

From: [Friends of Kensington Market](#)
To: [councilmeeting](#)
Cc: anth.swan@gmail.com
Subject: Changes to Policing in Toronto
Date: June 29, 2020 10:28:27 AM

Dear Friends and neighbours,

We join communities across this city in demanding a dramatic reduction in funding of the Toronto Police Services and a reimagining of the ways we keep our community safe. Friends of Kensington Market stands with Black Lives Matter in demanding reallocation of funds towards housing, harm reduction and public health.

We are appalled by the death of Regis Korchinski-Paquet, a young Black and Indigenous woman who died in the presence of the Toronto Police Service on May 27. Her death is situated in a long history of anti-Black racism and violence at the hands of the TPS.

Our community sees first hand the failure of the police to keep our community safe and their inability to deal with people in mental-health crises.

Though we have community officers in Kensington Market, and this is a better form of policing, those community officers are not the officers responding to emergency calls and have no say in how policing happens beyond of their presence.

FOKM has attended a TPS public consultation and has been speaking out against the proposed installation of CCTV police surveillance cameras in Chinatown, Kensington Market, and Alexandra Park. We recognize the impact police surveillance would have on our low-income and Black, Indigenous, and racialized neighbours, who are more likely to be profiled and harassed by the police.

We are disappointed that the Mayor has put forward a motion that seeks to diffuse the calls for reform while requesting body cameras, which will increase the police budget rather than solve the problem of police brutality.

Black Lives Matter has put forward practical alternatives: a police-free, community-led, trauma-informed emergency service for mental health/psychiatric distress; a civilian transportation safety service; community-based and trauma-informed emergency service for people who have experienced gender-based violence; a civilian conflict resolution service to replace policing of minor bylaw infractions/noise complaints.

It's clear that these types of solutions would better serve our community. Why isn't the mayor listening?

We need to reduce the money this City spends on the police, re-imagine what we need to keep everyone safe. The way to end police brutality and the targeting of racialized communities is to reduce the budget and role of the police and re-allocate our resources. The moment is now. Too many people have lost their lives already.

Dominique Russell

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Dominique Russell & Serena Purdy
Co-Chairs, Friends of Kensington Market