



MEMORANDUM

Date: April 27, 2023

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Leshner 
County Administrator

Re: **Update on County Initiatives to Address Homelessness and Public Safety – Modular Service Building**

On November 15, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved four motions made by Supervisor Scott relevant to addressing criminal concerns in the community. The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the progress made with three of the four motions.

Motion 2: The Board directs County Administration to devise a plan for making use of the Mission Annex as a site for the expansion of pre-trial and probation services.

In the January 23, 2023 memo to the Board of Supervisors, we outlined security concerns with the use of the Mission Annex to expand Pretrial Services. As a result of those concerns, we presented an alternative plan to place a modular building on vacant land adjacent to Pretrial Services, just outside of the jail facilities. The purpose of this modular is to connect individuals released from Pretrial Services' prebooking process and/or the jail facility to social services agencies. Our goal of standing up this modular is to reduce justice system involvement.

This modular is expected to be operational the second week in June 2023. The modular will not only serve as a supportive companion to Pretrial Services' current felony population oversight function, but will also look to fill a gap in services currently not being provided to the misdemeanor population with frequent rearrests. Individuals with misdemeanor charges typically receive less community supervision and have access to fewer justice-related resources than those with felonies. While there are other target areas being explored for improvement within the Justice System, we believe that targeting "warm handoffs" of social services for individuals being released from the jail is a viable strategy can yield significant improvement.

Motion 3: There is a need for comprehensive "wraparound" services that seek to address the root causes of homelessness. The Board directs county administration to report to us on any current joint efforts being undertaken by county and City of Tucson staff to provide such services, any further opportunities for greater collaboration and ways that private sector agencies can join in support of these efforts.

The County continues to work closely with the City of Tucson in response to community concerns, including areas with a nexus to justice-system involvement. An analysis of jail bookings demonstrates that the single most common charge is Failure to Appear (FTAs), occurring with approximately 20 to 30 percent of bookings. Frequently, misdemeanor

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offenses coincide with FTA charges – however, research shows that with rapid intervention and referral to appropriate resources, court appearance rates improve and rearrests decrease.

In the initial implementation stage of the modular, the Department of Justice Services (DJS) will hire four Justice Navigators whose role will be to engage with individuals leaving jail, work to identify their resource needs (housing, transportation, treatment referral, or justice system information/orientation), and refer individuals to community resources to address those needs. More specially, the Justice Navigators will connect individuals with shelter, substance use treatment, crisis intervention services, mediation-assisted treatment, and other social services. Individuals released from custody will be directed to this facility by either Pretrial Services staff or Sheriff Department personnel prior to leaving the grounds of the jail. Justice Services' staff will also be working to identify and initiate special protocols for individuals who have been arrested multiple times in recent months. Already underway is a "Familiar Faces" pilot program, led by DJS in a collaboration with the Pima County Sheriff's Department, Tucson Police Department, and the City of Tucson's Community Safety, Health, and Wellness Department.

The purpose of the project, which has already been successfully implemented in communities across the county, works to identify and intervene with individuals who frequently cycle between arrest/jail, unstable housing, emergency medical services, and crisis systems. A small number of these "familiar faces" often represents a disproportionate amount of system costs, higher utilization of taxpayer-funded resources, and low-level arrests. By identifying these individuals in the modular, staff can initiate measures to provide more intensive intervention and services – while also coordinating with justice system partners, leveraging accountability to encourage treatment and participation in services.

Equally important, navigators staffed in this modular will encourage those recently released to remain onsite until transportation to a court-approved location can be coordinated, if appropriate. Coordinating transportation also provides the Justice Navigators with additional time for discussion and dialogue, which we believe is critical in motivating individuals to engage in needed services and ensure they understand the conditions of release provided to them by PTS.

DJS, in collaboration with the City of Tucson, will continue exploring partnerships with additional service providers that will complement the interventions occurring in the modular. Such complementary strategies include: developing a consolidated warrant resolution center, creating a justice system navigation and resource website, and bringing in additional resources to support transportation to court.

Data Collection and Measuring Outcomes

DJS continues to make a significant investment in data and research. In coordination with the Pima County Sheriff's Department and Pima County's Analytics and Data Governance department, DJS regularly assesses jail bookings, types of charges, rearrest rates, and underlying charges most often associated with FTAs. It is this analysis that led the County

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to target misdemeanors for this pilot program. The jail data feed, as well as cross-system data partnership with Pretrial Services, will help to assess the effectiveness of the modular program.

More specifically, data will be collected from defendants who meet with Justice Navigators, and compared against those with similar charges who were released without intervention. Metrics of success in FTA and rearrests reductions will inform iterations of interventions and support services. We will be providing quarterly reports regarding the effectiveness of this modular to the Board of Supervisors.

Motion 4: The Board directs County Administration to fully evaluate and report back to us on any options for reallocating unexpended American Rescue Plan Act funds to pay for any expenses associated with any of the items addressed in this motion.

In the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2022/2023 (FY2023), the Deputy County Administrators reviewed Departmental American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) fund project plans with the Grant Management & Innovation (GMI) Department to ensure compliance with spending requirements and to make mid-course adjustments in budget or scope to attain the optimal impact of funds. Through this process, \$1,000,000 was reallocated to support the staffing and capital costs associated with the modular. Specifically, \$500,000 has been set aside for the leasing, construction, and furnishing of the new modular and \$500,000 for hiring of the Justice Navigators.

Next Steps

While awaiting delivery of the new modular, DJS is working to reassign existing staff and hire Justice Navigators, create policies and procedures, identify referral pathways to treatment, housing, and other resources, and coordinate services to align with Court, Jail, and Pretrial Services' protocol. DJS will also be working with Grants Management and Innovation (GMI) to identify additional grant resources that may be available for the long term support of these efforts.

JKL/anc

c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator