

February 23, 2021

Women Justice Advocates Design Workshop

NYC Borough-Based Jails Program

A DESIGN-BUILD PROGRAM

NYC Criminal
Justice



NYC Department of
DDC Design and
Construction



Draft Report
Delivered on
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AECOM-Hill JV

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Women Justice Advocates Session took place virtually on February 23, 2021 from 2:00PM until 4:00PM. Representatives from the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ), NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC), NYC Department of Correction (DOC) and the Program Management Consultant (PMC) AECOM-Hill JV were present to convene and facilitate a workshop to gather input from the women justice advocates. Women justice advocates input will be included in the RFP design guidelines during the procurement phase of the process. Design Guidelines will be used to inform Design Builders how to achieve a design that is appropriate to create supportive environments and connected communities. Queen Strategy Partners, a Consultant firm with expertise in designing and facilitating workshops, strategizing, planning event logistics, and reporting feedback, facilitated the workshop experience. Below is a summary of the following key areas of the workshop:

Workshop Objectives

The City is committed to closing the jails on Rikers Island and creating a network of modern and humane borough-based jails. The smaller, safer, fairer system will provide housing for a total of 3,300 people, the lowest rate of incarceration since 1920, in four borough-based sites. With a continued focus on re-entry and change, the facilities will become civic assets that provide a better life for those who are detained and work in them, support smoother transitions back home, and serve as resources for the community.

The Borough-Based Jails Program will build engaging civic assets that will be safe, secure, connected, efficient, durable, responsive, supportive, and accessible. Women will be centralized in the Queens Facility with their own admissions, health services, and visiting spaces.

The objectives of the workshop included engaging with justice advocates, specifically people with lived experience in/with women's facilities to get input that will be included in the design guidelines, especially in those areas related to create supportive environments and reinforce connected communities. Representatives from the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, NYC Department of Design and Construction, NYC Department of Correction and AECOM-Hill JV provided information on the NYC commitment to project excellence and presented key updates.

The following are the program-wide design principles where Justice Advocate input related to this workshop will be included in the design guidelines:

- Support physical health and mental well-being
- Create hospitable, nurturing environments for all people within the facility
- Promote safety and security through inclusive design
- Support autonomy and enable privacy
- Provide connections to nature
- Create healthy environments
- Encourage respectful interactions
- Promote a sense of community
- Offer safe spaces
- Create a variety of welcoming spaces
- Enhance visitor experience

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Considerations for this facility include:

- Health services facilities and spaces to support the unique needs of women
- Visiting space for female persons in custody
- Look and feel of women’s facility spaces
- Gender-responsive settings for living areas
- Admissions and release spaces
- Considerations for environments for women who may be survivors of physical or sexual violence
- Daylighting and visual connections to the outdoors

The workshop provided an opportunity for attendees to engage with City agency staff and the session’s Facilitator. This workshop report documents the questions and feedback gathered from the women justice advocates virtual session.

Workshop Details:

The guests that participated in the workshop were women justice advocates who are women with lived experience of the criminal justice system, work with that population or have friends or loved ones affected by the system.

Due to the pandemic, the workshop was convened online via the Zoom platform. Workshop participants were able to participate on their phones and computers to make polling choices and engage with the questions via the chat function.

Workshop Approach, Experience, and Agenda

The workshop engaged participants in facilitator-led interactive activities. The attendees were provided instructions to use the polling feature to choose and submit the image they liked and disliked the most. They also utilized the chat function to provide comments to justify their choices.

Workshop guests engaged in 3 activities that included:

Activity 1: How can the process be improved for someone who is entering the building in custody?

Activity 2: What would improve your experience as a visitor?

Activity 3: Input on Design Goals

- How do you imagine the visitors experience in the future facilities?
- How do you imagine the admissions experience in the future facilities?
- How do you imagine the living experience in the future facilities?
- How do you imagine the women’s support spaces in the future facilities?

GUEST BREAKDOWN

Workshop Participants	35
Facilitators and PMC	7
City Agency Representatives	11
Total Count	53

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Takeaways & Main Findings

Activity 1: How can the process be improved for someone who is entering the building in custody?

Physical Space

- Use trauma-informed care approach to ensure space is welcoming
- Intake areas should always have adequate light, water, restrooms, seating, and access to phone calls
- Intake should be inclusive and not dismissive, not traumatic but rather informative
- Friendly colors, natural light, murals, lighting, open spaces with windows, and informative posters
- Private bathrooms with showers
- Access to medical and mental health services
- Spaces that are not crowded or that feel confined and that provide room for social distancing if necessary
- Clean waiting areas

User Experience & Efficient Process

- Humane treatment
- Body scanners to replace strip searches
- Staff who have been trained in trauma-responsiveness, especially those doing strip searches
- Immediate services like access to hot food, drink, clothing, and care kits to freshen up

Activity 2: What would improve your experience as a visitor?

