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Chief Executive Officer

February 11, 2022

To: Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Brandon T. Nichols, Executive Director *BTN*
Jail Closure Implementation Team

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JAIL CLOSURE IMPLEMENTATION TEAM – FIRST QUARTERLY REPORT (ITEM NO. 27, AGENDA OF JUNE 22, 2021)

In response to the Board of Supervisors (Board) approved motion to create the Jail Closure Implementation Team (JCIT) to depopulate and close the Men's Central Jail (MCJ), the Chief Executive Office (CEO) reported to your Board on July 14, 2021, outlining the efforts to create JCIT, and on November 16, 2021, 60 days after becoming operational, JCIT filed its first status report. As directed by your Board, JCIT is submitting this first quarterly report to provide updates on the status of the directives from your June 22, 2021 motion.

Strategic Plan

JCIT is developing a strategic plan to help guide and inform jail depopulation efforts. This plan will seek to address the existing population and develop programs to establish a care continuum infrastructure to meet the needs of the justice-impacted population that incorporates public safety. JCIT recognizes that there are significant vulnerable populations in jail whose needs may be safely and more appropriately addressed in therapeutic community settings, and while these settings will take time to build and expand upon the current community infrastructure, JCIT is developing jail population reduction strategies and framing this work in terms of short, medium, and long-term goals. JCIT is collaborating with the Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) Office to further define roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication of effort and work-silos, and better align the strategic plan. In addition, JCIT is discussing jail depopulation efforts with community stakeholders, County departments, and partnering community-service providers.

JCIT intends to share the strategic plan with all invested partners and stakeholders for their review and feedback before adopting the plan that will help guide JCIT's efforts over time. JCIT will provide your Board with additional updates on the strategic planning efforts in the next reporting period. To promote public transparency, accountability, and to provide your Board with an easy way to track jail closure efforts, JCIT has prepared a short summary and status of major initiatives. This summary is attached to this memorandum. This is a first draft of a summary tracking document and does not reflect the entirety of JCIT's work. This summary will be significantly enhanced once the strategic plan is finalized.

Jail Population Reduction Strategies

Since the middle of September when JCIT's work began, the jail population has been reduced by approximately 10 percent. In October 2021, JCIT facilitated a meeting with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and State representatives, including the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and the Office of Governor Gavin Newsom, and the County obtained a commitment by the State to transfer up to 400 people a week out of local custody. Thereafter, the population reduction was nearly 16 percent; however, recent surges in COVID-19 cases and isolation precautions due to the Omicron variant, combined with the CDCR's pause on State prison transfers, have resulted in a temporary increase in the overall population. Despite the recent upward trend, if the County continues to implement a zero-bail policy, COVID-19 infections continue to decrease, people charged with misdemeanors and determined to be incompetent to stand trial are released from custody as required in Senate Bill 317, and the CDCR resumes transfers of those sentenced to State prison, the jail population should slowly begin to see a reduction over the next few months.

As a result of the meeting with State representatives in October 2021, the Sheriff's Department worked with CDCR to establish a local State parole program that permits CDCR inmates to be transferred to programs or facilities directly from local custody, which avoids unnecessary expenditure of time and resources to transfer people eligible for parole back to State prison before release.

JCIT continues to work with the Sheriff's Department to monitor the population increases and the conditions at the Inmate Reception Center (IRC) by working with Correctional Health Services and the Sheriff to leverage an existing Department of Health Services' custodial agreement to sanitize and maintain cleanliness at the IRC and adjoining high traffic areas and will continue to provide support to resolve any additional issues that may arise.

System of Care Expansion

Connecting people with a community-based contact prior to release from custody increases the likelihood of continued engagement and involvement in services upon release from incarceration, particularly when the community-service providers utilize a community health worker model and employ those with lived experience in the criminal justice system. JCIT has met with County departments and community-service providers that can support both the pretrial and sentenced population with housing and supportive services when released from custody. Continued investment and expansion of the reentry community-service infrastructure needed to support incarcerated populations will enable a smoother transition back to the community, particularly when mental health, substance use disorder, housing supports, and linkages to employment and educational opportunities are provided. These services promote stability and self-reliant behavior that can lead to increased public safety and lower the risk of recidivism.

Returning Home Well LA

A significant number of justice-impacted individuals are reportedly unhoused, which could require the development of additional bridge, transitional, and permanent housing to support diversion to alternatives to incarceration. As indicated in the first report to your Board, JCIT is partnering with ATI to design and fund a local program that would permit individuals sentenced to local custody to finish their sentence in a community setting or to provide transitional housing and connection to supportive services upon their release from incarceration. JCIT is determining legal mechanisms for release, including re-sentencing by the court, existing Sheriff's Department authority, and potential legislative pursuits that would enable early release without further court or law enforcement intervention. JCIT and ATI are identifying available housing and funding resources that can be committed to support this population and will survey providers to evaluate how capacity can be expanded to meet the goals of this program.

