



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Robert L. Davis
Chief of Police

**SUBJECT: SJPD EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN
SAFEST BIG CITY STATUS**

DATE: September 11, 2007

Approved

Date

9/12/07

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the San Jose Police Department's (SJPD) report on the referral issued in the Mayor's March Budget Message, "*Safest Big City in America: The residents of San José and the City Council have made public safety a priority. The City Manager is directed to report to the City Council on any additional steps necessary for San José to maintain its title as Safest Big City in America.*"

OUTCOME

Provide the City Council with information and activities taken by the SJPD to enhance public safety services within the City of San Jose.

BACKGROUND

This section discusses the City Council's public policy priority, the Morgan Quitno Ranking, and nationwide crime rates (with some select California cities profiled).

Council's Priority of Safest Big City In America

At the February 2007 Council Priority Setting Session, the City Council established as a three year priority the following, *Maintain status as Safest Big City in America*. In March 2007, the Mayor's Budget Message was approved by the City Council and contained a referral that required a report back from the SJPD that was responsive to the following:

Safest Big City in America: The residents of San José and the City Council have made public safety a priority. The City Manager is directed to report to the City Council on any additional steps necessary for San José to maintain its title as Safest Big City in America.

Regardless of the ability to maintain the designation of "Safest Big City in America," the Administration suggests that more discussion take place around the values supporting the City Council's public policy priority, along with a determination on whether this priority is properly

worded given that the priority can be interpreted as narrowly defined as receipt of the *Morgan Quitno* designation.

Morgan Quitno Ranking & Nationwide Crime Rate Statistics

The City of San Jose has enjoyed the designation of “Safest Big City in America” for the past five years (for cities with populations of over 500,000). This title is based on annual rankings compiled by the *Morgan Quitno Press, State and City Ranking Publications*. This designation is based on a proprietary analytical method employed by Morgan Quitno to assess crime rates for six crime categories (murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary and motor vehicle theft) as compared to the national average for different population groupings.

Statistics from the most recent FBI publication (Table 1) further illustrates that the City of San Jose maintains a low crime rate when compared to the national average. The Table shows San Jose’s crime rate data (per 100,000 populations) as compared to the crime rate data for the nation, state, and select California cities. For example, San Jose’s “homicide” rate of 2.8 means that on average there are 2.8 homicides per 100,000 population which is much lower than the nationwide average of 5.6: in comparison, San Francisco and Oakland’s rates are 12.8 and 23.2, respectively.

Table 1: 2005 Nationwide Crime Rate per 100,000 Populations

City	Population	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Total Violent Crime	Burglary	Larceny	Motor Vehicle Theft	Total Property Crime	Total All Crimes
Nationwide	296,410,404	16,692	93,934	417,122	862,947	1,390,695	2,154,126	6,776,807	1,235,226	10,166,159	11,556,854
RATE		5.6	31.7	140.7	291.1	469.2	726.7	2286.3	416.7	3425.8	3898.9
California	36,132,147	2,503	9,392	63,622	114,661	190,178	250,521	692,467	257,543	1,200,531	1,390,709
RATE		6.9	26.0	176.1	317.3	526.3	693.3	1,916.5	712.8	3,325.6	3,849.0
San Diego, CA	1,272,148	51	376	1,862	4,314	6,603	7,462	24,613	14,138	46,213	52,816
RATE		4.0	29.6	146.4	339.1	519.0	586.6	1934.8	1111.3	3632.7	4151.7
San Francisco, CA	749,172	96	172	3,078	2,639	5,985	6,208	19,887	8,174	34,269	40,254
RATE		12.8	23.0	410.9	352.3	798.9	828.6	2654.5	1091.1	4574.2	5373.1
Oakland, CA	400,619	93	306	2,672	2,621	5,692	5,783	8,227	9,017	23,027	28,719
RATE		23.2	76.4	667.0	654.2	1420.8	1443.5	2053.6	2250.8	5747.9	7168.7
SAN JOSE	944,857	26	263	884	2,319	3,492	4,049	13,374	5,507	22,930	26,422
RATE		2.8	27.8	93.6	245.4	369.6	428.5	1415.5	582.8	2426.8	2796.4

**Population based on figures from Demographic Research Unit, Dept of Finan
 Source: *Crime in the United States 2005*, issued 09/18/06

San Jose has maintained lower than average crime rates even as we face an ever increasing residential population, constraints on the number of police officer and support personnel, and ongoing budgetary issues. The City’s status as the nation’s *Safest Big City*’ has drawn attention to the issue of providing public safety services in San Jose.

