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# Jail Site Evaluation and Selection

BY KEN RICCI

## NEW JAIL PLANNING

Bulletin From the Jails Division of the National Institute of Corrections

**S**electing a site is probably one of the most difficult tasks in planning and designing a new jail. The task usually involves a volatile mix of public controversy and technical and financial considerations found with few other public construction projects. Site selection is also one of the most important decisions in designing a new jail, because the site selected will affect the operations, cost, and appearance of the new facility.

The purpose of this bulletin is to define the criteria that jurisdictions have used successfully to identify, evaluate, and select jail sites. In addition to understanding and applying these criteria, successful

site selection requires a process for dispelling the public's fears about having a jail nearby. Fortunately, modern technology makes it possible for new jails to be good neighbors. Unlike the public's perception of a stark dungeon surrounded by razor-ribbon fences and guard towers, the modern jail is a sealed building with an outer façade forming the secure perimeter. It can be shaped to look like a library, school, or museum.

Historically, most jails were built next to the courthouse to allow the easy transfer of inmates to and from court. That proximity is still desirable today. If the existing jail is next to the courthouse, the challenge is adding on to it

### FROM THE DIRECTOR

The process of jail site evaluation and selection is not simply a matter of choosing a site and building a jail. Selecting an appropriate site for a new jail project or a significant expansion of an existing facility involves a complex set of tasks, with an equally complex set of public relations requirements. Too often, jurisdictions do not realize the impact of their site selection decisions on facility construction costs and operating costs until the jail has been designed, built, and occupied.

This bulletin, which is part of a series on new jail planning, provides jurisdictions with the information they need to begin the jail site evaluation and selection process. It outlines an approach that can help jurisdictions address public concerns and make the best possible decisions in choosing a jail site that meets their community's needs.

**Morris L. Thigpen, Sr., Director  
National Institute of Corrections**

to expand capacity and upgrade security and operations. If land is available adjacent to the downtown jail, the jurisdiction probably will choose to build a multistory structure to accommodate the desired capacity. The planning goal should be to have the old jail and the new jail operate as an integrated unit, not two separate facilities.

If, on the other hand, the jurisdiction builds a new jail outside of town, not only may it still encounter the controversy that jails often generate, but entirely different considerations arise that affect costs and function. For example, the jurisdiction would need to consider the following:

- What will be done with the old jail? Will it be demolished? Recycled as a holding center for offenders on their way to court each day? Remodeled for other municipal uses, such as local government offices?
- Out-of-town sites often lack basic utility services (sewer and water, electricity, telephone, cable, etc.) and may not have adequate road access for the number, size, and weight of vehicles that must reach the jail. Obtaining sewer line hookups to a local sewer district can be expensive and time consuming, as can the alternative of building a sewage treatment plant for the jail.

### Case Study: Why Systematic Jail Site Selection Is Important

One suburban New York City county was in search of a jail site for more than 8 years. The original site proposed was next to the county landfill. When a new county executive was elected, she asked the author's firm to study an alternate site. The new site required an additional \$8 million for earth moving, road improvement, and a new sewer line. The county legislature approved the new site and encouraged the executive to go ahead. But then a recession began and the executive thought the project was too expensive, so she stopped it after the working drawings were done.

The next site selected was in the largest and oldest city in the county, in an urban renewal area. The site included a historic armory, toxic waste from an old gas station, and asbestos from demolished apartment buildings. It had no room for onsite parking. The jail would need to be completely redesigned. The county executive expected this site selection to generate enough urban votes to ensure her reelection. That did not work. She lost the election.

The new county executive designated a search committee that looked at 18 fresh sites and finally settled on one. But that site was far from the courthouse and did not have sewer or water hookups. The new site required an additional \$3 million to run sewer and water lines to a town that was willing to accept the new loads. Both the new jail and the water lines required an environmental impact statement and a public hearing. A lawsuit by the owner of one of the sites not chosen held up construction until the suit was dismissed.

The county executive decided that the county could save a million dollars by reversing the approved site plan, which he did. The jail was built, but the back of the building faces the main road and all traffic passes in full view of the inmates in their cells.

The new jail opened in 2001, 12 years after the author's firm was originally hired to design the facility.

