



Yesica Prado <yesica@eltecolote.org>

MEDIA: Questions on the Large Vehicle Refuge Permit – Deadline today for print issue

Press, DEM (DEM) <dempres@sfgov.org>

Wed, Oct 1, 2025 at 4:50 PM

To: Yesica Prado <yesica@eltecolote.org>, "Thornhill, Jackie (DEM)" <jackie.thornhill@sfgov.org>

Cc: "Kato, Erica (MTA)" <Erica.Kato@sfmta.com>, "Roccaforte, Michael (MTA)" <Michael.Roccaforte@sfmta.com>, "Press, DEM (DEM)" <dempres@sfgov.org>, "HOMmedia, (HOM)" <HSHMedia@sfgov.org>, "Schneider, Dylan (HOM)" <dylan.schneider@sfgov.org>, "Press Office, Mayor (MYR)" <mayorspressoffice@sfgov.org>

Hi Yesica,

Thank you for your patience with us as we try to ensure accuracy for your questions. We appreciate your partnership in engaging your readers in this process as well. We have added our responses to your questions below in bold.

Hope this helps!



Denny Machuca-Grebe (He/him)

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From: Yesica Prado <yesica@eltecolote.org>

Sent: Wednesday, October 1, 2025 4:37 PM

To: Thornhill, Jackie (DEM) <jackie.thornhill@sfgov.org>

Cc: Kato, Erica (MTA) <Erica.Kato@sfmta.com>; Roccaforte, Michael (MTA) <Michael.Roccaforte@sfmta.com>; Press, DEM (DEM) <dempres@sfgov.org>; HOMmedia, (HOM) <HSHMedia@sfgov.org>; Schneider, Dylan (HOM) <dylan.schneider@sfgov.org>; Press Office, Mayor (MYR) <mayorspressoffice@sfgov.org>

Subject: Re: MEDIA: Questions on the Large Vehicle Refuge Permit – Deadline today for print issue

Hi Jackie,

I wanted to follow up again on the questions I first sent on September 18 and then again on September 23. It's now been a week and I haven't heard back. Since the Large Vehicle Refuge Permit program is already rolling out, clarity from your office is essential, especially because these questions come directly from San Francisco residents who will be most affected by the program.

We've made every effort to give the city time to respond, but if I don't hear back **by Friday, October 3**, we will update our story to note that the city refused to answer these basic questions. To maintain transparency with our readers, we will also reference and link our email communications in the article.

I also want to let you know that I'm preparing another story on how the permit will affect people living in large vehicles. I'll be sending your office a new set of questions for that story tomorrow.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to your reply before Friday's deadline.

Warmly,

Yesica Prado

Investigative Reporter | El Tecolote



On Mon, Sep 29, 2025 at 12:14 PM Yesica Prado <yesica@eltecolote.org> wrote:

Hi Jackie,

I'm following up on the questions I sent last Wednesday. Since the permit is rolling out now, we're working on the city's timeline and I need to confirm these details quickly for accuracy in our reporting.

To avoid delays in our coverage, could you please let me know the best way to expedite this process? If a phone call or shorter written response would be easier, I'm happy to accommodate.

I'm also working on another story about how the permit will affect people living in large vehicles, so I'll have additional questions for you this week. Looking forward to your reply.

Thank you,

Yesica Prado

Investigative Reporter | El Tecolote

On Wed, Sep 24, 2025 at 5:49 PM Yesica Prado <yesica@eltecolote.org> wrote:

Hi Jackie,

Thank you again for your detailed follow-up. I've carefully reviewed your statement and want to make sure I'm interpreting the details correctly. Could you please confirm the following points (**in red**) based on what you wrote:

1. **Eligibility date** – You noted that eligibility is determined by the City's Large Vehicle Database, which was compiled "over multiple days of extensive canvassing in May 2025."

Interpretation: This means that RV residents had to be living in a vehicle *during that canvassing period* (not specifically on May 31 or before that date) to qualify.

Follow-up: If it's tied to the canvassing period, what were the exact days?

Response: This was completed throughout the month of May

2. **Parking rules** – You wrote that a permit only exempts vehicles from the two-hour parking limit and that “all other parking and vehicle laws ... continue to apply and may be enforced.”

Interpretation: A permit itself will not be revoked if someone violates rules like street cleaning, the 72-hour rule, or RPP zones. However, people can still be cited for those violations.

Response: Correct

Data use – You stated that application information is used “to better understand client needs” and that consent to share information is required.

To clarify: Does this mean the data is shared only with the Homelessness and Supportive Housing Department, or more broadly?

Response: Client information is stored in a secure place to protect PII/PHI. It is only shared on a limited case-by-case basis. More on data use related to the LV program can be directed to this webpage <https://www.sf.gov/large-vehicle-refuge-permit-program-city-departments-with-data-use-authorization>.

3. **Consent withdrawal** – You wrote that “if someone withdraws consent, the City may not be able to connect them with services.”

Interpretation: This means that people will lose access to all services provided by the Homelessness and Supportive Housing Department if they withdraw consent.

Response: Individuals who withdraw their consent to participate in the Large Vehicle Permit Program will lose access to the resources that were earmarked for participants in the program. They are welcome to continue moving forward with other programs and services in the Homelessness Response system.

Relinquishing vehicles – You wrote that “permit holders are required to move out of their vehicle when they receive permanent or non-congregate interim housing.”

To clarify: Does this mean that residents must transfer the vehicle title to the city, or is moving the vehicle outside San Francisco an option?

(Some RV residents have told us outreach staff said titles must be relinquished to the City. Can you confirm this?)

Response: Residents will not be required to transfer the title of the vehicle to the city. They may move the vehicle outside the city to a legal storage facility or legal parking spot.

4. **Housing options** – You mentioned “permit holders are required to move out of their vehicle when they receive permanent or non-congregate interim housing.”

Interpretation: Permit holders must accept whatever offer is given to them.

Response: Correct. If an individual or family is offered a place within the Homelessness Response system, they can no longer stay in their vehicle.

5. **Declining housing** – You wrote that permits can be revoked for “disengaging from case management, providing false information, attempting to transfer a non-transferable permit, or declining an offer of permanent or non-congregate interim housing.”

Interpretation: Permits will be revoked at the first declination of services.

Response: Permits could potentially be revoked for disengaging from case management, not for declining at the first offer.

6. **Towing** – Your statement noted safety-related towing, but not fees. Could you explain why towing fees are based on vehicle size and condition as per [this document](#)?

To clarify: The [SFMTA website](#) lists standard towing costs as around \$300 plus storage fees. But no information is available on changes made to this policy specifically for RVs.

Follow-up: If changes have been made to the towing costs, could you please point out where I can find this information?

Response: Towing and impound fees for large vehicles may vary based on vehicle size and condition. The SFMTA has implemented the nation's most comprehensive program to provide the most vulnerable populations relief from certain costs related to parking citations and towing. We have an obligation to manage the streets, and calling for a tow when it's warranted helps us do that. You can learn more at [Waivers for people experiencing homelessness or low-income and reduction for first time tow \(SFMTA.com/FirstTow\)](#) or Text Before Tow Program ([SFMTA.com/TextBeforeTow](#)).

7. **Vehicle buy-back program:** RV residents have reported to us that this program is capped at the first 100 RVs.

To clarify: Is the program capped at this number? Is this a first come first serve program?

Response: The program is not capped at this number.

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