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JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER

SUMMARY:

Madera County Grand Jury visited the Madera County Juvenile Detention Center (MCJDC) on October 2, 2019. The visit included observing the interior and exterior of the facility. Access was provided to all requested locations.

OVERVIEW:

This facility is for juvenile residents. The Madera County Juvenile Hall is a medium to low-security detention center that is operated locally by the Juvenile Justice Department and holds youth awaiting the determination of punishment for the crimes of which they are accused. Most of the adolescents are detained for less than two years. The Probation Department is also responsible for operation and administration of the Juvenile Hall. Juvenile Hall is a place of detention for juvenile offenders taken into custody within the provisions of Section 602 of the Juvenile Court Law. These young people are detained for their protection or the protection of the community pending and/or serving final disposition of their cases. Programs include temporary detention pending court disposition, holding for other agencies, and varying lengths of residential care. Treatment programs include full-time school within the Juvenile Hall for continuation of education.

FINDINGS - MADERA COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER (MCJDC)

F1. The MCGJ finds the Correctional Academy Program to be successful for the positive development of the youth who take part in the Academy.

F2. The MCGJ finds the staff and teachers within the Program at MCJDC highly capable, dedicated, and compassionate.

F3. The MCGJ finds that a delay of a 96-hour physical screening endangers the health of other residents and staff.

F4. The MCGJ finds the wards face a lack of choices after release.

RECOMMENDATIONS - MADERA COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER (MCJDC)

R1. The MCGJ commends CAP as a successful program and recommends that the MCJDC continue to provide this highly structured program thus enabling youth to recognize their personal potential.

R2. The MCGJ commends the staff and teachers within the Program for their attention to the mental, physical, and educational needs of the youth and encourage providers to continue in their positive responsiveness.

R3. The MCGJ recommends that immediately upon admission wards shall be screened for any communicable diseases.

R4. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the MCJDC connect wards with meaningful community service organizations.



MADERA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT Administration



STEPHANIE STOECKEL
Deputy Chief Probation Officer

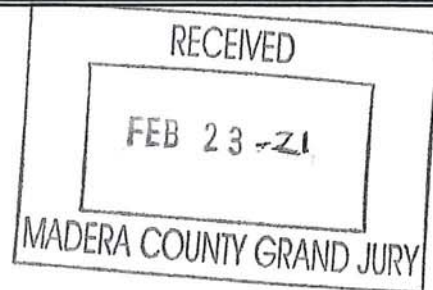
CHRIS CHILDERS, Chief Probation Officer

209 W. Yosemite Ave
Madera, CA 93637
Phone (559) 675-7739
Fax (559) 673-0521

February 19, 2021

Madera County Grand Jury Foreperson
PO Box 534
Madera CA 93637

Attention: Madera County Grand Jury Foreperson



This letter is to serve as a response to the (MCGJ) Madera County Grand Jury findings and recommendations released on December 21, 2020, regarding Madera County Juvenile Detention Facility.

Madera County Probation Department would like to thank the Madera County Grand Jury for their recommendations and comments. The group that toured our facility showed great interest in the education, rehabilitation, and medical efforts that were on display when visiting with the teachers, wards, facility staff and medical staff.

The Probation Department acknowledges the Grand Jury's recommendations and will strive to adopt them into our plan to improve both public safety and rehabilitation efforts of justice involved individuals.

The report noted two (2) findings for Madera County Juvenile Detention Facility and provided two (2) recommendations to address the reported findings. Below you will find both Grand Jury findings and recommendations, and the department's response pursuant to Penal Code Section 933.

1) Finding, Recommendation and Response:

F3. The MCGJ finds that a delay of a 96-hour physical screening endangers the health and safety of other residents and staff.

R3. The MCGJ recommends that immediately upon admission wards shall be screened for any communicable diseases.

Madera County Probation Department Response:

The Madera County Probation Department partially agrees with the finding and will explain the reasons. The physical screening is a full health assessment conducted by a physician soon as possible and no later than 96-hours of the ward's arrival. Equally, upon arrival to the facility, a ward is also screened by a qualified health care professional between 7am-7pm and no later than the following morning if the

"The mission of the Madera County Probation Department is to encourage positive change in the lives of offenders through collaborative partnerships, evidence based practices, and corrective services."

ward arrived after 7 pm. Further, if a ward exhibits any signs of illness, the facility or medical staff will immediately contact the on-call physician who is available 24/7.

The recommendation has been further implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action. The facility policies and procedures were updated in response to communicable disease priorities identified by the local health officer in March of 2020, at the start of the COVID pandemic. Facility administration, along with medical administration, developed a "COVID response plan" to prevent a communicable disease outbreak. Wards are still screened during the intake process by health care professionals for communicable diseases with the addition of the CDC screening tool and daily health screenings for the first (10) ten days after a ward's arrival.

Lastly, the Madera County Juvenile Detention operational policies and procedures are inspected bi-annually by the Madera County-Public Health Officer and the (BSCC) Board of State Community Corrections to ensure the facility meets Local and State standards set for the in California Title 15 Standards for Juvenile Facilities. Please note the facility meets or exceed those standards with the last inspection occurring in November 2019. A report of that inspection is public and accessible on Board of State Community Correction's website.

2) Finding, Recommendation and Response:

F4. The MCGJ finds the wards face a lack of choices after release.

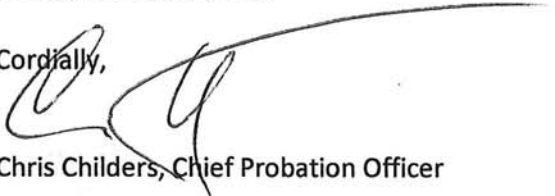
R4. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the MCDJC connect wards with meaningful community service organizations.

Madera County Probation Department Response:

The Probation Department agrees with the finding. However, the department's recommendation also requires further analysis and additional resources. Community based programs for wards and their rehabilitation have associated costs. The department has recently applied for additional grant funding through Senate Bill 823 for fiscal year 21-22. If awarded, the grant award will be used to augment evidenced-based treatment programs for wards housed in local juvenile detention facilities, as well as wards participating in re-entry programs following their release from custody.

In Closing, Madera County Probation appreciates the effort and time of the Grand Jury to provide the recommendations to the operation of the Madera County Juvenile Detention Facility. Madera County Probation Department Management and Staff will continue to follow all state and county procedures in the daily operation of the Juvenile Detention Facility. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Cordially,



Chris Childers, Chief Probation Officer

cc: Judge Michael Jurkovich

VALLEY STATE PRISON (VSP)

SUMMARY:

The Madera County Grand Jury visited the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), located in Chowchilla, California on December 6, 2019. The MCGJ toured the prison facility and was provided guided access to many areas.

OVERVIEW:

The VSP is operated by the CDCR. The prison opened in April 1995 as a women-only prison, and the prison began receiving inmates immediately thereafter. The CDCR began converting the prison into a facility for low-risk male inmates in 2012. The conversion was completed in January 2013 with the last female inmates in the facility transferred to the nearby Central California Women's Facility (CCWF) in Chowchilla and California Institution for Women in Chino, California. Some inmates nearing the end of their sentence were transferred to various county jails.

The MCGJ inspected the prison using a checklist developed for grand jury prison inspections by the California Board of State and Community Corrections. Additional information was requested by the MCGJ prior to making the inspection. The check list included the general safety and security of the facility, food services, medical services, job training, and educational programs for inmates, and a housing unit.

FINDINGS - VALLEY STATE PRISON (VSP)

- F1.** The MCGJ finds that the inmate population exceeds state mandates.
- F2.** The MCGJ finds there are adequate educational and vocational opportunity programs for inmates.
- F3.** The MCGJ finds there is a lack of mental health treatment options available for inmates.
- F4.** The MCGJ finds that the inmates were well behaved, polite, proud of their accomplishments, and willing to answer questions.

RECOMMENDATIONS - VALLEY STATE PRISON (VSP)

- R1.** The MCGJ recommends that the CDCR continue to work at the state level, specifically the California State Legislative Analyst Office (LAO), to assist in resolving overcrowding issues. <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4186>
- R2.** The MCGJ recommends that the CDCR continue providing well-rounded offerings of educational and vocational training with post release employment opportunities.
- R3.** The MCGJ recommends that the CDCR investigate an outsourcing option for mental health services or jointly utilize the mental health services available at the Central California Women's Facility.
- R4.** The MCGJ commends the CDCR staff for maintaining a positive and supportive environment.

VALLEY STATE PRISON

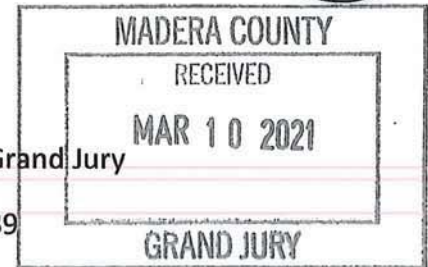
P.O. Box 99
Chowchilla, CA 93610-0099



March 3, 2021

Presiding Judge Michael Jurkovich
Madera County Superior Court
300 S. G. Street
Madera, CA 93637

Madera County Grand Jury
P.O. Box 534
Madera, CA 93639



This is in response to your Findings and Recommendations contained in the 2019-2020 Madera County Grand Jury report, dated December 21, 2020, regarding Valley State Prison (VSP).

Findings:

1. The MCGJ finds the inmate population exceeds state mandates.

I disagree with this finding.

2. The MCGJ finds there are adequate educational and vocational opportunity programs for inmates.

I agree with this finding.

3. The MCGJ finds there is lack of mental health treatment options available for inmates.

I disagree with this finding. Inmates are provided access to Mental Health Services Delivery System (MHSDS) at any time by submitting a referral for services. Inmates that are part of the MHSDS at the level of Enhanced Outpatient Care (EOP) and Correction Clinical Case Management System (CCCMS) level of care are provided adequate care consistent with their severity of mental illness and overall functioning. In addition, VSP is currently fully staffed in the Mental Health Department. There are regular audits to ensure quality care is being provided for the inmates. VSP has routine treatment team meetings to ensure that inmates are at the appropriate level of care.

4. The MCGJ finds the inmates were well behaved, polite, proud of their accomplishments, and willing to answer questions.

I agree with this finding.

Recommendations:

1. The MCGJ recommends that the CDCR continue to work at the state level, specifically California State Legislative Analyst Office (LAO), to assist in resolving overcrowding issues.

This recommendation has been implemented in 2019. The inmate population was 2906 however, with the Implementation of Propositions 47, 57 and AB 109 the population has continued to reduce the number at VSP to 2755.

2. The MCGJ recommends that the CDCR continue providing well-rounded offerings of educational and vocational training with post release employment opportunities.

This recommendation has been implemented with advanced education with Merced College and educational, vocational job placement, which has led to 157 AA degrees, 240 GED's and 37 high school diplomas between, 2017-2020.

3. The MCGJ recommends that the CDCR investigate an outsourcing option for Mental Health Services or jointly utilize the Mental Health Services available at the Central California Women's Facility.

As mentioned above, VSP's Mental Health Department is fully staffed to provide services to the inmate population in all levels of care.

4. The MCGJ commends the CDCR staff for maintaining a positive and supportive environment.

Thank you.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter, please contact David Barksdale, Administrative Assistant/Public Information Officer, at (559) 665-6500, extension 5509.


R. FISHER, JR.
Warden
Valley State Prison

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WOMEN’S FACILITY (CCWF)

SUMMARY:

The Central California Women’s Facility (CCWF), in Chowchilla, California, is part of the California State Prison system. A mandated responsibility of the MCGJ is to inspect the condition of all facilities within the County of Madera. The MCGJ toured this facility on January 9, 2020 after experiencing delayed, and limited scope access.

OVERVIEW:

The Madera County Board of Supervisors gave the prison its current name in 1989, prior to opening in October 1990 at a cost of \$141 million to construct.

The MCGJ inspected the prison using a checklist developed for grand jury prison inspections by the California Board of State and Community Corrections. The check list included the general safety and security of the facility, food services, medical services, job training, and educational programs for inmates, and a housing unit. The MCGJ toured the prison facilities pre-determined by the CCWF staff. The MCGJ were are not permitted access to many areas requiring inspection.

FINDINGS - CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WOMEN’S FACILITY (CCWF)

F1. The MCGJ finds that access was severely limited during the tour.

F2. The MCGJ finds that the inmate population exceeds State mandates.

F3. The MCGJ finds Firehouse 5 to be a valuable opportunity for inmates to learn marketable post incarceration skills and to serve the public while incarcerated.

F4. The MCGJ finds administrators attending job fairs on behalf of inmates is a questionable practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS - CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WOMEN’S FACILITY (CCWF)

R1. The MCGJ recommends that, during the fiscal year 21-22, the CCWF provide the Grand Jury with access to all areas on the checklist and those frequented by inmates.

R2. The MCGJ recommends that, beginning immediately, the CDCR continue working at the state level, specifically the California State Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) to assist in resolving overcrowding issues. Ref; <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4186>

R3. The MCGJ recommends that, immediately, CCWF administrative personnel provide equitable compensation for on-call services provided by firefighter inmates working from Firehouse 5.

R4. The MCGJ recommends that, immediately, the CCWF provide onsite job fairs for inmates nearing parole, enabling the inmate to personally participate and interact with potential employers

DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS
 Central California Women's Facility
 P.O. Box 1501
 23370 Road 22
 Chowchilla, CA 93610-1501
 (559) 665-5531



March 22, 2021

Presiding Judge Michael Jurkovich
 Madera County Superior Court
 300 S. G. Street
 Madera, CA 93637

Madera County Grand Jury
 P.O. Box 534
 Madera, CA 93639

This is in response to your Findings and Recommendations contained in the 2019-2020 Madera County Grand Jury report, dated December 21, 2020, regarding Central California Women's Facility (CCWF).

