

April 14, 2021

Good afternoon Commissioners,

My name is Simon Boas, and I am a resident of the King Neighborhood. I spoke to you some weeks ago in support of the formal legalization of occupied tiny houses on wheels and RVs on residential property. I expressed my concern over the added burden and cost that come with the recommendations to require sewage connections and electrical posts for existing tiny houses and RVs. After hearing the most recent presentation from the Water Bureau, I am still very worried that the proposed requirements would displace Portland residents from existing tiny houses and RVs and discourage residents from creating space for new dwellings of this sort.

There are a number of alarming assumptions made in the presentation. Not all tiny houses are snuggled up right next to the main house on the property--sometimes they are in the backyard, where every foot of extra electrical cable that has to be laid, every extra foot of sewer line that must be dug and plumbed can bring hundreds of added dollars in cost. This adds up very quickly. The figures from the water bureau represent a best-case scenario under ideal conditions that, unfortunately, does not describe the real costs many existing tiny house dwellers would face if they suddenly had to make dramatic changes to the utility set ups in homes they've lived in for years now.

That's why I support Portland: Neighbors Welcome in their call to codify the city's existing guidelines for occupied tiny homes and RVs. The city has for years now provided literature on requirements and best practices for placing a tiny house on residential property. The pamphlet the city has published was extremely helpful when my wife and I set up our tiny house utilities. We, like many Portland residents, want to be good neighbors by following the guidelines set by the city.

The existing guidelines set by the city for tiny houses and RVs on residential property have been proven to work well. They actively address the things our community wants to avoid like illegal dumping, but they give residents flexibility to use alternative systems for financial and environmental reasons. They also provide guidelines for safely installing power without the thousands of dollars needed to build a campground-style post.

Thank you,
Simon Boas