



DATE: October 4, 2016

CATEGORY: New Business

DEPT.: City Manager's Office

TITLE: **Update on Efforts Related to Homeless Residents Living in Vehicles, and Consideration of Direction on Options**

RECOMMENDATION

Receive an update on efforts related to homeless individuals and families that are living in recreational vehicles (RVs), cars, and other vehicles in Mountain View, and provide direction on options for implementation. It is recommended that the Council consider these issues and options in two parts:

1. Provide direction on specific items requested by the Council at its February 23, 2016 meeting, along with additional related, shorter-term options aimed at providing basic care and services to those living in vehicles that are largely shorter-term options; and
2. Provide direction on broader policy for longer-term options to address homelessness.

BACKGROUND

The City Council is committed to increasing housing availability and affordability as one of its top three priorities and is looking at a broad range of options to increase supply and assist displaced residents. This has included the construction of 127 affordable units in the last three years. Another 233 units are in the pipeline which will add to the more than 1,200 current affordable units. With more than 4,100 total housing units recently constructed or under development, Mountain View is a leader in the Bay Area in addressing the regional problem of insufficient housing supply.

Mountain View also continues providing ongoing support to community-based organizations like Community Services Agency (CSA), Mountain View's largest service provider for people in need, and shelter facilities in Mountain View, including the Graduate House transitional shelter for five adults and the Quetzal House youth shelter

for 40. The City also supports regional efforts in cooperation with the County's supportive housing programs.

Nevertheless, the regional housing crisis and homelessness remain as significant issues for many communities, including ours. According to the 2015 County homeless census, there were 6,556 homeless persons Countywide at that point in time, 276 of whom were in Mountain View (Attachment 1). The Mountain View homelessness count in 2015 nearly doubled from 139 in 2013. An increasingly visible manifestation of this regional issue is the presence of numerous RVs and other vehicles being used as housing on Mountain View streets.

The City has been studying and taking actions to address this troubling situation for the past two years. A summary of recent Council direction is below.

October 19, 2015: In response to resident testimony regarding large rent increases and evictions, the City Council held a Study Session to discuss a range of potential rent relief options and hear from housing experts and the public.

November 10, 2015 Council Meeting: The Council directed staff to return with an agenda item providing a brief description of safe parking programs in response to an increasing number of cars and RVs being used for housing purposes while parked on City streets.

December 1, 2015: Staff presented a variety of rent relief options for Council consideration. This item included a brief overview of safe parking programs in other areas of the State. The Council directed staff to return with more information regarding what establishing such a program would entail.

February 23, 2016: Staff presented information about the feasibility of a "safe parking program" in Mountain View along with other ideas for helping individuals and families living in RVs and cars (Attachment 2). The report noted that the core requirements for successful safe parking programs are an appropriate location, a program operator, and liability coverage. Additional safe parking program best practices included restroom facilities, case management services, rules for eligibility, individual behavior, hours during which "parking to sleep" is permitted, proof of vehicle registration, and insurance. The report also noted that there was an unsuccessful effort to piggyback on a City of San Jose-issued Request for Proposals (RFP) for qualified organizations to oversee and operate a pilot safe parking program and a mobile hygiene program. Given considerable challenges in meeting these requirements, a safe parking program

was not pursued. Rather, Council directed staff to pursue a work plan with a number of items to address the needs of residents living in their vehicles.

March to September 2016: For the past seven months, staff has researched the items in this work plan which has included convening a stakeholder group of nonprofits, regional government agencies, and local faith community; conducting a census and survey of individuals living in their vehicles in Mountain View; working with the CSA and other nonprofits to offer shower and laundry services; looking into waste disposal options; and working with leaders in the faith community to offer safe parking on nonprofit premises. The City also conducted a community survey from September 2 through September 19, 2016, to get community feedback on this complex issue.

ANALYSIS

Staff updates and recommendations on the items directed by Council in February are summarized below. These items are primarily shorter-term efforts to meet the basic care and hygiene needs of people living in vehicles, thus making this temporary method of shelter more humane. In the process of exploring these options, staff has come to a deeper understanding of the scope and complexity of the issue of people living in vehicles in our community. Staff has also identified several opportunities to leverage City resources through partnerships with the County, private funders, and community-based organizations.

As a result, we are also including additional recommendations for Council's consideration. The intent of these recommendations is to link those living in vehicles to services and housing programs which, over time, would reduce the number of cars and RVs being used as housing. Staff is also seeking direction regarding Council's interest in staff returning at a subsequent meeting with additional information and options for partnering with the County and others in support of a broader continuum of solutions for homelessness and homelessness prevention.

