

# Neighborhood

Neighborhood.org 415- 716-3665

Neighborhood's "No Parking" is a 9,000 sq ft lot in West Oakland, that has been leased since 2015 originally for \$1500 a month (now \$1613 per month). Its additional costs for water (we were lucky that the meter was already installed) Internet, Trash service, Sanitation Service and maintenance total generally \$2,000-\$3,000 per month depending. These are purely direct costs, there is no profit and no money going towards labor currently. Members own their own Tiny Homes (Vehicular Residential Facilities) the units include Buses, Vans, RV's, Travel Trailers, and Wood Framed Homes (you might see on HGTV) on wheeled chassis.

## **NEIGHBORSHIP'S COMMENTS ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO OAKLAND PLANNING CODE REGULATIONS RELATED TO INNOVATIVE CONSTRUCTION AND EXPANDED HOUSING OPTIONS INCLUDING RECREATIONAL VEHICLES**



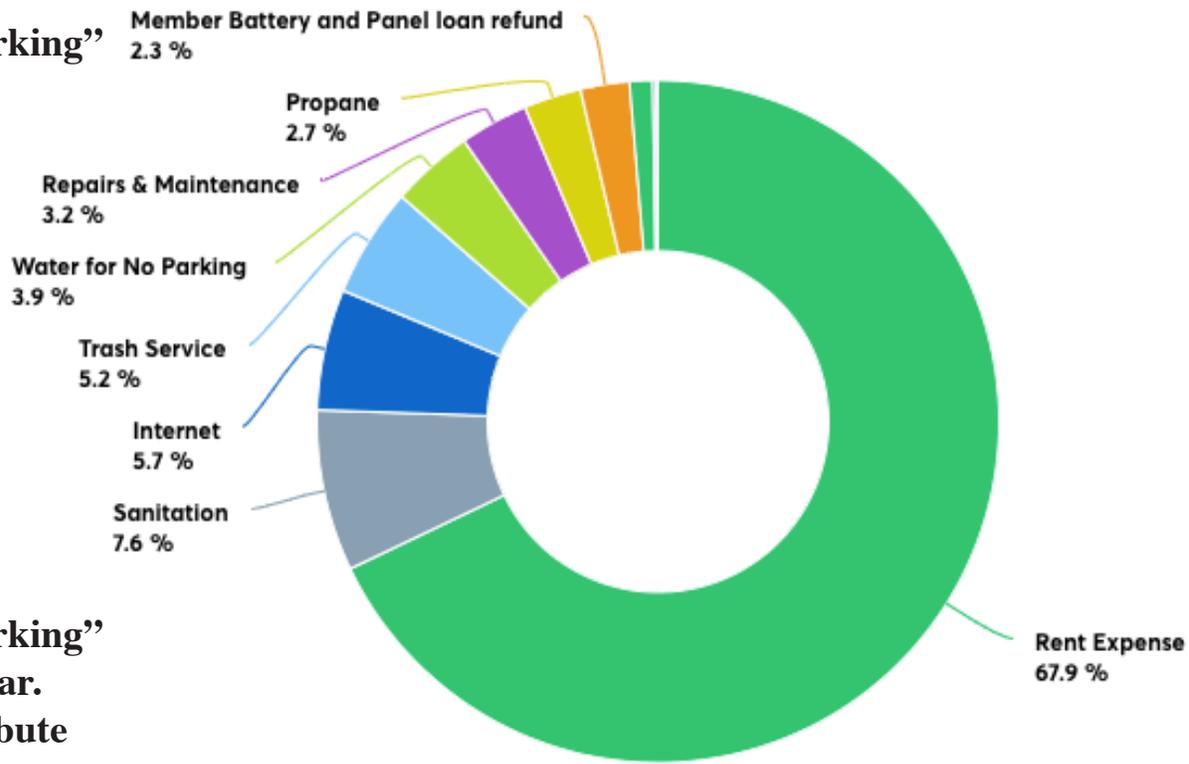
While this proposed change to zoning, blight and building codes is long overdue to include the inevitable shifts in how everyday Oakland residents have responded to a runaway housing market, this ordinance in its current language would not save Neighborhood from being shutdown, and it will likely not serve many other tiny home owners currently living in the City of Oakland.

