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RESPONSES TO THE 2024-2025

SONOMA COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORTS

Providing Continuity by Following Through on Previous Investigations

SUMMARY

The 2025-2026 Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury has reviewed responses to the investigations and Recommendations made by the 2024-2025 Grand Jury. The 2024-2025 Grand Jury issued seven investigative reports. This Continuity Report addresses the responses the Grand Jury required from the responsible entities named in those reports. It also lists those Recommendations that will require follow up to determine the progress of further analysis and whether proposed future actions have been accomplished. Although respondents did not adopt all Recommendations, their responses comply with the requirements of the Penal Code, except where noted.

BACKGROUND

The Civil Grand Jury system in California exists to promote effective and efficient local government. The Penal Code gives the Civil Grand Jury broad investigative powers to provide oversight to governing bodies of county, cities, and special districts within Sonoma County, bringing positive change in the best interest of all residents.

Each year the Grand Jury investigates local government institutions and issues reports containing the results of these investigations. Within each report are Findings that lead to

Recommendations for improvement. Governing bodies and elected county officials are required to respond to the Findings and Recommendations in a form and within a timeframe set out by the Penal Code. Governing boards are required to respond within 90 days of the release of a grand jury report; elected county officials are required to respond within 60 days. (Penal Code § 933.05)

Succeeding grand juries review these responses and determine whether they meet the requirements of the Penal Code. This review process provides continuity from one grand jury to the next. The seated grand jury may evaluate responses for adequacy and determine whether appropriate steps have been taken to implement Recommendations.

The seven 2024-2025 Grand Jury reports listed below are published on the court website together with full responses received to the Findings and Recommendations:

- **REPORT #1 - SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT - ADDRESSING CHALLENGES AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE - [View here](#)**
- **REPORT #2 - PERMIT SONOMA 2025 - MANAGEMENT REVIEW IS A BEGINNING, NOT AN END - [View here](#)**
- **REPORT #3 - LOCAL FEES, LOCAL SUBSIDIES - FEES AND SUBSIDIES CAUSE LOCAL PAIN - [View here](#)**
- **REPORT #4 - ANIMAL SERVICES IN SONOMA COUNTY - SEPARATE AND NOT EQUAL: THE COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF DECENTRALIZATION - [View here](#)**
- **REPORT #5 - COUNTY EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANS - ARE WE READY FOR THE NEXT MAJOR EVACUATION? - [View here](#)**
- **REPORT #6 - WHO CAN AFFORD TO LIVE IN SONOMA COUNTY? A TALE OF TWO CITIES - [View here](#)**
- **REPORT #7 - SONOMA COUNTY'S SURPLUS PROPERTY DISPOSAL - HOUSEKEEPING TAKES TIME BUT PAYS LONG-TERM BENEFITS - [View here](#)**

METHODOLOGY

The 2025-2026 Grand Jury evaluated responses to the 2024-2025 reports for compliance using the governing sections of Penal Code § 933.05.

DISCUSSION

According to the Penal Code, governing bodies and officials are required to respond to *Findings* in Grand Jury reports and the respondent shall indicate one of the following:

- The Respondent agrees with the Finding.
- The Respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the Finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons.

According to the Penal Code, as to each Grand Jury *Recommendation*, the respondent shall report one of the following actions:

- The Recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implementation action.
- The Recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation.
- The Recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.

- The Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation.

Respondent replies have been published on the Superior Court of California, County of Sonoma Civil Grand Jury website. Links are listed within each report below for reference. For responses which indicated that additional action would be taken by the end of 2025, we have requested and noted (where received) this additional information in subsection titled *Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026*.

CONCLUSION

The 2025-2026 Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury has reviewed each response to the 2024-2025 Recommendations and has noted:

- whether the response complies with the Penal Code, and
- whether future review is needed regarding further analysis and/or implementation.

While we may not agree with a response, the purpose of the report is to track responses and not to characterize them.

A glossary of abbreviations is available at the end of this report.

