


Gregory Andrew



December 1, 2025

Ms. Lindsay Lara, City Clerk, and City of San Rafael
City of San Rafael
1400 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901
Via email: city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org

Re: Public Comment for the San Rafael City Council meeting of 4b from the December 1, 2025; Item 4b on 350 Merrydale Ordinance Adoption - Final Adoption of Ordinance 2057:

Dear Ms. Lara and City of San Rafael,

I am submitting this public comment and request that it be entered into the public record for the above reference City Council meeting and agenda item.

Ordinance 2057 gives complete and blanket authority to the City Manager to authorize and place a homeless shelter anywhere they want, whenever they want, without any public or even City Council input. This authority is given in Ordinance 2025 Division 2C, "Establishment of Homeless shelters on City-Owned or Leased Property:"

"2. Pursuant to Government Code Section 8698.4, the City Manager or her designee is authorized to suspend any housing, health, habitability, planning and zoning, or safety standards, procedures, or laws as applied to a City homeless shelter as defined in this Division, except all such projects must comply with the 2019 California Residential Code Appendix X, and California Building Code Appendix O, and any future standards adopted by the Department of Housing and Community Development related to emergency housing or emergency housing facilities. The City Manager, or her designee is authorized to take any other actions consistent with and/or necessary for the implementation of this ordinance."

(Text highlighted for emphasis)

With Ordinance 2057, a homeless shelter can and will be developed near schools, day care centers, and communities with many young children. This is by virtue of the Ordinance 2057 "Finding," that:

"3. Strict compliance with local building approval procedures and/or state or local housing, health, habitability, planning and zoning, or safety standards, procedures, and laws in existence at the time of adoption of this ordinance will prevent, hinder, or delay the City's efforts to mitigate the effects of its declared Shelter Crisis through:

d. limits on the locations where the City can place homeless shelters."

(Text highlighted for emphasis)

The City demonstrated its willingness to disregard safeguards by locating a homeless shelter at 350 Merrydale, where the City was made aware of eight nearby daycare centers, hundreds of young children living in the neighborhood, and along a much-used route for children walking to Venecia Valley School.

In light of actions taken by the City Council on November 17, 2025, related to Item 6 of that meeting, pertaining to 350 Merrydale, I request an explanation from the City as to why Ordinance 2057 is needed. With the adoption of a Declaration of Shelter Crisis (Resolution 15478), the adoption of standards and procedures for Homeless Shelters (Urgency Ordinance 2056), and the authorization of the grant & purchase of 350 Merrydale (Resolutions 15479 & 15480) there does not appear to be any need for Ordinance 2057. All of the provisions I have referenced above in Ordinance 2057 are also included in Ordinance 2056.

Ordinance 2056 took effect on November 17, 2025 and will remain in effect during the period in which a shelter crisis is declared. It is certain that the City will keep the declared shelter crisis in place over the next three years and almost just as certainly for a much longer period of time, as has happened in Petaluma, Santa Rosa, Berkeley, Chico, San Luis Obispo, and other California cities, large and small. So, Ordinance 2056 will remain in effect for the foreseeable future and Ordinance 2057 is not needed. In addition, the Mayor, City Council, and City staff repeatedly made public comments that the homeless shelter at 350 Merrydale would be implemented in 2026, not in 2025, so there is no relevance to any 30-day effective date.

In declaring the homeless shelter “emergency” – an emergency 20 years in the making - the Mayor and City Council has taken a page out of the Trump playbook – declare an emergency and then do whatever they want, wherever they want, whenever they want. Only, in the case of Ordinances 2056 & 2057 it is the City Manager who has the sole authority to play out this scenario.

I oppose Ordinance 2056 and Ordinance 2057 because of the disregard to the electorate of San Rafael.

Thank you,



Gregory Andrew
GMA:gma

cc: Mayor Kate Colin kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org
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