

Lucy Mallonee

From: Alyssa Homen <alyssahomen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 2:53 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment 2/5/2025

Dear City Council & Mayor,

Alyssa Homen from District 2 here. I have multiple concerns I'd like to publicly comment on.

First, we have done wonderful work on improving our shelter which I thank you, the shelter staff, and the non profit organization Feral Freedom Northern CA, and the community for their efforts. Their work securing grants to help TNR (trap, neuter, release) feral and stray cats has made a great dent in the over population issue! I personally care for a colony and help TNR and with the shelter and Feral Freedoms help I have been able to fix about 12 out of 15 cats in my colony, and have gotten 8 kittens to rescue. This wouldn't have been possible without these resources. Please not only continue with submitting grants, but please also consider setting aside a budget to have a TNR program, and a low cost spay/neuter programs for the communities pets. As we saw with the SNIP Bus program back in August/September if it's free, people will utilize the resource and get these pets fixed. Please continue the efforts. Although we've made a big dent, if it ends we will be back at square one.

Second, I would love an update on the 11 million dollar grant we received to build tiny homes for the unhoused community. Are we still receiving the grant? Are there conditions to receive the grant that haven't been met? Will Los Banos be setting aside a budget to tackle this issue? We desperately need housing for them, social workers, and harm reduction busses. For those who don't know what harm reduction is, it not only keeps hazardous needles off the ground, but provides these individuals struggling with small tangible goals that eventually leads them to treatment. As you know this is a multifaceted issue that takes multiple solutions working together to help these individuals and keep our community safe. Majority are just people struggling that need help. For the small portion of unhoused people stealing from and vandalizing residential neighborhoods I'd like to ask why they cannot be held accountable? I've seen community members with extremely clear camera footage showing the burglary's and even shows them going back to the encampment only for the residents to be told police can't do anything... regardless of housing status, those burglarizing residential neighborhoods are committing crimes that should be investigated.

Third and last, Our community has a large Hispanic population and I'm sure you have all heard of the mass deportation ICE raids across America. These raids our terrorizing not only undocumented people, but also legal Hispanic citizens. ICE has been targeting people simple for the color of their skin or speaking Spanish publicly. This has left US citizens ending up being detained. This is a violation of our constitutional rights. Hispanic leaders in our community have reached out to elected officials and police with no response. Many cities in Merced County have hosted town halls, and assured our Hispanic Community members they are valued and they stand with the community. It's disappointing leaders in Los Banos have been completely silent regarding this issue. These are hard working people just trying to provide for their families who pay taxes through sales tax, and are vital to our economy and community. I would love to know how the mayor and council feel about this crisis, and how you plan to support the Hispanic community.

Thank You,

Alyssa Homen

Sent from my iPhone