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September 13, 2017

By U.S. Mail and email (ctadmin@contracosta.courts.ca.gov)

Mr. Jim Mellander, Foreperson
Contra Costa Civil Grand Jury
P.O. Box 431
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

Re: City of Concord Response to June 15, 2017 Grand Jury Report No. 1709, "Concord Naval Weapons Station Reuse: Management and Reporting"

Dear Mr. Mellander:

This letter serves as the City of Concord's (and Local Reuse Authority's) response to the Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury's findings and recommendations set forth in Report No. 1709, entitled "Concord Naval Weapons Station Reuse: Management and Reporting." This letter was reviewed by the Concord City Council, sitting as the Local Reuse Authority, at its September 12, 2017, meeting, and I was directed to submit the response for the City of Concord and Local Reuse Authority.

I. FINDINGS

Finding No. 1: "The LRA does not make all costs, schedules or contract issues easily accessible to the public."

Response: The LRA disagrees with this finding. The City places LRA contracts on public meeting agendas; therefore, they are posted on-line through a searchable database on the City's website.

Finding No. 2: "The LRA is using the City's existing budgeting cost system which lacks information about forecasted costs."

Response: The LRA agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 3: "The LRA website does not provide all relevant information that the LRA has available about the reuse process."

Response: The LRA partially disagrees with this finding. The vast majority of relevant information is posted to the City's websites and we are constantly looking for ways to improve the websites.

Finding No. 4: "The LRA staff provides an oral report to the LRA and/or the City Council on average once a quarter."

Response: The LRA agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 5: During the extended, simultaneous negotiations with two master developer finalists in 2015, the city manager removed the recommendation for a master developer from the LRA staff's report."

Response: The LRA agrees with this finding.

Finding No. 6: "The City Council sometimes conducts LRA business without publicly announcing that it is acting as the LRA."

Response: The LRA disagrees with this finding. All LRA business is on a public agenda and identified as such. Additionally, the Mayor announces that the City Council is sitting as the LRA at any meeting containing a LRA agenda item.

Finding No. 7: "No comprehensive plan exists that encompasses all Concord Naval Weapon Station Reuse project activities."

Response: The LRA partially disagrees with this finding. The LRA is managing a multi-faceted project contingent on elements not under the control of the LRA (i.e. U.S. Navy's property transfer and remediation efforts). Efforts to develop a Specific Plan began in 2016, and a dedicated in-house planner is working with City staff, the City's consultants, and the Master Developer's team. Given the complexity of the project, the current project schedule is a realistic estimate of our efforts to reach required milestones and is updated periodically.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No. 1: "The LRA should consider holding regular LRA meetings, separate from the City Council meetings."

Response: The LRA will not implement this recommendation. The City Council currently meets three times per month and is able to allocate sufficient time to LRA agenda items within those existing meetings.

Recommendation No. 2: “To increase transparency, the LRA should consider posting agendas, minutes, and video of the LRA (including the CAC meetings) on its website.”

Response: The LRA already does this. All agendas, minutes, and video of City Council meetings where LRA agenda items are discussed or considered are on, and have always been on, the City’s website. The agendas, minutes, and video of the CAC meetings are also found on, and have always been on, the City’s website. The LRA intends to improve the Project’s website so that it also includes the agendas, minutes, and video of CAC meetings in September 2017.

Recommendation No. 3: “The LRA should consider instructing staff to issue regular written periodic projects reports containing relevant information and current status, and to post the report on the LRA website to increase public awareness.”

Response: The LRA agrees with this recommendation and will produce written project status reports, at least quarterly, in conjunction with project status presentations to the LRA/City Council.

Recommendation No. 4: “The LRA should consider creating a project execution plan in accordance with accepted program management standards as soon as possible, but no later than at the completion of the specific plan.”

Response: The LRA’s current project management approach is consistent with accepted project management standards. As the Reuse Project transitions to complete LRA control and in conjunction with our implementation of project management system software (See the Response to Recommendation No. 6 below), we will develop and publish more detailed project execution plans.

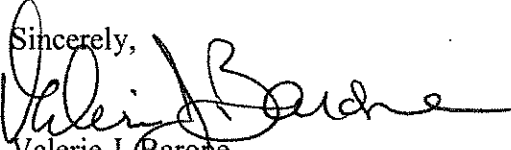
Recommendation No. 5: “The LRA should consider selecting a master developer prior to negotiating a Term Sheet in future phases of the project.”

Response: The City does not anticipate selecting a master developer for the next phase of the project until at least 2023. At that time, as the LRA develops its master developer selection parameters, it will consider this recommendation.

Recommendation No. 6: “The LRA should consider using a project management software system which would include project cost forecasting capabilities.”

Response: The LRA agrees with this recommendation and is in the process of implementing it. The LRA retained the Hallmark Group in January 2017 to help evaluate, choose and implement such a system with the goal of achieving comprehensive implementation at the completion of the specific plan.

Guy Bjerke, Executive Director of the Local Reuse Authority and Director of Community Reuse Planning, is available to answer any questions or provide any additional information concerning the above responses or enclosed documents. You can reach him at (925) 671-3076 or by email at guy.bjerke@cityofconcord.org.

Sincerely,

Valerie J. Barone
City Manager

C: Concord City Council
Kathleen Tropa, Assistant City Manager, City of Concord
Joelle Fockler, City Clerk, City of Concord
Guy Bjerke, City of Concord