

January 5, 2023

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Letter in Support of Mayor Tory's \$48.3 million increase to the Toronto police 2023 budget

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of City Council,

Community safety and well-being is key to the success of neighbourhoods and cities, and Toronto's Downtown Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) applaud Mayor John Tory's announcement of an increase in the police budget.

Community safety is especially important as the downtown continues its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Toronto's downtown BIAs represent the city's most significant economic hub, including its largest employment cluster with over 400,000 employees, as well as its busiest transit hub, and vibrant concentrations of retail, hospitality, arts, culture and tourism.

The Mayor's announcement not only highlights the importance of community safety, on a practical level it provides 25 new police officers to the downtown core – a very welcome addition to community safety efforts.

Policing is only one component of a multi-sectoral and collaborative approach to community safety and well-being. To achieve the goals of SafeTO, Toronto's 10-year community safety and well-being plan, effective interventions for enhancing and fast-tracking access to social services, mental health and addiction treatment services, and increased supportive housing development are also vitally important.

In this regard we appreciate Mayor Tory's commitment to ongoing funding for the Toronto Community Crisis Service, which provides a non-police response to persons in crisis.

As stewards of our downtown neighbourhoods, we will continue to advocate for safe and vibrant communities and the well-being of everyone who lives, works, studies and visits here.

Sincerely,

Janice Solomon
Executive Director
Toronto Downtown West BIA

Pauline Larsen
Executive Director and
Chief Operating Officer
Downtown Yonge BIA

Briar de Lange
Executive Director
Bloor-Yorkville BIA

Al Smith
Executive Director
St. Lawrence Market
Neighbourhood BIA

Grant Humes
Executive Director
Toronto Financial District BIA

Tim Kocur
Executive Director
Waterfront BIA