

# Police Services

## Money well spent?

In 2020, Winnipeg spent \$304 million, or 27% of its annual expenditures, on policing. That is the highest percentage of Canada's 10 major cities. Yet, in that same year, Winnipeg also topped this list of cities with the highest police-reported violent crime severity index. Of these same cities, the WPS' rate of solving criminal incidences, or clearance rate, tied for third lowest at 34%. Winnipeg's decades-long practice of defaulting to the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) to address societal failures is a costly failure.

## Indigenous and racialized Winnipeggers at greater risk from police encounters.

In 2020, Indigenous people made up 12%

of Winnipeg's population while Black people made up 4%. Of the twenty-two people killed in police encounters, between 2000 and 2020, 70% were Indigenous or Black.

## Are there better ways to respond to citizens experiencing mental health crises?

In 2020, the WPS responded to 18,991 wellbeing checks, making them the top resident call for help for the first time ever. Police presence can and has escalated these situations. Even when these encounters end peacefully, they can still have an accumulated traumatizing effect. There are evidence-based alternatives such as the Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets (CAHOOTS) model from Eugene, Oregon started 1989.

The CAHOOTS model involves teams of specially trained civilians, including nurses, crisis counsellor and peer workers, who will respond to a wide range of mental health-related crisis, including "conflict resolution, welfare checks, substance abuse, suicide threats, and more, relying on trauma-informed de-escalation and harm reduction techniques." At a much lower cost with better outcomes.

The Police Accountability Coalition (PAC) is comprised of over 100 community based organizations.

Winnipeg spends more on emergency services (excluding fire and paramedic) than we devote to recreation, parks, urban forestry, community liveability, libraries, arts, entertainment, culture and insect control, combined.

## The Alternative Municipal Budget proposes:

1. *Revise the current ARCC (Alternative Response to Citizens in Crisis) program to align with CAHOOTS so that it is a community/civilian first based response.*
2. *Fully fund the City of Winnipeg's Poverty Reduction Strategy*
3. *Fully fund the Newcomer Inclusion Strategy*
4. *Support existing and expansion of 24/7 safe spaces and community outreach initiatives*
5. *Adhere to TRC Calls to Action as well as MMIWG Calls for Justice including PAC's call for more accountability in policing and reforms to legal institutions such as Manitoba Justice.*

**The Alternative Municipal Budget proposes a 10% redistribution of the police budget to cover the above expenditures and more.**

## Questions for your candidate:

- Winnipeg spends the highest percentage of its budget on policing than the 10 major Canadian cities. Spending will increase yearly as the majority of those expenses are salaries, pensions and benefits. Given our high crime rate, what will you do to better increase public safety?
- Would you support a civilian led crisis intervention approach to people experiencing mental health crisis?
- What will you do to address systemic racism within policing?
- Do you believe that the Winnipeg Police Service needs better public oversight and accountability? If yes, how will you achieve it?

**There are alternatives. Budgets are about choices.**  
See the Alternative Municipal Budget at [policyalternatives.ca](http://policyalternatives.ca)



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