

OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

September 4, 2026

Derek Johnson
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Honorable Stephen Freccero
Presiding Judge
Marin County Superior Court
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San Rafael, CA 94903

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Dear Judge Freccero,

The Marin County Board of Supervisors' response to the FY 2025-2026 Civil Grand Jury Report "The Marin County Civic Center — In Need of Love" (June 4, 2026) is attached. The report was delivered to the Board of Supervisors and responds to all the requests made under law and requested by the Grand Jury.

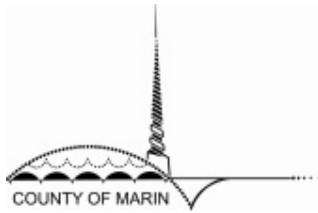
As always, thank you to the Court for overseeing this important part of local government and democracy. Please reach out if we can be of service to either the Civil Grand Jury or the Court.

Respectfully submitted,

Derek Johnson
Marin County Executive

ENC:

Marin County Board of Supervisors Response to Civil Grand Jury Report "The Marin County Civic Center — In Need of Love" (June 4, 2026)



RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT TITLE: The Marin County Civic Center – In Need of Love
REPORT DATE: June 4, 2026
RESPONSE BY: County of Marin Board of Supervisors

GRAND JURY FINDINGS

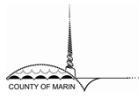
- We agree with the findings numbered: **F1-2, 6-8**
- We disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: **F3-5, 7, 9**

GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATION

- Recommendations numbered **R1, 4-5** have not yet been implemented, and will be implemented in the future.
- Recommendation numbered **R2** requires further analysis.
- Recommendation numbered **R3** will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.

Date: August 25, 2026

Signed: 
President, Board of Supervisors



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RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS

F1. The Civic Center interior spaces have deteriorated due to a lack of long-term strategic facilities management planning.

Response: Agree

The Board of Supervisors agrees that long-term facilities management planning is important to preserving the Marin County Civic Center and supporting its continued use. The Civic Center is a complex historic facility with building systems, landscape features, and infrastructure that are closely interconnected. Currently, the Parks Department maintains both exterior landscaped areas and interior planting, while the Department of Public Works maintains the infrastructure and building maintenance. As referenced in the Civil Grand Jury’s report, as well as previous plans, such as the Facilities Master Plan (2002), assessment of the Civic Center building and campus should be done with recognition that the facility must function as both a workspace and community asset.

The Board recognizes that effective long-term planning and coordination across County departments are essential to managing these assets, prioritizing maintenance and capital investments, and addressing deficiencies before they have an impact on building operations, occupants, or the historic integrity of the facility.

F2. The Civic Center interior spaces have deteriorated due to insufficient resources and staffing in the Department of Public Works and its Facilities Maintenance Division.

Response: Agree

The Board of Supervisors agrees that maintaining the Marin County Civic Center and the County’s broader facilities portfolio requires sufficient staffing and resources. The Board recognizes that the size, age, complexity, and maintenance needs of County facilities have evolved over time and that these demands place pressure on the Department of Public Works, including its Facilities Maintenance Division. The Board acknowledges that adequate staffing and operational resources are important to support preventive maintenance, reducing deferred maintenance, and preserving the Civic Center while balancing the County’s many competing fiscal priorities.

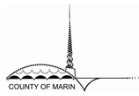
Effective January 1, 2026, the two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) positions in the Office of the County Executive’s Facilities Planning and Development Division were transferred to the Department of Public Works to better align the County’s facilities planning and development functions with its broader facilities operations and management responsibilities.

In July 2026, Board of Supervisors also [approved](#) \$6M in additional one-time funding for Civic Center improvements, staffing and security to address emerging needs and projects.

F3. Previously approved County budgets have not provided for major replacements and maintenance for the Civic Center. Additional funding will need to be allocated to address these shortcomings.