The way to avoid the debacle described above is to follow a logical planning method, such as the one described in this bulletin. This method allows for public, political, and professional participation in the important decisions about jail site selection.

Jails are not popular. They are complex to design and expensive to build. Nevertheless, local governments have an obligation to the public to build jails. This bulletin discusses the issues

associated with choosing a jail site and describes a site selection process that addresses public fears and the demands of security, economy, and functionality.

## The SEQRA Model

Some states formalize the site selection process in a state environmental quality review act (SEQRA), which calls for an environmental impact statement or review. Those who oppose a jail project, for whatever reason, can use the site selection process to derail the project (and the careers of elected officials). SEQRA can help a jail project stay on track, even in the face of opposition, because it mandates a formal process of data collection, analysis, and public input within a statutory framework and with a stipulated timeframe. At its best, SEQRA promotes open decision-making. The process described in this bulletin is based on this open model.

## Preliminary Considerations

**Start early.** Because the site selected will have a profound effect on jail operations, design, and cost, it is wise to begin the selection process as early as possible. This affords ample time to consider a variety of alternative sites, test public opinion, analyze the cost of building and operations, and engage the community in the decisionmaking process. An early start enables the technical and political decisionmaking process to develop in a way that is likely to result in a consensus solution. Jurisdictions

will have adequate time to collect data (on factors such as foundation conditions, wetlands, sewage treatment, ownership, zoning, historic value, traffic, property values); analyze the effect of these factors on construction costs and operational costs; and deal with the reaction of voters, the media, and elected officials.

**Appoint a site selection committee.** The committee should include representatives from the jail, the design team, and the public, as well as other government officials. If committee members represent all perspectives on the project, opposition to a site later on is less likely because concerned parties will have participated in the selection process and will understand why a particular site was chosen.

A typical site selection committee consists of:

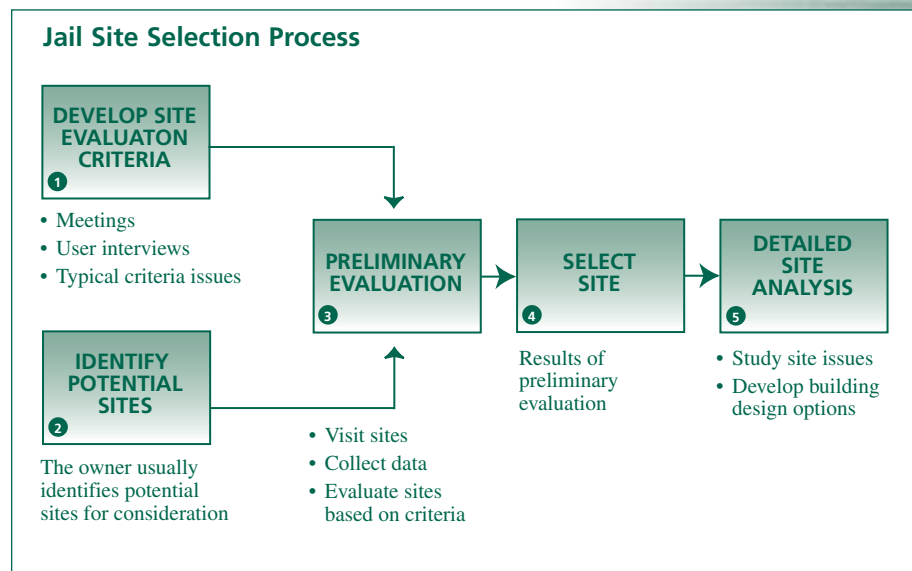
- Several county commissioners.

- Sheriff, director of corrections, and/or jail administrator.
- County director of planning.
- Private citizens representing local homeowners and businesses.
- Architect.
- County public works administrator.
- Construction manager (if chosen).

## The Site Selection Process

The site selection process has five steps:

- Step 1: Develop site evaluation criteria.
- Step 2: Identify potential sites.
- Step 3: Conduct a preliminary evaluation.
- Step 4: Select the recommended site.



- Step 5: Conduct a detailed site analysis.

