

Pilot Program: Vehicle Assistance Fund to Cover Unaffordable Vehicle Costs for People Experiencing Homelessness

July 2024

Introduction

The Financial Justice Project (FJP) in the Office of the Treasurer & Tax Collector partnered with the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), Bayview Hunter's Point Foundation (BVHPF), and Urban Alchemy to pilot a Vehicle Assistance Fund to support people living in their vehicles. The pilot program served people experiencing homelessness who reside in their vehicles at the Vehicle Triage Center (VTC) in fiscal year 2023-2024.

This report provides a summary of the pilot program's goals, design, and impact. Based on lessons learned from the pilot program, FJP provides recommendations to leverage this program concept to other populations and sites in San Francisco.

Background

San Francisco is the first city and county in the nation to launch a Financial Justice Project to assess and reform how fees and fines impact our city's low-income residents and communities of color. Fines, fees, and financial penalties can trap low-income residents in a maze of poverty and punishment and prevent people from succeeding. FJP works with community groups, city and county departments, and the courts to advance reforms that work better for people and for government. Working with partners, FJP has eliminated or adjusted dozens of fees and fines to lift a financial burden off struggling residents.

FJP has partnerships with HSH and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA) to create meaningful reforms to prevent people experiencing homelessness from losing their cars to unaffordable costs, such as towing costs, booting costs, and parking citations. People experiencing homelessness in San Francisco can receive one-time fine and fee waivers on tow, boot, and parking citation costs by working with a Coordinated Entry Access Point.

Despite these important resources, thousands of vehicles owned by people in poverty are towed each year, and many people are never able to reclaim their cars due to outstanding vehicle expenses. These expenses include an inability to pay for vehicle registration and other DMV fees, as well as smog tests and minor repairs to pass vehicle inspection for registration. Between July 2020 and March 2021, of the 1,321 total tows that typically impact people in poverty (for unpaid citations, lapsed registration, or for leaving a vehicle parked for 72 hours or more), 1,282 tows (97%) were because of expired registration.

Once a car is towed, it becomes very difficult for someone in poverty to reclaim the vehicle. Nine percent of vehicles that are towed are eventually auctioned for nonpayment of required fees. Between 2005 and 2017, 57% of the towed vehicles that

were auctioned were for expired registration. Currently, there are no City funds that can be used by residents to pay for these required vehicle expenses.

The risk of losing a vehicle is particularly acute for people who are living in their vehicle. The vehicle is often their biggest asset and source of stability. While living in a vehicle may not be a permanent housing solution, people are generally worse off when they lose their car and end up on the streets or in the shelter system. By then, their problems are more complicated and often more expensive to resolve.

Based on the 2024 Point-in-Time Count, there are approximately [1,442 people](#) in San Francisco who live in their vehicles, a 37% increase from 2022. During the Fall of 2022, FJP surveyed nearly 50 people living in their vehicles in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood to better understand the needs of this population. We found:

- 46% of people said their vehicles had been towed for registration issues.
- The majority of people surveyed identified as Black (28%) or Latino (35%).
- Over half of the respondents reported having a disability.
- The biggest challenges people faced were unpaid registration, repairs to make their vehicles operational, and outstanding parking tickets.

Pilot Program

Goals

Through a partnership between FJP, HSH, Bayview Hunter's Point Foundation (BVHPF), and Urban Alchemy, we developed a Vehicle Assistance Fund Pilot Program to help people experiencing homelessness pay for vehicle costs. The pilot program tested if the Vehicle Assistance Fund is a cost-effective, harm reduction, and tow-prevention strategy. We sought to understand whether paying for people's vehicle costs will help people:

1. Keep their largest asset and prevent them from ending up on the streets or in the shelter system;
2. Relocate their vehicles to a safe and sustainable location; and
3. Make their vehicle a more humane place to live by sealing it to keep weather and rodents out.

Funding

The pilot program was philanthropically funded with \$100,000 raised by The Financial Justice Project.

Pilot Program Site Selection

FJP and HSH worked collaboratively to determine where best to deploy the Vehicle Assistance Fund. We considered several populations to focus on, including people living in their vehicles at the Bayview Vehicle Triage Center, people living in their vehicles on the streets of San Francisco, and people who are housed but for whom losing their vehicle could tip them into homelessness.

HSH was particularly interested in deploying the funds at the Vehicle Triage Center (VTC), which is located at Candlestick Point in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood. The VTC is a safe parking site that launched in January 2022. Currently, there are 35 parking spots for people who are vehicularly housed with approximately 50-60 clients living at the site at any given time. There are future plans to expand the site's capacity. HSH provides funding for the VTC, including funding for the two community-based organizations on site: Bayview Hunter's Point Foundation and Urban Alchemy manage the site on a day-to-day basis and provide case management for clients. The lease for the VTC site was slated to end in January 2024, and HSH was concerned that vehicles would need to be towed off the site if they were inoperable. This would likely leave clients without their vehicular home if they could not afford to pay the tow fees. Given this urgency, FJP and HSH decided to begin using the funds at the VTC.

Pilot Program Guidelines

Bayview Hunter's Point Foundation was selected to implement the fund due to its presence at the Vehicle Triage Center. Together, along with HSH and Urban Alchemy, our organizations developed the following pilot program guidelines. Additionally, the working group developed forms, policies, and processes to guide implementation of the program and distribution of the funds.

Eligibility. People living at the Bayview Hunter's Point Vehicle Triage Center (VTC) were eligible for this fund. The first recipients of the fund were people that are classified under HSH's "problem-solving status," which means the first people who were assisted with vehicle expenses were those who have identified a pathway to resolve their homelessness without seeking ongoing shelter or a housing resource from the homelessness response system. For example, several people living in their RVs at the VTC wanted to repair their vehicle and get it registered so they could drive it to live with a relative in another state.

