

SING SING

PRISON MUSEUM



VOLUME TWO: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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INTRODUCTION

The documents provided here are intended to support the recommendations made in the first section of this document. Many of the following sections were initially presented in the Phase One Report delivered in June of 2016 and discussed in the July 6, 2016 meeting. They have been updated where applicable, or provided in their original form as a snapshot in time to illustrate the process of creating this final report.



1825 Cell Block. Source: Jan Hird Pokorny Associates, Inc.

CONTEXTUAL AND COMPARABLE ANALYSIS

"It's ultimately about visitors, but it's also about the building — the power of place is undeniable. We're your partners, and we hope to learn from you in the future."

-Interviewee

This chapter provides a contextual and comparables analysis that sets attendance, market, operational and financial benchmarks to help inform the planning of and projections for the Sing Sing Prison Museum (SSPM).

It presents recommendations based on the expertise of the consultants, best practices in the field and an understanding of the environment in which the SSPM will operate.

Contextual Analysis

A contextual analysis seeks to provide a realistic context for the planning of and especially the projections for attendance, operating revenues and expenses for a new museum. In the case of the SSPM, the contextual analysis considers the experience of specialized and history museums within the overall museums marketplace and, therefore, serves to avoid unrealistic expectations regarding the attendance and financial performance of it. The contextual analysis also provides a regional context with an assessment of the existing higher-attendance museum-related institutions in or near Westchester County.



Eastern State Penitentiary. Source: Flickr user adam_jones

SPECIALIZED AND HISTORY MUSEUMS WITHIN THE OVERALL MUSEUMS MARKETPLACE

The planned SSPM would be categorized by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) as a combination specialized and history museum. The data that follow are from the latest comprehensive survey of the AAM, which took place in 2009 and has comparisons to 2006.¹

- Attendance:** The average museum reported about 26,500 visitors in 2009 compared to about 33,400 in the 2006 survey, with the decline reflecting a substantial number of smaller new museums. Overall, museum attendance continues to increase. The median figure for specialized museums is 22,000 and for history museums is 10,000. These lower attendance figures reflect a narrower market for specialized museums and also the large number of small community history museums skews the figures for history museums lower. *There are relatively few prison museums, so the uniqueness factor may help to boost attendance levels. On the other hand, proximity to an operational maximum security prison may keep some potential visitors away. The boost in attendance to Alcatraz Island for Ai Weiwei's @Large exhibition confirms that there is likely to be a level of interest in issues associated with incarceration in America as well as the mass market appeal of the history of the*

¹ AAM has not allocated funds for another comprehensive survey, instead requesting members to upload data. While the resulting sample sizes are insufficient for meaningful comparative analyses, the consultants believe the 2009 data are, nonetheless, still generally relevant.

electric chair, known as “Old Sparky”. These issues are explored further throughout this report, and especially in the Visitor Experience Plan in Chapter 5.

- **Admission Charges:** Some 59% of all U.S. museums (49% for history and 57% for specialized) offered free admission. This study has recommended charged admission for the SSPM because of the need to generate earned income, the overcrowding that might take place in relatively small exhibition spaces and because the regional marketplace is primarily one of charged admission.
- **Sources of Operating Income:** The average museum generated about 28% of its operating income from earned sources, 37% from private sources, 12% from endowments and 24% from government sources. History museums generated somewhat lower than average income from earned sources while specialized museums were higher than average. *The data indicate that the SSPM will need to seek income from multiple streams including:*
 - *Maximized earned income through mass market appeal.*
 - *Substantial ongoing financial support from private and government sources largely on the basis of its role in furthering the discussion of incarceration in America.*

Given the substantial capital funds that will need to be raised, it is very unlikely that a capital campaign for the SSPM will also generate income for an endowment to support operations. However, the consultants will assume that a small endowment will be initiated after opening and will grow gradually over time.

- **Staff Salaries as a Percentage of Total Operating Costs:** In general, salaries and wages account for an average of 50% of the operating budgets of museums. Specialized museums allocate a lower than average percentage to staffing and history museums allocate a somewhat higher than average percentage. *The reality in the museum field is that controlling staffing costs is just as important as maximizing revenues if a sustainable operation is to be achieved.*
- **Collections Care as a Percentage of Total Operating Costs:** One of the key issues in the planning of the SSPM is the extent to which it should utilize collections in the visitor experience it offers, called the Display Collection, as well as the cost of caring for exhibitions that are not on display and, therefore, must be stored. The following table indicates median figures for various types of museums and confirms that there is a substantial cost of collecting, both in the context of the staffing requirements and the need for collections storage space and other collections needs.
- **Marketing as a Percentage of Total Operating Costs:** To enhance awareness levels of the SSPM in the very competitive New York State regional marketplace, it will require an adequate marketing budget. The table below indicates that history museums generally allocate substantially less to marketing and specialized museums allocate somewhat less, which helps to explain relatively low attendance levels. At the same time, it must be emphasized that an increasing emphasis on digital and social media has served to reduce expenditures on paid advertising in general.

