

From: [Bernadette Janet](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#); [Commissioner Mapps](#); [Commissioner Rubio](#); [Commissioner Hardesty](#); [Commissioner Ryan Office](#)
Subject: [User Approved] Agenda item 825-Testimony Regarding the Use of \$62 million surplus
Date: Tuesday, November 16, 2021 8:01:56 AM

Testimony to Portland City Council on the City of Portland Budget, Year-Round Testimony.

Current Proposal Status: City of Portland Budget Year-Round Testimony at Portland City Council. Public record is open.

I recommend that all excess budget funds be used for housing and homeless services. The behavior of the city of Portland's program to enforce property maintenance was created for racist reasons and is currently being wielded as a sword to drive vulnerable people out of their homes. This program has allowed complaints by malicious racist people to drive people of color out of their neighborhood for minor offences that have penalties which then balloon into thousands of dollars, as shown by the Ombudsman's report. Please read this entire article and the Ombudsman's report: 11-3-21 **Homeowners of color bear brunt of Portland program enforcing property maintenance rules.** <https://www.opb.org/article/2021/11/03/portland-program-enforcing-property-maintenance-rules-hits-people-of-color/>; <https://www.portland.gov/ombudsman/news/2021/11/3/citys-reliance-complaints-property-maintenance-enforcement>. This report, which was issued on Wednesday November 3, 2021, finds that the city system for enforcing property maintenance rules deliberately and disproportionately pushes homeowners of color living in rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods into debt.

I respectfully request that excess funds in the budget be used to pay all existing fines attached to the property of veterans, older, disabled, unemployed homeowners and homeowners of color, that all liens be removed and that remaining dollars go to both Habitats for Humanity and Taking Ownership PDX.org for repairs and home/yard maintenance of these properties. These fines are racially targeted, unconscionable attacks against vulnerable people of color meant to force them out of gentrifying neighborhoods.

Furthermore I request that permanent public toilets be installed throughout the city, particularly where feces have been found in public areas, creating a health hazard for all and demonstrating a callous disregard for the basic sanitary needs of the homeless population. Shower, hand washing and laundry facilities must also be provided to prevent the spread of gangrene and other preventable diseases which impair the health of homeless populations. Garbage pickup services must be provided for encampments with these excess funds as the homeless have no access to waste services like those enjoyed by homeowners. Should you find these funds are insufficient to produce these results, you have received sufficient money from the federal government recently to be devoted to homelessness problems. I suggest you consider that no city which considers itself civilized should continue to allow such conditions to exist. I personally know of three people who have decided to move out of state rather than continue to watch city council and the mayor's ineffectiveness with regard to these issues.

It is unacceptable to use *any* of these funds to support the Portland Police Bureau. PPB is currently not in compliance with a federal consent decree caused by PPB's pattern of excessive force against mentally ill persons. <https://www.courthousenews.com/protesters-gather-after-portland-police-fatally-shoot-man-in-city-park/>. How can any of you forget that in 2019 PPB killed five people in mental health crisis situations. <https://www.opb.org/article/2021/10/16/mingus-mapps-proposes-doubling-portland-police-behavioral-unit-social-services/>; <https://www.opb.org/news/article/portland-police-doj-agreement-federal-judge-decision/>. I urge you to instead redirect funds you intend to go to the PPB and instead promote the expansion of the highly effective

Portland Street Response throughout the city. <https://www.opb.org/article/2021/10/05/portland-street-response-oregon-911-police-alternative/>.

Thank you.

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Bernadette Janét

Books are a form of political action.

Books are knowledge.

Books are reflection.

Books change your mind.

- Toni Morrison -

'If not us, then who? If not now, then when?' -inscribed over a doorway in Nashville, where students first refused to leave lunch counters during the Civil Rights movement

I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. I will not refuse to do the something I can do. -- Helen Keller