

SOLANO COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY

2024-2025

City of Vallejo Roads

July 1, 2025

City of Vallejo Roads

Solano County Civil Grand Jury 2024-2025

I. SUMMARY

For the past several years the conditions of roads and traffic in Vallejo have been a continuous issue of discussion, and not in a positive way. Residents and non-residents passing through the City of Vallejo often weave through potholes and experience noise coming from illegal sideshows. The Solano County Civil Grand Jury (Jury) decided to examine city plans supporting street maintenance and efforts to curb sideshow activity. The jury was encouraged by their findings.

II. INTRODUCTION

The Jury chose to examine the road conditions, such as street potholes, and illegal sideshow road activity in the city of Vallejo based on complaints from residents of Vallejo. Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Data confirmed that Vallejo's street conditions are among the worst in Solano County and the Bay Area. Numerous news articles detailed citizen complaints about illegal sideshows happening in their neighborhoods. Based on this evidence, the Jury decided to investigate the entities responsible for city street maintenance and infrastructure and efforts to curtail illegal sideshow activity.



Figure 1: City of Vallejo Road Sign

III. STATEMENT OF FACTS

Street Maintenance

Years of underfunding in the City of Vallejo has led to significant deterioration of city roads. Today, there is a need to undertake significant reconstruction and maintenance measures to restore Vallejo's city streets.

The three primary agencies reviewed by the Jury were the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Solano Transportation Authority (STA), and Vallejo Public Works (PW) Department.

MTC is the transportation planning and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, which includes Solano County. It coordinates regional transportation projects, allocates

funding, and establishes the framework for the federal money dispersed to cities like Vallejo. MTC considers various programs and plans how federal funds can be spent.

MTC collects Pavement Condition Index (PCI) data for cities within its jurisdiction. This data is uploaded to the StreetSaver® database and used to assess the condition of local roadways and prioritize maintenance and repair projects. It is a federal requirement for cities to have these records updated every three years to be eligible to receive federal grant funds.

Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for Bay Area Jurisdictions, 2023 (continued)

Poor (PCI = 40–49)					
Jurisdiction	County	Total Lane Miles	3-YEAR MOVING AVERAGE		
			2021	2022	2023
Napa County	Napa	819.6	45	45	48
Petaluma	Sonoma	393.3	44	44	48
Pacifica	San Mateo	189.1	42	43	47
Vallejo	Solano	744.4	49	46	45
Bay Area		44,108	67	67	67

Figure 2: PCI Index Table

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) is responsible for planning, coordinating, and funding transportation projects and programs within Solano County. The STA Board is composed of mayors from seven cities in the county and one county supervisor. The Board makes decisions on regional transportation projects and allocates resources. The STA is involved only in major roadway construction funding and not in road maintenance.

The Vallejo Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining and improving the city's infrastructure, including streets, parks, and public facilities. PW is funded by a state gas tax, federal grants, and Measure P funds.

In 2022, the City of Vallejo voters approved Measure P sales tax to maintain city services including, but not limited to, paving city roads. Measure P added 0.875% to the city's sales tax and is estimated to generate \$18M annually. On January 23, 2025, the Measure P Oversight Committee approved \$10M of Measure P funding for the 2025 Roadway Paving Restoration and Renewal Project.

The level of street deterioration experienced by Vallejo now calls for significant effort in order to fund large scale projects. One way of acquiring funds earlier would be through a bond measure. In addition, the City of Vallejo is soliciting a municipal advisor service to review the City's long-range financing needs and assist with the development of alternative strategies for meeting those needs.

The Public Works Maintenance Division (PWMD) addresses issues related to residential road maintenance and pothole repair. Complaints are received through the SeeClickFix™ online tool

(non-emergency) or calls into the PWMD at (707) 648-5235 (for emergency maintenance). PWMD indicated that one challenge for the street maintenance section is a lack of steady labor force. Attrition is due in part to non-competitive salaries. PWMD has the lowest paid salaries for maintenance workers in Solano County.

