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RIGHT TO THE POINT

SCENES FROM A TORONTO IN DECLINE



LAURA PROCTOR / APF VIA GETTY IMAGES

Police officers and other first responders block access to an intersection near a mass shooting at the Salsa on St. Clair Festival in Toronto on Saturday. Many of the things that drive people away, writes Chris Selley, are preventable, such as awful public transit, not enough affordable housing and crime.

Crime surges as top issue in mayoral race

TORONTO • After a bloody weekend of gunplay that left three dead and several more wounded, the likely ballot question for this fall's mayoral election was suddenly clear: Do Torontonians feel safe in their city?

Brad Bradford, a city councillor who is challenging incumbent Olivia Chow, sought to emphasize that on Tuesday, telling reporters that police officials were wrong to argue that Toronto is "extremely safe" after the shooting that sent festivalgoers running in terror from Salsa on St. Clair.

"We need leadership whether it is at the Toronto police or city hall or any of our agencies that recognize that people don't feel safe in Toronto and telling them what to think is not the right response," he told reporters.

Bradford has made crime, safety and livability cornerstones of his campaign for the Oct. 26 election, as Toronto suffers the same post-pandemic social ills as many other Canadian cities.

See CRIME on A2

YOUNG FAMILIES AND YOUNG COUPLES LEAD THE EXODUS FROM HOGTOWN AND THE CITY DOESN'T SEEM TO CARE

CHRIS SELLEY
Comment

What if Canada's largest city started shrinking, and it wasn't all that huge an issue, even with a municipal election just months away? This is the odd situation in which Toronto, forever caught between aspiring to and boasting of "world class" status, may now find itself. Hopefully not.

For years, Hogtown has been able to boast of being one of North America's fastest-growing cities. Over the 12 months ending July 2020, Toronto Metropolitan University's Centre for Urban Research and Land Development found Toronto's "census metropolitan area" (CMA) — population over 6.5 million at the time — had grown by more people than any North American urban area except for Dallas and Phoenix.

Then in 2023, according to TMU researchers, it led the pack, ahead of Dallas, Houston, Montreal, Vancouver and Calgary.

And now ... not.

TMU's latest figures released last week show Toronto's not even in the game anymore, having apparently peaked at around 7.1 million people.

In 2025, relative to 2024, the city ac-

tually lost 1,000 people.

A fairly astonishing 77,000 people left the Toronto CMA for (they hope) greener pastures elsewhere in Canada. That's over one per cent of the population. To put that in some context, the "metropolitan statistical area" comprising Washington, D.C., and suburbs in Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland, lost 24,000 people to other U.S. destinations. That's roughly 0.3 per cent, and D.C. more than made up for it with births and robust international migration.

Of course, plenty of people also moved to the Toronto area from abroad: 53,000 in 2025 alone, according to TMU. But it couldn't make up for domestic out-migration. In addition to Calgary and Edmonton, the fastest-growing Canadian destinations by percentage in recent years include Moncton, Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo, Saskatoon, Regina and St. Catharines-Niagara.

Ample prior research tells us who Toronto is losing. Specifically: young families, and young couples considering starting a family. (There are other Canadian cities suffering the same problem, but none quite so spectacularly.)

See SELLEY on A5

Canada, U.S. forces see recruits up in Trump era

TRACY MORAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. • Military recruitment is rebounding in both Canada and the United States.

For the last two years, the Canadian Armed Forces have beaten their Regular Force recruiting target — hitting roughly 105 per cent of it this past fiscal year, the highest number in nearly 30 years — while U.S. armed services met and exceeded recruiting targets by three per cent in 2025.

The U.S. military and its recruiting efforts have consistently been top of mind for President Donald Trump. In fact, less than two months after his second inauguration, he took credit for record recruitment while addressing Congress in March 2025.

See MILITARY on A4

Lindsey Graham's legacy: A vital champion for Ukraine

FR. RAYMOND J. DE SOUZA
Comment

Regarding the late U.S. senator Lindsey Graham, President Donald Trump had lavish praise, the kind he customarily reserves for tyrants. That's a heavy burden for any man to carry to his grave, though Graham earned it. Such was the posterior osculation he offered the president after formerly castigating him as a reckless, bigoted nutjob.

About Trump, Graham blew cold then hot, then cold and then as hot as can be. He ran against him for president in 2015 — the "nutjob" assessment — and then converted after Trump won the presidency. At the end of Trump's first term, after the siege at the Capitol seeking to prevent the count of electoral college votes — with threats of violence against then-vice-president Mike Pence — Graham declared: "Count me out. Enough is enough."

See DE SOUZA on A9



Housing projects across Canada pile up behind sewer backlog, FPi

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Report finds NGOs rife with 'hostile behaviour related to Jews, Israel'

DAVE GORDON

Some 70 former and current staff from household-name humanitarian and rights groups have come forward in a new report, alleging widespread "hostile behaviour related to Jews, Israel, or Israelis" inside organizations that claim to defend human rights.

Those surveyed say managers ignored, tolerated or normalized the conduct, while some staffers faced retaliation

for speaking out.

The 63-page report, "Insiders Speak: NGO Antisemitism, Failed Accountability, and Their Effect on Social Cohesion," alleges "systemic patterns of discrimination, bias, and accountability failure" across the sector. Authored by EIGHT, an initiative founded by NGO insiders, it includes interviews with affected Jews and non-Jews and is billed as "the first independent and extensive account" of its kind.

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