

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Metropolitan Police Department



Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Oversight Hearing

Testimony of
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Before the

Committee on the Judiciary

Council of the District of Columbia

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John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004



Good afternoon, Chair McDuffie, members and staff of the Committee. I am pleased to testify before you today on Mayor Bowser's Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Budget, which provides critical resources to support the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and public safety in the District. This is the District's 21st consecutive balanced budget and makes key investments in public safety, education, affordable housing, transportation, infrastructure, job training, and employment services that give residents a fair shot at a pathway to the middle class. These investments are critical priorities as identified by District residents at the Mayor's public engagement forums, which were held during the budget formulation process.

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Briefly, the Mayor's proposed FY17 budget for MPD provides local funding of \$516.7 million. This is an increase of \$10.8 million, or 2.1 percent from the approved FY 2016 budget. This includes full year funding for the 3 percent FY17 union raises, which were previously budgeted outside of MPD, and a 3 percent cost of living adjustment for the civilian and the non-union sworn members of the Department.

Most of MPD's local budget, 89 percent, is for personal services (PS). The remaining 11 percent of the total budget – approximately \$56.4 million – covers a variety of Nonpersonal Services (NPS), including specialized law enforcement purchases – such as uniforms, firearms, ammunition, as well as contracts for the Police and Fire Clinic, fleet maintenance, and information technology. Of the local budget, only \$2.2 million, or less than half of one percent, is not tied up in salaries, benefits, and major contracts and programmatic spending. This \$2.2 million covers a wide variety of important operating expenditures, such as canine supplies and food, tuition reimbursement for cadets and other employees, and mandatory language access translations.

When looking at any budget, it is essential to consider it in context. Over the past decade, beginning with the FY08 budget through the proposed FY17 budget, with a few major policy changes held constant (see Figure 1 Notes, page 2), MPD's local budget increased just 4 percent. Over this time, the MPD PS budget for salaries and benefits increased 9 percent, while NPS spending decreased 25 percent. The city has grown by more than 80,000 residents from 2008 through 2015. In contrast, right now, MPD has about 300 fewer officers than it did in 2008. The Department has been able to succeed – and drive down crime – during times of tight budgets through sound and careful management of valuable resources. Fortunately, Mayor Bowser has recognized the need for investment in public safety.

The proposed budget provides funding for several important new initiatives: \$5.3 million to support the body-worn camera program for all front facing police officers, \$2.8 million and 35 Full Time Equivalent positions (FTEs) for hiring civilians, and \$2.5 million to hire approximately 60 experienced officers. I will highlight for the audience why these are important investments.

- In 2013 I directed my staff to explore implementing a body-worn camera program at MPD. Three years later, after researching various programs, evaluating models, and working with the Mayor, the community, and the Council on policy and regulations, we are now deploying cameras to all seven districts. So far, cameras are deployed in the First, Third, Fifth, and Seventh Districts. In the next two months, we will begin deployment to the Second, Fourth, and Sixth Districts.¹ The \$5.3 million funding level in the FY17 budget will pay for the software systems related to the videos, redaction services for videos to be released to the public, as well as full year funding for the staff to manage the redaction, review, and distribution of the BWC videos.

