

A Humane Alternative to the Borough Based Jail Plan

“A Humane Alternative to the Borough Based Jail Plan (BBJ)” is a detailed proposal developed by a group of local downtown Manhattan architects in response to the ill-conceived and wasteful mayoral Borough Based Jail Plan. The architects, represented by William Bialosky, have extensive experience in large-scale development and city planning projects.

This plan was originally presented at a 2019 press conference in Chinatown held in opposition to the proposed jail in Chinatown and gained city-wide exposure from that conference. Rather than engage the issues brought up by the plan and in furtherance of its own ill-conceived plan, the de Blasio administration expedited a ULURP to prohibit any future jails from being built on Rikers Island. The current proposal is an expansion of the 2019 plan and, as you will see, is applicable to all four proposed high-rise jails. It represents an opportunity to totally reimagine facilities needed for meaningful justice reform and rehabilitation. It can be accomplished without the disruption that would be caused by the current proposal, at significantly lower cost, in a shorter time frame and with much greater safety.

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A Humane Alternative to the Borough Based Jail Plan

Is this Prison Reform ?

The city has proposed the borough based jail system—skyscrapers for the incarcerated with ill-conceived plans for outdoor space, emergency evacuation and impact on the family neighborhoods in which each will reside.

City Proposal for Prison Reform —

Borough Based Jail System

Real prison reform goes
beyond closing Rikers
and replicating the same
mistakes in skyscrapers

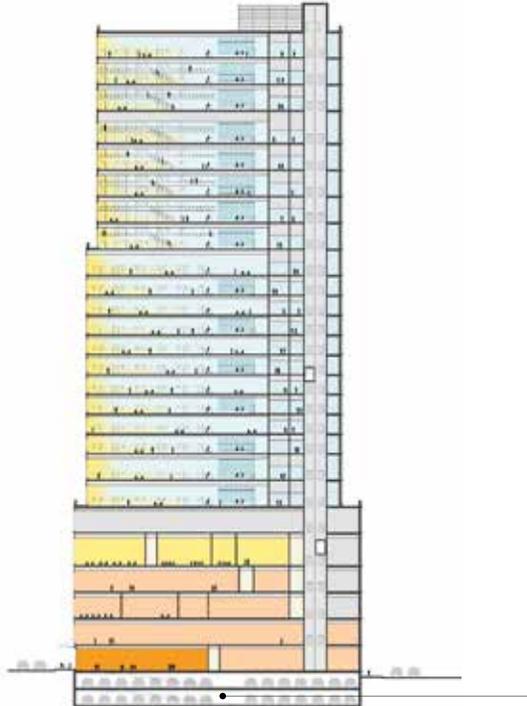


Proposed Jail Towers

A Tower Jail will not work

Prison Reform should be based on “evidence-based practices.” Evidence shows the beneficial mental and social aspects in a treatment-oriented environment of access to natural light and fresh air, connectedness to nature, thermal and acoustic comfort, and variety of outdoor spaces and views to experience the changing of seasons. These goals can only be achieved in low-rise buildings.

Right Sizing, Safety and Spatial Environment



Tower

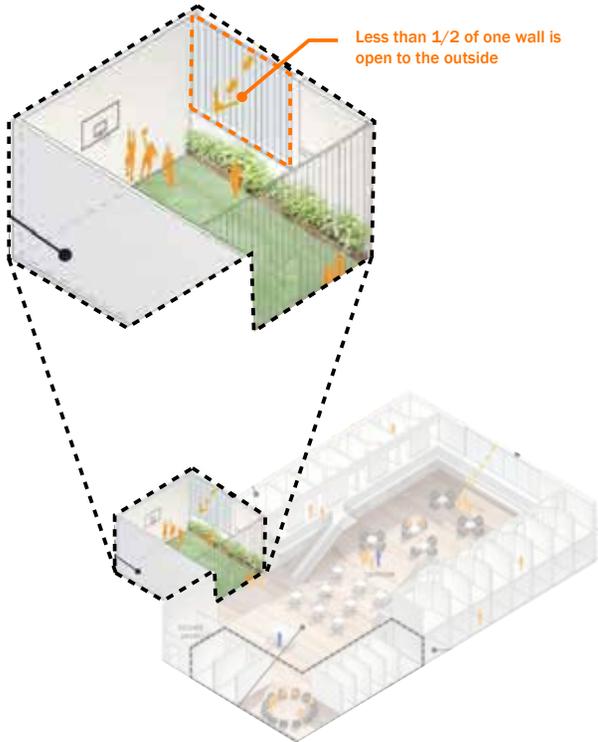
- Operational capacity should never exceed one thousand offenders.
- Large, crowded spaces increase an offender's sense of isolation and anxiety.
- Lack of variety in housing type diminishes the operation of rehabilitative programs and magnifies an institutionalized feeling.



Campus

- To aid in rehabilitation, facilities should be broken down into small units appropriately sized in accordance with security risk and needs.
- To encourage positive socialization, movement and the experience of seasonal change, multi-purpose spaces should be spatially organized in a campus-like setting consisting of several stand-alone buildings (rather than a large imposing institution), organized to maximize use of shared resources.

Outdoor Space



Tower

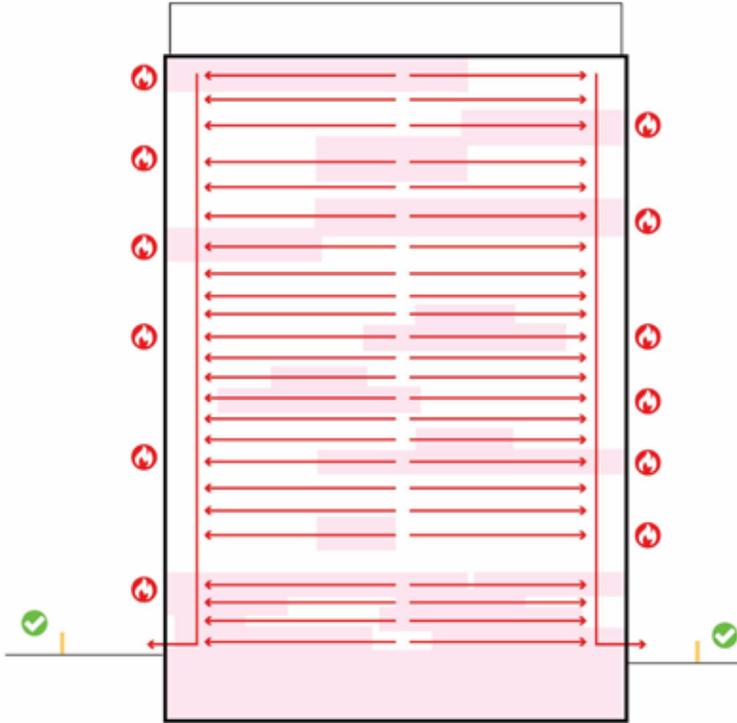
- Each Outdoor Space is estimated to be at the minimum allowed 1,000 SF. These “outdoor” spaces are not open to the sky and enclosed by solid walls on all sides with the exception of 1/2 of one wall.
- inspired by statutory minimums.



Campus

- Outdoor space includes, grassy fields, wide open spaces, walking paths, amphitheater and a central quad.
- inspired by higher education campus design.

Safety & Welfare



Tower

- In the event of a catastrophic emergency, detainees may be required to navigate over 20 flights of stairs in order to reach safety.
- Once detainees reach the outside they will empty into unsecured neighborhood streets.



Campus

- In the event of a catastrophic emergency, detainees can safely and efficiently egress to a secured, central outdoor space.

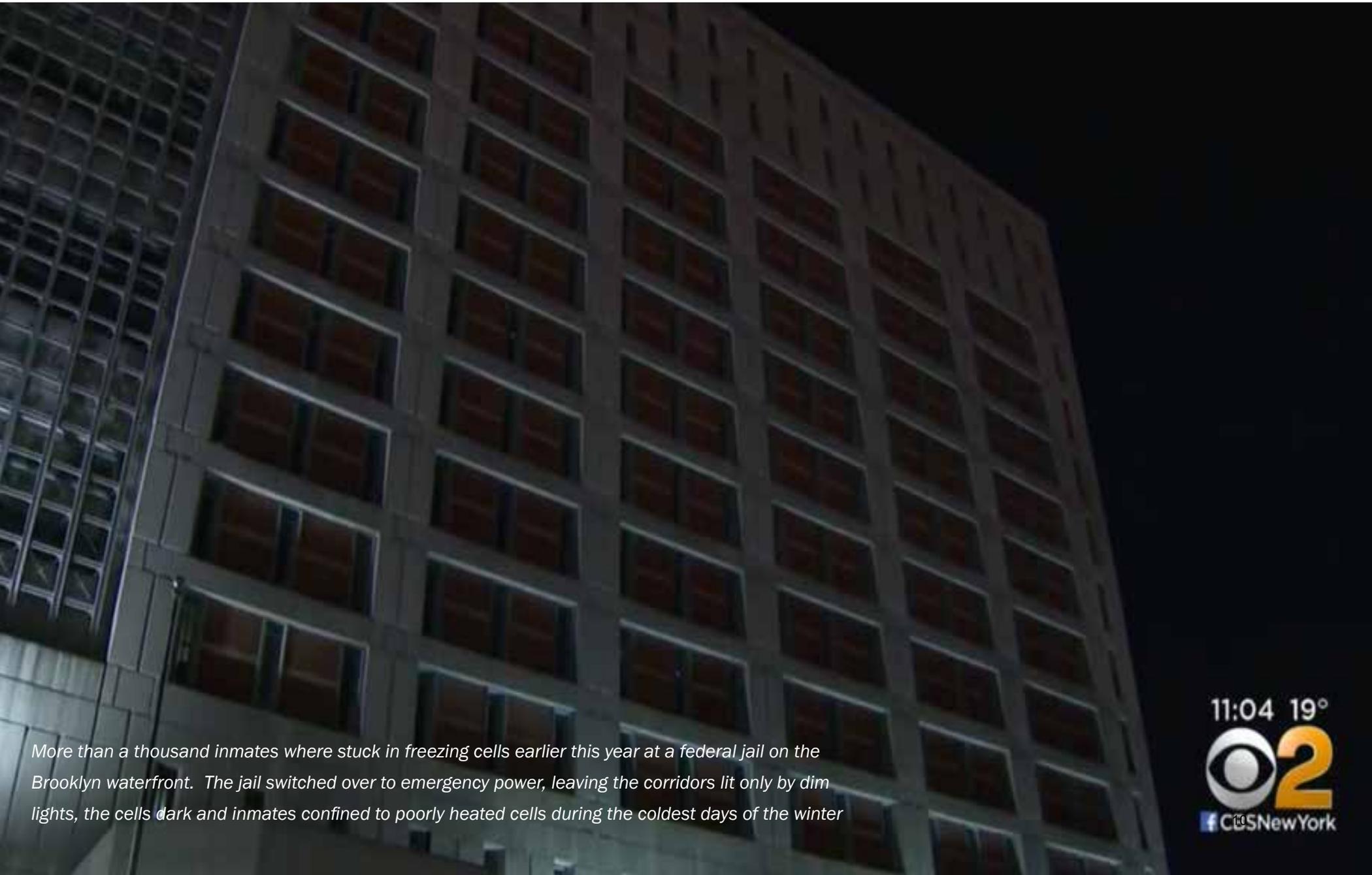
Tower jails are not safe

What would a fire look like in a new tower jail? —



Saturday, February 12, 2005, a fire was detected on the 21st floor of this building. The fire spread quickly throughout the entire building, leading to the collapse of the outermost, steel parts of the upper floors. It took firefighters about 24 hours to extinguish the fire.

