

The Portland Police Bureau Requested Budget: An Opportunity to Divest, Defund, and Disarm the Portland Police

January 29th 2018 – Just days ago, City of Portland Police Bureau released their requested budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal year to the Mayor, City Council, and the public. From here, the Mayor and City Council will decide not only the funding for the Portland Police Bureau, but **they will set the agenda for policing and its grave consequences for Portlanders over the course of the next year.**

We, the **Care Not Cops: Mental Health Care, Not Policing** community coalition, are grounded in the belief that policing endangers the health and wellbeing of communities. Policing escalates everyday mental health needs and instances of crisis. This type of punitive, violent, or control-based response to crisis specifically targets and impacts Black people, other people of color, houseless people, and people with mental health needs. With the City of Portland prioritizing policing rather than trained community-based mental health first responders, mental health instances are punished or criminalized and can lead to incarceration, injury, or death, rather than effective and lasting support. Policing and imprisonment forcefully removes people from our communities and creates more severe long term problems, rather than providing the care we need.

We demand that the Mayor and City Council actively work on and set forth a plan for divesting from policing and investing in community care, alternative ways to address harm, and life-affirming and sustaining services.

It is for these reasons that we firmly and urgently oppose the proposed \$12.7 million increase to the Portland Police Bureau budget for the 2018-19 fiscal year. Further, we reject the funding request allocated for an increase in 93 sworn and 9 unsworn new police hires within this budget.

What's called for in the 2018-2019 Police Bureau Proposal:



Increase in Police Bureau budget of \$12,699,674

The budget proposes increases in the areas of accelerating hires, updating and increasing surveillance technologies, funding more hours of officer training, deputy sheriff position, and regional information sharing.

More Community Policing

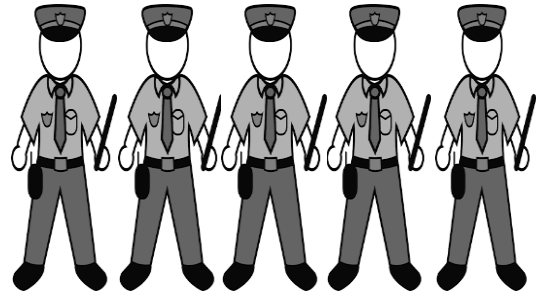


The budget calls for cops to focus on community policing, the dangerous strategy that emphasizes so called *relationship building* with neighborhoods using street patrols, broken windows policing, and surveillance. Community policing targets working class neighborhoods and communities of color, prioritizes areas of active gentrification, preferences protecting property over preventing individual harm, and brings

cops closer into our communities, increasing targeting.

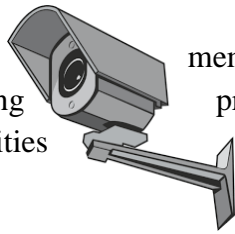
More Cops, Making Us Less Safe

The budget continues to press for 93 more full time armed and active police positions, including 21 “community police”.



Ongoing Membership in Regional Surveillance and Data Sharing

The budget includes regional information sharing additional spying on communities and criminalization.



membership costs to participate in RegJIN which is a post-911 program that connects various policing agencies allowing for and increasing racial profiling through the use of data on



Prioritizing Policing Over Health Care

The budget calls for 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.

Reject the Budget: A Community Based Proposal

Care Not Cops: Mental Health Care, Not Policing community coalition opposes this massive proposed budget and calls on all Portland community members to join in firmly demanding that the Mayor and Council Members formally reject the proposed budget.



Art by Rini Templeton

In this budget, the police are unfortunately prioritized as the first responders to situations involving someone having a mental health crisis. Through so-called community policing, armed and uniformed police officers are charged with enforcing the law to protect those in power and with neutralizing threats to corporations and private property. Theories of “Broken Windows” and “Community Policing” are the framework for increased racial profiling, quality-of-life arrests, stop-and-frisk type practices, and heightened spying on communities.

