

American River Parkway Preservation Society
Annual Organizational Report #18
October 1, 2021- September 30, 2022

Mission

**Preserve, Protect, and Strengthen the American River Parkway,
Our Community's Natural Heart.**

Vision

**We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a vibrant,
accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and refreshing the spirit of all
who enter it.**

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**American River Parkway Preservation Society
Organizational Leadership**

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Rob Kerth, President
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Phil Serna, Supervisor, 1st District
Sacramento County Board of Supervisors

Marcos Breton, Columnist
Sacramento Bee Newspaper

Introduction

Much has changed in terms of the problem—increased and devastating illegal camping in the Parkway by the homeless—but nothing has changed in terms of solutions; still the same unenforced solutions from public leadership with no concrete actions to restore the Parkway to a semblance of its status some years ago as the Jewel of Sacramento.

Indeed, as noted by the American River Parkway Foundation—the organization with the most boots on the ground due to its regular cleanups and office location actually in the Parkway—the amount of homeless illegally camping in the Parkway has grown into the thousands, as they reported earlier this year:

“Illegal camping has been a growing issue for the American River Parkway. Now, with 2,000-3,000 illegal campers, the impact is going to be felt for years to come.

“There is an environmental crisis on the Parkway with habitat destruction from fires, soil compaction, interruption of wildlife behaviors and decline in water quality. There is also a humanitarian crisis with unhoused living among trash and waste, leading to exposure to more disease.”

Retrieved September 30, 2022 from [Addressing Illegal Camping on the Parkway | American River Parkway Foundation \(arpf.org\)](#)

This is obviously extremely harmful to the Parkway.

However, we believe most people in public leadership have good intentions and will ultimately come to pursue the correct course to ensure our Parkway is protected and enhanced.

Meanwhile we will continue to advocate for our policy issues, which are posted on our website at [ARPPS - Strategy](#)

Public Communication & Education

Weblog

ARPPS posts regularly and maintains a public daily (on weekdays only) weblog at <http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/> .

During our last program year, from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022, we posted 93—we only post on weekdays—individual messages concerning articles, reports, news items, and event information connected to our mission.

E-Letters/Newsletters

ARPPS ensures that all public leadership with some form of public participation in Parkway related issues receives our monthly e-letters and quarterly newsletters, as well as press releases, research reports, policy briefings and position papers.

Finances & Membership

We currently, as of August 31, 2022, have \$1,096.93 in our account.

Our membership had stabilized at around 750 (give or take 20) for the past few years, currently 753.

Strategic Plan (2020-2025)

The American River Parkway Preservation Society Strategy & Implementation

Preserve, Protect & Strengthen the American River Parkway *For as Long as The River Runs Through It* 2020 – 2025

Introduction

The leadership in our community has a responsibility to create and implement a vision that preserves, protects and strengthens the treasured resource of the American River Parkway in perpetuity.

We have invested nineteen years—since our organization was founded in 2003—pursuing a strategy of organizational capacity building and conducting research in the practical approaches, emanating from our guiding principles, we’ve determined can address the critical issues impacting the Parkway, and communicating with our members and the public those results.

Six Critical Issues & Corresponding Guiding Principles

1) Continuing depletion of public funding to provide vital ongoing maintenance, facility repair, law enforcement presence, invasive plant management, and fully restore a sense of safety for those using our priceless public resource.

Our Guiding Principle: Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it’s a necessity.

2) Continuing pressure on the river, whether through flooding, illegal sewage discharge, or taking water for new development, hurts the salmon and other aquatic life.

Our Guiding Principle: What’s good for the salmon is good for the river.

3) Continuing habitat devastation, fires, and pollution from widespread illegal camping by the homeless, primarily in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway.

Our Guiding Principle: Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway: Social and environmental justice calls upon us to help the poor and distressed person but not at the expense of the adjacent community to visit the Parkway safely.

4) Continuing development pressure to build large homes along the Parkway edges, intruding on the view space, and encroaching into the commons.

Our Guiding Principle: If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn't be built along the Parkway.

5) Continuing exclusion of responsible usage by new Parkway user groups is contrary to the spirit upon which public ownership of a natural resource is predicated.

Our Guiding Principle: Regarding new parkway usages: Inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.

6) Continuing encasement of open space, restricting suburban community development upon which a sustainable tax base funding necessary public works is built, is contrary to sound future planning.

Our Guiding Principle: The suburban lifestyle—as surrounds the American River Parkway—which is imbued within the aspirational center of the California Dream and whose vision is woven into the heart of the American Dream, is a deeply loved way of life whose sustainability we all desire.

Our fourth strategic plan—designed to guide our work from 2020 to 2025—includes retention of a stable membership base of about 700, designation of a parkway advocate when someone emerges (seven individuals have been acknowledged since 2004), and regular communications (letters, articles, daily blogging, monthly e-letters, quarterly newsletters, annual organizational reports and five research reports covering critical issues, and periodic planning position papers).

All of this information is available on our website.

Strategic Summary

We will be investing the current five years in two directions: one major, the other ongoing.

The major work will focus around trying to encourage local government to bring into reality the one idea from our research into approaches that can most significantly impact the major critical issues—funding and management—which is the designation of a nonprofit organization to provide daily management of the Parkway, under contract with a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) consisting of Parkway adjacent governments (Cities of Sacramento, Rancho Cordova & Folsom, and Sacramento County).

The ongoing work will focus on continuing to help build a community knowledge base around the results of our six research reports, buttressed by new information that becomes available.

The American River Parkway is the most valuable natural resource in our community and one of the most valuable in the nation.

Because of this singular nature, it has the potential to be governed through a singular process, a nonprofit organization, as other signature park areas in the country are governed.

This type of governance will give our Parkway the dedicated management and fund-raising capability that are so necessary to retain and enhance its premier local and national status.

Implementation Summary

To help create an environment where the nonprofit policy concept we have presented becomes accepted public policy it is important to provide information about successful adaptations of the concept to other public park areas in the nation, to the public and public leadership through the following venues.

Community Information

- Weekdays Blogging: The Parkway Blog at <http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/> is part of the ongoing work of ARPPS public education and advocacy around public policy issues that may be related to the Parkway and the adjacent communities along the American River in Sacramento, California. (90-130) blog postings annually)
- Monthly & special e-letters to membership and public leadership: We will continue the monthly e letters, with a focus, when possible, on illegal camping in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway and JPA governance. (12 - 16 annually)
- Quarterly newsletters to membership and public leadership: We will continue the quarterly newsletters with a focus, when possible, on ARPC management and JPA governance. (4 annually)

- Regular letters to the editor: We will seek opportunities to send letters that focus on ARPC management and JPA governance, Auburn Dam & Illegal camping. (1-3 annually)
- Occasional articles in local publications: We will seek to have articles published that look at governance by a JPA and ARPC as a viable option for the Parkway. (1-2 annually)
- Occasional policy planning papers: We will, when possible, cover the viability of Parkway management by ARPC and governance by a JPA. (1-2 annually)
- Organizational report (1 annually)

Public Forums

- Presentations to local business and neighborhood organizations: We will seek the opportunity to present information, when appropriate, about JPA governance. (1-2 annually)
- Meetings with public leadership: We will meet with public leadership, when appropriate, to discuss the option of JPA governance. (1-2 annually)

Review & Update

This plan is subject to annual review and updating every five years.

Status Summary

Our Guiding Principles, Critical Issues & Suggested Solutions: Status of Progress

Guiding Principles

- 1) *Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity.*
- 2) *What's good for the salmon is good for the river.*
- 3) *Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway: Social and environmental justice calls upon us to help the poor and distressed person but not at the expense of the adjacent community to visit the Parkway safely.*
- 4) *If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn't be built along the Parkway.*
- 5) *Regarding new parkway usages: Inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.*
- 6) *The suburban lifestyle—as surrounds the American River Parkway—which is imbued within the aspirational center of the California Dream and whose vision is woven into the heart of the American Dream, is a deeply loved way of life whose sustainability we all desire.*

Status: These guiding principles—Number 6 was added in 2011—still animate our work, being prioritized as warranted.

Critical Issues/Solutions

We encourage policy discussions about the Parkway, addressing the five critical issues and our proposed solutions.

1) Continuing depletion of public funding to take care of the Parkway.

Solution: *Create a Joint Powers Authority and nonprofit organization for daily management and fundraising.*

Status: The nonprofit organization, American River Parkway Conservancy, created by former ARPPS Executive Director, Kristine Lea, was presented to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors on October 6, 2015 and was rejected.

We continue to advocate for that solution.

2) Continuing pressure on the river, whether through flooding, illegal sewage discharge, or taking water for new development, hurts the salmon and other aquatic life.

Solution: *Build the Auburn Dam.*

Status: On hold, but still a congressionally approved dam site which could be revived by Congress, and the Regional Water Forum sponsored by the Auburn Dam Council in June of 2012 and 2013 was a welcome addition to the public discussion for the need for Auburn Dam.

3) Continuing habitat devastation, fires, and pollution from widespread illegal camping by the homeless in the Lower Reach.

Solution: *Strengthen and enforce laws against illegal camping.*

Status: Sacramento County, as a result of court cases allowing the homeless to camp in public spaces if there are no homeless housing available for them, has essentially given up on this issue for now.

