



CITY of BELVEDERE

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June 13, 2017

The Honorable Judge Kelly V. Simmons
Marin County Superior Court
PO Box 4988
San Rafael CA 94913-4988

Dear Judge Simmons:

Enclosed please find the City of Belvedere's response to the April 6, 2017, Marin County Grand Jury's report titled "Overcoming Barriers to Housing Affordability." This item was reviewed and considered by the Belvedere City Council at their June 12, 2017, regular meeting.

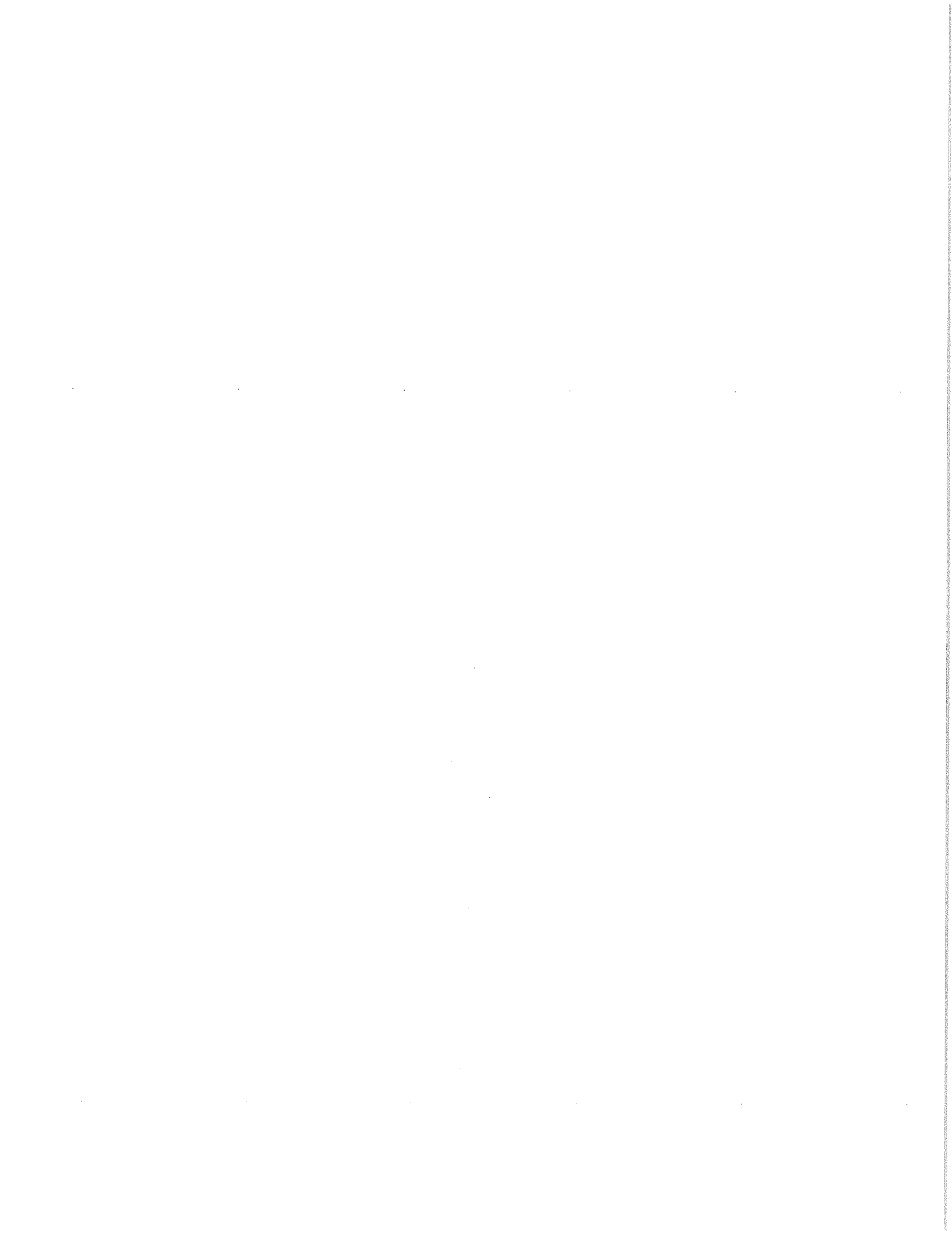
Please extend the City's appreciation to the 2017 Grand Jurors for the important work they do on behalf of all of the citizens of Marin County.

Sincerely,

Craig Middleton
City Manager

Encl.

cc: Jay Hamilton Roth, Foreperson
Marin County Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 275
San Rafael, CA 94903



RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM
City of Belvedere

Report Title: Overcoming Barriers to Housing Affordability
Report Date: April 6, 2017
Public Release: April 12, 2017
Response By: James Campbell, Mayor

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered R2 and R3 have been implemented.

- Recommendation numbered R1 and R6 will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.

Date: 06-12-2017

Signed: 
James Campbell, Mayor

Number of pages attached: 2

EXPLANATION REGARDING RECOMMENDATION

Recommendations that have been implemented.

Recommendation R2:

Each planning department should develop a proactive community outreach strategy for any project that might be considered potentially controversial (including going beyond legal noticing minimums and initiating outreach efforts as early as possible in the development cycle).

Response:

The size of projects in Belvedere is typically limited to the remodeling or construction of a single-family home, a minor commercial modification, or the construction of a Second Unit. For some planning projects, staff sends out a pre-notice to inform nearby residents early on in the process that an application has been submitted and is available for public review.

Recommendation R3:

Each planning department should use succinct "plain-speak" to convey issues in their outreach.

Response:

Typical Notices for projects will provide a brief project description of the project proposal in layman's terms, the types of applications requested, and the project address and applicant and or property owner information.

Recommendations that will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.

Recommendation R1:

Each planning department should begin regularly scheduled meetings at which developers can speak, early in the process, with all relevant members of staff to discuss impacts of proposed development and potential solutions to problems.

Response:

The size of projects in Belvedere is typically limited to the remodeling or construction of a single-family home, a minor commercial modification, or the construction of a Second Unit. The city strives to keep its permit procedures streamlined and processing times short, although the high level of community involvement can sometimes lengthen the process. The Planning Division is the lead agency in processing residential development applications and coordinates the processing of those applications with other city departments such as Building & Public Works Departments and other outside agencies such as the Fire District.

Although regularly scheduled meetings are not in place, it is common practice to offer applicants and or property owners an opportunity to meet with staff to discuss project proposals. It is the goal of the staff to work out design issues with the project applicant/property owner before the application is reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Recommendation R6:

Each jurisdiction should adopt procedures so that low-income housing projects are fast-tracked through the planning and permitting process.

Response:

The City of Belvedere already has a program in place – Belvedere Housing Element Program 4.9 – that commits the City to expedite the permit processing timeframe for new multi-family rental projects and to aim to reduce the typical processing time from 48 to 24 weeks.