Findings:

1. The MCGJ finds that access was severely limited during the tour
 I agree with this finding.
2. The MCGJ finds the inmate population exceeds state mandates
 I disagree with this finding.
3. The MCGJ finds Firehouse 5 to be a valuable opportunity for inmates to learn marketable post incarceration skills and to serve the public while incarcerated.
 I agree with this finding.
4. The MCGJ finds administrators attending job fairs on behalf of inmates is a questionable practice.
 I disagree with this finding.

Recommendations:

1. The MCGJ recommends that during the fiscal year 21-22, the CCWF provide the Grand Jury with access to all areas on the checklist and those frequented by inmates.
 CCWF agrees with this recommendation.
2. The MCGJ recommends that the CDCR continue to work at the state level, specifically California State Legislative Analyst Office (LAO), to assist in resolving overcrowding issues.

This recommendation has been implemented in 2019. With the implementation of Propositions 47, 57 and AB 109 the population has continued to reduce the number at CCWF to 2147 inmates.

3. The MCGJ recommends that immediately, CCWF provide equitable compensation for on-call services provided by firefighter inmates working from Firehouse 5.

CCWF follows California Code of Regulations Title 15 Section 3041.2; Inmate Pay Rates, Schedule and Exceptions. Pay rates can only be revised by the Secretary pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act.

4. The MCGJ recommends that immediately, the CCWF provide onsite job fairs for inmates nearing parole, enabling the inmate to personally participate and interact with potential employers.

Job Fairs have been provided in the past for the inmate population which was organized with the Department of Rehabilitation Program (DRP). CCWF continues to offer job fairs for the inmate population and work with the Fresno Regional Workforce Connection to encourage a successful transition back into society.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter, please contact Gene Norman, Administrative Assistant/Public Information Officer, at (559) 665-5531, extension 5012.



M. PALLARES
Warden (A)
Central California Women's Facility

1920-02 Unmet Transit Needs: Riders Without Routes, Unmet

SUMMARY:

The 2019-2020 Madera County Grand Jury (MCGJ) was prompted to review the Madera County Public Transportation (MCTC) services after reviewing the MCGJ 2017 report. That report found the “*Madera County Transportation Commission efforts in obtaining public input are insufficient.*” The MCGJ also considered the Unmet Transit Needs FY 2019/2020 Report published by the Madera County Transportation Commission. In addition, in July 2019 the County awarded a five-year contract to the Fresno County EOC (FCEOC) for Madera County Connection (MCC) transportation services. The change to the new service provider would have given the County the opportunity to review the routes and connections but improvements were not considered. The only changes were cosmetic: a new logo, different uniforms, and a new name attached to the service provider. This MCGJ report reviews the improvements to secure public input and develop route improvements to meet needs geographically, demographically, economically while addressing the needs for all communities in the County of Madera.

BACKGROUND:

The MCTC publishes an annual report provided to them by the Social Services Technical Advisory Council (SSTAC) “Unmet Transit Needs FY 2019/2020 Report.” SSTAC serves as a citizen advisory committee to the MCTC on matters related to public transportation needs of the Madera County community. SSTAC holds two to three meetings per year, including the Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing.

The function of SSTAC, which is comprised of MCTC staff and public volunteer representatives, evaluates public comments, holds public workshops, public hearings, and makes recommendations to the MCTC Board to aid the MCTC Policy Board in its review of public transit.

The composition of the SSTAC is set forth in statute and consists of representatives of the following groups; One representative of potential transit users who is 60 years of age or older, one representative of potential transit users who have a disability, two representatives of the local service providers for seniors, including one representative of a social service transportation provider if one exists, two representatives of local social service providers for those with disabilities, including one representative of a social service transportation provider, if one exists, one representative of a local social service provider for persons of limited means, and two representatives from the local consolidated transportation services agency. The volunteer representatives of SSTAC have not been filled since 2018. The administrative role of the MCTC is to foster intergovernmental coordination. By conducting meetings with Caltrans, undertaking comprehensive regional planning with the region’s public transportation operators, providing a forum for citizens input with citizen forums held once a year, and providing technical services to its member agencies.

The MCGJ's focus was on this annual report, and on the following items:

- MCTC efforts made to further engage and obtain public input
- MCTC efforts made to meet unmet transit needs
- MCTC efforts made to develop strategies to increase ridership and alleviate challenges of unmet transit needs
- MCTC efforts made to provide new or additional public transportation services routes
- MCTC efforts made to provide a public transportation service that services all communities in an efficient and cost effective manner.

Based on the findings presented in the MCJG 2017 report and the Unmet Transit Needs 2019/2020 Report, the MCGJ 19-20 revisited the agency and its operation.

FINDINGS:

F1. The MCGJ finds that the definition of unmet transit needs is vague and fails to consider the geography, the demographics, and the economic inequity of Madera County.

F2. The MCGJ finds that bus schedule information is not readily available.

F3. The MCGJ finds that bus schedules are difficult to read and understand.

F4. The MCGJ finds that there is inadequate public outreach to secure community input for transit needs from low income, senior citizens, and from rural mountain communities.

F5. The MCGJ finds that there continues to be unmet transit needs throughout the county which will only increase in outlying areas as the population increases and ages.

F6. The MCGJ finds that MCC LaVina, Fairmead, Berenda, Madera Dial a Ride, Chowchilla Dial a Ride, Senior Bus and Medical Escort are underused.

F7. The MCGJ finds that when referencing the hours and the bus schedules, transit services do not provide adequate hours or diverse route schedules.

F8. The MCGJ finds that there are several volunteer unfilled positions on the SSTAC committee. This limits the input from the underserved populations in the community.

F9. The MCGJ commends the County on the consolidated contract agreement and, cost savings of \$500,000 per year over five years with the selection of FCEOC as the bus service provider under a single operator contract.

F10. The MCGJ finds that little is being done to market public transportation within the County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. The MCGJ recommends that, by the of beginning fiscal year 21-22, the MCTC redefine the definition of "unmet transit needs" to be clearly outlined in layman terms.

R2. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, bus schedules be posted at bus stops, inside buses, and be made available at local businesses.

R3. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, bus schedules should be easier to read to promote ridership and ensure the clarity of transit availability.

R4. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, SSTAC increase Unmet Transit Needs Workshops and Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearings to four times per year to promote community involvement from other County locations outside of the City of Madera.

R5. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, an incentive programs, including FREE ridership days once a month for Seniors, Disabled and Persons with Limited Means, be introduced.

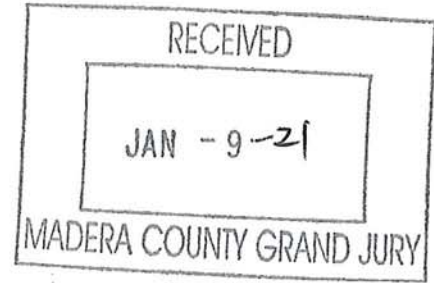
R6. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the Senior Bus, Dial-a-Ride, and Medical Transport County service be reviewed and expanded within Eastern Madera County, LaVina, Fairmead, and Berenda.

R7. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, additional bus routes be added for Fairmead, LaVina, Berenda, Raymond, North Fork, and Eastern Madera County.

R8. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, a concerted effort be made by SSTAC to recruit volunteers to serve on the SSTAC committee.

R9. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the annual \$500,000 savings be utilized to increase transit service routes in outlying areas; Eastern Madera County, La Vina, Fairmead, Berenda, Raymond, and North Fork.

R10. The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the County Public Works Department proactively seek additional funding, either through grants or minimal fare increases, to brand themselves and actively market their services to improve community outreach and increase ridership.



January 5, 2021

Judge Michael Jurkovich
Madera County Supervising Judge
300 South G Street
Madera, CA 93637

RE: Madera County's Unmet Transit Needs in Madera: Riders without Riders
Report Dated December 21, 2020

The Honorable Michael Jurkovich,

I write this letter as my required response to the above references Grand Jury Report.

While the Madera County Economic Development Commissions (MCEDC) does have a significant interest in transportation, our focus is on goods movement and access to key commercial and industrial areas throughout Madera County. The transit needs in this report are generally addressed in required environmental documents as conditions of development.

Unmet transit needs in Madera County is not an issue MCEDC tracks, as that falls in the purview of the Madera County Transportation (MCTC) and is a very complex issue that is expensive and generally not cost effective.

Our interaction with MCTC and their staff is limited. We assist with letters of support for their grant applications when appropriate and occasionally provide input regarding major transportation corridors.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further question in which I may be of assistance.

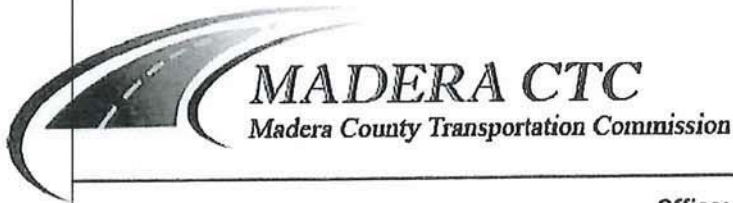
Respectfully submitted,

Bobby Kahn
Executive Director

Cc: Madera Grand Jury

"Madera County, The Perfect Location"





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Madera, California 93637

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February 17, 2021

Judge Michael Jurkovich
Supervising Judge of the Grand Jury
Madera County Superior Court
200 S. G Street
Madera, California 93637

Madera County Grand Jury
P.O. Box 534
Madera, California 93639

Subject: Response to Grand Jury Report – Final Report 1920-02, entitled “Unmet Transit Needs in Madera County: Riders without Routes,” December 21, 2020

Honorable Supervising Judge Jurkovich:

Pursuant to California Penal Code 933.05(a) and (b), the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) submits this response to the findings and recommendations in the Grand Jury Report – Final Report 1920-02, entitled “Unmet Transit Needs in Madera County: Riders without Routes,” December 21, 2020.

As a preliminary matter, Penal Code Section 993(b) requires that “the governing body of the public agency shall comment...on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters *under the control of the governing body.*” MCTC respectfully notes that Findings 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10, and the associated recommendations, pertain to matters that are not under the control of MCTC. MCTC is a public agency that is distinct and separate from the County of Madera and has a separate governing board. As such, MCTC is not the entity who would be able to provide a response to those items, nor would it have authority to implement the associated recommendations as further noted below. In an effort to facilitate comments, MCTC has forwarded a copy of the Grand Jury report to the County of Madera (see attached cover letter dated January 15, 2021).

FINDINGS:

Finding 1: The MCGJ finds that the definition of unmet transit needs is vague and fails to consider the geography, the demographics, and the economic inequity of Madera County.

Finding 1 Response: Agree. However, neither the Transportation Development Act (TDA) nor the California PUC provide guidance on the definition for “Unmet Transit Needs” or “Reasonableness to Meet”.

PUC-99401.5(c)

The definition adopted by the transportation planning agency for the terms “unmet transit needs” and “reasonable to meet” shall be documented by resolution or in the agency’s minutes.

The MCTC legally complies with the TDA and California PUC requirements – Sections 99400-99408.

There is no statute for these definitions related to the geography, demographics, and economic inequity in a region.

The Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) is comprised of a diverse group of representatives of social service and transit providers representing the elderly, disabled, and persons of limited means. An essential responsibility of the SSTAC is to advise the transportation planning agency on any major transit issues, including coordinating and consolidating specialized transportation services for those they represent. This responsibility includes considering the definition that guides the Unmet Transit Needs process related to problems or concerns with the region’s transit operations.

Finding 2: The MCGJ finds that bus schedule information is not readily available.

Finding 2 Response: MCTC respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to Finding 2 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the County of Madera, who is responsible for bus schedule information. MCTC has provided a courtesy copy of the Grand Jury report to the County of Madera, noting that this finding appears to be within the County’s jurisdiction. As this matter does not pertain to a matter under MCTC’s control, it is unable to respond regarding agreement or disagreement to the same [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Finding 3: The MCGJ finds that bus schedules are difficult to read and understand.

Finding 3 Response: MCTC respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to Finding 3 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the County of Madera, who is responsible for bus schedule development. MCTC has provided a courtesy copy of the Grand Jury report to the County of Madera, noting that this finding appears to be within the County’s jurisdiction. As this matter does not pertain to a matter under MCTC’s control, it is unable to respond regarding agreement or disagreement to the same [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Finding 4: The MCGJ finds that there is inadequate public outreach to secure community input for transit needs from low income, senior citizens, and from rural mountain communities.

Finding 4 Response: Disagree. Pursuant to TDA regulations, MCTC is required to conduct at least one public hearing to receive potential unmet transit needs from the public. MCTC also makes accommodations for interested individuals to remotely access and participate in public hearings online.

PUC-99401.5 (c)

The transportation planning agency shall hold at least one public hearing pursuant to Section 99238.5 for the purpose of soliciting comments on the unmet transit needs that may exist within the jurisdiction, and that might be reasonable to meet by establishing or contracting for new public transportation or specialized transportation services or by expanding existing services.

MCTC receives comments and input on potential unmet transit needs throughout the entire year. MCTC has discussed unmet transit needs at workshops and provided opportunities for interested individuals to provide comments or feedback during these functions.