Population Review Panel

To further the work to mitigate factors impacting length of stay in custody, JCIT has moved forward with creating a panel that will routinely review the jail population and recommend release of people who can be better served in the community. Many jurisdictions across the country use jail population review teams to identify alternatives to incarceration like the County's efforts in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic that significantly reduced the jail population. Working with the Center for Court Innovation and the MacArthur Safety and Justice Challenge, JCIT has met with several jurisdictions that successfully run jail population review teams, including Lucas County, OH; St. Louis County, MO; and the City and County of San Francisco, to educate our team on each

location's process, procedure, and best practices. JCIT also attended the MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge Network Meeting on February 2, 2022, which reviewed the design, implementation, and impact of population review teams and criminal justice collaborating councils across the country.

JCIT recently convened justice and clinical experts from the District Attorney (DA), Public Defender (PD), Alternate Public Defender (APD), Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR), ATI, Correctional Health Services, Sheriff's Department, Probation Department, and County Counsel to design a panel model that fits within the Los Angeles County justice framework. The team will finalize the panel's design, obtain staffing commitments, and explore necessary resources for the involved agencies.

Bed Capacity Building

As recognized in the past reports and recommendations that studied how to safely and methodically depopulate and eventually close MCJ, the County must increase community capacity. On December 10, 2021, JCIT participated in the ATI Bed Summit. JCIT continues its work with ATI, County departments, and community stakeholders to help develop bed capacity that provides opportunities for the justice-impacted population and will help to facilitate expansion to the bed network to support the County's needs. Expansion of housing, which includes permanent supportive housing and housing tied to mental health and other services, is critical to achieving jail closure. To this end, with the use of Care First, Community Investment (CFCI) funding, JCIT will provide gap funding for 76 interim housing beds in the ODR's portfolio that face a funding shortfall beginning in Fiscal Year 2022-2023. JCIT is working with ODR to increase the number of available beds in ODR's interim housing portfolio.

JCIT will continue to collaborate with the Homeless Initiative and community agencies to better serve the justice-impacted population that is also experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. Data from the 2019 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count indicated that 64 percent of the population experiencing homelessness also had justice system involvement. With better coordination and intentionality, it appears there are possibilities to help provide access to bed resources within the County's existing housing networks for those being, or who could be, released from custody.

Meetings with Stakeholders

JCIT has continued to engage with County department leads and community-based organizations to focus on jail population reduction strategies. During this quarter, JCIT met with representatives from various organizations, including the First Followers Reentry Program, National Association for Mental Illness, the Sybil Brand Commission, Veterans

Affairs, the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs' Association, the Los Angeles Regional Reentry Program, Public Counsel, healthRIGHT 360, Downtown Women's Center, Homeless Outreach Program Integrated Care System, Timelist, Californians for Safety and Justice, Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, Trans Latina Coalition, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, and Homeboy Industries. JCIT is committed to prioritizing the feedback from these organizations and others as the work towards jail depopulation moves forward.

During the next reporting period, JCIT will discuss the efforts underway to prioritize community engagement with groups and individuals that have direct justice-system experience and will incorporate feedback from these discussions into jail population reduction strategies and efforts to build a more responsive system of care. This input is invaluable and necessary for authentic partnership.

Gender Responsive Activities

On January 19, 2022, JCIT submitted its first quarterly report to update your Board on JCIT's activity in response to your Board's October 19, 2021 motion directing JCIT to prioritize and implement Gender Responsive Advisory Committee (GRAC) recommendations that further JCIT's mandate to decrease the jail population and close MCJ, develop a scope of work for a consultant to complete an updated population study of Century Regional Detention Facility (CRDF) and the K6-G units at Twin Towers Correctional Facility (TTCF), and work with Correctional Health Services and Gender Responsive Services on the prioritization of recommendations that promote gender responsive, trauma-informed services and programming for those that do not immediately qualify for release from custody.

On January 10, 2022, JCIT toured CRDF with Sheriff's Department personnel, Captain Geradette Montoya, who is responsible for overseeing the facility, and Director of Gender Responsive Services, Dr. Melissa Kelley. JCIT's direct experience touring the jail, seeing program operations, services provided, and the conditions in the jail provided a valuable perspective of the jail facility and service needs. Additionally, JCIT is working with Dr. Kelley to further prioritize the GRAC recommendations and track the progress being made by the Sheriff's Department and Correctional Health Services.

