

**From:** [melly belly](#)  
**To:** [Wheeler, Mayor](#); [Commissioner Hardesty](#); [Commissioner Rubio](#); [Commissioner Ryan Office](#); [Commissioner Mapps](#); [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
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**Subject:** Budget Surplus  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 16, 2021 2:07:05 PM

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Dear Mayor Wheeler and Council Members,

It is my hope that instead of focusing on additional funds for PPB for either hiring more police officers or the body cam needs, it is my hope that the police commissioner and council members realize that and correct the missteps of ignoring the call to adequately justify the \$211 million that was reduced but not as greatly as the 35,000 citizens requested in 2020. Where did their money go that they cannot afford body cams? If the city gives the PPB more money will they then in turn use surveillance and high tech that are not adequately regulated against the public? What has the PPB done with its money? Why does the police commissioner insist that the money has been drained so deeply? Was it because of the money given to the victims of the harm that the police had done? Where does that money come from when the council awards this money? That's millions of dollars. When will this endless cycle of harm.suing the city, and then millions of dollars gone per year happen with non stop perpetual motion? What has PPB done with the money in the budget? I ask the city to audit the use and act on the misuse of funds and monitor this heavily into the over \$220 million awarded for 2022.

Surplus budget uses should instead go to any of the following :

1. Clean air. <https://www.opb.org/article/2021/10/21/portland-cully-neighborhood-fight-for-clean-air/>

Cully has a high number of BIPOC residents. Please give action to BLM and facilitate clean air in BIPOC neighborhoods.

2. Reverse urban renewal gentrification and invest in the residents of Portland. All of the residents and even suburban residents just outside of Portland fell behind and became ignored. Urban renewal created a who can we get here mantra and strayed from the wellbeing of residents. Reverse the action. Give residents the ability to invest in the local economy by easing the cost of housing and transportation for residents. Covid has made residents more valuable to the city or this should be viewed that way. Residents should have always been the number one priority and tourists secondary, but urban renewal created the opposite effect. Reverse this very wrong trend. Businesses now need the resident and it's your job to connect the two entities.

3. Speaking of covid :

<https://portlandnewspaper.com/oregon-news/09/16/2021/study-shows-bipoc-disproportionately-impacted-by-covid/>

BLM should not be just words or be treated like a fashion statement. There's many reports that prove harm in 2021 still exists for the BIPOC community and the pandemic is not over.

4. Stress creates mental illness. It's not good enough to recognize that mental illness numbers are up. It's time for any council member to recognize that stress levels are also too high and the city should invest in lowering stress of the residents and anyone that comes to Portland on a regular basis.

5. East Portland's disparities are not gone. More resources are needed for East Portland residents.

6. The city could buy land and take that land off of the market for housing or for creating businesses that could have supplies not dictated by the market so that reform on stability can

be fostered.

7. Use the money to enhance the Portland Street Response on both the numbers of the team and broadening their location.

8. Use the money to create TriMet free rides. There's too much car usage and not enough public transportation usage. This would help with the recent inflation trend.

9. Use the money to help the community at large with covid that is not going away and to feel connected and good about supporting each other. This was a problem covid has magnified. The general feeling is one must get through covid alone because of the way the system had already been working. Reverse the go it alone trend or the endless need for mutual aid done by residents who are burdened more than the city would be if it stepped up to help.

10. Clean drinking water.

11. Public school renovation in underserved areas. Public schools are not private and they should be **EQUITABLY RUN**.

I know each of your offices have already seen this well written piece but as you vote, here's the reminder as to why it's not the quantity but the quality of the police that truly should be valued. Give quality law enforcement officers to **SERVE AND PROTECT** both businesses and **ALL** people not just serving and protecting some of them.

<https://www.portlandmercury.com/blogtown/2021/11/09/36865079/portlands-crime-rate-isnt-impacted-by-size-of-police-force-data-finds>

Thank you for your time on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

Mel Scot who is both a frequent Portland commuter and partner to a BIPOC Portland resident

*"People pay for what they do, and still more for what they have allowed themselves to become. And they pay for it very simply; by the lives they lead."*

*- James Baldwin*