

# Path to a Safe, Healthy & Just Recovery:

Cut NYPD's Budget & Invest in Communities



June 2021

**COMMUNITIES  
UNITED FOR  
POLICE REFORM**

   @ChangetheNYPD #NYCBudgetJustice #DefundNYPD

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## **Last year's FY21 budget fight**

In the spring of 2020, CPR members and partners launched a campaign to significantly cut the NYPD budget so that necessary monies could be redirected to Black, Latinx and other communities of color.

The backdrop was the COVID-19 pandemic that had starkly revealed and exacerbated every measure of inequality in New York City. But the underlying reality was that **basic infrastructure and programs have been defunded in low-income Black, Latinx and other communities of color for decades** – while the NYPD and the budget, size, scope, and power of policing continue to grow.

New Yorkers, like millions across the country, took to the streets in the spring and summer– in defense of Black lives and against police violence. Our campaign to #DefundNYPD for #NYCBudgetJustice was launched in the context of the Movement for Black Lives' ecosystem lifting up demands to #DefundThePolice across the country. Mayor de Blasio proposed an austerity budget that would slash essential programs for elders, essential workers, youth and others within communities of color – while protecting the NYPD's bloated almost \$6 billion expense budget (which translated to about \$11 billion in NYPD direct costs).

While we didn't win a cut of at least \$1 billion from the NYPD to reinvest in communities, collectively we created the conditions that made the demand irresistible and irrefutable – forcing Mayor de Blasio and the City Council to commit to the cut.

**Shame on them for what turned out to be a \$1 billion lie** (more on that later in this report). **Shame on elected officials and others who have tried to paint this movement's leadership and supporters as predominantly white** – erasing the Black, Latinx, Arab, Asian, and Indigenous leadership and base of the campaign. Nothing could be further from the truth.

It's unfortunate that some elected officials attempted to delegitimize the growing peoples' movement for a true peoples' budget – and to defend their decision to side with the NYPD instead of communities.

## **Since last year's fight**

The FY21 #NYCBudgetJustice campaign was a turning point for NYC. Over 200 organizations joined our #DefundNYPD campaign. There were daily protests, marches, actions and lobbying of elected officials, demanding cuts to bloated police budgets. The teach-ins and political education conducted in neighborhoods across the city contributed to a shifting politics.

We've seen the fruits of community education and organizing in the local 2021 races for City Council, borough and citywide elected positions. Regardless of what the final election outcomes are, the need to cut the NYPD budget was a central issue throughout various races. Just about every race had at least one candidate who supports the need to cut the NYPD budget and reinvest those monies into communities.

Over the past year, we've seen centrist and conservative politicians scramble to distract and discredit the popularization of the demand to divest from policing and invest in communities. We've also experienced the backlash of centrist and conservative politicians who play around and want to theorize about whether "defund" is a good slogan, as a way to dodge the simple demand to prioritize communities instead of failed policing strategies.

**Budgets are moral documents that outline a government's priorities – a city budget tells the story of how a government plans to care for its people.**

The #DefundNYPD and #NYCBudgetJustice demand is simply that NYC must organize our financial resources so that we invest in our people instead of in failed policing strategies and tactics.

We want NYC's budget to prioritize our communities so that all New Yorkers can live with safety, health and justice. That's achievable in our lifetimes, but as a city we need to prioritize it – not just in words, but also in dollars and deeds.

### **FY22 demands**

The FY22 demands of the #NYCBudgetJustice/#DefundNYPD campaign are for Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Johnson and the New York City Council to make sure that the FY22 budget that's adopted will ensure a safe and just transition from the pandemic. This includes:

**1) Follow-through on last year's promise to:**

- Cut at least \$1 billion from the NYPD FY22 expense budget
- Redirect all savings to non-police health and safety solutions

**2) Deny and cancel any new policing-related initiatives and staffing** (including those referred to as part of "police reform" and "outreach/community engagement" efforts) – **and block increases in any line of the NYPD FY22 expense budget.**

**3) Require NYPD transparency in the budget** by including transparency-related terms and conditions in the adopted FY22 budget.

This is not a one- or a two-year fight. We are in this long-term to transform our city and to fight for a safe and just transition out of the pandemic for all of us.

## **II. OVERVIEW OF THE NYPD BUDGET**

The NYPD is the largest police department in the country, with over 50,000 personnel. NYPD employees include approximately 35,000 officers and 18,000 civilian staff.<sup>1</sup>

**The NYPD’s staff is so outsized that one out of six NYC municipal government employees are employed by the NYPD.** Over 90% of the NYPD’s budget goes to personnel.

**New York City spends about \$11 billion per year on direct NYPD expenses,** even though the NYPD annual expense budget is only about \$6 billion. This is because an additional \$5 billion is located in a separate part of NYC’s budget, called “centrally allocated expenses” (explained more on p. 4 of this report). **The NYPD spends more per capita than any other police department in the United States.**<sup>2</sup>

While NYC spends about \$11 billion annually on NYPD direct expenses, It is hard to have a true assessment of the costs of policing in New York City. **The NYPD budget is notoriously opaque and secretive,** making it difficult to know the true costs of particular areas such as surveillance technologies or totals spent on public relations and propaganda.

The true cost of spending for the NYPD goes far beyond the \$11 billion from the NYPD’s expense budget and centrally-allocated budget.

**Additional costs that are not included in NYPD expense or centrally-allocated budget:**

Settlements and other litigation-related costs for police violence.

Expenses hidden in other agency budgets for “partnerships” with the NYPD.

Councilmember discretionary funds specifically designated for NYPD programs and infrastructure.

Capital expenses - The NYPD is expected to spend approximately \$700 million for capital projects in FY22, including \$230 million for a new firearms training facility.<sup>3</sup> The City is currently projecting spending \$1.04 billion for NYPD capital expenses in the FY22 - FY25 period.

Expenses paid directly by the New York City Police Foundation – The NYC Police Foundation is a private-public charity whose sole purpose is to fundraise & provide resources for the NYPD.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes referred to as the NYPD’s slush fund, the Police Foundation spent almost \$12 million on NYPD projects in 2019.<sup>5</sup>

## Explainer: NYPD budget versus NYPD overall spending



### ***Why is NYC's total spending on NYPD almost double the NYPD's annual agency expense budget?***

There are two main reasons that NYC's total spending on NYPD direct expenses<sup>6</sup> is almost double the amount of the NYPD's expense budget:

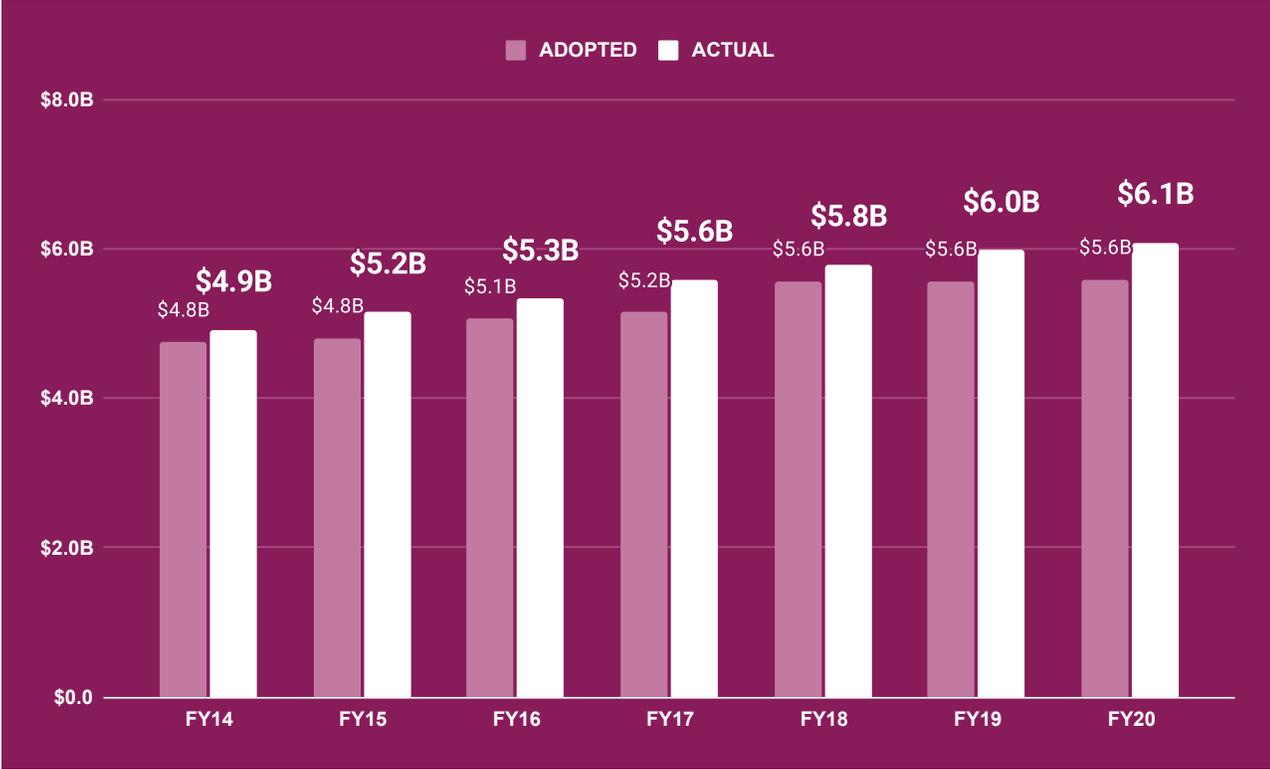
**About half of what NYC spends on NYPD direct costs is not reflected in the NYPD's agency expense budget.** Some direct NYPD costs (e.g. fringe benefits, retirement costs and debt servicing) aren't reflected in the NYPD's expense budget – they are itemized in a separate "centrally-allocated" section of the NYC budget.