4) Continuing development pressure to build large homes along the Parkway edges, intruding on the view space, and encroaching into the commons.

Solution: *Prohibit such new building.*

Status: The new Parkway Plan strengthened the restrictions.

5) Continuing exclusion of responsible usage by new Parkway user groups is contrary to the spirit upon which public ownership of a natural resource is predicated.

Solution: *Give such groups an opportunity to make their case.*

Status: New groups seeking access to the Parkway, such as dogs-without-leases groups, mountain-bike groups, disc-golf groups, mini-train groups, etc. are still finding little opportunity to present their proposals—which almost always includes doing the maintenance and initial set-up themselves—to the Parkway governing agency which has traditionally favored passive recreation over active.

6) Continuing encasement of open space, restricting suburban community development upon which a sustainable tax base funding necessary public works is built, is contrary to sound future planning.

Solution: *Support the growth of suburban communities.*

Status: There is an advocacy element in the Sacramento region which does not support suburban communities, and we shall continue to note that suburban communities are where the majority of people wish to live, and that planning decisions need to reflect this.

Appendix I: E-Letters

**American River Parkway Preservation
Society**

E-Letter #233, October 7, 2021

Homelessness & Business in Sacramento

This article from *KCRA 3* shows the devastation homelessness can cause, the fear of businesses surrounded by it, and the apparent helplessness of public leadership to do anything about it; tragic for all concerned.

An excerpt.

“Commerce Circle in the Johnston Business Park part of Sacramento is a loop lined with people experiencing homelessness.

“It was as the pandemic started growing some of the campers started off near the levee and they started making their way closer and closer to our building,” said Chad Rufer, group programming director for Bonneville International Sacramento, a media and marketing solutions company. “Then ... almost surrounding the building.”

“As that happened, Rufer became worried about his employees’ safety.

“We have a lot of essential employees who’ve had to come in throughout the pandemic,” he said. “Those people began becoming a little bit concerned, coming into work.”

“That fear was based on what they said they saw near their building. In addition to extraordinary amounts of garbage, they had gas siphoned from their station generator and saw dogs running loose among the encampments.

“We’ve watched, what we believe to be, drug transactions going on, prostitutions going on,” Rufer explained. “There’s human feces around. We spotted 10 to 12 empty boxes of bullets.”

“Dan Tompkins works as an assistant manager at WorldPac, a business next door to Bonneville International Sacramento.

“Worked here for 24 years,” Tompkins said. “Never seen this circle look this bad in all this time.”

“District 3 City Councilmember Jeff Harris told KCRA 3 people have the right to camp on public property.

“What they *can't* do is spew their possessions on private property, encumber private property, spread trash in the right of way,” Harris said. “And certainly, they can't do criminal behaviors.”

“Harris also explained the complexity of the issue and how the city is trying to tackle the growing problem.

“It's a very delicate balance to deal with compassion with unhoused individuals,” Harris said. “We are working desperately to get safe ground and safe car camping set up so we can create a safe space with hygiene, with food provided, and services provided to try to help these individuals create a better path in their life.”

“Business people said they feel empathy for those living on Commerce Circle.

“I believe that there should be a place for the homeless to go,” Tompkins told KCRA 3. “I believe that there should be designated places and that we help them go to where they do have the porta potties and they are able to cook their meals and stuff.”

“Rufer echoed a similar sentiment, adding, “It breaks my heart to watch people being challenged to be able to live this way.”

Retrieved September 22, 2021 from [Sacramento business park workers concerned about safety as encampment grows \(kcr.com\)](https://www.kcra.com/news/sacramento-business-park-workers-concerned-about-safety-as-encampment-grows)

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**American River Parkway Preservation
Society**

E-Letter #234, November 8, 2021

Homelessness, A Solution Approaches

We focus a lot on homelessness as it is now, and has been for some time, the major threat to public safety in the Parkway.

Through fires, pollution, unleashed dogs, and just a general sense that areas of the Parkway; especially the lower third, from Discovery Park to Cal Expo, are not safe, a magnificent retreat for the region is slowly becoming unusable.

Fortunately, a recent event occurred which may prove to provide a major addition to solving the homeless issue.

I refer to the visit by public leadership to perhaps the most successful homeless effort in the country, written about in a report from *City Express*

Here it is, in its entirety:

Could this Texas-based ‘One stop-shop’ for homeless services hold answers for California

Posted on November 2, 2021

A delegation from the City and County of Sacramento recently visited **Haven for Hope**, a nationally recognized program for people experiencing homelessness in San Antonio, Texas.

The program, which serves hundreds of people simultaneously, offers a full spectrum of programs, services and shelter all on one self-contained campus.

“It’s been eye-opening to come to Haven for Hope,” City Councilmember Jeff Harris said while visiting the site. “They have aggregated their services in one location. They’ve put together physical services — mental and behavioral health services — all together. They have a courtyard campus model, which is unique, and I think really effective.”

Harris said that many of the same programs and services already exist in Sacramento, but not all in the same location.

Sacramento County Supervisor Rich Desmond also travelled to San Antonio and noted the importance of offering a one-stop-shop. “It makes it much more likely that we can get folks connected with the services they need,” he said. “And that’s where they (Haven for Hope) see such success in changing the arc of folks’ lives.”

Haven for Hope offers space on its campus to more than 70 social service agencies and non-profits. Once someone enters the Haven for Hope system, they can receive help with everything from health and dental care to job training and placement.

Haven for Hope's campus includes "the courtyard," a low-barrier safe place where people to escape the elements, get meals and water, use bathrooms and showers and have access to other basic services. If they need a place to stay overnight, admission into "the courtyard" includes indoor areas where they can sleep.

Many people who initially stay in the courtyard become connected to services that help them transition into Haven for Hope's supportive housing and later permanent housing.

Bridgette Dean, director of the City's Department of Community Response, coordinated the fact-finding trip for a small group of community leaders after visiting the campus herself earlier this year.

"I had heard about Haven for Hope, and when I saw it for myself, I knew we had to bring some other people from Sacramento to see the campus model," Dean said. "One of the hardest things about really helping people who are experiencing homelessness is coordinating their progression from one program or housing setting to another. Haven for Hope has a model that works."

The City and County representatives who participated in the trip said they now will evaluate the information gathered to determine if any elements of the Haven for Hope model could work in Sacramento.

Retrieved November 8, 2021 from [Could this Texas-based 'one-stop-shop' for homeless services hold answers for Sacramento? - City Express \(sacramentocityexpress.com\)](https://www.cityexpress.com/news/could-this-texas-based-one-stop-shop-for-homeless-services-hold-answers-for-sacramento/)

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Fixing the Parkway

As has been sadly documented over the past several years, our beloved Parkway has been slowly degrading to the point where now there are virtual no-go zones, especially in the lower third from Discovery Park to Cal Expo; an area we have labeled the Parkway Skid Row.

Proposed causes and solutions for this have been examined by virtually everyone connected to the Parkway; but we remain committed to the public private partnership approach outlined in detail on our website from our 2007 research report [Report3-Governance\[1\].pdf](#) (pp. 9-16).

However, getting to this requires public leadership political will not yet evident from local government, poignantly expressed in a recent article from *Inside Sacramento* available at [inside East Sacramento December 2021 by Inside Publications - Issuu](#) (pp. 26-27)

My personal guru on all things bureaucratic, James Q. Wilson, wrote in his magisterial work on the subject about the constraints of public agencies:

“The key constraints are three in number. To a much greater extent than is true of private bureaucracies, government agencies (1) cannot lawfully retain and devote to the private benefit of their members the earnings of the organization, (2) cannot allocate the factors of production in accordance with the preferences of the organization’s administrators, and (3) must serve goals not of the organization’s own choosing. Control over revenues, productive factors, and agency goals is all vested to an important degree in entities external to the organization—legislatures, courts, politicians, and interest groups. Given this, agency managers must attend to the demands of these eternal entities. As a result, government management tends to be driven by the *constraints* on the organization, not the *tasks* of the organization. To say the same thing in other words, whereas business management focuses on the “bottom line” (that is, profits), government management focuses on the “top line” (that is, constraints). Because government managers are not as strongly motivated as private ones to define the tasks of their subordinates, these tasks are often shaped by the factors described in the preceding four chapters.”

James Q. Wilson. (1989). *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*. (p. 115)

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**American River Parkway Preservation
Society**

E-Letter #236, February 8, 2022

Rangers Estimate 2,000 Homeless in Parkway

The people paying attention to this over the years think there are probably more, story from *MSN News*.

An excerpt.

“Jan. 27—The American River Parkway Foundation in a new appeal to local government leaders is demanding Sacramento officials clear more than 750 unhoused people from the lower Parkway this year.

“It’s also asking the county to turn over control of a section of the parkway to the foundation, alleging the county has failed to protect a treasured urban park.

“The Parkway is in crisis,” the foundation wrote in a letter to County Executive Ann Edwards and City Manager Howard Chan Tuesday. “The environmental and public safety impacts of the growing number of incidents of illegal camping threaten the Parkway’s beauty and sustainability and are a hazard to communities, schools and businesses that border the Parkway. This includes growing fire danger, diminished water quality and hazardous materials resulting from intravenous drug use.”