Use of Funds. Funds were used to pay for vehicle repairs to make them operational and road-ready, vehicle weatherization and rodent-proofing, DMV fees and documentation, driver's license renewals, vehicle registration, smog checks, and to pay for vehicle insurance. We set a guideline of \$3,000 per person. Higher amounts required additional review and working group agreement. We based this amount on completed financial assessments of people's needs.

Priority Clients. We prioritized individuals who had a verified destination they could safely and sustainably relocate to, such as a relative's property. These individuals often need financial assistance to pay for repairs, vehicle registration fees, other DMV fees, etc. to get their vehicle safe and operational to drive to their destination. If individuals did not have a place to move their RV to, funds were used to repair and weatherize vehicles to ensure VTC clients have a safe and dignified place to live in while they are at the VTC. Many vehicles at the VTC

are old, poorly insulated, and unsealed, which can result in rodents, rain, and cold temperatures getting in.

What Was Accomplished

The pilot program launched in the Fall of 2023. BVHPF identified a mobile mechanic who specializes in RV repairs to assess vehicles at the VTC, with client consent. The mechanic assessed 31 vehicles (out of approximately 35 vehicles on site during the duration of the pilot program). Concurrently, BVHPF conducted assessments with clients to understand if they needed financial support with vehicle registration, other DMV fees, or had outstanding tickets that added barriers to obtaining vehicle registration. BVHPF also worked with clients to determine if they had a viable relocation plan.

Based on both the mechanic's vehicle assessment and BVHPF's client assessments, the working group prioritized three clients to make operational repairs to their vehicles. In addition, BVHPF identified general contractors to weatherize and rodent-proof the RVs on site. In total, 23 vehicles were weatherized to seal them from the rain and cold weather. And 22 vehicles were rodent-proofed, in response to the needs identified in the client assessments.

Expenditure Description	Total Spent
RV Repairs & Assessment Fees	\$22,436.26
Rodent Proofing	\$42,715.50
Weatherization	\$21,999.96
DMV Expenses	\$8,085.38
Administrative Fee	\$3,750.00
Total	\$98,987.10

Lessons Learned and Challenges

Below are the key lessons learned and challenges encountered through the pilot program.

- **The clients at the VTC had specific and unique needs, which made this population particularly challenging to support with relocation and vehicle repairs.** The pilot program was aimed at supporting people with the necessary repairs needed to relocate to a safe and sustainable location. However, tying the fund to reunification or permanent housing presented a challenge for many people at the VTC to become eligible for funds. People living in their vehicles are oftentimes afraid to seek permanent housing inside and are reluctant to give up living in a vehicle that they may have grown accustomed to over many years. Several clients had viable relocation plans to stay with family elsewhere in San Francisco or in other states, but the vast majority of the VTC clients did not have

a relocation destination. The working group also explored whether moving to a local RV park would be feasible for clients. However, many RV parks in the Bay Area set guidelines on the age and condition of vehicles (not allowing older or poorly maintained vehicles) or had very high fees, making this option infeasible for clients.

- **Not all vehicles were repairable.** Based on the mechanic's assessment, there were vehicles that were beyond repair. The cost of repairs would have exceeded the cost to replace the vehicle altogether or would have drained the available funds quickly. While the majority of clients agreed to have their vehicles assessed, there were a small number of clients who declined vehicle assessments.
- **Weatherization and rodent proofing repairs were the most beneficial improvements for VTC clients.** A significant portion of the fund was spent on repairs to weatherize vehicles (e.g., seal them from rain and cold temperatures) and rodent-proofing. These repairs seemed to have the most positive impact on people living at the VTC based on BVHPF's conversations and feedback from clients, compared to repairs to getting vehicles operational and road-ready. These types of repairs improved the conditions for people at the VTC and allowed clients to live more humanely and with dignity in their vehicles.
- **The VTC lease was extended, removing a key incentive for clients to leave the VTC for a more stable housing location.** The City leases the land at the VTC from the State. At the beginning of our work together, the working group was aware that the lease for the VTC may end in January 2024. There was a fear that vehicles would need to be towed off the site if they could not be driven off and that clients would need to find a new place to live or park their vehicle. In October 2023, the lease was extended for another two years, which removed a key incentive for clients to leave the site and take advantage of the vehicle repair fund.
- **It has been challenging to find a mechanic who is mobile and willing to support this population.** BVHPF worked diligently to identify mechanics who are mobile and could come to the VTC site, willing to support people experiencing homelessness with care and compassion, and who could provide services at a reasonable rate given the funding available. There were very few mechanics identified who fit these criteria. The mechanic selected for this pilot program had limited availability to come on site making it difficult for the mechanic to assess and repair vehicles quickly.
- **Expectations about the program were misunderstood and clients asked for additional repairs and were unwilling to leave the VTC.** The working group developed procedures, policies, and forms to help ensure that clients who received vehicle repairs understood the program guidelines and would leave the site once repairs were completed. A tremendous amount of case manager time

from BVHPF was required to support clients in understanding the process. However, it has been difficult to enforce agreements that clients signed to receive repairs due to Shelter Grievance Ordinance protections. Clients have remained at the VTC after receiving repairs and have made litigious threats.

Recommendations

Given the conditions and challenges present at the VTC site, this pilot program was not able to effectively evaluate whether the funds allowed people to keep their vehicles and prevent them from ending up on the streets or in the shelter system or relocate their vehicles to a safe and sustainable location. The pilot program did find that weatherization and rodent-proofing repairs were effective in making vehicles more humane to live in and were very beneficial to clients.

FJP recommends the following over the short- and long-term:

- **Short-term recommendations (with remaining funds).** In the short term, the group agreed to shift the use of funds from individual repairs and documentation needed to get vehicles road-ready to general repairs that benefit more people (e.g., weatherization and rodent-proofing).
- **Long-term recommendations.** FJP believes that this model of repairing vehicles to help people avoid tickets and tows could be successful under certain conditions and in a way that is sustainable and scalable. However, due to the challenges listed above, we recommend that HSH explore other ways to achieve the initial goals we set out. This may include identifying populations and/or sites where the following conditions can be met:
 - Focus on people who are at greater risk for vehicle impounds and citations (i.e., people not living at a safe parking site);
 - Focus on people who have a confirmed destination to move to and people who are willing to relocate;
 - Focus on people living in vehicles being used as temporary shelter (focus on sedans vs RVs);
 - Create binding agreements for beneficiaries; and
 - Set a clearer cap on vehicle repairs and allowable expenses.

