



County of San Diego

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RECEIVED

August 2, 2017

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

AUG 14 2017
SA
COUNTY GRAND JURY

Dear Judge Barton,

The 2016-2017 San Diego County Grand Jury recently completed its term and filed seven reports with recommendations requiring a response from the County of San Diego. On August 1, 2017, the County Board of Supervisors approved responses to these seven reports and directed me to forward the responses to your office, as required by the California Penal Code.

The responses, which are enclosed, correspond to the following reports:

- Adult Detention Facilities—San Diego County
- Comprehending The Plight of San Diego’s Homeless: Is There a Sea Change Coming?
- Examining The Issue Of Suicides In San Diego Jails
- Foster Care Civic Success Operating At 50 Percent Occupancy... Why?
- \$353 Million County Foster Care Budget: Where Are The Measurable Outcomes?
- San Diego County Juvenile Detention Facilities
- San Diego County Waterfront Park Setting A Poor Example Of Water Use

I thank the Grand Jury for their commitment to this process. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me at (619) 531-5250.

Sincerely,

HELEN N. ROBBINS-MEYER
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment

cc: Board of Supervisors

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSES
TO
2016-2017 GRAND JURY REPORTS

Examining the Issue of Suicides in San Diego Jails	Page 1
Adult Detention Facilities—San Diego County	Page 1
San Diego County Waterfront Park Setting a Poor Example of Water Use	Page 1
Foster Care Civic Success Operating At 50 Percent Occupancy...Why?	Page 4
San Diego County Juvenile Detention Facilities	Page 7
\$353 Million County Foster Care Budget: Where Are The Measurable Outcomes?	Page 11
Comprehending the Plight of San Diego's Homeless: Is There a Sea Change Coming?	Page 14

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2016-17 GRAND JURY REPORT
“Examining the Issue of Suicides in San Diego Jails”
Filed May 4, 2017

(Findings 01 through 04 and Recommendation 17-24 through 17-27 will be separately responded to by the Sheriff)

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2016-17 GRAND JURY REPORT
“Adult Detention Facilities—San Diego County”
Filed June 1, 2017

(Findings 01 through 03 and Recommendation 17-50 through 17-52 will be separately responded to by the Sheriff)

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2016-17 GRAND JURY REPORT
“San Diego County Waterfront Park
Setting a Poor Example of Water Use”
Filed January 31, 2017

FINDINGS

Finding 01: In the event of a declared water emergency, the County has no formal water-conservation plan for the Waterfront Park.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding.

A water conservation plan has not been prepared for Waterfront Park. However, water conservation was incorporated into the design of the park through the use of drought-tolerant plant species, expanses of decomposed granite surfacing (requires no water) and the use of a smart-irrigation system.

Finding 02: The County has not maximized its potable water conservation opportunities at the Waterfront Park.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer disagrees with this finding.

The Waterfront Park design optimized water conservation in landscaping and recreational fountain recirculation and filtration.

Finding 03: Insufficient data is available to accurately measure and manage fountain water conservation.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding.

At the time the park was constructed a water meter was not installed on the water line serving the park's fountains. Thus, there was no ability to measure the amount of water that was being used in the fountains.

In March of this year, a dedicated meter was installed to measure fountain water usage. Moving forward the County will be able to measure the amount of water being used by the fountains.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2016/2017 Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Chief Administrative Officer:

17-04: Prepare an emergency drought-response plan for the Waterfront Park that reduces the current recreational operating hours of the fountain system and turns off the fountains when not in use for recreation (ornamental mode). The plan should be invoked at any time the City Department of Public Works declares a water emergency that restricts residential water consumption and ornamental fountain operation.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. During the declared water emergency of 2015-16, the County remained in compliance with City of San Diego conservation requirements as applied at the Waterfront Park. In the future, should the City of San Diego require actions to be implemented in response to a declared water emergency, the County will continue to comply with the City of San Diego's conservation requirements as those requirements are applicable to the County at the Waterfront Park. In addition, the County has voluntarily implemented water conservation plans through its Board Policy A-106 and its drought response action plan adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 12, 2015(9).

17-05: Implement a proactive, ongoing water-conservation program for the Waterfront Park that reduces potable water consumption through landscape alternatives and active fountain-operation management.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. Water conservation and efficiency was one of the main factors incorporated into the design of the Waterfront Park. Plant species, including those located in the large specialty gardens, were selected for being drought-tolerant. Landscaping beds and trees throughout the park incorporate drip irrigation and large portions of the park were covered in stabilized decomposed granite (DG) in order to minimize landscaping and save water. In addition, the irrigation system for the park is managed by "smart" irrigation controllers which monitor water use, shut irrigation down when problems are detected, and provide the ability to monitor and adjust water usage in each area of the park. Lastly, the recreational fountain was designed to minimize water use by treating and recirculating its water which is stored in an underground tank. Water loss at the fountain is mainly a function of evaporation

and heavy use by the public. Fountain hours of operation already vary throughout the year due to factors such as length of day, popular public use times, planned events and weather.

The Waterfront Park also includes grass areas that are functional in nature and are used for general public recreation and special events. The grass surfacing is critical to the functional use of these areas. While replacing this grass with alternative surfacing materials would reduce the amount of irrigation required, it would also restrict or eliminate the ability of the areas to be used for their intended purpose.

17-06: Develop a means to measure fountain water consumption at the Waterfront Park allowing water usage conservation actions to be tracked.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented. A dedicated meter has been installed to measure fountain water consumption at the Waterfront Park. Data collection began on March 20th, 2017. The meter is being integrated into the County's Centralized Building Automation System (BAS) to provide trending data, which will enhance the County's ability to manage fountain operations.

17-07: Develop for the Waterfront Park a public recreational usage profile of the fountain system to allow plans to be established during declared water emergencies and for normal conservation.

Response: This recommendation will be implemented.

The County will perform an analysis of use of the recreational fountains over the next year to identify use levels for the north and south fountain basins. This information will be used when considering adjustments to the recreational fountain schedules in response to declared water emergencies or when evaluating modifications to scheduled fountain operating hours.

The Waterfront Park provides the only large green public open space in downtown San Diego. The entire park is open to the public free of charge. The 33,200-square-foot interactive fountain is used by people of all ages. The park provides much needed children's playground equipment and invites children to challenge themselves on the slides, climbing structure, and swings. Designed to accommodate a diverse population, the park is visited by users of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Older adults appreciate the accessible pathways, decorative gardens, and the safe bay-front setting. Families enjoy the lawns, interactive water feature and unique playground. County sponsored programs at the park, including yoga classes and the increasingly popular Movies in the Park series, enhance the quality of life for the region's residents by promoting healthy lifestyles and family-friendly activities. The Waterfront Park is a scenic destination for family gatherings and large events alike. The park is already a huge success, and routinely sees over 1,000 visitors a day during the summer months, and 200,000 to 300,000 visitors annually.

The popularity of the park as a special event venue has continued to grow since the park's opening in 2014. The park has numerous areas that may be reserved for both private and public activities. Reservable areas accommodate small events such as birthday parties, weddings and receptions, to large events that attract thousands of attendees, such as music festivals and art shows.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2016-17 GRAND JURY REPORT
“Foster Care Civic Success Operating At 50 Percent Occupancy...Why?”
Filed March 30, 2017

FINDINGS

Finding 01: Low enrollment underutilizes dedicated teachers and County facilities.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer disagrees with this finding. San Pasqual Academy is a unique residential education program for adolescent foster youth. Over the past ten years, there has been a steady decline in the number of youth in the foster care system both nationally and locally. Fewer youth in the foster care system has been the direct result of improved practices to maintain youth safely in their homes with comprehensive support services, to place youth with relatives and non-relative extended family members (NREFM), and to increase the number of youth being adopted. These best practices have reduced the number of adolescents referred to the Academy, which in turn has affected the number of youth placed in the program.

While the Academy’s enrollment is not currently at its full capacity, the program continues to provide placement stability, individualized educational services, preparation for independent living and supportive services for those youth unable to return home, live with a relative, NREFM, or in a licensed foster home. The Academy’s current enrollment has also afforded greater individualized academic instruction in the classroom, benefitting students who are often significantly behind in school credits.

Child Welfare Services (CWS) continues to make efforts to increase awareness of the Academy by educating County staff and stakeholders on the benefits of the Academy’s unique support and services. In partnership with various agencies, County Social Workers refer interested youth to the Academy. This placement is completely voluntary and youth must agree to live and learn at the Academy. Given the reduced number of youth in foster care, the Academy will not likely reach its maximum licensed capacity, but it continues to positively impact youth who are placed at San Pasqual Academy.

Finding 02: San Pasqual Academy operating below capacity wastes taxpayer resources and fails to capitalize on the principle economies of scale.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer disagrees with this finding. Most youth within the foster care system come from disadvantaged backgrounds and have experienced trauma. These youth benefit from the safe and stable home-based environment provided by caring individuals versed in trauma-informed care. In partnership with various agencies, County Social Workers refer interested youth to the Academy. This placement is completely voluntary and youth must agree to live and learn at the Academy.

Given the reduced number of youth in foster care, the Academy is not likely to substantially increase enrollment or reach its maximum licensed capacity. However,

the Academy continues to positively impact youth who would benefit from the comprehensive services offered. Fiscal resources invested upfront on foster youth at San Pasqual Academy can reduce the costs otherwise associated with the youth being ill-prepared for independent living and self-sufficiency.

