



The Willard Neighborhood Association

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Camping in the Parking Strip

The problem of camping in the space between the curb and the sidewalk is an issue in most of our neighborhood but its especially acute on the blocks just South of People's Park. On a regular basis, neighbors watch people leaving the park each evening with all their belongings and setting up their campsite in the parking strips. We met with the City of Berkeley and the BPD in order to clarify the application of current laws.

I. Needed conditions to enforce PC647(j) – no lodging in public spaces

Sidewalk and parking strip are public property

Blocking the sidewalk is covered by BMC 13.36.10

1) Only at night (this interpretation was made by the City Attorney)

2) Must have belongings such as bedroll and other items (this interpretation was made by the City Attorney)

II. Enforcement begins with resident's complaint – you must call to start the process.

Call the BPD non-emergency phone 981-5900

You should complain about anyone you see camping in the parking strip or on the sidewalk, not just those camping in front of your own property. Its important to make the point that this neighborhood is not a good place to bed down.

III. What information should the resident have when calling in complaint?

Your address

Your name

Request to move camper

Location of camper

Description of camper (whatever description you can provide)

IV. Here's what the Berkeley Police will do.

The BPD will give 2 warnings before a citation can be issued

Council Resolution 60142 (warning section may be affected by Public Commons Initiative)

Responding officer will allow the camper reasonable time to comply with warning then will give second warning if there is still no compliance within a reasonable time a citation will be issued. In almost all cases the person leaves after being warned.

If someone has small warrants outstanding, the police use that as leverage to say, "If you don't move along, then I'll have to arrest you on the outstanding warrants".

If someone has major warrants outstanding, the police will arrest them and take them to jail.

If you would like to get involved in the WNA, please contact Joe Halperin at 981-1993 or joelynn@comcast.net

For people with mental or drug issues, the police use the same protocol in all cases. If their problem is not just that they need a place to sleep, then they will be directed to other services, or taken there if need be.

If they move only a short distance, its the officer's discretion as to whether this constitutes a need for new set of warnings but a new complaint will definitely restart the process.

V. What can we do to help the police?

Keep porch lights on at night / keep shrubs trimmed back.
Light up the front of your house and the sidewalk.

WNA will switch out your porch light for a compact fluorescent if you agree to leave it on all night."

VI. What about camping in the local parks? Here's who you should call:

Willard Park – call BPD
non-emergency phone 981-5900

Peoples Park – call UCPD
642-6760

City parks close at 10 pm
Anyone there after 10pm gets moved on.

BPD Area Coordinator – Officer Steve Burcham 981-5778