

## **APPENDIX R: SURVEY OF REGIONAL JAILS IN THE UNITED STATES**

*The following pages are drawn, with permission, from a larger report that was developed for three counties in Southern Michigan.<sup>1</sup> The survey was conducted by Luminosity, Inc. under contract to CRS Inc. The complete report is available at the UPCAP web site: [www.upcap.org](http://www.upcap.org)*

### **Methodology**

Extensive research was conducted on the topic of regional jails in the United States as a part of the current feasibility study. The comprehensive research included information on regional jails generally as well as key evaluation criteria and other critical factors to be considered by the committee that is assessing the feasibility of a Western Michigan Regional Jail.

Initial research efforts included:

1. Review of all regional jail materials provided by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC)
2. Consultation with the NIC jails division staff including an interview with Fran Zandi, Jails Division Correctional Program Specialist
3. Review of all regional jail related articles published in *American Jail* magazine by the American Jail Association (AJA) between 1987 and 2006
4. Review of *Who's Who in Jail Management*, 5th Edition, a jail directory published in 2007 by the American Jails Association, containing the most current information available on 3,163 jails in the United States
5. Searching LexisNexis to identify news articles related to regional jails published over the past 2 years
6. Analysis of laws in all 50 states regarding statutes related to regional jails
7. Review of academic journal articles on the topic of regional jails identified through the resources of a university library and
8. Implementation of an exhaustive Internet search for online information related to regional jails

The initial research identified:

- 80 existing regional jails in 22 states
- 14 regional jail projects in 11 states currently under consideration or recently abandoned
- Statutes authorizing or related to regional jails in 19 states, and
- 33 journal articles and other publications

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Jail Feasibility Study for Allegan, Kalamazoo and Kent Counties, Michigan. CRS Inc. in association with Luminosity Inc., Gettysburg PA. December 2008.

The research results were used to develop and implement a survey of all identified regional jails (80) in the United States. The survey presented 28 questions related to regional jail development, implementation, and operation. In addition, current regional development entities were surveyed, as were recently abandoned regional jail projects.

There is no single source that identifies all regional jails. This research identified 80 regional jail facilities, spanning the country and located in most geographic areas. The 80 regional jails are located in 22 states:

- Alaska (2)
- Arkansas (2)
- Georgia (1)
- Idaho (1)
- Illinois (1)
- Kentucky (5)
- Maine (1)
- Minnesota (4)
- Mississippi (8)
- Missouri (1)
- Montana (2)
- North Carolina (1)
- North Dakota (2)
- Ohio (4)
- Oregon (1)
- South Carolina (2)
- South Dakota (1)
- Texas (1)
- Vermont (3)
- Virginia (25)
- Washington (2)
- West Virginia (10)

Figure R-1 displays the regional jails by state.

**Figure R-1: Regional Jails By State**



A comprehensive survey was developed which consists of 28 items designed to elicit from respondents detailed information about the development,

implementation, and operation of their regional jail and to form a comprehensive picture of regional jails in America.

The survey was mailed with a letter of introduction to all 80 regional jails. Survey participants were provided with three options to submit the survey: mail, fax, or online using the Luminosity Survey Research Center [<http://src.luminosity-solutions.com>].

Of the 80 jails surveyed, 43<sup>2</sup> facilities (54%) located in 15 states completed the survey. The survey results were reviewed and analyzed and a summary provided below.

### **Summary of Survey Findings**

The following narrative summarizes the findings from the 43 jails that responded to the survey.

#### **Organizational Structure**

The National Institute of Corrections categorizes regional consolidated jails into seven different organizational structures:

- Type I - A consortium of jurisdictions which agree to operate a regional facility for both pretrial and sentenced inmates, with shared control by a jail board drawn from the participating bodies, as well as joint pro rata funding. In this arrangement, there are no other jail facilities in the participating jurisdiction.  
(27 facilities)
- Type II - The same arrangement as Type I except that some jurisdictions in the consortium also maintain their own local facilities for pretrial inmates.  
(2 facilities)
- Type III - A multi-jurisdictional facility exclusively for certain sentenced offenders; the participating jurisdictions also continue to operate their own jails for both pretrial and sentenced inmates. (2 facilities)
- Type IV - A multi-jurisdictional facility holding both pretrial and sentenced inmates; some jurisdictions in the consortium continue to operate their own jails. (5 facilities)
- Type V - A locally operated facility which accepts referrals from other participating jurisdictions and the state, generally for work release; all

