

Minneapolis City Council & Mayor Jacob Frey:

Pass the people's budget! We can thrive, not just survive

Our city is at a crossroads. After the Minneapolis Police Department's murder of George Floyd and the summer's uprisings for justice, our city is making critical decisions about how to spend our money in the year ahead. We're in the midst of a devastating pandemic and recovering from a long, difficult summer. If there was ever a time for clear and courageous decision-making from our elected officials, it is now.

We must have the vision to see past MPD's threats and intimidation tactics while we build up the systems that keep us safe in Minneapolis. It won't be easy; it will be a transition that takes years. But for this transformation to be meaningful, it must include a major transfer of resources into Black communities and other communities facing oppression—and away from the murderous MPD. This is not a both/and question: every dollar that goes to MPD gives Bob Kroll's police federation more power in our city.

We believe in the possibility of a safer city and a police-free future. **This is the year to start moving our money into life-affirming institutions.** MPD has a track record of murder, abuse, sexual assault, and dishonesty. They receive billions of dollars and free reign of the city, yet so many people across the city are still not safe. We can't afford to keep doubling down on the same approach and expecting different results. It's time to try something new.

As they amend the 2021 budget, we demand that Mayor Frey and the City Council [make cuts to parts of MPD's budget that can be eliminated without a transition to alternative response](#) (like surveillance against protesters, militarization, image management, "community policing" initiatives, and unnecessary staffing). With the funding freed up by these cuts, we call on the city to:

- 1) Put health first.** As the pandemic rages on, it's more important than ever to fund city programs that support the health of Minneapolis residents—including mental health, substance use and overdose prevention, and environmental justice.
- 2) Prioritize people over profit.** We are in the midst of an economic crisis and people are struggling. Minneapolis must make major investments in housing, the needs of unsheltered community members, childcare, direct economic relief, and worker protections.
- 3) Fund prevention, not punishment.** We all want an end to violence in our city: police violence, domestic violence, gun violence. If we're serious about breaking the cycle for good, we have to put real money into tried and true programs that prevent violence (like community-based outreach teams that support communities in solving conflict) and respond effectively to violence when it happens (with restorative justice and domestic abuse transformation programming). We also have to divest from one of the biggest perpetrators of violence in our city: the police.

- 4) Help communities thrive, not just survive.** Let's plant the seeds for the future we want. Fund cultural institutions and art. Set aside funding to launch an annual participatory budgeting process. Fund the needs of sex workers.

We have done the hard work of coming together to outline some of the things our communities need to be safe and well. We call on our leaders to step up and turn them into policy in the 2021 budget.

Towards safety & liberation,

Anam Cara Therapies, PLLC
Asa's Bakery
Asian American Organizing Project
Black Immigrant Collective
Black Liberation Abolition Cohort (BLAC)
Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism
Black Market MN
Black Table Arts
Black Visions
Block Power Union
BOPS Squad
COPAL MN
Break the Silence
Butter Bakery Cafe
The Center for Prophetic Imagination
Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL)
CTUL
Do Better Content Consulting
Dark Matter Cooperative Network
Don't You Feel It Too?
Education for Liberation Minnesota
Family Tree Clinic
Fertile Ground
Filipinx for Immigrant Rights & Racial Justice MN (FIRM)
Free Black Dirt
Headwaters Foundation for Justice
Home Spinal Rehab, Inc.
Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee
Inquilinx Unidxs por Justicia
Isuroon
Jennifer Davis Art
Jewish Community Action
Jewish Voice for Peace - Twin Cities
MARCH (Multifaith Anti-Racism, Change and Healing)
Minnesota Doctors for Health Equity
Minneapolis Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP)
Minnesota Transgender Health Coalition

Minnesota Youth Collective
Moon Palace Books / Geek Love Cafe
The Movement For Black Lives
Mutual Aid Twin Cities Housing Cooperative
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, St. Cloud chapter
Navigate MN
OutFront MN
Prairie Crow Bikeworks
Presbyterian Church USA
Rajo Giving Foundation
RARE Productions
Reclaim the Block
ReleaseMN8
Reviving the Islamic Sisterhood for Empowerment
Robin for Minneapolis
ROC-MN
Rock Steady Alliance
The Sead Project
SEIU Local 26
Serita Yoga
Seward Police Abolition
Sex Workers Outreach Project-Minneapolis
Showing Up for Racial Justice-Twin Cities
Siengkane Lao MN
Smart Set, Inc.
stance//happen
Subversive Sirens
Survivors Lead
ThinkSelf Minnesota Deaf Adult Education and Advocacy
Uptown Pet Pals, LLC
Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota
Violence Free Minnesota
TakeAction Minnesota
Twin Cities Mutual Aid Project
826 MSP

List updated as of 8pm on Wednesday, December 9th. Sign-ons are now closed.

