

**From:** [Lisa Hansen](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** 2021 Executive Operating Budget  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 1:59:16 PM

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The time is NOW to show the members of our community that the City of Madison's priorities are the people and their well-being. The best way to do that is tangible action such as where we invest our money. It is shameful that the City of Madison budget for 2021 in its current form makes cuts to everything EXCEPT the Madison Police Department! How does that put the people and their well-being first? What about our libraries, parks, and transportation? This is even more disappointing given the increased awareness of police brutality against the community, especially BIPOC, and the civil rights movement sweeping not just our community but the nation. Decades of research has been done and it shows that investing in violence prevention programs, education, affordable housing, access to healthy affordable food, public transportation that allows for easy access to jobs (that pay a living wage and benefits) and services, and access to affordable healthcare is the best way to reduce crime and improve the well-being of the people in the community. Policing and punitive measures, especially over-policing in BIPOC communities, create more harm than good and continue to create distrust and tension in our communities.

I'm glad to hear that a small portion of the operating budget will be put into alternatives to policing, such as a half-time pilot program for a crisis response team in the fire dept. Thank you for that. But this is a very small portion relative to what is needed to make this effective. And it is a very small portion of money vs. what is being allocated to MPD. Again this is shameful and says that our city doesn't care about what the people say they need to survive and thrive as a community. As a resident I'm disgusted by what this budget represents and prioritizes. Enough! No matter how challenging it is, it is time to stand up to the traditional powers that be! It is time to stand up to and end white supremacy! Do the right thing and support the everyday people in our city!

Thank you for your time,  
Lisa Hansen  
1302 Dewberry Dr  
Madison

**From:** [Rachel Niesen](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Budget- Item 10- OPPOSE  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 4:40:17 PM

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Hello,

My name is Rachel Niesen and I am a constituent of Madison and I am emailing because I am so incredibly disappointed in what I have just learned about the fact item 10 on tonight's agenda is proposing a 3% INCREASE for the Police Department while you are effectively DEFUNDING every other agency.

How on earth are you justifying this decision in the midst of a pandemic and a Black Lives Matter uprising?

Please, listen to your community. Listen, especially, to your Black, Brown and Indigenous constituents who you have most ignored throughout your history. You can choose to change the direction of this committee. You can choose to stop making racist decisions.

Please OPPOSE Item 10 on tonight's agenda. Please refuse to increase any funding for the police department. Please commit to cutting the police department's budget so that we can finally begin to invest in our community.

Sincerely,  
Rachel Niesen  
10 S Lakewood Gardens Madison, WI

**From:** [Ryan Eykholt](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#); [Rhodes-Conway, Satya V.](#)  
**Cc:** [Damita Brown](#); [debberannie@gmail.com](mailto:debberannie@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Comments on Item 62322  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 9:22:36 AM

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Dear Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and Finance Committee,

I am writing to you today as a resident of Madison, urging you to make changes to the 2021 Executive Operating Budget that reflect the needs and demands from the community.

I grew up on Woodside Terrace on the West side of Madison. I felt incredibly safe in my neighborhood, and free to do what children do. I could walk to school at Midvale Elementary, I could bike, I could climb trees, I could play in the streets with friends. One glaring absence was police. Police did not patrol the streets of my majority white neighborhood. They did not surveil my every move, they did not assume I was up to no good. Because I never interacted with cops growing up, I did not have negative nor positive mental associations about the police. But it would be a mistake to have the assumption that a robustly funded police force was what created my feelings of safety growing up.

What does safety mean? Is it an absence, or a presence? An absence of harm, or a presence of community spaces and practices that looks out for everyone? I benefited from many privileges that ensured my wellness and helped me feel a connection to a community. I had every opportunity available to me in school to learn, to express myself, to be affirmed. I had access to private music lessons, community theatre, summer camps. When I struggled with depression, I had access to a counselor. I grew up with health insurance, and I had all of my immediate needs met. I believe that when the city funds mental health care, arts, education, transportation, and community programs that affirm people's humanity in a way where *everyone* can have access, then we will all be safer. We need to stop operating under the false belief that safety is the absence of harm, but rather the transformation of harms. And we *especially* need to stop believing that the police are the ones reducing harm. There is a well documented history of the harms that police have routinely enacted against Black and Brown communities, as well as their immense waste of resources.

