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SEP 28 2023

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SUTTER
CLERK OF THE COURT
By JACKIE LABWELL Deputy

September 5, 2023

Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
County of Sutter
1175 Civic Center Blvd.
Yuba City, CA 95993

Re: Response to 2022-2023 Sutter County Grand Jury Final Report

To the Honorable Presiding Judge:

This letter is the official consolidated response of the City of Yuba City regarding the Grand Jury Report entitled "Local Government Report – Rough Roads Ahead for Yuba City."

Grand Jury Findings

F1. The road pavements throughout Yuba City currently require extensive maintenance and refurbishment to sufficiently provide for critical transportation infrastructure.

Response: *The City agrees with the finding. Additionally, non-critical transportation infrastructure such as local residential roads require similar levels of maintenance and refurbishment that affect the overall quality of life for City residents.*

F2. The budget for the road pavements of Yuba City is inadequate to improve or even maintain their current Poor/Fair condition into the future.

Response: *The City agrees with the finding. Available funding from existing state and federal gas taxes is insufficient to provide necessary maintenance to keep City roadways from further deterioration. As stated in the Grand Jury Report, road conditions are at a critical level, with costs to rehabilitate roads exponentially increasing with time due to lack of maintenance.*

F3. Yuba City has created an App "YC311" to make it easier for residents to report road maintenance concerns.

Note: The Grand Jury did not request a response to Finding F3

F4. The Yuba City Council is attempting to address the serious problems with the deteriorating municipal road pavements and is struggling to find a funding solution.

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SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
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Response: *The City agrees with the finding. The City has thoroughly reviewed the budgets and available funding sources, including special efforts made to establish a Council Budget Ad-hoc Committee, hiring grant consultants to increase available funds, and through regular audits to review and prioritize funds.*

Over recent years, staff has been coordinating to obtain any grant funding related to roads and road maintenance to help with funding solutions, while also working to prioritize the use of available funds as efficiently as possible using new product types and technology.

Recommendations

- R1.** The City Council of Yuba City must create a funding plan by April 30, 2024, to finance the program that the Public Works Department has formed for continuous improvements of the road pavement conditions throughout Yuba City. (F1, F2)

Response: *The recommendation requires further analysis. The City has recently coordinated to establish a Revenue Ad-hoc Committee and hire a consultant to help develop a potential revenue measure for the November 2024 election. These efforts directly precipitate the development of a sustainable road funding plan per the Grand Jury recommendation. A date after the November 2024 election is required for the City to create a funding plan that provides for continuous Citywide pavement condition improvements.*

- R2.** The Yuba City Council must make efforts to survey and determine the public's views on a sales tax for additional funding to address road pavement maintenance by December 31, 2023. (F4)

Response: *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. The City has previously obtained sufficient survey data from the public, including relatively recent countywide polling data related to road maintenance funding. The survey data has shown that there is strong support for the use of funds for maintaining roads throughout the community. Additional surveys are not anticipated to change since the data was last collected. The City believes the resources required for the recommended effort can be better utilized on other priorities.*

- R3.** The Sutter County Grand Jury recommends that the Yuba City Council authorize an independent audit to be completed by April 30, 2024, to examine if additional cost savings can be found to help pay for road maintenance and refurbishment. The audit findings must be made available to the public. (F1, F2, F4)

Response: *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. It has been made clear and public, in the Grand Jury Report, annual City budget workshops, and through regular public audits of the City's finances that additional cost savings cannot be found to offset the road funding needs without severely impacting core municipal functions. These are all public documents with professional credentials associated with their development. The City respectfully disagrees that another independent audit is*

needed. As discussed in the report, the recommendation is purely to help provide the public assurances that the funding issue is real. The City believes this Grand Jury Report serves this purpose and that resources can be better utilized on other priorities.

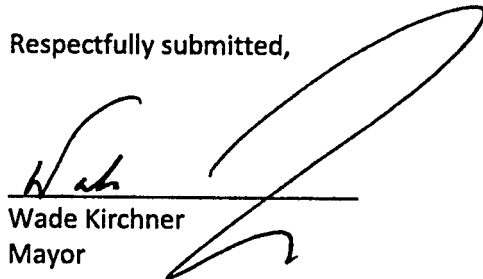
- R4.** The Yuba City Council should propose a sales tax to only Yuba City voters by the next election to increase funding for only road pavement maintenance and refurbishment for Yuba City. (F1 F2, F4)

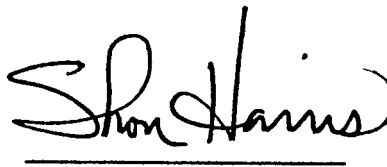
Response: *The recommendation requires further analysis and study. The City Council has hired a professional consultant to help the City move forward with a strategy to develop a successful plan for funding City needs. A timeline is to be determined through further analysis with the consultant and City leaders.*

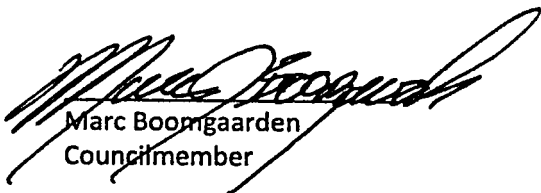
The City notes the Grand Jury's input regarding a sales tax measure specific to only roads and to be decided by only Yuba City voters; however, the Grand Jury report was solely focused on roads, and there are also substantial findings and public input regarding the need for public safety funding. The City believes that public safety funding is a critical element that needs to be considered by the City as we work to develop a sustainable funding plan for City priorities.


The City Council will also direct that a copy of this response be placed on file with the City Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,


Wade Kirchner
Mayor


Shon Harris
Vice-Mayor


Marc Boongaarden
Councilmember


Michael Pasquale
Councilmember


Dave Shaw
Councilmember


Benjamin K. Moody
Public Works & Development Services Director