Physical Space

- Spaces that are welcoming and inviting
- Child friendly spaces with books, activities, and a children's playroom
- Comfortable chairs, seating, and nice furniture
- Natural light, plants, artwork, and lots of warm colors
- Apartment-like spaces to allow for normative visits with children
- Friendly and upbeat signage that helps with navigation and does not include alienating words like “convict” or “inmate”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Takeaways & Main Findings

Activity 2: What would improve your experience as a visitor?

User Experience & Efficient Process

- Officers that have a more welcoming approach exhibiting friendliness and respect
- Personnel should be courteous, informative and not overbearing
- Seeing loved ones being treated with respect
- Television and entertainment features
- Space to enable families can prepare meals together
- Body scan searches rather than strip searches
- Streamlined, seamless and efficient process that is not overwhelming to visitors
- Snack machines available in the waiting areas
- Minimizing searches where possible and making them less intrusive
- Allow physical touch between visitors and people in custody

Activity 3: Input on Design Goals

Physical Space (Visiting, Admissions and Living Experience)

- Warm, color and lighting in lobby, waiting, and visiting areas
- Comfortable chairs, moveable seating and seating arranged for intimate and private family interactions in the visiting areas
- Natural lighting and large windows in all spaces
- Family visitation areas designed with children in mind including murals, artwork, bright colors, natural light and comfortable and movable seating
- Inviting-warm décor in all areas
- Color, design, and themes that are kid friendly in all visiting areas
- Spaces that don't look too institutional, sterile, or cold
- Spaces that include social distancing
- Inclusion of plants in both indoor and outdoor spaces
- Living spaces that are private and safe
- Living spaces that have appropriate furniture and storage
- Day room and communal areas with open space and natural lighting

Programming

- Recreation and program options that appeal to a wide array of people
- Women's support spaces and programs that are holistic and comprehensive

ACTIVITY 1: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How can the process be improved for someone who is entering the building in custody?

SUMMARY & RESULTS

1. How can the process be improved for someone who is entering the building in custody?

The first session activity asked attendees an open-ended question, “How can the process be improved for someone who is entering the building in custody?” The question was designed to elicit an understanding of preferences related to the design of the intake areas. Participants were not limited in their responses to these specific points, therefore feedback was elicited in an open-ended fashion to ascertain as much information as possible.

This opening activity established that the advocates prioritized approaching the process using trauma-informed sensitivity. The participants referenced trauma informed design principles and trauma-informed care throughout the activity. Advocates recommended the inclusion of trauma-responsive staff in completing the intake process.

Trauma-informed design is about integrating the principles of trauma-informed care into design with the goal of creating physical spaces that promote safety, well-being and healing. The principles of trauma-informed care, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), include safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment, voice and choice, as well as cultural, historical and gender issues.

The principles of trauma-informed design include reducing and removing known adverse stimuli and environmental stresses, actively engaging individuals in a dynamic, multisensory environment, supporting self-reliance, providing and promoting connection to the natural world, separating individuals from others who may be in distress, reinforcing a sense of personal identity and promoting the opportunity for choice while balancing program needs and the safety and comfort of the majority.

The following detailed recommendation from an advocate provides a roadmap for creating a process that reflects a trauma-informed design experience:

Discharge planning should begin upon entry. The services offered should be tailored to the services the person needs to address her root causes of incarceration. A person sits and meets with an intake counselor to discuss how the facility can best serve the woman. The entire process should be about serving the person incarcerated. No strip searching and parading women around naked in groups together. No more cold showers with no soap. Actually creating a welcoming environment like she was entering a Wellness facility.

SUMMARY & RESULTS

1. How can the process be improved for someone who is entering the building in custody?

Advocates gave further examples of how to create a humane experience for someone entering the building in custody. Feedback including, access to private bathrooms with showers, immediate services like access to hot food, drink, clothing, care kits to freshen up, phone calls, access to medical and mental health services was provided. Advocates also recommended that body scanners replace strip searches.

The capabilities of the staff and personnel were emphasized as an important aspect of the intake process. Since the staff and officers set the tone for the experience, it is important that they are trained in customer service, greeting and treating people with respect and humanity. Advocates shared their experiences with the continual use of untrained staff when it comes to the use of body scanners and recommended specific training be administered in this area.

Advocates recommend that the physical space have adequate lighting and natural light, friendly colors, murals, plenty of seating, restrooms, informative posters and clean waiting areas. Open spaces with windows are preferred. Spaces shouldn't feel crowded, confined or depressing. Social distancing should be able to be practiced in light of COVID-19 and future possible virus spread.

In conclusion, the women justice advocates shared the varying ways trauma-informed design can be integrated into the experience of those entering the building in custody. It was shared that "Intake should be inclusive and not dismissive, not traumatic but rather informative."

It shouldn't feel confined, there should be windows and open spaces. It should incorporate trauma-informed design principles to ensure the space is welcoming. There should be private bathrooms with showers for people to use.

Intake should be inclusive and not dismissive, not traumatic but rather informative.

