

CRIMINALIZATION VS. CARE

HOW THE 20 LARGEST US CITIES INVEST THEIR RESOURCES



SOCIAL MOVEMENT
SUPPORT LAB

DECEMBER 2022

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

COMMUNITIES UNITED (CU) is a survivor-led, intergenerational racial justice organization in Chicago. At the heart of CU's organizing is the development of grassroots leadership to build collective power to achieve racial justice and transformative social change. With this approach, CU focuses on advancing affordable housing, health equity, education justice, youth investment, immigrant rights, and shifting resources from the criminal justice and juvenile justice systems into restorative justice alternatives.

MOVIMIENTO PODER is based in Denver, Colorado, and is led by working-class Latine immigrants, queer, youth, women, and families. We build collective power through our membership, aligning with others and working together to create a new society led by those who are directly impacted by all forms of injustices.

REIMAGINE RICHMOND is a multi-racial, multi-generational coalition of residents pushing our city to invest in life-affirming resources and solutions that meet community needs. Founded in 2020, in response to BlackLivesMatter, historic over-policing, and the prison industrial complex, community leaders, mental health workers, educators, system-impacted individuals, and Richmond residents began the work of reimagining Richmond. Reimagine Richmond's approach is to research police reform policies, organize for reinvestment, and build life-affirming programs and services.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT SUPPORT LAB fights systemic racism by partnering with the communities most directly affected by it and providing them with the multidisciplinary support they need to create transformative social change. We work in the parts of the US where young people are routinely pushed out of school, the criminal legal system is most devastating, and there always seems to be enough money for more police or a new jail but never enough for education, affordable housing, and mental and behavioral health services. In those communities, we provide research, policy, legal, and communications support that meets the most critical needs of the grassroots organizations that are advancing racial justice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
The Criminalization Trap	7
The Tough-On-Crime Lie	16
Divest/Invest In Action: Richmond, CA	17
Reimagining Public Safety	19
Infographics	
Chicago, Illinois	22
Denver, Colorado	24
Houston, Texas	26
Jacksonville, Florida	28
Los Angeles, California	30
New York, New York	32
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	34
Phoenix, Arizona	36
San Francisco, California	38
Seattle, Washington	40
Methodology	42



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In many communities across the US, when children and families need help, there is a robust network of supports and resources to meet their needs. When residents experience mental or behavioral health challenges, there are systems in place to provide the appropriate care. In these communities, there are abundant parks and recreational opportunities. There is a vibrant cultural scene. Efforts are made to ensure access to affordable housing and address climate change. In these communities—ones that millions of (mostly White and affluent) US residents enjoy—the priority in spending tax dollars is on building **Systems of Community Care**.

However, in many other US communities, and particularly communities of color, that is not the case. There are still substantial investments of public dollars being made in these places. Lack of resources is not the problem. The problem is that rather than those resources being used to create more livable communities, policymakers tend to instead direct far more of them to expanding the **Mass Criminalization System**. In other words, within many communities, far too much is spent on systems that put people in handcuffs, jail, and prison, and far too little is spent on the Systems of Community Care that residents actually need to thrive.

In this report, we examine the 2022 budgets of the 20 largest US cities and their respective counties (if applicable) to determine whether their investments prioritize the Mass Criminalization System or Systems of Community Care (see boxes on page 3 for definitions). We analyze the size of these public investments, the ratio between them, the cost to local residents, how that translates into the city personnel that residents encounter on a daily basis, and how these dynamics have shifted over time.^a

^a For more detail on how all of the analysis in this report was conducted, see the Methodology section.



MASS CRIMINALIZATION SYSTEM refers to the approach to addressing public health and safety issues that emphasizes punishment, repression, surveillance, detention, violence, and other strategies that have inflicted incalculable harm on those who have been directly impacted, their families, and their communities. That includes all aspects of the criminal legal system (or what is often called the "criminal justice system"), including those related to the police, sheriffs, prosecutors, criminal courts, jails, and probation, for both youth and adults.



SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE refers to agencies that prioritize meeting residents' essential needs and that focus on addressing the root causes of crime and suffering, enhancing well-being, and promoting authentic forms of safety and freedom. That includes departments devoted to the following:

- Mental, behavioral, and community health and well-being
- Wraparound supports for youth and families
- Affordable housing and community empowerment
- Environmental sustainability
- Parks and recreation
- Arts and culture
- Equity
- Community-based alternatives to criminalization and incarceration



Photo By: © Mind and I / Adobe Stock

Our key findings include:

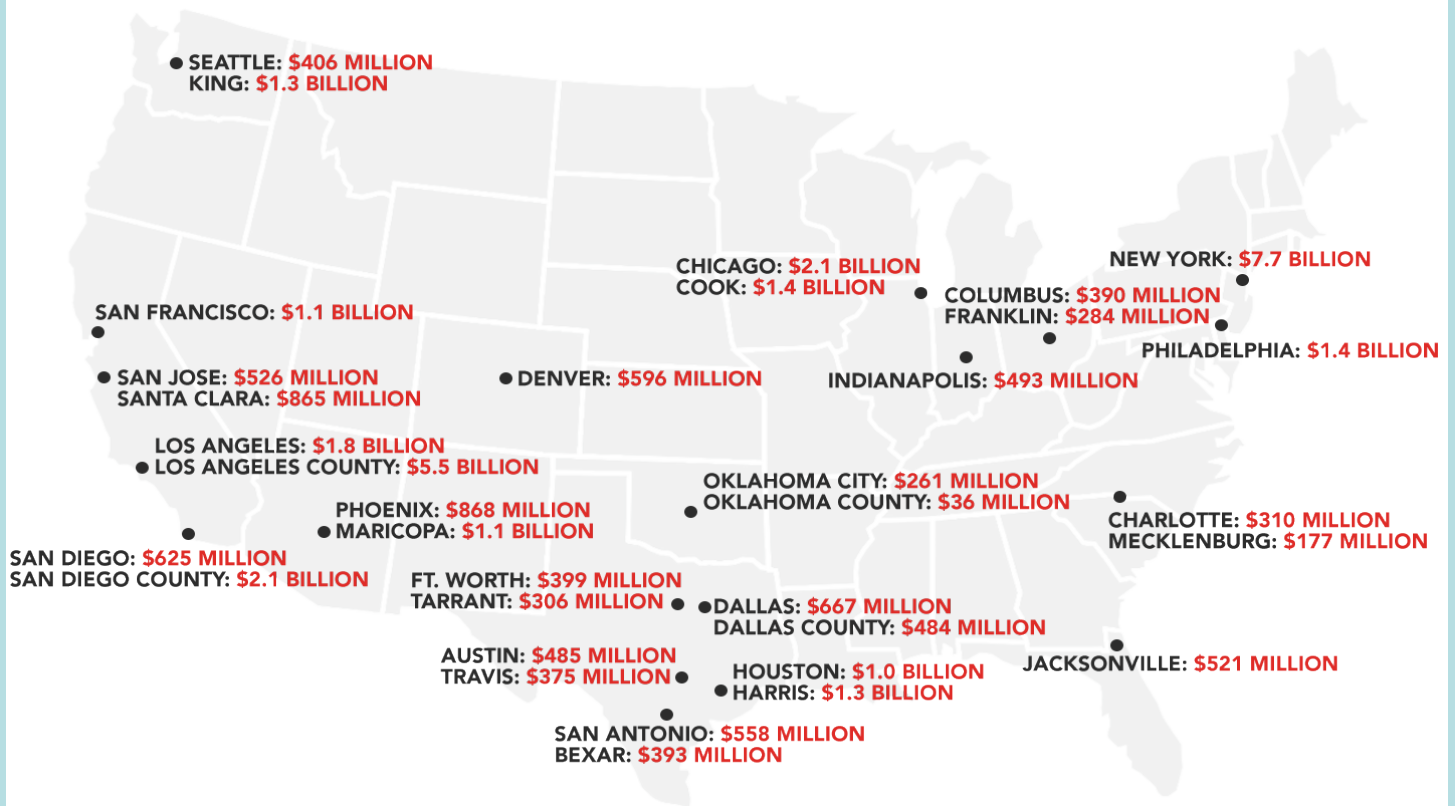
1.

Each of the 20 largest US cities is spending at least hundreds of millions of dollars per year on the criminal legal system, with the vast majority of those resources going to the police. Many cities and counties spend in the billions, with New York City the largest at \$7.7 billion in 2022. In total, these cities and their counties are spending \$37.9 billion on the Mass Criminalization System in 2022 (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

2022 Total Investment into Mass Criminalization System for 20 Largest US Cities and Their Associated Counties (if Applicable)

Source: Local Budgets



TOTAL INVESTMENT INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION FOR THE 20 LARGEST CITIES AND THEIR COUNTIES:

\$37.9 BILLION

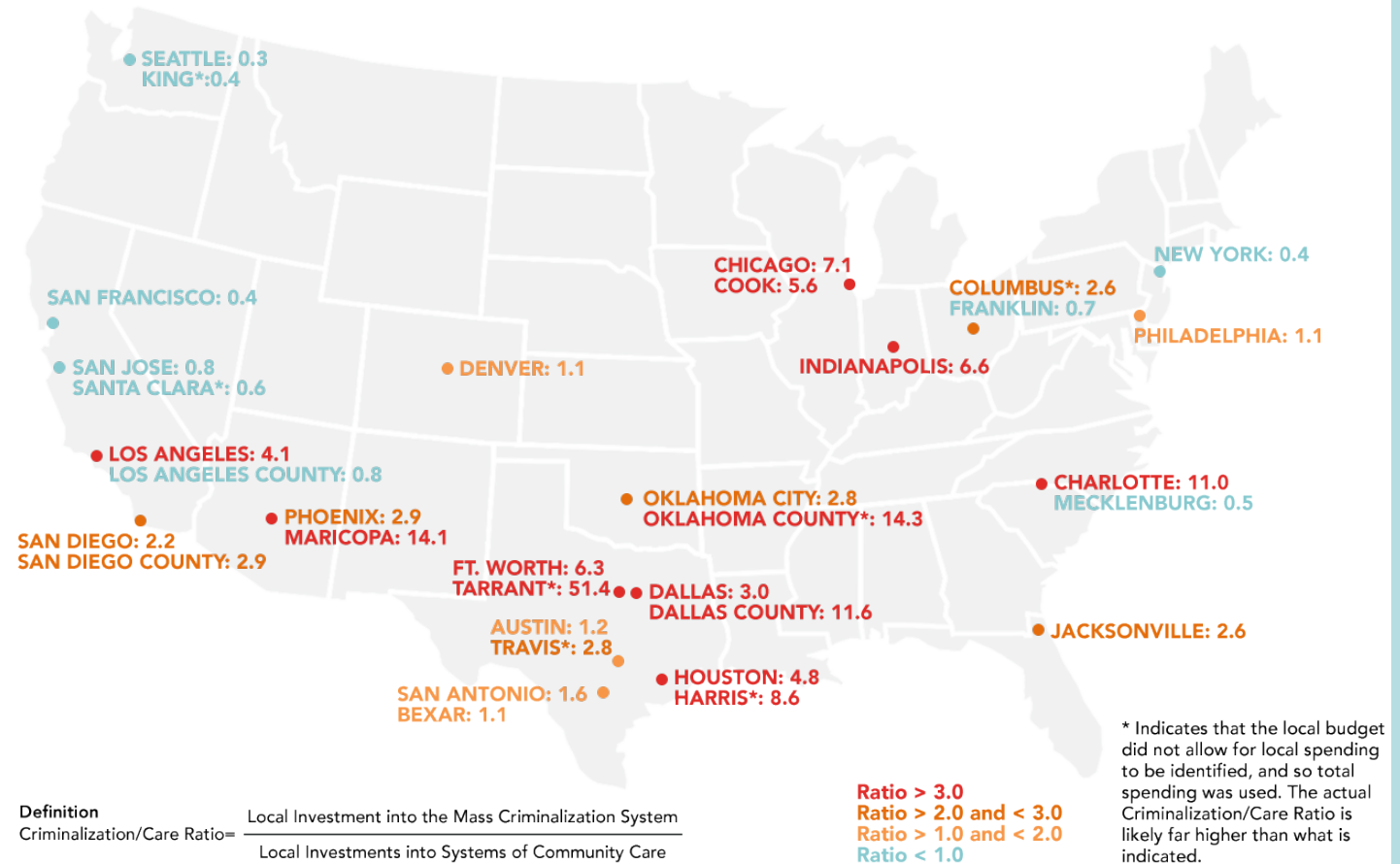
16 out of the 20 cities invest more on the Mass Criminalization System than they do on Systems of Community Care. In some cities, it is as much as 11 times more. At the county level, 9 out of 14 counties spend more on mass criminalization than on community care, with some counties spending up to 51 times more (see Figure 2).^b

2.

FIGURE 2

2022 Criminalization/Care Ratios for 20 Largest US Cities and Their Associated Counties (if Applicable)

Source: Local Budgets



3.

In 19 out of the 20 cities, and 12 out of 14 counties, there are more personnel employed within the Mass Criminalization System than there are within Systems of Community Care. In many cities and counties, there are more than 10 times as many criminal legal system employees as there are community care workers. Overall, the Mass Criminalization System in these areas employs more than twice as many people as the Systems of Community Care.

^b Six of the 20 cities have combined budgets for their city and county. Because county budgets often include aspects of the criminal legal systems that cities do not, the county budgets associated with the other 14 cities were also analyzed and included so that all aspects of the local criminal legal systems (and community care systems) could be represented.

Sustaining the Mass Criminalization System is extremely costly for local taxpayers. For example, in each of the cities, the amount of local dollars being spent in 2022 on the criminal legal system is between \$902 and \$2,826 per household. Average local spending on the criminal legal system at the county level is another \$115 to \$1,442 per household.

4.

5.

The range of local investments into Systems of Community Care is very wide. For example, at the city level, in 2022 it varied from \$204 per household in Indianapolis to \$8,303 per household in San Francisco.

6.

Spending on the criminal legal system has not always been this high. In fact, even after adjusting for inflation, criminal legal spending has more than doubled since 1980 in 18 of the 20 cities, and 11 of the 13 available counties. Over that time, some localities' spending grew by as much as 555%.

7.

These dynamics are a fundamental aspect of the systemic racism that is impeding the advancement and well-being of communities of color across the US. For example, these types of extreme investments into the Mass Criminalization System and disparities with respect to investments into Systems of Community Care are seen almost exclusively within Black and Brown communities.

8.

Examining the public investments being made into criminal legal systems that have been wildly ineffective at creating truly safe communities—while also actively causing enormous harm—raises numerous exciting possibilities for reimagining public safety and ensuring that city and county budgets are aligned with community needs and values.



