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November 16, 2020

Dear Mayor Frey and City Council Members,

This year has not been Minneapolis' best. We have had a daunting spring and summer with both Covid-19, the death of George Floyd and the ensuing civil unrest over these issues and our 2020 elections.

While some feel we can only solve the problem by defunding the police and instead changing to a more public safety centric model, many within the community are concerned that both will be underfunded.

We are hearing from officers that they can not respond as they are short staffed and people are seeing this in both an escalation in nuisance crimes and serious violence.

We would like to suggest the following...

- * Police Chief Arradondo is the expert, and we trust his judgment on police staffing needs. Stop cutting the police budget and look elsewhere in the budget for cuts.

- * Stop assuming that the Police Department and Office of Violence Prevention must compete for city funding. We need both.

- * Police should work together with Hennepin County co-responders (mental health, domestic violence counselors). Don't set up a duplicate city program for this.

- * Provide jobs for at-risk youth (16-30). Having a job is the first step to a productive life in society. Provide an alternative to criminal employment.

- * Revise how the city goes about funding affordable and subsidized housing. The city has spent millions over the past 20 years, but the problem is worse.

Please take a serious look at items that were great to fund when times were flush but now seem like they could be moved to the back burner. Bike trails can wait, pop up parks for public gatherings are not great during Covid-19, TIF for affordable housing creates a long-term funding gap for the general fund and trolleys that are short routes for few people could be put aside and the funds released to pay for the necessities of now.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Melody Devine co-chair CPNA

Rich Waryan co-chair CPNA