



Future of the Oahu Community Correctional Center

More Frequently Asked Questions

November 2021

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) receives questions and comments from the public, elected and appointed officials, stakeholder groups, community organizations, and others concerning its efforts to replace the obsolete Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) in Kalihi with a new facility. Among the questions recently received are those below along with PSD's responses.

Some have proposed halting all work on the new OCCC. What are the implications of delaying work on the new OCCC and continuing to operate the existing OCCC?

The need for a new OCCC to replace the current facility has been identified for decades with the problems at the jail worsening with each passing day. The implications of halting work on the new OCCC would be costly to taxpayers and would continue to negatively impact offenders, staff and the community as summarized below:

- Hawaii taxpayers will continue to fund operation of a deteriorating facility that requires considerable capital expenditures each year in order to operate and ensure the safety of offenders, staff and visitors. A portion of OCCC was built in 1912 and although there have been periodic renovations and upgrades, it is not economically feasible to extend the lifespan, security, and usability of an obsolete facility. Such costs will be substantially less with a new, modern facility.
- OCCC's outdated design and historical overcrowding has necessitated a higher level of staffing than contemporary facilities of comparable size. A new facility with a state-of-the-art design and operating model will be less costly to operate and maintain on a per bed basis than the current facility.
- Occupants of OCCC with special needs, including those who are mentally ill and infirmed, as well as individuals in protective and maximum custody, cannot be properly separated from the general inmate population.
- Replacing the antiquated OCCC with a modern, state-of-the-art facility will broaden programming and treatment services and capabilities that will help prepare inmates to successfully return to the community.
- Design of the new jail can incorporate the better layouts and the latest technology available to keep inmates, correctional officers, staff, and visitors safe, while improving functionality.
- A new jail would provide more space for community transitional beds, and for more transitional programs and services not currently offered to long-term jail detainees, allowing PSD to provide greater services to the jail population in order to help reduce recidivism.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the severe deficiencies and constraints of working with the existing aged facility, and further underscore the need for a new jail.

Because of OCCC's deteriorating physical condition and outdated design, the facility is obsolete and no longer provides a safe, secure, healthy, humane, social and physical environment for inmates and staff.

At what stage are new treatment and rehabilitative programs developed for those to be housed at the new OCCC?

The team is currently developing a new architectural program that is based on the current OCCC population forecast and utilizing efficient and effective layouts and arrangements of program spaces to serve the needs of the incarcerated, staff, and visitors to the new facility. Development of new treatment and rehabilitative programs will be undertaken by PSD as the new OCCC design is finalized and construction is underway which is still several years away.

What are the ways the Hawaii's Judiciary and Legislature can address jail and prison overcrowding?

Criminal justice reforms being implemented across the country, including bail and sentencing reform, alternatives to incarceration, increased support for mental health and substance abuse treatment programs, among others, are the purview of the Judiciary and Legislature. PSD supports such initiatives and encourages others to do so. Until reforms are made, we must work on immediate goals to help those in custody now, and that includes building a new OCCC.

Does PSD support recommendations of the HCR 85 Task Force concerning criminal justice reform including bail and sentencing reform, incarceration alternatives, and diversion programs?

Criminal justice reforms in Hawaii are the purview of the Judiciary and State Legislature and not PSD. It is hoped that the work of the HCR 85 Task Force will result in reforms that will allow greater numbers of detainees to be released, placed in outside programs, or assigned to other alternatives to incarceration than are available today. PSD supports such initiatives and encourages others to do so.

Prior to developing a new correctional facility, PSD is required by statute (HRS 353-16.37) to conduct community partnering. What is the schedule for undertaking community partnering?

According to the Hawaii Department of the Attorney General, the community partnering statute is triggered by the issuance of a Request for Proposal for construction of correctional facilities and not before.

Are the same facilities and resources accessible to pre-trial inhabitants as to convicted inhabitants? Are there differences in how these two groups are treated?

Although most offenders assigned to OCCC are housed for relatively short periods during the pre-trial and trial processes (days or weeks compared to the multi-year sentences served at Hawaii's prisons), both pretrial and inmates serving less than a one-year sentence are provided with resources and services to address health care, mental health, substance abuse and other issues while detained. Sentenced inmates are housed separately from the pretrial detainee population.

What consideration is being given to the needs, priorities, and concerns of former inmates, family members, and non-profits that work with issues concerning incarceration?

The OCCC Team continually solicits ideas about the new OCCC from all interested parties and as the project advances to the design stage, the needs, priorities and concerns of former inmates, family members, non-profits and others will be increasingly important, especially in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other contagions in the future.

How will the State of Hawaii select qualified designers, builders, and financiers to develop the new OCCC?

DAGS is using a three-stage process involving preparation of a Request for Interest (RFI) followed by a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and lastly, a Request for Proposal (RFP).

- As the first stage, DAGS published an RFI on January 29, 2021 to determine interest among prospective organizations to participating in the development of the new OCCC.
- Publication of a RFQ follows the RFI and is the pre-qualification stage of the process. Organizations which respond to the RFQ in early 2022 and best meet the qualifications criteria will be invited to participate in the RFP stage.
- As the third and last stage, the RFP solicits detailed technical and cost proposals, through a formal process, from organizations pre-qualified during the RFQ stage.

DAGS is using this process to achieve the best possible outcome for the new OCCC.

Interested in Learning More?

For additional information visit <http://dps.hawaii.gov/occc-future-plans> or contact:

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