

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 07/07/05
Department Name: CEO
Department No.: 012
Agenda Date: 08/02/05
Placement: Administrative
Estimate Time:
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Michael F. Brown
County Executive Officer

STAFF CONTACT: Lori Norton, Analyst
568-3421

SUBJECT: Board of Supervisors Response to 2004-05 Grand Jury Report – “An Ounce of Prevention”

Recommendations:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Adopt the proposed responses to the 2004-05 Grand Jury Report “An Ounce of Prevention” – Toward a More Transparent and Responsive Planning and Development Process as the Board’s responses.
- B. Authorize the Chair to execute the letter (Attachment 1) transmitting the Board’s responses to the Presiding Judge and Jury Foreperson.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendations are primarily aligned with the Board of Supervisors’ Strategic Goal No. 1: An Efficient Government Able to Anticipate and Respond Effectively to the Needs of the Community.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

The Grand Jury Report (Attachment 2) was released on May 18, 2005. In accordance with Penal Code Section 933(c), the governing body of the agency (Board of Supervisors) must respond within 90 days after issuance of the Grand Jury report. Consequently, the Board of Supervisors’ response must be finalized and transmitted to the Presiding Judge of the Courts no later than August 12, 2005.

Generally, Grand Jury Report responses are placed on the Departmental Agenda. Due to the non-controversial nature of the report, response, and the Board’s constrained meeting schedule during the month of August, the item has been placed on the Administrative Agenda for August 2, 2005. This will allow the

Board two opportunities, if necessary, to discuss and adopt a response. If desired, the Board may direct staff to schedule the item for discussion on August 9, 2005.

The “An Ounce of Prevention” Grand Jury Report contains 4 Findings and 4 Recommendations. The Planning and Development Department and the Board of Supervisors are the only required responses on behalf of Santa Barbara County. A number of Cities are also required to respond directly to the Grand Jury.

The Planning and Development Department submitted their response to the Grand Jury on July 15, 2005. It is recommended that the Board adopt the Planning and Development Department’s responses (Attachment 3), as the Board’s responses to those findings and recommendations. In general, the Planning and Development Department agrees, in whole or part, with each of the Grand Jury findings. Further, recommendations, 1, 2 and 4 have been implemented in whole or part. Recommendation 3 requires further analysis as it is a policy decision which your Board will consider in the context of planned process improvements to the ministerial permit and appeal process. Currently, the Board is scheduled to consider process improvements, including notification of land use changes, in October 2005.

Mandates and Service Levels:

California Penal Code Section 933(c) requires that no later than 90 days after the Grand Jury submits a final report on the operations of a public agency, the governing body of the public agency shall comment to the presiding judge of the superior court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under their control. These comments, in and of themselves, do not change existing programs or services levels.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

The recommended responses do not have a fiscal or facilities impact.

Special Instructions:

The response of the Board of Supervisors must be transmitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court no later than August 12, 2005. The Clerk of the Board is requested to return the signed letter to Brenda Castillo, County Executive Office, for distribution to the Superior Court. The signed letter, written responses and a 3 1/2” computer disc with the response in Microsoft Word must be forwarded to the Grand Jury.

Attachments:

1. Board of Supervisors transmittal letter
2. 2004-05 Grand Jury Report – “An Ounce of Prevention”
3. Planning and Development Department Response

C: Charles Foley, Foreperson, 2004-05 Civil Grand Jury
Ron Cortez, Deputy County Executive Officer
Terri Maus-Nisich, Assistant County Executive Officer
Dianne Meester, Assistant Director, Planning and Development

August 2, 2005

The Honorable Judge Anderson
Superior Court
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
Charles Foley, Foreperson
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**Board of Supervisors' Response to FY 2004-05 County Grand Jury Report titled:
"An Ounce of Prevention" Toward a More Transparent and Responsive Planning
and Development Process**

Dear Judge Anderson:

During its regular meeting on August 2, 2005, the Board of Supervisors adopted the responses (Attached) of the Planning and Development Department as its responses to Findings and Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the 2004-05 Grand Jury Report— "An Ounce of Prevention" Toward a More Transparent and Responsive Planning and Development Process.

