

# UMATILLA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

*"Conservators of the Peace"*

Sheriff Terry L. Rowan



Undersheriff Jim Littlefield

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## UMATILLA COUNTY JAIL MODIFICATION PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

In 1997, voters expressed their support for building a new jail facility, intended to hold offenders accountable for the crimes they commit. A jail bond was introduced and was overwhelmingly passed by the voters. Construction of the current jail facility at 4700 NW Pioneer Place in Pendleton was completed in 1999. The first inmates were transferred from the "old" jail on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors of the courthouse in downtown Pendleton to the new facility. That "new" facility is now nearly 20 years old.

The capacity grew from 80 inmates per day in the old jail, to 169 inmate capacity in the new jail, with an Average Daily Population (ADP) of about 100 to 125 inmates initially. During the latter stages of construction, double bunks were added in certain parts of the new facility to increase the total capacity to 252 available beds. The additional beds were intended to support higher inmate populations well into the future.

As stated earlier, when the new facility was designed and built, the intended population was 169 jail beds. By double bunking certain areas, the available jail beds was changed to 252, but the infrastructure was built to support a daily inmate population of only 169. Because of this, with the intention to maintain safe staffing and inmate levels, and prior to 2012, the jail population was capped at maximum of 135 inmates. When the jail reached its capacity, large numbers of inmates were released or "matrixed". This created a "revolving door" atmosphere, which had a negative impact and was not popular with the public or the criminal justice system.

In 2013, as a result of public criticism, lack of accountability, legislative changes, and common sense regarding the jail, newly elected Sheriff Rowan changed jail policy and philosophy by removing the 135 inmate jail cap. This was designed to increase public safety by holding offenders in jail and accountable for the crimes they committed, along with reducing the number of "Failure to Appear" warrants issued by the courts. Over the past several years, the jail capacity has increased from 135 ADP to over 215 ADP. It is widely agreed upon by those in the local criminal justice system that these changes have had dramatic and positive impacts on public safety in Umatilla County as a whole. Offenders are being held accountable, and court processes and prosecutions are streamlined. The criminal justice community and the public have been positively impacted and they are very supportive.

Fast forward nearly 20 years, from 1999 when the current facility was completed to 2018, and the future is here. We are now holding and managing more inmates in our Umatilla County Jail than ever before. It seems there are always additional demands and challenges that significantly increase our risk in running a facility of this size. Because of

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these risks, we always have to reevaluate the operations, and there are times when we have been forced to alter the way we do business.

Umatilla County has experienced significant population growth over the past 20 years. Inmate populations and demographics have changed also, and they are more demanding. Changes in these demographics include more volatile and violent offenders, more inmates with mental illness, those suffering from drug and alcohol addictions, transgender or gender confused inmates, and new case law have also increased risk. As a jail facility, in addition to our primary duties of providing a safe and secure environment for staff and inmates, we are providing more and more social services to our inmates than ever before, such as mental health treatment, counseling, and drug and alcohol addiction programs. Many of these services we are not trained, equipped or funded to provide.

Currently, our total jail population also includes contracts we have implemented to provide jail bed days to house inmates from Morrow, and Wallowa counties, Umatilla Tribal inmates, overflows for and special needs inmates from Union County, and holding ICE and US Marshall inmates. We are also a transport and transfer hub for many other correctional facilities in several western states. These added services have made our jail one of the largest regional facilities east of the Cascades. Revenue provided by these contracts and services has afforded us the ability to hold additional local offenders without substantially adding expenses to Umatilla County.

## **Proposal**

Over the past 4 years, we have seen a steady increase in our jail population, slowly moving from the 135 ADP to our current 215 ADP, with spikes in our daily population as high as 237. We have carefully examined and evaluated jail operations from a fiscal point of view, coupled with excelling in maintaining compliance with Oregon State Jail Standards and best practices, along with changes in case law, legislative changes, and the type of inmate population we supervise.

During our examination and evaluation of our physical plant, we learned that at certain times, more often than we would like, we experience a "bottle neck" (for the lack of a better term) in our booking and temporary housing area. When we have a back log of new arrestees coming into the facility with no place to put them, we've had to place unclassified inmates on mattresses on the floor in both indoor recreation areas of the jail. This practice increases the risk to staff and inmates, as well as not having proper bathroom facilities for the inmate population in those two areas.

Additionally, legislative changes and goals set at the State level to divert inmate population from the State hospital and/or Prison, have necessitated the need for expansion of our capacity. The goals of the State have been to divert

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the mentally ill individuals from the Oregon State Hospital, while also diverting inmate population from State Dept. of Corrections. With a goal of providing better treatment for those suffering from mental illness, drug or alcohol addiction, at the local level. All of the above changes are a predicate to crime, as is recent legislation reducing certain crimes from felony to misdemeanor.

In order to meet the current demand, mitigate risk, and plan for future requirements, it is recommended that we expand our capacity in our jail booking area. It is further recommended that we specifically address the overwhelming mental health population and high risk medical population that has been diverted from State care. We can accomplish this in Umatilla County with the funding recommendations proposed in this letter.

We have contacted LCA Architects, P.A. the company that provided the original design and plans for our jail, and asked them to provide some options to expand our capacity.

This plan was developed to stay within the current footprint and structure of the jail, and essentially make better use of our space. LCA Architects, P.A. have provided some early rough renderings and cost estimates relative to this expansion.

## GOAL:

Develop a funding source to secure an estimated \$725,000.00 in needed revenue to move the expansion project forward.

## Outcomes:

- Improve and increase capacity to the booking area
- reduce risk to inmates and staff
- meet the needs and demands of inmate demographics
- create a safer and improved environment for staff, inmates and the public
- expand capacity for the future.

## Process:

- Obtain Board of Commissioner approval
- Identify viable funding
- Secure final drawings
- RFP process

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**Comment [SM1]:** These should be bullets, not a list in paragraph form...far to important!

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- Award contract
  - Modify daily population during construction
  - Construction
  - Inspection and Certificate of occupancy
  - Resume normal operations

**ATTACHMENTS:**

LCA Architects, P.A. rough draft and cost estimate

**Other Considerations:**

- Examine and evaluate the Jail's control panel (device used to control the door operations in the facility)
- Examine and evaluate the camera system to include digital storage capability.

These two systems have been in place for the past 20 years, without much updating. The concern may be continued functionality and whether these two systems are coming to end of their respective serviceable life.

Respectfully,

Sheriff Terry L. Rowan

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