By preparing the Academy youth for independent living, we reduce the likelihood that youth will drop out of school, become homeless, pregnant, dependent on public assistance, or involved with law enforcement agencies. Successful outcomes are demonstrated when Academy students transition to adulthood and are enrolled in college or gainfully employed in the workforce.

As noted by the Grand Jury in this report, Academy youth have a higher graduation rate and college enrollment rate than peers in the foster care system. For those Academy graduates not interested in pursuing post-secondary education, they have been prepared to join the military, learn a trade or find employment. These outcomes speak to the value derived from the resources available at San Pasqual Academy. The program empowers foster youth to prepare for their future, make positive choices and remain connected to individuals who can continue to be a source of support.

In addition, the Academy's residential provider, New Alternatives, Inc., has an ongoing commitment to provide alumni housing to Academy graduates. The availability of on-campus alumni housing reduces the incidence of homelessness and/or housing insecurity, such as "couch surfing", among our graduates and offers them a safe, supportive environment to return to during the holidays, college breaks, transitions from college to employment and times of crisis. Through the alumni housing program, graduates can come "home" and can gain access to community resources, employment assistance, housing referrals and financial assistance. Alumni also benefit from social-emotional support from siblings, peers, house parents, grandparents, teachers, campus staff, and social workers.

Finding 03: Increasing the number of foster care children at San Pasqual Academy would result in more foster children graduating from high school and attending college.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer disagrees partially with this finding. CWS is committed to strengthening and preserving families by reunifying children with their families of origin and safely supporting permanency. When these options are unavailable, alternative placements such as San Pasqual Academy are offered.

Given the reduced number of youth in foster care, the Academy will not likely be able to substantially increase enrollment or reach its maximum licensed capacity. However, students who have been placed at the Academy have demonstrated significant positive outcomes. As of June 2017, the Academy has graduated 365 students with a high school diploma, with 107 enrolled in a four year university and 118 enrolled in a two year college at the time of high school graduation. This success is attributed to the following:

- A low student-to-teacher ratio in the classroom improves the individualized instruction and support received by each student;

- Students have more opportunities and added support to catch up on credits needed towards graduation both on campus and through individualized supplemental instruction;
- The ability to participate in extra-curricular activities such as athletics, yearbook, student government, and community service projects empowers students and provides them with a sense of normalcy;
- The presence of alumni on campus during college breaks and holidays as role models and mentors for the Academy students to focus on their high school education and post-secondary opportunities.

Finding 04: San Pasqual Academy has a positive effect in keeping families together by accepting siblings from middle school through high school.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding. The ability for siblings, 12-18 years old, to reside together at San Pasqual Academy has been a tremendous benefit to our youth's permanency connections and personal growth. More than 210 youth placed at San Pasqual Academy have been part of a sibling set at the Academy since 2001.

The teen years can be a difficult time for youth and their caregivers, sometimes leading to a change of placement for youth in foster care. At the Academy, there is a wide range of staff including intergenerational mentors, clinicians, mental health workers, residential staff, academic staff and County social workers to support the house parents with the students if behavioral issues arise. This added support reduces the number of change of placements a youth may experience, increases placement stability and enhances sibling relations for what may be normalized teen behaviors.

Campus staff diligently coordinate visits between Academy students and their siblings who reside off-campus, as well as their participation in the Camp Connect program, a partnership between Child Welfare Services and Promises2Kids. Academy alumni also return from college to stay on campus and visit with younger siblings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2016/2017 Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Chief Administrative Officer:

17-18: Fully use taxpayer resources and improve graduation rates of foster care children in San Diego County by establishing a plan to increase the enrollment of foster care children at San Pasqual Academy to the authorized capacity of 184.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. It is not warranted to meet the Grand Jury's recommendation to increase the Academy's enrollment to the authorized capacity of 184. Although San Diego County's population has increased nearly 15% since 2001 when the Academy opened, the region has approximately 50% fewer youth in foster care in 2017. In addition, the implementation of Assembly Bill 403 (also known as the Continuum of Care Reform) has provided directives for CWS to increase efforts to place youth with family in lieu of placements like the Academy. Both of these factors impact

the ability of San Pasqual Academy to reach an authorized capacity of 184. Historically, the Academy's population has not exceeded 140 youth for more than a brief period of time. The program has had an annual average population of 122 youth over a 12 year period from 2005-2016.

