



Office of Community Involvement



District Attorney's Office CBAC

TO: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Board of County Commissioners (3) pages

FROM: District Attorney's Office Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC)

DATE: March 14, 2025

SUBJECT: MCDA Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

DEPARTMENT BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Having reviewed the District Attorney's budget request for FY 2026 the MCDA CBAC feels that it is incumbent on the Board to consider a full funding of this Office and to remove the standing request for a 3% reduction in total dollars allocated to the DA's Office.

We respectfully request that all of these proposed reductions be restored:

Proposal for Reductions to Meet 3% FY 2026 General Fund Target Allocation			
Reduction Package # in priority order for restoration	Brief Description and Program Offers	General Fund Reduction	FTE Reduction
1	Homicide Unit (15305) - 1.00 FTE DDA 3	(\$291,000)	-1.00
2	Treatment Court Unit (15209) - 1.00 FTE DDA 2	(\$217,000)	-1.00
3	Domestic Violence Unit (15305) - 1.00 FTE DDA 2	(\$222,000)	-1.00
4	MCDA Access Attorney Program (MAAP 15207) - 1.00 FTE DDA 3 (North Portland)	(\$261,000)	-1.00
5	Juvenile Unit (15101) - 1.00 FTE DDA 1	(\$198,000)	-1.00
0	Multiple Program Offers - Accumulated budget savings from across the office, including as a result of salary savings from turnover.	(\$100,000)	0.00
Total		(\$1,289,000)	-5.00

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

We recognize from personal experience and a review of local and national media, that Multnomah County has suffered a devastating loss to its reputation as a place where people can safely visit for meetings, conventions, and vacations, where they can safely raise a family, or are able to conduct a successful business regardless of its size.

It is evident that Multnomah County faces a number of serious ongoing challenges, and that the County's ability to manage them successfully is now being hampered by a large shortfall in its revenue.

We recognize that you as our leaders are constantly being pushed and pulled away from our most important and urgent needs by the loudest voices in the room. One of the top priorities per our Board of County Commissioners is to protect our community.

While we are aware that the current lack of funds is going to require a reduction of services and benefits to many individuals who desperately need them, it is important that the safety of the community as a whole be considered as the most essential component in preventing even larger funding losses in the future, losses resulting in additional reductions in services and support to those who need them most.

BUDGET/PROGRAM OFFERS FEEDBACK:

This DA's Office is crucial to the public safety system and must be funded adequately in order to ensure fair and efficient justice, which ultimately benefits the community and upholds the rule of law.

With this in mind, MCDA CBAC supports the DA in his list of new requests and their prioritized order. However, we would like to speak on these program offer requests specifically:

- *Strategic Prosecution & Service Unit SPSU Expansion:* MCDA CBAC strongly supports this new request. This committee sees the value in the use of technology, intelligence, and data analytics in innovative ways that enable prosecutors to focus resources on the people and places associated with high concentrations of criminal activity.
- *Sr. Legal Assistant Expansion:* This is another program that would increase efficiencies within the DA's Office. By adding legal assistants to each of the seven felony units, this would free up administrative work currently being performed by the more expensive prosecutors, to be done by a less expensive legal assistant. Prosecutors would leverage this administrative workload shift by increasing their caseload capacity.
- *Body Worn Cameras Unit:* MCDA CBAC is shocked that this was not included as an ongoing program offer in the FY 2026 budget, as this would seem to be both constitutionally and ethically required. At the current level, only 17% of felony level body

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worn camera footage is currently being reviewed. That number would go down to zero if this funding does not continue into FY 2026.

- *Civil Commitments DDA*: This is difficult and complex work with the criminal justice system. The prosecutor is dealing with criminal defendants that are not mentally fit in a system with not enough mental health resources, including the Oregon State Hospital, which is chronically full, and the county jails acting as a de facto mental health facility.

In closing, we MCDA CBAC members understand that these are challenging budgetary times, but the fundamental importance of public safety leads us to our conclusions. We greatly appreciate the Chair and Commissioners considering our thoughts on these important matters.

CBAC Members:

Babak Zolfaghari-Azar

Chuck Sparks

Mike Delman (Chair)

Renai Bell (Central CBAC Representative)

Tim Larson

Staff:

Michelle Myers, MCDA Finance Director

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