With technical guidance from the CEO Chief Information Office, JCIT is developing a scope of work for an academic/research institution that will conduct a population study on the cisgender women, two spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, and transgender, gender nonconforming and/or intersex populations housed at CRDF and in the K6-G units at TTCF, with a focus on racial equity, and will lead roundtable discussions with people housed at CRDF and in the K6-G units. The academic/research institution will be

expected to produce a final report that synthesizes its findings to help inform which GRAC recommendations to prioritize.

Additionally, JCIT has convened ongoing meetings with the DA, PD, APD, ODR, and Vera Institute of Justice to identify a process and procedure to prioritize the pretrial release of women housed at CRDF. JCIT can confirm that case-review conferences have begun to evaluate the circumstances of pregnant women in custody and determine if a community setting can appropriately meet the needs of the individual without increasing the risk to public safety. Further, the DA has secured placement and supportive resources for this purpose. Additionally, the PD has started to identify cases of women in custody who are not pregnant to help facilitate similar case-review conferences. JCIT is also working with the County department leads identified in the November 16, 2021, report to expand existing contractual relationships with community-based organizations to provide housing and necessary supportive services that would facilitate the release of more women from custody.

ODR Maternal Health Program

JCIT is committed to working with ODR to determine how funds can be allocated to provide ongoing support to its maternal health program. In March of 2018, your Board directed ODR to divert pregnant women from the jail, whenever possible and through court interventions, and provide them with supportive housing and Reentry Intensive Case Management Services (RICMS). While operational, ODR Housing relies on an existing patchwork of funding to provide interim and permanent supportive housing and needs additional funds to expand services. To maximize ODR's capacity, JCIT is working with ODR to fund additional interim housing and supportive services to expand its portfolio of housing options for the maternal health program with the goal of serving more women and creating additional service capacity in the ODR clinical supportive housing programs.

Funding Opportunities

JCIT has requested that the Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, the Department of Health Services, ODR, and the Department of Mental Health determine if there are existing programs that could advance jail depopulation efforts and have unmet needs that could be supported through CFCI or American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) funds directed to JCIT. ODR's RICMS network that served Whole Person Care clients transitioning from jail or being released from state prison were at risk of being canceled due to a transition in Medi-Cal programming and potential funding gaps. JCIT has committed to provide \$5 million in CFCI temporary stop-gap funding to RICMS, if so needed, while the newly implemented Medi-Cal managed care program, California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), funding and service provisions evolve.

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RICMS providers are a crucial component in the reentry service continuum needed to fully support a person upon release from incarceration. JCIT and ODR are currently working to expand this network of services to potentially augment the pretrial population that can be diverted from jail and served in the community while disposition of their case is pending.

Next Steps

JCIT will continue to work with the Board offices, County departments, Board-established initiatives, and community stakeholders to move forward with the Board directives and the recommendations outlined above and provide a status update every 90 days.

Should you have any questions, please contact me or Brandon Nichols, Executive Director, Jail Closure Implementation Team, at (213) 262-7791 or bnichols@ceo.lacounty.gov.

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Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
District Attorney
Sheriff
Alternate Public Defender
Health Services
Internal Services
Mental Health
Public Defender
Public Health
Public Works

Draft Summary of Major Initiatives

Initiative	Time Frame	Notes
Strategic Plan	Very Short Term	Draft is nearly complete and ready to circulate to stakeholders and the public
Transfer of people to State CDCR	Very Short Term	Increased transfer rate was negotiated but recent COVID concerns have caused temporary restrictions
Contract with identified community provider for women's housing	Very Short Term	Statement of work is nearly complete and contract to be presented to the Board for approval
Returning Home Well LA	Medium Term	Explore legal release mechanisms; identify funding and existing housing and service resources
Population Review Panel	Medium Term	There may be opportunity to align panel concept with court plans to address case backlogs
Fund gap in ODR RICMS program to avoid disruption of services and expand RICMS	Very Short Term	Funding commitment have been made and services will continue uninterrupted
Fund gap, and expand, ODR interim housing beds	Very Short Term	
Align decarceration efforts with the County's Homeless initiative	Medium Term	
Stakeholder meetings	Ongoing	
Review of Pregnant Women in Custody	Very Short Term	Individual case conferences have begun
Women's review panel	Very Short Term	Public Defender has begun to identify cases for review
Women's population study	Very Short Term	
ODR Maternal Health	Very Short Term	Funding commitments for maternal health program have been made
Expansion of SAPC services	Medium Term	
Expansion of Permanent Supportive Housing	Long Term	