

**From:** [Janet Werkman](#)  
**To:** [Kamei, Ellen](#); [Abe-Koga, Margaret](#); [Hicks, Alison](#); [Matichak, Lisa](#); [City Council](#); [Lieber, Sally](#); [Showalter, Pat](#); [Ramirez, Lucas](#)  
**Subject:** Council discussion of Navarro et.al. v. City of Mountain View  
**Date:** Monday, December 6, 2021 8:34:52 PM  
**Attachments:** [December 6 letter to City Council \(1\).pdf](#)

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Mayor Kamei and Council Members:

Attached for your consideration please find a letter from the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning and Mountain View Housing Justice. Thank you.



December 6, 2021

Mayor and Council Members:

On Tuesday, December 7, the Mountain View City Council is scheduled to discuss further the City's response in *Navarro, et. al. v. City of Mountain View*, a lawsuit challenging the City's restrictions on the parking of oversized vehicles, which target people who live in those vehicles. We are writing to offer suggestions for how the City can respond positively to the lawsuit and address at the same time our area's continuing, worsening crisis of homelessness.

The federal magistrate in *Navarro* recently ruled that RV residents could prevail in several of their claims if the City implements parking restrictions so draconian as to leave them with no options for parking legally. In addition to exposing the City to liability, imposing restrictions that effectively banish RV residents would violate the fundamental human right to housing. For these reasons, we urge the City to focus on the need to identify safe and appropriate parking locations for all Mountain View residents living in RVs.

We acknowledge the laudable efforts the City has made to help residents unable to keep pace with the high cost of housing, including those living in vehicles. The City created a highly successful safe parking program that has become a model for other communities. The City also established a transitional housing program, operated by Life Moves, to help people find permanent housing. Both of these programs are currently operating at full capacity. The operator of the safe parking program reported that in November of 2021, all spaces for RVs were occupied and 10 RV households were on a waiting list. Despite the success of the City's safe parking program, the need continues to exceed its capacity.

In July of 2020, Mountain View police counted 191 RVs parked on city streets. After the City did not respond to a request for a count conducted in July of 2021, a group of community volunteers carried out an independent count in November of 2021 and found that the number of apparently inhabited oversized vehicles on public streets had increased to 206. (A map showing locations of vehicles is attached). This increase is consistent with media reports from across the Bay Area, showing more people resorting to living in vehicles. We believe the increase is primarily the result of the economic hardship experienced by many in our community, exacerbated by the pandemic, despite the record-breaking profits of local tech corporations and high salaries of many professional employees. The increase in vehicle dwellers has prompted a number of Bay Area cities, including San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley to establish safe parking programs in the past year. Closer to home, the cities of East Palo Alto, Palo Alto and San Jose have also undertaken safe parking programs.

We suggest the following actions to ease the impact of the new oversized vehicle parking restrictions on vulnerable people and help the City comply with its obligation to respect the legal rights of all residents.