What would a blackout look like in a new tower jail? —



More than a thousand inmates were stuck in freezing cells earlier this year at a federal jail on the Brooklyn waterfront. The jail switched over to emergency power, leaving the corridors lit only by dim lights, the cells dark and inmates confined to poorly heated cells during the coldest days of the winter

What would 1,150 inmates on the street look like in the event of an emergency evacuation in a new tower jail? —



Police watch over prisoners from Orleans Parish Prison who were evacuated from their prison to the highway due to high water in New Orleans, Louisiana. For months afterward, hundreds of incarcerated people were unaccounted for. "It was complete chaos," said a corrections officer with more than 30 years of service at Orleans Parish Prison

Unanswered Questions Related to a Full Evacuation

- 1) How long would it take to fully evacuate 1,400 violent and non-violent detainees and staff?
- 2) How will the NYPD and DOC secure a perimeter after 1,400 detainees are evacuated?
- 3) Where do the 35 buses and 1,400 detainees queue?
- 4) Which facilities are the detainees transferred to?
- 5) What is the protocol if some of the detainees escape?



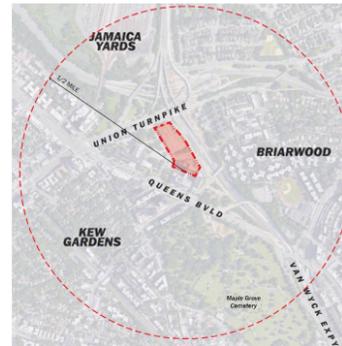
MANHATTAN

124-125 White Street



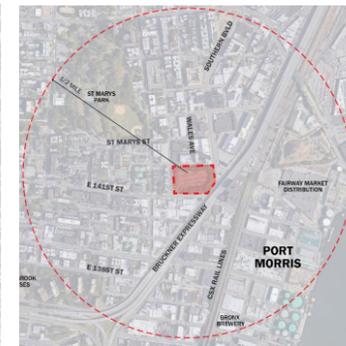
BROOKLYN

275 Atlantic Avenue



QUEENS

126-02 82nd Avenue

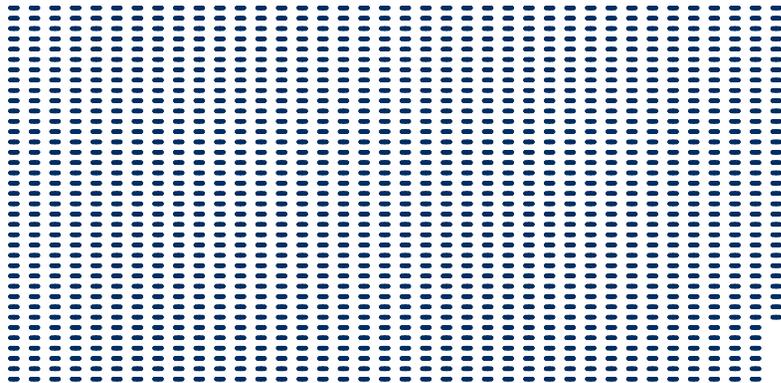


BRONX

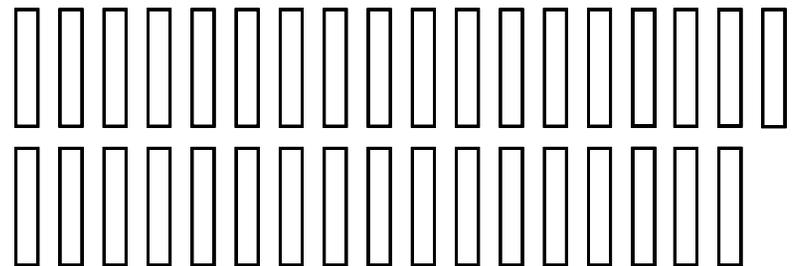
745 East 141st Street

The Department of Corrections claims it will evacuate detainees by bus during a catastrophic event

