



# CCPSA

COMMUNITY COMMISSION FOR  
PUBLIC SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

## **Report on the Proposed Chicago Police Department Budget for 2026**

**November 4, 2025**

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November 4, 2025

Dear City Council members:

The Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability is submitting its annual report on the proposed 2026 Chicago Police Department budget. The Commission is required by law to review the Police Department budget every year before the City Council votes on it.

The proposed CPD budget for 2026 is very similar to the budget that City Council approved for CPD for 2025. The vast majority of CPD's budget – 91 percent – pays for people. That includes both police and civilian staff. The proposed budget includes 14 fewer positions than the 2025 budget, a 0.1% reduction from 2025. Despite the reduction in the number of positions, CPD's budget for Personnel Services would increase by roughly \$142 million, mostly because the vast majority of CPD employees will receive salary increases that are required under union contracts. However, because of proposed reductions in CPD's non-personnel budget, the overall increase in CPD's total budget from 2025 to 2026 would be roughly \$38 million.

For the first time in years, the proposed overtime budget better reflects what CPD has spent on overtime in recent years. The proposed overtime budget is still lower than what CPD actually spent in 2024, but the budget proposal notes that overtime will be capped at the budgeted amount, and that any expenditure above the budgeted amount will require City Council approval.

Because so much of the budget pays for personnel, the central question when reviewing the budget is whether the Police Department is using its workforce in ways that best protect the health and safety of the people of Chicago. As in previous years, the proposed budget provides information about how CPD personnel are allocated at a high level. For example, the budget includes information about all the different positions that would be funded within the Bureau of Patrol and the Bureau of Detectives, and it makes clear that the allocation of positions by section and subsection of the Department would be almost exactly the same as it was for 2025. As in previous years, however, the budget does not include more detailed breakdowns, like how many patrol officers are allocated to each Police District or how many detectives are allocated to each Area. Those decisions will have a significant impact on CPD efforts to reduce response times, which are slower on the South and West Sides of Chicago, and are a source of concern among residents across the city. Workforce allocation decisions will also determine whether or to what extent CPD can expand community policing efforts that give patrol officers more of an opportunity to build relationships with community residents and work with them to identify and address local public safety challenges. Those decisions also determine whether or to what extent police officers get support from the same supervisors long enough to develop relationships that set officers up for success and result in greater accountability, and whether supervisors are assigned to a number of officers that makes it possible to provide police officers with the support, mentoring, supervision, and oversight that result in better policing. Early next year, a long-awaited, eagerly anticipated Workforce

Allocation Report is expected to be completed. The Commission has advocated for a Workforce Allocation Study in various ways since 2022. The study should give CPD better tools to determine where and when to deploy police officers most effectively. Though it will likely take several years to fully implement the recommendations, we are hopeful that the results of the study can begin to be put to good use starting in 2026.

One significant change in the proposed 2026 budget for CPD would affect the Professional Counseling Division. The Division, with 31 budgeted positions, provides mental health and substance abuse counseling services to CPD employees. Under the proposed budget, financial support for these counselors and clinicians would shift from the City's Corporate Fund to the Mayor's proposed Community Safety Fund, with revenue coming from the proposed Community Safety Surcharge, which is sometimes referred to as the "corporate head tax." A majority of City Council members have raised concerns about the proposed surcharge. The Professional Counseling Division does essential work. How will those services be funded if City Council does not vote to impose the surcharge, or if the surcharge is enacted but generates less than is projected?

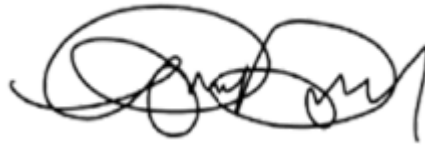
The proposed budget also appears to include a \$102 million cut in funding for "Non-Personnel Services." The cut reflects state and federal grants that CPD received in 2025 that the Department will not receive in 2026. It's not clear from the proposed budget whether the cuts that appear in budget documents reflect accounting issues or reductions that will have an actual impact on operations. And, if it is more than just an accounting issue, the proposed budget does not make clear where those cuts would come from or what impact they would have on CPD operations.

