



Memorandum

TO: Neighborhood Services and
Education Committee

FROM: Angel Rios, Jr.

SUBJECT: City Council Focus Area
Status Report: Cleaning Up
Our Neighborhoods

DATE: May 26, 2026

Approved

Date: 6/3/2026

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the status report on the Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods City Council Focus Area implementation for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Third Quarter.

BACKGROUND

On September 30, 2025, the City Council approved the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Focus Area work plans developed under a new model. This framework is designed to strengthen and accelerate progress on San José's most significant, cross-cutting challenges.¹ The model organizes City efforts into five Focus Areas:

1. Increasing Community Safety
2. Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness
3. Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods
4. Growing Our Economy
5. Building More Housing

The Focus Areas represent a major shift from data reporting to a shared learning model, structured through quarterly cycles of planning, executing, reflecting, and improving. Each Focus Area is supported by a logic model (a framework linking long-term goals to near-term actions and measurable results) and by a regular cadence of retrospective learning sessions that enable teams to adjust strategies in real time and report insights to the City Council.

¹See September 30, 2025, City Council, Item 3.4, City Council Focus Areas Semi-Annual Status Report. <https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=14796341&GUID=F10DEA6B-E69E-4648-A366-E7C99FB38D05>

The purpose of the Focus Areas is to promote accountability for driving positive outcomes and performance on a very limited number of priorities most greatly impacting the community, and to generate actionable and measurable solutions to address those priorities. Each Focus Area is not designed to include all related City services, though each varies in breadth and complexity. Staff currently provides quarterly status reports on the Focus Areas, alternating between the City Council and the aligned City Council Committee. Staff reported on the Focus Areas (First Quarter Status Report) to City Council Committees during December 2025² and to City Council on March 10, 2026, with status updates.³

ANALYSIS

Building the Infrastructure for Long-Term Impact (June 2025–March 2026)

Between July and September 2025, the Administration focused staff capacity on building logic models that would serve as the foundation for a shared long-term vision for each Focus Area. Since City Council approval, the Administration has focused on establishing the *people, processes, and technology* that will sustain this new performance-learning infrastructure. In December 2025, staff re-launched dynamic, public dashboards for each Focus Area to increase transparency and accountability.⁴ These dashboards were designed based on user experience interviews to enhance engagement and usability.

Additionally, since the City Council formally accepted the new model, teams have learned to apply *execution-as-learning*, an approach to testing small changes, documenting observations, and refining their approach. This process builds the City's internal capacity for adaptive learning while maintaining focus on results.

Through this model, City leadership is encouraging curiosity and reflection through questions such as:

- What are we seeing in our metrics to date? How do we make sense of what we are seeing?
- What did we observe from this past cycle? What went well? What could have gone better?
- What barriers are limiting progress? What are we learning as a result?
- What is a main issue we should address to continue making progress?

² December 2025 Committee Updates. [Increasing Community Safety](#), [Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness](#), [Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods](#), [Building More Housing](#), and [Growing Our Economy](#).

³ See March 10, 2026, City Council, Item 3.4, City Council Focus Areas Status Report for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. <https://sanjose.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7928730&GUID=98CD802A-7D82-4424-8825-B838DC35A424&Options=&Search=>

⁴ <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/office-of-the-city-manager/city-council-focus-areas>

- What will we adjust in the next cycle to have the most impact?

Staff invite committee members to ask similar questions during these updates, as committee reports offer an opportunity to learn together about how our collective efforts are working in practice. During committee discussions, staff welcome conversations about what we are learning from implementation, what the data, stories, and staff experiences suggest about the effectiveness of current interventions. These updates are not intended to modify problem areas, near-term goals, or success measures, which are established and adjusted by the full City Council through the budget process. However, committee members are encouraged to explore how we measure success, such as opportunities to disaggregate or contextualize existing data, where available, to deepen understanding of outcomes and equity impacts.

Focus Area Updates and Lessons Learned

This Committee oversees the following Focus Area: Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods.

This status report provides the Focus Area's long-term goal, the problem areas identified for each near-term goal, and the status and explanation for each. Status for each near-term goal is reported as either complete, on track, at risk, or off track according to the following criteria:

- Complete. The goal has been fully achieved.
- Green / On Track. The goal is progressing as planned or is on track for completion during the fiscal year given minor delays that do not jeopardize timely completion.
- Yellow / At Risk. The goal faces challenges that may require additional time beyond the fiscal year to complete or challenges where the scope of the goal may not be fully achieved.
- Red / Off Track. The goal is significantly delayed and may not be completed unless substantial interventions are made.

