

# County of Santa Cruz

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## PROBATION DEPARTMENT

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October 7, 1998

Agenda: October 20, 1998

Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, California 95060

### **Report on Bus Service to the Graham Hill Probation and Juvenile Court Facility**

Dear Board Members:

On December 12, 1997, your Board authorized the payment of \$4,400 from general fund contingencies to the Transit District for four months of trial bus service to the Graham Hill Probation and Juvenile Court facility. The Board also requested that the Chief Probation Officer work with the Transit District to publicize the trial service during that four month period.

As your Board will recall, representatives from the Probation Department and the Courts approached the Transit District about bus service to the Graham Hill facility, citing problems of family members not being able to attend court sessions and visitation hours due to the lack of public transportation. The Transit District had tried van service to Juvenile Hall several years ago and expressed reluctance to fund another trial period due to low ridership, suggesting instead that the County fund the service being requested. A compromise approach was taken, with the Transit District and the County sharing the cost of a four month trial run, each paying \$4,400. After that time, if there actually was sufficient ridership to suggest consideration of ongoing service, the Transit District would evaluate that service along with other route requests. There would be no further cost to the County.

As a result, in late June of this year, pilot bus service was initiated from the Scotts Valley Transit Center to the Graham Hill Probation and Juvenile Court facility, utilizing a contract with Santa Cruz Taxi to provide two pick ups and two drop offs from each location, daily. Although this pilot service was highly publicized and was to run for four months, it was discontinued by board action of the Transit District at the end of August, again due to low ridership. At the time of termination, there remained \$1,760 in unused county funds which had been dedicated to this service.

The fact that the Graham Hill Probation and Juvenile Court facility is not served by public transportation continues to be an area of concern for both the Probation Department and the Juvenile Court, as well as the County Administrative Office. In an effort to address this concern, meetings were staged with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, Santa Cruz Taxi and the interested county agencies. Through the course of those meetings it was determined that the most feasible solution would be to institute a system by which individuals and families receiving services from the juvenile delinquency and dependency courts, who were without transportation to the Graham Hill facility, could access vouchers for taxi service. The voucher would be specifically for service between the Scotts Valley Transit Center and the

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Graham Hill facility, and each voucher would be good for a single one-way trip and cost approximately \$6.50. Vouchers would be obtained from Santa Cruz Taxi through a purchase order and be issued and controlled by the Probation Department.

It is anticipated that the existing \$1,760 appropriation would cover the costs for this service from implementation through the end of the current fiscal year. In the event of an over-run the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission has agreed to provide back up funding to complete the fiscal year, using monies secured through a special appropriation.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is in process with a study of this and other transportation issues, and is expected to provide an evaluation in February 1999. The voucher program will be monitored by both Santa Cruz Taxi and the Probation Department, and assessed for future viability. It is clear that no funding mechanism exists beyond the current fiscal year, and that strategies for sustainability need to be examined.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED that your Board:

1. Accept and file this report on Bus Service to the Graham Hill Probation and Juvenile Court Facility; and
2. Direct the Probation Department to continue to monitor and assess the voucher program for viability beyond the current fiscal year, explore alternative options for funding of transportation services to the Graham Hill Probation and Juvenile Court Facility, and report back during FY 1999-2000 budget hearings.

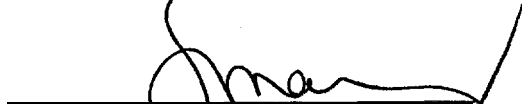
Sincerely,



JOHN P. RHOADS  
Chief Probation Officer

JPR:JB:FN

**RECOMMENDED:**



SUSAN A. MAURIELLO  
County Administrative Officer

cc: Courts  
Linda, Wilshusen, Executive Director, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission