

# Item D2: City Council Focus Area Status Report: Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods

*Neighborhood Services and Education Committee  
December 11, 2025*

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Execution as Learning



# Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area



# Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area

## Long-Term Goal

San Jose Residents can enjoy a city with clean public spaces and well-maintained private property.

## Context

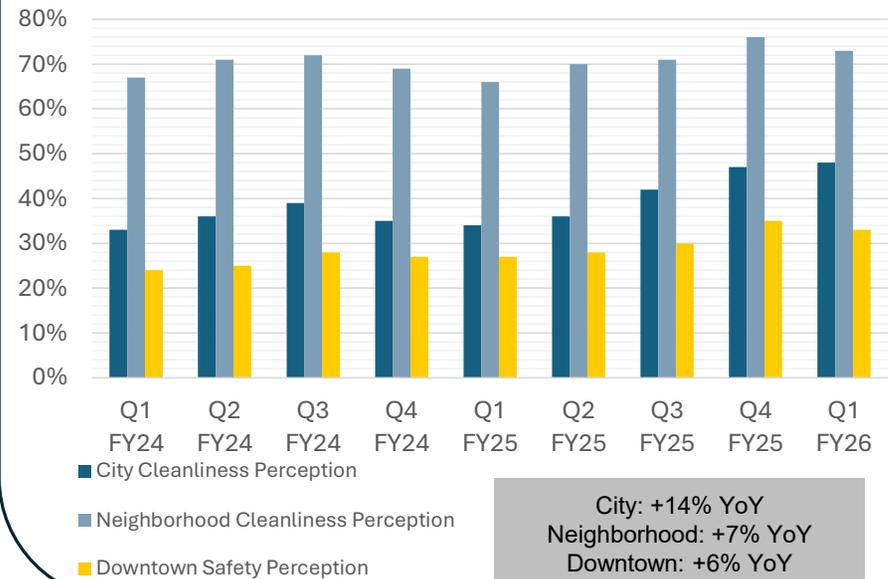
**What's going well.** As of September 2025, 73% of San José residents reported that their neighborhood was clean or very clean, 48% that the City was clean or very clean, and 33% that Downtown was clean or very clean, compared with 67%, 33%, and 24% respectively in Q1 2024.

**Main Challenges Moving Forward.** Increasing case volumes, expanding scope, and static staffing for general funded positions stretches Code Enforcement's ability to resolve complaints quickly. Volumes of graffiti eradicated and illegal dumping collected have increased steadily over time.

## Indicator

### Resident Cleanliness Perception

% of residents rating San José as "very clean" or "somewhat clean"





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San Jose Residents can enjoy a city with clean public spaces and well-maintained private property.

## Problem

1. Blight on Private Property.

## Context



Code Enforcement completed an Operational Assessment in FY 2024-2025 that made recommendations for operational improvements.

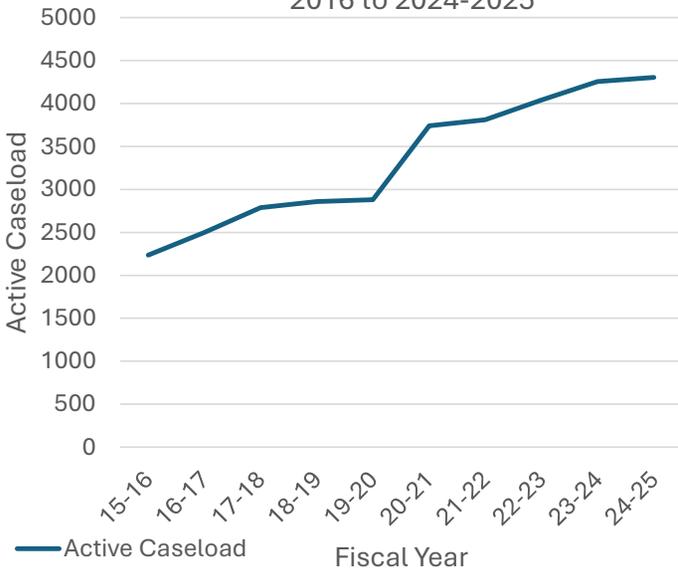


Code Enforcement capacity has been stretched with increasing case volumes, expanding scope, and static staffing.