As noted in a recent Mercury News article entitled *San Jose ‘Safest City’ No More* (8/16/07), the City of San Jose may lose its position at the top of the next Morgan Quitno ranking. The City

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has been aware of this possibility and, accordingly, the City Council requested that the SJPD issue a report on this subject.

ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to provide background on the City's efforts to: (1) Align limited police resources with public safety goals of community prevention, intervention and suppression; (2) Provide historical SJPD Resource Trend Information (e.g., calls for service, population, and sworn police officers); and, (3) Identify additional steps necessary to maintain the 'Safest Big City' designation.

SJPD Initiated Activities

Listed below are a number of recently implemented or ongoing programs that ensure, regardless of status, ranking, or acclamation, residents and visitors within the City of San Jose are truly safe anywhere, anytime. It is important to note that recent staffing and budgetary decisions advanced by the Administration, and supported by the City Council, have prioritized police operations. The following paragraphs address some of the efforts to reduce crime in general, and auto theft and burglaries specifically. Auto theft and burglaries are a particular concern as it is the increase in these categories that may impact the City's Morgan Quitno ranking.

Police Officers Added--The City Council approved fifteen (15) new police officer positions in the FY 07-08 budget. Some of these officers are targeted for assignment to the Auto Theft and Burglary Units, per the first tier of the first year of the Five Year Staffing Plan. Based on the current recruitment and policy academy schedule, these police officers will not be available until January 2009. Additional staffing to the Auto Theft Detail will assist the Department in the investigation of rising auto thefts, which remain a precursor to other crimes such as identity-theft (larceny) and burglary, fraud and Internet theft. Currently, the Auto Theft Detail has four officers and one sergeant assigned for a city of almost one-million population. (Auto Theft Detail has authorized staffing of six officers with two officer vacancies as of end of FY 2006-07.) Auto Theft caseload assignments average 30-40 cases per officer. With this heavy caseload, officers cannot be as proactive or provide the appropriate level of scrutiny to each event as they would like, resulting in delays to resolution of the case. Auto Theft investigators function only on a reactive basis.

Auto Theft Task Force--The nexus between auto thefts and other crimes often become complex due to the number of suspects involved, leads generated, and the rapid fencing of stolen property. These auto-theft, burglary and fraud "rings" are supported by criminal networks that cross jurisdictional lines and thrive on the lack of coordinated police efforts to inhibit their activities. The SJPD has a police lieutenant, sergeant and officer assigned to head up the Regional Auto Theft Task Force (RATTF), which is a countywide effort to reduce auto thefts throughout the South Bay. RATTF is a proactive taskforce dedicated to dealing with vehicle thefts. RATTF uses undercover officers, reverse sting operations involving vehicles and vehicle parts, and the use of bait (decoy) vehicles to impact auto thefts. RATTF investigators target suspects involved in multiple vehicle thefts, and work closely with all of the Santa Clara County law enforcement

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agencies. This effort receives state funding that is collected when owners renew their vehicles' registration fees through the DMV.

Use of License Plate Readers--SJPD has used grant funds to purchase License Plate Readers (LPR) for a few patrol vehicles. These LPRs have the capability of scanning hundreds of license plates while the vehicle is driven. The LPRs are used to look for stolen vehicles and vehicles used in specific crimes. The SJPD is presently deploying the LPRs to a limited number of patrol vehicles and is currently in the training and testing phase.