Profiles of Museums in the United States (median figures)	Art Museum	Children's or Youth Museum	General Museum	Historic Home or Site	History Museum or Historical Society	Living Collections	Natural History or Anthropology	Science or Tech	Specialized Museum	Overall 2009 Survey	Overall 2006 Survey
Sample Size	156	18	71	89	190	17	32	25	73	671	809
Attendance	44,878	130,870	58,500	11,700	10,000	208,574	58,176	357,103	22,000	26,500	33,446
% Charging Admission Fees	47.6%	94.1%	63.2%	77.4%	49.2%	64.3%	63.3%	96.0%	57.1%	59.0%	60.7%
Adult Admission Charge	\$8.00	\$7.50	\$7.00	\$6.00	\$5.00	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$10.00	\$7.00	\$7.00	\$6.00
Operating Income	\$2,379,176	\$1,729,532	\$1,930,895	\$350,000	\$260,000	\$3,072,452	\$3,256,810	\$7,857,138	\$602,080	\$1,168,559	\$850,000
Earned Revenues	21.5%	48.3%	24.8%	31.7%	24.0%	30.0%	31.1%	48.8%	33.2%	27.6%	31.0%
Revenues from Private Donors	46.6%	27.8%	33.7%	34.6%	31.0%	20.3%	38.3%	28.9%	37.7%	36.5%	35.2%
Revenues from Investment Sources	18.6%	12.1%	8.8%	10.7%	8.5%	14.3%	6.4%	3.0%	9.3%	11.5%	9.6%
Revenues from Government Sources	13.3%	11.7%	32.6%	23.0%	36.4%	35.4%	24.2%	19.3%	19.9%	24.4%	24.1%
Value of Endowment	\$9,744,500	\$414,875	\$2,539,870	\$1,202,817	\$526,500	\$14,253,806	\$5,078,964	\$1,829,599	\$2,526,508	\$2,825,075	\$1,580,537
Earned Income per Visitor	\$8.21	\$6.31	\$7.16	\$9.44	\$4.39	\$4.87	\$6.76	\$11.14	\$10.00	\$7.22	\$5.91
Operating Expenses	\$2,317,675	\$2,522,615	\$1,798,754	\$298,200	\$262,206	\$3,630,530	\$3,237,600	\$6,827,362	\$778,859	\$1,166,000	\$829,037
Operating Cost per Visitor	\$49.94	\$15.07	\$30.21	\$28.33	\$26.73	\$15.10	\$29.74	\$20.95	\$32.25	\$31.40	\$23.35
Staff Salaries as a % of Total Expenses	48.6%	54.5%	53.5%	56.0%	50.8%	63.9%	60.8%	45.8%	39.9%	49.9%	50.9%
Collections Care as a % of Total Expenses	6.4%	4.1%	9.9%	4.9%	8.5%	26.7%	17.3%	1.2%	10.0%	8.0%	9.4%
Marketing Budget as a % of Total Expenses	4.4%	8.4%	5.4%	3.8%	2.2%	4.1%	4.5%	7.5%	4.0%	4.1%	4.4%
Marketing Expenses Per Visitor	\$2.15	\$0.93	\$1.61	\$1.14	\$0.50	\$0.85	\$1.22	\$1.32	\$1.00	\$1.29	\$1.05

Source: 2009 Museum Financial Information, American Association of Museums, 2009

- **Importance of Size:** More recent comparative data were prepared by the Morey Group, as seen on the following table. It was based on a survey of 253 museums and related institutions that skew larger in size. The data confirm the impact of the size of the museum and its exhibition space in particular on attendance levels, admission charges and membership levels.

Comparative Data by Museum Type, 2013	Reported Attendance	Adult Price	Child Price	Child Price as % of Adult	Memberships	Memberships as % of Attendance
Art Museums	291,346	\$12.55	\$7.13	56.8%	13,789	4.7%
Aquariums	762,679	\$19.90	\$13.68	68.7%	17,132	2.2%
Botanical Gardens/Arboretums	468,793	\$10.56	\$6.35	60.1%	13,088	2.8%
Children's Museum	360,661	\$11.48	\$10.76	93.7%	7,729	2.1%
History Museum	398,672	\$11.91	\$7.26	61.0%	5,055	1.3%
Science Museum/Center	920,829	\$14.66	\$10.68	72.9%	9,431	1.0%
Zoo	959,894	\$15.04	\$10.74	71.4%	32,664	3.4%
Other Museum Types	278,864	\$13.59	\$7.88	58.0%	7,832	2.8%
Average for All	660,224	\$13.71	\$9.31	67.8%	13,340	2.6%
Median for All	433,733	\$13.07	\$9.28	64.9%	11,260	2.5%

Morey Group, 2014. Sample size of 253 and generally larger institutions

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The table on page 9 presents published information for museums in the region and also reflects data reported to the consultants. It focuses on museum-related attractions in the region that report at least 20,000 annual visitors. Among the key data and potential implications to the SSPM are the following points:

- **On-Site Attendance in the Context of Admission Charges:**
 - The highest attendance museum in the region is the free admission West Point Museum with 215,000 annual visitors. A new visitor center under construction is expected to increase the attendance totals to 250,000, and admission will continue to be free.
 - Dia:Beacon opened in FY2004 and reported about 126,000 visitors that year. As is common, attendance levels declined in subsequent years but recently have been gradually increasing and reached about 94,600 in FY2015. Average attendance over the past five years has been in range of 75,000 based on charged admission. The current adult rate is \$12 and children under 12 and school groups are offered free admission.
 - The Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt reports 105,000 annual visits with an \$18 adult admission charge, but this price includes admission to the Presidential Library as well. Historic Hudson Valley reports that attendance levels at historic sites in Westchester County have been declining. Kykuit, the Rockefeller Estate, attracts about 33,000 visitors based on a seasonal operation and admission charges for timed guided tours

are \$25 on weekdays and \$28 on weekends. The requirement for guided tours and the cost for them is a limiting factor for attendance. The Hudson River Museum in Yonkers reports 25,000 annual visitors.

The data offers useful benchmarks for attendance projections and indicates opportunities for more substantial attendance levels for museums that are unique.

- **Operating Schedule:** As shown on the following table, it is common for museums in the region to be closed to the public on Mondays and to have reduced days and hours during the colder weather months. Only the art museums have a weekly evening opening. These patterns will be considered to help the consultants make recommendations regarding the operating schedule for the SSPM, as explained in Chapter 5.
- **Staffing and Volunteers:** The data indicate the reality of the staffing levels required for a professional museum operation. West Point reports 14 full-time and 2 part-time staff, while Dia:Beacon reports 12 full-time staff and the Hudson River Museum reports 28 full-time and 41 part-time staff. The staff levels for Kykuit are skewed by the fact that it is a part of the overall Historic Hudson Valley system. The highest reported staffing level is at the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site. Volunteer levels vary widely but, in general, volunteer levels are strong. This is a positive indicator for the SSPM.



