From: Andrew Kohan
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:56 AM
To: CLK-CityClerks
Subject: March 18th meeting delegation

Good morning.

In lieu of my attendance yesterday, which was not possible due to my possible COVID-19 symptoms, please accept this written submission into the public record:

Good morning. Thank you councillors for the opportunity to speak today. Councillors Eadie and Santos, i wish it was possible to say it is good to be with you again - I know you were both here last night along with me until almost midnight, and the disappointing result of a preliminary budget passed through committee without amendment. I hope that my faith in good government and community engagement is not similarly disappointed today.

This is the standing policy committee on protection, community services and parks, and I'm here today to speak in opposition to the preliminary budget for 2020-2023's cuts to funding for protection.

As a member of Budget for All and Millennium for All, I've been hugely enriched by the opportunity to build community across this city, and learn from neighbours from every ward.

One of the teachings I've received over these last months that I most treasure comes from the members of Aboriginal Youth Opportunities and participants of Meet Me at the Bell Tower, who explained to me that cuts equal violence.

This isn't just an assertion that these cuts harm our communities, which they absolutely do, but that they also directly impede anti-violence efforts.

To put it another way, consider Fearless R2W, a group in the north end working against structural and state violence, who generously shared their time and space with members of Budget for All to learn together about the harms of this proposed budget.

Fearless R2W recently received a grant for crime prevention services. During our time together, group participants shared their ideas for what services prevent crime in our communities:

Community grants
Libraries
Transit
Community Centres
Leisure guide activities
Arts

Members of fearless R2W listed these as crime prevention activities, as community protection, because they know from their lived experience that these investments in Community matter for addressing violence and crime. When these community members ask for us to address crime and violence, they are not asking for increased policing budget, a decision also driven by their lived experience.

Those of us in Millennium for All oppose the airport-like security barrier at Millennium library for many reasons, both practical and principled. But among the many objections, i would submit that such interventions are simply too late - security responses intervene at the wrong point in the chain to address violence and crime.

We must intervene much much earlier, where the communities most in need of resources struggle for enough investment to engage everyone in the community. These investments have significant ROI relative to security interventions, and keep all Winnipeggers safer, and improve the quality of life for our whole family.

The elimination of funds for de-escalation training at Millennium Library undercuts these goals. Please amend this budget to bring them back.

The drastic cuts to the leisure guide undercuts these goals. Please amend this budget to bring them back.

The underfunding of trees budget will contribute to despair in our neighbourhoods, and undercut these goals. Please amend this budget to bring them back.

The cuts to arts will undercut community protection. Please amend this budget to bring them back.

The cuts to transit, UPass, the fleet maintenance, 311, and so many other vital services will undercut community protection. Please amend this budget to bring them back.

You on council have the power in your hands to make this a safer, more livable city for all. Please take that opportunity and restore funding to these life-sustaining services.

Thank you.