What makes you think that now is not the moment? What makes you think that this can wait? What part of you can manage to listen to the immense pain in the testimonies from Black and Brown people who have suffered in the systems of police brutality and mass incarceration, and then decide that their pain is not significant

enough to seek to make immediate change?

Defund the police. The amount of funding towards the police is so wrong. *Fund* the Black-led organizations doing phenomenal restorative work in the community. *Fund* mental health care and wholistic triage. *Trust* the people. *Trust* the research. We know how to keep us safe. The Black community's ingenuity, resilience, and creativity to find ways to survive in an oppressive system and keep each other safe can teach us all lessons for how to move toward a liberated and just society. Indigenous cultures on the American and African continents developed Restorative Justice, which is a remarkable practice that we can all learn for transformation and reconciliation. *This* is the moment. You have stalled long enough.

Here are the priorities and demands from Black leaders in the Madison community. I urge you to make these your priorities as well, and have these be reflected in the budget.

1. Remove all harmful punitive policies, practices and people from school environments, including police, suspension, and expulsion. Do not support politicking or policy decisions that put property over Black people's lives.
2. We want public institutions to engage in 360 degree accountability through abolitionist restorative justice.
3. Support and fund a Black-led committee with decision making and implementation power to remedy the deep patterns of harm caused by racist violence in all of its forms.
4. Using recommendations of said committee, invest in a campaign to decriminalize and humanize Black people.
5. Provide reparations to said committee to create educational initiatives for the Black community.
6. Provide reparations for Black land trusts and other remedies for gentrification and hyper-segregation.
7. Create a truth and reconciliation process to replace the punitive criminal justice system with abolitionist restorative justice.
8. Adopt the demands developed by the Movement for Black Lives.

Sincerely,  
Ryan Eykholt  
22 N Franklin St B3  
Madison, WI 53703  
[ryan.eykholt@gmail.com](mailto:ryan.eykholt@gmail.com)

**From:** [Amber L](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Defund the Police, Not Other Critical City Departments  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 2:56:55 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to request that the police budget be cut more than other departments since the goal we should be striving for is funding social programs instead of more policing. While the increase in the police budget (just over 3 percent) seems modest, the increase is actually much larger when taking into account that crossing guards are being moved to traffic engineering's budget and many other programs are being cut.

We *\*must\** do better as a city in terms of funding programs and departments that actually make a difference in the health and safety of our communities.

Thank you,

Amber Lefers  
620 Pine Street  
Madison, WI

**From:** [Matthew Braunginn](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Executive Operating Budget  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 1:48:52 PM

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Good afternoon Finance Committee,

In taking up the EOB, I hope that you will make actual decisions based upon evidence. Here I'm talking about the MPD budget raise vs cuts elsewhere. Other cities, like [Austin, TX](#) are taking truly progressive steps to reimagine public safety, not half measures, not pilots, not half-funded measures. If not exploring this deeply, Madison will yet again be behind the Progressive curve in how it operates as a city- unfortunately, this has become the norm. While other cities take action, Madison continually funds something halfway, or pilots it out, at times with varying success and always wonders why minimal impact is seen.

Violence interruption has already seen a cut, and all the data tells us these [initiatives work better and cost less](#). We also know, with increasing evidence, that mental health first responders work. Denver, another city willing to lead in a way Madison isn't, [has already implemented this type of initiative and they have seen over 300 mental health calls](#) that did not require police presence. This on top of the success CAHOOTS and other initiatives have already had.

