



City of Larkspur

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March 3, 2021

Lucy Dilworth, Foreperson
Marin County Civil Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room #275
San Rafael, CA 94903

Foreperson Dilworth:

At its regular meeting on March 3, 2021, the City Council reviewed the report "Roadblocks to Safer Evacuation in Marin", dated December 14, 2020. The report calls for a response from the City of Larkspur to findings 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5) and recommendations 1, 2, and 3 (R1, R2, R3).

Please see the attached for the response from the City.

Should the members of the Grand Jury require any additional information, please contact City Manager Dan Schwarz at 415-927-5110 or dschwarz@cityoflarkspur.org.

Kevin Haroff
Mayor, Larkspur

DocuSigned by:

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Signature

03/03/2021

Date

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: "ROADBLOCKS TO SAFER EVACUATIONS IN MARIN"

Report Date: December 14, 2020

Agenda Date: March 3, 2021

Response by: Kevin Haroff

Title: Mayor, City of Larkspur

FINDINGS:

- We agree with the findings numbered **F1**
- We disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered **F2, F3, F4, F5**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Recommendations numbered **N/A** have been implemented.
- Recommendations numbered **R3** have not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.
- Recommendations numbered **R1** require further analysis.
- Recommendations numbered **N/A** have been partially implemented, and remaining parts will be implemented in the future.
- Recommendations numbered **N/A** have been partially implemented, other parts will be implemented in the future, and parts require further analysis.
- Recommendations numbered **R2** will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.

FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

F1. No single agency or jurisdiction is taking responsibility and authority for building infrastructure for safe evacuation routes across jurisdictions in Marin County.

Agree. This is by design and in line with best practices. The responsibility for evacuation route infrastructure is shared by many agencies serving their respective jurisdictions because evacuation readiness and safety is multifaceted. It is not yet clear that infrastructure in Marin is a material impediment to safe evacuation. Slow evacuation routes are not necessarily unsafe, and require further study. Public Works and Central Marin Fire are regularly engaged in hazard reduction and road safety initiatives. Vegetation fuel reduction along roadways is ongoing and increasing with new funding available since July 2020 through the Marin Wildfire Protection Authority (MWPA). Vegetation along the public right-of-way is the adjacent landowner's responsibility. Private property hazards are being addressed as part of the increased defensible space inspection programs.

F2. There is confusion in the county as to who has ultimate responsibility and authority for ensuring that Marin has safe evacuation routes.

Disagree. There are many factors that contribute to safety and efficiency of evacuations, and responsibility for these factors lie with multiple public agencies, private entities, and landowners. The order to evacuate and responsibility lies with the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction. Fire agencies and law enforcement have worked together to create pre-determined evacuation zones, regularly provided multi-jurisdictional exercises, common terminology and other initiatives that involve evacuation routes. Marin fire agencies, public works staff, and the Office of Emergency Services (OES) have closely coordinate on efforts around evacuation routes and infrastructure improvements.

F3. Marin County Board of Supervisors and town and city councils have the responsibility for safe evacuation routing, and they have not sufficiently considered evacuation as a criterion when approving improvements to roads and traffic infrastructure in their jurisdictions.

Disagree. Roads and traffic infrastructure has not been identified as the major factor in evacuation safety in Marin. The MWPA evacuation study will evaluate potential hazards and impediments as well as additional critical factors not addressed in the Grand Jury report, such as non-traffic related improvements that are significant components of evacuation safety: home hardening, near home defensible space, roadside vegetation, roadside combustible structures.

Traffic related improvements with the greatest impact are likely to be intersection related, including the ability to manage intersections effectively during power outages/Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS), or when public works and law enforcement availability is reduced (battery/generator backup for intersections, remote intersection control, real-time traffic monitoring, LEO control). Evacuation routes may have garnered less attention in some regions prior to 2017. Since then, regular coordination of fire agencies and public works has taken place. An example of this is engagement of fire agencies and Fire Safe Marin were consulted extensively in the development of the center median project on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard specific to evacuation concerns in 2019 and 2020.

F4. County and municipal administrators, public works, and traffic engineers have not adequately considered mass evacuation as a criterion for planning and funding traffic infrastructure improvements.

Disagree. Public works professionals, traffic engineers, and other relevant staff consult with fire professionals and consider evacuation in concert with daily traffic impacts, pedestrian safety, and other traffic related considerations to best inform projects and spending priorities in Larkspur. The City of Larkspur will not comment on the practices of other jurisdictions.

F5. Most Marin jurisdictions have not yet included urgently needed evacuation plans in their general plans as required by state law and as recommended by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

Partially disagree. The City of Larkspur will not comment on the practices of other agencies. MWPA (composed of 17 member agencies including the City of Larkspur) will conduct an analysis of evacuation routes including hazards and risks. When complete (projected 2021), this study will include ratings of roads and contributing factors to evacuation impediments. It will provide the guidance necessary to inform the MWPA's annual workplan as well as local hazard mitigation plans, public works agencies, traffic engineers and others making infrastructure improvements.

The City of Larkspur is in the process of updating its General Plan (projected completion 2021). Evacuation Planning is identified as a priority in the updated Safety Element. A draft of the General Plan Update can be viewed at cityoflarkspur.org/generalplanupdate. The updated General Plan will meet all State law requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

R1. Within 180 days of the date of this report, the governing boards of the County of Marin and its cities and towns should direct their respective planning and public works departments to include evacuation needs among their criteria for evaluating and recommending public works projects.

This recommendation requires further analysis. MWPA will be conducting an analysis of evacuation routes including hazards and risks. This study will include ratings of roads and contributing factors to evacuation impediments. It will provide the data and information necessary to inform public works projects.

R2. Within 180 days of the date of this report, the governing boards of the County of Marin and its cities and towns should adopt resolutions calling on the Transportation Authority of Marin to include evacuation needs among the criteria it considers when planning and funding public works projects.

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable. The Transportation Authority of Marin assists the municipalities in Marin County with the implementation of capital projects by identifying sources of funding and by ensuring that funding is distributed from other State and regional agencies in a way that is consistent with law and other shared agreements. While TAM provides a high level of support and works to ensure there is communication and coordination among the communities in Marin County, each jurisdiction is responsible for determining their own capital improvement projects. Local

governing bodies such as the Board of Supervisors and local City Councils are best suited to address the needs and priorities of the communities they represent.

R3. In calendar year 2021, the County of Marin and its cities and towns should update the safety elements of their general plans to include evacuation planning.

This recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. The City of Larkspur will not comment on other agencies and the status of their Safety Elements. The City of Larkspur is in the process of updating its General Plan (projected completion 2021). Evacuation Planning is identified as a priority in the updated Safety Element. A draft of the General Plan Update can be viewed at cityoflarkspur.org/generalplanupdate.

MWPA will be conducting an analysis of evacuation routes, including hazards and risks. This study will include ratings of roads and contributing factors to evacuation impediments. It will provide the data and information necessary to further inform public works projects, priorities, and policy. 2021 implementation of any recommendations in this study is likely not feasible.