In an ideal world, a site selection team, with the help of a dedicated consultant, can accomplish these five steps in 60 to 90 days. But because site selection is so sensitive, it is important to allow time for public input and review in addition to the political decisionmaking process.

Even if the selection committee members feel sure they know where the new jail will be located, they should take the precaution of going through a public process of site selection. That way, opponents of the project cannot claim that a certain site or issue was not given proper consideration. The steps described in this

bulletin allow the committee to put each potential site under the same microscope of public scrutiny.

### **Step 1: Develop Site Evaluation Criteria**

The “Sample Site Evaluation Form” (appendix A) suggests 15 site evaluation criteria and discusses their content. Site selection committees may want to hold meetings in which the public can comment on these criteria and suggest others. Such a meeting has two benefits: it serves as a lightning rod to attract criticism and expressions of fear by the public and gives committee members an opportunity to respond early on to public concerns and explain the detailed considerations that go into site evaluation.

Committee members can talk about these considerations—security, public protection, jail operation, access, traffic, etc.—in a way that informs the public and the media about the safeguards to be incorporated in the jail design and about the complexities and costs of jail operations, especially transportation between the court and remote sites.

### **Step 2: Identify Potential Sites**

The site selection committee should issue a public call for all interested parties to come forward with their proposed sites. The committee should also make an inventory of county-owned sites and check with state and federal agencies for surplus properties. Even if committee members believe they have a site that works, it is prudent to make a list of other potential sites and conduct preliminary evaluations of them, so opponents to the project cannot accuse the selection committee of “railroading” the project or playing favorites with landowners.

### **Determining Whether a Site Is Big Enough**

A key criterion in searching for a new jail site is that the property has to accommodate more than just the footprint of the new jail building. Although there is no rule of thumb for deciding whether a particular parcel of property is big enough, the following factors should enter into the calculation:

### **Case Study: The Cost of Overreacting to Public Concerns**

The NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) phenomenon invariably arises during jail site selection, regardless of whether the selection committee is considering a new out-of-town site or an addition to a jail that has been there “forever.” The knee-jerk reaction by frightened officials may be to put the jail on the cheapest piece of property, far away from civilization. But such a decision should undergo the strict scrutiny of cost analysis, to avoid the expensive pitfalls one state encountered when it sited a new facility in a remote location.

The legislature of a small New England state, as the price of support for a new maximum-security facility, and without consulting technical advisors, mandated that the facility be built on a particular piece of state-owned land. The property was literally on a remote mountain. To complete the project, the state had to build a 2-mile road, run a sewer line to the nearest town (3 miles away), pay to upgrade the town’s sewage treatment plant, and incur a 2-year delay while the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers investigated the impact of construction on a rare toad found in a watery gravel pit at the top of the mountain. All of this added \$3 million to the cost of the project.

- **Building footprint (including expansion).** Use the architectural master space program to determine the building footprint, and add space for possible future expansion.
- **Building-plan irregularities.** The final building plan will not be a simple rectangle. To meet certain requirements (circulation, daylight, etc.) and accommodate natural features of the property, the final plan will have irregularities in shape. Add 25 percent to the building's program gross square footage areas for a rough approximation of the total footprint.
- **Recreation yards.** Modern jail design places most recreation yards on the ground adjacent to the general population housing units. Be sure to include these footprints in the calculations.
- **Perimeter and access roads.** If the jail will have a perimeter fence line, include the area required for the double fence zone and the perimeter patrol road. Also add roads providing access to the site from public roads.
- **Parking.** Include space for staff and visitor parking. The jail will need enough parking to accommodate two full staff shifts because of overlap during shift changes, as well as enough spaces for overlap during visiting hours. Also

### Case Study: An Example of Rural Site Selection

In Goshen, New York, the Orange County Correctional Facility required an unusually large piece of property (see drawing). The one-story jail facility includes a high-security building with 616 cells in Phase I, expandable to 824 beds in Phase II. The total building area of Phase I is approximately 300,000 square feet (6.7 acres). The site had to accommodate roadways, parking, expansion, building shapes, sloping terrain, a storm-water retention pond, and a buffer—all in 66 acres. The dimensions of the site are approximately 2,000 feet from front to back and approximately 1,000 feet wide.



