

Justice Project Implementation Planning Council Update

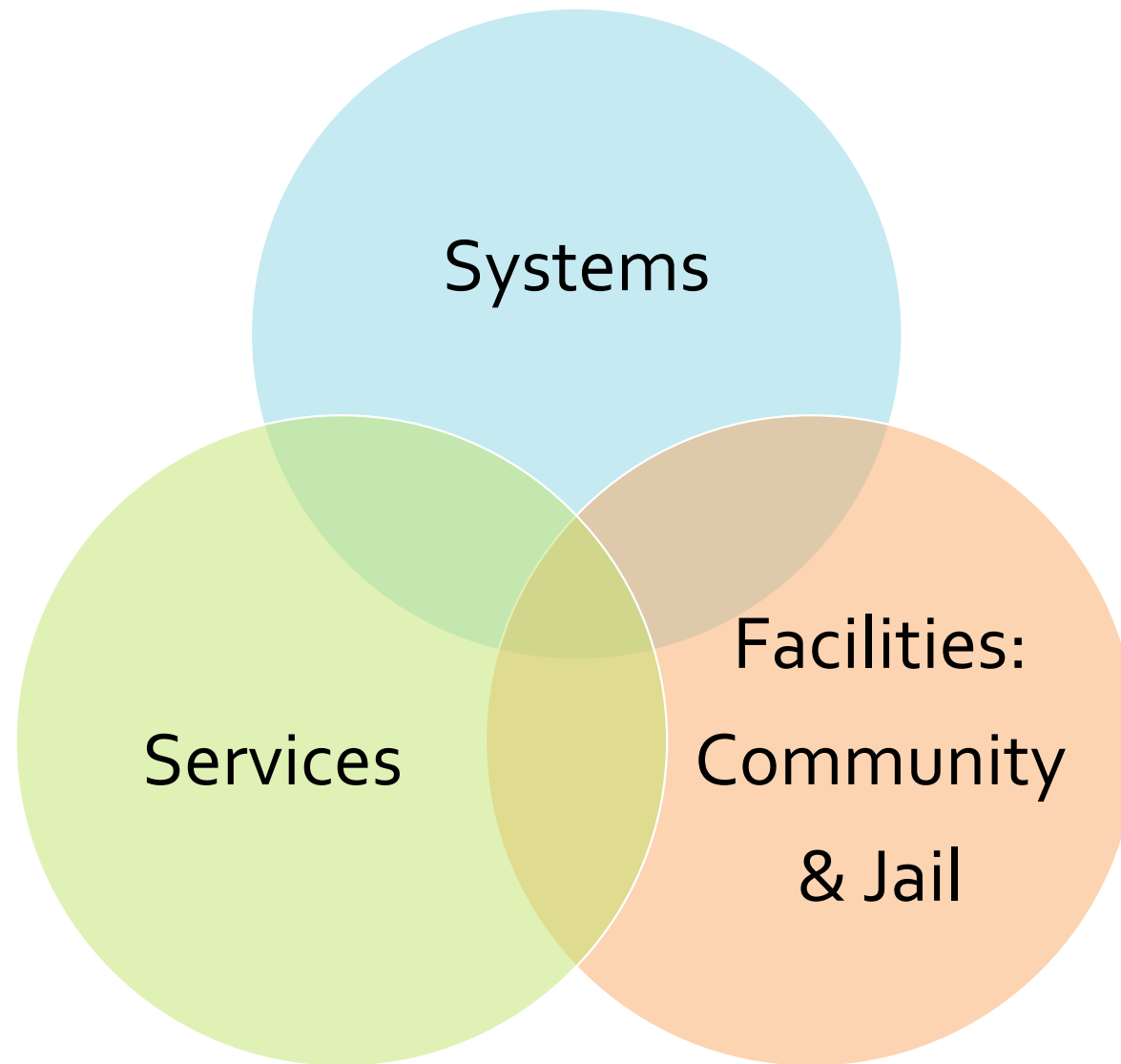
April 25, 2023



WHATCOM COUNTY JUSTICE PROJECT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Stakeholder Advisory Committee
for the Public Health, Safety,
and Justice Facility Needs Assessment

