

Seattle
Community
Police Commission

May 9, 2023

VIA EMAIL

Dear Councilmember Lisa Herbold,

We are writing to share with you the Seattle Community Police Commission's requests for amendments to the Seattle Police Accountability Ordinance, 125315.

While the City of Seattle and Seattle Police Department (SPD) have made significant progress on addressing unconstitutional policing practices that led to the inception of the Consent Decree in 2012, the work of police oversight and accountability is never finished. The City and SPD must continue addressing racial disparities in policing, use of force in crowd control, and police misconduct accountability structures in the next SPOG contract, among other problems.

With the City and SPD seeking to come out from under the 2012 Consent Decree, from which the Seattle Community Police Commission (CPC) was created, a strong and effective community-based police oversight and accountability system is even more critical to addressing these problems and long-term accountability.

Nearly six years ago, on June 1, 2017, the City adopted the landmark Police Accountability Ordinance 125315. Importantly, the Ordinance strengthened the independence of the Seattle Community Police Commission and made it a permanent entity within Seattle's Police Accountability system alongside the Office of Police Accountability and the Office of the Inspector General.

While the Ordinance is not perfect, we believe the Police Accountability System established under the Ordinance is a national model for community-based police accountability. Having operated under the Ordinance for nearly six-years, the CPC has recently reviewed the Ordinance with consideration toward further strengthening the CPC and the Police Accountability System. To that end, the CPC voted unanimously at its May 3, 2023, public meeting to request that the City adopt changes to the Ordinance as described in the attached document.

We are grateful for your partnership in this work, and look forward to working with you to update the 2017 Police Accountability Ordinance to improve and strengthen community-based police oversight and accountability in Seattle.

Sincerely,



Reverend Patricia Hunter, Co-Chair



Reverend Harriett Walden, Co-Chair



Joel Merkel, Co-Chair

CC:

Councilmember Andrew J. Lewis
Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda
Councilmember Sara Nelson
Councilmember Alex Pedersen
Mayor Bruce Harrell
Tim Burgess
Andrew Myerberg
OPA Director Gino Betts, Jr.
Inspector General Lisa Judge
Chief Adrien Diaz