Orange County Correctional Facility, Goshen, New York.  
Jacobs • Wyper • Ricci, Joint Venture Architects.

provide adequate space for future expansion.

- **Service yards.** Include areas for incoming deliveries and for waste disposal and recycling.
- **Buffer zones.** The amount of “buffer” zone around the facility is discretionary.

Planners may want to provide a visual barrier of trees and greenery or some other buffer between the perimeter fence and the property line.

- **Fire access lanes.** Be sure to check with the fire department that has jurisdiction over the

### Case Study: An Example of Jail Expansion on an Urban Site

In Buffalo, New York, the Erie County Holding Center, a 300-cell linear jail, was expanded to add 220 beds in a podular, direct-supervision floor plan. Designers fit more than 100,000 square feet of new construction onto a 15,000-square-foot site, adding a 13-story building with a recreation yard on the roof. Through the creative use of phased construction, the old jail continued to operate while portions of it were demolished to clear the site for the new building. When the new building was completed, portions of the old jail were vacated and renovated. Renovations included upgrades to the old kitchen and life-safety improvements in the linear cell areas. The new building accommodates inmate intake and processing, visiting, administration, programs, and a new main public entrance.

The old and new parts of the facility were designed to operate as one jail. In this way, Erie County could continue the life of the old linear jail, improve central support and operations, gain new cell space, and keep the jail near the courthouse. Because the site was in the downtown historic zone, the project needed special approval from the Delaware Avenue Historic District Commission. Designers used modern technology to create a secure exterior that fit into the urban fabric. No fences were used. The Commission approved the building design on the first submission.



Erie County Holding Center, Buffalo, New York.  
*Cannon Design, Inc., in association with The Ehrenkrantz Group, P.C.*

jail site. Find out the requirements for access lanes for fire-fighting equipment.

- **Natural features.** It is difficult and expensive to build on steep slopes and wetlands. Discount these areas from calculations of available land when analyzing a piece of property. Check with the state environmental agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about what constitutes a “wetland.” State and federal definitions are different, as are rules for filling wetlands.
- **Storm-water retention pond.** Most localities now require a separate pond for retention of storm water, with a mechanism for separating out particulates, and controlled release of storm water into the public storm system. A civil engineer can help with preliminary calculations.

### Convincing the Community That Modern Jails Make Good Neighbors

As noted earlier, modern technology makes it possible for new jails to be totally sealed buildings, where the outer walls act as the security perimeter. Neighbors need not see buildings surrounded by fencing and razor ribbon under the glare of intense lighting. Often, negative public reaction to jail construction is fueled by an outdated vision of what a jail will look like.

To counteract that vision, the site selection committee should spend the time and effort to develop an accurate image of their modern new jail, using drawings, models, or photos of modern jails in other communities.

The public may also fear that jail construction or expansion will depress property values and raise local crime rates. Several studies have looked at property values, crime rates, and local economies of communities located near correctional facilities, to determine any positive or negative effects of the facilities on the communities. In most cases, the studies showed that a new jail, if properly designed, does not adversely affect local property values or any other aspect of the community. In a few instances, property values decreased near a new correctional facility, but this was attributed to a preexisting trend in local real estate values or to some other factor not related to the new facility. Some studies found that crime rates dropped in areas surrounding new facilities.

The following are examples of studies that deal with the effects of correctional facilities on the surrounding community:

- **“There Goes the Neighborhood . . .”** 1986. Produced by the Community Residences Information Services Program, this summary of 40 studies focuses on group homes for

### Case Study: A Good Neighbor by Design

In Lexington, Kentucky, designers of the Lexington/Fayette Urban County Government Detention Facility placed the secure portion of the facility behind the steepled building, at a lower level, so neighbors and people using the road in front of the building are unaware the facility is a jail.



Lexington/Fayette Urban County Government Detention Facility, Lexington, Kentucky.  
CMW, Architect of Record • DMJM, Design Architect.

the disabled, dependent and neglected children, and ex-offenders. These studies of group homes have relevance for jail siting because they address many of the same concerns that arise when communities plan new correctional facilities. The studies found that the group homes had different positive or negative effects, depending on the makeup of the neighborhood. The editor concluded that, in general, fears about group homes causing property values

to decline, crime rates to increase, and quality of life to deteriorate were not justified.

