

In recent weeks, the conditions at San Lorenzo Park have deteriorated to the extent that we feel that a temporary park closure is the City's best and only realistic option. Specifically:

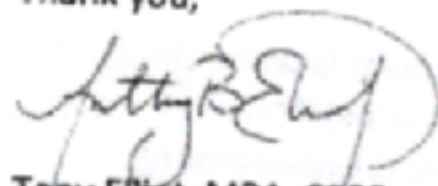
- The City's facilities have been vandalized with graffiti and illegal electrical taps.
- This site has been host to fires and fire safety issues.
- The City has received increased calls for service related to reported criminal activity in the area, including calls related to trespassing on nearby private property and even defecating within a neighboring garage.
- City staff has also observed a lack of social-distancing and mask wearing, and thus, it is possible that an encampment of this size and density could become a COVID-19 hotspot.
- The presence of criminal activity in the area prevents the City's park from being used as a park by the community.
- City staff is aware of theft of City tools and supplies.
- Encampments have destroyed the City's grass.
- Encampments are attached to trees, likely damaging those trees.
- Branches from the City's trees have been incorporated into encampment structures.
- Significant City resources are currently being used to manage the voluminous trash and needles that are created by occupants of the unmanaged encampments.
- This site has experienced large amounts of improperly disposed litter, in addition to human and animal waste.
- City staff no longer feel safe in the area and must operate in pairs.
- The City needs to conduct deferred maintenance in the park.

It is worth noting that the City recently paid over \$140,000 to clean and start the rehabilitation process of areas within the Pogonip. Especially during this time of significant budgetary constraints, we have a duty to preserve the park grounds and facilities and to prevent exorbitant rehabilitation expenses from becoming necessary at San Lorenzo Park.

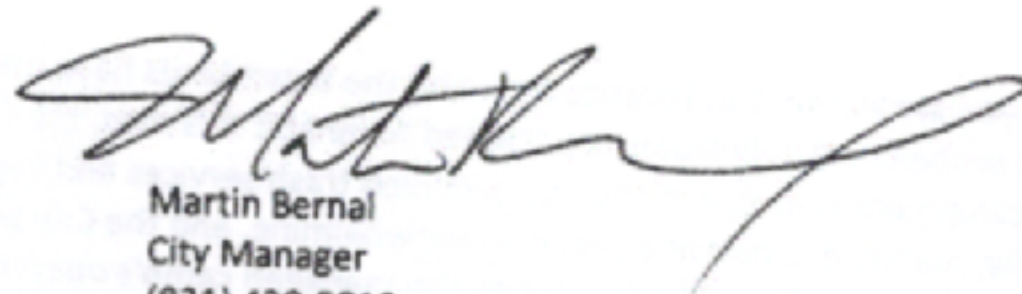
Individuals who currently reside in encampments in the park will be given reasonable written notice of this closure. We hope to work with the County to make sure that, to the greatest extent possible, outreach workers contact impacted individuals and try to connect them with any available shelter resources.

Please feel free to call or write with any questions you may have about this matter.

Thank you,



Tony Elliot, MPA, CPRP
Parks & Recreation Director
(831) 421-1872
telliott@cityofsantacruz.com



Martin Bernal
City Manager
(831) 420-5010
mbernal@cityofsantacruz.com