

Ryan Schenk

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

Portland has become a destination for homeless individuals from across the region and even across the nation. I fully support providing resources for the homeless that have called Portland their home for years. What I don't support, however, is continuing to make Portland a welcoming place for homeless individuals from Clark County, Clackamas Country, the rest of Oregon and beyond. If we continue to change our city policies and codes to accommodate a crisis that has no end in sight, we will only serve to permanently institutionalize homelessness in Portland. As a region, voters just passed a measure that is expected to raise \$250 million a year to be directed at various homeless services in the Metro region. That is an exceptional amount of money that I hope will be used to pay for solutions that will help move people towards permanent housing. What Shelter to Housing Continuum Project seems to be proposing, however, is a codification of widespread homelessness in the city. If this project was proposing to give homeless individuals the option to either live in permanent camps or be forced to leave the city, I could support that plan. This plan, however, doesn't provide any boundaries or accountability for what should be allowed. Absent any measures of these kind, Portland will continue to become a dumping ground for the region's homeless population. For the mayor and the commissioner's, I would ask that you send some time outside of Delta Park or along NE 33rd and Marine Drive or around Sunnyside School Park before voting on this measure. As someone who loves this city, I want to see it flourish again. If your goal is to clean up the city and make it more livable for everybody, doubling down on Portland's reputation as a homeless destination will not accomplish these goals. We need some structure and plan to contain the homeless crisis and help move people who want permanent housing in that direction.

Testimony is presented without formatting.