REPORT #1 -SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT - ADDRESSING CHALLENGES AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

[View full investigation report here](#)

Respondents/Full Response:

- SCID: Sonoma County Infrastructure Department - [View Sonoma County Infrastructure Department full response here](#)
- CEO: Sonoma County Executive Officer - [View Sonoma County Executive Officer full response here](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
R1	By November 1, 2025, Sonoma County Public Infrastructure will determine how to resolve all FAA non-airport land use issues and submit this plan for Board of Supervisors' review.	<p><i>SCID – Has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The Airport and Public Infrastructure are finalizing a dual-track plan for FAA compliance: 1) negotiate market rent with NCDF, and 2) develop relocation strategy for the Roads Yard. These actions are underway and expected to be presented to the Board by the recommended deadline.</p> <p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, February 2026</i></p> <p>As of December 31, 2025, the Airport and Public Infrastructure have made substantial progress toward resolving FAA land use issues, consistent with the dual-track strategy outlined in our August 26, 2025, response.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
	<p>With respect to the North County Detention Facility (NCDF), the Airport has engaged in discussions with the Sonoma County Sheriff regarding fair market rents and refined the specific areas to be leased. A recommendation is anticipated to be presented to the Board of Supervisors in 2026.</p> <p>Together, these actions represent meaningful progress toward addressing the uncompensated use issues identified in the Civil Grand Jury report.</p>

REPORT #2 - PERMIT SONOMA 2025 - MANAGEMENT REVIEW IS A BEGINNING, NOT AN END

[View full investigation report here](#)

Respondents/Full Response:

- PS: Permit Sonoma - [View Permit Sonoma full response here](#)
- CEO: Sonoma County Executive Officer - [View Sonoma County Executive Officer full response here](#)

- BOS: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors - [View Sonoma County Board of Supervisors full response here](#)

Overall status update from Permit Sonoma, January 2026:

The estimated timing on completion of December 2025 recommendations is now May 1, 2026. The capacity lost in the transitions of Director, Assistant Director, Project Review Division Manager, Code Enforcement Manager, and extended leaves by key department personnel has required staff to be focused on service delivery deadlines and the Board of Supervisors calendar for major policy items. Additionally, the department has had to freeze all nonessential spending due to budget constraints this Fiscal Year. All Recommendations relating to resources will be communicated to the County Executive Officer during the FY26-27 budget development process.

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
R1	By October 17, 2025, Permit Sonoma shall require that all employees record, within the workflow systems, time spent on task for permit intake and plan check, site visitation, field	<i>PS – Requires further analysis</i> This recommendation requires additional analysis. The department permit sections that currently require employees to record within workflow the time spent on each task are the departments that have the most significant processing bottlenecks and are most subject to customer service complaints. Permit Sonoma will assess if the added time spent documenting individual steps in the permit process outweighs the efficiencies of only reporting the cumulative time to process a permit in its entirety. All employees already enter their time in the County's timekeeping