NYPD fringe and retirement costs that are part of the City's "centrally-allocated" budget run close to a rate of 100% of NYPD personnel costs - a rate significantly higher than many other agencies.<sup>7</sup> The NYPD has a huge staff of approximately 35,000 uniformed staff and another 18,000 civilian staff,<sup>8</sup> totaling over 50,000 employees and representing almost 17% of NYC's municipal workforce.

Since over 90% of the NYPD's annual expense budget is made up of personnel costs, the centrally-allocated costs often comes close to doubling the NYPD's spending in any given year (compared to the NYPD expense budget).

**The NYPD routinely exceeds its approved expense budget.** Unlike other City agencies, the NYPD seems to treat its annual budget as a recommendation instead of something that needs to be followed to limit spending.<sup>9</sup>

# NYPD Expense Budget Overruns 2014-2020



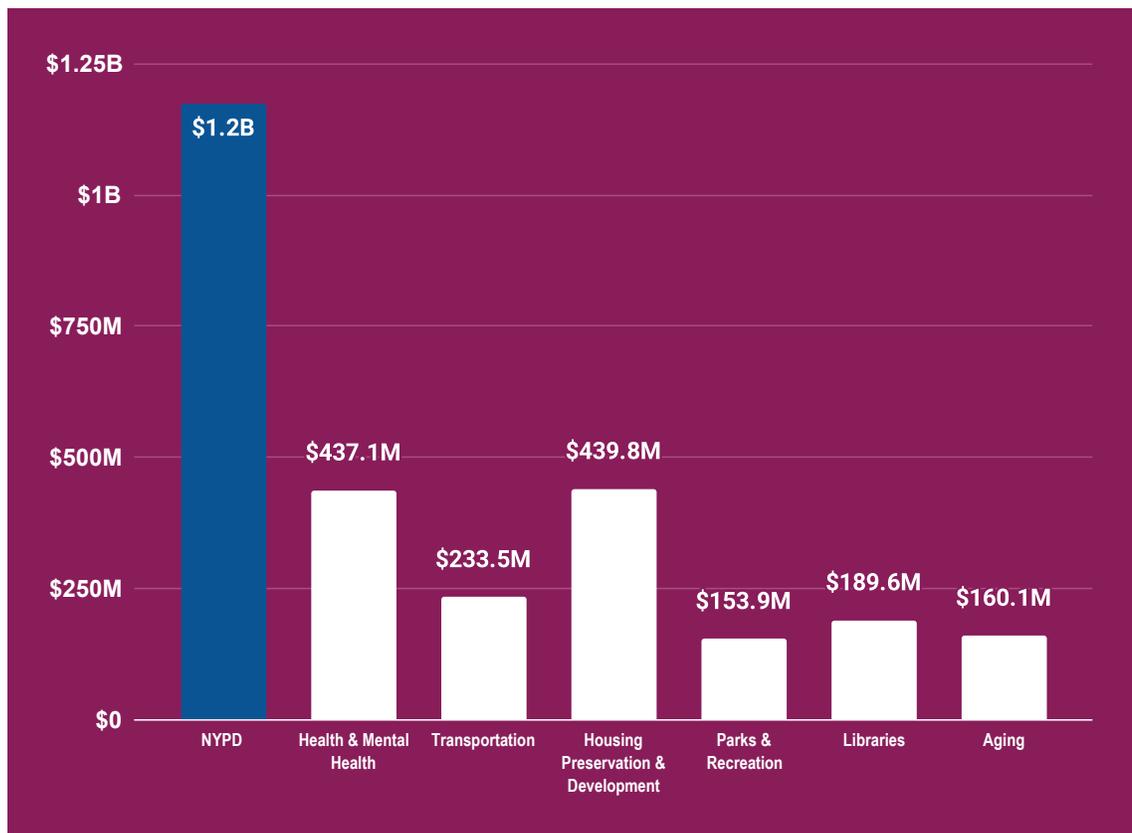
Source: All adopted numbers are from Expense, Revenue Contract Budgets from respective fiscal years and all actual numbers are from Message of the Mayor for respective fiscal years.

### III. NYPD Expansion Under de Blasio

Since Bill de Blasio became Mayor in 2014, the NYPD’s budget, size and scope have ballooned. Over his two terms, Mayor de Blasio (along with City Council Speakers Corey Johnson and Melissa Mark-Viverito) negotiated and passed budgets that prioritized funding criminalization and policing instead of deep investments in non-police, community safety strategies and approaches that could make communities healthier, stronger and safer.

The size of the NYPD’s annual expense budget has grown by \$1.2 billion<sup>10</sup> since Mayor de Blasio took office.

**Growth in Spending, 2013-2020, from Bloomberg to de Blasio**



Source: Message of the Mayor, City of New York, FY14-FY22

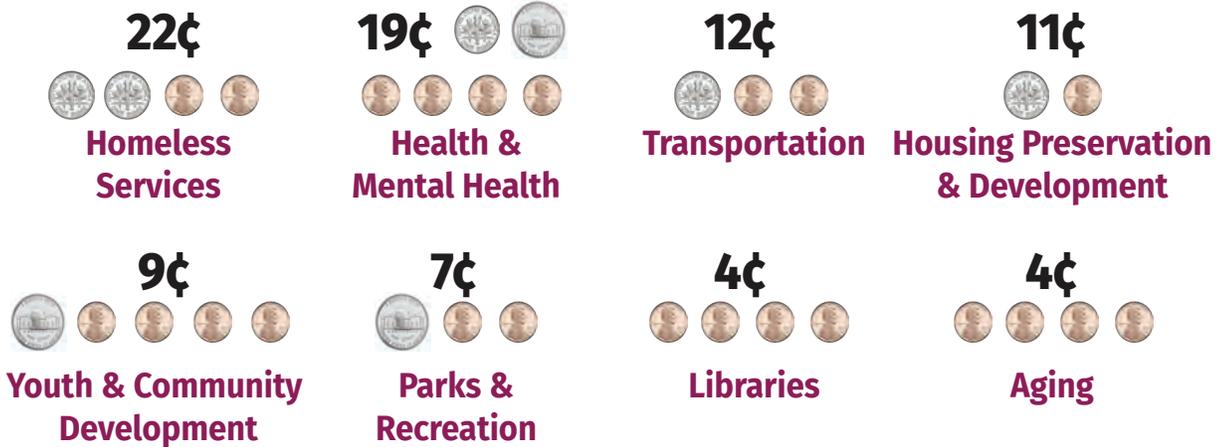
In the past seven years, NYC has spent almost \$40 billion<sup>11</sup> on the NYPD (and that’s just the expense budget, not including other costs like police fringe, capital costs, etc).

## Policing vs. Community Safety

**For every dollar that goes to the NYPD,  
under de Blasio**



**other agencies get:**

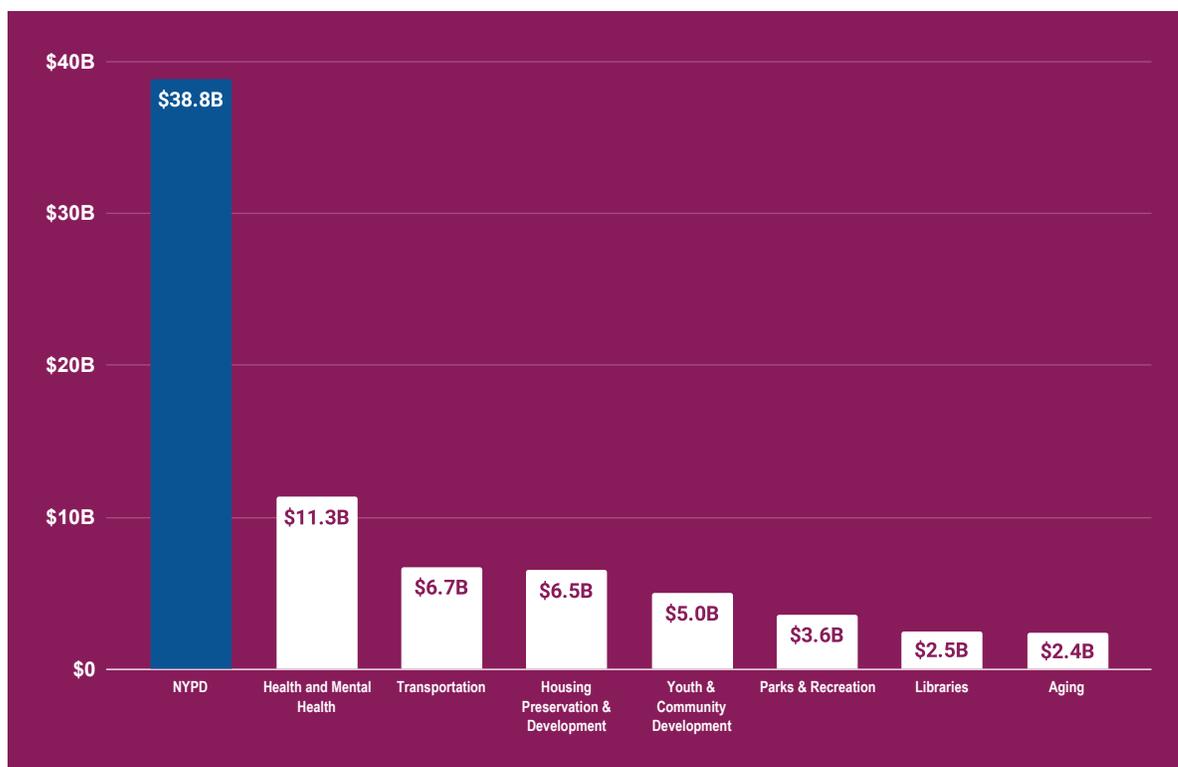


Source: FY20 data from Message of the Mayor, Executive Budget, City of New York, FY22

**From 2014-2020, NYC spent more on the NYPD's expense budget than the combined budgets<sup>12</sup> of the following:**

- Dept. of Health & Mental Health
- Dept. of Youth & Community Development
- Dept. of Housing Preservation & Development
- Dept. of Transportation
- Dept. of Parks & Recreation
- Libraries
- Dept. of Aging

## Spending, 2014-2020



Source: Mayors Message, FY15-FY20 and FY22

### The NYPD in NYC's budget process

While the bloated size and excessive growth of the NYPD's budget compared to other important agencies is cause for concern, the NYPD's approach to its adopted budget reflects other problems. Two of the most concerning issues related to the NYPD's budget are that the:

- NYPD routinely overspends their approved budget, with no consequences.
- NYPD is allowed to keep much of their budget opaque and secret

The above two issues reflect and reinforce the outsized power the NYPD exerts in NYC, including overspending of city tax dollars.