"For far too long, the mass criminalization system has taken resources from our communities. We know that policing and incarceration are not making our communities safer. We need investment into systems that will nurture, develop, and bring safety to us all—regardless of our zip code." —Oscar Luna, Movimiento Poder



Photo By: © Fotokitas / Adobe Stock

THE CRIMINALIZATION TRAP

It is often overlooked or underappreciated that every society has choices in deciding what type of criminal legal system it will have. There are numerous options available for addressing the various public health and safety issues that arise. These decisions often come down to how the society chooses to: (a) define “crime” and determine where it is happening; (b) determine who is going to respond to the crime that is found; and (c) decide what the response to that crime is going to be.¹ Each one of those questions can be answered in many different ways, and together those possibilities carry a wide range of potential outcomes that can dramatically alter the direction a society takes.

Of all those potential pathways, what the US has decided to do—particularly over the past 40 years—is the following:

- 1.** We have created policies that allow for the highly aggressive enforcement of extremely broad criminal laws, making it remarkably easy to identify “crimes” and ensuring that virtually every person can be considered a “criminal” at some point.
- 2.** We have prioritized the use of law enforcement responses to these “crimes” over many other possible responses, despite the fact that there is a fundamental mismatch between what law enforcement is trained to do and the skills needed to best address the vast majority of these behaviors.
- 3.** We have emphasized profoundly harmful and punitive consequences for criminal offenses rather than those that would be more effective at holding offenders accountable in meaningful ways, repairing the damage caused by crime, meeting the needs of survivors/victims, addressing the root causes of crime, and breaking the cycle of crime.

These are the decisions that have led the US to having both the largest incarcerated population and the highest incarceration rate in the world.² The end result is called the “criminalization trap” because we didn’t have to criminalize people this way; we *chose* to. In other words, our current Mass Criminalization System isn’t an accidental consequence or unfortunate side effect; the system is doing what it was designed to do. The policies and practices that have been instituted over the past several decades could not have produced anything other than a vastly oversized, overbroad, and destructive criminal legal system such as the one we have today.

Of course, we also get to decide who is going to be ensnared by that trap. We could have placed it anywhere, but we weren’t so indiscriminate. We could have placed it everywhere, but we weren’t that inclusive. No, we were both precise and discerning in our approach. We set the criminalization trap where we knew without a doubt that it would catch people of color far more than others. How did we do that? Through the following:

1. The highly aggressive enforcement of extremely broad criminal laws has been especially focused on Black and Brown communities.
2. We have invested particularly heavily in the criminal justice system within Black and Brown communities while underinvesting in systems that could otherwise address the causes of crime and respond to incidents of crime.
3. Our desire to punish White “criminals” often doesn’t rise to the same level as our desire to punish people of color.

As a result of these decisions, we have created enormous criminal legal systems with particularly concentrated resources within communities of color. All across the country, the investments being made into police, prosecutors, courts, jails, probation and other related departments have taken up increasingly large portions of local budgets.³ In turn, that has made it more difficult for many other worthy—and in some cases, vital—programs and initiatives to secure appropriate levels of funding. Additionally, many local budgets have been distorted in the direction of investments into the Mass Criminalization System as opposed to Systems of Community Care.

To illustrate these dynamics, we calculated a **Criminalization/Care Ratio** for each of the cities and counties featured in this report. To calculate the Criminalization/Care Ratio for every jurisdiction, we divided the local investment in the Mass Criminalization System by local investments into Systems of Community Care.^c Thus, a ratio of 1.0 would mean that for every dollar going into mass criminalization, another dollar was going into community care. A ratio of 2.0 would indicate twice as much investment into mass criminalization, while a ratio of 0.5 would indicate twice as much investment into community care.

^c We particularly wanted to highlight the investments of local dollars into either mass criminalization or community care. Thus, wherever possible, we deducted state, federal, and private contributions to local budgets so that we could examine how each city or county was choosing to prioritize its spending of local tax dollars and other local revenues.

While most people assume that spending on the eight separate types of community care systems would vastly surpass spending on the criminal legal system, the reality is that criminal legal spending has grown so much that the opposite is usually true (see Figures 3 & 4). In 25 of the 34 jurisdictions analyzed (or all but four of the cities and five of the counties), local spending on the Mass Criminalization System exceeds local spending on Systems of Community Care. In many of the cities and counties, there is vastly more investment into the criminal legal system. For example, in Chicago, the ratio is 7.1, with \$1,745 being spent per household on mass criminalization and \$245 being spent per household on community care. Many other jurisdictions—such as Maricopa County (14.1), Charlotte (11.0), Oklahoma County (14.3), Dallas County (11.6), and Tarrant County (51.4)—have even more egregious disparities in spending.

FIGURE 3 2022 Criminalization/Care Ratio for 20 Largest US Cities

Source: Local Budgets

CITY	CRIMINALIZATION/CARE RATIO	2022 LOCAL INVESTMENT PER HOUSEHOLD: MASS CRIMINALIZATION SYSTEM	2022 LOCAL INVESTMENT PER HOUSEHOLD: SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE
Charlotte, NC	11.0	\$902	\$82
Chicago, IL	7.1	\$1,745	\$245
Fort Worth, TX	6.3	\$1,289	\$205
Houston, TX	4.8	\$1,181	\$244
Los Angeles, CA	4.1	\$1,297	\$316
Dallas, TX	3.0	\$1,204	\$396
Phoenix, AZ	2.9	\$1,453	\$507
Oklahoma City, OK	2.8	\$1,041	\$366
Columbus, OH*	2.6	\$1,075	\$413
San Diego, CA	2.2	\$1,212	\$551
San Antonio, TX	1.6	\$1,081	\$674
Austin, TX	1.2	\$1,219	\$1,043
San Jose, CA	0.8	\$1,609	\$2,028
Seattle, WA	0.4	\$1,168	\$3,037
CITY WITH COMBINED CITY/COUNTY BUDGETS			
Indianapolis, IN	6.6	\$1,343	\$204
Jacksonville, FL	2.6	\$1,477	\$579
Philadelphia, PA	1.1	\$2,047	\$1,811
Denver, CO	1.1	\$2,018	\$1,833
New York, NY	0.4	\$2,255	\$5,671
San Francisco, CA	0.3	\$2,826	\$8,303

* Indicates that the available budgets did not allow for local spending to be identified, and so total spending was used. The actual Criminalization/Care Ratio is likely far higher than what was indicated.

FIGURE 4**2022 Criminalization/Care Ratio for Counties Associated with Largest US Cities**

Source: Local Budgets

COUNTY (WITH ASSOCIATED CITY)	CRIMINALIZATION/CARE RATIO	2022 LOCAL INVESTMENT PER HOUSEHOLD: MASS CRIMINALIZATION SYSTEM	2022 LOCAL INVESTMENT PER HOUSEHOLD: SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE
Tarrant* (Fort Worth)	51.4	\$424	\$8
Oklahoma* (Oklahoma City)	14.3	\$115	\$8
Maricopa (Phoenix)	14.1	\$687	\$49
Dallas (Dallas)	11.6	\$511	\$44
Harris* (Houston)	8.6	\$703	\$82
Cook (Chicago)	5.6	\$650	\$116
San Diego (San Diego)	2.9	\$1,345	\$465
Travis* (Austin)	2.8	\$762	\$270
Bexar (San Antonio)	1.1	\$575	\$517
Los Angeles (Los Angeles)	0.8	\$1,200	\$1,440
Franklin (Columbus)	0.7	\$547	\$785
Santa Clara* (San Jose)	0.6	\$1,362	\$2,347
Mecklenburg (Charlotte)	0.5	\$418	\$915
King* (Seattle)	0.4	\$1,442	\$3,362

* Indicates that the available budgets did not allow for local spending to be identified, and so total spending was used. The actual Criminalization/Care Ratio is likely far higher than what was indicated.

Here are some examples of what these disparities look like in practice, and what they indicate about the values and priorities of policymakers:

- The Los Angeles Housing Department is charged with promoting “livable and prosperous communities through the development and preservation of decent, safe, and affordable housing, neighborhood investment and social services.”⁴ In 2022, it is receiving \$61 million in local investment. The Los Angeles Police Department, in comparison, is receiving \$1.8 billion in local funds, or 29 times as much.
- The Houston Health Department is budgeted for \$63 million in local investment in 2022. The Houston Police Department is receiving \$998 million.
- In New York City, the entity responsible for protecting residents’ civil and human rights is the NYC Commission on Human Rights. In 2022, it is budgeted to receive \$12.2 million in local investment. In contrast, the New York Police Department is slated to receive \$5.2 billion, 426 times as much.
- Phoenix has an Office of Sustainability that is devoted to promoting long-term environmental health. This year the city has invested just over \$564,000 in local dollars for that office, compared to \$789 million for the Phoenix Police Department.
- Dallas has an Office of Integrated Public Safety Solutions which “works proactively to address systemic factors that contribute to criminal activity by providing non-law enforcement solutions that improve the quality of life in the community and reduce the demand for police service.”⁵

It includes a multidisciplinary mental health response unit, a violence interrupters program, a rapid response team to respond to various quality-of-life issues, and more. That office is receiving just under \$5 million in local investment in 2022. The Dallas Police Department is receiving over \$581 million.

(For more detail on these dynamics at the local level, at the end of the report there are infographics for ten of the featured cities.)

We also compared the number of employees within these various systems. In many communities of color, it is frequently the case that the city employees that residents encounter most often are not those who are equipped to meet their various needs, but rather those who have been empowered to criminalize, incarcerate, and use force against them. Those dynamics are reflected in how city and county governments are staffed (see Figures 5 & 6). In 31 of the 34 jurisdictions analyzed (or all but one of the cities and two of the counties), there are more people employed within the Mass Criminalization System than there are within Systems of Community Care. In most cases, the difference is vast. For example, in Los Angeles (city), there are 14,117 employees within the criminal legal system but only 2,113 community care workers. In fact, across all 20 cities and their respective counties, there are more than twice as many employees within the Mass Criminalization System (252,919) as there are within Systems of Community Care (115,193) in 2022 (see Figure 7).

FIGURE 5 2022 Employees within 20 Largest US Cities

Source: Local Budgets

CITY	PERSONNEL RATIO: CRIMINALIZATION VS. CARE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: MASS CRIMINALIZATION SYSTEM	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE
Charlotte, NC	10.3	2,456	239
Chicago, IL	9.8	14,481	1,474
Oklahoma City, OK	7.8	1,620	208
Los Angeles, CA	6.7	14,117	2,113
Houston, TX	4.4	7,062	1,592
Fort Worth, TX	3.8	2,375	621
Dallas, TX	3.8	4,507	1,184
Columbus, OH	3.3	2,611	780
Phoenix, AR	2.7	4,864	1,815
San Diego, CA	2.6	2,808	1,086
San Antonio, TX	1.9	3,828	2,041
San Jose, CA	1.9	1,752	943
Austin, TX	1.8	2,697	1,530
Seattle, WA	1.1	2,055	1,941
CITY WITH COMBINED CITY/COUNTY BUDGETS			
Indianapolis, IN	11.0	4,229	384
Jacksonville, FL	4.4	3,585	813
Philadelphia, PA	4.1	13,384	3,253
Denver, CO	2.2	4,080	1,827
New York, NY	1.7	67,045	38,507
San Francisco, CA	0.8	4,510	5,794

FIGURE 6 2022 Employees within Counties Associated with Largest US Cities

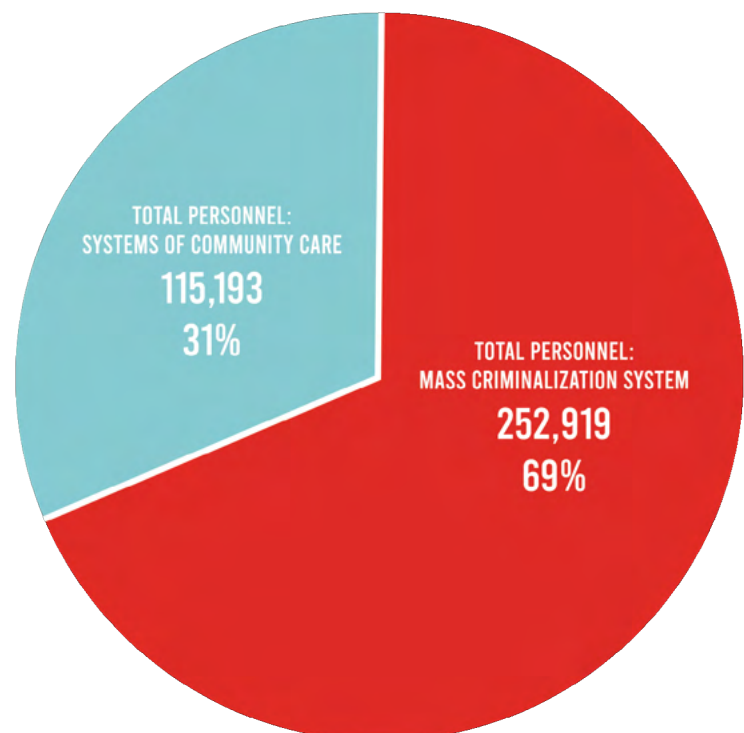
Source: Local Budgets

CITY	PERSONNEL RATIO: CRIMINALIZATION VS. CARE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: MASS CRIMINALIZATION SYSTEM	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE
Tarrant (Fort Worth)	98.2	2,554	26
Bexar (San Antonio)	48.0	4,178	87
Oklahoma (Oklahoma City)	26.2	628	24
Dallas (Dallas)	15.8	4,570	289
Harris (Houston)	10.0	10,734	1,075
Maricopa (Phoenix)	8.8	9,370	1,066
Travis (Austin)	7.9	3,121	394
Cook (Chicago)	7.2	11,668	1,621
King (Seattle)	2.1	3,579	1,718
Franklin (Columbus)	1.6	2,289	1,475
Santa Clara (San Jose)	1.4	3,329	2,420
San Diego (San Diego)	1.1	6,724	5,938
Los Angeles (Los Angeles)	0.9	24,874	27,334
Mecklenburg (Charlotte)	0.3	1,237	3,582

Overall, when analyzing these cities, what becomes apparent is that all of them are investing heavily into the criminal legal system, but there is considerable variance with respect to investments into community care. For example, Figure 8 compares the 14 cities in our analysis that do not have a combined city/county budget on both criminal legal and community care spending. 12 of the 14 have similarly high local spending levels on the Mass Criminalization System and relatively low spending on Systems of Community Care. Seattle and San Jose are the outliers; while they still both have high criminal legal spending, their spending on community care is considerably higher than the others.

