

FROM A1 POLICE: 'You just need to act'

Ribeiro was walking with his girlfriend near Chinatown late Tuesday when he was struck in the face by a stray bullet.

He's now recuperating in hospital, facing permanent blindness.

This morning, police Chief Rick Hanson is expected to make an announcement about the investigation.

According to Neto's uncle, Jose Rego, Ribeiro's parents plan to visit their son in Calgary soon.

The Brazilian Community Association of Alberta is rallying behind Ribeiro and held an emergency meeting Thursday night to formalize a plan to help the man's family.

"Our president is in contact with the victim's family directly and we're trying to help them come over as soon as it is possible," said Deise MacDougall, an association member.

Representatives visited the hospital to comfort Ribeiro's girlfriend.

"She is a little bit overwhelmed right now," said MacDougall.

The family's travel and some accommodation expenses are being paid for by the police through victim services, she said.

"We don't know when the family is coming. We know they have their passports and everything. We are going to work with the Canadian consulate in Brazil to fast track the process," said MacDougall.

The group is also planning to set up a trust fund to collect donations so the family can offset expenses.

Rodrigues said Ribeiro is receiving good treatment in the hospital and, given the severity of his wounds, is doing OK.

He may require surgery, but Rodrigues said there is a slight hope he may have some sight in one eye.

"We are all very sad with what happened. We never expected that."

The shooting, meanwhile, has renewed demands for the province to bolster Calgary's police ranks.

Thursday, Mayor Dave Bronconnier reiterated his request that the province match the city's \$25 million to put another 200 officers on the streets — an overture Stelmach again declared premature.

"Innocent people have been hurt. It's happened," Bronconnier said, after pressing Stelmach at a ceremonial sod turning.

"I don't want to see it happen to anyone again, which is why I renewed calls again on the province to say, 'reconsider your decision, look at what's occurring.'"

But Stelmach — who first rejected calls for \$25 million three weeks ago after a meeting with Bronconnier and Hanson — held his ground.

Stelmach, questioned Thursday by reporters in Banff and Calgary, outlined his government's anti-crime strategy, including bolstering the number of Crown prosecutors and the

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MAYOR DAVE BRONCONNIER

that Chief Hanson talked about, thousands of hours of hard work by police going into building the evidence and then somebody turns them out on the street through bail," Stelmach said.

"So there'll be bail reform and there will be other legislation coming forward this fall, it will be quite significant and help the police considerably."

He also cited a scheduled Sept. 23 meeting between Alberta Justice Minister Alison Redford and the province's chiefs of police.

"The process is solid and if the police chiefs, if Chief Hanson, over the last number of months has seen something that we can do better, or any other police chief that will be at the table, we're there to listen," Stelmach said.

Bronconnier said the province has all the information it needs.

"I'm not sure what new information Minister Redford or the premier would expect to hear," Bronconnier said.

"If the premier is looking for more time to reflect on the sense of urgency, then I guess we'll await his decision."

He said violent crime and gangs are a problem across the province and require provincial leadership.

"The reality is sometimes you just need to act."

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