

# Champaign County Jail Proposal: A Critical Analysis

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PREPARED FOR THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD

APRIL 9, 2015

PLANNERS NETWORK

DEPARTMENT OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

# Overview

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- Previously mentioned:
  - Response to RFQ
  - Accessibility/audience concerns
- Data Discrepancies
- Lack of Proposed Alternatives
- Questions that emerged

# Response to RFQ & Accessibility concerns

- Thorough examination of challenges and needs county's jail, including needs assessment for inmates with health issues.
- Lack of detailed list of building costs surprising
  - Operational costs detailed much more extensively
  - RFQ provides nearly identical language in its request for both costings: "Provide building cost estimates" vs. "Provide estimates as to operational costs"
- Lack of an Executive Summary

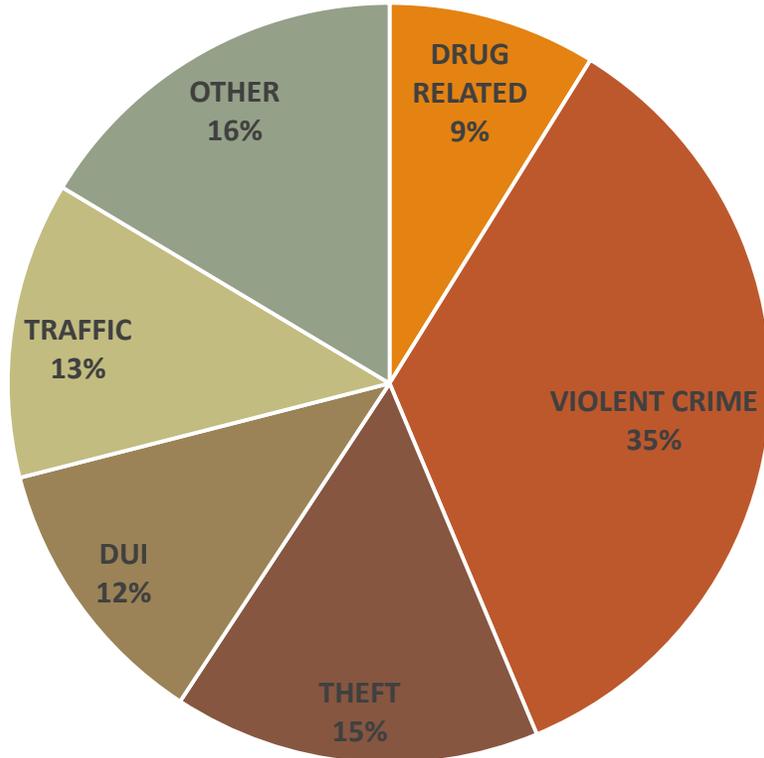
# Data Discrepancies

Proportion of inmates arrested due to traffic violations:

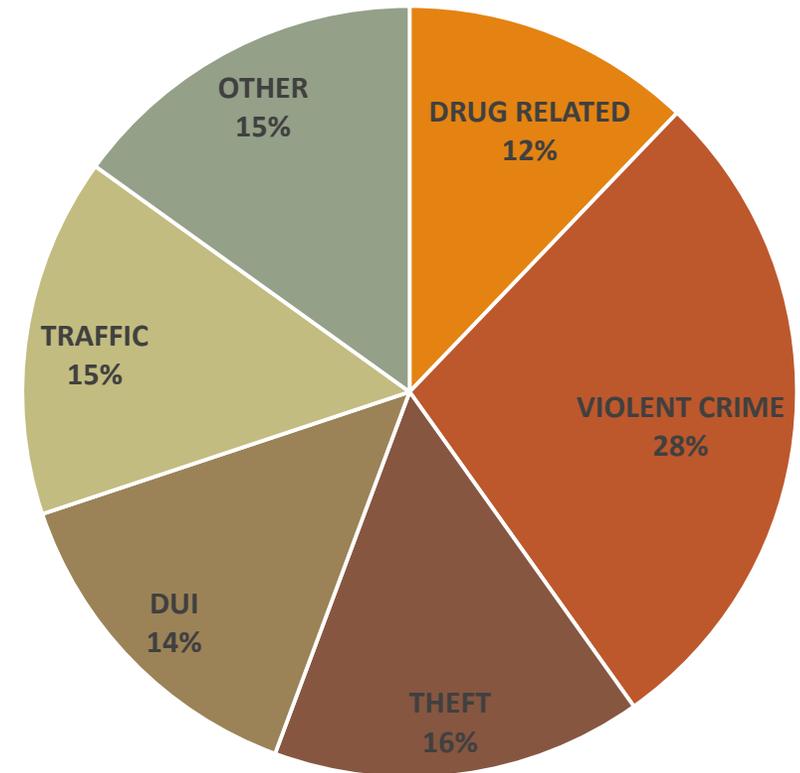
- The report points to a very small number of arrests for traffic violations – 2%
  - This figure was taken from a 20-day snapshot of the jail population in 2014
- We took a snapshot from two different days in 2014 (September, 9<sup>th</sup> and October, 13<sup>th</sup>)
  - Data was FOIA'd from the Sheriff's Office

