

Nome Youth Detention Facility Construction - Phase 2

FY2004 Request: \$3,900,000

Reference No: 35722

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Construction

Category: Law and Justice

Location: Nome

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Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2003 - 07/01/2008

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

Expansion of the Nome Youth Facility (NYF) to 12 detention beds and renovation of the existing structure is needed. NYF has received tremendous community and regional support as a community detention program. Increasing the capacity to twelve beds will reduce the placement of youth outside of the region. Marginal original construction and minimal maintenance, exacerbated by the arctic climate, have left the structure in need of complete renovation.

Funding:	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	Total
Gen Fund	\$3,900,000						\$3,900,000
Total:	\$3,900,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,900,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	215,000	3
One-Time Startup:	0	
Totals:	215,000	3

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

CH61/SLA01/P19/L28 – \$255.0 of GF and \$125.0 of Statutory Designated Program Receipts were appropriated for project design.

Project Description/Justification:

Nome Youth Facility

In FY2001 the legislature appropriated funds for planning and design in recognition of the severe programmatic and physical plant problems at the Nome Youth Facility (NYF). The redesign of the facility will be completed by the spring of 2003. This request is for Phase 2 construction funds that are required to complete the project.

NYF was constructed in 1981. Budget cuts closed the facility from 1986-1989 and again in 1996. It reopened in 1999 with reduced staffing as a community-based detention program. NYF has received tremendous community and regional support and was reopened in response to a public demand for services for regional youth who were causing significant community problems. The situation occurred, in part, due to the absence of an immediate detention response for out of control youth and a long-term local treatment response for regional youth. These needs have been only partly ameliorated with the current reduced facility program and staffing.

The facility re-opened with a low staff to resident ratio. At that time, the facility program was planned as a nontraditional community-based accountability program which relied on residents being in the community for a large segment of the day with a variety of mentors and other community-based partner agencies providing supervision and programming. The increase in referrals in the Nome region, coupled with the seriousness of the offenses requiring secure youth detention, made this program unrealistic.

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Marginal original construction and minimal maintenance, exacerbated by the arctic climate, have left the structure in need of complete renovation. A recent repair project revealed a section of roof in near collapse due to a deteriorating bearing wall, resulting in ongoing leaks into the facility. The current heating system is inadequate for an arctic climate, causing the facility to be unacceptably cold in the winter and often resulting in frost on the interior walls of resident rooms. Additionally, the structure requires significant redesign to meet the Division of Juvenile Justice's goals of co-locating probation and facility staff and to provide flexibility for both secure detention beds and medium security treatment beds. An increase in capacity to twelve beds will reduce placement of youth outside the region. Plans to fully reopen the facility were part of the 1997 State of Alaska DHSS Master Plan for Youth Facilities. This is the last project from that plan that remains incomplete. Planning and design funds were appropriated in the FY 2002 budget to accomplish the design changes. Construction / renovation costs are estimated at \$3.9 million.

NYF serves Northwest Alaska, an area the size of Pennsylvania. The region includes Nome with fifteen outlying villages and Kotzebue with eleven outlying villages. The entire population of the region is approximately 15,500, with juveniles ages 5 – 17 comprising approximately 5,000 of the total population. The region is 75-80% Alaska Native, with the remainder Caucasian and a smattering of other racial groups.

NYF has been averaging above capacity for the last year and a half, with 8+ juveniles in the facility often being the norm. In those instances when the population has exceeded 10, the overflow has been sent to other facilities. Expanding the facility to 12 beds would improve this situation. The goal of the facility is to hold youth more fully accountable at the onset of delinquency than they have been in the past and to prevent the need for longer-term institutionalization. Positive results have already been witnessed as formerly "institution bound" youth increasingly are being reintegrated into their communities. This renovation / expansion proposal would support and enhance this promising strategy while also ensuring that the needs of the northwest region are more appropriately met.

Currently the design for is progressing toward completion in spring 2003. If \$3.9 million in construction funding is approved, bid award and construction work can proceed in the fall of 2003, with completion expected by fall of 2004.