Strategic Gang Program—SJPD continues to set the standard for how police departments across the nation address gang problems in their communities. During a visit to San José in November 2004, Andy Moore and Jack Calhoun of the National League of Cities commented on San José's grass-roots effort to address issues of safety and gangs. They noted the "...constant re-engagement effort of partners and community involving new issues. The involvement of Community Based Organizations since the inception of the MGPTF in San José is part of a recipe for success, which includes folks from the ground level to policy level." This recognition rests on San Jose's three-prong strategy, which is a balanced model of prevention, intervention and suppression to impact gang crime. Recognizing that gang members often commit burglaries and auto thefts, this is part of the City's property crimes reduction strategies as well as for the obvious violent crime reduction. Additionally, the City Council recently appropriated one million dollars (\$1,000,000) for gang prevention. This additional funding will be used in conjunction with the City's ongoing efforts of prevention, intervention and suppression of gang activity in the City of San Jose.

Implementation of Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL)--In July of 2007, the SJPD activated the Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) function on its 9-1-1 CAD system. This new procedure is designed to ensure that the closest available police units arrive at the Priority call for service as quickly and safely as possible. By utilizing AVL location data for this purpose, the SJPD aims to improve Priority response times so that the closest unit to a priority call can be dispatched rather than relying on the older system of simply assigning the police patrol unit within the geographical beat in which the call originated. This allows the SJPD to reduce response times and make more efficient use of its limited patrol resources.

Manage by Measurable Performance Metrics--In 2004, Chief Davis institutionalized a process of Investing in Management of Police, Accountability, the Community, and Technology (IMPACT). The IMPACT Program uses data to identify where crime/public safety problems exist in the City and to allow Patrol Captains to assign resources accordingly to reduce crime in the respective area. In this process, a Patrol Division Captain reports each week to the Chief Officers about trends going on in their patrol area and what has been done to address the problems. The Crime Analysis Unit then analyzes the information to determine whether the problem described in the referral is verified by crime or activity data, and provides the responsible unit with potential solution resources through the following efforts:

- Small Area Crime Incidence Search to depict general or specific crime in a given area
- Suspect-Offense Correlation Search to determine if a suspect has committed similar crimes
- Hot spot or cluster analysis

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- Parolees/probationers/sex offenders with related histories who reside in the area
- Similar crimes with usable latent fingerprints on file

Essentially, this Program allows for more flexible deployment of SJPD resources to respond to peaks in crime trends as they occur. The IMPACT Program emphasizes using measurable performance metrics to ensure that efforts are results oriented (this is a modified version of the COMPSTAT model that came out of New York in the nineties).

Truancy Abatement and Burglary Suppression (TABS)—While the Department's truancy program is operating at a reduced level due to staffing cuts, the TABS program continues to target the detention and processing of truants from school. During CY2006-2007, TABS officers detained and processed over 6,000 juveniles. Since data show that the majority of daytime burglaries are committed by minors not in school, this is an effective method of addressing residential burglaries.

The Bureau of Field Operations is working with the Crime Analysis Unit (CAU) to identify the highest burglary areas in the City. Patrol officers have been working with TABS officers in their respective beats to impact the identified high burglary areas. The Patrol Division has also been working with schools to streamline the TABS processing of juveniles. Officers now have the option to return the truant to the school or TABS center, whichever is closer, to minimize the impact on out-of-service time for the patrol officer.

High Crime Clearance Rate--SJPD has sustained high clearance rates for violent crimes in general, and homicide in particular, when compared to other major cities in the country. The most recent crime statistics from the FBI (CY 2005) illustrates this point. In CY 2005 the SJPD had a homicide clearance rate of 96.2%, which compares favorably against the nationwide average of 62.1%.

Weed & Seed and SNI Programs--SPJD continues to actively support the Weed & Seed Program and Strong Neighborhood Initiatives through its Community Services Division. The Weed and Seed Program is designed to improve the safety of neighborhoods challenged by high levels of criminal activity in two steps. First, violent criminals and drug offenders are removed from these neighborhoods. Then the police, in league with a variety of other city agencies, work with local residents to help them clean up their own neighborhood. The program involves police interaction with the community through meetings, the establishment of a neighborhood watch program and other community programs.

