Honorable Sonny Sandhu
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of Stanislaus
P.O. Box 3488
Modesto, California 95353

RECEIVED
SEP 25 2025
BY:

Dear Judge Sandhu,

The City of Modesto appreciates the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations of the Civil Grand Jury's final report Computer Aided Emergency Dispatch in Stanislaus County: Fraught with Divisive Controversy Resulting in Public Safety Vulnerability, It is not what you want; it is how you go about getting it, Case #25-23GJ. The City Council reviewed and approved the responses below at their September 9, 2025, meeting.

Civil Grandy Jury Findings and Recommendations:

Finding 1: The 1999 SR911 JPA is outdated and lacks adequate content, detail, definitions, and policy necessitating major revisions with input from City of Modesto, Stanislaus County, SR911, plus stakeholders in the law enforcement, fire, and medical first responder community.

Response: The Modesto City Council disagrees with this finding.

The Council acknowledges that the 1999 Joint Powers Agreement between the City of Modesto and the County of Stanislaus ("JPA") has terms that could be further updated; however, amendments are not legally necessary. There have been amendments made in efforts to update the JPA to provide better structure, participation, and oversight by the JPA members. On June 4, 2024, the Council adopted Resolution 2024-174 amending the JPA, modifying the governing body structure of the Commission, updating quorum and action requirements, and providing for agency member liaisons to assist the Dispatch Director. The changes to the JPA were developed in close collaboration between the City and County executive teams.

Finding 2: The Board of Supervisor's letter to Sheriff Jeff Dirkse dated March 11, 2025, is a detailed description of the history and chronology of the emergency dispatch issues in Stanislaus County and is highly consistent with the findings of this investigation. The letter reiterates the steps necessary for the consideration of any future proposal for an alternative dispatch system including response time analysis, the inclusion of subject matter experts and stakeholders' input, fiscal analysis, and review by County Counsel and County Purchasing Agent.

Response: The Modesto City Council agrees with this finding.

However, it is important to note that the City Council did not request this letter, nor did City Staff prepare or verify all details of the letter. To the best of the Council's knowledge, the letter reiterates the steps necessary for the consideration of any future proposal for an alternative dispatch system, including response time analysis, the inclusion of subject matter experts and stakeholders' input, fiscal analysis, and review by County Counsel and County Purchasing Agent.

Finding 3: The Stanislaus County Sheriff's Office is the outlier among all of the other stakeholders in the emergency dispatch controversy. Political tactics, threats of litigation, personal attacks, refusal to

work with key operatives, and the appearance of intimidation by the Sheriff's Office faction in this dispute has damaged both personal and working relationships with interrelated government agencies and personnel.

Response: The Modesto City Council partially disagrees with this finding.

It has been the City's experience that the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Office is the only Stakeholder that has not agreed to participate in the new Central Square Computer Aided Dispatch System ("CAD"). This has resulted in the Sheriff's Office being the outlier in this process. However, it is difficult for the City Council to respond to the rest of Finding 3 since the Council does not interact with the Sheriff's Office on a day-to-day basis, and the Sheriff's Office is not a City Office. The City Council has read the newspaper articles and seen interactions; however, it cannot fully agree to the findings without more firsthand knowledge.

Finding 4: Stanislaus County-based oversight of the Sheriff's Office is inadequate given the potential impact its policies and the actions taken could have on the communities it serves. Opportunities exist to improve accountability, transparency, understanding, tolerance, and trust between all parties. The Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors has the option under Government Code §25303.7 to establish a Sheriff's Oversight Board consisting of citizens appointed by the Board of Supervisors and/or an Office of Inspector General to assist in overseeing the Sheriff's Office to enhance the Sheriff's Office accountability and transparency.

Response: The Modesto City Council partially disagrees with this finding.

The Council agrees that community oversight of law enforcement is valuable. In 2021, the Council established a Community Police Review Board for this purpose. The Council agrees that there are always opportunities to improve accountability, transparency, understanding, tolerance, and trust. However, it is difficult for the City Council to respond, agree, or disagree to the rest of Finding 4 since the Council does not interact with the Sheriff's Office on a day-to-day basis and the Sheriff's Office is not a City Office.

