

# 2020 BLUEPRINT FOR POLICE DIVESTMENT/COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT

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*Several components of this document are modeled off King County Equity Now and Decriminalize Seattle's [2020 Blueprint For Police Divestment/Community Reinvestment](#), and a [Recommendation and Resolution](#) put forward to the Berkeley City Council by Berkeley Councilmember Cheryl Davila.*

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

Since the founding of this nation, inequity and inequality have persisted in social institutions and the criminal justice system. The extra-judicial killing of George Floyd was another heartbreaking addition to the long list of Black people who have been murdered by the police in the United States, and sparked a national Movement for Black Lives that has carried forth to Olympia. This moment calls on us to examine the racial disparities that exist in every sphere and dismantle the white supremacy and race-fueled violence that has affected Black people for so long.

Mr. Floyd's death laid bare the fact that Black people still endure racial disparities, evident in our militarized policing system, founded from Slave Patrols and the breaking of strikes and organized labor. As communities reckon with this engrained system, it is incumbent on us to also consider that for every person killed by the police, many more are brutalized and survive.

Demonstrators are demanding the redistribution of civic resources from militarized police departments to social services where they belong, especially now, as COVID-19 exacerbates ever-present social inequities. Black people, Indigenous Peoples, People of Color, people with disabilities, poor people, and queer and trans people are all targeted for arrest and criminalization by the police.

Cities across the nation have started to embrace the need to defund the police and are applying approaches that are effective in the defunding of police departments. Police reforms that do not include redistributing resources away from police have not been sufficiently effective in curbing police abuses. Decades of reform have been tried in U.S. communities, including here in Olympia.

Yet in the U.S. there remains: [781 people killed by police so far in 2020](#); continued racism, with Black people 3 times more likely to be killed by police while also 1.3 times less likely to be armed than white people; unjust arrests and fatal and life-threatening injuries to demonstrators; and a continued gross lack of accountability, as in the case of the officers who murdered Breonna Taylor. Indeed, 99% of killings by police from 2013-2019 resulted in no officers being charged with a crime. During the same period,

Washington state police officers killed 238 people. In 2019, the FBI launched a database to track police use of force, but participation is voluntary and [60% of departments have chosen not to track their officers' use of force.](#)

### **Background of OPD Budget**

In the City of Olympia, many police reforms have been instituted, but inequities persist. According to the Olympia Police Department's own 2019 demographic data, 11% of those booked into City jail were Black, despite Census data confirming that Black residents represent less than 3% of Olympia's population. Use of force data returned from OPD also reflects racism inherent in policing. In 2019, 14% of use of force incidents were perpetrated against Black civilians. This statistic is consistent over years of policing--back in 2015, 15% of use of force instances involved Black people. Also important to note is that race data was omitted in 36% of police use of force reports starting in June of 2020, after the death of George Floyd. Compare this to all of 2019, when race was omitted only twice, or 1% of the time. This questionable omission pattern is yet another reason it is difficult, if not impossible, to have faith in Olympia's police department.

Since 2011, OPD's number of sworn officers has increased from 65 to 76, or 17%. The department's 2011 budget was \$13,175,090, compared to \$21,885,248 for 2020 - a 66% increase. Yet total calls for service, as measured and reported by OPD, increased by only 7%. Calls for service, per OPD staff, are logged each time an officer responds to any situation while on duty. It's difficult to understand why both police presence and budget have increased so substantially over the past decade given the community's need for police services has barely changed.

More funds are spent per capita on Olympia's police department than on public works, parks, arts, recreation, community planning and development, and general government combined. One third of the entire City budget, per capita, is spent on police. This despite there being no correlation between an increased investment in policing and reductions in crime.

Our current public safety model cannot create a healthy community. Reallocating general City funds from OPD towards supporting a new system of public safety would prevent rather than react to crime and actually address the disparities we can no longer ignore. Such an approach would remove police officers from situations in which their

militarized training is at best inappropriate and at worst homicidal.

A reallocation of part or all of the police budget offers enough funding to comprehensively address many inequities that underlie calls to the police and to create non-police interventions. This includes increased mental health support via the Crisis Response Unit and Friendly Faces Programs, as well as other professional mental health services outside of OPD control, like the crisis mobile teams run by Olympic Health and Recovery Services.

