



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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April 2, 2018

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To: Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Chair
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From: Sachi A. Hamai
Chief Executive Officer

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS TO ASSIST HOMELESS PEOPLE LIVING IN RECREATIONAL VEHICLES; OPTIONS TO CREATE "SAFE PARKING" LOTS FOR CARS AND RECREATIONAL VEHICLES (ITEM NUMBER 32, AGENDA OF JANUARY 30, 2018)

On January 30, 2018, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Department of Public Works (DPW), Department of Public Health, Department of Regional Planning, and the Chief Executive Office's Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI), in coordination with the Sheriff's Department and County Counsel, to report back in 60 days on three directives related to assisting homeless people living in vehicles. The CEO-HI has taken the lead on one of the directives related to developing options to create "safe parking" lots to assist homeless service providers with connecting homeless persons to housing and support services. The report back on the other two directives, related to disposal of dilapidated recreational vehicles (RVs) and improper disposal of RV waste, will be addressed by DPW via a separate memorandum to the Board.

The Attachment is a report on options to create "safe parking" lots in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and/or on County owned properties located countywide. The report provides an overview of vehicular homelessness in the County, reviews existing safe parking programs in Los Angeles and elsewhere in California, provides recommendations on necessary components of a safe parking program, describes options for siting safe parking programs, and includes estimated costs and funding sources for programs. Finally, the report includes next steps for moving forward with safe parking in Los Angeles County should the Board provide direction to move forward.

If you have any questions, please contact Phil Ansell, Homeless Initiative Director, at 213-974-1752 or by email at pansell@ceo.lacounty.gov.

SAH:JJ:FAD
PA:JR:EBI:ib

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Sheriff
Health Agency
Public Health
Public Works
Regional Planning

Safe Parking Lots

Options to Create Safe Parking Lots to Assist Homeless Service Providers with Connecting Homeless Persons to Housing and Support Services

On January 30, 2018, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Departments of Public Works (DPW), Public Health (DPH), Regional Planning (DPR) and the Chief Executive Office's Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI), in coordination with the Sheriff's Department and County Counsel, to report back in 60 days on three directives related to assisting homeless people living in vehicles. The CEO-HI has taken the lead on one of the directives related to developing options to create "safe parking" lots to assist homeless service providers with connecting homeless persons to housing and support services. This report provides information about vehicular homelessness and offers an overview of safe parking program options and considerations.

1. Vehicular Homelessness in Los Angeles County

Lack of affordable housing options in Los Angeles County has forced thousands of people out of their homes. Many of these individuals and families are living in temporary shelters, tents and other makeshift structures, or on the streets of Los Angeles County. For those who own vehicles, their cars, vans, or campers/recreational vehicles may also serve as shelter. According to the findings of the 2017 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count (Homeless Count), which covers all of Los Angeles County except Glendale, Long Beach, and Pasadena's Continuum of Care, there were 8,554 vehicles in use as residences, with approximately 16,303 individuals residing in these vehicles. Table I provides a breakdown of vehicular homelessness by Supervisorial District (SD). Tables II and III provide lists of the 10 census tracts in the County that have the highest number of vehicles being used as residences and highest number of people residing in vehicles, respectively. Addendum 1 provides several maps displaying vehicular homelessness hotspots. While this data is from last year's Homeless Count, it is a useful starting point for identifying high need areas. Data from the 2018 Homeless Count will be available in Spring of 2018.

Table I: Vehicular Homelessness

Supervisorial District	Cars	Vans	Campers/RVs	Total Vehicles
SD 1	381	400	732	1513
SD 2	797	693	1,398	2888
SD 3	476	449	893	1818
SD 4	289	220	415	924
SD 5	204	100	1,107	1411
Grand Total	2147	1862	4545	8554