Conclusion

There is an urgent need to better support people who live in their vehicles in San Francisco. This population is most at-risk from enforcement efforts like parking tickets, towing, and booting, and we believe there are ways that the City can intervene to prevent people from potentially losing their vehicles. FJP appreciated the opportunity to develop this pilot program in partnership with HSH, BVHPF, and Urban Alchemy, and looks forward to leveraging lessons learned and recommendations from this effort in the future.

Appendix

1. Vehicle Assistance Fund Pilot Slides – January 2023
2. Vehicle Assistance Fund Kick-off Meeting Slides – August 2023
3. Vehicularly Housed English Survey – Fall 2022
4. Vehicularly Housed Spanish Survey – Fall 2022
5. Bayview Hunters Point Foundation Client Consent Documents and Funding Plan

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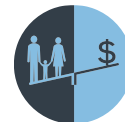
Planning Update & Proposal

Vehicle Assistance Fund Pilot Program

January 2023



DEPARTMENT OF
HOMELESSNESS AND
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING



THE FINANCIAL
JUSTICE PROJECT
S A N F R A N C I S C O

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1. The Problem and Potential Solution to Explore

The Problem

- We repeatedly hear from people whose car is about to be towed because of expired registration or they cannot retrieve their car from the tow lot because they cannot afford some expense related to their vehicle.
- Expenses include an inability to pay for vehicle registration to the DMV and other DMV fees, as well as related smog tests and minor repairs to pass vehicle inspection for registration.
- Currently, there is no fund to address these types of costs.

Potential Solution: Vehicle Assistance Fund Pilot Program

- We would like to collaborate with HSH and SFMTA to **pilot a flexible assistance fund to pay for unaffordable vehicle costs** which result in people's cars being towed and prevent them from getting their cars back.
- We believe that this **harm reduction effort would help people keep their largest asset and prevent them from ending up on the streets or in the shelter system.**

Goals & Guiding Principles

- Pilot a **Vehicle Assistance Fund to pay for unaffordable vehicle costs** which result in people's cars being towed and prevent them from getting their cars back
- Support clients find shelter inside and determine if this **harm reduction effort would help people keep their largest asset and prevent them from ending up on the streets or in the shelter system.** We first need to prevent their situation from getting worse—ending up in the streets—as a step toward helping people get housed.
- Develop a pilot that can be **implemented efficiently and effectively**
- If pilot proves effective, make the case for a **permanently supported Vehicle Assistance Fund**, if pilot proven effective

Proposed Work Plan

Milestone and Key Questions	Timeline
Set the Vision and Develop Common Goals	October
Understand the Problem <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct interviews and surveys with directly impacted people• Conduct interviews with key community groups that conduct outreach to SFMTA staff, AutoReturn, unhoused people• Landscape review of other places that have developed solutions to this problem	October-November
Develop and Shape Potential Solutions	December
Move Towards Pilot Implementation	January
Pilot Fund	January-April

2. Research and Survey Results

Understanding the Problem

- Conducted interviews and surveys with directly impacted people (completed 43 surveys with directly impacted people)
- Conducted interviews with:
 - ✓ Key community groups (e.g., Episcopal Community Services, Urban Alchemy, Coalition on Homelessness)
 - ✓ Vehicle Triage Center staff
 - ✓ SFMTA staff
 - ✓ AutoReturn
- Landscape review of other places that have developed solutions to this problem

Key Survey Takeaways

- The majority of survey respondents identified as Black or Latino/Hispanic and have disabilities
- Majority are lifetime or longtime San Francisco residents
- About half have had their car towed at least once
- 18 people at the VTC responded
- 25 people from street outreach in San Francisco responded
- The needs are greater for people on the streets than at the VTC
- Main challenges of respondents include: registration issues, repairs to make the vehicles operable, and smog test costs

VTC Survey Results: Overview

(VTC Surveys, N = 18)

- **11%** of respondents do **not** have a valid driver's license
- **72%** of respondents use their vehicle for **shelter** and **sleeping**
- **44%** of respondents reported their car being **towed** in the past
 - Of those who reported being towed, 88% were towed only once and 12% twice
 - Main reasons reported: **registration issues** and **issues with plates** or **driver's license**
 - **50%** of respondents were **not** able to get their vehicle back
- Nearly **83%** of respondents either live alone or with 1 other person

Demographics

- Majority of respondents identified as Latino (**44%**) or white (**27%**)
- **44%** of respondents reported having a disability
- Majority of respondents identified as male (**67%**)
- Majority of respondents (**56%**) are 55 or older

VTC Survey Results: Challenges and Costs

(VTC Surveys, N = 18)

- Majority of respondents reported the following as the biggest challenges they face with their vehicles:
 - Unpaid **registration** or vehicle **not registered in their name**
 - **Repairs** to make vehicles operational
 - **DMV** fees and **smog test** fees
 - **Repairs** to make the vehicles operational or safer to live in
- Respondents estimated the total cost to register and make their vehicles operational as:
 - **19%** said between **\$0 – \$999**
 - **25%** said between **\$1,000 – \$1,999**
 - **25%** said between **\$2,000 – \$2,999**
 - **31%** said between **\$3,000+**

Non VTC Survey Results: Overview

(Non VTC Surveys, N = 25)

