



March 9, 2021

Dear Mayor Wheeler and members of Portland City Council:

RE: Shelter to Housing Continuum recommendations

Friends of Terwilliger (FOT) supports the recent Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC) and staff recommendation that continues to **prohibit** permanent shelters in the Open Space (OS) zone, as well as prohibit permanent outdoor shelters in the environmental and scenic overlay zones and the prohibition of short-term shelter allowances in OS zones. Providing shelter or housing does not comply with the purpose of OS zoning.

We recognize the need for expanding housing and shelter options for our Portland homeless population and are supportive of creative living situations in our already built city environment. We agree with **Section 7.D of Portland's 2035 Comprehensive Plan** on environmental equity which states: *"All Portlanders have access to clean air and water, can experience nature in their daily lives, and benefit from development designed to lessen the impacts of natural hazards and environmental contamination."* But allowing temporary or permanent shelters in our city nature and parks' areas go against our parks' very design.

In today's world of the pandemic, with social distancing and health concerns, we have noticed more and more people taking advantage of nature and forest "therapy", giving us a greater appreciation for the green city we are proud to call Portland.

For over 4 decades, Friends of Terwilliger has fought to preserve and protect the historic, linear park known as Terwilliger Parkway. It is well known that our natural areas are sensitive to the impact and encroachment of human developments, wild fires, and the threat of water and soil instability. Allowing people to live full-time in our dedicated park land will only lead to contamination by human waste, waterway contamination, loss of our linear park as a wildlife corridor, and possibly permanent damage to our tree canopy and native vegetation.

We're asking you to remove the Open Space Zone from consideration as either temporary or permanent houseless shelters EXCEPT for a declaration of emergency by the City Council due to a catastrophic natural disaster such as an earthquake. Also, amend language in the new provision 33.296.030.H to add an exception for the Open Space Zone.

Sincerely,

Robin Vesey, board secretary

[www.terwilligerfriends.org](http://www.terwilligerfriends.org)

**Enhancing and Protecting the natural character and scenic beauty of historic Terwilliger Parkway; a linear park in SW Portland.**