ACTIVITY 2: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*What would improve your
experience as a visitor?*

SUMMARY & RESULTS

2. What would improve your experience as a visitor?

The second workshop activity asked a question from a different perspective, “What would improve your experience as a visitor?” The question was designed to elicit an understanding of preferences related to the design/build process for key aspects of the visitor’s experience such as the entrance, lobby, and waiting room. In addition, attendees provided feedback regarding engagement with staff and personnel.

The activity allowed stakeholders the opportunity to list what they believed was important to ensure a good visitor’s experience. The objective was to obtain as much feedback as possible to ensure participants felt their input was valued and not restricted.

The following words of an advocate expresses the recommended experience, treatment, and physical space for visitors going to see their loved ones in a facility:

As a visitor, I would appreciate walking into a facility and feeling like my loved one was being cared for. That they were in a clean, safe and supportive environment. That our justice system worked towards rehabilitation and NOT traumatizing and dehumanizing people. Having a nice waiting area for children with games and toys. Having a clean space with nice furniture. Having vending machines, natural light and plants. If DOC cannot keep a plant alive, how can we expect them to keep our loved one alive. I would love to see more artwork - even artwork created by the incarcerated people.

In this activity, the most used [words] in the chat were “respect” and “dignity.” Respect extended to both the visitor and the person in custody was emphasized because someone who is visiting a loved one witnesses or experiences trauma when either person is not treated with dignity and respect.

Some participants advocated for having no officers in the visiting process at all and some advocated for officers that have a more welcoming approach exhibiting friendliness and respect. There was consensus that all personnel should be courteous, informative, and not overbearing; and that the process be streamlined, seamless, and efficient.

SUMMARY & RESULTS

2. What would improve your experience as a visitor?

Advocates prefer spaces that are welcoming and inviting for adults and children. Being treated with respect is very important. This means minimizing searches where possible and making them less intrusive. There were requests for body scan searches rather than strip searches.

The feedback also highlighted the desired characteristics of the physical space which includes natural light, plants, artwork and lots of warm colors, comfortable chairs, seating and nice furniture, child friendly spaces with books and activities, television and entertainment features, snack machines in the waiting areas, and friendly and upbeat signage that helps with navigation and does not include alienating words like “convict” or “inmate”.

Advocates also recommended family-friendly features that include allowing overnight visits with children in apartment-like settings and a cooking facility so families can prepare meals together during the visitation experience.

In conclusion, the advocates focused on themes that enable a supportive environment; clear communication and processes, respectful interactions with staff and security and spaces that are welcoming and inviting. Advocates want design team to “think about the children and families that are visiting and how this will impact their experience during and after”.

Being treated with dignity. Not having to wait hours to see my loved one. Make the space inviting and children friendly.

Create spaces that are welcoming, clear, and inviting. Think about the children and families that are visiting and how this will impact their experience during and after.

**ACTIVITY 3:
WOMEN
JUSTICE
ADVOCATE
INPUT ON
DESIGN GOALS**

SUMMARY & RESULTS

3. Women Justice Advocates Input on Design Goals

This activity was designed to enable the women justice advocate community input and impact on the design guidelines principles, especially in those areas that create supportive environments and reinforce connected communities.

The concepts of Visiting Experience, Admissions Experience and Living Experience frame the design activities.

For **Visiting Experience**, this activity allows the participants to reflect on the experience in the lobby and waiting area, visiting areas, and family visiting with children area.

For **Admissions Experience**, this activity allows for input on the admissions process and waiting areas.

For **Living Experience**, this activity allows the participants to provide preferences on the sleeping rooms, day room and communal living area and the recreation space, and programming.

For **Women's Support Spaces**, this activity allows the participants to provide input on the health areas, maternity and nursery units, lactation rooms and programming alternatives.

The following supportive environment areas were specifically discussed during the activities and the feedback is included herein:

1. Lobby and Waiting Area
2. Visiting Areas
3. Family Visitation with Children
4. Admission Process and Waiting Areas
5. Sleeping Rooms
6. Day Room and Communal Living
7. Recreation and Programming
8. Health Areas, Maternity and Nurses Units, Lactation Rooms, and Programming Alternatives

The next section begins the specific findings and results from the virtual chat comments gathered in each theme.

1. LOBBY AND WAITING AREAS

We asked the participants “How do you imagine the visiting experience in the future facilities?” There was an overall consensus that the space should be family friendly, spacious, calm and comfortable and not institutional. Many envision the lobby and waiting area as a place to gather socially and prefer a relaxed, home-like look and feel. The most liked features included lots of light and windows, lots of color and warm tones instead of stark white coloring, wood tile flooring, artwork, high ceilings, comfortable furniture, and seating arranged for social interactions among families. The most disliked features included hard seats, no separation for family privacy, a dark, cold and cluttered space, and a high-maintenance impractical space that would be too expensive to maintain. Advocates engaged on the topic of social distancing and preferred spaces that were open but offered families the option to cluster together in their own family pod.

