

Members of Portland City Council:

When you vote in favor of the S2HC zoning proposal as is, you are voting to give JOHS and private concerns free rein to destroy East Portland neighborhoods.

I have been a board member of Hazelwood Neighborhood Association for about 7 years and I have been appalled at the degradation that has happened in my neighborhood in that period at the hands of City Hall and Multnomah County leadership. I grant you, some of this degradation is the result of the national economy in general, the fact that other areas of the nation have been more inequitable to the homeless, and the economic downturn of the COVID crisis, but the trends have been there all along. This neighborhood, which in not-too-distant times produced a United States Senator (Merkley), is on the brink of economic disaster.



When I hear civic leaders talking about serving the homeless and geographic equity, the 800-pound gorilla in the room is the huge camp which used to be called the I-205 bike path, just down the street from where I live. I don't know how many of you have ridden on the bike path lately, so I thought I'd show you a picture as an example of what I'm talking about. Waves of campers have repeatedly taken over in the open spaces adjacent to the freeway, and massive amounts of garbage is strewn everywhere. And sadly, this is not the only homeless camp in East Portland. In Hazelwood neighborhood, where I live, we've been living with overwhelming numbers of homeless for a couple of years now, and the strain it has put on our neighborhood.

Commercial development of small businesses in East Portland has struggled over the last couple of decades, but the impact we have really noticed in the last couple of years has been on grocery stores in the area. Gateway Fred Meyer, a once thriving flagship grocery and department store has been steadily hardening its entrances to keep up with the ever-mounting theft it has had to contend with, and last week it finally closed its back door, the one that faces the Gateway Transit Center and the I-205 bike path, permanently, and we neighbors hope that we don't

lose that store. We've already lost the Safeway on 122nd and Glisan, shortly after the Hansen shelter commenced operations. The biggest problem with the Hansen shelter was that it was mostly a place to sleep. There was limited food provided (mostly by volunteers), so clients were on their own to "find" food. If Hazelwood loses Fred Meyer then the only major grocery outlets in outer NE will be the two Winco stores on 102nd and 122nd, and Costco on 138th north of Sandy Blvd.

You don't see a lot of new businesses taking root here in Hazelwood, except for pot stores, strip clubs, and the omnipresent services for low-income, homeless, mental illness and drug addiction, and their clients. Since I moved to East Portland in 2012, Target has moved out of the location of 122nd and Glisan, and the DHS moved in. The Hansen shelter came and went, and just down the street at 122nd and Burnside, the huge Blackburn Center opened with its 200 spaces for shelter for a variety of homeless clientele. Not huge enough, apparently, because a row of tents has sprung up on the sidewalk alongside what used to be the neighborhood Safeway store just down the street. Another row of tents occupies the parkway along Burnside east of the center. And still a third camp is located in the open space around the I-84 entrance ramps on 122nd Avenue. We are all looking forward to the day that the DePaul Center opens near Mall 205 drawing substance abuse clients from all over Portland to our neighborhood. And the business that the city is installing in the Nick Fish building adjacent to the newly built Gateway Discovery Park, where 4 teenagers were gunned down last year, is Prosper Portland. All these things are happening less than a mile to 1.5 miles from my house!

And now we are being asked to buy into a scheme that would allow an unrestricted number of "homeless outdoor shelters and mass shelters" to be built in certain zoning classes unconditionally. Are you kidding? I don't think that it is an accident that this scheme is being developed piecemeal, without any reference to the siting of the shelters or what services will be planned to be provided. And I don't think it's an accident that the zoning types selected for this unrestricted development are most prevalent in East Portland. We are being asked to accept on faith that City Hall and Multnomah County will be acting in our best interests. And on the basis of your track record, the neighborhood meetings I've attended and conversations I've had with neighborhood association folks and other neighbors, I have to say that as a body, we do not trust that to happen:

