

# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Larry Esquivel

**SUBJECT:** POLICE DEPARTMENT'S USE OF  
MOBILE COMMAND CENTERS

**DATE:** December 9, 2014

Approved



Date

12/9/14

## INFORMATION

The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to Councilmember Herrera's November 5, 2014 Information Memorandum asking staff to look into the feasibility of deploying a San José Police Department Mobile Command Center to respond to an increase in burglaries in the Evergreen area.

## BACKGROUND

In September 2014, San José Police District Paul (which includes the Evergreen neighborhood) experienced a sharp increase in the number of reported burglaries. The increase in reported burglaries resulted in many residents expressing fear that their neighborhood was unsafe. The Police Department responded by attending numerous community meetings to engage in discussions with the community about the burglary problem and to address the residents' fears. During these discussions, a resident of the Evergreen community suggested that the Police Department establish a Mobile Command Center in the Evergreen area to address the burglary problem.

While the Department does utilize Mobile Command Centers, the use of these centers is typically limited to instances where the Department is attempting to control events which draw large crowds. For example, the Department often establishes a Mobile Command Center in the downtown area during the City's Cinco de Mayo celebration. The Department parks a large mobile unit downtown and the ranking officer will establish his/her command post at that location for the duration of the event. This approach allows the incident commander to manage his/her resources from the field. However, because the Mobile Command Center must, itself, be staffed at all times during its operation, the use of the unit involves a large number of field resources. In addition, the operation of a Mobile Command Center can involve multiple City departments and, sometimes, outside agencies, to manage all the resources assigned to the event.

Unlike an event which draws large crowds, burglaries, by nature, are not an issue of command and control. Accordingly, the Mobile Command Center would not be an effective tool to use to

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address this problem. Instead, the increase in reported burglaries is best addressed with the Department using its most current crime mapping software to determine where the burglaries are occurring and increase officers on patrol in those targeted areas. Since late September 2014, the Police Department has, in fact, utilized overtime funds and deployed additional officers to the areas where the burglaries are occurring in District Paul. These extra units, known as Burglary Suppression Units, have as their sole responsibility the combating of burglaries in the area. Specifically, patrol units conduct high visibility patrol in the areas where the burglaries are occurring and respond to alarm calls, suspicious persons, and in-progress burglaries in those areas. In addition, these units have no other responsibilities.

Since the deployment of the Burglary Suppression Units, the number of reported burglaries in District Paul has dropped more than 50% from a total of 95 reported burglaries in September 2014, to a total of 45 reported burglaries in October 2014. The Department is currently gathering the information for reported burglaries for the month of November 2014, and will report those numbers to the Council as soon as they are known. In the mean time, the Police Department will continue to deploy Burglary Suppression Units to targeted areas in District Paul which have been identified with the crime mapping software.

Since the Department's deployment of the Burglary Suppression Units, feedback from the community meetings has been that residents prefer officers patrolling their neighborhood over staffing a stationary command post.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Police Department appreciates the community engagement on how to address the increase in burglaries in District Paul and looks forward to continuing its dialogue with community members to quell their fears.

/s/

LARRY ESQUIVEL

Police Chief

For questions please contact Captain Michael Knox, Bureau of Field Operations, at 408-537-1807.