

Teresa Kubo

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

I strongly support providing support to the most vulnerable among us. I have long wished the impromptu camps I see all over the city were provided with trash management and sanitary services. Everyone deserves to live with dignity. All that said, I have a lot of misgivings about the use of our parks for sheltering our houseless population. I share the concerns that many have stated about health, safety and impacts on communities and the environment. I would ask that if this moves forward, the City consider applying strict criteria when selecting the parks that would be utilized as well when selecting the sponsoring organizations. I would also recommend starting with two to three pilot projects. Once it has been established that these sites can be safe, clean, and consistent with other community uses, there may be more openness to expanding the concept to other areas. This may already be in the plan and my apologies for not having given it a more thorough review. Among the criteria that I would like to see applied are: 1) Only establish camps in areas large enough to create a separation from other park uses. a. Consider fencing or barriers around the camp. This would help to provide privacy and safety for campers and would give park users a higher level of comfort 2) Only establish camps in areas that are not environmentally sensitive. Care should be taken to provide protection to wetland and riparian areas from potential trampling. Education should be provided to campers on how to avoid impacting the local environment. 3) Prioritize areas where campers can easily access essential services, including food, potable water, sanitation and medical services. 4) Only approve camps where the host organization has demonstrated capability of providing well- maintained sanitary services (trash collection and removal/toilets/showers) as well as 24-7 onsite monitoring and support. 5) Only approve a camp installation if a complete removal and remediation plan is in place (once the camp has been occupied for 180 days). Areas should be returned to pre-camp state and verified by the appropriate agency (BES, PRD etc) 6) Only approve camps if there is a commitment to follow-on support from the City to ensure that campers do not return to the site once a camp has been closed. 7) Campers must agree to a code of conduct to utilize the camp. This would include expectations around behavior toward other campers, use of common spaces, and respecting established boundaries. Not adhering to the code of conduct would be grounds for eviction. 8) For the health of campers and neighbors, a curfew for light and noise should be observed. 9) Use of drugs within the camp should be cause for eviction, however drug offenders should be channeled to support services.

Testimony is presented without formatting.