Information Technology Improvements--The SJPD views its website as a powerful tool to both educate and inform the community. To support this, the Department has worked on developing the use of e-citation technology and has hired a webmaster. The electronic citation program will be used for the issuance of traffic citations, reporting of traffic collisions and reporting DUI cases on a hand held device. The current system is inefficient and labor intensive for the end-users and support staff. However, the e-citation project will improve the efficiencies in our collection of traffic citation, traffic collision and DUI information.

Additionally, the hiring of a webmaster will enable the Department to provide real-time crime data to the public, including information on how to prevent crime. The SJPD now has the ability

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to host videos on the Website. These videos can be used at community meetings to help the public understand how to avoid being the victim of a burglary or an auto theft (see www.sjpd.org). Enhancements have also been made to the Public CADmine via the Website. Public CADmine is a public-facing application accessed via the Department's website (sjpd.org) that allows visitors to review Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) data summary reports in a variety of summary formats either citywide or within a specific beat-building block (BBB). These reports now provide the public additional CAD data. This information will enable the public to play a larger role in community problem solving.

Citizen's Police Academy--The Citizen Police Academy is a program initiated by the SJPD in October of 1993. It gives members of the community an opportunity to see first hand how the Department operates and to understand the challenges the SJPD face in providing quality policing to the community. Participants learn about specific functions or activities and gain an understanding of SJPD polices and laws that Police Officers adhere to. The Citizen's Academy is highly interactive with role playing, practical training, and demonstrations interspersed with classroom presentations. Participants are given an opportunity to go on a ride-along with an officer. Although eliminated in recent years due to budget cuts, this program is being reintroduced in September of 2007.

SJPD Resource Trend Information

From 1998 to present (June 2007), the City population has increased by approximately 9% (see Table 2). This upward trend is expected to continue with a projected population approaching one million residents by 2010¹. This number does not include population increases from County pocket annexations (approximately 18,000). Economic constraints following the 2001 downturn resulted in staffing reductions in 2005, bringing staffing back to 1998 levels (1,343 sworn). The lack of corresponding staffing increases during the past years, combined with increases in population, development, and calls for service have intensified the impact of reduced staffing. For purposes of providing background data, Table 2 below summarizes the City of San Jose's ten-year trend data for population, calls for service, sworn police officers, and SJPD's operating budget.

