

AGENDA
CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA
CITY COUNCIL

Tuesday, May 10, 2005

5:30 p.m. – Special Meeting

Council Chambers
3121 Gold Canal Drive, Rancho Cordova, California



Ken Cooley, Mayor
Robert J. McGarvey, Vice Mayor
Linda Budge, Council Member
David M. Sander, Council Member
Dan Skoglund, Council Member

MAKING YOUR POINT – MAKING IT COUNT

Government decision-making takes time—time for public input, time for analysis, and time for weighing both sides of the issue before making an informed decision.

People sometimes complain that the process takes too long, delay progress, costs extra money and is frustrating for discussion participants. Others say that the process doesn't give people enough time to comment and that decisions are made too quickly without enough consideration for all sides of the issue.

The foundation for democracy in America is our constitutional right to tell our elected leaders what we think about issues that affect us. This right is enjoyed by all citizens, regardless of education, background, or experience. Rancho Cordova leaders welcome you to public meetings and encourage you to participate in discussions that affect you.

The way you present your message at the podium can help or hurt your ability to persuade your audience. It can either facilitate or obstruct the public participation process. Whether you are an experienced public speaker or speaking at the podium for the first time, it may be helpful to remember these public meeting tips:

- Identify your main points. Writing them down will help you organize your thoughts and remember them when you're at the podium.
- Check your facts. Accuracy improves your credibility and helps you make a positive impression.
- Handouts summarizing your position may be distributed to policy makers and staff before or after your presentation. Busy leaders appreciate clear, concise information (one or two pages) that helps them identify your key points and remember your presentation.
- Don't be nervous. If you are, don't apologize for it. Public Officials see many citizens who are nervous when speaking in front of an audience. It may help to take a deep breath and exhale slowly just before you approach the podium.
- As you begin to speak, state your name and address clearly for the record. If you represent a group or organization, please state that information as well.



- Make your position known at the beginning, then present supporting information. You will sound organized, which helps people to understand your position.
- Keep your presentation short and simple. Attention spans are brief and people will remember a short presentation better than they will one that rambles and includes too much information.

- Don't repeat yourself. It uses valuable time and people tune out when they hear the same thing over and over. If a previous speaker has already made the point you planned to make, simply refer to that speaker and emphasize your support for that position.

- Be cautious about using humor which is very subjective. While some may laugh, others may be offended.

- Persuade, don't badger your audience. Compelling presentations can be very persuasive to both policy makers and public meeting audiences; however, insulting or degrading language can make you

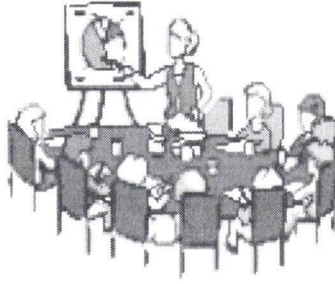
appear belligerent, reducing your credibility as well as the power of your message.

- Close your comments with an action statement such as, "Adopt this resolution" or "I urge you to vote 'no' on this ordinance."

Rancho Cordova City leaders appreciate your interest in issues that affect the community. We hope these tips will help you prepare and present your remarks so they will be clear, concise, accurate and credible. If you follow these guidelines, your audience is likely to listen, pay attention, and maybe even agree with you!

Rancho Cordova City government is not the City Council, City staff or Rancho Cordova citizens – it's all of us working together to understand each others' opinions so we can make the best decisions for our community.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!



**CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION AGENDA**

**Special Meeting
City Council Chambers
3121 Gold Canal Drive, Rancho Cordova**

**Tuesday, May 10, 2005
5:30 P.M.**

Call to Order

Roll Call: Council Members Budge, McGarvey, Sander, Skoglund, and Mayor Cooley

Study Session

At a study session, citizens are invited and encouraged to participate in discussion during the time the matter is discussed.

1. **Subject:** Discussion with Police, Code Enforcement, Economic Development, Attorney and Other City Staff about Steps Being Taken and Proposed to Address Vagrancy, Homeless, and Code Enforcement Concerns

Recommendation: No action is recommended at this time. Consider staff's presentation and provide general direction concerning the level of enforcement desired for Police and Code Enforcement Departments and ordinances needed to be drafted by the City Attorney in order to address vagrancy, homelessness and associated private property management concerns.

