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Statement from Mayor Chuck Reed Regarding the Audit of the SJPD Auto Theft Unit

SAN JOSÉ, CALIF. – Mayor Chuck Reed issued the following statement today regarding the Audit of the San José Police Department’s Auto Theft Unit:

I want to thank the City Auditor and the San José Police Department for working to improve the performance of the Auto Theft Unit.

The City of San José takes auto theft seriously, and as a result, we recover more than 90% of stolen vehicles. The auto theft rate dropped by 12 percent in 2007 and by another 20 percent in 2008. Compared to other cities our size, San José has the fourth-lowest rate of auto theft.

San José Police Department needs to continue to aggressively address this problem and ensure our patrol staff has full knowledge of hot spots for stolen vehicles. The Auditor’s report provides some ideas for improving communications about trends and giving patrol officers more tools to proactively address this crime.

Through the Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force and our partnerships with other law enforcement agencies and nonprofits working with youth, San José has brought new attention to the problems of juveniles committing auto theft.

The Task Force recognized an emerging trend. One in every three auto thieves is a juvenile. Among auto thefts overall, only 6 percent are committed by juveniles who are repeat offenders. The Task Force has established a subcommittee to work across city and county jurisdiction to drive that rate even lower, and these recommendations from the City Auditor will enhance those efforts.

I want to thank the members of the Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force for working to address the rates of vehicle theft committed by youth in our community through a collaborative effort.

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