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**CITIZENS CRIME COMMISSION RELEASES REPORT ON HOMELESSNESS IN  
PORTLAND,  
URGES PARKS DEPARTMENT OPEN TOILETS 24/7/365 IMMEDIATELY**

While the City and County are largely following best practice in their efforts to address homelessness, more could be done according to a just-released report by the Portland Citizens Crime Commission. A leading voice for public safety, the Crime Commission's report (available [here](#)) makes seven specific recommendations. Among them:

*The City and County, through the Joint Office , should continue their programmatic focus on homelessness prevention through housing retention, additional shelter resources and growing the stock of permanent supportive housing, the most cost-effective solution to housing the chronically homeless. The City of Portland should instruct the Parks Department to **immediately** open park bathrooms 24/7/365.*

Homelessness in Portland is not the fault of local government but rather the logical outcome of more than fifty years of federal policy. This includes the Community Mental Health Act of 1963, which led to deinstitutionalization, and the federal withdrawal from the low-income housing market.

The report found that "much of the public's criticism of government efforts to address the crisis arises within a vacuum of information. The current communications strategy leaves the public uninformed, creating conditions that are ripe for rumors and finger-pointing." In response, the report states that "a more robust data- and outcomes-rich communications strategy is needed to keep us informed, to encourage engagement and to track progress."

The report further states that: "This is our community's crisis and not simply a crisis to be shouldered by government."

Prior to releasing the report, the Crime Commission met with and received comments from key stakeholders, including Marc Jolin, Director of the Joint Office of Homeless Services, Mayor Ted Wheeler, County Commissioner Deborah Kafoury, City Commissioner Nick Fish, County Commissioners Stedman and Meieran, and the Director of the Oregon Health Authority, Patrick Allen and the newly appointed Behavioral Health Director, Steve Allen.

The Citizens Crime Commission of Portland is the leading voice of public safety. We are a non-profit organization dedicated to mobilizing business leaders and citizens to reduce crime, improve civility, and strengthen communities. Our efforts are driven through four core initiatives: Uniting Leaders, Better Justice Systems, Looking Beyond the Symptoms, and Business Security.

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