

The City of Seattle

Resolution _____

..title

A resolution relating to persons living in vehicles and establishing the Vehicle Resident Assistance Program; accompanying legislation to provide a structured pathway to shelter.

..body

Recitals:

The City of Seattle (City) is committed to creating a comprehensive strategy to help people living in their vehicles enter permanent housing.

Today there are no shelters or safe lots available in Seattle that are tailored for people who live in their vehicles, which means that the City does not have any place for people who live in their vehicles to come inside.

The City must provide a safe place that meets the needs of people who live in their vehicles in order to allow them to come inside.

The needs of vehicle residents are different than the needs of people experiencing other types of homelessness. These needs are not being adequately met by the City today, and that has hindered the City's progress to improve the lives of people living in their vehicles and create pathways to permanent housing.

For some who have fallen on hard times, their vehicle is their last possession after losing housing. Beyond needing different types of assistance such as minor vehicle repairs, fuel, and registering their vehicles, people who live in their vehicles also have the needs of everyone experiencing homelessness, including

shelter, clean water, food, warmth or cooling, and a place to use the restroom and shower.

The distinct differences between vehicle residency and other types of homelessness is why solutions to other types of unsheltered homelessness do not directly transfer to addressing vehicle residency.

The City currently has no City team to help people in their vehicles and offers few services specifically designed to assist people who live in their vehicles. It does not directly employ any outreach teams tailored to assist people living in their vehicles, besides the Seattle Public Utilities Pilot Vehicle Team and its RV Wastewater Collection program, which is tasked with removing sewage.

The only outreach resources designed for vehicle residency the City provides is contracted through the Salvation Army and the Vehicle Residency Outreach Program, which is a fiscally-sponsored organization that works out of the University Heights Center and retains around two-thirds of the City's contracts to address vehicle residency.

The City of Seattle needs to right-size its investment in helping people who live in their vehicles, create a City Vehicle Team, and expand city teams and contracts to better meet the needs of vehicle residents, better regulate motorhomes and travel trailers, and establish clear and accessible pathways for people living in their vehicles to enter shelter and housing.

When people exit shelter storage or a safe lot, they should receive an offer to have their vehicle purchased. The new Shelter Storage program should mirror safe lot policies on how vehicles exiting storage are purchased.

The Vehicle Resident Assistance Program provides new and expanded resources for people living in their vehicles. It expands shelter access with the new Shelter Storage program, funds new safe lots, expands invests more in outreach and support, creates a City team to work with our contracted outreach partners to bring people inside, and these resources are available to anyone no matter the type of vehicle, it also establishes a strategy to ensure people living in motor homes and travel trailers are on a pathway to housing and shelter. It creates a new Vehicle Resident Assistance Permit which allows permit holders to park lived-in motor homes and travel trailers to on City of Seattle streets, so long as they remain engaged with caseworks , follow existing parking and criminal laws, and follow basic rules detailed by the permit. Therefore,

Be it resolved by the City Council of The City of Seattle:

Section 1. The City Council desires to assist people who are living in their vehicles transition into shelter and housing. To achieve this goal, the City Council is considering a package of legislation. The Vehicle Resident Assistance Program includes:

A. Authorizing 2026 appropriations for departments to begin implementing the Vehicle Resident Assistance Program, including but not limited to additional safe lots, shelter storage, and increasing City outreach and contracted outreach to reduce caseloads and assist people living in their vehicle meeting the standards outlined in the Vehicle Resident Assistance Program.

B. Authorizing recreational vehicle storage in the Land Use Code so that vehicle storage can be provided to individuals who are transitioning into shelter or housing as a permitted land use.

C. Authorizing a Vehicle Resident Assistance Permit program that allows the Seattle Department of Transportation, in consultation with the Human Services Department, to allow people living in motor homes and travel trailers to continue parking on city streets while waiting for entry into shelter and housing transition programs.

D. Granting the Facilities and Administrative Services Director increased authority to execute leases to provide for vehicle storage and meet the needs of the Vehicle Resident Assistance Program.