Public Works Engineering (PWE) Department Staff provides funding recommendations for capital improvement projects including road repair/improvement efforts. These are larger scale projects handled by third-party contractors. These projects involve extensive planning, engineering, and significant capital. Capital funds must be approved by the Vallejo City Council.



Figure 3: Example of street deterioration with pothole and alligator cracking

Side Shows / Traffic Calming Measures

On November 14, 2023, the Vallejo City Council approved project plans and specifications for a Pilot Program dedicated to traffic calming measures. This program consists of installing traffic circles, speed bumps, and street narrowing at select intersections.

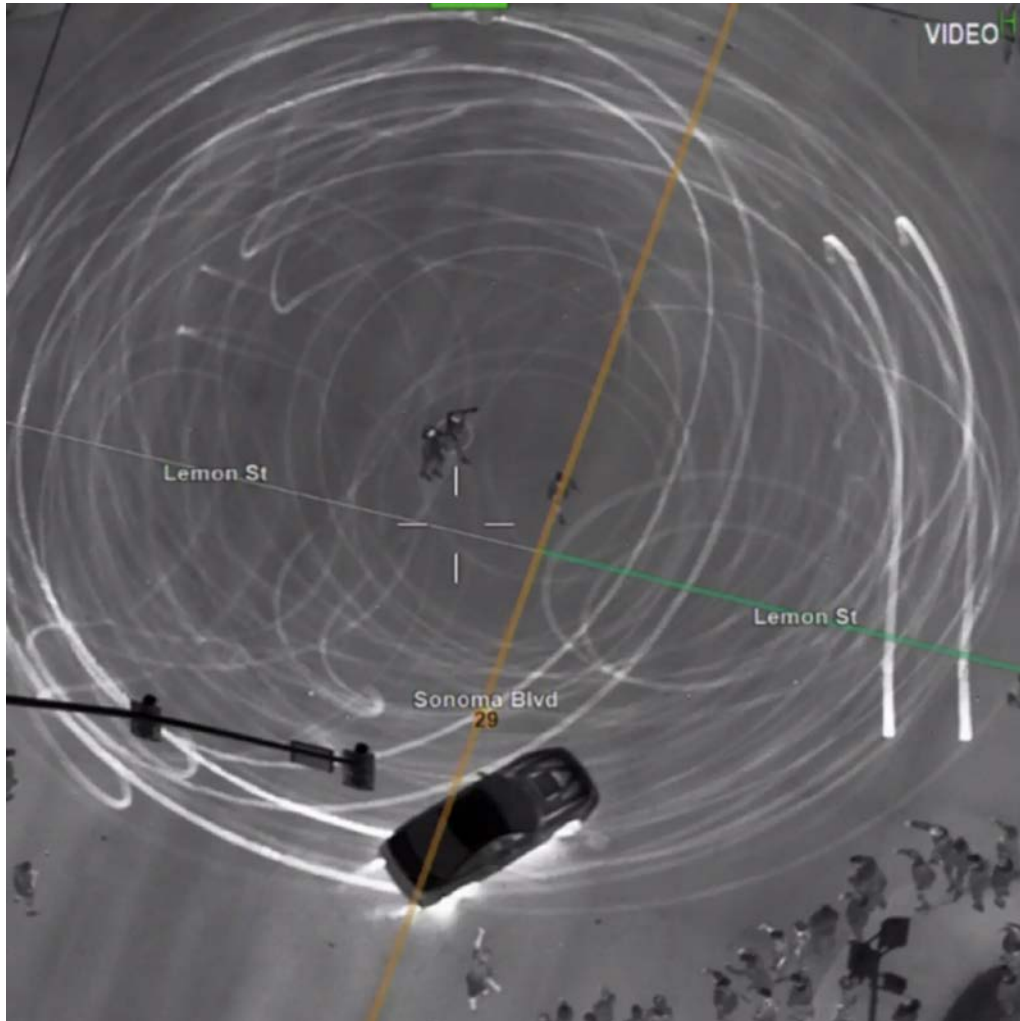


Figure 4: Sideshow at Lemon Street at Sonoma Blvd.



