Jail System Master Planning Community Survey Response Summary

Follow-Up to the January 26, 2026 Community Listening Session

Contents

Executive Summary....2

About the Survey and This Summary....3

Responses by Question....4

- Question 1: Disability Accommodations....4
- Question 2: Complex Medical Needs....6
- Question 3: Behavioral Health and Substance Use Needs....7
- Question 4: Fairness, Safety and Effectiveness....10
- Question 5: Steps to Address Serious Problems....13
- Question 6: Transition Back to the Community....16
- Question 7: Reentry Planning During Incarceration....20
- Question 8: Connections to Services After Release....23
- Question 9: Personal, Family and Community Impacts....27
- Question 10: One Change to Incarceration Practices....29
- Question 11: Questions for the County and Consultants....31
- Question 12: One Issue to Consider in the Master Plan....33
- Question 13: Messages to Decision-Makers....35

Executive Summary

Following the January 26, 2026, Jail System Master Planning Listening Session, Sacramento County conducted a community survey to gather additional feedback on jail facilities, operations, in-custody care, reentry services, and the Master Planning process. The survey generated 117 response records across 13 open-ended questions. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were not required to answer every question. The results reflect the perspectives of individuals who participated and should not be interpreted as representative of Sacramento County residents as a whole.

Survey responses addressed several recurring topics:

- **Jail facilities and operations:** Respondents expressed differing views about the future of the County's jail facilities. Some supported constructing or relocating facilities, modernizing existing buildings, and improving operational efficiency, particularly during booking and intake. Others questioned the need for additional jail capacity and encouraged the County to prioritize population reduction and alternatives to incarceration.
- **Healthcare and supportive services:** Comments addressed access to medical and behavioral healthcare, disability accommodations, staffing and training, crisis response, and the treatment of individuals in custody. Suggestions included improvements to screening and assessments, specialized treatment spaces, continuity of care, and more individualized services.
- **Diversion and alternatives to incarceration:** Respondents suggested expanding community-based treatment, housing, crisis response, and alternatives to pretrial detention. Some advocated substantial reductions in incarceration, while others emphasized the importance of maintaining sufficient secure capacity and accountability to protect public safety.
- **Reentry and community connections:** Comments emphasized preparing individuals for release and ensuring access to housing, transportation, employment, healthcare, and other resources. Respondents suggested earlier reentry planning, direct connections to community providers, improved release arrangements, and continued support after release. Views differed regarding whether these services should be led by correctional agencies or community-based organizations.
- **Personal, family and community impacts:** Respondents described a range of experiences involving incarceration, including effects on family relationships, financial stability, healthcare, and personal wellbeing. Others raised concerns about public safety, neighborhood conditions, and the impacts associated with the

Main Jail's downtown location. These accounts reflected differing experiences and perceptions of the jail system.

- **Transparency, accountability and public engagement:** Respondents raised questions about the scope, costs, potential locations, and long-term impacts of proposed facilities; compliance with the Mays Consent Decree; and how population reduction strategies and community alternatives will be evaluated. Comments also addressed oversight, the qualifications and roles of consultants, opportunities for continued participation, and how public feedback will influence County decisions.

The responses reflect a range of experiences and perspectives, including differing opinions about the role of incarceration in promoting public safety and the most appropriate investments for the County's future jail system. This report organizes the feedback by question and summarizes the concerns, suggestions, and questions raised by respondents. It does not rank priorities, establish consensus, independently verify respondents' assertions, or make recommendations regarding the County's Jail System Master Plan.

About the Survey and This Summary

The survey included 13 open-ended questions addressing jail facilities, operations, healthcare, supportive services, reentry, and the Jail System Master Planning process. The survey generated 117 response records, although not every question received a response in every record. The following summaries identify themes and suggestions reflected in the responses to each question. Comments have been grouped by subject matter and paraphrased for clarity. Responses addressing multiple subjects may be reflected in more than one category.

Participation was voluntary and self-selected. Accordingly, the responses should not be interpreted as statistically representative of Sacramento County residents. The summaries do not establish the relative popularity of particular proposals or the existence of consensus among respondents. The comments reflect participants' perspectives, experiences, and suggestions. Statements concerning existing County operations, policies, or conditions have not been independently verified, and their inclusion does not constitute endorsement by Sacramento County.

Artificial intelligence was used to assist with organizing and summarizing survey responses. County staff reviewed the summaries for accuracy, neutrality, and consistency with the submitted feedback. To respect respondent privacy, detailed personal accounts and potentially identifying information have not been reproduced.

Responses by Question

Answer counts describe entries, not the number of people endorsing any particular proposal or position.

No.	Survey Question (Short Description)	Nonblank Answers
1	Disability accommodations	106
2	Complex medical needs	109
3	Behavioral health and substance use needs	104
4	Fairness, safety and effectiveness	105
5	Steps to address serious problems	105
6	Transition back to the community	104
7	Reentry planning during incarceration	99
8	Connections to services after release	99
9	Personal, family and community impacts	88
10	One change to incarceration practices	99
11	Questions for the County and consultants	75
12	One issue to consider in the Master Plan	91
13	Messages to decision-makers	85

Question 1: Disability Accommodations

What improvements are needed in our jail system to ensure individuals with disabilities receive the necessary supportive services and appropriate care while in custody?

106 nonblank answers recorded

Accessibility and Facility Design

Respondents identified several physical improvements that could help the County better accommodate individuals with disabilities. Suggestions included accessible cells, bathrooms, showers, intake areas, and common spaces, along with sufficient room for wheelchairs, mobility aids, and other assistive equipment. Comments also addressed the importance of facility layouts that allow individuals with disabilities to move safely and access necessary services and programs.

Some respondents supported constructing new or modernized facilities designed to meet accessibility requirements, while others emphasized addressing barriers within existing facilities. Several comments suggested dedicated or specialized housing areas for individuals requiring additional assistance, with attention to ensuring that accommodations do not unnecessarily restrict access to programs, services, or interaction with others.

Screening, Accommodations and Individualized Care

Respondents emphasized the importance of identifying disabilities and accommodation needs early in the booking and intake process. Suggestions included more comprehensive assessments, improved communication with individuals about their needs, and the development of individualized accommodation and care plans. Some respondents also recommended reviewing available medical records or information from previous incarcerations to help identify existing conditions and necessary supports.

Comments addressed the need for ongoing assessments rather than relying solely on initial screening, recognizing that an individual's needs may change during incarceration. Respondents also raised concerns about classification and housing decisions, including the potential for individuals with disabilities to be placed in settings that do not adequately accommodate their needs or that limit their access to services and activities.

Staff Capability and Respectful Treatment

Responses highlighted the importance of staff training and access to personnel with specialized knowledge of disabilities and related care needs. Suggestions included disability-awareness training, improved communication practices, trauma-informed approaches, and additional healthcare professionals, social workers, or other specialists who can assist with accommodations and supportive services.

Some respondents expressed concerns about how individuals with disabilities are treated in custody, including whether requests for assistance are taken seriously and addressed promptly. Comments emphasized respectful treatment, compassion, and recognition that disabilities may affect how individuals communicate, behave, or participate in daily activities. Respondents also suggested better coordination among custody staff, healthcare personnel, and other service providers to ensure that accommodations and care needs are consistently addressed.

Alternatives to Detention

Some respondents questioned whether incarceration is the most appropriate setting for individuals with disabilities, particularly when their needs could be addressed through community-based care and supportive services. Suggestions included expanding diversion opportunities, supervised release, and other alternatives to detention for individuals whose disabilities or related needs make incarceration especially challenging.

Comments also encouraged greater investment in community services, including healthcare, behavioral health treatment, housing, and other resources that could help prevent unnecessary incarceration. These responses reflected a broader interest in

addressing the circumstances that may contribute to justice system involvement, rather than relying exclusively on improvements to correctional facilities.

