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by

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Chair, Santa Clara County
Board of Supervisors

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It was ten years ago yesterday that I first joined this Board. Despite the fact that I sat amidst some highly seasoned legislators -- Sig Sanchez, Dom Cortese, Dan McCorquodale, and Gerry Steinberg -- I was convinced there was no problem which, with a bit of logic and a large measure of aggressiveness, couldn't be solved. Ten years later, somewhat bruised and more than a little gray, I know I was wrong. While many solutions were found, some things can't be done. I can't make the elevators in this building work efficiently; I can't force the air to circulate evenly throughout the east wing; despite all efforts, 15 cities won't work together harmoniously with the County on all issues at all times; I can't convince a single city to welcome either a jail or a garbage dump; and we can't build Highway 85 in '85.

But here on the brink of 1985, we have a great deal to be proud of and grateful for: we continue to serve with compassion the health and social needs of the economically and physically disadvantaged of our community; thanks to the success of Measure A, we can begin the desparately needed upgrade of our highway system; we are building a new jail and hall of justice; we are becoming integrally involved in the detection and clean-up of toxic contaminants; and, of course, we are building, right now, the first light rail link of our new public transit system.

We are at a juncture in government at which we have passed muster with a long-grudging electorate. This year's election saw the return to office of every incumbent seeking reelection in our County. That coupled with the passage of numerous bond measures and the rejection of anti-government propositions like 36 and 41 are bell-wether indicators of a regained public confidence.

Following the chaotic upheaval of the post-Proposition 13 years and the accompanying major economic recession, we have reached a period of financial stability. Great credit is due our County Executive Sally Reed and her fine staff from top to bottom for helping us through the rough years to this hard-earned stability. Thanks also to Senator Alquist and Assemblyman Vasconcellos and our other legislators. For the first time in six years funding is relatively predictable. We're still far from covering even the basic needs in our Valley, but we have rebuilt our reserves and balanced our $1.1 billion budget. It would be easy to bask in the status quo; but instead we must seize the opportunity to remove the band-aids applied during the hard times and begin the longer term rehabilitation therapy that our body politic so badly needs. But in order to retain the most minimal service levels over these past years, we've had to neglect two major components of good government and good management -- the first is long-term planning and the second employee development.

Regarding the first, Transportation 2000 began the long range planning process, and when its priority recommendations come forth, we will aggressively pursue their implementation. Our next step, though, should be a program which we might call "Capital Assets Planning 2000" or (CAP 2000). Rather than react to crises, we now have the chance to plan, plan for capital asset, system and personnel requirements through the years 2000 and 2010.

Long range planning is critical to this County. We had only 228,000 jobs in this county in 1960, have passed 750,000 now and will exceed 1.1 million jobs by the year 2000 with no end in sight. To prepare for this rapidly growing demand for services, CAP 2000 should master plan the County's capital, systems and staff requirements by 1) subject, 2) date of implementation, and 3) identifiable funding sources. This will apply to all facilities, although I hope to factor out criminal justice planning requirements to a separate study. CAP 2000 will address long-term needs in parks acquisition and operation, hospital and ambulatory care, social programs, health and human services, and county-wide general services in much the same way Transportation 2000 is master planning projects and programs to meet our future trip requirements.

Construction will soon be underway on a new main jail and court space in a new hall of justice, and major renovation of Elmwood should commence this year. Yet these facilities will be inadequate even before they are completed. So we need to go further -- we need a time-phased master plan for a wholly coordinated and fundable criminal justice system -- one that incorporates the total requirements for courts, the Probation Department, our District Attorney, Public Defender, Coroner, Crime Lab and Sheriff's Department. This master plan should commence under the guidance of a designated Board Member and with the cooperation of the Justice System Advisory Board.

These two master planning projects, General Facilities and Criminal Justice, would join those efforts currently underway at Valley Medical Center and by Transportation 2000 -- and they should begin immediately. As a recent memo from Supervisors Legan and McKenna indicates, Board Members have already begun thinking about this and specific actions will be recommended within the next few weeks.