Table II: Census Tracts with Most Vehicles

Census Tract	City	Community Name	SPA	SD	Cars	Vans	Campers/RVs	Total Vehicles
910202	Unincorporated Palmdale	Unincorporated Palmdale	1	5	1	0	255	256
911001	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	1	5	14	11	161	186
277400	Los Angeles	Westchester/Playa NC	5	2	45	20	74	139
910805	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	1	5	9	1	101	111
900102	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	1	5	9	1	88	98
541001	Unincorporated Compton	West Compton	6	2	14	7	69	90
540902	Unincorporated Willowbrook	Willowbrook	6	2	12	1	71	84
273300	Los Angeles	Venice NC	5	3	19	23	8	50
980014	Los Angeles	Wilmington NC	8	4	19	2	29	50
900201	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	1	5	2	2	46	50

Table III: Census Tracts with Most People Estimated to be Living in Vehicles

Census Tract	City	Community Name	SPA	SD	Est. People in Cars	Est. People in Vans	Est. People in Campers	Est. Total People in Vehicles
910202	Unincorporated Palmdale	Unincorporated Palmdale	1	5	2	0	534	536
911001	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	1	5	22	20	337	379
277400	Los Angeles	Westchester/Playa Del Rey	5	2	72	36	155	263
910805	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	1	5	14	2	212	228
900102	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	1	5	14	2	184	200
541001	Unincorporated West Compton	West Compton	6	2	22	13	145	179
540902	Unincorporated Willowbrook	Willowbrook	6	2	19	2	149	170
900201	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	1	5	3	4	96	103
543305	Unincorporated Compton	Unincorporated Compton	8	2	2	7	90	99
900104	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	Unincorporated Antelope Valley	1	5	0	2	96	98

2. Safe Parking Programs: Overview and Experience

The goal of safe parking programs is to provide a temporary site for individuals and families residing in their vehicles to park overnight. In addition to offering a secure site for parking where participants are protected from threats to their security and are not subject to ticketing for parking unlawfully, these programs offer an effective way for families and individuals to stabilize their lives and get connected to case management, health and mental health services, and advocacy services with the goal of exiting their vehicles and obtaining permanent housing.

There are two primary examples of successful safe parking programs in the state of California in Santa Barbara and San Diego. There are also two programs currently running in the City of Los Angeles, but both are relatively early in their operations. Addendum 2 provides key information about each program.

3. Safe Parking Programming Considerations

Based on an examination of existing programs and interviews with experts and program operators in the field, the CEO recommends that the programmatic issues listed in Table IV be considered in determining the best design for a safe parking program.

Table IV

Programmatic issues	Possible options for consideration
Program administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third party, service provider, or other entity
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management, housing navigation, and/or other services • Services provided onsite or referred for offsite meetings • Hours of service provision • Onsite or offsite services
Hygiene facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portable toilets, sinks, access to mobile showers or another shower location
Service populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots or areas of lot designated for particular populations (i.e. families) or mixed population
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private security, self-policing, police patrol, or other mechanism
Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight or 24-hour
Vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operable or inoperable • Lots specific to RVs or mixed-use lots
Enrollment requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be actively working with a service provider to search for housing or other requirements for ongoing enrollment • Length of time in program • Renewal of enrollment • Loss of spot after period of absences

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vetting of participants for violent crime or sex offender history/status
Entry and exit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictions on when participants enter and exit the lot
Insurance, License, Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for vehicles and drivers • Access to financial assistance to update documents as needed
Basic rules of the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing issues such as substance use, cooking, noise levels, etc.

If the Board provides direction to move forward with consideration of a County safe parking program, the CEO will work with service providers and other key stakeholders to generate specific recommendations on the programmatic issues listed in Table IV, and any other issues that arise during the course of further research. A County safe parking program would be limited to the unincorporated areas of the County and/or to any County property located countywide.

4. Legal and Risk Management Issues

The following legal and risk management issues have been identified by County Counsel and CEO Risk Management in their initial review of safe parking programs. Further review is needed if programming moves forward.

- Legality of restricting in and out privileges to lot
- Requirements for driver's license, registration, and insurance
- Alcohol and drug policy
- Background checks of participants
- Potential entrance of non-program participants into lot
- Movement of vehicles that have not vacated the lot at morning end time of program (if overnight parking only)
- Security of County property if lot is on County land/at County facility
- Addressing auto collisions or other automobile damage
- Fire safety
- Determination of prohibited activities
- Addressing violations of program rules

Safe parking programs would require operators of all vehicles using the lot to sign waivers to release the County/provider from liability. Prior damage to vehicles could be noted at this time.