Overall, responses reflected differing approaches to meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities, including improvements to physical facilities, more individualized care and accommodations, enhanced staff training, and greater availability of community-based alternatives.

Question 2: Complex Medical Needs

What improvements are needed in our jail system to ensure individuals with complex medical needs receive the necessary supportive services and appropriate care while in custody?

109 nonblank answers recorded

Clinical Access and Continuity

Respondents identified several areas where medical care could be improved for individuals with complex or chronic health conditions. Suggestions included more timely medical assessments, improved access to medications, specialist consultations, and regular follow-up care. Comments also addressed the importance of identifying existing medical conditions during booking and maintaining prescribed treatment when individuals enter custody.

Some respondents expressed concern that interruptions in treatment or delays in addressing medical complaints could worsen existing conditions. Others suggested improving the exchange of medical information among community healthcare providers, correctional health staff, and other agencies to support continuity of care during incarceration and following release.

Staffing and Appropriate Facilities

Responses included suggestions to increase the number of qualified healthcare professionals available to treat individuals with complex medical needs. Respondents discussed access to specialists, better coordination between medical and custody personnel, and training for staff who regularly interact with individuals requiring specialized care.

Facility-related suggestions included dedicated medical housing or treatment areas, improved clinical equipment, additional space for examinations and treatment, and physical layouts that better accommodate individuals with significant medical limitations.

Booking and Operational Processes

Several comments addressed how medical needs are identified and managed during intake and booking. Suggestions included timely screening, better recognition of urgent medical conditions, improved coordination during medical clearance, and clearer procedures for responding to requests for treatment. Respondents also discussed the importance of ensuring that medical needs are appropriately considered when making housing and classification decisions.

Care Outside Jail

Some respondents questioned whether correctional facilities are appropriate settings for individuals with particularly complex medical conditions. Suggestions included expanded medical diversion, treatment in hospitals or other community-based facilities, and consideration of alternatives to incarceration when an individual's needs could be better addressed outside custody. These responses reflected differing approaches to improving care, including investments in correctional healthcare and greater reliance on community-based treatment alternatives.

Question 3: Behavioral Health and Substance Use Needs

What improvements are needed in our jail system to ensure individuals with behavioral health (mental health and/or substance use) needs receive the necessary supportive services and appropriate care while in custody?

104 nonblank answers recorded

More Treatment and Qualified Staff

Respondents identified several opportunities to improve access to mental health and substance use treatment for individuals in custody. Suggestions included increasing the availability of mental health professionals, counselors, social workers, and substance use treatment specialists, along with expanding individual counseling, group therapy, peer support, and other therapeutic programs. Some respondents also recommended educational programs to help individuals better understand and manage mental health conditions and substance use disorders.

Comments emphasized the importance of comprehensive behavioral health screening during booking and intake, followed by ongoing assessments to identify changing needs. Some respondents suggested reviewing prior treatment records, improving communication among providers, and conducting follow-up assessments for individuals who may not initially recognize or disclose their need for services. Others called for better access to

psychiatric medications, medication management, and evidence-based substance use treatment, including medication-assisted treatment.

Respondents also discussed the importance of training custody personnel to recognize behavioral health symptoms, respond appropriately to requests for assistance, and coordinate with clinical staff. Suggestions included crisis intervention, de-escalation, trauma-informed care, and improved communication among custody personnel, behavioral health professionals, and community service providers. Some respondents recommended establishing clearer standards for treatment access, documenting services provided, and evaluating the timeliness and effectiveness of care.

Crisis Response and Housing

Responses addressed the challenges of safely managing individuals experiencing acute mental health crises, substance use withdrawal, or other behavioral health needs while in custody. Suggestions included more timely assessments, improved crisis intervention and stabilization services, and increased access to qualified professionals who can respond to urgent situations. Some respondents emphasized the importance of identifying suicide risk and ensuring that individuals experiencing behavioral health crises receive appropriate clinical attention.

Facility-related suggestions included dedicated behavioral health housing or treatment units, additional space for counseling and therapeutic programs, and environments designed to better accommodate individuals requiring specialized care. Several respondents supported constructing or relocating facilities to provide these services, while others suggested developing separate treatment facilities or enhancing existing spaces. Comments also addressed the need to balance specialized treatment with the safety of staff, other incarcerated individuals, and the broader community.

Other respondents raised concerns about the use of isolation, segregation, and restrictive housing for individuals with serious mental illness. These comments encouraged approaches that prioritize clinical assessment, therapeutic intervention, and de-escalation rather than relying on restrictive custody practices to manage behavioral health symptoms. Some respondents also emphasized the importance of maintaining humane conditions, respectful treatment, and opportunities for meaningful interaction and programming.

Community-Based Responses

A substantial portion of the feedback questioned whether incarceration is an appropriate response to individuals experiencing mental health or substance use challenges. Respondents expressed concern that correctional environments may worsen existing

conditions and that jails are not designed to function as primary behavioral health treatment facilities. Some advocated reducing reliance on incarceration for individuals whose needs could be more effectively addressed through treatment and supportive services in the community.

Suggestions included expanding mental health diversion, non-law-enforcement crisis response teams, crisis stabilization centers, residential treatment facilities, and other alternatives to incarceration. Respondents also encouraged increased investment in community mental health services, substance use treatment, supportive housing, and programs that address circumstances contributing to justice system involvement.

Some comments specifically called for improving access to services before individuals encounter the criminal justice system, rather than relying on incarceration as an entry point for treatment. Other respondents supported maintaining secure, specialized treatment options for individuals whose behavioral health needs must be addressed while protecting public safety. These responses reflected differing views about how behavioral health treatment should be provided and the appropriate role of correctional facilities in that process.

Care Transitions

Respondents emphasized the importance of maintaining behavioral health treatment as individuals enter custody, move through the jail system, and return to the community. Suggestions included improving the exchange of treatment information, continuing prescribed medications when clinically appropriate, and coordinating care among correctional health staff, community providers, and other agencies.

Some respondents recommended beginning discharge planning early, including identifying ongoing treatment needs, arranging appointments before release, and connecting individuals directly with community-based mental health and substance use services. Comments also addressed the importance of ensuring that individuals leaving custody have access to medications, treatment referrals, transportation, and other resources needed to continue their care.

Other suggestions included dedicated case managers or behavioral health navigators to coordinate services before and after release, stronger partnerships with community treatment providers, and follow-up assistance for individuals who may have difficulty independently accessing services. Respondents also identified housing stability and ongoing social supports as important considerations when planning for successful transitions back to the community.

Overall, responses reflected differing approaches to meeting behavioral health needs, including expanding treatment and specialized facilities within the jail system, improving clinical and operational practices, and increasing access to community-based alternatives. Across these approaches, comments addressed the importance of timely assessments, qualified treatment professionals, appropriate crisis responses, and continuity of care.

Question 4: Fairness, Safety and Effectiveness

What changes do you think are necessary for our county jail system to operate more fairly, safely, and effectively?

105 nonblank answers recorded

Facility and Process Improvements

Respondents identified a range of physical and operational changes intended to improve safety, efficiency, and the delivery of services within the jail system. Some expressed concern that the existing Main Jail is outdated, difficult to modify, and limited in its ability to accommodate specialized medical and behavioral health services, programming, and future operational needs. Suggestions included constructing a modern facility, relocating the Main Jail outside downtown Sacramento, and developing a lower-rise or campus-style complex with additional space for treatment, recreation, and rehabilitation programs.

Several respondents supported increasing jail capacity to accommodate current and future populations, while others emphasized the importance of evaluating existing facilities and determining whether improvements or replacement would be appropriate. Facility-related suggestions also included updated security systems, improved ventilation, specialized housing and treatment areas, and designs that allow for more efficient movement and coordination among custody, medical, and behavioral health personnel. Some respondents connected relocation to concerns about downtown accessibility, public safety, and the availability of space for future expansion.