**The NYPD routinely exceeds its expense budget**, regardless of what the Mayor and City Council approve each June. During Mayor de Blasio's tenure, there does not seem to have been any meaningful check and balance to what appears to be unilateral budget decision-making by the NYPD.

**During de Blasio's tenure, the NYPD has exceeded its adopted budget by an average of \$324 million per year.**<sup>13</sup>

**In FY20 alone, NYPD spending exceeded its adopted agency budget by close to half a billion dollars.**<sup>14</sup> To put this in perspective, NYPD overspending in FY20 is more than triple the amount spent annually on the entire Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), which provides much needed summer jobs for young people, and has a proven track record of improving safety and well-being for communities (see chart on page 5).

**The NYPD regularly hires and maintains more officers than projected and budgeted.**

While it is reasonable that estimated staffing might fluctuate for any agency because of the realities of staff attrition and hiring, the NYPD's repeated overstaffing appears to be unique. For example, between FY15 and FY19 the NYPD actual annual headcount for uniformed officers was on average 338 more than the budgeted headcount, peaking in FY 2018 when the NYPD actual uniformed headcount was 565 larger than what was budgeted.<sup>15</sup>

**The NYPD appears to experience no meaningful consequences for this regular overspending and is arguably New York City's most protected agency in budget negotiations.**

This was evident last year when Mayor de Blasio proposed a preliminary FY21 budget that sought major cuts targeting life-saving programs across city agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic, while the NYPD's budget was largely protected.

**The NYPD seems to enjoy preferential treatment** in the budget and budget monitoring process, where they are routinely permitted to disregard limits of democratically approved budgets.

**It can be argued that in spite of regular overspending, the NYPD is not only protected but also regularly rewarded** with additional monies from Councilmember discretionary grants. Twenty Councilmembers awarded 38 discretionary grants directly to the NYPD and/or to NYPD-related programming (e.g. Police Athletic League, Explorers Program). These grants totaled \$293,500 from the City Council's FY21 discretionary grants.<sup>16</sup>

**Lack of NYPD fiscal transparency obstructs oversight**

The NYPD budget is arguably the most secretive and opaque of any New York City agency. This lack of transparency functions as structural protection from meaningful fiscal oversight, which has facilitated the ballooning of the NYPD budget over the years.

The NYPD's lack of budget transparency - combined with their preferential treatment in the budget oversight process - contributes to (and is the natural result of) the NYPD's outsized power in city affairs.

In fact, **even when the City Council has tried to reign in NYPD overspending or lack of budget transparency, the NYPD has simply ignored the Council's requirements and/or exploited loopholes to defy being regulated.**

An example can be found in the FY21 terms and conditions for the NYPD budget. In response to demands by Communities United for Police Reform (CPR) members and partners, the City Council included a requirement in the adopted FY21 budget for the NYPD to publicly report on private actors that fund the NYPD<sup>17</sup>. Part of the purpose of this was to create transparency related to the millions of dollars the NYC Police Foundation fundraises and spends on NYPD expenses each year.

In spite of knowing the intent of the Council's requirement, the **NYPD exploited a loophole** in the written terms to continue to keep secret the details of the NYC Police Foundation's spending for NYPD. **The NYPD reported none of the Police Foundation's contributions** for NYPD programs and initiatives in the required report.<sup>18</sup>

In spite of this clear undermining of budgetary terms and conditions, to date there have been no meaningful consequences to the NYPD.

### **NYPD mission creep & role expansion**

Much of the infrastructure, programs and services crucial for healthy and safe communities have been defunded in NYC's Black, Latinx and other communities of color for decades. The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare and exacerbated many pre-existing and systemic inequalities and crises in NYC, including lack of affordable housing, inadequate public health infrastructure (including mental health deserts in communities of color), lack of living wage employment opportunities, educational access inequalities, food insecurity and more. All of this is **core safety infrastructure for any community to be healthy and safe**.

While this core safety infrastructure has been largely defunded and under-resourced, the NYPD's budget has ballooned and the role of policing has expanded. The expanded role of policing in social service strategies has been at the expense of adequately resourcing community-based infrastructure and services that could more effectively intervene in and prevent violence and create healthy and safe communities in the immediate and long-term. With their massive budget, the NYPD plays a daily role in helping to hide visible signs of inequality in New York City.

The following are just a **few examples of areas where the NYPD's role has expanded – and where police should be removed**.

- **NYPD-run community centers:** In 2019, the NYPD unveiled a brand new, state of the art community center in East New York that would be run by NYPD personnel. The community center is aimed primarily at young people, with educational, recreational and social programming. Creating an NYPD-run community center does not build the power of a community – it expands and legitimizes the growing role, scope and power of the NYPD in communities of color. The East New York community center is an example of community infrastructure that can and should be run by the community, with youth and family development experts - and not by a police agency.
- **NYPD-led youth programming:** As noted by Girls for Gender Equity (GGE)<sup>19</sup> in their FY21 budget demands, there are many ways that the NYPD has expanded their youth engagement strategies, including the creation of “Youth Coordination Officers”. Monies spent towards NYPD-led youth programming would be better invested in community organizations that are run by young people and by youth development organizations. The NYPD's ability to unilaterally expand their youth programming while youth-serving organizations face annual budget strains is a clear demonstration of investing in policing and criminalization instead of communities.
- **NYPD role in mental health response:** There is a growing national consensus that police should not have a role in mental health response. Strengthening and supporting community mental health, especially coming out of the pandemic requires major investments in culturally competent, community-based mental

health infrastructure and services. Instead, the NYPD's budget and role have grown to respond to mental health crisis calls, sometimes with deadly consequences. Despite having no successful track record for this role, the City continues to invest in NYPD-led and NYPD-involved mental health crisis response.<sup>20</sup>

- **NYPD Bee unit:** The NYPD has a “bee unit<sup>21</sup>”! The NYPD bee unit has its own twitter account.<sup>22</sup> NYC's Parks Department and Department of Health already play roles monitoring and addressing issues that may come up with bees. This is a ludicrous example of NYPD mission expansion that has more to do with manufacturing positive public relations opportunities for the NYPD than with public safety.

The NYPD's role expansion – which increases their budget, size and scope – is unnecessary and undermines building strong community-based infrastructure and programs.

## IV. THE \$1 BILLION LIE (aka New York City's FY21 adopted budget)

In spite of press releases and statements by Mayor de Blasio, the City Council and the NYPD, the NYPD budget was not cut by \$1 billion last year. Instead, the Mayor and the majority of the City Council chose to protect the NYPD's budget and power during a global pandemic - while NYC saw tens of thousands of deaths due to COVID, our elders and children were food insecure, homeless rates were rising, and the NYPD used violence and brutality in policing protests, social distancing and mourning.

**The cost of that \$1B lie is that New Yorkers are less safe than we could be.**

Instead of major investments in community-based safety solutions, the Mayor and City Council chose to protect the NYPD and invest in the same abusive policing tactics that have historically failed to end or address violence. As a result, like the rest of the country that has faced economic and social devastation, New York City has seen continued violence that police are unable to prevent or address.

### **About the FY21 budget vote**

Last year's budget vote (for FY21) is believed by many to have been the most contested in the history of NYC budgets. Members and partners of CPR's #NYCBudgetJustice and #DefundNYPD coalition generated tens of thousands of calls and emails to individual Councilmembers, and organized countless marches, teach-ins and other actions before the vote.

**Organizing, direct action and advocacy by groups across New York City created the conditions that forced Mayor Bill de Blasio and City Council Speaker Corey Johnson to commit to cut at least \$1 billion from the NYPD's FY21 expense budget** and redirect savings to core community needs.

### **Fake cuts & budget tricks**

As the date of the FY21 budget vote approached, **it became clear that the Mayor and Council were using funny math and budget tricks<sup>23</sup> to make it seem like they would cut at least \$1 billion** from the NYPD's FY21 expense budget. However, the math was not there - information about the potential cuts the Council was considering indicated that they were looking for cuts on paper instead of meaningfully reducing the budget, size and scope of the NYPD and policing.

On the day of the vote, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer correctly called out the Mayor and City Council for their "manipulated math" and "bait and switch"<sup>24</sup> budget tricks. Speaker Johnson finally acknowledged during a pre-vote press conference that the cuts did not reach his previous commitment of the full \$1 billion.<sup>25</sup>

In spite of this, the Mayor, NYPD, and some members of the City Council continued to claim that they had cut the NYPD budget by \$1 billion - even after the budget was voted on.

The **full extent of the fake math, budget tricks and lies was hidden from the public – and even Councilmembers – during the June 30, 2021 vote.** In fact, some of the most serious budget tricks and lies were not uncovered until supporting schedules and other financial documents were made publicly available, and analyzed days and weeks after the vote.

The following are **just a few examples of the Mayor & Speaker’s fake cuts, budget tricks and lies that were part of the FY21 budget fight:**

**Fake transfers that never happened** – This category of fake cuts was smoke and mirrors, not the movement demand – and also just a lie. These “cuts” were never reflected in the City’s FY21 adopted budget documents.

