

Subject: Urgent Attention Needed: Overgrown Weeds and Vegetation in Petaluma

Dear City of Petaluma Officials, I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my concern about the overgrown weeds and vegetation in our beautiful city. As a resident, I have observed several issues related to this matter that I believe require urgent attention.

- 1. Health Impact on Allergy Sufferers:** The overgrown weeds and vegetation pose a significant health risk to residents, especially those suffering from allergies. Pollen from these plants can exacerbate allergy symptoms, leading to discomfort, respiratory issues, and increased medical expenses. Many individuals are forced to spend their own money on medications and relief due to the persistent presence of these allergens.
- 2. First Impressions Matter:** Petaluma is a charming town, and we take pride in welcoming visitors. However, when people exit the freeway and enter our city, the overgrown weeds are often the first thing they see. It's an embarrassment that such a picturesque town is marred by neglected vegetation. We want visitors to remember Petaluma for its beauty, not its unruly greenery.
- 3. Inequity in Enforcement:** While homeowners are fined for having overgrown weeds in their yards, it seems that the city is not equally diligent in maintaining public spaces. It's disheartening to witness this double standard. If we expect residents to keep their properties tidy, the city should lead by example and address the issue of overgrown vegetation on sidewalks, center dividers, and other public areas.
- 4. Safety Hazards:** Overgrown vegetation obstructs sidewalks, making pedestrian travel difficult. People are forced to walk over weeds, which can be hazardous, especially for those with mobility challenges. Additionally, low-hanging tree branches can impede visibility at intersections, posing risks to both pedestrians and drivers. We need to prioritize safety by ensuring proper clearance for pedestrians and vehicles.
- 5. Aesthetic Impact:** Petaluma has a rich history and a small-town charm that draws residents and visitors alike. However, the overgrown weeds detract from this charm. They make our town look unkempt and neglected. Let's work together to restore Petaluma's visual appeal by addressing this issue promptly.

Action Needed: I kindly request that the City of Petaluma take the following steps:

- **Regular Maintenance:** Implement a comprehensive maintenance plan to regularly trim overgrown vegetation in public areas, including sidewalks, center dividers, and streets.
- **Public Awareness Campaign:** Educate residents about their responsibility to maintain trees and vegetation adjacent to their properties. Encourage community participation in keeping Petaluma beautiful.
- **Timely Weed Abatement:** Ensure that the weed abatement program is carried out promptly each year, well before the first major rains of fall.

Let's work together to create a Petaluma that reflects our pride and commitment to a clean, safe, and welcoming environment. I appreciate your

attention to this matter and look forward to positive changes in our city.
Thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely,

Maja Ilonummi