

Whatcom County Justice Project

Implementation Planning

May 2023



Implementation Planning Process

- Present Potential Projects and Key Questions for:
 - County Council discussion, May 23
 - Town Hall, May 24
- Incorporate feedback then Poll
- Prepare Draft Implementation Plan
- Draft Plan to IPRTF/LJC & County Council for review
- Final **Justice Project Implementation Plan** submitted to County Council end of June

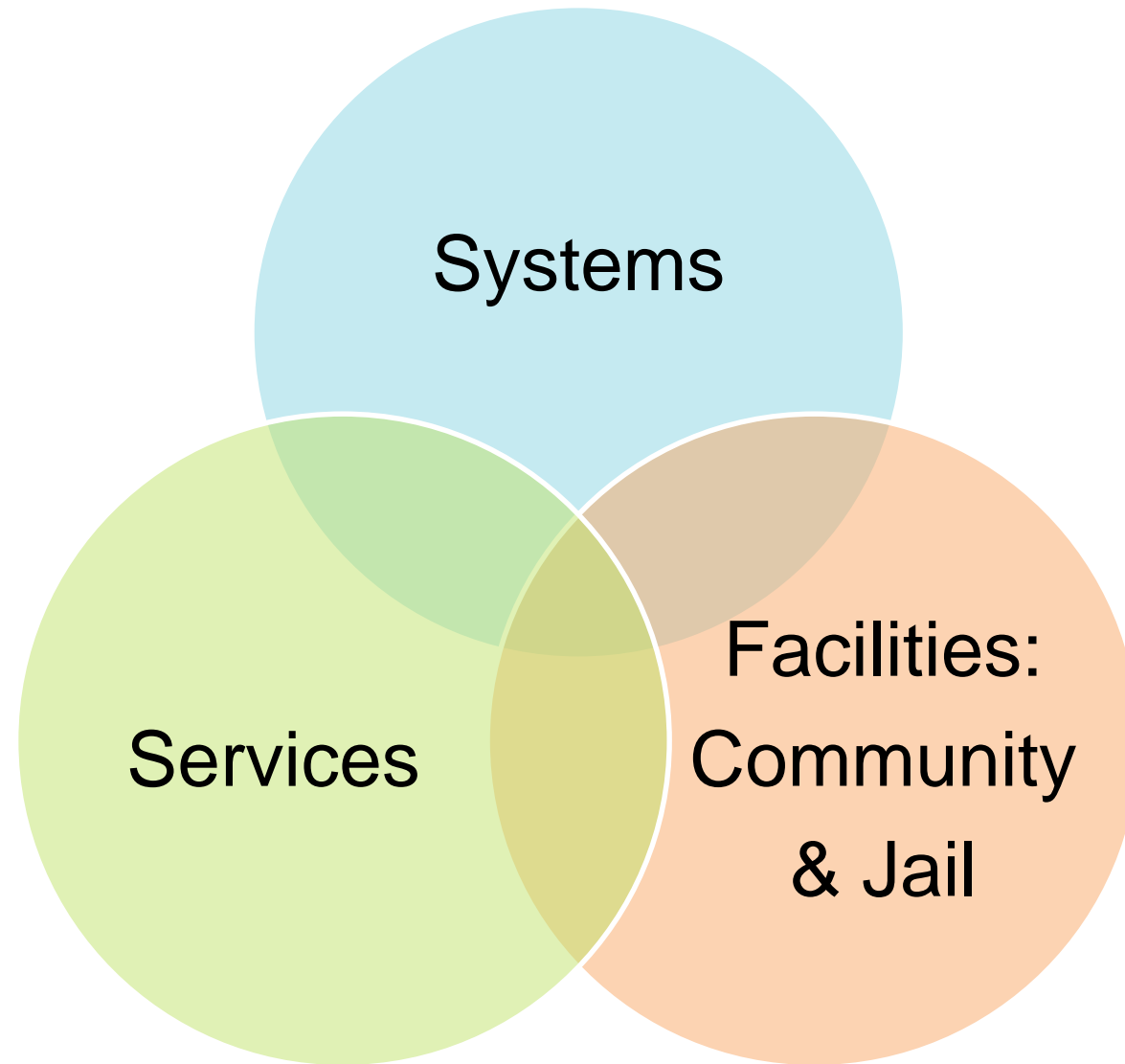
Today's Session

- Feedback on Potential Implementation Projects List.
- Update on analysis for facilities.

WHATCOM COUNTY JUSTICE PROJECT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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

January 2023



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Stakeholder Advisory Committee
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and Justice Facility Needs Assessment

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Scope of Work:

- Actions and projects to advance the 16 Needs and 32 Recommendations in the Needs Assessment
- 1-3 year time frame



DRAFT

**Revised
Implementation
Projects**

Potential Implementation Planning Projects

15 specific action
items in
5 categories

Increase Access to Behavioral Health Services

**Expand the Capacity of Programs to Reduce
Incarceration/Re-incarceration**

**Build the Array of Facilities Needed to Promote
Public Health and Safety**

**Make Systems Changes with Local, Regional, &
State Partners**

**Measure and Share Progress for Accountability and
Transparency, and Plan for the Future**

Critical Questions for Council today

We will go through each project category and ask:

- Do you have questions or concerns about any of these proposed implementation plan projects?
- What do you think will be important considerations to make these projects successful?