Public hearing and workshop information has been noticed in local newspapers, made available on public transit vehicles for riders, distributed to local social service agencies, distributed to businesses, distributed to online email groups, and posted on websites and social media in both English and Spanish.

Finding 5: The MCGJ finds that there continues to be unmet transit needs throughout the county which will only increase in outlying areas as the population increases and ages.

Finding 5 Response: MCTC respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to Finding 5 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the County of Madera. MCTC has provided a courtesy copy of the Grand Jury report to the County of Madera, noting that this finding appears to be within the County's jurisdiction. As this matter does not pertain to a matter under MCTC's control, it is unable to respond regarding agreement or disagreement to the same [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Finding 6: The MCGJ finds that MCC LaVina, Fairmead, Berenda, Madera Dial a Ride, Chowchilla Dial a Ride, Senior Bus and Medical Escort are underused.

Finding 6 Response: MCTC respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to Finding 6 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the County of Madera, who is responsible for the operation of transit service. MCTC has provided a courtesy copy of the Grand Jury report to the County of Madera, noting that this finding appears to be within the County's jurisdiction. As this matter does not pertain to a matter under MCTC's control, it is unable to respond regarding agreement or disagreement to the same [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Finding 7: The MCGJ finds that when referencing the hours and the bus schedules, transit services do not provide adequate hours or diverse route schedules.

Finding 7 Response: MCTC respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to Finding 7 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the County of Madera, who is responsible for bus and route schedule information. MCTC has provided a courtesy copy of the Grand Jury report to the County of Madera, noting that this finding appears to be within the County's jurisdiction. As this matter does not pertain to a matter under MCTC's control, it is unable to respond regarding agreement or disagreement to the same [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Finding 8: The MCGJ finds that there are several volunteer unfilled positions on the SSTAC committee. This limits the input from underserved populations in the community.

Finding 8 Response: Agree, there are two volunteer unfilled positions on the SSTAC committee. This limits the input from underserved populations in the community.

Finding 9: The MCGJ commends the County on the consolidated contract agreement and, cost savings of \$500,000 per year over five years with the selection of FCEOC as the bus service provider under a single operator contract.

Finding 9 Response: MCTC respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to Finding 9 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the County of Madera, who is responsible for transit operator contract agreements. MCTC has provided a courtesy copy of the Grand Jury report to the County of Madera, noting that this finding appears to be within the County's jurisdiction. As this matter does not pertain to a matter under MCTC's control, it is unable to respond regarding agreement or disagreement to the same [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Finding 10: The MCGJ finds that little is being done to market public transportation within the County.

Finding 10 Response: MCTC respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to Finding 10 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the County of Madera, who is responsible for marketing public transportation within the County. MCTC has provided a courtesy copy of the Grand Jury report to the County of Madera, noting that this finding appears to be within the County's jurisdiction. As this matter does not pertain to a matter under MCTC's control, it is unable to respond regarding agreement or disagreement to the same [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation 1: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, the MCTC redefine the definition of "unmet transit needs" to be clearly outlined in layman terms.

Recommendation 1 Response: The MCTC definition of "unmet transit needs," is concise. "Unmet Transit Needs," includes all essential trip requests by transit-dependent persons for which there is no other convenient means of transportation.

MCTC staff will include an item on the next SSTAC meeting agenda, scheduled for April 1, 2021, to discuss and take action to accept or amend the definition. If a recommendation is made to amend the definition, it would initiate a process that would ultimately require action from the MCTC Policy Board.

MCTC staff will initiate a fixed quarterly SSTAC meeting, and report quarterly to the MCTC Policy Board.

Recommendation 2: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, bus schedules be posted at bus stops, inside buses, and be made available at local businesses.

Recommendation 2 Response: As explained above, MCTC respectfully notes this matter is outside the control of MCTC. As such, MCTC does not have the legal authority to respond regarding the implementation of the recommendation as requested [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Recommendation 3: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, bus schedules should be easier to read to promote ridership and ensure the clarity of transit availability.

Recommendation 3 Response: As explained above, MCTC respectfully notes this matter is outside the control of MCTC. As such, MCTC does not have the legal authority to respond regarding the implementation of the recommendation as requested [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Recommendation 4: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, SSTAC increase Unmet Transit Needs Workshops and Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearings to four times per year to promote community involvement from other County locations outside of the City of Madera.

Recommendation 4 Response: MCTC's process is compliant. MCTC has never had nor will be limited to fixed in-person participation. There are various opportunities and methods for interested individuals to participate throughout the year. Expansion of the process is discretionary and based on the availability of resources. MCTC will schedule additional workshops as resources allow. During this unprecedented time with COVID-19 restrictions, MCTC will schedule, and advertise a GoToWebinar. The webinar(s) will be recorded and available on MCTC's website.

Recommendation 5: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, incentive programs, including FREE ridership days once a month for Seniors, Disabled and Persons with Limited Means, be introduced.

Recommendation 5 Response: As explained above, MCTC respectfully notes this matter is outside the control of MCTC. As such, MCTC does not have the legal authority to respond regarding the implementation of the recommendation as requested [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Recommendation 6: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, the Senior Bus, Dial-a-Ride, and Medical Transport County service be reviewed and expanded within Eastern Madera County, LaVina, Fairmead, and Berenda.

Recommendation 6 Response: As explained above, MCTC respectfully notes this matter is outside the control of MCTC. As such, MCTC does not have the legal authority to respond regarding the implementation of the recommendation as requested [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Recommendation 7: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, additional bus routes be added for Fairmead, Berenda, Raymond, North Fork, and Eastern Madera County.

Recommendation 7 Response: As explained above, MCTC respectfully notes this matter is

outside the control of MCTC. As such, MCTC does not have the legal authority to respond regarding the implementation of the recommendation as requested [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Recommendation 8: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, a concerted effort be made by SSTAC to recruit volunteers to serve on the SSTAC committee.

Recommendation 5 Response: MCTC staff, in January 2021, advertised the SSTAC vacancies in Madera's local newspapers and on MCTC's social media accounts. Flyers are posted on transit buses from all three providers that service the Madera County area. Also, MCTC staff reached out to social service providers, requesting to post vacancy flyers. The announcement of vacancies has also been sent to community members included on MCTC's email list. The following is a more detailed list of the outreach efforts completed:

- Advertisement in print and online newspapers of general circulation;
- Facebook post with a boost that reached 3,259;
- Emails sent to MCTC Agenda recipient list;
- Emails sent to SSTAC recipient list with the announcement of SSTAC vacancies and requesting the announcement to be posted. The list includes: Bass Lake Chamber, Oakhurst Chamber, Coarsegold Chamber, North Fork Chamber, Madera Chamber, Chowchilla Chamber, Madera County Economic Development Commission, Madera Farm Bureau, Chukchansi Tribe, North Rancheria of Mono Indians, Camarena Health, California Rural Legal Assistance, Madera County Action Partnership, Leadership Counsel, Madera Workforce Development, and Fairmead Community and Friends; and
- Emails sent to libraries, senior centers, and public health providers, requesting to post flyers in their facilities and social media.

Recommendation 9: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, the annual \$500,000 savings be utilized to increase transit service routes in outlying areas; Eastern Madera County, LaVina, Fairmead, Berenda, and North Fork.

Recommendation 9 Response: As explained above, MCTC respectfully notes this matter is outside the control of MCTC. As such, MCTC does not have the legal authority to respond regarding the implementation of the recommendation as requested [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

Recommendation 10: The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of Fiscal Year 21-22, the County Public Works Department proactively seek additional funding, either through grants or minimal fare increases, to brand themselves and actively market their services to improve community outreach and increase ridership.

Recommendation 10 Response: As explained above, MCTC respectfully notes this matter is outside the control of MCTC. As such, MCTC does not have the legal authority to respond regarding the implementation of the recommendation as requested [see Penal Code Section 933(b)].

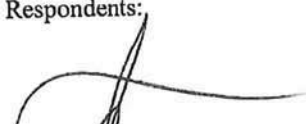
The Madera County Transportation Commission would like to thank the Madera Grand Jury's review and time involved in this matter and appreciates the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations. MCTC would like to offer the following clarifications to the content of the report:

- Page 5: *Filed annually, the Unmet Transit Needs Report is required in order to receive Transportation Development Act (TDA) Funds.* The main purpose of the Unmet Transit Needs process is to ensure that all the unmet transit needs reasonable to meet are fully funded before Local Transportation Funds can be released to fund street and road expenditures.
- Page 5: *Local Transportation Fund: As the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Madera County, MCTC is responsible for the administration of the Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds also known as Local Transportation Funds. TDA or Local Transportation Funds are funded through 25 percent of the statewide sales tax that is remitted back to the County of origin and is the primary funding source for most transit systems. The Local Transportation Fund (LTF) is derived from ¼ cent of the 1.25 cent local rate of the general sales tax collected in each county and then returned to that county.*
- Page 13: *Based on the definition of unmet transit needs which is: to create routes that are feasible, serve the community, service a significant number of the population at an economical cost with effectiveness, the MCTC is failing to meet the needs of Madera County. This results in increased single vehicle use with resulting negative environmental impacts.* From MCTC's perspective, this statement can be addressed from both a "reasonable to meet" TDA needs standard and a general interpretation of "...failing to meet the needs of Madera County." MCTC is mandated to comply with the TDA unmet transit needs requirements and has an established compliant process with an adopted definition of unmet transit needs. Based on MCTC's current definition of unmet transit needs, MCTC has responded to County-wide feedback in full compliance with the TDA. As noted in Recommendation #1, MCTC will closely coordinate with the SSTAC in evaluating the efficacy of MCTC's current definition of unmet transit needs, taking into consideration factors needed to demonstrate reasonably meeting unmet needs, something explicitly required of the SSTAC members who ultimately are responsible for forwarding a recommendation to the MCTC Board.

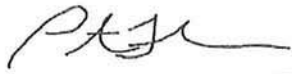
From a more general interpretation of the definition of "needs," the Grand Jury Report's statement "*MCTC is failing to meet the needs of Madera County,*" does not delineate areas of need and can be interpreted as all-encompassing without specificity. Although there certainly may be transit needs in the County, they may not be considered feasible to address based on performance considerations. Through quarterly SSTAC meetings, as noted in Recommendation #1, and effective community outreach, MCTC looks forward to improving its understanding of specific needs throughout Madera County and working closely with local transit operators to address feasible unmet transit needs.

- Page 14: *There is only one reasonable connection with YARTS and none with other general service providers.* There are three possible connections between MCC and YARTS.

Respondents:



Council Member Jose Rodriguez, MCTC Policy Board Chair
 Madera County Transportation Commission
 2001 Howard Road, Suite 201
 Madera, California 93637



Patricia Taylor, Executive Director
Madera County Transportation Commission
2001 Howard Road, Suite 201
Madera, California 93637



January 20, 2021

Honorable Judge Michael Jurkovich
Madera County Supervising Judge
300 South G Street
Madera, CA 93537

SUBJECT: Responses to Madera County Grand Jury Final Report 1920-02 (December 21, 2020) "Unmet Transit Needs in Madera County: Riders without Routes"

Dear Honorable Judge Michael Jurkovich:

The Madera County Public Works Department would like to acknowledge and express appreciation for extensive efforts undertaken by the Grand Jury to review the County's transit services. This review certainly will benefit the County's efforts to provide efficient and effective levels of mobility for residents throughout Madera County.

In accordance with California Penal Code §933 and §933.05, this letter addresses all the Grand Jury Findings and Recommendations that address subjects under the jurisdiction and control of the Public Works Department--F2/R2; F3/R3; F5/R5; F6/R6; F7/R7; F9/R9; and F10/R10. The Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) will address those Findings and Recommendations under their jurisdiction and control--F1/R1; F4/R4; and F8/R8. We hope our responses are helpful to future pursuits of the Grand Jury and to the community at large.

A. RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS

F1 The MCGJ finds that the definition of unmet transit needs is vague and fails to consider the geography, the demographics, and the economic inequity of Madera County.

The County respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to F1 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the MCTC.



F2 The MCGJ finds that bus schedule information is not readily available.

The County disagrees with this finding as information for all Madera County transit services—MCC, Madera Dial-A-Ride, Chowchilla Dial-A-Ride, Senior Bus and Medical Escort, is readily available through a variety of ways.

- A dedicated, comprehensive County transit website is available at www.mcctransit.com and provides information on all County services with real-time MCC bus location updates by stop, and links with other key transit operators, including YARTS, Madera Metro, CATX, and FAX.
- Google Maps Transit at www.google.com/transit provides on-line access to MCC routing and real-time MCC bus location updates by stop.
- Brochures/schedules are accessible on the Madera County website at www.maderacounty.com/government/public-works/transit and at the Madera County Transportation Commission website at www.maderactc.org.
- Brochures/schedules are available at the following key locations throughout the County:
 - County Transit Administration Building, 201 W. Almond Avenue, Madera
 - Madera County Transportation Commission, 2001 Howard Road, Suite 201, Madera
 - Downtown Intermodal Center, 123 E. Street, Madera
 - Camarena Health Services, Madera and Chowchilla
 - Madera Community Hospital
 - Madera Senior Centers
 - City of Chowchilla City Hall
- Brochures/schedules are available on all MCC buses and Medical Escort van.
- Madera County Transportation Commission periodically publishes a County-Wide Transit Guide.

The County will review other potential opportunities for wider distribution and increased accessibility of information on its transit services at key locations throughout the County.

F3 The MCGJ finds that bus schedules are difficult to read and understand.

