



Maine Department of Corrections

Women's Reentry Center

Societal Scale

Between 2002 and 2013, the number of women incarcerated in the Maine state prison system grew nearly six-fold, creating a bed space crisis. Rather than building more prison beds, the Department decided that a more sustainable solution was to focus on reentry. Understanding that successful reentry programs rely on more than just helping ex-offenders find jobs, the State recognized the need to help offenders change their attitudes and beliefs about crime and to prepare for life in the community. While this process begins within the nearby secure Women's Correctional facility, the new Reentry Center helps offenders transition to society as productive individuals, decreasing the prospect of returning to the corrections system.

Principle	Goal	MDOC Women's Reentry Center
S1 Safety - Reactive	Address offenders to prevent future criminal behavior	The facility is designed to support the successful transition back to society, reducing likelihood of future criminal behavior.
S5 - Responsiveness to Victims	Address broader impact of crime on victims and society, either through criminal justice system or public health or social services	The best way to address the impact of crime on victims and society is to reduce crime in general. The primary focus of this facility is to improve the rate of successful reentry into society, resulting in fewer crimes in society.
S9 - Accountability	Meet best standards; Have open & transparent media policy	The facility meets ACA standards, and has been featured on several local television and radio broadcasts. The facility is designed with ample glazing on a public road to literally show the community the good work occurring inside.





Project Program

The Women's Reentry program began with the reuse of an unoccupied modular building in York County, the southern-most county in the state. Following several years of measurable success, the Department began planning a new facility with clear goals in mind:

- Locate the facility near the center of the population, community services, and employment opportunities.
- Provide a center where the evidence of practiced success in the York facility could be delivered to a larger population at least twice the size.
- Provide plenty of spaces to allow programming and family reunification, and an environment to facilitate appropriate interactions and behavior.
- Provide a non-prison environment filled with natural light while permitting efficient staffing.
- Provide easy access to the natural environment with views and outdoor recreation, gardening, and program and education areas.
- Provide customized environments for assessment, treatment, learning and interaction for a range of risk levels and needs.

The new MDOC Women's Reentry Center responds to these planning goals and provides a place of transition, rehabilitation, education, and reentry into the community. Every programming, planning and design decision – from siting the building to furniture and fixture types, color palettes, and glazing – supports its mission to prepare female offenders to successfully reenter their communities and reduce their chance of reoffending.

The reentry mission and program theme, "Waves of Change, Oceans of Possibilities," offered wide latitude for softer, contemporary finishes and inspired many material and color selections. Abundant natural light, views, and an open floor plan with excellent sight lines create a safe, supportive environment for residents and staff alike, including cutting-edge rehabilitative, educational and residential spaces to prepare residents with resources to transition back into a successful life in the community.

The 96-bed center houses minimum-custody and community-release status female residents serving the final three years of their sentences. Its operations strategy, high levels of freedom contingent upon personal accountability, allows residents to leave the non-secure building for work or volunteer opportunities and return for educational, behavioral and wellness programming, a duality that posed design opportunities and challenges.

Owner's Statement

"The Maine Women's Reentry Center is a state of the art facility that allows staff to offer programming and educational services to minimum and community custody female offenders. The Maine Department of Corrections' mission is to reduce the likelihood that an offender will re-offend. With a facility such as the Women's Reentry Center, we are able to offer the programming and vocational skills that will set the offender back up in her community with a solid foundation and a greater chance of being successful. The new facility offers the space and an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and growing."

— Amanda Woolford, Dir. of Female Services, MDOC

Community Scale

The Reentry Center is situated outside the secure perimeter of the Maine Correctional Center located on the hill to the west. While the facility is situated in a rural context, it is minutes away from a population density that offers ample jobs and community services within the Greater Portland metropolitan area. Many of the residents work at jobs within the community accessible by a facility transit van. Across the street is the Maine State Society for the Protection of Animals, MSSPA. MSSPA's partnership with the Reentry Center provides residents the **opportunity to regularly volunteer and interact with other women from the community to help rehabilitate these abused animals** in a calm and safe environment.

