



Lodi Police Department  
215 West Elm Street  
Lodi, CA 95240  
(209) 333-6731 / (209) 333-6792 fax

Ricardo Garcia  
Chief of Police

November 15, 2024

Honorable Gus C. Barrera II, Presiding Judge  
San Joaquin County Superior Court  
180 E Weber Ave, Suite 1306J  
Stockton, California 95202

Re: Lodi Police Department Response to Grand Jury Case #0318 – Cold Cases in San Joaquin County: On the Back Burner

Judge Barrera,

On October 16, 2024, the City of Lodi Police Department (“LPD”) received a copy of the San Joaquin County Grand Jury Case #0318 Report titled “Second Look - 2018-2019 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury Report, Cold Cases in San Joaquin County: On the Back Burner” (“Second Report”). Generally, the Report reviewed cold cases in San Joaquin County, and documented a lack of response from the police agencies to the 2018-2019 San Joaquin Civil Grand Jury Report #318 of the same title (“Original Report”).

**City Response to the Report**

The Second Report provides: “[t]he Lodi City Council shall respond to all Findings and Recommendations of this report R1 and R2 and the 2018-2019 Grand Jury Report “Cold Cases in San Joaquin County: On the Back Burner” Case #0318, R1, R2, R8, and R10.”

Therefore, this response addresses the Second Report request and goes through the four (4) Original Report recommendations that applied to LPD. These were:

- R1 Each law enforcement agency in San Joaquin County develop a plan to define, prioritize, and digitally track cold case investigations no later than December 31, 2019. Prioritization will emphasize available physical evidence and utilize emerging DNA testing techniques.

- R2 Each law enforcement agency in San Joaquin County expands their definition of “cold case” to include missing persons with suspicious circumstances, and sexual assault (forcible rape and attempted rape), in addition to homicide no later than December 31, 2019.
- R8 Each law enforcement agency in San Joaquin County signs a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the newly formed Cold Case Task Force no later than March 31, 2020.
- R10 Each law enforcement agency in San Joaquin County develops a procedure and practice for maintaining periodic contact with family members of cold case victims no later than March 31, 2020.

The City of Lodi and LPD’s 2019 response to the Original Report is included as Attachment 1 hereto (“2019 Response”). LPD now provides an updated response to these recommendations for actions that have occurred since the 2019 Response as follows:

- R1 This recommendation has been met. LPD digitally tracks all cold case investigations and prioritizes cases with available physical evidence and utilizes emerging DNA testing techniques. As of the date of this report, every cold case has been analyzed to determine whether there is physical evidence in need of DNA or genetic testing. All available items have been tested. Cold cases are digitally assigned to each detective’s investigative “dashboard.” LPD cold cases are distributed among all detectives, and a supplemental report detailing their efforts is created on at minimum an annual basis.
- R2 This recommendation has been met. LPD’s cold cases include missing persons with suspicious circumstances and sexual assaults in addition to homicides.
- R8 This recommendation has been met. LPD has signed and participates with the county-wide Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.
- R10 This recommendation has been met. LPD maintains a practice of periodically contacting family members or next of kin of cold case victims. This occurs at the beginning of each year during “Cold Case Week” in which the department actively solicits information through social media by highlighting select cases and contacts family members to attempt to locate new leads or information.

In addition to the items noted above, LPD actively participates with the Luis G. Alvarez Rewards For Justice Foundation. This Lodi-based group raises funds to provide rewards to those whose tips to the police lead to arrests of unsolved homicides.

### **Summary**

LPD is committed to finding justice for victims of homicide or serious crimes. The Department is also committed to collaborating with not only local law enforcement agencies, but also local community based organizations that serve these interests.

Should you need any additional information on the City of Lodi and LPD's response to the Second Report, please contact me by email at [eversteeg@lodi.gov](mailto:eversteeg@lodi.gov) or by phone at (209) 333-5517.

