



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: FEBRUARY 4, 2009 NEW BUSINESS

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON THE PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT REPORT (EIR) FOR THE "RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL
DETENTION CENTER PROJECT"

FROM: David H. Ready, City Manager

BY: Planning Department

SUMMARY

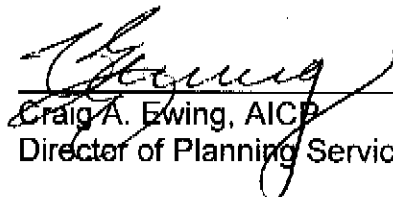
In response to Council direction provided at the meeting of January 21, 2009, staff has drafted a letter to the County of Riverside regarding the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the proposed Riverside County Regional Detention Center. The draft letter is attached for Council review and final direction.

RECOMMENDATION:


Direct staff, as appropriate, regarding the Council's response to the County of Riverside.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact.



Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services



Thomas J. Wilson
Assistant City Manager, Dev't Svcs



David H. Ready
City Manager

Attached: Draft letter
County of Riverside information regarding the proposed Detention Center

Item 5.A.



City of Palm Springs

City Council

3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way • Palm Springs, CA 92262

Tel: 760-323-8200 • Website: www.palmsprings-ca.gov

January 27, 2009

County of Riverside
Department of Facilities Management
Attn: Ms. Claudia Steiding
P. O. Box 1468
Riverside, CA 92502-1468

RE: Comments on the Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the
"Riverside County Regional Detention Center Project"

Dear Ms. Steiding:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide early input to the EIR for the proposed detention center. The City of Palm Springs recognizes the need for additional facilities to accommodate the County's growing inmate population, and acknowledges that any locational and design decisions regarding a new incarceration center will be a challenge.

We have reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and related materials and offer the following comments.

1. The EIR must evaluate the project as defined at full build-out. The County's information indicates a clear understanding of the ultimate size and scale of the project, including site plans and staffing needs. Consequently, the EIR must address more than just the "first phase", but provide a complete impact analysis of the detention center with 7,200 beds. While the NOP indicates that a Program EIR will be prepared, it is imperative to the City of Palm Springs that a full disclosure of the impacts of the entire scope of the project be provided in this EIR.
2. Alternative sites must be fully explored in the EIR. The City of Palm Springs appreciates recent reports indicating that the County continues to explore alternative sites, including locations in Desert Hot Springs, on federal lands and in other parts of the County. The EIR must take account of these efforts and provide a discussion of alternative sites that consider locations significantly distant from the proposed site to provide a meaningful consideration of reduced-impact options for the project.
3. In addition to the impact issue areas identified in the NOP, the City believes that following areas must be examined and evaluated in the EIR:
 - a. The potential impact on tourist facilities in the region. Several major centers of visitor-serving activities have a marketing "reach" that includes the proposed

project site, including the Cabazon Outlet Malls, the Palm Springs Convention Center, downtown Palm Springs, the Agua Caliente Spa Casino, the hot springs hotels of Desert Hot Springs and the like. These centers generate jobs and tax dollars, as well as contribute to the urban fabric of the region. The EIR should evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed detention center on these facilities, particularly the adverse physical impacts that would occur should the detention center reduce the attractiveness of the area for tourism.

- b. The potential impacts of increased mortality / morbidity rates. The establishment of a detention center may introduce persons into the region who carry with them infectious diseases. The EIR should evaluate the potential environmental effects of an increase in mortality and morbidity rates of the surrounding population, particularly the direct and indirect loss of population and how such losses impact the local physical environment.

In addition to these comments on the proposed EIR, the City of Palm Springs maintains that the proposed site is not a remote rural location, but is in the midst of a growing suburban and urban community. A detention center of this size and scale is best located far from population centers, where its impacts are not imposed on the local built environment. The experience of attempting to expand the jail in the City of Riverside is instructive: An urban jail should be of limited size.

The City of Palm Springs recognizes that the County of Riverside is seeking to fill a need for a large, extra-regional detention complex. However, the County must also consider that in the decades to come, the Cabazon / Whitewater / western Coachella Valley will be a growth center made up of homes, shopping centers, hotels, schools, churches and all the other uses that make up a healthy community. It would not serve any of these uses' long-term viability to have amidst them and their residents a jail of the size and scope envisioned here. We urge you to identify an alternative and more remote location as the County's first choice for this facility.