In addition, CPD has previously highlighted plans to create a new forensic science lab, which could significantly enhance the Department's ability to analyze evidence and solve crimes. The cost of creating such a lab wouldn't typically be included in CPD's budget. It might, for example, be included in the budget for the Department of Fleet and Facility Management, or the Office of Public Safety Administration.

That is just one example of an issue the Commission noted in its report on the proposed 2025 budget—the lack of transparency in the City's budget, generally, and in the CPD budget, specifically. Some budget items that have a significant impact on CPD operations are not included within the CPD budget and are virtually impossible to identify within the overall City budget. For example, the CPD budget does not include the City's investment in police vehicles, computers, communications equipment, and capital improvements that are crucial to an effective Department. Many of these items are included in the Office of Public Safety Administration, Office of Emergency Management and Communications, and Department of Fleet and Facility Management budgets, and are difficult to identify. That makes it virtually impossible to assess how much our city spends on policing, and much more difficult to assess whether the City is spending wisely on critical infrastructure. Chicago's budget must clearly show the information residents need to be able to accurately assess the actual cost of policing and hold public servants accountable. As the Commission stated last year, future proposed budgets should clearly highlight CPD-related expenses that are incorporated in other department's budgets, or a supplemental document should be prepared that includes and disaggregates all CPD-related expenses that are incorporated in other department's budgets. The Commission also recommends that information be

provided that, as best as possible, provides information about how CPD staff resources are allocated to police districts, areas, or other subunits within the department, and what personnel and other resources are dedicated to community policing initiatives.

The Commission is committed to working with the City Council, the Police Department, the District Councils, and residents across the city to better protect the health and safety of all Chicagoans.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Remel Terry', with a stylized, cursive script.

Remel Terry  
President, CCPSA

## Overview of the Process

The Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability is required by law to review the Chicago Police Department budget every year before the City Council votes on it (Municipal Code of Chicago, 2-80-050(o)). The Commission has the power to comment on the Police Department budget and to recommend changes. The City Council has the power to vote on the budget.

The ordinance that created the Commission establishes goals for the Commission. The Commission used those goals to frame its review of the Police Department budget. The goals include:

- increasing public safety;
- building trust between communities and the Department;
- increasing efficiency in the use of public safety resources;
- ensuring that Police Department resources aren't used inefficiently to address public health or safety issues that other professionals are better equipped to address; and
- encouraging preventative, proactive, community-based, and evidence-based approaches to public safety.

The Police Department's proposed 2026 budget is over \$2.1 billion and covers more than 13,000 positions. Just like with all other City of Chicago departments, CPD's budget mostly lists job titles and provides salaries for those jobs. It does not describe in detail what work will be done or lay out CPD's goals and priorities. As a result, the Commission's review focuses mostly on broader issues, such as workforce allocation, consent decree compliance, and other systemic efforts to improve policing and reduce misconduct.

The Commission prepared for this budget review by gathering input from community members. In September, the Commission heard an extended public comment on CPD's budget at its monthly meeting. Commission staff met with CPD to get an overview of the budget that was being prepared. The Commission first reviewed CPD's proposed 2026 budget when it was released to the public and to members of the City Council on October 16, 2025. Since then, Commissioners have reviewed and analyzed the budget and held a public meeting where Chicago residents had another opportunity to share ideas and concerns. At the Commission's public meeting on October 30, 2025, a CPD representative made a presentation on the budget and answered questions from Commissioners.

The information that the Commission gathers and the issues that it highlights through the budget review process will inform other work that the Commission does over the course of the next year. For example, the Commission has begun its annual goal setting process for the Police Superintendent, and information from the budget review process could play an important role in determining goals for the Superintendent for 2026.

## Overview of the Proposed 2026 CPD Budget

The proposed budget for CPD for 2026 is very similar to CPD's budget appropriation for 2025.

