



City of Arts & Innovation

Housing and Homelessness Committee Memorandum

**TO: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2025

FROM: HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES

WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: SAFE PARKING PILOT PROGRAM

ISSUE:

Receive a report on a Safe Parking Pilot Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee:

1. Receive and file a report on a Safe Parking Pilot Program; and
2. Request staff to bring forth the Safe Parking Program Pilot Program to the City Council for approval.

BACKGROUND:

On January 27, 2025, the Housing and Homelessness Committee received a report outlining Safe Parking Programs implemented in other cities. Following discussion, the Committee directed staff to return with a program proposal identifying the resources needed to implement a Pilot Safe Parking Program.

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of the proposed Safe Parking Pilot Program is to provide communities with a safe homelessness intervention for people who are living in their vehicles to stabilize and be connected to resources. The proposed program highlights aspects of Safe Parking Programs implemented in Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Barbara with a focus on the application process, background, case management, security, and pet policies.

Program Framework

The Safe Parking Pilot Program will provide up to 20 designated parking spaces offering a safe, overnight parking option for families with students currently enrolled in elementary, middle or high schools within the Riverside Unified School District or Alvorad Unified School District. Participation

in the program will be based on referrals from the district Family Coordinators and/or school counselors. Program operating hours will be 6:00 p.m. to 7 :00 a.m., seven days a week.

Ideal program site locations will include facilities equipped with restrooms, showers, and a designated pet relief area. Potential program partners include:

- Faith based organizations (e.g., St. George's Episcopal Church),
- County of Riverside (e.g. family shelter), and
- City parks that feature operational showers and limited pool deck access.

If a site is located on property owned by a faith-based organization or the County, a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be required to spell out the term, scope and funding allocation.

For city-owned sites, an assessment of facilities will be necessary to evaluate maintenance needs and potential impacts on existing recreational programming. Potential city park locations under consideration include:

- Hunt Park
- Shamel Park
- Reid Park
- Villegas Park

In accordance with Riverside Municipal Code Section 9.08.070, a permit must be issued to authorize the use of any park location for overnight camping purposes.

The proposed pilot will operate twelve months, with a formal assessment conducted at the six-month mark to evaluate program outcomes, identify barriers, and recommend adjustments to improve effectiveness.

Application Process

Families interested in enrolling in the Safe Parking Pilot Program must complete an application that includes:

- Identification of all family members residing in the vehicle
- Vehicle license number and proof of insurance
- Completion of a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) program enrollment and Consent to Release of Information forms
- Completion of the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) to determine individual service needs

Eligibility Requirements

To qualify, families must meet the following criteria:

- Possess an operational vehicle
- Have a valid driver's license
- No more than two animals per vehicle
- Only standard-size vehicles are allowed (no recreational or oversized vehicles)

Background Screening

All individuals 18 years and older will be required to complete a Department complete a Department of Justice and FBI inquiry. Individuals convicted of arson and/or sex offenses in alignment with California Penal Code Section 290 will be disqualified. Staff also recommend disqualifying individuals convicted of a felony.

Case Management

Participation in the program requires engagement in case management services. Each family will be assigned an outreach worker to help connect them with available social services, housing programs, and other needed resources.

The proposed staffing for the pilot includes one part-time outreach worker and one part-time housing locator.

A competitive procurement of services would be required to meet this program objective.

Site Security

The ideal site will be gated and secured during overnight hours. Regardless of location, security staffing is strongly recommended to:

- Verify that all vehicles are registered to program participants
- Ensure only enrolled families are accessing the designated parking area

During program hours, the lot will be closed to the public to maintain participant safety and program integrity.

Pet Policy

Participants are allowed up to two small pets per vehicle. Pets must be leashed at all times when outside the vehicle and remain under the control of their owners. Where feasible, kennels will be provided. Participants are responsible for cleaning up pet waste and supplying their own pet food and water.

Program Options

Option One – St. George’s Episcopal Church (950 Spruce Street)

Site Amenities:

- Paved parking area
- Children’s playground
- Indoor meeting space
- Exterior restrooms

Site Needs:

- ADA-compliant restroom renovations
- ADA pathways
- Perimeter fence and gates
- Shower trailer rental
- Outdoor rest area
- Solar-powered parking lot lighting
- Solar-powered security camera

The estimated costs to modify the site to meet program operational needs range from \$300,000 to \$674,250. It should be noted that the use of grant funds to meet site program needs may require a 20-year covenant be recorded against the church property.

Option Two – Islander Pool (3794 Mt. Vernon Road)

Site Amenities:

- Fenced parking area
- ADA-compliant restrooms
- ADA-compliant shower
- Picnic area

Site Needs:

- Interior perimeter fence
- ADA pathways
- Parking lot resurfacing
- Hot water heater installation
- Solar-powered parking lot lighting
- Solar powered security camera

The estimated costs to modify the site to meet program operational needs range from \$95,000 to \$375,000.

Option Three – Shamel Park (3650 Arlington Avenue)

Site Amenities:

- Paved parking area
- ADA-compliant restrooms
- ADA-compliant shower
- Hot water heater
- Picnic area
- Playground
- ADA pathways
- Office meeting space
- Exterior lighting

Site Needs:

- Solar-powered parking lot lighting
- Solar-powered security camera
- Park perimeter fence

The estimated costs to modify the site to meet program operational needs range from \$215,000 to \$500,000.

Proposed Budget

The proposed budget to operate the Safe Parking Pilot Program is \$250,000 and may be funded through Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Round 5 funding. All funds associated with this funding source must be fully spent by June 30, 2028.

Program Operation Budget

Activity	Amount
Professional Services – Background Checking Processing Fees	\$3,200
Professional Services - Case Management/Housing Locator	\$70,000
Professional Services - Security Services	\$100,100
Program Coordination (City staff)	\$56,700
Program Supplies	\$20,000
Total Program Operation Budget	\$250,000

FISCAL IMPACT:

Upon committee recommendation and City Council approval, the fiscal impact of this action is subject to the program site option selection as detailed below. Program operating costs of

\$250,000 and site improvements ranging from \$375,000 to \$674,250 are budgeted and available in the Development Grants Fund, HHAP 5 Account No. 9351040-440210.

Site Options	Estimated Site Costs	Operational Budget	Total
Option One: St. George's Episcopal Church	\$674,250	\$250,000	\$924,250
Option Two: Islander Pool	\$375,000	\$250,000	\$625,000
Option Three: Shamel Pool	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$750,000

Prepared by:	Megan Stoye, Housing and Human Services Deputy Director
Certified as to availability of funds:	Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by:	Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Rebecca McKee-Reimbold, Interim City Attorney

Attachment: Presentation