

January 17, 2022
BKF No C20129019



Yolanda Mathew, Operations Director
The Barlow
6780 Depot Street #110
Sebastopol, Ca, 95472
Transmitted Via Email

**Subject: Recreation Vehicle Parking Ordinance
Sebastopol, California**

Yolanda,

BKF Engineers has prepared this letter at your request to offer insight regarding the Sebastopol City Council's Recreation Vehicle Parking Ordinance as it relates to parking in the area immediately surrounding the Barlow.

We commend the Council for taking action to help the vulnerable population. Our Sonoma County communities have experienced four major firestorms in recent years. These events displaced people from their homes and many are still without permanent housing. Our homeless population continues to grow each year. The lack of permanent housing has pushed these demographics to seek shelter in recreational vehicles. Therefore, we understand the need to designate safe locations to park them.

The proposed ordinance makes it lawful to park recreational vehicles on public streets. However, there are safety concerns with implementing this policy in certain areas of the City. The Barlow and the public streets immediately surrounding are located within a floodplain. When developing housing or temporary housing, building codes require that habitable space be situated above the floodplain. The underlying intent is to create a relatively safe location for a resident to ride out the storm if they were unable to evacuate in time. It's important to note large flooding events can and do occur in this area and it would be inappropriate to shelter people here.

A recreational vehicle parked in the floodplain has the potential to create a dangerous condition. Flood water can rise rapidly, rendering a vehicle inoperable. More importantly, a member of our vulnerable population may face a situation where they cannot flee the rising flood water and are entrapped. Flood water along Morris Street can be as deep 10 feet. This scenario imposes an additional demand on the City's limited resources during an emergency as people need to be rescued and vehicles towed to safety. This situation



Recreation Vehicle submerged on Morris Street. February 2019

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should be and can be easily avoided by excluding parking recreational vehicles within the floodplain. Prohibiting parking within a floodplain will help keep the vulnerable population safe and reduce the demand of City resources during the time in emergency.

Sincerely,

BKF Engineers

WJB

Bill Boriolo, PE
Project Manager