The County partially agrees with this finding with the understanding that it appears to refer to MCC fixed-route schedules. The County has five different transit services each with its own brochure/schedule. The MCC fixed-route brochure provides detailed information on its services including bus schedules for three MCC routes—Eastern Madera County; Chowchilla-Fairmead; and Eastin Arcola-Ripperdan-La Vina. The County therefore assumes that this finding refers to MCC bus schedules. The Madera Dial-A-Ride, Chowchilla Dial-A-Ride, Senior Bus and Escort brochures provide detailed information on these services and how to make a demand-response trip reservation.

Although the County has received mostly positive feedback on the format of the MCC schedule, the County is receptive to evaluating alternative approaches to make it easier to

read and understand the brochure/schedule and will review other transit service information for ease of use.

F4 The MCGJ finds that there is inadequate public outreach to secure community input for transit needs from low income, senior citizens and from rural mountain communities.

The County respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to F1 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the MCTC.

F5 The MCGJ finds that there continues to be unmet transit needs throughout the county which will only increase in outlying areas as the population increases and ages.

The County partially agrees with this finding given that no specific needs by location are identified; the phrase "unmet transit needs" is very broad and undefined; and there are reasonable limits to meeting needs. For clarification purposes, the phrase "unmet transit needs" frequently is used in transit planning by the MCTC and County with a strict definition developed by the MCTC and in compliance with the Transportation Development Act (TDA). The County's response to this finding will address how the County meets both the formal MCTC definition and informal meaning that encompasses operating and capital needs.

As stated above, the MCGJ finding refers to unmet transit needs throughout the County without identifying specific unmet transit needs by location. Given the County's large geographic area, the County's mission has been to provide, at a minimum, lifeline services to those areas and residents that have been identified as being in greatest need of transit services, including seniors, disabled, persons of limited means, students and other general public.

Like many rural transit operators, the County faces many challenges in providing successful transit services and infrastructure to rural communities with low population densities and diverse needs such as those found in Madera County. The County spans over 2,100 square miles and has a population of 157,000 residents served by five different transit services, one fixed-route and four demand-response services—MCC fixed-route; MCC Madera Dial-A-Ride; MCC Chowchilla Dial-A-Ride; Senior Bus; Medical Escort. These services collectively serve an area stretching from Oakhurst-Bass Lake to the north, Valley Children's Hospital to the east, Eastin Arcola-Ripperdan-La Vina to the south, and Chowchilla-Fairmead to the west. Inter-county medical trips also are provided from Madera County to Fresno County.

One of the key purposes of the MCTC Unmet Transit Needs process is to determine whether any unmet transit needs may exist and may be reasonable to meet before street funds can be distributed. MCTC has a well-established annual public outreach process and utilizes its Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) to review all testimony received from the MCTC Board Public Hearing and advises the MCTC Board. The County actively participates in MCTC's annual Unmet Transit Needs process and is a member of the SSTAC

which provides the County with informed insight into transit needs throughout the region from a broad spectrum of the public.

It is important to note that through the County's proactive participation in MCTC's public participation process, the County has expeditiously addressed many transit needs throughout the County. For example, a dedicated MCC route was added to Eastin Arcola-Ripperdan-La Vina, and additional service was expanded to the communities of Raymond and Yosemite Lakes Park. Levels of service also were enhanced to and from Fairmead, Chowchilla, Valley Children's Hospital, and Madera Community College with additional round trip service.

Beyond the MCTC Unmet Transit Needs process, the County initiated and continues to undertake many transit service and capital improvements. Most recently, on-time performance, dispatching and fleet maintenance have improved and a new dedicated Transit Administration Office completed. Bus shelters and benches have been installed at key MCC bus stops throughout the County. All vehicles are wheelchair accessible. Service reliability is high given the procurement of seven new buses and a van over the past two years and the County's goal of adhering to its Fleet Replacement Plan. Consolidation of transit operations from four contracts to one was undertaken beginning in FY2019/20. This effort has led to streamlined operations, management, and administrative oversight, seamless services and dispatching, and more cost-efficient services.

The County's transit services are funded by a variety of federal, State, and local funds. Integral to each funding source are stringent requirements. Implementation of services must be carefully evaluated for effectiveness in meeting service and cost-efficient performance measures. The County, at a minimum, must strive to achieve a ten percent (10%) farebox recovery, where fares cover 10% of transit operating costs, and to maintain transit costs that do not exceed specific Consumer Price Index metrics consistent with State TDA requirements. These requirements do not exclusively guide County transit improvements but must be considered.

While the County recognizes the need for effective transit services throughout the County, including outlying rural communities, warranted operating and capital improvements have been and will continue to be undertaken. The ability to operate transit services while meeting key performance metrics remains key to successful long-term sustainability.

F6 The MCGJ finds that MCC La Vina, Fairmead, Berenda, Madera Dial a Ride, Chowchilla Dial a Ride Senior Bus and Medical Escort are underused.

The County partially agrees with this finding but does not currently provide direct service to Berenda. The MCGJ provides a general statement about underuse collectively of all County transit services. The County agrees that ridership on its services could increase both by incentivizing current riders and attracting non-riders. New residential and commercial

developments, an aging population, and an increasing transit-dependent population also will help generate increased ridership.

The County understands the importance of developing increased public outreach and trust in its transit services, particularly with the dramatic changes in transit rider behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic and declining transit ridership. Marketing efforts will be undertaken as described in greater detail in R10.

F7 The MCGJ finds that when referencing the hours and the bus schedules, transit services do not provide adequate hours or diverse route schedules.

The County disagrees with this finding and would like to clarify that while the finding is general in nature, it appears to reference MCC fixed-route schedules and routes. Assuming this interpretation is correct, the County agrees that MCC has the potential to increase its hours of operation. The service is designed to provide a high level of service justified by demand and that is cost-effective for long-term sustainability.

As described in F5, the County offers diverse services with operating challenges faced by many rural transit operators. Improvements to County transit services, whether through an MCTC Unmet Transit Needs process or informal request, are considered based on a specific defined need and on many operational performance measures, including potential ridership, days and hours of operation, vehicle requirements and cost. Each request is carefully considered and responded to on a timely basis, and as warranted, improvements are initiated.

For clarification purposes, the MCGJ report states that “there have been no new service routes or expanded services in Madera County since the YARTS expansion in 2000 and the addition of MCC routes in 2002/03 to Eastin Arcola, Ripperdan and La Vina.” The County would like to note that MCC services were expanded to the Chukchansi Gold Casino in 2005; Yosemite Lakes Park in 2010; and mid-morning and mid-afternoon trips to Chowchilla-Fairmead, and an early-morning run to the College-Hospital route and additional Eastern Madera stops were added in 2016. Further, two trips were added to Eastin Arcola-Ripperdan-La Vina in July 2020 but discontinued in December 2020 due to low ridership. MCC schedules are continuously monitored for on-time performance and undergo changes as needed due to route changes, transfers, addition or deletion of bus stops, traffic changes, etc.

Six new MCC bus shelters also were installed in 2015 in Fairmead, Chowchilla, Oakhurst, Coarsegold, and La Vina. There are plans for additional shelters at other locations, including in Fairmead through close coordination with community leaders and the organization Fairmead Community and Friends.

F8 The MCGJ finds that there are several volunteer unfilled positions on the SSTAC committee. This limits the input from the underserved populations in the community.

The County respectfully responds that this finding does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to F1 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the MCTC.

- F9 The MCGJ commends the County on the consolidated contract agreement and, cost savings of \$500,000 per year over five years with the selection of FCEOC as the bus service provider under a single operator contract.**

The County agrees with this finding and notes that cost savings through consolidation of contracted services have proven beneficial from both an operational as well as financial perspective. For clarification, however, the cost savings are estimated at \$340,000 annually from FY2019/20 to FY2023/24.

- F10 The MCGJ finds that little is being done to market public transportation within the County.**

The County partially agrees with this finding, and will undertake proactive marketing as described in greater detail in R10.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1 The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning fiscal year 21-22, the MCTC redefine the definition of “unmet transit needs” to be clearly outlined in layman terms.**

The County respectfully responds that this recommendation does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to F1 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the MCTC.

- R2 The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, bus schedules be posted at bus stops, inside buses, and be made available at local businesses.**

The County partially agrees with this recommendation and already provides bus schedules and brochures on all vehicles. The County will post bus schedules at key bus stops and broaden its distribution of schedules and brochures to more businesses/sites.

- R3 The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, bus schedules should be easier to read to promote ridership and ensure the clarity of transit availability.**

The County agrees with this recommendation and will review the MCC bus schedules and other service brochures and identify alternative approaches to make them easier to read and understand.

- R4 The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, SSTAC increase Unmet Transit Needs Workshops and Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearings to four times per year to promote community involvement from other County locations outside of the City of Madera.**

The County respectfully responds that this recommendation does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to F1 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the MCTC.

- R5 The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, an incentive programs, including FREE ridership days once a month for Seniors Disabled and Persons with Limited Means be introduced.**

The County partially agrees with this recommendation but proposes to undertake a more comprehensive approach for marketing system-wide. The County will evaluate the feasibility of an incentive program targeting free-ride days for seniors, disabled, and persons with limited means as part of a more comprehensive marketing and outreach campaign to increase overall ridership as described in greater detail in R10.

- R6 The MCGJ recommends that by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the Senior Bus, Dial-A-Ride, and Medical Transport County service be reviewed and expanded within Eastern Madera County, La Vina, Fairmead, and Berenda.**

The County partially agrees with this recommendation and will review the feasibility of expanding the Senior Bus, Madera Dial-A-Ride, and Medical Escort services within Eastern Madera County, La Vina, Fairmead, and Berenda before final determination is made to expand services. The County does not initiate additional services or bus routes outright without comprehensive evaluation of key performance metrics, including potential ridership, days and hours of operation, vehicle requirements, projected costs, and transit budget and farebox recovery impacts of each service improvement component. Services may be expanded as warranted by County performance findings and carefully monitored for long-term sustainability.

- R7 The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, additional bus routes be added for Fairmead, La Vina, Berenda, Raymond, North Fork, and Eastern Madera County.**

The County partially agrees with this recommendation and will review the feasibility of adding routes to the identified communities before final determination is made to add bus routes. This effort will be undertaken as described in R6. Routes may be added and maintained as warranted by County performance findings and carefully monitored for long-term sustainability.

- R8 The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, a concerted effort be made by SSTAC to recruit volunteers to serve on the SSTAC committee.**

The County respectfully responds that this recommendation does not pertain to a matter under its control. Instead, matters pertaining to F1 are believed to be within the jurisdiction and control of the MCTC.

- R9 The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the annual \$500,000 v savings be utilized to increase transit service routes in outlying areas; Eastern Madera County, La Vina, Fairmead, Berenda, Raymond, and North Fork.**

The County partially agrees with this recommendation but wishes to clarify that consolidation of transit contracts resulted in approximately \$340,000 in annual cost savings. As noted in R6, additional bus routes are not increased outright without comprehensive evaluation of key performance metrics, including potential ridership, days and hours of operation, vehicle requirements, projected costs, and transit budget and farebox recovery impacts of each service improvement component. Routes may be added and maintained as warranted by County performance findings and carefully monitored for long-term sustainability.

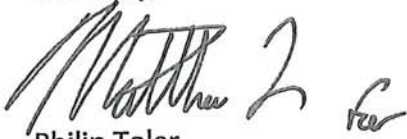
- R10 The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the County Public Works Department proactively seek additional funding, either through grants or minimal fare increases, to brand themselves and actively market their services to improve community outreach and increase ridership.**

The County agrees with this recommendation and will proactively seek and/or utilize grant funding or minimal fare increases, as recommended, and will undertake marketing and branding strategies in an effort to increase ridership.

The County believes that this effort will help establish a more structured marketing approach to reach out to the general public and targeted groups. Effective marketing and outreach also provide an opportunity to capture greater market share to assure residents that the County is undertaking protective health safety measures in response to unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic impacts on transit ridership in Madera County and throughout the country.

County residents will be informed of the many options available to access transit service information and of specific safety health measures implemented in transit operations. As noted in R5, the County will evaluate the feasibility of an incentive program with free-ride days targeting seniors, disabled, and persons with limited means as part of a more comprehensive marketing campaign to increase overall ridership. The County will coordinate marketing efforts with MCTC, as appropriate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip Toler". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "P" and a distinct "2" at the end.

Philip Toler
Deputy Public Works Direct



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF MADERA

MADERA COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
200 WEST 4TH STREET / MADERA, CALIFORNIA 93637
(559) 675-7700 / FAX (559) 673-3302 / TDD (559) 675-8970
Agendas available: www.MaderaCounty.com

Members of the Board
Brett Frazier, District 1
David Rogers, District 2
Robert L. Poythress, District 3
Leticia Gonzalez, District 4
Tom Wheeler, District 5

AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

March 16, 2021

Chairman Robert L. Poythress

DEPARTMENT County Administration/Risk Management & Legal Services Division		DEPARTMENT CONTACT Yvette Gomez 559-675-7703		AGENDA ITEM 5.J Consent Calendar	
SUBJECT: Response to Grand Jury Report		REQUIRED VOTE: 3/5 Votes Required	DOC. ID NUMBER 7150	DATE REC'D 11/20/2019	
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA(S): Focus Area Not Defined (Explain)					
<u>For Clerk of the Board's Office Use Only</u>					
BOARD'S ACTION:					
RESULT: APPROVED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS] MOVER: Tom Wheeler, Chairman Pro Tem SECONDER: Brett Frazier, Supervisor - District No. 1 AYES: Frazier, Rogers, Poythress, Gonzalez, Wheeler					
Is this item Budgeted? No Will this item require additional personnel? No Previous Relevant Board Actions: PowerPoint/Supporting Documents: Other/Misc.			DOCUMENT NO(S).		