- **Issues in Siting Correctional Facilities.** 1992. This Information Brief from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) is an adaptation of a study by the Florida Atlantic University-Florida International University Government Center for Environmental and Urban Problems. Entitled *Impact of Correctional Facilities on Land Values and Public Safety*, the study determined that land

### Case Study: Creative Solutions to Public Concerns

In Poughkeepsie, New York, the planned new addition to the Dutchess County Jail was located across the street from private homes. Meetings with neighbors revealed that their biggest concern was noise created by inmates shouting from inside the building to visitors on the street. The design of the new facility and the retrofit of the old jail created a sealed building that effectively solved the problem. The new site relocated parking for sheriff vehicles from streetside to behind the new jail addition, thereby solving a neighborhood complaint about the noise officers made at shift change. The exterior design of the new addition eliminated any correctional features. The new facility looks like a typical neighborhood building.



Dutchess County Jail Facility, Poughkeepsie, New York.  
*Ricci Greene Associates, Design Architect • Gruzen Samton, PC, Architect of Record*



Aerial view of Dutchess County Jail Facility, Poughkeepsie, New York.

values, public safety, and quality of life were not adversely affected by the presence of correctional facilities. The NIC Information Brief is available online at <http://nicic.org/Library/010591>.

- ***Environmental Impact Study, Orange County (New York) Correctional Facility.*** 1996. In this unpublished report from Ricci Greene Associates, a professional appraisal showed that property values across the street or one or two blocks away from the jail in the village of Goshen, New York, were similar to values elsewhere in the village. The values of homes on the block immediately adjacent to and overlooking the jail, with full view of jail yards and service areas, were about 10 percent lower than values of comparable homes across the street.
- ***Literature Review of Impacts to Communities in Siting Correctional Facilities.*** 1995. This study from the Washington Council on Crime and Delinquency reviews research and statistics from various sources. The study concludes that the presence of correctional facilities does not cause property values to decline, particularly in the long term, and may in fact have a slightly positive effect.



### Understanding How the Site Selected Will Affect Operations

**Scenario 1:** A community wants to add on to the existing jail, but the land next to the jail is not big enough for the entire facility to be on one level. The community decides on a multi-story configuration.

**Scenario 2:** A community decides to build a new jail out of town. It will need to spend additional operating funds to transport prisoners between the jail and the downtown courthouse. It will also need to create holding facilities at the old courthouse to accommodate male and female inmates waiting to appear in court, plus space for inmate meetings with attorneys and perhaps a break room for correctional officers.

Neither scenario is wrong or right. The factors determining jail siting decisions vary, and each decision has different effects on jail operations. Operations will be affected by the following:

- **Building footprint.** A limited site means a smaller footprint and probably a multistory building. Although sheriffs and staff tend to prefer one-story jails, many multistory jails operate quite successfully.
- **Access points.** Access points include four entrances: public, staff, service, and inmate transport. A downtown site may have multiple access

### Case Study: Connecting the Jail to the Courthouse

In Naples, Florida, designers created a bridge that connects the Collier County Jail to the courthouse on the same campus. The jail has no fence.



Collier County Jail, Naples, Florida.  
*Ehrenkrantz/H.J. Ross • Joint Venture Architects.*

points on the same street. An out-of-town site should have at least two vehicle entry points in the event of an emergency.

- **Internal organization based on the footprint.** How inmate movement, recreation, services, and programs are organized in a new jail depends on the height of the facility. One way to minimize inmate use of elevators in a multistory jail is to locate services and programs on the same level as housing units.
- **Connection/proximity to courthouse.** Inmate movement between the jail and courthouse is most secure and most efficient when inmates can walk through a secure connection. If the new jail is out of town or even just a block away

from the courthouse, it will be necessary to transport inmates to and from the jail and provide inmate holding space at the courthouse.