- **60%** of respondents do **not** have a valid driver's license
- **80%** of respondents use their vehicle for **shelter** and **sleeping**
- **48%** of respondents reported their car being **towed** in the past
 - Of those who reported being towed, 25% were towed only once, 33% twice, and 42% were towed 3 or more times
 - Main reasons reported: **registration** or **plates issues**
 - **67%** of respondents were **not** able to get their vehicle back
- Nearly **64%** of respondents either live alone or with 1 other person

Demographics

- Majority of respondents identified as Black (**44%**) or Latino (**24%**)
- Majority of respondents reported having a disability (**52%**)
- Majority of respondents identified as male (**56%**)
- **68%** of respondents are between the ages of **35 – 55**
- **50%** of respondents were **lifetime SF residents**, **86%** have been living in SF **16 years or longer***

* This question was added later, 14 people responded to this question and analysis is based on those 14 responses

Survey Results: Challenges and Costs

(Non VTC surveys, N = 25)

- **57%** of vehicles are **not operational***
- Majority of respondents reported the following as the biggest challenges they face with their vehicles:
 - Unpaid **registration**
 - **Repairs** to make vehicles operational or safer to live in
 - Outstanding **parking or traffic ticket debt** in San Francisco
- Respondents estimated the total cost to register and make their vehicles operational as:
 - **38%** said between **\$0 – \$999**
 - **29%** said between **\$1,000 – \$1,999**
 - **19%** said between **\$2,000 – \$2,999**
 - **14%** said between **\$3,000+**

* This question was added to the survey later, 23 people responded to this question and analysis is based on those 23 responses

Survey Results: Vehicle Type and Registration Status

Respondents reported a **total of 63** vehicles

RV and Trailers (28 vehicles)

- **64%** are either **not registered** to their owners or have an **unknown** registration status
- **79%** have a **functional restroom**
- **43% would not keep** their vehicles if they moved into permanent housing

Passenger Cars (34 vehicles)

- **35%** are either **not registered** to their owners or have an **unknown** registration status

Interview Highlights: AutoReturn

- Main barriers to releasing vehicles for people with low incomes are due to:
 - Issues with DMV registration (either not registered in their name or lapsed registration); many people are 1-2 years behind in registration
 - Uninsured vehicles (for SF Police Department tows)
- Frontline staff are trained to notify all vehicle owners of the available tow discounts for low-income people and waivers for PEH. And have access to the Human Services Agency website to verify eligibility
- About 20% of tows are SFPD tows, according to data provided by AutoReturn, which require more stringent release authorization requirements (up to date registration and insurance) and can block people from receiving discounts
- Unhoused people may not receive mailed notification of towed vehicle – storage fees can pile up
- Suggested partnering with the DMV or DMV-certified office to help people with registration and other DMV fees; also suggested preventive measures to help people avoid towing in the first place

Highlights from interviews with key stakeholders

- There is a lot of variability amongst people living in their vehicles (age, ethnicity, #s, etc).
- People have a variety of goals (most want to get into housing, from our surveys, but some want to stay in vehicle).
- A lot of brainstorming about best way to implement a pilot program. How to shape it so that we learn what we need to learn to shape a longer-term approach that uses public funding.
- Won't just take \$ to solve the problem. A lot of people don't have valid DL, Car not registered in their name, they need registration transferred; People may need case management/other assistance to navigate DMV processes etc.

Registration Costs

Registration fees depend on:

- Vehicle type (auto, motorcycle, RV, etc.)
- Purchase price or declared value
- Purchase date or date entering California
- The unladen or declared gross vehicle weight (GVW) and the number of axles your vehicle may have
- Whether you have any unpaid parking violations or toll evasion bail
- County the car is being registered in

Range of new vehicle registration costs in San Francisco. In addition, late fees range from \$20 - \$454.

New Vehicle Registration	Fee	Use/Sales Tax*
min	\$94	\$0
max	\$343	\$2,076
average	\$237	\$1,188
Vehicle Renewal Fee:	\$65	

*Note: Use/sales taxes are due to the DMV if a car was not purchased through a licensed dealer (e.g., if it was purchased by a private third party)

3. How a Pilot Program Might Work

3 Potential Target Populations

Population	What could success look like for this population?	Potential ways to reach / serve this population
1. People living in their vehicles at the Bayview Vehicle Triage Center (~65 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are housed inside • Vehicles are more humane, comfortable, and safe for living • Ensure that vehicles are not towed when the VTC program ends • PEH have a working vehicle to get to work, appointments • PEH have a working vehicle to drive to a longer-term housing solution inside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential partnership with Episcopal Community Services and their mechanic who can assess and repair vehicles • ECS or UA could administer the Fund
2. People living in their vehicles on the streets of San Francisco (~2,000 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are housed inside • Vehicles are more humane, comfortable, and safe for living • PEH have a working vehicle to get to work, appointments • PEH have a working vehicle to drive to a longer-term housing solution inside • People have a vehicle that is registered and repaired so they can go to work, appointments without risk of being towed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) could reach people and connect them to services at Episcopal Community Services (ECS) • ECS or UA could administer the Fund
3. People who are housed but losing their vehicle could tip them into homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevents people from becoming homeless • People have a vehicle that is registered and repaired so they can go to work, appointments without risk of being towed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential partnership with SFMTA/AutoReturn who can refer people whose cars are towed and can't get them back to ECS • Potential partnership with DMV-certified offices (e.g., AAA) to help people with registration and other DMV fees

DRAFT How a Pilot Program Might Work: First Phase to Focus Vehicle Assistance to Get People a Sustainable Housing Solution

3 Potential Populations

- 1 People living at the VTC (**partner with Urban Alchemy**)
- 2 People living on the streets in their vehicles (**partner with HOT Teams**)
- 3 People whose car is towed and they can't get it back (**partner with AutoReturn**)

UA and ECS would provide case management services

UA could administer

Philanthropic Funds for DMV issues and insurance

Goal is to help people become eligible for Problem Solving Funds

ECS could administer

Problem Solving Funds for repairs, gas, RV park entry

Outcomes: People get to a sustainable housing solution

- Ensure vehicles are not towed when the VTC program ends
- People have a working vehicle to drive to a temporary or permanent housing solution
- People have a working vehicle to drive to an RV Park
- PEH have a working vehicle to get to work and stay housed

