

**Study Session  
on Homeless Encampments  
and Vehicle Dwelling  
facilitated by the  
Police Department**

**Item 2  
RTC 21-942  
August 24, 2021**

1




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## **Study Session Topics**

- Overview of Study Session
- Homelessness in Santa Clara
- Various forms of Homelessness
- Legal Context
- Homelessness during Covid
- Homeless Encampments in Santa Clara
- Vehicle Dwelling in Santa Clara
- City's Current Response
- Council Priorities and Next Steps

2


**POST MEETING MATERIAL**




## City of Santa Clara Homeless Statistics

City of Santa Clara Homeless Population	Unsheltered	Sheltered	Total
2013	203	275	478
2015	150	227	377
2017	199	73	272
2019	264	62	326

3

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- ## City of Santa Clara Homeless Statistics
- The majority (81%) of respondents reported living in Santa Clara County at the most recent time they became homeless.
  - The unemployment rate among homeless survey respondents was 82%
  - The biggest obstacles to obtaining permanent housing were the affordability of rent (66%), a lack of a job/income (56%), and a lack of housing (40%).
  - Homeless survey respondents also reported having these health conditions: a psychiatric or emotional condition (42%); drug/alcohol abuse (35%), and PTSD (33%).

4



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## Various Forms of Homelessness

Form of Homelessness	Brief definition / examples
Chronic	Sleeping in parks, undeveloped properties, vacant buildings, transit stations  Frequently suffer from long-term health conditions, such as mental illness, substance abuse, disabilities or other medical conditions, and lack access to healthcare
Transitional	Shelter system, boarding house, emergency shelter
Hidden	Hotel living, couch surfing, doubling up or reliance on friends/family
Vehicle dwelling	Personal vehicle, recreation vehicle
Encampments	Multiple people living in an unsheltered area
Imminent risk of homelessness	Domestic violence, runaway, sex trafficking, etc.

5




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## Citizen Complaints Connected with Our Unhoused Population

- Blight and corresponding property value decline and/or business viability
- Concern for safety, particularly in City parks
- Noise
- Fire
- Vandalism
- Solid waste
- Unhealthy conditions and impact on the environment, particularly in our creeks
- Costs to society
- Potential for an increase in crime




6


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## Laws, Court Rulings and City Code Restrictions

- Martin v Boise Federal Appeals Court Ruling
- Panhandling / Solicitation  
(City Code Section 5.05.210)
- Vehicle Dwelling  
(City Code Section 12.50.010)
- Parking Regulations  
(City Code Section 10.05.470)
- Coronavirus Pandemic Early Inmate Release
- Santa Clara County Superior Court Zero Bail




7


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## Coordination of Services

- Coordinating a successful intervention is a lengthy process:
  - Multiple visits may be required to gain acceptance of assistance
  - Jurisdictional issues
  - Identification of Needs
  - Availability of Staff Resources
  - Availability of Partner Resources
  - Coordination of Services
    - Timeframe restrictions
    - Costs associated with clean up or clear out
  - Unique situations specific to the person(s) in need (e.g. pet, children, vehicle, etc.)




8


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## Temporary Impacts as a Result of the Coronavirus Pandemic

- Center for Disease Control guidelines
- Individual agency responses
- Early inmate release
- Zero Bail




9

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## Location of Unhoused Individual

- Private Property
  - A landowner is required to initiate enforcement action for trespassing. The decision of the landowner and subsequent process in collaboration with law enforcement to address trespassing of unhoused individuals is time consuming and labor intensive. Law enforcement then works with the agency of jurisdiction
- Public Property
  - On public property, a person can be asked to leave however they are not required to do so based on the Martin v City of Boise Federal appeals court ruling


10



## Location and Agency of Jurisdiction

Location	Agency of Jurisdiction
In and around creeks	Valley Water
Along the freeways	CalTrans
Under the expressways	County Road
Along the railroad tracks	Cal Train
In City parks	City of Santa Clara
Private property	Private property owner (varies)
In adjacent municipalities	City of Jurisdiction
Public street	City of Santa Clara

