



**Coalition for a Safer San Mateo County**

# **The Case for Independent Oversight**

**presented by Jim Lawrence**

**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

**[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)**



# The Goal: A Community Voice

- Community safety for all
- Two way communication between the community and the Sheriff
- Support Sheriff's deputies in their mission to protect and serve
- Address resident complaints, investigate issues, and make policy and practice recommendations
- Independent review of Sheriff policies and practices



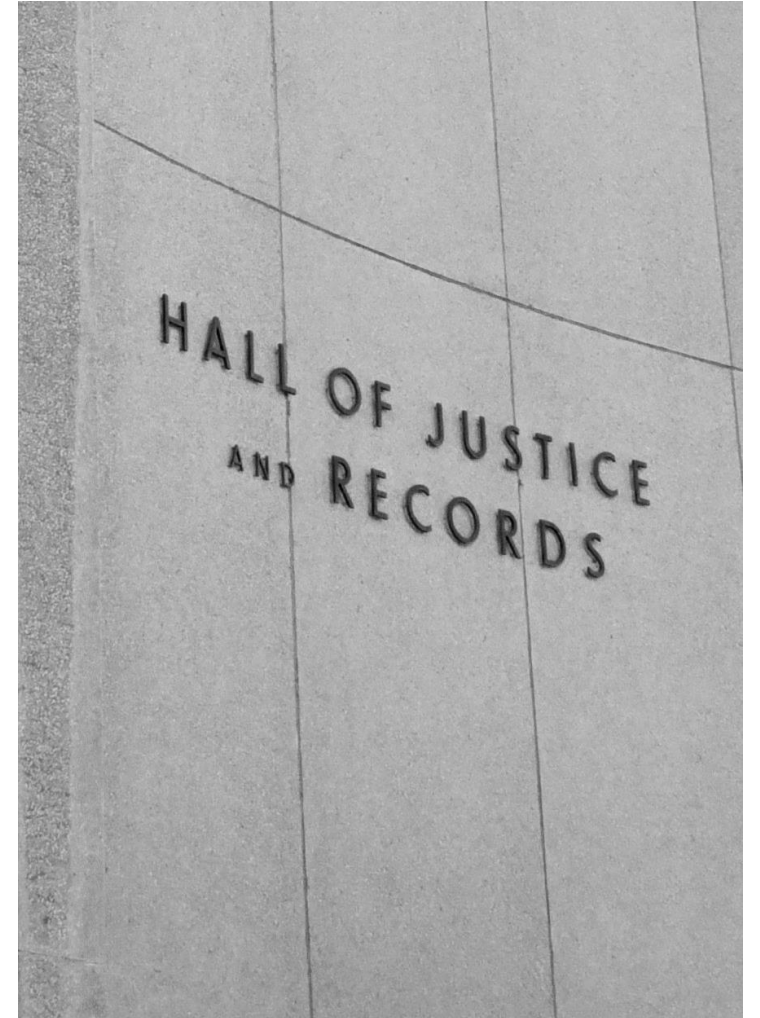
**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)



# It's Common Sense

- ✓ Checks and balances
- ✓ Good government
- ✓ Fiscal responsibility
- ✓ Transparency
- ✓ Accountability



