



City of Malden Massachusetts

POLICE DEPARTMENT

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The Malden Police Department appreciates the opportunity to review the Police Community Advisory Council's Annual Recommendation Report and to provide feedback from an operational law enforcement perspective. Overall, the report reflects a sincere and thoughtful effort by the Council to engage constructively with both the department and the broader Malden community. The balance of the report, along with its acknowledgment of the department's professionalism, accreditation efforts, and officer participation in community engagement, is noted and appreciated.

That said, several aspects of the report raise concerns related to feasibility, staffing capacity, and structural constraints that are important to document and consider as discussions continue.

First, with respect to workforce demographics and recruitment, the report appropriately identifies slight disparities between the demographics of the City of Malden and those of the Police Department. However, it does not fully account for the limitations imposed by the Massachusetts Civil Service system. While recruitment and outreach efforts are important and will continue, hiring outcomes are largely determined by external factors such as civil service examination participation, ranking, residency preferences, and certified eligibility lists. These statutory and procedural requirements significantly limit flexibility in hiring decisions, regardless of departmental intent or effort. Without acknowledging this framework, there is a risk of creating expectations that are not achievable in the short term. We have collaborated with the Chinese Culture Connection and welcomed them to the MPD just a short time ago. Part of the conversation revolved around individuals taking the Civil Service entrance exam.

Second, the recommendation that departmental data be shared in its raw form, without analysis, presents practical challenges. Raw law-enforcement data frequently lacks the context necessary for accurate interpretation and may lead to misunderstandings or misleading conclusions. A more sustainable and effective approach, in my opinion, involves structured data summaries. This method provides appropriate context while addressing transparency goals.

Third, the recommendation to add a second mental health clinician is well-founded and aligns with the operational realities faced by patrol officers. In 2024, Malden PD was the 15th busiest Public Safety Access Point (PSAP 911 terminals) in the state, receiving over a thousand more 911 calls than Somerville. Calls involving behavioral health crises continue to place significant

demands on the department. At the same time, implementation of this recommendation is dependent on funding availability, hiring timelines, and the availability of qualified clinicians. In fact, in 2025, the state came very close to eliminating the grants that pay for our clinician. Even with expanded clinical resources, patrol officers will continue to serve as first responders in many of these situations due to call volume and response-time requirements.

We are still fighting for a second and/or third clinician, but as I stated, funding is lacking and hiring is a challenge as there is a significant shortage of clinicians at this point in time.

Fourth, the recommendation to track or code calls involving unhoused individuals, while well intentioned, presents operational complexity. Many incidents involve overlapping issues, including mental health concerns, medical emergencies, substance use, and quality-of-life matters. There is also a human element where individuals may or may not be offended by asking them about their housing status, or an officer assuming someone is homeless based on their current situation. Having said that, in the best interest of those individuals in need of services, we are communicating with our Records Management System (RMS) provider to look into creating a searchable code that indicates potential homelessness.

The recommendation to designate a single point of contact within the department to coordinate communication with the PCAC is reasonable and may improve consistency and efficiency. I will have an officer permanently assigned to the PCAC meetings.

Finally, the traffic analysis accurately identifies areas of concern, particularly along Route 60 and Route 99. These corridors experience high traffic volumes and significant commuter and through-traffic, which can limit the effectiveness of enforcement alone. The number one predictor of an accident is that the large majority of them happen at intersections. Volume, of course, contributes to that significantly. Congestion and frequent crashes often require officers to prioritize response and roadway clearance, reducing the staffing and time available for proactive traffic enforcement. When utilizing traffic statistics in a year-to-year comparison, 2021 through 2023 skews most statistics. As a direct result of COVID-19, those years are highly anomalous. There was a much lower volume of traffic during that time frame. In 2024, traffic volume had largely returned to pre-pandemic levels making 2024/2025 data more comparable to pre-2020 data than 2021/2022 data. I have also been informed that some traffic statistics may have some unintended research errors which is being looked into for clarity.

In summary, the PCAC report provides a constructive starting point for continued dialogue. Several recommendations would benefit from deeper consideration of legal frameworks, staffing realities, and resource limitations that shape daily operational needs. Ongoing engagement between the Malden Police Department and the Police Community Advisory

Council, grounded in these operational constraints, will be essential to maintaining realistic expectations and ensuring that proposed initiatives are both effective and sustainable.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chief Glenn Cronin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first word "Chief" being more prominent and larger than the rest.

Chief Glenn Cronin