“The foundation is asking officials to produce a detailed plan by March to address how they’re going to move people. The foundation also wants agencies to report back to the community every three months.

“As many as 2,000 people could be camping along the American River, parkway rangers estimate. Many people do not want to camp along the parkway — which is especially dangerous for women — but they go there as a last resort. Many of them have been there

for years with their dogs, and have formed tight relationships with their neighbors for safety.

“Local agencies have limited options in relocating people from encampments. A 2018 decision by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals known as *Martin v. Boise* prohibits officials from citing unhoused people for camping on public property, unless a shelter bed is available. All city and county shelter beds tend to be full on any given night.

“Many unhoused people camp along the lower American River Parkway because police have swept them from other locations, said Crystal Sanchez, president of the Sacramento Homeless Union.

“If the thousands of people come off the river they’re going to be in people’s neighborhoods,” Sanchez said. “Or farther into the woods. Being pushed into the woods would not allow for emergency vehicles to reach people. A lot of the homicides of unhoused individuals appear to happen in secluded places.”

“As part of the campaign, the foundation released a 13-minute video, including local TV footage of fires, and an interview with Sacramento Fire Department spokesman Capt. Keith Wade. Each year, an average of 100 fires are started along the parkway, mostly near homeless encampments.

“Any open flame out here, especially in an afternoon when humidity is low and you have a little bit of a wind, recipe for disaster,” Wade said in the video. “Tragedy can happen fast.”

“Sanchez said people make fires for survival.

“The only way to survive when you are homeless is to make a small fire,” Sanchez said. “It provides warmth, a way to cook your food and to heat up your water to wash yourself off.”

“Praise for river foundation’s ‘aggressive stance’

“City officials are discussing the letter with county officials, but most of the parkway is in under county jurisdiction, said Tim Swanson, a city spokesman.

“The county welcomes discussions about the “complex stressors” affecting the parkway with all partners, including the foundation, said Kim Nava, a county spokeswoman.

“The county remains committed to the American River Parkway, and Regional Parks has been a priority area for the board, as has been demonstrated by the county’s consistently increased funding over the past several years, which has allowed for additional rangers for increased public safety, fire fuel reduction, outreach for connections to social services, creation of an environmental impact team, increased trash and debris removal, and on-going work with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Sacramento Storm Water Quality Partnership, and Regional Sanitation to address water quality studies on the Lower American River,” Nava said in a statement.

“County Supervisor Phil Serna praised the foundation for “taking an aggressive stance.”

“It helps me continue to advocate forcefully for the parkway, as I have for the past decade, especially given the unique challenges attributable to the pandemic,” Serna said.”

Retrieved January 28, 2022 from [American River advocates demand removal of homeless camps in appeal to Sacramento leaders \(msn.com\)](https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/local/american-river-advocates-demand-removal-of-homeless-camps-in-appeal-to-sacramento-leaders)

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #237, March 7, 2022

Homelessness in Sacramento, A Proposal

This proposal, as outlined in the *California Globe*, is, indeed, a good start.

An excerpt.

“A City of Sacramento Poll recently found 71% say homelessness is the top issue facing the city. 57% of those polled say they have little to no confidence that the City can fix the problem. More than 60% think the problem can be solved with the right leadership and policies.

“93% of Sacramento County residents polled say homelessness is nearly universally seen as a “very serious” problem, and think the County is on the wrong track in dealing with it.

“That is a good start.

“The *Globe* has [written extensively about Sacramento’s perpetually growing homeless](#) population for several years, despite Mayor Steinberg spending hundreds of millions of dollars on it. What was 5,000 homeless on Sacramento streets in 2020 has

grown to more than 11,000, that we know of. The homeless count is taking place right now.

“[Region Business](#), a trade association for architects, contractors, engineers, banks, restaurants, law firms, developers, etc..., formed Sacramentans for Safe and Clean Streets and Parks, and co-drafted a ballot measure to address the rampant homelessness in the city, and to enforce local illegal camping laws, after years of ineffective leadership.

“The ballot measure would give Sacramento citizens the ability to sue the City to force them to clean-up encampments that pose a nuisance to the surrounding community. It also requires the City to establish areas, adequate to accommodate 75% of the homeless population, where individuals can be moved.

“Josh Wood, co-founder and CEO of Region Builders, spoke to the Globe about the importance to the entire community of the ballot measure. “We believe we are doing the maximum allowed under the ‘Boise’ case, and will force accountability of the city the same way they hold private property owners accountable.”

“There is also legal recourse for reimbursement for legal fees associated with that effort, should it be required.

“One member of the committee shared that the initiative is not without acknowledgement of the need for housing in the city and county. But it acknowledges that efforts to provide adequate housing will take years and in the meantime establishing a “state of emergency” of sorts is necessary to properly deal with this interim disaster that has occurred.

“Demonstrating the ineffectiveness of the City, Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg floated an alarming idea at his State of the City address this week: with so many state workers continuing to work remotely long-term, he’d like to utilize empty state offices for housing the city’s homeless.

“And that is the primary problem with how Mayor Steinberg has addressed homelessness: as if it’s a housing problem, rather than a mental health and drug addiction problem. And, Steinberg has allowed homeless advocates to bully him.

“The Mayor and City Council have largely hidden behind the *Martin v. Boise* case, in which the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals refused to reconsider invalidation of ordinances completely banning sleeping and camping in Public. But *Martin v. Boise* did not render local officials impotent to deal with homelessness, as they would have you believe.

“The crux of the issue is that *Martin v. Boise* will not apply in any situation where there is not complete prohibition on camping in any public place.

“Heather MacDonald of the Manhattan Institute, explains the fallacies of the Ninth Circuit ruling in, “[San Francisco, Hostage to the Homeless:](#)”

“*Boise v. Martin* was a patent case of judicial activism in the pursuit of a favored policy agenda. The decision discounted facts that stood in the way of its desired conclusion. But the ruling’s most serious problem was the declaration that homelessness is an involuntary condition that the sufferer has no capacity to control or change. Numerous personal decisions go into being homeless, such as not moving to a cheaper housing market, refusing offered services, or breaking ties with friends or family members who might be able to provide accommodation. The concept of agency is already under assault in the legal academy; should more courts pick up on this trend, much of the criminal law would have to be discarded. A dissenting Ninth Circuit judge in a subsequent appeal of the case noted that if cities cannot ban sleeping in public, because sleeping is an inevitable concomitant of being human, they also cannot ban defecating in public. The majority chose not to respond to this logical inference.”

“A key takeaway of the proposed Sacramento initiative is the illegal camping enforcement component. Here’s how the initiative addresses this:

“The streets and public areas within the city should be readily accessible and available to residents and the public at large. The use of these areas for camping purposes or storage of personal property interferes with the rights of others to use the areas for which they were intended. Such activity can constitute a public health and safety hazard which adversely impacts neighborhoods and commercial areas. Camping on private property without the consent of the owner, proper sanitary measures and for other than a minimal duration adversely affects private property rights as well as public health, safety, and welfare of the city. The purpose of this chapter is to maintain streets, parks and other public and private areas within the city in a clean, sanitary and accessible condition and to adequately protect the health, safety and public welfare of the community, while recognizing that, subject to reasonable conditions, camping and camp facilities associated with special events can be beneficial to the cultural and educational climate in the city. Nothing in this chapter is intended to interfere with otherwise lawful and ordinary uses of public or private property.”

“Large unauthorized encampments on public and private property create additional and more dangerous public health and safety concerns and threaten the livability, security and economic vitality of the city and can never be tolerated.”

“The city must enforce these laws while providing immediate emergency shelter and emergency camping spaces as an alternative to unauthorized camping.”

“As for the *Martin v. Boise* restrictions, in a City of Oakland lawsuit brought by homeless advocates trying to block the city from evicting a homeless camp on city property, a federal judge ruled, “*Martin* does not establish a constitutional right to occupy public property indefinitely,” the East Bay Express [reported](#).”

“With enough signatures, the Sacramento initiative will appear on the November 2022 ballot.”

For the rest of the story [Sacramento Business Group Proposes ‘Homelessness Shelter and Enforcement’ Initiative – California Globe](#)

American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #237, April 6, 2022

Suburbs Preferred

More evidence to the common-sense truth, from *New York Daily News*.

An excerpt.

“As the centers of media and political discourse, large cities, notably New York, have a unique ability to promote themselves, asserting that dense, core urban areas own the future. Yet in reality, even during good times, and well before the pandemic, Americans have been headed, in *increasing numbers*, to suburbs, exurbs and to [smaller cities](#). Romantic illusions to past urban recoveries may make people feel better, but they ignore both long-lasting trends and new realities.

“People vote with their feet, and today, only a small percentage of Americans live in or around the core urban counties. In 1950, [the core cities](#) accounted for nearly 24% of the U.S. population; today the share is under 15%. In contrast, the suburbs and exurbs grew from housing 13% of the metropolitan population in 1940 to [86% in 2017](#), a gradual increase of 2% a year. Despite all the talk of young people and families and others coming “back to the city,” suburbs accounted for about [90% of all U.S. metropolitan growth](#) since 2010; over that time, suburbs and exurbs of the major metropolitan areas gained 2 million net domestic migrants, while the urban core counties lost 2.7 million.

“Much the same can be said about the economy. During the last decade, [roughly 80% of all job growth](#) has been in the suburbs. Suburbs also generate [the bulk of patents](#); in fact, three-quarters come from areas with less 3,500 people per square mile, less than half the density associated with urban centers.

“The pandemic accelerated these already existing trends. [New census numbers](#) show that San Francisco, New York and Los Angeles led the population loss sweepstakes over the past year, while people headed to the Sunbelt, suburbs, exurbs or even small towns.

“But the real issue now is not so much the pandemic per se but the rise of dispersed work. Midtown offices are still [more than half empty](#) — and that’s not just the pessimist’s way of seeing the glass. While they will recover some, they will likely not replace a large portion of what was lost. Stanford economist [Nicholas Bloom](#) suggests that remote workers will ultimately constitute at least 20% of the workforce, more than three times the pre-pandemic rate.

“This leaves the large central business districts such as Midtown particularly exposed. As long-time urban booster [Richard Florida](#) notes, central business districts represent “the last gasp of the old Industrial age.” He adds, “This idea that you have to pack and stack these office workers and they have to commute in at 9 and leave at 5 and work in cubicle farms— it’s just silly. It is completely out of touch with the way people work.”

To read the rest, [The biggest cities are past their prime – New York Daily News \(nydailynews.com\)](#)

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #239, May 7, 2022

Homeless Returned

This is a sad story, for all concerned, from *KCRA 3*.

An excerpt.

“California’s Department of Transportation, or Caltrans, cleared out a homeless encampment in Sacramento six months ago that has since returned, and nearby residents and business owners say they are concerned for their safety.

“I’m very sympathetic to the issues going on in our homeless community here, but at this point, it’s a growing safety concern,” Dr. Jenny Apekian said.

“She owns Midtown Dental on the corner of 29th and G streets, right across from the line of tents where a growing number of unhoused people have been camping. Just over the last few months, she said rocks were thrown through business windows, damaging equipment inside. For Apekian and her employees, it’s come to them using a buddy system to go back to their vehicles.

“She said she is calling police about concerns ranging from vandalism to theft to drugs on a daily basis.

“[When Caltrans did a sweep of the area in October](#), Apekian said that she and other nearby business owners offered to pay for Caltrans to have the section of land between 29th Street and Business 80 fenced off.

“They have ignored our emails. They say it’s on the list, but there seems to be no urgency,” she said.

“Caltrans told KCRA that there is a plan for additional fencing, but they did not provide details on what that plan is or when it could happen. A spokesperson also said another cleanup will happen soon, but they did not say how soon.

“Caltrans provided the following statement:

“Caltrans continues to work with its partners, local law enforcement, CHP, and the City of Sacramento on scheduling encampment closures, cleaning sites and coordinating with local agencies and social service providers so they can connect people experiencing homelessness with essential services and available shelter. Caltrans has cleaned this area before, and individuals have returned and reestablished an encampment. The department continues to add exclusionary measures, like fencing, in the area and will continue working to address the ongoing issues. The department provides 72-hour notice prior to any encampment closure and connects people experiencing homelessness on the state’s right-of-way with service providers who can offer safer shelter options.”

“When people camping in the area were told to leave back in October, City Council Member Katie Valenzuela said she was frustrated to learn about it because the city did not yet have a safe place for them to go.

“The mayor is pushing as hard and fast as he can, working with city staff to get some of these 20 sites we’ve identified open as quickly as possible,” Valenzuela told KCRA 3 in October. “Some of them have been identified as tiny homes and that’s going to take a few months.”

“Since then, the city opened a safe ground site in February at Miller Park. It can temporarily house up to 110 people, and it already is typically full or nearly full.”

[Sac homeless encampment back after it was cleared 6 months ago \(kcr.com\)](#)

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**American River Parkway Preservation
Society**

E-Letter #240, June 13, 2022

Water Storage

Part 9 of the excellent series on California water policy from *California Globe*.

An excerpt.

“In May 1957, Harvey Banks, then director of the California Dept. of Water Resources, submitted “The California Water Plan” to the governor and state legislature. [On page 14 of part one](#) of this comprehensive document, Table 3 depicts what Banks and his team determined to be the “Estimated Present and Probable Ultimate Mean Seasonal Water Requirements.” The scale of their ultimate expectations reveals the magnitude of the challenge they had accepted.

“At the time, the estimated statewide water requirements were 19.0 million acre-feet (MAF) per year for agriculture, which they estimated would ultimately peak at more than double that amount, 41.1 MAF/year. The total urban and miscellaneous use per year at the time was 2.0 MAF/year, which they estimated would eventually quintuple to 10.0 MAF/year. In all, California’s mid-century water planners intended to build infrastructure capable of delivering to farms and cities 51.1 million acre-feet per year.

“This is a fascinating statistic, because this ultimate goal, set 65 years ago, easily fulfills the goal anyone might set who wishes to realize water abundance in California today. As we have seen, the average total water use in California in recent years for farms and cities was 41.6 million acre feet per year, well short of the 51.1 MAF goal set by Harvey Banks and his team back in 1957.

“A examination of what they intended to build in order to accomplish this objective back then, compared to how it could be possible today, can uncover encouraging insights. To view this grand conception, refer to [Table 30 on page 212 \(ref. part two\)](#) of the original Water Plan, “Summary of Features, Accomplishments, and Costs of Physical Works Under the California Water Plan.” Or, for a summary of this summary, refer to the following table.

“The 1957 Water Plan called for construction of 376 new reservoirs to be in addition to those already built. These new reservoirs were planned to add 76.9 million acre feet of new storage capacity with an average annual yield of 24.0 million acre feet. The other primary element of the 1957 Water Plan was to rely on interbasin transfers via an astonishing array of new conduits. These included 4,987 miles of canals, 680 miles of pipe, and 598 miles of tunnels.

“The attentive reader will note that gigawatt-years is referenced on the summary chart above, instead of “millions of kilowatt-hours,” which appears on the source document. This unit of energy, gigawatt-years, is an underutilized but very useful point of reference. Its utility comes into focus when anyone attempts to determine the *yield* of an energy project. It makes it very easy to compare *capacity* in gigawatts (or megawatts), which is a common term used to report how much energy flow can be produced or consumed by a project when running at maximum output, to how much of that capacity is actually used (or produced) by a project over a period of time. In the above examples, it can be seen that the new hydroelectric dams included in the 1957 Water Plan could have collectively generated an electricity flow of 7.9 gigawatts if all of the reservoirs had sufficient water to spin all the turbines, all the time, in all of the power houses. But given the amount of projected rainfall and timing of releases from these dams, the planners expected them to annually produce only 3.9 gigawatt-years of energy. By normalizing these two measurements – *flow* of energy, and *units* of energy – to gigawatts, it is easy to see that the planners expected a *yield* of 49 percent (3.9/7.9). In their report, the planners projected a yield of 33,767 million kilowatt-hours, rendering it impossible for anyone viewing that table to intuitively assess the yield of these planned projects. One gigawatt-year is 8,766 million kilowatt-hours. Do that in your head.

“If the goal of public policy discussions is to come up with rational public policies, the choice of units matters. For example, when viewing “nameplate capacity” on solar or wind installations, the amounts are typically reported in megawatts, and the yields are then reported in megawatt-hours. Without a calculator, this offers no insight into the yield of these devices. But when a solar or wind farm is installed with a reported output capacity of, for example, 500 megawatts, and the projected annual energy production is reported at 100 megawatt-*years*, one knows immediately that the yield is 20 percent (100/500). One megawatt-year is 8,766 megawatt-hours (365.25 x 24). More on this later.

“In specific reference to California’s water infrastructure, normalizing these variables also makes it easy to compare the estimated annual energy yield from the planned hydroelectric dams (3.9 gigawatt-years), and the estimated annual energy consumption of the planned pumps (5.6 gigawatt-years), to the total electrical generation in California. In 2018, according to data [compiled by the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory](#), California generated 1,700 trillion BTUs of electric power, which equates to 57 gigawatt-years (1,000 trillion BTUs equals 33.4 gigawatt-years). This is interesting. Had the 1957 Water Plan been fully implemented, today those new pumps would be consuming an amount equal to 10 percent of California’s entire electricity consumption today (5.6/57), offset by planned hydroelectric generating capacity that may have given back an amount equal to 8 percent of California’s current electricity consumption (3.9/57).”

To read the rest, [The Abundance Choice, Part 9: Can Reservoirs be Part of the Solution? – California Globe](#)

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**American River Parkway Preservation
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E-Letter #241, July 8, 2022

Homelessness & Public Leadership

I am getting tired of reading and posting these stories, as I'm sure many of you are also.

This is an area for public leadership but so far, at least over the past 19 years we have been dealing with this, public leadership has talked a lot but I do not see any specific strategy that has actually worked to reduce the problem and most importantly for us, made the Parkway safer.

We will continue reading and posting these stories in the hope that someday things will get better, for the homeless, business, local neighborhoods, and the Parkway.

Excerpt from an article from *KCRA*.

“Homeless encampments continue to cause problems in certain parts of Sacramento, with many residents and businesses saying they feel unsafe – but there is a new proposal that some city leaders hope will help.