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Steve Pougnet
Mayor

Chris Mills
Mayor Pro Tem

Ginny Foat
Councilmember

Rick Hutcheson
Councilmember

Lee Weigel
Councilmember



**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
NOTICE OF PREPARATION FOR A DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

Date: December 2, 2008
To: Responsible and Trustee Agencies/Interested Organizations and Individuals
Project: Riverside County Regional Detention Center Project (previously the "Hub Jail" Project)

Lead Agency

County of Riverside
Department of Facilities Management
P.O. Box 1468
Riverside, CA 92502-1468
Email: SAFERSTREETS@co.riverside.ca.us
Project website: <http://saferstreets.countyofriverside.us>

Consultant Firm Preparing the Draft EIR

LSA Associates
20 Executive Park, Suite 200
Irvine, CA 92618

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) includes a summary project description and a list of the environmental issues to be examined in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Riverside County Regional Detention Center (RDC) project.

The environmental determination in this NOP is subject to a 30-day public review period per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21080.4 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15082. Public agencies, interested organizations, and individuals have the opportunity to comment on the proposed project and identify those environmental issues that they believe have the potential to be affected by the project and should be addressed by the County of Riverside (County) in the EIR.

The public review period for this NOP is December 2, 2008 to January 9, 2009. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Project Purpose and Need

The County of Riverside proposes a new detention center to accommodate both current and future jail needs for the County. Currently, the County operates five jail/detention facilities; Robert Presley Detention Center, Southwest Detention Center, Larry D. Smith Correctional Facility, Indio Jail Facility, and Blythe Jail Facility. All five of these existing jail and detention facilities have very limited opportunities for future expansion. The County jail system regularly experiences daily populations which exceed 90 percent capacity causing over-crowding and resulting in early releases for inmates.

The RDC is designed to be phased and expanded as population trends and custody demands dictate, and it offers greater efficiencies in inmate transportation to and from the courts for the inmates who do not have immediate court appearances scheduled. The RDC would receive the

overflow from the other jails and inmates requiring longer-term custody. The RDC design has a footprint for developing additional custody units in phases and expanding the units as necessary. The flexibilities in the design concept would meet both the current and future demands for a county experiencing rapid growth such as Riverside. In addition, jail capacity needs are based on population growth, but can change very quickly depending on changes in mandatory sentencing requirements enacted by either the State legislature or referendum. Historically, changes in mandatory sentencing requirements have generally resulted in longer stays in jails.

Project Location

The project site is an undeveloped property in the Cabazon area of unincorporated Riverside County. The site is just less than 140 acres in size and fronts the north side of Interstate 10 (I-10). The site is located at the intersection of Rushmore Avenue and Tamarack Road. Tamarack Road runs east/west across the property. **A map showing the location of proposed RDC is shown in Attachment A.**

Project Description

The proposed RDC would be developed in phases over time. The first phase is detailed below and is expected to be completed by 2012. Subsequent development phases would occur incrementally after 2012 as funding and needs arise. The site plan showing the first phase of construction for the RDC is shown in Attachment B.

Phase 1 Development (up to 2,000 beds)

- 2,000-bed detention center
 - Housing buildings
 - Inmate transfer facility
 - Medical clinic
 - Video visiting building and visitor parking area
 - Staff dining and break area
 - Staff parking areas
 - Internal roadways
 - Security fencing
- On-site utilities
 - Water storage tanks
 - Waste water treatment plant
 - Water wells
 - Initial backup central power plant/station
- Realignment of Tamarack Road
- Realignment of the existing gas lines (within the right-of-way of realigned Tamarack Road)
- Sheriff's office/administration building
- Warehouse/maintenance building
- Central food preparation plant
- Central laundry
- Landscaping

The Phase 1 Staffing and Operations Plan is included in Table A, which is Attachment C to this NOP.

Future Development phases

The master site plan showing the buildout of the RDC is show in Attachment D.

- Up to 7,200 total detention center beds
- Additional square footage for support facilities will be added as additional housing buildings are added to the site for the following components:
 - Housing buildings
 - Office/administration building(s)
 - Medical clinic
 - Staff dining and break area
 - Staff parking areas
 - Internal roadways
 - Security fencing
 - Backup central power plant
 - Water wells
 - Waste water treatment
 - Water storage tanks
- On-site utilities
 - Water storage tanks
 - Waste water treatment plant
 - Backup central power plant/station

The buildout Staffing and Operations plan is included in Table B, which is Attachment E to this NOP.

