



VICENTE SARMIENTO

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION NORTH BUILDING
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PHONE (714) 834-3220

July 21, 2026

City of Santa Ana
Mayor and Councilmembers / City Manager
20 Civic Center Plaza
Santa Ana, CA 92701

RE: Agenda Item 19, Direction Regarding the Proposed Orange County Coordinated Reentry Center at the Former Youth Guidance Center Site in Santa Ana

Dear City Manager Nuñez, Mayor Amezcua, and City Council Members,

I am writing to provide additional information regarding Agenda Item 19 and to clarify the current status of the proposed Orange County Coordinated Reentry Center at the former Youth Guidance Center site in Santa Ana.

As you may know, individuals who have completed their jail sentences are often released in Santa Ana without access to the supportive services that can help them successfully transition back into the community. The concept of establishing a reentry center to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes was first developed in 2019. In 2021, the former Youth Guidance Center site in Santa Ana was identified as the preferred location. Both decisions occurred before I took office as County Supervisor.

Since learning of the Reentry Center, I have consistently maintained that the County should not move forward with funding the project until there has been meaningful engagement with the City of Santa Ana and the surrounding community. While I believe reentry services are critical to successful rehabilitation, projects like these must be developed transparently and in partnership with the communities that host the services. Without that partnership, the project risks undermining the very goals it is intended to achieve.

At its June 9 meeting, the Orange County Board of Supervisors provided direction on the Fiscal Year 2026-27 County budget, which included approximately \$21 million in capital funding related to the proposed Coordinated Reentry Center. During that meeting, I urged my colleagues to pause moving forward with the project until the County conducted meaningful public outreach with the City of Santa Ana and the surrounding community. I made clear that residents deserved the opportunity to understand the proposal, ask questions, and provide input before any decisions were made regarding the future use of the former Youth Guidance Center site.

On June 18, I joined Mayor Amezcua, members of the Santa Ana City Council, and residents at a community meeting to discuss the proposed project. During that meeting, I reaffirmed my position



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that I could not support funding the project until there had been meaningful engagement with the City and the community.

At the June 23 Board of Supervisors meeting, many Santa Ana residents submitted written comments and appeared before the Board to express their views on the project. Their input reinforced the concerns that had been raised previously regarding the need for greater community engagement. The Board ultimately did not include funding for the proposed Coordinated Adult Reentry Center in the adopted Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget. As a result, the adopted budget does not authorize the proposed Adult Reentry Center or any capital improvements at the former Youth Guidance Center site.

To be clear, at this time the Board of Supervisors have not approved construction of a Reentry Center at this location, nor has it approved funding to renovate the former Youth Guidance Center for this purpose.

While County staff have completed preliminary conceptual design work to evaluate what the site could potentially look like, no construction has begun, no construction has been authorized, and no funding has been approved. Before any project could move forward at this or any other location, County staff would be required to return to the Board of Supervisors for separate public consideration and approval.

Since the direction was given, County staff have made efforts to initiate discussions with the City regarding the proposal and have sent formal requests to meet with City leadership, including letters dated June 22 and July 10. Although those discussions have not yet occurred, my office as well as County staff remain available to meet with City representatives, answer questions, and provide additional information.

I remain committed to working collaboratively with the City Council, County staff, residents, and stakeholders to ensure that any future discussions are transparent, inclusive, and guided by community input.

I look forward to continuing to work together in the best interests of the Santa Ana community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vicente Sarmiento", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Vicente Sarmiento
Orange County Board Supervisor, District 2