

# karl abramovic

**#278969 | March 24, 2021**

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

I am a life-long Portlander addressing concerns I have over the viability of the S2HC project for dealing with Portland's homeless problem, a problem that now effects all citizens of our city, not just those living on the streets. There is nothing in the project proposal that recognizes the difference between true homeless people in need of help and the nomadic campers who are part of a criminal and drug subculture that have no interest in changing their lifestyles. This second demographic, which is responsible for rampant theft, drug needles littering the streets, parks and sidewalks, and bicycle chop-shop camps, seem to be the main face of Portland's homelessness problem, and one in which the S2HC project does not offer any solutions in alleviating. My second concern is in regard to the 180-day temporary outdoor shelter arrangement meant for Portland's parks and open spaces. Who will oversee and manage those places to avoid the accumulation of garbage, human waste, and discarded needles? When recently viewing the destruction (caused by illegal campers) to Brookside Wetland on S.E. Foster Road, I was horrified and fear the same fate will come to places like Oaks Bottom and other public locations where the city has invested millions in order to save natural habitats for all to enjoy, rather than allowing a few to destroy. Such places will be abandoned by all but the campers who will overwhelm them when encouraged by the S2HC project as it stands. With no inclusion of ways to address the concerns I have expressed above, or mention of supporting mental health and drug treatment services to help true homeless people in need, I see the S2HC project as being wholly detached from the reality of Portland's homeless crisis, and being more of a bureaucratic pacifier than a route to realistic solutions. Please take the time to reconsider the 180-day temporary camping option of the S2HC project, which I foresee becoming a permanent living arrangement for Portland's nomadic camping culture. Once word spreads around the nation that Portland welcomes criminal campers, our city's current homeless crisis will become a true disaster.

Testimony is presented without formatting.