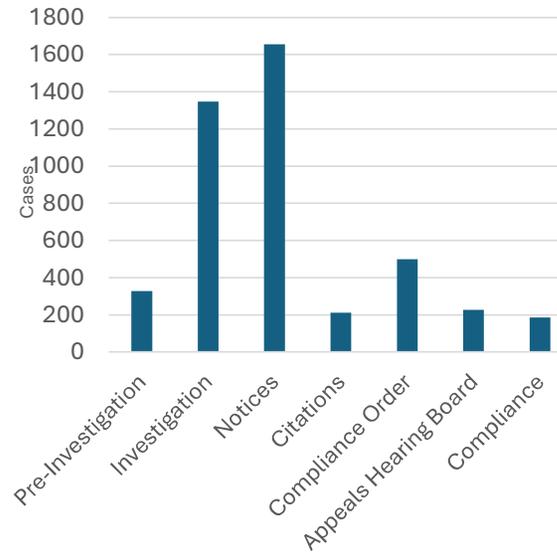


Implementing recommendations from that assessment is a major focus in this fiscal year.

Code Enforcement Active Caseload, 2015-2016 to 2024-2025



General Code Cases by Stage, Q1 2025-2026





# Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area

**Problem**

**1. Blight on Private Property.**

#	Goal	Expected Result	Status	Update
1.1	Implement Chronic Offender Resolution and Enforcement Pilot Program beginning in October 2025 and evaluate efficacy and report to the NSE Committee in April 2026.	The CORE Pilot Program will expedite enforcement against properties with a history of chronic or significant repeated violations ensuring properties come into compliance more rapidly and are maintained in compliance.		The Code Enforcement Division of the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement (PBCE) commenced the Chronic Offender Resolution and Enforcement Pilot in October 2025. The purpose of this pilot is to provide escalated enforcement for property owners with repeated code violations. Implementation of this pilot involves evaluating cases as they are received to identify cases that meet the pilot criteria and would benefit from enhanced enforcement.
1.2	Implement Escalated Enforcement Policy beginning in September 2025. Evaluate efficacy and report on progress to the NSE Committee in April 2026.	Policy will standardize compliance timelines and set clear expectations for escalating enforcement resulting in more consistency, efficiency, and timely resolution of cases.		In September of 2025 the Code Enforcement Division completed a revision of the Escalating Enforcement Policy in the PBCE Operating Policy and Procedure Manual. The purpose of the revision is to make clear the timeline expectations, at each enforcement step, for issuance of the enforcement action, the responsible party's compliance, and follow-up actions from Code Enforcement staff. Code Enforcement staff has been trained on the revised policy and as a next step will evaluate the efficacy of this approach in improving case resolution timelines. Early results are showing that cases are progressing through the enforcement process when comparing current and previous year Q1 data.
1.3	Implement Phase 1 of CodeX, the updated Code Enforcement case management system, by June 2026 and report out on progress at the NSE Committee in June 2026.	CodeX System will make management of code enforcement cases more efficient and effective, resulting in more effective prioritization of cases and more rapid case resolution, and substantially increase Code Enforcements ability to use data analytics to improve service delivery.		Due to the age of the current system, staff has encountered additional challenges in implementing a new system. Challenges include data problems in the current system and a more labor-intensive requirement gathering process than anticipated. Staff is working with the vendor to create an updated project scope and timeline. The CODEX project manager was added to Code Enforcement's SCRUM team and the project is using RACI matrix to make decisions about the project.



# Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area

## Problem

## 1. Blight on Private Property.

#	Goal	Expected Result	Status	Update
1.4	Raise the maximum administrative fine by August 2025 and complete a Fine Study and bring forward for City Council consideration by February 2026.	Recommendations from the consultant study will provide options for the City to more effectively achieve compliance.		Staff has initiated the fee study work with the consultant. The target date for return to City Council has shifted from February to May 2025, due to the timeline for securing funding for the contract and additional staff work that will be needed after the report is complete due to final contract scope.
1.5	Continue to implement monthly meetings of the Downtown Enhanced Vacant Building and Storefront Working Group to coordinate enforcement against blighted properties in the Downtown and report to the NSE Committee in April 2026 on progress bringing vacant buildings into compliance.	Enhanced inter-departmental coordination will result in more effective enforcement against problem properties in the Downtown.		Staff continues to lead the monthly interdepartmental working group on high-priority problem properties and participates in the Mayor's Monthly Downtown Safety & Security Committee. Through this collaboration, the scope of work has expanded beyond vacant buildings and storefronts to include late-night activity, unlicensed smoke shops, and other emerging downtown issues. These partnerships have enabled faster enforcement actions, stronger evidence gathering, quicker decision-making, and timely litigation when needed.



# Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area

## Long-Term Goal

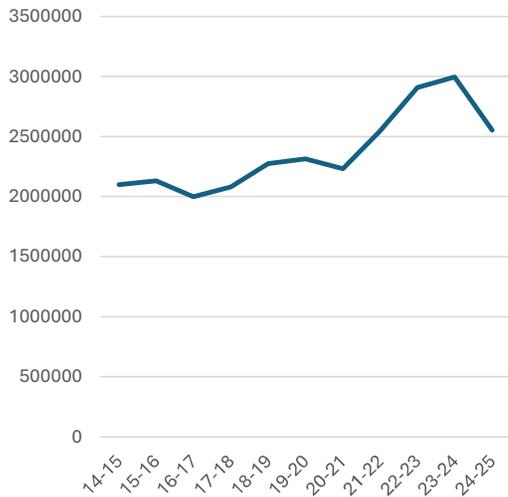
San Jose Residents can enjoy a city with clean public spaces and well-maintained private property.

## Problem

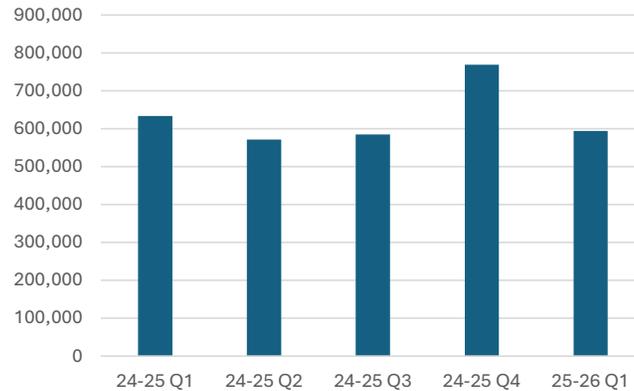
2. Graffiti.

## Context

Square Feet of Graffiti Removed



Square footage of graffiti removed



BSJ removes graffiti quickly and effectively.



Despite an effective removal program, the volume of graffiti has grown steadily over the past ten years.



We need to deter taggers from making graffiti in the first place.



# Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area

**Problem**

**2. Graffiti.**

#	Goal	Expected Result	Status	Update
2.1	Implement a graffiti enforcement program. Evaluate effectiveness and report to NSE Committee in August 2026.	Enforcement against prolific taggers will reduce graffiti from prolific taggers and generally deter graffiti.		The Police Department continues to allocate investigative resources toward cases involving prolific taggers. This work remains productive. Officers have arrested seven active taggers this fiscal year, including several individuals responsible for extensive damage across multiple neighborhoods. The Department has also expanded its prevention and diversion efforts. SJPD provided training to BeautifySJ Staff, SJYEA and PRNS Youth Intervention Services staff on the identification and documentation of gang-related graffiti. This training strengthens early recognition, supports safer interventions, and improves information-sharing across City partners.



# Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area

## Long-Term Goal

San Jose Residents can enjoy a city with clean public spaces and well-maintained private property.

## Problem

**3. Illegal Dumping.**

## Context



Investments in BSJ have resulted in increase in illegal dumping collection

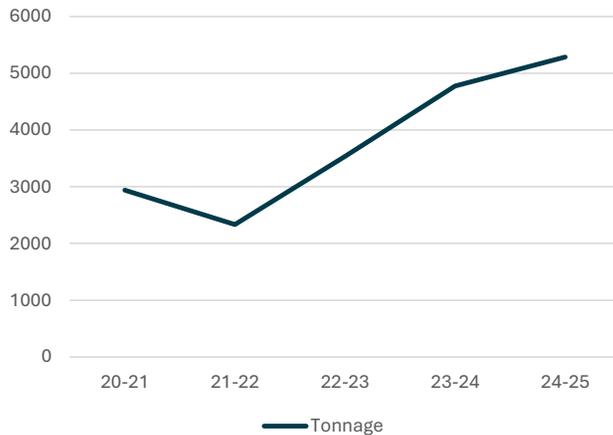


Though successful so far, continuing to scale illegal dumping collection is not sustainable.

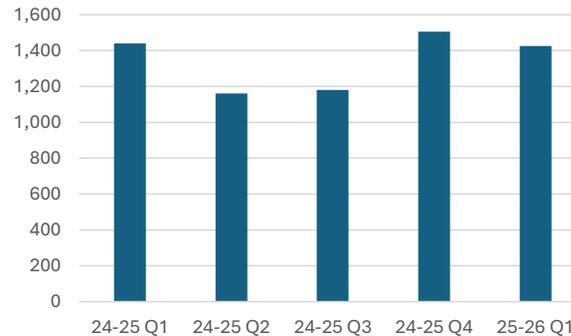


We need to reduce the level of illegal dumping and optimize operations to handle the high volume.

RAPID Tonnage Collected, FY 20-21 – FY 24-25



Illegal Dumping Tonnage Collected FY 24-25 Q1 – 25-26 Q1





## Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area

**Problem**

**3. Illegal Dumping.**

#	Goal	Expected Result	Status	Update
3.1	Implement a coordinated illegal dumping enforcement strategy, including (1) use of BeautifySJ cameras, (2) use of Police Department cameras, and (3) vehicle seizures. Evaluate effectiveness and report to the NSE Committee in August 2026.	Enforcing against illegal dumpers will deter future illegal dumping and reduce illegal dumping tonnage collected over time.		Led by BeautifySJ in partnership with PBCE and the Police Department, staff continues to address chronic dumping activity through enhanced coordination on enforcement. BeautifySJ and SJPD have initiated data sharing and collaboration on the deployment and use of Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR). In addition, BeautifySJ staff and SJPD camera and operations teams have begun holding regular coordination meetings to review illegal dumping cases and identify those with sufficient evidence for enforcement action. BeautifySJ is working with the City's Information Technology Department to assess staff access to Real Time Intelligence Center live camera feeds at select illegal dumping locations. Similar efforts are underway to increase access to ALPR data and BSJ's illegal dumping and graffiti camera systems. During Quarter 1 of FY 2025–2026, BSJ identified 73 illegal dumping cases with sufficient evidence to refer to Code Enforcement for follow-up. These referrals resulted in 18 warning letters being issued and 17 citations. Twenty-six cases were unable to proceed due to insufficient evidence, and 12 cases remain pending.



# Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area

**Problem**

**3. Illegal Dumping.**

#	Goal	Expected Result	Status	Update												
3.2	Implement an illegal dumping education strategy aimed at deterring illegal dumping, including (1) engagement with neighborhood associations, (2) school presentations and (3) a marketing campaign. Evaluate effectiveness and report to the NSE Committee in August 2026.	By educating the public about the impact of illegal dumping and options for legal disposal of trash, illegal dumping will be reduced, and trash disposal will be diverted to legal means.		BeautifySJ has doubled the number of presentations to associations and leadership groups (24) and doubled the number of schools engaged in environmental stewardship education and action around litter and illegal dumping (6). Staff is now developing consistent outreach plans for neighborhoods with high rates of illegal dumping and high move-in/move out rates (i.e. the area around SJSU with many students moving in and out). This work will continue through Q3.												
3.3	Implement strategies to improve Junk Pickup usage, including (1) 311 process improvements, (2) hauler outreach and coordination with multifamily complexes and (3) identification of potential service model improvements for the next solid waste contract. Evaluate effectiveness and report to NSE Committee in June 2026.	Strategies will improve utilization of Junk Pickup, thus diverting illegal dumping into a legal trash disposal method.		Staff in the Environmental Services Department has worked with the City’s multifamily hauler to improve usage of the Junk Pickup Program for multifamily residences, focusing on areas with significant illegal dumping. Strategies include proactive outreach and collaboration with multifamily property managers to schedule cleanout events for the residents. This approach appears to have yielded results, with average monthly tons increasing from 174.97 in FY 24-25 to 220.35 in the first quarter of FY 25-26, a 26% increase. <div> <p>The bar chart shows the tons collected through the Free Junk Pickup Program from multifamily residences for the first quarter of FY 25-26. The Y-axis represents tons collected, ranging from 0 to 300. The X-axis lists the months July, August, and September. For each month, there are two bars: a blue bar for 2024 and an orange bar for 2025. The 2025 data shows a significant increase in tons collected compared to 2024 for all three months.</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Tons Collected Through the Free Junk Pickup Program from Multifamily Residences</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>2024 (Tons)</th> <th>2025 (Tons)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>July</td> <td>174.97</td> <td>220.35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August</td> <td>174.97</td> <td>220.35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September</td> <td>174.97</td> <td>220.35</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Month	2024 (Tons)	2025 (Tons)	July	174.97	220.35	August	174.97	220.35	September	174.97	220.35
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**Problem** 3. Illegal Dumping.

#	Goal	Expected Result	Status	Update
3.4	Develop budget proposals for revised trash disposal procedures and service efficiency improvements that will prevent the City's service yards from reaching capacity. Develop and submit proposals by March 2026.	By implementing process improvements, the City will be able to continue process high volumes of illegal dumping, encampment trash, and trash from neighborhood volunteer events more efficiently with the goal of reducing the overall cost of trash off-haul and program management.		Initial assessments of the BeautifySJ Program indicate that there are potential efficiency improvements for trash hauling. BSJ staff is exploring ways to maintain current service levels, at reduced cost, by optimizing the allocation of resources (in-house, contractual and equipment) across BSJ sub-programs to better match the volume, complexity, and trends of the workload. Utilizing in-house staff, particularly where the cost per ton of trash off-haul can be done less expensively, is being explored
3.5	Conduct a pilot program for a dedicated service to collect shopping carts, evaluate pilot and recommend a permanent service model to the City Council by November 2025.	The shopping cart collection pilot will aid the City in developing a permanent shopping cart collection model, which will make the City more effective at retrieving shopping carts.		Code Enforcement conducted an Abandoned Shopping Cart Pilot Program from August 14 through November 14, 2025. The pilot collected 734 shopping carts within two pilot areas during the time period. Staff will return to Council with a proposed work plan on December 16. The Council item was delayed from November to December 2025 due to the timing of the Governor's approval of State legislation on shopping carts, which is key to setting the City's strategy on this matter.



# **What's Next?**

## **Focus Areas and the FY 2026-2027 Budget Process**

# What's Next?

## Focus Areas and the FY 2026-2027 Budget Process

Embedding Focus Area discussion into the Budget Process to ensure co-creation of strategies aimed to meet our Long-Term Goals

### January

#### Priority Setting.

Staff will embed Focus Areas into the 2026-2027 Preliminary General Fund Forecast and Budget Priorities Study Session to cultivate a discussion that supports the City Council articulating its priorities (given budget constraints and required reductions) in advance of the Mayor's March Message.

### February

### March

#### Mayor's March Message.

Direction given through the Message will inform exploration/scoping of future focus area work, that may include problem areas or specific change initiatives for FY 2026-2027. Any contemplated changes for the following fiscal year should be explored in this context.

### April

#### City Manager's Proposed Budget.

The Administration may propose change initiatives for FY 2026-2027, stemming from learnings derived from current year's execution.

### May

#### Budget Study Session.

The Administration will embed Focus Area learnings into a Budget Study Session; this will include recommended changes to the following year's Focus Area work.

### June

#### June Budget Message.

Through the adoption of the June Budget Message, the City Council will formally adopt the Focus Area workplans for FY 2026-2027.

#### Manager's Budget Addendum (MBA).

The Administration will publish an MBA that summarizes all feedback/ideas contemplated through the budget process and establishes a recommended path for FY 2026-2027.