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Economy & Efficiency Commission Presentation

Editorial Note: Although every effort has been made to insure the accuracy of the material in this presentation, the scope of the material covered and the discussions undertaken lends itself to the possibility of minor transcription misinterpretations.

**PRESENTATION BY
Mr. Richard Shumsky
Chief Probation Officer, Los Angeles County Probation Department
Topic: Probation Department Strategic Plan Focus
February 3, 2000**

Commissioner Thompson introduced Mr Shumsky relating past associations with him and commending his dedication to the Probation Department.

Mr. Shumsky in his opening remarks said that to assist him in his presentation on the Los Angeles County Probation Department's Strategic Plan, he brought the department's strategic planner Mr. Marcus Allen.

Mr. Shumsky commented that in his 32 years as a probation officer he developed his own vision of what a strategic plan should be and knew what needed to be done. He said that the awareness of goals and the technical knowledge to implement them are different issues. It is imperative that a capable strategic planner be retained to develop a comprehensive approach to strategic planning that is consistent with the County's vision.

Mr. Alien stated that the Probation Department is trying to follow the classic strategic planning process. Interviews have been conducted with many of the people who have an interest in the department to determine what departmental functions they consider to be important. He referred the Commission to the distributed material, saying that it identified the Department's mission, goals, objectives, and vision.

Mr. Allen commented that the department is structured around the Detention Bureau, the Residential Treatment Bureau; and the Adult and Juvenile Bureaus. These four Bureaus are working on their visions, goals, and objectives to be included in a three to five year strategic plan. This strategic plan will also be supported by Human Relations, Contracts, Information Technology (IT), and Capital Infrastructure plans. Each year the operational or tactical plan will be updated to be consistent with the adopted strategic plan.

Commissioner Stoke asked Mr. Allen if he felt there was enough knowledge within the department to determine what can or should be done. Mr. Allen replied that the short answer was no, but his view of a strategic planning document was that of an ongoing process. He said the idea was to continually modify an existing structure. Mr. Alien went on to say that although the plan would not be perfect in the beginning, after going through a process it will evolve to provide effective direction for the department.

Mr. Allen said that Mr. Shumsky has a realistic vision for the department's direction. What has been done is to put in place initiatives which establish value across the four bureaus. In the short term initiatives, goals,

and perspectives have been established on issues that will determine the department's direction.

Commissioner Stoke wanted to know who the Probation Department's customers were. Mr. Allen answered that it depends on whom you ask. Typically the courts and the community of probationers and their families. Mr. Allen said that in his area of administrative functions the customers are the bureau chiefs and departmental operations. Commissioner Stoke asked if the crime victims were customers. Mr. Allen said yes, that one of the departments goals was to increase collections for restitution and departmental reimbursement.

Commissioner Balderrama wanted to know what the term "Residential Treatment" meant. Mr. Shumsky replied that it referred to the department's nineteen probation camps housing approximately 2,000 minors.

Commissioner Thompson asked how many probationers the average probation officer monitored. Mr. Shumsky said that in adult probation the typical caseload was 1,000 per probation officer. He continued saying that the department was installing kiosks that would help track probationers through their ability to read a palm print and ask a series of pertinent questions. This process has been experimental in New York and would be of use in Los Angeles. Commissioner Thompson wanted to know how much true supervision was done with dangerous people in our society. Mr. Shumsky said that there was a pilot program called "DISARM" which will identify 4,000 of the most dangerous felons. There exists a search and seizure order which will be used to randomly conduct searches for weapons or any other illegal material. It is known that with 1,000 probationers per deputy that meaningful surveillance and counseling is not being done. This area needs to be addressed.

Mr. Shumsky commented that the juvenile ratio of caseload per deputy was much smaller. He said that they were trying to keep the juvenile caseload to from 50 to 75 per deputy. Mr. Shumsky added that presently there were 70,000 adult probationers and approximately 26,000 juvenile probationers in Los Angeles County.

Chairman Philibosian asked, at this point, if the Commissioners would hold their questions to ensure that there is sufficient time to make the full presentation.

