

# AGENDA – OPEN SESSION MEETING THURSDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2022 AT 9:30 AM

#### CORNWALL CIVIC COMPLEX SALON 'B'

#### Meetings

Excerpt from the Ontario Police Services Act:

35. (1) The board shall hold at least four meetings each year.

#### Quorum

(2) A majority of the members of the board constitutes a quorum.

#### Proceedings open to the public

(3) Meetings and hearings conducted by the board shall be open to the public, subject to subsection (4), and notice of them shall be published in the manner that the board determines.

#### Exception

- (4) The board may exclude the public from all or part of a meeting or hearing if it is of the opinion that,
- (a) matters involving public security may be disclosed and, having regard to the circumstances, the desirability of avoiding their disclosure in the public interest outweighs the desirability of adhering to the principle that proceedings be open to the public; or
- (b) intimate financial or personal matters or other matters may be disclosed of such a nature, having regard to the circumstances, that the desirability of avoiding their disclosure in the interest of any person affected or in the public interest outweighs the desirability of adhering to the principle that proceedings be open to the public. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.15, s. 35.
- Call to Order and Roll Call
- Approval of the Agenda
- Conflict of Interest Declaration
  - 1. Adoption of the Open Meeting Minutes of October 6, 2022

#### **Business & Correspondence:**

- 1. Provincial Appointee to CPS Board & Swearing-In
- 2. Third Quarter Financial Statement Chief Spowart
- 3. Third Quarter Professional Standards Report Deputy Chief Foy
- Vehicle Noise Pollution and Speeding Need for Technology to Support Traffic Enforcement – Director Grant
- Confirmation of Meeting Dates in December 2022 and January 2023 Chair MacDonald/Chief Spowart

ADJOURNMENT OF OPEN SESSION - IN CAMERA SESSION TO FOLLOW

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### MINUTES – OPEN SESSION MEETING – CPSB OCTOBER 6, 2022 CORNWALL CIVIC COMPLEX SALON 'B' 9:30 AM

#### Call to Order and Roll Call:

Present:

Elaine MacDonald - Chair
Michel Payette - Vice-Chair
Mayor Glen Grant - Director
Martha Woods - Director

Shawna Spowart - Chief of Police Vincent Foy - Deputy Chief Diane Brown - Secretary

**Guests:** President Troy St. Germain - Cornwall Police Association

Vice President Mat Lemire - Cornwall Police Association
Vice President Dave Michaud - Senior Officers Association

Regrets: None

Approval of the Agenda:

Moved by: Martha Woods

Seconded by: Mike Payette

That the agenda, as presented, be approved. All in favour. MOTION CARRIED

**Conflict of Interest:** None declared

1. Adoption of the Open Meeting Minutes of September 1, 2022.

Moved by: Glen Grant

Seconded by: Mike Payette

That the Open Meeting Minutes of September 1, 2022 be approved. All in favour.

**MOTION CARRIED** 

#### **New Business & Correspondence:**

#### 2. Staffing Report - Chief Spowart

Chief Spowart provided a presentation on the staffing shortages affecting police operations. This matter was originally brought forward by former Chief Aikman in 2018. She highlighted three threats that impact present services: increased pressures, provincial vacancies, employee wellness.

Increased pressures include: 2.7% increase in population since 2016; 29% increase in calls for service since 2017; 33.7% increase in violent crimes since 2017; increase in drug overdoses; evolving neighbourhoods & new developments (stressing staff resources); 7% increase in CPI.

Employee wellness is impacted by operational stress and organizational stress. burn-out due to lack of available employees on duty (overtime). Recruitment is also an ongoing issue.

Mitigating strategies include strengthening resiliency for employees and the organization as a whole; building stronger teams; and reducing stigma. Two organizations offer training sessions to deal with PTSD: Before Operational Stress (BOS) by Wounded Warriors of Canada; and Trauma Care Program by Homewood Health. This training will be mandatory for all staff beginning in the next month.

