



## ERIE COUNTY

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FACILITY MASTER PLANNING AND DESIGN SERVICES ERIE COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

**RFP # 2025-041VF**

**Due October 1, 2025**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING  
EDWARD A. RATH COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING  
95 FRANKLIN STREET  
BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14202**

# **COUNTY OF ERIE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

## **FACILITY MASTER PLANNING AND DESIGN SERVICES ERIE COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Proposals are being solicited from qualified architectural and engineering firms to provide master planning and conceptual design services for expansion and reconfiguration of the Erie County Correctional Facility (ECCF) located at 11581 Walden Avenue in the Town of Alden.

This project would involve the consolidation of operations from the two existing sites, ECCF in Alden and the Erie County Holding Center (EHC) in Buffalo, into a single contemporary facility at the ECCF site in Alden. The Erie County Comprehensive Facility and Operational Needs Assessment, completed by Azar Design Co., was finalized in May 2025 and is available for review via this link: [erie.gov/jailstudy](https://erie.gov/jailstudy)

The Needs Assessment report found that both the ECCF and EHC facilities had operational and physical deficiencies and outlined what would be required for a future facility that met modern best practices and accounted for bedspace and programming needs. The report concluded that consolidating operations at the ECCF site through selective demolition, renovation, and new construction was the most viable and cost-effective solution.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) outlines the County's requirements for this phase of the project. The selected consultant (Consultant) will provide validation of the Needs Assessment's findings and recommendations, working with Department of Justice and NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, analyze reasonable site development and phasing options, and provide a recommended option with the supporting documentation necessary to enable the County to proceed with developing a program statement and design of the future ECCF.

### **2. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

Erie County currently operates two separate detention facilities: the EHC in Buffalo and the ECCF in Alden. Both facilities operate under the authority of the Erie County Sheriff's Office Jail Management Division. Originally built in 1937, EHC is a 7-story high-rise maximum-security facility. Among its deficiencies are a linear layout that creates safety concerns and inefficient use of staff due to poor sightlines, limited programming space, and an overall environment that is not conducive to employee wellness or rehabilitation for the incarcerated. The ECCF, built in 1985, is a 2-story medium-security facility with a campus layout. However, there is no properly designed housing for medical or mental health patients which, together with space usage, open dormitory housing, and other building limitations have created operational constraints for the detention system.

Due to a number of factors, including recent New York State legislation, both facilities have been operating significantly below their design capacity (638 beds at ECHC and 742 beds at ECCF). While the overall population has decreased, the percentage of the population with acute needs has increased, including those with mental health, substance abuse, and other medical conditions. This underutilization of bedspace and increasing population of those with specialized housing and programming needs has created system inefficiencies.

The Needs Assessment concluded that the Recommended Option, Option 4 – Consolidate Operations on the ECCF Campus Site, is the most viable and cost-effective option to achieve meaningful facility improvements. The County is now pursuing this recommended option, which consolidates the two facilities into one – a remodeled and expanded facility at the ECCF site in Alden. This option achieves the consolidation of detention operations at the Alden campus by reusing most of the existing ECCF buildings to reduce new construction required, selective demolition, and the replacement of the dormitory housing units and the construction of new housing and support space. “Section 9: Recommended Direction / Option” from the Needs Assessment, which provides a detailed look at Option 4, is attached as Exhibit “C.”

As of May 2025, the maximum authorized capacity of the ECCF was established at 746 beds. The existing Building Gross Square Feet (BGSF) of ECCF is 219,834.

As described in the Needs Assessment report, the proposed building program would involve a combination of renovation and demolition of existing buildings at the ECCF site in order to achieve, at a minimum, the projected overall square footage and bedspace requirements. The report identified a future need of 522,363 BGSF, which would include 906 beds plus 22 medical beds.

The primary objectives of this project are to:

- **Validate the Findings of the Needs Assessment:** Review and validate the key conclusions and recommendations of the Needs Assessment report regarding facility conditions, programming, costs, and recommended bed space among other findings.
- **Develop Comprehensive Site Master Plan and Conceptual Designs:** Create a comprehensive site master plan and two to three (2 – 3) conceptual design alternatives that incorporate the recommendations of the Needs Assessment. Recommend a preferred alternative from the two to three (2 – 3) conceptual design alternatives. Design alternatives will include renovation/reuse of certain existing buildings, selective demolition of obsolete dormitory housing and other deficient areas, and new construction of specialized housing and programming space. This includes a reorganization of the ECCF campus to improve layout and connectivity, support more efficient movement throughout the campus, and allow for expansion to support potential future programs or services. Designs will address the identified operational and functional inefficiencies from the Needs Assessment and will incorporate modern best practices.

- **Phased Construction/Continuity of Operations Planning:** Develop strategies for a construction approach that minimizes disruption to ongoing operations at the existing ECCF, including potential temporary relocation of staff and incarcerated individuals, and facilitates the closure of the ECHC.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Develop conceptual designs that will comply with all relevant local, state, and federal codes, regulations, and best practices, including compliance with New York State Commission of Correction (NYS COC) standards. Ensure compliance with NYS SEQR regulations, including at a minimum Lead Agency solicitation, preparation of Part I of the Environmental Assessment Form (EAF), and determination of significance.
- **Cost Estimating:** Develop refined conceptual cost estimates for the expanded ECCF facility and an order of magnitude cost estimate for the eventual demolition of the ECHC.
- **Prepare for Future Design Phases:** Develop a detailed building program for design based on the preferred alternative identified in the concept design phase.
- **Develop Project Schedule:** Create a comprehensive project schedule that integrates all key project phases, including but not limited to design and permitting, phased construction, relocation of staffing and incarcerated individuals, and closure of facilities.

### 3. GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

- A. Firms are encouraged to include Certified Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) in their teams in order to meet Erie County's goals of 15% MBE and 5% WBE participation. Certified M/WBE proposers should include the Erie County certification letter with the proposal.
- B. Pursuant to Erie County Local Law 5-1 (2023), firms are encouraged to include Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOBs) in their teams in order to meet Erie County's goal of 6% SDVOB participation. Certified proposers shall include proof of certification under the New York State Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act.
- C. **Proposers MUST sign the Proposal Certification attached hereto as Exhibit "A." Unsigned proposals will be rejected.**
- D. **One (1) original, six (6) print copies, and one (1) PDF copy of the proposal on a flash drive are required to be submitted by 3:00 pm on October 1, 2025. Proposals MUST be signed. Unsigned proposals will be rejected.**
- E. **All firms wishing to participate in this process must register electronically at [planning@erie.gov](mailto:planning@erie.gov). All further information and contact from Erie County will be sent electronically.**
- F. Any requests for RFP interpretations should be made electronically by September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, to [planning@erie.gov](mailto:planning@erie.gov). No requests for oral interpretations via telephone or in person will be accepted. A single response to all questions will be made as

outlined in the schedule. No communications of any kind will be binding against the County, except for the formal written responses to any request for clarification.

