

Portland City Council Agenda Written Testimony
 Document Number 2025-007

	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
1	Brian Posewitz	Oppose	The mayor and city council should learn to live with smaller staffs for the sake of higher priorities, including addressing Portland's livability crisis. Thank you for considering my comments.	No	01/10/25 2:09 PM
2	Steven Fisher resident of Laurelhurst	Support with changes	Mayor Wilson and Councilmembers, My name is Steven Fisher and I reside in Laurelhurst, District 3. It is with dismay that I read in the Oregonian that this proposal to increase budget for your staffs will possibly come from funds slated for camp and graffiti removal. Voters went to the polls in November and elected Mayor Wilson who promised to end homelessness in a year. I am going to give him the benefit of the doubt and hope to see substantial improvement in 2025. Yet here we are in January and the Council is set to reduce funds already dedicated for this effort. Not a promising start. I am also going to give the Council the benefit of the doubt and am open to the possibility that the Oregonian article was alarmist or a new Council did not realize the implication of this proposal. I understand you need staff but urge you to find funds from items in the budget that are not dedicated to public safety, basic infrastructure and do not go back on the issues that motivated voters in the recent election. Thank you for taking the time to consider new approaches.	No	01/10/25 3:57 PM
3	Anonymous	Oppose	I am alarmed by your proposal to cut funding for critical programs addressing homeless impacts and improving livability in order to fund an increase in staff levels for yourselves. Do not let one of your first actions as a city council be to reduce the livability of our city, especially when the City's own data shows that 74% of Portlanders are either Dissatisfied or Highly Dissatisfied with the cleanliness of our city. The three areas identified for cuts—the Impact Reduction Program, Public Environmental Management Office, and Alternative Shelter Program—are the very programs that support our city's cleanliness and help reduce homelessness. 45% of Portlanders say homelessness is the top issue impacting our city. Yet, one of your first actions is to reduce shelter capacity to fund your own staff? How can you justify this? Portlanders voted for a new form of government to secure more effective solutions, not to create more office jobs. With 240% more councilors and less responsibility for bureaus under the new system, how can you already determine that additional staff is the solution, especially after just one week in office? I urge you to reconsider this approach. Work within your means, as the rest of us do, or find alternative ways to fund your proposal that truly advance the city. Do not prioritize your own needs over the wellbeing of Portlanders.	No	01/11/25 6:15 PM
4	Anonymous	Oppose	The most important thing Portland can do to recover from the past few years of anarchy and chaos downtown is to address the homeless and graffiti issue . We need to bring business and people back downtown in order to survive as a city. Follow the money. Bringing more \$ into the city will result in more \$ to do good works with. City dies ? So does everything else	No	01/11/25 6:49 PM
5	Jen Young	Oppose	The city is rife with graffiti and homeless. We've already expanded our government And associated costs and before you've even had one meeting, you're already asking to expand it further. The tax payers are suffering from wages not keeping up with inflation and a city/state that is rated poorly for businesses. We need to focus on attracting new and supporting existing businesses. We can't do that when the city is attracting homeless and covered in graffiti. Please don't take money slated for the betterment of the community to add more government employees.	No	01/11/25 7:56 PM
6	Laura Anderson	Oppose	I am strongly opposed to this measure. I have lived in a couple different states where elected officials - city, state lawmakers, etc did not need multiple staff. Constituent services are good as long as the elected official is putting in the time for them. You do not need more staff. You need to focus on righting the ship. Give this a year or two to find your paces. Do not steal money from graffiti removal or other vital services. Our city needs leadership. We voted for change. Citizens do not want the same old tired corrupt politician behaviors. Our city is struggling. Focus on helping fix the errors of the failed wheeler years.	No	01/12/25 9:43 AM

Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
7 Tracie Wiest	Oppose	Hello - I live on NW Kearney and 14th. Please do not defund the camp/graffiti cleanups. If anything we need more money to go to the camp and graffiti clean up effort. Currently this area is not safe, there are fires started by the campers frequently, people can't access the sidewalks and are forced to walk in the street, there are needles and waste which makes it unsanitary. We have some of the highest property taxes in the nation and I would hope the council would prioritize the people who pay their salaries over putting funds into redecorating their offices.	Yes	01/12/25 10:18 AM
8 Anonymous	Oppose	This City Council has almost no responsibilities compared to its predecessor council which actually managed bureaus. City council today does very little work for the people and doesn't need more staff. You guys by getting more staff will be cutting city programs and city jobs. Every single year we see budget cuts this ain't sustainable for you to keep spending while we're cutting.	No	01/12/25 11:48 AM
9 Anonymous	Oppose	What constituent services do you need to provide you guys do not manage government anymore so if constituents need help they are better served by going to 211 or to city administrator staff not to city council. Your first act is to spend more of our tax dollars to give yourself another staffer? This city council loves to spend as we cut programs as our city decays and as our city agencies barely work	No	01/12/25 11:50 AM
10 Anonymous	Oppose	this new government structure was created by Candace avalos to make it easier for her to get elected it's cost taxpayers countless millions in new costs and your first order of business is spending more money? How about create stronger renter protections? How about get our code enforcement programs to follow the city code? How about actually putting some work in for us and now spending more money on your selves?	No	01/12/25 11:51 AM
11 Joe Hovey	Oppose	Mayor and Council, there are CORE elements that Portland needs to provide for a healthy community where ALL residents and businesses can thrive: Housing, Public Safety & Liveability (Wages/Infrastructure/etc.). Remember all 13 of you were elected to provide and uphold ALL of these elements. And now here we are a little over two weeks in and you are already looking to cut budgets for departments that address Public Safety and Liveability. There have been recommendations from some of you to cut into PPB, Fire and other Emergency resources; along with decreasing budgets for the Impact Reduction Program and the Graffiti Removal. While I understand your need for additional staff; you need to be more disciplined on finding additional monies elsewhere! You have to agree that there is alot of waste and inefficiencies within our local government and your focus should be on identifying these areas to find these additional dollars. You should NOT be cutting back on any of the CORE Elements that is due to the community as a whole. A closing thought: Before you cut back on things like the Impact Reduction Program, you should focus on that which needs to happen before cutting back. Your main focus should be on getting more "long term shelter/housing" into production along with the necessary wrap around services as required by some of those unhoused and / or suffering from addiction and mental disabilities. Once we have achieved this, then we can examine cuts to the IRP. Thank you for your time and consideration.	No	01/12/25 11:54 AM
12 Jim Baucom	Oppose	I can't believe that you want to endanger the public by cutting fire, police, & EMS budgets to enrich your empire building by adding staff. Like all of Portland, learn to make do with less. How about focusing on the benefit to the PUBLIC rather than your power? Cut sustainability or PBOT since they do NOTHING to benefit the public. You could always lower staff salaries & benefits.	No	01/12/25 11:56 AM



INSIDE
TO GIFT



NO LOITERING

DO NOT TO KEEP



DO NOT TO GIFT

McDonald's
You're a star.

McDonald's

sweet tea
low-sodium

McCafé
McCafé

FROZEN
FLAT
blue raspberry





Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
13 Christopher Braun	Oppose	<p>Mayor and Council, there are CORE elements that Portland needs to provide for a healthy community where ALL residents and businesses can thrive: Housing, Public Safety & Liveability (Wages/Infrastructure/etc.). Remember all 13 of you were elected to provide and uphold ALL of these elements. And now here we are a little over two weeks in and you are already looking to cut budgets for departments that address Public Safety and Liveability. There have been recommendations from some of you to cut into PPB, Fire and other Emergency resources; along with decreasing budgets for the Impact Reduction Program and the Graffiti Removal. While I understand your need for additional staff; you need to be more disciplined on finding additional monies elsewhere! You have to agree that there is alot of waste and inefficiencies within our local government and your focus should be on identifying these areas to find these additional dollars. You should NOT be cutting back on any of the CORE Elements that is due to the community as a whole.</p> <p>A closing thought: Before you cut back on things like the Impact Reduction Program, you should focus on that which needs to happen before cutting back. Your main focus should be on getting more “long term shelter/housing” into production along with the necessary wrap around services as required by some of those unhoused and / or suffering from addiction and mental disabilities. Once we have achieved this, then we can examine cuts to the IRP.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>	No	01/12/25 11:56 AM
14 Government Transition Advisory Committee Co-Chairs Fred Neal and Jose Gamero-Georgeson	Support with changes	In February 2024, the Government Transition Advisory Committee (GTAC) sent a letter to city council, the City Budget Office Director and Deputy Director, and the Chief Administrative Officer arguing that the council budget allocation is insufficient to staff an effective legislative body. The GTAC recommended increased staffing for both individual councilors and shared council operations. The recommendation is based on research of 15 peer cities, as well as the GTAC's collective personal and professional expertise, and that of city staff. The GTAC resubmits that letter as support for increased council staffing. The GTAC has not considered staffing for the mayor and is not commenting on that portion of the ordinance. The GTAC declined to weigh in on where the funding for additional council staffing should be found.	Yes	01/13/25 9:43 AM
15 Josh Keater	Support with changes	Haven't been involved in none of this accounting and such in professional capacity but... well I am a citizen, and portland police bureau got their budget raised over 40% in just the years of wheeler as mayor. This did nothing but empower cops to give slow response times in poor neighborhoods (this was proven from some leaks back in 2020 if y'all remember) and beat protestors and shoot homeless and black guys without accountability. I also see these cop cars always parked in front of fire hydrants and driveways and all this. My neighbor is a cop and he beats his dog and is always yelling at his wife. These are not good folk, really. What happens when you embolden one to have power over another only due to a few months training..... anyhow, cut the cops, invest in EMS and Portland Street Response, Portland Fire and Rescue, and Multnomah County Search and Rescue. And no reason our police department is buying military surplus anyhow. That is just ridiculous and far too violent. Nonetheless, if city council say they need more staff, I do believe they may. Only one staffer not enough. BUT- don't raise your own dang salary. Then you've lost the Josh Keater vote.	No	01/13/25 10:44 AM
16 Marita Ingalsbe	Support with changes	Hello, I am in favor of the Mayor and City Councilors having the necessary staff and materials to perform their duties, but not at the expense of Portland Solutions programs to restore livability. Please consider transferring FTE from city bureaus that are expected to recognize efficiencies due to the city's new administrative structure. Thank you.	No	01/13/25 11:46 AM