Oral Communications

2. Public Comment

Citizens wishing to address the Council for any matter not on the agenda may do so at this time. **Please keep your comments to three minutes or less and provide a Speaker Card to the City Clerk.** Please state your name and community of residence. Under the provisions of the California Government Code, the City Council is prohibited from discussing or taking immediate action on any unagendized item unless it can be demonstrated to be of an emergency nature or the need to take immediate action arose after the posting of the agenda. At a Special Meeting, if you wish to be heard on a listed agenda item, please do so when that item is being discussed.

Adjournment

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 10, 2005

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Jim Carney, Senior Management Advisor

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH POLICE, CODE ENFORCEMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ATTORNEY AND OTHER CITY STAFF ABOUT STEPS BEING TAKEN AND PROPOSED TO ADDRESS VAGRANCY, HOMELESS, AND CODE ENFORCEMENT CONCERNS



RECOMMENDATION

No action is recommended at this time. Consider staff's presentation and provide general direction concerning the level of enforcement desired for Police and Code Enforcement Departments and ordinances needed to be drafted by the City Attorney in order to address vagrancy, homelessness and associated private property management concerns.

BACKGROUND

In response to the City Council's expressed interest, staff has gathered information regarding vagrancy, homelessness and code enforcement concerns within the City. Incorporation of Rancho Cordova has given the City an opportunity to take a fresh locally determined approach to old lingering social problems, such as vagrancy, homelessness, and associated poor management of some private properties within the city.

A Right to Clean, Safe, Non-threatening Neighborhoods - Clearly, people who live, work and/or operate businesses in Rancho Cordova neighborhoods, or anywhere, have a right to peaceful, clean, and unthreatening environments in which to go about their daily activities. Unfortunately, the behavior exhibited by some people who are homeless and/or vagrants, causes some areas within the City, and particularly along some parts of the Folsom Boulevard and the American River Parkway corridors to be impacted by blight, health hazards, aggressive panhandling, garbage and litter, human waste, loitering and trespassing. Associated with that behavior are physical conditions in the form of make-shift shelters on public and private properties that create unsafe, unhealthy living conditions.

Historic Perspective of Homelessness and Vagrancy Concerns - These social problems are not unique to Rancho Cordova for cities of comparable size and demographics in the Sacramento region, in California, nor in the United States. In fact, cities throughout the world, and for many years, even decades and centuries, have had to address the social, economic and law enforcement impacts of having populations caught in anti-social behavior resulting from vagrancy, homelessness, public drunkenness, drug addiction and mental illness.

Cities and counties of comparable, and somewhat larger, size in the region have dedicated significant funds, economic development and housing staff, social services and law enforcement to addressing these societal problems. The justice, health and mental health systems expend significant funds and resources on this issue. As with many complex challenges, other institutions in the community play a role in attempting to alleviate the associated problems as well, including religious groups, non-profit organization, charities, foundations, service clubs and the business community. With the all of these dedicated resources, communities seem not to have eliminated vagrancy, homelessness and poor property management.

New City – New Effort - While the problems of vagrancy, homelessness and irresponsible property ownership have persisted, in the short time since incorporation, Rancho Cordova has taken a number of steps to reduce the negative impacts of the behaviors resulting from these social problems. With a small city staff and limited resources, the Code Enforcement and Police staffs have been the primary departments that have responded to these concerns. The workshop will be an opportunity for Code Enforcement and Police Department staffs to review how their programs have addressed these issues. More importantly, they will present an overview of the problems after nearly two years of dealing with the concerns and an outline of an approach to effectively improve the City's role in reducing the negative impacts of vagrancy, homelessness and property mismanagement.

Community Improvement Tool Box - Yvonne Dehaan, the City's Code Enforcement Manager, will make a presentation (Attachment A) regarding her efforts and plans with addressing the health and safety impacts on private properties and the City. Specifically, her presentation will focus on a "community tool box approach", including:

- A summary of steps IN-SHAPE has taken since incorporation
- A list of all the types of enforcement activities we currently take part in. This will include those that we are mandated to perform as well as those we have taken on to improve the City's image. We will show how our department interacts with every other department within the city and some outside agencies.