**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)



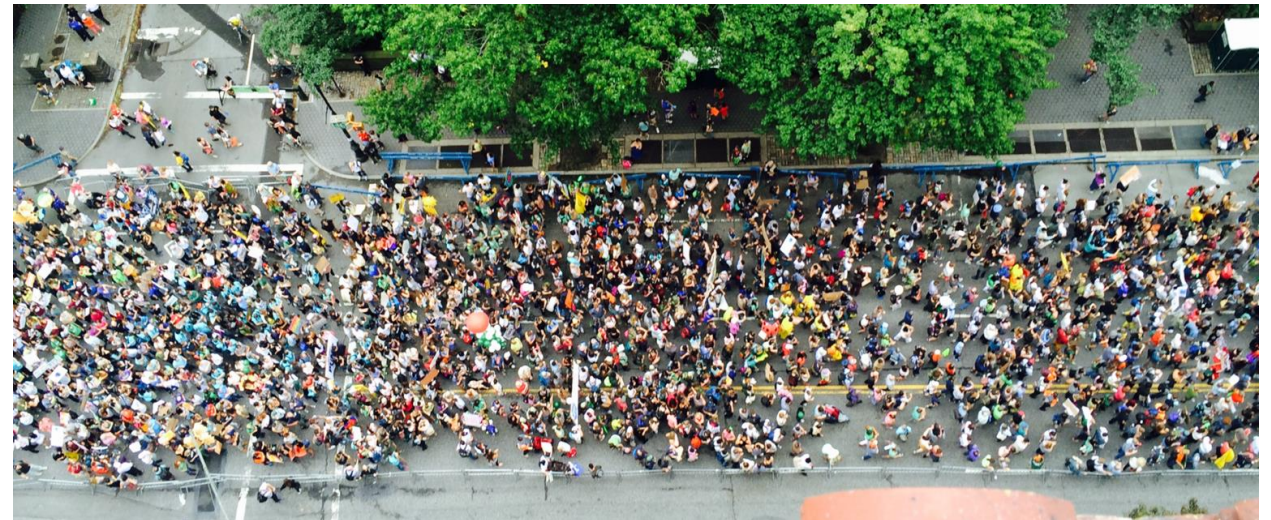
# Support for Oversight is Widespread

Cities and towns that  
together comprise

**1/3 of all county  
residents**

**36** local  
organizations  
and community  
groups

- East Palo Alto
- Half Moon Bay
- Portola Valley
- Redwood City
- San Mateo
- North Fair Oaks  
Community Council



**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)



# Coalition for a Safer SMC Members

## Civil Rights

ACLU Northern California  
ACLU North Peninsula Chapter  
ACLU Mid-Peninsula Chapter  
Belmont Neighbors Against Racism  
Coastside Families Taking Action  
Center for Common  
Ground/Peninsula-South Bay Chapter  
Foster City Association of Black  
Residents  
La Honda Indivisible  
NAACP San Mateo  
Puente de la Costa Sur  
Raging Grannies Action League  
REACH Coalition of San Mateo County  
Redwood City for Racial Equity  
San Francisco Peninsula People  
Power  
San Mateo County Coalition for  
Immigrant Rights

## Justice

Fools Mission  
Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY)  
In Our Care  
ReEvolution  
San Mateo County Law Enforcement  
Accountability Group

## Political

Coastside Democrats  
Peninsula Democratic Coalition  
San Mateo County Democracy for America  
San Mateo County Democratic Party  
San Mateo County Dems Farmworker  
Affairs Committee  
San Mateo County LatinX Democratic Club  
San Mateo County Stonewall Democrats

## Faith Based

Action Council of the Unitarian  
Universalist Church of Palo Alto  
Faith in Action Bay Area  
Island United Church  
Peninsula Solidarity Cohort  
Sisters of Mercy Solidarity  
Committee  
Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship of Redwood City  
Unitarian Universalists of San  
Mateo Anti-Racism Committee  
Woodside United Methodist  
Church

**Fixin'**  
**San Mateo**  
**County**

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)



