

Theresa Corrao

#279302 | March 30, 2021

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

While I am deeply empathetic to the homeless population in Portland, I am also incredibly saddened and disheartened to see our lovely city turn into a garbage heap. While arguing over what moral approach to use, we have neglected our duties to the remainder of our citizens who abide by and prescribe to the rules of society. That said, as far as this project, I am concerned that the amount of effort and money it will take to create this opportunity, will result in 20% or less of the homeless community actually conforming to the rules that will be (and should be) in place for clean and respectable community living. This is clearly evidenced in the recent Laurelhurst park sweep. Homeless population in Portland appear to be divided into two groups. One segment wants access to services and re-entry into society. The latter, and larger portion, appears unwilling to rejoin or accept the basic rules of society...and have a strong criminal element, either from unmediated mental health issues or raging addiction to street drugs. I remain unconvinced that this portion will willingly go to temporary shelter and rehabilitate back into society. I believe money would be better spent creating a community where this larger population can camp off the grid (with grocery store, access to bus line, mental health facilities, access to free prescribed medication, drug recovery facilities, and mobile medical units available and on site), But SEPARATE from the residents of Portland who are business owners, property owners, and law abiding citizens. We should have a parallel program downtown for those that want to rehabilitate back into working society. ACCESS TO AMENITIES ARE CRUCIAL, AND INTEGRITY AND RESPECT SHOULD BE A PART OF ANY RELOCATION EFFORT, but if we are being truly honest, city wide integration of people who choose to live on the fringe of society, have unmedicated mental health issues, and are dangerously addicted to drugs, with those who live within society's laws, does not appear to be working. Our citizens feel endangered and overlooked. These past attempts have only contributed to the downward spiral of our own beautiful city. More details, transparency and greater weight to property and business tax paying citizens must be given before this project should be finalized. While i applaud the city for putting effort into finding humane solutions, this feels like a temporary and very expensive solution that has a low percentage chance for success.

Testimony is presented without formatting.