

Barbara Garcia

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

I am supportive of allowing RVs on residential properties. If they are occupied, they must have proper hook ups for black and Gray water and need to contain belongings to RV including pets. I am not supportive of opening green space or parks for outdoor shelters even for 180 days of temporary use. These places have been sanctuary during Covid and for neighborhood residents outside of Covid. Many of us choose to buy homes or rent homes due to these amenities. There has to be a better place than the green spaces and parks where critical resources have deliberately been protected like Westmoreland's Crystal Springs-the last natural spring fed salmon spawning drainage in all of Portland and also other wetlands and critical wildlife areas around Sellwood and Oak Bottom. Federal forests and parks could never pass environmental review given the green space/park portion of this proposal. Why should the city be given a pass for these analyses? I would feel that due diligence was done if a full environmental review of not just clean air and water but ecological conditions were completed and disclosed incorporating the proposed action for public review prior to this decision. I don't see any of that here. Since homeless camping has become more evident in parks and green spaces I have seen a difference in wildlife movement and have observed at least a dozen times individuals relieving themselves, bathing themselves and throwing trash in this invaluable water resource. I have had very scary encounters with aggressive dogs associated with homeless tents and RVs. I have also seen an increase in syringes and human waste in the kids play area. Even large wildfire response teams select areas with hardened surfaces and adequate environmental conditions that won't further diminish ecological conditions for displaced citizens and for firefighters. I don't see a good plan here that assures me degradation will diminish or at least, not get worse. The "just trust us, we have support resources to hold the line" has never played out as truth. This proposal doesn't have the detail that lends itself to trust. Finally, my husband and I are people of color that can't afford a home in Portland but we chose the neighborhood we live in to accommodate a motorized free commute downtown and green space to maintain our sanity. My uncle lived in a rail car and my grandma in her car leading to my mother being in foster care. I get the tragedy of homelessness. I wonder if large areas that have asphalt as the base, in areas where there is not a ton of mixed recreational activity, and aren't near clean flowing water and ecologically important areas are a better fit? I would not oppose temp shelters in those areas in my neighborhood. Please consider the environmental aspects of this proposal in addition to the mental and physical health of other Portlanders that are barely holding on if not for the peace the parks and green space provide.

Testimony is presented without formatting.