Armed police, trained in a culture of violence, are the least appropriate responders to mental health crises. Often their presence escalates already tense situations. In 2015, at least 1 in 4 fatal killings by police in the United States were adults with mental illness. In Olympia in 2018 Vaneesa Hopson died after police responded to her call for help. Yet welfare checks remain the third most common 911 call that OPD officers respond to. Strong crisis response programs have demonstrated that police presence isn't necessary--the CAHOOTS program in Oregon, for example, requires police back-up only about 0.6% of the time.

Police misconduct has minimal consequences for police departments because settlements are often paid out of general funds rather than police budgets, putting financial pressure on other city services. Some cities resort to issuing bonds to cover settlements, which the Action Center on Race and the Economy (ACRE) call "Police Brutality Bonds", and these drastic measures are more common in recessions like the one we are currently facing as a result of COVID19.

The work to defund OPD and create true public safety and health will happen in phases. Phase one - the initial cuts and reinvestments listed in Section 1 below - will be facilitated by the 2021 budget rebalancing process with the City of Olympia. This phase will be followed by deeper cuts to OPD's budget to come in the 2022 budget cycle, coupled with a participatory budgeting process that will allow the community to determine the direction of deeper investments to generate true public safety and health. The second phase (.... will follow the established implementation process and will follow all the benchmarks laid out in Phase 1.

To achieve immediate cuts to OPD's remaining 2020 budget, the City must reorganize the department to reduce its size, while reallocating its funds and positions to City departments and community organizations better suited to creating public safety and health. To be clear, cuts from the section below would start during the last three months of 2020. Some of these cuts would come from fully eliminating OPD functions, some

would come from transitioning functions out of OPD that should never have been under police control to begin with, and others will come making the current hiring freeze permanent and reductions in staffing.

## 1. OPD Budget Item Cuts

The following budget items and funding should be removed from the OPD budget. Where applicable, we have offered alternatives so some functions can continue. Funding from these areas should be placed in a fund to cover: a participatory budgeting process centering BIPOC to determine where funding should go in the long-term (Section 2.1); investing in community-led organizations to increase public safety (Section 2.2); and immediate needs for survival (Section 2.3).

**Budget Item:** Unfilled commissioned officer positions

**Amount:** ~ \$300,000

**Action:** The 2020 City operating budget accounts for 76 commissioned OPD officers. However, a public records request for a list of these officers returned an actual employ of 73 commissioned officers. Cut the budget now to reflect not the officers budgeted for, but the number that are actually being paid by the department.

**Budget Item:** Overtime

**Amount:** \$883,593 (2020 YTD)

**Action:** In 2019, OPD spent over \$1.1 million on police overtime alone. This represents about 5% of the entire police budget for that year, and is almost ten times the amount the Community Planning and Development department was able to dedicate to “Downtown Homeless Response” the same year. Police are already well compensated. End overtime benefits for police officers. Make all positions salaried. We realize the current police union contract may limit the Council’s ability to immediately end overtime expenses. However, the Council could work to decrease opportunities for officers to accrue overtime by:

- Ending homeless encampment sweeps altogether, and moving to decriminalize homelessness. Based on [a report](#) from the City’s Community Work Group, the latter is already well supported by the community.
- Ending police presence at protests. As recent reports from protestors on the ground have indicated, police presence causes harm.
- Ending police coverage of private events as indicated in the budget.

Note: The following 5 recommended cuts come from the \$3.1 million spent on “Community Policing.” This department may feel the friendliest, as it purports to “prevent” crime and build community. However impact matters more than intent, and the impact of this program has been to foster a false sense of security for race and class privileged citizens only while jeopardizing the lives of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and causing these communities to experience oppression and harm. Crime has not been reduced. Citizens continue to experience harm at the hands of police. The City must stand up to its own racist systems--and police do not prevent crime. Research is consistent that housing, community support and access to jobs are what prevent crime. The \$3 million being spent on police crime prevention must go to community programs that are supported by community members and organizations and that *will actually prevent crime in the long run*. We would like to see the entire \$3 million liberated from this department and placed towards BIPOC lead community efforts, that are supported by research. Because we recognize this is a complicated process, we recommend the following cuts immediately.