Environmental Issues to be Evaluated in the EIR

Given the broad geographic nature of the project and the variety of environmental issues that could be encountered with a project of this type, the County has determined that a Program EIR will be prepared for the project. The EIR will evaluate each of the applicable impact issue areas listed in the CEQA Guidelines and provided below:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| • Aesthetics | • Hydrology and Water Resources |
| • Air Quality | • Land Use and Planning |
| • Biological Resources | • Noise |
| • Cultural Resources | • Public Safety |
| • Geology and Soils | • Transportation/Traffic |
| • Global Climate Change | • Utilities and Services |
| • Hazards and Hazardous Materials | • Cumulative and Growth Inducing Impacts |

The EIR will assess the project's potential environmental impacts for each of the issues listed above. Where necessary, mitigation measures will be identified that can lessen the project's impacts. A final determination of the significance of the impact (i.e., no impact, less than significant impact, and significant impact) will be made. The EIR will be used by the County to gain an understanding of the project's environmental impacts. The EIR will also be considered by the decisionmakers, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, prior to consideration of the project and preparation of construction documents.

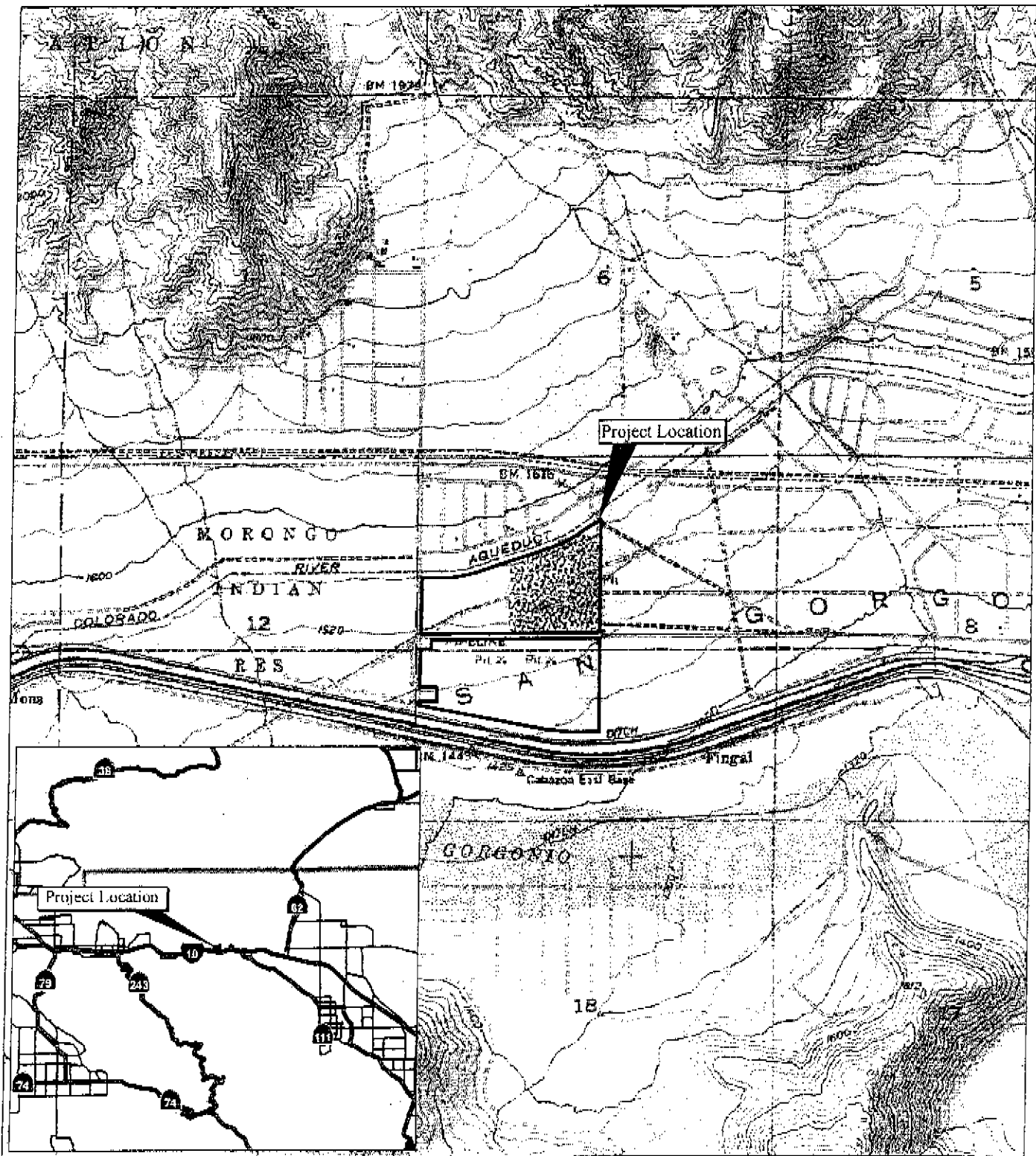
Opportunity to Comment

Agencies, organizations, and individuals have the opportunity to comment on the scope and content of the environmental issues to be included in the EIR. Agencies, organizations, and individuals making written comments may do so within the NOP response period. E-mailed comments will also be accepted, using the contact information provided below. The County has also developed a website for the project. Visitors to the website may provide comments there, and the site will also contain useful information that will be updated as the project moves forward. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. Please include the name, phone number, and address of your organization's contact person with your response. **Please note that the NOP review/response period will be December 2, 2008 through January 9, 2009.**

All comments should be directed to:
County of Riverside
Department of Facilities Management
ATTN: Ms. Claudia Steiding
P.O. Box 1468
Riverside, CA 92502-1468