Kind Regards,

Captain Eric VerSteeg

Cc via email only: Mr. Irving Jimenez, [grandjury@sjcourts.org](mailto:grandjury@sjcourts.org)

CITY COUNCIL  
MARK CHANDLER, Mayor  
DOUG KUEHNE,  
Mayor Pro Tempore  
BOB JOHNSON  
JOANNE MOUNCE  
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# CITY OF LODI

2015 "Wine Region of the Year"

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City Clerk  
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City Attorney

August 23, 2019

Hon. Linda L. Lofthus, Presiding Judge  
San Joaquin County Superior Court  
180 East Weber Avenue, Suite 1306J  
Stockton, CA 95202

**RE: Response to the San Joaquin County Grand Jury Report titled "Cold Cases in San Joaquin County: On the Back Burner 2018-2019 Case No. 0318"**

Dear Judge Lofthus:

The City of Lodi has reviewed the summary report to the 2018-2019 San Joaquin County Grand Jury Case No. 0318, regarding Cold Cases in San Joaquin County: On the Back Burner.

The enclosed response to the Grand Jury's Summary was approved by Council at the Council's regularly scheduled meeting of August 21, 2019.

The City thanks the Grand Jury for its review of cold cases in San Joaquin County and appreciates the opportunity to respond to the report. Please feel free to contact us if you have any further questions.

Respectfully,



Stephen Schwabauer  
City Manager

c: Trisa Martinez, Grand Jury Staff Secretary  
Jennifer M. Ferraiolo, City Clerk  
Janice D. Magdich, City Attorney



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Tod Patterson  
Chief of Police

Following is the City Of Lodi Police Department's response to Grand Jury Report 2018-2019 Case #0318, "Cold Cases in San Joaquin County: On the Back Burner":

***FINDINGS***

**Finding F1.0:**

*There is inconsistency and confusion regarding what defines a "cold case" amongst the law enforcement agencies in San Joaquin County.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F2.0:**

*There are more than 500 cold case homicides in San Joaquin County including 12 homicide victims whose remains have never been positively identified. The exact number of cold case homicides is unknown due to the lack of a consistent written definition for "cold case" and the lack of a digitized tracking system.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F2.1:**

*The lack of accurate numbers in counting and tracking cold cases in San Joaquin County is a contributing factor to the overall lack of priority for staffing, funding, and investigating cold cases.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F3.0:**

*The total number of cold case homicides in San Joaquin County is increasing each year due primarily to the decreased clearance rate for solving homicides.*

**Response:** PARTIALLY AGREE

The City of Lodi and the Lodi Police Department do not presume to be knowledgeable in regards to the clearance rate of cold case homicides in the other law enforcement agencies in the County; however, in the City of Lodi the cold case homicides are not increasing year over year, but have increased in the last ten years.

**Finding F3.1:**

*Cold case homicide investigations in San Joaquin County rarely result in case closure, arrest or prosecution. This is a contributing factor to the increasing number of cold case homicides in San Joaquin County.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F3.2:**

*Due to the current inconsistencies in both defining and counting cold cases involving missing persons with suspicious circumstances, and sexual assaults, there is insufficient information to clearly determine the extent to which the number of those unsolved cases may be increasing.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F4.0:**

*There is insufficient staffing for cold case investigations, in San Joaquin County, primarily within the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department, the Stockton Police Department, and the San Joaquin County District Attorney's Office.*

**Response:** PARTIALLY AGREE

Although the Lodi Police Department has insufficient staffing for cold case investigations, it does not presume to be knowledgeable regarding the staffing levels for other law enforcement agencies within the County, including the District Attorney's Office.

**Finding F4.1:**

*There are a significant number of cold case homicides with the Stockton Police Department and the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department that have not been reviewed in many years due to insufficient staffing and lack of prioritization.*

**Response:** N/A

The Lodi Police Department has no knowledge regarding the number of cold case homicides in either the Stockton Police Department or the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office that have not been reviewed in many years due to insufficient staffing and lack of prioritization.