In addition, the Academy was specifically designed for foster youth, 12-17 years old, who were unable to safely return to their parents, be placed with relatives, and for those youth who experienced multiple moves in foster care and are unlikely to reunify with their family. These parameters carve out a smaller sub-set of the overall foster care population and further reduce the number of potential youth to be considered for the Academy. Furthermore, placement at the Academy is voluntary and youth have a voice in whether they would like to live and learn at the Academy. Some youth would prefer to remain in their communities where they feel comfortable and have an established support network rather than relocate to the Academy, which further impacts our ability to reach an authorized capacity of 184.

On-going efforts are made to maintain and increase the Academy population. Such efforts include: presentations to regional social work units, Court Appointed Special Advocates, minor's counsel, and judges; assessing adolescents detained at the County's Ten-Day Temporary Shelter Facility; communicating with Academy Liaisons in the region; and educating new social worker classes about the benefits of San Pasqual Academy.

17-19: Consider highlighting the San Pasqual Academy student achievement with quarterly progress reports as one of the means used by Child Welfare Services to increase enrollment as San Pasqual Academy in the plan noted above.

Response: This recommendation will be implemented.

Quarterly progress reports highlighting the achievements of San Pasqual Academy students may help increase program enrollment. Quarterly progress reports can be shared with Child Welfare Services staff, as well as other stakeholders such as Juvenile Court Dependency Judges, Children's Legal Services of San Diego, and Voices for Children. This recommendation can be implemented in Fiscal Year 2017-2018, with the first quarterly progress report shared in October 2017.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2016-17 GRAND JURY REPORT
"Juvenile Detention Facilities – San Diego County"
Filed May 30, 2017

FINDINGS

Finding 01: An adequate budget line item for facility repairs would allow for timely and necessary repairs to be performed.

Response: The Probation Department partially disagrees with this finding to the extent that this finding implies there is not a budget line item. The Probation Department identifies prioritized facility repair projects annually as part of the County's Major Maintenance Improvement Plan and establishes a budget line item for those projects.

Finding 02: A budget line item for interim facility upgrades would keep the facility current until a new facility is built.

Response: The Probation Department partially disagrees with this finding to the extent that there is not a budget line item. The Probation Department identifies prioritized facility upgrade projects annually as part of the County's Major Maintenance Improvement Plan and establishes a budget line item for those projects.

Finding 03: Additional time allowing juvenile detainees to participate in joint recreational events would benefit the juveniles' eventual assimilation back into the community, as well as provide a learning experience of how to get along with others.

Response: The Probation Department partially disagrees with this finding. When youth enter Probation's facilities, they are assessed and receive a score based upon age, criminogenic needs, risk-level, and history. Mixing youth with different needs can result in negative outcomes and safety issues. The Probation Department is open to exploring additional joint recreational activities that will benefit youth's time in custody and their assimilation into the community but must be balanced with their rehabilitative needs.

Finding 04: Reallocating staff elsewhere would create a more feasible ratio of detainees to staff.

Response: The Probation Department partially disagrees with this finding to the extent that it implies the Probation Department has not been allocating staff elsewhere to create a more feasible ratio. In the Operational Plans (budgets) for the past two fiscal years, and in the CAO Recommended Operational Plan for Fiscal Year 2017-18, the Probation Department has reallocated staff to address changes in workload across all divisions and services.

Finding 05: A long-range master plan would provide clarity on whether or not to further consolidate facilities and services.

Response: The Probation Department partially disagrees with this finding to the extent that a long-range master plan is not being developed. The Probation Department has convened a group of stakeholders including justice system partners and community leaders to create a master plan for juvenile justice facilities. This group is incorporating best practices and designs from programs across the country in plans to consolidate and upgrade facilities and services.

Finding 06: The remoteness of this facility makes it unsuitable for parents to participate in a juvenile's life during incarceration.

Response: The Probation Department agrees with this finding. Camp Barrett does not have public transportation options and travel time to the facility can be greater than one hour, each direction, from certain areas of San Diego County. However, the Probation Department provides tele-visitation (i.e. Skype) opportunities for families unable to visit. The proposed relocation of Camp Barrett to Kearny Mesa will enhance visitation opportunities.

Finding 07: The auto repair and maintenance shop training is grossly underutilized in its present location.

Response: The Probation Department disagrees partially with this finding. The auto repair and maintenance shop training program provides youth at Camp Barrett with valuable life and employment skills. As the number of youth in custody continues to decline, the Probation Department has worked to ensure these and other technical education opportunities are available to youth. The Probation Department looks to improve and expand upon this program at a future facility in Kearny Mesa.

Finding 08: Providing the means for the boys to acquire culinary art skills would primarily provide a better meal, but more importantly provide them with useable skills upon leaving the detention facility.

