

Compliance and Continuity Report

2021-2022 Fresno County Civil Grand Jury Report No. 3

SUMMARY

The 2021-2022 Fresno County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) reviewed the mandated responses to three investigative reports issued by the 2019-2020 Fresno County Civil Grand Jury to assess compliance with California Penal Code Section 933.05. The complete text of these reports can be accessed at the following website:

<https://www.fresno.courts.ca.gov/divisions/jury-service/report-response>

The website also provides links to the responses given by the public agencies to the Findings and Recommendations contained in the reports.

BACKGROUND

California Penal Code Section 933(a) requires the Grand Jury to submit to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court a final report of its Findings and Recommendations that pertain to government matters within the county during the fiscal or calendar year.

Penal Code Section 933(c) requires governing bodies of the public agencies to respond to the Findings and Recommendations directed to them within 90 days of the release of a Grand Jury's report and requires elected county officials or public agency/department heads to respond within 60 days.

This Compliance and Continuity Report focuses only on the Penal Code requirements for responding to the Recommendations.

Penal Code Section 933.05(b) states that the governing body or county elected officials or public agency/department heads are required to report one of four possible responses to the Recommendations:

- 1) The Recommendation has been implemented, with a summary of the action taken;

- 2) The Recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a time frame for implementation being provided;
- 3) The Recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope of the analysis and a time frame for response being provided of not more than six (6) months from the release of the report; or
- 4) The Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation being provided.

The 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury issued the following reports:

- Revisiting Special District Audits
- Solving the Homelessness Challenges Threatened By Too Many Helping Hands
- Who Is Running Parlier?

The three (3) reports contained sixteen (16) Recommendations, which required seventeen (17) responses that were received from five (5) different persons, agencies or departments.

Two (2) responses were received within the Penal Code's specified time frames; nine (9) Responses were not timely received; and sixteen (16) Recommendations were not responded to.

The responses that were timely received were from the Fresno County Auditor-Controller-Tax Collector's office for the report titled "Revisiting Special District Audits".

The responses that were not received on a timely basis were from the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care, the City of Fresno and the County of Fresno, all responding to the report titled "Solving The Homelessness Challenges Threatened By Too Many Helping Hands".

The governing body that did not respond to the Recommendations was the City Council of Parlier for the report titled "Who Is Running Parlier?"

METHODOLOGY

The 2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury evaluated responses to the 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury's report Recommendations to ensure compliance with the governing sections of the Penal Code. The 2021-2022 Grand Jury's effort to compile this report was delayed because of the process through which responses flow to the Superior Court and are posted online by the Court. The 2021-2022 Grand Jury discovered responses to the 2019-2020 Grand Jury's Consolidated Report had been received by the Court in early 2020, but were not posted until the 2019-2020 Grand Jury's Consolidated Report was published in January 2022.

The Court has changed its procedure and will post future responses publicly when received.

The following criteria were considered:

1. If a response indicated that a Recommendation had been implemented, did it include a summary of what was done?
2. If a response indicated that a Recommendation would be implemented, did it include a timeframe for what would be done?
3. If a response indicated that a Recommendation required further analysis or study, did it include an explanation of the scope, parameters, and time frame of the proposed analysis or study?
4. If a response indicated that a Recommendation would not be implemented because it was unwarranted or unreasonable, did the respondent include a reasoned explanation supporting that position?

DISCUSSION

The following tables offer a summary of the responses the elected county officials, public agency/department heads and governing bodies provided to the 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury's Recommendations contained in the three (3) reports, as assessed by the 2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury. In some cases, the responses contained additional details that are not included in the tables found in the appendices.

FINDINGS

F1. Respondents to the 2019-2020 Grand Jury's Report Findings and Recommendations do not consistently follow Penal Code timeline requirements.

F2. Responses to the 2019-2020 Grand Jury's Report Findings and Recommendations do not consistently follow Penal Code response format and language requirements, leaving interpretation to the reader.

