



May 15th, 2026

Portland City Council
1221 SW 4th Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

RE: Support for Mayor Wilson's FY 2026–27 Proposed Budget

Council President and Members of Council:

On behalf of the Portland Metro Chamber and our coalition, we write to urge the City Council to adopt Mayor Keith Wilson's FY 2026–27 proposed budget substantially as submitted.

Portland is at a critical moment. Residents and businesses are asking for the same thing: a city government focused on delivering core services effectively, restoring public confidence, and stabilizing Portland's economic future. This is not the moment for political maneuvering or ideological budget debates. This is the moment to focus on the foundational services that determine whether Portland succeeds or falls further behind competing cities.

Mayor Wilson's proposed budget reflects that reality. Faced with a substantial structural deficit, the Mayor has presented a disciplined budget that prioritizes essential services while making difficult but necessary reductions across city government. The proposal appropriately focuses on fiscal stability, operational accountability, and the preservation of the core functions that residents and employers rely on every day.

We strongly urge Council to reject any additional reductions to:

- Portland Police Bureau
- Portland Fire & Rescue
- Portland Environment Management Office
- Prosper Portland
- Portland Parks & Recreation
- Auditor's Office

The Mayor's budget already includes significant reductions across city government, including staffing reductions, bureau consolidations, administrative streamlining, deferred investments, and operational cuts. There is simply no justification for weakening the very agencies most responsible for public safety, emergency preparedness, economic recovery, and neighborhood livability.

Additional cuts to the Portland Police Bureau would directly undermine ongoing efforts to restore public confidence in safety conditions throughout the city. Businesses continue to cite crime, emergency response reliability, retail theft, and visible disorder as among the top barriers to investment and recovery. The Mayor's budget appropriately protects core patrol and operational functions while still requiring bureau-wide efficiencies and reductions. Further cuts would move Portland backward at precisely the wrong time.

Likewise, Portland Fire & Rescue and the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management are essential public safety infrastructure. The Mayor's proposed budget recognizes the growing importance of emergency response capacity as Portland faces increasing risks from severe weather, wildfire smoke events, natural disasters, infrastructure disruptions, and public health emergencies. Reducing emergency preparedness and response capability in this environment would be irresponsible and shortsighted.

We also strongly opposes further reductions to Prosper Portland. Economic development is not optional during fiscal instability—it is essential to solving it. Prosper Portland plays a critical role in business recruitment, small business support, industrial land development, job creation, and downtown revitalization. Portland cannot restore its tax base or long-term fiscal health while simultaneously reducing the very tools responsible for economic recovery and private investment.

In addition, Portland Parks & Recreation must remain a priority. Clean, safe, and well-maintained parks, recreation facilities, trails, and community spaces are core city services that directly impact neighborhood livability, tourism, workforce attraction, public health, and community safety. Parks are not peripheral amenities; they are foundational infrastructure that shape how residents and visitors experience Portland every day.

Continued deterioration of parks maintenance and recreation services would further erode public confidence in the City's ability to provide basic services effectively.

The Mayor's proposal appropriately recognizes that Portland cannot cut its way to recovery by hollowing out core systems while continuing to ask residents and businesses to shoulder rising taxes and fees. At a time when households and employers are already facing mounting financial pressures, the City must demonstrate discipline, focus, and a commitment to getting the basics right.

We appreciate the Mayor's emphasis on:

- Preserving core public safety services
- Maintaining emergency preparedness capacity
- Supporting economic revitalization
- Protecting neighborhood livability
- Improving operational efficiency

Lastly, the Portland City Auditor's Office plays a critical role in ensuring transparency, accountability, and public trust in city government. At a time when Portland residents and businesses are demanding greater confidence in how public resources are managed and how city services are delivered, preserving the Auditor's budget should remain a priority. Independent oversight, performance auditing, elections administration, and government accountability functions are essential core services that help ensure taxpayer dollars are used effectively and that city government operates with integrity, efficiency, and public confidence.

We urge Council to adopt the Mayor's proposed budget substantially as submitted and resist efforts to impose further reductions on the agencies most directly responsible for Portland's recovery and long-term competitiveness.

Now is the time to focus on core services, fiscal stability, and restoring public confidence—not political division. Portland's residents, workers, and employers deserve a city government focused on execution, accountability, and results.