



September 5, 2017

Jim Mellander, Foreperson  
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury  
725 Court Street  
P.O. Box 431  
Martinez, CA 94553-0091  
Email: [afren@contracosta.courts.ca.gov](mailto:afren@contracosta.courts.ca.gov)  
**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Re: Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report No. 1707, "Homelessness in the Cities"

Dear Mr. Mellander:

Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933.05, this letter responds to Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report No. 1707, "Homelessness in the Cities."

#### **FINDINGS**

F1: CORE teams are most likely to be the first point of entry for the homelessness into the County's Coordinated Entry System.

Response: The City of El Cerrito agrees with Finding #1.

F2: CORE teams can successfully identify a homeless individual in need of physical or mental health services.

Response: The City of El Cerrito agrees with Finding #2.

F3: CORE teams have the resources to identify if there are vacant shelter beds available in the county.

Response: The City of El Cerrito agrees with Finding #3.

F4: CORE teams are equipped and have authorization to transport homeless individuals to a medical facility or to a homeless shelter.

Response: The City of El Cerrito agrees with Finding #4.

F5: CORE teams build trust between the homeless and police departments.

Response: The City of El Cerrito agrees with Finding #5.

F9: The cities of Antioch, Concord, Pittsburg and Walnut Creek, which are the CDBG Entitlement Cities, are the only cities in Contra Costa County that have an approved written homeless plan to end or reduce homelessness in their respective jurisdictions.



Response: The City of El Cerrito partially disagrees with Finding #9. The City of El Cerrito cannot address the practices of other entities, including whether or not other parties “have an approved written homeless plan to end or reduce homelessness in their respective jurisdictions.”

F10: The City appears to be in compliance with the California Housing Accountability Act.

Response: The City of El Cerrito agrees with Finding #10.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1: The City should consider establishing CORE teams either by partnering with one or more cities in the region or by funding its own team.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented at this time. While the City has considered the benefits and costs of establishing its own CORE team, the City does not currently have the staff nor the resources to do so.

R2: The City should consider providing incentives for developers to construct housing for the extremely low income, very low income, and homeless populations.

Response: This recommendation is being implemented. The City currently conforms both with the State Density Bonus Program requirements and provides both a Tier IV entitlement process within the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan area. The process incentivizes the provision of public benefits, such as affordable housing for low and very low income and homeless populations, and an Incentives Program outside of the Specific Plan area through which a housing developer could apply for more flexible development standards if providing affordable housing.

R3: The City should consider using Successor Agency funds, CDBG and other federal housing funds, impact fees, and city general funds to assist in funding housing for the extremely low income, very low income and homeless populations.

Response: This recommendation is being partially implemented. The City is currently developing an Affordable Housing Impact Fee program.

R4: The City should consider adopting a five-year comprehensive homeless plan, as soon as possible with a target date of January 1, 2019, to reduce the homeless population in the City.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented. The City does not have the staff nor the resources to develop such a plan, especially considering the City’s low count of 13 unsheltered individuals. Further, the City believes that developing such a plan should be regional in nature, which is better suited to fall under the purview and responsibility of Contra Costa County.



Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or require additional information concerning the above responses. You can reach me directly at (510) 215-4302 or by email at [kpinkos@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:kpinkos@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us).

Sincerely,

Karen E. Pinkos  
Assistant City Manager  
City of El Cerrito

cc: El Cerrito City Council  
Scott Hanin, City Manager