DATE: February 8, 2024

TO: Mayor Wheeler
Commissioner Gonzalez
Commissioner Mapps
Commissioner Rubio
Commissioner Ryan

CC: Director Tim Grewe, City Budget Office
Deputy Director Ruth Levine, City Budget Office
Chief Administrative Officer Michael Jordan

FROM: Government Transition Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Council budget allocation is insufficient to staff an effective legislative body

Our Charge

The Government Transition Advisory Committee (GTAC) is a group of Portlanders appointed by the mayor and city council in March 2023. GTAC acts as the primary citizen engagement and advisory body for Portland's government transition.

In an 8/23/23 memo, the 2023 council defined GTAC's scope of work to include:

“Advise on the role of future Council districts and offices, inclusive of exploring expectations around district/office outreach to the community and constituent relations work.”

The GTAC finds proposed staffing levels inadequate to support the transition and new city administration. This letter recommends staffing of councilors and council operations for effective legislative development and community engagement.

Our Research

Our recommendations are based on research of councils in 15 peer cities, as well our collective personal and professional expertise. These recommendations also incorporate the expertise of city staff. As explained in this letter, we hope council shares our belief in the importance of equipping future leadership for success.

Key points:

- The staffing levels set by the Current Appropriation Levels (CAL) Ordinance 191526 do not adequately support future council in their legislative duties and role in community engagement.
- Research in peer cities has shown that -- under the CAL Ordinance -- Portland would have the lowest per-councilor staffing among them, at one FTE each.
- Research shows that – under the CAL Ordinance – Portland's total combined staffing for a presiding officer, shared legislative staff and operations staff would likewise be among the lowest of peer cities.
- Sufficient staffing for council and transition-related work should be a priority.

Current Staffing Budget Status

On November 29, 2023, council approved Ordinance 191526, which set the appropriation levels for staffing for the offices of the council, the mayor, and city administrator for fiscal years 2024-2026. The CAL budgets just one FTE for each councilor—half of that adopted in the organizational structure resolution of November 1, 2023 (see Amended Exhibit A). Likewise, the CAL fails to budget for the shared operations and legislative staff needed for oversight by an expanded council.

GTAC understands that this ordinance is the starting point of the budget; however, this base level staffing, which can be perceived as at essential levels, is not enough to run a city council.

Why do we need additional staff in the new form of government?

Staffing must accommodate the basic functions of both individual councilors and the council as a whole. With the shifting roles in the new form of government, individual councilors will need support for both legislative policy making and budgetary analysis and adoption, now solely the council's responsibility. Furthermore, the new districted governance must staff and support constituent service and community engagement for each councilor.

An expanded council will also require more research and policy staff to support broader legislative operations in a new committee system, as well as city clerk support to the auditor's and city attorney's offices. Augmented staffing of city council can increase community engagement and support of legislative development.

How do Portland's proposed staffing levels compare to peer cities?

Research shows that city council legislative staffing structures—independent of an executive mayor and/or an executive city manager—all must address several fundamental categories:

1. Staff for individual councilors
2. Staff for the presiding officer (council president or a presiding mayor)
3. Legislative staff to the full council
4. Operations staff to the full council

First, compared to peer cities, Portland would have the lowest per councilor staffing at one FTE per councilor. Peer cities average from 2-4 staffers per individual councilor (see Table 1).

