

# Stacey Heath

**#278434 | March 17, 2021**

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

I am writing in support of the Shelter to Housing Continuum project (S2HC) and urge the Portland City Council to adopt the proposed code changes. Adopting this plan will codify useful tools from the 2015 Housing State of Emergency. S2HC will remove barriers in the zoning code so existing and future shelters (temporary and permanent) can continue to be embedded into communities across the city. Since 2015, the practical tools created by the existing Housing State of Emergency allowed for increased shelter beds year-round, expanded village-style shelters, reduced barriers to seasonal and temporary shelters, and brought shelters directly into neighborhoods to improve access to businesses and services. It is vitally important that the city recognize the need for shelters in areas where services, transportation and jobs are easily accessed. Shelters need to be focused where there is greatest need and the best chance of success, rather than concentrated in any one neighborhood or a remote area. Creating and supporting shelters in communities, rather than remote locations, are vital for ease of access to transportation, medical care, support services, businesses and community, particularly for the most vulnerable, the growing number of unhoused adults over 55, and those who have disabling conditions or mobility challenges. S2HC will also help protect sensitive natural areas by providing developed landscape and areas with Open Space zoning. By including parking lots, open lots and publicly-owned buildings which are often appropriate places for temporary shelters, Open Space provides better opportunities than wetlands or stream banks that may currently be used when people have nowhere else to live. S2HC makes sense for the city, the natural environment, and most importantly, for the people of Portland.

Testimony is presented without formatting.