

Craig, Sondra

From: Amanda Jackson <amhjackson@outlook.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 10:48 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Camping at Isla La Plume/Houska Park

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Good Morning,

I would like to encourage the Council to consider voting no on the proposed resolution to allow camping on Isla La Plume. After the significant amount of time, money and effort that went into cleaning up this area after the last encampment to restore Houska park, I find it bewildering that this is even before the Council again. This seems like a knee jerk reaction and an out of sign out of mind mentality, if you allow camping at Houska park, the homeless encampments will be generally out of the public sight, and you feel that is better for everyone. There are so many flaws in that mentality. Furthermore, the last time that the City of La Crosse allowed camping at Houska Park it caused significant damage to Houska park, it increased the size of the homeless encampment and caused damage to boats and unsafe conditions (used needles in and around the parking areas, dock and in the water) at the nearby Municipal Harbor. The sheer volume of destruction and debris left in Houska park after last summer and the amount of time and resources it took to restore it to the condition it is now, is beyond impressive by the Parks Dept. Not to mention the increased use of the baseball fields down there since the camping ban has gone into effect. Let that area continue to serve as a park and waterway welcoming point into the City.

Beyond the general concern to allow camping in an area where it has already proved unsuccessful, this seems like a deviation from the well-established Pathways to Home plan. What kind of message does this resolution send La Crosse County as they diligently work on a sustainable long-term plan that the City approved, when the City of La Crosse continues to deviate with these various short-term plans, none of which have proven effective to date. As a La Crosse resident, it is beyond frustrating to watch. Please take a step back, work with the County and come up with a better option.

Sincerely,

Amanda Jackson
District 8 Resident