This is the people's budget:

1) Put health first (\$11.99 million)

1. Fund mental health workers to address mental health crises:

- a. 24/7 city-wide, rapid-response mobile mental health teams **(\$4.5 million)**^{1,2}
 - b. Trauma counselors for youth in schools **(\$1 million)**³
2. Increase funding to culturally-competent health resources:
 - a. Pandemic response resources made available in all languages reflected in Minneapolis communities **(\$5,000)**
 - b. Expand existing culturally-specific, community and mental health programs with emphasis on programs offering services in Spanish, Somali, Oromo, Hmong, and languages other than English **(\$1 million)**
 - c. Fund traditional Indigenous healing methods for relatives experiencing opioid addiction and homelessness **(\$500,000)**
 - d. Restore funding to the health department cuts⁴ that disproportionately affect BIPOC communities, including the cuts for nurses who address asthma and lead exposure, air quality testing, and the Lead and Healthy Homes program **(\$90,000)**
3. Fund harm reduction initiatives to support communities affected by the War on Drugs:
 - a. Fund a pilot study for safe consumption sites **(\$150,000)**
 - b. Fund the development of a minimum of two culturally-specific, community-based drop-in centers with a focus on harm reduction, at least one in North and one in South. **(\$1 million)**⁵
 - c. Fund grassroots harm reduction groups like Southside Harm Reduction and SWOP MPLS's outreach teams **(\$100,000)**
 - d. Fund harm reduction supplies, including clean syringes for existing syringe exchanges, grassroots programs and outreach programs outside of Syringe Service Programs (ex. public health outreach workers, shelters etc.) **(\$500,000)**
 - e. Fund vehicle and other mobile support for outreach teams, such as mobile medicine and shelter for care and connecting with services **(\$250,000)**
 - f. Fund the development and delivery of public health education about safer drug use, safer sexual health, infectious diseases, and connecting to low barrier, culturally specific community resources. This education must be destigmatized, evidence-based, harm reduction-based and developed by people with lived experience in partnership with existing grassroots harm reduction programs **(\$300,000)**
4. Build safer streets for pedestrians and bikers according to SMPSC's recommendations⁶ **(\$2.5 million)**

2) Prioritize people over profit (\$50.13 million)

1. Find housing, create permanent housing, and support people to stay housed **(\$30 million)**⁷:
 - a. Fund the short- and long-term needs of those experiencing unsheltered homelessness

¹ Following the recommendations outlined in detail by the 911/MPD Workgroup and [Seward Police Abolition](#)

² As highlighted by [this coalition of Minneapolis small businesses](#)

³ Equivalent to what was spent on subcontracting MPD to be School Resource Officers

⁴ p. 362-364 of the Mayor's recommended budget

⁵ Funding to be drawn from current budget for mounted patrol

⁶ [Expand Interdepartmental Utilization of Great Street Program](#)

⁷ Equivalent to a 20% reduction of the all the precinct/patrols line items (\$19.9M), the MPD homeless response team (\$93K) and Special Operations (\$8.7M)

- i. Short term: provide warming stations, food distribution, healthcare and other supportive services, and housing-first initiatives without prerequisites. No evictions.
 - ii. Long term: supportive, permanent housing and housing navigation.
 - b. Create high-quality, affordable housing for all, built with union labor
 - i. Expand safe, affordable long-term housing and programs that increase access including, but not limited to ownership options for tenants through land trusts and cooperatives **(\$10 million for 2021, \$30 million over the next 3 years would fund 200 homes in North Minneapolis)**
 - c. Prevent Eviction
 - i. Fully fund Legal Aid to provide right to counsel for renters **(\$3.75 million)**
 - ii. Match funding for the Tenant Resource Center to be at least equivalent to MPD's Police Athletic league **(\$65,000)**
- 2. Provide direct economic relief to residents and pay people to stay home while COVID crisis continues. Consider adopting St. Paul's [People's Prosperity Guaranteed Income Pilot](#), and include assistance for utilities including internet, phone, and other services needed by students and families. No income qualifications for utilities support, rental assistance, emergency energy assistance, etc. **(\$10 million)**
- 3. Contract with local providers for free, culturally competent childcare that not tied to food support (WIC) **(\$5 million)**⁸
- 4. Ongoing support for mutual aid sites, including those without nonprofit status:
 - a. Utilities, space and basic wages of 146/214 mutual aid sites **(\$4.5 million)**⁹
- 5. Increase funding to existing contracts to provide direct economic support for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Support must be meaningful and go beyond reimbursements or gas cards. **(\$30,000)**
- 6. Protect community contracts for education and outreach on worker rights, including sick and safe time and liveable minimum wage, and fund 6 investigators in Labor Standards Department **(\$600,000)**

