

Emails to CouncilBudget

Dear Councilmember Yang,

I run a business in the city of St. Paul and employ another 10 people. With the steady increase of crime, I am concerned for my employees who are responsible for large amounts of cash on site and come and go from the business locations in St Paul at all hours. Cutting the police force will cause us all to live in increased fear during these tumultuous times.

The police officers who patrol our neighborhood have always been there for us and have been ready to help whenever we've had a problem. They are an important part of our community and we are disappointed the city is talking cutting the number of officers. If anything, they should be increasing!

Our employees and customers depend on police to keep the neighborhood safe, and they have already been stretched thin with increases in crime over the last few years. If the police aren't able to get a handle on the crime that has been increasing, there will be less and less people wanting to come to our city.

Please hold the line and keep the St. Paul Police Department at its current size.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Adelsman
2118 Nebraska Ave E
Saint Paul, MN 55119
Parkwaytabs@hotmail.com

Hello St. Paul Council Members,

My name is Laura Jones and I am a resident of Ramsey County. I would like to urge the members of the council, when deliberating on next year's budget, to consider first and foremost redirecting funds from the city's police department instead to our most vulnerable citizens. Specifically, the number of unhoused people in St. Paul has grown enormously because of the current pandemic and it is the job of the government to offer these people support and resources. With freezing temperatures coming, the need for emergency housing is URGENT.

The police department has established themselves as a direct threat to the safety of these unhoused people through their harassment and violence against people and families camped out in parks and living on the streets. PLEASE show these unhoused citizens that their government cares about their lives and the lives of their children by providing as much funding assistance to aid programs as quickly as possible, and not by raising the funding of those that have demonstrated violence against them.

Thank you for your consideration,

Laura Jones

Distinguished council members,

I am writing to you as a Minnesota citizen who feels it is important to fund community services in the city of Saint Paul. Our state's capital is a beautiful city with many promising things happening currently, but we have the opportunity to invest in our people, rather than the police.

Thousands of people experience houselessness every year in our communities, and oftentimes are met with police violence instead of government intervention and help. We need to invest deeply in programs for these disenfranchised peoples, who often times end up being BIPOC. Being without a house is not a crime, and if resources are never made available to people experiencing this struggle, they will have a much harder time getting out of that cycle.

We need to invest in treatment programs for the addicts in our communities. We need to invest in programs that will help first-time homebuyers. In our ever-increasing housing market with our ever-stagnant wages, many people will never have the opportunity to know what it is to own a home. We need to invest in supporting our small businesses, the places we all visit every day and the owners who are facing the same bills they always do, but with less than half of the traffic because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Speaking of the Covid-19 pandemic, we need to invest in our healthcare workers and hospitals, since they obviously need our help now more than ever.

What we do not need as a community is a higher police presence. We do not need police departments who extrajudicially murder people, spray them with tear gas, use LRADs and flash bangs. We need a public safety department comprised of people from all races and creeds who live in our neighborhoods, not suburban people who come to work in the Twin Cities and have always been scared of us.

Your constituents are imploring you to do the right thing, and invest in our communities instead of in the police, who are obviously just here to suppress our first amendment rights to free speech and assembly.

All of you have the opportunity to invest in YOUR community, and make sure that we're all taken care of. Please listen.

Respectfully,

Natasha Holden

Hello Council Members,

My name is Kate Warner. I moved to St. Paul in 2017 and have lived in Dayton's Bluff and currently am a homeowner in Frogtown. While I am happy to be creating new roots within this community, I am still regularly shocked that a progressive city with such an extreme climate seems to have left their unhoused neighbors to fend for themselves - especially a city with limited affordable housing (actual affordable housing, not whatever this "affordable luxury nonsense is), and an abundance of resources (compared to most other parts of the country TBH).

I grew up in the South, but my first encounter with the Midwest was when my sister went to UW for college. While visiting one winter, I asked her where do the people without homes go in the snow, and she said that the city opens up public buildings so that these people can at least get out of the cold. At the time, I just assumed that that is what all major midwestern cities did for their citizens. I was absolutely shocked to find out that St. Paul, capitol of the supposedly nicest state, does not offer even this small amount of grace to folks.

However, letting folks inside during blizzards is really quite a low bar to set and I want to see more from City Council. I regularly see unhoused folks harassed by the police. I regularly see them getting medical support from EMTs. I regularly see them harassed by NIMBY type people. I regularly see them outside, in the snow, in the cold, in the wind. It leaves such a nasty taste in my mouth to know that leadership would rather give even more money to police when they can instead have an immediate, long-lasting impact on the lives of so many of our neighbors by providing government support and housing to people who are literally trapped outside in single-digit weather. Folks who can't even ride the greenline all night anymore, because of shortened hours and covid.

The basis of the budget should be prioritizing people with the most need. during a respiratory pandemic. Without actual intervention in the form of affordable housing, the numbers of unhoused folks are going to grow (pandemic) and require even more resources to solve (pandemic). **Respectfully, don't kick the can down the road.**

Best,

Kate Warner

Hello City Council Members,

I'm a St. Paul citizen that is pleading with you to defund the police department and be more creative about how to solve the many issues our city is facing. We need new programs that are much more effective than the police department to serve our citizens and end homelessness, hunger, violence, and greater access to mental health services.

We really need to tear apart this system (the police department) and institute new and effective programs. Please defund it and invest in education, social services, social workers, community centers, crisis hotlines, and trained professionals who are better equipped to descilate and care for our community.

This is a necessary step - please do what is right. It's way past obvious that the police department is not the answer for what our community needs are. Blaze a trail and let's be examples of what a caring and compassionate and an anti-racist city can look like. We must and can do much better.

Leah Korger

Hello Council Members,

My name is Lindsay Blahnik, and I am a resident of the Highland Park neighborhood. I write to you today to provide feedback on St. Paul's proposed budget for next year.

Overall, I very much support Mayor Carter's proposed budget. A number of weeks ago I was able to listen in on a Zoom session his office held talking over the budget, including reasonings for the current plan and his future strategy. I largely stand by his vision for St. Paul, especially in regards to public safety.

I do not support increased funding to the police force when that money could be better used to address homelessness, education, and racial inequities within our city. This year the police's funding is remaining flat, which is a good start, but in reality, I think a lot of the money given to this department could be better invested elsewhere. It's a little insane to me that the police department is given over \$122 million, while the entire Community Development and Housing department will be given less than \$50 million, even though we are living through one of the greatest homeless surges of our lifetime. Additionally, the entire Public Health department will be given less than \$2 million amidst a severe pandemic, and within that department, there is less than \$400k budgeted for WIC Supplemental food aid to women and children, even though we are also going through a hunger pandemic. I reflect on the fact that so much more could be done to address homelessness, community health, and food insecurity within our city if just a fraction of the police budget was reallocated to these programs. I understand that might be a hard sell in the current political climate, but please know that there is a lot of support for it that is only growing stronger as race and class divides widen.

That being said, I am sure you are receiving a number of emails from St. Paul residents who are worried about increased crime in recent months. I ask that you not be reactive to these complaints and put more money into the police department. I know that crime is on the rise in St. Paul, but it is on the rise throughout the country, too. I studied criminology in college and learned that increased crime is very much correlated with poverty and economic instability. The recent rise in crime within St. Paul is much more likely due to the historic national economic downturn than it is to an understaffed or under-resourced police department. Because of this, I believe taxpayer money would be better spent in preventative ways that address families' economic instability, such as rent relief, homeless shelters, discounted childcare, and food/utility assistance. When taxpayer money is spent on the police department, we are largely paying for

an institution that reacts to crimes instead of prevents them. As we have seen across the country and throughout history, this does very little to prevent crime no matter how much money is thrown at the problem, and instead leads to distrust of the police and police brutality. I appreciate that Mayor Carter's proposed budget and strategy seems to align more with prevention instead of reaction. I fully support more money being given to homeless shelters and the basic income trial study. I believe these are great initiatives for our city to be investing in during a time many people are greatly struggling.

Overall, I know this is an extremely difficult year and likely an extremely difficult budgeting session for everyone. I realize that revenues are down, even as needs grow. For this reason, it's all the more important that taxpayer money is spent in efficient, innovative ways that will tangibly improve residents' lives. I believe this is best done by investing in programs and departments that are urgently responding to the current pandemic, economic recession, and homelessness crisis. Thank you for allowing me to share my opinions.

Lindsay Blahnik

St. Paul resident (Highland Park)

I am writing today to push for funds in the St. Paul city budget to be allocated to housing for residents over more funding for the SPPD. We are in the midst of a housing crisis. If you are truly invested in the safety and protection of St. Paul residents, that must start with providing everyone with safe and dignified housing, not funneling more funds into a police department that specializes in intimidation and the displacement of those seeking the basic human right of sheltered housing. As the weather grows cold and we enter another Minnesota winter, the need for more housing funds grows more imperative.

In solidarity,

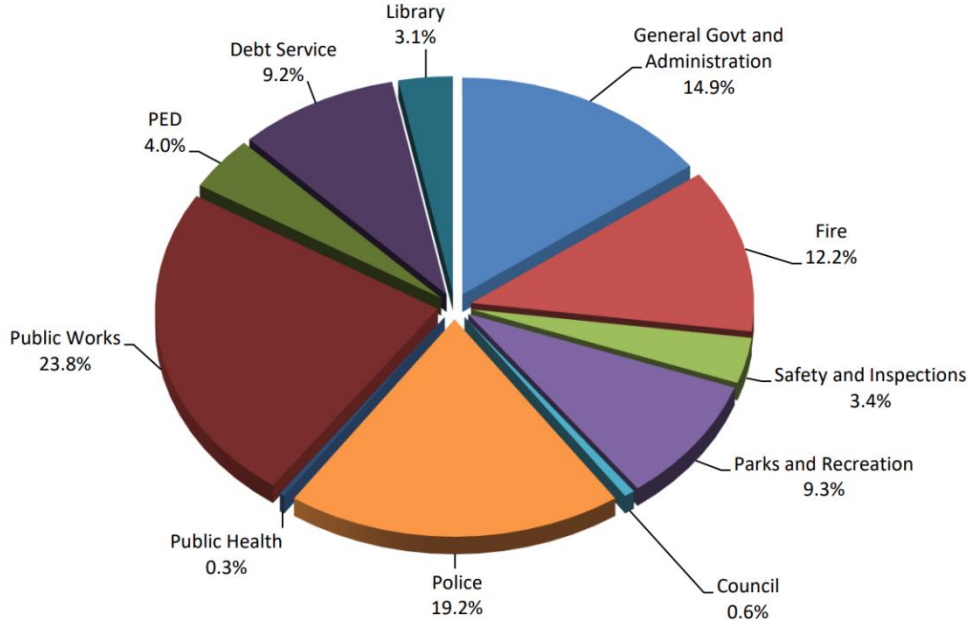
Audrey Parry

Mayor Carter loves to quote his mother when talking about creating a budget that reflects our values. One glance at these budget charts makes the St. Paul values clear: police, police, and more police. Those may be your values, but they are not the values of your constituents. As a resident of Ward 1, I demand you reroute funding to addressing the houseless epidemic and the economic depression we are all fighting through. People need housing much more than the police need bullets. Stop projecting a progressive image with zero follow through. Countless studies have shown that more police does not equal less crime.

As I said in my original submission, our inalienable rights are to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Make a budget that reflects that.

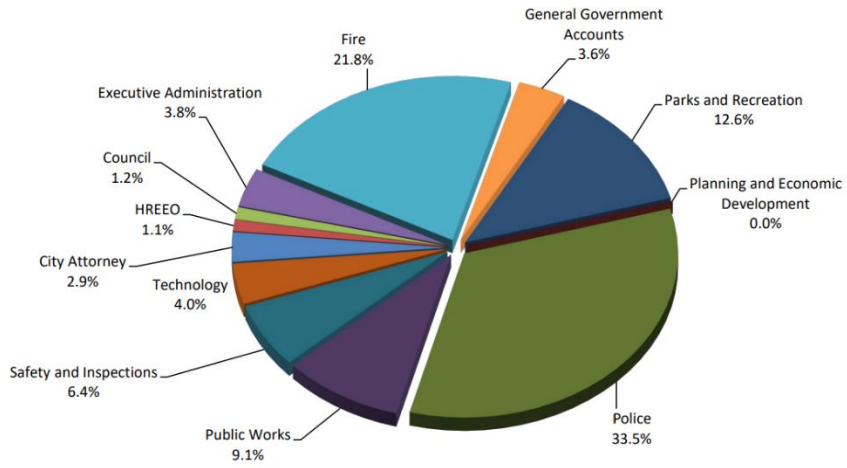
Composite Spending - By Department

2021 Proposed Budget



General Fund Budget

2021 Proposed Spending by Department



2. What do you like most about the proposed budget?

The SRO budget dropping to \$0 thanks specifically to youth organizing.

