TO: Office of the City Mayor and City Council  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94301  
City.Council@cityofpaloalto.org

FROM: Juana Briones Elementary School PTA

SUBJECT: Proposed Budget Cuts

Dear Honorable City Council Members:

This letter is from the Juana Briones Elementary School PTA on behalf of the entire Palo Alto community. We ask you to re-consider the reduction of Crossing Guard staff and PAPD Patrol staff, which impacts the immediate safety to our children and the community as a whole.

Stripping away the Crossing Guard safety mechanism for our already vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists is an alarmingly dangerous move. Commuters in the community are already facing changing bell schedules, increased traffic, recently changed bike and traffic routes, and over a year of not even physically going to school! The changing bell schedules will cause an influx of walking and cycling students on our City streets, during times drivers are not accustomed to dealing with them. The precautions and safety plans that were needed to be in place to get kids back to school post-Covid need to include getting them there safely.

Your current 2022 budget proposal will remove 5 PAPD Patrol positions. The PAPD Traffic Team is critical to the Juana Briones Community. The avenues and roads that directly cross our school (Los Robles Avenue, Maybell Avenue, and Coulombe Drive) are high traffic bike areas. The neighboring Arastradero Road is one of the busiest commuter roads in Palo Alto! Children from the ages of 6 and older ride these lanes to and from Juana Briones Elementary School, Barron Park Elementary School, Fletcher Middle School, and Gunn High School. It’s nearly a daily critical mass in Palo Alto.
Our very own Juana Briones PTA President had their child hit by a car and run over, on his way home from school, which resulted in two broken bones. We are thankful he is still with us. We all know other families have not been as lucky. Palo Alto parents are a tight community, and Juana Briones' parents have called 911 on several occasions when finding children laying on the side of the road bloody, disoriented, in tears, after being hit by a car or just falling off their bike on their way to or from school.

While we need our crossing guards for basic safety, we need our traffic officers for actual compliance, as the streets will be filled again in the 2021 school year. It is essential for us to keep our kids safe, and not lose one more child to an accident. Bike lanes and well-intended committees are not enough. We need a team of professionally trained crossing guards and police who can keep our kids safe. We urge you to retain full funding for crossing guards. This is imperative for our children’s safety.

Should you have any questions, concerns, or require additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly via email at ptajuanabriones@gmail.com. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ginnie Noh

Ginnie Noh
Juana Briones Elementary School PTA President

cc: Rosie Mesterhazy (Juana Briones Safe Routes to School Coordinator)  
    Katy Bimpson (Juana Briones Principal)  
    Jennifer DiBrienza (Juana Briones School Board Representative)  
    Dr. Don Austin (PAUSD Superintendent)
Dear Council Member,

I heard that there is a plan to cut the number of crossing guards for our students. Please note that the safety of our students should be primary in the budget, and the small savings of about $300k do not justify the sacrifice in safety.

Sincerely,
Haluk Konuk
Palo Alto homeowner and resident since 2007.
Dear Council Members:

I implore you to preserve the safety and welfare of our children by retaining ALL of the current school Crossing Guard positions.
Please do not cut the number of school Crossing Guards as part of upcoming budget cuts.

Thank you,
Catherine Reed-Beaudouin
Parent of two PAUSD students

Sent from my iPhone
Hello Greg,

Despite being on the City Council since 2016, it is clear you do not understand the basic workings of this City. This job is obviously out of your league and you should let the grown ups handle it. Being moderate, conservative or a fiscal hawk is one thing, being outsmarted by everyone in the Council and the City staff and not being able to learn simple concepts after 5 years is not what this City needs. Although you did your homework compared to last year, your "span of control" analysis was just laughable and an embarrassment.

Please stop wasting Palo Alto's time! Thank you,

Jean-Baptiste Gallo
My great thanks to Finance Committee Members Pat Burt, Alison Cormack and Eric Filseth for reconsidering cuts in the 2020 budget process for the Palo Alto Art Center during this challenging, fiscal time. The Palo Alto Art Center is a gem on the San Francisco Peninsula and merits whatever funding may be awarded for its preservation.

