

Claudia Bill-de la Peña
Mayor

Response to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: Senior Transportation in Ventura County

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Report Date: May 23, 2013

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Response By: Claudia Bill-de la Peña, Mayor

VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Council has carefully reviewed the Recommendations in the Grand Jury Report and has the following responses to each of the five Recommendations, R-01 through R-05. The Grand Jury Report statement of the Recommendation is presented first, followed by the City's response.

As a general statement, the City of Thousand Oaks has consistently supported the availability of transportation services for seniors and funds local transportation services in response to need and the availability of funding.

R-01. *The Grand Jury recommends that an independent, non-elected County administrator be assigned to oversee the collaborative efforts of all the senior transportation modalities in the County and produce strategies to simplify senior transportation. This administrator would seek consensus with the independent companies and city transportation agencies with a goal of consistency in the areas of availability, acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, and affordability. Further, the administrator would develop an advisory board comprised of senior bus-riding citizens to point out the opportunities for improvements. In addition, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors should be encouraged to ride a bus route once per year to determine needs and the effectiveness of the programs.*

City Council Response: The City does not believe this recommendation will have a significant impact on the availability of transportation services for seniors. Current advocacy for senior related transportation programs in Ventura County is extensive and the City's Council on Aging has developed a Master Plan for Senior Services that includes a transportation element. A committee of senior transportation users meets regularly to advise City staff on improvements to existing transportation services.

R-02. *In cooperation with the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) and Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA), programs should be implemented that are designed to assist senior citizens with transportation within their cities and throughout the County.*

City Council Response: The City believes in the availability of robust transportation services for all residents, including seniors, and fully cooperates with other local and regional agencies on planning and implementation of transportation services with an identified need and funding source. Thousand Oaks Transit provides more senior specific transportation services than any other transit agency in Ventura County.

R-03. The Ventura County Board of Supervisors should allocate specific funding for senior transportation.

City Council Response: The City believes that each agency in Ventura County operating transportation services should allocate funding that best meets the needs of the residents served.

R-04. The VCTC, working with VCAAA, should standardize requirements for participation in the senior transportation programs. They should also publicize the availability of programs that fulfill the transportation needs of seniors.

City Council Response: The City believes it is in the best interest of all transit users, that when possible, services should be operated consistently throughout the region and each agency should avail itself of various forms of print and electronic media to conduct outreach about the availability of existing transportation resources. The City of Thousand Oaks does specific outreach to seniors including regular staff presentations at the televised Council on Aging meetings and staff support to the Senior Master Plan Transportation Committee.

The City has made significant improvements to the availability of senior Dial-a-Ride services in recent years, conducts travel training classes geared specifically to seniors, is working on a cooperative program with the City of Moorpark to provide inter-city transportation services, and is the only transit agency in Ventura County to provide free bus transportation services to senior Dial-a-Ride and Americans with Disabilities Act cardholders.

R-05. The VCAAA should plan for increased staffing to accommodate a growing senior population.

City Council Response: The City believes that all transportation agencies must fund services to the best of their ability and use available resources to maximize service availability.

SUMMARY:

The City of Thousand Oaks wishes to thank the Grand Jury for its time in performing their review and determining their recommendations.

Date: July 9, 2013

Signed: 
Claudia Bill-de la Peña, Mayor

Number of pages attached 0