Response: The Probation Department agrees with this finding. The Probation Department is committed to offering custodial youth with skills to successfully reenter the community. In addition, enhanced culinary programming and food opportunities can provide a more welcoming, home-like environment at the East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility. The Probation Department has partnered with the County Office of Education to begin offering culinary arts programming at East Mesa whereby youth can obtain certificates for employment opportunities upon release.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2016/2017 Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Chief Administrative Officer:

17-35: Establish a process to immediately address on-going facility repairs, as well as interim upgrades pending the construction of a new facility.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented.

The County's Major Maintenance Improvement Plan (MMIP) sets forth a process by which County departments coordinate with the Department of General Services for ongoing repairs and upgrades to facilities. Through the MMIP, the Probation Department has and will continue to work closely with General Services to identify and include in the budget funds for required repairs and projects until the new urban camp facility at the Kearny Mesa campus is complete. All health and safety related repairs are made as quickly as possible to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for youth and staff.

17-36: Establish a process to evaluate daily schedules to allow additional recreational time for Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility detainee organized games, events and library use.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis.

On June 9, 2017, the Probation Department received a notification of award for an 18 month technical assistance grant to review, evaluate and implement custodial reforms for San Diego's juvenile detention facilities by evaluating youth programming and policies. By November 30, 2017, the Department will use the

award to review and evaluate the recommendation and work to improve scheduling and programming needs in the current and future facilities.

17-37: Consider making full utilization of existing state of the art kitchen at East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility in order to enhance the culinary training class and opportunities for future employment.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.

East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility staff have collaborated with the San Diego County Office of Education to provide classroom training for food preparation and will begin conducting limited culinary training in the existing kitchen. The current kitchen is not fully operational for teaching due to the limited functionality of some equipment and estimates for required upgrades are cost-prohibitive.

17-38: Create a plan to close Camp Barrett Juvenile Detention Facility, and move its detainees to remaining facilities. Transfer learning assets to a San Diego facility to provide training opportunities for a greater number of juveniles.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. The Probation Department is in the beginning stages of designing a new urban camp setting at the Kearny Mesa campus to replace the Camp Barrett Juvenile Detention Facility as part of a long-range master plan for Camp Barrett and Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility. The Probation Department convened stakeholders including justice system partners and community leaders to identify long-term needs with a strong focus on career and technical education (CTE), treatment, and other opportunities for youth committed to the Probation Department's custody. All current assets and programs will be transferred to the new facility and programs will be expanded and enhanced. The long range plan is to close Camp Barrett when an upgraded facility is available for occupancy. As this project is planned and constructed, youth committed to the Probation Department's custody at East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility will continue receiving expanded training and technical education opportunities. An initial cohort of youth at East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility is now receiving food preparation skills and welding opportunities. As these programs continue to be successful, more opportunities can be made available. The timeframe for closing Camp Barrett and transferring some, if not all, of its training opportunities is currently being developed and will be available by November 30, 2017.

17-39: Develop a long term plan to utilize excess Probation Department correctional staff and maintain a detainee-to-staff ratio in line with PREA standards.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The Department continually evaluates the need to repurpose staff to match the number of youth in custody and staffing standards and does reallocate staff to meet departmental needs. Probation is currently in compliance with Title 15, California Code of Regulations detainee-to-staff ratio requirements and is working to meet PREA standards. The Department constantly monitors youth-to-staff ratios to promote safety, rehabilitation, and engagement.

17-40: Expedite the creation of a long-range executable master plan to eliminate any wasteful underutilization of space and contractual agreements (contracted staff, insurance

coverage etc.,) that was based on a much larger number of detainees, yet retaining sufficient capacity and services required to serve the County for at least the next decade.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. The Department's Institutional Services already closely monitors the daily population in the juvenile facilities. As the population has fluctuated, staff has consolidated and opened housing units to manage operating expenses for the Department. The Probation Department maintains a regular quality assurance and contract review process. The Probation Department has worked closely with other County departments and contractors to ensure that maximum flexibility is included in agreements for programmatic services for our youth and staff. As existing contracts expire, the Probation Department will work closely with the Department of Purchasing and Contracting to ensure taxpayer resources are maximized while also providing the highest quality of rehabilitative services to our youth. Over the years, the Department has found that given the constant fluctuation in our juvenile population and changes to the law, that short term planning and development is more economical and efficient. However, our master plan for the new juvenile hall campus will take this recommendation into consideration.

