

The Avenue Merchants
3107 W. Colorado Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

January 15, 2010

El Paso County Board of County Commissioners

Wayne Williams, District 1;
Amy Lathen, District 2;
Sallie Clark, District 3;
Dennis Hisey, District 4;
Jim Bensberg, District 5

27 E. Vermijo Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Dear Commissioners:

As you know, the Colorado Springs City Council is considering an ordinance to limit and/or ban camping on public property in the city. We respectfully request the county adopt a similar ordinance to prevent campers from simply moving onto county land once a city ordinance is enacted. As that happens, the health and safety issues we are experiencing in the City of Colorado Springs will become a County problem.

Specifically, we are concerned about the homeless camps located off West Colorado Avenue along Fountain Creek, in the "no-man's land" just outside city limits. It's already a problem, and we fear it will only get much worse without action.

According to code enforcement and police officials, many of the campers off West Colorado Avenue near Ridge Road know they are outside of city limits. It won't take long for the word to spread and the problem to intensify.

We have been working closely with City Council, law enforcement and other city officials on a redevelopment taskforce focused on Westside improvements.

At a Westside Redevelopment Team meeting held Jan. 13, 2010 at the Gold Hill police substation, it became clear that the City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County - along with the City of Manitou Springs - need to work in concert to address the camping situation.

It is our hope that the county and city will collaborate to address this issue.

Respectfully yours,

The Avenue Merchants board of directors

Robert Maez, The UPS Store
Gary Vogrin, Papa Murphy's
Mike Crepeau, Hotel San Ayre

cc: Colorado Springs City Council, City of Manitou Springs