Response: Partially Disagree

The Board of Supervisors disagrees that County budgets have not consistently included sufficient funding for major building system replacements, capital renewal, and deferred maintenance at the Civic Center, while acknowledging that addressing comprehensive



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infrastructure needs will require sustained, long-term capital investment and dedicated funding for major projects. Recent investments in maintenance include, but are not limited to:

- Replacement and subsequent cleaning of the Civic Center roof to restore it to the iconic Frank Lloyd Wright “blue” over the last 5 years, totaling a [\\$21 million investment](#) through County bond.
- [FY 2021-22](#): \$2 million for Civic Center Electrical Upgrades
- [FY 2022-24](#): \$5 million for Civic Center Facilities Improvements
- [FY 2023-24](#): \$30 million for Civic Center and Veterans Memorial Auditorium improvements to address deferred maintenance and facility modernization
- [FY 2024-26](#): \$5.1 million for Veteran’s Memorial Auditorium Capital Improvements and \$350,000 for Civic Center Board Chambers A/V and Accessibility Upgrades

In June 2026, the Board accepted the FY 2027–2031 Five-Year [Capital Improvement Program](#), which includes a substantial, multi-year investment in the Civic Center and Marin Center campus. Based on the funded and previously approved projects identified in the CIP, these investments total approximately \$129 million when the broader campus improvements, including Lagoon Park projects, are included.

The Capital Improvement Program also includes a six-phase HVAC replacement project estimated at over \$63 million through FY 2031 and over \$6 million in office improvements and remodeling through FY 2031, with over \$2.6 million approved for the current fiscal year.

F4. The Civic Center does not meet modern security standards.

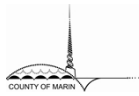
Response: Partially Disagree

The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees with this finding because there is no single, universally applicable “modern security standard” for county administrative facilities. Rather, the County is responsible for complying with applicable building, fire, accessibility, occupational safety, and workplace violence prevention requirements while evaluating and addressing security risks based on the Civic Center’s use, operations, and historic character.

The Board recognizes that maintaining a safe and secure environment requires ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement. The County has implemented security measures appropriate to its functions, including security personnel, emergency procedures, employee training, and workplace violence prevention planning, and periodically reviews its security practices to respond to evolving risks, technology, operational needs, and regulatory requirements. These security measures are critical given the Civic Center’s historical open design, and since the building functions as the “hub” of County government, where employees work and the public accesses essential services, services on juries, and attends community meetings.

This includes a contract with [Barbier Security Group](#) (most recent contract approved by the Board on July 14, 2026). This contract includes performance metrics, including staffing of contracted shifts, including after-hours events, response time to incidents, incident documentation and review of incidents with County staff to evaluate staff training and the effectiveness of County security measures.

The Board approved the recent contract with Barbier Security Group with reporting from the County’s Risk Management division that the contractor has successfully provided security



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services at the Civic Center and several County Health and Human Services sites since March 2023 and has yielded positive feedback from both employees and the public.

Additionally, DPW Facilities is in the process of installing key card readers on all office doors in the County. These card readers ensure that the doors to interior offices at the Civic Center remain locked and only accessible by County staff with a current employee ID. These card readers have already been installed at a number of offices and are expected to be fully installed by the end of 2027. This project represents an \$8 million capital investment in security enhancements.

The Board also recognizes that responsibility for security at the Civic Center is shared among multiple entities. As noted in the report, the Superior Court of California (County of Marin) is located in the Hall of Justice and responsible for court security in accordance with Judicial Council of California requirements. The Marin County Sheriff-Coroner provides security to the Court, in accordance with a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) between the two parties and the County, most recently approved by the Board of Supervisors on August 26, 2025.

The County also works collaboratively with the Court and law enforcement partners on campus-wide emergency planning, coordination, and facility-related security improvements.

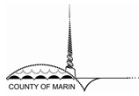
F5. The Civic Center is large enough and important enough to require additional advocates other than the Department of Public Works. No County body is empowered to make the Civic Center a great place to work and visit, inside and out. Although entities are tasked with historical preservation and maintenance, no entity takes a holistic view of the building in regard to long-term functionality, financing, and sustainability.

