



Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION AND
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Khaled Tawfik
John Ristow
Jon Cicirelli

SUBJECT: Vehicle Concerns and
Service Improvements
Status Report

DATE: September 16, 2024

Approved

Date:

9/27/24

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the status report on recent enhancements to the San José 311 Vehicle Concerns reporting system and the coordinated multi-departmental response to vehicle blight concerns.

BACKGROUND

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, complaints regarding vehicle-related blight in neighborhoods, disputes over limited parking space, and impacts from lived-in vehicles on streets began to overtake traditional vehicle abatement core services. In Fiscal Year 2021-2022, the City Council noted the need to address vehicle blight issues and made vehicle blight a priority for FY 2022-2023.

Vehicle-related complaints require coordination across many departments. Typically, these complaints require staff to address vehicle parking, support those living in vehicles, ensure street cleanliness and safety, address potential crimes reported, and investigate disputes spanning public and private spaces in a coordinated, prompt, and effective manner. Correlating performance measures and customer satisfaction results for a clear understanding of impacts and challenges has been key to improving service delivery regarding vehicle blight. The Information Technology Department (ITD) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) launched a multi-departmental team to reimagine the response, resolution, and tracking of vehicle complaints for higher effectiveness and resident satisfaction. The project team includes representatives from ITD, DOT, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), San José Police Department (SJPd), Housing Department (HSG), Planning, Building and Code Enforcement (PBCE), and the City Manager's Office.

Staff previously provided status updates and reports on the Vehicle Blight and Vehicle Concerns programs and work efforts related to regulating oversized and lived-in vehicles. See Attachment A, for further information on previous updates, reports and future planned work related to oversized and lived-in vehicles.

Following the last update to the Transportation and Environment Committee on June 3, 2024, staff continued to detect and address system defects, accepted over 20,000 vehicle concerns service requests, developed and refined¹ frontline work processes, and launched the new [Vehicle Concerns Dashboard](#)^[OBJ] in September of 2024. See Attachment B for a summary timeline of prior efforts and upcoming workplan items.

ANALYSIS

Previously, all vehicle-related issues reported through SJ311 under vehicle abatement were directly integrated into DOT work streams and manually triaged. The new Vehicle Concerns service automatically triages and routes service requests to the appropriate City departments. As shown in *Figure 1* below, vehicle concerns service requests are now routed to one of five City departments based on information provided by the reporting party, including vehicle characteristics, vehicle condition, and the presumed use or activity in or around the vehicle.

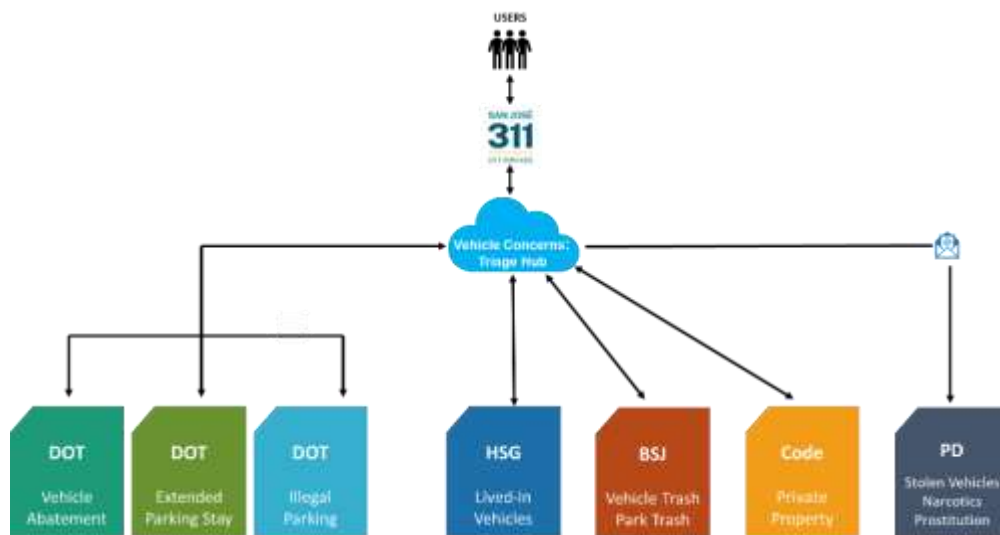


Figure 1: SJ311 Vehicle Concerns Triage and Department Distribution

Between the launch of the new SJ311 Vehicle Concerns service on March 28, 2024, and as of August 31, 2024, the system has received, triaged, and routed 20,077 cases, a subset of these cases (17%) was initiated by parking compliance staff during citywide

