

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Stevenson, Kirsten](#)
Subject: Re: Feb 13 Special Budget Meeting
Date: Friday, February 9, 2024 12:54:35 AM

[REDACTED]

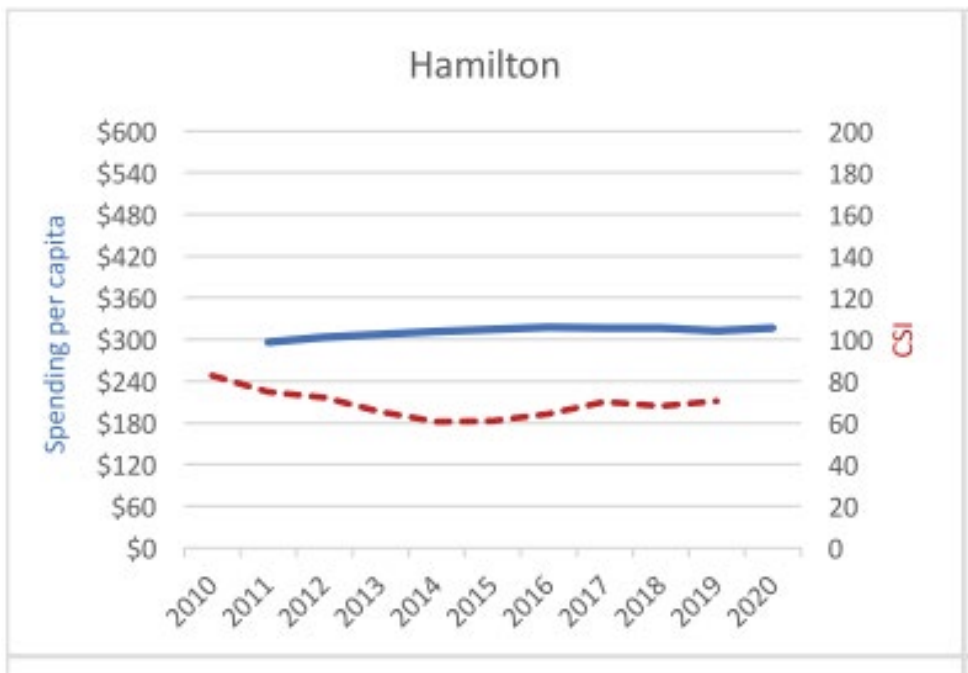
Hello Hamilton Police Services Board,

I am writing today to express my opposition to HPS's requested increase to their police budget. For the past few years on the City of Hamilton budget community delegation day, delegates have voiced their opposition to further budget increases, and yet the budget has continued to increase.

Will this finally be the year that the City of Hamilton pays attention to research showing that increases in police budgets have not resulted in decreases in crime? We now have a [comprehensive study](#) that has explored this question for major Canadian cities and came to the conclusion that "No consistent associations were found between police funding and crime rates across municipalities, and overall, net increases in spending per capita are not associated with greater net decreases in crime rates."

In response to this study, the chief of police suggested that the study had "[limited data points](#)" and so the same conclusion could not be applied to Hamilton. He also repeated the conclusion of the study ("no consistent correlation" between funding and crime rates across the municipalities"). The fact that the study found no consistent correlation is evidence that supports a smaller police budget, not a larger one. If we can't be confident that police spending lowers the crime rate then why would we keep spending more on police? Also, if we go back and look at the study, we find that the authors noted "data limitations" for the city of Hamilton because they only had access to nine years of data instead of ten. Hardly an issue that affects the overall analysis.

As shown in the graph below, which is in the study, Hamilton's crime rate has both increased AND decreased as the budget has increased, which supports the study's conclusion that increasing the police budget is not associated with decreases in crime.



This conclusion of the study is also intuitive when we compare cities of similar size, such as Hamilton and Detroit. These cities have similar population sizes, but we know the crime rate in Detroit is much higher despite a much larger police budget. Are people in Detroit simply more violent? Does a person's DNA change when they cross the border? Or do cities in the USA provide even fewer social supports than cities in Canada do? The table below is from my delegation in 2023.