Operational suggestions focused particularly on the booking and intake process. Respondents described concerns about lengthy processing times, delays in medical clearance, repetitive paperwork, and communication gaps between staff responsible for different stages of booking. Specific suggestions included streamlining intake documentation, improving coordination with medical personnel, and implementing electronic tracking or notification systems to help staff identify when individuals are ready to proceed to the next stage of processing. Some respondents noted that more efficient

booking could reduce the time law enforcement officers spend waiting at the jail and allow them to return to their regular duties sooner.

Population Reduction and Alternatives

Other respondents emphasized reducing the number of people entering or remaining in custody as a way to improve safety, conditions, and system effectiveness. Suggestions included expanding cite-and-release practices, increasing access to pretrial release and supervision alternatives, reconsidering cash bail practices, and strengthening diversion opportunities for individuals with mental health or substance use needs.

Some respondents raised concerns about the incarceration of individuals accused of lower-level offenses or whose circumstances involve homelessness, poverty, or unmet behavioral health needs. These comments advocated for greater use of community-based treatment, housing assistance, crisis response, and other supportive services intended to address underlying needs and reduce justice system involvement. Several respondents also questioned whether enforcement and detention practices adequately distinguish between individuals who present significant public safety risks and those who may be better served through alternatives to incarceration.

Comments also addressed the relationship between jail population levels and conditions of confinement. Respondents suggested that reducing the population could alleviate crowding, improve access to medical and behavioral health services, and allow existing resources to be used more effectively. Others disagreed that population reduction should be the principal solution, emphasizing the need for sufficient secure capacity to hold individuals when necessary to protect public safety. These responses reflected different perspectives on how the County should balance incarceration, alternatives, and future facility needs.

Staffing and Workplace Practices

Respondents identified staffing levels, employee training, leadership, and workplace culture as important considerations for improving jail operations. Suggestions included recruiting and retaining experienced personnel, addressing vacancies in custody and healthcare positions, maintaining consistent staffing assignments, and ensuring that employees receive appropriate training for the populations they serve. Some respondents expressed concern that insufficient staffing or frequent personnel changes may affect continuity of services, institutional knowledge, and daily operations.

Comments also addressed staff wellness, burnout, and the challenges associated with working in correctional environments. Suggestions included additional employee support,

peer assistance, counseling, improved training opportunities, and consideration of staffing schedules and workplace conditions that may contribute to fatigue or stress. Some respondents emphasized the importance of leadership practices that encourage professional development, mutual respect, and communication among employees.

Other responses focused on interactions between staff and incarcerated individuals. Respondents encouraged training in de-escalation, trauma-informed care, disability awareness, behavioral health crisis response, and respectful communication. Some raised concerns about staff conduct, institutional culture, or perceived lack of compassion, while others emphasized the need to support employees in maintaining safety and managing challenging situations. Suggestions included clearer expectations for professional conduct, appropriate supervision, and consistent accountability for staff performance.

Oversight and Public Accountability

Respondents raised several suggestions related to transparency, oversight, and accountability within the jail system. Some advocated for stronger independent review of jail operations, including oversight mechanisms with access to relevant records, authority to investigate concerns, and procedures for addressing identified problems. Comments also addressed the importance of accessible and reliable grievance processes, appropriate review of complaints, and accountability when policies/rules are not followed.

Several respondents suggested expanding public reporting on jail operations and outcomes. Proposed measures included information about the jail population, use of force, restrictive housing, grievances, medical and behavioral health services, and progress toward established performance goals. Others encouraged greater use of data analysis, outside research partnerships, and evidence-based practices to evaluate programs, identify operational concerns, and measure whether changes produce intended results.

Community engagement was another subject raised in the responses. Suggestions included more opportunities for public participation, improved communication about jail policies and conditions, and greater coordination with community organizations and other agencies providing services to individuals involved in the criminal justice system. Some respondents expressed distrust of existing accountability mechanisms and called for more independent oversight, while others emphasized the importance of effective management, leadership, and operational accountability within the Sheriff's Office.

Respondents also identified different measures of system effectiveness. Some focused on maintaining secure facilities, preventing violence, addressing gang-related activity, and ensuring sufficient capacity to protect the public. Others emphasized reduced

incarceration, improved health and reentry outcomes, fewer returns to custody, and more effective use of public resources.

Overall, responses reflected differing views about the changes needed to improve the jail system. Suggestions ranged from constructing modern facilities and increasing operational capacity to reducing incarceration and expanding community-based alternatives. Across these perspectives, respondents addressed the importance of effective staffing, appropriate treatment and services, efficient operations, and accountability for system performance.

Question 5: Steps to Address Serious Problems

What steps could help address the most serious problems you see in the county jail system?

105 nonblank answers recorded

Population and Diversion Strategies

Respondents identified several approaches to reducing the jail population, including expanding alternatives to pretrial detention, increasing the use of cite-and-release practices, and improving access to diversion programs. Some specifically questioned the length of time individuals remain in custody while awaiting trial, particularly those facing lower-level charges or who may not present significant public safety risks. Comments expressed concern that even relatively short periods of incarceration can disrupt employment, housing, and family relationships, potentially creating additional challenges following release.

Suggestions included expanding mental health and substance use diversion, strengthening community-based crisis intervention services, and improving coordination among criminal justice agencies to identify individuals who may be eligible for alternatives to incarceration. Some respondents also advocated changes to policing and enforcement practices, including reconsidering arrests associated with homelessness, encampment enforcement, and certain low-level offenses. These comments encouraged greater investment in prevention and services intended to reduce the need for incarceration.

Several respondents referenced the County's Jail Population Reduction Plan and the Mays Consent Decree, arguing that implementation of population reduction strategies should play a central role in addressing jail conditions and compliance requirements. Others emphasized that population reduction alone would not resolve existing facility limitations or meet all operational and public safety needs. These respondents supported maintaining

sufficient capacity for individuals who require secure detention, including through replacement or expanded facilities.

Healthcare, Staffing and Care Delivery

Responses identified concerns about timely access to medical and behavioral healthcare, the availability of qualified personnel, and coordination between custody and healthcare staff. Suggestions included increasing the number of nurses, medical providers, mental health professionals, and substance use treatment specialists, along with improving access to medications, clinical assessments, and ongoing treatment. Some respondents expressed concern about delays in receiving medical attention or having requests for care addressed.

Several comments focused specifically on the medical screening and clearance process during booking. Respondents described lengthy waits for initial evaluations, repeated screenings, inconsistent medical clearance requirements, and delays when individuals must be transported elsewhere for additional assessment. Suggestions included increasing the availability of qualified medical personnel during intake, reviewing medical clearance procedures, reducing duplicative assessments, and exploring opportunities to complete more evaluations within the jail or through remote clinical consultation.

Staffing and workforce concerns extended beyond healthcare. Respondents suggested increasing custody staffing, improving training and supervision, and providing additional support to employees working in demanding correctional environments. Training recommendations included de-escalation, crisis intervention, trauma-informed care, recognition of behavioral health conditions, and appropriate responses to medical emergencies or substance use withdrawal.

Some respondents emphasized that improving staff interactions with incarcerated individuals should be part of broader efforts to address jail conditions. Comments encouraged more respectful communication, timely responses to requests for assistance, and greater coordination between custody and clinical personnel. Others focused on employee safety, workforce retention, and ensuring staff have sufficient resources to manage challenging situations.

Physical Conditions and Workflow

Respondents raised concerns about the condition, design, and operational limitations of existing jail facilities. Some supported constructing new facilities or relocating the Main Jail outside downtown Sacramento, citing the need for additional space, more efficient layouts, improved medical and behavioral health treatment areas, and facilities capable of

accommodating current operational requirements. Suggestions included lower-rise or campus-style facilities, additional programming and recreation areas, and designs that could accommodate future changes in population or service needs.