# Jail Population by Type of Arrest in Champaign County

Type of Arrest (9/15/2014)



Type of Arrest (10/13/2014)



## Lack of Alternatives

- RFQ details that the report may include “**determining number of beds,**” and that “[a]ll discussions should also include (...) **flexibility of the design to adapt to changing facility needs over time**”
- Yet, the report claims that “*the county confirmed with the consultants that neither a long-term projection of future bed counts nor an assessment of criminal justice system impacts on bed needs were to be part of the study [because that work had already been accomplished by the ILPP study]*”

# Kimme Associates website – Example Studies

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- **Marathon County, WI – Jail Population Reduction Study & Facility Master Plan**
  - “K&A led a two-part study to determine the long-term needs of the county jail. Though the jail was double-bunked to reach 279 beds the average daily population (ADP) was peaking at nearly 350. As a result the county was shipping an increasing number of inmates to other county jails.”
  - “...K&A determined that the jail population could be reduced by roughly 12% by taking several steps to reduce the disposition timeframes of pre-trial felons.”
  - “Reductions in projected ADP were estimated to save the county over \$20 million in expansion project costs.”
- **Mecklenburg County, NC – Jail population reduction study, and detention-corrections facility master plan**
  - “Significant **system and case processing changes** identified during the study, and to which local practitioners are committed, **will result in \$17 million of facility and operational cost avoidance** in the first year and **nearly \$750 million over a 20 year life cycle.**”
  - Another recommendation from this plan: “Developing a Mental Health Crisis Intervention Center”

# Mecklenburg County N.C. Detention-Corrections Master Plan

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“The Kimme team recommends that Mecklenburg County justice system practitioners implement four strategies to reduce the number of admissions / bookings:

- Increased use by law enforcement of **citations in lieu of arrest in minor offense cases**;
- **Tightening the processes used for issuing warrants** based on citizen’s complaints;
- Revision of bail setting and pretrial release **policies to enable prompt release (prior to booking into jail) of low-risk offenders**;
- Development of a **crisis intervention center** and related facilities, policies and procedures that enable law enforcement officers **to divert from jail mentally ill individuals charged with minor offenses**; and
- Increased use of **“problem-solving” courts for substance abusing and mentally ill offenders** charged with non-violent offenses (p. 91).”

# Questions for consultants

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- **Response to RFQ:**

Given the similarity in language in the RFQ, why were the detailed building costs not included?

- **Accessibility concerns:**

How was the decision to not include an Executive Summary made?

- **Data discrepancies:**

How was the sample for the '20-days snapshot' in the report selected?

- **Lack of alternatives:**

Why the discrepancy between RFQ language and what, according to the report, was asked of the consultants?

# Questions for Planners Network?

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# Champaign County Jail Proposal: A Critical Analysis

Prepared in April, 2015 for the Champaign County Board  
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## How well does the proposal respond to the RFQ?

- The report rigorously highlights the spatial, design, and configuration needs and challenges of the County's jails.
- Needs assessment for 'mental health inmates' was thorough and objective – the report clearly exposes a deficiency in how the County currently handles this issue.
- RFQ provides nearly identical language in its request for building costs and operational costs: "Provide building cost estimates," "Provide estimates as to operational costs." Yet the amount of detail provided in the report for each category is drastically different

## Lack of Proposed Alternatives

RFQ details that the report may include "determining number of beds," and that "[a]ll discussions should also include (...) flexibility of the design to adapt to changing facility needs over time"

This contradicts the consultants' assertion that the request called for plans that maintained the current number of beds. Further, the RFQ seems to encourage a consideration of possible future scenarios for the jail (i.e. changing facility needs over time). This would be most effectively achieved through scenario planning. That is, considering the full range of possible options available for the county with regards to the jail and weighing them in terms of costs and benefits.

