



Town of Moraga

TOWN MANAGER

September 2, 2016

Mr. Michael Simmons, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
Post Office Box 431
Martinez, CA 94553

Dear Mr. Simmons,

This letter represents the response from the Town of Moraga to the Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report No. 1609, entitled "Human Trafficking," pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933.05.

Findings

F1: The San Francisco Bay Area is one of three "hot spots" for human trafficking in California, along with Los Angeles and San Diego.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #1.

F2: The emphasis in human trafficking cases has shifted from solely prosecution to a "victim-centered" approach in which the needs of persons who have been trafficked receive equal consideration.

Response: The Town of Moraga partially disagrees with Finding #2. While there is a stronger emphasis on the needs of victims in these cases, there has always been an acknowledgement of victims and the need to ensure they receive appropriate assistance in these cases.

F3: Effectively identifying and apprehending traffickers requires knowledge of the local environment and criminal activities acquired through years of experience.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #3. Local knowledge of offenders and activities is a key element in the solution of many crimes, including human trafficking.

F4: Most police officer training related to human trafficking is acquired through working with more experienced officers and victim advocates.

Response: The Town of Moraga partially disagrees with Finding #4. While working with experienced officers and advocates provides excellent information, officers also receive

information through training courses and information distributed by other agencies and organizations.

F5: The required two-hour POST Training Video in dealing with human trafficking complaints provides a general basis, but more intensive training found in the 2014 training manual contains in-depth coverage of the issues important to officers assigned to trafficking cases.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #5. It is important to provide specialized training to officers who are assigned to investigate trafficking cases.

F6: Successful apprehension and prosecution of traffickers often involves coordination and cooperation among local, State and federal agencies.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #6. Human trafficking cases often extend across jurisdictional lines. Having multiple jurisdictions involved in these investigations provides critical resources which can expedite the conclusion of investigations, resulting in reduced trauma for victims.

F7: City law enforcement and Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department have no comprehensive or consistent method for analyzing data about the number and type of adult trafficking victims. More data that is complete is needed to define the magnitude of the problem and to support decisions about victim services and resource allocation.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #7. Complete data is important to accurately assess the impact of human trafficking and the resources that are necessary to effectively combat it.

F8: City law enforcement and Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department do not always use resources offered by State and federal for joint "sting" and "sweep" operations.

Response: The Town of Moraga partially disagrees with Finding #8. County law enforcement agencies and their State and federal partners routinely work cooperatively on many issues, including human trafficking. This is especially important for the Moraga Police Department, given its limited resources.

F9: Trafficking frequently occurs in combination with other violent crimes and its victims often have a history of abuse and trauma.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #9.

F10: The use of specialized multidisciplinary teams in high crime areas can increase the likelihood that trafficking will be recognized as a component of other crimes.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #10. While many officers possess training in this area, the involvement of multiple officers, including those with specialized training, in an investigation provides multiple viewpoints that lead to a complete analysis of all factors, including the possibility that human trafficking is involved.

F11: Public awareness is a critical factor in identifying potential human trafficking activity.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #11. Information and tips that are received from the public are often critical factors in solving crimes.

F12: The County's efforts to build a broad public awareness of human trafficking has primarily been a poster campaign beginning in 2015.

Response: The Town of Moraga partially disagrees with Finding #12. While there is a need for more outreach to build public awareness, the County has been utilizing multiple approaches and has also benefited from the work being done in neighboring counties.

F13: The Zero Tolerance for Human Trafficking Coalition is developing operating guidelines for case review and coordination to be completed in December 2016.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #13. The Moraga Police Department is prepared to review, train officers on and work with the new guidelines.

F14: A comprehensive approach to dealing with human trafficking includes robust community engagement; training law enforcement in responding to human trafficking incidents; vigorous prosecution of perpetrators; education of and advocacy to policy makers; and wrap-around services for victims/survivors.

Response: The Town of Moraga agrees with Finding #14. The most effective response to an issue as serious as human trafficking is multidisciplinary and should involve prevention, education, enforcement and prosecution.

Recommendations

R1: City law enforcement agencies and the Sheriff's Department should consider incorporating expanded training for officers assigned to trafficking-related duties.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented as it is not warranted. The Moraga Police Department does not have an officer specifically assigned to trafficking-related duties. However, training will continue to be provided to patrol officers, enabling them to recognize human trafficking, and investigators, who conduct all criminal investigations, to ensure human trafficking cases are properly handled.

R2: City law enforcement agencies and the Sheriff's Department should consider increasing collaboration with State and federal law enforcement to expand "sweeps" and "stings" in high crime areas.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented. Currently, local law enforcement agencies collaborate with State and federal law enforcement on a number of efforts to interdict crimes throughout the county. The Moraga Police Department participates in these efforts, when resources allow.

R3: City law enforcement agencies and the Sheriff's Department should consider the benefits of assigning multi-disciplinary teams in areas with significant drug, gang and/or prostitution activity to assist in identifying trafficking activities.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented as it is not warranted. The Town of Moraga is fortunate as it does not have any areas within its boundaries that suffer from significant drug, gang or prostitution activity. However, the Moraga Police Department will assist other law enforcement agencies as needed.

This response was reviewed and authorized by the Moraga Town Council at a regular meeting on August 24, 2016.

Sincerely,



Robert Priebe
Interim Town Manager