



RECEIVED  
AUG 16 2016  
BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY OF SANTEE

**MAYOR**  
Randy Voepel

**CITY COUNCIL**  
Jack E. Dale  
Ron Hall  
Rob McNelis  
John W. Minto

**CITY MANAGER**  
Marlene Best

August 15, 2016

Honorable Jeffrey B. Barton  
Presiding Judge, San Diego Superior Court  
220 W. Broadway  
San Diego, CA 92101

**Re: Grand Jury Report: "East County Cities' Lack of Response to Homelessness"**

Dear Judge Barton,

The City of Santee has reviewed the Grand Jury Report titled, "East County Cities' Lack of Response to Homelessness" filed on June 8, 2016. In accordance with California Penal Code section 933(c), the following is Santee's response to the findings and recommendations in the report.

**RESPONSE TO FINDINGS**

**Finding 01: East County emergency and transitional housing is available only in El Cajon and exists primarily for families with children, victims of domestic violence, veterans, the mentally ill, and those willing to join a one-year Christian discipleship program.**

**Response: Neither agree nor disagree.** The City of Santee acknowledges there is no emergency or transitional housing located in the City's jurisdiction. However, Santee is not familiar with the requirements of the emergency and transitional housing available in El Cajon and cannot confirm or refute this finding without further study.

**Finding 02: East County cities have marginal involvement in homeless issues.**

**Response: Disagree.** The City of Santee cannot speak to the level of involvement of other east county cities. However, Santee has much more than "marginal involvement" in homeless issues. Below are examples of Santee's most notable contributions.

### Partnership with Crisis House

The City of Santee currently partners with and provides funding to Crisis House, who provides humanitarian services to citizens who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, and whose mission is to stabilize families and individuals to break the cycle of poverty, domestic violence and homelessness by providing emergency assistance, housing, and social services that promote self-sufficiency. Crisis House also coordinates a seasonal nighttime shelter, provides counseling and referrals for homeless and persons at risk of homelessness, and provides emergency shelter to victims of domestic violence. They also recently received a federal grant to expand transitional housing opportunities, particularly for veterans.

The City of Santee has consistently partnered with and provided funding to Crisis House for homeless related services dating back to 1993 (\$5,000 was allocated this fiscal year, not \$2,000 as identified in the Grand Jury report). Crisis House is located in East County and focuses on serving residents throughout the east county region. Each year, Crisis House reports on the number of persons assisted in Santee, which includes Santee residents and homeless who reside in Santee. Reports show that over 3,300 persons have been assisted since 2010. Services can range from providing referrals over the phone to providing emergency housing.

### Support to the Regional Task Force on the Homeless

Santee provides \$2,500 each year in support of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, which is described by the Task Force as Santee's fair share to support their activities. On several occasions, Santee staff and elected officials have also accompanied the Regional Task Force on the Homeless during their annual point-in-time homeless count to better understand these efforts and learn more about the homeless population in Santee.

### Implementation & Participation on the East Region Homeless Outreach Team (HOT)

The Santee Sheriff's Department and the City of Santee implemented the East Region Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) in 2014/2015, which is a collaborative partnership between the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, the El Cajon Police Department, Health and Human Services Agency and Psychiatric Emergency Response Team. The Santee Sheriff's Station has the primary administrative responsibility for coordinating the East Region HOT activities, and works closely with Santee staff and elected officials. The goals of the Team are to lead a collaborative effort while providing a humanistic and socially responsive approach to improving the quality of life for chronically homeless individuals; to assist the chronically homeless populations of the east county region in developing a plan to end their homelessness; and to ensure a safe environment for homeless and non-homeless populations in the east county.

The City's contribution to the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) is comprised of six law enforcement deputies and one sergeant. The County provides a Psychological Emergency Support Team (PERT) clinician and Health and Human Services Agency workers who accompany the HOT team on all HOT efforts.

The Santee Sheriff's Department actively seeks out homeless persons on a weekly basis in an attempt to connect them with available resources. The overarching goal is to help the homeless population reintegrate into society. Deputies provide an informational pamphlet to every homeless

person they have contact with in the City of Santee. This pamphlet provides specific information on resources for employment assistance; medical assistance; transitional housing and shelters; clothing, and bedding; recovery and rehabilitation services; assistance for veterans and victims of domestic violence; and other east county resources, such as contact information for Crisis House and 2-1-1 San Diego.

Homeless Outreach Teams throughout the County have received national recognition for their work with the chronically homeless, and were mentioned in an Urban Institute report pointing to this strategy as a model for other regions (The Urban Institute 2004, Strategies for Reducing Chronic Street Homelessness).

### **RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS**

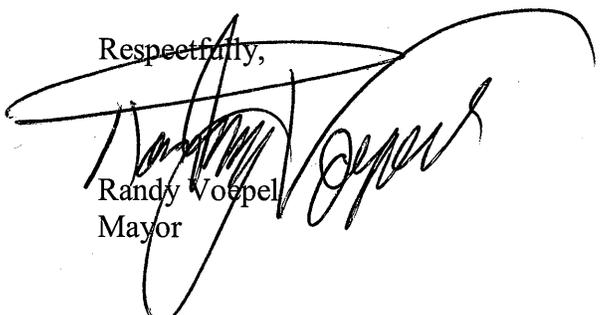
#### **Recommendation 16-58: Initiate coordinated homelessness-related efforts to increase prevention, shelter, and transitional housing services in East County.**

**Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.** Providing homelessness-related services including prevention, shelter and transitional housing is a very specialized business. The City of Santee has chosen to support organizations, like Crisis House, who have the appropriate training, knowledge and expertise to best serve this purpose. The City of Santee does not have the staff or expertise to fulfill this need, and therefore will continue to support organizations that do.

#### **Recommendation 16-59: Join the Regional Continuum of Care Council and participate in its work.**

**Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.** The City of Santee will work with the Regional Continuum of Care Council in the coming weeks to join the organization and begin participating in its work.

Respectfully,

  
Randy Voepel  
Mayor