The options and recommendations that follow include the Council-directed items, additional options identified through staff's research related to basic care and hygiene, and temporary housing, as well as the investments toward the longer-term solutions as mentioned above. The information is organized into the areas of:

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Vehicle Census/Survey and Other Data Gathering

- Basic Care and Waste Disposal
- Faith-Based Safe Parking and Other Temporary Housing Options
- Outreach and Services to Link to Housing

A summary chart of the options reviewed, estimated costs, and recommendations is included in Attachment 3.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Council Direction to Send Letters About Mountain View's Efforts to Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and State and Federal Legislative Delegation

Staff conducted outreach and sent formal letters starting in March. This resulted in a connection with a representative from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Community Planning and Development, who attended the April stakeholder meeting (described below). The issue was also discussed or agendaized at regional meetings, such as the NASA quarterly group, the Santa Clara Valley Water District Board of Directors Homeless Encampment Ad Hoc Committee, and the Cities Association of Santa Clara County (scheduled for October 13, 2016).

Council Direction to Convene a Meeting of Regional Stakeholders, Nonprofits, and Faith-Based Groups to Discuss Implementing a Safe Parking Program in North Santa Clara County, and Other Efforts Related to Residents Living in Vehicles

Staff convened two meetings with a wide range of stakeholders on April 5 and September 26, with 35 and 28 participants, respectively. At the April stakeholder meeting, five working groups were established to address various topics, which were pursued over the course of the summer as summarized below.

- *Children's Issues*—A working group meeting was held in July and a subsequent meeting took place in September with representatives from the Mountain View Whisman School District, Mountain View-Los Altos High School District, and the County. Participants discussed the number of students who are known to be homeless or otherwise unstably housed and the challenges with establishing an accurate count. The school district staff described how they work to get homeless students enrolled in school as quickly as possible and referred to services. These discussions established useful connections to help clarify vaccination requirements and increase coordination to better identify and meet the needs of homeless students.

- *Safe Parking*—The working group met in July and several follow-up discussions took place with congregations interested in pursuing a safe parking pilot. The status of this option is described in the Safe Parking section below.
- *Rapid Rehousing*—The City participated in numerous discussions with Santa Clara County and Destination Home, which received a \$1 million grant from Google to develop a North County program to implement “Rapid Rehousing” and “Homelessness Prevention.” Later in this report, staff will be seeking Council direction to continue to explore possible models for and City participation in these programs for Mountain View residents.
- *Marketing/Information*—This working group met in August and discussed the need for increased outreach to the homeless about the availability of supportive services and the desire to inform the community at-large about the different “faces of homelessness” to build support and to tap into Mountain View’s community value for safe and stable housing. The group discussed a possible future meeting of local providers to improve the coordination of services.
- *Basic Care and Hygiene*—This effort was primarily staff-driven as Council had already requested staff to explore a number of basic care, hygiene, and waste disposal options. The status and recommendations related to these options are included in their own section below.

Estimated Costs/Recommended Options:

Staff recommends continued engagement with regional representatives and local partners, which would require ongoing staff time.

VEHICLE CENSUS/SURVEY AND OTHER DATA GATHERING

Council Direction to Contract with LifeMoves to Conduct a Census and Survey of Residents Living in Vehicles in Mountain View

Over the course of two weeks in June 2016, LifeMoves staff counted 126 inhabited vehicles in specific areas of Mountain View with known concentrations of people living in vehicles and completed the survey with 68 individuals who were willing to participate (Attachment 4). The largest group of respondents (47 percent) was single men. The survey identified 10 children under the age of 17 living with their families in vehicles. Of the 10 children, 9 were of school age. One (1) in 5 respondents self-

identified as a senior, and very few respondents (less than 1 in 20) self-identified as a veterans.

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents identify as being from Mountain View, with 43 percent reporting that Mountain View was the location of their last permanent housing. The cost of rent and other economic factors, such as loss of a job or income source, was the primary reason people gave for losing their previous residence and for being unable to obtain a new permanent residence. Just over half of the respondents reported working and over half of the respondents are receiving some type of government financial assistance such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), General Assistance (GA), or Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF). The level of income reported ranges from \$0-300 to \$3,000 and over per month, with the largest group (48 percent) reporting monthly income in the range between \$600 and \$1,000.

Roughly one-third of respondents have been living in cars for more than two years, with the remaining two-thirds roughly spread evenly in time frames leading up to two years. Nearly all of respondents stated that they were not currently connected to CSA or other service providers, though it may be that this question was misunderstood given the different names associated with CSA programs.

LifeMoves made the noteworthy observation that at least 15 RVs parked along Crisanto Avenue are being rented out by “landlords.” One landlord pays a mobile waste disposal truck to pump periodically the waste from the RVs he owns. Monthly rents cited were between \$200 and \$800. This is an area for consideration of policy direction associated with enforcement of the commercial use of public rights-of-way.

