

Philip Quarterman

#267723 | March 15, 2021

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

It's tempting to use bold strokes to show that the City is addressing the problem. But In this case, I believe it would be rash to allow temporary (up to 180 day) shelters, including tents and other similar structures, in the Open Space Zone. Our City parks and open spaces were set aside for the enjoyment of the whole population. Designating any portion of them for shelters would in my view be contrary to the very purpose of our public open spaces. And the cost and difficulty of clean up and restoration of vegetation after the 180 day period ends would be a burden on the City Parks and Recreation budget. City Parks do provide services already to the homeless community, as in access to rest rooms, use of park benches and tables, just as they do to all citizens. Please exempt the Open Space zone from the allowance of temporary shelters. They should be allowed only in the case of declared emergencies caused by natural disasters, such as floods, fires and earthquake. In closing, the City is doing its best to address a deep seated and multi-faceted problem. Changes to the zoning code, for instance in commercial and industrial zones, can be helpful in removing obstacles. But applying this provision to all zones is overly-broad, especially in the case of the Open Space zone. Please redouble the City's effort to get more people into treatment and rehabilitation (where I suppose Multnomah County is really the lead agency), and please make more coordinated efforts to remove the piles of abandoned belongings and debris that litter our rights of way. Thanks for allowing me to to testify. Phil Quarterman

Testimony is presented without formatting.