



May 15, 2011

FROM: Parking Enforcement Traffic Officer Members of SEIU 721

TO: Miguel Santana, City Administrative Officer

RE: SEIU 721 REPORT ON PART TIME TRAFFIC OFFICERS

Dear Mr. Santana:

This report was created by a committee of Traffic Officers to provide you their perspective on the impact on Los Angeles Department of Transportation, Parking Enforcement, Los Angeles residents, and the Part Timers, if the City decides to implement the Part Time Traffic Officer Program. We urge you to consider this information that we are providing you to make the decision not to implement the Part Time Traffic Officer Program. We provided you the facts below why this Program is not good for the City of Los Angeles, we provide facts that show that it is not financially effective to hire Part Timers in place of Full Timers, and we provide other options that are available to you to generate revenue.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO PART TIMERS

We are promoting for your Office to support Reinvesting the money that you will use to hire Part Timers to the existing resources within the department in the following manner below:

**1) Off-shift Work** – The Department states that the Part Time Traffic Officer will bring in four tickets an hour. A Full Time Traffic Officer averages 10 tickets an hour when they do off-shift work. Providing the opportunity for a Full Time Traffic Officer to do off-shift work tied solely to ticket writing will bring in money to pay for the Traffic Officer and extra to be put into the City budget.

**2) Part Time Cost Versus Full Time Cost** – A new Traffic Officer has a base hourly rate of around \$18; when you include benefits that hourly rate is around \$24. Two Part Time workers that are each paid \$16 an hour will cost the City \$32 for both.

For the cost of \$24 dollars, you have a Full Time Traffic Officer that are more flexible and able to do a multitude of tasks (duties outlined in #3, 4, 5, and ancillary duties), and that will exceed the job of two Part Timers that will cost the City \$32 per hour.

It makes more financial sense to maximize the abilities of a new Full Time worker than to hire a part time worker that will be pigeon holed to only ticket writing.

**3) HPV** – Revenue can be generated by re-implementing the Habitual Parking Violations Unit. This is the unit that focused on booting vehicles that have 5 or more tickets outstanding (scofflaws). The Department has disbanded this and has focused on towing vehicles instead.

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The Controllers press release dated April 26, 2011, has outlined the lost of revenue for the City since this program has been eliminated.

Also, the Department can deploy HPV with LPR (License Plat Readers) simultaneously to capture more boot eligible vehicles and abandon vehicles.

All traffic Officers have the ability to have a vehicle towed, but this can be supplemented with an HPV Unit that will bring in more money by capturing and booting more vehicles.

Here is the cost comparison between towing a vehicle versus booting a vehicle:

\$100 goes to the city when you tow a vehicle

\$150 goes to the city when you boot a vehicle

**4) Abandons Sweep** – Re-implement the Abandons Sweep. The Abandons Sweep operates by utilizing small group of Officers to sweep designated areas known for high volumes of abandoned vehicles. During these sweeps Scofflaws are picked up too where they are booted (vehicles with outstanding tickets). The area covered by the Valley Division and Central Division will be ideal for the re-implementation of abandon sweeps since these are the areas that have high numbers of abandon vehicles.

Potential revenue generating opportunity:

--\$100 to the city when a vehicle is towed as an abandon or boot eligibles (20 to 30 vehicles equates to \$2000 to \$3000 per sweep)

The sweep includes an average of 6 to 7 Officers that will have a target date, time and location for the sweep. Average abandon pickups equate to around 20 to 30 vehicles.

**5) Handicap Detail** – Re-implement the Handicap Detail. The detail worked with team of two Officers that would target areas with high activity of handicap placard violations.

Or, the Department can allow all the Officers to be able to cite handicap placard violations. Currently, all Officers are not allowed to cite handicap placards.

Potential revenue generating opportunity:

--\$330 a cite goes to the City

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

We outline the health and safety concerns that Part Timers will be subjected to doing a Traffic Officers job.

**1) IOD** – The repetitive nature of the job does cause injury to the Officers. The Part Timer who will solely write tickets will have a heighten increase of Carpel Tunnel due to the repetitive keying of information to generate a ticket.

The fact that the Part Timer will not be getting any benefits at all will be detrimental to that persons health and wellbeing and limit their ability to get another job or attain one that require them to type and/or key.

**2) Confrontations** – Ticket writing is the one task that puts the Officer in a higher chance of confrontations and attacks from residents – there is a 70% probability rate of incidents of attacks from residents against Officers during issuing citations.

There has been, and there will continue to be, incidents of Officers getting shot at, getting spat on, getting intentionally struck by vehicles, objects being intentionally thrown at them, as well as other physical and verbal assaults. This is particularly prevalent and increasing during these times where people are highly stressed due to the financial instability of our country. In Los Angeles, vehicles are essential to Angelino's daily activities. There are also situations where people live in their vehicles. These are perfect recipes for confrontations.

Since the Part Timer will solely write tickets, the City is putting this low paid and un-benefited worker in harms way. Couple that with the fact that they do not have benefits that will be needed when they are in need of medical attention.

This is not fair for the Part Timer, and the leaders of Los Angeles need to be more protective and in the forefront of protecting their workers.

## **PART TIME TRAFFIC OFFICERS VERSUS FULL TIME TRAFFIC OFFICERS JOB PERFORMANCE**

We outline the inefficiency and instability in a Part Timers job performance and worker output versus a Full Time Officer.

**1) High Turnover Rate** – there will be a high turn over rate which will be a waste of money for the City due to utilizing staff to have to rehire and retrain replacement Officers.