FIGURE 7 Allocation of Personnel in 20 Largest Cities & their Counties: 2022

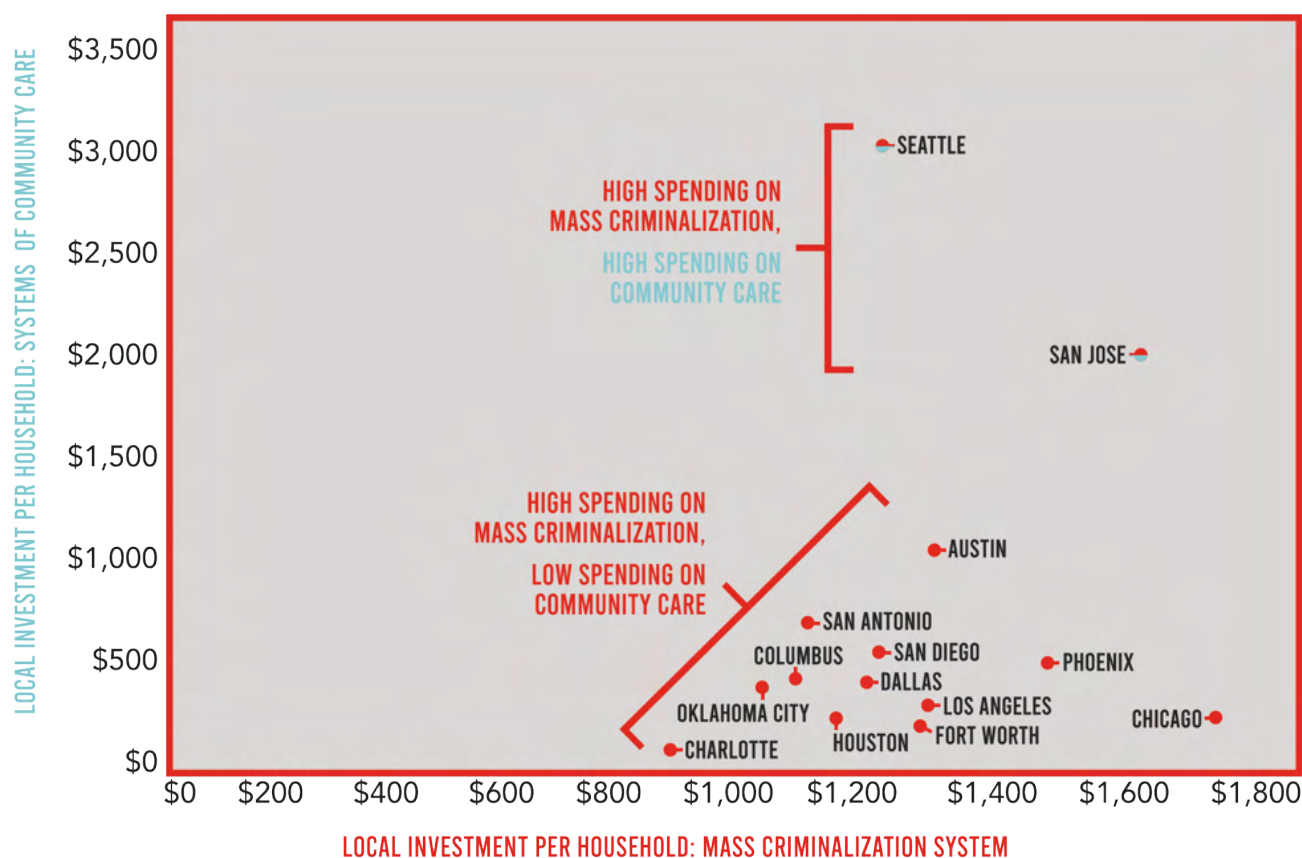
Source: Local Budgets



While publicly available budgets do not allow for accurate analysis of how many local dollars are going toward these systems at both the city and county levels, we can create a rough approximation of that by combining average household spending at both the city and county levels, where applicable (Figure 9).^d In 2022, there are no city/county combinations among the 20 that have low spending on the criminal legal system and high spending on community care. On the contrary, 16 of the 20 represent the worst combination: high spending on the Mass Criminalization System and low spending on Systems of Community Care. There are only four cities—Seattle, San Francisco, New York, and San Jose—that diverge from the pack by having relatively high spending on community care. However, those four cities still also have relatively high spending on the criminal legal system.^e

FIGURE 8 2022 City Investments: Mass Criminalization System vs. Systems of Community Care

Source: Local Budgets

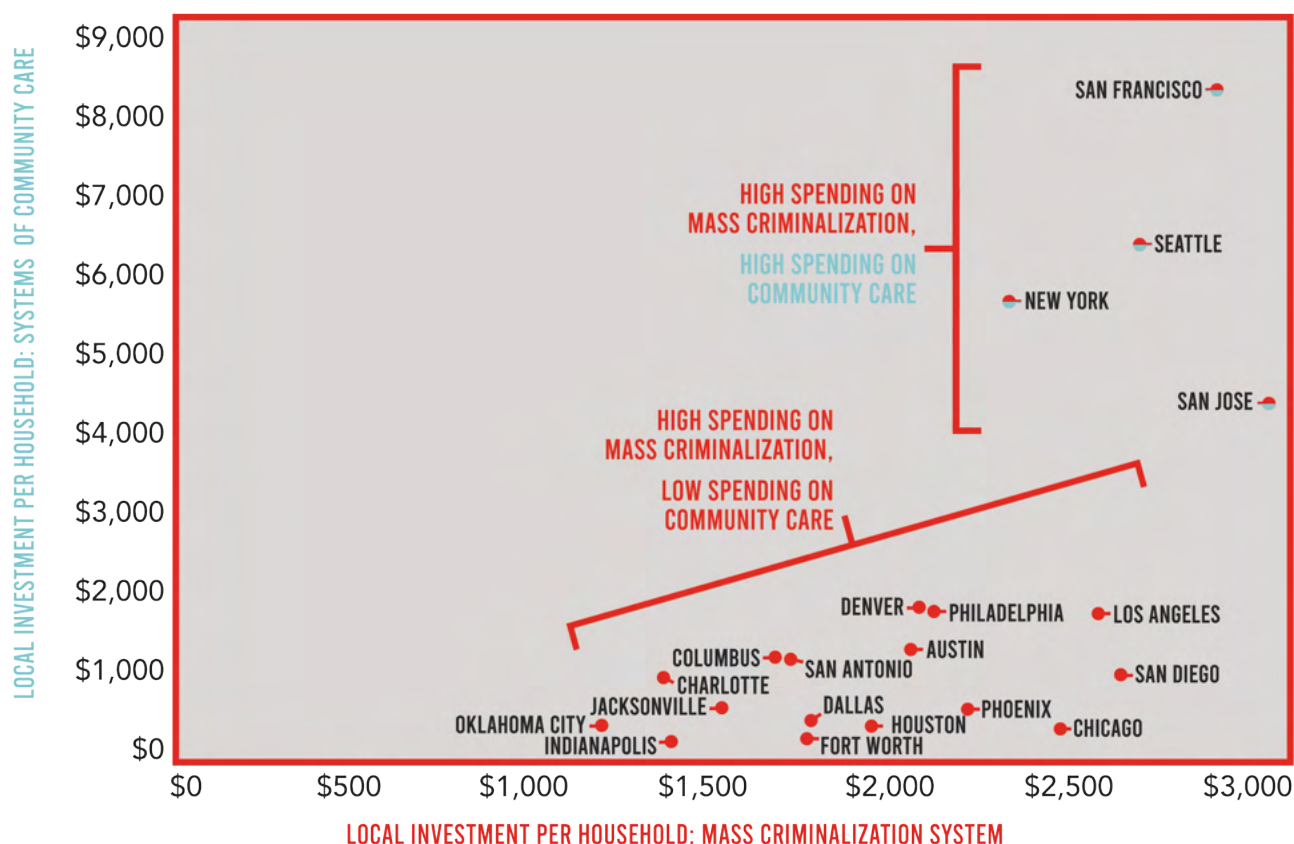


^d These approximations are likely conservative for city/county combinations because of the concentration of jail and other county-level criminal legal resources within the larger cities.

^e Note that there are often substantial racial inequities embedded within these ratios because of intra-city disparities. For example, there are typically wide disparities in the allocation of criminal legal resources within cities such that predominantly Black and Brown neighborhoods have much higher concentrations of police than predominantly White neighborhoods.

FIGURE 9**2022 Combined City/County Investments: Mass Criminalization System vs. Systems of Community Care**

Source: Local Budgets



It is important to realize that these dynamics are relatively new. It was not that long ago that the budgets of criminal legal systems in these and nearly every other city and county in the US were dramatically lower. Even after adjusting for inflation, nearly every one of the 20 cities has seen the cost of their criminal legal system double, triple, or even quadruple or more since 1980 (see Figure 10).⁶ For example, Denver’s criminal legal spending has increased by 152%, New York’s has gone up 163%, San Antonio’s has risen 305%, and Austin’s has ballooned by 555%. At the county level, the expansion in criminal legal spending is frequently even more dramatic, as evidenced by Franklin County (336%), Harris County (411%), and Maricopa County (538%), among others (see Figure 11).

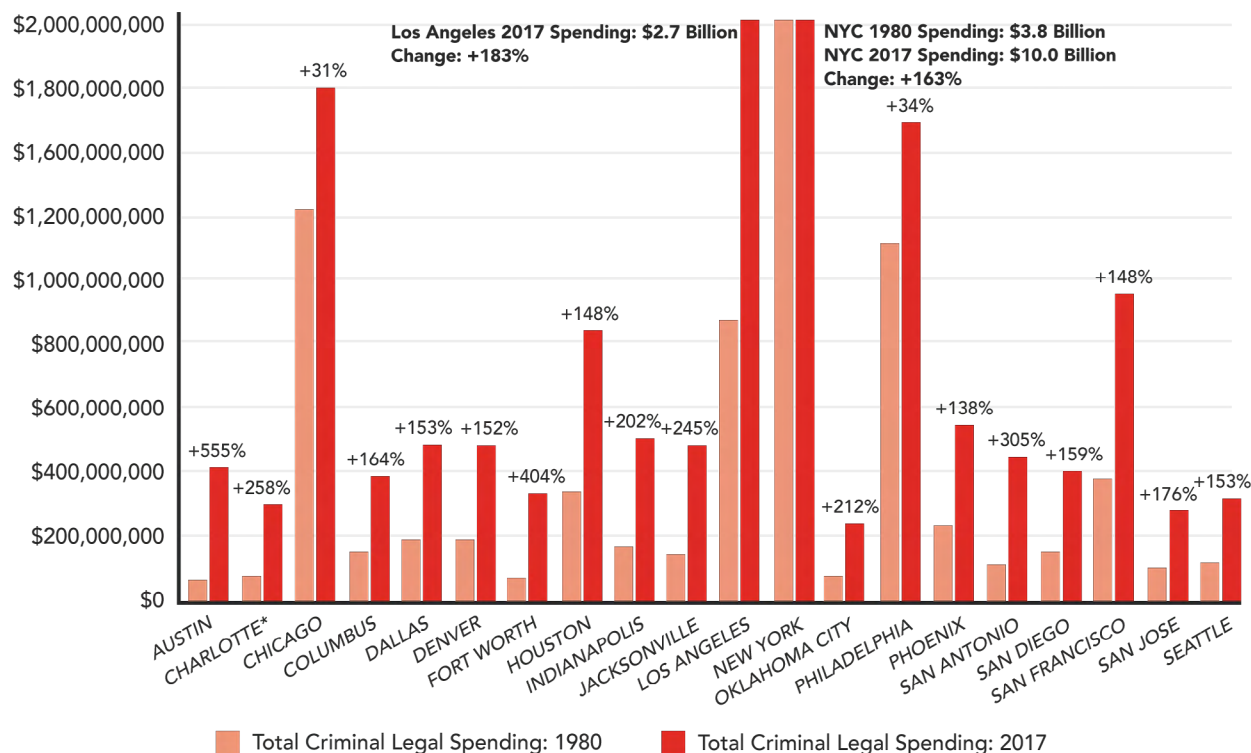


“In Chicago, every day someone gets illegally searched. I have experience firsthand being profiled and illegally searched. I, like many in my community, live in constant fear of being targeted by police. In a community where we have so many needs, our tax dollars should not go to the systems that criminalize us. They should go to services like housing, education, and youth programs that will help our children thrive.”

–**Matthew Melvin**, Roseland community member in Chicago

FIGURE 10 Cities: Total Criminal Legal Spending, 1980 vs. 2017 | Adjusted for Inflation (in 2022 dollars)

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics



*1980 spending was unavailable for Charlotte. What is represented is the difference between 1992 and 2017.

FIGURE 11 Counties: Total Criminal Legal Spending, 1980 vs. 2017 | Adjusted for Inflation (in 2022 dollars)

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics



*1980 spending was unavailable for Travis County. What is represented is the difference between 2002 and 2017.
 Note: this data was not available for Mecklenburg (Charlotte), Marion (Indianapolis), and Duval (Jacksonville) counties.



THE TOUGH-ON-CRIME LIE

Photo By: © Graffix / Adobe Stock

Not only have criminal legal budgets ballooned over time, the allocation of those investments has been far from equitable. There have been enormous racial disparities in how communities are policed, prosecuted, incarcerated, and otherwise criminalized.⁷ As a result, Black residents of the US are incarcerated at more than five times the rate of White residents, and Native American and Latinx residents are also grossly overrepresented in the prison population.⁸

The normalization of such bloated criminal legal budgets and unconscionable inequities would not have happened without the many lies that have been told to, and about, communities of color. For example, over the past 40 years, what US policymakers have been saying to Black and Brown communities is: We can best keep you safe by being “tough on crime.” By increasing the number of police officers. By using stop and frisk. By employing “broken windows” policing and cracking down on low-level offenses. By putting police in schools. By locking up people at the highest rates anywhere in the world. Over and over, policymakers have claimed that these are the most effective public safety strategies, but where is the evidence for that? Where are the heavily policed and high-incarceration communities that are flourishing socially, economically, and culturally? The answer is: There are none. It’s a null set.⁹

Also, if it were true that these were the best strategies, wouldn’t we be policing, prosecuting, and incarcerating White communities the same way? Wouldn’t the residents of predominantly White communities be in the offices of their elected officials clamoring for more tough-on-crime strategies? There is more than enough crime within predominantly White schools, universities, workplaces, and neighborhoods that currently goes unpoliced and unpunished. We could be cracking down on those predominantly White spaces the same way we do in communities of color and we could fill up our jails and prisons many times over with White teenagers, college students, stockbrokers, Silicon Valley programmers, lawyers, and others who up until now have been largely committing crimes with impunity. We could flip our racial disparities and have a predominantly White prison population in no time. Yet we don’t do those things because we don’t really believe what we say about how effective those strategies are.

Instead, the “tough-on-crime lie” is being used to justify enormous investments in racist strategies that have caused, and continue to cause, catastrophic harm to communities of color and their residents. When paired with the habitual underfunding of Systems of Community Care within those communities and the impact that has on the conditions that often dictate crime and violence, the end result is an utterly absurd public safety strategy.¹⁰



Photo By: J. Li

DIVEST/INVEST IN ACTION: RICHMOND, CA

What does it look like when a city grapples with the dynamics described in this report? There are many examples across the US. A particularly promising one is Richmond, California, where the community has been actively reassessing what it means to be a truly safe and healthy place to live and work.