- An outline of the specific tools we utilize in addressing the homeless/vagrancy issue
- An update on follow-up from the property maintenance presentation that will detail the code changes we expect to make shortly, and others that will be held pending the planned revision of the entire nuisance code later this year.
- A description of the activities planned for this next year and beyond, and
- Seek Council input and feedback

Police Presentation on Homelessness and Vagrancy - Attachment B provides an outline of the presentation to be provided by Lieutenant Rich Kropp, Watch Commander, Rancho Cordova Police Department.

Lt. Kropp will provide an overview, including:

- The Symptoms of Homelessness and Vagrancy
- The Reason Homeless and Transient People are Drawn to the City
- Homelessness as a Social Issue
- Who are the Homeless?
- Summary of a Homeless Survey by the Sacramento County and Cities Board on Homelessness
- Service Constraints
- What Can Law Enforcement, Code Enforcement and City Do?
- Network with Existing Program
- Develop Community Forum and Include Stakeholders
- Develop New and Practical Statutes to Assist Law and Code Enforcement
- Support Law Enforcement
- Are We Behind the Curve?
- We Have a Clean Slate

While the concerns about vagrancy and homelessness persist is more than one area of the City, the focus of the Police Department's initial program will be the Folsom Boulevard corridor.

Trial Program - Starting May 2, 2005, the Police POP officers have begun an eight week trial program to better understand the issues, numbers and components of the problems of vagrancy and homelessness. Upon analysis and identification of successes and areas for improvement, the program can then be applied in other sections of the City.

Clearly, the American River Parkway corridor is a major concern for, especially for homeless encampments, and the resulting impacts on adjoining Riverside neighborhoods, as well as the recreational, tourist and economic impact to the City's residents, workforce and image. Because of the multi-jurisdictional interests along the entire American River Parkway, any approach to addressing the homeless camps must involve a broad coalition of stakeholders.

Code Enforcement, Police staff, including POP officers and I have met to coordinate our efforts. We agree with the following basic beliefs:

- People who are caught in homelessness, vagrancy, public drunkenness, and drug addictions are victims of those maladies and associated diseases and should be treated humanely
- Social services, as well as mental health and medical health services should be made available to such people
- People with drug and/or alcohol addictions need residential treatment program and centers
- Anti-social, threatening, unhealthy behavior that impacts other people, neighborhoods can be controlled through ordinances
- Constitutional rights must be protected, as inappropriate behavior is controlled
- People who are homeless and/or vagrants can be held responsible for the negative, unhealthy or threatening impact their behavior has on other people and property
- People who are temporarily homeless due to economic catastrophes need housing – emergency, transition and permanent housing
- The Rancho Cordova community has done its share and will continue to have places to address homelessness such as the Mather Transitional Shelter – a successful regional model
- The provision of a wide range of affordable housing choices are needed throughout the region, as well as in Rancho Cordova
- The program of free passes provided by organizations to homeless people to ride Regional Transit must be re-examined due to the negative impact on cities along the light rail line, in particular Ranch Cordova
- Homelessness and vagrancy are social issues that must be addressed by the widest coalition of organization in the community – federal, state, county and city governments, Regional Transit religious, charitable and non-profit organizations, mental and medical health providers, housing developers – for-profit and non-profit, neighborhood associations, etc. – all must work individually and in concert to provide their expertise and resources to significant reduce the negative impacts of vagrancy, homelessness and poor property management
- Homelessness and vagrancy have been with societies for centuries and not likely to disappear soon. Therefore, our efforts must reduce

Code Enforcement, Police and City staff seek Council feedback as to the community values that ought to guide our efforts in addressing vagrancy, homelessness and code enforcement concerns.

Next steps will involve

- Expanding our circle to include representatives of other organizations within the City, with neighboring communities, the County and existing social service, non-profit, church and related groups, in order to develop

more comprehensive approaches to efficiently and effectively share resources.

- Work with the City Attorney's Office to research model programs and develop ordinances to address specific measures that can be taken to control negative behavior of vagrants and homeless people tailored to Rancho Cordova's needs and community values.
- The City Manager's Office exploring staffing options in the coming year to address these issues
- Report to the City Council monthly as to the steps taken, successes and areas needing improvement, of City efforts to address subject vagrancy, homeless and property management concerns
- Return to the Council with a comprehensive plan later this year to takes into account Council direction for the desired level of enforcement, and expressed community values

Please contact me (916-942-0241) should you have a need for any additional information or questions.

