

Jail and Criminal Justice System Study

STUDY COMPLETED: July 2007

LOCATION: Okaloosa County, Florida

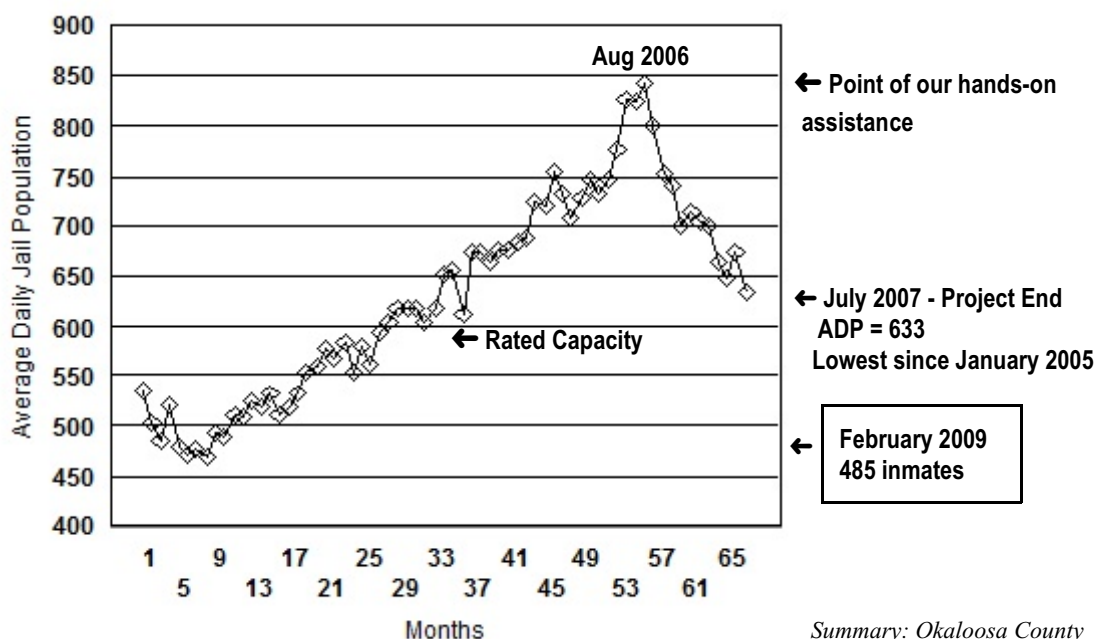
DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTY'S PROBLEM

The Okaloosa County Jail had exceeded its rated capacity of 594 beds to the point that the Director of Corrections was in the process of obtaining bids to convert the jail's parking lot into a tent-based holding facility complete with razor-ribbon (barbed wire) and guard dogs.

WHAT WE DID

Rather than waiting until the study was completed to make improvements, JCI took active role in working with system leaders. We examined cases and interacted with Judges, State's Attorney, Public Defender, and Pretrial Release staff to identify inmates who could be released immediately to alternatives to incarceration and to improve the speed of case processing. This "hands on" assistance started in late July 2006. As can be seen in Figure 1, the jail population peaked in August and began to decline. At the time of making the final presentation of the report in August 2007, the average daily population (ADP) had dropped to 633, the lowest since January 2005. Long term follow-up in February 2009 indicated the inmate count had continued to drop to 485.

Figure 1. Results of JCI Assistance in Reducing the Average Daily Jail Population in Okaloosa County, Florida



Further reduction in the jail population was anticipated. Our report contained 39 recommendations, several of which were implemented before the study was concluded. Many of the remaining recommendations could be implemented immediately without incurring any cost.

Contact with Jim Curry, the County Administrator, on October 25, 2012 brought this email response: "We are still benefitting from the 2007 study."

REFERENCE

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