¹ City of San Jose PBCE, ABAG, Projections 2005

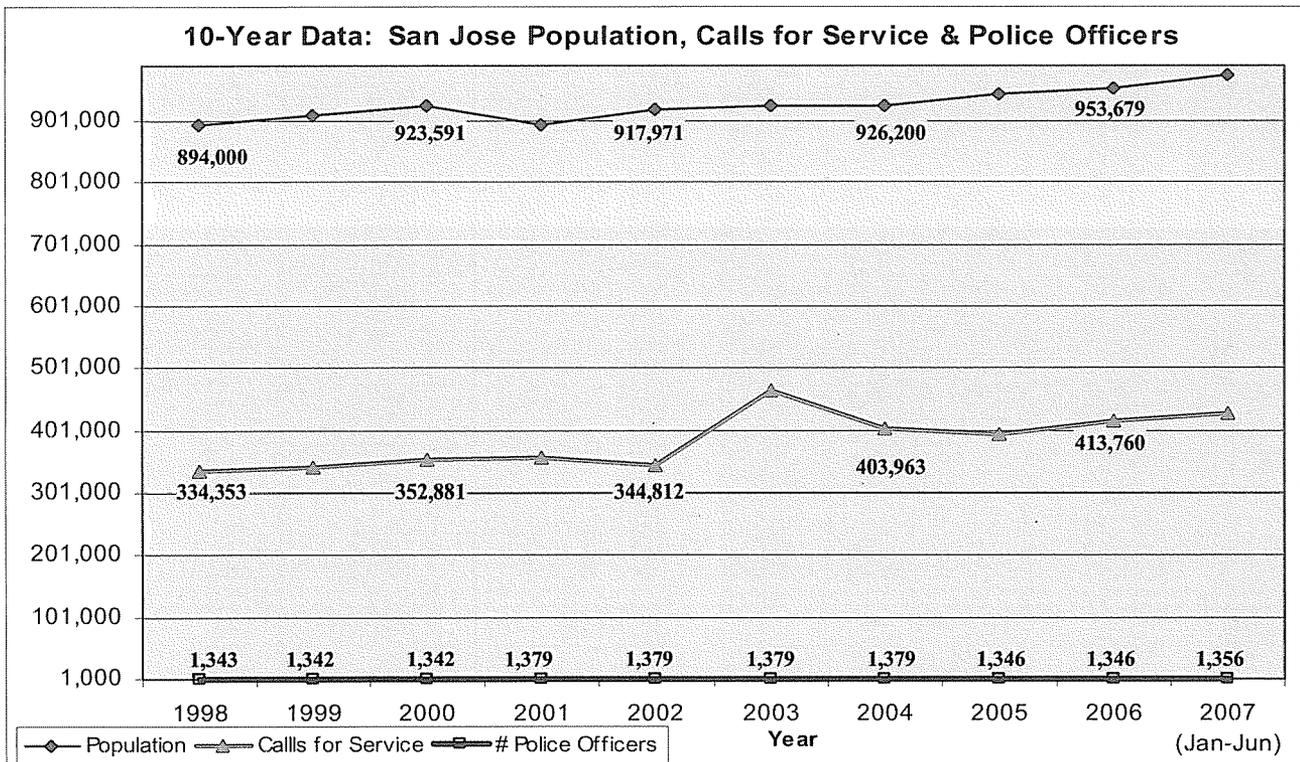
Table 2: Trend in City of San Jose Population, Calls for Service, Sworn Police Officers, and SJPD's Operating Budget

Year	City Population ²	Calls for Service ³	# Police Officers ⁴	SJPD Budget ** (Reported in Fiscal Years e.g. FY 98-99)
1998	894,000	334,353	1,343	\$167,491,997
1999	909,100	340,628	1,342	\$180,860,884
2000	923,591	352,881	1,342	\$189,414,987
2001	894,943	354,992	1,379	\$197,304,290
2002	917,971	344,812	1,379	\$216,690,144
2003	925,000	464,551	1,379	\$221,030,263
2004	926,200	403,963	1,379	\$233,054,844
2005	944,857	393,196	1,346	\$239,684,790
2006	953,679	413,760	1,346	\$261,787,876
2007 (Jan-Jun)	973,672	213,799*	1,356	\$281,142,125
1998-Present (% Change)	8.9%	27.9%*	0.97%	67.9%

*Year to Date 'Calls for Service' reflects only 6 months of the calendar year. To calculate a % increase from 1998-Present, the above figure was doubled and the above % is based on a projected 427,598 Calls for Service for 2007. From 1998 to 2006, there was a 24% increase in calls for service.

**The figures reflect the SJPD Operating Budget (personal and non-personal)

Chart 1: 10-Year Data: San Jose Population, Calls for Service, and Police Officers



² Department of Finance for all years except 2001, which was obtained from the 2000 census

³ SJPD Crime Analysis Unit

⁴ SJPD Personnel Unit. Number of "Actual" positions

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The above chart (Chart 1) shows that while the population and calls for service have increased by roughly 9% and 28%, respectively, the number of sworn police officers have essentially remained flat. As reported in November 2006 to the City Council, below are some key indicators that provide further context for the SJPD's staffing levels:

- The SJPD has 1.48 officers per capita (1000). This is 44% lower than the average officer per capita ratio of 2.64 for the 23 cities with populations ranging from 500,000 to 1,000,000 persons.
- The SJPD has 0.40 civilian police staff members per capita (1000). This is also approximately 44% lower the average civilian police employee per capita ratio of .72 for the 23 cities with populations ranging from 500,000 to 1,000,000 persons.

