

Carolyn Thieme

#267652 | March 15, 2021

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

Joanne is right "Parks are for everybody" and Joanne is wrong "having a few camps in a park" will definitely make the parks unavailable for everyone!!! Bikers, families with children, joggers, walkers, picnickers, volunteer gardeners, grounds personnel, playing with and walking dogs, games of Frisbee, tossing a ball, exercising, and sitting on a bench enjoying the fresh air, will all be OFF LIMITS to those who enjoy these activities. I volunteer to pick up trash with two different organizations and for some distance around the vicinity of homeless camps, whether 1 or 10 tents, we find the surrounding area strewn with garbage, including needles!! This is not safe for anyone! Yes, the homeless situation is a very sad situation. We must also realize that there are many who are addicted to drugs, alcohol, and/or suffer from mental illness, who are no longer welcome with their family members, and who chose to live on the street, turning down shelter offers. This was evidenced with the Laurelhurst sweep, the majority of the folks in the sweep turned down shelter space in favor of moving their tents a few blocks south to another camp. By opening up parks to house camps or shelters is ignoring the problem of homelessness and ignoring those who currently enjoy and support the parks through their taxes. I urge you to work to facilitate shelters in existing buildings. Thank you.

Testimony is presented without formatting.