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2016-17 GRAND JURY REPORT
 "\$353 Million County Foster Care Budget: Where Are the Measurable Outcomes?"
 Filed June 5, 2017**

FINDINGS

Finding 01: There is no relationship between CWS programs and policies and taxpayer's contributions to the long-term success of County foster care alumni.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer disagrees with this finding. The exact linkage between foster care investment and results achieved by San Diego County foster care alumni is unknown. The County of San Diego Child Welfare Services (CWS) is committed to strengthening and preserving families by reunifying children with their families of origin and safely supporting permanency. The continued decrease in the number of youth in the San Diego foster care system is attributed to the implementation of various programs such as CWS' Safety Enhanced Together practice framework and Safety Organized Practice, an approach designed to enhance skills in family engagement and critical thinking to create sustained safety for children. Youth who have been active to CWS due to alleged or substantiated allegations of abuse and/or neglect by their parent or guardian receive an array of services to mitigate safety threats, reduce risk to overall welfare and strengthen the family unit. Once children have reunified, obtained permanency through adoption or guardianship, or transitioned out of the child welfare system and the Juvenile Court has terminated jurisdiction, CWS no longer has the legal authority to track information related to them.

CWS, however, has implemented multiple programs that help foster youth succeed once they exit the system. For instance, all youth ages 16 and older are eligible to participate in Independent Living Skills classes to help them learn how to prepare for a job interview, budget their finances, maintain a home, and gain other critical skills needed to be independent. In addition, Transitional Housing Programs (THP)

provide current and former foster youth up to age 24 with transitional housing and comprehensive supportive services. Further, the implementation of Extended Foster Care allows youth to remain in care until age 21, providing them additional support so that they can be successful adults. Initial findings from the first CalYouth report demonstrate improvement in youth outcomes for those who remain in Extended Foster Care. Additionally, San Pasqual Academy is a first-in-the-nation residential education campus that provides foster youth ages 12-18 with a stable and caring home, quality individualized education and the skills needed for independent living as they prepare for college and/or a career path.

The County of San Diego Child Welfare Services (CWS) local policies and programs are established in accordance with the California Welfare and Institutions Code, Federal Title IV-E requirements and CA State mandates.

Finding 02: The County HHSA has no data to determine if delivery of services by the CWS results in lower/higher dependence on general welfare programs by former County foster care youth.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer disagrees partially with this finding. While the County of San Diego collects extensive data, privacy concerns, obtaining consent, program constraints and the possible transient nature of this population limit the ability to conduct a comprehensive review and analysis to determine if delivery of services results in lower/higher dependence on general welfare programs.

Although CWS does not conduct its own research on Foster Care alumni they are involved in the following research activities:

CWS participates in the CalYouth Study (Chapin Hall) for foster youth ages 17, 19 and 21. The CalYouth study is an evaluation of the California Fostering Connections to Success Act (AB12) which began extending foster care up to age 21. San Diego participates in this study by providing foster youth information and data for these purposes. Initial findings from the study are positive and pointing to improvements in youth outcomes for those who remain in foster care up to age 21.

CWS also provides foster care data for the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) research conducted by the Children's Bureau, Administration of Children and Families (ACF). The National Youth in Transition Database is a data collection system to track the independent living services States provide to youth and develop outcome measures that may be used to assess States' performance in operating their independent living programs.

Finding 03: Data from longitudinal studies of foster care alumni has resulted in improvement and understanding of the foster care programs and policies.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding. Longitudinal research such as the LONGSCAN (Longitudinal Studies of Child Abuse and Neglect) studies has been helpful in understanding the effectiveness of programs and policies contributing to successful outcomes of foster care alumni. The LONGSCAN studies can be found at: <http://www.unc.edu/depts/sph/longscan/>.

In review of the literature on outcomes for foster children, articles such as *Legal and Relational Permanence in Older Foster Care Youths* (<http://www.socialworktoday.com/archive/072115p24.shtml>) as cited in Social Work Today and *Enhancing Permanency for Youth in Out-of-Home Care* released by the Child Welfare Information Gateway (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/enhancing.pdf>) support the notion that children do better when permanency is achieved. CWS has implemented many efforts to ensure children do not languish in foster care, including the Permanency Roundtables and the Permanent Connections contracts to enhance family finding efforts for youth. Additionally, CWS has partnered with Casey Family Programs to identify the characteristics of youth who are more likely to remain in foster care for three years or longer and implement strategies to reduce the length of stay in care.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2016/2017 Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Chief Administrative Officer:

17-53: Reduce HHSWA welfare cost by foster care alumni through a cooperative effort with a local university with the mandate to conduct a longitudinal research effort to determine the effectiveness of CWS policies and programs contributing to successful foster care alumni.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis.

By December 1, 2017, the County of San Diego HHSWA CWS will conduct fiscal analyses, as well as explore the legal authority to conduct studies involving former foster youth. The activities may include:

- Securing a plan to obtain written consent from foster youth authorizing periodic follow up, once they leave the system;
- Exploration of existing research agencies, including educational institutions, who may serve as strong research partners for this recommended effort;
- Exploration of funding opportunities.

