

COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

For the Agenda of:
September 13, 2007
9:30 a.m.

To: Board of Supervisors
From: Sheriff's Department
Subject: Report Back - Possible Significant Revenue Sources For Future Funding Of
Enhanced Law Enforcement Services
Contact: Undersheriff George Anderson, 874-5094

BACKGROUND

During Final Budget Hearing, the Board requested the Sheriff report back on possible significant revenue sources that could be used to fund enhanced law enforcement services.

DISCUSSION

Since taking office, Sheriff McGinness has formed the Management Analysis and Planning Bureau, whose duties include review of existing Department operations to identify efficiencies and research feasibility of new revenue sources.

County Service Area

A County Service Area (CSA) provides for a special property tax assessment which voters may adopt to raise the level of municipal law enforcement services within the unincorporated area of the County.

The desire to identify a stable funding source for public protection services is not unique to Sacramento County. The purpose of the extended police services to be funded by the CSA is to augment law enforcement services (specifically patrol services) up to a level that is comparable to other cities in the region. Due to an anticipated budget shortfall in FY 2004-05, a variety of revenue streams were explored. Ultimately, the Board of Supervisors approved the formation of County Service Area (CSA) No 11, exclusively for the provision of Extended Police Protection. The boundaries of CSA 11 include all areas within the Urban Services Boundary approved in the County General Plan except territories within the boundaries of the incorporated cities.

For various reasons, the CSA 11 was never "activated." However, recently Sheriff McGinness directed staff to explore the feasibility of moving forward with this CSA. A wide range of tasks are required, including: reviewing current patrol districts; surveying community members to ascertain level of service desired; and costing out proposed expanded levels of service, among other issues. Proceeding with a CSA would require voter approval, however this funding source appears to be the most promising stable funding source for public protection services.

9-1-1 Tax

Another possible significant revenue source is a “9-1-1” tax on cell phones. The challenges facing the Sheriff’s Department’s ability to respond to 9-1-1 calls continue to rise as the population and use of cell phones escalates. Currently, over 200,000 9-1-1 calls are received annually by the Sheriff’s Department 9-1-1 dispatchers. Without additional funding, the Sheriff’s ability to respond to emergency calls will continue to decline.

The County of Sacramento could consider placing an “emergency communication system response” tax on the ballot. If approved by the voters, the tax would be to finance the acquisition and construction of equipment, software, and facilities needed to provide an adequate and reliable 9-1-1 communication system under a single uniform management structure.

Other Efforts

The Board of Supervisors just approved the Sheriff’s recommended changes to the Alarm Ordinance—which will increase revenues by over \$1.0 million a year. We will continue to examine other ways within which to improve revenues. As a part of this initiative, we will coordinate our efforts and share ideas with other law enforcement agencies.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN MCGINNESS
Sheriff