



# NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

## Police Services Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

---

**Subject:** Councillor Information Request - Police Service 2023 Budget Comparison of Similar Services

**Report To:** Chair and Members, Niagara Police Services Board

**Report Date:** 2023-09-01

---

### Recommendation(s)

**That the Niagara Police Services Board receive this report for information.**

### Key Facts

- Councillor Kaiser formally requested that the Niagara Regional Police Services Board (Board) provide information comparing the Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) budget to budgets of similar police services. The report is scheduled for presentation at the Budget Review Committee of the Whole (BRCOTW) meeting scheduled October 12, 2023.
- At the time of this report, the Service received 2023 budget data from five regional police services for use as comparators: Halton, Waterloo, Durham, Peel and York.
- Police operating budgets reflect both the requirements as outlined under the Police Services Act (PSA), in addition to the special needs of the local community.
- According to a recent Municipal Study 2022 by BMA Consulting Inc., services provided by police are influenced by varying degrees of factors within each municipality such as the inflow/outflow of non-residents, rural/urban mix, geography, specialized facilities such as airports and casinos etc.

### Financial Considerations

There are no financial implications relating to the recommendations contained within this report.

### Analysis

At the July 27, 2023, BRCOTW Meeting, Councillor Kaiser formally requested that the Board provide information comparing the NRPS budget to the budgets of similar police services for the upcoming October 12, 2023, BRCOTW meeting.

As this information was time sensitive, a copy of the memo from the Office of the Regional Clerk was forwarded to Service staff prior to the Police Service Board meeting scheduled September 28, 2023, to prepare the information requested.

The information gathered pertains to the 2023 budget year as police services are currently developing their 2024 budgets. At the time of this report, most 2024 police service budgets have yet to be presented to their respective Police Boards.

The NRPS 2023 net operating budget, before indirect allocations, was approved at \$177,857,755.00, a 5.7% increase over 2022. The total 2023 net levy budget inclusive of costs (chargebacks) for regional services and capital financing was \$195,005,793.00, an increase of 5.4% over 2022. The net levy budget figure will be used for comparison with other similar services.

The collection of police service budget information was sourced from public websites such as local municipalities and municipal city council meetings. The availability of detailed information presented publicly varied between municipalities. To provide for a fulsome comparison, Service staff received budget information from the Halton, Waterloo, Durham, Peel, and York regional police services. As information is not publicly reported for many services, the comparison of the Niagara budget data will be against the aggregate average, including Niagara.

To better understand the budget comparison, the table below provides a comparison of the municipality's metrics.

Municipal Size:

	Niagara	Aggregate (Median) Average
# of Municipalities	12	8
Sq Kms	1,854	1,564
Population	510,226	719,318
Population Density	275	583

2023 Budget:

Authorized Strength:	Niagara	Aggregate (Median) Average
Sworn	769	910
Civilian	337	371
Total	1,106	1,280
SOA (included in Total)	43	48
Frontline incl Supervision	418	499
Sworn per 100,000 population	151	127

Capital & Operating	Niagara	Aggregate (Median) Average
Capital Expenditure Budget (excluding facility)	\$5,298,833	\$10,132,472
Net Levy Operating Budget	\$195,005,794	\$230,796,133
Net Levy Operating Budget per Capita	\$382	\$321

The comparator operating budget includes direct costs, regional service costs (chargebacks), and debt costs. While most police services have similar direct costs, the comparison varies with the types of municipal chargebacks and debt costs allocated to its policing agencies. As an example, some police services report fuel as a direct cost with others reporting fuel as an allocated regional cost where centralized fuel stations exist. Revenue sources may also vary between services with some costs being offset by provincial grant funding. A line-by-line detailed review of all police costs would need to be conducted to ensure a fair comparison. The budget data reported above compares the net levy budget and assumes the comparator municipalities allocate regional service and debt costs consistent with the Region of Niagara.

Over the past three budget cycles, many police services have identified operational gaps within their police services, specifically on the front-line. The table below provides a comparison of budget requests approved for the NRPS against its regional comparators.

