

3.07 Meeting the Urgent Crisis of Unsheltered Homelessness with Interim Housing Strategies



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While permanent housing -and voluntary supportive services- remains the solution to ending homelessness, temporary accommodations can offer a critical and often lifesaving space—when provided using a low-barrier and housing-focused approach— for those who are otherwise unsheltered and who are likely the most vulnerable. Come learn about diverse community approaches to reducing harm while permanent housing is scaled, and the underlying principles, design considerations, and practices to keep people safe and healthy.

Bringing People Home.



DESTINATION: HOME

Centering Lived Experience in Interim Shelter Decision-Making

By Claudine Sipili and Alex Senegal
February 27, 2025

OUR UNIQUE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

COLLABORATING ON A COMMON AGENDA



DESTINATION: **HOME**

HOW WE'RE HELPING END HOMELESSNESS



Funding Impactful Strategies



Incubating New Ideas



Public Policy & Advocacy



Community Engagement



Research



KEY STRATEGIES & INITIATIVES



Expanding the supply of deeply affordable housing

- Investing in Affordable Housing
- Affordable Housing Policies
- Housing Ready Communities



Helping residents achieve & maintain stable housing

- Santa Clara County Homelessness Prevention System
- Expanding Job Training & Placement (Destination: Work)



Improving access and equity within our system

- Addressing Racial Disparities in Homelessness
- Data & Technology Initiatives
- Partnership with the Lived Experience Advisory Board



Why Lived Experience Matters

- Residents of emergency interim housing (EIH) sites have unique insights into challenges and solutions
- Decisions grounded in lived experience improve engagement, program success, and cost efficiency
- Incorporating lived experience fosters a sense of belonging, which increases compliance and positive housing outcomes

Supporting Data:

- Residents across EIH sites expressed the desire for greater community involvement and decision-making roles
- Programs with resident councils and peer leadership opportunities see increased stability and lower turnover



Key Challenges Identified by Residents

1. Lack of Clear Communication on Housing Pathways

- a. Residents fear unexpected displacement due to unclear program duration and requirements

2. Limited Community Engagement Opportunities

- a. Residents want to help shape policies and support each other but feel excluded.

3. Inadequate Healthcare & Crisis Response

- a. High emergency service calls due to lack of onsite medical support (e.g., LVNs, mobile health units).

4. Insufficient Resident-Centered Security Approaches

- a. Current security models feel punitive rather than supportive



Strategies to Embed Lived Experience in Decision-Making

→ Establish Resident Councils

- ◆ Elected residents co-lead policy discussions and provide direct feedback

→ Improve Transparency on Housing Pathways

- ◆ Clearly communicate program expectations, timelines, and exit plans

→ Shift to a Supportive Supervision Model

- ◆ Replace private security with trained resident coordinators who build relationships

→ Expand Community Spaces & Activities

- ◆ Create communal gathering areas, cooking spaces, and peer support programs to strengthen engagement



Call to Action – Building a National Movement for Lived Experience Leadership

For People with Lived Experience of Homelessness:

💬 Raise Your Voice – Advocate for your needs and push for decision-making roles in programs that serve you

🔗 Join & Lead – Participate in resident councils, advisory boards, and peer-led initiatives


⚙️ Shape Policy & Programs – Your insight is invaluable in designing effective, humane housing solutions



Call to Action – Building a National Movement for Lived Experience Leadership

For Government Agencies & Policymakers:

 **Commit to Co-Design** – Ensure policies and funding decisions are made in partnership with people directly impacted

 **Fund What Works** – Prioritize models that center lived experience, such as peer navigation, resident councils, and trauma-informed staffing

 **Reevaluate Compliance-Based Models** – Replace punitive rules with approaches that build trust, autonomy, and stability




Call to Action – Building a National Movement for Lived Experience Leadership

For Service Providers & Housing Organizations:

 Create Pathways to Housing Stability – Make housing programs predictable, transparent, and trauma-informed

 Redesign Security & Staffing Models – Replace punitive security with peer-led and resident-centered approaches

 Strengthen Community & Connection – Design spaces and policies that foster belonging, autonomy, and mutual support



Stay Connected

Let's Keep the Conversation Going!

