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September 19, 2016

By U.S. Mail and email (epant@contracosta.courts.ca.gov)

Mr. Michael Simmons, Foreperson
Contra Costa Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 431
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

RE: City of Concord Response to June 22, 2016 Grand Jury Report No. 1609, "Human Trafficking"

Dear Mr. Simmons:

This letter serves as the City of Concord's response to the Contra Costa County Grand Jury's findings and recommendations set forth in Report No. 1609, entitled "Human Trafficking." This letter was reviewed by the Concord City Council at its September 13, 2016 City Council Meeting, and I was directed to submit the response for the City of Concord.

I. FINDINGS

Finding No. 1: "The San Francisco Bay Area is one of three "hot spots" for human trafficking in California, along with Los Angeles and San Diego."

Response to Finding No. 1: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 2: "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 to Finding No. 2: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 3: "Effectively identifying and apprehending traffickers requires knowledge of the local environment and criminal activities acquired through years of experience."

Response to Finding No.3: The City of Concord partially disagrees with the finding. Specific training in these areas and collaboration with other agencies will likely achieve the same results.

Finding No. 4: “Most police officer training related to human trafficking is acquired through working with more experienced officers and victim advocates.”

Response to Finding No. 4: The City of Concord partially disagrees with the finding. Specific training in human trafficking and collaboration with non-government organizations (NGO) such as Community Violence Solutions (CVS), other law enforcement agencies and advocates, are the primary sources of human trafficking training gained by police officers.

Finding No. 5: “The required two-hour POST Training Video in dealing with human trafficking complaints provides a general basis, but more intensive training found in the POST 2014 training manual contains in-depth coverage of the issues important to officers assigned to trafficking cases.”

Response to Finding No. 5: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 6: “Successful apprehension and prosecution of traffickers often involves coordination and cooperation among local, State and federal agencies.”

Response to Finding No. 6: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 7: “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 to Finding No. 7: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 8: “City law enforcement and Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department does not always use resources offered by State and federal for joint "sting" and "sweep" operations.”

Response to Finding No. 8: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 9: “Trafficking frequently occurs in combination with other violent crimes and its victims often have a history of abuse and trauma.”

Response to Finding No. 9: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 10: “The use of specialist multidisciplinary teams in high crime areas can increase the likelihood that trafficking will be recognized as a component of other crimes.”

Response to Finding No. 10: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 11: "Public awareness is a critical factor in identifying potential human trafficking activity."

Response to Finding No. 11: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 14: "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 to Finding No. 14: The City of Concord agrees with this finding.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No. 1: "City law enforcement agencies and the Sheriff's Department should consider incorporating expanded training for officers assigned to trafficking-related duties."

Response to Recommendation No. 1: The City of Concord has implemented this recommendation. Sworn staff are provided with specific training on Human Trafficking every two years through our in-service training program. Additionally, detectives working in the Special Victims Unit who investigate human trafficking incidents have also been provided with additional training through CVS and California POST-approved training.

Recommendation No. 2: "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 to Recommendation No. 2: The City of Concord believes this recommendation requires further analysis. Although the recommendation appears to be valuable, it lacks specificity on the amount of resources needed to fulfill this recommendation. It also fails to incorporate NGO's such as CVS; who are invaluable with these investigations.

Recommendation No. 3: "City Law enforcement agencies and the Sheriff's Department should consider the benefits of assigning multidisciplinary teams in areas with significant drug, gang and/or prostitution activity to assist in identifying trafficking activities."

Response to Recommendation No. 3: The City of Concord will not implement this recommendation as our model of enforcing and investigating human trafficking cases is not consistent with a multidisciplinary team. All sworn staff at the City of Concord are trained in identifying human trafficking cases and will summon assistance from Special Victim's Unit detectives should such a case be identified.

Guy Swanger, Chief of Police, is available to answer any questions or provide any additional information concerning the above responses or enclosed documents. You can reach him at (925) 671-3193 or by email at guy.swanger@cityofconcord.org.

Sincerely,



Valerie J. Barone
City Manager