Like so many other cities, Richmond, a mid-size (population: 115,639), historically Black and Brown city north of Oakland, has been ravaged by a long history of failed—and racist—“tough-on-crime” criminal justice policies and initiatives. Alongside the now-multi-generational harm caused by the city’s mass criminalization system, residents also began taking note of the impact this expansion of the criminal legal system was having on the city budget.

Through community-led research, residents learned that 40% of the city’s General Fund was being spent on police every year, almost double of what it was in the early 1990s. They also learned that Richmond was spending more per capita on police than New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles. Ultimately, they decided that this use of public funds was no longer acceptable and they began organizing other residents to create change.

Thus, a multi-racial, multi-generational coalition called Reimagine Richmond was formed in 2020 to push the city to invest in life-affirming resources and community-based solutions that meet human needs. Through surveying, interviews, focus groups, and data analysis, Reimagine Richmond identified key community priorities for improving public safety. They then collaborated with newly elected City Council members to establish the “Reimagining Public Safety Community Taskforce.” Based on community input, this task force sought to transition away from the city’s costly and ineffective “community policing” model and instead reallocate funds into prevention efforts and systems of care.

However, these efforts did not go unnoticed nor unchallenged by fierce opposition trying to uphold systematic racism. With the powerful backing of the Richmond Police Department and major funding from the Richmond Police Officer’s Association, a small contingent of residents organized within neighborhood councils and used smear tactics to attack Reimagine Richmond’s work. Nevertheless, due to overwhelming public support, Reimagine Richmond was able to work with the City Council in 2021 to shift \$3 million from the police budget into youth employment, gun violence prevention, interventions for unhoused residents, and a non-police mental health crisis response program.

More importantly, these efforts have shifted the mindsets of residents across the city who had never even imagined alternatives to the now-familiar over-policing/over-incarceration model of public safety. Thus, while Reimagine Richmond continues to work toward addressing what is still a troubling over-investment in the criminal legal system and under-investment in systems of community care, there is hope. It’s the hope that comes from large groups of people beginning to realize the power they have in ensuring that public budgets are aligned with public values.

“The mass criminalization system has extracted people and put them into the criminal legal system for trauma, addiction, and poverty. We need structures for mass liberation and care, not harm and criminalization. To do that, we need to change our way of thinking. The money that’s being spent on the criminal legal system is our money. It’s the job of City Council and the County Supervisors to manage that money, but it’s OURS!”



—Adey Teshager, Reimagine Richmond



Photo By: Sasi Ponchaisang/EyeEm | Getty Images

REIMAGINING PUBLIC SAFETY

Every advocate for meaningful affordable housing initiatives, youth development programs, violence intervention efforts, mental health resources, and other innovative social programs has been told, probably repeatedly, “Great idea, but there’s just no money for it.” Over and over, efforts to address the most pressing needs of community are stalled, minimized, or rejected because “budgets are tight.” However, the analysis of local budgets makes two things apparent: (1) there definitely *is* money available, but too often it is being spent on the wrong things; and (2) budgets are only tight when it comes to Systems of Community Care; for the Mass Criminalization System, it seems there’s always room to grow.

One would think that with the enormous investments being made into the criminal legal system that there would at least be a high level of accountability for those resources. You would think that police departments, district attorneys, criminal courts, probation departments and other criminal legal entities would be subjected to rigorous oversight to ensure that the investments being made were promoting genuine safety. You might even think that those departments would be compelled to answer to the communities they served; to ensure that they had consent from residents for the methods they employed and their usage of their tax dollars.

If you do happen to think any of those things, then with respect to most (if not all) Black and Brown communities across the US, you would unfortunately be wrong. Considering the enormous investment being made into the criminal legal system within these communities, there is typically a shocking lack of accountability for what is done with those resources.

While education systems, healthcare systems, affordable housing providers, and nearly all other government agencies are required to continuously justify the public investments they receive, criminal legal systems within communities of color typically receive no such scrutiny. Nor are they expected to hold themselves accountable to the people they are supposed to be serving. Thus, instead of the public deciding how the criminal legal system should be enforcing the law to best meet community needs, it is typically law enforcement officials who decide how they will be enforcing the law against the public, regardless of how much harm they cause in the process. To the extent there are any meaningful accountability measures used at all, they are typically based on metrics that do not necessarily align with public safety, such as arrest rates.

Plus, what is very apparent from these budgets is that at no point did the criminal legal policymakers responsible for them ask a very basic and fundamental question: *What are the best strategies available to us for both preventing and responding to crime and violence in ways that promote safer, healthier, and more equitable communities across the country?*¹¹

Anyone who spends any time engaging with that question quickly realizes that police and the criminal legal system are, at most, only a small part of the answer. Yet in cities and counties around the country they are funded as if they are most of, if not the entirety of, the answer.

The truth is that safety—real, authentic safety—does not come from police, prosecutors, jails, and prisons. It comes from healthy, well-resourced, and equitable communities that proactively address the root causes of crime and violence, and then employ the most effective interventions when crime and violence occur. Currently, that can sometimes involve the criminal legal system, but far more often, it does not.

The exciting part is that all across the US, there are community-led public safety initiatives underway.¹² These efforts are leading the way in reimagining public safety; what it means for all people to truly be safe. Even in the budgets analyzed above, many cities and counties boasted about new initiatives in which mental health professionals, social service providers, violence interventionists, or unarmed, civilian public safety workers handle incidents that would previously have gone to police.¹³ The problem is that those efforts are woefully underfunded, whereas most police and other criminal legal budgets continue to grow.

Thus, the critical action step is for communities to compel their policymakers to conduct a rigorous, and long overdue, examination of criminal legal budgets. There should be an extensive audit to determine whether public investments are truly aligned with community needs. And where they are not, those funds should be repurposed to more effective prevention measures and intervention efforts. Thus, without raising taxes at all, we could inject billions of dollars into mental and behavioral healthcare, youth development, affordable housing, environmental sustainability, and other community care efforts that can help create healthy, safe, and equitable communities. And in the future, city and county budgets would no longer reflect the perverse set of priorities that places mass criminalization over what communities truly need for all people to thrive.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

7.1 : 1



OUT OF EVERY **\$100** IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION** OR A **SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE** IN 2022, **\$88** WENT TO A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION**.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$1.9 BILLION

\$1,745

14,481

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

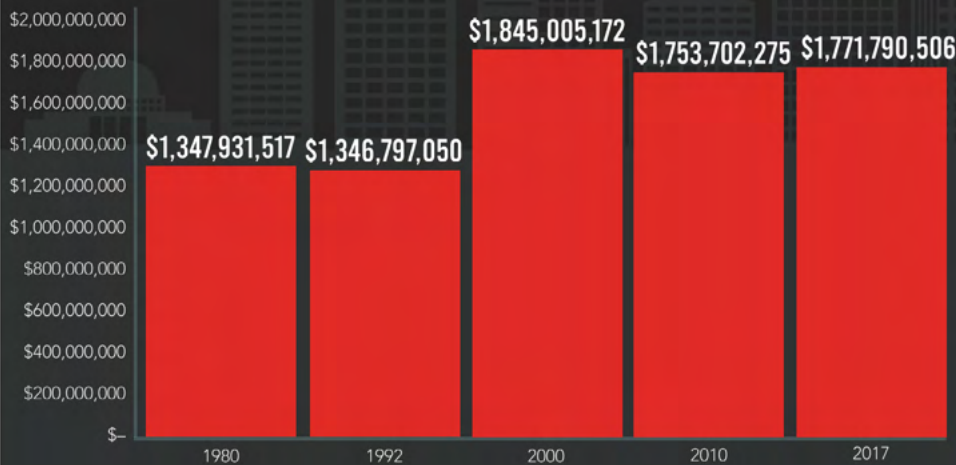
\$265 MILLION

\$245

1,474

CHICAGO CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, **SPENDING** ON THE **CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM** IN **CHICAGO** HAS **INCREASED BY 31% SINCE 1980**.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

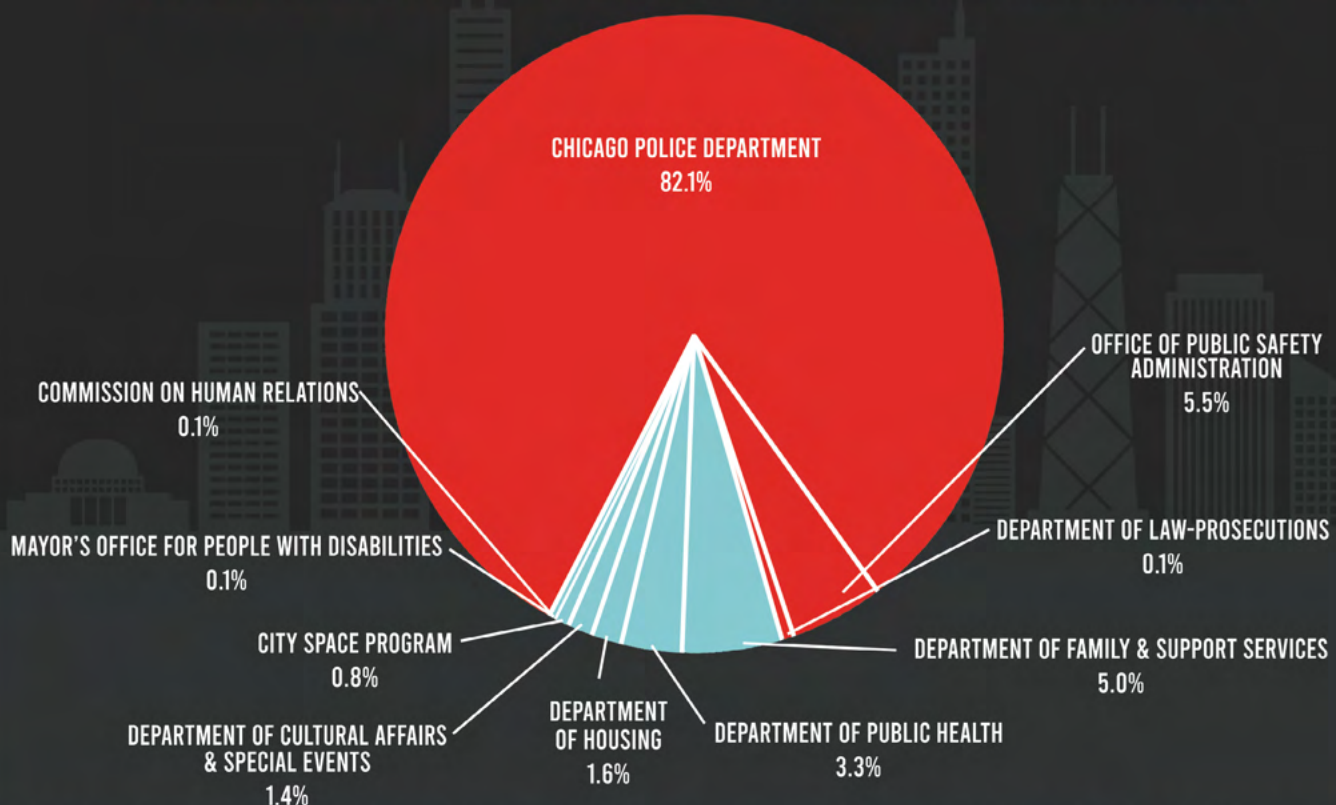
ALL ASPECTS OF THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING:

- Police and sheriff's departments
- Prosecutor's departments
- Correctional departments
- Court systems
- Probation departments
- Youth probation and detention
- Other criminalization-centered departments

WHAT ARE THE 8 ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE?

- Mental, behavioral, and community health and well-being
- Wraparound supports for youth and families
- Affordable housing and community empowerment
- Environmental sustainability
- Parks and recreation
- Arts and culture
- Equity-focused systems
- Community-based alternatives to criminalization and incarceration

CHICAGO 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Chicago Police Department	\$1.8 billion	\$1.9 billion	14,102
Office of Public Safety Administration	\$117.3 million	\$172.9 million	354
Department of Law-Prosecutions	\$2.6 million	\$2.6 million	25
TOTAL	\$1.9 BILLION	\$2.1 BILLION	14,481

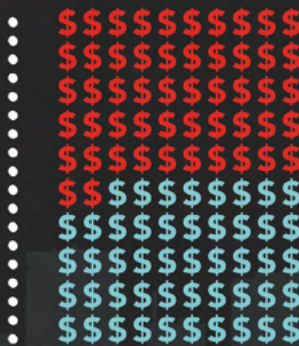
INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Family & Support Services	\$108.1 million	\$910.6 million	414
Department of Public Health	\$71.9 million	\$1.0 billion	835
Department of Housing	\$34.1 million	\$380.1 million	92
Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events	\$29.2 million	\$71.2 million	78
City Space Program	\$17.6 million	\$19.2 million	0
Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities	\$2.5 million	\$7.9 million	36
Commission on Human Relations	\$1.2 million	\$2.9 million	19
TOTAL	\$265 MILLION	\$2.4 BILLION	1,474

DENVER, COLORADO

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

1.1 : 1



OUT OF EVERY \$100 IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION OR A SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE IN 2022, \$52 WENT TO A SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$581 MILLION

\$2,018

4,080

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

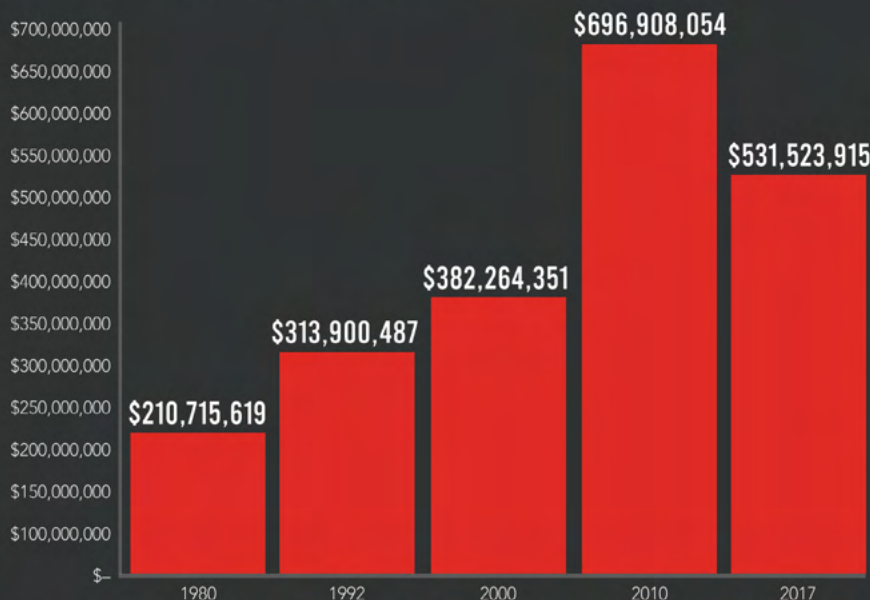
\$527 MILLION

\$1,833

1,827

DENVER CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, SPENDING ON THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM IN DENVER HAS INCREASED BY 152% SINCE 1980.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

