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## TULARE RESIDENTS DEMAND ACTION ON HOMELESSNESS CHALLENGES



[By Francisco Ramirez Jr.](#)

### Community Voices Concerns at City Council Meeting

At the June 17, 2025, Tulare City Council meeting in Tulare, CA, residents raised urgent concerns about homelessness during the public comment period, highlighting its impact on public safety and community spaces in the Central Valley. Linda Molloy, representing the AmVets Ladies Auxiliary, addressed the council, stating that flags placed at Zumwalt Park to honor veterans were stolen, with homeless individuals identified as the culprits. "We put up 300 flags for Memorial Day and Veterans Day," Molloy said, noting that 50 flags were taken, costing \$250 to replace. She emphasized the need for stronger measures, saying, "The homeless situation is out of control."

Vicki Gordon, another resident, echoed Molloy's concerns, describing a troubling incident near the flagpoles. She recounted observing a homeless individual urinating in public near children playing, which she said posed a public [health](#) risk. "It's not safe for our kids or our community," Gordon told the [council](#), urging action to address such behaviors in Tulare, CA. Both speakers criticized the city's temporary homeless encampment, arguing it has not resolved ongoing issues like theft and public disturbances in the Central Valley city.



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## Budget Debate Highlights Competing Priorities

Later in the meeting, the discussion of homelessness resurfaced during the adoption of Tulare's \$1,177,938,330 fiscal year 2026 budget. Council Member Jose Sigala proposed allocating 10% of Measure Y funds, approximately \$100,000, to support at-risk [youth programs](#), citing the need to prioritize prevention over addressing homelessness after the fact. "We're spending a lot on homelessness, but we need to invest in our youth to stop these cycles," Sigala said. However, the proposal was rejected in a 2-3 vote, with Mayor Patrick Isherwood, Vice Mayor Stephen C. Harrell, and Council Member Dennis A. Mederos voting against it. Council Member Terry A. Sayre joined Sigala in supporting the motion.

The budget discussion underscored tensions between addressing immediate homelessness challenges and investing in long-term community solutions. Residents like Molloy and Gordon expressed frustration that existing measures, such as the encampment, have not curbed incidents affecting downtown Tulare, CA. The council's decision to prioritize other budget items over youth programs sparked debate about how best to allocate resources in the Central Valley community.

## Calls for Stronger Action Persist

The public comments and budget debate reflect growing concern among Tulare residents about homelessness and its effects on safety and community pride. Molloy's plea for action on flag theft and Gordon's report of public [health risks highlight the urgency felt by locals](#). While the council, led by Mayor Isherwood, acknowledged these concerns, no immediate policy changes were proposed during the meeting. The rejection of Sigala's youth funding proposal further emphasized the challenge of balancing short-term interventions with preventive measures in Tulare, CA.

As the Central Valley city grapples with these issues, residents continue to call for solutions that protect [public spaces and ensure safety](#). The council's next steps remain unclear, but



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the voices of Molloy, Gordon, and others signal a community eager for change.