Operations follow the principles of direct supervision, but the line between security and programming staff disappears. Communal spaces include a **yoga studio, classrooms**, a range of interview and small meeting spaces and a **family reunification center including a carpeted child visitation area. A teaching kitchen** with catering capabilities and **vegetable garden** add to the education programs.

Program helps Maine inmates care for horses

by WGME | Wednesday, December 12th 2018





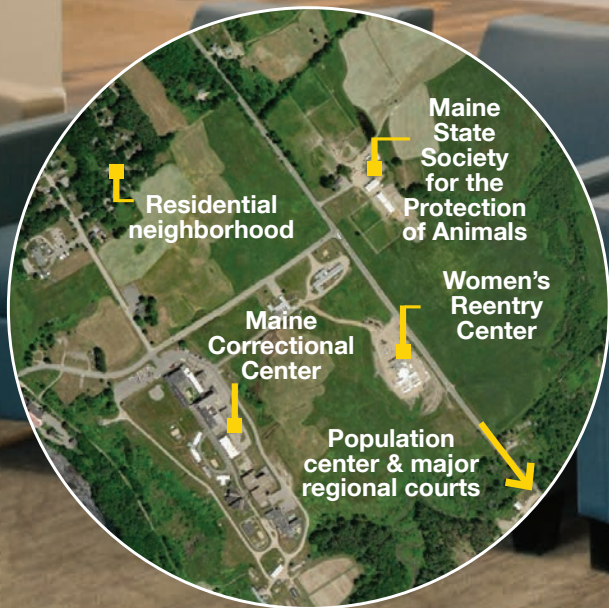
Co-location



Principle	Goal	MDOC Women's Reentry Center
C1 - Planning Process	Broad and inclusive stakeholder and community involvement in a comprehensive planning process for justice system needs	Since 1997 the MDOC has consistently updated the master plan for the system. This project came out of the most recent full system trends analysis. The planning process involved many meetings with stakeholders, local legislators and the public. The exterior design is responsive to community feedback. The building, sited outside the existing secure facility, serves as both a step out into the community and a view inside the center.
C2 - Facility Siting	Locate facilities near suitable workforce and of population in custody	The facility is located in the middle of the most populated part of the state. The Greater Portland metropolitan area includes more than half of Maine's population and is the second fastest growing area in New England. The area also provides the greatest access to employment opportunities.
C4 - Co-location	Co-locate with/near: health care, mental health care, public health, reentry facilities, education, employment	The Greater Portland metropolitan area is home to Maine's largest concentration of healthcare, mental health services, public health, education, and employment opportunities. The location provides quick access to I-95 for connections to more distant portions of the state.
C8 - Technology - Video Appearance	Provide robust option for video visitation without supplanting in-person visiting	Multi-purpose computer stations provide the ability to utilize video visitation, helpful for reaching the more distant parts of the state. Large visitation spaces (inside and out) provide generous areas for family reunification, visiting, and child/family play areas central to successful reentry.

Community Scale

(continued)





■ Greatest Challenges

Planning

The Center is sited directly on a heavily traveled road considered a “gateway” to the town of Windham. The designers developed a design approach that mitigated neighbors’ concerns over another encroaching corrections institution. A large-scale siding pattern made of a contemporary, wood-look engineered product achieves the desired aesthetic effect while offering reduced maintenance and increased longevity. This purposeful siting and its exterior finish give the Center its distinct identity, and suggest a community college rather than a corrections facility.

Programming and Design

Three operational goals drove the programming and design for the housing area: providing a residential-scale environment, dividing the population into smaller groups more appropriate for the female population, and maintaining an appropriate openness to provide supervision. The four 24-bed pods consist of 12 double bedrooms on two levels open to separate ‘living rooms’. The living rooms include comfortable couches, TVs, armchairs and other furnishings that provide a quiet, soft environment for the smaller group of residents of each pod. The four living rooms are open to a central great room, a reconfigurable space for traditional day room and group programming activities. From the great room, staff have a clear view of all living rooms, through the open thresholds and large glazed exterior walls. The configuration allows the staff to freely move through the spaces, interacting with residents while maintaining a clear view to all the sleeping/living and support spaces.

