

Annette Adams

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

I am against this permanent ordinance change. I do not think it will address the issue that we are dealing with. And the fact that it will not allow community input to siting is unacceptable. The City has already sited homeless shelters without community approval (Hanson Shelter). The negative impact on community is still being felt. And the narrative of filling it up with houseless people from that area was false. The shelter ended up housing people from two closed shelters from different areas. There is a trust issue at stake. Many in the community are thinking the City is not very trustworthy. Then there is the question of private property owners being allowed to let transient camping occur on their property. I was told all they would need is a city permit. But who will regulate the septic issues, garbage, etc. Will the property owner be responsible for issues or the campers? This ordinance change will further eliminate the right of citizens to have input about what happens where they live. Many in the community are concerned regarding the question of equity. How will the shelters be sited? There is nothing in the proposed ordinance addressing this. There is concern that all may end up in the East side where many neighbors are already struggling from the effects (criminality, garbage, etc.) of the transient population living there. I do not believe the houseless should be allowed to camp period. I think that is inhumane. It affects the livability and safety of community members and for the campers. In the Parkrose/Argay neighborhoods, there have been at least 5 five fires in the last six weeks that totally engulfed the tent, car, or RV the houseless person(s) were living in. It is unknown to me if there were injuries or death associated with those. I do know at least one person died yesterday in an RV fire cause by a propane tank (not uncommon) at 137th and Powell. Today I observed a transient "structure" at about 92nd and Prescott that had smoke pouring out of it. A fire waiting to happen. We also had a Motor Home blown up by a pipe bomb recently and another trailer riddled with bullets. I attached three photos of fires; one being a vacant home that was trespassed by transients and burnt down (146/Burnside). The other two were incidents in Parkrose. The City allowing this practice (starting in 2015) was the beginning of the problem we have today. You may say it has been caused by the shortage of affordable housing. I say not. That, I am sure is part of the issue, but when you open doors to a certain type behavior, and don't have regulations that keep the activity in check, you end up with what we have now. And it also puts the word out, far and wide, COME TO PORTLAND. I speak with a lot of houseless people in the neighborhoods I live and frequent and am astounded at how many say they are from out of state. I was waiting to hear what the results of the 2021 Point in Time Homeless Count would be for the Portland area. But the County opted out of doing it. I could not believe that. We are in an

emergency situation (Title 15) and the powers that be opt out of something as important as this. How can the powers that be make decisions regarding shelters and services when you don't have access to the most current homeless numbers. I wonder why there is a trust issue between the City leaders and many community members. At the Monday night Parkrose Neighborhood Assn. meeting, a City of Portland employee spoke to us about the ordinance change. When the question was asked if there was going to be an enforcement component within the ordinance change, she said no. And might not be for years to come. That left the question as to what will happen with the transients that continue to camp where ever they choose to camp. Because that is what will happen. You can build a shelter, but you can't FORCE people to use it. And many will not for differing reasons; primarily addiction and mental health issues; the same one that were living this way before the housing shortage. But during those times, they were aware of the laws and rules and lived a bit differently than now. The city of Portland employee at the PNA meeting stated testimony will be heard, but most likely the decision has already been made. I am asking that you hear our input and do not pass this ordinance change. I do not think it is the right thing to do and will not solve the issue. Thank you for your time, Annette Adams

Testimony is presented without formatting.