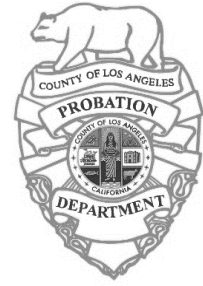




# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES PROBATION DEPARTMENT


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**ADOLFO GONZALES**  
Chief Probation Officer

September 30, 2022

TO: Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Adolfo Gonzales   
Chief Probation Officer

SUBJECT: **FUTURE OF CENTRAL JUVENILE HALL: FEASIBILITY STUDY AND PLAN (ITEM NO. 56-B, AGENDA OF MARCH 15, 2022)**

On March 15, 2022, on motion of Supervisors Mitchell and Kuehl, the Board of Supervisors (Board) took various actions related to the possible closure of Central Juvenile Hall (CJH) and transfer of all youth and services to Barry J Nidorf Juvenile Hall (BJNJH), which included Directives 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, and 1E, as follows:

1. Direct the Probation Department (“Probation” or “Department”) and Los Angeles County Public Works (“PW”), in conjunction with the Courts, Union Partners, Chief Executive Office, County Counsel, Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, District Attorney, and other relevant County departments to conduct a CJH Closure Feasibility Study and prepare a report back in writing to the Board within 120 days to include timelines, cost, and other relevant information for the successful closure and demolition of CJH and to include:
  - a. A plan to transfer youth at CJH to BJNJH.
  - b. A transportation plan for service providers, families, court visits, medical and mental health visits, and attorneys.
  - c. A family visiting plan that includes exploring and identifying off-site locations for a visiting hub and/or center to encourage visitation and reunification.

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- d. A schedule for a robust engagement plan, led by the Probation Oversight Commission (POC), to understand potential impact on the Courts, staff, and community, including incarcerated and formerly incarcerated youth, due to the closure of CJH.
- e. A plan that includes a timeline and budget for modifications, reconfigurations, and upgrades, to create a “home-like” environment, compliant with the California Department of Justice settlement agreement, at BJNJH, including the demolition of the “Compound”, to become the only Probation facility in Los Angeles County to hold pre-dispositioned youth.

The plan should also include:

- i. Instituting the LA Model.
- ii. Duplicating Camp Kilpatrick’s Credible Messenger Program.
- iii. Identifying adequate space to provide robust programming and services, including individual, small and large group sessions; indoor and outdoor work, recreational, and green spaces; higher education, career development, and vocational training classes and programs; arts and sports programs; and other extracurricular activities provided by educational partners and community-based service providers. Adequate space should also be identified for family visitation, administrative, medical, and mental health offices.

The Probation Department and PW obtained approval of additional time to submit the attached Feasibility Study.

## **BACKGROUND**

Central Juvenile Hall was originally built in 1912 in Los Angeles and for many decades was the only probation facility in Los Angeles County. In 1956, a second Juvenile Hall – Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall (LPJH) – was built in the City of Downey as the youth population within Probation increased and, in 1978, a third facility – BJNJH – was built in Sylmar. Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall eventually closed in 2019 due to a decreased need for probation detention facilities.

As the oldest facility, CJH reflects design concepts of a previous era and a differing philosophy for youth detention. As a result, Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury investigations and reports detailed conditions and operational concerns and in 2014, recommended that CJH be closed and demolished. In addition, CJH has come under significant scrutiny by the California Board of State and Community Corrections

(BSCC), the State regulatory agency for both juvenile and adult facilities. Based on multiple reviews, the BSCC determined that the County's Juvenile Halls were unsuitable to care for youth and considered issuing orders for closure. Since then, corrective action has occurred regarding operational matters and with your Board's support in providing funding, the Department has addressed some repairs at BJNJH and CJH.

For example, several units at CJH have been cleaned and painted. Floors have been resurfaced in several areas. Large cracks and gaps have been patched and replaced in the concrete walkways throughout the facility. A barber shop and game room were also added near the school. There are ongoing repairs to plumbing and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning systems throughout the facility; however, significant changes toward a new, home-like environment are impossible at CJH because the facility is over 100 years old.

In March 2022, the Board, in response to concerns regarding conditions at CJH, directed the Probation Department and PW, in conjunction with others, to conduct this Feasibility Study. The primary focus of this study was to determine the feasibility of consolidating juvenile detention at BJNJH, allowing the decommissioning, closure, and demolition of the outdated and outmoded CJH.

In addition to exploring issues related to capacity, the study considers the impact of consolidation on the system as a whole, including various County agencies and private stakeholders and advocates as well as the ability to respond to the tenets of the LA Model related to trauma responsive care and providing a normative environment supportive of treatment.

### **Youth Arrest Trends**

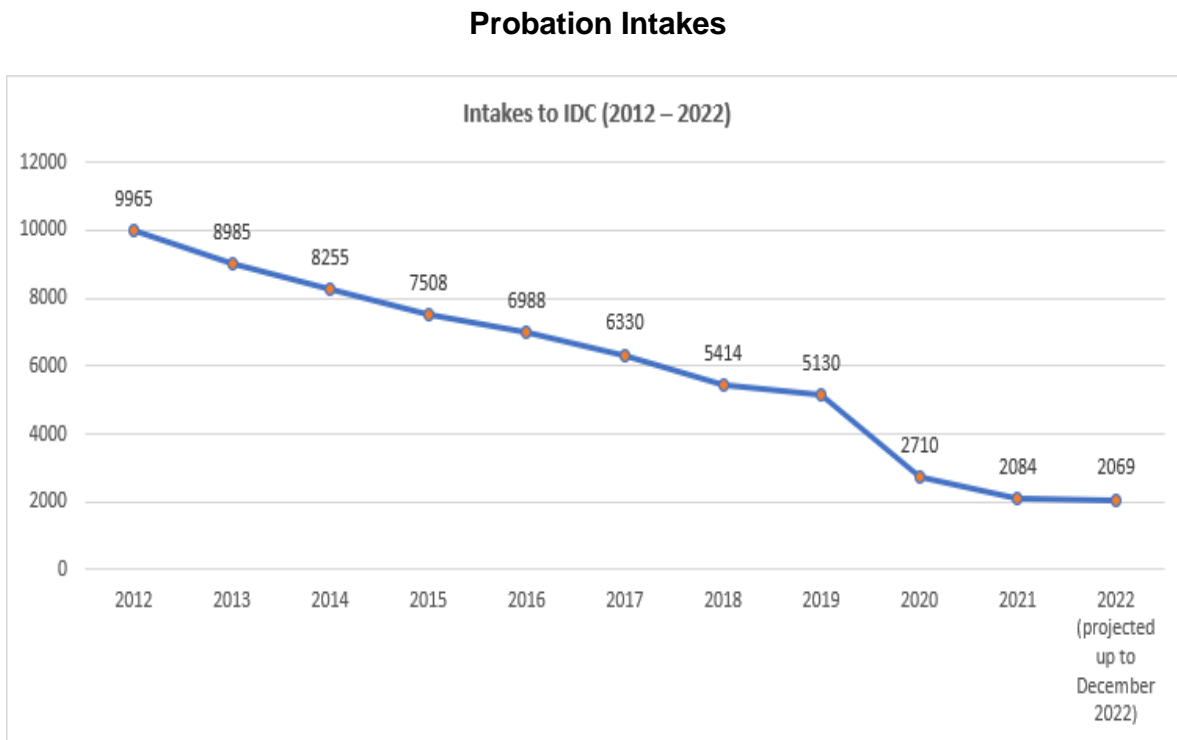
In general, the number of arrests is one of the main factors that lies behind the rising and falling numbers of youth in detention, frequently correlated to crime trends. Statistical data from the last 10 years shows that both juvenile crime and arrests trends reflect a steady reduction from year to year. ***However, as reported by representatives from the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, the County has seen an increase in violent crime committed by juveniles, with the number of petitions filed for offenses listed in Subdivision (b) of Section 707 (e.g., murder, attempted murder, assault, robbery, weapons, and unlawful/other sex) has tripled in the last few years.***

In Los Angeles County, arrests vary by district widely across the County, with the majority of arrests occurring in and around the Metro area. There are over 70 law enforcement agencies bringing youth to Juvenile Hall. Most of the youth are arrested and brought in at CJH by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), followed by arrests made by the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) and school police departments. For example, based on a March 6, 2022 snapshot, the largest arrest jurisdictions are LAPD, LASD (unincorporated), Lancaster, Palmdale, and Long Beach. Over the study period,

the decline in crime activity has resulted in a reduction in youth arrests, from 25,881 arrests in 2012 to 8,133 arrests in 2018.

### **Probation Intakes**

As illustrated below, the number of Probation intakes to secure detention have decreased from their peak in 2012.

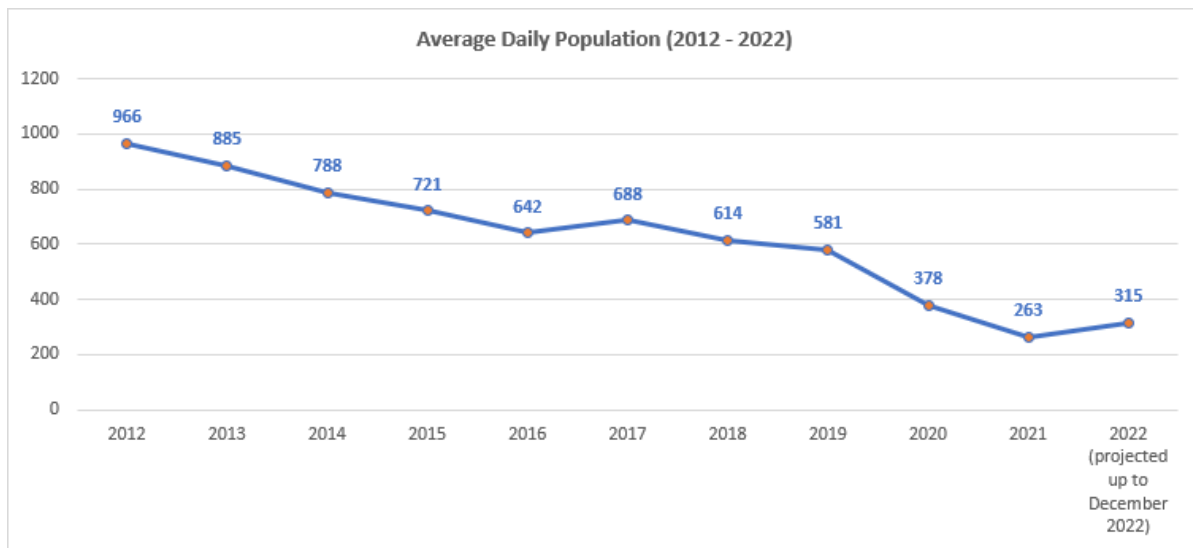


Driven by the decline in arrests rates, the number of Intakes significantly decreased from 9,965 in 2012, to 2,084 in 2021. At present, even though the number of intakes is still below pre-COVID figures, Probation anticipates 2,069 intakes by the end of the calendar year.