I will be proposing several other specific programs during the year such as: revisions to our budgeting process; more support for the arts; more aggressive regional leadership from the County on land use and environmental issues; a solution to our parking problems here at the County complex; stronger public information programs; a change to our park acquisition and maintenance systems and others. But I will stress only one more extremely important effort at this time. As Chair of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and a member of the EPA Integrated Environmental Management Plan Committee, I've become painfully aware that the laws prohibiting the desecration of our water and air by toxic contaminants are confused and the enforcement

authority diffused to the point of ineffectiveness. Many areas are at a standstill in their efforts to control toxic contamination because of this legal hodgepodge. Supervisor Wilson will be leading our Board's attempt at sorting out this morass with our State Legislature, but in the interim we must act now, here in our County.

Fortunately, we have a courageous District Attorney in Leo Himmelsbach assisted by Jerry Nadler who have taken on the toxic enforcement challenge with the inadequate tools available and are doing a good job. I have asked Leo to tell this Board what added resources we might provide to help him be even more effective, and I know our Board will provide those resources.

As I began I mentioned two components to good government and good management. The first was longterm planning; the second is an internal process -- employee resource development. Since the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, we've been through some awfully rough times here in County government. But like a muscle torn by great strain and now nearly healed, Santa Clara County is again ready to act with decision and strength. Much as we have deferred maintenance on our aforementioned capital facilities, so too we have deferred attention to the most vital element of our service delivery system -- our employee work force.

Since 1978, all of us have found creative and innovative ways to provide the public literally with more for less, providing service which no business, no corporation, no other agency can deliver. We provide public transit at an affordable price, outstanding medical care without respect to one's ability to pay, and protection from fire, crime, and health risks. We keep records and maps, collect thousands of pages of vital statistics, and run a library system. We make it our daily business to protect our citizens' rights to vote, be heard and seek due process of law -- and much more. And we do all these things well because those who work for Santa Clara County <u>are the best and we care</u>.

But we've a daunting schedule before us this year. I've touched on our jails, transit and highway projects. Additionally, Valley Medical Center must be upgraded to be more competitive with private institutions; our parks acquisitions projects must proceed, the risks to our water and air must be evaluated and controlled; our farms and grazing lands protected -- not to mention the increasing day to day workload in our service and support departments.

None of these are new challenges, but all will weigh heavily on our County staff resources this year and in years to come. To handle the load with grace and efficiency, the county employees need special help in three ways.

First: training. In much the same way the best corporations help their teams of employees "work smarter and enjoy it more" Santa Clara County must, this year, plant the seeds for a dynamic and accessible employee development program. We all need the chance to maximize our potential, to see personal skills sharpened, hidden talents discovered and opportunities increased. The tools to help serve our public better and to be more satisfied with the products of our efforts come through training in both job philosophy and method. Supervisor Lofgren has identified a program which might be pursued via San Jose City college. The County Executive is already hard at work, with the help of her staff and our employee representatives, developing that and other programs for implementation this year.

Second: motivation. Okay, we have the improved skills and have discovered a host of remarkable hidden talents. But we need a good reason to use them. Motivation is the key. It's a stew of pride, personal commitment, liking the work, a healthy work environment, caring coworkers, and advancement opportunities. Perhaps, too, it's an innovative child care system and the guarantee of pay commensurate with skill and responsibility, two elements I will actively pursue this year. As we've scrambled to adjust to Proposition 13 these past years, we've lost some of those ingredients. By reconcocting that excellent mix we create an example of good government and unlimited personal opportunities.

Last: recognition. For those who continue to run and win the race of merit, there must be rewards. The self-satisfaction of a job well done is important as is a decent pay scale, but praise is absolutely necessary. Starting this year, each of our agencies will be invited to select an "Employee of the Month" to be personally commended by the Board of Supervisors. The County Government Center's lobby will bear the photos of those who've given the citizens their best. I'll be watching for other ways to show our appreciation during the year also, so when any of you observe outstanding performance please let me know.

We live in a valley where good products are constantly made better. High-tech industries seem to thrive on challenge, and so do we. Santa Clara County's workers -- on the buses, in hospitals, sheriff's cars, in offices and shops -- have shown what stern stuff we're made of. Public confidence in the past has been low in California governments, yet our employees kept on pushing for the best when work was heaped on and kind words were a long time coming.

So now, with our newfound stability, it's time to stretch again, to flex that muscle, to move together to that next higher level of performance, satisfaction and rewards. We are, after all, a team . . .a team of winners!

Thank you for all you do for our residents.