

Safe Parking Program Proposed Encinitas Lot FAQ



Program Overview, Hours and Location:

#1 Q: What is the Jewish Family Service “Safe Parking Program”?

A: The Safe Parking Program helps individuals and families who are living in their vehicles by providing a safe and secure place to sleep seven days a week. Lots are secured through gated, controlled entry during certain hours granted only to program participants and security staff. The program provides vital resources and tools, dignified support, and a welcoming environment to help individuals and families stabilize their lives and transition back into housing. We provide participants with basic needs: access to bathrooms, handwashing stations, hygiene supplies and meals/food. The program is more than just a safe place to park; participants meet regularly with case managers to develop an action plan with an emphasis on finding stable housing solutions, which could include additional supports like benefits assistance, career coaching, financial literacy, parenting classes, and children’s services.

If approved, the Encinitas Safe Parking Lot will accommodate no more than 25 vehicles and will include on-site services through case managers and an overnight security guard present at all hours of program operation. The Safe Parking Program shall operate daily from 6:00 p.m. through 7:00 a.m. Security will be present during the operating hours of the program. Staff is required to be on-site between the hours of 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and be available outside of these hours, as needed. Participants are vetted off-site prior to being allowed entry into the program.

#2 Q: Who are the people in the Safe Parking Program?

A: The people we assist are often experiencing homelessness for the first time, including: veterans, older adults (over the age of 55), college students, and families with young children. Most people in the Safe Parking Program have a source of income, have a job or are looking for work, and just need a little assistance to get themselves and their family back on their feet and into a home. The program does not cater to the chronic homeless population or those who cannot be around others safely due to severe mental illness or addiction. It is designed to interrupt the downward spiral of homelessness for individuals and families who are working hard to return to living in a place of their own. The majority of our clients struggle with housing affordability, often due to the loss of a job, medical hardship, reduction in work hours, or any other unexpected financial challenge.

Examples of the people who have benefited from Safe Parking Program lots, like the one proposed, include:

- Community college students trying to make ends meet, while prioritizing their education.
- Families who have fallen on hard times due to an unanticipated medical bill and needs to get connected to resources.
- Recently transitioned veterans who are struggling to navigate their next steps and find a new job.

#3 Q: Will a Safe Parking lot in Encinitas bring more homeless people to this area?

A: Through our current work, we know that families and individuals in the Safe Parking Program do not have the income to support a long daily commute. This means people stay near their places of employment and school. There is no data, evidence or reason to believe that a Safe Parking lot will increase the homeless population in Encinitas. In fact, we expect to alleviate the homeless population in the area, serving existing Encinitas individuals and families who currently live in their car or in other situations without permanent housing.

With only 25 available spaces, the Encinitas lot will prioritize and focus on vulnerable families, veterans, older adults and college students who are currently living in their vehicles within Encinitas and North County. JFS case managers will work with staff at the City of Encinitas, the Sheriff’s Department, Community Resource Center, Mira Costa College, Encinitas Union and San Dieguito School Districts, as well as members of the community, to connect with those constituents currently living in vehicles.

Safe Parking Program Proposed Encinitas Lot FAQ

#4 Q: Where will the Encinitas lot be located?

A: The proposed location is Leichtag Commons. Leichtag Commons is a 67.5-acre property in Encinitas. The 25-space lot area will be situated within the interior of property, distanced from the street.



#5 Q: How many cars will the Safe Parking Program lot proposed in Encinitas serve?

A: A *maximum* of 25 vehicles/households will be served at any one time in the Safe Parking lot proposed in Encinitas. When participants exit the program, we enroll a new eligible, vetted individual/household into the open space. No RVs, Motorcycles or camper style vehicles will be allowed. Each vehicle must have enough seatbelts to safely transport all people who will be sleeping in the vehicle. In the last year, in other lots, there was an average of two people per vehicle.

#6 Q: Why does Encinitas need a Safe Parking Program lot?

A: The 2018 San Diego Regional Task Force on the Homeless Point-in-Time Count identified 1,975 individuals experiencing homelessness in North County – of which, 354 are living out of their vehicles, *including 51 in Encinitas*. The actual numbers are suspected to be much higher.

On October 17, 2018, following the lead of the state and the City of San Diego as well as others, a *Shelter Crisis* was declared by the City of Encinitas. Subsequently, on November 20, 2019, the City Council approved the drafting of agreements and negotiation of terms to establish a Safe Parking Lot in Encinitas. These agreements and a final program plan will be presented to the City Council in open session at the January 22, 2020 City Council meeting.

Safe Parking Program Proposed Encinitas Lot FAQ



#7 Q: Why is Jewish Family Service being considered to operate this safe parking lot?