Response: Partially Disagree

The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees with this finding because though we agree the Civic Center is large and important enough to require holistic oversight, the County has established mechanisms to support coordinated stewardship across departments. The Board initiated the County Executive Leadership Reorganization to advance greater coordination and accountability for cross-departmental performance. This includes the appointment of an Assistant County Executive responsible for the Community & Environment portfolio that oversees the Departments responsible for maintenance and utilization of the Civic Center campus to ensure executive-level stewardship.

The Civic Center Campus Working Group, which includes representatives from the Office of the County Executive, the Department of Public Works, Marin County Parks, and Department of Cultural Services fulfills an important role for this coordination. The Working Group meets regularly to coordinate projects, share information, address operational issues, and identify opportunities for collaboration across the Civic Center campus. The Department of Public Works, Marin County Parks, and Cultural Services have executed a Memorandum of Understanding that clearly defines maintenance responsibilities and strengthens coordination among departments. Marin County Parks, Public Works and Cultural Services jointly presented to the Board [on November 4, 2025](#) to provide an update on projects planned for the Civic Center campus – reflecting that this effort continues to be a multi-departmental approach.

The Department of Cultural Services is also the liaison for the Frank Lloyd Wright Civic Center Conservancy, a commission appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Departments included in the Civic Center Campus Working Group regularly present to the Conservancy to ensure



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awareness and review projects for complex consistency with the Civic Center’s status as a historic landmark.

F6. The Design Guidelines used by DPW, Facilities Maintenance, and Parks staff are over 20 years old and should be updated.

Response: Agree

The Board of Supervisors agrees that the Civic Center Design Guidelines should be updated. While the 2005 Guidelines continue to provide valuable direction, they have not been assessed to determine if they fully reflect current preservation standards, operational practices, technologies, regulatory requirements, sustainability goals, accessibility requirements, or County priorities. Updating the Guidelines would help preserve Frank Lloyd Wright’s vision while providing a more relevant framework for coordinated decision-making, long-term stewardship, maintenance, and investment in the Civic Center campus.

F7. The Civic Center Campus is underutilized as a gathering place for members of the Marin community. Despite enthusiasm for it to become a community gathering spot — a true “third place” — it has not had sufficient planning or monies allocated to achieve such a goal.

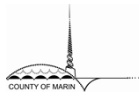
Response: Agree

The Board of Supervisors agrees that the Civic Center Campus has historically been underutilized as a gathering place for the community. Despite this, there have been several longstanding, “flagship” community events and programs. They include:

- The Annual Marin County Fair, the county’s largest annual event, hosting 80,000 visitors in 2026.
- The Marin County Farmer’s Market, operated by the Agricultural Institute of Marin (AIM), that operates every Thursday and Sunday, attracting tens of thousands of visitors annually. With over 150 year-round vendors, the Sunday Marin Farmers Market is the third largest weekly market in California.
- Frank Lloyd Wright Docent Tour Program and curation of rotating art exhibits at the Bartolini Gallery and the Civic Center galleries, welcoming visitors from around the County and beyond.
- A Facilities Rental Program, managed by Cultural Services, hosts hundreds of community-led and cultural events on the Civic Center campus every year.

However, there are also several new initiatives currently being undertaken – with Board appropriated resources – to further establish the Civic Center campus as a gathering place for the community. These “placemaking” projects were included in the Board during the [November 4, 2025](#) update. They include:

- Department of Cultural Services programming:
 - The Holiday Light Spectacular, held for the first time from November 28, 2025-January 4, 2026, welcomed 34,000 visitors to the Civic Center campus. This program is renewed for the 2026-2027 Winter season.
 - The Roller Disco Daze on Lagoon Island, launched in July 2026, welcoming 600+ visitors per day to roller skate.



