

Streets to Stability: Safe Rest Villages - Project summary

In April of 2021, Portland City Council unanimously passed the [Shelter to Housing Continuum](#): this ordinance changed our zoning code to allow for siting outdoor Villages, and it instructed city bureaus to identify city-owned properties that could potentially be used for outdoor shelters.

In June of 2021, City Council unanimously passed the Paving the Pathway from Streets to Stability [ordinance](#) (#190478), which codified our approach toward outdoor shelters and provided the regulatory tools we need to build six Safe Rest Villages. Safe Rest Villages will be outdoor shelters—not tents—that provide a place for Portlanders to sleep, basic and necessary hygiene, and access to case management and behavioral health services. Safe Rest Villages will provide harm reduction. With dignity, stable living, and support services, the trauma and volatility of life on the streets can be reduced, allowing for healing and stability with the goal of Villagers to enter recovery, return home and reconnect with family, or find permanent supportive housing, among other options.

These Villages will be managed by a contracted social service provider selected by the [Joint Office of Homeless Services](#).

Safe Rest Villages will serve as an improved point of entry for Portlanders on the continuum from living on the streets to finding stability in permanent housing—they may look like a safe park program for people living in RVs or tiny houses like Kenton Women's Village. All Safe Rest Villages will include wraparound services.

Safe Rest Villages are among a range of services and program models being deployed to address houselessness. And the City and Multnomah County—[through the Joint Office of Homeless Services, and with federal funding and revenue from the Metro Supportive Housing Services Measure](#)—are actively expanding that system of services, which serves tens of thousands of people every year.

Together, we are adding additional shelter capacity, including village-style and motel shelters, along with more outreach workers, more behavioral health resources, and more rental assistance resources to house people. Some of those new investments are already in place and are making a difference right now. Many more will be online in the coming weeks and months.

Safe Rest Villages – Service Priorities



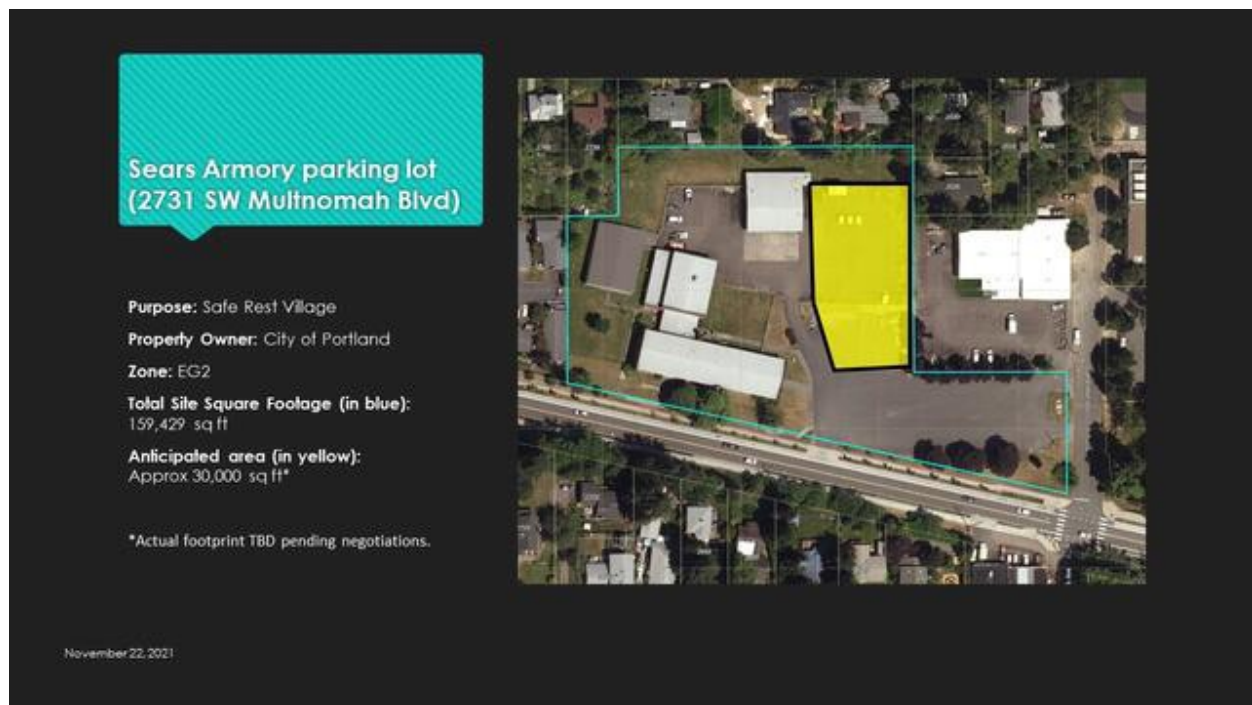
Safe Rest Villages WILL be:

- Outdoor shelters—as opposed to brick-and-mortar indoor shelters—for Portlanders experiencing houselessness that will address basic needs including hygiene services and case management.
- A positive change for both Villagers and neighbors currently experiencing unsanctioned camping and its impacts.
- Fully staffed with security fencing to protect Villagers from harassment or invasions of privacy as experienced when living in unsanctioned locations on the street—only Villagers and their guests will be allowed to enter the Villages.
- Spaces where people currently experiencing houselessness can find respite from the volatility of life on the streets, gain stability, and receive supports to achieve permanent housing.
- Offer case management and social service support to address the trauma of houselessness, treatment for unmet mental health needs, substance use disorders, and prepare Villagers for their next steps including entering recovery, going home, reconnecting with family, or entering permanent supportive housing, among other options.