Other respondents questioned whether new construction is necessary or appropriate, advocating for population reduction, improvements to existing facilities, or greater investment in community alternatives. Some expressed concern about the financial implications of constructing additional jail facilities and encouraged the County to evaluate the costs and benefits of different approaches before making long-term commitments.

Booking efficiency was another recurring operational concern. Several responses, including comments from individuals identifying a law enforcement perspective, described delays that keep arresting officers at the jail for extended periods. Suggestions included streamlining the intake and property-processing procedures, improving coordination between booking and medical staff, evaluating alternative drop-off arrangements, and considering additional booking locations. Some respondents also recommended improvements to parking, vehicle access, and the movement of individuals through the booking process. These changes were suggested as ways to reduce processing times and allow officers to return to their regular duties more quickly.

Comments also addressed basic conditions of confinement, including cleanliness, sanitation, food quality, access to clothing and blankets, and the availability of programs and activities. Some respondents raised concerns about safety, drug availability, gang-related activity, and housing classification practices. Suggestions included more consistent facility maintenance, appropriate housing assignments, additional safety checks, and expanded opportunities for education, vocational training, and constructive activities during incarceration.

Oversight and Social Investment

Respondents suggested several approaches to strengthening accountability, transparency, and public confidence in jail operations. Some called for increased independent oversight, regular facility inspections, more accessible grievance procedures, and clearer mechanisms for investigating and addressing complaints about staff conduct or conditions of confinement. Comments also encouraged greater public access to information about jail operations, expenditures, outcomes, and progress toward identified improvements.

Other suggestions emphasized the importance of data collection, performance measurement, and coordination among agencies. Respondents recommended using information about jail populations, healthcare access, grievances, and program outcomes to identify problems and evaluate proposed solutions. Some suggested establishing

collaborative workgroups involving criminal justice agencies, healthcare providers, community organizations, and individuals with relevant professional or lived experience to develop and monitor improvements.

Funding and resource allocation were also addressed. Some respondents supported additional investment in jail staffing, healthcare, facilities, and rehabilitation programs, while others advocated redirecting resources from incarceration toward community-based services. Suggested investments included affordable housing, behavioral health treatment, substance use services, youth programs, workforce development, and other efforts intended to prevent justice system involvement.

Several comments focused on improving outcomes for individuals returning to the community. Suggestions included expanding educational and vocational programs, improving coordination with housing and service providers, and ensuring access to identification, healthcare coverage, medications, transportation, and other basic resources upon release. Some respondents emphasized the importance of beginning this planning during incarceration and coordinating services across agencies to reduce disruptions in care and support.

Overall, responses reflected differing perspectives on the most effective ways to address challenges within the jail system. Some emphasized facility replacement, operational efficiency, staffing, and secure capacity, while others prioritized population reduction, diversion, independent oversight, and community investment. The suggestions also demonstrated that respondents viewed jail operations, healthcare, public safety, and broader community services as interconnected issues requiring consideration during the Master Planning process.

Question 6: Transition Back to the Community

What could be done to improve the transition back to the community for individuals released from our county jail system?

104 nonblank answers recorded

Release Planning and Timing

Respondents emphasized the importance of beginning reentry planning well before an individual's release from custody. Suggestions included assessing needs during intake, developing individualized transition plans, and coordinating with community service providers, family members, and supervision agencies before release. Some recommended assigning dedicated reentry coordinators, social workers, or navigators to assist individuals with preparing for housing, employment, healthcare, and other needs. Others suggested

involving community organizations directly in the planning process rather than relying solely on referrals provided at the time of release.

A recurring concern involved the timing of releases, particularly when individuals are released late at night or during early morning hours when public transportation and community services may be unavailable. Respondents recommended limiting releases during these hours, providing advance notice of release dates and times, and coordinating with service providers to ensure individuals can access assistance immediately upon leaving custody. Some suggested establishing a 24-hour support location near the Main Jail or arranging transportation to designated community service centers.

Comments also addressed the importance of communication among the courts, Sheriff's Office, correctional health providers, probation or parole officers, and community organizations. Some respondents noted that release decisions may occur with limited advance notice, leaving insufficient time to arrange transportation, medications, or placement in treatment programs. Suggestions included earlier notification to service providers, improved information sharing, and more consistent implementation of existing release procedures.

Immediate Basic Needs

Responses identified several practical resources that individuals may need immediately upon release. Suggestions included providing appropriate clothing, food, water, transportation assistance, identification documents, access to a telephone, and information about available community services. Some respondents recommended providing transit passes, transportation vouchers, or direct transportation to housing, treatment programs, or family members. Others suggested ensuring that individuals have access to their personal property and funds when leaving custody.

Housing was a particularly important consideration in these responses. Respondents expressed concern about individuals being released without a safe place to stay, particularly those who were experiencing homelessness before incarceration or who cannot return to previous living arrangements. Suggestions included arranging emergency shelter or transitional housing before release, partnering directly with housing providers, and improving access to permanent supportive housing and other housing assistance programs.

Some respondents distinguished between providing information about available resources and ensuring that individuals can actually access those services. Comments described concerns about referrals to organizations that may be closed, difficult to contact, or unable to provide immediate assistance. Suggestions included verifying service availability,

helping individuals complete enrollment requirements, and providing direct connections to housing and other resources rather than relying exclusively on written referral lists. Several respondents also suggested establishing a dedicated release support area or community-based service center where individuals could receive assistance with transportation, clothing, food, communication, and referrals immediately after leaving custody.

Housing, Healthcare and Work

Respondents emphasized the importance of connecting individuals to stable housing, healthcare, employment, and educational opportunities as part of the reentry process. Housing-related suggestions included expanding transitional and supportive housing, developing partnerships with shelters and residential programs, and providing assistance with applications, eligibility requirements, and placement before release. Some respondents advocated direct agreements with housing providers to secure available placements rather than relying primarily on housing navigation and referrals.

Healthcare continuity was another significant subject. Comments addressed the importance of ensuring that individuals leave custody with necessary medications, active prescriptions, scheduled appointments, and connections to medical and behavioral health providers. Respondents raised concerns about potential interruptions in treatment, particularly for individuals with mental health conditions, substance use disorders, or complex medical needs. Suggestions included improving discharge planning, coordinating with community treatment providers, and ensuring that health coverage and benefits are available following release.

Some respondents specifically recommended strengthening coordination with Medi-Cal managed care plans and other community healthcare partners, including through the State's CalAIM Justice-Involved Initiative. Others suggested establishing treatment plans before release, providing medication supplies sufficient to bridge the transition to community care, and arranging direct connections to substance use treatment or residential recovery programs.

Employment and education were also emphasized as important components of successful reentry. Suggestions included expanding vocational training, educational programs, apprenticeships, and job placement assistance during incarceration and following release. Respondents identified opportunities to teach practical skills such as financial management, maintaining identification and benefits, preparing for employment, and navigating community resources. Some advocated partnerships with employers, workforce development organizations, and community colleges to create clearer pathways to employment.

Other comments encouraged expanding access to counseling, peer mentorship, and programs that address substance use, behavioral health, and other challenges that may affect an individual's ability to maintain employment, housing, or community relationships.

Relationships and Follow-Up

Respondents identified ongoing support after release as an important component of successful reentry. Suggestions included assigning case managers, social workers, peer mentors, or community navigators to help individuals follow through with treatment appointments, housing applications, employment opportunities, and other services. Some recommended establishing regular check-ins or follow-up assistance during the initial weeks or months after release, particularly for individuals with complex behavioral health or social service needs.

Several respondents emphasized the role of community-based organizations, including nonprofit providers, faith-based groups, recovery programs, and organizations offering housing, employment, and other supportive services. Some identified existing programs, including the Exodus Project, as potential partners and suggested improving awareness of available services among individuals preparing for release. Others advocated providing additional funding to community organizations to expand their capacity to offer individualized reentry assistance.