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<sup>2</sup> One respondent was the Southwest Regional Jail Authority, headquartered in Meadowville, Virginia, which operates four facilities—in Haysi, Tazewell, Abingdon, and Duffield. Another respondent was the West Virginia Regional Jail Authority which operates ten facilities across the state.

jurisdictions are charged a fee-for-service for all persons confined in the regional unit. (1 facility)

- Type VI - A single jurisdiction accepts pretrial and/or sentenced inmates on a set fee-for-service basis, with total control remaining with the operating jurisdiction. (4 facilities)
- Type VII - Consolidated city-county jurisdiction. (No facilities)

The first four types are all variations of structure in which two or more localities operate a regional jail with none, some, or all of the entities maintaining local jails. These types are recognized as more traditional regional jails while types V, VI, and VII generally are not. Figure R-2 compares and contrasts the characteristics of the seven types of regional structures.

**Figure R-2: Characteristics of Seven Types of Regional Structures**

Type	Operated By	Maintain Local Jails?	Type of Inmates Housed		Accept Other Jurisdictions?	Number of Facilities
			Pretrial	Sentenced		
I	Consortium	None	Yes	Yes		27
II	Consortium	All	Yes	No		2
III	Consortium	All	No	Yes		2
IV	Consortium	Some	Yes	Yes		5
V	One County	NA	No	Yes	State	1
VI	One County	NA	Yes	Yes		4
VII	City/County	NA	Yes	Yes		0

Nearly two-thirds of all regional jails characterize their facilities as type I, serving two or more jurisdictions and operated by a representative board or authority, with no other jails being operated in the participating jurisdictions. Type IV is the second most common structure, a multi-jurisdictional facility holding both pretrial and sentenced inmates with some jurisdictions in the consortium continuing to operate their own jails. Four facilities reported being type VI, two facilities as type II, two as type III and one facility as type V. No type VII arrangements were reported.

Figure R-3 (two pages) presents key characteristics of the jails that responded to the survey.

**Figure R-3: Summary of Characteristics for 43 Regional Jails (Part 1)**

Facility Name	State	Capacity	Number of Gov Entities	Public Private	Profit or Non Profit	NIC #	Construction Subsidy?	Operating Subsidy?	Male	Female	Low	Med.	High	Spec. Needs
Beadle County Regional Corr. Ctr.	SD	60		Public	Non- Profit	V I			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Southside Regional Jail	VA	100	2	Public	Non- Profit	I	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Southwest Multi- County Correction Center	ND	118	6	Public	Non- Profit	I			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Middle Peninsula Regional Security Center	VA	121	5	Public	Non- Profit	I	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Northern Oregon Regional Corrections	OR	150	4	Public	Non- Profit				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
NortheastRegional Corrections Center	MN	150	5	Public	Non- Profit	II I			Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Kentuck River Regional Jail	KY	154	2	Public	Non- Profit	I V			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tri-County Regional Jail	OH	160	3	Public	Non- Profit	I			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mini-Cassia Criminal Justice	ID	172	2	Privat e	<b>Profit</b>	I			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Multi-County Correctional Center	OH	178	2	Public	Non- Profit	I			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Northwest Regional Corrections Center	MN	188	3	Public	Non- Profit	II			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Two Bridges Regional Jail	ME	209	2	Public	Non- Profit	I			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Central Virginia Regional Jail	VA	246		Public	Non- Profit	I	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Daviess/DeKalb County Regional Jail	MO	280	2	Public	<b>Profit</b>	I	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail	VA	290	4	Public	Non- Profit	I	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
South Fulton Municipal Regional Jail	GA	323	2	Public	Non- Profit	I			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N



### Number of Participating Localities

The number of localities that participated in each regional jail varied. The most common situation for a regional jail is one where two or more municipalities—usually counties—share one regional facility. The majority of regional jails serve three or four localities; a few had only two participating localities. The most municipalities that one regional jail served were seven, as at the Riverside Regional Jail in Virginia. Situations that are less typical are found in West Virginia and Mississippi. West Virginia operates within a statewide authority; therefore its 10 facilities serve all 55 counties. In Mississippi, regional jails serve all the cities within a single county and also house state inmates.

