

# Osha Roller

**#277743 | March 16, 2021**

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

As a parks, natural areas, & trails supporter, I am writing to strongly advocate for an important change in the language of Shelter to Housing Continuum recommendations from the Planning and Sustainability Commission. I recommend the removal of Open Space Zones from consideration for either temporary or permanent houseless shelters EXCEPT for a declaration of emergency by the City Council due to a catastrophic natural disaster. I believe there is no compelling rationale to support inclusion of Open Space for siting temporary or permanent shelters. The long-term impacts would be severe and the resources and time required for restoration would be extraordinary.

Portland can and must do better than surrendering its parks, natural areas, and trails to any use, temporary or permanent, that jeopardizes their primary purpose - now and into the future. I received the above language from a neighborhood organization. In my own words as a mom and resident of Portland, our neighborhood park has meant the world to our community during the last year. It is a place we go to relax, exercise, and let our children play. I want my children and all children to feel safe in the park. Having houseless people legally camping in parks is no way for kids to feel safe. I voted for the parks bond and feel it would be a huge violation of our citizens commitments to our parks to allow camping. I also voted for Ted Wheeler because I believe he deserves another chance to help our city to be livable and beautiful. This is not the way. I am in full support of city sanctioned camping in designated areas with services like the one on Water Ave. We need to make our city more livable for all of our citizens, house less and housed alike. This is not the way.

Recommendations 1. Amend language in 33.296.030.G to remove the Open Space Zone from consideration as either temporary or permanent houseless shelters EXCEPT for a declaration of emergency by the City Council due to a catastrophic natural disaster such as an earthquake 2.

Amend language in the new provision 33.296.030.H to add an exception for the Open Space Zone.

Testimony is presented without formatting.