- **Transfer of school safety officers from NYPD to DOE.** It is important to note that this was never the demand of young people, their families or school staff. The demand (which has been led by young people for years) has been, and continues to be #PoliceFreeSchools – schools that invest in the education and wellness of young people instead of continuing to pour money into criminalization with NYPD officers and “school safety agents”

The Mayor and the City Council claimed this as a \$307.5 million<sup>26</sup> cut from the NYPD expense budget. This cut was already insulting because it was budget trickery of shifting the line between agencies – which wouldn’t decrease policing and wouldn’t yield any funds to increase investments for core community needs. What is even more wild is that it was an outright lie. It was never cut from the NYPD FY21 expense budget – in fact, this area was *increased* 2% to \$326 million in the budget.<sup>27</sup>

- **School crossing guards.** Similar to school safety officers, the Mayor and Council claimed they would move crossing guards out of the NYPD – which would not have met the demand to reduce the NYPD budget and policing, it was just more of the same budget musical chairs and trickery. This too turned out to be another budget lie. The \$40 million was never cut from the NYPD budget.<sup>28</sup>

**1. Fake cuts that moved civilian staff from the NYPD to other agencies** – This category of fake cuts misled the public into thinking that officers were being cut from the NYPD. What actually happened is that civilian NYPD staff (not officers) were transferred from the NYPD to other agencies – leaving the existing abusive policing intact.

- **Homeless unit.** One key demand has been to remove police from homeless engagement. The Mayor & Council led the public to believe that the NYPD homeless outreach unit and functions would be dismantled. Instead, the fine print revealed that instead of ending the abusive policing of homeless New Yorkers, 25 civilian staff were transferred from the NYPD to the Department of Homeless Services. Like the other fake transfers, this has no impact on the abusive policing of people who are homeless and does not result in additional monies that can be redirected to communities.

**2. Fake cuts that increase abusive policing** – and were never “cuts”.

- **Traffic Enforcement Agent Revenue.** Another so-called “cut” was not a cut at all – it was a projection for increased revenue to result from re-assigning 165 traffic staff to enforcement duties. You can’t make this up.

### 3. **Mythical cuts with no enforcement plan** – the best example is probably overtime.

- **Overtime.** The Mayor claimed \$352.2 million would be cut from NYPD overtime. However, since there were no enforcement mechanisms built into the budget, there should have been no projection of this as a cut. The NYPD routinely goes over their overtime budget by hundreds of thousands of dollars. As of July 2020 (the month the FY21 budget went into effect), the Independent Budget Office was already predicting that the NYPD would go over their overtime budget by \$400 million.<sup>29</sup>

The fact that the Mayor and Speaker were using funny math and budget tricks was clear by the time of the June 30 vote. The NYC Comptroller (the City's top financial auditor) confirmed this. Local media reported on CPR members and partners calling out the funny math and fake cuts.

In spite of the clear failure by the Mayor and the City Council to follow-through on their promise to cut at least \$1 billion from the NYPD FY21 expense budget, 32 Councilmembers approved the budget (less than a veto-proof majority). Some Councilmembers voted against the budget because they didn't want any cuts to the NYPD.

However, the fact that there were also 9 votes against the budget by Councilmembers who were willing to go against the establishment's \$1 billion lie was historic, especially since the Council typically passes annual budgets with little public attention and almost no dissent. Of those who voted against the budget, a repeated reason was that the budget did not meet the movement's demands or the Council's commitment to meaningfully cut the NYPD budget and reallocate savings to other critical infrastructure and programs in communities of color.

Scandalously, the Mayor,<sup>30</sup> the NYPD Commissioner, other NYPD officials, certain Councilmembers and official City Council documents<sup>31</sup> repeated the \$1 billion lie before, during and after the vote. During Spring 2021 budget hearings, conservative Councilmembers asked NYPD officials leading questions about how the \$1 billion cut (that had never happened) had impacted operations, safety and morale. NYPD officials responded with fear-mongering and calls for increased funding.

This \$1 billion lie, reported on particularly, but not only, by national press, has helped fuel the backlash to the reasonable #NYCBudgetJustice demands to cut the NYPD's bloated budget and redirect funds to communities and non-police safety solutions.

#### **Increases to NYPD FY21 budget since June 2020**

Since the June 2020 City Council budget vote, the NYPD expense budget has gone through additional modifications that *increased* their budget. According to the April 2021 FY21 plan, the NYPD FY21 expense budget was increased by \$188,664, compared to the FY21 budget that was adopted in June 2020.

It is reasonable to assume that by the time actuals are available for FY21, NYPD total spending may be revealed to be higher than the budget adopted in June 2020.

## **V. The NYPD & FY22 Budget**

After 15 months of COVID-19, we are slowly starting to see a transition from the worst moments of the pandemic, as more New Yorkers are vaccinated and as the City and state begin to lift some of the past year's pandemic-related restrictions. However, **the impact of the pandemic on Black, Latinx and other communities of color** - as it relates to families, housing, education, jobs, mental health and more - **is far from over**.

**The pandemic starkly revealed and exacerbated every measure of inequality in New York City**, including abusive policing of communities of color.

Our city lost over 33,000 New Yorkers to COVID since the start of the pandemic - with Black, Latinx and other communities of color hit the hardest. Many of us lost at least one person to COVID, and many of us have also lost loved ones due to related and other causes over the past fifteen months. The grief of these losses will be with us for years to come.

Our collective trauma and stress from an unprecedented global pandemic is compounded by current challenges faced, especially by low-income Black, Latinx, and other communities of color – including elders, youth, immigrants, LGBTQ and gender nonconforming people, people with disabilities, women, people who are homeless, informal sector workers and others.

The challenges faced by New Yorkers include loss of employment and income, lack of stable housing, food insecurity, lack of access to adequate health care (including culturally competent mental health services), police violence and other violence.

**Budgets are moral documents that outline a government's priorities – a city budget tells the story of how a government plans to care for its people.** NYC's FY22 budget is likely to be the largest in history - close to, if not exceeding, \$100 billion. COVID-related federal aid over the next few years is expected to total more than \$22 billion, with \$15.7 billion planned for FY21 and FY25.<sup>32</sup> Mayor de Blasio proposes applying \$6.5 billion of this aid to FY22.

Mayor de Blasio calls his \$98.6 billion FY22 budget proposal a “recovery budget” with “radical investment in working families.”<sup>33</sup> While there are some new programs proposed and some prior cuts restored, this is not a “radical” or transformative budget. There is no coherent plan to ensure that communities who have suffered the most during the pandemic will be on a path to a just recovery, or that any historic inequities are being seriously confronted.

**The executive budget proposal tinkers around the edges – it does not organize the City's resources to address the inequalities that allowed the pandemic to disproportionately impact low-income communities of color.** The FY22 budget proposal misses the opportunity to redefine safety and rethink our city's priorities so that all communities are strengthened for a just recovery.

In fact, the **FY22 budget proposal reveals a plan to continue to prioritize policing and criminalization – and fails to meet the critical needs we have to address inequality so that all communities can be healthy and safe post-pandemic.**

## **Facts about the NYPD and FY22 executive budget**

The FY22 executive budget proposes:

**1. \$11.1 billion to be spent on NYPD direct expenses.** This represents 12% of the FY22 budget. The \$11.1 billion includes:

- NYPD FY22 expense budget of \$5.4 billion, which is an increase of \$211 million compared to the FY21 adopted budget.
- An additional \$5.7 billion projected for centrally-allocated expenses.<sup>34</sup>

**NOTE:** *This likely underestimates how much the NYPD budget is expected to grow in FY22 because federal monies are not generally included in the budget until funds are received. Not all federal funds have been accounted for in FY22 budget documents that have been made publicly available.*

**2. Additional \$812 million for NYPD expense and centrally-allocated budgets,** compared to FY21.<sup>35</sup>

**3. NYPD headcount would increase to 52,482 employees,** budgeting for 35,030 uniformed officers and 15,646 civilian personnel, and 1,806 full-time equivalent staff.<sup>36</sup> One out of every six NYC government employees works for the NYPD – making the NYPD one of NYC’s largest municipal employers.

**One out of six NYC government employees work for the NYPD.**



**Over 50,000 people work for the NYPD.**



**The NYPD headcount is more than double the employees of the departments of health & mental health, social services, youth & community development and homeless services combined.**

4. After more than a year of video after video of brutal NYPD violence and massive shows of police force against New Yorkers in COVID enforcement, at protests, in parks and more, the common-sense approach would be to reduce the NYPD's budget, size and scope. Instead of firing officers and cutting the NYPD budget, the **proposed plan rewards the NYPD with an additional \$15 million to hire 200 new staff positions<sup>37</sup> to implement fake police reforms.** The total baked into the NYPD budget for ineffective reforms is unknown because of the lack of transparency in the NYPD budget.

The following represents some of the new hires that are being planned for fake police reforms that will do nothing to improve safety, but will help the NYPD promote propaganda and improve its image in communities.