### Identifying the Gatekeepers and Developing Strategies To Deal With Them

“Gatekeepers” are people or agencies (aside from county commissioners) with the power to control approval of a jail construction project. For example, if the project needs zoning approval, the zoning board officials are gatekeepers. The fewer gatekeepers a project has, the less likely it is to encounter obstacles to a speedy approval process. Jail site selection committees should consider the following suggestions for working effectively with various gatekeepers:

- **Zoning officials.** Try to keep the project on properties that permit jail uses “as-of-right,” i.e., where a variance or special permit is not required. Although cities do have to comply with local zoning ordinances, counties may not have to comply. However, most county commissioners would rather be “good neighbors” and respect local zoning if possible. As a courtesy, site selection committees should listen respectfully to local zoning officials and accommodate their requests where feasible.
- **Land owners.** Using county-owned land avoids the pitfalls and delays associated with negotiated sale or eminent domain (condemnation), except where the county land is unsuitable or its use imposes additional costs.
- **Sewer district.** If the jail site does not have sewer lines in the street in front of the property, it probably will be necessary to apply to the sewer district for a hookup. Carefully check hookup charges and usage fees, and do not assume that the sewer district will automatically allow access. Keep the following in mind:
  - First, the arrangement with the sewer district should accommodate not only the number of beds currently projected for the new jail but also future capacity expansion.
  - Second, each jail cell produces wastewater at roughly 2 to 2.5 times the rate of the average household.
  - Third, sewer districts have to meet strict state standards. Be sure the district will be in compliance with these standards if it accepts the flow from the jail. If the sewer district’s plant must be upgraded to accept the new flow, be clear about who will pay for the improvements.
- **Local parking authority.** If the downtown jail is to be expanded, the site selection committee must be sure to have a solution for parking. Some towns and cities have independent parking/traffic authorities from which approval may be required.
- **Historic preservation and cultural archaeology.** Just because a site is in a rural area does not mean it has no historic significance. For example, a site could be a Native American burial ground or campground. Avoid surprises during construction by doing the homework and hiring an expert or calling the state historic preservation office for advice early in the site evaluation process. If the project may involve demolishing old buildings, consult state officials to determine whether the buildings are eligible for designation as significant or historic.
- **State Department of Environmental Protection.** As noted earlier in the bulletin, some states require an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a major new project or addition. Check the state law and how it applies to the project at hand. The purpose of the EIS is not to prohibit development but to ensure that a process of analysis and public disclosure is followed; the county attorney or planner will be familiar with state procedures. Also check for hazardous materials on any site under consideration. Hire a professional environmental engineer to perform the necessary analysis, which typically includes a Phase I analysis of existing records and, if required, a Phase II analysis based on field testing, or ask the seller to provide the results of a professional analysis. Old buildings in particular should be tested for the presence of asbestos and other hazardous materials; mitigation or removal can be tricky and costly.
- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.** As noted earlier, the federal government uses a definition of wetlands that differs from definitions used by many states. If the new jail project involves filling or encroaching on wetlands, consult a knowledgeable engineer or planner very early in the process and be aware that the U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers may have jurisdiction.

### **Step 3: Conduct a Preliminary Evaluation**

In this step, a site selection team (a subcommittee of the larger site selection committee) visits each site and conducts a “walk-through,” gathering data on conditions. The team also gathers data from sources such as tax maps and property records. It may be necessary to generate additional information: a topographical survey, a boundary survey and legal description, borings to determine subsurface conditions, groundwater tests, etc. The team should assemble and organize all of the data as shown in the “Sample Key Data Display” (appendix B). Once this is done, the site can be evaluated against the criteria developed in step 1 (see appendix A).

### **Step 4: Select the Recommended Site**

Although the evaluation process is not scientific, it is an orderly way to display information, it makes the information easy to understand, and it allows the site selection committee to compare the assets and liabilities of each property. It also provides a format that the public and the media can easily comprehend.

The criteria in the Sample Site Evaluation Form are stated so that a positive answer is expressed as a “Yes.” In step 4, the

property with the most “yes” responses warrants further consideration. It is important to keep in mind that the relative importance of each criterion in any given site selection process is determined by the values of the community, not a computer or a textbook.

### **Step 5: Conduct a Detailed Site Analysis**

Once a site is selected, the next step is a detailed analysis to determine whether the site will accommodate the projected jail and its requirements. In this step, an architect and a civil engineer prepare alternative building and road layouts that will enable planners to decide whether the property can be developed within the facility’s operational and budget requirements. The result of this process is a detailed master plan for the project.

