



INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES FOR A SAFER CITY



a plan by

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for NYC Comptroller



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All our communities need and deserve safety. The rising levels of violence that cities all across the country have seen through the pandemic jeopardize that safety, amplify the trauma of this crisis, diminish public health, and demand a thoughtful and strategic response.

But the answer is not more policing. New York City already spends more on the NYPD than we do on the Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene, Homeless Services, Housing Preservation and Development, and Youth and Community Development combined. In our streets and in our communities, we are seeing the consequences of spending more on policing than on healthy neighborhoods, mental health services, affordable housing, and youth programming.

Brad has been a long-time advocate for safe and thriving communities. When he moved to NYC in 1992, at the peak of the era of abandonment and violence, he immediately rolled up his sleeves as the executive director of the Fifth Avenue Committee (FAC). Brad organized residents to win investments in housing, jobs, youth services, and small businesses to replace abandoned buildings and blocks, and launched FAC's "Developing Justice" program to support residents returning to the community from prison or jail. As chair of the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development (ANHD), Brad helped lead community groups across the city in helping communities recover. As sociologist Patrick Sharkey has shown, the work of community development nonprofits played a strong role in the declining crime rates from the 1990s to the 2010.

In the City Council, Brad has continued to fight for community safety and police accountability. In 2013, he partnered with Public Advocate Jumaane Williams to pass legislation -- over Mayor Bloomberg's veto -- to curb stop-and-frisk, strengthen the city's prohibition on racial profiling, and create the office of the NYPD Inspector General. He has also continued to fight alongside communities to support efforts to achieve better public safety by shifting many social service and community support functions to non-policing alternatives (e.g. responding to people in mental distress, homeless outreach, street safety

enforcement, and much more), and pushing for more resources for "violence interrupter" programs that have been proven to reduce violence.

In June 2020, in the wake of the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, when the City Council failed to listen to the cries of Black New Yorkers against abusive policing, Brad voted against the City's FY21 budget because it did not meaningfully shift at least \$1 billion away from the NYPD and toward communities. Last year, the Council cut summer youth jobs, parks and sanitation services, CUNY, and more -- while the NYPD continued to wildly overspend on overtime.

As Comptroller Brad will demand budget justice, dig in on the numbers through aggressive audits as the City's chief budget watchdog, hold the NYPD accountable for violence and misconduct, and advance a public health approach to public safety that centers community support rather than policing and incarceration. That's how we can achieve a safer city, with less violence, and less abusive policing.

FIGHTING FOR BUDGET JUSTICE

New York City spends far more per capita on policing than most American cities. We have 1 NYPD officer for every 162 people. Los Angeles only has 1 officer for every 203 people, Houston every 360, and Phoenix every 380. Last year when the City was on the precipice of fiscal crisis at the outset of COVID-19, the Mayor imposed a hiring freeze on teachers, counselors, parks workers, and nearly every other City agency - but not the NYPD. An NYPD hiring freeze -- or even the "1-for-3" replacement policy that eventually took place at most other agencies -- would have saved the City hundreds of millions of dollars during the pandemic fiscal crisis.

FISCAL YEAR 2021

An unprecedented movement for racial justice took to the streets in the spring of 2020, pushing for fundamental change in how we approach public safety. A clear demand emerged from longtime police accountability advocates, led by Communities United

for Police Reform, a coalition of more than 30 organizations, to shrink the NYPD's budget by at least \$1 billion and use those resources to prioritize investments in communities of color who have endured abusive policing, historic disinvestment, and a disproportionate toll of the coronavirus health and economic crisis.

Brad therefore approached New York City's Fiscal Year 2021's budget with the goals of divesting from policing to preserve the social safety net, prioritizing public health, investing in a just recovery, taking a smart, long-term approach to our City's economic health, and beginning the process of transforming public safety, so we can keep all communities safe. Brad voted no on the City's FY21 budget because it failed to meet those principles.

