

## **ACRJ Renovation Project Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is the rated capacity for the overall jail?**

- a. 329 is the rated capacity for the overall jail. A 15-year forecast does not anticipate 329 population based on 2 factors (slow population growth of the area; Commonwealth Attorneys of city and county sustains commitment to reducing jail population safely and effectively. We have not had 600 population since approximately 2008.

### **2. How many housing units will have mental health?**

- a. 7 designated purpose designed beds.
- b. Jail standards dictate the 3 kinds of housing units – minimum, medium and maximum
- c. Standards also require special purpose housing (medical, administrative segregation and mental health). Based on population, standards dictates how many special purpose housing units will be provided.
- d. There will be 2 special purpose units each with 7 beds.
- e. Separate floors – not tiered units. No communication between the 2 units. One is dedicated to mental health, and the other is special purpose.
- f. Special purpose is not intended for long-term. It's a temporary condition. Those beds are not counted as part of the general population.
- g. Existing jail does not meet the standards for special purpose beds.

### **3. How can ACRJ qualify for the 25% reimbursement?**

- a. The current jail is not in compliance with new standards. The state will only reimburse up to 25% for any improvement that meets the new 2018 BLRJ standards. Option 3, the expansion will be built to the new standards and therefore will qualify for the 25% reimbursement. All three options will qualify for some reimbursement to the 1975 portion of the facility's renovation. However, due to the manner in which it was designed and constructed, cost prohibitive and not feasible to bring it into full compliance. Specifically, enlarging the housing areas from the current 35sq ft. per inmate to the new square foot standards per inmate of 80sq ft. would require removing load bearing walls

concrete reinforced walls which would require significant demolition and alteration to the roof and floor.

**4. Why is this costing so much – money coming out of the local economy?**

- a. The 1975 portion of the facility is designed and constructed in such a manner that it is cost prohibitive and not feasible to bring it into full compliance. Therefore one portion will be demolished and a new section will be built to the new standards thereby creating a large section of the facility that meets the current standards and needs of the facility.
- b. Jail and Prison construction is one of the most expensive forms of construction. Similar to hospitals.

**5. How did you determine that these were the best 3 options? Were there more than 3? Who decided on the options?**

- a. Cost
- b. Needs of the facility
- c. Most effective and most efficient
- d. Decided by building codes of Board of Regional Jails, ACRJ staff, community and architects.
- e. After reviewing other alternatives to meet the requested options the community wanted to see, HVAC improvements, improvements only to the 1975 portion and no expansion. No other options were designed.

**6. Is it possible to use some of the funds to purchase new uniforms for the inmates? Something other than the stripes?” This article gets at some of the importance.**

<https://www.themarshallproject.org/search?q=how+a+blazer+?>

- a. It would not be necessary to divert funds from the renovation to purchase inmate uniforms as that is a separate budget item and is funded yearly by the local jurisdictions. I am not opposed to researching uniforms that are not the traditional stripped uniforms.

**7. Lastly, I would very much rather see the money for the renovation be put into the community and go to groups doing the work of healing (SARA, BUCK Squad, Central Virginia Community Justice) and have**

**us as a community brainstorm how we could have a place of containment that looks entirely different than the jail. I know the funds cannot simply be diverted and that there is a call to do both (renovate the jail and fund community groups).**

- a. As we discussed in the forum, this facility, its staff and I are supportive of alternatives to incarceration (pre-trial HEI and post sentence HEI), pre-trial programs to divert people from incarceration, re-entry initiatives to improve success upon re-entry to society and reduce the likelihood of a person recidivating.
- b. I do not see the jail's renovation and our communities diversion, re-entry and recidivism initiatives as an either or endeavor. Both can be achieved and both have to be part of our communities' holistic response to crime.

**8. "...making the jail the focus(sp) of care for mental health is not something I believe ultimately leads to the healing our community needs."**

- a. I agree, that individuals who suffer from mental illness and can be safely served in the community should be. That is the policy of our local courts and the Therapeutic Docket, law enforcement diversion programs, and other community programs. If in addition to the above, more resources are needed in the community, then funding should be secured from entities who are responsible for funding those programs and not by diverting funding from, although unfortunate, an agency that provides a significant amount mental health treatment for this community.
- b. It's the individuals who experience mental illness and become incarcerated that need an environment in which they can receive the treatment they require and deserve while becoming stabilized.