With a normal class of Traffic Officers at around 30 for Full Time positions, there is a drop out rate of around 6%. Of the remaining Officers (about 25 from 30) that continue past the training classes around 6.25% Officers do not pass probation. So, you only have 21 Officers who make it for a Full Time Position. These Officers who make it past training and probation have higher probabilities of staying with the department until retirement.

For a Part Timer that will not receive any benefits, we estimate that the turnover rate during training will be higher. And, the turnover rate during probation will be higher too.

The cause for the predicted rate of turnover is determined and based on the following: The stress of having to perform and capture high rates of tickets that can determine their future employment (At-will employment), and abuse from citizens during their normal course of duty (violence, verbal abuse, and physical attacks). A Part Time Officer will immediately leave and transition to another position that is full time within the city or out of the City to put them selves in a better position to have a better living for the stress they are willing to deal with.

**2) Dedication to the Job** – Once a Full Time Traffic Officer makes it to a permanent position (passed probation), the majority of the Officers will make this job their careers until retirement. This is when dedication and focus kicks in for an Officer to keep and maintain their job until retirement.

A part time traffic officer will view this job as a transition into another career. A part timer will not be expected to stay a part timer with no benefits for the remainder of their lives. This will cause a high turnover, which will drain the department in finances and time to rehire part timers and to train them to replace the ones that will leave.

**3) Experience** – Experience will be a huge factor that can determine the efficiency of an Officers work, maintain safety for themselves and others, and keep the city out of any liabilities.

A Full Time Traffic Officer takes in-class training that takes about a month. Then there is training in the field that takes about two weeks, at which point they are ready to perform independently. On average a well rounded Full Time Traffic Officer deemed experienced takes around 6 months to 1 year.

Keep in mind these trainings and the learning period of doing the job leads to decreasing the number of ticket errors, increase efficiency in writing enforceable tickets, and strengthens the Officers disengagement tactics to avoid injuries to the Officer or citizens and keeping the city out of any potential liabilities.

A Part Time Officer will not be able to be fully capable to handle the job with two weeks training as the Department has recommended. There are too many codes to learn, and there are too many tactics to learn that upholds the standards for safety, dealing with the public, and dealing with the stress and hazards that the job entails.

The learning curb of the Part Time Officer will take longer since they will work fewer hours on the job, coupled with the less training time they will receive.

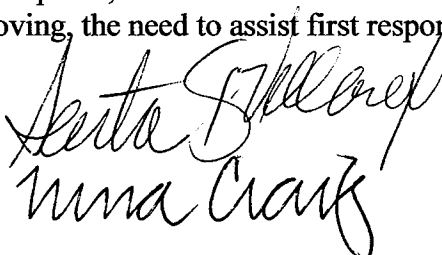
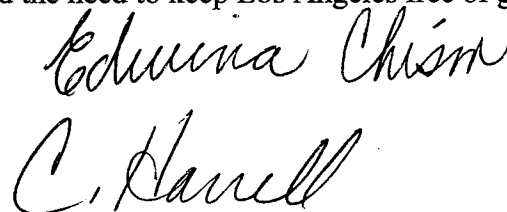
Naturally, this will cause high rates of ticket errors which equates to high rates of voided tickets. The Part Time Officer is being put in a higher safety risk of danger since they will not effectively be trained in the necessary tactics to avoid it. And, you will be putting the City in a higher rate of liability for compromising the necessary safety training that the Officer needs.

**4) Multitask Ability** – A Full Time Traffic Officer does all eligible cites and services. A Full Time Officer has the ability to capture tickets ranging from meters (around \$40) to towing a vehicle (\$100 plus the outstanding balance of scofflaws). That same Officer can immediately assist with detouring Traffic when there is an accident that happens during the course of his/her work.

A Part Time Traffic Officer will not have this multi-task capability and flexibility. They will not be able to handle an abandoned vehicle that could have brought the City \$100; they will not be able to handle stolen vehicles that help the City and residents with car jacking deterrence and tracking; and they will not be available and supportive to first responder assistance to keep traffic flowing and keep pedestrian traffic safe.

In Conclusion, we urge you to not implement the Part Time Traffic Officer Program because only a Full Time Traffic Officer can uphold and perform the type of work that it entails such as the first responder nature of the job, the safety aspects of the job for the Traffic Officer and the residents, the high standard of performance that needs to be upheld, the need to have flexible and adaptable workers that are able to multi-task to keep Los Angeles moving, the need to assist first responders, and the need to keep Los Angeles free of gross violations.

Sincerely:

500 S Virgil Ave • Los Angeles CA 90020-1404 • Tel (213) 368-8660 • Fax (213) 380-8040  
 309 S Raymond Ave • Pasadena CA 91105-2607 • Tel (626) 463-0471 • Fax (626) 463-1053  
 4336 S Market St • Riverside CA 92501-3518 • Tel (951) 686-7372 • Fax (951) 684-2134  
 82-655 Indio Blvd • Indio CA 92201-3133 • Tel (760) 346-5506 • Fax (760) 342-8160  
 2472 Eastman Ave Ste 30 • Ventura CA 93003-5774 • Tel (805) 644-8291 • Fax (805) 644-7843  
 933 Castillo Street • Santa Barbara CA 93101-3734 • Tel (805) 963-4411 • Fax (805) 962-9643  
 1651 E 4th St Ste 120 • Santa Ana CA 92701-5141 • Tel (714) 543-1063 • Fax (714) 543-2871  
 42231 6th St W Ste 201 • Lancaster CA 93534 • Tel (661) 802-0977 • Fax (661) 974-7914