### Public vs. Private Ownership and Operation

All 43 regional jails that responded to the survey are publicly owned and operated. Three facilities reported that they were “revenue generating,” charging per diems to house state and federal inmates and inmates from other counties. Typically, the revenue is used to offset the cost of operating the regional jail.

### Geographical Area Served

The area served by the regional jails range from approximately 150 sq. mi. (Hampton Roads Regional Jail in Virginia and Georgia’s South Fulton Municipal Regional Jail) to approximately 14,000 sq. mi. (Northwest Regional Corrections Center in Minnesota). West Virginia’s 10 facilities serve the entire state (24,230 sq. mi.).

### Year Built

Of the 30 regional jails that reported the year the facility was built, three were built or converted to a regional facility in the 1970’s (1976 and 1977), two in the 1980’s, 18 in the 1990’s and 7 since the year 2000.

### Rated Capacity

Rated capacity varies significantly in regional jails across the country. The average rated capacity of the respondent jails, excluding West Virginia, is 133. The rated capacities ranged from 60 beds (Beadle County Regional Correctional Center in South Dakota) to 1,250 (Hampton Roads Regional Jail in Virginia).

### Types of Inmates Housed

Because nearly two-thirds of the responding regional jails have only one central facility that serves all of the participating localities (no separate local jails) it is not surprising that more than three-fourths hold all types of inmates, including male, female, all risk levels (low, medium, high), pretrial, sentenced, and special needs. Five facilities hold all types of inmates excluding special needs while two additional facilities hold all types of inmates except classifications of high risk and

special needs. One facility holds only inmates that are male, low risk, and sentenced.

### Primary Form of Inmate Supervision

Three primary inmate supervision forms were identified: (1) linear intermittent; (2) podular -indirect supervision; and (3) podular - direct supervision. Nearly half (48%) reported their primary form of inmate supervision was podular – direct supervision. Sixteen percent reported linear indirect, 16% reported podular – indirect, and 20% reported a relatively even combination of podular direct and indirect supervision.

### Legal Authority

In nearly every case, a regional jail is enabled by state statute. Laws in 19 states—Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia—were identified, providing a comprehensive survey of regional jails’ statutory authority and legal enactment across the country.

There appear to be four primary ways that regional jails are legally enabled:

1. Statutes enabling two or more municipalities to create either a regional jail or regional jail authority
2. Statutes allowing for two or more municipalities to create inter-local cooperative agreements
3. Statutes defining a regional jail as one in which a county or city jail contracts with the state Department of Corrections to house state inmates (MS)
4. Statutes that specifically name municipalities that are to participate in a regional jail.

#### *Regional Jail Authority Statutes*

The most common type of statutes are ones in which two or more cities, counties, or municipalities are permitted either to participate in a regional jail or form a regional jail authority, the purpose of which is to operate a regional jail.

### Inmate Transportation

Inmate transportation varies from facility to facility, often reflecting the type of facility and types of inmates housed. In localities where there is only the regional jail and no other locally operated jails, inmate transport is done by the arresting agency to the jail and by a jail transport team after initial admission. Several facilities that hold pretrial inmates reported using video arraignment equipment to reduce court transports.

### Site Selection Decision Making Process

The site selection process for the location of each regional jail was somewhat unique to the circumstances of each system; however, common elements and themes were identified as part of the reported site selection processes. These criteria included the following:

1. Central location
2. Proximity to all participating jurisdictions including law enforcement, courthouses, and service providers
3. Appropriate zoning, non-residential
4. Available county owned land
5. County owned land with room for expansion
6. Largest participating county

### Construction Funding

Several different methods were used to finance the construction of regional jails. The majority of regional jails funded their construction through a type of municipal bond or a revenue bond issued by the regional jail authority. Some regional jails received 50% reimbursement of capital costs from the state (Virginia and Ohio). Two jails received federal and state grants to build their facilities. One regional jail was built using reserve funds while another facility—Daviess/DeKalb County Regional Jail in Pattonsburg, Missouri—financed their facility through a half-percent sales tax increase in each of the participating jurisdictions. The West Virginia Regional Jail and Correctional Authority utilized their state-mandated bonding power.