3. What did you like least about the proposed budget?

You dare invoke the name of George Floyd, yet the police budget is nearly 5X that of the PED during a double-fronted housing crisis.

4. What would you change about the budget and why?

Give more money to housing, health, and your constituents that are hurting instead of the boys in blue that terrorize us.

5. What services would you reduce to help balance the budget?

Police

6. What services and investments are the most important to you?

- Affordable Housing
- Community First Public Safety
- Homelessness & Unsheltered
- Infrastructure
- Job Creation
- No Property Tax Increase
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Safety
- Small Business
-

7. What other comments would you like to share?

Our inalienable rights are to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Make a budget that reflects that.

Hello council members,

My name is Johannah and I am a St. Paul resident. I am emailing to request that this budget season, you defund the police and fund the community. With the increase in community members experiencing homelessness, we need more funding for proper shelter and care, with an emphasis on long-term solutions. Police often bring violence to the communities they claim to serve.

I am asking you to direct those funds to housing, addiction and recovery services, wellness centers, youth services, and mental health services. Please do not fund the police.

Thank you,

Johannah Frisby

Hello!

I am a former St. Paul resident of 4 years, having moved out of the city in August 2020. I am writing to implore the St Paul city council to move to defund the St. Paul Police Department. During my time living in St. Paul, it became clear to me that the department is beyond reform. What is more, there are many serious (often life or death) needs of St. Paul residents that are going unmet, while we spend millions of dollars on the police department budget. Let's divert funds away from St. Paul Police towards the actual needs of St. Paul residents.

Thank you!

Andrew Spencer

Former resident of 2143 Marshall Ave, Saint Paul MN 55104

Hello,

My name is Sophie Warrick and I am a senior at Hamline University majoring in Music and Social Justice. I would just like to remind you of the hundreds of people experiencing homelessness in St. Paul who are met with police violence rather than government support. I must remind you of the atrocities the St. Paul police have committed, and I MUST remind you that their job is to care for our community -- ESPECIALLY our most vulnerable neighbors.

Defund the police. It's proven that they don't work. You know that.

With hope,

--



Sophie Warrick

she/her/hers

Hamline University '21

Music/Social Justice Majors, Nonprofit Management/Digital Media Arts Minors

New Student Programs: *Student Coordinator*

Women's Resource Center: *Student Worker*

Disability Resources: *Access Assistant*

Planned Parenthood Action Fund: *Generation Action Intern*

Hamline Zinesters Local 55104: *Steward*

Hamline Students for Reproductive Justice: *President*

<https://www.sophiewarrick.com/>

Dear St. Paul City Council Members,

I am writing to implore you to defund the police and invest instead in community care. As you all know, we are facing many intersecting crises right now – the pandemic, climate change, lack of sufficient housing, racist violence, the list goes on. As these crises grow ever stronger and more frequent in the coming years, it is your job to make sure that St. Paul is a resilient community, one that can deploy resources to take care of its residents, rather than kill, surveil, and brutalize them (which is all the police are good for). You have heard it so many times, from St. Paul's most vulnerable residents – police do not keep us safe. What does keep us safe? Family, friends, and neighbors, coming together to feed and house and take care of one another during these crises, and in the face of abandonment by our government. I promise you, police and prisons are not the answer to creating resilient communities, to interrupting cycles of trauma and abuse, to ending poverty. Please, please, for the future of our city and its beautiful people, defund the St. Paul Police Department. Our lives are depending on it.

Sincerely,

Grace Clark
Lifelong St. Paul resident

After 4 years of a monster in office, making this country harder to survive for houseless people and minorities, after 4 years of increased police brutality, and after massive protests against the police, I think it's time to make a change. Change can, and will, begin with a small action. Defunding the police, to spend more on public housing, and other needs.

The people will remember this decision.

make the right one.

Hi there,

As a former resident of St. Paul (born & raised) and knowing that part of my family still resides there, I am writing in support of council members Yang and Jalali in their call to defund the police. I believe we should reallocate the money to better resources within our community. The

police were never trained to de-escalate issues outside of crime, therefore they are not capable of approaching minor problems within the BIPOC community appropriately which is why it usually ends tragically. Please listen to your community vs gov't interests. Thank you for your time.

--

Best,

Davee Ek

Mobile | 651.325.5738

Email | sodavyek@gmail.com

Instagram | [@youngbrokefabulous](https://www.instagram.com/youngbrokefabulous)

Blog | www.daveesecrets.com

Twitter | [@ilovedavee](https://twitter.com/ilovedavee)

I live in Midway St. Paul and I strongly believe a large portion (not a fraction) of the police budget should be reallocated to other community programs. Programs that provide resources and support for the community. Police are supposed to be peace officers yet in both my personal experience and the experiences of others in my community, police continue to escalate situations and cause more harm than good. There is little to no police accountability and when police overstep their bounds and abuse their power, they are so heavily favored by legal protections that it is the taxpayer who takes the hit and little to no consequence for the wrongdoing officer involved.

Please do not let fear or ignorance inform your decision on this matter. Please reduce the budget for the department that exists to protect property and not the people and reinvest those funds into the community. Bolster public schools, build support systems for the homeless population, strengthen social services.

St Paul Resident

Ryan Ball

I am a Saint Paul homeowner and I ask you to please not give the police any more money. Our police are supposed to help our communities, yet I have not seen that to be the case. Please redirect that money to other services in our community. The homeless population would be especially well served by this money as they get displaced during the coldest months of the year.

Sincerely,

Wendy Eggerman

Hello,

As the city council deliberates over budget planning for next year, I am contacting you to disregard pressure from pro-police and right wing organizations and instead work towards defunding the St. Paul Police Department.

The presence of SPPD officers throughout the summer during anti-racism protests caused vast amounts of physical and mental harm to passionate individuals who were exercising their First Amendment right to non-violently protest. In almost every situation, SPPD chose violence over peace.

The hundreds of unhoused individuals in St. Paul have been met with harassment and abuse from SPPD, when they should be receiving support and care. SPPD's job is to provide "trusted service with respect," to care for the members of our community (especially the most vulnerable). They have responded by committing to a policy of harm and violence without hesitation or empathy.

Instead of continuing to provide SPPD with an excessive amount of funding, which they will use to fund their cruel and discriminatory actions, I am urging you to defund the police and refund our community.

Sincerely,

Wes Muilenburg

Twin Cities Resident

I live in the Midway neighborhood, and I want massive police reform, defunding, and ultimate police abolition. A friend of mine spent MONTHS in the hospital undergoing surgery after surgery after being shot nine times by police who had been called to his house by family who were concerned he was having a mental health crisis. He was unarmed, and even the privileges of being a white male didn't help him. He was SHOT IN THE GUT FOR BEING MENTALLY ILL. Even if you leave aside the human cost of wildly inappropriate actions like this-- what benefit does the city get from our police force as it is? What is the financial reasoning for supporting such a hyper-reactive force that routinely ESCALATES situations? Why are we pouring money into this pit instead of applying it to solutions that would actually solve issues of criminality and abuse?

I'm sure the budget is tight this year. As one of your constituents, I'm asking that you think in terms of REAL SOLUTIONS to issues like crime and homelessness, and question any reasoning that begins with the idea that systems can't change. They can change. My Masters degree is in education: every piece of research you'll ever find on human behavior shows that investments in human care reaps huge benefits in saved costs and overall efficiency, whereas the costs of human abuse compound over time. Please make your upcoming decisions based on research instead of on rage and fear.

Thank you,

-Alana Hawley

Hello,

I am a concerned citizen who would like to see the budget cut for St. Paul police. The money could be used to help house the homeless in St. Paul as winter nears instead of bolstering police violence toward the homeless. The job of the police is to enforce the laws and keep the community safe, but in St. Paul, the police have shown that this is not what they do. Defund the police to and use the money to actually keep the community safe.

Thank you for your time,

Brooke

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this evening to urge you to consider defunding the police at the very least. Ideally, I call for police abolition, but I know this is a bigger issue.

Hundreds of people experience houselessness in Saint Paul and they are often met with the police rather than with the help they need from our government and society. This will be my third year living in my Saint Paul apartment and I have seen the same man on the streets each week asking respectfully for community kindness because our government and the police refuse to give it to him. When will we value humanity as much as we value violence?

The Saint Paul police have commit atrocities. Their job is to care for the people of the community especially the most vulnerable. I work in a junior high school with a man who used to be on the Saint Paul police force but quit because it wasn't what he wanted to be doing. He thought he would be helping people rather than caught in violence. This man is one of the kindest, most caring humans I know. he is someone who excels in building relationships with students of all backgrounds. Students feel comfortable sharing their most vulnerable, stressed out selves with him. The fact that the police who are supposed to be protecting and caring for our communities are failing to run a system that can attract and retain empathetic, caring individuals is appalling.

I am a White woman and I do not feel comfortable calling the police. I do not trust the police because time and time again I am shown that they do not care for my friends and for my neighbors. That is a massive problem.

Please fund our community, rather than funding the police. There are so many ways this money could be used to prevent the need for police, and wouldn't that be a better use of everyone's energy?

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,
Ellis Johnston

I am writing this email urging you to defund the St. Paul police department.

The amount of homeless people and people in low-income neighborhoods who are met with violence from police officers on a daily basis is overwhelming, and a poor representation of our great state's capitol. We can do better.

Follow in the footsteps of Nelsie Yang and Mitra Jalali! Defund the incredibly racist, sexist, and ableist police department which only benefits those in rich areas. We need to bring aid to those in historically oppressed groups who need our help right now. Use the money taken from the police department to create housing for the homeless, or the blood of their deaths this winter will be on your hands.

DEFUND. ABOLISH. THE POLICE SYSTEM ONLY PROTECTS WHITE PEOPLE.

Dear St. Paul City Council,

I am writing today to demand that you do not increase the police budget and that you defund the police and move toward a community centered public safety approach. I would like to see those funds redirected to housing since our population of unhoused individuals is on the rise and we need different solutions to provide people with the resources they need, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. I would like the city to invest in more hotels to homes.

We know that the St. Paul Police Department has historically been the deadliest force in Minnesota, and therefore, one of the deadliest forces in the nation. As a city with such a diverse population, it is understandable that Black and Indigenous folks, as well as other people of color and people with mental disabilities, do not feel comfortable in our city and we certainly do not need more police presence. I would like to see more money invested in community programs working to prevent homelessness, food shortages, and mental health crises- also known as investing in actual community needs.

Sincerely,

Ashley
Ward 2
682 Grand Avenue
55105

Hello,

My name is Clara Sorensen, and I am a constituent in Ward 4 of St. Paul. I am writing to you with concern regarding our city's budget for the upcoming year. It has come to my attention that the proposed budget for the Police Department in St. Paul is \$104,738,797, significantly more than any other department in the city. It is deeply disappointing to me that after a summer of commitments from all across the nation to divest from police and reinvest in our schools, public health, public works, and affordable housing, efforts that would truly make our communities safer, this is the budget that St. Paul has set.

The St. Paul Police Department does not have a good track record. In 2009, Justin Tiegan was brutally beaten and his body was thrown in a dumpster. The officers were not charged. Last September, officers still who are still on the force today shot and killed Ronald Davis. I could go on and on, listing the people, especially Black men, who have lost their lives at the hands of our police department.

There are countless ways our money can be better spent. Need I remind you that there are hundreds of people in our city who are living in tents, who would be safer and healthier if they had a roof over their heads? Need I remind you of the public health crisis we are facing? Of the fact that the Twin Cities rank among the worst metro areas for racial equity? This is where money should be going if you truly want safer communities.

I believe in police abolition. A department known for its violence towards BIPOC people cannot keep us safe. What can is community care - housing, feeding, and ensuring equity for each other. A better world is possible, and it starts with changing the budget to move funds from the police into REAL community care.

Sincerely,

Clara Sorensen (she/her)

Dear Councilmember Tolbert, et al.

I am a constituent of Ward 3 and I am writing to voice my thoughts on Mayor Carter's proposed 2021 budget. While aspects of the budget, such as the guaranteed income pilot program, are indeed commendable, the budget does not on the whole reflect Saint Paul as a city. The Twin Cities are the epicenter of a new civil rights movement. We have the opportunity to forge a new path and create a better world. Usually when I write emails like this one, I write out of a vague, tedious obligation to democratic participation. Today, I write with a smile on my face because I truly have hope that Saint Paul can create beautiful change towards a better world. The current budget doesn't do that.