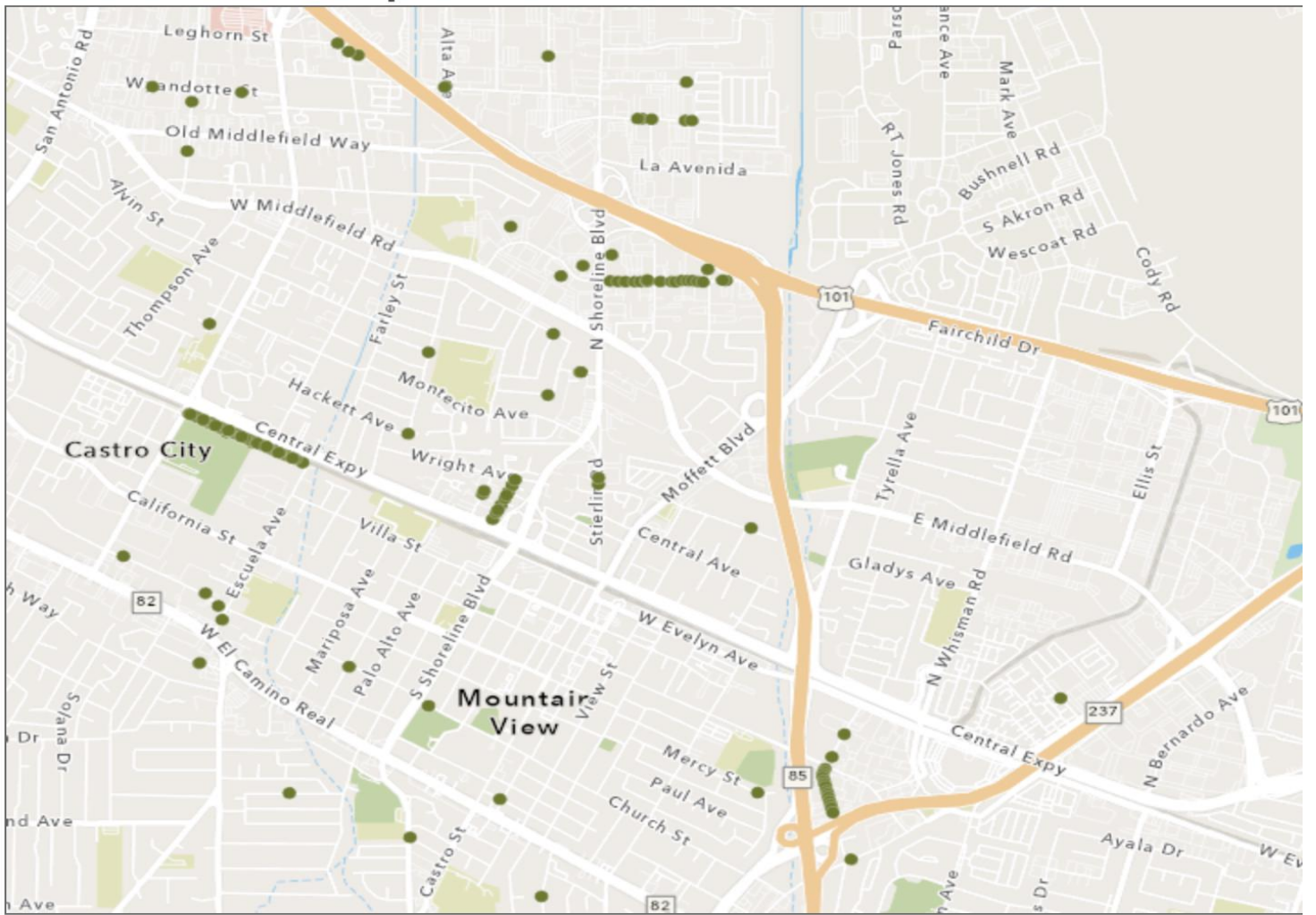
- Publish a map showing where oversized vehicles may park for 72 hours in Mountain View. The City's August 16, 2021 motion to dismiss the *Navarro* complaint states, "These available streets are identified on maps that inform the public where oversized vehicles may legally park." We are aware of no such maps. The City's June 15, 2021 Outreach Notice displays a map that simply shows where "No [Oversized Vehicle] Parking" signs have been or are being installed. Please note that many streets where Oversized Vehicles may park legally normally already have parked cars or have limited space between driveways, so they are not necessarily available.
- Where signs mark the boundary between rights-of-way less than 40 feet and more than 40 feet, add arrows to show which street segment is legally available.
- Remove "No Parking — 2 am to 6 pm" signs from streets wider than 40 feet where there are no identified traffic hazards.
- Expand the safe parking program, beginning with the portion of Shoreline Amphitheatre Lot B currently leased to Life Moves, which appears to be underutilized. Safe parking is safer than other forms of shelter offered to people without permanent housing and provides more independence and dignity.
- Consider the creation of an "RV Park" within Mountain View. The operation of such a facility could be less costly than our current safe parking program, because it could charge rent on a sliding scale and residents would not necessarily need case management. RV Parks normally provide utility hook-ups for hosted vehicles.

Housing analysts acknowledge that it will be years before current efforts to create affordable housing in the region begin to catch up with need. Housing will remain unaffordable for a large number of Mountain View's workers, seniors, people with disabilities, and other residents for the foreseeable future. We are faced with the reality that vehicle dwelling has become an essential alternative for meeting the immediate housing needs of some low-income individuals and families. By identifying ways to support these households and improve their living conditions, we will build a stronger, more inclusive, and more just community.

Thank you for considering these recommendations.

Bruce England, Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

Edie Keating, Janet Werkman, and Kevin Ma, Mountain View Housing Justice



Locations of Oversized Vehicles (RVs) on Public Streets November 2021