



Madison Police Department

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TO: Dave Schmiedicke, Finance Director

FROM: Victor Wahl, Acting Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Police Department 2021 Operating Budget Proposal

This proposal for MPD's 2021 budget is being prepared and delivered in the midst of an unprecedented period. The COVID-19 pandemic, increased gun violence, and weeks of civil unrest/protests have put immense strain on the department. Consistent with the Mayor's budget instructions, I have outlined a framework below for a 5% cut to MPD's budget in 2021. However, I feel that a few points of context are critical to provide background for this discussion:

Town of Madison: The City of Madison, City of Fitchburg, and Town of Madison are parties to an intergovernmental agreement that will result in the dissolution of the Town in 2022. The agreement specifies that most of the Town (about 80% of the population and about 90% of the geographic area) will become part of the City of Madison on October 31, 2022. The remainder of the Town will become part of the City of Fitchburg. The Town currently has a full-time police department, providing 24/7 police coverage to Town residents. MPD has conducted a workload analysis and determined that an additional thirteen (13) commissioned positions and one (1) additional civilian position are needed to account for the workload that will come with the Town.

I consider it likely that MPD will need to take on responsibility for policing the Town earlier than October 31, 2022 (and probably in early 2022). Significant cuts to MPD's 2021 budget would result in MPD not having a pre-service academy in 2021, and leave us with insufficient resources to adequately take on policing in the Town.

COPS Grant: MPD has a long history of securing federal grant funds (through the COPS office) to add commissioned personnel. COPS funding typically covers 50% of the cost (salary & benefits) of new officers for three years. In early 2020, MPD applied for a COPS grant, requesting additional positions to create a team of officers that would focus exclusively on the Central Entertainment District (primarily the State Street area). In June, we were notified by the COPS office that we had been awarded the grant, supporting the hire of an additional ten (10) officers (a value of more than \$1.2 million). The State Street area has gone through a tumultuous 2020, and creating this team would greatly enhance our capacity to support the area in the future.

We have been in contact with the COPS office and believe that we can defer a decision on accepting the grant until after the 2021 budget is finalized. There are a number of possible options that would allow for acceptance of the grant as part of the 2021 MPD budget.

OIR Report & Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations – MPD has made significant progress in responding to the recommendations put forth in the OIR Report and by the Madison Police Department Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee. Many of the critical recommendations require significant staff time, training time or other expense. A reduction in MPD’s 2021 budget will have a direct and adverse impact on our capacity to address these recommendations in an effective and timely manner.

Workload: For years, MPD has conducted an annual data-based analysis of patrol workload and staffing needs. This analysis has consistently demonstrated that patrol workload is steadily increasing and that MPD patrol staffing is insufficient to deliver the level of service expected by the community. These workload increases have resulted in the elimination of nineteen (19) non-patrol officer positions over the last few years to allow those officers to be reassigned to patrol. Loss of these positions (Traffic Enforcement & Safety Team, neighborhood officers, Community Outreach officers, Safety Education officers, community policing team officers, etc.) has significantly impacted our capacity to deliver service and respond to community concerns. While the final analysis of 2019 patrol workload is not yet complete, preliminary results show that MPD’s patrol function – based on the existing budget/staffing framework – is more than ten (10) officers short. Reductions in the budget will greatly exacerbate this situation and result in significant service cuts to the community.

Hiring Timeline: MPD typically runs a pre-service academy for new officers every year. The academy starts in May, and the new officers complete their training (and are ready for solo patrol) the following February. A 5% cut to MPD’s budget (requiring layoffs) would result in cancellation of the 2021 MPD academy. That means that MPD would likely not start an academy until May of 2022, and that no new officers would be available (operationally) until February of 2023. If attrition remains consistent with recent years, the impact of this on the department and community would be devastating.

2021 Operating Request: Major Goals

My goals for 2021 are centered on the mission of the MPD which is to provide high-quality police services that are accessible to all members of the community while respecting individuals’ dignity and individual and constitutional rights. With this mission in mind, my goals for 2021 are:

- To work in collaboration with other agencies, non-profit organizations, stakeholder groups and members of the public to collectively solve problems and improve the quality of life for Madison residents.
- To build relationships and engage the public in all aspects of MPD operations.
- To continually evaluate all aspects of MPD operations and remain committed to seeking improvement where needed. This work will reflect recommendations from the OIR Report and Madison Police Department Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee.
- To be transparent in what we do and how we do it.
- To hire the best employees possible and provide them with cutting-edge training. MPD is committed to having a diverse workforce, and has a national reputation for having a representative workforce.
- To always work with professionalism, and with a focus on maintaining employee and

community safety.

A cut to MPD's budget would adversely impact the capacity of the department to fulfill these goals. I recognize that this budget submission comes in the midst of meaningful conversations about public safety in our community. I look forward to engaging in these important discussions and ensuring that MPD is providing high quality service to all members of the public.

