

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Homeless Car Camping

Meeting Date: June 13, 2011
Department: Planning & Development
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: B
Staff Contact: Michael Wisth
Contact Telephone Number: 682-5540

ISSUE STATEMENT

Since 1998, the City of Eugene has administered the Homeless Car Camping program to manage public and private car camping sites, as well as assist in the enforcement of prohibited on-street overnight parking. The purpose of this work session is to provide City Council with an update of the Homeless Car Camping program and to address any questions related to the program.

BACKGROUND

In 1998, the Eugene City Council adopted an ordinance allowing off-street overnight camping on managed sites around the city. Following this, the Homeless Car Camping program was developed to aid in management of car camping throughout the City. Eugene City Code 4.816 allows off-street overnight camping if certain criteria are met. These criteria include:

- With permission of the property owner, persons may sleep overnight in a vehicle, camper or trailer in a non-residential parking lot on which a parking lot and occupied structure are located. Non-residential sites may host up to three vehicles.
- With permission of the property owner, persons may sleep in the backyard of a single family residence in a residential zoning district. Not more than one family is allowed in any backyard.
- Property owners who allow a person to sleep overnight must provide or make available garbage disposal and sanitary facilities.

To manage the overnight car camping allowed under Eugene Code, the Homeless Car Camping Program was developed. In addition to the management of camping sites, the program assists in the enforcement of regulations prohibiting on-street overnight parking. The program, managed by Community Development, works with numerous City departments to address the issues raised both by legal and illegal overnight car camping. The program has two main elements:

- Management of public and private overnight parking sites
- Enforcement of on-street camping regulations.

The City contracts with St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) to manage much of the daily operations of this program, particularly the management of existing car camping sites, responding to on-street camping complaints, and outreach to potential hosts of car camping spaces. The FY11 budget includes \$89,000 for these services. Attachment A displays the budget for the program.

Management of public and private overnight parking sites

The Homeless Camping Coordinator at SVDP manages the waiting list and placement of eligible persons for identified sites, arranges for sanitary and trash pick-up and actively monitors conditions at the managed sites. The coordinator also serves as a liaison to service providers such as SVDP's Eugene Service Stations and First Place Day Center to further assist car camping clients. Further, as time and funding permit, the program is marketed to property owners who may wish to host a car camper.

The number of available sites tends to fluctuate throughout the years. Some sites are seasonal while others are gained or lost to development or property owner choice. At present, the program manages 26 permitted sites, with these sites accommodating between one and three vehicles each. These sites currently serve 53 people; the waiting list stands at 83 requests. Attachment B displays the locations of sites throughout the City.

Enforcement of on-street camping regulations

On-street camping regulations are enforced in response to complaints. Calls from residents concerned about illegal on-street camping are fielded by many departments throughout the city. For non-emergency situations, residents are encouraged to call the non-emergency number of the Eugene Police Department. Since 2006, the following protocol has been in place to deal with camping-related complaints:

- Calls are screened for criminal or safety issues.
- If there are no criminal or safety issues, calls are entered into the "Camping Log." The caller is provided with the incident number for reference.
- A log of illegal camping complaints is forwarded to the SVDP Homeless Camping Coordinator as complaints are received. Once the coordinator has made contact with the campers, a 24-hour notice to move is initiated. At this time, the coordinator also performs outreach to the campers to inform them of available resources related to their needs.
- Campers who do not leave following the 24-hour notice or have moved but continue to illegally camp in other places around the city are reported to the Eugene Police Department (EPD) as *willful violators*. A *willful violator* vehicle may be towed and the camper may be ticketed by EPD.

Police response to car-camping complaints is prioritized below violent or in-progress criminal activity. The department has identified officers who will specialize in these calls so that response can be standardized and *willful violators* more quickly identified. The department has determined that there is too much risk involved in this type of complaint to assign civilian employees such as Community Service Officers or volunteers to respond to calls regarding *willful violators*.

The number of complaints remained relatively consistent between 2005 and 2010. There has been a significant increase in the number of calls in the first quarter of 2011, January through March, in comparison to the first quarter of 2010, as shown in Attachment C.

Internal coordination

Community Development convenes a monthly meeting to improve coordination between City departments and St. Vincent de Paul for issues related to legal and illegal car camping. The meetings include St. Vincent de Paul staff and City staff from the following departments:

- Planning and Development (Community Development, Zoning and Nuisance, Parking Services)
- Eugene Police (Communications Center, Patrol)
- Central Services (City Manager's Office -- Neighborhood Services, Public Service Officer, Equity & Human Rights)
- Public Works (Maintenance)

The purpose of these meetings is to develop policy and procedures to best manage ongoing issues related to car camping such as complaints, interdepartmental communication and opportunities to improve existing protocol. These meetings also serve to develop responses to specific community concerns regarding homeless car camping issues, especially related to signage and enforcement issues.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

This is an information item; no recommendation is necessary.