Attachment A: IN-SHAPE Presentation Outline

Attachment B: Police Department Presentation on Issues of Homelessness and Vagrancy

COMMUNITY TOOL BOX IN-SHAPE PRESENTATION

This presentation is designed to highlight the effects our program has had and will have on the existing portions of Rancho Cordova, and to outline our “Tools” for continuing to improve the quality of life in this city, and to actively assist in larger concerns such as the ones discussed tonight.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

By providing a energetic and focused response to the needs of the community, this program has earned a reputation for responsiveness and problem solving.

- Over 4,100 Service Requests – less than 100 remain unresolved
- Prompt and consistent response
- Positive interaction with both callers and violators
- Very few repeat offenders
- Fulfilled needs and increased expectations

WHAT WE ARE DOING

- Constant attention to the needs of the community
- Modifying our program as needed to provide maximum effectiveness
- Expanding our value by participating in training, workshops, local and regional boards and partnerships.
- Identifying and implementing new tools to enhance enforcement
- Using education and communication to empower residents

IN PROGRESS PROJECTS

- Expanded and dedicated efforts to reach the rental community – landlords and tenants – to address substandard housing
- Revising current codes as applicable based on feed-back from the earlier Property Maintenance discussion
- Coordinating with City Attorney to revise Nuisance Code
- Preparing study on the question of the City providing CC&R enforcement
- Focusing attention on all vacant/derelict buildings
- Following up on the cart ordinance to improve results and look for additional alternatives

WHO WE WORK WITH

Our program interacts with all city departments and many outside agencies. Examples will be provided to illustrate how our program can be considered a tool by each of the following:

City Manager
City Clerk
City Attorney
Finance
Building
Public Works
Planning
Police
Fire
Parks
Utilities
Multiple County Agencies
Neighborhood associations
Regional Boards, Task Forces and Partnerships

WHERE WE WILL GO NEXT

- Design and implement a system for identifying and rewarding both residential and commercial properties that improve and maintain their properties
- Encourage new neighborhood associations and assist them in becoming an active part in their own destiny
- Take education to the area youth. We are going forward with plans for activity books and a classroom presentation to increase awareness of the benefits of code compliance.
- Continue to team with Rancho Cordova PD to address concerns requiring our mutual skills
- As always - looking for new ways to fix old problems, improving service and response, and taking on new challenges

INPUT AND FEEDBACK

This is an opportunity for the Council to ask questions and voice specific concerns where our program may be able to provide assistance.



City of Rancho Cordova City Council

Presentation on Homelessness and
Vagrancy Issues

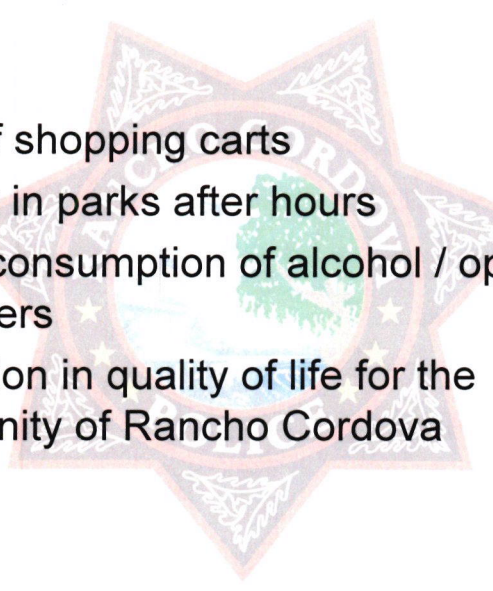
Lt. Rich Kropp

May 10th 2005

Symptoms of Homelessness and Vagrancy

- Blight
- Health hazards
- Panhandling
- Garbage / Litter
- Human waste
- Loitering
- Trespassing

- Habitation of vehicles
- Homeless camps
- Public intoxication
- Temporary concessions (Illegal vendors)
- Illegal dumping
- Illegal campfires
- Jaywalking