Figure 5: Results of sideshows at 800 5th Street, Vallejo

The installation of traffic calming measures requires the agreement of the Vallejo Police Department (VPD) and emergency services due to the impact these measures may have on response times for these entities. In addition, some side shows occur outside city jurisdiction. In these cases, the city cannot install measures through the Pilot Program described above.



Figure 6: Speed Bumps Approaching Dalwigk Park

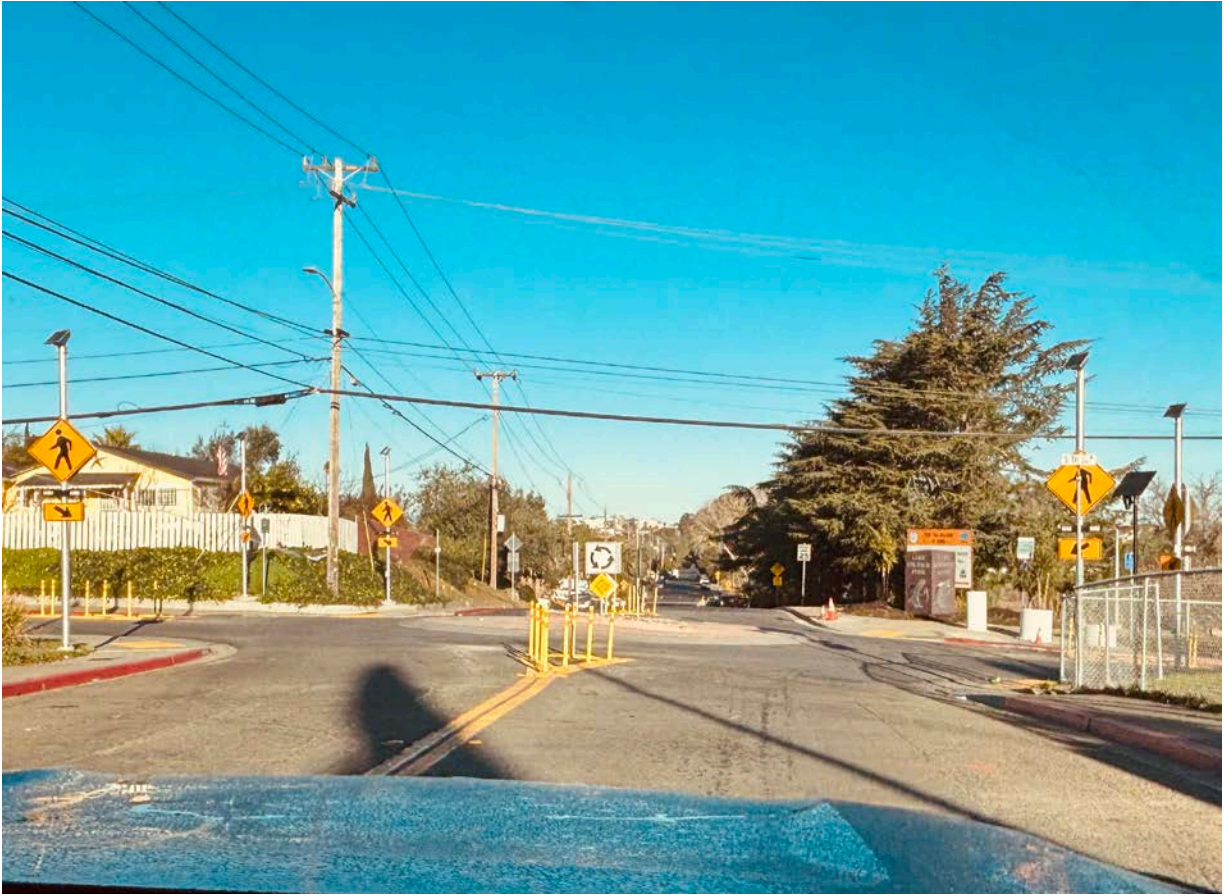


Figure 7: Traffic Circle at Dalwigk Park Intersection

According to the City of Vallejo website's Key City Briefs, "The Public Works Department is implementing several measures to deter sideshows. The city installed sideshow deterrent and traffic calming devices in 15 intersections as a pilot project throughout the city. These have mostly been at neighborhood scale intersections. The department is also working with peers to assess technologies and strategies that may work at larger intersections. The department expects to pilot some new devices and approaches at major intersections within the next few months. Note that any intersection that falls on a state highway is controlled by Caltrans, so the City would need to coordinate with Caltrans on the design of the devices as well as receive Caltrans approval to install the devices."