SUGGESTED MOTION

This is an information item; no motion is required.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Overnight Parking Program Budget
- B. Map of Overnight Parking Sites
- C. Illegal Car Camping Complaints by Quarter

FOR MORE INFORMATION

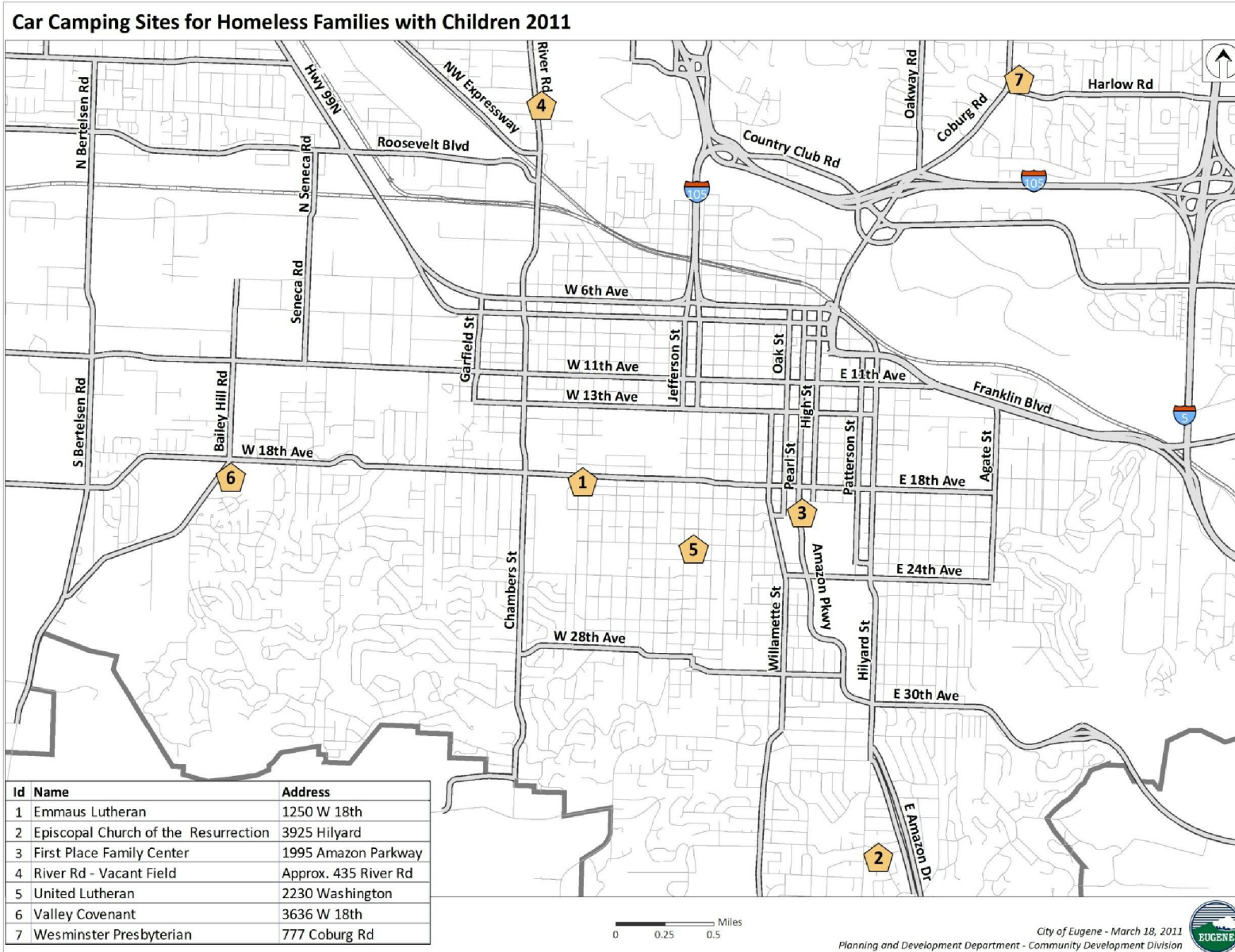
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**Overnight Parking Program Budget
FY 2010-2011**