**G. ERIE COUNTY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS AND TO WAIVE ANY INFORMALITIES THEREIN**

- H. This RFP is not intended and shall not be construed to commit the County to pay any costs incurred in connection with any proposal or to procure or contract with any firm.
- I. Proposers may be required to give an oral presentation to the County to clarify or elaborate on the written proposal. Those proposers will be notified to arrange specific times.
- J. No proposal will be accepted from nor any agreement awarded to any proposer that is in arrears upon any debt or in default of any obligation owed to the County. Additionally, no agreement will be awarded to any proposer that has failed to satisfactorily perform pursuant to any prior agreement with the County.
- K. The County will only contract with firms that do not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, citizenship status or any other status protected by New York State and Federal laws.
- L. The County reserves the right to amend this RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any or all of the proposals, or any part thereof, submitted in response to this RFP, and reserves the right to waive formalities, if such action is deemed to be in the best interest of the County. The County reserves the right to request additional information from any proposer. The County reserves the right to award negotiated contracts to one or more proposers.

#### **4. SCOPE OF WORK**

The Consultant will provide comprehensive master planning and conceptual design services and related pre-design activities. The following is a description of the services to be performed and completed:

##### **4.1 Validation of Needs Assessment Findings**

- 1. Project Kick-off: Initial meetings with Steering Committee and County leadership.
- 2. Conduct a thorough, critical review of the Needs Assessment report completed by Azar Design Co., verifying its methodologies, data, conclusions, and recommendations. Review and become familiar with other previous relevant studies along with all relevant available building plans, drawings, specifications, and reports to be provided by the County.

- a) Make recommendations for any additional necessary pre-design items including but not limited to boundary and topographic survey, geotechnical investigation, and hazardous materials surveys.

#### **4.2 Facility Conditions Validation and Assessment**

1. Conduct site inspections to validate existing building and site conditions as described in Needs Assessment report, including but not limited to structural integrity, mechanical, electrical, plumbing (MEP) systems, building envelope, utilities, and security infrastructure to assess modification and incorporation of costs into project scope.
  - a. This may include non-destructive and potentially some limited intrusive investigations to validate prior findings and confirm identified deficiencies. This is intended to confirm opportunities for reuse of viable ECCF buildings and identify specific areas for selective demolition, renovation, and new construction.
2. Utilize the Facility Physical Building Assessment from the Needs Assessment report to inform the expansion of the existing facility and identify specific building systems and spaces (e.g. kitchen, laundry, sallyport, telecommunication, surveillance and security systems) that will need to be expanded, modified, or replaced to accommodate the expanded ECCF.
3. Assess the existing building envelope for impediments to future development of ancillary improvements/facilities to accommodate the expanded ECCF.

#### **4.3 Program Validation and Building Program**

1. Review the findings and the underlying assumptions of the Azar Design Co. Needs Assessment for validity. The Consultant will review and validate the detailed space program outlined in the Needs Assessment. This will involve confirming the projected population/bed space estimates overall and by classification, square footage requirements, and building program recommendations for validity. If either is believed to be incorrect or revisions are needed based on the thorough review, the Consultant will provide updated information.
2. Building Program:
  - a. Assess current structure for expansion and identify location of expansion.
  - b. Identify building systems, spaces (ex. kitchen, laundry, sallyport, telecommunication, surveillance and security systems, etc.) which will need to be expanded, modified, or replaced to accommodate an expanded facility. As part of the Needs Assessment, a facility physical building assessment was produced. The Consultant is expected to utilize this report, based on expanding the facility.
  - c. Assessment of building envelope for ancillary improvements to update the current facility
  - d. Adaptive Reuse Analysis: Assess proposed areas for adaptive reuse of existing viable structures at the ECCF site for functional efficiency, economic viability, and integration with overall site master plan.

3. Refine the Needs Assessment's proposed programming (e.g., medical, mental health, educational, vocational, administrative, visitation, recreation, food service) to define the building program for the expanded facility, including assessment of space requirements for this programming. This should include refining and expanding upon certain recommendations from the Needs Assessment, including confirmation of space required and a breakdown by category of the proposed 22 medical beds, non-carceral beds, and expanded medical, mental health, and substance abuse services proposed in the Needs Assessment. The Consultant will further analyze:
  - a. Overall operations of the Sheriff's Office administrative offices and other ancillary facilities/functions, which are currently located at the ECHC campus downtown, to refine what facilities can or should reasonably be shifted to the expanded ECCF campus. The Consultant will assess the downtown Sheriff's Office facilities and provide a recommendation to the Steering Committee on which facilities and functions will be transferred to the new facility in Alden facility.
  - b. Court facilities to be located at the expanded ECCF.
  - c. Ancillary projects identified in the Needs Assessment report including proposed non-carceral housing.
  - d. Incorporation of a County Ambulance branch site.
4. Validate the operational deficiencies identified in the Needs Assessment report, including but not limited to inefficient movement of staff and incarcerated individuals, inadequate surveillance/security controls, inefficient processing, inadequate visitation areas.
5. Continuity of Operations and housing: planning regarding staffing and incarcerated individual housing during the construction period.
  - a. Logistics of Staffing, Housing, Transfer, or Temporary Relocation of Incarcerated Individuals: Collaborate with Jail Management Division to develop strategies for staffing and managing the population of incarcerated individuals during construction. For housing this may include some combination of intra-facility relocation, temporary relocation to the ECHC or other strategies proposed by the consultant. A staffing plan accompanying the housing strategy should also be developed. This should also include security, transportation, medical, operational or other protocols for all movements of incarcerated individuals with a breakdown by classification.

#### **4.4 Pre-Design Services**

1. Utility Mapping and Needs Estimate:
  - a. Conduct utility mapping for the ECCF site, including existing electric, natural gas, water, sewer, and telecommunication infrastructure.
  - b. Estimate future utility needs of the expanded facility and confirm capacities for future demands based on the validated facility program.

- c. Estimate future energy needs and demand and determine if the existing energy service is sufficient or requires infrastructure upgrades.
  - d. Assess viability of incorporating alternative energy systems such as solar (rooftop or ground mounted), geothermal, microgrid, and/or battery storage.
- 2. General Assessment of Site Suitability for Construction: Conduct a general assessment of the ECCF site for its suitability to construct the expanded facility, including preliminary review of soil and geological conditions. Based on the selected concept design alternative, the Consultant will gather further information to inform the needs for the next phase of design, potentially including items such as a geotechnical report, utility survey, or topographic survey as necessary.