The CPS is also planning to hire a consultant this year to create a new working model to perform resource deployment analysis, i.e. schedule changes, building structure, etc.

In conclusion, Chief Spowart emphasized that action must be taken to address the resource shortages that will ultimately affect officer safety as well as public safety. Currently, there are four police officers who have been absent from the workplace for more than one year and there are no indications of these officers returning to the workplace.

Chief Spowart recommended that the Police Services Board authorize the hiring of three additional supplemental new recruit police officers at the rank of 4th class constable, effective January 2023 (the next available Basic Constable Training intake). There would be a net zero cost to this increase in 2023 by utilizing the WSIB recovery money as an offset within in the 2023 budget year. Should our staffing numbers improve, it would be understood that the CPS would reduce their authorized strength through attrition.

In order to be proactive, Chief Spowart further recommend that the Board authorize the hiring of one direct hire (fully trained) officer as soon as possible in 2022 to cover one of the two officers who will be absent from duty on maternity/parental leave for a minimum of one year each. The cost of this increase would not be contained in the 2022 budget however will be supported in

2023 as those officer salaries are already included within the budget and by that time those officers will no longer be on Cornwall Police Service payroll.

Moved by: Glen Grant Seconded by: Mike Payette

That the Police Services Board authorize the hiring of one direct hire (fully trained) officer as soon as possible in 2022; and the hiring of three additional supplemental new recruit police officers at the rank of 4<sup>th</sup> class constable, effective January 2023. All in favour.

MOTION CARRIED

#### 3. 2022-23 CCTV Grant - Chief Spowart

The CPS was approved to receive \$48,500 to expand Close Circuit Television (CCTV) to support Guns & Gangs Project Clear Eye

Moved by: Glen Grant Seconded by: Martha Woods

That the CPS Board enter into an agreement with the Ministry of Solicitor General for this approved grant program. All in favour.

**MOTION CARRIED** 

## 4. Wells Divisional Court Appeal Decision – Chief Spowart

Mr. Well's judicial review application was once again dismissed. Mr. Wells has been informed by the Ontario Civilian Police Commission to pay a portion of the legal expenses incurred by the CPS for both the judicial review application and the urgent motion to stay his dismissal.

Moved by: Mike Payette Seconded by: Martha Woods

That the report be received. All in favour.

**MOTION CARRIED** 

# 5. Response to MACDOUGALL Inquest Recommendations – Deputy Chief Foy

The McDougall inquest generated three recommendations to be implemented by all Ontario Police Forces by December 1, 2022 as follows:

- Recommendation 8: Joint Mental Health Police Response
- Recommendation 9: Joint Mental Health Team Engagement Policy
- Recommendation 10: De-escalation Training

Deputy Chief Foy provided a summary of these recommendations and how they have been implemented by the CPS.

Moved by:

Glen Grant

Seconded by:

Martha Woods

That the report be received. All in favour.

**MOTION CARRIED** 

## 6. 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Financial Statement – Chief Spowart

Chief Spowart provide an update on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Financial Statement.

Moved by: Glen Grant Seconded by: Mike Payette

That the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Financial Statement be received. All in favour.

**MOTION CARRIED** 

# 7. Resolution from Municipality of East Ferris re: School Bus Regulations

Moved by: Mike Payette Seconded by: Glen Grant

That the CPS Board respond to the Municipality of East Ferris indicating their support of the Resolution.

All in favour.

**MOTION CARRIED** 

# 8. Verbal Report on the Sept 15/22 OAPSB Meeting in Trenton - Chair MacDonald

Chair MacDonald provided a summary of the OAPSB Meeting in Trenton. At the meeting, Paul Dube, the Ombudsman from Ontario provided a report on situations in which police were ill-equipped to respond to individuals suffering from crises relating to mental illness. Because those situations often ended in tragedy, the 2014 Report, entitled "A Matter of Life or Death" called for increased mental health training for police officers. Unfortunately, the training has not yet been modified but recognition of the problem has led to partnerships between medical personnel and police officers while on patrol.