# These Officials Have Endorsed Independent Oversight for San Mateo County

**Anna Eshoo** US Congresswoman for CA-16

**Kevin Mullin** US Congressman for CA-15

**Jackie Speier** former US Congresswoman for CA-14

**Josh Becker** CA State Senator for District 13

**Marc Berman** CA Assemblymember for District 23

**Sally Lieber** State Board of Equalization

**Noelia Corzo** San Mateo County Supervisor

**Ray Mueller** San Mateo County Supervisor

**Lisa Gauthier** Mayor of East Palo Alto

**Jen Wolosin** Mayor of Menlo Park

**Deborah Penrose** Mayor of Half Moon Bay

**Amourence Lee** Mayor of San Mateo

**Juslyn Manalo** Vice Mayor of Daly City

**Antonio López** Vice Mayor of East Palo Alto

**Joaquin Jimenez** Vice Mayor of Half Moon Bay

**Maurice Goodman** Vice Mayor of Millbrae

**Lisette Espinoza-Garnica** Vice Mayor of Redwood City

**Lisa Diaz Nash** Deputy Mayor of San Mateo

**Warren Lieberman** former Mayor of Belmont

**Emily Beach** Burlingame City Council and former Mayor

**Dr. Rod Daus-Magbual** Former Mayor of Daly City

**Robert Brownstone** Half Moon Bay City Council and former Mayor

**Harvey Rarback** Half Moon Bay City Council and former Mayor

**Debbie Ruddock** Half Moon Bay City Council and former Mayor

**Alicia Aguirre** Redwood City Council and former Mayor

**Charles Stone** former Mayor of Belmont

**Jim Lawrence** former Mayor of Foster City

**Giselle Hale** former Mayor of Redwood City

**Laura Parmer-Lohan** former Mayor of San Carlos

**Rick Bonilla** former Mayor of San Mateo

**Joe Goethals** former Mayor of San Mateo

**Ian Bain** former Mayor of Redwood City

**Diana Reddy** former Vice Mayor of Redwood City

**John Goodwin** Colma Town Council

**Betsy Nash** Menlo Park City Council

**Sam Hindi** Foster City Council

**Elmer Martínez Saballos** Redwood City City Council

**Chris Sturken** Redwood City City Council

**Richard Hedges** San Mateo City Council

**James Coleman** South San Francisco City Council

**Eddie Flores** South San Francisco City Council

**Jenn Wall** Woodside Town Council

**Ned Fluet** Woodside Town Council

**Michael Smith** former member Redwood City Council

**Chelsea Bonini** San Mateo County Board of Education Vice President

**Hector Camacho, Jr.** San Mateo County Board of Education Trustee

**Richard Holober** San Mateo County Community College District Trustee

**John Pimentel** San Mateo County Community College District Trustee

**Kalimah Salahuddin** Jefferson Union High School District Trustee

**Andy Lie** Jefferson Union High School District Trustee

**Shara Watkins** San Mateo-Foster City School District Trustee

**Ligia Andrade Zuniga** San Mateo Union High School District Trustee

**Karen Maki** San Mateo County Democratic Party Chair

**Alexis Lewis** San Mateo County Democratic Party District 2

**Monroe Labouisse** Chair, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission

**Paul Bocanegra** Commissioner, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission

**Rocsana Enriquez** Commissioner, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission

**Johanna Rasmussen** Commissioner, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission

**Chris Rasmussen** Behavioral Health Commission Chair





# Enforcement is Unequal

Black people are

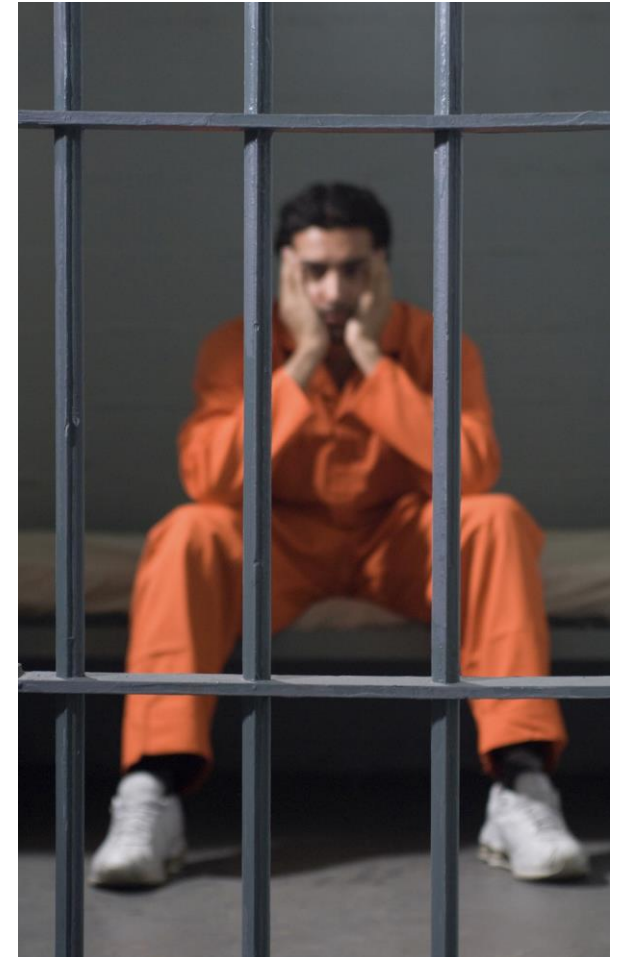
**NINE TIMES**

more likely than White people to be  
arrested in San Mateo County

Hispanic people are

**TWICE AS LIKELY**

as White people to be arrested



**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)



# People of Color Are At Risk



Black people make up **less than 7%** of the population, but **27% of people killed by police**