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

Consideration of approval of the response to the 2019-2020 Grand Jury Report entitled "Madera County's Unmet Transit Needs in Madera County: Riders without Riders".

DISCUSSION / FISCAL IMPACT / STRATEGIC FOCUS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

1. Grand Jury Response 2019-2020 - Madera County Unmet Transit Needs
2. Grand Jury Report - Unmet Transit Needs in Madera County 12-21-2020





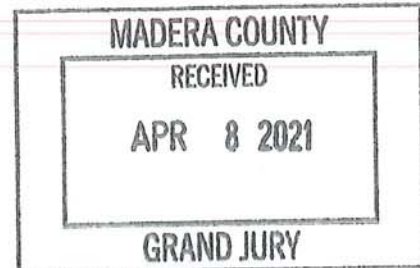
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March 21, 2021

The Honorable Michael Jurkovich
Supervising Judge of the Grand Jury
Madera County Superior Court
200 S. G Street
Madera, CA 93637



Subject: Response to the 2019-20 Grand Jury Report entitled "Madera County's Unmet Transit Needs in Madera County: Riders without Riders"

Honorable Judge Jurkovich:

Pursuant to the California Penal Code 933.05, the Madera County Board of Supervisors submits this response to the findings and recommendations in the 2019-20 Madera County Grand Jury report entitled "Madera County's Unmet Transit Needs in Madera County: Riders without Riders" See Attachment #1.

The following are the Board of Supervisors' responses to The Grand Jury's Findings and Recommendations 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10. The remaining findings and recommendations are considered to be under the control of the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) and will be addressed in a separate response submitted by the commission.

Finding 2:

The MCGJ fines that bus schedule information is not readily available.

Response

Respondent disagrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (2). Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works has responded to this finding and stated:

"Information for all Madera County transit services--MCC, Madera Dial-A-Ride, Chowchilla Dial-A-Ride, Senior Bus and Medical Escort, is readily available through a variety of ways.

- *A dedicated, comprehensive County transit website is available at www.mcctransit.com and provides information on all County services with real-time MCC bus location updates by stop, and links with other key transit operators, including YARTS, Madera Metro, CATX, and FAX.*
- *Google Maps Transit at www.google.com/transit provides on-line access to MCC routing and real-time MCC bus location updates by stop.*
- *Brochures/schedules are accessible on the Madera County website at www.maderacounty.com/government/public-works/transit and at the Madera County Transportation Commission website at www.maderactc.org.*
- *Brochures/schedules are available at the following key locations throughout the County:*
 - *County Transit Administration Building, 201 W. Almond Avenue, Madera*
 - *Madera County Transportation Commission, 2001 Howard Road, Suite 201, Madera*
 - *Downtown Intermodal Center, 123 E. Street, Madera*



- Camarena Health Services, Madera and Chowchilla
- Madera Community Hospital
- Madera Senior Centers
- City of Chowchilla City Hall
- Brochures/schedules are available on all MCC buses and Medical Escort van.
Madera County Transportation Commission periodically publishes a County-Wide Transit Guide.

The response of the Deputy Director of Public Works to the above finding is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.

Finding 3:

The MCGJ finds that bus schedules are difficult to read and understand.

Response

Respondent partially disagrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (2). Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works has responded to this finding and stated:

"The County has five different transit services each with its own brochure/schedule. The MCC fixed-route brochure provides detailed information on its services including bus schedules for three MCC routes—Eastern Madera County; Chowchilla-Fairmead; and Eastin Arcola-Ripperdan-La Vina. The County therefore assumes that this finding refers to MCC bus schedules. The Madera Dial-A-Ride, Chowchilla Dial-A-Ride, Senior Bus and Escort brochures provide detailed information on these services and how to make a demand-response trip reservation.

Although the County has received mostly positive feedback on the format of the MCC schedule, the County is receptive to evaluating alternative approaches to make it easier to read and understand the brochure/schedule and will review other transit service information for ease of use."

The response of the Deputy Director of Public Works to the above finding is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.

Finding 5:

The MCGJ finds that there continues to be unmet transit needs throughout the county which will only increase in outlying areas as the population increases and ages.

Response

Respondent partially disagrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (2) because the finding lacks specificity. Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works has responded to this finding and stated:

"The phrase "unmet transit needs" is very broad and undefined; and there are reasonable limits to meeting needs. For clarification purposes, the phrase "unmet transit needs" frequently is used in transit planning by the MCTC and County with a strict definition developed by the MCTC and in compliance with the Transportation Development Act

(TDA). The County's response to this finding will address how the County meets both the formal MCTC definition and informal meaning that encompasses operating and capital needs.

As stated above, the MCGJ finding refers to unmet transit needs throughout the County without identifying specific unmet transit needs by location. Given the County's large geographic area, the County's mission has been to provide, at a minimum, lifeline services to those areas and residents that have been identified as being in greatest need of transit services, including seniors, disabled, persons of limited means, students and other general public.

Like many rural transit operators, the County faces many challenges in providing successful transit services and infrastructure to rural communities with low population densities and diverse needs such as those found in Madera County. The County spans over 2,100 square miles and has a population of 157,000 residents served by five different transit services, one fixed-route and four demand-response services—MCC fixed-route; MCC Madera Dial-A-Ride; MCC Chowchilla Dial-A-Ride; Senior Bus; Medical Escort. These services collectively serve an area stretching from Oakhurst-Bass Lake to the north, Valley Children's Hospital to the east, Eastin Arcola-Ripperdan-La Vina to the south, and Chowchilla-Fairmead to the west. Inter-county medical trips also are provided from Madera County to Fresno County.

One of the key purposes of the MCTC Unmet Transit Needs process is to determine whether any unmet transit needs may exist and may be reasonable to meet before street funds can be distributed. MCTC has a well-established annual public outreach process and utilizes its Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) to review all testimony received from the MCTC Board Public Hearing and advises the MCTC Board. The County actively participates in MCTC's annual Unmet Transit Needs process and is a member of the SSTAC which provides the County with informed insight into transit needs throughout the region from a broad spectrum of the public.

It is important to note that through the County's proactive participation in MCTC's public participation process, the County has expeditiously addressed many transit needs throughout the County. For example, a dedicated MCC route was added to Eastin Arcola-Ripperdan-La Vina, and additional service was expanded to the communities of Raymond and Yosemite Lakes Park. Levels of service also were enhanced to and from Fairmead, Chowchilla, Valley Children's Hospital, and Madera Community College with additional round trip service.

Beyond the MCTC Unmet Transit Needs process, the County initiated and continues to undertake many transit service and capital improvements. Most recently, on-time performance, dispatching and fleet maintenance have improved, and a new dedicated Transit Administration Office completed. Bus shelters and benches have been installed at key MCC bus stops throughout the County. All vehicles are wheelchair accessible. Service reliability is high given the procurement of seven new buses and a van over the past two years and the County's goal of adhering to its Fleet Replacement Plan. Consolidation of transit operations from four contracts to one was undertaken beginning in FY2019/20. This effort has led to streamlined operations, management, and administrative oversight, seamless services and

dispatching, and more cost-efficient services.

The County's transit services are funded by a variety of federal, State, and local funds. Integral to each funding source are stringent requirements. Implementation of services must be carefully evaluated for effectiveness in meeting service and cost-efficient performance measures. The County, at a minimum, must strive to achieve a ten percent (10%) farebox recovery, where fares cover 10% of transit operating costs, and to maintain transit costs that do not exceed specific Consumer Price Index metrics consistent with State TDA requirements. These requirements do not exclusively guide County transit improvements but must be considered.

While the County recognizes the need for effective transit services throughout the County, including outlying rural communities, warranted operating and capital improvements have been and will continue to be undertaken. The ability to operate transit services while meeting key performance metrics remains key to successful long-term sustainability."

The response of the Deputy Director of Public Works to the above finding is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.

Finding 6:

The MCGJ finds that MCC La Vina, Fairmead, Berenda, Madera Dial a Ride, Chowchilla Dial a Ride, Senior Bus and Medical Escort are underused.

Response

Respondent partially disagrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (2). Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works has responded to this finding and stated:

"The MCGJ provides a general statement about underuse collectively of all County transit services. The County agrees that ridership on its services could increase both by incentivizing current riders and attracting non-riders. New residential and commercial developments, an aging population, and an increasing transit-dependent population also will help generate increased ridership.

The County understands the importance of developing increased public outreach and trust in its transit services, particularly with the dramatic changes in transit rider behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic and declining transit ridership. Marketing efforts will be undertaken as described in greater detail in R10."

The response of the Deputy Director of Public Works to the above finding is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.

Finding 7:

The MCGJ finds that when referencing the hours and the bus schedules, transit services do not provide adequate hours or diverse route schedules.

Response

Respondent disagrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (2). Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works has responded to this finding and stated:

“The County disagrees with this finding and would like to clarify that while the finding is general in nature, it appears to reference MCC fixed-route schedules and routes. Assuming this interpretation is correct, the County agrees that MCC has the potential to increase its hours of operation. The service is designed to provide a high level of service justified by demand and that is cost-effective for long-term sustainability.

As described in F5, the County offers diverse services with operating challenges faced by many rural transit operators. Improvements to County transit services, whether through an MCTC Unmet Transit Needs process or informal request, are considered based on a specific defined need and on many operational performance measures, including potential ridership, days and hours of operation, vehicle requirements and cost. Each request is carefully considered and responded to on a timely basis, and as warranted, improvements are initiated.

For clarification purposes, the MCGJ report states that “there have been no new service routes or expanded services in Madera County since the YARTS expansion in 2000 and the addition of MCC routes in 2002/03 to Eastin Arcola, Ripperdan and La Vina.” The County would like to note that MCC services were expanded to the Chukchansi Gold Casino in 2005; Yosemite Lakes Park in 2010; and mid-morning and mid-afternoon trips to Chowchilla-Fairmead, and an early-morning run to the College-Hospital route and additional Eastern Madera stops were added in 2016. Further, two trips were added to Eastin Arcola-Ripperdan-La Vina in July 2020 but discontinued in December 2020 due to low ridership. MCC schedules are continuously monitored for on-time performance and undergo changes as needed due to route changes, transfers, addition or deletion of bus stops, traffic changes, etc.

Six new MCC bus shelters also were installed in 2015 in Fairmead, Chowchilla, Oakhurst, Coarsegold, and La Vina. There are plans for additional shelters at other locations, including in Fairmead through close coordination with community leaders and the organization Fairmead Community and Friends.”

The response of the Deputy Director of Public Works to the above finding is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.

Finding 9:

The MCGJ commends the County on the consolidated contract agreement and, cost savings of \$500,000 per year over five years with the selection of FCEOC as the bus service provider under a single operator contract.

Response

Respondent agrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (1). As a point of clarification, as noted by the Deputy Director of Public Works, the estimated cost savings from FY 2019/20 to FY2023/24 is \$340,000 annually.

Finding 10:

The MCGJ finds that little is being done to market public transportation within the County.

Response

Respondent partially disagrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (2). However, respondent agrees that increased funding and a renewed focus on marketing and branding would help to increase ridership.

Recommendation 2:

The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, bus schedules be posted at bus stops, inside buses, and be made available at local businesses.

Response

The recommendation will not be implemented in part because it is not necessary and will be implemented in the future in part. Bus schedules and brochures are already available on all vehicles. As noted by the Deputy Director of Public Works, greater emphasis will be placed on posting bus schedules at key bus stops and distribution of schedules and brochures will be broadened to include additional businesses and sites in the coming fiscal year.

Recommendation 3:

The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, bus schedules should be easier to read to promote ridership and ensure the clarity of transit availability.

Response

Bus schedules and brochures will be reviewed in an effort to identify alternative approaches to make them easier to read and understand.

Recommendation 5:

The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, an incentive program, including FREE ridership days once a month for Seniors, Disabled Persons, and Persons with Limited Means be introduced.

Response

The recommendation requires further analysis. The Public Works Department will undertake a comprehensive review of system-side marketing. The feasibility of an incentive program targeting free-ride days for seniors, disabled, and persons with limited means will be studied as part of a comprehensive marketing and outreach campaign to increase overall ridership.

Recommendation 6:

The MCGJ recommends that by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the Senior Bus, Dial-A-Ride, and Medical Transport County service be reviewed and expanded within Eastern Madera County, La Vina, Fairmead, and Berenda.

Response

The recommendation requires further analysis. Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works has responded to this recommendation and stated:

"The County will review the feasibility of expanding the Senior Bus, Madera Dial-A-Ride, and Medical Escort services within Eastern Madera County, La Vina, and Berenda before final determination is made to expand services. The County does not initiate additional services or bus routes outright without comprehensive evaluation of key performance metrics, including potential ridership, days and hours of operation, vehicle requirements, projected costs, and transit budget and farebox recovery impacts of each service improvement component. Services may be expanded as warranted by County performance findings and carefully monitored for long-term sustainability."

The response of the Deputy Director of Public Works to the above recommendation is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.

Recommendation 7:

The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, additional bus routes be added for Fairmead, La Vina, Berenda, Raymond, North Fork, and Eastern Madera County.

Response

The recommendation requires further analysis. Feasibility of expanding service will be reviewed consistent with the process described in the response to Recommendation 6.

Recommendation 9:

The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the annual \$500,000 v savings be utilized to increase transit service routes in outlying areas; Eastern Madera County, La Vina, Fairmead, Berenda, Raymond, and North Fork.

