

From: [Jenna Goldin](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: Public comment re: Recent \$40m budget towards "Homeless Services"
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 7:41:12 AM

To whom it may concern:

My name is Jenna Goldin. I have lived in Portland, OR for upwards of 20 years. I am a business owner and activist and have spent the past 14 months doing direct outreach with about 75 houseless folks in North Portland on a weekly basis. I have utilized the JOHS supply center when anyone could get supplies to redistribute. I formed a 501c3 so I could continue to access the site when it was closed to the public and switched from a weekly schedule to a biweekly schedule. I have helped other individuals and mutual aid groups access JOHS by collaborating with 501c3's in Portland. I have personally handed out sleeping bags, tents, medical supply kits, water, books, flashlights, clean needles, sharps kits, clothing, made fliers for folks to get their taxes prepared and get gift cards for vaccines. I have made hundreds of sandwiches, purchased food from local BIPOC-owned businesses when the funds were available to distribute to folks. I have collaborated with the Portland Street Medicine team to provide medical support to the folks I work with on a biweekly basis. All of this with little to no budget and in collaboration with individuals throughout the Portland area. Given all that, I have to say that I am completely disgusted with how the city has "supported" our houseless community. The recent \$40M surplus is another grotesque and totally off-base show of what houseless folks actually want and need. I wonder if you all have ever even taken the time ask folks what they want or how they would like to be supported? How does one even suggest that this money will be "for" the houseless community while simultaneously saying that sweeps will be increased five-fold?!? Also, it is my understanding that there are about 4000 houseless folks in the Portland-area, yet the recent proposal offers 2000 shelter beds, which is not nearly enough and also is temporary. Additionally, many houseless folks do not want to be in a shelter because they can't have all of their belongings with them, they usually are restricted hours and many times it's unsafe for folks to share space with certain people due to prior issues. What folks need is permanent housing, access to medical care, clothing, food, a phone, ID, and that is just the beginning. Portland has grown exponentially in the past 20 years to where I could rent a room in 2001 for \$250/month and now folks are paying upwards of \$1000/month with little to no increase in wages (let alone disability payments), clearly there is money in this town, yet where is it all going???? This is besides all the empty apartment buildings, motels/hotels, buildings (like the Lloyd Center), etc. There is ample real estate to provide places for folks to escape the elements while getting paired with service providers and ultimately offered housing. Why is this not happening?!?! So many of the unhoused folks that I know have been trying to access housing for years and they get nothing. We need a clear pathway to housing, not just convoluted and time consuming process of referrals, phone calls and waiting. Folks I know have tried to call the phone numbers and work with advocates and nothing comes of it. (I should mention that the fact that someone who is houseless is expected to have access to a phone with a plan that works beyond free wifi is completely ridiculous.) If you actually care about helping the houseless community and honestly, so many Portlanders who live paycheck to paycheck and are on the brink of being displaced at any moment, then you need to act with urgency and ask people what they want and how they want to be served. You are in fact in service to their needs, not the other way around. Furthermore, sweeps without the offer of housing is illegal and I only hope that sooner than later there will be more court cases filed against the City of Portland for the continued illegal sweeps that have and will clearly continue to happen. Making people invisible is how colonizers justified slavery

and genocide and these policies are no better than that. DO BETTER!

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