Family connections and positive social support networks were also addressed. Respondents suggested involving family members or other trusted individuals in release planning when appropriate, maintaining opportunities for communication during incarceration, and connecting individuals with mentors or peers who have successfully navigated reentry. Some encouraged programs that provide ongoing guidance, encouragement, and assistance with building stable community relationships.

Responses reflected differing perspectives on supervision and accountability following release. Some respondents supported structured supervision, participation in treatment and educational programs, regular check-ins, and consequences for failing to meet release conditions. Others expressed concern that reentry services tied too closely to correctional supervision may create additional barriers and preferred voluntary, community-led programs focused on meeting individual needs. Some respondents also advocated reducing the amount of time individuals spend in custody, arguing that shorter periods of incarceration could help preserve existing employment, housing, healthcare, and family connections, thereby reducing the challenges associated with reentry.

Overall, responses reflected an interest in improving coordination between the jail system and community resources, with particular attention to the timing of releases, immediate

basic needs, housing stability, healthcare continuity, and employment opportunities. Suggestions included both expanded planning and services within the jail system and greater reliance on community-based organizations to assist individuals as they return to the community.

Question 7: Reentry Planning During Incarceration

How should the jail support reentry planning (housing, employment, behavioral and medical healthcare, community connections) while people are still incarcerated?

99 nonblank answers recorded

Begin Planning Early

Respondents emphasized the importance of beginning reentry planning early in an individual's incarceration, rather than waiting until a release date is approaching. Suggestions included conducting comprehensive needs assessments during booking or intake to identify housing instability, employment needs, medical and behavioral health conditions, eligibility for public benefits, and existing family or community support systems. Some recommended developing individualized reentry plans that identify specific needs, available resources, and steps to be completed before release.

Several respondents expressed concern that uncertainty about release dates can make it difficult to arrange services in advance. Comments identified potential barriers associated with projected release dates, including situations where referrals or eligibility determinations cannot begin until a release date has been established. Respondents suggested reviewing these procedures, allowing referrals to begin earlier when possible, and improving coordination among agencies to minimize disruptions when individuals are released with limited advance notice.

Other suggestions included regularly reviewing and updating reentry plans throughout incarceration, establishing clear responsibilities for completing necessary arrangements, and ensuring that individuals understand the services and resources available to them. Some respondents emphasized that planning should account for differences in the length of incarceration, recognizing that individuals held for short periods may have very little time to complete applications, establish connections, or participate in programs before release.

Individualized Coordination

Respondents recommended assigning dedicated case managers, social workers, reentry specialists, or other personnel to assist individuals with developing and carrying out reentry plans. Suggestions included providing individualized assistance with identifying

needs, completing applications, arranging appointments, and connecting with housing, employment, healthcare, and other community resources. Some advocated for continued contact with a designated coordinator throughout incarceration and following release.

Several comments emphasized the importance of coordination among the Sheriff's Office, Correctional Health, Behavioral Health Services, Probation, the courts, and community-based organizations. Suggestions included regular multidisciplinary meetings, improved information sharing, and establishing clearer responsibilities among participating agencies. Some respondents encouraged the County to identify gaps in existing services and improve communication among organizations already providing reentry assistance, rather than developing duplicative programs.

Respondents also suggested allowing community-based service providers to meet directly with individuals while they remain in custody. Proposed approaches included scheduled visits from housing providers, workforce development organizations, healthcare professionals, benefits specialists, and nonprofit reentry programs. Some encouraged establishing dedicated spaces within jail facilities for these meetings and ensuring that individuals can communicate with providers by telephone or other means when in-person visits are not possible.

Access to communication was identified as a potential barrier. Some comments raised concerns about telephone costs and restrictions that may limit individuals' ability to contact community service providers. Suggestions included providing free calls to designated service organizations, improving access to information about available programs, and facilitating direct introductions to providers before release.

Practical Preparation

Respondents identified several activities that could be completed during incarceration to help individuals prepare for housing, employment, healthcare, and other needs following release. Housing-related suggestions included beginning applications for emergency, transitional, or permanent housing, connecting individuals with housing providers, and identifying potential placements before release. Some respondents specifically encouraged direct partnerships with organizations that provide housing, rather than relying exclusively on referrals or assistance navigating available resources.

Employment and education were also emphasized. Suggestions included expanding vocational training, job readiness programs, educational opportunities, and opportunities to earn certifications or develop marketable skills while incarcerated. Some respondents recommended partnerships with employers, workforce development agencies, community colleges, and apprenticeship programs to help individuals establish employment

opportunities before release. Other comments encouraged practical instruction in areas such as financial management, communication, and navigating community services.

Healthcare preparation was another subject raised in the responses. Suggestions included coordinating with medical and behavioral health providers, arranging follow-up appointments, preparing prescriptions, and ensuring individuals have information about where to continue treatment. Some respondents specifically recommended beginning the process of activating or reinstating Medi-Cal, CalFresh, Social Security, and other benefits before release. Comments also identified opportunities to use CalAIM JI and related programs to improve connections to healthcare and supportive services.

Several respondents emphasized the importance of maintaining family relationships and other positive support networks during incarceration. Suggestions included improving access to telephone calls, video visits, letters, and in-person visitation, as well as involving family members or other trusted individuals in reentry planning when appropriate. Some also encouraged peer mentorship, counseling, substance use treatment, and other programs intended to help individuals prepare for the challenges of returning to the community.

Different Views on Responsibility

Responses reflected differing perspectives about which agencies and organizations should be responsible for developing and coordinating reentry services. Some respondents believed the jail system should provide comprehensive reentry planning, including dedicated staff, educational and treatment programs, and structured coordination with outside organizations. Others emphasized that the Sheriff's Office should focus primarily on custody and security, with reentry services coordinated by County social service agencies, Probation, or community-based providers.

A number of respondents specifically advocated for community organizations to lead reentry planning and provide services directly to individuals during incarceration. These comments emphasized the value of working with organizations that can maintain relationships with individuals after release and offer ongoing support with housing, healthcare, employment, and other needs. Some encouraged the County to provide additional funding to existing community-based programs, including organizations already working with justice-involved populations, rather than establishing new jail-operated services.

Other comments reflected different perspectives on participation and accountability. Some respondents recommended structured reentry plans, participation in treatment or educational programs, and coordination with probation or parole officers to support

compliance with release conditions. Others preferred voluntary, individualized services that allow participants to identify their own goals and make decisions about available supports.

Several respondents also questioned whether reentry planning should be the primary focus of changes to the jail system. These comments advocated reducing the length of incarceration, expanding diversion and pretrial release opportunities, and preserving existing housing, employment, healthcare, and family connections whenever possible. Some expressed concern that expanding jail-based reentry programs could increase reliance on incarceration rather than addressing the circumstances contributing to justice system involvement.

Overall, responses reflected interest in beginning reentry planning earlier, improving coordination among agencies and community organizations, and helping individuals establish connections to necessary services before release. Respondents differed on whether these activities should be led by the jail system or community-based providers, but suggestions across these approaches addressed the importance of individualized planning, practical preparation, and continuity of support when individuals return to the community.

Question 8: Connections to Services After Release

Upon release, how can we better connect individuals to resources and services to reduce recidivism and returns to custody?

99 nonblank answers recorded

Direct Assistance Rather than Referrals Alone

Respondents emphasized the importance of helping individuals establish direct connections with community service providers rather than relying exclusively on written resource lists or referrals at the time of release. Suggestions included scheduling appointments before release, introducing individuals to designated service providers, and ensuring that individuals know whom to contact for assistance with housing, healthcare, employment, benefits, and other needs. Some respondents expressed concern that individuals may receive information about services that are difficult to access, have long waiting lists, or are unavailable when they are released.

Several respondents recommended assigning dedicated reentry navigators, case managers, social workers, or peer support specialists to help individuals access and remain engaged with services. Suggestions included providing one-on-one assistance with applications, transportation, appointments, and other practical challenges that may arise

after release. Some advocated for manageable caseloads to allow coordinators to provide meaningful individualized support, particularly during the first several weeks or months following incarceration.

