

From: [SHANE & MARY PERRY](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)
Subject: 2021 Budget
Date: Wednesday, December 9, 2020 11:35:55 AM

Hello,

After listening to the budget address, and understanding the current situation due to the pandemic, here are a few comments:

Police and Fire - our city cannot afford to reduce these services. Any budget variances should be only through attrition. We need to maintain the number of officers and firefighters on our streets. That was clearly evident during the unrest this summer. Cries to "Defund the Police" are reactive and do not serve any purpose but to fuel political fervor.

The Mayor cites the St. Paul Fire BLS program as an alternative to sending paramedics to less emergent calls. Can or should the same be done by the police using parking enforcement staff to respond to certain calls traffic or parking complaints?

Police must continue to perform welfare checks as part of their duties due to the potential violence due to drug involvement of this type of request. This should not be left to paramedics or other unarmed staff.

As long as police are human, we will continue to have encounters and events with varied and sometimes very unfortunate and even tragic outcomes. Agreed, people like Derek Chauvin should not be hired or kept on as a peace officer in our City.

Conversely, we cannot expect police officers to risk their own lives while they are up against St. Paulites who are carrying weapons or drug addled or are otherwise mentally unstable.

Further, we do need to address the reasons police are called in the first place. It is reasonable to include social workers and mental health resources in the Community First effort. Since this is nearly \$2 million endeavor, the residents of St. Paul should be provided with a comprehensive performance evaluation and list of accomplishments before the program be deemed "ongoing". One consideration that I have not heard addressed is how these ancillary workers will be made to understand not just St. Paul policy but Minnesota law as well.

People's Prosperity Guaranteed Income Pilot - The residents of St. Paul cannot sustain a program that does not serve every resident of the City equally. At the end of 2021, this program should be abandoned or monies drawn from other than the City (or County) funds. We would all be better served by helping others to rise up rather than providing a handout.

As for City staff, while it is a good first step to ask leaders to reduce their pay, the Mayor's cabinet and multitude of "analysts" should be addressed. It is irresponsible to maintain highly paid positions in the City and positions that are redundant to roles at the State and County level. For example, we have Human Rights and Equity staff at the State and County level. How did this become a city focus? How many legislative and intergovernmental staff do we need. Again, redundancy and the need to see the performance and effectiveness of these roles.

This is a call to return to basic services mandated for our residents: Police, Fire, and Infrastructure.

Homelessness - St. Paul has approved and financially supported many, many high-

density buildings in recent years. In the midst of a pandemic, we see the shortsightedness of putting large groups of people in communal living situations. Further, these buildings do not provide any long-term affordable housing and benefit only the builders. Examples of this are the Schmidt Brewery and most recently, the Highland Bridge. The result is the ludicrous encampments in City parks. We have become Seattle! Many of the people in these encampments are working poor. Why can't they afford rent in our City! It is the responsibility of this City Council to find very real ways to help alleviate our citizens living in tents during the extreme heat and cold of Minnesota. Stop funding developers/builders and start reducing the costs to live in St. Paul.

City and county taxes as well as the levies by our school board, have created a breaking point for St. Paul residents. Especially our seniors and those just starting out, who want to remain homeowners in our City. Ironically, most seniors cannot afford to leave their homes because they can't afford to rent in our city!

This is the umpteenth draft to you. As Mayor Carter says, staying quiet is not the answer. Please inject some reasonableness to the issues facing us today. Please do the right thing for all residents of our city and not give into reactionary measures that will only put a band-aid our current situation and create permanent financial burdens.

Regards,

Mary Perry

Lexington-Hamline