

Helena Tesselaar

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

Why I oppose the part of the Shelter to Housing Continuum (S2HC) proposed zone code changes that would allow for public parks and golf courses to be used as places for homeless encampments: The February 3, 2021 edition of the Portland Tribune features the article “Report: Regional natural areas damaged by homeless camping.” I quote from this article: “The extent of the region wide harm was recently documented by Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission member Mike Houck, the director emeritus of the Urban Greenspaces Institute. “During the commission’s recent discussion about allowing more shelters and sanctioned camps in the city, Houck prepared and distributed a presentation with photos of damaged natural areas throughout the region. It was intended to show why camping should not be allowed in open spaces within the city, including natural areas managed by Portland Parks and Recreation. ...camping in natural areas and parks, but to point out to those who say it’s only a litter/trash problem that’s it’s far more an issue of environmental degradation,” (Damage included) “habitat destruction, soil compaction, water pollution, wildlife harassment, wildfire danger, threats to public safety, and millions of dollars of restoration undone, with some areas that may never recover.” In addition to the environmental degradation, the other difficulty that I perceive is once you set a precedence to sanction camping in local parks ... Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Testimony is presented without formatting.