

# James Parker

**#267456 | March 15, 2021**

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

I am writing about proposed changes in City policy concerning the use of parks and golf courses for homeless camping. I favor the use described IF: 1. The Portland Police Bureau can guarantee the safety not only of the campers but of their neighbors and the citizens of Portland. To this time, it has not been possible to make such a guarantee. Altercations have broken out on SE Oak Street, across from Laurelhurst Park, and we hear reports of weapons being present on the site. 2. The city can guarantee sanitation and other measures necessary for public health. To this date, that guarantee has not been made. We hear and read of the park's gardens being used as toilets. 3. The City can guarantee that the resource in question—park or golf course—will be kept in public use. These spaces and facilities belong to all of us. No one should have to make a trip home from a picnic in the park to use our own bathroom because the public facility is dangerously filthy. No one should have to steer children away from excrement, needles, or weapons. No one should have to avoid visiting and using property which belongs to all of us because of legitimate fears of unsafe or unsanitary uses of those properties by others.

Testimony is presented without formatting.