



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
Civil Grand Jury

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City Of Santa Cruz: Preventing Rape and Domestic Violence

Where's The Priority?

Summary

By law, since 1981, the City of Santa Cruz is required under Santa Cruz City Ordinance 81-29 to make the prevention of rape and domestic violence one of its highest priorities. In 2023, the Santa Cruz City Council adopted a Five Year Strategic Plan. The Plan makes no mention of rape and domestic violence.

Over the past decade, the City's Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women has failed to provide the City Council with solid Annual Reports that document City, community, and police efforts to prevent rape and domestic violence. Recent reports have either included no data or limited data. The 2023 CPVAW Joint Report has no metrics on important trends such as whether the City of Santa Cruz still has a higher than average rate of rapes by strangers. What areas of the city were the crimes committed in? Have there been arrests?

Long-standing Commission programs such as the Safe Place Network of local businesses are currently idle. This year the Santa Cruz City Schools District canceled the Commission's popular self-defense classes for middle and high school students. The in-person classes are being replaced with an online self-esteem video.

The City has ended the Commission's thirty five-year access to redacted police reports of rape and domestic violence. These reports enabled the Commission to evaluate police response, respond to complaints and recommend training if needed.

The Grand Jury submits its findings and recommendations to bring the City of Santa Cruz into compliance with City Ordinance 81-29. The personal safety and well-being of the community is at stake.

Table of Contents

Summary	1
Table of Contents	2
Background	3
Scope and Methodology	3
Investigation	4
History Of Commission Work	4
Decline in Report Quality and Frequency	5
Metrics On Reported Rape in the City	6
Commission Programs and Resources	8
Self-Defense	9
Cuts to Self-Defense	9
Safe Place Network	10
Bar Coasters	11
Banners	12
Measuring the City's Support	13
Not In the City Five Year Strategic Plan	13
Decline In Dedicated Staffing	13
Ongoing Budget Reductions	14
Loss Of Visible Location	14
Frequency Of Meetings	15
SCPD And The Commission	15
High Incidence of Stranger Rape	15
Defining Rape	16
FBI And Revised Rape Definition	17
SCPD, CPVAW and the Definition of Rape	17
Commission Access to Redacted Police Reports on Rape	20
Conclusion	20
Findings	21
Recommendations	21
Required Responses	22
Invited Responses	23
Definitions	23
Sources	23
References	23
Appendix A – Figure 8 Full Table	29
Appendix B – Figure 9 Full Table	30

Background

Rape and domestic violence are among the most serious of crimes. Yet they are hidden crimes, ones we would rather not talk about except for high profile cases. When did you last read in the local press about a woman raped in Santa Cruz? Victims of these crimes feel shame, self-blame, fear, and isolation. Perpetrators are rarely arrested, prosecuted, convicted, and sentenced.^[1]

Forty-three years ago, the Santa Cruz community took action to bring rape and domestic violence out of the shadows by making them issues of public concern and public policy. An Initiative was drafted, circulated, and gained sufficient signatures to qualify for the ballot. The Santa Cruz City Council at the time adopted the Initiative rather than put it to a vote of the people. As a result, Santa Cruz City Ordinance 81-29 was passed by the Santa Cruz City Council in 1981.^[2]

The Ordinance required the creation of a City Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women (CPVAW or Commission) to carry out specific actions to help prevent rape and domestic violence in the City. The Ordinance mandates that the Santa Cruz Police Department (SCPD) offer full and open cooperation to the Commission. The Ordinance states that: “It shall be the policy of the City of Santa Cruz that the prevention of rape and domestic violence shall be one of its highest priorities.” Sexual harassment was added to the purview of the Commission in the early 2000’s, however it is not codified in the Ordinance.^[3]

Since 2016 there has been a noticeable decline in the Commission’s visibility and programs. There is little collaboration with relevant community agencies. Detailed information and metrics on rape are no longer presented to the community as in past years. The City of Santa Cruz appears to have significantly reduced its support for the Commission’s mandates. There is no mention of the prevention of rape and domestic violence in the City’s published priorities for the next five years.

This investigation was undertaken to document and explore possible reasons for this decline and recommend solutions. This will hopefully bring the Commission and the City back into compliance with its mandate to help prevent rape and domestic violence in the City of Santa Cruz.

Scope and Methodology

The scope of this investigation is:

- To investigate the effectiveness and function of the City of Santa Cruz Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women, the Santa Cruz Police Department, and the City of Santa Cruz with respect to the mandates of Ordinance 81-29.
- To investigate the decline in the comprehensiveness and usefulness of the Commission’s required Annual Reports.
- To investigate the decline and abandonment of established Commission programs for community awareness and safety.

- To investigate how data on rape is recorded by the Santa Cruz Police Department, in what form it is sent to the Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) and how it is shared with the Commission.

For this investigation the Grand Jury undertook the following actions:

Interviews

- Conducted interviews

Documents and Reports

- Reviewed City Ordinance 81-29
- Reviewed all available past CPVAW Annual Reports

Program Comparison

- Compared past Commission programs and activities with current programs and activities

Staffing and Budgets

- Examined past and current Commission staffing levels
- Examined past and current Commission budgets

Law Enforcement Data

- Reviewed Santa Cruz police statistics on reported rape and domestic violence and the format for submitting data to the UCR
- Reviewed Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) reports on National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) for Rape

Field Trips

- Attended a Commission meeting
- Listened to all Commission meetings since and including November 2023
- Inquired about Commission resources at local bars
- Visited downtown stores listed as members of the Safe Place Network for current evidence of the program

Investigation

History Of Commission Work

The record of work carried out by the Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women is partially captured on its website, which includes Annual Reports to City Council and the CPVAW Historical Timeline.^[4]

The Historical Timeline begins with the Commission's formation in 1981. It stops at 2008. It gives a snapshot of the extensive programming, resources and community outreach that was typical between 1982 and 2008 and which has largely been discontinued.

Some highlights from the timeline are listed below.^[5]

- 1982 Distributed a bilingual Women's Resource Card
- 1983 Emphasis on developing a Self-Defense Program
- 1985 Review of 1983-84 Sexual Assault cases. Many areas of concern identified. An "Officers' Check-list" developed for SCPD
- 1985 Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) initiated and developed
- 1987 Updated "Survivors Feedback Form" for those who reported to SCPD
- 1988 New procedures enabled survivors of domestic violence to obtain an Emergency Protective Order at the scene of the crime
- 1989 Improve services for Latina survivors of domestic violence
- 1990 Self-defense class in Spanish established
- 1992 Outreach to women in Blaine St. Jail
- 1992 Teen Women's Day. Self-defense for women with mental health issues
- 1993-94 Commission coordinator trained SCPD in Domestic Violence awareness
- 1996 Responded to the rapes of three elderly women with media coverage for awareness, teach-ins, and free installation of safety equipment
- 1997 Latina Self-defense program established
- 1998 Self-defense for all female students at Branciforte Junior High
- 2000-01 First Teen Men's Day. CPVAW 20th Anniversary
- 2003-04 Safe Place Network formed
- 2004-05 Bar Coaster Program developed. Banner Program established
- 2005-06 Joint City Committee on Sexual Assault created
- 2006-07 Stakeholders' meeting, 45 representatives from community agencies
- 2007-08 Self-defense in City schools for girls and boys in PE classes established

The Ordinance specifies duties for the Commission and for the SCPD.^{[2] [4]} Performance relative to fulfilling the Ordinance is covered in the following sections.

Decline in Report Quality and Frequency

Ordinance 81-29 requires that the Commission submit an annual report to the City Council documenting in detail City, community, and police efforts to carry out the purposes of the Ordinance. The Ordinance requires the Chief of Police to submit an annual report to the City Council documenting, in detail, police efforts to carry out the purpose of the Ordinance.^[2]

There are no Annual Reports on its website of the Commission's first twenty years of work. The Historical Timeline is the only record from 1981-2005.

The Joint report of 2005-2007 is the earliest listed report. For those years, the CPVAW and SCPD submitted a combined report.^{[6] [7] [8]} Both the 2005-07 Joint Report and the 2005-07 CPVAW Annual Report are comprehensive reports which highlight significant programs and include detailed metrics on reported rape and domestic violence. The

24-page 2005-07 CPVAW Report includes the results of a stakeholders' meeting where forty-five representatives from community agencies, community members, and law enforcement participated in discussions that led to detailed goals and objectives.^[9]

The Joint Reports and Annual Reports of 2008-10 and 2012 are also comprehensive, including detailed data on domestic violence and rape. The 2014-16 Annual Report is briefer than earlier reports. It does include data on rape and domestic violence but not as detailed as in the earlier reports.

Between 2017 and 2020 there are no Commission Annual Reports. In 2018 the Commission hired consultants to do a Needs Assessment. The resulting document references the entire county, does not focus on the city, and has little to add that is new or relevant to the Commission's mandate.^[10]

The 2020-21 and 2022 Reports are brief three-page narratives with no data on domestic violence or rape.^{[6] [7]}

In May, 2024 the Commission and the SCPD completed a brief 2023 Joint Report. More details about this Report are under the section, SCPD and The Commission.^[11]

For the first two CPVAW meetings of 2024, SCPD made available annual statistics on rape, domestic violence, homicide, and stalking. However there have been no comprehensive Annual Reports from the SCPD to City Council from 2012 to 2022.^[12]

Metrics On Reported Rape in the City

Publicly accessible data on the profile of those who commit rape, where, what percentage are arrested and the outcome of arrests is important for community awareness and safety. Such data were provided in detail in earlier Commission reports but are not included in the three recent reports. The Commission has in the past made repeated requests for a tracking system to determine the outcome of an arrest. No such system or data have been provided.^[13]

The actual incidence of rape in the City of Santa Cruz is unknown and can only be estimated. Reference to numbers in the Commission Annual Reports is based on rapes reported to the Santa Cruz Police Department. Reported rape is a smaller percentage of all rapes committed and estimates vary. Data from the Rape and Incest National Network (RAINN) estimate between a quarter to a third of all rapes are reported to law enforcement with differences based on ethnicity, age, class, and degree of physical injury.^[1]

Note: The number of crimes listed may not equal the number of victims. A person may commit more than one crime on one victim.

Detailed information up to 2016

Based on redacted police reports (all personal information removed) the Commission until 2016 gathered detailed metrics on rape and domestic violence. These metrics gave important information to the community about these crimes. Information on rape included:

- Location of the crime by police beat (West, East, Beach, Central, Downtown)
- Time of year

- Whether perpetrator and victim were local or visitor
- Age and ethnicity of perpetrator and victim
- Whether weapons or alcohol were involved
- Whether the perpetrator was a stranger, a brief encounter (less than 24 hours) or an acquaintance
- Percentage of arrests

The Figures which follow illustrate the detail and approach taken in earlier reports.

Detailed Information on Rape in Past Reports: From Joint Report 2008-2010

Figure 1 provides three data points on whether the person committing rape was an acquaintance, briefly encountered within 24 hours or a complete stranger. Such information is important for community awareness, preparedness, and crime prevention.

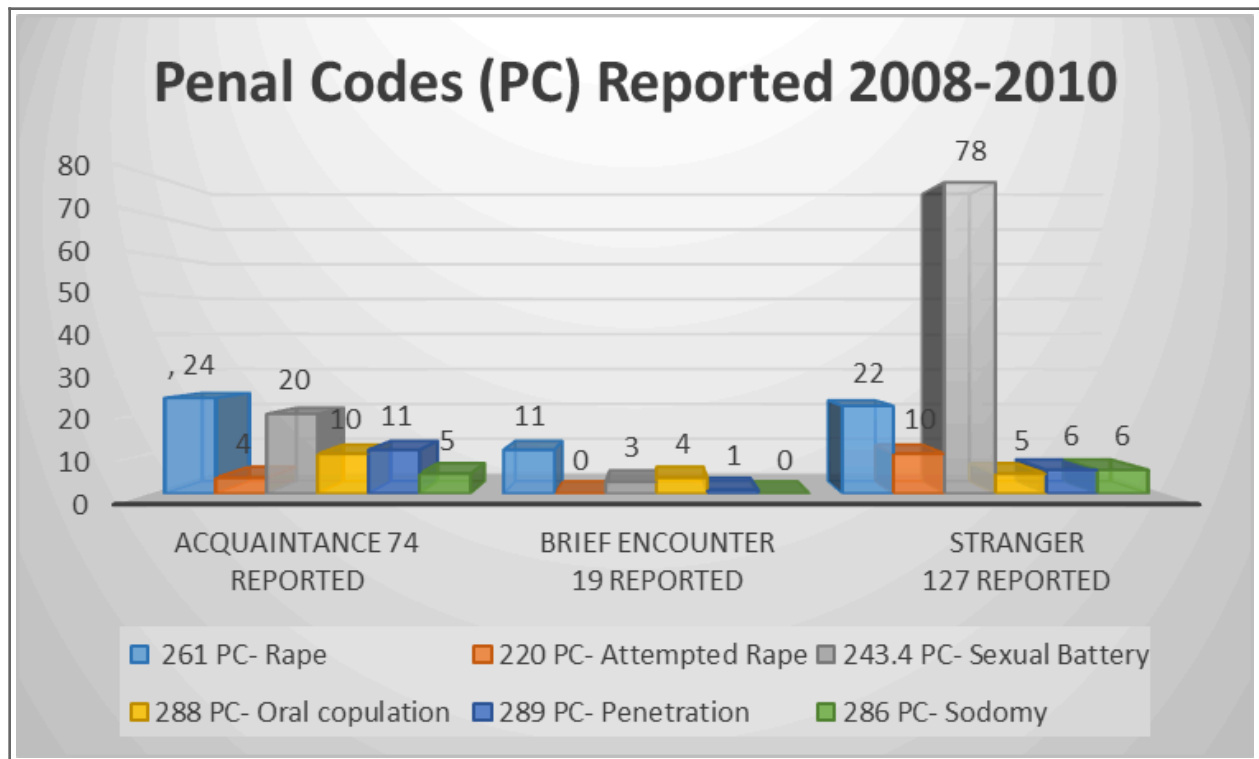


Figure 1. Reported Penal Codes on Sexual Assault 2008-2010.^[14]

Figure 2 indicates whether the perpetrator and the victim were local residents or visitors. Such information helps replace assumptions with facts.

