county of ventura

COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE
JOHN F. JOHNSTON
County Executive Officer

September 3, 2002

TO: John F. Johnston, CEO

FROM: Paul Derse, Chief Deputy CEO – Finance Division

SUBJECT: 2001-2002 Grand Jury Response Concerning Real Property held by Ventura County

The following is a combined response from the CEO and Board of Supervisors to the findings and recommendations of the FY2001-2002 Grand Jury Report relating to Real Property held by Ventura County. Since all findings were informational, responses are directed to Recommendations 1 and 2 of the report.

Recommendations:

R-1 The County real property assets need to be monitored at the highest level possible with a centralized review consolidating department recommendations in order that short-term and long-term plans will be based on strategic considerations.

<u>R-1 Response</u>
Concur
The recommendation is in the process of being implemented. The Board of Supervisors adopted a Capital Planning Policy on June 11, 2002. A review of real property assets is currently in progress. This review will evaluate County owned and leased properties in terms of location, clients served, optimal revenue utilization, and demographic and public need projections. The process will provide a centralized review to consolidate short-term and long-term department plans based on strategic considerations. Department plans will be coordinated with the infrastructure development strategy being developed concurrently. A formalized plan for real property assets is expected to be completed in conjunction with the infrastructure and strategic planning process in early 2003.

R-2 The County of Ventura should implement a strategic infrastructure development process which will have cognizance over the non-IT aspects of the Five Year Capital Improvement Plan as well as be responsive to near-term interdepartmental space needs. This should consist of a committee of County department senior managers chaired by the Chief Executive Officer. Support staff responsibilities could include (1) coordination and investment analysis and

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population projections from the CEO's office, (2) analysis of contracts and legal restrictions from County Counsel, (3), analysis of zoning and covenants from RMA and (4) detailed facility analysis from GSA. It would have the following responsibilities:

- *a. Rationalize County facility planning with the vision of the County General Plan.*
- *b. Coordinate and adjudicate space and facility issues across County departments.*
- *c. Develop a biannual infrastructure strategy for internal County use by consolidating demographic and public need projections currently being performed by individual County departments and soliciting forecasts for the demands for County services from the Board of Supervisors, the ten cities within the County, LAFCO and major employers such as Amgen and the Department of Defense.*
- *d. Access the consolidation of facilities for improved services, particularly in the East County.*
- *e. Assess the use of existing land assets such as the unused land at the Ojai Woman's Facility and the Todd Road Jail for disposition or development.*
- *f. Develop consolidated projections of the demand for County services.*
- *g. Sponsor the evaluation of the use of technology as an alternate to facility investment, i.e., video conferencing (Probation Department, Sheriff's Department and Human Services Agency); remote sensing and monitoring technology (Probation Department and Sheriff's Department).*
- *h. Review the benefits of land leased by the County to commercial activities as well as facilities leased by the County from commercial entities. Based on the long-term strategy terminate or renegotiate leases.*
- *i. Task the RMA and County Counsel to review the constraints on selected County assets. Some County properties may have restrictions, constraints or covenants that should be changed in order to facilitate better use of existing assets.*

<u>R-2 Response</u>
Concur
The recommendation is being implemented. A Capital Planning Policy was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on June 11, 2002. The policy establishes and authorizes a Capital Planning Committee of senior managers to evaluate and recommend proposed capital projects and to develop processes to support the non-IT aspects of the Five Year Capital Improvement Plan. In addition, the committee will continue to encourage and evaluate the use of technology as an alternative to facility investment. The committee is to be composed of representatives from Auditor-Controller, General Services Agency, Public Works Agency, and the County Executive Office; and is chaired by the County Executive Officer.

The project to develop a biannual infrastructure and strategic planning process is currently in progress. This project will take place over a six-month time frame and consists of three phases.

The first phase, consolidating information, is already in progress. In this stage, information is being gathered regarding facility usage, cost structures, functions, long and short-term needs, and population projections. Consolidated public need projections of demand for County services will also be developed. The focus of the Information phase is to obtain complete data related to existing facilities as well as need projections.

The second project phase will integrate and evaluate the information obtained in Phase I. Key evaluation criteria include near- and long-term ability to meet public service demands, accessibility, facility condition and use, and availability of funding. This phase also includes assessment of consolidation of facilities for improved service delivery, particularly in the East County. The deliverables for this stage are a draft facility utilization plan and a documented process to resolve interdepartmental space issues. The facility utilization plan will be completed with input from the departments.

The third phase consists of activities required for implementation. Once the facility utilization plan is complete, the remaining land assets can be evaluated for disposition or development. A business case analysis will be conducted for leased, vacant and underutilized properties. This analysis will include land leased by the County to commercial activities as well as facilities leased by the County from commercial entities. Based on the long-term utilization plan and the business case analysis, a draft plan will be completed for acquisition, disposition and development. This facility plan will be coordinated with the County General Plan. The RMA and County Counsel will be requested to review the constraints on selected County assets to determine whether changes in restrictions or covenants might facilitate better use of existing assets.

The completed review will result in 1) a working plan for existing leased and owned assets; 2) a documented strategic infrastructure development process; and 3) a documented methodology to coordinate near-term departmental space needs. The initial review and planning phase of this project will be completed in 2003. The strategy will be subject to ongoing review and refinement as it is implemented.

> *R-3 The CEO and Sheriff evaluate the economic benefit to the County of renting excess jail bed space to other counties.*

<u>R-3 Response</u>
Concur
The CEO concurs with this recommendation. The Sheriff has cooperative agreements with most California counties to house their inmates on a case-by-case basis, and contracts with the state and federal governments to house their prisoners in Ventura County facilities when space is available. The Sheriff is currently utilizing this approach to generate additional revenue to the extent possible within the constraints of operational, safety, and security requirements. For instance, during a two-month period late in FY 2001-02, the average number of jail bed days billed per month was 232.

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