

This document is an extract of a larger publication.

civilgrandjury.org is a project of UnGovr.org, a US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to government transparency and public accountability.



INQUIRY INTO CORRECTIONAL, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COURT FACILITIES IN MONTEREY COUNTY

INTRODUCTION

Section 919(b) of the California Penal Code states that each Civil Grand Jury “shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county”. To fulfill that requirement, the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury (Jury) toured the two state correctional facilities located in Soledad, California. In addition, the Jury toured the Monterey County Jail and Juvenile Hall both located in Salinas, California. To complete the Jury’s tours of places of incarceration ten of twelve city police departments and the Monterey County Superior Court in Salinas were visited to inspect their holding cells.¹

In Monterey County the State of California operates:

- Salinas Valley State Prison (SVSP) in Soledad
- Correctional Training Facility (CTF) in Soledad

The holding cells located at the Salinas Superior Courthouse are operated by the Monterey County Sheriff.

The city of Monterey operates a type I detention facility/jail ².

Although the Grand Jury is not required to make recommendations for changes in any of these facilities, this Jury has chosen to inquire into the condition of correctional, law enforcement and court facilities in the county and provide a short summary of its observations.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

In the tours of the state correctional facilities, the Jury was impressed by the range and availability of education and vocational programs accessible to inmates for obtaining employable skills upon their release. Also notable during tours was the attention given to the dining facilities and to providing proper nutrition for the inmates. The general impression was that the facilities were clean and well maintained.

Construction of a 576-bed expansion to the Monterey County Jail commenced on September 18, 2017. The new addition to the county jail will bring total capacity to approximately 1,400 beds. Jail capacity fluctuates for a variety of reasons, including individual inmate cells required for

¹ Del Rey Oaks and Sand City are the two smallest communities in the county. Their police departments are small and do not contain jails or holding cells. The Jury did not visit these police departments, but they were contacted by telephone and email to verify facts.

² Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities”; Title 15-Crime Prevention and Corrections, Division 1, Chapter 1, Subchapter 4, Page 12.

security reasons. At the time of the Jury's visit, the inmate population was 875. Because of the variable prison population in the jail and uncertain funding for increased staffing, a specific plan of how the space in the old facility would be used in the future had not been finalized. In a subsequent interview, officials at the County Jail emphasized that continuing to increase program services and inmate mental health would be among the priorities being considered.

Some of the program services discussed were:

- Education: GED, junior college and vocational/technical
- Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation
- Religious Services

The state prisons and the county jail have sally ports, which provide additional security when transferring prisoners between the facilities and transport vehicles.

On May 17, 2017, construction began on a new juvenile hall with a capacity of 120 beds. This will replace the existing facility with 114 beds that was constructed in 1959. An addition to that building was constructed in 1984 and will continue to be used. The older section is scheduled for demolition after the new facility has been completed. This project is the culmination of an effort that has taken years to bring to fulfillment. It will provide the juvenile offenders, the staff and the administration with an environment that offers dignity and respect as well as safety and security.

CITY POLICE DEPARTMENTS

The Jury visited ten of the twelve city police departments throughout the county and noted such things as perimeter security, holding cells, sally ports and the age and overall condition of the facilities. Three of the facilities were constructed in the 1950s, two in the 1960s and four in the 1970s. As indicated below, two of these older facilities are scheduled to be renovated or replaced. City police department statistics can be found in Addendum A.

The City of Carmel has approved renovations to its police department facility.

The City of Salinas has approved funding for a new police department building to replace the old and inadequate building.

The Greenfield Police Department occupies modern quarters in a section of the recently constructed municipal building. Due to funding constraints, some final steps, such as completion of the holding cells, remain to be completed at the time of the Jury's visit. The facility appears to have been planned to meet both the present and future needs of the Greenfield Police Department.

Five of the twelve city departments have the security of a sally port. At least one department previously had a sally port that was eliminated when space was needed for department staff.

The Jury has not made reports on all of these facilities. However, a separate report has been made on the City of Monterey Police Department's facilities.³ That report highlights some of the limitations inherent in a sixty-year-old structure.

SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE – SALINAS

The Monterey County Sheriff operates holding cells. The Courthouse has a sally port for the secure transfer of prisoners.

SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE – SOUTH MONTEREY COUNTY

The 2013⁴ closure of the King City Courthouse placed a burden on South Monterey County police departments, all of which have a small number of sworn officers. A copy of the closure notice can be found in Appendix B.

A concern expressed by several of these police departments was the strain on local police coverage when officers transport those arrested to the county jail and the courthouse, both of which are located in Salinas. The departments also noted the amount of time required for these transports. South County jurors, witnesses and trial attendees are also adversely affected by the increased distance.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Since the comprehensive report of the 2016 –2017 Civil Grand Jury was issued, many improvements have been made to the corrections and law enforcement facilities in Monterey County. Construction of a major addition to the county jail is underway, the juvenile hall has broken ground on a new facility, the City of Salinas has approved a new building for its police department and Carmel is in the early stages of planning an upgrade to the facility housing its police department.