Mr. Allen went on to say that on the operational side short term initiatives have been put in place in an attempt to drive value. On the infrastructure side, the department tried to do the same thing. The Probation Department, has identified approximately \$60M worth of unmet needs, both physical and infrastructure. The repair of detention and residential are the areas where money has been spent in the last 18 months. During this 18-month period the Department received \$24M from the Board of Supervisors to fund deferred maintenance. However, the Department has been unable to get to the adult or juvenile area office needs. Mr. Allen continued saying that the original estimated \$60M for unmet needs is no longer valid. Working with the Chief Administrative Officer, the Department will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) by the end of February. The RFP seeks a consultant to create a five to ten year forecast of strategic asset management.

Mr. Shumsky interjected that the department had outside help in focusing on a needs assessment. Progress on this issue is being made and the department was is both reactive and proactive

Chairman Philibosian asked to hear any questions or comments from Commissioner Kennedy who, as past foreman of the Grand Jury, has done work in this area. He felt that this would determine how the Commission could best assist the Probation Department.

Commissioner Kennedy said that the Commission did want to focus on the Probation Department's capital planning and how that would integrate into its strategic plan. She asked for a time line on developing a strategic plan. Mr. Allen replied that in terms of having an overall strategic plan he was hoping to have a draft by April that addresses the Department's vision, objectives, and goals. The outcome measures and how it connects to the overall map and performance components will not be accomplished this early. In terms of the capital planning component the Department hopes to have a consultant on board and have the inventory accomplished to respond to the August budget cycle. Mr. Shumsky interjected that some studies have shown that if proposition 21, were to pass in March the Department may be overwhelmed with minors. This would

significantly impact any strategic plan. He said that although there is an attempt to plan long term, there could be a crisis.

Commissioner Kennedy stated that members of the Commission have expressed an interest in visiting the central facility to see its condition and the improvements that have been made. She asked if that would be possible. Mr. Shumsky said that it would be possible and that they would be happy to give commissioners a tour and to discuss with them the current plans. Commissioner Kennedy said that since the departmental planning unit has been increased, how many people were now employed in this unit. Mr. Allen said that there were 4 authorized positions and that two were currently filled.

Commissioner Padilla stated that he was a teacher and that it surprised him to learn how many of his students and parents are affected by crime. He said that he was aware of a program in Boston where the Probation Department was working in conjunction with local law enforcement to reduce crime. Would that work here? Mr. Shumsky said that the Los Angeles Probation Department has been doing this for a number of years.

Commissioner Seidner stated that it was clear that the Department is struggling with a scarcity of resources and has had difficulty with its capital assets. He wanted to know how the Department was planning on dealing with their strategic plan when it is finally completed. He also suggested that they not become frustrated when they encounter a brick wall. Mr. Shumsky said that because the Department handles so many minors, health and safety considerations are always the first priorities. They can overcome any strategic plan. He admitted that the process will be frustrating but that it was an exercise that needs to be done. Mr. Shumsky shared that the Department's budget was year to year. He added that the Department has attempted to create a multi-year budget by being frugal.

Commissioner Hill wanted to know about the relationship of the Probation Department with the Asset Management Division of the Chief Administrative Office. Mr. Allen said that it was close. Commissioner Hill asked if there were any existing operational models that can be identified with that currently have a strategic plan. Mr. Shumsky replied that he was able to incorporate many ideas from throughout the county into the department's planning. He continued saying that the Department has a Research Section that is constantly looking for new innovative ideas.

Vice Chair Lucente said that one of the items that the Grand Jury Implementation Task Force has chosen to look at more carefully at is the capital planning aspect of Probation. He stated that the Commission was supportive of the efforts of the Probation Department and that the Commission can potentially help in the transition of some of the proposed changes.

Mr. Shumsky thanked the Commission for its interest in the Probation Department and said that he would be in contact to arrange a site visit for the Commission.

Chairman Philibosian thanked Messrs. Shumsky and Allen for their informative presentation and said that the Commission would continue its interest in the Probation Department.

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