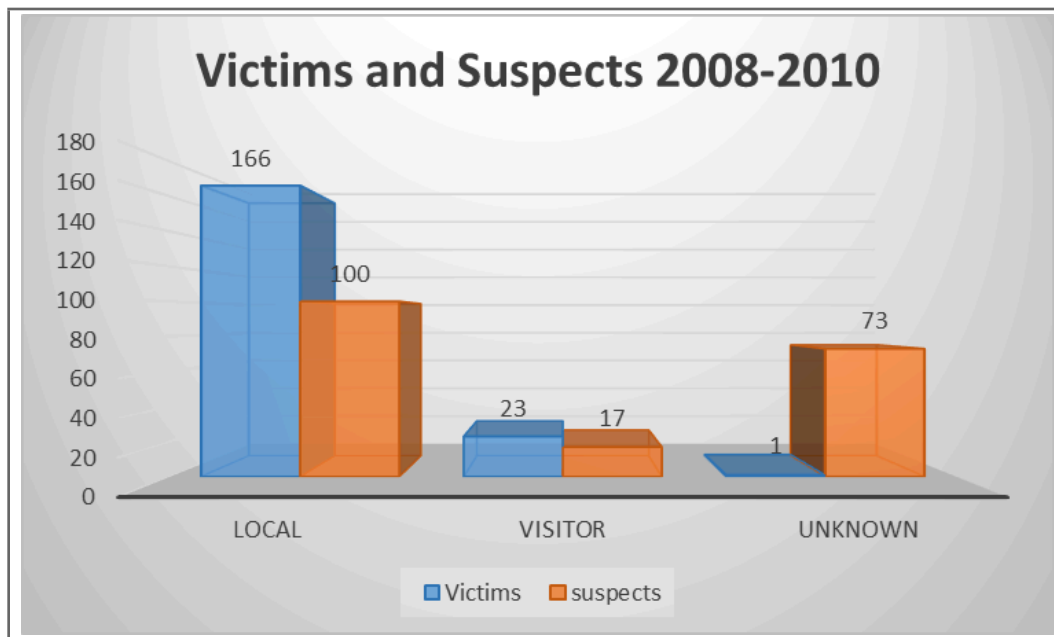


Figure 2. Data from 2008-2010 Joint SCPD CPVAW Report-Victims & Suspects^[14]

Commission Programs and Resources

The Commission has a history of providing the community with a wide variety of programs and resources for raising awareness of and helping to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault.

Covid had an understandable impact on the ability of the Commission to provide programs during 2020-22 and half of 2023. Since then there have been a few one-time well-attended events, a number of Public Service Announcements (PSA's) and events for Domestic Violence Month. However, the established, popular CPVAW programs have largely disappeared, with no explanation on why they were ended. Other programs have been neglected. Visibility of CPVAW and, by association, the City's commitment to public safety has declined. To document this decline the Grand Jury investigated the following major programs.

Self-Defense

Free or low cost self-defense classes offered to the community at London Nelson Center and to Santa Cruz City District Schools have been a long-time key component of CPVAW's visibility and resources for personal safety. Their progression is documented in the History of the Commission Work section of this report.

Establishing self-defense classes in District Schools was described in the 2007-8 Annual Report as an "incredible milestone" and a "goal that CPVAW has had for years." The following entry from the 2010 Annual Report captures their significance:

Since 2007, the CPVAW has partnered with Santa Cruz City Schools to offer safety skills/self-defense classes to girls and boys at local middle and high schools. Almost 5,000 students have taken these classes in the past four academic years. This program, scheduled during physical education classes, provides information on awareness, avoidance, verbal techniques, and physical skills for students. Evaluations from students and teachers continue to indicate that these classes are valued and successful in teaching girls and boys important skills that assist in avoiding or facing difficult, uncomfortable situations.^[15]

Cuts to Self-Defense

Cuts to the Commission's self-defense programs have been made over the past seven years.

In 2017 the Commission significantly cut the community self-defense program. This issue of public concern was covered by the weekly newspaper, The Good Times.^[16] In November 2023, at the regular CPVAW meeting, the sixteen-year history of self-defense classes in middle and high schools came to an end. An online video, *Vector Solutions*, will replace in-person self-defense classes in District Schools. The video covers issues such as stress management, self-harm awareness, conflict resolution, students' safety, wellness, and healthy relationships. While useful topics, they are different skills than those taught and practiced in a self-defense class.^[17]

This decision was opposed by members of the public who spoke to the Commission at the meeting. Drawing on personal experience, they stressed the need for in-person, hands-on self-defense classes. Long-time City self-defense instructor, Leonie Sherman, cautioned against substituting in-person self-defense classes with an online course. She spoke of the need for a local instructor's physical presence to ensure correct techniques, to connect with students and to respond to local situations.^[18]

]

Safe Place Network

The network of “Safe Places” was initiated by the Commission in 1999. It is described as “A collaborative effort by the Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women, the Downtown Association, the Downtown Commission and Monarch Services (formerly Women’s Crisis Support-Defensa de Mujeres)”.^[19] The network of forty- one businesses, mostly in the downtown, identified by a decal in their window (Figure 3 below), offered a safe place for anyone who felt threatened on the street. Upon request, a staff member in the business could offer resources and a place to wait until a resource responded.

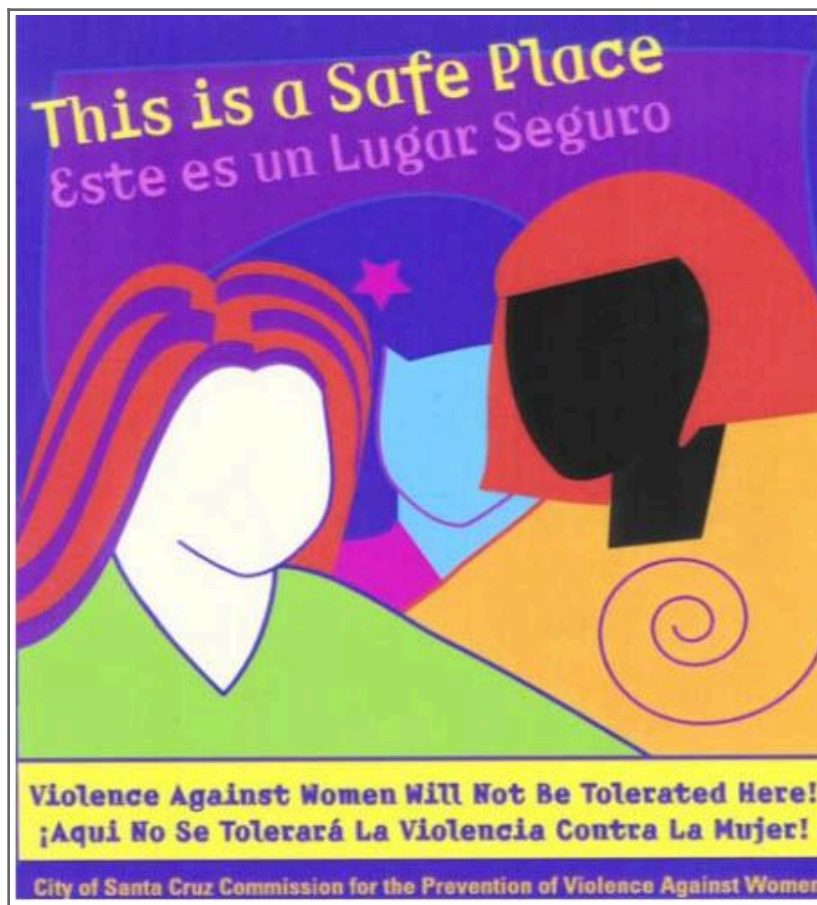


Figure 3. Safe Place Window Sticker from CPVAW
Annual Report 2005-07^[20]

The Safe Place Network is still listed on the Commission’s website. Out of the forty-one businesses listed, fourteen have closed. Of the remaining businesses, only two still have stickers in their storefront windows.^[21]

The Grand Jury could find no record of why this important program and safety resource has not been updated and continued. The Safe Place Network costs little to run and offers a valuable resource for our community and visitors if ever in need of an immediate safe haven in the downtown area. Without CPVAW active support, residents and visitors lose this valuable resource.

Bar Coasters

The Coaster Program was introduced during April of 2005 to raise awareness regarding the issues of alcohol, sexual assault, and consent. Since the first distribution in 2005, more than thirty bars in the City of Santa Cruz, from Seabright on the Eastside to Mission St. and the downtown area have participated.^[22] The coaster program started with a consent and alcohol message and then was updated with the GHB (date rape drug) testing feature. This was an effective way to keep the awareness message front and center with the public.



Figure 4. Drug Testing Drink Coaster - Juror supplied picture^[8]

The 2020-21 and 2022 Annual Reports refer to a continuation of the coaster program with similar-themed posters and brochures. The Grand Jury could find no evidence of such support materials in a random selection of local bars. Coasters were found in only one bar after the barkeep spent five minutes searching along the back wall of the bar. Staff in other establishments who were asked said they had heard of the program and were interested but had no materials.^[23]

Banners

These public awareness banners, a program initiated in 2005 (shown in Figure 5 below), were displayed twice a year on top of street poles along Pacific Avenue and major city corridors.



Figure 5. CPVAW Banner Project From CPVAW Annual Report 2005-07^[22]

From the description in the 2010 Report: “Banners are displayed in April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Banners are again displayed in October for Domestic Violence Prevention Month. The goal of the CPVAW Banner Project is to raise awareness and to continue to keep the issues of sexual assault and domestic violence as a priority in the City of Santa Cruz.”^[22]

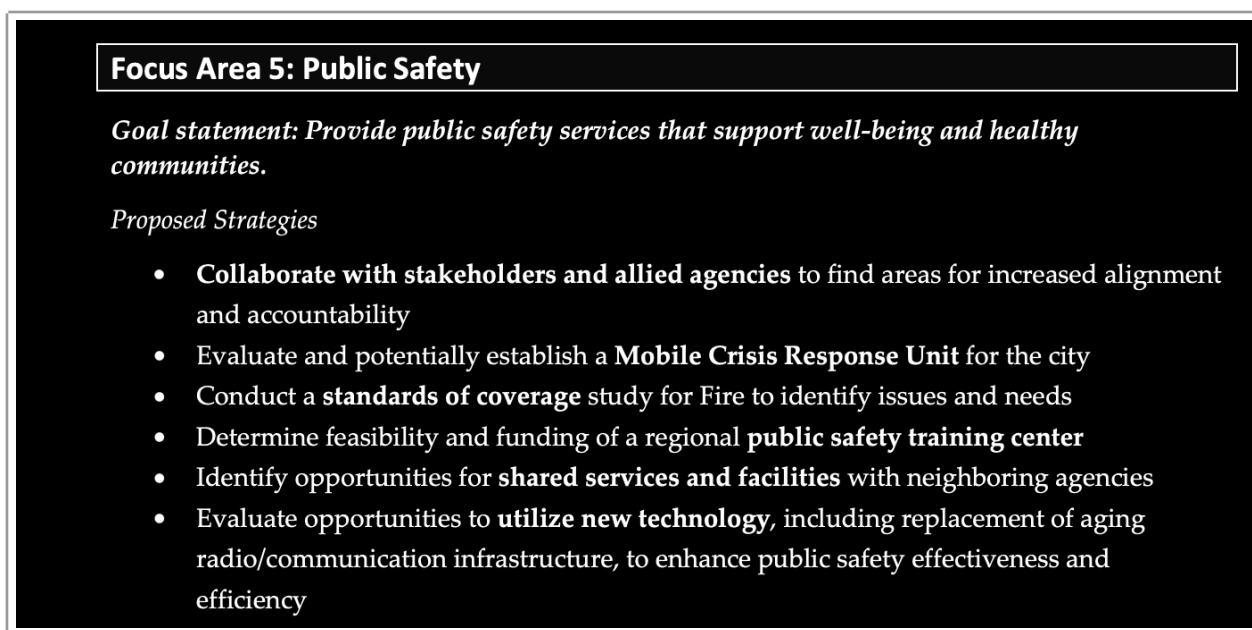
From a review of the Annual Reports, it seems the banner program has been dormant for more than a decade. The Grand Jury could find no record of this program being officially discontinued.

Measuring the City's Support

The Grand Jury evaluated the following indicators of support for and commitment to the Commission's mandate: the City's Five Year Strategic Plan, Commission staffing, budget, community visibility and frequency of meetings.

Not In the City Five Year Strategic Plan

In 2023 the City Council adopted a Strategic Plan which establishes priority areas of focus for the City over the next five years. There are six Focus Areas in the Plan. Focus Area 5 (shown in Figure 6 below) is Public Safety. There is no inclusion of preventing rape and domestic violence under Public Safety, nor under any of the other five Focus areas.^[24] The City confirmed that the Strategic Plan is a statement of the City's priorities.^[25]



Focus Area 5: Public Safety

Goal statement: Provide public safety services that support well-being and healthy communities.

Proposed Strategies

- **Collaborate with stakeholders and allied agencies** to find areas for increased alignment and accountability
- Evaluate and potentially establish a **Mobile Crisis Response Unit** for the city
- Conduct a **standards of coverage** study for Fire to identify issues and needs
- Determine feasibility and funding of a regional **public safety training center**
- Identify opportunities for **shared services and facilities** with neighboring agencies
- Evaluate opportunities to **utilize new technology**, including replacement of aging radio/communication infrastructure, to enhance public safety effectiveness and efficiency

Figure 6. From the 2023-28 Five Year Strategic Plan for the City of Santa Cruz^[24]

Decline In Dedicated Staffing

Since the Commission's inception, and until 2016, the City had funded a dedicated twenty-hour per week Commission Coordinator. The position required a knowledge of the issues as well as skills in event planning, outreach, and publicity. A dedicated staff position was considered necessary because CPVAW is not tied to a City Department. Other commissions such as Planning and Parks and Recreation are tied to City Departments with multiple employees to assist with their commissions' work.

In 2016, the Commission lost its dedicated staff. The Coordinator and her predecessor had worked as Commission Coordinators for over twenty years. From the Historical Timeline and Annual Reports, it appears that their work ensured ongoing successful programs, visibility for the issues and effective partnership with relevant agencies and community groups. According to a city staff report, the position was eliminated.^[26]

Since the loss of the dedicated Coordinator position, the City Manager’s office has allocated employees from that Department to work a few hours per week for the Commission: to run Commission meetings, keep minutes and follow the Brown Act regarding posting of meetings. The turnover is high. The staff time available is low.

This problem is captured in the words of the then Commission chair Newman from November, 2017:

Newman says the CPVAW’s mission hasn’t changed, but admits that recent staff turnover and reduced allocated staff time for the commission has made its goals more of a challenge. The commission has had three coordinators in the last two years, and Newman says the process of commissioner appointments—which come from the City Council—as well as the amount of time needed to catch up new appointees, makes transitions difficult.^[27]

From 2017 to 2024, the staffing situation is basically unchanged. It appears that without a dedicated staff person with sufficient time and knowledge of the issues, since 2016, the Commission’s programs, visibility, reports, and connections with the community has declined.^[28]

Ongoing Budget Reductions

Don’t tell me what you value. Show me your budget, and I’ll tell you what you value. President Biden quoting his father, March 2023.^[29]

The Commission’s annual budget has always been modest, covering the Coordinator’s half-time salary plus supplies, administrative costs, and self-defense classes. In 2007-08 the City Council cut the Commission’s \$69,992 budget to \$50,759. In 2010-11 it cut the budget to \$46,328. In 2023-24 council further cut the budget to \$38,869.^[30]

At its November 1, 2023 meeting, the Commission voted to forward a budget request for 2025 for a status quo budget of \$25,202 plus \$15,000 for self-defense: a total of \$40,202. The Commission voted for an additional request for a part-time staff with benefits. The City Council will vote on all department requests at its budget hearings in late May or early June 2024.^[31]

Loss Of Visible Location

For over a decade the Commission had a storefront office on Cedar Street. This site gave public visibility for the issues and access to the Commission Coordinator for information and resources.

