

SEATTLE JAIL CAPACITY NEEDS STUDY

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Seattle is a member of the consortium of 37 King County cities that was established to collectively address the needs of municipalities in meeting their misdemeanor jail bedspace requirements. Presently, most cities, including Seattle, contract with King and Yakima Counties for bedspace, but those contracts will expire in 2012 and 2010 respectively.

Ricci Greene Associates was hired by the consortium's Jail Administration Group (JAG) to develop a strategic plan, or "roadmap" for best meeting the cities' overall misdemeanor jail bedspace requirements and services once the contracts with King and Yakima Counties expire. The JAG study is focused on the needs of the system as a whole, including the utility of existing jail facilities and the possible development of new ones in meeting future jail population growth projections.

At the same time, the city of Seattle commissioned Ricci Greene to conduct a separate study of its jail system and to assess the impact of Seattle building and operating its own jail independent of the JAG. Though separately funded, the study was conducted simultaneously with the JAG study due to the inter-relationship between them. For example, a decision by Seattle to build its own facility may impact subsequent options for the county-wide strategic plan regarding the number and location of facilities required to service the remaining JAG cities. By the same token, the potential for building regional JAG facilities may also impact Seattle's planning processes.

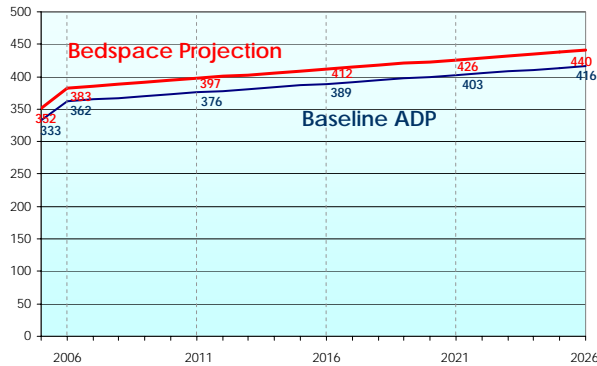
Population Analysis and
 Bedspace Projections

Inmate population and **jail bedspace projections** were generated as the foundation for facility planning. An analysis of misdemeanor growth trends (ADP) and city population forecasts indicate that Seattle will need 446 jail beds by the year 2026. During the course of the study, officials asked the Consultant to provide information on alternative project delivery methods, namely jail privatization and regionalization. As such, broad research was conducted and a summary of each concept was developed to give Seattle officials an overview understanding of key issues.

At the direction of Seattle officials, the analyses of future needs focused on the development of a potential new facility. Should Seattle decide to construct its own jail, the actual number of beds to build (relative to the 446 bedspace projection) is ultimately a policy decision. Jail capacity scenarios that were explored with city officials included “over-building”, e.g. building above the projected bedspace and renting beds to neighboring cities; or “under-building”, e.g. building below the projected bedspace need and relying on other facilities to fill the bedspace gap. Neither was deemed acceptable. As such, the consensus was to develop a plan for meeting Seattle’s full capacity needs exclusively, as projected for 2026.

A **profile analysis** of Seattle’s misdemeanor jail population found the “typical” inmate to be a 37 year old pre-trial male, waiting trial on a non-violent offense, with no additional charges pending elsewhere. For facility planning purposes, this suggests that Seattle’s jail population is by and large appropriate for low security housing rather than single cell construction that is typically reserved for higher security level classifications.

Bedspace Projection



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New Facility Requirements In jail facility planning, “operations drive design”. While this is not a design project, establishing an operational philosophy for facility planning purposes helped form the basis for generating a new jail facility space program and staffing plan. Key operational objectives include:

- *Least Restrictive Setting*: reserving single cells only for inmates who are a risk to jail safety and security
- *Objective-based Classification*: assessing for risk and need, and housing inmates accordingly
- *Direct Supervision Design*: giving officers a direct, barrier-free view of all inmates in the housing unit
- *Decentralized Services*: provided at the housing unit level, minimizing inmate movement throughout the facility
- *Manageable Unit Size*: striking a balance between achieving staffing efficiencies and ensuring good supervision

Should Seattle decide to build a new jail facility, the established operational criteria must guide the design of the new jail, with an emphasis on achieving the program requirements in a staff-efficient manner.