**Budget Item:** Hiring (including bonuses), recruiting, retention, training, etc.

**Amount:** \$468,807

**Action:** Permanently freeze hiring within OPD, effective now and in place for the next five years. We do not need more police. In fact, cuts recommended here, like those to this department and school resource officers, will free up several officers who can be redirected to patrol efforts if OPD feels it is understaffed. This would free up close to \$2 million over time, which can be funneled into community safety programs like mental health crisis response, housing and community partnerships, and civilian de-escalation teams.

**Budget Item:** Special Ops

**Amount:** \$400,681

**Action:** Eliminate this team altogether. This team covers community events where police presence may not be needed or even welcome, and often results in overtime for officers. As an alternative, the City can support civilian de-escalation teams who can provide safety at community events. Of this budget, \$276,822 goes to “K9 Community Events,” \$69,439 to “Officer Community Events” and \$54,252 to “Traffic Community events.” The very idea of a “community event” with police dogs used to terrorize people in the community is antithetical to public safety. This is not where citizens’ tax dollars should be spent. Of note, the

department has only spent about \$2,632 of these dollars so far in 2020. Clearly this funding is not necessary, and should be cut immediately.

**Budget Item:** School Resource Officers

**Amount:** \$398,075

**Action:** Eliminate police presence in the Olympia School District. In June, the Olympia School District voted to not renew their School Resource Officer program. Also at this time, the nation's largest teacher's union, The American Federation of Teachers, released a [resolution](#) demanding that police be removed from school safety plans. There is widespread information indicating that the presence of SROs perpetuates inequities and causes harm particularly to students of color. Data for 2015 from The U.S. Department of Education [shows](#) that while Black students represented 15% of the student population, Black students accounted for 31% of referrals to law enforcement and subsequent arrests. Clearly, police presence in schools serves only to perpetuate the lifelong harm of anti-Black racism. Funds diverted from SRO salaries and specialized training and equipment for them should be reallocated for licensed mental health professionals equipped to support students from diverse backgrounds, social-emotional learning programs, and training in communication, conflict resolution, and developing and maintaining healthy relationships.

**Budget Item:** Neighborhood Police/Community Policing Patrol

**Amount:** \$603,908

**Action:** Eliminate this team. It consists of one officer each on Westside and Eastside Olympia. These officers are meant to be "proactive." While this sounds well intentioned, research shows that truly proactive approaches to crime don't involve police at all. Don't fund police to patrol and look for crime. Fund housing and community programs that connect folks with jobs and support. That is the truly proactive approach.

**Budget Item:** Crime Prevention

**Amount:** \$413,653

**Action:** Eliminate this department. This consists of one lieutenant and one civilian volunteer. Crime prevention comes from supporting community safety and health outside of policing. Allow community led programs to provide safety and support

that actually prevents crime.

**Budget Item:** Traffic Officer

**Amount:** \$234,107

**Action:** Transfer traffic services out of OPD. This is already happening in communities like Berkeley California, where leaders have recognized that traffic safety should be handled by people who are focused on just that--traffic safety--and *not* by police who are focused on apprehending criminals. Current traffic laws and practices allow police a huge amount of discretion to choose when to stop folks, when to arrest them, and when to simply issue a warning. Unfortunately, this incredible latitude allows systemic racism to have greater influence, and leads to more oppression of communities of color. Research has supported the reality that racial discrimination plays a significant roll in traffic stops. The [Stanford Open Policing Project](#) has been analyzing traffic data from all 50 states since 2015, and has concluded that police are consistently more likely to stop Black drivers than white drivers, and--in nearly every jurisdiction studied--more likely to search Black drivers once they've been stopped than they are white drivers. Traffic stops are also the most common way that citizens come into contact with police, and have resulted in the death of Black citizens like Sandra Bland and Philando Castile. It doesn't have to be this way. Traffic stops were the second most common call that OPD responded to in 2019; removing this responsibility would significantly lighten the department's load and allow them to focus on actual police matters. Civilians can be trained as traffic enforcers--as stated, this has already been explored in other communities like Berkeley and New Orleans--and can be given authority to issue citations. Major accidents are already addressed by paramedics.