Police will never be adequate or appropriate responders to mental health crises, *regardless of how many hours of training they receive*, as this is not the intended role of the police. Even in situations where someone experiencing a mental health crisis can potentially harm themselves or others, a police response often escalates the crisis and causes more harm. It is far more appropriate for someone who specializes in mental health and de-escalation to respond. We know that many people may not call for help in the event of a mental health emergency for the very reason that they do not want to risk escalation, arrest, or violence.

We believe that rather than policing and targeting our communities, we should instead have access to community-driven and self-determined mental health care and resources. By diverting funds away from policing, we want to invest in community-based resources and alternatives that specialize in mental health, build up people’s capacity to know their options when dealing with a crisis, and strengthen our ability to rely on each other. Ultimately, we want to make policing obsolete.

We support the development of real, robust, community-determined, life-affirming care, crisis-response, and support resources that do not traumatize, retraumatize, incarcerate, or kill members of our communities. A demonstration of City of Portland Mayor and Council Members’ commitment to the real safety of Portland communities, particularly the most vulnerable, takes four forms:

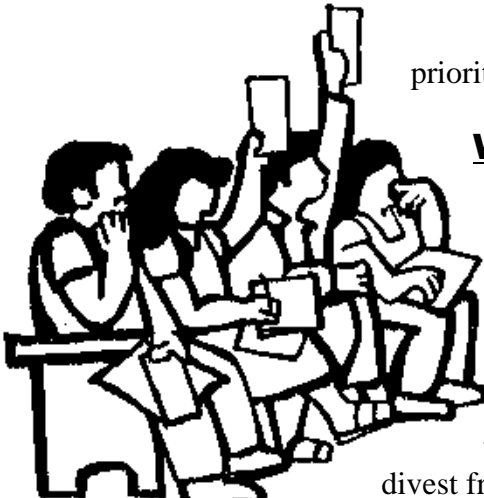
1. An immediate reduction in the exorbitant, taxpayer funded budget allocations to the Portland Police Bureau.
2. In addition to this reduction, an immediate freeze on new PPB hires, instead of the nearly 100 new positions proposed. An alleged staffing crisis does not indicate the need for new hires, but the need to fundamentally alter the current structure of resource allocation and funding.

3. A redirection of policing funds toward communities, using truly participatory budgeting. This redirection would need to involve the input of the communities who are most impacted by policing and who should have control over what services their tax dollars fund.
4. Active investment in life sustaining resources and services. Some examples include:
 - Direct funds to people and organizations that have existing relationships with houseless 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.

Our communities know what real safety, real security, real care mean to them and deserve to determine what this looks like. We know that no amount of training can make police the correct responders to mental health crises, because interaction with police re-traumatizes, incarcerates, and harms. It tears apart communities. It does not provide support or safety. We know that we must build alternatives that can actually keep us safe.

We urge Portland elected officials to show that your priorities *really* lie with serving the needs of the most vulnerable communities by directing funds toward those communities.

Our coalition does this work, in honor, respect, and in grief of those in the Portland community who have been murdered by the Portland Police Bureau in times of mental health crisis. We name here those whose lives have been taken in the last 12 years alone, just over a week preceding the anniversary of the murder of 17-year-old Quanice Hayes, and less than a week after the anniversary of the murder, by Clackamas County Sheriffs, of 19-year-old Christopher Kalonji: Aaron Campbell, Keaton Otis, Quanice Hayes, Terrell Johnson, James Chasse, Darryel Ferguson, Thomas Higginbotham, Bradley Morgan, Billy Wayne Simms, William Monroe, Merle Hatch, Santiago Cisneros III, Nick Davis, Christopher Healy, Allen Belew, Steven Liffel.



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Until the priorities of the City of Portland elected officials match the priorities of the people of Portland, we commit to fighting in their memory.

Want to support or get involved?

The Care Not Cops: Mental Health Care Not Policing community coalition is focused on ending the role of police as first responders to mental health crises, and building up community-derived and oriented alternatives that provide real, meaningful care and safety.

Turn out to the upcoming City Budget Hearings on April 3th & 17th, as we continue to demand and demonstrate to our city officials the need to divest from policing and invest in real, community-determined care.

Get involved with the campaign! Contact crpdx@criticalresistance.org or on Facebook at Critical Resistance Portland for info about meetings, updates, and ways to plug in.