

## **Fill SJPD's Vacant Traffic Enforcement Positions**

Last year's budget allowed the San José Police Department to assign 30 police officers to the detail known as the "Traffic Enforcement Unit," or TEU, but only 18 officers currently serve in that detail. Twelve of the positions remain vacant, in part due to the steady flow of departures of retirement-age officers.

We can fill vacancies by pulling from other shorthanded units—such as patrol or homicides—or by accelerating hiring. I'd prefer the latter, and my March Budget Message calls for implementing a "hire ahead" program that enables SJPD to boost academies as more officers reach retirement age in the coming year. It also allocates millions more to add officers this year, and more in each of the coming years.

One colleague submitted a proposal urging that we commit the entire budgetary increase in hiring for the traffic enforcement unit. Yet Chief Anthony Mata and the City Manager explained extensively at the budget hearing (you can learn more [by watching the video](#) at 2:44) why such a proposal wouldn't actually accomplish anything—because adding more vacant positions doesn't actually get cops out on the street. Moreover, it neglects the other critical areas for police response.

If [merely having more cops on traffic enforcement doesn't magically solve a traffic safety problem](#), the bigger question lies in the "how" of our enforcement. Our strategic approach focuses enforcement on those 17 Priority Safety Corridors, to put officers precisely where the auto-involved injuries and deaths happen most frequently. Enforcement will focus on the specific behaviors—excessive speeding and recklessness—that pose the greatest risk of harm to the public.