

# Sarah Peters

**#289281 | April 8, 2021**

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

I strongly urge Council Members to adopt the changes to the City's zoning code developed through the S2HC project. As a homeowner and resident in the Lents neighborhood of SE Portland, I see my houseless neighbors living incredibly hard lives every day. We all know there are not nearly enough shelter spaces for everyone who can't afford housing, and the spaces that are available often come with rules and restrictions that are untenable. Managing traditional shelters is hard work and those restrictions are necessary, but people shouldn't have to be separated from their partners, pets, and possessions just to have a place to sleep at night. The expanded temporary shelter options recommended by S2HC will help provide safer places for people in our community. Many of my neighbors in East Portland have shared their concerns that S2HC will result in more camping and trash on our sidewalks, streets, and multiuse paths. I walk and ride a bicycle most days and I find these problems frustrating as well - in fact, I haven't walked or taken my bicycle on the I-205 bike path since 2018 because even back then it felt like riding through someone's living room. That said, continuing on our current path won't solve these issues. Portland's current trash problem is not the fault of homeless people - it's because the rickety systems we have in place to keep our streets and paths clean broke down under an extraordinary set of stresses. I'm really heartened to see what the City is doing to accelerate cleanups, and while I would love to ride the I-205 path again, it's not right to push out the people who are living there now without giving them a better place to go. TLDR: Let's make it easier and safer for people who are currently sleeping on the streets, in tents, in their cars, and in RVs to find a place to stay and get the help they need to find stable housing. Please adopt the S2HC project to make this happen. Thank you for your attention and for working to make Portland a better place for all of us.

Testimony is presented without formatting.