

MOTION NO. 8006

A MOTION authorizing a consultant study to evaluate the causes of the increasing maximum detention population in the department of youth services (DYS) and to identify program options for meeting the needs of the population.

WHEREAS, the operation of the juvenile detention facility is based on a Continuum of Care philosophy, which emphasizes placing youth in DYS custody in the least restrictive form of detention, and

WHEREAS, the executive and the county council in 1987 approved a capacity plan for the new facility which assumed the implementation of the Continuum of Care philosophy, and

WHEREAS, population in the juvenile detention facility has recorded a steady increase well beyond the projected capacity plan or estimated population figures for 1989 and 1990, which were prepared prior to the bond sale authorizing the construction of the new facility, and

WHEREAS, the Continuum of Care Program and the capacity plan addressed only the detention needs of juvenile offenders and the community, and not the health and social needs of offenders, and

WHEREAS, preliminary data from the department indicate that the types of offense and youth in the facility differ from the assumptions included in the population estimates of several years ago, and

WHEREAS, King County needs additional data and needs to identify options to enable the implementation of operating programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

The King County Executive is hereby authorized to initiate a consultant study, under the detailed scope of study as outlined in the accompanying document marked Attachment A.

PASSED this 30<sup>th</sup> day of July, 1990

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Lois North  
Chair

ATTEST:

Gerald A. Peterson  
Clerk of the Council

Statement of the Problem:

King County is building a new juvenile detention facility that will open in 1992. When planning for the facility took place several years ago, the County Executive and Council approved a mission statement for the Department of Youth Services (DYS). The mission statement is based on a "continuum of care" philosophy, which emphasizes placing youth in DHS custody in the least restrictive form of detention. The Continuum of Care program that was developed provides a range of detention options for pre-trial youth, consisting of community detention (home detention, electronic monitoring, foster care, and group homes) and maximum secure detention.

In 1987, the Executive and the Council also approved a capacity plan for the new facility. Consistent with the Department's mission statement, the capacity plan assumed full implementation of community detention as part of the Continuum of Care program. Since 1986, however, the juvenile detention population has increased dramatically and is significantly higher than the projections assumed in the capacity plan. The county does not know why there is a significant discrepancy between where we are now and where we thought we would be when we planned for the new youth detention facility.

The Continuum of Care Program and the capacity plan addressed only the detention needs of juvenile offenders and the community, and not the many other needs of juvenile offenders, such as the need for substance abuse, mental health, and socialization programs. A full continuum of care program, including program alternatives which address the multitude of needs of juvenile offenders has not yet been developed.

Purpose and Scope of Study:

The purpose of this study is to answer the following questions:

- o What contributed to the increase in the juvenile detention population between 1986 and 1989?
- o Can King County expect this increase to continue?
- o What is the population impact if additional policy changes are enacted, such as re-criminilization of status offenders?
- o What programs should be available to meet the needs of juvenile offenders?

In order to answer these questions, the consultant should design the study to address the following factors, in addition to any other factors the consultant believes are relevant:

- (1) An analysis of the changes in the juvenile offender population between 1986 and 1989:

- Are juveniles committing more and/or more serious crimes?
  - Are police presenting more youth for detention? Are these youth different? How?
  - Have the characteristics of the detention population changed?
  - Has average length of stay changed? If so, how?
  - Have legislative changes affected the juvenile offender population? If so, how?
- (2) An analysis of the impact the various actors in the system have on the juvenile offender population:
- What roles do the police, DYS staff, the prosecuting attorney, the public defenders, the judges and others play in impacting the juvenile offender population?
  - Have these roles changed since 1986? If so, how?
- (3) An analysis of potential policy changes that could impact the juvenile detention population:
- What policies are being considered by DYS, the judges, the police, the Department of Juvenile Rehabilitation and the State Legislature?
  - How would these policies affect the detention population?
- (4) A needs analysis of the detention population:
- What are the needs of juvenile offenders in detention?
  - What deficiencies exist in the programs currently available?
  - What program alternatives should be available or need to be created which meet the rehabilitative and many other needs of juvenile offenders?