

From: notify=proudcity.com@getproudcity.com <notify=proudcity.com@getproudcity.com> **On Behalf Of** MarkFallows
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 7:16 PM
To: Info <info@cityofsanrafael.org>; Open Data <opendata@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: New submission from Contact City Council

Name

Mark Fallows

Email

[REDACTED]

Subject

Following up from TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Message

hi as requested by Mayor Kate
Good evening, Mayor and Council members. My name is Mark Fallows. I'm a resident who lives near Starkweather Path(Bedford Cove), and I'm asking the Council to pause the lighting proposal until three basic questions have been answered.

****First, the policy contradiction.****

I took a photo of the park entrance sign this morning. It says, in the city's own words: "Closed Sunset to Sunrise." If this park is officially closed at night, why are we spending public money on lighting infrastructure for hours when no one is supposed to be there?

If we install lighting, we're either wasting resources on a closed park, or we're planning to change the hours without community review. Which is it? And if the path remains closed at night, lighting doesn't prevent crime. It makes the path more attractive to people who shouldn't be there. A simpler solution would be gating key access points, which is enforceable and doesn't require ongoing electricity or maintenance.

****Second, the environmental question.****

At the end of this path, there are interpretive signs the city installed to educate visitors about the ecological significance of this area. I photographed those too. The city's own signage describes this marsh as "critical habitat for rails" and calls it "an important part of the mosaic of aquatic habitats that support migrating birds along the Pacific Flyway." The signs say these wetlands provide "vital nesting and feeding areas for wildlife."

If the city recognized this ecological significance when it installed those educational displays, why hasn't it completed a biological assessment before proposing to add light pollution to this same habitat?

Tiscornia Marsh at Pickleweed Park supports Ridgway's rail, which is federally endangered. The Marin Islands, visible from this path, support the largest heron and egret rookery in the Bay Area. Just last week, the Marin IJ reported that shorebird populations in the North Bay have declined between 61 and 68 percent over the past 20 years.

Peer-reviewed research in Nature Communications, PNAS, and Scientific Reports has documented that artificial lighting disorients migratory birds, disrupts circadian rhythms, and alters predator-prey dynamics. Has the city consulted with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? Has a biological assessment been completed?

****Third, my ask.****

Pause this project until the city has clarified the park hours policy, completed a biological impact assessment, and consulted with Fish and Wildlife.

The city's own signs quote a fellow Scot, born in Dunbar in 1838, John Muir - he understood the interconnectedness of nature. His words appear on the city's own signage at the end of this path. John Muir: "When we tug at a single thing in nature, we find it attached to the rest of the world." Let's make sure we understand what we're tugging at before we install permanent infrastructure.

Thank you.