

From: Dee G

Sent: March 7, 2026 9:34 AM

To: Clerks <clerks@durham.ca>

Subject: Report #2026-F-4 – Unbudgeted Capital Request from the Durham Regional Police Service Board

Dear Members of the Finance and Administration Committee,

I am writing regarding Report #2026-F-4, which requests approval for approximately \$4.5 million in unbudgeted capital improvements to Durham Regional Police Service facilities. Clerk, please attach this correspondence to the agenda under the Correspondence section for the meeting for consideration.

Before addressing the request itself, I noticed what appears to be a date error in the report. It references a December 16, 2026 confidential report to the Police Services Board, which has not yet occurred. This may simply be a typographical error but should be corrected.

Public safety is essential, and facility improvements may clearly be necessary. However, this request is unbudgeted, and the 2026 DRPS budget already represented over 70% of the Region's taxpayer-funded property tax increase. When requests of this size arise shortly after a budget has been approved, it raises questions about whether these needs could have been identified through the normal capital planning process. The report indicates part of the request would be funded from a projected surplus. While this may address the immediate need, surpluses should not automatically be viewed as available for new spending. When they occur, there should also be consideration given to how they can help moderate future tax pressures.

This is particularly important as DRPS is expected to bring forward both a long-term capital plan and a more detailed operational financial outlook, as discussed during the 2026 budget meetings. Those plans should help Council and the public better understand the long-term trajectory of police spending. Durham Region benefits from one of the lowest crime rates in the GTA, yet police spending has been growing faster than population, crime levels, and service demand. For that reason, careful scrutiny of new spending requests like these remains important.

I encourage the Committee to review this request closely and ensure clear justification is provided. I also hope the upcoming long-term plans will provide greater clarity and reduce the likelihood of future unbudgeted requests of this nature.

Respectfully submitted,

D Glass