

From: Andrea Leavitt [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 4, 2023 9:30 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Homeless encampments in San Rafael

To the San Rafael Elected Officials:

I am very concerned about the homeless encampments in San Rafael. I frequent businesses along Anderson Drive and near Albert Park. The homeless encampment that is growing near Albert Park and the tents along Anderson Drive should not be allowed. It does not help the local businesses or residents. Allowing these encampments to go on does not help their "residents" either. We have seen it is a hard issue to solve but you can not allow the health of the city to suffer.

I urge you to ban encampments at Albert Park and on sidewalks in San Rafael.

Thank you.

Andrea

Andrea Leavitt
San Anselmo, CA 94960

From: Elizabeth Horevitz [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 5, 2023 6:55 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: No-Camping Ban Albert Park (for Monday's City Council Meeting- 3/6/23)

Dear Esteemed Members of the San Rafael City Council,

We are writing as members of the San Rafael community-- (parents of two elementary school children in San Rafael City Schools and residents of the Gerstle Park neighborhood for the past seven years). Our children have both gone through Parkside Preschool and now attend Parkside after-care. We attend Pacific's games in the summer, and have often tried to use the playground and community center since moving to Marin. We have become increasingly concerned about the lack of cleanliness and safety at Albert Park due to the growing encampment of individuals experiencing homelessness there. As you are aware, there have been incidences of members of the encampment reaching their hands through the childcare fence; increasing issues of vandalism, public intoxication, public hygiene issues (human waste) on the park premises, and other issues of public safety at this park so central to the San Rafael Community.

At this time, the encampment is significantly affecting the usability of this public space -- (we are hesitant to take our children to Pacific's games, have stopped using the playground all-together, and are not comfortable letting our children play in the field in the evening). Our request is that the Council move to **adopt the no-camping ordinance with the modification that it be extended year-round.** The community center, tennis courts, and child care center operate year-round, and banning camping in the park in the spring/summer only is a half-measure that misses the critical need to restore the public safety of this space for elders, children, and families year-round.

Another area of concern is that there are two other downtown parks (Gerstle Park and Boyd Park) that are heavily used by children and families and that have faced similar encampment issues in the past. If the ordinance is only applied to Albert Park, it will merely shift this issue to another downtown park. **We would encourage the Council to adopt similar ordinance for Gerstle Park and Boyd Park on a year-round basis.**

We are sensitive to the complexity of the homelessness issue our community faces, and are sympathetic to the plight of the unhoused individuals and families of San Rafael. We fully believe that the city (and County) have a responsibility to offer supportive social services as well as invest in permanent & supportive housing solutions for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in our community. However, the ceding of public space meant for community and families to use to encampments is a public health issue and is causing this space to feel increasingly unsafe and unusable. Please adopt the ordinance *with the modification that it be extended year-round and to the two other nearby city parks* so that the broader community can re-engage with this public space. The city should also redouble its efforts to find long-term, meaningful housing solutions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Elizabeth Horevitz & Andy Taylor-Fabe

From: Katie Fleet [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 7:41 AM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: March 6, 2023 Meeting - Agenda Item 6b

Dear City Clerk and City Council Members,

We are San Rafael residents and parents of a five-year-old girl who attends the Parkside Children's Center. We write to support a resolution banning camping in Albert Park, and we support modification of the existing resolution to make the ban year round.

We are sympathetic to the current housing crisis and welcome the city's commitment to finding supportive services and housing for homeless individuals. We also believe the homeless encampments in Albert Park pose a threat to the health and safety of San Rafael residents, especially the young children who attend the Parkside Preschool and Children's Center. A seasonal ban on camping in Albert Park would not cover many months of the school year when Parkside's students and staff need a safe, secure, and welcoming facility.

We look forward to further discussion of this matter at the March 6, 2023 meeting. Thank you for your attention.

Katie Fleet and Kevin Bruner

From: NANCY CHERNEY [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 5, 2023 2:00 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: No homeless at Albert Park

Dear Rafael City Council members,
I strongly urge you to ban any homeless encampment in Albert Park. This encampment creates a public health and safety problem for all San Rafael and Marin residents.
Best,
Nancy Cherney
Concerned Citizen

From: Paul Santagata [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 5, 2023 10:15 PM
To: Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Yes on the no-camping ordinance for Albert Park

Greetings esteemed City Council members,

I write to you as a parent of a child in Parkside Preschool, a parent of a child in Parkside aftercare, and as a San Rafael community member that yearns to keep our parks safe and open to all. I'm strongly in favor of adopting **the no-camping ordinance for Albert Park with the modification that it be extended year-round.**

During the Sept/Oct/Nov 2022 period it was common to see urine spilling across the Parkside School Playground from the encampment residents relieving themselves next to the school. Cigarette and marijuana smoke clouds would also waif over the school yard to the point that the children ceased being allowed outside to play for a period. And unleashed dogs of encampment residents made it nerve-racking having the kids play in front of the school upon pickup, so many parents opted not to. The tipping point for when parents began regularly calling the police was when a man residing in the park reached through the Parkside school fence while kids were in the yard. The SRPD responded to each complaint quickly and compassionately and the community thoroughly appreciates the attention and care they took to improve conditions.

The encampment situation has improved for the area immediately touching the fence of the school, but as of Friday March 3, 2023 I counted over 30 tents/sleep structures in other areas of Albert Park, countless dogs, people laying on mattresses, mounds of garbage and dozens of bikes a short way from the school and adjacent to the ballpark.

These homeless encampments have made huge swaths of the park feel incredibly unsafe and unusable for the community and the ballpark off limits for families. Our children can't walk or bike past the homeless encampment without fear and the area often smells like a latrine. Dog owners in the community are limited to using a small part of the park, and the playground is now often empty due to men sleeping/loitering nearby and making families uncomfortable. I've watched the encampment along Andersen Drive grow week over week, and assume that will escalate as the weather gets nicer.

My heart goes out to the unhoused that are seeking refuge in the park, they deserve to feel safe and supported and hope the City further invests its efforts to find long-term, meaningful housing solutions. **Please adopt the ordinance with the modification that it be extended year-round** and seek to invest in permanent & supportive housing options for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in our community.

Thank you,

Paul Santagata

One quarter of the encampment on March 3rd

