MEMORANDUM

Copy

DATE: August 21, 2002

TO: Paul Quander

CC: Susan Shaffer

FROM: Claire Johnson   *[signature] w/recommendation 10/2/02*

RE: Study of the Housing Landscape of Returning Prisoners

The Research Review Board (RRB) has reviewed the research proposal submitted by Caterina Gouvis Roman of The Urban Institute to study The Housing Landscape of Returning Prisoners in the District of Columbia. Our recommendation is for CSOSA to not support the research at this time, and the statement supporting this is attached.

Please indicate your acceptance or non-acceptance of this recommendation as soon as possible so that we may inform the researcher of the outcome of our review.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 202-220-5553 or *Claire.Johnson@csosa.gov*.

Thank you.

Enclosures: Research Proposal
             RRB Recommendation Statement

Research Review Board

Janice Bergin, Director of Operations, PSA • **Calvin Johnson**, Director of Research and Evaluation, CSOSA • **Claire Johnson**, Director of Community Justice Programs, PSA • **Carolyn Peake**, Senior Program Analyst, Strategic Planning, Analysis and Evaluation, PSA • **George Pruden**, General Counsel • **Thomas Williams**, Associate Director, Community Supervision Services, CSOSA

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COURT SERVICES AND OFFENDER SUPERVISION AGENCY &
PRETRIAL SERVICES AGENCY
RESEARCH REVIEW BOARD

RECOMMENDATION STATEMENT

I.   RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Investigator(s): Caterina Gouvis Roman

Title: The Housing Landscape of Returning Prisoners in the District of Columbia

Institution: The Urban Institute, Washington, DC

Type of Data: Archival information in Agency offender/defendant records that does not reveal the identity of individual subjects

Subjects: Offenders - Archival information in Agency records.

Description: The purpose of this study is to document the geographic concentrations of returning prisoners, develop an assessment of housing capacity in neighborhoods where offenders are returning in large numbers, explore what programs and services are available to assist returning prisoners with their housing needs, and draw attention to the larger policy questions with regard to building supportive neighborhood environments for returning prisoners.

II.   RECOMMENDATION

The RRB recommendation for this study:

☐ Support   ☐ Support with Conditions   ✗ **Do Not Support**

The proposed research is not supportable at this time. CSOSA continues its data integrity and data audit implementation. When SMART data are "certified/certifiable," CSOSA will begin to engage outside research partners in projects that specifically require SMART data extractions.

III.   SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposed study is compliant with Federal regulations regarding the protection of human subjects as certified by the Urban Institute Institutional Review Board (Federal Assurance #0189) on June 20, 2002.

The proposed research shows no evidence of non-compliance with Agency policies pertaining to research.

The proposed research is consistent with Agency priorities and/or interests as follows:

- Agency and practitioner and research communities would benefit from a discussion of the context within which housing policy contributes to the limited housing opportunities for ex-offenders; as well a better understanding of the landscape of community support for reentry in general.

- This is a descriptive study that should yield information that would be useful for agency decisions about citing facilities, contracting for services and partnering with community-based social service/housing agencies.

- Bed space projection definitely expand the manner in which housing needs in the area of transitional services is currently projected, though it would require a more detailed analysis than what is being proposed.
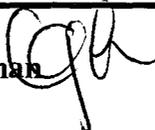
The proposed research is inconsistent with Agency priorities and/or interests as follows:

- The data being requested recently has been converted to a new system of records and currently is undergoing data integrity and data auditing scrutiny. Staff are meeting regularly to correct identified data conversion problems, ensure that no additional data problems exist, and that the new system of records contains the information necessary to begin tracking performance along the Agency-defined and Congressionally-approved Critical Success Factors. Program and research staff are also working on query routines to stratify CSOSA populations according to reporting requirements and analysis tasks. Until these exercises have been completed, all proposed research projects that require SMART extracts will be postponed.

Outstanding questions, issues or concerns about the proposed study include:

- This proposed research involves the use of active offenders residences only to make inferences at the census block group or census tract level. The Agency would need to clarify if the level or format of the request is consistent with confidentiality policies.

■ THE URBAN INSTITUTE 2100 M STREET, N.W. / WASHINGTON D.C. 20037

Caterina Gouvis Roman
Research Associate

phone: 202-261-5704
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TO: Research Review Board
DATE: July 1, 2002
SUBJ: Summary Statement for Project: The Housing Landscape for Returning Prisoners in the District

A) <u>Name and Affiliation</u>: Caterina Gouvis Roman, Research Associate, Justice Policy Center, The Urban Institute, 2100 M Street, NW Washington, DC 20037

B) <u>Title of Study</u>: The Housing Landscape for Returning Prisoners in the District

C) <u>Purpose of Project</u>: The purpose of the study is fourfold: (1) to document the geographic concentrations of returning prisoners; (2) to develop an assessment of housing capacity in neighborhoods where offenders are returning to in large numbers; (3) to explore what programs and services are available to assist ex-prisoners with their housing needs; and (4) to draw attention to the larger policy questions with regard to building supportive neighborhood environments for returning prisoners.

D) <u>Location of Project</u>: District of Columbia

E) <u>Duration of Study</u>: July 1, 2002 through January 31, 2003

F) <u>Research Methods</u>: Collection of address data (address where ex-prisoner is living after release from prison) on all returning prisoners to the District from January 1, 2001 through December 31, 2001. Creation of geographic information system to examine concentrations of addresses across the District. High concentration areas will be identified using the nearest neighbor clustering technique of the CrimeStat program. Data on the sociodemographics of census tracts and block groups will be collected from 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing Summary Tape File 1 (STF 1) and Summary Tape File 3 (STF3). Correlation analyses will be performed examining the relationship between concentrations of returning prisoners and community health indicators. The analysis for this task will be strictly correlational; no conclusions regarding causality will be made. In addition, for neighborhoods with large numbers of returning offenders, we will examine the locations of and types of rental and subsidized housing and transitional housing, along with other characteristics of the housing market to include, for instance, average housing value/rent, percentage owner or renter occupied, number of multi-unit structures, housing density, overcrowded renter housing and owner housing, and vacant housing. After all the data have been collected and stored in one database, proposed staff will conduct correlational analyses at the block group level and create a detailed description of the housing capacity in neighborhoods where high concentrations of returning prisoners are residing. This analysis will provide the answer to research questions such as: What are the general characteristics of the rental and owner-occupied housing in neighborhoods where released prisoners are living? Are these neighborhoods characterized by overcrowding? What types of subsidized housing exists in these

G) communities? Do these communities have transitional housing or group homes that are available to returning prisoners? Have housing prices changed in these neighborhoods over a five-year period (1995-2000)? The examination of housing characteristics across space is not designed to assume that spatial proximity entails accessibility, but to provide a basic understanding of what housing looks like in areas of high concentrations of returning offenders. A basic understanding can then serve as the baseline for future studies that utilize offender surveys and family surveys to assess real housing issues and barriers within these concentrated geographic areas.

H) <u>Sample Size Required/Time Frame for Sample Collection</u>: We would like to obtain list of current addresses of all adult prisoners (both male and female) released on parole to the District of Columbia in 2001. We are also interested in obtaining the "contact information" that may be provided by client in the BOP release file. We are not interested in names, but type of contact (e.g., girlfriend, spouse, mother, etc.).

I) <u>Description of Support Needs</u>: CSOSA individual that has knowledge of and can provide access to computerized records of parolees, including BOP release file information that contains address to where prisoner stated he/she would be living at release. In the event of missing or invalid data, we would like to work with CSOSA to establish valid addresses for all parolees released in 2001.

J) <u>Indication of Risk or Discomfort to Subjects as a Result of Participation</u>: All data collected by the research team will be maintained under the confidentiality provisions of our data security plan. Information collected will not be disclosed to the police, courts, probation, service providers, or anyone else. The parolees will not be contacted as part of the research study; the intent is to aggregate addresses to examine areas of DC that have high concentrations of parolees. Overall, the risks to human subjects are minimal.

K) <u>Anticipated Results</u>: We anticipate that we will successfully geocode over 90 percent of the addresses. Maps, tables and graphs will be prepared that describe block group and census tract level analysis results showing neighborhood characteristics of areas that have high concentrations of parolees.

