

## **Cabin Village: City of Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project - FAQs**

**1. Q: Will the Cabin Village Cabin Village/Permanent Supportive Housing Project be transitional or permanent housing?**

A: Permanent supportive housing.

**2. Q: Are the DignityMoves buildings moveable and will the City own them?**

A: The City of Ojai is purchasing the units through the Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Grant and will provide ongoing maintenance; they will not be on wheels, nor will they be designed to be moved.

**3. Q: Are the DignityMoves buildings described as sheds, cabins, small houses, tiny houses or what?**

A: The City is describing the project as a "cabin village".

**4. Q: How can a cabin without a toilet, sink, or mini kitchen be described as a permanent structure?**

A: Configuration of the project, and amenities for each cabin, will coincide with the property selected and what is possible at that location. The City could build a project with some, or all, of the cabins configured with bathrooms and kitchens. The City could also build a project with a portion of the cabins with bathrooms, a portion with bathrooms and kitchens, and some with neither, but with access to communal bathroom and kitchen/dining facilities.

**5. Q: Why is DignityMoves getting 9 million dollars of the 12 million dollar grant?**

A: DignityMoves is the City's development partner in the project, approved by the State, as part of the grant award. DignityMoves is a Developer. They have all the responsibility of building the project including site improvements, underground work, facility improvements, structure purchase and placement, etc.

**6. Q: How much money will Help of Ojai get to provide case work to all residents?**

A: Help of Ojai requires \$72,360/annually for a case worker with a 10:1 ratio (case worker to residents). The number of case workers required will be determined by the number of cabins the City is able to build.

**7. Q: How much money will the City of Ojai get to do all the daily service work to keep the village clean and safe?**

A: In addition to case management, one outreach specialist position with the City of Ojai was included for the first two years for this purpose. Security, supplies, utilities, and maintenance were also included in the grant.

**8. Q: How much will the Sheriff get to provide security?**

A: The proposal includes security from a contracted private security provider, and the adopted City budget also provides for Sheriff overtime "Directed Patrol" in the amount of \$120,000.

**9. Q: How many residents will be transitioned to more suitable housing as part of the rehabilitation effort?**

A: The original proposal included 20 of the most vulnerable into cabins, with motel vouchers for 18, including supportive services for those able to work on housing plans. However, the grant request could be modified if the City identifies a property that is able to serve more, and thereby requiring less motel vouchers.

**10. Q: How will inappropriate and unsafe behavior on the part of one or more residents be handled?**

A: The Ventura County Behavioral Health Rapid Integrated Support & Engagement (RISE) Team can address behavioral health issues, and the Sheriff would be called in for illegal activities. Supportive services will be onsite during daytime hours with contracted private security onsite overnight. Finally, with the addition of Amy Weiss/St. Francis Challenge into the City's Tent Town, a Resident/Steward Model has been implemented with the residents, rewarding accountability, ownership and community.

**11. Q: What criteria will be used to screen potential residents to assure they will be suitable for the village?**

A: Help of Ojai will provide case management to all residents and will complete assessments through HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) to determine vulnerabilities, barriers and concerns to ensure the most vulnerable are prioritized for units.

**12. Q: What will be the cost to the City after the grant runs out, and what is the long-term funding plan?**

A: The first two years of operations are covered by the Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Grant. There will be ongoing case management, security and utilities which could be paid through 30% income received as rent from residents. In addition, future grants through the Ventura County Continuum of Care and State funding from Proposition 1 will also be available for a portion of the Cabin Village/Permanent Supportive Housing Project population. Ventura County Community Foundation has been identified as a potential source of locating funding, and there will be opportunities for Help of Ojai to apply for grants for the purpose of the supportive services. The City is developing a cost model, which will identify any portion of funding gap within the project after the Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Grant has completed in two years.

**13. Q: According to DignityMoves, their intent is to move people through the Cabin Village housing as transitional housing.**

A. That is incorrect. The Cabin Village is not transitional housing; instead, it is permanent supportive housing.

**14. Q: If we have 35+/- unhoused now, how will we accommodate additional unhoused?**

A: The Cabin Village/Permanent Supportive Housing Project is funded through the Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Grant which addresses existing encampments and their residents; not future encampments. However, once the Cabin Village Project is complete, the City will have a "facility", which will further bolster the City's ability to advise prospective campers of their inability to camp in town, as well as the requirement to go through Help of Ojai for screening to be considered for potential participation in the Cabin Village/Permanent Supportive Housing Project.

**15. Q: Will Ojai become a destination for unhoused people until they get housed?**

A: The City has always had an unhoused population, and the Cabin Village does not establish Ojai as a "destination", because it has a limited capacity. Ventura, Oxnard and Thousand Oaks are all building permanent housing for their unhoused. People tend to stay in the community where they become unhoused, because they have ties to that community.

**16. Q: What is the daily count of the unhoused and is that increasing because of what Ojai offers?**

A: The Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Grant includes a targeted number of approximately 35 individuals who would reside within the cabin village project. The City is not opening the Cabin Village to new participants.