Email: SAFERSTREETS@co.riverside.ca.us
Website: <http://saferstreets.countyofriverside.us>

Attachments:


- A. Project Location Map
- B. Phase 1 Site Plan
- C. Phase 1 Staffing and Operations
- D. Buildout Site Plan
- E. Buildout Estimated Staffing and Operations
- F. Frequently Asked Questions

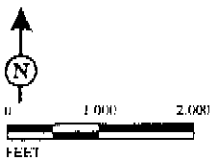


LSA

ATTACHMENT A

LEGEND

 Project Boundary



SOURCE: USGS 7.5' QUAD - WHITEWATER W8, CALIF.
 [D:\MJ0704\GIS\Figure 1_VEG1.mxd (11/26/2008)

Riverside County Regional Detention Center
 Regional and Project Location Map

Attachment C: Table A – RDC Phase I Staffing and Operations

Section	Hours	Number of Staff	Day of week	Schedule type
Administration	0730-1700	22	Monday-Friday	9/80
Security - Floor Operations	0545-1815	62	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1745-0615	62	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
Kitchen	0200-1100	10	Sunday-Saturday	9/80
	1000-1930	12	Sunday-Saturday	9/80
Warehouse/Support Services	0400-1630	5	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	0600-1630	8	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
Medical & Mental Health	0700-1900	32	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1900-0700	13	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1500-2300	2	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0800-1700	12	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0700-1630	3	Monday-Friday	5/8
Maintenance	0700-1700	8	Monday-Friday	9/80
	0700-1700	2	Saturday-Sunday	9/80
Transportation	0300-1100	12	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0430-1230	12	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0600-1400	12	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0700-1700	13	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0930-1730	18	Monday-Friday	5/8
	1230-2230	7	Monday-Friday	5/8
Business Office	0445-1715	15	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1645-0515	15	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	0900-1800	12	Monday-Friday	9/80
Classification	0500-1730	5	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1700-0530	5	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	0500-1730	5	Monday-Thursday	12/84
	0300-1200	3	Monday-Friday	9/80
	0500-1500	10	Monday-Friday	9/80
	1000-2230	7	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	0800-1700	5	Sunday-Saturday	9/80
Immigration Unit (ICE)	0430-1700	3	Monday-Friday	12/84
	1300-0130	3	Monday-Friday	12/84
TOTAL Staff		415		

