



Memorandum

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL**

FROM: Debra Figone

**SUBJECT: Law Enforcement and Related
Activity in Response to
Recent Homicides**

DATE: August 22, 2012

INFORMATION

Over the past week there have been seven homicides in San Jose, including several that appear to be gang-related. Given the sensitive environment of strained City resources in which these unacceptable incidents are occurring, this memorandum is intended to provide Councilmembers with key points that reflect the City's action plan going forward.

The past week has been an intense period of violence that has triggered a similarly intense response by the San Jose Police Department to ensure that our community can be confident that San Jose remains one of the safest big cities in America, and a nationwide model for combating gang violence. Based on our extensive and successful experience from similar spikes in violence that have occurred in past years, the Police Department currently is fully engaged in gang intervention and enforcement activity in concert with the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force and with our many partners in law enforcement and in our community.

Although the recent spike is extremely serious, I must emphasize that the Police Department and our officers have the skill, strong experience, and effective protocols for responding to gang issues and the recurring cycle of violence and retaliations. To address ongoing concerns, the Department has implemented a coordinated effort to:

- Swiftly identify and apprehend suspects to stop additional retaliations;
- Conduct police sweeps and other actions to disrupt gang activity and prevent further violence; and
- Activate our Crisis Response Protocol that engages police and other City departments, community service organizations, social service agencies, and schools to restore peace in affected neighborhoods.

Because of the urgency of this effort and its importance to community safety, Police Chief Moore has made this effort the highest priority in the Police Department. While recognizing that both short term and longer term issues must be addressed, the following actions have been taken immediately:

August 22, 2012

Subject: Law Enforcement Activity in Response to Recent Homicides

Page 2

- All available officers have been assigned to patrol duties in order to ensure appropriate response and investigations.
- Overtime funding has been renewed to ensure that we have sufficient police resources to implement proven protocols, including “overtime pay cars” that can quickly respond as needed to increase police visibility and provide backup when needed.
- The City’s youth intervention workers from Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services and other partners are already in the streets working with school officials, youth and their families, and neighborhood leaders to de-escalate volatile situations and provide aftercare and “cooling off” opportunities that help prevent retaliation and further violent incidents.

As a City organization, it is also imperative that we send a clear message to gang members and supporters, as well as to our community, that we will not tolerate further violence and we are taking the necessary steps to stop it. We recognize that the Police Department, as with certain critical operations throughout the City, has experienced significant attrition. Nonetheless, our officers and other staff will be given the support needed to focus to the task at hand – to apprehend offenders and ensure public safety. This is a time when we truly need all community leadership and resources to stand in solidarity with the Police Department and with our community partners as we deal professionally with this recent series of homicides.

We must also acknowledge that our focus on stopping gang violence will involve short-term tradeoffs with other Police Department priorities and resources. Recognizing that we have fewer officers in the department today than in past years, intensifying our response to recent violence means that in the near term we will not be able to maintain levels of service and response times for other calls for service. We continue to ask our community to be engaged work with their neighbors to monitor suspicious activity, help each, learn more how to prevent crime, and call the Police Department’s non-emergency line to provide information that can be critical to catching offenders.

To call attention to our police response and to enlist additional community leadership support, the Police Department will hold a news conference on Friday morning, August 24, immediately following the meeting of the Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force Policy Team. At this news conference I anticipate that the Police Department will be able to report on recent results of this coordinated effort to investigate these crimes, disrupt gang activity, and stop the violence. The Department will distribute more details about this news event tomorrow. I encourage all Councilmembers to stand with our partners in our efforts to preserve the safety of San Jose residents and neighborhoods.



Debra Figone
City Manager