

EDITORIAL

We have to all stick together during difficult times

The City has signaled that many community organizations and others serving Portland citizens are in for some hard times. From neighborhood groups to cycling and walking advocates, to homeless and housing services and after-school programs — there's an anxiety spreading through the cities ranks knowing that there's a \$25 million dollar budget hole.

It's unclear what the mayor will do concerning a public process and how new leadership at City Hall would like to understand and determine priorities in the community. The idea of managing 27 bureaus with 14 staff, six months before

the forthcoming budget with a deficit of \$25 million seems more than overwhelming to Street Roots.

Saying all of that, it's important that we move forward as a city and find a way to stick together and support one another across different issues and programs. It's no

time to watch larger organizations simply get bigger, leaving the smaller grassroots organizations to fend for themselves. Sometimes it's the larger organizations and programs in this city that allow for a centralized infrastructure and delivery system around a specific issue. Other times, it's small investments in smaller community programs that go a long way.

Street Roots and others are eager to find a path forward and to be innovative and help maintain the basic safety net that makes our city strong. With the right coordination between local government agencies and partners — we think we can weather this storm. If we're talking a wholesale cut to our city's core values and the programs that make Portland unique — than we run the risk of having our safety net disintegrate and all hell breaking loose.

We know how complex the issue of housing and homelessness is. We also know that for years the city government has held these issues harmless due hard economic times for its citizens. The city may not have been able to add to the ongoing revenue for housing and homeless services, but it has held the line and in many ways supplemented the lack of resources coming from the state and federal government. Without strong support for these core programs the city would be facing a much worse reality, including an even more visible homeless population and more people dying on the streets.

While it may be difficult, we know that a unified vision and common cause that we can create real change in our community, even during difficult times.

We're looking to the mayor and city council along with the leadership at Multnomah County to show us the way. We also hope there's a healthy dialogue in Street Roots and in the public about the priorities of the city, knowing that \$25 million is at stake. The time is short. Let your voices be heard.

Our mission

Street Roots creates income opportunities for people experiencing homelessness and poverty by producing a newspaper and other media that are catalysts for individual and social change.

Street Roots publishes every two weeks, launching on Fridays, and is available exclusively through our street vendors or by subscription. We are proud members of the North American Street Newspaper Association and the International Network of Street Papers.

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Hygiene items are greatly needed

What we call the February fake-out at Street Roots will no doubt happen again this year. That time of year when the sun pokes

DIRECTOR'S
DESK

By Israel Bayer

Israel Bayer is the executive director of Street Roots. You can reach him at israel@streetroots.org

through clouds and you realize that there is actually a blue sky. For a moment, we collectively think that the rainy season is almost over and that summer is right around the corner. It's beautiful. Then, of course, the rain and clouds return.

With the rainy season at Street Roots comes tension and sickness. People experiencing homelessness and poverty are relegated to a life in the cold and wet. It means many of our folks are dealing with the flu, sometimes walking pneumonia. It's a hard knock life.

What may be a passing cold to some may turn into a life or death scenario for people sleeping outdoors. It's a cruel reality.

Our vendors are in need of small gloves, socks, socking caps, foot powder, cough drops and hand warmers. A small donation could go a long way and help keep our vendors warm and their feet strong. If you're interested in giving any of these materials you can e-mail me at israel@streetroots.org or come on by the office at 211 NW Davis. We would love to see you.

In fact, anytime you are in the neighborhood we would love to see you. We love when readers and supporters come into the office and introduce themselves. It's a great way to meet the staff and to check out the community space we've created at Street Roots. You might even see your favorite vendor in the office.

We appreciate all the love you show vendors week-in and week-out. It means the world to all of us at Street Roots. Your readership and support matters. More than you could image.

Let Right 2 Dream Too continue

Right 2 Dream Too is the exact same situation from over a decade ago in Portland, in the struggle to form and sustain Dignity Village. That experiment turned out well, with 60 people sheltered every night that do NOT take up city resources, because the Village exists. And it's not enough. Let R2D2 continue this great work to shelter and care for those who have so little, until all of our citizens have shelter, food, and a chance to turn their lives around, with dignity.

WENDY KOHN

Thanks for making Street Roots possible

I was very sorry to read about your loss at Street Roots (Ted Jack). I have read about him before over the years; it's a horrible shame that he passed away at such a young age.

I subscribe to a few papers — USA Today, Wall Street Journal Weekend and the Oregonian, but, by far, Street Roots is my favorite paper. I enjoy reading the vendor profiles. I am inspired by their moving stories of survival, of course, the best stories are those involving success in overcoming poverty, homelessness, and basic daily economic struggles in life. I, myself, live paycheck to paycheck so I can relate to some degree, to the group that struggles to stay afloat, etc.

We live in a highly unquotable society, so my prayers will always be with the folks that are down-and-out and struggling to survive. Once again, I'm sorry about the

loss of Ted and I hope that your vendors will stay safe and secure with winter approaching.

Also, I believe that your work with Street Roots is simply unbelievable. You're doing an amazing job that very few could ever wish to achieve; your commitment to helping those in poverty is highly commendable, altruistic and noble. You're quite a credit to society. Thanks again for your excellent publication.

WARREN WILSON

Thanks to special vendor

I just wanted to send a note about your vendor Skip. He is awesome. It doesn't matter whether it's rain or shine, hot or cold, he is always standing on that corner with a smile on his face and papers in his hands. I walk past him almost every morning on my way to work, and I actually look forward to seeing him. In fact, there was a period a few months ago where he had disappeared for awhile, and I was wondering where he'd gone because I was actually starting to miss him. Then, all of a sudden, a couple months later, as I was making my walk and literally just thinking about him, there he was. Back at his post. He ended up explaining that he had a surgery and was recovering for awhile. I was so glad to hear he was ok and glad he was back.

NICKIE BRUDOWSKY

WHAT DO
YOU THINK?

Send letters to the editor to the Street Roots office, 211 NW Davis St., Portland, OR 97209, or e-mail to joanne@streetroots.org.

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Street Roots Rose City Resource

Street Roots publishes the Rose City Resource, a comprehensive booklet of services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty. To inquire about getting an order of the Rose City Resource for distribution, please write to pdxrosecityresource@gmail.com. Resources are also available online at www.rosecityresource.org.

Vendors

Street Roots vendors buy the newspapers for 25 cents each and sell them for \$1, keeping the 75 cents in profit for themselves. In order to keep the cost low to our vendors, we receive additional support from donations and in-kind contributions.



75¢
goes directly to the vendor
who sold you the paper

25¢
goes toward
printing costs

Vendor orientations are at 1 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Street Roots office.