



MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Brian Pedrotti, Community Development Director

BY: Andrew Perez, Planning Manager

SUBJECT: Safe Parking Ordinance Update

DATE: August 8, 2023

SUMMARY OF ACTION:

Receive an update on the status of the safe parking ordinance.

IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:

No financial impact is projected.

RECOMMENDATION:

Suspend efforts to adopt a safe parking ordinance due to the inability to secure a commitment from a social service provider to support individual safe parking sites.

BACKGROUND:

Recognizing the rising costs of housing and the need to provide options for those in our community facing homelessness, combined with the interest from local faith organizations, a study session was held with City Council on March 14, 2023 to discuss the topic of safe parking. Staff drafted a safe parking ordinance and presented it to Council at the March 14, 2023, study session. The ordinance defined safe parking sites, identified zones in which safe parking sites could be permitted, and proposed a new permit type specifically for safe parking sites. Performance standards were also included as a way to mitigate adverse impacts on surrounding properties.

Council was generally supportive of the ordinance as it was proposed at that time. Much of the discussion was centered around the amount of involvement that a local social service provider, most likely the 5 Cities Homeless Coalition (5CHC), would need to have to make the program effective. Council directed staff to further refine the ordinance and coordinate with 5CHC to ensure that the amount of involvement by 5CHC is feasible given its limited resources.

Item 11.a.

Council also directed staff to add a performance standard to the ordinance that requires an operator to register its guests by obtaining name and date of birth, vehicle make, model, and license plate number, and proof of driver's license and automobile insurance. The registration form would be used to verify that the guest has made contact with a social services provider. It was anticipated that, in most cases, the social services provider would be 5CHC. By requiring at least a check-in with 5CHC, or another social service provider, the ordinance acknowledges that those services and benefits provided are an important component in improving the living situation of safe parking guests.

After the study session, staff had discussions with 5CHC, who determined that they were unable to provide the services necessary to support safe parking sites. The primary concern was due to potential liability for issues that may arise at these sites. Additionally, the lack of resources makes a commitment to support these sites infeasible. The draft ordinance was presented to the Planning Commission on May 16, 2023, and staff's recommendation at that time was to continue the hearing to a date uncertain due to the inability to secure a commitment from 5CHC to support the future sites. Based on this new information, the Planning Commission postponed the hearing indefinitely.

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:

The draft ordinance was updated after the study session with City Council in preparation of moving the ordinance forward to adoption. Regarding the involvement of a social service provider, the ordinance was revised to include a performance standard that states:

In addition to the registration form the guest must make contact with a local social service provider where they can be offered access to support resources and case management services. The guest must provide proof that they made contact with a social service provider within seven (7) days of the initial entry into the Safe Parking Site.

As directed by Council, staff has had multiple discussions with 5CHC to confirm its ability to support safe parking sites. A commitment from 5CHC would allow site operators to comply with the ordinance and provide essential services for guests of safe parking sites. 5CHC has stated that it is unable to provide the services due to a lack of resources that can be dedicated to this effort.

Since the study session, City staff has met with County staff regarding a regional approach to safe parking to make more efficient use of the limited resources that support this use. County staff is continuing discussions with the other cities to identify potential safe parking sites. The County is hoping to establish one site in south county and another in north county. This would allow limited resources to be concentrated at just two sites rather than multiple smaller sites throughout the cities and county as a whole. A benefit of this approach is that coordinated management of regional safe parking sites will result in consistent standards and expectations for guests of these sites, as well as services to guests and broader and more easily accessed knowledge of where the sites are located.

Staff will continue coordinating with the County in pursuit of a safe parking situation that is beneficial for guests, hosts, and neighbors of these sites.

ALTERNATIVES:

The following alternatives are provided for the Council's consideration:

1. Receive the update from staff and direct staff suspend efforts to adopt a safe parking ordinance; or
2. Provide other direction to staff.

ADVANTAGES:

Continued discussions with Council will provide direction to staff regarding the future of the safe parking ordinance.

DISADVANTAGES:

Without a commitment from a social services provider, the ordinance cannot move forward based on the most recent direction from Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

No environmental review is required for the study session discussion. Adoption of a safe parking ordinance will require environmental review at the time it is considered formally and will be noticed accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City's website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2. Leaders of local faith-based organizations, the 5 Cities Homeless Coalition, and San Luis Obispo County Homeless Services staff were notified of this agenda item via e-mail on July 31, 2023, due to expressed stakeholder interest.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Safe Parking Ordinance