



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mayor Matt Mahan
Councilmember Sergio Jimenez
Councilmember David Cohen
Councilmember Domingo Candelas

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: October 29, 2024

Approved:

Date: 10/25/24

Matt Mahan Sergio Jimenez David Cohen Domingo Candelas

SUBJECT: BEAUTIFYSJ NEIGHBORHOOD BLIGHT REDUCTION STATUS REPORT

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Accept the BeautifySJ Neighborhood Blight Reduction Status Report for 2023-2024.
2. Direct staff to produce an Information Memo by February 2025 with an assessment of opportunities to enhance illegal dumping and graffiti enforcement and deterrence measures. The assessment should include a progress update on prior Council and Budget direction and other recommendations to curtail blight, such as:
 - a. Coordinating illegal dumping and graffiti sting operations with the San José Police Department (SJPD)
 - b. Determining the feasibility of expanding camera coverage across the city by integrating the Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) system
 - c. Adding cash incentives to the P3 Mobile Crime Stoppers Unit for tips that lead to the citation or arrest of prolific taggers and illegal dumpers
 - d. Coordinating with Caltrans to:
 - i. Install hoods and shields to keep taggers from accessing freeway signs
 - ii. Deploy cameras and sensors in hotspot areas to alert CHP or SJPD depending on jurisdiction, to potential vandalism
 - e. Installing physical deterrents and cameras in more illegal dumping hot spots and deploying staff resources to review camera footage

BACKGROUND:

Our BeautifySJ teams work tirelessly every day to eradicate blight across our city, but they simply can't keep up with the ever-growing increases in illegal dumping and graffiti reports. Just last year, the Removing and Preventing Illegal Dumping (RAPID) program team received a 21% increase in reports and collected over 9.5 million pounds of trash, representing a startling 33% increase in the amount of debris collected from the prior year. BeautifySJ and contractors also eradicated almost three million square feet of graffiti, representing a 17% increase over the last

three years. These unsustainable trends will continue unless we get serious about stronger enforcement and deterrence measures.

Since at least 2021, Council has directed staff multiple times to explore strategies like monetary rewards for information or evidence resulting in the successful citation of illegal dumpers, expanding camera deployment, installing physical deterrents, and more intentional coordination between SJPD, Code Enforcement, and BeautifySJ to catch prolific dumpers and graffiti taggers. Yet, these ideas have yet to produce an effective enforcement strategy given our limited resources, an emphasis on eradication and education, and coordination challenges between departments and jurisdictions. Staff should report back in February – ahead of the budget process to help inform any resource needs – with their recommendations to meaningfully improve our enforcement strategies to deter graffiti and illegal dumping.

The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.