

From: [Wendy Gehring](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Cc: [Commissioner Mapps](#); commrubio@portlandoregon.gov; [Commissioner Hardesty](#); [Commissioner Ryan Office](#)
Subject: [User Approved] Regarding the use of \$62 million surplus
Date: Tuesday, November 16, 2021 4:05:15 PM

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.

TO: City Council, Portland, OR

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 has allowed complaints by malicious racist people to drive people of color out of their neighborhood for minor offenses that have penalties which then balloon into thousands of dollars. Please read this 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 into debt homeowners of color living in rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods.

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 Habitat for Humanity and Taking Ownership PDX.org for repairs, home and 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 consideration be given to installing permanent public toilets, shower, hand-washing, and laundry facilities, and garbage pickup throughout the city. Such actions would help clean up our city and improve the lives and health of our vulnerable homeless citizens. 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 would continue to allow our current conditions to be unaddressed.

I strongly object and find it 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/>. I urge you to 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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