

Abstract

Research Paper: Social Justice Approaches to Sustainability: A Qualitative Analysis Exploring the Costs and Benefits to the *De-fund the Police Initiative* in Washington Park, Chicago, IL

Student: Natalee DeJohnette

Degree: Master of Urban and Regional Planning

College: Estopinal College of Architecture and Planning

Date: July 2021

Pages: 51

Recent nationwide demonstrations against police brutality and institutional racism perceptions in law enforcement have sparked renewed controversy concerning the United States criminal justice system. Much of this debate has been centered on the notion of defunding the police. It is an issue of how the often-astronomical police budget can be divested and reinvested in other essential sectors rather than funding the institution. This study details public views on defunding the police forces, allocating fewer funds for police departments, and redirecting more money for essential public safety and healthcare systems. Proponents of defunding the police campaign have raised concerns due to police officers' frustration and brutality. Law enforcement officers respond to various social problems, including homelessness, mental health crises, or substance use, heightening their chances of interaction and conflict with the public. Proponents of defunding the police campaign argue that nonenforcement policies are often more effective than policing in solving such community problems. This study also describes current police roles that could be reassigned to other community associates to deter crimes. In general, it explains the benefits of divesting police funds and reallocating such funds to community services. *Keywords:* Defund the police, social justice, social sustainability, social services, health, security, quality of life, qualitative analysis