

## WHY IT'S IMPERATIVE WE CONSTRUCT A NEW JUSTICE CENTER

### Current Building Deficiencies

1. The courthouse was built in 1955 and originally, housed up to 5 inmates.
2. The jail, sheriff department, courts and probation have outgrown the building and there is no viable option for expansion at the present location.
3. The state demographer predicts a significant increase in the county's population over the next 25 years.
4. Lake County Courts and Probation facilities have been ranked by the Underfunded Courts Grant Commission as one of seven most critically deficient courts in Colorado. In the past 5 years, four of the seven counties, Pueblo, Montezuma, Gunnison and Alamosa have recently built new facilities or are under construction, and two counties, Huerfano and Archuleta are well along in construction planning.
5. Lake County received \$156,000 grant funds (Underfunded Courts Grant & Department of Local Affairs – DOLA grant) to develop a master plan, to explore feasibility, site location, building designs, and cost estimates because the current facility no longer meets the needs of the community.
6. Construction of a new Court in Lake County is not just a political aspiration but an inevitability and legislated responsibility (CRS 13-37-108). With population increases predicted for all of western Colorado and specifically Lake County, it is clear that a new Justice Center is a necessity. Now is the best economically viable time to consider this project. Construction costs will continue to increase, and at this moment, there are available grant opportunities and favorable interest rates for this project which will likely diminish over time. Lake County will likely be able to tap into \$3-4 million in grant funding for this project if we act now.
7. The building is not ADA compliant and liability issues loom.
8. The electrical service in the building is undersized and outdated to meet the increasing demand of the sheriff, courts, and probation technology systems.
9. The safety of everyone that works in the building is severely compromised.
10. Temperature control in the building is inadequate and difficult to manage.

### Sheriff/Jail

1. The jail is completely inadequate and outdated. There are only 11 beds for a county that needs approximately 30.
2. Without any increase in space since 1955, the Lake County sheriff is now required to house up to 30 prisoners, dispatch and provide offices for 15 sheriffs' employees as well as provide Emergency Operations (EOC) / Communications, Booking, Patrol, Visitation, Inmate Recreation and other mandated Inmate Programs.
3. Approximately 57% of our inmates are routinely boarded out of County, at taxpayers' expense, due to space issues. New arrestees brought to the jail could be refused by the sheriff.
4. Sherriff Rod Fenske estimates that he spends an average \$100,000 per year to house prisoners in other counties. This cost does not account for transportation costs.
5. In 2015 the Sheriff's Department spent approximately \$43,000 in overtime in just the jail. According to the Sheriff, most of this was for transporting inmates to jails in other counties.
6. The Lake County jail has no female housing or juvenile holding capabilities. Consequently, Lake County Judges are sometimes reluctant to remand arrestees to jail excepting extreme cases.
7. The jail is not ADA compliant and the emergency evacuation system is outdated making the county vulnerable to lawsuits.

8. The County is at risk for litigation. Under present conditions, a security, health or safety incident and subsequent litigation could result in an ordered closure of the jail requiring the sheriff to relocate all prisoners. This closure would dramatically increase county expenses and would preoccupy the sheriff's department with prisoner transports in lieu of public safety. This type of closure would also result in mandated construction of a new jail without voter approval. A closure of this sort is not unprecedented and has occurred in Colorado and Wyoming in recent years.
9. There is 1 working shower, no outdoor space, no privacy space for sensitive interviews/assessment, no room for evidence storage, a manual locking system, no sightline into inmate housing, and the booking area serves multi purposes creating safety issues and inefficiencies.
10. There is no ability to classify prisoners of different risk levels or to provide programming while in custody. (In custody programming improves successful outcomes upon release but cannot occur in the current jail.)
11. There are no holding cells or secured prisoner traffic routes in the building for in-custody defendants. The only way to move prisoners throughout the current Courthouse is via public hallways. This allows them direct access to Judges, all staff in the building and potentially victims and witnesses.

### Courts and Probation

1. Court clerks are often in unsecured, public hallways working with clients on court days as there is limited room at the one court window.
2. Lake County has only 1 courtroom where 2 are required for its population and caseload.
3. Integral personnel are without permanent offices to do their work; some are housed in remodeled spaces which do not have separate entrances.
4. There are no attorney client conference rooms available for confidential consultation and no accommodation to separate waiting defendants and their families from the witnesses/victims.
5. A recently completed judicial space assessment revealed that Lake County Court and probation operations need approximately 20,000 sf. These offices and functions are currently squeezed into 10,500 sf.
6. 6 probation staff works in a space designed for 3. Confidentiality and safety are compromised.
7. Employees work in an unsecured building and unsecure areas with high risk offenders. The one exit is not adequate should an altercation occur placing our employees at risk.
8. As recently as January 2016, a probation client was found to have a knife and stun gun on his person in the probation lobby (a public hallway). Most Justice Centers have one entry and exit for the public where everyone goes through security minimizing the chance a weapon is brought into the building and into appointments.
9. There is no program space available for free programs and services such as Mediation Services, Self-Represented Litigant Center, Public Access Terminals, and probation groups.
10. Public hallways are used for lobby/waiting areas. This is a safety issue and a violation of contact standards for adult sex offenders who are not allowed to have contact with minors.
11. There are insufficient meeting and interview rooms.
12. Probation is a cost effective utilization of taxpayer dollars by diverting offenders from incarceration. Annual costs for FY2015 are reflected below.

**Annual Cost of Sentencing Options Per **Adult Offender** FY15**

Source: DOC: Office of Planning & Analysis; DCJ: Office of Community Corrections; Probation: Division of Probation Services

Probation	\$1,686
Community Corrections	\$8,621
Parole*	\$5,771
Department of Corrections**	\$36,892

\*Average of Parole and ISP Parole

\*\*State facilities only, does not include private prisons

**Annual Cost of Sentencing Options Per **Juvenile Offender** FY15**

Source: DYC ; Probation: Division of Probation Services

Probation	\$2,360
Juvenile Parole	\$15,144
Division of Youth Corrections***	\$85,304

➤ \*\*\*State and Private facilities

**What's next for current building?**

1. Currently, the County is renting space in town for departments that cannot fit into the courthouse. The cost is roughly \$3,000 per month. These governmental offices could be housed back in the courthouse saving Lake County funds, consolidating services into one location, and freeing up commercial rental space for entrepreneurial purposes.
2. The current courthouse could be remodeled for more community purposes and meeting space.
3. This could be done via the same funding mechanism which, in essence, creates 2 community buildings for Lake County. These buildings could potentially handle the growth and needs of Lake County for upwards of 50-60 years.
4. Once constructed, the proposed Justice Center can be a civic hub of the City of Leadville. The current proposal depicts a Justice Center connected to downtown Leadville on a property that is currently blighted and not desirable for other commercial use or housing. The new Justice Center will be a civic building, Court and Jail that architecturally compliment Lake County history. The Sheriff's Department and Detention facility would locate behind the court. A modern detention facility looks nothing like concrete and iron bar jails of the past and its purpose would not be evident by those who did not already know.