In designing the lobby and waiting area space, the participants would like the designers to focus on creating a space that doesn't look too institutional or industrial. Warmth, color, and lighting would make the space look comfortable “and give off a sense of purpose without the stark reminder of where you are”.

A spacious, welcoming place with calming colors, artwork, and natural light

The industrial look does speak to incarceration but that is not the look we want to achieve here.

1. LOBBY AND WAITING AREAS

MOST LIKED Social Gathering



PROS:

- Home-like look and feel
- Light and windows
- Welcoming
- Spacious
- Calming colors
- Relaxed
- High ceiling

CONS:

- Not identified

Low-Key and Quiet



PROS:

- Spacious
- Warm tones
- Seating arrangement for natural congregation
- Easy to practice social distance

CONS:

- It could have more natural light

Organic Seating



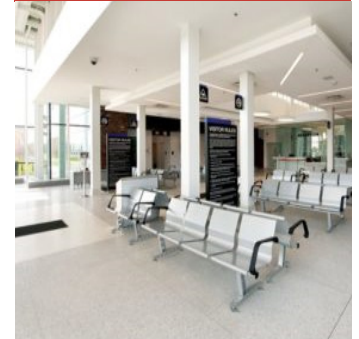
PROS:

- Family friendly feel
- Comfortable furniture
- Artwork and design

CONS:

- Seating is not conducive to gathering
- Dark, lack of natural light
- Hard to maintain and expensive, impractical
- No options for people that want to sit in smaller groups

MOST DISLIKED Modern and Transparent



PROS:

- Natural light
- Easy to maintain

CONS:

- It feels institutional
- Benches look hard
- No separation for family privacy.
- Lacks creativity and substance.
- Resembles a bus stop
- Plain and monotonous colors (too white)
- Not welcoming
- Industrial look
- “Nothingness”

2. VISITING AREAS

We asked the participants, “How do you imagine the visiting experience in the future facilities?” The participants overwhelmingly preferred a group visiting experience design with many preferring the moveable seating option. The most-liked features included comfortable chairs, bright colors, airiness and natural lighting, seating arranged for intimate and private family interactions. The most disliked features included cold and impersonal space, institutional looking, no natural lighting and too rigid and compact. There was a preference for flexibility to accommodate varying family sizes and dynamics. Some families want to sit across from each other, some next to each other. There was also a recommendation for a larger table in the design.

The women justice advocates focused on intimacy and privacy as key drivers for their recommendations. There was also consideration for the experience of children and a desire for the space to not look sad or depressing but rather friendly and colorful. An advocate commented that creating a space either with a lower ceiling or with the use of materials resulting in one that is less noisy or one that would decrease the potential for echoes was also preferred.

Furniture movability allows for individuals to take on some agency with their space and relation to one another.

2. VISITING AREAS

MOST LIKED Group Visiting Movable



PROS:

- Big comfy chairs
- Colorful
- Nice for adults and children
- Natural light
- Feels intimate
- Comfortable
- Wooden floor

CONS:

- Not sure if it allows for movability
- Small tables

Group Visiting



PROS:

- Allows for movability and individual to take some agency with their space.
- Flexible to family size
- Carpet

CONS:

- Chairs look uncomfortable
- Resembles a school setting
- Too crowded
- Monotonous, consider people are here for a long time.

Cafeteria-Style Visiting



PROS:

- Flexible to family size
- Large tables

CONS:

- Floor and ceiling could make the space too echoy
- Reminds a hospital

MOST DISLIKED Linear Visiting



PROS:

- Not identified

CONS:

- Cold
- Impersonal
- It does not allow for intimacy
- Dehumanizing
- Sit across from plexiglass
- Rigid
- Too compact
- Dark and hidden
- Depressing
- Unfriendly
- Institutional
- Oppressive
- Suffocating

3. FAMILY VISITATION WITH CHILDREN

For this activity, representative photos of four spaces for families to visit with children were shared to solicit feedback regarding the family visitation experience with children. They are all spaces that will be included in the design. We asked the participants to provide feedback and recommendations related to each of the family visiting spaces which included details on what they liked or disliked about each one regarding what experience each one would provide. There was no poll in this activity.

Throughout the session, we heard that there is a desire for a space to be created for family overnight stays. Although this was not provided as an option, we are noting this request.

The women justice advocates generally preferred the spaces to have windows, art, and comfortable, moveable and appropriate seating to be incorporated into every design option. The advocates prefer a design that more resembles a home than a classroom, “All the images feel like a classroom space. When children are visiting parents or family, they want to feel like they are in a space that is intimate and comfortable like a living room with flexibility to expand for activities together”.

When children are visiting parents or family, they want to feel like they are in a space that is intimate and comfortable, like a living room, with flexibility to expand for activities together.