F3. The process followed by the Superior Court to delay publishing responses to the Grand Jury's Reports could lead to the false assumption that the governing body of a public agency or an elected county officer, public agency head or department head was not meeting its statutory obligations to provide a timely response.

F4. The 2021-2022 Grand Jury commends the Superior Court for changing the procedure on posting responses to the report Findings and Recommendations so those responses are made available to the public much sooner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Respondents to Grand Jury reports should respond pursuant to Penal Code mandates.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

No responses to this report are required or requested.

REVISITING SPECIAL DISTRICT AUDITS

The 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury initiated a review of performance of the audits of the special districts by the offices of the Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector and the Fresno County Local Agency Formation Commission Executive Office.

The report was issued in October 2020, with responses required from the Fresno County Auditor-Controller-Tax Collector's office.

The complete responses submitted are shown in **Appendix A**.

REVISITING SPECIAL DISTRICT AUDITS

R1-Continuing R4 of the 2017-2018 Fresno County Grand Jury Report No. 3: Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector either perform financial audits on special districts or contract with certified public accountants to have missing audits completed. (F2)

R2-Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector audits not completed in a timely manner by special districts should be referred to Fresno LAFCo as ‘potentially inactive’ in order that Fresno County LAFCo may commence the dissolution process for chronic non-compliance, if necessary. (F2)

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933.05, the Fresno County Civil Grand Jury required responses from the following governing bodies: Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Tax Collector and Fresno County Local Agency Formation Commission Executive Office.

RESPONDING AGENCY	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE TIMELY OR TARDY?	CONTENT RESPONSIVE PURSUANT TO PC SECTION 933.05 (b)?	SUMMARY OF RESPONSES AND 2021-2022 CIVIL GRAND JURY ANALYSIS
Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector’ office	R1	Timely	Yes	Follow up to determine if implemented
Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector’s office	R2	Timely	Yes	Follow up to determine if implemented

SOLVING HOMELESSNESS CHALLENGES THREATENED BY TOO MANY “HELPING HANDS”

The 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury initiated an investigation of the City of Fresno’s and the County of Fresno’s actions to address the homelessness challenges in Fresno County.

The report was issued in October 2020, with responses required from the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care organization, the City of Fresno and the County of Fresno.

The complete responses submitted are shown in **Appendix B**.

SOLVING HOMELESSNESS CHALLENGES THREATENED BY TOO MANY “HELPING HANDS”

R1-Street2Home fills Board vacancies by December 31, 2020. (F1)

R2-Street2Home should operate openly and transparently with community involvement by inviting the public to participate in widely noticed meetings and by allowing time for public comment during board meetings. (F1)

R3-Street2Home positions of executive director, facilitator and data manager should be filled no later than March 31, 2021. (F2)

R4-Fresno Madera Continuum of Care (CoC) should update its website with current member information; meeting agendas and minutes; and current funding opportunities and awards, no later than March 31, 2021. (F3)

R5-City of Fresno should perform and publish quarterly audits of all homeless grants to ensure that funds are being spent appropriately, services are being provided and goals are being met. This should be ongoing beginning with fiscal year 2020-2021 and findings should be posted on its website, as well as the CoC website. (F3)

R5-County of Fresno should perform and publish quarterly audits of all homeless grants to ensure that funds are being spent appropriately, services are being provided and goals are being met. This should be ongoing beginning with fiscal year 2020-2021 and findings should be posted on its website, as well as the CoC website.(F3)

R6-Fresno Madera Continuum of Care ought to consider complying with the Brown Act guidelines for posting meeting notices and also inform its members and the public about the application and ranking process for organizations that apply for HUD awards. This should be ongoing and begin no later than 90 days after the publication of this report. (F3)

R7-Street2Home should develop a plan for regular dialogue with the Fresno County community to educate and inform the public about what is being done to resolve homelessness in the Fresno community. (F3)

R8-Street2Home meetings should be held at easily accessible venues, and at times that encourage public participation, beginning no later than March 31, 2021, or as allowed by restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. (F3)

