

June 29, 2020

Statement from downtown Mpls organizations

There is an unmistakable and significant negative impact from the framing of a needed discussion about improving law enforcement and other public safety efforts as “dismantling the Minneapolis Police Department.” Without a clear understanding that policing services will be reinvented but not eliminated in our City, we can anticipate the desirability of Minneapolis as a community to live, visit, invest, and create/maintain jobs within will diminish.

There is no greater responsibility facing our elected officials at City Hall than providing public safety for all our residents, workers, and visitors. There is no debate more important facing them, and the entire community, than how best to fulfill that responsibility in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd and all that led up to that moment. **The following principles will guide our participation in that conversation. We anticipate more organizations and businesses will join us in coming days.**

It is essential that we come together as a community to reimagine policing and public safety. Significantly improved law enforcement is a needed and overdue component of an overall continuum of responses to maintain safety for all. Sworn officers paired with supporting resources and other complementary safety strategies have proven effective in downtown. These approaches should be expanded more broadly in our City. **Bottom Line, we say YES to reform and reinvention of policing led by our Police Chief with broad-based community support. To the notion of “Dismantling” the MPD, we decisively say NO!**

Signed by (as of 6.28.2020),

mpls downtown council
Minneapolis Regional Chamber
BOMA

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR POLICE REFORM AND PUBLIC SAFETY

1. Clear Accountability for Oversight of Police and Public Safety
 - a) Maintain the current City Charter, whereby the Mayor manages the MPD, not the Mayor plus a City Council of 13 individuals. Management of the MPD by committee will muddles accountability where it is most essential.
2. MPD Reform and Reinvention is Needed
 - a) Support the Chief of Police more visibly than before and provide regular input on public safety and MPD reform.
 - b) Educate ourselves - business, community leaders and citizens of all neighborhoods - about best practices we should support.
 - c) Support a process that utilizes research, best practices, data and engages communities of color.
 - d) Demand an immediate and lasting change in MPD culture, including, increased authority for the Chief, parting ways with any and all bad officers, and improvements to police officer recruitment with incentives to attract high-caliber recruits
3. A Continuum of Safety Strategies is Necessary
 - a) Law enforcement is essential, but cannot alone provide for community safety.
 - b) Downtown and other areas in Minneapolis have adopted complementary strategies that work and should be expanded throughout the City (co-responder models, DID ambassadors, liasons for the homeless, etc.).
 - c) Support additional housing services, mental health services, and other community-building assets.
 - d) Acknowldge this may require an increase in staff size to achieve the results we expect from a world-class City.
4. There Exists an Undeniable Role for Law Enforcement
 - a) Protecting residents, visitors and people who work in Minneapolis is the most important goal of any plan to reform the MPD.
 - b) Trained, sworn personnel must be available in appropriate numbers to provide first responder capability, 24 - 7 coverage, and address threatening situations affecting citizens, businesses and properties.
 - c) Affirm emergency response capacity remains in place during any period of planning or transition.
5. Build Broad Consensus on the Path to a Safer City for Everyone
 - a) Develop a “plan to make a plan” that gives multiple perspectives a genuine place at the table and engages communities of color and businesses in Minneapolis.
 - b) Provide clarity about the timeline and process for decision-making and any implementation of the plan.
 - c) Support the implementation of restorative justice measures that emphasizes accountability and justice that is focused on repairing the harm caused by crime.
 - d) Support work that is consensus building and not polarizing; neither status quo nor chaotic change is acceptable.