Response

The recommendation requires further analysis. Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works has responded to this recommendation and stated:

"The County partially agrees with this recommendation but wishes to clarify that consolidation of transit contracts resulted in approximately \$340,000 in annual cost savings. As noted in R6, additional bus routes are not increased outright without comprehensive evaluation of key performance metrics, including potential ridership, days and hours of operation, vehicle requirements, projected costs, and transit budget and farebox recovery impacts of each service improvement component. Routes may be added and maintained as warranted by County performance findings and carefully monitored for long-term sustainability."

The response of the Deputy Director of Public Works to the above recommendation is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.

Recommendation 10:

The MCGJ recommends that, by the beginning of fiscal year 21-22, the County Public Works Department proactively seek additional funding, either through grants or minimal fare increases, to brand themselves and actively market their services to improve community outreach and increase ridership.

Response

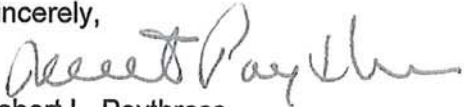
The recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future. Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works has responded to this recommendation and stated:

"The County agrees with this recommendation and will proactively seek and/or utilize grant funding or minimal fare increases, as recommended, and will undertake marketing and branding strategies in an effort to increase ridership.

The County believes that this effort will help establish a more structured marketing approach to reach out to the general public and targeted groups. Effective marketing and outreach also provide an opportunity to capture greater market share to assure residents that the County is undertaking protective health safety measures in response to unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic impacts on transit ridership in Madera County and throughout the country."

The Board acknowledges the Grand Jury's review and time involved in this matter and appreciates the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Poythress
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

1920-03 At Promise Student Opportunities In Madera County

SUMMARY:

The Madera County Grand Jury (MCGJ) investigated programs and facilities which support “At-Risk” youth. The essential question the MCGJ considered is, *what does the education system within the County of Madera do with ‘at-risk youth’ to prevent them from becoming adults with similar problems?* What preventative educational programs and training do the districts within Madera County provide to school-aged students who need additional help to prepare to navigate the adult world. The base concern being students becoming homeless or incarcerated adults. The MCGJ reviewed each school district throughout Madera County and how their programs fit to serve the needs of the student.

The first problem the MCGJ encountered was a misunderstanding in terminology. At the outset of the investigation, the MCGJ was referring to the student population under consideration as “At-Risk Youth.” The term “at-risk” had been used to describe students coming from precarious situations or circumstances that increase their chances of academic failure. The term was often used to refer to those from disadvantaged backgrounds, which can include those in low-income communities, English learners, and children in foster care, among others. However, the MCGJ was quickly and politely corrected that the current term is “At-Promise Youth.” In October of 2019, the California Governor, through Assembly Bill No. 413, officially changed the term from “At-Risk Youth” to “At-Promise Youth.” The reasoning behind this name change was to create a more positive, “promising” image of students.

BACKGROUND:

Dr. David Satcher, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stated, *If you can give young people a reason to believe that they can change their future, then it is much easier to deal with violence and substance abuse and teenage pregnancy...*” According to Dr. Satcher, violence, substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy are not the problem but the symptoms of a lack of hope in the future, *when young people don’t have any hope for the future, they’ll do anything.*

For students who are at-promise, their key to success in high school lies in convincing them that a satisfying future is within their reach by showing them how education relates to their future goals. For the mainstream student in any school, the valued outcome from the school’s perspective is to have as many students graduate as possible and to go on to college. However, for many of the students, their immediate concern is to make money. Students may not want to pursue an academic college education but may wish to pursue a career technical education. Those who do not expect to attend college, however, are often confused as to why they should care about getting a good grade in English, or even finishing high school at all. Students focused on making money have limited their concerns to skill oriented education.

Student who don’t see a connection between high school and future success are doomed to spend their school years in a ‘neutral position.’ The way to turn on turned-off students is to help them

understand the role of high school achievement in reaching their goals in life as well as in education and employment.

In the wake of significant concern and frustration surrounding current public-school systems, forms of alternative education continue to thrive. Many parents are dissatisfied with the quality and focus of the education their children receive in the public-school system. Others may have religious or political reasons to seek alternative schools. Others simply believe their students are unsafe in the public-school system and seek out alternative, nontraditional schools. Students themselves may find that the traditional forms of teaching and learning do not fit their needs.

Types of Non-traditional Schools: The Education Code, sections 58500-58512, provides that school districts may establish and maintain alternative schools and programs of choice. The premise behind alternative schools of choice is that “one size doesn’t fit all.” In other words, not all students will thrive or reach their full potential in the traditional comprehensive school. The following is a list of the different types of alternative educational programs available throughout California including Madera County.

Alternative-Non-traditional Schools: a form of alternative education with non-traditional methods. Non-traditional schools base their curriculum and methods on individual philosophies of education. Non-traditional schools often teach in radically different manners, sometimes not using grades, or typical teaching strategies such as lesson plans, rubrics, worksheets, and standard type tests.

The purpose of alternative schools and programs of choice is to provide different means of achieving grade-level standards and meeting students' needs. Alternative Schools and Programs of Choice are voluntary for districts, teachers, students, and their parents/guardians/caregivers.

These schools and programs are often characterized by responsiveness to learning and instructional style differences and small unit size. The effective use of such instructional strategies as independent study, community-based education, focused or thematic education, and flexible scheduling increases attendance and improves performance.

Independent Schools: a form of alternative education, often referred to as “independent” schools, are often more traditional in their methods. Students often work at their own pace with standard curriculum and teacher resources. Often times, independent schools provided students an opportunity to catch up on missing credits.

Charter Schools: a form of alternative education which is publicly funded but have more freedom and choice in policies and curriculum. In return for academic freedom, charter schools are required to produce better results than the public-school system.

Continuation High Schools: Continuation high school is primarily for students who are considered at risk for not graduating at the normal pace. Continuation education provides a high school diploma program that meets the needs of students of ages 16 to 18 who have not graduated from high school, are not exempt from compulsory school attendance, and are deemed at risk of not completing their education. Students enrolled in continuation education programs

often are behind in high school credits. They may need a flexible educational environment because they are employed or fulfilling family obligations. Minimum attendance in the program is 15 hours per week or 180 minutes daily.

Community Day Schools: Community day schools are schools for students who have been expelled from school or who have had problems with attendance or behavior. They are run by school districts. These schools serve troubled students in many ways. They offer challenging classes and teach important skills. They have counselors and other professionals who assist students. The California Department of Education is involved in the funding and management of community day schools.

FINDINGS:

F1. The MCGJ finds that the Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts are in compliance with California State mandates for At-Promise students.

F2. The MCGJ finds the Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts are addressing At Promise youth through their Strategic Plan.

F3. The MCGJ finds throughout Madera County, all school districts seek to maintain At-Promise students' connection to a relevant and Career Technical Alternative Education Services program. (CTAES).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

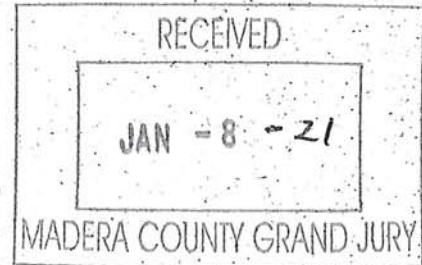
R1. The MCGJ recommends that the Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts continue to follow State mandates for At-Promise students.

R2. The MCGJ recommends Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts continue to address At Promise youth in their Strategic Plan.

R3. The MCGJ recommends Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts continue to connect At-Promise students to Career Technical Alternative Education Service program.



Cecilia A. Massetti, Ed.D.
Superintendent



January 4, 2021

The Honorable Michael Jurkovich
Madera County Supervising Judge
300 South G Street
Madera, CA 93637

Dear Judge Jurkovich:

I am in receipt of the grand jury final report dated December 21, 2020. As outlined in the cover letter, the Madera County Superintendent of Schools is required by Penal Code Section 933.05(a)(b) to respond separately to the specified findings and recommendations "in the report."

Findings (F)

F1. The MCGJ finds that the Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts are in compliance with California State mandates for At-Promise students.

The Madera County Superintendent of Schools agrees with finding number one.

F2. The MCGJ finds the Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts are addressing At-Promise youth through their Strategic Plan.

The Madera County Superintendent of Schools agrees with finding number two.

F3. The MCGJ finds throughout Madera County, all school districts seek to maintain At-Promise students' connection to a relevant and Career Technical Alternative Education Services program (CTAES).

The Madera County Superintendent of Schools agrees with finding number three.

Recommendations (R)

R1. The MCGJ recommends that the Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts continue to follow State mandates for At-Promise students.

The Madera County Superintendent of Schools appreciates the recognition of the efforts of the educational community and multi-agency partners for Madera County's At-Promise youth in recommendation number one.

R2. The MCGJ recommends Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts continue to address At-Promise youth in their Strategic Plan.

The Madera County Superintendent of Schools recognizes the need for continued awareness and responsiveness to the needs of our youth. During the 2020-2021 school year, all school districts in the county will be reviewing the Madera County Plan for providing services to expelled youth for submission to the California Department of Education by June 30, 2021. This is a triennial process.

R3. The MCGJ recommend Madera County Office of Education and Madera County School Districts continue to connect At-Promise students to Career Technical Alternative Education Service program.

The Madera County Superintendent of Schools and the school districts look forward to future opportunities to provide additional Career Technical Education programs for our "At-Promise students" through grants and business partnerships.

On behalf of the school districts in Madera County, I would like to thank the grand jury members for their interest in our educational programs for "At-Promise Youth." Your genuine interest in ensuring quality programming for students reaffirms the commitment of the Madera County community for all students.

Sincerely,



Cecilia A. Massetti, Ed.D.
Madera County Superintendent of Schools

cc: Foreperson, Madera County Grand Jury



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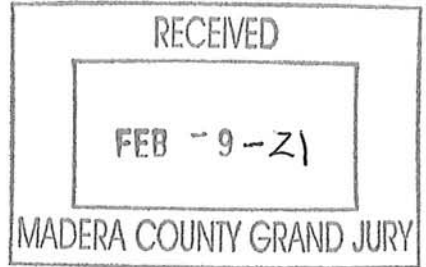
Todd Lile

Our Vision

Madera Unified will set the standard for hard work, creativity and resiliency with a fearless drive to continuously improve.

Our Mission

We are committed to creating and sustaining a culture enabling Madera Unified students to experience an unparalleled educational journey that is intellectually, socially and personally transformative.



February 2, 2020

Honorable Judge Michael Jurkovich
 Madera County Supervising Judge
 300 South G Street
 Madera CA 93637

Re: At Promise Student Opportunities in Madera County Report Date:
 December 21, 2020

Dear Honorable Judge Jurkovich,

I am submitting a response letter to the recent Madera County Grand Jury Report regarding the investigation mentioned above for Madera Unified School District.

After reviewing the findings and recommendations including in the report I am pleased to let you know that the findings are accurate with the exception of one error.

The findings under Madera Unified are correct with a minor revision in the third paragraph for Madera Unified School District findings (page 9). I have included the paragraph below:

High school students, who are placed on suspended orders, are usually referred to alternative programs, which include Mountain Vista Continuation, Ripperdan Community Day School, Furman High School (independent study) or Pioneer Technical Center. High school students, for whom expulsion orders are not suspended, are referred to MCSOS Community Day School.

Pioneer Technical Center needs to be removed as an alternative program for Madera Unified. We do not send Suspended Order Students to PTC. Only Full Orders as indicated in the last sentence within the same paragraph.

We appreciate the time and effort the Madera County Grand Jury has put together to produce this report. Should you, or members of the Grand Jury have further questions or concerns regarding our At Promise student opportunities, feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Todd Lile
 Superintendent

cc: Foreperson, Madera County Grand Jury

1920-04 Madera County Food Safety/Food Inspection

SUMMARY:

The US Federal Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Code and the California Retail Food Code provide scientific standards and guidelines that states and localities may adopt for food safety in restaurants and institutional food settings. The code includes temperature standards for cooking, cooling, refrigerating, reheating, and holding food. It also recommends that inspectors visit restaurants every six months. Each state or locality may choose to adopt any or all of the code in its laws or regulations. There are variations among jurisdictions in standards currently being applied to restaurants and other food establishment inspections. Madera County has no food safety reporting requirements. The Environmental Health Department does not report food safety reports to any State or Federal agencies. All inspection programs performed by the Environmental Health Department, except food inspections, are regulated by the State of California. Madera County Grand Jury (MCGJ) focused on retail food facility inspection, compliance with standards, and recording the results by the Food Inspection Program.

BACKGROUND:

All food services requiring a food inspection in Madera County are required to be inspected by the Food Safety Program (FSP) under the jurisdiction of Madera County's Environmental Health Division (EHD). In the past 20 years, MCGJ has reviewed this entity in 2007/2008 and in 2012/2013. Both inquiries discovered the program was under-funded and under-staffed causing inspections to be delayed or not performed at all. Insufficient time for available personnel limited meeting inspection goals. The FSP is not required to report food inspections to any State or Federal agency or any public entity.

Because of these past reports, the MCGJ was prompted to reexamine the Food Safety Program to see what changes were made in the past seven years to rectify the inspection backlog.

FINDINGS:

- F1.** The MCGJ finds that current staffing levels, determined by permit fee income, leave inspection requirement goals unattainable.
- F2.** The MCGJ finds that the lack of available vehicles hinders timely inspections.
- F3.** The MCGJ finds that the FSP does not assign "risk" categories for establishments with repeated infractions.
- F4.** The MCGJ finds that the online food inspection program scheduled for January 2020 has not been implemented.

