

From: Taylor DeCoste
Sent: February 2, 2023 6:20 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Cc: Ward 4 <ward4@hamilton.ca>
Subject: Public Budget Delegation

To whom it may concern,

My name is Taylor DeCoste, and since I am unable to delegate on the budget in person I wanted to express my opinions via email.

To start, I think it is very important to reject the HPS budget increase. Historically, the HPS finish the year in a surplus, keep the surplus funds, and then request a massive budget increase. Police serve not to deter crimes, but to respond and react to them. This may have some benefits, but not nearly as many as focusing on root issues that cause crime. I think after seeing the success of a program like Social Navigator, we as a City need to recognize that an approach of criminalizing and militarism isn't the right one.

With that said, I believe the City should be allocating funds to support various social services. Three key focuses, which would also help with crime rates that many like to focus on, would be investing in housing supports, mental health, and harm reduction. Those who face homelessness, mental health challenges, and addictions have many challenges in life. They are constantly at risk to injury, sickness, theft, robbery, criminalization, etc. By investing in housing and housing supports, we can help lower the homeless population but also help people maintain their housing and get stability in their lives. In doing so, we could also help address mental health and addiction for those living rough. Trying to tackle mental health and addiction while living rough is nearly impossible as you have no stability. By housing those individuals, we allow them to begin tackling other hurdles of life.

These kinds of investments can inevitably save the City money. Costs can be saved on By-Law enforcement, policing services, hospital stays, emergency service calls, cleaning costs, etc.

The most important thing to remember is that **by investing in the people, you are investing in the City.**

Thanks for taking the time to read and consider the opinions of one Hamiltonian. I have confidence the City will do what's best for its people.

Taylor DeCoste