Mayor de Blasio and City Council Speaker Corey Johnson presented phony promises of \$1 billion in budget cuts to the NYPD. However, as Brad revealed in his questioning of Deputy Mayor Dean Fuleihan at the Council's Preliminary Budget hearing in March, City Hall and the NYPD delivered on less than a quarter of that promise, spending \$760 million more than they claimed in press releases and on social media. Other City agencies, Parks, Sanitation, CUNY, and the Administration for Children's Services, had to be cut more, because the NYPD was cut less.

More than \$300 million of the so-called \$1 billion reduction to NYPD was claimed simply by proposing to move school safety agents from the NYPD to the DOE, even though it will be the same agents doing the same jobs, in the same places, with no savings or

NYPD "Reductions" in Fiscal Year 2021 (in millions)

Description	Mayor + Speaker Commitment in June 2020	What was actually in the FY21 Budget	Actual Spending in FY21	Notes
Reduce uniform headcount	81	55	55	Includes fringe
Uniform overtime reduction	110			
Additional overtime reduction	200			
Civilian overtime reduction	42			
OVERTIME REDUCTION SUBTOTAL	352	334	154	Projecting from 7-month actuals
Hiring freeze on non-safety positions	7	5	5	
TEA revenue	42	n/a	n/a	Revenue increase, not a cut
TEA / placard enforcement revenue	8	5	5	
Reduce OTPS and contracts	12	12	12	
Vehicle delay	5	n/a	n/a	Not included in expense budget
Cancel police cadet class in FY21	5	4	4	
CUT SUBTOTAL	512	416	236	
Move school safety out of NYPD (phased-in)	422	0	0	Shift never included in FY21 budget
Move school safety out of NYPD (50% savings)	61	0	0	Shift never included in FY21 budget
DHS and Homeless Engagement Transfers	5	5	5	
SHIFT SUBTOTAL	488	5	5	
TOTAL NYPD "REDUCTIONS"	\$1,000	\$420	\$240	

\$760

NYPD Spending in Fiscal Year 2021 over what the Mayor & Speaker Promised at Budget Passage in June 2020

reinvestment or transformation of approach. Under this approach, children as young as five years old continue to experience police interactions at the doors of their school, and students returning to high school for their first days during the pandemic were forced to wait in long lines to go through metal detectors. The proposal even counted as a “cut” the \$134 million spent on fringe benefits for those school safety agents, which won’t be cut or even moved at all. Meanwhile, the Administration presented those “cuts” as though they were part of its FY21 budget announcement, even though it was not proposing the transfer until FY23.

As has been widely reported, there was no good reason to believe that the NYPD would abide by the \$350 million on overtime reductions. And as it turned out, they didn’t. The NYPD had already exceeded its \$254 million overtime budget for FY2021 by \$74 million just 10 months into the fiscal year. By the end of June, the NYPD will likely exceed their overtime budget by upwards \$100 million.

New Yorkers do not deserve -- nor can we afford -- more smoke and mirrors or backroom deals that undermine the needs of our communities.

FISCAL YEAR 2022

Last year, reducing NYPD spending was not only a necessary first step toward transforming our approach to public safety, it was also a fiscal necessity, given the pandemic.

This year, we face a new reality: despite a policing budget larger than the GDP of many nations, crime has gone up in New York City. Shootings in March 2021 were up 77% from last year. Business as usual isn’t working; it’s failing to keep New Yorkers safe. Yet de Blasio’s Executive Budget further increases NYPD’s funding and resources by \$195 million from FY2021.

We must ensure the City’s budget paves the way to a just recovery -- to build a city that dramatically expands proven public health and community solutions rather than policing and incarceration to keep our communities safe. In his final budget in the Council, Brad will continue to hold the Mayor and the Council accountable to the promises they made but failed to deliver on last year. Building on the work already done by advocates and organizers, Brad has a plan to genuinely move \$1 billion from the NYPD in FY2022 to pave the way toward transformational changes to the City’s approach to public safety that will invest in real community safety.

