



CAMPING ORDINANCE

CITY COUNCIL
June 11, 2025



BACKGROUND

- Historically, California cities have been free to regulate camping within their borders pursuant to local police powers.
- However, in 2019, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeal severely limited the ability of cities to enforce anti-camping ordinances against homeless individuals absent available shelter beds within those cities.



U.S. SUPREME COURT

- Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its ruling in *City of Grants Pass, Oregon v. Johnson*, which overturned the 9th Circuit and restored the authority of local agencies to regulate camping activity.



PURPOSE

- Protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- Prohibit unpermitted camping activity on City owned property.
- Regulate storage of personal property on City owned property.



DEFINITIONS

- "Camp" means to pitch or occupy camp facilities, live in camp facilities or outdoors, including in a vehicle, or to use camp paraphernalia.
- "Camp Facilities" include tents, huts, or similar temporary shelters or structures.
- "Camp Paraphernalia" includes tarps, cots, beds, blankets, sleeping bags, hammocks, cooking equipment and similar items.



OPERATIONAL REGULATIONS

The following activities, if conducted on City property, will be made unlawful under this ordinance:

- Maintaining any type of temporary shelter
- Camping (including living in a vehicle)
- Storing personal property



ENFORCEMENT

- Violations of the ordinance constitute misdemeanor criminal offenses
- Law enforcement will have discretion to continue outreach, give warnings, issue citations, and/or arrest offenders
- Process to evict repeat offenders to prevent them from entering the same public area for any purpose



RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Receive staff presentation and report; and
- 2) Introduce for first reading, by title only, and waive further reading of an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CALIFORNIA, ADDING CHAPTER 6.13 (CAMPING IN PUBLIC AREAS) TO TITLE 6 (PUBLIC SAFETY AND WELFARE) OF THE RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA MUNICIPAL CODE RELATED TO CAMPING ON PUBLIC PROPERTY, AND AMENDING SECTION 12.02.030 AND CHAPTER 12.06 (SLEEPING IN VEHICLES) OF TITLE 12 (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) OF THE RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA MUNICIPAL CODE RELATED TO SLEEPING IN VEHICLES".

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QUESTIONS