Recommendation 1a: The SR911 CEDAC in a leadership role should assemble a multidisciplinary task force from the City of Modesto, Stanislaus County, and include members of the emergency response community in Stanislaus County to comprehensively update the SR911 JPA. This revision task force should be formed by October 31, 2025, with a target completion date for the JPA revisions of April 30, 2026.

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted at this time. There is no current deadline for an amendment to the SR911 JPA. City and County executive teams and legal counsel have met regarding the SR911 JPA for more than 18 months. The working group collaborated on the recent amendments to the SR911 JPA and have continued to discuss potential amendments of the JPA. The working group has also collaborated on the implementation of the Central Square Computer Aided Dispatch System. There is no deadline for any revisions to the JPA due to the current discussions involving the Sheriff's issues with using the new CAD system. A continued discussion regarding the role of the JPA and who it dispatches for is needed in order to prepare any amendments. Further analysis is needed to develop the scope of potential amendments and timeline if desired.

Recommendation 1b: The JPA revision task force should make necessary revisions, including but not limited to detailed policy for the role and authority of the SR911 Director by April 30, 2026.

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. Further analysis is needed regarding the role of the JPA and what entities it will assist. Discussions regarding desired amendments to the JPA and role and the authority of the SR911 Director will be included as part of those discussions and analysis.

Recommendation 1c: The JPA revision task force, with assistance from the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County legal and purchasing departments, should develop their own comprehensive, detailed RFP process for future use when making major purchases by April 30, 2026.

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. Both the City and the County have established regulations related to procurement. Until further discussions are held regarding the SR911 JPA, including, but not limited to, what entities it provides dispatching services for and the JPA's roles and responsibilities, it is not possible to prepare a stand-alone "RFP process" for the JPA. Further analysis is needed to determine whether this recommendation is desired/needed; however, at this time, no plans exist to implement it.

Recommendation 1d: The JPA revision task force and the Sheriff's Office should address and develop written policy concerning the responsibility for maintaining compliance with CLETS regulations including designating responsibility for performing recurring required audits of security of the CLETS information by April 30, 2026.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not within the legal authority of the Modesto City Council to audit, maintain, or oversee CLETS compliance. Under CLETS regulations and applicable law, the law enforcement agency that maintains the direct connection to the California Department of Justice is responsible for ensuring compliance with CLETS requirements.

Recommendation 2a: It is recommended that both the Sheriff's Office and County Officials strictly adhere to the requirements included in the letter of March 11, 2025, going forward in order to prevent any further misunderstandings or miscommunications that have resulted in delays in the past.

Response: The City is not in a position to respond to whether this recommendation has been or will be implemented. The recommendation deals with the Sheriff's Office and the County. It is the City's desire that all parties work together to implement what is best for the public safety of our community.

Recommendation 2b: It is recommended that the Sheriff's Office adhere to usual and customary practices requested by county officials for providing information in advance of public meetings so that information can be reviewed by officials and the public prior to meetings.

Response: The City agrees that it is necessary for all parties to adhere to usual and customary practices to improve public meetings and provide the public with necessary information. However, the City is not in a position to respond to whether this recommendation has been or will be implemented. The recommendation deals with the Sheriff's Office and the County. It is the City's desire that all parties work together to implement what is best for the public safety of our community.

Recommendation 3a: Stanislaus County, City of Modesto, and the Sheriff's Office officials should utilize independent outside intervention in the form of professional mediators and/or subject matter experts to process interpersonal damages in working relationships of key figures and to provide unbiased information related to product efficacy. The use of outside professional mediators and subject matter experts should commence by October 31, 2025.

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. Subject matter experts have been involved throughout the process of the Central Square CAD implementation. The Sheriff's Office has been invited to participate in the process. The City of Modesto is committed to working collaboratively with all parties, including the Sheriff's Office, to ensure the continuity of public safety services for the residents SR911 serves.

Recommendation 3b: The Sheriff's Office needs to take a lead role in reconciliation with the other stakeholders and acknowledge that it is only one county department among many with competing interests and must function in a more cooperative, collaborative manner.