9. Notice from Agape Centre on Cancellation of their Golf Tournament
The Agape Centre have had to cancel their golf tournament due to lack of
registrations. They will be reimbursing CPS Board for their \$500 donation.

## 10. Schedule of 2023 CPS Board Meeting Dates

The list of 2023 Board meeting dates was distributed.

## 11. Adjournment of Open Session:

Moved by: Martha Woods Seconded by: Glen Grant

That this meeting be adjourned (11:15 a.m.)

All in favour

Elaine MacDonald, Chair

Diane Brown, Secretary

**MOTION CARRIED** 



# Executive Council of Ontario Order in Council

On the recommendation of the undersigned, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, by and with the advice and concurrence of the Executive Council of Ontario, orders that:

#### Conseil exécutif de l'Ontario Décret

Sur la recommandation de la personne soussignée, la lieutenante-gouverneure de l'Ontario, sur l'avis et avec le consentement du Conseil exécutif de l'Ontario, décrète ce qui suit:

PURSUANT TO section 27 of the Police Services Act, as amended,

#### Amanda Brisson of Cornwall

be appointed as a member of the Cornwall Police Services Board to serve at the pleasure of the Lieutenant Governor in Council for a period of three years, effective from the date of this Order in Council.

EN VERTU DE l'article 27 de la Loi sur les services policiers, dans sa version modifiée,

Amanda Brisson, de Cornwall,

est nommée membre de la Commission des services policiers de Cornwall pour exercer son mandat à titre amovible pour une période de trois ans,

O.C./Décret: 1 3 6 0 / 2 0 2 2

la nomination prenant effet à la date du présent décret.

Recommended: Solicitor General

Recommandé par: Le solliciteur général

Concurred: Chair of Cabinet

Appuyé par: Le président/la présidente du Conseil des ministres,

Approved and Ordered:

Approuvé et décrété le: OCT 2 0 2022

**Administrator of the Government** 

L'administratrice du gouvernement

## City of Cornwall Financial Statement as at Sept 30, 2022 (not final)

#### Cornwall Police Service

| EXPENDITURES Salaries & Benefits                             | 2021<br>Actuals Sept<br>\$14,711,361 | <b>2021 Budget</b> \$19,182,151 | 2022<br>Actuals Sept<br>\$15,326,539                              | <b>2022 Budget</b> \$19,921,669                                   | Y-T-D<br>% used<br>76.93%                       |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Full-Time Salary Part-Time Salary Overtime Premiums Benefits |                                      |                                 | \$10,344,362<br>\$599,016<br>\$767,328<br>\$62,922<br>\$3,592,911 | \$13,932,467<br>\$770,004<br>\$620,988<br>\$94,608<br>\$4,503,602 | 74.25%<br>72.60%<br>123.57%<br>66.51%<br>79.78% |
| Purchase of Goods  | \$537,866                            | \$958,688                       | \$593,293   | \$953,603   | 62.22%  |
| Services & Rents   | \$810,475                            | \$1,116,745                     | \$903,175   | \$1,132,998   | 79.72%  |
| Financial &  | <u>\$1,016,169</u>                   | <u>\$1,278,161</u>              | <u>\$1,046,893</u>  | <u>\$1,281,335</u>  | 81.70%  |
| Subtotal   | <b>\$17,075,871</b>                  | <b>\$22,535,745</b>             | <b>\$17,869,900</b>   | <b>\$23,289,605</b>   | <b>76.73%</b>                                   |
| Total Revenue NET COSTS                                      | \$1,605,677                          | \$1,849,818                     | <u>\$1,903,394</u>  | \$1,747,761   | 108.90%   |
|  | <b>\$15,470,194</b>                  | <b>\$20,685,927</b>             | <b>\$15,966,506</b>   | <b>\$21,541,844</b>   | 74.12%  |

#### Commentary

#### Salaries & Benefits

The Salaries & Benefits line has been broken down to demonstrate where overages have derived from. It should be noted that a portion of the 123.75% used in overtime has in fact been off-set by recoveries in the revenue section of the financial statement. This was a reimbursement from the Provincial Government related to COVID-19 protests, and therefore the overage is not a true representation of the cost of this line item. It should also be noted that the full-time and part-time salary line items are running under budget, as a result of diligent forecasting and planning by CPS Cost Centre Managers.

