



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mayor Matt Mahan
Councilmember Sergio Jimenez
Councilmember David Cohen
Councilmember Pam Foley
Councilmember Arjun Batra

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: April 12, 2024

Approved

SUBJECT: Actions Related to the Mobile Interim Housing Project Located at the Via Del Oro Site

RECOMMENDATIONS

Accept staff recommendations with the following additional direction to staff for implementation with existing resources as capacity allows, or with new resources, included in the 2024-2025 Proposed Budget that align with City Council's approval of the Mayor's March Budget Message for Fiscal Year 2024-2025:

1. In line with previous Council direction, prioritize outreach to unhoused residents currently living in tent and vehicle encampments within 1.5 miles of the Via del Oro EIH, including along Great Oaks Boulevard and Las Colinas Lane.
2. After residents receive extensive outreach and prioritization for housing at the Via Del Oro EIH community, or other temporary or permanent housing options as available, compassionately resolve encampments within the 1.5 miles by:
 - a. Utilize tools Enforcing 72-hour parking restrictions, expired registration or inoperable vehicle tow authority provided by the California Vehicle Code, where applicable, after due notification;
 - b. Facilitating enhanced street sweeping through temporary tow-away zones, or enforce no overnight or no large vehicle parking where currently prohibited; and
 - c. Conducting an abatement of all remaining tent encampments that received priority for outreach and placement.
3. Preserve our progress within two walkable blocks of the Via Del Oro EIH
 - a. Use existing resources or new resources, such as deploying Community Activity Specialists to the area to prevent re-encampment, and/or installing physical deterrents or permanent signage.

4. Prevent tent and vehicle re-encampment along Great Oaks Parkway between Endicott Boulevard and the Blossom Hill Caltrain Station and at the northwest corner of Monterey Road and Bernal Road due to traffic safety and critical infrastructure concerns
 - a. Use existing resources or new resources, such as deploying Community Activity Specialists to the area to prevent re-encampment, and/or installing physical deterrents or permanent signage.

BACKGROUND

The Via del Oro Interim Housing Community exemplifies an innovative, public-private partnership model for accelerating the rate at which we create safe and dignified alternatives to unmanaged encampments. We're grateful for John Sobrato, Peter and Susanna Pau with the SHP Christian Foundation, the Valhalla Foundation, Vinod and Neeru Khosla, Preston & Carolyn Butcher, and anonymous donors for their generosity; and DignityMoves' creative development approach that will allow us to bring 150 beds online quickly and cost-effectively. We hope to replicate learnings from this project across the city to other interim housing projects in our pipeline.

However, our ability to scale interim housing and other alternatives to unmanaged encampments requires community buy-in. Neighborhoods that host solutions to homelessness reasonably expect that quality-of-life issues will improve as unhoused residents move out of unmanaged encampments that impact their local parks, environment and small businesses, and into dignified housing with supportive services. South San Jose neighborhoods have taken on four EIH communities and one safe parking site and deserve to realize the direct benefits, which is why we must offer a local preference, resolve encampments after people are offered housing, and preserve our progress once encampments are resolved.

We've started to pilot this approach in other parts of the city. Council previously approved a Water Resource Protection Zone around the forthcoming Cherry Avenue EIH site in District 9 and voted to preserve our progress after rehousing people living along the Guadalupe River Trail downtown. Most recently, Council approved the Mayor's March Budget Message, which included direction to explore establishing no-encampment zones within two walkable blocks of every existing and planned EIH and in areas where significant resources have been dedicated toward rehousing efforts.

We must apply the same approach in South San Jose – where we anticipate opening 354 new beds this calendar year across the Branham-Monterey and Via del Oro EIHs. These units will add to the existing 124 beds at Rue Ferrari, 78 beds at Monterey-Bernal, and 42 parking spaces at Santa Teresa Safe Parking; and we will soon break ground on 134 beds at the Rue Ferrari Expansion site. With 732 total safe alternatives to unmanaged encampments, South San Jose deserves to see quality of life issues improve in their neighborhoods.

To achieve this, the City will first provide outreach to residents living in tent and vehicle encampments within 1.5 miles of the Via Del Oro EIH Community. Outreach teams will be able to make direct referrals to interim housing at Via del Oro and help make connections to other available housing options. For those that have an RV or other vehicle, we should try to provide a referral to Santa Teresa Safe Parking, or any other safe parking location within the city, if there's capacity or offer a buy-back incentive pending allocation of resources through the FY 24-25 budget process. Further, if this area is selected under the new proactive outreach model, outreach teams will have access to flexible funding to help unhoused residents meet a wide variety of needs, such as resources to repair vehicles or obtain car insurance, reconnect with family, or identifying longer

term housing options in San Jose or elsewhere to enable residents to independently meet their needs.

After residents living in encampments within 1.5-miles of Via del Oro receive a reasonable amount of outreach (as determined by city staff), connections to appropriate resources and support, and priority for a unit at the new interim housing community, any remaining encampments should be abated and parking restrictions enforced. We believe the City is doing its part in offering and prioritizing unhoused residents within 1.5 miles of the Via del Oro project multiple and repeated opportunities to come indoors. Many of these residents will have an opportunity to move into Monterey-Branham months before Via del Oro opens. Therefore, our recommendations direct staff to abate remaining encampments within 1.5 miles of the site using existing resources, or if needed, new resources provided through the FY 24-25 budget. We hope that residents will take the offers for safe parking, vehicle buy-back, interim housing at Brahman-Monterey or Via del Oro, or permanent housing as available, thereby reducing the need to conduct abatements. People that reject shelter and other resources must be held accountable in the end.

After investing \$13.3 million in re-housing efforts and additional resources to clear the area surrounding the Via del Oro EIH, we have a fiscal responsibility to prevent re-encampment in key areas. At minimum, our memo seeks to maintain two walkable blocks around the Via del Oro interim housing community clear of tent and vehicle encampments. While our recommendations seek to give staff latitude to implement the best approach for this two-block area, we recommend deploying Community Activity Specialists. These positions were funded in the FY 23-24 budget and have been directed to keep the Guadalupe River Trail clear of encampments. We anticipate that these positions will have capacity to service more than one area of the city, and we should consider deploying them to preserve our progress at Via del Oro.

Finally, our memo seeks to preserve our progress along Great Oaks Parkway between Endicott Boulevard and the Blossom Hill Station (Great Oaks encampment) and at the northwest corner of Monterey Road and Bernal Road (Monterey Road underpass). Specifically, the Great Oaks encampment runs parallel to Monterey Road, which is a Vision Zero Priority Safety Corridor. The City's Implementation Plan for the Community Plan to End Homelessness includes a commitment to reduce traffic fatalities and injuries among unhoused residents; therefore, this direction seeks to help save lives by preventing re-encampment along a specific section of the corridor. We acknowledge that addressing the Greak Oaks encampment may require collaboration with multiple partner agencies to leverage existing agreements or execute new agreements to clear and maintain that area going forward.

We also seek to prevent re-encampment of the Monterey Road underpass to protect critical infrastructure. The current encampment below Monterey Road and Bernal Road is associated with fires, property damage, biowaste, and trash that poses a risk to a water company providing critical services for our water infrastructure.

The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.