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

March 16, 2021 Shelter to Housing Continuum testimony Lloyd EcoDistrict and Lloyd Community Association are submitting our testimony in strong support of the Shelter to Housing Continuum. The Lloyd neighborhood has been at the forefront of neighborhood alliances working side by side with the kind of shelter communities this continuum would support (specifically Right 2Dream Too) We have experience working with each other, and we understand very well the benefit of having a rest area such as R2DToo located in Lloyd. It is neither exaggeration nor hyperbole to say that we strongly prefer having a rest area in the district; R2DToo provides a vital, essential service in our community which would otherwise cause Portlanders with no other place to go, to have to find other unsafe options scattered throughout our neighborhood. R2dToo has been a great neighbor and a true partner in this crisis. The S2HC seeks to make more low-barrier, entry-level, temporary shelter available to more people experiencing homelessness. It also seeks to provide more transitional shelters with onsite supportive services and allow the construction of a wider variety of affordable types of permanent housing. At its core, this project is a zoning code change for the very, very poor. This code change allows for greater livability for the very poor, many of whom are homeless. Many cities in the region, and across the nation, are facing concurrent crises. We are seeing increasing homelessness and face a looming eviction crisis. Now, more than ever, we need to get this code change right. Homelessness is a crisis in every neighborhood. Shelters are community assets that serve the most vulnerable among us. Being embedded in a community—instead of somewhere remote and distant—is essential to ensuring a shelter’s success. Connections and ease of access are especially important for the growing share of people in shelter, those who are 55 and older or who have disabling conditions or mobility challenges. Vital community connections simply wouldn't be possible if people are sheltered in remote locations far from community. The goal of S2HC is to codify the tools provided by the 2015 Housing State of Emergency. With every extension, it becomes harder for the City to argue it is an “immediate” need. We acknowledge there are future emergencies on the horizon and the City has the flexibility to declare a new emergency to respond to these new crises. We look forward to a time when we have solved the houseless crises through provision of housing alternatives which give everyone dignified choices for permanent shelter. Until then, we must do better, and this code change is a step in the right direction. Sarah Heinicke, Lloyd EcoDistrict Keith Jones, Lloyd Community Association

Testimony is presented without formatting.