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# Smart Practices for Safe Parking

A nationwide review of safe parking  
programs for people sheltering in vehicles.

**Prepared by:**

**University of Southern California**

**Sol Price School of Public Policy**

Lindsay McElwain

Daniel Schiele

Laila Waheed

**For:**

**The Center for Homeless Inquiries**

Dr. Christopher Weare, Director

Dr. Grace Nadel, Assistant Principal Investigator



**CENTER FOR HOMELESS  
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## **Foreword**

Safe parking programs are designed to provide a safe place for people sheltering in their vehicles to park without risk of a citation. Safe parking programs offer several on-site services, including restrooms, handwashing stations, charging stations, and case management services. In 2020, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) employed the Center for Homeless Inquiries (CHI) to evaluate the Los Angeles Safe Parking Initiative.

CHI utilized our Capstone team to identify and examine safe parking programs nationwide to distill smart practices. The team's research focused on program recruitment, target service population, service provision and program benchmarks. Components of programs studied evolved into smart practice recommendations for safe parking programs.

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## **Executive Summary**

Nearly three dozen communities struggling to assist their unsheltered and sheltered homeless populations have developed safe parking programs. These programs offer secure places for people sheltering in vehicles to park and sleep in vehicles overnight while using a range of social services to facilitate rapid and permanent rehousing. One of the most well-known programs is Santa Barbara New Beginnings Counseling Center (SBNBCC), created in 2004. SBNBCC has been a reference for many other programs.

This capstone team was assembled and tasked with researching smart practices on safe parking programs supporting the Center for Homeless Inquiries' study of Los Angeles's Safe Parking Initiative. Our research identified 32 programs outside of Los Angeles and Santa Barbara and focused on program recruitment, target service population, service provision, and program benchmarks. After report completion, researchers from the National Homelessness Law Center shared nine additional programs with our team, bringing the total to 43 safe parking programs. We studied the characteristics of safe parking programs to differentiate successful program approaches and determine which specific and unique strategies may translate effectively to other communities.

The following report includes an analysis of safe parking programs based on surveys and interviews with 19 programs responsive to the team's outreach. We identified research questions relating to recruitment, target population, services offered, and benchmarks for success to support a nationwide smart practices review.

Our findings include three program models that range from top-down to bottom-up approaches to program operation: umbrella organization, composite programs, and independent operators. The successes of programs in each model provide opportunities for program growth and improvement to programs operating on the other end of the spectrum.

The team's recommendations for successful safe parking fall under six themes: intentional program design, strategic location, fostering trust, focused social services, engaging stakeholders, and implementing benchmarks. Our recommendations will assist existing programs seeking to increase utilization and participant stability and inform organizations exploring the implementation of safe parking.

Our findings support the concept of safe parking as a stabilizing force in parkers' lives and benefit to the broader community. Safe parking is a helpful resource for homeless services networks, from law enforcement outreach to case management engagement. Rehousing efforts rely on social service integration, but safe parking programs can provide the foundational community to meet parkers' basic needs.

## **Introduction to the Issue**

The Center for Homeless Inquiries (CHI) is researching the Los Angeles Safe Parking programs to identify how to improve success. Existing research on safe parking programs consists of a handful of reports on practices, program models, or outcomes. Even though there are examples of safe parking program initiatives lauded as successful, the overall model of safe parking lacks the research needed to improve recruitment, day-to-day operations, and verify the desired connections to stable housing. Our team conducted a review of safe parking programs outside of Los Angeles to inform the evaluation of the Los Angeles programs.

Although the impetus for this review was to aid the Center for Homeless Inquiries' evaluation of Los Angeles' safe parking programs, our study focused on other programs across the United States to develop "smart practices" (Bardach & Patashnick, 2016) and benchmarks for success. Our research identified 43 safe parking programs in the United States, primarily located on the West Coast.

Given the early stage of safe parking program research, information about what works for programs and why was unclear. Early reports have focused on a few select programs to describe their services. Safe parking programs are still a novel homeless service, and their characteristics are not widely known. As a hybrid between street outreach and emergency shelters, safe parking programs constitute an under-researched niche in the homeless crisis system.

## **Framing the Homelessness Crisis**

The ongoing homelessness crisis is at the forefront of many policy makers' and social scientists' agendas but has proven to be a wicked problem, evading simple policy solutions (Rittel & Weber, 1973). Community perceptions of homelessness as a problem often influence feasible policy options and can push for enforcement over support services (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty [NLCHP], 2019). Homeless advocates emphasize treating the unhoused with a "vision of human solidarity, empathy, and dignity" (Gawthrop, 2005, p. 246). However, supportive service interventions often fall short of ideals due to fragmented networks and limited resources (NLCHP, 2019).

The NLCHP (2019) reports that the nation's 3.5 million homeless individuals routinely face a limited supply of affordable housing and high overall housing costs. Median home prices across the United States have continued to rise faster than median income leading to increased housing instability and challenges finding housing (Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2020). Efforts to increase affordable housing through development projects or rent control are challenged by "not in my backyard" activists and investors (Gibson, 2005). High rent costs, limited housing supply, and cumbersome temporary shelter processes contribute to the growing population of homeless individuals and families (Zeitlin, 2019). In response to the growing disparity between rental prices and income, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) created the Rental Affordability Index. Rental affordability is a metric used by the HUD (n.d.) that divides median rent by median income to compare housing affordability between geographic areas. The affordability index considers rent too burdensome if the annual rental cost is more than 30 percent of income (HUD, n.d.).

Fowler et al. (2019) advocate for a complex system approach to consider prevention, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing. However, many communities struggle to fund and develop effective interventions (Fowler et al., 2019). The lack of integrated services requires unstably housed and homeless individuals to navigate a complicated web of social service agencies for aid.

To combat the challenge of decentralized services, some communities participate in a Continuum of Care (CoC) to better connect and refer individuals in need. CoCs are a federally sponsored program designed to integrate social services like emergency shelter, police outreach, and housing support services. Within a CoC, individuals known by one organization are supported by all (HUD, 2021). Safe parking programs partner with CoCs in many communities where they operate to end homelessness.

In addition to the challenges of connecting individuals with effective services, homelessness policy faces additional pushback due to homeless individuals being framed as unworthy (Parker, 2019). Public perception influences attention and investment in possible solutions (Kingdon, as cited in Rose & Baumgartner, 2013). The perception of unhoused people and homelessness can serve to strengthen or diminish commitment to public funding. The worthiness of homeless support services is impacted by media portrayals that unhoused people are social deviants, drug addicts, cheaters, or criminals (Rose & Baumgartner, 2013) responsible for their misfortune. Policy also stalls due to community fears of becoming a “magnet” city for homeless individuals seeking services (Rosenthal & Foscarinis, 2006). While the “welfare magnet” theory was debunked by Hanson and Hartman (1994), it is regularly used as a justification for limiting homelessness support (Rosenthal & Foscarinis, 2006).

### **Unhoused and Underserved**

Rising costs of living and stagnant wages have contributed to housing instability and thus increases in unsheltered adults and families relying on their vehicles as a place to live and sleep. Research from the NLCHP (2019) indicates that between 30% and 50% of unhoused individuals in West Coast cities now utilize their vehicles as a primary source of shelter. Even though the number of individuals living in their vehicles is increasing, many homeless services focus on chronically unsheltered homeless who live in the streets or other makeshift shelters (Lee et al., 2010).

The needs of individuals sheltering in their vehicles are different from chronically homeless individuals living outdoors (Wakin, 2005). These vehicle dwellers face unique legal, social, and economic challenges. By maintaining access to minimal shelter, individuals sheltering in their vehicles may maintain work and community ties not afforded to individuals living on the street. However, the criminalization of vehicle dwelling exposes people to citations, towing, or impoundment fees that increase instability and threaten those ties (Mitchell, 1997).

The enforcement of overnight parking restrictions and prohibitions on sleeping or loitering in vehicles can cause further economic and social struggle (NLCHP, 2019). Increasing numbers of communities have turned towards criminalizing overnight parking to solve this issue (NLCHP, 2019; Mitchell, 1997). Residents may no longer see RVs and vehicles used as shelters on the street, but individuals may lose access to their only remaining shelter. By meeting the basic

physiological and safety needs, safe parking can prevent individuals from slipping into further hardship (Rosenthal & Foscarinis, 2006). Figure 1 depicts the compounding relationship between housing instability and vehicle camping criminalization.



*Figure 1. Causes of increased housing instability for vehicle dwellers.*

Housing instability can lead to individuals relying on their vehicles for shelter. In communities where living in vehicles is criminalized, a temporary episode of housing instability can lead to the loss of a vehicle, livelihood, and ability to regain stability.

The severity of California’s homelessness crisis led to varied policy efforts at the state level to address the needs of the state’s homeless individuals. In 2019, California Assembly Bill 891 passed the Assembly and State Senate to require cities with populations over 330,000 to develop safe parking programs and utilize public property for programs where possible (Bill Text - AB-891, 2019). Governor Newsom vetoed the bill, but it brought attention to the relatively new safe parking service model.

### **The Safe Parking Concept**

Safe parking programs aiming to meet the needs of people living in their vehicles recognize that safety and basic physiological needs are the foundation of psychological stability. Adults require their basic needs to be met to focus on finding work, housing, and community (Kenrick et al., 2010). Communities that provide safe parking can help parkers achieve stability and focus attention on more advanced needs (Kenrick et al., 2010).

Safe parking lots provide a space and basic hygiene amenities for vehicular residents to park overnight without the risk of a citation. Programs are run by nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, cities, and counties and are found primarily on the West Coast. Safe parking programs seek to address basic needs by providing designated and secure parking lots and spaces and connecting participants to social services. Safe parking lots allow parkers a whole night’s sleep and a sense of stability to engage in their next goal.



The newness of safe parking programs presents a challenge in the evaluation of program success. Santa Barbara's New Beginnings Counseling Center (SBNBCC) is the best-known safe parking program (SBNBCC, 2021; Zeitlin, 2019). SBNBCC produced a safe parking program manual to provide navigational support on program development with regard to community support, vehicles, parkers, operations, and services based on their experience (Jansen & Tauber, 2017).

Merely relying upon SBNBCC as the single exemplar of smart practices is limited and might not improve our understanding of success. Differentiating successful safe parking program approaches and performance outcomes is key to determining which specific and unique strategies may be considered smart practices (Bardach & Patashnik, 2016).

News articles and reports often cite Santa Barbara as the program model transplanted in other cities. However, our research has revealed a considerable variation in programs from size, services on-site, service referrals, participation requirements, service providers, and more. A feasibility study conducted by the City of Long Beach identifies recurring themes in five successful safe parking programs: transitioning people to housing, good relationships with law enforcement, operation by nonprofits, limited access hours, and no RV support (Colopy, 2017). A policy brief by Ivey et al. (2018) builds upon the Long Beach report to identify two types of program operations. Ivey et al. (2018) describe programs as either centralized with funding benefits or privatized with flexibility benefits. Ivey et al. (2019) focus on legal and messaging practices for successful programs, including good relationships with law enforcement and the local community.

The Homeless Policy Research Institute [HPRI] (2018) also developed a report on safe parking programs in response to the City of Long Beach that draws from the same program examples. HPRI's (2018) research provides information on program size and budget, screening and security processes, goals, and outcomes. The findings point to large amounts of variation between program size and rehousing results, but similarities for screening and security. HPRI (2018) found that programs often require background checks and have on-site security hired or provided by program participants.

Takeaways from these initial reports highlight differences in structural design, security approaches, connections with law enforcement, and social service provision. While specific smart practices identified in a sample of successful programs add to the general academic literature, the scope of safe parking practices has not been explored. Thus, recommendations based upon the limited scope of research may lack generalizability or practical usefulness (Bardach & Patashnik, 2016). Our team developed program models representing the different types of safe parking programs identified to increase generalizability and identified logic models to inform various programs.

### **Safe Parking Logic Model**

The team developed a logic model as a visual representation of the process by which safe parking programs provide those living in their vehicles with a safe place to park (Millar et al., 2001). Our logic model is based on SBNBCC's safe parking program since that program is often viewed as the baseline model for all safe parking programs. The logic model explains the connections between program design and activities in relation to expected returns. Through the

logic model, we can understand the safe parking process and identify which smart practices different programs use to move from inputs to results.

Figure 2 depicts a safe parking program logic model.



Figure 2. Safe parking logic model.

The safe parking baseline logic model allowed the team to identify potential research areas that impact outcomes and other smart practices for safe parking programs more broadly. For example, funding sources and stability can impact program longevity and service level. Rules and eligibility requirements are impacted by community input but may limit utilization and program impact on individuals. While most of these elements were present for all programs, the individual program approach implicated varying success and challenge points. Our teams’ research on safe parking programs revealed choices in design and activities had downstream impacts on results.

### Methods

Our project adds to the academic literature on safe parking programs by identifying smart practices that are translatable to other communities (Bardach & Patashnick, 2016). To identify smart practices for safe parking programs, our team focused on a nationwide review of existing safe parking programs. The team identified four themed research questions regarding recruitment, target population, service provision, and benchmarks for success.

Our research revealed 43 safe parking programs operating in the United States, with over three quarters located on the West Coast. The team contacted 32 safe parking programs identified prior to data collection to request participation in the research. Twenty programs responded to our interview request; one short pilot was excluded from our findings. The team researched the community surrounding the safe parking program for additional context to supplement survey information gathered.

## Research Questions

Research questions focused on recruitment, target population, service provision, and benchmarks:

- (1) *How do successful safe parking programs recruit parkers?* The team sought information regarding how potential participants are identified, contacted, and recruited to join the program. With program elements similar to street outreach programs, the level of engagement to recruit individuals could involve window knocking or may focus more on formal referral networks.
- (2) *What population is served by the safe parking program?* Research on service provision indicated that properly targeted services most effectively support homeless individuals (Barile et al., 2018). The population served by a safe parking program is a factor for providing suitable services. Some programs may be highly selective with program eligibility, while others may target a specific demographic or serve anyone in need.
- (3) *What types of services do safe parking programs provide to successfully connect unhoused individuals to more stable housing?* Programs offer services on-site and provide referrals to service providers, but the offerings vary greatly. The team compared levels of service provided as a program design component.
- (4) *What benchmarks and metrics could be used to measure the success of a safe parking program?* Benchmarks for safe parking program success do not currently exist. The team sought information from programs about how they measure success, from providing stability to rehousing parkers.

## Reviewing the Literature

The academic literature on safe parking programs is limited. To understand the context of safe parking, the team focused on more general homeless services and the features that overlap with safe parking. The benchmarks from other homeless supportive services guided the team's understanding success in safe parking programs.

## Primary Research and Data Collection

The team's project had three primary research components resulting in building a dataset with case study style narratives. The three primary research components were: (1) identifying safe parking programs, (2) contacting program leaders to participate in a questionnaire, and (3) conducting a semi-structured interview with program leaders. After data collection, the team paired online and academic resources with primary research to develop program typologies.

- (1) *Identify safe parking programs and context.* The team conducted online research utilizing keywords, followed news article leads and references, and reviewed reports published about safe parking programs to identify all safe parking programs nationwide. In addition to online research, the team contacted experts in safe parking programs through CHI to learn about other programs. The team also utilized snowball sampling; as we connected

with safe parking providers, we requested if there were other programs in their regions. The team compiled contact information for program leaders that were available online.

The contextual online research supplemented the survey responses from programs to provide details about the size of the community, the size of the homeless population, the laws relating to sleeping in vehicles, and housing affordability to understand the safe parking program's success in the community.

- (2) *Online survey questionnaire for program leaders.* To gather data on the safe parking programs, the team developed a Qualtrics survey for the aspects of the research that were well suited to quantitative questions like yes/no, multiple-choice, or short answers (Marielli, 2010). The questionnaire allowed for branching logic depending on the respondent's selections but was short to increase response rates. The survey was roughly 30 questions and took under 15 minutes for respondents to complete.

Central questions for the online survey were about the program basics, such as the size of the program, partnerships the program has, the types of services provided, and the program outcomes for participants.

- (3) *Semi-structured Zoom interviews with program leaders.* To understand the context of the survey data collected and to ask more qualitative questions (Marielli, 2010), the team conducted follow-up interviews with questionnaire respondents. The semi-structured interview format allowed for more context and understanding of the situation that helped the team understand why a practice worked well (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Döringer, 2020).

When contacting program leaders, the team requested participation in the research. Once an interview was scheduled, the team shared the online survey and asked for participant responses in advance of the interview date.

Twenty of the 32 safe parking program operators contacted responded to the request for an interview. Interviews were conducted via Zoom. Two team members were present at each interview, with one member taking the lead to ask questions and the second responsible for note-taking. Interviews were approximately 45 minutes in length.

### **Case Study Narratives**

The data collected from surveys and interviews provided the team with information on 20 safe parking programs. The remaining programs identified were not responsive to the team's outreach efforts and did not complete the survey (Miller & Salkind, 2002). To analyze the results, the team applied the program logic model features and sought out patterns in practices and contexts for successful programs. Using case study narratives, the team developed three models of successful programs, including their context, to answer questions of "how" and "why" the programs were successful (Miles & Hubbard, 1984). The program models developed support translatable smart practices (Bardach & Patashnik, 2016), informing the theoretical grounding of safe parking programs and recommendations for other safe parking initiatives. The team has included in-depth case study narratives of programs representing each typology in Appendix A.

## **Risks and Limitations**

The foreseeable challenges posed by our research design were (1) low response rates, (2) inaccurate reporting from programs, and (3) data collection differences between programs. The team established contact early with programs to mitigate low response rates and offered to share report findings. We achieved a 63% response rate for interviews from large and small programs run by various organizations. Data differences between programs resulted in the team not always being able to compare accurately. Data quality and access is a known issue for researchers working on homeless services evaluations.

The team has minimal concerns about data inaccuracies due to the personal credibility of interviewees. While there is a risk with self-reported information to document only positive outcomes, interviewees were forthcoming with program challenges.

## **Data Characteristics**

In the evaluation of data, we considered our research questions and analyzed how programs may be determined to be successful. We used evaluative criteria and “value judgments” (Bardach & Patashnik, 2016, p. 27) to examine our four research questions. Our evaluative criteria on recruitment, target population, services offered, and transition to stable housing are based on the following:

- *Recruitment:* The team gathered information on the methods of outreach safe parking programs conducted such as 211, social service referrals, police referrals, and street outreach, including flyers. In connection with recruitment efforts, the team evaluated whether programs were often full or utilized a waitlist.
- *Target population:* A target population could be a specific demographic group, priority access to services, or exclusion based on eligibility rules. The team requested information on eligibility, such as vehicle requirements, demographics, or residency rules programs enforced for parkers.
- *Access to services:* Program services included restrooms, laundry facilities, food, security, case management, availability of counseling, and document services. The team saw the scope of program services as a potential draw for parkers and a way to improve outcomes.
- *Transition to stable housing:* The transition to stable housing is a common goal for homeless support services. We sought data on the number of participants housed and the average length of stay in the safe parking program.

The above are criteria to evaluate program data; we also collected detailed information about the characteristics of each safe parking program studied. As noted above in the methodology section (1) *identify safe parking programs and context*, the team identified individuals in various programs and asked them to complete an online survey and participate in a semi-structured Zoom interview. Survey results and responses to interview questions provided operational

characteristics of safe parking programs. Surveys and interviews were the sources for data about measurable successes and smart practices.

Our team created a matrix of program characteristics to select smart practice programs or elements within programs. We then analyzed program characteristics and made value judgments based on critical outcome criteria about program successes.

The report that follows draws on case studies and smart practices identified in programs across the United States. The report includes a literature review followed by a discussion of our findings. The literature review provides the theoretical foundations for homeless service provision. Our findings and analysis section introduces program models identified in the research and highlights translatable smart practices.

### Literature Review

Our team conducted a literature review focused on homelessness services more broadly to provide context and theoretical grounding for primary research. We concentrate on precipitating factors for homelessness, how people overcome homelessness, and how other types of programs are successful, or not, at supporting people towards stable housing. Safe parking programs share features with street outreach and emergency or temporary shelters but do not fit neatly into those existing service categories. The final section of the literature review includes academic research on benchmarks for traditional types of programs to support safe parking program benchmarks.

