



Safe Parking Program Year 1 Report

About

The City of Beaverton Safe Parking Pilot Program (Safe Parking) provides a safe, legal place to park for people experiencing homelessness and living out of their vehicles. While no one should have to live in their car, providing a safe place to park can help families and individuals in this situation stabilize their lives and gain better access to services. The program was designed after a successful model in Eugene, Oregon and provides case management through a contract with Just Compassion of East Washington County. The case management focuses on identifying barriers and working towards housing stability.

Timeline

- Program development: July 2018- March 2019
- Program Start with two host sites (City, THPRD): April 2019
- Municipal Code Changes: September 2019
- Development Code Changes: February 2020
- Washington County adds Safe Parking code changes to Long Range Work Planning Program: March 2020
- Third host site (faith partner) is added to the program: April 2020

Program Statistics (April 2019- April 2020)

Overview of people served

- # of individuals served: 37 (28 adults, 9 children)
- # of vehicles in the program: 17
- # of vehicles exited into housing 6 (12 individuals)
- # of vehicles continuing in the program: 6 (9 individuals)
- # of vehicles exited not into housing (noncompliance or self-exited): 5 (16 individuals)

Demographic Information

	Race	Gender	Veterans
Adults	White – 16 Black – 3 Latinx – 4 Asian and Pacific Islander – 1 Not reported – 4	Female -- 17 Male – 11 Non-binary – 0	1
Children	White – 5 Latinx – 4	Female – 6 Male – 3 Non-binary - 0	N/A

The program has served both families and single adults and has identified senior women on fixed incomes as a high need population. The gap between income and rent is the primary reason for homelessness among program participants.

Guests Exited from the Program

- One vehicle, representing a family of six self-exited from the program to move closer to family support (a decision made through discussions with Just Compassion).
- Four vehicles have been exited from the program for not attending case management meetings or showing progress on their plan towards housing. One of the vehicles exited from the program for non-compliance with case management housed a senior woman who was going to school with the goal of earning an associate degree and a better stream of income. She was eventually able to do so during her time in the program with additional assistance from Holy Trinity Church.

Police Calls

- In August, there were several calls to BPD from neighbors next to the city site regarding noise from guests. BPD responded and characterized their interaction as a welfare check (they didn't make any arrests). One vehicle of guests associated with the noise complaint was eventually exited from the program and trespassed from the parking lot. City staff changed the location of the parking spots/restrooms on the lot to address neighbor concerns about noise.

Strengths of the Safe Parking Pilot Program to Date

- **Transition to Housing.** Safe Parking has provided its participants with stability that they don't normally find when living out of their vehicles. They have had access to a regular restroom and storage and an entry point for services. This stability has allowed them the chance to have more sleep at night, work towards employment and school, and receive dedicated assistance in finding housing.
- **Access to Resources.** Participants in the program have had access to the Just Compassion Resource Center, including meals, laundry service, laptops, assistance with rental application fees, and a permanent address to receive mail. They have also been able and more likely to access the Beaverton Severe Weather Shelter during the winter season to have a warm place to stay and a hot dinner.
- **Community Collaboration.** The program has collaborated with Family Promise of Beaverton to provide a place for families on their waitlist to park until they are able to get into the program. This has helped keep kids in school and supported more consistent communication with the families, so they don't get lost in the system. Just Compassion has built strong partnerships with Luke Dorf, Community Action, and the Beaverton School District for referral and resourcing of guests, which has clearly increased the overall impact of the program.

- **Livable Neighborhoods.** BPD has worked with the program to address needs of people experiencing homelessness that they encounter living out of their vehicles in neighborhoods and public spaces. Having a place to refer people in this situation has helped alleviate neighborhood concerns and provided an alternative option to enforcement of the camping ordinance.

Testimony from former program participant:

“My partner and I, both working full time, were desperate to have a place to call our own. However, due to the fact that we didn't have a rental history, we had been denied by every apartment, house, and trailer park that we applied to. Finally, in October we received a business card from a policeman telling us about Just Compassion and the safe parking program. This would be a huge step up since they offered a place where we could sleep safely near our work with a restroom... Sooner than we could have ever hoped we were applying to an apartment building that was lenient and we were ACCEPTED! Now we have a one bedroom with a full kitchen, living room, and bathroom with a tub. It has done wonders for our health, both mental and physical. We are eternally grateful for Just Compassion and the safe parking program. I don't know what we would have had to do if we hadn't finally found them. They allowed us to keep our family together and let us feel like real members of society again. I will never forget that kindness.”

Challenges and Program Modifications

- **Staffing.** Just Compassion was in transition over the first six months of the program, as the primary case manager left the organization and they had to rehire. A new coordinator was hired October 1, 2019 and brought a wealth of experience to case management that benefited guests working towards housing.
- **High Need.** The need is so much greater than what can be offered. The waitlist had to be capped early on because the demand was so high. Additionally, the first guests to enter the program were previously known from the severe weather shelter and point-in-time count. While this made relationship building easier, the barriers to housing for these guests (part of the chronically homeless population) were very high. Just Compassion had to schedule more regular meetings to connect with guests. The intensive case management represents an increased cost in services provided.
- **Privacy.** Guests staying at the city site are highly visible to neighbors and daily visitors to the location and surrounding area. This leads to a lack of privacy for these guests, as well as a higher likelihood for neighbor complaints.
- **Lack of affordable housing.** The biggest service gap at this point is the lack of affordable and available housing. This has led to participants needing extensions on their allotted time in the program while they are waiting for housing. The longer guests need to stay in the program before they can access housing, the less turnover there is at host sites and the fewer people can be served.

- **Hesitancy for host sites.** Commitment of faith partners to sign on as host sites has taken significantly longer than expected. Several partners who initially stepped forward to express interest later backed away or found they had to engage in extensive internal processes to build buy in and discern as a congregation if they would participate. Outreach has included informational sessions and updates, presentations to congregations and leadership boards, discussions with local neighbors and NACs, multiple site visits to talk through program administration and potential logistics, etc.

Recommendations

1. Transition from pilot to established program.
2. Increase budget to recognize additional case management provided by Just Compassion and additional guest needs such as gas vouchers.
3. Explore options for moving the city site to a new location, to provide additional privacy to program guests and reduce neighbor concerns.
4. Allow the City to place up to six vehicles on their sites as it provides more capacity for the program without increased site infrastructure costs.
5. Collaborate with Washington County on countywide Safe Parking.
6. Continue to convene quarterly internal stakeholder meetings consisting of staff from several departments.
7. Evaluate capacity and need to expand beyond the original target of five host sites.