Jail Facilities Planning Survey

226 Response Records - 20 Planning Factors - 6 Planning Categories

Contents

Executive Summary 2
Survey Scope and Reporting Method 2
Planning Factors 4
- Safety, Conditions, and Care 4
- Cost and Sustainability 4
- Operations and Staffing 4
- Location and Access 5
- Future Needs and Community Impact 5
- Legal Requirements 5

What the Ratings Show - and Do Not Show 6
- Safety, Conditions and Care 6
- Operations, Staffing and Long-Term Cost 6
- Location and Access 6
- Future Needs, Community Impact and Legal Standards 6
- How to Use These Findings 6

Written Feedback - Facilities and System Priorities 7
- Future Facilities, Replacement and Downtown Location 7
- Population Reduction and Alternatives 7
- Safety, Treatment and Humane conditions 7
- Practical Operations and Financial Considerations 7
- Differing Perspectives 7

Written Feedback - Perspectives and Participation 8
- Experiences Informing Responses 8
- How Experiences Shaped Different Priorities 8
- Why This Material is Summarized 8

Executive Summary

Sacramento County invited community members to rate how important different considerations should be when evaluating potential changes to jail facilities. This report summarizes the 20 planning-factor ratings and the substance of two optional written-response questions.

Among respondents, safety for people in custody, staff and the public received the highest combined “Very Important” or “Extremely Important” rating (92%). Facility design supporting efficient staffing (85%), staff working conditions (84%) and ongoing operating costs (80%) were also rated highly. Location-related factors drew more varied ratings (36%–56%). Important interpretation: these ratings indicate the importance assigned to a consideration, not the direction of a preferred decision. A high rating for distance from residential neighborhoods, for example, does not establish support for a specific site, facility, or distance.

The written comments expressed differing perspectives. Some favored replacing, relocating or expanding facilities to improve safety, staff working conditions and service capacity. Others opposed expansion and urged investment in population reduction, diversion, treatment and community-based supports. Some respondents emphasized downtown impacts, long-term fiscal tradeoffs or the importance of humane treatment and reentry. The survey was voluntary and self-selected. The results describe submitted records, not a representative sample of Sacramento County residents, and do not establish consensus.

Survey Scope and Reporting Method

The attached survey export contains 226 records. This summary includes only the 20 planning-factor questions, plus optional written comments about jail facilities planning and respondents’ perspectives.

How the Figures were Calculated

For each planning factor, the numerator is the number selecting “Very Important” plus “Extremely Important”; the denominator is the number who answered that particular question, including those selecting “Not Sure / Needs More Information.” Blank answers are excluded from the denominator. Full category counts and percentages are available in the separately published aggregate results Excel workbook.

The table shows whole percentages for readability; underlying proportions are calculated without premature rounding. Because some respondents skipped individual factors, denominator sizes range from 223 to 226.

Scope of Written Feedback

There were 107 nonblank entries for the optional question about other considerations in evaluating jail facilities, and 91 nonblank entries about background or experience shaping a respondent's perspective. Nonblank entries include some "none," "no," or similarly non-substantive answers. The qualitative themes are paraphrased, not counted or ranked; comments may raise more than one issue.

Privacy and Limitations

Original respondent-level identifiers, timestamps, personal histories and potentially identifying statements are not reproduced. Respondents' descriptions of jail conditions, public safety or other experiences are presented as their views rather than independently verified findings. The County does not endorse specific allegations or proposals by including them.

The 226 records do not necessarily establish 226 distinct people, and the findings are not statistically representative of the County population. No weighting, statistical significance testing or formal theme-prevalence analysis was performed.

Reading the Charts

For consistency with the County's August 27, 2026 community webinar, the charts use the combined share rating each consideration "Very Important" or "Extremely Important." This report adds the underlying numerator and denominator next to each percentage and publishes the full rating distributions separately.

Planning Factors

Share of answers rating each factor "Very Important" or "Extremely Important." Counts are the combined number out of those answering the item.

Safety, Conditions, and Care

Planning factor	Very / Extremely Important	Count / Answers
Safety for people in custody, staff, and the public	92%	207/225
Living conditions and humane treatment of people in custody	72%	161/225
Supportive environment for medical and behavioral health care	79%	178/224
Access to programs (education, job training, reentry services)	68%	153/226

Cost and Sustainability

Planning factor	Very / Extremely Important	Count / Answers
Upfront construction/renovation costs	67%	150/225
Ongoing operating costs (staffing, maintenance, services)	80%	180/224
Total cost (construction/renovation and long-term operations)	74%	165/224

Operations and Staffing

Planning factor	Very / Extremely Important	Count / Answers
Working conditions for facility staff (custody, healthcare, etc.)	84%	189/225
Facility design that supports efficient staffing and operations	85%	192/225

Location and Access

Planning factor	Very / Extremely Important	Count / Answers
Proximity to courts	46%	102/223
Proximity to hospitals and specialty medical services	45%	101/225
Proximity to law enforcement agencies	36%	82/225
Distance from residential neighborhoods	56%	126/224
Distance from business/commercial areas	41%	92/224
Accessibility for visitors, family members, and service providers	48%	108/224

