



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Sergio Jimenez

SUBJECT: SAFE PARKING PILOT
PROGRAM EXPANSION

DATE: March 25, 2019

Approved by:

Date:

3/25/19

RECOMMENDATION

Approve staff memorandum dated March 12, 2019 with following additions:

1. Direct staff to modify the City of San Jose's contract with LifeMoves to ensure there is flexibility in the language as it relates to the number of cars allowed to park overnight at the Southside Community Center. If possible, extend the current 25 car limit to a more impactful but feasible number.
2. Direct staff to modify the Safe Parking Pilot Program operational guidelines and any corresponding clauses in the contract to clarify that individuals do not need to have their vehicles registered and insured in order to partake in the program.
3. Direct staff to explore leveraging existing city partnerships with Dignity on Wheels for onsite shower services at Southside Community Center in lieu of a need for portable restrooms.
4. Direct staff to explore additional sites for further expansion in Council Districts most needing this program which do not yet have it.

ANALYSIS

I want to begin by expressing appreciation for the tireless work of our housing staff and their willingness to walk District 2 staff and myself through the details of this item and answer our many questions in a thorough and timely manner. Further, I am grateful for the exemplary partnership between LifeMoves, city staff, and the Seven Trees community which has given the City Council and other neighborhoods around San Jose the confidence to move forward with an expansion to the Safe Parking Pilot Program which we started in 2018.

San Jose finds itself in a housing and homelessness emergency. Having said that, it is important that we all contribute solutions to our emergency with more housing and shelter options in every Council District. I am proud to be part of the solution and even more proud of the neighborhoods surrounding Southside Community Center in District 2 which, despite questions and some trepidation, ultimately embraced this project recognizing the immense need that exists. Indeed, District 2 has been an example to follow, with the operation of an Overnight Warming Location (OWL) at Southside Community Center in 2018 as well as the planned affordable senior living project on Blossom Hill and Snell.

Now that we have cleared the many hurdles which lay before any new homeless shelter or housing option, it is important we maximize the capacity of this opportunity to help as many car-or-RV-dwelling San Joseans as feasible. The parking lot slated for use in this program (facing Cottle Rd.) has 48 usable spaces but as proposed, only 25 cars would be allowed to partake on any given night. Whether expanding to the larger adjacent parking lot (facing Poughkeepsie Rd.) or simply using more spaces within the Cottle Rd. parking lot, it is appropriate in this case to aggressively expand our capacity to help if the demand exists.

In keeping with the theme of helping as many in need as would be possible, I am also recommending City Council direct staff to make changes to the Safe Parking Pilot program guidelines as well as to our contract with LifeMoves to clearly state no person(s) will be deemed ineligible to a safe parking spot if they do not have a current car registration or insurance. As it is currently written on page 2 of the Safe Parking Pilot program operational guidelines, "Vehicle owners *should* have a valid driver's license and the vehicle *must* be registered and insured". We should appreciate the cost of car insurance and registration may be prohibitive for a person living on the streets and should not preclude them from access to safety.

Lastly, it is important we leverage existing partnerships with services such as Dignity On Wheels at a site like Southside Community Center which has accessible restrooms on-site and would not need portable restrooms. In lieu of the expense associated with portable restrooms, resources ought to be dedicated to providing added value such as a shower at the start of the day.