For questions, collaboration, or to share insights, reach out to us:

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Meeting the Urgent Crisis of Unsheltered Vehicular Homelessness

Matthew Tecle, Executive Director
February 27, 2025



safeparkingla.org

Matthew Tecle

Executive Director, Safe Parking LA

Matthew Tecle leads Safe Parking LA with over 15 years of experience in the nonprofit and public sectors.

Before joining Safe Parking LA in June 2024, Matthew served as the Associate Director for City/County Coordination at the Department of Health Services Housing for Health. Matthew also led the Department of Public Health's first People Experiencing Homelessness Vaccination Unit.

Matthew holds a bachelor's degree in Anthropology from the University of California Santa Cruz and a Master of Public Policy with a certificate in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Management from the University of Southern California.





About Safe Parking LA

Safe Parking LA employs underutilized parking lots to support the specific needs of Angelenos whose only source of shelter is their vehicle.

In addition to a safe parking spot overnight, we offer services to help stabilize clients sheltering in their vehicles, support their health and wellness, and open doors to housing.

Founded in 2017, Safe Parking LA has evolved to become the largest safe parking program in Los Angeles and the only provider of safe lots exclusively focused on vehicular homelessness. SPLA has permitted 2,500 vehicles since then.



Mission

Safe Parking LA provides safe overnight parking to facilitate stability and housing in Los Angeles County for individuals living in their vehicles, and advocates for fair and equitable treatment and resources for the unhoused.

Vision

For all individuals and families living in their vehicles to have an expedited path to housing through a system that opens doors.



“

“Safe Parking LA helped me get back a sense of dignity and what was lost.”

-David, former participant

”

Our Program

Services Provided

Our services are designed to meet the needs of our community, facilitate safety and stability, and provide and actionable roadmap for participants to return to permanent housing.



Community Warmline and Intake

With a warm welcome, we help clients assess their situation; explore resources; and enroll in the program.



Safe Parking Lot Operations

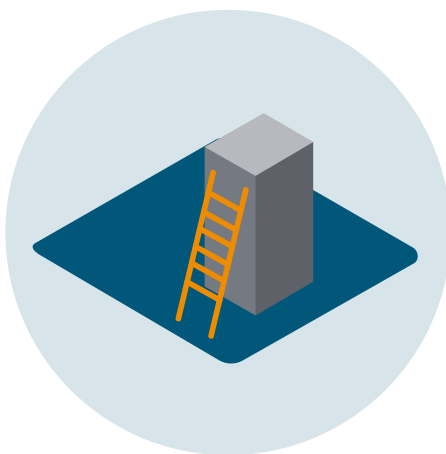
Our safe lots offer security and basic sanitation. Clients have access to mobile showers, laundry, and donated items and food when available.

Our Program



Case Management Resource Coordination

Our Case Managers offer housing-focused care to each of their clients by developing a housing stabilization plan; coordinating care; and advocating for a pathway to housing.



Emergency Funds and Financial Assistance

We aim to remove barriers by providing participants with temporary financial assistance for vehicle maintenance, credit repair, and rental deposits.



Referrals and linkages to housing

The ultimate objective is for participants to secure a permanent residence by utilizing 90 days of support for housing retention.



Service Areas

1. Downtown Los Angeles - Figueroa
2. Hollywood – NOT IN SERVICE
3. LAX – La Cienega
4. National
5. Reseda
6. Veterans Affairs West LA
7. West Los Angeles - Iowa

7

nights/week

365

days/year



41,653 Safe Nights

spent in our program

431 Unique Participants

parked safely overnight and got connected to case management services

390 Financial Awards

distributed to participants to help with hardships

\$177,040 Total Amount

awarded in financial assistance and gift cards

174 Participants

transitioned into a positive housing outcome

47% Placement Rate

achieved for participants who exited the program

We Need Your Help!

LAHSA's 2024 Point in Time Count found over 23,000 people are experiencing vehicular homelessness in LA County. Programs such as safe parking provide safe, legal, and preventative services to keep people from further deepening within their crisis.

Innovative programs such as safe parking provide a much needed entry point for those experiencing vehicular homelessness who have very specific needs that are unique to this population.



Contact



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Community Warmline

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