

CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

To: Office of the City Administrator
Attn: Dan Lindheim
From: Police Department
Date: April 13, 2010

Re: An Informational Report From the Oakland Police Department Detailing Service Implications Associated with Eliminating the Abandoned Auto Detail, And Any Considerable Options to Continue to Provide Abandoned Auto Detail Services Should Said Cut Occur, And How The Options Will Effect Overall Police Service Delivery

SUMMARY

As requested by the City Council, staff has prepared this informational report detailing service implications associated with eliminating the Abandoned Auto Detail, and any considerable options to continue to provide Abandoned Auto Detail services should the Council move to cut funding, and the effect on overall police service delivery.

FISCAL IMPACT

The abandoned auto unit tows approximately 3,000 vehicles per year, with a decrease every year. According to the City's contracted towing company (B&B Auto) the City receives approximately \$52.00 per towed vehicle and results in approximately \$156,000 of annual revenues to the City of Oakland. In addition, administrative fees in the amount of \$125.00 per vehicle are also paid to the City for the release of vehicles. With approximately 50% of towed vehicles being picked up from B&B towing, this results in approximately \$187,000 of additional revenue. In sum, the General Purpose Fund fiscal impact pertaining to the elimination of the Abandoned Auto Unit would be a loss of approximately \$343,000 in annual revenue.

The Abandoned Auto Unit has an authorized staffing level of 8.0 FTE Police Services Technician II (PST II) positions, of which, 5.0 FTE positions are filled. Because two of the vacancies are golden handshake positions, and are already deducted from OPD's budget, the elimination of the Abandoned Auto Unit will only result in a reduction of 6.0 FTE from the budget for a total reduction of \$462,500.

Should the Council move to eliminate the Abandoned Auto Unit, savings to the General Purpose Fund would be approximately \$119,500 annually, which is the difference between the 6.0 FTE filled PST II positions and the revenues generated per year in towed vehicles.

The budget balancing report that went to Council on February 16, 2010 reported a savings of \$540,000 versus revenue loss of \$115,000. The difference in revenue (\$343k versus \$115k) is

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due to additional revenue realized in the program and \$125.00 administrative fees in this report. At the time the report was published, it was not clear that residents were paying administrative fees for vehicles that were legally classified as abandoned. However, further analysis of the program indicates that people are claiming about 50% of the vehicles that were towed by the Abandoned Auto Unit. The difference in salaries (\$540k in February versus \$463k in this report) is due to the identification of an additional golden handshake vacancy, which cannot be counted as budgeted salary savings.

It should also be noted that all cities and unincorporated areas in Alameda County participate in the Alameda County Abandoned Vehicle Abatement Authority and a \$1.00 fee is levied annually for each vehicle registered in Alameda County to fund abandoned vehicle abatement. The City's actual revenue associated with ACAVAA is based on a formula that consists of vehicles abated, population and land area as a proportion of the County totals. As such, 75% of the tows performed by the Abandoned Auto Unit are reported as part of the City's participation in ACAVAA. Anticipating that elimination of the Abandoned Auto Unit will severely reduce and/or eliminate the number of abandoned vehicles abated, the ACAVAA revenue that the City receives will be negatively impacted as well. On average, the City of Oakland has received approximately \$450,000 in ACAVAA revenue annually over the last five years. These revenues fund 1.0 FTE Police Officer and 2.0 FTE PST II in fund 2172 (Alameda County Vehicle Abatement fund).

BACKGROUND

The Abandoned Auto Detail has been since approximately 1981, and was established to address the problems of blight resulting from the high number of abandoned autos citywide. Since that time, a gradually shift has occurred annually from a majority of abandoned vehicles being towed to more vehicles being towed for expired registration violations.

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KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

The information below details the Unit's statistics from 2006 through 2009.

2006		2007		2008		2009				
Abandoned Auto Detail		Abandoned Auto Detail		Abandoned Auto Detail		Abandoned Auto Detail				
Year-End Totals		Year-End Totals		Year-End Totals		Year-End Totals				
Complaints	19,519	Complaints	11,955	-39%	Complaints	11,783	-1%	Complaints	8,804	-25%
Towed	5,146	Towed	3,861	-25%	Towed	3,586	-7%	Towed	3,064	-15%
Gone on Arrival (GOA)	10,047	GOA	9,057	-10%	GOA	6,693	-26%	GOA	5,479	-18%
Complaints Marked	6,236	Complaints Marked	7,024	13%	Complaints Marked	3,457	-51%	Complaints Marked	2,572	-26%
On View Marked	1,933	On View Marked	1,922	-1%	On View Marked	1,950	1%	On View Marked	2,156	11%
Citations	1,694	Citations	1,262	-26%	Citations	1,350	7%	Citations	3,275	143%
10.28.030 ¹ Citations	1,082	10.28.030 Citations	5,39	-50%	10.28.030 Citations	98	-82%	10.28.030 Citations	499	409%
Recovered 10851s ²	625	Recovered 10851s	624	0%	Recovered 10851s	358	-43%	Recovered 10851s	428	20%

Service Implications

Elimination of the Abandoned Auto Detail would severely impact the Department's ability to respond to complaints of abandoned vehicles. According to Department statistics, of the 3,000 vehicles towed per year, 88% are towed for expired registration violations (over 6 months expired). Without a dedicated unit to actively cite and tow offenders, much of the work would fall upon other PSTs, Patrol, and Problem Solving Officers, who would likely only respond to complaints from residents concerning abandoned vehicles as time permits, during the course of their normal assignments.

¹ 10.28.030 OMC – Use of Streets for storage of vehicles prohibited.
² 10851 VC – Stolen Vehicle.

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SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: While the elimination of the Abandoned Auto Unit will yield a small savings to the General fund, it will create a service delivery problem for the Department as well as the citizens of the City.

Environmental: The existence of blight and grime poses the opportunity for other environmental threats to breed within City limits, thereby affecting the well being and public safety of the citizens of Oakland.

Social Equity: The Abandoned Auto Unit was established exclusively to address the issue of blight associated with abandoned vehicles throughout the City. Elimination of this unit will prevent the Department from effectively managing abandoned vehicles and vehicles in violation of expired registration, thereby allowing for blight and grime to thrive.

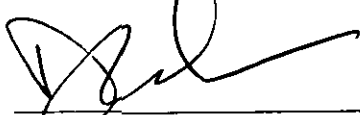
DISABILITY AND SENIOR ACCESS

There are no ADA or senior citizen access issues identified in this report

RECOMMENDATION

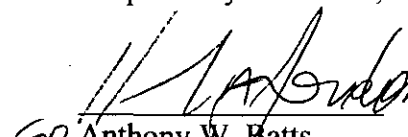
Staff recommends acceptance of this report.

FORWARDED TO THE PUBLIC
SAFETY COMMITTEE:



Office of the City Administrator

Respectfully submitted,



FOR Anthony W. Batts
Chief of Police

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