Community Survey

To gather feedback from the public on this complex issue, the City also conducted a community survey from September 2 to September 19 (Attachment 5). The survey was available online via *Open City Hall* and in hard copy at City facilities. The survey was announced through all of the City’s communication channels and postcards were mailed to the residents and businesses near areas with significant numbers of people living in vehicles. The survey was available in English and Spanish.

There were 828 surveys returned (including 18 received in Spanish), the vast majority of which were completed online. The majority of respondents reported that they have seen people living in vehicles near their homes, businesses, and elsewhere in Mountain View. From two-thirds to three-quarters of respondents rated the issue of people living

in vehicles as a significant concern with 75 percent indicating a high level of concern about the supply of housing; 66 percent indicating a high level of concern about the needs of people living in cars and vehicles; and 70 percent indicating a high level of concern about the impact on nearby residences and businesses.

Survey respondents noted a variety of specific concerns on behalf of those living in vehicles, including concern that it is a substandard living condition (75 percent); that it is not a stable housing source (66 percent); and that there is vulnerability to crime (58 percent).

Concerns noted about the impacts on surrounding residents and businesses included increased trash and/or waste spills (76 percent), blighted or obstructed views (65 percent), worsened traffic or parking (61 percent), and reduced public safety (58 percent).

City and County government and community-based service providers were seen as having the lead role in solving this issue by the majority of the respondents, followed by State government (48 percent), foundations (45 percent), and faith-based organizations (35 percent).

The majority of respondents see offering basic care and hygiene, and increasing affordable housing as solutions. Short-term emergency housing, ongoing services and housing for the chronically homeless, and restricting parking all received support in the mid-40 percent range.

Other Community/Resident Feedback

The City has also received feedback about this issue through e-mails, letters, calls, social media, and *Ask Mountain View*. These communications have raised specific complaints with concerns about illegal activity, requests for enforcement, parking restrictions, or for debris removal or cleaning. Others have expressed concerns about the welfare of the homeless in Mountain View and a desire to help those in need. There has also been frequent coverage in the media.

Enforcement

The Mountain View City Code restricting sleeping in vehicles has been suspended in light of litigation on this issue, *Desertrain v. Los Angeles*. In this case, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that a provision of the City of Los Angeles City Code was unconstitutional for prohibiting people from using their vehicles as living quarters.

The Police Department has approached this issue with compassion using education, information, resource referrals, and enforcement of other current valid codes. While most abide by the laws, there are some residents living in vehicles who have continued to violate the laws, and residents engaging in illegal behaviors or actions need to be dealt with.

The majority of the residents in vehicles have congregated along Crisanto Avenue and Latham Street. The Police Department has reached out to both the neighborhoods and residents living in vehicles to explain the laws, City efforts, and limitations on enforcement. The Police Department cites for a City Code violation, or for the Vehicle Code that is used as an authority section. Areas of citations include the California Vehicle Code 22651k–72-Hour Parking; Mountain View City Code 35.32.3/32.31.3–Discharge Hazardous Material in Gutter/Storm Drain; City Municipal Code 19.72–Parking in Excess of 72 hours; and the California Penal Code 374.3–Garbage Dumping.

The Police Department has also reached out to our immediate neighboring agencies to learn about their efforts with this issue as it is not a just a local problem; it is affecting other cities, counties, and the entire State. Multiple approaches are needed to address the matter. Once real solutions and options for residents living in vehicles are in place, the City should consider additional tools to maintain the quality of life in the neighborhoods.

City Data Collection

Staff has noted a growing volume of calls for service and staff activity related to the issue of people living in vehicles. Primary areas of focus have been on waste dumping; illegal dumping; wastewater cleaning; excessive litter and garbage; debris removal, including human waste; and leaks that have required investigation for potential enforcement action and street cleaning. As noted above, staff has also received a number of calls, e-mails, and letters of concern, which have required a response. Ancillary impacts such as park reservation cancellations have also occurred.

As this is a new area of impact and service activity for the City, staff only recently began tracking the amount of time spent on issues associated with living in vehicles by the following departments: Police, Fire, Public Works, Community Services, City Attorney's Code Enforcement Division, and the City Manager's Office. Starting in July 2016, staff began recording regular data on a monthly basis, with most departments reporting figures for July and August.

Between July and August 2016, staff spent over 485 hours on issues connected to residents living in vehicles. The City Manager's Office staff responsible for managing this special project represents about one-third of the staff hours, but the other departments added these extra hours on top of their existing workloads (Attachment 6).

Estimated Costs/Recommended Options

Staff recommends the continuation of data gathering which would require ongoing staff time.

BASIC CARE AND WASTE DISPOSAL

Council Direction to Communicate the City's Policy on Vehicle Impoundment to the Public and Educate RV Owners about Illegal Dumping of Waste into Storm Drains and Creeks—Safe Disposal, Options for Waste Dumping, and the Resulting Effect on the Natural Waterways

Police Chief Max Bosel met with stakeholders to explain the City's vehicle impoundment policy. Multicultural Outreach and Environmental Services staff met with interested parties at the Day Worker Center. The City also completed outreach on both topics in conjunction with the homeless living in vehicles survey.

Council Direction to Work with CSA to Bring Dignity on Wheels (DOW) to Mountain View

The City coordinated with the local service providers to assess feasibility and obtain cost estimates for bringing DOW shower services to Mountain View. DOW has been advised that the only City requirements are for a Mobile Vendor Permit and a City business license. DOW may be able to provide service 1 or 2 half-days per week (four hours per session) for a cost of \$500 per session. The City or its partners could fund this service. The location of service is under consideration, but would likely be the CSA parking lot. This lot is currently challenging due to construction of a project nearby, but that project will be finished in late 2016/early 2017, providing greater access to the CSA site at that time.

Other options for providing shower and clothes washing services to those in need are either under way or being explored. CSA is now providing free showers and social worker support at Hope's Corner on Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. This is in addition to the existing Saturday morning programs at Hope's Corner to provide free showers and a food program. Neither CSA nor Hope's Corner has washer and dryer

services presently, but the City has discussed the feasibility of adding this capability at CSA in the near term.

Community benefit funding from the office project at 580-620 Clyde Avenue, approved in June 2016, will be provided directly to CSA and Hope's Corner to assist them in meeting the needs of the community. Funds will go to a commercial kitchen at Hope's Corner and other supportive efforts by CSA, and will be available at the time of the building permit and construction process.

Staff also researched the cost of YMCA memberships for basic services that could be provided to families or others living in vehicles to provide them with a place to shower or study. This is not recommended at this time.

Council Direction to Explore Keeping Public Restrooms Open Overnight

The City Code (Sec. 38.13) defines the operational hours of City parks and facilities as 6:00 a.m. to one-half hour after sunset. Park restrooms at all parks are opened by 9:00 a.m. The City's Park Rangers lock facilities and the contractor cleans the restrooms after closing.

Restroom open hours could be extended until 12:00 midnight or to some other time. However, staff would not recommend this without Rangers or other personnel on-site. The cost of a Park Ranger for six additional hours is approximately \$6,800 per month plus the cost of a cleaner at \$1,200 per month (for a total cost of \$96,000 per year).

Another option includes updating the locking system to an electronic one that will allow card access and pin number. The doors could be programmed to open/lock at specific times depending on the need. The system is estimated by Facilities at approximately \$9,500 plus regular cleaning costs for both doors. On-site monitoring through the Rangers would likely still be required.

Other Possible Restroom Options

Public Works Department staff reviewed basic requirements for a stand-alone public restroom to be sited somewhere in an easily accessible public space. Such a project would require ADA access, site grading, extending a water lateral and sanitary sewer lateral to the structure, and would need to meet building permit requirements and is estimated to be \$25,000. The current estimated costs for a designing and constructing new park restrooms is approximately \$450,000 to \$500,000 for a stand-alone park-type restroom.

Staff also researched the costs for public toilets such as a “Portland Loo.” The estimated cost per Portland Loo is approximately \$140,000 to \$150,000, plus ongoing maintenance and cleaning costs. A unit could possibly be installed in the Rengstorff Park group barbecue parking lot close to the sidewalk. At this location, it could serve as an additional restroom option for those using the barbecue area.

There appear to be existing water and sanitary sewer services available in Centennial Plaza for a Portland Loo type of installation, but modifications and extension to an exact location would still be required. This would disturb the plaza’s special pavement, which would add to the expense. Additionally, the most likely location within the plaza for such a facility is on property owned by Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB). The City leases the parcel from the PCJPB, so coordination with and final approval of the construction plans by the PCJPB would be required. And, of course, the City is developing a new Master Plan for the Transit Center that may substantially alter its layout. Other sites would require additional review.

A short-term option that could be considered is a Port-A-Potti that is ADA compliant and would have servicing at least three times per week to supplement the restrooms at Rengstorff Park. The estimated monthly costs average approximately \$200 to \$300, plus some additional funding may be desirable to screen it, not to exceed \$10,000 per year.

The Police Department would recommend evaluating any of these options further to optimize design, lighting, and location for crime-prevention considerations. In addition, providing facilities after hours when parks are closed to the public may require an amendment to the ordinance to achieve, and it also raises questions about enforcement.

Council Direction to Explore Creating a Waste Disposal Site in Mountain View or at Palo Alto Waste Treatment Plant

Public Works staff evaluated a possible City-operated RV waste dump station, including siting considerations, cost, and operating issues. A dump station consists of a small concrete pad with a curb on three sides and a sewer drain with a self-closing weighted cover. Liquid waste is discharged from the RV via a hose and flows directly to the sanitary sewer. A water supply is also provided for flushing the tank. There would be incremental costs associated with the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant account discharging waste.