- 180 “Community Assistants” who “*will serve as a link between police and communities in precincts, housing posts, and other places of frequent interaction. The aim is to provide improved customer service and personalized attention.*”<sup>38</sup> These positions should not be created or allowed to move forward. They do nothing to improve safety, but do function to supplement NYPD public relations and image improvement efforts.
  - Eight “Community Ambassadors” with annual salaries of \$95,000 - \$110,000 who will be assigned by NYPD Community Affairs to “*serve as liaisons between police leadership and communities*”.<sup>39</sup> The creation of these positions should be understood as attempting to address the failure of the NYPD’s “neighborhood policing” program. These positions should not be created or allowed to move forward. They do nothing to improve safety, but do function to supplement NYPD public relations and image improvement efforts.
  - 10 research scientists and five paralegals to “*manage an early intervention system for discipline of NYPD personnel*”<sup>40</sup>. This additional budget bloat is a slap in the face to New Yorkers since the early intervention system has existed for years, NYPD personnel are already assigned to analyze and monitor it, and most importantly – the NYPD routinely refuses to fire officers who kill, brutalize or otherwise abuse New Yorkers. The creation and hiring of these new positions will do nothing to improve safety of New Yorkers.
5. The FY22 executive budget seeks to **reinstate and expand police roles in responding to mental health crises** – in spite of the growing consensus that police should have no role in mental health response. The staffing of NYPD mental health co-response teams would increase from 33 to 54 and close to double the budget of co-response teams to \$6.1 million, investing more city monies into failed police-based mental health crisis response instead of community based mental health service.<sup>41</sup>
  6. **Instead of investing in community-based youth organizations and youth development efforts, the FY22 proposed budget seeks to institutionalize and expand NYPD youth engagement.** This includes funding 300 NYPD “Youth Coordination Officers,” costing the City upwards of \$35 million and further investing in criminalization and surveillance efforts instead of investing in community-based and community-led youth infrastructure and programs.
  7. **\$1.5 billion is proposed for NYPD capital expenses over the next 10 years,** with \$1.04 billion projected to be spent in the FY22 – FY25 period. The NYPD is expected to spend approximately \$700 million for capital projects in FY22, including \$230 million for a

new firearms training facility.<sup>42</sup>

## **Major gaps in the proposed FY22 budget**

The current FY22 proposed budget restores some prior cuts but fails to use the opportunity of major federal aid to meaningfully address the historical inequities that have made Black, Latinx and other communities of color more vulnerable to death, illness, homelessness, violence, and economic devastation since the start of the pandemic.

The following is a non-comprehensive sample of **critical investments that can immediately improve the health and safety of New Yorkers - and are possible if the NYPD's bloated budget is significantly cut:**

- 1. Prevent gun violence and support gun violence survivors:** As the city faces an increase in gun violence, the Mayor claims that his budget makes significant investments in Cure Violence groups that have a proven track record of intervening to prevent and significantly reduce gun violence. In spite of the success of Cure Violence groups in preventing and reducing gun violence in neighborhoods they are based in, the Mayor's proposal only allots an additional \$27 million<sup>43</sup> for two additional cure violence programs, nothing close to the \$1.15 billion that cure violence groups and advocates are calling for to fully fund the NYC Crisis Management System (CMS).

One thing to watch out for in the coming period: If the NYPD is allowed to hire the 200 new civilian personnel positions for fake police reform, this can position them to advance their goal of having the Crisis Management System and Cure Violence groups work under an NYPD-run task force. This was something that Mayor de Blasio proposed in the spring as part of his preliminary "police reform & reinvention" plan. The language was removed from the final resolution passed by the City Council in March, but that does not mean that the NYPD has abandoned the idea.

- 2. Prevent hate violence and support hate violence survivors.** Organizations like Jews for Racial & Economic Justice (JFREJ), NYC Anti-Violence Project (AVP), Center for Antiviolence Education, the Audre Lorde Project and more have been organizing to end hate violence for years. Their non-carceral approach of intervening, educating and organizing at community levels to reduce hate violence – in spite of a lack of significant city investment – helped create the model of anti-hate violence programming that the Asian American Federation is currently promoting, in response to the rise of anti-Asian hate violence.

The Asian American Federation proposal would require a \$10 million investment. The broader Hate Violence Prevention Initiative is calling for additional \$5 million to \$10 million.

- 3. Use federal monies to move NYC housing policy to a "Housing First" approach and increase supportive housing.** The City must invest in a housing first model that supports creation of Community Land Trusts, creates new stock of deeply affordable

housing, and recognizes that there needs to be low-threshold access to supportive housing units for individuals to move from the streets and shelters into permanent housing. The City's over-reliance on the shelter system and failure to invest deeply in truly affordable housing has contributed to the crisis of homelessness. And, there are far too many bureaucratic barriers to supportive housing. For every five eligible applicants only one vacancy in supportive housing exists.<sup>44</sup> The City also needs to invest in more supportive housing units and ensure easy and rapid access to these units for homeless and other New Yorkers.

- 4. Fully fund the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP).** The FY22 executive budget proposes \$167 million for 75,000 SYEP slots,<sup>45</sup> which simply restores the level of SYEP slots to pre-pandemic levels. The Department of Youth & Community Development has already confirmed that they have received 150,000 applications this year.<sup>46</sup>

SYEP is a proven anti-violence program that invests in young people and communities. It has been shown to reduce the number of young people victimized by violence and also reduces the likelihood of youth involvement in the criminal legal system.<sup>47</sup>

- 5. Care for all public school students:** The executive budget claims to make a massive investment in schools, and while there are increases in school funding, there are also major deficiencies and gaps, especially for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are homeless or who are in the foster care system, many of whom had increased educational challenges during the pandemic.<sup>48</sup>
- 6. Fully fund harm reduction programs and overdose prevention centers.**<sup>49</sup> After a year of some of the highest rates of overdose deaths in decades, New York City needs an aggressive plan to make sure that the rest of 2021 and 2022 don't see the same number of tragedies. The FY22 budget should make major investments in overdose prevention centers, which have a strong track record of supporting people who are using drugs and ensuring that they have the best harm reduction services available to them.
- 7. Create and fund new community-based mental health services, particularly run by and for low-income communities of color.** This past spring, the City Council attempted to advance a bill (Int 2210) that was intended to reduce police involvement in mental health response but in practice would have created a *permanent* role for police in mental health response. After organizing and advocacy by CPR members and partners, the Speaker agreed not to advance the bill. However, a similar program design has been embedded in the FY22 budget proposal.

The executive budget proposes to designate \$112 million<sup>50</sup> to expand a poorly-designed, mental health emergency response pilot (which hasn't even been operational for a year) – and make it citywide.

Some of the same reasons CPR members and partners opposed Int 2210 apply to this misguided proposal for a citywide mental health emergency response program, including:

- The model is harmful and does not follow best practices for non-police projects that effectively and safely respond to mental health crises.
- The model relies on including a role for police in many situations, rather than removing police from mental health response. This will guarantee continued killings, brutality and unnecessary arrests of people in emotional distress by the NYPD.
- The proposed program ignores the realities of race and class, which shape how Black, Latinx and other communities of color experience mental health challenges and should drive culturally competent solutions.

In addition, the FY22 proposed budget continues to ignore the fact that low-income neighborhoods of color are currently mental health service deserts.<sup>51</sup> The executive budget proposes an addition of only \$5.5 million for preventative mental health care, not nearly enough to close the gap and ensure that people are not going into crisis because they don't have access to care.<sup>52</sup>

**Proposing to fund a badly-designed citywide program for mental health emergencies without investing in the core mental health services needed in Black, Latinx and other communities of color is a recipe for disaster.** It guarantees that mental health crises will continue and that police will be the default response, as the only fully-funded response.

The citywide expansion should be canceled and the monies should be invested instead into creating community-based behavioral mental health clinics and other kinds of community-based mental health supports in Black, Latinx and other communities of color. This includes crisis prevention programs, crisis response and post-crisis services.

- 8. Guarantee culturally responsive, healing-centered programs in all public schools – including restorative justice programs.** Our students need culturally responsive and healing-centered programs and school staff with proven track records of being able to help students thrive in school and out of school. The City should invest in this workforce and partner with community-based organizations to provide these kinds of services in schools citywide. The FY22 proposal to invest \$12 million in restorative justice programs does not even come close to the \$225 million that school advocates are calling for. The \$12 million falls short of even the City's own commitment to having a restorative justice coordinator in each public middle and high school, which would cost an additional \$130 million.<sup>53</sup>

## VI. Cut the NYPD Budget for a Safe, Healthy & Just Recovery

The FY22 demands of the #NYCBudgetJustice campaign are for Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Johnson and the New York City Council to ensure a safe, healthy and just transition from the pandemic:

### **1. Follow through on last year's promise to:**

- Cut at least \$1 billion from the NYPD FY22 expense budget.
- Redirect all savings to non-police health and safety solutions.

*As explained in Section II of this report, cutting the NYPD expense budget would result in a net savings that is almost double the amount cut. This is because over 90% of the NYPD expense budget is comprised of personnel and the separate NYPD centrally-allocated budget is made up primarily of fringe and retirement costs from the expense budget.*

### **2. Deny and cancel any new policing-related initiatives and staffing** (including those referred to as part of new “police reform” and “outreach/community engagement” programs) – **and block increases in any line of the NYPD FY22 expense budget.**

### **3. Require NYPD transparency in the budget** by including transparency-related terms and conditions in the adopted FY22 budget. The NYPD's lack of transparency serves as structural protection from any meaningful fiscal oversight. This allows the NYPD's budget to continue to balloon, and their impunity and power to grow unchecked. There are four terms and conditions that should be included when the FY22 budget is adopted:

- a) The NYPD should be required to make public a full accounting of the millions that the NYC Police Foundation spends on NYPD programs and initiatives each year. This should include a full description and accounting of NYPD programs, initiatives and projects and miscellaneous items that the Police Foundation funds. The NYPD should not be permitted to continue to use the NYC Police Foundation as a private slush fund and piggy bank for unregulated policing operations and programs in NYC and around the world.
- b) The NYPD should continue to be required to publicly report on all private sources of income that equals \$5,000 or more in a fiscal year – with details of the specific purposes of those funds and a full description and accounting of budget lines those funds cover.
- c) The NYPD should be required to have more specific units of appropriation in all public facing budgets and fiscal reports.
- d) The NYPD should be required to publish annual reports of all officers with pending and closed misconduct incidents, with details including when, whether and what disciplinary action was taken, if any.