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933.05, the Fresno County Civil Grand Jury required responses to each of the specific findings and recommendations. It is required that responses from elected county officials and public agency/department heads are due within 60 days of the receipt of the report and within 90 days for other governing bodies of a public agency. The Fresno Grand Jury requested responses as follows:

Fresno Madera Continuum of Care (R4 and R6)

City of Fresno (Mayor’s Office of Strategic Initiatives) (R1, R2 R3, R7 and R8)

County of Fresno Department of Social Services (R5)

RESPONDING AGENCY	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE TIMELY OR TARDY?	CONTENT RESPONSIVE PURSUANT TO PC SECTION 933.05 (b)?	SUMMARY OF RESPONSES AND 2021-22 CIVIL GRAND JURY ANALYSIS
City of Fresno, Street2Home	R1	Tardy	No	No legal requirement for centralized coordination of homelessness services
Fresno Madera Continuum of Care	R1	Tardy	No	No legal requirement for centralized coordination of homelessness services
City of Fresno, Street2Home	R2	Tardy	No	Response did not contain evidence or explanation of organizational meeting requirements being established
City of Fresno, Street2Home	R3	Tardy	No	Response did not contain evidence or explanation of positions mentioned having been filled.

Fresno Madera Continuum of Care	R3	Tardy	Yes	Follow up to determine if implemented
Fresno Madera Continuum of Care	R4	Tardy	Yes	Follow up to determine if implemented
City of Fresno	R5	Tardy (due to Covid-19 pandemic)	No	No response or explanation to R5 found in Response
County of Fresno	R5	Tardy	No	No response or explanation to R5 found in Response
Fresno Madera Continuum of Care	R6	Tardy	Yes	No further analysis or follow up required
City of Fresno, Street2Home	R7	Tardy	Yes , in Part	Follow up to determine if implemented
City of Fresno, Street2Home	R8	Tardy	Yes in Part	Follow up to determine if implemented

WHO IS RUNNING PARLIER?

The 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury investigated the Parlier City Council's development and maintenance of administrative policies and procedures; hiring of qualified management; budget and finance procedures; and policies about filling unexpected Council vacancies.

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933.05, the Fresno County Grand Jury required responses to each of the specific findings and recommendations. It is required that responses from elected county officials and public agency/department heads are due within 60 days of the receipt of the report and within 90 days for other governing bodies of a public agency. The report was issued in October 2020, with responses required from the Parlier City Council. The Parlier City Council (City Council) did not respond in compliance with Penal Code Section 933.05.

WHO IS RUNNING PARLIER?

R1-The City Council order the distribution of the updated Personnel Policy Manual containing the travel policy approved by the City Counsel in Resolution No. 2020-09 to all personnel and publish the Manual in the City of Parlier's website for the public's perusal within two months of the publication of this report. (F1)

R2-The City Council educates itself regarding the responsibilities under Government Code Section 36512 regarding filling vacancies on the City Council within two months of the publication of this report. (F3)

R3-The City Council initiate the hiring process to fill the position of City Manager within two months of the publication of this report. (F4)

R4-The City Council contract with a qualified certified public accountant to act as interim Finance Director until a City Manager can hire a permanent Finance Director within two months of the publication of this report. (F5)

R5-The City Council develop a travel policy consistent with Government Code Sections 53232.2 and 53232.3 for members of the City Council and to develop a similar policy for unelected city officials within two months of the publication of this report. (F8)

R6-The City Council develop and utilize a meaningful annual budget process, including, among other things, public budget hearings, within six months of the publication of this report. (F9 and F10)

RESPONDING AGENCY	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE TIMELY OR TARDY?	CONTENT RESPONSIVE TO SECTION 933.05 (b)?	SUMMARY OF RESPONSES AND 2021-22 Civil Grand Jury Analysis
Parlier City Council	R1-R6	No response received	No response received	No response received

CONCLUSION

The 2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury appreciates all departments and agencies that responded to the 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury's Findings and Recommendations. It is important for responses to be complete and responsive so the public can know when to expect actions to be taken to address highlighted issues.

