From: Caroline Wilson
To: Public Comments
Subject: Public Comment regarding Commissioner Budget
Date: Monday, July 20, 2020 4:31:11 PM

Hello,

My name is Caroline Wilson and I live in Weaverville in Buncombe County. I am writing to demand the amendment of the city budget to refund the County Sheriff's Office and Detention Center by at least 50%. Please consider reinvesting these funds to actually address the local pandemic, including supporting local businesses to only remain open if deemed essential, providing PPE and masks to employees and upholding the mask policy. Please halt the reopening of schools in the fall and reallocate funds to support schools in distance learning and families in child care. Increase funds for frontline medical and emergency workers. Abolish the Tourism Development Agency and it's over-extended budget for advertisement during a global pandemic. Use that money instead to shelter our unhoused communities so they stay safe and sheltered during a pandemic that disproportionately impacts them and then spreads in shelters and jails where unhoused people often cycle in and out of due to systemic targeting by police forces. Use the money from defunding the police and County Sheriff's office to instead provide affording housing, mental health services, rent subsidies, eviction diversion, free public transportation, more access to testing, and restorative justice and mediation services. While the city commissioners and council are enjoying the fruits of being applauded nationally for the vague reparations commitment, this is a time when those dreams and wishes to center our Black, Brown, immigrant, and Indigenous communities can be realized through defunding of policing forces, addressing the local pandemic, and halting over tourism.

Thank you for your time,
Caroline