

Valerie Harrington

#278013 | March 16, 2021

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

I'm very concerned about the S2HC ordinance being considered by the Portland City Council. My husband and I own a home in the Laurelhurst neighborhood which has been hugely impacted by a homeless camp along the sidewalks and parking spaces bordering the south side of Laurelhurst Park for the past several years. It has continued to spread to the point that homes are being sold nearby as property values have declined. My sister-in-law and her husband just sold their home on SE 35th and Oak that had been in our family for 60 years due to this problem. If parks throughout the city are opened to "temporary shelters", it's not unlikely there will be many more families fleeing the city. Our city parks have been amenities for neighborhoods for decades and enjoyed by families, kids, outdoor enthusiasts, cyclists, joggers, and walkers. That will all change if these shelters appear without paid security, porta-potties, garbage bins, garbage pickup, and other associated homeless relief services. We are facing an unprecedented homelessness crisis in our city that requires a viable solution, not a bandaid fix, which is why the voters overwhelmingly passed the Metro County ballot measure 26-210 that created a tri-county homeless services coordination plan. Knowing one of the authors of that measure, I was told there has been no coordination between S2HC and that tri-county group. This problem cannot be successfully solved without a unified approach with all agencies onboard otherwise we'll continue to chase these serious problems for the foreseeable future. So I urge the City Council to give more thought to the impact S2HC will have on the livability of our inner city neighborhoods and then come up with a coordinated plan to restore the safety and cleanliness this beautiful city once enjoyed.

Testimony is presented without formatting.