Appendix A

The originals of these replies are unavailable. This is a verbatim copy of the actual text

Revisiting Special District Audits

County of Fresno
Oscar J. Garcia, CPA
Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector

February 4, 2021

The Honorable Arlan L. Harrell, Presiding Judge Fresno County Superior Court 1100 Van Ness Avenue Fresno, CA 93724-0002

Reference: Response to Fresno County Grand Jury Report No.2: Revisiting Special District Audits

Dear Judge Harrell:

We apologize for the delay in the County of Fresno Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector's responses to the Grand Jury's October 2020 Report. The impact of the pandemic and other issues on the ACTTC Office has been critical over the past few months and that resulted in missing the request for responses to the 2020 Report until it was brought to our attention this week. We want to assure the Grand Jury that the ACTTC Office has continued to work on the recommendations from the 2017-18 Report by tracking and assisting non-compliant districts in meeting their audit obligations. As soon as circumstances permit, the ACTTC will be seeking the additional funding to staff a more formal effort to ensure that all special districts subject to its audit oversight come into compliance.

As directed by the Grand Jury, the responses below are provided in accordance with Penal Code, Section 933.05.

Finding Numbers:

F2.

Good progress has been made in reducing the number of non-compliant districts and the number of past due audits; the Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office has not completed recommendation R4 from the 2017-18 Grand Jury's Report No. 3 concerning the performance of financial audits from non-compliant special districts.

County's Response:

The County has eight districts that have outstanding audits. We have communicated with the districts to resolve these items. Non-compliance letters were sent to the districts on July 13, 2020. Follow up communications have occurred, with the most recent follow ups dated February 1,

2021. As the Grand Jury was informed the extreme stresses and staff shortages created by the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the Auditor

February 4, 2021 The Honorable Arlan L. Harrell, Presiding Judge Fresno County Superior Court
Grand Jury Final Report No. 3

Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector's plan to obtain additional funding from the Board of Supervisors to staff efforts to conduct audits of non-compliant districts.

Recommendation Numbers

R1.

Continue recommendation R4 of the 2017-18 Fresno County's Grand Jury Report No. 3: "Per California Government Code, Section 36929 as amended, Fresno County Auditor Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office should either perform financial audits on special districts or contract with a certified public accountant to have the missing audits completed." (F2)

County's Response The County has been working with the special districts to resolve the issue of past due/missing audits, as noted in our response to F2. The Auditor-Controller/Treasurer Tax Collector's Office will continue to work closely with County Counsel to improve upon our policies and procedures regarding the timing in which we step in to either perform or contract with a certified public accountant to perform the audits. Due to the vast number of special districts and the limited staffing and resources of both the special districts and the Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office, this will be an ongoing project to ensure compliance.

R2.

Audits not completed in a timely manner by special districts should be referred to Fresno County LAFCo as "potentially inactive" in order that Fresno County LAFCo may commence the dissolution process for chronic non-compliance, if needed. (F2)

me

The County will work closely with LAFCo with regards to potentially inactive districts due to continued non-compliance. Our most recent discussion with LAFCo regarding a potentially inactive district occurred in December 2020.

This concludes the Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector's responses to the findings and recommendations of the October 2020 Grand Jury Report No. 2.

Sincerely,

S/ Oscar J. Garcia

Oscar J. Garcia, CPA Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector

cc: Elizabeth Vecchio, Program Technician, County Administrative Office

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County of Fresno
Oscar J. Garcia, CPA
Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector

July 15, 2021

Fresno County Civil Grand Jury
Continuity Committee
Lanny Larson
P.O. Box 2072
Fresno, CA 93718

Reference: Response to 2019-2020 Fresno County Civil Grand Jury Report #2, Implementation Response Update Request

Dear Fresno County Civil Grand Jury Continuity Committee:

The County of Fresno Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector is providing an update to its response to the Fresno County Grand Jury Report No. 2: Revisiting Special District Audits, dated February 4, 2021. The Auditor's Office agrees that providing transparent financial information to special districts' constituents is valuable and important. The Auditor's Office is working to implement the Grand Jury's recommendations.