For the purposes of this analysis, staff concentrated on City-owned sites rather than seek a commercial or industrial property owner that would be willing to host such a facility. A possible City-owned site is the front of the Municipal Operations Center (MOC). Public safety training and rest facilities are nearby and a sandbag repository currently occupies the area. Concerns associated with the impact on regular operations for each department would need to be looked at further.

There are a number of operational concerns associated with operating a dump station, including the potential for illegal dumping, vandalism, attracting RVs to Mountain View because of this service, and attracting RVs to park long-term near the dump station. Some of the concerns can be alleviated if the station is staffed, though there is a significant operational cost associated with staffing. Without staffing, an automatic pay station could be installed, though possible vandalism and servicing the pay station provides another challenge. There would also be clean-up costs for the facility every few days after it closed, which would be done on an overtime basis, plus associated equipment charges. The estimated annual cost is \$60,000 for cleaning three days per week.

The estimated cost of constructing a dump station is approximately \$250,000, though the Santa Clara County Water District may have grant funding sources to offset some costs. If the Council is interested in pursuing a dump station, staff can perform a more thorough site search, including both private and public sites, but cautions careful consideration of the long-term implications of operating a dump station.

Staff contacted two facilities that currently have or used to have dump stations, and both experienced operational concerns that included illegal dumping, improper waste disposal, and RV owners being at the facility outside of operational hours. The Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant operated an RV dump station in the distant past. The final date of the closure is unknown.

Additional Ideas for Meeting Basic Care, Hygiene, and Waste Disposal Needs

To manage waste disposal and reduce the likelihood of accidental spills, staff reviewed options for providing vouchers for RV owners to pump waste at an RV camp in Redwood City. This does not appear to be a viable solution at this time as the site owner is not interested.

Staff has identified a vendor who could be contracted to bring a portable pump to RV parking areas and remove waste for \$50 per pump. They would require RV owner

permission and waiver of liability. The costs for 50 RVs to be pumped twice a week would be \$260,000 per year.

Another option is to provide free waste tank caps to RV owners to help prevent tanks from leaking, though it will not prevent spill if the tanks are over capacity.

The City should also consider temporarily prohibiting all vehicle parking with 72-hour advance noticing on Crisanto Avenue and Latham Street for regular sweeping in order to clean streets. Posting for the special sweeping would be an incremental additional cost. Additional cleanup of human waste or trash would also add to the costs that would be based on labor rates established in the City's fee schedule.

Estimated Costs/Recommend Options:

For basic care and hygiene services, restrooms, and waste disposal, staff recommends:

- Contract for Dignity on Wheels (DOW) shower services via the City or a grant to CSA 500 to provide one 4-hour session. One session per week for a year costs \$26,000.
- Provide free waste tank caps to RV owners to ensure tanks are not leaking onto City streets at an estimated cost of \$10 to \$25 per cap (not to exceed \$2,500).
- Periodic prohibition on all vehicles parking on Crisanto Avenue and Latham Street in order to clean streets of improperly disposed waste and trash. Routine staff costs would be part of the street cleaning.
- Fund the purchase of a commercial washer and dryer for CSA and/or Hope's Corner at an estimated \$3,000 to \$5,000, depending on models and installation needs (not to exceed \$15,000).
- Port-A-Potti that is ADA compliant and would have servicing at least three times per week to supplement the restrooms at Rengstorff Park after hours. The estimated monthly costs average approximately \$200 to \$300, plus some additional funding may be desirable to screen it. Not to exceed \$10,000 per year.

The following options are not recommended by staff due to significant lead or construction times, high costs, or operational concerns. If the Council is interested in pursuing the following options, staff can perform a more thorough analysis:

- Public toilets such as a “Portland Loo.” The estimated cost per Portland Loo is approximately \$140,000 to \$150,000 plus ongoing maintenance and cleaning costs.
- Extending restroom hours at Rengstorff Park until 12:00 midnight (or to some other time) with Rangers or other personnel on-site. The cost of a Park Ranger for six additional hours is approximately \$6,800 per month plus the cost of a cleaner at \$1,200 per month (for a total cost of \$96,000 per year).
- Updating the locking system at Rengstorff Park for approximately \$9,500 plus regular cleaning costs for both doors. On-site monitoring through the Rangers would likely still be required.
- Constructing a dump station on City land is estimated at \$250,000 and annual cost of cleaning of \$60,000 for cleaning three days per week using staff overtime

FAITH-BASED SAFE PARKING AND OTHER TEMPORARY OPTIONS

Council Direction to Conduct Additional Outreach to the Faith Community to Assess Interest in Pilot Safe Parking on Faith-Based Premises

As mentioned earlier in this report, staff convened a safe parking working group and continued meeting with two interested faith-based nonprofits who are taking the lead in developing a safe parking program proposal. The proposal, if pursued and approved by applicable boards, would result in a small pilot of four to five congregation sites hosting one to three vehicles to start. The timeline is estimated at some time in 2017.

