

# C·FACTS

*Clark County Correction Facility Advisory Commission*

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## COMMISSION MISSION

*The purpose of the Correction Facility Advisory Commission (CFAC) is to provide the county council with an assessment of the need for improved correction facility design, capacity and services; the options for improving correction facility design; and community service level expectations.*

*CFAC will provide a recommended solution based on assessment results, community service level expectations, and potentially available resources. The recommendation will be available by May 2019.*

## Subcommittees work on capacity and services

CFAC members took a deep dive into three important questions. How big should a replacement jail be? Which services should be within the jail? What does this mean for spaces to serve both service and housing needs?

CFAC values call for diversion from jail, alternatives to incarceration, and solid connection to social, behavioral health and homeless services. CFAC believes if the jail has a physical and service design that supports these ends, the jail is more likely to be "right sized". Right sizing is important. A jail that is too small can be as cumbersome and counterproductive as a jail that is too big. *Continued...*

*Subcommittees work on capacity and services continued...*

Subcommittees convened and focused on different phases of the correction continuum. Law enforcement focused on pre-jail practices. Justice focused on in-jail practices. Support services focused on post jail and release services.

Each group identified practical poli-

cies and practices that might improve safe and responsible diversion, alternatives to incarceration, and connection to services. Knowledge of existing programs helped identify factors that might increase or decrease the need for jail space. Members discussed what needs to happen in the community

to make the changes in policies and practices occur.

The subcommittee recommendations will eventually form the baselines for jail replacement alternatives. The baselines are the common features included in all alternatives evaluated by CFAC.

## Law Enforcement

The Law Enforcement Subcommittee was led by Chief Bob Richardson of Battle Ground and Chief James McElvain of Vancouver. This group focused on pre-jail activities. Their group concluded it might be possible to reduce jail population by three to four percent if law enforcement changed policies or practices and supportive social services are in place.

Programs for persons with drug, alcohol or mental health issues could provide options in lieu of booking, and could reduce recidivism. Persons who commit misdemeanor crimes could be booked into jail only when booking is mandated by law. If social services are in place, officers might seize evidence and release Class C felony drug offenders (possession). A countywide policy for options to arrest for some lower level offenses could be a collaborative effort between law enforcement and the Prosecuting Attorney.

The subcommittee thinks adequate space for booking is important for the future. This space could take several forms, including interview rooms, satellite facilities and access to better technology. Space to complete paperwork is important. Better technology to allow cities access to book and release systems could be helpful if cities have adequate space, training and equipment to accomplish the tasks.

## Capacity baseline discussed

Today, Clark County has a total of 590 beds distributed between the main jail and the jail work center. CFAC continues to discuss the number of beds needed by 2036. All alternatives evaluated by CFAC will use the same total bed count.

The number of beds recommended by CFAC will reflect input from the county's space consultant, DLR, as well as the input of CFAC members who studied the potential for diversion, alternatives to incarceration, and other service programs. The bed proposal may require the community to incorporate new practices and policies throughout the correction system.

## Judicial

District Court Judge Kelli Osler led the Judicial Subcommittee. This group focused on ways to reduce populations or shorten stays in the jail, and help in-jail systems address capacity.

The subcommittee believes more beds are needed for the future so cases are addressed promptly and offenders comply with the conditions of their sentences. Ways to be more effective and shorten jail stays to impact jail capacity include pretrial diversion, assisted diversion, and better supervised release.

The subcommittee supports direct supervision of inmates. The subcommittee believes the future jail should include spaces for attorney interview rooms and better technology to make documents available more quickly. Social service providers will need space. Thought should be given to more courtrooms and to the safety concerns of moving inmates between cells and court. Training areas for officers are important.



## Social Service

The social service support committee was led by Vanessa Gaston, Director of Community Services of Clark County. This group focused on social service supports that could reduce recidivism. They focused on services for persons with mental health disorders or persons who are homeless. The changes, however, could benefit other people.

The subcommittee suggested continuing assisted medication treatment for persons with opioid use and medication management for persons with antipsychotic drug needs. They suggest jail social workers partner with community providers to allow reinstatement of Medicaid before inmate release. Service providers and jail staff should work to decrease gaps in medication treatment between the time a person is in jail and post release.

*Continued...*



*Social Service Support Committee continued...*

Data sharing with homeless service providers, and allowing homeless service staff into the jail could assist handoffs when inmates are released, and reduce recidivism. Expanding of the work release program so inmates can search for jobs during the day or access needed services, and spend the night in jail would assist transition and support family relationships and social networks. Therapeutic services and job training for persons in jail could be enhanced.

Space needs identified by the subcommittee include more space for booking and multiple spaces for booking. They support the direct supervision model. Space for defense attorneys and private rooms for service providers is important. Negative pressure cells to house persons with communicable diseases are a priority. Multi-purpose rooms are supported.

Warm colors, sound proofing, natural light and flexible furniture reduce stress and reduce behavior issues.

## CLARK COUNTY CORRECTION FACILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION

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[www.clark.wa.gov/councilors](http://www.clark.wa.gov/councilors)

