



# CITY OF SIMI VALLEY

Home of The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library

June 21, 2010

Honorable Kevin J. McGee, Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, Ventura County  
P. O. Box 6489  
Ventura, CA 93006

Dear Judge McGee:

The City of Simi Valley has received the 2009-2010 Grand Jury report, "Where are You Sleeping Tonight?" and in accordance with Penal Code Section 933.05, we submit this response to the Grand Jury findings and recommendations.

The City Council appreciates the efforts of the Grand Jury in researching the issue of homelessness, and documenting the efforts taking place within Ventura County to implement strategies aimed at ending homelessness.

With respect to the Grand Jury's findings, the City has no comment on those findings not specific to Simi Valley; it is assumed that the statistics and factors cited were derived from the reference documents reviewed by the Grand Jury and have been accurately presented. As to the findings specific to Simi Valley, the City generally concurs with the Grand Jury findings, with the following noted clarification:

F-41. The fifth bullet of this finding should be rewritten to read: "Simi Valley Police Department – when it is determined that individuals being released from custody are homeless, they are provided with referral information on available homeless services, and they may stay at the police station temporarily instead of being released with no place to sleep." The Simi Valley Police Department does not provide temporary sleeping quarters.

As requested by the Grand Jury, following are the City's responses to the recommendations applicable to Simi Valley:

***R-01. Both public agencies and nonprofit organizations should be adding low-income rental housing. Other entities should be encouraged to do so by governmental agencies.***

This recommendation has been implemented. The City currently administers rental agreements for a total of 1,436 affordable units, including 22 that are reserved for developmentally disabled homeless persons. Further, the City actively promotes the development of affordable rental units and the conversion of market rate units to affordable units.

***R-02. The Cities should take a leading role in coordinating services and resources directed at eliminating or minimizing homelessness in their communities through marshalling and motivating volunteers to assist with programs for the homeless.***

This recommendation has been implemented. The City has a long history of leadership in addressing the issue of homelessness through collaboration with citizens, non-profits, the faith community, civic organizations and government agencies. Some of the non-profit and volunteer organizations with which the City has active partnerships include the Samaritan Center, Public Action to Deliver Shelter (PADS) winter warming sites, the Dining Site program, Free Clinic of Simi Valley, Care and Share, and the Salvation Army. In addition to working with these organizations to mobilize volunteers as a resource, the City played a lead role in forming the Alliance to House the Homeless in 2007, partnering with representatives of the faith-based and non-profit communities and County agencies. The Alliance meets monthly in a case management format to assist clients, network on resources, and improve capacity to address homelessness issues. Over a two-year period, the Alliance's efforts have resulted in stable housing for 156 individuals.

***R-03. The County and the Cities should make every effort to ensure that the original goal of the Strategy, to reduce homelessness within the County by 50% during the first five years (2008-2012), is accomplished.***

This recommendation is on schedule for being implemented. In the past two years, the Simi Valley Homeless Street Count has been reduced by approximately 25%, surpassing the original goal. It should be noted, however, that homelessness is a complex and dynamic issue, and consideration should be given to the impact of the current economic issues facing the region, such as unemployment, foreclosures, and the elimination of certain County and non-profit services previously utilized to assist the homeless. These issues will impact the County's local homeless counts over the next few years.

***R-05. Innovative and effective programs developed by Cities and other organizations should be documented and replicated in other areas of the County that lack such programs.***

This recommendation has been implemented. The Simi Valley Task Force on Homelessness and the Alliance to House the Homeless are comprised of service providers who work in communities throughout Ventura County. The information-sharing character of these bodies provides an opportunity for program ideas to be discussed and made available for implementation in other communities. Additionally, the City's *Directory of Services for the Homeless and Needy* is a ready resource that has been utilized throughout the County for documented program and service ideas.

***R-06. Cities that have not pursued grant funds, or have been unsuccessful in receiving them, should aggressively seek such funds.***

Honorable Kevin J. McGee

June 21, 2010

Page 3

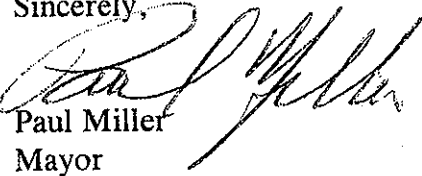
This recommendation has been implemented. The City has applied for such grant sources as Community Development Block Grant, Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP), and HOME funds. The City has been and will continue to be aggressive in securing housing grants.

*R-07. The County and all Cities should continue to recognize and publicly thank the various nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and other volunteer groups for their ongoing and highly effective support of the homeless population in Ventura County.*

This recommendation has been implemented. The close coordination and networking between the City and local service providers lend to effective communication and regular opportunities for the City to express appreciation and support of these providers. As a recent example, in April 2010, the City Council presented Certificates of Recognition to members of the Alliance to House the Homeless for their efforts and accomplishments.

The City Council considered the Grand Jury report at its June 21, 2010 meeting and authorized this response. The contents of this letter shall also constitute the response requested of the City Manager. We appreciate the efforts of the Grand Jury and this opportunity to respond to its findings and recommendations.

Sincerely,



Paul Miller  
Mayor

cc: H. G. Kelley, Foreman, Ventura County 2009-2010 Grand Jury  
City Council  
City Manager  
City Attorney  
Assistant City Manager  
Chief of Police  
Director of Environmental Services  
Director of Community Services