



# Memorandum

**TO:** NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Jacky Morales-Ferrand

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SAFE PARKING  
PILOT PROGRAM**

**DATE:** May 28, 2019

Approved

Date

6-7-2019

## RECOMMENDATION

Accept the report on the progress and status of the safe parking pilot program for families at Seven Trees Community Center and Library.

## BACKGROUND

The Mayor and the City Council have taken several actions to support the development of a safe parking program. In October 2017, the City Council approved a Council Priority (now ranked #10), which called on the administration to “explore and create a safe parking program which would allow parking for people who live in their vehicles.” In October 2018, Council approved a contract with LifeMoves to operate a pilot safe parking program for families at the Seven Trees Community Center, a city owned facility. The City was able to open the pilot under the Shelter Crisis Act. The Administration has pursued two paths:

- 1) Create an ordinance allowing property owners to legally provide safe parking on public or private parking lots, and
- 2) Enter into a contract with an experienced homeless services organization to provide safe parking on city-owned property.

Final adoption of the ordinance (and closure of Council Priority #10) is agendized for Council approval on June 11, 2019. This report provides a status update on the pilot program.

LifeMoves began the Safe Parking Pilot Program at Seven Trees Community Center and Library on November 1, 2018. The service rich program can serve up to seventeen families a night. In partnership with the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services, the San José Public Library, and San José Police Department, the program operates on an overflow parking lot at the center every day from approximately 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. LifeMoves offers necessities, while also providing personalized case management, employment development, and housing placement services. Program participants are also able to use the Community Center showers

during the daytime hours but also have exclusive access at designated evening hours. Children may use the teen center and families have access to the Library during regular operating hours.

At the March 14, 2019 meeting of the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee, the Housing Department presented an update on the first three months of operation of the safe parking pilot program. The Committee directed that a six-month update provides information on: 1) the services and referrals provided by LifeMoves to support program participants; 2) progress made in coordinating with First5 regarding partnership opportunities; and 3) language access and cultural competency.

## **ANALYSIS**

This six-month update on the safe parking pilot program covers the following:

- Need for safe parking services in San José;
- Program referrals, participant data, and program outcomes;
- Neighborhood Services and Education Committee request;
- Neighborhood challenges; and
- Update on pilot program expansion.

### **Need for Safe Parking Services**

The 2019 biennial point-in-time homeless census (PIT) counted 6,172 homeless persons in San José. Out of the total 6,172 individuals, over 1,000 people were counted as living in their vehicles. In addition, both the Housing and Transportation Departments track the number of people sleeping in vehicles. From November 2018 to April 30, 2019, the Housing Department received 353 calls to the homeless concerns hotline regarding homeless persons sleeping in their vehicles. In the same period, 169 occupied vehicles were reported to the City of San José Vehicle Abatement Program. There is a lack of safe places for unsheltered persons to park and sleep in their vehicles and the need continues to grow.

Safe parking programs create a safe and secure place for car and recreational vehicle dwellers to park and sleep. The program also increases access to available services and potentially decreases enforcement actions for people living illegally in vehicles. Safe parking programs are one crisis response to immediately address homelessness while unsheltered individuals and families seek to secure permanent housing.

### **Program Referrals, Participant Data & Program Outcomes**

From November 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019, a total of 44 families (75 adults and 88 minor children) were enrolled in the program. LifeMoves' priority is to engage participating families in finding the most suitable temporary (e.g. shelter) or permanent (e.g. affordable apartment) housing option for each family. Of the 44 families, 33 have exited the pilot program. Thirty-one moved to shelter or a permanent housing opportunity and the destination of two families is unknown. Of those families that have exited, the average length of stay in the pilot program was

27 days. At the beginning of May 2019, there were twelve active households in the pilot program. See **Attachment A** for profile of participant success stories.

Participants are referred to the program from a variety of sources, including:

- Waiting lists from three family shelters in San José (Family Supportive Housing's San José Family Shelter and LifeMoves' Georgia Travis House and The Villa);
- Children's Initiative Community Center;
- Healthier Kids;
- Bill Wilson Center;
- Re-entry Center;
- Housing Department's Homelessness Response Team;
- HomeFirst and PATH homeless outreach teams;
- City Council offices;
- County Office of Supportive Housing and Social Services;
- School districts;
- First 5 Santa Clara County;
- Amigos de Guadalupe;
- Vehicles dwellers in the Seven Trees neighborhood and surrounding areas;
- Planned Parenthood;
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC);
- San Antonio and Horace Cureton Elementary Schools;
- Alpha Public Schools;
- Franklin McKinley School District Social Workers;
- Sacred Heart Community Service;
- Grail Family Services;
- Valley Homeless Healthcare Program;
- HealthTrust; and
- Program participants.

