



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Christopher M. Moore  
Hans F. Larsen

**SUBJECT: NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH  
SIGN INSTALLATIONS**

**DATE:** May 18, 2012

Approved

Date

5/18/12

## BACKGROUND

The Neighborhood Watch Program, managed by the Police Department, is designed to organize neighbors and give them information on how to protect their homes, vehicles, and families. Police Crime Prevention Specialists work with individual residents, neighborhood associations and property management companies to coordinate meetings throughout San José.

The Neighborhood Watch model allows neighbors an opportunity to meet one another and discuss issues impacting their neighborhood. Crime Prevention Specialists who are police liaisons with the community attend these meetings and answer questions pertaining to neighborhood climate, Police Department procedures, and various crime prevention topics such as statistics, CrimeReports.com, and other available public data; 9-1-1, 3-1-1, anonymous tips lines, and business lines; suspicious activity; vehicle crimes and residential burglary; vacation security and personal safety; and other neighborhood issues.

All Neighborhood Watch participants receive printed materials covering the above topics for further study as well as Neighborhood Watch window placards to show participation. In past years, qualifying neighborhoods with a 70% participation rate have had the option of having metal Neighborhood Watch signs strategically placed within their neighborhood, designating it as a Neighborhood Watch neighborhood. The installation of the signs was performed by the Department of Transportation (DOT) using Police Department funding. However, due to reductions in both the Police Department and DOT, the installation of the signs was suspended in 2010-2011.

## ANALYSIS

The community plays an important role in the safety of the City, and the relationship the community has with the Police Department is critical in investigating crimes and patrolling the City. By strengthening this relationship through the Neighborhood Watch Program and increasing awareness in the community, residents are empowered to deter undesirable activity in

their neighborhoods. The sense of belonging and knowing your neighbors encourages residents to look out for each other and deter suspicious activity by calling the police.

The Neighborhood Watch sign is a reflection of the significant unification among neighbors on that street and the San Jose Police Department. Only when 70% of a designated street or neighborhood participates in the Neighborhood Watch Program are they qualified to have the signs posted. Most neighborhoods strive to attain this goal. The City has received numerous requests to reinstate this service as part of the Neighborhood Watch Program.

The Police Department and DOT will be reinstating sign installations into the Neighborhood Watch program in 2012-2013, with the cost of the installations being covered by existing resources for up to 100 installations per year. Each Neighborhood Watch sign installation may include one or more signs, with an average of two signs per installation. The cost of the signs and mounting hardware is estimated to be \$34 per sign or \$6,800 annually. This cost will be absorbed within the Police Department's General Fund budget. The staff costs to install the signs are estimated to be \$59 per installation on average, or \$5,900 annually. This cost will also be absorbed within the DOT's General Fund budget. The requests for Neighborhood Watch signs will be addressed as they are received, and DOT will assign installations to crews with other sign installations and maintenance work already planned around the City. Depending on the demand for new signs, the departments may not be able to absorb costs above the estimated 100 installations per year. If sign demands are higher than estimated, a budget proposal will be considered for inclusion as part of the development of the 2013-2014 budget.

### **COORDINATION**

This MBA has been coordinated with the City Manager's Office and the City Attorney's Office.

/s/  
Christopher M. Moore  
Chief of Police

/s/  
Hans F. Larsen  
Director of Transportation

CMM/LP