Independent Commission On New York City Criminal Justice And Incarceration Reform

RECOMMENDATIONS
The Independent Commission sought to create a blueprint for an improved criminal justice system reflecting our city’s values of decency, dignity, and equal treatment before the law.

**Chair:** Hon. Jonathan Lippman, Former Chief Judge, NY Court of Appeals

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**Rethinking Incarceration**

**Objective:** Are there policy and procedural changes that could safely reduce the number of people entering jail and shorten the amount of time people remain there?

**Chair:** Nick Turner, Vera Institute of Justice

**Members:**
- Juan Cartagena, LatinoJustice
- Hon. Matthew D’Emic, Brooklyn Mental Health Court
- Bob Fiske, Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP
- Seymour James, Legal Aid Society of NY
- Hon. Judy Kluger, Sanctuary for Families
- Ana Oliveira, NY Women’s Foundation
- Stanley Richards, NYC Board of Corrections
- Peter Samuels, Proskauer Rose LLP

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**The Future of Jails**

**Objective:** How can jail facilities be designed to enhance the safety and security of staff and inmates? What should the relationship between jails and neighborhoods look like?

**Chair:** Michael Jacobson, CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance

**Members:**
- Richard Aborn, Citizen’s Crime Commission of New York City
- Glenn Martin, JustLeadershipUSA
- Rocco Pozzi, Westchester County Department of Probation
- Laurie Robinson, George Mason Univ.
- Hon. Jeanette Ruiz, NY Family Court
- Alethea Simon, Greenhope Services
- Jeremy Travis, John Jay College
- Ken Zimmerman, Open Society Found.

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**Reimagining the Island**

**Objective:** If the use of jails on Rikers Island phases out, what should happen with the island in the near term and long term?

**Chair:** MaryAnne Gilmartin, Forest City Ratner Companies

**Members:**
- Mylan Denerstein, Gibson Dunn
- Colvin Grannum, Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration
- Peter Madonia, Rockefeller Foundation
- Julio Medina, Exodus Transitional Community
- Herb Sturz, Center for NYC Neighborhoods
- Darren Walker, Ford Foundation
- Kathy Wylde, Partnership for NYC
The Commission prioritized guiding principles in creating a vision for a fairer justice system.

**ENSURE DIGNITY AND JUSTICE**
Procedural justice for both those accused and those impacted by crime, with **efficiency, accountability, and due process** at each point in the system.

**PROMOTE SAFETY**
A **safe, humane, and transparent borough-based jail system** for staff, detainees, and the community.

**CREATE HUMANE AND ACCESSIBLE FACILITIES**
Facilities that are **accessible to courts, staff, families, attorneys, and providers** – ending the “out of sight, out of mind” approach to criminal justice and corrections.

**THINK LONG TERM**
Planning that embraces a **long-term, phased implementation schedule that seeks to address critical needs** for the city.

**ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY**
Input and ideas from a **broad range of policymakers, thought leaders, industries, and other stakeholders.**
Through implementing a series of policy changes to promote a fairer and more efficient criminal justice system, the jail population in New York City can be safely reduced to below 5,000.

### Proposed Reforms

#### Alternatives to Arrest
- Build a “leaner” system with fewer cases
- Create a different path for cases involving behavioral and mental health

#### Pretrial Reform
- Maximize safe pretrial release
- Expand pretrial supervision to all felony-level cases

#### Case Processing
- Require shorter adjournments
- Promote due process in pretrial negotiations
- Create accountability for speedier case processing

#### Sentencing Reform
- Eliminate “meaningless” jail
- Prioritize second chances and community-based alternatives

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Jail Population</th>
<th>9,500</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternatives to Arrest</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pretrial Reform</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Processing</td>
<td>1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sentencing Reform</td>
<td>600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reformed Jail Population</td>
<td>~4,500</td>
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The Commission recommends a borough-based system of jail facilities and increased support for training, diversion, and programming.

A COUNTY JAIL IN EACH OF THE FIVE BOROUGHS
System capacity of 5,000 for 5,500 beds, with 4 jails with average capacity of 1,325 beds each and 1 jail in Staten Island with a capacity of 200 beds.

STATE OF THE ART TRAINING ACADEMY
Space to provide essential tools for staff development.

SUPPORT FACILITIES
Most built internal to facilities to limit movement and reduce cost.
Borough-based jail facilities with proximity to courthouses and state-of-the-art design can save $540 million annually through more efficient operations.

Proposed facilities in Brooklyn (left) and recently-built facilities in Denver (upper right) and San Diego (lower right) demonstrate modern jail design.

Annual Costs and Savings for New Jail System

- **Operating Costs**
  - New Borough Jails: $770M
  - New Training/Programming: $330M

- **Operating Savings**
  - More Efficient Staffing: $1.6B

Total Annual Costs: $1.1B
Total Annual Savings: $1.6B

Net Savings: $0.5B annually
Concept 1 | Rikers Island is strategically positioned to support regional growth by accommodating an expanded LaGuardia Airport and green infrastructure.