



BERKS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

PROJECT FACT SHEET

Summer 2022

PURPOSE

The County of Berks Board of Commissioners recommended the evaluation of a new facility based on an assessment and forecast of the population, an understanding of current judicial system trends and a thorough study of the existing facility. The new facility will be significantly more cost-effective to build rather than renovating the existing one, with more efficient, sustainable space for employees, visitors and the temporarily incarcerated. Flexible spaces for rehabilitation and education will better prepare individuals to re-enter the community in a more productive manner.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Berks County Correctional Facility provides secure, safe and compassionate confinement of the temporarily incarcerated. We accomplish this by providing cost-efficient services focusing on rehabilitation, recidivism reduction and social restoration with an emphasis on education and self-improvement. Through evidence-based programming, those confined are more prepared to re-enter the community as law-abiding and productive citizens.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE

Why do we need a new facility? In the past 10 years, criminal justice trends across the country have changed greatly, and the County of Berks' approach to justice and confinement has also been modernized.

Why does it have a new name? The new building will be called the Berks County Correctional Facility to reflect a modernized approach to justice and incarceration. It will be a more efficient, sustainable facility for visitors, employees and those temporarily incarcerated for two years or less or awaiting transfer to another facility.



BERKS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Opportunity for Change.

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It is said that no one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails.

- Nelson Mandela

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PROJECT SCHEDULE



VALIDATION OF NEED

In May 2022, the County Owner's Representative (CGL) delivered a Needs Assessment draft report with information compiled from national data and trends, as well as historical data from the county. The report recommended 960 beds, down nearly 24 percent from the 2018 study. This was due in part to the declining number of inmates, a decrease in the county's crime rate and the adoption of criminal justice initiatives aimed at reducing the inmate population.



The County of Berks has been ahead of national trends pertaining to its criminal justice reform initiatives.

PROJECT STATUS



The County of Berks is currently in the pre-design/construction services phase of the project. Work in this phase prepares the county to make decisions about the best course of action in building a new facility. This phase includes outreach with various stakeholders including:

- » Organizational Analysis of the current Berks County Jail to understand staffing issues
- » Needs Assessment to aid in decision making for long-term capacity requirements
- » Architectural Programming to further define types and square footage of spaces that will make up the new facility
- » Financial Modeling to determine the best way to pay for the project
- » Drafting of a Procurement Method to select an architect and builder. This phase of the project is scheduled to be complete at the end of February 2023; County Commissioners will then decide the best process to move forward.

PROJECT GOALS

Deliver a holistic approach to justice

- » Continue to work with stakeholders on justice system improvements
- » Create a hub of services to connect inmates back to the community

Design facility to exceed industry standards

- » Plan for flexibility and future populations
- » Incorporate technology to advance operations and programming
- » Evaluate total cost of ownership to make informed decisions



Provide a safe, supportive, and healing environment for inmates, staff, and visitors

- » Leverage the site location to enhance access and connection to nature
- » Ensure appropriate and adequate space for inmate programming and recreation

Sustainability

Our intent is to promote and encourage the use of sustainable practices that support a high-performance building and cost-efficient operations while prioritizing the health and well-being of those employed and temporarily incarcerated inside the new facility.



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Visit the project website to learn more and sign up for important updates on the new facility.