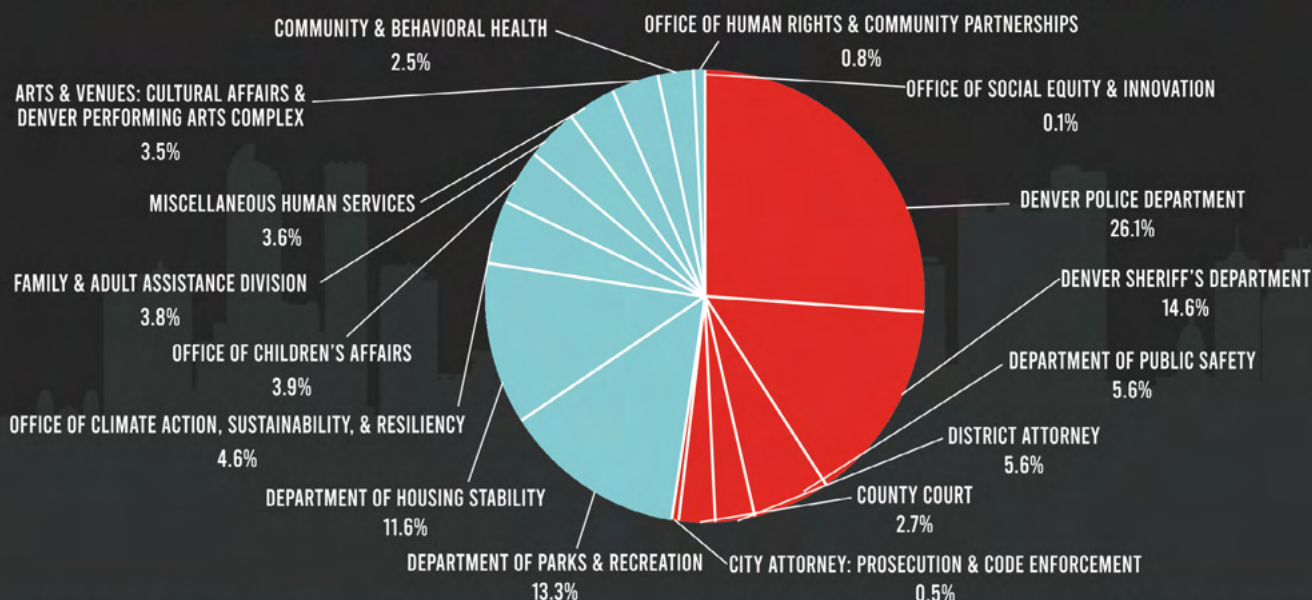
ALL ASPECTS OF THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING:

- Police and sheriff's departments
- Prosecutor's departments
- Correctional departments
- Court systems
- Probation departments
- Youth probation and detention
- Other

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- Parks and recreation
- Arts and culture
- Equity-focused systems
- Community-based alternatives to criminalization and incarceration

DENVER 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Denver Police Department	\$289.4 million	\$297.3 million	1,935
Denver Sheriff's Department	\$161.6 million	\$161.6 million	1,121
Department of Public Safety	\$62.5 million	\$64.2 million	441
District Attorney	\$32.1 million	\$36.1 million	271
County Court	\$29.9 million	\$31.1 million	273
City Attorney: Prosecution & Code Enforcement	\$5.3 million	\$5.4 million	39
TOTAL	\$581 MILLION	\$596 MILLION	4,080

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Parks & Recreation	\$147.8 million	\$152.1 million	1,040
Department of Housing Stability	\$128.2 million	\$138.4 million	116
Office of Climate Action, Sustainability, & Resiliency	\$50.5 million	\$51.2 million	47
Office of Children's Affairs	\$43.5 million	\$60.5 million	27
Family & Adult Assistance Division	\$41.8 million	\$41.8 million	428
Miscellaneous Human Services	\$39.4 million	\$39.4 million	43
Arts & Venues: Cultural Affairs & Denver Performing Arts Complex	\$38.4 million	\$38.4 million	11
Community & Behavioral Health	\$27.5 million	\$37.1 million	60
Office of Human Rights & Community Partnerships	\$9.3 million	\$9.4 million	45
Office of Social Equity & Innovation	\$1.0 million	\$1.2 million	10
TOTAL	\$527 MILLION	\$569 MILLION	1,827

HOUSTON, TEXAS

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

4.8 : 1



OUT OF EVERY **\$100** IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION** OR A **SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE** IN 2022, **\$83** WENT TO A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION**.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$1.0 BILLION

\$1,181

7,062

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

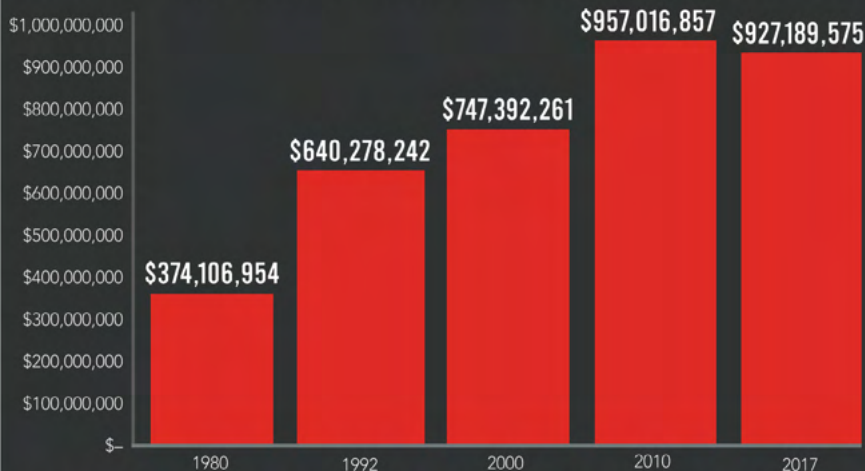
\$213 MILLION

\$244

1,592

HOUSTON CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, **SPENDING** ON THE **CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM** IN **HOUSTON** HAS **INCREASED BY 148% SINCE 1980.**

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

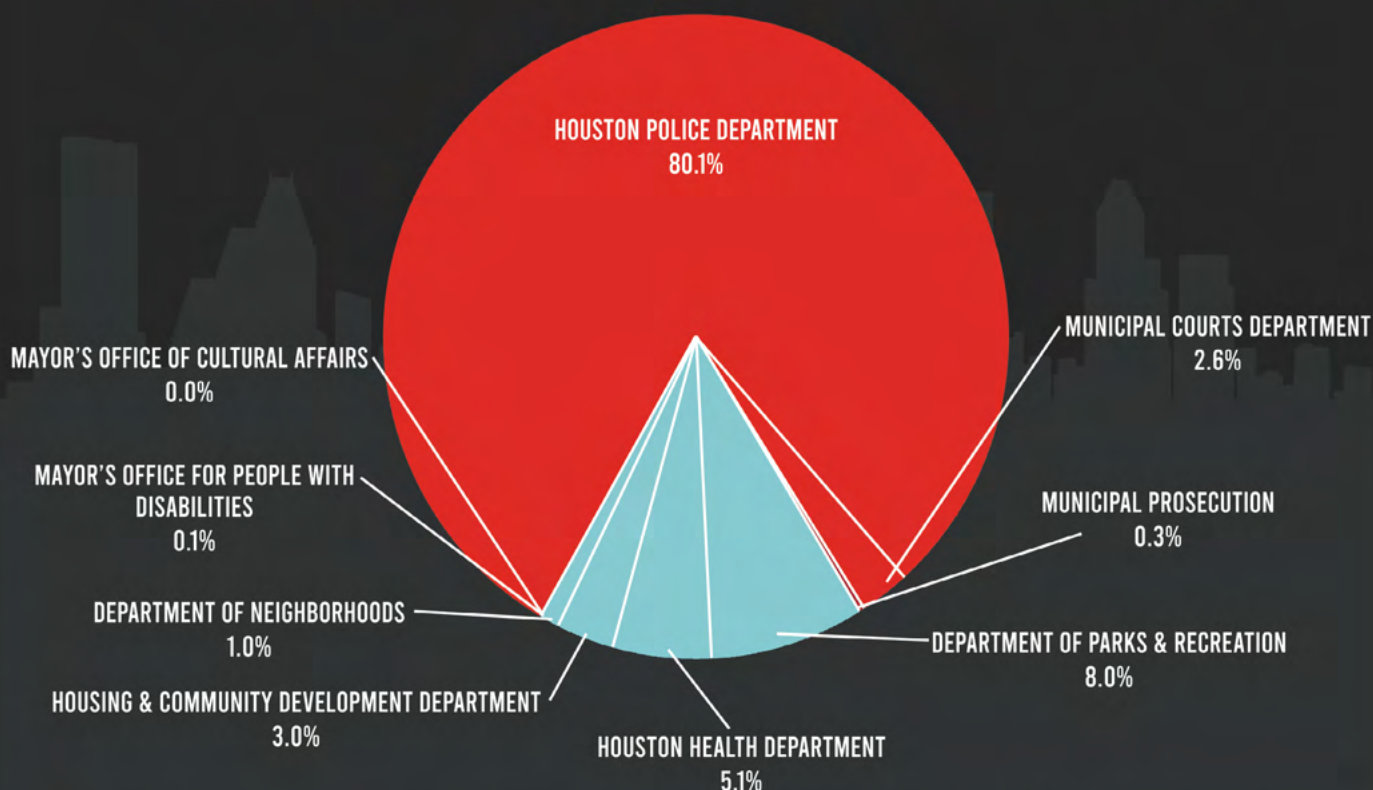
ALL ASPECTS OF THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING:

- Police and sheriff's departments
- Prosecutor's departments
- Correctional departments
- Court systems
- Probation departments
- Youth probation and detention
- Other

WHAT ARE THE 8 ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE?

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- Affordable housing and community empowerment
- Environmental sustainability
- Parks and recreation
- Arts and culture
- Equity-focused systems
- Community-based alternatives to criminalization and incarceration

HOUSTON 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Houston Police Department	\$997.6 million	\$1.0 billion	6,778
Municipal Courts Department	\$32.0 million	\$32.0 million	260
Municipal Prosecution	\$3.2 million	\$3.2 million	24
TOTAL	\$1.0 BILLION	\$1.0 BILLION	7,062

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Parks & Recreation	\$99.6 million	\$102.1 million	827
Houston Health Department	\$63.0 million	\$101.3 million	661
Housing & Community Development Department	\$37.0 million	\$37.0 million	0
Department of Neighborhoods	\$12.3 million	\$12.3 million	94
Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities	\$646,800	\$646,800	6
Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs	\$468,725	\$468,725	4
TOTAL	\$213 MILLION	\$254 MILLION	1,592

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

2.6 : 1



OUT OF EVERY **\$100** IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION** OR A **SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE** IN 2022, **\$72** WENT TO A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION**.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$515 MILLION

\$1,477

3,585

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

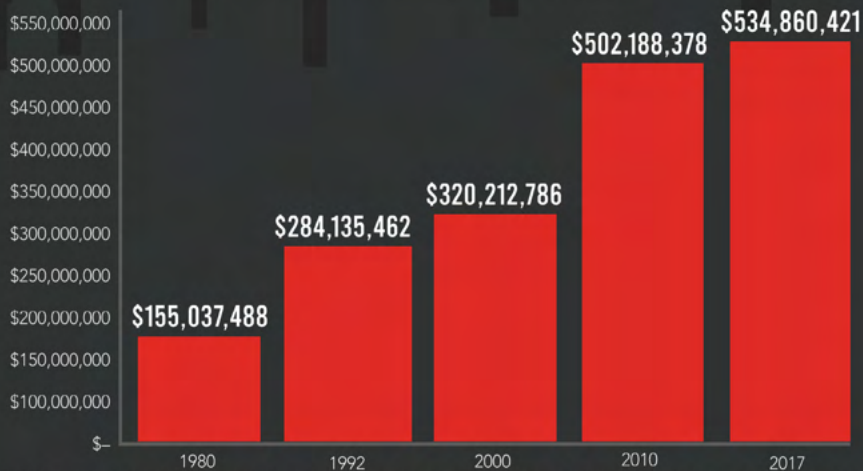
\$202 MILLION

\$579

813

JACKSONVILLE CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, **SPENDING** ON THE **CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM** IN **JACKSONVILLE** HAS **INCREASED BY 245% SINCE 1980**.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

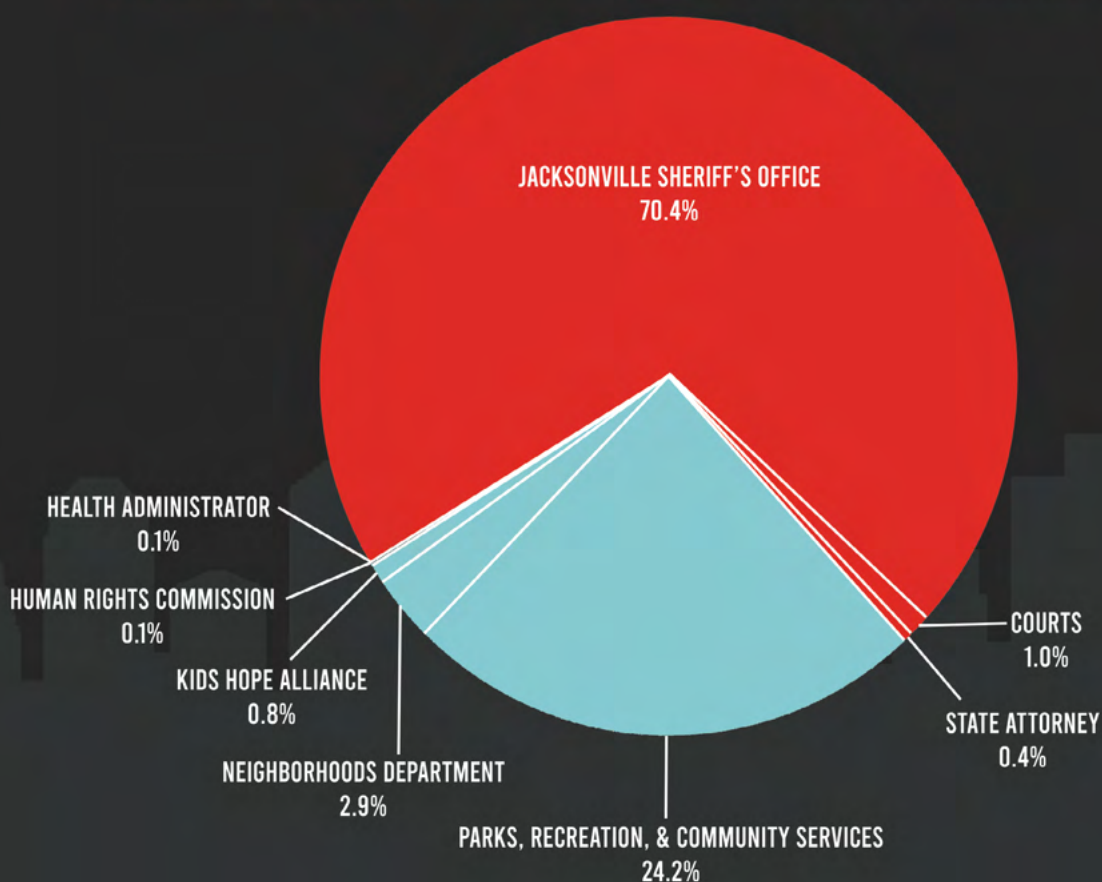
ALL ASPECTS OF THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING:

- Police and sheriff's departments
- Prosecutor's departments
- Correctional departments
- Court systems
- Probation departments
- Youth probation and detention
- Other criminalization-centered departments

WHAT ARE THE 8 ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE?

