



STOP COP CITY CORPORATE CAMPAIGN

WEEK OF ACTION TOOLKIT – JANUARY 15-21

Organize a protest in your community to demand corporations stop investing in police violence!

From January 15-21 people across the United States will stage protests at Home Depot, UPS, and other corporate targets to demand that they stop collaborating with Cop City in Atlanta.

The Atlanta Police Foundation is attempting to build a militarized police training site known as “Cop City.” Police from all over the country would be trained in repressive tactics used most often against communities of color. Cop City would also host police exchanges with Israel and other foreign governments with a history of human rights violations and brutality against civilians.

The construction of Cop City would destroy much of the city's largest urban forest, warming nearby majority Black neighborhoods by as much as 10 degrees. Similar projects are being considered in other cities.

Unaccountable private corporations are funding the Atlanta Police Foundation. Join us to demand that UPS, Home Depot, and other corporations stop funding and profiting from police violence and environmental destruction!

DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER YOUR EVENT AT

[AFSC.ORG/COPCITYACTION](https://afsc.org/copcityaction)

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WHY NOW?

Join the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the coalition of Stop Cop City in Atlanta, faith leaders, and communities across the country for a national week of action as we come together to keep one another safe. We need to keep corporate donors out of local government and policing, demilitarize the police, and call on localities to invest public dollars in addressing the root causes of violence instead! We are organizing these actions in solidarity with the mass movement against Cop City in Atlanta, but also because we need to show organized opposition to these projects before they take root in our communities elsewhere.

Corporations like Home Depot and UPS are giving millions of dollars to the Atlanta Police Foundation (APF). If corporate support dries up, the project will not be able to continue.

The Home Depot (NYSE: HD), of Atlanta, is a publicly traded multinational retailer. It has [donated](#) at least \$361,500 to APF between 2016 and 2022 and is listed as a corporate sponsor for the Foundation's [September](#) 2023 event. The company's vice president of technology, Daniel Grider, [sits](#) on the APF Board of Trustees.

UPS (NYSE: UPS), of Atlanta, [donated](#) \$1 million to the APF in 2022. It sponsored the Foundation's [May](#), [September](#), and [November](#) 2023 events, and its executive vice president, Norm Brothers, [sits](#) on the APF Board of Trustees.

You can find the full list of Cop City contractors and APF donors and sponsors at <https://afsc.org/companies-and-foundations-behind-cop-city>

Our points of unity

- Center the voices and leadership of those most affected by police violence and environmental devastation.
- Uphold a commitment to nonviolence during the actions on this day.
- Take guidance from core messages offered in this toolkit.

Together, we demand these corporations:

- Publicly commit to withholding resources and funding from Cop City.
- End all collaboration with the Atlanta Police Foundation and all other police foundations.
- Invest in the building blocks of true community safety by paying good wages to their workers, paying their fair share of taxes, and adopting sustainable and socially responsible business practices.

HOW TO DESIGN A POWERFUL ACTION

During the week of action, we are calling on everyone to protest at Home Depot, UPS, and other corporations involved in Cop City and APF.

Here are some ideas to help you plan:

PLANNING

- **Identify your target.**
 - **You can find a UPS store near you at:**
<https://www.theupsstore.com/tools/find-a-store>
 - **You can find a Home Depot near you at:**
<https://www.homedepot.com/l/storeDirectory>
 - **You can find the full list of corporate targets at:**
<https://afsc.org/companies-and-foundations-behind-cop-city>
- **Research your location ahead of time if you can.** If you haven't already been to the store, stop by ahead of time just to get a sense of where you might stage the protest, what the security is like in the building, and anything else it would be good to know before your action.
- **Find allies:** Who are your existing partners in this work? Who should be involved? Reach out to them early so they can be part of the planning if they would like to be.
- **Assess your resources:** What skills does your group have? How many people will participate? How much money and supplies do you have access to?
- **Make an action plan:** Think through the action from start to finish. Assign action roles, make a time schedule, list supplies and equipment needed, and finalize logistics. Make backup plans just in case!
- **No action is too big or too small!** If you live in a rural area or an area where there is not yet much opposition to (or awareness of) Cop City, even five people delivering this message at their local store can help show that people across the country support these demands.

PROGRAM

- **Plan** what you want your action to be like beforehand. Identify speakers, an emcee, and any other elements you might want (music, prayer, street theater, etc.)

ACTIONS

- **Hold a protest, rally, or vigil** in front of Home Depot, UPS, or one of the other corporations supporting Cop City.
- **Include visuals to clearly communicate our demands.** We want everyone – event attendees, media, elected officials, social media followers, and others – to understand the depth of our conviction and what we’re asking them to do.
- **Deliver a letter highlighting our demands.** You can find a sample letter on page 10
- **Don’t forget to take photos and video and share on social media!** Use the hashtag #StopCopCity. Please also send us photos of your protest along with the location to socialmedia@afsc.org

POST-ACTION

- **Debrief the action:** What were the action highlights? Where was there room for improvement?
- **Follow up:** Reach out to participants and members – keep them updated. Make follow up calls to media – get the story out. Provide jail support if necessary and keep track of ongoing legal issues.