After the City sold the building in 2010, the Commission had to move. It had space for a number of years in a room upstairs in the Parks and Recreation department. The Commission was then moved to the City Manager’s office. This site is largely invisible to the public. According to discussion at Commission meetings, many resources, such as the banners and past documents, have been misplaced or lost. Since April 15, 2022,

there has been no mention of any CPVAW program or support of the Commission in the City of Santa Cruz City Manager's weekly update.^[32]

Frequency Of Meetings

For the first twenty-five to thirty years the Commission held monthly meetings. That frequency, combined with a half-time dedicated staff person for CPVAW's work, produced robust programs, community visibility and effective partnerships.

During the past decade, the City halved the number of CPVAW's regular meetings to once every two months or six times a year. With such infrequent meetings, the Commission's programs and their visibility to the media and the public have suffered.

SCPD And The Commission

High Incidence of Stranger Rape

When a rape is reported to the SCPD, if the perpetrator is a stranger, community alerts posted with suspect description and area of crime committed are important tools for community safety. The Joint Report of 2008 noted that "alert" flyers were posted in the community when a sexual assault occurred. The Report stated, "Commission staff and the Parks and Recreation Department work closely with SCPD to get the flyers out into the community as quickly as possible." There is no evidence that this protocol is currently being carried out.^[33]

Data gathered from police reports up to 2016 showed that the City of Santa Cruz is above the norm for rapes committed by strangers. The national average of rapes committed by strangers is just under twenty percent. The data up to 2016 show that the percentage of reported rapes committed by strangers is higher in the City of Santa Cruz than the national average. Even allowing for the fact that stranger rape is more likely to be reported than non-stranger rape, the city's percentage is very high.^[1]

Stranger rape is not singled out as being more serious than acquaintance or brief encounter rapes. It is highlighted because the public needs to know if an unknown rapist is still at large in the community. When the suspect is a stranger and has not been arrested, SCPD needs to alert the community.

Note: National averages do not track the brief encounter category. For the purpose of this report, the word "stranger" is used as it is defined in the reports and does not include a brief encounter. The rationale for creating the brief encounter category is on page 6 of the 2008 Joint Report.^[14]

Figure 7 below shows the relationship between victim and perpetrator as compiled from Commission Reports 2005-2010. These reports use the term sexual assault, which covers all felony sexual crimes including rape. They include the crime of sexual battery which can be a misdemeanor or a felony depending on the details of the crime. The 2014-16 report lists percentages only.

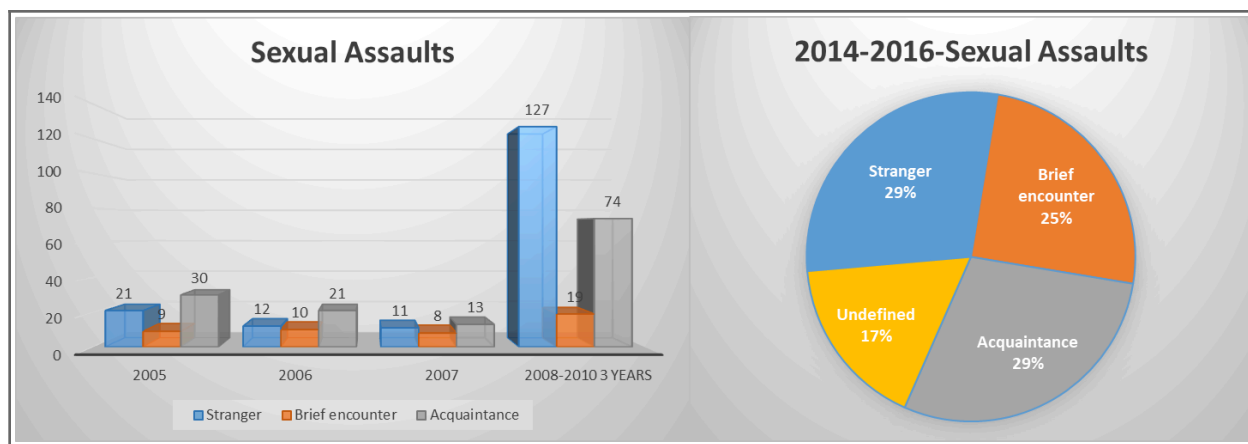


Figure 7. Relationship between victim and suspect. 2005-2016^{[34] [35] [36]}

There are no CPVAW Reports after 2016 that gather such data. Without available data and public reports, the community has no way of knowing whether Santa Cruz continues to have a high incidence of rapes committed by strangers. Such knowledge is crucial for community safety and crime prevention.

At its May 1, 2024 meeting, the Commission approved a 2023 Annual Report and Joint Report. While this Report includes data regarding the numbers of rapes and domestic violence incidents reported to SCPD, it does not include the detailed metrics that were featured in earlier Reports up until 2016. There is no information about which police beats, or areas of town the rapes were committed in, no data on age, ethnicity, use of alcohol or weapons and no information on the percentage of rapes committed by strangers. These long standing metrics are crucial for community awareness. It is important for the public to know if the high percentage of stranger rapes in Santa Cruz is a continuing trend.

In the absence of any such data, the 2023 Report, under the heading “Who are the Perpetrators?” highlights the following national statistic: “The majority of perpetrators are someone known to the victim. Approximately 8 out of 10 sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim.”^[1]

This general statement and metric is accurate as an average for the nation, but it is not necessarily accurate for the City of Santa Cruz. When data on victim/perpetrator relationships were tracked by the Commission, over fifty percent of sexual assaults reported in the city of Santa Cruz involved an assailant who was a complete stranger to the victim. The Grand Jury believes that by referencing this generic **national** statistic the City is minimizing stranger rape and misleading the public into a possible false sense of security.

Defining Rape

A complaint filed with this year’s Grand Jury claims that the SCPD is not using the current Uniform Crime Report (UCR) definition of rape. The complaint asserted that by not using the current definition, neither the Commission nor the community are receiving

accurate data on rape. The answer as to whether the SCPD is using the current definition is complex.

To assess the validity of this claim the Grand Jury investigated the definitions of rape and how they are applied.

FBI And Revised Rape Definition

Since 1929, in an effort to track crime on a national level, the FBI has gathered crime data from local police departments under the UCR Program. Data, including that of rape, are submitted monthly by police departments to the UCR.

The current UCR definition of rape was adopted in 2014. Rape is now the umbrella term to cover all forms of felony sexual assault, previously submitted under their separate Penal Code entries. This is how the FBI described the new definition:

Beginning in 2013, the FBI UCR Program defines Rape for SRS UCR purposes as, 'Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.' The new definition updated the 80-year-old historical definition of rape which was 'carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will.' Effectively, the revised definition expands rape to include both male and female victims and offenders, and reflects the various forms of sexual penetration understood to be rape, especially nonconsenting acts of sodomy, and sexual assaults with objects.^[37]

The new definition includes the rape of males, attempted rape, and sex offenses beyond forced vaginal penetration. This change makes it a more comprehensive, inclusive definition.

SCPD, CPVAW and the Definition of Rape

A Question of Definition

The data on rape that SCPD presents to the CPVAW is different from what SCPD posts on its website. Entries for Rape on the SCPD website under Crime Data are listed as UCR numbers (revised rape definition). It should be noted that data prior to 2017 is more detailed than the single number listed after 2017.^[38]

At the first two CPVAW meetings in 2024, SCPD shared Data Collection Monthly Reports for Sexual Assault. Each Data Collection table covered the years 2021-2023 with the first three months of 2024 added to the second Report. Both Data Collection tables for 2021-2023 should be identical since they cover the same period. See Figures 8 and 9 below.

Unlike on their website, SCPD Data Collection Tables are not using the revised UCR definition of rape. They list sexual assaults under their separate Penal Codes. Under the column Rape Cases the data includes only spousal rape and the old definition of rape. Using data for the year 2021 for example, a reader would conclude that there were 18 rapes. To know the UCR rape totals, you must add up all the separate Penal Codes.

If the other forms of sexual assault are included, consistent with the UCR definition of rape, there were 26 rapes. **By not using the revised UCR definition of rape, rapes are essentially being under-counted by more than 40%.**

	Domestic Violence/Battery Calls	Domestic Violence/Battery Cases 273.5 PC (Felony)& 243(e)(1) PC (Misdemeanor)	Homicide-Intimate Partner (Felony)	Sex Assault (Other) 243.4 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)	Rape Cases 261 PC & 262 PC (Felony)	Sodomy 286 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)	Forcible Sexual Penetration w/a Foreign Object 289 PC (Felony)	Assault to Commit Rape 220 PC (Felony)	Stalking 646.9 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)
2021	339	218	1	41	18	0	6	2	20
2022	343	235	0	30	20	3	5	6	22
2023	295	201	0	21	8	3	4	5	17

Figure 8. 2021-2023 Sexual Assaults Using Separate Penal Code Entries with old Rape Definition, from SCPD January 2024 Data Collection. Annual totals for easier viewing.^[39] Full table in [Appendix A](#).

	Domestic Violence/Battery Calls	Domestic Violence/Battery Cases 273.5 PC(Felony)& 243(e) (1) PC (Misdemeanor)	Homicide-Intimate Partner (Felony)	Sex Assault (other) 243.4 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)	All Rape Cases 261 PC & 262 ^{1,6} PC (Felony)	Sodomy 286 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony) ⁵	Oral Copulation 287 ^{2,4} PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)	Forcible Sexual Penetration w/a foreign Object 289 PC (Felony)	Assault to Commit Rape 220 PC (Felony)	Stalking 646.9 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)
2021	339	218	1	41	18	0	5	9 (6)	2	20
2022	343	235	0	30	23 (20)	4 (3)	4	9 (5)	6	22 (17)
2023	323 (295)	202 (201)	0	21	17 (8)	4 (3)	1	7 (4)	5	17

Data in (parenthesis) was previously published by the SCPD as the January 2024 data collection

Notes

1. PC 262 repealed on October 8, 2021, AB 1171)
2. PC 288a oral copulation, was changed to PC 287 on January 1, 2019
3. UCR Summary totals the number of victims, not the number of cases-as reported in the table above
4. PC 287 includes PC's 288a(b)(a), 288a(c)(2)(a), 288a (c)(3)
5. One case involving PC 288.7(A) and 286 counted as one for sodomy count
6. One case involving PC 264.1 and 261 counted as one for rape count

Figure 9. 2021-2023 Sexual Assaults Using Separate Penal Code Entries with old Rape Definition, from SCPD May 2024 Data Collection. Annual totals only.^[40] Full table in [Appendix B](#).

A Question of Accuracy

Of serious concern is that the data in Figure 8 and Figure 9 do not match, despite being identical data sheets for the same years 2021-23. In Figure 9, the Grand Jury entered the number of rapes from Figure 8 in parentheses so readers can see the difference. Both numbers should be identical.

One example: In Figure 8, the number entered for 2023 is eight rapes. In Figure 9, using the same definition, the number entered for 2023 is seventeen rapes. This is a

difference of more than 100%. It is not possible to know which is the correct number. SCPD must provide the Commission and the public with accurate data on rape. This is not a question of definition but of accuracy.

As previously noted, SCPD on its website under Crime Data is using the UCR definition of rape. However, the annual totals on the SCPD website for rape do not consistently match the aggregate numbers in the above Crime Data sheets. For example, for 2023, the UCR number on the SCPD website is twenty-one rapes. On Figure 8 when you sum the separate Penal Codes the number is twenty but on Figure 9 the number for the same year is thirty-four.

This discrepancy cannot be explained by the footnotes under Figure 9. Footnote #3 states that UCR tracks the number of victims while SCPD tracks the number of cases, explaining why the numbers may be different. But that footnote applies only for the year 2021. For that year, the total UCR figure on SCPD's website is twenty-six which is the same number as on Figure 8. However, for that same year, Figure 9 has thirty-four rapes.^[39]

These examples suggest there is a serious need for oversight and review for accuracy of the SCPD's data collection before being published.

National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and Rape

An overview of this reporting system is helpful for a fuller understanding of how rape is now defined and what additional data is submitted to the FBI for public awareness.^[40]

In 2016, the FBI started transitioning to a new reporting format, which they expected to be completed by 2021. This system, the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), aims to “enhance the quantity, quality and timeliness of crime data collection...and to improve the methodology used in computing, analyzing, auditing and publishing the collected crime statistics.”^[37] California has CIBRS, which is the same as NIBRS with additional specific data elements.^[41]

NIBRS uses the new UCR definition of Rape. It also defines the various felony sex offenses that fall under the term Rape.

NIBRS Gathers Important Rape Metrics

The Grand Jury learned that in 2024, the SCPD started using this enhanced data system for their submission to the FBI for crime data gathering.^[42]

Both CIBRS and NIBRS require the submission of more crime elements than aggregate numbers. Non-identifying details of both victim and offender submitted to NIBRS include: age, sex, race, ethnicity, use of alcohol or drugs by the offender, use of weapons and relationship of victim to offender. This data is gathered from police departments, such as SCPD, nationwide and published for public information.^[43]

Since the SCPD gathers this data for submission to CIBRS and NIBRS, such data should be available on a regular basis for the Commission as well as on the SCPD website. The Commission is currently not receiving the data as described above.

This more detailed data could then easily be incorporated into the Commission's Annual Reports. The increased data will enable the public to have a clearer understanding and awareness of rape and rape trends in the city of Santa Cruz, including whether the City has a continued trend of a significant number of rapes committed by strangers.^[42]

Commission Access to Redacted Police Reports on Rape

There are two reasons the Commission requires access to redacted SCPD reports on rape and domestic violence. One is to gather information for the city and the community to have a more detailed and accurate understanding of rape trends. For instance, what communities or neighborhoods might be at risk or whether the high incidence of rapes by strangers is a continuing pattern. The other reason is to evaluate the quality of SCPD's response to rape and domestic violence.

Ordinance 81-29 Section 5d, 4 and 5 states that the Duties of the Commission are:

- To hear citizens' complaints and recommendations about the City Police Department's service to those who have been raped or battered, and to evaluate such input.
- To present recommendations to the City Council regarding activities of the Police Department related to this Ordinance.
- To make recommendations to the City Council regarding police training in the areas of rape and domestic violence.^[2]

The Commission has a thirty-five year history of reviewing redacted police reports. The redacted cases have always been "closed" cases. No active cases or cases involving children were requested.^[5] Over the past year, the City has denied the Commission access to redacted police reports. The Grand Jury asked to review the City's reasoning for this denial. The response from the City attorney referred to Government Code Section 7926.600 as the reason for disallowing access. The Grand Jury did not see the relevance of this Code to the issue of access to redacted reports of rape.

Conclusion

City Ordinance 81-29 Section 3 (a) states, "It shall be the policy of the City of Santa Cruz that the prevention of rape and domestic violence shall be one of its highest priorities." It is clear from each priority criterion evaluated for this investigation that the City is ignoring its mandate. This inaction leaves the community vulnerable and ill-informed with respect to rape and domestic violence. By adopting the Grand Jury's recommendations, the City can bridge the gulf between their long-standing legal obligations and their current neglect of these critical services. The result will be a community better informed, better prepared, and less vulnerable to rape and domestic violence.