¹ SJ311 Vehicle Concerns Dashboard
<https://311.sanjoseca.gov/?page=shell&shell=reports-dashboard&reports-dashboard=reports-dashboard-vehicle-concerns>

proactive abandoned vehicle patrols. *Figure 2* below highlights the distribution of the 20,077 cases received across the five responsible departments.



Figure 2: Distribution of SJ311 Vehicle Concerns Requests by Program

Transportation – Parking Compliance

Since the systems launched in March, the Department of Transportation's Parking Compliance Unit has received 16,878, or 84% of the total SJ311 Vehicle Concerns service requests (3,400 monthly average). These cases fall into one of three categories (Abandoned Vehicles, Extended Parking Stay, Illegal Parking), each with its own work stream, outcomes, and customer satisfaction scores.

Abandoned Vehicles

Reports of vehicles exhibiting specific characteristics, such as missing/shattered windows, on jacks/blocks, missing wheels/tires, and inoperable vehicles, as defined by the California Vehicle Code, are investigated as potentially abandoned vehicles. Between March and August 2024, DOT closed out 5,588 of the 5,769 service requests received (97%), resulting in the towing of 1,283 vehicles (23% tow rate).

This Abandoned Vehicles service delivery, including both service requests submitted by the public (41%) and those proactively initiated by the Parking Compliance Unit (59%), is the most impactful in removing blighted vehicles from city streets. The new SJ311 system enhancements, which triage and assign service requests to the appropriate departmental workstream, have positively impacted customer satisfaction scores compared to the prior intake method. Figure 3 below highlights the difference in

customer satisfaction of the prior Abandoned Vehicle program (green bars), which in the prior six month (October 2023 – March 2024) was at 39%, compared to the current model, which in between April and August 2024 was tracking at 61% overall customer satisfaction (blue bar).

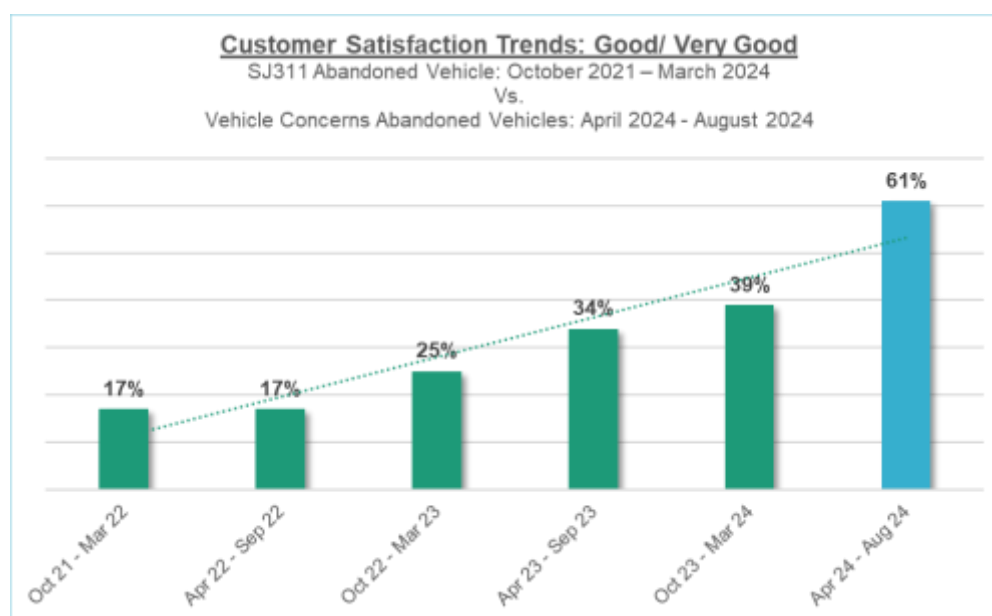


Figure 3: Abandoned Vehicle Customer Satisfaction Trends

Extended Parking Stay (EPS)