Proposed NYPD Budget Reductions for FY22

Category	Description	Amount
Hiring Freeze	At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic and fiscal crisis that followed, Brad was the first elected official in the City to call for an NYPD hiring freeze for FY21. Instead, the City hired 1,110 new police officers while we refused to replace retiring teachers, counselors, and social workers. With over 35,000 officers, New York City has far more cops-per-resident than our peer cities. This year, Brad will continue to fight for an NYPD hiring freeze (or, at the very least, the application of the 1-for-2 replacement that is facing other agencies). Those funds must be directed towards social services and community support in this and future budgets.	\$420 million

<p>Remove Police from Schools. Replace them with Guidance Counselors and Restorative Justice Programs</p>	<p>Today, police far outnumber counselors and mental health professionals in NYC's public schools. Brad has been a long-time champion for police-free schools, and supports the removal of School Safety Agents from our public school system. Police presence in our schools directly contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline and criminalizes youth with a severe and unjust bias against black and Brown students. These personnel must be removed from schools and retrained for other civilian posts outside the NYPD. Meanwhile, we must use the resources to create safer, more supportive classrooms for all of New York City's young people by ensuring that every school has a guidance counselor, social workers, and restorative justice programs.</p>	<p>\$332 million</p>
<p>Eliminate the Vice Enforcement Division and Strategic Response Squad</p>	<p>The NYPD Vice Enforcement Division solicits, exploits, and incarcerates sex workers and is rife with corruption. It should be disbanded. In addition, we should eliminate the Strategic Response Squad, which engaged in violent suppression of peaceful protests last summer. Its officers are notorious for significant misconduct allegations, including a supervisor with 32 complaints against him.</p>	<p>\$85.7 million</p>
<p>Remove NYPD from Routine Traffic Enforcement and Pioneer New Street Safety Approaches</p>	<p>Brad has a detailed plan to create safer streets with less policing, including the removal of NYPD from routine traffic stops, and the expansion of the Reckless Driver Accountability Program. This would end practices like sending officers out to fill quotas for broken tail lights and not wearing a seatbelt. NYPD officers should only be enforcing driving behavior that visibly and immediately endangers public safety (e.g. drag-racing, visibly erratic, aggressive, intoxicated, or road-rage). Meanwhile, the City should make greater use of speed and red-light cameras, and the Driver Accountability Program that Brad helped to pioneer at the Red Hook Community Justice Center, to target the most reckless drivers and require them to change their driving behavior before they cause injury or death.</p>	<p>\$62.2 million</p>
<p>Public Relations</p>	<p>The NYPD's budget for public relations far exceeds most other agencies, and is unnecessary spending on what often feels to communities like propaganda. These funds should be eliminated from the NYPD's budget and redirected towards public and mental health campaigns and community partnerships.</p>	<p>\$3.3 million</p>

Eliminate the Gang Unit, Gang Database, and NYPD Youth Initiative

The NYPD has maintained the gang database since 2012, adding and removing individuals--including minors--without notice, and conducting surveillance and enforcement based on inclusion in the database, with almost zero transparency. Entry into the database does not require any evidence of criminality or suspicion of wrongdoing and 95% of the people in this database are black or Latino. Brad has been part of the fight to reform and eliminate these practices since 2018 and believes this unit and database must be eliminated immediately. Funding for the NYPD's Youth Initiative, which seeks to proactively intervene with youth before they engage in criminal activity, should be redirected towards the community-based organizations already doing this work.

\$50 million (est)

Community Ambassadors, Assistants, and other civilian positions

The Mayor's FY22 Executive Budget added 216 Community Assistant positions to "serve as a link between police and communities" to provide "customer service and personalized attention" in addition to research scientists, paralegals, psychologists, and mentors. There is no evidence that these positions will meaningfully change culture or behavior from within the NYPD. The funds for these new positions should be eliminated from the NYPD's budget and redirected toward other City agencies, contracts with community-based organizations and Mayoral offices already partnering directly with communities to serve their needs.