Findings

- F1.** Since 2016, the lack of comprehensive Annual Reports with detailed metrics on rape, including the tracking of stranger rape, leaves the community less informed, more vulnerable, and less safe.
- F2.** By highlighting a generic national statistic on stranger rape, rather than assessing local metrics in the CPVAW 2023 Report, the City is minimizing stranger rape and misleading the public into a possible false sense of security.
- F3.** The lack of attention to long-time Commission programs such as the Safe Place Network and the Bar Coaster program leaves residents and visitors without important resources for their personal safety.
- F4.** The loss of the in-person self-defense program for boys and girls in Santa Cruz City Schools lessens students' ability to prevent sexual assault and interpersonal violence, inconsistent with the mandate of Ordinance 81-29.
- F5.** The City's replacement of a dedicated 20-hour per week Commission staff position with rotating staff with minimal hours has resulted in a loss of visibility for the prevention of rape and domestic violence, a loss of community connections, a lack of programs, inadequate resource distribution and less public awareness.
- F6.** The City's refusal to allow the Commission continued access to redacted police reports prevents the Commission from making recommendations for police training and evaluating community complaints as required by Ordinance.
- F7.** The SCPD's decision to drop stranger rape alerts and case-by-case updates leaves the community unaware about this serious crime and therefore less safe.
- F8.** The inconsistencies the Grand Jury found in SCPD's rape numbers means the public, the CPVAW and the City have no accurate metrics about reported rape, leaving the community ill-informed and Annual Commission Reports unreliable.
- F9.** The SCPD and the Commission's lack of a consistent definition of rape leads to public confusion and potential undercounting of rape crimes in the City.
- F10.** The Five Year Strategic Plan's failure to include the prevention of rape and domestic violence leaves the community less aware and less safe.
- F11.** The City Manager's Weekly Update to the community has not highlighted the work of the CPVAW for the past two years, effectively relegating the prevention of rape and domestic violence to a low priority, leaving the public uninformed.

Recommendations

- R1.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City Council fund a dedicated staff person for the Commission with skills commensurate to the need for program and resource development, community outreach and visibility, data research and report writing and have such position advertised by December 31, 2024. (F5, F3)

- R2.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City Council reevaluate the legal ability of CPVAW commissioners to access redacted police reports of rape as described in this investigation, and present the results of that research by December 31, 2024. (F6)
- R3.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City Council begin evaluating options with the Santa Cruz City School District to reinstate the in-person self-defense program for middle and high school students of all genders by January 31, 2025. (F4)
- R4.** The Grand Jury recommends that the SCPD update its website to include the detailed metrics on Rape Incidents submitted to NIBRS and CIBRS, ensuring all data entries are accurate and available at each meeting of the CPVAW, and have this in place by January 31, 2025. (F8, F9)
- R5.** The Grand Jury recommends that the SCPD reinstate community alerts for incidents of stranger rape, with case-by-case updates, by December 31, 2024. (F7)
- R6.** The Grand Jury recommends that the Commission and the SCPD submit comprehensive annual reports as called for in Ordinance 81-29, using the 2005-07 reports as a model, with the 2024 Annual Report placed on the Commission's agenda by December 31, 2024 and future reports submitted on a consistent, annual basis. (F1)
- R7.** The Grand Jury recommends that the 2023 Report be amended to remove the national entry on stranger rape, replacing it with accurate data for the City of Santa Cruz by December 31, 2024. (F2)
- R8.** The Grand Jury recommends that the CPVAW update the status of the Safe Place Network and the Bar Coasters program. If the programs are to be discontinued, a public CPVAW meeting is advised for that decision. If the programs are to be continued, the date of January 31, 2025 is recommended for the full reinstatement of these programs. (F3)
- R9.** The Grand Jury recommends that Focus Area 5, Public Safety of the 2023-28 Five Year Strategic Plan include an entry prioritizing the prevention of rape and domestic violence, as mandated by Ordinance 81-29, and published by February 28, 2025. (F10)
- R10.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City Manager increase the visibility of the CPVAW programs and events by publishing relevant information, at least quarterly, in the City Manager's Weekly Update and that the first article be published by December 31, 2024. (F11)

Required Responses

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Findings</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Respond Within/ Respond By</i>
Santa Cruz City Council	F1–F11	R1–R10	90 Days September 25, 2024

Invited Responses

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Findings</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Respond Within/ Respond By</i>
Santa Cruz Chief of Police	F1, F6–F9	R4–R6	90 Days September 25, 2024
Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women	F1–F3, F8	R4, R6, R7	90 Days September 25, 2024
Santa Cruz City Manager	F11	R10	90 Days September 25, 2024
Superintendent, Santa Cruz City Schools	F4	R3	90 Days September 25, 2024

Definitions

- **CIBRS:** California Incident Based Reporting System
- **CPVAW:** Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women
- **FBI:** Federal Bureau of Investigation
- **NIBRS:** National Incident-Based Reporting System
- **RAINN:** Rape and Incest National Network
- **SCPD:** Santa Cruz Police Department
- **UCR:** Universal Crime Report

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Appendix A – Figure 8 Full Table^[39]

	Domestic Violence/ Battery Calls	Domestic Violence/ Battery Cases 273.5 PC (Felony) & 243(e)(1) PC (Misdemeanor)	Homicide- Intimate Partner (Felony)	Sex Assault (Other) 243.4 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)	Rape Cases 261 PC & 262 PC (Felony)	Sodomy 286 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)	Forcible Sexual Penetration w/ a Foreign Object 289 PC (Felony)	Assault To Commit Rape 220 PC (Felony)	Stalking 646.9 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)
2021									
January	26	14	0	3	1	0	1*	0	0
February	19	14	0	5	3	0	0	0	0
March	30	14	0	3	2	0	2	1	1
April	23	12	0	5	1	0	0	0	2
May	41	26	0	3	1	0	1*	0	1
June	31	21	0	6	2	0	0	0	3
July	24	18	1	6	0	0	0	0	1
August	19	13	0	5	0	0	1*	1	2
September	39	27	0	1	3	0	1	0	3
October	36	25	0	3	2	0	0	0	4
November	33	19	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
December	18	15	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	339	218	1	41	18	0	6	2	20
2022									
January	21	19	0	0	4	0	0	1	3
February	26	22	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
March	18	14	0	7	1	1*	0	1	1
April	23	19	0	2	2	0	0	0	1
May	30	22	0	3	3	1*	1*	0	3
June	35	22	0	4	1	0	1*	0	2
July	37	25	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
August	35	23	0	3	2	0	0	0	3
September	33	16	0	2	1	0	1*	0	2
October	32	20	0	2	2	1*	1*	1*	3
November	26	17	0	1	2	0	0	0	2
December	27	16	0	3	0	0	0	2	1
	343	235	0	30	20	3	5	6	22
2023									
January	28	18	0	3	1	0	0	0	0
February	26	9	0	1	0	0	1	1	3
March	26	15	0	5	0	1	1*	1	1
April	33	23	0	1	3	2*	1*	0	0
May	35	19	0	3	1	0	0	1*	2
June	30	23	0	0	2	0	0	1	1
July	33	22	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
August	32	18	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
September	35	20	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
October	17	6	0	2	1	0	1*	1	4
November	-	11	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
December	-	17	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
	295	201	0	21	8	3	4	5	17

* Associated with another reported case

Appendix B – Figure 9 Full Table^[40]

	Domestic Violence/ Battery Calls	Domestic Violence/ Battery Cases 273.5 PC (Felony) & 243(e)(1) PC (Misdemeanor)	Homicide- Intimate Partner (Felony)	Sex Assault (Other) 243.4 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)	All Rape Cases 261 PC & 262 ¹ PC (Felony)	Sodomy 286 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)	Oral Copulation 287 ^{2,4} PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)	Forcible Sexual Penetration w/ a Foreign Object 289 PC (Felony)	Assault To Commit Rape 220 PC (Felony)	Stalking 646.9 PC (Misdemeanor or Felony)
2021										
January	26	14	0	3	1	0	1*	1*	0	0
February	19	14	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	0
March	30	14	0	3	2	0	0	3	1*	1
April	23	12	0	5	1	0	1*	1	0	2
May	41	26	0	3	1	0	2*	2	0	1
June	31	21	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	3
July	24	18	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	1
August	19	13	0	5	0	0	0	1*	1	2
September	39	27	0	1	3	0	1*	1	0	3
October	36	25	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	4
November	33	19	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
December	18	15	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total Cases³	339	218	1	41	18	0	5	9	2	20
2022										
January	21	19	0	0	4	0	1*	0	1	3
February	26	22	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
March	18	14	0	7	2	1*	1	0	1	1
April	23	19	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	1
May	30	22	0	3	4	1*	0	2*	0	3
June	35	22	0	4	1	0	0	1	0	2
July	37	25	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
August	35	23	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	3
September ⁵	33	16	0	2	2	1	0	1*	0	2
October	32	20	0	2	2	1*	0	2*	1*	3
November	26	17	0	1	2	0	1*	1*	0	2
December	27	16	0	3	0	0	1*	0	2	1
Total Cases	343	235	0	30	23	4	4	9	6	22
2023										
January	28	18	0	3	1	1	0	1	0	0
February	26	9	0	1	1	0	0	2*	1*	3
March	26	15	0	5	0	1	0	1*	1	1
April	33	23	0	1	3	2*	0	1*	0	0
May	35	19	0	3	2	0	0	0	1*	2
June	30	23	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1
July ⁶	33	22	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	1
August	32	18	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	1
September	35	20	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	2
October	17	6	0	2	2	0	0	1*	1	4
November	9	12	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
December	19	17	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total Cases	323	202	0	21	17	4	1	7	5	17
2024										
January	-	13	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
February	-	13	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	1
March	-	17	0	1	4	2*	1*	0	1	0
Total Cases	-	43	1	2	7	2	2	0	1	1

* Associated with another reported case

** Data includes cases involving all genders, adults and minors

1. PC 262 repealed on October 8, 2021, (AB 1171)

2. PC 288a oral copulation, was changed to PC 287 PC on January 1, 2019 (SB 1494)

3. UCR Summary totals the number of victims, not the number of cases - as reported in the table above

4. PC 287 includes PCs 288a(b)(1), 288a(c)(1), 288a(c)(2)(a), 288a(c)(3)

5. One case involving PC 288.7(A) and 286 counted as one for sodomy count

6. One case involving PC 264.1 and 261 counted as one for rape count



SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY
GRAND JURY

Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

Civil Grand Jury Required Responses: (1) Housing for Whom & (2) Preventing Rape & Domestic Violence

Gina Liebig <gliebig@santacruzca.gov>

Mon, Oct 14, 2024 at 9:17 AM

To: Santa Cruz Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>, Matt Huffaker <mhuffaker@santacruzca.gov>

Hello Santa Cruz Grand Jury,

At the Santa Cruz City Council meeting on October 8, 2024, the attached two reports/responses were approved by the Council:

1. Housing for Whom
2. Preventing Rape and Domestic Violence

Thank you, Gina



Gina Liebig

Principal Management Analyst

City of Santa Cruz | City Manager's Office

[809 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060](https://www.cityofsantacruz.com)

Phone: 831-420-5044

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Web: www.cityofsantacruz.com

2 attachments



Housing for Whom.pdf

257K



Preventing Rape and Domestic Violence.pdf

333K



The 2023–2024 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury
Requires the

Santa Cruz City Council

to Respond by September 25, 2024

to the Findings and Recommendations listed below
which were assigned to them in the report titled

City Of Santa Cruz: Preventing Rape and Domestic Violence

Where's The Priority?

Responses are **required** from elected officials, elected agency or department heads, and elected boards, councils, and committees which are investigated by the Grand Jury. The California Penal Code (PC) [§933\(c\)](#) requires you to respond as specified below and to keep your response on file.

Your response will be considered **compliant** under [PC §933.05](#) if it contains an appropriate comment on **all** findings and recommendations **which were assigned to you** in this report.

Please follow the instructions below when preparing your response.

Instructions for Respondents

Your assigned [Findings](#) and [Recommendations](#) are listed on the following pages with check boxes and an expandable space for summaries, timeframes, and explanations. Please follow these instructions, which paraphrase [PC §933.05](#):

1. **For the Findings, mark one of the following responses with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
 - a. **AGREE with the Finding**, or
 - b. **PARTIALLY DISAGREE with the Finding** – specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and include an explanation of the reasons why, or
 - c. **DISAGREE with the Finding** – provide an explanation of the reasons why.
2. **For the Recommendations, mark one of the following actions with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
 - a. **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – provide a summary of the action taken, or
 - b. **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – provide a timeframe or expected date for completion, or
 - c. **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – provide an explanation, scope, and parameters of an analysis to be completed within six months, or
 - d. **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – provide an explanation of why it is not warranted or not reasonable.
3. **Please confirm the date on which you approved the assigned responses:**

We approved these responses in a regular public meeting as shown
in our minutes dated _____.

4. **When your responses are complete, please email your completed Response Request as a PDF file attachment to both**

The Honorable Katherine Hansen, Grand Jury Supervising Judge
Katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org and

The Santa Cruz County Grand Jury grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

If you have questions about this request form, please contact the Grand Jury by calling 831-454-2099 or by sending an email to grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

Findings

- F1.** Since 2016, the lack of comprehensive Annual Reports with detailed metrics on rape, including the tracking of stranger rape, leaves the community less informed, more vulnerable, and less safe.

- AGREE**
 PARTIALLY DISAGREE
 DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The Santa Cruz City Council (“the Council) disagrees with the assertion that the community is less informed due to the Annual Report lacking detailed metrics. The Annual report includes both current and historical data on rape and domestic violence. Detailed metrics on rape such as stranger rape, age, gender, location, etc.. are not mandated, however, the CPVAW has voted to receive detailed metrics on the type of crimes committed which it has determined to be more useful to their efforts to prevent rape & domestic violence.

Up until 2016 the Annual Reports contained demographic information which included reporting on stranger versus acquaintance rape. From approximately 2017-2022 there was significant turnover in staff to the commission, the commission members, and a world-wide pandemic which impacted the commissions receipt of rape and domestic violence data. In addition, there was not an annual report prepared by the Commission during that time. The most recent Annual Report for 2023 includes details from the FBI Uniform Crime Report (UCR) for rape as well as data from 2010-2023 on the following California Penal Code Sections relating to rape: 220 Attempted Rape; 261/262 Rape; 286 Sodomy; 387/288 Oral Copulation and 289 Penetration with a foreign object. Additionally, the 2023 report also includes domestic violence statistics from 2015 to 2023.

The Council disagrees with the Grand Jury's claim that a lack of detailed metrics on rape leaves the community more vulnerable and less safe. The absence of specific metrics in the Annual Report, or its contents, does not correlate to increased vulnerability or decreased safety. In fact, the FBI Uniformed Crime Report shows a 26% reduction in rape from 2022 to 2023, along with a 34% decrease in Domestic Violence cases by from 2020 to 2021 and a decline of 14% between 2022 and 2023. The Commission voted in November 2023 to accept a revised reporting format for rape and domestic violence statistics to include all FBI UCR Data, and various California Penal Code Sections on rape and domestic violence. In August of 2024, the Commission began receiving rape data from the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). If the Commission chooses to reassess the metrics it requests from SCPD, including stranger rape data, the SCPD is prepared to provide the requested information. However, the Commission must decide what metrics it needs to review and how the Commission will utilize the information in relation to prevention and education. When the Commissioners request various information and try to compare it to UCR data and/or National Incident-Based Reporting System/California Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS/CIBRS) the information may not be consistent because the methodology for collecting the data sets are not the same, which causes confusion and leads to the perception of deception which is not accurate.