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- Renovation and modernization of the Veterans’ Memorial Auditorium (VMA), scheduled to reopen in 2027. \$30 million was approved in the FY 2023-2024 County Budget for this project and Civic Center improvements.
- Planned major renovation and improvements of the Civic Center Café to create a brighter, more welcoming destination for employees, visitors, and the community. The Capital Improvement Program allocates \$900,000 in the current Fiscal Year, and proposes a total \$11.1 million in Fiscal Years 2027-2028 and 2028-2029.
- Ongoing operation of a new coffee cart, five days a week, at the South Arch. This new operation has activated the South Arch space and brought in employees and members of the public into the south arch space and surround outdoor seating spaces.
- The Board of Supervisors has approved a 40-year lease to build a permanent Center for Food and Agriculture on the Civic Center campus. The new facility will combine an open-air farmers market with permanent amenities (including ADA-accessible restrooms, shade and rain protection, bicycle parking, and other environmental enhancements) on Thursdays and Sundays, with plans for the addition of a Tuesday market. Alongside the permanent farmer market will be a Food Innovation Hub, offering facilities for food and farm business resource programs, food and gardening education programs for learners of all ages and abilities, and climate-smart landscapes. The Board of Supervisors has also committed \$2.5 million in the FY 2026-28 Capital Improvement Plan to support this project.

F8. Public-private partnerships have been a useful tool to renovate other public buildings.

Response: Agree

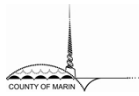
The Board of Supervisors agrees that public-private partnerships are a useful tool that should be analyzed for efficacy to support the preservation, restoration, or enhancement of the Civic Center campus. An initial opportunity for analysis is part of the Veteran’s Memorial Auditorium (VMA) renovations. The scope of this project includes funding to develop long-range plans for further improvement of the VMA. By Fall 2026, designs and cost estimates will be developed for these future projects. The Board expects the Office of the County Executive and Department of Cultural Services to assess the opportunity for public-private partnerships to explore these opportunities.

F9. The Civic Center building is confusing and hard to navigate. Modern, clear maps and signage, at the Civic Center, on the Campus grounds and online, would help residents and visitors alike.

Response: Partially Disagree

The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees with this finding, though recognizes that the overall design of the building – with changing ground floor and top floor levels and three major archway entrances – is unconventional and therefore non intuitive for members of the public and employees alike to navigate.

However, there have been many improvements to wayfinding and signage over the years to enhance the experience of residents, visitors, employees while balancing the historic design of the building. This includes signage at the entrance to guide visitors to some of the most visited



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locations (Courts, Library), and the stationing of a permanent security personnel in the South Arch information window beginning in 2021 to answer questions from visitors. In 2016, IST and Cultural Services developed a [Civic Center Guide mobile application](#) (initiated as part of the 5-Year Business Plan) with the initial intent of guiding visitors to the offices they intend to visit in the building, as well as have options for self-guided historical tours. However, use of the application – especially for office wayfinding purposes – was very low.

The Board of Supervisors recognizes that there are more improvements to make the Civic Center a welcoming place for visitors and residents doing County business. The County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) proposes a total of \$2.5 million to wayfinding, signage and visitor enhancements in the Civic Center and throughout campus in Fiscal Years 2027-2028 and 2028-2029. The Civic Center Conservancy will also continue to play an important role in assessing modern enhancements to the building.

The Digital Innovation & Transformation Office in the Office of the County Executive has also studied potential improvements to Civic Center wayfinding to ensure residents and visitors are warmly welcomed to the building and can access the services they require. That includes assessing County services that can be offered in online formats to improve accessibility for residents.

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Marin County Civil Grand Jury recommends the following:

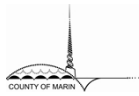
R1. By January 1, 2028, the Board of Supervisors should approve and fund a comprehensive Conditions and Uses Assessment Report / Facilities Asset Management Plan for the Civic Center. The Report / Plan should analyze current uses of the Civic Center and the entire Campus, and plan for its future.

This recommendation has not been implemented and will be in the future.