Response: The City agrees that cooperation and maintaining good working relationships are necessary among all stakeholders involved in SR911. However, the City is not in a position to respond to whether this recommendation has been or will be implemented since it is directed towards the Sheriff's Office. It is the City's desire that all parties work together to implement what is best for the public safety of our community.

Recommendation 4: The Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors should initiate action to create a Stanislaus County Sheriff's Oversight Commission and/or an Office of Inspector General pursuant to Government Code §25303.7. This can be accomplished by either an action by the Board of Supervisors or through a vote of county residents. This recommendation should be accomplished by December 31, 2025.

Response: The City is not in a position to respond to whether this recommendation has been or will be implemented. The City is not aware of an Oversight Commission and/or an Office of Inspector General being created. The recommendation deals with the Sheriff's Office and the County. It is the City's desire that all parties work together to implement what is best for the public safety of our community.

MODESTO CITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION NO. 2025-314

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE RESPONSE TO THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2024-2025 STANISLAUS COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT- CASE #25-25GJ

WHEREAS, on June 25, 2025, the City received reports from the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury (SCCGJ), Case Number 25-23GJ, titled, "Community Assisted Emergency Dispatch in Stanislaus County: Fraught with Divisive Controversy Resulting in Public Safety Vulnerability, It is not what you want; it is how you go about getting it.;" and

WHEREAS, the SCCGJ conducted an examination of the replacement of the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system utilized by Stanislaus Regional 911 (SR911) who currently provides emergency dispatch services to two (2) member agencies participating in the Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Joint Powers Authority, the City of Modesto and the County of Stanislaus; and

WHEREAS, according to the SCCGJ report, the "replacement and implementation of an obsolete Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) system in Stanislaus County has consumed an inordinate amount of costly staff time and government resources. Factions with strongly held polarized positions have developed with the Sheriff's Office being the outlier among the multiple stakeholders;" and

WHEREAS, the report also details conflict "centered around the choice of product and provider, implementation details, as well as decision making power and control;" and

WHEREAS, the SCCGJ report summarized the following:

> "The situation has deteriorated to the point of threatened lawsuits involving what are normally aligned, cooperative governmental

departments. Due to the ongoing conflicts, decision making related to solutions going forward were postponed and delayed. This resulted in the currently outdated and unsupported system continuing to be utilized pending replacement which has resulted in vulnerabilities within the community related to emergency response. Recent directives issued by County leadership have moved forward the purchase and implementation of an updated CAD system while the Sheriff's Office insists on continuing its pursuit of an alternative dispatch system which combines a records management and jail management plan."

WHEREAS, on June 16, 2022, the City received reports from the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury, Case Number 22-05GJ, titled, "Homelessness: The Elusive Definition of "Success" and Case Number 22-07GJ, titled, "The Future of Urban Water Supply and Demand;" and

WHEREAS, the City has reviewed and responded to respective findings and recommendations as noted in the attached response letter to the SCCGJ; and

WHEREAS, while the City has varying responses to each of the findings and recommendations ranging from agreement to partial disagreement, it is noted that the City is not in a position to respond to some recommendations regarding implementation, because the recommendation(s) pertain solely to the Sheriff's Office and the County of Stanislaus; and

WHEREAS, the City remains vigilant in implementing the new CAD system to ensure the continuity in public safety services to the City of Modesto residents, businesses and visitors and is committed to partnering and coordinating with our neighboring

jurisdictions to provide a high level of service and response.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Modesto that it hereby approves the responses to the Findings and Recommendations of the 2024-2025 Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury Report- Case #25-25GJ.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is authorized and directed to forward the approved responses to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Stanislaus County.

The foregoing resolution was introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Modesto held on the 9th day of September, 2025, by Councilmember Wright, who moved its adoption, which motion being duly seconded by Councilmember Escutia-Braaton, was upon roll call carried and the resolution adopted by the following vote:

AYES:	Councilmembers:	Alvarez, Bavaro, Escutia-Braaton, Ricci, Williams, Wright, Mayor Zwahlen
NOES:	Councilmembers:	None
ABSENT:	Councilmembers:	None

ATTEST: _____
DIANE NAYARES-PEREZ, CMC,
City Clerk

(SEAL)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

BY: _____
JOSE M. SANCHEZ, City Attorney