**Budget Item: Special Emphasis Patrol (Walking Patrol)**

**Amount:**\$1,129,888

**Action:** Immediately begin work to civilianize this department, formerly referred to as "Walking Patrol," and remove it completely from OPD. Like Community Policing, Walking Patrols are based on the faulty logic that police prevent crime. In fact, according to the Washington State Statistical Analysis Center, crime reported by OPD was [decreasing](#) when the Walking Patrol was first implemented in Olympia in 2017. After 2017, crime rates started to rise. We are aware that some citizens, particularly



downtown business owners, are concerned about safety and crime downtown. Unarmed crisis responders can provide additional presence downtown and will be more likely to help the community than to cause more harm as police have done. Because the system of policing is inherently racist and violent, it is important that any civilian de-escalation team created be completely separate from the police department--in funding, training, and practice.

**Budget Item: Patrol**

**Amount: Varies**

**Action:** Reduce the overall police force to reflect ratios in 2011, when OPD staffed one officer for every 734 residents. Given the virtually unchanged demand for police service from 2011 to 2019, we see no way to justify the need for more officers. We recommend reducing the police force to 2011 levels, adjusted for population, which would require a total of 72 commissioned officers, rather than the 76 currently budgeted. Of note, only 73 officers are currently employed by OPD. To accommodate this reduction in staff, we recommend taking key duties off of OPD's plate.

- Traffic enforcement and walking patrol could be largely removed from OPD, as discussed above.
- Sexual assault response should be removed as well, and handled by mental health and social work professionals who can prioritize care for the person who has been harmed by the assault. The current system, emphasizing police response, results in injustice for everyone; most rapes are never reported, and even fewer go to trial. Instead, interviews should be conducted by licensed mental health professionals, not police. Hospitals and health care providers should manage reports and rape kits. Money should go to funding programs that provide assistance and support to survivors, including programs like Safeplace, which can provide for immediate safety concerns for those who have been harmed.

**Budget Item: Sexual assault interviewing and report and rape kit management**

**Amount: ?**

**Action:** Police should not be leading sexual assault responses. This approach results in injustice for everyone; most rapes are never reported, and even fewer go to trial. We can surmise that this is in part because of our current system, which prioritizes punishment for the perpetrator, usually fails at that, and leaves the person who has

been harmed without any recourse or support. What we need instead is a system that prioritizes both immediate and ongoing support for people who experience sexual assault. This means interviews should be conducted by licensed mental health professionals, not police. Hospitals and health care providers should manage reports and rape kits. Money should go to funding programs that provide assistance and support to survivors, including programs like Safeplace, which can provide for immediate safety concerns for those who have been harmed.

### **Financial Implications**

The current proposed police budget for 2021 (\$x) will be reduced by an amount of y% (\$z) or greater and funding of community programs and non-police city agencies will be increased by a commensurate amount. Reducing the OPD budget by at least x% will allow funding for but not limited to youth programs or community groups and programs, housing and homeless services, food security, mental health services, healthcare, creation of new city jobs and job training programs, and public health services.

## **2. Blueprint for Phase I of Community Reinvestment**

### **2.1 Invest in Community-Led Research Process to Generate True Public Safety Informed by Community Needs**

Initial investments, funded by divestments from OPD's budget as outlined above, should go to funding a 2021 winter/spring participatory research process that will start our city on the task of reimagining a world built on a community vision for public safety and health. Policing and community safety are fundamentally racial justice issues, so a broad coalition of directly impacted people of color must take the lead in shaping the solutions to creating sustained community safety beyond saturated policing. Olympia residents most directly impacted by police policies and practices have never been given the time and space to imagine responses beyond imperfect, inadequate, and often violent police responses, and years of bloated police budgets reflect consistent disinvestment in our community. This disinvestment has exacerbated racial inequities. It has created less community safety and more harm for BIPOC residents.

The community-led research process will inform the vision for a world where we shift away from our reliance on policing and move towards addressing root causes and unmet needs. A world where instead of being met with an armed officer who is more

likely to kill BIPOC community members, people are met with support, services, and care so they can thrive. The community-led research is in itself a community safety measure.

City-wide dialogues about expanded notions of community safety will inform the roadmap City leaders need to move forward with further cuts to OPD's budget and corresponding reinvestment in our community. The funding from the City to support the research will allow people who are most directly impacted by police contact and surveillance to systematically produce their own solutions to guide the City's next steps. Without community voice and leadership, any proposed solutions are likely to be short-sighted, incomplete, and actively harmful.