The council claims to be progressive, claims to govern off evidence and data-informed practices. But this budget doesn't reflect that when it comes to public safety. What would an informed public safety budget look like? Well one that truly does reimagine public safety and fully funds initiatives that helps MPD stop being a "master of none" department, as our current Chief and Chief Koval have both admitted in their own words, MPD doesn't address the social problems they are asked to respond to and is tasked with picking up the slack where the holes are- such as mental health and violence interruption. MPD, or police in general, cannot do these things better than trained experts and cost more to put the responsibility on MPD. By decoupling these responsibilities, MPD will be better positioned to be a stronger response unit- as Police are a response, not preventative care. And the fiscally responsible thing to do when taking away a department's responsibilities and putting it into the hands of others is to shift money.

Like the COB and Independent Auditor, this is a moment for Madison to start leading as a Progressive city again, and not continue to be years behind. Or launching a pilot and studying something that has been successfully launched and replicated elsewhere. These things work, but half measures, and half funding, will only lessen their impact. Be smart, be informed, and take the lead. Stand on your professed ideals.

These are things I have studied at my time with COWS and the Mayors Innovation Project, I know this comes to you late, but if you have any questions, would like more resources, and would like to engage in these topics as the budget process moves forward I am more than happy to set up a time to talk and to present much more information on these topics.

This isn't about being "pro" or "anti" police, it is about figuring out what truly works in creating a stronger and safer society, in which we are truly investing in the humanity of

everyone. There are things that show to truly work that are underfunded in almost every city in the United States. Let's do more and be better.

If you are hesitant to reach out for whatever reason, know that it isn't about me arguing down to you, but a conversation, talking through tough topics, hard to research topics, and presenting you with the best information possible on what works. That is my aim in helping to create a better city. This hasn't been my first offer, and few alders have taken me up on such an offer. I do hope you reach back out to learn more, even if I don't expect it. I would love to be wrong about what I think will happen in both being reached out to and the budget session. If you think I'm wrong, show me, no, show us, something different than many of us have observed far too frequently.

Thank you and stay masked folks.

Matthew Braunginn

**From:** [Lunds](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Item #12  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 2:33:09 PM

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To the Finance Committee

Once again, I am registering my voice in opposition to Agenda item #12, the Executive Operating Budget that increases the funding for the Madison Police Department and reduces and shifts funds from other agencies. This is at a time when the Madison community is calling for a reduction in police budgets and allocating more funds to departments and agencies that can intervene in community and human issues and crisis "upstream" from where police are called and violence and harm are more likely to ensue. This could help relieve stress and undue burden from the police department and officers, most of whom are working to do what is best for the people of Madison. Other cities and communities are already working to enact this kind of financial reallocations. The MPD has been a leader in policing before. Let's continue to be an example.

Elrene L Lund  
2050 E Mifflin St.  
Madison, 53704

**From:** [Michael O'Brien](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Item 12  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 4:52:18 PM

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I won't be able to speak but I would like to point out that services are what makes Madison. As I stated Thursday night, that

A raise of 2% late in the year costs the city very little. I think that 2m is only .6% onto the 349m budget. 4 furloughs days I a 2% cut in pay for the people who had continue working in the streets. I ask you to find a way forward for raises and no furloughs

Michael O'Brien

Local 236

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**From:** [Joe Ryan](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Cc:** [Harrington-McKinney, Barbara](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Monday, October 12, 2020 - Written Comment Entry - Elver Park Community Center Request  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 3:52:43 PM

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Greetings-

The Madison West Neighborhood Association (Mwana), would like to ask the Finance Committee to discuss, make and authorize a motion to finance the starting steps to scope out a Community Center at Elver Park for this current budget.

The idea of the Community Center was drafted and placed in the Southwest Neighborhood Plan Adopted Jan 2008 (<https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/Southwest.pdf>) under the 'Walking, Gathering, and Enjoying All Places - Plan Recommendations and Action Strategy' section Priority 1, Plan Recommendations. See below.