FY 2025-2026 third quarter updates are summarized in the Attachment, and more data and learnings will be expanded upon in the staff presentation.

What's Next: Continuing to Learn and Build

The Administration views FY 2025–2026 as a pilot year that is focused on building the infrastructure, tools, and culture needed for long-term success.

Key next steps include:

- Iterating on the user experience for the community of public-facing dashboards for each Focus Area.
- Implementing near-term goals and associated change initiatives.

- Refining processes and metrics through regular retrospectives and interdepartmental coordination.
- Cultivating a work environment and team culture that ensures staff are supported to test new approaches, identify challenges early, and learn openly.
- City Council consideration and approval of a Manager's Budget Addenda with FY 2026-2027 Focus Area Work Plans.

The Administration's learning from the full year of this foundational work will be reported to City Council in fall 2026, which will include further updates on results across all Focus Area near-term goals. As this first year of Focus Area new approach to implementation represents an important step in building the long-term infrastructure for performance, learning, and results, staff will also provide relevant implementation insights with recommendations for further improvement in the second year of execution. While this work takes time to refine, the City is already gaining valuable insight from implementation and developing the systems and culture needed for major, lasting impact.

COORDINATION

This memorandum was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

/s/
Angel Rios, Jr.
Deputy City Manager

For questions, please contact Peter Hamilton, Assistant to the City Manager, at peter.hamilton@sanjoseca.gov or (408) 535-7998.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment: Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area FY 2025-2026 Q3 Status Update

Attachment: Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area FY 2025-2026 Q3 Status Update

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

Problem Area 1: Blight on Private Property	Q2 Status
<p><i>1.1 Implement Chronic Offender Resolution and Enforcement Pilot Program beginning in October 2025, and evaluate efficacy and report to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee in April 2026.</i></p> <p>The pilot program was launched in March 2026 and is currently being implemented. The purpose of the program is to expedite enforcement against properties with repeat violations. Once added to the program, the property will undergo an initial inspection by a Code Enforcement inspector. If violations are found, the property owner will be given 30 days to comply. If violations remain unresolved upon reinspection, the supervisor will review the case for potential referral to the City Attorney’s Office for legal action or issuance of a Compliance Order, significantly expediting the enforcement process. An update on progress was provided at the April 2026 meeting of the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee.</p> <p>Although the pilot will not be completed by the end of the fiscal year, resulting in a yellow status, staff has proposed that this goal be continued in the next fiscal year through Manager’s Budget Addendum (MBA) #8, which recommends focus areas goals for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. Completion of the pilot is anticipated by September 2026 and evaluation by December 2026.</p>	Yellow
<p><i>1.2 Implement Escalated Enforcement Policy beginning in September 2025. Evaluate efficacy and report on progress to the NSE Committee in April 2026.</i></p> <p>Escalated Enforcement Policy revisions were completed in September 2025. The policy was updated to provide clearer procedures and a more structured, step-by-step framework to ensure consistent and timely enforcement when compliance is not achieved. The updated policy establishes defined timelines, a formal escalation process, and expanded criteria for City Attorney referrals, supported by tools designed to improve consistency and decision-making. An update on progress was provided at the April 2026 meeting of the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee.</p> <p>Since implementation, FY 2025–26 data shows more cases advancing to the next enforcement milestone compared to FY 2024–25, including increases of 30% at the Citation stage, 11% at the Compliance Order stage, and 30% at the Appeals Hearing Board stage.</p>	Complete
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Due to unanticipated delays in the CodeX project staff is currently reevaluating the project plan and developing a revised project approach and timeline.</p>	Yellow
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>As part of the approval of the Code Enforcement Operational Assessment Report staff was directed to return to Council with an ordinance increasing administrative remedy per day and total maximum penalties. Staff was also directed to complete an administrative fine study as proposed in staff’s report. Staff returned to City Council in</p>	Yellow