*Schedule Types

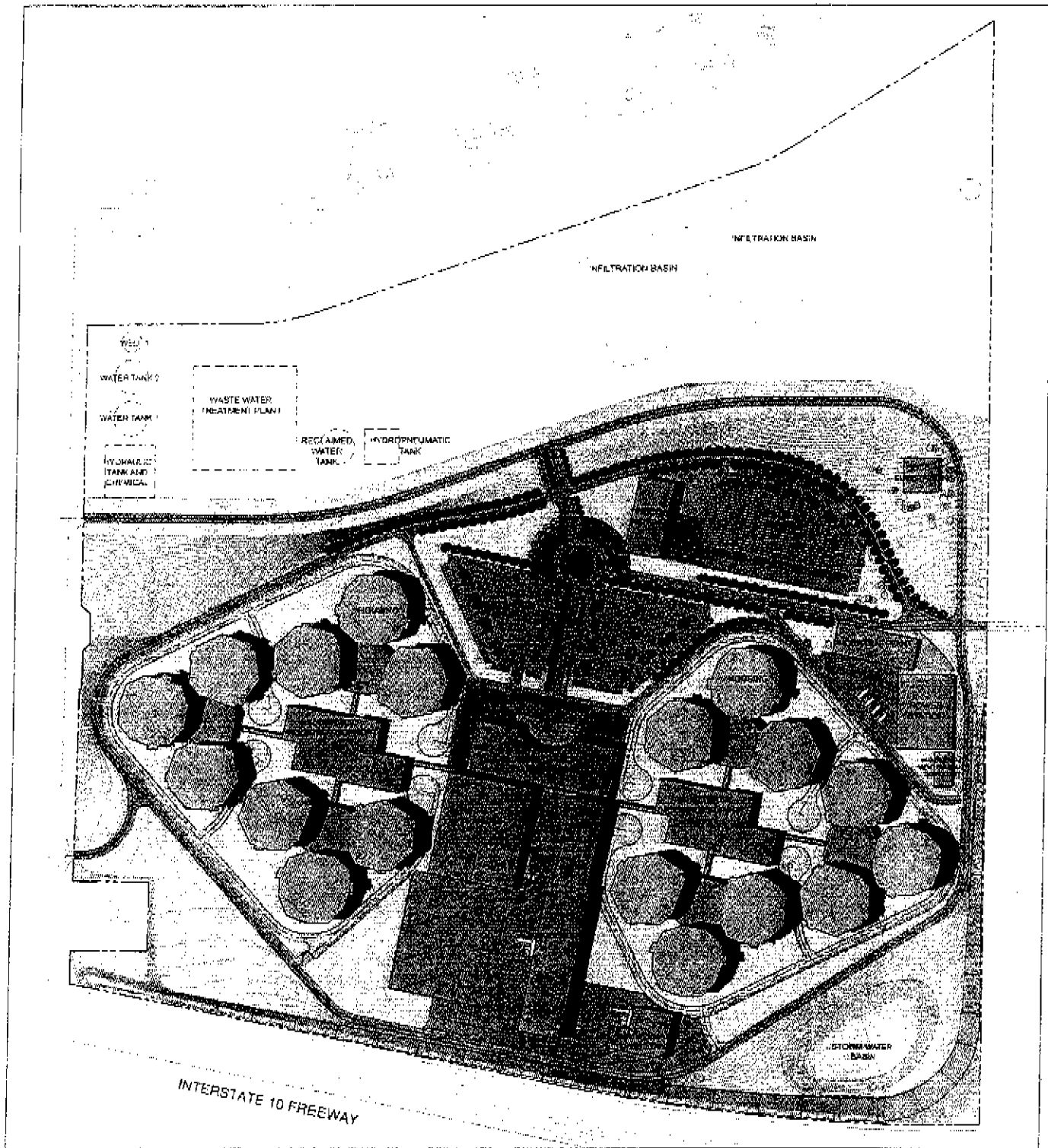
4/10 = Four 10 hour days per week (80 hour pay period)

9/80 = Four 9 hour days per week + 1 eight hour day every other week. (80 hour pay period)

12/84 = Three 12 hour days per week + 1 twelve hour day every other week. (84 hour pay period)

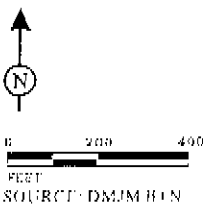
5/8 = Five 8 hour days per week. (80 hour pay period)

Note: These are preliminary estimates for the staffing levels for Phase I. Subsequent refinements will occur and the staffing numbers may increase or decrease.