### Average Daily Juvenile Hall Population

As reflected below, after peaking at 966 youth in 2012, detention Average Daily Population (ADP) figures of 12 to 18 years old served by Probation have been safely and responsibly reduced from 966 in 2012, to 263 in 2021, representing a 73 percent decrease in the percentage of youth brought to Juvenile Hall by law enforcement that are ultimately admitted and detained. **However, it is imperative to note that the Juvenile Hall population has been increasing this year.**

### Juvenile Halls



It should also be noted that while both admissions and the ADP have steadily declined since 2012, the population between 2016 and 2019 averaged 631 youth in detention. The Juvenile Hall population dropped drastically from 2019 to 2021, primarily as a result of the impact of the COVID pandemic and most recently has shown a slight increase. **Consequently, while recent history was used as a basis for planning, there is the potential for the population to return to pre-pandemic levels.**

### Current Client Population

Public Works' consultant team performed a review and analysis of the Probation Department's client data and mapping of client home locations, with a focus on assessing the potential impact on pre-dispositioned youth and their families of potentially closing CJH and centralizing detention services at BJNJH.

**Demographic Characteristics**

Based on a June 3, 2022 snapshot, there were 276 pre-dispositioned youth in Juvenile Hall with the following demographic characteristics:

- Most of the youth detainees come from the Second Supervisorial District (39 percent), followed by the Fifth Supervisorial District (20 percent), and the First Supervisorial District (19 percent).
- About 88 percent are male. Historically, the proportion of female offenders has gradually decreased, from 25 percent in 2012 to 12 percent in 2022.
- 17-year-old youth are detained in Juvenile Halls more frequently than any other age group. The average age of pre-dispositioned youth is 17, with a median age of 16.
- The distribution of youth detainees is inconsistent with the racial makeup of Los Angeles County, with both African American and Latinos overrepresented in the probation population of youth detainees.
- 62 percent of the youth detainees have two or more prior admissions to Juvenile Hall.

Based on the June 3, 2022 snapshot, the 10 most serious offense types of youth in juvenile halls are presented below.

**Most Serious Offenses for Youth Detainees**

<b>Most Serious Charge of Youth *</b>	<b>BJNJH</b>	<b>CJH</b>	<b>Total</b>
PC187(A) - Murder - 1st Degree	49	1	<b>50</b>
PC211 - Robbery	11	25	<b>36</b>
PC664/187(A) - Attempted Murder	17	12	<b>29</b>
WI602Warrant - Warrant - Minor	8	20	<b>28</b>
PC215(A) - Carjacking	9	8	<b>17</b>
PC245(A)(2) - ADW - W/Firearm	6	9	<b>15</b>
PC245(A)(1) - ADW W/O Firearm W/GBI	6	7	<b>13</b>
WI602 - Failure to Obey Juvenile Court	5	8	<b>13</b>
PC187(A) - Murder	5	--	<b>5</b>
VC10851(A) - Vehicle Theft	3	2	<b>5</b>

*\* June 3, 2022 Snapshot, per Probation's Case Management System*

As discussed in Section V of this report, Probation has worked with PW's consultant, DLR, on conducting a thorough Feasibility Study that provides your Board with potential options regarding the housing of detained youth. **However, due to various factors, Probation and PW do not recommend the consolidation of CJH and BJNJH youth as provided under Alternatives 1A through 1C. Consolidation in a single facility at BJNJH – either through renovation or new construction – is the least responsive of all alternatives.** Key issues that do not support the consolidation of youth detention at BJNJH relate to facility size, tenets of the LA Model, geographic distribution, normative environment, return on investment, diminished access to specialized services, and flexibility for the future.

In addition, while various alternatives have been provided, Alternatives 2A through 2D appear the most viable to best care for youth and involve primarily the renovation/reconstruction of two Juvenile facilities; or the construction of two new juvenile facilities; or the renovation/reconstruction of three juvenile facilities; or the construction of three new Juvenile facilities. However, it would be prudent that we engage key stakeholders to assist in a needed, broader analysis of the population in an effort to formulate the best system for the future that is based on the values of Youth Justice Reimagined.

It is also imperative to provide for flexibility in whichever alternative is selected by your Board in the future following further consideration, so the County can best respond to changing circumstances, such as, increased or decreased capacity needs. **The alternative to construct multiple Juvenile facilities is not supporting incarceration, rather, it is taking into consideration foreseeing the County's fiduciary responsibility for considering changing circumstances when using public funds.** Whichever Alternative is selected, the Probation Department is committed to continue supporting the County's efforts to expand care-first strategies to reduce the number of youth entering the juvenile justice system. Diverting as many young people from the justice system as possible is everyone's shared goal.