### Factors That Prompted the Development of the Regional Facility

The regional jails that responded to the survey provided information regarding the factors that prompted them to develop a regional jail. An analysis of the information revealed six primary reasons, listed below by frequency reported:

1. Condition of current facilities - described as obsolete, antiquated, in the process of being condemned, deteriorating, poor, and did not meet standards
2. Additional bed space needs - due to crowding and future projected need
3. Improvements required by federal and/or circuit court order
4. Financial incentives – more cost effective, state match, grants
5. No current jail
6. Desired programming space – educational and industries

Most regional jails were developed to respond to one or more of these factors.

### Notable Obstacles to the Regional Jail Development Process

The regional jails that responded to the survey provided information regarding significant obstacles that needed to be overcome during the development process. Seven primary obstacles were described:

1. Citizen opposition to facility location – “not in my back yard”
2. Joint powers agreement – developing and securing buy-in from participating jurisdictions
3. Cooperation and agreement from participating jurisdictions – planning, financing, architectural design, construction, staffing, and operations
4. Sheriffs’ resistance to a regional jail instead of expanding their own facilities
5. Site selection – zoning and agreement on location (transportation distances)
6. Financial – support for bond
7. Convincing localities of the advantages of a regional jail

### Effective Development Strategies

Current regional jails reported development strategies they found to be the most effective. Many different strategies were provided and they varied from jail to jail. There were a few consistent themes. The first, and most common, was the use of the National Institute of Corrections’ training, resources, and library. Numerous regional jails recommended NIC training for regional jail planning and model for direct supervision as well as the jail center’s Planning of New Institutions (PONI) and How to Open a New Institution (HONI) programs. The NIC Jails Division was a highly recommended resource.

A second theme was the success achieved by educating both the participants and the public at large. Public education in community gatherings and in other arenas was recommended as well as educating participants in the advantages of a regional jail.

Other effective development strategies included “staying the course” (10 years in one case), working closely with a consultant firm, and close construction management.

### Improving the Development Process

Survey respondents were asked what they would have done differently during the development process. An analysis of the responses identified three common themes. First, respondents said they would have done a better job ensuring that the appropriate human resources needed to plan and sustain the partnership, monitor the general contractor, write policies and procedures, and provide general oversight were available. Several facilities reported that the process is resource intensive and it is critical the process is adequately staffed.

Second, jails reported they wished they had visited more facilities and they recommended visits to numerous existing facilities at the beginning of the process. Finally, many jails reported they would build a larger facility and add more beds if they had the opportunity to do things differently. Other reported improvements included not occupying the jail before construction is 100% complete, hiring the superintendent first, and hiring a better security consultant/having better security measures.

In addition to the comments provided in the survey, the document “Regional Jails in the State of Washington: Regional Jail Study Final Report” (May 2001) was shared by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs. The Association conducted an independent study of regional jails which was not a feasibility study for any specific project. Their work was supported in part by funding from the National Institute of Corrections. Their report contains valuable information on regional jails. Advice, conclusions and recommendations found in this document are presented below.

1. Regional jails are a viable alternative for local corrections. However, not every county is a good candidate for a multiple county jail.
2. Transportation must be addressed in any effort to provide multiple jurisdiction jail services.
3. Jurisdictions with similar needs, philosophies, and goals have a better chance of success.
4. Any successful effort to create a regional jail requires strong leadership and the partners’ commitment to the concept.
5. Equal representation of each partner jurisdiction is crucial to the building of trust and a successful working relationship.
6. The employment of an excellent corrections professional as the jail administrator increases the possibility of success.
7. Communication is an extremely important factor in the process of creating a regional jail board, and subsequently constructing and operating a regional jail.
8. The effort to create a multiple jurisdiction regional jail must occur at the local level with commitment to the effort by local officials.
9. The concept of a regional jail is viable, but it requires a marketing effort so that the public understands a regional jail’s value.
10. The economic value of a regional jail to the community should be determined and publicized.
11. Regional jails address the needs of each participating jurisdiction better if the jail is operated by all jurisdictions through a board, as opposed to one jurisdiction operating the jail.