The City's Homelessness Response Team and LifeMoves continue to meet with new agencies, schools, and businesses where families receive services to inform them of the pilot program. Since the program began, LifeMoves contacted 689 families that were either on the waiting list for shelter or referred by a party listed above for potential enrollment in the program. Of the families contacted:

- 303 were not interested (inconvenient location, staying in a shelter or motel, preferred alternate place to park, did not live in San José);
- 114 did not return voicemails;
- 79 expressed interest in the future;
- 59 numbers were no longer in service;
- 57 were ineligible (did not have a vehicle, did not have children);
- 77 households were screened for eligibility;
- Of those 77 households, 44 families were enrolled; and
- The remaining 33 did not show to their intake appointment and upon follow-up from the Housing Department, had already found services elsewhere.

The Housing Department and LifeMoves will continue to monitor this data closely to learn why or why not families chose to participate in the program. The program is extremely flexible, and families in need are not turned away. Also, families are accepted into the pilot program, even if they are not sleeping at the Seven Trees Community Center overflow parking lot every night, but still want access to the services. Of the 44 families served, there are 10 families who are receiving services but are not parking at the site.

LifeMoves has achieved the following outcomes in the first 180 days as summarized below.

| <b>Goal</b>                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Accomplishment</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Within 120 days of intake, 75 percent of households will move into a temporary destination (emergency shelter or transitional housing) or a permanent housing destination.</b> | 94 percent of enrolled households moved into shelter or permanent housing.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>100 percent of enrolled children will be enrolled or re-enrolled in school.</b>                                                                                                | 100 percent of school age children enrolled in the program were enrolled in school.                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>75 percent of permanently housed households will remain permanently housed for at least 90 days after program exit.</b>                                                        | 10 households have been permanently housed. Of the ten households, seven have been housed for at least 90 days and 100 percent of the seven remain permanently housed. The remaining three households have not yet been housed for 90 days |
| <b>75 percent of households that exit to temporary housing destinations will be connected to services for linkage to stable housing within 90 days after program exit.</b>        | 100 percent of the families remain connected to services with LifeMoves case management or shelter site case management services.                                                                                                          |
| <b>85 percent of participants who received services through the Safe Parking Pilot Program will feel they received helpful assistance.</b>                                        | Surveys results show 100 percent of program participants reported that they felt they have received help and are satisfied with the assistance they received.                                                                              |

*Neighborhood Services and Education Committee Direction*

The Committee directed the Housing Department to provide information on the services and referrals participants receive. The table below displays the direct services and referrals LifeMoves provided to participants supporting their short- and long-term goals. It also illustrates the range of services, referrals and support families receive from LifeMoves.

| <b>Service</b>     | <b>Households</b> | <b>Activity</b>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Basic needs        | 33                | Gift cards for basic needs such as food, gas, pharmacy, hygiene items and clothing.                                                                                                                     |
| Housing search     | 31                | Housing application assistance and navigating open affordable housing waiting lists.                                                                                                                    |
| Benefits           | 26                | Benefits application assistance, including TANF, food stamps and SSI/SSDI.                                                                                                                              |
| Employment search  | 25                | Resume assistance, referrals to job fairs, job leads and placements.                                                                                                                                    |
| Transportation     | 22                | Assistance with UPLIFT bus passes, car repairs, insurance, DMV registration and identification.                                                                                                         |
| Housing placement  | 20                | Once housing is secured, LifeMoves assists with families with move ins.                                                                                                                                 |
| Education          | 15                | Assistance with school enrollment and connection to McKinney Vento homeless liaisons for afterschool enrollment, school uniforms, bus passes and other services.                                        |
| Shelter            | 14                | Placement in family shelters                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Financial literacy | 13                | Savings program, budgeting, accessing and reviewing credit reports and financial literacy workshops.                                                                                                    |
| Legal Aid          | 9                 | Pro bono legal services including legal aid and outreach court                                                                                                                                          |
| Behavioral health  | 8                 | Therapy services for five households provided directly by LifeMoves staff. Referrals for therapy and behavioral health services to the County of Santa Clara and programs at Gardner Family Healthcare. |
| Childcare          | 6                 | Assistance with completing lengthy applications and gathering needed documents (tuberculosis test results, birth certificates, immunization records, Social Security cards, etc.).                      |
| Rental assistance  | 5                 | Leveraged Emergency Assistance Network to secure deposit and rental assistance.                                                                                                                         |
| Counseling         | 3                 | Referrals to counseling for children at school or family counseling.                                                                                                                                    |
| Physical health    | 2                 | Referrals for eye exams for children's eyeglasses.                                                                                                                                                      |

