

# Aimee Virnig

**#267363 | March 14, 2021**

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

Dear City Council I am writing to you as an east of 205 homeowner who is begging you not to approve the Shelter to Housing Continuum Project. I realize you are all trying to be empathetic and helpful to our most vulnerable population, however allowing camping in public areas is dangerous, and in the long run not humane. When mental illness and addiction are factors, there should not be the choice to avoid shelters in lieu of camping (which is the choice many have made when offered shelter). While it might feel like an easy answer to you, camping in public parks and on public property is not a solution, and deprives so many people of being able to use these areas. Personally, I have felt the impact in my own neighborhood (which is already a grocery desert and fast becoming unwalkable due to the many tents blocking the sidewalks and access to MAX) as I can no longer use the springwater trail for walking or cycling near my home - it is completely blocked by homeless tents and littered with needles and garbage. These are areas that were designed for everyone and now are unable to be used by most. By allowing camping, you are also sending out an invitation to people from the entire nation that they can come to Portland and camp in the parks. Portland simply doesn't have the resources to handle more clean up and more crime. I recently drove down NE 33rd near Marine Drive and it looks like a Mad Max Chop Shop. If you continue to allow the abuse of our parks, the entire city will continue to deteriorate and become undesirable. Again, Please do not pass this referendum.

Testimony is presented without formatting.