## **I. TRANSFER PLAN (DIRECTIVE 1A)**

Probation is prepared to follow all protocols to effectuate a smooth transition of youth from CJH to BJNJH, if deemed necessary and approved in the future. The protocols include, but are not limited to, the following: Coordinate with our internal transportation operations to secure the proper amount of vehicles and transportation equipment; inform all County and community partners who provide CJH services/programming; brief our labor partners of the plan; inform local law enforcement agencies; inform the external oversight commissions; and collaborate with Probation's Management Services Bureau to ensure all meals and facility needs are prepared and met for the youth upon transfer to BJNJH. Inform Probation staff with as much lead time as possible of any shift changes and/or logistics that may need to be addressed. The youth shall be informed of the transfer prior to allow for supportive services (Department of Mental Health, Credible Messengers, etc.)

to provide reassurance and clinical support for any youth experiencing anxiety or who are unsettled.

Leadership shall meet with both facility superintendents and management teams to coordinate the proper coverage and preparation of the living units that youth from CJH will occupy. Facility management shall use change management skills to assist with the nuances and concerns that may arise.

The Transfer Plan shall be formalized with intention and ensuring the safety of the youth as the paramount factor when determining the pace of the transfer. If any unforeseen safety issues arise, the transfer will halt, and safety considerations shall be implemented to support its continuation. The Board shall also be provided the Transfer Plan.

## **II. TRANSPORTATION PLAN (DIRECTIVE 1B)**

The proposed Transportation Plan would include the initiation of all internal evacuation and transfer procedures. The transportation operation would lead the transfer with all safety and security measures intact. The plan would also include communication with all respective courts, attorneys (legal representation), parents or guardians, Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS), Department of Mental Health and local law enforcement agencies. The plan would also include a time frame of all planned movements, unit-by-unit, and ensure the movements are communicated to a centralized communication center for accountability and progress updates. All transports would be escorted by Probation's Special Enforcement Operations (SEO) from CJH to BJNJH. These escorts are an additional layer of safety and security and will provide any support needed throughout the transport. The Board shall be informed of the commencement and conclusion of the transportation.

## **III. FAMILY VISITING PLAN (DIRECTIVE 1C)**

As the Transportation Plan calls for communication with parents or guardians to be informed of the relocation, they would also be provided the visiting information that will be continued at BJNJH. This information shall include driving directions, visitation hours, and any other information requested related to visiting. A plan to provide transportation options for parents/guardians from CJH to BJNJH will be considered to support family engagement.

## **IV. ENGAGEMENT PLAN SCHEDULE (DIRECTIVE 1D)**

Probation will work collaboratively with the POC as the lead to generate a robust engagement plan outlining the potential impact on the Courts, staff, community, and incarcerated and formerly incarcerated youth, due to the closure of CJH. Within 30 days of the Board's response to this study, the engagement plan schedule shall be initiated with substantial input from our community-based partners and invested commissions to ensure a viable comprehensive plan schedule is provided.

## V. MODIFICATION PLAN (DIRECTIVE 1E)

On March 15, 2022, in response to concerns and complaints specific to CJH, the Board directed the Probation Department, PW, and others to study the feasibility of permanently closing CJH and transferring all youth and services to BJNJH. Public Works retained the DLR Group (DLR) through a subcontract with PBWS Architects, to provide professional services to develop a Feasibility Study on the potential CJH closure and BJNJH renovation.

### Comparative Evaluation

While cost and schedule are highly critical concerns in decision-making, there are other subjective parameters that should be given equal weight. As a basis for facilitating informed decision making, the following parameters were evaluated for each alternative:





- **Responsiveness to the tenets of the Los Angeles Model & Best Practices** – measure to what extent the alternative would further the ideals of the LA Model and contribute to reimagining the Juvenile Justice system in Los Angeles County.
- **Responsiveness to Stakeholder Concerns** – measure to what extent the alternative responds or does not respond to various stakeholder concerns as documented in interviews.
- **Access to Family & Community** – measure to what extent the alternative is responsive to engaging family and community resources in wrap-around therapy.
- **Access to Professional Resources** – measure to what extent the alternative provides for utilizing outside professional and volunteer resources in support of treatment plans.
- **Programmatic Suitability** – measure to what extent the facility responds to meeting the basic space programming requirements of a youth detention facility.
- **Normative Environment** – measure to what extent the facility as finally realized would reflect a healthy, normative environment supportive of therapeutic trauma responsive treatment.
- **Flexibility to Adapt to Changing Needs** – as noted throughout the study, further analysis and deliberations are needed to resolve on a consensus basis the overall continuum of care and the resulting need for secure residential detention capacity. This criterion considers, can the alternative adapt to accommodate a larger population, if required.
- **Accommodate Temporary Secure SYTF Housing** – measure to what extent the alternative could include capacity for temporary secure housing for youth

committed to the SYTF program pending classification and reassignment to an identified, approved SYTF facility.

- **Operational and Staffing Efficacy** – measure to what extent the alternative would enhance staffing and operations and implementation of the LA Model.