- Mental, behavioral, and community health and well-being
- Wraparound supports for youth and families
- Affordable housing and community empowerment
- Environmental sustainability
- Parks and recreation
- Arts and culture
- Equity-focused systems
- Community-based alternatives to criminalization and incarceration

JACKSONVILLE 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Jacksonville Sheriff's Office	\$504.8 million	\$510.1 million	3,567
Courts	\$7.4 million	\$8.2 million	18
State Attorney	\$3.1 million	\$3.1 million	n/a
TOTAL	\$515 MILLION	\$521 MILLION	3,585

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Parks, Recreation, & Community Services	\$173.5 million	\$189.4 million	470
Neighborhoods Department	\$21.1 million	\$24.5 million	243
Kids Hope Alliance	\$6.0 million	\$6.2 million	93
Human Rights Commission	\$845,120	\$845,120	7
Health Administrator	\$434,175	\$1.2 million	n/a
TOTAL	\$202 MILLION	\$222 MILLION	813

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

4.1 : 1



OUT OF EVERY **\$100** IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION** OR A **SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE** IN 2022, **\$80** WENT TO A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION**.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$1.8 BILLION

\$1,297

14,117

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

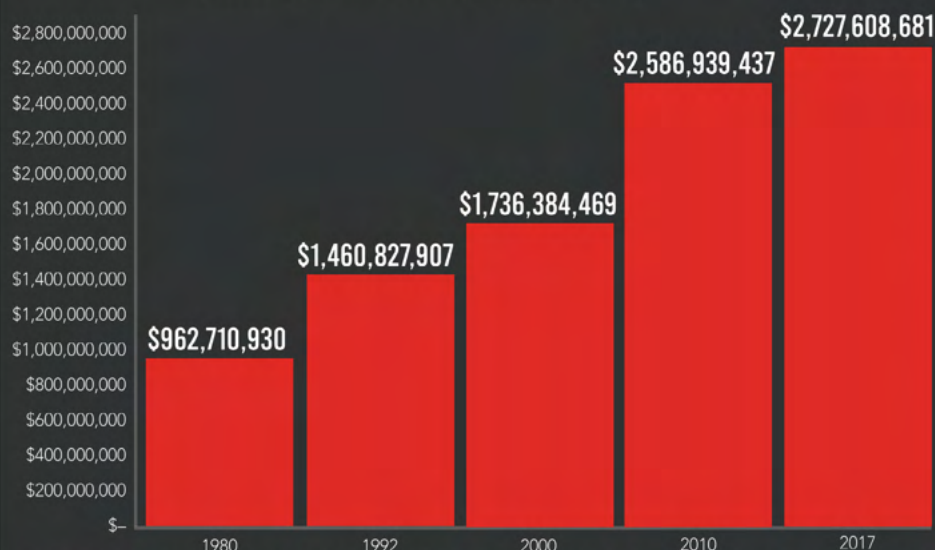
\$444 MILLION

\$316

2,113

LOS ANGELES CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, **SPENDING** ON THE **CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM** IN **LOS ANGELES** HAS **INCREASED BY 183% SINCE 1980**.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

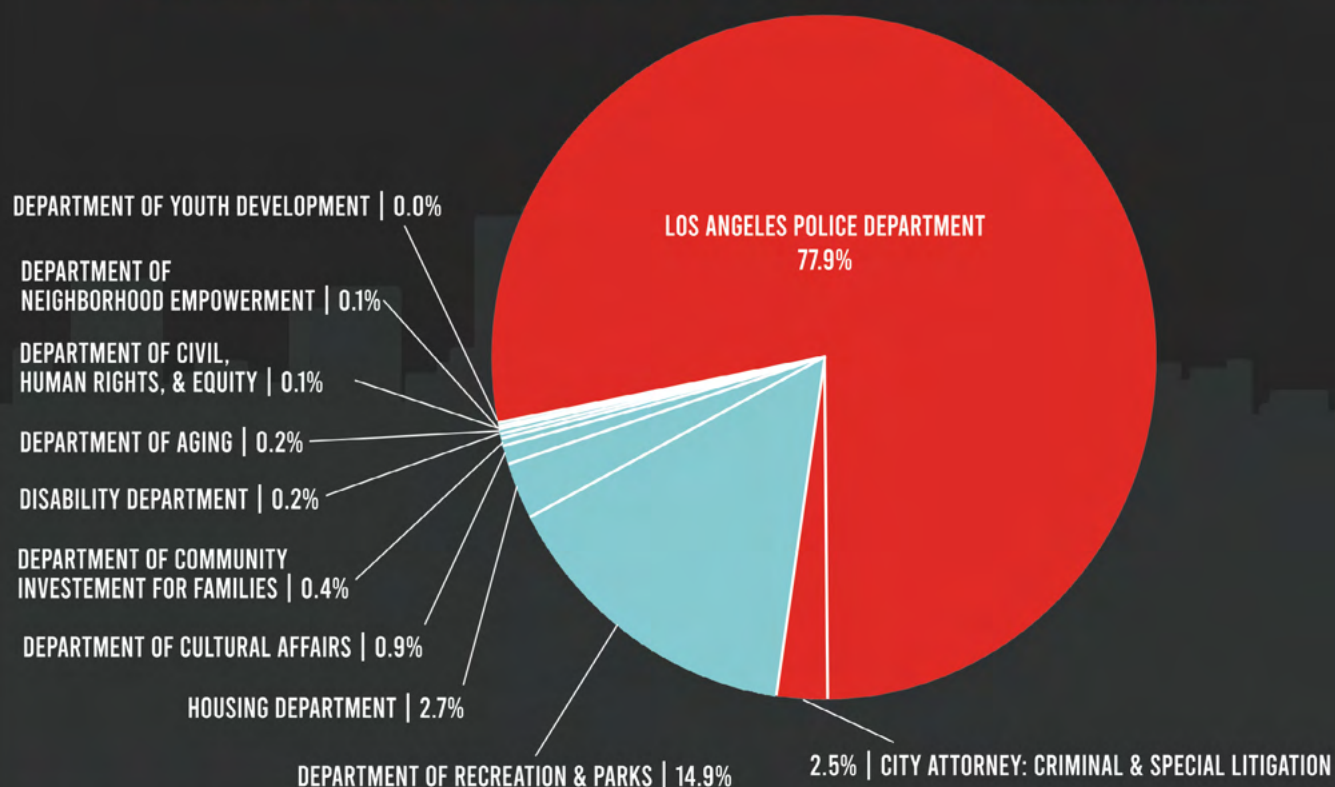
ALL ASPECTS OF THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING:

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- Probation departments
- Youth probation and detention
- Other criminalization-centered departments

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- Arts and culture
- Equity-focused systems
- Community-based alternatives to criminalization and incarceration

LOS ANGELES 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Los Angeles Police Department	\$1.8 billion	\$1.8 billion	13,744
City Attorney: Criminal & Special Litigation	\$56.3 million	\$58.7 million	373
TOTAL	\$1.8 BILLION	\$1.8 BILLION	14,117

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Recreation & Parks	\$338.0 million	\$338.0 million	1,398
Housing Department	\$60.6 million	\$76.7 million	514
Department of Cultural Affairs	\$20.3 million	\$20.3 million	67
Department of Community Investment for Families	\$8.2 million	\$14.4 million	35
Disability Department	\$4.8 million	\$4.8 million	27
Department of Aging	\$4.5 million	\$7.1 million	40
Department of Civil, Human Rights, & Equity	\$3.3 million	\$3.3 million	1
Department of Neighborhood Empowerment	\$3.0 million	\$3.0 million	30
Department of Youth Development	\$1.1 million	\$1.1 million	1
TOTAL	\$444 MILLION	\$469 MILLION	2,113

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

0.4:1



OUT OF EVERY **\$100** IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION** OR A **SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE** IN 2022, **\$28** WENT TO A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION**.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$7.2 BILLION

\$2,255

67,045

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

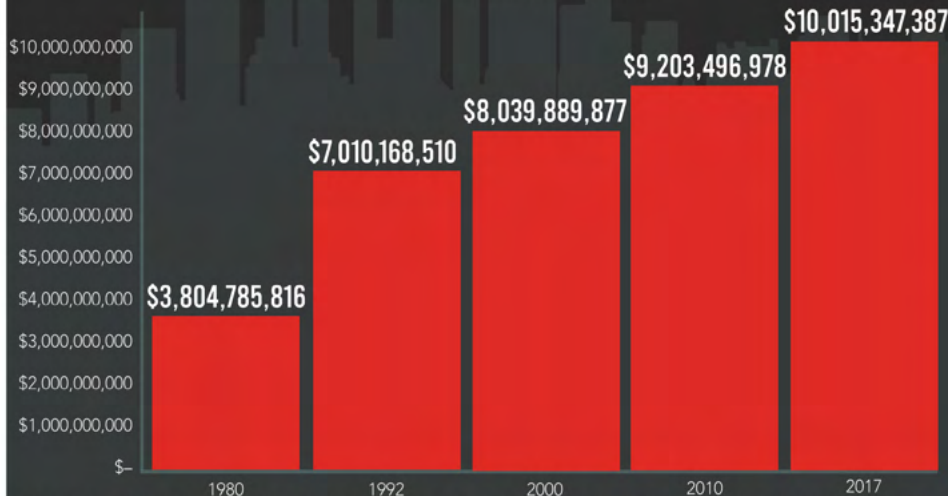
\$18.1 BILLION

\$5,671

38,507

NEW YORK CITY CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, **SPENDING** ON THE **CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM** IN **NEW YORK** HAS **INCREASED BY 163% SINCE 1980**.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

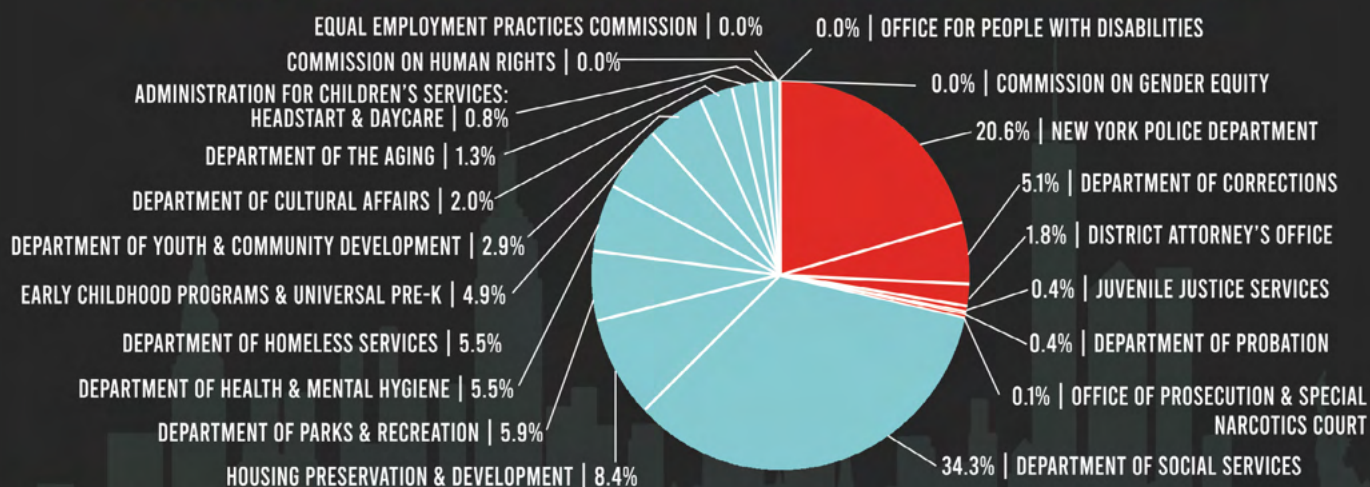
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- Correctional departments
- Court systems
- Probation departments
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- Community-based alternatives to criminalization and incarceration

NEW YORK CITY 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
New York City Police Department	\$5.2 billion	\$5.2 billion	50,676
Department of Correction	\$1.3 billion	\$1.6 billion	9,298
District Attorney's Offices	\$458.5 million	\$467.7 million	4,345
Juvenile Justice Services	\$109.4 million	\$294.9 million	1,349
Department of Probation	\$101.2 million	\$118.6 million	1,138
Office of Prosecution & Special Narcotics Court	\$24.8 million	\$25.9 million	239
TOTAL	\$7.2 BILLION	\$7.7 BILLION	67,045

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Social Services	\$8.7 billion	\$11.2 billion	13,634
Housing Preservation & Development	\$2.1 billion	\$2.9 billion	2,601
Department of Parks & Recreation	\$1.5 billion	\$1.6 billion	4,356
Department of Health & Mental Hygiene	\$1.4 billion	\$2.5 billion	6,169
Department of Homeless Services	\$1.4 billion	\$2.2 billion	2,158
Early Childhood Programs & Universal Pre-K	\$1.2 billion	\$2.4 billion	8,282
Department of Youth & Community Development	\$729.5 million	\$874.8 million	531
Department of Cultural Affairs	\$497.0 million	\$510.3 million	52
Department for the Aging	\$339.2 million	\$493.1 million	329
Administration for Children's Services: Headstart & Daycare	\$199.2 million	\$537.1 million	235
Commission on Human Rights	\$12.2 million	\$12.7 million	133
Equal Employment Practices Commission	\$1.4 million	\$1.4 million	15
Office for People with Disabilities	\$762,841	\$852,295	7
Commission on Gender Equity	\$585,214	\$629,695	5
TOTAL	\$18.1 BILLION	\$25.2 BILLION	38,507

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

1.1 : 1



OUT OF EVERY **\$100** IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION** OR A **SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE** IN 2022, **\$53** WENT TO A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION**.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$1.3 BILLION

