

Future of the Oahu Community Correctional Center

Vol. 52 - Community Outreach Engages Broad Audiences

April 2024



Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

The Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) carries out orders from the state courts to confine individuals for a set period of time utilizing jails and prisons located within Hawaii, at the Federal Detention Center in Honolulu, and in private contracted facilities on the mainland. Jails, known in Hawaii as Community Correctional Centers (CCCs), are located on the islands of Kauai, Maui, Hawaii and Oahu and house pre-trial detainees, misdemeanor offenders, and others with a sentence of one year or less. CCCs also provide a pre-release transition function for prison inmates who reach less than a year until their scheduled release. While some offenders will remain confined for life, over 95 percent will serve their sentences and be released to the community.

DCR envisions a future when all its facilities provide safe, secure, healthy, and humane environments for offenders and staff. A future based on better understanding the differing needs of offender populations, using therapeutic rather than punitive management techniques, ensuring racial equity, and by promoting positive change so that fewer individuals are incarcerated in Hawaii. However, aged and obsolete CCCs have undermined DCR's ability to deliver such a vision and improving some facilities and replacing others are high priorities. Chief among those priorities is development of a new Oahu CCC (OCCC) at the Animal Quarantine Station (AQS) in Aiea. Assisting DCR with OCCC planning and development is the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) and a team of experts and advisors (the "OCCC Team").

Community Turns Out to Discuss New Oahu Community Correctional Center

More than 60 people attended the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) Community Engagement Workshop held at the Aiea Elementary School on February 1, 2024. The University of Hawaii Community Design Center (UHCDC) hosted the workshop in partnership with the Hawaii Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to envision rehabilitative models for a new OCCC facility and a more robust community-based continuum of care.

Community members participated in activities to share their thoughts on the planned relocation of the OCCC. The workshop represents DCR's ongoing commitment to maintain its active community outreach and engagement efforts to keep the public up to date.

During the meeting, DCR Director Tommy Johnson provided an update to attendees on the relocation project. A new correctional facility is sorely needed, Director Johnson said. *"Parts of OCCC are 110 years old."* DCR aims to have a Request for Proposal (RFP) posted for prospective bidders for the new OCCC in late 2025.

Area lawmakers, state and community leaders, stakeholders and residents attended the workshop. Attendees divided into groups where members of the UHCDC team facilitated activities to gather feedback from community members through interactive, co-design activities and group discussions related to the new jail and broader justice system.

At the community meeting, Cathi Ho Schar, director of the University of Hawaii Community Design Center, said, *"We appreciate your wisdom, your understanding and your patience as we learn with and from all of you."* *"We take this privilege and responsibility very seriously,"* Schar said.

The DCR contracted UHCDC in 2022 to lead an independent engagement, research and proof-of-concept study on the OCCC relocation project, to inform the work of future professional planning and design teams. UHCDC is not responsible for developing the RFP for the new jail.



**Participants at the Community Engagement Workshop (February 1, 2024).
Photo credit: UHCDC**

Breaking Cycles Symposium Updates Community on Plans to Improve Hawaii's Correctional System

Approximately 70 people attended the *"Breaking Cycles Symposium Update: Re-envisioning a Health, Housing, and Corrections Continuum"* held at the state Capitol auditorium on March 6, 2024. State and community leaders discussed the ongoing need for a unified approach to a better, holistic, program-oriented correctional system. Attendees included stakeholders, lawmakers and community groups and members who addressed the call to break the cycles of substance abuse, mental health needs, homelessness and generational incarceration in Hawaii.

Guest speakers included State Homeless Coordinator John Mizuno; Nikos Leverenz of the Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center; Dr. Chad Koyanagi of the Department of Health; District Court Judge Melanie May of the First Circuit (Oahu); Kainoa Castro of the Department of Health; Dr. Judy Mohr Peterson of the Department of Human Services and Iopa Maunakea of Men of Pa'a (Positive Action Alliance).



