



## Portland City Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Updates regarding the Shelter to Housing Continuum Proposal**

Portland, Oregon – As the commissioners and mayor indicated last Wednesday, they intended to be responsive to the testimony they heard, and to the written testimony that they continue to receive. They have been working to find common ground on how best to incorporate the public feedback. The fruits of that internal work were evident in today's council meeting.

Following today's session, Portland's Commissioners and Mayor announced the following updates:

- Due to a technical outage, the Council began late. The entire session can be viewed [here](#).
- The draft amendments referenced during today's meeting are available [here](#). A general summary from Bureau of Planning and Sustainability staff will follow tomorrow morning; please check back [here](#) tomorrow to see that post.
- These amendments will be discussed internally between the councilmembers over the coming week and will be voted next Wednesday (March 31).
- Testimony will remain open until 5 pm on Tuesday, March 30. We welcome community members to share their thoughts on the specific amendments, as well as to continue to share about the overall plan. They may do so [here](#).
- The goal remains to pass a final version of the proposal on March 31, during the 3pm session.
- The Mayor's office will be putting forth an emergency ordinance next week (March 31) that will extend the housing state of emergency for a further year, through April 4, 2022.

#### Project Background

In 2015, Portland declared a housing emergency. The City and Multnomah County created the Joint Office of Homeless Services and used the emergency to double the number of year-round beds, open new shelters, and transform how they look and operate.

Because of the emergency, shelters are now open 24 hours and no longer require people to line up nightly for beds. They welcome pets and partners, and let guests bring their belongings.

They offer kitchens, laundry, showers, case management offices, and sometimes even clinic space. And they are set up to help people transition to housing.

But in the last six years, the need has exploded – and, unfortunately, the emergency will expire April 4, 2021. In non-emergency conditions, city codes limit hygiene facilities, shelter locations, the number of beds, and how long an individual can stay. They also make it challenging to quickly open temporary facilities during seasonal changes or severe weather, to provide wraparound support services, and to allow village-style communities.

The Shelter to Housing Continuum project began roughly two years ago to review and retool City regulations to better address the homelessness crisis. The proposals coming to Council on March 17<sup>th</sup> are the result of extensive staff time, deliberation by the Planning and Sustainability Commission, and public testimony and feedback. Adding an extra session on March 24<sup>th</sup> ensures the Council has adequate time to digest all of this information and consider how best to move the proposal forward.

For more information, please visit <https://www.portland.gov/bps/s2hc/>