

Attachment A

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

July 14, 2020

Honorable Michael J. Carrozzo
Presiding Judge
Santa Barbara Superior Court
County Courthouse
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara CA 93101

Reference: Response to Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury report titled, "Detention Facilities in Santa Barbara County" published April 2020.

Judge Carrozzo:

Please find attached the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (Board) response to the above referenced Civil Grand Jury Report. As directed by the Grand Jury, all responses are provided in accordance with Section 933.05 of the California Penal Code.

The Board appreciates the work conducted by the Probation and Sheriff Departments for their assistance in responding to this matter.

Sincerely,

Gregg Hart, Chair
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

CC: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Attachment

**Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2019-2020 Report
“Detention Facilities in Santa Barbara County”**

1.0 Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Jails

1.1 Santa Barbara County Main Jail

Finding 3

The Main Jail is understaffed.

The Board of Supervisors disagrees partially with the finding. In February 2020 when the Grand Jury conducted their review, the Main Jail's Daily population was substantially higher than it currently is. The daily population has currently dropped below 600 (a 37% reduction) due to COVID-19 mandates from the Governor. With the new Northern Branch Jail anticipated to come online in FY 2020-21 and actions to make the population reduction at the Main Jail permanent, currently funded staffing at the Main Jail may be adequate.

Recommendation 3

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors allocate sufficient funding to the Sheriff's office specifically for the purpose of hiring additional custody deputies.

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is currently not warranted at this time. The County is in the process of opening the Northern Branch Jail and will transfer inmates from the Main Jail, thus reducing the need for additional staffing. Subsequent to the Northern Branch Jail opening, renovations will take place at the Main Jail that will permanently close some sections, and consolidate other areas to make staffing more efficient. These actions, combined with other steps the County is reviewing to lower the overall system population, may be adequate to address this concern.

Finding 4

There are no body scanners to detect dangerous contraband.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the finding.

Recommendation 4

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff's Department purchase and install a body scanning system immediately to intercept contraband at the Main Jail.

This recommendation will be implemented. A Side X-ray Body Scanner has been purchased by the Sheriff's Department and has been installed at the Main Jail. The use of the scanner will begin as soon as Jail staff have been trained by the manufacturer on its use.

Finding 6

The inmate transportation fleet is old and unreliable.

The Board of Supervisors disagrees partially. Seven (7) of the eight (8) transportation vans are 1-4 years old and one specialty van is over ten years old, but has less than 100,00 miles on it. The four MCI buses are still within their expected life span. All vehicles are serviced regularly by Santa Barbara County General Services Department. Also, with the opening of the Northern Branch Jail the need for inmate transportation over long distances will be reduced. This will require less maintenance on the fleet allowing for the Sheriff's Department to maintain the fleet and increase its reliability.

Recommendation 6

That the Board of Supervisors and Sheriff consider funding for upgrade and replacement of the inmate transportation fleet within two years.

The recommendation will be implemented. The Sheriff's Department has a replacement schedule for the entire inmate transportation fleet that had been implemented previously. The vans are 1-4 years old and all MCI buses are on a current replacement schedule identified by Santa Barbara County General Services. The Carpenter bus does need to be replaced, however, it is currently only used as a back-up bus in the event that the other busses are down for service. It will be retired when it is no longer serviceable. With the opening of the Northern Branch Jail the need for inmate transportation over long distance will be reduced, thus reducing the need to replace the fleet in the near term. Staff will analyze the use and condition of the fleet after the Northern Branch jail has been in operation to reassess the need for replacement vehicles.

1.2 Santa Barbara County Northern Branch Jail

Finding 3

The Northern Branch Jail will have a body scanner that will assist in the detection of contraband coming into the facility.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the finding.

Recommendation 3

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff's Department purchase a second body scanner system to provide additional screening coverage for inmates returning from outside appointments and court visits.

This recommendation will not be implemented as it is unwarranted. The use of body scanners is subject to a higher standard of probable cause due to the invasive nature of the scan. This standard will reduce the number of actual scans performed. In addition, the cost of such equipment is prohibitive and would be better spent in other endeavors. The use of the new body scanner and procedures to detect contraband are adequate to address the risk.

Finding 5

There is currently no solar electric power system budgeted for the facility.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the finding.

Recommendation 5

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff’s Department obtain contractor bids to install a solar system to lower power costs.

This recommendation will not be implemented. During the application phase of the project, the cost of a photovoltaic power system was determined to be cost prohibitive. In order to install the system, the County would have had to eliminate necessary building elements that our application for state funding was being judged on, jeopardizing the awarded funding. However, additional conduits for this power option have been installed in the new facility for consideration if funding becomes available.