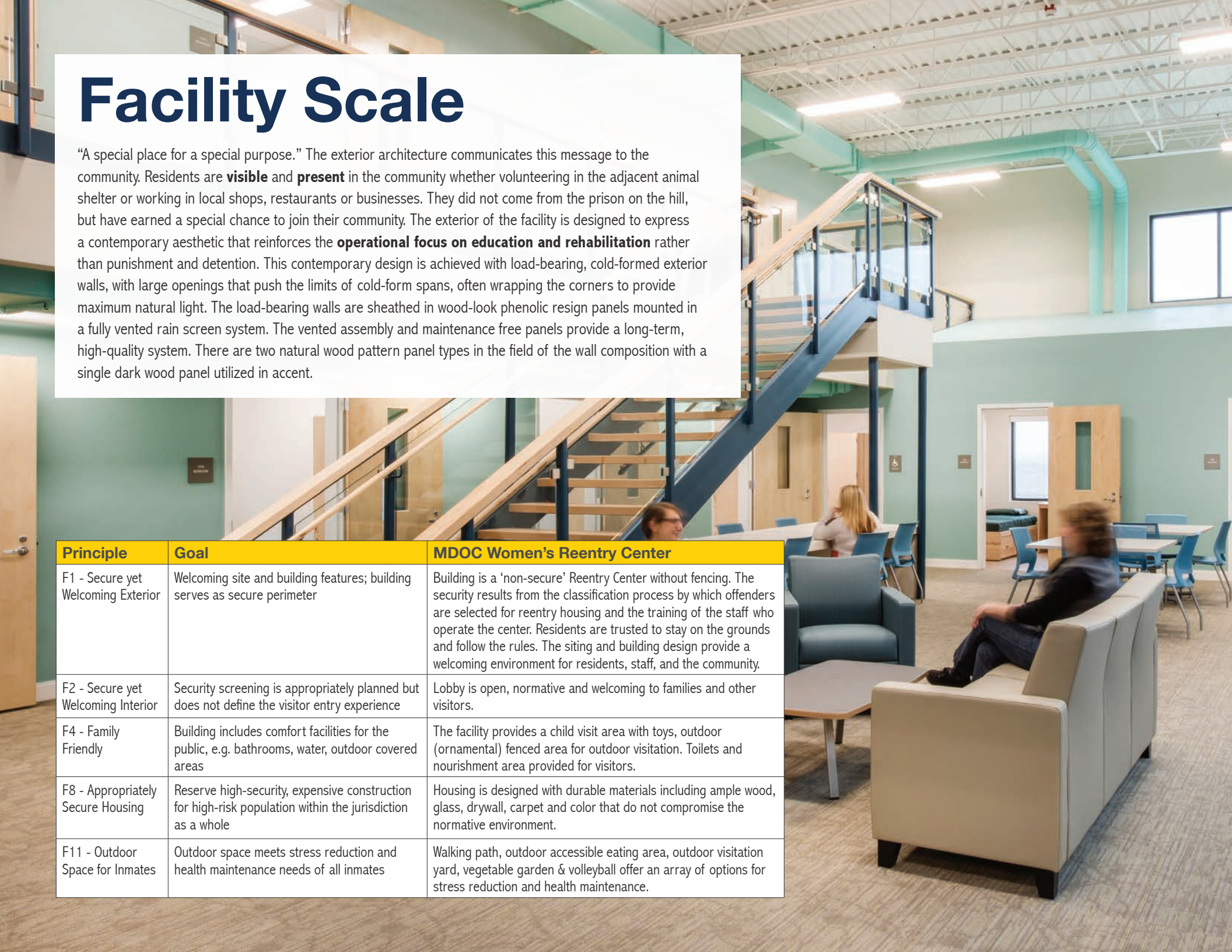
Design Innovation

The priority and challenge was finding the right balance between durable materials traditionally used in corrections construction, and softer materials that would enhance the rehabilitative environment supporting the facility’s mission. Materials like abuse-resistant GWB in lieu of concrete construction achieve the needed durability, while bright colors, subtle patterning and abundant natural light and views to the outside contribute to the calm, educational aesthetic.

