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1/8/26

City Council  
City of Goleta  
30 Cremona Dr # B, Goleta, CA 93117

Subject: Concerns Regarding the Workability of the Current Proposed Vehicle Dwelling Ordinance

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

I am writing to express concerns regarding the current proposed ordinance regulating vehicle dwelling and camping within the City of Goleta that was presented to Council at its November 4, 2025, meeting. While I appreciate the City's efforts to address the complex issue of vehicular camping in a compassionate and lawful manner, it appears that the ordinance, as currently structured, may lead to unmet community members expectations and enforcement challenges.

The ordinance relies on meeting two of four specific criteria to deem a vehicle as unlawfully dwelling or camping. However, in practice, this enforcement framework will be difficult for the Sheriff's Department to consistently apply. For instance:

- Many individuals who sleep in their vehicles tend to move their vehicles within 72 hours of a report, which complicates enforcement tied to the vehicle remaining stationary.
- Most people living in their vehicles in the Phelps Rd. and Pacific Oaks Rd. do not have cooking appliances or bathroom facilities, which are among the criteria stipulated for enforcement (This is related to the next bullet).
- A significant number of those sleeping in vehicles in the Phelps Rd. and Pacific Oaks Rd are not chronically homeless but are made up of college age students, Uber/Lyft drivers sleeping Thursday through Sunday in their vehicles, and individuals on hybrid work schedules who use their vehicles as temporary safe resting places. This evidenced by the fact that the vehicular homeless population in the area fluctuates on weekends and school holidays
- Many vehicle dwellers in the Pacific Oaks and Phelps areas also utilize nearby Planet Fitness facilities for showers and bathroom needs, further demonstrating they do not meet the full scope of the ordinance's dwelling indicators.

Given these realities, the ordinance's reliance on multiple criteria may result in enforcement actions that do not align with the actual living circumstances of many of vehicular homeless in the in the Phelps Rd. and Pacific Oaks Rd area, leading to confusion for residents in the area and potentially consistency in enforcement. It may also create unnecessary burdens on law enforcement resources and community relations.

Furthermore, the City of Goleta should be working proactively to address student homelessness in the area by collaborating with the University of California Santa Barbara as well as local businesses to provide viable alternatives and support for those in need.

I urge the City Council to reconsider the criteria and enforcement approach to better reflect the nuances of vehicle dwelling in our community, ensuring that the ordinance is practical, equitable, and effectively supports both public safety and the diverse concerns of residents as well as those sleeping in their vehicles. I also urge that the minority of the City Council tour the area to see for themselves the impact that vehicular homelessness has on this part of the community. I also urge that the City Council direct the City Manager and the City's Homeless Services Coordinator to augment their current knowledge and understanding of what is happening in the area by meeting with local business owners and residents who have been impacted by this issue.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Pedro Paz