

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Jimenez

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: June 2, 2023

Approved



Date: 06/02/2023

SUBJECT: City Initiatives Roadmap- Recreational Vehicles Communities Supportive Parking and Emergency Interim Housing.

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the staff report with the following modification:

1. Eliminate item (d) *Evaluate and pursue as a back-up option the Bernal Road South at 101 On Ramp and/or the Bernal Road North between 101 and 85 sites for the Governor's State Small Home Initiative.*

ANALYSIS

District 2 has proudly championed and supported Emergency Interim Housing Communities (EIHC's), Safe Parking, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Overnight Warming Centers. Since 2020, my team and I have worked tirelessly to gain community acceptance and integration of three EIHC sites in District 2. The Bernal Rd at Monterey Rd EIHC is 78 units. The Rue Ferrari site currently hosts 118 units and has been approved for a 100 unit expansion. Just a few miles away, 204 units are currently under construction at Branham Ln and Monterey Rd. This brings us to a total of 500 units of emergency interim housing already built, planned, or under construction in District 2.

I know that EIHC's are a necessary part of our City's efforts to decrease unsheltered homelessness. I am also fully aware that these communities have a positive impact on surrounding neighborhoods by decreasing blight, encampments, and crime. However, I firmly oppose over-concentrating emergency housing in South San Jose. I believe our unhoused residents would be better served by EIHC's across the City.

The proposed sites at Bernal Rd and Highway 101 are on the periphery of our City and not accessible via public transportation. Placing individuals at the far edge of the City where they have no access to their familial networks, needed services, or employment opportunities is a disservice and will make transitioning out of homelessness much more difficult. We know from

experience that engaging EIHC residents in the programs and services they need is nearly impossible if they do want to live at the site. Another concern is that because these locations are adjacent to a major freeway, it is imperative that the City evaluate potential health hazards caused by poor air quality and traffic smog.

EIHC outreach over the last three years has focused on those most vulnerable to Covid-19, those in the Guadalupe Gardens encampment abated by the FAA mandate, and those impacted by the winter floods. Both Rue Ferrari and Bernal served as Evacuee Transitions and Facilities (ETF's) housing dozens of individuals displaced by the unprecedented rain storms. Unhoused individuals were brought into District 2 from all over the City. It is undeniable that we have led the City in efforts to house our most vulnerable residents during times of crisis.

I urge City staff to prioritize emergency interim housing in the many locations that have been evaluated outside of South San Jose and District 2. The Cerone site in District 4 and the Cherry Ave site in District 9 are much more suitable locations and will help us achieve our original goal of equitable distribution across all ten Council Districts. I urge my colleagues, staff, and agency partners to focus on these locations before placing more units in South San Jose.