January 2023





Process

- Compiling content from Worksheets & Workshops
- Sending questions to groups/individuals
- Refining and synthesizing implementation plan ideas



Process

- Aiming for 8-10 projects in total, that can be accomplished in the next 1-3 years
- Each will address multiple needs & recommendations
- Polling workshop participants for feedback & priorities



Potential Implementation Plan Projects

Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Criteria for New Jail

- Correctly sized, based on a fair analysis of population growth, along with strategic investments to avoid unnecessary incarcerations.
- Sized and operated to assure booking restrictions in the county and its cities will not occur.
- Designed to reflect best practices for safety, efficiency, and technology.
- Safe for incarcerated individuals and those who work and visit there.
- Designed with spaces & equipment to provide incarcerated individuals with dignity and needed services.
- Versatile to accommodate changes in the population.
- Built to last; easy to maintain; feasible to fund and build.
- Located near adjacent land to purchase/develop if needed.
- Located in proximity to resources incarcerated individuals need.
- Easily accessible by all jurisdictions served.

Recent Workshop Discussions

Key questions:

1. Important design qualities
2. Services needed in/near jail
3. Size range
4. Location for jail and accessory services
5. Where do we have the potential to make the biggest impact?
6. Where could we get funding leverage?

**How Important
it is that the Jail
Be Located in
Close Proximity
To These
Resources
(SAC Survey)**

% Who Rated Resources Important or Very Important (N=35)	
Bus Line	86%
Courthouse	74%
Public Defender's Office	58%
Crisis Stabilization Center	46%
Sheriff's Office	43%
Hospital	41%
Work Center	35%
Freeway Entrance	35%

Jail Design “Wish List”

- Trauma- informed design
 - Natural light
 - Use of color
 - Natural beauty
 - Spatial layout, visual interest
- Individual cells – people have a space of their own
- Integrate medical & behavioral health services throughout facility

Data Used in Jail Need Forecasting in 2013

Jail Usage Variables:

- Admissions rate
- Average length of stay
- Average daily population

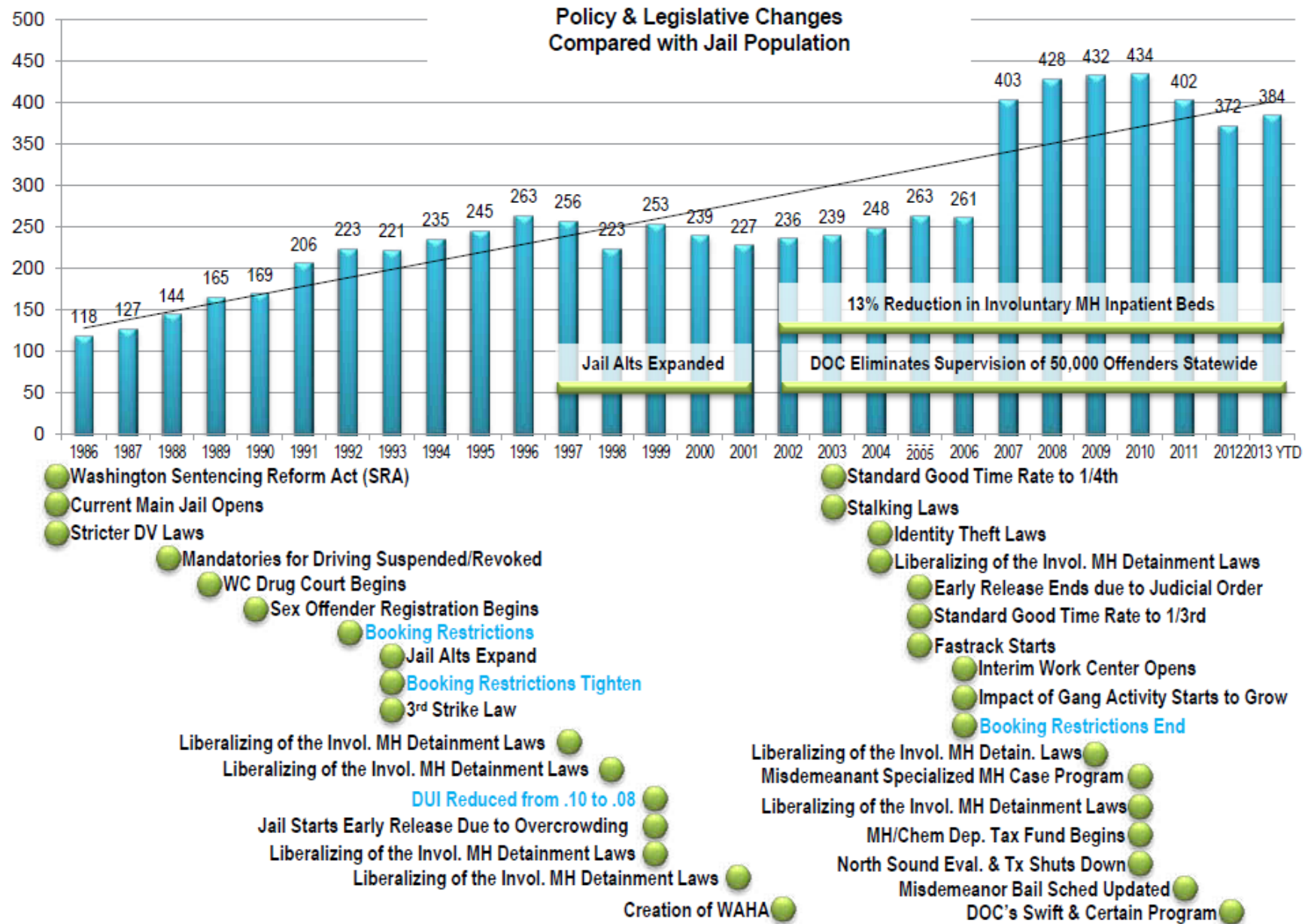
Adjustment Factors:

- Peaking factor
- Classification factor

Local and State Incarceration Rates

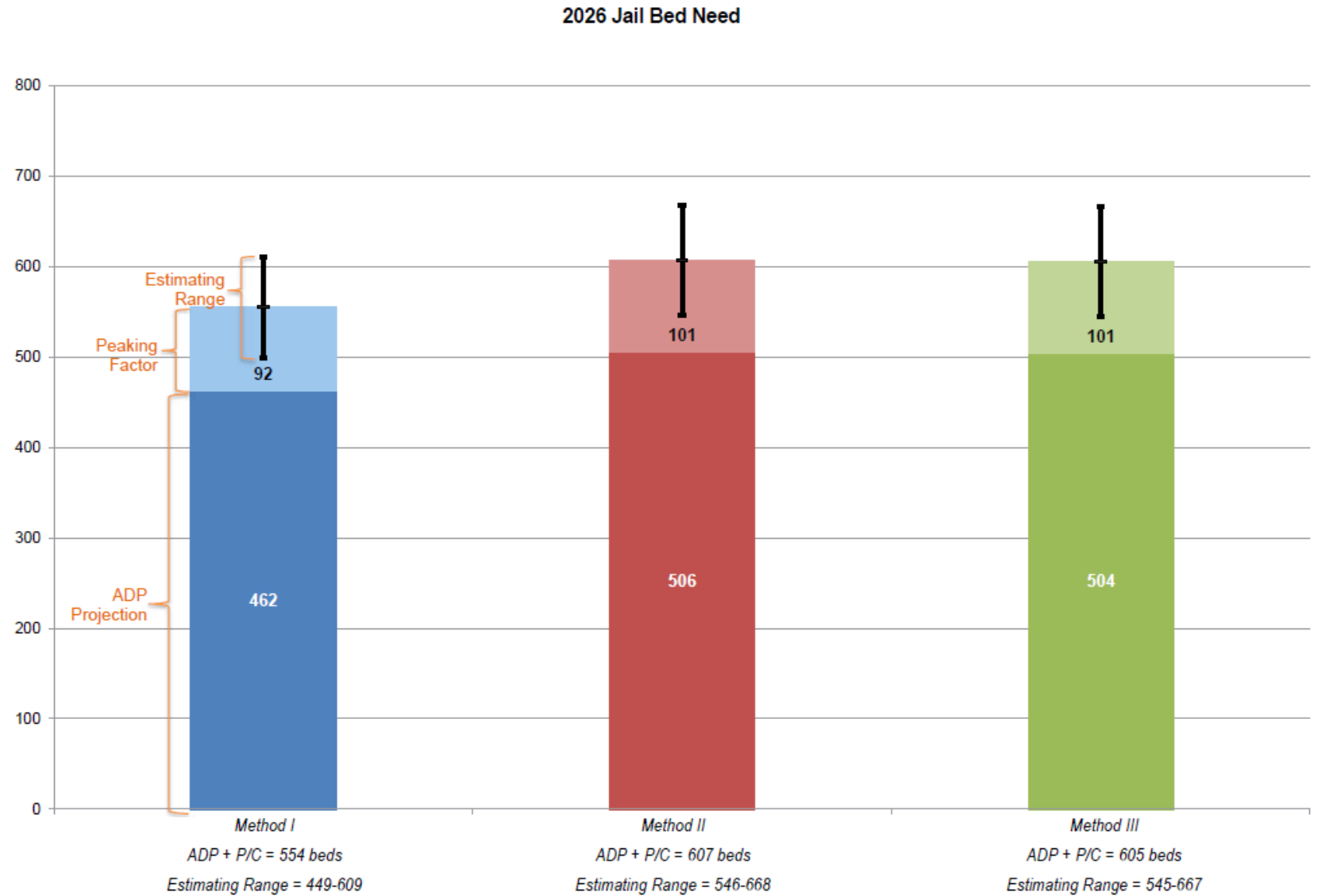
Factors Impacting Jail Population Trends

