

From: [Alan Richardson Hohn](#)
To: [#CI-StPaul_Ward5](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward1](#); [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Reallocation of Police Funds
Date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 11:50:09 AM

St. Paul City Council Members,

My name is Alan Richardson Hohn, a lifelong resident of this fine city. I currently reside on the north edge of Ward, a place some would call one of the epicenters of violence and crime in the metro and state. I am asking you today to listen to the mandate brought forth by the residents of your city when, despite pandemic and decades of systemic driven despair, the people came to the streets in an overwhelmingly non-violent manor to demand accountability from an institution which has forever refused to live up to their mantra of "protect and serve".

My entire life I have lived in areas which have shown me first hand the very worst put forth by residents clawing their way out of dire situations by any means necessary. In their attempts to live with life, liberty, and the pursuit minor crimes are frequently committed including theft, break-ins, panhandling, living unsheltered, property crimes, and violence, typically committed against victims known to the offenders. Being in this intimate proximity has led me to repeated situations where police assistance is requested by citizens and multiple other situations where their presence is not requested, yet they chose to interject.

Time and time again police have been dismissive of calls for help in domestic violence and property crimes in middle and low income neighborhoods. I've been told personally by officers that they have "better things to do", to "blame the mayor's offices and the city council" for their refusal to investigate, and have been told they are "neutered" of their ability to do anything about persistent and solvable crimes. At the same time I've been told by beat cops that they will continue to "stop and interrogate people who are gambling, drinking, smoking weed, or even congregating in a suspicious location because these small crimes often lead to bigger arrests". This comment was made after community members had requested officers do exactly the opposite and instead of hassling residents who have committed victimless crimes do some investigation and response to calls they had actually made to dispatch.

In the time since the people's mandate this spring police have increasingly decided which calls they want to take and repeatedly send an excessive amount of units. This past Saturday was a sobering reminder as, according to all available accounts, it took dozens of officers, a helicopter, K-9's, charged rounds, a taser, and finally 3 shots to apprehend a naked man high on methamphetamines who was hiding in a dumpster. I heard the shots from my back stairs and was amazed by the response time of sirens and lights. When the mission spread in the neighborhood is to stop the shooting this should most certainly include police who, with those shots, add to a narrative of ever increasing unsafety and concern for stray bullets.

In negotiations both sides should be ready to bring conditions. The police have requested more money and officers, yet refuse to give up anything for civilian accountability. They say they don't have enough sworn officers to keep up with the crime, but refuse offers to reallocate their funding for other types of first responders who would alleviate their supposed overusage. They say they can't respond in person to vehicle thefts, catalytic converter thefts, and other property crimes, requiring citizens to fill out online reports and sending stock letters of the unsolvability of the crime, then are somehow able to be stationed 10 plus units deep at small, peaceful protests or send excessive amounts of force to arrest singular individuals of

interest.

We desperately need our citizenry to trust that there is an agency which will protect and serve their interests, having more people wearing a uniform of an historically oppressive agency will not rebuild trust. It will further a divide and increase our turmoil moving forward. Please vote to be accountable to your constituents to provide the services needed by reallocating funds for police to programs and responders who will show the respect they demand, demonstrate transparency, and genuinely care for all the people who need their assistance.

Thank you,

Alan Richardson Hohn