3.0 Santa Barbara County Probation Department

3.1 Los Prietos Boys Camp

Finding 1

Los Prietos Boys Camps is underutilized.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the finding.

Recommendation 1

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department explore options to increase utilization of the facility.

This recommendation will not be implemented. The utilization of Los Prietos Boys Camp (LPBC) should be reserved for those that pose a significant risk to the community or whose ongoing treatment needs cannot be safely addressed in the community. Removing youth from their families and the community and placing them in a juvenile facility is a decision that should not be taken lightly and has been associated with poor physical and mental health outcomes later in adulthood. Unless the benefit of the services provided at LPBC clearly outweighs the detriment of being incarcerated, detention itself is counterproductive to the goals of treatment, rehabilitation, and is harmful to the youth.

The Probation Department has worked purposefully to reduce the number of youth housed in secure detention while ensuring that local practices are aligned with the evidence and research within the field of Juvenile Justice. Presently, LPBC is undergoing a full program redesign. Taking into consideration the current demographics and criminogenic needs of the population. LPBC is being revamped to better address youth brain development, trauma informed care and evidence based programming. While utilizing concepts discussed in the recent county-wide Reimagining Juvenile Justice Initiative, LPBC is working to enhance the behavioral management program, utilize positive youth development, integrate youth voice into operations and activities, and improve community transition elements.

The Probation Department's goal is to ensure that the LPBC program effectively meets the needs of the youth and continues to serve as an alternative to more restrictive, long-term commitments to other facilities. While increasing the number of youth committed to LPBC is not a specific goal, pending legislation may result in an opportunity to serve older youth or young adults in a separate dormitory. Available areas are being repurposed to create "home like" areas that can be used for small group seating, facilitating recreation and programming opportunities. Additionally, LPBC is looking for ways to reduce or eliminate escalating behaviors by youth through the utilization of intervention techniques such as multi-sensory de-escalation room/space designed to provide safe space for maintaining self-control while reducing stress, and developing self-help techniques to manage behavior and emotions. It is anticipated the instances of discipline as well as youth being removed from the program will be reduced.

The Department will continue to evaluate the needs of local youth in the context of best practices and changing legislative requirements while considering options to maximize the use of space within the facility.

Finding 2

There is limited transitional mentoring.

The Board of Supervisors disagrees wholly with the finding.

Recommendation 2

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department develop a transitional mentoring program with the assistance of outside service organizations.

This recommendation has been implemented. The Probation Department currently contracts with a local community-based organization for mentoring services. A Community Transition Officer is assigned to each youth to assist in the transition back to the community after they complete their commitment at LPBC. The Department of Behavioral Wellness also provides support to youth and their families as part of the youth's discharge planning effort. Although there are sufficient resources in place to ensure youth have assistance and support as they transition back to the community, it is always of benefit to seek out additional opportunities to partner with new organizations to meet the various needs of youth and foster positive relationships within the community.

3.2 Susan J. Gionfriddo Juvenile Hall, Santa Maria (SMJH)

Recommendation 1

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and Probation Department explore options to optimize the utilization of the facility.

This recommendation will be implemented. The Probation Department has been exploring opportunities to optimize utilization of the facility while balancing the fact that Santa Maria Juvenile Hall (SMJH) is a secure detention facility with significant restrictions pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 15 and confidentiality consideration for justice involved youth pursuant to WIC §827. A remodel of the former intake area of the facility is underway to incorporate Santa Maria Juvenile Court Service functions at the site, allowing youth and their families to be served more efficiently. This permits the

juvenile functions of the court, prosecution, defense and probation to be co-located closer to youth housed at Santa Maria Juvenile Hall.

As the Juvenile Justice System continues to evolve, the Probation Department regularly assesses future needs and populations. Currently, the Governor's budget has proposed a realignment of the housing for youth sentenced to the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) be transferred from the state to the counties. The Probation Department is working to develop a program within the existing facility to house those youth impacted by the realignment of DJJ. The integration of a DJJ population into SMJH will have significant impacts on operations. Youth committed to DJJ can be detained for years and in some instances until they attain 25 years of age. The Probation Department is working to develop a plan to co-locate these vastly different populations with differing needs through the repurposing of existing space within SMJH.

Recommendation 2

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and Probation Department replace the cameras and monitors with a higher quality system.

This recommendation will be implemented. The Probation Department has identified numerous concerns about the current system and the upgrade of the system has been identified as a capital project in the FY 2019-20 Capital Improvement Plan. The Department has been working with County's General Services Department (GS) to upgrade the quality, coverage and storage system of the current camera systems. The Department received a revised quote from the vendor in early June and anticipates awarding the contract before the end of the calendar year.

Recommendation 3

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and Probation Department create a transitional mentoring program with the assistance of outside service organizations.

