

From: [Elizabeth Andrews](#)
To: [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Input on the proposed 2021 St. Paul budget.
Date: Monday, November 23, 2020 5:39:34 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Elizabeth Andrews and I live on Grand Avenue in St. Paul. In advance of the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing on December 2, I wanted to write with some input on the proposed budget.

My specific concern relates to the police budget. From my understanding, the St. Paul Police Department comprises roughly 20% of the proposed budget. I would strongly prefer that the City of St. Paul decrease the police budget and spend that money on other interventions and services that support community safety.

This request comes at the end of a year filled with an increased focus on police brutality and race relations both in Minnesota and around the country. As a community, we need to do better by our BIPOC neighbors, and the current policing model is not working to protect and help them. "Defund the Police" initially sounded like an extreme position to me, but the more I learned about it, the more it made sense. Why are we asking our police officers to perform mental health and social worker services when they are not trained to do so? Wouldn't that money be better spent sending the right kind of responders to the scene? Can we use our police for violent crimes and dangerous situations, and let medical and mental health professionals step in when needed?

I have interacted with the SPPD several times, and I have always found them to be kind, helpful, and patient. I do not have any particular beef with police officers nor the SPPD. However, BIPOC citizens do not always have the same experience, and regardless of a community's make-up, I believe that spending some of the police budget on expanding related services and safety programs is a smart use of resources.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
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