3. FAMILY VISITATION WITH CHILDREN

With respect to the four design options provided, please find feedback on each design below:

Family Visiting Area



- Nice and homey looking, kids will be more comfortable
- Recommends more windows
- Doesn't like the makeshift look of things thrown together
- Seems hard to maintain
- Designed with children in mind

Children's Visiting Area



- Mural looks lovely and looks cheerful for children
- Tables are too small
- Teenagers would like this area
- Chairs are not moveable
- A little too industrial
- Loves little chairs for young people
- Designed with children in mind

Family Visiting Area



- Looks versatile and open
- Large windows, airy and roomy with lots of space
- Colors are bright and lots of natural light
- Add more comfy chairs

Outdoor Visiting Area



- Should include seating for adults
- Should include flowers and plants (a garden)
- Gives visitors the opportunity to play and share space outdoors if needed
- Would like to see another option to address changes in the weather
- Not enough swings, needs a slide and some monkey bars
- Looks barren and looks like only one family can visit at a time
- Good to have an open-air option

4. ADMISSIONS PROCESS AND WAITING AREAS

We asked the women justice advocates, “How do you imagine the admissions experience in the future facilities?” In the design options, a social distancing alternative was included to reflect how the space would look and feel when implementing the guidelines and requirements to safely convene in spaces during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The participants preferred a design that included natural light, color, sufficient space and group seating. The advocates envisioned this space for the process of meeting with a counselor therefore there was a desire for a space that could accommodate privacy. The most liked features include comfortable seating, welcoming colors and tones, good sight lines and lots of lighting and natural lighting. The most disliked features include shared seating, tandem seating, lacking color, and an overall cold and institutional look and feel.

An advocate shared that the design options were sterile and lacked a trauma-informed design. Another advocate shared that usage of colors and lighting along with comfortable seating should be included in the design to ease a traumatic experience.

The participants raised the need for private conversations with staff and counselors and could imagine it difficult to share private information through a plexiglass window.

In conclusion, the participants want the space to include social distancing but be comfortable, vibrant, and well lit.



Usage of colors and lighting along with comfortable seating designed to ease a traumatic experience is needed.

4. ADMISSIONS PROCESS AND WAITING AREAS

MOST LIKED Color and Natural Light



PROS:

- Colorful
- Vibrant
- Not too casual
- Comfortable seats
- Natural light
- Resembles a public office
- Not governmental

CONS:

- Not trauma informed
- Shared seating
- Lacks privacy (some people do not like to share seats)

Group Seating



PROS:

- Families can sit together and face each other
- Light and airy
- Comfortable seats
- Tones are welcoming and calm

CONS:

- Needs more privacy and space
- Not trauma informed

Social Distancing



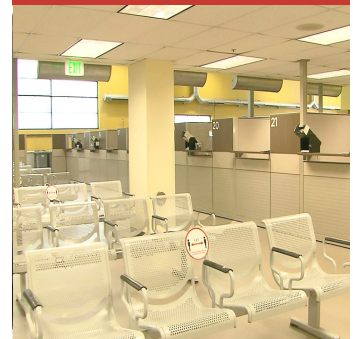
PROS:

- Looks safe

CONS:

- No natural light
- Families cannot be admitted together
- Not trauma informed
- Cold
- No permanent option

MOST DISLIKED Tandem Seating



PROS:

- Easy to maintain

CONS:

- No natural light
- Sterile
- Reminds a hospital waiting room
- Looks clinical
- Colorless
- Not trauma informed
- Hard seats
- Status quo
- Institutional
- No privacy

5. SLEEPING ROOMS

The participants were asked, “How do you imagine the living experience in the future facilities?” The majority selected the single room experience with distributed furniture for its layout and movable furniture. The next highest vote was for the single room with integrated furniture. The integrated furniture design does not allow for the furniture to be moved and the bed is affixed to and against the wall.

The women justice advocates were overwhelmingly in support of a single room option for privacy and respect for women’s individuality. “No one should be forced to live in a dorm setting or share a room if they are over the age of 21”. The most liked features included an open, spacious and airy room, privacy, moveable furniture, big window, extra storage, plants, wood floor, and comfortable look and feel. The most disliked feature was the dorm style design, which provided less privacy and safety.

Advocates expressed concerns about the possibility of assaults in a shared room experience. “Denial of private space is trauma-inducing”. An advocate commented that “having your own key to your room is important.”

There were also several comments on the size of the beds in the designs and requests for adult sized beds and beds that would be comfortable for a larger person.

In conclusion, there was a preference for a living space that resembles a single room where there is privacy, safety, and a space to maintain your identity.