I am staunchly opposed to the amount of money allocated to the Saint Paul Police Department. Earlier this summer, reports indicated that Mayor Carter would cut \$9.2 million from SPPD. That's nothing when you look at the department's 2020 budget of \$105,539,797 (nearly one third of the city's *entire* budget). Cutting \$9.2mil would be the bare minimum, but the current budget proposal doesn't even do that; instead, it proposes to cut just \$801,000 (0.8%) from the SPPD budget. The public library agency, public works, safety and inspections, and parks and recreation all had their budgets cut by a larger percentage. Libraries and parks are crucial departments to the wellbeing of people without access to a safe place to sleep or work. In the middle of a pandemic and a recession, it is despicable and inhumane to suggest we cut funding to those two departments by a larger percentage than the already bloated department responsible for the murders of Philando Castille, Ronald Davis, and too many more.

Police departments are reactive. They respond when a call is made, not before. And far too often, that response only perpetuates violence instead of stemming it; this occurs at a disproportionately higher rate when the police interact with Black Saint Paulites. We need to focus on prevention. The hundreds of millions of dollars being funneled into the police department should be reallocated to programs that promote the general welfare. What does punishment do for the community? Does that actually make anyone safer or make anyone's life better? No. Our money should be going to ensuring that libraries stay open and thriving; it should be funding the guaranteed income pilot, mental health support, programs that get guns off the streets, youth programs, education, COVID-19 testing. In short, our money ought to fund *the proactive needs of the community*. I appeal to your morals as this is an issue of morality. The Saint Paul Police Department has escaped the spotlight shone on Minneapolis, Louisville, and Kenosha because it has not yet had another Philando Castille, George Floyd, Anthony McClain, Jacob Blake, Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain, Sandra Bland, Tony McDade. Let's keep it that way by addressing the root of the problem. SPPD *will* sooner or later perpetrate similar violence and our city will have to mourn the death of someone in our community because that is the nature of American policing. Don't let that happen.

I urge Mayor Carter and the City Council to reconsider the currently proposed miniscule cut to SPPD. We ought to cut the budget by *at least* the \$9.3million that Mayor Carter initially proposed. It is in the interest of public safety and the wellbeing of all our communities to be proactive instead of reactive. We have an opportunity to make a substantial cut and reallocation of police department funds to fund services that will make our city more just and equitable for all of its citizens. We have an opportunity to create a better Saint Paul.

Thank you.

Kindest regards,

Dipakshi Sarma

Class of 2024

Dear Councilmember Tolbert, et al.

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Sincerely,

Ezra Nayagam Muthiah

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Ward 3

Dear City Council Board,

I am writing as a concerned member of the community. I do not agree with increasing the police budget, especially with the rise in police violence and current political atmosphere. Instead, I hope that next year's budget can better reflect our communities needs by investing more in affordable housing, education, emergency preparedness and health in regards to covid, and funding for physical infrastructure. I believe this sentiment is shared by many in my community. Please make budget decisions that can benefit the community as a whole and protect vulnerable peoples. Thanks for your consideration.

Jade Arrowsmith

Dear Council Members,

I am emailing as a resident of Saint Paul, MN. It is important that we defund the police this year. The pandemic has hit millions of people, hard. Currently, there are hundreds of people homeless, or near homeless, in Saint Paul that are met with police violence rather than government support. I have personally witnessed officer's shot into people's homes with rubber bullets when teens have taunted them on the job. The brutality of arrests have made the local news many times over the past years, especially with the young Black girl arrested in the UPS store in the Midway last year. We could be using the resources the city uses to barricade the police precincts to house and feed people in the city. Please defund the police and use the money to protect people from winter and poverty.

Thank you,

Vivia Alfifuson, resident of Frogtown.

Dear St. Paul City Council,

As next year's budget is being determined, I am reaching out to request that you defund the police and allocate more funding to the community. Police have met many, including the hundreds of homeless people in St Paul, with violence. They have failed to protect the most vulnerable in the community and have proven that they are and will always be ineffective in creating lasting positive change. Funding should go towards programs that uplift and improve the lives of the people. Education and shelters should receive more funding to build a stronger community.

Thank you,

Mia Krohn

Hi,

I am asking for the St. Paul City Council to defund the police and put money back into the community. There are hundreds of people experiencing homelessness who aren't met with the appropriate support and are instead met with police who have not done a good enough job to care for the community, and especially those who are most vulnerable.

Thank you.

To Whom it May Concern:

Looking over the current budget, I am concerned with Mayor Carter's inclusion of maintaining current funding levels for the police department when the city faces a budget shortfall. The city of St Paul has an opportunity to begin the steps to come up with alternative solutions in place of over-policing in community level initiatives that tackle drug addiction, the unhoused and mental health crises that would be better dealt with by trained professionals in these specialties and not overtaxed and under trained police officers.

In addition, the lack of substantive increase of public health spending is troubling considering the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic continues to worsen day-by-day.

I hope that the Council members will consider pushing back on the budget and not approving the current levels of police funding and instead push Mayor Carter to re-evaluate his priorities to

make St Paul live up to its name as one of the most livable cities in the country, not just for those who are affluent and white.

Sincerely,

Kara Richard

55102 Ward 8 Resident

Hello,

I am a St. Paul resident, and I am writing to request that the St. Paul police be defunded and funds be redirected to dire community needs. As City Council members, you are responsible for the care of our community, especially our most vulnerable neighbors. Defund the police to reduce the violence against our community, and redirect funding to aid our unhoused neighbors who currently face police violence rather than government support.

Thank you,

Monica Randazzo

Hello,

I am emailing in regard to Mayor Carter's proposed 2021 budget. While there is much to commend in it -- especially the guaranteed income pilot program -- it falls vastly short of the demands of the civil rights movement centered in the Twin Cities.

To be specific, I have tremendous concerns about the amount of money allocated to the St. Paul police department. As I'm sure you know, reports earlier in the summer indicated that Mayor Carter would direct a cut of \$9.2 million dollars from SPPD — a pittance, given that the department's 2020 budget was \$105,539,797, just shy of a third of the *entire St. Paul city budget* — but at least a start. Even that, however, has fallen through. Instead, the mayor's 2021 budget proposal cuts only \$801,000 (0.8%) from the SPPD budget. This is both by percentage and absolute value a smaller cut than those to the public library agency; public works; safety and inspections, and parks and recreation. In the middle of a pandemic and recession which has led to rising homelessness and poverty, it is frankly despicable that two services those who lack

access to a safe place to sleep or work depend on most — libraries and parks — are being cut more than the already bloated department which is responsible for the murders of Philando Castille, Ronald Davis, and many others.

Police departments are definitionally reactive. They respond when a call is made, not before. And in many, many cases, especially when they are interacting with Black citizens of this city, they perpetuate violence rather than preventing it. What St. Paul needs is prevention, and the hundred million dollars that are currently being funneled into the police department should be reallocated to programs that promote social good, not punishment. That money should be preventing libraries from being defunded, should be funding the guaranteed income pilot, mental health support, programs to get guns off of streets, youth programs, schools, COVID-19 testing — funding, in short, *the proactive needs of the community*. This is a moral issue. The St. Paul Police Department has this year been able to escape the spotlight shone on Minneapolis, Louisville, and Kenosha because it has not yet had another Philando Castille, George Floyd, Jacob Blake, Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain, Sandra Bland, or Tony McDade. But sooner or later, similar violence will be perpetrated by SPPD, similar deaths will occur in our city. That is the nature of American policing, and it must be pulled up at the root.

To that end, I urge Mayor Carter and the City Council to reconsider the currently proposed cut to SPPD. It should be much larger — at a bare minimum the \$9.3 million Mayor Carter initially proposed. The city of Saint Paul has the opportunity to be proactive instead of reactive. To, as Mayor London Breed has in San Francisco, make a substantial cut and reallocation of police department funds to fund services that will make our city more just and equitable for all of its citizens.

I've lived in Minnesota for ten years and have watched proudly as we've led the way in many human rights issues. This is a major step backwards for us and will not simply be overlooked by the St. Paul community. We're holding our government accountable in the fight against police brutality and anti-Blackness, and I hope that you will stand beside us. I know that we can do better, and we must.

Sincerely,
Katrina Illig

Dear Council,

My name is Alex Hagen and I live in Saint Paul. I am writing to you today to urge you to allocate more money in next year's budget towards housing St. Paul residents experiencing homelessness, instead of prioritizing the police.

The City should be providing support for our most vulnerable neighbors, especially as winter quickly approaches. Our unhoused neighbors should be the City's top priority.

Hiring more cops, or giving more money to them, does not reduce crime, and eliminating cops does not increase crime. Instead of beefing up the police budget, or hiring even more police, redistribute that money towards giving everyone a home.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Alex Hagen

--

Alex Hagen

he/him

alex.m.hagen@gmail.com | 651.955.7533

Greetings St. Paul City Council,

I am a college student at Macalester College currently living in St. Paul. I am reaching out because I care deeply about the people of St. Paul, and that means I am in favor of defunding the police department (and diverting funding to positive community resources). Following countless abhorrent and racialized violences on black and BIPOC residents (both city- and nation-wide), I believe removing money from the police department budget and reinvesting in community care is the right and necessary decision.

Hundreds of people are currently unhoused in St. Paul, and are met with needless, violent, and dehumanizing evictions from the police, rather than care and support. This would be a good area to reinvest funding (providing housing rather than perpetuating the problem through evictions and anti-homeless infrastructure).

Your job is to care for our most vulnerable neighbors, and putting more funding into the police department puts our most vulnerable neighbors directly in harm's way. This is completely unacceptable.

Maggie Jaenicke

814-206-6558

Macalester College

Dear City Council,

My name is Sophie Freedman, and I am a St Paul resident. I am emailing because I am asking you, as you are considering the budget, to defund the St. Paul police with the hopes of eventual abolition. This is so important because as we have seen, policing has not prevented crime, and police have often used their power to intimidate and harm communities of color. To better communities, we need to fund them in ways that do not perpetuate violence and gets to the heart of inequality. Please put funding towards the community and not towards the police. Thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,

Sophie Freedman

Hello St. Paul City Counsel,

I am emailing you today to remind you that if you seek to decrease crime, decrease hate, decrease white supremacy, if you seek to increase quality of life, increase care, increase community there is an answer. It might not be the easiest thing to do, it might not be the safest political choice, it might piss off some of your privileged white neighbors but if you seek to better your community, to leave a loving legacy that uplifts your community then you know what you must do. It is well past time to defund the police.

It is your job to protect all of your constituents, not just your white constituents nor just your affluent constituents, but ALL your constituents.

This community belongs to all of us. We all deserve to feel safe walking down the street. It's truly not that complicated, when those charged to serve and protect, murder and harass instead then the checks and balances of our government must work to protect the people. it is not only your duty but what the people pay you to do. You must protect us. you and only you, have the capacity to check the police department's unharnessed violence against our BIPOC and homeless neighbors. If you continue to empower them in their violence, may the escalations of

the police force haunt you. may their murders, coverups, and violence against our community haunt you every damn day, because they will continue until they are halted in their tracks.

Best regards,

Samantha Wolk

Hello St. Paul City Council Members,

I am writing you on behalf of those in our city that need defending and help the most. we can not in good conscious continue to increase police funding year after year when countless studies have showed that not only the police not stop crime (best case scenario they show up after it happens, worst case they show up to commit crime), but the thing that DOES reduce crime (investing in our communities) is consistently the money cut from. The simple truth of the matter is Donald Trump has empowered an already compromised group of individuals. White supremacist ideologies have been infiltrating our police forces more aggressively in the last 15 years, although we all know Police exist as an evolution of slave patrols, intended to protect property and harm black bodies. These systems may aim to protect us, but that is not the function they actively play in our communities. By reducing funding, we can send the message that they will not go unpunished any longer. The justice system refuses to hold cops who kill, rape and commit harassment accountable for their actions, so we need to look to other branches of government for answers. We need to check police power in this country or our system of checks and balances is powerless to stop them from harming our communities.

You have the opportunity to in this time and place, not have some radical experiment, but to do something that is shown to work. You have the opportunity in this time and place to support those that need it most, not the unbridled police force who commit not only crime with no consequence but murder.

This money could be significantly better spent housing unhoused community members who have been supported by their communities, rather than the city. We need to offer our people real solutions, real housing and real empathy. We are in the middle of a pandemic, there is mass unemployment, there are so many needs in the community that could be fulfilled with this money. so many people who could be housed. don't waste it on overtime pay so police can harass a few extra folks in a day. It's time to bridle our out of control police department.