\$14.9 million

Mental Health Response Unit Headcount Increases

The Mayor's FY22 Executive Budget added 23 new positions to the NYPD's "Co-Response Teams" that are intended to respond to mental health crises in partnership with behavioral health professionals, but the program has not prevented the NYPD's killings of 14 (overwhelmingly BIPOC) New Yorkers in mental health crises during police encounters in the past 3 years. The City received 169,000 mental health 911 emergency calls in 2017, 56% of which resulted in individuals being transported to the hospital. New Yorkers are in need of public health support, not more police interactions that too often result in further harm, trauma, and even death. We need a new approach to mental health response that does not depend on increasing the NYPD's headcount and instead staffs up the agencies and organizations already trained to provide the public health support New Yorkers need.

\$2.5 million

Overtime

The NYPD's routine overspending on overtime is a prime example of waste, bloat, and a lack of accountability in our City's approach to policing and community safety. While the City has made some progress in reducing overtime spending in FY21, the NYPD is still set to exceed its overtime budget by upwards of \$100 million this year. Given that the NYPD routinely exceeds overtime budgets regardless of where those budgets are set, it is clear the City must continue to reduce budgeted overtime for the department in order to reign in its spending. Yet, instead of setting more ambitious targets for NYPD overtime reductions, the Mayor's FY22 executive budget actually increased the NYPD's overtime budget by \$162 million to account for and offset its irresponsible overspending this year. We cannot reward the NYPD's overspending on overtime with more funds - history demonstrates that the NYPD will spend that \$162 million and far exceed it. We must continue to reduce the NYPD's overtime budget each year to build on the progress we've made and continue to hold them accountable as best we can with the tools available to us.

\$250 million

TOTAL

\$1.2 billion

BEYOND BUDGETING

Strategies to Improve Public Safety and Police Accountability from the Comptroller's Office

By freeing up those resources from policing, New York City can choose instead to invest more in our communities -- both for effective public health approaches to particular public safety problems (see below), and for investments in the jobs, housing, small business, arts and nonprofit programs that build strong communities over time. As Comptroller, Brad will continue to partner directly with organizers, activists and communities--as he has done for over a decade--to win true accountability and transformational change.

AUDITING FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

The urgent challenge we face is to strategically shift spending from over-policing to effective community investments and programs that take a public health approach to achieve community safety. That requires in-depth analysis of current spending, and its results and consequences, a review of alternative programs to

meet community safety goals, and a commitment to track spending and results over time. To support this process, Brad will take a comparative approach, to identify the outcomes, costs and benefits of policing and compare them with alternatives that center community support and investments in social services. Brad will examine why the department is failing to deliver improved safety outcomes despite decades of budget increases and overspending on overtime and then compare that analysis with alternatives, in order to identify the approaches that are most effective and deliver the best outcomes to New Yorkers. With a comparative data-driven approach to audits, Brad will make the case for civilianization and reinvestments into community strategies that are proven to be more effective than policing and incarceration. Potential areas for these audits include:

VIOLENCE INTERRUPTION

Cure Violence and other violence interrupter programs have been shown to reduce violent crime. The City is currently increasing investment in these programs, from \$37.4 million in FY20 to \$80.1 million in FY22 and \$90.1 million in FY23. These are good increases, though this is still 0.017% of the NYPD budget. As these programs grow, it will be important to evaluate their impact, and compare efficacy to NYPD programs.