Increase Access to Behavioral Health Services

- 1. Increase the capacity of effective existing programs to divert people from incarceration** in tandem with community support services to enable people with behavioral health issues to successfully complete diversion programs.
- 2. Build systems to facilitate communication and coordination between organizations** providing services for a seamless continuum of care.
- 3. Address workforce shortages in behavioral health services**, including recruitment and retention strategies to ensure an inclusive, well-trained workforce.

Expand the Capacity of Programs to Reduce Incarceration/ Re-incarceration

4. **Ensure people leaving jail have transportation to a safe destination.**
5. **Bolster Re-entry Support Services** – Establish jail-based and community-based locations where people can receive coordinated re-entry support services, such as case management, peer support, and assistance with housing, employment, healthcare, etc.
6. **Ensure ongoing efforts to maintain and expand supportive housing programs include services for people with behavioral health issues and a history of incarceration** (e.g., additional housing facilities, well-trained on-site clinical support, and housing case management services).

Build the
Array of
Facilities
Needed to
Promote
Public Health
and Safety

7. **Build a 23-hour Crisis Relief Center** (Behavioral Health Urgent Care open all hours, seven days per week) to enable prompt and appropriate intervention when a person is having a behavioral health crisis to prevent incarceration.
8. **Build a safe and humane jail, coordinating with a Behavioral Care Center** to provide secure, short-term behavioral health treatment as an alternative to jail for people charged with a crime.
9. **Research the feasibility of building additional facilities for voluntary and involuntary treatment of people with serious mental illness and/or substance use disorders.**

Make Systems Changes with Local, Regional, & State Partners

- 10. Continue to make changes in court systems** to reduce the number of people detained in jail, and the length of time they spend in jail before trial, and provide and evaluate options in lieu of bail.
- 11. Advocate for a state waiver to allow use of Medicaid funds to pay for jail-based medical and behavioral health services.**
- 12. Expedite access to competency restoration services** through advocacy at the state level and exploration and development of outpatient alternatives (e.g., Prosecutorial Diversion Program, Assisted Outpatient Treatment).

Measure and
Share
Progress for
Accountability
and
Transparency,
and Plan for
the Future

- 13. Collect data to measure progress toward desired outcomes.**
- 14. Develop a data dashboard** for criminal legal system organizations to share data with one another and the public.
- 15. Include BIPOC communities and people with lived experience in the oversight of progress and future planning efforts.**

Any other questions, concerns, or suggestions about the proposed implementation plan projects?

Increase Access to Behavioral Health Services

Expand the Capacity of Programs to Reduce Incarceration/Re-incarceration

Build the Array of Facilities Needed to Promote Public Health and Safety

Make Systems Changes with Local, Regional, & State Partners

Measure and Share Progress for Accountability and Transparency, and Plan for the Future



Update on Analysis for Facilities

Questions
for Council
today
regarding
facilities

We will share an overview of the thinking so far about facilities and ask:

What do you need to know to be able to make a decision about facilities?

Facilities Needed to Build a Better System

- 23–hr. Crisis Relief Center
- New Jail with trauma-informed design and integrated medical & behavioral health services throughout facility
- Behavioral Care Center
- Locations for re-entry support services
- Supportive housing
- Additional facilities for voluntary and involuntary behavioral health treatment



Building a Better System

- The first puzzle piece is location of a new jail.
- Three county-owned properties under consideration:
 - **Civic Center (near Courthouse, parking lot across from current jail)**
 - **Irongate (Division St.)**
 - **LaBounty (off Slater Rd. & I-5)**
- Locations for all other needed facilities on other county properties can then fall into place.
- Feedback from focus groups indicates appeal of a campus concept with co-location of facilities for increased continuity of care and less travel.

Design Concepts

Horizontal Design

Pros

- Versatility in how “pods” are used over time
- Less expensive to build
- Easier monitoring, safer design
- Greater accessibility, safer and easier to move through facility
- Expandable if/when criteria are met

Cons

- Requires more land
- Fewer options for location
- More travel required to get to site

Vertical Design

Pros

- Less land required
- More options for location
- Could reduce travel time from Civic Center

Cons

- Facility dimensions are permanently set
- Less versatility - harder to repurpose spaces
- More expensive to build
- More challenging to monitor and maintain safety
- Elevators/stairs required to move through facility

Civic Center



- Adjacent to courthouse
- 1.3 acres developable
- Vertical design
- Cost estimate: ~\$207M (\$704/sf)

Irongate



- 9-12 mins. to courthouse
- 10.6+ acres, 5 developable (demo Work Cntr.)
- Vertical design
- Limited opportunities for co-location
- Cost estimate: ~\$170M (\$630/sf)

Labounty



- 12-15 mins to courthouse
- 39+ acres, 16+ developable
- Horizontal design
- Maximum potential for co-location
- Cost estimate: ~\$137M (\$528/sf)

Other feedback or
suggestions?