CALGARY INSIGHT

Calgary Police: performance, resources and the 2027 to 2030 budget request

How Calgary's police have performed since 2019 for the resources they have had, how that compares with five other large Canadian cities, and what the evidence says about the request for 309 more officers

Calgary · November 10, 2026 · Data to November 9, 2026

QUESTION

Has the Calgary Police Service performed well relative to its resources, and does its record, workload and the city's growth support the resources it has asked for in 2027 to 2030?

Key findings

1. From 2019 to 2025 Calgary recorded the largest fall in crime severity of six large city police services (**35%**), and the Calgary Police Service raised its clearance rate more than any of them, from second lowest to the highest (**35.1%**, narrowly ahead of Edmonton).

2. These results came while Calgary had the second fewest officers (**145** per 100,000) and the fewest civilian staff per resident of the six; officers grew 7% while the population grew 18%.

3. Crime also fell in volume: Criminal Code incidents per resident fell 26%. Violent crime is the exception: the rate was about level and incidents rose 18% with the population.

4. Signs of pressure: overtime at about twice its budget, 6% of officers reported on leave and 13% on accommodated duties in 2025, and lower public confidence. Spending per resident after inflation has been about level since 2022, and $48M of 2026's tax rise replaces fine revenue moved to the City's accounts.

5. Priority 1 response time rose from 8.2 minutes (2019) to **9.5** (2022), against an 8-minute target; this study could not find a published figure since.

6. The request would bring officers per resident most of the way back to the 2021 level (about **155** per 100,000) for 12% more per resident by 2030; it sets few measurable outcome targets.

7 Overall the evidence fits “strong performance, but increasing operational pressure”; it cannot settle whether the full request is the right size, because the key measures of need are not public.

1 What this study asks, and how it answers

The Calgary Police Service has asked for 309 more officers and 214.5 more civilian staff by 2030, and for its yearly operating budget to rise from **$684.5M** in 2026 to **$816.7M** in 2030. Council considers the 2027 to 2030 budget from November 23, 2026.

This study looks at two questions with the same care. Has the Service performed well for the resources it has had? And does the evidence support the resources it now asks for? It does not assume the Service is underfunded, or adequately funded, or that more spending means less crime.

It uses only published data: Statistics Canada's police statistics for Calgary and five other large city police services (Edmonton, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Ottawa and Toronto), the Service's annual and quarterly reports, the Calgary Police Commission's reports, the 2027 to 2030 budget plan, the budgets of the other five services, and the Service's community crime file. Where a figure has not been published, the study says so rather than estimate it. No single measure is used to rank police services.

A note on years: Statistics Canada's figures run to 2025. Its police staffing survey has no figures for 2020 or 2024. 2020 was a pandemic year, when crime patterns were unusual, so most comparisons start from 2019.

2 Crime: fewer and less severe overall; violent incidents up with the population

Statistics Canada's Crime Severity Index weighs every police-reported crime by how serious it is, per resident. By that measure Calgary's crime fell **35%** from 2019 to 2025, from 96.5 to 62.9: the largest fall of the six cities, and the largest whichever year from 2018 to 2021 is taken as the start (2019 was Calgary's highest year since 2015; measured from 2018 the fall is 31%). In 2025 Calgary's index was the third lowest of the six, after Ottawa and Toronto.

The volume of crime fell too. Criminal Code incidents (excluding traffic) went from 90,842 in 2019 to 81,929 in 2025 (-10%), and per 100,000 residents from 6,836 to 5,080 (-26%). Property crime per resident fell 32%. Most of the fall in the severity index came from non-violent crime (non-violent severity 99.0 to 60.4).

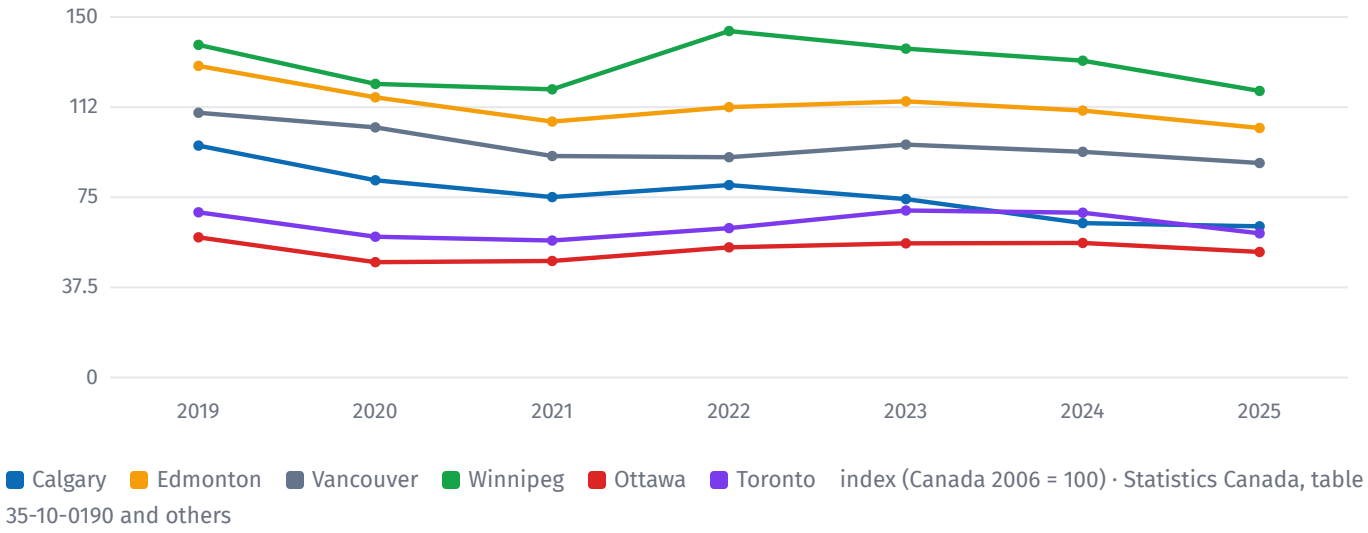
Violent crime is the exception. The violent crime rate was **1,076** per 100,000 residents in 2019 and **1,047** in 2025, about level (-2.7%). Because the city grew, the number of violent incidents rose from 14,302 to 16,882 (18%). The Service's own reports, which count violent crime by victim, show the same direction. Violent crime severity still fell 20%, because the mix shifted away from the most serious offences; homicides were 34 in 2020 and 15 in 2025.

Two checks on these comparisons. First, the starting year: 2019 was Calgary's highest year since 2015, which flatters a 2019 comparison. Measured from 2015 (79.6) the index is down 21%, and from 2022 (80.1) down 21%, so

the fall is real on every base. Second, the latest year: from 2024 to 2025 the severity index edged down again (64.3 to 62.9), but the number of crimes per resident rose 6% and property crime per resident rose 10%. One year is not a trend, but it is worth watching.

Police-reported crime is not the same as all crime: it depends on what people report, and many causes besides policing affect it. A fall in crime alongside policing does not show that policing caused it.

