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## Groups applaud mayor's proposed budget

By [Joany Carlin, The Oregonian](#)

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A few bemoaned cuts, but most who testified at the Portland budget hearing tonight thanked Mayor Sam Adams and the city council for saving programs for seniors, the homeless and the arts.

Several dozen citizens showed up at Mt. Tabor Middle School to testify on Mayor Sam Adams' proposed budget. The council will vote on the budget next Wednesday. Marc Jolin, co-chair of the coordinating committee to end homelessness, thanked the council for protecting programs that will "help hundreds of people get through the downturn without becoming homeless, and help people on the street."

Kathy Oliver, executive director of Outside-In, which provides shelter and other services for homeless youths, thanked the council for its continuing support.

Commissioner Nick Fish recalled how Oliver told him the center is required by law to notify the last known responsible adult before providing services to a minor, and in ten years, not a single adult has ever responded.

"I want you to know, we are not going to walk away from those children," Fish said.

Adrienne Flagg, creative director of the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, thanked the mayor for including money for the center in the proposed budget.

"I'm proud to be from Portland, where creative folks are not only brought to the table, we get to help build the table," Flagg said.

The mayor's budget will increase some park fees, raise parking rates and increase water and sewer rates. But the city's general fund would be cut \$8.8 million from the \$375.7 million needed to provide all general fund services at their current levels.

The budget slices 159 positions, although because of attrition and a hiring freeze, that probably will mean only about 40 city workers will lose jobs.

An infusion of \$12.3 million in unexpected revenue will allow the city to save some programs that had been on the chopping block. They include housing programs and neighborhood livability programs such as graffiti eradication.

Brian Franz said he was an alcoholic, living in his car, when he came to Central City Concern for help. Two years later, he has an associate degree in business administration, and a job.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who as a neighborhood activist, attended many city budget hearings, said she was amazed by the tone of the meeting.

Even in good years, when the council was divvying up a surplus, "people showed to say gimme, gimme, gimme," Fritz said.

Not everybody tonight was grateful.

Tanya March, who serves on the Northwest District Association parks committee, asked for funding to be restored for the SUN School program at Metropolitan Learning Center.

Lisa Reed Guarnero criticized cuts to the Vision into Action program. When the planning and sustainability bureaus merged, she said, "It felt like everything came to a screeching halt."

Ken Forcier, complained about the loss of funding for the tree manual, a project to place all the tree regulations in one place.

"Our tree canopy is coming under attack daily," Forcier said.

Richard Beetle, representing the laborers union, criticized the budget for once again cutting the transportation budget, leading to the loss of 29 workers. "The transportation system will continue to deteriorate," Beetle said.

The mayor proposed raising city parking fees by 25 cents an hour, but he dropped an earlier plan to extend parking meters by two hours from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. He did propose charging for parking on Sunday afternoons, however.

He proposed a \$500,000 bicycle infrastructure improvement fund, to be paid for with utility franchise fees.

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