#### **4.5. Site Master Planning and Conceptual Design**

- 1. Development of Multiple Design Alternatives: Develop two to three (2 – 3) comprehensive conceptual design alternatives for the expanded ECCF campus that incorporate the building program identified in Task 4.3, including targeted renovation, selective demolition, and new construction. Alternatives must align with or respond to the validated projections, needs, programming, and identified deficiencies from the Needs Assessment.

Each alternative should explore varied building configurations, operational flows, programming space, and housing unit layouts that result in an optimized facility that integrates the validated program, security requirements, a preliminary construction phasing strategy, and maximizes reuse of existing viable ECCF buildings/infrastructure. Alternatives should include the following elements:

- a. Blocking and stacking, massing of facility, footprint of the structure, connection point to the existing facility.
- b. Transportation, accessibility and parking needs assessment: Assess the current transportation, accessibility, and parking systems. Calculate future needs based on the expanded facility and propose conceptual designs for the site transportation circulation network and parking facilities.
- c. Based on functionality, existing building and site integration, develop two - three (2 - 3) preliminary expansion options, incorporating the building program for evaluation by the steering committee.
- d. Develop conceptual security improvements to reduce blind spots, generally address deficiencies identified and validated in the Needs Assessment, and incorporate modern security standards into the existing facility.
- e. Concept site plan to scale depicting new structures, existing structures, parking, and interior roads.
- f. Demolition plans if applicable.
- g. Phasing Plan Concepts: develop a phasing plan for construction that addresses how the project could be built in phases while minimizing disruption to ongoing operations at the existing ECCF. Include a narrative describing the logistics of housing, transfer, or temporary relocation of incarcerated individuals.



- h. Adhere to all applicable federal and state (NYS COC) regulations, building codes, local codes and regulations, and industry best practices.
  - i. Staffing plan.
- 2. Recommended Alternative: Based on a thorough analysis of all conceptual alternatives, propose a recommended alternative that best meets the project objectives, program requirements, budget, and operational considerations. The Consultant should clearly articulate how the recommended alternative addresses the validated findings and recommendations of the Needs Assessment. A detailed comparison of alternatives should explain why the recommended alternative was chosen over the others. Include a narrative describing the logistics of housing, transfer, or temporary relocation of incarcerated individuals.
- 3. Based on the recommended alternative, further refine the site-specific material to gather information to inform the scope of design, including but not limited to:
  - a) Conduct selective soil borings to assess a generalized assessment of the expansion area;
  - b) Utility survey; and
  - c) Topographic survey.

Assess and plan for future uses, plan for expansion, release housing, training facilities, integration, and other topics deemed appropriate by the County or the Consultant.

#### **4.6 Cost Estimating**

- 1. Concept Alternatives Cost Estimates: Develop conceptual-level cost estimates for each concept design alternative, suitable for concept level decision making and comparative analysis. Estimates should demonstrate the cost implications of different design approaches by, at a minimum, including costs for renovation, demolition, and new construction components of each option.
- 2. Construction Cost Estimate for Expanded ECCF: Review the construction cost estimate for the expanded ECCF from the Needs Assessment report and refine it based on the updated building program and revised cost information.
- 3. Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate for ECHC Demolition: Develop an order of magnitude cost estimate for the eventual demolition of the ECHC in downtown Buffalo. This demolition is outside the design scope of the expanded ECCF facility.
- 4. Refinement of the staffing plan and operations and maintenance plan for a combined facility versus the two separate existing facilities. Detail the difference in operations and maintenance costs between existing conditions and the planned new facility.

#### **4.7 Assistance with Public/Stakeholder Engagement**

- 1. Coordinate with the NYS COC to ensure they have the appropriate information as necessary.

2. Consultant shall coordinate and facilitate engagement with stakeholder groups and the general public. Focus groups that were convened during the Needs Assessment will be reconvened to solicit input from groups such as formerly incarcerated, families of incarcerated, law enforcement, service and medical providers, and municipalities.
3. Create communication materials including webpage/press release content, educational materials and flyers, social media content, and presentations that may be required to support County needs. The Consultant will NOT be responsible for hosting a website or posting social media content.
4. Provide for document translation services and for potential need for on-site translation and sign language services during designated activities.

#### **4.8 SEQR Compliance**

1. Assist with Lead Agency Solicitation, Action Classification, Coordinated Review
2. Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) Preparation
3. Determination of Significance
4. Conduct Consultation with the NY State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or other agencies deemed necessary by the Consultant or County.

#### **4.9 Project Schedule**

Creation of overall project schedule with key milestones, meetings, and deliverables. Key members of the Consultant team shall participate in bi-monthly meetings with the County's Steering Committee.

The schedule is expected to be based upon the phasing plan and will include the following:

- Design and permitting
- Phased construction
- Incarcerated Individuals relocation (temporary and permanent) based upon classification
- Staffing Planning
- Closure of Holding Center
- Closure of ancillary downtown Sherriff's Office functions

#### **4.10 Building Work Program Assessment**

Development of a comprehensive assessment of the building work program, inclusive of interior and exterior work proposed to be designed and constructed based on the recommended alternative.

#### **4.11 Deliverables**

1. Validated Needs Assessment Report Summary:
  - a. Facility Conditions Report: Summarize findings from facility conditions validation, identifying specific constraints and opportunities for renovation, selective demolition, and new construction, incorporating an assessment of

- the existing ECCF building envelope and key building systems for expansion/modification.
- b. Site Analysis Report
- 2. Building Program
- 3. Conceptual Design Alternatives report
  - a. Drawings to scale, narrative, cost estimates for all alternatives
- 4. Recommended Alternative
  - a. Drawings, narrative explaining selection and alignment with Needs Assessment, cost estimate
- 5. Cost Estimates
  - a. Refined cost estimate for expanded ECCF based on updated building program
  - b. Order of magnitude cost estimate for demolition of ECHC.
- 6. SEQR Documents
  - a. EAF, Lead Agency solicitation/coordination, determination of significance
- 7. Engagement Summary, including public engagement work and interaction with NYS COC.
- 8. Project Schedule
- 9. Comprehensive Building Work Program
- 10. Meeting minutes

**4.12 Other Project Particulars** (*Tasks include but are not limited to*):

- 1. The Consultant deliverables shall include reports and associated elements for each of the above tasks 4.1 - 4.10. Individual reports will be compiled into one report.
- 2. The Consultant shall prepare the preliminary documents for final review by the County.
- 3. The Consultant shall schedule a meeting(s), to ensure that all comments, feedback and changes are incorporated into the final documents.
- 4. The Consultant shall provide Engineer's Estimates of Cost at Conceptual levels.
- 5. The Consultant shall provide written meeting minutes to the County for all meetings during the study.
- 6. All payment applications made by the Consultant and any sub-consultants must be submitted to the County in a format acceptable to the County for reimbursement of funds.
- 7. The Consultant shall organize and facilitate bi-monthly progress meetings with the County Steering Committee.
- 8. The Study is expected to be completed over a 9-month schedule, commencing in late November 2025.
- 9. The Consultant shall perform all work necessary to meet the project timeline as outlined in the Project Schedule.
- 10. The Consultant must understand that in-person meetings with the County (as often as monthly), in Buffalo will be required.