The Jury commends the citizens of Monterey County and the Monterey County Board of Supervisors for their willingness to provide for these essential changes. In particular, the Jury commends the senior leadership of the Probation Department for its dedication to the well-being of the youths residing at juvenile hall, and their unflagging determination to build a new facility. We also commend the efforts of the Sheriff's Department to complete the design and commence construction of the new addition to the County Jail.

More work remains to be done. Renovations will be necessary for the continued use of some areas of the existing county jail. Law enforcement facilities in Monterey and Seaside are over sixty years old. The police departments in King City, Pacific Grove and Soledad occupy facilities

³ City of Monterey Police Department – Monterey Civil Grand Jury 2017-18 Report

⁴ <http://www.monterey.courts.ca.gov/Documents/News/2013-Public-Notice-KC-temp-Closure-Notice.pdf>

that are forty or more years old. While the Jury found the maintenance and cleanliness of these older facilities to be good, they were not designed to meet the needs of current population and staffing levels. Finally, the closure of the South County Courthouse has placed a considerable burden on the law enforcement entities of the southern part of the county.

GLOSSARY

CTF – Correctional Training Facility in Soledad

Holding Cells – “Temporary Holding facility”⁵ means a local detention facility constructed after January 1, 1978, used for the confinement of persons for 24 hours or less pending release, transfer to another facility, or appearance in court

Jury – Monterey County Civil Grand Jury

Sally Port - A secure entryway (as at a prison) that consists of the enclosed space between two locked doors or gates that must be traversed to enter the unit. The doors cannot be opened at the same time to reduce risk of flight

SVSP – Salinas Valley State Prison in Soledad

⁵ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>

APPENDIX A
Statistics City Police Departments in Monterey County

	Year	Authorized		Officers	Number of	
City	Building	Police	City	Per 1000	Holding	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Built</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Residents</u> 6	<u>Cells</u>	<u>Sally port</u>
Carmel	1967 ⁷	15	3,938	3.81	1	No
Del Rey Oaks	1953	8	1,650	4.85	0	No
Greenfield	2011	23	16,929	1.36	0	Yes
Gonzales	2010	10	8,440	1.18	2	No ⁸
King City	1978	17	13,581	1.25	4	Yes
Marina	1993	29	21,688	1.34	2	No
Monterey	1956	53	28,454	1.86	7	No
Pacific Grove	1974	22	15,504	1.42	3	Yes
Salinas	1966 ⁹	174	157,218	1.11	3	No
Seaside	1954	42	31,342	1.34	4	Yes
Sand City	1970 ¹⁰	13	383	33.94	0	No
Soledad	1970's	17	25,336	0.67	2	Yes ¹¹

⁶ In California, the average ratio of sworn officers per 1,000 residents is 2.32

<http://www.governing.com/gov-data/safety-justice/police-officers-per-capita-rates-employment-for-city-departments.html>

⁷ A plan for the renovation of the existing facility was approved in 2017.

⁸ The original plan was to have a covered and secure sally port, but the plan was scaled back at the time of construction to reduce costs.

⁹ The new building project is being finalized. Construction bids are next. It is expected that the building will be finished and ready for occupancy in early 2019.

¹⁰ The original building was constructed in 1970. It was upgraded in 1993.

¹¹ The original building was constructed in the 1970s. It was upgraded in the 1990s. There is an uncovered sally port that is partially secured by a chain link fence.

APPENDIX B



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF MONTEREY

PUBLIC NOTICE*

TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF KING CITY COURTHOUSE EFFECTIVE MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2013

Pending the restoration of funding by the State for the new South County Courthouse project, the King City Courthouse will temporarily close effective Monday, September 23, 2013. Without an immediate remedy to the current facility's limitations combined with the need to maximize resources, the Court has decided to temporarily close the King City Courthouse. King City personnel will be reassigned to fill court-wide vacancies. At this time, it is unknown when the funding for the South County Courthouse construction project will be restored.

Locally, the funding allocation has decreased by 17.5% from 2008, which represents approximately \$10 million over the past five years. Recently the State and Assembly Budget Subcommittees announced their support to reinvest in the Judicial Branch. While the proposed reinvestment will assist in reducing the deficit, it will not remedy the devastating impacts of previous State reductions.

Upon the temporary closure of the King City Courthouse, all misdemeanor and felony cases will be heard at the Salinas Courthouse and all traffic and small claims matters will be heard at the Marina Courthouse. Court location details and public service hours are detailed below and can be viewed online at http://www.monterey.courts.ca.gov/General_Information/Locations.aspx.



Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.