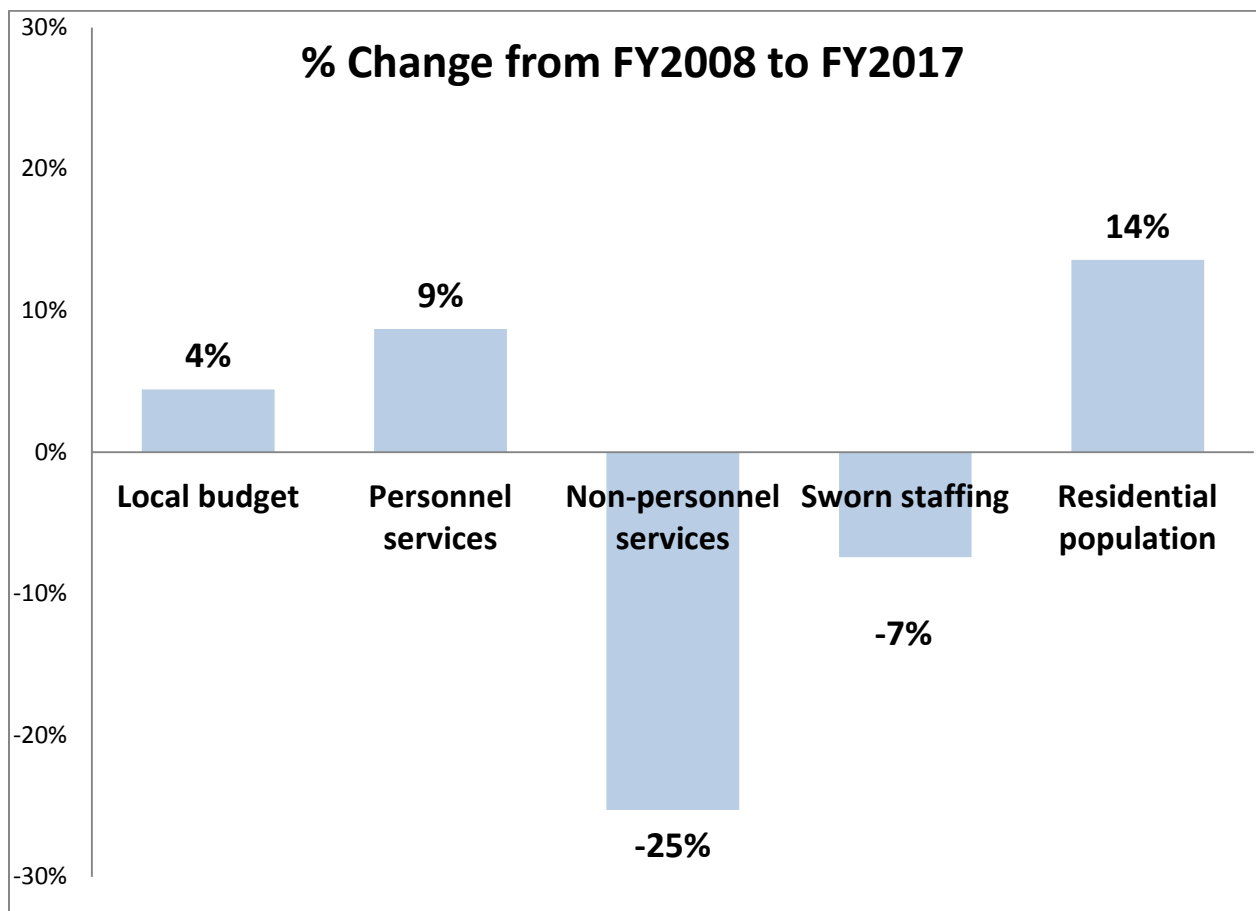


Figure 1 Notes:

1. To allow for a clean comparison, budget figures were adjusted for 3 major policy changes: building management moved to DGS, ATE moved to local budget, and pay increases in FY15 -FY17.
2. The primary drivers in local Personnel Services spending between FY08 and FY16 were: (a) approximately 50 grant-funded positions expiring and being moved to the local budget; and (b) technical corrections for base retention differential and tech and hazard pay in FY13.
3. Sworn staffing = end of year staffing figures from FY2008 - FY2016 (as of March 21, 2016)
4. Residential population = Mid-year US Census figures for 2008 - 2015

¹ In order to design a robust evaluation of the body-worn cameras, a team of researchers developed an implementation model in which about half of the officers in patrol have BWCs, with the second half scheduled to receive cameras in December 2016.

- The Mayor's proposed budget also includes \$2.8 million and 35 FTEs for hiring civilians. In the past, we have focused on civilianization, an effort to hire civilians to replace sworn members in functions that do not require police powers. Those sworn members are then returned to an operational function. To make sure there is no confusion, I want to be clear that at this time, our civilian hires are not just for civilianization. For one, we may be hiring civilians to put in positions that are not currently filled with a sworn member, but would be if we don't hire a civilian. We intend to fill new positions, such as body-worn camera coordinators. It also includes positions being vacated by retiring sworn members. As sworn members retire at record rates, we are looking for more opportunities to have functions – or even part of a function – done by civilians. The best example of this is our Crime Research Specialists (CRS), a position we first developed less than three years ago. The civilian CRS team supports operations by combing through the information and tools that we have available to quickly identify crime patterns or suspects. This team has helped our officers and detectives apprehend numerous violent criminals. So while hiring them does not put an officer on the street, it makes every officer and detective better able to do their job.
- Lastly, the FY17 budget includes an additional \$2.5 million to help increase our hiring through an Experienced Officer Training Program, which we also call "Lateral Lite." This allows experienced officers from other jurisdictions to join MPD as new recruits, but with a shorter training program that focuses on the District community and unique features of policing in the District. This will allow us to get these lateral officers on the street faster. All told, the Mayor's budget funds hiring 360 officers: 300 new recruits and 60 laterals.

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Every year, it seems that the focus of this hearing is on the budget for the following year. I wanted to take an opportunity to discuss some of the prior funding. It is important for the community to know that an investment in the police department is an investment in the community. Every time we spend money – whether on large projects or small ones – my goal is to ensure the spending benefits the community. Here are just a few of our initiatives demonstrating this commitment.

