

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT RESPONSE
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY GRAND JURY'S 2009-2010 REPORT
"AN OVERCROWDED SANTA BARBARA COUNTY MAIN JAIL: How
Long Will This Situation Continue?"

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1: *Overcrowding in the main jail continues to have a negative impact on jail operations and inmate health and safety.*

Response to Finding 1: **The Sheriff's Department agrees with the finding.**

The Sheriff's Department continues to operate under a Court Order Decree limiting the inmate population. For the last several years the jail has routinely operated at approximately 120% of rated capacity as determined by the Corrections and Standards Authority (CSA). This is well above the suggested capacity of 85%, which allows for proper inmate management. The ability to keep persons with incompatible charges, criminal sophistication, medical and mental health issues or other vulnerabilities separated from each other is negatively impacted by jail overcrowding. The overcrowded conditions complicate the classification of inmates and require an intense, ongoing effort to properly house offenders while providing for the health and safety of inmates, custody deputies, and professional support staff alike.

Recommendation 1: *The Board of Supervisors fully implement the Blue Ribbon Commission's recommendations to fund prevention, intervention, and recovery programs that address key factors contributing to crime and imprisonment.*

Response to Recommendation 1: **This recommendation has been partially implemented.**

The Board of Supervisors has supported the Sheriff's efforts to fund prevention, intervention, and recovery programs. Specific programs include the Sheriff's Treatment Program (STP), learning programs at the Helen Pedotti Inmate Learning Center, the Safe Serve certification program, and New Beginnings program for substance abuse. In addition to expending funds on such programs, the Sheriff secured a State of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) grant to provide for two State Parolee Day Reporting Centers in the County of Santa Barbara.

A \$1,499,960.00 contract was awarded to Community Solutions Incorporated (CSI) to provide services for the two parolee Day Reporting Centers. These centers, one in Santa Maria and one in Santa Barbara, opened on July 1, 2010. They provide customized treatment plans for each parolee. Each Day Reporting Center has a variety of programs, including: Substance Abuse Education, Job Training/Job Search/Job Placement, Transitional Housing and Basic Needs Assistance, Parenting and Family Reintegration, Anger Management, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Community Service Opportunities, and Random Drug and Alcohol Testing. Although providing service to State parolees rather than those on County probation, these centers provide a significant benefit to our communities by increasing the likelihood of successful parolee reintegration into society, thereby decreasing the likelihood of their return to County Jail.

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The Sheriff has also fully implemented the Blue Ribbon Commission's recommendation of establishing a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council that provides a forum to address Criminal Justice System issues related to jail overcrowding.

Finding 2: *The Blue Ribbon Commission recommended that the county focus on crime prevention, reducing recidivism, improving early release programs and exploring other proven options to incarceration, in addition to constructing a new 300-bed facility in the north county.*

Response to Finding 2: **The Sheriff's Department agrees with the finding.**

Recommendation 2: *The Board of Supervisors fund the implementation of the Blue Ribbon Commission's recommendation to enhance existing community corrections programs.*

Response to Recommendation 2: **This recommendation has been partially implemented.**

On July 13, 2010 the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to place *Measure S-2010*, the *Local Crime & Gang Reduction, Fire Protection and Jail Construction/Operation ½ Percent Transactions (Sales) Tax Initiative*, on the November 2, 2010 ballot. If passed by the voters, *Measure S-2010* would provide funding for the construction and operation of the new jail, implementation of programs designed to reduce recidivism, and provide alternatives to incarceration, as well as provide additional funding to all local law enforcement agencies for community protection, and to local fire agencies in order to bolster front-line fire protection services.

Part of the *Measure S-2010* funding may be used to enhance the current community corrections efforts (such as GPS electronic monitoring) and/or to establish or re-establish other programs (such as work furlough). *Measure S-2010* would provide an independent oversight committee to administer approximately \$5 million per year in coordinated “wrap-around” treatment, recovery and community corrections services, where mental health, alcohol and drug abuse, housing and other providers will deliver integrated case management efforts to address recidivism.

Finding 3: *The construction cost of a new 300-bed jail in the north county is currently estimated to be at \$80.2 million and the county's share is estimated at \$23.9 million.*

Response to Finding 3: **The Sheriff's Department agrees with the finding.**

Recommendation 3a: *The Board of Supervisors move to secure funding for a new 300-bed jail facility in the north county by making a substantial fiscal commitment to the capital budget with identified sources of funding.*

Response to Recommendation 3a: **This recommendation has been partially implemented.**

The Board of Supervisors has funded the purchase of the land for the North County Jail, the EIR for the property, and the preliminary plans for construction.

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Recommendation 3b: *The Board of Supervisors work with the Sheriff's Department to plan for a means by which to fund annual operating expenses for a new 300-bed jail in the North County.*

Response to Recommendation 3b: **This recommendation has been partially implemented.**

As mentioned, the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to place *Measure S-2010* on the November 2, 2010 ballot. In addition to providing funds for the construction of a new 304-bed North County jail, *Measure S-2010* would generate approximately \$15 million per year for jail operating expenses for 10 of the Measure's 14 years.

Finding 4: *The annual cost to the county of operating a new 300-bed jail in the north county is currently estimated at \$17 million.*

Response to Finding 4: **The Sheriff's Department agrees with the finding.**

Measure S-2010 is expected to generate \$15 million per year for jail operating expenses. Upon the completion of the new 304-bed North County jail, the current Santa Maria branch jail will be transitioned to another use. The current \$2 million per year budgeted for operations of the Santa Maria jail will be transferred to the new North County jail operations budget, for a combined total of \$17 million per year for North County jail operating costs.

Finding 5: *Additional sources of funding are necessary to build and operate a new 300-bed jail in north county and to ensure receipt of the \$56.3 million AB900 state construction funds.*

Response to Finding 5: **The Sheriff's Department agrees with the finding.**

The source for the “match” funds needed to ensure the receipt of the \$56.3 million AB900 state construction funds would be secured by the passage of *Measure S-2010*, as discussed in the Response to Recommendation 3b, above.

The construction costs for the 304-bed jail would be funded by *Measure S-2010*, as discussed in the Response to Recommendation 3b.

The source of funds for the operating costs for the new 304-bed jail North County jail are discussed in the Response to Finding 4, above.