17-54: Utilize existing County databases to determine how many individuals have been subject to CWS have ultimately been users of the adult welfare system or subject to the criminal justice system.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis.

By December 1, 2017, the County of San Diego HHSWA CWS will conduct analyses, as well as explore the legal authority to determine how many individuals previously involved with CWS become consumers of San Diego County's adult welfare system or subject to the San Diego County criminal justice system.

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2016-17 GRAND JURY REPORT
“COMPREHENDING THE PLIGHT OF SAN DIEGO’S HOMELESS: IS THERE A SEA
CHANGE COMING?”**

Filed June 6, 2017

FINDINGS

Finding 01: The need for low-income housing continues to increase while, at the same time, the inventory of affordable housing units is not keeping pace with the demand.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding. The County of San Diego is fully aware of this issue and has been diligently effectuating changes in processes to both encourage the development of new affordable housing through community engagement, and to fund the creation of new units through gap financing of new developments.

On June 20, 2017, the Board of Supervisors approved a series of actions aimed at increasing the amount of affordable housing units in the region. A \$25 million trust fund was established for the purpose of enhancing affordable housing in San Diego County, along with an allocation of \$500,000 to evaluate the potential for affordable housing or other alternatives on a County-owned property. In addition, the Board authorized a review of current excess County property for the potential development of affordable housing.

Finding 02: Agencies and funding exist that could combine to produce low-income housing, which ultimately could save taxpayers money by getting the most vulnerable off the streets.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding. The County of San Diego works with a multitude of public and private entities to produce low-income housing.

The County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) receives funding from both the State of California and from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This year, HHS, through its housing arm Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS), awarded funding and/or Project Based Vouchers for the construction of four affordable housing developments, which will create over 250 new affordable housing units in the region. Additionally, HCDS is working closely with the State of California on the No Place Like Home (NPLH) program. If the NPLH Program is approved by the State courts (a court validation process is currently underway), an estimated \$140 million in housing program funds are expected to be made available to affordable housing developers within the San Diego region over the course of six years, beginning 2018. Affordable housing developers that apply for financing will be required to secure additional funding sources to combine with these funds. This process is commonly referred to as local leverage.

Additionally, in 2016, under the direction of the Board of Supervisors, the County Chief Administrative Officer launched Project One for All, an extensive effort to provide intensive wraparound services, including mental health counseling and housing, to homeless individuals with serious mental illness. This effort uses a

coordinated approach that includes: outreach, treatment and housing; a mechanism for County resources to be matched with individuals in need; and, a method for cities, local housing authorities and non-profit organizations to pair with County resources.

The County's HHSA, Behavioral Health Services works with treatment providers, housing developers, landlords and Housing Authorities to implement and develop an array of housing options funded through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). Through these partnerships, over the last 11 years, Behavioral Health Services has expanded the availability of housing for approximately 1,400 previously homeless persons with serious mental illness by matching treatment services funded by MHSA with an array of housing options, such as rental assistance subsidies through the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) and HCDS. An example of this partnership is the recently opened Atmosphere project downtown, which paired 31 MHSA funded units with SDHC Sponsor Based Vouchers.

Child Welfare Services was recently awarded a Bringing Families Home (BFH) grant. The primary goals of the BFH program are to significantly reduce the number of families in the child welfare system experiencing homelessness, increase the number of families reunifying and prevent foster care placement. The BFH program uses a Housing First framework and requires CWS to utilize two evidence based housing models and practices, Rapid Re-housing and Supportive Housing, to help support homeless families that are involved with CWS. This program includes partnerships with the San Diego Housing Commission and funders Together to End Homelessness and will primarily serve families living in the Central and South Regions.

Additionally, as an active member of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, the County is participating in the development of a Regional plan, the Community Plan to Address Homelessness. This will be a strategic framework and implementation plan that will bring together existing efforts to address homelessness into a coordinated, region-wide system.

Finding 03: State mandates need to be followed to make available the appropriate properties for low-income housing development.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding. The County of San Diego follows Government Code section 54220, et seq., which unless otherwise exempted, requires that surplus real property be offered for development of low- and moderate-income housing to various public entities and housing sponsors prior to disposition.

On June 20, 2017, the County presented the Board of Supervisors an inventory of 11 County owned surplus properties currently under consideration for the development of affordable housing. The surplus properties are being assessed using a variety of factors and are located throughout the region, including facilities in the City of San Diego, East County, and the North Inland region of the county.