Crime Severity Index, 2019 to 2025 (lower is less crime)



index (Canada 2006 = 100) · Statistics Canada, table 35-10-0190 and others

Change in crime severity, 2019 to 2025

Police service	Crime severity 2019	2025	Change	Violent severity change	Violent crimes per 100,000, 2025
Calgary	96.5	62.9	-35%	-20%	1,047
Edmonton	129.7	103.9	-20%	-2%	1,385
Vancouver	110.1	89.3	-19%	+3%	1,165
Winnipeg	138.4	119.3	-14%	-3%	1,711
Toronto	68.8	60.0	-13%	-24%	1,158
Ottawa	58.3	52.2	-10%	-12%	806

Calgary: crime counts and rates (Statistics Canada)

Year	Criminal Code incidents	Per 100,000	Violent incidents	Violent per 100,000
2019	90,842	6,836	14,302	1,076
2020	76,738	5,688	12,786	948
2021	75,636	5,577	14,209	1,048
2022	83,653	5,994	13,878	994

Year	Criminal Code incidents	Per 100,000	Violent incidents	Violent per 100,000
2023	83,069	5,614	15,919	1,076
2024	75,587	4,805	16,490	1,048
2025	81,929	5,080	16,882	1,047

Calgary: crime severity since 2015 (Statistics Canada)

Year	Crime severity	Violent	Non-violent	Weighted clearance rate
2015	79.6	75.9	80.8	27.1%
2016	78.6	66.5	82.8	27.3%
2017	84.5	79.7	86.1	25.7%
2018	91.1	85.2	93.0	25.4%
2019	96.5	88.7	99.0	26.6%
2020	82.1	81.6	82.1	28.1%
2021	75.0	87.7	70.6	29.9%
2022	80.1	83.7	79.4	30.8%
2023	74.3	86.7	69.9	33.8%
2024	64.3	80.9	58.2	35.5%
2025	62.9	70.7	60.4	35.1%

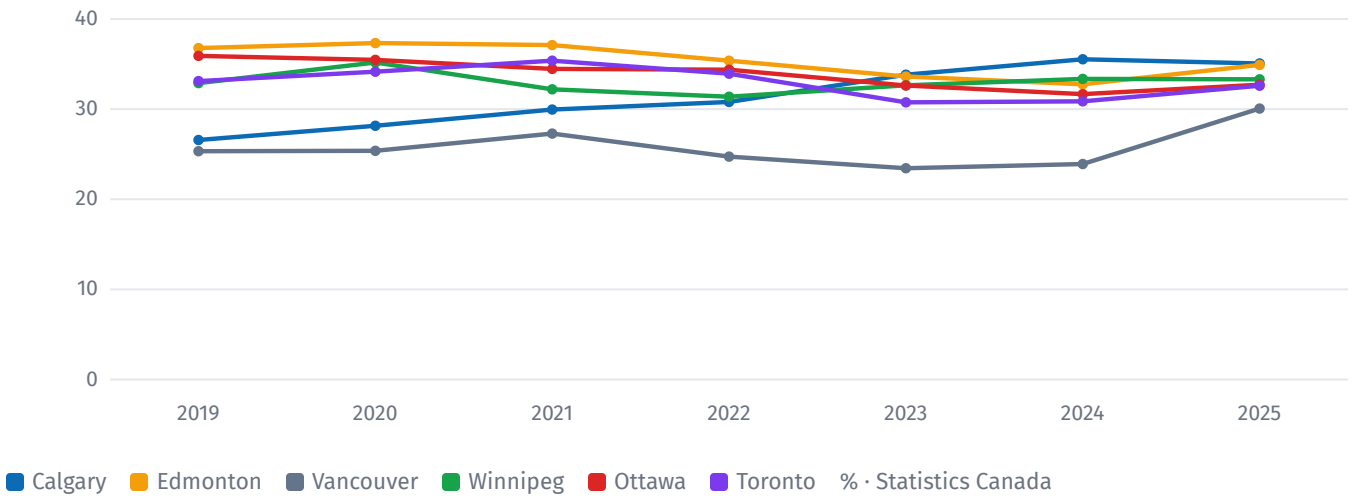
3 Solving crime: from below average to the highest of the six

Statistics Canada counts a crime as cleared when police have identified an accused and have enough evidence to lay a charge, whether a charge is laid or the case is closed another way (for example diversion, or the complainant declining to proceed). Cleared does not mean convicted. The weighted clearance rate divides cleared incidents by all incidents, counting serious crimes more heavily; incidents are counted in the year they are cleared, which may be later than the year they were reported. Calgary's rose from **26.6%** in 2019 (second lowest of the six) to **35.1%** in 2025, the highest of the six, narrowly ahead of Edmonton (34.9%); it was 35.5% in 2024. Calgary's gain of 8.5 points is nearly double the next largest (Vancouver, 4.7); three of the other four fell. For violent crime it rose from 42.5% to 51.2%, second only to Toronto (53.2%).

This is an independent Statistics Canada measure, and solving crime is the police service's own work: it is the clearest achievement in the data. A clearance rate can also rise when fewer crimes are reported, or when the mix of crime shifts towards kinds that are easier to solve; the published data cannot separate these effects.

Clearance differs sharply by kind of crime. The Service's quarterly report for the first half of 2025 shows 57.7% of violent crime victims' cases cleared and 13.6% of property crimes (8.2% of vehicle thefts). Clearance figures for recent periods rise later, as cases are solved months or years afterwards.

Weighted clearance rate, 2019 to 2025 (share of crime solved, weighted by seriousness)



Clearance rates, 2025

Police service	All crime	Violent crime	Non-violent crime	Change since 2019 (points)
Calgary	35.1	51.2	27.5	+8.5
Edmonton	34.9	48.0	28.0	-1.9
Winnipeg	33.3	45.5	24.1	+0.4
Ottawa	32.7	50.0	23.7	-3.2
Toronto	32.6	53.2	19.7	-0.5
Vancouver	30.1	41.8	24.7	+4.7

4 Service to the public: calls, response and confidence

Calls from the public were 368,488 in 2020 and 372,887 in 2025: about level in number (+1%), and down 15% per resident. Calls started by officers themselves rose from 147,661 to 192,477 (+30%), and online reports from 16,223 to 26,773. The Service's report also gives a total (571,866 in 2020, 628,318 in 2025) that is about 36,000 higher than these three parts added together; the report does not say what makes up the difference, so this study uses the parts, not the total.

Per officer, calls from the public were about 176 in 2021 and 164 in 2025, and Criminal Code incidents per officer fell from 42.8 (2019) to 36.0 (2025). Incidents cleared per officer stayed about level (13.3 in 2019, 12.9 in 2025): each officer faced fewer reported crimes and cleared about as many. On cleared incidents per officer Calgary is third of the six, behind Edmonton and Winnipeg. These are crude measures: they ignore how serious or complex the cases are, and the work of civilians.