DCR Director Johnson addressing attendees.
Photo credit: DCR



Symposium attendees. Photo credit: DCR

DCR Director Tommy Johnson thanked everyone for their will to change the system and the paths of the lives of inmates. *"We want to change the trajectory of these people's lives. We want to have better and safer communities. We can't do it alone,"* Johnson said. *"It's going to take us working together as a community of policy makers, to different community organizations, to the legislative branch of government, and to the judicial branch of government."*

One of the efforts that the DCR is working on is the implementation of more rehabilitation services and programs. Currently, the DCR is in discussions with the Men of Pa'a for a mentoring program for inmates at the Kulani Correctional Facility. At the symposium, Iopa Maunakea said, it is "our kuleana" to take care of each other.

DCR is also finalizing an agreement with the University of Hawaii to provide ho'oponopono services. Such services and programs, Johnson said, would help reduce the 57% recidivism rate in Hawaii. *"These types of culturally based programs are critically important to our paradigm shift to a more humane, culturally sensitive and effective rehabilitative model."* The March 6th symposium — part of a project funded by the DCR and led by UH CDC — was an update to the first Breaking Cycles Symposium held in October 2023.

At the symposium, Judge Melanie May and Kainoa Castro shared results of the post-booking jail diversion program in District Court of the First Circuit. The program's goal is to identify non-violent defendants with low-level pending misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor charges, keep them out of jails and long stays at the Hawaii State Hospital and find another way to focus on treatment rather than incarceration.

The program is voluntary and requires collaboration with both the public defender's office and prosecutor's office. Upon graduation, criminal charges against the defendant are dismissed. Judge May noted the Judiciary has supported jail diversion for more than 17 years. *"The big difference now is with the buy-in and collaboration from other stakeholders, we have been able to achieve results that we have not previously seen,"* she said.

During the event, Dr. Michael Champion, Senior Advisor for Mental Health and the Justice System for Governor Josh Green, M.D., told attendees that breaking cycles is a foundational priority for the Governor who has assembled a dedicated team spanning across departments and disciplines that are united in *"our commitment to this effort."* *"People who experience behavioral challenges face a very high prevalence of powerlessness, trauma, and justice involvement. Our efforts to break the cycles requires a sustained commitment to redesign our mental health and justice systems with a focus on ensuring improved access to services while also reducing disparities,"* Dr. Champion said. The time for action is now, he added.

Breaking Cycles **Virtual Roundtable:**

OCCC Programming & Design Case Studies

Friday, April 12th, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:30 AM

Zoom Meeting Link <https://www.breaking-cycles-symposium.org>

Please join us on Zoom for presentations and discussions on alternative jail programs and facilities, followed by a roundtable discussion gathering stakeholders who will reflect on the diverse models and share their vision for a new facility to replace OCCC.

Welcome

Tommy Johnson, Director, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Presentations

James Krueger, Director of Design, HMC Architects

Lucy Easley, Facility Director, Davidson's County Sheriff's Office Behavioral Care Center

Roundtable

Hayley Cheng, First Deputy Public Defender, Office of the Public Defender

Dennis Dunn, Board Member, Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Keoki Dudoit, Director of Operations, Makana O Ke Akua

Christin Johnson, Oversight Coordinator, Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission

Lois Kim, Case Management Program Manager, Care Hawai'i

Bob Merce, Chair, Correctional Reform Working Group

Eugenie Naone, Director of Programs, Ke Ola Mamo

Steve Wood, Chair, Aiea Neighborhood Board



To RSVP or learn more
Scan this QR code or visit
www.breaking-cycles-symposium.org
Email: uhcdc@hawaii.edu
Phone: (808) 956-4704



UHcdc
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
COMMUNITY DESIGN CENTER

CRWG
CORRECTIONAL REFORM
WORKING GROUP

We Want to Hear From You

DCR continually seeks input from community leaders and members about plans for the new OCCC. In response, OCCC team representatives attend meetings of the Aiea Neighborhood Board #20, the Aiea Community Association, and the Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission and engage with state and local officials, the media, and others. In addition to reporting progress and accomplishments in advancing plans for the new OCCC, these forums are opportunities for DCR to seek input, advice and guidance from officials, stakeholders and the public. Contact the City and County of Honolulu, Neighborhood Commission Office for information about how to participate at an upcoming Aiea Neighborhood Board meeting (Tel: 808-768-3710 / email: nco@honolulu.gov); do the same for information about upcoming meeting of the Aiea Community Association and how to participate (<http://www.aieacommunity.org>).