As directed by the Grand Jury, the responses below are provided in accordance with Penal Code, Section 933.05.

Recommendation Numbers

R1. Continue recommendation R4 of the 2017-18 Fresno County's Grand Jury Report No. 3: "Per California Government Code, Section 26909 as amended, Fresno County Auditor Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office should either perform financial audits on special districts or contract with a certified public accountant to have the missing audits completed."

County's Response In an effort to address the Grand Jury's recommendation, the Auditor's Office has discussed with the County Administrative Office and will be allocated \$200,000 during the budget hearings in September for special district audit costs to contract with a private CPA firm for audits of special districts for which audits have not been provided, to the extent the Auditor's Office has authority under Government Code Section 26909. There are currently 84 special districts that have not provided audits, but only six of these special districts did not provide audits in previous years. We are in continuous communication with special districts throughout the year regarding their need to obtain audits and our most recent notification was sent out on July 12, 2021. We anticipate that a majority of these special districts will return to compliance in the next few months. We continue to consult with County Counsel on this matter.

This concludes the Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector's update to its response to the Fresno County Grand Jury Report No. 2: Revisiting Special District Audits, dated February 4, 2021.

Sincerely,
Oscar J. Garcia
Oscar J. Garcia, CPA Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector

cc: Elizabeth Vecchio, Program Technician, County Administrative Office

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July 15, 2021 Lanny Larson
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Appendix B

The originals of these replies are unavailable. This is a verbatim copy of the actual text

Solving The Homeless Challenges Threatened By Too Many Helping Hands

Street2Home

(Street2Home did not provide a separate response provided, but City of Fresno Response indicates it is also responding for Street2Home)

Fresno Madera Continuum of Care

February 12, 2021

The Honorable Arlan L. Harrell, Presiding Judge Fresno County Superior Court 1100 Van Ness Avenue Fresno, CA 93724-0002

RE: Response to Fresno County Grand Jury Report No. 4: Solving Homelessness Challenges Threatened By Too Many "Helping Hands"

Dear Judge Harrell:

The Grand Jury's report reflects findings and recommendations regarding homelessness and the challenge of coordinating services across jurisdictions. The Fresno Madera Continuum of Care (FMCoC) thanks the Grand Jury for its investment in this issue. Below are the responses to the findings and recommendations:

Findings:

Finding #1: There is a lack of robust central coordination in providing homeless services in Fresno County.

Response #1: The FMCoC disagrees with Finding 1. There is no overarching legislative mandate which supports central coordination of homeless services. There are a variety of sources that fund homeless services with each having their own requirements. The FMCoC follows all guidelines and requirements mandated by the funding source.

The FMCoC agrees with Finding #3.

The FMCoC agrees with Finding #3.

Recommendations:

Recommendation #4: The Fresno Madera Continuum of Care should update its website with current member information; meeting agendas and minutes, and current funding opportunities and awards no later than March 31, 2021.

Response 4: The recommendation has been implemented. The FMCoC website is functional and contains the above-mentioned information. www.fresnomaderahomeless.org

Recommendation #6: The Fresno Madera Continuum of Care ought to consider complying with the Brown Act guidelines for posting meeting notices, and also inform the members and the public about the application and ranking process for organizations that apply for HUD awards. This should be ongoing and begin no later than 90 days after the publication of this report.

Response 6: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be partially implemented by July 1, 2021. The FMCoC will consider complying with the Brown Act guidelines. Additionally, the FMCoC will post the application and ranking process for the HUD awards on its website during the next cycle of funding.