Sincerely
Signe Mayfield
Barron Park, CA
Please focus on using the least possible to serve the most possible.

I agree with the revised budget under consideration. Our city should fund existing services like fire, police, libraries and services for youth and elders.

The proposed Palo Alto History Museum will not add any value to those services. The history of Palo Alto is well documented by a variety of sources. Creating an entire museum is not necessary. I agree that the archives are very extensive and should be given appropriate storage and access. I also wonder how it will contribute to an accurate narrative about the ways that ALL of the workers in Silicon Valley were included AND excluded from the companies that made this area famous. I don’t think our city’s funds should be used to tell the story of a limited number of private (and VERY WEALTHY) citizens success.

Thank you

Sue

Sue Purdy Pelosi

Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible.
Dalai Lama

https://www.linkedin.com/in/suepurdypelosi/
Dear City Council,
We seniors who live downtown in walking distance of 270 Forest Street have been missing our library. Please be sure it’s properly funded and now that Palo Alto’s in the yellow tier, encourage it to open.
Hopefully and thanks,
Betty Howell
850 Webster #639
Palo Alto, CA 94301

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” —James Baldwin
Dear City Council members,

I was raised in Palo Alto, and am now raising my own children here. From when I was a child in the 1970s and 1980s until now, the Children's Theater has brought magic and light to this community--whether your family participates onstage, behind the scenes, or as part of the audience. The Children's Theater is one of those gems that makes Palo Alto special. Especially in times like these, we need creativity and arts in our lives.

Please restore the Children's Theater budget in full, so it can continue to bring joy to generations to come.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Pearson Garr
Hilbar Lane
From: Phyllis Smith <binkyblu920@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 8:36 AM
To: Council, City
Subject: Support of Children's Theater

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Please DO NOT cut funding to the Children's Theater. It is one of the few theaters that is for children by children. I have lived in Palo Alto for over 50 years. In 5th grade my sons’ school wanted to do a play so we went to the theater and they came to the school, auditioned students and brought in costumes and sets and that was the beginning of the School Outreach Program in about 1979. I was a member of the Friends of the Children’s Theater for many years and my son worked as a volunteer through high school then after college was hired by the theater to do set design and tech work. I have seen the impact the funding has had on the theater and has allowed ALL STUDENTS access to participation regardless of family financial background.

PLEASE support continued funding for the CHILDREN’S THEATER.

Phyllis Smith
920 Boyce Avenue
Palo Alto, CA. 94301

As a side note: My daughter lives up in Washington on Whidbey Island. They have a Children’s Theater based on ours that is a theater for children by children that was established by a Hollywood producer who lived in Palo Alto and moved to Washington and help establish their theater (which my grandson acts in).
Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and Members of the Palo Alto City Council,

I’ve heard my story before as I have spoken about my family’s history in Palo Alto from the turn of the century. I proudly hail myself as a product of the school system in Palo Alto and active member of my community be it engaging in city issues, neighborhood activism, or connecting others to the rich history of Palo Alto.

I write to you again to fully support the development of the Palo Alto Museum in the Roth Building for its important historic and cultural ties to the history of Palo Alto. My grandfather immigrated to Palo Alto in 1900 and owned the first legal Palo Alto Chinese-run restaurant, which Dr. Lee, founder of PAMF, was a loyal customer! Sam Ying Mock married and had 7 children, including my mom, who were all delivered by Dr. Edith Johnson, the first woman doctor of Palo Alto also known as the “White Angel.” She was well known for her work during the 1918 Influenza pandemic. As have experienced another pandemic which has hit us locally and globally, and tested the financial health of our establishments and mental health of our citizens as we had to shelter in place, we had learned about how it is important to work together with our friends, neighbors and even strangers to get through this. During this major disruption of our routines the importance of staying rooted and establishing a stronger community is vital more than ever to the health of our city as we work our way to some sort of normalcy and come back together as a community.

I see the building of the Palo Alto History Museum as a community center that will serve as an anchor for us all. It will showcase our stories of this community from its inception as a University town to the growth of Palo Alto as a powerhouse of Silicon Valley to the present. It will help make sense of where we were, how we became, and what we can become through a collection of experiences that we not only share with our community, our children, but the rest of the world.