In 2024, in an effort to better inform the community, and keep people safe, the Commission enhanced their outreach and education to the community by collaborating with other Community Based Organizations to raise awareness about prevention and available services to victims of rape and domestic violence. This includes co-sponsoring the "Stronger Together" Fun Run/5K Race with Monarch Services in September 2023 & 2024, participating in both the Dyke and Pride Parades, the 2024 March to End Homelessness and the "She is Beautiful" race. Additionally, the Commission partnered with Monarch Services by providing \$6,000 to support their efforts to end domestic violence and provide assistance to victims of rape.

F2. By highlighting a generic national statistic on stranger rape, rather than assessing local metrics in the CPVAW 2023 Report, the City is minimizing stranger rape and misleading the public into a possible false sense of security.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The CPVAW 2023 Annual Report includes, as approved by the Commission on November 1, 2023, data from the US Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigations, Uniform Crime Report on Rape, which is data specific to the City of Santa Cruz. The Annual Report also includes specific data on 5 types of Sexual Assault violations committed in the City of Santa Cruz. It is correct that this data does not distinguish between a stranger and an acquaintance. While this type of distinction may be useful, there is no data supporting that this is misleading the public into a false sense of security. The data cited in the Annual Report is from a nationally recognized association; Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network (RAINN) and is consistent with previous data analysis as reported in the 2005-07 Annual Report.

The data shows that the City is safer in 2023 than in previous years. The Uniformed Crime Report shows a decrease in rape by 26% from 2022 to 2023, and a decrease in Domestic Violence cases by 34% from 2020 to 2021 and a decrease of 14% between 2022 and 2023.

If the Commission chooses to reconsider its previous decision on which metrics SCPD should provide to the Commission, including stranger rape, SCPD will provide that information. SCPD supports the collection of this information but would prefer the Commission decide on all the metrics they are interested in and show how it will be useful towards the prevention and education mission of CPVAW. SCPD feels both national statistics on stranger rape and local metrics are important to provide the public with a local view as well as a broader perspective.

F3. The lack of attention to long-time Commission programs such as the Safe Place Network and the Bar Coaster program leaves residents and visitors without important resources for their personal safety.

- AGREE**
- PARTIALLY DISAGREE**
- DISAGREE**

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The Commission believes in leveraging their funds to partner with community-based organizations who specialize in providing victims of domestic violence and rape with much needed financial support to continue their successful programs and services. These organizations provide tangible resources that the Commission could not provide nor have the expertise to provide. In 2024, the Commission provided the following with sponsorships to support local non-profit organizations: \$2,000 to Walnut Ave Women’s Center, a non-profit organization based in Santa Cruz that provides direct services to survivors of domestic violence including prevention and education and \$6,000 to Monarch Services, another local non-profit that offers immediate crisis response to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking.

The Commission has created new programs to promote personal safety. In 2023, the Commission partnered with the Santa Cruz City School district to provide high school students with an on-line course through Vector Solutions. This program offered targeted courses for grades 6-8 and 9-12, which reached approximately 2,000 students. This mandatory program enabled the school to extend its reach, empowering more students to make informed choices, resist peer pressure, and foster healthy relationships. Topics included: Dealing with Stress and Anxiety; Self-Harm Awareness and Resolving Disagreements. Additional content included Mental Health and Wellbeing, Healthy Relationships & Inclusion, Personal & Community Safety and Student Safety and Wellness.

The City is the only local agency to have a Victim Advocate on staff in the Police Department. This important resource keep victims informed of their rights in the legal system and makes referrals to local agencies. The Advocate works with victims to ensure they are treated with fairness and respect.

With regards to the Bar Coaster Program, the Commission agrees with continuing this program. As of July 1st, State Law requires all bars that do not provide food to provide drug testing kits to customers. The Commission supports this new law. In June of 2024, the Commission purchased an additional 500 drug testing coasters to distribute to bars located in the City of Santa Cruz.

The Commission had a program entitled Safe Place Network which is no longer active. The program began over 25 years ago by providing a window sticker to

businesses stating they were a “Safe Place”; however, there was very little to no training provided for businesses and their staff. The program also lacked a comprehensive marketing and outreach plan to inform visitors and the community of its existence. There are no metrics or data to substantiate the claim that not having this program has left residents and visitors without important resources for their personal safety. However, the Commission could consider re-establishing the program if it chooses to do so in the future.

F4. The loss of the in-person self-defense program for boys and girls in Santa Cruz City Schools lessens students' ability to prevent sexual assault and interpersonal violence, inconsistent with the mandate of Ordinance 81-29.

- AGREE**
- PARTIALLY DISAGREE**
- DISAGREE**

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The Commission has offered self-defense classes either through City Schools and/or the Parks and Recreation Department. Over the years, participation in the Parks & Recreation program significantly declined, leading to the cancellation of classes.

In FY2023, the City Council approved a budget of \$15,000 for self-defense classes to be administered by the Commission. In November of 2023, the Commission considered how best to use the funds at a regularly scheduled public meeting. The Commission considered two options: 1) Self Defense program through the City Parks & Recreation Department, or 2) A proposal by City Schools for an on-line course through a private contractor, Vector Solutions. The Commission chose the City Schools proposal.

This program offered targeted courses for grades 6-8 and 9-12, which reached approximately 2,000 students. This mandatory program enabled schools to extend their reach significantly, empowering more students to make informed choices, resist peer pressure, and foster healthy relationships. Topics included: Dealing with Stress and Anxiety; Self-Harm Awareness and Resolving Disagreements. Additional content included Mental Health and Well-being, Healthy Relationships & Inclusion, Personal & Community Safety and Student Safety and Wellness.

Vector Solutions is already being used in other school districts across the country to reduce violence against women. This valuable program will help prevent violence against women by providing students with the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy choices and build positive relationships.

In addition, the Commission authorized an additional \$5,000 to enable one Commissioner to work with the Parks and Recreation department to offer a self-defense course. Unfortunately, the program never came to fruition, and the funds were not spent.

In the FY25 Budget, the City Council approved re-authorization of \$15,000 to continue offering these types of programs. The Commission will consider how to utilize those funds at their meeting on September 4, 2024.

F5. The City’s replacement of a dedicated 20-hour per week Commission staff position with rotating staff with minimal hours has resulted in a loss of visibility for the prevention of rape and domestic violence, a loss of community connections, a lack of programs, inadequate resource distribution and less public awareness.

- AGREE**
- PARTIALLY DISAGREE**
- DISAGREE**

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The part-time Events Coordinator position was eliminated in 2016/2017 and replaced with a more senior staff member to provide enhanced support to the Commission. From 2017 to 2020, there were three staffing changes involving personnel from both the City Manager’s Office and the Police Department. The Commission also saw turnover among its members during this same period. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic severely limited the Commission’s ability to organize and participate in public events, as well as to support local non-profits and schools until 2022.

In 2023, as the community began to recover from the pandemic, the Commission resumed its participation in and organization of events.

As part of the Fiscal Year 2024, the City Council also approved funding for an Administrative Assistant III staff position that will dedicate half of their work week (20 hours per week) to supporting the Commission’s work. With the addition of this new position, the Commission will have more staff support than it has had for the last several years.

Notably, crime data indicates that the city is safer in 2023 than in previous years. The Uniformed Crime Report reveals a 26% decrease in rape incidents from 2022 to 2023, as well as a 34% drop in domestic violence cases from 2020 to 2021, and a further decline of 14% between 2022 and 2023.

F6. The City’s refusal to allow the Commission continued access to redacted police reports prevents the Commission from making recommendations for police training and evaluating community complaints as required by Ordinance.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The Commission received redacted police reports from approximately 1984 to 2010. However, around 2010-2017 the Commission began to receive summary demographic data from SCPD. From approximately 2017-2022 there was significant turnover in staff to the commission and a world-wide pandemic which impacted the commissions receipt of rape and domestic violence data. In 2023, a request was made by the Commission for the City Attorney to attend a CPVAW meeting to discuss and provide a recommendation to them regarding the ability to receive redacted police reports. Given the extremely sensitive nature of these police reports, even when redacted, the City Attorney’s Office recommended not to provide redacted police reports to the Commission for the following reasons:

- (1) Under the Brown Act, there is no legal basis for the Commission (or the Commission’s Police Subcommittee) to review the redacted police reports in a confidential or closed session (see Gov’t Code § 54962).
- (2) While the Commission is not permitted to meet in closed session, the Commission could hypothetically meet in open session to review the reports. However, review of police reports in open session would waive any applicable exemption under the Public Records Act (Gov’t Code § 7921.505), and the City would be required to release those redacted reports to any member of the public that requests them. In other words, if the Commission were to review the redacted police reports in open session, the City would be waiving the future confidentiality of those reports, without the consent of the individuals who are referenced in that report, and without input as to how that lack of confidentiality might impact their lives.
- (3) The City is legally prohibited from releasing some reports, even in redacted form. For example, state law prohibits the release of a police report where a juvenile is the subject of the report (Wel & Inst Code § 827.95), or reports involving mandated reports of suspected child abuse and neglect (Penal Code § 11167.5). Various Constitutional provisions, such as The Victims’ Bill of Rights Act of 2008: Marsy’s Law, Section 28 of Article I of the California Constitution, or the right to privacy afforded by Section 1 of Article I of the California Constitution may also be considered when determining whether to release a police report. Even for reports that the City is not legally prohibited from releasing, all of the referenced police reports are generally exempt from disclosure to the public pursuant to Government Code section 7923.600.

Based on the foregoing, including the advice of the City Attorney’s Office, the Commission voted to *not* require the SCPD provide redacted police reports to the Commission or the Commission’s Police Sub-Committee. However, the Commission did vote to include additional California Penal Code Sections, all Domestic Violence cases, and the FBI Uniform Crime

Reporting data in the monthly data SCPD reports to the Commission.

The Commission still retains the ability to hear citizen complaints regarding the SCPD's service to women who have been raped or battered. With improvements in technology and changes in state law and City Council requirements, citizen complaints go directly to the SCPD Professional Standards Unit, the Chief of Police, and the Independent Police Auditor. Any concerns about a Police Department employee's conduct, actions or service are investigated by the Police Department's Professional Standards Unit. All completed investigations are reviewed by the Independent Police Auditor to provide an independent review of the citizen complaint process. The Independent Police Auditor provides an annual report to the City Council in a public meeting on the level of thoroughness and objectivity of these investigations. The process to file a complaint can either be started in person at the Police Department, online on the SCPD website, or directly through the Independent Police Auditor.

The City also employs a Victim Advocate and is the only one in the county that does so. The Advocate provides information to victims about their rights and the criminal legal system and makes referrals to local agencies when appropriate. The Advocate works alongside SCPD personnel to ensure all victims of domestic violence and sexual assault are treated with fairness and respect. The Victim Advocate also provides training to officers and detectives to provide the highest level of professional service to the victims.

With regards to Police Training, the CPVAW Police Subcommittee received a presentation on November 1, 2023, from SCPD on their training standards. This provided an opportunity for the Commission to review and provide input on SCPD's training program. The Police Subcommittee intends to conduct an annual review of the SCPD training program. All SCPD training records are kept up to date and in accordance with State law and Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) standards.

F7. The SCPD's decision to drop stranger rape alerts and case-by-case updates leaves the community unaware about this serious crime and therefore less safe.

- AGREE**
- PARTIALLY DISAGREE**
- DISAGREE**

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

SCPD has not made the decision to drop stranger rape alerts and case-by-case updates. If there was a stranger rape case and an alert to the community was appropriate, SCPD would not hesitate to make the community aware. SCPD is very active on social media, and transparently shares valuable information with the community.

F8. The inconsistencies the Grand Jury found in SCPD’s rape numbers means the public, the CPVAW and the City have no accurate metrics about reported rape, leaving the community ill-informed and Annual Commission Reports unreliable.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

City of Santa Cruz Ordinance No. 81-29 establishes specific responsibilities and cooperation between SCPD and CPVAW:

- **Section 5(e):** The Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women, in carrying out its duties shall have the authority to call upon members of the Police Department to present information which is not defined as confidential by State law. The Santa Cruz Police Department shall offer full and open cooperation to the Commission.
- **Section 6(b):** The Police Department shall create a separate statistical report form to document and consolidate all domestic violence and women beating calls. This shall be compiled monthly.

The SCPD has adhered to these requirements, explicitly providing data as the Commission requested. Before the February 7, 2024, CPVAW meeting, where the SCPD’s statistical report (Appendix A – Figure 8 Full Table) was first presented, the SCPD had been producing a simplified statistical monthly report. This report included data on domestic violence calls, domestic violence cases, rape cases, sexual assaults, stalking cases, and intimate partner homicide cases.

At the November 1, 2023, CPVAW meeting, upon a specific commissioner’s request and approved by the Commission, sodomy and forcible sexual penetration with a foreign object were separated from the generalized rape column, and assault to commit rape was added. In the following two meetings (February 1, 2024, and May 1, 2024), SCPD complied and continued to make improvements to provide an accurate and comprehensive statistical report. Improvements included updating all the monthly summary values to reflect the addition of any cold cases when they occurred, not when reported, and footnotes were added to provide clarifying language. This was to try and explain why the old numbers had changed from previous reports.

Discrepancies in Appendix A – Figure 8 Full Table were due to the removal of cases involving minors during the development of the new table format and improper communication of this omission. The oversight was corrected in the following report (Appendix B – Figure 9 Full Table), presented to CPVAW on May 1, 2024, and included up-to-date data encompassing all genders, adults, and minors.

The SCPD would like to respond to the Grand Jury’s assessment of the SCPD’s statistical report (Appendix A – Figure 8 Full Table). The Grand Jury compared the year 2021 Case Totals to SCPD’s website UCR figure of reported rape totals for the same year and

questioned why the two values - 34 vs. 26 did not match and therefore concluded the statistical report was inaccurate. As defined in the SCPD response to the Grand Jury's R4 question, UCR data reports out monthly victim counts, while NIBRS reports on the total number of rape-related offenses.

In effect, the SCPD's monthly statistical report does both, but special consideration is needed when summing values. Rape cases can involve multiple offenses, and a case typically involves only one victim. The SCPD statistical report breaks out rape-related offenses but places an asterisk next to any offense that is already associated with another offense listed in the same case. By excluding any value with an asterisk while summing values, the SCPD statistical report will provide a rape case count similar to UCR Summary data. If all rape-related values are summed, ignoring the presence of asterisks, the SCPD statistical report will generate a rape offense count similar to NIBRS data.

Due to the confusion reported in the grand jury report, the SCPD has reservations regarding the effectiveness of the current format of the monthly statistical report in keeping the community well-informed. The SCPD requests that the Commission review what data is needed to better understand the nature and extent of rape-related crimes in the community and asks the Commission to provide details on how it intends to use the data to tailor prevention and intervention strategies. A better understanding of the Commission's work plan will help improve the collaborative work between the Commission and the SCPD.

To add to the confusion, one member of the Commission has requested certain metrics not consistent with the other members of the Commission. The SCPD, trying to be collaborative and responsive, provided this information but it has been taken out of context, creating confusion and the perception the SCPD is changing the data. The SCPD recommends, prior to producing any future data or metrics, the Commission decides exactly what information they are looking for and what they will do with the information in the world of prevention and education. There are many different means to produce the data, but it will be clearer to the Commission and the public if we can agree on one methodology and then understand the nuisances of that data.

