

# Freedom to Thrive

Reimagining Safety & Security in our Communities



FREE TO MOVE. FREE TO STAY.

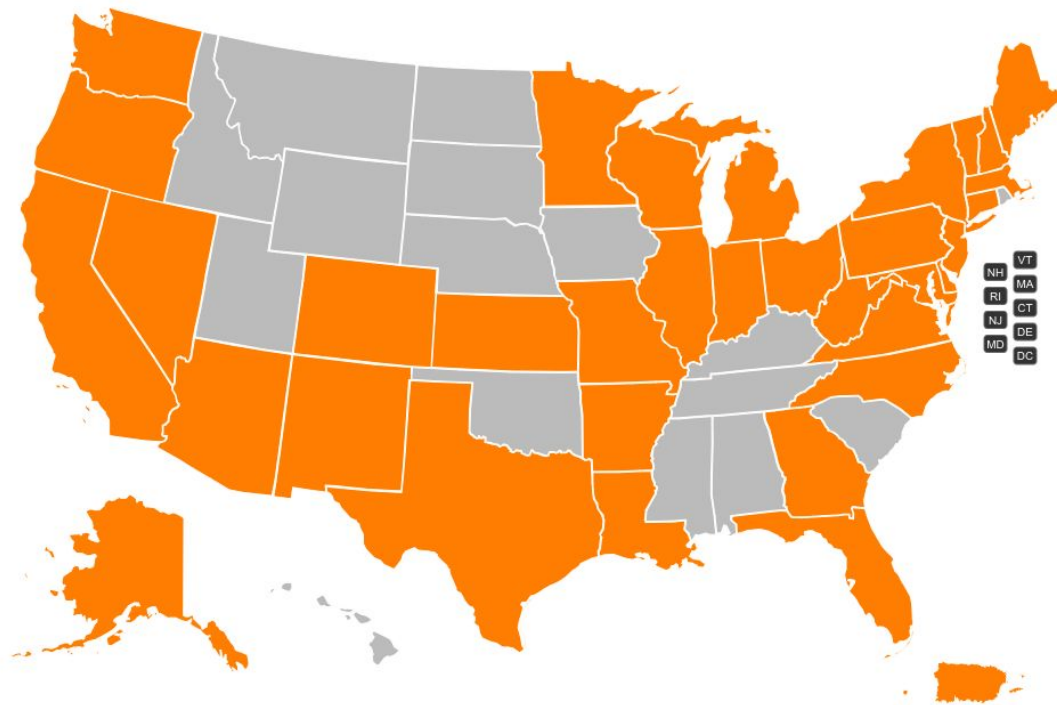
Thrive  
Dream  
Build  
Play  
Laugh  
Sing  
Love  
Serve  
Grow

Jennifer Epps-Addison  
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[www.populardemocracy.org](http://www.populardemocracy.org)





[Click here to learn more about our network](#)

## The Center for Popular Democracy Network

CPD is a national network of **55 grassroots community organizations in 35 states**, Puerto Rico, and Washington D.C.

# Imagine a Thriving Neighborhood

- ★ What does it look like?
- ★ What does it sound like?
- ★ Who lives there?
- ★ What's your favorite place?



# Our Communities Deserve to Dream



- ★ We can do better than “not dead” or “less poor”
- ★ We deserve to live in a community that cares for us at our worst, not condemns us
- ★ We need bold solutions that impact our everyday lives right now and in the future

We are working to build a world in which all of us are ***free to thrive*** together—where people have the power and ability to control the policies, institutions, and structures that define our existence, and where we recognize that true freedom depends on deep interconnection and interdependence.

**Reimagining Safety is anchored in love and deep respect for the inherent capacity and creativity in all of us to contribute to building the country of our dreams.**





***Our Shared  
Commitments***

**United  
Against  
Hate**



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## YOU SIGNED UP FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

- ★ to develop a proposal for dramatically shifting resources from enforcement and punishment to prevention and wellness for integration in the FY 2021-23 Budget;
- ★ to transform public safety by reducing the Oakland Police Department General Purpose Fund (GPF) budget by 50%; and
- ★ to significantly increase the proportion of the total GPF budget for departments providing community programs and services to address the root causes of violence and crime.







**1968 Poor People's March**

# Demands from 1968

- A meaningful job at a living wage
- A secure and adequate income for all those unable to find or do a job
- Access to land for economic uses
- Access to capital for poor people and minorities to promote their own businesses
- Ability for ordinary people to play a truly significant role in the government

***Not very different from our communities' demands today.***

***A VERY  
Brief  
History of  
Modern  
Policing***

**United  
Against  
Hate**



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# Wasn't Juneteenth the abolition of slavery?

First go watch 13th on Netflix!

No. Emancipation freed only enslaved people in 11 Confederate states, including Texas.