Please I ask for your help to support the History Museum in its vision to become a unique and living experience for all the world to enjoy.

Kimberley Wong

3rd generation Palo Altan
As a parent of three active bikers who navigate the streets from our house to Ohlone elementary and Greene Middle School, reducing the number of crossing guards at intersections is a bad move. They regularly are able to get to and from school with ease because of the safety provided by crossing guards. Numerous mishaps have been avoided on the occasions that I've picked with them because of the crossing cards presents. Those short yet busy times of day during school start an end times must be well protected for our cyclist, pedestrians and increasingly distracted driving parents. I urge you to please reconsider any cuts to this vital yet small portion of the Palo Alto budget for the upcoming year. Protected intersections mean more bicyclists and pedestrians and less drivers on our narrow streets!

Signed,

Kathy Thielke Chen parent of three children at Ohlone Elementary and Greene Middle School
From: Nancy A Huber <njh451@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 3:58 PM
To: Council, City
Subject: In support of the Palo Alto Museum

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear Honorable Council Members:

I am writing in support of the Council’s vote to direct the Finance Committee to find a way for the City of Palo Alto to fund the Roth Buildings rehabilitation through the combination of Impact Fees and Stanford University Medical Center funds. This would significantly move this important project forward.

Rich Green, President of the board of the Palo Alto Museum, carefully laid out all the benefits to our community that the Museum offers, both inside the Museum and outside in Heritage Park. I will not reiterate these benefits again except with regards to the City-owned archives. Having volunteered while the Archives were at the Main Library and at Cubberly, I am acquainted with their content and feel that having a designated spot in an environmentally appropriate setting in the Roth Building will be a benefit to all of us including researchers interested in Silicon Valley. Having such a facility will also encourage people who have contributed to the growth and development of Silicon Valley (particularly those living in Palo Alto) to consider donating their archival material to the Museum.

Thank you for your time regarding this matter!

Sincerely,
Nancy Huber
451 Lincoln Avenue
njh451@comcast.net
To: Honorable members of the Palo Alto City Council / Finance Committee  
Subject: Why the City should invest in the Palo Alto History Museum

In 1912 a quiet event in Palo Alto changed the world profoundly and permanently. Working at Cyril Elwell’s Federal Telegraph Company at 913 Emerson, Lee de Forest coaxed his “audion” vacuum tube invention to function as an amplifier and oscillator. He created electronics.

Three years later President Wilson spoke to Alexander Graham Bell and Bell’s assistant Thomas Watson on the first transcontinental telephone call, an impossibility before de Forest’s development. Commercial radio broadcasting soon followed, then radar, then television. Two guys started an electronics company in a garage. The first digital computers used hundreds of audions, which were by then called triodes. Transistors were developed as next-generation triodes. The world connected.

All of that was enabled at 913 Emerson St, Palo Alto, California.

Surprisingly few people are aware that this world-shaping event occurred in Palo Alto. We need, need, a museum of Palo Alto history.

Twenty years ago the City purchased the Roth Building with no clear idea of what to do with it. Twenty years later it sits empty, derelict. Twenty years ago a group of citizens met to form a history museum in that historic structure. I was there. Twenty years of diligent effort by leading citizens have shown how difficult it is to raise private money to rehabilitate a neglected city property.

Clearly it is time for the City to finish what it began twenty years ago. The amount needed to invest in realizing this resource is not large. The civic ROI is huge. Let’s. Just. Do. It.

Thank You

David Bubenik, Electrical Engineer  
420 Homer Avenue  
Palo Alto  
www.HomerAvenue.org
I have been awaiting the reopening of the downtown library. There are already so many vacant storefronts and businesses; why would the city ever want to consider replacing the library.
I dislike having to drive to Rinconada and Mitchell park to pick up and drop off books. Closure is a bad idea!

