

## **WHAT IS THE NEW OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SAFETY (OCS) AND WHAT IMPACT WILL IT HAVE ON PUBLIC SAFETY?**

### **How it Came About**

- In 2020, the killing of George Floyd and the ensuing public outrage and unrest led to calls from the public and city leaders for police reform and, from some quarters, the defunding of the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD)
- Changes to the Minneapolis Charter resulting from a 2021 ballot initiative led to major changes in city government structure
- Recommendations from Mayor Frey's Working Groups on "Public Safety" and "Government Structure" led to the proposed Office of Community Safety (OCS)

### **What Does the Proposed New Office of Community Safety Look Like?**

- It includes Police, Fire, 911(MECC), Emergency Management and the new Neighborhood Safety Department (which includes the Office of Violence Prevention (OPI) and the Behavior Crisis Response Teams)
- Cedric Alexander is the first Minneapolis Commissioner of Community Safety; he reports directly to the Mayor

### **What Are the Benefits and Controversial Aspects of the Proposed OCS?**

#### Benefits:

- Direct and clear lines of reporting, authority, and responsibility will help with police reform and accountability
- Frequent meetings of departments heads
- Better communication and synergies among department's operations
- Clear lines of responsibilities and communications during crisis/citywide emergencies

#### Controversial aspects:

- Disagreement among city council members and between some of them and the mayor whether the police department should be part of OCS or a stand alone department. Some wish to wait until reform of the MPD has been proven
- Disagreement as to whether the pilot Behavior Crisis Response Teams are ready to be ramped up to full operational status, or should remain in the OPI for at least another year

### **What Is the Status of the OCS?**

- It is part of the Mayor's proposed new government structure
- It is waiting for the ordinances that will define it and make it operational
- Ordinances are adopted by the City Council and approved or vetoed by the Mayor

- It is also possible that changes to the Charter may be needed (that is unclear at this time)

### **2023/2024 Budget Allocations**

- Five personnel positions will be added to the OCS to facilitate the start up and carry out future functions of the new office
- \$1M for MPD technology advancements
- \$6M for violence prevention programs
- \$4.35M for Behavioral Crisis Response services
- Increases to Fire, 911 and Emergency Management

### **Future Goals of the OCS**

- Develop innovative recruitment measures to solve MPD staffing shortages
- Use technology advances and add alternative (to armed police) responses to address community safety.
- Increase capacity of the BCR teams, develop other programs to address drug/overdose.

(I can add supporting docs later)