SPREAD THE WORD!

Now that you've decided what you're doing and when, it's time to invite others to join you.

Register your event at: afsc.org/CopCityAction so others know there is an event in their area.

You can also create a Facebook event to reach more people in your networks. Download social media graphics and posters at afsc.org/CopCityAction

Use the hashtag **#STOPCOPCITY**

Here's some promotional language you can adapt for your event.

Sample Invitation/Facebook language

Protest [Home Depot/UPS] for investing in police violence!
January [date and time]
[Location]

Join the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the coalition of Stop Cop City in Atlanta, faith leaders, and communities across the country for a national week of action. We will stand together to keep one another safe—and to keep corporate donors out of local government and policing, to demilitarize the police, and call on localities to invest public dollars in addressing the root causes of violence instead!

Corporations like Home Depot and UPS are giving millions to police foundations, including the Atlanta Police Foundation that is attempting build a militarized police training site known as “Cop City.” Police from all over the country would be trained in repressive tactics used most often against communities of color. The construction of Cop City would destroy much of the city's largest urban forest, warming nearby majority Black neighborhoods by as much as 10 degrees. Similar projects are being considered in other cities.

CONTACTING THE MEDIA

One important way to amplify the effect of your action is to get the press to cover it. To get reporters there, you have to let them know in advance.

You can modify the template below to create your own media advisory. The media advisory should be emailed to reporters in your area several days before the event, and then followed up with calls to make sure they got it and to encourage them to attend.

Tips for contacting reporters:

- Email the media advisory (see the template below) to the reporter with a personal note at the top. Paste the advisory in the body of the email. If you don't have a reporter's email you can look up their news desk online.
- After you have emailed, follow up by phone to make sure they received it.
- When they answer, you can say something like "Hello, my name is [your name] and I am calling on behalf of [your organization]. I'm calling to follow up on the advisory I sent you about a protest at [location]. Did you receive the release?" If they say no, ask if you can resend and confirm the correct email address. If you get a voicemail, you can just leave a message with the event details.
- If you do get a real person, tell them a little bit about the details of the event and why they should come to cover it. Try to get a commitment from them to report on it. If they are not sure, ask them when you can follow up.
- Reporters get a ton of calls and emails, so they'll be trying to rush you. Make sure you're prepared to resend the release if they didn't get it. Don't feel bad if it seems like they are blowing you off, just be as polite and persistent as you can be!

MEDIA ADVISORY TEMPLATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press contact: Name, Phone, Email

Protests planned at [Home Depot/UPS/Other] for involvement in Cop City

[A subheading further describing event can go here if needed]

CITY (DATE) - On Jan. [date], residents of [state] will be holding a rally at [UPS/Home Depot] to protest their support of the Atlanta Police Foundation and the construction of Cop City. The city of Atlanta wants to build a \$90 million police training facility. If constructed, “Cop City” would be one of the largest militarized police training centers in the country—all built by destroying a vital urban forest.

Atlanta residents have mobilized in huge numbers to petition the city to stop the project. And now people across the country are taking action by protesting the corporate sponsors and contractors who are enabling this massive and expensive expansion of militarized policing. [Choose sentence relevant to your target: The Home Depot has [donated](#) at least \$361,500 to APF between 2016 and 2022 and is listed as a corporate sponsor for the Foundation’s [September](#) 2023 event. The company’s vice president of technology, Daniel Grider, [sits](#) on the APF Board of Trustees. / UPS [donated](#) \$1 million to the APF in 2022. It sponsored the Foundation’s [May](#), [September](#), and [November](#) 2023 events, and its executive vice president, Norm Brothers, [sits](#) on the APF Board of Trustees.

This action in [your city/town] is part of a national week of action demanding that corporations stop supporting police violence. The week of action is organized by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), a Quaker organization that has worked in Atlanta for decades.

What: Name of the event

Who: Speakers/participants and their organizational affiliations/participants and their organizational affiliations

When: Date and time

Where: Address and any specific details that folks will need to get there

Visuals: [Include a note about the great photo opportunity you’re creating for the press]

For more information about Cop City, visit <http://afsc.org/stopcopcity>

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[A short description of your organization can go here]

The American Friends Service Committee is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace and humanitarian service. Its work is based on the belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice

MESSAGING GUIDE

This messaging guide is designed to unify our message and impact while avoiding narratives that don't help our cause. It can be adapted to your local context.

Cop City will fuel the criminalization of marginalized people and further expand the carceral system – in Atlanta and around the world. Cop City will allow police not just from Atlanta, but globally, to learn repressive tactics, so that protests and rebellions can be easily crushed. According to the original proposal, 43% of the training at Cop City will be for officers outside of Atlanta, including military training with the infamous Israeli Defense Forces.