The SCPD remains committed to providing accurate and comprehensive statistical reports, ensuring transparency and continuous improvement in response to the Commission's needs.

F9. The SCPD and the Commission's lack of a consistent definition of rape leads to public confusion and potential undercounting of rape crimes in the City.

- AGREE**
- PARTIALLY DISAGREE**
- DISAGREE**

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

When the Federal Government changed the definition of rape in 2013, SCPD immediately included the additional penal codes that now fall under the new definition and have been reporting these numbers since this change. The lack of consistency is more related to the different data collected and methodologies between UCR data, NIBRS/CIBRS, and specific metrics requested by the Commission.

F10. The Five Year Strategic Plan’s failure to include the prevention of rape and domestic violence leaves the community less aware and less safe.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The absence of rape and domestic violence prevention from the Public Safety focus area of the Five-Year Strategic Plan does not lessen its significance as a priority for the City. The recently adopted strategic plan serves as a framework that balances community needs with the City's resource capacity. It reflects the policy priorities set by the City Council and acts as a high-level roadmap for future actions. The plan includes a vision to guide future focus, seven focus areas to direct organizational efforts, goal statements, strategies for achieving these goals, and a workplan for implementation.

The lack of specific mention of the Commission in the Five-Year Strategic Plan does not imply that the community is less informed or safe regarding the prevention of rape and domestic violence. Moreover, it does not undermine the Council's commitment to these issues. Notably, the Commission is the only advisory body that receives a dedicated budget and staffing from the City Council. The Council has demonstrated its commitment by increasing the Commission's budget by over 150% for FY25, enabling additional staff support and resources to further the Commission’s goals in preventing rape and domestic violence in Santa Cruz.

F11. The City Manager’s Weekly Update to the community has not highlighted the work of the CPVAW for the past two years, effectively relegating the prevention of rape and domestic violence to a low priority, leaving the public uninformed.

- AGREE**
- PARTIALLY DISAGREE**
- DISAGREE**

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

There is no evidence to suggest that the absence of the Commission’s activities in the City Manager’s Weekly Updates has left the public uninformed or perceived as a low priority. The Weekly Update is a communication tool that shares relevant city activities and projects, drawing information from City Departments and highlighting key city council actions and significant projects. The Commission is encouraged to submit updates about its work to the City Manager’s office for inclusion.

The Commission focuses on partnering with community-based organizations that specialize in supporting victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. In 2024, the Commission provided funding to local non-profits, including \$2,000 to the Walnut Avenue Women’s Center, which offers direct services to survivors, and \$8,000 to Monarch Services, which provides crisis response for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. These organizations have a broader reach than the City Manager’s Weekly Update, effectively disseminating more information to the public.

Furthermore, the Commission has significantly increased its community presence by participating in events such as co-sponsoring the "Stronger Together" Fun Run/5K with Monarch Services in September 2023 and 2024, marching in the Dyke March and the 2024 Pride Parade, and taking part in the 2024 March to End Homelessness and the “She is Beautiful” race. These events enhance awareness and provide crucial information on preventing rape and domestic violence.

Additionally, the Commission has launched a dedicated newsletter to highlight its events and activities, allocating funds for two publications in FY25. It also uses social media platforms to promote and inform the community about the initiatives of the Commission.

Recommendations

- R1.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City Council fund a dedicated staff person for the Commission with skills commensurate to the need for program and resource development, community outreach and visibility, data research and report writing and have such position advertised by December 31, 2024. (F5, F3)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

As part of the FY25 Budget, the City Council has approved a part-time (20 hours per week) Administrative Assistant III to support the work of the Commission. The recruitment is scheduled to begin in late August or early September 2024.

R2. The Grand Jury recommends that the City Council reevaluate the legal ability of CPVAW commissioners to access redacted police reports of rape as described in this investigation, and present the results of that research by December 31, 2024. (F6)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

Police reports documenting instances of rape, sexual assault, or domestic violence are extremely sensitive. These reports provide intimate details about horrific crimes. Even if heavily redacted, it is likely the reports would still include details that would enable some to identify the victim or parties involved.

Given the extremely sensitive nature of these police reports, even when redacted, the City Attorney’s Office recommends not to provide redacted police reports to the Commission for the following reasons:

- (1) Under the Brown Act, there is no legal basis for the Commission (or the Commission’s Police Subcommittee) to review the redacted police reports in a confidential or closed session (see Gov’t Code § 54962).
- (2) While the Commission is not permitted to meet in closed session, the Commission could hypothetically meet in open session to review the reports. However, review of police reports in open session would waive any applicable exemption under the Public Records Act (Gov’t Code § 7921.505), and the City would be required to release those redacted reports to any member of the public that requests them. In other words, if the Commission were to review the redacted police reports in open session, the City would be waiving the future confidentiality of those reports, without the consent of the individuals who are referenced in that report, and without input as to how that lack of confidentiality might impact their lives.
- (3) The City is legally prohibited from releasing some reports, even in redacted form. For example, state law prohibits the release of a police report where a juvenile is the subject of the report (Wel & Inst Code § 827.95), or reports involving mandated reports of suspected child abuse and neglect (Penal Code § 11167.5). Various Constitutional provisions, such as The Victims’ Bill of Rights Act of 2008: Marsy’s Law, Section 28 of Article I of the California Constitution, or the right to privacy afforded by Section 1 of Article I of the

California Constitution may also be considered when determining whether to release a police report. Even for reports that the City is not legally prohibited from releasing, all of the referenced police reports are generally exempt from disclosure to the public pursuant to Government Code section 7923.600.

Based on the foregoing, including the advice of the City Attorney's Office, the Commission voted to *not* require the SCPD to provide redacted police reports to the Commission or the Commission's Police Sub-Committee.

R3. The Grand Jury recommends that the City Council begin evaluating options with the Santa Cruz City School District to reinstate the in-person self-defense program for middle and high school students of all genders by January 31, 2025. (F4)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The Commission has previously offered self-defense classes either through City Schools and/or the Parks and Recreation Department. Over the years, participation in the Parks & Recreation program significantly declined, leading to the cancellation of classes. Based on the lack of participation, free classes sponsored by the Commission are no longer offered through Parks and Recreation.

In FY2023, the City Council approved a budget of \$15,000 for self-defense classes to be administered by the Commission. In November of 2023, the Commission considered how best to use the funds at a regularly scheduled public meeting. The Commission considered two options: 1) Self Defense program through the City Parks & Recreation Department or 2) A proposal by Santa Cruz City Schools for an on-line course through a private contractor, Vector Solutions. The Commission chose the City Schools proposal.

This program offered targeted courses for grades 6-8 and 9-12, which would reach approximately 2,000 students. This mandatory program would enable the school to extend its reach, empowering more students to make informed choices, resist peer pressure, and foster health relationships. Topics included: Dealing with Stress and Anxiety; Self-Harm Awareness and Resolving Disagreements. Additional content included Mental Health and Wellbeing, Healthy Relationships & Inclusion, Personal & Community Safety and Student Safety and Wellness.

Vector Solutions is already being used in other school districts across the country to reduce violence against women. This valuable program will help prevent violence against women by providing students with the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy choices and build positive relationships.

In addition, the Commission authorized an additional \$5,000 to enable one Commissioner to work with the Parks and Recreation department to offer a self-defense course. Unfortunately, the program never came to fruition, and the funds were not spent.

In the FY25 Budget, the City Council approved re-authorization of \$15,000 to continue offering these types of programs. Consideration of how to utilize these funds will be considered by the Commission at its meeting on November 6, 2024.

R4. The Grand Jury recommends that the SCPD update its website to include the detailed metrics on Rape Incidents submitted to NIBRS and CIBRS, ensuring all data entries are accurate and available at each meeting of the CPVAW, and have this in place by January 31, 2025. (F8, F9)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The publication of metrics on rape incidents from the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and California Incident-Based Reporting System (CIBRS) would introduce an additional data set to the two preexisting data sets regularly published by the Santa Cruz Police Department (SCPD) – Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data and its own monthly statistical data report provided to the Commission. SCPD believes this would increase public confusion regarding rape incidents within the City of Santa Cruz. All three data sets report on rape occurrence, but variations in methodology, scope, and level of detail make direct comparisons unsound.

Uniform Crime Reporting System (UCR)

The UCR Summary system reports are based on when a crime is reported, not when the crime occurs. For example, in many rape-related cases, individuals come forward weeks, months, or even years after being victimized. This limitation can distort monthly victim counts and create erroneous trends within a community. Another constraint lies in how the data is prioritized. UCR Summary data reflects the hierarchy rule, which states that only the most severe crime contributes to an agency’s monthly crime totals when more than one offense occurs within an incident. For example, an incident involving a murder, robbery, and rape, the stats only reflect the homicide for the monthly totals, as homicide is the highest offense on the hierarchy.

UCR data is calculated by the number of victims and does not account for multiple offenses committed against one victim during one incident. For example, a victim of rape (261 pc) could also be a victim of oral copulation (288a pc) and sodomy (286 pc). All of these offenses fall under the definition of rape per the new definition in 2013 but there are different penal code sections and charges. UCR data will calculate this example as one incident because it only includes one victim. However, in other reporting methodologies like NIBRS or metric collecting like CPVAW has requested, the one incident can be counted multiple times depending on the number of penal code sections or charges brought forward on the perpetrator.

National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

NIBRS collects detailed data on each reported crime incident, including information on the victim, offender, location, weapon used, and circumstances surrounding an incident. Unlike UCR Summary, NIBRS captures all offenses reported in a single incident, providing a more complete picture of criminal activity. NIBRS' labile data set allows for constant updates to monthly summaries as cold cases are reported.

Publishing static monthly NIBRS/CIBRS data on SCPD's website or through the Commission's meetings immortalizes data designed to change over time, offering little added benefit to the public. NIBRS/CIBRS data is not updated until several weeks after the end of each month, producing the data monthly would cause more confusion and provide inaccurate data to the public.

The level of detailed data provided by NIBRS allows law enforcement agencies, policymakers, and researchers to better understand the nature and extent of crime in their communities, identify emerging trends, and tailor prevention and intervention strategies accordingly, but may not be suitable for public consumption without proper analysis and a simplified synopsis.

Additionally, unlike UCR data, NIBRS/CIBRS data will change based on when a crime occurred versus when the crime was reported. Therefore NIBRS/CIBRS data is fluid and could constantly change. However, UCR data is locked once each month is complete. This adds to the confusion and perception of the inaccuracies to the data.

R5. The Grand Jury recommends that the SCPD reinstate community alerts for incidents of stranger rape, with case-by-case updates, by December 31, 2024. (F7)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

SCPD never stopped executing community alerts for incidents of stranger rape when the circumstances were necessary to keep the community safe and well-informed.

R6. The Grand Jury recommends that the Commission and the SCPD submit comprehensive annual reports as called for in Ordinance 81-29, using the 2005-07 reports as a model, with the 2024 Annual Report placed on the Commission's agenda by December 31, 2024 and future reports submitted on a consistent, annual basis. (F1)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The Annual Report as required by Ordinance No. 81-29, Section 5.(d), requires the Commission to "...submit annually, and the City Council review and act upon a report documenting, in detail, City, community, and police efforts to carry out the purposes of this ordinance." The Ordinance does not require the Annual Report to provide detailed metrics on rape. However, various Annual Reports over the years have included data on rape and domestic violence, including the most recent Annual Report for 2023. The 2023 Report includes details the FBI Uniform Crime Report for Rape and Domestic Violence from 2015 to 2023, and data from 2010-2023 on the following California Penal Code Sections relating to Rape: 220 Attempted Rape; 261/262 Rape; 286 Sodomy; 387/288 Oral Copulation and 289 Penetration with a foreign object. The Commission will continue to provide comprehensive reports as required by the Ordinance.

The 2023 Annual Report is modeled after the 2005-2007 and the 2008-2010 Annual Report. Both of those reports were a Joint Report by the Commission and the Santa Cruz Police Department, same as the 2023 Report. Both reports contain data on sexual assault including incidents by Penal Code Violations. However, the previous reports did not contain information on Domestic Violence which the 2023 report contains. The previous reports include an analysis of demographics within each rape case which has not been conducted since 2017. The Commission, not individual commissioners, must decide what information or metrics they would like to see and how the information will be used towards prevention and education. There needs to be an agreement of what set of data and metrics will be evaluated because the combination of different sets of data causes confusion and the perception of deception.

The Annual Report should include a full years' worth of data, therefore presenting an annual report in December would not include a full years' worth of data. In order to provide the community with a comprehensive report, with a full year's worth of data, the report will be presented at the February meeting of the following year.

R7. The Grand Jury recommends that the 2023 Report be amended to remove the national entry on stranger rape, replacing it with accurate data for the City of Santa Cruz by December 31, 2024. (F2)

HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED – summarize what has been done

HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE – summarize what will be done and the timeframe

REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)

WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The 2023 Annual Report provides a comprehensive data analysis over a 14-year period on rape and 16 years' worth of data on domestic violence cases in the City of Santa Cruz. While the Annual Report does not distinguish between acquaintance and stranger rape, the data is accurate. The Ordinance does not require the Annual Report to provide crime data, however, because the data on the number of cases is readily available and is compiled by the SCPD it is included in the Annual Report. Ordinance No. 81-29, Section 5.(d), requires the Commission to "...submit annually, and the City Council review and act upon a report documenting, in detail, City, community, and police efforts to carry out the purposes of this ordinance."

SCPD supports the collection of this information if the Commission decides on all the metrics they are interested in and shows how it will be useful towards the prevention and education mission. SCPD feels both national statistics on stranger rape and local metrics are important to provide the public with a local view as well as a broader perspective. The data SCPD has presented is accurate, but some confusion has arisen based on the different methodologies of UCR data, NIBRS/CIBRS, and specific requests from the Commission.

R8. The Grand Jury recommends that the CPVAW update the status of the Safe Place Network and the Bar Coasters program. If the programs are to be discontinued, a public CPVAW meeting is advised for that decision. If the programs are to be continued, the date of January 31, 2025 is recommended for the full reinstatement of these programs. (F3)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The Commission will agendaize the Safe Place Network at their February 5, 2025 meeting to consider whether or not to continue the program.

The Bar Coaster program is in place. As of June 2024, an additional 500 coasters were purchased to be distributed to local bars.

R9. The Grand Jury recommends that Focus Area 5, Public Safety of the 2023-28 Five Year Strategic Plan include an entry prioritizing the prevention of rape and domestic violence, as mandated by Ordinance 81-29, and published by February 28, 2025. (F10)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The absence of rape and domestic violence prevention from the Public Safety focus area of the Five-Year Strategic Plan does not lessen its significance as a priority for the City. The recently adopted strategic plan serves as a framework that balances community needs with the City's resource capacity. It reflects the policy priorities set by the City Council and acts as a high-level roadmap for future actions. The plan includes a vision to guide future focus, seven focus areas to direct organizational efforts, goal statements, strategies for achieving these goals, and a workplan for implementation.

The lack of specific mention of the Commission in the Five-Year Strategic Plan does not imply that the community is less informed or safe regarding the prevention of rape and domestic violence. Moreover, it does not undermine the Council's commitment to these issues. Notably, the Commission is the only advisory body that receives a dedicated budget and staffing from the City Council. The Council has demonstrated its commitment by increasing the Commission's budget by over 150% for FY25, enabling additional staff support and resources to further the Commission's goals in preventing rape and domestic violence in Santa Cruz.