1,400 Detainees

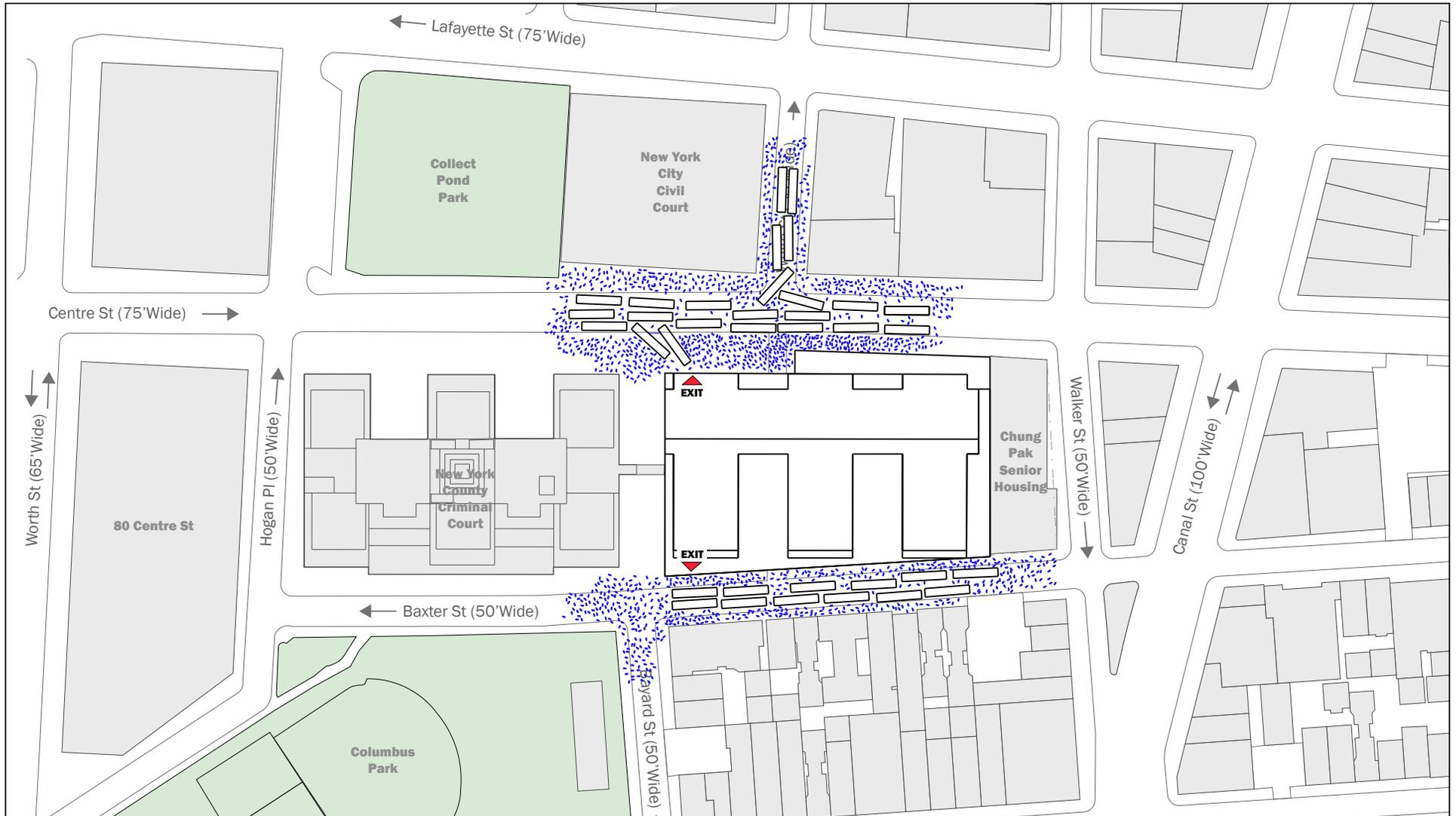


35 Buses

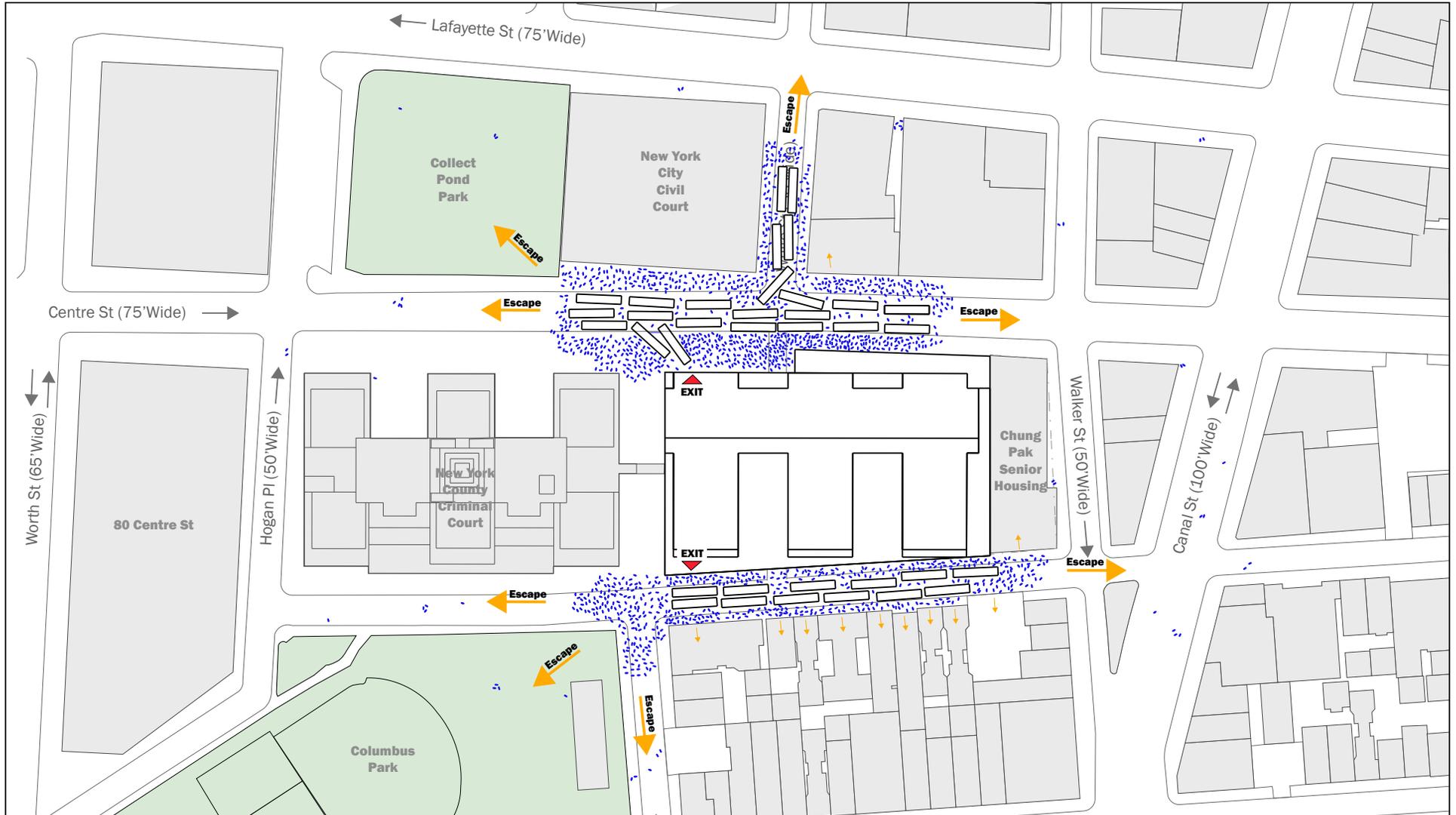


(40 Detainees/ Bus)

What would 1,400 Detainees and 35 Buses look like on neighborhood streets?



How many detainees will be unaccounted for?



Is this really what prison reform looks like?



Before



After

The one area in the city that allows for space for programming and serving the incarcerated in a humane way is a reimagined Rikers Island.



Why Fix Rikers ?

In concert with a deep rethinking and comprehensive reforms to operations, personnel, oversight, land-use, and site accessibility—and by demolishing every existing structure on the island and building anew—we believe we can create a resilient and rehabilitative environment that will serve all New Yorkers far better than the Mayor’s current plan.

Rikers today is broken —



Dehumanizing & Outdated Infrastructure



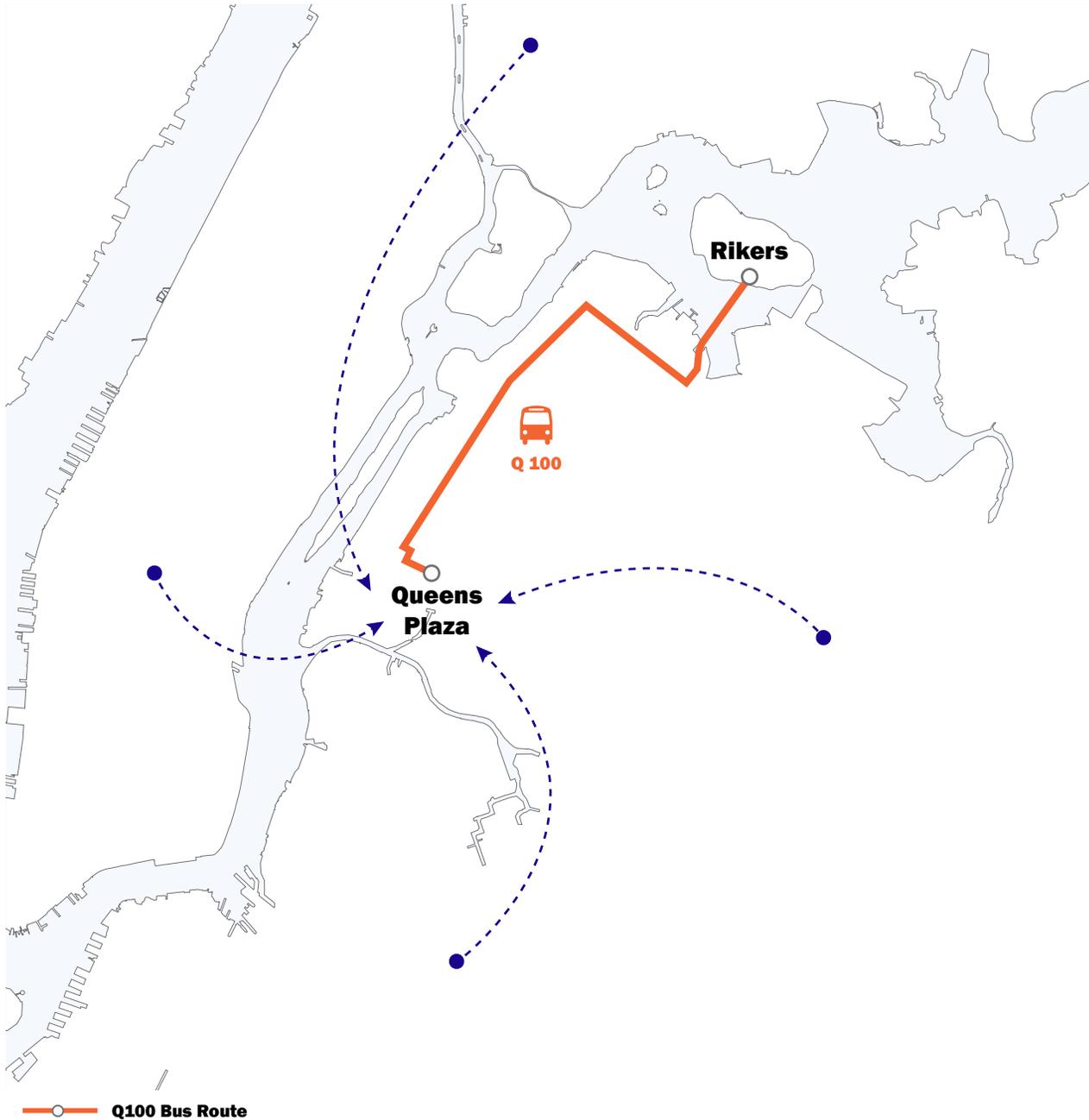
Existing Conditions

Temporary & Obsolete

1/3 of the Structures
are temporary dorms or
obsolete buildings



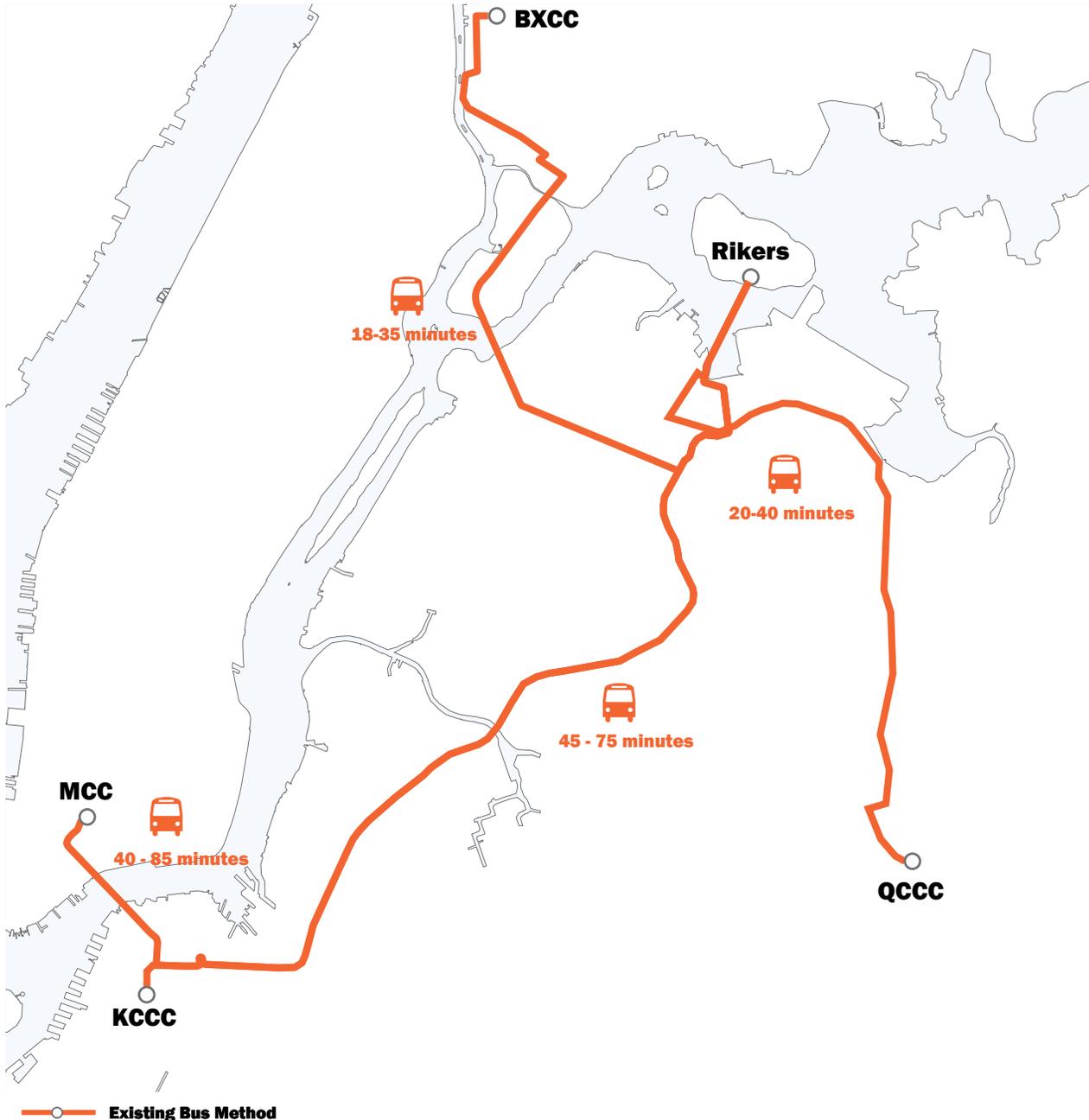
Limited Access



Public Transportation options for visitors and staff are currently limited to the Q100 Bus