Coordination with First Five

The Committee also directed the Housing Department and LifeMoves to meet with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of First 5 to determine how First 5 could provide additional support to the program participants. LifeMoves met with the CEO and other executives of First 5 to discuss the difficulty of accessing affordable childcare for the participants. First 5 offered to help assist with direct referrals for childcare services for program participants. Per First 5's direction, LifeMoves has referred six families to the Seven Trees Family Resource Center to begin the process of enrolling in First 5 services, including childcare. The Housing Department has a meeting scheduled with the same senior management team from First 5 to discuss other partnerships with the City's homeless programs.

Language Access and Cultural Competency

Per Neighborhood Services and Education Committee direction from the March 14, 2019 meeting, the following is information about our Safe Parking Program Pilot partner LifeMoves.

LifeMoves services in Santa Clara County Started in 1973 (then operating as InnVision the Way Home). They merged with San Mateo County Non-profit, Shelter Network, in 2012 and rebranded as LifeMoves in 2016. LifeMoves' mission is to provide interim housing and supportive services for homeless families and individuals to rapidly return to stable housing and achieve long-term self-sufficiency.

LifeMoves serves a diverse population. All LifeMoves clients are extremely low-income from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds. Last year, clients served identified as 41 percent Caucasian, 19 percent African-American, 21 percent Native American, 6 percent Pacific Islander, 4 percent Asian, 9 percent Multiracial/Other, and 33 percent Hispanic. Almost half of the individuals LifeMoves serves have disabilities, 10 percent are Veterans, and 5 percent are formerly incarcerated individuals. Last year, 92 percent of LifeMoves clients had an annual income under \$25,000. In addition, due to the skyrocketing cost of living in the Bay Area, 72 percent of families served last year were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

Cultural competency is an integral part of LifeMoves training and programming. LifeMoves administers ongoing, comprehensive annual training to all employees to ensure staff are prepared to work effectively with clients and achieve program performance objectives. Trainings include Housing First best-practices, motivational interviewing, harm reduction, suicide, self-harm prevention, emergency response protocol and procedures, conflict prevention and resolution, mandated reporting, and many more topics. Further, in addition to in-house expertise, LifeMoves contracts with a licensed clinical psychologist to provide mandatory, semi-annual training to all LifeMoves staff on cultural competency and sensitivity by integrating multiculturalism into organizational practices. Practicing cultural competency and sensitivity assists LifeMoves staff members so that clients feel safe and accepted regardless of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. LifeMoves employs many bilingual staff to effectively assist non-English speaking clients.

With regards to our pilot program, flyers for the Safe Parking Pilot are in both English and Spanish, and the Housing Department is in process of developing one in Vietnamese. The director of the pilot program and the person who screens all referrals are fluent in Spanish, as are staff on the pilot program team. Case management services are available in both English and Spanish. To date, there has not been a request to provide services at the safe parking program in any other languages.

### Neighborhood Challenges

The neighborhood where the pilot program is taking place has several existing conditions such as RV dwellers, issues with crime and safety, illegal dumping, trash, and blight that will take the focused efforts of many stakeholders to address. However, none of these issues are affiliated with the LifeMoves program. The Housing Department and LifeMoves are committed to being a positive contributor to the neighborhood. The City's homeless outreach teams proactively engage with residents who live in their vehicles and offer services and referrals. Also, in an effort to be a good neighbor, LifeMoves staff spends one hour each day cleaning litter around the Community Center, the majority of which is not left by program participants. Additionally, the Housing Department has fixed broken lighting and trimmed trees in the safe parking lot to enhance the environment and physical safety. The LifeMoves program also brings nighttime activation and private security that not only stays on the parking lot, but periodically patrols the adjacent neighborhood. The Housing Department and LifeMoves will continue to work with San José Police, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, the San José Public Library, and the community to jointly tackle these neighborhood issues.