Alcatraz Island. Source: Flickr user adholmes

REGIONAL MUSEUMS REPORTING AT LEAST 20,000 REPORTED ANNUAL VISITORS

Institution	Reported Attendance (rounded)	Admission Charge (Adults)	Admission Charge (Children/ Students/ Seniors)	Operating Schedule	Evening Openings after 6pm? Y/N	Full-Time Staff	Part-Time Staff	Volunteers
Dia: Beacon	94,600	Adults \$12	Children Free Seniors \$10 Students \$8	Jan.-March Fri.- Mon. 11-4; April- Oct. Thurs.- Mon. 11-6; Nov.- Dec. Thurs.- Mon. 11-4.	N	12		
Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site	105,000	Adults \$18 (includes admission to the FDR Presidential Library)	Children under 15 & school groups no charge	Daily 9am - 5pm	N	53	Many seasonal	100
Hudson River Museum, Yonkers NY	25,000	Adults \$6 Youth (3 to 18 years) \$3	Seniors (62+) and Students with ID \$4	Wednesday - Sunday 12 - 5 pm	N	28	41	79
Kykuit: The Rockefeller Estate	33,000	Members: \$15-18 Adults: \$25-28	Children/ Seniors: \$23-26	May 1- September 30 Daily; October 1-31 Closed Tuesdays	N			
Katonah Museum of Art, Katonah, NY	40,000	\$10	Seniors & Students: \$5	Closed Monday peak season, Monday and Tuesday rest of year. Hours 10 am - 5 pm Sunday: 12 pm - 5 pm	N	11	19	179
Neuberger Museum of Art	56,500	General Public - \$5	Seniors 62+ and Students \$3, Children under 12 free, free as well on First Saturdays and Wednesday evening	Tuesday - Sunday, 12 - 5 pm Wednesday, 12 - 8 pm Closed on Mondays	Y	16	5	120
Stony Point Battlefield	36,000	Fees charged for evening tours, lantern walks, special events, & programs.	Fees charged for evening tours, lantern walks, special events, & programs.	Mid-April to Oct. Wed.-Sun. 10-5, Sun. 12-5.	N	1	6	3
Trailside Nature Museum	20,000	No charge; \$4 parking fee, \$8 without parking permit	No charge	Winter: Tues.- Sun. 9-4; Summer: Mon.- Fri. 9-4	N	2	1	8
West Point Museum, West Point NY	215,000	No charge; donations accepted.	No charge; donations accepted.	Daily 10:30-4:15	N	14	2	6

Sources: *The 2015 Official Museum Directory and institutional websites*

Comparables Analysis

The analysis here is of existing prison museums, especially those associated with operational prisons that would offer the best comparability to the proposed SSPM. There are relatively few prison museums worldwide, and even fewer welcoming visitors in close proximity to an operating prison. The consultants have, therefore, expanded the research to include prison museums at non-operating prisons and related sites. In the Final Report, the consultants will do a deep dive into sites of conscience such as the National Civil Rights Museum. The comparables research offers benchmarks useful to the planning of and projections for attendance, operating revenues and expenses of the SSPM. It also offers advice from interviews regarding factors for success and mistakes to avoid.

Key findings and potential implications for SSPM are as follows:

- Operational Status as a Key Factor Affecting Attendance at Prison Museums:** The data indicate that the highest attended prison museums are those in which there is no longer an operational prison on site. This allows for authentic, full public access without any security fears. The highest attended prison museum associated with a functioning maximum security prison is the Angola Museum at Louisiana State Penitentiary, which reports 120,000 annual visitors, but this is based on free admission. The other prison museums associated with functioning prisons attract 10,000 and 35,000 annual visitors based on very low admission charges or do not count visitors, also implying relatively low attendance. Free or low-cost admission, limited-sized operations and relatively low attendance appear, at least in part, to be because these are prison museums associated with fully functioning prisons. In contrast, prison museums that are not associated with functioning prisons attract substantial numbers of visitors and are among the highest attended attractions in their cities, including 1.4 million annual visitors to Alcatraz Island. There is a fascination with former prisons that brings visitors to prison museums, but far less so if there are concerns about security or limited access to an authentic experience. *The data emphasize the importance of the 1825 Cell Block in helping to offer more authenticity and, thereby, helping to increase potential attendance levels. The data also indicates the need for caution with respect to potential attendance levels at the SSPM given that it will be associated with a functioning maximum security prison.*
- Location and Attendance:** Eastern State Penitentiary is located in the urban core of Philadelphia and, therefore, does not require additional travel from residents or out-of-town visitors. Similarly, Alcatraz is located in San Francisco, although it requires a boat ride that is considered a part of the experience. These two museums have large potential audiences in close proximity. Sing Sing is about 35 miles from New York City, an hour's drive from the urban center. Similarly, Angola is 50 miles from Baton Rouge and 130 miles from New Orleans, while Folsom Prison is 20 miles from Sacramento. This is considered a day or half-day trip for residents, schools and tourists, which accounts for some of the lower attendance to these institutions when compared to Eastern State Penitentiary and

Alcatraz Island. A similar pattern may be seen for the European prison museums associated with functioning prisons. *This is, therefore, part of the reason why prison museums associated with functioning prisons located outside of the urban core tend to attract fewer visitors.*