This Scope of Work has been prepared as a proposal guideline. It is the respondent's responsibility to add any other Consultant services that the Consultant feels would be necessary to complete the project.

## **5. BACKGROUND/EXPERTISE OF PARTICULAR VALUE:**

- A. Experience completing large-scale multi-phase criminal justice facilities with conceptual construction budgets of more than \$100 million over the past 5 years, particularly if the project included adaptive reuse of existing buildings.
- B. Experience conducting validation of needs assessments or similar studies for a county criminal justice system and facilities.
- C. Experience planning the complex phasing and logistical challenges of temporary relocation of staff and incarcerated individuals during a site transition.
- D. Experience in correctional facility architectural planning, including concept development and cost estimating, with particular emphasis on projects that involve combining multiple facilities.
- E. Background in projects of a similar nature, with particular emphasis on those that required experience with all relevant New York State and federal regulations, including the NYS COC Minimum Standards for Local Correctional Facilities.
- F. Experience with cost estimating for large-scale criminal justice construction projects.
- G. Experience developing site master plans, including schematic design, design development, and construction documents.

Firms should only include project experience from staff that are currently with the firm and included on the proposed project team for this project.

## **6. GENERAL PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:**

### **A. Experience of Firm/Project Team**

Firms, or their principals, responding to this RFP should include an organizational chart, identifying the project manager and team members, with their titles.

### **B. Experience, Depth and Breadth of Personnel**

The project team should have a full range of relevant criminal justice, architectural, and engineering consulting and stakeholder engagement expertise. Primary personnel in each of the noted disciplines must be identified by name and office location, with resumes included, and should demonstrate satisfactory experience in the past 10 years and depth in each of the required disciplines. This should also include identifying the firm's role within any project and the year(s) in which the work took place.

#### **1. Approach and Methodology**

Respondents to this RFP should include a brief narrative explaining their approach. The narrative should outline the tasks and deliverables to be provided in response to the recommended Scope of Work outlined above and should include a project schedule with key milestones.

**2. Cost and Budget (separately sealed)**

The Consultant contract will be a fixed price or lump sum cost contract. Therefore, all proposals must contain a Lump Sum Cost Proposal for the Scope of Work delineated, inclusive of all expenses (there will be no reimbursables). Proposals must include a breakdown by cost and person hours for the tasks outlined. Submit cost proposal in a separate sealed envelope along with the proposal for services. Cost proposals should provide a cost per boring.

**3. Hourly Personnel Rates**

As a supplement, a schedule of billable rates for all key personnel (Principal in Charge, Project Manager, primary personnel for each design discipline, etc.) must be included in the proposal. Proposals must also include the ranges of billable rates for technical staff and support personnel. Firms shall note separately the firm’s Overhead & Profit rate that is to be added to each hourly rate.

**C. Schedule**

The anticipated schedule for the project is:

RFP Release	September 5, 2025
*Tour of Facilities	September 17, 2025
RFP Questions Due	September 19, 2025
RFP Question Response Date	September 24, 2025
RFP Due Date	October 1, 2025
*Must be registered	

**7. SCORING, RANKING AND SELECTION PROCESS:**

Erie County may short list from the proposals and interviews may be required. Scoring and ranking will include the following factors:

**A. Background of Firm**

1. Experience and performance of firm	10	_____
2. Experience/qualifications of the Project Manager	10	_____
3. Staff and subconsultants assigned to project	10	_____
4. Local presence for team	10	_____
5. M/WBE participation	10	_____

**B. Approach to project**

1. Understanding of owner’s program and intent	15	_____
2. Understanding of tasks	15	_____

3. Schedule	10	_____
4. Consultant Project Management and Staffing Plan	10	_____
5. Other factors		_____
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	_____

## 8. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS:

- A. All firms wishing to participate in this process must register electronically at [planning@erie.gov](mailto:planning@erie.gov). All further information and contact from Erie County will be sent electronically including any addendums.
- B. There is no restriction on the length of a proposal; however, respondents are encouraged to be as concise as possible.
- C. Proposers **MUST** sign the Proposal Certification attached hereto as Exhibit "A." Unsigned proposals will be rejected.
- D. One (1) original, six (6) print copies, and one (1) PDF copy of the proposal are required. Proposals **MUST** be signed. Unsigned proposals will be rejected.
- E. Cost and budget proposals should be submitted in a separate sealed envelope.
- F. Proposals must be received at the below address no later than 3:00 PM, October 1, 2025:  

**Daniel Castle, AICP**  
**Commissioner of Environment and Planning**  
**Erie County Department of Environment & Planning**  
**Rath Building, Room 1053**  
**95 Franklin Street**  
**Buffalo, New York, 14202**
- G. The County does not assume the responsibility or liability for costs incurred by firms responding to this RFP or to any subsequent requests for interviews, additional information, submissions, etc. prior to issuance of a contract.
- H. Any requests for RFP interpretations should be made electronically to [planning@erie.gov](mailto:planning@erie.gov) by September 19th, 2025. No requests for oral interpretations via telephone will be accepted. A single response to all questions will be made as outlined in the schedule. NO COMMUNICATIONS OF ANY KIND WILL BE BINDING AGAINST THE COUNTY, EXCEPT FOR THE FORMAL WRITTEN RESPONSES TO ANY REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION.

- I. All consultants should understand that Erie County is committed to an open, fair and transparent selection process. All RFP submissions will be reviewed, objectively scored and ranked. Short listed firms will be interviewed prior to recommendation for selection.
- J. The highest-ranking firm after scoring and interviews will be recommended to the Erie County Legislature for authorization to enter into a contract. Scores and ranking of all firms will be provided to the Legislature and the results will become public record at that time.
- K. Proposing firms should understand that to provide for this open and transparent process, more time will be required. The timeframe from advertisement to contract execution may be up to five months. Consultants should consider this when scheduling staff time and anticipating project commencement.

