

Thomas Fischer

#278039 | March 16, 2021

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

I wish to register my strong opposition to the S2HC proposal that would permit the siting of homeless camps in and around schools and parks. 1. Homeless camps damage parks and open spaces, making them unusable for their intended purpose. Garbage, used syringes, human feces, fires, damage to park settings and threatening behavior have all been continually reported and documented at illegal park camps. 2. Camp siting criteria should address livability, health and safety issues that would affect the surrounding community. For example, children's safety is imperative and no camps should be located near schools or playgrounds. 3. New camp placement should consider how many camps/shelters already exist in an area so that no neighborhood or city area is oversaturated. Currently, Southeast Portland has 82 reported camps versus 40 reported camps in Northeast Portland and fewer than 25 reported camps in North, Northwest and Southwest Portland. 4. The city's efforts should be directed toward well placed, sanctioned, monitored, larger camps that utilize economies of scale to help contain operating costs. These sanctioned camps should provide the residents with resources to satisfy their basic hygiene needs and make social services available to help with mental health and addiction problems, as well as job counselors to assist those seeking employment. If passed as currently written, S2HC will exacerbate our inability to keep our neighborhood parks clean and safe for everyone's use and accelerate Portland's deteriorating livability. Please consider all stakeholders and amend the S2HC proposal to exempt city parks and school and playground areas from camping.

Testimony is presented without formatting.