Jail Population Management Plan
and
Status Update

Board of Supervisors Meeting
January 23, 2024

Background

- Collaborative efforts in recent years by criminal justice (CJ) partners have focused on reducing recidivism, diverting from jail individuals with behavioral health needs, and improving speed and efficiency of the justice system.

- In July 2022, MW Consulting provided initial report, which analyzed criminal justice trends, projected the long-term jail population, and explored policy options to reduce the jail population.
  - Long-term projection was 800-900 beds, which could be reduced through "policy levers" related to expanding diversion, expanding electronic monitoring, reducing recidivism, etc.

- CJ partners were simultaneously working on multiple related initiatives, e.g., expanding pretrial services, holistic defense, diversion programs, etc.
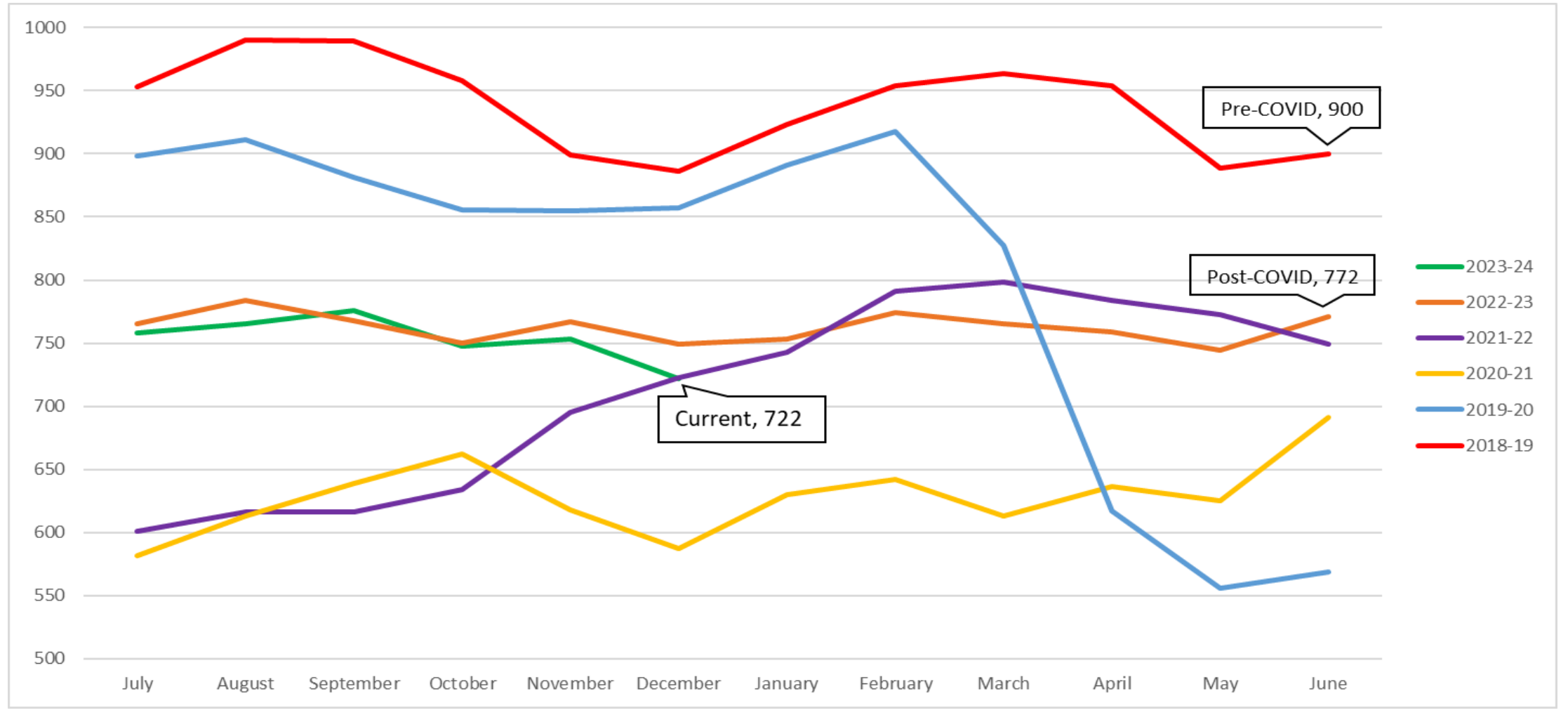
Key Takeaways – MW Consulting Report

- SBC incarceration rate is higher than State's.

- Previous factors of concern (e.g., NBJ opening) have not proven to increase jail population.

- Population adjustment has been made and Alternative Sentencing data has been incorporated. Current projection is 700-800 as incarceration numbers have not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

- Further reduction is achievable through targeted measures.
  - Based on recent data from the jail, further reduction of the population suffering from mental health issues should continue to be a priority.

Jail Population Management Plan

- In May 2023, Board directed staff to obtain designs for new construction of one pod at the Northern Branch Jail (NBJ) for a total jail system capacity of 728 beds, and to return with targeted diversion strategies to address jail population management

- Additionally, written update of jail population management initiatives is required to comply with Stipulated Judgment in *Murray et al. v. County et al.*

- Attached report is in response to both Board direction and Stipulated Judgment requirements

- Jail population management plan describes existing and new initiatives—many of which align with MW Consulting policy levers—that support overarching goals of safe jail population reduction, reduced recidivism, and improved wellbeing and community supports for justice-involved individuals

Monthly Average Daily Population by Year

Jail Population Management Strategies

Existing Initiatives	Initiatives in Planning Stages	General System Improvements Designed to Reduce Recidivism
Alternative Sentencing	Familiar Faces*	CalAIM Justice-Involved Initiative
Crisis Stabilization Unit – North County	Crisis Stabilization Unit – South County	Housing Projects
Misdemeanor Mental Health Diversion	Early Representation*	Felony Incompetent to Stand Trial (IST) Planning
CREDO-47 Pre-Arraignment	Mental Health Rapid Diversion*	Reentry Coordinator
DSH AB 1810 Diversion	Felony Diversion (future opportunity)	Enhanced Discharge Planning
Sobering Centers		
Pretrial Supervision		
Co-Response		

*Anticipated launch in January 2024

Next Steps

- While many measures discussed in jail population management plan are in early stages and difficult to identify specific impact, collectively they are anticipated to significantly impact need for future jail beds

- Ongoing commitment and urgency by all system partners will be key to success, along with funding prioritization

- MW Consulting will work with departments leading initiatives to capture information and data to further inform jail population projections

- Additional project-specific projections anticipated to be available for presentation to your Board within next 6 months

Recommended Actions

A) Receive and file a report by MW Consulting on Santa Barbara County Updated Analysis: Criminal Justice Overview and Jail Projections – December 2023;

B) Receive and file a report on County jail population management strategies plan and status update;

C) Provide any direction, as appropriate; and

D) Make the CEQA finding.

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