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
	inspection and code enforcement review.	<p>system known as Dimensions. Permit Sonoma will complete this additional analysis by December 19, 2025.</p> <p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p> <p>The department has completed piloting the time tracking system in Accela for the At Cost work conducted by the Planning Division. It has been demonstrated that it can work but at this time will require a substantial investment of resources in and updates to the accounting systems in the department to result in a time savings.</p>
R2	By December 19, 2025, Permit Sonoma shall develop a plan to implement all workflow system changes required to capture and report, in a reliable and sustainable manner, individual employee and collective permit throughput; and agency compliance with	<p><i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>R2 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by December 19, 2025.</p> <p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p> <p>The Department contracted with an outside firm to create a Power BI dashboard that is now going through testing. The Department's IT Manager that manages the dashboard and Deputy Director of Construction & Engineering that manages the AB2234 access database are collaborating on migrating the utility of the access database into the Power</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
	California Assembly Bill 2234 (2022) timely performance requirements.	BI dashboard. The dashboard requires programming expertise that does not exist within the department.
R3	By December 19, 2025, Permit Sonoma will establish and publish objective performance and throughput goals regarding permit review and approval.	<p><i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>R3 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by December 19, 2025.</p> <p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p> <p>The estimated timing on completion of this recommendation is now by May 1, 2026. The Department continues to apply AB2234 review deadlines to non-AB2234 permits. The website will be updated to have a consolidated review table. This will also be reflected in the dept SOPs. The SOPs developed during the management review are being developed into an updated template with uniform headers, structure, formatting, and overall look and feel for all divisions to use. Next steps require each division to transition their existing SOPs into the new standardized format.</p>
R4	By December 19, 2025, Permit Sonoma shall review and make available on its website	<p><i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>R4 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by December 19, 2025.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
<p>and other publicly accessible documents all over the counter permit processes and requirements.</p>	<p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p> <p>The estimated timing on completion of this recommendation is now by May 1, 2026. Content is drafted for Express Application Review and Over the Counter permits.</p>
<p>R5 By December 19, 2025, Permit Sonoma shall review and publish its requirements and expectations for express permit review and approval, third party plan check, permit and inspection self-certification, and use of program management techniques to fulfill all Berry Dunn Report recommendations.</p>	<p><i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future, also indicates requires further analysis</i></p> <p>Partial implementation: By December 19, 2025, Permit Sonoma shall review and publish its requirements and expectations for express permit review and approval, third party plan check, permit and inspection self-certification.</p> <p>This recommendation either requires more analysis or will not be implemented: Use of program management techniques to fulfill <u>all</u> Berry Dunn Report recommendations by December 19, 2025. By December 19, 2025, Permit Sonoma will assess the Initiatives not covered in other Recommendations that the Grand Jury has found to be incomplete.</p> <p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
		The estimated timing on completion of this recommendation is now by May 1, 2026. Content is drafted for Express Application Review and Over the Counter permits. The two year allocation of discretionary funding for Third Party Plan Check for extra capacity has ended. The Self Certification program has been in effect for the fiscal year and has been successful. Permit Sonoma plans to publish criteria and forms online to facilitate and to call more attention to the program. The department is assessing changes to the program in an effort to further increase its viability.
R6	By December 19, 2025, Permit Sonoma shall review and publish an accurate update to its January 2025 Board of Supervisors report on progress toward fulfillment of the Berry Dunn report recommendations.	<i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i> R6 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by December 19, 2025. <i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i> The estimated timing on completion of this recommendation is now by May 1, 2026.
R7	By March 27, 2026, Permit Sonoma shall determine whether	<i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i> R7 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by March 27, 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
	<p>additional resources are required to fully implement the workflow system upgrades needed to fulfill all Berry Dunn Report recommendations and communicate such incremental budget requirements to the County Executive Officer and the Board of Supervisors.</p>	
R8	<p>By March 27, 2026, Permit Sonoma will review, publish (and require consistent staff usage of) requirements checklists for issuance of all permit types.</p>	<p><i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i> R8 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by March 27, 2026.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
R9	By March 27, 2026, Permit Sonoma shall review and update its workflow system training materials and protocols for all Permit Intake, Plan Check, and Planning personnel	<i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i> R9 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by March 27, 2026.
R10	By March 27, 2026, Permit Sonoma shall establish and publish, in a consistent format, standard operating procedures for all Planning, Building, Engineering, Well & Septic, and Code Enforcement permit	<i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i> R10 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by March 27, 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
	issuance/compliance review processes.	
R11	By May 1st, 2026, the County Executive shall review Permit Sonoma's resource requirement noted in Recommendation 7 for inclusion in the Board of Supervisors' 2026-27 budget review.	<p><i>BOS – Has not been implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>Each year, the County Executive considers existing and emerging county needs within the context of limited County resources and makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors who ultimately determine and adopt the County budget. As part of the FY 2026-27 budget process the County Executive will review any requests from Permit Sonoma related to recommendation 7 along with other County needs and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.</p> <p><i>CEO - Has not been implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>As described in Sonoma County's <u>Recommended Budget Fiscal Year 2025-2026 available here</u>, each year, departments have an opportunity to request funding for following-year programs. The County Executive will review any requests from Permit Sonoma related to Recommendation 7 and include those requests, along with other departmental requests, in a package for the Board of Supervisors to consider during FY 2026-27 budget review.</p>
R12	By July 10, 2026, and annually thereafter, Permit	<p><i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>R12 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by July 2026.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
	Sonoma shall publicly post an accurate annual report of each department's permit processing performance and compliance with timeliness requirements of 2022 California Assembly Bill 2234.	
R13	By July 13, 2026, or as soon thereafter as allowed by budget authority, Permit Sonoma shall implement workflow system upgrades sufficient to ensure that individual and collective throughput performance is captured and reported in a	<i>PS – has not yet been implemented but will be in the future</i> R13 as recommended by the Grand Jury for implementation by July 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
	reliable and consistent manner.	