The Benefits line also demonstrates an overage. This is as a result of the benefits of individuals who retired from CPS effective December 31, 2021 having not been budgeted for by the City.

#### Purchase of Goods

Increased fuel costs may result in the fuel expense exceeding budget. Fuel was budgeted at \$1.10 a litre. The average cost is \$1.44 a litre for gasoline and \$1.62 for diesel. There is an anticipated shortfall in the fuel budget of \$15,000. The Department will try to stay within budget overall.

#### Financial and Transfers

Financial and transfers are high due to contribution to capital and reserves booked at 100%.

#### Revenue

Revenue is above budget at this time due to the timing of Provincial grants and recoveries from WSIB and other municipalities for services rendered.

The Provincial Grant for Court Security was budgeted at \$830,000. In late spring the Ministry confirmed the amount to be transfer was \$\$865,487 resulting in an additional funds of \$35,487.

In addition, due to COVID-19 restrictions in the first part of the year, there is an anticipated shortfall in clearance letter revenue of \$60,000, as many of the schools and community groups had not resumed their activities.



# CORNWALL POLICE SERVICE PART V – POLICE SERVICE ACT – COMPLAINTS



# STATISTICAL REPORT 3rd Quarter of 2022

| TYPE ( | OF COMPLAINT   |            | Incl. Prev. Yr | Quarter        | Year to<br>Date | Previous<br>Year's |
|--------|--|------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
|        |  |            | KEEL SELECTION |                | 14-14 c         |                    |
| Α      | <b>Public Complaints-Policy or Service Complaints</b>                                    | 0          | 0              | 0              | 0               | 2                  |
| В      | Public Complaints-Conduct Complaints   | 5          | 0              | 1              | 14              | 21                 |
| С      | Public complaints- Including Both A & B  | -:         | -              | -              | -               | 7=                 |
| D      | Internal Complaints (Chief's Complaints)   | 1          | 3              | 0              | 2               | 1                  |
| Е      | Local Complaints   | 0          |                | -              | -               | 1                  |
| F      | Customer Service Resolutions   | 0          | -              |                | =               | 1150               |
| TYPE   | OF ALLEGATIONS *- CONDUCT COMPLAINTS   |            |                |                |                 |                    |
| Α      | Discreditable Conduct  | 6          | / <del>-</del> |                | 9               | 11                 |
| В      | Unlawful or Unnecessary Exercise of Authority  | 5          | -              | -              | 7               | 7                  |
| С      | Neglect of Duty  | 1          |                | 10=            | 2               | 7                  |
| D      | Harassment-Racial  | .=:        | ; <b>-</b>     | n=             | -               | : <del>-</del>     |
| Е      | Harassment-Sexual  | -          | -              | n <del>=</del> | -               | •                  |
| F      | Harassment-other   |            | y <del>e</del> |                |                 | / <u>-</u>         |
| G      | Firearm Discharge  | -          | R <b>ii</b>    |                | -               | 72                 |
| Н      | Bias-Based Profiling   | -          | -              | 8-             |                 | 8-                 |
|        | Regulated Interaction – Collection of Identifying information                            | : <u>-</u> | 62 <b>4</b>    | -              | -               | T.                 |
|        | Others: Use profane, abusive or insulting language to any other member of a police force | 150        | 2 <b></b>      | <b>-</b> :     | 2               | 3                  |
| K      | COVID 19 Related (New)   |            |                | -              | -               | -                  |

Note: \*Total number of allegations. More than one type per complaint may be listed.

