



Office of the Mayor

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For Immediate Release
August 27, 2020

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Update on City Work Related to Criminal Justice Reform, Crime Prevention, and Racial Disparities A Message from Mayor Rhodes-Conway

Over the past three months, the City of Madison has been working hard to advance police reform, begin reimagining public safety, and invest in our community, especially our Black community. Here are some of the efforts underway and how you can get involved or learn more:

- The community asked that police to be removed from schools. The City and School District worked together to end the police contract. You can share your input on how you think the School District should reinvest that money from their budget at <https://budget.madison.k12.wi.us/budget-information-2020-21>.
- The community asked for community control of police. There is a legislation underway right now to create a Civilian Oversight Board and an Independent Police Monitor. I support the creation of this Board and Office, and want to make sure they are set up for success. I feel the current proposal should include additional measures to ensure that we hire and support an experienced professional as Monitor, and I am hopeful that the Council will make any changes needed to make this a successful oversight structure.
- The community wanted a non-police response to behavioral health calls. The City and County are working together through the Criminal Justice Council to examine an alternative crisis response team for people experiencing behavioral health crises. Such a program would lift calls off the police and allow police to focus on “shots-fired” and other serious violent crimes.
- The City’s Public Safety Review Committee is reviewing the police department budget, use of force policies, and is now prioritizing actions from the Ad Hoc Task Force on Police Policy and Procedure.
- The independent Police and Fire Commission is hiring our next police chief, and is asking you to fill out a community input survey. To participate, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G923DNG>. They have a long list of other ways to be involved as well, posted at www.cityofmadison.com/PFC
- The City is hiring now for an Equity Manager to lead internal City government racial equity and social justice work and external work in the community to address systemic racism. We are also strengthening the City’s racial equity and social justice team in the Department of Civil Rights.
- We are investing in wealth-building strategies for people of color and business owners of color to help reduce the unacceptable racial disparities we see in our community. We are:
 - Supporting homeownership programs
 - Offering financial education and navigation services to low income households
 - Supporting immigrant families via community based organizations
 - Funding community based organizations to help families experiencing housing insecurity

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- Helping small businesses purchase their storefronts
- Subsidizing zero interest, zero fee loans to small businesses via Kiva
- Piloting a Madison ACRE program to train more people of color in real estate and development fields
- Developing a small business equity and recovery program to support entrepreneurs of color as they recover from the pandemic
- The City funds multiple organizations that prevent, intervene in and interrupt violence, including supporting a variety youth services, tenant support, reentry services, domestic violence services, and violence interruption.

In the coming days and weeks, we are adding to this list:

- We will continue to work on the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Task Force on Police Policy and Procedure and other reforms lifted up by the community.
- We are moving forward on our strategy of addressing violence as a public health issue in partnership with Public Health and Dane County.
- We will be increasing our investments in affordable housing and economic development via the 2021 budget.
- We are expanding the availability of childcare to low income families in partnership with the Madison Metropolitan School District.
- We are working to create more internships and jobs for young people in our community.

There is a lot of work to be done to continue to dismantle structural racism, reimagine public safety, and invest in our community. My office and the whole of City government is dedicated to advancing this work in collaboration with the community.