While this report does not analyze NYC's FY22 capital budget, the #NYCBudgetJustice campaign calls for the cancellation of NYPD items in the capital budget – and redistribution of capital dollars and capital properties from the NYPD to other agencies serving the most under-resourced New Yorkers.

## **How to cut the NYPD budget**

The NYPD has a bloated \$6 billion expense budget that keeps growing. Last year, Mayor de Blasio and the City Council promoted a \$1 billion lie – misleading New Yorkers about their plan to cut the NYPD's budget. They protected the NYPD's bloated budget and out-sized power last year, which also meant that necessary investments were not made in community infrastructure and programs that could have improved the health and safety of New Yorkers.

There are many NYPD programs and initiatives that should be cut and eliminated. The secretive and opaque nature of the NYPD budget and fiscal reporting makes it challenging for members of the public to do a full accounting and audit. As a result, the cuts in this report should be considered a starting point that summarizes a baseline and minimum of what should be cut. This is not meant to be a comprehensive list of all items that should be cut from the NYPD FY22 budget.

**The demand is to cut the NYPD's budget to decrease abusive policing and redirect monies to non-police community needs.** Given the funny math and budget tricks employed by the Mayor and City Council with the FY21 budget, we're repeating: Playing musical chairs by transferring budget items from the NYPD to the expense budgets of other agencies is an example of budget trickery, and will continue to be called out as such.

Note on calculations and amounts listed to cut: *These are minimum calculations, generally based on conservative estimates. We believe that the actual budget amounts for many of these areas is higher than listed (e.g. the cuts generally don't account for overhead expenses for particular initiatives).*

*The following section includes a non-comprehensive sample of five categories of cuts that should be made to the NYPD and City's FY22 budget – and redirected to community **health and safety needs**. We use "health and safety needs" as a broad category that includes life-saving and life-affirming community infrastructure, programs and initiatives that address the immediate and long-term health and safety needs of New Yorkers. This includes, but is not limited to non-police safety solutions. **The goal is for every New Yorker to be able to thrive with health and safety in every community.***

**This sample of cuts in five categories totals a minimum of \$1,337,145,351 cut from the NYPD FY22 expense budget.** *These cuts could result in a minimum of \$1,837,561,636 that could be redirected to communities, because of the associated central costs that would also be saved. The calculations used in this report are conservative and the probable cuts and savings are much higher.*

## Category 1: Officer Hiring Freeze and Cancel Cadet Corps

*This could result in \$531,184,535 redirected to communities (\$271,637,585 from NYPD FY22 expense budget; \$259,546,950 from centrally-allocated budget).*

Reducing police violence requires reducing unnecessary contacts between police and the public. What is clear across New York City and the country is that when you ask folks to think about safe neighborhoods and communities, the common denominator is not that they have more cops, but rather that people in the community have basic resources needed to survive.

The NYPD is the largest police department in the country, with over 50,000 staff, including approximately 35,000 officers. The NYPD officer headcount is about triple the headcount of Chicago PD, which is the next largest police force in the United States. New York City has one of the highest rates of officers per capita, approximately 436 officers per 100,000 people.<sup>54</sup>

In this transition period where NYC moves towards a healthy and safe recovery from a global pandemic, what is clear is that massive police presence has not kept communities safe. In fact, consistently increasing funding for police while defunding community infrastructure in low-income communities of color has made us less healthy and less safe as a city.

To reduce police violence, we need to reduce the massive staffing of the NYPD and redirect those monies to non-police community safety solutions that can prevent and reduce violence in our streets and in our homes.

### **Officer Hiring Freeze – Redirect \$528 million to community-based safety solutions**

*Cut NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$269,100,000*

*Cut NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$259,546,950*

***Total savings that can be redirected to community-based safety solutions: \$528,646,950***

Almost all city agencies had mandated hiring freezes for FY21. The NYPD was not subject to a hiring freeze last year, and the result did not lead to a safer city. Monies that should have been invested in community-based safety solutions were instead reserved for the NYPD.

There has been repeated evidence over the past year that the NYPD headcount is bloated, allowing for scores of officers to be deployed at whim, in militarized fashion, to assignments that don't increase safety (e.g. to brutally police protests and even to enforce changed curfews for parks).

The NYPD is projected to hire roughly 2,300 officers in FY22 (to account for an annual attrition rate of about 2,300 officers<sup>55</sup>). **A hiring freeze could reduce the NYPD expense budget by approximately \$269,100,000.**<sup>56</sup> This would result in an additional baseline savings of at least \$259,546,950 from the centrally-allocated costs of fringe and pensions.<sup>57</sup>

This would result in **a total of at least \$528,646,950 that could be redirected to community-based safety solutions.**

## Cancel FY22 Cadet Corps - redirect at least \$2.5 million to communities

*Cut from NYPD expense budget: \$2,537,585*

The Police Cadet program is a two-year, part-time officer-in-training program. Cutting this program would result in at least \$2,537,585<sup>58</sup> that could be redirected to community based safety solutions.

### Category 2: Address Failure to Fire NYPD Officers and Cancel Fake Reforms

*This could result in \$350,313,873 redirected to communities (\$308,199,990 from NYPD FY22 expense budget; \$42,113,883 from centrally-allocated budget).*

**The NYPD has a documented history of protecting and refusing to fire officers** who kill, brutalize, sexually assault/harass, unconstitutionally stop, lie in official statements, refuse to identify themselves, retaliate against complaints, and otherwise engage in misconduct against members of the public.

In 2018, secret files revealed that the NYPD let hundreds of officers keep their jobs even though they had been guilty of egregious acts of misconduct, including brutality, sexual assault, and lying to grand juries and District Attorneys.<sup>59</sup>

Families whose loved ones were killed by NYPD officers have faced extraordinary hurdles to try to fire these officers. It is incredibly rare, and often only as a result of years-long, high visibility campaigns that officers are either forced out or fired. It took over five years to force the NYPD to finally convene a disciplinary trial that resulted in the firing of Daniel Pantaleo for his killing of Eric Garner. Six years later, none of the officers who engaged in misconduct in the Eric Garner case have been fired.

This July 4, 2021 will mark five years since the killing of Delrawn Small by NYPD Officer Wayne Isaacs. Isaacs is still on the force, even though his actions were so egregious that the NYS Attorney General's office prosecuted him for murder. After the NYPD refused to take disciplinary action, the Civilian Complaint Review Board substantiated charges against Isaacs. The NYPD then obstructed formally serving those charges against Isaacs until the organizing of Delrawn's family and CPR member and partner groups forced the charges to be served. The process to fire Wayne Isaacs is far from over and it is shameful that the City forces families to go through this.

While the City Council can't mandate discipline by the NYPD, the **Council can use their budgetary authority to ensure there are consequences for the NYPD's systemic refusal to fire officers** who engage in misconduct against members of the public.

Since the NYPD refuses to hold officers accountable for misconduct against New Yorkers, and routinely keeps officers on payroll in spite of egregious acts, the City Council and the Mayor should deduct the following amounts from the NYPD expense budget:

## **Costs of officers on modified duty - \$45.9 million redirected to communities**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$23,400,000*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$22,569,300*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: \$45,969,300***

The total number of officers on modified duty at any given time is unknown to the public. In the spring of 2020, it was revealed during a Council budget hearing that there are generally 200-300 NYPD officers on modified duty at any given time. Given the widespread police violence over the past 15 months during social distancing enforcement, policing of protests and other instances, the number may be higher.

For the purpose of this report, we baseline the estimate of modified officers as 200 officers. The cost of payroll for 200 modified officers is approximately \$23,400,000<sup>60</sup> NYPD expense budget salaries/year plus additional \$22,569,300<sup>61</sup> in costs from the centrally allocated budget.

Since the NYPD refuses to fire officers in a timely way for harming civilians, we demand that the NYPD expense budget be cut by the equivalent of this cost as a consequence for protecting abusive policing and \$45,969,300 be re-directed towards communities.

## **Pay of NYPD officers who killed New Yorkers – sample of a dozen killings - \$39 million**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$19,864,990*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$19,159,783*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: \$39,024,773***

Justice Committee and CPR staff researched and analyzed payrolls of NYPD officers in 12 cases where officers killed New Yorkers and at least one officer involved in the killing was still being paid by the NYPD in the most recent year that payroll records are publicly available.<sup>62</sup> Pay calculations totaled \$19,864,990<sup>63</sup> and included in this small sample are of officers responsible for the killings and related misconduct or cover-up of the following NYPD killings: Amadou Diallo (1999), Ramarley Graham (2012), Shantel Davis (2012), Mohamed Bah (2012), Kimani Gray (2013), Eric Garner (2014), Delrawn Small (2016), Kadeem Torres (2017), Allan Feliz (2017), Saheed Vassell (2018), Kawaski Trawick (2019), and Antonio Williams (2019).

There are many other cases where NYPD officers have not been fired for killing New Yorkers, and are still paid by the NYPD. **The payroll costs calculated here relate only to a dozen NYPD police killings.**

- Paid to officers since the killing (not including fringe/retirement costs): **\$19,864,990**
- Paid to officers in 2020, only (not including fringe/retirement costs): **\$4,324,869**

**Based on only a dozen NYPD killings, the above calculations represent only a small fraction** of the total paid to continue to employ officers who kill, brutalize and otherwise engage in misconduct against members of the public.

The NYPD refuses to fire officers in a timely way – and too often does not fire or discipline officers at all for actions against the public. The Mayor and City Council should reduce the NYPD budget with the total costs that taxpayers have covered to keep these officers on the force – and redirect these funds to non-police community safety solutions.

If you include centrally funded costs \$19,159,783 this would result in **a total of at least \$39,024,773 that could be redirected to community-based safety solutions.**

**Costs of police violence judgments and settlements - \$250 million  
redirected to communities**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$250 million*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: \$250 million***

Every year, New York City pays millions to settle lawsuits against the NYPD for violence and abuse against the public. This money comes out of a central fund not the NYPD budget.

