

COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR POLICE REFORM

June 26th, 2024

New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

New York City Council Members
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Members of New York City Council,

With New York City's FY25 budget due at the end of the month, Mayor Adams recently announcedⁱ his plan to build a 'Public Safety Training Academy' - i.e. a Cop City - in College Point, Queens that would cost the city at least \$225 million dollarsⁱⁱ. This NYC Cop City would consolidate the enforcement and police forces that are currently housed amongst 18 different city agencies (e.g. the Department of Sanitation Police, Homeless Services Police, and the Administration for Children's Services Police and othersⁱⁱⁱ), and bring them together to train with NYPD officers. The purpose of this consolidated training is to have **these smaller police forces more fully adopt NYPD's hyper-militarized tactics and policing practices**, as well as to expand the power and influence of the NYPD over other city agencies. In short, Cop City is being built to increase carceral enforcement as the primary solution to city issues, criminalizing everything from bureaucratic city regulations to social and public health problems. **The 33 grassroots, legal, advocacy and community-based organizations are calling on the City Council to stop this dangerous plan from advancing by cutting Cop City from the FY25 Capital budget before it dramatically increases policing and criminalization in our city.**

Mayor Adams has made it clear that his go-to solution for NYC's most pressing issues - the housing crisis, gun violence, and mental illness to name a few - is increased policing and criminalization. But his plan for NYC's Cop City goes beyond anything we have seen before, pouring 100s of millions of dollars into a training facility that will mold all the city's police and enforcement arms after the NYPD, having them adopt NYPD's aggressive policing tactics and their blatant disregard for oversight and accountability. If this plan moves forward and succeeds in molding all of the city's police forces after the NYPD, it will undoubtedly increase violence and harm to New Yorkers. Under Mayor Adams, the NYPD's track record of misconduct, violence and abuse is the highest it's been in a decade^{iv}, they refuse to fire cops who kill New Yorkers^v, and they reject or ignore state and city oversight legislation^{vi}, and they have dramatically increased arrests for low level offenses^{vii}-- molding more police forces after the NYPD will mean more police departments that act with impunity and violence.

We have already started to see how Mayor Eric Adams has sought to increase the use of policing and criminalization in non-public safety agencies, turning them into instruments of his police state. Mayor Adams appointed former NYPD official Jessica Tisch as the Department of Sanitation Commissioner and under her leadership there has been documented evidence of increasingly aggressive enforcement of street vendor licenses^{viii}, including a recent incidence in which police were caught on camera violently manhandling a young girl for selling fruit out of her parents' cart^{ix}. If Cop City is built and training is consolidated, the city will see more and more civilians being abused and criminalized for a wider range of reasons. This expansion of the use of policing as the

primary strategy for addressing city issues^x, ones that often require social and public health solutions, will only further inequity and criminalization of Black, Latine and other communities of color, and decrease safety for New Yorkers.

Since spending for this dangerous project is projected to begin in FY25, we are calling on City Council to act at this critical juncture and stop Cop City before it starts by negotiating with the mayor for the project to be removed from the FY25 Capital Budget^{xi}. The city needs better schools, mental health care, and truly affordable housing – not a mega-police training facility. The safety and health of our communities depends on it. We need to advance an FY25 Capital and expense budget that truly addresses the needs of the people and reflects a transformative approach to public safety that is rooted in equity and ensuring all New Yorkers have what they need to thrive.

Signed,

Communities United for Police Reform
Ali Forney Center
Arab American Association of NY
Audre Lorde Project
CAAAY: Organizing Asian Communities
Caribbean Equality Project
Center for Community Alternatives
Center on Race and Digital Justice
Chinese-American Planning Council
Community Connections for Youth
DRUM- Desis Rising Up and Moving
El Puente
Equality for Flatbush
Freedom Agenda
Guyanese American Workers United
Immigrant Defense Project
INCITE! Palestine Force - NYC Hub
Jews For Racial & Economic Justice
Jim Owles. Liberal Democratic Club
Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice
Laal NYC
Make the Road New York
Malcolm X Grassroots Movement
New York Communities for Change
Nodutdol
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment
NYC Network for Worker Cooperatives
Policing and Social Justice Project
Street Vendor Project at the Urban Justice Center
Surveillance Resistance Lab
Teachers Unite
VOCAL NY
Youth Represent

ⁱ <https://theintercept.com/2024/06/05/nyc-eric-adams-cop-city-police-training/>

ⁱⁱ Mayor Adams Public Safety Training Facility Budget as found in the [Capital Commitment Plan for FY21, April 2020, PDF Page 250](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ Agencies to be trained with the New York City Police Department (NYPD) include: Department of Correction (DOC), Department of Probation (DOP), New York City Sheriff's Office, Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Police, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Police, Department of Homeless Services (DHS) Police, NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H) Police, New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) Police, Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) Enforcement Patrol, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Police, Department of Sanitation, New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM), Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY), Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) Police, New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) Police, NYC Business Integrity Commission (BIC) & CUNY Police.

^{iv} <https://www.nyclu.org/commentary/complaints-nypd-abuse-are-way-under-mayor-adams>

^v <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/12/nyregion/kawaski-trawick-nypd-bronx.html>

^{vi} On NYPD out of compliance with oversight legislation: <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/nypd-continues-dodge-surveillance-transparency-laws> and rejecting oversight legislation <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/03/nyregion/nypd-how-many-stops-act.html>

^{vii} <https://www.nyclu.org/commentary/nypd-stops-are-skyrocketing-under-mayor-adams>

^{viii} <https://hellgatenyc.com/mango-vendor-arrest-mayor-adams> and <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/nyc-comptroller-lander-presses-city-hall-for-answers-regarding-street-vendor-sweeps-and-delayed-implementation-of-local-law-18/#:~:text=Despite%20the%20delay%20in%20issuing,in%20late%20July%20against%20vendors>

^{ix} <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/fruit-vendor-new-york-parks-b2556356.html>.

^x <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2024/04/15/the-ex-nypd-official-trying-to-tame-new-yorks-trash>

^{xi} \$225 million for this project was originally slated for a new Department of Corrections training facility and adopted into the city's capital budget in FY21 (See Capital Commitment Plan for FY21, April 2020, PDF Page 250). However, plans for a new DOC training facility did not move forward and no money has been spent (See [Capital Projects Dashboard](#), [Mayors Office of Operations](#), [Project Name C114ACADY](#) – to find search C114ACADY and make sure that "projects with Agency Schedule" is unclicked). Mayor Eric Adams recently announced that he is planning to use the funds originally earmarked for the DOC training facility to build New York's own Cop City. Mayor Adams also announced that the mega-police training facility will likely cost more than is currently budgeted. According to [Executive Budget Capital Commitment Plan for FY25](#), spending on this project is slated to begin in FY25. According to the [New York City Charter](#) (Chapters 9 & 10), council has the authority to negotiate with the Mayor to remove a capital project from the capital budget as part of the annual city budget process.