A portion of the research will be explicitly focused on defining community safety and offering specific recommendations and support to community organizations as they scale and build capacity to meet community safety needs. This may include providing analyses or projections that inform staffing or resource allocation as community organizations scale up, and in turn will inform the 2021 budgeting process.

Possible initial research areas include:

- Increasing access to high speed internet and technology for community members in need
- Gathering information on health crises, including COVID-19 and other disease, that disproportionately impact BIPOC, and possible solutions
- Gathering information on climate crisis impacts and environmental racism impacting BIPOC in our community
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This community-led research process will transition into a 2021 Participatory Budgeting process for the Public Safety sections of the city budget. We envision most of the funds for these processes would come out of the police budget, though we recognize other City departments may contribute funds as well.

Values guiding Participatory Research Process:

- Process must be community designed and controlled.
  - o Trust is essential to collecting good data, and the City has a long track record of misusing this trust. In part because of the City's long track record of supporting harmful policies and procedures, many community members do not trust the City to lead an effective research process. By supporting and

funding a community-led research process, the City will tangibly address this legacy of using data to [justify or ignore the harm done to communities](#).

- Process must provide tangible support for participants
  - o As city officials are paid to plan for public safety, community members should not be expected to come up with solutions on a volunteer basis. Paying community members to be involved in this dialogue will offer income support to the communities most directly impacted by COVID-19 and the economic crisis. Funding should be provided immediately to source the staffing and support for this process to be successful. The scale of this work cannot be met with unpaid labor alone, especially when some community members must prioritize meeting their needs for food, shelter, and other basic needs during a global pandemic.

### **Research activities**

Secured funding for the Community-Led Research Process should be allocated immediately. While we imagine one or two groups would coordinate and facilitate the Community-Led Research Process, additional investments would increase the number of organizations that can participate in this participatory research. Allocated funding should include resources to resolve community issues identified during the research (e.g., a need for more PPE, high speed internet and technology), research analysis, and reporting activities.

Below are the overall research activities we anticipate would need to be covered by the allocated funding:

1. Staffing, training, administrative and technical support, and materials
2. COVID-related support
3. Removing institutional barriers
4. Data collection and analysis
5. Data reporting and presentations

Criteria for Organizations Receiving Funding: The organizations to be funded must not have a financial conflict of interest with police departments. Funded organizations would share some of the following characteristics:

1. BIPOC-leadership, particularly with youth leaders or a youth advisory council
2. Experience with people who have firsthand experience with policing systems
3. Experience with Black youth

4. Experience with centering the experiences of BIPOC people who are Trans and LGBTQIA
5. Experience working with BIPOC youth in culturally responsive ways that promote youth leadership
6. Experience with people who are overrepresented in juvenile justice system, foster care, or people who are experiencing homelessness
7. Experience with people with disabilities

Timeline: January - March 2021

1. Community organizations (selected with input from the community) and community members start preliminary research to test accessible language and expand support for the winter/spring research (ongoing)
2. Preliminary work plan and selection of participating organizations in partnership with community members
3. Participating organizations announced (additional organizations may be added on a rolling basis)
4. Disburse funding
5. Finalize hiring
6. Delivery of research skills training workshops for youth researchers, adult research, and support staff
7. Update work plan based on participants' research goals and preliminary needs assessment
8. Implementation of initial round of research to test participatory budgeting accessibility considerations, as well as community-led research on what health and safety actually means, including (but not limited to) alternatives to policing
9. Complete regular and ongoing community report backs to share preliminary findings as the project continues. Assess community needs and resolve urgent issues.
10. Implementation of additional round(s) of research to test participatory budgeting accessibility considerations, and equity-centered participatory budgeting process
11. Continue community-led research on what health and safety actually means, including (but not limited to) alternatives to policing
12. Complete regular community report backs, and share additional findings. Assess community needs and resolve urgent issues. Update reports based on community feedback
13. Share road map for how to engage in an accessible and equity-centered

2021-2022 participatory budgeting process.