In addition to distributing OCCC Newsletters to over 1,500 elected and appointed officials, government agencies, media outlets, volunteer groups, and members of the public, DCR maintains the OCCC Future Plans, a website dedicated to planning the new OCCC. This website provides access to project-related materials, documents outreach efforts, and facilitates the public's ability to offer ideas and suggestions or ask questions: <https://dcr.hawaii.gov>. Interested parties can also request to receive (via email) future announcements and notifications by submitting your contact information (name, affiliation if any, and email address) to: robert.nardi@wsp.com.

Progress Continues at Constructing New Housing Unit at Hawaii CCC

With increasingly aged and crowded in-state jail facilities, DCR is moving forward with efforts to improve and/or replace its corrections infrastructure. In addition to replacing OCCC and expanding the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC), DCR is addressing the crowding that has long existed at the Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC) by constructing a new housing unit. The new unit is representative of DCR's overall program of improving its community correctional centers. The soon-to-be-completed housing unit will improve living conditions and be a substantial improvement over current conditions with access to natural daylight, improved acoustics, thermal comfort, and adequate space, all of which have been shown to enhance the feeling of safety and lowering stress levels among offenders and staff with a positive effect on overall institution safety and security.



**Interior and exterior photos of new HCCC housing unit showing substantial progress.
Photo Credit: Mike Janes, DLR Group, March 2024.**

Improvements Continue at Women's CCC

Progress continues at constructing a new Administration Building, Visitation/Intake Building, and Housing Unit at the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). Progress includes interior finishes, furniture, landscaping, paving, among other elements. Once completed, women held at OCCC will be relocated to WCCC which will also perform intake functions for all women. Doing so will also make available an entire housing module at OCCC.



Renderings by CGL Companies

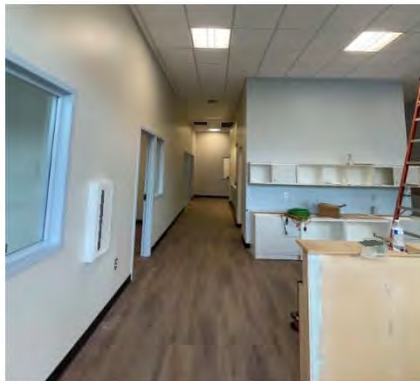


Photo Credit: Rider Levett Bucknall, April 2024



British navigator Captain James Cook arrived in Hawaii aboard the HMS Endeavour on April 26, 1778

Upcoming Activities

The following activities are anticipated in the months ahead.

April 2024	<p>Construction continues at HCCC, MCCC, and WCCC.</p> <p>Public outreach and engagement continues with attendance at Aiea Neighborhood Board, Aiea Community Association, and Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission meetings.</p>
May 2024	<p>Construction continues at HCCC, MCCC, and WCCC.</p> <p>Public outreach and engagement continues with attendance at Aiea Neighborhood Board, Aiea Community Association and Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission meetings.</p> <p>2024 Session of Hawaii Legislature concludes.</p>
June 2024	<p>Construction continues at HCCC, MCCC, and WCCC.</p> <p>Public outreach and engagement continues with attendance at Aiea Neighborhood Board, Aiea Community Association and Hawaii Correctional Systems Oversight Commission meetings.</p>

Join OCCC Email List

Add your name to the OCCC email list to receive announcements, newsletters, and other project-related materials by sending your name, affiliation (if any), and email address to: robert.nardi@wsp.com.

Interested in Learning More?

For additional information visit <http://dcr.hawaii.gov/occc-future-plans> or contact:

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