## **9. STATEMENT OF RIGHTS**

### **UNDERSTANDINGS**

**Please take notice**, by submission of a proposal in response to this request for proposals, the proposer agrees to and understands:

- That any proposal, attachments, additional information, etc. submitted pursuant to this Request for Proposals constitute merely a suggestion to negotiate with the County of Erie and is not a bid under Section 103 of the New York State General Municipal Law.
- Submission of a proposal, attachments, and additional information shall not entitle the proposer to enter into an agreement with the County of Erie for the required services.
- By submitting a proposal, the proposer agrees and understands that the County of Erie is not obligated to respond to the proposal, nor is it legally bound in any manner whatsoever by submission of same.
- That any and all counter-proposals, negotiations or any communications received by a proposing entity, its officers, employees or agents from the County, its elected officials, officers, employees or agents, shall not be binding against the County of Erie, its elected officials, officers, employees or agents unless and until a formal written agreement for the services sought by this RFP is duly executed by both parties and approved by the Erie County Legislature, the Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority, and the Office of the Erie County Attorney.
- In addition to the foregoing, by submitting a proposal, the proposer also understands and agrees that the County of Erie reserves the right, and may at its sole discretion exercise, the following rights and options with respect to this Request for Proposals:

- To reject any or all proposals.
  - To issue amendments to this RFP.
  - To issue additional solicitations for proposals.
  - To waive any irregularities in proposals received after notification to proposers affected.
  - To select any proposal as the basis for negotiations of a contract, and to negotiate with one or more of the proposers for amendments or other modifications to their proposals.
  - To conduct investigations with respect to the qualifications of each proposer.
  - To exercise its discretion and apply its judgment with respect to any aspect of this RFP, the evaluation of proposals, and the negotiations and award of any contract.
  - To enter into an agreement for only portions (or not to enter into an agreement for any) of the services contemplated by the proposals with one or more of the proposers.
  - To select the proposal that best satisfies the interests of the County and not necessarily on the basis of price or any other single factor.
  - To interview the proposer(s).
  - To request or obtain additional information the County deems necessary to determine the ability of the proposer.
  - To modify dates.
- All proposals prepared in response to this RFP are at the sole expense of the proposer, and with the express understanding that there will be no claim, whatsoever, for reimbursement from the County for the expenses of preparation. The County assumes no responsibility or liability of any kind for costs incurred in the preparation or submission of any proposal.
  - While this is an RFP and not a bid, the County reserves the right to apply the case law under General Municipal Law § 103 regarding bidder responsibility in determining whether a proposer is a responsible vendor for the purpose of this RFP process.
  - The County is not responsible for any internal or external delivery delays which may cause any proposal to arrive beyond the stated deadline. To be considered, proposals MUST arrive at the place specified herein and be time stamped prior to the deadline.

## **10. EVALUATION**



The following criteria, not necessarily listed in order of importance, will be used to review the proposals. The County reserves the right to weigh its evaluation criteria in any manner it deems appropriate:

- Proposer's demonstrated capability to provide the services.
- Evaluation of the professional qualifications, personal background and resume(s) of individuals involved in providing services.
- Proposer's experience to perform the proposed services.
- Proposer's financial ability to provide the services.
- Evaluation of the proposer's fee submission. It should be noted that while price is not the only consideration, it is an important one.
- A determination that the proposer has submitted a complete and responsive proposal as required by this RFP.
- An evaluation of the proposer's projected approach and plans to meet the requirements of this RFP.
- The proposer's presentation at and the overall results of any interview conducted with the proposer.
- Proposers MUST sign the Proposal Certification attached hereto as Exhibit "A." Unsigned proposals will be rejected.
- Proposers may be required to give an oral presentation to the County to clarify or elaborate on the written proposal.
- No proposal will be accepted from nor any agreement awarded to any proposer that is in arrears upon any debt or in default of any obligation owed to the County. Additionally, no agreement will be awarded to any proposer that has failed to satisfactorily perform pursuant to any prior agreement with the County.

## **11. CONTRACT**

After selection of the successful proposer, a formal written contract will be prepared by the County of Erie and will not be binding until signed by both parties and, if necessary, approved by the Erie County Legislature, the Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority and the Office of the County Attorney. NO RIGHTS SHALL ACCRUE TO ANY PROPOSER BY THE FACT THAT A PROPOSAL HAS BEEN SELECTED BY THE COUNTY FOR SUBMISSION TO THE ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE AND/OR THE ERIE COUNTY FISCAL STABILITY AUTHORITY FOR APPROVAL. THE APPROVAL OF SAID LEGISLATURE AND/OR AUTHORITY MAY BE

NECESSARY BEFORE A VALID AND BINDING CONTRACT MAY BE EXECUTED BY THE COUNTY.

The term of the contract shall be for a One (1) year period commencing \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ and terminating \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ The County, in its sole discretion may extend the agreement beyond its initial term for up to two (2) additional year periods at the same prices and conditions.

## **INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE**

The proposer accepts and agrees that language in substantially the following form will be included in the contract between the proposer and the County:

“In addition to, and not in limitation of the insurance requirements contained herein the Consultant agrees:

(a) that except for the amount, if any, of damage contributed to, caused by or resulting from the negligence of the County, the Consultant shall indemnify and hold harmless the County, its officers, employees and agents from and against any and all liability, damage, claims, demands, costs, judgments, fees, attorneys' fees or loss arising directly or indirectly out of the acts or omissions hereunder by the Consultant or third parties under the direction or control of the Consultant; and

(b) to provide defense for and defend, at its sole expense, any and all claims, demands or causes of action directly or indirectly arising out of this Agreement and to bear all other costs and expenses related thereto.

Upon execution of any contract between the proposer and the County, the proposer will be required to provide proof of the insurance coverage described in Exhibit “B.”

Insurance coverage in amount and form shall not be deemed acceptable until approved by the County Attorney.

## **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

The proposer accepts and agrees that language in substantially the following form will be included in the contract between the proposer and the County:

All deliverables created under this Agreement by the Consultant are to be considered “works made for hire.” If any of the deliverables do not qualify as “works made for hire,” the Consultant hereby assigns to the County all right, title and interest (including ownership of copyright) in such deliverables and such assignment allows the County to obtain in its name copyrights, registrations and similar protections which may be available. The Consultant agrees to assist the County, if required, in perfecting these rights. The

Consultant shall provide the County with at least one copy of each deliverable.