Post Emancipation Proclamation: 13th Amendment ratified the abolition of slavery and repackaged/reformed slavery into policing and prison culture.



# 13th Amendment

13th Amendment Adoption on January 31, 1865, stated:

*Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."*

Freedom from enslavement meant new laws and policies meant to suppress black communities seeking to thrive, and that threatened White prosperity.

# Reforming slavery and oppression

- Black Codes
- 94 Crime Bill
- Militarization of Police and Prison/Jail building spree
- Patriot Act
- Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- COPS “community oriented policing” program
- Police in Schools “School Resource Officers” & the School to Prison/Deportation pipeline



## **Movement for Black Lives Demand 1:**

### **Defund Police**

Police budgets account for 44% of Oakland's general fund. Given that we're in the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression now is the time to scrutinize police budgets; rethink the role of the police; and center our health, safety, and well-being. We need bold, visionary action right now.

## **Rooted in History**

Policing as an extension of slavery and Whiteness:

1704: First slave patrols in the south; created to preserve slavery, chase down runaways (think sheriff departments, bounty hunters and probation officers) and preventing slave uprisings/revolts Policing for property:

1838: first organized police dept. Formed in Boston; result of Boston being a large commercial center and businesses eating the costs of protecting their property. Transferred those costs to the public.

## **M4BL Demand 2:**

### **Invest in Black Communities**

The record unemployment our nation is currently experiencing comes at the tail end of decades of disinvestment in Black communities and Black people. It is time to make real investments in our communities. That means diverting wasteful spending on militarized police and investing in community-based programs like healthcare, education, and housing that we know keep us safer, allow us to thrive, and preserve our dignity.

## **Rooted in History**

Criminalization and Punishment over Safe and Thriving communities

2013: Chicago closes 49 elementary schools and one high school to close a \$1 billion deficit; that same year, the city's federal litigation budget to defend police shootings, use of force etc. was funded at \$4.6 million.

Total police budget for Fy 2013 was over \$300 million



***Divest from  
Harm &  
Invest in  
Community***

**United  
Against  
Hate**



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A nation that continues  
year after year to spend  
more money on military  
defense than on  
programs of social  
uplift is approaching  
spiritual death.

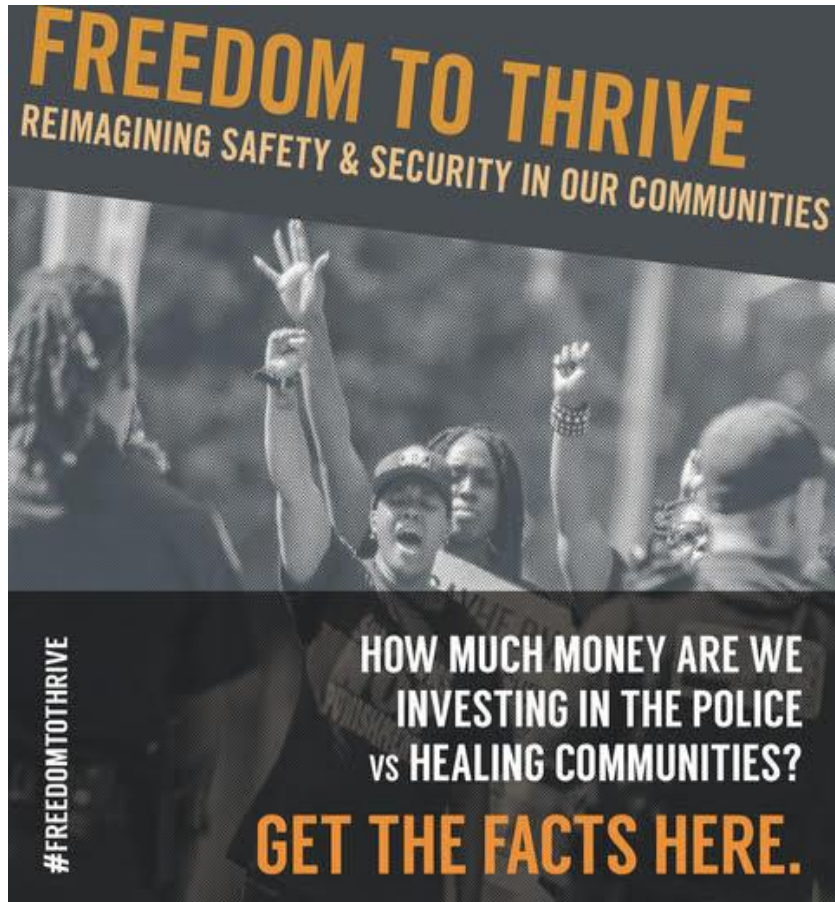
*Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Riverside Church,  
New York City  
4 April 1967*



