

Catherine Thompson

#279384 | March 30, 2021

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

I am submitting additional testimony after listening to the initial public testimony, reading the amendments to the open space zoning changes and listening to the work session last week. I appreciate the considerable effort being made by Commissioners, Bureau staff to get this right. Based on the current wording of the Open Spaces clause, I urge you to remove open spaces, community centers and parking lots from the 180 day per calendar year temporary and the permanent shelter inventory. The vast majority of our open spaces (in addition to those in environmental zones) including our parks, our community centers and parking for these facilities have previously been designated for specific functions to serve all of the public. Shelters in parking lots, sidewalks or street parking adjacent to a community center, park, natural area or trail will have the same negative impact as sheltering in the areas themselves on those resources and will impair the enjoyment of those resources for their intended use by everyone. Please zone for shelters in land that is not already committed to other uses. When shelter is colocated with parks, community centers, natural areas, and their designated parking, through no fault of their own, it puts the homeless/houseless population on a collision course with the other primary users of those resources, both human and wildlife. Currently the public has been very generous in our funding to address the lack of housing. Setting up these sorts of conflicts as part of a planning process seems ill advised for all involved. There may be some open spaces that no longer serve the public or parking lots that no longer serve their original purpose that would be appropriate for shelter. These can easily be considered as they are identified and permitted for shelter by City Council on an individual basis. This sort of scrutiny will serve as a barrier to inappropriate locations being used for shelter. The current zoning change of record has sufficient ambiguity that the public is rightly concerned that open space and parking lots that are inappropriate for shelter will be used. Thank you for your service, Catherine Thompson, M.D.

Testimony is presented without formatting.