The Board of Supervisors approved, as part of the [Fiscal Year 2026-2028 Budget and County Work Plan](#), an item to “develop and refine specifications and a practical implementation approach for a Countywide Asset Management and Lifecycle Replacement Program”, including the Civic Center campus. This will include defining key asset categories, establishing basic data standards, outlining roles and responsibilities, and identifying a phased rollout plan. This item is included in the “Investing in Marin County’s Infrastructure” workplan and will be completed by June 30, 2026, led by the Department of Public Works. A complimentary item in the Department of Public Works workplan is the “issue a request for proposals and begin implementation of an asset management system to assess the condition of public infrastructure and inform the Capital Improvement Program”.

The Board of Supervisors also directs the analysis of a Marin Center Business Plan and Civic Center Campus Master Plan to be initiated after the Countywide Strategic Plan, scheduled to be completed by April 30, 2027. These long-term plans will assess viable financial models for the Marin Center and identify a phased investment approach for the Civic Center campus.

The Civic Center Campus Master Plan will build on the foundational of the County of Marin Facilities Master Plan (April 2022) to complete a short-, medium- and long-term needs assessment. Many of the principles of the 2002 Plan are consistent with findings in this report



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that have been implemented by County staff including establishing a unified facilities management group, inviting the community into the Civic Center, and increasing customer service by establishing “Regional Hubs” to deliver services.

R2. By January 1, 2027, the Board of Supervisors should appoint a commission consisting of County staff and members of the public that focuses on long-term revitalization of the Civic Center, including improvements to the uses and functionality of the work and community spaces. This commission should make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding future planning and uses, facilitate community engagement, encourage public private partnerships, support philanthropic funding, and monitor the progress of planned maintenance and improvements.

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.

The Board of Supervisors supports the existing coordinating bodies that support Civic Center planning, maintenance, and preservation. The Civic Center Campus Working Group, which includes representatives from the Office of the County Executive, the Department of Public Works, Marin County Parks, and Department of Cultural Services allows for the internal coordination of Departments contributing to Civic Center maintenance, improvement and use under the Board’s leadership.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Civic Center Conservancy is appointed by the Board to advise on the County’s responsibility to preserve, protect, and steward the Civic Center’s architectural integrity and historic significance based on standards set forth by the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, and the preservation guidelines adopted by the national Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy.

The Board approved updated bylaws on August 18th, 2026, to affirm the important purpose of the Conservancy as part of the County’s approach to the Civic Center and clarify their responsibilities to the Board.

R3. By January 1, 2028, the Board of Supervisors should approve and fund a full security and safety study for the Marin County-managed portions of the Civic Center building.

This recommendation requires further analysis.

The Board of Supervisors recognizes the importance of periodically evaluating security and safety measures for County facilities. The Board directs additional analysis by the Risk Management division of the Department of Human Resources, to be delivered to the County Executive no later than March 1, 2027. This analysis should include a cost estimate to prepare the report and assessment of staff capacity in key departments including Risk Management and the Department of Public Works. The analysis will make a recommendation on the appropriate scope, objectives, and methodology of a potential security and safety assessment of the County occupied portions of the Civic Center.

R4. By January 1, 2028, the Board of Supervisors should direct the Department of Public Works to update the Civic Center Building and Campus maps across all formats (online, physical, etc.) in order to improve routes to and navigation within the building and campus.

This recommendation has not been implemented and will be in the future.



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The Board of Supervisors directs the inclusion of Civic Center and campus maps and wayfinding in the Campus Master Plan (Recommendation #1) to be completed no later than March 1, 2027.

R5. By June 30, 2027, the Board of Supervisors should direct County staff to explore and report back on expanding the availability of the Civic Center as a venue for celebratory events such as wedding ceremonies, adoption finalizations, and a place to observe other moments that are especially memorable in the lives of Marin residents.

This recommendation has not been implemented and will be in the future.

The Board of Supervisors directs the inclusion of community use of the Civic Center in the Campus Master Plan (Recommendation #1) to be completed no later than March 1, 2027.