



Push to Disband Minneapolis Police Backfires as City Council Approves Funds for More Cops

After vowing to “dismantle” the Minneapolis police force mere weeks after the death of George Floyd in police custody last June, the Minneapolis City Council voted unanimously on Friday to approve \$6.4 million to hire more officers in an attempt to beef up the depleted force.

The council voted to approve the request from the department and Chief Medaria Arradondo without any debate. The Minneapolis Police Department began 2020 with 817 officers on the payroll but currently the department can only currently field 638 officers. The city expects to have 674 officers available by the end of the year with another 28 working their way through the hiring process.

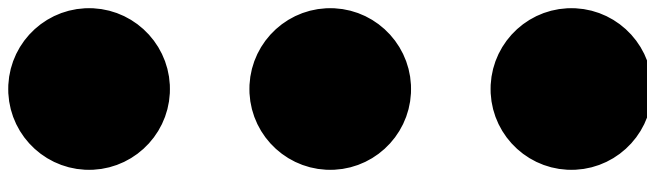
An unprecedented number of officers either resigned or went on extended leave after the death of Floyd last May and the perception of the rank-and-file officers that the mayor and the city council did not support them. The *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* reports that 155 officers remain on extended leave, many for claims of PTSD in the wake of the Floyd incident.

Earlier last week, Mayor Jacob Frey and Chief Arradondo may have greased the wheels for the unanimous vote by announcing changes to the hiring process for the department. The department plans to update the application process by asking questions about whether applicants have ever lived in the city, and whether they have criminology, social work or psychology degrees.

Deputy Police Chief Amelia Huffman hopes that the application changes “will help us to really feel confident that we are recruiting the kinds of candidates we want right from the beginning.”

Despite the unanimous vote for new funding for more officers, the push to replace the department with a reimagined “public safety department” is not yet dead. Three council members — Phillippe Cunningham, Steve Fletcher, and Jeremy Schroeder — have written a proposal that would replace the police department with an agency that would encompass policing along with other public services. Their plan would also do away with what they call the mayor’s “complete power” over the force.

In addition, a local group called Yes 4 Minneapolis, a leftist political action committee, is gathering signatures for their own “comprehensive public health approach to safety” to be put on the ballot for



Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo (AP Images)



Written by [James Murphy](#) on February 16, 2021

voters to decide upon this November. Yes 4 Minneapolis is funded in part by George Soros's Open Society Policy Center.

Any such change to the Minneapolis Police Department would require public consent. A ballot proposal to change the city charter and possibly the police department was considered last year but was eventually dropped after the city's charter commission said it needed more time to study the issue.

Last June, the city council caved in to demands from Black Lives Matter and other extremist leftists and voted to [dismantle](#) the city's police department and replace it with an undefined "community-led public safety system." The council passed the measure unanimously.

But after officers started leaving the force, the public grew unnerved about an increase in crimes such as street racing, robbery, carjackings, assaults, and shootings. Amazingly, the council questioned the officers' dedication to their jobs and [wondered aloud](#) if the department was not "enforcing crime" as a political stunt.

"I also hear from constituents that rank and file officers on the street are telling them that they are not enforcing crime," Council President Lisa Bender complained during a meeting with Chief Arradondo. "This is not new but it is very concerning in the current context. I think there are a number of possible explanations for this. I think it's possible they are, essentially campaigning, either politically because they don't support the council member or in some cases the mayor, or perhaps they think they are making the case for more resources for the department."

Unbelievable. City Council President Bender and the rest of the city council vote to disband the police department, causing hundreds of officers to either quit or take extended leave. This leads, unsurprisingly, to an increase in crime. Yet, they still have the unmitigated gall to blame the front-line officers for the crime surge in the city.



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