

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS JUVENILE HALL PROJECT

What is the Monterey County Juvenile Hall?

The Wellington M. Smith, Jr. Juvenile Hall is a short-term detention facility for juveniles awaiting adjudication of their cases. This facility houses youth who are charged with new criminal acts and/or probation violations.

While in custody they are under constant supervision of the facility's juvenile institutions officers. The youth in custody generally fall into these categories:

- Youth pending further investigation immediately after admission.
- Youth detained pending further court proceedings.
- Youth awaiting court-ordered placement.

What is the average type of youth offender in the Hall and what is the average time they stay in custody?

Most of the juveniles in Juvenile Hall are charged with felony offenses. Juvenile Hall is a temporary detention facility for youth going through the Juvenile Court process. The average stay in Juvenile Hall is 20-30 days.

Why do we need a new Juvenile Hall?

The existing Juvenile Hall is over 50 years old. It is outdated; does not meet our current needs; and has chronic maintenance problems. We are also housing more serious young offenders now than when the facility was first built.

How many juveniles will be housed there?

The new facility will be able to accommodate 150 youth.

How will the new facility be funded?

Monterey County received a conditional State award of \$35 million to construct a new facility. The Board of Supervisors has approved the financing plan for an additional \$17 million, for a total project cost of \$52 million.

Why is the Laurel Drive site being considered for the new juvenile hall?

The site is close to Natividad Medical Center and youth brought to Juvenile Hall by local law enforcement often require pre-booking medical clearances. The hospital also handles medical emergencies for our youth in custody. The short distance from the site to the hospital is critical to ensure safety and security.

The site is also close to Juvenile Court, which is located at 1422 Natividad. The youth in Juvenile Hall need to be transported to court on a daily basis.

It is centrally located and accessible to families for visitation and rehabilitative services.

The Laurel site is unencumbered, as required by the grant.

Why can't you just tear down the old hall and build a new one?

To build a new facility on the existing site, construction would need to occur in stages and the juveniles in custody would need to be relocated, which would make the project dramatically more expensive and extend the time for construction.

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Will there be future opportunities for public input?

Yes. The project will undergo an Environmental Impact Report in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and will provide opportunities for public review and input as part of the process.

What is the difference between the Juvenile Hall and the Youth Center?

The Youth Center is a year-long treatment facility for wards of the Juvenile Court. The youth are committed to the Youth Center by the Juvenile Court Judge. They spend 6-9 months in custody at the facility where they receive a variety of rehabilitative services. They spend the remainder of the year's commitment on the aftercare program.