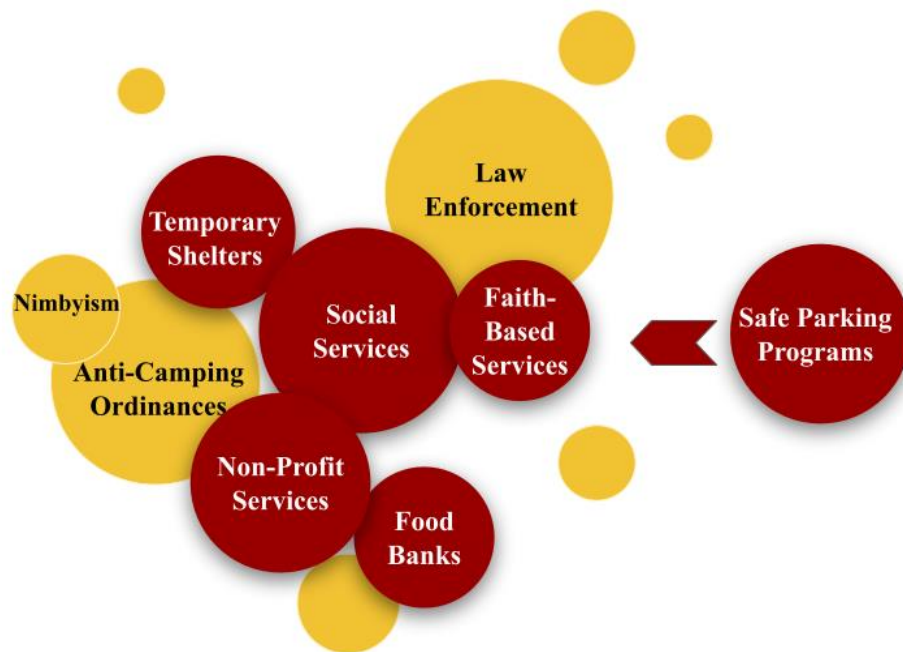


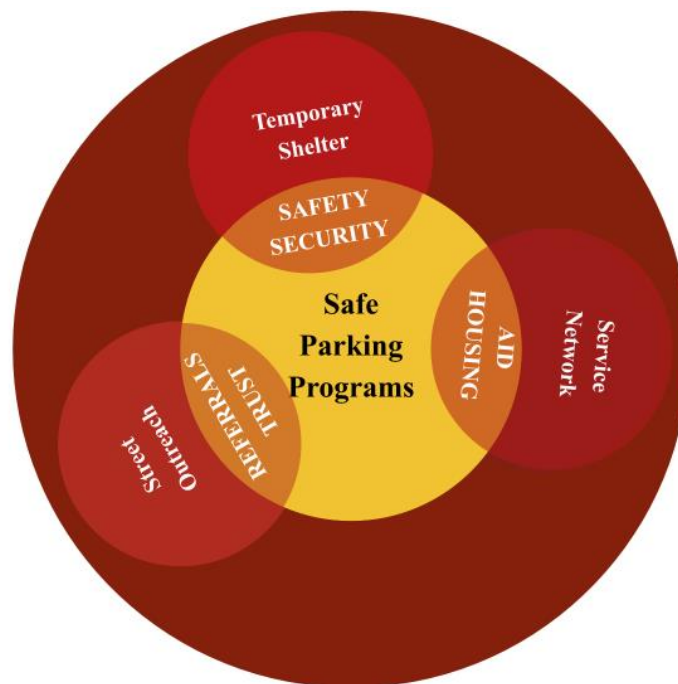
Figure 3. Context of homeless services scatter diagram.

The figure depicts overlapping homeless service network players and safe parking programs based on the research conducted by our team.

The literature on homelessness identifies well-established contributing factors for why people become homeless, from individual factors like disability to structural factors like affordable

housing shortages (Aubry et al., 2012; Main, 1998). A more complex perspective considers socioeconomic, social, and personal vulnerability factors of individuals paired with bad timing and bad luck to account for entries and exits in homelessness (Fowler et al., 2019). Research on self-identified causes of homelessness identified 19 vulnerabilities with variation between demographic groups adding credence to the need for a varied approach to services (Barile et al., 2018). Safe parking can be one solution for a specific subset of needs and vulnerabilities, especially sudden loss of income, illness, domestic violence, and eviction in expensive housing markets. Safe parking can serve as a stabilizing intervention for individuals made vulnerable by any one of these factors.

Within the last few years, the programmatic framework for combating homelessness has shifted to a housing first approach for chronic homelessness and rapid rehousing for more transitionally homeless (Padgett, 2015; NAEH, 2016). Previously, housing readiness approaches began with street outreach for underlying conditions such as mental health or job services before providing housing. The housing first approach prescribes moving someone from the street to stable housing to provide stability and meet foundational needs (Kenrick et al., 2010; Padgett, 2015). Rapid rehousing efforts take a similar approach by providing temporary shelter and stability within weeks of engagement with services. Like these stability-first programs, the safe parking approach recognizes stability and safety as critical before engagement with the next steps like health and income support services. Although safe parking programs do not provide permanent stability, programs may fulfill the basic safety and security needs enabling participants to take steps towards housing.



*Figure 4. Overlapping traits for safe parking programs.*  
The figure depicts features shared by safe parking programs, street outreach, temporary shelter, and homeless service networks.

Safe parking programs share features with street outreach and temporary shelter but do not fit neatly into those existing service categories. Street outreach, designed to meet individuals “where they are at” (Lee & Plitt Donaldson, 2018, p. 426), requires building trust in the personal connection and the system’s ability to help (Kryda & Compton, 2009). Outreach workers who could approach homeless individuals without judgment were more likely to engage homeless populations (Lee & Plitt Donaldson, 2018). Persistence, even repeated brief encounters, and goal setting were cited as successful approaches for engagement (Lee & Plitt Donaldson, 2018). Safe parking programs rely on initial outreach and referral but provide a central and safe location for repeated contact and trust-building among and between participants.

Traditional temporary shelters have developed poor reputations as unsafe and undesirable options among homeless individuals (Winter, 2017; Culhane, 2007). At the forefront of homeless advocacy, low barrier shelters seek to provide flexibility for individuals, sometimes allowing pets, less restrictive hours, and limited rules (NAEH, n.d.). Low barrier shelters focus on maintaining dignity and choice with the least restrictive rules required to maintain safety (NAEH, n.d.). Like temporary shelter programs, safe parking can provide basic amenities and safety with low entry barriers. Low barriers and flexibility may generate demand for safe parking from individuals living in their vehicles.

Safe parking programs join a network of services intending to support homeless individuals of all kinds. Despite the overlap between safe parking programs and CoC services, funding and networked support for safe parking are unofficial at best. CoC support through increased funding, advocacy, local public-private support directly correlates with reductions in homelessness (Jarpe et al., 2019). Because safe parking programs do not align neatly with federal grants (Lucas, 2017), funding, reporting, and service provision may not be integrated with CoC efforts. The similarities to existing programs and connections to existing services vary for safe parking programs but may inform outcomes due to demonstrated need for integrated service networks.

At the core of homeless services rehousing and stabilizing individuals experiencing homelessness is the stated goal. However, benchmarks for strong rehousing rates and even actual outcomes are not standardized. SBNBCC lists 17 outcome measures for safe parking services that align with program services tracked in Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) (Jansen & Tauber, 2017). These include the length of time in the program, participants housed, number of participants on a waitlist, and referrals to social services (Jansen & Tauber, 2017). SBNBCC’s outcome measures informed our team’s data collection framework.

Complicating analysis efforts, data in HMIS varies greatly between communities, and data specific to safe parking programs is nonexistent. United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) provides benchmarks for supporting homeless families, including that no families are turned away from temporary shelter, no families are unsheltered, and all are offered appropriate referrals to services (USICH, 2017). NAEH (2016) provides benchmarking specific to rapid rehousing, citing an average of 30 days or less unhoused. The federal and national organizations provide better and more specific benchmarks and measures for success than the state and CoC levels.



## Findings and Analysis

The team surveyed and interviewed program leaders in over 20 safe parking programs, most of which operate along the West Coast. Nineteen unique programs are included in the findings of this report. Programs excluded from this report are not yet operating, and programs not responsive to the team's outreach efforts. One program interviewed included a six-week pilot program in Sacramento, California; this program was also excluded from the report due to the short length of operational time. The team included programs that operated pilots in the past year, many of which indicated efforts to restart operations. The following findings and analysis focus on describing the general findings, introducing program models, and distilling translatable smart practices from the nineteen safe parking programs.

To develop robust case narratives, the team focused data collection on four areas of each program: community context, program context, program design, and program outputs. The coding of variables within each area and findings are presented in the Findings section.

In interviews and surveys, three program models emerged. These models range in program design and context, though each seek to address vehicular homelessness within communities by providing a safe location to park. Of course, many programs provide much more than just safety. The three models are Umbrella Organizations, Composite, and Independent Operator. Umbrella organizations are characterized by a single organization managing safe parking lots, sometimes with unique lot owners and operators. Composite model programs utilize aspects of larger umbrella organizations and smaller independent lots, often with a service "hub" with more intensive services and parking lot "spokes" that provide basic amenities. Independent operator programs are primarily smaller programs operated by faith-based or nonprofit organizations that support homeless individuals as part of their mission. The Program Models section provides a more in-depth discussion on the findings relating to each research question in the context of the program typology. Case narratives and data matrices are in the appendices of this report.

Finally, in Distilling Smart Practices, the team discusses themes that emerged in the research, including the importance of location, flexibility, community building, and defining success.

### Findings

We used a multivariate matrix (Appendix C) to organize survey and interview responses into four categories: (1) community context, (2) program context, (3) program design, and (4) program output. We were then able to code the organized data. The following establishes coding for the variables identified and the range of responses received.

- (1) *Community Context*: To help provide additional context surrounding safe parking programs, we included information regarding the general population size of the city or county, the total number of unsheltered and sheltered homeless individuals, the rental affordability statistic, and information regarding ordinances on camping in vehicles.

The city or county populations are interval data ranging from a low of 42,020 in Edmonds, Washington, to a high population of 1,671,000 in Alameda County, California. Our team used general population sizes to provide context on the community and its ability to address homelessness. Homeless populations from point-in-time (PIT) counts

conducted by counties are also interval data and ranged from a low of 14 in Edmonds to a high of 8,102 in San Diego. The PIT for King County, Washington in Appendix C was excluded as the high count because it includes the City of Seattle, which we omitted from the study. The homeless population counts included the total number of unsheltered and sheltered individuals within a city or county.

The rental affordability is interval data ranging from a low of 17.79% in Green Bay, Wisconsin, to a high of 32.9% in Walnut Creek, California. Rental affordability statistics provide context on the ability of renters to sustain monthly rental payments. Rental affordability typically accounts for other debts and financial responsibilities and considers rental costs too high when exceeding 30% of income. Two programs operated in cities where rent came close to 30% of median income.

We coded ordinances prohibiting camping in vehicles or overnight parking as ordinal data with Yes, Some Places, or No responses. Twelve communities reported ordinances against camping in vehicles or overnight parking. Three reported that ordinances were in effect in some places in the community (for example, on residential streets), and four reported no ordinance prohibiting camping in vehicles or overnight parking.

- (2) *Program Context:* Variables relating to program context were the programs' relationship to law enforcement, program funding sources, social service level, and the programs' targeted service population.

Relation to law enforcement responses were coded as ordinal data, with the highest being Organizational Support, followed by Individual Referrals, and Opposition. Sixteen of the programs reported organizational support from law enforcement leadership, while three reported individual referrals from frontline officers. One program operating several jurisdictions reported multiple levels of support; the team coded the response based on the higher ranking. No programs reported ongoing opposition from law enforcement, although initial law enforcement responses in some communities were not supportive.

Funding source responses are shown as nominal data and are abbreviated in the tables to allow multiple entries for each program. Programs selected 'yes' to all funding types received. The number of programs responding yes and rounded percentage are as follows: Federal (6, 30%), State (6, 30%), County (8, 40%), City (9, 45%), Private (12, 60%), or Faith-based (7, 35%). We added grant funds in addition to the survey categories provided because two programs reported receiving grants (2, 10%). All but three programs reported multiple funding streams.

The team coded social service measures by the level of service provision or integration for safe parking programs. The team identified four levels of service and grouped programs according to interview and survey responses. Case Management (12 programs) included either programs funded or directly integrated case management for parkers, while Referral Network (5 programs) had referrals to existing social services partnered with the program. Indirect Service Referrals (2 programs) constituted the minimum level

of services observed in our sample who informally provided parkers with social services contact information.

- (3) *Program Design:* Data gathered about the program design included the intake process, services offered, types of vehicles accepted, and security levels

Target population measures began as a yes or no question; questions on target population shifted during the research period to accommodate an additional sorting element by demographics and priority service that some programs employed. Six programs (30%) did not target, prioritize or sort program participants. Seven programs (35%) targeted specific demographics like families, the elderly, or women. Priority services (3 programs) and sorting (3 programs) allowed programs to serve a broader range of demographics while meeting service and safety goals.

Our team coded the intake processes or program screening as Background Check (BC), Code of Conduct (CC), and Intake Questionnaire or Interview (I). Many programs reported overlapping screening processes; all programs reported utilizing an intake interview or questionnaire. Ten programs (50%) required a background check, though they did not necessarily exclude participants based on prior convictions. Fifteen programs (75%) asked participants to agree to a code of conduct relating to program rules.

We used three ordinal categories to code services offered: full, intermediate, and basic service. Basic services met minimum requirements for hygiene with portable toilets and handwashing stations, while intermediate services included all basic services plus wifi, charging stations, showers, or kitchen access. We defined full service as intermediate services plus financial support, case management, and housing services. Additionally, the surveys identified eight programs that offer full services, eight that offer intermediate services, and three programs with basic services. Figure 5 depicts the frequency of programs providing a given service.

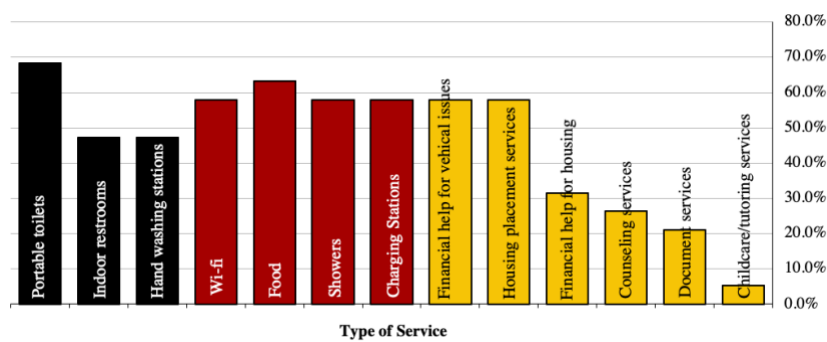


Figure 5. Frequency of services offered by safe parking programs.

Figure five shows the percentage of responses for various services offered by safe parking programs. Services coded as Basic are black, Intermediate are red, and Full Service are yellow.

Survey results revealed most programs do not allow RVs due to concerns of size and maintenance requirements. Vehicle eligibility was collected as nominal data, and the team coded program responses into two categories: Any Operational Vehicle (5) or

Passenger Vehicles (14). However, because one program allowed RVs with a size limit, we added the RV/Size limit category to account for that specific program.

Program interviews identified six types of informal and formal levels of on-site security protection. Six programs had on-call staff; two programs had video surveillance, one program reported on-site volunteers, three programs had paid security guards on-site, and six programs had paid staff on-site. One program utilized staff to drive-by lots nightly. Two programs utilized drive-by volunteers upon implementation but phased out the nightly drive-by when security issues did not materialize.

The events of the past year, primarily COVID-19, greatly impacted the hours of operation. Responses may not be indicative of future operational plans for safe parking programs. Eight programs operated overnight parking only, while 11 programs reported allowing parkers to remain in the lot for 24 hours. Of the 11 programs that allowed 24-hour parking, six cited expanding hours to accommodate parkers during the pandemic. One additional program began directly in response to the pandemic.

Program capacity was collected as interval data to count the total number of parking lots and the total number of spaces across all parking lots within a program. Program capacities are listed in Table 1 and grouped by program type.

*Table 1. Program Capacity*

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Total Lots</b>	<b>Total Spaces</b>
<b>Umbrella Organization Programs</b>		
CAREavan (Union City)	4	70
Colorado Safe Parking Initiative (Denver Metro Area)	7	56
SafeSpaces - Association of Faith Communities (Santa Cruz)	8	46
Dreams for Change (San Diego)	2	77
One Starfish Safe Parking Program (Monterey)	7	50
City of Mountain View	5	101
Pathways to Hope (Fullerton)	1	25
Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking Program	1	21
<b>Composite Programs</b>		
Saint Vincent de Paul Society (Eugene)	8+	64
Lake Washington United Methodist Church (Kirkland) <sup>1</sup>	3	60
---St Jude Safe Parking Program (Redmond)		15

<sup>1</sup> Lake Washington, St. Jude and Overlake are three organizations forming a Composite Program.

---Overlake Christian Church (Redmond)		15
Trinity Center (Walnut Creek)	1	12
HOPE for Longmont (subset of Colorado Safe Parking Initiative)	3	15
<b>Independent Operator Programs</b>		
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (Covington)	1	6
Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation	1	13
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo	1	7
Mosaic Christian Community (St. Paul)	1	12
Interfaith Council of Alameda County	1	25
Wise Women Gathering Place (Green Bay)	1	20

(4) *Program Output:* Variables to measure program output included the total number of participants served, the percentage of participants relocated into stable housing, the existence or utilization of a waitlist, and the biggest challenges and successes of the program.

We requested the total number of people served in 2019 and 2020 from each program, although not all programs operated in both years. The surveys revealed program capacity varied among participants, which also helped explain the variance with people served.

*Table 2. Program Service Numbers*

Program Name	People Served		Percent Rehoused	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
<b>Umbrella Organization Programs</b>				
CAREavan (Union City)	120	86	40%	25%
Colorado Safe Parking Initiative (Denver Metro Area)	N/A	40	N/A	10%
SafeSpaces - Association of Faith Communities (Santa Cruz)	73	109	30%	40%
Dreams for Change (San Diego)	250	180	45%	45%
One Starfish Safe Parking Program (Monterey)	120	120	50%	40%
City of Mountain View	N/A	150	N/A	13%
Pathways to Hope (Fullerton)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking Program	45	50	54%	54%
<b>Composite Programs</b>				
Saint Vincent de Paul Society (Eugene)	100	100	15%	15%

Lake Washington United Methodist Church (Kirkland) <sup>2</sup>	168	244	33%	53%
---St Jude Safe Parking Program (Redmond)	26	36	35%	34%
---Overlake Christian Church (Redmond)	35	31	65%	52%
Trinity Center (Walnut Creek)	-	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
<b>Independent Operator Programs</b>				
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (Covington)	Unknown	32**	Unknown	Unknown
Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation	36	24	35%	20%
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo	13	23	50%	61%
Mosaic Christian Community (St. Paul)	26	14	98%	98%
Interfaith Council of Alameda County	35	50	25%	20%
Wise Women Gathering Place (Green Bay)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

We coded whether a program utilized a waitlist or not as nominal data with five programs responding yes (25%), nine programs reporting no, they do not use a waitlist, and five programs answering that they sometimes use a waitlist.

Successes and challenges were large qualitative measures with key concepts distilled in the team’s multivariate matrix and case within the narratives. The team identified some recurring themes within the responses to questions asking for program challenges, including addressing needs with limited resources or funding (8), COVID-19, and especially the need for resources when the eviction moratorium is lifted (5), and the high cost of housing (3). Themes in responses for program successes included providing stability (7), community building between parkers (5), breaking the stigma of homelessness (4), and rehousing participants (4). Program responses identified multiple challenges or successes in both themes.

### **Program Models**

Past research on safe parking programs characterized programs by their status as private and public organizations (Ivey et al., 2018). Our research goes a step further to discuss the organizational models of safe parking. To better understand the similarities, differences, and smart practices, our team developed organizational models related to the structure of the organization and the provision of services. A program's organizational structure and connections to services influenced how they met their goals and their authority to act (Hill & Lynn, 2016). We named these three models the Umbrella Organization Model, Composite Program Model, and Independent Operator Model.

Although many of the safe parking programs studied are private organizations, all of them operate within the context of local governments and social services. The central aspect of organizational structure is how the rules enable and constrain actions (Hill & Lynn, 2016). Thus, the contracts, memorandum of understandings (MOUs), and informal agreements safe parking

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<sup>2</sup> Lake Washington, St. Jude, and Overlake are three organizations forming a Composite Program.

programs make with their communities are central to shaping how the organization functions and how services are provided.

By analyzing safe parking programs through the lens of three models, our team was able to identify how central research themes appear in each structure. It is important to note that these three models are not mutually exclusive and can share features or interact. Umbrella organizations, composite programs, and independent operator models create a blueprint for continued program learning. Inter-model collaborative learning allows programs to incorporate the smart practices of others while leaning into program strengths.

Program models developed organically based on the community need and organizational structure of the program operator. Some program designs purposely left room for growth and evolution. An overwhelming number of programs cited reviewing the SBNBCC manual before designing their safe parking programs. Using SBNBCC as a base model, safe parking programs adapted to their community, resources, and, when applicable, target populations.

### ***The Umbrella Organization Model***

Safe parking programs that fall under the umbrella organization model are composed of a larger parent organization that acts as the umbrella for the program's associated lots (Figure 6). Sometimes umbrella organizations contract with a third-party administrator (Case Study [1e](#), [1h](#)); other umbrella organization safe parking programs operate all aspects of the program (Case Study [1d](#), [1g](#)). When umbrella organizations contract for program administration, the umbrella organization remains the service provider and oversight agency. Umbrella organization model programs are the largest in scope and size, making up 40% of all programs surveyed.