In addition, DLR provided a thorough feasibility study that includes:

- An existing facility analysis, including scoring each component of BJNJH with a “Traffic Light Matrix” comparison:

	Highly Responsive to Criterion
	Partially Responsive to Criterion
	Limited Responsiveness to Criterion, Further Evaluation Needed
	Not Responsive to Criterion

- Data analysis of committed youth populations from the last 10 years.
- Consultations with key juvenile justice system stakeholders to gather their feedback and opinions on the potential impact of closing CJH on the Courts, law enforcement agencies, Juvenile Halls facility staff, service providers, pre-dispositioned youth and their families, and the community at large. In June 2022, the consultant team met virtually with members and representatives from the following agencies:
  - Juvenile Court (Judiciary and Court-Related Agencies)
  - District Attorney’s Office
  - Public Defender’s Office
  - Alternate Public Defender’s Office
  - Probation Department Leadership
  - Probation Department’s Intake and Detention Control (IDC/CDP)
  - Department of Health Services (DHS) - Juvenile Court Health Services
  - Department of Mental Health (DMH)
  - Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)

As detailed in the Feasibility Study, the results of these conversations are grouped by the major topics of concern commonly echoed by all the participants. In general, all groups were not in favor of consolidation at BJNJH, in many cases based on common reasons and in others based on specific concerns related to their role in providing trauma responsive care and treatment to the youth population.

- Proposed alternatives, keeping in mind the LA Model, documenting high-level concepts, timelines, and budgets.

Consideration must also be given to the approximately 80–112 young adults currently at the State’s Division of Juvenile Justice, with an average age of 20, and who will return to Los Angeles County’s custody. This transfer of young adults must be completed by June 30, 2023. This population will need to be separated from the other population depending on age, level of sophistication, and ability and willingness to engage in programming. Without another option for our growing SYTF population, combining facilities will be challenging. It is recommended that stakeholders engage in a broader analysis of program and facility needs for all detained youth to provide a continuum of care that supports the values of Youth Justice Reimagined.

The Board motion called for a determination of the feasibility of consolidating all juvenile detention at BJNJH and closing and demolishing CJH. Based on the Feasibility Study, the following three potential alternatives, along with estimated project schedules and costs, were developed:

❖ **Alternative 1A – Full Consolidation / Maximum Reuse**

- This potential alternative accepts the constraints of the existing physical plant and limits major renovations to the housing units while refreshing the balance of the support facilities.
- New construction is limited to addressing functional shortfalls, or where possible, creating smaller communities in response to the LA Model and best practices.
- This option will result in three separate communities with a total capacity of 312 beds, which includes continued use of the Compound, as follows:
  - A girls’ community of 48 beds, including new program and services building that limits movement to the main campus and creates a separate sub-campus within BJNJH.
  - A 72-bed boys’ community will be created at the eastern end of the facility, including new program and services building that limits movement to the main campus and creates a separate sub-campus within BJNJH.
  - The remaining 192 beds will form a general population community, including renovated, linear housing units, and the renovated Compound and utilize the existing program and service buildings at BJNJH.
- **Estimated Construction Costs:** \$161.2 million
- **Estimated Total Project Costs:** \$230.22 million
- **Estimated Time Frame:** 60 - 65 months from establishing the project to Close Out and Acceptance.

*Note: Allowance for 6-month delay in decision-making would increase costs by \$9.21 million to \$170.41 million for construction and \$239.43 million for project costs.*

❖ **Alternative 1B – Full Consolidation / Reuse / New Construction**

- This potential alternative would provide for further sub-dividing of the population into smaller communities, again with a total capacity of 312 beds, which includes continued use of the Compound as follows:
  - A girls' community of 48 beds, including new program and services building that limits movement to the main campus and creates a separate sub-campus within BJNJH.
  - A 72-bed boys' community will be created at the eastern end of the facility, including new program and services building that limits movement to the main campus and creates a separate sub-campus within BJNJH.
  - The Compound will be renovated to provide a high-risk boys' community of 96 beds including new program and services building that limits movement to the main campus and creates a separate sub-campus within BJNJH.
  - A smaller general population boys' community of 96 beds will be created, including new program and services building which limits movement to the main campus and creates a separate sub-campus within BJNJH.
- The primary difference is that rather than using the existing educational and program facilities for a larger population of 192, they are replaced with smaller facilities dedicated to 96-bed communities.
- **Estimated Construction Costs:** \$165.7 million
- **Estimated Total Project Costs:** \$236.7 million
- **Estimated Time Frame:** 60 - 65 months from establishing the project to Close Out and Acceptance.

*Note: Allowance for 6-month delay in decision-making would increase costs by \$9.47 million to \$175.17 million for construction and \$246.17 million for project costs.*

❖ **Alternative 1C – Full Replacement/Reconstruction**

- This potential alternative is predicated on demolition and reconstruction in place.
- Would develop a completely new facility on the existing site.
- Would fully respond to the LA Model and best practices.
- Total capacity of 312 +/- beds and possible expansion.

