

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Joint Budget Committee

FROM: Steve Allen, JBC Staff

SUBJECT: Amendment for COMCOR

DATE: March 20, 2015

During briefing and figure setting, JBC Staff discussed some of the rate setting challenges presented by COMCOR, Inc. a community corrections program in Colorado Springs. These challenges are a consequence of the high security costs associated with COMCOR's large footprint, which includes several old-style motels along North Nevada, Ave. From a security perspective, COMCOR's spread-out buildings are more like three facilities, each with its own security staff, than they are like a single facility.

Subsequent to figure setting, Staff learned of a community-wide redevelopment effort focused on North Nevada, Ave., where COMCOR is located. A year ago, Mayor Bach commissioned a task force to look at the area on North Nevada between Austin Bluffs and Fillmore and come back with ideas for redevelopment. The effort involved the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, El Paso County, and the City of Colorado Springs. Last December, this group finished the initial phase of the planning process. The next step is to engage a planning firm that will turn the initial plan into an operational blueprint that specifies the ideas more completely and works out the many details that must still be addressed.

Further progress will not occur until a planning firm is engaged, and a lack of funding is delaying the hiring of a firm.

It now seems very likely that redevelopment will occur along this section of Nevada Ave. The redevelopment effort will clearly affect COMCOR and its aging motels. It's possible that redevelopment will result in closure of COMCOR, which would cost the state more than 300 community corrections beds and the valuable services they provide for the State's criminal justice system.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Committee provide support for this redevelopment effort and attempt to direct it in ways favorable for community corrections and COMCOR by appropriating \$95,000 of FY 2014-15 General Fund to the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), specifically to the *Other Local Government Grants* line item in DOLA's Division of Local Government.

This would not involve a net increase in FY 2014-15 appropriations. Instead, the FY 2014-15 appropriation for *Community Corrections Placements* in the Department of Public Safety would be reduced by \$95,000 General Fund and the FY 2014-15 appropriation to *Other Local Government Grants* in DOLA would rise by \$95,000 General Fund. A footnote attached to the DOLA appropriation would specify that the appropriation is for a redevelopment planning grant to local governments in El Paso County. The footnote would further specify the expectation that

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the plan will recognize the importance of community corrections to El Paso County, the importance of community buy-in, and make every effort to preserve community corrections resources in the County. Finally, the footnote would specify that the FY 2014-15 appropriation to DOLA can roll forward into FY 2015-16.