Umbrella model programs differ from the other two program models on intake processes. In umbrella model programs, individuals contact the parent organization, are screened, and assigned to the lot that best fits their needs. After the screening process, the participant may receive various social services ranging from case management to housing assistance specific to their needs and their assigned lot. For example, AFC in Santa Cruz's family-specific lot is strategically placed next to a children's park (Case Study [1c](#)). Umbrella organizations generally exist to assist parkers in stable housing while generating a safe community to facilitate the process. Both Dreams for Change and Colorado Safe Parking emphasize the importance of maintaining the strategic goal of placing parkers into stable housing from the intake process to the potential warm handoff into stable housing (Case Study [1d](#), [1b](#)).

Umbrella organizations differ in structure from composite and independent operator models; they often contain parts and practices of the other two. For example, The City of Fullerton with Pathways to Hope and The City of Monterey with One Starfish are classified as independent operators to help run their programs (Case Study [1e](#), [1h](#)). The Association of Faith Communities, which was already working like a quasi-composite program, was tasked with running the City of Santa Cruz's safe parking program (Case Study [1c](#)). This top-down model is standard with umbrella organizations as over half of the programs surveyed were started by a municipality addressing public demand and need.

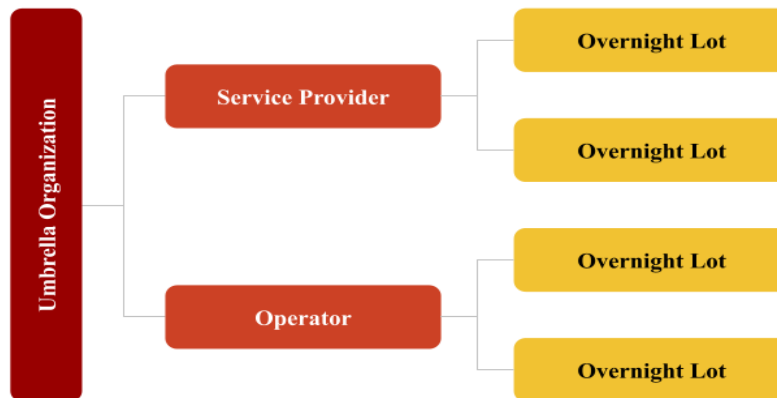


Figure 6. Umbrella organization program model.

The figure shows how umbrella models start with the parent organization who might contract for services or lot operators. In programs with multiple lots, parkers are referred to locations based on their needs and services available.

### *Challenges/Limitations*

Challenges and limitations for umbrella organizations stem from their larger operational structure and government funding requirements. Compared to the other two models, umbrella organizations are generally more formal, often formed under city management and COC guidelines which can induce complicated processes and budget appropriations. They are also subject to public administration accountability measures that intend on maintaining public trust and confidence, but sometimes remove the flexibility composite and independent operator program models enjoy (Hill & Lynn, 2016). The City of Fullerton, for example, contracts a Pathways to Hope to operate its safe parking program but still maintains accountability (Case Study [1h](#)). The oversight and sometimes strategic direction come from a public entity, often a municipality, but a nonprofit organization conducts the actual day-to-day operations. Being a public agency, reporting requirements and bureaucratic lines of communication sometimes constrain an umbrella program's ability to focus on the outcome of placing parkers into stable housing.

With the more extensive operation, umbrella organizations require more funding compared to the other safe parking models. On average, umbrella programs have more lots and paid staff than programs in the other models. Umbrella programs are also more likely to be located in large metropolitan areas. Funding often comes from private donors, municipal budgets, and grants, requiring documentation and reporting requirements. Umbrella organizations must manage stakeholder expectations due to receiving their money, especially compared to some of the smaller composite and independent operator programs. All umbrella safe parking programs received a conglomerate of nonprofit and government funding except for Alameda HCSA who received their funding from purely governmental agencies (Case Study [1g](#)). Most acknowledged that managing the HMIS requirements for county and state grants and other reporting



requirements was a challenge, but it was a worthwhile challenge since it enabled the program to operate.

### *Translatable Smart Practices*

The umbrella organization demonstrates success by being well diversified in its approach to safe parking. Umbrella organizations demonstrate proficiency with their larger lots, funding pool, and service spread which propel their goal of placing people into stable housing. Umbrella organization parking lots are commonly full, with some having significant waitlists, and they are well-staffed and suited to meet almost all the needs of their parkers.

Of the programs included in this study, the following fall under the umbrella organization model:

- [CAREavan Safe Parking, Union City, California](#)
- [Colorado Safe Parking Initiative, Denver Metropolitan Area, Colorado](#)
- [Association of Faith Communities SafeSpaces, Santa Cruz, California](#)
- [Dreams for Change, San Diego, California](#)
- [One Starfish Safe Parking, Monterey, California](#)
- [City of Mountain View, California](#)
- [Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking Program](#)
- [City of Fullerton/Pathways to Hope, Fullerton, California](#)

### *The Composite Model*

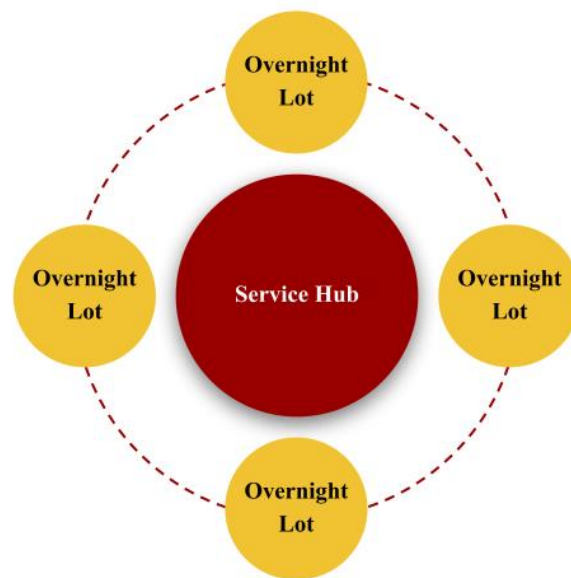
The composite model, named for the hybrid of elements from umbrella organizations and independent operator models, features multiple safe parking locations with a central or shared service location. Drawing on the concept utilized by HOPE for Longmont, a subset of Colorado's Safe Parking Initiative, programs in this model engage in a "hub and spokes" approach to service provision and lot location (Case Study [2d](#)). The lots are equipped with basic services, such as restrooms and handwashing stations, and parkers utilize additional services at another, closely integrated location. Shared services could be showers at another faith-based organization (Case Study [2b](#)) or more involved social services at an existing social service "hub" like a shelter (Case Studies [2a](#), [2c](#), [2d](#)).

The model differs from the umbrella model because the lots are not the core of the program; lot owners may have some say in the parkers' demographic. The more bare-bones lot facility minimizes the programmatic involvement of lot owners, and the focus is on the hub where parkers can engage with case management or enhanced support services (Case Study [2a](#)).

Composite programs often highlighted the importance of building community among parkers similar to the independent operator models (Case Studies [2b](#), [2c](#)). The focus on community and safety is similar to the recognition that basic needs have to come before income or housing work (Kenrick et al., 2010). Parkers might be placed at a location with demographically similar groups or moved to a different lot if a better social fit is needed (Case Studies [2a](#), [2b](#)). Composite programs were the best example of sorting in our research and called out sorting as a helpful feature of their programs (Case Study [2b](#)).

The composite model has the fewest examples in our research with just four programs (Case Studies [2a](#), [2b](#), [2c](#), [2d](#)), but can provide insights for larger programs aiming to maintain smaller

lot sizes or smaller programs aiming to share limited resources. Composite programs have the potential to grow flexibly and utilize existing resources when well connected to homeless service networks (Case Study [2a](#), [2b](#)). Some safe parking programs have found this model informally (Case Study [2b](#)), and others have intentionally designed their programs around a service hub (Case Study [2a](#), [2d](#)). An independent operator program included in the next model expressed an interest in expanding towards a composite program (Case Study [3b](#)).



*Figure 7. Composite program model.*

The figure for composite models depicts a hub and spokes concept; parkers visit the central service location and travel to nearby lots with basic amenities for overnight use.

#### *Challenges/Limitations*

Geography may limit this type of program in places without a few lots close to a service hub; programs utilizing this model kept lots and services within short driving distance from one another (Case Studies [2a](#), [2b](#)). Regularly driving a long distance for services may defeat the benefits for parkers and limit rehousing success if case management is too far away.

Other challenges for composite models are related to the relationships required to maintain the program. For those operating many lots owned by others, checking how each continued to function was an ongoing task (Case Study [2a](#)). For programs not yet operating in this model or seeking to set up additional hubs, the challenge arose when trying to find other organizations to partner with and share resources (Case Study [3b](#)). Overcoming community concerns about safety and perceptions of homeless individuals is a central challenge when getting started but has not materialized (Rosenthal & Foscarinis, 2006; Case Studies [2b](#), [2c](#)).

#### *Translatable Smart Practices*

The structure of composite modeled programs is well suited to adapt to different organizations and communities' needs. Larger programs can manage costs by utilizing more lots with fewer

parkers if the services are more limited at the spoke locations. Smaller, faith-based programs can find informal connections in the community to share resources and expand services (Case Study [2b](#)).

The flexibility of the model can provide programs with some of the benefits to community building seen by independent programs with the shared resource efficiencies of larger umbrella organizations.

Of the programs included in this study, the following fall under the composite model:

- [St. Vincent de Paul Lindholm Overnight Parking, Eugene, Oregon](#)
- [Lake Washington United Methodist, Overlake Christian and St. Jude Catholic Churches, Kirkland/Redmond, Washington](#)
- [Trinity Center Safe Parking Program, Walnut Creek, California](#)
- [HOPE for Longmont, a subset of Colorado Safe Parking Initiative, Longmont, Colorado](#)

### ***The Independent Operator Model***

The independent operator model is named for the self-initiation by organizations implementing safe parking in response to the organizational mission or community needs. Safe parking programs in this model are administered and funded by small faith-based and nonprofit organizations. Independent operators host safe parking on property owned by or leased by the organization. These safe parking programs are typically smaller in scale than the umbrella organization and composite programs, with the largest offering no more than 25 parking spaces (Case Study [3e](#)). Typically, faith or nonprofit organization staff run the program, although many programs cited volunteer support. Such volunteer support consisted of bringing participants hot meals, donated clothing, or sanitation supplies (Case Studies [3a](#), [3b](#), [3d](#), [3f](#)). Only two independent operator programs receive government funds (Case Study [3c](#), [3e](#)) and are therefore constrained by regulations and data reporting requirements.

We identified six independent operator safe parking programs (Case Studies [3a](#), [3b](#), [3c](#), [3d](#), [3e](#), [3f](#)). These programs can inform organizations that may directly address vehicular homelessness in their communities and help grow the total number of safe parking spaces in the region on a distributed basis. Independent operator programs are a grassroots phenomenon often spearheaded by a local champion in a church congregation or nonprofit staff (Case Studies [3a](#), [3b](#)).

Notably, independent operator programs have modest housing goals and cite their major accomplishment as providing safety and security for parkers. The safety and comfort provided by these programs through a whole night's sleep, food, and hygiene services are prerequisites for parkers to accept and benefit from a range of social services. In this way, these programs meet the basic physiological and safety needs of Maslow's Hierarchy (Kenrick et al., 2010).



*Figure 8. Independent operator model.*

The figure for independent operator models depicts the component parts of organizations operating safe parking: the operator, a parking lot, and the designated safe parking spaces.

### *Challenges/Limitations*

Independently operated safe parking programs are limited due to the difficulty of finding and securing affordable housing for their participants (Case Studies [3a](#), [3b](#), [3c](#), [3d](#), [3e](#)). Homeless services, particularly those that embrace a “housing first” model, are looking at the transition to housing as a measurable outcome. While independent operator programs view a transition to housing as a success, their more immediate concern is to provide stability. Housing is an anecdotal success for independent operator participants.

Half of the independent operator programs cited the COVID-19 eviction moratorium’s inevitable lifting as a future concern (Case Studies [3a](#), [3c](#), [3e](#)). At that time, homelessness is expected to increase significantly, and independent operator programs may not be able to increase their scale.

### *Translatable Smart Practices*

One of the critical aspects of the programs under this model is that they run small (less than 25 spaces), manageable lots. Usually, the programs require one parking space between parkers to allow for privacy and personal space. The grassroots nature and low capital required to create independently operated programs make them easier to replicate. These programs enjoy a strong relationship with law enforcement who referral vehicular residents to the program instead of issuing citations. Finally, these programs are well connected in the community, and where they may not have the capability to offer specific services, they can refer participants to appropriate partner agencies. For example, two of the programs in this model partner with the local YMCA to provide showers (Case Study [3b](#), [3d](#)).

In our review, we identified the following programs falling under the independent operator model:

- [St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Covington, Washington](#)
- [Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Edmonds, Washington](#)
- [Community Action Partnership, San Luis Obispo, California](#)
- [Mosaic Christian Community, St. Paul, Minnesota](#)
- [Interfaith Council of Alameda County, Oakland, California](#)
- [Wise Women Gathering Place, Green Bay, Wisconsin](#)

*Table 3. Limitations, Smart Practices, and Implications Across Models*

Research Question	Limitations	Smart Practices	Implications	Model
<b>How do successful safe parking programs recruit parkers?</b>	Waitlisted parkers are often not in need of the service when it becomes available	Working relationships with: 211 Government and nonprofit social services Law enforcement Word of mouth	Programs in large cities can devote fewer resources to recruitment due to higher demand	<b>Umbrella Organizational Model</b>
			Social services and referring partners can connect parkers with an immediate need	<b>Composite Model</b>
	No challenges or limitations identified.		A strong relationship and early involvement with law enforcement	<b>Independent Operator Model</b>
<b>What population is served by the safe parking program?</b>	With no target population, a large variety of parkers that have more needs	Robust amount of services Thorough intake process Large quantity of lot spaces	Umbrella organizations require large spaces to facilitate their many parkers More control and attention is required through the processes due to the large variety of parkers and funding expectations	<b>Umbrella Organizational Model</b>
	The wait for some parkers may increase if they do not fit with a demographic	Multiple lots allow programs to sort based on demographics or other factors to maintain safety and comfort	Smaller lots can develop community, stay under the radar in residential areas, and lower on-site costs	<b>Composite Model</b>
	Programs serving only one population turn away referrals from non-targeted prospects	Target population varies by program Flexible on a valid license, registration, insurance, background check	Practice flexibility and support in program enrollment	<b>Independent Operator Model</b>

<b>What types of services do safe parking programs provide to successfully connect unhoused individuals to more stable housing?</b>	Some parkers do not want stable housing	Early identification of what the parkers desire from the program	Funding for case management services may be more available to parkers connected to an established shelter	<b>Umbrella Organizational Model</b>
	Parkers must travel to engage with case management and some may choose not to	Connection to case management through an existing shelter or service hub		<b>Composite Model</b>
	Programs do not have direct access to many services, including housing subsidies such as Section 8	Financial assistance for deposits/first rent payment Partnering with social service organizations for case management Strong community connections and partners	Utilize partner agencies to provide amenities	<b>Independent Operator Model</b>
<b>What current benchmarks and metrics are used to measure the success of a safe parking program?</b>	Data may be incomplete, or no benchmarks are given from the parent organization	Program requirements to maintain funding HMIS entry and robust internal tracking	Proficient data collection and entry leads to benchmarking that generates revenue	<b>Umbrella Organizational Model</b>
	Estimated data or combined data with other programs was common	By incorporating parkers into other services, the safe parking program may not need as much independent data collection	The success at rehousing participants sometimes relies on another organization's services	<b>Composite Model</b>
	Qualitative measures such as providing a safe place are held in lower regard than quantitative measures such as participants rehoused	Provide a welcoming and safe place Establish a sense of community Transition to housing	Utilization is the best proxy measure of success	<b>Independent Operator Model</b>

**Answering Our Research Questions**

Across models, there are not significant enough differences to identify practices as better or smarter in one model over another. Rather, the models identified are the design and structure of safe parking program operations. Answering research questions, then, becomes a function of logic model relationships and program context.

**Recruitment and Intake**

The team set out to understand how safe parking programs recruit parkers. Recruitment activities are part of the input side of the safe parking logic model. Successful recruitment and intake have

the potential to increase program utilization, enhance participant safety, and facilitate community buy-in.

Recruitment across safe parking program models included 211 connections, online information, and referrals from social services and law enforcement. Programs surveyed often cited the personal relationships with social services and law enforcement as foundational for recruitment (Case Studies [2b](#), [2c](#), [3a](#)). Composite and umbrella model programs tended to be well integrated with social service networks or CoCs in their area, relying on two-way referrals for service engagement (Case Studies [1a](#), [1g](#)). Word of mouth was a commonly highlighted factor for how participants found composite or independent operator programs, and those programs focused on trust in the homeless community.

Most umbrella organizations utilized waitlists for services; waitlists were less common among composite and independent programs. Composite and independent programs took the approach of more flexible limits to avoid turning parkers away. Established umbrella organizations and composite programs reported consistently operating close to capacity. When used, waitlists were not often a source of new parkers because waitlisted individuals were difficult to reach. Saint Vincent De Paul (Case Study [2a](#)) and CAPSLO (Case Study [3c](#)) had engagement requirements for individuals to remain on the waitlist.

Longer-term programs emphasized finding the right number of program participants by trial and error. Packing parkers into spaces led to more issues in the wider community and more stress for the operating organization.

The intake process for parkers across programs begins with either a questionnaire or interview. Umbrella organization safe parking programs integrated with CoCs engaged in more formal intake interviews like VI-SPDAT (Case Study [1f](#), [1h](#)). The formality of screening processes was generally low in composite and independent programs. Composite and umbrella programs often reported that a parker's interest in finding stable housing was an essential factor in determining if a parker would be a good candidate for the program.

Background checks were nearly universal but did not always result in automatic disqualification of participants; a set of programs engaged in conversations to understand the situation (Case Studies [2b](#), [3a](#), [3b](#)). Another program would only require background checks for lots located near schools or churches (Case Study [2a](#)). Background checks provided the surrounding community with a sense of security in who will be parking in their neighborhood and provide case management with an idea of the obstacles they may face in finding employment and qualifying for housing. As part of their commitment to public safety and to dispel community hesitations for safe parking, safe parking programs often required participants to agree to some form of a code of conduct as a condition of enrollment.

### ***Target Population and Eligibility***

Programs can prioritize specific demographic groups, residents of a city or county, or exclude specific demographics. The intended results of population targeting are to serve more vulnerable groups, support community building and safety at lots, and improve community buy-in in line with the safe parking logic model results. Our research findings show that most programs target

by prioritizing certain demographic groups, sorting demographics to different lots, or excluding certain groups from eligibility.

Priority service to specific demographic populations can assist program goals in serving those most vulnerable. Programs engaging in priority service were exclusively umbrella organizations and chose to serve seniors, veterans, or families with young children (Case Studies [1a](#), [1b](#), [1c](#), [1f](#), [1h](#)). Priority service did not necessarily result in programs serving the prioritized population; umbrella organizations generally welcome everyone with a working vehicle despite prioritizing a specific population.

Composite and umbrella programs utilized population sorting as only programs with multiple parking lots had the option to sort by demographics. This inherently excluding independent operator programs. Programs engaging in sorting reported parker comfort and community building as the intent of the practice (Case Studies, [2a](#), [2b](#), [1d](#), [1e](#)). Programs utilizing sorting often brought up the ability to maintain smaller lots and reduce conflicts among parkers. These priorities align with the team's logic model results of an increased sense of community.

The most common justification for exclusion from participation in safe parking programs was residential requirements for the city or county in which it operated (Case Studies [1e](#), [1f](#), [1g](#), [3d](#)). Some safe parking programs operating with residential exclusions cited community concerns with becoming a welfare magnet despite limited evidence for the theory (Rosenthal & Foscarinis, 2006).

Others excluded children because they were eligible for other local programs (Case Studies [2a](#), [2c](#)) or because funding was only available for women with minor children (Case Study [3d](#)). One program only served women, families with children because of the parking lot proximity (Case Study [3b](#)).

Not all programs engaged in population targeting; five programs (four of which were independent operator programs) welcomed any person living in their vehicle for eligibility (Case Studies [1b](#), [3a](#), [3c](#), [3e](#), [3f](#)). On average, independently operated programs see higher utilization rates than other program models, which our team attributed to the flexibility allowed in eligibility requirements.

The faith-operated programs on church property have a great deal of autonomy and legally protected rights to operate safe parking as part of their religious mission. These programs had lower barriers to program entry in the areas of driver's licenses or up-to-date vehicle registration.

### ***Services***

A range of service provision and connections to services are present in safe parking programs. Varying levels of service inputs result in outputs, outcomes, and impacts found in the logic model. Basic services improve physical and mental health, while intermediate and full services work towards enhanced trust and engagement with local communities.

