

Susan Stewart

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

I grieve for what Portland has become. It is covered with garbage, litter, graffiti, human waste, needles, tents, and it is getting worse. If we “allow the temporary siting of shelters in parks and open space for no more than 180 days,” as proposed, we would be negatively impacting the lives of hundreds of thousands of people who enjoy and pay for this public space. Homelessness would not be solved, and this would lead to more spoiling of a once beautiful city. Archbishop Desmond Tutu is credited with saying, “There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in.” We desperately need to begin treating and committing people for addiction and mental health issues. It is not “compassionate” to just let them wallow in our public spaces with no regard for the larger community.

Testimony is presented without formatting.