| DISF               | POSITION   | This Quarter | Total<br>Year to Date | Total<br>Previous Year |  |
|--------------------|--|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| CONDUCT COMPLAINTS |  |              |                       |                        |  |
| Α                  | Unsubstantiated  | 1            | 1                     | 3                      |  |
| В                  | Screened out by OIPRD                                    | 5            | 12                    | 15                     |  |
| С                  | Withdrawn by Complainant                                 | -            | :=                    | -3                     |  |
| D                  | Informal Resolution Agreement                            | -            |                       | -4                     |  |
| Ε                  | Disciplinary Hearing                                     | -            | t <del>s=</del>       | <b>-</b> 4             |  |
| F                  | Criminal Charge Laid Against Police Officer              | =            | , <del>-</del>        | -                      |  |
| G                  | Unsatisfactory Work Performance                          | -            | i <del>l</del>        |                        |  |
| Н                  | Through local resolution                                 | -            | 1=                    | =:                     |  |
| I                  | Customer Service Resolutions (C.S.R.)                    | <del>-</del> | ;=                    | 1                      |  |
| J                  | C.S.R. not successful - Returned to OIPRD for screening. | -7           | -                     |                        |  |

Notes:

| DISF | POSITION (cont'd)                                | This Quarter     | Total<br>Year to Date | Total<br>Previous Year |
|------|--|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| POL  | ICY OR SERVICE COMPLAINTS                        |                  | <b>通過加速的</b>          |                        |
| Α    | No Further Action Required                       | es<br>Pa         | -                     |                        |
| В    | Action Taken                                     |                  | -                     | 8                      |
| С    | Referred to the Police Services Board for Review | =                | -                     | =                      |
| CON  | PLAINTS INVOLVING BOTH - CONDUCT AND SERVICE/PO  | LICY             |                       |                        |
| Α    | No Further Action Required                       | -                | -                     |                        |
| В    | Action Taken                                     | -                | -                     | -                      |
| С    | Referred to the Police Services Board for Review | s <del>n</del> a | -                     | <del></del>            |
| D    | Referred to the OIPRD for Review                 |                  | -                     | -                      |

| DIPRE              | D - REVIEW   | This Quarter | Total<br>Year to Date | Total<br>Previous Year |  |
|--------------------|--|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| REQUEST FOR REVIEW |  |              |                       |                        |  |
| A                  | Total  | 0            | 1                     | 1                      |  |
|                    | - Concurred with finding                           | -            | <u> </u>              | 1                      |  |
|                    | - Directed to deal with as per OIPRD instruction   | -            | 1*                    | <b>⇒</b> d             |  |
|                    | - Re-assign to another P.S. or taken over by OIPRD | -            | -                     | =8                     |  |
|                    | - Request not accepted by OIPRD                    |              | -                     | <b>₩</b> ((            |  |
| В                  | Reviews pending                                    | 0            | 1                     | <b>≡</b> €             |  |
| OMN                | MENTS  |              |                       |                        |  |

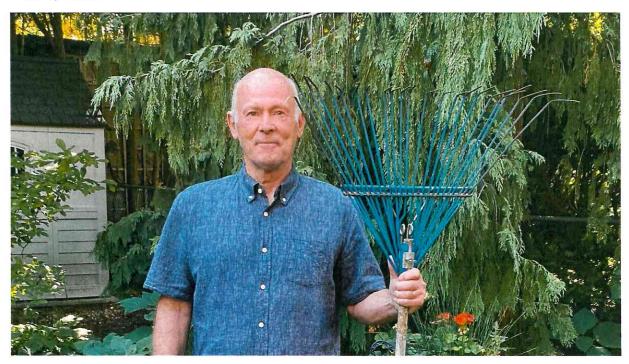
| SPE  | CIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT (SIU)               | This Quarter                            | Total<br>Year to Date | Total<br>Previous Year |  |  |  |
|------|--|---|-----------------------|------------------------|--|--|--|
| INVI | ESTIGATIONS                                  |   |                       |                        |  |  |  |
| Α    | Total Investigations Filed                   | _                                       | 2                     | 4                      |  |  |  |
| В    | Investigations Resolved                      |   |                       |                        |  |  |  |
|      | - No Criminal Wrongdoing                     | -                                       | 2                     | 4                      |  |  |  |
|      | - Criminal Charges Laid                      | -                                       | -                     |                        |  |  |  |
|      | - Discipline (per O. Reg. 267/10 sec. 11)    | ======================================= | u <del>s</del>        | :: <b>=</b>            |  |  |  |
|      | - Policy Change (per O. Reg. 267/10 sec. 11) | -                                       | 7.                    | 2=                     |  |  |  |
| С    | Type of Investigations                       |   |                       |                        |  |  |  |
|      | - Death                                      | 11-                                     | -                     |                        |  |  |  |
|      | - Serious Bodily Injury                      | 3.5                                     | 1                     | 1                      |  |  |  |
|      | - Sexual Assault                             |   | 1                     | 3                      |  |  |  |
| D    | Investigations Ongoing                       | 0                                       |                       | Contract Contract      |  |  |  |
| CON  | IMENTS                                       |   |                       |                        |  |  |  |

