



Office Address
640 Drake Avenue
Marin City, CA 94965
Mailing Address
P.O. Box 366
Sausalito, CA 94965
Telephone Number
(415) 332-1441

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT TITLE: "Better Services at Lower Cost – Optimizing Essential Services for the Future of Marin"
REPORT DATE: June 11, 2026
RESPONSE BY: Marin City Community Services District

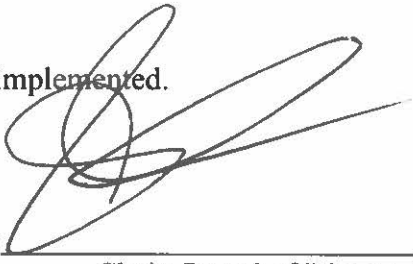
GRAND JURY FINDINGS

- We disagree wholly or partially with the finding(s) numbered: **F1, F4, F5, and F7.**
- We agree wholly or partially with the finding(s) numbered: **F2, F3, and F6.**

GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation number **R1** is currently being implemented.

Date: 9.9.2026

Signed: 
Chair, Board of Directors

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS

OVERVIEW

The Marin City Community Services District (“MCCSD” or “District”) appreciates the Civil Grand Jury’s examination of opportunities to improve the efficiency, resilience, transparency, and long-term sustainability of special districts in Marin County. The District supports efforts to identify practical opportunities for interagency cooperation, shared services, and other measures that can improve service delivery and reduce costs.

At the same time, the District believes that many of the findings and recommendations in the report have limited applicability to the MCCSD. As the report recognizes, Marin County’s special districts vary significantly in their size, functions, funding, geography, and the communities they serve. The report’s analysis and examples focus substantially on districts providing water, wastewater, fire, and emergency services, where multiple agencies may provide the same or similar services across adjacent geographic areas. The MCCSD presents a materially different circumstance.

The MCCSD is a small, community-based district serving the geographically compact and historically underserved community of Marin City. The District provides recreation and community programming, refuse and recycling services, and street lighting. These services are closely connected to the particular needs of the Marin City community.

The MCCSD also has a long and important history as a community institution in Marin City. The District’s local governance structure provides Marin City residents with direct representation and accountability concerning services that affect their community. Accordingly, any consideration of consolidation must account not only for potential administrative efficiencies, but also for the nature of the services involved, the community being served, local accountability, and whether consolidation would actually improve services or reduce costs.

For these reasons, the MCCSD supports appropriate opportunities for functional collaboration and shared services but does not agree that formal consolidation should be presumed to be an appropriate or beneficial objective for every special district.

F1. The current fragmented structure of special districts results in unnecessary duplication of administrative services and operational inefficiencies.

Response: Partially Disagree.

The District agrees that opportunities may exist for special districts to share certain administrative services and thereby reduce costs or improve efficiency. However, the District disagrees that the existence of multiple special districts necessarily results in unnecessary duplication or operational inefficiency.

The MCCSD provides a unique combination of localized services within a small geographic area. The District is not aware of another special district providing the same combination of

services to which its operations could readily be consolidated. Moreover, the District's relatively small administrative structure limits the potential savings that could be achieved through consolidation.

The MCCSD nevertheless supports evaluating shared administrative services where doing so is practical, cost-effective, and consistent with maintaining appropriate service levels and local accountability.

F2. Some districts perform competently but lack sufficient scale to support long-term strategic investment in infrastructure, technology, staffing, and resilience.

Response: Partially Agree.

The District agrees that small public agencies can face challenges associated with limited financial and staffing resources. However, size alone does not establish that a district is unable to plan strategically or invest appropriately in infrastructure, technology, staffing, and resilience.

The appropriate inquiry is whether an individual district can sustainably provide the services for which it is responsible. Because special districts differ substantially in their responsibilities, infrastructure requirements, revenues, and service models, the scale required for effective operation also differs substantially among districts.

The MCCSD supports continued evaluation of opportunities to strengthen its organizational capacity, including through collaboration and shared services where appropriate.

F3. Smaller districts are disproportionately vulnerable to staffing disruptions and catastrophic events that could rapidly impair service delivery.

Response: Partially Agree.