**Southwest Neighborhood Plan**

<b>Walking, Gathering, and Enjoying All Places - Plan Recommendations and Action Strategy</b>				
Plan Recommendation	Lead Implementation	City Implementation Action Steps (Estimated Cost)	Neighborhood Action Steps	Time Horizon
<b>Priority 1:</b> Enhance facilities at Elver Park to offer an array of community and recreational opportunities year round. Future uses to explore: community center, swimming pool, splash park, and skiing & snowmaking equipment.	Neighborhood Associations, in conjunction with Parks Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Request Parks Division to determine the feasibility and cost of recreational amenities.</li> <li>- Request Parks Division to reevaluate the siting of the third public swimming pool after the second public pool is built.</li> </ul> <p>Estimated Cost: \$8 million for community center, \$7 million for swimming pool, \$700,000 for splash park, \$300,000 for snowmaking equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish Friends of Elver Park to assist in short- and long-term improvements to the park system.</li> <li>- Establish exploratory project team to set out the process for capital campaign.</li> </ul>	Long-Term (7 or more years)

We hope to see the Finance Committee keep moving forward on this. Multiple Neighborhood Associations around Elver Park have supported this idea and we are happy to start bringing in whatever resources are needed to get this project started and implemented. We understand the first step in any project is to scope it out and understand requirements, budgets and timelines. At this time, we are asking to initiate this process and set aside funding for the first steps of scoping out the project.

Thanks

Joe Ryan

**Joseph Ryan** | President  
**Madison West Neighborhood Association, Inc.**  
 708-469-6055 | [O](#)  
 517-862-3579 | [M](#)  
[president@madwest.org](mailto:president@madwest.org) | [www.madwest.org](http://www.madwest.org)

**From:** [Rofls, Daniel](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** MPSEA, Local 236, Local 6000, MCAA position paper  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 5:02:11 PM  
**Attachments:** [Coalition Joint position paper to CER 10 2 2020.pdf](#)

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Finance Committee members,

The attached document was sent to the Committee on Employee Relations as a part of our discussion regarding long-term wage equity.

Thank you for your consideration.

On behalf of the Coalition of Associations  
Local 6000  
Local 236  
MCAA  
MPSEA

**From:** [Katherine NORMAN](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to 2021 Budget  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 11:04:06 AM

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Dear finance committee members,

My name is Katherine Norman; I live in district 2 in Madison. I write to express my frustration regarding the city's 2021 Executive Operating Budget, and to ask that you do not pass the current budget without significant amendment. Namely: the *increase* in funding to the MPD during this budget shortfall, while all other city agencies are having their funding cut, does not serve the health and safety of our community.

As your constituent, I request that you do not approve this increase to MPD's budget. The limited funds available to the city this year should and must be directed towards community health and safety, such as more funding for the new Crisis Response Team and violence prevention public health programs. Rather than increasing the level of policing in our community, please increase funding for programs that prevent crime from the outset through improved health and safety for all.

Thank you for your time,  
-Katherine Norman

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**Katherine E. Norman (she/her)**  
***Graduate Student* | Educational Psychology**  
**Educational Neuroscience Lab**  
***Kohler Fellow* | Wisconsin Institute of Discovery**  
**University of Wisconsin-Madison**  
**[www.KatherineENorman.com](http://www.KatherineENorman.com)**

**From:** [Blackwell, Clifford](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Cc:** [Mainella, Lara](#)  
**Subject:** opposition to Mayor's proposed budget  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 3:40:34 PM

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I am writing to oppose the Mayor's executive budget as proposed. While I recognize the Mayor has the ability or even obligation to set priorities for City expenditures over the next year, I believe that the Mayor has set priorities that are contrary to the interests of the City as a whole and to City employees in particular.

