

From: [Mark Matthews](#)
To: [Diana Rich](#); [Sarah Glade Gurney](#); [Una Glass](#); [Neysa Hinton](#); [Patrick Slayter](#)
Cc: [Mark Home](#); [Mary Gourley](#); [Valerie J Marshall](#)
Subject: City Council Meeting Today
Date: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 9:58:27 AM
Attachments: [Morris St Encampment.docx](#)

Good morning,

First of all, thank you for doing what you do as City Council members. Right now, you are dealing with the Morris St. situation, and we all hope that you make the right decision, so that we can clean up the mess that now exists on the first street visitors would enter coming from Santa Rosa and points east.

Before today's Council meeting, please read the attached letter which was crafted to give a different perspective on how to solve the problem, because moving the issue to a different location only kicks the can down the road to a new problem area.

You have tools now, but have refused to use them. We hope that you will reconsider your positions before creating problems in a new area.

Thank you,

Mark Matthews



Mark A. Matthews & Valerie J. Marshall

Sebastopol, CA 95472

707-477-9246

November 30, 2021

City Manager, Larry McLaughlin
Chief of Police, Kevin Kilgore
Public Works Superintendent, Dante Del Prete
Mayor and City Council Members
City of Sebastopol
714 Johnson St.
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Subject: Morris Street Homeless Encampment

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are writing this letter as tax paying real estate owners in Sebastopol. We pay sales and property taxes to enable the City to operate, hopefully, in a positive manner.

Of late, however, we have seen a City Council and City Management that has hamstrung the Police Department so severely that Sebastopol is favoring non-taxpaying members of the community over the law-abiding citizens that make this city run.

I am speaking specifically about how the City's leaders have turned over Morris St. and adjoining streets to the homeless. This has been done without regard to the concerns of adjoining businesses, Barlow tenants, Sebastopol homeowners and renters, the reputation of the City in the Northbay, and local school students.

I have been told that we cannot ask the homeless to leave without finding an alternate space for them to live or park. Baloney!!

The problem has been perpetuated by a weak City Council, City Attorney and City Manager, all of which refuse to allow the Police to enforce the codes and laws already on the books. Presently, the homeless know that Sebastopol is soft on enforcement, so they come here. Following are some examples:

- Many of the homeless vehicles are trashed and not even operable. Morris is a parking lot for inoperable or marginal vehicles. Vehicle code violations. (We could not leave junked cars on our street and get away with it.)
- There is trash under, over and around every vehicle. Code violation!
- Most of the vehicles are never moved, even after 72 hours. The owners of the vehicles could be cited multiple times and out of sheer frustration and expense, they would move away. Parking violations

- From the windows of Coaches Corner, I have observed many potential drug deals going down. Law violations

Thanks to the County, we have already been very generous in turning the Sebastopol Hotel over to the homeless. Consider the revenue the City has given up with that move. That is enough.

If the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and City Attorney would give the Chief of Police the power to enforce existing municipal codes and State laws, this problem would be rapidly cleaned up. Moving the caravan of homeless to another site in Sebastopol is not the answer. We will simply be transferring the current problem to a new location.

From Brett Stephens editorial in the Press Democrat on November 29, 2021, these two paragraphs highlight our City's nightmare:

If you permit petty vices and crimes to flourish, greater ones will usually follow. If you refuse to police quality-of-life infractions like public drug use or aggressive panhandling, the quality of life will decline. If you increase the incentives for bad behavior, and reduce the ones for good, you will inevitably achieve catastrophic results.

This is not social science. It's common sense. It's the basis on which the United States was able to make its streets far safer from around 1995 to 2015, when crime rates kept going down — above all to the benefit of the very minority communities that progressives claim to champion.

The first paragraph above speaks to exactly what is happening in the City of Sebastopol. A weak City Council and City management have allowed Petty Crimes to flourish.

We encourage you to stop it now, by allowing and encouraging the Police to do their job. This will end the Morris St. problems. The homeless will move, thereby eliminating the need to develop an alternative site with the same problems and more cost.

Thank you,

Mark Matthews and Valerie Marshall

Postscript from Valerie:

Because of the homeless population ensconced on our streets and the number of drug abusers it attracts into our City, Sebastopol feels less safe. The quality of life in Sebastopol has gone down. I for one, would not walk down Morris St. on my way to the Barlow or the Laguna.