Sourced materials:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5652551/>

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/103113NCJRS.pdf>

<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/community-organizations-have-important-role-lowering-crime-rates>

<https://www.justsecurity.org/70507/white-supremacist-infiltration-of-us-police-forces-fact-checking-national-security-advisor-obrien/>

Best Regards,

Samantha Wolk

Hello Council Members,

Police violence and apathy are at an all time high. The amount of money allocated for the police is inordinate. Studies have shown that the safest communities aren't the ones with the highest police or police budget, but the ones with the most community support and funding. Choose to house the homeless instead up supporting police brutality. Choose to fund public schools instead of supporting police brutality. Choose to engage with communities and community leaders instead of funding police brutality.

Reallocate funds to truly help your community.

Don't increase the police budget.

Cheyenne Kern

Dear St. Paul City Council,

My name is Paisley Rodriguez, and I am a New Hope resident. I am urging you to please decrease the St. Paul Police Department's funding. For the past several years, the police budget has been increasing. This year there is a proposed \$3,764,522 increase for 2021, and this is absolutely unacceptable. Time and time again the St. Paul Police Department has not shown up for everyone in the community. It is their duty to serve and protect every individual. Instead, they have harassed dozens of community members, and committed atrocities against BIPOC and people experiencing homelessness. This money would be much more helpful in funding community initiatives and creating sustainable housing for people experiencing homelessness. Providing funding to these places is far more effective in creating safer, equitable, and flourishing communities than further supplying the St. Paul Police Department with this increase ever will. Providing this increase to the St. Paul Police Department will result in further harassment, violence, and unjust treatment of St. Paul civilians. Please decrease funding towards the St. Paul Police Department.

Thank you,

Paisley Rodriguez

Dear St. Paul City Council,

My name is Paisley Rodriguez, and I am a New Hope resident. I am urging you to please decrease the St. Paul Police Department's funding. For the past several years, the police budget has been increasing. This year there is a proposed \$3,764,522 increase for 2021, and this is absolutely unacceptable. Time and time again the St. Paul Police Department has not shown up for everyone in the community. It is their duty to serve and protect every individual. Instead, they have harassed dozens of community members, and committed atrocities against BIPOC and people experiencing homelessness. This money would be much more helpful in funding community initiatives and creating sustainable housing for people experiencing homelessness. Providing funding to these places is far more effective in creating safer, equitable, and

flourishing communities than further supplying the St. Paul Police Department with this increase ever will. Providing this increase to the St. Paul Police Department will result in further harassment, violence, and unjust treatment of St. Paul civilians. I urge you to please decrease funding towards the St. Paul Police Department.

Thank you for your time,

Paisley Rodriguez

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today, as a citizen of St. Paul, to ask that the City Council not increase police funding in the new budget.

What we need in this city is increased support for marginalized communities, who need support more now than ever thanks to COVID-19, not more money going to the police. Communities should be given the resources to keep themselves safe because the police have proven again and again that they are not up the job. This funding could go to increased affordable housing for the houseless people that are about to have to survive the Minnesota winter outside, to mental health professionals who are better equipped to cope with mental health crisis than the police, to more education funding to prepare people for life, the list goes on.

We've tried giving more funding to the police, and it has failed. Let's try something else and be a model for the rest of the country. St. Paul is capable.

Thank you,

Helen Meigs

Dear city council members,

I write as a concerned resident of St. Paul. As you deliberate on next year's budget, it is **ASTRONOMICALLY IMPORTANT** that you move to substantially defund the St Paul Police Department and invest in our community.

SPPD has committed atrocities. They have done more harm to our people than help, although that is their supposed role.

Every day members of our community are met with hostility and violence by the police force. Our Black, Brown, Indigenous, disabled, trans, homeless neighbors -- the most vulnerable in our community -- are statistically and repeatedly treated the worst by the very service which is sworn to protect us.

As a resident who lives and works in this community, the last thing I want to fund through my taxes is the further traumatizing of my fellow community members -- which is exactly what our current police force does.

By defunding the SPPD, we can reinvest in our community. We can build a St Paul where everyone is cared for. Every day in our city homeless individuals are antagonized by the police -

- what if we divested from their violent force and instead invested resources to house ALL St Paul residents? This is the St Paul I dream of -- where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Vulnerable members of society should be met with governmental support but instead are met with police violence. You have the power to change lives in our community for the better or for the worst.

I ask you to defund the police, and reinvest in our community.

Sincerely,

Rachel Liebherr

--

Rachel Liebherr

she/her/hers

Russian studies major | Art history, English minors

Macalester College '21

Dear Councilmember Tolbert,

I am a constituent of Ward 3, emailing in regard to Mayor Carter's proposed 2021 budget. While there is much to commend in it — especially the guaranteed income pilot program, it falls vastly short of rising to the occasion of the current civil rights movement of which the Twin Cities is the epicenter, and is misrepresentative of the desires of the people of Saint Paul. What rests on the shoulders of this budget proposal is the opportunity to incite a true change in the face of all which has befallen our country in the past months, a chance to take what has been seen and learned and apply it to bettering this city and our country.

To be specific, I have a great deal of worry about the quantity of money allocated to the St. Paul police department. Reports earlier in the summer indicated that Mayor Carter would direct a cut of \$9.2 million dollars from SPPD — a pittance, given that the department's 2020 budget was \$105,539,797, just shy of a third of the *entire St. Paul city budget* — but at least a start. Even that, however, has fallen through. Instead, the mayor's 2021 budget proposal cuts only \$801,000 (0.8%) from the SPPD budget. This is both by percentage and absolute value a smaller cut than those to the public library agency; public works; safety and inspections, and parks and recreation. In the middle of a pandemic and recession which has led to rising homelessness and poverty, it is frankly despicable that two services those who lack access to a safe place to sleep or work depend on most — libraries and parks — are being cut more than the already bloated department which is responsible for the murders of Philando Castille, Ronald Davis, and many others.

Police departments are reactive institutions. They respond to calls, and not before, and in many cases, especially when they are interacting with Black citizens of this city, they perpetuate the cycle of violence instead of stemming it. What St. Paul needs is a shift of focus towards prevention. A more than marginal percentage of the hundred million dollars that are currently being funneled into the

police department should be reallocated to programs that promote social good, not punishment. That money should be preventing libraries from being defunded; should be funding the guaranteed income pilot, mental health support, programs to get guns off of streets, youth programs, schools, COVID-19 testing — funding, in short, *the proactive needs of the community*. This is a moral issue. The St. Paul Police Department has this year been able to escape the spotlight shone on Minneapolis, Louisville, and Kenosha because it has not yet had another Philando Castille, George Floyd, Jacob Blake, Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain, Sandra Bland, or Tony McDade. But sooner or later, similar violence will be perpetrated by SPPD, similar deaths will occur in our city. That is the nature of American policing, and it must be pulled up at the root.

To that end, I urge Mayor Carter and the City Council to reconsider the currently proposed miniscule cut to SPPD. It should be much larger — at a bare minimum the \$9.3 million Mayor Carter initially proposed. The city of Saint Paul has the opportunity to be proactive instead of reactive to crime. As Mayor London Breed has done in San Francisco, reallocating police department funds to vitalize the aforementioned proactive services will make our city more just and equitable for all of its citizens.

Sincerely,
Seamus McCarthy
Ward 3

Good evening,

I am a resident of Saint Paul who enthusiastically endorses a redirection of funds from our police department into social services that will actually take care of our neighbors. Saint Paul police have not once made me feel safe. Instead, these so-called "public servants" make me fear for my fellow residents of the Twin Cities, many of whom are houseless, who need support but instead are only met with violence from these officers. Saint Paul needs to invest in its neighborhoods rather than patrol them with tasers, batons, and guns. Where is our public housing? Where is our rent control? Where is our plan to care for victims of addiction? Where are all these programs that will prevent violence from taking place? Why do we insist on accepting the inevitability of this utterly manageable human suffering and choose to spend our budget on more violence? What is preventing us from ending harm, beyond our lack of imagination?

Wishing for a future free of fear,

Adam

To whom it may concern,

I hope you are well during these trying times. I email tonight because I am a concerned member of our St. Paul Community and am distraught by the calls to increase police funding.

I urge you to have an imagination- of what true community support could look like. This means that when there is a crisis, people are able to call a number and are met with the support they need- whether medical, mental, etc. Hundreds of homeless people in St Paul are met with violence from the police- what could happen if they were instead met with government support?

It has been proven that increasing police does not decrease crime. (Vitale, "The End of Policing"). In fact, it disrupts community trust and care. I do not need to recount the lives taken at the hands of police for you to be reminded of this. Approximately 1,000 civilians are killed by police each year (<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01846-z>).

Please, defund the police.

Kind regards,

Clare Mazack

Hello,

For this upcoming year, in the midst of the COVID 19 Pandemic, major shifting of the national government and increasing tensions between the people and the police, I am writing to ask you to DECREASE the Police budget and use that money to fund the community. Funding the police and increasing militarization of the police will lead to the deaths of more of your citizens. We need you, as our council members, to fund actual solutions like housing and mental health resources. In doing so, this will decrease crime rates and save lives.

Please think of all the people in this city who are being persecuted and killed by the police and do not increase this budget.

Thank you,

Dio Cramer

Hello,

I am a St Paul resident and I believe that we need to decrease our police budget and put the money back into the community. The money should be redirected into affordable housing (actually affordable) and mental health supports.

Thank you,
Conor Burk

Hello,

With next year's budget on the line, I wanted to weigh in on the decisions that will affect all members of the St. Paul community. Police funding vastly overshadows all other budget items, and leaves community organizations that work to directly impact the daily lives of community members with little to work with.

Community organizations that focus on human impact, aid for those in need, education, child care services, health and wellbeing of people, and other such projects are in dire need of funding to help them survive and thrive and truly reach the people who need these organizations' services. Focusing the majority of funding on the police force does not directly help individuals in the community in their daily lives. People need more than armed officers patrolling the streets to feel safe and fulfilled. They need food, shelter, financial security, mental health support, arts and recreation, and so on. If people don't have enough food or the money to pay the electric bill, seeing yet another brand new police vehicle drive past won't help them feel supported.

The police budget could stand to lose some funding. The police organization would be absolutely fine if more of the budget were allocated to these grassroots community services that focus on direct impact in the community. Community members do not want more policing and patrolling. They need more services to help them simply exist in the world and thrive in their daily lives and health.

It is the job and duty of the city to support all its members - the homeless and down-on-their-luck most of all. These people need support. They need shelter, food, and clothing. They need a sense of safety and the empowerment to feel like a human being. These folks don't want to be where they are at any more than the police want them to be there, and they certainly don't deserve violence for having been dealt a tough hand. Community members need support, not violence and derision. Put the money we definitely have towards those in need rather than funnelling it into wasting resources and purchasing more new cars and supplies the police do not actively need.

Thank you for your time.

Avery

Hello,

My name is Ingrid Topp-Johnson. I am a lifelong Saint Paul Resident, always having lived on the city's West Side. My family's roots here go back five generations. I love this city for its beauty, its true uniqueness, and its people. Very little harms the people of Saint Paul as much as the Saint Paul Police department does. I have a vision for Saint Paul that I hold very close to my heart, one where people are not harassed for having no option but to live out in the elements, one where housing is a right of every resident. It is unconscionable to me that when faced with such a visible sign of Saint Paul not working for all who live here (homelessness), City Council would fund the organization that meets poverty with violence (Saint Paul Police). If you love Saint Paul, I hope you will commit to defunding the Police Department and redirect that money to programs that ensure the well-being of all our citizens. Doing so is not only the morally right thing to do, but you will also be on the right side of history. Sooner than later we will all realize the purpose and power of government is to empower people to take care of each other, why not start now.

With Attention,

Ingrid Topp-Johnson

Hello,

My name is Abby Thomsen and I am an alum of Macalester College. As you debate the budget for next year's City Council, I ask you to foreground the push for police abolition.

Please re-direct funds that go to SPPD to community organizations and solutions. Currently SPPD are the main government employees who interact with people experiencing homelessness. All our citizens, especially those unhoused, deserve to be met with resources and kindness as opposed to police violence. I also write to remind you of the murder of Philando Castille at their hands. As city council members, your job is to care for our most vulnerable community members, and that includes defunding the police who routinely brutalize, terrorize, and murder our Black neighbors.

Thank you,

Abby Thomsen

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Abby Thomsen '20

she/her/hers

Anthropology

Hello,

I wanted to weigh in on plans for the St. Paul budget. As it is a hot topic this year, I am focusing on police budget funding. We all know that the police receive an exorbitant share of the city's budget. Indeed, this continually has been increasing (while crime has not been decreasing). It may be a politically fraught topic, but the reality is pouring more money into policing does NOT create safer communities.

