



September 15, 2016

Subject: Written testimony regarding Planning and Sustainability Commission Meeting, Tuesday, September 13, 2016, Agenda item: Mass Shelters and Housing Zoning Code Update Hearing / Recommendation

To: psc@portlandoregon.gov

I am submitting this written testimony to reiterate and further clarify my oral testimony on mass shelters and housing zoning code updates.

Transition Projects is the largest provider of shelter in the Portland metropolitan area. We operate 510 shelter beds in five facilities located throughout Portland. Prior to the Declaration of Housing Emergency, under which the Mayor can temporarily wave some code requirements, we had sited only one new shelter in the previous 15 years. The permitting process for siting shelter is expensive and lengthy. Shelter code also sets a limit on the number of shelter beds in an area that is too low to take advantage of economies of scales. Shelter code currently caps the number of beds in EX, CX and CG zones at 100. During that state of emergency, Transition Projects has demonstrated that we can safely and efficiently operate shelters at a scale of greater than 200. This scale is consistent with shelters in other similarly-sized cities in the US.

Transition Projects recommends one change to the current draft proposal--increasing the maximum number of beds in CS, CM, and CO2 zones. Shelter providers have been able to safely and successfully operate mass shelters with 75 to 100 beds in these zones. Specifically, we recommend that the Maximum Number of Shelter Beds for Mass Shelters as an allowed use (as described at 33.285.050.B.2 and related Table 285-1) in Storefront Commercial (CS), Mixed Commercial/Residential (CM), and Office Commercial 2 (CO2) zones be set at 100 beds, rather than at 50 beds as in the current proposed draft.

Thank you for your thoughtful proposed revisions to code. Please contact me if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "G. Devendorf", written in a cursive, flowing style.

George Devendorf
Executive Director