5. Siting Safe Parking Programs

To move forward with a safe parking program in the County of Los Angeles, appropriate program sites must be identified. The following options are under review:

- **County Assets:** CEO Real Estate is compiling a list of County buildings with parking lots that may be suitable for a safe parking program. These include vacant

buildings where parking lots are not in use and buildings where parking lots (or some portion of the lots) are not in use overnight.

- **Faith Community:** Existing programs in the City of Los Angeles are sited in parking lots of faith organizations. CEO-HI has identified faith organizations that are interested in exploring the use of their parking lot for overnight safe parking.
- **Privately Owned:** Business owners or other land owners interested in providing safe parking could volunteer their space for use. Some businesses informally allow vehicles to park overnight in their lots; such business may be approached to establish a more formal program with services provision.

In order to move forward with any potential site, whether County-owned or otherwise, an assessment of zoning and land use restrictions is necessary. Addendum 3 provides examples of short-term zoning-related options to facilitate siting of safe parking lots.

6. Estimated Program Costs

Table V provides estimated costs for a safe parking program.

Table V

Component	Estimated Cost per Month
Use of Parking Lot	N/A County owned or donated
Portable toilets (double unit) and sinks (two stations) w/ daily servicing	\$916 (\$50/month rental + \$866/month servicing – less frequent service may be possible)
12-hour security	\$6300 (\$17.50/hour – fewer hours of security may be possible)
Case Management	Utilize existing CES services
Program Administration (Includes oversight, contracting for facilities and services, intake, etc.)	10% of total program budget
Housing Navigation	Utilize existing CES services
Waste Disposal for RVs	To be addressed by DPW in their Board report