We have seen this in data and we have heard this qualitatively from community members across the city and state. And we know it intuitively if we take the time to think about it: safety for communities comes from stability in the lives of community members. By that logic we should invest in community members through improved and more access to services, better built environments and justice in transportation, better education and employment opportunities, etc etc etc. WE KNOW THIS.

It is now your job to act on this and re-invest in communities the RIGHT WAY by divesting from reactive and ineffective policing (which is not immune from errors in human judgement like classism and racism, no matter what they think about themselves) and moving that money into the actual communities that need to be served.

I am confident you will make the right decision with the city budget. Thank you for your time and service.

Respectfully,

Lisa Murray

1303 Osceola Ave

St. Paul, MN 55105

651 343 7589

Hello,

I am writing this with hopes you will take my words into consideration. Defund the police and instead, fund our community!

I encourage the council to listen to the people of St. Paul and use next year's budget to support the community, especially with the increased stressors relating to the pandemic. The hundreds of homeless people in St. Paul do not need police harassing them, they need housing! BIPOC have been victimized by the SPPD. You all have an opportunity to change history! Be an example for the rest of the country! It can be done. Listen to the research. Help support education, low income housing, rehabilitation centers, and mental health services!

No one is saying we don't need police. However, if you channel the city's funds into other resources, it is possible to lower crime and the need for a heavy police presence. That way, SPPD can stick to focusing on real criminals and leave innocent homeless people, BIPOC, those with addiction, and those struggling with mental health ALONE.

Thank you
Morgan Himeline

Dear City Council members,

As we enter Minnesota's coldest season, with the added complication of a pandemic and the accompanying economic downturn, you all have the power and responsibility to choose how to use the city's budget to serve the residents of Saint Paul. I have look as at the proposed budget and seen that the single largest line item is Police, which, at 122.33 million, is funded nearly 100 times more than Public Health (1.89 million).

This is a travesty, particularly in the current circumstances in which poverty, homelessness, and hunger are increasing at an alarming rate and COVID cases are skyrocketing in Minnesota. As our elected officials, your job is to care for our community, especially the most vulnerable among us. The hundreds of unhoused people currently living in encampments in Saint Paul are not made safer by the continued investment in policing; in fact they are made less safe. You, as city council members, have the power to make our community a safer place by funding programs to get people into safe and warm housing before the worst of the winter weather gets here. This is going to be a long, hard winter, and if we want genuine public safety in this city we need investment in things that actually keep people safe: food assistance, housing assistance and tenant protections, addiction services, and COVID prevention.

Defund the police and fund true public safety and public health.

Sincerely,

Amy Manning

Dear Saint Paul City Council,

I want the government to support people's lives, not facilitate their deaths.

This means that, at the Saint Paul City Government level, I want money allocated to immediately house our unhoused residents instead of going towards our police department.

I'd rather Public Works have more money to plow and salt our streets so that there are less accidents.

I want to see the City provide direct funds to help people who are unemployed by the pandemic pay their rent and mortgages.

I want our schools to have the resources they need and our teachers to be paid more.

I want folks who aren't carrying weapons and who have the proper training to respond to safety crises in our community.

I want more mental health professionals to be employed to help people having a mental health crisis.

There just simply isn't a sufficient return on investment on the money spent on police. They don't prevent crime, and they don't solve enough crime. And pushing people into the criminal justice system damages people's lives and is an expensive use of tax payer dollars.

In short, move money from the police department to other departments that do more good in people's lives.

Sincerely,

Meridith

I am a St Paul resident.

Please support and protect our community members by shifting the funding and responsibility for responding to mental health issues, drug possession, and non-violent disturbances away from conventional armed policing, onto the COAST unit and other departments that are better

suited to address these issues by taking a non-violent approach, de-escalating the situation, and connecting people to the resources they need.

Thank you!

Vincent Ferguson

Dear Councilmembers,

I'm a resident of Highland Park (Councilmember Tolbert represents me on the City Council) and a white woman. As you engage in deliberation on next year's budget, **I'm writing to express my support for beginning the process of defunding the police and reallocating those funds across a multi-faceted, multi-year strategy that reimagines our approach to "law enforcement" and operationalizes a plan to develop and prove out new approaches to community health and safety.**

I acknowledge the complexity of this work, how many intersections are necessarily engaged in this work, and how many years - centuries - of history anchor our current system of policing. And yet, we must do better, and to do better, we must do differently.

Like many white-bodied people who operate with and benefit from white privilege, I've experienced blistering hindsight this year. I've also gotten clearer about some things, one of which is this: because I can't fully know the experience of BIPOC community members, I must listen to and rely on their perspectives for truth-telling, vision-casting, agenda-setting, and ultimately policy-making. This is not to say that I or white people broadly should sit on the sidelines or not 'do the work' alongside - indeed, white people must take up substantially more burden in the fights for justice. But it is to say that because there are some things I literally can't experience as a white-bodied person, I must hear and believe the experiences of BIPOC community members as primary inputs to my own perspectives, opinions, and advocacy.

On some level, the police system was designed to protect my body; to protect the white woman's body, including historically as property. My lived experience with police is neutral, unmemorable, even a sort of vague but pleasant sense of being protected - *not even a factor* in my daily living. Because of this, I have no choice but to prioritize the lived experience of my neighbors for whom our system of policing creates daily trauma, risk, and life-threatening violence.

Please begin the process of defunding the police and investing in community-led design of healthy and safe communities.

Thank you for your service and courage during this extraordinary time.

Sarah Hunt

St. Paul, MN

SARAH HUNT

612-618-1219 (c)

she / her / hers

St. Paul City Council,

I am emailing as a concerned citizen of the Twin Cities to urge you to decrease St. Paul's police budget. As you are deliberating on next year's budget, I ask that you consider alternatives to the police instead of funneling all funding toward them.

The police this year especially has acted atrociously. They routinely cause harm to so many community members, whether protestors making their voices for change heard or people experiencing homelessness just trying to live their lives. Your job as City Council is to care for the entire community, and it is our most vulnerable populations that are in need of the most care right now. The police have proven they are not the solution; community-based care is.

Please consider shifting funding toward community efforts, mental health services, education, or whatever other community-based aid resources you may be able to divert funding to. Any increase to the police budget should be opposed.

Regards,
Emma Lacroix

Hello!

I'm a student in the Saint Paul public school district and I am writing to reinforce our state's need, and power, to defund the police and actually support the people. We know that you are currently deliberating on next years budget and we hope for you to keep in mind the voice of the people, not just their wallets.

Defunding the police does not mean chaos and riots. Peaceful protests and riots have arisen *because* of the lack of actual community and safety value that the police provide. Defunding the police would give us the resources to take care of the thousands who are now jobless and homeless due to this pandemic and a lack of affordable housing. People who are not helped and supported by the police in a great time of need, but instead threatened by our SPPD and MPD.

Your job is to care for our community, especially our most vulnerable neighbors and we believe in you. We are the people you swore to protect and serve, now fight to bring us justice!

Proud St. Paul born and raised ,

Solei C.

Student and daughter

Hello,

My name is Oslo Martin. I am a St Paul resident and I'm writing today to express dissent with those community members who wish to increase police funding on the city budget. Instead, I believe the city needs to take money out of the policing budget and invest it back in our community. Over these past weeks, we have seen the effects of an overfunded police department on our homeless population. Hundreds of homeless individuals have been met with police violence and evictions in St Paul, rather than the support they deserve through low-cost housing solutions. Increasing funding to police departments is therefore not the solution! Instead, we must show our homeless community that they are worthy of government support. To city councilmembers: it is up to you to provide care to the community, including the most vulnerable members of our population. To increase police funding is to blatantly invalidate the experiences of the most vulnerable, and ensure that such violence will continue.

Please do not increase the city's policing budget. Instead, defund the Saint Paul police department!

~Oslo Martin

Hello,

I'm a neighbor who lives at 1185 Goodrich in St. Paul. I'm urging the council to protect our neighbors by investing in community first and defunding the police.

Hundreds of people in St Paul alone are living outside and met with police violence & aggression instead of programs that can help them get affordable housing and into more stable life situations. It's appealing to me that we allow people anytime to have no place to go, but especially during a pandemic, and with winter coming. Our city leaders should be prioritizing preventive and supportive programs that have been proven successful and strengthen community. Pouring funding into police budgets is not only wasteful, but it does not make crime go away and it disproportionately negatively affects Indigenous, Black and People of Color neighbors. It's 2020, and St. Paul can do much better.

There's also no shortage of other public services like libraries, parks, education that could surely use the funding always. These programs impact more people in a positive way as shown time and time again.

Please put community over police funding. Let's walk the walk and truly make St. Paul be one of the most livable cities in the US.

Thanks,
Emily Regan

Defund the police--

CARLYN SHANLEY

414.241.2571

Hello St. Paul City Council,

I support the City council completely defunding the city police and replacing it with non-violent mental health responders and targeted social supports for areas and communities with high crime. Our city needs to move past the racist, violent, oppressive system of policing that relies on armed and dangerous individuals granted the power to kill anyone with cover of law and the courts. This system systematically oppresses my neighbors and friends of color, constantly and aggressively surveilling their every move, stopping them all the time to ensure they know their time and lives belong to the cops, and regularly abusing them with physical and psychological violence to try to keep living in constant fear. This system is cruel.

It also fails to stop violence. The numbers show that police hardly solve robberies, and rarely stop murders, only showing up afterwards to arrest someone. They're main role seems to be to keep black and brown St. Paulites under constant fear. If all those resource were instead used to economically and socially and psychologically support the struggling black and brown members of this city, there would be less violence, and everyone's lives would be better.

Please defund the police!

--

Nash Hall

Pronouns: he/him/his



Virus-free. www.avg.com

Defund and abolish the Saint Paul police department if you truly care about what is best for the community.

The SPPD are racist

Unfit to handle the situations they are being tasked to do And already over funded Pouring more resources into the police rather than reallocating that funding to organizations which are already able to handle these situations is the only logical solution.

Do what you were elected to do and protect the community that you serve by defunding SPPD

I am begging you.

Sincerely,

Helen Frieman
1849 Portland Ave. Apt. 2
Saint Paul, MN 55104
Helenfrieman@yahoo.com

As a constituent of ward 4 I implore you to defund the St Paul Police department.

Reallocate the millions of dollars that are siphoned into the department to help our neighbors in need and to fund community programs!

Please use the funds from SPPD to fund programs to address our city's unsheltered population who are your neighbors!

In today's political climate adding more funds to the coffers of SPPD will not be the look you will want to have in the long run.

Stand on the right side of history and fund community programs instead of a department that wreaks havoc in our communities.

DEFUND

To whom it may concern,

In the wake of the election and after a summer of righteous rage due to racial inequality and systemic injustice the message of those who you seek to “protect and serve” is clear. You, as member of the city council, have an obligation to defund the St. Paul Police Department and invest in your community. As I write this message, hundreds of people are experiencing homelessness in the face of a long and cold winter. In what world does it make sense that these individuals be met with expensive police violence rather than compassion and government support (which, surprise, will cost much less). It is perfectly clear that the police are not fit to handle these situations, a fact that will not be fixed by pouring bottomless funding into their department. I promise you, it makes much more economic sense to defund the police, reinvest in the community, and allow us to heal and take care of ourselves in the way we know best. I sincerely hope that you make the right decision.

Helen Frieman

1849 Portland Ave. Apt. 2

Saint Paul, MN 55104

Pronouns: she/her

helenfrieman@yahoo.com

Hello,

I am a resident of St Paul, zip code 55116

I am emailing asking the council to REDUCE FUNDING to the SPPD! I am asking the funds directed towards policing to go towards housing and food security for my community.

Respectfully,

Muna

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To the Council,

I am a long time St. Paul resident and while this recent year has been overwhelming for many of us, no community has been hit harder than the people experiencing homelessness in this city. Unfortunately, instead of using community funds to support the most vulnerable in our society, this city has continually chosen to further punish those already dire circumstances. Instead of spending the limited resources we have to lift up our fellow residents, you all have supported the brutalization and criminalization of this population.

The over policing of the homeless community in this city needs to stop.

I am writing now to ask you to consider adjusting the St. Paul police budget to more accurately reflect the needs of the community. Shifting funds from punishing the vulnerable to supporting them will be the first step in challenging the inherent racism and classism of the system.

Sincerely,

Morgan Hazelton

To whom it may concern,

I am emailing in favor of abolishing the St. Paul Police Department.