R10. The Grand Jury recommends that the City Manager increase the visibility of the CPVAW programs and events by publishing relevant information, at least quarterly, in the City Manager’s Weekly Update and that the first article be published by December 31, 2024. (F11)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

There is no evidence to suggest that the absence of the Commission’s activities in the City Manager’s Weekly Updates has left the public uninformed or perceived as a low priority. The Weekly Update is a communication tool that shares relevant city activities and projects, drawing information from City Departments and highlighting key city council actions and significant projects. *The Commission is encouraged to submit updates about its work to the City Manager’s office for inclusion when appropriate.*

The Commission focuses on partnering with community-based organizations that specialize in supporting victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. In 2024, the Commission provided funding to local non-profits, including \$2,000 to the Walnut Avenue Women’s Center, which offers direct services to survivors, and \$8,000 to Monarch Services, which provides crisis response for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. These organizations have a broader reach than the City Manager’s Weekly Update, effectively disseminating more information to the public.

Furthermore, the Commission has significantly increased its community presence by participating in events such as co-sponsoring the "Stronger Together" Fun Run/5K with Monarch Services in September 2023 and 2024, marching in the Dyke March and the 2024 Pride Parade, and taking part in the 2024 March to End Homelessness and the “She is Beautiful” race. These events enhance awareness and provide crucial information on preventing rape and domestic violence.

Additionally, the Commission has launched a dedicated newsletter to highlight its events and activities, allocating funds for two publications in FY25. It also uses social media platforms to promote and inform the community about the initiatives of the Commission.



SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY
GRAND JURY

Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

Commission on the Prevention of Violence Against Women-Grand Jury Response

Lisa Murphy <LMurphy@santacruzca.gov>

Mon, Sep 9, 2024 at 9:47 AM

To: "katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org" <katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org>,
"grandjury@scgrandjury.org" <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

Cc: Gina Liebig <gliebig@santacruzca.gov>, danielle long <daniella.long@sbcglobal.net>

Good Morning,

The City of Santa Cruz Commission on the Prevention of Violence Against Women is pleased to submit their response to 2023-2024 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury's report entitled "City of Santa Cruz: Preventing Rape and Domestic Violence, Where's The Priority?"

Included in this email is a copy of the Commissions Action Minutes approving the response from the Commission. The minutes will not be final until the Commissions meeting scheduled for November 6, 2024.



Lisa Murphy
Deputy City Manager
City of Santa Cruz
809 Center St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
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Web: www.cityofsantacruz.com

2 attachments

 **CPVAW_Grand Jury Response_CPVAW Invited Response Request 09-04-24 Revision by CPVAW_FINAL.pdf**
219K

 **09-04-24 CPVAW Action Summary.pdf**
62K

ACTION SUMMARY

City of Santa Cruz
809 Center Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

COMMISSION FOR THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (CPVAW) REGULAR MEETING

September 4, 2024
Action Summary prepared on September 6, 2024

6:30 PM

Call to Order - at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call - Commissioners Barrett, Feinman, Novak, Simonton, Trigueiro; Vice Chair Madura.

Commissioners Absent: Chair Long (Chair Long arrived at the meeting for Item 4)

Statements of Disqualifications - None.

Oral Communications - Vice Chair Madura opened the public comment period at 6:31 p.m. Vice Chair Madura closed the public comment period at 6:43 p.m.

Announcements - Staff member L. Murphy made announcements about a new stipend program and changes to terms of commissions.

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes of the August 7, 2024 Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women Meeting

Motion carried to approve as amended.

Presentations - None.

General Business

2. Santa Cruz Police Department Update

The Commission received the report and provided direction on the Santa Cruz Police Department (SCPD) monthly statistical rape and domestic violence

report.

3. Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury Response (Continued from 8/7/24)

Motion carried to authorize the Chairperson to submit responses to the Santa Cruz Civil Grand Jury on behalf of the CPVAW for the “City of Santa Cruz: Preventing Rape & Domestic Violence: Where’s the Priority?” report with the following edits:

- a) Section F1, leave the statement: “Given the complexities of sorting rape data” and add a statement under programming to include “a half hour program being used by county schools to start difficult conversations on male rape.”
- b) Section F2, paragraph one, change “may be” to “is” and fix typo “rate” to “rape” and paragraph two, change “FBI NIBR” to “FBI NIBRS.”
- c) Section F8, remove everything from “SCPD response...” to the end of that section and fix typo “Ordinance” to “Ordinance’s.”

4. Ad-Hoc Committee Appointments & Fund Allocation (Continued from 8/7/24)

Motion carried to form ad-hoc committees for upcoming FY25 projects and to allocate funding in November as discussed.

5. Funding for to Support Shared Data Page (Continued from 08/07/2024)

Motion carried to approve funding in the amount of \$5,600 for the Coalition Facilitator and \$500 Annually for Website Development and Hosting for a Shared Data Page.

Information Items

6. FY25 CPVAW Work Plan

Update on street banners, will work with publicity committee to implement for October domestic violence month, reminder about work plan, event called “Stronger Together” on September 22nd at Aptos High School.

Reports from Ad Hoc and Standing Committees

Police Subcommittee - no update

Publicity Ad-Hoc Committee - gave a brief update on social media

Event Ad-Hoc Committee - Monarch event on October 10th.

Items Initiated by Members for Future Agendas

Santa Cruz City Schools - Vector Solutions (Nov)

FY26 Budget (Nov)

CPVAW Annual Report (Feb 26)

Annual SCPD Training Report (Feb 26)

Election of Officers (Feb)

Adjournment - At 8:40 p.m., motion carried to adjourn.



The 2023–2024 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury
Invites the

Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women

to Respond by September 25, 2024

to the Findings and Recommendations listed below
which were assigned to them in the report titled

City Of Santa Cruz: Preventing Rape and Domestic Violence

Where's The Priority?

Responses are **invited** from appointed agency and department heads, appointed committees, and non-profit agencies contracted to the county which are investigated by the Grand Jury. You are not required to respond by the California Penal Code [\(PC\) §933\(c\)](#).

If you choose to respond, please follow the instructions below when preparing your response.

Instructions for Respondents

Your assigned [Findings](#) and [Recommendations](#) are listed on the following pages with check boxes and an expandable space for summaries, timeframes, and explanations. Please follow these instructions, which paraphrase [PC §933.05](#):

1. ***For the Findings, mark one of the following responses with an “X” and provide the required additional information:***
 - a. **AGREE** with the Finding, or
 - b. **PARTIALLY DISAGREE** with the Finding – specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and include an explanation of the reasons why, or
 - c. **DISAGREE** with the Finding – provide an explanation of the reasons why.
2. ***For the Recommendations, mark one of the following actions with an “X” and provide the required additional information:***
 - a. **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – provide a summary of the action taken, or
 - b. **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – provide a timeframe or expected date for completion, or
 - c. **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – provide an explanation, scope, and parameters of an analysis to be completed within six months, or
 - d. **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – provide an explanation of why it is not warranted or not reasonable.

3. ***Please confirm the date on which you approved the assigned responses:***

We approved these responses in a regular public meeting as shown
in our minutes dated Sept 4, 2024_____.

4. ***When your responses are complete, please email your completed Response Request as a PDF file attachment to both***

The Honorable Katherine Hansen, Grand Jury Supervising Judge
Katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org and

The Santa Cruz County Grand Jury grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

If you have questions about this request form, please contact the Grand Jury by calling 831-454-2099 or by sending an email to grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

Findings

- F1.** Since 2016, the lack of comprehensive Annual Reports with detailed metrics on rape, including the tracking of stranger rape, leaves the community less informed, more vulnerable, and less safe.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The Commission partially agrees with the assertion that the community is "less informed" due to the Annual Report lacking detailed metrics on known and stranger rape. The Commission disagrees that the lack of detailed metrics leaves the community more vulnerable and less safe as a result, due to the fact that there are no known data on what kinds of reporting create community safety, per se. We want the Annual report to consistently include both current and historical data on rape and domestic violence and anticipate being able to reach this goal with the support of our new part time staff. Ordinance No. 81-29, Section 5. (d), requires the Commission to "...submit annually, and the City Council review and act upon a report documenting, in detail, City, community, and police efforts to carry out the purposes of this ordinance." The Annual Reports historically included more detailed metrics on Rape and Domestic Violence. While we concur that no reports were prepared during the 2017-2019 years, the 2023 Report provided a full recovery of the available data for those years The 2023 Report includes data from FBI Uniform Crime Report for Rape and data from 2010-2023 on the following California Penal Code Sections relating to Rape: 220 Attempted Rape; 261/262 Rape; 286 Sodomy; 387/288 Oral Copulation and 289 Penetration with a foreign object. Additionally, the 2023 report also includes domestic violence statistics from 2015 to 2023

The Commission partially agrees with the Grand Jury's claim that a lack of detailed metrics leaves the community more vulnerable and less safe. FBI Uniformed Crime Report shows a 26% reduction in rape from 2022 to 2023, along with a 34% decrease in Domestic Violence cases by from 2020 to 2021 and a decline of 14% between 2022 and 2023. Due to reporting timeline issues, a recent seeming uptick in rape numbers for 2024 is likewise not the full picture until we see the aggregate for the year. In its efforts to determine a more informative set of metrics for assessing community risk types for reporting, the Commission voted in November 2023 to accept a revised reporting format for rape and domestic violence statistics to include all FBI UCR Data, and various California Penal Code Sections on Rape and Domestic Violence. If the Commission chooses to reassess the metrics requested from SCPD, including stranger rape data, the SCPD has indicated it is prepared to provide that information. The Commission is still gathering information to determine what metrics are most informative to its work in relation to prevention and education. Understanding how SCPD reports NIBRS/CIBRS is a work in progress.

Given the complexities of sorting rape data, The Commission continues to focus on enhanced outreach to the community by collaborating with other Community Based Organizations to raise awareness about prevention and available services for survivors. This includes co-sponsoring with Monarch Services the “Stronger Together” Fun Run/5K Race in September 2023 & 2024, partnering for the past two years in both the Dyke and Pride Parades, the 2024 March to End Homelessness, and the She is Beautiful race. The production of a 30-minute film, “How to start difficult conversations on rape” which is being shown in local schools. Additionally, the Commission partnered with Monarch Services and approved allocation of \$6,000 to support their efforts to end domestic violence and to provide assistance to all survivors of sexual assault.

F2. By highlighting a generic national statistic on stranger rape, rather than assessing local metrics in the CPVAW 2023 Report, the City is minimizing stranger rape and misleading the public into a possible false sense of security.

- AGREE**
- PARTIALLY DISAGREE**
- DISAGREE**

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The Commission partially disagrees with the assertion that presented data leads to a false sense of security. The CPVAW 2023 Annual Report includes, as approved by the Commission on November 1, 2023, data from the US Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigations, Uniform Crime Report on Rape which is data specific to the City of Santa Cruz. The Annual Report also includes specific data on 5 penal code categories of Sexual Assault violations which together reveal accurate rape statistics of crimes committed in the City of Santa Cruz. It is correct that this data does not distinguish between a stranger and an acquaintance. While this type of distinction is useful, there is no data supporting that this is misleading the public into a false sense of security. However, we do agree that publishing stranger rape alerts to our community would increase capacity for safety. The data cited in the Annual Report is from a nationally recognized association; Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network (RAINN) and is consistent with previous data analysis as reported in the 2005-07 Annual Report.

The data showed that the City was safer in 2023 than in previous years. The Uniform Crime Report showed a decrease in rape by 26% from 2022 to 2023, and a decrease in Domestic Violence cases by 34% from 2020 to 2021 and a decrease of 14% between 2022 and 2023. We may be well served to adopt the FBI NIBRS data as the county and the City of Scotts Valley utilize and publish these data. This merits a further discussion with SCPD.

Again, the Commission is reviewing its effective range of data for evaluation and appreciates SCPD cooperation in providing such data as is determined to be most informative to our efforts to realize the intent of the Ordinance.

F3. The lack of attention to long-time Commission programs such as the Safe Place Network and the Bar Coaster program leaves residents and visitors without important resources for their personal safety.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The Commission is currently (see budget FY 24 and 25) leveraging their funds to partner with community-based organizations who specialize in providing victims of domestic violence and rape with much needed financial support to continue their successful programs and services. These organizations provide tangible resources that the Commission could not provide nor have the expertise to provide. In 2024 the Commission provided the following sponsorships to support local non-profit organizations: \$2,000 Walnut Ave Women’s Center, a non-profit organization based in Santa Cruz that provides direct services to survivors of domestic violence including prevention and education and \$6,000 to Monarch Services, another local non-profit that offers immediate crisis response to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking.

The Commission supported new programs to promote personal safety. For example, the Commission created PSAs aired on local channels to promote local safety; in 2023 the Commission partnered with the Santa Cruz City School district to provide high school students with an on-line course through Vector Solutions. This program offered targeted courses for grades 6-8 and 9-12, which would reach approximately 2,000 students. This mandatory program would enable the school to extend its reach, empowering more students to make informed choices, resist peer pressure, and foster health relationships. Topics included: Dealing with Stress and Anxiety; Self-Harm Awareness and Resolving Disagreements. Additional content included Mental Health and Wellbeing, Healthy Relationships & Inclusion, Personal & Community Safety and Student Safety and Wellness. The Commission funds self-defense programming each year. The City is the only local agency to have a Victim Advocate on staff in the Police Department. This important resource provides victims with information pamphlets outlining their rights, needed resources and advocate support through the legal system; and makes referrals to local agencies. The Advocate works with survivors to ensure they are treated with fairness and respect.

With regards to the Bar Coaster Program, the Commission has continued this program in FY 23 and 24. It is budgeted again in FY25. As of July 1st, State Law requires all bars that do not provide food to provide drug testing kits to customers. The Commission supports this new law. In June of 2024 the Commission purchased an additional 500 drug testing coasters to distribute to bars located in the City of Santa Cruz. These have been distributed into the community and we would welcome the opportunity do more, as our budget is allocated for it.

The Commission had a program entitled Safe Place Network which is no longer active. The program began over 25 years ago by providing a window sticker to businesses stating they were a "Safe Place", however there was very little to no training provided for businesses and their staff. The program also lacked a comprehensive marketing and outreach plan to inform visitors and the community of its existence. There are no metrics or data to substantiate the claim that not having this program has left residents and visitors without important resources for their personal safety. However, the Commission could consider re-establishing the program if they should choose to do so in the future.

Of further note, the Commission requested and was awarded for FY 25 a half time staff person dedicated to Commission business. This will greatly enhance our efficacy in general and with sustaining event and distribution protocols, budget management, program development and implementation, and is a strong indicator of City Council recognition of the critical work the Commission produces for community safety. Getting resources out to the community requires coordination and support from staffing. We anticipate great improvement.

F8. The inconsistencies the Grand Jury found in SCPD's rape numbers means the public, the CPVAW and the City have no accurate metrics about reported rape, leaving the community ill-informed and Annual Commission Reports unreliable.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

City of Santa Cruz Ordinance No. 81-29 establishes specific responsibilities and cooperation between SCPD and CPVAW:

- **Section 5(e):** The Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women, in carrying out its duties shall have the authority to call upon members of the Police Department to present information which is not defined as confidential by State law. The Santa Cruz Police Department shall offer full and open cooperation to the Commission.
- **Section 6(b):** The Police Department shall create a separate statistical report form to document and consolidate all domestic violence and women beating calls. This shall be compiled monthly.