Umbrella organizations with substantial funding are often directly linked to government and nonprofit social services, thus providing case management and financial assistance in-house



(Case Studies [1b](#), [1d](#), [1e](#), [1f](#), [1g](#), [1h](#)). Service provision in composite programs is primarily defined by enhanced services offered at a central location or single lot. The services provided range from access to showers to full case management support at the central location, while individual lots have basic amenities (Case Studies [2a](#), [2b](#)). Independent operator programs typically offer fewer on-site services than umbrella organization or composite model programs and partner with third-party organizations to support parkers. All independent operator programs partnered with social service agencies; only one handled complex case management tasks as a formal part of services (Case Study [3c](#)).

Engagement with services varies in importance for safe parking programs. Some independent operators and composite programs expressed less concern with parkers' rehousing goals (Case Studies [2b](#), [3b](#), [3e](#), [3f](#)). In contrast, umbrella organizations often explicitly require engagement with case management as a participation requirement (Case Studies [1c](#), [1d](#), [1e](#), [1g](#), [1h](#)). Since much of umbrella organization funding comes from grants and other government-related funding sources, specific criteria must be met to maintain the revenue stream. Sometimes, the program rehousing goals are unaligned with the parker's desired outcome (Case Study [1c](#)).

Support for food was present in some safe parking programs but varied in formality. Five independent operator programs offer access to a kitchen or food services (Case Studies [3a](#), [3b](#), [3c](#), [3e](#), [3f](#)). Some of these programs also receive food donations from congregants or community members (Case Study [3a](#), [3d](#), [3f](#)), and in one case, a local chick-fil-a (Case Studies [3a](#)). Composite models relied on existing food support services to connect their parkers with meals (Case Studies [2a](#), [2b](#), [2c](#)); food support was less common with umbrella organizations.

Security for programs varied greatly by program model, with nearly all umbrella organizations operating lots with paid on-site security (Case Studies [1a](#), [1b](#), [1c](#), [1d](#), [1f](#), [1g](#), [1h](#)). Security for composite programs consisted of on-call staff with one exception (Case Studies [2a](#), [2b](#), [3b](#), [3d](#)). The program that hired security planned future iterations without paid security due to the high cost and low need (Case Study [2c](#)). Video surveillance (Case Studies [3a](#), [3c](#)) and on-call staff ([3b](#), [3d](#)) were the most common security measures for independent operator programs. The smaller size of the lots and smaller communities for composite programs and independent operators may be why an on-call security framework functions well.

The pandemic significantly impacted hours of operation for safe parking programs; programs reported expanding hours in response to job loss and closures of the daytime uses for parking lots. Several composite programs extended to 24-hour access due to the pandemic but initially operated during evenings and nights only (Case Studies [2a](#), [2b](#)). Three independent operators expanded operational hours in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to allow for 24/7 access (Case Studies [3a](#), [3b](#), [3c](#)). Only one umbrella program reported expanding hours of operation in response to COVID-19 (Case Study [1f](#)). Before the pandemic, 14 of the 20 programs operated safe parking overnight only.

### ***Benchmarks***

Benchmarking is an important mechanism used to help safe parking programs direct their focus and conduct self-evaluation to determine if they are on track toward achieving goals (Bryson, 2011). Without benchmarking and specific measures for success, safe parking programs may

have difficulty determining what resources and inputs to contribute to achieving better services for parkers and more resources for the program displayed in the logic model. The team's research requested program definitions of success despite limited measurement or goal setting.

Most umbrella organizations note the lack of actual benchmarks and measures of success but do reference the need to maintain grant and city funding requirements. CAREEvan in Union City is required to report to the city council its general operating requirements and outcomes regularly (Case Study [1a](#)). Most other programs track exits to permanent and temporary housing and have a median rehousing rate of 40 percent. Programs averaged a 34% success rate in transitioning participants to permanent or temporary housing in 2020 (with one 98% outlier excluded, Case Study [3d](#)), despite differences in housing affordability.

Less measurable but often cited, safe parking programs measure success based on their ability to meet parkers' physiological and safety needs (Case Studies [1c](#), [1d](#), [1e](#), [1g](#), [2a](#), [2b](#), [2c](#), [3b](#), [3c](#), [3e](#)). Programs reported focusing on parkers' sense of safety and community as a way to improve their stability. When parkers felt stable, they could better engage with social services or their next chosen step. Programs reported transformations of parkers over months that gave them evidence that the program was working (Case Study [1a](#), [1e](#), [1g](#), [2b](#), [3e](#)).

In addition to parker benefits, programs cited improved community understanding as a significant benefit and goal of their programs (Case Studies [1a](#), [3d](#), [3f](#)). Programs were proud and measured the success of their programs on the change in perceptions from the surrounding community, who were often apprehensive at the program onset.

### **Distilling Smart Practices**

Analysis of recruitment, targeted population, service provision, and benchmarks for success supplement the structural model findings presented above. The following smart practices draw from the above analysis to distill findings to support the team's recommendations. We identified smart practices based on our research and the theoretical frameworks rooted in homeless assistance services. The five key smart practices in safe parking are intentional program design, the strategic location of parking lots, building trust and community among program participants, strong social service integration, and engaging stakeholders.

#### ***Intentional Program Design***

Programs are designed either from a top-down or a bottom-up approach. This design element is due to the initiating entity; an organization may have authority and funding to initiate a program resulting in an umbrella organization program. By contrast, a grassroots need can be fulfilled by an independent operator. As a hybrid, composite programs take on elements of each of these approaches with varying levels of funding and grassroots organization. As programs seek to grow and improve, intentionally designing program structure with elements of other models can increase success.

Independent programs seeking to grow may partner with other local organizations to form a network of safe parking with shared resources (Case Study [2b](#)). In a distributed fashion, this would mean that the total number of parking spaces serving a community could increase significantly if more independent operators follow the example of others.

Organizations developing safe parking by mandate or with funding use a top-down approach by seeking out lot locations and social service operators to run the program. Typically, these are umbrella organizations such as government agencies or established social service organizations. Programs started in this model may achieve parker benefits by creating smaller lots to enhance a sense of community and safety (Case Study [2a](#)).

### ***Strategic Location of Parking Lots***

Lot location for safe parking programs is either tied directly to a grassroots organization's property or can be selected by larger organizations via contracting. Prior research has identified lots located on faith-based or city-owned property (Colopy, 2017); the findings held in our research with a few outliers on privately owned property. The location within a community has significant impacts on a program's ability to start operations, who the program can serve, and the desirability for parkers.

Programs report initial pushback from property owners near the lot. Programs have taken different approaches to the issue; some choose to hire security or enforce stricter participation rules while others have "flown under the radar" (Jansen & Tauber, 2017). Independent operating safe parking programs cited their ability to open spaces in their parking lots because the lots were vacant most of the week and not subject to zoning use restrictions. Some faith-based locations remained small in scope to maintain internal organization, control access, and mitigate negative attention from nearby communities (Case Study [2b](#)). Both composite and umbrella model programs used public-owned and faith-based parking lots to facilitate their parkers' specific needs. Programs seeking to minimize pushback might find success with industrial neighborhoods or rural edges of the city.

Lot location can influence the targeted population of parkers. Some safe parking programs deliberately targeted families and children based on the parking lot's proximity to schools and parks (Case Studies [1a](#), [1c](#), [2b](#), [3b](#)). Another program only conducted background checks on parkers placed near schools and churches (Case Study [2a](#)). Programs engaging in location assignments based on parker demographics allowed them to provide a safe, comfortable place for parkers. The psychological safety (Delizonna, 2017; Duhigg, 2016) parkers gained from a well-suited location allowed them to build a community at the lots. A subset of people using vehicles as shelters live in RVs, which do not function well in many parking lots. Programs serving RVs often utilized parking lots away from residential areas for RV parking (Case Studies [1d](#), [1f](#)). Many safe parking programs were unwilling or unable to facilitate a location for RVs to park, again supporting Colopy's (2017) findings.

One program with multiple parking lots experienced parkers requesting specific locations due to convenience for work or school (Case Study [1f](#)). Under both umbrella and composite models, programs divided parkers into specific lots to tailor program offerings while maintaining proximity to the larger community. This proximity helped parkers save on gasoline costs, maintenance costs, and accessibility of services.

### ***Building Trust and Community Among Program Participants***

Borrowing from research on street outreach, meeting parkers where they are and building trust that the program can help are essential elements for safe parking programs (Kryda & Compton, 2009; Lee & Plitt Donaldson, 2018). Building trust and community among program participants increases the likelihood of satisfying basic psychological needs, the second level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Kenrick et al., 2010). Trust and community building activities focused on flexibility and parker responsibility for program operations.

Across all programs, the team heard that parkers felt safe and were able to stabilize due to having a safe place to sleep. In addition to that safety, a sense of belonging makes vehicle residents feel secure, valued, dignified, and motivated. Across models, programs cited a success measure as their ability to build community among parkers (Case Studies [1d](#), [1e](#), [2b](#), [3a](#), [3e](#)). Such individual and internal attributes create a sense of cohesion and willingness to engage.

Flexibility emerged as an important theme among programs, especially independent operators and composite programs. Some programs, especially those operated by faith-based organizations, offered flexibility to parkers and assistance in attaining the minimum eligibility requirements (Case Studies [2b](#), [3a](#)). The willingness to support and bend eligibility rules, such as asking parkers to confirm that they know the state requires insurance rather than checking for insurance, helped programs engage more parkers in the program (Case Studies [3a](#), [3d](#)).

In programs that encourage community building among parkers, participants celebrated their parking lot neighbors' milestone achievements (Case Studies [1g](#), [2b](#)). Programs noted that some community members expect all parkers to participate, but the program can only work with those who are willing (Case Studies [1c](#), [2b](#)). Some rely on parkers to complete certain community chores, such as removing litter or keeping water dispensers clean and sanitary (Case Studies [3c](#), [3e](#)), while others have hired parkers as security or support staff for the program (Case Studies [1a](#), [3e](#)).

Trust among parkers can minimize security concerns, as residents self-police intruders, noise, or interpersonal disputes to protect the image of their group and preclude a need for intervention from program staff (Case Studies [1g](#), [2a](#), [2b](#), [2c](#), [3a](#), [3b](#), [3c](#), [3d](#)). Some programs highlighted the reduced crime and increased neighborhood safety because parkers know who should be there and report what they see (Case Studies [1e](#), [2a](#), [3a](#)).

### ***Social Service Integration***

Social service integration is the foundation of the rehousing efforts that safe parking programs undertake. Though nearly all engage in some form of case management for parkers, programs do not have a uniform approach to service provision. Programs were either the provider of case management, contracted for case management services, or referred to social service providers.

Programs that served as the primary case manager tended to be umbrella programs or larger composite model programs. The intake process for these programs often included a needs assessment (Case Studies [1c](#), [1g](#), [1h](#), [3c](#)), though some elected to ask more invasive questions over time (Case Studies [1d](#), [1f](#)). The highest levels of case management for these programs

included daily rounds at the parking lot (Case Studies [1d](#), [1g](#), [1h](#)). Other programs had regularly scheduled case manager visits on-site for parkers (Case Studies [1a](#), [1b](#)).

Organizations that contracted for case management services or offered referrals to social services did not offer on-site case management. Parkers were encouraged to visit a social service hub, in the case of composite models, or to visit case managers at other agencies (Case Studies [2a](#), [2b](#), [2c](#), [2d](#), [3a](#), [3b](#), [3c](#), [3d](#), [3e](#)). Personal relationships between program staff and case managers benefitted parkers due to the informal check-in and shared knowledge between providers. These programs did not see significantly different outcomes, but the cost of services for these programs was greatly reduced.

### ***Engaging Stakeholders***

Safe parking programs represent public and nonprofit organizations that engage with formal and informal stakeholders, each with diverse expectations and needs (Ipsos MORI, 2009). Keeping stakeholders regularly informed can increase transparency and clarify the safe parking programs' intentions (Ipsos MORI, 2009). The community and stakeholder context for safe parking programs can shut programs down or help them flourish. Addressing community fears and strong law enforcement relationships emerged as important themes for program success.

Nearly every program expressed some form of apprehension from community members before the program implementation and a later realization that the program did not cause issues after a time. Some programs took a prevention approach to inform and engage community members (Case Studies [1e](#), [2b](#), [3b](#), [3e](#), [3f](#)). For programs seeking to overcome initial push back increasing rules, and eligibility for parkers, using background checks, making the program a pilot, or involving law enforcement patrols (Case Studies [1a](#), [1f](#), [2c](#), [3a](#)). Small faith-based programs also took the approach of flying under the radar after initial outreach (Case Studies [2b](#), [3f](#)), but that option was not generally afforded to larger umbrella organizations.

Many programs enjoyed a strong relationship with local law enforcement, including police or sheriff representatives in the program development (Case Studies [1a](#), [1b](#), [1c](#), [1d](#), [1e](#), [1f](#), [1g](#), [2a](#), [2b](#), [3a](#), [3b](#), [3c](#), [3d](#)). In these programs, law enforcement was more likely to refer vehicular residents to the program than issue citations for overnight parking. Prior research on safe parking programs indicated that law enforcement were important allies for safe parking programs (Colopy, 2017; HPRI, 2018; Ivey et al., 2018); our findings showed a range of support, from individual officers to full task force membership involved in the program development.

### **Recommendations**

Our team developed the following recommendations for safe parking providers seeking to improve utilization and participant success or organizations seeking to implement safe parking programs. These recommendations are organized in six categories: intentional program design, strategic location, fostering trust, focused social services, engaging stakeholders, and implementing benchmarks.

#### **Intentional Design**

Programs should plan, operate, and structure their organizations intentionally to meet local needs and align with local resources.

- If the focus is placing parkers into stable housing, everything a program does, from the intake process to social service contracting, should be to meet that goal. If stability is the core goal, community building should come first.
- Programs should design their operation with an awareness of local resources available. Fostering connections formally with contracts or informally can help programs serve parkers with different needs.
- Designing a program with the ability to grow is important; programs that started as independent operator models could morph into composite programs by building local networks. Umbrella models should learn from smaller programs and avoid packing parkers into lots.

### **Strategic Locations**

Safe parking programs should organize lots and services according to geography, population needs, and local social services.

- Programs seeking to avoid pushback should locate safe parking lots in industrial areas of the community or near rural pockets.
- Programs seeking to serve families should locate lots near schools and parks. Safe parking near schools may preclude serving parkers with criminal records or sex offender registration.
- Programs seeking to serve all demographics should explore operating smaller lots with demographic grouping can enhance a sense of community and security.
- Programs seeking to serve RVs should focus on lots in industrial areas that are away from neighborhoods. RV parker needs are different from passenger vehicles and are better suited to a separate location.

### **Fostering Trust**

Safe parking programs should focus on fostering trust with and among parkers. Trust can help build community and dignity for parkers and increase their ability to engage with social services.

- Programs should focus on community and making parkers feel like they belong. Smaller lots can facilitate more connections among parkers.
- Programs should consider flexible eligibility requirements to join the program to reduce barriers to entry. Flexibility can be a foundation for trusting relationships with parkers and facilitate a sense of safety and community.
- When possible, programs should work with individuals who break the rules or have difficulty following codes of conduct. Identifying the root issue that prevents a parker from abiding by the rules helps build trust within the program community.

- Programs should encourage shared responsibility for program spaces and processes to instill pride in the parker community. This may be done by assigning daily tasks or regular engagement.

### **Focused Social Services**

Case management services are essential for rehousing, but programs do not need to fund case management independently; programs can integrate with third-party social services.

- Programs can provide social services on-site or off-site, but the connection needs to be personal; safe parking administrators should know about and support case management efforts with parkers.
- Programs should assess their specific parker population to determine social service level needs. Seniors require a different timeline and level of support than families or single adults. Populations eligible for more supportive housing can be served more expeditiously.
- Programs can benefit from Continuum of Care connections. Safe parking programs should participate in Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data entry to improve needs assessment and outcome tracking. HMIS participation can provide additional funding opportunities for programs.

### **Engaging Stakeholders**

Safe parking programs should anticipate initial opposition to safe parking. Opposition can be prevented or overcome by engagement and planning efforts.

- To prevent initial opposition, programs should practice early engagement with stakeholders. This can be done via community participation on task forces, notification letters, and listening sessions. Community fears are almost entirely unfounded but preventing opposition will help the program get started.
- Programs should exemplify other safe parking programs' experience of reduced crime in the neighborhood after beginning safe parking.
- Programs should build relationships with law enforcement, especially outreach officers who can be program champions on the ground and provide high levels of referrals.

### **Implementing Benchmarks**

Programs should develop benchmarks for rehousing rates, lengths of stay, and service engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

- Based on surveyed program averages and local housing context, safe parking programs should aim for 30-40% rehousing within 30 days.
- Programs should strive to meet the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) standards for families and other vulnerable groups. USICH standards include

not turning away any families needing safe parking and swift placement into permanent housing.

- If the recommended benchmarks are unreasonable compared to shelter and outreach programs in the area, programs should aim to match rehousing rates of other organizations.

### **Conclusion**

Safe parking programs can provide security and the basics for people to stabilize; however, their success at rehousing people is mainly dependent on the integration with a successful social support system. Measuring the success of safe parking as rehousing is measuring the success of social services that partner organizations often offer.

Our team's report provides a larger sample and more in-depth data than prior reports on the safe parking topic. By surveying 19 safe parking programs across the country, our team was able to identify three program models: umbrella organizations, composite programs, and independent operators. The program models show both top-down and bottom-up approaches to the development and operation of safe parking. Crossover and evolution of program designs provide opportunities for programs in each model to engage in inter-model collaborative learning.

Recommendations drawn from cross-case analysis offer smart practices in six themes: intentional program design, strategic location, fostering trust, focused social services, engaging stakeholders, and implementing benchmarks. Programs can align goals and local context to understand which program design elements and features will best serve their community members sheltering in vehicles.

More research is needed on safe parking programs. The relative newness of safe parking means that the shared knowledge base is informal at best. Communities seeking to start programs often informally surveyed peers to learn about safe parking practices. Our research can provide a helpful starting point for translatable smart practices, but quantitative measures of success are still lacking. Future researchers can further develop findings on program successes to strengthen benchmark recommendations and measurable outcomes. Doing safe parking well should be defined as fostering good social service connections, creating a safe community for parkers, and providing flexibility for individuals to meet their needs.



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## Appendix A – Case Study Narratives

### *Umbrella Organization Model Programs*

#### *Case Study 1a: CAREEvan Safe Parking, Union City, California*

The City of Union City in Alameda County has a population of 74,722 (U.S. Census Bureau [USCB], 2020). Alameda County imposes strict anti-camping ordinances for people living in their vehicles on public streets. The median gross rent in Union City is \$2,002 (USCB, 2019c) per month. The median annual income in Union City is \$114,681 (USCB, 2019c), meaning that the rental affordability is 20.95 percent.

#### *Development*

CAREEvan was established in 2016 under the direction of Jesus Garcia, the Recreation Coordinator in the Parks and Recreation Department in the City of Union City. Seeing the need for safe parking in his city, he collaborated with school officials and local churches to provide a safe space for families that attended local schools to park. Soon after, the program drew from helping a few families to four different lots that provide services to nearly anyone in need of safe parking. Now, the program continues to grow, often having a waitlist to enter a safe parking space, with more services becoming available.

#### *Program Features*

CAREEvan has four lots that total 70 parking spaces, but they do not exceed 35 parkers due to their rotation preference. They allow safe parking during the hours of 8 pm - 6 am throughout the entire week. Of the umbrella model programs, CAREEvan provides basic services with hygiene, bathroom, and food amenities. They do not offer any types of on-site social services. However, CAREEvan refers parkers to a vast referral network throughout the region, resulting in parkers being placed into stable housing. All potential parkers apply directly through Union City and are directed toward one of the four lots based upon need and availability. Only one to two lots are available each night through a weekly rotation schedule. On Friday and Saturday nights, community churches provide food and other activities for children and families using the program.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

Though families with school-age children were initially targeted, CAREEvan is open to anyone who lives out of their vehicle. Women, families with children, and seniors have priority, but the program rarely turns away participants due to the four-lot rotating system. Parkers are commonly moved through the different lots and usually do not stay in the same spot for more than one night.

#### *Rules and Security*

All applications go through the program coordinator, who conducts a phone interview to explain the admissions process and rules. Participants receive a 90-day placard that must be displayed in their vehicle at all times. There is no formal set of rules, but common civility is expected, and there is no tolerance for illegal activity. The parkers typically police themselves, which alleviates the need for a security guard. Complaints are sometimes routed to the staff, who are usually able to mediate the situation. The program assigns a staff member to monitor the lot in use each night.

### *Financing Mechanisms*

When the program began in 2016, the City of Union City covered all expenses. However, as the program grew, additional funding through HEAP grants and other county sources helped alleviate the increased costs. Though churches do not directly donate money, they provide assistance via the use of their parking lots. CAREEvan must regularly report to the city council on its progress as the city funds the program.

### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

CAREEvan used to contract with an on-site social worker, but funding constraints resulted in eliminating the position. CAREEvan's goal is to increase the number of parkers to source more funding, but COVID-19 has slowed down its operation. Several previous parkers now work as staff which came as the result of social services on-site. More funding will bring the social worker position back along with job training classes and computer training. Also, since CAREEvan reports to the city council, they do a better job of tracking HMIS data and promoting the transition into stable housing compared to the onset of the program.

