

Regarding Transparency, Accountability, and Community Engagement in Homelessness and Public Safety Policy

To: Portland Mayor Wilson and the Portland Committee on Community-Engaged Policing (PCCEP)

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, write to express deep concern about the persistent lack of transparency and engagement in the city's homelessness and public-safety strategy.

Organizations such as PDX Saints Love and Rose Haven have long-standing experience providing services to homeless neighbors. Yet, their presence has been lacking from decision-making bodies and task forces in our city government. When these organizations have been asked for its assessment and assistance, the suggestions have not been taken into consideration leaving it to feel as if it is nothing more than tokenized consultations. The organizations that are included often are the ones that agree wholeheartedly with a plan that alienates, criminalizes, and creates more harm than good for those who are most vulnerable in our city.

We are also concerned about how the city chooses its partners and allocating contracts related to homeless services. After an RFPQ in the early months of 2025 left some providers out of the conversation, when the mayor stated he had to "stand behind the fair and equitable RFPQ process," other providers, who hadn't even applied were then offered contracts for overnight shelters.

Some organizations received large amounts of money without a clear reasoning as to why it was selected, how its work is evaluated, and whether it delivers positive outcomes. At the same time, local providers with successful track records are overlooked. On top of this, there is no clear visibility into how Clean and Safe dollars are used or monitored. Without transparency, people question whether these are supporting the community or simply reinforcing the current power structures without long term solutions.

The city's reliance now on overnight-only congregate shelters is also a model that is flawed and provides no safety to the community. Our homeless neighbors who have trauma, disabilities, or long-term health challenges will not receive the care needed in these shelters. If congregate shelters are the cornerstone of Portland, then what and how will these lead to long term stability and not just hide the problems that this city is facing?

There is confusion about why some experts, such as Helmi Hisserich, are no longer part of the strategy of the city's growth and prosperity. When people who understand issues such as

housing, homelessness, and public safety are removed, it leaves the public wondering what direction the city is taking and if this is rooted in actual safety.

This has become a pattern of behavior that we are witnessing from this mayor, that when his ideas or visions seem to be undermined, he begins to silence or disengage people who have expertise, even separating them from positions, funding, or groups of people to remove them from conversations.

This leads to the final concern: Portland Police and its role regarding our homeless neighbors and the Mayor's plan to "clean up" the city. PPB leadership continually says it is understaffed. PPB leadership continually says there are serious crimes that need addressing. Yet officers are being sent to assist with sweeps and give out citations to those who are living in tents. If our police force does not have the capacity to respond to crimes that are considered high-priority then why pull the bureau in this direction?

The disconnect affects the community and any trust the public is supposed to have in the public safety system. When police are directed towards activities that do not align with their mission, then it is clear the resources are misallocated and the city is no closer to being safer.

All these concerns intersect. PCCEP's mission is to address policing and ensure strategies are grounded in transparency, expertise, and genuine community engagement. When the Mayor does not collaborate in good faith with trusted organizations and instead contracts with those that merely uphold his vision, the result is unnecessary law enforcement, misallocated funds, and costly band-aid short term solutions. Ensuring equitable policing means ensuring the strategies from shelters to sweeps to public safety directives make sense and are geared to providing lasting and long term care.

We remain ready to show up in person, submit written questions, and contribute our knowledge and experience to help Portland move toward solutions that are humane, fiscally responsible, and effective.

Sincerely,

Organizations and Community Members:

Rabbi Ariel Stone, Houselessness Advocate

Lauren Armony, Community Member



Kat Mahoney, Attorney at Law



The Rev. Sara Fischer
Hope & Bread Mission

ROSETO

FILMS

Johnathon DeSoto - Business Owner

The Rev. Andria Skornik - Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church

Bradley Thatcher PDX saints love - day shelter manager

Lydia Kiesling, community member

Cheryle Gardiner, registered voter, community member



Up and Over, Javonnie Shearn -Director of Programs



Kristle Delihanty, Executive Director, PDX Saints Love

Briana Cerezo, registered voter & community member

Delayne O'Niel community member Board Member PDX Saints Love

Jessica Johnson, PWS, Resident Services Case Manager, PDX Saints Love

Linda Strom, registered voter and volunteer at PDX Saints Love

Tianna McMullen, Community Health Worker , PDX Saints Love

Mel Foresman, community member



Sophie Hook + Jenna Goldin, Board Members, Community's Non-Profit



Jenna Goldin, Business Owner, Community Organizer

Marie Tyvoll, registered voter and community member

Catherine Fine, community member

Elizabeth Daykin, registered voter and community member

Allie Morgan, community member

Debra Porta, Executive Director Pride Northwest Inc

Caitlin Lynch, MS, LPC, NCC Owner, Neuro/Queer Therapy

Brian Benson, community member

Liz Starke, Community Member

Emily Paben, community member and volunteer with Holding Hearts Bloc



Dr. Sandra Comstock, ED Hygiene4All

Deb Wilson, registered voter & community member