

**From:** Ethan Strull [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 5, 2024 12:01 PM  
**To:** Distrib- City Clerk <city.clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>  
**Subject:** Please Consider Renter Protections in San Rafael

Dear San Rafael City Council:

As a longtime citizen and housing advocate in San Rafael, I am writing to ask that you put rent stabilization and additional eviction protections on your agenda at your earliest convenience.

Like many other Marinites, I grew up with a profound understanding of how housing segregation and instability divides our community and upends the lives of hard-working community members. As such, I have worked both professionally and as a volunteer at numerous local housing organizations in Marin to work on integrating our community and providing stable homes for all.

San Rafael has already taken some of these steps: recently, we have rezoned certain areas of our City for apartment buildings to make our city more affordable in the long term, built supportive housing for unhoused community members, and have instituted eviction protections that ensure landlords cannot arbitrarily evict tenants. These steps are certainly part of the long-term path towards integration and just housing.

In spite of what we have done, though, too many hardworking San Rafael residents continue to get forced out of our community, or pushed into unstable housing situations or homelessness. It is clear that there are gaps in the protections we currently have.

As a Housing Legal Assistant at Legal Aid of Marin, I see first-hand how displacement and housing insecurity occurs for renters in San Rafael. Some renters have received 9-10% rent increases multiple years in a row, making them fall behind on rent and face eviction since their incomes do not grow. Many more continue to pay the higher rent, knowing that other options in Marin are limited, but use 50% of their income on rent or are forced to crowd others into their home to share costs. For this, too, they can be evicted. Others' buildings are purchased by large, out-of-town developers who see the lack of protections as an opportunity to evict existing tenants, remodel, and rent for significantly higher than before. We currently do not have ordinances in place to address these far-to-common situations.

Please listen to the voices and stories of your citizens and nonprofit organizations who profoundly feel and understand this chaos in our community and consider the following two measures at an upcoming City Council Meeting.

1. An annual cap on rental increases that is meaningfully lower than the 9.2% state limit.
2. Adding to our Just Cause Ordinance: a right for tenants to return to their home after a developer completes significant remodeling.

Placing rent stabilization and eviction protections on a City Council agenda would allow our community to maintain a healthy political debate and find a consensus that is right for our city. Thank you for considering these requests from your citizens and continuing to make San Rafael a leader of housing and justice in Marin.

Sincerely,  
Ethan

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