



NEWS RELEASE
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**City of Chico's Progress on Encampment Removal Halted Again
by Legal Services of Northern California**

Chico, CA – (Sept. 29, 2022) - The City of Chico's progress in the enforcement of anti-camping ordinances has been halted again due to objections recently made by the Plaintiffs' Counsel at Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC).

"We continue to demonstrate our commitment to encampment clean-up for the betterment of our city," said City Manager Mark Sorensen. "We are disappointed to learn of another delay in our progress. It appears a tactic that's being used against us is to continually delay and derail our progress and our ability to comply with the settlement."

"The tons of trash, debris and hazardous materials in the encampments and lack of sanitation are local health hazards and present fire danger. The City of Chico does not want LSNC's actions to delay enforcement because we are making good progress and we'd like to keep up the momentum," said Erik Gustafson, City of Chico's Director of Public Works. "Additionally, encampment trash and residue leak into our waterways and greenways and create environmental damage, and the conditions these citizens are living in can cause lasting and costly damage to the land."

It's the City's intent to provide housing, per the Settlement Agreement. However, the present challenges standing in the way of forward progress are:

- LSNC wants the City to be required to resolve any reasonable accommodation requests a homeless person might make during an enforcement effort before such individual relocates to the shelter they have been assessed for. Additionally, LSNC wants to require the City to resolve any such reasonable accommodation requests on behalf of the Torres Shelter, rather than having that shelter resolve such requests itself. The City's position is that the evaluation of a reasonable accommodation request can take several weeks, which would cause unreasonable delays to enforcement operations if such requests cannot be resolved after a homeless individual moves into the shelter they have been assessed for. Moreover, the City urges that the Torres Shelter should have the opportunity to manage any reasonable accommodation requests directed specifically to it.
- LSNC does not want the City to ask homeless persons to sign forms indicating what property they would be willing to abandon when they are assessed for shelter, especially if the City does not instruct people that the City may store property for them. The City's

position is that the current use of property abandonment forms is reasonable to reduce the volume of trash and unwanted property collected in encampments throughout the City. Further, the City does not want to increase the likelihood of conflict during enforcement operations by incentivizing homeless individuals to request that the City store garbage and other items it is not required to store.

The latest halt occurred on the very day that noticing was to begin in the Windchime Park area of the Little Chico Creek greenway.

City representatives are making themselves available for an informal conference before the Court as early as possible to resolve these issues with LSNC.

For more information, please contact:

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Located in Butte County, California, Chico is the cultural and economic center of the northern Sacramento Valley and the largest city north of Sacramento. Known as a college town, the home of California State University, Chico and for Bidwell Park, one of the largest urban parks in the world. For more information, visit www.chico.ca.us

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