

San Jose tiny home site to double beds for homeless



by Joyce Chu October 1, 2024



The construction for the expansion of Rue Ferrari will begin this month and double the housing capacity. It is slated for completion next September. Photo by Joyce Chu.

After months of delay, a tiny home project in South San Jose is expanding to help more people off the streets.

By this time next year, 107 units will be added to the tiny home site at 5898 Rue Ferrari, with the capacity to house up to 146 homeless people — more than doubling its current capacity of 82 units with 124 beds. Rue Ferrari will become the city’s largest tiny home site, housing up to 270 once homeless individuals.

Mayor Matt Mahan, Councilmember Sergio Jimenez, Congressman Jimmy Panetta, Housing Director Erik Solivan and Public Works Director Matt Loesch announced the milestone at the groundbreaking Tuesday after Panetta helped secure [\\$1 million](#) in federal funding for the expansion.

“These sites are very important midpoints from homelessness to permanent housing. They serve an ability to let folks stand up, stabilize and get themselves ready for a permanent home,” Jimenez, whose district covers the tiny home site, told San José Spotlight. “Adding 100 units of this is going to be even more beneficial to many more residents we’re going to be able to serve. I’m proud that District 2 continues to step up and do our part to help solve this issue.”

The rooms will have private bathrooms and a central building for laundry and a shared kitchen. The complex will feature a security office, dog park, an outdoor picnic area, raised garden beds and additional storage units. HomeFirst will continue providing case management services at the expansion.

It will cost more than [\\$30 million](#) to construct the additional units and amenities. Rue Ferrari’s operating cost will increase from \$3.7 million to \$5.4 million annually once the construction is completed. The San Jose City Council unanimously approved the plans last December, but

councilmembers voiced concerns over rising operating costs at this complex and other temporary housing sites in the city's growing portfolio.

The expansion is part of the city's plan to add [784 beds](#) in the next year and a half to tackle the homelessness crisis — though delays and rising construction costs could threaten those efforts. The beds will be spread across five locations: Via Del Oro, Cerone Yard, Cherry Avenue, Branham and Monterey Road and an expanded Rue Ferrari. Construction at Rue Ferrari was originally expected to start this past spring and end this year.

Toeou Sy, 49, told San José Spotlight he's grateful for Rue Ferrari. He became homeless seven years ago after he had spinal surgery and lost his job. He lived in shelters and outdoors, suffering in the cold and rain, before he finally moved into Rue Ferrari in February.

Having a mailing address and a place to lay his head has made a world of a difference, he added. Since moving to Rue Ferrari, he's reapplied for a green card after his was stolen, and got approved for Supplemental Security Income.

"It's a big blessing," he told San José Spotlight. "I was waiting years for this."

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