The Consultant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the County for all damages, liabilities, losses and expenses arising out of any claim that a deliverable infringes upon an intellectual property right of a third party. If such a claim is made, or appears likely to be made, the Consultant agrees to enable the County's continued use of the deliverable, or to modify or replace it. If the County determines that none of these alternatives is reasonably available, the deliverable will be returned.

All records compiled by the Consultant in completing the work described in this Agreement, including but not limited to written reports, source codes, studies, drawings, blueprints, negatives of photographs, computer printouts, graphs, charts, plans, specifications and all other similar recorded data, shall become and remain the property of the County. The Consultant may retain copies of such records for its own use.

#### **NON-COLLUSION**

The proposer, by signing the proposal, does hereby warrant and represent that any ensuing agreement has not been solicited, secured or prepared directly or indirectly, in a manner contrary to the laws of the State of New York and the County of Erie, and that said laws have not been violated and shall not be violated as they relate to the procurement or the performance of the agreement by any conduct, including the paying or the giving of any fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity or consideration of any kind, directly or indirectly, to any County employee, officer or official.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

All proposers must disclose with their proposals the name of any officer, director or agent who is also an employee of the County of Erie. Further, all proposers must disclose the name of any County employee who owns, directly or indirectly, an interest of ten percent or more in the firm or any of its subsidiaries or affiliates.

There shall be no conflicts in existence during the term of any contract with the County. The existence of a conflict shall be grounds for termination of a contract.

#### **COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS**

By submitting a proposal, the proposer represents and warrants that it is familiar with all federal, state and local laws and regulations and will conform to said laws and regulations. The preparation of proposals, selection of proposers and the award of contracts are subject to provisions of all Federal, State and County laws, rules and regulations.

## CONTENTS OF PROPOSAL

The New York State Freedom of Information Law as set forth in Public Officers Law, Article 6, Sections 84 et seq., mandates public access to government records. However, proposals submitted in response to this RFP may contain technical, financial background or other data, public disclosure of which could cause substantial injury to the proposer's competitive position or constitute a trade secret. Proposers who have a good faith belief that information submitted in their proposals is protected from disclosure under the New York Freedom of Information Law shall:

a) Insert the following notice in the front of its proposal:

### **"NOTICE"**

**The data on pages \_\_\_ of this proposal identified by an asterisk (\*) contains technical or financial information constituting trade secrets or information the disclosure of which would result in substantial injury to the proposer's competitive position.**

**The proposer requests that such information be used only for the evaluation of the proposal, but understands that any disclosure will be limited to the extent that the County considers proper under the law. If the County enters into an agreement with this proposer, the County shall have the right to use or disclose such information as provided in the agreement, unless otherwise obligated by law."**

and

b) Clearly identify the pages of the proposals containing such information by typing in bold face on the top of each page " **\* THE PROPOSER BELIEVES THAT THIS INFORMATION IS PROTECTED FROM DISCLOSURE UNDER THE STATE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION LAW.**"

The County assumes no liability for disclosure of information so identified, provided that the County has made a good faith legal determination that the information is not protected from disclosure under applicable law or where disclosure is required to comply with an order or judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction.

The contents of the proposal that is accepted by the County, except portions "Protected from Disclosure," may become part of any agreement resulting from this RFP.

**EFFECTIVE PERIOD OF PROPOSALS**

All proposals must state the period for which the proposal shall remain in effect (i.e. how much time does the County have to accept or reject the proposal under the terms proposed). Such period shall not be less than 180 days from the proposal date.

**EXHIBIT "A"**

**PROPOSER CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned agrees and understands that this proposal and all attachments, additional information, etc. submitted herewith constitute merely an offer to negotiate with the County of Erie and is NOT A BID. Submission of this proposal, attachments, and additional information shall not obligate or entitle the proposing entity to enter into a service agreement with the County of Erie for the required services. The undersigned agrees and understands that the County of Erie is not obligated to respond to this proposal nor is it legally bound in any manner whatsoever by the submission of same. Further, the undersigned agrees and understands that any and all proposals and negotiations shall not be binding or valid against the County of Erie, its directors, officers, employees or agents unless an agreement is signed by a duly authorized officer of the County of Erie and, if necessary, approved by the Erie County Legislature and Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority and the Office of the County Attorney.

It is understood and agreed that the County of Erie reserves the right to reject consideration of any and all proposals including, but not limited to, proposals which are conditional or incomplete. It is further understood and agreed that the County of Erie reserves all rights specified in the Request for Proposals.

It is represented and warranted by those submitting this proposal that except as disclosed in the proposal, no officer or employee of the County of Erie is directly or indirectly a party to or in any other manner interested in this proposal or any subsequent service agreement that may be entered into.

---

*Proposer Name*

By: \_\_\_\_

*Name and Title*

**EXHIBIT "B"**

**STANDARD INSURANCE PROVISIONS**

# COUNTY OF ERIE STANDARD INSURANCE PROVISIONS

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COUNTY OF ERIE STANDARD INSURANCE CERTIFICATE

- I. Insurance shall be procured and certificates delivered before commencement of work or delivery of merchandise or equipment.
- II. CERTIFICATES OF INSURANCE
  - A. Shall be made to the "County of Erie, 95 Franklin St, Buffalo NY, 14202"
  - B. Coverage must comply with all specifications of the contract.
  - C. Must be executed by an insurance company, agency or broker, which is licensed by the Insurance Department of the State of New York. If executed by a broker, notarized copy of authorization to bind or certify coverage must be attached.
- III. Forward the completed certificate to: County of Erie, (Department or Division) responsible for entering into the agreement for construction, purchase, lease or service.
- IV. Minimum coverage with limits are as follows:

Vendor Classification	A Construction and Maintenance	B Purchase or Lease of Merchandise or Equipment	C Professional Services	D Property Leased to Others or Use of Facilities or Grounds	E Concessiona ires Services	F Livery Services	G All Purposes Public Entity Contracts
Commercial Gen. Liab.	\$1,000,000 per occ.	\$1,000,000 CSL	\$1,000,000 CSL	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000 CSL	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000 CSL
General Aggregate	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Products Completed Operations Liability	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Blanket Broad Form Contractual Liability	INCLUDE						
Contractual Liability		INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE
Broad Form P.D.	INCLUDE						
X.C.U. (explosion, collapse, Underground)	INCLUDE						
Liquor Law				INCLUDE	INCLUDE		
Auto Liab.	\$1,000,000 CSL		\$1,000,000 CSL	\$1,000,000 CSL	\$1,000,000 CSL	\$1,000,000 CSL	\$1,000,000 CSL
Owned	INCLUDE		INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE
Hired	INCLUDE		INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE
Non-Owned	INCLUDE		INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE	INCLUDE
Excess/Umbrella Liab.	\$5,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$1,000,000
Worker's Compensation & Employer's Liability	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY
Disability Benefits	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY	STATUTORY
Professional Liability			\$5,000,000				
Erie County, To Be Named Additional Insured	Gen. Liab., Auto Liab., & Excess	Broad Form Vendors May Be Required	Gen. Liab., Auto Liab., & Excess	Gen. Liab., Auto Liab., & Excess	Gen. Liab., Auto Liab., & Excess	Gen. Liab., Auto Liab., & Excess	Gen. Liab., Auto Liab., & Excess