LSA

ATTACHMENT D



Riverside County Regional Detention Center
Master Site Plan

P:\05430704\G\Master.cdr (11/25/08)

Attachment E: Table B – Estimated Staffing and Operations for RDC Buildout

Section	Hours	Number of Staff	Day of week	Schedule type
Administration	0730-1700	78	Monday-Friday	9/80
Security - Floor Operations	0545-1815	222	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1745-0615	222	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
Kitchen	0200-1100	36	Sunday-Saturday	9/80
	1000-1930	42	Sunday-Saturday	9/80
Warehouse/Support Services	0400-1630	18	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	0600-1630	30	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
Medical & Mental Health	0700-1900	114	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1900-0700	48	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1500-2300	6	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0800-1700	42	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0700-1630	12	Monday-Friday	5/8
Maintenance	0700-1700	30	Monday-Friday	9/80
	0700-1700	6	Saturday-Sunday	9/80
Transportation	0300-1100	42	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0430-1230	42	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0600-1400	42	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0700-1700	48	Monday-Friday	5/8
	0930-1730	66	Monday-Friday	5/8
	1230-2230	24	Monday-Friday	5/8
Business Office	0445-1715	54	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1645-0515	54	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	0900-1800	42	Monday-Friday	9/80
Classification	0500-1730	18	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	1700-0530	18	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	0500-1730	18	Monday-Thursday	12/84
	0300-1200	12	Monday-Friday	9/80
	0500-1500	36	Monday-Friday	9/80
	1000-2230	24	Sunday-Saturday	12/84
	0800-1700	18	Sunday-Saturday	9/80
Immigration Unit (ICE)	0430-1700	12	Monday-Friday	12/84
	1300-0130	12	Monday-Friday	12/84
TOTAL		1,488		

***Schedule Types**

4/10 = Four 10 hour days per week (80 hour pay period)

9/80 = Four 9 hour days per week + 1 eight hour day every other week. (80 hour pay period)

12/84 = Three 12 hour days per week + 1 twelve hour day every other week. (84 hour pay period)

5/8 = Five 8 hour days per week. (80 hour pay period)

Note: These are preliminary estimates for the staffing levels for detention center buildout. Subsequent refinements will occur and the staffing numbers may increase or decrease.

ATTACHMENT F



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

RIVERSIDE COUNTY: SAFEGUARDING OUR COMMUNITIES

WHY DO WE NEED A NEW DETENTION CENTER?

A federal injunction requires the Riverside County Sheriff's Department to release inmates when jails are at capacity. As a result, the sheriff's department has been forced each year to release thousands of inmates - convicted criminals who have victimized our residents and communities - before their sentences are served. In 2007, more than 6,000 inmates were released early, some serving just a few days of a year-long sentence. Without a new detention center, the early release of inmates will continue to place our residents at greater risk for crime.

HOW BIG WILL THE DETENTION CENTER BE?

As many as 2,000 beds are planned for the first phase of construction. Decades down the road the facility may house up to 7,200 jail beds. At build out, the center will employ about 1,500 deputies and support personnel.

WILL I BE SAFE WITH A DETENTION CENTER NEARBY?

A study for the nonpartisan Senate Office of Research in California found that communities near correctional facilities tend to have lower crime rates than those without them. Inmates will not be booked into or released from the detention center. Several layers of state-of-the-art security will ensure inmates stay locked up and that nearby neighborhoods remain safe. The priority is to protect our residents and communities.

WILL INMATES OVERWHELM OUR COMMUNITY?

No. In fact, inmates will not be booked into or released from the center, but will be transported to other jail sites for release. Inmates will have no direct contact with visitors in order to restrict contraband. Visitors will only communicate with inmates by video camera from a remote location on the jail site. The vast majority of inmate activity will occur inside the detention center.

WHY BUILD THIS IN THE WHITEWATER AREA AND NOT FARTHER AWAY?

The county looked at 30 sites to determine the best location for the new detention center. The proposed location was chosen in an effort to minimize environmental effects and because of its close proximity to Interstate 10, its ability to serve courts in both ends of the county, and its sparsely populated surroundings.

HOW WILL THE DETENTION CENTER BENEFIT OUR COMMUNITY?

The detention center will create hundreds of new construction and public safety and support jobs. Although new roads, water lines and fire safety improvements are intended to serve the project specifically, they also offer benefits for surrounding neighborhoods.

TIMELINE:

The environmental review report is expected to go to the Riverside County Board of Supervisors for consideration in the first quarter of 2009.