The District agrees that smaller organizations may have fewer personnel available to absorb staffing disruptions. However, the degree of vulnerability depends on the particular services provided, staffing model, available contractors and service partners, mutual assistance arrangements, and other circumstances.

The MCCSD agrees that continuity of operations and organizational resilience are important considerations and supports appropriate interagency cooperation and contingency planning to address those risks.

F4. Although consolidation is a popular idea among many elected board members, current governance structures, absence of board member term limits, and fear of loss of political influence discourage boards and administrators from initiating consolidation even when they recognize its benefits.

Response: Disagree.

The District does not believe the report establishes that reluctance to consolidate is generally attributable to the desire of elected officials or administrators to preserve political influence.

There are legitimate policy reasons why locally elected boards may conclude that consolidation is not in the best interests of their communities. In Marin City, local governance provides residents of a small and historically underserved community with direct representation regarding services specifically provided to that community. Preservation of meaningful local representation and accountability is a legitimate governmental consideration and should not be equated with preservation of political influence.

Consolidation should be evaluated based on objective considerations, including whether it would improve service, reduce costs, enhance organizational resilience, and preserve appropriate representation and accountability for affected communities.

F5. Service and pricing inequities currently exist across Marin and may increase if consolidation and functional collaboration do not accelerate.

Response: Partially Disagree.

The District recognizes that service levels and costs vary among public agencies. However, differences in pricing or service levels do not necessarily constitute inequities. Special districts provide different services, serve communities with different needs, operate under different financial circumstances, and have different infrastructure and service obligations.

The MCCSD supports functional collaboration when it can demonstrably improve services or reduce costs. The District does not agree, however, that consolidation is necessarily an appropriate or effective means of addressing differences in service levels or pricing across agencies performing different functions.

F6. Performance metrics for essential, mission-specific services exist but they are not readily available and standardized, which prevents meaningful public comparison of district effectiveness and undermines accountability.

Response: Partially Agree.

The District supports transparency and the use of meaningful performance information. The MCCSD also supports efforts to identify metrics that can assist the public and governing boards in evaluating agency performance.

However, standardized comparisons must account for significant differences among special districts in their missions, services, funding structures, populations served, and operating environments. Metrics designed to compare water, wastewater, or fire agencies may have little relevance to a community services district providing recreation, refuse, and street lighting services.

Any standardized reporting framework should therefore be sufficiently flexible to ensure that comparisons are meaningful and do not create misleading comparisons among fundamentally different agencies.

F7. Without proactive reform, future consolidations are more likely to occur through crisis-driven intervention, resulting in greater disruption and higher costs.

Response: Partially Disagree.

The District agrees that public agencies should engage in responsible long-term planning and should proactively address financial, operational, and organizational risks. The District does not agree, however, that consolidation is an inevitable or generally necessary response to those risks.

Proactive planning may identify opportunities for shared services, contractual arrangements, partnerships, or other forms of functional collaboration that strengthen agency operations while preserving effective local governance. Formal consolidation should be considered when the circumstances of particular agencies demonstrate that it would produce meaningful benefits, rather than as a presumed endpoint of reform.

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. By January 1, 2027, all special district boards should have conducted their first semiannual consolidation exploration meeting with similar districts and will have established a regular meeting schedule moving forward.

Response: Will Not Be Implemented.

The MCCSD supports communication and collaboration with neighboring and similarly situated public agencies. However, the District does not believe that mandatory semiannual meetings focused specifically on consolidation are warranted for the MCCSD.

The MCCSD provides a unique combination of recreation, refuse, and street lighting services to a small and distinct geographic community. There is no readily apparent similarly situated district with which consolidation would necessarily produce operational or financial benefits.

The District will continue to communicate and collaborate with other public agencies when there are specific opportunities to improve service delivery, reduce costs, share expertise, or otherwise benefit District residents.

R2. By October 1, 2026, the Board of Supervisors should direct the development of comprehensive, cost-efficient shared services (such as IT, legal, finance, HR/payroll, harmonized compensation/benefits package, insurance) for special districts to optimize expenses and secure a Marin-wide acceptable quality standard. First limited-service offerings are encouraged to be made available by January 1, 2027.

Response: Requires Further Analysis.

