



CITY OF SANTA MARIA
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

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April 1, 2014

The Honorable Judge Arthur Garcia
Santa Maria Juvenile Court
4263 California Blvd.
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 *What is 2-1-1? Will it Survive in Santa Barbara County?* 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 WHAT IS 2-1-1? WILL IT SURVIVE IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY?

Finding 1

The Santa Barbara County 2-1-1 Helpline is a program that provides a valuable service to the residents of the county.

The City agrees with the finding.

Finding 3

There is insufficient funding to continue operating the Santa Barbara County 2-1-1 Helpline Program.

The City partially disagrees with the finding as it is unclear if alternative funding sources have been considered and outreach efforts for the program have been expanded to include solicitation from charitable and tribal grants in addition to public social service related agencies.

Finding 4

The cities of Santa Maria, Solvang, Buellton, Goleta, Carpinteria, and Guadalupe do not contribute financially to the Santa Barbara County 2-1-1 Helpline Program.

The City of Santa Maria can only address itself, and agrees that it does not make a financial contribution to the 2-1-1 Helpline Program. It should be noted that City staff has contributed time and effort to accurately complete past 2-1-1 Helpline surveys about City programs, services and resources, for the purpose of updating the 2-1-1 database.

Recommendation 3

That the County, the cities, and other entities benefitting from the services provided by the Santa Barbara County 2-1-1 Helpline Program contribute funding in proportionate amounts as proposed by county staff in its December 2013 recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

City's response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. The 2-1-1 Helpline is primarily a social service, and it is the County government and the non-profit community that provide public social services, not the City.

The City of Santa Maria currently faces significant financial challenges in order to meet its basic service demands and has very little discretionary funding. All available resources are being directed to focus on preservation of existing basic services, and for the modest expansion of public safety in an attempt to keep up with increasing calls for service. The City remains in a financial crisis and is using one-time reserves for the sixth year in a row to balance its budget for programs that include public safety services.

With or without the 2-1-1 program, on a daily basis, the City of Santa Maria staff answers many phone calls and in-person questions about community services and programs from constituents. In addition, the City makes a special effort to educate the public and the media about accessing emergency service communications and what information they can expect to receive, through a multi-faceted approach.

The above concludes the City's response to the Grand Jury's Report on *What is 2-1-1? Will it survive in Santa Barbara County?* 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