There has not been an instance in my 27 years of life when the SPPD has ever made me feel safe or protected. In my early twenties, I was involved in protests after the murders of Jamar Clark by the MPD, and Philando Castille by the SPPD. Both police departments solidified through their own actions of furthered harm at protests and the 4th precinct occupation, that they were not present to keep any of us safe.

I'd like to speak to who and what HAS kept me safe in my lifetime. As a young poor person with two diagnosed disabilities, I have been kept safe solely through community efforts and mutual aid funds that maintain my autonomy.

When I lost housing in 2016 due to unreasonably expensive housing in the cities, I was taken in by a community member for several months at no cost so that I could get back on my feet. I can't help but think about the numbers of unhoused folks currently experiencing deep harm by the SPPD every time they are evicted from their camps. And how we could reallocate SPPD's AMPLE funds into free housing.

I was diagnosed with mono in 2019, and my community showed up for me consistently to make sure I was getting my needs met. Folks checked in with me consistently, came to clean my home and walk my dog. They made sure I had enough food and got my medications.

The SPPD have NEVER aided my community. Abolish the SPPD. If any of their officers actually wanted to be of service to community, they'd become social workers, or better yet - they'd become active community members devoted to benefitting their neighbors (like many of my loved ones who have been aiding our unhoused neighbors this summer/fall).

Thank you,
Emeline O'Hara
(507)696-3868

Hello members of St. Paul City Council and executive assistants,

I hope you're all doing well and staying safe. I'm writing today because I know the Council is ironing out the city budget for the coming year, and I'd like to once again voice my belief that the SPPD's budget should be decreased in favor of increasing investment in other areas. St. Paul can support community garden efforts, farmers markets, educational support and opportunities, public health, housing, and more.

As I review the current proposed 2021 budget, I am dismayed to see just how much is tentatively allocated to the police (\$122.33 million as of this writing) vs. the relatively paltry \$1.89 million tentatively allocated to public health. Public health does not comprise even 1% of the current proposed budget. This would be alarming to me at any time, but during a global pandemic, I am very concerned by this. I'm also disappointed to see the relatively low amount allocated to the Community Development Block Grant program. Would it not make more sense to invest in St. Paul communities through this program? Couldn't this program address some of the factors that Police Chief Todd Axtell himself has pointed out as issues police are called on to address but are unequipped for?

In past presentations to the City Council, Chief Axtell has noted that the police department is sometimes tasked with addressing issues that would be better addressed through other programs: housing/homelessness, education, community investment, etc. Why not reallocate some of the SPPD budget to those very areas to support the people of St. Paul and minimize police interference in their lives? Why not use some of those funds to support people experiencing homelessness in St. Paul and work toward a workable, sustainable solution for keeping those folks safe and cared for? Instead of meeting those people with police force, intervention, violence?

Regardless of an individual officer's or department's track record, policing is an institution that is built on racism and, as such, cannot be reformed into something that will equitably serve all people. Time and time again, we have seen how police officers and departments have interfered in people's lives from profiling to outright murder. Reforms have been attempted over and over with little change in the overall character of policing or outcomes. I shouldn't have to invoke the long list of black people murdered by police. I know you're familiar. They should all be alive today. Police should not murder people. That's why I see defunding police and investing in other community measures as the solution. This won't happen overnight. It's not easy, but it's possible.

To me, it's clear. Invest in our communities, and they will flourish. Provide long-term support to programs and solutions crafted by those communities, and St. Paul will flourish.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this message. I trust you will do the right thing to support the people of St. Paul.

All the best,

Theresa J. Beckhusen

St. Paul, Ward 1

Dear St. Paul City Council,

I am a lifelong Minnesotan and have resided in St. Paul since 2005. My family and I live here because we love the communities within St. Paul for all that they offer, including diversity of people and how much neighbors and city residents care for each other.

As you do your work, representing the people of St. Paul and their interests, I ask that you seriously discuss defunding the police and redirecting the budget to programs and services that address our city's most basic human needs - housing, education, health care.

Right now, there are hundreds of people in St. Paul experiencing homelessness, and rather than being met with the support of the city, we instead send in the police. How does this help?

People have been left without the resources they need. Jobs and livelihoods will take a long time to recover. And most of all, Black citizens of St. Paul continue to live in a city that is currently upholding the St. Paul Police Department, which has brutalized and taken too many Black lives. This is a time for action, not empty gestures and suggestions of possible changes.

I call on the St. Paul City Council to take the following actions -

1. Redirect funds divested from policing to provide educational opportunities for communities impacted by police violence.
2. Commit resources to support community-led alternatives to policing.

3. Propose plans for ensuring the safety of Black and other marginalized people in our community from racial profiling by police and other security forces with input from members of the marginalized communities themselves.

I look forward to seeing you lead this important change.

HaiVy Thompson

1774 Palace Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55105

End all financial support of the St Paul Police Department. Reallocate funding to address the root social issues that plague our communities. Reject the racist policing policies that have lead to our communities being further traumatized and oppressed.

You have the power to allocated Millions of dollars from SPD to end poverty, housing/food insecurity, and expand mental health programs. Replace SPD with skilled professionals who are trained in de-escalation & DO NOT USE DEADLY FORCE.

Our city had been filled with violence perpetrated and escalated by the St Paul Police Department. End it now. Defund SPD.

Sincerely,

Anastasia Zink, PhD

--

Anastasia Zink

(651)233-4302

zink.anastasia@gmail.com

Too many people are not able to access safe housing and meet basic hygiene needs. These hardships have never been more dire than during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Immediately stop park evictions and provide housing alternative.

Budget to end homelessness by converting empty hotels and stop relying on a broken system of shelters with insufficient beds.

Housing insecurity can be solved. Invest in individuals and communities instead of stigmatizing and erasing the problem from view.

Sincerely,

Anastasia Zink, PhD

--

Anastasia Zink

(651)233-4302

zink.anastasia@gmail.com

Hello,

As a saint paul citizen I am concerned about the recent call for the council to increase police funding. This year has shown that the problems our city faces cannot be solved by the police, not even a bloated and over equipped/funded force. Their presence, pepper spray, and national guard was a catalyst for turning protests to violent and destructive events. It is clear that we need the budget to attack our problems at their source--helping the homeless, jobless, and downtrodden citizens instead of funding the police to beat and arrest them.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ingrid Ebbesen, lifelong Saint Paul MN resident

To whom it may concern,

I am a twin cities resident deeply concerned for the health & wellbeing of my houseless neighbors, especially with winter quickly approaching. I am also deeply concerned with pervasive & aggressive police agitation and violence that NEEDS to end. **I am emailing to tell you how police are impacting our houseless neighbors and why it needs to be the**

council's top priority to defund the police and work towards complete abolition in favor of investing directly in community care.

We have a homelessness epidemic in St Paul & Minneapolis, and police presence & agitation only exacerbate an already overwhelming problem. Hundreds of people who are experiencing homelessness in St Paul are met with police violence rather than government support, from officers throwing their homes into dumpsters to agitating people trying to hold on to what little belongings & sense of community they've been able to build through community aid.

Your job is to care for our community, especially our most vulnerable neighbors, and continuing to invest in a police force that's only concerned with destruction & could care less about our citizens, you are showing your true colors.

Community members in St Paul have been showing up for each other every day through massive mutual aid efforts that show no signs of stopping. We have proved that we are capable of caring for our neighbors, and investing in true community care. **We are living proof that we need to invest funds in our community, not in a police force that's rooted in white supremacy and ill equipped to do their job.**

A city council's job is to engage with and invest in their community. Show us you take your jobs seriously by **defunding the police, investing in our communities, and ultimately doing the work to abolish the police state in favor of community care.**

In Solidarity,

Katy Hackworthy (she/hers)

Dear council members,

As a resident of St. Paul, I ask that you do not increase funding for St. Paul Police, and instead direct funds towards the community. Hundreds of people are experiencing homelessness in St. Paul right now and St. Paul's police are meeting them with violence rather than support. Funding the police will prolong and increase the violence against unhoused people, when those same funds could go towards finding them safe, dignified housing. Additionally, St. Paul police have committed a multitude of atrocities against community members, including the fatal shooting of civilian Ronald Davis in 2019, and many others. Funding police contributes the violence they commit against St. Paul community members. Again, I ask that you do not give into the demands of pro-violence, pro-policing groups and show that you care about the St. Paul community by directing funds towards community and not towards police.

Thank you,

Reena Shenoy

Dear Saint Paul City Council,

I am a young community member urging you to take steps towards abolition of the police. There are SO many community members, especially BIPOC, economically disadvantaged folks, and hundreds of people experiencing homelessness who are only met with police violence and harm. They are the most vulnerable in our community and if they are not benefiting from the police, what is the point? We must ask ourselves who benefits from the systems we have in place. If not everyone benefits, we must rethink our systems of safety.

For this reason, I urge you to redirect money from the police budget towards mental health care, housing, COVID relief, and community support.

Thank you for your time,

Emma Harrington

Hi!

My name is Grace Iverson, I am a life long resident of Minneapolis and work in SPPS. I understand that right now there is a counter movement to the BLM, anti-police brutality, and defunding the police efforts happening across our state right now, that citizens are concerned about their "safety" but mostly their property. Yet not enough attention is being paid to how the police are continuing to suck resources out of our communities and terrorize black people and people of color. Just this week we saw police and State troopers and Swat teams being paid for overtime to trap over 600 activists including kids and families for HOURS as they were finishing their PEACEFUL protest, which is their RIGHT. I watched on Unicorn riot as police slowly picked off people one at a time to arrest them and that they would carefully escort white people while briskly grabbing POC. The money that was spent terrorizing those activists and keeping the highway closed for hours could have been more meaningfully and effectively been spent to house the unhoused, create affordable housing, and contribute to long term solutions. By continuing to fund the police we are neglecting our most precarious individuals and families in our communities and cities.

While I know this was an incident that happened in Minneapolis, it is an example of what policing looks like across the US.

I'm guessing you will get many emails about reports of crime increases or feeling "unsafe" or talking about the encampments. It is very important to view these as part of the systemic problem that needs to be addressed. Due to COVID, increased unemployment, continuing evictions, and no stimulus or support from the government, people are not doing well. White middle class people who send you emails about wanting to increase the budget can do so because their lives have not been impacted in the way the unhoused, and low income workers have been.

As you read those emails, I request that you consider who has access to computer, email, time, knowledge of the budget meeting, and perceived sense of power or entitlement.

I ask that you consider how resources can be reallocated to address the needs of the people instead of punish and over police them.

I ask that white comfort would not be what determines the St Paul city budget, but that the needs of the communities more at risk population would be centered.

Thank you for your time,

Grace Iverson

Hello,

My name is Peyton Ordner. I am a young white resident of Minneapolis and was very impressed to see the solidarity and support for abolishing/defunding police during the George Floyd protests this summer. However, now that things have more or less “gone back to normal,” support for BLM has diminished and we are seeing surges of white supremacist support for Trump and police departments nationwide.

I know defunding and abolishing the police seems “too radical” for many who will decide on the police budget this year, so I deeply encourage you to read about it.

I didn't support it either until I read Black and Brown people's testimonies of why it's essential to their survival. Police have never existed FOR BIPOC folks. The system is fundamentally set up to devalue their lives, regardless of how many BIPOC or queer people are on the force. It doesn't CARE about individuals, it cares about sustaining itself and justifying its actions at all costs.

Perhaps I'm using “loaded terms” such as “the system” and such, but I also do have a degree in American History. I've read countless books about our flawed justice system, which at this point, I hope none of you are ignorant enough to think it isn't flawed at the very least.

I beg you— take the money you would spend on this police budget and put it towards social services for BIPOC and queer folks.

If you want to see fewer deaths, this is literally your best choice. If you choose not to, I hope you think very very hard about the consequences every time someone is killed by police in the next year.

Thank you so much for reading my somewhat blunt but important words,

Peyton Ordner

Hello,

I would like to add my concerns, as a citizen of Saint Paul, that the council look towards the future of the community it serves while deliberating on the budget for next year. The police are grossly overfunded for what they do, and they don't stop crime, they report after the crimes typically occur. Nearly every day, I see an armed police officer monitoring the traffic line at the corner of Marshall and Snelling at the Starbucks. And I always think to myself— why? Why do we have an ARMED police officer monitoring traffic? Why are we wasting our POLICE resources on THIS, when we could simply defund the police and put more of that money into hiring local people as crossing guards, rather than armed, trained police officers? It's also a known fact that the best way to reduce crime is by investing money into the community. When we have underserved communities that lack resources, there is more motivation to potentially commit a crime to acquire what one needs to survive. If we focused our time, money, resources and energy into creating a society in which every member was housed and fed and had their basic human needs met, we would see a society that actually functioned as a unit rather than as the divisive communities we see now.

