



CITY OF SANTA MARIA  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

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RECEIVED

Presiding Judge James Herman  
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1100 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

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BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Honorable Judge James Herman:

The 2016-17 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury recently released its report entitled *Youth Safety in Santa Maria*. The Report includes six findings and six recommendations. The Grand Jury has requested the Santa Maria City Council respond to Findings 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 within 90 days of the report issuance.

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY

**Finding 1:** The City of Santa Maria has stated that its new Santa Maria Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety will be confined to youth-serving agencies within the city limits of Santa Maria.

**City Response to Finding 1:** The City disagrees wholly with the finding.

**Recommendation 1:** That the Mayor and the City Council of Santa Maria expand the service area of the Santa Maria Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety to include youth-serving agencies in the entire Santa Maria Valley.

**City Response to Recommendation 1:** Has been implemented. The earliest statements of the Youth Task Force were in the June 7, 2016 City of Santa Maria Budget Message which reads "City staff is proposing to hire a part-time Community Outreach Coordinator to work with at-risk youth and the Police Activities League. This new position would help coordinate community outreach and engagement events (i.e. working in collaboration with the One Community Action Coalition, the probation department, local schools, and even the proposed North County Task Force on Youth Safety) in an effort to decrease youth violence, gang activity and juvenile delinquency" (page A-27). More recent statements have consistently maintained a sense of inclusivity and coordination with partners beyond the City limits and the City is unable to find any statements suggesting efforts will be confined to the City limits; in fact efforts have not been.

**Finding 2:** The Mayor and the City Council of Santa Maria's exclusive control of the strategic plan's design and implementation may cause costly delays.

**City Response to Finding 2:** The City disagrees wholly with the finding.

**Recommendation 2:** That the Mayor and the City Council of Santa Maria delegate certain discretionary authority for routine operational decisions in order to avoid costly delays to the implementation of the strategic plan.

**City Response to Recommendation 2:** Requires further analysis. While the City Council is unclear what "certain discretionary authority for routine operational decisions" means, the inclusive process has just commenced and participants are active and engaged. Routine operational decisions are yet to be defined as the community is currently engaged in the strategic planning process and community outreach, please note that the City has already made routine operational decisions during the planning process and anticipates additional routine operational processes to occur in the future.

**Finding 3:** The Mayor and the City Council of Santa Maria initially refused to collaborate with the 5<sup>th</sup> District Santa Barbara County Supervisor in utilizing the \$75,000 allocation from the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors for the hiring of an executive level coordinator for the Santa Maria Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety.

**City Response to Finding 3:** The City disagrees partially with the finding. While the City and the County did not agree that an executive level salary was consistent with objectives of the efforts, they did collaborate on funding this effort.

**Recommendation 3:** That the Mayor and the City Council of Santa Maria strengthen their collaboration with the 5<sup>th</sup> District Santa Barbara County Supervisor and the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to expand their ongoing support for a regional program under executive-level leadership.

**City Response to Recommendation 3:** Has been implemented. The City and County have been collaborating since before the strategic planning process began. The collaboration has been strengthened through the monthly meetings of the Mayor's Task Force with ongoing support for a regional partnership under existing executive-level leadership in their respected programmatic areas.

**Finding 4:** The Mayor and the City Council of Santa Maria have not yet identified reliable, permanent sources of funding needed to maintain the Santa Maria Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety programs and staff.

**City Response to Finding 4:** The City agrees with the finding.

**Recommendation 4:** That the Mayor and the City Council of Santa Maria within the next six months identify reliable, permanent sources of funding for the Santa Maria Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety programs and staff.

**City Response to Recommendation 4:** Requires further analysis. This is an item identified by the Mayor's Task Force to be addressed during the strategic planning process.

**Finding 6:** The Mayor and the City Council of Santa Maria have not included representatives at the policy-making level of parents and at-risk youth who would be directly affected by the services of the Santa Maria Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety.

**City Response to Finding 6:** The City disagrees partially with the finding as each of the Task Force Meetings have been open to the public, and the Task Force has heard from parents and youth who have spoken at each of the meetings, as well as at the public forums.

**Recommendation 6:** That the Mayor and City Council of Santa Maria include parents and at-risk youth representing the diversity of the community in the first tier of the Santa Maria Mayor's Task Force from the beginning of the planning and decision-making process.

**City Response to Recommendation 6:** Will not be implemented. The Mayor's Task Force already began meeting months ago with nearly three-dozen members who serve and support at-risk youth. And while the process is already started and the Task Force continues to receive input from parents and youth members of the community, the Task Force also hears input directly from dozens of youth and at-risk youth by the Mayor and the City's Community Outreach Coordinator going directly into schools to talk one-on-one with them in their own environment.

The above concludes the City's response to the Grand Jury's *Youth Safety in Santa Maria*. The City respectfully submits this response to the Grand Jury and thanks the members of the Grand Jury for their service to the community.



**ALICE M. PATINO**  
Mayor

cc: Santa Barbara County Grand Jury