When New Yorkers are killed or injured by police and other agents of the state, the City should compensate survivors of this violence and family members of those killed to the fullest extent. The NYPD should also face consequences for continuing to facilitate violence against members of the public.

**During de Blasio’s first 7 years as Mayor, NYC paid approximately \$1.7 billion<sup>64</sup> for judgments and settlements against the NYPD,** averaging about \$250 million/year.

The NYPD’s annual expense budget should be cut by the equivalent of the average of settlements for the prior seven years as a consequence for the NYPD’s systemic refusal to fire officers, and their routine support and protection of abusive officers.

**Cancel fake police reform initiatives**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$14,935,000*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$384,800*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: \$15,319,800***

As discussed earlier in this report (p. 17), the FY22 proposed budget includes new initiatives that are being referred to as “police reform”. None of these initiatives will reduce police violence. The total expected to cover these fake reforms is unknown because the costs of NYPD consultants and others are hidden in the FY22 budget documents, without notation or explanation.

The few new items that were identifiable in the FY22 executive budget include **plans to hire 200 newly-created “community assistant” and “community ambassador” positions.** The creation of these new positions will allow the NYPD to hire hundreds of community members to ostensibly play “liaison” roles between the NYPD and communities. New Yorkers should understand that the **goal of these positions is to improve the NYPD’s image and build support for the NYPD, and have nothing to do with decreasing police violence or increasing community safety.**

All new fake police reform initiatives should be canceled and taken out of the FY22 budget before the Council votes on it. This would result in at least \$14,935,000<sup>65</sup> cut from the NYPD Expense Budget and another \$384,800<sup>66</sup> from centrally allocated funds for a **total of \$15,319,800 that could be redirected towards communities.**

### **Category 3: Remove police from schools, community “engagement” and social services**

***This could result in \$530,580,405 redirected to communities (\$466,133,194 from NYPD FY22 expense budget; \$40,173,354 from centrally-allocated budget).***

The scope of policing and the roles the NYPD plays in New York City continues to expand - in spite of evidence that police are ineffective, counterproductive and sometimes deadly in their response to situations including mental health crises and more.

**The huge size of the NYPD headcount contributes to the outsized power of the NYPD** in city politics, and allows them to make unilateral decisions in a variety of areas, even when the power and responsibility is that of another agency. We saw this recently when the NYPD made unilateral decisions to change the curfew at a number of city parks, creating and escalating crises in their brutal enforcement of the changed curfews.<sup>67</sup>

In addition to outsized power, the NYPD’s massive headcount and the fact that one out of six municipal workers are employed by the NYPD, make the city dependent on them in a variety of situations. We saw this during the most devastating periods of the COVID pandemic. NYPD officers were deployed for a variety of roles where public health workers would have been the appropriate choice to educate and mobilize New Yorkers to have a unified, healthy and safe response to the pandemic. However, NYC has defunded public health so significantly that the same kind of public health workforce simply does not exist.

In spite of often not wearing masks themselves, NYPD officers were deployed to enforce mask-wearing and social distancing rules. This resulted in documented racial profiling, violence and racially disparate enforcement by NYPD officers.

**For New York City to turn the corner on the pandemic and set up a truly safe and just transition for all, we need to make choices that prioritize building public health and other community infrastructure instead of policing.**

Police should be removed from schools and all social service roles, and related monies should be redirected to agencies and community-based organizations that can deliver on community safety solutions, instead of more policing and criminalization.

**#PoliceFreeSchools - Redirect \$449 million to communities**  
*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$449,207,01*  
**Total savings that can be redirected to communities: at least \$449,207,051**

For years, students of color, youth organizations, teachers, and parents have been fighting for #PoliceFreeSchools and the creation of school environments that are safe and healthy for students and staff. As noted by the Center for Popular Democracy, Make the

Road NY, Urban Youth Collaborative, and others in their [Arrested Learning](#) report, “New York City funnels hundreds of millions of dollars into the school-to-prison-and-deportation pipeline each year.”<sup>68</sup> #PoliceFreeSchools demands include removing NYPD and school safety officers (known as “school safety agents” or “SSAs”) from schools.

Last year, the Mayor and City Council claimed that part of their \$1 billion cut to the NYPD’s budget would transfer school safety officers out of the NYPD to the Department of Education – a move that no groups advocated for, and would have amounted to playing musical chairs in the budget. However, this budget trick was not even reflected in the FY21 budget – it was simply a talking point that was part of the Mayor and City Council’s \$1 billion lie. In fact, Center for Popular Democracy found “In 2021, the NYPD School Safety Division...was allocated \$451.9 million – an increase of nearly \$70 million over the previous five years.”<sup>69</sup>

According to Girls for Gender Equity’s “Fund Care & Communities” briefing paper, “there are currently 122 public schools in New York City, serving 22,339 students – that have neither a full-time school counselor or social worker but have a full-time school-based cop.”<sup>70</sup>

The #PoliceFreeSchools movement does not support the transfer of SSAs from the NYPD to DOE. SSAs and policing should be removed from NYC public schools and monies should be invested in creating school environments that fully support the educational, social and emotional needs of all children and youth.

Removing 5,511 NYPD and school safety agents from schools could result in a direct re-investment of \$449,207,051<sup>71</sup> back into the Department of Education.

**Eliminate NYPD “Youth Coordination Officers” and NYPD youth Initiatives  
– at least \$68.9 million<sup>72</sup> that can be redirected towards communities.**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$35,100,000*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$33,853,950*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: \$68,953,950<sup>73</sup>***

Last year, the NYPD unilaterally launched a new “youth initiative” that includes more than 300 Youth Coordination Officers (YCO) in each of the department’s 77 precincts. The officers conduct home visits and make other contact with individual youth that the NYPD has labeled ‘at risk’ of criminal activity.

Youth organizations and programs – particularly those that engage in community organizing and political education with young people - are under-resourced across the city. The monies used for the NYPD YCOs and other police-led youth programming would be better invested in community-based youth organizations and to support community and youth-led youth programming, without police. For youth of color who are already targeted by the NYPD, further interactions with police and criminalization are misguided.

The cost of NYPD youth coordination officers is at least \$68,953,950.<sup>74</sup> This includes approximately \$35 million in the NYPD FY22 expense budget, plus an estimated \$33,853,950<sup>75</sup> in centrally-allocated costs. This does not account for additional expenses that are not salary-related.

There are additional tentacles of NYPD programming in schools and with young people across the city that should be cut. For example, the NYPD's FY22 executive budget includes \$2.5 million for the NYPD to expand the Saturday Night Lights program with the Department of Youth & Community Development (DYCD).<sup>76</sup> There is no reason NYPD involvement is necessary to expand Saturday Night Lights to additional sites. The full funding could be redirected to DYCD to expand the program citywide, partnering with youth and community-based organizations instead of the NYPD.

**Remove NYPD from Mental Health Response - redirect \$12.4 million to communities**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$6,100,000*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$6,319,404*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: \$12,419,404***

New Yorkers who experience an emotional or psychiatric crisis need a response system that is based in public health principles, and that can connect them to the services they need. The City's plan to train police to respond to emotional distress calls and pair officers with mental health workers is a backwards and failed approach.

People in emotional distress account for 25%-50% of all individuals killed by police across the country. Regardless of training, the **NYPD should not have a role in mental health response.**

The NYPD FY22 executive budget seeks to increase the size and cost of NYPD-led co-response teams, with a baseline of \$6.1 million<sup>77</sup> from the expense budget. This would include increasing NYPD headcount by 23 officers for a total of 56 NYPD officers dedicated to mental health crisis response<sup>78</sup> with a resulting cost of \$6,319,404<sup>79</sup> in centrally allocated funds for a total of \$12,419,404.

**The NYPD co-response teams should be eliminated** and invested in increasing non-police community-based mental health services and programs that can provide general mental services (including crisis prevention), crisis response and post-crisis wrap-around support.

**Remove NYPD from homeless outreach and engagement**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: Unknown*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: Unknown*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: Unknown***

In response to #NYCBudgetJustice coalition demands, last year's budget disbanded the NYPD Homeless Outreach Unit and dissolved the Memorandum of Understanding between the NYPD and the Department of Homeless Services. However, this spring the NYPD created a new Business Improvement Unit that is performing the very same sweeps of homeless New Yorkers that the previous Homeless Outreach Unit did in years past.

"Closing" units and morphing them into a different form is a regular NYPD trick. For example, when the infamous Street Crimes Unit that killed Amadou Diallo in 1999 was shut down in response to protests and litigation, it did not mean the unit's tactics were over.

In fact, the result was more NYPD units engaged in unconstitutional stops, and the “anticrime” unit was created with the same use of plainclothes officers. Like the prior street crimes unit, the anti-crime unit was disproportionately responsible for brutalizing and killing New Yorkers.

The NYPD Business Improvement Unit should be eliminated. We must not continue to deploy the NYPD to manage the crisis of homelessness in the city and continue to fail to address the root causes of the problem. Having the NYPD harass, detain, and criminalize homeless New Yorkers is far from a solution, it puts homeless New Yorkers at an increased risk of violence.

#### **Category 4: Eliminate SRG, VICE and other units**

**This could result in \$251,505,292 redirected to communities (\$144,526,810 from NYPD FY22 expense budget; \$106,978,482 from centrally-allocated budget)**

The NYPD has many specialized units. The following are two examples that should be eliminated.

#### **Strategic Response Group**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$67,777,343*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$50,216,693*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: \$117,994,036***

The Strategic Response Group (SRG) has been protested since the idea of the unit was first announced by former NYPD Commissioner Bill Bratton. In fact, when the purpose of the SRG was made public (to counter-terrorism, policing protests and disorder), the public outcry forced the de Blasio administration to say that it would not move forward. In spite of this, the SRG was created in 2015 as a hyper-militarized unit of a few hundred officers and has expanded significantly since.