Comments also encouraged greater use of existing community-based organizations, including nonprofit providers, faith-based organizations, and programs serving justice-involved populations. Some respondents specifically identified organizations such as the Exodus Project, Loaves & Fishes, and NAMI as potential resources or partners. Others suggested establishing community reentry hubs or centralized service navigation centers where individuals could obtain assistance with multiple needs in one location. Several emphasized that these services should be accessible outside the jail and available independently of law enforcement or correctional supervision.

Other suggestions included making resource information more widely available through public websites, libraries, community centers, and other accessible locations. Respondents also recommended providing working telephones, charging stations, telephone assistance programs, and transportation to help individuals make contact with providers and attend appointments. Some specifically identified opportunities to use Enhanced Care Management services and other existing programs to provide ongoing assistance.

Housing and Treatment Access

Housing was a recurring subject in the responses, with respondents identifying stable and affordable housing as an important part of reducing returns to custody. Suggestions included expanding transitional and supportive housing, increasing access to emergency shelter, developing housing-first programs, and establishing partnerships with organizations that provide residential placements. Some respondents encouraged the County to invest in additional housing options, including smaller or lower-cost transitional housing developments.

Several comments distinguished between helping individuals navigate housing resources and ensuring that actual housing placements are available. Some respondents argued that referrals and navigation services are of limited value when shelters, treatment facilities, or housing programs lack capacity. Suggestions included direct contracts or partnerships with housing providers, motels, sober living facilities, and other organizations that can offer immediate or transitional accommodations. Others advocated expanding permanent housing opportunities and community investments intended to reduce housing instability.

Respondents also emphasized direct connections to medical, mental health, and substance use treatment following release. Suggestions included arranging appointments

before individuals leave custody, providing medications or active prescriptions, and coordinating with healthcare providers to minimize interruptions in treatment. Some specifically recommended ensuring access to medication-assisted treatment for substance use disorders, psychiatric medication management, and placement in residential treatment programs when appropriate.

Other comments identified the importance of reducing delays in accessing behavioral health services, including Full Service Partnership programs, wraparound services, and other community treatment resources. Respondents suggested improving coordination among Correctional Health, Behavioral Health Services, Medi-Cal managed care plans, and community providers so that individuals can continue receiving necessary care after release. Some advocated completing assessments and eligibility processes during incarceration whenever possible.

Several respondents also emphasized that housing, healthcare, and treatment services must be available in sufficient capacity to meet demand. These comments encouraged the County to consider broader community investments alongside improvements to referral and coordination practices.

Employment and Supportive Networks

Respondents identified employment, education, and positive community relationships as important considerations for supporting individuals after release. Suggestions included connecting individuals with workforce development programs, job placement services, vocational training, apprenticeships, and educational opportunities. Some encouraged partnerships with employers and community organizations to help individuals obtain employment and develop skills that can support longer-term financial stability.

Comments also addressed practical financial needs, including access to identification documents, public benefits, banking services, and assistance with basic living expenses. Respondents suggested helping individuals establish or restore Medi-Cal and other benefits, obtain identification, and access transportation and communication tools needed to maintain employment and participate in community services.

Peer support and mentorship were also emphasized. Several respondents advocated connecting individuals with people who have successfully navigated reentry and can provide guidance, encouragement, and assistance with overcoming common challenges. Suggestions included funding peer support networks, incorporating people with lived experience into reentry programs, and maintaining relationships with navigators or mentors during the initial months following release.

Family connections and community involvement were identified as additional sources of stability. Respondents encouraged efforts to reconnect individuals with supportive family members, friends, faith communities, and other positive social networks when appropriate. Some recommended programs that help individuals develop new community relationships, participate in educational or recreational activities, and establish routines outside of correctional settings.

Other comments emphasized that successful reentry may require assistance beyond the immediate release period. Suggestions included regular follow-up contacts, continued access to case management, and opportunities for individuals to seek additional help when they encounter setbacks involving housing, employment, treatment, or other needs.

Alternatives and Accountability

Responses reflected differing perspectives on the appropriate role of correctional supervision and accountability in reducing returns to custody. Some respondents supported structured supervision following release, including regular contact with probation or parole officers, participation in treatment programs, and monitoring to ensure that individuals comply with release conditions. Suggestions included individualized supervision plans, specialized caseloads for people with significant behavioral health or substance use needs, and closer coordination between supervising officers and community service providers.

Other respondents expressed concern that overly restrictive supervision requirements or technical violations may contribute to unnecessary returns to custody. These comments encouraged reducing conditions that do not directly contribute to public safety, making supervision requirements more manageable, and emphasizing assistance with housing, treatment, employment, and other stabilizing resources. Some advocated shifting greater responsibility for reentry support to community organizations rather than correctional agencies.

Several respondents suggested evaluating reentry programs based on outcomes, including whether participants maintain housing, engage in treatment, obtain employment, and avoid returning to custody. Some encouraged the use of evidence-based practices, regular program evaluation, and greater accountability for agencies and organizations responsible for providing reentry services.

Other comments addressed the broader role of incarceration in preventing future criminal activity. Some respondents advocated reducing the use of pretrial detention, expanding diversion, and investing in community services to prevent initial or repeated incarceration.

Others supported stronger enforcement, longer detention for certain offenses, or additional accountability measures for individuals who repeatedly violate the law.

Overall, responses emphasized the importance of connecting individuals with resources that are available and accessible when they return to the community. Suggestions included direct connections to housing and treatment providers, practical release assistance, ongoing case management and peer support, and improved coordination among County agencies and community organizations. Respondents differed on the appropriate balance between supervision and voluntary services, as well as the broader role of incarceration in promoting public safety and reducing recidivism.

Question 9: Personal, Family and Community Impacts

How has the jail system impacted you, your family, or community?

88 nonblank answers recorded

Effects on Family and Personal Wellbeing

Respondents described a range of personal and family experiences involving incarceration, including emotional distress, separation from loved ones, financial hardship, and disruptions to family relationships. Some shared experiences involving parents, children, siblings, partners, or friends who had been incarcerated. Comments addressed the effects of separation on children and families, the challenges of maintaining relationships during incarceration, and difficulties rebuilding stability following release.

Several respondents described longer-term consequences, including challenges maintaining employment, housing, and access to healthcare. Some expressed concern about the effects of incarceration on individuals' mental and physical health and the additional responsibilities placed on family members who provide financial, emotional, or caregiving support. Other respondents described personal experiences with the jail system as contributing to feelings of fear, frustration, or distrust.

Service and System Concerns

Some respondents described experiences or observations involving access to medical and behavioral healthcare, conditions of confinement, treatment by correctional personnel, and the availability of services during incarceration and following release. Comments included concerns about perceived delays or inadequacies in treatment, the use of restrictive housing, and the difficulties faced by individuals with serious mental health conditions or other significant needs.

Other respondents expressed concerns about fairness, racial bias, and the treatment of individuals involved in the criminal justice system. Some described experiences they believed reflected inequitable practices or insufficient accountability. Several also questioned whether incarceration effectively addresses behavioral health needs, poverty, homelessness, or other circumstances that may contribute to repeated justice system involvement. These accounts reflect respondents' experiences and perceptions rather than independently verified findings.

Workforce and Community Consequences

Respondents also described impacts extending beyond individuals directly involved in the jail system. Several expressed concerns about the location of the Main Jail in downtown Sacramento, particularly the effects they associate with releases into surrounding neighborhoods. Comments addressed perceptions of public safety, homelessness, neighborhood conditions, property values, and the potential effects on downtown businesses and economic activity. Some advocated relocating the jail or improving release arrangements to address these concerns.

Other respondents described the broader community consequences they associate with incarceration, including housing instability, reduced employment opportunities, financial hardship, and repeated involvement with the criminal justice system. Some emphasized the use of public resources and questioned whether greater investment in community services could produce better outcomes. Respondents with professional experience in law enforcement, healthcare, legal services, and community organizations also shared observations about operational challenges, service gaps, and the effects of incarceration on the people and communities they serve.