DLR 2013
Pre-design Report



Projection of Jail Bed Need in 2026

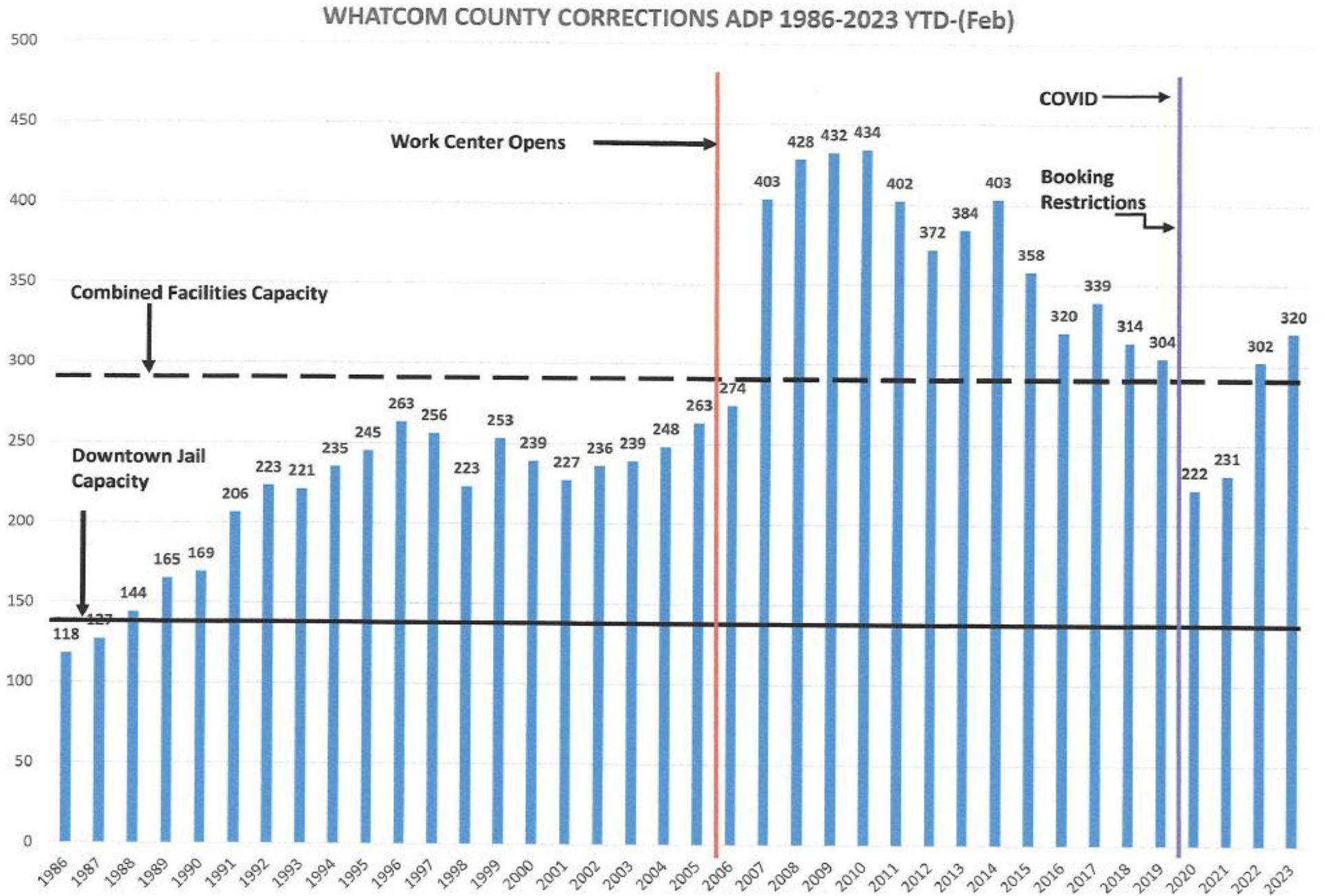
DLR 2013
Pre-design Report



2013 Whatcom County Pre-Design Report

	# pods	# beds
Phase I Buildout		
Single Cells	3.5	77
Double Cells	5.5	238
Quad Cells	3	192
Medical Housing	1	14
Phase I Total Beds		521
Phase II Alternates		
Single Cells	0	0
Double Cells	0	0
Quad Cells	2	128
Medical Housing	0	0
Phase II Total Beds		128
Total Beds		649