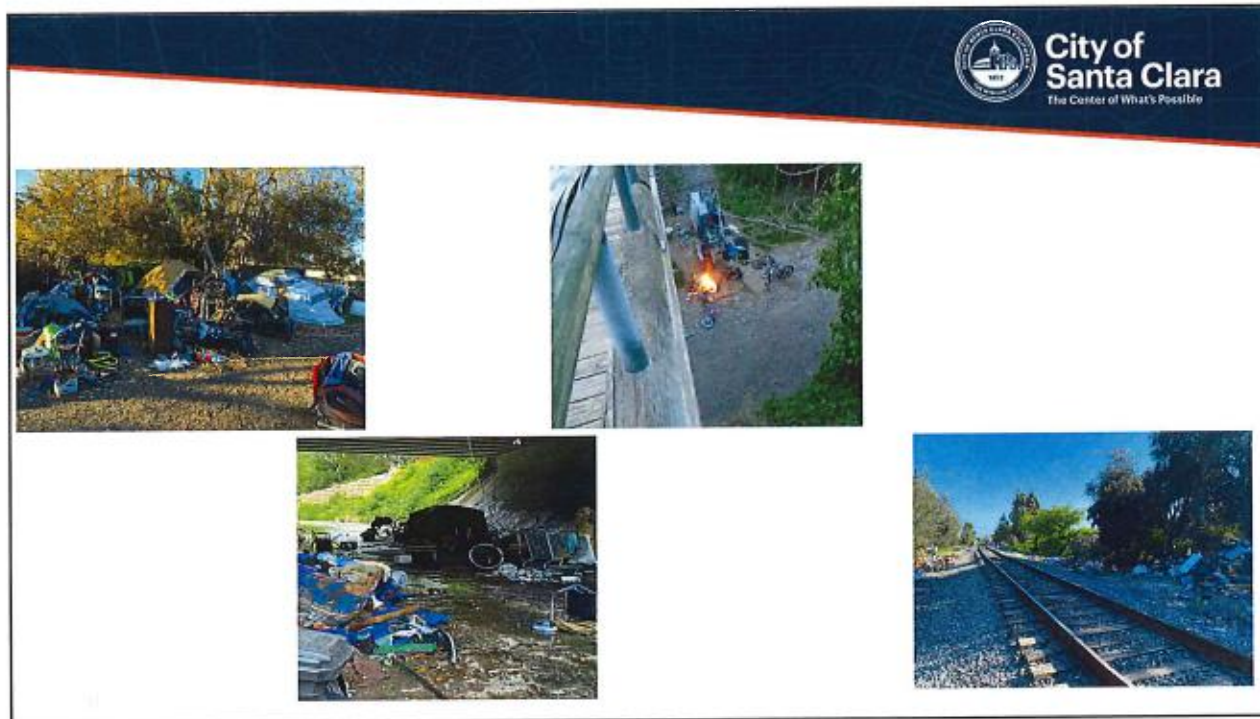
11



## Homeless Encampments in Our City

Encampment Location	Agency of Jurisdiction
Lafayette Street at Laurelwood Road	City of Santa Clara
San Tomas Aquino / Saratoga Creek Trail at Homestead Road	Valley Water
San Tomas Aquino / Saratoga Creek Trail at Mauricia Avenue and Tracy Drive	Valley Water
Calabazas Creek north of El Camino Real	Valley Water


12





13



14

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## Clean-up vs Clear Out



15


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## Clean-up vs Clear out



16




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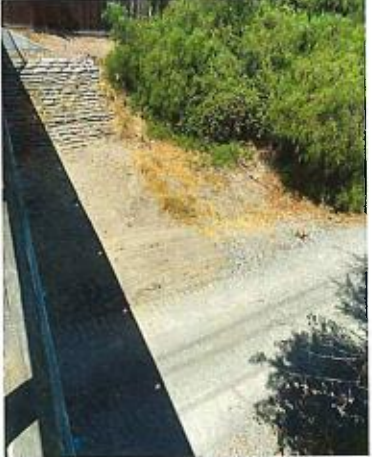

## Procedures for Each Case

- Outreach to individuals advising of community resources (e.g. emergency shelter, showers, laundry service, meals, medical services, case management, employment training, etc.) and determine next steps to resolve the reported concern
- Notification advising of intent to conduct the clear out at least 72-hours in advance, encouraging individual(s) to remove their personal property and provide free bags to do
- Document pertinent information to third-party vendor regarding the location, making note of potential jobsite hazards and conducting employee safety training as necessary
- Coordination with an experienced third-party vendor to conduct clear out
- Staff a police officer to be present for the clear out
- Clear and dispose of debris
- Sort and tag personal property, prepare the items for storage and ensure the items can be claimed up to 90-days following the clear out
- Return of personal property as requested


17

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## Photos Taken 8/16/21




18

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## Department Oversight for Vehicles

Matter of Concern	Department Oversight
Storage on private property	Code Enforcement Division
Illegal parking on public property	Police Department
Potential issues associated with RV, personal vehicle or commercial vehicle dwelling	Police Department


19

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## Vehicle Dwelling in Santa Clara



20




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## Vehicle Dwelling Locations in Our City

- As of 5/5/21, there were 107 vehicles counted with evidence of people living in them
- 97 of these were recreation vehicles \*
- 73 of which were in one of the following locations:
  - Hope Drive from Lafayette Street to Lick Mill Boulevard
  - Bassett Street from Laurelwood Road to Agnew Road
  - Agnew Road from Lafayette Street to Mission College Boulevard
  - Memorex Drive from Lafayette Street to Richard Avenue
  - Richard Avenue from Lafayette Street to Martin Avenue
  - Space Park Drive, Kenneth Street and Raymond Street area
  - Grant Street and Reed Street area

*\*It would be nearly impossible to do a complete inventory of personal vehicles serving as residences City-wide.*

21



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## Citizen Complaints Specific to Vehicle Dwellers

- Blight and corresponding property value decline
- Excessive litter and garbage
- Discharging sewage on the public right of way
- Line of sight safety issues for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers
- Encroachment of items outside, on top of, or attached to the RV
- Reduced parking availability
- Noise from generators
- Unleashed pets
- Concern for personal safety
- Potential for increase in crime

22