



## **Demand that Portland City Council Invest in Mental Health Care Not Policing!**

Community Budget Forum: April 17, 2018

### **How to give a strong public comment**

#### Questions to consider:

*How has the violence of policing impacted your life or your community?  
How could Portland's budget better meet the needs of our communities?*

#### Steps for commenting:

1. State your name, the neighborhood you live or work in, and any communities or organizations you are a part of.
2. State what demand/s or talking points you are here in support of. See below.
3. Briefly describe why Portland communities need City Council to take this action. This can be through sharing personal or family connection to the issue if you have been impacted by policing or mental health crisis.

### **The only way to stop police violence is to disarm, defund, and dismantle the police:**

- More police training, body cameras, or investigations will not stop police killings, nor the everyday violence of policing that is overwhelmingly targeted towards Black, Brown, and poor communities in Portland. At least 4 of the officers involved in the shooting of John Elifritz were previously investigated for their extreme use of violence and in one case the killing of Keaton Otis in 2010.
- Community and neighborhood safety cannot be achieved with increased policing. This funding must be invested in community programs such as increased housing, transformative justice models, and education.
- Police attacks against houseless people and in support of gentrification have been on the rise, with the recent police killing inside a shelter only one particularly egregious example of daily assaults. The City must invest in services, rather than attacking community programs for eviction, such as Right 2 Dream Too and Village of Hope.

### **We demand an immediate reduction in the taxpayer funded Portland Police Bureau (PPB) budget, not the proposed increase of nearly \$13 million.**

- Last year, the PPB was allocated almost \$217 million! They are asking for almost \$13 million *in addition* to that figure.
- Portland is currently facing economic and social crises related to social services. There are increasing numbers of houseless people, with Portlanders losing their homes, jobs, and healthcare while the PPB currently spends nearly \$600,000 *per day*.

[www.carenotcops.org](http://www.carenotcops.org)



- The Portland Police Bureau, City Council, and Mayor Wheeler show a disregard for solutions that meet the economic, health, and social needs of Portland's communities of color by continuing to press for an increase in the budget for policing.

**We call for an immediate freeze on new PPB hires, instead of the nearly 100 new positions proposed.**

- **The police budget proposes funding 93 more full time armed and active police positions, including 21 “community police”. We need life-affirming and skilled staffing positions in other programs and city infrastructure, not more police officers.**
- The budget calls for 21 new “community police” who will be charged with more street patrols, broken windows policing, and local surveillance. Community policing targets working class neighborhoods and communities of color, prioritizes areas of active gentrification, preferences protecting property over preventing individual harm, and brings more police into our communities, increasing targeting of people of color.

**Police will never be adequate or appropriate mental health responders.**

- The budget requests an additional \$1.5 million for service coordination and increases both police and clinician positions under the Portland Police Bureau for provision of substance use and mental health services. The framework for these services is based in punitive and coercive measures rather than user-centered, voluntary, and supportive services. **This funding must be invested directly into community-based services, not contingent on police interaction.**

**We demand that the City Council invest in life affirming response to mental health crises by building up community-based and peer-led services and resources.**

- Direct funds to people and organizations that have existing relationships with targeted or vulnerable populations, such as those who work with houseless people to find support, resources, and housing. With adequate resources, people who are connected with their existing networks and communities can provide long-term resources and support.
- Fund mental health advocates with experience in providing trauma-informed support, which would immensely benefit survivors of trauma experiencing mental health emergencies.
- Fund those individuals and organizations that connect people with care and support following a mental health emergency, rather than increased policing, which re-traumatizes and criminalizes people.