



COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN

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April 1, 1997

Dr. Alan Kalmanoff
Executive Director
Institute for Law & Policy Planning
P. O. Box 5137
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Dear Kal:

Spring 1997 Criminal Justice System Evaluation

It has now been about two years since your Criminal Justice System Evaluation in San Joaquin County. As you will recall, you and your staff made some 90 recommendations. The County formulated an implementation structure, process, and action plan to address those 90 recommendations. During the month of March, the Board of Supervisors approved another 11 items as complete. There are now a total of 53 items that have been addressed and deemed complete by our Board of Supervisors. We define complete as 1) recommendation implemented; 2) recommendation implemented with some modification; and 3) recommendation not implemented after detailed analysis. In addition to the 53 items that have been addressed, there are approximately 30 items that are under active work.

Overall, San Joaquin County has a qualitatively better, more cost-effective, and coordinated criminal justice system than prior to your work. In perspective, there have been several specific changes. They go beyond cost containment and cost savings. Specifically, these qualitative differences are as follows:

1. *Intense Focus*—County government and the law and justice departments continue to have an intense focus on the law and justice system as the largest consumer of general fund monies.
2. *System Perspective*—Departments approach issues from more of a systems point of view as opposed to a departmental point of view.
3. *Ownership of Some Problems*—While the criminal justice system responds, or fails to respond, to factors outside of its direct control, as system participants we've come to realize that *we* own some of the problems. Some of the problems are of *our* own making through failure to view ourselves as a system and act accordingly.
4. *Empowerment to Influence Some Outcomes*—With recognition of problem ownership, we are also better able and motivated to influence those outcomes which we can control.

5. *Greater Team Orientation*—Because of the frequency of our meetings and the give and take of working through and resolving issues, there is far greater team orientation than prior to your evaluation.
6. *Better Communication*—A material result of our intense focus, system perspective, and team work, is better communication throughout the criminal justice system. If you look at County government as a “learning organization”, we have also used our processing system to develop other initiatives using some of what we’ve learned.
7. *Cost-Effectiveness*—This synergy of the above have led to more cost-effective approaches as we add resources and expand our capabilities. We simply spend money more wisely.

These benefits are many times more valuable than the mere cost savings and cost containment features that have occurred with the overall project.

San Joaquin County thanks you again for the outstanding work!

Very truly yours,



David L. Baker
County Administrator

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