- **Estimated Construction Costs:** \$207.39 million
- **Estimated Total Project Costs:** \$296.3 million
- **Estimated Time Frame:** 61 - 78 months from establishing the project to Close Out and Acceptance

*Note: Allowance for 6-month delay in decision-making would increase costs by \$11.85 million to \$219.24 million for construction and \$308.15 million for project costs.*

### **Consideration of Additional Alternatives is Vital for Informed Decision-Making**

While the Board directive was focused on consolidation, the data collected related to population, geography, and stakeholder input suggested that additional potential alternatives should be considered as a basis for informed decision-making. These potential alternatives, along with their estimated project schedules and costs, are as follows:

#### ❖ **Alternative 2A – Two Facility Alternative, Renovation / Reconstruction**

- Renovated / Reconstructed BJNJH, 144 beds.
- Renovated / Reconstructed CJH, 192 beds (144 boys and 48 girls).
- Based on capacity available, also includes a potential reuse alternative for a portion of BJNJH for temporary secure housing for youth committed to the SYTF program.
- Total Detention Capacity would be 336 beds as a basis for planning; however, has the flexibility to be increased.
- Additionally, 72 secure beds for SYTF housing could be provided at BJNJH via renovation and creation of a separate community.
- **Estimated Construction Costs:** \$195.2 million
- **Estimated Total Project Costs:** \$278.8 million
- **Estimated Time Frame:** 82 - 87 months from establishing the project to Close Out and Acceptance

*Note: Allowance for 6-month delay in decision-making would increase costs by \$11.15 million to \$206.35 million for construction and \$290.0 million for project costs.*

❖ **Alternative 2B – Two Facility Alternative, New Construction**

- Proposed New Facility at BJNJH Site, 144 beds.
- Proposed New Facility at CJH Site, 192 beds (144 boys & 48 girls).
- If desired, program for new construction at either site could be adjusted to include temporary secure housing for youth committed to the SYTF program.
- Total Detention Capacity would be 336 beds as a basis for planning; however, has the flexibility to be increased as part of final implementation planning.
- Additionally, secure beds for SYTF housing could potentially be provided at either site with additional new construction.
- **Estimated Construction Costs:** \$264.9 million
- **Estimated Total Project Costs:** \$378.4 million
- **Estimated Time Frame:** 85 - 102 months from establishing the project to Close Out and Acceptance.

*Note: Allowance for 6-month delay in decision-making would increase costs by \$15.14 million to \$280.04 million for construction and \$393.6 million for project costs.*

❖ **Alternative 2C – Three Facility Plan, Renovation / Reconstruction**

- Proposed Renovation / Reconstruction of BJNJH - 96 beds for boys' detention.
- Proposed Renovation / Reconstruction of CJH - 96 beds for boys' detention, 48 beds for girls' detention.
- Proposed Renovation / Reconstruction of Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall - 96 beds, boys' detention.
- Total Detention Capacity would be 336 beds as a basis for planning; however, has the flexibility to be increased.
- BJNJH could be increased to 144 beds without using the "Compound."
- Either CJH or Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall could also potentially be increased and, additionally, 72 secure beds for SYTF housing could be provided at BJNJH via renovation and creation of a separate community.
- **Estimated Construction Costs:** \$205.3 million
- **Estimated Total Project Costs:** \$293.3 million

- **Estimated Time Frame:** 82 - 87 months from establishing the project to Close Out and Acceptance

*Note: Allowance for 6-month delay in decision-making would increase costs by \$11.73 million to \$217.03 million for construction and \$305.0 million for project costs.*

#### ❖ **Alternative 2D – Three Facility Plan, New Construction**

- Proposed New Facility at BJNJH Site – 96 beds.
- Proposed New Facility in Southern Los Angeles County (possibly Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall site) - 96 beds.
- Proposed New Facility at CJH - 144 beds (96 boys and 48 girls).
- If desired, program for new construction at either site could potentially be adjusted to include temporary secure housing for youth committed to the SYTF program.
- Total Detention Capacity would be 336 beds as a basis for planning; however, has the flexibility to be increased as part of final implementation planning.
- Additionally, secure beds for SYTF housing could potentially be provided at either site with additional new construction.
- **Estimated Construction Costs:** \$290.4 million
- **Estimated Total Project Costs:** \$414.9 million
- **Estimated Time Frame:** 85 - 102 months from establishing the project to Close Out and Acceptance.

*Note: Allowance for 6-month delay in decision-making would increase costs by \$16.6 million \$307 million for construction and \$431.5 million for project costs.*

#### **Additional Key Highlights**

- Alternatives 1A, 1B and 1C result in a maximum capacity of 312 beds for detention.
- Alternatives 2A through 2D provide opportunities for increased capacity if more detailed analysis and engagement with all stakeholders result in a decision that increased capacity is required.
- Alternatives 2A through 2D specifically would allow a portion of available beds at BJNJH (or one of the other facilities) to be dedicated to initial, secure housing for a portion of the SYTF population. Construction costs for creating a 72-bed independent community for secure beds at BJNJH are estimated at \$22.6 million

with a project cost of \$32.3 million. Allowing a 6-month delay for decision-making would result in an escalation of \$1.29 million, increasing construction costs to \$23.89 million and total project costs to \$33.6 million.

Based on the comparative evaluation, the DLR planning team ranked Alternatives 2A through 2D in order of preference, as follows:

- Alternative 2C – Three Facility Plan, Renovation/Reconstruction
- Alternative 2D – Three Facility Plan, New Construction
- Alternative 2A – Two Facility Alternative, Renovation/Reconstruction
- Alternative 2B – Two Facility Alternative, New Construction

As an overview, based on all design options, PW developed schedules and project costs as utilized in the Feasibility Study.