The Mayor's proposed budget for 2026 includes \$2,114,745,912 for CPD (this does not include spending on a range of things including equipment, technology, and fringe benefits). That is an almost \$38 million increase over 2025, when the budget appropriation was \$2,076,802,517, an increase of 1.8%.

Unlike the CPD budget that was proposed for 2025, which would have eliminated more than 450 then-vacant positions, including more than 350 civilian positions that the Commission believed were critically important to support Consent Decree implementation and ongoing reform efforts, the proposed 2026 budget holds CPD staffing very close to the current level. The proposed 2026 budget covers 13,793 full-time employees, a .1% reduction from 2025, when the budget covered 13,807 full-time employees. Despite the small, proposed reduction in the number of CPD personnel, the personnel budget would increase from an appropriation of \$1,777,829,734 for 2025 to \$1,918,391,412 for 2026, an increase of 7.9%. The growth in CPD's budget comes, despite a reduction in the workforce, because of pay increases for CPD employees, most of which are required by collective bargaining agreements. The actual costs for CPD personnel are significantly higher than what is reflected in the CPD budget, because the costs of health insurance and other fringe benefits are quite substantial for City employees, but those costs appear in another part of the City's budget.

While CPD's personnel budget would increase under the proposed budget, the "Budget Overview" indicates that CPD's proposed non-personnel budget would be reduced by over \$100,000,000, from \$298,972,783 in 2025 to \$196,354,500 in 2026, a decrease of 34.3%. It is not clear from the proposed budget where the cuts that appear in the "Budget Overview" reflect accounting issues or actual reductions that will have an impact on operations. If it is more than just an accounting issue, the proposed budget does not make clear where cuts would come from or what impact they would have on CPD operations. The Commission has not been able to get clarity on this issue and City Council members may wish to seek additional information about what impact, if any, the apparent reduction in the proposed non-personnel budget would have on CPD operations.

Spending on overtime is a big part of CPD's Personnel Services budget. For the first time in years, the proposed CPD budget includes an increase to the overtime line item. This increase reflects two things. First, CPD salaries are increasing in 2026, and that will drive up overtime costs. CPD has stated that, while the proposed overtime budget is increasing, the number of overtime hours worked has been decreasing, but the increase in salaries has offset the savings due to reductions in the number of overtime hours worked. Second, CPD's budget proposal is likely a slightly more realistic projection of actual overtime costs. For 2026, CPD has budgeted \$200,000,000 for overtime as compared to the \$100,000,000 for overtime that CPD has consistently budgeted for several years, even though actual spending on overtime often far exceeded the budgeted amount. The increased overtime amount is more in-line with CPD's actual spending on overtime in 2023 and 2024. However, even with the proposed increase, the 2026 overtime budget is still below actual overtime expenses in recent years. For example, in 2023, CPD spent \$282,757,004 on overtime and in 2024, CPD spent \$237,974,220.

In recent years, CPD has budgeted substantially less to pay for the costs of lawsuits against CPD than the City has paid for those lawsuits. The proposed 2026 budget includes \$82,558,000 for the costs associated with lawsuits against CPD – the same amount proposed for 2025, even though actual spending related to lawsuits was significantly higher in 2025 than what was budgeted. Indeed, in every year that the Commission has reviewed CPD's budget, the City has consistently spent far more on lawsuits against CPD than the City has budgeted for legal settlements and judgments, and that amount continues to increase year-over-year. In 2022, CPD spent \$126,386,493 on legal judgments. In 2023, CPD spent \$150,848,929 on legal judgments. In 2024, CPD spent \$162,163,780 on legal judgments.

