



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area**

September 22, 2019

Mayor Matichak and Members of the City Council
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

Re: Council Meeting Sept. 24th – Agenda Item # 7.2 Safe Parking Ordinance and Emergency Shelters

The LWV from the national organization to the local level strongly supports providing a decent home and suitable living environment for every American family. Clearly, in the present environment in the Bay Area this is an impossible goal. We cannot keep up with the demand for affordable housing in our region. The LWV also supports programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and homelessness and to provide essential support services.

Based upon these principles, we urge the Council to continue with safe parking supportive services, expand safe parking sites and streamline the process to encourage more participation in the program. Most of the people living in their vehicles would not choose to do so if affordable housing were available to them or even if there were sufficient shelter beds available.

We agree with the concerns expressed by the EPC regarding the proposed zoning amendments. We think that it shouldn't take a year to determine whether lot capacity expansion of over 30 vehicles is feasible; perhaps 3 months should be sufficient. Also, the limit of 30 vehicles seems arbitrary, not necessarily based upon the capacity of the safe parking lots.

We are very concerned with the 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. restriction and encourage the City to allow 24/7 operations wherever feasible. This could be determined on a lot-by-lot basis, rather than dictated by this ordinance. This time restraint is particularly difficult for vehicle dwellers who work evening hours. Additionally, requiring vehicles to be moved twice each day adds to traffic and greenhouse gas emissions.

We share the EPC's concern that electricity might be needed by vehicle dwellers. We believe generators, for example, should be allowed consistent with noise allowances for homeowners and apartment residents as battery-driven electricity can't cover the hours needed for doing homework, etc. This is another issue that could be decided on a lot-by-lot basis.

We also support incentives for private property owners who might be willing to allow their lots to be used for safe parking. We hope the City will support a task force to investigate the possibility of adding more private lots.

Finally, we support increasing the capacity of emergency shelters.

Donna Yobs
Co-Chair, Housing Committee, LWV of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area

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