



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Councilmember Sergio Jimenez

**SUBJECT:** See Below

**DATE:** October 31, 2022

Approved

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**City Initiatives Roadmap – Emergency Housing System Expansion: Actions Related to the Homekey Program Round 2 Funds from the California Department of Housing and Community Development for Interim Housing Located at Branham Lane and Monterey Road.**

## Recommendations

1. Approve the staff recommendations.
2. Direct the City Manager to work with LifeMoves to prioritize outreach to houseless residents living within the immediate vicinity of this development, particularly along Monterey Road south of Capitol Expressway, at least six months prior to construction and occupation of the interim housing.
3. Explore the feasibility of, and identify funding sources for, pedestrian safety improvements at the corners of Monterey Rd and Branham Ln, and Branham Ln and Saddle Brook Dr, to ensure safe pedestrian access to Edenvale Library and Edenvale Garden Park.
4. Direct the City Manager to work with my office and LifeMoves on a public art component, such as a mural within the project site, to be incorporated into the development.

## Analysis

In 2017, I hosted the first community meeting to explore the possibility of interim housing in District 2 including at Branham Ln and Monterey Rd. It would be an understatement to say that the meeting was hostile. Some residents were very angry and opposed any type of homeless housing or housing solutions in this neighborhood. Thankfully, as a City, we have evolved. While there is still opposition to affordable housing and emergency interim housing, I believe that the vast majority of residents know that these developments are necessary to address

homelessness. Furthermore, in District 2, we have proven that interim housing works: it gets people off the street and on the pathway to permanent stable housing. We have shown through well-managed sites at Rue Ferrari Ave and at Bernal Rd that these developments do NOT make neighborhoods unsafe, lower property values, or attract encampments. On the contrary, these interim housing sites have improved public safety and neighborhood cleanliness. Therefore, I will continue to champion affordable housing and interim housing in District 2.

Since taking office, we have built two interim housing communities, hosted an overnight warming location, operated a safe parking site for 2 years during the height of the pandemic, and nearly finished construction of 147 units of permanent affordable housing for seniors in District 2. We kick started a safe parking program for RV's and have other affordable developments in the pipeline, including the potential redevelopment of Southside Community Center. I approve of an interim housing development at this location and urge my colleagues to support the staff recommendations, along with my memorandum.

Key to the success of this project is acceptance and welcoming from the neighboring community. Not only must we successfully manage the property and provide residents with services and stability, but we also must address the abject poverty that exists in the immediate vicinity of this community. The Monterey Rd corridor is currently home to several unsanctioned encampments; one has existed on this very site for many years. We need to target the houseless individuals along the corridor and prioritize them for housing at this development. Encampments on Monterey Rd at Blossom Hill, Xander's Crossings, Bernal Rd, and Ford Rd, just to name a few, are where we need to start outreach and make a concerted effort to house these individuals and help them transition to permanent housing. Even if we run this site well and keep it immaculately clean, if encampments continue to exist in the vicinity, the public perception will be that we are not doing enough. For this reason, prior to the completion of the project, Housing staff should work with LifeMoves to prioritize outreach to residents in the immediate vicinity of this project so that residents of the site and neighbors continue to see a positive change in their community.

Monterey Road is notorious for speeding, traffic collisions, and dangerous sideshows. The intersection of Monterey Rd and Branham Ln is within the walking path to Edenvale Library. It is imperative that residents in the neighborhood have safe access to library resources. This past fiscal year, I was successful in securing funding for sideshow mitigation at this intersection, and I am hopeful that together with the Department of Transportation we can further improve traffic safety. I am aware that this intersection includes Union Pacific right of way, and this will need to be considered as we explore any improvements.

Similarly, Edenvale Garden Park is just a block away from this location. The intersection at Saddle Brook Rd and Branham Ln does not have a crosswalk. We should explore how we can best create a safe walking path to the park from this development for the benefit of all. I would like to explore the possibility of using funds already allocated to this development to also fund any needed traffic and pedestrian safety improvements.

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Blight and graffiti are all too common along Monterey Rd. A public art aspect to the project will not only enhance the beauty of the neighborhood but may also deter blight and graffiti. The Edenvale Library already has a beautiful mural that honors the diversity of the community and the historic nature of Monterey Rd. A mural or other art feature that could be enjoyed by residents and passersby would be an asset to this development. I look forward to working with staff and LifeMoves to explore how we can enhance the beauty of this community.

I am proud to have brought hundreds of units of affordable and interim housing to District 2. I recognize that many residents feel that south San Jose has borne the brunt of these projects in the last few years. I understand why my constituents feel this way, we need more developments like this across the City. I urge my council colleagues, especially those who do not have EIHCs within their districts, to be proactive and locate sites. We are all impacted by homelessness, and we must all be a part of the solution.