One Choice

Limited Access



Rikers detainees currently travel by bus to appear in court. The maximum travel time is between:

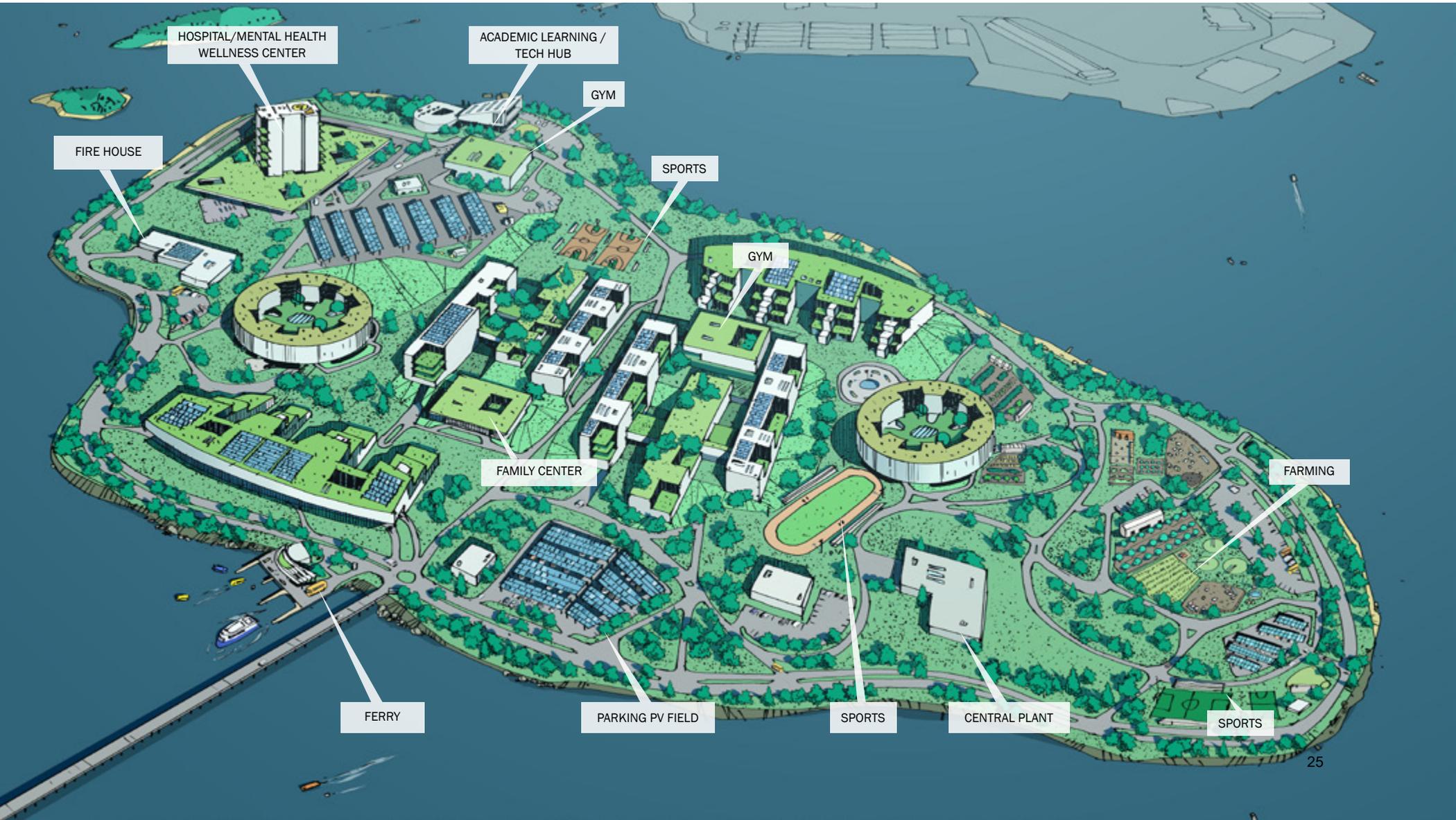
35 - 85 minutes one way

How do we solve the challenges facing Rikers?

- Dehumanizing & Outdated Infrastructure
- Temporary & Obsolete
- Limited Access



A Vision for Rikers Island —



Campus Master Plan will include:

- Courthouses
- Mental health facilities for different levels of need, trauma and transition – stabilization centers
- Vocational Schools
- Sports fields & field house
- High School and College classes for inmates
- Housing for the visiting families w/ recreational amenities
- Correction Officers Resource Center
- Agricultural farming program
- Transitional housing for the inmates on their way back into society

Environmental Strategies to Promote Wellness

- Maximize natural daylighting
- Maximize natural ventilation & purification
- Improve acoustics & thermal comfort
- Establish connection to natural environments & the changing seasons
- Natural Materials



Precedents

Correction Facilities Designed for Wellness

Designed through the use of evidence-based criteria, these modern facilities have been shown to foster the rehabilitation and wellbeing of their occupants. Such aspirations have been achieved in part by implementing design programs that encourage humane treatment, provide access to daylight, and create a closer connection to the natural environment.

Precedent —

Van Cise-Simonet Detention Center

Name

Van Cise-Simonet Detention Center

Location

Denver, Colorado

Architect

RicciGreene Architects / Hartman-Cox
Architects

“The new 1500 bed Denver Detention Center in the heart of the Civic Center and new Justice Center will express the dichotomy between the difficult job of incarcerating those awaiting trial, sentencing or placement and the longer term mission of returning detainees and inmates successfully and productively into the community. Materials and forms will illustrate the seriousness of purpose and permanence, as well as optimism for the future”



Precedent —

Justice Center

Name

Justice Center

Location

Leoben, Austria

Architect

Joseph Hohensen Architects

“In its execution as a ‘belle façade’ facing the city, the court building comes across as an open and transparent building representing the new self-image of justice. No ‘judicial palace’, but a modern open ‘service facility’ for citizens... The detainment units are designed like flat-sharing communities, each housing up to fifteen people. Each unit has a small kitchen, sanitary unit, gym and day room as well as a loggia that extends internal freedom of movement by the dimension of ‘stepping outside’.”



Precedent —

Iowa State Penitentiary

Name

Iowa State Penitentiary

Location

Fort Madison, Iowa

Architect

HOK

“The organization of collegiate campuses inspired the layout of this eight-building penitentiary.... To create a less institutional-feeling environment, the design gives offenders and staff expansive exterior views while drawing large amounts of natural light deep into the core of the buildings. Access to natural ventilation and sophisticated automated temperature controls improve energy efficiency while contributing to health and well-being. Natural plants and healing gardens incorporate the Iowa landscape.”



Precedent —

Las Colinas Women's Detention & Reentry Facility

Name

Las Colinas Women's Detention & Reentry Facility

Location

San Diego, California

Architect

KMD / HMC Architects

"It's our hope that the Las Colinas Detention and Reentry Facility can do more. That it can transform inmates' lives. Acknowledging that over half of prisoners in America's corrections system suffer from abuse, trauma and mental illness, the County of San Diego and the Sheriff's Department recognized that building a healing environment to promote well-being and prevent further psychological deterioration was imperative"



Improved Access

- Provide easy access that will also provide a positive experience for family and visitors.
- Provide timely, secure and easy transport to the court houses.
- Provide easy access for construction materials and labor.



New York is built on its waterways —



Benefits of Ferry Service

“

The ferry service, on the other hand, is much more promising, and we believe warrants further consideration and analysis. In particular we think the potential user population as well as the availability and cost of appropriate dock sites with sufficient parking and proximity to public transportation need to be examined to determine if the ferry could be an attractive and viable service.

”

— Stanley Brezenoff
Rikers Alternate Means of Access
Report by the DOT 1984

Benefits of Ferry Service

“

In less than two years, NYC Ferry has become one of the most reliable, affordable, and beloved transit systems in the city. Expansion of the system means getting even more New Yorkers where they need to go, increasing access to good-paying jobs, schools, and other neighborhoods, all for the price of a subway ride. We are proud to have delivered an invaluable asset to the city that makes all five boroughs fairer and stronger.

”

— James Patchett
NYC Economic Development President 2019

Benefits of Ferry Service

“

Perhaps most important to note....: boats, docks, and terminals can be established relatively fast and are exceptionally cheap in transit dollars. Unlike subway expansion, which famously takes decades to complete, ferry terminals and vessels can be up and running within a year or two—in the case of NYC Ferry, they actually launched rapidly. And, seriously: the cost of a few million to build a new ferry stop might buy you inches of the Second Avenue subway line.