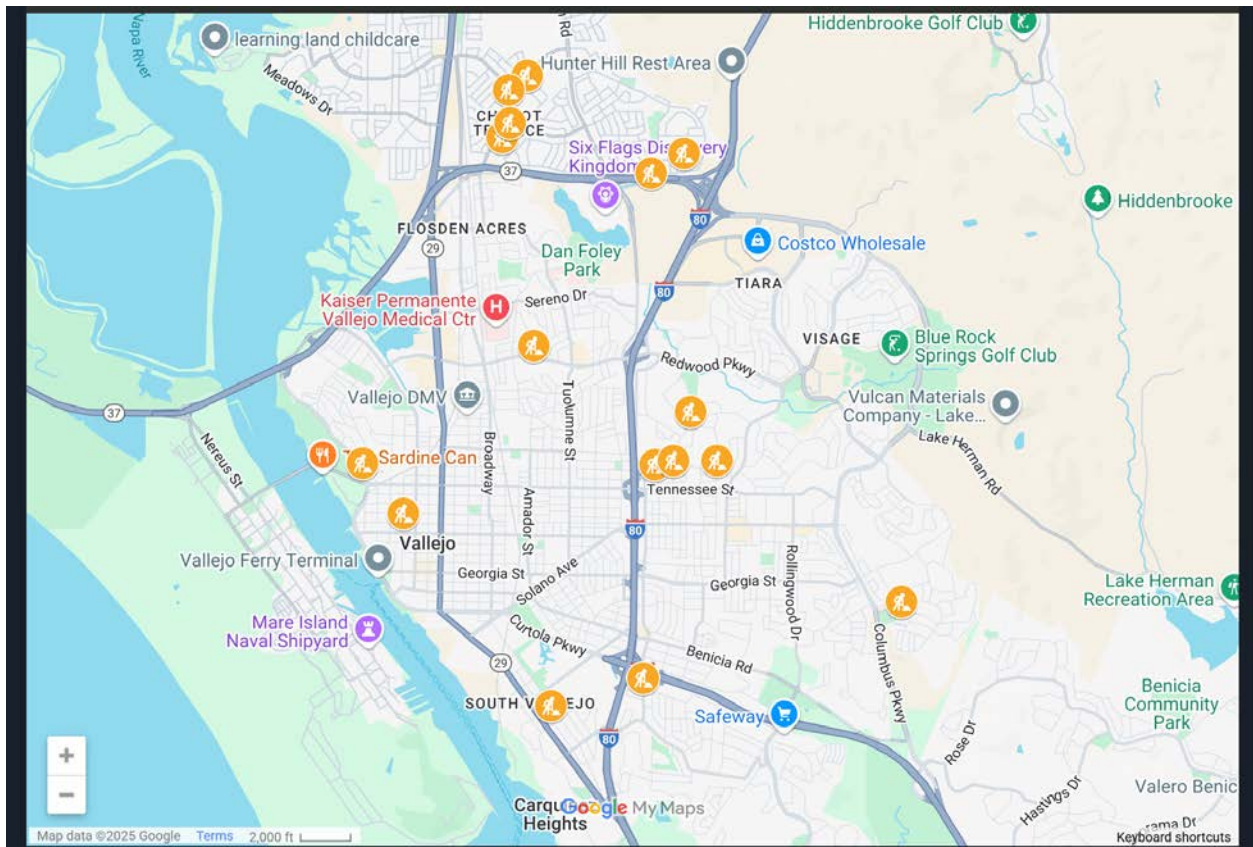


Figure 8: Planned intersections for improvement are depicted by the construction icons

VPD uses Flock Safety® Raven audio sensors to pick up sounds of screeching tires often heard during sidschows. The sensors are not installed city-wide, therefore areas lacking the sensors will not pick up sidschow activity. Data and history collected through these sensors can be searched; however, this data is deleted after 30 days.