Finally, CPD is currently projected to gain \$3,555,977 in new revenue, from the proposed Community Safety Fund, which would support the 31 full-time employees in CPD's Professional Counseling Division that are currently paid for from the City's Corporate Fund. However, revenue for the proposed Community Safety Fund would come from a "Community Safety Surcharge," which would be paid by employers with more than 100 full-time employees who work mostly in Chicago, and a majority of alders have raised concerns about the proposed surcharge. If the surcharge is not enacted or it is enacted and generates less than projected, the City will need another way to fund the Professional Counseling Division

## Support for Investigations

Since 2022, the Commission has highlighted the importance of quality investigations for violent crimes, increased clearance rates, and strong support and services for crime victims. In its FY2024 Budget Report, the Commission noted CPD's commitment to improving clearance rates by increasing the number of personnel to investigate crimes and analyze evidence. In 2024, one of the Superintendent's annual goals set by the Commission was to provide quality investigations and timely communication with victims and their families by hiring and training additional staff for the Bureau of Detectives, strengthening its victim support services, and assessing the Department's forensic services infrastructure.

Last year, the Commission raised concerns when CPD's FY2025 proposed budget recommended an overall 8% personnel reduction to the Bureau of Detectives, with specific cuts for police officers assigned as evidence technicians and for civilian positions for investigators and latent fingerprint examiners in the Forensic Services Division. However, the FY2025 budget also included CPD's creation of an Office of Crime Victim Services and an 18% increase in the number of budgeted victim advocates.

As of August 2025, the Mayor's Office and CPD reported significant reductions in crime and violence citywide. A WBEZ analysis found that violent crime is down 21.5% from 2024 and the City reported substantial progress in clearing homicide cases. In his annual budget address, Mayor Johnson spoke about the need to continue investing in public safety and CPD's investigations via strategic restructuring of its detective teams and utilization of new technologies to solve crimes.

In the proposed FY2026 budget, support for the Bureau of Detectives does not substantively change from 2025. The FY2026 budget proposal includes 542 full-time employees at the Bureau of Detectives, the same amount as listed in the FY2025 budget, and an increase in funding to \$68,753,448, up from \$66,656,844 in FY2025. For the Office of Crime Victim Services, CPD's proposed budget adds one additional full-time employee, growing the staff to 58 budgeted positions in FY2026.

The Commission has previously highlighted in its budget reports that it is difficult to ascertain exactly how much of the City's budget is spent on the police department and public safety due to the fracturing of key operational costs across several city departments. While the Bureau of Detectives does not appear to lose any full-time budgeted positions for FY2026, the Commission is concerned about the lack of transparency on two issues:

- 1) CPD has spoken at-length about the development and construction of a new forensic science laboratory, which could significantly enhance CPD's ability to analyze evidence and solve crimes. As capital improvements are not included in CPD's annual budget recommendations, we do not know whether CPD's progress on this project will be impacted by potential budget restraints on another city department.
- 2) The "Budget Overview" document shows a \$102 million reduction in funding for non-personnel services. The proposed budget does not make clear whether this reduction will require any cuts to programs or services that would otherwise have been provided, so we have not been able to assess what the impact of the reductions will be, including any potential impact on CPD's ability to investigate crime and provide services to crime victims.

#### **Questions for Consideration**

- Funding for the new forensic services laboratory currently in development is not included in CPD's budget. Is money for that project incorporated somewhere else in the proposed 2026 budget?
- Will the \$102 million reduction in the allocation for non-personnel services as a result of a reduction in state and federal grant funding have an impact on CPD operations generally, and the Bureau of Detectives' operations specifically?
- A 2019 report by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) identified ways that CPD could improve homicide investigations and solve more crimes. The PERF Report's recommendations included changes related to equipment usage, technology improvements, and vehicle updates. Implementing some of those recommendations would likely require funding in other City department budgets, such as the Office of Public Safety Administration and the Department of Fleet and Facility Management. How will the City's overall budget recommendations impact CPD's progress towards fulfilling PERF's recommendations?

## Consent Decree Implementation

Last year, the Commission's budget review highlighted how the proposed FY2025 budget recommended severe cuts to CPD units that were closely associated with increasing compliance with the consent decree, the federal court-enforced document that is driving significant reform at CPD. This included proposed cuts to staff working in units that help support CPD's workforce allocation study, community policing strategy, training and leadership development, and modernizing the Department's data systems. The Commission expressed concern that without sufficient staff focused on increasing the Department's efforts to reach consent decree compliance, it would be difficult for CPD and the City to reach full compliance with the consent decree by 2027 and sustain those reforms into the future. Following the release of the FY2025 proposed budget last year, the Independent Monitor and the Attorney General also raised serious concerns that the proposed cuts could severely harm the future of CPD reforms. The budget that was ultimately enacted by the City Council eliminated most of the proposed cuts.

