

From: [Krista Eastman](#)
To: [Finance Committee](#)
Subject: operating budget
Date: Monday, October 17, 2022 7:23:53 AM

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Dear Finance Committee,

As you consider the city budget, I know you will get pressure to support more funding for police and policing, but I ask you to have the courage to take our city on a different path – one that understands that building a safe community means supporting the dignity, humanity, and capacity of our BIPOC youth and communities.

I strongly oppose adding six police officers through the COPS grant; we as taxpayers will be on the hook to pay for these officers in a short few years, at a time when our city will be dealing with large deficits. Policing already has an oversized budget in comparison to the rest of city services; committing new funds to an additional six officers does not reflect our values or actually contribute to more safety for children and youth.

If we want to reduce racial disparities, we must start by rejecting a costly proposal that puts more police in neighborhoods with BIPOC youth and use those funds to invest in what works.

I also believe Madison can be a leader in providing care rather than criminalization to our most vulnerable community members. Programs like CARES represent an important step and an effective alternative to further policing. In order to do this, CARES needs robust funding. I support the Mayor's vision, but it is simply not enough. I want to see this program not only exist, but thrive as a viable alternative our city can be proud of.

I'm happy to see significant funds in this budget earmarked for things such as reproductive health, young adult employment programs, a purpose-built homeless shelter, affordable housing, and emergency management for climate change. Unrelated to this budget, we also applaud the City's work on guaranteed income. I'm excited to see the portions of the city budget that honor community, care, human rights, and racial justice. But we can and should do better.

Thank you,

Krista Eastman

940 Clarence Court

From: [Larissa Duncan](#)
To: [Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Re: Public comment on 2023 Operating Budget -- please rescind COPS match
Date: Monday, October 17, 2022 3:23:50 PM

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Dear City of Madison Common Council Finance Committee:

I am a resident of District 15 in Madison, an MMSD parent, and a faculty member at the university.

There is much to like in the 2023 Operating Budget for the City of Madison, such as increased funding for reproductive health, expansion of the CARES program to run 7 days per week (from 5), and funding for an Independent Police Monitor.

I am very concerned, however, that the matching funds the city is providing for the federal COPS program to hire 6 new police officers to engage in community policing will backfire and make us less safe.

The COPS matching funds the Finance Committee approved for this year's 2023 operating budget seem minimal (\$95K), however the City will soon have to pay the entire salaries for these 6 new positions in just a few years (at a cost of over half a million dollars per year). Those funds would be much better spent by increasing CARES funding and investing in youth programs and community development work that we know prevents violence.

The COPS community policing model has a stated purpose of improving police "legitimacy" which sounds like a public relations job. In a city where we already spend 10 times as much on policing than we do on public health, we don't need more police. We need more investment in BIPOC led youth-serving organizations and public infrastructure that prevents the root causes of violence.

I have spoken with many other parents who feel the same way. We do not want more police in our neighborhoods surrounding our schools. We want more neighborhood resources.

Please rescind your Finance Committee support of the 2023 match for federal COPS funding. Please don't send taxpayers a bill in just a few years to pay for these 6 new police officers we don't want or need.

Thank you,
Larissa Duncan
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*Views represented in this email are not those of the University and I am not representing the University.