# Tvo Today: Sound off: Why Ontarians are fighting for peace and quiet

Experts say that noise pollution can have detrimental effects. And groups and governments are trying to turn down the volume

#### Written by Diane Peters

Diane Peters is a Toronto-based writer, editor, and teacher. Oct 5, 2022



John Watt helps run a project called Gasbusters, which is working to get rid of noisy, gas-powered lawn equipment in Toronto. (Courtesy of John Watt)

John Watt's tree-lined neighbourhood in Toronto was usually pretty quiet. But, in 2020, he says, many residents and their landscapers in Deer Park, near St. Clair Avenue and Yonge Street, seemed extra busy with leaf blowers and other gas-powered gardening equipment.

"The noise was unbearable," Watt says. "Everyone was working from home, and the decibels from leaf blowers is enough to penetrate brick walls. It made it impossible to think."

After getting fed up with the noise and <u>air pollution</u>, he and another neighbour wrote up a flyer and started knocking on doors.

"Do you want everyone on the street to hate you?" Watt's daughter protested. But the opposite happened, Watt says: some of his neighbours stopped blowing leaves. One even bought an electric device so that their landscaper wouldn't have to use the old gas one and then loaned it around to others on the street. "Education was key. A lot of people didn't know about the hazards of these devices," Watt says. "It's about people coming to grips with how we all have to do something to help our environment be healthier and cleaner." Watt isn't the only Ontarian concerned about the clamour. Noise pollution is emerging as an issue that residents care about, and experts say it can have a range of detrimental effects. So who's in charge of keeping streets quiet — and what action are they taking?

"There's definitely been a lot more interest in noise in the last year or so," says <u>Tor Oiamo</u>, associate professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Toronto Metropolitan University and a specialist on noise and air quality.

Why Noise Pollution Is More Dangerous Than We Think | The Backstory | The New Yorker

Oiamo says recent studies — including a series of review studies out of the <u>World Health Organization</u> — connect chronic exposure to loud noise to health problems such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, mental-health conditions, and poor birth outcomes. His own <u>study</u>, published in 2020, linked higher rates of diabetes and cardiovascular disease to exposure to noise in Toronto residents.

A <u>2022 UN report</u> highlighted noise as a top environmental issue, stating that noise pollution causes 12,000 premature deaths and 48,000 new cases of heart disease in Europe alone and has a detrimental effect on urban animals. In Ontario, the trucker-convoy protests in Ottawa illustrated the negative effects of incessant horn blasting. In February, A <u>Superior Court judge</u> issued a 10-day ban on honking and air horn blowing to protect "citizens' right to quiet."

"It put the issue on the map," says Oiamo. "And it showed how weak our noise-regulation guidance is."

Noise problems are governed by various levels of government. Municipal bylaws address landscaping and construction racket. The federal government governs small boats: a 2021 survey of 6,000 Muskoka and Georgian Bay area residents conducted by the group Safe Quiet Lakes found that 67 per cent wanted decibel limits set on boats and 67 per cent wanted more enforcement of boat-muffler laws.

