

Safe Streets Advocacy Groups Join Growing Movement to Cut Police Spending

- By [Christian MilNeil](#)
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Boston Police Captain John Danilecki at a white supremacist rally in downtown Boston last summer. Photo courtesy of John O'Donnell (@ODonnell4NH) via Twitter.

In a letter sent yesterday to Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, three large advocacy groups for safer streets – the [LivableStreets Alliance](#), [Boston Cyclists Union](#), and [WalkBoston](#) – called on the City of Boston to remove the Boston Police Department (BPD) from the city’s Vision Zero Task Force, reduce the BPD’s annual budget, and “reallocate resources for social programs designed to strengthen communities.”

“We believe Boston is capable of achieving zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries on our streets,” states [the letter from the three organizations](#). “However, we will not have achieved our goal of safe streets if officer-initiated enforcement remains a tenet of Boston’s Vision Zero

Action Plan, and furthermore, if Boston police officers are not held accountable for engaging in racist and aggressive tactics.”

The letter also singles out BPD Capt. John Danilecki, who currently represents the BPD on the City’s Vision Zero Task Force. [Danilecki was filmed assaulting counter-protesters](#) at a white supremacist rally in Boston last August.

“It is unacceptable for an officer who engages in brutal tactics against civilians to be the liaison between BPD and those of us who are fighting to make our streets safer,” wrote the three organizations, who are demanding that Capt. Danilecki be removed from the city’s Vision Zero Task Force.

The letter brings local safe streets advocates into a growing coalition of groups who are asking city officials to reduce police funding as a consequence of widely-publicized incidents of police violence in recent weeks.

City Councils across the Commonwealth are analyzing municipal budgets right now in preparation for the new fiscal year.

In an online hearing of the [Cambridge City Council](#) on Monday, hundreds of residents spoke in favor of reducing that city’s police department funding, and in Boston, the Muslim Justice League, Families for Justice as Healing, Youth Justice and Power Union, and other groups [are calling for a \\$40 million reduction in the BPD’s budget](#) to fund improved social services instead.

[Read the full text of the letter here.](#)