Where Are We In The CEQA Process?

- ◆ Notice of Preparation sent to Responsible and Trustee Agencies
- Responses to Notice of Preparation sent to Lead Agency (30 days from acceptance).
- ◆ Preliminary Administrative draft EIR prepared. Independent review by Lead Agency.
- ◆ Draft EIR completed.
- ◆ Notice of Completion filed with OPR. Public Notice of Availability published.
- Public Review of draft EIR (45 days).
- ◆ Written comments received.
- ◆ Responses to comments prepared and included as part of Final EIR.
- Responses sent to commenting agencies (10 days before decision by Lead Agency).
- ◆ Final EIR certified by Lead Agency.
- ◆ Lead Agency makes decision on project.
 - ◆ Findings written and adopted.
 - ◆ Mitigation reporting and monitoring program adopted.
- Notice of Determination filed (5 days from approval.)
- Notice of Determination posted (24 hours from filing).

- ◆ CEQA process actions
- CEQA process actions with time constraints

Riverside County Regional Detention Center EIR
Tentative Schedule

Notice of Preparation	Dec. 2, 2008 – Feb. 9, 2009
Public Information Meeting	Jan. 8, 2009
Technical Reports Preparation	Oct. 2008-Jan. 2009
Draft EIR Circulation (45 days)	Mar. 2009 – Apr. 2009
Public Meeting on Draft EIR	To be announced
Preparation of Final EIR	Spring 2009
Board of Supervisors Hearing on Final EIR	To be announced

COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

DATE: January 26, 2009
TO: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
FROM: Jacob Alvarez, Management Analyst *JA*
THROUGH: Aurora Wilson, Director *AW*
Department of Community Resources
RE: Letter of Support – Proposed Riverside County Regional Detention Center

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Executive Committee approve a Letter of Support to the County Board of Supervisors to be signed by the Chair for the proposed Riverside County Detention Center in the Whitewater area.

Public Safety Committee: Concurs (1/12/2009).

BACKGROUND: On Monday, January 12, 2009 a presentation on the proposed Riverside County Regional Detention Center was given by Sheriff Stan Sniff. The presentation covered the County's needs for 1,724 new jail beds per the County Corrections Master Plan; the jail site, and facilities.

Following discussion, the Public Safety Committee took action and unanimously approved a recommendation that a Letter of Support to the County Board of Supervisors be drafted for consideration and action by the Executive Committee.

Attached is the draft Letter of Support for your consideration.

FISCAL ANALYSIS: There is no impact to the General Fund. This is information only.

Attachments: Notice of Preparation for a Draft Environmental Impact Report

CVAG

COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

Blythe • Cathedral City • Coachella • Desert Hot Springs • Indran Wells • Indio • La Quinta • Palm Desert • Palm Springs • Rancho Mirage
County of Riverside • Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians • Cabazon Band of Mission Indians • Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

January 26, 2008

County of Riverside
Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Jeff Stone, Chairman
4080 Lemon Street, 5th Floor
Riverside, CA 92502-1647

**RE: Letter of Support for the Riverside County Regional Detention Center in the
Whitewater Area.**

Dear Chairman Stone:

May this Letter of Support serve as endorsement by the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) for the proposed Riverside County Regional Detention Center located in the Whitewater area.

On Monday, January 12, 2009 the Coachella Valley Association of Governments Public Safety Committee met. On their agenda, at the request of Sheriff Stan Sniff, was an item regarding the proposed Riverside County Regional Detention Center. A presentation was done by Sheriff Sniff and Chief Deputy Steve Thetford. There were questions and discussion by the Committee. Following this, the Committee took action to unanimously request that the Executive Committee sign a Letter of Support to the Board of Supervisors for the proposed Riverside County Regional Detention Center in the Whitewater area.

The CVAG Executive Committee, consisting of the mayors from the member jurisdictions, members of the Board of Supervisors and tribal leaders, met on Monday, January 26, 2009 and took up this item with action to approve the Letter of Support.

Should you have any questions, feel free to contact me or CVAG staff, Jacob Alvarez, at (760) 346-1127. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Eduardo Garcia
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Marion Ashley, Fifth District
The Honorable Roy Wilson, Fourth District
The Honorable John Tavaglione, Second District
The Honorable Bob Buster, First District