- **Body-Worn Cameras:** Of course, we are still in the midst of implementing the FY16 budget for the body-worn cameras. In mid-March, we began the Phase 3 roll-out of the cameras, and as of this week, we have more than 700 cameras deployed. It is premature to talk about results, but the independent research team is fully engaged in guiding the deployment and collecting data for a robust analysis. Equally important, both our officers and the community are continuing to respond very positively to the cameras.
- **Nightlife Unit:** In FY13, MPD conducted a comprehensive economic development analysis on planned and ongoing developments throughout the city. The analysis identified several highly populated and dense entertainment areas that demanded a different type of police deployment. As a result, we were able to get funding in the FY14 budget for additional officers enabling us to establish an innovative Nightlife Unit. We deployed 90 officers in the H Street NE Corridor, Adams Morgan, Columbia Heights, Dupont Circle, and U Street NW

Corridor. All 90 officers received targeted training on how to handle and deescalate incidents in the entertainment areas. The Nightlife Unit has successfully provided high visibility patrols on foot, bicycle, and Segways during the nightlife hours and worked with nightclubs and liquor-licensed establishments to provide a safe environment. Based on the one-year evaluation, all five nightlife areas experienced significant reductions in violent crimes. Most notably, robberies decreased by more than 40 percent in the nightlife areas from FY13 to FY14. Of course, the Nightlife Unit also helps residential neighborhoods by reducing the need for patrol officers to be dispatched to these zones.

- **Mountain Bikes:** Last year, we purchased 200 new mountain bikes, and we have 355 officers assigned to bike patrol. The officers are eager to be out in the community on their new bikes, and we are regularly adding to the pool of officers with mountain bike training. In October, the bike officers kicked off a new initiative of community and citywide bike rides. These rides increase visibility and encourage officers and community members to ride and talk together. In the coming months, each district will host a ride.
- **TECC Kits:** After the Navy Yard shooting, the Department began deploying and training officers on the use of Tactical Emergency Casualty Care kits, or TECC kits. Almost 1,900 patrol members have received TECC kits and the necessary training that enable them to provide emergency medical care to injured officers or civilians in the first critical moments. As a result, our members have been able to assist numerous victims of violent crimes before an ambulance arrives. This quick use of field medical tools has increased the odds that the victim will make a full recovery. For instance, officers quite literally saved the life of a woman with a lacerated femoral artery by applying a tourniquet to stop the bleeding.
- **Dog Catch Poles:** One small investment with a big impact has been our deployment of dog catch poles, which are long poles with a loop at the end that allow officers to catch and control potentially dangerous dogs from a distance. I would like to thank the Washington Humane Society (WHS), which has assisted in training MPD officers with the dog pole for a few years. Indeed, last month, I was pleased to give two WHS members, Zita Maciananti and Ray Noll, a special award for their strong support of this effort. They train officers on how to approach and capture an animal as a first control option instead of using force. More than 200 officers have received this training. Our members even used a dog catch pole to capture a dog that had bitten an officer. In 2015, we had eight incidents in which firearms were discharged at animals, a 53 percent reduction from the prior year, and 24 percent lower than the average of the prior seven years. I have received so much positive feedback from our members, especially in the Sixth District where we have seen the most types of these incidents.

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I would like to close my testimony by thanking the many people and organizations that make our work possible. First and foremost, I feel fortunate to lead a department staffed with dedicated and hardworking officers and civilians. I would like to thank our community members and

community organizations for supporting our officers and the Department, especially during these challenging times for law enforcement and many cities. Lastly, I appreciate the strong partnership of so many of the agencies we work with, from our criminal justice partners to the other public safety agencies in the District government. It is important to recognize how critical our District partners – including the Office of Unified Communications (OUC), the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS), and the Department of Forensic Services (DFS) – are to police work.

- While some may believe that a communications center just has a supporting role, I know that the quality of management and staffing of call taking and dispatch can have a critical impact on our ability to effectively deliver police services. Call takers gather information from people who are often involved in a disturbing situation, and share critical facts that may have a direct impact on the safety and well-being of the caller and the first responders. Moreover, as the first contact between the District's public safety partners and the public, the OUC can shape the caller's perception of the District response.
- Our fellow first responders at Fire and EMS are on the front lines with MPD in working to serve and save people in the District. All too often, we are together in responding to victims of violence, or individuals in crisis due to substance abuse or mental health issues. Their response can keep a violent assault from becoming a tragic homicide. And unfortunately, our members share a unique bond in the substantial dangers we face in the performance of duty.
- Lastly, the forensic lab may be our most unheralded partner, but it is certainly no less important. Work in the lab is critical to solving serious crimes and holding offenders accountable. Most importantly, they help the entire criminal justice system get dangerous individuals off the street in order to prevent the next violent crime. As police, we cannot do our work without the lab providing significant support.

In closing, I recognize that the Mayor and the Council face many difficult choices as they develop the budget. But public safety and order are critical to ensuring the success of our thriving city and to the well-being of everyone who lives in or visits it. MPD will continue to do our best to safeguard the District, but we need to have the resources necessary to do so. I appreciate the continued support of Mayor Bowser, Chairman McDuffie, the Committee, and the Council in this effort.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and my staff and I are available to answer any questions you may have.