Second, combined staffing for a presiding officer, shared legislative staff and operations is fairly consistent. Each city operates under different charters and rules, so staff support varies as well. Among peer cities, staffing distribution varies according to the authority of the presiding officer and staffing of other offices. Refer to Table 1.

Table 1: Estimated* council staffing levels of peer cities

City	Form of gov't**	Council size	FTE per councilor office	Mayoral/ Council President staff (FTE)	Centralized Staff (FTE)	Total Council operations staff (FTE)***
Austin	C-M	11	3	7	31	38
Baltimore	SM-C	15	4	12 ^A	12	24
Boston	SM-C	13	5	55 ^A		55
Denver	M-C	13	4	^A	29	29
Detroit	SM-C	9	6	4 ^A	44	48
Fresno	SM-C	7	1 to 6	6 ^A	19	25
Indianapolis	SM-C	25	0	^A	16	16
Milwaukee	M-C	15	2	^A	40	40
Minneapolis	SM-C	13	2	2 ^A	29	31
Phoenix	C-M	8	3	15	9	24
Sacramento	C-M	9	2.5	14	1 ^B	16
San Antonio	C-M	10	8.5	10	5	15
San Jose	C-M	10	4 to 6	28	18	46
Seattle	SM-C	9	2 to 4	3 ^A	20	23
Portland ^C	M-C	12	1		10	10

* These are best estimates based on an examination of most recent budget documents, and organizational staffing information publicly available on peer city websites.

** C-M = Council-Manager, M-C = Mayor-Council, SM-C = Strong Mayor-Council

*** This is the sum of both centralized operations staff and staff dedicated to a presiding officer.

^A In these cities, the mayor does not preside over Council.

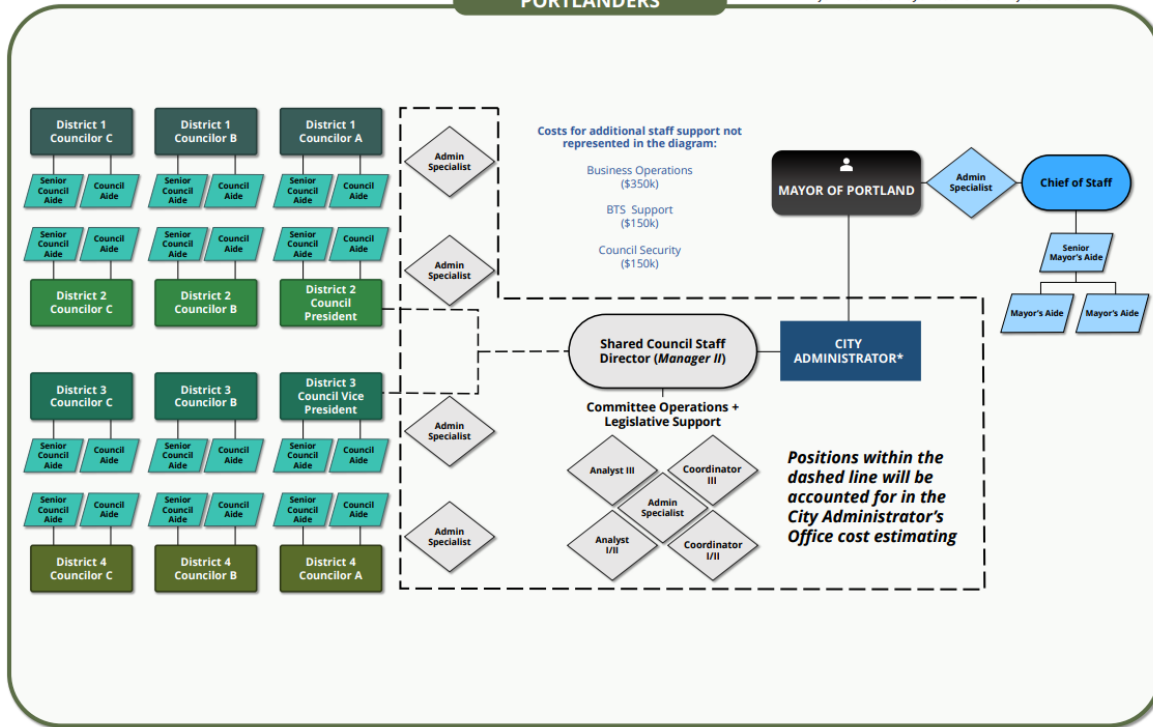
^B Sacramento effectively outsources council operations staffing to the mayor and councilors' staff.