In August 2023, DOT expanded a pilot program focused on investigating vehicles reported as being stored on public streets for extended periods (at least 10-days) but not meeting the Abandoned Vehicle program investigation criteria. The Extended Parking Stay (EPS) Pilot Program is staffed with three (3) full-time contract staff, allowing for up to 10,000 vehicle investigations during FY 2023-2024. EPS has quickly become the largest volume of work (See *Figure 2*) with 7,971 cases received through August and is on pace to receive nearly 20,000 service requests in FY 2024-2025. Through August 2024, EPS investigations have resulted in issuing 425 parking citations and towing 11 vehicles. These outcomes demonstrate that most vehicle owners move their vehicles independently or are responsive to warning notices. The overall tow enforcement rate of vehicles investigated through the EPS Program is less than 1% at 0.015%. This enforcement rate is much lower than the enforcement rate of the Abandoned Vehicle Program tow rate of 23%.

The increasing volume of EPS service requests has begun to outpace resources, resulting in turnaround timelines that extend beyond the 21-day closeout goal. This, in combination with a low tow rate that does not meet customers' desired outcomes, has impacted EPS customer service ratings, with 26% of customers rating the service as

“Good” or “Very Good”. It is expected that timeliness may continue to be impacted by staffing resources and in return customer satisfaction.

Illegal Parking

A new feature of the SJ311 Vehicle Concerns program allows users to submit instances of illegal parking, including potential violations of no parking zones, red curbs, fire hydrants, blocking bike lanes and crosswalks. DOT is not currently resourced to provide an on-demand response to individual illegal parking concerns. However, illegal parking reports are collected, aggregated over time, and used to inform future parking enforcement deployments.

Through August 2024 DOT received 3,138 Illegal Parking reports. Staff has analyzed this data and identified specific areas of the City with the highest concentration of reports, noting that most of the concerns are reported as occurring in the evening and overnight hours when fewer Parking Compliance Officers are patrolling city streets. DOT is working to modify proactive safety patrols to accommodate temporary increased patrol frequency in the identified areas and will continue to review and analyze the data as Illegal Parking reports are received and make operational changes as appropriate.

Attachment C outlines additional details on how partner city departments address Vehicle Concern service requests, including the Housing Department’s approach to reports of lived-in vehicles and PRNS’s response to trash and biowaste concerns.

Information Technology

ITD recently launched the new Vehicle Concerns Dashboard. As part of this initiative, staff analyzed customer satisfaction data, leading to implementing an enhanced survey method designed to capture more actionable feedback. The new survey focuses on understanding customer satisfaction around outcomes, timeliness, and communication. It also disaggregates satisfaction scores based on the complexity of the service request and differentiates between city departments. This approach aims to provide a more detailed understanding of customer satisfaction and drive improvements in responsiveness.

As shown in Figure 4 below, you see the volume of requests and their status, outcomes of service requests, high-level and focused drill-down of customer satisfaction data, and the time taken to resolve service requests. Users can filter the data by date, council district and program type. The dashboard also includes a map of the service request outcomes across the City where users have the ability to input an address and search for Vehicle Concerns activity around the location.