On October 15, 2025, the Independent Monitor released Independent Monitoring Report 12, which noted that CPD and the City have made strides in consent decree compliance. As of June 2025, the City was in full compliance with approximately 22% of all consent decree paragraphs. While CPD's proposed FY2026 budget retains the majority of its budgeted positions from 2025, there is some reduction in



staffing proposed for CPD's Office of Constitutional Policing and Reform Unit, which is responsible for managing reform projects and tracking CPD's progress on its consent decree obligations. CPD's FY2026 budget recommends eliminating four budgeted positions in the Office of Constitutional Policing and Reform: one Information Coordinator and three Coordinators of Research and Evaluation.

Also included under the Officer of Constitutional Policing and Reform Bureau is CPD's Training Division, which is responsible for both training new recruits and the continued education for Department members. The Superintendent has spoken about how training is a core tenet of the Department's reform efforts to ensure Department members are well-prepared on the new and updated policies to ensure sustained reform. Training also makes up the bulk of requirements for CPD to reach secondary compliance with the consent decree. Secondary compliance is achieved when CPD has adequately trained its personnel on new or updated policies required under the consent decree. As of the most recent reporting period, the City was in secondary compliance with about 62% of all consent decree paragraphs. For the City to increase secondary compliance, CPD needs to properly train more officers on the reforms. In CPD's FY2026 proposed budget, however, CPD has recommended eliminating budgeted positions for 21 civilian Training Officers, representing about an 18% cut. However, those positions are now vacant and the proposed FY2026 budget includes the creation of 11 Assistant Directors and one Administrative Manager positions within the Training Division, resulting in a net loss of nine budgeted positions in the Training Division. We encourage City Council members to ask during budget hearings about how the elimination of 21 Training Officers and the addition of 11 Assistant Directors and an Administrative Manager will impact CPD's work towards full compliance with the consent decree.

#### **Questions for Consideration**

- For the positions eliminated in the Office of Constitutional Policing and Reform and the Training Division, will the loss of those positions impact CPD's ability to do its work?
- For the Training Division, what will the addition of eleven Assistant Directors help with?

## **Personnel and Workforce Allocation**

The vast majority of CPD's budget – 91 percent – pays for personnel. When reviewing the Department's budget, the primary question is, therefore, whether the Police Department is using its workforce in ways that best protect the health and safety of the people of Chicago. As in previous years, the proposed budget provides information about how CPD personnel are allocated at a high level. For example, the budget includes information about all the different positions that would be funded within the Bureau of Patrol and the Bureau of Detectives. As in previous years, however, the budget does not include more detailed breakdowns, such as how many patrol officers would be allocated to each Police District or how many detectives would be allocated to each Area. Those decisions could have an enormous impact on public safety across the city.

Since 2022, the Commission has emphasized the need for a data-driven, Department-wide strategy on workforce allocation in both its annual budget reviews and its annual goals for the Superintendent. In 2024 and 2025, the Superintendent publicly committed to completing a workforce allocation study. In previous budget reports, the Commission has noted that a comprehensive workforce allocation study would help CPD to assess where police officers are currently working and where they should be deployed for maximum effectiveness. As of October 2025, CPD confirmed that the entity conducting the

workforce allocation study has completed an assessment of CPD's current organizational state and is currently undertaking a staffing analysis. The Workforce Allocation Report is expected to be completed early next year.