- **Security Issues and Attendance:** In the United States, the San Quentin Prison Museum and Angola Museum are the only two prison museums that are known to allow visitors inside the gates of an operating prison. At Angola, visits inside the walls of the prison require advance planning, but may include lunch in a prison cafeteria and a visit to the execution chamber. At San Quentin, operating hours and visitation are limited, but the public may attend without an appointment by simply stopping at the gate house on their way into the prison campus to request a visit to the museum. However, there are some rules: visitors must present government ID and they cannot wear denim or orange to avoid being mistaken for a prisoner. *The data confirm the reality of security issues associated with a functioning prison which further helps to explain lower attendance levels at such prison museums.*
- **Operating Schedule and Attendance:** The prison museums not associated with functioning prisons tend to be open daily, which is another factor explaining higher attendance. Among those associated with an operational prison, the free admission Angola Prison Museum is closed on Sundays while free admission San Quentin is closed on both weekend days. Only the modestly charging Folsom Prison is open daily with limited hours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. *The longer the operating schedule the higher the potential attendance, but also the higher the staffing and operating costs. These factors have been taken into account in the recommended operating schedule in Chapter 5.*
- **Admission Charges and Attendance:** Admission charges are important influencers of attendance. The highest admission charges are reported by prison museums that are not associated with functioning prisons. These include Alcatraz Island (\$33 for adults) and Eastern State Penitentiary (\$14 for adults). In contrast, the Angola Museum at Louisiana State Prison offers free admission, while the other U.S. examples are also free with the exception of the Folsom Prison Museum, which charges a nominal \$2 for adults with free admission to children, school groups, all law enforcement and military personnel. *The consultants have recommended a more substantial admission charge for the SSPM given the higher quality visitor experience assumed, but also have recommended free admission to some market segments as discussed in Chapter 5.*
- **Exhibits and Programming:** Most of the programs and exhibits in prison museums are focused on interpreting the history of the sites, from the collections of handmade weapons on display at both Folsom Prison and Angola Prison to the guided tours of sites like Alcatraz Island and Kilmainham Gaol in Dublin, Ireland. Two notable exceptions are Dartmoor Prison in the United Kingdom and Eastern State Penitentiary, *where exhibits and programs include discussions of present-day challenges in incarceration and rehabilitation.* The programming offered at existing prison museums has been taken into account in

preparation for the Interpretive/Visitor Experience Plan presented in Chapter 5 of this report.

- **Staffing and Volunteers:** Most of the existing prison museums rely heavily on volunteer staffing, such as the Folsom Prison Museum, which is run entirely by 7-10 volunteers. Even in cases where a prison museum's staff is paid, such as at the Angola Prison Museum, many positions are part-time and the overall staff is still small. Given the projected programming and operations needs at the SSPM, the staffing model of Eastern State Penitentiary – which has 37 full-time employees and several hundred part-time and seasonal employees over the course of each year – is closer to what will be necessary to have a professional museum operation at the SSPM. On the other hand, *controlling staffing costs will be necessary if the SSPM is to be sustainable.*
- **Operating Budgets and Revenue Sources:** Overall budgets and funding streams vary at prison museums of different sizes and scopes. Existing prison museums rely on a mix of funding sources including government, private support, grants and earned income from admissions and gift shop sales. *The SSPM will also require a combination of earned, private and governmental support.*
- **Factors for Success and Mistakes to Avoid:** In interviews with representatives from existing prison museums, most emphasized the need for the SSPM to connect with visitors on a deeply emotional and intellectual level to tell the human stories of incarceration in America, *to help visitors to engage with the issues being presented on a level that goes beyond the celebrity inmates and executions that may have initially brought them to the site and to create a meaningful experience that is one-of-a-kind so that visitors will become ambassadors for the SSPM to their friends and families.*

From a financial and operational standpoint, one of the biggest tips received was to *ensure that the board of directors for SSPM would support the mission and financial needs of the organization, and would work hard to cultivate the board intentionally in pursuit of that goal.*

The interview subjects also emphasized the strength of their partnerships with other organizations and with operating partners for support with concessions, transportation, maintenance and other operations. The Angola Prison Museum even works with the prison itself to run tours of the facility and staff the café with prisoners who serve as chefs as part of a re-entry program. In addition to partnering on operational issues, several individuals called out the importance of partnerships with local organizations to develop programming and leverage shared audiences. *The SSPM will be part of a network of sites in the Hudson River Valley that will be able to draw more tourists to the region overall by harnessing their shared resources in pursuit of a common goal.*

MUSEUMS AT OPERATING PRISONS

Museum / Location	Year Museum Opened	Admission Charges	Reported Visitors Annually	Operating Schedule	Staffing	Budget & Funding Notes	Types of Programming
Angola Museum, Louisiana State Penitentiary (Maximum Security); Angola, Louisiana (50 miles to Baton Rouge)	1997	No charge	120,000	Mon-Fri, 8:00-4:30; Sat, 10:00-4:00	1 Full-Time Staffperson, 6 Part-Time Staff, 1 Full-Time Volunteer, 1 Part-Time Volunteer	\$300,000 annual merchandise revenue; Other funding comes from money received from outside tour operators (they do not charge for their own tours) and grants.	<p>Programming includes tours and symposia on various topics (e.g. an upcoming event on prison music). Exhibits include the history of the prison, information on homemade contraband items, prison staff, movies made at the prison, and more. There is a cafe at the museum and a gift shop, too.</p> <p>Tours can also be arranged through the Prison: A regular tour consists of a visit to the museum, the historic Red Hat, a cellblock or dormitory at Camp F, lunch at Camp F (provided this request was made in advance and group arrives before 11:00 a.m.), and the lethal injection table. Offender speaker(s) are also available for a Q&A session with approved groups. The prison also hosts a popular rodeo.</p> <p>Historic Research Center Opening 2016.</p>
Retired Correctional Peace Officers Museum At Folsom State Prison, Folsom State Prison (Minimum-Medium Security); Represa, California (20 miles to Sacramento)	1975	Adults: \$2; School groups, law enforcement, and military; No charge	10,000	Daily, 10-4	7-10, All part-time volunteers	All operating funds come from sales in gift shop; no other support.	None. Exhibits include photographs, old hemp ropes used to hang prisoners, memorabilia from Johnny Cash's famed concert, a hand-cranked Gatling gun, inmate-made weapons, and an eight-foot motorized Ferris Wheel made from a quarter million toothpicks by a prisoner in the 1930s. Gift shop sells souvenirs (hats, books, photos, etc.)
San Quentin Prison Museum, San Quentin State Prison (Minimum-Maximum Security); San Quentin, California (12 miles to San Francisco)	1994	No charge	No records	Museum: Tues/Thurs, 10-4; Hobby Shop: Mon-Fri 7-8 am, 2-3 pm	1 volunteer		None. Exhibits of prison ephemera, weapons, historical photos, objects from past prisoners. Hobby shop on-site sells goods made by prisoners.