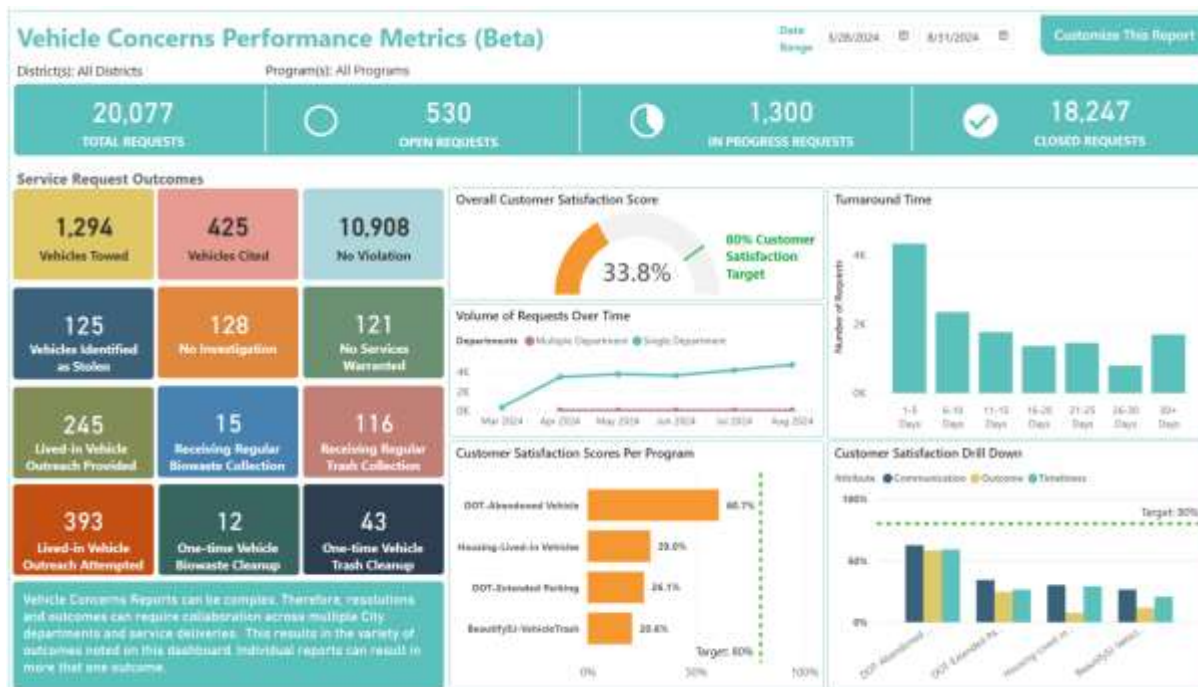


Figure 4: Vehicle Concerns Dashboard

COORDINATION

The Vehicle Concerns initiatives have been coordinated with the Information Technology Department; Department of Transportation; Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department; Housing Department; Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Office of the City Attorney; San José Police Department; and the City Manager's Office/Communications Office.

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For questions related to Vehicle Concerns Service Deliveries, please contact Arian Collen, Division Manager, Transportation, at arian.collen@sanjoseca.gov

For questions related to SJ311, please contact Namrata Batra Agrawal, Product and Projects Manager, Information Technology, at Namrata.batraagrawal@sanjoseca.gov

ATTACHMENT

- A. Vehicle Blight and Vehicle Concerns Program Updates, Reports and Future Work
- B. Vehicle Concerns & Workplan Timeline
- C. Individual City Department Approaches to Addressing Vehicle Concern Service Requests

ATTACHMENT A

Vehicle Blight and Vehicle Concerns Program Updates, Reports and Future Work

Staff previously provided status updates and reports on Vehicle Blight and the Vehicle Concerns program, as well as work efforts related to the regulation of oversized and lived-in vehicles during the following Committee and Council meetings:

- Transportation and Environment Committee on May 1, 2023²
- City Council on May 16, 2023³
- Transportation and Environment Committee on December 4, 2023⁴
- City Council on January 30, 2024⁵
- City Council on April 9, 2024⁶
- Transportation and Environment Committee on June 3, 2024⁷

Furthering the City's commitment to identifying and addressing the impacts of vehicle blight and more specifically, oversized and lived-in vehicles parked on city streets, the FY 2024-2025 adopted budget includes direction and funding to establish an oversized vehicle regulation pilot program. The Managers Budget Addendum #16⁸, outlines a DOT led collaborative approach to identify and begin addressing the impacts of oversized and lived-in vehicles parked on city streets.

