

Mary Woods

#279329 | March 30, 2021

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

Dear Mayor Wheeler and members of the Portland City Council, I am a homeowner in Parkrose Heights Neighborhood, but I strongly agree with the statements below. However, one item in the proposed zoning changes was not mentioned - temporary shelters in parks. I have received emails from your offices and understand what this change means but we are still against it. Our parks are sanctuaries to all citizens and allowing the temporary shelters to be set up in the parks could bring in some homeless occupants that will not adhere to the code and could cause destruction to the beauty of our parks. Please reconsider this along with the other comments below. We support the majority of the code changes proposed in the S2HC project. However, on behalf of the residents in Hazelwood and East Portland, we are asking for three amendments to ensure the code change doesn't adversely affect communities in East Portland by concentrating outdoor self-managed camps in areas that are already struggling. An economically diverse region is a healthy region.

Unfortunately for East Portland - according to Metro - economic diversity is getting worse, not better. The cost of living is increasing but incomes, particularly among communities of color who reside mainly in East Portland, aren't keeping up with the cost of living. We've heard the statements made by various officials that this will not happen. That our concerns are unfounded and that we just don't understand the code change. But we do understand, we've participated in dozens of meetings since December. And we have determined, based on historical context and simple economics, that without some protections for marginalized neighborhoods, there will be a disproportionate number of outdoor self-managed camps sited in East Portland. The combination of an abundance of cheap vacant land where shelters can be sited much more quickly and the need to make these options immediately available for people living on the streets ensures this will happen. We are not inferring that having shelters in a neighborhood is a bad thing. However, having multiple shelters concentrated in marginalized areas puts a huge strain on struggling communities and creates a scenario where different sets of vulnerable populations are all competing for the same (very) limited resources that exist in East Portland. No community will thrive in those circumstances. So we're asking that you codify protections for marginalized communities and add, or least further explore, the amendments which are not addressed in the current amendments proposed (3.25.21). Reference Table 1 – Outdoor Shelters: Amendments to the City Code Volume One, Introduction Recommended Draft February 2021 Definition of marginalized neighborhoods • Neighborhoods with more than 20% of residents living at or below the poverty line • Neighborhoods where the majority of residents have an annual median household of less than \$55,000.00 • This can easily be

determined using web data such as <https://www.point2homes.com/> Amendments: • Reduce the number of individuals than can be housed in outdoor shelters to 20 residents in marginalized neighborhoods zoned for multi dwelling, commercial and institution zones. • Limit the number of outdoor individual shelters than can be placed in marginalized neighborhoods - zoned for multi dwelling, commercial and institution zones. Marginalized neighborhoods should not be asked to house more than 1% of their total population • Prohibit outdoor shelters in neighborhoods already permanently supporting more than 200 unhoused neighbors, which would include permanent shelters and supportive housing facilities like the Blackburn Center We hope you will seriously consider our amendments and find the right balance between both humane solutions for our houseless neighbors and a commitment to protecting the marginalized communities in East Portland when you vote on the final code change. Thank you Sincerely, Hazelwood Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

Testimony is presented without formatting.