The Mayor's office in the past, has worked diligently to assure that there is wage equity among the various groups of City employees. While the times are unusual, it would appear that the Mayor has entirely abandoned the concept of wage equity. There are several unions whose employees will be receiving wage increases as a result of labor negotiations that were consummated under the prior administration. The City through its Human Resources Department sought to achieve labor peace with the police, fire and transit unions while it failed to engage the general municipal employee associations in similar negotiations. In the past, the general municipal employee associations would have received "me too" agreements restoring equity among represented and association employees. However, we all know that didn't happen as an election intervened and a new Mayor came to office.

While the current Mayor has expressed her agreement with the concept of wage equity, she has chosen to pursue other priorities for the City and left the general municipal employees hanging without any hope that they will be made equal with their unionized brothers and sisters. The current budget presents not a glimmer of movement towards restoring wage equity for the City's employees. It proposes a "no wage increase" budget and to make matters worse, seeks to impose furloughs of between 2 and 4 days for only general municipal employees. Once again the police, fire and Metro workers are exempted from furloughs putting general municipal employees yet further behind their unionized coworkers.

Had the Mayor's proposed budget shown any movement towards returning to wage equity, I might have been disposed to reluctantly support the Mayor's budget given the difficulties confronting the City due to the COVID pandemic. However, the general municipal employees have been stymied at each approach to the Mayor's representatives to work towards equity. The general municipal employees took these concerns to the CER last week. The CER was supposed to address the employee concerns as early as September, but the Human Resources Department kept the CER from meeting to discuss the employee complaints.

The equity issue has been further exacerbated by the health insurance premiums for 2021 that were just announced. All of the providers with the exception of GHC showed increases, some substantial over last years premia. Again the police, fire and Metro employees premia are fixed at a contribution rate that is less than that of the general municipal employees. This further widens the wage gap between workers.

The Mayor's furlough plan contends that it is intended to be progressive. Rather it is punitive to long term City employees and older workers. The Mayor proposes to impose furloughs of between 2 and 4 days with higher paid workers being expected to bear a longer number of furlough days than lower wage workers. First, the Mayor's proposal does not impose furloughs on all City employees, it exempts police, fire and Metro employees. The lost wages from a furlough will fall solely on general municipal employees once again widening the wage gap among employees. Second, Progressivity is served by imposing the same number of days of furlough on all employees. An employee at the higher end of the City's wage scale will lose more income from the same day's furlough than an employee at the lower end of the wage scale. That is the essence of progressivity. While the Mayor may argue that imposing more furlough days on higher wage employees is more progressive than a one for one system, and higher wage employees are more able to bear that additional loss, the supposed progressivity comes likely at the cost of discrimination against older employees.

Employees at the higher end of the City's wage scale tend to have reached that position through longevity with the City and through progression up the ladder of step increases and career ladders with the City's compensation system. In other words, higher paid employees will likely be older (over 40). While it is possible that a younger worker might be hired for a position at the higher end of the wage scale, it is most likely a result of specialized

knowledge and experience most likely gained over time.

Though I do not currently possess the break down of City employees by age, I think it is a very reasonable assumption that older workers make up the class of employees who will be expected to take the brunt of furlough days.

Applying standard disparate impact analysis to this situation, the Mayor's allegedly facially neutral policy of imposing more furlough days on higher wage employees, is extremely likely to have a substantially significant statistically adverse impact on the protected class of employees over 40 without a reasonably necessary business purpose that cannot be accomplished in a less discriminatory manner such as imposing furlough days on all City employees for the same length of time. Even imposing the same number of days and seeking voluntary furlough by other employees is likely to achieve the same result as proposed by the Mayor.

To summarize, the Mayor's proposed budget discards the long sought concept of wage equity for other unspecified priorities. The proposal for no wage increase is not shared equally by all employees of the City and the proposed budget widens the wage gap among employees without giving any indication that the Mayor has any interest or intention of creating and maintaining an equitably compensated workforce. Further, the Mayor's proposed plan for imposition of furloughs widens the equity gap and could expose the City to litigation over the issue of discrimination against older employees (those over 40).