DRAFT How a Pilot Program Might Work For An Individual

Note: The breakdown below is for a hypothetical person for explanatory purposes

Item	Cost	Source of Funding
Vehicle repairs	\$5,000	Problem Solving Funds*
Registration	\$2,000 (Max)	Philanthropic Funds
Insurance	\$600 (3 months)	Philanthropic Funds
Driver's license	\$50	Philanthropic Funds
Gas	\$250	Problem Solving Funds
Costs at RV Park	\$1,000	Problem Solving Funds
Total	\$10,000 (Max per person)	

Compare to ~**\$60,000 annual cost** of someone experiencing homelessness using shelter and emergency services in the City

* Requires a waiver to up the amount of problem solving funds that could be spent

Addition: Weatherization Funds

- Given the need, we are looking to set aside an additional \$25,000 of funding for participants at the VTC to weatherize their vehicles.
- Funds would be used to “seal” vehicles and ensure rain, rodents couldn’t enter. For insulating vehicles, repairing leaks, patching up holes, etc.
- We are looking into the estimated cost of such improvements to estimate how many vehicles we can support in weatherizing

Item	Funds Available	Source of Funding
Weatherization Improvements	\$25,000	Philanthropic Funds

4. HSH Questions and Answers

HSH Questions From Last Check-in

- Is there enough demand from a potential pilot group to find a permanent housing solution NOW? How many people do we estimate are interested in finding a permanent housing solution?
 - ECS and UA think there would be a demand and news of the pilot will “spread like wildfire.”
 - ECS estimated at least 10 people at the VTC would be interested to go to an RV park. UA added that there are 6 people who use their vehicles to drive to work but desperately need repairs and may be good candidates, another 2 people are interested in family reunification.
 - UA estimated that there would also be demand from people living in their vehicles on the streets of San Francisco (at least 2 people that week that they did outreach to might be eligible / interested).
 - Both ECS and UA acknowledged that many people may not want a permanent housing solution; the majority of clients at the VTC have been unhoused for many years and going into permanent housing is intimidating.
 - UA is developing a participation plan to move more people into permanent housing; this fund could be used as an incentive.
- Can the cars actually be fixed or are they beyond repair?
 - ECS believes that the increased funding will make it feasible to repair cars, though some may be beyond repair. They have a mechanic that provides quotes for repair costs.

HSH Questions From Last Check-in

- How would we administer the fund?
 - Potential options: ECS (with Abode Services as their fiscal agent) could administer the repairs and provide case management services. UA could also provide case management services
 - ECS would need to confirm capacity of staff who currently administer Problem Solving funds
 - Potential outreach partners to people living in their vehicles in SF: HOT Team; UA; ECS
- What are the RV parking options in the Bay Area? What are the vacancy rates and costs?
 - 12 to 15 parks within a 40-mile radius of San Francisco
 - Average daily rate of \$90 and vary depending on:
 - Number of people
 - Size of RV
 - Pets
 - Desired amenities
 - Duration of stay
 - Most parks require reservations, up to date registration, and fully functional RVs (note: this may be the most challenging for people)
 - Vacancy rates are not available online, must call to determine

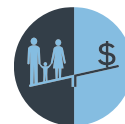
Next Steps

- Discuss potential pilot parameters with HSH
- Once finalized, work with potential partners (including ECS, UA, Hot Team) to move toward startup
- Establish clear timeline, performance measures, way to measure progress
- Establish implementation guidelines and any relevant MOUs
- Other?

Kick-off Meeting

Vehicle Assistance Fund Pilot Program

August 22, 2023



THE FINANCIAL
JUSTICE PROJECT
SAN FRANCISCO



Introductions and Overview

Purpose: Kick-off Meeting with Vehicle Assistance Fund partners

- Name
- Pronouns
- Organization
- Icebreaker: what's bringing you joy lately?

Agenda

1. Introductions and Overview
2. Recap Goals and Guiding Principles
3. Review Guest and Vehicle Assessments
4. Collectively Develop Guidelines for Funds
5. Discuss Roles and Responsibilities
6. Review Process for Administering Funds
7. Review and Discuss Potential Challenges with Administering the Funds
8. Discuss Evaluation

2. Recap Goals & Guiding Principles

- Pilot a **Vehicle Assistance Fund to pay for unaffordable vehicle costs** which result in people's cars being towed and prevent them from getting their cars back.
- Support clients find shelter inside and determine if this **harm reduction effort would help people keep their largest asset and prevent them from ending up on the streets or in the shelter system.** We first need to prevent their situation from getting worse—ending up in the streets—as a step toward helping people get housed.
- Develop a pilot that can be **implemented efficiently and effectively.**
- If the pilot proves effective, make the case for a **permanently supported Vehicle Assistance Fund.**

3. Review Guest and Vehicle Assessments

Guest assessments

- How many have been completed to date?
- How many people do we expect to benefit from this?
- Where are the guests in terms of DMV documentation?
- What themes can we understand from the list?

Vehicle assessments

- How many vehicles have been assessed to date?
- What's the average cost per vehicle?
- What are the major problems vehicles have?
- What's the total cost of repairing all the problems?

4. Collectively Develop Guidelines for Funds

What are the eligibility criteria?

- Prioritize guests with a plan to leave the VTC to find permanent housing elsewhere
- Guest vehicles that are repairable
- Guests have sufficient documentation to register their vehicles

What are allowable expenses?

- Vehicle repairs to make them operational
- Vehicle weatherization
- DMV fees and documentation (including driver's license renewals, registration, smog checks)
- Insurance
- Anything else?

What is the cap per person/vehicle?

May be determined based on assessment of all vehicle needs.