There are several considerations for implementing a safe parking program facilitated by members of the faith community: understanding the target population to be served and who will be willing to use a safe parking program; determining suitable parking lot locations; identifying a program operator; deciding on and arranging for additional services; providing for waste disposal; addressing the need for hygiene services such as toilets, showers, laundry, and fresh water; addressing liability issues; determining the level of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review; and securing program funding.

Locations are likely to be subject to Provisional Use Permit (PUP) or Conditional Use Permit (CUP) requirements. Under the CUP and PUP processes, a public hearing is required and the City is able to condition the application to address any concerns.

Council Direction to Research Creation of a Liability Insurance Program for Safe Parking

Risk Management reviewed the options and determined that the City cannot obtain insurance directly for the nonprofits as we have no insurable interest—as it would not be our property or program. Nonprofits involved with a safe parking program may be eligible for additional liability coverage through CalNonprofits. Through CalNonprofits, nonprofits could seek coverage via the Nonprofits Insurance Alliance Group (NIAC). NIAC is a group of 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax-exempt insurers used by the Santa Barbara safe parking program. Their purpose is to serve 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organizations by providing a stable source of reasonably priced liability insurance tailored to the specialized needs of the nonprofit sector. This possibility is being explored by one of the engaged pastors who received a cost estimate of approximately \$800 to \$1,000 per year, per location.

The City could consider an option to provide grants for the additional insurance costs incurred by the organizations participating in a safe parking program. Review and consideration by the interested congregations is ongoing. There may be additional requirements to qualify for coverage if, and when, underwriting is requested.

Possible Return of a Rotating Shelter in Mountain View

Staff has discussed with the County and CSA the possibility of reviving a rotating, hosted shelter model, similar to the Alpha Omega shelter program that was previously operated in Mountain View and the Hotel de Zink shelter that is currently operated by LifeMoves in Palo Alto. Twelve (12) faith-based communities would be required to run the program with each hosting one month per year. Funds and volunteers or commitments to host are the core needs of a successful program. The clients may stay for up to 90 days, which provides them with stability, safety, and a team of experienced staff working to help them become self-sufficient. For this program to be viable, much would be required of the County, CSA, faith community volunteers, and funders. The County has expressed an interest in providing funding for the operation of a rotating shelter in Mountain View.

Nontraditional Housing Forms

The Community Development Department also looked at a couple of emerging forms of nontraditional housing, such as “modular temporary homes,” that are individual locking units between 100 and 200 square feet with access to shared bathrooms and kitchens, and “tiny homes on wheels,” which are somewhat like mobile homes.

Additional review of both these options would be needed if this became an area of interest to determine sites and zoning land use designation.

Estimated Costs/Recommend Options:

For faith-based safe parking and other temporary housing options, staff recommends:

- The City provide grants for the additional insurance costs incurred by the organizations participating in a safe parking program. The cost is estimated at \$800 to \$1,000 per year, per location.
- Staff also recommends further discussion with the County and faith community regarding a rotating faith-based host shelter model as described above.

OUTREACH AND SERVICES TO LINK TO HOUSING

As mentioned earlier in this report, staff has identified additional recommendations based on what we have learned from the LifeMoves survey, the expertise of the stakeholders we have engaged, and the research we have done on options related to people living in their vehicles. These recommendations go beyond meeting the basic care and hygiene needs of these residents while they continue to exist in a precarious, temporary living situation. These recommendations also leverage County and other resources and position the City to consider partnering further with the County to support a continuum of strategies that would expand the availability of housing programs to Mountain View homeless and unstably housed residents.

The first recommendation is to bring a dedicated Outreach Worker to Mountain View to connect with people living in vehicles, assess their needs, and identify services that will help them. The total cost would be approximately \$100,000 to \$120,000 per year, potentially through a contract with the County or a local nonprofit agency. The County has suggested that it could fund half of this cost, resulting in a net annual cost to the City of \$50,000 to \$60,000. This would provide both active outreach to those living in cars and coordinated services at stationary locations to connect our vehicle residents to services.

The second recommendation is to secure a Case Worker to provide case management and supportive services to 20 chronically homeless cases in Mountain View in order to get them into permanent supportive housing, which from the vehicle survey appears to reflect the circumstances of some of the people living in RVs and cars in Mountain View. This can be established via a “revenue-sharing agreement” which the County

uses to focus its limited housing resources, prioritizing cities that have an established need and a willingness to partner on solutions. This agreement is similar to existing agreements with the cities of Palo Alto and Santa Clara. The City's cost would be \$187,000 for 18 months in exchange for which Mountain View would receive housing subsidies for our residents in the value of \$300,000 from County accessible funding resources, including HUD. This value would be realized as the individuals are placed in housing.