Impact to SJPD's Service Delivery

The result of population growth, increased calls for service, citywide budget reductions and the resulting flat staffing are as follows:

- During Fiscal Years 2002-2007, the SJPD incurred a loss of **thirty-six (36) sworn positions**. Ten (10) of these sworn positions were restored in FY 2006-2007; however, because of the time it takes to recruit, hire and train sworn personnel, the FY 2006-2007 additions will not be street-ready until October 2007.
- During Fiscal Years 2002-2007, the SJPD incurred a loss of **sixty-one (61) civilian positions**.
- Combined these position cuts have resulted in the following service reductions:
 - An entire Traffic Safety Team (motors)
 - A Special Operations Horse Mounted Unit
 - Detective positions in the Bureau of Investigations High Tech Unit, Assaults Unit and Burglary Unit
 - Alignment of limited Bureau of Investigations (BOI) personnel with priority given to crimes against person investigations. The shifts in staff and investigative priorities have adversely impacted the SJPD's ability to deal sufficiently with property crimes. For example, Bureau of Investigations (BOI) personnel must investigate crimes against persons on a prioritized basis. This required a necessary shift of limited detective resources to prioritize crimes against persons over property crime investigations so that the most serious interpersonal crimes could be responded to and resolved most effectively. As a result, the SJPD is experiencing weaknesses in its ability to impact burglary and auto theft crimes due to the lack of detectives in BOI. (*Note: Burglaries and auto thefts are two of the six crime types tracked by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Morgan Quitno used as factors in naming San Jose as the "Safest Big City in America."*)

In addition, the SJPD has absorbed/undertaken changes and/or initiatives that affect police service levels and available resources. For example, these include but are not limited to:

A. Police Services:

- Wireless call volume to the 911 system increased 20% during FY 2005-2006. In FY 2006-2007 wireless call volume to the 911 system increased 21.24%
- An increase in reported person and property crime
- Increased case complexity for investigations of identity theft, financial crimes, elder abuse, vehicle fatalities, and high tech forensic evaluations

B. Special Events & External Factors

- New state mandates requiring increased sexual registration monitoring (Prop 83) and federal increase in bomb detection activity at the San Jose Airport (e.g., anti-terrorism, and Homeland Defense)
- Federal Mandated anti-terrorism/Homeland Defense participation involving training, Joint Terrorism Early Warning Groups, intelligence sharing, and critical infrastructure protection as mandated by the receipt of federal funding
- Increased time and resource consumption diverted from normal enforcement duties to address high volume and complex City special events:
 - San Jose Grand Prix
 - Cinco de Mayo
 - Rock 'n Roll ½ Marathon
 - Increased growth in the Downtown Entertainment Area

Note: Some of these program costs are reimbursed through the Department's Secondary Employment Unit, City Office of Cultural Affairs or through City funding; the impact on staffing levels remains unchanged.

C. Administrative Issues or Efforts

- Deficient support and technical services due to inadequate levels of call takers, dispatchers, records clerks, analysts, technical, clerical, and information technology support staff.
- Increased demands on staff to recruit, conduct background investigations and train staff to fill the anticipated 260 retirements from police service by 2011, along with any increase in authorized staffing levels.⁵
- The Internal Affairs (IA) Unit continues to experience an increase in workload resulting from the complexity of cases to investigate and an increasing number of formal disagreements in IA cases. The increase workload has resulted in a backlog of assigning cases to investigators and completing investigations. Formal disagreements with IA case findings require a written response and, those that are not successfully resolved, are forwarded to the City Manager's Office for final disposition. In 2007 IA as received 59 formal disagreements. In 2006, IA received 40 formal disagreements and in 2005 15 formal disagreements were received. The approximate 300% increase of formal disagreements, over two years, has created a workload capacity issue with respect to investigation complaints.
- Sunshine Reform Task Force (SRTF)/Public Records Act (PRA) requests. Over the past year, as the SRTF has increased in activity, the SJPD has had to dedicate sworn and civilian resources toward advancing various open government reforms and to respond to increasing PRA requests, with some being significantly more complex in nature.