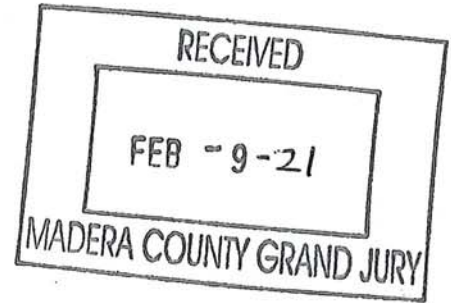
RECOMMENDATIONS:

R1. The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, the EHD study the fee structure and elements of inspection (# Inspections*Inspection and Travel time + fee =Budgetary Allotment). The calculation will provide the number of staff and time required to complete all inspections. Further, if funding is inadequate, request funding from the general fund or raise fees to complete all required FSP inspections on a timely basis.

R2. The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, the EHD work within the department to set up a schedule for vehicle usage assignments.

R3. The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, EHD assign risk categories to establishments with inspection failures and impose fines.

R4. The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, EHD post online food inspection report results on the EHD website.



February 3, 2021

Judge Michael Jurkovich
Madera County Supervising Judge
300 South G Street
Madera, CA 93637

Foreperson
Madera County Grand Jury
PO Box 534
Madera, CA 93639

Subject: Response to the Findings of the Madera County Food Safety / Food Inspections 2019/20 Grand Jury Final Report 1920-04 Published on December 21, 2020

Honorable Judge Jurkovich:

Pursuant to California Penal Code 933.05(a) and (b), the Community and Economic Development (CED) - Environmental Health Division (EHD) has compiled its responses to the findings and recommendations in the 2019/20 Madera County Grand Jury Final Report 1920-04 entitled "Madera County Food Safety/Food Inspections" published on December 21, 2020.

EHD appreciates all the efforts that the Grand Jury Team has put into this report and please contact me if you have any additional questions about our responses.

Respectfully,

Dexter Marr
Deputy Director
Environmental Health Division

Matt Treber
Madera County
Chief of Development Services





Response:

Agree with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (1).

RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS IN REPORT:

Recommendation 1:

The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, the EHD study the fee structure and elements of inspection (# Inspections*Inspections and Travel Time + fee = Budgetary Allotment). The calculation will provide the number of staff and time required to complete all inspections. Further, if funding is inadequate, request funding from the general fund or raise fees to complete all required FSP inspections on a timely basis.

Response:

The recommendation requires further analysis. EHD will review its fee structure and fee schedule to make the necessary recommendations to our Board of Supervisors, if needed. Most EHD staff are Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS), even though staff are assigned to a specific EHD program, staff will be required to assist in other programs as needed to protect public health and safety.

Recommendation 2:

The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal years 21-22, the EHD work within the department to set up a schedule for vehicle usage assignments.

Response:

The recommendation has been implemented. This recommendation is already in practice.





Recommendation 3:

The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal years 21-22 EHD assign risk categories to establishments with inspection failures and impose fines.

Response:

The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in fiscal year 2021-22.

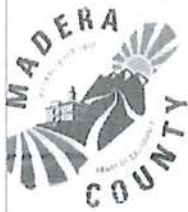
Recommendation 4:

The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, EHD post online food inspection reports result on the EHD website.

Response:

The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in fiscal year 2021-22.





BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF MADERA

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Members of the Board
Brett Frazier, District 1
David Rogers, District 2
Robert L. Poythress, District 3
Leticia Gonzalez, District 4
Tom Wheeler, District 5

AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

March 16, 2021

Chairman Robert L. Poythress

DEPARTMENT County Administration Department		DEPARTMENT CONTACT Yvette Gomez 559-675-7703		AGENDA ITEM 5.1 Consent Calendar									
SUBJECT: Response to Grand Jury Report		REQUIRED VOTE: 3/5 Votes Required	DOC. ID NUMBER 7149	DATE REC'D 11/20/2019									
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA(S): Focus Area Not Defined (Explain)													
For Clerk of the Board's Office Use Only													
BOARD'S ACTION:													
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>RESULT:</td> <td>APPROVED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MOVER:</td> <td>Tom Wheeler, Chairman Pro Tem</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SECONDER:</td> <td>Brett Frazier, Supervisor - District No. 1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AYES:</td> <td>Frazier, Rogers, Poythress, Gonzalez, Wheeler</td> </tr> </table>						RESULT:	APPROVED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]	MOVER:	Tom Wheeler, Chairman Pro Tem	SECONDER:	Brett Frazier, Supervisor - District No. 1	AYES:	Frazier, Rogers, Poythress, Gonzalez, Wheeler
RESULT:	APPROVED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]												
MOVER:	Tom Wheeler, Chairman Pro Tem												
SECONDER:	Brett Frazier, Supervisor - District No. 1												
AYES:	Frazier, Rogers, Poythress, Gonzalez, Wheeler												
Is this item Budgeted? No			DOCUMENT NO(S).										
Will this item require additional personnel? No													
Previous Relevant Board Actions:													
PowerPoint/Supporting Documents: Other/Misc.													

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

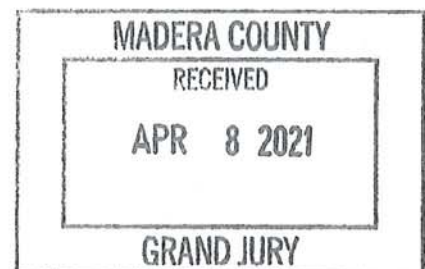
Consideration of approval of the response to the 2019-2020 Grand Jury Report entitled "Madera County Food Safety/Food Inspections".

DISCUSSION / FISCAL IMPACT / STRATEGIC FOCUS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

1. Grand Jury Response 2019-2020 - Madera County Safety and Food Inspections
2. Grand Jury Report - Madera County Food Safety Food Inspections 12-21-2020





MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

BRETT FRAZIER, District No. 1
DAVID ROGERS, District No. 2
ROBERT L. POYTHRESS, District No. 3
LETICIA GONZALEZ, District No. 4
TOM WHEELER, District No. 5

KAREN POGUE, Chief Clerk of the Board

March 21, 2021

The Honorable Michael Jurkovich
Supervising Judge of the Grand Jury
Madera County Superior Court
200 S. G Street
Madera, CA 93637



Subject: Response to the 2019-20 Grand Jury Report entitled "Madera County Food Safety/Food Inspections"

Honorable Judge Jurkovich:

Pursuant to the California Penal Code 933.05, the Madera County Board of Supervisors submits this response to the findings and recommendations in the 2019-20 Madera County Grand Jury report entitled "Madera County Food Safety/Food Inspections" See Attachment #1.

The following are the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations and the Board of Supervisors' responses:

Finding 1:

The MCGJ finds that current staffing levels, determined by permit fee income, leave inspection requirement goals unattainable.

Response

Respondent agrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (1).

Finding 2:

The MCGJ finds that the lack of available vehicles hinders timely inspections.

Response

Respondent disagrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (2). Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works, Environmental Health Division has responded to this finding and stated:

"EHD staff works together to make sure county vehicles are available for staff that are scheduled for field inspections. EHD has been working with Madera County Central Garage and can access pool vehicles when needed."

The response of the Deputy Director of Public Works, Environmental Health to the above finding is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.



Finding 3:

The MCGJ finds that the FSP does not assign "risk" categories for establishments with repeated infractions.

Response

Respondent agrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (1).

Finding 4:

The MCGJ finds that the online food inspection program scheduled for January 2020 has not been implemented.

Response

Respondent agrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (1).

Recommendation 1:

The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, the EHD study the fee structure and elements of inspection (#Inspections*Inspection and Travel time + fee = Budgetary Allotment). The calculation will provide the number of staff and time required to complete all inspections. Further, if funding is inadequate, request funding from the general fund or raise fees to complete all required FSP inspections on a timely basis.

Response

The recommendation requires further analysis. Under separate cover, the Deputy Director of Public Works, Environmental Health Division has responded to this recommendation and stated:

"EHD will review its fee structure and fee schedule to make the necessary recommendations to our Board of Supervisors, if needed. Most EHD staff are Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS), even though staff are assigned to a specific EHD program, staff will be required to assist in other programs as needed to protect public health and safety."

The response of the Deputy Director of Public Works, Environmental Health to the above recommendation is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.

Recommendation 2:

The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, the EHD work within the department to set up a schedule for vehicle use assignments.

Response

The recommendation has been implemented.

Recommendation 3:

The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, EHD assign risk categories to establishments with inspection failures and impose fines.

Response

The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in fiscal year 2021-22.

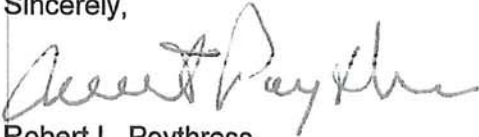
Recommendation 4:

The MCGJ recommends that, beginning fiscal year 21-22, EHD post online food inspection report results on the EHD website.

Response

The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in fiscal year 2021-22. The Board acknowledges the Grand Jury's review and time involved in this matter and appreciates the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert L. Poythress".

Robert L. Poythress
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

1920-05 City of Madera Police Department Unveiling Truths of Local Law Enforcement

SUMMARY:

The City of Madera Police Department (MPD) is facing challenges in a community that is growing economically and in racial diversity. The law enforcement officer's job is both physically and mentally challenging. In an instant, officers can be thrown into extremely stressful situations. The City of Madera Police Department is staffed by a pool of young, motivated officers and an experienced command structure. High-risk encounters coupled with a focus on community relationships in the efforts to serve and protect the City of Madera residents. How these officers cope with work related stress and maintain compassion as positive role models is what guided the MCGJ focus.

BACKGROUND:

When the Madera County Grand Jury (MCGJ) started considering what areas within public safety to investigate, it was decided to review the City of Madera Police Department (MPD) there were several reasons for this choice, including police stress reduction programs, police in community outreach programs, crime statistics, police department staffing, and procedural deficiencies.

The City of Madera Police Department is made up of 70 sworn officers (able to carry a firearm on duty) and 35 non-sworn employees. The department is organized into 3 divisions:

Administration: Community outreach, including. (97 Neighborhood Watch programs), dispatch, and non-sworn personnel.

Operations: The largest division of the department comprised of patrol personnel.

Investigations: Detective Unit, Special Investigations Unit, and Code Enforcement. Code Enforcement and Animal Control are part of the police department.

The police department also has two K9 (canine) officer. One K9 is trained as a drug sniffing/identifying dog and the other one is a multi-purpose bite/attack dog. The K9 officers are issued bullet proof vests. Summertime temperatures make prolonged wearing of vests problematic for K9 officers.

The cost for each K9 officers to be service ready is \$10,000 with an additional \$10,000 for training. This one-time cost does not include the costs for veterinary care and food for these canine officers which can vary with each K9 officer. The K9 officers work vehicles are unique and specifically designed for K9 officers and their human partner.

FINDINGS:

- F1. The MCGJ finds that the Madera Police Department works on multiple levels to build and strengthen positive relationships with community members.
- F2. The MCGJ finds there are 15 funded positions that currently are unfilled at the Madera Police Department.
- F3. The MCGJ finds that Madera County is not effectively handling the individuals Madera Police Department identifies as having a mental health crisis (5150).

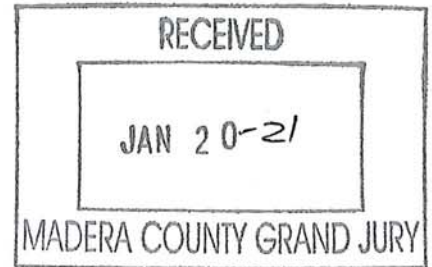
RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. MCGJ recommends that the Madera Police Department continue to foster the relationships within the community through the efforts already in place, and be open to the suggestions brought by community groups and individuals.
- R.2 MCGJ recommends that during Fiscal Year 21/22 currently open positions at the Madera Police Department be filled.
- R3. MCGJ recommends that the Madera Police Department immediately work with the Madera County Board of Supervisors to provide adequate mental health services.



MADERA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Office of the Chief of Police



January 12, 2021

Michael Jurkovich
Supervising Judge of the Grand Jury
Madera Superior Court 300 South G Street
Madera, CA 93637

&

Madera County Grand Jury
PO Box 534
Madera, CA 93637
Attn: Foreperson; Nina Zarucchi

RE: City of Madera Police Department: Unveiling Truths of Law Enforcement

Report Date: December 21, 2020

Dear Honorable Judge Jurkovich and Members of the Grand Jury:

Enclosed please find Madera Police Department's response to the Madera County Grand Jury findings and recommendations.

FINDINGS

F1. The MCGJ finds that the Madera Police Department works on multiple levels to build and strengthen positive relationships with community members.

F2. The MCGJ finds there are 15 funded positions that currently are unfilled at the Madera Police Department.

F3. The MCGJ finds that Madera County is not effectively handling the individuals Madera Police Department identifies as having a mental health crisis (5150).

Madera Police Department Response to the Madera Grand Jury Findings:

F1. The respondent agrees with the MCGJ findings.

F2. The respondent agrees with the MCGJ findings.

F3. The respondent agrees with the MCGJ findings.



MADERA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Office of the Chief of Police

RECOMMENDATIONS

R.1. MCGJ recommends that the Madera Police Department continue to foster the relationships within the community through the efforts already in place and be open to the suggestions brought by community groups and individuals.

R.2 MCGJ recommends that during Fiscal Year 21/22 currently open positions at the Madera Police Department be filled.