Sincerely,

Susan Rose
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Attachment

C: **Ron Cortez, Deputy County Executive Officer**
Terri Maus-Nisich, Assistant County Executive Officer
Dianne Meester, Assistant Director, Planning and Development

July 15, 2005

The Honorable Judge Anderson
Superior Court
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Charles Foley, Foreperson
Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Response to 2004-05 Grand Jury Report:
An Ounce of Prevention—Toward A More Transparent and Responsive Planning and
Development Process

Dear Judge Anderson and Mr. Foley:

The Grand Jury requested Planning and Development respond to Findings and
Recommendations 1-4 of the above referenced report. The following is the department's
response, which is due on July 15, 2005.

**Grand Jury Finding 1: Mission Statements, when available, were often outdated and
did not list customer satisfaction as a primary goal.**

Response to Finding 1: Agree in part. The department agrees that customer satisfaction is
not an explicit part of the department's mission statement. Disagree in part. The Santa Barbara
County Planning and Development Department's mission statement is available in the
department's strategic plan, which is updated annually, in the County budget document, and on
the department's website.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 1: Planning departments should have mission statements
specific to their department. These mission statements should have customer satisfaction
as a primary goal.**

Response to Recommendation 1: The recommendation has been implemented. The
department's updated mission statement is attached. The revised mission statement is on the
website and will be incorporated into the next update of the department's strategic plan and the
FY 2006-07 budget document.

Grand Jury Finding 2: Planning departments did not have basic customer satisfaction procedures in place.

Response to Finding 2: Agree in part. Santa Barbara County Planning and Development has a suggestion and feedback process, but this process can be improved.

Grand Jury Recommendation 2: To increase customer satisfaction, each planning department should publicly post the agency's mission statement, post timelines and mitigating factors, provide easy access to all relevant forms with adequate explanations as to their use, post a list of key personnel involved in completing an application, and clearly define the complaint process. In addition, handouts should be provided to each customer explaining the application and complaint process.

Response to Recommendation 2: This recommendation has been implemented. The information requested in this recommendation is posted on the department's website and is available at the public counter.

Grand Jury Finding 3: Notification of changes to land and property use in most jurisdictions was limited to mandated State *minimum* requirement to owners only, and within 300 feet from the borders of the property site.

Response to Finding 3: Agree.

Grand Jury Recommendation 3: Notification of land use changes should include the owner *and occupants* within at least 500 feet of the border of the property site.

Response to Recommendation 3: The recommendation requires further analysis. This is a policy decision for the Board of Supervisors. The department will bring this policy issue to the Board of Supervisors in the context of planned process improvements to the ministerial permit and appeal process, expected to be before the Board of Supervisors in October 2005.

Grand Jury Finding 4: The complaint process in most jurisdictions was not designed for quantifiable analysis and could not be used to find strong and weak points in the planning process.

Response to Finding 4: Agree.

Grand Jury Recommendation 4: Planning agencies should track all complaints and conduct random quantifiable surveys of 10% of the customers who have used their services. (See Appendix A for an example of a possible customer satisfaction survey.) Agencies should use the results of these surveys to make the planning process more customer friendly. The results should be added on a quarterly basis to the department website for public viewing. (See Appendix B for an example of how to display the results of the customer satisfaction surveys.)

Response to Recommendation 4: The recommendation has been implemented in part. See the attached revised customer satisfaction survey which the department will begin using immediately. The results of the surveys will be used to monitor and adjust the operations of the department, monitor and adjust the operations of the department. The results will be posted on the department's website regularly.

Thank you for your thoughtful observations, findings and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Dianne L. Meester, Assistant Director
Planning and Development Department

Attachments