“Video obtained by KCRA 3 shows two people fighting near the intersection of 30th and J streets in downtown Sacramento earlier this week. A woman is seen swinging around a long stick – and a man is seen using some kind of spray. A few moments later, the woman is seen hitting the man with the stick and then running away. The fight blocked part of the roadway.

“They just stopped traffic for a solid 3 minutes,” said the woman who caught the confrontation on camera from her office.

“That woman did not want to be identified, but she told KCRA 3 that she believes the two people seen in the video are part of the unhoused community.

“It was shocking but also not shocking. That’s just turned into the status quo for downtown,” the woman said.

“The homeless camp at the intersection where the fight happened is full of tents. The woman who filmed the video said some people will walk near the building she works in, making her feel unsafe.

“The guy that owns this building is constantly cleaning up needles and feces, and people are combative and try and urinate on the building,” the woman said.

“A few blocks away at the Falafel Corner on Alhambra Boulevard, manager Suhail Yusuf said he deals with a similar problem.

“The homeless people come in here, throwing stuff at us, coming in and grabbing things off the counter, bothering other customers, some getting violent too,” Yusuf said.

“Yusuf also said the unhoused in the area also loiter in front of the restaurant.

“They’ll chill out by the door. They’ll come, they’ll basically make marks on the windows,” Yusuf said. “Of course, you feel bad for them and stuff, but at the same time, business is business, and you have to get your orders and food out.”

“Now, the Sacramento City Council will be looking at a [proposed ordinance](#) regarding unhoused individuals and sidewalk obstructions. It would make it a misdemeanor for homeless people to block sidewalks and be within four feet of building entrances.

“Homeless people are not above the law,” Sacramento City Councilmember for District 3 Jeff Harris said.

“Harris said under the proposed update to existing regulations, the city manager would be allowed to enforce the new obstruction rules. Harris called the changes necessary.

“Many homeless individuals have taken up residence in our streets, and quite frankly, negated the possibility for people to have safe passage,” Harris said.”

For the rest, [Residents, businesses describe homeless issues in NorCal \(kcra.com\)](#)

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E-Letter #242, August 8, 2022

Illegal Camping, Protecting the Parkway

We hope this happens, as the Parkway is in a disastrous condition, primarily from the impact of illegal homeless camping.

An excerpt from the *MSN story*.

“Sacramento County this week could move toward clearing hundreds of homeless people living in encampments along the entire American River Parkway, stepping up enforcement in a public space but potentially displacing vulnerable people without first providing more options for shelter.

“The Board of Supervisors on Wednesday is expected to vote on two anti-camping ordinances that would represent a major change in how Sacramento County manages its homeless crisis. One would allow county officials to remove encampments on the parkway; the other would allow officers to remove tents from a range of public spaces, such as schools, libraries and government buildings.

“The proposals are not explicitly connected to providing new shelter for homeless residents. The county in June adopted a budget that set aside \$5 million for a potential American River Parkway homeless shelter, and county supervisors recently voted to open two tiny home shelters in south Sacramento that would house up to 145 people.

“We’re going to (increase) our capacity for sheltering but at the same time, we have to start holding people accountable,” said Supervisor Patrick Kennedy said. “Whether you’re homeless or not, you still have to abide by societal norms and the law. And what we see happening on the parkway when you go downtown, it’s just not acceptable.”

“But the enforcement-first proposals expose a rift in how the city of Sacramento and the county want to address homelessness.

“City voters in November are expected to see a business-backed ballot measure that would allow officials to remove certain encampments and compel the city to provide about 1,000 more shelter spaces. City officials reportedly have told supporters of the initiative that they [could amend it or pull it from the election](#) because county supervisors have not placed a companion measure on the ballot.

“Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg criticized county leaders for moving toward an ordinance that would clear camps without also requiring itself to open more shelter beds. He declined to comment on whether he wanted to change the homeless ballot measure.

“Passing enforcement-only measures will do nothing to solve the issue of unsheltered homelessness as long as people don’t have anywhere to go, and it will actively encourage more people to move encampments into the city limits,” Steinberg said. “We need their partnership to provide mental health, substance abuse treatment and other services to people experiencing homelessness in the city, where the majority of unsheltered people in the county are located. Our neighborhoods and businesses need relief, but enforcement alone is a false promise.”

“Outdoor advocates and people who live near the American River Parkway have pressed Sacramento to do more about the encampments there for years. The American River Parkway Foundation estimates 2,000 people are living along the parkway.

“In January, the [foundation urged the county to turn over control of part of the parkway](#). In February, the slaying of 22-year-old [Emma Roark on the parkway](#) alarmed the river’s neighbors. In April, the Sierra Club’s Sacramento chapter released a report connecting a [rise in fires on the parkway](#) to homeless camps.

“Assemblyman Kevin McCarty, D-Sacramento, this year introduced state legislation [to allow the county to clear camps off the parkway](#). Sheriff-elect Jim Cooper, meanwhile, has [pledged to increase patrols](#) on the parkway when he takes office next year.”

To read the rest:

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/sacramento-county-to-vote-on-clearing-homeless-camps-from-american-river-parkway/ar-AA10rgOy?li=BBnbfcL>

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #243, Sept 6, 2022

New Study Sees Need for Dams

That's the absolutely correct conclusion of this article from the *Sacramento Bee* reporting on a new report from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

An excerpt.

“Hotter weather, less snow and more water shortages. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation offered a bleak vision of the future of the American River watershed Wednesday, releasing an extensive report on how the basin that's so vital to the Sacramento region's water supplies will be affected by climate change in the coming decades. The bureau, which operates Folsom Lake, said the Sierra Nevada foothills east of Sacramento could eventually see shortfalls of as much as 78,000 acre-feet per year unless stronger conservation and water-storage projects are undertaken. Closer to Sacramento, the area's water agencies will likely have to increase groundwater pumping by as much as 155,000 acre-feet per year, “which would affect groundwater sustainability.” An acre-foot is 326,000 gallons, enough water to serve as many as three households for a year.

“Areas served by the American River had a fairly wet winter this year — at least when compared to most of the rest of the state as the California drought continues for a third year. But with each passing year, conditions on the American will likely worsen. The heart of the problem is the warming climate. Average summer temperatures in the watershed are expected to increase by 7.2 degrees Fahrenheit by the end of the century, the study said. Winter temperatures will climb 4.9 degrees.

“Not only does hotter weather increase the demand for water, snowfall will give way to rain — as it has already — making it much harder to operate Folsom Lake and manage the river system for both droughts and flood control. An ample Sierra snowpack acts as backup reservoir space. But if the region receives mostly rain and little snow, the precipitation will overwhelm the system, raising flood dangers while making it harder to store water. “Climate pressures will make it harder to simultaneously store water for droughts, manage flood risk and protect freshwater ecosystems,” the study said. The bureau's study advocates several strategies for coping with climate impacts, including a \$300 million “water bank” that's already being developed in the Sacramento area. The project will install dozens of aquifer storage mechanisms that will take high flows during heavy rainstorms and plant some of the water underground.

“In addition, the bureau recommended that regional leaders study the creation of a small reservoir at Alder Creek, off the South Fork of the American River about halfway between Sacramento and South Lake Tahoe. The reservoir would hold 175,000 acre-feet of water – less than one-fifth of what Folsom can hold. “We must replace the snowpack with storage,” said Andy Fecko, general manager of the Placer County Water Agency, which worked with Reclamation on the study.”

Read more at: <https://www.sacbee.com/news/california/water-and-drought/article265162996.html#storylink=cpy>

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Appendix II: Newsletters

American River Parkway Preservation Society Newsletter: Issue 72 – Fall 2021

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Annual Report Introduction

In rereading last year’s Introduction to that year’s Annual Report, I realized that it couldn’t be improved on, except, things are even worse now, with a third of the Parkway virtually a no-go zone, so this year’s Introduction will be last year’s though with a few changes.

Due to medical and political reasons, the negative impacts on the Parkway from illegal camping have increased, though the Parkway Rangers are doing heroic work to protect the Parkway. The central feeding area for the transit of illegal campers to the Parkway, the River District, is actually increasing the concentration of homeless and homeless services, which will increase the negative impact on the Parkway and adjacent neighborhoods.

To read how bad it really is, right now, in the River District, see Homelessness in the River District | Parkway Blog (wordpress.com) This is why we refer to the lower part of the Parkway—from Discovery Park to Cal Expo—as Parkway Skid Row rather than the long-gone though once-deserved appellation, the Jewel of Sacramento.

Unfortunately, there does not exist a well-established advocacy community for helping the Parkway—though the American River Parkway Foundation seems to be stepping up and has produced an excellent video, the Parkway in Peril, available at Parkway in Peril - YouTube as well as a discussion at Parkway in Peril & Panel Discussion - FB Live Stream - YouTube—as there exists for that which hurts it; but that will not curtail our efforts as we knew from the beginning in 2003 that this was to be a long struggle as protecting the Commons has always been.