Finding 04: The public would benefit from expanded opportunities to observe the progress the City and County of San Diego are making in developing moderate- and low-income housing.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding. The County of San Diego offers multiple outlets to inform the public of available funding for the creation of affordable housing via a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process. HCDS posts NOFA opportunities on its website and Facebook page, and sends group email notifications to community members, public housing residents, rental assistance participants, community stakeholders, building and development associations, non-profit organizations, members of the Continuum of Care, and other local governments. As potential projects are identified they are brought before the Board of Supervisors for a public hearing and approval. Completed developments are then posted on the HCDS website and added to the County of San Diego Housing Resource Directory. This Directory is also used by the 2-1-1 San Diego information and resource line, as well as various non-profits throughout the region.

Finding 05: The City and County of San Diego have the responsibility for ensuring that low-income/affordable housing units are appropriately included in developments when inducements have been provided to do so.

Response: The Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding. When a land development project receives an inducement for providing affordable housing as part of a discretionary permit, Planning & Development Services (PDS) places conditions on that project to ensure that the units will be reserved for affordable housing. The conditions require the applicant to enter into a contractual agreement with the County of San Diego Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS) to ensure that the units are reserved for affordable housing. PDS and HCDS continue to coordinate to ensure that the specific condition requirements are met.

HCDS also performs regular monitoring activities of low income/affordable housing developments that have received U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funds through the County's NOFA process. Monitoring activities ensure that developments that have received funding through this process are adhering to all requirements. Monitoring activities include, but are not limited to, the review of annual financial reports, confirming required insurance is in place, conducting Housing Quality Standards inspections, and review of tenant files to ensure proper documentation of eligibility.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2016/2017 Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Chief Administrative Officer:

17-55: Examine their process for disseminating information to potential developers about unused properties to ensure that those trying to create moderate- and low income housing have access to them as the California Surplus Land Act requires.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented

The County of San Diego follows Government Code section 54220, et seq., when applicable, prior to disposition of its real property. Under this statutory requirement, the County if applicable must offer real property declared surplus by the Board of Supervisors to, among others, local public entities, as defined in Section 50079 of the Health and Safety Code, and housing sponsors, as defined in Section 50074 of

the Health and Safety Code, for the purpose of developing low- and moderate-income housing. When surplus real property is located in the jurisdiction of one of the above-referenced entities, in accordance with the statutory requirement, the County of San Diego sends a written offer for their purchase or lease of the land prior to proceeding with disposition of the surplus real property.

17-56: Consider creating a means by which the public can observe the progress in creating moderate and low-income housing, including city, county, nonprofit, public-private and Housing Commission projects.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented

A variety of forums are currently in existence that allow for public engagement including meetings of the County Board of Supervisors, the Housing Authority of the County of San Diego, the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, and Community Planning Groups. Additionally, SANDAG/Regional Housing Needs Assessment, the HCDS NOFA process as detailed above and the publication of the Housing Resource Directory are available publicly. Staff will continue to consider ways to make the affordable housing process more transparent to the public.

In accordance with State law, all counties must submit an Annual Progress Report to the State Office of Planning and Research and the State Department of Housing and Community Development on the status of General Plan implementation. This Annual Progress Report fulfills statutory requirements to report certain information pertaining to the Housing Element of the General Plan, including the Annual Housing Element Progress Report, which contains the County of San Diego's progress in meeting its share of Regional Housing Needs and local efforts to remove governmental constraints to housing development. State law further mandates that the Housing Element portion of the Annual Progress Report be considered at a public meeting before the Board of Supervisors.

In addition, the State requires local agencies to periodically update the Housing Element Background Report to ensure that affordable housing opportunities are identified. The Housing Element Update is considered at a public meeting before the Board of Supervisors. The next update by the County of San Diego is required to be submitted to the State Department of Housing and Community Development in 2021.

17-57: Request an audit to verify that buildings constructed with the stipulation that low-income/affordable units be included are occupied by people who qualify to live there.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented

When a land development project proposes affordable housing as part of a discretionary permit, Planning & Development Services (PDS) places conditions on that project to ensure that the units will be reserved for affordable housing. The conditions require the applicant to enter into a contractual agreement with County of San Diego Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS) to ensure the units are reserved for affordable housing. PDS coordinates with HCDS to ensure the contract has been entered into per the specific condition requirements placed on the project (e.g. prior to the issuance of building permits for a certain phase or number of units).

The County of San Diego HCDS also performs regular monitoring activities of low income/affordable housing developments that have received U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funds through the County's NOFA process. Monitoring activities are designed to ensure that developments that have received funding through this process are providing the agreed upon number of affordable units and adhering to all programmatic requirements. Monitoring activities include, but are not limited to, the review of annual financial reports, confirming required insurance is in place, conducting Housing Quality Standards inspections, and review of tenant files to ensure proper documentation of eligibility. These monitoring activities are performed regularly during the affordability period, which is typically 55 years for NOFA funded developments.