## History



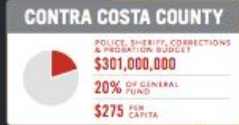
## INVEST-DIVEST



- [Freedom To Thrive](#) is a report by CPD, Law for Black Lives and BYP100
- Examines racial disparities, policing landscapes and budgets in 12 jurisdictions
- Interviews of 24+ grassroots organizations about Invest/Divest campaigns they have run in their cities & community safety priorities

# MAPPING THE COSTS OF CRIMINALIZATION

AMOUNTS ARE FOR FY17 BASED ON LOCAL BUDGETS AND U.S. CENSUS DATA





OAKLAND, CA

# DIVEST FROM POLICING INVEST IN COMMUNITIES

AMOUNTS ARE FOR 2020 BASED ON LOCAL BUDGET'S GENERAL FUNDS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

44.4%

HUMAN SERVICES

2.4%

ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT

0.8%

PUBLIC WORKS

0.5%

Redefining public safety means shifting resources away from policing and the criminalization of our people to community led solutions that keep us safe and help neighborhoods thrive.

#FreedomToThrive  
#DefundPolice



Please note that these figures reflect general fund expenditures only, and do not reflect all sources of funding allocated to a particular department. We focus on the general fund because it is the most flexible fund that goes toward core general operating expenses.



## OAKLAND

Cents to the Dollar: Investments in Police versus Selected Investments in Community



Source: Fiscal Year 2015–17 Adopted Policy Budget, City of Oakland



# Reimagining Public Safety

1

**Acknowledge  
the Legacy &  
Set the New  
Culture**

2

**Meeting Our  
People's  
Material Needs**

3

**Imagineering  
with Our People**

4

**Collective  
Action**





## Acknowledge the Legacy & Set the New Culture

- The disparities in the criminal legal system didn't happen by accident. They are the result of intentional policies, and undoing them requires the same level of intentionality
- Start divestment right away focusing first on proven ways to limit community interaction with the police & well tested harm reduction strategies (Decriminalize all ordinances, safe injection sites, housing)
- Increase direct citizen oversight, as well as limit police authorities



## Meeting Our People's Material Needs

- ★ Allocate funding to meeting material needs (Food, Housing, Healthcare- including mental health)
- ★ Build response teams charged with care, not criminalization (helping people navigate crisis, violence interrupters, public works program, universal basic income, avoid eviction, get treatment, etc.)
- ★ This pot of money MUST be significant, not a token gesture





# Imagineering with Our People

- ★ How do we care for the vulnerable
- ★ How do we repair the harm done to our communities
- ★ Build participatory structures for budgeting and accountability
- ★ What can we build that we won't need to dismantle later
- ★ Shared metrics of success
- ★ What does restoration and healing look like
- ★ Where do we need to invest money
- ★ Which constituencies are hurting the most

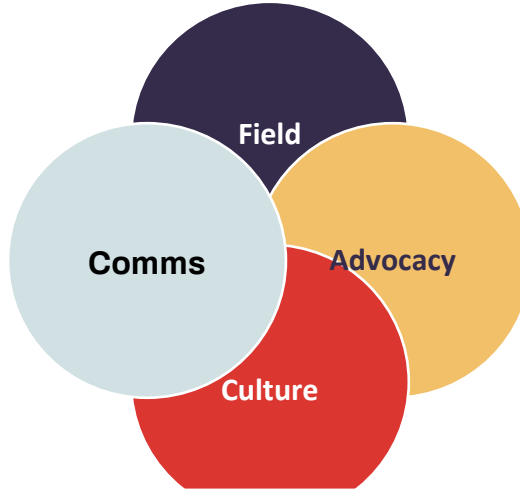


# Collective Action:

## Raising Awareness



## Making it Important

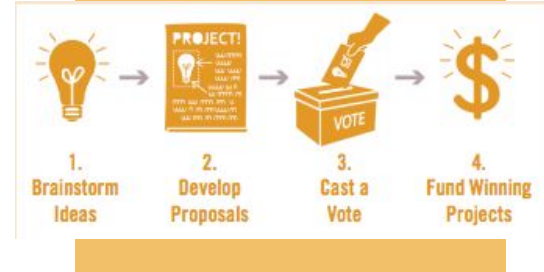


Target Narrative

## Making it Personal



## Making it Official







## Transform the System:

This is our time to confront the deepest systemic wounds of our country. There are no easy answers and no quick “feel good” solutions. Sustainable movements require sacrifice in order to topple oppressive systems. We’re not interested in nibbling around the edges or accepting symbolic concessions. Black people have struggled for centuries for true freedom—our time is now. Joining us here means you accept the work immediately ahead of us, and the long march to victory.

- Movement for Black Lives



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**WE WON'T GO BACK**

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