Avg. Daily Population 2/86 – 2/23



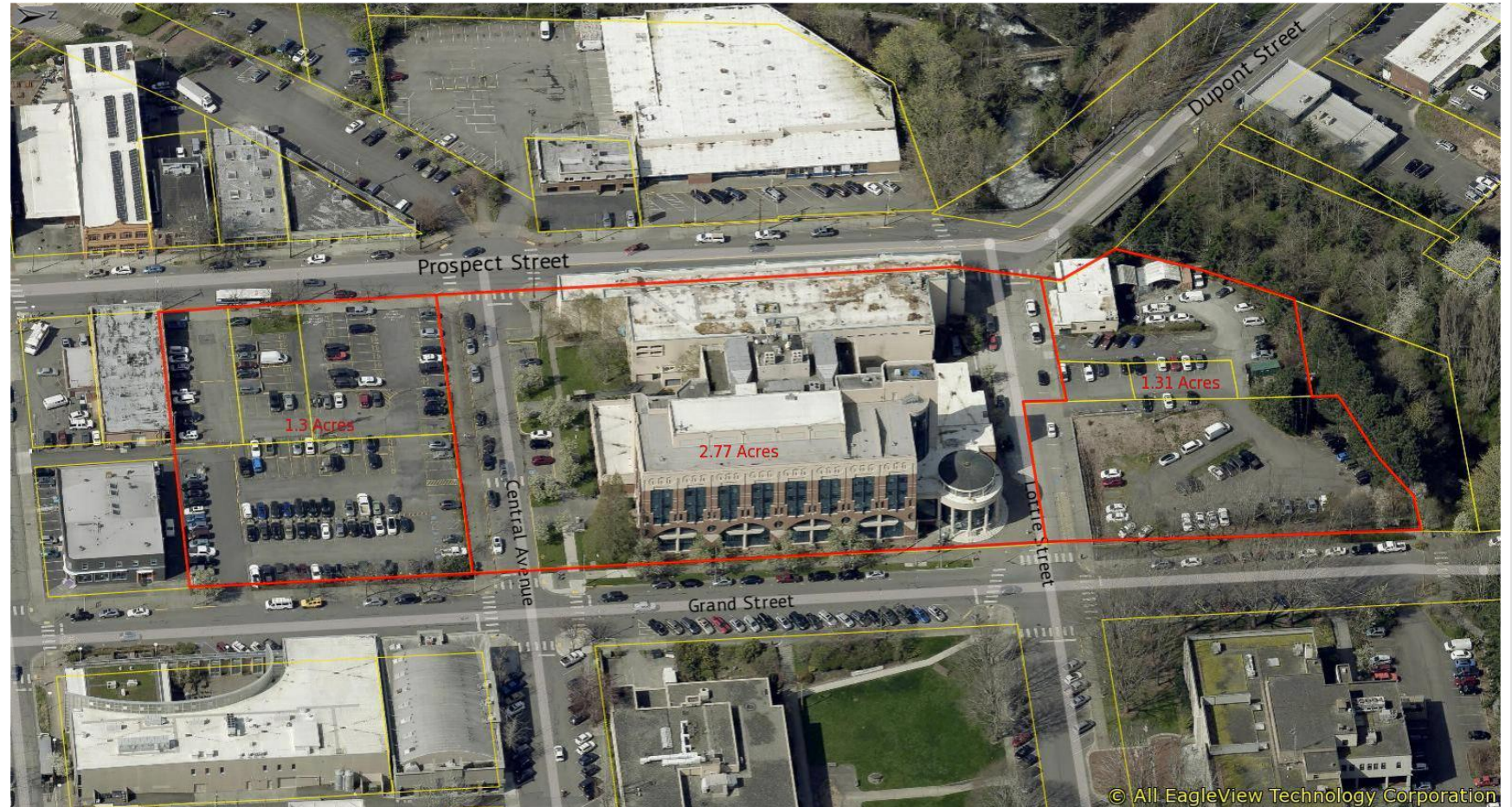
Current Whatcom County Jail Capacity



359 beds in two facilities

Since individuals' different needs (classifications) require a variety of housing, the actual operational capacity is ~80% of this.

County Sites: Civic Center



County
Sites:

Irongate