*Privacy and more spacious rooms
respect people’s individuality.*

5. SLEEPING ROOMS

MOST LIKED Single Room/ Distributed Furniture



PROS:

- Allows for choice and privacy
- Comfortable, inviting and spacious
- Open and airy
- Resembles college
- Rounded furniture edges
- Windows and natural light
- Plants
- Wall cabinet and hanging space
- Wooden floor

CONS:

- Stool doesn't help people who need back support
- Movable furniture could be dangerous

Single Room Integrated Furniture



PROS:

- Warm colors
- Comfortable Furniture
- Extra storage
- Window and natural light

CONS:

- Thin bed attached on the side to the wall, uncomfortable for larger people

Collegial/Open Dorm



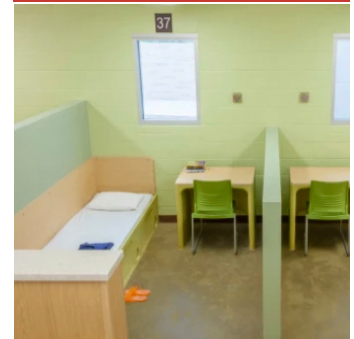
PROS:

- Not identified

CONS:

- Institutional
- Cold
- Sterile
- Denial of private space is trauma inducing
- Lack of individual space
- Thin bed

MOST DISLIKED Divided Dorm



PROS:

- Not identified

CONS:

- Institutional
- No privacy
- Dehumanizing (the number on top of the window)
- Lighting feels institutional
- Denial of private space is trauma inducing
- It looks cheap
- Thin bed

6. DAY ROOM AND COMMUNAL LIVING

We asked the participants, “How do imagine the living experience in the future facilities?” The advocates envision this space as a space to heal and grow that should “look” and “feel” like a “normal” environment, including spaces with a living room feel, colors and murals. The most liked features included natural lighting, natural wood, open space, calming environment, bright colors, murals, and comfortable and moveable seating. The most disliked features included an institutional and sterile feeling space with uncomfortable and immovable furniture that appears to be bolted to the floor. The participants want a space with varied space for women to hang out.

A participant remarked that the space should have large windows with scenery and colors and spaciousness that makes it mentally therapeutic. The participants remarked that the space should not feel institutional. “People need spaces that mirror the outside world.”

This should be a space for people to heal and grow and should look as much like the outside world as possible.

6. DAY ROOM AND COMMUNAL LIVING

MOST LIKED Colors and Murals



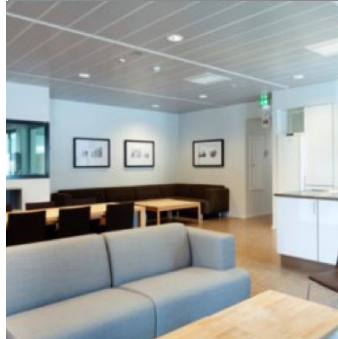
PROS:

- Natural light
- Spacious
- Flexibility
- Easy to maintain
- Allows for various size groups or solitude if just hanging out reading
- Colors and murals
- Looking out the window
- Mentally therapeutic

CONS:

- Institutional layout

Living Room Feel



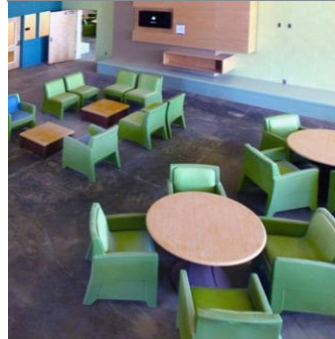
PROS:

- Comfortable couches
- Nice feeling
- Space that mirrors the outside world
- Closest to “normalization”

CONS:

- Reminds a doctor's office

Flexible Grouping



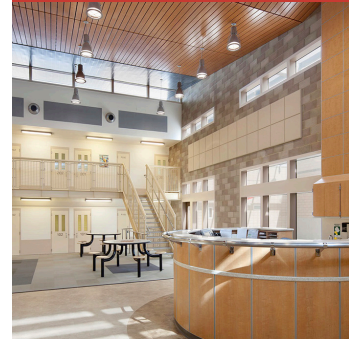
PROS:

- Flexible

CONS:

- Sterile
- Non attractive colors

MOST DISLIKED Natural Materials



PROS:

- Not identified

CONS:

- Institutional feel
- Stools and tables fixed to the ground
- Sterile /Cold
- Uninviting
- Not comfortable
- Prison-style feel
- Traditional
- Not for a therapeutic setting

7. RECREATION AND PROGRAMMING

Women justice advocates were asked to provide feedback and recommendations related to the recreation and programming amenities and spaces.

