



# SAFE PARKING LOTS OUTREACH

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## THE CHALLENGE

In 2018, 3,372 people in King County lived in their cars, a 46% increase from 2017. If you lined up all of their vehicles from end to end, the line would stretch for more than seven miles. These individuals make up about half of King County's unsheltered homeless population. Safe parking programs provide people who live in their vehicles a safe place to sleep and access to vital resources. Due to the legal leeway granted to religious organizations around the right to exercise the tenets of their faith (including service to the poor), religious organizations play a critical role in providing services for this population. Currently, few safe parking programs hold operations within Bellevue city limits. The goal of this project was to gather and synthesize information on best practices for safe parking programs hosted by religious organizations in comparable nearby communities.



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## METHODS

To produce a set of best practices, I conducted a short literature review to establish context; researched local, successful safe parking programs; attended a homeless encampment focus group at Bellevue City Hall; and explored the structure and stories behind five successful safe parking programs. I carried out this portion of my work by interviewing five safe parking program leaders, one social service provider, and two concerned Bellevue residents. I also met with three representatives of Bellevue Human Services.



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## RECOMMENDATIONS

From the information and stories collected, I compiled a high-level data summary, a comprehensive report, and three communications products:

- 1. Safe Parking Start-Up Guide:** A 37-page printed booklet and digital file that summarizes key findings and describes the structure and logistics needed to establish a successful safe parking program. Woven into this communication product are the stories of the people who participate in these programs. A copy can be accessed at this URL: [bit.ly/SafeParkBellevue](http://bit.ly/SafeParkBellevue)
- 2. Persuasive One-Pager:** A glossy, one-paged graphic that summarizes the need for safe parking programs and provides information on how to access the Safe Parking Start-Up Guide.
- 3. Aggregated Code of Conduct:** A well-constructed code of conduct is the backbone of a successful program. I reviewed five codes and compiled an aggregated document that synthesizes the most useful and universal components to serve as a comprehensive template around which new programs can be oriented.

The City of Bellevue will use this information to gain buy-in from local religious organizations and empower them to create their own programs to serve people experiencing homelessness in Bellevue.



Safe Parking Start-Up Guide booklet VICTORIA PINHEIRO



Communication Leadership student and sole researcher Victoria Pinheiro presents her Livable City Year project to City of Bellevue staff and community members on March 13, 2019. TERI THOMSON RANDALL

