

# Managing Correctional Capacity

Report highlights

January 2020

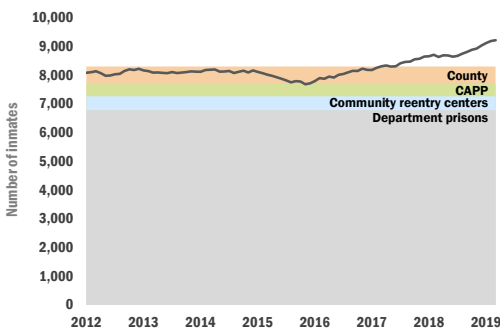
**Over the past decade, the state's approach to managing corrections has been designed for relatively short-term budget planning.**

**Inadequate planning since our 2010 evaluation is a contributing cause of many problems it faces today.**

The Department of Correction still lacks a system-wide staffing model for correctional officers.

Since 2010, deferred maintenance has increased by **45% to \$58.6 million.**

**Inmate population has significantly exceeded in-state housing capacity**



Rapid growth since 2016 is not fully understood. However, at least two factors have contributed to it:

1. Parole revocations have increased
2. Inmate releases have not kept pace with inmate population growth

## Findings

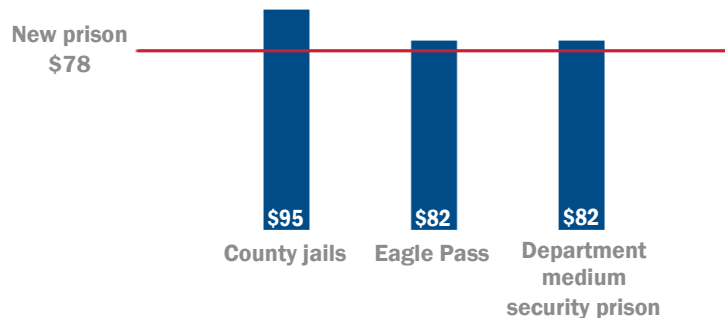
The department does not produce a long-term forecast. Without this forecast, the state cannot effectively identify, prepare for, or respond to rapid growth.

The department has implemented ad-hoc, incremental changes to inmate housing, such as adding bunks to already overcrowded facilities or relying more heavily on county jails and out-of-state contract prisons to house inmates.

Inmates have better opportunities and services in department-operated prisons than in alternative placements, such as county jails or out-of-state prisons.

Inmate placement in county jails is more expensive than placement within any department prison.

The state could realize cost savings from new prison construction. Estimated cost per inmate day at a new prison would be less than the cost at county jails, the out-of-state contract prison, or a medium security department prison.



## Recommendation

The Department of Correction should develop a system-wide master plan that incorporates the recommendations in our report. The master plan can guide the department on how to address immediate problems and set a long-term road map.

Without this information the department will struggle to demonstrate to policymakers the need and purpose of budgetary requests, such as an increase in full-time employees or capital investments.

View the report:  
[www.legislature.idaho.gov/ope/](http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/ope/)