2021 Request & Equity

Implementing a cut to MPD's 2021 budget will have an adverse impact on the department's efforts to advance the City's equity goals. For example, most of the initiatives designed to reduce racial disparities in the criminal justice system (like the community restorative court) are organized and facilitated through MPD's Community Outreach section. A 5% budget cut would eliminate this section and jeopardize these efforts moving forward. Maintaining the current budget and organizational structure would allow for these programs to continue benefiting the community.

2021 Request & Sustainability

MPD has started the process of transitioning our fleet to hybrid squad cars (both full police package patrol vehicles and support vehicles). Reduced budget capacity to replace vehicles will slow this process. Eliminating positions will reduce opportunities for officers to engage in activities outside of traditional squad car response (bike patrol, foot patrol, mounted patrol, motorcycle use, etc.). This will result in more officers in squad cars, and increased fuel use/carbon footprint.

COVID Response & Recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on MPD in 2020. While many were staying home or telecommuting, MPD personnel continued their work in the field, providing critical public safety services to the community. Significant internal staff time was needed to coordinate MPD's COVID-19 response, and substantial costs were incurred for supplies and services (testing, PPE purchases, etc.). It is unclear as of this writing to what extent those needs will extend into 2021, but MPD's base budget is insufficient to support the department if the COVID-19 pandemic extends into 2021.

Summary of Proposed Reductions - \$4,209,219 (5%)

A 5% reduction to MPD's operating budget would require the elimination of twenty-six (26) sworn positions, nine (9) full-time civilian positions, and fifty-seven (57) hourly positions. The commissioned cuts would be to multiple ranks and would decimate the department's ability to deliver service and support public safety. I anticipate that these cuts would have the following impacts:

Elimination of MPD's Community Outreach Section – This includes the community outreach Captain, the entire Community Outreach and Resource Education (CORE) unit, the Mental Health Unit, and civilianization of the Crimestoppers coordinator position. This cut would drastically reduce MPD's capacity to engage the public and build trust with the community.

The Community Outreach and Resource Education (CORE) Team works to enhance the department's efforts to reduce disproportionate arrests related to racial disparities and improve trust and perception of fairness through procedural justice, community outreach, education and problem solving. The CORE team currently coordinates all of our restorative justice efforts and the majority of our outreach programming (Black and Latino Youth Academies, Amigos en Azul, Bigs in Blue, etc.). With the elimination of CORE, many of these important outreach efforts will end and our capacity to coordinate restorative justice referrals – an effort directly related to reducing racial disparities in the criminal justice system – will be greatly decreased. A number of recommendations in the OIR and Ad Hoc Committee report are directed towards CORE, and these will be unattainable if the unit is dissolved.

MPD's Mental Health Unit was created to provide a coordinated, professional and compassionate police response to individuals affected by mental illness and their families. Over the years, the MHU has become known throughout the country as reflecting best practice in policing and as a model for other agencies to aspire to. Mental Health Officers work collaboratively with partner agencies like Journey Mental Health and NAMI to achieve improved outcomes for individuals affected by mental illnesses by connecting them to needed services and diverting them away from the criminal justice system whenever possible. Eliminating these positions will result in an increased workload for patrol, a reduced quality of service to people affected by mental illness, and an increased potential for encounters between MPD and those affected by mental illness to end badly.

For decades, an MPD officer has served as coordinator for the Crimestoppers program. While this support must continue, a 5% budget cut would eliminate the police officer position currently assigned this function and replace it with a civilian position.

Elimination of the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) – Currently two SIU detectives attempt to enhance community safety by working with selected individuals in our community who have a history of involvement in violent crime. They work in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Dane County District Attorney's Office, other law enforcement agencies, and community service providers to practice "focused deterrence" with these individuals. Detectives keep in regular contact with these individuals to provide enhanced opportunities for participants to make positive, productive changes in their lives, and to ensure the highest level of legal accountability for those who continue to re-offend. Focused deterrence is an evidence-based strategy that has demonstrated positive impacts on public safety locally and nationally.

Elimination of the Crossing Guard Program – Our school-aged children and their parents expect the City to staff crossing guards at certain intersections during the school year. A few years ago, an intersection along East Washington Avenue went unstaffed for a period of time due to attrition and the public outcry and corresponding complaints from the Alder forced MPD to have a commissioned officer assist with the daily crossing duties. While the temporary loss of a crossing guard at a single intersection demonstrated an adverse impact on the community, the implications will be much greater if the entire program is eliminated.

Elimination of the Traffic Enforcement and Safety Team (TEST) – In 2017, Chief Koval was forced to eliminate the PM TEST unit and reassign those officers to patrol as a result of increasing patrol workload and insufficient patrol staffing. This elimination led to a significant decrease in our traffic enforcement efforts during the afternoon and evening commute hours and an overall

reduction in the number of traffic citations issued. TEST plays a key role in MPD's traffic enforcement efforts; in 2019, the TEST team accounted for over 31% of the total traffic citations issued by the department. TEST also engages in problem solving efforts to address traffic safety concerns, manages traffic grants received by the department, and plays a critical role in MPD support of special events in the City (Ironman, Crazylegs, Madison Marathon, etc.).