- Provide a low barrier to entry, with very few minimum qualifications to be a villager: Villagers need to be at least 18 years old and experiencing houselessness—outside of that, Villagers can bring their pets, partners, and personal belongings.
- Offer private, lockable pods for people to sleep safely and store their belongings.
- Partners with low barrier employers to mitigate camping, trash, graffiti, and environmental impacts from the Villages to ensure all Villagers are good neighbors.
- Designed and managed to reduce the harm that life on the streets creates.
- Locations for communal gathering, with shared kitchen, laundry, shower, and restroom facilities, as well as yet-to-be-determined site-specific amenities like raised bed gardens or mini-libraries.
- Established so Villagers can engage respectfully with the surrounding neighborhood, with teams that regularly maintain and clean the perimeter for blocks around each of the sites.

Safe Rest Villages will NOT be:

- Tent camps—Safe Rest Villages will be managed Villages with pods for privacy, sleeping and storage, trash service, and onsite shared showers, restrooms, laundry, and kitchen, and social services.
- The same as unsanctioned camping, which causes trauma for Portlanders experiencing houselessness, and negatively impacts housed neighbors.
- Permanent housing—Safe Rest Villages will support the transition to permanent supportive housing and set the expectation that Villagers stabilize their lives and then are connected to permanent supportive housing.
- Self-managed camps, as some existing outdoor shelters currently operate—Safe Rest Villages will be managed by contracted non-profit partners who provide wraparound services that benefit Villagers, including moving unhoused Portlanders into permanent supportive housing, recovery programs, reconnecting with home or family, or whatever the next steps in their journey might be.



Sears Armory Safe Rest Village

The Sears Armory site will continue to be used for emergency preparedness and response, and it will provide access to the Portland Bureau of Transportation, the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management, and the Portland Water Bureau. The Maintenance Building that PBEM and the Water Bureau use will be fenced and secure and have a separate entrance than the Safe Rest Village. The current use for the earthquake preparedness improvements for SW Capitol Highway will not be impacted by this new Safe Rest Village.

The Safe Rest Village at the Sears Armory site will be an additional emergency management use. The Safe Rest Village will be a temporary outdoor shelter, hosting up to 60 sleeping pods. The map on the [Safe Rest Village website's Locations page](#) shows the general portion of the property that will be used for the Village. The Safe Rest Village will be using roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the site.

Architectural and civil plans are still in very rough draft form, but please see attached for our latest depictions.

Timeline–Goal Village opening date–Feb 1, 2022

- Site Selection Announcement–11/22/21
- Community Engagement begin–11/22/21

Tentative Construction Schedule for Safe Rest Village at Sears Armory site:

1. Utilities–sewer, water, and electrical

- Work with electric company (PGE or Pacific Power) to determine how long it will take to get power, and where to pull from, verify transformer specs
- 2. Site design/pod layout
- 3. Permitting
 - DR permit (BDS)—land use review, life safety, site development, sewer, source control, water, water backflow
 - Trades permits – UC/UB, PT, ET
 - Conditional Use permit (Fire)
- 4. Install temporary construction fencing
- 5. Install temp power (Hollywood Lights) if needed – depends on timeline with PGE or Pacific Power
- 6. Trenching—utilities are brought on site
- 7. Grading—quarter minus
- 8. Install Conex boxes, gate shack, med shack (including ADA ramps)
- 9. Install sleeping pods (may need to build wood platforms first, depending on the unit)
- 10. Hook up electrical to sleeping pods, install site lighting
- 11. Install wood fence—(timeline depends on availability of the wood—this could be last thing to go up)
- 12. Open shelter
- 13. Install temporary mural/artwork—painted on wood fence with community after shelter opens

Any Compliance Concerns?

The use of this site as a Safe Rest Village is emergency management. The City of Portland declared a housing crisis in 2015, and the COVID-19 global pandemic exacerbated our existing crises. There is a humanitarian crisis on our streets, the Sears location has been used for emergency shelter before, and we are confident that this use falls well within the designations for this property. The site will continue to be used for emergency preparedness and response, and it will provide access to the Portland Bureau of Transportation, the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management, and the Portland Water Bureau. The Sears site is managed by the Office of Management & Finance. Commissioner Ryan is proud to have support for this new Safe Rest Village from all involved bureaus. As part of our due diligence for the Sears site—and all Safe Rest Village sites—we review deed restrictions and have reviewed this site accordingly. The use of the Sears location for a Safe Rest Village is consistent with its intended use.

Commissioner Ryan and the Safe Rest Villages team are happy to meet and discuss this site further next week.