- 
- Theft of shopping carts
 - Staying in parks after hours
 - Public consumption of alcohol / open containers
 - Reduction in quality of life for the community of Rancho Cordova



Homeless and Transient People are Drawn to the Rancho Cordova area:

- The American River Parkway
- V.A. Hospital
- Available and cheap transportation into our community, such as Light Rail
- The availability of cheap alcohol and the geographic density of alcohol retail outlets

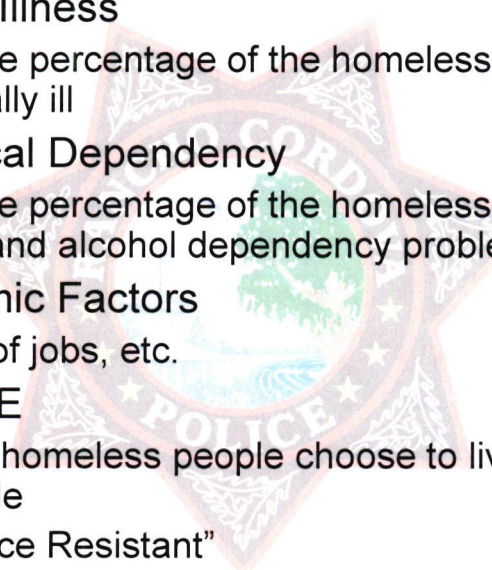
- Temporary employment services such as Labor Ready
- Availability of various social services, particularly those that distribute funding, coupons, or other benefits
- Recycling centers
- Churches and fast food restaurants that provide free food

Homelessness is a Social Issue

- It is not illegal to be homeless
- Law enforcement is not equipped to deal with the social issues that are the root of homelessness
- People become homeless for a variety of reasons

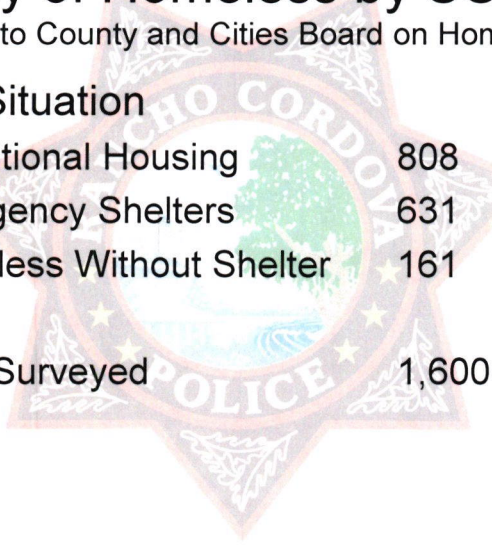
Who Are They?

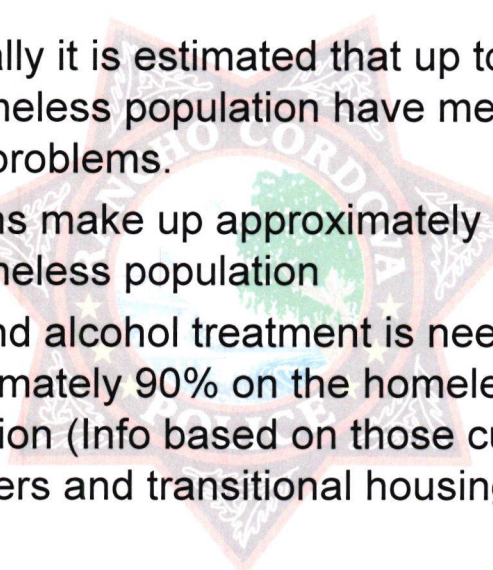
- Due to mental health issues, service resistance, and the transient nature of homeless people it is difficult to obtain reliable statistical data
- Here is what we do know...

