

Urgent Action on the Auto Theft Crisis

Date: April 3, 2024

To: Economic and Community Development Committee

From: City Council

Wards: All

CITY COUNCIL DECISION

City Council on March 20 and 21, 2024, referred Motion MM16.48 to the April 30, 2024 meeting of the Economic and Community Development Committee for consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor Mike Colle, seconded by Councillor Frances Nunziata, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Premier of Ontario and the Provincial Minister of Transportation to impose lifetime bans on the issuance of Driver's Licenses for anyone convicted of motor vehicle theft under section 333.1 of the Criminal Code.
2. City Council request the Prime Minister of Canada and the Federal Minister of Transportation to introduce a ban on the export of all used automobiles out of Canadian ports, such as the Port of Montreal and the Port of Vancouver.

SUMMARY

Carjackings and automobile thefts have more than doubled year to date in 2024.

Toronto Police Services have reported that there have been 68 carjackings so far this year - an alarming 106 per cent increase over the same time period in 2023.

Auto thefts in 2023 topped 12,200 vehicles, an increase from 9,821 cars stolen in 2022.

As the increase in car jackings demonstrates, auto thefts have become increasingly brazen and violent including break-and-enters related to auto theft that are on the rise and have already climbed to 34 incidents so far this year, eclipsing the 22 reported for all of 2023.

There is more that needs to be done to combat this urgent and escalating crisis. After unacceptable delays in action, the Provincial and Federal governments have finally begun the process to end this epidemic – but we must act swiftly and decisively.

It is clear to all levels of government that these thefts are part of a network of organized crime, with vehicles being stolen and shipped internationally. In addition to actions addressing the vulnerabilities at our shipping ports and in the antiquated anti-theft technologies that are offered by automobile manufacturers; more effective legislative action is required to act as a deterrent at the source – the criminals stealing the cars in the first place.

This motion should be deemed urgent due to the need for immediate action at all levels of government, and the need for stiffer penalties to crack down on these crimes.