5. Discuss Roles and Responsibilities

1. BVHPF will work in collaboration with Urban Alchemy, HSH and TTX's Financial Justice Project to prepare for the launch of the Vehicle Assistance Fund pilot program:

- **Assess all clients currently residing at the VTC** to understand their housing goals, as well as the status of their driver's license, vehicle registration, smog test, insurance, other DMV fees
- **Subcontract or work with an auto mechanic to conduct assessments of vehicles** to determine cost of potential repairs.
- After examining client assessments and mechanics' assessments of vehicles, **develop criteria and allowable uses for the \$100,000 vehicle assistance fund** in collaboration with TTX's Financial Justice Project, Urban Alchemy, and HSH.
- **Identify clients** among the approximately 60 people currently at the VTC who meet eligibility criteria jointly created by BVHPF, Urban Alchemy, The Financial Justice Project, and HSH.
- As needed, **create process flow and protocols** for the program and ensure that Vehicle Triage Center clients are aware of the Fund and its eligibility guidelines
- **Create forms and other documentation** needed to implement the program

5. Discuss Roles and Responsibilities (Continued)

2. BVHPF will lead implementation of the Vehicle Assistance Fund pilot program:

- **Provide financial and other assistance to VTC clients to resolve vehicle issues** with the DMV and others, including getting driver's licenses, insurance, paying for registration, and transferring registration if the car is not registered in their name.
- **Administer funding to pay for repairs, DMV fees, and other approved expenses**
 - Provide funds to auto mechanic to repair vehicles
 - Provide funds to DMV for license and registration issues or pay for vehicle insurance
 - As possible, work in collaboration with Episcopal Community Services (ECS), if Problem Solving funds can be used

3. BVHPF will partner with Financial Justice Project, who will do a light evaluation of impact of funds and lessons learned of this approach

6. Review Process Flow for Administering Funds

Proposed Process

1. Each participating guest shall be matched with a case worker to manage their participation
2. BVHPF shall itemize all vehicle-related costs for each pilot participant
3. Determine the total amount of money required to cover all approved expenses, for each participant
4. Based on the number of participants and total cost of vehicle expenses, the group will collectively determine what limits may be necessary to maximize impact
5. What else?

7. Review and Discuss Potential Challenges with Administering the Funds

- What are challenges we expect to come up? How will we address these challenges?
- How will we communicate and collaborate with each other?
- What questions are you all getting from guests?

8. Evaluation: What do we want to test and learn from this?

- What do we want to learn from this pilot program?
- How would we explore these questions and learn? With a goal of informing a larger publicly funded solution.
- Should we have the selected pilot participants fill out surveys before they receive the funds?
- How will we stay connected to participants to do a post-pilot evaluation on the impact of the program?
- How did this program help people stabilize, move forward in their lives, and/or get housed?

Questions?

Survey About Vehicle Costs

November 2022

The San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing and The Financial Justice Project want to learn more about what vehicle costs people struggle to pay and what assistance people might need to pay for these costs. We want to see if it is possible to offer help that would prevent people's cars from being towed or getting tickets and ensures that people can keep their vehicles.

Thank you for completing this short survey! All questions are optional, and your responses will be kept anonymous.

-
1. Name: _____ (OPTIONAL)
 2. How many people live with you (not including yourself)? _____
 3. Do you have any pets that live with you? How many and what kind? _____
 4. Do you have a valid driver's license? Circle one: Yes No
 5. What types of vehicles do you own and how many do you own?

Type of Vehicle	Number You Own	Is the vehicle registered to you? (Yes/No)	Does the vehicle run?
Recreational Vehicle (RV)			
Passenger Car (e.g., sedan, van)			
Other: _____ _____			

6. If the vehicle(s) are NOT registered in your name, have you tried to register the vehicle in your name? What challenges do you face with vehicle registration?
7. If you own an RV, do you have a functional restroom inside?

Circle one: Yes No N/A

Survey About Vehicle Costs

November 2022

8. If you were to move into permanent housing, would you keep your RV?

Circle one: Yes No N/A

9. What types of challenges do you face with your vehicle(s)? Check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unpaid registration | <input type="checkbox"/> Repairs to make vehicle safer or more comfortable to live in |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle not registered in your name | <input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding parking or traffic ticket debt in San Francisco |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other DMV fees | <input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding parking or traffic ticket debt in other counties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Costs related to passing a smog test (e.g., cost of smog test itself, repairs to pass smog test) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tow costs and storage fees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repairs to make vehicle operable | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

10. What do you estimate is the total cost to register your vehicle and make it operational?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$0 - \$999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2,000 - \$2,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 - \$1,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$3,000 |

11. Have you had your vehicle towed in the past? Circle one: Yes No

If yes, how many times have you been towed? _____

If yes, what was the reason? _____

If yes, were you able to get your vehicle back? Circle one: Yes No

If yes, did you use a discount or waiver available to people with low incomes or people experiencing homelessness?

Circle one: Yes No Not aware of discounts

Survey About Vehicle Costs

November 2022

12. On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), please say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I need help paying these vehicle costs.	1	2	3	4	5
I am afraid of my car being towed for expired registration.	1	2	3	4	5
If my car was towed, I would have difficulty paying to get it back.	1	2	3	4	5

13. What do you use your vehicle for? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Shelter and sleeping
- ☐ Driving to work
- ☐ Driving to appointments
- ☐ Caregiving responsibilities (e.g., driving children to school, supporting a family member)
- ☐ Other: _____

14: Are you employed?

15: How long have you been in San Francisco?

16: The following questions are OPTIONAL so we can understand more about who is having trouble paying for these vehicle costs:

My race/ethnicity is:

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black
- ☐ Latino
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Mixed

Survey About Vehicle Costs

November 2022

☐ Decline to state

My gender is:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

Do you have any disabilities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What is your age?

- ☐ 18-25
- ☐ 26-35
- ☐ 36-45
- ☐ 46-55
- ☐ 56-65
- ☐ Over 65

17. What additional support do you need? Are there any other comments you would like to provide?

Thank you for completing this survey.

