

# LifeMoves, Sares Regis, Construct Purpose-Built Supportive Housing Using Modular, Complete Project in Six Months



By [Meghan Hall](#)

Time is of the essence in the construction industry, especially when it comes to the construction of interim and supportive housing. With this in mind, however, one project team may have cracked the code to complete projects on a condensed timeline. This week, LifeMoves, one of the largest providers of interim housing and services for people experiencing homelessness in Silicon Valley, opened its newest community, LifeMoves Mountain View. In just six months, the development team, which also included Sares Regis Group of Northern California and XL Construction, delivered 100 private units.

“The pandemic has been extremely challenging but it has also brought us together in helping our most vulnerable residents,” said Mountain View Mayor Ellen Kamei. “By taking bold steps with our public/private partners, we now have an interim housing community that was built in record time during a public health emergency. Already, LifeMoves Mountain View is assisting individuals and families on a proven path to finding permanent housing.”

Located at 2566 Leghorn Street, LifeMoves Mountain View is expected to greatly increase the City’s ability to address the needs of residents experiencing homelessness. The project will be able to accommodate about 124 people, about 10 times the number of year-round shelter beds previously available in the city of Mountain View. The community will have the capacity to serve more than 50 percent of the current homeless population in Mountain View within the first year alone.

The units will serve families, individuals and couples experiencing homelessness. Units are also designed to specifically serve seniors and medically vulnerable individuals when needed. All units come equipped with personal storage, HVAC, and windows.

Intensive case management and support services will also be provided with the goal of helping residents return to stable housing within 90 to 120 days of their arrival. However, there is no time limit for resident stays.

The site also includes private meeting spaces for case management, workshops, dining, recreation, laundry and dog kennels. A children’s playground and community classroom are also part of the community.

The development team was able to complete construction quickly thanks to state-of-the-art, prefabricated construction. The project’s modular units were rapidly deployed and ready for habitation.

“The pandemic has created a rapidly growing homelessness crisis throughout the Bay Area, which necessitates a fast response from local communities to provide immediate shelter to this population of people in need,” said Keith Brown, senior vice president of Sares Regis Group of Northern California. “LifeMoves Mountain View was fast tracked from start to finish in six months thanks to a management system that parallel-tasked planning and design, factory fabrication of modular units, demolition of on-site construction, coordinating permits and approvals, coordinating the installation of utility infrastructure, and prefabrication of the site, all at the same time.”

Brown continued, adding, “Key to that success was the close coordination between the community operator LifeMoves, the team of site contractors, and general contractor XL Construction, as well as its trade partners. This effective model can be replicated to fast-track other modular housing projects and we certainly hope that it will be.”

Anchor funding from the State of California’s Project Homekey, a grant program for agencies to acquire buildings for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, as well as public funding from the City of Mountain View and County of Santa Clara, helped to make the project possible. LifeMoves partners and other private donors also contributed to the project. Other financial support has come from investors such as Google and LinkedIn.

LifeMoves is the largest provider of interim housing and services for homelessness in Silicon Valley. Currently, the organization has 26 shelter and service sites, spanning from Daly City to San Jose. 86 percent of families and 67 percent of individuals who engage in LifeMoves programs return to stable housing. The organization hopes that its Mountain View location will adhere to those same standards.

Currently, Santa Clara County has one of the largest homeless populations in the nation. The City of Mountain View specifically saw its homeless population rise from 276 in 2015 to 606 in 2019, a 220 percent increase.

According to an Economic roundtable study, each person persistently experiencing homelessness costs the public about \$83,000 per year. LifeMoves believes that supportive interim housing can be a solution. Typically, such units can be built for \$50,000 to \$150,00 per door, while permanent housing costs between \$500,000 to \$800,000 per door.

A site such as LifeMoves Mountain View could therefore be built for about \$10 million. Land costs and five-year operating funding pushed the budget to \$25 million. If land is no longer available, the same units can be moved and reused.

“Thanks to the generosity of all involved, we have an amazing opportunity to drastically reduce homelessness in Mountain View at this innovative site and quickly support our most vulnerable unhoused neighbors,” said Aubrey Merriman, CEO of LifeMoves in a statement. “We hope that this pilot program will be the first of ten rapidly deployed interim housing communities throughout Silicon Valley that use cost-effective modular construction and can be quickly deployed to provide much-needed shelter to those who are living on our streets or in vehicles.”