<p>August 2025 with a proposed ordinance amendment that was approved by City Council increasing the per day maximum administrative penalty amount from \$2,500 to \$20,000 per violation and total maximum administrative penalty amount from \$100,000 to \$500,000 effective in October 2025. Staff secured funding through the 2024–2025 Annual Report to contract services with Guidehouse Consulting to complete a high-level fee study and analysis. The study has been completed, but additional staff work is needed to develop specific recommendations for fine amounts. Staff initially targeted bringing revised fines to City Council in the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year but due the need for additional staff work, MBA #8 proposes carrying this goal over into the next fiscal year, with a goal of bringing revised fines to the City Council in Fall 2026.</p>	
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The Working Group strengthened interdepartmental coordination and communication to address the Downtown's most blighted, chronically vacant, and nuisance properties. Code Enforcement expanded its use of administrative and legal enforcement tools in coordination with the City Attorney's Office including receiverships and nuisance litigation. The program is actively monitored 58 Downtown properties.</p>	Green

<p>Problem Area 2: Graffiti</p>	<p>Q2 Status</p>
<p><i>2.1 Implement a graffiti enforcement program. Evaluate effectiveness and report to NSE Committee in August 2026.</i></p> <p>This goal was implemented by the San José Police Department (SJPD) Graffiti Unit, which consisted of two temporarily assigned detectives who proactively investigated graffiti-related crimes. In March 2026, due to reductions in overtime spending, officers assigned to the graffiti unit were moved back to patrol. In the absence of this resource graffiti investigations are conducted by the Gand Investigations Unit or patrol, as time allows.</p>	Green

<p>Problem Area 3: Illegal Dumping</p>	<p>Q2 Status</p>
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>Beautify SJ (BSJ) and SJPD have strengthened collaboration and data sharing between BSJ's illegal dumping program and SJPD's Real Time Intelligence Center. Year to date, 112 cases involving illegal dumping have been referred to code for follow-up. This resulted in 18 warning letters being sent by code and 16 citations issued. BSJ is working with SJPD and other departments to develop a citywide camera technology procurement strategy. BSJ, SJPD and the City Attorney's Office have been pursuing options for seizing vehicles used in illegal dumping. To date, one case involving an illegal dumping situation has resulted in a warrant for seizure of a vehicle, with staff pursuing warrants in several other cases.</p>	Green

<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>To address illegal dumping occurring in hot spot corridors and neighborhoods, BSJ's RAPID team collaborates closely with the Neighborhood Association Engagement Team to conduct targeted outreach to neighborhood associations and neighborhood groups. This includes focused efforts in high-incident areas through the distribution of door hangers and educational materials, promotion of the Junk Pickup Program, and direct engagement with residents to encourage proper disposal practices. Prior to installing monitoring cameras, staff canvass the area and conduct knock-and-talk outreach efforts to educate residents about proper disposal options for large bulky items. BSJ's environmental stewardship program expanded to six school sites across five council districts in FY 25-26, with elementary and junior high school aged youth being educated on the importance of clean neighborhoods and pledging to bring this message to reduce litter and illegal dumping in their neighborhood and community home to family.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The Environmental Services Department (ESD) is working with the City's customer experience team to implement process improvements for the Junk Pickup services. These include updated and streamlined email templates sent to residents, updated setout instructions, and a new dashboard to track performance.</p> <p>ESD also worked with the City's contracted multifamily junk pickup hauler to increase proactive outreach to property managers. Email and phone outreach are being used to promote the junk pickup program and increase participation. Tonnages collected by the multifamily junk pickup program are up 31% over the same period last year.</p> <p>ESD has a Community Activity Specialist position that has recently begun supporting multifamily junk pickup outreach. The Community Activity Specialist meets with property managers to assess solid waste program needs, and promote use of the junk pickup program. Site visits commenced in May 2026. Learning outcomes from the Community Activity Specialist's site visits will help inform potential service model improvements in the next solid waste contract cycle.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p>The BeautifySJ Optimization Plan is included in the 2026–2027 Proposed Operating Budget. The plan is designed to address the growing volume and complexity of blight-related challenges while positioning BeautifySJ for long-term sustainability. Through operational efficiencies and strategic resource alignment, the Optimization Plan will expand the program's focus beyond high-volume trash removal to include comprehensive blight reduction, neighborhood and public space beautification, neighborhood engagement, and encampment management. This approach will enable BeautifySJ to preserve recent progress, enhance neighborhood livability, and deliver a more balanced and proactive service model citywide.</p>	<p>Complete</p>

<p><i>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.</i></p>	Complete
<p>Staff completed the pilot program and based on recent changes in state law, provided a recommendation on a permanent service model to the City Council in December 2025.</p>	