Overall, Seven Trees has been a good location for the program. Partners from the San José Public Library and Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services work with LifeMoves to designate space to conduct private support, as well as rooms for events, meetings, interactions, workshops, and meals. As mentioned earlier, pilot program participants may use the Community Center and have access to programming provided by the Library and PRNS. The level of programming and services provided at Seven Trees has allowed the city to leverage the services that are offered to program participants.

### Safe Parking Program Expansion on City Owned Sites

On November 27, 2018, the City Council approved expanding the Safe Parking Pilot Program contract with LifeMoves to operate at two additional City owned sites, using Homeless Emergency Aid Program funding. As of May 15, safe parking programs are now operating at Southside Community Center and Roosevelt Community Center. The two sites increase capacity by 50 vehicles on any given night. With a total of 67 spots available each evening, the overall goal is to provide safe locations for households living in their vehicles to sleep and receive individualized services, including housing search and placement.

## **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

On March 26, 2019 the City Council approved the extension of the Safe Parking Pilot Program at Seven Trees Community Center and Library and expanded to two additional sites at Southside Community Center and Roosevelt Community Center. The contract with LifeMoves for all three safe parking sites ends in June 2021. Using funding from the Homeless Emergency Aid Program, the two expansion sites began operations on May 15, 2019. All three sites shall be monitored closely with updates as follows:

- The results of the program will be reported twice a year, 1) in the spring during a report on Homeless Emergency Aid Program funded activities to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee; and 2) in the fall, during the Annual Homeless Report to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee.
- As a condition of receiving Homeless Emergency Aid Program funds, the City is required to provide reports to the State regarding the number of families served and the types of services they received, until all funds have been expended by the June 30, 2021 deadline. These reports will be posted to the Department's website.

Future reports on the pilot safe parking programs will detail the participant data, program, services, and outcomes. In addition, reports will provide data on registered operators/hosts of safe parking through the ordinance, including participant utilization. Finally, the Housing Department will coordinate with the County Office of Supportive Housing to report out on best practices and outcomes of safe parking efforts throughout the County.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The Housing Department hosted a neighborhood meeting on May 23, 2019 at Seven Trees Community Center and Library to provide a six-month update on the pilot program and receive feedback regarding their experiences with the pilot program. Approximately 21 residents signed in for the meeting. The overall feedback from residents was a desire to move the program to another site because of increasing numbers of recreational vehicles in the area (not affiliated with the program) and the lack of enforcement in their neighborhood to move the recreational vehicles.

Residents also expressed concerns about crime, as well as safety for children walking to and from school while the LifeMoves program is not in operation. Residents said that Police and Vehicle Abatement do not respond or otherwise reported cases are closed without results. Police and Vehicle Abatement were at the meeting and urged neighbors to continue contacting them with their concerns. The Housing Department voiced commitment to look at ways to address some community concerns, including extending hours of private security.

Since the beginning of the safe parking pilot program at Seven Trees Community Center, staff from LifeMoves and the Housing Department have provided direct contact information to neighbors to report concerns. The Housing Department has received concerns from two households directly adjacent to the program, requesting vehicles park with lights facing away from the residential properties. Those concerns were immediately addressed. LifeMoves

received calls from three households since the program began, with operational questions or requests related to the program, which were addressed.

Overall, residents were very interested in bringing more resources to the community, including safety patrols, Vehicle Abatement patrols, school crossing guards, gang intervention services, public parking lot enforcement and addressing illegal dumping. The Housing Department will work with the Council office to continue to address the existing neighborhood conditions. The pilot at Seven Trees will continue at this site for the next six months while the Department works with the Council office and neighborhood to address concerns.

This item has been posted on the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee website for June 13, 2019.

### **COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT**

At the April 11, 2019 Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC) meeting, the HCDC unanimously passed the Housing Trust Fund Expenditure Plan for 2019-2020, which included a funding allocation for the Safe Parking Pilot Program at Seven Trees Community Center and Library.

### **COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS**

This memorandum does not commit the City to additional expenditures.

### **COORDINATION**

This item has been coordinated with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, the City Attorney's Office, and the City Manager's Budget Office.

### **CEQA**

Not a Project, File No. PP17-009, Staff Reports, Assessments, Annual Reports, and Informational Memos that involve no approvals of any City action.

/s/  
JACKY MORALES-FERRAND  
Director of Housing

For questions, please contact Kelly Hemphill, Homelessness Response Manager, at (408) 975-4483 or [kelly.hemphill@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:kelly.hemphill@sanjoseca.gov).

Attachment A: Participant Success Stories