

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 521.17 AND 945.12 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES TO REGULATE CAMPING ON CITY PROPERTY, CITY BUILDINGS, STREETS, SIDEWALKS, AND PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY IN THE CITY OF CHARDON AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

WHEREAS, the City of Chardon owns or controls real property, streets, sidewalks, and rights-of-way within the City; and

WHEREAS, said public lands and rights-of-way are owned, controlled, operated and maintained for specific public purposes; and

WHEREAS, the act of camping on public real property, streets, sidewalks, and rights-of-way impair and impede the specific public purposes for which the real property, streets, sidewalks, and rights-of-way have been devoted to public use, threatens their good and orderly maintenance, can endanger facilities and grounds, and can endanger persons and property; and

WHEREAS, the act of camping on public real property, streets, sidewalks, and rights-of-way subject persons to health, safety, and welfare risks, including but not limited to: unsafe and unsanitary conditions, fire safety risks, and potential property damage or injury by changing pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Charter and plenary power conferred by §§ 3 and 7 of Article XVIII of the Ohio Constitution, the Council finds that it is in furtherance of the public health, safety and welfare to enact this prohibition against camping on publicly owned/controlled property and public rights-of-way in the City of Chardon.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Chardon, Geauga County, Ohio, that:

Section 1. Section 521.17 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Chardon is hereby amended to read as follows:

**“521.17 CAMPING.**

- (a) "Camping" shall mean the erection of temporary living accommodations; **the placing or assembling of a shelter, tent or other structure; or sleeping, making preparations to sleep, placing bedding or any materials used for bedding purposes; sleeping, erecting a tent lighting of fires and/or using space heaters or other methods of generating heat for warmth; lighting fires and/or using hot plates or other means of preparing food or drinks; storing personal belongings or other activities commonly associated with the aforementioned conduct, when such conduct takes place outside of a permanent physical structure or residence.**
- (b) **"Shelter" means anything designed, including that which is of crude or extemporaneous assembly, to provide a person protection from the natural elements for purposes of sleeping, food preparation, and/or any other activities of living.**
- (c) No person shall engage in Camping on or in **the any sidewalk, street, alley, lane, or any public right of way; on or in any city-owned or controlled building; on or in any real property owned or controlled by the City, including but not limited to: 111 Water Street, any City park, the City Square, any City cemetery, the Maple Highlands Trail and the open areas along the side of the trail, the trail heads at: South Street, Park Avenue, Water Street, Center Street, and Fifth Avenue, all tree lawns,** or the properties located at 432 and 434 Water Street.
- (d) Any person who violates this section shall be guilty of a fourth-degree misdemeanor. After a person's first criminal conviction, all subsequent violations shall be penalized as a first-degree misdemeanor.”

Section 2. Section 945.12 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Chardon is hereby amended as follows:

**945.12 PARK-SPECIFIC RULES AND REGULATIONS.**

In addition to the generally applicable rules set forth in Section 945.11, the following park-specific rules and regulations shall govern in each of the following City parks:

(a) Mel Harder Park.

(1) Seasonal Use: Mel Harder Park shall be open for public use during the spring, summer, and fall seasons. Except as designated by the City, Mel Harder Park shall be closed from November 1 through March 15 of the following year.

(2) Hours of Operation: When open for use, Mel Harder Park shall be open from dawn until 11:00 p.m. on a daily basis.

(3) Camping is prohibited within Mel Harder Park **and is also prohibited**, ~~but is permitted~~ on Permanent Parcel No. 10-709646.

(b) Living Memorial Park.

(1) Living Memorial Park shall be open year-round.

(2) Hours of Operation: Living Memorial Park shall be open from dawn until 11:00 p.m. on a daily basis.

(3) The City is authorized to establish separate rules and regulations regarding the use of the sledding hill, Chalet, fitness equipment, trails, gazebo, and sculptures within the Living Memorial Park.

(4) Camping is prohibited within Living Memorial Park.

(c) City Pool/Paved Courts/Skate Park.

(1) The Recreation Director shall establish the dates and hours of operation for the Pool.

(2) Paved Courts and the Skate Park shall be open during hours established and posted on site by the Recreation Director.

(3) Camping is prohibited at the City Pool, on the paved courts, and the Skate Park.

(d) Water Street Pocket Park.

(1) The Water Street Pocket Park shall be open from dawn until 11:00 p.m. on a daily basis.

(2) Camping is prohibited within the Water Street Pocket Park.

(e) Ibold Park.

(1) Camping is prohibited within ~~designated areas~~ Ibold Park.

**(f) "Camping shall have the same meaning and definition as Section 521.17 of the Codified Ordinances."**

Section 3. Section 945.99 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Chardon is hereby amended as follows:

**945.99 PENALTY.**

Whoever violates any provision of this Chapter shall be fined as follows:

For non-parking offenses: for the first offense, not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00); for a second offense within one year after the first offense, not more than one hundred dollars (\$100.00), or imprisoned not more than ten (10) days, or both. A third offense within one year, and each successive violation thereafter, shall each constitute a first degree misdemeanor with a maximum fine of up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) and a maximum jail time of 180 days.

For parking violations under this Chapter, penalties shall be issued in accordance with Chapter 351 of the Codified Ordinances.

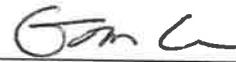
**For violations of the prohibitions on camping set forth in this Chapter, penalties shall be issued in accordance with Section 521.17 of the Codified Ordinances."**

Section 4. Any ordinances in conflict with Sections 1, 2 or 3 above be and hereby are repealed.

Section 5. It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to the passage of this Ordinance were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with the law.

Section 6. This Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure because it is immediately necessary for the City to take prompt steps to ensure that the act of camping on public real property, streets, sidewalks, and rights-of-way stop impairing and impeding the specific public purposes for which the real property, streets, sidewalks, and rights-of-way have been devoted to public use, to ensure that the act of camping stops threatening the good and orderly maintenance of said public spaces and property, and to stop exposing the public to health, safety, and welfare risks, including but not limited to: unsafe and unsanitary conditions, fire safety risks, and potential property damage or injury by changing pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns, accordingly, this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 13 day of February, 2025.



CHRISTOPHER GRAU, Mayor  
President of Council

Attest:



AMY DAY  
Clerk of Council