- V. Construction contracts require excess Umbrella Liability limits of \$5,000,000.
- VI. Coverage must be provided on a primary-noncontributory bases.
- VII. Designated Construction Project General Aggregate Limit Per Project Endorsement CG 25 03 is required.
- VIII. In the event the concessionaire is required to have a N.Y.S. license to dispense alcoholic beverages an endorsement for liquor liability is required.
- IX. Waiver of Subrogation: Required on all lines unless noted.
- X. Transportation of people in buses, vans or station wagons requires \$5,000,000 excess liability.
- XI. Workers Compensation: State Workers' Compensation/Disability Benefits Law.

### Use Applicable Certificates Below:

#### Workers Compensation Forms

CE-200	Exemption
C105.2	Commercial Insurer
SI-12	Self Insurer
GSI-105.2	Group Self Insured
U-26.3	New York State Insurance Fund

#### DBL (Disability Benefits Law) Forms

CE-200	Exemption
DB-120.1	Insurers
DB-155	Self Insured

- XII. The "ACORD" form certificate may be used in place of the County of Erie Standard Insurance Certificate, provided that all of the above referenced requirements are incorporated into the "ACORD" form certificate.



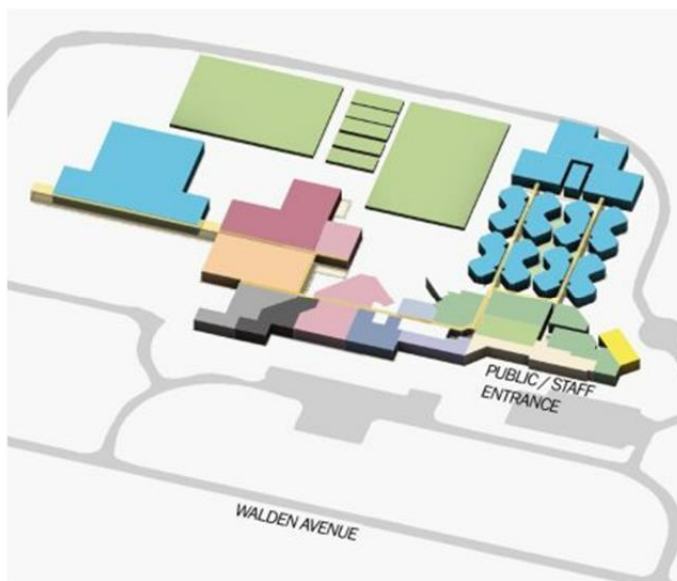
## EXHIBIT "C"

### SECTION 9: Recommended Direction / Option

After reviewing the four options for consideration, **Option 4 – Consolidate Operations on the ECCF Campus Site** emerged as the preferred site development option.

#### Option 4

Demolition, Renovation and Expansion Alden



	SF	Beds
Demo	28,450	414
Existing to Remain	191,384	384
New	266,937	522
<b>Total</b>	<b>458,321</b>	<b>906 + 22 med</b>
Construction Cost	\$353,508,497	
Soft Costs		
Design/CM Fees (12%)	\$42,421,020	
FF&E Allowance (2.8%)	\$9,898,238	
AV/IT/Security Allowance (4%)	\$14,140,340	
Construction Contingency (2.5%)	\$8,837,712	
Site Acquisition & Prep	--	
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	<b>\$428,805,807</b>	
Escalation (4% x 3.5 years)	\$63,189,373	

This is the option that best achieves many of the County's objectives in terms of operational efficiencies, building functionality and residents' programs and services. It provides long-term, economically sustainable correctional operations with greatest improved safety through the replacement of obsolete and operationally deficient buildings, and the reuse, repair and upgrade of existing assets to bring the current infrastructure up to modern standards and good repair status.

At the completion of this project, the County will have a suitable detention system with fewer, more efficient and flexible buildings to maintain; appropriate bedspace capacity (number and type of beds); modern operational practices; more safe, secure, and therapeutic living environments that facilitate dynamic supervision and interaction between staff and residents, and a high-performance workplace environment.

## Key Benefits

Maximum reuse and more efficient space utilization – Maximizing the use of existing infrastructure makes this option the most cost-effective in terms of project costs. This option can be implemented with the lowest potential project cost of the four options, at approximately \$429M.

Greater flexibility and building expansion – This option allows for greater flexibility and site development area to adapt to changes in building conditions and future fluctuations in the size and composition of the detention population and the uncertain pattern of needs.

Enhanced campus character with quality indoor and outdoor spaces – Campus layouts are often preferred over high-rise configuration because they offer a more normalized environment, convey a sense of openness, and allow for a safer and more efficient movement of detainees. There is also more access to natural light for the benefit of the residents, staff and service providers. Therefore, keeping with the current campus configuration, expansion will be horizontal (low-rise).

Improvement of campus layout, connectivity and circulation – The ECCF campus will be reorganized to improve layout and connectivity, with core services like health services remaining central to the campus while maintaining campus boundaries. In turn, this will support a more effective/efficient resident movement throughout the campus.

Greater parking area allowance – This option satisfies parking requirements for both facility staff and the public, which was a very important planning priority. Additional parking areas are planned for public and staff parking, commensurate with the projected staffing need and added bedspace capacity, including designated / restricted parking for facility leadership, security staff, and elected officials, and service / maintenance vehicles.

Best bedspace alignment to the changing needs of the population – This option best meets historical changes in the overall detention system and shifts in demographic trends that have facility impacts. These include increasing case complexity and growth in the risk and special needs of the population (i.e. female population, and individuals with medical challenges, behavioral, substance abuse and co-occurring disorders). This is accomplished by expanding the housing for the significant portion of the population that is classified as special needs with the construction of purpose-built and mission-driven housing units that are right sized and configured with required program support areas. Such dedicated housing does not currently exist at the ECCF.