As compared to 2025's appropriations ordinance, CPD's proposed FY2026 budget recommends an increase of almost \$38 million, growing from \$2,076,802,517 in 2025 to \$2,114,745,912 in 2026. As noted earlier, though the proposed 2026 CPD budget is higher than the 2025 budget, the proposal reflects a small reduction in the number of CPD personnel. The proposed budget for FY2026 would eliminate fourteen full-time positions, going from 13,807 full-time employees in 2025 to 13,793 full-time employees in 2026. The increase in the proposed budget for personnel is mainly tied to scheduled salary and benefit increases as set by union contracts. The proposed budget for personnel services for 2026 is \$1,918,391,412, more than \$140 million higher than the 2025 personnel services appropriation of \$1,777,829,734.

The proposed 2026 budget would make only minimal changes to the current allocation of CPD employees across CPD sections and subsections. Indeed, the allocation of positions by section and subsection of the Department is, in almost every case, exactly the same as it was for 2025.

While the proposed budget clearly prioritizes retaining budgeted positions in 2026, it does not indicate how many of the proposed 13,793 positions are currently vacant. The proposed CPD budget includes a total of \$92,622,125 for "Turnover," reflecting the amount of money that is expected to be saved from positions that go unfilled for at least part of the year. That is roughly \$13 million more than CPD Turnover for 2025. We do not know if the value of Turnover in the proposed budget just reflects the amount of time that is projected to fill vacant positions, or if it is intended, at least in part, to limit personnel costs. The proposed budget includes a "targeted" hiring freeze, with exceptions for public safety-related positions. We do not know whether that exception applies to all CPD vacancies.

One of the most significant line-item changes in CPD's proposed FY2026 budget is the proposed increase in overtime spending, from \$100,000,000 in 2025 to \$200,000,000 in 2026, which reflects a more realistic estimate of CPD's annual overtime costs. In recent years, annual expenditures on CPD overtime have consistently significantly exceeded the City Council-approved budget for overtime. In 2023, CPD spent \$282,757,004 on overtime and in 2024, CPD spent \$237,974,220. While CPD may have better systems to control for overtime usage now and in the future, according to a dashboard maintained by the Office of Inspector General, CPD has already spent \$190.1 million on officers' overtime through September 2025. Considering the increase in federal immigration enforcement in Chicago, the potential for increased First Amendment activity, and any other unanticipated, large-scale actions in 2026, the question remains as to whether this number is a realistic estimate of what the City should set aside for overtime next year. However, the 2026 Budget Overview notes that the Budget Management Ordinance will include "overtime controls," with a "cap on overtime," and a requirement that any increase in CPD overtime spending get City Council approval with an additional appropriation.

Another significant line-item change is that the proposed CPD budget for FY2026 would move CPD's Professional Counseling Division and all 31 budgeted positions from the City's Corporate Fund to the Mayor's proposed Community Safety Fund. Staff in those positions provide mental health and substance abuse counseling services to CPD employees. The Mayor's Budget Address indicated that the Community Safety Fund would be a permanent \$100 million fund intended to pay for several programs that advance public safety in Chicago. Under the Mayor's proposed budget, the Community Safety Fund would be funded by a Community Safety Surcharge (which some refer to as a "corporate head tax"), which would

cost businesses with over 100 full-time employees who perform at least half their work in Chicago \$21 a month per worker. The programs earmarked for the Community Safety Fund—mental health resources for first responders, gun violence prevention, gender-based violence programs, and youth programming—are foundational to further increasing public safety efforts across Chicago. However, if the proposed revenue fails to either pass City Council or raise \$100 million in 2026, the Commission is concerned about how CPD will ensure the Professional Counseling Division is funded in FY2026. As the City and CPD continue to make progress on its consent decree requirements, the Professional Counseling Division is an essential part of CPD’s compliance with officer wellness requirements.

Finally, the City would be well served to use the preliminary findings from CPD’s workforce allocation study to expand efforts to identify work that is now done by CPD that other professionals or City departments can do as well or, possibly, better. In particular, the City should look at finding alternative solutions to address non-emergency public safety needs, by transferring that work to other entities, so that CPD resources can be dedicated to the most critical policing functions.