The Mayor should be encouraged to resubmit a budget that demonstrates the City's intent to close the wage gap among employees and to recognize the incredible work that City employees have produced under trying and difficult conditions during this pandemic. The proposed budget fails to demonstrate concern for the sacrifices already made by City employees, requires them to sacrifice in an unequal manner in the coming year and fails to provide any hope that these inequities will be removed in the future.

I would be happy to answer any questions that the Committee might have of me.

Clifford E. Blackwell, III

**From:** [Steve Verburg](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Please accept public comment on all days when you will deliberate  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 3:54:38 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Finance Committee Members:

You should really hear public comment on the budget proposal both today and Tuesday. Presumably, you'll be deliberating and voting on Tuesday? Please keep all of the committee's deliberations and decisionmaking tethered closely to the public.

These are difficult times. It's very difficult to predict how the next few months will unfold. I'm thinking about the potential for the national elections to be contested for a period of time after Election Day. You may be making decisions on issues you aren't accustomed to. At all levels of government, there are typically influential people who have access to elected officials in private. This may be an especially good time to keep everything out front, certainly starting with the budget.

Thanks for considering my request,

Steve Verburg  
1614 Wendy, Madison Wisconsin

**From:** [Lunds](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** police funding  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 3:20:28 PM

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I know this is a challenging time for budgeting, but the priorities reflected in the budget proposal need to be scrutinized. I am writing to ask that, at a minimum, the funding for the police department be reduced in similar proportion to the cuts demanded of other agencies, not increased as proposed. Further, more of the police budget should be directed to violence prevention, conflict resolution, and alternative crisis responses. Tiny pilot programs are not the answer. Please be more creative than this!

Ken Lund  
2050 E. Mifflin St.  
Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [Steve Verburg](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed budget: Don't defund everything BUT police  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 3:10:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [2011 Dane Follow Up Final \(1\).pdf](#)

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Members of the Madison Common Council Finance Committee:

It's time to substantially reduce funding for the Madison Police Department. It's time for a general reduction of arrests of people who pose no danger to society. It's time for the creation of alternative professional services to take over certain responsibilities we've mistakenly assigned to police.

You can make these things happen by significantly cutting the Madison Police Department budget.

For decades, Madison's leaders have been promising to end Madison's dreadful record of racial disparities. But the [treatment of Black people has gotten worse](#).

Sustained, racist police practices are causing violence to be visited on Black people more than other racial groups. Look. It's not a secret. White people are afraid of Black people far out of proportion of any actual threat to Madison's peace and tranquility. [We call the police on Black people far too often](#), and the police injure, kill and [imprison Black people in numbers that are disgraceful](#).

Take a look at the Institute for Law and Policy Planning studies Dane County commissioned dating back to the 2000s (A 2011 ILPP study is attached). Then and now, police are arresting too many people for minor offenses, or for behavior that is only offensive if you are afraid of Black people or you view them as less than human.

You are a member of the Madison Common Council. Why can't someone else fix this injustice?

The Dane County [district attorney could make a difference. A well-reported article by Katelyn Ferral's recently noted that our DA hasn't kept his promise to reduce racial disparities, and that district attorneys can refuse to rubber-stamp excessive and biased criminal case referrals from police](#).

Dane County could take you off the hook by building a smaller jail so that Madison police couldn't lock up so many people.

But the fact is that the main source of racially unequal overpolicing in Dane County is the Madison Police Department. And you hold the budgetary power to fix it.

The cruelty and racist unfairness of policing in America is making more and more people demand an end to police and prisons, which were created as instruments for maintaining white supremacy.

I don't want to abolish all police officers tomorrow. But the department could be cut back with

understanding that officers would continue to respond to major crimes and stop arresting people who aren't a danger to the community.

And cuts could be made with the further understanding that the police themselves have been telling us for years that we are asking them to do too much in terms of handling social problems they aren't trained to handle.

