

ken reid

#279169 | March 27, 2021

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

Dear Mayor and Commissioners, When I moved here from Boise's North End a few years ago I was struck by the beauty and high civic morale of Portland. It has been a shock to witness the city's death-spiral of the last two years. I'll focus my comment here on a local issue. I urge you to permanently remove the homeless camp along SE Oak Street, between the Laurelhurst Playground and Laurelhurst Park. It has become a threat to neighborhood health and hygiene. The food wrappers, toilet paper accumulations, liquor containers, and miscellaneous trash are spilling over into both the Park and the Playground. I have seen adult men urinating on the parking strip and in the Park proper during daylight hours. We live only a block away but taking our seven- and nine-year-old grandchildren to the Playground or the Park has become increasingly fraught. The Park's off-lease area used by dogs is a cleaner and healthier place for kids than the approaches to the Playground. And moving the Oak Street homeless camp permanently means not just shuffling it back and forth between Laurelhurst and nearby school playgrounds. That kind of rhythm may work for Wallowa County ranchers hustling cattle from one pasture to the next, but we can't treat the homeless like cows or parks like pastures. We're probably facing something like Europe experienced at the end of the second world war, with many thousands of "displaced persons" needing shelter and basic living facilities scaled to their numbers. Instead of continuing to dole out slums to each neighborhood, I urge you to consider the problem holistically. Thank you for your attention, Ken Reid

Testimony is presented without formatting.