Maggie
North Palo Alto
I hope the downtown library will not be closed. It has unique items and they are displayed in an outstanding way. Because it is small, it is easier to get help than from rinconada and Mitchell Park. Palo Alto libraries are what many of us like most about living here. The downtown library is unique. I hope it doesn’t need to be closed.

Marilyn Messer
1050 Guinda Street

Sent from my iPhone
Dear City Council - we are shocked that 22 police officers have been let go. How and why did this happen? Was this a full council vote?

Last night at 3am we had an intruder scale a wall and enter our backyard. My wife was alone and called 911. She was told there were no police officers available since they were all out on other emergencies. How is this possible?

Cutting public safety budgets as a means to balance a deficit should be the last thing done.

Mike
Dear Council Members,

I appreciate the decision to reduce the JMZ entrance fee from $18 to $10.

My fundamental concern, however, is not allayed by the reduction. A $10 fee per person would be devastating to families who have frequented the facility in the past. Personally, despite my being able to afford the entrance fee for my family and me, I would have been shocked and turned away on a typical bike ride to the park and museum with my grandchildren given that I never carry money. That fee would be insurmountable for a family of 4 or 5 especially given the financial straights that many of our citizens—especially in neighboring East Palo Alto—have endured this past year. Why can’t we be more generous and educationally responsible than to preclude families—perhaps those who need such experiences the most—from the unique experience of the JMZ?

Perhaps it would be possible to suggest that families pay what they can and note that other facilities charge $15 or $20 per person as an entrance fee.

Can we try such volunteerism?

Thank you—from a faithful supporter of JMZ,

Edie Sullivan
70 Crescent Drive
Palo Alto, CA 94301
On May 8, 2021, at 5:07 PM, Edith V Sullivan <edie@stanford.edu> wrote:

Dear Council Members,

What a terrible blow to our faithful attendees to be surprised with an $18 entrance fee to our beloved junior zoo museum!

Having been a supporter of the JMZ for decades and having had my grandsons enjoy years of learning as campers, visitors, and junior counselors with your amazing staff, I cannot believe that we in Palo Alto CHOOSE to exclude children who most need the type of experience afforded by the JMZ. Are the renovation costs and moneys promised to it a bate and switch to us residents? What can we do to reverse this exclusionary fee? Do we need more donations from each of us to be used directly for entrance fees? There is nothing right about this decision. I cannot believe that Palo Alto, one of the wealthiest communities in the entire country, cannot make this important learning opportunity free to all as it has been for years.

With great concern,

Edie Sullivan
70 Crescent Drive
Palo Alto, CA 94301
415-613-2269

Edith V. Sullivan, Ph.D.
Professor
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences
Stanford University
School of Medicine
[FEDEX: room 3202]
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e-mail: edie@stanford.edu

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Dear Mayor DuBois and council members,

I am writing to thank you for your bold stance regarding funding for community services, including the libraries, police and fire, the Art Center, and Children's Theatre. These are all important to the psychological and physical well-being of the community. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

My personally favorite of the “restored” items is the College Terrace Library. It is the only City facility for neighbors on this “side of the tracks”. While it may not have been one of the most used libraries in recent years (especially given the reduced opening hours etc.), it still does provide a critical service for the Barron Park, Evergreen, and College Terrace communities. Families from Escondido Village also use our little, local branch and I’m sure that once it’s open again, so will families from University Terrace. I’m looking forward to having it back.

So once again, thank you!!!

Best regards,

Pria Graves
2130 Yale
650.493.2153
If this is so, this is an outrage. Please advise the electorate. Thank you.

Jacqueline Campbell
916 8343548
jacampbell19503@gmail.com

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S10e, an AT&T 5G Evolution capable smartphone
Dear City Council,

We support and applaud the new rate change proposed. As a small non profit business downtown, run entirely by volunteers, we seldom generate much wastewater (as in, flush a toilet 2-3 times a day or less, then wash our hands!). Basing our usage on quantity and removing the monthly charge to us would be greatly, greatly appreciated. And, honestly, much more equitable. Thank you so much, all the volunteers at the United Nations Association Gift Shop, 552 Emerson Street. Best, Shelly Kosak

Sent from my iPhone