

Frequently Asked Questions(FAQ) Regarding the McLean County Jail Needs Assessment

How long of a time period has the Property Committee been working on the project?

The County issued an RFP for a needs assessment on 01/21/2014. Between 2008 and 2014, the County supported the formation and development of a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council which significantly reduced jail overcrowding and out-of-county housing of inmates from 2009-2014.

What, other than population growth is creating space problems in the current facility?

Length of trial, length of sentence, mandatory sentences, proportional number of police officers, criminal activity, and closing of state mental health facilities are some of the contributing factors.

Does the Sheriff feel that he and his predecessor have been given adequate input into the jail design?

Yes. The Sheriff's Dept participates directly in the analysis of jail statistics and have been given opportunities to voice opinions on jail design needs.

Why should citizens have a high level of comfort in the recommendations and plans being developed by Dewberry and Goldman and Associates?

Dewberry has extensive experience in design and construction management of jails. Goldman and Associates has extensive experience working with the Nation Institute on Corrections on the topic of medical and behavioral health provision. Finally County personnel representing the Sheriff's Department, Administration, Facilities Management and Property Committee Chairman Segobiano went through an extensive Request for Proposals Process before hiring the firms conducting the current assessment.

Has there been any public meeting to engage the citizens of the county in this project?

In addition to the multiple County Board, Property Committee, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and Mental Health Advisory Group meetings, all which have been public and that have addressed this topic, the consultant had a meeting specifically to generate input of the community on this topic on October 14, 2014.

To what degree is adequate investment being made by local governments and agencies to reduce the number of citizens that fall into the pipeline leading to the need for criminal incarceration due to behavioral health issues?

Clearly, part of critical need is created by a reduction in state funded mental health support and facilities provision. The Community has worked over the past 18 months to identify additional resources to address this issue. Working with Community providers, over the past 12 months, the County community has leveraged a \$250,000 appropriation from the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services for behavioral health provision, a \$700,000 investment from the Illinois Department of Human Services to allow for establishment of a Crisis Stabilization Center and a provision by the McLean County Board of Health to provide two full-time staff and a contract with non-profit PATH to coordinate crisis care and local behavioral health provisions.

Where else in the County are mentally ill persons requiring detention and close supervision housed?

“Requiring detention” assumes that the individual has committed a crime and charges are being pursued. Therefore only the McLean County Detention facility fits this criteria.

What percent of the citizens in the county that have been determined to have mental health challenges that require living in a controlled environment?

No data on this is currently available.

If the jail expansion occurs, how many current bed spaces will be taken out of service?

This depends on which scenario or option is adopted.

The consultant says we need **224 new** beds by 2035. We have 234 beds now. (this counts Booking and the North & South Holding cells-neither of these should be counted for daily housing) $235 + 224 = 458$.

In each scenario the amount of current beds used could differ. Part of the old jail would be repurposed. The number 458 is not correct.

The growth in bed demand was projected at 1% annually. That type of growth takes us to a need of 290 beds in 2035.

True, but an additional 20% was added to accommodate peak populations and to allow for proper classification.

In the last several years has McLean County had to move inmates to other counties due to lack of space or been able to accept inmates from other counties that had crowded jails?

We have not housed out for the last 3 years. The County seldom, if ever house inmates for other facilities unless it is an overnight “courtesy hold”.

To what degree has the Jail been housing inmates that have been sentenced to serve time in State facilities?

This does not happen. You are either sentenced to the County Facility (which would be a sentence of 364 days or less) or you are sentenced to DOC (the Department of Corrections for 365 days or more).

What is the typical percentage of beds that are typically occupied by those being held awaiting for “their day in court”?

70-75% avg were pre-trial detainees.

To what degree is this population created by the judicial system not delivering on “prompt justice”?

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council has been in place since 2009, with the goal of insuring that the justice system is not a contributing factor to jail populations. This group has been successful in reversing a trend that required the expenditure of over \$750,000 in out-of-county housing in 2008 and continues to work to attainment improvements in this area..

When those being held in the county jail, are sentenced to serve time, to what degree is this time served in the County Jail, verse State of Illinois facilities?

This statistic is not currently gathered.

What is the current practice or trend in McLean County Judicial system for issuing long sentences, compared to other areas of Illinois?

This statistic is not currently gathered.

Are there currently other effective means or methods for punishing and/or rehabilitating those found guilty, which might reduce demand for jail beds?

...possible...but when found guilty some cases “require” the individual serve a “mandatory sentence” in a detention facility.

To what degree is technology based monitoring currently being used?

Technology and legal requirements evolves daily. Currently electronic monitoring is available as a pre-trial alternative and the County averages 13 pre-trial individuals a month on Electronic monitoring. Individuals are required to pay a minimum \$70 set-up fee plus \$8 per day. Ability to pay is a consideration in recommending EM.

Are there alternative methods under study or being developed that might reduce bed demand during the next 20 years?

While the county anticipates that physical incarceration will always be required for individuals that are a threat to the community, alternatives including improvement and expansion of technology, changes in sentencing mandates and changes in criminalization are all areas which t may reduce projected bed demand in the future, but are areas which local officials have limited control over.

To what degree is the current demand for housing the mentally ill linked to the State of Illinois closing some of their facilities that were formally used for the mentally ill?

Reduction in service and facility availability reasonably can be identified as a contributing factor in the influx of individuals coming to the jail with mental health issues.

Might there be “economies of scale” in housing inmates that could be captured if consideration was given to collaborating with other counties in building centralized jail facilities used by 2 or 3 counties in the region?

Regional jails have not been implemented in Illinois. except it the case of very small rural counties The challenge of regionalization is that Courts are also provided by County and regionalization can dramatically increase the detainment of non-sentenced inmates.

Do the Town of Normal and/or the City of Bloomington operate jail facilities?

No.