Facility Scale

“A special place for a special purpose.” The exterior architecture communicates this message to the community. Residents are **visible** and **present** in the community whether volunteering in the adjacent animal shelter or working in local shops, restaurants or businesses. They did not come from the prison on the hill, but have earned a special chance to join their community. The exterior of the facility is designed to express a contemporary aesthetic that reinforces the **operational focus on education and rehabilitation** rather than punishment and detention. This contemporary design is achieved with load-bearing, cold-formed exterior walls, with large openings that push the limits of cold-form spans, often wrapping the corners to provide maximum natural light. The load-bearing walls are sheathed in wood-look phenolic resin panels mounted in a fully vented rain screen system. The vented assembly and maintenance free panels provide a long-term, high-quality system. There are two natural wood pattern panel types in the field of the wall composition with a single dark wood panel utilized in accent.

Principle	Goal	MDOC Women's Reentry Center
F1 - Secure yet Welcoming Exterior	Welcoming site and building features; building serves as secure perimeter	Building is a 'non-secure' Reentry Center without fencing. The security results from the classification process by which offenders are selected for reentry housing and the training of the staff who operate the center. Residents are trusted to stay on the grounds and follow the rules. The siting and building design provide a welcoming environment for residents, staff, and the community.
F2 - Secure yet Welcoming Interior	Security screening is appropriately planned but does not define the visitor entry experience	Lobby is open, normative and welcoming to families and other visitors.
F4 - Family Friendly	Building includes comfort facilities for the public, e.g. bathrooms, water, outdoor covered areas	The facility provides a child visit area with toys, outdoor (ornamental) fenced area for outdoor visitation. Toilets and nourishment area provided for visitors.
F8 - Appropriately Secure Housing	Reserve high-security, expensive construction for high-risk population within the jurisdiction as a whole	Housing is designed with durable materials including ample wood, glass, drywall, carpet and color that do not compromise the normative environment.
F11 - Outdoor Space for Inmates	Outdoor space meets stress reduction and health maintenance needs of all inmates	Walking path, outdoor accessible eating area, outdoor visitation yard, vegetable garden & volleyball offer an array of options for stress reduction and health maintenance.



Notable Features

Access to Natural Light and Views

The building footprint defines the various segments of housing, programs and services, administration and staff. This configuration provides nearly universal access to natural light and views for residents, staff and visitors. One hundred percent of normally resident-occupied spaces including sleeping, living, great room and program areas are filled with natural light and direct views to the outside natural environment. Ninety-five percent of the staff and administrative spaces have direct or indirect access to natural light.

The access to natural light and views far exceeds that of traditional correctional environments. The residents who are housed here have earned this placement. The environment is a constant reminder of that fact and the work that must be done to move safely and successfully further into the community.

Normative Design

Normative design discards the correctional image for materials, finishes, and furniture while still providing a durable environment that will stand up over time. Generous use of glass provides ample views to the outside as well as inside the building enhancing the transparency, safety and efficient management of the facility. The use of more normal furniture, colors, patterns and less institutional materials communicates the special purpose of the facility while communicating the right expectations for resident behavior.

Abundance of Program Spaces

High recidivism is exacerbated by lower educational attainment. For every dollar spent on prison education, taxpayers are estimated to save four or five dollars that would have been spent on incarceration. Education can give people a purpose, restore individuals' self-esteem and social competence and open up doors to a better future. In this facility residents are provided the opportunity to gain education while working toward reentry.

Accessibility

The entire site and building are fully accessible. Today accessibility goes beyond the disabled to include bariatric residents and visitors. This fact impacts furniture, passageways and plumbing fixtures. All of the program areas are on a single level with at-grade entrances. All entrances are under cover to protect from the extreme climate in the region. Notification features (PREA & Life safety) are auditory and visual. Whenever possible, spaces open up to one another, or have doors on hold opens, limiting the amount of doors one needs to open while living in the facility.

Quiet Spaces

A quiet space is a safe space that reduces stress for staff and residents. Quiet, safety and a low stress environment provide a setting for residents to do the necessary work to transition successfully into the community. Standards originally proposed to be included in the ACA standards to reduce reverberation in spaces were utilized to design the acoustics for all the large areas in this building.