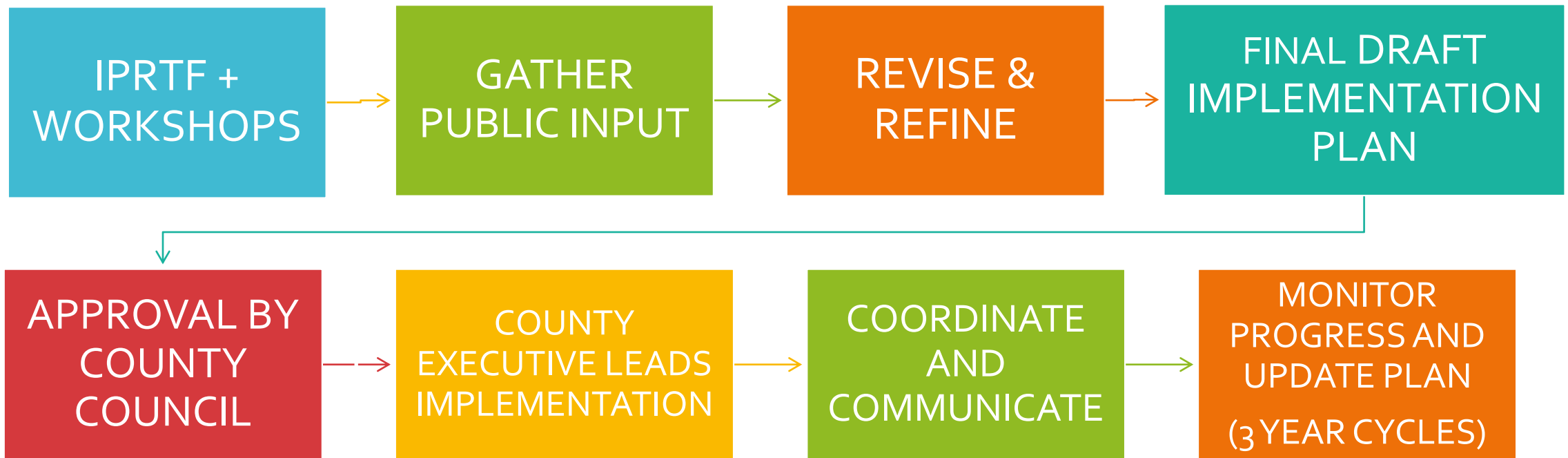
County
Sites:

Labounty
(near Slater and I-5)



“The key to the long-term management of a jail and other corrections resources is the implementation of a system plan: a set of policy and program strategies that will enable a jurisdiction not only to react to change but also to influence and shape the course of that change.”

