



Customizing a van for Premier Doug Ford — with items that included a reclining leather sofa and a mini-fridge — would have cost taxpayers more than \$50,000, according to a document filed in Ontario Superior Court.

An estimate for customizing the van was filed by lawyers for Ontario Provincial Police Deputy Commissioner Brad Blair as part of a lawsuit. Blair is asking the court to force the province's ombudsman to investigate the appointment of Ford's friend, Toronto Police Supt. Ron Taverner, to be the next OPP commissioner.

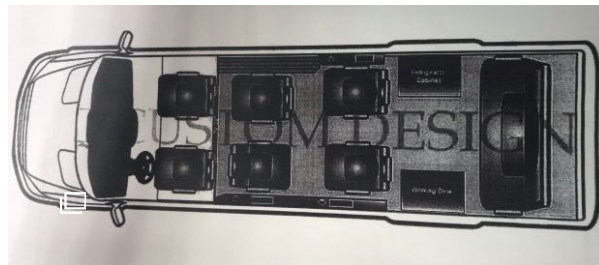
Blair has alleged that Ford's chief of staff told the OPP to buy a "large camper-type vehicle," have it modified to the premier's specifications and keep the costs off the provincial books.

The document shows the van would be kitted out with a dozen specialty items, including a mini-fridge, a 32-inch television with Blu-ray player, a leather power reclining sofa bench, four swivel chairs and desks, for a total price of \$50,696 (HST included).

"Please keep in mind this is only the conversion cost this is excluding the price of the van," says the estimate dated Nov. 21, 2018, from a company called A1 Mobility.

Ford's [appointment schedule shows](#) he personally visited the company's Mississauga office on Nov. 5.

The estimate for van customization is attached to emails between the company, Ford's executive assistant, Nico Fidani, and members of the OPP. Fidani is using a personal email address, not his government of Ontario address.



Divisional Court/Ontario Superior Court of Justice

The documents suggest two van options were being considered: a Ford Transit or a Mercedes-Benz Sprinter.

"The sprinter is an overall larger van this will give us more space inside the vehicle by almost 40 [inches]," said an email from the company to Fidani.

A spokesperson for Ford denies there was any attempt to keep the cost of the van hidden from the public.

"The allegations that anyone in the premier's office requested a van be 'kept off the books' are a complete fabrication by Mr. Blair, and are categorically false," said Ford's director of media relations, Simon Jefferies, in a statement provided to CBC News.

Ford "requested the OPP look into the possibility of obtaining a cost-effective used van for purposes of working and travelling the province,"

# Doug Ford's van customization has \$50K price tag, documents show

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said Jefferies. "The emails sent to the OPP from a member of the premier's office staff are not an official procurement of a van, instead they are a cost-estimate and reveal an effort to minimize expense."

The documents also reveal that Ford complained in July about the rotation of different OPP officers on his security detail.


An OPP officer assigned to take Ford to the airport on July 18 emailed his superior officer with an account of Ford being "upset" about travelling to New Brunswick for the premiers' conference with three officers he did not know.

"I keep getting new people in the truck. I just want my own protection team," Sgt. Terrance Murphy reported Ford as saying in an email to his staff sergeant which was then forwarded up the chain of command all the way to Blair within an hour.

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