Most undesirable sound comes from vehicles; it's legislated by the province under the Transportation Act and enforced by police. (Cities need to get permission from the province for their police to use sound cameras.) Municipalities and other groups are increasingly looking to take steps to reduce the din. Calgary can fine cars generating sound louder than 96 decibels, while Edmonton, Paris, and New York City have been piloting the

use of sound cameras. <u>Burlington</u> is considering options for dealing with loud vehicles, and Ottawa is planning to look at its idling bylaw.

Toronto has seen an uptick in noise complaints, particularly over the past two years. "We heard a lot from residents working from home. As we know, the city is growing at a fast pace, and noise, especially on residential streets, is a problem," says Toronto deputy mayor and councillor Ana Bailão, who <u>introduced a motion</u> for city staff to look into the feasibility of sound cameras a year ago.



In July, the City of Toronto <u>amended its noise bylaws</u> to limit power-device noise by one hour on weekday mornings — they now can't start until 8 a.m., up from 7 a.m. — and agreed to ask the province to allow it to use noise-activated camaras and to increase fines and demerit points for noisy vehicles. The city did not, however, ban gas-powered landscape equipment, something that's been done in <u>many cities</u> in the United States and the state of California, although Watt and others advocated for the change.

"They didn't pass it," says Watt. "It was determined that industry would take care of this problem. Toronto is one of the most lagging cities on the continent in terms of these machines." Toronto is, however, planning a full review of its noise-related bylaws in 2023.

The Halton Regional Police Service is also tackling road noise. "We were getting inundated with complaints about noise" in 2020, says Constable Marc Taraso, adding that city councillors and police were also hearing regularly from residents about noisy cars in the area.

So Taraso came up with the idea for Project Noisemaker, which updates police on various sound-related <u>provincial infractions</u> such as having no

muffler, removing the catalytic converter (which makes a car noisier as well as causing it to spout extra emissions), and making extra noise by speeding. His force started pulling over noisy cars and trucks while doing their usual duties and targeting places where cars were known to loudly race around. Taraso's project had additional benefits, too, he says: "I was noting that if cars were making noise, we would also find improperly filled tires, brakes not in operation, seat belts removed, windows that had been tinted too much." (If vehicles are unfit for the road, the police can remove the plates, not just levy fines.)

In the past two years, Halton police have laid 3,100 charges under Project Noisemaker. Other jurisdictions in the province — including Ottawa, Peel, and Burlington — have consulted with Taraso and launched their own programs. Meanwhile, in July 2022, the province amended its rules to allow charges to be laid against anyone who causes a motor vehicle to operate without a muffler or emissions controls; police can now lay fines of \$300 to \$500 for mechanics who help people tamper with their cars and trucks. Oiamo thinks punishing those who make a racket at parties, in their garden, or on the street — and encouraging regulators and manufacturers to come up with alternatives to ear-splitting emergency sirens and back-up beepers — may help reduce unhealthy, bad noise.

But he says we need to look bigger picture: "Most of our laws deal with single-time, single-issue exposure — they don't deal with chronic and larger-scale noise exposure." Lowering speed limits reduces overall sound levels, and planting more trees on busy streets helps, too, he adds. (In a 2021 study, he found that tall trees with a big crown work best.)

Oiamo says that parks can be designed to muffle urban noises and highlight pleasant sounds, such as wind through leaves, and that new homes could feature quiet courtyards and balconies that take advantages of quieter sides of a building.

Watt is continuing his fight for peace and quiet. As part of the <u>Deer Park Residents Group's noise and pollution committee</u>, he helps run a project called Gasbusters. Eight residents' associations now embrace Gasbusters, and Watt says 600 people across the city are now working to get rid of noisy, gaspowered lawn equipment, including chainsaws and weed cutters — but especially leaf blowers. "Let's make this the year of the rake," he says. "What ever happened to raking?"