

Seattle City Council Approves Plan to Defund Police. Goodbye Seattle.

written by GEG | August 11, 2020



Seattle City Council approves a plan to defund the police department, cutting jobs and salaries. The logic behind this is that crime has exceeded the capacity of police to control it. The solution, therefore, is to reduce the capacity of the police on the theory that the criminals then will stop committing crimes. Seattle currently has around 1,400 police officers, and the current plan would see about 100 cut, although, once the process is started, there is no reason not to expect it to continue. The police department's \$400 million budget was cut by about \$3 million. The council's plan also removes officers from a team that dismantles homeless camps. Council member Kshama Sawant was the sole "no" vote because she felt the proposals didn't go far enough. Riots broke out in Seattle on Sunday evening ahead of the expected city council vote to defund the police. Amazon, Whole Foods, and a Chase Bank were vandalized. Police Chief Carmen Best has resigned from her position. -GEG

The [Seattle City Council](#) voted Monday to move forward with a controversial proposal that would begin the process of defunding the [police department](#).

The 7-1 vote comes despite objections from the [city's police chief](#), mayor and the Seattle Police Officers' Guild.

The plan would ultimately slash funding to the department but not the 50% some had sought. Seattle currently has around 1,400 police officers, and the current plan would see about 100 cut. It was also cut the police department's \$400 million budget by about \$3 million, according to [KOMO](#).

Councilmember Kshama Sawant was the sole "no" vote because she felt the proposals didn't go far enough, while Debora Juarez abstained, according to [MyNorthWest.com](#).

The council reviewed a final set of amendments Monday before the vote, which included reducing the police department by up to 100 officers through layoffs and attrition as well as cutting the \$285,000 annual salary of the Police Chief Carmen Best and other top officers. Best is the city's first Black police chief and the pay cut would put her salary well [below her White predecessor](#).

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"While we can't do everything in this summer rebalancing package, we have set the path forward for tremendous work in front of us as a council and as a city," Councilwoman Teresa Mosqueda said.

The move to defund the city's [Navigation Team](#), and redirect the money to homeless outreach services such as REACH will "dramatically restrict the city's ability to address unauthorized encampments," Jason Johnson, Interim Director of Seattle's Human Services Department, [wrote in a letter](#) to the council last week.

Some council members have said the initial cuts are a first step to more sweeping reductions and a rethinking of law enforcement in Seattle.

"It's important to show community members that we hear them, that we're working towards the same goal," [Councilwoman Teresa Mosqueda](#) said last week.

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