### *Translatable Smart Practices*

- Having an on-site social worker helps interested parties attain a stable living condition or other needs.
- The rotating lots feature helps alleviate some stressors that naturally come when hosting parkers on the property for an extended period. Never sleeping in the same lot twice in a row ensures vehicles are operational, and it gives the lot owners a chance to clean the area, and it helps bring down neighbor complaints.
- Using city funds brings more transparency and accountability to the program since it has to regularly report to the city council.
- All referrals and potential parkers go through one person who can control the information being given to ensure consistency with the program.



### *Case Study 1b: Colorado Safe Parking Initiative, Denver, Colorado*

Denver County is the largest region surveyed in our study, with a population of 2.9 million (USCB, 2020). Denver County has a variety of homeless-centered anti-camping rules and regulations but generally, sleeping in vehicles is not illegal. The median gross rent in Denver County is \$1,311 (USCB, 2019c) per month. The median annual income in Denver County is \$68,582 (USCB, 2019c), meaning that the rental affordability is 22.94 percent.

#### *Development*

The Colorado Safe Parking Initiative (CSPI) began in 2020 as a politically hot issue under the Denver County Continuum of Care. The first lot started at the Broomfield United Methodist Church at the police department's request and has since grown due to its success. They source several nonprofit organizations to act as parking lot operators within the Denver Metro Area. Currently, CSPI has seven parking lots but has plans for several more lots.

#### *Program Features*

Services provided to the parkers range based on the parking lot assigned but are generally robust and well-organized. Three lots have case management, and out of the first 24 parkers, six were able to get into stable housing. CSPI provides food, wifi, showers, and many other basic amenities. The program emphasized getting parkers into stable housing by identifying any barriers (substance abuse, employment, paperwork) at the beginning of the process, which helps keep stable housing feasible. Paid staff and occasionally a volunteer are on-site during operating hours at each lot.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

Eligibility is based on an initial interview that comes only after the parker contacts the program via its website. CSPI collects HMIS relevant data and conducts a basic background check to ensure parkers have no sex registration status. Each lot has an individual background process that varies in depth, but there are no specific target populations. No RVs are allowed at any lots.

#### *Rules and Security*

Basic rules and conduct guidelines are explained during the intake process since each lot has its guidelines. Any law-breaking is strictly prohibited; the on-site staff is responsible for ensuring rules are followed but do not directly intervene and only report misconduct as appropriate.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

CSPI relies on grants, faith-based donations and their parking lots, and private donors. CSPI remains engaged with the community, but each lot manages its budget. Some parking lots may have more resources available compared to others. The Denver CoC is responsible for most grant writing and government funding, while each lot solicits for private funding.

#### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

Colorado Safe Parking maintains a steady waitlist that is growing tremendously. It is one of the few programs that provided specific goals in several different areas. It has the goal of racing 200 spaces and strives to help at least 50% of its parkers reach stable housing within the first 30 days. Interestingly, this mirrors federal guidelines (USICH) for safe parking benchmarks. Lots meet

with neighbors to ensure transparency and have good relationships with law enforcement, who provide referrals.

*Translatable Smart Practices*

- Transitioning to stable housing is made clear as the goal throughout the process.
- The parent umbrella organization mainly gathers government funding, while each lot focuses on private funding and community engagement.
- Autonomy is given to each lot to manage its budget, rules, and outreach.
- Lots hold frequent meetings with neighbors to fish out any concerns early and often.

### *Case Study 1c: SafeSpaces Association of Faith Communities, Santa Cruz, California*

The City of Santa Cruz is the largest city and the County seat of Santa Cruz County. Santa Cruz is a popular California Coastal destination with a population of 64,522 (USCB, 2020). Sleeping in vehicles on public property is illegal in Santa Cruz. The median gross rent in Santa Cruz is \$1,889 (USCB, 2019c) per month. The median annual income in Santa Cruz is \$77,921 (USCB, 2019c), meaning that the rental affordability is 29.09 percent.

#### *Development*

The Association of Faith Communities (AFC) is a coalition of 30 faith-based communities in Santa Cruz County that started SafeSpaces safe parking in 2019 with the help of Santa Cruz County. Early volunteers researched safe parking programs in San Diego and Santa Barbara, which served as the foundation of SafeSpaces. The program is impacted by community efforts to remove RVs and vehicle shelters from the streets due to quality of life and aesthetic complaints. The program continued to grow with the support of both government and nonprofit entities, totaling eight lots with over 46 spaces.

#### *Program Features*

The eight lots are located on city-owned and faith-based locations and are open 24 hours per day. Lots maintain basic hygienic amenities and are willing to assist parkers with vehicle maintenance costs but do not generally provide on-site case management or social services. Instead, SafeSpaces refers parkers to social services based on HMIS information. SafeSpace permits nearly all vehicle types, including RVs less than 30 feet, and maintains a nearly full waitlist.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

Applicants are interviewed over the phone, and the responses are transferred to a VI-SPDAT assessment required for HMIS input. The program accepts anyone sheltering in a vehicle, but priority is given to families. All parkers are required to be licensed drivers with insurance and current registration. Concurrently with the interview, the program conducts a background investigation to prevent admittance to those with sexual and violent offense histories. After the intake process is complete, parkers are assigned to the parking lot best tailored to their needs. For example, one lot has immediate access to a playground where families with children are placed.

#### *Rules and Security*

Basic rules and conduct guidelines ranging from unlawful behavior to incivility amongst parkers are explained during the intake process and enforced by a combination of site coordinators and program administrators. Parkers are given written warnings and subsequently asked to leave the program on the third offense. The lots are staffed and supervised intermittently but not the entire 24 hours per day.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

SafeSpaces receives funding from AFC's large conglomerate of faith organizations and donors. AFC's board is in charge of allocating money to the SafeSpaces program. SafeSpaces regularly applies for and is awarded HEAP grants and received CARES grant funds to offset some of the costs associated with the three city-owned lots within the program. Stating the benchmarks were not difficult to meet, SafeSpaces typically meets the requirements for CoC assistance because its staff is well versed in grant writing and procurement.

### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

Because the program is parented by a conglomerate of nearly 30 faith-based organizations, SafeSpaces focuses on making parkers feel safe and building a sense of community within themselves and the local congregations. Meeting grant requirements through HMIS data entry and reporting to the city is also essential, but the overall goal is to “help one person at a time.”

### *Translatable Smart Practices*

- Using both faith-based donations simultaneously with government grants helps secure funding for expansion. A well-rounded approach to gaining and maintaining stakeholders.
- The parent organization is staffed by individuals familiar with homelessness and sent individuals to research other programs in similar scope and similar goals.

### *Case Study 1d: Dreams for Change, San Diego, California*

San Diego has a population of over 1.42 million, and the median gross rent in San Diego County is \$1,658 (USCB, 2019c; USCB, 2020) per month. The median annual income in San Diego County is \$78,980 (USCB, 2019c), meaning that the rental affordability is 25.19 percent. Overnight camping in vehicles is illegal in San Diego.

#### *Development*

Dreams for Change started in 2010 and is one of the largest and oldest safe parking programs surveyed. Dreams for Change currently operates two parking lots, one for RVs and another for passenger vehicles. Before Dreams for Change leased the land from the city, the RV parking lot was a haven for drugs and violence. With private funds, Dreams for Change rehabilitated the parking lot for safe parking. Dreams for Change attempted to expand to a third parking lot in a suburb of San Diego, but it was shut down due to poor reception from the neighborhood.

#### *Program Features*

Dreams for Change has two lots that hold approximately 77 spaces. One lot is for passenger vehicles, and the other is leased from the city and primarily used for RV parking. The program focuses heavily on placement into stable housing and makes that goal clear throughout the entire process. It maintains a full spread of hygienic services along with on-site case management and referral services. The program assisted over 250 parkers in 2019, with a 50% average rehousing rate, but due to COVID-19, that number dropped in 2020. Of interesting note is the connection between the San Diego Homeless Court and the program who frequently refer parkers to each other in assisting with legal fees or fines.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

Dreams for Change required two things to enter the program; a willingness to work toward stable housing, and the parkers cannot be registered sex offenders. Referrals mainly come from the 211 system and law enforcement referrals. It welcomes everyone but does sort the RVs onto a specific lot.

#### *Rules and Security*

Basic rules are explained in an interview, and further screening is done on-site. Screening consists of explaining unlawful behavior, the expectation of privacy, and kindness toward other parkers. Self-policing is expected due to the sense of community, and the staff is rarely needed to intervene. Staff is occasionally on-site, and there is no paid security. If rules are broken, on-site staff investigates through a lens of compassion and understanding.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

Dreams for Change was privately funded during its first eight years but later generated buy-in from the City of San Diego. The city now assists with funding and property. The program now receives state HEAP funds and takes whatever donations they can receive. It prides itself on running a lean program but wishes it could receive federal funding.

#### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

Dreams for Change almost always has a waitlist and is always looking for more stakeholders and property to expand. It contributes its lasting presence in the area and successful budgeting to the

constant demand of parkers which may only worsen after the COVID-19 moratorium ceases. The program does not have set benchmarks for goals for rehousing or recruitment but is content with the community it has built within its programs.

*Translatable Smart Practices*

- Transitioning to stable housing is made clear as the goal throughout the process and is an eligibility requirement.
- Dreams for Change works with the San Diego Homeless Court in assisting the homeless with legal fees and housing.
- RVs are assigned a separate lot to avoid misconceptions and prioritize the different needs between vehicles and RVs.

### *Case Study 1e: One Starfish Safe Parking, Monterey, California*

One Starfish is located in Monterey County, California, with a population of 434,061, and a median gross rent in Monterey County of \$1,495 per month (USCB, 2019c; USCB 2020). The median annual income in Monterey County is \$71,015 (USCB, 2019c), meaning that the rental affordability is 25.26 percent. Monterey maintains strict anti-camping ordinances that include sleeping in one's vehicle overnight in public.

#### *Development*

One Starfish was contracted in 2017 by the City of Monterey to administer the city's safe parking program after seeing a significant increase in vehicular homelessness. One Starfish began in 2010 by providing safe parking to women. Because of the program's success, the organization had a good reputation as a safe parking provider. The program continues to administer its own lots for women along with the contracted lots through the city.

#### *Program Features*

One Starfish is responsible for a total of seven lots with over 50 spaces. Lots are located on both faith-based and city property which all have different levels of service and amenities tailored to the parkers' needs. Onsite services range from basic hygiene needs to some case management but primarily operates through referrals. Situation counseling is available depending on the circumstances. Lots are open at night with a steady waitlist. In 2020, One Starfish served 120 parkers and averaged a 40% rehousing rate.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

Anyone living out of their vehicle is eligible, but they must be Monterey County residents for at least six months. An initial phone interview is conducted to ensure compatibility. After acceptance into the program, each parker is sorted based on demographic and vehicle type (RVs are welcome) and assigned to a specific lot best suited for their needs. They receive a placard to place in their windshield that helps staff identify who is allowed to be in each lot.

#### *Rules and Security*

Basic rules are explained in an interview and further screening is done on-site, consisting of unlawful behavior and the expectation of privacy and kindness toward each other. One Starfish does not conduct background interviews, citing its good faith for the homeless but does require current registration and a valid driver's license. Staff drive-by nightly to check on the parkers. Parkers are encouraged to contact staff if any issues arise.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

Faith-based donations initially funded One Starfish, but it began receiving some city funds after contracting with the city to run additional lots. One Starfish does not enter HMIS data and does not receive any grants from the county CoC.

#### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

The program keeps track of basic statistics including intakes per month, parkers housed, and who is given what kind of assistance. The city requires reports to help justify the costs but there is no specific benchmark or goal to achieve per a specific time period.

*Translatable Smart Practices*

- One Starfish finds success in promoting acts of humanity which has softened the weariness of neighbors and critics of the program.
- Sorting individuals to lots based on needs and services helps better serve the parkers while justifying costs to the city and stakeholders.



### *Case Study 1f: City of Mountain View, Mountain View, California*

The City of Mountain View is located in the Bay Area of Northern California and has a population of 81,656 (USCB, 2020). The median gross rent in Mountain View is \$2,456 (USCB, 2019c) per month. The median annual income in Mountain View is \$139,720 (USCB, 2019c), meaning that the rental affordability is 21.09 percent.

### *Development*

In 2017, the City of Mountain View faced increased pressure from residents and officials regarding the need for safe parking for all of its vehicular homeless. The program looked to Santa Barbara's widely successful program as an example and started an interim pilot program for 18 months, primarily using church lots as the location. Mountain View works in tandem with the county and has implemented a unique cost-sharing mechanism to fund the lots. After the program saw success, it expanded to use both city and church lots in accordance with CoC guidelines and unique city safe parking ordinances.

### *Program Features*

Mountain View administers five lots with a total of 101 spaces and is open 24 hours a day. It provides a full list of on-site services and has paid staff to assist with case management. It prides itself on taking the services directly to the parkers and is actively recruiting individuals to participate. Each lot is semi-independent and holds a specific demographic tailored to what the lot provides. Every parker completes a VI-SPDAT assessment which is logged into HMIS for tracking and compliance with CoC requirements.

### *Eligibility and Target Population*

Mountain View accepts families, seniors, and those with disabilities who live and work in the City of Mountain View. The program allows all types of vehicles, including RVs, but requires RVs to be parked at a specific location with a waitlist. The intake process begins with a form that helps identify the parker's needs and therefore, where they will be placed.

### *Rules and Security*

Program intake begins with an application and a phone interview discussing rules and code of conduct. Parkers must have insurance and a valid driver license for admittance. Rules cover common guidelines such as noise control and respect for other parkers. Individual lots stewards are responsible for maintaining order, but many staff members and police commonly check-in for extra supervision.

### *Financing Mechanisms*

Mountain View depends on private donations, city funding, and county funding to maintain its operations. The city also leases some of the lots to ease property costs in the Bay Area. They work well with the CoC, which assists in obtaining grants and other funding mechanisms.

### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

Mountain View wants to take care of its own, especially the elderly and families. It reported a relatively low rehousing rate at 13% but emphasized the need to place people into more stable housing. The program strives to meet CoC guidelines of rehousing and are constantly trying to improve its program.

*Translatable Smart Practices*

- Separate lot only for RVs allows for targeted outreach and compliance.
- To mitigate concerns that the program is a magnet for the homeless, Mountain View requires its parkers to be residents of the area.
- The program believes heavily in bringing the services to the parkers instead of making the parkers travel more or find a way to make it to social service appointments.

*Case Study 1g: Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking, Unincorporated Alameda County, California*

Alameda County is located in the Bay Area of Northern California and has a population of 1.6 million (USCB, 2020). The median gross rent in Alameda County is \$1797 (USCB, 2019d) per month. The median annual income in Alameda County is \$99,406 (USCB, 2019d), meaning that the rental affordability is 21.69 percent. The county enforces laws prohibiting camping in vehicles.

*Development*

In 2019, Alameda County declared an emergency regarding the amount of homeless congregating in specific parts of the county. Much of the problem was centered around those living out of their vehicles on public property. In response to the emergency, the county hired consultants to study and implement a safe parking program on behalf of the county to address the rise in vehicular homelessness.

*Program Features*

Alameda County HCSA maintains one lot with 21 spaces 24 hours a day and is operated by a contractor. It works with nearby safe parking programs but maintains its autonomy as a county-owned and operated safe parking program. The program offers a range of on-site services from basic hygiene amenities to on-site case management and private appointments with psychologists. The program assisted roughly 50 persons in 2020 and has an average rehousing rate above 50%. HCSA was proud to report that veterinary and grooming services are offered to the program's animal participants.

*Eligibility and Target Population*

The program requires all individuals to conduct a phone interview asking for any sex related crimes and offenses. The discussion also helps identify the needs of the parker so services can be tailored to their specific situation. The program targets seniors, single adults, families, and veterans and maintains a steady waitlist. Parkers must have current registration, a valid driver's license, and insurance for admittance. The average parker in the program is over 60 years of age.

*Rules and Security*

Alameda has "30 Commandments" which are explained during the intake process. Rules are enforced by roaming staff and a paid security guard. Parkers typically address questions or issues themselves before escalating to a program administrator.

*Financing Mechanisms*

Alameda is the only safe parking program surveyed that solely relies on government funding ranging from grants to CoC program funds in all of its levels. They have no private or faith-based funding.

*Program Outcomes and Goals*

There are no formal benchmarks but the program uses HMIS data to meet CoC guidelines for funding. The steady waitlist combined with some stable housing referrals is enough to justify the program to the county. The program mentioned its success with helping animals belonging to parkers find care and shelters if needed.

*Translatable Smart Practices*

- Strong connections with all entities of local government allow for increased grant funding and awareness.
- Connections with local animal services have helped address concerns regarding animal care and sheltering.

*Case Study 1h: City of Fullerton/Pathways to Hope Safe Parking, Fullerton, California*

The City of Fullerton is located in Orange County, with a population of 139,611 (USCB, 2020). Orange County trends toward anti-camping ordinances for those living out of their vehicles on public streets. The median gross rent in Fullerton is \$1,311 (USCB, 2019d) per month. Fullerton's median annual income is \$68,582 (USCB, 2019d), meaning that the rental affordability is 22.94 percent.

*Development*

Pathways to Hope contracted in May 2020 as the parent organization to run the City of Fullerton's safe parking program due to challenges under the prior organization. Pathways to Hope was able to redirect program efforts and see good results. In December 2020, the land where the safe parking lot was located was designated for other use and the program came to an end. Pathways to Hope is currently looking for a new location for safe parking as it still maintains support and funding.

*Program Features*

The safe parking program was operational for approximately seven months. During its tenure, Pathways to Hope administered the program with one lot and 25 spaces and provided an assortment of onsite services that included basic hygiene support and onsite case management. The program prioritized parkers development of a housing plan and provided the resources and staff to help facilitate. The program was never at capacity but had a steady stream of incoming and outgoing parkers. Because the City funded the program, Pathways to Hope regularly reported operating costs and successes. Though the program was terminated due to the lot location being designated for another use, funding and city support still exists.

*Eligibility and Target Population*

Pathways to Hope received pre-screened individuals from the city based on basic needs assessment similar to VI-SPDAT criteria and to ensure Fullerton residency. An early assessment to determine feasibility toward attaining permanent housing or other relocation assistance is the basis for case management services.

*Rules and Security*

Basic rules and conduct guidelines are explained during the intake process. Being a Fullerton resident is the primary criteria for entering the program. This requirement meant the parkers from nearby neighborhoods were turned away. A security guard was on-site for most of the day, and staff frequently visited the lot to ensure everyone was well cared for.

*Financing Mechanisms*

The program was initially funded through CARES act money and sustained through various sources, including city, county, state, and private donations. Even though Pathways to Hope lost its location, they still have the funding sources to restart the program if a suitable location is procured quickly.

*Program Outcomes and Goals*

Standard rehousing rates and people served metrics were unidentified due to the lack of survey data and the program's newness. Pathways to Hope focused on placing people into stable housing

and developing into an efficient and organized program. One of the most significant outcomes was the notion that the program was left better than when it started and would be better positioned to restart than its inception.

*Translatable Smart Practices*

- A focus on process improvement and efficiency through HMIS profile creation and housing variety.
- Parkers were constantly engaged throughout the process in an effort to redirect them to stable housing or productive exit.
- Using city funds brings more transparency and accountability to the program through reports to the city council on a regular basis.
- The goal of the program was clear to the parkers, staff, and stakeholders and reiterated through constant communication and transparency.

## ***Composite Model Programs***

### *Case Study 2a: St. Vincent De Paul Overnight Parking Program, Eugene, Oregon*

Eugene, Oregon, has a population of 176,464 (USCB, 2020) and prohibits camping within city limits. Before the pandemic, law enforcement would often ask individuals to move but have recently allowed most campers to remain in place unless issues occur. The median gross rent in Eugene is \$1,031 (USCB 2019d) per month. Eugene's median annual income is \$50,962 (USCB, 2019d), meaning that rental affordability in the city is 24.28 percent.

### *Development*

St. Vincent De Paul (SVDP) is the longest-running program our team identified, having begun in 1995 with the intention to serve families with children living in their vehicles. The mayor supported the program's development and contracted with SVPD as an established social service provider to operate the safe parking program. The first lots began on faith organization property, but over time many other locations have been added. The program has shifted from families to serving all other groups because families now have access to a dedicated shelter in the community.

### *Program Features*

SVDP operates safe parking with a combined 64 spaces and a central service station for showers, food, and social services in Eugene and Springfield. The program has parking lots with portable toilets, hand-washing stations, and waste disposal on faith organization property, local government property, private property, and community centers. The lots generally serve no more than six parkers and are time-limited to overnight access during typical years but have allowed parkers to stay on-site during the pandemic.

### *Eligibility and Target Population*

SVDP accepts all types of operational vehicles within the program. SVPD is considered a housing first program, so increasing stability to access housing services is the priority for participants enrolled in the program. Participants often spend time on a waitlist before entering the program and are highly encouraged to visit the service center as part of their participation in the program. The program has a formal waitlist that requires two weekly calls to remain active. By the time a space becomes available, many on the waitlist are no longer in need of safe parking or unable to be contacted.

