



OFFICE OF  
COMMISSIONER  
RENE GONZALEZ

**DATE:** January 10, 2024  
**TO:** **KC Jones, Director, City Auditor's Office**  
**FROM:** Commissioner Rene Gonzalez  
**RE:** City Auditor Report - Portland Fire & Rescue: Community Health Division

---

Director Jones,

Thank you for the efforts of you and your team to critically evaluate the Community Health program in Portland Fire & Rescue. Community Health, its two programs of CHAT (Community Health Assess & Treat) and Portland Street Response, is at once newly emerging and yet critically important. At a time of perhaps unprecedented public health need due to the ravages of unmitigated substance use disorder coupled with decades of federal and state disinvestment in mental and behavioral health support programs, Community Health's mission and performance are essential to Portland's success.

The specific programmatic opportunities for improvement your team identified reflect a desire on the part of previous elected leadership to expand Community Health as quickly as possible. While the urgency may be understandable, the need to ensure these programs are structurally sound, grounded in articulable, actionable goals, and financially cost-effective can no longer be ignored. As commissioner in charge of Portland Fire & Rescue, I am committed to these programs' long-term success and have full confidence in both bureau and program leadership to guide us there. Your audit serves as an important reminder that sometimes we need to "slow down to speed up." Thank you.