

Mary Lee

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

Portland Zoning Change We were dismayed to learn of the City Council's plan to open parks to overnight camping for Portland's homeless population. While we strongly support efforts to provide shelter and assistance to this segment, our city parks are not the answer for the following reasons: Parks are designated as open spaces for children, the elderly and all residents to use as open spaces to get in touch with nature and enjoy our beautiful environment. For those living in apartments and condos, this is the only outdoor space available. If we turn this space over to a tent city, all that will be lost. As a longtime Portland resident, I have seen the damage done where homeless enclaves have been set up—including needles, garbage, damage to plant life and human waste. The cost is too high—Portland Parks Bureau would be required to do constant cleanup. And if the council later decides it was not such a good idea, the restoration of the parks to their natural state will be very costly. Please rethink this proposal. Every resident I have talked with about this opposes it—some very vehemently. It's a bad idea. Stop it before it turns our beautiful city into a dump.

Testimony is presented without formatting.