**17. Q: Why aren't we interviewing and transitioning the unhoused to more permanent housing now?**

A. Many of the current encampment residents have been entered into HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) by Help of Ojai. Several have already been prioritized through the Coordinated Entry System for any other housing opportunities, should they become available.

**18. Q: What happens to those not approved for occupancy or who won't follow the rules? Do they get to stay in Ojai and if so, where?**

A: The new housing units will have participation rules and lease agreements. Typically, there are several opportunities to correct behavior and/or comply with the rules before a resident is required to vacate the property. The onsite supportive services will provide housing retention support and bring in wrap around services. If a resident must be evicted, there will be other shelter or treatment services offered by the County.

**19. Q: I've heard that participants in the Cabin Village/Permanent Supportive Housing Project must be first screened by Help of Ojai. I've also heard that participants must have "experienced homelessness" or "become homeless" in Ojai – or have some connection that makes Ojai "home" for them. With that said, what happens to those who are homeless in Ojai, but not from the area, who show up and want to be screened by Help of Ojai and become participants in the Cabin Village/Permanent Supportive Housing Project?**

A: Help of Ojai Case Managers can enter housing insecure and/or homeless individuals into the HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) and based upon their eligibility, offer housing-related referrals throughout Ventura County. Referrals to other resources through HMIS may also include countywide emergency shelters, transitional housing, rapid rehousing (rental assistance), day services, one stop programs, and other participating programs.

**20.Q: What has the City spent so far on Tent Town and Cabin Village?**

A: The project financials will be provided at March 25, 2025 City Council meeting and will be published in the meetings minutes thereafter.

**21.Q: Will the City effectively be the landlord while the residents are the tenants?**

A: The City does not have tenants at the Ojai Tent Town encampment (OTT). OTT participants live there voluntarily and the City is their host. If the City proceeds with the Cabin Village project, those living there would be tenants of the City with individual lease agreements with the City.

**22.Q: Where will residents go if they are no longer “fit” for the supportive housing community? If their needs are met are they able to return? Is their cabin “held” if they are hospitalized or arrested?**

A: These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and determined by our partners, Help of Ojai and Ventura County Continuum of Care.

**23.Q: Being removed for mental health reasons is out of the residents control. What can be done to those with alcohol/drug addictions that choose to use?**

A: The Ojai Tent Town Encampment (OTT) and The Cabin Village Project are behavior based, upon the Housing First model. Neither OTT nor the Cabin Village Project are sober living facilities, and the Housing First model, which the ERF grant is based upon, does not allow for a sober living facility requirement. This was explained at the Cabin Village Town Hall meeting. Tenant screening and selection practices promote accepting applicants regardless of their sobriety or use of substances, completion of treatment, or participation in services.

**24.Q: How can Ojai maintain its family-oriented appeal with its growing unhoused population and their erratic behavior?**

A: We are working to address these types of issues. OTT and the Cabin Village Project help to alleviate these issues and does not cause them.

**25.Q: Does City Manager Ben Harvey have experience with the unhoused, addiction and mental health?**

A: The City Manager's experience is primarily based on his daily experience at the City of Ojai for the past year, managing the existing encampment (OTT). Prior to Ojai, he served two other communities as City Manager, Avalon and Pacific Grove, which he did not have much exposure to issues pertaining to the unhoused.

**26.Q: How will the site be accessed? Why was there a lot line adjustment proposed?**

A: Per the revised site plan, the site would be accessible by automobile, bicycle and pedestrian via South Montgomery Street to the east, from an access drive. The site would also be accessible from the north via South Ventura Street by an ADA compliant ramp and an additional pedestrian walkway. The lot line adjustment was intended to better reflect the topography of the site, as the lot line was significantly past the top of the slope on the north end of the site. This would best accommodate future land use in the northern abutting parcels. However, the lot line adjustment was ultimately scrapped as that portion of the lot is proposed to be used to access the site by an ADA ramp and pedestrian walkway.

**27.Q: Because This issue has caused so much friction between community members, I feel it would be beneficial to take it to a vote and see how the community truly feels? Is that an option? If not, why?**

A: The City Council could direct that this be taken to a vote, but the opportunity to do this in time, avoiding imminent grant funding requirements, has long passed.

**28.Q: How is this project consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan.**

A: The project is consistent with several goals, policies, and objectives within the General Plans Land Use, Circulation, Air Quality, Recreation, Open Space, Noise, Conservation, Safety, and Housing element. Each policy is detailed in the projects "Similar Use Determination" attachment to the March 25, 2025 City Council meeting agenda item.

**29.Q: What consequences would this project pose to the community.**

A: As an unhoused encampment currently exists at the City Hall Campus, which is made up of majority Ojai natives, there will not be additional consequences from the development of this project. The project aims to better accommodate the already existing unhoused issue the community faces. The current proposal is much more fit to do so than the existing encampment.

**30.Q: Are there additional housing options for those who have no source of income?**

A: There are currently no additional housing options that are 100% affordable in the City of Ojai for those who have no source of income. The proposed Cabin Village Project would fulfill that role.