



**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
**Inter-Departmental Correspondence**

County Manager's Office

**DATE:** September 2, 2008  
**BOARD MEETING DATE:** September 16, 2008  
**SPECIAL NOTICE:** None  
**VOTE REQUIRED:** None

**TO:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** John L. Maltbie, County Manager  
**SUBJECT:** 2007-08 Grand Jury Response

**RECOMMENDATION**

Accept this report containing the County's responses to the following 2007-08 Grand Jury report: San Mateo County Jails and Alternatives to Incarceration.

**VISION ALIGNMENT:**

**Commitment:** Responsive, effective and collaborative government.

**Goal 20:** Government decisions are based on careful consideration of future impact, rather than temporary relief or immediate gain.

This activity contributes to the goal by ensuring that all Grand Jury findings and recommendations are thoroughly reviewed by the appropriate County departments and that, when appropriate, process improvements are made to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided to the public and other agencies.

**DISCUSSION**

The County is mandated to respond to the Grand Jury within 90 days from the date that reports are filed with the County Clerk and Elected Officials are mandated to respond within 60 days. To that end, attached is the County's response to the Grand Jury report on San Mateo County Jails and Alternatives to Incarceration, issued on June 30, 2008.

# San Mateo County Jails and Alternatives to Incarceration

## Findings:

Staff is in general agreement with the Grand Jury's findings.

## Recommendations:

The Board of Supervisors should direct the County Manager to:

1. **Explore with the Chief Probation Officer the creation and proper staffing of a program along the lines of the Bridges Program to provide rehabilitation of inmates not convicted and sentenced for crimes involving drugs or alcohol.**

**Response:** Agree in concept. While all indications are that the Bridges Program is effective in reducing crime and recidivism, additional programming must be considered with other competing interests during development of future budgets, including other programs, potential State cuts and the County's structural budget deficit.

2. **Avoid building a facility that is too small by constructing the largest facility that can be built on the selected site so that the building can properly house the current number of inmates and any projected increases in the jail population, and also provide space for both the rehabilitation and re-entry programs.**

**Response:** Agree in part. The County agrees that the new jail should be sized appropriately to properly house the current number of inmates, provide room for future capacity, and provide space for rehabilitation and re-entry programs. However, future capacity needs should take into account any new programs that would alleviate jail overcrowding.

The Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff's Office should:

1. **Work together in the design of the new facility so that it can be securely partitioned to house both the incarcerated and participants of special programs run by the Sheriff's Office and the Probation Department. Planning for the new facility and programs to be housed there should include a full cost benefit analysis that:**
  - ascribes a value to recidivism reduction
  - considers additional cost for building a new facility should the

**jail population outgrow capacity**

- **includes possible income from housing inmates from other counties in the new facilities if there is initial excess capacity.**

**Response:** The recommendation requires further analysis. The needs assessment report provided by DMJM in building a replacement sentenced jail facility provides overall general design options, yet does not include architectural details. A Request For Information (RFI) for a functional program consultant is underway as a preliminary step to developing a Request For Proposal (RFP) to identify and secure an architect for the project. An architect will not be chosen until a site has been selected.

The County's intent is to use a participative process of planning and information sharing in each step of development that should meet the aim and spirit of this recommendation. During the coming year and beyond, the County will continue to work together with the Sheriff's Office, Superior Court, Probation Department, and other criminal justice and community stakeholders in the design of the new facility. Given the lack of large building sites, it is unlikely that there will be adequate room to build additional space for post-incarceration programs run by the Probation Department or to house inmates from other counties or the State.

2. **Explore with the Chief Probation Officer and other members of the criminal justice community the use of electronic monitoring accompanied by close supervision of inmates in an expansion of the Work Furlough Program.**

**Response:** Concur. The Board of Supervisors and the County Manager's Office is committed to working collaboratively with the Sheriff's Office, Court, Probation, and other members of the criminal justice community in exploring the use of electronic monitoring as well as the expansion of the Sheriff's Work Furlough Program and other alternatives to incarceration in order to limit the occurrences of jail overcrowding.