This recommendation will be implemented. The Probation Department currently contracts with a local community-based organization for mentoring services. The Probation Department will expand referrals to youth exiting SMJH into the local community this Fiscal Year. Additionally the Department is working to increase other agencies involvement in transitional services.

4.0 Superior Court Holding Facilities

4.1 Santa Maria Superior Court Holding Facility

Finding 1

A video arraignment program would expedite the processing of inmates through the court system and reduce holding cell overcrowding.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the finding.

Recommendation 1

That Santa Barbara County District Attorney in partnership with the Public Defender develop and implement a video arraignment program.

This recommendation has been implemented. With the impact of COVID 19 on in person court appearances, the County and Superior Court have been utilizing video arraignments. We continue to explore the use of video arraignment on an ongoing basis. The Board of Supervisors will receive an update on COVID impacts and related budgetary impacts mid Fiscal Year 2020-21. At that time video arraignment, changes in department operations and court related appearances will be reviewed.

4.2 Santa Barbara County Courthouse

Finding 1

The Santa Barbara Court Holding Facility does not meet safety standards.

The Board of Supervisors disagrees wholly with the finding.

Finding 2

The Santa Barbara Court Holding Facility is often overcrowded and uses “cages” that are inhumane.

The Board of Supervisors adopts the Sheriff’s Department response: “The Sheriff’s Office disagrees partially with an explanation. We also disagree with the characterization of individual holding cells as “cages.” All court holding facilities are part of the court complex which is owned by the State of California. The State has no plans to do any construction modifications to any of the court holding facilities that would add additional holding cells. We are limited to the availability of the cells and at the mercy of the courts as to scheduling of inmates. Inmates are transported to the court holding facility based on the court calendar. Inmates do not always appear in court as scheduled and some are required to stay at the court compound for an extended period of time. It is fortunate that the Santa Barbara Court Holding Facility is relatively close to the Southern Branch Jail and inmates can be transferred back to the facility once they have completed their appearance. This helps to relieve the overcrowding that temporarily exists in the court holding facility. Additionally, there are some inmates who choose to act out negatively or who are unable to be placed with other inmates due to safety concerns and those inmates need to be held separately. Due to the lack of holding cells, the temporary metal enclosures are used to house those inmates temporarily.”

Recommendation 2

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff’s Department develop and implement a video arraignment program to reduce overcrowding and the use of “cages.”

This recommendation has been implemented. With the impact of COVID 19 on in person court appearances, the County and Superior Court have been utilizing video arraignments. We continue to explore the use of video arraignment on an ongoing basis. The Board of Supervisors will receive an update on COVID impacts and related budgetary impacts mid Fiscal Year 2020-21. At that time video arraignment, changes in department operations and court related appearances will be reviewed.

4.3 Lompoc Courthouse

Finding 1

The Lompoc Facility needs maintenance.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the finding.

Recommendation 1

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors correct building maintenance deficiencies.

The recommendation will not be implemented. The Lompoc Courthouse is one of the several Court facilities in the County transferred to the State. As part of the transfer, the State assumed responsibility for maintenance of their portion of the facilities. The County pays the State an annual amount for maintenance for each of the transferred buildings. The County Facilities Payment for the Lompoc Courthouse was \$53,169 in FY 2019-20. The County's General Services Department provides needed maintenance on the County's portion of the facility as funding allows.

Recommendation 2

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and Sheriff's Department explore other options for holding the overflow inmates and remove the "cages."

The Recommendation will not be implemented. The Board of Supervisors adopts the Sheriff's response: "All court holding facilities are part of the court complex which is owned by the State of California. As far as we know, the State has no plans or funding to do any construction modifications to any of the court holding facilities that would add additional holding cells. We are limited to the availability of the cells and are subject and limited to the court's scheduling of inmates for court appearances. Our main correctional facility is in Santa Barbara and it is not economically responsible to conduct multiple transports to get inmates to the Lompoc Court Holding Facility as needed. We transport all inmates scheduled for appearance in the morning and they remain there until all inmates are complete with their appearances. These cells are only used occasionally for inmates whose behavior is incompatible with their being held with other inmates in multi-person cells. Again, the Sheriff's Office disagrees with the characterization of individual holding cells as "cages."

Finding 3

The camera video surveillance system does not record and the images are of poor quality.

The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees. We acknowledge that there is no recording equipment for the video surveillance system. All court holding facilities are part of the court complex which is owned by the State of California.

Recommendation 3

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and Sheriff's Department upgrade the cameras for recording capability and high definition imagery.

This recommendation will not be implemented. This recommendation is not within the County's jurisdiction. All court holding facilities are part of the court complex which is owned by the State of

California. Installation of any equipment within their facilities must be first approved by the State of California.