Creating A Safe RV Pilot Program

Last year, according to information gathered in the 2019 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, over 16,500 residents of Los Angeles County were using vehicles, including cars, vans, and Recreational Vehicles (RVs), as their homes. Over the past three years, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) has taken a number of actions to address the needs of people experiencing this kind of homelessness through the creation and expansion of Safe Parking Programs. Traditional Safe Parking Programs provide people living in their vehicles with a safe environment in which to rest, access resources, and work towards stabilization. This is done, in part, by providing a safe parking environment for overnight stays, as well as social services to support transitioning into permanent housing. In 2018, the Board voted to create a pilot Safe Parking Program at two existing County-owned parking lots, and in 2019, the Board invested funding to expand the program Countywide.

These Safe Parking Programs play a pivotal role in addressing the needs of people experiencing vehicular homelessness, but, so far, they have primarily focused on people living in cars. The data indicates that over fifty percent of those experiencing
vehicular homelessness in the County actually live in RVs, and these residents have unique and different needs than those living in cars, which precludes them from accessing traditional Safe Parking Programs. Many RVs are too large for the parking spaces available in Safe Parking Programs, and/or are unable to move multiple times a day due to high fuel costs and mechanical barriers. To date, there have been no Safe Parking lots opened that meet their specific needs. To meet the varied needs of individuals living in all types of vehicles, it is important that the County explore the feasibility of opening a Safe RV Parking Pilot Program.

An underutilized lot at 15380 Oxnard Street in the City of Los Angeles has been identified as a potential location for such a pilot program through a partnership between the City of Los Angeles, the Federal Government, and the County. The proposed vacant lot is owned by the Army Corps of Engineers, operated by the City of Los Angeles’ Department of Recreation and Parks and could operate 24-hours a day. Parking lots that can accommodate vehicles 24-hours a day are a better option for people living in RVs.

The Board has previously allocated Measure H to fund both Interim Housing and Safe Parking programs. Given the significant percentage of County residents living in RVs, it is appropriate that the Board explore the feasibility of creating a Safe Parking Program that meets the needs of this population. Lessons learned from this pilot program could be extremely helpful for understanding how to meet the needs of people living in RVs across the County.

I, THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to report back in 30 days on a potential funding source for the
predevelopment, capital, and 1-year operating costs of a Safe RV Pilot Program at 15380 Oxnard Street.

S:MR/CreatingASafeRV PilotProgram