



Eric T. Costello
Baltimore City Council, 11th District

May 19, 2022

Michael Harrison
Police Commissioner
Baltimore Police Department
601 E Fayette St
Baltimore, MD 21202
Via Email To: michael.harrison@baltimorepolice.org

Commissioner Harrison,

Thank you for your work on behalf of the citizens of Baltimore. The efforts of the men and women of the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) do not go unnoticed.

The City Council's Ways & Means Committee is preparing to hold FY2023 budget hearings during the week of May 31 – June 07, 2022. The Ways & Means Committee looks forward to discussing your agency's progress in FY2022 and your proposed plans for FY2023. The Bureau of Budget and Management Research (BBMR) has already been in touch with representatives from your agency to advise on the format of hearings, your specific date / time slot, and a request for an updated organizational chart along with cell phone numbers for Command Staff (Major and above in rank) and key civilian personnel, to be submitted to BBMR by no later than May 31, 2022. Specifically, we will be carefully reviewing BPD's plans to make Baltimore City safer and significantly impact the unending violence that is crushing our communities.

Since the beginning of Mayor Scott's term in December 2020, the Mayor has consistently committed to long term goals for addressing the underlying causes of crime in our communities. I unequivocally agree with and support these long-term goals. Waves of disinvestment over several decades have come and gone while an embarrassing dismissal of the root causes of crime, chiefly, inadequate K-12 public education and lack of economic opportunity have been allowed to continue and endure. However, the residents of our City expect to be safe in their homes and their houses of worship, that their children to be safe walking to and from their schools and parks, that they can safely walk to and support small businesses in their communities, and that their neighborhoods are not under siege from violence that is beyond their control.

The level of violence that has been gripping our City and our communities is simply beyond comprehension. After suffering a total of 1,021 homicides from 2019 - 2021, so far this calendar year, we have suffered 125 homicides as of May 18, 2022. To frame the sheer volume of tragedy here, by the end of April 2022, we were at 112 homicides, having never exceeded 100 homicides by that date in the history of our City. The pace of the violence our City has experienced has never been sustainable and it has only gotten worse. Our residents and communities need relief, and they need it now. We are currently suffering through the following aggregate totals of violent crime since the beginning of 2019 that continue to grow by the day:

- Homicides - 1,146
- Non-fatal shootings - 2472
- Robberies - 13272



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These historic numbers are in direct conflict with the goals of the multi-year crime plan that you and BPD leadership have frequently touted. In addition, these numbers don't begin to tell the heartbreaking stories of senseless tragedy. Over the past week and a half:

- On May 10, 60 gunshots were fired in one incident on the 700 block of Rose St resulting in one death and three non-fatal victims.
- On May 12, a pregnant woman was shot and killed on the 300 block of E 23rd St, leaving her fiance dead, their one-year old baby parentless, and her prematurely delivered baby fighting for its life.
- On May 15, a 17-year old was fatally shot on the 1700 block of E Fayette St shortly after attending his junior prom.
- During the 2021-2022 school year, we have lost 12 Baltimore City Public School System students to homicide, aged 15, 15, 17, 16, 13, 15, 15, 17, 16, 17, 15, and 17 – all a result of shootings.

The people of this City deserve urgency around this generational crime problem. They deserve transparency to understand what their leaders are doing to improve their lives and the safety of their neighborhoods. They deserve every effort from us, every minute of every day, to work together to solve this problem.

I am asking you to provide the Committee with a Short-Term Crime Plan, in writing, by no later than Friday, June 03, 2022. We will review the specifics of this Short-Term Crime Plan during your budget hearing and the Committee expects to hear detailed answers in conjunction with details of how you propose to spend taxpayer dollars to achieve these goals. This document should include, at a minimum, the following components:

1. Inventory of Non-BPD Public Safety Assets Operating in Baltimore City - An inventory of all public safety officers currently operating in Baltimore City, including a strategy for deployment of a diversified force of multi-agency personnel (i.e., FBI, ATF, State Police, a university police department, etc.), the total number of officers (broken down by whether they are primarily deployed in the field or in an office), the percentage of time they are dedicated to cases in Baltimore City, and how long they are committed to assignments within Baltimore City. Also include details of any ongoing cross-jurisdictional plans with Baltimore and Anne Arundel Counties to keep neighborhoods safe through the summer and the end of the year
2. Plans to request to Increase Inventory of Non-BPD Public Safety Assets Operating in Baltimore City - a list of additional requests that your office is prepared to make in writing, by no later than June 07, 2022, to the head of each law enforcement agency identified above, along with the number of sworn officers from other agencies that you are requesting.



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3. Status Update on Efforts to Civilianize BPD's Workforce - leadership from BPD has long touted the progress made in efforts to civilianize BPD's workforce in an effort to assign more sworn officers to Patrol and other visible functions within the community. This update should include the number of civilian positions starting at the beginning of FY2020, how many have been civilianized, where these sworn officers have since been assigned (i.e., Patrol, CID, etc.), and plans to civilianize all possible positions currently occupied with sworn officers along with associated timeframes and narrative justification for why this has not yet been completed.
4. A Complete Inventory of All BPD Sworn Officers Not in the Field, including rank and divisions - Notations should be included for those not in field due to factors such as medical, suspension, etc.
5. Immediate Plan to Deploy Additional Sworn Officers to the Field - a complete plan along with a schedule to deploy all sworn officers to the field in Patrol or another community-facing and visible role.
6. Plan for Utilizing Overtime - a restructured plan to more efficiently use overtime resources to increase officer visibility and immediately impact violent crime
7. Measurement of "Operational Energy" - a description of how we measure performance of officers in the field and how the Department determines the extent to which officers are currently performing adequately. This section should include detailed steps on how to immediately increase the effectiveness of officers in the field.
8. Increasing Clearance Rates - Plans appropriate staff and subsequently increasing the clearance and case closure rate for homicides, shootings and auto thefts.
9. Areas of Demonstrated Ongoing Violence - a plan to immediately reduce violence in neighborhoods with repeat incidents, including in areas where violence is directly associated with open air drug markets in neighborhoods.
10. Utilization / Expansion of License Plate Reader (LPR) Technology - a complete inventory of LPR (stationary and mobile). This section should include a plan to immediately increase procurement of, use and strategic deployment of additional LPR resources moving forward. Additionally, this section should highlight any procedural or institutional obstructions to increased and expedited procurement and use of these devices.

As mentioned earlier, please provide this Short-Term Crime Plan, in writing and via email, by no later than Friday, June 03, 2022. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact me directly at eric.costello@baltimorecity.gov or 410-396-4816.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric T. Costello".

Eric. T. Costello
Baltimore City Council, 11th District



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CC: Honorable City Council President Nick Mosby
Honorable City Council Vice President Sharon Green Middleton, 6th District
Honorable City Council Members
Lawrence Anderson, Chief of Staff to Council President
Bob Cename, Director of BBMR
Michael Huber, Chief of Staff to Mayor
Shantay Jackson, Director of Mayor's Office of Neighborhood and Safety Engagement
Natasha Mehu, Director of Government Relations to Mayor
Eric Melancon, Chief of Staff at BPD
Marilyn Mosby, State's Attorney for Baltimore City
Chichi Nyagah-Nash, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Chris Shorter, Chief Administrative Officer
Andy Smullian, Deputy Chief of Staff at BPD
Matt Stegman, Director of Fiscal and Legislative Services to Council President
Nina Themelis, Deputy Director of Government Relations to Mayor
Michelle Wirzberger, Director of Government Relations at BPD