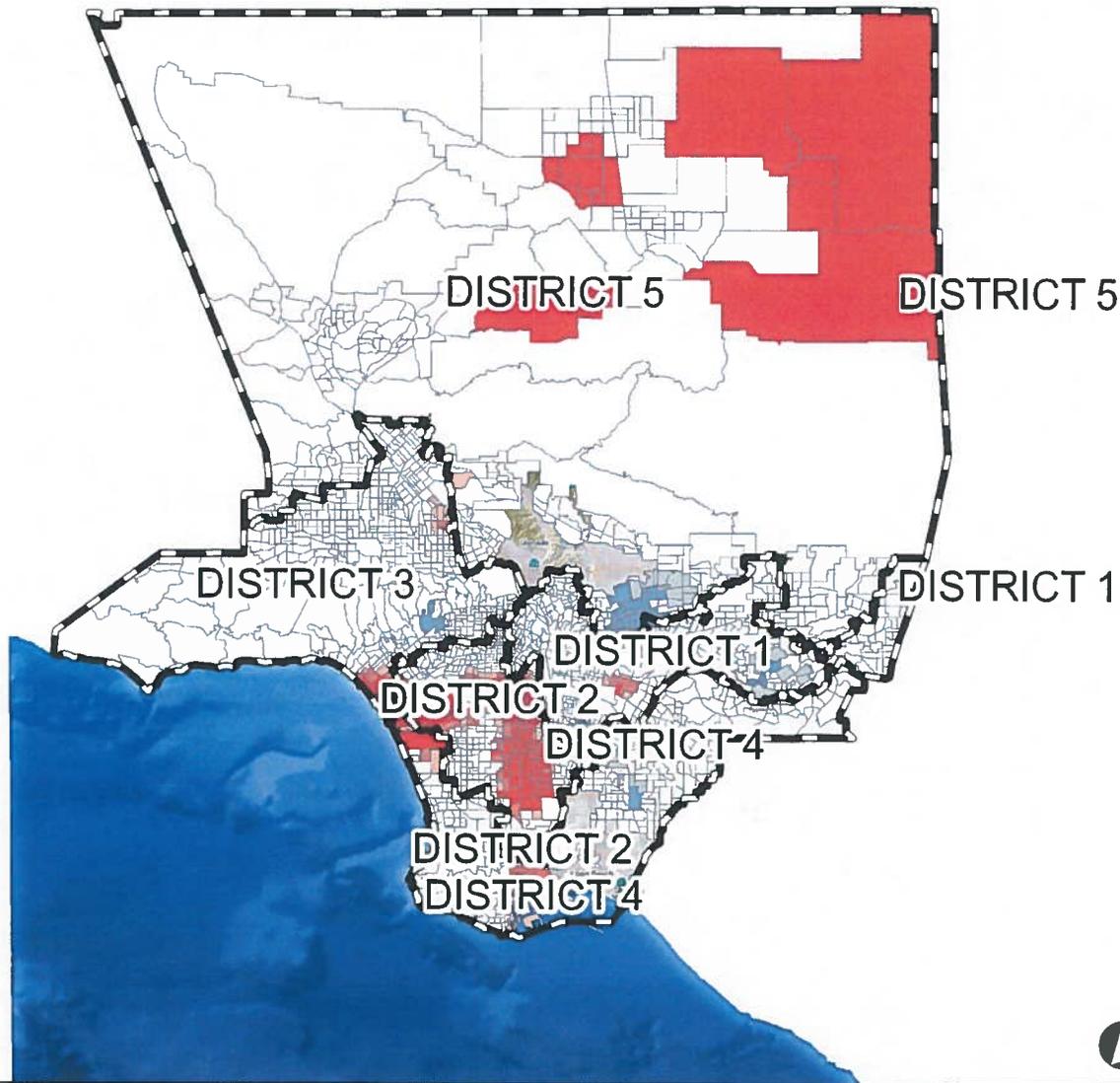
7. Next Steps

Safe parking programs provide security for individuals and families experiencing vehicular homelessness, while helping to connect them to needed services and housing. With more than 16,000 individuals residing in their vehicles in LA County, there is a significant need for solutions. As Los Angeles County works to combat and prevent homelessness, safe parking may be an additional strategy that can strengthen the County's ability to engage and house as many people experiencing homelessness as possible.

If the Board directs the CEO to move forward with the development of a safe parking program, the CEO would engage in a planning process involving key stakeholders to determine ideal program design. Further assessment of possible sites, both County and non-County, would occur in consultation with Board Offices. Additionally, County Counsel and CEO Risk Management would engage in further review of the program. Once the program is developed, the CEO would return to the Board for approval to proceed with implementation.



Number of Vehicles Used as Shelter – Hot Spot Analysis



Legend

- Supervisorial District (2011)
- Hot Spot Analysis on Number of Vehicles**
- Cold Spot (Identify statistically significant spatial clusterings of low numbers of vehicles)
- Cold Spot (Identify statistically significant spatial clusterings of low numbers of vehicles)
- Not Significant
- Not Significant
- Hot Spot (Identify statistically significant spatial clustering of high numbers of vehicles)



36.5 0 18.24 36.5 Miles

County of Los Angeles

1: 1,155,581.00

This map is for reference only and should not be used for legal decisions. While the County of Los Angeles makes its best effort to ensure data is accurate, the County makes no representation or warranty of any kind.

Notes

Existing Safe Parking Programs in California

	Santa Barbara	San Diego	Los Angeles SSG HOPICS	Los Angeles Safe Parking LA
Spaces in use	133	120	10	9
Number of lots	24	2	1	1
People served	N/A	180-220	N/A	10
Hours	Varies by lot	6pm-7am	9pm-7am	6pm-6am (one night per week lot is only open for 9 hours overnight)
Populations	Mixed	Mixed: families and single adults are placed in separate areas	Families	Mixed
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management • Rapid re-housing • Employment services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, intake, and referrals • Case management • Housing navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management • Housing Navigation • Provider visits the site twice a week and some weekends for one hour and sees participants in office during the day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Management • Coordinated Entry System leads in Service Planning Area 4 provide case management services/refer to appropriate providers for population
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portable toilets are provided by lot owner or program administrator if approved by owner. • Not all lots have toilets. • RVs are steered to lots without toilets. 	Portable toilets and handwashing stations	1 portable sink/toilet for every 20 participants. Showers are available at the youth center across the street at 4:30am.	Portable toilet and sinks
Security	Two lot monitors drive between the 24 lots.	No, but close working relationship with San Diego Police Department.	Yes, from 8:30pm to 7am.	Yes. Unarmed guards cover two shifts: 6pm-12am, 12am-6pm. Guards cost \$17/hr.