^C FTE estimates are based on the CAL Ordinance 191526.

Sufficient staffing for council and transition-related work should be a priority.

In November 2023, the City Budget Office forecasted declining revenues. While GTAC understands the current budget constraints, council must properly staff our future council. The CAL Ordinance, in funding just a single staffer for each councilor, disregards how Portland's first elected officials, under a new system, elected in multi-winner elections, will serve constituents and engage community. The new government also strives for more efficient and targeted service delivery. Constituents expect a participatory, accountable government through their districts' councilors. As councilors optimize their new roles, they will need adequate support and funding.

Amended Exhibit A



Appendix: References and additional resources

City Budget Office's (CBO) 2024-2025 budget preparation documents

<https://www.portland.gov/cbo/2024-2025-budget/development/preparation>

Includes the Mayor's Budget guidance memos #1 and #2, published November 17, 2023 and December 18, 2023, respectively.

Ordinance 191526 on November 15, 2023

First reading, presentation by City Budget Office to City Council on November 15, 2023: <https://www.portland.gov/council/agenda/2023/11/15>

Exhibit No. 1:

<https://www.portland.gov/council/documents/ordinance/passed/191526>

Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
17 Anonymous	Oppose	<p>Dear Portland City Council Members,</p> <p>I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal currently before the Council that seeks to reduce funding for homeless campsite and graffiti removal initiatives. These programs are essential for maintaining the livability and property values of Portland neighborhoods, which in turn generate the tax revenues that support our city and county governments.</p> <p>While we commend the Council's efforts to address the root causes of homelessness and mitigate its human impact, it is imperative to balance these long-term solutions with immediate measures that preserve the quality of life in our communities. Graffiti removal and campsite management not only enhance the safety and desirability of our neighborhoods but also contribute to Portland's reputation as an attractive place to live, work, and visit. These factors are critical to sustaining the tourism and economic activity that provide much-needed revenue for the city.</p> <p>I urge the Council to reconsider these proposed reductions and prioritize initiatives that directly contribute to the vitality and appeal of Portland for all its residents.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.</p> <p>Sincerely, Concerned Resident of Portland Oregon</p>	No	01/13/25 2:16 PM
18 Hank Schottland	Support with changes	I've attached a short (1-page) document with my thoughts on this proposal. Some of them have probably been mentioned elsewhere, but others may be new to you and worth considering. Thank you !	Yes	01/13/25 2:43 PM
19 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn	Oppose	There is no need for additional staff. District 3 Representatives have demonstrated that they've already established our agenda/solution set - no listening needed - the very loud, violent minority Progressives listen to will tell the rest of us how to live. SE Uplift's pathetically narrow and biased survey was an insult to every citizen of District 3 and the entire city - there is ZERO Progressive about systemically deficient Public Safety and Livability. You know that is your most basic job, right? It is clear they have adopted the tired demonstrably lethal policy that led to years of record murders and crime. No Thank You - Said every Portlander who gives a rip about the welfare of fellow Portlanders.	No	01/13/25 5:59 PM
20 Anonymous	Oppose	When can we get back to basics? Bureau of Development Services has had reduce service levels for a decade not acting on some code violations at all due to understaffing and lack of funding and you guys want to spend more money on new staffing and things?	No	01/13/25 9:14 PM
21 Peggy McDaniel (HAND Neighborhood)	Oppose	<p>Dear City Council and Mayor Wilson, please do NOT consider any proposal or option that would reduce the budget for PEMO, IRP, or the Alternative Shelter Program. I am an active member of the Clinton Triangle Alternative Shelter Site's Community Oversight Committee (CTOC) as well as very active on our neighborhood PEMO calls. I have seen first hand the benefits of these programs and they could be even better with MORE funding, not less. If you choose to reduce funds to these programs you will hurt, not help our already struggling neighborhoods.</p> <p>PEMO is a very helpful resource that allows for community involvement and engagement. The team listens and acts on neighbor's requests which, even if things have been slow to improve at times, helps make us citizens of Portland feel empowered.</p> <p>The IRP (Impact Reduction Program) is fundamental is improving our neighborhoods by working directly with the unhoused and reducing the number of camps and especially those overrun by garbage from impacting sidewalks, etc. The team could use MORE funds to work faster and more efficiently, NOT less. I have been involved with the Clinton Triangle Alternative Shelter Site since it was announced by the city and have been an ongoing member of the CTOC. The management by Urban Alchemy and the city have worked tirelessly with the neighbors to minimize impact of a 200 person shelter to our neighborhoods (HAND, Brooklyn, and CEIC) and have, in fact, improved our neighborhood livability overall. Without the IRP, our GNA would not be effective.</p> <p>Please consider how many staff you really need during this first year or two and consider that your fellow citizens and those that elected you are counting on you to continue to IMPROVE our livability, not fall backwards.</p> <p>Thank you- I am happy to talk to any or all of you about my perspective and work with these offices.</p>	No	01/14/25 9:20 AM

