



ESTABLISHED 1850

CITY OF VACAVILLE

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Office of:
The Mayor

August 10, 2016

Honorable Robert C. Fracchia
Presiding Judge, Dept. 25
Hall of Justice
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

**SUBJECT: RESPONSES TO 2015-2016 GRAND JURY REPORT ENTITLED:
 Homelessness-Omnipresent and Invisible?**

Dear Judge Fracchia:

This letter shall serve as the City of Vacaville's response in accordance with Penal Code §933.05 to the Grand Jury report entitled "Homeless-Omnipresent and Invisible?" as approved by the Vacaville City Council on August 9, 2016.

MAYOR, CITY OF VACAVILLE (FINDINGS 5, 7, 9c) - RESPONSES

FINDING 5

The City of Vallejo has established a citywide *Participatory Budget Process* to engage citizens to develop and recommend projects under the annual budget.

RESPONSE TO FINDING 5

The City of Vacaville agrees with this finding.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The Solano County Board of Supervisors and the Mayors/City Managers in Solano County engage citizens to develop and recommend priorities and projects through the adoption of a *Participatory Budget Process*.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 5

The City of Vacaville disagrees with Recommendation 5. We have looked into the Vallejo Participatory Budget Process and we understand that it applies to a small portion of Vallejo's general fund, yet there is a substantially higher cost and administrative oversight. The City of Vacaville conducts hearings and

performs outreach with our community with our annual budget adoption process. This has resulted in strong community support for the City's approach to budgeting, as well as city administration in general. Recent community surveys rank Vacaville City Government's overall job rating as good or excellent by 81% of those surveyed. In that same Spring 2016 survey, 91% believe that Vacaville is an excellent or good place to live. Given all of these factors, Vacaville does not agree to spend considerable additional funds to create a new process for budgeting at this time.

FINDING 7

All cities in Solano County need to understand the real cost of homelessness and how it impacts services, safety, loss of retail revenue, damage to the infrastructure in their cities, etc.

RESPONSE TO FINDING 7

The City of Vacaville agrees with this finding, to the extent that it is feasible to fully access the information needed to generate the data.

RECOMMENDATION 7

7A. At such time that the county implements recommendation Number 6, the county openly share the findings, methodology and accounting principles encompassed with the seven county cities to provide them the ability to replicate the study.

7B. All cities in Solano County conduct a cost assessment analysis to supplement the county results to develop a true depiction of the costs associated with homelessness to the cities of Solano County.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 7

The City of Vacaville agrees that a cost assessment can be done to capture some of the costs of homelessness that are associated with government services. However, we disagree that it is feasible to identify the costs associated to impacts to services outside of government such as the loss of retail revenue or to be able to fully assess all of the impacts of homeless uniformly without significant investment of time and assistance from the private sector. The City of Vacaville has already created a separate program based budget that assesses the City's out of pocket cost for homelessness related issues. The City of Vacaville is willing to provide our cost assessment with the other agencies at the appropriate time.

FINDING 9

The Grand Jury understands regional planning is a necessary and vital component to creating solutions to homelessness and has been informed that efforts are underway to develop a regional approach to the homelessness issues.

RESPONSE TO FINDING 9C

The City of Vacaville agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATION 9C

The Mayors of the seven cities in the county, serving in the capacity of the Solano City County Coordinating Council, establish homelessness as a priority item on their agenda and support the implementation of a regional plan as a part of their responsibilities.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 9C

The City of Vacaville agrees with the recommendation. The City County Coordinating Council has already supported the approach to developing the regional plan, and a plan is being prepared.

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Thank you for your investigation of the issues related to Homelessness, and for this opportunity to respond to the issues.

Sincerely,


Leonard J. Augustine
Mayor

cc: Vacaville City Council
Laura C. Kuhn, City Manager
John Carli, Police Chief
Emily Cantu, Housing Services Director