Since its creation, the SRG has proven to be especially brutal. The SRG led the violent police response to last year’s spring and summer racial justice protests against police violence – which has resulted in a slew of lawsuits for human rights violations, including one by the NYS Attorney General. SRG officers were also among officers who killed Saheed Vassell in Crown Heights in 2016.

There are approximately 700 SRG officers, though the NYPD refuses to confirm the exact headcount<sup>80</sup> and the SRG has a budget of \$67,777,343<sup>81</sup> and centrally allocated costs of \$50,216,693<sup>82</sup> for a total of \$117,994,036. The unit should be eliminated and these monies should be redirected towards communities.

#### **VICE**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$18,249,467*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$338,540*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: \$18,588,007***

The VICE unit is responsible for discriminatory policing and targeting of LGBTQ and other New Yorkers. VICE is notorious for harassment, sexual violence, abuse and false arrests

of Black, Latinx and Asian trans and cis women, as well as sex workers and others who work in informal economies, including massage and escort services.

The VICE unit should be eliminated and the \$18,249,467<sup>83</sup> in addition to the \$338,540<sup>84</sup> in centrally allocated funds should be eliminated. This would result in a total of \$18.5 million redirected to communities.

**Cut 500 officers from NYPD Transit Bureau - redirect \$114.9 million to communities**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$58,500,000*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$56,423,250*

**Total savings that can be redirected to communities: \$114,923,250**

In 2019, Governor Cuomo and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority announced they would hire 500 new MTA police for NYC subways. CPR members and partners protested the creation of these positions, but we were not successful in blocking the hiring process.

We do not need more police on the trains. We do need drastically improved train and bus service and affordable and free transit.

The NYPD transit bureau should be cut by at least 500 officers to offset the increase of 500 officers from the MTA. The NYPD is always able to re-deploy existing officers to the transit system as they see fit.

**Cutting 500 officers from the NYPD's transit bureau could result in total estimated savings of: \$58,500,00<sup>85</sup> from the NYPD expense budget, \$56,423,250<sup>86</sup> from centrally allocated funds for a total of over \$114,923,250** that could be redirected to address transportation equity and other needs for communities most impacted by the pandemic and abusive policing.

**Other units**

There are other units the City Council and the Mayor should work to eliminate and/or reduce significantly. The above are just a few examples. Some CPR member groups have also identified additional NYPD units that should be eliminated. For example, VOCAL-NY and Drug Policy Alliance have called for the dismantling of the Narcotics Division (\$75.5 million, 945 officers), and redirection of those funds for drug-related harm reduction and public health programs, including overdose preventions centers and street-based medical services.

**Category 5: Other Budget Bloat and Items to Cut from NYPD FY22 Budget**

**This could result in \$198,251,388 redirected to communities (\$186,647,772 from NYPD FY22 expense budget; \$11,603,616 from centrally-allocated budget).**

**NYPD Public Relations Budget**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$4,026,032*

The NYPD budget for the office of the Deputy Commissioner for Public Information (DCPI) is \$4,026,032.<sup>87</sup> Agencies other than the NYPD have much smaller press departments,

including some that combine intergovernmental and public relations functions.

The DCPI budget is believed to be only a fraction of the full public relations apparatus that is at the discretion of the NYPD. Other public relations and propaganda capacity that is not included in DCPI's budget includes NYPD staff who run precinct social media handles and blogs; regular amplification by the Mayor's press team and the Mayor; and PR costs that are paid for by private entities like the NYC Police Foundation. The NYC Police Foundation and other private sources have been known to cover strategic communications costs, including the creation and placement of propaganda advertising, videos, blogs and podcasts.

The NYPD public relations budget should be cut.

### **Surveillance Technologies & Military-Grade Equipment**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: Low-ball minimum of \$16,269,073*

*Cut from NYPD centrally-allocated budget: \$11,603,616*

***Total savings that can be redirected to communities: Low-ball minimum of \$27,872,689***

**The total amount the NYPD is spending on surveillance technologies is unknown.** We know that the NYPD purchase of a brand new fleet of 14 drones in 2018 cost about \$480,000. At the time, 29 officers were assigned to run the drones and analyze drone footage, bringing the cost to roughly \$4 million.

This past year, after significant public outcry, the NYPD was forced to cancel its \$94,000 contract leasing a robotic dog.<sup>88</sup> However, even without robot dogs, the NYPD's surveillance inventory includes underwater drones (estimated as \$75,000 - \$150,000 each), helicopters, armored vehicles, X-ray vans (\$700,000 - \$800,000 each), stingrays (\$100,000 each) and other surveillance equipment and programs that are purchased and used with little to no oversight.

The cost of NYPD surveillance technologies is largely unknown, and the personnel required to operate the technologies, is still largely unknown. Last year, we baselined the projected cost as \$27 million (\$16,269,073 from the NYPD expense budget, and an additional \$11,603,616 from the central budget) – and call for this minimum amount to be redirected to communities.

### **NYPD overtime - cut increase in overtime budget from FY21 to FY22**

*Cut from NYPD FY22 expense budget: \$166,352,667*

In the last six years the NYPD has spent a total of \$4.4 billion in overtime. That is not a typo. The amount of money that the NYPD spent in overtime is astronomical, far eclipsing the budgets of other much needed public agencies.<sup>89</sup> The FY22 executive budget proposes an NYPD overtime budget of \$434,352,667,<sup>90</sup> which is millions more than the cost of the summer youth employment program and many other city programs combined.

The NYPD routinely overspends their overtime budget by upwards of \$200 million with no consequence.<sup>91</sup> It is an example of the waste and over-resourcing of the NYPD. The NYPD has also been allowed to use overtime to fill gaps that would be better filled by other public agencies. For example the City is using close to \$7.3 million dollars in COVID-related federal aid funds to pay for NYPD staff overtime at vaccination sites.<sup>92</sup>

The NYPD's ability to overspend their overtime budget each year without consequence is part of what enabled the massive police presence and police violence at protests this past year, and in COVID-related enforcement. Overtime is also widely-known to be abused by individual officers who conduct baseless arrests at the end of their shifts to take advantage of additional overtime pay, which also benefits their retirement benefits. Basically, NYPD overtime is a racket.

The City Council must not just cut overtime, they must create an enforcement mechanism and consequences that prevent the NYPD from routinely overspending its overtime budget.

At the very least, the council should not increase the NYPD Overtime Budget for FY22 and maintain the \$268 million<sup>93</sup> overtime budget from FY21 and should cut \$166,352,667 from the FY22 overtime budget

## Conclusion

We are at a crucial moment of recovery where we need to ensure that ALL New Yorkers are able to emerge from this pandemic with more economic stability, better access to health and mental health care, and well-resourced communities that can better weather whatever future storms lie ahead of us. The City must take a new approach to budgeting that leaves nobody behind and finally puts an end to the continued investment in policing over the needs of our communities.

New Yorkers deserve real, long-term, and significant investments in their communities, particularly Black, Latinx and other people of color communities in NYC that suffered so much during the pandemic due largely to decades of divestment and criminalization. All New Yorkers deserve to live in safe and healthy neighborhoods that are well taken care of, have strong community organizations and social services, and quality accessible health care. This is very possible for New York City, and is not an out-of-reach, lofty goal. What it will take is a fundamentally different approach to city budgeting that prioritizes creating safe, healthy and thriving neighborhoods through investing in community infrastructure, programs and organizations – instead of investing in policing and criminalization.

No New Yorker wants to face a future health crisis as unprepared as we were for COVID-19 and in order to do that we need more than just simple restitutions in life-saving public services and programs - we need deep, long term investments. We need to fully invest in social services for Black, Latinx, and other communities of color. We need to prioritize behavioral health services, programs for our elders, food access programs, youth programs, education, worker cooperatives and workforce development. These programs have long suffered under-investment from the City and need to be prioritized as key elements in producing a thriving and safe city.

While federal and state aid commitments have meant that NYC is not operating at the same level of deficit as we were last year, we are still far from being out of the woods. We need the City to reprioritize and realign the budget so that Black, Latinx, and other communities of color emerge from the pandemic stronger, healthier, safer, and more well-resourced. This report is the reflection of the collective work of many contributors - all New Yorkers fighting for a healthy and safe NYC where everyone can thrive.

# Acknowledgments

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## Special thanks to

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# Endnotes

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- 82 Fringe rate based on 96.45% Fringe Rate according to the NYC Quadrennial Report 2015 (Appendix K) <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/2015-Quadrennial-Commission-Report.pdf>
- 83 Executive Budget, Supporting Schedules, FY22, City of New York
- 84 According to the Executive Budget, Supporting Schedules, FY22, City of New York, there are 3 Uniform Officers in the VICE unit, even though we know many more Officers carry out the work of the VICE unit, the fringe rate is only based on these three positions and calculation is based on average officer annual pay rate of \$117,000 and a 96.45% Fringe Rate according to the NYC Quadrennial Report 2015 (Appendix K) <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/2015-Quadrennial-Commission-Report>
- 85 Calculation is based on average officer annual pay rate of \$117,000
- 86 Fringe rate based on 96.45% Fringe Rate according to the NYC Quadrennial Report 2015 (Appendix K) <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/2015-Quadrennial-Commission-Report.pdf>
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# **COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR POLICE REFORM**

*Communities United for Police Reform (CPR) is an unprecedented campaign to end abusive and discriminatory policing practices in New York, and to build a lasting movement that promotes public safety while reducing reliance on policing. CPR runs coalitions of over 200 local, state and national organizations, bringing together a movement of community members, lawyers, researchers and activists to work for change. The partners in this campaign come from all five boroughs, from all walks of life and represent many of those most targeted by the NYPD.*