Estimated Costs/Recommend Options:

For outreach and services to link to housing, staff recommends:

- Outreach Worker to Mountain View to connect with people living in vehicles, assess their needs, and identify services for approximately \$100,000 to \$120,000 per year. (The County has suggested that it could fund half of this cost, resulting in a net annual cost to the City of \$50,000 to \$60,000.)
- Case Worker to provide case management and supportive services to 20 chronically homeless cases to get them into permanent supportive housing for \$187,000 for 18 months in exchange for which Mountain View would receive housing.

Future Policy Direction Regarding City Contributions to Longer-Term Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategies

While the immediate response options outlined in this staff report provide a level of relief for the issues related to people living in vehicles, staff has identified the potential opportunity to work with the County and other partners to achieve more permanent housing for these residents through a continuum of services. These services include emergency shelter, transitional housing, Rapid Rehousing, permanent supportive housing, and homelessness prevention, and are described by the County below.

Emergency Shelter (ES) programs respond to the crisis of homelessness, providing immediate shelter from the elements, access to meals, and connections to services and resources. Most shelters for adults offer bunks or cots in shared rooms with strict rules regarding behavior and alcohol and drug use. Shelter guests are usually required to leave the shelter during the day, and when demand is higher than the available beds, might not be guaranteed access to a bed the following night. Emergency shelter serves a purpose of providing a safe place off the streets for a temporary period, but it generally does not effectively help people move to permanent housing.

Transitional Housing (TH) programs provide temporary housing (usually no more than two years) with attached services focused on helping people prepare to obtain housing upon program exit. Units can be anything from an enclosed cubicle with reserved bed at a shelter facility to an apartment in the community. Transitional housing programs are intended to provide time and resources for individuals and families to gain education, employment, and income so that they are able to obtain housing upon exiting the program. Transitional housing can be effective for people who need and desire a temporary structured program environment and who have the potential to increase their income to the point that they can afford housing in the local market. However, those with fixed incomes and other barriers to obtaining and maintaining housing face the same challenges upon exiting a transitional program than they did when they entered it. In Fiscal Year 2013-14, 34 percent of people exiting transitional housing programs in Santa Clara County exited to permanent housing.

Rapid Rehousing (RRH) provides short-term financial assistance and support (four to six months, on average) to quickly rehouse homeless households in their own independent permanent housing. Program participants may start off paying 30 percent of their adjusted gross income toward rent, but their subsidies could gradually decrease. Eventually, RRH participants are expected to transition in place and take over the full lease of the unit in which they currently reside. The goal is to quickly move households out of homelessness and back into permanent housing, providing the lightest level of service necessary to assist the household. Supportive services typically include housing search, landlord mediation, and case management. RRH is effective for families and individuals who are episodically homeless and have the ability to generate sufficient income to afford housing long-term. According to the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, “data from some experienced programs indicate that 90 percent of households served by Rapid Rehousing are successfully housed and do not return to shelter.” Under the Federal stimulus-funded Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) in San Jose, 75 percent of homeless households receiving Rapid Rehousing assistance from 2009 through 2012 successfully maintained their housing at program exit.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is designed for chronically homeless and other highly vulnerable individuals and families who need long-term support to stay housed. Residents typically face significant barriers to housing, such as serious mental illness, substance abuse, chronic health conditions, and other disabilities. Programs move people directly into housing and provide deep housing subsidies, case management, and other supportive services. Permanent supportive housing has no time limitation, providing support for as long as needed and desired by the resident. Nationally, PSH is considered a highly successful strategy for ending chronic homelessness. The national

100,000 Homes campaign, which supported local communities in housing 100,000 chronically homeless individuals through Permanent Supportive Housing, found that 84 percent of people housed remained housed for at least one year. In Fiscal Year 2013-14, 98 percent of people in PSH programs in Santa Clara County maintained their housing for at least 12 months.

Homelessness Prevention (HP) programs stop homelessness before it starts by providing financial assistance and services to prevent families and individuals from losing their housing. Assistance may be one-time or for a short period. Supportive services may be provided in addition to financial assistance, or households might be connected to other resources in the community. In Santa Clara County, the Emergency Assistance Network provides one-time financial assistance to households facing eviction. Prevention services are also provided by Supportive Services for Veteran Families grantees. The effectiveness of prevention programs is difficult to prove because it is unknown if the household would have become homeless without assistance or if they would have found another way to stay housed. Under the Federal stimulus-funded HPRP Program in San Jose, 83 percent of homeless households receiving prevention assistance from 2009 through 2012 successfully maintained their housing at program exit.

City consideration of participating in the planning and funding of such a continuum of services is timely in light of a recent \$1 million grant from Google to Destination Home to implement a Rapid Rehousing Program and enhance homelessness prevention efforts in Mountain View and Sunnyvale. Staff has met with the County and Destination Home to discuss the potential scope and cost of services as well as the potential funding role for the City and other funding sources. The City has also been in discussion with the Silicon Valley Community Foundation about its possible interest in participating in some way. Community benefit funds provide another possibility to support various homelessness efforts.