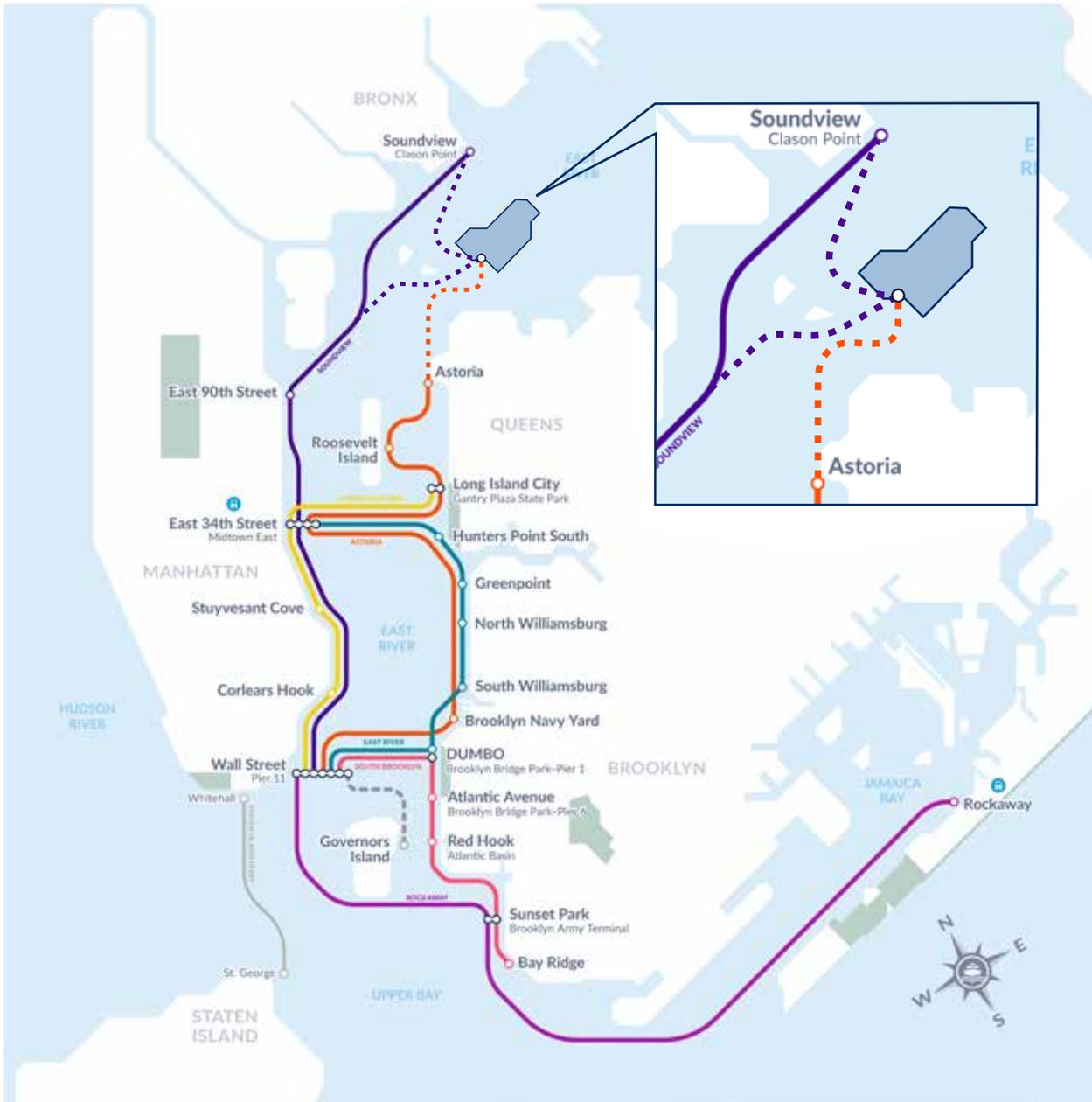
”

— Roland Lewis
CEO & President Waterfront Alliance 2019

Ferry Services



Improved Access

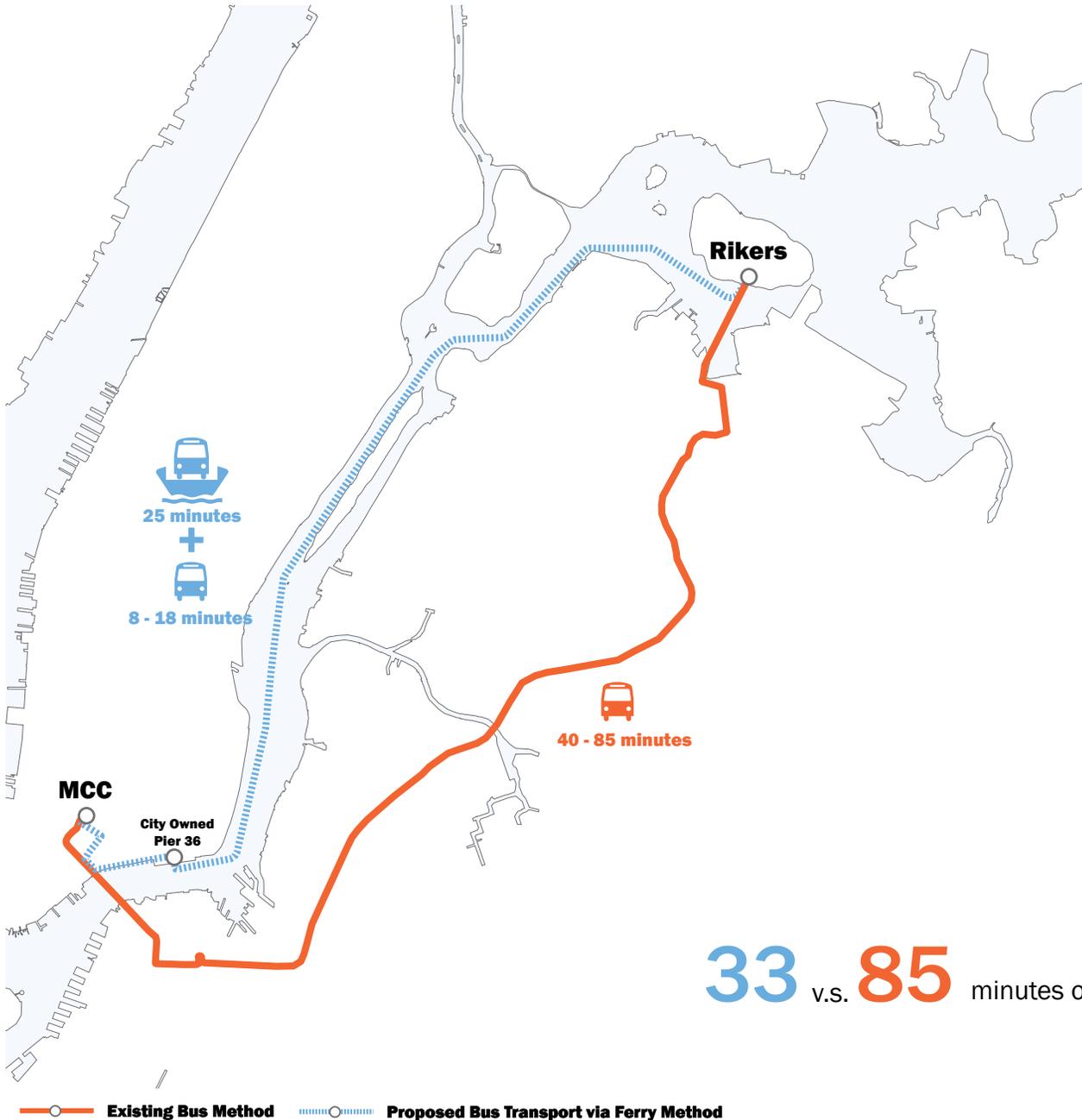


Adding a Rikers Ferry stop to the existing NYC Ferry Astoria and Soundview routes will provide easy access for staff and visitors from all five boroughs. This will also humanize the experience of accessing Rikers at a much lower cost than alternative transportation methods. In addition, the proposed Air Train LGA provides an opportunity to expand access to Rikers Island from Grand Central, Penn Station and beyond.

Average Ferry Speed (18 kt/20.7 MPH) determined by using Blount Passenger Cargo Ferry 100 LT performance metrics. All proposed ferry terminals are on city owned sites and will need to be built to support cargo ferry. Vehicular travel times calculated using google maps arriving at Courthouse at 9AM on a weekday. Cargo Ferry will also allow for easy transportation of materials and laborers during construction

Visitor and staff public transportation

Improved Access
Manhattan

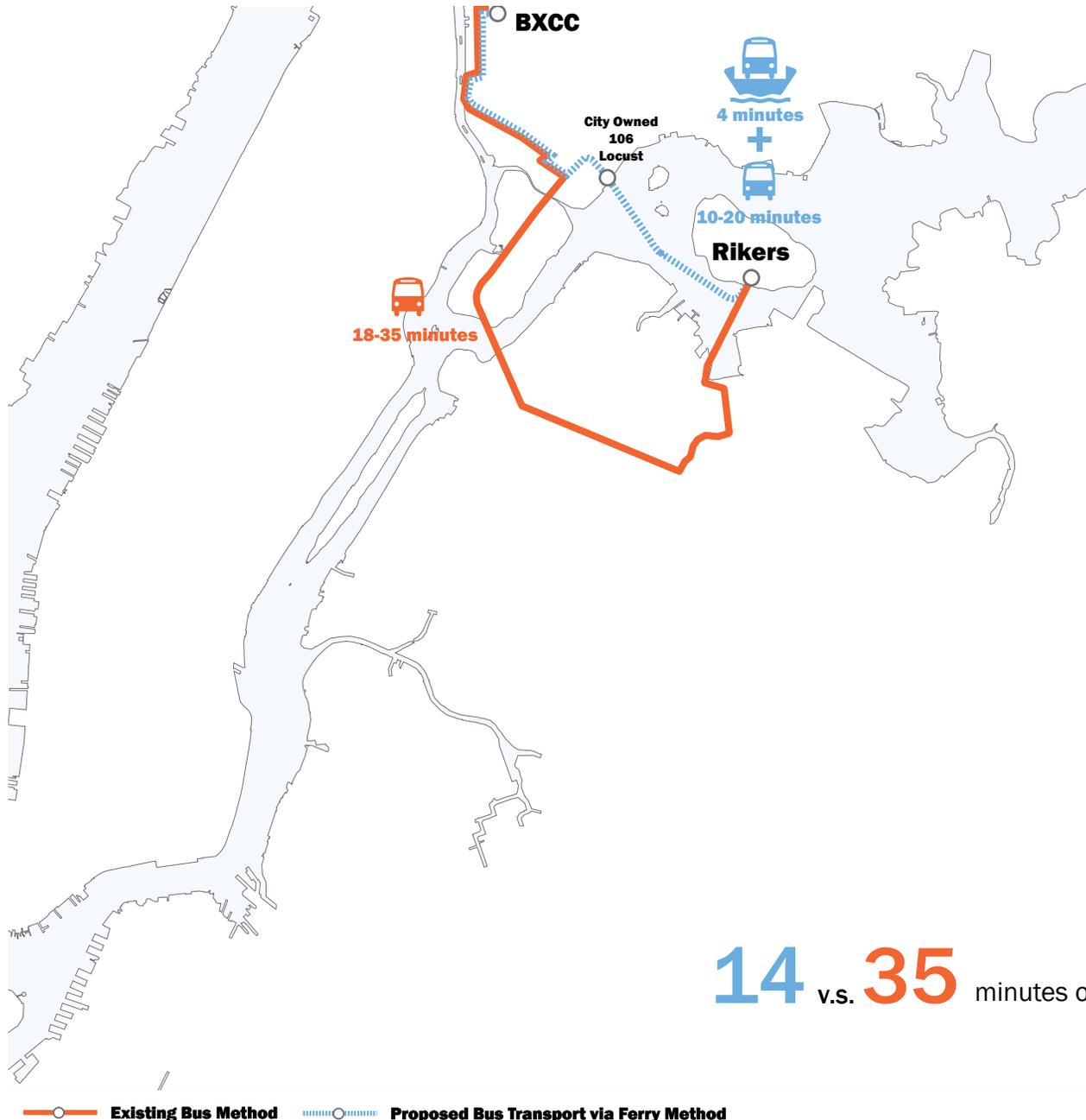


A ferry can transport detainees to their court appearance at MCC without leaving the security of the bus and potentially save a maximum of 52 minutes one way