## VI. MOST VIABLE OPTIONS

Alternatives that include multiple sites/facilities and geographic distribution are more responsive to the evaluation criteria. These alternatives are judged more reflective of the facility initiatives that underpin the implementation of the Los Angeles Model – small, safe, youth focused, and community based.

In recognition that the existing facilities (BJNJH and CJH) are 40 and over 100 years old, respectively, and were constructed in entirely different eras for different purposes than what is envisioned by “Youth Justice Reimagined” and the LA Model, consideration given to new construction may be favored over renovation. ***Based on all options, Alternatives 2A through 2D appear to be the most viable options to align with Best Practices while establishing environments rooted in a culture of care.***

We agree with our community partners that it is not sufficient to continue making cosmetic changes to dilapidated facilities. We all share the goal of wanting to properly service our youth. For the many obvious reasons, the existing facilities are not conducive to providing the needed therapeutic environment to current or future youth, without an adequate level of investment by the County. Whichever Alternative is selected, the Probation Department will continue to support the County's efforts to expand care-first strategies to reduce the number of youth entering the juvenile justice system. Diverting as many young people from the justice system as possible is everyone's shared goal.

## VII. KEY NEXT STEPS

It is important to emphasize that Alternatives 2A through 2D provide opportunities for increased capacity if more detailed analysis and engagement with all stakeholders result in a decision that increased capacity is required. Prior to initiating implementation of a preferred alternative, the County, along with the Youth Commission, Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, Probation Department, stakeholders and interested youth advocacy groups should engage in a broader analysis of the population in an effort to formulate the system of the future based on the values of Youth Justice Reimagined and make an informed decision regarding secure youth detention needs, including consideration of variables that impact capacity needs over time.

The above is especially true in adopting a capacity target based on current data, given that prior to the pandemic the population averaged 631. This is not meant to imply that the population and capacity needs cannot be further reduced, but only to emphasize that it needs to be an informed, consensus-based decision as a basis for future planning and facility development.

In addition, it is important to note that prior to considering any of the above potential options, review and findings, as necessary, would be required under the California Environmental Quality Act regardless of the observations and recommendations contained in this report back.

## CONCLUSION

We will continue to provide your Board any needed support to evaluate all viable options to best serve current and future youth under our care. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Karen Fletcher, Chief Deputy, Adult and Juvenile Services, at (562) 940-2513, or [kfletcher@probation.lacounty.gov](mailto:kfletcher@probation.lacounty.gov).

AG:KF

Attachment (zip file)

c: Honorable Akemi Arakaki, Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court  
Fesia Davenport, Chief Executive Officer  
Celia Zavala, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Dawyn R. Harrison, Acting County Counsel  
Christina R. Ghaly, Director, Department of Health Services  
Lisa Wong, Acting Director, Department of Mental Health  
Mark Pestrella, Director, Public Works  
Debra Duardo, Superintendent, Los Angeles County Office of Education  
Wendelyn Julien, Executive Director, Probation Oversight Commission  
Sheila Williams, Senior Manager, CEO  
Justice Deputies

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS AND

March 15, 2022

SHEILA KUEHL

**Future of Central Juvenile Hall: Feasibility Study and Plan**

Central Juvenile Hall, also known as Eastlake Juvenile Hall, constructed in 1912, was Los Angeles County’s (County) first, permanent juvenile detention facility and is currently one of two open juvenile halls. For decades, Central Juvenile Hall, occupying almost 22 acres, has been used to incarcerate thousands of youth, boys and girls.

Over its 110 years of existence, it has sustained criticisms and has been subjected to multiple lawsuits and consent decrees for poor living conditions and alarming treatment of the youth incarcerated in its cells.

For years, scathing reports have been written about Central Juvenile Hall. In a 1999 Grand Jury report<sup>1</sup>, it detailed run-down conditions at Central Juvenile Hall, and in 2014, another Los Angeles County Grand Jury report<sup>2</sup> proposed that Central Juvenile Hall be torn down due to deplorable conditions and poor treatment of the youth. That

<sup>1</sup> <http://grandjury.co.la.ca.us/gjury99/reportgj-21.htm>

<sup>2</sup> [http://grandjury.co.la.ca.us/pdf/2013-2014\\_Final.pdf](http://grandjury.co.la.ca.us/pdf/2013-2014_Final.pdf)

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same year, members of the Board of Supervisors (Board) encouraged and supported the tear down of Central Juvenile Hall.

On January 13, 2021, after three years of investigation by the California Department of Justice (Cal DOJ), the County entered into a settlement agreement to “improve the conditions and education services in the county’s juvenile halls.”<sup>3</sup> The investigation noted “serious deficiencies regarding the treatment and conditions of confinement of youth in juvenile detention in the county...”<sup>4</sup>

Months later, in September 2021, the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), found Central Juvenile Hall and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall “unsuitable for the confinement of youth.”<sup>5</sup> Prior to this finding, the Probation Department developed a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) in response to being found out of compliance “with several of the [BSCC’s] regulations.”<sup>6</sup> Up to that point, the BSCC had never found a juvenile correctional facility unsuitable for youth in the State of California.

Despite support from the BSCC, the Probation Department continues to fall out of compliance laid out in its CAP, as recently as last month, when the BSCC found additional areas of non-compliance during its inspection. The Probation Department is taking the issue of non-compliance seriously, however, to come into full compliance, major work needs to be done such as facility repairs, training of staff, and other steps to ensure the Probation Department passes its next BSCC inspection.

A lot of effort will be going into preparing for the BSCC inspection, including

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<sup>3</sup> <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-becerra-los-angeles-county-enter-groundbreaking-settlements>

<sup>4</sup> Id.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bscc.ca.gov/news/bscc-finds-la-juvenile-halls-unsuitable-for-confinement-of-minors/>

<sup>6</sup> Id.

paying for repairs, painting, re-painting, and replacement of fixtures to maintain areas of Central Juvenile Hall. Given the age of Central Juvenile Hall, this a Sisyphean task--a continuous and expensive problem to maintain an aging and decrepit facility. In light of the never-ending issues with the facility's suitability, we must question whether the facility can even be fully repaired. It is time to assess all possibilities and ask whether it make more sense—fiscally and morally—to close Central Juvenile Hall.

The question of whether the Board should close Central Juvenile Hall, or any other Probation camps and halls, is not new nor has the Board shied away from doing so, in fact, since 2016, the Board explored the closure of Probation camps and halls<sup>7</sup> and over the years, the Board closed and re-purposed several camps and halls such as:

- Camp Gonzalez, closed in 2017 to soon become a fire camp for formerly incarcerated youth.<sup>8</sup>
- Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall, closed in 2019 after serious allegations of low staff morale and staff abusing incarcerated youth.<sup>9</sup> In Fall of 2020, “a portion of the facility [was converted] into a crisis/bridge housing program for young women who are experiencing homelessness.”<sup>10</sup>
- Camp Challenger was closed in 2019 to be “converted into a pilot residential vocational training center for young adults ages 18-25.”<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, the incarcerated youth population is at historic lows. As of March 10,

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<sup>7</sup> <http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/101600.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://imprintnews.org/news-2/los-angeles-juvenile-detention-camp-slated-close-will-see-second-life-voluntary-job-training-center/29495>; <https://probation.lacounty.gov/l-a-probation-completes-facility-consolidation-plan-by-closing-nine-juvenile-facilities-in-two-years/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.thedowneypatriot.com/articles/la-county-sets-date-for-los-padrinos-juvenile-hall-closure>

<sup>10</sup> <https://jovenesinc.org/los-padrinos/>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.avpress.com/news/youths-are-leaving-challenger-detention-center/article\\_35909d68-a9e5-11e9-85a3-03d78a50b46d.html](https://www.avpress.com/news/youths-are-leaving-challenger-detention-center/article_35909d68-a9e5-11e9-85a3-03d78a50b46d.html)

2022, there were 289 youth in the juvenile halls and 108 adjudicated youth in the camps. As a comparison, in 1998, the population in the halls alone was almost 2,000 youth.<sup>12</sup>

The Board is actualizing and fulfilling “Youth Justice Reimagined”<sup>13</sup> (YJR) in LA County, by approving \$75 million in funding and committing to the creation of a Department of Youth Development (DYD)<sup>14</sup>. In spirit of the YJR values and commitment to our at-risk youth, this Board needs to continue its pledge and decide on the future of Central Juvenile Hall.

It is evident that to continue to reduce the Probation facilities’ footprint and incarcerated youth population and decarceration of youth in the County’s camps and halls, Central Juvenile Hall needs to be shuttered, demolished, and a brighter future planned to replace its blight mark on LA County history.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Probation Department and the Department of Public Works, in conjunction with the Courts, Union Partners, Chief Executive Office, County Counsel, Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, District Attorney, and other relevant County Departments to conduct a Central Juvenile Hall Closure Feasibility Study and prepare a report back in writing to the Board within 120 days to include timelines, cost, and other relevant information for the successful closure and demolition of Central Juvenile Hall and to include:

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<sup>12</sup> <http://grandjury.co.la.ca.us/gjury99/reportgj-21.htm>

<sup>13</sup> <https://lacyouthjustice.org/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/166845.pdf>

- a. A plan to transfer youth at Central Juvenile Hall to Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall.
- b. A transportation plan for service providers, families, court visits, medical and mental health visits, and attorneys.
- c. A family visiting plan that includes exploring and identifying off-site locations for a visiting hub and/or center to encourage visitation and reunification.
- d. A schedule for a robust engagement plan, led by the Probation Oversight Commission, to understand potential impact on the Courts, staff, and community, including incarcerated and formerly incarcerated youth, due to the closure of Central Juvenile Hall.
- e. A plan that includes a timeline and budget for modifications, reconfigurations, and upgrades, to create a “home-like” environment, compliant with the Cal DOJ settlement agreement, at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall, including the demolition of the “Compound”, to become the only Probation facility in LA County to hold pre-dispositioned youth. The plan should also include:
  - i. Instituting the LA Model.
  - ii. Duplicating Camp Kilpatrick’s Credible Messenger program.
  - iii. Identifying adequate space to provide robust programming and services, including individual, small and large group sessions; indoor and outdoor work, recreational, and green spaces; higher education, career development, and vocational training classes and

programs; arts and sports programs; and other extracurricular activities provided by educational partners and community-based service providers. Adequate space should also be identified for family visitation, administrative, medical, and mental health offices.

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