We don't need to send armed police to address every social problem and every difficult situation. Other cities deploy medical professionals who are trained to defuse situations stemming from addiction and mental health. They solve immediate conflicts and design long-term solutions without resorting to injuring, killing or imprisoning people. As you know, Dane County is contemplating such services. But if you've watched these kinds of reform efforts previously, you've seen that they usually are not only underfunded, but they are underfunded at a glacial pace. And then the funding is reduced.

Why? In a segregated society marked by racial hierarchy and fear, it's simply easier for white leaders to assuage the fears of white constituents by continuing to arrest everyone in the room to stop one from someday causing some unforeseeable harm.

You can leverage the creation of proven, robust medical services that would make us safer. You can do it by reducing the Madison Police Department budget to reflect that certain duties will be taken over by medical professionals. That will encourage the creation of programs like the successful STAR and TRIAGE in other communities.

Several years ago, when I was a journalist covering these issues, I asked Alan Kalmanoff, the executive director of ILPP, what he told elected officials who knew we were jailing far too many people who posed no danger to society. Even taking the issue of race out of it for a moment, if you stop arresting and jailing so many people of all races; if you stopped arresting so many people for "disorderly conduct" -- which typically means being perceived as speaking disrespectfully to a police officer -- you would save taxpayers a fortune (and incidentally take a giant step toward remedying racial disparities). And your crime rate would go down, not up. But eventually, in a year or ten years or thirty years, one of these tens of thousands of people who were not arrested for mouthing off to a police officer, eventually one would commit a heinous, high-profile crime. I asked Alan Kalmanoff: What do the elected officials do then? Won't members of the public, and opportunistic political foes blame them for being soft on crime?

Kalmanoff said that's exactly what eventually happens. But the elected officials would have had made an agreement among themselves. They would have agreed that the next morning, they would all stand together in front of the courthouse and face the public. Each of the top officials would explain in turn that this crime was a terrible aberration that would be fully investigated and handled under the law. They would also explain very clearly that this community was doing the right thing by not imprisoning tens of thousands of harmless individuals over a period of years and years in order to try to prevent one isolated, aberrant act.

What kind of society are we? I'm asking you to reduce police department funding and ensure that the city does everything it can to encourage the creation of proven alternatives to over-policing, and to adequately fund housing, health, and welfare programs to reduce the conditions that can lead to certain kinds of criminalized harm.

Thank-you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

Steve Verburg  
1614 Wendy Lane, Madison, Wisconsin

**From:** [Lorien Draeger](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Reject Mayor's budget!  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 2:10:23 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello City of Madison Finance Committee,

We all understand that the covid crisis has done horrible damage to all parts of our society, including municipal budgets. But the mayor's budget is not a good response to the crisis. When faced with thousands of people marching in support of black lives, demanding that resources mis-allocated to the police be put to better use, the mayor has created a budget that does exactly the opposite.

The police don't solve the actual problems in our community. They don't provide healthcare, food, or housing. They don't provide transportation. They don't provide us with public greenspace. In the face of an unprecedented budget crisis, it is disgusting and shameful that the mayor would cut everything else but the police. It is a slap in the face to everyone in the community repeatedly demanding that we do better.

Please reject the mayor's proposed budget. Tell her to come back with a proposal that cuts the police and nothing else.

Thank you,  
Lorien Draeger  
2550 University Ave apt 423

**From:** [Jennifer Lanzel](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Vote NO on the 2021 Executive Operating Budget  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 12:59:11 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Finance Committee,

I urge you to vote NO on the 2021 Executive Operating Budget. If there was ever a good time to increase the Madison Police Department's funding, now is certainly not that time. The Budget, as it stands, would cut funding from essential resources like libraries, parks, and transportation. It would cut from services that our communities depend on. To increase MPD's budget and defund other agencies rather than lift up the people in our community who need help during the current disastrous economic downturn would be irresponsible and unconscionable.