E. Clarifying the definition of junk vehicles in the Traffic Code to assist with enforcement and implementation of the Vehicle Resident Assistance Permit program.

F. Beginning to enforce these programs at the same pace as people's ability to receive an assistance permit, with full enforcement of the legislation only beginning after adequate time is provided for registration.

G. Removing ecoblocks currently placed on City right-of-way within six months of full implementation of the Vehicle Resident Assistance Program.

LEG Vehicle Resident Assistance RES
Calvin Chow
D2a

Adopted by the City Council and signed in open session in authentication of its
adoption on _____.

President _____ of the City Council

Attested on _____.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

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Summary and Fiscal Note

1. Legislation Summary

Department:

Legislative Department

Title:

A resolution relating to persons living in vehicles and establishing the Vehicle Resident Assistance Program; accompanying legislation to provide a structured pathway to shelter.

Background:

This resolution describes a package of legislation intended to support persons living in vehicles by providing a structured pathway to shelter. This legislative package includes:

- A. Creating a new Vehicle Resident Assistance Permit program to allow people to live in mobile homes or travel trailers while engaging with the City's outreach efforts to transition to shelter. Consistent with current parking policy, permitted vehicles would be restricted to a maximum of seventy-two (72) hours in one place (or as signed), and would be restricted to parking in Industrial Zones during the hours of Midnight to 6:00 A.M.
- B. Authorizing recreational vehicle storage as an explicit, allowable use in the Land Use Code. Outreach and transition programs to persons living in vehicles may be more effective if vehicle storage is made available.

- C. Authorizing the Facilities and Administrative Services Director to execute leases to provide for vehicle storage. Outreach and transition programs to persons living in vehicles may be more effective if vehicle storage is made available.
- D. Clarifying the junk vehicle provisions in the Traffic Code to assist with enforcement and implementation of the Vehicle Resident Assistance Permit program.
- E. Authorizing 2026 appropriations for departments to begin implementing the Vehicle Resident Assistance Permit program and outreach engagement. Future appropriations would need to be identified in future budgets.

Summary Attachments:

None.

2. Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project?

☐ Yes

☒ No

a. CIP Project Name:

b. Master Project ID:

c. Project Location:

d. Start Date:

e. End Date:

f. Total Project Cost Through 2030:

3. Summary of Financial Implications

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City?

☐ Yes

☒ No

This resolution does not have financial impacts, but it describes a package of legislative proposals that will have financial impacts. Please see the Summary and Fiscal Notes for the referenced legislation for more details.

4. Other Impacts

a. Does this legislation require a public hearing?

☐ Yes

☒ No

b. Does this legislation require a notice to be published in The Daily Journal of Commerce and/or The Seattle Times?

☐ Yes

☒ No

c. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No.

d. Race and Social Justice Initiative impacts:

1. How does this legislation affect vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you come to this conclusion? Please consider both impacts within City government (like employees and internal programs) and in the broader community.

This resolution describes a package of legislation intended to support the City's outreach efforts to engage persons living in vehicles. Please see the Summary and Fiscal Notes for the referenced legislation for more details.

2. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses used to develop or assess this legislation.

No Racial Equity Toolkit has been developed.

3. What is the Language Access Plan for communicating with the public about this legislation?

No Language Access Plan has been developed for this legislation

e. Climate change impacts:

1. Emissions: Will this legislation significantly increase or decrease carbon emissions? Attach any studies or materials that inform your answer.

This legislation does not meaningfully impact carbon emissions.

2. Resiliency: Will this legislation make Seattle more or less able to adapt to climate change? If it reduces resiliency, explain what can be done to lessen the impact.

This legislation does not meaningfully impact climate resiliency.

f. If this legislation creates a new program or expands an existing one, what are the long-term, measurable goals? How will this legislation help achieve those goals? What methods will be used to track progress?

The package of legislation described in this legislation is intended to support programs to engage persons currently living in vehicles. The impact of this legislation would be measured by the number of persons working with the City's outreach team and accessing shelter.

g. Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP that involves shared funding with a non-City partner or organization?

No.