REPORT #3 - LOCAL FEES, LOCAL SUBSIDIES - FEES AND SUBSIDIES CAUSE LOCAL PAIN

[View full investigation report here](#)

Respondents/Full Response:

- City Council of Petaluma - [View City Council of Petaluma full response here](#)
- City Council of Rohnert Park - [View City Council of Rohnert Park full response here](#)
- City Council of Santa Rosa - [View City Council of Santa Rosa full response here](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
R1	By December 31, 2025, the City Councils of Petaluma, Rohnert Park, and Santa Rosa direct staff to include a section	<p><i>City Council of Petaluma – Implemented</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Santa Rosa – Implemented</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Rohnert Park - has not yet been implemented but will be in the future, also indicates requires further analysis</i></p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
	in all future fee proposals that identifies any fee changes that will exceed a council-specified threshold and any fees with past or proposed subsidies.	Recommendation I is addressed as follows. City staff plans to include in all future fee proposals presented to the Rohnert Park City Council a section identifying any fee changes that will exceed a council-specified threshold and any fees with past or proposed subsidies. The Grand Jury requested this recommendation be implemented by December 31, 2025; however, staff plans to return to the City Council by June 30, 2026, with a report on the status of all "cost recovery fees." The December 31, 2025, recommended date is not feasible at this time. The City adopted a budget in FY 25-26 that reduced costs and services by \$4.9 million dollars over FY 2024-25. These reductions included identifying savings for current vacant positions and holding other positions as vacant until the City Manager authorizes the recruitment. This was done to avoid layoffs in FY 2025-26 and to save money for the upcoming FY 2026-27 budget in which cost are again expected to exceed City revenues. The City is currently reviewing City services and where further reductions may be made if necessary. Additionally, contract services was reduced in FY 2025-26 by \$2.0 million, limiting the City's ability to contract for services that could provide support in reviewing the fees and fee policy. The City will make a plan to study fees not already in process by Departments over the next two to three years as resources become available.
R2	By December 31, 2025, the City Councils of	<i>City Council of Rohnert Park - has not yet been implemented but will be in the future, also indicates requires further analysis</i>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
<p>Rohnert Park and Santa Rosa will adopt a policy to avoid abrupt fee increases.</p>	<p>Recommendation 2 has previously been partially implemented. Rohnert Park Municipal Code Chapter 3.32 is a policy intended to avoid abrupt fee increases by providing an annual public review of the percentage of City costs recovered through cost recovery fees. As noted in the City's responses to Finding 4 and Recommendation 3, the City recognizes that the cited Chapter 3.32 has not been fully implemented by the City in the recent past; and therefore, the City intends to update its policy as identified in the response to Recommendation 3. The City also wishes to note that the following fees are increased annually based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to avoid abrupt fee increases in these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Services: Recreation Facility Fees, PAC Rental Fees • Development Services: Impact Fees, Planning Fees, Engineering Fees, Building Fees, and Rental Affordable Housing Fee • Community Services is in the process of developing a new policy for Council consideration with regard to subsidy levels for Community Services Recreation fees. This new policy will replace Policy number 8.01.002, adopted in 2021. This is a multi-step process that is being done inhouse with staff, is expected to be completed over the next three years, thus not in time for the recommended deadline. • Development Services is in the process of working on a Nexus Study for

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
		<p>Development Fees. The estimated cost for the consultant to do this work is approximately \$41,100. This study is expected to be completed in early 2026. Again, not in time to meet the recommended deadline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and Sewer Fees are subject to a rate study at least every 5 years and contain no subsidies. New Sewer fees were adopted in FY 2024-25, and a water rate study is currently in process. <p><i>City Council of Santa Rosa – will not be implemented</i></p>
R3	<p>By December 31, 2025, the City of Rohnert Park will either direct staff to submit a fee report in the 2025–2026 fiscal year that complies with Rohnert Park Municipal Code Chapter 3.32 or revise that code section to align with state law.</p>	<p><i>City Council of Rohnert Park - has not yet been implemented but will be in the future, also indicates requires further analysis</i></p> <p>Recommendation 3 will be addressed as follows. The City Council hereby directs staff to return to the City Council by June 30, 2026, with a recommended update to Rohnert Park Municipal Code Chapter 3.32 ("Chapter 3.32") in order to update the procedures or develop an alternate policy. The City does not currently have the resources to implement the recommendation by December 31, 2025.</p>

REPORT #4 - ANIMAL SERVICES IN SONOMA COUNTY - SEPARATE AND NOT EQUAL: THE COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF DECENTRALIZATION

[View full investigation report here](#)

Respondents/Full Response:

- BOS: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors - [View Sonoma County Board of Supervisor full response here](#)
- DHS: Sonoma County Department of Health Services Director - [View Sonoma County Department of Health Services Director full response here](#)
- City Council of Cloverdale - [View City Council of Cloverdale full response here](#)
- City Council of Cotati - [View City Council of Cotati full response here](#)
- City Council of Healdsburg - [View City Council of Healdsburg full response here](#)
- City Council of Petaluma - [View City Council of Petaluma full response here](#)
- City Council of Rohnert Park - [View City Council of Rohnert Park full response here](#)
- City Council of Santa Rosa - [View City Council of Santa Rosa full response here](#)
- City Council of Sebastopol - [View City Council of Sebastopol full response here](#)
- City Council of Sonoma - [View City Council of Sonoma full response here](#)
- City Council of Windsor - [View City Council of Windsor full response here](#)
- NBAS: North Bay Animal Shelter Executive Director (invited to respond) - [View North Bay Animal Shelter Executive Director full response here](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
R1	<p>By November 1, 2025, the Board of Supervisors will direct DHS to establish an Animal Services Task Force comprising county, city, and shelter representatives to revisit the 2012 DHS Animal Services Report and recommend a governance structure for animal services that will: 1) provide county-wide oversight to ensure compliance with State Law; 2) standardize fees and engage a common licensing vendor to</p>	<p><i>BOS – requires further analysis</i></p> <p>Recommendation R1 requires additional analysis.</p> <p>The establishment of a countywide Animal Services Task Force could be a valuable step toward addressing longstanding fragmentation in governance, service delivery, and public communication. However, success will depend on inclusive representation, respect of jurisdictional differences, and a shared willingness to explore innovative governance solutions. An analysis of this recommendation, including an evaluation of the feasibility and readiness with our partners, will be brought to the Board of Directors by December 22, 2025. If there is capacity and interest, the Department will evaluate scope during the next budget or work plan cycle.</p> <p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p> <p>Requested response has not been received.</p> <p><i>DHS – requires further analysis</i></p> <p>Recommendation R1 requires additional analysis.</p> <p>The establishment of a countywide Animal Services Task Force would be a valuable step toward addressing longstanding fragmentation in governance, service delivery, and public</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
<p>enhance public health and safety, licensing rates and revenue, and; 3) achieve economic efficiencies through shared resources. (F1, F3, F4-F6 and F9-F10)</p>	<p>communication. However, success will depend on inclusive representation, respect of jurisdictional differences, and a shared willingness to explore innovative governance solutions. An analysis, including an evaluation of the feasibility and readiness with our partners, of this recommendation will be brought to the Board of Directors by December 22, 2025. If there is capacity and interest, the Department will evaluate scope during the next budget or work plan cycle.</p> <p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p> <p>This is formal notice that we have completed the prescribed survey and notified the board of it's [sic] results. We'll be attempting to add staff and resources in our upcoming 26/27 budget to proceed forward with next steps.</p> <p><i>The following Cities indicate they will support Implementation of a task force, should the Board of Supervisors establish one:</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Healdsburg</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Cloverdale</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Petaluma</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Santa Rosa</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Sebastopol</i></p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
		<p><i>City Council of Sonoma</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Rohnert Park</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Cotati – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The City shares animal shelter services with the City of Rohnert Park. The City is also open to discussions with the County of Sonoma (County) regarding standardization and greater cooperation to improve the systems for animal services in Sonoma County.</p> <p><i>City Council of Windsor – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The Town of Windsor is awaiting a response from the County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors regarding the next steps, including a timeframe.</p>
R2	By January 1, 2026, each of Sonoma County's 9 cities will delegate one or more representatives to participate in the county-wide Animal Services	<p><i>The following Cities indicate they will delegate one or more representatives to participate in the county-wide Animal Services Task Force, should the Board of Supervisors establish one:</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Cloverdale</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Cotati</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Petaluma</i></p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
	Task Force convened by DHS. (F1)	<p><i>City Council of Rohnert Park</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Santa Rosa</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Sebastopol</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Sonoma</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Windsor</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Healdsburg</i></p>
R4	By May 1, 2026, the Board of Supervisors will direct DHS to launch a county-wide public information campaign in cooperation with the cities to explain the legal imperative and benefits of licensing pets. The campaign will commence no later than July 1, 2026. (F7-F9)	<p><i>BOS – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>Recommendation R4 has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.</p> <p>The County supports the recommendation to launch a county-wide public information campaign to raise awareness about the legal requirement and benefits of pet licensing. DHS plans to implement a campaign in FY25-26, however conducting such an effort in coordination with other jurisdictions may not be feasible within the timeline recommended by the Grand Jury.</p> <p>A county-wide campaign with meaningful reach will require investment, including formalizing agreements with partner agencies and vendors, and developing approaches may be difficult in the current climate of budget limitations. SCAS will conduct outreach</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
