

From: [Elizabeth Hawthorne](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#); [Commissioner Mapps](#); [Commissioner Rubio](#); [Commissioner Hardesty](#); [Commissioner Ryan Office](#)
Subject: Budget
Date: Wednesday, November 17, 2021 11:19:40 AM

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SUBJECT: Agenda Item 825--Testimony to Portland City Council on the City of Portland Budget, Year-Round Testimony.

To Mayor Wheeler* and City Council Members Ryan, Mapps, Rios and Hardesty,

We moved to Portland in 2011 and watched the city grow and suddenly watched it deteriorate to the point of being undesirable. We are trying to sell our home in the city with no success at a significantly lower price than what we paid for it in 2017. The problems in the city (racism evidenced in housing, schooling, health care, and policing, homeless citizens, crime, trash) are long-standing and have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

Throughout all this, I have not seen any leadership, creative problem solving or meaningful action by any of you addressed in this letter or your recent predecessors.

Now you have a budget surplus which is great news. It is my understanding that you are

seriously considering directing significant funds to the police bureau. I am a supporter of proper policing but this **police department** needs reform and a change of culture and needs to earn any additional funding through positive actions supporting all communities in the city.

Further, underlying many of our city problems is the **failure of cooperation** among city bureaus including the police department for which each of you is culpable.

The funds should be spent to **ameliorate the living conditions** of our citizens; mobilizing developers and community organizations to renovate and build decent housing including facilities for necessary mental health and other services. Please provide proper sanitary facilities throughout the city for our homeless citizens as well as routinely-emptied trash containers. Hire some of these folks to ameliorate their hopefully temporary situations.

I urge you to address the inconceivable property maintenance law causing unbelievable financial burdens on people of color especially. Use some of the funds to pay those fines or just cancel them and change the rules about how the commission administering the rules is funded). Find out how these people can be helped to address maintenance issues on their homes so that they can stay in their homes. Do they need help? Do they need financial support?

Crime

appears to be growing. I fear as a resident of the Pearl I will sound like yet another 'rich white person' whining (a problem in Portland to be sure), but additional crime in the Pearl and the Alphabet District directly impacts businesses which deserve to be protected. Are the crimes being committed because it is a lawless place (so it's easy to commit crimes and not be held accountable) or because people are desperate and need help? Whatever the facts, it is your job to address and fix the problems.

Thank you for your service. I urge you to make it count for all communities in Portland.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Hawthorne

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*Where is the mayor's email address?