- 
- **Mental Illness**
 - A large percentage of the homeless are mentally ill
 - **Chemical Dependency**
 - A large percentage of the homeless have drug and alcohol dependency problems
 - **Economic Factors**
 - Loss of jobs, etc.
 - **CHOICE**
 - Many homeless people choose to live this lifestyle
 - “Service Resistant”

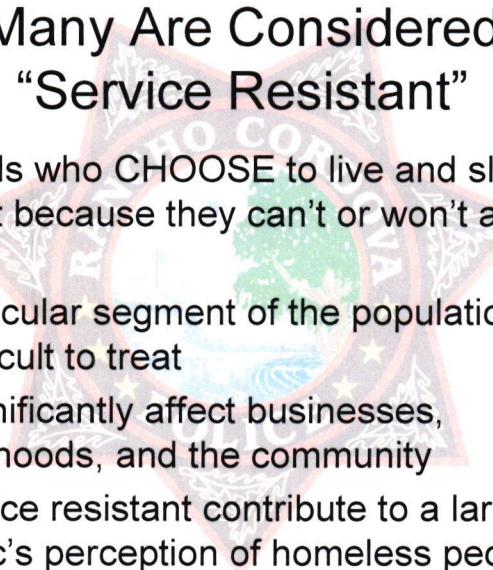
Survey of Homeless by SCCBoH

(Sacramento County and Cities Board on Homelessness)

- 
- **Living Situation**
 - Transitional Housing 808
 - Emergency Shelters 631
 - Homeless Without Shelter 161
 - Total Surveyed 1,600

- 
- Nationally it is estimated that up to 45% of the homeless population have mental health problems.
 - Veterans make up approximately 30% of the homeless population
 - Drug and alcohol treatment is needed by approximately 90% on the homeless population (Info based on those currently in shelters and transitional housing)

Many Are Considered “Service Resistant”

- 
- Individuals who CHOOSE to live and sleep on the street because they can't or won't access services
 - This particular segment of the population is the most difficult to treat
 - They significantly affect businesses, neighborhoods, and the community
 - The service resistant contribute to a large part of the public's perception of homeless people

Service Resistant

- The “Service Resistant” make up the majority of the homeless encountered by law enforcement and the community at large
 - Panhandling
 - Sleeping in doorways
 - Elaborate encampments
 - Shopping carts
 - Public intoxication
 - Trash and human waste

Sacramento Bee Headline

**“W. Sac tells
riverbank campers:
Move - or we'll move
you out”**

**“Advocates for the
homeless say they
need shelter, not an
enforcement sweep”**

- By Ed Fletcher -- Bee Staff
Writer
*Published 2:15 am PDT
Wednesday, April 13, 2005*



Sacramento Bee Headline

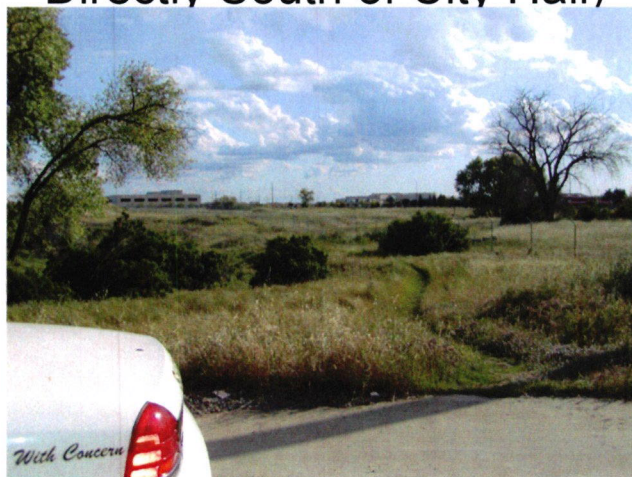
**“City, county look
for ways to stop
trashing of
parkway”**

**“Attempts to stop
camping by the
homeless haven't
worked”**

- By Cameron Jahn -- Bee
Staff Writer
*Published 2:15 am PST
Thursday, March 31, 2005*



White Rock/Gold Canal (View of Hidden Homeless Camp Directly South of City Hall)



White Rock/Gold Canal
(Same Camp Twenty-Five Yards Away)



White Rock/Gold Canal
(This Camp Approximately 100 Yards from City
Hall Was Completely Hidden From View)



White Rock/Gold Canal
(Junk and Rubbish Found Near Camp)
Camp Has Now Been Removed



