



June 25, 2007

The Honorable Judge Melville  
Superior Court  
312-M East Cook St.  
Santa Maria, Ca. 93455

Dear Honorable Melville:

Below please find the City of Solvang's response to the 2006-2007 Grand Jury's *Law, Justice and Public Safety: Selected Community Challenges*. In your letter dated May 10, 2007 you noted **Finding 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5** with **Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5**. Many of these Findings and Recommendation pertain to a holding facility located within a Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department facility at 1745 Mission Dr., Solvang.

The City of Solvang contracts with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department to provide all Law Enforcement functions within the geographic boundaries of the incorporated city. The operation of this facility located at the Sheriff's Station is included in these contracted functions. While the City of Solvang contracts with the Sheriff's Department, we do embrace a collaborative approach to all issues facing our community.

**Finding 1:**

Greater use of medium security detention facilities, staffed by law enforcement and clinical experts, could reduce jail overcrowding and provide more humane treatment for some segments of the inmate population.

Response to Finding 1: The respondent agrees with the finding.

**Finding 2:**

Allegations of negligent or improper treatment of inmates in the Main Jail could not be verified but such claims were not isolated.

Response to Finding 2: The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding. The City of Solvang does not operate, nor do we have any authority over, the Main Jail located in Goleta.

**Finding 3:**

The influence of gang activity in the detention system is pernicious and its impact on the growth of neighborhood gangs may increase if not checked.

Response to Finding 3: The respondent agrees with the finding.

**Finding 4:**

The California Civil Code (1714.1 & 1714.3) prescribes the liability of parents or guardians for the misconduct of children within their custody and control.

Response to Finding 4: The respondent agrees with the finding.

**Finding 5:**

There is a growing disregard for traffic laws and this can contribute to disregard for the law in general.

Response to Finding 5: The respondent agrees with the finding.

**Recommendation 1:**

Develop more medium security detention facilities as alternatives to incarceration in the Main Jail.

Response to Recommendation 1: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. All functions associated with the county's detention system are under the sole authority of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department. The City of Solvang has no jurisdiction in this responsibility.

**Recommendation 2:**

Authorize and fund a court appointed ombudsman who is beholden neither to detention authorities nor to inmate advocacy groups and who is devoted to evaluating and reporting on complaints.

Response to Recommendation 2: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. All functions associated with the county's detention system are under the sole authority of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department. The City of Solvang has no jurisdiction in this responsibility.

**Recommendation 3:**

Implement a sustainable educational program on the negative impact of gang activity, involving law enforcement and the education experts, focusing on children in K-8 and including outreach to parents.

Response to Recommendation 3: The recommendation has been implemented. The City of Solvang participates in the Citizen's Option for Public Safety, COPS, grant program. Through this state administered grant, the City of Solvang has chosen to fund a Community Resource Deputy. His primary duties are to provide proactive outreach programs to our community, focusing on school age children through a variety of activities ranging from the Sheriff's Activity League to after school athletic activities.

**Recommendation 4:**

The District Attorney should proactively inform parents or guardians that under the provisions of the California Civil Code they are liable for the misconduct of their children.

Response to Recommendation 4: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. The City of Solvang has no authority over the activities of the District Attorney's Office.

The City of Solvang does, however take every possible step to educate parents about their liability as it relates to their children. Most recently, illegal skateboarding in the downtown area has been an issue. Recently, a juvenile skateboarder struck an elderly pedestrian. Our staff published a letter to the editor explaining just this aspect of juvenile behavior. The letter read in part "... Should your child be caught skateboarding in the downtown area, they risk being cited, fined and the board being seized. Should your child accidentally strike a pedestrian while on a skateboard, you risk significant financial consequences if you are sued in civil court."

**Recommendation 5:**

Place greater emphasis on enforcement and implement a public awareness program regarding the bad habits of drivers and bicyclists.

Response to Recommendation 5: The recommendation has been implemented. Through our contract with the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department, we identify specific problems within our geographic boundaries. We utilize public input and statistical data to identify problematic areas and violation categories. We then respond to this information in a variety of venues to include; public education forums, Public Service Announcements, changeable message boards, letters to the editor and finally specialized enforcement for recurring violation themes.

The City of Solvang appreciates the observations of the Grand Jury. We applaud your commitment to our community and look forward to improving the services we provide our citizens with the assistance from bodies such as yourselves.

Sincerely,

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Kenneth Palmer  
Mayor

**cc:** Santa Barbara County Grand Jury  
Attention: Foreperson  
1100 Anacapa St.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101