**9. Page 5 of the PowerPoint presentation identifies 8 non-exclusive findings for improvements to the physical structures from the CBCP Planning Study. I would like to know how each of these improvements is - or isn't - included in each of the three options for the renovation.**

- a. Option 1, has a scope of work, area to be renovated, of the 1975 portion of the building and addresses issues in west side and ground floor housing areas as well as other areas as shown on page 15 and 16.
- b. Option 1, by renovating the west and ground housing areas as shown on slide 17 of the presentation. By removing the bar grate that separates staff from the inmates common area, also known as a “cat walk”, the square footage of the day room is increased. The additional square footage in the dayroom meets the new Board of Local and Regional Jail’s (BOLRJ) standards for sq ft per inmate in dayrooms in open dormitories (not to be confused with the 2000 expansion’s Housing units). The increased square footage allows for greater ADA accessibility, more access to natural sunlight by getting the day room closer to the windows and one more shower. The removal of the bar grate is also a part of trauma informed design. The reorganization of the floor plan also allow for better sight lines for supervision increasing safety for staff and inmates.
- c. However, the cells themselves at 35sq ft. per inmate cannot be redesigned or renovated to meet the new 80 sq. ft. per inmate standard.
- d. Option 1, also includes renovating current space and designating it classroom space for inmates. The addition of inmate programming space is also a BOLRJ requirement. HVAC improvements/replacement are also included in option 1 in the West and ground floor housing areas.
- e. Option 1 does not address adding a mental health unit or increased/enhances visitation area or additional staff areas/office space or renovating the 1975 original east side of the facility.
- f. Option 2 includes everything in option 1, in addition to renovating the 1975 original jail’s east side.
- g. Option 2 does not address adding a mental health unit or increased/enhances visitation area or additional staff areas/office space.
- h. Option 3 address everything in option 1 and 2 in addition to adding a mental health unit, a larger lobby, enhanced visitation space for visitors and professionals, and additional staff areas/office space.
- i. With regard to ADA accessibility and meeting BOLRJ’s new standards:

- j. Regardless of the option selected, the 1975 original jail will not be able to meet all of the ADA accessibility and BOLRJ's new standards. Specifically as they relate to the single cell housing areas. It would be prohibitively expensive and logistically not feasible to remove the poured concrete and rebar reinforced load bearing walls in some of the cell blocks with individual cells. The day rooms in those single cell housing areas will meet the new requirements. Even when the double bunks in those areas are removed the sq ft per inmate does not meet the current standard.

**10. Its not clear why the other options were not designed to also qualify for the same reimbursement.**

- a. Essentially in order to design option 1 and 2 to maximize any reimbursement, the renovation must address and meet the new Board of Local and Regional Jail standards. The areas that are addressed in the first two options are focused on the original 1975 areas of the facility. To bring that area into compliance with the reimbursable standards would be cost prohibitive and not practical from a construction perspective. As mentioned yesterday during the tour, the housing areas in the 50 year old section are solid reinforce concrete tied to the ceiling and floor. To make those areas larger to meet the new square foot per inmate standards would require tearing down those walls, which again is not practical and cost prohibitive. In addition there are other areas required by the new standards that also could not be met due to being impractical and cost prohibitive.
- b. Option 3 was the most cost effective, practical and efficient way to get as much of the facility to meet the new standards and thereby maximizing reimbursement from the state. By tearing down the east wing which housing units have not been renovated and building back in its place is the least disruptive to operations. When it is complete, it will meet the needs the community expressed in the initial community engagement, the results of the CBCP study and those of staff and stakeholders.

**11. Looking at page 16 of 125 of the document submitted to the state for all the improvements for all 26. Is the end square footage at the end of the component more or less than it is now? By how many square feet?**

- a. The expansion will add approximately 16,000 sq ft.

**12. Will we have answers to our questions if we wrote them on the comments sheet? It would be nice if everyone in the room knows how many people are on zoom. Is that possible to announce during the forum?**

- a. All questions and responses will be posted as FAQs on the website. During the course of the presentation there were 10 individuals. However, there were not 10 present at all times. It appears there were 7 people on ZOOM throughout the presentation.

**13. Will additional staff be required to operate the expansion?**

- a. The current authorized staffing level is 161 full-time employees. The authorized staffing level will not need to be increased to accommodate the renovation/expansion.