

CITY OF YORBA LINDA

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

September 17, 2019

The Honorable Kirk H. Nakamura
Presiding Judge
Orange County Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

RE: Response of the City of Yorba Linda to Orange County Grand Jury 2018-19 Report, dated June 12th, 2019, titled "Orange County Urban Forest."

Dear Judge Nakamura,

In accordance with Section 933.05(a) and (b) of the California Penal Code, the City of Yorba Linda submits the following response to the report, findings and recommendations of the 2018 – 19 Orange County Grand Jury report published June 12, 2019, entitled, "Orange County Urban Forest."

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS

Per page 9 and 10 of the Grand Jury Report, the City of Yorba Linda is required to respond to Grand Jury Findings F1, F2, F3, F 4, F5, F6, F7, F10. Those responses are provided immediately below.

F1. *Cities identified in F10 have dedicated a portion of their general fund budget to an urban forest program: however, the allocation percentage varies widely among cities (See Appendix B).*

Response: **The City of Yorba Linda cannot agree or disagree with this finding.** The City of Yorba Linda Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance of 3,700 + trees within the Public Right-of-Ways with an annual general fund budget of \$223,500. Under Appendix B within the report, the City of Yorba Linda ranked 12th out of 35 cities for percentage of total city budget allocated for street tree. This ranking represents the upper half of the spectrum.

F2. *In order to efficiently manage financial and staff resources, Orange County cities identified in F10 utilize contract services for their tree maintenance and services. Some cities also maintain a small staff to supplement contract services.*

Response: **The City of Yorba Linda agrees with this finding.** The City of Yorba Linda utilization of contract services for our tree maintenance is an efficient and financially beneficial means to manage our urban forestry. The contract tree services are also supplemented thru City staff.

F3. *City councils for the cities identified in F10 are supportive of their urban forest programs and budget request made by their respective city managers and public works departments.*

Response: **The City of Yorba Linda agrees with this statement.** The City of Yorba Linda Council is very supportive of all urban forest programs and budget requests made by their respective city managers and public works department.

F4. *Cities interviewed for this report reported minimal financial liabilities from tripping hazards, root intrusions, and falling branches and trees.*

Response: **The City of Yorba Linda agrees with this finding.** The City throughout the years has realized minimal financial liabilities from tripping hazards, root intrusions and falling branches or trees.

F5. *Cities identified in F10 have not been successful in ensuring that residents are aware of their city's urban forest program,*

Response: **The City of Yorba Linda disagrees with this finding.** The City of Yorba Linda Municipal Code, Chapter 16.08, Tree Preservation, was enacted as mechanism to developed regulations to aid the beautification of the City, encourage sound development and promotes the health, safety and prosperity and general welfare of the residents and property owners consistent with the right of an individual to develop private property in a manner which will not be prejudicial to the public interest.

F6. *Environmental and economic benefits provided by the urban forest have not been fully realized in Orange County cities in F10 and the unincorporated areas of the Orange County.*

Response: **The City of Yorba Linda cannot agree or disagree with this finding.** The City will continue to evaluate opportunities to increase the environmental and economic benefit of the City's urban forestry.

F7. *Cities identifies in F10 do not coordinated their urban forestry program with each other.*

Response: **The City of Yorba Linda cannot agree or disagree with this finding.** The City has reached out to our neighboring cities to evaluate opportunities to coordinate our urban forestry programs.

F10. *The following Cities have significantly fewer public street tree per resident than other Orange County cities (Appendix B).*

Response: **The City of Yorba Linda cannot agree or disagree with this finding.** The City of Yorba Linda will continue to plant trees in order to increase the total count of street trees.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENTATIONS

Per page 10 of the Grand Jury Report, the City of Yorba Linda is required to respond to Grand Jury Recommendations R1, R2, R3. Those responses are provided immediately below.

R1. *By September 30, 2019, each city listed in F10 and the City of Mission Viejo should commit to continue regular schedule tree inspections and maintenance cycles to enhance public safety and to minimize future liabilities due to tree-related claims. (F4)*

Response: The program has been implemented. The City of Yorba Linda maintains a 3-year trim and maintenance cycle that is well below the industry standard of 5-7 years. In addition to, the City's service request system captures resident and staff concerns as it relates to tree concerns and or evaluation of tree (s) therefore, mitigating and or minimizing liability issues and or tree-related claims.

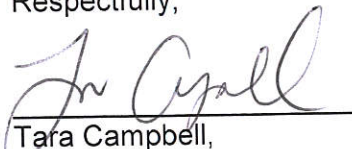
R2. *By September 30, 2019, Orange County cities listed in F10 should implement a program to coordinate with non-profit and volunteer organizations to promote residents' awareness of the city's urban forest benefits and promote active involvement with ongoing programs. (F5)*

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City has developed a section under the City's website for resident to a request street tree in front of their residence within the public right-of -way. Additionally, the City will reach out to elementary, high school and colleges to find ways to promote the benefits, involvement and awareness of the City's urban forest.

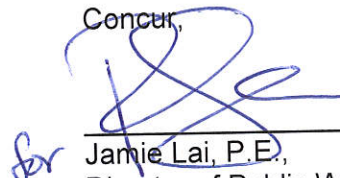
R3. *By September 30, 2019, Orange County cities listed in F10 should develop and implement policies and practices that will benefit their urban forests and explore ways to improve their street count. (F1, F6, F10)*

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City of Yorba Linda will plant approximately 50 street trees per year as per our program listed in R2 and also perform out reach to coordinate with non-profit and volunteer organizations to promote residents' awareness of urban forest benefits.

Respectfully,



Tara Campbell,
Mayor
City of Yorba Linda

Concur,


for Jamie Lai, P.E.,
Director of Public Works/City
Engineer

Cc: Orange County Grand Jury (700 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana, CA 92701)