

# Matthew Van Auken

**#267274 | March 13, 2021**

Testimony to **Portland City Council** on the **Shelter to Housing Continuum Project, Recommended Draft**

Dear Council Members and Stakeholders- We are writing to express deep concern about opening the parks for temporary shelter. We live off of Laurelhurst Park and we have seen the encampment deeply impact our community in negative ways. There have been instances of fire, drug use and verbal aggression towards our children and our neighbors. While we recognize that this is a complex problem with many systemic injustices and mental health issues that need to be addressed, we feel very strongly that opening the parks further to the houseless will result in immediate dangers. We have multiple households on our street with children under six years old (like ours) and the houseless impact is putting our children in harms way and making the parks and playground areas unsafe. We have had to skip outside time in the past months so as to not witness drug use or be accosted by persons that are mentally unwell. To be clear, we support creating real sustainable solutions and shelters for the houseless and we will gladly send our tax dollars towards a resolution to that end. We just do not support a stop-gap measure that has no real safety policy for us and puts our young children in potential danger.

Testimony is presented without formatting.