Cities around the country have been cutting funding to their police departments and reallocating the money to social programs, e.g., Austin, TX, which has decided to reduce its police budget by a third this year ([Austin City Council cuts police department budget by one-third](#)). In the Budget, some money has been designated to fund alternatives to policing (a half-time pilot program for a Crisis Response Team in the Fire Department and a new Violence Prevention Unit in Public Health). This is a step in the right direction, but the funding allocated to these programs is tiny relative to what is needed and relative to MPD. Funding should be reallocated from MPD to these programs.

There is no reason that Madison cannot be a leader in policing reforms. The passage of the Civilian Oversight Board shows that there is broad support in the community to make the changes that are necessary to bring equity and accountability to our city. If you believe that Black lives matter, then I urge you to understand that we must center the voices of those most impacted by police violence and see that an investment in MPD is an investment in white supremacy. As your constituent, I will not stand for this, and I will tell my friends, family, and neighbors to stand with me. Together, we can and will beat white supremacy, and you are in a position of power to help us along that path.

--

Jennifer Lanzel  
806 Winston Way, Waunakee, WI 53597  
Email: [lanzeljr@gmail.com](mailto:lanzeljr@gmail.com)  
Mobile: 715.497.8631

**From:** [Veronica Sustic](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Vote NO on the 2021 Executive Operating Budget  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 12:44:04 PM

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Dear Finance Committee,

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Sincerely,  
Veronica Sustic  
115 S. Mills St., #516  
Madison, WI 53715

**From:** [Jessica Slind](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Vote NO on the 2021 Executive Operating Budget  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 2:28:24 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Finance Committee,

I urge you to vote NO on the 2021 Executive Operating Budget. Now is not the time to increase the Madison Police Department's funding. The Budget, as it stands, would cut funding from essential resources like libraries, parks, and transportation. It would cut from services that our communities depend on. To increase MPD's budget and defund other agencies rather than lift up the people in our community who need help during the current disastrous economic downturn would be irresponsible and unconscionable.

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Sincerely,

Jessica Slind  
3909 Tulane Avenue  
Madison, WI 53714

**From:** [Nicholas Davies](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Waste of \$60K on police intervention equipment  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 1:09:50 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Finance Committee,

In the 2021 capital budget, there is currently \$60K planned for "police intervention equipment". Equipment of the same kind that the full council declined \$50K in spending for over the summer.

It would be irresponsible for this committee to approve that \$60K in spending on this type of equipment, particularly since the council has yet to make an informed decision on whether to ban tear gas, which I believe is classified as one of the "less lethal" police intervention weapons.

While not every budget item may get spent to the full amount, we can assume that this one will. The police department sought to buy \$50K of these weapons over the summer and was denied, and has since used more of these weapons on protesters. It's likely that the police chief will make use of the \$60K as soon as the funds are available, and that could occur before the council's expected decision to ban some of them in February, upon receipt of a report currently being put together by MPD. Any money that gets spent on these unconscionable chemical weapons prior to that anticipated ban will be taxpayer money down the drain.

I should note that this request to resupply these weapons comes in the context of COVID-induced austerity, when our city is facing cuts to our most crucial programs, ones where every dollar goes farthest, and where investments in the social safety net can have the greatest return on investment to get us out of this austere situation in 2022 and beyond.

We're also in the midst of a city-wide conversation about how our police department treats people of color, including how the department responds to protests about their treatment. That response has included wanton violence, turning this kind of "police intervention equipment" on the general public.

With no accountability for the officers responsible, we have no way to know whether they represent "bad apples", or the culture of the department as a whole, but it's clear that at least some officers cannot be trusted to use these weapons according to standard operating procedures, or with any regard for human life.

I urge the committee to zero out this line item, and put the \$60K of taxpayer money to better, more humane use elsewhere.

Thank you,  
Nick Davies  
3717 Richard St