

GRAND RAPIDS  
  
PRIDE  
CENTER

June 26, 2020

[City Leader Name, Title]

300 Monroe Ave NW

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

\_\_\_\_\_ (City Leader's Title/name) -

We are the Grand Rapids Pride Center, serving the LGBTQ+ community in Grand Rapids and surrounding communities since 1988. As a non-profit constituent with the mission of empowering our LGBTQ+ community, a community that intersects all other communities in Grand Rapids, we strongly recommend that you support a vote to reallocate the Grand Rapids city budget by defunding the GRPD to the charter mandated 32% of the city's budget, freeing up about \$9 million to be used for community-focused and community-led programming, including the Office of Oversight and Public Accountability.

If the City of Grand Rapids is to be “nationally recognized as an equitable, welcoming, innovative, and collaborative city with a robust economy, safe and healthy community, and the opportunity for a high quality of life for all”, then City leaders must act to ensure that the opportunities it seeks to provide are funded and accessible to all residents, especially Black and BIPOC individuals. Currently, City funding is diverted away from community services that ensure access to quality jobs, education, and housing, which lead to the desired outcomes of the City while reducing crime and increasing safety. Eliminating funding for Community Services is a counterproductive strategy for the City's desire to be safer because the evidence proves that increasing access to quality jobs, education, and housing reduces crime, not increased police presence.

We are calling on you to prepare a budget that reduces GRPD to the 32% minimum that the charter requires. Let's no longer divest from communities. Let's invest in communities.

The Staff & Board of Directors of the Grand Rapids Pride Center

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