To: Portland City Council

Greetings councilors -

My name is Hank Schottland and I'll be unable to attend this week's meeting where 2025-007 (Adopt a Supplemental Budget for City Council and Mayor staffing) will be discussed. I've attached some of my thoughts below, regarding staff augmentation.

I support zero-sum financing of staffing augmentation at this time. Editorial comment, based on 40+ years of public and private sector management experience, the amount of work always expands to fill available staffing levels (and then some). Getting on top of everything that's important will always take more staff than you can afford. Most council members probably already know this.

Referencing the level of funding that existed in our previous form of government, as support, feels like a little bit of misdirection. Council and mayor have such different roles and responsibilities, and the city has just started to make those operational. Too soon to change.

Related topic: I'm opposed to digging into contingency funds so soon after the start of our new form of government. It's too early to know what else, of much higher priority, will emerge over the next several months - potentially with costs too large to handle without significant contingency fund use or service impact, or both. Spending those funds now will make those later decisions more painful.

For example: In the recent working session there were several points made regarding staffing needs for council-wide support for legal, budgeting and finance, etc. Shouldn't these be in the mix now, for consideration? These positions might provide major benefit to Council as Budget Committee, between now and the start of the next fiscal year, especially considering projected budget shortfalls and the prospect of significant labor cost increases.

The optics of boosting staff for individual council members is not good, especially without considering and discussing options like increasing staff on a district basis rather than on an individual-councilor basis. One point made many times during Charter Commission meetings was the hope that multi-member districts would result in more such shared services, for improved efficiency. Demonstrating that this is in fact happening would, I think, be well-received.

The decision on staffing boosts should be made with an eye toward the next fiscal year's budget.

The impact on 2024-25 is small but the impact on 2025-26 is much larger and will generate more negative publicity and possibly erode public confidence, especially if service cutbacks are required.

Best regards,

Hank Schottland

Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
Robin Tokmakian	Oppose	<p>Re: Item #6, January 15, 2025 Adopt a Supplemental Budget for City Council and Mayor staffing</p> <p>Council members:</p> <p>My name is Robin Tokmakian and I live in District 4. I am greatly disappointed to see on the council's first substantial agenda to create a better Portland, a request to revise the city's budget by moving \$5 million dollars from the city's use for addressing the needs of the city to your personal and bureaucratic office uses.</p> <p>Rather than looking for ways to collaborate and work efficiently together with your fellow district councilors to maximize the funds already allocated, you've already assumed, that you need more funds for unspecified needs. You have been in office less than a month, and are already asking to increase the city's bureaucracy rather than solving its problems.</p> <p>Five million dollars split between twelve councilors and the mayor's office represents approximately \$360,000 to each of you. My job in the past was mostly funded by grants from the government. I had to justify each and every dollar that I was requesting as to where and how it would be used. Such justification and analysis needs to be provided to the public and it has not been.</p> <p>Your full-time jobs as councilors are considerably different than previously council jobs. It is no longer a management job, but a job requiring you to do much of the legislative work yourselves, rather than a staff person. Use the next six months to figure out how to use your already allocated funds efficiently and, if necessary, determine, with justification, what additional funds you need to serve the citizens of Portland more effectively.</p> <p>Everyone needs to wisely marshal our limited monetary funds. Please make solving the city's problems your priority and not increasing the city's bureaucracy until you can justify it.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	No	01/14/25 10:33 AM
Anonymous	Oppose	<p>Our city council doesn't need to spend more money this new government structure which Candace Avalos designed has already cost taxpayer many millions to transition to and many millions in new annual costs. Simply put this new government structure already is impacting budgets and services and more money will further cut city services and budgets.</p>	No	01/14/25 11:43 AM
Anonymous	Oppose		No	01/14/25 2:28 PM
Anonymous	Oppose	<p>In light of city council members no longer managing city agencies I'm unsure why they need more money and staff while asking city agencies to make cuts?</p>	No	01/14/25 3:46 PM

Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
26 KC of Stadiumhood	Oppose	<p>I am writing to formally oppose the ordinance regarding the appropriation of \$4,318,424 to the City Council for the FY 2024-25 budget. While I understand the need for effective governance and support for our newly established council structure following the approval of Ballot Measure 26-228, I believe these funds could be better allocated to address the more pressing issues currently facing the citizens of Portland, including crime, drug addiction, and homelessness.</p> <p>The establishment of 12 new council offices and the associated funding for administrative support is a significant investment in city governance. However, at a time when our communities are grappling with urgent social challenges, it is imperative that we prioritize resources that directly impact the lives of our residents. The ongoing issues of crime and homelessness are debilitating our neighborhoods, and the funds proposed for council operations could instead be directed toward programs that provide immediate relief and long-term solutions.</p> <p>Investing in enhanced public safety initiatives, addiction recovery programs, and comprehensive services for the homeless population would yield far greater benefits for our community than the proposed administrative expenses. By reallocating these funds, we can create a safer, healthier, and more supportive environment for all Portland residents.</p> <p>I urge the council to reconsider the implications of this ordinance and to focus on the urgent needs of our community. The effectiveness of our local government should be measured not just by its structure, but by its ability to respond to the challenges faced by its citizens.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my perspective on this important issue. I hope to see a more community-focused approach in the upcoming budget discussions.</p>	No	01/14/25 5:12 PM
27 Laurie Wimmer, NW Oregon Labor Council	Support		Yes	01/14/25 8:19 PM
28 Linda Nettekoven — HAND	Oppose	<p>I am strongly opposed to any reduction in the Portland Solutions budget — Pemo, Impact Reduction, TASS sites, etc. I know budget decisions involve complex trade-offs. However, in this case the possible reductions to Portland Solutions will threaten the substantial progress that has been made in addressing homelessness & some of the related issues of substance abuse. Staff from these programs have been able to increase ongoing community volunteer support by listening to people's concerns & responding quickly & innovatively to ongoing livability issues, stretching limited resources that much further. Working with Hank Smith & the Urban Alchemy team at the Clinton Triangle TASS site since its inception, I've seen what a difference a concerted City effort can make. Everyone running for Council office mentioned the need to better address homelessness in our city. So why dismantle programs that are already working, led by staff & volunteers who continually seek ways to improve them — at a time when the needs are still so great? Thank you for considering my concerns.</p>	No	01/14/25 9:54 PM
29 Linden Ellingson	Oppose	<p>I do not support adopting this supplemental budget if it means taking away funds from homeless camp cleanups and graffiti abatement. I am a 72 year old woman living in the Edge Lofts for the past 11 years. I walk and take public transportation because I do not drive. I'm finally feeling safer walking in the Pearl, downtown and Northwest neighborhoods after the past few years of fear. Please do not slow the progress of cleaning up homeless camps and making our neighborhoods safer by diverting funds from these efforts. Thank you for considering my testimony.</p>	No	01/15/25 6:20 AM
30 Melissa Doukas	Oppose	<p>The change in Portland Council/City Manager was designed to move the heavy lift of work to the professional city administration, and limited council to policy work. There is no need for additional staffing and costs for City Council members. There are 15 of you. This is putting a huge overhead burden on the Citizens of Portland. You did not hear the message of the voters. Vote no.</p>	No	01/15/25 7:31 AM



Date: January 15, 2025
To: Portland City Councilors: Elana Pirtle-Guiney, Council President and Council Members
From: Laurie Wimmer, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, NW Oregon Labor Council
RE: Proposal to increase Council staffing

Representing NOLC's 103 union affiliates and their 59,000 workers, I ask that you please accept my testimony in general support for increased Councilor staffing that will help to ensure your success in leading this beautiful city.

Many critics will weigh in, arguing that the costs of this new experiment are already wildly greater than anticipated when the charter change question was put to Portland voters in 2022. While this is true, the point must be made that this is because of the huge bulk-up of the administrative side, not of the legislative side.

Perhaps a bit of math will help to shine a light on your need for appropriate staffing.

I spent 30+ years in the Oregon Legislative process, and I can tell you that there are many analogous functions that make for good comparison. Key personnel for legal, financial, policy, and research are well-funded supports for your state legislative counterparts. In addition to two full-time legislative assistants, Oregon's 90 legislators also have the exclusive and critical staffing support of four legislatively dedicated offices: Legislative Revenue Office (LRO), Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO), Legislative Counsel (LC), and Legislative Policy and Research (LPRO). LRO has seven economists on staff plus an office manager. LFO has three officers, two administrative support staff, and 23 analysts. LPRO hires 70 policy and research analysts plus seasonal backup. Legislative Counsel maintains a staff of 18 lawyers and an unpublished number of editors. All told, approximately 305 people work directly in the service of 90 legislators, or roughly **3.5 FTE for each policymaker**, and more during sessions.

