

Camerino Sanchez

July 31, 2007

The Honorable Rodney Melville  
Presiding Judge, Superior Court  
County of Santa Barbara  
312 M East Cook Street  
Santa Maria, California 93455

County Civil Grand Jury,  
Attention Foreman Albert Mercado  
1100 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, California 93101

Dear Honorable Melville:

This letter is in response to the Civil Grand Jury's letter to the Mayor dated May 17, 2007, requesting a response to its 2006-2007 report entitled *Law, Justice & Public Safety: Selected Community Challenges*. The response is provided pursuant to the requirements of state Penal Code Section 933(c).

We have enclosed with this letter the detailed response to the findings and recommendations contained in that report as approved by the Santa Barbara City Council at its regular meeting of July 31, 2007. The Grand Jury Report requests a response from the City of Santa Barbara and our Chief of Police. This response constitutes the reply of both the City Council and the Chief of Police of the City of Santa Barbara.

Please feel free to contact us and/or Santa Barbara City Attorney Stephen Wiley, should you have any questions concerning the City's response or if you need anything further from the City.

Yours truly,

Marty Blum  
Mayor

Cam Sanchez  
Police Chief

Cc: James L. Armstrong, City Administrator  
Stephen P. Wiley, City Attorney  
Cam Sanchez, Police Chief  
City Clerk Cyndi Rodriguez

**Response of the City Council of the City of Santa Barbara to the report of the 2006-2007 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury entitled “Law, Justice & Public Safety: Selected Community Challenges.”**

**FINDINGS**

**Finding 1**

Greater use of medium security detention facilities, staffed by law enforcement and clinical experts, could reduce jail overcrowding and provide more humane treatment for some segments of the inmate population.

**Response:** This finding falls within the purview and responsibility of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff and we will defer to their expertise in those areas.

**Finding 2**

Allegations of negligent or improper treatment of inmates in the Main Jail could not be verified but such claims were not isolated.

**Response:** This finding falls within the purview and responsibility of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff and we will defer to their expertise in those areas.

**Finding 3**

The influence of gang activity in the detention system is pernicious and its impact on the growth of neighborhood gangs may increase if not checked.

**Response:** We concur with this finding.

**Finding 4**

The California Civil Code (1713.1 & 1714.3) prescribes the liability of parents or guardians for the misconduct of children within their custody and control.

**Response:** We concur with this finding.

**Finding 5**

There is a growing disregard for traffic laws and this can contribute to disregard for the law in general.

**Response:** While logical, we have not found any indicators that would either support or rebut this finding.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 1**

Develop more medium security detention facilities as alternatives to incarceration in the Main Jail.

**Response:** This matter falls within the purview and responsibility of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff. We will defer to his expertise in this matter.

### **Recommendation 2**

Authorize and fund a court appointed ombudsman who is beholden neither to detention authorities nor to inmate advocacy groups and who is devoted to evaluating and reporting on complaints.

**Response:** We would need to have additional information on the pros and cons of this recommendation before we can form an informed opinion. This again is a matter that falls within the purview of the County of Santa Barbara and we defer to their expertise on the subject.

### **Recommendation 3**

Implement a sustainable educational program on the negative impact of gang activity, involving law enforcement and the education experts, focusing on children in K-8 and including outreach to parents.

**Response:** Our D.A.R.E. program continues to address and teach not only drug abuse resistant courses, but includes in its curriculum, lessons/training on violence prevention, which includes gang awareness and prevention, as well as bullying issues on and off school grounds.

This past school year, 440 students graduated from the D.A.R.E. program. Our D.A.R.E. program operates in the Santa Barbara School District and several private and parochial elementary schools. Since 1987, 17,000 students have graduated from the D.A.R.E. program in the City of Santa Barbara.

We continue to believe strongly in providing early intervention to our children through the D.A.R.E. program.

At the Junior High and High School levels, our successful Police Activities League, P.A.L., continues to provide young people positive alternatives to gang participation and affiliation and other youth violence issues.

Our Police Activities program provides positive programs to over 1600 young people year round. Some of the programs include:

- Summer camps
- Tutoring
- Computer sciences
- Leadership training
- Sports activities
- Dance
- Community service involvement

The department is also collaborating with the City Parks and Recreation Department on programs for youth and families. The department plays two distinct rolls in the area of youth and families, both proactively and reactively.

We continue to conduct community type forums around the City, advising parents and families of youth issues and available programs for our young people.

Our Youth Services Section of the Police Department continues to conduct parental consulting and provide resources for parents. We also continue our great relationship with the school system as well as County Probation regarding young people involved in behavior not conducive to a learning environment.

We also involve ourselves as an organization with many young people who are involved in positive and healthy behavior, and that is the majority of our students in the City.

There are choices to make and decisions to ponder, and we always are hopeful that our young people make the right choices in their lives.

We as a Police Department will continue to provide many positive options for our young people and their families. It is important to recognize the fact that the majority of our young people do, in fact, continue to live safe and healthy lives. It is those that choose to not live that lifestyle that we are certainly concerned with and hoping that in the long run we can find an answer to the issues of youth violence, including gangs and other matters involving youth choices.

#### **Recommendation 4**

The District Attorney should proactively inform parents or guardians that under the provisions of the California Civil Code they are liable for the misconduct of the children.

**Response:** We agree with this recommendation and believe it to be a current practice of the Office of the District Attorney.

## **Recommendation 5**

Place greater emphasis on enforcement and implement a public awareness program regarding the bad habits of drivers and bicyclists.

**Response:** In the City of Santa Barbara, our traffic concerns are taken very seriously. Our traffic officer operation is continually developing strategies to address public awareness of traffic laws through enforcement and education.

We also have been very successful in obtaining grant funding for traffic related needs Citywide.

Some of the obtained grants have given us the ability to work specific areas of education and enforcement for the following areas of concern:

- Seat belt compliance
- Child seat restraint compliance
- Pedestrians rights
- Unlicensed/uninsured motorists
- DUI checkpoints

Despite times when personnel resources are a challenge, the Santa Barbara Police Department continues to enforce its traffic laws, including the handling of major traffic accidents and at times fatal traffic accidents where investigations are lengthy and complicated. We also continue to collaborate with the Public Works Department with the Safe Routes to Schools program and regularly interact with the City's traffic engineer when appropriate.