Lobby



Processing

Facility Scale

(continued)

RIVER ROAD

ADMIN & SUPPORT STAFF

PUBLIC LOBBY

VISITATION

PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

RESIDENT HOUSING

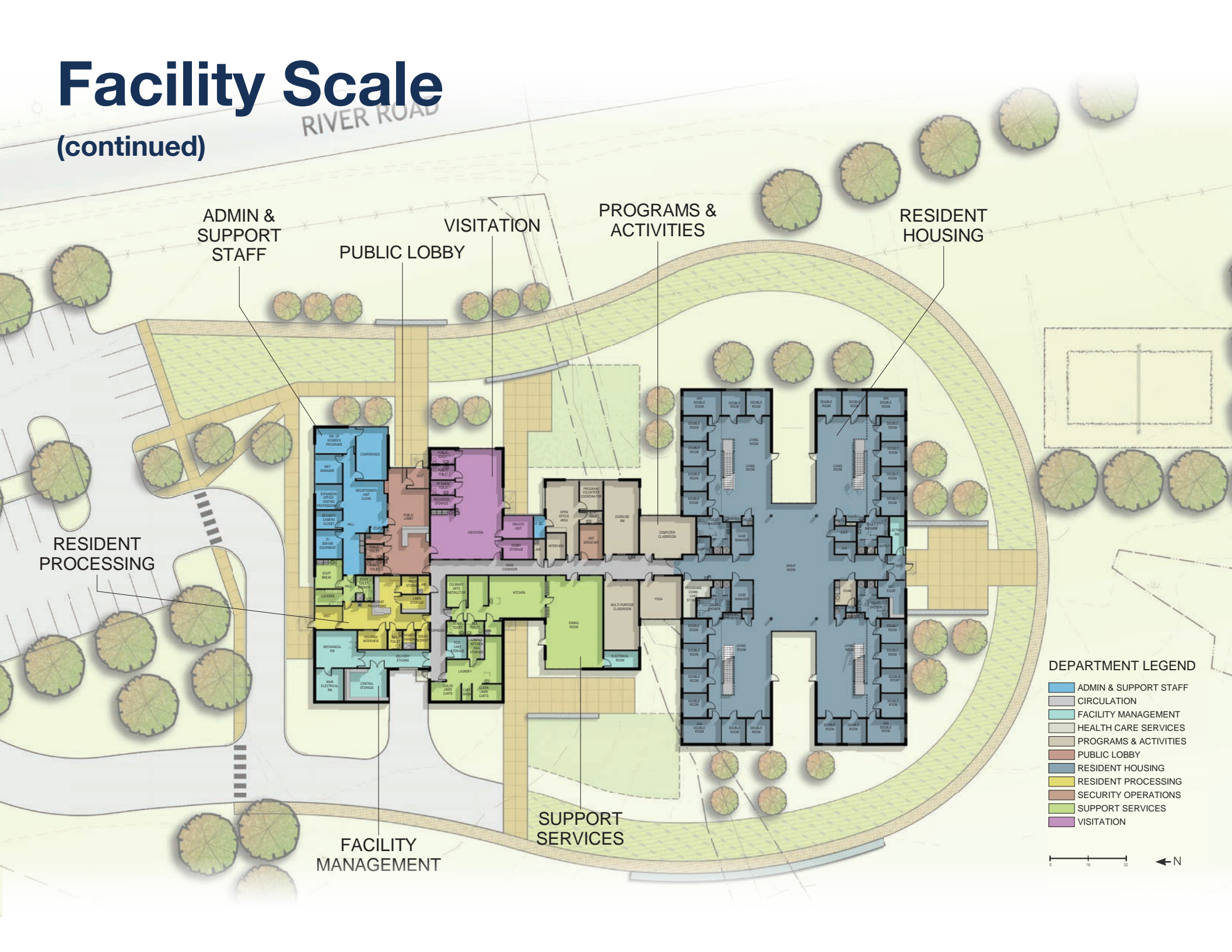
RESIDENT PROCESSING

FACILITY MANAGEMENT

SUPPORT SERVICES

DEPARTMENT LEGEND

- ADMIN & SUPPORT STAFF
- CIRCULATION
- FACILITY MANAGEMENT
- HEALTH CARE SERVICES
- PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES
- PUBLIC LOBBY
- RESIDENT HOUSING
- RESIDENT PROCESSING
- SECURITY OPERATIONS
- SUPPORT SERVICES
- VISITATION

