

# Su Cooper

**#278404 | March 17, 2021**

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

I oppose the code change recommendations in the Shelter to Housing Continuum Project on many of the same grounds as others who've provided testimony. I fail to see how permitting sanctioned camping in open/public spaces or in residential neighborhoods will be much of an improvement over the public camping already happening throughout this area. The City's proposal is focused on identifying physical spaces to locate camps and outdoor shelters without committing to oversight, services, etc. needed to manage these types of sites. Is the expectation that all parties simply trust that once established these sites will be given adequate supports, management and accountability by the City? Without a thoughtful plan and commitment from the City for what will come after such sites are established, this is not a good faith proposal for any of the parties involved, including those experiencing homelessness. Additionally, too many people, particularly in East Portland where the highest density concentrations of potential sites for outdoor shelters are located on the maps, have lived with issues associated with homelessness for years. Equitable distribution of housing/service options for the homeless across the city should be a priority. Continuing to minimize the livability, hygiene and crime concerns of neighborhood residents and business owners who have been directly impacted by these issues is not helpful. Many people have started to leave the city for this reason and will continue to do so if these issues are not addressed in a way that works to balance the needs of all parties involved. The majority of Portlanders are compassionate and want to provide proper housing and support services to the homeless. We've passed many millions of dollars worth of bond measures to help address the issue. The focus should be on identifying existing structures for renovation/repurposing and building temporary and sometimes permanent housing solutions for those who are experiencing homelessness for a variety of reasons. Outdoor shelters should not be the go-to solution.

Testimony is presented without formatting.