

Michael Weitzhandler

#278410 | March 17, 2021

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

City Council Members & Mayor Wheeler, This email is to express my strong opposition and very real concern for the council's proposed Shelter to Housing Continuum recommendation to allow the use of Park Open Space Zones for outdoor shelters. The houselessness of thousands of Portland residents is not a short-term emergency, rather it is an ongoing crisis. As such, the long-term planning that is required for this crisis cannot include an expectation that temporary shelters in parks offer a solution. Siting of shelters in parks will adversely impact the surrounding park area and intended land use, with possible harm to wildlife and natural resources. City parks were not designed, and are not appropriate, respectful places, for people to live. The inevitable increase in crime will make these wonderful natural refuges unsafe and unusable for most of the general public. I will not feel safe, I likely will not be safe walking through the most important green space in my neighborhood (Gabriel Park). Please provide leadership in implementing the best solutions for our houseless community members - living in parks is not one of them.

Testimony is presented without formatting.