

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Town of San Anselmo

Report Title: Overcoming Barriers to Housing Affordability

Report Date: April 6, 2017

Public Release: April 12, 2017

Response By: Kay Coleman, Mayor

FINDINGS

- We agree with the findings numbered: N/A
- We disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: N/A
(see attached for portion of the finding that is disputed and explanation of the reasons therefor)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations R1, R2, R3 and R6 have been implemented, see summary regarding the implemented action attached.
- Recommendations N/A has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, see attached timeframe for implementation.
- Recommendations N/A require further analysis, see attached explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion, which timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.
- Recommendations N/A will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, see attached explanation.

Date: 6/16/2017

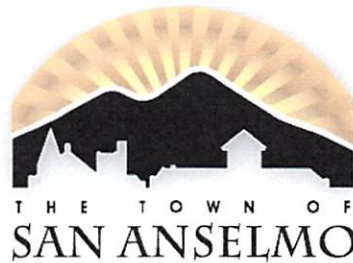
Signed: _____


Mayor Kay Coleman

Number of Pages Attached: 2

Kay Coleman
Mayor

Tom McInerney
Vice Mayor



Ford Greene
Councilmember

John Wright
Councilmember

Matt Brown
Councilmember

525 San Anselmo Avenue, San Anselmo, CA 94960-2682
www.townofsananselmo.org
(415) 258-4600 | Fax (415) 459-2477

June 14, 2017

The Honorable Kelly V. Simmons
Judge of the Marin County Superior Court
Post Office Box 4988
San Rafael, CA 94913-4988

Jay Hamilton-Roth, Foreperson
Marin County Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 275
San Rafael, CA 94903

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report "Overcoming Barriers to Housing Affordability"

Dear Honorable Judge Simmons and Mr. Hamilton-Roth:

This letter explains in detail the Town of San Anselmo's response to the Grand Jury Report dated April 6, 2017. The Report directs the Town to respond to Recommendations R1, R2, R3, and R6.

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 Town has implemented this recommendation. Town staff block off time every Thursday at 1:30 p.m. for "predevelopment meetings." These meetings include representatives from planning, building, public works and Ross Valley Fire Department. The meetings are often held at the project site. Town staff discusses potential impacts of the proposed development, code issues, and potential solutions to problems.

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 Town has implemented this recommendation. The Town planning department recommends that developers speak with neighbors prior to submitting an

application. Some applicants take this advice. For projects that staff anticipates to be controversial, staff schedules a “study session” where the public is noticed regarding the public meeting by mail, social media, and posted agendas. At the study session, the public and Planning Commission provide input on the project and request additional information from the applicant and staff, but no action is taken on the application. Comments are often made on the building design, form and mass as well as potential environmental impacts, such as parking and traffic. The developer is then able to revise the project in response to any concerns, prior to a formal hearing.

Recommendation R3. *Each planning department should use succinct “plain-speak” to convey issues in their outreach.*

Response: The Town has implemented this recommendation. Town Planning Department staff strives to use plain-speak to describe projects and uses detailed project descriptions so that residents understand the scope of the project. This is challenging for projects subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act, since State law includes terms of art (e.g. “Initial Study” and “Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact”) that a layperson may not understand. Staff will seek to use plain-speak for its next public notice on an environmental review document.

Recommendation R6. *Each jurisdiction should adopt procedures so that low-income housing projects are fast- tracked through the planning and permitting process.*

Response: The Town has implemented this recommendation. The Town fast-tracks new accessory (second) dwelling units (ADUs). Accessory dwelling units provide affordable housing in Town. Most ADUs are processed through the building department and do not need discretionary planning review. The Town code requires these permits to be approved within 120 days of submittal to the building department.

The Town Housing Element 2015-2023 includes a program to fast-track projects on housing opportunity sites (Housing Element Program H3.E), which would include low-income housing projects. However, the Town rarely receives applications for new low-income housing projects and currently has no pending applications for low-income housing projects.

The Town of San Anselmo Town Council reviewed and approved this response on June 13, 2017, at a duly noticed and agendized pubic meeting. If you have further questions on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Kay Coleman
Mayor