Average Ferry Speed (18 kt/20.7 MPH) determined by using Blount Passenger Cargo Ferry 100 LT performance metrics. All proposed ferry terminals are on city owned sites and will need to be built to support cargo ferry. Vehicular travel times calculated using google maps arriving at Courthouse at 9AM on a weekday. Cargo Ferry will also allow for easy transportation of materials and laborers during construction

Improved Access

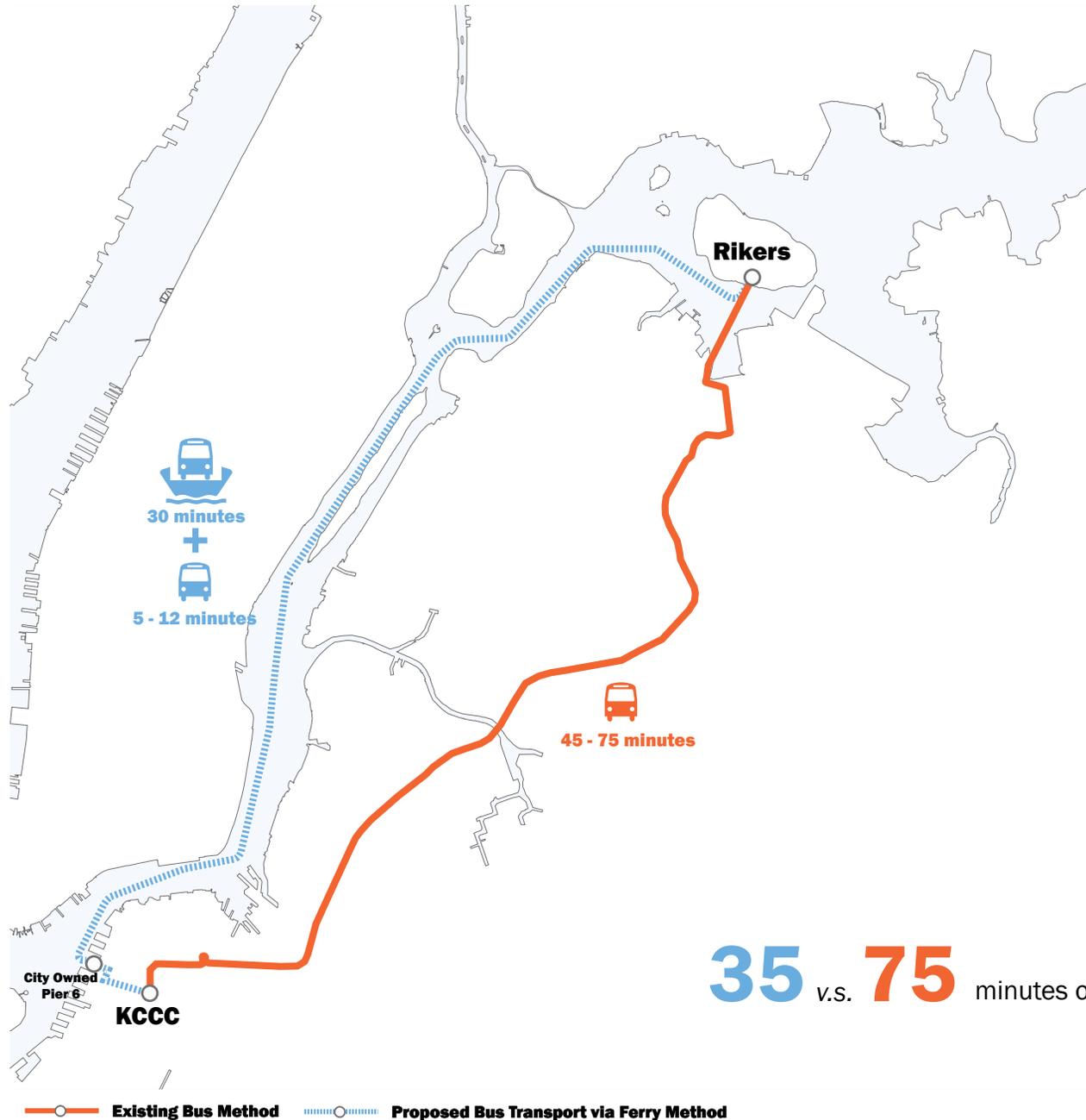
Bronx



A ferry can transport detainees to their court appearance at BXCC without leaving the security of the bus and potentially save a maximum of 21 minutes one way

Average Ferry Speed (18 kt/20.7 MPH) determined by using Blount Passenger Cargo Ferry 100 LT performance metrics. All proposed ferry terminals are on city owned sites and will need to be built to support cargo ferry. Vehicular travel times calculated using google maps arriving at Courthouse at 9AM on a weekday. Cargo Ferry will also allow for easy transportation of materials and laborers during construction

Improved Access
Brooklyn

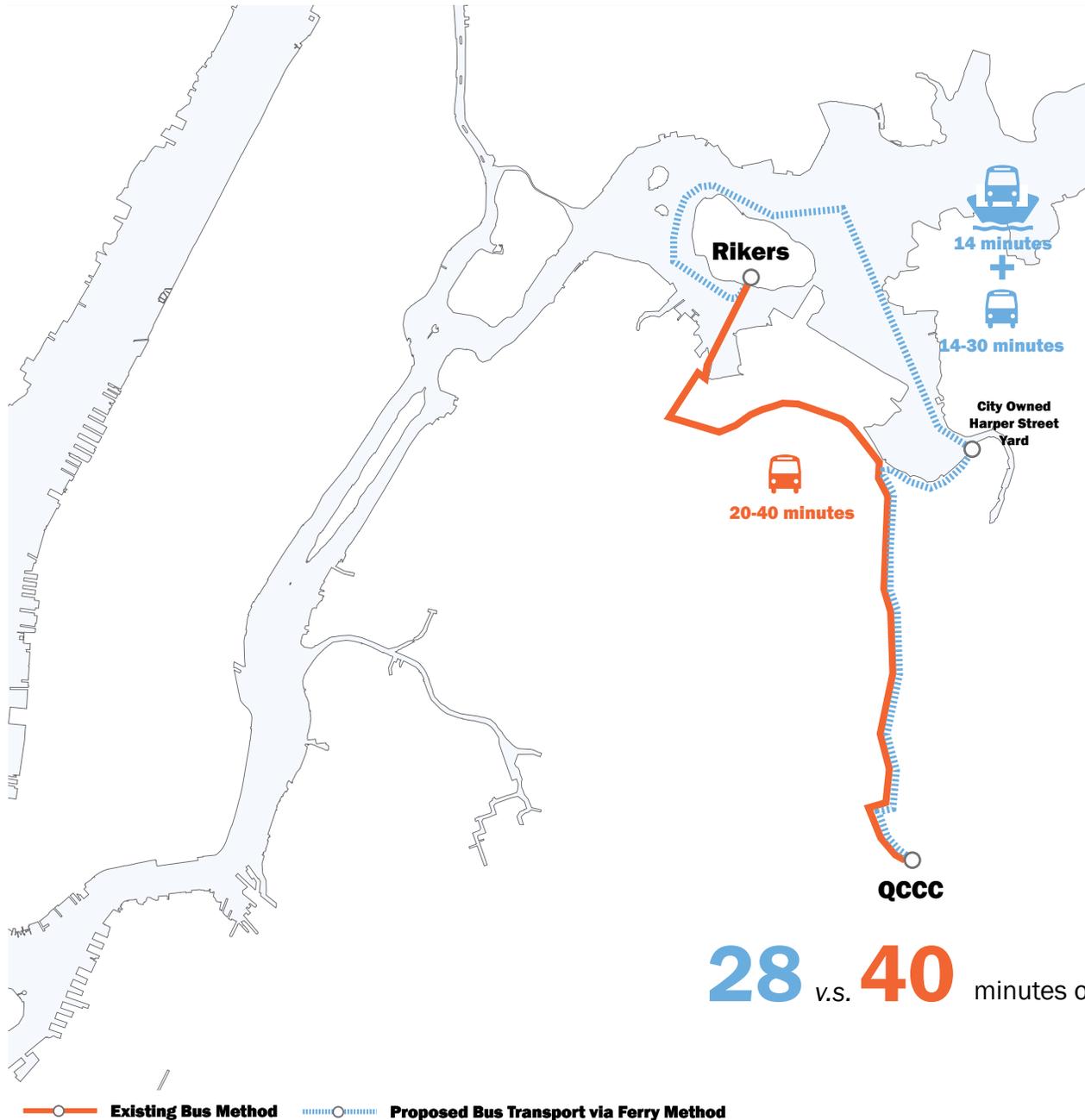


A ferry can transport detainees to their court appearance at KCCC without leaving the security of the bus and potentially save a maximum of 40 minutes one way

Average Ferry Speed (18 kt/20.7 MPH) determined by using Blount Passenger Cargo Ferry 100 LT performance metrics. All proposed ferry terminals are on city owned sites and will need to be built to support cargo ferry. Vehicular travel times calculated using google maps arriving at Courthouse at 9AM on a weekday. Cargo Ferry will also allow for easy transportation of materials and laborers during construction

Detainee transportation

Improved Access
Queens



A ferry can transport detainees to their court appearance at QCCC without leaving the security of the bus and potentially save a maximum of 12 minutes one way

28 v.s. **40** minutes one way

Average Ferry Speed (18 kt/20.7 MPH) determined by using Blount Passenger Cargo Ferry 100 LT performance metrics. All proposed ferry terminals are on city owned sites and will need to be built to support cargo ferry. Vehicular travel times calculated using google maps arriving at Courthouse at 9AM on a weekday. Cargo Ferry will also allow for easy transportation of materials and laborers during construction

Detainee transportation

How will a tower jail impact the capital strategy?

