CITY OF
SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

TO: Neighborhood Services and Education Committee

FROM: Angel Rios, Jr.

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

DATE: December 1, 2025

Approved	Date:
	12/2/2025

RECOMMENDATION

Accept this status report on the City's Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area implementation and progress toward building the long-term infrastructure required for learning and continuous improvement.

BACKGROUND

On September 30, 2025, the City Council approved the *Focus Area Model 2.0*—a framework 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

Model 2.0 represents 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.

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[1] See 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

ANALYSIS

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

Between July and September 2025, the Administration focused staff capacity around building logic models that would serve as the foundation for a shared long-term vision for each Focus Area. Since Council approval, the Administration has focused on establishing the *people, processes, and technology* that will sustain this new performance learning infrastructure.

MONTH (2025)	MILESTONE	PURPOSE
JULY-SEPTEMBER	Completion of FY 2025–2026 logic models and retrospective training series • Conducted staff workshops and deep-dive consultations • Articulated Long-Term Goals, Problem Areas, Change Initiatives, and Near-Term Goals • Established indicators and metrics to serve as feedback loops • Initiated implementation of select change initiatives	Established foundations for shared understanding and learning
SEPTEMBER 30	Council adoption of Model 2.0	Formalized governance and accountability structure
OCTOBER–NOVEMBER	Completion of retrospective trainings and dashboard buildouts • Provided retrospective trainings for execution leaders in each Focus Area; training on performance leadership • Held first monthly retrospectives in each Focus Area • Conducted user experience interviews for public dashboards • Finalized data structure and collected data sets for dashboards	Capacity building and operational rollout
DECEMBER	Committee briefings and launch of first-iteration of dynamic public dashboards	Community learning

Additionally, during the initial two-month period since the City Council formally accepted the new model, teams have been learning how to apply *execution-as-learning*—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're 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?
- 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, we 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.

As committee members delve deeper into the focus areas and become the subject matter experts that can inform City Council discussions, the committee conversations they facilitate can help shape how we learn and support the City Council's broader decision-making.

Focus Area Updates

This Committee oversees the following Focus Area(s):

- Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods
- Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness

This report provides an update on the Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area. Because the September 30, 2025 City Council presentations were brief, for these first Focus Area Committee Updates in December 2025, staff will review the new logic model components and provide a full walk through of the Focus Area long-term goals; problems that are preventing the City from reaching its goal; the near-term goals staff committed to accomplishing to address the goals; and the change initiatives tied to those near-term goals. Implementation updates will be embedded in this presentation with a summary of key lessons learned to date.

Moving forward, each Focus Area Committee Update will include:

- A brief reminder of the long-term goal and near-term fiscal year goals;
- A summary of progress to date, drawing from retrospective learnings; and
- Key lessons learned and next steps to strengthen implementation.

A few major updates for the Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods Focus Area are summarized below; more learnings are expanded upon in the committee presentation.

- **Code Enforcement Problem Area**
  - **Chronic Offender Resolution and Enforcement Pilot:** 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.
  - **Escalating Enforcement Policy Revisions:** 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.

- **Graffiti Problem Area**
  - **Graffiti Enforcement and Diversion:** 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 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.

- **Illegal Dumping Problem Area**
  - **Illegal Dumping Enforcement Program:** Led by BeautifySJ (BSJ) in partnership with PBCE and the Police Department, staff continues to address chronic dumping activity through enhanced coordination on enforcement. BSJ and SJPD have initiated data sharing and collaboration on the deployment and use of Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR). In addition, BSJ 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. BSJ is working with the City's Information Technology Department to provide staff with training and 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.
  - **Junk Pickup Improvement Project:** Staff in the Environmental Services Department has worked with the City's solid waste haulers 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 tonnage collected from multifamily residences seeing a year-over-year increase from July-September 2024 to 2025. For example, the program collected 145 tons from multifamily complexes in September 2024 and 241 tons in September 2025, representing a 66% year-over-year increase.
  - **Abandoned Shopping Cart Pilot Program:** The Code Enforcement Division conducted an Abandoned Shopping Cart Pilot Program from August 14 through November 14, 2025. The pilot collected 734 shopping carts over this period within two pilot areas. Using the experience gained through this pilot program staff is bringing forward a recommendation for an ongoing abandoned shopping cart retrieval program to City Council at its December 16, 2025 meeting.

What's Next: Continuing to Learn and Build

The Administration views FY 2025–2026 as a pilot year for Model 2.0 that is focused on building the infrastructure, tools, and culture needed for long-term success.

Key next steps include:

- Continue iterating on functionality of public facing dashboards – improving usability and data shared for each Focus Area.
- Continue sequenced implementation of near-term goals and associated change initiatives.

- Refining processes and metrics through monthly retrospectives and interdepartmental coordination.
- Building capacity through additional training on data literacy, goal setting, and performance leadership.
- Cultivating a work environment and team culture that ensures our staff feel supported to test new approaches, identify challenges early, and learn openly. This involves staff feeling comfortable publicly working through discussions on projects where any missed targets are valued as learning opportunities, knowing that experimentation in this space requires creativity, iteration, and public learning without fear of personal blame.

The Administration's learning from this foundational work will be reported on during communications to City Council in Spring 2026, which will include updates on results-to-date across all Focus Area near-term goals. As this first year of Focus Area Model 2.0 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/
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For questions, please contact Peter Hamilton, Assistant to the City Manager, City Manager's Office, at peter.hamilton@sanjoseca.gov.