A: JFS is an experienced Safe Parking Program provider and currently operates three safe parking lots within the City of San Diego. In June of 2019, Jewish Family Service received a \$256,000 grant through the California Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) to open a Safe Parking Program lot in North County. JFS approached the City of Encinitas to consider partnership for operating the program. On November 20, 2019 at the City Council meeting, the City of Encinitas voted 4-1 for City staff to begin drafting agreements for a Safe Parking Program at Leichtag Commons.

Following the last City Council meeting, JFS, the City of Encinitas and Leichtag Foundation agreed that additional time was needed to finalize agreements and program details. To that end, the Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH) approved a one-month extension to implementation of the grant from December 31, 2019 to January 31, 2020.

While JFS now has approval from the RTFH to launch Safe Parking Program operations no later than the end of January 2020, there is still an urgency, first and foremost for the people who are currently sleeping in their cars, but also so that we do not risk forfeiting the funds and risk future State support for critical homeless services in the North County region.

#8 Q: Is there a budget or breakdown for the grant?

A: Yes, below is a budget for the first year of the program development and actual operation projected at January 30, 2020 – May 31, 2020. The budget below includes HEAP funding and additional funding raised by JFS to support clients getting into housing as quickly as possible. If approved to continue, the second year of the program would be June 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021 and would require additional fund, beyond the HEAP funding to be raised by JFS to cover the increased security costs.

Expenses – Year 1: June 1, 2019 – May 31, 2020	JFS - HEAP
Direct Service Staff, Case Managers and Program Supervisor	\$83,373
Program Development and Administrative staff	\$35,100
Benefits	\$39,908
Personnel Subtotal	\$158,381
Program Operations, includes (cleaning, office supplies and operational costs)	\$18,382
Insurance	\$3,500
Security	\$38,640*
<i>* If program approved to continue, annual security costs in year 2 will be: \$123,032</i>	
Computer and Other Equipment	\$9,750
Telephone, Fax, Internet	\$2,808
Travel/Mileage	\$1,200
Program Delivery Supplies	\$4,500
Client Financial Assistance – Client Flex Funds (Security Deposits & Rent)	\$35,000*
<i>*\$30,000 funded by Coastal Community Foundation</i>	
Staff Development and Training	\$2,000
Operating Expenses	\$85,780
Indirect Costs (Maximum of 5%)	\$12,208
Total	\$ 286,369

Safe Parking Program Proposed Encinitas Lot FAQ



#9 Q: Is the City of Encinitas or the Leichtag Foundation paying for this program?

A: No. The Safe Parking Program lot will operate at **no cost** to the City of Encinitas, the Leichtag Foundation, Encinitas residents and program participants. HEAP funding was awarded to Jewish Family Service, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Through this State funding and additional private philanthropy, JFS will cover all expenses to operate the program. The Leichtag Foundation has offered to lease a 25-space portion of a parking lot at Leichtag Commons to the City of Encinitas for \$1 and, in turn, JFS will lease that section of property from the City of Encinitas for \$1.

#10 Q: Why is a lease arrangement needed? Why can't Leichtag just provide the space directly to JFS?

A: The proposed lease agreement between the City and Leichtag is required in order for the parking lot to qualify as a "public facility" under the State Shelter Crisis Law (Govt. Code Sect. 8698-8698.2). As a "public facility", under the Shelter Crisis Law a local jurisdiction may allow persons unable to obtain housing to occupy designated public facilities during a state of emergency. On October 17, 2018, the Encinitas City Council adopted Resolution 2018-85 to declare a shelter crisis in Encinitas.

#11 Q: Isn't Leichtag Commons in the agricultural zone?

A: The Leichtag Commons is located within the Encinitas Ranch Specific Plan area and is zoned for agricultural use. However, if the City determines that it is in the public's interest, pursuant to its police powers and under the authority of the Shelter Crisis Law, the City may suspend regulations to the extent the regulations would in any way prevent, hinder or delay efforts to mitigate the effects of the Shelter Crisis.

Program Enrollment and Services:

#12 Q: How are participants screened for enrollment into the Safe Parking Program?

A: Individuals and families living in their vehicles call our Safe Parking Program phone line (858-637-3373) or inquire via the [JFS website](http://jfssd.org) (jfssd.org) to learn about the program. JFS case managers meet with clients individually offsite and screen for eligibility in advance of any entry to the lot, informing those interested that they must have a working vehicle, must follow the [Program Guidelines](#), and will be required to meet regularly with a case manager and housing specialist to create a plan to achieve more permanent housing. All adults are run through the Megan's Law database and the National Sex Offender Registry. They are also asked if they have been convicted of a violent crime which disqualifies them for enrollment. Once deemed eligible, participants are scheduled to meet with a case manager in person to complete the official intake paperwork, provide picture IDs, and sign the Safe Parking Program Guidelines. Participants must go through this assessment before being allowed entry to the lot.