In the 5-county Bay Area, 2015-2020

**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)





# Costing Taxpayers and the County

In 2022, San Mateo County  
paid more than

**\$5.4 Million**

to settle claims related to the  
Sheriff's Office

**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)



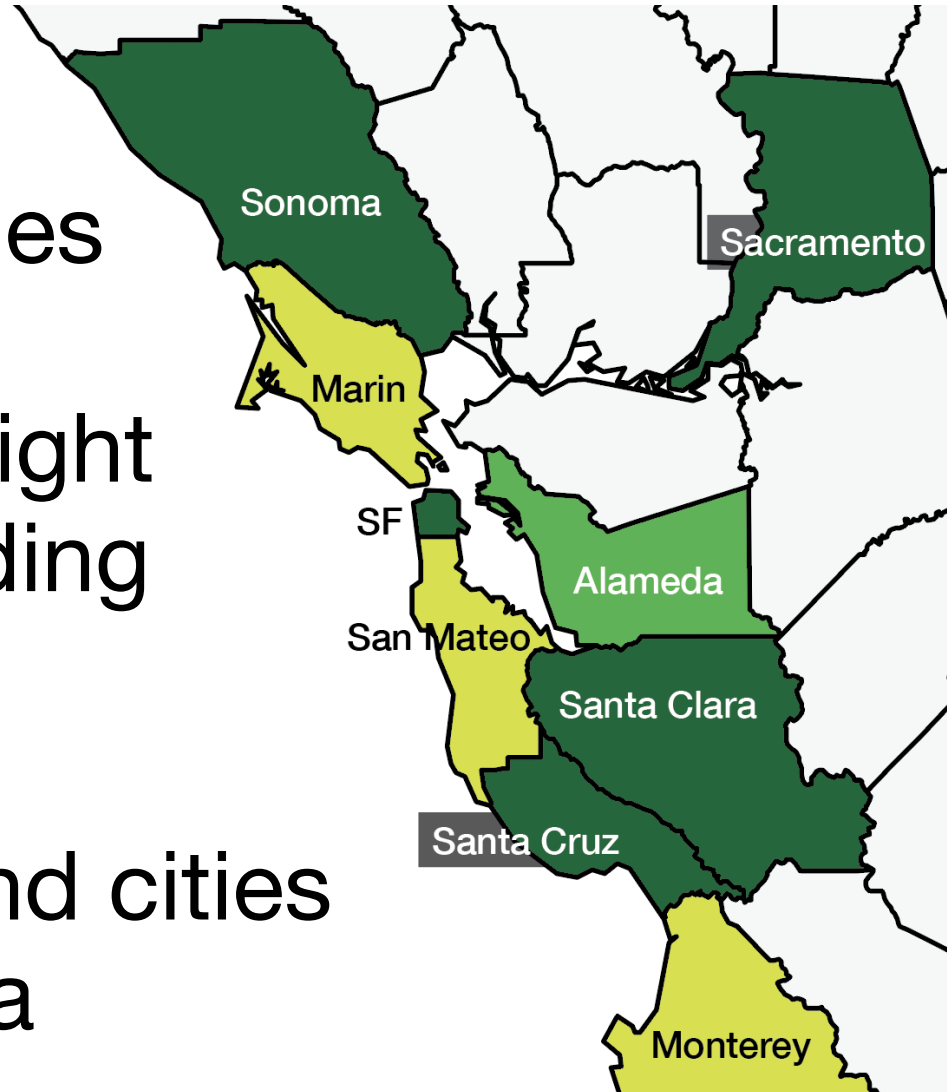
# Civilian Oversight Is Growing

**250**

U.S. counties  
and cities  
have oversight  
now, including

**25**

counties and cities  
in California



**Oversight of  
Sheriff's Offices  
in the Bay Area  
by County**



**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

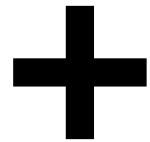
[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)