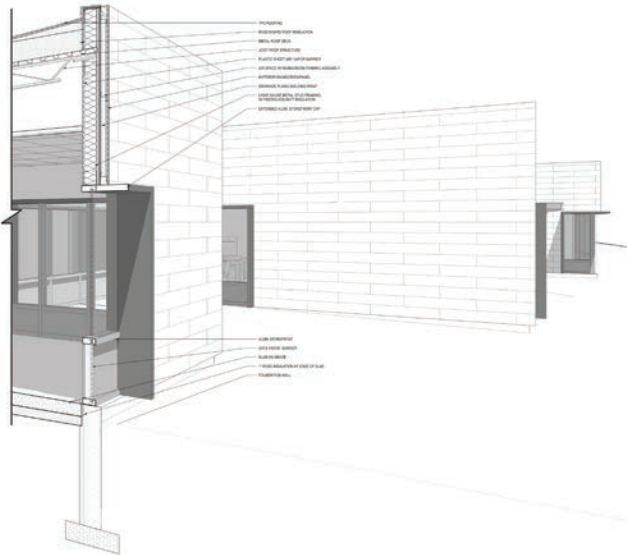




Outdoor dining and recreation area



Child visitation area



Perspective section through vented rainscreen wall assembly

Technological Features

Natural Light

The design provides substantial natural light. This feature provides a connection with the outdoors as the building is located on a picturesque rural site. This connection is especially important due to the cold climate which limits access to the outdoors for some of the residents during the winter months. The natural light also serves as a sustainable feature in limiting the amount of interior lighting needed and contributes to the quality of the interior environment.

Vented Rainscreen

The vented rainscreen assembly is a new technology to this region, which still relies heavily on brick masonry construction for most government work. This approach gave

the owner a contemporary aesthetic, increased continuous insulation, a worry-free vented wall cavity and a low maintenance exterior siding material. We expect to continue to utilize this type of assembly.

Interior Materials

The hybrid correctional / residential facility drove some new fixture and material choices – some of which we are utilizing in softer spaces within more traditional correctional facilities already.

New Demands

The design team was tasked with developing an approach to balance correctional durability with a more residential aesthetic in an open interior environment

Human Scale

The exterior of the facility is designed to communicate a contemporary aesthetic that reinforces the operational focus on education and rehabilitation rather than punishment and detention. The **facility is designed with ample glazing on the public road side to literally show the community the good work taking place inside.**

The program theme “Waves of Change, Oceans of Possibilities” influenced many of the interior design decisions throughout the facility. The color palette and material choices create a soothing nautical aesthetic. Floor patterns throughout circulation areas emulate a wooden boardwalk weaving through the tall beach grass.

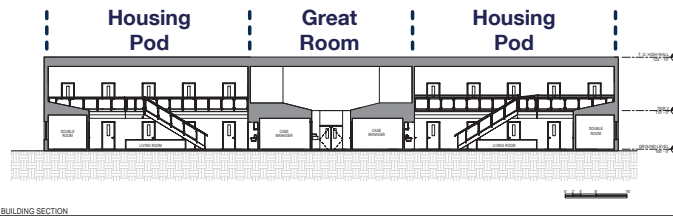
The facility balances durable materials traditionally used in corrections construction and softer materials that will enhance the rehabilitative environment supporting the facility’s mission. Durability was achieved with materials like abuse-resistant GWB in lieu of concrete construction, while bright colors, subtle patterning and abundant natural light contribute to the calm, educational aesthetic.