This concludes the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care comments on the findings and recommendations of the Fresno Grand Jury Report No. 4, October 2020.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Moreno
Laura Moreno, Chair

C: Elizabeth Vecchio, County Administrative www.fresnomaderahomeless.org

**THOMAS ESQUEDA
CITY MANAGER**

July 30, 2021

The Honorable Arian L. Harrell, Presiding Judge Fresno County Superior Court 1100 Van Ness Avenue Fresno, CA 93724-0002

RE: Response to Fresno County Grand Jury Report No. 4: Solving Homelessness Challenges Threatened By Too Many "Helping Hands," October 2020

Dear Judge Harrell:

The City of Fresno thanks the Grand Jury for its investigation related to the critical issue of homelessness in our community. The Grand Jury's report reflects findings and recommendations regarding the challenge of coordinating services addressing homelessness across jurisdictions.

My apologies for not forwarding to you the City's response to the Grand Jury's request sooner. Our delay is due primarily to the joint challenges associated with preventing the spread of COVID-19 among our homeless population during the pandemic and the turnover in Mayoral administrations here at the City of Fresno at the end of 2020. Nevertheless, we are grateful for the Grand Jury's attention to this most critical issue.

The Fresno Grand Jury requested responses to the following findings and recommendations: F1, F2, F4; R1, R2, R3, R7, R8. The following are responses to those items:

Findings:

F1. There is a lack of robust central coordination in providing homeless services in Fresno County.

The City of Fresno agrees in part with this assessment.

First, there is no overarching legislative mandate which supports central coordination of homeless services. In fact, recent legislative acts at both the State and Federal levels continue to support cities, counties and continuums of care in their separate but coordinated efforts to address homelessness in municipalities across the country, including here in Fresno.

There are a variety of sources that fund homeless services with each having their own requirements. The City follows all guidelines and requirements mandated by the funding source, including the requirement for coordination with other institutions and agencies making up our community wide homeless service delivery system.

Secondly, we appreciate the historic coordinating role that the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care has played in our community. The City has a seat on its Executive Committee. More recently, we also appreciate the “robust central coordination” involved in planning and deploying services addressing homelessness during the pandemic led by Dawan Utecht, Director of Fresno County Behavioral Health, and Sonia De La Rosa, Principal Analyst with the County of Fresno, which was nothing short of spectacular.

Thirdly, there is still a need for an ongoing, “robust central coordination” described in the Street2Home Fresno County: A Framework for Action (www.street2homefresno.org). For more details, please see our response to Recommendations 1-3 below.

F2. Although funding is available, the three positions recommended in the Street2 Home report for the “backbone organization” remains unfilled.

The City of Fresno agrees in part with this assessment.

Although the three positions recommended in the Street2Home report remain unfilled, there was a conscious commitment of significant staff time to fill that gap temporarily from both the Mayor's Office in the City of Fresno and the County Administrator's Office at the County of Fresno amounting to a substantial investment in staffing the collective impact activities outlined in Street2Home. That being said, we believe now that the crisis of the pandemic is subsiding, it is imperative for us to establish a backbone organization as outlined in the Street2Home Report in order to advance community wide efforts to address homelessness.

The Honorable Arian L. Harrell, Presiding Judge Response to Fresno County Grand Jury Report No. 4: Solving Homelessness Challenges Threatened by Too Many "Helping Hands"

July 30, 2021 Page 3 of 4

Please see our response to Recommendations R1-R3 below.

F3. There is a lack of communication with the public at-large regarding services provided for the homeless and the success of efforts to reduce the homeless population.

Please see our response to Recommendations R1-R3 below.

Recommendations:

Please see the joint response to R1, R2 and R3 below.

