



**The Corporation of the
City of Sault Ste. Marie**

C O U N C I L R E P O R T

July 14, 2025

TO: Mayor Matthew Shoemaker and Members of City Council
AUTHOR: Tom Vair, CAO
DEPARTMENT: Chief Administrative Officer
RE: O.P.P. Costing Request

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information related to the request for costing of Ontario Provincial Police (O.P.P.) policing services for Sault Ste. Marie.

Background

On May 12, 2025, City Council approved the following resolution:

Whereas a safe community free of crime and social disorder is beneficial for all residents of and visitors to the City of Sault Ste. Marie; and

Whereas the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service was founded as a municipal police service for the City of Sault Ste. Marie in 1871; and

Whereas year-over-year, the cost of policing in the City of Sault Ste. Marie has risen at a rate higher than the rate of inflation; and

Whereas the rising costs of police services must be paid by taxpayers; and

Whereas the rising cost of policing in the city of Sault Ste. Marie is not sustainable; and

Whereas the Ontario Provincial Police (O.P.P.) provide policing service across the province along with the ability to provide additional resources; and

Whereas a priority of Council and City staff is to ensure that tax dollars are spent in a fiscally responsible way while exploring all options to provide services that will enhance the safety of our community,

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the CAO be directed to send a letter to Ontario's Solicitor General, the Honourable Michael Kerzner to request

pricing for O.P.P. services for the City of Sault Ste. Marie; and further that, copies of the letter be sent to the Sault Ste. Marie Police Services Board, the Interim Sault Ste. Marie Police Chief and Police Association and Senior Officers Association.

Staff sent the request letter and received a reply from the Solicitor General on July 3, 2025 indicating that the Province will not provide an O.P.P. resource plan (Attachment A – Solicitor General Response).

Analysis

Given the response from the Solicitor General, focus will remain with the Sault Ste. Marie Police Services Board and Chief of Police to deliver adequate and effective policing services to the community.

Staff are working with the Police Services Board to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which aligns with the recommendations from the KPMG Shared Services Review Feasibility Study. This MOU is anticipated to improve communication and collaboration between the City and Sault Ste. Marie Police Services, particularly between the Finance and Human Resources departments of the respective organizations.

In addition, the City will continue to advocate, along with the Northern Ontario Large Urban Mayors (NOLUM), to seek financial support from the Province to address the escalating cost of police services. Since 2019, the actual percentage increase for community policing costs has increased 52%. The Consumer Price Index increase over the same period was 18.9%. This level of increase is unsustainable for a municipality to absorb with current financial resources. The 2024 BMA Municipal Study indicated Sault Ste. Marie has the highest net policing costs per capita for communities with a population between 30,000-99,000.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications directly contemplated in this report. The cost of policing services in Sault Ste. Marie will continue to be advised through the Sault Ste. Marie Police Services Board and Chief of Police.

Strategic Plan / Policy Impact / Climate Impact

This is an operational matter not articulated in the corporate Strategic Plan.

Recommendation

It is therefore recommended that Council take the following action:

Resolved that the report of the CAO dated July 14, 2025 concerning O.P.P. costing be received as information.

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Respectfully submitted,

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