



March 15, 2021

Portland City Council
1221 SW 4th Ave #110
Portland, OR 97204

RE: Proposed Draft, Shelter To Housing Continuum

Dear Mayor Wheeler and members of the City Council,

Johnson Creek Watershed Council strongly supports the City's efforts as described in *Shelter To Housing Continuum, Preferred Draft* to provide new and expanded housing options for the many thousands of Portlanders currently experiencing houselessness.

Housing is a basic human right. The lack of affordable housing in Portland has led to a housing crisis. This crisis has led to an environmental crisis in many riparian areas along Johnson Creek and other natural areas, as those without permanent housing seek out safe areas to live. Increased trash in and near the creek, soil compaction, untreated human waste, trees cut for firewood or privacy are documented impacts of people's desire to live with the basic necessities.

Our organization's mission is to restore Johnson Creek with community engagement. Sheltering in urban riparian areas is incompatible with the needs of fish and wildlife, which use these areas as critical habitat. Our volunteers have put in tens of thousand of hours restoring riparian and other natural areas in the past 26 years. The Cities of Portland, Gresham, and Milwaukie; Multnomah and Clackamas Counties & SWCDs; Metro; our Council and other organizations have spent millions of dollars in the past 25 years to further restoration in this watershed.

We urge you not to permit temporary shelters or other housing in ecologically sensitive areas, including within the 100-year floodplain and designated natural areas. We also urge you to provide basic services, such as trash pickup, water, and sanitation services, in areas where temporary housing will be permitted.

Sincerely,

Daniel Newberry
Executive Director