The long struggle for the Commons is noted in the 1990 book by Dr. Elinor Ostrom:

Hardly a week goes by without a major new story about the threatened destruction of a valuable natural resource. ... 2 The issues of how best to govern natural resources used by many individuals in common are no more settled in academia

than in the world of politics. Some scholarly articles about the “tragedy of the commons” recommend that “the state” control most natural resources to prevent their destruction; others recommend that privatizing those resources will resolve the problem. What one can observe in the world, however, is that neither the state nor the market is uniformly successful in enabling individuals to sustain long-term, productive use of natural resource systems. Further, communities of individuals have relied on institutions resembling neither the state nor the market to govern some resource systems with reasonable degrees of success over long periods of time. We do not yet have the necessary intellectual tools or models to understand the array of problems that are associated with governing and managing natural resource systems and the reasons why some institutions seem to work in some settings and not others. (pp. 1-2) Dr. Elinor Ostrom. (1990 & 2015). *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. Cambridge University Press; United Kingdom.

The model we have suggested is management by a nonprofit organization contracted to a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) of the Parkway adjacent county and cities: Sacramento County, Sacramento City, Rancho Cordova, and Folsom. To help in this process, ARPPS Former Executive Director, Kristine Lea, incorporated a nonprofit organization, the American River Parkway Conservancy (ARPC) to serve as an educational forum initially, and eventually, provide daily management for the Parkway.

The ARPC concept was presented to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors on October 6, 2015, however the County went another direction, supporting the transfer of governing authority to a state agency, the California Wildlife Conservation Board, <https://www.wcb.ca.gov/> part of the California Department of Fish & Wildlife. Even with that development, to help create an environment where the nonprofit policy concept we have presented becomes accepted public policy it is important to provide information about successful adaptations of the concept to other public park areas in the nation, to the public and public leadership through the following venues.

We initially thought having the JPA—made up of local leadership of the Parkway adjacent county and cities—provide the daily management, but soon realized that would be too much impacted by whatever current political forces ascendent at the time. The advantage of a nonprofit organization providing the daily management—as our model the Central Park Conservancy (CPC) does—while contracted with local government, in our case the JPA. 3

Here is how CPC is described in Wikipedia:

The Central Park Conservancy is a private, nonprofit park conservancy that manages Central Park under a contract with the City of New York and NYC Parks. The conservancy employs most maintenance and operations staff in the park. It effectively oversees the work of both the private and public employees under the authority of the publicly appointed Central Park administrator, who reports to the parks commissioner and the conservancy's president. The Central Park Conservancy was founded in 1980 in the aftermath of Central Park's decline in the

1960s and 1970s. Initially devoted to fundraising for projects to restore and improve the park, it took over the park's management duties in 1998. The organization has invested more than \$800 million toward the restoration and enhancement of Central Park since its founding. With an endowment of over \$200 million, consisting of contributions from residents, corporations, and foundations, the Conservancy provides 75 percent of the Park's \$65 million annual operating budget and is responsible for all basic care of the park. The Conservancy also provides maintenance support and staff training programs for other public parks in New York City, and has assisted with the development of new parks, such as the High Line and Brooklyn Bridge Park.

Retrieved October 5, 2020 from

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Park_Conservancy

CPC struggled to convince the city of New York that its suggested public-private park administration would work, as the founder, Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, notes in her book:

Looking back, I realize that the birth of the Central Park Conservancy was essentially a matter of luck and timing. The current unquestioned acceptance of the concept of public-private park partnerships and the cooperative alliance between New York City government and the Conservancy today makes it hard for us to believe the degree of resistance to its creation in the first place. The proposal to form an official working partnership between city government and a group of private citizens was viewed warily and would probably not have been accepted at that time by public officials jealous of their authority and reluctant to give up the opportunities that elected office grants when political patronage is the norm. In addition, if the city had not been under duress, the municipal workers union (District Council 37) would have claimed that privately funded employees were usurping the jobs of union men. Even if this were not the case, objections would be raised by residents maintaining that they were taxpayers, ergo the care of parks was a city responsibility. Moreover, some existing not-for-profit park support organizations were questionable. "Private groups should not get in bed with the city," declared a board member of one, explaining that the role of citizen's groups was to criticize the policies and practices of public officials and to campaign for reform, not to act as a partner of government. (P. 14) 4 Elizabeth Barlow Rogers. (2018). *Saving Central Park: A History and a Memoir*. Alfred A. Knopf: New York.

Of course, things have changed substantially since then, as witnessed by the number of public/private partnerships that have arisen since then and here are two examples:

One is the Emerald Necklace Conservancy in Boston which describes its Vision:

Vision In its role as a steward of Frederick Law Olmsted's 100-year old park system, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy will be seen as a trusted collaborator working seamlessly with its public partners to restore, improve, maintain, and protect this iconic urban landscape. This work will be visible to all and recognized nationally for setting standards of excellence and creating best practices in

preservation, advocacy, education, conservation, programming, safety, sustainability and park administration.

Retrieved October 9, 2020 from <https://www.emeraldnecklace.org/about-us/>

Two is the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy:

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy was founded in December 1996 by a group of citizens concerned with the deteriorating conditions of Pittsburgh's historic city parks. A nonprofit organization, the Parks Conservancy has worked closely with the City of Pittsburgh since 1998 under an official public interest partnership agreement to restore the city's parks. To date, the Parks Conservancy has raised nearly \$130 million for parks and has completed 22 major improvement projects. Currently active in 22 of the city's 165 parks, the Parks Conservancy has expanded into community and neighborhood parks throughout Pittsburgh.

Retrieved October 9, 2020 from <https://www.pittsburghparks.org/the-conservancy>

The Parkway has the potential to become as strongly supported by its community as CPC now is, but not under the current management. The full report, now online, can be accessed at [http://www.arpps.org/ARPPS Annual Report 2021.pdf](http://www.arpps.org/ARPPS%20Annual%20Report%202021.pdf)

Homelessness in the River District

We have been given permission by the author to publish this very important letter concerning the homeless situation in the River District, which, along with the Woodside neighborhood, and the Parkway, is homelessness Ground Zero in our area. Excerpt from the letter:

Sacramento County Supervisor Phil Serna August 19, 2021: Re: Item 22, 8/24/2021 Board Of Supervisors Meeting

Dear Supervisor Serna, You will recall that I attended at the August 10th meeting of the Sacramento County Supervisors to speak on item 29, a progress report on Project Room Key (PRK) given by Acting Director Ethan Dye. While the item had no action attached to it, the River District Board is acutely interested in PRK because the River District has been hosting La Quinta Inn, a Project Room Key hotel, since April of 2020. At inception we were told that the hotel would be an emergency shelter for three months only. Supervisor Serna, we knew that once the hotel was established it wouldn't be three months but we never imagined it would be this long.

Now, 16 months later, we have weathered several extensions and I note that item 22 on the 8/24/2021 meeting agenda is an ask made to the Board of Supervisors to extend PRK until November of this year and then through April of 2022. Today,

on behalf of our board of directors, I am asking you to choose a different location from La Quinta Inn in the River District for this extension. We understand, share, and support your dedication to housing our unsheltered neighbors and the River District has certainly been doing our part. For the last 30 years the River District, which is in your District 1, has supported the vast majority of the homeless and social services for the Sacramento region.

Our 1.25 square mile area currently supports Union Gospel Mission, (60 emergency shelter beds) Quinn Cottages, (60 units of permanent supportive housing) The Salvation Army Shelter, (132 emergency shelter beds + 28 homeless hospital discharge beds) the County-run A Street Shelter, (100 emergency shelter beds + First Steps Communities triage) the VOA run Family Shelter on Bannon Street, (62 family shelter units) the City-run North 5th Street shelter, (120 emergency shelter beds + 100 new beds proposed in the City's new comprehensive homeless siting plan) La Quinta Inn (168 Project Room Key beds) and Sister Norah's Place and Mary House, (19 beds for homeless women).

If we do the math, that's 849 units of sheltering inside our 1.25 square mile boundary. In addition to shelter beds, the River District currently hosts numerous other social and homeless services including Loaves and Fishes which draws 600-1000 people per day for meals and to spend the day in Friendship Park. Further, the River District is estimated to have over 1500 people living, unsheltered, on our sidewalks, in our bike lanes, on city street shoulders, up against the America River Parkway and camped against private business. It is our fervent desire to reduce the human suffering our businesses witness daily and also the impact on those same businesses. Having said that, we would prefer not to be asked to continue to carry the lion's share of the burden and would prefer that another location be selected for the continuation of PRK."

The complete letter can be read at our website news page, <http://arpps.org/news.html>

Society Information

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American River Parkway Preservation Society Newsletter: Issue 74– Spring2022

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Article Excerpt: Removing Homeless Campers from Parkway

Let's hope this becomes reality, but so far, public leadership—for these many years—on this issue, has been sketchy.

Excerpt from article at *Fox 40*.

“SACRAMENTO, Calif. (KTXL) — State lawmakers introduced a bill that would use \$50 million to clear homeless campsites at special parklands, including the American River Parkway.

“The bill was proposed by Assemblymembers Ken Cooley, Kevin McCarty and Jim Cooper. The proposal hopes to reduce illegal campfires and address concerns regarding public safety.

“I know the homeless have been assaulted. They have been on the receiving end of violence, but as we know in the case of [Emma Roark](#), a 20-year-old woman with autism, she was assaulted by a homeless individual who had a long history,” said Assemblymen Ken Cooley, D-Rancho Cordova.