Case Study: Hamilton vs. Detroit

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510018001&pickMembers%5B%5D=1.108&pickMembers%5B1%5D=2.4&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2016&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2021&referencePeriods=20160101%2C20210101>

Hamilton					Detroit				
Year	Population	Police Budget (per person)	Property Crime Rate (per 100,000 population)	Violent Crime Rate (per 100,000 Population)	Year	Population	Police Budget (per person)	Property Crime Rate (per 100,000 population)	Violent Crime Rate (per 100,000 Population)
2016	552,272	\$277.49	2,622	925	2016	676,883	\$458.31	4,723	2,008
2017	559,673	\$281.12	2,859	1,005	2017	674,188	\$463.90	4,541	2,057
2018	566,144	\$284.71	3,023	970	2018	672,662	\$468.83	4,305	2,047

Sources:

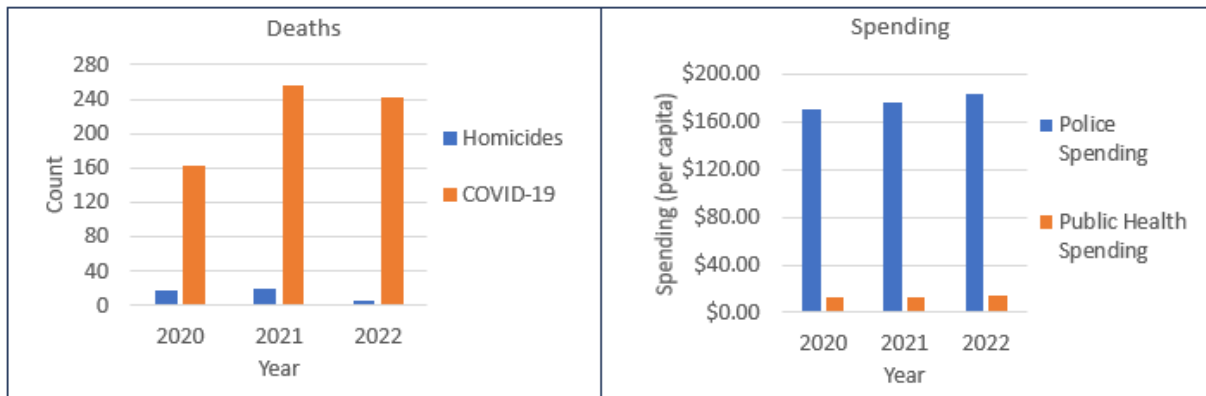
- <https://hamiltonpolice.ca/about/budget>
- <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510017701&pickMembers%5B%5D=1.208&pickMembers%5B1%5D=2.64&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2016&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2021&referencePeriods=20160101%2C20210101>
- <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510017701&pickMembers%5B%5D=1.208&pickMembers%5B1%5D=2.4&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2016&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2021&referencePeriods=20160101%2C20210101>
- <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1730013501&pickMembers%5B%5D=2.1&pickMembers%5B1%5D=3.1&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2016&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2022&referencePeriods=20160101%2C20220301>
- https://detroitmi.gov/sites/detroitmi.localhost/files/mjw/ated_docs/financial-reports/FY2020-2023ApprovedFourYearFinancialPlanSectionLegalBudget.pdf
- https://detroitmi.gov/sites/detroitmi.localhost/files/mjw/ated_docs/financial-reports/FY%202018-2021%20City%20Council%20Four%20Year%20Financial%20Plan%20Sector%208%20Agency%20Descriptions.pdf
- <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/soptest/hist/en/2010-2018/01res/notab/PEPANNCHP.pdf>

Even if the police budget WAS associated with decreases in crime, for police to justify their budget they should have to show that police spending decreases crime MORE than spending on social supports does. These supports take people out of the precarious living conditions so that they can live a dignified life. We know that people are more likely to commit crimes when they are pushed into these precarious situations. A society that chooses to deal with this

problem by going the route of paying bodyguards more to prevent access to care for these folks instead of just giving them what they need is not one that seriously cares about stopping crime, it is one that cares about perpetuating it to keep people down.

In my delegation to the general issues committee, I brought attention to the fact that Hamilton spends 10 times more on policing than we do for public health, and yet COVID-19 is causing 10 times more deaths. This is just one example of how additional spending on the police is not the area that needs to be focused on. I hope the police services board takes note of the published evidence this year and declines the requested increase to the police budget.

Hamilton Crime vs. Public Health Outcomes



- Sources:
- <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/hamilton-police-homicide-rate-1.6724633>
 - <https://data.ontario.ca/en/dataset/status-of-covid-19-cases-in-ontario-by-public-health-unit-phu>
 - Hamilton City Budget Documentation

Sincerely,

Evan Ubene