3) Fund prevention and repair, not punishment. (\$11.55 million)

- 1. Fund coordinated street outreach teams geared toward violence prevention and supportive services **(>\$6.5 million)**
 - a. Teams must not be connected to law enforcement in any way.
 - b. Teams should be in key areas in North and South Minneapolis. Program planning should explicitly work to end patterns of under-resourcing in North Minneapolis.
 - c. Teams should be made up of community members who are culturally competent and have lived experiences reflective of the communities they serve.
- 2. Expand neighborhood-based restorative justice offices¹⁰ to transform harm when violence has occurred
 - a. Expand the capacity of Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice group to include 6 full-time staff **(\$500,000)**

⁸ Funding for 310 children for one year. [Average cost of childcare](#) is \$1,341/month.

⁹ 109 medium volume sites @\$1,000 monthly, 37 high volume sites @\$7,200 monthly. Assumes that remaining 68 sites are churches with access to space and/or regular volunteers

¹⁰ As detailed by [Seward Police Abolition](#)

- b. Create a 5-year grant program that neighborhoods can apply for to build their own neighborhood-based RJ group, or to expand the work of organizations doing similar work like the Power of People Leadership Institute **(\$450,000)**
 - c. Domestic Abuse Transformation Programming (DATP) **(\$650,000)**
- 3. Permanently redirect all report-only calls to 311 and fund a public education campaign about the change **(\$2.5 million)**¹¹
- 4. Fund the replacement of a federal community safety coordination grant for community safety activities for and by Little Earth residents and to restart restorative justice programming **(\$200,000)**
- 5. Increase funding to the Office of Immigrant and Refugee affairs **(\$750,000)** to expand the office into a fully staffed city department (similar to those that exist in Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco, and New York). For more details, [click here.](#)

4) Thriving, not just surviving **(\$10.7 million)**

- 1. Facilitate participatory budgeting to allow the community to creatively cultivate ideas to meet community needs **(\$500,000)**
- 2. Facilitate participatory planning to bring community expertise and involvement into the CPED department and all aspects of city enterprise planning **(\$500,000)**
- 3. Fund the sex worker community **(\$1.45 million)**
 - a. A taskforce that brings diverse stakeholders of people in sex trades to the table to investigate best practice and policy reform to improve lives of people in the sex trades **(\$200,000)**
 - b. Neighborhood conflict resolution and and mediation services led by SWOP to address neighborhood concerns about commercial sex economies **(\$100,000)**
 - c. Establish of a sex worker community center and sanctuary to serve as a safe place to convene for a community that is historically disenfranchised, to include free services that have been hard for sex workers to access such as accountants to help with taxes **(\$50,000)**
 - d. Grants for previous incarcerated sex workers and sex workers with felony records **(\$200,000)**
 - e. Small business support to establish a worker-owned strip club co-op where workers can create a business that lives the values outlined in [the ordinance](#) SWOP advised on last year **(\$700,000)**
 - f. Non-law enforcement, non-faith based services for youth in sex trades **(\$200,000)**
- 4. Fund artist-led community visioning sessions **(\$500,000)**
- 5. Create of a Black artist-administered fund to resource arts and culture initiatives **(\$5 million)**
- 6. Fund community healing modalities, with specific programming for youth, elders and adult needs. This should include training and employing a group of community doulas **(\$500,000)**
- 7. Create of a fund to support Indigenous community needs as defined by local artists, elders, organizers for culture, healing, and art **(\$1 million)**
- 8. Establish a creativity and art healing space, dealing directly with trauma **(\$750,000)**
- 9. Permanently maintain George Floyd Square with the sculpture in the middle of the intersection, with gathering spaces on the Chicago side of Cup Foods **(\$500,000)**

¹¹ As detailed by the 911/MPD workgroup and [Seward Police Abolition](#)

In addition to funding these initiatives, a people's budget must NOT:

1. Fund growth of the police force through any means, which includes recruit and CSO classes.
2. Cut community-focused staff positions while the heads of departments keep the same salaries (e.g. the mayor keeping his \$135K salary while cutting a community outreach policy aide in his department).
3. Involve MPD in initiatives regarding public health, including but not limited to houselessness, substance use, and mental health.
4. Allow for sharing data that could be used to criminalize residents of the city, especially as surveillance and inter-agency law enforcement cooperation increases. The city of Minneapolis must also commit to rejecting and not instituting all reiterations of Countering Violence Extremism (CVE).