

Jennifer Bierce

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

Dear Mayor Wheeler and members of the Portland City Council, Our parks and natural spaces must remain open to the public. As you consider the language for the Shelter to Housing Continuum Project, I strongly recommend the removal of Open Space Zones, including developed parks, natural areas, and trails, from consideration for the siting of either temporary or permanent houseless shelters. You will hear testimony on this issue, and you should conclude that there is already vacant and underutilized land available. You can conclude that allowing shelters in Open Space Zones is inequitable as it disproportionately affects BIPOC communities living without yards or outdoor spaces. You can conclude that access to parks, natural areas, and open spaces is a fundamental necessity for the physical and mental well being of all Portlanders and should not be infringed upon. Current campsites have overrun the city and created an excess of trash and unsafe conditions for Portlanders to enjoy. My home is currently surrounded by 10+ tents and campsites. By allowing campsite access in our parks you will remove an area that has remained a safe haven for tax paying Portlanders to enjoy and access the outdoors. The houseless crisis in Portland needs solutions, and this is not one of them. This will only exacerbate this issue. Please vote against this.

Testimony is presented without formatting.