



Calgary

Jyoti Gondek, Mayor

April 2, 2025

Honourable Mike Ellis, M.L.A
Deputy Premier of Alberta
404 Legislature Building
Edmonton Alberta T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Ellis,

Re: Community Peace Officer and Calgary Police Service alignment to combat fentanyl trafficking, illicit drug use, and social disorder

Thank you for your time and thoughtful discussion during our meeting on March 21, 2025. I appreciate your openness to us sharing our approach to public safety in Calgary, specifically the strong alignment and partnership between City of Calgary peace officers and the Calgary Police Service (CPS).

There were three actions identified at the meeting that we committed to and warrant further follow up:

- Iain Bushell, Director, Emergency Management & Community Safety to contact Curtis Zablocki, Assistant Deputy Minister, to formally request the needed changes to the Peace Officer Program to allow for the Peace Officer transport of illicit drugs.
- The City of Calgary and the Calgary Police Service are interested in an information session regarding potential Compassionate Care Intervention legislation.
- Calgary Community Court is looking to expand from monthly to weekly and we would appreciate your advocacy with the Minister of Justice in this regard.

Examples of proactive measures we have already taken that we shared with you included:

- The current Major Operation, Operation Certainty (aka Safer Calgary), where peace officers and CPS coordinate twice per day under the operational command of CPS.
- Community Safety Hubs, where peace officers meet and are co-deployed with CPS.
- Our 2023 Public Transit Safety Strategy and tiered response model with CPS. Peace officers patrol transit and proactively address social disorder while CPS responds to high priority crime. This has contributed to a 15 per cent reduction in disorder events and a 42

per cent reduction in crime. On the Calgary transit system, overdoses have decreased by 70 per cent in 2024 when compared to 2023.

- Our 2024 Memorandum of Understanding with CPS enhances the cooperation between peace officers and CPS by providing opportunities to increase coordination.
- Managing protests, where CPS and peace officers work closely to maintain public safety. This includes peace officers supporting with crowd control and other tactics under CPS command and operational plans. In 2024, peace officers supported CPS at over 50 protests.

Additionally, we had the opportunity to highlight for you the tremendous success of the Calgary Community Court (CCC). This City of Calgary initiative, in partnership with Calgary Legal Guidance, provides an alternative option for individuals who have received a bylaw violation ticket. They can attend the Court, receive services and follow prescribed actions as an alternative to paying a fine. Benefits include improvements in public safety and quality of life for individuals and community, reduced demand on the traditional justice system and improved relationships between vulnerable Calgarians, peace officers and CPS members. Community Court is helping to address social disorder problems by connecting offenders with resources to eliminate offending behaviour. Calgary Police Commission reports that 90% of social disorder calls are non-criminal in nature and Community Court addresses this 90% of the time. So far, over 200 individuals have participated with 35 having moved through to completion.

This initiative has been so successful that we have heard reports of unhoused persons asking peace officers for a ticket so they can attend community court. CCC has seen a 500% increase in participation since the initial Community Court day and the program is only nine months old. Given this success, Community Court is looking to expand from monthly to weekly and we see this as a significant step forward in connecting citizens with the supports they need. I will also take the opportunity to reach out to Minister Amery directly to discuss this program further and the associated investment required.

I believe we have an aligned path forward to work collaboratively and efficiently on combatting the damaging impact illicit drugs have on our community. Thank you again for your commitment to the safety of Albertans.

Sincerely,



Jyoti Gondek
Mayor, The City of Calgary

CC: Curtis Zablocki, Assistant Deputy Minister, Director of Law Enforcement, Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services
Yonathan Sumamo, Chief of Staff, Office of the Deputy Premier and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services

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Amtul Siddiqui, Chair, Calgary Police Commission
Scott Boyd, Superintendent, Community Policing South Division, Calgary Police Service