

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM
Town of Tiburon



Report Title: Roadblocks to Safer Evacuation in Marin

Report Date: December 14, 2020

Response By: Town of Tiburon

Holli Thier
Mayor

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Jon Welner
Vice Mayor

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Alice Fredericks
Councilmember

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David Kulik
Councilmember

.....
Jack Ryan
Councilmember

.....
Greg Chanis
Town Manager

FINDINGS

- We agree with Findings numbered: **F1**
- We disagree wholly or partly with Findings numbered: **F2-F5**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered **__NA__** have been implemented.
- Recommendations numbered: **__R3__** have not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.
- Recommendations numbered **__NA__** have been partially implemented, and remaining parts will be implemented in the future
- Recommendations numbered: **__R1__** require further analysis.
- Recommendations numbered: **__R2__** will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.

Date: March 17, 2021

Signed: _____

Number of pages attached: **3**



Office of the Town Manager
Town of Tiburon
March 17, 2021

The Honorable Andrew Sweet
Presiding Judge of the Marin County
Superior Court
Post Office Box 4988
San Rafael, CA 94913-4988

Lucy Dilworth, Foreperson
Marin County Civil Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 275
San Rafael, CA 94903

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report
Roadblocks to Safer Evacuation in Marin

Dear Honorable Judge Sweet and Foreperson Dilworth:

This letter explains in detail the Town of Tiburon’s response to the Civil Grand Jury Report dated December 14, 2020 (***Roadblocks to Safer Evacuation in Marin***). The Report directs the Town to respond to Findings F1-F5, and Recommendations R1-R3.

FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

F1. No single agency or jurisdiction is taking responsibility and authority for building infrastructure for safe evacuation routes across jurisdictions in Marin County.

Response- The Town of Tiburon agrees with this finding

Although we agree with this finding, we would note this may also be an effective practice. There are many factors associated with evacuation readiness, and it is not clear that insufficient or substandard infrastructure is currently a major impediment to evacuations in Marin. In addition, in Tiburon, several projects related to infrastructure are ongoing or have been completed that will assist in evacuation events. Ongoing projects/programs include: A robust pavement management program to ensure our roads are in good condition, an ongoing roadside vegetation management program, and coordination with local Fire Districts (2) in sponsoring popular ‘chipper days’. In addition to this ongoing work, the Town recently completed a project to provide for backup power at all lighted intersections (CalTrans jurisdiction) within the Town.

F2. There is confusion in the county as to who has ultimate responsibility and authority for ensuring that Marin has safe evacuation routes.

Response- The Town of Tiburon disagrees with this finding

The factors and conditions leading to the need for an evacuation are complex, and vary by jurisdiction and the type of precipitating event. As a result, the responsibility for ensuring any evacuation is conducted safely and efficiently is

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shared among multiple public entities (County, Cities/Towns, Fire Districts), private entities and individuals. During an event, the evacuation plan/routes would be determined based on the event causing a need to evacuate and its location. Decisions will be made by law enforcement/fire district(s)/EOC and the plan will be executed in the field by Law with the help of fire and DPW personnel. Information will be messaged out by Alert Marin/Nixle, Nextdoor, SNAP radio, E-newsletter and officers with Hi-Lo sirens and a PA system.

F3. Marin County Board of Supervisors and town and city councils have the responsibility for safe evacuation routing, and they have not sufficiently considered evacuation as a criterion when approving improvements to roads and traffic infrastructure in their jurisdictions.

Response- The Town of Tiburon partially disagrees with this finding.

As stated in the comment to Finding 2, the responsibility for ensuring evacuations are conducted safely and efficiently rests with a number of entities including, but not limited to those listed in this Finding. In Tiburon, with regards to ‘approving improvements to roads and traffic infrastructure’, many of the projects undertaken by the Town over the past 5 years will help ensure safe and orderly evacuations if required. In addition, with regards to events involving fire protection/emergency medical service related issues, it is important to note in Tiburon these are not Town functions, but rather are provided by 2 separate independent fire protection districts. The first, Southern Marin Fire Protection District (SMFD), is a member of the newly formed Marin Wildfire Protection Agency (MWPA). The second, Tiburon Fire Protection District (TFD) is **not** a member of the MWPA. We understand that both districts will be working with the software vendor Zonehaven. This vendor provides a tool designed to be used by law enforcement, fire agencies and Emergency Operations Centers to provide data driven capabilities during an actual evacuation event. Town departments will continue to work with the Fire Districts in coordinating our efforts related to evacuation planning.

F4. County and municipal administrators, public works, and traffic engineers have not adequately considered mass evacuation as a criterion for planning and funding traffic infrastructure improvements.

Response- The Town of Tiburon disagrees with this finding.

The Town will not comment on the practices of other jurisdictions. As to Tiburon specifically, please see responses to F1, F2 and F3 above

F5. Most Marin jurisdictions have not yet included urgently needed evacuation plans in their general plans as required by state law and as recommended by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research.

Response- The Town of Tiburon partially disagrees with this finding

Again, the Town will not comment on other jurisdictions practices. With regards to Tiburon, the Town has just started the process of updating its General Plan, and intends to include the required information related to evacuations in the updated plan.

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RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

R1. Within 180 days of the date of this report, the governing boards of the County of Marin and its cities and towns should direct their respective planning and public works departments to include evacuation needs among their criteria for evaluating and recommending public works projects.

Response- This recommendation requires further analysis

In Tiburon, the Department of Public Works is primarily responsible for planning and completing infrastructure projects. In evaluating projects, the DPW consider a wide range of factors in determining how best to allocate limited resources. In addition, as stated earlier, Tiburon fire protection services are covered by 2 separate independent fire districts, both of which will be employing new tools in the area of evacuation planning and execution. Town departments will continue to coordinate with these agencies as we plan projects in the future.

R2. Within 180 days of the date of this report, the governing boards of the County of Marin and its cities and towns should adopt resolutions calling on the Transportation Authority of Marin to include evacuation needs among the criteria it considers when planning and funding public works projects.

Response- This recommendation will not be implemented as it is unwarranted or unreasonable.

The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) assists municipalities in Marin County with the implementation of transportation related projects by identifying sources of funding, and ensuring funding from various State and regional agencies is distributed in a way that is consistent with law and any other agreements in place. In this role, TAM provides assistance in ensuring coordination and communication among Marin communities. However, each jurisdiction, and their governing bodies are best positioned to determine the priorities of the communities they represent.

R3. In calendar year 2021, the County of Marin and its cities and towns should update the safety elements of their general plans to include evacuation planning.

Response- This recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

In 2020, Tiburon embarked on a 2 year process to update its General Plan. When complete, the Safety Element of the updated plan will incorporate information related to evacuation planning, including all required information under State law.

Sincerely,

Greg Chanis, Town Manager

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