L) <u>Deliverables</u>: Deliverables will include a brief report summarizing the findings of the study, and an article to be submitted to the Fannie Mae Foundation's journal, Housing Policy Debate. The report will contain a short executive summary highlighting the findings, the body of the report, and a number of maps documenting a descriptive relationship between socioeconomic characteristics and neighborhoods with high concentrations of returning prisoners. Maps will also highlight the affordability of housing and characteristics of housing in those neighborhoods. The draft article will touch upon the findings of the proposed study, but is not intended to be a summary of the study findings as much as a vehicle for discussing housing issues for returning prisoners as a national issue and with regard to the housing challenges faced by returning prisoners. The article will touch on what could be done with regard to housing in order to build supportive neighborhood environments for returning prisoners, both at the neighborhood-level and across the broader community or city, and will discuss ideas for future research.

Research Review Board
Review of Proposed Research Projects
Reviewer: Calvin C. Johnson
Submitted: August 5, 2002

The Housing Landscape of Returning Prisoners in the District of Columbia (Recommendation: Do Not Support -- at this time)

Submitted by: The Urban Institute

The proposed research project raises five questions that are of interest to the Agency. However, the first two research questions are already in progress or will be soon to support CSOSA's workload and facilities "siting" analyses. Indeed, the Agency's program and research staff has already begun the process of geocoding the residences of active parolee and probation clients. Some of this work will begin to focus on additional overlays that describe the current social and economic landscape of the communities that become home to our returning clients. Therefore, the value to the Agency, specifically related to the first two research questions, is a bit limited.

The third research question has two component parts that measure vastly different housing questions. Affordability is the focus of the first component. Simply put, is there affordable housing in neighborhoods where ex-offenders return? Given the latest boom in the housing market, I am not certain whether there is anything to be learned.

Bed space projection is the focus of the second component. This question is more than a matter of counting releases and bed slots. Indeed, the projection requires a number of pre-defined assumptions. (Note: The requesting institution has demonstrated its capacity to do this in other jurisdictions.) This would definitely add to the way we currently project our housing needs in the area of transitional services. However, it would require a more detailed analysis than what is being proposed.

The fourth and fifth research questions are perhaps the most interesting with the exceptions of the reference to the location of field offices. Specifically, the Agency and practitioner and research communities would benefit from a discussion of the context within which housing policy contributes to the limited housing opportunities for ex-offenders. This is a story with limited public attention but must continue to be part of the reentry dialogue. We also need to better understand the landscape of community support for reentry in general. Until we are able to move from an understanding of such support services painted with broad brush strokes to one painted with refined details, we will continue to miss out on community support networks that exist for our clients. (Note: CSOSA's Quality Assurance team is currently drafting an instrument to survey non-profits throughout the Washington Metropolitan Area.)

Although half of the research questions may be of interest to CSOSA, the data being requested has been recently converted to a new system of records and is currently undergoing data integrity and data auditing scrutiny. Staff is meeting regularly to ensure that data conversion was successful and that the new system of records contains the information necessary to begin tracking performance along the Agency-defined and Congressionally approved Critical Success

Factors (four in total). Program and research staff is also working on query routines to stratify our populations according to reporting requirements and analysis tasks. Until these exercises have been completed, my position is to postpone all desired research projects that require SMART extracts. Only after putting our system of records through tests that emerge from internal research would I feel comfortable sharing the data contents with the outside world.

As a secondary point of discussion, we must decide on the specific client information that could be shared with the research community and under what circumstances. This proposed research involves the use of active clients residences only to make inferences at the census block group or census tract level. When such a request is made, CSOSA's ORE would be willing to work with the General Counsels Office to determine whether we can provide the data at a level or in a format that is consistent with confidentiality policies. In this case, ORE could assist in aggregating requested information to an appropriate spatial unit for dissemination to the requesting institution. Doing so limits the potential harm to a client(s) while enabling the researcher to accomplish his/her objectives.

Require Action(s): *CSOSA will continue data integrity and data audit implementation. When SMART data are "certified/certifiable," CSOSA will begin to engage outside research partners in projects that specifically require SMART data extractions.*