% Budget Increase over Prior Year - Years 2021 to 2023:

	<b>Niagara</b>	<b>Aggregate Average</b>
<b>2023:</b>		
% Increase (Incr.) over 2022*	5.4%	6.5%
Incr. – Total Staff	11.0	52.1
Incr. – Sworn	1.0	33.6
Incr. – Civilian	10.0	18.5
<b>2022:</b>		
% Increase (Incr.) over 2021*	4.2%	4.6%
Incr. – Total Staff	13.0	31.8
Incr. – Sworn	8.0	24.6
Incr. – Civilian	5.0	7.2
<b>2021:</b>		
% Increase (Incr.) over 2020*	4.5%	3.8%
Incr. – Total Staff	6.0	7.5
Incr. – Sworn	4.0	4.0
Incr. – Civilian	5.0	3.5

\*For comparison to other police services, the % increase is based on total operating budget including indirect allocations

Under the PSA, police agencies are responsible to provide adequate and effective policing services which ensure the safety of the community. To meet these objectives, police services develop strategic plans and policies which create an organizational model specific to the unique needs and priorities of the local community. The annual operating budget reflects both the requirements under the PSA, as well as the special needs within the local community. According to a recent Municipal Study 2022 by BMA

Consulting Inc., services provided by police are influenced by the varying degrees of factors within each Municipality such as:

- the daily inflow/outflow of commuters and tourists, seasonal residents (such as students), cultural and sporting events that are not captured in population-based metrics
- specialized facilities such as airports and casinos, correctional, mental health facilities; and
- social and economic demographic trends

The study further reports police costs may significantly vary based on several factors such as:

- geographic mix (urban/rural mix)
- international borders and number of water ways
- incident of more complex crimes
- specialized services (Marine Unit, Public Order)
- service levels; and
- accounting and reporting practices

The Niagara Region contains 3 major urban cities and 9 rural communities within its 1,854 sq kms, exceeding the median average by 19%. This vast area encompasses 12 lower-tier municipalities (average of 8), each with its own unique policing needs.

For the Niagara Region, a police service would consider the following factors when developing a service delivery model:

- The Niagara Region receives 13 million tourists each year including seasonal residents; not included in population-based metrics.
- There are two major post-secondary educational campuses, Brock University and Niagara College.
- Niagara hosts many cultural activities which attract residents from throughout the Golden Horseshoe.
- The Region supports four international land border crossings and is considered the Nation's busiest border crossing area.
- The Region is bordered by two great lakes, the Niagara River, as well as other inland waterways, for a total of 1,500 square kilometers of waterways.
- Niagara Falls hosts two casinos.
- Niagara has a large hospitality industry which attracts human trafficking and other drug-related criminal activities.
- Due to its vast geography, there are six police district buildings located throughout the region.
- Niagara's proximity to the Greater Toronto Area attracts criminal activity due to the amount of non-resident inflows and the large hospitality industry.

This report was prepared at the request of Councillor Kaiser and provides comparisons of 6 regional government police service budgets. The NRPS 2023 operating budget falls below the median average. Further, for the past 2 budget cycles, the monetary and authorized strength increases authorized for the NRPS fall below the median average. Requests to increase the authorized strength of many Ontario police services, especially within the front-line, reflect the growing demand for policing services to address the needs of the community.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Not applicable.

### **Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities**

The budget preparation process is conducted in consideration of Regional objectives, with efforts to balance the informational requirements of the Region as outlined in the Municipal Act, with the accountabilities of the Board under the PSA.

### **Relevant Policy Considerations**

None.

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

9.1.2022.11.18 – Niagara Regional Police Service -2023 Proposed Operating Budget

*This report was prepared by Laura Rullo, Manager, Finance and reviewed by Mario Lagrotteria, Superintendent, Corporate Services. Recommended by Bill Fordy, Deputy Chief, Support Services.*



---

#### **Submitted by:**

Bryan MacCulloch, M.O.M. #5835  
Chief of Police

### **Appendices**

None.

**Administration**

Office of the Regional Clerk

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, PO Box 1042, Thorold, ON L2V 4T7

Telephone: 905-980-6000 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215 Fax: 905-687-4977

[www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca)

August 8, 2023

**RECEIVED**

BOY *of*  
AUG 21 2023

*public agenda*

Deb Reid, Executive Director  
Niagara Regional Police Services Board  
5700 Valley Way  
Niagara Falls, ON L2E 1X8

**SENT ELECTRONICALLY**

**RE: Councillor Information Request – Budget Review Committee of Whole Meeting – July 27, 2023**

At the Budget Review Committee of the Whole meeting held on July 27, 2023, the following request for information was made:

**Minute Item 7.2**

**Councillor Kaiser requested information comparing the Niagara Regional Police Service budget to the budgets of similar police services.**

The next meeting of the Budget Review Committee of the Whole meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2023. If you could kindly provide information in this regard prior to that meeting, it would be appreciated.

If further information is required, please contact me at 905-980-6000 Ext. 3220 or by email [ann-marie.norio@niagararegion.ca](mailto:ann-marie.norio@niagararegion.ca)

Yours truly,



Ann-Marie Norio  
Regional Clerk  
CLK- C 2023-090