

Sample of over 100 citizen complaints about illegal activity of in Deering Oaks park last summer between mid-July and October 6 (emphasis added):

~~The area is a complete disaster. **Needles and trash everywhere in piles.** Everywhere. **People openly shooting, snorting, smoking drugs. Drug deals in plain sight.** People dancing wildly in the road in traffic, tables and tents set up. People walking and standing in the road. Vandalism. Graffiti. What is happening? Why has the city not done anything about this? It has been going on for days and getting worse. Scary, sketchy, people approaching cars high and unstable. This needs to be shut down.



~~The drifters and homeless are using this area behind the post office staircase as a bathroom area. I've now seen at least two people dropping their pants to release themselves here. Is the city going to do anything about this? **This whole tent city is a mess and is loaded with litter, flagrant drug use, aggressive panhandling, fighting, etc.** We are in the middle of a pandemic and these people are just amassing without protection and defecating in open space. Do something now! I don't care if they are homeless or addicts, enough is enough- it's time to get real and less politically correct!

~~The cease and desist order only worked to stop food distribution on deering oaks property without a permit. So, what about the piles of people, drugs, trash, tents, urine, and stool piled up around the park and streets. **Is my city, the mayor, and the police department going to ignore the blatant violations of public law, the harm and threat to public safety, the harm and threat to public health, and the risk we expose portland residents to that are part of the Parkside community and the city as a whole?** If I did any one of the things these people are doing

anywhere in the city I would be shut down immediately. My tax dollars pay for the maintenance of public spaces, this space is the furthest from maintained as i have ever seen in Portland in 42 years. **If this camp is allowed to maintain, then i will, as long as every portland citizen, be able to urinate and defecate on any public, state, or federal government property (i will cite the post office outdoor facility the camp has designated) as my precedent. I will do massive amount of narcotics in public view, inject them in to my veins in front of all citizens including small children. When I'm so high I can't see where I'm going I will run in the streets and ask for money, or cigarettes. And when portland police try to arrest me I will forever and forever spread the word, that it was totally acceptable for these people in deering oaks, so don't you dare arrest or stop anyone in portland for doing anything, anywhere, anytime, ever. Shame on you portland. People having bowel movements outside the post office, shooting up at the traffic intersection, people on spice unable to move, sleeping on the sidewalks so citizens unable to pass. Little children with their parents finding piles of needles in the park. Shame on you portland. Shame on you.**

~~When is the city/state going to help take back this park from the drug users and transients who have no respect or care for the earth? Shelters are less than 50% full but we let them congregate and sleep here breaking park rules blatantly in the open. Sad. Police are too afraid to do anything.



~~Why has the police department not put a stop to this camp. The city states there isn't anything they can do to stop people from sleeping in the park unless other things are "at play." Every time I pass by, I see a crime being committed. The answer is very simple here folks. Post multiple police officers to monitor for crimes. Examples of crimes to help you: 1. standing, dancing, loitering in the street in traffic. 2. Drug deals. 3. Urinating in public. 4. Defecating in public. 5. Living on/blocking sidewalks. 6. Littering. Just a few to help you get started. Police presence will put a stop to this camp and destruction of public property. Immediately. The citizens of Portland do not want this crime in their beautiful park. Thank you.

~~Drug deals going down, urinating in public, littering. It's a zoo and people should be extra careful about going to this park. You have to watch out for needles and people on drugs. Not sure why Portland can't get a handle on this.

~~Along the bushes at the Rose Garden in Deering Oaks Park, there's human fecal matter and toilet paper. Likely 10+ "droppings" and used toilet paper in and around the circular hedging. This is a public safety, sanitation and biohazard in the park.



~~As a property owner in this neighborhood I am furious. Looking forward to losing my good tenants. On the upside I guess I no longer have to purchase purple "city bags" as it would seem I am welcomed to dump my trash in the park.



~~Homeless camp persists at Deering Oaks. **These are sketchy, dangerous people who have been offered services several times and declined, and remain a risk to the public who want to walk, drive, or want to enjoy this area.** It looks like most of them belong in a hospital. Get them there or arrest them. **I've seen fights, drug deals, and people so high they can't walk.** I'm not assuming it's everyone, but it's time to stop trying to be sensitive to the city's criminals and start taking action. Fix it.



Anne Pringle
President, Friends of Deering Oaks

I would also like to testify live on Friday, but wanted to submit, for your review in advance, the attached comments made by the public and photos submitted last summer on the impacts on Portland's historic Deering Oaks park of the so-called "low level violations of law" by the homeless, cited in the summary of this bill.

I ask every Committee member to ask yourself: Would you think it was appropriate to tolerate these behaviors if they were occurring on State House grounds or in your own city or town?

These violations would no longer be "subject to arrest and prosecution" if committed by a person who "lacks a home". But others who commit these violations would be. Is this fair?

What are the impacts on others, if one segment of the community is allowed to engage in these behaviors without consequences?