

March 24, 2021

Re: S2HC

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Members of Portland City Council:

I appreciated the opportunity to testify on the issues surrounding the Shelter to Housing Continuum:

I support the efforts of our community to find workable and humane solutions for dealing with homelessness.

I am writing today opposing the use of open space including our parks, natural areas, trails, golf courses, parks-related parking lots and community centers, as temporary shelter spaces. The use of these spaces and facilities should not be allowed during a Shelter Shortage as defined in the proposed code.

The citizens of Portland have voted generously for tax and bond measures to support both houseless services and parks. They are not inclusive of each other. Our parks, natural areas, community and public spaces are no longer safe, clean or available to the citizens that have supported them. Providing temporary shelters in our parks does not move our community closer to affordable housing.

The support for open space was never intended to provide temporary housing or shelter for a human population. The intent of the voters was to ensure the ability of all citizens to use our parks and open spaces for their intended purposes. I ask that you remove Portland Parks & Recreation community centers and other recreation buildings from consideration for use as temporary shelters related to the shortage.

The State of Oregon will receive \$4 billion as part of the American Rescue Plan with Portland receiving in excess of \$200 million. Mayor Wheeler has committed to the needs of the vulnerable. Apply these funds to the housing shortage and get people off the streets, assist the needy with their mental and physical health needs. Lease commercial and industrial space using public and private partnerships like the Oregon Harbor of Hope. There are no short-term solutions to this long-term problem. Housing affordability is not going away and placing temporary shelters in our open space compromises our communities and perpetuates the problem.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Vranizan
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