The key to safe and effective jail operations is inmate classification and to support the classification system, the new facility must have the proper number and type of housing units, ranging from open dormitories to single cells for inmates who must be separated from the general population and kept under strict supervision.

The facility housing will be designed for “direct supervision” and a “decentralized” system of program and service delivery. Moreover, the jail should include two arraignment courtrooms as programmed, to minimize inmate transport to municipal court for arraignment hearings. Finally, the site selected for the new jail facility must accommodate not only the physical plant requirements, but also the estimated parking requirements and horizontal expansion in the future.

The **facility space program** establishes the size of the new facility, and serves as the basis for initial cost estimating based on square footage cost assumptions. A space program was developed detailing the

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number, type and size of spaces contained in the proposed facility. The size of a new 446-bed facility is expected to be about 188,000 gross square feet.

In jail facilities, inmate housing generally accounts for half of the building size – and it can be the most expensive construction type if housing is comprised of single cells. The profile analysis revealed that the majority of Seattle’s inmates fall within minimum security designations, where dormitory-style housing is appropriate. Single cells are reserved for those inmates who pose a safety or security risk, based on a “classification” assessment that takes presenting behavior and risk factors into account.

Jail staffing costs account for a significant portion of the overall operational budget in any correctional facility, as each full time post typically requires 5 FTE positions. The **staffing plan** developed for the proposed Seattle facility reflects staffing requirements for the number and type of housing units and support functions identified in the facility space program. A total of 152 FTEs are projected for a 446 bed facility.

Cost Estimates

Capital and operating cost estimates were generated for the proposed facility providing sufficient information for decision-makers to better understand the general costs associated with a new facility. Total Capital Project cost estimated for the 446-bed facility is projected to be \$122,750,795 (escalated to year 2010 costs).

Construction cost estimates were developed at a programmatic level on a cost per square foot basis (as opposed to more detailed estimates that can be done once building drawings have been generated and a site has been determined).

The **construction cost estimate** uses cost precedents from other recent jail facilities in Washington and elsewhere, adjusted for inflation and regional cost differences. Industry national averages were also considered. The primary precedent used was the King County Regional Justice Center in Kent (RJC), which would be similar to the Seattle Jail in terms of construction type and quality, direct supervision

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design philosophy, and configuration, with the difference that the Seattle facility will be of a lower security designation overall. Final construction costs for the RJC were not available to the consultant. However, two estimates were provided. The estimate developed by Sellen was deemed the most appropriate benchmark for cost projecting.

A cost of \$287 per square foot (2006 dollars) was used, which represents a lower end of the range of precedents based on the anticipated lower level of security required for the misdemeanor population versus other “general population” jails. This cost was escalated to 2010 assuming 6.5% per year. C3MG Management Group assisted Ricci Greene Associates with the estimates.

Construction costs account for both the “bricks and mortar costs” of building a new facility as well as associated “soft costs” which, among others, include additional costs such as professional fees, escalation, construction contingency and other owner costs.

It should be noted that the Seattle region market is now about 20 – 25% higher than it was when cost estimates were generated during the options development phase of the project (Summer 2006), due primarily to a lack of public bidding competition. If this trend holds, escalation used for these estimates may need to be increased substantially. The City should continue to monitor local construction costs before committing to any anticipated construction budget.

Staffing costs were estimated based on the number and type of staff required. Staffing costs were established for FTE (full time equivalent) positions identified in the proposed staffing plan, representing base salary plus benefits. In the absence of a Seattle Jail, King County Correctional Facility salary and benefits for year 2006 were used as the basis for determining personnel costs. Following National Institute of Corrections’ guidelines, 70% of the local cost was allocated to staffing expenses. Finally, **operation and maintenance costs** accounted for the remaining 30% of the annual operating budget.

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The construction, staffing, operational and maintenance costs were run through a 30-year life-cycle cost analysis to establish annual and per diem cost impacts, as illustrated below:

Summary of Costs

	<u># Required Beds</u>	<u>Staffing & Operations</u> (2006 dollars)	<u>Daily Cost per Bed*</u> (2006 dollars)	<u>Total Construction Cost</u> (2010 dollars)
2026 projection	446	\$15,797,099	\$97	\$122,750,795

*This figure is the cost per bed – not the cost per inmate – so it is not comparable to the daily rates that Seattle currently pays. In other words, Seattle will pay this rate regardless of whether the bed is full or empty.

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