

# Kathrine Richardson

**#277905 | March 16, 2021**

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

The idea of allowing tents/camping in Portland City Parks would be a complete and utter mess. The City of Portland is not able to manage the current situation regarding homelessness/"rooflessness", and now they are dumping the mess into our City Parks, which we all will pay for in many ways. There is already a major health and safety issue with people camping and loitering in the parks and squares in the NW portion of the city, and this will only escalate the problem. For example, I go on frequent evening walks in the Pearl neighborhood, and I am routinely threaten and have been chased several times when I walked through Jameson Square over the past year. I can not imagine what it will be like when people are allowed to set up tents...As well, I have frequently seen RATS running in and out of the tents set up along Johnson St. outside of the Ecotrust Building over the past two years. This is a major public health issue that the City of Portland is refusing to address. At the very least, the City of Portland should be sued for willful negligence for not addressing this major public health issue. My husband and I pay a considerable amount of taxes to live in this city, and we are seeing very little for our money. All in all, the City of Portland is in over its head with this matter, and refuses to make the tough choices of providing and mandating long-term medical, counseling, and proper housing options for people in need. At the same time, the City is quickly alienating those residents who pay the taxes that keep this City going. I ask the following questions for the City of Portland: Where in the U.S. has long-term medical care, mental care, and housing been SUCCESSFULLY provided to those in need, and how can Portland follow this example? What sort of partnerships has the City of Portland developed with local/regional nonprofits, faith based organizations, and the State, and Federal programs so that the City of Portland's actions and programs regarding homelessness can be addressed and curtailed over the long term? How can the City of Portland moved beyond its Permissive Political Correctness regarding the City's homeless/roofless population and create and maintain a city that does not have tents with rats running around the area, needles scattered around these camping sites, and people who physically threaten and chase City of Portland residents (and tax payers) who walk through public areas such as Parks and Squares? I think we need to get our priorities straight here in Portland. In sum, the Permissive Politically Correctness approach that the City of Portland is so used to using (basically DO NOTHING about the homeless issue), is wearing thin, and the City will begin to see an exodus of its tax paying residents to other jurisdictions. It is becoming a very serious issue of health and citizen/resident safety now. For once, City of Portland, stop worrying about your Politically Correct Public Image, and start managing the City by properly addressing the homeless/roofless issue. The

City of Portland thinks it wants to be a BIG City, but has no idea how to be or manage a Big City.  
City of Portland, you are wildly in over your head right now.

Testimony is presented without formatting.