Given that K&A had the knowhow and experience (see back side) and was not constrained by RFQ, **it is unclear why the report refrained from considering alternative scenarios that take into account the potential effects of diversionary strategies to reduce inmate population size**

## Audience & Participation: Accessibility Issues and Lack of Stakeholder Input

It is unusual for a plan of this scope and detail not to have an Executive Summary. Executive Summaries are intended to state the objectives, methodology and conclusion of a study or plan clearly and concisely, and thus constitute one of the primary tools to promote accessibility for the general public. It is unreasonable to expect interested but busy readers to wade through a 200+ page report to get to the main points.

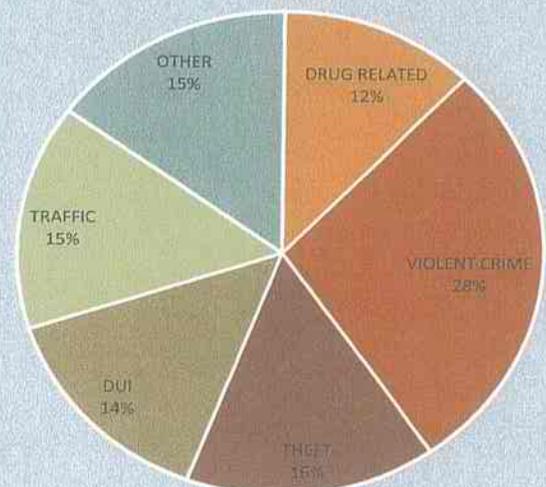
Another common feature of any plan, at all stages of the planning process, is an assessment of stakeholders' positions on the issue – this not only legitimizes the planning process but informs the decision making and enhances the visioning process (i.e. what possibilities are considered). This report fails to consider input from critical stakeholders such as inmates, or their families.

## Data Discrepancies

Drawing from two distinct one-day 'snapshots' of the jail population in 2014, one in September and one in October, we arrived at drastically different figures from those reported in the Kimme report.

From these snapshots, based on data FOYA'd from the Sheriff's Office, we found that traffic-related arrests in those dates fell **between 13 and 15%** of all arrests (see chart below). Meanwhile, based on a 20-day snapshot of the jail population from April-July of 2014, the report suggests a much smaller number of arrests for traffic violations – **a mere 2%** of total arrests. This raises questions as to how the 20 days were chosen out of the 122-day period.

Type of Arrest (10/13/2014)



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## From Kimme & Associates website - Example Studies

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"...K&A determined that the jail population could be reduced by roughly 12% by taking several steps to reduce the disposition timeframes of pre-trial felons."

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Mecklenburg County, NC – Jail population reduction study, and detention-corrections facility master plan

"Significant system and case processing changes identified during the study, and to which local practitioners are committed, will result in \$17 million of facility and operational cost avoidance in the first year and nearly \$750 million over a 20 year life cycle."

Another recommendation from this plan: "Developing a Mental Health Crisis Intervention Center"

### **Mecklenburg County Detention-Corrections Master Plan**

"The Kimme team recommends that Mecklenburg County justice system practitioners implement four strategies to reduce the number of admissions / bookings:

- Increased use by law enforcement of citations in lieu of arrest in minor offense cases;
- Tightening the processes used for issuing warrants based on citizen's complaints;
- Revision of bail setting and pretrial release policies to enable prompt release (prior to booking into jail) of low-risk offenders;
- Development of a crisis intervention center and related facilities, policies and procedures that enable law enforcement officers to divert from jail mentally ill individuals charged with minor offenses; and
- Increased use of "problem-solving" courts for substance abusing and mentally ill offenders charged with non-violent offenses (p. 91)."

### **Questions raised:**

How was the sample for the '20-days snapshot' data analysis selected?

A single page of a 200+ page document dedicated to estimating project costs, especially given the lengthy discussion of operational costs, seems excessively succinct. How was the decision made to not include detailed costings?