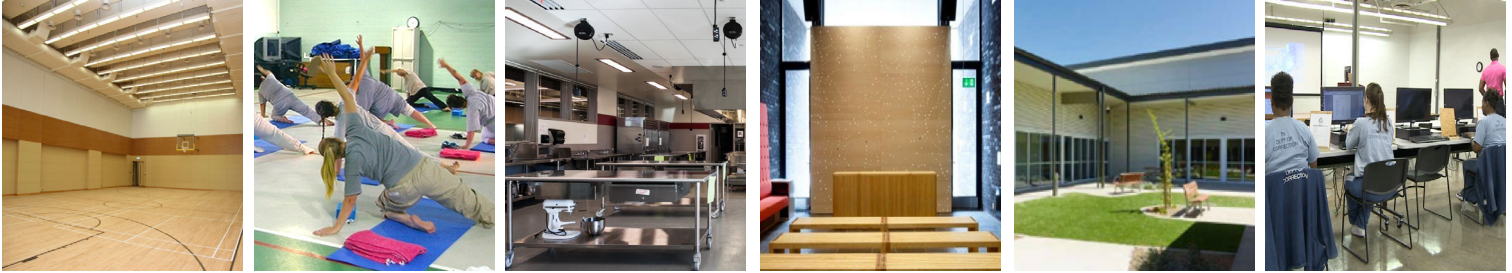
The overall experience should include spaces that are inviting and have color and natural light for indoor spaces. Having an outdoor space that includes plant life and facilitates a connection to nature is important.

In summary, the space and programming options should offer an array of options that range from education, training, and counseling to help people thrive; also arts and cultural programs that allow people to have positive leisure time.

Below are the recommendations in two categories; Spaces and Programs:

SPACES	PROGRAMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meditation room • Library space • Arts and craft room • Chapel and spiritual space • Women and child space • Independent Laundry room • Outdoor space / courtyard • Quiet reading and calming space • Culinary Arts Studio/Bakery • Indoor recreation and exercise space • Classroom space • Group program space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Training: Must be focal point in all aspects of programming so that women can gains skills to obtain gainful employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>College courses</i> - <i>Employment certificate programming</i> • Beauty, hair, nail tech training • Book clubs and reading groups • Self-care workshops • Meditation, Reiki and yoga classes • Aerobics and exercise classes accessible to all abilities including Tai Chi • Culinary program and simulated restaurant concept • Horticulture, planting, gardening and micro-farming • Counseling • Creative Art classes and activities - writing, performing and visual arts, <i>music, poetry, dancing</i> • Life planning

7. RECREATION AND PROGRAMMING



Prioritize creative arts activities which have been proven to be very effective for people with histories of trauma and mental health issues.

Ensure the outdoor space is more open, less courtyard style. There should also be some versatile/swing rooms that can be used for multiple purposes. Quiet reading, calming spaces are good. In terms of programming there was a lot of talk about having a space for beauty/hair/nails training.

Provide people with opportunities to obtain skills and certifications needed to attain employment is key.

Having classrooms that are inviting and have color and natural light are important. Outdoor space is also important, as well as plant life - growing food and having space for nature.

8. WOMEN'S SUPPORT SPACES AND PROGRAMMING

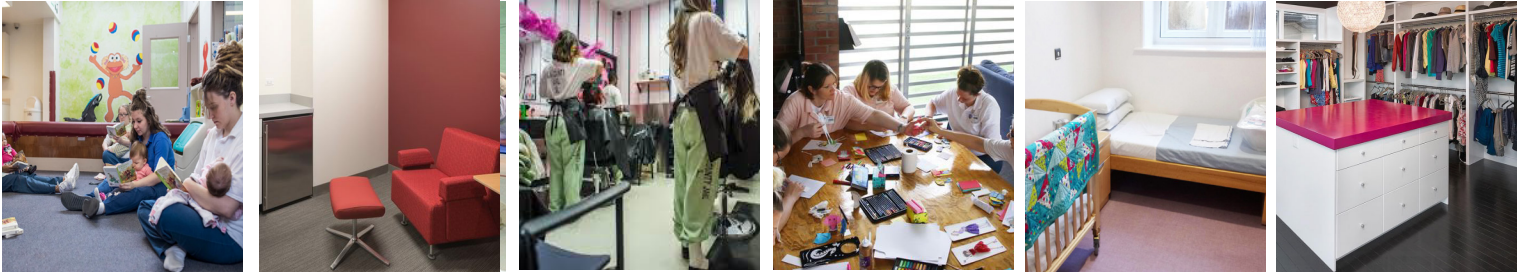
Women justice advocates were asked to provide feedback and recommendations related to the women's support spaces and programming considering health areas, maternity and nursery units, lactation rooms, and programming alternatives.

In summary, there are many recommendations for programming and spaces that support women and their families with an emphasis on both their present development, care and support, and the preparation for their future upon release.

Below are the recommendations in two categories; Spaces and Programs:

SPACES	PROGRAMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lactation Room with comfortable chairs • Salon – Very important to have your hair done for court • Nursery Unit for Mothers and Babies • Clothing boutique accompanied by Dress for Success program • Vocational areas • Outdoor recreation with families • Recreation Areas • Garden space • Reading nook – parents can read to their children in a space with bean bags, comfy chairs and lots of books • Spinning studio • Quiet space for parents visiting with young children • Library • Meditation Room; Stretching and Tai Chi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting Classes focused on healing facilitated by non-DOC staff • STEM skills – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math • Vocational classes including non-traditional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction - Electrical Work - Plumbing • Tutoring – for moms and children • Know your rights / family law classes • Educational and training resources from outside community service agencies; building a plan for release • Women's entrepreneurship class • Gender dynamics in the workplace training • Braiding classes • Financial courses – banking, saving, home ownership, budgeting • Transgender women support services • Lactation coaches and breastfeeding coaches

8. WOMEN'S SUPPORT SPACES AND PROGRAMMING



Ability to have outdoor recreation space with families would go a long way towards encouraging family unity.

