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May 22, 2018 | Letter to the Editor

Restricted Parking Enforcement Should End

According to East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) visitor counts at Mission Peak Regional Preserve declined by 23% over the last three years. This is discordant with other parks in the East Bay, where visitor counts increased by 72% since 2009. Parks support healthful exercise, and local governments should encourage people to spend time in nature: Healthy Parks equals Healthy People.

However, EBRPD supports the restriction of parking in the Stanford Avenue neighborhood, by providing free enforcement in those areas where the city of Fremont blocked 2,000 parking spaces in 2016. The district has a mission to promote our parks and open space. Every dollar spent to restrict parking and block access to our parks undermines that mission. These enforcement dollars should instead be spent on litigation, defending the district and the public from those who'd block the expansion of parking inside the park.

Enforcement is expensive. The park district spent $42,000 over 14 months, to enforce parking near Mission Peak. District police spent 207 hours (3.5 hours/week), and handed out over 65% of the tickets to restrict parking on city streets. This excludes transit, administrative and supervisory time, as well as training overhead.

The fines don't cover the costs of enforcement, since EBRPD receives none of the revenue. More than 3,000 citations have been handed out since the crackdown began, with fines totaling over $180,000. The district is left with fewer funds to operate our parks, visitors are punished, and our local restaurants and shops suffer. A typical $63 ticket costs as much as a family meal or a tank of gas. The loss of business revenues reduces sales tax receipts, thereby impacting city coffers. The parking harassment is a stain on the reputation of our city and the park district, and should be ended.

wm. yragui
Mission Peak Conservancy

Due to expire July 2020

- Parking restrictions on city streets near Mission Peak;
- Temporary permits for residential parking;
- Enforcement agreement with EBRPD police

Mission Peak Conservancy
protecting park access

We're on facebook at Mission Peak Conservancy or www.missionpeakconservancy.net