The site selection committee may decide to carry out detailed analyses of two sites. This approach will help the committee understand the potential of each site more fully and will state the pro’s and con’s of more than one site for the public record.

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Decisions made in the earliest stages of the project have the most profound effect on jail design and operations.

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Step 5 is critical. It is a reality check in which the architect documents the physical layout of the planned facility and presents the results of the site analysis in terms that jail staff, county commissioners, and other officials can understand. Step 5 also produces a clear picture of additional costs the project is likely to incur if a particular site is chosen, such as construction cost premiums because of poor soil conditions, the cost of providing a new sewage treatment facility, or costs of transporting prisoners.

## **Conclusion**

The decisions made in the earliest stages of a project have the most profound effect on design and operations. Site selection is among the most important early decisions because it can be a contentious political issue and because the site selected will affect the operations and the cost of the new jail now and in the future. The time, effort, and dollars spent on site evaluation and selection will pay large dividends for a long time. Site selection can be done successfully in a public forum with the active participation of elected officials, professional engineers, architects, voters, and representatives of other public entities. Conducting site evaluation and selection in a public process is the best way to achieve a workable consensus within a reasonable timeframe.

## Appendix A: Sample Site Evaluation Form

Site Criteria	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
<p><b>1. Location</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site is located within a county seat.</li> <li>• Can house the sheriff's civil office as mandated by county law (must be housed in the county seat).</li> </ul>				
<p><b>2. Site size</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large enough to accommodate a facility, sheriff's offices, and office of civil defense.</li> <li>• Large enough to accommodate a one-story facility with at-grade recreation yards.</li> <li>• Large enough to accommodate a buffer zone around the facility.</li> <li>• Provides room for expansion.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>3. Site ownership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property is owned by the county.</li> <li>• Property is immediately available for development.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>4. Capability to satisfy correctional design criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site provides unobstructed surveillance capabilities.</li> <li>• Site permits opportunity to adequately provide for safety of public.</li> <li>• Site conditions permit the design of a facility that adheres to modern accepted jail practices and standards.</li> <li>• Site permits sight and sound separation from neighboring land uses.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>5. Compatibility with existing zone ordinances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site development as a jail is in conformance with present zoning.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>6. Accessibility to county courts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site is less than 10 minutes driving time to criminal courts.</li> <li>• Site is readily accessible to justice and city courts throughout the county.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>7. Accessibility to arteries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility to Route _____ .</li> </ul>				
<p><b>8. Direct accessibility to existing water and sewer lines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City water and sewer lines are onsite.</li> <li>• Annexation of property is not required to extend water and sewer to site.</li> </ul>				

**Appendix A: Sample Site Evaluation Form (continued)**

Site Criteria	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
<p><b>9. Accessibility to medical facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site is less than 10 minutes driving time to nearest hospital.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>10. Capability for future expansion and flexible building configurations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site allows for facility expansion to meet future demand.</li> <li>• Site allows for flexible building configurations resulting in lower construction and operations costs.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>11. Minimal adverse environmental impact of developing site for new jail</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal impact on existing land/air/water conditions.</li> <li>• No development in or near wetlands, flood plains, fragile landscapes, or historic/archeological sites.</li> <li>• Minimal noise impact on neighboring land uses.</li> <li>• Minimal impact of construction process on adjacent land uses.</li> <li>• Minimal impact on existing transportation/traffic infrastructure.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>12. Positive soil, drainage, and terrain conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site has good soil-boring capacity.</li> <li>• Site has good drainage and runoff.</li> <li>• Site has gently sloping terrain.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>13. Normal site development costs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site does not require special techniques, unusual foundation supports, or additional drainage systems.</li> <li>• Site does not require special extension of water and sewer lines.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>14. Minimal special development issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relocation or demolition problems caused by developing site.</li> <li>• If applicable, existing onsite structures can be easily converted to jail use.</li> <li>• No negative social impact on neighboring land use caused by developing site for a jail.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>15. Capability to develop high energy efficiency conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site has potential for utilizing its southern exposure for energy-efficient systems.</li> <li>• If applicable, site is located to enable possible hookup with nearby energy-efficient heating/cooling systems.</li> </ul>				

