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

With the increasing challenges of the COVID pandemic, homeless camps have been a fixture along Laurelhurst Park during the past 12 months. They are clearly a public health hazard (trash, human excrement, needles, syringes, rats..) despite efforts by the city and community to be supportive. For persons wishing to utilize portions of the park now, it has been difficult or impossible. For those of us living nearby, it has disrupted our lives and has caused many to seriously consider relocating. Clearly problems related to homelessness will worsen and a coordinated multifaceted sustained approach to solving these problems is required. Recommendations proposed by the Planning and Sustainability Commission are important to implement. However, I believe there should be an important amendment to the S2HC recommendation. Namely, public Open Space Zones such as parks, trails, and natural areas should not be utilized for temporary or permanent homeless shelters except for a declaration of emergency by the City Council due to catastrophic natural disaster such as an earthquake. Please amend the language in 33.296.030.G to remove the Open Space Zone from consideration for either temporary or permanent houseless shelters. Thank-you for your attention to this testimony.

Testimony is presented without formatting.