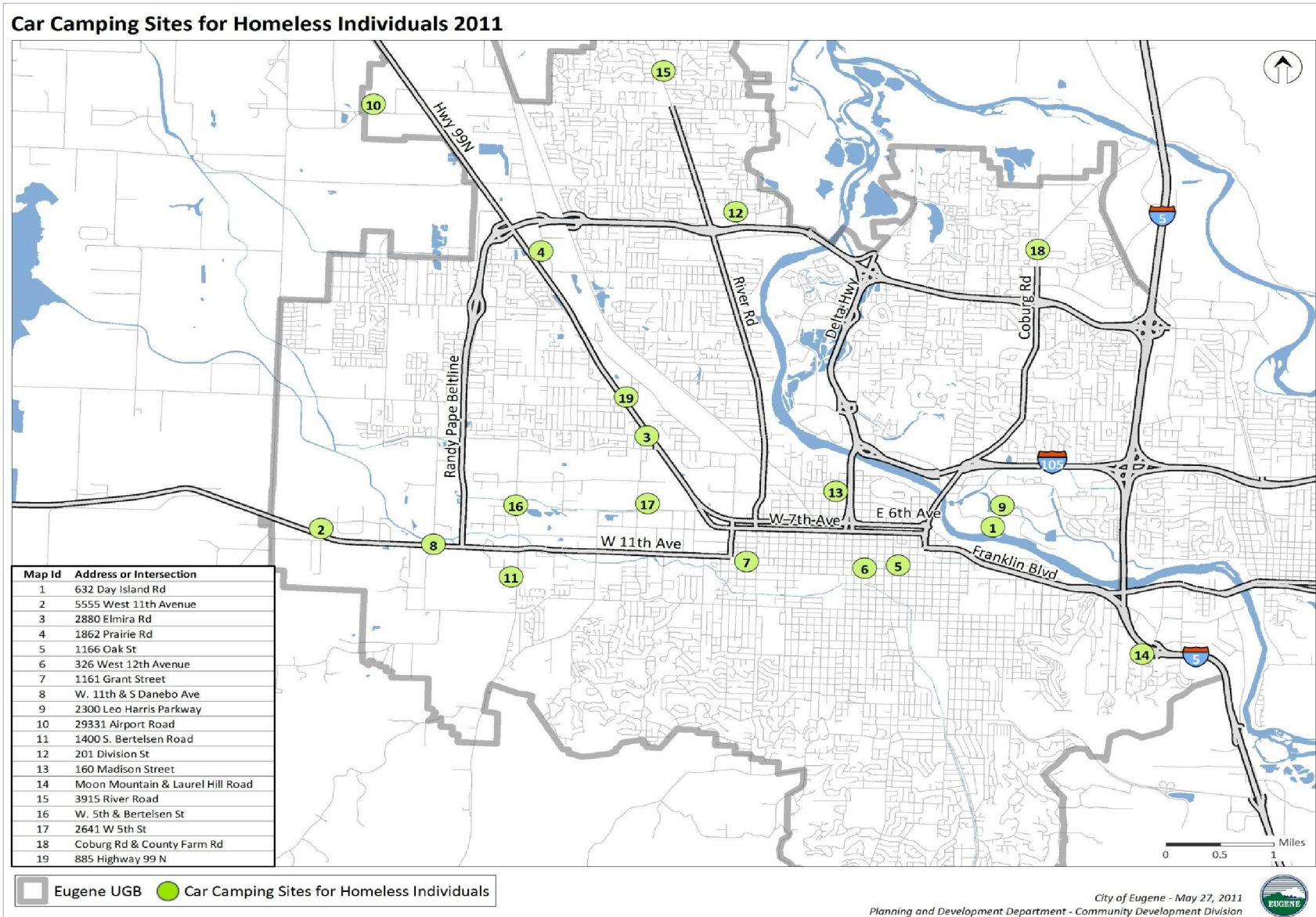
		Source of Funds	
		City	SVDP
Expenses	Budget		
Program Coordinator			
1 FTE @ \$16/hr	\$ 33,280.00	\$ 33,280.00	
Fringe @ 24%	\$ 7,987.00	\$ 7,987.00	
Portable Toilets	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 24,000.00	
Sanipac/Lane Co Dump	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	
Telecommunications	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00	
Mileage/Transportation	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	
Supplies	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	
Equipment/Repairs	\$ 700.00	\$ 700.00	
Towing	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	
Photocopies/Printing	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	
Insurance	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	
Administration	\$ 7,200.00	\$ 4,533.00	\$ 2,667.00
Totals	\$ 92,067.00	\$ 89,000.00	\$ 2,667.00

Map of Overnight Parking Sites



Caution: This map is based on imprecise source data, subject to change, and for general reference only.

Map of Overnight Parking Sites



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Illegal Car Camping Complaints by Quarter