Future Needs and Community Impact

Planning factor	Very / Extremely Important	Count / Answers
Flexibility to adapt to future needs (increase or decrease capacity)	76%	172/225
Impacts on surrounding communities (safety, traffic, neighborhood effects)	72%	163/225
Investment in alternatives to incarceration (e.g. treatment, diversion, reentry support)	60%	136/225

Legal Requirements

Planning factor	Very / Extremely Important	Count / Answers
Compliance with legal and accessibility requirements (e.g. court mandates, ADA)	77%	174/225
Going beyond minimum legal requirements to improve conditions and outcomes	53%	120/225

What the Ratings Show - and Do Not Show

Safety, Conditions and Care

Safety was rated very or extremely important by 92% of respondents who answered the item. A supportive healthcare environment was rated at 79%, living conditions and humane treatment at 72%, and access to programs at 68%. Each reflects the importance of the consideration, not a judgment about present performance.

Operations, Staffing and Long-Term Cost

Facility design supporting efficient staffing (85%) and staff working conditions (84%) were among the highest-rated considerations. Ongoing operating costs (80%) were rated above total lifecycle cost (74%) and upfront construction or renovation cost (67%). This does not establish a preferred project budget or funding option.

Location and Access

Location-related considerations showed a broader spread: distance from residential neighborhoods (56%), visitor/family/provider access (48%), proximity to courts (46%), proximity to hospitals and specialty medical services (45%), distance from commercial areas (41%), and proximity to law enforcement (36%). These questions did not ask respondents to select a site or indicate whether closer or farther was preferable.

Future Needs, Community Impact and Legal Standards

Flexibility to accommodate changing capacity needs received 76%; impacts on surrounding communities 72%; and investment in alternatives to incarceration 60%. Compliance with legal and accessibility requirements received 77%, while going beyond minimum requirements received 53%. The importance assigned to alternatives should not be interpreted as a vote for or against jail construction.

How to Use These Findings

These ratings can help the planning team see which considerations survey participants flagged as important. They cannot determine the most suitable design, location, capacity or policy approach on their own; those decisions involve legal requirements, operational and clinical needs, feasibility, cost, and additional public and Board review.

Written Feedback - Facilities and System Priorities

The comments below summarize responses to the question asking what else should be considered when evaluating potential changes to jail facilities. They are paraphrased without ranking or reproducing identifying experiences.

Future Facilities, Replacement and Downtown Location

Some respondents supported new or replacement facilities, greater capacity or relocation of the Main Jail, including concerns about the condition and flexibility of existing facilities. Comments also addressed downtown business activity, neighborhood impacts, transportation, parking and possible future uses of the current site. Others warned that relocation or new construction could impose substantial costs or divert resources from other priorities.

Population Reduction and Alternatives

Other respondents opposed expansion or urged the County to first examine reducing the number of people incarcerated. Suggestions included pretrial release or diversion for eligible individuals, residential behavioral health treatment, investments in housing and prevention, and alternatives for people who could safely be served outside jail.

Safety, Treatment and Humane conditions

Respondents raised issues related to staff and public safety, housing classifications, healthcare, disability access, mental health and substance use treatment, and the dignity and safety of incarcerated individuals. Comments included calls for both appropriate secure capacity and meaningful rehabilitation, programming and continuity of care.

Practical Operations and Financial Considerations

Comments addressed booking efficiency, adequate staffing and workspaces, technology, visiting access, maintenance, long-term operating expenses and the need to compare replacement with rehabilitation of existing buildings. Some requested clearer evidence about future population needs and evaluation of alternatives before committing funds.

Differing Perspectives

The written comments included calls for stricter enforcement and keeping individuals in secure custody when needed, as well as calls to limit incarceration and address its underlying causes. The summary does not treat these positions as equivalent proposals or attempt to determine which was more widely held.

Written Feedback - Perspectives and Participation

The second optional text field asked what aspects of respondents' background or experience shaped their perspective. The 91 nonblank entries provide context, but they are not independently verified or suitable for publishing as raw respondent-level narratives.

Experiences Informing Responses

Respondents described perspectives shaped by living or working in Sacramento, experiences with crime, personal or family incarceration, correctional and law enforcement employment, healthcare and behavioral health work, legal services, social services, advocacy, volunteering, and business or property interests. Some described multiple overlapping roles.

How Experiences Shaped Different Priorities

People describing correctional experience sometimes emphasized capacity, officer safety, operational constraints, intake efficiency and staff working conditions. Some family members, formerly incarcerated people, providers and advocates emphasized treatment, access to services, fairness, reentry or alternatives to detention. Some downtown residents and business stakeholders discussed neighborhood, visitor-access and economic implications of the Main Jail's location. These were not exclusive patterns, and no single professional or lived-experience group expressed one uniform viewpoint.

Why This Material is Summarized

Some written entries contain detailed personal or professional information or accounts that could make a respondent identifiable. For that reason, the public summary uses broad descriptions rather than publishing individual responses linked to people's experience categories. The original survey records remain distinct from this public summary and the aggregate numerical workbook.