## **2.2 Invest in Scaling Up Community-Led Organizations**

The City should invest 2021 dollars in groups that have already been engaging and developing community-led alternatives to policing and criminalization. Olympia already has groups involved in non-armed crisis response, violence interruption and prevention, harm reduction, and restorative and transformative justice approaches to harm as well as approaches to serving and addressing homelessness. For many years, Olympia organizations have been undertaking safety-building activities such as: self-defense classes; dispute resolution and conflict coaching; communication and conflict resolution training; mediation; training in restorative practices; healthy relationship skills classes for teens and adults; community programs on preventing sexual violence and assault; advocacy programs working with survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, hate crimes, identity-based violence and sex trafficking; programs to support parents in de-escalating conflict in their homes without violence; programs aimed at reducing the harms of drug addiction in communities; job training and healing justice programs; and more.

These efforts have developed and survived despite the over investments in the current policing/criminalization paradigm. It is past time to put real city dollars towards the development and growth of approaches to public safety that do not involve policing. These immediate investments will allow the organizations to scale up their operations in preparation for ongoing cuts to OPD's budget and operations.

OPD has had decades to produce community safety and has failed. Community organizations should not be required to end crime in Olympia in one funding cycle. Investing in these groups will drastically increase the odds of generating true public safety for those communities who have borne the brunt of police presence, surveillance, and violence. Funds will also go towards incubating new projects and organizations in police-impacted communities. These investments must begin in 2020 because we need to build up these organization's capacity in order to be ready for the transition to a drastically reduced police footprint in 2021.

The investments will include growing the capacity of the organizations who are providing long-term support beyond crisis intervention to criminalized populations, and the organizations who are involved in interrupting and preventing violence and harm to begin with.

### **Criteria for Organizations Receiving Funding:**

The organizations to be funded will demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Culturally relevant expertise rooted in community connections and support
- Well versed in de-escalation skills and mental health support
- Peer-led models prioritized
- Trauma-informed, gender-affirming, anti-racist praxis
- Connected to resources like housing, food security, and other basic needs with wrap-around services and long-term support
- Committed to retention of social service workers with adequate and equitable pay and benefits, preferably unionized
- Committed to hiring and retaining staff who are from the communities they serve and with lived experience of criminalization
- Demonstrated commitment to a harm-reduction model, including safer consumption practices

### **Timeline:** January - March 2021

- Criteria and grant-making process established
- Capacity building workshops offered by the city for organizations who will be applying for funds
- Monthly disbursements to organizations for general operating support
- Create work plans for scaling up responses
- Complete recruitment and hiring plans
- Regranting process in 2022 to continue work, with goal of organizations beginning to offer enhanced services by mid-2022

To allow community groups to focus their efforts on their growth and development, the grants will be for general operating funds, with minimal bureaucratic requirements. To reduce the burden of contracting and reporting these funds will allow organizations to determine what data is important and useful for them to collect for improving their work. Funding will include capacity-building support for organizations to apply and receive city funding. This capacity-building support can be used by organizations to increase their infrastructure (space, curricula, financial management systems, staff training programs, and more) so that they are ready to serve far more members of the community than they could when they were under-funded.

## 2.3 Support Immediate Survival Needs

The final area for immediate reinvestment is a fund to support urgent survival needs by investing in housing, increased mental health support, healing and reconciliation space and services for BIPOC, and [Justice System/Jail streamlining]

### Housing

In the 2019 budget, the City of Olympia allocated \$20 million of its general funds to the police, and \$3.8 million to Community Planning and Development, which is responsible for homeless response and housing. Yet we know police do not prevent crime, and housing does. From 2018 to 2019, the OPD budget increased by \$1.5 million.

Meanwhile, the Community Planning and Development department was able to add a Homeless Response Coordinator--as a "donation-funded" position. Yet housing is a growing problem in our community, and one that disproportionately impacts People of Color. The Thurston County Point in Time Census reported a 56% increase in the houseless population from 2017 to 2018. Further, the community has a vested interest in decreasing unnecessary contact between OPD and houseless community members to improve the already fragile mental health of this segment of our population. Between January and June 2020, OPD performed 751 "wake ups" of houseless community members. That's more than two people per day forced out of sleep while enduring the many complex challenges of poverty and trying to survive on the streets.