Cost Benefit

- No need for temporary swing space construction that will be demolished
- Shorter construction time
- No discretionary land use action (ULURP)
- Low rise construction is less expensive
- Phased construction to align with prison reform
- No construction related environmental legal risk from neighborhoods
- Easier access for construction material and labor



*Construction of Las Colinas Women's
Detention & Reentry Facility*

Cost Comparison

Borough Tower Jails

\$ **11** Billion

Over 10 years

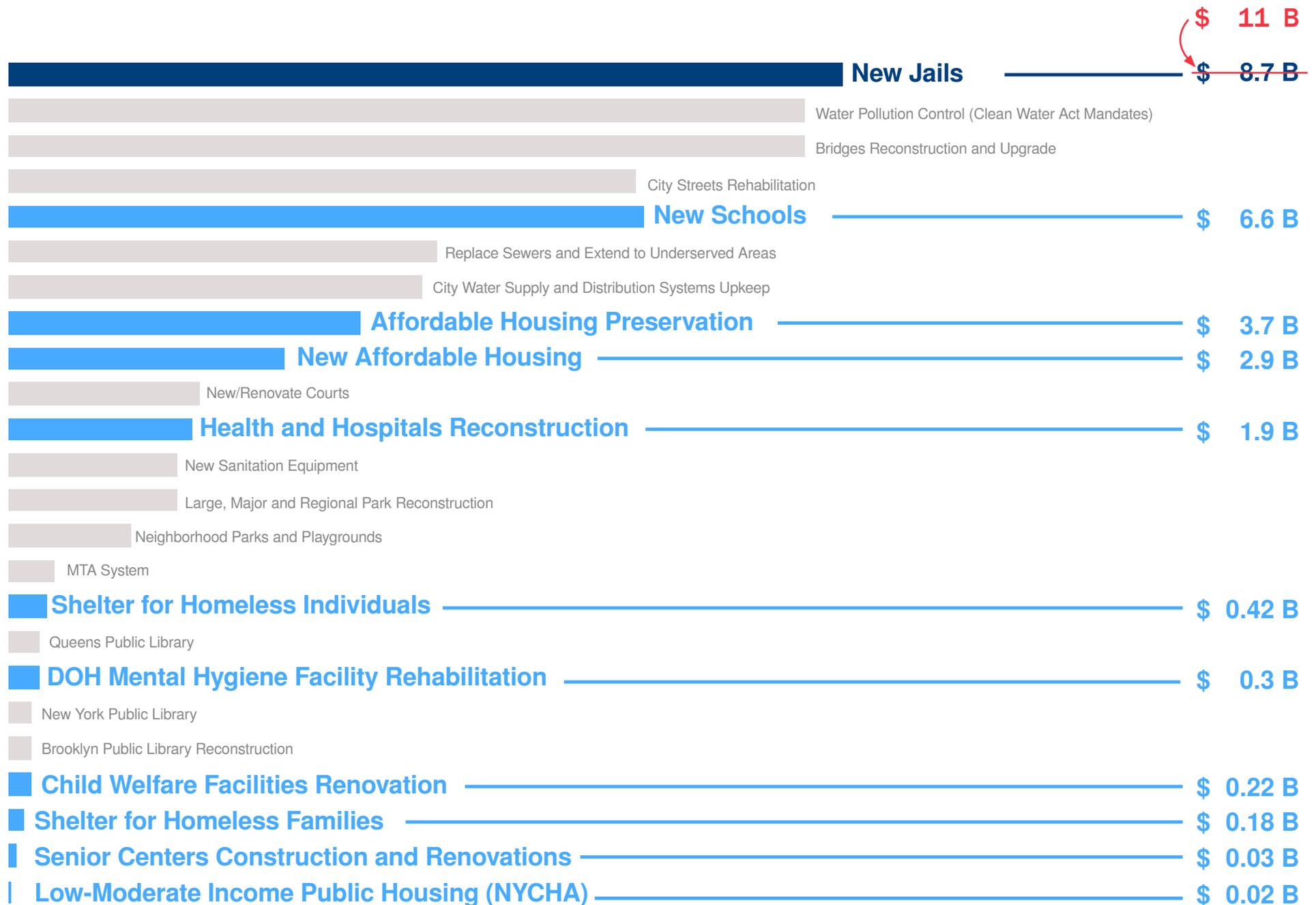
v.s.

Rikers Island Transformation

\$ **5.6** Billion

Over 5 years

A prison reform campus will cost half that of tower jails and be constructed in half the time



New Jails

\$ **11** Billion

2020 - 2029

v.s.

New Schools

\$ **6.6** Billion

2020 - 2029

Why are we allocating nearly twice the amount of money for new jails than we are for new schools?

New Jails

\$ **11** Billion

2020 - 2029

v.s.

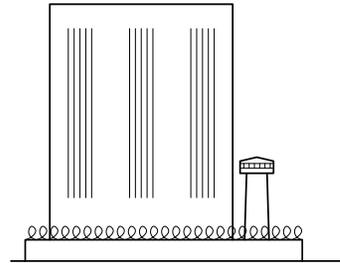
Housing & Health Care

\$ **9.7** Billion

2020 - 2029

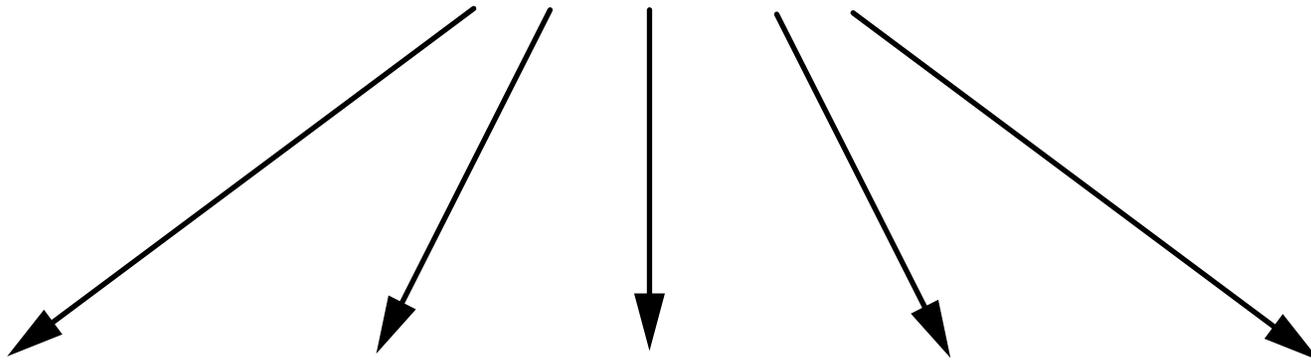
Why are we allocating more money for new jails than we are for housing and healthcare combined?

The city should spend more money preventing crime than punishing it.



Expensive New Prison System

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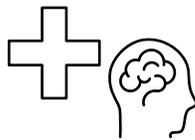


\$



Affordable Housing

\$



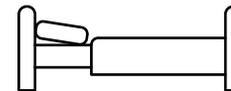
Health & Wellness Services

\$



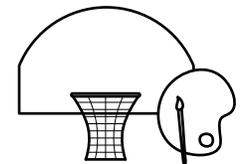
Restorative Justice on Rebuilt Rikers

\$



Shelter for Homeless Families

\$



After School Programs

Is this really what prison reform looks like?

