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SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY RELEASES REPORT ON HOMELESSNESS

San Joaquin County lacks any semblance of a coordinated strategy for dealing with the growing problem of homelessness, an investigation by the 2015-16 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury found.

While many government agencies and private organizations are working to help the homeless, without an over-arching strategy these well-meaning efforts often end up being both wasteful and redundant. Lodi, the Jury investigation found, is the only government body in the county with a well thought out, coordinated public-private approach to the issue of homelessness. That model is in sharp contrast to the City of Stockton, where homelessness is most highly concentrated, but where there is no coordinated effort to deal with the issue.

The Jury recommends that the County Board of Supervisors act as the point agency for the entire county to deal with homelessness. Lodi's approach, the Jury suggests, might be a model for a county effort. As it stands today the County acts largely as a "pass through" agency distributing state and federal funds to other government agencies and private organizations. There is little accountability and no coordination on how those funds are used, the Jury investigation found.

The Jury's findings and recommendations are meant to draw attention to issues and to suggest ways to remedy problems. Only the Jury foreman is allowed to comment publicly about Grand Jury investigations.

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors is required to submit a response to each finding and recommendation in the report. Those responses must be sent to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court within 90 days.

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