



July 8, 2020

Dear Community:

Many of you may be aware that we are planning for a large scale protest on July 12th. We have received numerous emails and messages from concerned business owners and residents about potential problems in our town due to the protest.

I wanted to provide some information on what we know, what we are doing, and what we expect. As a small community thrust into the national spotlight, we are now receiving a large amount of publicity and this has translated into a planned protest on Sunday July 12th. We anticipate a large group of folks showing up to gather at the Mural on Court Street and then marching to the waterfront.

WHAT WE KNOW:

There are several organizers involved and we have been in contact with the national group, TWS Revolution, as well as the local group, Martizians for Black Lives. The organizers from both groups have been helpful and cooperative in the planning of the event. They have worked with us on their walking routes and are committed to a peaceful gathering. We do not anticipate any issues from these groups, but we do anticipate a large number of demonstrators showing up at the Mural to gather.

I know that we have many in our community that are afraid and concerned about what this event may bring. I would ask that as a community, we collectively take a deep breath. Please know that as a City, we are doing all we can to ensure that the community remains safe. We do not have any specific information that would lead us to believe there will be any problems, but we cannot predict what may occur and with that in mind, we will have adequate staff on hand. I appreciate the help from the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office and all the agencies within our County that are providing officers to assist us through mutual aid.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Our plan is to have officers out and about on Main Street and in the general downtown area to provide patrols to the businesses downtown. In an effort to control traffic in the area and to provide a buffer between the business areas, residential areas, and the protestors on Court Street, we will be blocking off the following streets starting on Saturday July 11th at 10:00 pm. Vehicles will not be permitted to enter the area until Monday the 13th at 7:00 am:

- 500-800 blocks of Ferry St.
- 600-800 blocks of Las Juntas
- 500-800 blocks of Court St.
- 600-700 blocks of Pine St.



- 800-1000 blocks of Marina Vista
- 800-1000 blocks of Escobar
- 800-1000 blocks of Main St.
- 800-1000 blocks of Ward St.
- 800-900 blocks of Green St.

While we realize that blocking the streets will be inconvenient, it will provide us the ability to properly manage foot and vehicular traffic. It will enable us to provide a buffer as well as clear lines of sight between the protest and the surrounding area. We ask that the public and our business owners not park their vehicles in these areas from Saturday at 10:00 pm to Monday morning at 7:00 am. We will be placing barricades up to block off the streets to create this buffer zone.

Furthermore, the groups involved have agreed to park their cars at the Waterfront and convene at the Mural. They will then march from the Courthouse on Court Street to Marina Vista, west towards Ferry Street, and back to the Waterfront. This should alleviate parking related issues in and around the downtown area.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT?

For anyone that is involved in the protest on Sunday – I would ask that you participate in a way that is respectful and mindful of others. Even when you may feel frustrated or angry, remember that when we lose our patience or lose control, any message we are trying to send gets lost in the delivery. Let's all focus on sharing our message in a constructive and peaceful way.

The police department is committed to keeping the community safe. I have been asked by residents if the police will be enforcing the law. The answer is yes, we will. We want to provide an environment where people can peacefully assemble and engage in freedom of speech, but we cannot condone acts of violence, looting, damage to property, or behavior that puts the community at risk. Please help us keep this event civil and work with us to maintain the safety of our community. We are counting on you to help us help all of you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Manjit Sappal
Chief of Police