Although the program prioritizes veterans, women, and seniors, adult men make up most participants. SVDP placed people in lots with similar demographics and occasionally asks to move to a new lot if personal conflicts arise or a better-suited location becomes available.

### *Rules and Security*

Upon entry to the program, participants agree to abide by the program rules, such as no drugs or alcohol and quiet hours. Upon agreement, participants receive a permit for one month. For parking lots located near schools or churches, background checks and drug testing occur before placement. For privately or city-owned lots, SVDP does not conduct background checks. Program materials note that some lot owners participate because having parkers on-site overnight increases the area's safety by reducing criminal activity. Lots do not have on-site security and rely on parkers to self-govern and report any issues. The limited numbers of parkers on each lot

and wait time to enter the program are credited with participants taking responsibility for their assigned locations and reporting any issues to the program coordinator.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

The safe parking program and services are funded through private, nonprofit, local, state and federal monies. The contract with the city has changed over time and recently sought to contract for additional case management services. Due to no RFP responses, SVPD may receive additional funding to increase case management services for parkers. Funding and contractually limited spaces were identified as the program's biggest challenges.

#### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

The program aims to increase stability for participants and support rehousing through employment or supportive housing programs. Self-reported information indicates that about 15% of participants exit the program to permanent or temporary shelter, 75% remain in their vehicle and 10% have unknown exits.

#### *Translatable Smart Practices*

- An established social service organization can offer a service hub to mobile individuals at limited increased costs.
- The reputation of the operating organization can enhance trust in the program and makes finding new locations for parkers easier. Lot owners trust that issues are few and will be dealt with effectively.
- More lots with limited services and fewer parkers can work well for parkers and neighborhoods with minimal disruption and has the potential to reduce crime.



*Case Study 2b: Lake Washington United Methodist Church, Overlake Christian Church, and St. Jude Catholic Church, Kirkland/Redmond, Washington*

Kirkland and Redmond are located in the East King County region with populations of 99,212 and 80,915 (USCB, 2020), respectively. Camping overnight in vehicles is not prohibited. If complaints arise, law enforcement may respond by sending an outreach worker to engage with homeless individuals or individuals sleeping in their vehicles. The median gross rent in the area is approximately \$1,895 (USCB, 2019d) per month. The median annual income in the area is approximately \$124,689 (USCB, 2019d) meaning that the rental affordability is 18.23 percent.

*Development*

Lake Washington United Methodist Church, Overlake Christian Church, and St. Jude Catholic Church have operated safe parking programs in close collaboration beginning in 2011, 2015 and 2016 respectively. Lake Washington's program began by offering parking to people when shelters in the area were full but expanded to a regular program with up to 100 spots as the need became apparent. Due to community concerns of density, the program scaled back to 60 spots as additional parking became available at Overlake and St. Jude. Lake Washington now serves primarily families with children, while Overlake and St. Jude, with 15 spaces each, serve single men, women, and couples.

Prior to starting their own programs, both Overlake and St. Jude had homeless individuals staying overnight on the church property. Overlake was notified of people parking overnight on their lot by neighbors and decided to start a program to meet the need rather than call the police. St. Jude had experience with a program called Camp Unity where a group of individuals living in tents would camp on church property for three months at a time before moving to another church.

*Program Features*

The three programs have a combined capacity to serve 90 vehicles at a time and each location has different services available including mail, access to church facilities and programming. The churches are 15 to 20 minutes away from one another and are in regular communication about their programs. The programs reported a strong relationship with local social service agencies and an outreach worker who refers parkers to the program. Parkers at all three lots are able to utilize showers at Overlake and food aid at Lake Washington. All lots provide the basic access to restroom facilities and program staff check in with parkers to make sure case management is underway. Prior to the pandemic, the lots were time limited to overnight access but have allowed parkers to stay on-site during the pandemic due to the church services being limited.

The relationship to law enforcement in both cities was reportedly positive with outreach and support services offered first. Although no ordinances prohibit parking, police respond to complaints with an outreach worker and often refer individuals to the safe parking programs.

*Eligibility and Target Population*

Operational passenger vehicles are accepted at all three programs. The main focus is on providing stability and safety so parkers can engage with the case management provided by the city of Redmond or Kirkland. Each city has a dedicated outreach and a case management worker who engages with parkers to connect them with services and more permanent housing. There is

not a formal agreement to provide case management, but a general spirit of collaboration means that the case worker engages with parkers regularly.

Although the programs are often at capacity, they do not have hard limits and rarely turn individuals away. Each program described reaching capacity and determining that too many parkers meant that people felt less safe and created additional stress for staff.

On occasion, a program may ask one of the other churches to host a parker if they “need a break” from them or are a better fit elsewhere. The shared pool of resources relieves the burden from any one church and prevents the need to turn individuals away completely. One program reported that if a spot is not available immediately, parkers nearly always find something else so a waitlist is not helpful. Referrals from the city case worker, the other church programs and word of mouth were common ways these programs received parkers.

#### *Rules and Security*

Upon referral to one of the churches, participants agree to abide by the program rules such as no drugs or alcohol and quiet hours. Basic guidelines for respecting other parkers are also included. All three churches use a similar intake process modeled after Lake Washington. The churches have local law enforcement run a background check. The programs reported that parkers are not turned away based on the background check but may have a conversation to determine the circumstances of the issue.

Lots do not have on-site security and rely on parkers to self-govern and report any issues. At the start of the programs, local law enforcement agreed to drive-by nightly, but the regularity has decreased as issues have not materialized for the programs.

Overlake and St. Jude have 356-day limits on stays but allow parkers to continue to use services after they leave the program. Lake Washington does not have a time limit.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

All three safe parking programs are funded exclusively by the churches and donations they receive to run the program. Case management work is not paid for by the programs but is funded by the city. Overlake has considered seeking further funding from the city but currently each church raises funds to perform the work as a ministry or duty to serve those in need. These three programs are the only ones with single funding sources.

Lake Washington’s budget of \$30,000 funds daytime administrative support and access to church amenities such as the kitchen, dog run, mail service, and laptop checkout.

Overlakes budget of approximately \$60,000 funds program administration, access to the church’s facilities such as the showers and targeted financial support for parkers.

St. Jude’s budget of \$5,000 funds program administration, access to restrooms and gas and food vouchers.

#### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

The programs aim to increase stability and community for participants, citing connection as a primary goal. Success for these programs is about individuals feeling safe though all three programs highlighted the importance of finding a good fit for participants in terms of goals, ie. moving into a more permanent situation.

Lake Washington reported serving 168 individuals in 2020 with 38% exiting the program to permanent housing and 15% to temporary housing. In 2019, the program served 244 parkers with 33% exiting to permanent housing.

Overlake reported serving 35 parkers in 2020 with 43% permanent and 9% temporary exits of the program. Parkers tended to stay in the program between 3 and 6 months. In 2019, 26 individuals were served by the program but 65% entered a permanent housing situation upon exit.

St. Jude reported serving 31 parkers in 2020 and 35 in 2019. Permanent housing was achieved by 29% and 23% respectively each year, with 5% and 12% entering temporary housing.

#### *Translatable Smart Practices*

- Relationship with city case management services provides the bulk of the social services allowing programs to minimize program administration costs.
- Church facilities and programs are made available to parkers, facilitating a sense of community with existing resources.
- Finding the right number of parkers was important for program stability and success.
- Relationships with other programs allowed independence but shared access to resources for parkers at service hubs.

### *Case Study 2c: Trinity Center, Walnut Creek, California*

Walnut Creek is located within commuting distance of the Bay Area and has grown rapidly in recent years. The population in 2020 was 70,812 (USCB, 2020). The city does not have an ordinance prohibiting sleeping in vehicles, but vehicles can be cited if parked in the same place for 3 days. Law enforcement has been disinclined to cite people parking but will respond to quality-of-life complaints from neighbors. The median gross rent in Walnut Creek is \$2,905 (USCB, 2019d) per month. The median annual income in Walnut Creek is \$105,948 (USCB, 2019d) meaning that the rental affordability is 32.9% percent.

### *Development*

Trinity Center is an existing shelter and service hub in Walnut Creek and is part of a homelessness task force that includes community members, service providers, law enforcement and local officials. The task force researched safe parking programs and developed a plan to pilot one in Walnut Creek. The program required a special permit to operate on a church parking lot and the public was very involved in the approval process. Church leadership was in favor of starting the program and involved the congregation to gather support. The lot began operating in 2019 and ceased operation in June of 2020 due to a lack of funds and no access to the church lot during the pandemic. The lot served 10-12 individuals during its operation.

### *Program Features*

The safe parking program operated on a single church lot a few minutes from the Trinity Center itself. On-site services included access to the church restroom facilities and an on-site security guard throughout the night. The lot was accessible to parkers from 9pm to 6am with the aim of only being on-site during hours of darkness. Once on-site, parkers were not granted in and out vehicle privileges but could walk to a convenience store nearby. The program was not utilized by parkers every night but became a plan b for some who could couch surf or get a hotel once in a while. Parkers were enrolled as members of Trinity Center and given access to case management and aid services available there including showers, food, job support, mental health and substance abuse referrals. The relationship to law enforcement leadership was reportedly very positive though rank and file officers were not on board from the start. No issues materialized and the relationship with law enforcement remained positive.

### *Eligibility and Target Population*

Adults with operational passenger vehicles, valid license, and registration were eligible for the program. The program did not allow children. The main focus was on providing stability and safety for parkers; case management was a bonus during the pilot of the program. Parkers were encouraged to visit Trinity Center during the day, but many worked. The program reported that older, working women were the majority of clients in the program.

### *Rules and Security*

Trinity Center utilized a coordinated entry system for participants enrolled in the safe parking program. The program ran background checks on individuals prior to participation and was not open to sex offenders or individuals with warrants. Participants agreed to abide by the program rules such as adult couples refraining from sexual activity on-site.

An on-site security guard was hired to remain on the lot during the night and police were required to drive-by nightly. None of the anticipated safety concerns materialized and the program had no complaints during its operation.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

The safe parking program was funded by a \$50,000-dollar matching grant from the city, plus \$15,000 in private donations from a local bank and \$15,000 from a public fundraising campaign. Due to the funding received from the city, the number of participants in the program was limited due to safety concerns. The largest expense for the program was the overnight security guard because other program services were covered by existing program dollars. In the next iteration, Trinity Center intends to utilize a volunteer or a case manager on-site instead of paid security.

#### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

The program's main goal was to demonstrate the safety and feasibility of a safe parking program. Some program participants were able to achieve housing independently of the program and when the program stopped operating, others were placed in existing shelter beds. The program was not often full but had a positive impact on those who used it, enabling some to stabilize and seek treatment for substance abuse issues or just sleep through the night.

#### *Translatable Smart Practices*

- The program's initial pilot showed the high cost of security and limited need for it to ensure the program's safety in the community.
- The early and thorough involvement of the community led to more restrictive guidelines for the program but allowed for more community buy-in to get started.

### *Case Study 2d: HOPE for Longmont, Longmont, Colorado*

Longmont is in the Denver Metro area and has a population of 98,711 (USCB, 2020). A city ban on parking RVs or campers took effect last year and prevents camping vehicles from being parked on city streets. The ban is intended to be enforced by complaints and to address quality of life concerns raised by housed community members. The median gross rent in Longmont is \$1,340 (USCB, 2019b) per month. The median annual income in Longmont is \$74,242 (USCB, 2019b) meaning that the rental affordability is 23.46 percent.

### *Development*

Homeless Outreach Providing Encouragement (HOPE) for Longmont is a subset of the Colorado Safe Parking Initiative with three lots and a central service location. This composite model operates under an umbrella organization described in more detail in the Colorado Safe Parking Initiative case narrative. Less specific information is available on outcomes for the Longmont subset but the program was intentionally designed as a hub and spokes model. The Colorado Safe Parking Initiative began operations in 2020 and has plans to increase the hub and spokes model to additional neighborhoods in the Denver Metro Area.

### *Program Features*

The program offers parkers shower and food services at a central location where parkers check in for the evening. After checking in, parkers disburse to lots in groups of about 6-8 vehicles and basic amenities. With case management offered at the hub, the program aims to support income sources to enable a transition to housing. The program has limited hours, requiring parkers to vacate the premises during the day.

### *Eligibility and Target Population*

Operational passenger vehicles are accepted, and parkers can fill out an online form to be considered. The main focus is on providing stability and safety so parkers can engage with other services and the case management provided by HOPE for Longmont. The program is open to anyone living in their vehicle, but participants may be guided to other services based on specific needs.

### *Rules and Security*

The program receives referrals from law enforcement, social media and word of mouth for most parkers. Upon referral, parkers are interviewed and entered into HMIS. Individual lot owners dictate background check requirements based on their preferences but generally, sex offenders are not accepted.

Lot operators are required to have someone on-site and available throughout the night to parkers, but formal security is not required. The program has seen a reduction in criminal incidents in the neighborhoods with safe parking lots.

### *Financing Mechanisms*

Hope for Longmont has an independent budget from the Colorado Safe Parking Initiative, but specific spending was not available to our research team.

*Program Outcomes and Goals*

Program outcomes are included in the Colorado Safe Parking Initiatives totals.

*Translatable Smart Practices*

- Designing safe parking programs around existing services is the goal for Colorado Safe Parking Initiative.
- The hub and spokes service concept originated from this program subset in our interview.

### ***Independent Operator Model Programs***

#### *Case Study 3a: St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Covington, Washington*

The City of Covington, located in King County, Washington, is a small suburban community with a population of 20,825 (USCB, 2020). Covington has limited public transportation, so travel within the city is dependent on a personal vehicle. The city has an ordinance prohibiting vehicles from being parked on certain residential streets overnight. The median gross rent in Covington is 1,764 (USCB, 2019a) per month. The median annual income in Covington is \$105,154 (USCB 2019a), meaning that the rental affordability is 20.13 percent.

#### *Development*

In 2017, after a church member heard a presentation on safe parking from another church, St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (SJBC) began the development of their safe parking program. SJBC held listening sessions with community residents, HOAs, and City officials when first designing their program. To dispel community concerns, SJBC developed a memorandum of understanding with the City of Covington, and in November 2018, SJBC launched its safe parking ministry. SJBC partnered with the local Catholic Community Services (CCS) Charity to provide their parkers with case management services.

#### *Program Features*

SJBC operates safe parking from the church parking lot with six spaces. The program has portable toilets, hand-washing stations, showers, and food on the property. The lot previously was open from 9:00 pm to 8:00 am so as not to disrupt church activity or the start of school but has allowed parkers to stay on-site during the pandemic.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

Only operational passenger vehicles are accepted in SJBC's program. Since program inception, SJBC has not needed to utilize a waitlist as their program usually has one or two available spaces. SJBC does not target any specific population and allows anyone living in their vehicle to use their spaces, but they have not seen any families. The majority of participants are single individuals or couples.

#### *Rules and Security*

Program intake begins with a CCS case manager who runs a background check and communicates program participation expectations. Participants agree to abide by the CCS expectations and then are referred to SJBC who covers the parking lot Code of Conduct which includes basic rules such as no drugs or alcohol and quiet hours. Parkers are then assigned a parking spot. Initially, church volunteers would coordinate nightly drive-bys to ensure security, but with few incidents since program inception, volunteers have dropped these to once or twice weekly. Program participants have formed a sense of community and self-govern and report any issues to CCS case managers or SJBC's coordinator.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

The safe parking program is funded through SJBC's general fund with an annual budget of approximately \$3,500. Some community members have provided direct monetary donations to support the program, and others have offered hot breakfasts a few times per week. The most significant request from parkers for financial support is gift cards for gas or Fred Meyers.



### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

The program aims to increase stability and safety for parkers and support participation in case management. SJBCC self-report that since the launch of the program, they have served 32 parkers; a handful have secured permanent housing. SJBCC does not track program exits to housing, letting CCS case managers take the lead on exit data.

### *Translatable Smart Practices*

- MOU with Catholic Charities Service for case management minimizes program services costs.
- The early and thorough involvement of the city and the development of an MOU allowed for more community buy-in.

### *Case Study 3b: Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Edmonds, Washington*

The City of Edmonds, located in Snohomish County, Washington, is a suburban community with a population of 42,040 (USCB, 2020). Snohomish County prohibits camping on land not specifically designated as campgrounds; the prohibition has been applied to vehicular residents. The median gross rent in Edmonds is \$1,466 (USCB, 2019a) per month. The median annual income in Edmonds is \$89,229 (USCB, 2019a), meaning that the rental affordability is 19.72 percent.

#### *Development*

Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation (EUUC) preaches a strong social justice component in their ministry. To support social action, EUUC contemplated the feasibility of building a tiny house village on the church property. Due to a lack of willing partners, the tiny house proposal failed. From their research, the EUUC learned of safe parking and was encouraged by the option to implement a program immediately. In 2015, EUUC offered five parking spaces and a portable toilet but has increased capacity since.

#### *Program Features*

EUUC offers ten year-round spaces and 13 parking spaces in the summer due to increased program demand. The program has portable toilets, handwashing stations, wifi, charging stations, and in response to the pandemic, provides cleaning supplies and a microwave. EUUC received a grant to provide gas and laundry vouchers for program participants and established a relationship with the local YMCA to give participants a three-month membership for showers and other activities. During the holidays, EUUC offers small gifts for participants.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

The program serves women and families with an operational passenger vehicle. While not always full, the program does sometimes reach capacity and requires a waitlist. During this time, EUUC allows parkers a 90-day stay but can extend the stay as needed. EUUC conducts a criminal background check through the state and will investigate further if the background check reveals a felony conviction. The program receives most referrals from the 211 system, but EUUC also posts flyers in nearby churches and schools and receives referrals from online advertisements, County social services, and law enforcement.

#### *Rules and Security*

EUUC has a team of seven volunteers tasked with administering the safe parking program and ensuring security on the lot. Standard program rules apply, including valid license, registration, and vehicle insurance. Program participants are expected to self-govern, and longer-term participants are known for peer supervision. EUUC enjoys a strong relationship with the County Sheriff and provides the Sheriff's office with approved participants' license plates numbers. Parkers are always encouraged to call the Sheriff if they feel in danger, and the Sheriff's office has been accommodating and provided some referrals.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

The safe parking program is funded through EUUC's general fund with an annual budget of approximately \$3,400. EUUC receives directed donations to support its safe parking program. Leaders believe if they were to conduct a general ask of the congregation for additional funds,

they would receive generous donations. The congregants take a lot of pride in safe parking because of the overall benefit to the community. EUUC also enjoys grant funding from a location foundation to provide gas and laundry vouchers for participants who remain in the program for two weeks.

#### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

The program aims to increase women's stability and safety, especially those with traumatic domestic violence experiences who do not have the financial means to support themselves. Self-reported information indicates that about 30% of participants exit the program to permanent or temporary shelter, 10% remain in their vehicle, and 62% have unknown exits.

#### *Translatable Smart Practices*

- Obtaining a grant for laundry and gas vouchers allows parkers to wash their clothes and continue operating their vehicles.
- Utilizing volunteers to operate programs reduce costs and is easily launched and sustained.
- Partnering with organizations such as the YMCA for showers off-site.
- On-site free wifi access to the internet is attractive and useful to participants.

*Case Study 3c: Community Action Partnership, San Luis Obispo, San Luis Obispo, California*

The City of San Luis Obispo is the County seat for the County of San Luis Obispo, with a population of 47,302 (USCB, 2020). San Luis Obispo County has a strict ordinance that prohibits overnight camping. San Luis Obispo County's median gross rent is \$1,476 (USCB, 2019a) per month. San Luis Obispo County's median annual income is \$73,518 (USCB, 2019a), meaning that the rental affordability is 24.09 percent.

*Development*

The Community Action Partnership (CAPSLO) has long served the homeless population of San Luis Obispo County. CAPSLO runs a homeless shelter, and the safe parking program is operated in the shelter parking lot. CAPSLO's goal is for participants to transition to permanent housing.

*Program Features*

CAPSLO offers 7 parking spaces and allows parkers to remain onsite 24/7. Since the lot is located at the shelter, they provide full services, including indoor restrooms, showers, wifi, charging stations, food, kennels for animals, document services, access to medical clinic services, and financial assistance for housing and vehicle issues. CAPSLO also offers free laundry, clothes, access to computers and phones, and intensive case management.

*Eligibility and Target Population*

CAPSLO opens their program eligibility on a first-come, first-serve basis to San Luis Obispo County residents who can agree to follow the parking lot rules and are willing to work with case management. Parkers must have a valid license, registration, and an operational vehicle. They accept RVs or trailers under 25 feet long. Participants are screened to ensure they are a good fit for safe parking since there is little overnight supervision in the parking lot. The program is nearly always full and utilizes a waitlist; when spaces become available, priority is given to potential participants who have attended the shelter for day services.

*Rules and Security*

Standard rules apply, including no drugs and alcohol, no cooking outside vehicles, and respect for other participants and program leaders. The parking lot is open 24/7, however, a 7:00 pm curfew for overnight was implemented so staff can lock up (exceptions are made if a parker has a job and notifies staff ahead of time). There are cameras on the property, and program leaders have a nightly checklist to ensure security. Parkers are expected to self-monitor and notify police or program leaders if there is an issue. Participants are also expected to complete one chore per day at the shelter.

*Financing Mechanisms*

CAPSLO's safe parking program is funded by the City and County of San Luis Obispo and private donations the organization receives as a nonprofit.

*Program Outcomes and Goals*

The program aims to provide a safe place where parkers are not on the street, and police resources are not spent waking people. CAPSLO tracked housing data and was proud to report that many participants were transitioned to permanent housing or reunified with family. They

cited their biggest successes as providing a space for parkers to live independently and connect them to appropriate resources for long-term stability.

*Translatable Smart Practices*

- Utilizing the shelter parking lot allows for participant independence but access to shelter amenities.
- Direct integration with the shelter ensures the collection of outcome data and participant engagement.

### *Case Study 3d: Mosaic Christian Community, St. Paul, Minnesota*

The City of St. Paul is the capital city of Minnesota, with a population of 304,547 (USCB, 2020). St. Paul has a city ordinance that prohibits camping in vehicles and overnight parking, however the Chief of Police has instructed law enforcement to be lenient about enforcement. The median gross rent in St. Paul is \$968 (USCB, 2019a) per month. The median annual income in St. Paul is \$57,876 (USCB, 2019a), meaning that the rental affordability is 20.07 percent.

#### *Development*

Mosaic Christian Community's (MCC) safe parking program is a unique program providing parking for women and women with dependent children in Ramsey County until those participants can transition to the County hotel voucher program. The participants typically spend a very short time in the parking lot, with the longest documented parking lot stay at four days. MCC works closely with Ramsey County Human Services, who refer parkers to stay at MCC until they are approved for the hotel voucher.

#### *Program Features*

MCC's safe parking program runs seasonally, from May to October, depending on the weather. MCC offers a portable toilet for overnight use, daytime access to the indoor restroom in church, and morning and evening access to the church kitchen. MCC partnered with the local YMCA who offered participants showers and treated them as full YMCA members. MCC could also refer parkers to other partner agencies for clothes and legal services. They work closely with county officials to transition participants to the hotel voucher program.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

MCC opens their program eligibility to women and women with dependent children who are residents of Ramsey County, Minnesota only. MCC focused on this population since there are programs in place to assist with a transition to the hotel voucher program. Parkers must assert that they understand that insurance is required under state law. There is no waitlist for the program.

#### *Rules and Security*

Standard rules apply, including no illegal activity, no drugs and alcohol, no guests, and quiet hours. The program does require parkers to vacate the property between 7 am and 9 am to allow for church activities. Parkers are asked to sign a covenant agreement with the church that outlines rules and consequences of those rules, which can be program exit.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

MCC's safe parking program has an annual budget of \$6,000 funded through faith-based funding from the church and private donations.

#### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

The program has high housing outcomes (98% of participants housed), with most participants transitioned initially to the county hotel voucher program. MCC noted that only a few women had fallen out of housing and utilized the program more than once and the maximum stay in the parking lot was four days.

*Translatable Smart Practices*

- Integrating with social services and serving a specific population allows for high rates of a successful transition to housing.

### *Case Study 3e: Interfaith Council of Alameda County, Oakland, California*

The City of Oakland is the largest city in Alameda County, California with a population of 425,097 (USCB, 2020). Oakland has a city ordinance that prohibits overnight parking in many areas. The median gross rent in Oakland is \$1,445 (USCB, 2019a) per month. The median annual income in Oakland is \$73,692 (USCB, 2019a), meaning that the rental affordability is 23.53 percent.

#### *Development*

The Interfaith Council of Alameda County (ICAC) is a coalition of faith organizations seeking to support and serve the community. In 2018, ICAC developed its Safe Car Park at one of its partner church parking lots. ICAC quickly learned the challenges of providing safe parking in a large city, including the cost to provide security.

#### *Program Features*

ICAC offers up to 25 parking spaces from 7:00 pm to 7:00 am. The parking lot has portable toilets, handwashing stations, wifi, donated clothing, snacks, and water. After 30 days, participants are eligible for financial assistance such as license and registration fees, smog tests, or other vehicle assistance. ICAC partnered with Project WeHOPE, and once per week, the shower and laundry truck parks at the lot. Participants are encouraged to schedule with social services for case management and housing placement services.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

ICAC opens their program eligibility to anyone who can agree to follow the rules of the parking lot. Parkers must have a valid license, registration, and an operational vehicle. There is no waitlist for the program, and no formal background check is conducted.

#### *Rules and Security*

Standard rules apply, including no drugs and alcohol, no cooking outside vehicles, respect for other participants and program leaders, no idling in vehicles, no pets, onsite security, no vehicles larger than 28 feet in length, and smoking only in designated areas. Initially, ICAC hired private security but found the cost prohibitive and transitioned to hiring parkers to do the job. Now regular parkers serve as “lot monitors” and hold gainful employment while still meeting the insurance requirements for onsite security.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

ICAC’s safe car park has an annual budget of \$250,000 funded through faith-based funding, nonprofit funding, private donations, the City of Oakland, and a grant from Alameda County. ICAC noted the challenge in tracking metrics for investors.

#### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

The program aims to positively impact parkers’ lives and provide participants with a sense of dignity and worth. ICAC recognizes the importance of transitioning participants out of homelessness and into permanent housing but is realistic about the time and resources required to accomplish this goal. ICAC’s primary goal is to help as many vehicular residents as possible feel safe and secure.



*Translatable Smart Practices*

- Providing on-site paid private security by employing participants as lot monitors.
- Partnering with a nonprofit with its specific mission and resources for showers and laundry.

### *Case Study 3f: Wise Women Gathering Place, Green Bay, Wisconsin*

The City of Green Bay, located in Brown County is the third-largest municipality in Wisconsin, with a population of 104,578 (USCB, 2020). Green Bay prohibits parking on any city street between 3:00 am, and 5:00 am. The median gross rent in Green Bay is \$730 (USCB, 2019a) per month. The median annual income in Green Bay is \$49,251 (USCB, 2019a), meaning that the rental affordability is 17.79 percent.

#### *Development*

Wise Women Gathering Place (WWGP) started as an organization of midwives from whom the community sought advice and assistance. WWGP eventually began supporting youth programs and joined the coordinated community response team for domestic violence support. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, WWGP collaborated with the Oneida Tribe to open a homeless shelter, however, plans were put on hold when renovation funding was reallocated. Still wanting to support homeless residents, WWGP requested permission from the Oneida Tribe to utilize the parking lot of the planned shelter to host safe parking.

#### *Program Features*

WWGP offers up to 20 parking spaces from 5:30 pm to 8:30 am. The program has portable toilets, handwashing stations, charging stations, and food. WWGP partnered with local churches to open showers so participants could wash up to three times per week. Members of the community have been known to bring hot food, and program participants help each other with access to resources or needs. Each morning a WWGP volunteer visits the safe parking lot to discern the parkers' needs and provide food, clothing, blankets, or assistance with gas. Depending on available funds, WWGP can also assist with vehicle repairs.

#### *Eligibility and Target Population*

WWGP primarily serves participants who are victims of a crime. Many of their participants are women harmed by domestic violence, sexual assault, or sex trafficking. Participants learn about the program through the Green Bay Homeless Outreach Team and the Oneida police department who provide safe parking business cars on vehicles.

#### *Rules and Security*

WWGP requires a staff member to always be on-site to serve the parkers and ensure rules and safety protocols are followed. These include no drugs and alcohol, parking two car lengths apart, wearing masks when outside of the vehicle, and rules of respect. Parkers are also expected to self-govern and are encouraged to contact WWGP staff or police should they feel the need. WWGP enjoys a strong relationship with local law enforcement and has a weekly meeting with law enforcement, the Oneida Crisis Management Team, the Green Bay Health Department, and a local shelter to provide program updates.

#### *Financing Mechanisms*

The safe parking program is funded through a handful of means, including a Personal Protective Equipment loan grant to provide parkers with safety equipment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately \$12,000 was budgeted from the WWGP foundation, and United Way donated another \$15,000 for the safe parking program operation. Other program funding is from the CARES Act through the Continuum of Care in Green Bay.

### *Program Outcomes and Goals*

The program aims to increase women's stability and safety, especially those with traumatic domestic violence experiences who do not have the financial means to support themselves. While highly encouraged for all participants, parkers must elect case management services to help them stabilize stable housing. WWGP works with a local case management service, NEWCAP, which enters data for parkers to HMIS.

### *Translatable Smart Practices*

- Having a program staff member always on-site ensures continuity of communication.
- Partnering with off-site churches to provide shower facilities to participants.
- Engaging and encouraging community members by welcoming meals at all times.
- Allowing a trusted and capable third party to handle case management responsibilities.

## Appendix B – Case Study Matrix

Operating Organization	Year Established	# Served (2020)	% Housed (2020)	Service Level	Nightly Vehicle Capacity	Funding Sources <sup>3</sup>
<b>Umbrella Organization</b>						
CAREavan Safe Parking (Union City)	2016	86	25%	Basic	70	CF,COF,SF,FF
Colorado Safe Parking Initiative (Denver Metro Area)	2020	40	10%	Full Service	56	FF,NPF,FBF
SafeSpaces - Association of Faith Communities (Santa Cruz)	2019	109	25%	Intermediate	46	COF,SF,FF,NPF
Dreams for Change (San Diego)	2011	180	55%	Full Service	77	SF,PD
One Starfish Safe Parking (Monterey)	2017	120	35%	Full Service	50	CF, NPF, PD
City of Mountain View	2018	Unknown	Unknown	Full Service	101	CF,COF,NPF
Pathways to Hope (Fullerton) <sup>4</sup>	2020	Unknown	Unknown	Full Service	25	CF,NPF
Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking Program	2019	50	57%	Full Service	21	CF,COF,SF,FF
<b>Composite Programs</b>						
St. Vincent de Paul Society (Eugene)	1995	100	15%	Full Service	64	FF,NPF,CF,COF,SF,PD
Lake Washington United Methodist Church (Kirkland) <sup>5</sup>	2011	168	53%	Intermediate	60	FBF
--- Overlake Christian Church (Redmond)	2015	35	52%	Intermediate	15	FBF
--- St. Jude Catholic Church (Redmond)	2016	31	34%	Intermediate	15	FBF

<sup>3</sup> Funding Codes: FF = Federal Funding; NPF = Nonprofit funding; FBF = Faith-based funding; CF = City funding; COF = County funding; SF = State funding; PD = Private donors

<sup>4</sup> Pilot program only, not currently operating

<sup>5</sup> In collaboration with Overlake and St. Jude, these three programs are a Composite Program.

Trinity Center (Walnut Creek) <sup>6</sup>	2019	Unknown	Unknown	Full Service	12	NPF,FBF,CF,PD
HOPE for Longmont (Colorado Safe Parking Initiative) <sup>7</sup>	2020	Subset of Colorado SPI		Full Service	15	FF,NPF,FBF
<b>Independent Operator</b>						
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (Covington)	2018	32 <sup>8</sup>	Unknown	Intermediate	6	FBF,PD
Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation	2015	24	20%	Intermediate	13	FBF,PD
Community Action Partnership in San Luis Obispo, California	2010	23	61%	Full Service	7	CF,COF,PD
Mosaic Christian Community (St. Paul)	2019	14	98%	Basic	12	FBF,PD
Interfaith Council of Alameda County, Oakland, California	2017	50	20%	Intermediate	25	CF,COF,NPF,FBF,PD
Wise Women Gathering Place (Green Bay)	2020	Unknown	Unknown	Basic	20	FF,NPF

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<sup>6</sup> Pilot program only, not currently operating

<sup>7</sup> HOPE for Longmont is one program operating under the Colorado Safe Parking Initiative as a Composite Program.

<sup>8</sup> Total since program launch

### Appendix C – Multivariate Matrix

Program	Community Context					
	City Size (Population 2020)	Homeless Population (PIT 2020) <sup>9</sup>	Median Monthly Gross Rent	Median Annual Income	Apartment Affordability (Median Gross Rent/Median Income)	Illegal to Vehicle Camp <sup>10</sup>
CAREEvan (Union City)	74,722	106	\$2,002	\$114,681	20.95%	Yes
Colorado Safe Parking Initiative (Denver Metro Area)	2.9 mil	4171	\$1,311	\$68,582	22.94%	Yes
SafeSpaces - Association of Faith Communities (Santa Cruz)	64,522	2,167	\$1,889	\$77,921	29.09%	Yes
Dreams for Change (San Diego)	1,425,976	8,102	\$1,658	\$78,980	25.19%	Yes
One Starfish Safe Parking Program (Monterey)	County: 434,061	County: 2837	\$1,495	\$71,015	25.26%	Yes
City of Mountain View	81,656	606	\$2,456	\$139,720	21.09%	Yes
Pathways to Hope (Fullerton)	139,611	2,765	\$1,669	\$79,978	25.04%	Yes
Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking Program	County: 1,671,000	County: 8,022	\$1,797	\$99,406	21.69%	Yes
Saint Vincent de Paul Society (Eugene)	176,464	County PIT: 1606 County pop: 385,585	\$1,031	\$50,962	24.28%	Yes
Lake Washington United Methodist Church (Kirkland)	99,212	County PIT: 11,751 County pop: 2,260,000	\$1,861	\$117,190	19.06%	No
St Jude Safe Parking Program (Redmond)	80,915		\$1,929	\$117,190	19.75%	No
Overlake Christian Church (Redmond)				\$132,188	17.51%	No

<sup>9</sup> PIT 2020 data references are included in the main report reference section.

<sup>10</sup> Illegal to vehicle camp information from expert interviews.

Trinity Center (Walnut Creek)	70,812	County PIT: 2,277 County pop: 1,159,540	\$2,905	\$105,948	32.90%	No
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (Covington)	20,825	County PIT: 11,751 County pop: 2,260,000:	\$1,764	\$105,154	20.13%	Some Places
Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation	42,040	12-14	\$1,466	\$89,229	19.72%	Some Places
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo	47,392	1,483	\$1,476	\$73,518	24.09%	Yes
Mosaic Christian Community (St. Paul)	304,547	1,579	\$968	\$57,876	20.07%	Some Places
Interfaith Council of Alameda County	425,097	8,022	\$1,445	\$73,692	23.53%	Yes
Wise Women Gathering Place (Green Bay)	104,777	Balance of State: 1,457 <sup>11</sup>	\$730	\$49,251	17.79%	Yes

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<sup>11</sup> Unable to obtain PIT data for City of Green Bay or Brown County Wisconsin. State PIT data was found in the HUD's (2020) AHAR.

Program	Program Context		
	Relation to Law Enforcement <sup>12</sup>	Funding Sources <sup>13</sup>	Social Service Connection
CAREavan (Union City)	Organizational Support	CF, COF, SF, FF	Referral network with social service organizations
Colorado Safe Parking Initiative (Denver Metro Area)	Organizational Support	FF,NPF,FBF	Case management for social services
SafeSpaces - Association of Faith Communities (Santa Cruz)	Organizational Support	COF, SF, FF, NPF	Referral network with social service organizations
Dreams for Change (San Diego)	Organizational Support	SF,PD	Case management for social services
One Starfish Safe Parking Program (Monterey)	Organizational Support	CF, NPF, PD	Case management for social services
City of Mountain View	Organizational Support	CF, COF, NPF	Case management for social services
Pathways to Hope (Fullerton)	Individual Referrals	CF,COF, SF, NPF	Case management for social services
Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking Program	Organizational Support	CF, COF, SF, FF	Case management for social services
Saint Vincent de Paul Society (Eugene)	Organizational Support	FF, NPF, CF, COF, SF, PD	Case management for social services
Lake Washington United Methodist Church (Kirkland)	Organizational Support	FBF, PD	Referral network with social service organizations

<sup>12</sup> Relation to law enforcement from expert interviews is coded as organizational support if leadership is involved, individual referrals if officers send parkers, or opposition.

<sup>13</sup> Funding sources coding: FF: Federal funding; NPF: Nonprofit funding; FBF: Faith-based funding; CF: City funding; COF: County funding; SF: State funding; GF: Grant funding; PD: Private donors



St Jude Safe Parking Program (Redmond)	Organizational Support	FBF, PD	Referral network with social service organizations
Overlake Christian Church (Redmond)	Organizational Support	FBF, PD	Referral network with social service organizations
Trinity Center (Walnut Creek)	Organizational Support	CF, PD	Case management for social services
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (Covington)	Organizational Support	FBF,PD	Case management for social services
Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation	Organizational Support	FBF,PD,GF	Indirect social service referrals
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo	Organizational Support	CF,COF,PD	Case management for social services
Mosaic Christian Community (St. Paul)	Organizational Support	FBF,PD	Case management for social services
Interfaith Council of Alameda County	Individual Referrals	CF,COF,NPF,FBF,PD	Indirect social service referrals
Wise Women Gathering Place (Green Bay)	Individual Referrals	FF,NPF,GF	Case management for social services

Program	Program Design						
	Target Population <sup>14</sup>	Intake Process <sup>15</sup>	Services Offered <sup>16</sup>	Vehicle Types	Security and Safety	Program Capacity	Hours of Operation
CAREavan (Union City)	Priority - Families, elderly	CC, I	Basic Service	Passenger vehicle	Paid Staff On-Site	Spaces: 70 Lots: 4	Overnight only
Colorado Safe Parking Initiative (Denver Metro Area)	No	BC, CC, I	Full Service	Passenger vehicle	Paid Staff On-Site	Spaces: 56 Lots: 7	Overnight only
SafeSpaces - Association of Faith Communities (Santa Cruz)	Sorting	BC, CC	Intermediate	Any Operational	Paid Staff On-Site	Spaces: 46 Lots: 8	24hr
Dreams for Change (San Diego)	Sorting	BC, CC, I	Full Service	Any Operational	Paid Staff On-Site	Spaces: 77 Lots: 2	Overnight only
One Starfish Safe Parking Program (Monterey)	Sorting	CC, I	Intermediate / Lot dependant	Any Operational	Drive-By Staff	Spaces: 50 Lots: 7	Overnight only
City of Mountain View	Priority - Families, elderly, disability	CC, I	Full Service	Passenger vehicle	Paid Staff On-Site	Spaces: 101 Lots: 5	24hr
Pathways to Hope (Fullerton)	No	CC, I	Full Service	Passenger vehicle	Paid Security	Spaces: 25 Lots: 1	24hr
Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking Program	Yes - Elderly, veterans, women	CC, I	Full Service	Passenger vehicle	Paid Security	Spaces: 21 Lots: 1	24hr
Saint Vincent de Paul Society (Eugene)	Sorting - no children accepted	BC, CC, I	Full Service	Any Operational	On-Call	Spaces: 64 Lots: 8+	24hr

<sup>14</sup> Target population is coded as yes, no, sorting or priority. Programs that are coded as Sorting use different lots for demographic groups. Programs coded as Priority, prioritize program admission to specific demographic groups.

<sup>15</sup> Intake process: BC - Background check, CC - Code of Conduct, I - Intake Questionnaire/Interview

<sup>16</sup> Services Offered: *Basic* = portable toilets, handwashing stations; *Intermediate* = basic + wifi, charging stations, showers, kitchen; *Full Service* = intermediate + financial support, case management, housing

Lake Washington United Methodist Church (Kirkland) <sup>17</sup>	Yes - Women, families w/ children	BC, CC, I	Intermediate	Passenger vehicle	On-Call	Spaces: 60 Lots: 1	24hr
----St Jude Safe Parking Program (Redmond)	Yes - Single men, women, couples	BC, CC, I	Intermediate	Passenger vehicle	On-Call	Spaces: 15 Lots: 1	24hr
----Overlake Christian Church (Redmond)	Yes - Single men, couples	BC, CC, I	Intermediate	Passenger vehicle	On-Call	Spaces: 15 Lots: 1	24hr
Trinity Center (Walnut Creek)	Yes - children excluded	BC, I	Full Service	Passenger vehicle	Paid Security	Spaces: 12 Lots: 1	Overnight only
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (Covington)	No	BC, CC, I	Intermediate	Passenger vehicle	Video Surveillance	Spaces: 6 Lots: 1	24hr
Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation	Yes - Women, families w/ children	BC, I	Intermediate	Passenger vehicle	On-Call	Spaces: 13 Lots: 1	24hr
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo	No	I	Full Service	Passenger vehicle, RV >25ft	Video Surveillance	Spaces: 7 Lots: 1	24hr
Mosaic Christian Community (St. Paul)	Yes - Women, women w/ children	CC, I	Basic	Passenger vehicle	On-Call	Spaces: 12 Lots: 1	Overnight only
Interfaith Council of Alameda County	No	CC, I	Intermediate	Passenger vehicle	Paid Security	Spaces: 25 Lots: 1	Overnight only
Wise Women Gathering Place (Green Bay)	No	I	Basic	Passenger vehicle	On-Site Volunteer	Spaces: 20 Lots: 1	Overnight only

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<sup>17</sup> Lake Washington, St. Jude and Overlake serve different populations in collaboration with one another.