\$2,047

13,384

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

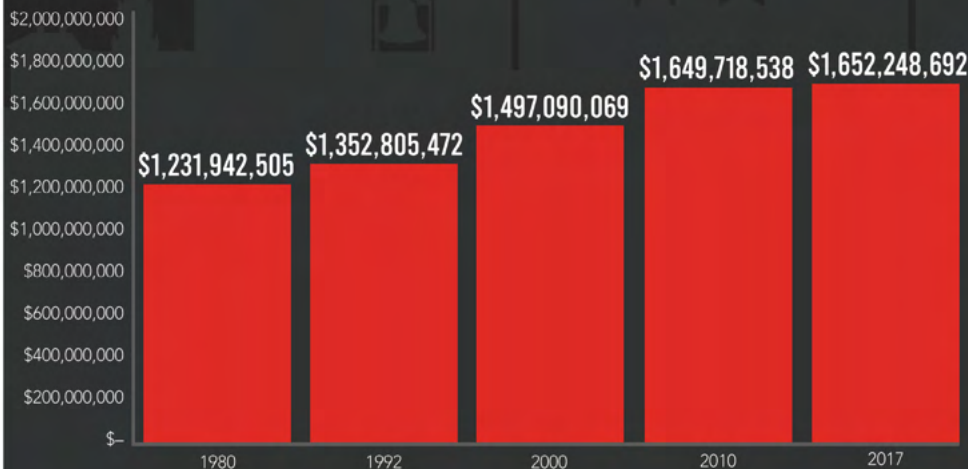
\$1.1 BILLION

\$1,811

3,253

PHILADELPHIA CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, **SPENDING** ON THE **CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM** IN **PHILADELPHIA** HAS **INCREASED BY 34%** SINCE 1980.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

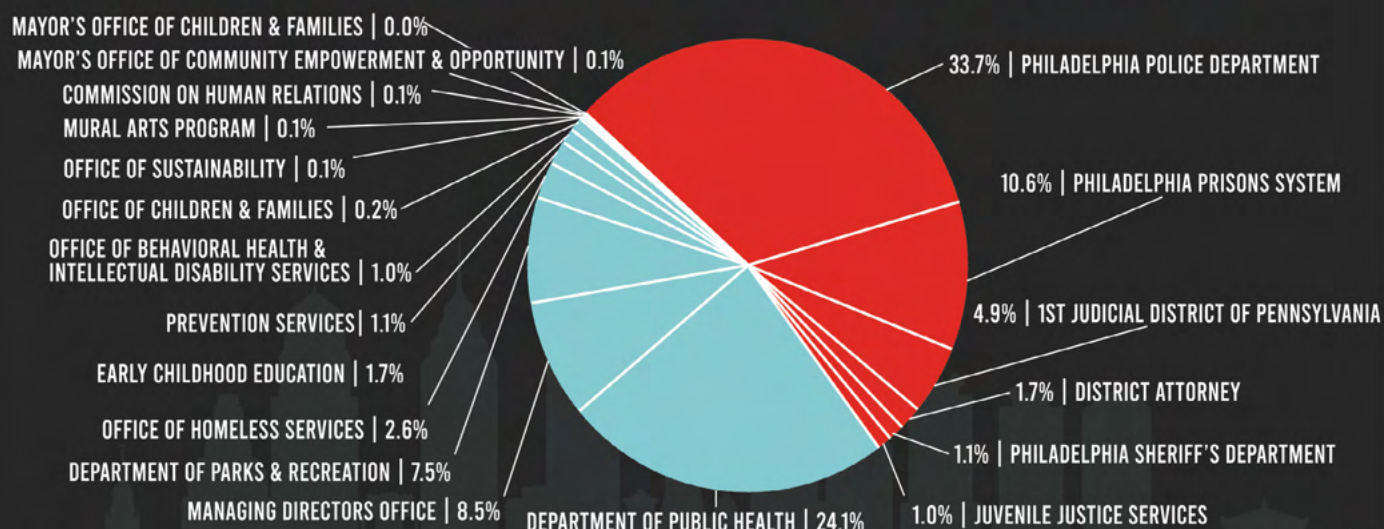
ALL ASPECTS OF THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING:

- Police and sheriff's departments
- Prosecutor's departments
- Correctional departments
- Court systems
- Probation departments
- Youth probation and detention
- Other criminalization-centered departments

WHAT ARE THE 8 ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE?

- Mental, behavioral, and community health and well-being
- Wraparound supports for youth and families
- Affordable housing and community empowerment
- Environmental sustainability
- Parks and recreation
- Arts and culture
- Equity-focused systems
- Community-based alternatives to criminalization and incarceration

PHILADELPHIA 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Philadelphia Police Department	\$796.5 million	\$818.5 million	7,452
Philadelphia Prisons System	\$250.7 million	\$254.4 million	2,186
1st Judicial District of Pennsylvania	\$116.2 million	\$169.2 million	2,321
District Attorney	\$40.4 million	\$60.9 million	643
Philadelphia Sheriff's Department	\$26.8 million	\$26.8 million	428
Juvenile Justice Services	\$24.4 million	\$82.9 million	354
TOTAL	\$1.3 BILLION	\$1.4 BILLION	13,384

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Public Health	\$569.4 million	\$836.4 million	1,017
Managing Directors Office	\$200.2 million	\$484.6 million	583
Department of Parks & Recreation	\$177.3 million	\$293.9 million	795
Office of Homeless Services	\$60.7 million	\$154.5 million	212
Early Childhood Education	\$41.1 million	\$41.2 million	6
Prevention Services	\$24.9 million	\$70.3 million	88
Office of Behavioral Health & Intellectual Disability Services	\$23.5 million	\$1.6 billion	321
Office of Children & Families	\$3.6 million	\$12.7 million	135
Office of Sustainability	\$3.0 million	\$3.5 million	13
Mural Arts Program	\$2.7 million	\$2.7 million	10
Commission on Human Relations	\$2.3 million	\$2.4 million	33
Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment & Opportunity	\$1.5 million	\$43.6 million	37
Mayor's Office of Children & Families	\$442,000	\$442,000	3
TOTAL	\$1.1 BILLION	\$3.6 BILLION	3,253

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

2.9 : 1



OUT OF EVERY **\$100** IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION** OR A **SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE** IN 2022, **\$74** WENT TO A **SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION**.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$884 MILLION

\$1,453

4,864

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

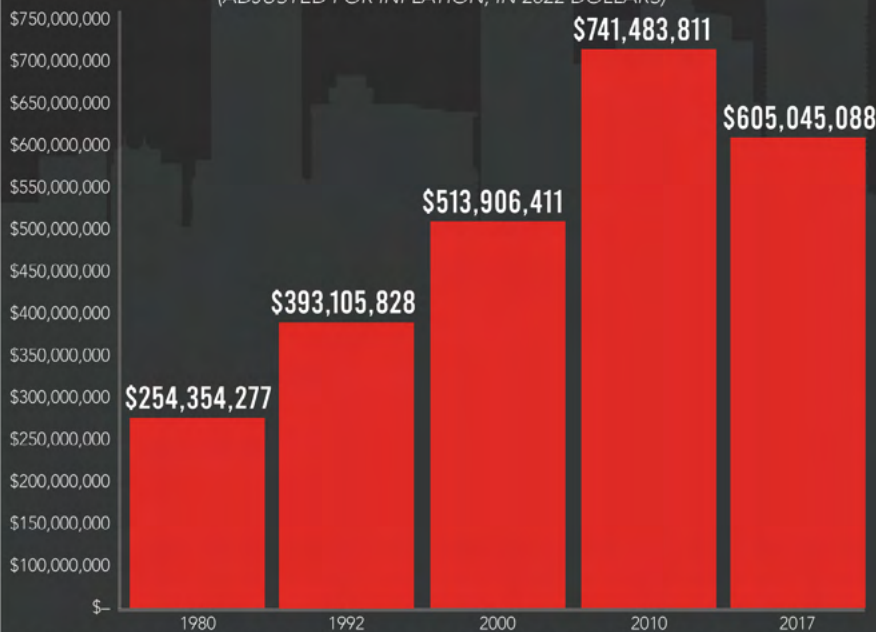
\$295 MILLION

\$507

1,815

PHOENIX CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, **SPENDING** ON THE **CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM** IN **PHOENIX** HAS **INCREASED BY 138% SINCE 1980**.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

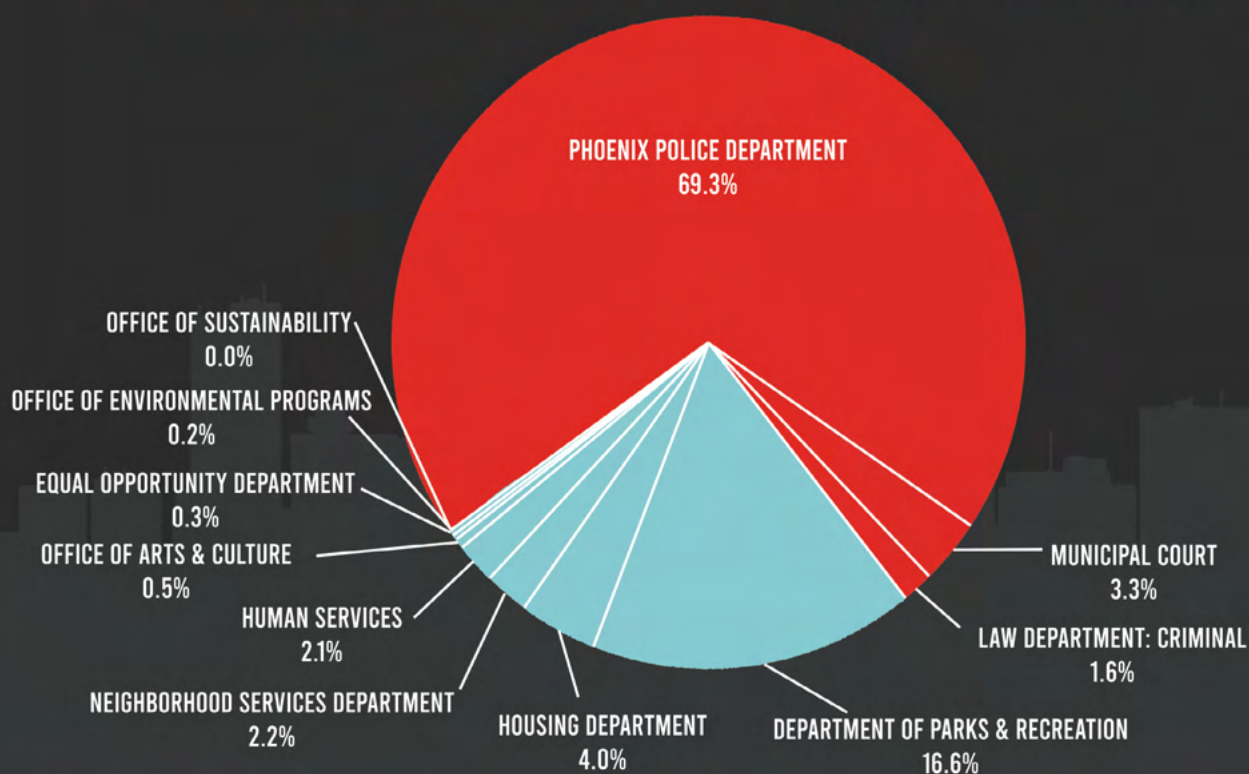
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PHOENIX 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Phoenix Police Department	\$788.7 million	\$811.1 billion	4,437
Municipal Court	\$37.5 million	\$37.5 million	279
Law Department: Criminal	\$17.9 million	\$19.2 million	148
TOTAL	\$844 MILLION	\$867 MILLION	4,864

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Parks & Recreation	\$189.4 million	\$208.2 million	1,050
Housing Department	\$45.1 million	\$159.5 million	126
Neighborhood Services Department	\$25.4 million	\$95.3 million	191
Human Services	\$23.6 million	\$148.2 million	395
Office of Arts & Culture	\$5.5 million	\$5.7 million	11
Equal Opportunity Department	\$2.9 million	\$3.5 million	27
Office of Environmental Programs	\$2.2 million	\$2.2 million	11
Office of Sustainability	\$564,233	\$910,264	4
TOTAL	\$295 MILLION	\$624 MILLION	1,815

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

0.3 : 1



OUT OF EVERY \$100 IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION OR A SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE IN 2022, \$25 WENT TO A SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$1.0 BILLION

\$2,826

4,510

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

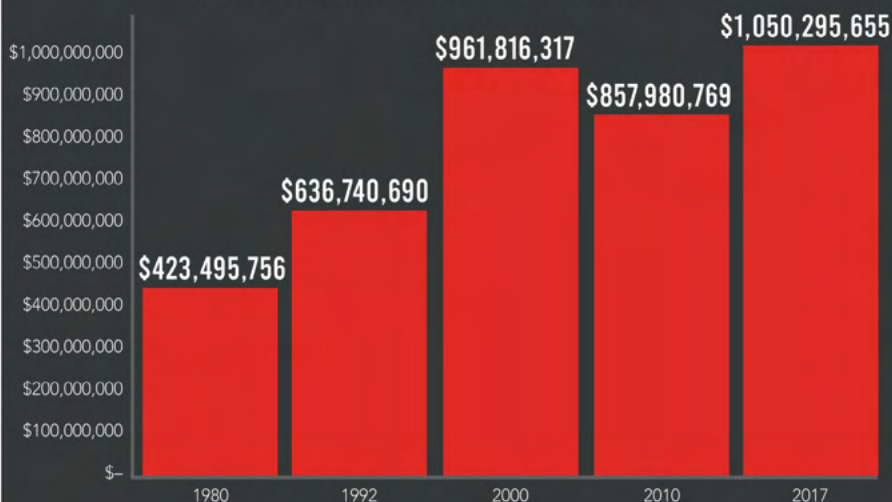
\$3.0 BILLION

\$8,303

5,794

SAN FRANCISCO CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, **SPENDING** ON THE **CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM** IN **SAN FRANCISCO** HAS **INCREASED BY 148% SINCE 1980.**

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

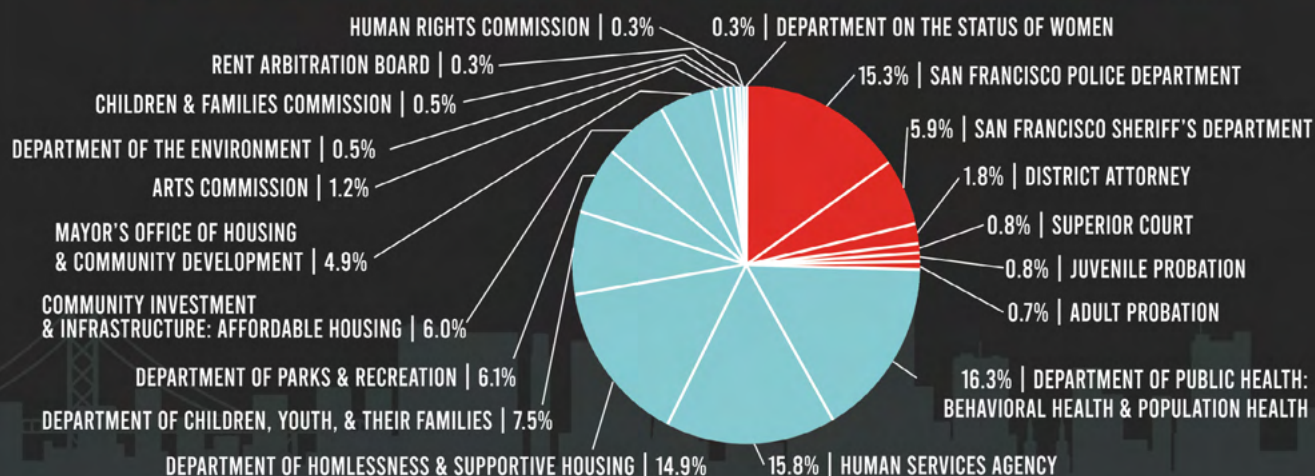
ALL ASPECTS OF THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING:

- Police and sheriff's departments
- Prosecutor's departments
- Correctional departments
- Court systems
- Probation departments
- Youth probation and detention
- Other criminalization-centered departments

WHAT ARE THE 8 ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE?

