

# Jill Workman Anderson

**#278569 | March 17, 2021**

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

Thank you for taking input from the citizens of Portland on this important issue. I appreciate the opportunity to comment. I am a life long Oregonian and have lived the vast majority of my life in southeast Portland. The homeless crisis here is real and growing, and I have great compassion for those who are forced to live on the streets. Portland needs a plan, a better than is the current status plan, to help the homeless and the neighborhoods they inhabit. Southeast Portland has a huge problem and the plans in place are not effective in dealing with it. In my neighborhood, there is a growing number of homeless in the green spaces (both public and private) and parked along the streets. With those growing numbers comes an increase in the trash and litter along the streets, in the green spaces and in and around Johnson Creek. There is a growth in the rodent population according to posts on Nextdoor that is quite likely due to the increase in food scraps/debris left by the homeless. The housed residents of the area deserve better and so do the homeless. Our green spaces drew people to this area and they are becoming so compromised that many of us are afraid to use them. That shouldn't be. And, those areas - that are already compromised by trash, food debris, human waste, fire and an increase in rodents - should not be further damaged by the building of temporary shelters and allowed camping by the homeless. We have no confidence that the City of Portland will monitor or control this any better than it has the out-in-the-open-for-everyone-to-see illegal camping that is currently taking place. Our green spaces come from private/public (taxpayer) money. They were created to protect ecological processes and function that is compromised by intensive use - the use that they are now illegally under and that would grow under the proposal. Please do not further violate the public's trust by misusing these precious areas. Instead, put people to work cleaning them up. This is not a 'not in my backyard' response. I am supportive of properly sited housing for the homeless and those in need. Our protected green spaces are not proper siting, and we have no hope that temporary use, if permitted, will end after 180 days. We believe that there will not be a good plan in place to replace it so that the temporary use will be extended. It's best just not to go there, but find a real solution and start there. Please stop making Southeast Portland a sacrifice zone and instead work towards a plan that takes all people into consideration, and then enforce that plan and the rules in place that protect everyone's rights.

Testimony is presented without formatting.