R1. The Street2Home organization should fill all board vacancies by December 31, 2020. (F1)

R2. The Street2Home organization should operate openly and transparently with community involvement by inviting the public to participate in widely noticed meetings and by allowing time for public comment during board meetings. (F1)

R3. The Street2Home organization positions of executive director, facilitator, and data manager should be filled by no later than March 31, 2021. (F2)

The following is our joint response to Recommendations 1-3 (R1, R2, and R3):

In the report which the City of Fresno co-commissioned in 2018, Street2 Home Fresno County, A Framework for Action (www.street2homefresno.org), it was recommended that the City of Fresno join with the County of Fresno to organize and convene a collective impact initiative of influential community leaders who can deploy human or financial resources and keep track of the big picture.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, an initial board of directors of a backbone organization was assembled and met, including multi-sector representatives as recommended in the report. With the COVID-19 emergency homeless response, this work was put on hiatus. We anticipate that the board of the backbone organization will become fully operational in FY 21/22 and will develop a flexible and dynamic structure with clear delineation of

The Honorable Arian L. Harrell, Presiding Judge Response to Fresno County Grand Jury Report No. 4: Solving Homelessness Challenges Threatened by Too Many "Helping Hands"

July 30, 2021 Page 4 of 4

leadership and decision-making roles, as well as opportunities for extensive community engagement and participation with the first task to implement a dynamic staffing structure to support the collective impact structure.

Though in favor of a functional collective impact structure with a board of directors, we are not in favor of calling this backbone organization "Street2Home," as there are some factors that have called this particular name into question.

R7. Street2Home should develop a plan for regular dialogue with the Fresno County community to educate and inform the public about what is being done to resolve homelessness in the community. (F4)

We anticipate that the collective impact structure's board and staff, once operational, will engage the entire community in solutions to addressing homelessness. Working with our robust network of agencies to address homelessness, the collective impact structure will be committed to full community engagement, with all partners, elected officials, and community leaders.

R8. Street2Home meetings should be held at easily accessible venues and at times that encourage public participation, beginning no later than March 31, 2021, or as allowed by restrictions imposed due to the COVID 19 pandemic. (F4)

The City of Fresno fully agrees with this recommendation.

This concludes the City of Fresno's comments on the findings and recommendations of the Fresno Grand Jury Report No. 4, October 2020. H. Spees will be glad to discuss these in depth with you should you have questions. He appreciated the opportunity to provide you with an update to the City of Fresno's homeless initiatives during the Grand Jury's recent meeting with him on Wednesday, July 21, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,
S/ Thomas C. Esqueda
THOMAS C. ESQUEDA,
City Manager

S/ H. Spees
H. SPEES, Director
Housing and Homeless Initiatives

January 4, 2021

The Honorable Arlan L. Harrell,
Presiding Judge Fresno County Superior Court 1100 Van Ness Avenue Fresno, CA 93724-0002

RE: Response to Fresno County Grand Jury Report No. 4: Solving Homelessness Challenges
Threatened By Too Many "Helping Hands"

Dear Judge Harrell:

The Grand Jury's report reflects findings and recommendations regarding Homelessness and the Challenge of coordinating services across jurisdictions. The Fresno County Department of Social Services (DSS) thanks the Grand Jury for its investment in this issue. Below are the responses to the findings and recommendations:

Findings:

The Department agrees with Finding #4.

Finding #1: There is a lack of robust central coordination in providing homeless services in Fresno County.

Response #1: The Department disagrees with Finding 2. There is no overarching legislative mandate which supports central coordination of homeless services. There are a variety of sources that fund homeless services with each having their own requirements. The Department follows all guidelines and requirements mandated by the funding source.

Recommendations:

Recommendation #5: The City of Fresno and the County of Fresno should perform and publish quarterly audits of all homeless grants to ensure that funds are being spent appropriately, services are being provided, and goals are being met. This should be ongoing beginning with Fiscal Year 2020-21 and findings should be posted on their website as well as the CoC website.

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www.co.fresno.ca.us

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Response #5: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be partially implemented by July 1, 2021. The Department audits monthly invoices and activity reports including outcomes. A more complete audit and site visit are completed annually, and those annual reports will be published.

This concludes the Fresno County Department of Social Services comments on the findings and recommendations of the Fresno Grand Jury Report No. 4, October 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

S/ Delfino E. Neira
Delfino E. Neira, Director

C: Elizabeth Vecchio, County Administrative Office

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