Private sector corporations—which are not accountable to the public—are funding the Atlanta Police Foundation and enabling the Cop City project. The overall budget for the project is \$90 million, of which \$31 million comes from the city's budget. The rest of the money is supposed to come from private donations funneled through the Atlanta Police Foundation (APF).

We demand these corporations:

- Publicly commit to withholding resources and funding from Cop City.
- End all collaboration with the Atlanta Police Foundation and all other police foundations.
- Invest in the building blocks of true community safety by paying good wages to their workers, paying their fair share of taxes, and adopting sustainable and socially responsible business practices.

Pressuring corporations is working and we need to keep the pressure building! Facing mounting public pressure, some companies that were involved in Cop City have already [divested](#) from the project, including Reeves Young Construction, Quality Glass Company, and Atlas Technical Consultants.

Cop City is bad for the climate. Cop City is slated to be built in the largest green space in Atlanta. The Weelaunee Forest is [one of four “lungs” of Atlanta](#) and destroying the forest's tree canopy will accelerate the urban heat island effect. The area, which is surrounded by mostly Black residents who are at or below the poverty line, [could experience up to 10 degrees of warming](#). Forests in Atlanta absorb as much as [19](#)

[million pounds](#) of air pollutants each year. The sewage pollution in the South River has been a major issue for over a decade, and in 2021 it was named [one of the most endangered rivers in America](#). Building Cop City would exacerbate this pollution, adding lead from gun shells and bombs to the list of pollutants in the river.

Cop City faces intense public backlash. A coalition of organizations—including the Movement for Black Lives, Black Voters Matter, Southerners on New Ground, the Working Families Party, CASA, Georgia Conservation Voters, and AFSC—were part of a referendum campaign to let the voters decide the fate of Cop City. Over two months, our coalition collected more than 116,000 voter signatures—nearly double the number required for a referendum. That’s more than the number of people who voted in Atlanta’s last mayoral election.

SAMPLE DEMAND LETTER

Dear [Home Depot/UPS/other corporation],

As employers and service and product providers, corporations are part of our communities. But it is not their role to set public policy, and it does not serve the public good for corporations to get involved in policing. That's why we were disappointed to learn about your connection to the Atlanta Police Foundation and to the "Cop City" project in Atlanta.

If constructed, Cop City would be one of the largest militarized police training centers in the United States. Plans include military-grade training facilities, a mock city in which to practice urban warfare, and more. Police from all over the country would be trained in repressive tactics frequently turned on communities of color. That includes police exchanges with foreign governments with a history of human rights violations and brutality against civilians.

Cop City would also destroy much of the Weelaunee Forest, Atlanta's largest green space, warming nearby majority Black neighborhoods by as much as 10 degrees.

Prisons and policing do not keep us safe or prevent violence. They don't help survivors of harm heal. Instead, these institutions undermine human and civil rights, disproportionately targeting and harming poor people and people of color. Don't let this be your philanthropic legacy.

As someone who cares deeply about community safety, we urge you to:

- Publicly commit to withholding resources and funding from Cop City.
- End all collaboration with the Atlanta Police Foundation and all other police foundations.
- Invest in the building blocks of true community safety by paying good wages to your workers, paying your fair share of taxes, and adopting sustainable and socially responsible business practices.

A growing number of individual investors, foundations, endowments, pension funds, and corporations are refusing to be complicit in police violence and mass incarceration. Many are eager to work with grassroots organizations to uplift economic growth that is sustainable and just. We urge you to join them.

Sincerely,

[List of participating organizations/groups in your local action]

DAY OF ACTION CHECKLIST

Materials to have on hand

- Banners, posters, and other visuals
- Flyer to give to passersby explaining the action
- Fully charged phones to document the event and stay in touch with organizers
- Bullhorn or sound system
- “Just in case” box (Contents of box: packing or duct tape, scissors, stapler, huge markers, sidewalk chalk, extra paper, first aid kit)

Suggested roles

- Emcee: Welcomes attendees, introduces speakers, and facilitates program.
- Speakers: A few people who can speak directly to the situation in Atlanta and why we must stop cop city.
- Security/police liaisons: Help keep participants safe by directing them to correct locations; isolates provocateurs from the event attendees; liaises with police if they appear.
- Marshalls: Keep event participants focused on the event and direct the movement of the group, block traffic if marching
- Press point person: Greets press, gets their contact information, explains the program to the press, and then directs them to people to be interviewed.
- Documenting: Takes pictures/video
- Song/Chant/Activity leaders: A couple of people who can confidently (not necessarily the best singers but have confidence) sing the song or chant the chant first and then lead attendees.

More questions? Need support? You can reach out to Tim Franzen at our Atlanta office at TFranzen@afsc.org or by phone at 404-414-5521.