

Hazel Mahan

#278143 | March 16, 2021

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

I object in the strongest possible terms to allowing homeless camping/tents in Lair Hill Park. I have watched in horror and sadness as the parks in rest of our beautiful city has been overrun with garbage and refuse, and I have ceased to visit nearby Duniway Park due to the erratic, sometimes dangerous behavior of the large amounts of homeless that have set up camps there unchallenged. Even the trails I used to use are no longer safe and are cluttered with drug paraphilia, human waste, and other debris. Lair Hill Park is not only right by my home, it is directly adjacent to a school for young children, who are very frequently out for recess and play. It would be beyond insanity to expose them, or indeed anyone in our neighborhood, to the kinds of crime and potentially dangerous behavior a homeless camp would invite. As a disabled person on a fixed income myself, Lair Hill Park is the only outdoor space I can access easily and is one of the best things about living in this community. If it becomes unsafe and overrun, I will lose my only opportunity for daily exercise and time spent outdoors. I have immense sympathy for the plight of the homeless and those in need, and would support any measures that would aid them without endangering everyone else. Allowing the destruction of our park with "camping" is not the solution and ultimately will help neither the homeless nor the surrounding community being used in lieu of proper housing, counseling, and treatment for substance abuse.

Testimony is presented without formatting.