



Demand that Portland City Council Invest in Life Affirming Solutions, Not Policing!

Community Budget Forum: April 2, 2019

Portland communities continue to believe that policing is not the solution to safety but actually creates more violence in our city. Lasting solutions need to be built through investments in community care. Last year, after researching the proposed Portland Police Bureau (PPB) budget and seeing continued proposed increases to programs, equipment, and police positions, Care Not Cops moved into action. Organizing strong mobilizations, media work, and advocacy resulted in an approximately 50% cut to the proposed budget and police staffing increases! This year we're here to continue to work to reduce the power and size of the PPB and fight for community investments!

The City of Portland Must:

- **Immediately scale back police presence** in historically Black neighborhoods, communities of color, areas with high houseless populations in order to reduce the fear, ongoing trauma, violence, and oppressive conditions which impede on people's daily survival.
- Develop and implement a plan to **dismantle the controversial and discriminatory gang policing unit** of the PPB.
- Move away from police responders to health or mental health calls and **implement alternative first responses that are not led by the police.**
- **Invest in life-sustaining and dignified resources** that ultimately reduce people's vulnerability to or targeting by policing.
- Implement genuine strategies for **dignified temporary and permanent housing**, and halt sweeps of houseless encampments and other villages.
- **Include impacted and targeted communities at the forefront** of determining City investments in life-sustaining resources and related policy objectives.

How to give a strong public comment

Questions to consider:

*How has the violence of policing impacted your life or your community?
What investments should the City of Portland make in order to meet the needs of our communities?*

Tips for commenting:

1. State your name, the neighborhood you live or work in, and any communities or organizations you are a part of.
2. Review the demands (above) and specific budget information (reverse) that Care Not Cops and our allies are fighting for. Incorporate into your testimony.
3. Briefly describe why Portland communities need City Council to take action. This can be through sharing personal or family connection to the issue if you have been impacted by policing or mental health crisis.
4. Reiterate your demand and close.

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Portland Police Bureau (PPB) wants to expand patrol staff by 150 positions by 2022-2023. For 2019, PPB has requested \$12,635,753 over last year's approved budget, putting them at \$239,443,249. This is likely to be 34% of the General Fund. 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.

The only way to end police violence is to reduce the funding and scope of policing.

We demand an immediate reduction in the taxpayer funded Portland Police Bureau (PPB) budget, not the proposed increase of \$12.6 million to their budget.

- City Council and Mayor Wheeler have a responsibility to implement solutions that meet the economic, health, and social needs of Portland's communities of color. Continuing to fund sweeps of houseless encampments, the repression of public protest, control and harassment of people of color through anti-gang policing, surveillance through community policing, and violence against people in health crisis shows a total disregard for Portland's needs.

We call for an immediate freeze on new PPB hires and an end to violent policing programs, beginning with the anti-gang policing units.

- School Resource Officers, Neighborhood Response Teams, and Behavioral Health Units are used as ways to disguise policing. We must separate community-based needs from police and instead create new positions to hire life-affirming and skilled staffing positions in other programs, not more police officers.
- The Gang Enforcement Team and Gun Task Force target Portland's Black communities and neighborhoods under heavy gentrification with traffic stops and street harassment. The Cycle of Violence Program, under which gang policing falls, proposes a 2019 budget of \$23 million, approximately 10% of the overall policing budget and 10% of police officers. **Portland demands different priorities for ending cycles of violence.**

We reject the use of police as so-called community advocates or emergency first responders.

- The budget requests an additional \$4.9 million for "Emergency Response and Problem Solving" when one-third of these calls were for policing of houseless or perceived houseless people, not for addressing harm. Last year, 52% of PPB arrests were of houseless people.
- Any new clinician positions for provision of substance use and mental health services must not be under the Portland Police Bureau. Receiving these services should **not be contingent on police interaction.**

We demand that the City Council invest in life affirming solutions Portland's needs by building up community-based and peer-led services and creating lasting resources such as housing.

- Funding priorities should be guided by impacted and targeted communities. Direct funding towards those communities and the organizations that have existing relationships of support, such as those who work with houseless people to find resources, care, and housing.
- Invest in long-term solutions such as housing and education.
- Fund user self-determined care and enable people to provide trauma-informed support, which immensely benefits survivors of trauma experiencing mental health emergencies.