

MARCH 2, 2020

# Effectively Managing State Prison Infrastructure

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PRESENTED TO: Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 5  
On Public Safety  
Hon. Shirley N. Weber, Chair



LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

## Significant Infrastructure Needs Throughout Prison System

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### Recent Study Recommended Over \$11 Billion in Projects at 12 Oldest Prisons

*(Dollars in Millions)*

Prison	Estimated Cost of Recommendations	Number of Projects
San Quentin State Prison	\$1,647	11
California Men's Colony	1,557	12
Correctional Training Facility	1,318	26
California Institution for Men	1,228	26
California Rehabilitation Center	1,116	7
Deuel Vocational Institution	804	13
Folsom State Prison	800	11
Correctional Medical Facility	763	10
California Correctional Institution <sup>a</sup>	531	16
Sierra Conservation Center	504	9
California Correctional Center	503	10
California Institution for Women	413	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$11,184</b>	<b>159</b>

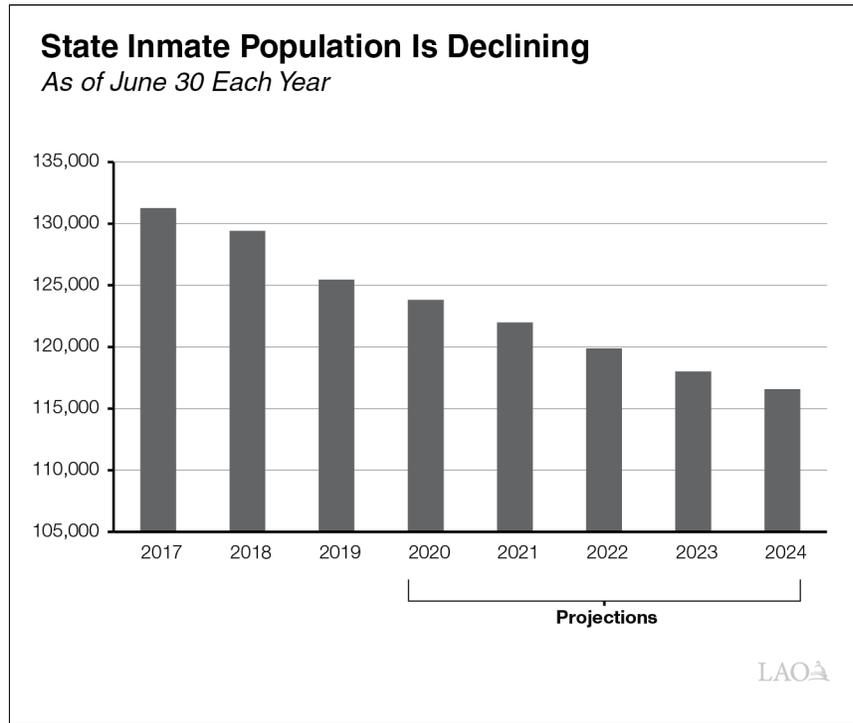
<sup>a</sup> Does not include portions of the prison that were built in 1985.

- The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) operates and maintains 34 prisons, which contain extensive amounts of infrastructure essential to prison operations. Much of the state's prison infrastructure is in need of repair or replacement.
- For example, a recent study of the state's 12 oldest prisons—originally constructed between the 1850s and 1960s—recommended over 150 infrastructure projects totaling over \$11 billion, as shown in the above figure.
- In addition, CDCR estimates it would cost about \$8 billion to address all maintenance and repairs identified at the remaining 22 prisons as being necessary to complete between 2018-19 and 2023-24.



## Inmate Population Decline Could Reduce Number of Prisons Needed

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- **Population Size Directly Related to Need for Prisons Due to Overcrowding Limit.** The state is under a federal court order to limit the population of its 34 state-owned prisons to about 117,000 inmates. To comply with the limit, the state houses inmates in beds outside of state-owned prisons, such as in contracted prisons.
- **Population Decline Has Not Reduced Need for Prisons...** Despite recent declines in the inmate population shown above, the need for all of the state's existing prisons has not changed. This is because state law requires inmates to first be removed from privately operated contract prisons housing males, which CDCR expects to complete by April 2020.



## Inmate Population Decline Could Reduce Number of Prisons Needed

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*(Continued)*

- ***...But Continued Decline Could Reduce Number of Prisons Needed in Future.*** After the last male inmates are removed from privately operated prisons, we project the population will decline by about 6,200 inmates by June 2024. This would allow the state to close two prisons in the near term without violating the court order. However, the administration plans to instead first remove all male inmates from publicly operated contract prisons and then potentially close one state prison at some point in the next five years.



# Recommended Road Map for Developing a Prison Infrastructure Plan

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- Given the poor condition of the state's prison facilities and the possibility of prison closure in the near term, we provide a road map to guide the Legislature in the development of a plan to strategically manage prison infrastructure.

## ▶ **Direct CDCR to Close Two Prisons in Near Term**

- Avoids the need to make infrastructure improvements at those two prisons and allows the state to concentrate resources for infrastructure improvements at the remaining prisons.
- Reduces the risk that the state is sued for the conditions resulting from poor infrastructure.
- Results in about \$100 million in annual operational savings for the state relative to the administration's proposed approach.

## ▶ **Require CDCR to Develop a Strategy to Improve Infrastructure at Remaining Prisons**

- List of significant, high-priority infrastructure projects that should be accomplished over the next ten years at the remaining prisons that takes into account the possibility of further prison closures and various alternatives to repairing existing facilities.
- Project priority order and time line that prioritizes addressing infrastructure needs that threaten inmate and staff well-being, as well as opportunities to reduce construction and operational costs.



## Key Steps to Facilitate Prison Closures

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### ► Identify Prisons for Closure Based on Key Criteria

- ***Per Inmate Cost Avoidance.*** The state should consider closing prisons with high operational costs and/or costly infrastructure needs but relatively low inmate capacity.
- ***Operational Needs.*** The state would likely not want to close a prison with a specialized mission (such as health care) unless it can shift that function to another prison or it determines that function is no longer needed.
- ***Ability to Adequately Provide Services Undermined by Location.*** Prisons that have difficulty providing adequate services due to their remote location (such as because of difficulty recruiting staff) should be prioritized for closure over prisons that operate more effectively.

### ► Develop Detailed Prison Closure Plan

- After identifying which prisons to close, the state will need a plan to address the logistics of implementing the closure process, such as how the inmate population at the prisons will be drawn down and transported elsewhere.
- As a part of the prison closure process, the state will likely bargain with unions who represent the employees at the prisons slated for closure on how to minimize the effects on the workforce and day-to-day operations.

