



CITY OF SAN RAMON

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July 30, 2020

Ms. Anne N. Granlund, Foreperson
2019-2020 Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
PO Box 431
Martinez, CA 94553

CC: ctadmin@contracosta.courts.ca.gov

Re: The City of San Ramon response to the Grand Jury Report (No. 2004- May 20, 2020), titled, "Police Department Staffing."

Ms. Granlund, this letter is the response from the City of San Ramon Police regarding the Contra Costa County Grand Jury's fourteen listed findings and five listed recommendations in Grand Jury report, No. 2004 ("Police Department Staffing"). This letter addresses the specifically listed Grand Jury findings enumerated only for the *City of San Ramon* (Findings 1-10; 12-14; and for Recommendations 2-5). None of the responses in this letter address the staffing, practices, and/or needs of any of the other police agencies within Contra Costa County, listed in the Grand Jury report.

I. Grand Jury Findings

1. Low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions present challenges in maintaining police services.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #1 of the Grand Jury.
2. Low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions have resulted in reducing or eliminating staffing of traffic units, school resource officers, community outreach, or other police services.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #2 of the Grand Jury.
3. Due to low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions, officers are often required to put in mandatory overtime to cover critical services.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #3 of the Grand Jury.
4. Mandatory overtime can lead to officer stress, which creates retention challenges.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #4 of the Grand Jury.
5. Low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions may contribute to increased average response times for Priority 1 (emergency) calls.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #5 of the Grand Jury.

6. Recruiting officers is challenging due to fewer applicants who meet the required hiring standards and complete the rigorous testing process.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #6 of the Grand Jury.
7. Negative perceptions of policing and the availability of less dangerous job opportunities contribute to fewer applicants for law enforcement positions.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #7 of the Grand Jury.
8. Each Contra Costa police agency (except those that contract with the Sheriff's Office) conducts its own recruiting program to attract potential applicants.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #8 of the Grand Jury.
9. The process of hiring and training new officers takes an extensive amount of time and resources to complete.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #9 of the Grand Jury.
10. Each Contra Costa police agency (except those that contract with the Sheriff's Office) manages its own screening process for police officer positions, resulting in a replication of efforts across the County.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #10 of the Grand Jury, but with a notation that the City of San Ramon cannot speak to the specific hiring practices of other police agencies.
11. Contra Costa cities that contract with the Sheriff for police services are generally able to fill vacancies faster than non-contract cities.
 - *Finding #11 of the Grand Jury is not included in the list of required responses from the City of San Ramon*
12. Recruits and young officers have different expectations than in the past regarding work/life balance.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #12 of the Grand Jury.
13. Recruits and young officers' expectations about work/life balance contribute to the challenges of officer recruiting and retention.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #13 of the Grand Jury.
14. Wellness and Employee Assistance Programs offered by Contra Costa police agencies aid the retention of police officers.
 - The City of San Ramon concurs with Finding #14 of the Grand Jury.

II. Grand Jury Recommendations

1. The Board of Supervisors should consider identifying funds to develop a countywide outreach program to attract more applicants to police agencies in Contra Costa County by June 30, 2021.
 - *Recommendation #1 of the Grand Jury is not included in the list of required responses from the City of San Ramon*
2. The City/Town Councils of Antioch, Brentwood, Clayton, Concord, El Cerrito, Hercules, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek should consider identifying funds to study the cost/benefit of a countywide screening process for police officer positions, to avoid replication of these steps while allowing each city police department to select and evaluate candidates, by June 30, 2021.
 - Recommendation #2 of the Grand Jury will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.
 - ✚ Every law enforcement agency is unique—both in its internal standards and external community expectations of their police officer candidates. A single approach with regards to a

screening of applicants would not adequately address or reflect the needs of the community each agency protects and serve.

3. The Sheriff and the City/Town Councils of Antioch, Brentwood, Clayton, Concord, Danville, El Cerrito, Hercules, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Orinda, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek should consider directing their police departments to apply annually, or when offered in 2021, to the Department of Justice COPS Hiring Program, which provides funding for hiring additional officers, by June 30, 2021.
 - Recommendation #3 of the Grand Jury will not be implemented.
 - ✦ The San Ramon Police Department has applied for the Department of Justice COPS Hiring Program (CHP) grant funding on multiple consecutive years. The San Ramon Police Department has received a “not awarded” response in each of the application submissions, due to the City of San Ramon’s fiscal health, crime statistics, community policing strategy, and/or other relevant factors determined by the COPS Office. The San Ramon Police Department does not intend to apply for the CHP in 2021.

4. The City/Town Councils of Antioch, Brentwood, Clayton, Concord, Danville, El Cerrito, Hercules, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Orinda, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek should consider identifying funds to increase the number of authorized sworn officers to fill understaffed units, such as traffic patrol and school resource officers by June 30, 2021.
 - Recommendation #4 of the Grand Jury requires further analysis.
 - ✦ The San Ramon Police Department’s internal staffing levels are currently on pace to meet our authorized sworn levels. To increase the levels of our authorized sworn personnel will be dependent on current (or projected future) budgetary restraints of the City of San Ramon, due to economic hardships created by the current COVID-19 pandemic and based on the needs of the community.

5. The Sheriff and the City/Town Councils of Antioch, Brentwood, Clayton, Concord, Danville, El Cerrito, Hercules, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Orinda, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek should consider identifying funds that would permit their police departments to over-hire officer positions as a strategy for keeping departments fully staffed, by June 30, 2021.
 - Recommendation #5 of the Grand Jury has been implemented.
 - ✦ The City of San Ramon currently allows for the over-hiring of officers, determined on a case by case basis. At present, the City of San Ramon has been authorized for the over-hiring of (1) police officer during FY 20/21.

Respectfully,


Joe Gorton
San Ramon City Manager