Program	Program Output						
	People Served 2019 2020		% Rehoused 2019 2020		Waitlist?	Biggest Challenges?	Biggest Successes
CAREavan (Union City)	120	86	40%	25%	Sometimes	Obtaining and on-site social worker	Hiring former parkers to help administer the program
Colorado Safe Parking Initiative (Denver Metro Area)	N/A	40	N/A	10%	Yes	Educating the parkers on their services	Growing significantly
SafeSpaces - Association of Faith Communities (Santa Cruz)	73	109	30%	40%	Sometimes	NIMBYism	Collaboration with faith-based groups, stabilization
Dreams for Change (San Diego)	250	180	45%	45%	Yes	Ending of COVID-19 Eviction Moratorium	Growing program, parker community
One Starfish Safe Parking Program (Monterey)	120	120	50%	40%	Sometimes	COVID-19, Logistics, LEOs not following intake protocol	Community building, encouragement, individual successes
City of Mountain View	N/A	150	N/A	13%	Yes	Community Push/Pull, Program may be attracting more homeless	Permanent housing focus, Rehab, Project Roomkey,
Pathways to Hope (Fullerton)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No	Lack of common understanding of program intentions	Process improvement, some got into permanent housing
Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking Program	45	50	54%	54%	Sometimes	COVID-19, Elderly unfamiliar with technology	Data collection, Animal care, moving the elderly into permanent housing
Saint Vincent de Paul Society (Eugene)	100	100	15%	15%	Yes	Funding and limited spaces allowed by city	Parkers finding work, bettering situation, breaking stigma around homelessness
Lake Washington United Methodist Church (Kirkland)	168	244	33%	53%	No	Addressing overwhelming need, NIMBYism	Sense of safety and community
St Jude Safe Parking Program (Redmond)	26	36	35%	34%	No	People needing more intensive help	People finding housing and stability to keep working
Overlake Christian Church (Redmond)	35	31	65%	52%	No	Helping parkers find community, cost of housing	Transformations of parkers with stability

Trinity Center (Walnut Creek)	N/A	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No	Cost compared to people served	Stability and safety of parkers, gave support to feasibility
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (Covington)	Unknown	32 <sup>18</sup>	Unknown	Unknown	No	Addressing overwhelming need, especially when COVID eviction moratorium is lifted	Providing safety and community to parkers in the program
Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation	36	24	35%	20%	Sometimes	High cost of housing is prohibitive even for parkers with stable employment	Providing safety and stability to parkers in the program so they can sleep
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo	13	23	50%	61%	Yes	Ability to serve more people, challenges in achieving housing	Allowing parkers to live independently and connect to appropriate resources
Mosaic Christian Community (St. Paul)	26	14	98%	98%	No	Limited resources restrict what the program can offer participants	Program has changed the conversation of what homelessness looks like
Interfaith Council of Alameda County	35	50	25%	20%	No	Cost compared to housing successes	Positively impacting the lives of parkers and helping them have dignity and feel seen
Wise Women Gathering Place (Green Bay)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No	There is no solid revenue stream	People coming together to support parkers

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<sup>18</sup> Began operating partway through 2020.

**Appendix D – Map of Safe Parking Locations**



## Appendix E – Interview Protocol

### *Research Questions*

*R1 - How do successful safe parking programs recruit parkers?*

*R2 - What population is served by the safe parking program?*

*R3 - What types of services do safe parking programs provide to successfully connect unhoused individuals to more stable housing?*

*R4 - What current benchmarks and metrics are used to measure the success of a safe parking program?*

### **Introduction**

“Thank you for making time for this interview today. My name is --- and I am here with ---. We are graduate students at USC studying Public Administration. We are working with the Center for Homeless Inquiries to help Los Angeles Safe Parking Programs develop a better understanding of other Safe Parking Programs around the Country. We anticipate this conversation will last about 30 minutes. We will ask some questions about your program’s connections to the community, the design and size of the program and the outcomes that will help us understand the context of the survey responses you have already provided to us. If there are any questions you do not feel comfortable answering, please just let us know.”

**The first questions we have are about the context of your program such as relationships to other organizations and service providers in the community and how your program began and runs. We would like to know a bit more about how it was started.**

0 - Can you introduce yourself? What is your position in the program? How long have you been working with the program?

1 - Can you tell us about the history of the program? How long has the program been around? How did it get started?

2 - [R4] **Are there any benchmarks required from any of your stakeholders?** Do any of your funders impact the types of services you provide? What input do sponsors have on the types of services you provide? Can you describe any specific benchmarks your program must meet to maintain funding?

3 - [R1] **Are you the only provider of safe parking services in your community or are their others?** How does your program fit in with other homeless services in your community? Are there rules determining who may be referred to safe parking as opposed to other shelter or housing programs?

**The next few questions are about how your program is designed and how it operates.**

4 - [R1] **How do participants learn about your program?** Do you have outreach workers? Do you get referrals? If so, who does the referrals? [If working with law enforcement] How does your program work with law enforcement?

5 - [R2] [Reference eligibility survey responses] **Besides living in their vehicles, does your program have other eligibility rules for participating as a parker?** Do you use different lots for different populations? E.g. families, elderly, women, etc. [If targeting a group] For what reasons does the program target the selected group of individuals?

6 - [R1] [If there is a waitlist] **How long do people generally spend on the waitlist?** Do people still need the service when there is space available?

7 - [R1 & R2] **Is there a screening process for participants?** How does it work? Do you provide support for people who do not currently meet participation requirements?

8 - [R3] **Can you describe the services that are offered both on-site and off-site?** Are there any additional services that you would like to provide to your parkers that you currently are not able to provide? Why do you think they are needed?

9 - [R3] [If case management is offered] What kind of services does the case manager offer? [If connected to social services] Can you describe how your program connects people with social services? Is it a warm-handoff? What does that warm hand-off look like?

10 - [R3] [Reference rules survey response] **How are the basic parking lot rules enforced?** Are some harder to abide by for parkers?

11 - Have there been any security incidents or complaints from parkers staying at the safe parking program site?

12 - [R1] **How strict is local law enforcement toward people living in their vehicles on the streets?** Is vehicle camping tolerated in certain areas of the community?

**Our final few questions are about program metrics, community perception of the program and the challenges you see.**

13 - [R4] **How does your program measure success?** How is that information collected? Does your program record the exit destinations of your parkers? Do you track whether they return to homelessness after being in your program? Do you collect any feedback from your parkers, such as an exit interview?

14 - **How has the program been perceived by the community?** Has there been any community opposition and/or community support?

15 - **What are the program's biggest challenges from your perspective?**



**16 - What are the program's biggest successes?**

**Closing**

Thank you for your time on this interview and to complete the survey for us. Your information will help us understand how safe parking programs are working for communities. Are you open to us emailing or calling you if further questions arise in our research?

## Appendix F – Survey Protocol

### Start of Block: 1 - Introduction

Q1 We appreciate your time responding to the Safe Parking Program Survey.

The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete and will ask you about the size of the program, partnerships the program has, the types of services provided, and the program outcomes.

Program data for numbers served and housing outcomes when leaving the program are requested. If you have access to that information via HMIS or internal records, it will be helpful to complete the survey. If it is not available, you will have an opportunity to skip those questions.

This survey utilizes the term “client parkers” to refer to people seeking safe parking in their vehicles.

We appreciate your responses. This information will help the research team develop program models and success factors for safe parking programs.

### End of Block: 1 - Introduction

### Start of Block: 2 - Respondent and Program Information

Q2 *This section focuses on your role within the safe parking program and some background information about the program.*

Q3 What is the name of the organization you are with?

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Q4 What best describes your role in relation to the safe parking program?

- Program Coordinator for city or county wide program
- Site or program manager for a safe parking lot
- Service provider for safe parking program (case management or other services)
- Other role: \_\_\_\_\_

Q5 What best describes the current status of the safe parking program?

- Active program with nightly clients
- Pilot phase with limited number of clients and parking spaces
- In development but not yet providing services
- Proposed but no action taken
- Program terminated or cancelled
- Decided not to develop safe parking program

*Display This Question:*

*If What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Proposed but no action taken*

*Or What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Program terminated or cancelled*  
*Or What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Decided not to develop safe parking program*

**Q5a** If the safe parking program is not active, please select the challenges that have impacted program implementation.

- Lack of funding
- Difficulty finding suitable lots
- Lacking community support
- Lacking political support
- Lack of support from own agency or organization
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Display This Question:*  
*If What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Decided not to develop safe parking program*  
*Or What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Program terminated or cancelled*

**Q5b** If the decision to not develop a safe parking program was made or the program was cancelled, please describe what happened and why.

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*Skip To: End of Survey If Condition: If the decision to not purs... Is Not Empty. Skip To: End of Survey.*

*Display This Question:*  
*If What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = In development but not yet providing services*  
*Or What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Proposed but no action taken*

**Q5c** If the program is in development or under consideration, please respond to the survey questions as the program is intended to operate. We will note that the program is not yet operating.

*Skip To: End of Block If If the program is in development or under consideration, please respond to the survey questions a... Is Displayed*

*Display This Question:*

*If What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Active program with nightly clients*

*Or What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Pilot phase with limited number of clients and parking spaces*

Q6 What year was the program started?

▼ 2004 ... 2020

*Display This Question:*

*If What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Active program with nightly clients*

*Or What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Pilot phase with limited number of clients and parking spaces*

Q7 How many lots does the safe parking program operate? Please include all lots participating in the same program in the area.

▼ 1 ... 8+

*Display This Question:*

*If What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Active program with nightly clients*

*Or What best describes the current status of the safe parking program? = Pilot phase with limited number of clients and parking spaces*

Q8 How many spaces are available to client parkers across all lots? Please pick a number using the slider bar.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300

Number of parking spaces ()	
-----------------------------	--

Q9 Where are the safe parking lots located? Select all that apply.

- City/county owned parking lots
- Private business parking lots
- Faith organization parking lots
- Community center parking lots
- Other location: \_\_\_\_\_

Q10 How is the safe parking program staffed? Please enter a number for each type of personnel selected.

- Security guards: \_\_\_\_\_
- Caseworkers: \_\_\_\_\_
- Supervisory staff: \_\_\_\_\_
- Program administrators: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other staff: (specify the type of staff and number) \_\_\_\_\_

**End of Block: 2 - Respondent and Program Information**

**Start of Block: Program Size and Services On-Site**

Q11 This part of the survey asks about the services offered by the program and service capacity.

Q12 Is there a waitlist for client parkers to enter the program?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

*Display This Question:*

*If If the program is in development or under consideration, please respond to the survey questions a... Is Displayed*

Q13 Are the lots fully utilized most nights?

- Yes, nearly always full
- Sometimes full
- No, rarely full

Q14 Does the program allow client parkers to be on-site 24/7?

- Yes
- No

*Display This Question:*

*If Does the program allow client parkers to be on-site 24/7? = No*

Q14a What hours do the lots allow client parkers?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

PM - Parking opens at...	
AM - Parking closes at...	

Q15 What types of rules are enforced at the lots?

- No drugs or alcohol

- Quiet hours
- No cooking outside vehicles
- Other rules: \_\_\_\_\_

Q16 What types of services are offered through the safe parking program?

- Hand washing stations
- Portable toilets
- Indoor restrooms
- Showers
- Wifi
- Charging stations
- Food
- Case management services
- Scheduling with social services
- Counseling services
- Housing placement services
- Financial help for housing (down-payments, debt-relief, ect.)
- Childcare/tutoring services
- Document services
- Financial help for vehicle issues (repairs, renewals, insurance, ect.)
- Other services: \_\_\_\_\_

*Display This Question:*  
 If What types of services are offered through the safe parking program? = Case management services

Q16a Do case managers work on-site with client parkers?

- Yes
- No

Q17 Is there a limit for how long a client parker can utilize services?

- Yes (enter value in days) \_\_\_\_\_
- No

*Display This Question:*  
 If Is there a limit for how long a client parker can utilize services? = Yes (enter value in days)

Q17a Can the client parker renew their stay after they reach the limit?

- Yes
- No
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Q18 How is the safe parking program funded?

- City funding
- County funding
- State funding
- Federal funding
- Nonprofit funding
- Faith-based funding
- Private donors
- Other funding source: \_\_\_\_\_

Q19 What was the annual budget for the safe parking program in the prior fiscal year?

\_\_\_\_\_

**End of Block: Program Size and Services On-Site**

**Start of Block: Program Connections**

Q20 *This section of the survey focuses on program eligibility and recruitment for client parkers.*

Q21 What vehicle eligibility requirements must client parkers meet to use the program?

- Must have valid license
- Must have vehicle registration
- Must have vehicle insurance
- Must have operational vehicle
- Other requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

Q22 What types of vehicles are allowed?

- Cars
- RVs or trailers (enter size limit if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_
- Trucks
- Buses
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Q23 How is program recruitment conducted? Please select all that apply.

- Brochures on vehicles
- Street outreach
- Online advertisement
- Referrals from social services
- Law enforcement referrals
- Other recruitment: \_\_\_\_\_

Q24 Does your program focus recruitment or eligibility to serve a certain group of individuals?

- No, anyone living in their vehicle

- First time or recently homeless
- Veterans
- Families
- Women
- Seniors
- Single adults
- Transition age youth
- Other group: \_\_\_\_\_

*Display This Question:*  
*If Does your program focus recruitment or eligibility to serve a certain group of individuals?  
 != No, anyone living in their vehicle  
 And And If the program is in development or under consideration, please respond to the  
 survey questions a... Is Displayed*

**Q24a** Do targeted recruitment efforts or eligibility result in the program serving the intended group of individuals?

- Yes, the target group is the predominant client group
- Somewhat, the program serves a variety of groups
- No, the program predominantly serves non-targeted groups

**End of Block: Program Connections**  
**Start of Block: Program Outcomes**

**Q25** *The final section of the survey asks about the number of people the safe parking program serves and housing outcomes as client parkers leave the program. If the information is not available, you may leave the question blank.*

**Q26** How many client parkers does the safe parking program serve per year? Please provide a number for 2019 and 2020, if available.

- Number served in 2019: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number served in 2020: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q27** What is the average length of stay for client parkers?

- 1 week or less
- Under 1 month
- 1 to 3 months
- 3 to 6 months
- Over 6 months

**Q28** For 2020, please provide the percentage of client parkers exiting the program to each of the below options. The total should add up to 100%.

Permanent housing situation : \_\_\_\_\_

Temporary housing situation : \_\_\_\_\_

Remain in vehicle : \_\_\_\_\_



Unknown : \_\_\_\_\_  
Other housing: : \_\_\_\_\_  
Total : \_\_\_\_\_

Q29 Because 2020 was an exceptional year, please provide the same exit information for 2019.

Please provide the percentage of client parkers exiting the program to each of the below options.  
The total should add up to 100%.

Permanent housing situation : \_\_\_\_\_  
Temporary housing situation : \_\_\_\_\_  
Remain in vehicle : \_\_\_\_\_  
Unknown : \_\_\_\_\_  
Other housing: : \_\_\_\_\_  
Total : \_\_\_\_\_

*Display This Question:*

*If For 2020, please provide the percentage of client parkers exiting the program to each of the below... [ Permanent housing situation ] > 0*

*Or Because 2020 was an exceptional year, please provide the same exit information for 2019. Please... [ Permanent housing situation ] > 0*

Q30 Did any client parkers exiting the safe parking program enroll in subsidized housing programs?

- No
- Rapid Rehousing (RHH)
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)
- Other ongoing subsidy: \_\_\_\_\_

Q31 Does the program enter data into a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

**End of Block: Program Outcomes**

### Appendix G – Safe Parking Program Index<sup>19</sup>

Location	Operating Organization	Website (if available)
Alameda County, California	Alameda County HCSA Safe Parking Program	<a href="https://alcosafeparking.org/">https://alcosafeparking.org/</a>
Alameda County, California	The Village of Love	
East Palo Alto, California	Project WeHope	<a href="https://www.wehope.org/">https://www.wehope.org/</a>
Fullerton, California	City of Fullerton/Pathways of Hope	Pilot ended
Livermore, California	CityServe of the Tri-Valley	<a href="https://cityservecares.org/get-help/">https://cityservecares.org/get-help/</a>
Long Beach, California	City of Long Beach	<a href="http://www.longbeach.gov/">http://www.longbeach.gov/</a>
Los Angeles, California	Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority	<a href="https://www.safeparkingla.org/">https://www.safeparkingla.org/</a>
Monterey, California	One Starfish/Monterey County	<a href="http://www.onestarfishsafeparking.org/">http://www.onestarfishsafeparking.org/</a>
Mountain View, California	City of Mountain View	<a href="https://www.mountainview.gov/">https://www.mountainview.gov/</a>
Oakland, Alameda County, California	Interfaith Council of Alameda County	<a href="https://www.interfaithac.org/">https://www.interfaithac.org/</a>
Oakland, California	City of Oakland	<a href="https://www.oaklandca.gov">https://www.oaklandca.gov</a>
Sacramento, California	City of Sacramento	<a href="https://www.cityofsacramento.org/">https://www.cityofsacramento.org/</a>
San Diego, California	Dreams for Change	<a href="https://www.dreamsforchange.org/">https://www.dreamsforchange.org/</a>
San Diego, California	Jewish Family Services	<a href="https://www.jfsla.org/">https://www.jfsla.org/</a>
San Francisco, California	City of San Francisco	Pilot ended
San Jose, California	LifeMoves	<a href="https://lifemoves.org">https://lifemoves.org</a>

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San Jose, California	Amigos de Guadalupe	<a href="https://www.amigoscenter.com/">https://www.amigoscenter.com/</a>
San Luis Obispo, California	CAPSLO	<a href="https://capslo.org/">https://capslo.org/</a>
Santa Barbara, California	Santa Barbara New Beginnings Counseling Center	<a href="https://sbnbcc.org/">https://sbnbcc.org/</a>
Santa Cruz, California	Association of Faith Communities Santa Cruz	<a href="https://www.afcsantacruz.org/">https://www.afcsantacruz.org/</a>
Santa Rosa, California	City of Santa Rosa	<a href="https://srcity.org/">https://srcity.org/</a>
Sebastopol, California	Community Church of Sebastopol	<a href="https://www.uccseb.org/">https://www.uccseb.org/</a>
Union City, California	Union City	<a href="https://www.unioncity.org/">https://www.unioncity.org/</a>
Ventura, California	Unitarian Universalist Congregation/City of Ventura/Salvation Army	<a href="https://unitarianuniversalistventura.org/">https://unitarianuniversalistventura.org/</a>
Walnut Creek, California	Trinity Center	<a href="https://trinitycenterwc.org/">https://trinitycenterwc.org/</a>
Denver Metropolitan Area, Colorado	Colorado Safe Parking Initiative	<a href="https://www.colosafeparking.org/">https://www.colosafeparking.org/</a>
St. Paul, Minnesota	Mosaic Christian Community	<a href="https://www.mosaicstpaul.org/">https://www.mosaicstpaul.org/</a>
Beaverton, Oregon	Just Compassion	<a href="http://justcompassionewc.com/">http://justcompassionewc.com/</a>
Bend, Oregon	DAWNs House	<a href="http://dawnshouse.org/home-1">http://dawnshouse.org/home-1</a>
Eugene, Oregon	Saint Vincent de Paul Society	<a href="https://www.svdp.us/">https://www.svdp.us/</a>
Salem, Oregon	Church at the Park	<a href="https://www.church-at-the-park.org/">https://www.church-at-the-park.org/</a>
Covington, Washington	Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church	<a href="https://sjtbcc.org/">https://sjtbcc.org/</a>
Esperance, Washington	Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Congregation	<a href="https://euuc.org/">https://euuc.org/</a>
Everett, Washington	City of Everett/Interfaith Family Shelter	<a href="https://interfaithwa.org/">https://interfaithwa.org/</a>
Kirkland, Washington	Lake Washington United Methodist Church	<a href="https://lakewaumc.org/">https://lakewaumc.org/</a>
Multnomah County, Washington	Multnomah County/Catholic Charities	Pilot ended

Redmond, Washington	St. Jude Catholic Church	<a href="https://www.stjude-redmond.org/">https://www.stjude-redmond.org/</a>
Redmond, Washington	Overlake Christian Church	<a href="https://www.occ.org/">https://www.occ.org/</a>
Seattle, Washington	Urban League	<a href="https://urbanleague.org">https://urbanleague.org</a>
Tacoma/Pierce County, Washington	Coalition to End Homelessness	<a href="https://www.pchomeless.org/">https://www.pchomeless.org/</a>
Tukwila, Washington	Riverton Park United Methodist Church	<a href="http://www.rivertonparkumc.com/">http://www.rivertonparkumc.com/</a>
Vancouver, Washington	City of Vancouver	<a href="https://www.cityofvancouver.us/">https://www.cityofvancouver.us/</a>
Green Bay, Wisconsin	Wise Women Gathering Place	<a href="https://www.wisewomengp.org/">https://www.wisewomengp.org/</a>