



OWOSSO PUBLIC SAFETY

202 S. WATER ST. • OWOSSO, MICHIGAN 48867-2958 • (989) 725-0580 • FAX (989)725-0528

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 15, 2026

TO: Owosso City Council

FROM: Kevin Lenkart
Public Safety Chief

RE: Ordinance Addition – Prohibition of Unauthorized Camping and Overnight Occupation of City Property

Recommendation:

Recommend Owosso City Council approve the attached resolution setting a public hearing for October 5, 2026, to receive citizen comment regarding the proposal to add ordinance, Prohibition of Unauthorized Camping and Overnight Occupation of City Property, to Chapter 21-10, Parks and Recreation, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Owosso.

Background:

Currently the City of Owosso Parking does not have an ordinance prohibiting camping on City Property. The adoption of this ordinance will allow Owosso Police staff to enforce this ordinance.

RESOLUTION NO.

**AUTHORIZING FIRST READING & SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING
FOR THE PROPOSED ADDITION TO SECS. 10 OF CHAPTER 21,
PARKS AND RECREATION, OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR
PROHIBITION OF UNAUTHORIZED CAMPING AND OVERNIGHT
OCCUPATION OF CITY PROPERTY**

WHEREAS, the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan, requests to add an ordinance to prohibit unauthorized camping on city property; and

WHEREAS, it shall be unlawful for any person to camp on city property;

and WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to add the ordinance to prohibit camping on city property; and

WHEREAS, it is the long-standing practice of the City Council to hold a public hearing to receive citizen comment regarding any and all proposed ordinance amendments.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THE CITY OF OWOSSO ORDAINS THAT:

Section 1. Addition. That Sec 21-10, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Owosso be added as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 21 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Owosso is hereby amended by adding a new section, to be numbered **Section 10**, to read as follows:

Sec. 21-10 Prohibition of Unauthorized Camping and Overnight Occupation of City Property.

(a) Prohibition.

It shall be unlawful for any person to camp, establish or maintain a temporary place to live or sleep, or occupy City-owned or City-controlled property overnight.

(b) Sleeping in Vehicles.

It shall be unlawful for any person to sleep overnight in a vehicle, including, but not limited to, a van, automobile, camper, motor home, recreational vehicle, or similar vehicle, while the vehicle is located on City-owned or City-controlled property.

(c) Camping Facilities and Paraphernalia.

It shall be unlawful for any person to establish or maintain a campsite or temporary place to live or sleep on City-owned or City-controlled property through the use of camping facilities or camping paraphernalia, including, but not limited to, tents, huts, temporary shelters, cots, beds, sleeping bags, hammocks, tarps, or similar items.

(d) Definitions.

For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

1. **Campsite** means any place where any bedding, sleeping bag or other sleeping matter, or any stove or fire is placed, established or maintained, regardless of whether such place incorporates the use of any tent, shack, structure, or vehicle.
2. **To Camp** means to set up or to remain in or at a campsite for the purpose of establishing or maintaining a temporary place to live or sleep.
3. **Temporary Shelter** means any structure, enclosure, covering, or other arrangement used or intended to provide temporary protection from the elements or to establish or maintain a place to live or sleep, including, but not limited to, tents, tarps, huts, or makeshift shelters.

(e) City-Owned or City-Controlled Property.

The prohibitions contained in this section apply to all City-owned or City-controlled property, including, but not limited to:

1. City parks;
2. Public parking lots;
3. Streets and alleys;
4. Sidewalks;
5. Public rights-of-way;
6. Public easements;
7. Public bike paths and trails;
8. Public recreational areas; and
9. Other public areas, whether improved or unimproved, under the ownership or control of the City.

(f) Personal Property Associated with Unauthorized Camping or Occupation.

1. If camping facilities, camping paraphernalia, or other personal property are found on City-owned or City-controlled property in violation of this section, the owner of such property, if present, shall be given a reasonable opportunity to remove the property.
2. If the owner is not present, or refuses to remove the property, the property may be removed and handled in accordance with established City policies and applicable law.
3. If the owner arrives during the removal of property, the owner shall, when reasonably practicable, be provided an opportunity to remove the property.

(h) Violation.

A person who violates any provision of this section shall be responsible for a municipal civil infraction.

(i) Enforcement.

Nothing in this section shall prevent the City or its authorized personnel from taking appropriate action to address an immediate threat to public health, safety, or welfare or from enforcing any other applicable provision of the City Code.

Section 2. Severability.

If any provision, section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.

Section 3. Repealer.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 4. Effective Date.

This ordinance shall become effective

CITY OF OWOSSO

By: _____
Mayor

By: _____
City Clerk