	Santa Barbara	San Diego	Los Angeles SSG HOPICS	Los Angeles Safe Parking LA
Type of location	Lots include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 churches • 3 County lots • 3 City lots • 6 non-profits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One city-owned lot and one non-profit. • One lot is in a commercial area; the other lot is in a more residential area with an adjacent park/recreation center. 	Church parking lot	Faith organization parking lot
Notable policies or rules	Limited financial assistance for insurance and registration costs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 - 3 spaces between program spots. • Participants are screened for enrollment by provider. • Must have valid license, insurance, and registration or be receiving assistance to procure these documents. Financial assistance is available for this purpose. • Can lose spot if absent for three nights. • Monthly permit granted to participants; may renew permits. Participants must be engaged in housing search and location activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issued a 30-day parking pass. Participants should be actively seeking housing. • Administering organization screens and vets clients.
Cost per day per parking space	\$8	\$16	\$23	\$10 (estimate)

Possible Short-Term Zoning Solutions for Siting Safe Parking Lots

The Department of Regional Planning (DRP) recommends consideration of the following potential approaches to addressing zoning issues and expediting the process related to siting of Safe Parking Lots:

1) Use of County Property (California Government Code 65402)

- Under this section of the CA government code, projects on County-owned land may be able to accommodate temporary Safe Parking Lots.
- This applies to all County-owned land located in incorporated cities and/or unincorporated communities.
- Applicants in collaboration with County Homeless Initiative staff should identify County-owned sites large enough to host Safe Parking Lots without displacing required parking for the existing uses onsite. In addition, the applicant must meet performance and development standards (bathroom facilities, fencing, screening, lighting, solid and human waste collection, on-site security guard) to maintain safety and quality of life, and to avoid incompatibilities with surrounding uses.
- Since these projects are ministerial approvals, they do not require a public hearing, but would require compliance with performance and development standards.
- The cost for DRP to review a Safe Parking Lot Project on County-owned land is \$1,498. Permit approval requires a land use application, ownership information, site plan, floor plan, elevations, photographs, and conceptual approval from the County Department of Public Works and possibly the County Fire Department.
- Permits expire within two years of approval. The applicant may apply for a one-year, one-time extension. Depending on the temporary nature of a Safe Parking Lot, the permit may have an earlier expiration date.

2) Temporary Use Permits (LA County Zoning Code 22.56.1830)

- This Code Section allows for short and long-term Safe Parking Lots if sponsored by a public agency, nonprofit, religious, fraternal, or educational service organization.
- This applies to all private property in the unincorporated communities.
- Short-term events are limited to 6 weekends or 7 days during a 12-month period; long-term events may request a longer time frame if they can meet the burden of proof (The applicant would be required to provide justification for the project, including how operations will not harm the neighboring properties). Any public agency, nonprofit, religious, fraternal, or educational service organization can apply for an extended Temporary Use Permit (TUP) and collaborate with County agencies to establish a Safe Parking Lot.
- The Director of DRP may approve an *extended* TUP if the applicant has met the burden of proof, and if any opposition received can be mitigated or if the concerns are unfounded. The Director can also deny the application and the applicant may request a public hearing.

- Notification to neighbors within a 500-foot radius is required and any opposition to the project will be evaluated by DRP.
- All TUPs have conditions that must be satisfied and require inspections. The applicant must propose a sunset date. A TUP approval, short or extended, would require development/performance standards to be satisfied by the applicant and on-going inspections. The Director of DRP may request additional inspections as deemed necessary to address quality of life issues and ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses.
- TUPs cost \$220 plus a \$200 inspection fee, or \$3,094 with a hearing plus the \$200 inspection fee.