National Institute of
Corrections, “Jail Capacity
Planning Guide” pg. 63



CREATE – IMPLEMENT – MONITOR - UPDATE

Poll of Workshop Participants: Behavioral Health Services

Action	How Important	How Feasible
Establish a BH Resource Center	96%	93%
Increase capacity of effective existing programs to divert people from incarceration	93%	93%
Address workforce shortages & expand capacity of BH services	89%	92%
Build a 23-hr. Crisis Relief Center	89%	89%
Explore & develop outpatient competency restoration services	79%	85%

Poll: Address Housing Needs

Action	How Important	How Feasible
Ensure existing supportive housing programs are adequately staffed & equipped	89%	81%
Expand the number of permanent supportive housing options for people involved, or at risk of involvement, with the criminal legal system	85%	74%
Advocate to address the “90-day rule”	65% 23% didn't know	75%

Poll: Measure Progress Toward Desired Outcomes

Action	How Important	How Feasible
Collect data to measure progress toward desired outcomes	96%	96%
Develop data dashboard for criminal legal system orgs to share data with one another and the public	85%	100%

Poll: Build New Jail & Accessory Services

Action	How Important	How Feasible
Build new jail with accessory services	93%	85%
Build a BH Care Center attached to jail to provide secure, short-term BH treatment as alternative to jail	89%	78%

Poll:
Should a tax
initiative
include services
to keep people
out of jail as
well as building
a new jail?

85% Yes

4% No

11% Unsure

Poll:
Which
property is an
appropriate
location for
each type of
facility

Location:	Civic Center	Behind 1511 N. State St.	Irongate	LaBounty
23-hr Crisis Relief Cntr.			74%	33%
New Jail			52%	59%
Behavioral Care Cntr.			44%	56%
Resource Cntr. (Re-entry)	56%		41%	
Transitional Holding Facility	63%		33%	

Poll:
Rank
Preferred
Location for
the Jail

	1st	2nd	3rd
LaBounty (Horizontal)	52%	24%	24%
Irongate (Vertical)	44%	48%	8%
Civic Center (Vertical)	4%	28%	68%

A scenario
for
discussion
purposes

LaBounty

- Booking Reception and transportation for re-entry support
- New Horizontal Jail to replace existing jail and Work Center
- Behavioral Care Center

Irongate

- Ann Deacon Center for Hope
- 23-hr Crisis Center on newly acquired vacant property
- Re-model and re-purpose current Work Center for other BH purpose