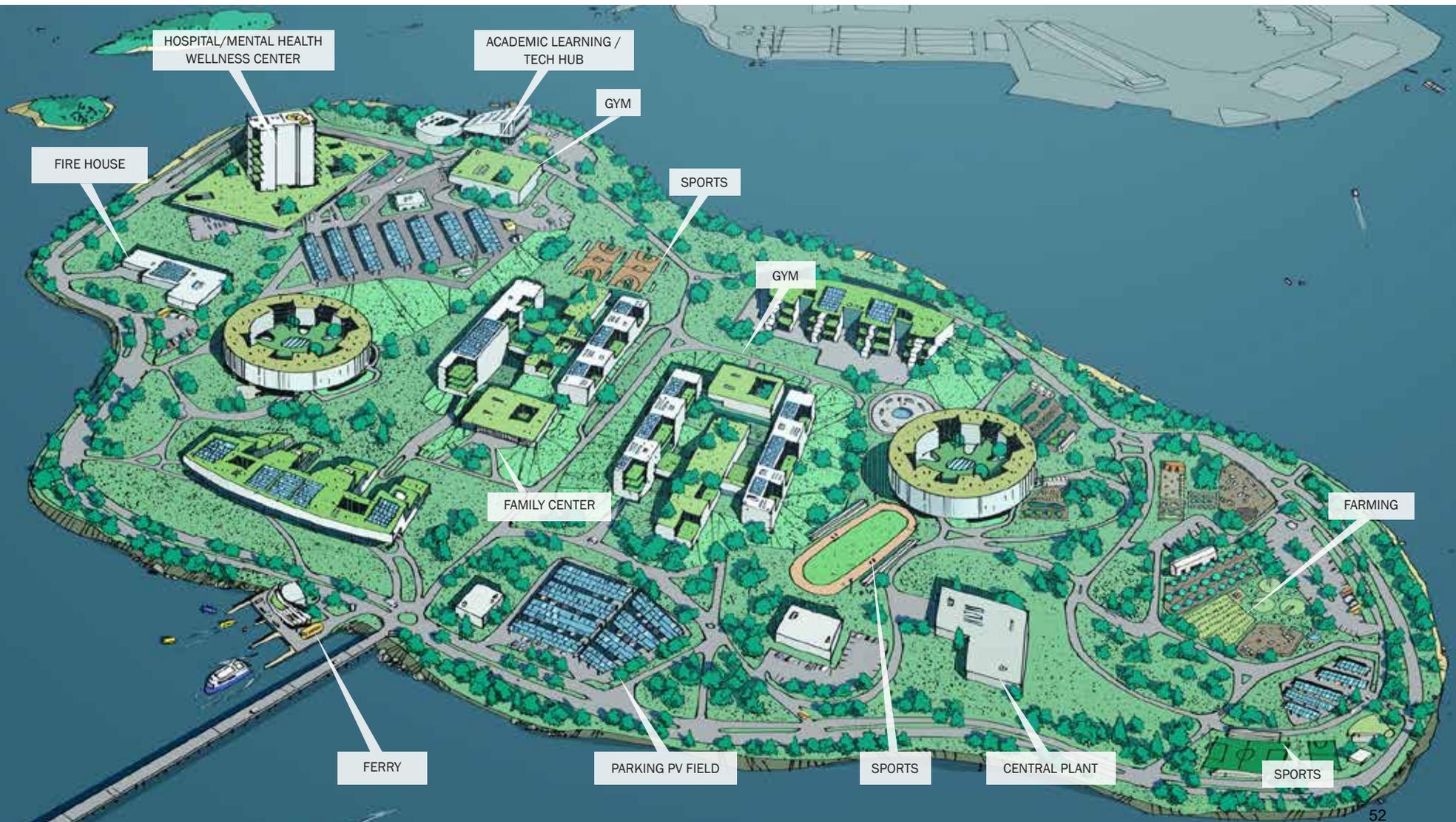


Before



After

We believe that people who are incarcerated should be treated with dignity and offered opportunities that encourage rehabilitation by nurturing the mind, body and soul. We see this through state of the art health facilities, education, vo-tech, access to nature and daylighting.



Master Plan Goals

- Replace all existing structures with state of the art facilities.
- Design to standards that promote physical and mental health, including air quality, access to nature, daylight, and other appropriate lighting levels
- Provide state of the art medical treatment that is local to the island
- Embrace the city's sustainability goals, to create a healthy living environment
- Provides a cost effective phasing solution



At Las Colinas Women's Detention & Reentry Facility, services are housed in separate buildings, and the inmates are escorted by deputies between the dining hall, the medical building, and the recreation and education facility.

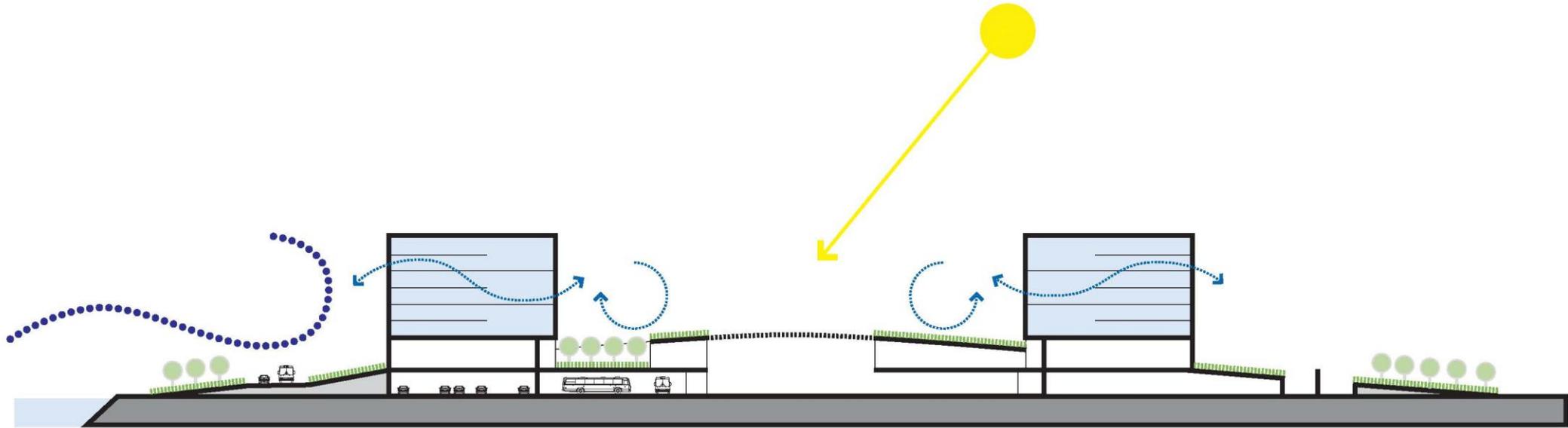
Critical Human Resource Programs for the campus:

- Courthouses
- Mental health facilities for different levels of need, trauma and transition – stabilization centers
- Vocational Schools
- Sports fields & field house
- High School and College classes for inmates
- Housing for the visiting families w/ recreational amenities
- Correction Officers Resource Center
- Agricultural farming program
- Transitional housing for the inmates on their way back into society



1300 Bed "State of the Art" Central Intake Facility

**How will sustainability
create a healthy workplace
and shape the building's
architectural identity?**



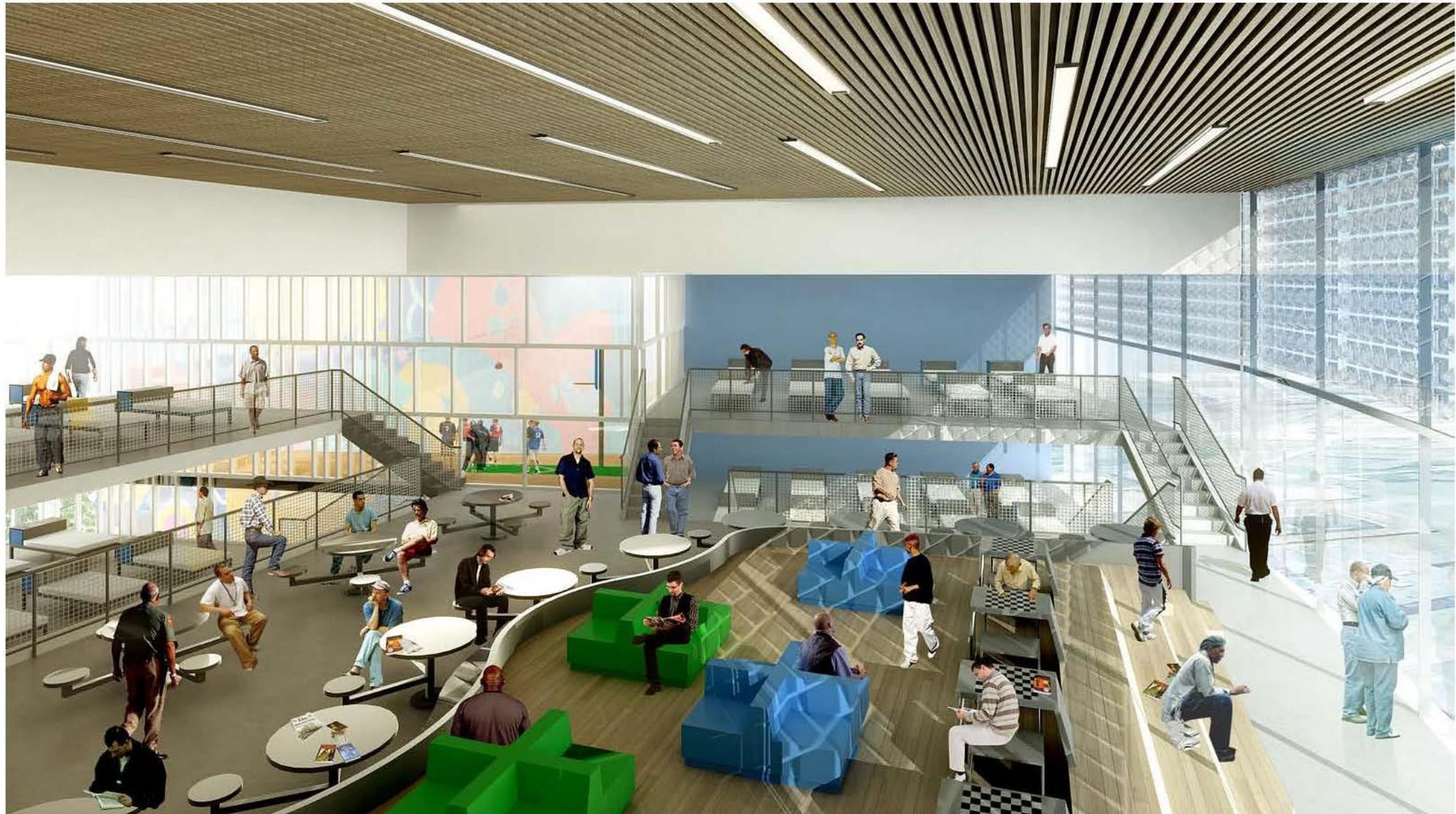
1. SHALLOW RING DEPTH FOR **NATURAL VENTILATION AND NATURAL DAYLIGHTING** (DOUBLE EXPOSURE DORM UNITS)
2. **WINTER WINDS BLOCKED** FROM RECREATION YARDS AND CENTRAL COURTYARD
3. LARGE CENTRAL COURTYARD TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE: **VIEWS, INTAKE AIR QUALITY, SUMMER COOLING**
4. COMPACT MASSING FOR **EFFICIENT INSULATION**

ADDITIONAL GREEN TECHNOLOGY

- + THERMAL MASS: USING THE EARTH'S TEMPERATURE TO ASSIST BUILDING PERFORMANCE
- + HEAT EXCHANGER: UTILIZING EXCESS EXHAUST TO PREHEAT SUPPLY AIR



A humane Facility Intake



Double Exposure Light Filled 50 Bed Dorms Units

Precedence of Humane Dorm Facilities



Van Cise-Simonet Detention Center - Denver, Colorado



Las Colinas Women's Detention & Reentry Facility - San Diego, California



Justice Center - Leoben, Austria



Iowa State Penitentiary

Precedence of Humane Low-Rise Detention Facilities



Van Cise-Simonet Detention Center - Denver, Colorado



Las Colinas Women's Detention & Reentry Facility - San Diego, California



Justice Center - Leoben, Austria



Iowa State Penitentiary