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- Environmental sustainability
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SAN FRANCISCO 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
San Francisco Police Department	\$618.1 million	\$661.7 million	2,897
San Francisco Sheriff's Department	\$238.5 million	\$270.1 million	1,001
District Attorney	\$73.7 million	\$80.1 million	278
Superior Court	\$33.5 million	\$33.5 million	n/a
Juvenile Probation	\$30.9 million	\$43.7 million	178
Adult Probation	28.5 million	\$48.0 million	155
TOTAL	\$1.0 BILLION	\$1.1 BILLION	4,510

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Public Health: Behavioral Health & Population Health	\$655.2 million	\$798.4 million	2,088
Human Services Agency	\$638.3 million	\$1.4 billion	2,210
Department of Homelessness & Supportive Housing	\$599.2 million	\$671.8 million	222
Department of Children, Youth, & Their Families	\$301.5 million	\$314.0 million	55
Department of Parks & Recreation	\$243.8 million	\$244.8 million	928
Community Investment & Infrastructure: Affordable Housing	\$241.7 million	\$241.7 million	23
Mayor's Office of Housing & Community Development	\$196.8 million	\$218.8 million	79
Arts Commission	\$49.9 million	\$51.0 million	29
Department of the Environment	\$21.0 million	\$21.6 million	67
Children & Families Commission	\$20.6 million	\$30.2 million	16
Rent Arbitration Board	\$14.0 million	\$14.0 million	47
Human Rights Commission	\$13.6 million	\$13.6 million	23
Department on the Status of Women	\$11.1 million	\$11.1 million	7
TOTAL	\$3.0 BILLION	\$4.0 BILLION	5,794

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

CRIMINALIZATION / CARE RATIO:

0.4 : 1



OUT OF EVERY \$100 IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EITHER A SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION OR A SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY CARE IN 2022, \$28 WENT TO A SYSTEM OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION.

SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

\$402 MILLION

\$1,168

2,055

CATEGORY

LOCAL INVESTMENT: 2022

LOCAL INVESTMENT PER CITY HOUSEHOLD: 2022

TOTAL EMPLOYEES: 2022

SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

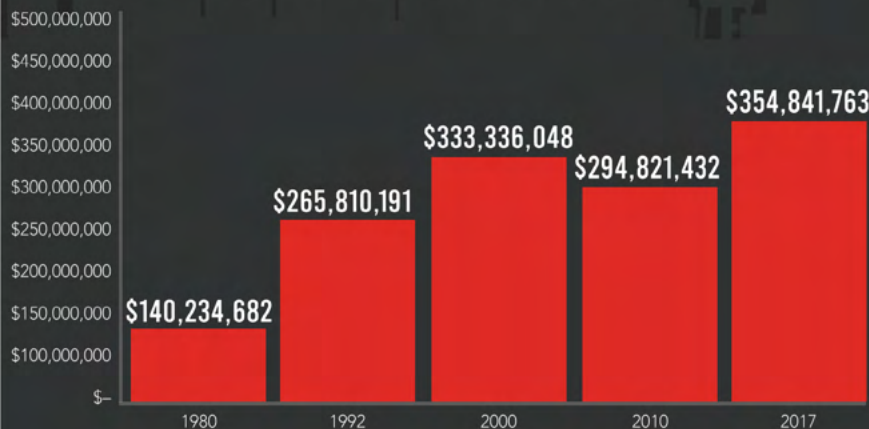
\$1.0 BILLION

\$3,037

1,941

SEATTLE CRIMINAL LEGAL SPENDING: 1980-2017

(ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, IN 2022 DOLLARS)



EVEN AFTER ADJUSTING FOR INFLATION, SPENDING ON THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM IN SEATTLE HAS INCREASED BY 153% SINCE 1980.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION?

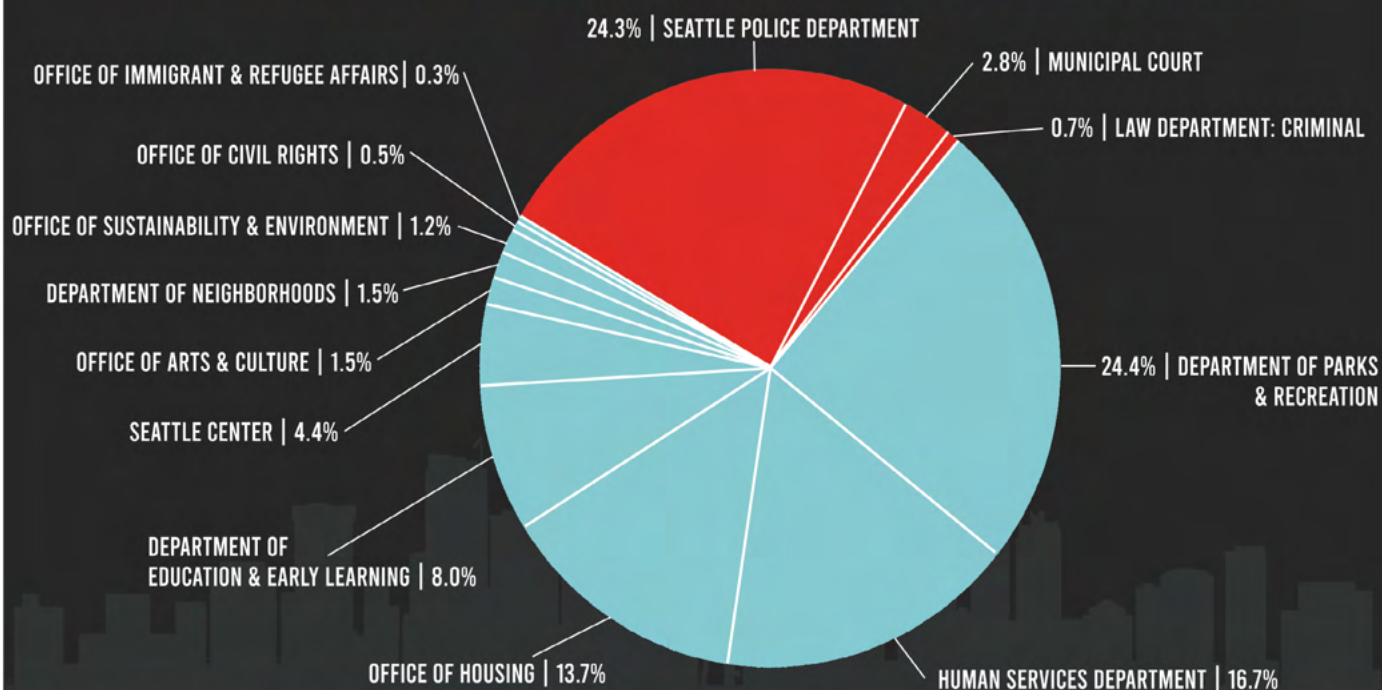
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- Arts and culture
- Equity-focused systems
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SEATTLE 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION AND SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE



INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Seattle Police Department	\$352.0 million	\$355.5 million	1,768
Municipal Court	\$40.0 million	\$40.0 million	206
Law Department: Criminal	\$10.4 million	\$10.4 million	81
TOTAL	\$402 MILLION	\$406 MILLION	2,055

INVESTMENTS INTO SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY CARE

	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	TOTAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING	# OF POSITIONS
Department of Parks & Recreation	\$354.3 million	\$361.1 million	959
Human Services Department	\$241.4 million	\$308.4 million	400
Office of Housing	\$199.2 million	\$208.4 million	51
Department of Education & Early Learning	\$115.9 million	\$121.4 million	119
Seattle Center	\$63.1 million	\$64.7 million	215
Office of Arts & Culture	\$21.5 million	\$21.5 million	40
Department of Neighborhoods	\$21.3 million	\$21.3 million	76
Office of Sustainability & Environment	\$17.9 million	\$17.9 million	32
Office for Civil Rights	\$7.8 million	\$7.8 million	39
Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs	\$4.4 million	\$5.0 million	11
TOTAL	\$1.0 BILLION	\$1.1 BILLION	1,941

METHODOLOGY

Data Sources

Most of the budgetary analysis comes from the 2022 fiscal year operating budgets that are available on the respective city or county websites. For the following jurisdictions, adopted budgets were either unavailable or not structured in a way that allowed for this type of analysis, and thus the recommended budgets were used: Columbus, San Francisco, and Los Angeles County.

Capital expenditures were also included. Sometimes they were included in the operating budgets and sometimes they were included within separate capital budgets on city or county websites.

The longitudinal data for cities and counties come from the *Justice Expenditure and Employment Extracts* compiled by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). Inflation adjustments were made using the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' *CPI-U, All items in U.S. City Average, All Urban Consumers, Not Seasonally Adjusted, Series ID: CUUR0000SA0*.

Data on the number of households per jurisdiction come from the U.S. Census Bureau, *QuickFacts*.

Data Notes

- Generally, the Mass Criminalization System data includes, but is not limited to, what is identifiable within local budgets for the following categories:
 - Police and Sheriff's Departments: for some jurisdictions, this also includes constables
 - Prosecutors' Departments: district attorneys and city attorneys when they have prosecutorial functions
 - Correctional Departments: detention centers and departments of corrections
 - Court Systems: courts that handle criminal matters (responsibilities and nomenclature vary across jurisdictions)
 - Probation Departments: adult probation departments
 - Youth-Focused Systems: juvenile probation, juvenile institutions, juvenile detention centers, juvenile district courts, and juvenile justice services
 - Other Spending on Mass Criminalization and Incarceration: forensic services, pretrial services, and offices of criminal justice/public safety that contribute to criminalization
- Other criminal legal system-related offices and departments, such as those that provide oversight or are working to reduce the size of the criminal legal system, were excluded from this analysis.
- There are some other substantial categories of criminal legal spending that were not included because comparable information for Systems of Community Care could not be identified. They include spending on police pensions and police liability claims.
- Generally, the Systems of Community Care data includes, but is not limited to, what is identifiable within local budgets for the following categories:
 - Mental, Behavioral, and Community Health and Well-Being: public health, health and human services, mental health, and elder-focused departments
 - Wraparound Supports for Youth and Families: child and youth development, family and support services, and human/social services departments
 - Affordable Housing and Community Empowerment: affordable housing policy/construction and community-building or neighborhood services departments
 - Environmental Sustainability: departments specifically focused on addressing environmental degradation and climate change

-
- o Parks and Recreation: departments focused on maintaining local parks and providing recreational activities
 - o Arts and Culture: departments that advance the arts and cultural activities
 - o Equity: departments focused on supporting historically marginalized groups
 - o Community-Based Alternatives to Criminalization and Incarceration: programs that engage in public safety initiatives outside of the criminal legal system
- The data on Systems of Community Care does not include those agencies or departments that either typically have their own separate budgets (e.g., school systems) or are not funded through city governments (e.g., hospital systems). Child welfare systems were also not included because spending on those agencies is not a reliable indicator of the prioritization of community care.
 - The inclusion of a department within one of the community care categories does not necessarily mean that it is operated well or equitably.
 - For both the System of Mass Criminalization and Systems of Community Care, departments were included when it appeared that a substantial portion of their functions were aligned with that particular category. When the relevant functions appeared to be a small percentage of the department's operations, those functions were disaggregated where possible. If it was not possible to disaggregate the relevant functions, that department was excluded from the analysis.
 - Some of the System of Mass Criminalization departments may include functions that would be more appropriately included as part of Systems of Community Care, and vice versa. Those functions were disaggregated where possible, but the available documents did not always allow for that.
 - Where the data provided focuses on "local investment," that indicates that, wherever possible, state, federal, and private contributions to local budgets were deducted so that it could be determined how each city or county was choosing to prioritize its spending of local tax dollars and other local revenues.
 - Where departmental functions had to be disaggregated and/or not all categories of data were available, pro rata shares were used.
 - For the number of departmental employees, the data typically included within local budgets was for the number of full-time employee equivalents (FTEs). Where FTEs were not provided, whatever alternative that was used (e.g., the number of positions) is included instead.
 - The longitudinal spending data includes both direct and intergovernmental expenditures. Direct expenditures include things like salaries for personnel, purchase of supplies, and capital expenditures (construction, equipment, and purchase of land and structures). Intergovernmental expenditures are amounts paid from one government to another—for example, from the state to a county.

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1. Jim Freeman, *Rich Thanks to Racism: How the Ultra-Wealthy Profit from Racial Injustice* (Cornell: 2021), 118-119.
 2. World Prison Brief, accessed August 29, 2022, <https://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest/prison-population-total>.
 3. Communities United, Make the Road-New York, & Padres and Jóvenes Unidos, *The \$3.4 Trillion Mistake: The Cost of Mass Incarceration and Criminalization, and How Justice Reinvestment Can Build a Better Future for All* (2016), <https://fundersforjustice.org/the-cost-mass-incarceration-criminalization-justice-reinvestment-can-build-better-future/>.
 4. Los Angeles Housing Department, <https://housing.lacity.org/housing>.
 5. City of Dallas, Office of Integrated Public Safety Solutions, <https://dallascityhall.com/departments/OIPSS/Pages/default.aspx>.
 6. Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Justice Expenditure and Employment Abstracts*.
 7. Freeman, 123-129.
 8. Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prisoners in 2020 – Statistical Tables*, <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/p20st.pdf>.
 9. Freeman, 129-131.
 10. Freeman, 132-134.
 11. Freeman, 118.
 12. One Million Experiments, <https://millionexperiments.com/>.
 13. E.g., https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/obm/supp_info/2022Budget/2022OverviewFINAL.pdf, 25; <https://media.graphassets.com/6rbjh7qRSF2Y6cYIJx3h>, 87; Ryan Briggs, "Philly to begin hiring an all-new class of unarmed traffic officers this month," WHYY, <https://whyy.org/articles/philly-to-begin-hiring-an-all-new-class-of-unarmed-traffic-officers-this-month/>.

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