

Kay Coleman  
Mayor

Tom McInerney  
Vice Mayor



Matt Brown  
Councilmember

Ford Greene  
Councilmember

John Wright  
Councilmember

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September 26, 2017

The Honorable Kelly V. Simmons  
Marin County Superior Court  
P.O. Box 4988  
San Rafael, CA 94913-4988

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

Re: Response to the June 26, 2017 Civil Grand Jury Report titled "Public Engagement in Marin – A Pathway to Inclusive Governance"

Dear Judge Simmons and Mr. Hamilton-Roth:

The Town Council of the Town of San Anselmo has received a copy of the June 26, 2017 Civil Grand Jury Report titled "Public Engagement in Marin – A Pathway to Inclusive Governance".

As required, I have enclosed the Town Council's response to Recommendations R1 through R12.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need additional information or clarification.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kay Coleman".

Kay Coleman  
Mayor

**TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO  
RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS  
MARIN COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY  
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – A PATHWAY TO INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE**

Recommendation 1:

Each agency without a formal PE Plan should develop either a PE Plan or PE Guidelines tailored to the needs of their public and publish the results.

Response to Recommendation 1:

The Town Council agrees that providing clear guidelines for public engagement (PE) to both staff and the public is important. Public engagement is a high priority at the Town of San Anselmo and is a critical part of our ongoing governance. Staff is in the process of developing guidelines outlining public engagement tools and techniques along with a checklist to be customized and implemented at the planning stages of all projects and initiatives developed by the Town.

Recommendation 2:

Each agency should obtain input from the public in the planning and design or update of its plan/guidelines.

Response to Recommendation 2:

If an agency is going to create a PE Plan (or Guidelines), it makes sense for that agency to engage the public about its development. As part of the development of the Town's Public Engagement Guidelines, staff will engage the public as to the different ways they prefer to receive information and offer input. The results will help tailor the guidelines accordingly.

Recommendation 3:

Agency managers should regularly share their PE Plans and "lessons learned" with their counterparts in other Marin agencies.

### Response to Recommendation 3:

Executive management of each municipality in Marin meet monthly and discuss a variety of topics. Discussions often include sharing the techniques and results of public engagement efforts. PE plans, guidelines and other information on PE efforts are readily available on agency websites, and staff share ideas frequently.

### Recommendation 4:

Each agency should provide early and ample opportunity for PE in the form of proactive engagement in-order to ensure that the public is aware of all their PE opportunities.

### Response to Recommendation 4:

The Town utilizes several methods to notify the public of various information, including PE opportunities. Residents have the opportunity to receive a weekly newsletter, email announcements, and quarterly publications produced by the Town. Additionally, the Town is launching an updated website which will include a robust engagement platform that will allow for a high level of two-way communication. The Town will conduct a Town-wide effort to inform the public of this new tool. The Town Council agrees that agencies should engage the public as thoroughly as is feasible and warranted for all projects.

### Recommendation 5:

Post-engagement, each agency should follow up with the public, informing them of the results of projects and issues.

### Response to Recommendation 5:

The Town Council agrees. Town staff reports out to the Town Council on all results of PE efforts. Recent examples have included reporting out on the results of a survey on cannabis-related questions, and the results of a year-long park master planning effort. These results are presented to the public at meetings and are made available online.

### Recommendation 6:

Each agency should create an easy-to-find area on their website dedicated to describing current community issues and explaining how the public can get involved.

Response to Recommendation 6:

The Town Council agrees. The Town is launching a new website in October which will feature a section for discussions on current projects, issues and initiatives. The link to this area will be prominently displayed on the homepage as one of the primary "global link" buttons.

Recommendation 7:

Each agency should make PE a required responsibility of at least one staff person and publicize that responsibility.

Response to Recommendation 7:

Community engagement takes different forms for different projects and issues. The Town Council suggests alternative language for Recommendation 7. "For all projects and issues, each agency should publish the means by which the public can be engaged."

Recommendation 8:

Each agency should offer regular PE professional development to its staff.

Response to Recommendation 8:

The Town Council agrees that ongoing education as to the most effective PE methods is important. As mentioned in the response to R1, providing meaningful public engagement [PE] is a high priority at the Town of San Anselmo and is a critical part of our ongoing governance.

Recommendation 9:

Each agency should develop meaningful and ongoing partnerships with their local community-based organizations.

Response to Recommendation 9:

The Town Council agrees that agencies should try to develop such partnerships. The Town of San Anselmo fosters engagement with local CBO's in many ways, including collaboration on community events.

Recommendation 10:

Each agency should include on all written communications the social media platforms they use.

Response to Recommendation 10:

The Town Council does not agree that this recommendation is necessary. The public has easy and clear access to this information regarding which social media platforms are used by the Town on the Town's website.

Recommendation 11:

Each agency should communicate and emphasize to the public the importance of participation in PE.

Response to Recommendation 11:

The Town Council agrees that agencies should regularly remind their communities about the importance of being engaged in the community and local government.

Recommendation 12:

Each agency should publish an annual report describing the effectiveness of their PE efforts.

Response to Recommendation 12:

The Town Council does not agree that an annual report is a necessary expenditure. The Town Council expects that staff integrate all PE efforts and their corresponding results into all reports and to provide regular and meaningful feedback to the public about community engagement.