

County of Santa Clara

Office of Supportive Housing

2310 North First Street, Suite 201
San Jose, CA 95131
(408) 278-6400 Main



July 20, 2020

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors
Jeffrey V. Smith, County Executive

FROM: Ky Le, Director, Office of Supportive Housing

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SUBJECT: Use of Travel Trailers by the County and City of San José

Under advisement from the April 21, 2020, Board of Supervisors meeting (Item No. 12), this memorandum provides an update on the use of travel trailers received by the County of Santa Clara and the City of San José (City).

City Travel Trailer Program

On March 4, 2020, the City of San José received 104 trailers from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES). While initial direction on appropriate use of the trailers was unclear, on April 23, CalOES clarified that the trailers could only be used to provide non-congregate shelter options for people experiencing homelessness and who are: 1) COVID-19 positive; 2) presumably exposed to the virus; or, 3) at high risk for serious illness or death per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.

The City established a temporary shelter program using travel trailers in a parking lot at Kelley Park/Happy Hollow Zoo in San José. The program served persons who at high risk of serious illness or death if they contract COVID-19. Due to the condition of the trailers, the City spent significant resources to repair and clean the trailers as well as build utility infrastructure at Kelley Park/Happy Hollow Zoo. This included plumbing hookups, electrical hookups using six generators, installing above-ground infrastructure for potable water and sewage system. Table 1 below provides the one-time set-up costs and ongoing operations costs. When the shelter program commenced on May 14, 2020, only 90 of the 104 trailers were habitable.

Table 1. Set-up & Operations

Set-up (One-time)	Monthly Operations (Ongoing)
Utility infrastructure (electric, sewer, water)	Generators/Electric
Supplies & Materials	Site operator/services
Trailer repairs	Showers/laundry
City Public Works Staff time	Security/Fencing
	Maintenance
\$530,000	\$445,000

The City contracted with Abode Services (Abode) to operate the program from May to October 2020 for approximately \$728,855. Abode personnel served as the main point of contact for the site to ensure that clients' needs were met, and all CDC and public health protocols were followed. While the City provided essential services such as laundry, maintenance, and 24/7 security, Abode provided all other miscellaneous program supplies needed to operate the site. Abode managed client intake and administered participant surveys to evaluate service delivery and customer satisfaction.

In early June, an electrical malfunction in three trailers caused them to catch fire. On June 16, 2020, the City demobilized its temporary shelter program at Kelley Park/Happy Hollow Zoo. The decision was made after continuous significant electrical, plumbing, and sewage issues including eight major plumbing repairs, and power outages that left trailers without air conditioning or power. The City's primary concern was the health and safety of the vulnerable clients residing in these trailers. The average age of the 35 clients served through June was 64. All 35 clients had underlying health conditions and some mobility constraints.

On July 15, 2020, staff learned that: 1) the State moved 14 trailers to Sonoma County; 2) on July 17, 2020, the State is picking up 37 trailers and moving them to Imperial County; and, 3) the State is planning to move 29 trailers to San Francisco County, but has not confirmed a date. Of the remaining ten trailers, fires rendered three unusable.

County Travel Trailer Program

The California Department of General Services (DGS) allocated 15 travel trailers to the County pursuant to Executive Order N-23-20 in February 2020, prior to the pandemic. The trailers were to be used to provide temporary shelter and services to homeless individuals and families. While the County's trailers were initially placed at the Fairgrounds, staff subsequently discovered that the Fairgrounds did not have sufficient water, sewer and electrical connections.

Using the 15 trailers, the Administration intends to establish a non-congregate temporary shelter program on a County-owned property located at E. 8th and Alexander Streets in Gilroy. The property was formerly a storage and service yard for the County's Roads and Airports Department. The site is secured by a fence, has multiple buildings with bathrooms. There are two existing office buildings on the site which would provide office space for a site manager and security. These buildings are in good condition and appear to only require minimal updates and cleaning.

The Administration had explored implementing a short-term program by establishing temporary power, water and sewer services, but the cost would have been exceptionally high. Quotes from vendors totaled approximately \$100,000 per month, not including costs to operate the program and provide supportive services.

Instead, the Administration proposes to make one-time investments in the site's infrastructure, allowing the County to operate a temporary shelter program on the site for several years. To implement the program, the Administration is working through the Facilities and Fleet Department (FAF) to make the necessary improvements and modifications to the electrical, water distribution, and sewer systems. FAF estimates that the improvements would require a one-time investment of \$175,000 to \$200,000 and take three months; however, this may change once proposals are received. The Administration estimates that ongoing costs to operate the program and provide supportive services would be between \$400,000 and \$500,000 per year depending on service levels and the composition of client households.

During the pandemic, the trailers can be used to help isolate or quarantine COVID-19 positive individuals and/or close contacts including agricultural workers and vulnerable populations from South County. After the pandemic, the trailers would be used to support homeless individuals and families solely.

Cc: Chief Board Aides
Miguel Márquez, Chief Operating Officer
James Williams, County Counsel
Megan Doyle, Clerk of the Board
Consuelo Hernandez, Deputy Director, Office of Supportive Housing
Director, County Emergency Operations Center
Chief, Operations Section, County Emergency Operations Center

Encl: Attachment A, City of San José Presentation to City Council, June 30, 2020



Housing

Trailer Report

June 30, 2020

Item 3.1



CalOES Trailers

- March 19th & 20th City received 104 trailers from CalOES (24 hrs notice)
- Significant repairs required on 90, 14 unusable
- CalOES direction: trailers for 1) COVID positive, 2) persons under investigation or 3) high risk per CDC, homeless populations



Set-up & Operations

Set Up \$530,000

- Utility infrastructure (electric, sewer, water)
- Supplies & Materials
- Trailer repairs
- Staff time

Monthly Operations \$445,000

- Generators/Electric
- Site operator/services
- Showers/laundry
- Security/Fencing
- Maintenance



Site Challenges & Client Safety

- 🏠 Trailer malfunctions
- 🏠 Plumbing/Sewer
- 🏠 Power outages
- 🏠 Fire(s)
- 🏠 Client Safety
- 🏠 Client mobility



Relocation of Residents

- 🏠 35 people (29 trailers occupied)
- 🏠 Advance Notice
- 🏠 All residents were relocated into a Motel/Hotel – NO ONE moved back into an encampment
- 🏠 City is going to replace the capacity – no loss of overall capacity



Relocation/Long-term Placement

- 🏠 Site identification: 15-20 acres needed
- 🏠 Infrastructure/Utilities
- 🏠 Approximate Cost \$8.2M



What's Next

- Request to State to take trailers back & reimburse City for costs incurred
- Community re-use