	<p>with its local partners to determine capacity for initiating this effort over the current fiscal year. The nature of a final campaign will be dependent on available funding.</p> <p><i>DHS — not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>Recommendation R4 has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.</p> <p>We fully support the recommendation to launch a county-wide public information campaign to raise awareness about the legal requirement and benefits of pet licensing. DHS plans to implement a campaign in FY25-26, however conducting such an effort in coordination with other jurisdictions may not be feasible within the timeline recommended by the Grand Jury.</p> <p>A county-wide campaign with meaningful reach will require investment, including formalizing agreements with partner agencies and vendors, and developing approaches may be difficult in the current climate of budget limitations. SCAS will conduct outreach with our local partners to determine capacity for initiating this effort over the current fiscal year.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
	<p><i>City Council of Cloverdale – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The City of Cloverdale will implement this recommendation. We will collaborate with county staff to help educate the public on licensing requirements and rabies prevention measures as part of the campaign launch by July 1, 2026. It is important to note that, prior to the release of this report, North Bay Animal Services (NBAS) had already agreed to increase the frequency and availability of rabies and vaccination clinics within the City of Cloverdale.</p> <p><i>City Council of Cotati – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>Noted. The City regularly uses public information to raise awareness regarding the need for animal licensing.</p> <p><i>City Council of Petaluma – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>This recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be in the future. Petaluma will assign staff lead by March 1, 2026, and coordinate messaging. The City is happy to coordinate with DHS on such a campaign.</p> <p><i>City Council of Rohnert Park – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The City of Rohnert Park will work together with DHS to share and/or create informational campaigns regarding the importance and laws of pet licensing no later than July 1, 2026.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
	<p><i>City Council of Santa Rosa – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The Santa Rosa City Council is supportive of the county-wide public information campaign in cooperation with DHS and the cities to explain the legal imperative and benefits of licensing pets, with a campaign commencement date no later than July 1, 2026. Once initiated, the City is prepared to collaborate with the County in developing and disseminating public messaging materials.</p> <p><i>City Council of Sebastopol – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The City of Sebastopol acknowledges Grand Jury Recommendation R4 and supports the launch of a county-wide public information campaign by the Board of Supervisors and the Department of Health Services (DHS) to explain the legal requirements and benefits of licensing pets.</p> <p>The City is committed to cooperating with DHS and other Sonoma County cities to help design and disseminate accurate and effective messaging to the public. Sebastopol will assist in promoting the campaign within the community and encouraging pet owners to comply with licensing requirements, thereby supporting public health, safety, and responsible pet ownership.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
		<p><i>City Council of Sonoma – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>Will be implemented (in partnership). The City will amplify the County's campaign locally by: posting licensing/rabies info on City channels; issuing renewal reminders; and cross-linking to SCAS/Pets Lifeline resources. Timeline: Begin local amplification upon County campaign launch, no later than July 1, 2026.</p> <p><i>City Council of Windsor – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The Town of Windsor is awaiting a response from the County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors regarding the next steps, including a timeframe.</p> <p><i>City Council of Healdsburg – requires further analysis</i></p> <p>The City of Healdsburg, through its animal care and control contractor (HSSC) and subcontractor (SCAS), would collaborate with DHS on outreach to promote pet licensing and rabies control.</p>
R5	By November 1, 2025, each city contracting with North Bay Animal Services will inspect and evaluate the shelter	<p><i>City Council of Windsor – implemented</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Sebastopol – implemented</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Cloverdale – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
<p>condition, and evaluate the shelter operation and animal control services, to determine whether NBAS is complying with legal mandates and other terms of its contract. (F2, F11-F12)</p>	<p>The City of Cloverdale will implement this recommendation. We are committed to conducting a thorough evaluation of North Bay Animal Services' shelter conditions and operational performance. Additionally, we recommend that the Grand Jury or alternatively, the proposed Animal Services Task Force develop and publish a standardized animal shelter inspection checklist.</p> <p>The Chief of Police conducted an inspection of the NBAS facility and observed no open bags of food on the ground or signs of mistreatment of animals. The animal enclosures were clean, and both dogs and cats appeared healthy and well cared for. The facility was orderly, free of clutter, and no concerning conditions were noted. While a few enclosed rooms had stale air, the majority of the facility was well ventilated and maintained.</p> <p><i>City Council of Petaluma — not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>This recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be in the future. As mentioned in our response to F13 above, we have already inspected and evaluated the shelter condition and are working to complete a prioritized list of facility maintenance items. We will be evaluating the shelter operation and animal control services over the next 3-4 months and expect to have that process completed by December 31, 2025.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