“Judy Childress, a Citrus Heights resident, said she has never personally felt threatened by a member of the homeless community, but she said still has concerns. “Those of us who ride alone on the bike trail don't feel safe around them, and it's not their fault. But nevertheless, that's the way it is,” Childress said.

“Fires from illegal campsites have also proved to be a problem. Childress said she has never seen a fire break out.

“It was just black and smelled dreadful because they had only just put a fire out, so that was a mess,” Childress said.”

To read the rest, [Proposed bill would clear encampments at American River Parkway \(fox40.com\)](#)

Article Excerpt: San Fransicko

A great book review by one of the most balanced thinkers on environmental issues, from *City Journal*.

I have added this book to my library and recommend you do the same.

An excerpt from the review.

“For decades, concern for the global environment has been a major political issue, yet our shared local environment, or “oikos” to use conservative philosopher Roger Scruton’s term, seldom receives the same attention. Environmental researcher, author, and California [gubernatorial candidate](#) Michael Shellenberger, a San Francisco Bay Area resident, is one of few thinkers who take an interest in both spheres. After writing a [bestselling book on climate change](#), Shellenberger found it “consistent with the organization’s mission” to expand the work of his think tank, Environmental Progress, to address the decline of many American cities due to the spread of homelessness and crime.

“The result is his masterful new book, *San Fransicko: Why Progressives Ruin Cities*, both a kind of war reportage and a critical, compassionate analysis of the “crisis of disorder” in the West Coast’s urban centers—San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle.

“California,” writes Shellenberger, “has half of America’s homeless but just 12 percent of the population.” A substantial portion of this group is unsheltered, with catastrophic effects for quality of life of both the homeless themselves and of the communities in which they roam aimlessly. Shellenberger opens the book by noting that a major environmental nuisance in San Francisco in the 1970s was uncollected dog feces; today, it is human excrement that pollutes the city’s streets and parks.

“Public defecation is sadly not the only crime that goes unchecked. Open-air drug injection and dealing, as well as brazen thefts, have become common sights in progressive West Coast cities, reports Shellenberger. Murder rates have also increased dramatically, as they have in big cities nationally, since the summer of 2020.

“You really can do anything in San Francisco,” one resident tells Shellenberger. “It’s a free-for-all here in Seattle,” says a resident of that city, which is not only blighted by homelessness but was also rocked by the violent protests surrounding the so-called Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone.

“Though it focuses on America’s West Coast, *San Fransicko* offers important lessons for cities more broadly. One insight, against which the writer and podcaster Andrew Sullivan pushed back in his [recent conversation](#) with Shellenberger, is that we should avoid using the term “homeless.”

“One word, ‘homeless,’” writes Shellenberger, “entails an entire, insidious discourse that acts subconsciously and subliminally on our hearts and minds, rendering us unable to

understand the reality before us.” Originally coined by progressive activists in the early 1980s, the term deliberately obfuscates the fact that people live on sidewalks not because of poverty and high housing costs, but primarily because of untreated mental illness, drug addiction, or a combination of the two, as Shellenberger shows by talking to “rough sleepers,” parents, and social workers.

“This conceptual confusion produces counterproductive policy choices like the Housing First model, whose underlying assumption is that unsheltered addicts and the mentally ill will recover as soon as they are provided with an apartment. West Coast cities are so wedded to this model that they have diverted funding from providing cheaper temporary shelters toward building fewer, more expensive apartments. As Shellenberger discusses at length, a significant body of evidence shows that the “privacy and solitude created by Housing First make substance abuse worse” and impede improvements in the care of the mentally ill. Studies find more positive long-term outcomes, even in terms of keeping people housed, for programs that offer better housing in exchange for behavioral changes.

“But facts are only part of the picture in this debate. *San Fransicko* convincingly argues that the progressive response to crime and what is called homelessness is ultimately a question of morality. In a novel rethinking of social psychologist Jonathan Haidt’s [Moral Foundations Theory](#), Shellenberger suggests that progressives do in fact value the three “conservative” foundations of authority, loyalty, and sanctity, but interpret them radically differently.

“Progressives value authority and loyalty when it comes to anyone whom they define as a victim. “They’re the voices that should be centered,” as one activist says in the book. Progressives, writes Shellenberger, thus “insist on taking orders . . . from the homeless” and even from criminals, and support efforts to decriminalize or lower the cost of many antisocial behaviors, from public camping to drug dealing. Progressives also value the sanctity of perceived victims, which leads them to reject involuntary drug and psychiatric treatment.”

For the rest of the article, [Review of “San Fransicko” by Michael Shellenberger | City Journal \(city-journal.org\)](#)

Homeless Money & Sacramento

A must-read article from *California Globe*.

An excerpt.

“Sacramento City Manager Howard Chan “raised an alarm this week about funding for the city’s existing homeless shelters even as the City Council pushes to open more large sites to address the community’s growing homelessness crisis,” the Sacramento Bee [reported](#) Thursday.

“The city has received hundreds of millions of dollars from the state and federal government over the course of many years. Where did the money go? Or is this just saber rattling for more money?”

“Chan this week told the council the city can’t count on having the \$33 million it needs to provide the roughly 1,000 spaces it currently offers past July 1. That’s in contrast to the council’s August direction to free up \$100 million to open 20 new sites for homeless shelters, tiny homes and Safe Ground sanctioned encampments,” the Bee [reported](#).

“\$33 million to provide 1,000 spaces is \$33,000 per space. Who is the city paying that kind of money? What is it going to take to get to the bottom of this bottomless pit of homeless funding?”

“However, Chan wisely warned the council Tuesday, “It’s important we don’t get side tracked by new sites. We have not yet identified funding for the current (ones).”

“Earlier this week, the Globe [reported](#) on the labyrinth of city “programs” and “services” which few homeless people can actually access on their own:

“On the [City of Sacramento website titled “Responding to Homelessness](#), leads to [another city website](#), this is what the city says about homeless programs. That website takes you to two other city pages only [offering the homeless](#) “Safe Parking” in a parking lot on the southern section of Front Street. Eventually another link takes you to housing programs coordinated through [Sacramento Steps Forward](#) “for transitional or permanent housing,” because the city’s focus is on “housing first,” a losing holdover from the Obama administration.

“The Globe also [warned](#):

“if the City of Sacramento isn’t successful in helping the thousands of lost souls into legitimate programs, they don’t shut down. They don’t lose money. And no one is fired.

“Instead, those who run city programs say they need more funding, because really, these are government jobs programs. The purpose of the program is secondary.”

“The Bee [reports](#) Sacramento County has an estimated 10,000 unhoused individuals (it’s more than 11,000), “and all shelter beds and spaces are full on any given night. Because of the crisis, the council is charging ahead with at least two new large sites, which Mayor Darrell Steinberg is calling ‘hubs.’”

“We get the money in this city,” Steinberg said. “We do. I’ve been pretty successful at it. We’re successful at it together. And these larger projects could be the opportunity we have been seeking for a long time.”

“Is it all about the money, and not solving the devastating homeless crisis on city streets?”

“The Mayor and City Council now calls Sacramento’s drug-addicted, mentally ill homeless vagrant population the “unhoused,” “people experiencing homelessness,” “guests,” and “our unhoused neighbors,” as if these really are our neighbors who were just one paycheck away from living on the streets.

“[Demonstrating](#) lack of effectiveness, Mayor Steinberg floated an alarming idea at his State of the City address last week: with so many state workers continuing to work remotely long-term, he’d like to utilize empty state offices for housing the city’s homeless.

“And that is the primary problem with how Mayor Steinberg has addressed homelessness – as if it’s a housing problem, rather than a mental health and drug addiction problem.

“The Bee [reports](#): “City officials have for months been trying to acquire a downtown building at an unidentified location, and it could be finalized soon,” Chan said. “This downtown site, which we obviously cannot be public about in terms of its location yet, is a tremendous opportunity, not only for our collaboration with the county...but also what it could mean for a more comprehensive campus kind of approach,” Steinberg said. “It all takes a long time, too long, but I think we are getting there on this particular opportunity.”

“Smoke and mirrors?”

“The city created “Sacramento Steps Forward” in 2009 as a “policy committee,” and in 2011 turned it into a non-profit organization. Yet Sacramento Steps Forward manages/administers all of the state and federal funding received: “The Sacramento CoC (Sacramento City and County Continuum of Care) receives and administers both Federal and State funding to support local efforts to more effectively and efficiently address homelessness in a variety of capacities,” Sacramento Steps Forward says in its [2019-2020 Annual Report](#).”

For the rest of this must read: [Sacramento Claims There Won’t be Money to Continue Funding Existing Homeless Shelters – California Globe](#)

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**American River Parkway Preservation Society Newsletter:
Issue 75– Summer 2022**

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Article Excerpt: Homeless & Public Leadership

I am getting tired of reading and posting these stories, as I'm sure many of you are also.

This is an area for public leadership but so far, at least over the past 19 years we have been dealing with this, public leadership has talked a lot but I do not see any specific strategy that has actually worked to reduce the problem of homeless camping in the Parkway, and most importantly for us, made the Parkway safer.

We will continue reading and posting these stories in the hope that someday things will get better, for the homeless, business, local neighborhoods, and the Parkway.

Excerpt from an article from *KCRA*.