**This ordinance needs to both pass and be EDITED** in the following ways. If left unchanged, this will go the way of the RV Pilot Program, an empty policy change that virtually no one is able to take advantage of.

There are two poison pills in this ordinance, that need to be amended to make this proposal have the desired effect of expanding housing options for Oakland citizens:

- 1) **DENSITY:** Exempt Vehicular Residential Facilities from density regulations.
- 2) **UTILITIES:** Allow for the flexibility of utility provisions that is in the RV Pilot program language. Specifically allow water tanks and Sanitation services for multiple Unit spaces.

## Neighborhood “No Parking” Expense Breakdown for the Year.



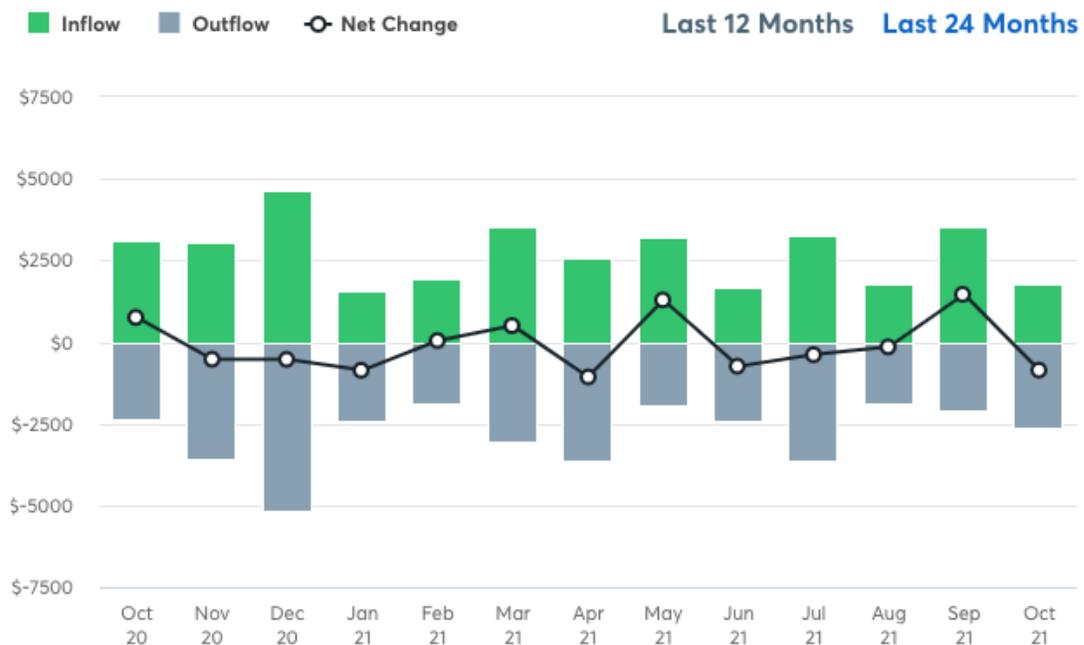
## Neighborhood “No Parking” Net Income for the Year. Most members contribute \$600 monthly.

Fiscal Year <span>?</span>	2020	2021
Income	\$26,730.91	\$22,357.18
Expense	\$23,930.98	\$23,752.51
Net Income	\$2,799.93	-\$1,395.33

## Neighborhood “No Parking” Cashflow for the Year.

Cash coming in and going out of your business.

[View Report](#)



## DENSITY:

Our vacant lot is like many in Oakland. It sat unused for years before we began leasing it. The density restriction for our 9,000 sq ft. lot is 3 units. This is based on the size of a single-family home (2,500 sq ft on average). Tiny Homes or “Vehicular Residential Facilities” should be exempt from that density restriction.

What’s to prevent the density from getting out of hand and unsafe? The setback requirements already in the ordinance, in addition to the human reality that people need personal outdoor spaces around their homes. The average Tiny Home is 200 sq ft. We have space for 9 units comfortably, and for the last two years have had a general occupancy of 6 units.