# What Community Voice Looks Like

## **Civilian Oversight Board**

(community members)



## **Inspector General (IG)** (Attorney)

### **Both Board and IG:**

- Are appointed by BoS
- Have subpoena power
- Review and recommend policies
- Make public reports
- Dialogue with Sheriff



# Oversight Board

## **Composition: 11 community members**

- impartial
- knowledgeable
- committed
- diverse in location and life experience

## **Responsibilities:**

- Monthly public meetings
- Community outreach
- Receive complaints and concerns
- Issue public reports



# Inspector General

- **Attorney with criminal law experience**
- Investigate complaints from residents
- Investigate incidents and trends including:
  - excessive force
  - deaths in custody
  - racial profiling trends





# Necessary for Effectiveness

## Independence

from the Sheriff's Office

## Support

from Board of Supervisors

## Access

to records, including by subpoena when needed

## Ability to hear

complaints directly from residents

## Representation

from the entire community

## Funding

to do its work

**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)





# Oversight - necessary but limited

## Oversight DOES

Create transparency and accountability through public reports to the Board of Supervisors, the Sheriff, and the public

## Oversight DOES NOT

- Set policy for the Sheriff or Board of Supervisors
- Discipline or fire deputies



**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)

*State law AB1185 gives subpoena power to oversight boards & inspectors general but does not create these boards/offices*



# Benefits to the Sheriff's Office

- Can advocate for resources the Office needs for reform
  - Unarmed mental health response
  - Alternatives to jail for mental health
  - Community engagement
- Independent intermediary to build trust
- Promotes dialogue instead of adversarial / lawsuit response to issues
- **Does not take away the power and position of the Sheriff or Sheriff's Office**



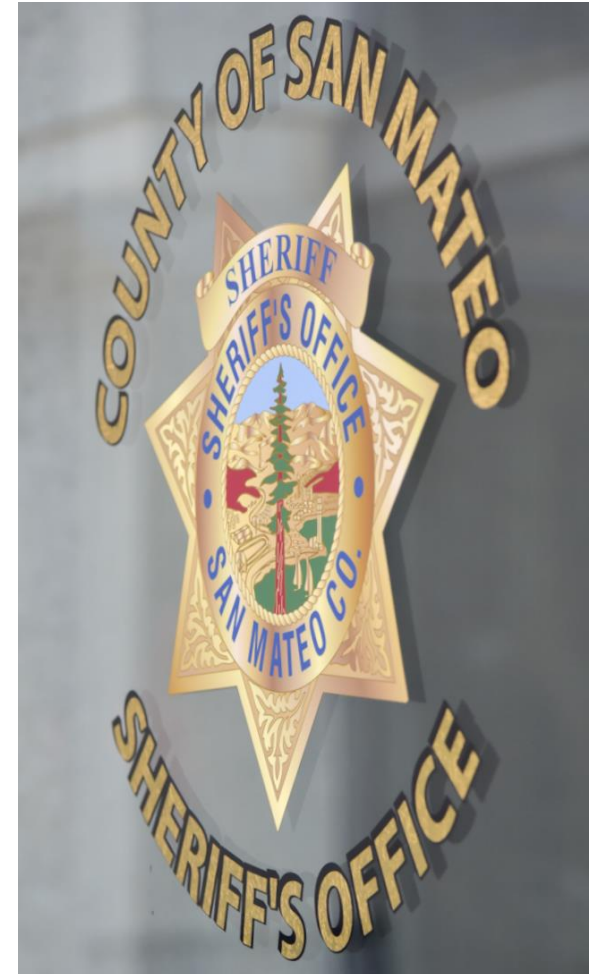
**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)



# Thank you for supporting oversight

Thank you to the Board for voting in favor of a strong oversight model in 2022 and to the many community members and groups who have supported this effort.



**Fixin'**  
San Mateo  
County

[fixinsmc.org](http://fixinsmc.org)