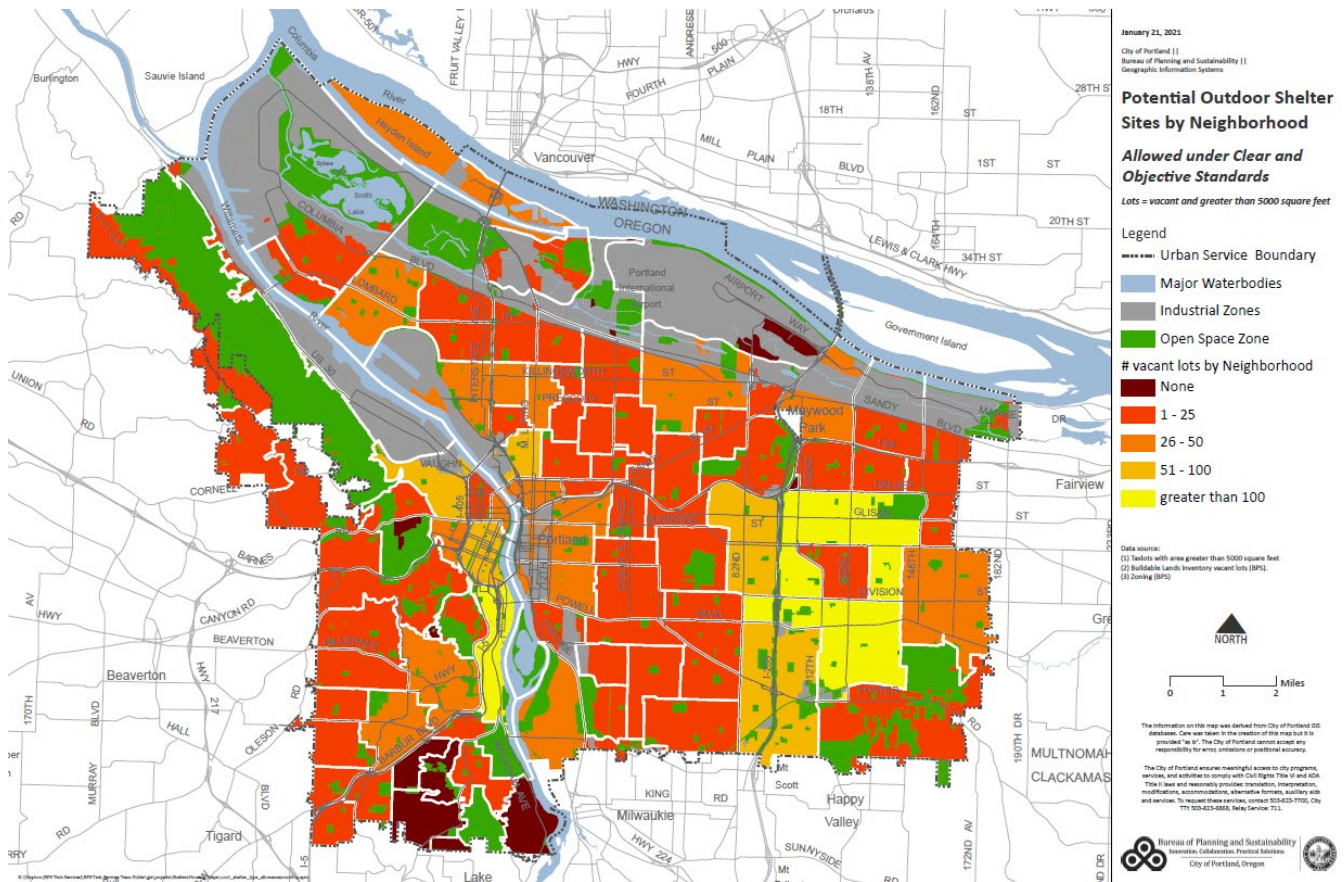
We don't trust you because you have targeted East Portland all along as a convenient place to develop massive amounts of low-income housing.

We don't trust you because you have been siting and relocating all the low income, homeless, mental illness, and drug addiction facilities in the city to East Portland. These in turn have attracted many more of the homeless to our area. Gosh, anyone that didn't know how much you value equity might think that you've been setting about to turn East Portland into a slum!

We don't trust you because you cannot look us in the eye when you present one of these facilities to us, fait accompli, and we ask you if the clients are going to be from all over the city or just East Portland.

We don't trust you as a result of your mismanagement of the Hansen shelter.

We don't trust you because although we already shelter large amounts of homeless folks in East Portland, you made a map showing that our area has the most available sites for unconditional shelter developments on vacant land in the city. We feel that you've painted a target on our back:



We don't trust you because when we ask you where the shelters are planned to be sited and what services they will provide you tell us, "This is just a zoning issue. Our committee has nothing to do with those things." We would like to see a package of proposals that address zoning, geographic equity, services, and service facility siting throughout the city.

We don't trust you because for all your talk of equity we think you expect East Portland to bear the brunt of the misery of the homeless without helping to create a viable jobs base in the area.

Members of Portland City Council, I implore you to vote against this hastily put together, yet permanent institutionalism of poverty in our East Portland neighborhoods. Please craft a proposal that first and foremost, **addresses a fair geographic distribution of shelter to be developed in each neighborhood in its zoning rules.** Your proposal should also encompass a comprehensive, city-wide plan of shelters and **services supporting them,** minimum standards for shelters (and their management), a process of review for shelter sitings and the decommissioning of illegal mass camping sites.

Carol S. Hasenberg