



**Law Enforcement
Labor Services, Inc.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Brooklyn Center police union and Minnesota police association urge Brooklyn Center: Vote NO on defunding police

(Brooklyn Center, Minn.) - At a [special Brooklyn Center City Council meeting](#) this Monday, November 29 at 6 PM, it is expected that the Council will vote to reallocate at least \$1.2 million from the existing police budget for non-police functions, specifically by not filling the current 14 vacant positions in the police department, according to a presentation by the city manager at the Monday, November 22 council meeting. **This will mean the elimination of 14 police positions, in a direct vote to permanently defund the police department.**

Minnesota's major law enforcement organizations previously [sent several letters to city leaders \(second one here\)](#) warning about defunding and what that will mean for the safety of the community. Many of the mayor's proposed initiatives would be illegal under state law.

Chuck Valleau, acting president of Local #82, representing rank and file officers of the Brooklyn Center Police Department said, **"Brooklyn Center's police officers are committed to building community trust and working to keep the community safe and secure. This upcoming vote to defund the police department will make residents less safe and further divide our community. Less officers will result in more crime, longer response times to help victims of crime, and less resources to investigate crimes to provide justice."**

Jim Mortenson, executive director of Law Enforcement Labor Services (the union that represents police officers from Brooklyn Center and hundreds of other agencies across the state) said, **"The vote on Monday to defund the police is clear: This plan was put together in secret, is based on replacing police with non-existent civilian staff that do not have police authority to act under state law, and will embolden those who seek mayhem. We urge the Council to slow down and reevaluate, and support law enforcement."**

Brian Peters, executive director of Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (the state's largest public safety association, representing 10,000+ rank and file officers) and former Brooklyn Center Police Department Commander, said, **"We're currently seeing the effects of a defunded police department: All types of crime - including violent crime - has substantially increased in Brooklyn Center. The mayor's proposal seeks to appease extremists at the expense of everyone else who seeks a safe and secure community by making these defunding changes permanent."**

CURRENT STAFFING LEVELS:

In 2021, Brooklyn Center's police department was budgeted for 49 sworn officers. Currently, there are 35 on the payroll. Of those 35, three are unable to work and are on long-term medical leave, resulting in only 32 currently available officers to respond to calls for service. **If this vote passes, and 14 positions are eliminated, this will be a permanent reduction of 30% in officers available to respond to calls for service.** The [existing staffing shortages](#) in the police department have been previously documented.

Staffing levels have greatly impacted the Investigative Division in particular. Previously, the BCPD's Investigative Division has operated with 9 detectives, overseen by a Commander. Right now, the BCPD's Investigative Division is staffed by three detectives, with one of those acting as the Commander for case review and assignment. If a case does not fall into a serious category of high community interest or impact (such as homicide, certain types of assaults), the case will be closed inactive. **BCPD detectives are not investigating any property crime which includes auto theft and burglaries.**

SERVICE RESPONSE TIMES:

A memo sent to the Brooklyn Center Police Department last week outlined an analysis of calls for services from Brooklyn Center to the Hennepin County Dispatch Center:

Pre April 11, 2021

- Calls for service were holding for an average of 9 minutes 50 seconds.
- Average response times to the calls for service were 9 minutes 52 seconds.

As of September 1, 2021

- Calls for service were holding for an average of 17 minutes 58 seconds.
- Average response times to the calls for service were 10 minutes 47 seconds.

The data above reflects an 83% increase for holding time and almost a 10% increase for response time. With even less officers today, it is likely the holding and response times will be even longer.

Valleau said, **"The proposal to accept current extremely low staffing levels and defund the police department is dangerous for Brooklyn Center and will do nothing to combat the local, regional and national crime trend of increasing violent crime."**

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The Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (MPPOA) represents Minnesota's 10,000+ public safety officials who hold active law enforcement licenses in the state of Minnesota. Members include police officers, correctional officers, dispatchers, and firefighters. MPPOA is the largest association representing public safety professionals in the State of Minnesota.

Law Enforcement Labor Services (LELS) is Minnesota's largest public safety labor union (6,600+ members) specializing in representing law enforcement, fire, dispatch, corrections, and public safety support staff.