

August 22, 2018

The Honorable Ricardo Cordova, Presiding Judge  
Stanislaus County Superior Court  
PO Box 3488  
Modesto, CA 95353

**SUBJECT: Invited Response to 2017-2018 Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury Report: "Is Modesto City Water in Riverdale's Future?" (Case #18-25C)**

Dear Judge Cordova:

The Stanislaus Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is in receipt of the 2017-2018 Civil Grand Jury report related to the Riverdale Park Tract Community Services District (CSD). On behalf of Stanislaus LAFCO, this letter provides an invited response to the report.

Community service districts, like the Riverdale Park Tract CSD, are governed by an independent board or directors. A special district's establishment is as a result of local demand for a particular service in an area where residents are willing to pay for such service. Regardless of size or level of staffing, special districts are required and expected to function as a local government entity subject to the Brown Act, and a variety of other requirements to ensure they function in a transparent fashion. Neither the Board of Supervisors nor LAFCO have authority over an independent special district's policies, procedures, finances, or Brown Act compliance. It is worth noting, however, that there are a number of free and low-cost resources that special districts may benefit from, including training offered by the Institute for Local Government and the California Special Districts Associations. Both are non-profit entities that regularly advocate for good local governance.

As the title of the Civil Grand Jury's report indicates, one of the many challenges facing the Riverdale Park Tract CSD is water quality. The District and the City of Modesto are currently exploring what improvements would be required to connect to the City's water supply. Should the District and the City of Modesto reach an agreement for water service, the extension of such services would not require LAFCO review, pursuant to Government Code Section 56133(e). LAFCO Staff has been coordinating with Self-Help Industries (currently assisting the District), City of Modesto staff, and the State Water Resources Control Board to discuss various options for the District.

Stanislaus LAFCO appreciates the Civil Grand Jury's invitation to respond to the report. Should you or the Civil Grand Jury have any questions, please contact our office at (209) 525-7660.

Sincerely,



Terrance P. Withrow, Chairperson  
Stanislaus Local Agency Formation Commission