Museum / Location	Year Museum Opened	Admission Charges	Reported Visitors Annually	Operating Schedule	Staffing	Budget & Funding Notes	Types of Programming
The Bautzen Memorial, Bautzen Correctional Institution (Short-Term, Pre-Trial Housing); Bautzen, Germany (30 miles to Dresden)	1993	No charge	No records	Mon-Thurs: 10-4; Fri: 10-8; Saturday, Sunday: 10-6			Currently serves as a memorial to those who did time in either Bautzen I or Bautzen II throughout the 20th century. Tours of Bautzen II, which serves as a memorial and a museum about the different periods of history when the prison was open. Unclear if there is any secondary constructed memorial or if the building itself serves as a memorial. There are exhibits on the site that interpret multiple eras in the institutions' histories.
Dartmoor Prison Museum, Dartmoor Prison (Low-Medium Security - Category C); Princetown, Devon, UK (15 miles to Plymouth)	1996	Adults: £3.50, Children: £2.50, Family Ticket (2 adults and up to 3 children): £11.00, Groups over 10 people: £2.50 per person (\$5 USD, \$3.50 USD, \$15.50 USD, and \$3.50 USD, respectively)	35,000	Mon-Thurs, Sat: 9:30-12:30, 1:30-4:30; Friday & Sunday: 9:30-12:30, 1:30-4:00			Exhibits include prison uniforms, weapons and memorabilia, and the history of famous prisoners and escapes. There are also displays and information on less well known aspects of the prison such as the incarceration of conscientious objectors during world war one. A shop sells souvenirs and objects made by prisoners. Present-day practices of imprisoning people are juxtaposed with the methods of the past: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dartmoor today means brutal punishments have been abolished. The prison now holds low category prisoners who are encouraged to: • Undertake training programs to help them on their release • Meet with skilled advisors hold discussion sessions to make them aware of how unacceptable their crimes are • Eat in their cells • Live in single cell occupancy/accommodations • Shower and use telephone communication with their families freely

MUSEUMS AT NON-OPERATING PRISONS

Museum / Location	Year Museum Opened	Admission Charges	Reported Visitors Annually	Operating Schedule	Staffing	Budget & Funding Notes	Types of Programming
Alcatraz Island, Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary; San Francisco, California	1973	Adults (12+): \$33; Children: \$20.50; Seniors (62+): 31.25; 4 and under: Free	1,400,000	Daily, 9:00-4:30 in fall, winter, and spring; 9:00-6:30 in summer	NPS: Interpretive Staff: 12 full-time, 2 interns; On any given day there are 100-125 people working on/in proximity to the Island between NPS, the Golden Gate Parks Conservancy, Alcatraz Cruises, and other partners.	NPS funding comes from government; The rest of their support comes from partner organizations and friends groups.	Operated by National Park Service. Offers picnic area, interpretive programs, guided, evening and audio tours, and historic exhibitions story of the occupation by Indians of All Tribes (1969-1971). Their audio tour features voices of Alcatraz inmates and correctional officers. Rangers do orientation, staff industry building, and run programs. They're starting a new paid interpretive program, but are still figuring out the details. Their park conservancy also provides some staffing and support. They also have natural resources staff to support the gardens and bird colony.
Eastern State Penitentiary, Eastern State Penitentiary; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	1994	Adults \$14, senior citizens \$12, students & children 8-17 \$10	190,000	Daily, 10-5	37 full-time, 341 seasonal part-time, 122 part-time volunteers	Budgeted Expenses: \$6,065,794. Revenue Sources: 31% earned, 67% private, 2% government (state and local), No endowment. Major fall fundraiser and another smaller spring event represent the bulk (64%) of the private contributed revenue.	All daytime programming ("The Voices of Eastern State" Audio Tour, Hands-On History, artist installations, and history exhibits) is included in one admission price. Offers an annual haunted house titled "Terror Behind the Walls". They recently opened an exhibit about incarceration in America today, and have employed four formerly incarcerated people to act as tour guides.
Kilmainham Gaol, Kilmainham Gaol; Dublin, Ireland	1966	Adult e8; Senior e6; Child/Student e4; Family e16 (\$9 USD, \$6.75 USD, \$4.50 USD, \$18 USD, respectively)	326,635	June-September: 8:45 am - 7:00 pm; October-May: 9:30 am - 5:30 pm	8 Full Time; 31 Part Time Seasonal; 0 Volunteers	Kilmainham Gaol is a listed National Monument owned by the Irish government and governed by the Office of Public Works (OPW). It is managed by the National Monument Service which maintains and preserves over 780 national monuments throughout the country. Kilmainham Gaol is an oddity within the family of National Monuments in Ireland as its the only building that makes a profit after maintenance bills/staff salaries are paid.	Access by guided tour only. Kilmainham Gaol is one of the largest unoccupied gaols in Europe, covering some of the most heroic and tragic events in Ireland's emergence as a modern nation from 1780s to the 1920s. Attractions include a major exhibition detailing the political and penal history of the prison and its restoration. The tour of the prison includes an audio-visual show. Tours may be arranged for visitors with special needs by prior arrangement. They also hold events to commemorate anniversaries related to the prison.

Museum / Location	Year Museum Opened	Admission Charges	Reported Visitors Annually	Operating Schedule	Staffing	Budget & Funding Notes	Types of Programming
Constitution Hill, Constitution Hill; Johannesburg, South Africa	1995	Adults: R30 (About 2 USD)	127,939	Monday to Friday 9am-5p, (last tour at 4pm) Wednesdays - Last tour departs at 1:00pm Saturdays, Sundays & Public Holidays 10am-3pm			These areas host gripping exhibitions with themes that reveal South Africa's rich heritage and advocate human rights. Furthermore, Constitution Hill is an imperative platform for Heritage, Education, and Tourism related programs. The site hosted 20 exhibitions in 2014/15. These were developed in collaboration with creative workers and thus had an impact on temporary job creation. In addition, the site attracted musicians, poets, storytellers, drummers, and others to perform at various activities. The site hosted 63 public programs and 83 educational programs closely aligned to the history of South Africa and constitutional education.

DARK TOURISM AND SITES OF CONSCIENCE

Institution	Reported Attendance (rounded)	Admission Charge (Adults)	Admission Charge (Children/Students/Seniors)	Operating Schedule	Evening Openings after 6pm? Y/N	Full-Time Staff	Part-Time Staff	Volunteers
The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza, Dallas, TX	385,000	\$16	Children (0-5) (with audio guide): \$4 Children (0-5) (without audio guide): FREE Youth (6-18): \$13 Senior: \$14	10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday; 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Mondays	N	44	6	55
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC	1,700,000	FREE; from March through August, timed passes are required to enter the Permanent Exhibition. No passes are required for any other Museum exhibitions.	FREE; From March through August, timed passes are required to enter the Permanent Exhibition. No passes are required for any other Museum exhibitions.	Daily from 10 am-5:20 pm, excluding Yom Kippur & Christmas Day.	N	422		350
National September 11 Memorial & Museum, New York, NY	1,820,000	\$24; tours and memorial access additional	U.S. College Students, Seniors, Veterans: \$18; Youth (7-17): \$15 Members: FREE	Open Daily Sun - Thu, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m., last entry at 6 p.m. Fri and Sat, 9 a.m. - 9 p.m., last entry at 7 p.m.	Y	14	1	436
Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, Oklahoma City, OK	389,246	\$15	Seniors, Military, Students(6-17 ro college ID): \$12 Children: FREE	Monday - Saturday, 9am - 6pm Sunday, 12pm - 6pm	N	22	3	65

Sources: *The 2016 Official Museum Directory and institutional websites*

MARKET ANALYSIS

From its very early days, Sing Sing was the destination not only of penologists but the curious general public who came in such numbers that they became a long term intrusion in the daily life of the prison.

-Roger Panetta, Ph.D

When considering potential audiences for the proposed Sing Sing Prison Museum (SSPM), there are many opportunities and challenges. This chapter considers available data and estimates or opinions regarding the size and profiles of potential resident, school and tourist markets for the SSPM. There is also separate consideration of persons who visit prisoners and those who work there as an internal Sing Sing Correctional Facility market segment. These analyses help to lead to the planning principles and recommendations outlined in Chapter 5 that will influence the attendance and financial projections in the second phase of this study.

Potential Resident Markets

The resident market is very important to all museums in the following ways:

- The resident market is readily accessible and available on a year-round basis.
- Residents are most easily and economically made aware of a new museum.
- Residents are most likely to be repeat visitors.
- Residents are most likely to become volunteers, members and donors.
- Residents often suggest museums and other attractions to their visiting friends and relatives, and often accompany them to attend.

In order to analyze the potential resident market for the SSPM, the consultants have drawn inferences from various museum demand indicators and their judgment and experience in the

field. The key indicators of potential resident market demand are the size and projected growth of the population base and various other demographic and socioeconomic indicators.



Sing Sing Prison Museum Community Engagement – Photo by Lord Cultural Resources

POPULATION SIZE AND PROJECTIONS

The table below illustrates population levels and projections for residents:

- Within a 10-mile radius of Sing Sing Correctional Facility.
- Within a 20-mile radius of Sing Sing Correctional Facility.
- Within the Town of Ossining. (Although Ossining is a “village”, the census data refer to it as a town; accordingly, the “town” terminology has been used to capture the larger area the township represents.)
- Within Westchester County.

For context, the data are compared to regional, state and national averages in:

- The New York-Newark Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).
- New York State.
- USA

We have defined the primary resident market for the SSPM as those living within a 20-mile radius of the site, a substantial population in the range of 2.2 million persons. Those who live beyond a 20-mile radius of the SSPM within the very large New York-Newark MSA may be considered as either a secondary resident market or a day-trip tourist market. Some from farther afield within the MSA may also stay overnight, particularly if they combine their visit with other things to do. This is a *large potential market, but the market also has access to some of the best museums in the country in and near New York City. The fact that the closest prison museum is in Philadelphia is positive, but on the other hand, there are real market concerns associated with a maximum security prison.*

The population growth projections for the period from 2010 to 2030 also shown on the table indicate growth rates for Westchester County and the MSA that exceed the state average, but are substantially lower than the national average.

Resident Population	Actual		Projected		% Change Actual	% Change Projected
	2000	2010	2020	2030	2000-2010	2010-2030
10 Mile Radius	418,456	435,730	N/A	N/A	4.0%	N/A
20 Mile Radius	2,094,330	2,165,916	N/A	N/A	3.3%	N/A
Ossining Town	36,534	37,674	N/A	N/A	3.0%	N/A
Westchester County	923,459	949,113	998,040	1,039,400	2.7%	8.7%
New York-Newark MSA	18,980,010	19,590,940	20,646,380	21,597,360	3.1%	9.3%
State of New York	18,976,457	19,229,752	19,697,021	19,794,733	1.3%	2.9%
USA	282,162,410	309,330,220	340,554,350	373,751,030	8.8%	17.2%

Sources: Policy Map, 2010 US Census, 2014 MSA Profile, Woods & Poole Economics and Cornell University Projection Demographics

AGE

Interviews confirmed that a prison museum in the context of a maximum security prison is likely to be challenged to attract families with younger children. The market is likely to skew older visitors. The two tables below indicate that the local resident market is substantially older than for the MSA and national averages, and it includes a higher percentage of seniors. With the aging of the large baby boom generation, there will continue to be a growth of seniors as a percentage of the population in the next two decades. This is positive for the SSPM, but it is also the case that many museum visits are motivated by what adults believe will interest their children or grandchildren. Moreover, there are mobility issues among some seniors that will need to be considered in the design of the facility. *The data suggest caution regarding the potential attendance at the SSPM.*

Key Age Distribution, 2010	Ossining Town %	Westchester County %	New York State %	New York-Newark MSA %	USA %
0-19 years	24.2%	26.5%	25.7%	25.4%	26.9%
20 - 24 years	5.7%	5.6%	7.1%	6.8%	7.0%
25 - 44 years	28.9%	25.3%	27.7%	28.2%	27.1%
45 - 64	27.9%	27.8%	26.1%	26.5%	26.0%
65 +	13.3%	14.6%	13.2%	13.1%	13.0%
Median Age	39.3	40.0	38.1	37.7	37.2

Source: 2014 American Community Survey and Woods and Poole Economics, 2014

Key Age Distribution, 2010	10 Mile Radius	20 Mile Radius
Under 5	5.71%	5.89%
Under 18	23.67%	23.49%
18-64	61.60%	61.34%
65 +	14.73%	15.17%
Median Age	N/A	N/A

Source: Policy Map

GENDER

Women account for slightly more than half of the overall population, but traditionally represent a disproportionately high percentage of visitors in most types of museums for the following main reasons:

- Women tend to make the decisions in a household regarding educational experiences for their children; therefore, the greater the perceived educational benefit of the SSPM, the more likely it will be selected.
- Women account for a large majority of elementary school and secondary teachers who usually make the decisions regarding field trip destinations.
- Women tend to make the decisions regarding attractions to visit while on family vacations and account for a large majority of tour group passengers and trip planners.

Key issues often cited by women in selecting attractions to visit include ease of access from parking and the perceived safety of the area, including the distance from the parking to the attraction. *These factors raise concerns about whether women might be less likely to attend the SSPM because of the proximity to a maximum security prison.*

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Numerous studies have shown that of the various socioeconomic characteristics, level of education is the variable with the closest correlation to museum attendance and participation. The higher the level of education of an individual, the more likely it will be that this person will attend or participate. Focusing on residents aged 25 or older with at least a bachelor's degree, the table below indicates that *educational attainment levels within Westchester County are much higher than the levels of the MSA, New York State and especially national averages. This is positive for museums in general and potentially for the SSPM.*

Educational Attainment, 2010 (residents age 25+)	% of Residents with BA or Higher	% of Residents with Less than High School Education
10 Mile Radius	N/A	N/A
20 Mile Radius	N/A	N/A
Ossining Town	46.0%	17.7%
Westchester County	44.5%	12.6%
New York- Newark MSA	35.0%	16.0%
New York State	33.7%	14.7%
United States	27.5%	15.4%

Source: 2010 American Community Survey, Woods and Poole Economics, 2014

INCOME

Like education, household income is an important indicator of potential museum attendance, but is not as significant an indicator as education. That is, highly educated, low-income persons are more likely to attend than less educated, high-income persons. Income levels are, nonetheless, very important since the SSPM will charge admission.

The data indicate median per capita income levels for Westchester County that are lower than those of the overall New York-Newark MSA, but substantially higher than the state and national averages. Household income levels also substantially exceed the state and national averages. Conversely, Westchester County has a lower percentage of persons living in poverty. *Thus, the income indicators are generally positive.*

Income Levels, 2010	Per Capita Income	Median Household Income	% Living in Poverty
10 Mile Radius	N/A	N/A	N/A
20 Mile Radius	N/A	\$84,615	N/A
Ossining Town	\$43,721	\$85,749	12.3%
Westchester County	\$47,814	\$79,619	8.2%
New York- Newark MSA	\$54,120	N/A	N/A
New York State	\$30,948	\$55,603	14.2%
United States	\$27,319	\$51,371	15.9%

Source: US Census 2010, 2010 American Community Survey, Woods and Poole Economics, 2014

COMPARATIVE RACE AND ETHNICITY

The table below indicates a diverse resident market with substantial percentages of Hispanic residents that exceeds the state and national averages and is continuing to grow. The African American and Asian populations are substantial as well.

Ethnicity, 2010	White	Black	Asian	American Indian	Other	Hispanic	Foreign Born
10 Mile Radius	68.6%	12.0%	6.5%	0.5%	9.5%	21.7%	23.0%
20 Mile Radius	69.2%	10.4%	9.7%	0.3%	7.8%	19.6%	26.7%
Ossining Town	69.5%	10.2%	5.2%	0.7%	12.4%	28.6%	28.3%
Westchester County	68.1%	14.6%	5.4%	0.4%	8.3%	21.8%	24.3%
New York- Newark MSA	50.3%	16.5%	10.2%	0.2%	N/A	22.7%	N/A
New York State	65.1%	15.9%	7.3%	0.6%	7.4%	17.6%	22.3%
United States	76.3%	13.7%	5.8%	2.1%	5.2%	16.0%	12.9%

Source: Policy Map, 2010 US Census, Woods and Poole Economics, 2014

As cited in the experience of Eastern State Penitentiary, the racial disparities in the U.S. criminal justice system reduce the number of minorities, particularly African Americans and Hispanics, who may normally be interested in visiting the SSPM. For example, reports have cited that one in three black males will go to prison in their lifetime.² These audiences may feel that the subject is too close to their reality—because of personal connections to people in the criminal justice system or general fear that their family member may be touched by this system—and, therefore, may not be interested in visiting a museum on the subject. These audiences will need to be attracted through programs at the education center.

²"Addressing Racial Disparities in Incarceration" by Marc Mauer, *The Prison Journal Supplement* to 91(3) 87S-101S, 2011 SAGE Publications

Potential School Markets

Educators interviewed expressed that grade six would be the lowest grade in which a field trip to the SSPM would be seen as appropriate by teachers and principals. The challenge for the SSPM is that the large majority of field trips take place at the elementary level. This will serve to limit attendance levels.

This section also considers other issues that will affect the potential school market for the SSPM. This includes consideration of enrollment levels, curriculum links, issues associated with student enjoyment, proximity, access and cost, and their potential implications to the SSPM.