Encuesta sobre costos de vehículos

Noviembre de 2022

El Departamento para Personas sin Hogar y Viviendas de Apoyo de San Francisco y el Proyecto de Justicia Económica quieren saber más sobre los costos de vehículos para personas que tienen dificultades para pagar y qué asistencia podrían necesitar estas personas para pagar estos costos. Queremos averiguar si es posible ofrecer ayuda que evitaría que los autos de las personas sean remolcados o reciban multas y asegurarnos de que las personas conserven sus vehículos.

Gracias por responder esta breve encuesta. Todas las preguntas son opcionales y sus respuestas se mantendrán anónimas.

-
1. Nombre: _____ (OPCIONAL)
 2. ¿Cuántas personas viven con usted (aparte de usted)? _____
 3. ¿Tiene mascotas que viven con usted? ¿Cuántas y de qué tipo? _____
 4. ¿Tiene licencia de conducir que es válida? Encierre en un círculo: Sí No
 5. ¿Qué tipos de vehículos tiene y cuántos tiene?

Tipo de vehículo	Cantidad que tiene	¿El vehículo está registrado a su nombre? (Sí/No)	¿El vehículo funciona? (Sí/No)
Vehículo recreativo (RV)			
Auto de pasajeros (por ejemplo, sedán, camioneta)			
Otro: _____ _____			

6. Si los vehículos NO están registrados a su nombre, ¿ha intentado registrar el vehículo a su nombre? ¿Qué retos enfrenta para registrar el vehículo?
7. Si tiene un RV, ¿tiene un baño funcional?
Encierre en un círculo: Sí No N/C

Encuesta sobre costos de vehículos

Noviembre de 2022

8. Si fuera a mudarse a una vivienda permanente, ¿conservaría su RV?

Encierre en un círculo: Sí No N/C

9. ¿Cuales problemas tiene con su vehículos? Marque todas las opciones que correspondan.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Registro no pagado | <input type="checkbox"/> Reparaciones para que el vehículo sea más seguro o más cómodo para vivir en él |
| <input type="checkbox"/> El vehículo no está registrado a su nombre | <input type="checkbox"/> Multas de estacionamiento o de tráfico pendientes de pago en San Francisco |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Otros cargos de DMV | <input type="checkbox"/> Multas de estacionamiento o de tráfico pendientes de pago en otros condados |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Costos relacionados con pasar una prueba de smog (por ejemplo, el costo de la prueba, reparaciones para pasar una prueba de smog) | <input type="checkbox"/> Costos de remolque y cargos por almacenamiento |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reparaciones para que el vehículo sea operable | <input type="checkbox"/> Otro: _____ |

10. ¿Cuánto cree que le costaría pagar por todas estas problemas?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$0 - \$999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2,000 - \$2,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 - \$1,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Más de \$3,000 |

11. ¿Su vehículo fue remolcado en el pasado? Encierre en un círculo: Sí
No

Si respondió Sí, ¿cuántas veces ha sido remolcado? _____

Si respondió Sí, ¿cuál fue el motivo? _____

Si respondió Sí, ¿pudo recuperar su vehículo? Encierre en un círculo: Sí
No

Si respondió Sí, ¿usó un descuento o exención disponible para personas con bajos ingresos o personas sin hogar?

Encierre en un círculo: Sí No No sabía que había descuentos

Encuesta sobre costos de vehículos

Noviembre de 2022

12. En una escala de 1 (totalmente en desacuerdo) a 5 (totalmente de acuerdo), diga si está de acuerdo o no está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones:

Afirmación	Completamente en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Neutral	De acuerdo	Completamente de acuerdo
Necesito ayuda para pagar estos costos del vehículo.	1	2	3	4	5
Estoy preocupado/a que mi vehículo sea remolcado por tener el registro vencido.	1	2	3	4	5
Si mi auto fuera remolcado, tendría dificultades para pagar y recuperarlo.	1	2	3	4	5

13. ¿Para qué usa su vehículo? Marque todas las opciones que correspondan.

- ☐ Como refugio y para dormir
- ☐ Para conducir al trabajo
- ☐ Para conducir a mis citas
- ☐ Responsabilidades de cuidado (por ejemplo, llevar a los niños a la escuela, apoyar a un familiar)
- ☐ Otro: _____

14: ¿Está empleado/a?

15: ¿Cuánto tiempo has estado en san francisco?

16: Las siguientes preguntas son OPCIONALES de manera que podamos entender más sobre quién tiene problemas para pagar estos costos del vehículo:

Mi raza/etnia es:

- ☐ Blanco
- ☐ Negro
- ☐ Latino
- ☐ Asiático
- ☐ Mixto
- ☐ No deseo especificarlo

Encuesta sobre costos de vehículos

Noviembre de 2022

7 Mi género es:

- ☐ Masculino
- ☐ Femenino
- ☐ Otro

¿Tiene alguna discapacidad?

- ☐ Sí
- ☐ No

¿Cuál es su edad?

- ☐ 18-25
- ☐ 26-35
- ☐ 36-45
- ☐ 46-55
- ☐ 56-65
- ☐ Más de 65 años

15. ¿Qué tipo de apoyos adicionales necesita? ¿Tendra mas comentarios que quiere compartir?

Gracias por responder esta encuesta.



BAYVIEW HUNTERS POINT FOUNDATION
for Community Improvement

Shelter / Mobile Home Community Offer for Receiving the Vehicle Repair Funding

Today's Date: _____

Guest Name: _____

The Bayview Vehicle Triage Center site is closing in January 2024. You have been assessed as Problem Solving Status or Unknown Status, which means the city will offer you a congregate (group) shelter placement or help you transition into a mobile home community (If your RV is operable). Please indicate if you accept or refuse the shelter or mobile home community offer below.

Date of
Acceptance/Refusal: _____

I Accept Placement: ☐ Congregate Shelter Placement or will accept assistance in moving into a mobile home community – If you accept the offer of shelter or moving into a mobile home community, you will be transferred **as soon as possible** before 01/01/24.

