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Beyond the bureaucracy, however, the camp has gotten good reviews as an orderly and safe operation, even if some people would like to see it moved from its high-profile site downtown.

"I've heard far more positive feedback than negative feedback," said Michael Boyer, crime prevention program coordinator for the Old Town/Chinatown neighborhood. "I think from a humanity standpoint, people want to see something more stable and livable than tents on the streets."

From the beginning, the camp has set strict rules prohibiting drugs, alcohol and violence.

At City Council Wednesday, Trilliam Shannon with Right 2 Survive, testified that a camp like this should be replicated, not destroyed. "You have the ability to work with BDS to suspend code violations," she said. "We need to stop criminalizing people who are exercising their right to survive."



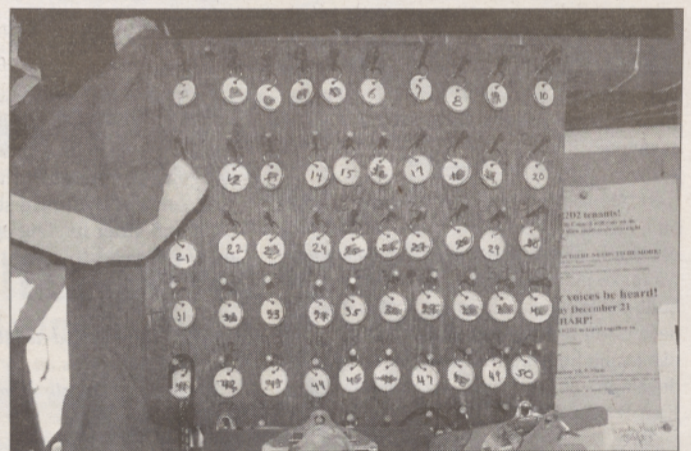
Above left: A man reads the overnight log. Each morning and evening the camp records the number of people who are staying there and how much additional capacity they may have for the night. Above: A man who stays at Right 2 Dream Too walks away defeated in a suit after learning he did not get the job he had interviewed for.

### Photos by Israel Bayer



Above: Three people who stay at Right 2 Dream work the security shift. Right, top: A poem written by Chaz, an overnight sleeper at Right 2 Dream Too. At right, bottom: Tag tents are hung in an orderly fashion. When campers leave or return, they flip their assigned tent number to indicate whether they are home.

**Right 2 Dream Too**  
by Chaz (Right 2 Dream Too tenant)  
Thank you for giving me the Right 2 Dream too.  
When the nights were so cold, and my feelings were blue.  
I could have gave up, and just died on these streets.  
But my soul and my pride was too strong to defeat.  
Remember some nights will be cold and seem blue.  
But one thing we all have, is the right to dream too.



## City opens up overnight camping option for select sites

BY JOANNE ZUHL  
STAFF WRITER

For years, Portland's anti-camping ordinance has been the target of countless demonstrations by the homeless and their supporters.

They have marched, protested and held vigils at City Hall against the city's policy that makes camping illegal on public property or on unpermitted private land, which they say effectively criminalizes the thousands of people in this city without homes.

On Wednesday, however, the city gave a little ground with a new approach — a policy allowing faith-based and nonprofit organizations to host vehicular campers on their lots.

Presented by Commissioner Nick Fish, the resolution approved Dec. 21, establishes a one-year pilot project that will let people without shelter to "sleep overnight in a

vehicle, camper or trailer parked on an existing parking lot of a host." The resolution limits hosts to one designated area per partner, with a maximum of four vehicles at a time. It does not, however, allow for tent campers.

On Thursday, Multnomah County Commissioners passed a supporting proclamation echoing the new sleeping allowances. The new policy is patterned after one in Eugene that for years has allowed designated camping sites for people experiencing homelessness.

Several people who testified before City Council argued passionately that the resolution doesn't go far enough, and leaves the population of tent campers without a place to go. Many of those testifying spoke on behalf of Right 2 Dream Too, the camp at Fourth Avenue and Burnside, which is under threat of closure for code violations. (See page 1)

Fish acknowledged the plan isn't a solution to the city's housing crisis but it is a step in the right direction, calling it "a commonsense and pragmatic response to the crisis we find ourselves in."

"Last week, there were more than 90 people in families staying at our family winter shelter," Fish said. "That's a 150 percent increase over last year. Many of these families are currently sleeping in cars, which have to move on a regular basis. This pilot would allow them to safely and legally sleep overnight, with the authorization of a faith-based partner or nonprofit."

Fish said the plan comes after two years of reviewing the city's camping ordinance, but it gained momentum from the Occupy Portland movement, which raised the profile of the number of people homeless on Portland's streets. The issue has also been put on a trajectory by Right 2 Dream Too.

In November, the Ecumenical Ministries

of Oregon sent letters to Fish and County Commissioner Deborah Kafoury's office asking for the opportunity to explore hosting small-scale camps for the homeless.

David Leslie, executive director of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, said faith-based organizations are hoping the option will spur greater innovation in addressing and correcting homelessness.

"The big issue we're looking at is how can religious communities utilize their resources and their assets more creatively, effectively and collaboratively, to help people end homelessness, build affordable housing and maybe get to the point where there's actually economic development," Leslie said "That's the big issue."

Several members of Ecumenical Ministries participate in the program in Eugene. There, Leslie says, the program