² May 1, 2023, Transportation & Environment Committee: BeautifySJ Blight Status Report
<https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=11916666&GUID=AF4375B6-07C1-4A77-B22B-3732CAC61F14>

³ May 16, 2023, City Council – City Initiatives Roadmap: BeautifySJ Blight Status Report
<https://sanjoseca.primegov.com/portal/viewer?id=20274&type=2>

⁴ December 4, 2023, Transportation & Environment Committee: Vehicle Blight Status Report
<https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=12477914&GUID=85E82536-87E6-47A0-8831-3EAB84ED3CC1>

⁵ January 30, 2024, City Council – Regulating Oversized Vehicles Citywide
<https://sanjoseca.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=8643dccc-c87d-4546-a13f-1965160f3926>
January 30, 2024, City Council – Addressing Encampments & Oversized Vehicles Around Schools
<https://sanjoseca.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=67551f83-6408-4424-933f-7bb1a4fe1818>

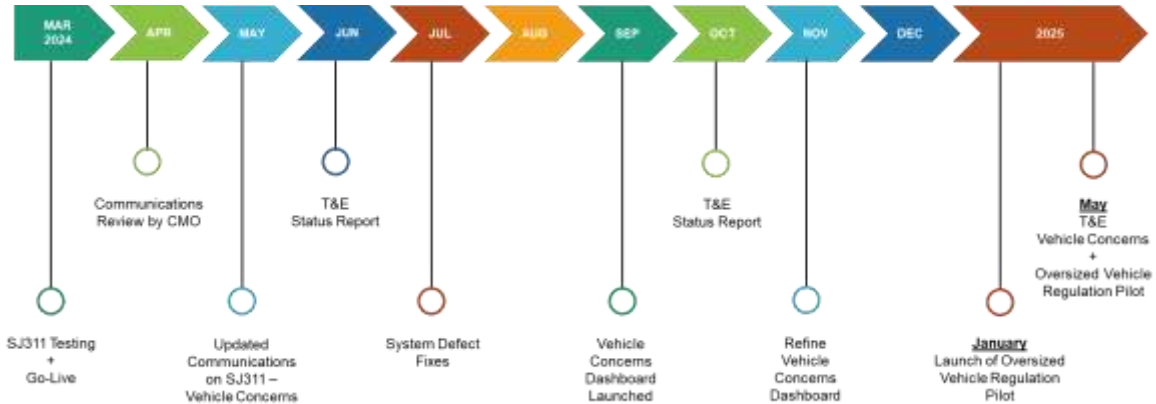
⁶ April 9, 2024, City Council, Proposed Ordinances Authorizing the Removal of Vehicles Parked in Violation of Prohibited Large Vehicle Parking Zones and No Overnight Parking Zones
<https://sanjoseca.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=a47964b8-6c3d-4978-8f22-492a680f45ce>

⁷ June 3, 2024, Transportation & Environment Committee: Vehicle Concerns Program Status Report
<https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=12996080&GUID=8B132567-20BF-43A8-9FB9-AB0893516994>

⁸ FY 2024-2025 Manager's Budget Addendum #16
<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/112302/638522459606300000>

ATTACHMENT B

Vehicle Concerns & Workplan Timeline



ATTACHMENT C

Individual City Department Approaches to Addressing Vehicle Concern Service Requests

Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services – Beautify SJ

The BeautifySJ Program in the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department provides cleanup services to those residing in lived-in vehicles. The BeautifySJ Program responds to work orders received related to trash near lived-in vehicles that are submitted via the San José 311 Vehicle Concerns portion of the app. The program responds to work order requests to remove trash from sidewalks, streets, and trail areas, and assess the vehicle to proactively determine whether it should be added to the Encampment Management trash collection route. From March 28, 2024 through August 31, 2024, the BeautifySJ team responded to 505 complaints of trash located near lived-in vehicles received via the San José 311 App. This resulted in 5,000 pounds of trash being removed during this time-period. It is important to note that BeautifySJ proactively collects trash from lived-in vehicles that are on a trash route as part of the Encampment Trash Program. The BeautifySJ Program receives most reports related to encampments and lived-in vehicles (trash, biowaste) via the Encampment Coordinated Response System.⁹

