

Loree Sheckels

#279170 | March 27, 2021

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

3/27/21 Dear City Council, As a Portland resident, I applaud your efforts to grapple with our homeless crisis, but I do not see how making a permanent zoning change that allows for residential camping on city park property is a workable solution. Such efforts in other communities have proved to be unsustainable. In fact, just last week the city of Los Angeles permanently closed Echo Park Lake to temporary shelter because of the many problems it created there. As a result of this closure, the LAPD were engaged in a volatile conflict. Furthermore, park restoration is estimated to cost \$500,000. When I voted for our recent park's bond measure, I understood the money would be used towards stewardship of our fragile and valuable public open spaces. I don't see how permanent rezoning for residential camping on park properties is compatible with that intent. I believe that our city and its citizenry have the ability to create a healthy and dignified way to offer safe and stable housing to our most disadvantaged residents. As a social service professional, my experience had been that such housing is successful only when coupled with adequate medical, addiction, and employment services. Moving people into our parks would only continue to marginalize our most vulnerable residents and only promises to create a host of new problems. Thanks you, Loree Sheckels, LPC

Testimony is presented without formatting.