Different Experiences

Although numerous respondents described negative experiences, others offered different perspectives on the role of incarceration. Some expressed concern that individuals who pose a public safety risk may be released without adequate supervision or support, contributing to instability in surrounding communities. Others described situations in which incarceration provided a sense of safety or stability for a loved one, particularly when that individual was struggling with behavioral health or substance use needs.

Some respondents shared experiences working with incarcerated individuals and emphasized their dignity, resilience, and need for meaningful support. Others indicated that they had not been personally affected by the jail system or did not have sufficient experience to describe a specific impact.

Overall, the responses reflected a wide range of personal experiences and community perspectives. While some emphasized the harms associated with incarceration and the need for greater access to supportive services, others focused on public safety, neighborhood conditions, and the role of custody in providing structure or protection. The comments illustrate that the effects respondents associate with the jail system extend beyond individuals in custody to families, service providers, and the broader community.

Question 10: One Change to Incarceration Practices

If you could change one thing about how our county handles incarceration, what would it be?

99 nonblank answers recorded

Reduce Reliance on Jail

Respondents suggested reducing the use of incarceration, particularly for individuals accused of lower-level or nonviolent offenses and those whose circumstances involve homelessness, poverty, mental health conditions, or substance use disorders. Suggestions included reducing unnecessary arrests, reconsidering cash bail practices, limiting pretrial detention, and expanding diversion and community-based alternatives. Some respondents questioned whether incarceration is an effective response to social and behavioral health needs and encouraged the County to consider approaches that address these circumstances before individuals enter the criminal justice system.

Several comments advocated redirecting resources from jail operations or construction toward housing, healthcare, behavioral health treatment, and other community services. Some respondents called for substantial reductions in jail populations, while others expressed broader opposition to incarceration or advocated for eliminating jail facilities altogether. These responses reflected different degrees of support for reducing the County's reliance on incarceration, ranging from targeted policy changes to more fundamental changes in the criminal justice system.

Shift Toward Rehabilitation

Other respondents identified rehabilitation and treatment as the most important changes to how incarceration is managed. Suggestions included expanding educational and vocational programs, counseling, mental health and substance use treatment, and individualized reentry planning. Some advocated beginning rehabilitation efforts upon entry into custody and providing opportunities for individuals to develop skills, address

behavioral health needs, and establish connections with community services before release.

Comments also emphasized humane living conditions, respectful treatment, and appropriate healthcare. Some respondents suggested reconsidering disciplinary practices that may interfere with rehabilitation, while others supported structured programming that combines treatment with personal accountability. Several described incarceration as an opportunity to prepare individuals for a successful return to the community rather than focusing exclusively on punishment.

Invest in Facilities and Operations

Some respondents identified replacing or relocating existing jail facilities as the single most important change. Suggestions included moving the Main Jail outside downtown Sacramento, constructing a modern facility with additional space for medical and behavioral health treatment, and developing a lower-rise or campus-style design that could better accommodate programming and operational needs. Others emphasized maintaining existing facilities and ensuring that custody and healthcare personnel have appropriate space and resources to perform their responsibilities.

Operational improvements were also identified, particularly the need to streamline the booking process. Several respondents described delays associated with intake and processing and suggested changes that would allow arresting officers to return to their duties more quickly. Other comments addressed release timing, communication among staff and agencies, and the importance of consistent procedures.

Strengthen Enforcement or Accountability

Respondents expressed differing views about how the County should approach enforcement, detention, and accountability. Some advocated stronger criminal enforcement, increased jail capacity, longer periods of incarceration, or fewer early releases, particularly for individuals accused of violent offenses or repeated criminal activity. These comments emphasized protecting public safety and ensuring that individuals are held accountable for their actions. Others supported maintaining secure custody while providing more effective treatment and rehabilitation services.

Other respondents focused on accountability within the jail system and among agencies providing services. Suggestions included stronger oversight of Sheriff's Office practices, more transparent operations, independent reviews or audits, and greater accountability for contracted service providers. Some also expressed concerns about access to legal

representation, the treatment of incarcerated individuals, and the need to ensure that correctional policies and disciplinary practices are applied fairly.

Overall, responses reflected different perspectives on the most important change the County could make, ranging from reducing incarceration and expanding community-based alternatives to investing in modern facilities, rehabilitation, and stronger enforcement. The comments also demonstrated differing views about how public resources should be allocated and the appropriate balance among public safety, accountability, treatment, and community investment.

Question 11: Questions for the County and Consultants

What questions do you have for the County or its consultants about the Jail System Master Planning Process?

75 nonblank answers recorded

Questions have been paraphrased and grouped by subject to summarize the issues raised by survey respondents. They are presented to document community feedback and should not be interpreted as findings about current County practices or as answers provided by the County.

Scope and Rationale

Respondents raised questions about the purpose of the Master Plan, the need for additional jail capacity, and how alternatives to incarceration are being considered. Some questioned whether new construction is necessary, while others sought information about the types of facilities, services, and operational improvements being evaluated. Several asked how population reduction strategies and investments in community services would influence future facility needs.

Questions raised included:

- What specific problems is the Master Plan intended to address, and how were those problems identified?
- How is the County determining whether additional jail capacity is necessary?
- How will population reduction strategies, pretrial alternatives, and diversion programs be considered alongside potential construction projects?
- What alternatives to new construction are being evaluated, including improvements to existing facilities or expanded community-based treatment?
- How will the County determine whether proposed changes improve public safety, rehabilitation, and outcomes for people involved in the criminal justice system?

Public Input and Decisions

Respondents asked how the County is engaging the public and whether community feedback will meaningfully influence the Master Planning process. Some expressed concerns about the accessibility and publicity of engagement opportunities, particularly for people who are currently or formerly incarcerated, their families, and community service providers. Others requested additional opportunities to participate and clearer information about how decisions will be made.

Questions raised included:

- How will the County incorporate community feedback into the Master Plan and explain how that feedback influenced its recommendations?
- What opportunities will be available for additional public participation before decisions are made?
- How will currently and formerly incarcerated individuals, their families, and community-based service providers be included in the planning process?
- Will future engagement opportunities include virtual participation, transportation assistance, outreach inside jail facilities, and other measures to improve accessibility?
- What is the anticipated timeline for completing the Master Plan and presenting recommendations to County decision-makers?

Facilities, Sites and Costs

Respondents requested more information about potential facility improvements, new construction, relocation options, and associated costs. Some supported relocating the Main Jail outside downtown Sacramento, while others questioned whether construction or expansion should be pursued at all. Comments also addressed the future use of existing facilities and the need to evaluate financial and community impacts.

Questions raised included:

- What potential sites are being evaluated for a new or relocated jail facility, including locations near the Rio Cosumnes Correctional Center?
- What would happen to existing jail facilities if a new facility were constructed? Would they remain operational, be repurposed, or be replaced?
- What would a proposed facility look like, and how would its services and capabilities compare with those currently available?
- What are the anticipated construction and operating costs, and how would different options affect the County's long-term finances?

- How will the County evaluate the effects of potential facility locations on surrounding neighborhoods, downtown Sacramento, transportation, and economic development?
- Is the County considering a dedicated medical or rehabilitation facility, including the proposed Medical Annex?

Standards, Accountability and Consultants

Respondents asked how the County will evaluate the effectiveness of the Master Plan, ensure accountability, and demonstrate progress toward improving jail conditions and services. Questions addressed the Mays Consent Decree, healthcare and behavioral health services, independent oversight, and the qualifications and potential financial interests of consultants involved in planning.