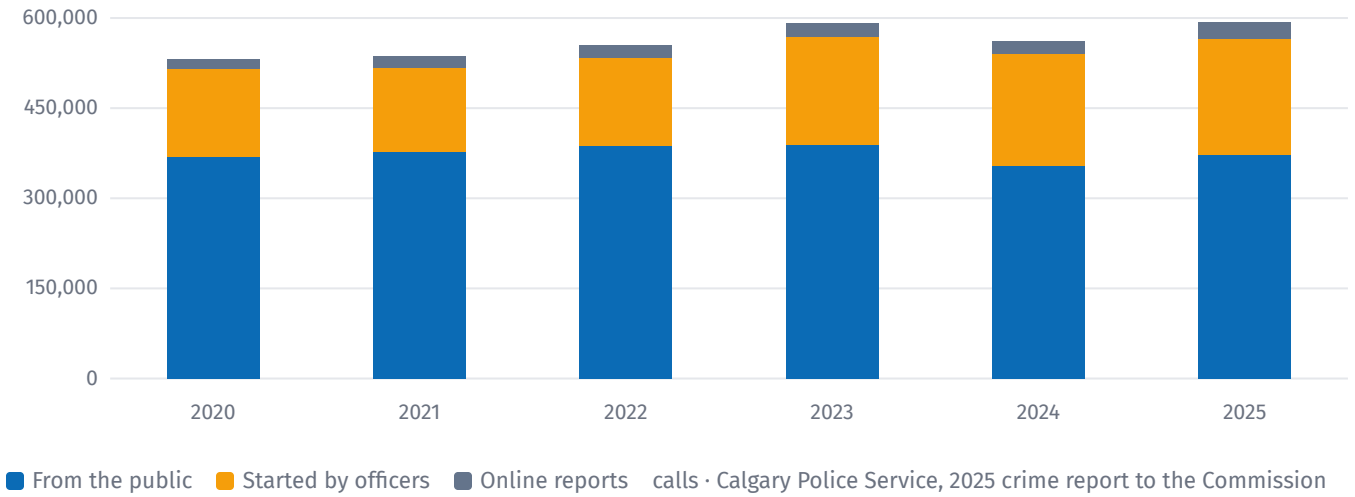
Response time to the most urgent (Priority 1) calls, measured from dispatch to arrival, is the measure the public most often asks about. It was 8.2 minutes in 2019, 7.8 in 2020, 8.3 in 2021 and **9.5 in 2022**; the 2023 policing plan

set a target of 8 minutes. **This study could not find a published figure after 2022** in the annual reports, quarterly reports or policing plans. It is the largest gap in the public record.

The share of patrol time spent on proactive work (not answering calls) was 18 to 19% from 2019 to 2022. The Commission's target is 25% by the end of 2026; the budget plan puts it at 20% now and aims for 34%.

Public confidence has fallen. In the Police Commission's telephone surveys, the share of Calgarians who agree Calgary is a safe place to live was 95% in 2018, 94% in 2020, 85% in 2022 and 86% in 2024. Confidence in the Service fell from 94% (2020) to 87% (2022). The 2025 survey moved online (801 people, not weighted) and found 80% feel safe, 75% trust the Service and 61% support more police funding; because the method changed, these cannot be compared with earlier years.

Calls for service by who started them



calls · Calgary Police Service, 2025 crime report to the Commission

Work per officer: Criminal Code incidents and incidents cleared (Statistics Canada)

Police service	Incidents per officer 2019	2025	Cleared per officer 2019	2025
Edmonton	55.6	47.0	22.7	18.2
Winnipeg	49.3	51.2	13.6	15.3
Calgary	42.8	36.0	13.3	12.9
Ottawa	33.2	33.6	11.5	9.7
Toronto	27.5	28.2	8.8	8.0
Vancouver	43.6	34.3	9.0	7.9

Priority 1 response (dispatch to arrival, average)

Year	Minutes
2018	8.0
2019	8.2

Year	Minutes
2020	7.8
2021	8.3
2022	9.5
2023 to 2025	no published figure found

Calgarians who agree Calgary is a safe place to live (telephone survey)

Year	Share
2015	95%
2016	95%
2018	95%
2020	94%
2022	85%
2024	86%
2025 (online, not comparable)	80%

5 Staff: fewer officers for each resident

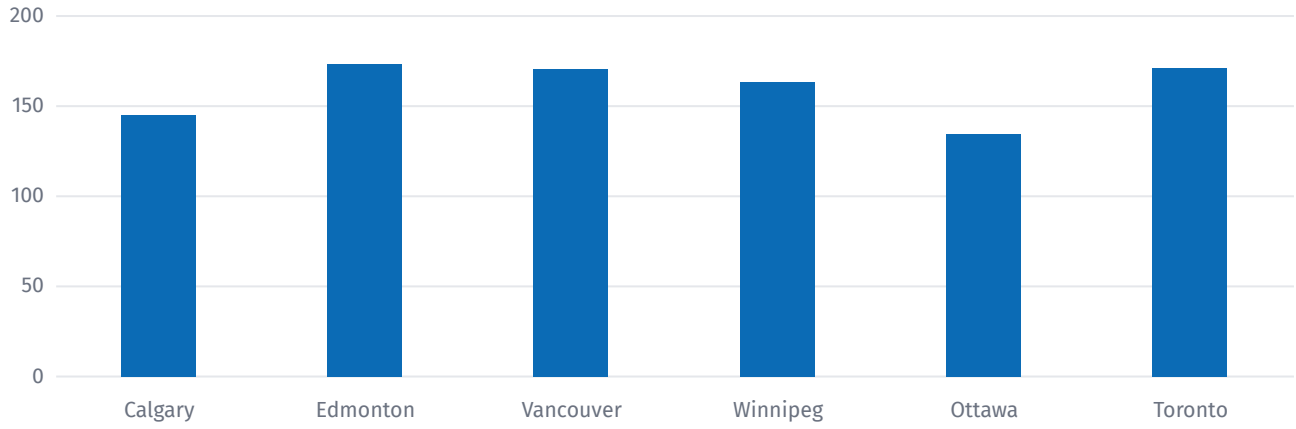
From 2019 to 2025 Calgary's population (as counted for policing) grew **18%**; its police officers grew **7%** and its civilian staff **8%**. Officers per 100,000 residents fell from 159.8 to **145.2**. In 2025 Calgary had the second fewest officers per resident of the six cities (after Ottawa) and the fewest civilian staff per resident (57 per 100,000, against 65 to 112 elsewhere).

Calgary's authorized strength in 2025 was 2,280 officers and 2,278 were in post, so the low ratio reflects the authorized size, not vacancies. The net gain in 2025 was +29 officers after hiring and departures. Statistics Canada's counts (May each year) differ from the Service's own: the plan counts 2,304 officers and 946.5 civilians; Statistics Canada 2,278 and 896 (civilians were 965 in 2023).

Not every officer on the books is available for every duty. As reported from a Police Commission memo in the City's 2026 budget package (September 2025), about 6% of officers were on full leave and a further 13% were working with accommodations (modified duties), many because of physical or mental injuries. The two are different: officers on leave are away; accommodated officers are at work, but often not in front-line roles. The report does not say how many of them are. Statistics Canada also reports that 8.3% of Calgary's officers were eligible to retire in 2025.

Fewer officers per resident does not by itself mean too few. Cities differ in how much they use civilians, in their crime, their geography and the services their police provide.

Police officers per 100,000 residents, 2025



per 100,000 · Statistics Canada, table 35-10-0077

Calgary staff and population (Statistics Canada police survey, counted on May 15 each year)

Year	Population served	Officers	Officers per 100,000	Civilian staff
2019	1,328,830	2,123	159.8	832
2021	1,356,293	2,140	157.8	825
2022	1,395,040	2,097	150.3	841
2023	1,478,430	2,164	146.4	965
2025	1,569,133	2,278	145.2	896

Staff per 100,000 residents (Statistics Canada, May 15, 2025)

Police service	Officers	Civilian staff	Criminal Code incidents per officer
Ottawa	134.8	64.7	33.6
Calgary	145.2	57.1	36.0
Winnipeg	163.2	76.7	51.2
Vancouver	170.5	65.6	34.3
Toronto	171.0	111.5	28.2
Edmonton	173.3	97.3	47.0

6 Money: a rising budget, about level per resident since 2022

The Service's total spending rose from $519M (2021 budget) to $671M (2025 actual); $690M is budgeted for 2026 (the 2027 to 2030 plan gives $684.5M for 2026; the two figures come from different documents, neither explains the difference, and they are not interchangeable: this study uses the annual report's figure for the past and the

plan's for 2027 to 2030). In 2025 dollars, spending per resident was $461 in 2021, $430 in 2022, $413 in 2024 and $430 in 2025: about 7% lower than in 2021, almost all of it in 2022, when prices rose 7%. Since 2022 it has been roughly level, with a dip in 2024.