If we are held to only 3 units, we couldn’t afford the costs to operate the space. This was the same flaw with the RV Parking Pilot, a restriction of 1 unit per lot. To date, not one person has made use of that paperwork victory. Don’t let this ordinance be the same.

## UTILITIES:

Our vacant lot, like most in Oakland, by definition does not have traditional utilities connected to it. This is what makes it affordable to lease and is largely why it hasn’t been developed yet.

When you look at the minimum costs to install a 5/8“ meter to a raw lot for water in, and a corresponding sewer line out, the number is no less than \$28,000 and very likely more once the specifics are applied.

### **Min Cost of Water into Vacant Lot in Oakland (Water tank should be allowed)**

- Meter install to EBMUD= \$1300
- System Capacity Fee to EBMUD= \$15,000

### **Min Cost of getting sewer connection to Vacant lot (Sanitation is less than \$2400 annually)**

- Sewer Lateral to a plumbing contractor = \$7000-\$20,000 (quote ranges)
- System Capacity Fee to EBMUD = \$4,000
- Permit Fees to Oakland Public Works = \$1500
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**Total Minimum Costs of Compliance \$28,800**

For more context on the large costs of compliance that this ordinance would burden people seeking affordable housing options, its worth looking at the City of Oakland’s decision to pay for the costs of plumbing on city property for Transitional Housing programs.

In the current case of the E12th Parcel project where two Transitional Housing programs of 70 units total is approaching completion the City of Oakland opted out of installing a water line to the site (Despite an existing sewer connection on the land) because the capacity charge to EastBay Mud was \$70,000 and that was just too much to pay. Instead the operators who wanted to provide plumbing to their clients were told to purchase water tanks and Sanitation service. Nearly every transitional housing program in the City of Oakland uses Sanitation services and water tanks. The City of Oakland does this because it is a practical and fast way to setup housing relief for its Citizens in need of support. Neighborhood’s Sister organization, Tiny Logic, is one of the operators of the Co-Governed Tiny Home Community on E12th parcel.

It is understandable to insist that we all deserve plumbing and running water. Neighborhood is in full agreement and will be seeking grants and donations to try to get a sewer line on our lot regardless of if it is required. We just don’t believe it should be required. We don’t believe that we should need to shut down the space if we are unable to raise the money. We do not believe that other groups who want to provide housing relief rapidly should need to become developers, raise ungodly amounts of money and go through long and drawn out permit processing timelines to get people housed.

## WHY?

While Neighborhood is in the video promoting this ordinance, it stands as an inconvenient truth in counter to the narrative that this prescribed costly set of standards is the only way this type of space could work smoothly.

We have shown for 6 years now that you do not need to adhere to these costly requirements to have a stable affordable place to live. For most of that time, no one even noticed we were there. Once we were faced with Code enforcement in 2020, we went to the press, engaged the support of our neighborhood, and created a petition with nearly 1,000 signatures.

Finally its important to note that part of the allure of the Tiny House Movement and why its not going away anytime soon is that it offers an alternative to purchasing Real Estate (not possible for larger and larger amounts of people) and to being a renter (something most of us are forced into and resent).

Tiny Homes offer the pride of homeownership without the lifetime of debt and they also offer stability that a renter doesn't have, because the home can actually relocate to a better situation if the financial or interpersonal relationship falls apart.

Land Trusts and Cooperative housing arrangements are perfectly suited for this type of housing because the theoretical separation between the land and the buildings on top is much more of a practical reality with Tiny Homes. This ordinance assumes that there is always a landlord, and a tenant, and therefore misses the point of this new (yet actually quite old) way of looking at housing. Specifically the language about the requirements of a toilet, heater and shower being required in each VRF miss the point that Tiny Homes are most often owned by their inhabitants who very often in the case of a Van or a Bus make the practical decision to not include some of these fixtures and find alternatives, like a dry toilet, outdoor shower, or a propane space heater. This ordinance needs to be amended to fit the reality of Tiny Homes on Wheels. Currently it is written only for those interested in buying and installing units to rent out as landlords. This use case will likley only exist for those intersted in short term rentals. Tiny home owners are left out of this ordinance.

