

Peter Blackston

#267737 | March 15, 2021

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

I want to open with I respect anyone who holds public office. Thank you for your service. I completely agree that as a society, we must figure out how to care for our fellow citizens that are experiencing homelessness. We have opportunities early on to help those who are intermittently homeless, which many times is not acted upon- and they then become chronically homeless. There is a couple sleeping in their truck by Fields Park, and every time I see them, all I can think is nobody helped them when they had a roof over their head...and here they are, sleeping in their vehicle. We all know, once they are chronically homeless, we cannot agree on the best way to help them. This proposal being an example of that. I am sharing my thoughts (nervously I may add , since it is not in support of this proposal) since I do not agree with this proposal. The city seems to be encouraging camping anywhere and barely deals with the human and financial toll it takes on those those who witness it and deal with it in daily life, the taxpayers, and the people experiencing homelessness. In addition, as taxpayers we are expected to continue to pay more for solutions that do not seem to work and honestly feel like we are criticized for vocalizing any opposition to a proposal like this. In addition, during this pandemic, shouldn't our parks remain clean and maintained for families and friends to exercise in and socially distance in? I see trash and syringes and sidewalks blocked and nothing is improving, and I don't see this proposal keeping parks clean and safe, because the city cannot even keep sidewalks clean. I gladly pay my taxes. I am fortunate that I can. I paid almost \$7,000 in annual property taxes, and one reason I sold my home in the NE in Oct 2020, was the constant expectation to pay more with little acknowledgment of concerns as a taxpayer. In addition, another reason I sold was the horrific increase crime -namely shootings and protests/riots outside my door. I think this proposal is not well thought out. Why can't the city use Wapato more, or another location? Give free transportation there, have all services there... have it centralized -not spread out over the city with lack of visibility / control of our money and resources, and hopefully be able to measure effectiveness of programs. I don't think this local government, mayor, city council nor metro actually care what taxpayers think as long as we pay, but thank you for even listening to my thoughts. Good luck,

Testimony is presented without formatting.