Dear Sammamish City Council and City Planning commission.

I am writing to share my strong opposition to specific changes in the newly drafted city ordinance for temporary homeless encampment in our city.

The ordinance should go further then what it currently does at protecting the rights and providing adequate safety measures to the residents of Sammamish. The city also needs to ensure that the impact due to a recurring temporary encampment doesn’t fall on a small concentrated population of Sammamish and is well spread across the entire community. Also the ordinance should be built taking into account similar ordinances which are already in place by cities that are similar in size and demographics such as Mercer Island and discount the ordinances of bigger cities such as Seattle which have a very different demographics and size. With regards to the above mentioned concerns we would like the City of Sammamish make following amendments to the proposed ordinance:

(1) The city should consider changing the time period mentioned in item#6 under Section C – General Conditions from 12 months period to 18 months period. The 12 month period is too short and has the risk of putting un-due burden on the same residents very frequently and the 12 month frequency is much shorter than the average duration limit other neighboring cities impose.

(2) The city should consider adding requirements for random warrant checks for people residing in the temporary encampment during their stay covered in item# 20 under Section C – General Conditions. Such strict rules are already part of other more responsible homeless encampments on the eastside such as Camp Unity. Also these requirements are must to ensure the safety of our kids first and foremost.

In addition we would like to ensure that the city doesn’t further lax the following restrictions already mentioned in the ordinance:

(1) We request the city should maintain the proposed 90 day max encampment duration mentioned in item#5 under Section C – General Conditions and not extend it to 120 days as suggested by the other party.

(2) We request city council to stick to the current proposal of not granting permission to the homeless encampment on a lot or lots within one-half mile of any lot that contained a homeless encampment. This is covered in item#6 of section C – General Comments.

(3) We request the city council to stick to the current proposal of the application process for temporary encampment permits as outlined under Section E – General conditions section and not relax any of the requirements.
Having read through the various police actions that occurred during TC4's recent stay, it is highly concerning that our city would endorse any lenience to our existing ordinance. Furthermore, it is unfair to burden the tax-paying citizens of Sammamish with the increased costs of added police service. It is prudent to let TC4 pay for the needed police service as well as any additional costs incurred for specific police action. Such as another narcotics arrest. Or another rape investigation.

How can the city council allow any leniency towards more crime and harm that can come to our peaceful family community? The charges held against TC4 are serious.. drug use, sale, and assault. Should the community be asked to tolerate such crime? Will the city council take responsibility for any harm that may come to family, friends, and neighbors?

It seems to me that the council should stand as a champion for the community to protect the rights of the people for a safe and peaceful place to call home against an organization that is clearly putting their agenda ahead of the welfare of our neighborhood families.

The logical conclusion is clear... maintain and insure the safety of the people we call family and friends.

Sincerely,

Laura Nemiroff