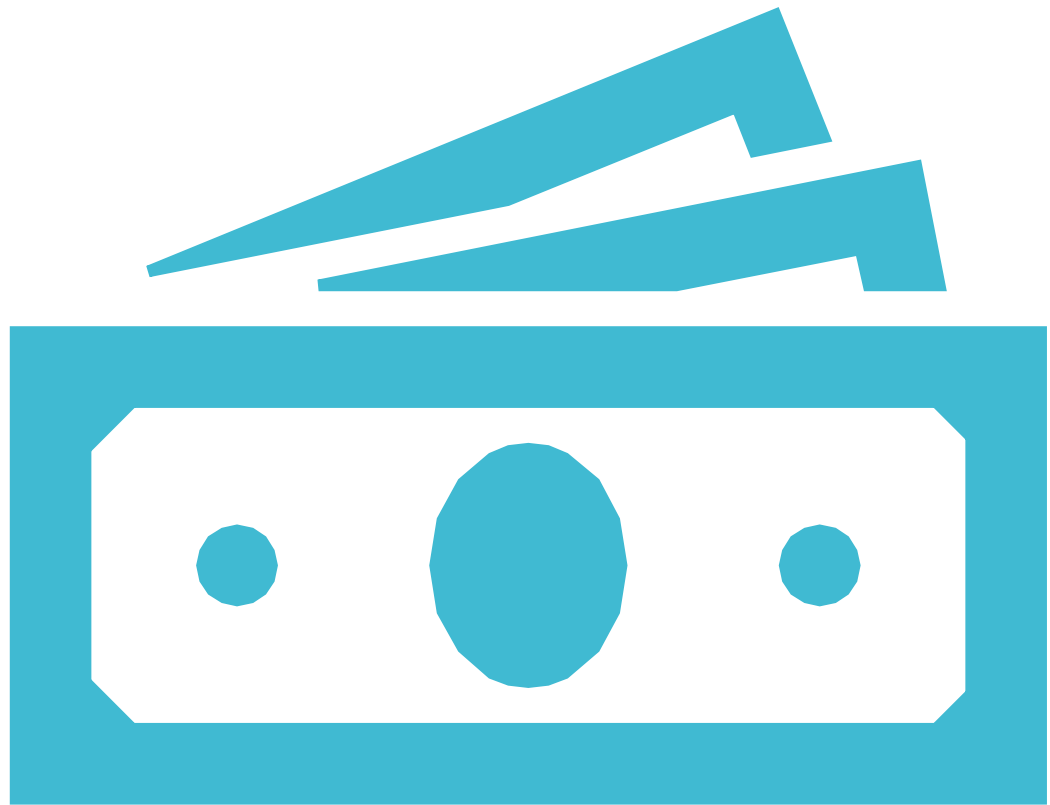
Civic Center

- Holding Space, Attorney Visits, Courtroom Access, Re-Entry, etc.
- Remodel/Addition to Courthouse
- Could potentially use current juvenile detention cells
- Could use current jail site

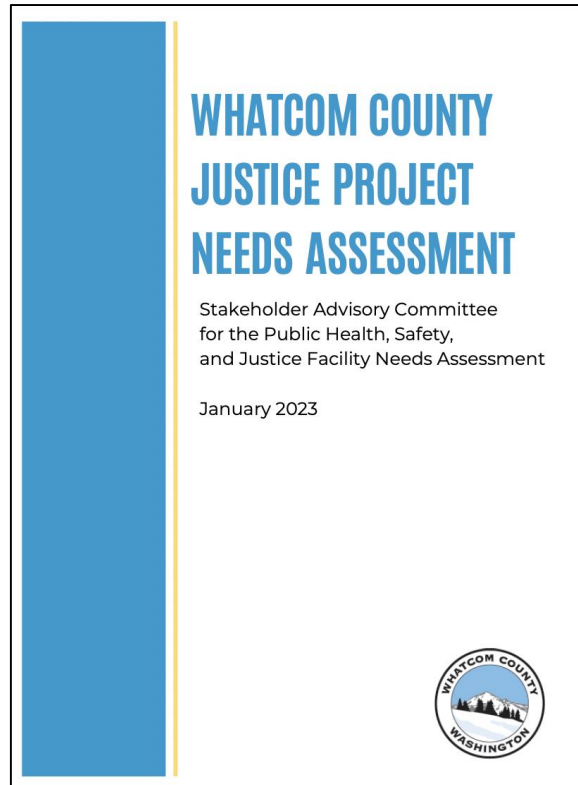
State Street

- Resource Center: Link to re-entry support, BH services, housing support, vocational support
- Close proximity to the Way Station and bus station.

Potential Funding Sources



Compilation of Local, Regional, State, Private, Non-profit, & Corporate Funding Opportunities



Appendix N: Potential Funding Sources

[Potential Funding Sources](https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/71750/Potential-Funding-Sources-January-2023), January 2023,

<https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/71750/Potential-Funding-Sources-January-2023>

It has become clear through the SAC process that there are high levels of agreement, both among SAC members and community members, in many areas. These include the desire to:

1

Protect public health, safety and rights.

2

Have a jail facility that is:

- Structurally sound.
- Well-designed to ensure the safety of incarcerated people, staff, and visitors.
- Large enough to meet community public safety needs and to accommodate needed services.

3

Improve service capacity and availability, particularly in the areas of mental health and substance use treatment.

From the Justice Project Needs Assessment

Upcoming Events in Implementation Planning Process

- **Focus Groups with priority audiences**
April 24-28
- **IPRTF/Law & Justice Council Meetings**
May 15, June 12
- **County Council Deliberations (COTW)**
April 25, May 9, May 23, June 6, June 20, July 11, July 25
- **Town Hall**
May 24

Discussion: Council Policy Direction

- **What other information is needed to inform Council decision-making process?**
- **What steps can be taken to increase public trust in process?**