R.3 The MCGJ recommends that the Madera Police Department immediately work with the Madera County Board of Supervisors to provide adequate mental health services.

Madera Police Department Response to the Madera Grand Jury Recommendations:

R.1 The MGJ recommendation has been implemented. The Madera Police Department will continue to build and strengthen positive relationships with community members. The Madera Police Department will continue to foster openness with the community that we serve.

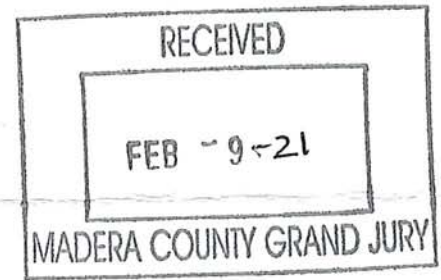
R.2 The MGJ recommendation has been implemented. The Madera Police Department has and will continue to fill current unfilled positions. The Madera Police Department has filled nine (9) of the above-mentioned vacancies and we are moving forward with filling the remaining six (6) vacancies.

R.3 The MCJ recommendation has been implemented. On 01-08-2021 County Law Enforcement and Mental Health Officials conducted a meeting relating to providing improved mental health services and training. All entities are also perusing a combined grant. All entities are engaged in reoccurring meeting with the goal of improved Mental health services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dino Lawson".

Dino Lawson
Chief of Police



February 2, 2021

Judge Michael Jurkovich
Madera County Supervising Judge
300 South G Street
Madera, CA 93637

Foreperson
Madera County Grand Jury
PO Box 534
Madera, CA 93639

Subject: Response to the Findings of the City of Madera Police Department Unveiling Truths of Local Law Enforcement Madera County Grand Jury Final Report 1920-05 Published December 21, 2020.

Honorable Judge Jurkovich:

Pursuant to California Penal Code 933.05 the Department of Behavioral Health Services (BHS) has complied its responses to the findings and recommendations in the Grand Jury Final Report 1920-05 "City of Madera Police Department Unveiling Truths of Local Law Enforcement" published on December 21, 2020.

BHS appreciates all the efforts that the Grand Jury Team has put into this report and that we were invited to submit a response. Please contact me if you have any additional questions about our responses.

Respectfully,

Julie Morgan
Acting Director
Madera County Behavioral Health





RESPONSES TO FINDINGS IN REPORT:

Finding 3:

The Madera County Grand Jury (MCGJ) finds that Madera County is not effectively handling the individuals Madera Police Department identifies as having a mental health crisis (5150).

Response:

Disagree with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05. BHS has a long history of working as a collaborative community partner with Madera Police Department and other local Law Enforcement. Madera County has a Community Wide Collaborative that includes BHS, all local law enforcement, both local hospitals, Madera County Department of Corrections, and other community stakeholders. This collaborative has developed the Madera County 5150 Response Protocol. The 5150-response protocol was updated in 2019 and outlines all stakeholders agreed upon roles in addressing our community members in crisis.

Response to Recommendations in Report:

Recommendation 3:

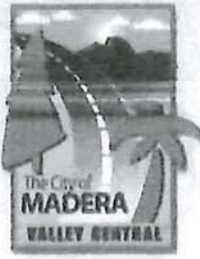
MCGJ recommends that the Madera Police Department immediately work with the Madera County Board of Supervisors to provide adequate mental health services.

Response:

This recommendation is already in effect. Madera County has a Community Wide Collaborative that includes BHS, all local law enforcement, both local hospitals, Madera County Department of Corrections, and other community stakeholders. This collaborative has developed the Madera County 5150 Response Protocol. The 5150-response protocol was updated in 2019 and outlines all stakeholders agreed upon roles in addressing our community members in crisis. The collaborative meets quarterly to address any issues or breakdowns within the system of crisis care. BHS is currently in collaboration with Madera County Administration, Madera Police Department, Madera Sheriff's Department and the Department of Corrections are working to apply for a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) grant that would provide law enforcement partners with additional training on mental health issues that qualify as POST training, will enhance knowledge and reduce training costs. BHS in collaboration with Madera Police Department and Madera Sheriff's Department were able to establish a mobile crisis response team in 2017 that is still in effect.



March 17, 2021



The Honorable Michael Jurkovich, Supervising Judge
Supervising Judges of the Grand Jury
Madera County Superior Court
300 South G Street
Madera, California 93637

**Re: City of Madera Response to Madera County Grand Jury
Madera County and City of Madera Police Department: Unveiling Truths of Local Law
Enforcement
Report 1920-05; December 21, 2020**

Dear Honorable Judge Jurkovich:

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Madera.

On December 21, 2020, the City of Madera ("City") received a letter from the Madera County Grand Jury which attached a copy of the Grand Jury's Report titled "City of Madera Police Department: Unveiling Truths of Local Law Enforcement" (hereafter "Report"). The letter states that the Report would be released to the public "three days after the date of this letter." As such, we view the release date as December 24, 2020.

Penal Code Section 933 (c) requires that the governing board of the public agency (here, the City Council) is required to respond not later than 90 days after the public release date. As required, the City Council of the City of Madera respectfully submits the following responses to the Findings and Recommendations in the Report in the form required by the Penal Code.

FINDINGS

F1: The MCGJ finds that the Madera Police Department works on multiple levels to build and strengthen positive relationships with community members.

Response 1: The City agrees with Finding 1. The Madera Police Department works tirelessly to build and strengthen positive relationships with community members.

F2: The MCGJ finds there are 15 funded positions that currently are unfilled at the Madera Police Department.

Response 2: The City disagrees partially with Finding 2. Given that the finding does not identify the positions or dates, the City does not have adequate information to ascertain how this data was obtained. The finding, as written, provides insufficient information to either agree or disagree. Additionally, we note that the City "disagrees partially" because of the mandated method for response. Regardless, the City strives to fill vacant positions to ensure adequate service levels that the community has come to expect. While staffing may sometimes be fluid due to attrition, the Police Department currently has six vacancies. The City budgeted for these positions and is aggressively working to fill the openings.

F3: The MCGJ finds that Madera County is not effectively handling the individuals Madera Police Department identifies as having a mental health crisis (5150).

Response: The City respectfully notes that this finding pertains to a matter that is not under the control of the City.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. MCGJ recommends that the Madera Police Department continue to foster the relationships within the community through the efforts already in place and be open to the suggestions brought by community groups and individuals.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The City appreciates MCGJ's recognition of the City's effort to foster and strengthen relationships with our community. The City believes that when it comes to public safety, nothing is more important than trust and mutual respect between Police Officers and the community. For this reason, the Police Department will continue to explore new and innovative ways to connect with our community.

R2. MCGJ recommends that during Fiscal Year 21/22 currently open positions at the Madera Police Department be filled.

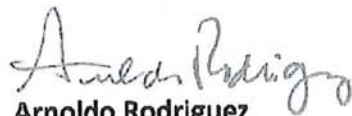
Response: This recommendation has not yet been implemented but the City plans to implement it when it adopts the Fiscal Year 21/22 Budget.

R3. MCGJ recommends that the Madera Police Department immediately work with the Madera County Board of Supervisors to provide adequate mental health services.

Response 3: This recommendation has been implemented. More specifically, earlier this year, Police Chief Lawson attended a meeting with the Madera County Mental Health Department where the focus was on improving mental health services. The Police Department is also assisting the Mental Health Department pursue mental health grant opportunities.

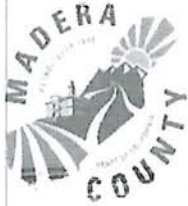
Thank you for your service to the community. Please let us know if you need additional information.

Sincerely,



Arnoldo Rodriguez
City Manager
City of Madera

c: Foreperson, Madera County Grand Jury, PO Box 534, Madera, CA 93637



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF MADERA**

MADERA COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
200 WEST 4TH STREET / MADERA, CALIFORNIA 93637
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Members of the Board
Brett Frazier, District 1
David Rogers, District 2
Robert L. Poythress, District 3
Leticia Gonzalez, District 4
Tom Wheeler, District 5

AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

March 16, 2021

Chairman Robert L. Poythress

DEPARTMENT County Administration/Risk Management & Legal Services Division		DEPARTMENT CONTACT Yvette Gomez 559-675-7703		AGENDA ITEM 5.K Consent Calendar									
SUBJECT: Response to Grand Jury Report		REQUIRED VOTE: 3/5 Votes Required	DOC. ID NUMBER 7151	DATE REC'D 11/20/2019									
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA(S): Focus Area Not Defined (Explain)													
<u>For Clerk of the Board's Office Use Only</u>													
BOARD'S ACTION:													
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>RESULT:</td> <td>APPROVED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MOVER:</td> <td>Tom Wheeler, Chairman Pro Tem</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SECONDER:</td> <td>Brett Frazier, Supervisor - District No. 1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AYES:</td> <td>Frazier, Rogers, Poythress, Gonzalez, Wheeler</td> </tr> </table>						RESULT:	APPROVED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]	MOVER:	Tom Wheeler, Chairman Pro Tem	SECONDER:	Brett Frazier, Supervisor - District No. 1	AYES:	Frazier, Rogers, Poythress, Gonzalez, Wheeler
RESULT:	APPROVED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]												
MOVER:	Tom Wheeler, Chairman Pro Tem												
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Is this item Budgeted? No			DOCUMENT NO(S).										
Will this item require additional personnel? No													
Previous Relevant Board Actions:													
PowerPoint/Supporting Documents: Other/Misc.													

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

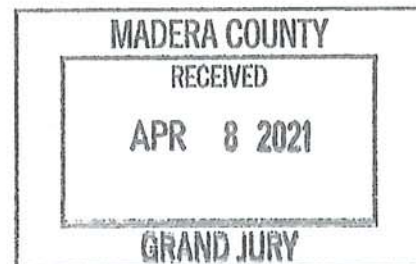
Consideration of approval of the response to the 2019-2020 Grand Jury Report entitled "City of Madera Police Department: Unveiling Truths of Law Enforcement".

DISCUSSION / FISCAL IMPACT / STRATEGIC FOCUS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

1. Grand Jury Response 2019-2020 - City of Madera Police Department
2. Grand Jury Report - City of Madera Police Department 12-21-2020





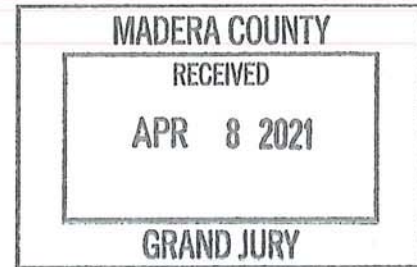
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

BRETT FRAZIER, District No. 1
DAVID ROGERS, District No. 2
ROBERT L. POYTHRESS, District No. 3
LETICIA GONZALEZ, District No. 4
TOM WHEELER, District No. 5

KAREN POGUE, Chief Clerk of the Board

March 21, 2021

The Honorable Michael Jurkovich
Supervising Judge of the Grand Jury
Madera County Superior Court
200 S. G Street
Madera, CA 93637



Subject: Response to the 2019-20 Grand Jury Report entitled "City of Madera Police Department: Unveiling Truths of Law Enforcement"

Honorable Judge Jurkovich:

Pursuant to the California Penal Code 933.05, the Madera County Board of Supervisors submits this response to the findings and recommendations in the 2019-20 Madera County Grand Jury report entitled "**City of Madera Police Department: Unveiling Truths of Law Enforcement**" See Attachment #1.

The following are the Board of Supervisors' responses to the Grand Jury's finding and recommendation No. 3:

Finding 3:

The MCGJ finds that Madera County is not effectively handling the individuals Madera Police Department identifies as having a mental health crisis (5150)

Response

Respondent disagrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (2). Under separate cover, the Acting Director of Behavioral Health Services has responded to this finding and stated:

"BHS has a long history of working as a collaborative community partner with Madera Police Department and other local Law Enforcement. Madera County has a Community Wide Collaborative that includes BHS, all local law enforcement, both local hospitals, Madera County Department of Corrections, and other community stakeholders. This collaborative has developed the Madera County 5150 Response Protocol. The 5150-response protocol was updated in 2019 and outlines all stakeholders agreed upon roles in addressing our community members in crisis."

The response of the Acting Director of Behavioral Health Services to the above finding is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.



Recommendation 3:

The MCGJ recommends that the Madera Police Department immediately work with the Madera County Board of Supervisors to provide adequate mental health services.

Response

The recommendation has been implemented. Under separate cover, the Acting Director of Behavioral Health Services has responded to this finding and stated:

"Madera County has a Community Wide Collaborative that includes BHS, all local law enforcement, both local hospitals, Madera County Department of Corrections, and other community stakeholders. This collaborative has developed the Madera County 5150 Response Protocol. The 5150-response protocol was updated in 2019 and outlines all stakeholders agreed upon roles in addressing our community members in crisis. The collaborative meets quarterly to address any issues or breakdowns within the system of crisis care. BHS is currently in collaboration with Madera County Administration, Madera Police Department, Madera Sheriff's Department, and the Department of Corrections are working to apply for a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) grant that would provide law enforcement partners with additional training on mental health issues that qualify as POST training, will enhance knowledge, and reduce training costs. BHS in collaboration with Madera Police Department and Madera Sheriff's Department were able to establish a mobile crisis response team in 2017 that is still in effect."

The response of the Acting Director of Behavioral Health Services to the above finding is considered appropriate and is submitted as the Board of Supervisors' response.

The Board acknowledges the Grand Jury's review and time involved in this matter and appreciates the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Poythress
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors