



# City of Ripon

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August 21, 2013

## Via U.S. Mail and Email

Honorable David P. Warner, Presiding Judge  
San Joaquin County Superior Court  
Post Office Box 201022  
Stockton, California 95201  
Email: [grandjury@sjcourts.org](mailto:grandjury@sjcourts.org)

Re: San Joaquin County Grand Jury 2012-2013 Report – Case No. 0912

Dear Judge Warner:

In response to San Joaquin County Grand Jury Case No. 0912, the City Council of the City of Ripon responds as follows:

## **RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY CASE No. 0912 Crime – Budget Cuts + AB 109 ≠ Safe Communities (Amended 05/23/13)**

### **FINDINGS:**

F1.1: The staffing of all law and justice agencies in the County has been reduced increasing the threat to the safety of the citizens and their property.

Response to F1.1: The City of Ripon Police Department has seen a reduction in full time Police Officer positions by 15% since 2010, and a further reduction in support staff by 36% during this same timeframe. The changes in pure numbers to this agency do not reflect an increased danger to its citizens, but makes it necessary to operate in a more efficient and effective manner. The Ripon Police Department accomplishes this by constantly evaluating day to day operations and making necessary changes to operations to provide improved services to its citizens. We do not accept that fewer staff automatically translates into diminished services or protection to our citizens. The City of Ripon Police Department continues to operate at the highest officer per citizen ratio in the county.

The decreased staff in the District Attorney's Office may have a more dramatic effect on the safety of our citizens than our own reductions. The depletion of the District Attorney's Office does not allow for the further investigation and prosecution of necessary criminal offenses in our county.

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F1.4: Continued and increased use of current technologies would make law enforcement agencies more efficient and offset some of the decreased staffing.

Response to F1.4: The City of Ripon Police Department has used this approach for several years, and is a strong proponent that the utilization of existing and new technologies increase efficiency and act as a deterrent to criminal behavior.

F3.1: The duplication of special units, specialized training and police functions (e.g., property, room dispatch, investigation technicians) cause inefficient use of limited resources.

Response to F3.1: Each agency within San Joaquin County has specific needs and a specific level of service that is expected of the communities that they serve. The City of Ripon Police Department has similar issues, but at differing levels than other county agencies that require our units' attention. It is the belief of this agency that the community issues that are faced by the City of Ripon would not be addressed at the same level or as quickly if they were the responsibility of a larger entity (i.e. task force, consolidated dispatch center, county wide property rooms, or evidence technicians).

F3.2: There are examples of cooperation between different agencies in the County but each agency still operates autonomously most of the time.

Response to F3.2: There is great cooperation and sharing of resources amongst the agencies within this county. The City of Ripon Police Department is part of that cooperation, but must also remain responsive to the needs of our community.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

R1.1.2: Each City Council, before September 1, 2013, adopt a policy that states it is a priority of the County to increase staffing for law enforcement, including patrol and probation.

Response to R1.1.2: The City Council believes that it is necessary to have appropriate staffing levels to maintain a safe and secure community. Appropriate staffing for public safety is determined by the Council in collaboration with the City Administrator and Chief of Police. The City of Ripon Police Department continues to operate at the highest officer per citizen ratio in the County, and the City Council will adopt a policy encouraging increased staffing at the County level.

R1.4: The Sheriff's Department and each City's police department review their current use of crime prevention technologies and develop a plan to implement new technologies that could help increase the efficiency of their agencies.


Response to R1.4: The City of Ripon Police Department has an extensive list of technologies that are utilized for crime prevention and further enhance our proficiencies. The department continues to evaluate and seek new technologies to further enhances our operations.

R3: The Board of Supervisors and the City Councils of Escalon, Lathrop, Lodi, Manteca, Ripon, Stockton and Tracy, before September 1, 2013, each appoint two representatives, one to represent law enforcement and one to represent the governing body or management, to form an *ad hoc* committee. The committee's purpose is to conduct a study on how to increase countywide efficiency of law enforcement agencies by taking a regional approach to some or all of their services. A preliminary report is to be released before December 31, 2013, of actions already taken to increase efficiency and additional actions that will be taken between January 2014 and June 2015..

Response to R3: As proposed, an *ad hoc* committee may not be necessary because it would essentially be a duplication of effort. Elected officials, City Managers, and law enforcement executives regularly meet with their neighboring counterparts to discuss problems and solutions affecting local and regional government. Nevertheless, in the event an *ad hoc* committee is formed as recommended by the Grand Jury, the City Council will appoint two representatives to participate on the committee.

If there are questions or concerns regarding any aspect of this Response, please feel free to contact City Attorney Thomas H. Terpstra, or send correspondence to the City Council at 259 N. Wilma Avenue, Ripon, California, 95366.

Sincerely,

  
Dean Uecker  
Mayor