Given current trend of consistent decline in inmate population, do enough instances of overflow occur to justify an increase in the number of beds?

Why are the report authors under the impression that the RFQ requested for plans to keep the number of beds constant?

## BOOKINGS AND JAIL POPULATION (AND POPULATION SNAPSHOTS)

Some people assert that if 15% of jail bookings are of a particular offender category like traffic offenders that traffic offenders must therefore represent 15% of the average daily jail population. They then assume that if traffic offenders were no longer booked at the jail, the jail population would fall 15%.

This is a false assumption based upon an incorrect analysis.

The jail population, and the proportion of it represented by traffic offenders, for example, is actually a product of two factors, of which bookings is only one. The other factor is length-of-stay. The basic formula for understanding the amount of bed space used by the whole jail population or any part of it is as follows:

$$\text{Bookings} \times \text{average length-of-stay} = \text{detention-days}$$

So, if someone wants to know how much of the jail population is represented by traffic offenders, they would have to a.) multiply the number of traffic offenders booked by the average length of stay accrued by traffic offenders, and then b.) compare the answer to the total detention-days accrued by the entire population.

The following two *hypothetical* calculations show the impact of, first, incorrectly using booking data only, and second, correctly using both booking and average length-of-stay data to determine what proportion traffic offenders are of the total jail population.

	Bookings	Percent of Bookings
Traffic	15	15%
All Others	85	85%
Totals	100	100%

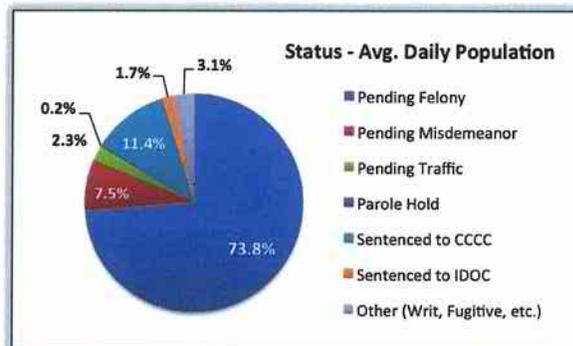
	Bookings	Avg Length of Stay in Days	Detention-Days accrued	Percent of Detention-days
Traffic	15 x	2 =	30	2%
All Others	85 x	15 =	1275	98%
Totals	100	13.05 =	1305	100%

In the preceding calculations, while traffic offenders represent 15% of all bookings, they represent only 2% of total detention-days, which is the same as saying only 2% of the average daily jail population. Therefore, if all traffic offenders were eliminated from the jail the average jail population would decline by 2%, not 15%.

During our work for Champaign County, the "snapshot" of the jail population we constructed from 20 days of classification data across four months inherently accounts for length of stay. Thus, it captures what proportions of the total population are likely attributable to identifiable sub-category populations, including that of traffic offenders.



Dennis Kimme,  
Kimme & Associates, Inc.  
April 9, 2015



*Snapshot results*

# Champaign County Sheriffs Office Masterplanning

Opinion of Probable Costs

## COST SUMMARY

A) Construction Hard Costs	3yr Maintenance	Option 1	Option 2
<b>Satellite Building</b>			
S0.0 3 Year Maintenance Repairs	\$2,426,504		
S0.1 Pod A Renovation		\$335,170	\$335,170
S0.2 Pod B Renovation		\$277,007	\$277,007
S0.3 Admin/Storage/Garage Renovations		\$838,529	\$838,529
S0.4 Building Service Renovation/ Upgrades		\$155,705	\$155,705
S0.5 East Addition & Parking		\$19,419,400	\$19,419,400
S1.1 Kitchen Mechanical		\$69,000	\$69,000
S2.1 Law Enforcement Addition & Parking			\$6,180,950
S2.2 Kitchen/ Locker Rm Renovation			\$106,185
<b>Downtown Building</b>			
D0.0 3 Year Maintenance Repairs	\$52,313		
D1.1 Building Envelope Repairs		\$978,628	
D1.2 Law Enforcement Temporary Relocation		\$1,607,000	
D1.3 Law Enforcement Area Renovations		\$2,494,003	
D1.4 Storage Area Renovations		\$645,214	
<b>Sub-total Hard Costs</b>	<b>\$2,478,817</b>	<b>\$26,819,657</b>	<b>\$27,381,946</b>