	<p>As mentioned in our response to F12 above, the City has recently contracted with a third-party consultant to assist the City and NBAS make improvements in several key areas: organizational structure and oversight; shelter operations and animal care; behavioral assessments and staff training resources; and licensing performance and rabies control. We look forward to the consultant's recommendations on these aspects of the City's animal services.</p> <p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p> <p>The consultant assignment ended early without any meaningful results or feedback. With the current NBAS contract expiring July 31, 2026, and with sufficient lead time required to solicit for, select and contract with a future operator, staff are focused on the RFP for animal services within the first quarter of 2026. Our expectation is to have a new contract approved with an operator prior to the expiration of the existing one, which we expect will include additional tools, performance metrics and reporting processes to better ensure that staff can evaluate the services and operations of a future contractor.</p> <p><i>Recommendation to the following cities is not applicable, as they do not contract with NBAS:</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Cotati</i></p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
		<p><i>City Council of Healdsburg</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Rohnert Park</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Santa Rosa</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Sonoma</i></p>
R6	<p>By September 30, 2025, each of the cities that contracts with NBAS will require quarterly reports that include data and performance criteria sufficient to evaluate compliance with its contract and all relevant laws. (F2, F11)</p>	<p><i>City Council of Windsor – implemented</i></p> <p><i>City Council of Cloverdale – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The City of Cloverdale will implement this recommendation. We will amend our agreement with North Bay Animal Services to include quarterly reporting with quantifiable metrics that demonstrate legal and contractual compliance.</p> <p><i>City Council of Petaluma — not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>This recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future. Petaluma's contract with NBAS already requires bi-annual reporting, and this would increase that frequency to four times annually. On-time reporting with an agreed-upon set of statistics and metrics will help to assess performance. Given the contract expiration / renewal date of July 31, 2026, Petaluma will look to integrate this recommendation with an updated contract with the selected provider at that time.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
	<p>As mentioned in our response to F12 above, the City has recently contracted with a third-party consultant to assist the City and NBAS in making improvements in several key areas including: organizational structure and oversight; shelter operations and animal care; behavioral assessments and staff training resources; and licensing performance and rabies control. We look forward to the consultant's recommendations on these aspects of the City's contracted animal services.</p> <p><i>City Council of Sebastopol – not yet implemented but will be in the future</i></p> <p>The City of Sebastopol acknowledges Grand Jury Recommendation R6. The City is issuing a request for proposals to solicit a new long-term animal services provider. The City will require the selected entity (including North Bay Animal Services (NBAS) if they are selected) to submit quarterly reports beginning no later than 30 days from award of contract.</p> <p>These reports will be required to include data and performance metrics sufficient to evaluate the provider's compliance with the terms of its contract and all applicable laws. The City is committed to reviewing these reports regularly and taking appropriate action to ensure that animal control services meet legal requirements and community expectations.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
		<p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p> <p>The City has issued a second RFP for animal control services. The City will be requiring quarterly reports beginning no later than 30 days from the award of the contract, if they are in fact selected. The RFP was required to be adjusted and sent out again and no contract has been awarded at this time and is not being considered by the city council until the March 3rd 2026 City Council Meeting.</p> <p>The City has been inspecting NBAS monthly.</p> <p><i>Recommendation to the following city is not applicable, as they do not contract with NBAS: City Council of Healdsburg</i></p>
R7	By November 1, 2025, the Petaluma City Council will direct staff to implement a facilities assessment of the city-owned shelter and submit a report of	<p><i>City Council of Petaluma – Implemented</i></p> <p>This recommendation has already been implemented. As mentioned in several responses above, a list of repair and renovation tasks related to the shelter has already been created. We are in the process of completing those tasks.</p> <p><i>Update to the Grand Jury, January 2026</i></p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
	findings related to the adequacy of the HVAC system and any improvements that may be required for the health and safety of animals and humans. (F13)	<p>As originally stated, a facilities assessment was conducted and generated a prioritized list of repairs / renovations / maintenance items needed. Many of those higher priority items have been completed with several less critical items still to be completed over the next six months. As of December 2025, approximately \$150,000 of work has been conducted, including ventilation motor repairs, duct cleaning and repair, HVAC leak repairs at coils, HVAC thermostat replacements, various electrical repairs, roof repair, water valve replacements, privacy screenings on kennel doors, HVAC addition of extra ventilation ducts, and repairs to the siding of several outbuildings.</p> <p><i>Recommendation to the following city is not applicable, as they do not contract with NBAS: City Council of Healdsburg</i></p>
R8	By June 1, 2026, the City of Petaluma will correct any identified ventilation and/or other defects that put animal and/or human health and safety at risk. (F13)	<p><i>City Council of Petaluma – Implemented</i></p> <p>This recommendation is currently being implemented. As mentioned in several responses above, a list of repair and renovation tasks related to the shelter has already been created and are underway. We are in the process of completing those tasks and anticipate completion by June 30, 2026.</p> <p>The City of Petaluma remains committed to ensuring high-quality, legally compliant animal services. We appreciate the Grand Jury's review and will use these Findings and</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
		Recommendations to strengthen both oversight and outcomes for animals and the community.

REPORT #5 - COUNTY EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANS - ARE WE READY FOR THE NEXT MAJOR EVACUATION?

[View full investigation report here](#)

Respondents/Full Response:

- BOS: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors - [View Sonoma County Board of Supervisors full response here](#)
- DEM: Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management - [View Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management full response here](#)
- PID: Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Department - [View Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Department full response here](#)
- SSO: Sonoma County Sheriff's Department – [View Sonoma County Sheriff's Department full response here](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS		RESPONSES
R3	By July 1, 2026, the Board of Supervisors shall fund Department of	<i>BOS – Requires Further Analysis</i> The Department of Emergency Management, in collaboration with the Sheriff's Office and the County Fire Marshal/Warden within Permit Sonoma, will continue to review options and

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
<p>Emergency Management acquisition of evacuation management modeling and simulation software which will facilitate advance identification of zone-specific evacuation routes and evacuation messaging.</p>	<p>operational needs from the three departments. The review of options and recommendations will be presented for Board review before July 1, 2026.</p> <p><i>DEM – Requires Further Analysis</i></p> <p>The Department of Emergency Management, in collaboration with the Sheriff’s Office and the County Fire Marshal/Warden within Permit Sonoma, would need to continue to review options and operational needs from the three departments to formulate a request for proposal (RFP), pending a funding source from the County Board of Supervisors and the Office of the County Executive. The review of options and recommendations will be completed by the end of Q4 CY 25.</p>

REPORT #6 - WHO CAN AFFORD TO LIVE IN SONOMA COUNTY? A TALE OF TWO CITIES

[View full investigation report here](#)

Respondents/Full Response:

- BOS: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors - [View Sonoma County Board of Supervisors full response here](#)
- City Council of Healdsburg - [View City Council of Healdsburg full response here](#)

- City Council of Rohnert Park – [View City Council of Rohnert Park full response here](#)
- City Council of Petaluma (invited to respond) – [View City Council of Petaluma full response here](#)
- City Council of Santa Rosa (invited to respond) – [View City Council of Santa Rosa full response here](#)
- City Council of Sonoma (invited to respond) – [View City Council of Sonoma full response here](#)

REPORT #7 - SONOMA COUNTY'S SURPLUS PROPERTY DISPOSAL - HOUSEKEEPING TAKES TIME BUT PAYS LONG-TERM BENEFITS

[View full investigation report here](#)

Respondents/Full Response:

- BOS: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors - [View Sonoma County Board of Supervisors full response here](#)

GLOSSARY

- BOS - Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
- CEO - Sonoma County Executive Officer
- DEM - Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management
- DHS - Sonoma County Department of Health Services
- NBAS - North Bay Animal Services
- PID - Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Department
- PS - Permit Sonoma
- SCAS - Sonoma County Animal Services
- SCID - Sonoma County Public Infrastructure Department
- SSO - Sonoma County Sheriff's Department