



CITY OF SANTA MARIA  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

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September 1, 2020

Judge Michael Carrozzo  
110 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

SUBJECT: RESPONSES TO 2019-20 SANTA BARBARA COUNTY GRAND JURY  
REPORT - HOMELESSNESS IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
DATED JUNE 19, 2020

Dear Honorable Judge Carrozzo:

The City of Santa Maria is pleased to provide the following requested responses to the above-referenced report for Findings 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10, and Recommendations 1b, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8a, 8b, 8c, 9, and 10, within 90 days of the report issuance. Please note the following responses:

**Finding 1**

*There is a need for greater transparency, understanding and accountability of homeless related expenditures and the results.*

**Response: Agree**

**Recommendation 1b**

*That the City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria publish an annual report of their homeless related expenditures and outcomes.*

**Response: Will not be implemented.** There is not a consistent reporting methodology and the City already reports specified expenditures.

**Recommendation 2**

*That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria develop plans and devise mechanisms for providing ways to build permanent supportive housing for our most vulnerable homeless populations.*

**Response: Has been implemented.** The City uses a variety of techniques and partnerships to build permanent supportive housing in Santa Maria. To date, the City of Santa Maria has provided numerous ways and approvals for the building of permanent supportive housing projects for the most vulnerable homeless populations. To date, the City of Santa Maria has supported the development of the following permanent housing projects:

- Rancho Hermosa (Housing Authority of County of Santa Barbara, project-based vouchers)
- Depot Street Project (Housing Authority of County of Santa Barbara, project-based vouchers)
- Good Samaritan Shelter's Casa de Familia Project (16 units of PSH for formerly homeless families, project-based vouchers)
- Good Samaritan Shelter's Pine Street Bungalows (Duplex that provides PSH for 2 formerly homeless families, project-based vouchers)
- Good Samaritan Shelter's Cook Street Project (Triplex that provides PSH for 3 formerly homeless families – reduced, fixed rent)

New Development Projects in the Pipeline include:

- Good Samaritan Shelter's Pine Street Bungalow Expansion (Adding a 3rd unit to the existing project for a large homeless family ,project-based vouchers)
- Cox Project (Housing Authority of County of Santa Barbara, project-based vouchers)

The Housing Authority of Santa Barbara County continues to prioritize homeless individuals and families for the distribution of Section 8 vouchers, and works closely with Good Samaritan Shelter to ensure that shelter residents fill out applications when there is open enrollment. In addition, Good Samaritan Shelter currently receives 5 (five) federal Rapid ReHousing Grants that are utilized to support shelter residents in moving into permanent housing units and provides supportive services through ongoing case management.

### **Finding 3**

*State and federal funding that is granted to Santa Barbara County does not sufficiently support the mandate for housing the homeless.*

**Response: Agree**

### **Recommendation 3**

*That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria identify funding mechanisms, including, but not limited to, bond issues, dedicated taxing, a designated budgetary line item and strong philanthropic partnerships, for housing the homeless.*

Response: Requires further analysis. A coordinated approach is required which will take up to six months to identify.

**Finding 4**

*Elected City and County leaders have not exhibited aggressive leadership in determining the availability of sites in their jurisdictions for housing the homeless.*

Response: Disagree wholly.

**Recommendation 4**

*That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, and City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria designate and facilitate building of housing for the homeless on sites within their jurisdictions.*

Response: Has been implemented. The City continues to have proportionately more sites designated and built and work in partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara and Good Samaritan Shelter to identify and support the building of housing for the homeless within the city jurisdiction.

**Finding 5**

*A greater effort is needed to inform and include the public regarding the needs of the homeless for housing and services and how it can appropriately fit into neighborhoods.*

Response: Agree.

**Recommendation 5**

*That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, and City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria be more proactive in informing the public of the needs of the homeless for housing and services and how it can appropriately fit into neighborhoods by holding forums and conducting tours of existing facilities to educate the residents whose neighborhoods are proposed for the development of projects for the homeless.*

Response: Has been Implemented. The City of Santa Maria has hosted tours of homeless housing projects for stakeholders and members of the public at numerous city-funded projects over the past five years, and Good Samaritan Shelter has hosted an annual Open House at the shelter campus for the public for the past several years. The Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara also hosts tours and meetings for the public on any proposed developments that will provide housing for homeless populations within the City of Santa Maria. Each year, the City of Santa Maria CDBG Committee hosts a Needs Assessment Forum when deciding the priorities for CDBG funding.

