

# Joe Vacarella

**#278939 | March 24, 2021**

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

From an equity standpoint, it is NOT equitable to allow homeless / mentally ill to live in parks and green space designed for children and all Portlanders to exercise and relax. As we have seen, the existing encampments have caused significant harm to the environment and green spaces. Now more than ever, because of the pandemic Portlanders need access to these parks and green spaces without the concern that they might encounter a drug user's syringe or a person experiencing a violent episode because of drug use or episode of mental illness. Those people experiencing "houselessness" need to be provided services / housing / treatment in a place that is specifically used for this concept. This space (Wapato or other location along a bus line ; perhaps off NE Columbia) should be located in an area that does not degrade existing green spaces / parks, nor prevent the use of parks and green spaces by children / other Portlanders, for fear of their own personal safety and well being.

Testimony is presented without formatting.