10131 Folsom Blvd
(Homeless Camp on West Side of Building Cannot
Be Seen From the Street)



10131 Folsom Blvd
(West Side of Building Before)



10131 Folsom Blvd
(West Side of Building After)



10131 Folsom Blvd
(Small Camp Along Wall of Adjacent
Building)



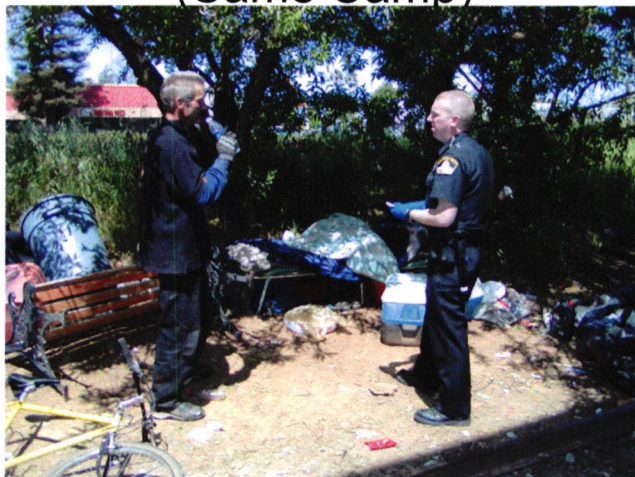
10131 Folsom Blvd
(After Clean-Up by Owner)



South of Light Rail Tracks
Across From 9555 Folsom Blvd
(Cannot Be Seen From Street)



South of Light Rail Tracks
Across From 9555 Folsom Blvd
(Same Camp)



South of Light Rail Tracks
Across From 9555 Folsom Blvd
(Twenty Five Yards Away)



South of Light Rail Tracks
Across From 9555 Folsom Blvd
(Close-Up)



Bike Trail
South off Coloma/East of Sunrise
(Hidden Camp From 25 Yards)



Bike Trail
South off Coloma/East of Sunrise
(The Campers)



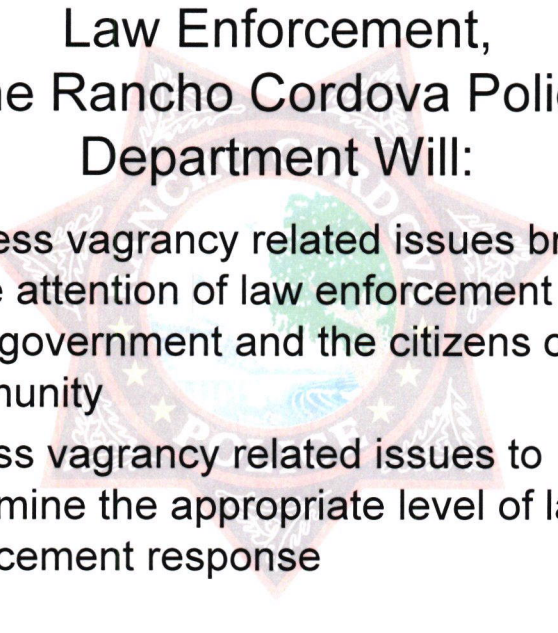
Bike Trail
South off Coloma/East of Sunrise
(The Remains of Other Camps at Same Site)



What Can We Do?

- Law Enforcement
- Code Enforcement
- City Government



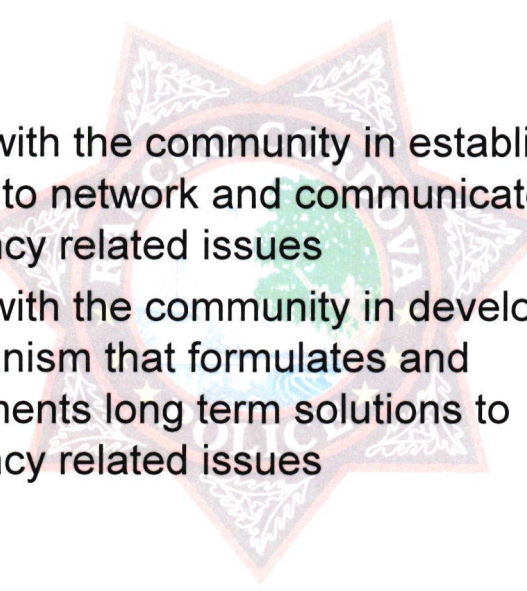


Law Enforcement, The Rancho Cordova Police Department Will:

