



OVERSIZED VEHICLES (OSV) COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE



ADDRESSING HEALTH AND SAFETY, ENHANCING RESOURCES

County data shows Palo Alto continues to have a higher proportion of its unsheltered people living in vehicles than the County as a whole, with 73% in vehicles within our community, while 37% were in vehicles countywide. The growing number of people living in vehicles on streets is posing additional neighborhood challenges and health and safety concerns.

To address these concerns, the City Council adopted a phased plan in an effort to address the impacts of oversized vehicles and enhance resources available. Immediate steps are underway, with other actions actively being explored, seeking a comprehensive approach in balancing health and safety concerns with enhancing services and resources for our unhoused community.

The City Council's approach seeks to balance public health and safety, neighborhood concerns, and the complex needs of people living in vehicles. It is designed to roll out in phases, allowing the City to test solutions, refine policies, and align resources over time.



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PHASED APPROACH

Designed to roll out in phases, the City's approach supports a thoughtful, results-based response that is effective, compassionate, and legally defensible.

Phase 1: Regulations & Enhanced Cleanups

This phase focuses on immediate health, safety, and cleanliness improvements.

- Parking enforcement
- Street cleanups and sweeping
- Coordination with service providers to assist individuals to find shelter and housing
- Explore expansion of off-street safe parking facilities

Phase 2: Pilot Enhanced Services

This phase builds upon Phase 1 with consideration of targeted support and management tools.

- Potentially limit oversized vehicle parking to certain streets
- Potential development of a permit program for oversized vehicle dwellers who have already been residing in Palo Alto
- Potentially provide enhanced services such as mobile pump-outs and increased outreach and engagement

ENFORCEMENT

Increased enforcement of existing regulations is occurring, consistent with Council direction and is working towards addressing neighborhood impacts caused by oversized vehicles by increasing street sweeping and cleaning.

The Palo Alto Police Department revised their enforcement, noting that previously, efforts were centered on abating vacant oversized vehicles while collaborating with the City's outreach team to connect people experiencing homelessness to services. With Council's direction, staff is prioritizing towing oversized vehicles linked to increased blight and those out of compliance with vehicle registration requirements. This revised strategy is active across all street segments with significant oversized vehicles presence.

ENHANCED STREET CLEANING AND SWEEPING

Initial street cleaning and sweeping began in December 2025 with ongoing routine sweeping continuing. "No parking" signs were posted in advance of the work with any vehicles remaining subject to citation and towing. Personal belongings must be removed with vehicles to avoid removal. The ongoing routine street sweeping schedule will be posted on each street affected. The first enhanced cleaning and sweeping took place on Embarcadero Road (south side) between East Bayshore Road and Faber Place, Faber Place and Embarcadero Way and Embarcadero Way and Baylands/Embarcadero Road. Subsequent streets will follow and signs will be posted accordingly.



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CITY HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS PRIORITIES

The City is advancing a multi-pronged strategy that includes:

- Permitting and beginning construction of the Homekey interim shelter
- Supporting affordable housing developments, including Wilton Court Apartments, 231 Grant Avenue, Mitchell Park Place, City-owned sites such as Lot T (Downtown) and 340 Portage Avenue
- Strengthening renter protections
- Enabling and supporting safe parking programs

HOMEKEY INTERIM HOUSING

Homekey Palo Alto is new modular interim housing being developed to provide supportive, transitional housing for people experiencing homelessness in Palo Alto. It is part of California's statewide Homekey program, which funds rapid expansion of housing for individuals and families without stable shelter. It will provide 88 modular rooms with the capacity to serve over 200 individuals annually with on-site support services.

Homekey Palo Alto is intended to be a dignified transitional step for unhoused residents on the path to stable, permanent housing. Its focus includes:

- Customized case management
- Employment support
- Housing search assistance
- Health, wellness, and stability services

SAFE PARKING

Palo Alto offers Safe Parking Programs for unhoused individuals living in their vehicles, providing secure locations, restrooms, and connections to social services. Public lots, like the one at 2000 Geng Road, allow continuous parking and are supported by funding from the County of Santa Clara. Congregation-based programs require participants to leave the lot daily, with vehicles allowed on-site from 6:00 pm to 8:00 am, accommodating from four to eight passenger vehicles per night. The City Council established a process for the establishment of new safe parking sites as part of the support for this program.

The City is working to identify potential safe parking locations from willing private commercial property owners. If you own a property that could be suitable for safe parking, we'd like to talk! Expansion and new locations would require outreach to congregations and neighbors.



Homekey artist's rendering (top) and construction



Safe parking at the Geng Road lot



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PHASE 2

The next phase of the oversized vehicles program will provide additional tools to improve public health and safety and better support individuals transitioning out of vehicle habitation.

Key Strategies Under Consideration

The City is exploring a coordinated set of tools to better manage impacts while supporting people living in vehicles. These include:

- Limiting oversized vehicle parking to specific streets
- Creating an oversized vehicle permit pilot (including enhanced services for participants)

Exploration of Designated Oversized Vehicle Parking Streets

The City is considering a potential system that could:

- Potentially limit OSV parking to specific streets
- Consider creating an oversized vehicle permitting program
- Consider launching an enhanced services pilot

Oversized Vehicle Permitting Program (to be considered)

The focus would be permits for oversized vehicle dwellers who are already residing in Palo Alto. Ongoing review would be required to adjust locations and capacity over time. The program would be designed to regulate parking, monitor compliance, and improve coordination between enforcement and services.

Enhanced Services for People Living in Vehicles

Enhanced services could complement parking management and include:

- Outreach and engagement with people living in vehicles
- Sanitation services, such as trash collection, RV pump-out services, and designated waste drop-off locations

WHAT'S NEXT

Continue to participate in this discussion at the late February Council meeting when the Ad Hoc Committee will report back to the full Council. The Ad Hoc Committee will share progress updates as well as ideas for Council consideration such as the exploration of limiting OSV parking to certain streets and an enhanced services pilot. As further community engagement is planned, information will be shared via direct outreach, the City's website, social media, and flyers posted in key locations.



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