We are working with the SCPD to meet these requirements, and to access more accurate metrics and data to deliver to the community. Before the February 7, 2024, CPVAW meeting, where the SCPD's statistical report (Appendix A – Figure 8 Full Table) was first presented, the SCPD had been producing a simplified statistical monthly report. This report included data on domestic violence calls, domestic violence cases, rape cases, sexual assaults, stalking cases, and intimate partner homicide cases.

At the November 1, 2023, CPVAW meeting, the Commission approved a metrics change and sodomy and forcible sexual penetration with a foreign object, and forced oral copulation were separated from the generalized rape column, and assault to commit rape was added. In the following two meetings (February 1, 2024, and May 1, 2024), SCPD complied and continued to make improvements to provide an accurate and comprehensive statistical report. Improvements included updating all the monthly summary values to reflect the addition of any cold cases when they occurred, not when reported, and footnotes were added to provide clarifying language. This was to try and explain why the old numbers had changed from previous reports.

CPVAW continues to develop our understanding of the available and appropriate metrics to support the work from the Ordinance mandate. We want to be collaborative with the SCPD and our community partners as well as the community in general to advocate for the best possible shared information and responses.

Recommendations

R4. The Grand Jury recommends that the SCPD update its website to include the detailed metrics on Rape Incidents submitted to NIBRS and CIBRS, ensuring all data entries are accurate and available at each meeting of the CPVAW, and have this in place by January 31, 2025. (F8, F9)

— **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done

— **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe

REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)

WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The Commission understands, and the SCPD webpage via the City of Santa Cruz portal, that the UCR reporting system is phased out and the CIBRS/NIBRS metrics and data collection are being implemented. We look forward to working with SCPD to align our understanding and reporting of data as of 2024 in the new systems.

R6. The Grand Jury recommends that the Commission and the SCPD submit comprehensive annual reports as called for in Ordinance 81-29, using the 2005-07 reports as a model, with the 2024 Annual Report placed on the Commission's agenda by December 31, 2024, and future reports submitted on a consistent, annual basis. (F1)

HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED – summarize what has been done

HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE – summarize what will be done and the timeframe

REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)

WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The Annual Report as required by Ordinance No. 81-29, Section 5.(d), requires the Commission to "...submit annually, and the City Council review and act upon a report documenting, in detail, City, community, and police efforts to carry out the purposes of this ordinance." The Ordinance does not require the Annual Report to provide detailed metrics on Rape. However, various Annual Reports over the years have included more detailed metrics and data on Rape and Domestic Violence, including the most recent Annual Report for 2023. The 2023 Report includes aggregate numbers from the FBI Uniform Crime Report for Rape and Domestic Violence from 2015-2016 and 2021 - 2023, and data from 2010-2023 utilizing California's Rape Law definition. The Commission will continue to provide comprehensive reports as required by the Ordinance, including enhanced reporting with qualified metrics and data

The 2023 Annual Report is modeled after both the 2005-2007 and the 2008-2010 Annual Report. Both of those reports were co-authored by the Commission and the Santa Cruz Police Department. The earlier joint reports contained data on sexual assault including incidents by Penal Code Violations. However, the previous reports did not contain information on Domestic Violence, which the 2023 report contains. The previous reports include an analysis of demographics within each rape case, which has not been conducted since 2017. The Commission must decide the metrics and data that will serve the mandate of the Commission.

To be meaningful, the Annual Report must include a full years' worth of data. In order to provide the community with a comprehensive Annual Report, the CPVAW Annual Report will be presented at the February meeting of the following calendar year.

R7. The Grand Jury recommends that the 2023 Report be amended to remove the national entry on stranger rape, replacing it with accurate data for the City of Santa Cruz by December 31, 2024. (F2)

HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED – summarize what has been done

HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE – summarize what will be done and the timeframe

REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)

WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The Commission appreciates SCPD's continued support in the collection of appropriate metrics and data that are useful towards the prevention and education mission. The Commission shares the perspective with SCPD that both national statistics on stranger rape and local metrics are important to provide the public with a wide and deep perspective. The data SCPD has presented is accurate in part; however more work is needed to resolve inconsistencies due to the different methodologies of UCR data, NIBRS/CIBRS. We look forward to collectively refining this work.



SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY
GRAND JURY

Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

City of Santa Cruz City Manager Response

Lisa Murphy <LMurphy@santacruzca.gov>

Mon, Sep 16, 2024 at 4:40 PM

To: "katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org" <katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org>, Santa Cruz Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

Cc: Gina Liebig <gliebig@santacruzca.gov>

Good Afternoon,

Attached you will find the City of Santa Cruz City Manager Response to "City of Santa Cruz: Preventing Rape and Domestic Violence, Where's the Priority?"



Lisa Murphy

Deputy City Manager

City of Santa Cruz

809 Center St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Phone: 831-420-5365

Email: lmurphy@santacruzca.gov

Web: www.cityofsantacruz.com



2024-9dl_RapeData_SantaCruzCM Invited Response Request.docx

155K



The 2023–2024 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury
Invites the

Santa Cruz City Manager

to Respond by September 25, 2024

to the Findings and Recommendations listed below
which were assigned to them in the report titled

**City Of Santa Cruz: Preventing Rape and Domestic
Violence**

Where's The Priority?

Responses are **invited** from appointed agency and department heads, appointed committees, and non-profit agencies contracted to the county which are investigated by the Grand Jury. You are not required to respond by the California Penal Code [\(PC\) §933\(c\)](#).
If you choose to respond, please follow the instructions below when preparing your response.

Instructions for Respondents

Your assigned [Findings](#) and [Recommendations](#) are listed on the following pages with check boxes and an expandable space for summaries, timeframes, and explanations. Please follow these instructions, which paraphrase [PC §933.05](#):

1. **For the Findings, mark one of the following responses with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
 - a. **AGREE with the Finding**, or
 - b. **PARTIALLY DISAGREE with the Finding** – specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and include an explanation of the reasons why, or
 - c. **DISAGREE with the Finding** – provide an explanation of the reasons why.

2. **For the Recommendations, mark one of the following actions with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
 - a. **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – provide a summary of the action taken, or
 - b. **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – provide a timeframe or expected date for completion, or
 - c. **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – provide an explanation, scope, and parameters of an analysis to be completed within six months, or
 - d. **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – provide an explanation of why it is not warranted or not reasonable.

3. **When your responses are complete, please email your completed Response Request as a PDF file attachment to both**

The Honorable Katherine Hansen, Grand Jury Supervising Judge
Katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org and

The Santa Cruz County Grand Jury grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

If you have questions about this request form, please contact the Grand Jury by calling 831-454-2099 or by sending an email to grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

Findings

F11. The City Manager's Weekly Update to the community has not highlighted the work of the CPVAW for the past two years, effectively relegating the prevention of rape and domestic violence to a low priority, leaving the public uninformed.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

There is no evidence to suggest that the absence of CPVAW activities in the City Manager's Weekly Updates has left the public uninformed or perceived as a low priority. The Weekly Update is a communication tool that shares relevant city activities and projects, drawing information from City Departments and highlighting key city council actions and significant projects. The Commission is encouraged to submit updates about its work to the City Manager's office for inclusion.

The Commission focuses on partnering with community-based organizations that specialize in supporting victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. In 2024, the Commission provided funding to local non-profits, including \$2,000 to the Walnut Avenue Women's Center, which offers direct services to survivors, and \$8,000 to Monarch Services, which provides crisis response for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. These organizations have a broader reach than the City Manager's Weekly Update, effectively disseminating more information to the public.

Furthermore, the Commission has significantly increased its community presence by participating in events such as co-sponsoring the "Stronger Together" Fun Run/5K with Monarch Services in September 2023 and 2024, marching in the Dyke March and the 2024 Pride Parade, and taking part in the 2024 March to End Homelessness and the She is Beautiful race. These events enhance awareness and provide crucial information on preventing rape and domestic violence.

Additionally, the Commission has launched a dedicated newsletter to highlight its events and activities, allocating funds for two publications in FY25. It also uses social media platforms to promote and inform the community about CPVAW initiatives.

Recommendations

R10. The Grand Jury recommends that the City Manager increase the visibility of the CPVAW programs and events by publishing relevant information, at least quarterly, in the City Manager’s Weekly Update and that the first article be published by December 31, 2024. (F11)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

There is no evidence to suggest that the absence of CPVAW activities in the City Manager’s Weekly Updates has left the public uninformed or perceived as a low priority. The Weekly Update is a communication tool that shares relevant city activities and projects, drawing information from City Departments and highlighting key city council actions and significant projects. *The Commission is encouraged to submit updates about its work to the City Manager’s office for inclusion when appropriate.*

The Commission focuses on partnering with community-based organizations that specialize in supporting victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. In 2024, the Commission provided funding to local non-profits, including \$2,000 to the Walnut Avenue Women’s Center, which offers direct services to survivors, and \$8,000 to Monarch Services, which provides crisis response for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. These organizations have a broader reach than the City Manager’s Weekly Update, effectively disseminating more information to the public.

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SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY
GRAND JURY

Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

Grand Jury Response

'Kris Munro' via Santa Cruz Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org> Mon, Aug 19, 2024 at 12:27 PM

Reply-To: Kris Munro <kmunro@sccs.net>

To: Katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org, grandjury@scgrandjury.org

Dear Honorable Judge Hansen and Members of the Grand Jury,

Thank you all for your service to our community. Please see my requested response to the Grand Jury's findings attached to this email.

Best regards,
Kris

--

Kris Munro

Superintendent

Santa Cruz City Schools

133 Mission Street, Suite 100

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

831-429-3410 x220

Engaging Students Hearts and Minds -- Every student, every day!



2024-9eI_RapeData_SantaCruzSS Invited Response Request.pdf

195K



The 2023–2024 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury
Invites the

Superintendent, Santa Cruz City Schools

to Respond by September 25, 2024

to the Findings and Recommendations listed below
which were assigned to them in the report titled

**City Of Santa Cruz: Preventing Rape and Domestic
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Where's The Priority?

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The Santa Cruz County Grand Jury grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

If you have questions about this request form, please contact the Grand Jury by calling 831-454-2099 or by sending an email to grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

Findings

F4. The loss of the in-person self-defense program for boys and girls in Santa Cruz City Schools lessens students' ability to prevent sexual assault and interpersonal violence, inconsistent with the mandate of Ordinance 81-29.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

When the in-person self-defense program was provided by the City, school principals fielded complaints from staff about the programming. Middle and high school teachers and other staff stated that there was a disconnect between the staff who came to train students and the students themselves. It was reported that while the trainers had knowledge and skills in self-defense, their lack of formal training negatively impacted students gaining the desired skills. Efforts were made to mitigate these issues, but at the same time that the City was evaluating the program, the District came to the conclusion that these offerings should be suspended and instead implemented a broader curriculum.

The in-person self defense classes were only one part of a broader curriculum that the district uses to prevent sexual assault and interpersonal violence amongst our students. We have an articulated plan that utilizes credentialed science teachers, in-person speakers from Monarch Services, and interactive videos by Vector Solutions at every grade level and for every year from 6th to 12th grade.

Middle school science teachers have attended and have been trained by staff who are contracted through the Santa Cruz County Office of Education and other community partners including the Cardea Training, an organizational development and research firm, to teach age-appropriate Sex Education. There are many components to these 6th through 8th grade units that address topics such as awareness, healthy relationships, teen dating violence, sexual harassment, active consent, bystander intervention, and more. These trained professionals use creative techniques that include role playing, student team presentations, expert videos, guest speakers from partners such as the Walnut Avenue Family and Women's Resource Center, and more. The middle school science teachers meet and collaborate regularly to ensure clear grade level articulation and to share strategies. The entire Sexual Education Unit spreads across roughly one month of school each year.

In each SCCS high school, all students take a semester-long Health Education Class in 9th grade. In these classes, students are taught lessons similar to middle school, and the lessons evolve in complexity as students mature. These trained and credentialed Health teachers also use their expertise to engage students in thought provoking and critical thinking activities that connect to students' lives as they learn characteristics of healthy vs. unhealthy relationships. Teen dating violence, sexual harassment, human trafficking, and active consent are also covered.

Each year, from 10th through 12th grade, students are taught these essential skills. Our high schools partner with Monarch Services to educate students on topics such as dating and domestic violence, healthy relationships, active consent, power dynamics, social media safety, and more. The presenters from Monarch Services bring a wealth of expertise from their agency, and classroom teachers reinforce these lessons by facilitating discussions with students before and after the presentations.

This past year at Santa Cruz High, we piloted Vector Solutions for these lessons. The Vector courses are designed to be engaging and age-appropriate, featuring diverse peer presenters to help all students relate more easily to the content. The courses are customized for grades 6-8 and 9-12. Along with the videos, students took pre- and post-tests, which showed an increase in knowledge following the lessons. Topics for 10th through 12th graders included Dating Violence Awareness, Healthy Relationships, Resolving Disagreements, Stress and Anxiety, Youth Suicide Risk, and more.

In addition to our programming for grades 6-12, we also teach personal safety, boundaries, problem-solving, and conflict resolution to our elementary students using the evidence-based Second Step Social and Emotional Learning curriculum. Furthermore, we've partnered with Kidpower International to support our TK-5th grade students. Kidpower uses an 8-point boundary framework to help prevent and address issues quickly and effectively, including stopping unwanted touch and attention.

Recommendations

R3. The Grand Jury recommends that the City Council begin evaluating options with the Santa Cruz City School District to reinstate the in-person self-defense program for middle and high school students of all genders by January 31, 2025. (F4)

HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED – summarize what has been done

HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE – summarize what will be done and the timeframe

REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)

WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

As addressed in our response to Finding #4, the Grand Jury appears to be unaware of the comprehensive programs and activities currently implemented by the Santa Cruz City School District for preventing sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and promoting personal safety. Our present curriculum and systems offer a significantly broader and more in-depth safety education compared to the in-person program previously provided in partnership with the Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women (CPVAW). The former program did not adequately equip students with the necessary skills to navigate the complexities of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Since then, our programs have evolved substantially. The advancements in data, technology, and educational techniques over the past several years have enabled us to develop a more relevant and effective approach to safety education. Unlike traditional self-defense courses that primarily focus on physical defense, our current programs emphasize the importance of understanding healthy relationships, addressing teen dating violence, and recognizing active consent. These areas are crucial, given that, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, in eight out of ten rape cases, the victim knows the perpetrator. Our programs, including Vector, which was funded by CPVAW in 2024, are designed to address these crucial aspects.

It is regrettable that the Grand Jury did not consult the Santa Cruz City School District to gain a full understanding of our current curriculum before making its assessment and recommendations. We take great pride in our comprehensive programming, which spans all grade levels and focuses on personal safety and prevention of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and interpersonal violence. We continuously review and refine our safety and prevention programs, lessons, and partnerships to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. We appreciate the ongoing support of CPVAW for the programs we have in place and look forward to continuing our collaborative efforts.