



CITY OF SANTA MARIA  
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August 5, 2014

The Honorable Judge Arthur Garcia  
Santa Maria Juvenile Court  
4263 California Boulevard  
Santa Maria, CA 93455

And

Santa Barbara County Grand Jury  
1100 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Honorable Judge Garcia & Grand Jury Foreperson:

The 2013-14 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury recently released its report entitled *Union Valley Parkway – Progress with Problems*. The City of Santa Maria (City) is named as an affected agency and is required to respond to applicable findings and recommendations within 90 days of the report issuance.

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINDING REGARDING UNION VALLEY  
PARKWAY – PROGRESS WITH PROBLEMS

**Finding 1**

"Union Valley Parkway at California Boulevard intersection is not a four-way stop."

The City agrees with the finding.

**Finding 2**

"Drivers on Union Valley Parkway traveling east or west may not be aware, nor are they warned, that there is an upcoming intersection at California Boulevard."

The City disagrees with the finding. UVP has striping that breaks, as is standard practice, at the intersection with California Boulevard, as well as visible curb returns and unobstructed sight distance for eastbound and westbound vehicular traffic.

**Finding 3**

"There are 'Cross Traffic Does Not Stop' signs on the north and south stop sign posts on California Boulevard as it intersects Union Valley Parkway."

The City agrees with the finding.

### **Recommendation 1**

"Install a four-way stop at the intersection of Union Valley Parkway and California Boulevard."

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City's response: The recommendation will not be implemented because a four-way stop is not warranted. Staff completed a 12-month accident history analysis of the intersection, 24 hour vehicular volume counts on all four (4) approaches, intersection morning (a.m.) and evening (p.m.) peak hour pedestrian counts and vehicular turning movement counts. Using this data, staff completed the stop sign and signal warrant analysis and the intersection did not meet the necessary criteria to install a traffic control device.

The criteria of minimum correctable accidents and minimum traffic volumes with delay were not met for a four-way stop. Only one (1) collision has occurred in the past twelve (12) months and minor roadway vehicular delay does not exceed 30 seconds.

Per the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Publications, and transportation engineering standards of practice, unwarranted stop signs create problems at both the intersection and along the roadway by:

- Encouraging motorists to drive faster between intersections in order to save time. Placing stop signs unnecessarily promotes speeding between the intersections as drivers try to offset the delays caused by stopping frequently;
- Encouraging violation of traffic laws. As the number of stop signs increase so that nearly every intersection has one, the rate of stop sign violations tends to increase;
- Encouraging the use of alternate routes. Placing too many stop signs in some areas often causes traffic to use other neighborhood routes to avoid a sequence of intersections that may be controlled by stop signs; and
- Increasing the chance that drivers will disregard conflicting vehicle and pedestrian traffic, which raises the risk of collisions.

In addition to evaluating the criteria for a four-way stop, staff also conducted a signal warrant analysis. All nine (9) warrants provided in the CA MUTCD were evaluated, and none were met at this intersection.

### **Recommendation 2**

"Install appropriate warning signs on east and westbound Union Valley Parkway as it approaches California Boulevard."

City's response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented. Staff will locate the signs based on guidance from the CA MUTCD. The signs will be installed within the next six (6) months.

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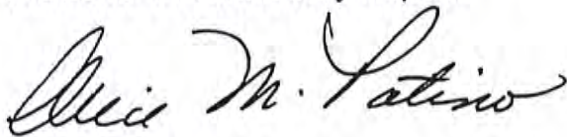
**Recommendation 3**

"If Recommendation 1 is accepted, replace the "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" plaques on the north and south stop signs on California Boulevard as it intersects Union Valley Parkway with 'ALL-WAY (four-way) stop plaques."

City's response: The recommendation will not be implemented because Recommendation 1 will not be implemented.

UVP is classified as a primary arterial and is currently functioning as such, with minimal impediments to vehicular traffic on UVP. With increased traffic volumes, limited traffic collisions, and four-way stop sign application criteria and signal warrants not being met, the greatest benefit to the community is to maintain the existing stop control features. Additional stop controls would create delay for the majority of the motoring public and could increase the number and severity of accidents at the intersection of UVP and California Boulevard. Staff will continue to monitor this location to determine if any relevant changes have occurred that would result in the need to re-evaluate the four-way stop application or signal warrants.

The above concludes the City's response to the Grand Jury's Report on *Union Valley Parkway – Progress with Problems*. The City respectfully submits this response to the Grand Jury and thanks you again for all your efforts associated with this 2013-14 Grand Jury Report.



**ALICE M. PATINO**  
Mayor of Santa Maria