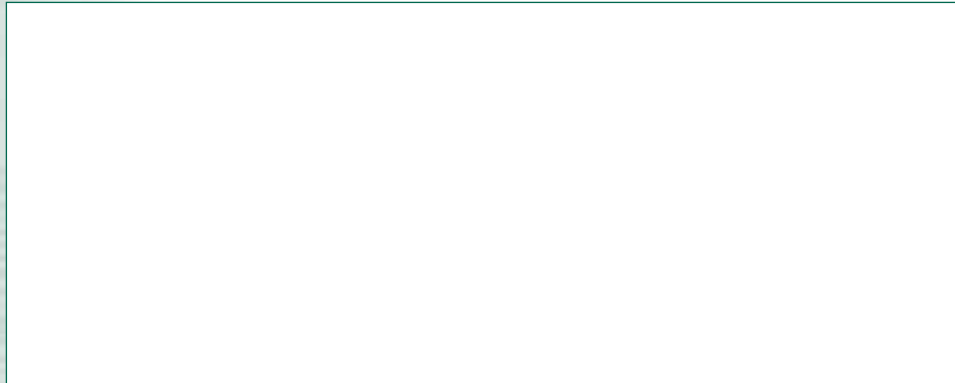
## Appendix B: Sample Key Data Display

Issues/Sites	Bishop Burke A	Highway Complex B	Lexington School C	The Barry Farm D
<b>Location</b>	City of Gloversville	City of Johnstown	City of Johnstown	City of Johnstown
<b>Ownership</b>	Catholic Diocese of Albany	Fulton County	Fulton County	Private
<b>Size (buildable acreage)</b>	25 acres (approx.)	7.5 acres	20 acres (approx.)	20 acres
<b>Current use</b>	Community-based residence for special-needs adults	Gravel storage	Handicapped training program	Open fields
<b>Purchase cost of land</b>	\$500,000	None	None	\$98,500
<b>Zoning district</b>	R-1 Residential	Arterial Industrial	Industrial and Commercial	R-A Residential and Agricultural
<b>Requires zoning variance</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes
<b>Soil conditions for new development (i.e., drainage)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor drainage</li> <li>• Poor soil-boring capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor drainage</li> <li>• Poor soil-boring capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor drainage</li> <li>• Fair/poor soil-boring capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor drainage</li> <li>• Poor soil-boring capacity</li> </ul>
<b>Slope conditions for new development</b>	N/A	Moderately steep	Western part very steep	N/A
<b>Availability of public water and sewer systems</b>	Onsite	Onsite	Onsite	Accessible

**Appendix B: Sample Key Data Display (continued)**

Issues/Sites	Bishop Burke A	Highway Complex B	Lexington School C	The Barry Farm D
Distance to county court	6 miles	1.5 miles	1.7 miles	1.9 miles
Can accommodate proposed building program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Regional highway access available	0 feet	3,000 feet	3,000 feet	4,000 feet
Proximity to hospital	Next door	2.0 and 5 miles	2.2 miles	2.4 and 5 miles
Distance from county population center	0	0	0	0
Requires environmental assessment form prior to implementation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Future expansion capabilities	20 years or more	Up to 20 years	20 years or more	20 years or more
Special considerations	Displacement of Lexington After-School Program  Adaptive reuse of existing high school	Reduces land available for highway department use  Sewer must be pumped up from site  Tight site constraints	Urban setting  Negative psychological connotation of building jail next to Lexington School	Site may require annexation into City of Johnstown  Site located next to existing county facility

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## NEW JAIL PLANNING Bulletin Series

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### About the Author

As both architect and advocate, Ken Ricci, FAIA, has devoted his 35-year career to the programming, planning, and design of justice and correctional facilities throughout the country. Mr. Ricci has brought his national reputation, sensitivity to local conditions, unique problem-solving approach, and professional expertise to a variety of projects. In recognition of his dedication to “improving environments for the incarcerated,” Mr. Ricci was named to the American Institute of Architects College of Fellows.

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