The Jury contacted the VPD regarding data related to sidschows. VPD collects data regarding the number of 9-1-1 dispatcher calls regarding sidschows. However, the Jury notes that VPD does not collect sufficient data points or indicators to assess the effectiveness of these deterrence measures.



Figure 9: Flock Safety® Raven Audio Sensors

IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDING 1 – Vallejo Public Works Maintenance workers are among the lowest paid in Solano County.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – While a 5% increase in wages takes effect on July 1, 2025, the City of Vallejo should continue to look at ways to improve retention including salary competitiveness.

FINDING 2– Vallejo has not yet engaged a municipal advisory service.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – The City of Vallejo should expedite the hiring of municipal advisory services.

FINDING 3– Traffic calming measures have been installed in only select areas.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – Continue to explore pilot programs to find more permanent solutions to discourage sideshow activity.

FINDING 4 – VPD does not currently collect data regarding the efficacy of the Pilot Program, outside of 30-day logs from RIMS computer-aided dispatch (CAD) System.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – VPD should have defined measures to determine the effectiveness of the Pilot Program.

FINDING 5 – VPW is using a “pay-as-you-go” system to repair current roads and is not able to produce large-scale maintenance projects without upfront funds.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – The City of Vallejo should continue to pursue a city bond in order to properly fund needed large scale maintenance work.

V. COMMENTS

Timely preventive maintenance is crucial. Funding for road upkeep has been insufficient, leading to greater deterioration and higher future rehabilitation costs. The city bond requested by VPW will help address rehabilitation efforts in the City of Vallejo if it is approved.

Impediments to controlling sideshow activity include separation of jurisdictions between city and county roads; combined with the transitory nature of the sideshows. Many intersections within the city limits cross state highways or county roads which adds a level of difficulty in resolving illegal sideshow activity.

VI. METHODOLOGY

Video:

City of Vallejo: Measure P Oversight Committee
<https://vallejoca.portal.civicclerk.com/event/7255/files/agenda/10178>
<https://vallejoca.portal.civicclerk.com/event/7346/files/attachment/20466>

Documents:

City of Benicia Human Resources Department, Salary Information.
City of Vallejo Human Resources Department, Salary Information.
City of Fairfield Human Resources Department, Salary Information.
City of Rio Vista Human Resources Department, Salary Information.
City of Vacaville Human Resources Department, Salary Information.
City of Vallejo, August 2019 Pavement Condition Index (PCI)
Pavement Engineering Inc., Executive Summary - Pavement Management System for Vallejo Ca.
Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC): 2023 Pavement Conditions Summary
City of Vallejo Police 2022-2023 Biennial Report
Date: August 4, 2020 Announcement:
Vallejo police department cracks down on dangerous sideshow activity.
Date: January 27, 2025:

CHP Expands Support To Assist VPD In Addressing Reckless Driving & Sideshows.

Date: 10/10/24: Briefs of Key City Issues

https://www.vallejo.gov/our_city/departments_divisions/communications/briefs_on_key_city_issues.

SeeClickFix™

<https://seeclickfix.com/vallejo>

Interviews:

Solano Transportation Authority.

Public Works, City of Vallejo.

Site Tours:

Various streets within the City of Vallejo

VII. REQUIRED RESPONSES

Vallejo City Council: Findings 1 and 2

Vallejo Public Works: Findings 3 and 5

Office of the City Manager: Findings 1 and 2

Vallejo Police Department: Findings 3 and 4

VIII. COURTESY COPIES

City of Vallejo Public Works Director

City of Vallejo Assistant Public Works Director – Maintenance

City of Vallejo Transportation Program Superintendent

Metropolitan Transportation Commission

Solano Transportation Authority