

# John Bakkensen

**#267285 | March 14, 2021**

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

I am a lifetime resident of Portland and am writing in opposition to the plan to allow shelters and tents in Portland's parks for up to 180 days. The closest park to my residence is Gabriel Park in SW Portland. It is heavily utilized by area residents for walking, skate boarding, tennis, picnicking, basketball, soccer, and other sports. It is also beautiful physically with grassy open areas and lots of trees. I fear that the wonderful character of this urban park will be destroyed if camping in shelters and tents is allowed for up to 180 days. Portlanders have witnessed how lovely Laurelhurst Park has been ruined by tents and camping in and near the park. We do not want Gabriel Park to similarly degrade into an unwelcome scene of chaos or criminal activity as Laurelhurst has experienced. There has to be a better plan for dealing with homelessness in Portland. Beginning in 2021, both local businesses and certain individuals will be subject to a one percent tax on income. This new revenue, which the City of Portland will collect for Metro, should permit local governments to develop much better solutions for homelessness without turning our beautiful parks into blighted green spaces. Thank you for considering this testimony.

Testimony is presented without formatting.