

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS AND SHEILA KUEHL**

**August 1, 2017**

**Creating Community Reentry Hubs to Meet the Needs of Probation Clients**

The Los Angeles County (County) Probation Department (Department) supervises approximately 38,455 adult clients. Pursuant to its mission, one of the Department’s core responsibilities with this supervision is to “effect positive client behavior change.” Until recently, however, the Department provided limited pro-social services for the adult population beyond making occasional referrals to non-contracted programs or providers. As the Department noted in its Senate Bill 678 (SB 678) funding plan, this has led to considerable barriers to the delivery of much needed services for adults under the Department’s supervision. Having to navigate a range of providers spread out across a large geographical area with often limited transportation, as well as tackle the bureaucracy and obstacles inherent in accessing certain services, often prevents clients from receiving the health, mental health, substance abuse, housing, legal, employment, and case management services they need in order to stabilize and thrive.

According to a recent recommendation by Resource Development Associates (RDA) in the Los Angeles Governance Study (established through a Ridley-Thomas and Kuehl motion, February 16, 2016), probation departments should intentionally foster structured partnerships with community organizations and other government agencies offering co-located services to meet the range of client needs and reduce costs associated with providing these services. Under new Department leadership and with

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the availability of a large amount of accumulated SB 678 funds, the Department is moving forward on this recommendation by seeking to develop community-based reentry centers or hubs.

The concept for community reentry centers is in part inspired by and modeled after the Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON), which a delegation of County officials and stakeholders visited as part of a site visit organized by RDA. Spearheaded by New York City's Department of Probation, NeON is a vehicle for establishing a network of partners working together to promote the success of people on probation. At its core, NeON is a collaboration with the community to work with clients and their families in neighborhood settings to promote pro-social life choices, educational achievement, career advancement, attitude and behavior changes, and active civic engagement. New York City's probation staff is trained to be community-oriented and has sought additional resources – approximately \$30 million – to enhance programming for NeON communities. NeON sites are designed to be inclusive, non-institutional and welcoming spaces that on select days are open to the larger community. NeON sites are more than just co-located spaces for government and community services. This model reflects a community-led and conceived approach working in partnership with New York City's Department of Probation. NeON sites are currently in seven New York City neighborhoods that have a high number of clients on probation, with satellite NeON sites located in eight additional communities.

As conceptualized in the County, community reentry centers would similarly co-locate County agencies and community partners in or adjacent to existing Department offices in order to streamline service delivery for clientele. As the Department has noted, by co-locating services, this model would eliminate many barriers and obstacles to accessing resources and would ultimately improve service participation and generate better outcomes. When clients report to a Department field office for orientation, assessment, screening or other meetings, the community reentry hubs would allow for more meaningful reentry and case-planning through authentic collaboration. Moreover, this model would represent a vast cultural change from a Department viewed as merely

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a monitoring agency to one that is welcoming to and supportive of its clients. This is consistent with other efforts underway to reform the Department and promote evidence-based practices.

The capital project at 3965 South Vermont Avenue in the City of Los Angeles presents an opportunity to pilot a community reentry hub in the County. On March 3, 2015, the Board of Supervisors (Board) approved a motion to pursue transit-oriented development opportunities along the Crenshaw / LAX transit line, which led to the relocation of the Department's Crenshaw field office from 3606 West Exposition Boulevard to 3965 South Vermont Avenue and the renovation of the Vermont space to accommodate the Department's needs. As part of the renovation planning, the Department has committed to utilizing the third floor of the three-story, 60,060 square foot office building for the co-location of County and community-partners who can best meet the needs of adult clients. The services tentatively envisioned include: workforce development and education; health and mental health; system navigation and case management services (e.g., transportation passes, access to vital records, legal services, and counseling); and services to address housing stability.

This project is conceived as more than just the relocation of an office and renovation of a building, but rather an opportunity to build a better service delivery model that is friendly, rehabilitative, and encourages clients to readily access resources and benefits from a range of on-site partnerships. As an example, the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work at the neighboring University of Southern California has expressed a desire to partner at this site to enhance the pro-social services available, particularly around homelessness, case management and health. All elements of the 3965 South Vermont Avenue Department's office, including building design, furniture, operations, and partnerships, are intended to signal a fundamental departure from how the Department relates to those it serves. If successful, this model could then be replicated throughout the County. Adequate planning for this building, as well as other community reentry hubs to be created, is essential to ensuring that a true culture shift is accomplished.

**WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. Direct the Chief Probation Officer, in partnership with the Office of Diversion and Reentry, to develop a program plan to be implemented at the renovated 3965 South Vermont Avenue space, modeled largely after New York's Neighborhood Opportunity Network, and report back to the Board of Supervisors (Board) in writing in 60 days. The report regarding the program plan should include:
  - a. The creation of a meaningful community-led partnership with the Probation Department, including the involvement of and partnership with community- and faith-based organizations with opportunities for upfront community feedback (including but not limited to community-based organizations and probation clients) regarding the model and the types of services that should be available, and a procurement process to establish community partners and service providers at the site with a proposed funding plan to sustain these partnerships.
  - b. Recommendations on partnerships with relevant County departments such as Health Services, Mental Health, Public Health, Public Social Services, Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services, and Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, as well as other government entities, to provide a range of appropriate services on-site.
  - c. Recommendations on a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a partnership with the University of Southern California's School of Social Work to enhance services, particularly around health, homelessness and case management;
  - d. Recommendations as to whether the services could be available on select days to the larger community (e.g., non-Probation Department clients);
  - e. Recommendations on types of training and staff support for Probation Department employees as well as partners to ensure consistency and

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fidelity to a client-centered, community reentry model; and

- f. Recommendations for how the building design and operations (beyond just the third floor) will function so that safety is achieved in the least restrictive means to ensure a non-institutional environment throughout the building, with an intentionality towards rehabilitation and community accessibility.
2. Direct the Chief Executive Officer to explore parking options for community- and faith- based participants, and County departments that will be co-located at the community reentry center and report back to the Board in writing in 90 days.
3. Direct the Chief Probation Officer, in partnership with the Director of the Office of Diversion and Reentry, to report back to the Board in writing in 180 days on lessons learned from the planning of this site in order to expand community reentry centers across the County.

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