Reduced Patrol Officers – A 5% budget cut would require a reduction in the number of officers assigned to the patrol function. As indicated above, data analysis has consistently demonstrated that MPD's current patrol staffing levels are inadequate to address existing workload and community expectations. A reduction from current patrol staffing levels will require tangible reductions in service. I anticipate that MPD officers will no longer respond to a number of specific incident types in the event a 5% budget cut is implemented. These incident types could include:

- Non-injury motor vehicle accidents
- Private property vehicle accidents
- Noise complaints
- Landlord/Tenant disputes

In addition, a reduction in patrol staffing will have a number of other adverse impacts on service:

- Reduced police visibility
- Delayed response times
- Less traffic enforcement
- Less time for officers to engage in proactive activity (problem solving, foot patrol, etc.)

Reduction to Neighborhood Officer Program – For years, MPD has staffed full-time neighborhood police officers (NPOs) in challenged neighborhoods. These officers build relationships and focus on long-term problem solving for the benefit of the neighborhood and residents. Patrol staffing shortages have required the elimination of some NPO positions, reducing the number of geographic areas served by NPOs. A 5% budget cut would require further cuts to the NPO program, possibly including the elimination of geographic NPOs altogether.

Reduction to Mounted Patrol Unit – the MPD Mounted Patrol provides great benefit to the department and community. The unit is used for community outreach/engagement, special events, search and rescue and Central entertainment district support. The unit is particularly valuable given the large number of special events that MPD is called on to support every year. A 5% cut budget cut would curtail the size and availability of the unit.

Eliminate Police Report Typist Positions – In order to meet a 5% budget reduction, six (6) full-time civilian police report typists (PRTs) would be laid off. The PRT team transcribes police reports, processes field reports, routes individual reports to investigators and process stakeholders, staffs seven customer service windows and phones during normal working hours, and supports our Officer-in-Charge office on each patrol shift. Police report typists also support commissioned personnel through public-facing customer service at the six district stations. MPD would experiment with use of a private vendor transcription service to address the loss of transcription capacity caused by these layoffs. However, other services provided by PRTs could not be outsourced, and these layoffs would result in reduced services to the community. The

OIR Report and Madison Police Department Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee both recommended expanding public hours at MPD facilities; this cut would likely result in reduced public access to windows at MPD facilities.

Eliminate Property Clerk Position – MPD property unit staff are responsible for all items that come into the MPD property system. This includes evidence, found/lost property, etc.; more than 20,000 items per year are collected. Eliminating this position would reduce the capability of the department to adequately manage this property and would reduce access for the public to have property returned to them.

The vast majority of MPD's budget goes towards personnel, and there is simply no way to make any substantive cuts without reducing positions. There are, however, a few non-personnel cuts that would be implemented as part of a 5% budget reduction:

Employee wellness checks – A national best practice – and recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee – is to provide for annual mental health checks-ins for employees. This program is critical to providing support to our employees; a number of surrounding agencies have similar programs in place. MPD's 2020 budget included funding for this initiative, but the COVID-19 budget crisis required that it be cancelled. A 5% budget cut would preclude implementation of this effort in 2021.

Eliminate ProTraining funding – ProTraining is provided by a private vendor, and is focused on improving interactions and outcomes during high-stress encounters. The Ad Hoc Committee recommended that MPD pursue it. Funding was included in the 2020 budget, but a variety of issues made it impossible to pursue. A 5% cut would preclude implementation of this training in 2021.

Adjust annual overhire formula – MPD's annual attrition overhire is critical to ensuring that our actual number of available officers is as close to our authorized strength as possible. It accounts for the hiring and training timeline/cycle, and allows us to address attrition within our existing budget. In recent years, we have seen unprecedented numbers of resignations and retirements. In the current environment, I anticipate this trend continuing in 2020. Adjusting the formula that the overhire is based on would reduce academy size and result in salary savings, but would increase the ongoing impact of attrition on staffing availability and service levels.

Conclusion

The events of 2020 have put an unprecedented strain on the men and women of MPD, exceeding the department's capacity. Virtually all MPD personnel have been focused on essential activities, and most specialized functions have been suspended. Had we been operating with a 5% smaller budget (as outlined above), the department simply would not have been able to address the issues faced by the City during this period.

Even in a "normal" year, the impact of a 5% cut to MPD's budget would be significant. The department would take major steps backwards in a variety of key areas, including:

- Ability to respond to increased gun violence in the City
- Capacity for community outreach and engagement

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- Training
- Addressing OIR/Ad Hoc recommendations
- Ability to staff special events in the City
- Traffic safety/enforcement
- Problem-solving
- Patrol visibility and response time

These impacts will be felt by all members of the community, and will adversely impact public safety in Madison for years.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victor Wahl". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "V" and "W".

Victor Wahl
Acting Chief of Police

CC: Assistant Chief John Patterson
Teague Mawer