



Safety, Wellness, and Youth Committee Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

**TO: THE SAFETY, WELLNESS, AND YOUTH
COMMITTEE**

DATE: JUNE 17, 2026

FROM: CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

WARDS: ALL

**SUBJECT: UPDATE FROM RPD, THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT, AND THE CITY
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE REGARDING \$70.00 PER TOW FEE FOR TOW
COMPANIES THAT CONTRACT WITH RPD**

ISSUE:

If it is possible for the City Council to reduce the \$70.00 “per tow fee” that the Riverside Police Department (“RPD”) charges to tow companies, and if so, what financial effect that would have on the City.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Safety, Wellness, and Youth Committee:

1. Receive the following report and presentation providing an update to the Safety, Wellness, and Youth Committee regarding the \$70.00 per tow fee in question; and
2. Provide direction on whether the \$70.00 per tow fee in question should be changed, and if so, to make a motion to refer the following report and presentation to the City Council.

BACKGROUND:

RPD has and continues to contract with various tow companies to provide tow services for police-related incidents around the City. As part of these contracts, and pursuant to Riverside Municipal Code § 5.15.095, each tow company has agreed to pay the City a “per tow fee” for each tow referral that RPD forwards to them.

According to the City’s Schedule of Fees and Charges for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, RPD currently charges a \$70.00 per tow fee, both for tows made at the request of a vehicle owner, (a.k.a. “owner request tows”) and any other vehicle tows.

DISCUSSION:

When the per tow fee was first implemented by the City in 2021, it was set at \$70.00 at the recommendation of a City-retained consultant. In practice, the \$70.00 per tow fee pays for several facets of RPD-related towing cases, including (1) officer responses, (2) officer time at the scene,

(3) the salary and total benefits package of RPD's "Tow Coordinator" position, and (4) several functions the Tow Coordinator is involved in. The Tow Coordinator is the RPD staff member whose job it is to facilitate RPD-related tows in the City.

Technically, it is possible for the City Council to vote to reduce the \$70.00 per tow fee. However, doing so would mean the City would have to subsidize many of RPD's towing functions from the General Fund. If the City Council wishes to avoid subsidizing tow-related RPD functions with money from the General Fund, the \$70.00 per tow fee should not be reduced.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A fiscal impact is expected if the City Council votes to reduce the \$70.00 per tow fee, as doing so would mean the City would have to subsidize many of RPD's tow-related functions with money from the General Fund. At this point, the total fiscal impact is unknown due to the fact that any reduction in the fee would have to be known in order to calculate the revenue impacts from any potential reduction.

Prepared by: Jacob Castrejon, Deputy City Attorney
Approved as to form: Rebecca McKee-Reimbold, Interim City Attorney

Attachments:
1. Presentation