In addition to collecting trash from lived-in vehicles, BeautifySJ also collects bio-waste as part of the Recreational Vehicle Pollution Prevention Program. The collection of black and grey water from lived-in vehicles to prevent spills and disposal into storm drains. This program supports the City's Stormwater Permit mandates by proactively collecting bio-waste from lived-in vehicles. In fiscal year 2024-2025 the program will be scaling services from 150 vehicles in the prior fiscal year to six hundred (600) lived-in vehicles throughout the City to meet the increased demand for these services.

Housing

When a report is submitted through San José 311 for a lived in or occupied vehicle, it is routed to Housing (Homeless Response Division). The report is then assigned to an outreach provider (HomeFirst or PATH) depending on where in the City the lived in or occupied vehicle is located. The outreach team typically responds to the report within 30 days. When an outreach team responds to the site, there are three potential outcomes: Contact Made/Referral Provided, No Contact/No One Home, and Gone on Arrival. The outreach team will select the disposition in ERCS that best describes the outcome of the visit. Contact/No contact is dependent on if the vehicle is still in the location where it was reported or if the person inside the vehicle is willing to engage. If Contact is recorded, the person living inside the vehicle was there and willing to engage. If a

⁹ Encampment Coordinated Response System: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/parks-recreation-neighborhood-services/report-an-encampment>

person is there but unwilling to engage, No Contact is recorded, and the case is closed. If the vehicle is Gone on Arrival, the case is closed.

The outreach team provides basic hygiene, snacks (to help with the initial engagement) as well as referrals to resources, individualized to the person's needs. The team can also conduct a housing assessment to help determine the type of housing intervention needed. The assessment is submitted into the "system." Once a visit is complete (basic needs are met and referrals are made), the team closes the case.

Planning, Building, Code Enforcement – Private Property

When a report is received through SJ311, Code Enforcement reviews the report for completeness. If the report lacks sufficient information for Code Enforcement to act, the report is closed. If sufficient information is included in the report, a Code Enforcement case is created, and a letter is mailed to the property owner requesting they voluntarily address the vehicle issue that has been reported. A letter is also mailed to the reporting party requesting they respond within 21 days to confirm the vehicle issue has been addressed. If a report is received by the reporting party that the vehicle has not been addressed, the case will be assigned to an inspector to begin the enforcement process.

While customers now have the ability to report concerns on private property via SJ311, they may also still report their concern directly to Code Enforcement. Since the launch of the vehicle concern system, Code Enforcement has received 316 SJ311 reports for vehicle concerns on private property.

Police

Stolen Vehicles

When vehicle concerns are entered into the SJ311App with a license plate number, the number is run against a list of stolen vehicles reported to the Department of Justice. If the vehicle plate entered matches a plate on the list an email is automatically generated and sent to a specific mailbox at the San Jose Police Communications Center. A Communications Specialist assigned to monitor the mailbox will retrieve the email and create a police event to send a Community Service Officer or Police Officer out to the given location to determine if the vehicle is still there, still listed as stolen and if so, will recover the vehicle and attempt to return it to the registered owner. The SJ311App has flagged 125 vehicles to San José Police Communications as stolen since March 2024.

Narcotics and Prostitution

When vehicle concerns are entered, and the reporting party chooses the option of narcotics and/or prostitution, their complaint is forwarded via email to the Covert Response Unit for narcotics (250 referrals) and the Special Victim's Unit for prostitution (99 referrals). The emails are retrieved by the units Police Forensic Analysts and

assessed for information. If the complaint includes enough detailed information to open an investigation the information is passed on to officers to follow up. Between March 2024 and the drafting of this memo there have been only a handful of open investigations.