MENTAL HEALTH RESPONSE

All across the country, when people are in a mental health crisis, police are usually the first ones called. Only a very small percentage of calls (less than 5%) about mental health emergencies result in EMS responding without police. But police are not trained to be social workers or crisis counselors. And as we saw with Kawaski Trawick, an armed police officer responding to someone in crisis can be very triggering; escalating situations rapidly and far too often with deadly results. Anywhere from 50-75% of people killed every year in this country have a mental illness. After many years of pressure from advocates, NYC is launching a pilot program in three Harlem precincts, where EMTs and social workers will respond to mental health distress calls, instead of police.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The NYPD Special Victims Division has been repeatedly cited as a locus of problems, including in a devastating audit by the NYC Department of Investigation in 2018. Brad will follow up to audit the division to investigate compliance (or lack thereof) with those recommendations. Separately, Brad will also work with intimate-partner violence organizations to explore alternative approaches to policing to keep survivors safe, and help them escape harm. A 2015 survey by the National Domestic Violence Hotline found that about 75 percent of survivors who called the police on their abusers later concluded that police involvement was unhelpful at best, and at worst made them feel less safe.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Brad has proposed a comprehensive strategy, Transforming Traffic Safety: Safer Streets, With Less Policing, a data-driven, problem-solving, restorative approach to reducing traffic violence with less policing, with potential to save lives, prevent injuries, save money, and make our streets safer. As Comptroller, he will audit implementation of the

Reckless Driver Accountability Act, as well as the new DOT unit for crash investigations, and compare the efficacy of these approaches to the ongoing work of the NYPD Transportation Bureau.

SCHOOL SAFETY

The Dignity in Schools-NYC Coalition is campaigning to divest the \$332 million New York City spends each year on NYPD officers in schools, and spend those resources instead on guidance counselors, social workers, nurses, and restorative justice programs to keep school communities safe and help all students to thrive. On average, if we redistributed this funding, each NYC public school would receive about \$195,000 each year that they could devote to resolving conflicts and keeping students safe.

CONTRACT REGISTRATION & CHECKBOOK NYC

The NYPD goes to great lengths to keep its contracts for consultants, equipment and technology sealed and confidential even from the Comptroller, raising serious transparency and accountability concerns. As chief fiscal officer for New York City, Brad will hold the NYPD accountable to the standards imposed on all other City agencies to ensure the NYPD's contracts are with responsible vendors and that such purchases are not exposing New York City to avoidable risks. Brad will build on Checkbook NYC to fight for greater disclosure of NYPD contracts, especially for technology and surveillance equipment that too often infringes New Yorkers' civil rights and liberties. Brad will use the contract registration process as an opportunity to demand greater transparency over NYPD spending.

POLICE MISCONDUCT MONITORING SYSTEM

NYC spends upwards of \$252 million in taxpayer dollars every single year on police misconduct judgements and settlements. Those funds are paid out from the City's general funds rather than the NYPD's massive \$5.5 billion budget, giving NYPD leadership little incentive to prevent and appropriately discipline officers for police misconduct and violence. Brad has a long track record of using data in innovative ways to build new accountability systems and will bring that same approach to his oversight over the NYPD. As Comptroller, Brad will build a Police Misconduct Monitoring System which will pull together anonymized settlement data, publicly available disciplinary records, and civilian complaints in

coordination with the City's Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) to build a more complete picture of police misconduct for New Yorkers and policymakers. Through that tracker, Brad will work to discern patterns and warning signs of police misconduct including the identification of particular units and precincts that present higher risks of police misconduct, violence, harassment, discrimination, and settlement payments to fight for early intervention, more accountability, and new policies to better incentivize NYPD leadership to prevent police misconduct from occurring in the first place, including the payout of settlements from NYPD coffers.

OVERSIGHT & ORGANIZING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NEW YORKERS

For over a decade, Brad has stood with families of loved ones killed by police violence time and time again, at press conferences, in civil disobedience, to design and pass the Community Safety Act, and in oversight hearings to demand accountability and he will continue to do so as Comptroller. Leveraging the tools of the Comptroller's office, Brad will use the new data made available thanks to organizers' work to repeal state law 50-a as well as comparative cost-benefit audits and a data-driven approach to measuring outcomes and misconduct to demand accountability and make the case for spending more on community solutions for public safety and less on policing.

CONCLUSION

Budgets are moral documents -- and tests of character. As NYC's budget watchdog and chief accountability officer, the Comptroller has powerful tools to help shape a better way forward on public safety -- one that moves away from using policing as a response to every problem, that demands racial justice, and that invests in community services, resources, and capacity. The choices we make now about how to invest in community safety will determine whether New York City's families and communities can thrive more equally.