



CITY OF MARINA

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August 27, 2018

The Honorable Judge Stephanie E. Hulsey
Judge of the Superior Court
240 Church Street
Salinas, California 93901

Re: City of Marina Response to Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report – “WHO’S IN CHARGE? Stepping up on Homelessness: The need for strategic leadership and comprehensive planning”

Dear Judge Hulsey:

The City of Marina recognizes the issues and challenges associated with homelessness in Monterey County and the strategic leadership and comprehensive planning that is critical if we are to move forward with addressing this problem.

As requested by the Civil Grand Jury, the City of Marina respectfully submits the following responses to Findings F1 – F12 and to Recommendations R1 – R10 of the Grand Jury’s Final Report entitled “WHO’S IN CHARGE? Stepping up on Homelessness: The need for strategic leadership and comprehensive planning.”

The City’s Response to the Grand Jury’s Findings and Recommendations was approved by the City Council at a special meeting held on August 10, 2018. In adopting and approving its Response and expressing support for various programs and initiatives to address homelessness, the City Council made no contractual or financial commitment or pledge of resources in support of specific plans, programs, organizations or initiatives and nothing contained in its Response should be so construed.

The City Council would like to thank the members of the 2017-2018 Grand Jury for their participation and effort in preparing their Report, and their participation in the Grand Jury process.

Findings

F1: Homelessness is a bigger problem in the County than the biennial homeless census would suggest.

Response: The City agrees with the finding. The City does not track nor have an accurate count on the number of homeless in Marina.

F2: The County's homeless problem has the potential to get worse if we do not invest in accessible housing solutions. Growing housing insecurity will only increase demand on our underfunded, over-stressed public services.

Response: The City agrees with the finding. The City is already seeing a growing demand on underfunded public services related to the homeless problem.

F3: The County's strategy for addressing homelessness needs a clearer focus, accountable leadership, and enhanced capacity.

Response: The City agrees with the finding. The homeless problems countywide are continuing to grow, stronger leadership to address this problem is critical.

F4: Structuring the Continuum of Care administrator as a 501©3 nonprofit organization is conducive to securing funding and coordinating homeless services. However, a nonprofit organization cannot establish public policy and planning needed to end homelessness.

Response: The City agrees with the finding. While the City is not directly involved with the Continuum of Care, it believes this would be a good program for securing funding and coordinating homeless services.

F5: The County has unofficially established the Coalition of Homeless Service Providers as the central organization for addressing homelessness. Making any non-profit the center of homeless solutions effectively creates the perception there is governmental leadership when there is, in fact, no formal political leadership. This arrangement provides elected officials with a way to avoid accepting political responsibility for addressing homelessness.

Response: The City partially disagrees with the finding. While the City agrees that the Coalition of Homeless Service Providers does not provide the best avenue for cities to work together to address the homeless problem, it does not believe the arrangement is a way for Marina's elected officials to avoid accepting responsibility for addressing homelessness.

Because the structure of the Coalition of Homeless Service Providers is without political leadership, it does not have policy making power. Even when our elected officials have attended Coalition meetings, they have no authority to provide direction and end up being at the meeting only to gather information.

F6: The Coalition of Homeless Service Providers is a small nonprofit that does not have sufficient capacity to administer the County's strategic plan to end homelessness and its continuum of care for both Monterey and San Benito counties. It does not provide political leadership to coalesce public support and government commitments around a concrete action-plan to end homelessness.

Response: The City agrees with the finding.

F7: The composition of the Leadership Council and its location within the Coalition of Homeless Service Providers has affected the focus of the leadership council. The Leadership Council's critical opportunity of generating and executing a strategic plan to end homelessness has narrowed to providing oversight of the Continuum of Care.

Response: The City agrees with the finding.

F8: The structure of the Leadership Council does not provide authority to design and execute a regional plan to end homelessness, and it does not support full public accountability for meeting stated targets.

Response: The City agrees with the finding.

F9: Political leadership is necessary to secure public support, enact policy and planning decisions that capitalize on state legislation, and execute a regional homeless plan.

Response: The City agrees with the finding. As an example, the City of Marina has taken a leadership role working with the County in implementing a regional safe overnight parking program for the homeless at the County's Coastal Office located at 2616 First St. in Marina. This happened independent of other cities and with the political leadership support of the Marina Mayor and City Council.

F10: Government decision-making is essential for making choices about resource commitments.

Response: The City agrees with the finding.

F11: To meaningfully change the course of homelessness and housing insecurity, there must be a regional approach to homelessness and the creation of a new governing body with the power to oversee implementation of the plan.

Response: The City agrees with the finding. It is critical that each City be involved in working with the County to address homelessness.

F12: The strategic plan to end homelessness serves as an informal guide rather than a definitive regional plan. It needs to be updated and fully implemented.

Response: The City agrees with the finding.

Recommendations

R1: Elected County and City officials should provide government leadership to address homelessness.

Response: The City has partially implemented this recommendation with the regional safe parking program established at the County's Coastal Offices in Marina. However, in broad terms the recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future when the County establishes a regional government leadership structure.

R2: The County and its Cities should form an accountable leadership body that has the power to oversee a regional approach to ending homelessness and address housing insecurity in Monterey County.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future when the County establishes an accountable leadership body. The City agrees with the need to establish this body and will support it.

R3: The County and its Cities should enter into a binding, enforceable agreement, such as a Memorandum of Agreement, to secure commitment to the plan and ensure responsibilities of each jurisdiction.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. The City of Marina will support committing to a plan that will ensure responsibilities of each jurisdiction for each jurisdiction including the County.

R4: The Lead Me Home Leadership council should clearly define its purpose and goals.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. The City of Marina fully supports the Lead Me Home Leadership Council clearly defining its purpose and goals.

R5: There should be a clear distinction between governance of the Continuum of Care—as an *integral part of the broader strategic plan*—and the leadership body charged with implementing a regional strategic plan to end homelessness.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future when a regional body is established to implement a regional strategic plan. Marina agrees a regional strategic plan and will participate.

R6: If the County effectively exerts control of Coalition for Homeless Service Providers through the Leadership Council, then the County should clearly define the purpose and role of the Coalition for Homeless Service Providers. It also follows that the Coalition for Homeless Service Providers should be adequately funded and staffed in proportion to its level of responsibilities with respect to securing resources and performing services for the county.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future when the County moves forward in doing this. The City of Marina will fully support.

R7: The newly created regional leadership body (*see R2*) should update and implement a regional strategic plan to end homelessness by defining its purpose, goals and assessment to measure and track progress.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future when the County established a regional leadership body. The City of Marina supports and will participate in this regional body.

R8: The strategic plan should be revisited annually using outcome measurements to evaluate and adjust strategies for meeting goals.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. The City of Marina will support this plan and believes it should be a long-range multi-year plan that is updated annually.

R9: Reports that assess which goals are, or are not, being met should be generated and made publicly available.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. When these goals are developed Marina agrees that they need to be tracked and the results made available to the public.

R10: The new regional leadership body should produce a transparent consolidated budget to maximize resources and identify expenditures. All municipalities should demonstrate their commitment to the regional plan to end homelessness in an equitable, or proportionate, manner.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future when the County establishes the regional body. Marina agrees that all municipalities should be committed to the regional plan and all involvement should be on a fair, equitable, or proportionate manner.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Delgado', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bruce Delgado
Mayor