Fine revenue fell short for several years: budgeted at $47M to $48M, it brought in $34M (2023), $33M (2024) and $25M (2025), after the Province restricted photo radar. From 2026, fine revenue is recorded in the City's corporate accounts, not the police budget. So $48M of the $74M rise in property-tax funding for 2026 replaces revenue that moved off the Service's books; it does not pay for more policing.

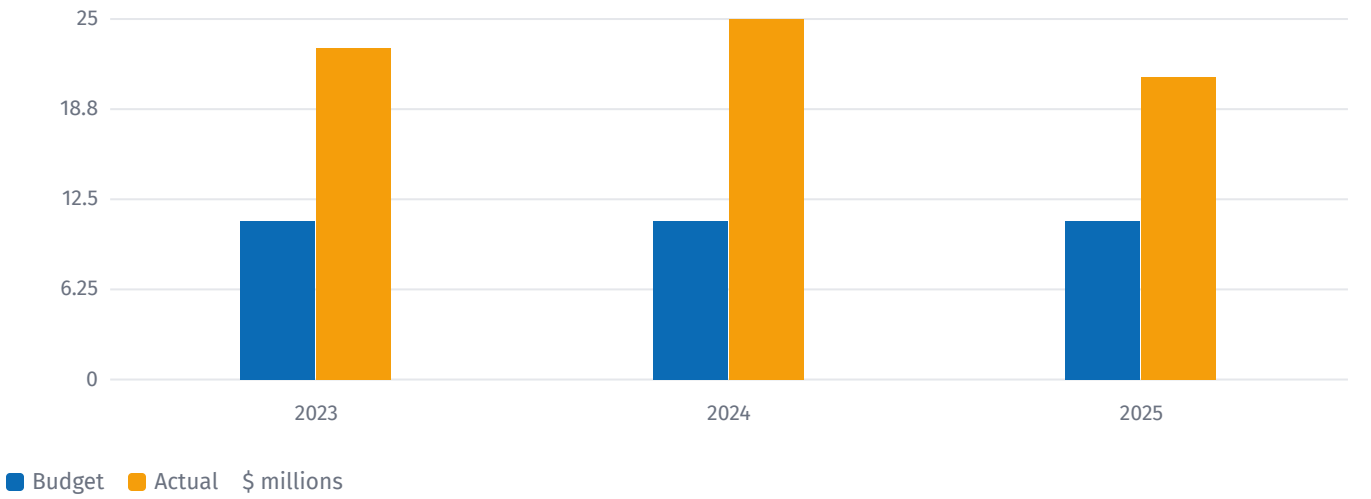
Overtime and call-outs ran at about twice their $11M budget: $23M in 2023, $25M in 2024 and $21M in 2025 (about 3% of spending in 2025). The Service has attributed this to protests, transit safety patrols and security at sensitive sites. Sustained overtime is one sign of pressure on the existing workforce, though overtime alone does not show a service is short of staff: events, major investigations and court time also drive it, and no breakdown by cause is published.

Capital is the other side. Of $81M budgeted for buildings, vehicles and equipment in 2023, $23M was spent; in 2024, $19M of $71M; in 2025, $29M of $64M. The Service's own target is to spend at least 65% of its capital budget. For 2023 the City's service plan update gives the reason: delays in the facilities program (a new district office and an indoor range). No reason was found for 2024 or 2025, and no project-by-project figures are published, so this study cannot say whether projects were delayed, deferred or finished under budget. It does raise a fair question for a larger capital plan: what will be different in delivering it?

Calgary Police Service spending ($ millions)

Year	Total spending	Basis	Per resident	Per resident in 2025 dollars
2021	519	budget	$393	$461
2022	529	budget	$392	$430
2023	592	actual	$416	$439
2024	611	actual	$405	$413
2025	671	actual	$430	$430
2026	690	budget	$436	n/a

Overtime and call-out: budget and actual ($ millions)



Fine revenue and property taxes ($ millions)

Year	Fines budgeted	Fines received	Property taxes
2023	47	34	485
2024	48	33	494
2025	48	25	541
2026	moved to City accounts		615 (budget)

Capital: budget and spent ($ millions)

Year	Budget	Spent	Share spent
2023	81	23	28%
2024	71	19	27%
2025	64	29	45%

7 How Calgary compares, on several measures at once

No single measure ranks police services fairly, so the table below sets several side by side for 2025. Calgary has the lowest crime severity of the four western and prairie cities, the highest clearance rate of the six, the second fewest officers per resident and the fewest civilian staff per resident.

Spending per resident is the hardest comparison. Each city reports its police budget differently (gross or net of revenue, budget or actual, with or without some pension and capital costs), and Statistics Canada does not publish spending for each police service. The figures below are on the basis stated beside each one and are a rough guide only. (Calgary's $428 here divides by Statistics Canada's population, as for every city in the table; the $430 in the Money chapter divides by the City's own estimate.) On them Calgary spends less per resident

than Edmonton and Vancouver, slightly more than Winnipeg and more than Ottawa; Toronto's figure is not comparable.

The pattern the data supports is this: compared with the other western and prairie cities, Calgary had less severe crime and solved more of it, with fewer officers and civilians per resident and, on the rough spending comparison, less money per resident than Edmonton and Vancouver. Compared with Ottawa and Toronto, Calgary's crime is a little more severe and its clearance higher; it has more officers per resident than Ottawa but fewer than Toronto, and fewer civilians than either. The data shows these outcomes and resources together; it cannot show that one caused the other.

Performance and staff, 2025

Police service	Crime severity	Change since 2019	Crime solved (weighted)	Officers per 100,000	Civilians per 100,000
Calgary	62.9	-35%	35.1%	145.2	57.1
Edmonton	103.9	-20%	34.9%	173.3	97.3
Ottawa	52.2	-10%	32.7%	134.8	64.7
Winnipeg	119.3	-14%	33.3%	163.2	76.7
Vancouver	89.3	-19%	30.1%	170.5	65.6
Toronto	60.0	-13%	32.6%	171.0	111.5

Spending per resident, 2025 (rough guide: different bases)

Police service	Spending	Per resident	Basis
Calgary	$671.0M	$428	2025 actual, total spending
Edmonton	$608.7M	$511	2025 actual, gross spending
Ottawa	$447.5M	$388	2025 budget, gross
Winnipeg	$352.0M	$417	2025 projected spending
Vancouver	$434.2M	$573	2025 budget as requested by the department
Toronto	$1,220.2M	$373	2025 budget approved by the police board (basis not stated; likely net)

8 The 2027 to 2030 request, item by item

The budget plan asks for 309 net new officers (2,304 to 2,613) and 214.5 net new civilian staff (946.5 to 1,161). The operating budget would rise by $56.6M in 2027, $30.3M in 2028, $24.0M in 2029 and $21.2M in 2030: from $684.5M to $816.7M. Capital would be $191.9M over four years, up from $110.58M in 2023 to 2026. The plan says about 300 further positions were deferred, and the Chief has said the full need is about double the request.