Estimated Costs/Recommend Options:

This City has various efforts, programs, and funds in all of these continuum areas. Staff seeks direction to conduct further analysis and return to Council in early 2017 with specific options for how the City might enhance its involvement. The City has had initial discussion with the County on a continuum of care for the Mountain View community that could involve significant funding requests from the City in order to leverage limited County resources for the benefit of residents. The following are funds that could be used for these longer-term solutions:

- \$250,000 in one-time housing funds was discussed as part of the Fiscal Year 2016-17 Budget to be used for housing or services to low-income residents.
- \$500,000 in one-time funds committed as public benefit from the 400 San Antonio Road project. This funding will go to the City at building permit submittal, but could be a significant source of funding for additional CSA services or other regional solutions.

Other Ongoing Funds for Housing and Homeless Efforts:

- \$200,000 this fiscal year for CSA Rental Assistance (new program funded at \$150,000 in Fiscal Year 2015-16).

	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17
CSA Alpha Omega Program	\$11,326	\$10,474
CSA Emergency Assistance	\$27,755	\$24,019
Life Moves	\$26,376	\$23,499

Other Funds to Nonprofits:

- Approximately \$600,000 spread over two years (the \$1 million in one-time funds for Destination Home for Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing and services in Mountain View and Sunnyvale).
- In early 2016, the City released a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for affordable housing developments. Three developers submitted applications for City affordable housing funds totaling over \$30 million. ROEM Development Corporation, Palo Alto Housing Corporation, and MidPen Housing will develop more than 200 new units within the next few years.

- Approximately \$400,000 in one-time funds committed as “community benefit” from the office project at 580–620 Clyde Avenue. This funding will go directly to CSA and Hope’s Corner, at the time of building permit issuance.

FISCAL IMPACT

As staff has discussed in this report, there is a lot of opportunity to leverage funding sources and enhance partnerships with funders. Staff intends to bring back an expanded discussion at a subsequent meeting with additional information and options for partnering with the County and others in support of a broader continuum of solutions for homelessness and homelessness prevention.

The summary of staff recommendations in this report can be fully funded for this fiscal year with the available accumulated redevelopment dissolution or “boomerang” funds that were appropriated as part of the Fiscal Year 2016-17 adopted budget (\$261,300).

Options	Estimated Costs
• Contract for Dignity on Wheels (DOW) shower services via the City or a grant to CSA 500 to provide one 4-hour session. One session per week for a year costs \$26,000.	~\$26,000
• Provide free waste tank caps to RV owners to ensure tanks are not leaking onto City streets at an estimated cost of \$10 to \$25 per cap.	~\$2,500
• Fund the purchase of a commercial washer and dryer for CSA and/or Hope’s Corner at an estimated \$3,000 to \$5,000, depending on models and installation needs.	~\$15,000
• Provide grants for the additional insurance costs incurred by the organizations participating in a safe parking program. The cost is estimated at \$800 to \$1,000 per year, per location.	~\$20,000 – full estimate unknown
• Outreach Worker in conjunction with the County at an estimated net annual cost to the City of \$50,000 to \$60,000.	~\$50,000 to \$60,000

Options

Estimated Costs

- Case Worker for \$187,000 estimated and 18-month contract - \$62,300 for first 6 month of 18-month contract
- Port-A-Potti with servicing at least three times per week to supplement the restrooms at Rengstorff Park. The estimated monthly costs average approximately \$200 to \$300. Some additional funding may be desirable to screen it. ~\$10,000

Estimated Total:

\$195,800

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the Council provide direction on specific items requested by the Council at its February 23, 2016 meeting along with additional related, shorter-term options and provide direction on broader policy for longer-term options. The options reviewed, estimated costs, and recommendations are included in Attachment 3.

ALTERNATIVES

The Council may wish to consider the following alternatives to the recommendation:

1. Council could choose one or more of the options.
2. Council could direct staff to pursue options that were not recommended by staff.
3. Council could decide not to consider options at this time.
4. Council could explore other options.
5. Council could provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting and meeting advisory and a copy of the report was sent to all stakeholder group members, working group members and, as feasible, customers who have corresponded with the City on this topic.

Prepared by:

Approved by:

Prepared by:

Approved by:

Kimberly S. Thomas
Assistant to the City Manager

Audrey Seymour Ramberg
Assistant City Manager

Daniel H. Rich
City Manager

KST/2/CAM
609-10-04-16CR-E

- Attachments
1. Housing and Homeless Overview
 2. [Council Report for February 23, 2016](#)
 3. Options Summary Chart
 4. Vehicle Survey Summary
 5. Community Survey Summary
 6. City Department Data