It is incredibly important to take action to shape the future during this time. Maintaining the status quo doesn't leave much of a legacy. We all have an incredibly important niche to fill in this world, and we must fulfill that niche with bravery, kindness, and love, doing what is best for all, not just the wealthy few. Besides, capitalism as we know it is crumbling. I implore you to take a BRAVE stance now to do what is best for the community, rather than pander to the fear mongering. Our communities look after each other, and the volatile police presence is not helping us care for our neighbors. We need more money invested into community resources, and less predatory and violent police officers roaming the streets looking for their opportunity to be a "hero". We already have plenty of heroes in our communities feeding and nurturing the homeless, helping with mutual aid efforts for marginalized communities, and those are the people worthy of more funding to help their nonviolent cause.

The police force of this country is inherently a racist institution. It is in the legacy of the force, traced back to the founding of the institution as a means of capturing and returning escaped slaves to wealthy slave owners. When you are founded on such vicious, violent principles, that

legacy remains ingrained in the psychological and spiritual principles that the institution represents. There is no reforming that. We need a completely new system built on new principles.

But until then, please consider divesting money away from the police force and into organizations that actually, truly, CARE about the people in this community, rather than one that sees everyone as a potential threat. It is the only way to move forward with grace and love during these turbulent times.

Kind regards,

Isabella Cianciolo

Merriam Park

Hi Council Member Thao:

I urge you to further divest St. Paul from police. As a response to crime after it happens—and one that is rooted in racism and brutality—police do little to prevent crime before it happens. Interaction with the police and the criminal justice system can actually lead to poverty, mental distress, experiences of violence (from the police) and other risk factors for violence perpetration. See more here: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>

Meanwhile, we have the ability to create communities that have conditions that prevent crime. We do that by doubling down on protective factors. Supports for families to be healthy and students to do well academically and with extracurricular opportunities (such as after-school programming at libraries) can all serve to protect against perpetration or victimization of crime. Police presence does not lead to any of this. Fund community supports and resources and you will see an actual decrease in crime—stop overfunding the police. It is not enough to do this just because it's what we've always done and it makes only part of the community you serve feel safe.

Thank you,

Katherine Lymn

Ward 1

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Hello,

At this point in time I have been made aware of an organization who has set up spam messages to increase Saint Paul's police funding. I want to email the council today to let them know that this is not the majority of Saint Paul residents.

I would like to be known that funding for the Saint Paul Police should be decreased, not increased. The Saint Paul Police Department has caused its community collective trauma and suffering through its willing negligence to prevent and through its direct action which has caused the death of its citizenship. It employs the use of facial recognition software which is known for its racial bias.

St Paul is familiar with this type of change and is able to do so. Invest in our communities not in an officer holster or their hours. Saint Paul can lead the charge. Do not let this pro-police organization's spam mischaracterize the will of Saint Paul. DIVEST.

Saint Paul Citizen,

Joshua T. Medley

<https://m.startribune.com/five-st-paul-police-officers-fired-for-failing-to-intervene-in-assault/511254182/>

<https://m.startribune.com/online-survey-reveals-dozens-of-allegations-of-st-paul-police-misconduct/512305592/>

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.mprnews.org/amp/story/2013/02/14/troubled-st-paul-crime-lab-problems-even-worse-than-first-thought-probe-reveals>

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.bloomberg.com/amp/opinion/articles/2020-06-25/in-st-paul-police-reform-is-working>

<https://www.aclu.org/news/privacy-technology/how-is-face-recognition-surveillance-technology-racist/>

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Joshua Timothy Medley (He/Him/His)

Normandale Student Senate President and LeadMN Intern.

There is a real homeless problem in St. Paul that is met frequently with police force and violence. The cops do NOT need more money. Money should be directed towards more social programs and crisis intervention. SPPD is one of the most well-funded PDs in the nation. Our citizens deserve better than to have more militarized responses to systemic racism and oppression. MORE POLICE FUNDING WILL NOT PREVENT CRIME. We can support the police by abolishing violent policing and funding programs to lift people out of poverty, to fund affordable housing projects and develop relationships between our communities and government. Police do not need any extra money. They need training on how to compassionately deal with those they are sworn to protect.

Jen

Hello Council Members,

As a resident of St. Paul, I have been deeply disturbed this past year seeing how, even at the height of a pandemic, we are still unable to help our houseless community members. I have watched unpaid volunteers scramble to provide care to our houseless community members on shoe-string budgets cobbled together from social media fundraising. Meanwhile, the only help the city seems capable of providing is a violent police force who does nothing but force homeless individuals to constantly relocate. St. Paul can do better. We don't need more police officers, or more weapons of war in our community. We need to invest in housing, and services that lift our community members up. I'm calling on our city council to defund the police and re-allocate those funds to housing.

Best,

Maria Mens

Hello.

I am writing to you today to show my support for defunding the St. Paul Police Department.

Throughout the last few months, there have been too many instances of police brutality, unnecessary violence or arrests, and too much responsibility and reliance on the police force. The police have violently attacked the homeless rather than help. They have attacked peaceful protestors. They have wrongfully arrested and attacked many BIPOC simply for their race.

I am proud of my state. Minnesota is known for its progressive ideals and kind people, but the police do not represent this. They represent a minority of racists and perpetrators who use violence for their own good. Police are meant to assist a community, support them. Their first goal should always be the people first, but they have made the system selfish and irresponsible to the communities of Minnesota.

The system itself needs to change. With the police force based on the slavery police and having heavy ties to white supremacy, it needs to change. Funding should go to mental health services, schools, healthcare, after school programs, arts, and so many other areas that already benefit communities. There are too many statistics that show how changing the system would benefit communities, the people, and the government.

Based on third-grade test scores, they can predict how many beds are needed in prisons.

Black people are shot at twice the rate of white people by police.

82% of people in prison for misdemeanors are BIPOC.

The system needs to change. Minnesota could be the tipping point for the rest of the country. We can set an example of caring for the people rather than a false ideal of order that comes from the police and their use of violence. You have the power to change this and put money into what communities need, rather than what is forced upon them.

Thank you for your consideration.

--

Caroline Rutkiewicz
BA in Studies in Cinema and Media Culture

Phi Beta Kappa Honors

To whom it may concern,

My name is Megan Malotky and I am writing to you to voice my support for the city of St. Paul to begin taking the steps to defund and eventually abolish the police.

This topic is important to me because after educating myself on the history of the relationship between police and racism I do not believe that it is worth investing more money into a public service that is not serving the public!

I hold our city to a higher standard. There are examples all around the world where alternatives to police produce positive community relations.

A decision to not begin taking serious steps to defund the police would be a disservice to the people.

I am sure you are getting tons of pro-cop emails right now. I want you to ask yourself who you should be listening to, Derek Chauvin or George Floyd?

Please make the right choice and do not support funding for St. Paul PD. Let's improve our community in ways that support, strengthen, and lift up our neighbors. This is not a radical idea. Police have proven time and time again they can not be fixed.

Thank you

Megan

Hello!

I am writing in regards to the proposed city budget, specifically to request that the police budget be significantly reduced. In the past half year, people experiencing homelessness have been harassed and brutalized by police officers rather than met with dignity for the hardships they face. This is also true of people peacefully protesting in the name of black lives matter, immigrants, people with disabilities and women. The police are supposed to protect people,

especially our vulnerable neighbors. There are better options that can support rather than police resources. Please consider alternatives rather than continue to fund an organization that is known for hostility and lack of support for the whole community.

Thank you,

Jaimee Leibfried

Hello,

My name is Becca Simon. I'm writing to urge you to divest from policing and invest money in community resources and solutions.

We have hundreds of neighbors in St Paul who are facing homelessness. They are met with police violence and cruelty rather than support and investment in their wellbeing. Safe housing is a human right. They deserve our support and care.

St Paul Police have a history of violence including against our most marginalized and vulnerable communities. Increasing the police budget does not solve that. Defunding is the answer.

Thank you,

Becca Simon

Dear City Council members,

My name is Mae and I am a former St Paul resident who lived in Union Park neighborhood up until 2017. I am writing to you today to urge you to prioritize funding in the budget for people experiencing homelessness in St. Paul, and for the St. Paul Police Department.

The St. Paul Police Department's mission, per their website, is to "Protect the peace and maintain public safety through trusted service with respect." SPPD has consistently shown that the safety and dignity of our unhoused St. Paul neighbors is not a priority for them. Reliable, affordable housing is a critical piece of public health and public safety.

For hundreds of unhoused people in St. Paul, instead of receiving government support to ensure them shelter and essential services, they are met with police violence and disregard for their safety and long-term wellbeing.

I urge you to join your neighbors and fellow council members who support defunding the police, and use that money instead for short-term and long-term solutions to house more of our St. Paul community.

Thank you,

Mae Hanzlik

Former St Paul Resident

Hello St. Paul Council,

I am writing to express my concern over increasing police funding. Rather than bolster this form of public safety that is rooted in bias, I encourage defunding the police and redirecting resources to strengthen other forms of public safety such as mental health services, community deescalation training, and many other proven methods.

Thank you for your consideration,

Priscilla

Priscilla Trinh (she/hers)
Sustainable Systems Management, CFANS '22
Honors Program | Food Recovery Network
MNYI Co-coordinator | Hydroponics Researcher
trinh074@umn.edu | 952-737-3211

Hello,

My name is Meredith Song and I'm a resident of Minneapolis. I am emailing to express my support for councilmember Nelsie Yang and Mitra Jalali's stances to defund the St. Paul Police Department. As a neighbor who cares deeply about the unhoused, over-policed Black and Brown communities, and youth in our schools, I am urging you to support the defunding of SPPD. Policing as a system is rotten at its core, and it is time to stand on the side of justice and move towards defunding and reducing the power of SPPD to ensure true community safety.

Thank you,

Meredith Song

Hi,

My name is Madison Nelson and I currently attend The University of St. Thomas as a law student. I have lived in the Twin Cities for 5 years now and it has become widely apparent that we cannot trust the police. I have seen over and over again how marginalized communities consistently suffer at the hands of the police. Personally, I believe that the police as we know it needs to be abolished. There is no reason the people who hand out traffic citations need guns. Social workers should be the people working with sexual assault victims, the disabled, and the unhoused. The training time for a police officer is abysmal compared to most countries, it needs to be longer and more in-depth. As a law student, I also find it ridiculous that often police officers do not even understand or know the laws that they are supposed to be enforcing. This system is not only failing, it is killing innocent people, creating a bigger divide amongst people, and creating more distrust in our government (even more so at the local level). It is time we take the right steps moving forward. I know establishing a new system will be complicated, but it needs to happen. In the meantime, we need to defund (not completely, but by A LOT!) the police and put that money into the community. People need food, housing, and healthcare more than they need cops. Also, supporting people within the community has proven to be a better way to gain the community's trust as well as lessens the chances of crimes in the future. You have the power to make great change in this world by being a pioneer in creating a new system, a better system. We are counting on you.

Best,

Madison Nelson (she/her)

Dear City Council members,

My name is Ellen and I live in the Union Park neighborhood of St. Paul. I am writing to you today to urge you to prioritize support for people experiencing homelessness in St. Paul, and not increase the budget of the St. Paul Police Department.

For hundreds of unhoused people in St. Paul, instead of receiving government support to ensure them shelter and essential services, they are met with police violence and disregard for their safety and long-term wellbeing.

The St. Paul Police Department's mission, per their website, is to "Protect the peace and maintain public safety through trusted service with respect." SPPD has consistently shown that the safety and dignity of

our unhoused neighbors is not a priority for them. Reliable, affordable housing is a critical piece of public health and public safety.

I urge you to join your neighbors and fellow council members who support defunding the police, and use that money instead for short-term and long-term solutions to house more of our St. Paul community.

Thank you,

Ellen Fee

Hello Saint Paul City Council,

I am a resident of Ward 3 and would like to express my concern about the misplaced priorities in the proposed 2021 budget. A city that spends \$122 million on police, but only \$7 million on Public Health and Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity has made its value very clear. If we truly want to be the inclusive and caring city that we think we are, we need to spend money on things that help those most in need.

Thank you,

Ben Dimond

Dear Councilmembers -

My name is Rebecca Hare, and I live in St. Paul. I am writing to urge the Council to **defund and abolish the St. Paul Police Department and immediately invest directly in people in need of financial support, housing, legal support, and medical care.** This triple pandemic of racism, COVID-19, and an economic downturn is a time of crisis that needs a people-centered emergency response - and a new direction moving forward.