On the City's population forecast (1,583,200 in 2026 to 1,689,400 in 2030), the request would take officers per 100,000 residents from about 146 to about **155**, most of the way back to 2021 (157.8). With no new officers it

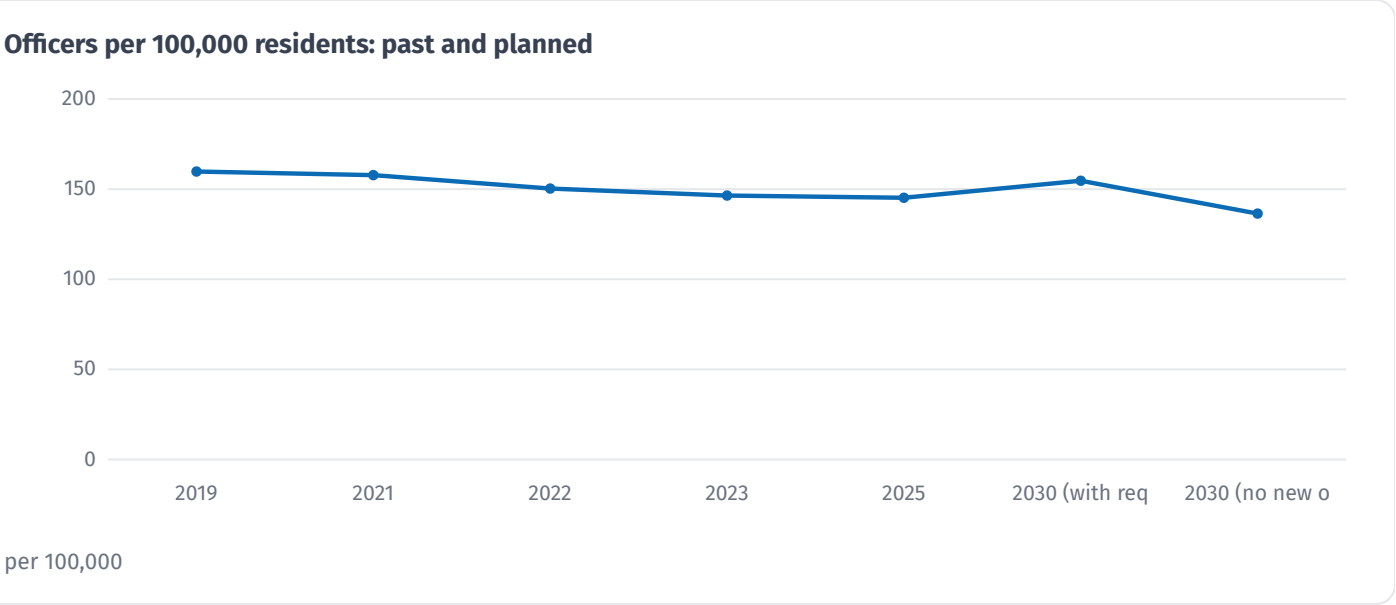
would fall to about 136. Spending per resident would go from $432 to $483, 12% more; if prices rise 2% a year, that is about 3% more after inflation.

For each part of the request, the table sets out the problem the plan names, the evidence this study found, and what the public could measure. The main gaps are that the plan gives no year-by-year hiring schedule, does not separate the cost of new positions from the rising cost of existing staff, and sets few outcome targets for 2030 other than proactive patrol time.

Recruiting is part of the question. 309 net new officers over four years is about 77 a year on top of replacing everyone who leaves; in 2025 the net gain was +29. The plan does not say how hiring would reach the higher pace.

The request and the evidence

Request	Problem the plan names	Evidence available	What to measure
309 net new officers	Patrol is mostly reactive (20% proactive time); specialist units (homicide, child abuse, domestic violence, hate crime, mental health) stretched	Officers per 100,000 fell from 160 (2019) to 145 (2025); calls from the public level in number since 2020 (down per resident), officer-started calls up 30%; 6% of officers on leave and 13% on accommodated duties (2025, as reported); overtime about double budget	Proactive time (plan: 34%); Priority 1 response time; officers available, not just employed; overtime against budget
214.5 net new civilian staff	Specialist work (analysts, IT, HR, fleet) done by officers or not done	Calgary has the fewest civilian staff per resident of the six cities (57 per 100,000)	Officer hours returned to policing; civilian vacancies filled within four months (the Service's own target)
Operating budget +$132.2M by 2030	Growth in population and calls; cost of the new positions	Spending per resident after inflation about level since 2022 (down about 7% from 2021)	Spending per resident after inflation; split between new positions and existing costs (not published)
Capital $191.9M (fleet $73.1M, facilities $56.1M, IT $55.2M, equipment $7.5M)	Ageing fleet, facilities and systems; vehicles for the new officers	Capital spending has run well below budget: $23M of $81M (2023), $19M of $71M (2024), $29M of $64M (2025)	Share of the capital budget spent each year (the Service's target: 65% or more); projects completed



9 Three scenarios to 2030

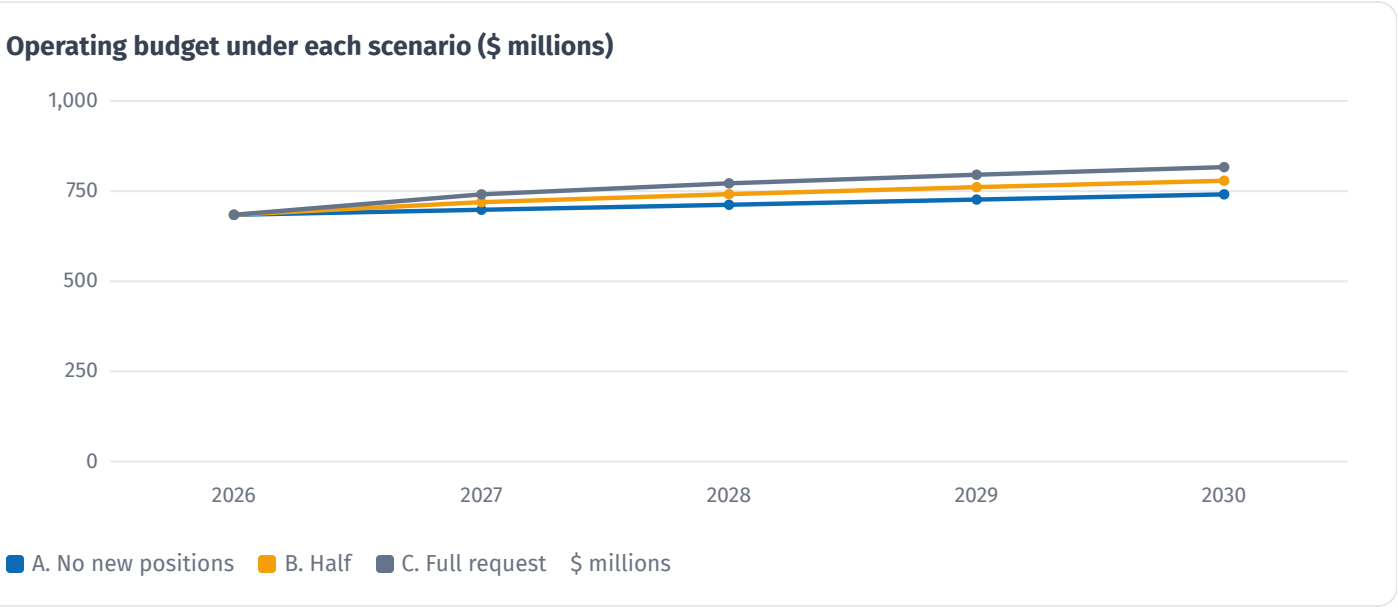
These are models, not forecasts. They show what each choice would cost per resident and what it would do to staffing per resident. They do not predict crime: the evidence does not support a claim that more officers automatically mean less crime.