12. Regional jails need to be located where resources (employees, goods and services, inmate services) are readily available.
13. Regional jails must be located where utilities and infrastructure (sewer, water, electricity, gas, roads, and proper drainage) are available to support the jail operation.
14. Construction of regional jails can save money.
15. The operation of regional jails has the potential to provide better services for more inmates at a lower cost per prisoner, but does not necessarily represent an overall operations savings to member jurisdictions. There must be a measurement of what existed before the regional jail, and at what cost, in comparison to improvements realized by operation of a regional jail (lower crime, more prisoners incarcerated, less risk of financial loss through litigation, safer and less stressful working environment for prisoners, less jail violence, improved public safety, etc.).

The study concluded that regional jails are a viable alternative for the State of Washington, offering the following potential benefits:

1. Economies of scale
2. Construction cost savings
3. The possibility of operating expense savings based on annual per prisoner costs
4. Improved jail housing conditions
5. Improved provision of inmate services
6. Provision of special offender services
7. Safer and more secure facilities
8. Enhanced public and officer safety

Finally, they concluded that any jurisdictions which are going to build a new jail, or extensively remodel an existing jail, should give serious consideration to a multiple jurisdiction facility.

#### *Current and Recently Abandoned Regional Jails Projects in the U.S.*

A significant part of the research for the Western Michigan feasibility study involved identifying, cataloging, and contacting other localities nationwide who are either currently engaged in the regional jail process or began in that process, but ultimately decided against pursuing a regional jail. The research identified 9 regional jail projects in 11 states currently under consideration and 5 that were recently abandoned.

The primary source for this information was LexisNexis, a premier national research database. LexisNexis provides a searchable index of over 8,500 of the world's news sources. The search examined over 3,400 newspapers from across the country for the past two years. Figure R-4 describes the projects, identifying their state, localities involved, and status of the project.

It is interesting to note that the state with the most regional jails currently under consideration is Michigan. Fifteen counties in the Upper Peninsula are currently exploring the potential of two regional jail projects. Through a contract with the Michigan Department of Corrections, the Upper Peninsula Commission for Area Progress Services, Inc. (UPCAP) is requesting proposals for consulting services to conduct a study on the potential uses of closed correctional facilities in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and the feasibility of a regional jail in the Upper Peninsula. The study is projected for completion in December 2008.

Also in Michigan, The Hannahville Community, made up of members of the Potawatomi Tribe, has also applied for a grant from the federal government to explore the possibility on constructing a jail on Indian land. Recently, the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs has solicited letters of interest from organizations interested in studying the feasibility of developing jail facilities on Indian land as an economic development initiative.

**Figure R-4: Regional Jail Projects Under Consideration or Recently Abandoned**

<b>State</b>	<b>Localities</b>
	<b>In Process of Developing Regional Jail</b>
Alabama	Vestavia, Mountainbrook, Irondale
Idaho	Lincoln, Gooding, Jerome and Camas
Idaho/WA	Spokane Co. WA and Kootenai County, ID
Michigan	The Hannahville Indian Community with three Upper Peninsula counties
Michigan	Presque-Isle, Otsego, Montmorency, Alpena, Oscoda, Alcona, Iosco
Michigan	15 counties in the Upper Peninsula
Missouri	Jackson County and 18 cities
South Carolina	Lee, Colleton, and Laurens Counties
Virginia	Blue Ridge Regional Jail, Appomattox, Amherst
	<b>Abandoned Regional Jail Development Efforts</b>
Iowa	Mills, Montgomery, Fremont
Nebraska	Cuming, Wayne, Stanton and Thurston
North Dakota	Barnes, Dickey, Griggs, LaMoure, Ransom, Sargent and Steele Counties and Valley City
Virginia	Pittsylvania and Danville
Wisconsin	Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette and Richland; Winnebago and two adjacent counties

Six other regional jail projects are currently being explored in Alabama, Idaho, Missouri, South Carolina and Virginia as well as a partnership between two states – Idaho and Washington. For the purposes of the feasibility study, analyzing regional projects that were abandoned is just as important as successfully completed and current projects. Five abandoned projects were

identified, one each in the states of Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

### Attachments

The following attachments available in the full southern Michigan report which may be found at the Jail Resource Center operated by UPCAP ([www.upcap.org](http://www.upcap.org)).

- Attachment A: Regional Jail Bibliography
- Attachment B: Regional Jails in the United States
- Attachment C: Regional Jail Survey
- Attachment D: Survey Cover Letter
- Attachment E: Survey Respondent Contact Information
- Attachment F: Regional Jails Statutory Authority
- Attachment G: Detailed Findings from All Respondents

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