Questions raised included:

- How will the Master Plan address the requirements of the Mays Consent Decree and contribute to achieving sustained compliance?
- What measures will be used to evaluate success, including jail population trends, access to healthcare, rehabilitation, and outcomes following release?
- How will accountability for custody practices, treatment access, and other jail operations be strengthened?
- What qualifications and relevant experience do the County's consultants have, and what research or comparable projects are informing their recommendations?
- How will the County identify and address potential financial conflicts of interest among consultants or other organizations involved in the planning process?
- How will the County determine whether proposed investments are producing meaningful improvements and make adjustments when necessary?

Question 12: One Issue to Consider in the Master Plan

What is one thing you want to be considered or explored as part of the Jail System Master Planning Process?

91 nonblank answers recorded

Population and Community Alternatives

Respondents encouraged the County to examine opportunities to reduce the jail population and expand alternatives to incarceration as part of the Master Planning process. Suggestions included reducing pretrial detention, reconsidering cash bail practices, expanding diversion, and evaluating whether individuals with behavioral health or other

significant needs could be better served through community-based programs. Some advocated substantial reductions in incarceration, while others called for eliminating jail expansion or moving away from incarceration altogether.

Several respondents specifically requested that the County evaluate population reduction and community investments before determining whether additional jail facilities are necessary. Suggestions included expanding behavioral health treatment, crisis response, supportive housing, and other services intended to prevent justice system involvement. Some also referenced the Mays Consent Decree and advocated achieving compliance through population reduction and operational reforms rather than new construction. These comments reflected concerns that the Master Planning process could result in additional jail capacity without fully considering alternatives.

Care and Rehabilitation

Responses addressed the importance of incorporating medical and behavioral healthcare, rehabilitation, and reentry services into future jail planning. Suggestions included adequate space for Adult Correctional Health and Adult Correctional Mental Health services, access to social workers and counselors, substance use treatment, and opportunities for education, vocational training, and employment preparation. Some respondents advocated integrating rehabilitation and reentry planning from the beginning of incarceration, with an emphasis on preparing individuals for a successful return to the community.

Other comments addressed conditions of confinement and opportunities to improve daily life for individuals in custody. Suggestions included better food and nutrition, opportunities for recreation and therapeutic activities, improved access to family communication and religious or spiritual support, and housing arrangements that account for individual treatment and safety needs. Some respondents also proposed alternatives to traditional custody classifications, programs that recognize progress toward rehabilitation, and fair compensation for voluntary work performed during incarceration.

Facilities and Fiscal Tradeoffs

Respondents offered differing perspectives on the future of the County's jail facilities. Some advocated constructing a modern facility, relocating the Main Jail outside downtown Sacramento, or developing a new facility near the Rio Cosumnes Correctional Center. Suggestions included selecting a location with sufficient space, improving accessibility, accommodating future population and service needs, and incorporating flexibility into facility design. Others opposed new construction or expansion and encouraged the County

to consider improvements to existing facilities and alternatives that could reduce the need for jail beds.

Comments also addressed the financial implications of different planning options. Respondents suggested evaluating construction and ongoing operating costs, impacts on taxpayers, and the long-term economic and social consequences of facility decisions. Some specifically requested consideration of downtown businesses, property values, neighborhood conditions, and the broader economic effects of relocating or maintaining jail operations. Others emphasized the importance of comparing investments in correctional facilities with potential investments in housing, healthcare, diversion, and other community services.

Governance and Other Considerations

Respondents identified several operational and administrative issues they wanted considered during planning. Suggestions included improving booking efficiency, establishing alternative booking locations, enhancing information sharing among agencies, and providing additional resources and support for custody personnel. Some also recommended consulting researchers, regularly evaluating program effectiveness, and improving coordination among County departments and community service providers.

Accountability and transparency were also raised. Respondents requested consideration of independent oversight, clearer accountability for Sheriff's Office practices, progress toward Mays Consent Decree requirements, and greater attention to the experiences of individuals involved in the criminal justice system. Some questioned the assumptions underlying the Master Planning process or expressed concern that facility decisions could be made before other approaches are adequately evaluated. One respondent also specifically cautioned against using artificial intelligence in the planning process.

Overall, responses reflected differing views about the appropriate scope and direction of the Master Plan. Some emphasized the need for modern facilities, adequate capacity, and long-term operational planning, while others advocated population reduction, systemic reform, and investment in community-based alternatives. Additional suggestions addressed rehabilitation, healthcare, fiscal responsibility, accountability, and the long-term effects of the County's decisions on individuals, families, and the broader community.

Question 13: Messages to Decision-Makers

What message would you like to send to decision makers about the Jail System Master Planning Process?

85 nonblank answers recorded

Make Choices that Address Long-Term Needs

Respondents encouraged County decision-makers to consider the long-term consequences of decisions about jail facilities, operations, and services. Some emphasized the need to replace or relocate aging facilities, citing concerns about available space, operational efficiency, the ability to provide appropriate care, and future population needs. Several advocated moving the Main Jail outside downtown Sacramento and developing a modern facility designed to accommodate medical and behavioral health services, rehabilitation programs, and changing operational requirements.

Other respondents urged the County to reconsider whether additional jail construction is necessary or appropriate. Some explicitly cautioned against using the Master Planning process to justify expansion, arguing that greater investment in housing, healthcare, prevention, and community-based services would better address the circumstances contributing to incarceration. Comments also encouraged decision-makers to evaluate long-term operating costs, fiscal sustainability, and community impacts rather than focusing exclusively on immediate construction expenses. These responses reflected differing views about which investments would produce the greatest long-term benefits.

Balance Safety, Care and Rehabilitation

Respondents expressed different perspectives on how the County should balance public safety, accountability, treatment, and rehabilitation. Some emphasized the importance of secure custody, appropriate consequences for criminal behavior, and maintaining adequate facility capacity. Others advocated reducing reliance on incarceration and prioritizing diversion, prevention, and alternatives that address behavioral health needs, poverty, and housing instability.

Several comments encouraged a greater focus on humane treatment, access to medical and behavioral healthcare, education, and opportunities for rehabilitation. Respondents also emphasized the importance of preparing individuals for release and connecting them with housing, employment, treatment, and other community resources. Some urged decision-makers to consider the experiences of incarcerated individuals and their families when evaluating proposed changes, emphasizing that the consequences of incarceration extend beyond an individual's time in custody.

Demonstrate Responsiveness

Respondents encouraged the County to demonstrate that community feedback will meaningfully inform the Master Planning process. Some emphasized the importance of

listening directly to incarcerated individuals, formerly incarcerated individuals, correctional employees, service providers, and others with firsthand knowledge of jail operations. Suggestions included visiting facilities, consulting local experts, continuing public engagement, and considering recommendations from community organizations and federal monitors.

Other comments expressed frustration with the pace of planning and implementation. Some urged decision-makers to move forward with meaningful improvements rather than continuing to study longstanding problems, while others questioned the need for additional consultants or expressed concerns about potential bias toward construction. Respondents also requested greater transparency regarding decisions, contracts, expenditures, and accountability for jail operations. Several emphasized that the County should explain how public input and available evidence are considered when determining its next steps.

Recognize Different Perspectives

The final messages reflected a range of opinions about the appropriate direction of the jail system. Some respondents expressed appreciation for the opportunity to provide feedback and acknowledged the complexity of the decisions facing the County. Others supported moving forward with new facilities or operational improvements, emphasizing the importance of addressing longstanding infrastructure and service limitations.

Other respondents strongly opposed additional jail construction or advocated more fundamental changes to incarceration practices. Several encouraged decision-makers to prioritize community investment, reduce the jail population, and involve people directly affected by incarceration in future planning. Some offered broader observations about fairness, dignity, public safety, and the County's responsibility to consider both immediate needs and long-term community outcomes.

Overall, the final messages reflected different expectations for the Master Planning process. While respondents did not agree on whether the County should construct new facilities, reduce reliance on incarceration, or pursue other approaches, their comments addressed the importance of considering long-term consequences, communicating decisions clearly, and taking meaningful action in response to identified needs.