In addition, the expansion will also include modern medical facilities with administration space and all required clinic functions and accommodating a co-ed infirmary with easy access to emergency vehicles. It is expected that the expansion of clinical services will help expand the provision of medical services on-site, including infirmary care and some specialty clinics reduce the number of transports to outside hospitals for specialty clinics.

*Increased opportunities for residents' access to programs and services* – Additional program space is planned to provide expanded treatment, educational, vocational and job readiness programming for individuals housed in the facility, including the expansion of the current marketable skill programs, in support of successful re-integration into the community. A long-term opportunity exists for the County to address the need to provide non-carceral, community-based programming within the facility.

*Improvement of administrative-related functions and additional staff support areas* – Specific areas of the facility will be renovated, repurposed and expanded to accommodate additional offices, staff assembly and collaboration space, lockers, outdoor dining, and wellness area (i.e. fitness room, quiet room, lactation room, etc.) near the staff entry.

*Improved working conditions for service providers/volunteers and more efficient program delivery* – Creating a more pleasant and professional environment, together with the addition of program spaces both within the housing units and across campus for private conversations, like individual rooms for counseling and therapy and multi-purpose areas for group interventions, will improve the working conditions and support positive interpersonal communication between residents and service providers and volunteers.

*Improved intake, transfer and release area* – The existing intake/release area of the building is modified and expanded to accommodate the effective and efficient flow of intake, transfer and release processing activities including holding cells and screening rooms. Separate access to/from the sallyport for detainees and for those being transported will be provided. Multi-use office and interview space is planned to accommodate probation, pre-trial services staff, and other system partner agencies (for medical screening, assessment reports, consultations, and investigation interviews), and meetings related to release, restorative justice, or classification.

*Increased operational efficiencies* – Consolidation of detention operations at the ECCF site provides the most opportunities for increased operational efficiencies and annual staff cost savings.

## Disadvantages and Next Steps

*Impact on transportation-related costs.* Consolidation of operations in Alden will result in new transportation needs that do not currently exist. Currently, twice a day — typically morning and afternoon — residents are walked through the underground tunnels from ECHC to Erie County Court. This pedestrian tunnel movement will need to be replaced by two additional vehicular round trips daily from ECCF to the downtown courts.

Although having the detention facility and courthouse physically connected is an advantage, this is not a significant one. For example, Philadelphia, PA moves about 600 detainees per day 20 minutes back and forth between its detention center (Curran-Fromhold) and the courthouse (Juanita Kidd Justice Center). By comparison, recent data suggests that after relocating to the ECCF campus, an average of 18 residents could be moving per day. Based on current IRS travel costs, these round trips could result in an additional cost of \$53 per day in transportation costs. Operating costs increases resulting from moving detainees are therefore relatively small because the Sheriff is already transporting individuals between ECHC and the courts and between ECHC and ECCF anyways.

It is the cost of vehicles that could make the difference. For a five-day work week annually, this results in additional vehicle operations and maintenance costs of \$13,842 per annum to be added to the transportation expenses. It should be noted this does not include the expense that will be related to accelerated vehicle replacement costs due to additional miles being placed on Transportation vehicles.

*Recommendation* – As the operations of a consolidated ECCF facility get finalized, a detailed analysis should be conducted to identify transport needs. With an eye towards reducing the needs and costs for some transport and accommodating justice partner agencies, the new facility could have a small holding area devoted to virtual proceedings and designed to accommodate attorney-client visits and increased video conferencing / meetings with justice system professionals. In addition to the private/confidential interview rooms located in the existing visiting area for attorneys that prefer a face-to-face visit, attorneys will also have the option to use the video visitation system.

After careful analysis, consideration should be given to the use of remote proceedings by identifying the types of criminal cases and stages of proceedings where the benefits are likely to be the greatest (e.g. specialty dockets and cases involving individuals with mobility issues or acute mental health issues as they may experience less anxiety and stress in a virtual setting compared to a traditional courtroom environment). In New York

State, counties have mixed experiences with virtual hearings involving incarcerated individuals. Such information can be gathered from conversations with various stakeholders and by reviewing statistical data. We recommend partnering with one or more nonprofit organizations or academic institutions to assist in this research.

*Increased distance for family members, visitors and the public.* The major concern about this site development option is the distance to the site. Depending upon the route, the travel time between downtown Buffalo and the Town of Alden takes an average of 27-29 minutes. While there is no universal “best practice” for how long family members should drive to visit a loved one, a 30-minute drive is considered a reasonable distance and is within the recommended maximum acceptable duration for travel.

Although three different routes are generally available from downtown by vehicle, at present, there are no public transportation options at the Alden location, making it difficult for family members of incarcerated individuals to access the site. As per email correspondence with Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority representatives, a number of different transit service options to serve the location were tried in the past but, ultimately, with the closing and relocation of the Erie County Home and the Sheriff’s work release program being eliminated, ridership continued to decline, and the NFTA service route to the correctional facility was eliminated in 2015.

Family contact with loved ones is of paramount importance to the Jail Management Division. Maintaining and strengthening family and community contact is good for the residents and their families and proven to enhance the likelihood of positive outcomes. It promotes a calmer institutional atmosphere which in turn supports a safer and more secure environment.

*Recommendation* - To re-establish public transportation as a priority of this project moving forward. Also, consideration should be given to revisiting the visitation schedule and allowing for up to 60-minute visits for families now incurring longer travel time. While not directly impacting programming or space, a topic raised during interviews with family and community members alike, was the length of visits. While some preferred the current schedule allowing multiple shorter visits, others suggested that they would prefer the same amount of visits a week (to include weekends) but with longer visits due to the travel times required for families to get to the site. This is only captured here for consideration as it was a major subject of discussion.

*Impact on Correctional Health Costs* - Whereas consolidation of operations at Alden may have a minor reduction in correctional health staff due to economies of scale, at issue is the additional inconvenience and risk associated with “medically fragile

individuals” being housed further away in Alden, as opposed to near the Buffalo metro area where most of the medical facilities are located.

As with the medical issues discussed above, the additional travel time/expense of any parties assisting with resident health services located exclusively at an Alden campus must also be considered. Particularly, Forensic Health Division staff will be impacted by travelling to a more remote location. And while data is not readily available to effectively estimate these kinds of monetary costs, these kinds of qualitative issues must be considered and properly addressed.

*Recommendation* - Expanded use of telemedicine to allow nurses and doctors to deliver medical services to patients remotely. Nationwide, telehealth services are increasingly used to provide access to specialists and mental health consultations. Additionally, having modern medical facilities will allow for expanded on-site medical services, including infirmary care and some specialty clinics, all of which can help reduce the number of transports to outside hospitals.