By contrast, you have your single staffer plus nine FTE in council support (Council Operations Manager, 2 policy analysts, 1 agenda coordinator, an administrative specialist, and four district administrative specialists shared by each district's three representatives). That works out to **1.75 FTE for each policymaker**. In essence, you would need to double your overall staffing numbers to maintain the professional support our state legislature receives for similar work.

Now, you are all smart, dedicated, and hard working, but you are not super human. We have been concerned ever since the structure was devised that your thin staffing would undercut your ability to be maximally effective, and that would be a shame, considering the high level of expectation of a watching public and the great challenges you have before you. There are simply some numbers you cannot change: the number of hours in a day, days in a week, or weeks in a year. If you had an LPRO department, researchers could easily find out how Atlanta, Boston, Minneapolis, or another great American city invests in its city policy leaders. I took a stab at it. Staff of Atlanta's 15 city councilors are on a list goes on for five pages. You can find it [here](#). Boston's 13 city councilors have approximately seven employees plus 12 central staff. You can check this [here](#). Minneapolis's 13 city councilors have at least two full-time staffers each, in addition to a large central staff in its "Legislative Department". You can find this information [here](#).

On behalf of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, which supports adequate funding for your 7500 city workers as well as for a full complement of staffers to serve this city's legislative operations, I humbly ask that our support for some form of increased legislative staffing support be recognized by this council, so that you all are able to be as successful in your work as possible. Thank you.

	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
31	Anonymous	Support with changes	<p>Generally, I think it makes sense that this group needs additional staff. Would it make sense to make these people a central shared pool of topic-specific experts? For example, would it make sense to have a staff member with expertise in environment, one focused on energy, another on transportation, another on housing and homelessness. Then, those folks could come together around the many complex topics that face our city.</p> <p>This approach seems more fiscally responsible to me because you don't hire 12 people to try to all learn the same things (which is arguably too much anyway). Instead you get 12 folks who can comprise a cabinet and explain how things work. Somewhat like rulemaking at the state level, this group would be like the rulemaking advisory committee and advise the City Council as a body on its decisions.</p>	No	01/15/25 7:32 AM
32	BL, Portland resident	Oppose	I think it is irresponsible to pass this expensive legislation when the city has a \$27 million general fund deficit and is looking at layoffs and labor strikes. Council should try doing their job with current resources and then make the case with clear description of impacts, if additional budget is a critical city need. The current structure with council and city administrators is likely more expensive than we can realistically support.	No	01/15/25 10:45 AM
33	Anonymous	Oppose	Strongly oppose. Make due with existing resources for five months until the next budget is approved. Compete this line item with the rest of the city priorities and funding as part of the upcoming budget process. In the interim, at this meeting, vote against this request to preserve existing funding for all resident facing services and maximize any carry-over available. District 3 resident.	No	01/15/25 12:58 PM
34	Anonymous	Oppose	I believe that it is irresponsible and selfish of newly elected City Council members to demand more staff before even trying to get anything done. I am already dissapointed with this new format of government. I was open to giving it a chance, but requests such as this are proving that new council members are already unsuccessful at their roles - improving the City with available resources. It CAN be done. Money (nor more staff) is not the answer: implementing effective programs and solutions are the answer. Until the graffiti stops and there are no more homeless encampments to clean up, I want my taxpayer dollars going to the actual work being done, not to increase administrative costs and bloat.	No	01/15/25 2:07 PM
35	Nguoyke Willison	Oppose	Please stop wasting our money. We need a functioning city that needs to use existing resources to enforce existing laws. This agenda items does nothing to advance the city's very basic mission to serve the people but instead contributes to administrative bloat, a higher tax bill, while doing nothing to serve the common person that is squeezed to finance this circus. Please stop wasting our time, resources and energy.	No	01/15/25 3:52 PM
36	Zach L	Support	I support funding additional staff so that the council can be more effective in its legislative capacity.	No	01/15/25 5:03 PM

Portland City Council Meeting
Wednesday, January 15, 2025 - 6:00 p.m.
Verbal Testimony

	Agenda Item	Name
1	2025-007	Fred Neal
2	2025-007	Jose Gamero-Georgeson
3	2025-007	Terry Harris
4	2025-007	Alan Comnes
5	2025-007	David Gray
6	2025-007	Rob Martineau
7	2025-007	robert m butler
8	2025-007	Dr Dennis Scollard
9	2025-007	Janice Thompson
10	2025-007	bRidgeCrAnE siMChA-jOHnSoN