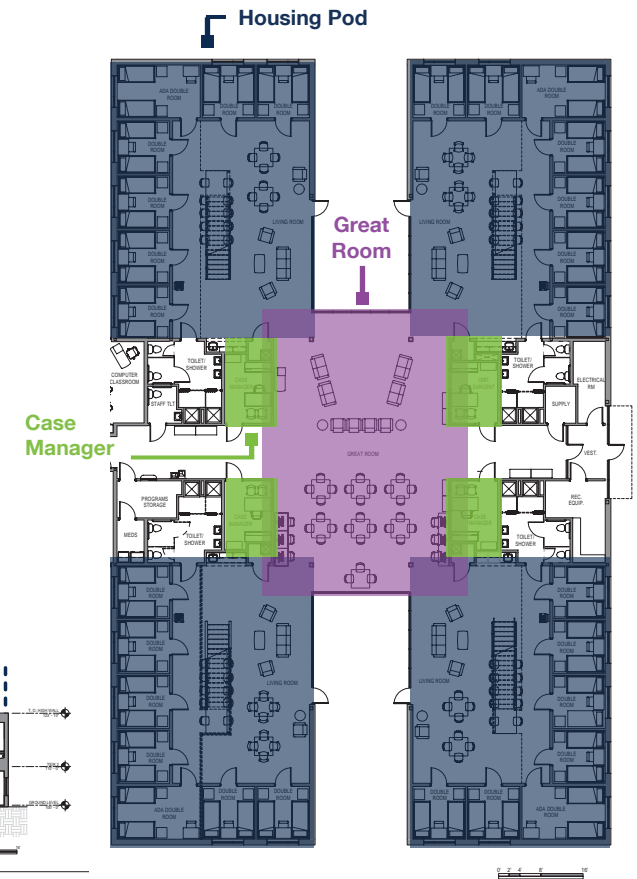


Experimental Programming & Design

The open multiple day-room configuration was a new concept for the owner and design team. All four of the “living rooms” are separate in defined areas, but all open up at a corner to a larger “great room.” This hybrid configuration enables optimal multipurpose uses of the spaces; enabling large group activities and smaller quiet activities in one continuous space, which can be supervised by a single staff person.



Use of the two level housing pods compresses the footprint and provides good sightlines



Organizing the four housing pods around the “Great Room” provides separation while allowing good sightlines for staff observation

Principle	Goal	MDOC Women’s Reentry Center
H1 - Acoustical Comfort	Sound levels do not create additional stress or obstruct communications	Overlap of ‘living room’ and ‘great room’ areas creates auditory connection without acoustical issues. Materials selected to mitigate noise, exceeds proposed ACA acoustical requirements.
H5 - Stress Reduction	Sunlight, daylight & views that cue time of day, weather conditions, and psychological connection to nature are provided for staff areas, public visiting areas, and inmate living and program areas	Ample natural light and outstanding views from all spaces offer a therapeutic connection with the natural surroundings. Surrounding natural wetlands are full of wildlife year round.
H7 - Normative Visual Environment	Provide a durable, safe, and non-institutional environment to cue pro-social behavior	Reentry environment is finished with conventional, normative materials. Non-institutional materials send a message of what the expectations are for behavior.

Human Scale

(continued)



N1 EXTERIOR ELEVATION - EAST
1/8" = 1'-0"

The articulated building form provides natural light and views to most of the spaces



Durable materials that do not compromise the normative environment: ample wood, glass, and carpeting



Double sleeping room, dorm-like feel

Green Building Initiatives

While there were no owner-driven sustainability goals for the project, the project team focused on 'value add' sustainability solutions. Every opportunity was taken to reduce the project's carbon footprint without adding cost to the project. Some sustainable features include:

- Ample natural light with LED lights on daylight sensors throughout
- Multiple HVAC zoning to minimize wasted energy use
- 'Low flow' plumbing fixtures throughout
- 100% precipitation managed on site
- Fully vented rain screen with continuous mineral wool insulation (exceeding code requirements)
- 'No VOC' paint products utilized throughout
- Carpet favored for reduction of airborne particulates
- 'Low' to 'No' maintenance material selections (LVT flooring, Phenolic Resin Panel cladding, sealed concrete in service areas)
- Site location significantly reduces travel times conserving fuel

