

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Arjun Batra

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: May 12, 2023

Approved *Arjun Dev Batra*

Date May 12, 2023

SUBJECT: CITY INITIATIVES ROADMAP: BEAUTIFYSJ VEHICLE BLIGHT STATUS REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the status report on BeautifySJ Vehicle Blight and direct staff to provide the following additional information:

- 1) Investigate methods that can be used to report the number of vehicles that have been towed and impounded but were later released to determine how many vehicles were truly abandoned and how many were reclaimed by their owners.
- 2) Explore alternative methods that can be used to obtain precise movement and status of a reported vehicle since its initial reporting.
- 3) Develop procedures to post notices on abandoned vehicles providing owners with alternatives to dispose of their vehicles.

BACKGROUND

The current Abandoned Vehicle Program deploys two approaches to provide San Jose communities with effective services. DOT's Parking Compliance Unit (PCU) follows proactive and reactive services to identify and remove vehicles parked on the city streets which they deem as most likely abandoned. The programs' new approach has increased tow rates from less than 7% to 26% and increased efficiency in deployment of staff resources. Currently, there is no data on the influx of vehicles being towed because of discrepancies in tow company's data intake. Direct staff to develop a routine practice of reporting the number of vehicles being towed but later released to calculate how many vehicles are abandoned versus how many are later retrieved by their owner.

According to the Vehicle Blight Analysis, Abandoned Vehicles make up 12% of service requests received, Nuisance makes up 16%, and Illegal Parking makes up the vast majority at 72%. The complexity behind the Illegal Parking category makes it difficult to uphold any enforcement actions such as towing. After the report is submitted the vehicle owner is given 72 hours to move their car before it becomes a violation. Vehicles associated with these concerns tend to move or relocate to another location before a PTCO is available to respond/conduct a field visit to

Item 5.1 – City Initiatives Roadmap: BEAUTIFYSJ Vehicle Blight Status Report

Page 2

investigate. Currently, PTCO's follow state guidelines, looking for a change in position in valve stems on vehicle tires to determine whether the vehicle has moved or not since the first visit. A vehicle only needs to move a few inches for the valve stem to move enough to restart the 72-hour time clock. Direct staff to explore sharpened procedures that can be used to more accurately determine the movement and status of a reported vehicle.

Additionally, to increase awareness of options available for disposing of unwanted vehicles, and to reduce on-street storage of unwanted vehicles, direct staff to create an informational flyer, or other tool, that can be widely distributed, including distribution to the vehicle that is being cited, either with warning, a citation, or other citings, clearly outlining each option and the steps for utilizing those options.