

From: Michele Gallagher
Sent: January 12, 2024 7:19 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Written Submission

Good afternoon, my name is Michelle Gallagher, and I am a concerned citizen of Ward 2.

I can no longer recall a time before all these so called "unprecedented times". Perhaps the City of Hamilton has forgotten what kind of world we live in right now. If any of you have forgotten, I invite you to spend some time walking through the downtown.

Our city is beautiful. The people are beautiful. But far too many people in our city are living outside, exposed to the elements, because the city is unable or unwilling to house them.

And in the midst of this sobering landscape of both reality and the mind, Hamilton Police has the staggering audacity to request a 13.3 million dollar increase in their budget.

For what? For what, I ask you? What are the police doing to house our citizens? To address the cost of living crisis? To assist the disabled and elderly in our community?

If we cannot afford to house our fellow humans, we most certainly can't afford to increase funding to the police.

I had a very privileged upper middle class upbringing. I am white. I went to University. And still, because of this cost of living crisis, I sleep on the floor next to my child's bed because I can only afford a one bedroom apartment. I am only a few strokes of bad luck away from being unhoused myself.

If we continue to funnel city funds away from housing, away from people who actually need it, more and more people will find themselves in my situation. Maybe, god forbid, you might find yourself in that situation, or worse. It's not impossible.

I urge you to consider the future you are building for the people who will come after you, including your future selves. What kind of Hamilton do you want to live in as you grow old? Do not rely on privilege to protect you. Privilege can be a fickle beast.

A better Hamilton is still possible. And that better future is inextricably attached to defunding the police and investing in its people.

Council, it is your responsibility to house the people of Hamilton and we will not stop holding you to that.

Regards,

Michelle Gallagher
Ward 2