A. No new positions. Today's service, with its costs rising 2% a year (an assumption: actual wage settlements may differ). Spending reaches about $741M in 2030, $439 per resident; officers per 100,000 fall to about 136.

B. Half the new positions. About 155 officers and 107 civilians. Spending reaches about $779M, $461 per resident; officers per 100,000 about 146, which only holds today's ratio as the city grows.

C. The full request. Spending reaches $816.7M, $483 per resident; officers per 100,000 about 155.

Under this model the new positions cost about $76M a year by 2030, roughly $145,000 per position. That figure depends on the 2% assumption: at 3% a year the same request leaves about $88,000 per position. The plan itself does not publish this split. The interactive budget calculator lets you change the share approved and the yearly cost growth and see the result.



The City of Calgary's population forecast, and spending per resident under each scenario

Year	Residents (City forecast)	A. No new positions	B. Half	C. Full request
2026	1,583,200	$432	$432	$432
2027	1,608,700	$434	$447	$461
2028	1,634,800	$436	$454	$472
2029	1,662,300	$437	$458	$479
2030	1,689,400	$439	$461	$483

Scenarios in 2030 (modelled)

Scenario	Operating budget	Per resident	Officers	Officers per 100,000	Civilian staff
A. No new positions	$741M	$439	2,304	136	946.5
B. Half	$779M	$461	2,458	146	1,054
C. Full request	$817M	$483	2,613	155	1,161

10 Officers and crime: what research can and cannot say

Would more officers mean less crime in Calgary? No Calgary data can answer that directly: crime and staffing move together for many reasons, and Calgary's crime severity fell while its officers per resident fell too. The best evidence comes from studies of many cities over many years.

A large study of 242 US cities from 1960 to 2010 (Chalfin and McCrary) found that a 10% rise in officers per resident went with about a **1.7% fall in property crime** and a **3.4% fall in violent crime**, with larger effects for murder and robbery. A review of thirteen studies for the UK's police inspectorate (Bradford, 2011) put the typical effect at about **3% less property crime for 10% more officers**, found the evidence for violent crime weaker and

sometimes contradictory, and warned that the effect depends on how officers are deployed, that it may not be the same for cuts as for increases, and that causation is not proven.

Applied to the request only as an illustration: 309 officers raise officers per resident by about 6% by 2030. On the research range, that would go with roughly 1.0% to 1.8% less property crime per resident, and about 2.1% less violent crime (on the US study; the UK review found the evidence for violent crime weaker), all else equal. These are not forecasts for Calgary: the studies are from the United States and the United Kingdom, crime has many causes, and the outcome depends on what the new officers do. The interactive calculator lets you choose a budget increase and shows the officers it could pay for and this research range, with the same warnings.

Research estimates: change in crime for 10% more officers per resident

Study	Property crime	Violent crime	Where and when
Chalfin and McCrary (2018)	-1.7%	-3.4% (murder -6.7%, robbery -5.6%)	242 US cities, 1960 to 2010
Bradford, review for HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (2011)	about -3%	weaker, sometimes contradictory evidence	13 studies, mainly US and UK

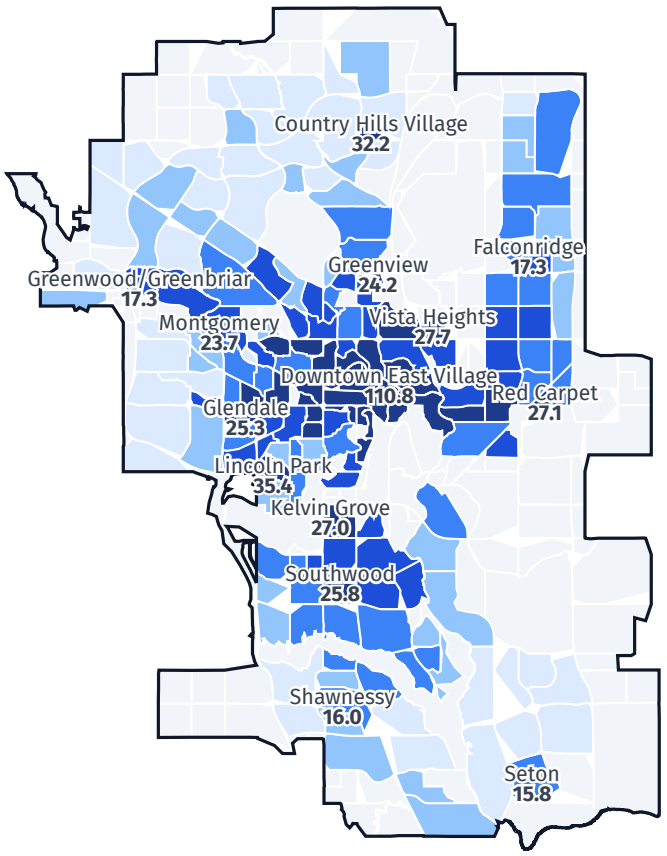
11 Safety across Calgary

The Service publishes crime by community each month for nine kinds of crime: non-domestic assault and other violence, street and commercial robbery, break-ins, and thefts of and from vehicles. Other theft, fraud and domestic violence are not in the file. For privacy the file shows any count from 1 to 5 as 2, and those masked cells make up about **70%** of all the crimes it counts. That makes small communities and changes over time unreliable, so this section shows where crime is concentrated now, for communities with at least 100 crimes a year, and leaves trends to Statistics Canada's figures above.

Rates are highest downtown. Downtown East Village (111 per 1,000 residents) and the Downtown Commercial Core are far above the typical community (13 per 1,000). Their residents are few compared with the workers, visitors and shelter users there every day, so a rate per resident overstates the risk to any one person. A high count in a community is not a sign of poor policing; it reflects where people gather, where businesses are, and where crime is reported.

One change is large enough to stand out despite the masking: violence in Downtown East Village rose from 194 incidents (October 2020 to September 2021) to 338 (October 2025 to September 2026). The new suburbs, by contrast, have some of the lowest rates in the city.

Crimes per 1,000 residents, 12 months to September 2026 (nine kinds of crime)



3.1 to 7.3 · 7.3 to 11.0 · 11.0 to 16.0 · 16.0 to 23.7 · 23.7 to 110.8 per 1,000 residents (counts of 1 to 5 shown as 2 in the source) · Calgary Police Service, community crime file

Highest rates (communities with at least 1,000 residents and 100 crimes)

Community	Residents	Crimes, 12 months	Per 1,000	Violence per 1,000
Downtown East Village	4,231	469	110.8	79.9
Downtown Commercial Core	9,729	1,017	104.5	47.7
Cliff Bungalow	2,165	132	61.0	19.4
Sunalta	3,797	190	50.0	13.7
Hounsfield Heights/Briar Hill	2,821	129	45.7	16.3
Forest Lawn	8,146	366	44.9	25.0
Beltline	33,811	1,395	41.3	17.1
Lower Mount Royal	3,395	133	39.2	8.8
Bankview	6,079	208	34.2	6.3
Crescent Heights	7,128	215	30.2	10.2

Community	Residents	Crimes, 12 months	Per 1,000	Violence per 1,000
Mission	5,194	153	29.5	7.3
Rosscarrock	4,142	122	29.5	16.4
Hillhurst	6,386	186	29.1	7.8
Sunnyside	4,726	127	26.9	7.6
Downtown West End	3,973	106	26.7	11.8

12 What the public record cannot tell us

Several questions this study set out to answer cannot be answered from published data:

- **Response times since 2022.** This study could not find a published figure; the Service may hold one.
- **Officers actually available.** Leave and modified duty were reported once (about 19% in 2025); there is no regular series.
- **Vacancies, recruitment and departures by year.** Statistics Canada reports a net gain or loss of officers; the Service reports recruiting against a target, without numbers.
- **Where officers are deployed** across districts, and how that compares with calls and crime.
- **Officer hours:** how many are available for front-line work, and how they divide between calls, investigations and paperwork.
- **Overtime by cause, and capital spending by project,** which would show whether each is a one-time or a lasting problem.
- **How many of the new positions would be front-line,** and what it costs to have them hired and trained, not only approved.
- **Fleet use, purchasing and administrative workload,** so the efficiency of spending cannot be tested directly.
- **Spending per resident on one basis for every city.** Statistics Canada does not publish it by police service.

