



CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

MEMORANDUM

City Manager's Office

DATE: September 29, 2016

TO: City Council

FROM: Kimberly S. Thomas, Assistant to the City Manager

VIA: Daniel H. Rich, City Manager

SUBJECT: Results of Community Survey on Residents Living in Vehicles

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the City Council with a short summary of results of the Community Survey on residents living in vehicles.

To ensure received feedback on this complex issue, the City conducted a survey from September 2 to September 19. The surveys were placed at City facilities, a link posted online via *Open City Hall (OCH)*, and mailed postcards to areas experiencing a high volume of people living in vehicles. The survey was available in English and Spanish. There were 828 (including 18 received in Spanish) surveys returned coming from a majority of online submittals (includes OCH registered and unregistered replies), and then returns to City facilities, e-mails, and direct mail-ins. The survey had 10 questions in total, comprised of open-ended, closed-ended, and 1-to-10 scale questions, with the last question being entirely open-ended for the respondent.

- The majority of respondents see people living in vehicles near their homes, businesses, and elsewhere in Mountain View and have a higher level of concern. Significant concern was expressed regarding:
 - The supply of housing (75 percent).
 - The needs of people living in cars and vehicles (66 percent).
 - The impact on nearby residences and businesses (70 percent).
- Just over 6 percent of respondents said they had never seen anyone living in a vehicle in Mountain View.

- Just over 71 percent of respondents indicated they were concerned above 5 on a scale of 1 to 10 for people living in vehicles. A majority of concern was also noted for the specific needs of vehicle dwellers. The largest concern was substandard living conditions with about 75 percent. Two-thirds of respondents answered that it was not a stable housing source. Slightly more than one-half cited vulnerability to crime as a concern. Only about one-third of respondents wrote in an answer, and the most common one was sanitation, with 10 percent.
- Forty percent (40%) are concerned with impact on business and about 75 percent of respondents answered their concern was a 6 or greater on a scale of 1 to 10. Concerns noted for the impacts on surrounding areas of increased trash and/or waste spills was by about 75 percent of respondents.
- Seventy-two percent (72%) of people indicated that they were not aware of what the City was doing to address the issue of people living in their vehicles. About 10 percent were aware.
- Local government and community-based service providers were seen as having the main role in solving this issue by the majority of the respondents. Nonprofits received about 45 percent and faith-based organizations received about 35 percent of respondents.
- The majority of respondents see offering basic care and hygiene and increasing affordable housing as solutions. Short-term emergency housing, ongoing services and housing to the chronically homeless, and restricting parking all received support in the mid-40 percent range.

Questions 4, 6, 7, and 8 had write-in for “other” comments and the feedback was similar to the final Question 10, which was the only write-in. The most common experiential response dealt with the respondent self-identifying as living near a site with people living in their vehicles. Many noted responses were shaped by a broad concern in the community, not a direct experience or a specific policy recommendation.

- Responses ranged (in descending number) the desire for homeless people and those living in vehicles to be able to access basic services, the unfairness of individuals living in public spaces without paying taxes, public health, promoting dignity and respect in seeking a solution, blight, traffic/traffic safety, property values, and several quality-of-life issues.
- The most common noted perception was that the homeless and living-in-vehicle community were in their situation due to unfortunate circumstances, personal

struggles, and forces outside of their control. There was also a significant perception that some individuals may have economic means, and that some are coming from outside the Mountain View community and may struggle with drug/alcohol abuse and criminality.

- Many write-in solutions included the need for additional housing, support for a government-sponsored parking program, support for rent control, and support for a temporary shelter being among the most common answers.

KST/7/MGR

609-10-04-16A-5-E

Exhibit: A. Community Survey on Residents Living in Vehicles



Living in Vehicles Survey

Please give us your input by Monday, September 19

Housing affordability and homelessness are challenges throughout the region, which may result in some people living in cars, RVs, or other vehicles. The City of Mountain View has been exploring how to address this unfortunate situation and will present an update to Council on October 4 to discuss options. You may give us your input by completing this 10-question survey, which should take about 5 minutes to complete.

You may also take this survey online at MountainView.gov/LivingInVehiclesSurvey or return the completed survey to any City facility front desk; mail it to City Manager's Office, 500 Castro Street, Mountain View, California, 94041; or e-mail it to City.Mgr@mountainview.gov. Paper copies of the survey are available in English and Spanish at City facilities or by calling 650-903-6301.

1. **Have you seen anyone living in a vehicle in Mountain View?** *CHECK all that apply:*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, near my home | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, elsewhere in Mountain View |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, near my business | <input type="checkbox"/> No, I have not seen anyone living in a vehicle in Mountain View |

2. **To what extent are you concerned that there is not enough housing in Mountain View for all who need it?** *CIRCLE your response (with 1 being not at all concerned and 10 being seriously concerned):*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. **To what extent are you concerned about the needs of people living in vehicles in Mountain View?** *CIRCLE your response (with 1 being not at all concerned and 10 being seriously concerned):*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. **What are your specific concerns about the needs of people living in their vehicles?** *CHECK all that apply:*

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not a stable housing source | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substandard living conditions | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vulnerability to crime | <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable (I do not have any concerns about this) |

5. **To what extent are you concerned about how vehicles being used as housing might impact nearby residents or businesses?** *CIRCLE your response (with 1 being not at all concerned and 10 being seriously concerned):*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. **What are your specific concerns about the impact on nearby residents or businesses?** *CHECK all that apply:*

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worsened traffic and parking | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased trash and/or waste spills | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blighted or obstructed views | <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable (I do not have any concerns about this) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced public safety | |

7. **Are you aware of what the City is doing to address the needs of people living in vehicles?** *Choose only one.*

- Yes No Maybe

8. **Who do you think should play a role to address the issues related to people living in vehicles?** *CHECK all that apply:*

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community-based service providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith-based organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Private companies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City government | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit foundations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County government | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual community members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State government | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic institutions |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

9. **What types of things would you like to see the City and its regional partners do to address issues related to people living in vehicles?** *CHECK all that apply:*

- Offer basic care and hygiene services to those who are homeless or living in vehicles.
- Provide short-term emergency housing/shelters.
- Provide temporary rent subsidies to keep people in their homes.
- Provide ongoing services and housing to those who are chronically homeless.
- Build more affordable housing.
- Place restrictions on parking.
- Other _____

10. **Please share any additional comments or feedback.**

Return the completed survey by **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19**, to any City facility front desk; mail it to City Manager's Office, 500 Castro Street, Mountain View, California, 940419; or e-mail it to City.Mgr@mountainview.gov.