“Homeless encampments continue to cause problems in certain parts of Sacramento, with many residents and businesses saying they feel unsafe – but there is a new proposal that some city leaders hope will help.

“Video obtained by KCRA 3 shows two people fighting near the intersection of 30th and J streets in downtown Sacramento earlier this week. A woman is seen swinging around a long stick – and a man is seen using some kind of spray. A few moments later, the woman is seen hitting the man with the stick and then running away. The fight blocked part of the roadway.

“They just stopped traffic for a solid 3 minutes,” said the woman who caught the confrontation on camera from her office.

“That woman did not want to be identified, but she told KCRA 3 that she believes the two people seen in the video are part of the unhoused community.

“It was shocking but also not shocking. That’s just turned into the status quo for downtown,” the woman said.

“The homeless camp at the intersection where the fight happened is full of tents. The woman who filmed the video said some people will walk near the building she works in, making her feel unsafe.

“The guy that owns this building is constantly cleaning up needles and feces, and people are combative and try and urinate on the building,” the woman said.

“A few blocks away at the Falafel Corner on Alhambra Boulevard, manager Suhail Yusuf said he deals with a similar problem.

“The homeless people come in here, throwing stuff at us, coming in and grabbing things off the counter, bothering other customers, some getting violent too,” Yusuf said.

“Yusuf also said the unhoused in the area also loiter in front of the restaurant.

“They’ll chill out by the door. They’ll come, they’ll basically make marks on the windows,” Yusuf said. “Of course, you feel bad for them and stuff, but at the same time, business is business, and you have to get your orders and food out.”

“Now, the Sacramento City Council will be looking at a [proposed ordinance](#) regarding unhoused individuals and sidewalk obstructions. It would make it a misdemeanor for homeless people to block sidewalks and be within four feet of building entrances. “Homeless people are not above the law,” Sacramento City Councilmember for District 3 Jeff Harris said.

“Harris said under the proposed update to existing regulations, the city manager would be allowed to enforce the new obstruction rules. Harris called the changes necessary.

“Many homeless individuals have taken up residence in our streets, and quite frankly, negated the possibility for people to have safe passage,” Harris said.”

For the rest, [Residents, businesses describe homeless issues in NorCal \(kcra.com\)](#)

Article Excerpt: California Water Policy

It has been mismanaged for decades and this excellent article from *California Globe*, reviews the failure.

An excerpt.

“In October, and then again in December 2021, as the **third severe drought** this century was entering its third year, not one but *two* atmospheric rivers struck California. Dumping **torrents of rain** with historic intensity, from just these two storm systems over 100 million acre feet of water poured out of the skies, into the rivers, and out to sea. Almost none of it was captured by reservoirs or diverted into aquifers. Since December, not one big storm has hit the state. After a completely dry winter, a few minor storms in April and May were too little too late. California’s reservoirs are at **critical lows**, allocations to farmers are in many cases down to zero, and urban water districts are tapping their last reserves. In some areas of Southern California, water agencies are now penalizing **residential “water wasters”** by coming onto their property and installing flow restrictors.

“Back in 2014, a supermajority of California voters, 67%, **approved Proposition 1** to fund water storage projects. As of the spring of 2022 **not one project has begun** construction, eight years later. Meanwhile, in Southern California, a proposed desalination plant in Huntington Beach that could produce 60,000 acre feet per year of fresh water from the ocean has **been held up** by a mostly hostile bureaucracy and endless litigation for over twenty years. As you read this, the project faces another major hurdle – on May 12, the California Water Commission Board might defy the recommendation of their own staff and grant “final” approval. But their approval may come with so many conditions that in effect it will be another denial. Or the army of litigants that for years have opposed the plant will find yet another basis for a lawsuit.

“When it comes to water in California, there is a robust political consensus that *something* has to be done. There is agreement that multi-year droughts will leave Californians with inadequate water supplies; that once a drought enters its third or fourth year, the demands of the environment, agriculture, and urban water consumers are far in excess of what is deliverable. And that’s where we are today.

“Back in the summer of 2021, knowing there was broad agreement as to the problem, I began to canvas the state to build support for a ballot initiative that would fund water projects. I entered into this project with only a basic knowledge of water policy. My goal was to talk with as many experts as I possibly could in order to come up with a comprehensive solution that, if approved by voters, would end water scarcity in California forever. I had no idea what I was getting myself into.

“Water politics in California isn’t what it once was. The water infrastructure that transports water from mountainous northern watersheds to coastal cities mainly in the southern part of the state remains the biggest plumbing system in the world. The first major construction began over a century ago. To supply water to the burgeoning cities of Southern California, the **Los Angeles Aqueduct** was completed in 1913. The **Hetch Hetchy** dam and aqueduct, supplying water to the City of San Francisco, was completed in 1934.

“Major water projects in California were ongoing in the decades that followed. The Federal Bureau of Reclamation finished building the **Shasta Dam** in 1945, creating what remains the biggest reservoir in California. The famed **California State Water Project**, with its centerpiece the California Aqueduct, completed most of its big projects in the 1960s. These highlights barely begin to describe the scale of the investments that were made or the magnitude of the projects that were built.

“How California built a system of reservoirs and aqueducts that enables a mostly arid state to support a population of 40 million and some of the most productive farmland in the world is an epic story. A detailed accounting can be found in the classic book **Cadillac Desert**, written by Marc Reisner in 1986. An even more detailed and more recent source is **The Great Thirst**, written by Norris Hundley, Jr. in 2001. But the historic achievements of earlier generations of Californians to supply this new civilization with enough water to thrive have not been matched in recent years. California’s water infrastructure has been neglected. In the face of epic droughts and soaring demand, these days, the only answer California’s politicians have been able to agree on is water rationing.

“Such is the state of water politics today. There is universal recognition that there is a water supply crisis, but every solution that involves major new construction is hopelessly gridlocked. Around the state, incremental and inadequate steps are taken, but there is no statewide vision to solve the crisis. Water rationing, typically referred to using the less threatening term “conservation,” is the only solution. While some activist groups in California truly believe conservation is all that will ever be necessary, it is mostly imposed on Californians by default.

“The Basics of Water Supply and Demand in California

“After two big storms in the fall of 2021, on January 1, 2022 the San Jose Mercury published an article with **an encouraging headline** “California has topped last season’s rainfall. Will trend continue in 2022?” Quoting the National Weather Service, the article announced that the “massive October atmospheric river and wet December” delivered 33.9 trillion gallons of rain to the state. This exceeded the 33.6 trillion gallons that fell during the entire previous water year, from October 2020 through September of 2021.

“To express this amount in acre feet helps put this in perspective. 33.9 trillion gallons is 104 million acre feet. According to data compiled by the California Department of Water Resources, over the ten year period from 2011 through 2020, on average, 180 million acre

feet of rain fell each year in California. The following table shows how that 180 million acre feet of water is used. Most of it either evaporates, percolates, or eventually makes its way to the ocean. But a significant amount is diverted for either urban, agricultural, or environmental use.

“For the years 2011 through 2015, the data on this chart comes from the **2018 update of the California Water Plan**, prepared by the California Dept. of Water Resources. Data for 2016 and 2018 was compiled on request by engineers working for the Dept. of Water Resources; they are still working on the 2017 data. For these most recent seven years for which complete data is available, diversions for urban, agricultural and environmental purposes averaged 75.3 million acre feet per year.”

To read the rest, [The Abundance Choice, Part One - California Globe](#)

Article Excerpt: California’s Legislature to stop Camping in the Parkway?

This could be good news or, based on the actions of local public leadership over the past couple decades, mean nothing.

From *Cap Radio*.

“Three Democratic state lawmakers from the Sacramento area are backing legislation they say would speed up the removal of homeless encampments along the American River Parkway — and eventually ban the camps from the 23-mile natural corridor.

“Assembly member Ken Cooley (D–Rancho Cordova) said his [Assembly Bill 2633](#) will authorize Sacramento County park rangers “to actually remove campers, campsites [and] fire pits,” something critics say will further criminalize homelessness.....

“Currently, Sacramento County and jurisdictions across California must adhere to a [2019 federal court ruling known as Martin v. Boise](#), which prevents them from prosecuting people camping on public property unless certain conditions are met including the offer of an available shelter or a legal campground.

For the rest, [California bill would ban homeless encampments along American River Parkway – capradio.org](#)

But, according to a June 16, 2022 amending of the bill:

“(b) (1) The governing body shall *make its best efforts to* use all available funding and resources, including, but not limited to, the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program (Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 50216) of Part 1 of Division 31 of the Health and Safety Code), the No Place Like Home Program (Part 3.9 (commencing with Section 5849.1) of Division 5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code), and the

Children’s Mental Health Services Act (Part 4 (commencing with Section 5850) of Division 5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code) to provide immediate housing and services to ~~unpermitted campers~~ *persons engaged in the act of unpermitted camping* who are displaced pursuant to this section.

“(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the unavailability of housing or services does not prohibit the governing body from removing persons engaged in the act of unpermitted camping or removing unpermitted campsites from the American River Parkway pursuant to this article.”

California Legislature, [Bill Text – AB-2633 Protection of parklands: American River Parkway: County of Sacramento: removal of persons engaged in the act of unpermitted camping and clearing of unpermitted campsites.](#)

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