1. Police operate without real accountability and are a danger to the people of St. Paul.

Lack of accountability to the people they are hired to serve, lack of accountability within the city and their own department, and lack of accountability under our court system create an environment that is dangerous for everyone in this city -- and especially for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, who experience disproportionate effects of this lack of accountability.

2. Unnecessary police interaction and police use of force disproportionately harm low-income folks and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in St. Paul.

We need to move away from calling a 911 emergency line that dispatches guns and oppressive criminal

consequences. A militarized police should not be the face of interaction with city services and should not be a source of fear for the people of St. Paul. People should not fear for their lives or livelihood when the city dispatches public servants. Public servants should not carry lethal weapons or regularly use suppression against people. The uncriticized assumption that police are justified in violent use of force is antithetical to freedom and is state oppression.

3. **Overuse of the criminal system resulting from police encounters disproportionately impacts low-income folks and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in St. Paul.** Many so-called crimes criminalize living without a home. Moreover, the court system itself unfairly penalizes the poor far more than those with access to money -- with fines, fees, cash bail, and consequences for missing work in jobs without set schedules or paid time off. Police cruising around the city and targeting poor people with violations of the law hurts our city by piling disproportionate consequences on those who have the least ability to successfully weather them.

4. **We need a greater array of services that can respond to emergency situations that do not involve the possibility of police violence or criminal consequences.** We need a people-first approach that focuses on better outcomes for everyone and that starts with addressing root causes of incidents where police are currently called, and ill-equipped, to respond. To address much of the so-called crime in the city, we should be redirecting money that funds police to direct cash distribution to the people of St. Paul who are struggling financially. To address the intersection of so-called crime and mental illness, we need first responders who are professionally equipped to handle these situations and do not have lethal weapons.

These reasons in support of abolishing and defunding the police are supported both by evidence and personal experience and observation. I have seen unfair targeting of folks on the lightrail in St. Paul, declined to call SPPD for fear of what they might do to "handle" a situation that could leave individuals worse off than they were, supported people financially at desperate times who encountered obstacles to getting funds from the city, and witnessed mental health crises that did not need police response - and could have endangered their ability to find future housing.

We do not need police to address symptoms of poverty, to perpetuate racist systems, and to commit violence against the people they serve. Instead, we need first responders that put people first and **even more urgently, we need immediate direct cash distribution, housing, legal support, and medical care for people in need without bureaucratic requirements that frustrate access by those most in need.**

Sincerely,

Rebecca Hare

St. Paul, MN

Dear Councilmember Yang,

I have been told that the St. Paul City Council is currently deliberating on the next year's budget. I do not reside in St. Paul, but I have friends who do and the allocation of these funds will affect them a great deal. I stand in solidarity with them.

Many of my friends are experiencing homelessness in St. Paul and are being met with police brutality and trauma. They need and want support from their government. Please remember the atrocities that the SPD have committed in communities such as bulldozing encampments, the loss of property, traumatizing removal of people that creates further mental health issues in the midst of a pandemic. My husband and I have been going into the twin cities on the weekend to provide help, food, supplies, and donations to help house those who are in need. We believe in communities helping communities, but this cannot be done without your help too.

Your job of being on the Council is to care for the community you serve, especially the most vulnerable of neighbors.

DEFUND/ABOLISH the police and REINVEST in your community PLEASE.

Thank you.

LeAnn Livengood

Dear Councilmember Yang,

We are residents and constituents of St. Paul and am deeply concerned about the proposed cuts to the St. Paul Police Department. We've seen a huge spike this summer in crime, and cutting police when these crimes have already happened just means that more crimes will go unsolved. It's absolutely crazy to see in all the ways the city has found to spend our money on the nice to have items that do not further safety in any way. For us to have a safe and welcoming city, we need a police force which is able to respond to the calls for help when they happen and address the crimes when they are happening. Having lived across the street from one of St. Paul's many "drug houses" we had to call the police several times. We saw first hand how we need the police and depend on them.

Please oppose any efforts to reduce the size of the police force this year.

Sincerely,

William Langevin
1742 Cottage Ave E
Saint Paul, MN 55106
crlangevin@aol.com

Dear Councilmember Yang,

My Family is become my fearful of living here...the city we have been in for 25years. If the police force is cut and fewer officers are available to assist when crime happens, we be forced to consider leaving our long time home. I am deeply concerned about the proposed cuts to the St. Paul Police Department. We've seen a huge spike this summer in crime, and cutting police when these crimes have already happened just means that more crimes will go unsolved. It's absolutely crazy to see in all the ways the city has found to spend our money on the nice to have items that do not further safety in any way. For us to have a safe and welcoming city, we need a police force which is able to respond to the calls for help when they happen and address the crimes when they are happening.

Please oppose any efforts to reduce the size of the police force this year.

Sincerely,

Randy Adelsman
2118 Nebraska Ave E
Saint Paul, MN 55119
radelsman@hotmail.com

Dear Councilmember Yang,

I'm a lifelong resident of St. Paul. I work here, send my kids to school here, and shop here. I'm also a constituent of yours and am writing about a huge issue for me - the safety of our community. I think it's a fair expectation that we have a safe community supported by a police force able to do their work. With the pandemic we've seen even more crime. But instead of getting support and help police officers need, we learn the city is considering CUTTING 40 offices. This is wrong. So wrong for the victims of crime. So wrong for the safety of our community. Please fix this immediately.

I don't want increased crime in St. Paul. We need our police.

Sincerely,

Edward Xiong

2136 Ivy Ave E
Saint Paul, MN 55119
Edwar_xiong470@yahoo.com

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Sincerely,

Sara Naglosky
1015 Geranium Ave E
Saint Paul, MN 55106
saranaglosky@hotmail.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Carol Johnson <user@votervoice.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 5, 2020 2:00 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: DO NOT CUT POLICE!

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Dear Councilmember Yang,

Thank you for serving as our city council member.

I'm writing today to express my thoughts about the city's budget, particularly as it pertains to the police staffing levels.

I feel very strongly that EVERYONE in our city - regardless of where you live, what you look like, who you are - deserves a police force able to respond and help them and we can't do it with fewer officers because of budget cuts. I am extremely concerned about how the City Council is approaching dealing with expected shortfalls. I remember last year when a report showed that we needed much more police to respond to the increased crime and population.

We CANNOT remove 40 officers. That's shocking and disappointing. The need is greater than ever. Times are tough, but justice and public safety are critical services the city provides and should be preserved during budget discussions.

Again, thank you for your service and support for public safety.

Sincerely,

Carol Johnson
769 Case Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55106
crlajohns@aol.com

From: Mimi Hua <user@votervoicenet.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 5, 2020 9:41 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: DO NOT CUT POLICE!

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Again, thank you for your service and support for public safety.

Sincerely,

Mimi Hua
1600 Arlington Ave E
Saint Paul, MN 55106
mhua99@yahoo.com

From: Carolina Contreras <user@votervoicenet.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 9:38 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: DO NOT CUT POLICE!

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Again, thank you for your service and support for public safety.

Sincerely,

Carolina Contreras
1119 Barclay St
Saint Paul, MN 55106
Contreras6450@msn.com

From: Adeé Moua <user@votervoicenet.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 5, 2020 8:22 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: I oppose cuts to the police department

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Dear Councilmember Yang,

I live in your district, and love living in St. Paul. But the violent crime increases combined with the cuts and lack of support towards the police is making me think twice about some politicians' values. Too many people I know have experienced the impact of crime from cars being broken into, robberies, or knowing someone who has been a victim of violence. If the police don't have the resources to pursue

those who commit these crimes, then those who committed the crimes just keep doing it again and again.

My family - and everyone's family - deserves to be safe. It is just wrong to cut the police department during this time of such great need.

I am firmly opposed to any budget moves that leave the police department smaller than it is today.

No cuts!!!

Sincerely,

Adee Moua
1269 Payne Ave Apt 1
Saint Paul, MN 55130
t.rewane.l@icloud.com

Dear Saint Paul City Council,

I am writing to urge you to divest from the Saint Paul Police Department and to invest in social services, public health, and housing for the homeless. The Saint Paul Police department harms the community more than it helps it.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Shuda

From: Jacob Jurss <jakejurss@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 25, 2020 4:33 PM
To: Yang, Nelsie (CI-StPaul) <Nelsie.Yang@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Comments on St Paul City Budget

Dear Councilmember Yang,

Please find attached my comments on the 2021 city budget.

Sincerely,

Jacob Jurss

From: LeAnn Livengood <leann.livengood@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 6, 2020 7:18 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: City Budget

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Dear Councilmember Yang,

I have been told that the St. Paul City Council is currently deliberating on the next year's budget. I do not reside in St. Paul, but I have friends who do and the allocation of these funds will affect them a great deal. I stand in solidarity with them.

Many of my friends are experiencing homelessness in St. Paul and are being met with police brutality and trauma. They need and want support from their government. Please remember the atrocities that the SPD have committed in communities such as bulldozing encampments, the loss of property, traumatizing removal of people that creates further mental health issues in the midst of a pandemic. My husband and I have been going into the twin cities on the weekend to provide help, food, supplies, and donations to help house those who are in need. We believe in communities helping communities, but this cannot be done without your help too.

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DEFUND/ABOLISH the police and REINVEST in your community PLEASE.

Thank you.

LeAnn Livengood

From: Mr. & Mrs. William Langevin <user@votervoice.net>

Sent: Friday, November 6, 2020 9:54 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Police department budget

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Dear Councilmember Yang,

We are residents and constituents of St. Paul and am deeply concerned about the proposed cuts to the St. Paul Police Department. We've seen a huge spike this summer in crime, and cutting police when these crimes have already happened just means that more crimes will go unsolved. It's absolutely crazy to see in all the ways the city has found to spend our money on the nice to have items that do not further safety in any way. For us to have a safe and welcoming city, we need a police force which is able to respond to the calls for help when they happen and address the crimes when they are happening.

Having lived across the street from one of St. Paul's many "drug houses" we had to call the police several times. We saw first hand how we need the police and depend on them.

Please oppose any efforts to reduce the size of the police force this year.

Sincerely,

William Langevin
1742 Cottage Ave E
Saint Paul, MN 55106
crlangevin@aol.com

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This is wrong.
So wrong for the victims of crime.
So wrong for the safety of our community.
Please fix this immediately.

I don't want increased crime in St. Paul. We need our police.

Sincerely,

Edward Xiong
2136 Ivy Ave E
Saint Paul, MN 55119
Edwar_xiong470@yahoo.com

From: Sara Naglosky <user@votervoicenet.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 5, 2020 10:10 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Cutting 40 people - please oppose

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Dear Councilmember Yang,

I'm a lifelong resident of St. Paul. I work here, send my kids to school here, and shop here.
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1015 Geranium Ave E
Saint Paul, MN 55106
saranaglosky@hotmail.com

From: Carol Johnson <user@votervoicenet.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 5, 2020 2:00 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: DO NOT CUT POLICE!

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Contreras6450@msn.com

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Saint Paul, MN 55130
t.rewane.l@icloud.com

Concerning the city council discussion on the budget, I urge city council members to drastically reduce police funding and invest that money in ways that better serve the community and help reduce the root causes of crime and instability. Police funding is a bottomless pit where tens of thousands of dollars are swallowed up to be mismanaged and weaponized against the community with zero accountability for criminal officers. There is no way to fix this problem through giving it more money. Any dollar given to the police department would be infinitely more valuable and better spent if put towards housing the homeless, youth education, or substance use rehabilitation. Do what is right for the community and invest in the marginalized while holding corrupt and criminal police accountable, or our city will see continued popular insurrection and protests. If you do not listen to reason through peacefully avenues like community petitions and emails from concerned citizens like this one, the only realistic outlet for change is massive, disruptive civil unrest. End your cowardice. Stop hiding from this.

Luce Sageser, St. Paul resident, Ashland & Pascal

Councilmember Prince, and the rest of the St. Paul City Council

I am deeply concerned about the priorities reflected in the proposed city budget for 2021. Despite the desire of the city council to push for community-first public safety, and a need to cut the city budget due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the city budget only proposes a 2% cut to our

police department, while multiple other departments are being cut by 10% or more, including departments that will help restore and build community. This is simply unacceptable. The police department is the largest portion of our budget, and the police department should be held, at minimum, to a similar level of cuts that the city is forcing onto other departments. This is doubly important if we wish to have the proper resources to move to a community-first public safety model, which requires moving funds from traditional policing to other resources, including our community centers, youth programming, and libraries.

Thank you,

Jeb Rach

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