

## Craig, Sondra

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**From:** cvm <cvanmaren@protonmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 8, 2023 2:33 PM  
**To:** ZZ City Clerk External  
**Cc:** ZZ Council Members  
**Subject:** Oppose 23-0673

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Dear Council members,

I am emailing to urge you to oppose item 23-0673. I personally would have been in violation of such an ordinance at many times during my life of being in public parks with my family, children, and friends and in various times of employment and unemployment.

This ordinance is probably not meant to apply to those of us who are currently fortunate enough to have a bed in a room somewhere, and maybe a "car-suit," too, so that "camping" in a park is just an optional leisure activity. But, unfortunately, for those with no room or car, there is only "out there," including parks to live in, and that includes sleeping. If not there, where?

I am not happy, either, that the inequality and cruelty of our current systems and priorities have pushed people out of living spaces and into the only space left, parks, libraries, and other public space. It's easy to ignore reality and hold onto the thought that everything's going fine until we are forced to see that it isn't. In some ways this ordinance proposal is similar to the bans some states are enacting against history books and medical facts. The truth is, our system does not work for many people and it needs to change.

Possibly an ordinance requiring that any time our city subsidizes (through TIF districts, tax breaks, and other benefits programs) the building of high-end housing to help developers and landlords make money, we also require a certain "housing equity fee" be paid by them to help build or buy space to provide services and places for people with no housing and no money for housing. The fee could increase the greater the difference between developments' rental rates and 30% of the annual income of someone working a full time minimum wage job (that would be a monthly rent of about \$377).

After all, we spend millions every year ensuring people's cars have nice places to sleep.

I have not had a chance to read through the Capital Improvements budget, but I wonder if there are any improvements for helping those without homes find a place to sleep in there. Could there be?

I know it's a hard issue and I appreciate the effort, but I think it is misdirected. Definitely, something has to change, but I don't think it's the definition of camping in city parks.

Please oppose this bandaid and support a treatment that will work to cure the chronic condition.

Thank you.

Cathy Van Maren  
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La Crosse