The recommendations ask for them.

13 The five questions, answered as far as the data allows

1. Has the Service performed well relative to its resources? On the measures that can be compared, yes. From 2019 to 2025 Calgary had the largest fall in crime severity of the six cities, and the Calgary Police Service raised its clearance rate more than any of them, from second lowest to the highest, while it had the second fewest officers and the fewest civilian staff per resident. The rise in crimes solved is the Service's own work and is the clearest result in the data; what the data cannot show is whether the Service is exceptionally efficient in how it deploys its people, because officer hours, deployment and current response times are not published; the fall in severity has many causes, of which policing is one. The record is not uniformly strong: the violent crime rate was about level, response times worsened to 2022 with no published figure found since, and public confidence declined.

2. Is the Service short of resources? The evidence is mixed, with several signs of pressure. Officers per resident fell 9% since 2019, overtime has run at about twice its budget, and in 2025 about 6% of officers were reported on leave and another 13% on accommodated duties. Against that, crime and calls per resident fell, Criminal Code incidents per officer fell, spending per resident after inflation has been about level since 2022, and capital money has gone unspent, so some constraints are about delivery, not funding.

3. Does the evidence justify more officers and civilian staff? Partly. The falling staffing ratio, the lowest civilian ratio of the six, the overtime and the leave figures point towards more staff; the falling crime volume and level workload per officer do not. The plan sets few outcome targets, and the measures that would show the need most directly (response times, officers available) are not published.

4. Is the proposed funding proportionate? The request adds $132.2M a year by 2030 (19% more than 2026), or 12% more per resident (about 3% after inflation at 2% a year). It would bring officers per resident most of the way back to the 2021 level, still below four of the five other cities. What the money would buy in outcomes is not set out in measurable terms, so proportionality cannot be judged on outcomes.

5. What should taxpayers expect in return? Measurable, published results: Priority 1 response times each year against the 8-minute target; proactive time rising from 20% towards the Commission's 25% and the plan's 34%; officers on leave and on accommodated duties reported each year; overtime within budget; the clearance rate held at or above 35%; and at least 65% of the capital budget spent each year.

Overall: the evidence fits best with “strong performance, but increasing operational pressure”. It is not sufficient to say whether the full request is the right size, because the measures that would settle it are not public.

Conclusion

On the measures that can be compared fairly, Calgary's results stand out among large Canadian cities, and the Calgary Police Service deserves plain credit for its part. Crime became much less severe and less frequent per resident, and the Service solved a rising share of it, including serious crime, almost every year from 2019 to 2025, rising from second lowest to the highest clearance rate of the six cities, with fewer officers and civilian staff per resident than almost any peer. That is strong comparative performance; it is not proof of exceptional efficiency, which would need figures on officer hours and deployment that are not public.

The same data shows rising pressure: more violent incidents as the city grows, overtime at about twice its budget, 6% of officers reported on leave and 13% on accommodated duties, lower public confidence, and response times that were worsening when last published. The 2027 to 2030 request would bring officers per resident most of the way back to the 2021 level for 12% more per resident by 2030. What it would achieve is not set out in measurable terms, and the key measures of need are missing from the public record. Publishing them, alongside whatever council decides, would let Calgarians judge whether the investment works.

Options to consider

	Option	Priority
1	**Publish Priority 1 response times every year** The last published figure is for 2022 (9.5 minutes against an 8-minute target). An annual figure by district, with the median, the slowest tenth of calls and the share meeting the target, is the clearest public measure of whether more officers are needed and whether they help. Based on: Service to the public; the five questions	High
2	**Report officers available, not only officers employed** In 2025 about 6% were reported on leave and 13% on accommodated duties; how many can do front-line work changes how many officers the public actually has. A yearly figure would show whether staffing gains reach the street. Based on: Staff	High
3	**Tie the 2027 to 2030 funding to published targets** Proactive time, response times, clearance, overtime within budget and capital spending against budget, each reported every year, so council and residents can see whether the investment works. Based on: The request, item by item	High
4	**Publish the hiring schedule and the cost split** Year-by-year hiring and attrition, and how much of the $132.2M increase pays for new positions as against existing costs. Based on: The request, item by item	Medium
5	**Keep public surveys comparable over time** Run the confidence and safety questions the same way each year, so changes reflect opinion rather than method. Based on: Service to the public	Medium

Next steps

Step	Who	How we will know
Ask for 2023 to 2025 Priority 1 response times and the current share of officers on leave or modified duty before the budget decision	Council, during budget deliberations	Figures tabled in the budget record
Set yearly targets for proactive time, response time, clearance, overtime and capital spending alongside any funding decision	Council and the Calgary Police Commission	Targets in the approved budget and a yearly public report against them
Add officer availability and response times to the Service's annual report	Calgary Police Service	Both measures in the 2026 annual report

How this was worked out

1. Six large city police services compared on Statistics Canada's definitions, for the same years: crime severity, violent crime rate and weighted clearance rate (Uniform Crime Reporting Survey), and officers, civilian staff and population

served (Police Administration Survey, a count on May 15 each year).

2. Calgary's population over time is the City of Calgary's own: estimates for 2021 to 2025 and its forecast for 2026 to 2030 (Calgary and Region Economic Outlook, Spring 2026, Table 4), the same forecast the police budget plan uses; spending per resident uses it and Calgary's consumer price index (Statistics Canada 18-10-0005) to express it in 2025 dollars.
3. Calls per officer divide the Service's public-generated calls by Statistics Canada's count of officers in the same year; incidents and cleared incidents per officer use Statistics Canada's Criminal Code totals (excluding traffic). The Service's published total of calls is not used because it exceeds its parts by an amount the report does not explain.
4. Community rates divide the police community file's nine crime types over twelve months by each community's residents (Calgary Insight's community estimate). Communities with fewer than 1,000 residents or 100 crimes are left out of rankings, because the file masks small counts.
5. Scenarios start from the 2026 budget in the plan ($684.5M). Scenario A grows it 2% a year; C is the plan's own path; B is halfway between. Population each year is the City's forecast.
6. This is an independent analysis of publicly available information. Calgary Insight does not represent The City of Calgary, the Calgary Police Service or the Calgary Police Commission. Figures from official sources and figures from news reports are labelled as such.
7. All calculations were made in code from the downloaded tables and checked against the published totals.

