

August 8, 2023

The Honorable Maria D. Hernandez  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

**RE: City of Buena Park Response to Grand Jury Report – *Historic Rain, Yet Drought Remains***

Dear Honorable Judge Hernandez:

The Buena Park City Council has reviewed the Orange County Grand Jury's report entitled, *Historic Rain, Yet Drought Remains*. Below are the City of Buena Park's responses to the aforementioned report:

**F1 Future water supplies are impacted by climate change and current supplies will not meet future demands.**

**Response:** The City of Buena Park partially disagrees with this finding. We agree that climate change does have an impact on future water supplies, but believe that there are too many variables and uncertainties to declare that current supplies will not meet future demands.

**F2 Climatologists predict future extended periods of low moisture with occasional wet years.**

**Response:** The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.

**F3 Climate change is inevitable and is exacerbated by human behavior.**

**Response:** The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.

**F4 South Orange County relies primarily on the importation of water.**

**Response:** The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.

**F5 Local water suppliers recognize that enhanced stormwater capture and storage, wastewater recycling, and infrastructure improvements will not be sufficient to address the long-term forecast of drought and its effects on supply.**

**Response:** The City of Buena Park partially disagrees with this finding. We agree that long-term forecast of drought will have a negative effect on our water supply, but we believe more capture, reuse, and recycling of stormwater and wastewater combined with additional infrastructure may alleviate supply issues.

**F6**            **There is significant water infrastructure planning, but inadequate implementation.**

**Response:**   **The City of Buena Park disagrees with this finding.** Within the last 30 years, the City has improved our local infrastructure to become more self-sufficient and less reliant on imported water. We rely on the Orange County Water District (OCWD) to help manage our ground water basin and are fully aware of major projects undertaken and constructed by OCWD to improve our local self-reliance. Buena Park has undertaken several projects in this period, including two new water wells and a booster pump station that reduced our dependence on imported water. The City is in the design phase of an additional water well that will enter construction in 2024.

**F7**            **The review and approval process for major water capital projects is cumbersome and overly restrictive.**

**Response:**   **The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.**

**F8**            **Failing to find solutions to water shortages will have a significant impact on the Orange County economy.**

**Response:**   **The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.**

**F9**            **Continued development in Orange County creates additional water supply needs.**

**Response:**   **The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.**

**F10**          **Conservation and efficient use of water is essential.**

**Response:**   **The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.**

**F11**          **Increased outreach and public education are necessary.**

**Response:**   **The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.**

**F12**          **Desalination has proven to be technologically and environmentally feasible and is slowly being embraced as a drought-resistant source of water.**

**Response:**   **The City of Buena Park agrees with this finding.**

**R2**            **Orange County water agencies should expedite the planning, development, and construction of desalination plants over the next five years to insure a sustainable and reliable drought-resistant source of water.**

**Response:**   **The City of Buena Park requires further analysis of this issue.** If an opportunity for partnership on a desalination plant project becomes feasible and beneficial for Buena Park to be involved in then the City may consider becoming a stakeholder in the undertaking.

**R3**            **The County of Orange and all Orange County cities should formulate an emergency development moratorium plan in anticipation of the Colorado River water supply being constrained. The emergency moratorium plan should be developed by the end of calendar year 2023.**

**Response:**    **The City of Buena Park has implemented the recommendation.** We have developed an action plan called the Water Shortage Contingency Plan. This plan outlines appropriate actions and responses for varying levels of water shortages.

**R4**            **Orange County water agencies should update their public communication strategies, by calendar year end 2023, to inform the public of lifestyle changes, if additional water sources are not developed.**

**Response:**    **The City of Buena Park has implemented the recommendation.** The City has a robust public communication program that includes a public portal for water meter monitoring, usage information and alerts, and campaigns on television, print, and social media platforms to reach customers. We also partner with the Orange County Water District and the Metropolitan Water District of Orange County to provide public outreach and education.

Thank you for providing the City of Buena Park the opportunity to respond to this report.

Sincerely,



Aaron France  
City Manager

cc: Buena Park City Council  
Christopher G. Cardinale, City Attorney