This recommendation is directed primarily to the Board of Supervisors. The MCCSD would be willing to evaluate shared-service offerings developed by the County where those services are voluntary, cost-effective, appropriately tailored to the needs of smaller districts, and provide demonstrable benefits to District residents.

R3. By January 31, 2027, with the assistance of the County, all districts should develop and publish on their website standardized, comparable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with regard to service pricing, finance, staffing, operations, and customer satisfaction.

Response: Requires Further Analysis.

The MCCSD supports transparency and meaningful measures of agency performance. The District is willing to participate in the development and evaluation of appropriate performance indicators.

However, the usefulness of standardized KPIs will depend on whether they adequately recognize the substantial differences in the functions, size, resources, and communities served by Marin's special districts. The MCCSD believes performance measures should primarily evaluate a district against the services it is charged with providing rather than create comparisons among agencies with materially different missions.

R4. By January 31, 2027, each district should publicly update findings and progress regarding consolidation opportunities, and share those findings with the Board of Supervisors and the public on a semi-annual basis.

Response: Will Not Be Implemented.

For the reasons stated in response to R1, the MCCSD does not believe that establishing an indefinite semiannual reporting process concerning consolidation would be an efficient use of the District's limited administrative resources in the absence of an identified consolidation opportunity.

The District will continue to evaluate opportunities for interagency collaboration and shared services as appropriate and will consider potential consolidation if circumstances arise demonstrating that it could materially improve service delivery, financial sustainability, or organizational resilience for the Marin City community.

R5. By January 31, 2027, the Board of Supervisors should oversee compliance with R1–R4 and update the public on the districts' performance.

Response: Requires Further Analysis.

This recommendation is directed to the Board of Supervisors. To the extent implementation would impose additional reporting requirements on the MCCSD, the District believes such requirements should recognize the differing missions and capacities of special districts and should avoid imposing administrative burdens that outweigh the resulting public benefit.

R6. By October 1, 2026, in the process of implementing R1 and R2, districts should prioritize functional consolidation in operations, procurement, training, and administration as a precursor to formal consolidation.

Response: Requires Further Analysis.

The MCCSD supports collaboration and shared services where they can improve service quality, increase organizational capacity, or reduce costs. The District is willing to evaluate opportunities involving procurement, training, administration, technology, professional services, and other functions where collaboration is practical and beneficial.

The District does not agree, however, that functional collaboration should necessarily be viewed as a “precursor” to formal consolidation. Shared services can be valuable precisely because they allow public agencies to achieve economies and organizational resilience while preserving local governance and accountability. The MCCSD therefore views functional collaboration as an independent tool for improving public services, rather than necessarily as a step toward consolidation.

R7. By October 1, 2026, the district’s board compensation, benefits, length of service, date of term end, and expenses related to board work should be clearly and prominently posted on each district’s website and updated annually.

Response: Will Be Implemented.

The District supports transparency regarding Board membership and compensation and will review its website to ensure that the information identified in the recommendation is clearly available and updated as appropriate.

R8. By June 1, 2027, special districts should adopt term limits of two consecutive four-year terms for all board members. Staggered implementation of term limits to avoid disruptions is encouraged.

Response: Will Not Be Implemented.

The District does not agree that a uniform two-term limit is appropriate for every special district in Marin County. The MCCSD serves a small community, and the pool of residents willing and able to serve on the District Board is necessarily more limited than for larger jurisdictions.

Long-serving board members may also provide valuable institutional knowledge concerning District operations, finances, facilities, community needs, and historical commitments. Voters remain able to determine whether continued service by an incumbent board member is in the community’s best interest.

The District therefore believes the question of board tenure should remain subject to applicable law and the electoral process rather than a uniform countywide standard.

R9. By June 1, 2027, board compensation structures should be reviewed across districts, and considered for adjustment. All components of board compensation should be posted on their website (see best practice example in Appendix B).

Response: Requires Further Analysis.

The District supports transparency regarding compensation provided to elected officials and will ensure that applicable Board compensation information is publicly available.

The District does not believe, however, that compensation should necessarily be standardized across special districts. Appropriate compensation may vary based upon the responsibilities, workload, financial resources, and circumstances of individual agencies. Any review of compensation should account for those differences.