

Philip Graham

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

I am a longtime Portland resident, homeowner, and small business owner. The answer to the crisis of homelessness, is to provide homes. I urge you to vote YES on the Shelter to Housing Continuum. Both for the sake of humanity towards our houseless neighbors, and for the livability of the City as a whole, it is essential that we commit to real, comprehensive efforts to provide housing and shelter in whatever form is possible. There is no other way to get people off the street. This is an urgent need that must be shouldered by every neighborhood and part of the City. Do not accept any amendments that limit the ability of the City or providers to locate shelter wherever needed. There are amendments proposed by "Portland: Neighbors Welcome and Social Justice Coalition" that will strengthen the ability to place shelter wherever needed, and I support Council adopting them. These include amendments to increase the flexibility of siting shelters; allowing shelters to be hosted by churches and other community organizations; and allowing RVs and tiny houses to be occupied on private property without sewer hookups. This is a genuine humanitarian crisis, and we have to choose whether we face it with open hearts and pragmatic care, or shamefully turn away. Thank you.

Testimony is presented without formatting.