I Refuse Placement: ☐ Congregate Shelter Placement or to receive assistance moving into a Mobile Home Community - If you refuse the offer of a shelter or mobile home community, you will be exited from The Bayview Vehicle Triage Center site on 01/01/24 or sooner.



BAYVIEW HUNTERS POINT FOUNDATION
for Community Improvement



What reason(s), if any, did the guest give to explain this refusal?

How was this notice delivered?

- ☐ Physically handed to the guest
☐ In an envelope under the guest's door
☐ In an envelope at the front desk (guest not onsite to receive)

Guest name: _____

Guest Signature: _____

Staff name: _____

Staff Signature: _____





Vehicle and RV Repair Checklist

Please check all boxes the client has completed to obtain vehicle repair funds with the assistance of their case manager.

- ☐ Resident has completed the vehicle assessment survey
- ☐ Resident has signed the repair agreement.
- ☐ Resident meets with case manager weekly.
- ☐ Resident has received a housing assessment.
- ☐ Resident has an active driver's license.
- ☐ Resident has submitted their car registration documents.
- ☐ Resident has submitted their insurance documents.
- ☐ Resident has submitted their proof of vehicle ownership.
- ☐ Resident has submitted their vehicle smog check documentation.
- ☐ The lead Mechanic has assessed the resident's vehicle

Documented BVTC exit plan with case managers

- ☐ Moving to RV park ☐ Moving with a family member ☐ Moving to an apartment ☐ Other

DMV Estimated Cost

- ☐ \$100.00-\$500.00 ☐ \$500.00-\$1000.00 ☐ \$1000.00-\$1500.00 ☐ \$1500.00-\$2000.00 ☐ \$2000.00+

Vehicle Repair Estimated Cost

- ☐ \$100.00-\$1000.00 ☐ \$1000.00-\$2000.00 ☐ \$2000.00-\$4000.00 ☐ \$4000.00-\$5000.00 ☐ \$5000.00+

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lot # _____ Phone # _____

Car Type: _____ Car Model: _____

Date of Car Estimate: _____ Date of DMV Cost Estimate: _____

Driver License#: _____ License Plate# _____

VTC GUEST VEHICLE/RV FUNDING PLAN

This Vehicle/RV funding-based **Funding Plan {FP}** is created in partnership with the program Guest and the assigned Case manager. FP's s are guest centered and must be agreed upon, by the Guest.

The Vehicle/RV Funding Plan: This is a standardized case management plan designed to assist the Guest to identify and achieve attainable vehicle/ RV registration, insurance, Vehicle/RV repairs, and relocation/ permanent housing goals. This document identifies barriers to obtaining vehicle/RV funding and gaining permanent housing and sets goals, action steps, and targeted completion dates.

Categories: **1. Vehicle/RV Diagnosis** **2. Driver/ Insurance Documentation** **3. Housing Status** **4. Housing Plan** **5. Estimated Move-Out Date**

Not all steps are required to complete and receive the Vehicle/ RV repair funding. Each Step may have additional goals. Each vehicle/RV funding plan is tailored to the individual and is used to support the Guest.

Category	Identified barrier	Goal	Action Steps	Start Date	Guest Signature and Date
1	Vehicle/RV Diagnosis List of Vehicle/RV issues Below :	Identify all issues within the Vehicle/RV.	The Guest will work with a Case Manager and the RV Mechanic to determine all Vehicle/RV-related issues		
2	Vehicle/RV official cost estimation.	Identify the total cost of the repairs needed for the vehicle/RV.	List of all cost related to the Vehicle/ RV below:		
3	Driving License Car Insurance Car/RV Title Car/RV registration	Obtain required documentation	The Guest will work with a Case Manager to obtain referrals to the DMV, AAA, and all car insurance providers to help the guest obtain insurance.		
4	Problem-solving status or housing Referral status	To determine if the client can move into permanent housing or look at alternative housing options.	Partner with Episcopal Community Services for initial housing assessment and/or assessment renewal. Work closely with a Case manager, ECS, and problem-solving staff to find the guest's preferred housing destination.		

5	Find an alternative RV housing site or a location where the Guests will relocate with their families.	Find a housing solution and the date that the Client will exit the Vehicle Triage Center (VTC).	Final address the Guest will be relocating to below:		
6	Establishing an estimated VTC exit date.	Establish an exit date for the VTC.	Estimated date of exit below:		
7	The Guest agrees on of the Vehicle/RV repairs of the total amount of:\$_____	Guest agrees that all approved repairs will be made , if funds are available and agrees to the terms of relocating once Vehicle/RV funds are complete.	Guest agrees that they have received a total of :\$_____ in vehicle/ RV repairs Given there is enough remaining funds		
8	The Guest acknowledges that all the agreed upon repairs have been complete.	To provide proof that all Vehicle/RV repairs have been made.	By signing this agreement, the guest agrees that all items listed in the mechanic report have been repaired Have been repaired		
9	Guest Move out Date Below:	To set a date that the guest will exit the VTC.	By signing this, the guest agrees that the fulfillment of the Vehicle/RV repair funding Plan has been complete, and the guest is moving out.		

The barriers, goals, and action steps were developed in partnership with my Case Manager. I understand that each barrier, goal, and action step listed above will support my efforts in obtaining Vehicle/RV Funding. I agree to work on these goals in partnership with my Case Manager and Episcopal Community Service. I will update my Care Manager as I complete the above goals and will communicate any challenges I experience.

I understand my Case Manager will offer me support as needed. Failure to work toward the attainment of these goals can result in non-obtainment of vehicle/RV Funding. **Upon receiving and completing the Vehicle/RV Funding Plan, the Guest must exit the VTC to their agreed-upon destination within the guest VTC GUEST FUNDING PLAN.**

Guest Signature

Date

Housing Case Manager Signature

Date