### Questions for Consideration

- How many vacancies are represented in CPD’s budget for 2026?
- Will any positions in CPD’s budget be subject to the proposed hiring freeze? If so, how many, who determines which positions will be frozen, and how are those determinations being made?
- Does the \$92.6 million in “Turnover” in the proposed budget for CPD just reflect the amount of time that is projected to fill vacant positions, or is it intended, at least in part, to limit personnel costs?
- What happens if City Council doesn't approve CPD's overtime use beyond the \$200 million budgeted?
- How will CPD use results from the workforce allocation study to shape allocation decisions in 2026, including efforts to ensure that officers and other personnel are in the right places, at the right times, to address the most critical public safety needs?
- CPD previously mentioned it had frozen academy classes. Does this budget include additional freezes to new cadets?
- What, if any, impact could the continued immigration enforcement operations have on CPD's budget? In previous budget years, CPD highlighted how the increase in migrants to Chicago had impacted their spending and officers. Does this budget account for a continued federal presence on immigration matters in Chicago?
- As the Community Safety Fund is not a guarantee yet, what would happen to the Professional Counseling Division and all 31 full-time employee positions if the fund does not generate the amount of revenue projected or City Council does not approve the tax?

## Legal Judgments and Risk Assessment

Since its first review of CPD’s budget in 2022, the Commission has raised concerns regarding the extraordinarily large sums of money the City pays each year for legal judgments and the associated costs for lawyers and experts for trial. CPD has budgeted \$82,558,000 for legal judgments and trial costs every year since 2019 and FY2026 is no different. A brief historical analysis shows that in every year since 2011, excluding 2020, CPD has spent more on legal settlements than it has budgeted. For example, in 2023, CPD spent \$150,848,929 on legal judgments and, in 2024, CPD spent \$162,163,780. Recent reporting has indicated that the City has already exceeded the amount budgeted for legal judgments in 2025. And the City is using a new and unconventional approach to pay the \$90 million approved to settle 176 lawsuits

related to misconduct under former CPD Sergeant Ronald Watts. The cost of that settlement will not appear as part of CPD's budget.

The Commission previously recommended that CPD develop a comprehensive risk assessment plan to better understand repeat offenses and how to leverage increased risk management personnel, increased supervision, increased training, and increased data analytics to reduce legal judgments. CPD has stated that it is in the process of developing a new system to conduct internal risk assessments. In its 2024 budget, CPD included new positions for lawyers, data analysts, and others who were intended to expand the Department's capacity to learn from lawsuits and use of force cases and identify changes in policy and practice that could reduce harm and lawsuits. However, in 2025, CPD decreased its Risk Management Unit from six budgeted positions down to two. While the proposed FY2026 budget retains the Risk Management Unit's two budgeted positions, the Commission remains concerned about whether CPD has anywhere near the capacity it needs to better identify ways to reduce the risk and harm associated with legal judgments.

CPD and the City must do more to learn from its mistakes and manage risk by identifying patterns of police misconduct or policies and practices that result in significant legal judgments. The consent decree requires the City to analyze police misconduct litigation data and trends, including conducting a risk analysis, and to make recommendations. While some of the costs are the result of policing incidents that occurred several years ago, those cases should be considered when assessing and managing the City's overall litigation risk. The City cannot rely on borrowing funds to cover the cost of "extraordinary and one-time" expenses, such as payouts related to resolving police misconduct, as it deals with a budget deficit of \$1.15 billion.

The Commission continues to stress that CPD's budget should prioritize personnel needed to reduce risk and harm. The City should also ensure that CPD's budget more realistically reflects the estimated cost of legal judgments so that the City Council can review and the public can comment on a proposed budget that is based on the most accurate projections possible.

#### **Questions for Consideration**

- The budget for legal judgments remains stagnant from 2025 to 2026. If, as has consistently been the case, CPD spends more than the \$82,558,000 that is included in the proposed budget, how is the City planning to cover those additional costs? Will the Mayor recommend borrowing funds again to cover so-called "one-time" expenses?
- Since the consent decree requires the City to analyze police misconduct litigation data and trends, and to make recommendations, what concrete steps have CPD and the Department of Law taken to meet that requirement and what changes have resulted?