Data sources

Source	Publisher	Period used	Notes
Crime severity index and weighted clearance rates, police services in Alberta (35-10-0190), Ontario (35-10-0188), Manitoba (35-10-0189) and British Columbia (35-10-0063) https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510019001	Statistics Canada	2019 to 2025, released July 22, 2026	
Police personnel and selected crime statistics, municipal police services (35-10-0077) https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510007701	Statistics Canada	2019, 2021 to 2023 and 2025 (no 2020 or 2024), released August 5, 2026	
Incident-based crime statistics by detailed violations, police services in Alberta (35-10-0183), Ontario (35-10-0180), Manitoba (35-10-0181) and British Columbia (35-10-0184) https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510018301	Statistics Canada	2019 to 2025, released July 22, 2026	
Consumer Price Index, annual average (18-10-0005), Calgary https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1810000501	Statistics Canada	2021 to 2025	
Calgary and Region Economic Outlook 2026-2031, Table 4: City of Calgary population projection https://www.calgary.ca/content/dam/www/cfod/finance/documents/corporate-economics/calgary-and-region-economic-outlook/Calgary-and-Region-Economic-Outlook-2026-Spring.pdf	City of Calgary	Spring 2026 (forecast completed January 2026); the Fall 2026 edition has no new population table	

Source	Publisher	Period used	Notes
Investing in Public Safety: the Calgary Police Service's 2027 to 2030 budget plan https://www.calgarypolice.ca/content/dam/police/documents/budget/26-09-16%20-%202027-2030%20Budget%20Plan.pdf	Calgary Police Service	September 16, 2026	
2025 Annual Report https://www.calgarypolice.ca/transparency-and-accountability/annual-reports/2025-annual-report.html	Calgary Police Service	2025	
2024 Annual Report (including the 2024 Community Perceptions survey result) https://www.calgarypolice.ca/transparency-and-accountability/annual-reports/2024-annual-report.html	Calgary Police Service	2024	
2023 financial tables https://www.calgarypolicecommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/2024-03-15-Financial-Tables.pdf	Calgary Police Commission	2023, published March 15, 2024	
Police Services: 2023 service plan and budget update (capital delays) https://www-prd.calgary.ca/content/dam/www/ca/city-manager/documents/2023-2026-service-plans/updates/police-services.pdf	City of Calgary	2023 results	
2021-2022 budget information https://www.calgary.ca/content/dam/www/cps/documents/business-plans-and-budgets/2021-2022-CPS-Budget-Information.pdf	Calgary Police Service	2021 and 2022 budgets	
2025 crime report to the Commission https://www.calgarypolicecommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Mar-2026-CPC-2025-Crime-Report-1.pdf	Calgary Police Service	2020 to 2025, March 2026	
Key performance indicators for the Calgary Police Service https://www.calgarypolicecommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Key-Performance-Indicators-for-the-Calgary-Police-Service.pdf	Calgary Police Commission	2015 to 2022, July 2023	
Quarterly statistical report, second quarter 2025 https://www.calgarypolice.ca/content/dam/police/documents/Quarterly%20Statistical%20Report%20Q2_2025.pdf	Calgary Police Service	January to June 2025	
2025 Community Perceptions Survey https://www.calgarypolicecommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/June-2025-CPC-7.1-2025-Community-Perceptions-Report-Safety-Policing-Public-Priorities-for-Public-Distribution.pdf	Calgary Police Commission	March 31 to April 28, 2025	
2026 Annual Policing Plan https://www-prd.calgary.ca/content/dam/www/cps/documents/business-plans-and-budgets/service-action-plans/APP%202026%20-%20Web.pdf	Calgary Police Service	2026 targets	

Source	Publisher	Period used	Notes
Community Safety Dashboard data (community crime file) https://www.calgarypolice.ca/transparency-and-accountability/community-safety-dashboard---monthly-snapshot.html	Calgary Police Service	October 2020 to September 2026	
Nearly 20 per cent of Calgary police officers are on leave or accommodation (report of a Commission memo in the 2026 budget package) https://livewirecalgary.com/2025/09/17/nearly-20-per-cent-of-calgary-police-officers-are-on-leave-cpc-memo/	LiveWire Calgary	September 17, 2025	
Overtime and call-out spending in 2023 https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/calgary-police-budget-overtime-callouts-double-1.7109144	CBC News	2023	
Edmonton Police Service budget variance, period ending December 31, 2025 https://edmontonpolicecommission.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/6.2.1-Edmonton-Police-Service-Budget-Variance-for-the-Period-Ending-December-31-2025.pdf	Edmonton Police Commission	2025	
Budget Report 2025 https://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/Documents/2025-Budget/Budget-Report-2025.pdf	Ottawa Police Service	2025	
2025 Environment for Policing in Winnipeg https://legacy.winnipeg.ca/clerks/boards/WpgPoliceBoard/pdfs/boardpublications/2025/2025-environment-for-policing-in-winnipeg-quick-reference-guide.pdf	Winnipeg Police Board	2025	
Vancouver Police Department seeks $22.8M increase for 2025 budget https://squamishchief.com/economy-law-politics/vancouver-police-department-seeks-228m-increase-for-2025-budget-9832076	Squamish Chief (Glacier Media)	2025 request	
Are U.S. cities underpoliced? Theory and evidence (Chalfin and McCrary), Review of Economics and Statistics 100(1), 167-186 https://eml.berkeley.edu/~jmccrary/chalfin_mccrary2015.pdf	MIT Press	2018 (working paper 2015)	
Police numbers and crime rates: a rapid evidence review (Bradford) https://assets-hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/uploads/police-numbers-and-crime-rates-rapid-evidence-review-20110721.pdf	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary	July 2011	
Calgary police ask for budget boost to deal with city growth (the Chief's comments on the request) https://livewirecalgary.com/2026/10/30/calgary-police-ask-for-budget-boost-to-deal-with-city-growth/	LiveWire Calgary	October 30, 2026	

Source	Publisher	Period used	Notes
Toronto Police Service 2025 budget https://www.tps.ca/media-centre/news-releases/61639/	Toronto Police Service	2025	

What this cannot tell you

- Police-reported crime is not all crime: it depends on what people report and on police counting rules. Statistics Canada's figures and the Service's own reports count in different ways (incidents and victims), so their totals differ.
- Statistics Canada's staffing survey has no figures for 2020 or 2024, and counts officers on one day (May 15). The Service's own year-end counts differ slightly (2,321 officers at the end of 2025).
- Spending figures for the six cities are on different bases (budget or actual, gross or net). The comparison is a rough guide only. Calgary's 2021 and 2022 figures are budgets; 2023 to 2025 are actual spending.
- Priority 1 response times after 2022, officer availability by year, vacancies and deployment by district are not published, so the study cannot test them.
- The 2025 public perception survey changed method (online, 801 people, not weighted) and cannot be compared with earlier telephone surveys.
- The community file shows counts of 1 to 5 as 2; such cells hold about 70% of the crimes it counts, so community trends are not reliable and only current rates for larger communities are shown. It covers nine crime types only, and community populations are estimates.
- The shares of officers on leave (6%) and on accommodated duties (13%) are as reported by LiveWire Calgary from a Commission memo; the memo itself was not available to this study.
- The crime effects shown in the calculator come from US and UK studies of police numbers, not from Calgary; they are an illustration of the research, not a forecast, and assume the extra money pays for officers and civilians in the same mix as the request.
- The scenarios are models built on stated assumptions (2% yearly cost growth, the City's population forecast); they are not forecasts and say nothing about crime.
- The study did not seek comment from the Calgary Police Service or the Commission before publication; their published reports were used throughout, and any response will be added.