**Finding F4.2:**

*Law enforcement agencies in San Joaquin County continue to be challenged in hiring and retaining enough qualified officers to fill budgeted positions. This has been a contributing factor to insufficient staffing of cold case investigations.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F4.3:**

*Providing experienced staffing for cold case investigations may require transferring staff from other assignments, hiring additional qualified retirees, or seeking qualified volunteers.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F5.0:**

*There is insufficient funding for cold case investigations in San Joaquin County, primarily for the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department, the Stockton Police Department, and the San Joaquin County District Attorney's Office. The lack of sufficient funding is due primarily to financial limitations and lack of priority.*

**Response:** PARTIALLY AGREE

The City of Lodi and the Lodi Police Department agree that the Lodi Police Department does not have the funding to dedicate personnel solely to cold case investigations; however, we do not know or presume to know funding availability in the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, Stockton Police Department or the San Joaquin County District Attorney's Office in order to fund cold case investigations.

**Finding F6.0:**

*There is a need for additional training specific to cold case investigations for the law enforcement agencies in San Joaquin County.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F6.1:**

*The lack of organized computer databases for cold cases is impeding the effective evaluation and investigation of cold cases in San Joaquin County.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F6.2:**

*The methods for prioritization of cold case investigations in San Joaquin County are often ineffective, with insufficient emphasis placed on available physical evidence.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F6.3:**

*The exact number of cold case homicides in San Joaquin County that have testable DNA evidence is unknown due to the lack of effective tracking and evaluation methods.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F6.4:**

*There are limitations on the amount of physical evidence that the State of California Department of justice crime laboratories will process for cold case investigations due to staffing and prioritization.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F6.5:**

*Cold case homicides involving street gangs often present greater challenges due to the lack of testable DNA evidence and the lack of available or willing witnesses.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F7.0:**

*The elevation of cold case investigations as a priority is vital to the future success in investigating and solving cold cases in San Joaquin County.*

**Response:** AGREE



**Finding F7.1:**

*The utilization of innovative technology and emerging techniques is an essential element to the future success of investigating and solving cold cases in San Joaquin County.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F7.2:**

*The level of collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney's Office is a critical component to success in solving and prosecuting cold cases.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F7.3:**

*There is minimal contact between the District Attorney's Office and cold case investigative staff in San Joaquin County due to lack of staffing and priority.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F7.4:**

*There is universal support amongst law enforcement agencies in San Joaquin County for the District Attorney's Office to form a Cold Case Task Force to support cold case investigation and prosecution.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Finding F8.0:**

*There is no consistent procedure or practice for law enforcement agencies in San Joaquin County to maintain periodic contact with the family members of cold case victims.*

**Response:** AGREE

**RECOMMENDATIONS****Recommendation R1:**

*Each law enforcement agency in San Joaquin County develop a plan to define, prioritize, and digitally track cold case investigations no later than December 31, 2019. Prioritization will emphasize available physical evidence and utilize emerging DNA testing techniques.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Recommendation R2:**

*Each law enforcement agency in San Joaquin County expand their definition of "cold case" to include missing persons with suspicious circumstances, and sexual assault (forcible rape and attempted rape), in addition to homicide no later than December 31, 2019.*

**Response:** AGREE

**Recommendation R8:**

*Each law enforcement agency in San Joaquin County sign a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the newly formed Cold Case Task Force no later than March 31, 2020.*


**Response:** The City of Lodi and the Lodi Police Department will wait to read the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement before determining whether we can consent to the Agreement; but agrees that a Cold Case Task Force and cooperation between County agencies would be beneficial

**Recommendation R10:**

*Each law enforcement agency in San Joaquin County develop a procedure and practice for maintaining periodic contact with family members of cold case victims no later than March 31, 2020.*

**Response:** AGREE

  
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Lodi City Manager- Stephen Schwabauer      8.23.18  
Date

  
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Lodi Police Chief Tod Patterson      082219  
Date