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## **Economy & Efficiency Commission Presentation**

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*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  
Ms Lari Sheehan, Assistant Administrative Officer  
Topic: County Services to Unincorporated Areas  
March March 2, 2000**

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Commissioner Padilla introduced Ms Sheehan relating her past associations and experience in evaluating and improving municipal services to unincorporated areas. He added that her cooperation with the Unincorporated Area Task Force has been most helpful.

Ms. Sheehan began her presentation by passing out a document stating she would be referring to it during her presentation. She said that she was pleased to be making a presentation to the Commission and that the work in evaluating municipal services was one of the factors in the creation of her office. Ms. Sheehan then gave a brief history of her qualifications and background.

Ms. Sheehan stated that the people in the unincorporated areas have the feeling that they are the orphans of Los Angeles County, and that they probably have reason to feel that way. She related that it was fortunate that the financial condition of Los Angeles County was such that progress in providing services to unincorporated areas was possible. She went on to explain the structure and staffing of her office. The mission of the office can only be successful if the departments that are actually providing the services are supportive. Ms. Sheehan said that they are moving toward a more collaborative style in dealing with issues and with the communities.

Ms. Sheehan went on to say that Los Angeles County is no different than other counties in that departments tend to operate in their own areas of expertise. While there may be some understanding of the cause and effect of interactivity between departments, there is always the opportunity to improve collaboration to insure that everyone is working as part of a larger system.

Ms. Sheehan, referring the commissioners to the document she had distributed, stated that she would like to elaborate on some of the more important items listed. She said that effort is currently being directed toward "Census 2000" and the outreach for unincorporated communities. Another item that has generated a lot of interest is the regional airport issue. The Supervisors desire to regionalize the airports so as not to loose the market share that has been established. A consultant is being hired to help with these issues since this technical expertise does not exist within the County.

Ms. Sheehan continued saying that improving citizen access in unincorporated areas is another issue that is being addressed. Two pilot projects have been established; one is the Code Enforcement Hot Line which is

available to all unincorporated area residents to assist them with code enforcement issues, and the other is the Citizens Help Line which will run as a pilot project in five unincorporated communities to assist residents find the appropriate county departments to respond to their needs.

Ms. Sheehan said that her office has worked with Supervisor Molina's office and set up a pilot web site for the community of East Los Angeles and is looking for the means to extend to other communities. This Web site includes County services, State and Federal services as well as how to contact community based organizations.

Ms. Sheehan added that another project is the establishment of Family Safety Zones. This project is the result of Board action, sponsored by Supervisor Burke, to establish family safety zones in County parks. The County has 125 parks, 96 of these are active recreational parks. Pilot programs are proposed in six County parks which include the installation of call boxes, to make the parks safer for families and children.

Commissioner Abel asked Ms. Sheehan, since she referred to the projects as collaborative projects, could she not be perceived as the City Manager for the unincorporated areas. Is that the role that is being assumed? What structural things need to be accomplished in County government to help achieve the mission of the office? Ms. Sheehan answered that she was assuming that role. Part of what she needs is ongoing communication with the Board offices and county departments.

Commissioner Petak interjected that although economies are important, you will not know that you have economy if you do not have a measurement system. He added that there was no effective measurement system for services provided to unincorporated areas. He asked how Ms Sheehan knew how services are being provided and how effective those services are.

Ms. Sheehan answered that there was an inventory of what is being provided. It was begun last year as a part of this year's budget by collecting expenditure data. The reliability of this data is currently being examined.

Ms. Sheehan said that nothing has been done to determine how people feel about the services they were receiving. She added that it was important to establish some benchmarks to determine the level of customers satisfaction with service delivery within the County.

In summation Ms. Sheehan said, she believed that as her office continues to examine how things were being done and how they can be improved upon to maximize the economy and efficiency of the system while improving customer service.

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