#12 Q: Are there restrictions on drug and alcohol use?

A: Drug and alcohol use is not permitted in the Safe Parking Program. While HEAP funding prohibits drug testing, Safe Parking case managers and security closely monitor participants' behavior and the physical lot for any signs of alcohol or drug use. Illegal drug use will result in immediate disqualification from the program and a call by the onsite security to the Sheriff.

#14 Q: What happens if someone who is not enrolled in Safe Parking shows up and wants to park?

A: Trained security personnel will always manage entry at the gate to ensure only pre-enrolled Safe Parking participants enter the lot only during the allowed entry hours. Security will be on-site during operating hours for the entire length of the program at Leichtag Commons. For anyone expressing interest in enrollment, security will direct them to call our Safe Parking Program phone line so that they can speak to a case manager who will assess their eligibility for future enrollment. Anyone who is turned away at the gate will be advised they may not park in the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Safe Parking Program Proposed Encinitas Lot FAQ



#15 Q: Is there a time limit for participants in the program?

A: The goal of the program is to help participants find housing that they can manage within their income. There are no minimum or maximum time limits to enrollment. Case managers review attendance regularly to ensure active individuals/households maintain their space in the program, while reopening spaces of anyone not actively utilizing services. Participants who are continuing to meet with JFS case managers are welcome to stay in the Safe Parking Program, which provides a safe environment as they make progress on their plan to achieve more stable housing.

#16 Q: Do participants pay to park?

A: No, there is no fee to park nightly. Safe Parking is a *free* service for eligible, enrolled participants who agree to actively seek more stable housing.

Safety & Security:

#17 Q: How can you ensure community safety?

A: There will be onsite security guards during all program hours from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. for the duration of the program under this grant. Security will manage entry of pre-enrolled participants, closely monitor the lot overnight, and ensure everyone exits in the morning. While participants may leave at any time, the gate will be closed, and no entry or re-entry will be permitted after 9:30 p.m. Additionally, we are working closely with law enforcement on all aspects of the program. The Sheriff is committed to working with onsite security and program operators to ensure community safety. Leichtag Commons is fully gated with existing entry access control. There are closed circuit TV security cameras throughout the property monitored by the onsite security including cameras on the Safe Parking Program lot. Law enforcement will also have access to the camera footage.

#18 Q: Who maintains insurance and liability for the proposed site?

A: Jewish Family Service agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City of Encinitas, the Leichtag Foundation, LF Encinitas LLC and all subsidiaries from and against claims, demands, losses, defense costs, or liability of any kind connected to the Safe Parking Program, including but not limited to their use of the property and operation of the program.

#19 Q: Where do Safe Parking participants go during the day?

A: During the day, many participants work or attend school. Others will be connecting with additional local organizations to which they have been referred by our case managers and housing specialists. All participants will leave the Safe Parking lot by 7:00 a.m. and will be advised they may not park in the adjacent residential neighborhoods during the day.

Program Review:

#20 Q: What are the current outcomes of the Safe Parking Program?

A: In JFS's current Safe Parking Program lots, we have verified that 42% of clients move into housing. Many of the remainder move on to similar circumstances, although we are not informed directly, so we are unable to track and verify for data reporting purposes. Over 99% of people exited the current JFS programs/lots without incident. In the past year, less than 1% were exited from the program by our staff for poor behavior or not following Program Guidelines.

#21 Q: What data and information will be tracked?

A: JFS will report the following measures to the City on a monthly basis. After the first three months, JFS will report the results to City Council.

1. Zip code of enrolled participants (the number/% of Encinitas residents, the number/% of North County residents, #/% other)
2. Demographics of enrolled participants (including first time homeless, college students, veterans, families with children, and older adults as prioritized demographics)

Safe Parking Program Proposed Encinitas Lot FAQ



3. #/% of exits that are involuntary (track reasons why participants were exited and average number of days in the program)
4. #/% of exits that are voluntary (track reasons why participants exited the program and average number of days in the program) with a goal of at least 30% of enrolled participants will exit to more stable housing (e.g., apartment/home, reunification with family, permanent supportive housing, veteran housing, roommate)

The City, with the assistance of the San Diego Sheriff's Department, will track for the geographic area bound by Leucadia, Blvd. to the North, I-5 to the West, Encinitas Blvd. to the South, and an edge about 1 mile from Leichtag Commons to the East (around Via Cantabria), on a monthly basis:

1. Calls for service (total number and number that generate a criminal case)
2. Crimes (type and number)

#22 Q: How long will the program run?

A: HEAP funding is available through May 31, 2021. The program will operate initially with evaluation after 3 months, and possible extension in 4 month increments for another 12 months.