⁵ San Jose Police Department Proposed Five-Year Staffing Plan 2007-2012

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Presently, the SJPD lacks a Records Management System that would facilitate some PRA requests.

- Increased demand for various SJPD data reports (e.g., Force Response Report and Vehicle Stop Demographic Study) and the need to perform more rigorous statistical analyses to produce meaningful conclusions about the data. Many of these reports require that the data is collected manually and then entered into the database before an analysis can be performed.

Additional Steps Necessary to Maintain “Safest Big City” Designation

The discussion above illustrates the complexity of sustaining service levels within constrained resources and, also, illustrates various proactive measures taken to enhance public safety programs over the past years. Steps necessary to maintain the “Safest Big City” designation have been:

1. Assigning resources in a highly collaborative manner with departments, community, and other government agencies to yield the greatest impact and to maximize service delivery.
2. Wise/prudent use of grant funds.
3. Maximizing/prioritizing resources on violent crimes, over property crimes. Essentially, the SJPD has preserved funding levels, to the extent possible, on violent crimes (e.g., Homicide) over property crimes (e.g., auto theft). Auto theft and burglaries impact the City’s Morgan Quitno ranking.
4. Greater use of technology, within limited resources.

It is important to note that although the Police Department has been successful in applying limited resources toward a wide range of prevention, enforcement, and intervention issues, the cumulative impact of these staffing constraints has made it difficult to keep pace with crime trends and patterns, as witnessed by the rise in property crimes. The SJPD has taken additional steps necessary, as demonstrated SJPD Initiated Activities section, to maintain the title of Safest Big City in America. Last, over the last few decades, the SJPD has become widely recognized as one of the premier, professional law enforcement agencies in the country.

San Jose Business Model—Community Policing

SJPD business model is based upon the philosophy that the SJPD does not wait for crime to occur and then simply react or respond to it. Much of the SJPD’s success has come because of its ability to proactively work very closely with San Jose’s residents, neighborhood associations, community leaders, non-profit organizations, schools, social service organizations, elected officials, and other government agencies in its efforts to prevent crime, intervene with those in the community who are committing crime in an effort to extract them from a criminal lifestyle, and enforcing the law on those who choose to commit crimes.

The City Council’s investment and support in this model has helped the SJPD achieve its status as the “Safest Big City in America” for five consecutive years. The SJPD works to anticipate what crime trends or social issues are causing crime and then partners with ‘anybody and

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everybody' to address the crime and its socioeconomic roots in whatever manner possible. The current dilemma, however, is that the very business model that has worked so well for the SJPD is at risk due to staffing levels that have not kept pace with increases in demand for service.

CONCLUSION

The SJPD appreciates and shares the City's desire to maintain its title as Safest Big City in America. It is important, however, to note that by any objective measure, San Jose is among the safest cities in the country, regardless of our current or future ranking in the Morgan Quitno analysis.

There are many indicators that reflect the City's high level of safety. For example, a December 2005 statistically significant community survey shows that residents of San Jose hold a high feeling of safety; although, it is fully acknowledged that some areas of the City require more attention and may not experience as high of level of safety as reflected in the community survey. *(Note: This public opinion poll measured various elements of city service and was conducted in such a manner that it can accurately be characterized as representative of all San Jose residents.)* In conjunction with that survey, the SJPD consistently continues to use existing resources to leverage program/services that provide the most impact for public safety. As a result of these efforts, the majority of San Jose residents enjoy exceptionally high feelings of safety and this measure has remained very stable over the past years.

Finally, the SJPD appreciates the opportunity to discuss this topic with the City Council and will continue to ensure that our residents feel safe.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

N/A

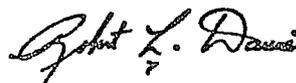
COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the City Managers Office and the City Attorney's Office.

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CEQA

Exempt.



Robert L. Davis
Chief of Police

RLD: LR

For any questions, please contact Lt. Laurence Ryan, Commander of the Research and Development (R&D) Unit, at 408-277-5250.