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Letter to the Editor: Mission Peak

Many of those who visit Fremont's number one attraction, Mission Peak Regional Preserve, are first-timers. East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) surveyed visitors in 2015, during the planning for the new parking lot inside the park.
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http://www.ebparks.org/Assets/_Nav_Categories/Parks/Mission+Peak/2015-11-03+Parking+Management+Survey+-+full+appendix+-+BAE.pdf

A plurality of visitors is from Fremont. Most (63%) visitors either had not visited during the past year, or visited only once or twice. This makes them susceptible to citation by city and or park police since they are proverbial babes in the woods.

Visitors are being ticketed for parking and curfew violations, predominately around 6:30 a.m. During November 2016ÐJuly 2017, 2,478 parking tickets were handed out near Mission Peak. Churning out 64 tickets per week, the city and EBRPD have rung up over $100,000 in fines assuming $42-$62 per ticket. Mission Peak leads the city in ticketing. The rest of the city had just $350,000 in parking tickets in 2013. The Mission Peak racket is more profitable, because the park district hands out 72% of the tickets on city streets; enforcement cost is shifted from the city to the park district.
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More than 81% of those that responded to the survey live in Alameda or Contra Costa County, and 75% said theyÕd reached the summit. This is impressive and amazing, given the difficult trail, elevation change of 2,000 ft. and a round-trip of six miles. According to the official report, the park is not Ònearly as popular for sunset hikes as for sunrise.Ó Mornings are more popular, with 39% of visits before 9:00 a.m., and only 13% after 4:00 p.m.
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Just two real crimes have been reported at the park during the last three years. However, a wave of car break-ins litters the neighborhood with broken glass. With little police presence, break-ins are not thwarted. Areas with unrestricted parking donÕt have warning signs or video cameras. Visitors are being preyed upon.
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Interestingly, speeding on nearby Antelope Drive is rampant. It has the highest proportion of speeders of any city street according to a 2015 Speed Survey. But, the street is ignored by city police and residents race at 35Ð40 mph, where the limit is 25 mph.
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We recommend the park district restore the park opening to 5:00 a.m. to reduce ticketing and allow park visitors to see sunrise from the summit. If you agree, please reach out to EBRPD managers:

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