



Office of Community Involvement



## District Attorney's Office CBAC

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TO: Chair Deborah Kafoury and Board of County Commissioners (2) pages

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

DATE: April 5, 2021

SUBJECT: MCDA Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office (MCDA) Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) understands that FY22 is a most challenging year, and that the Chair and Commissioners face a daunting task of budget prioritization. MCDA faces yet another constraint budget, continuing to shrink in the face of a growing population and increasing demands. This moment in time is a historic turning-point for the criminal justice system, with issues of equity and transparency commanding attention. Simultaneously, our community suffers an abrupt rise in domestic violence, and skyrocketing shootings and homicides, which disparately impact communities of color. Against this backdrop, we note that MCDA plays critical roles in both criminal justice oversight and public safety. Cutting MCDA funding at this historic moment is, in the considered opinion of the committee, irresponsible.

### PROCESS

The CBAC met nine times to review and discuss the MCDA FY 22 proposed budget. The Committee heard from relevant members of MCDA staff as well as District Attorney Mike Schmidt, and reviewed extensive supporting documentation.

### PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS

15304B Unit D Gun Violence \$203,571

The alarming growth in shootings and gun homicides continues its acceleration into early 2021. In response, this committee strongly supports the District Attorney's proposal to repurpose the Unit D SAKI Grant position into the Unit D Gun Violence Deputy District Attorney. This is a sound and necessary move to meet a grave public safety crisis.

15102B Domestic Violence Unit OTO Expansion \$242,359

The COVID-induced backlog of Domestic Violence cases is substantial, and terribly harmful to victims. It is an urgent matter. The committee strongly supports the OTO request to address this critical problem.

15301B Unit A/B - Property/Drugs/Human Trafficking Restoration \$235,470

Property crimes in Multnomah County are out of control. Many property crimes, such as auto theft, disproportionately harm communities of color, involving, for example, cars needed for basic work

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transportation. Cutting Unit A/B is preferable to cutting violent crime prosecutions, yet cutting property crime staff now will only foster continued growth. This cut should be restored.

15012B Body Worn Cameras Expansion \$456,523

Gresham PD now has 132 BWCs deployed, while Portland State University Campus Police have 14. The District Attorney has profound constitutional responsibilities to conduct oversight review of this evidence, to ensure that laws are followed and rights honored. This required review is not currently funded adequately to meet the increasing volume. In this era of community demand for full transparency in law enforcement activities, funding one of transparency's most important tools is non-negotiable.

15401B Victims Assistance Program Restoration \$111,532

Victim Advocate services are necessary to providing victims of all crime, but especially violent crimes such as homicide, sexual assault and child abuse, with their constitutional rights in a trauma-informed manner. The community expects and needs this service to be adequately funded. The committee strongly supports this restoration.

15022 Alfresco Document Management Stabilization and Upgrade \$644,868

This OTO request provides necessary modernization and document integrity to the MCDA file storage system. It is long overdue and absolutely vital to ongoing MCDA services. Document management is central to the MCDA mission, ensuring correct third party criminal justice system oversight by parties, attorneys, courts, the press and the public. *This request has moved to the DCA budget as Program Offer #78319 District Attorney's IT Project Planning.*

15023 MCDA Technology Upgrade - Email Systems and Public Records \$221,115

This OTO request is also an overdue improvement needed to conduct everyday business. *This request has moved to the DCA budget as Program Offer #78319B MCDA Technology Upgrade - Email Systems and Public Records.*

15000B Management Services - Policy Director \$276,647

This is a new management position implemented by the current District Attorney, who believes it necessary to fulfill his campaign promises related to equity efforts in the criminal justice system. Half of the committee members support DA Schmidt on immediate implementation of this position, taking the view that now is the time. The other half took the view that adding this management position now, when cutting lawyers, support staff, and victim advocates is untimely, although they support doing so in the future .

## CONCLUSION

We are experiencing the great need for transparency and meaningful oversight in the criminal justice system, intersecting with a rapid upsurge in gun violence, domestic violence and property crime. The need for an adequately funded, properly functioning District Attorney's Office, able to exercise its constitutional and public safety roles, was never greater. This committee unanimously and emphatically urges the Chair and Commissioners to follow its recommendations.

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**Members:** Tim Cunningham, Cynthia Escamilla, Leah Gibbs, Eric Hunter, Rebecca Nickels, Chuck Sparks, Ernest Warren; **Staff:** Dana Anderson, Allen Vogt