Vocational workstations with classes taught to gain vocational skills.

A space where mom's work with educators collaboratively so that they can tutor their kids and help them with homework.

Create a reading nook for parents to sit and read to their children with bean bags, comfy chairs and lots of books.

A well appointed library with training resources, educational resources and resources from outside community service agencies to her build a plan for release.



CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The virtual workshop yielded information and insights valuable to the design guidelines process. The workshop participants were passionate people with a long history of advocating for criminal justice issues. The women justice advocates were engaged and committed to ensuring they advocated on behalf of women and their families to ensure an optimal experience. The participants provided robust input that will have significant value in the design build process. The women justice advocates will have the opportunity to engage throughout the design process to ensure the needs of the community they represent are heard.

In the visiting experience feedback, we learned that comfortable and moveable seating, group visiting, and family-friendly spaces are important. For the family visiting spaces, there was a preference for large windows, art, bright colors, and plants.

With respect to the admissions experience, the participants recommended the use of colors, natural light and comfortable seating in the design to ease a traumatic experience. There was a concern about privacy and the need for intimate conversations with counselors. For this reason, the use of plexiglass as a barrier was not recommended.

With respect to the living experience, the participants recommended that privacy, safety, and individuality be considered when designing sleeping rooms. There is a preference for single rooms over dorm style living. They would also like the day room and communal space to “mirror the outside world” with a living room feel.

With respect to the recreation, programming, and women’s support spaces, there is a preference for natural light and color in the indoor spaces and plants and seating options in the outdoor spaces.

Overall, the virtual session provided an opportunity for participants to advocate for the needs of their community and ways the space can be a tool for rehabilitation rather than trauma. Advocates want an environment that enables healing and development for those in custody. From entering the building, to admissions to living, the experience should not be trauma inducing and should be built on a foundation of respect and dignity. Advocates recommended ways to ensure a positive experience for those in custody and their visiting families, which includes a welcoming and trained staff, a comfortable and warm environment, a design and layout that is family and child friendly, access to social workers, medical, and mental health professionals, and programming that prepares those in custody for their future upon release.

The workshop generated design insights in line with our objectives. Overall, the participants provided their design preferences and dislikes while also providing context and examples for why they made their choices. Attendees were forthcoming in providing their likes and dislikes along with their comments and justifications. We acknowledge their flexibility in allowing us to convene on a virtual platform to garner their input to be included in the Design Guidelines for the Design/Build Process. We received practical takeaways that will not only be useful in optimizing the design of the physical structure but also in how to maximize meaningful engagement between the Department of Corrections staff, visitors, and those in custody. Both components are equally and critically important to the visiting, admissions, and living experiences for those in custody and their families and loved ones.

Overall, the advocates were unified in their feedback that led to greater clarity in understanding the needs of the women’s population and their loved ones that lends to a more compassionate, trauma-sensitive, and human approach as we engage with this population.



APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

During the Q&A segment at the end of the workshop, there were several questions asked by the participants. Below is a list of questions posed by the group:

1. Question: Will there be dorm rooms or single rooms?

Answer: DOC responded that there will be a mix of both but most will be single rooms. There will be lactation rooms for women in custody and staff. There will be a maternity housing unit and nursery housing units for women with children under one years old. There will be sleeping rooms with crib areas and soft surfaces. Planning for transgender housing unit. There will be special considerations in the women's spaces. There will be library spaces – public and law.

2. Question: When will we be able to see draft schematics and provide feedback not only on the women's facility but on all facilities?

Answer: DDC responded that at the moment we are in a procurement stage, and that the design-builder will receive the reports of these meetings and integrate into the design.

3. Question: There were several focus groups completed with women who are formerly incarcerated, how are that feedback being utilized

Answer: MOCJ responded that the feedback from the previous focus group got us here. Started with focus groups in each Borough. Now there is one dedicated facility for women. Allocations of [women's] space [in Queens facility] came from that community engagement.

4. Question: Where will the women be housed relative to the men? What will be done to ensure their safety and PREA compliance?

Answer: DOC responded that PREA compliance is a requirement. There will be private showers in the housing units.

5. Question: In the depictions of the single rooms - were toilet facilities included? Also for dorms - what did the restrooms look like?

Answer: DOC responded that the design allows for bathrooms in both dorm style and single room. There will be private bathroom options in the sleeping areas. There will be dedicated spaces for women in compliance with law.

6. Question: How are you incorporating trauma-inform care principles in the design principles?

Answer: MOCJ responded that it can be included in the design-build package, and they will report back so people are aware what has been incorporated.



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