



TACIR

The Tennessee Advisory Commission
on Intergovernmental Relations



6

Suite 508
226 Capitol Boulevard Building
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0760
Phone: (615) 741-3012
Fax: (615) 532-2443
www.tn.gov/tacir

MEMORANDUM

TO: TACIR Commission Members

FROM: Harry A. Green *Harry*
Executive Director

DATE: December 9, 2009

SUBJECT: Regional Jail Feasibility Study

In 2010, TACIR will publish a study exploring the feasibility of a regional jail facility for Clay, Fentress, Overton, and Pickett Counties. This memo provides information about the background of this project, the work plan and schedule, and information about a previous jail study completed by TACIR.

- Public Chapter 554 of 2009 appropriated funds to TACIR for a regional jail feasibility study. TACIR confirmed the legislative intent of the jail study appropriation with Representatives Les Winningham and Charles Curtiss, who sponsored the amendment. The Representatives indicated the counties for study.
- Regional jail feasibility studies require specific expertise and for this reason, TACIR will hire a contractor to complete the regional jail feasibility study.
- Staff wrote a Request for Proposals (RFP) and received project proposals from eight vendors. A proposal evaluation team scored the proposals and the proposer with the highest score was announced as the apparent winner. TACIR is pursuing a contract with CRS Incorporated, the apparent winner, to complete the study. The project due date will be late April, 2010. CRS Incorporated will present their findings to the Commission at the June 2010 TACIR Commission meeting.
- This is not the first time TACIR has studied jails. In March 2007, TACIR published a county jail study called *Beyond Capacity: Issues and Challenges*

Facing County Jails. This study discussed issues related to housing state prisoners in county jails, state reimbursements to county jails, jail overcrowding, medical and mental health care costs, costs associated with housing illegal immigrants in county jails, and the topic of regional jails.

- TACIR Commissioners formally adopted two recommendations from the study regarding the housing of state prisoners in local jails:
 - 1.) The General Assembly should to require the Tennessee Department of Correction to reimburse county jails for the daily costs of housing state prisoners who are awaiting probation revocation hearings.
 - 2.) The Tennessee Department of Correction should set a flat daily reimbursement rate for local jails housing state prisoners and should simplify the reporting process jails must complete to be reimbursed.
- While the General Assembly has not taken action to enact either of these recommendations, in 2008 the State enacted T.C.A. § 41-12-101, known as the Regional Jail Authority Act. Under T.C.A. § 41-12-101 local governments wishing to participate in a regional jail may create a regional jail authority.