

# christine bugas

**#267592 | March 15, 2021**

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

Our home is up from bridge at Lower Macleay entrance in Forest Park. Big mistake to encourage living in park. Lived here 20 years and always issues of paranoid schizophrenics, meth users, exuberant drunks and fire starters. Yesterday I pulled the last of encampment out with tarps and a hand truck. 10 trash sacks were removed that were rotting, falling into BalchCreek. A Homeless male, 6'4", caucasian, 40 y/o packed in July 2020. He lived through the fires, was neat but the trash eventually took over, spilling into the creek. His camp was in the park at the bridge, Lower Macleay. Yesterday I pulled out his massive accumulation of trash, old clothes, meth stove and drug pipes, broken glass etc . Another woman, a paranoid schizophrenic, camped just below our house last April. She brought sophisticated gear, suitcases of clothes, made a fire and did drugs at night. She screamed. One day when she was gone, I pulled all her things out on a tarp. It took days. I have seen youth with tiki torches ascend to the Witches House in the night and light fires, seen three trees burning to 20 feet up with the fire dept just able to reach the last of the three trees with hoses 4 years back, seen one man light pitch to see if he could get the tree to burn, have seen one man's felled tree on Holman, seen a naked man on Wildwood who said he was living there to prove clothes were not needed, encountered 2 men who attempted to lure me into their encampment and then said that they could easily kill me but they were not going to ... I have been walking the Lower Macleay to the Witch House, taking a right and going up Holman to 53rd, and Wildwood back to the Meadow on Aspen every single day for 20 years. I know that encouraging folks to settle in the park is a foolish move, a dangerous one. Forest Park will not easily manage the encampments of homeless. There will be trash. There will be fires. There will be danger to walkers. In emergency medicine we never start a procedure for which we cannot manage the negative side effects, should they occur. I should hope that in city management it is the same precautionary principle: the cure cannot be worse than the disease. Negative side effects of homeless in parks are many. Every single person would attempt to build a fire. The fire department cannot guarantee water could be available to control the fires. Children, as well, should not be allowed into the park after dark with tiki torches and vodka bottles. The Lower Macleay to the Witches House and then to either the Pittock or to the meadow, Wildwood Trail, all are trails that are necessary for the health of the Portlanders who need to walk but stayed locked down, obviating distance travel. While it is important to solve the problem of homelessness, do not solve that problem by using the parks. The people of Portland have to be appropriate stewards of the trees and streams. Trash and human fecal material must be gathered to dispose of them. Wraparound services must accompany the homeless. Save the forests. Chris Bugas

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Testimony is presented without formatting.