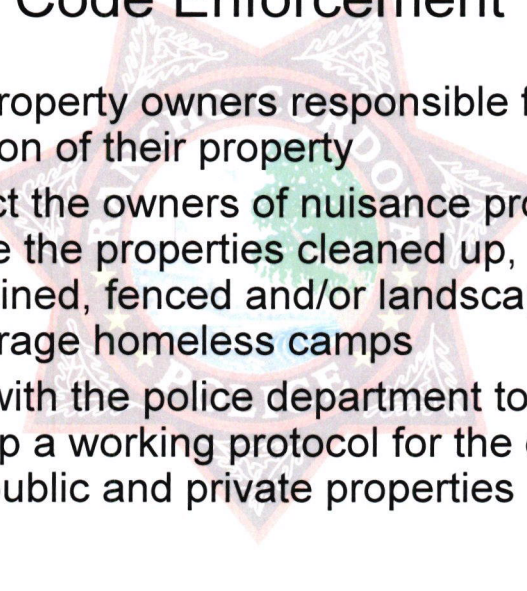
- Address vagrancy related issues brought to the attention of law enforcement by local government and the citizens of our community
- Assess vagrancy related issues to determine the appropriate level of law enforcement response

When a Law Enforcement Response is Appropriate, We Will:

- Quickly and assertively enforce vagrancy related statutes
- Conduct organized operations to more effectively combat complex vagrancy related issues
- Implement long term projects based on Community Oriented Policing models
- Effectively communicate and train our personnel on vagrancy related issues and subject matter
- Work closely with the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office to improve our effectiveness in dealing with vagrancy related statutes

- 
- Work with the community in establishing a venue to network and communicate their vagrancy related issues
 - Work with the community in developing a mechanism that formulates and implements long term solutions to vagrancy related issues

Code Enforcement

- 
- Hold property owners responsible for the condition of their property
 - Contact the owners of nuisance properties to have the properties cleaned up, maintained, fenced and/or landscaped to discourage homeless camps
 - Work with the police department to develop a working protocol for the clean-up of public and private properties

City Government

- An effective long term strategy will require the support and guidance of City Government
 - Recognize homelessness as a social issue
 - Develop a philosophy for the city of Rancho Cordova that will guide its police department, code enforcement department, and other city employees

Network With Existing Programs

- The Sacramento County and Cities Board on Homelessness was established to ensure a coordinated and systematic approach to the homeless problem.
- Members Include
 - Elected Officials
 - Business Representatives
 - Neighborhood Representatives
 - Service Providers
 - Sacramento County
 - City of Sacramento
 - City of Citrus Heights
 - City of Folsom
 - Law Enforcement Representatives
 - Formerly Homeless Individuals

Develop Community Forum Include All Stakeholders

- Local Government
- Community Prosecutor
- Law Enforcement
- Code Enforcement
- A.B.C.
- Fire Department
- Business Owners
- Business Associations
- Housing Associations
- Churches
- City Attorney
- Local Charities
- Property Owners
- Residents
- Parks and Recreation
- Social Services
- Light Rail / Regional Transit
- V.A. Hospital
- CalTrans
- Local Hotels and Motels

Develop New and Practical Statutes to Assist Law Enforcement

- Panhandling
- Loitering
- Drinking in public
- Camping
- Shopping carts
- Advertising (Holding signs)

Support Law Enforcement

- Support the Vagrancy Task Force (VTF)
 - Eight week program which began May 1st, to combat blight, illegal camping, and respond to complaints from the public and local government
- Consider Funding for long term law enforcement solutions (Example: Full-time paddy wagon)

Are We Behind the Curve?

- The Sacramento County and Cities Board on Homelessness is in the midst of a five year plan to reduce and mitigate homelessness
- The City of Sacramento just announced a new ten year plan to deal with homelessness
- Sacramento County spends \$26 million dollars each year on homeless services

We Have a Clean Slate

- Other Cities and Counties have been struggling with this issue for years
- We have the opportunity to start from scratch with our own program, considering new and innovative ideas.
- Combine our efforts with other local governments that have already completed much of the groundwork (and learn from their mistakes)

The Rancho Cordova Police Department looks forward to working with the Rancho Cordova City Council, Department Heads, and local community to develop a philosophy that will guide our city and its employees in this complex issue.