This city has failed to provide all its residents access to basic housing needs - i.e., a safe, secure, clean, humane space that provides the bare minimum for human flourishing. Housing is an essential human need and few things are more central to real public safety than a home. It's a place to rest, eat and store possessions without fear of loss. A home provides the critical stability, privacy, safety, and security necessary for individual health and communal public health. To maximize the short-term and long-term public safety goals, it is important to create immediately ways to create a Housing Fund to

Importantly, nothing in this proposal is novel or untenable. The current uprising in defense of Black lives has revealed as untenable the City's habit of bending to the will of a police department whose conduct has chronically and systematically been violent and detrimental to the public safety of many communities. The contrast between the makeshift tents and encampment intertwined with opulent development point to the vast racial and economic chasm that must be closed if we are to transform the City's approach to public safety.



No proposal to increase true public safety by divesting from policing will be complete without a commitment to expanding housing access and availability.

**The City should prioritize the following short-term housing solutions:**

- Support the immediate transfer of underutilized public land for BIPOC community ownership, including, where necessary, purchase and activation capital and upfront transaction costs.
- All empty housing stock in the city should be used until any unhoused person who wants a place to live has one. People currently unhoused should be prioritized for receipt of any assistance, with no barriers based on income, criminal records, record of addiction, etc.
- End sweeps of homeless encampments and all related activities
- Fund existing community-based, housing service organizations to allow for increased capacity and services, including the facilitation of emergency rent assistance programs related to COVID.
- Enact good cause eviction and non-possessionary bill. Protect renters and ensure that they cannot be evicted for debt accrued during the pandemic.
- Establish funds to aid BIPOC residents in paying rent or mortgage through the end of the COVID pandemic

**Considerations for funding would include ensuring organizations receiving funding can meet the following criteria:**

- Provide services to people who are currently and formerly incarcerated
- Commit to offering harm reduction training, programming and infrastructure to provide low barrier substance use/homeless services to Black and Brown people.

**City officials must remove barriers to accessing existing services, ensuring that community services providers:**

- Have direct access to low barrier/harm reduction shelters beds
- Have direct access to mental health support and wraparound services without the need for a referral
- Have direct access to permanent supportive housing

**3. Stop-Gap Measures to Increase Police Accountability**

City of Olympia must be prepared to deploy a police accountability control mechanism. A comprehensive police code of conduct that provides clear guidelines while carrying

out policing duties with clear standards on arresting and detention.

These measures are meant to increase public safety and police accountability while the funding from OPD is being redistributed to the community. They are not a replacement for defunding.

- Immediately establish the Police Accountability Review Board as an independent civilian review board with 50% BIPOC representation. The board should have authority to study trends in police behavior; establish a process to review incidents of police use of force, complaints and misconduct; participate in internal investigations; and have the authority to participate in and initiate discipline, including firing, of officers who violate departmental policy and/or harm community members with use of force. The board should be required to review and revise existing code of conduct that has direct impact on civilians and especially BIPOC.
- Immediately adapt the entire [Model Use of Force Policy](#) by the [Police Use of Force Project](#).
- Mandate that officers only serve in the zip code in which they live
- Mandate that officers be accompanied by a mental health specialist for any mental health-related 911 calls.
- Ban pretextual stops and consent searches that act as common mechanisms for police to engage in racial profiling and circumvent legal standards.
- Implement common-sense, civilly and criminally enforceable legal constraints so there will be only rare instances in which officers are able to use force against community members.
- The hiring freeze within OPD should remain permanent. However, if the department chooses to break the freeze, all officers hired should meet a minimum requirement of holding a BA or equivalent in social work or a related field of study.

## Conclusion

The 2021 investments are only the beginning of a multi-year process to create real public safety and health in the City of Olympia. The winter/spring 2021 research process will lay the groundwork for the 2021 Participatory Budgeting cycle, which will in turn identify further cuts to be made from the City's Public Safety agencies, i.e., the Olympia Police Department, the City Attorney's Office, the City Jail, and Municipal Court. Further investments to be made and distributed during the 2021- 2022 biennium will be identified through the research processes completed in 2021 and the participatory budget process completed in the last quarters of 2021.

The goal of these processes is to create a new paradigm for how the City distributes its funding and invests in community. We have an opportunity to close the door on the era of bloated police budgets that put Black and Brown lives at constant risk of violence and death. We invite City leaders to accept the invitation to transform our city.