## **Finding 8**

*All overnight emergency shelters are at capacity year-round, there are not enough day centers, and there are currently no Navigation Centers in Santa Barbara County.*

**Response: Disagree partially with Explanation.** Good Samaritan Shelter in the City of Santa Maria provides emergency shelter within city limits does report that they are at capacity year-round. Currently, under the COVID pandemic, Good Samaritan Shelter allows all clients to stay on property throughout the day under the Shelter in Place order. Under normal operating conditions, Good Samaritan Shelter does allow those that are medically fragile and homeless families to stay in the shelter during the day. Day centers are a costly endeavor, and would need more analysis before deciding on whether or not that is a conducive solution. Good Samaritan Shelter, the local homeless shelter provider, is the first organization in the county that has implemented the Navigation Centers – two centers have been implemented in North County, one within the City of Santa Maria and another one on the outskirts of the City of Lompoc at Bridgehouse. Good Samaritan Shelter utilized HEAP funding that was allocated from the state, through Santa Barbara County, to construct modular office buildings that host housing interventions for homeless individuals and families seeking services. Services that are provided within the Navigation Centers include Rapid Resolution, Homeless Prevention, Rapid ReHousing, Veteran Services, Shelter Access, and Housing Location & Assistance.

## **Recommendation 8a**

*That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria work together to create overnight emergency shelters commensurate with their homeless populations.*

**Response: Has been Implemented.** The City of Santa Maria has worked in partnership with the County of Santa Barbara and the local homeless shelter provider, Good Samaritan Shelter, to create overnight emergency shelter commensurate with the homeless population. Emergency Shelters within the City of Santa Maria include:

- Good Samaritan Shelter's Santa Maria Emergency Shelter (90 bed facility)
- Good Samaritan Shelter's Family Shelter (48 bed facility)
- Good Samaritan Shelter's Overflow Shelter (30 beds)
- Good Samaritan Shelter's SAFE House (16 beds)

The City of Santa Maria worked in partnership with the Good Samaritan Shelter to develop the first and only Emergency Shelter in the county that provides emergency shelter for victims of Human Trafficking (SAFE House). This project serves victims throughout Santa Barbara County. The City of Santa Maria also works in partnership with the County of Santa Barbara, Salvation Army, and the Freedom Warming Center that provide inclement weather emergency shelter for individuals that are unsheltered during the months of December – March. In addition, the City of Santa Maria is the only city within the county that supported



the opening of an additional Emergency Shelter during the COVID pandemic that was operated by both the County of Santa Barbara and Good Samaritan Shelter at the Santa Maria High School gym for three months.

**Recommendation 8b**

*That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria work together to create day centers commensurate with their homeless populations.*

Response: Will not be implemented. The biggest need is the lack of emergency shelter beds within the City of Santa Maria, and throughout Santa Barbara County.

**Recommendation 8c**

*That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria fund and expedite the development and opening of more shelters incorporating the Navigation Center concept.*

Response: Has been implemented. Good Samaritan Shelter has already implemented the Navigation Center concept at the Santa Maria Shelter Campus within city limits. The modular was installed in June 2020, and is already operational.

**Finding 9**

*Currently, several California cities are providing temporary homeless facilities by utilizing alternative cost-effective forms of housing such as high-performance tension fabric structures, tiny houses, and modular housing.*

Response: Agree. The City of Santa Maria's homeless shelter provider, Good Samaritan Shelter, has already implemented alternative cost-effective forms of housing in other regions in Santa Barbara County – including the development of 2 tiny houses to provide permanent supportive housing for homeless families.

**Recommendation 9**

*That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria undertake feasibility studies and develop plans for using alternate types of cost-effective forms of housing.*

Response: Will be implemented. The City is currently updating its Housing Element and General Plan. The schedule coincides with the City's RHNA schedule proscribed by State law and the General Plan update is underway anticipated to be a three-year project.

**Finding 10**

*Currently, in some California cities, large health care insurers are utilizing their tax credits to fund housing facilities for the chronically homeless.*

Response: Agree.

**Recommendation 10**

*That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and City Councils of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Guadalupe, and Carpinteria contact major health care insurers in their jurisdictions and encourage them to seek partnerships to support the construction of housing for the chronically homeless of Santa Barbara County.*

Response: Will not be implemented. Such partnerships need to be collaborative with homeless services providers and the City is open to being part of such collaboration.



**ALICE M. PATINO**  
Mayor