

Philip Selinger

#278899 | March 24, 2021

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

Honorable Mayor Wheeler and City Council Members: I fully appreciate that the houseless situation in Portland should be a top priority for the Council's attention and for the allocation of both bureau and budgetary resources. I also appreciate efforts to tackle the topic with multiple strategies including bolstering the social services needed to help the houseless to help themselves. I am, however, troubled by any allowance for our public parks and sensitive open spaces to be used as temporary shelter spaces. I have volunteered with SOLVE and lead a local monthly clean-up and have seen the impact houseless encampments have on open spaces that are quickly turned into dump sites. Vegetation is quickly trampled and soils contaminated. The environmental and visual impact is distressing and even a cursory clean-up consumes many hours of labor. This is of obvious concern for parks used by all members of our community - particularly children - and open spaces that host sensitive wildlife and vegetation. Please remove any recommendation to use open spaces, which would include parks, natural areas, trails, golf courses, and parks-related parking lots and community centers, as temporary shelter spaces, except in the case of natural disasters and short term emergencies. The use of these spaces should not be allowed during a Shelter Shortage as defined in the proposed code. Thank you for providing assurances to the community that this priority concern can be addressed without degrading the quality of our community and environment. Thank you.

Philip R. Selinger 2466 NW Thurman Street

Testimony is presented without formatting.