

From: [Thetotoroboy](#)
To: [CityCouncilListPublic](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Allocation of PG&E funds
Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 7:19:08 PM

Dear esteemed council members,

As a life long resident of Santa Rosa I have witnessed many changes to our great city, for better or worse. Our community has shown its resilience in recent years, and continue to face these challenging times with strength and compassion. One of the most apparent changes has been a dramatic increase in homelessness. The problem has been growing for years, yet we chose to ignore it and by turning a blind eye we have made a mountain out of a molehill. We have finally acknowledged we have a problem, but the controversy surrounding it is limiting our ability to find an appropriate solution to this crisis.

Many people have expressed disdain towards this vulnerable population, judging them to be undesirable and unworthy of support. Stereotypes and false assumption have dominated the conversation, controlled the narrative, and directed our response thus far. When the Joe Rodota trail was at its peak population SRPD cracked down, clearing the trail and fencing it off. It cost the taxpayers \$450,000 to clean the trail and bring it back to its former aesthetic, while completely ignoring the problem. We did not end homelessness for those 300 people, we simply refused to acknowledge there existence.

I understand people's frustration, I want the city to stay beautiful, clean and safe as well. The reality is homelessness is unsightly and repellent, but cannot compare to the ugly truth:

California is the worlds 5th largest economy, Sonoma county is world renowned, and Santa Rosa is relatively prosperous. How then can we justify turning our backs on our fellow citizens? How can we enjoy our meals, our homes, our families, knowing somewhere nearby someone suffers, hungry and alone?

Forced relocation has been proven itself a failure time and time again, it continues to cost the taxpayers money, and does not address the root of the problem.

I am urging the city council to use a portion of the PG&E funds for the benefit of our homeless population and our community as a whole. I only hope we can find a better solution by using our common sense and compassion.

Sincerely,

Steven Gomez