ENROLLMENT LEVELS

Most school field trips occur within a single day and students are transported on the same school buses that pick up and transport students at the beginning and end of the school day. Thus, the window of opportunity when these buses are available is quite limited. This window is affected by distance and the round-trip travel time between the school and the SSPM. *Accordingly, schools most likely to attend the SSPM are from within a driving distance considered reasonable. We have assumed this would be within the resident 20-mile radius. However, the uniqueness of the SSPM in the regional marketplace means that there are likely to be specialized classes or independent students who are conducting research and, thus, are willing to travel from farther afield.*

Two tables follow. The first indicates the percentage of students enrolled in schools, whether public or private, in the Town of Ossining, Westchester County and New York State, and also older persons attending colleges or universities. The second table indicates the percentage of students in each age category, confirming the peak level is elementary, but also there is substantial enrollment in college and/or graduate schools. The data show a greater level of enrollment in Westchester County relative to the state.

School Enrollment Levels	Ossining Town	Westchester County	New York State
Population 3+ years enrolled	9,436	255,359	5,056,560
3 and 4 years	57.1%	67.6%	57.8%
5 to 9 years	97.6%	97.9%	96.7%
10 to 14 years	98.8%	98.6%	98.3%
15 to 17 years	96.8%	96.7%	96.1%
18 and 19 years	74.5%	82.2%	79.0%
20 to 24 years	50.3%	47.7%	45.5%
25 to 34 years	7.6%	11.7%	12.7%
35 years and over	2.1%	2.4%	2.5%

Source: 2010 American Community Survey

School Enrollment Levels	Ossining Town	Westchester County	New York State	USA
Population 3+ years enrolled	9,436	255,359	5,056,560	82,291,141
Nursery School (less than 5 years)	6.2%	6.9%	5.9%	6.1%
Kindergarten (5-6 years)	5.7%	5.0%	4.6%	5.1%
Elementary/Middle School (7-14 years)	42.3%	40.0%	38.4%	39.6%
High School (14-18 years)	20.9%	21.9%	21.9%	20.5%
College or Graduate School (18+ years)	24.9%	26.2%	29.2%	28.8%

Source: 2010 American Community Survey

CURRICULUM LINKS

Whether for a field trip or an in-school lesson, programs for schools are most successful when they demonstrate clear links to established curricula and address state and local standards. Through programs like the New York City Public Schools Criminal Justice program—over 90 schools participate in the program—there are clear linkages to the SSPM.

Educators interviewed referred to the history of the Hudson River as part of social studies curricula in grades 10 through 12, particularly for local schools. They also expressed a desire for the SSPM to address contemporary issues relating to courses in Grade 11 and 12 on classism, racism and sexism. Education staff of the SSPM will need to identify opportunities to widen curriculum links associated with the New York social studies curriculum, which tends to be modified every few years. *The curriculum links for a prison museum are less clear and substantial for younger grades.*

At the middle school level, the social studies curriculum was believed to offer the best potential curriculum links, although limited relative to other museum types. On the other hand,

the educators were interested in the SSPM because of career opportunities in law enforcement and corrections.

Though field trips for high school students are rare, due to the authentic nature of the facility and the opportunity to both experience crime and punishment and engage in a dialogue in the iconic space, there are opportunities to connect with students in grades 10-12.

STUDENT ENRICHMENT THROUGH ENJOYMENT

Although curriculum links are the most important factor in field trip selection, there has been an increasing emphasis on selecting field trip destinations that are learning-based and age-appropriate in relation to the content and activities, thus offering students higher levels of learning enjoyment. This is rooted in the knowledge that children are more likely to learn if their experience is interesting and enjoyable. *Hands-on, interactive opportunities are assumed for the SSPM and this should help to increase the appeal to both students and teachers.*

High school students expressed an intense interest in every aspect of the SSPM. Therefore, programs for older students should focus on authenticity of experience.

FIELD TRIP DECISION-MAKING

There are no state or district-mandated field trips at any grade level in the region. Decisions regarding field trip selection tend to be made by the classroom teacher who seeks approval from the principal. A large majority of teachers are women and some may be less personally interested in attending a prison museum, particularly one close to a functioning maximum security prison. *It will be very important for educators working at the SSPM to develop and communicate to teachers the curriculum links and to seek to assure them that there are limited security concerns associated with attending field trips.* Interviews suggested that security concerns would diminish the closer the schools are to the Town of Ossining because many parents work in or support the operation of the prison.

PROXIMITY AND COST

Proximity and cost are important factors in field trip selection. As discussed above, schools most likely to attend are those with a travel time of less than an hour. This recognizes that the window of opportunity for school buses used for field trips that must also transport children to and from school each day is limited. Generally, it is between 9:30 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. However, there may be some schools willing to travel a longer distance because of the uniqueness of the SSPM and how it might relate to a particular unit of study.

The cost issue is also very important. This applies to both the cost of buses and the cost of admission. Local educators who were interviewed expressed that an admission charge for

school groups to the SSPM, if reasonable, would be acceptable, but noted there are often no funds allocated to field trips. Rather, there are discretionary funds that could be used for a variety of needs, including field trips. It is primarily parent teacher associations that raise funds for them. The Jacob Burns Center was cited as an institution that provides buses to the schools for free. *There would need to be sponsorship available for the SSPM to pay for school buses and to consider free admission for school groups*

Potential Tourist Markets

The familiarity with the Sing Sing brand should help to attract not only day trip and overnight tourists from the very large New York City-centered region, but also tourists to New York City who would add it to their things to do. Therefore, the visitor experience must not only be compelling enough, but also substantial enough to justify the travel time from and back to New York City. Collaboration with other attractions like Dia:Beacon, West Point, Kykuit and others along the Hudson River, as well as with Metro-North, will be important to create packaged opportunities to enhance the value of time and money spent. Metro-North would like to increase weekend ridership and has already been collaborating with attractions like the Hudson River Museum to offer 10-20% discount packages purchased online within the Metro-North system.

The Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area covers all or part of 11 counties, including Westchester County. The region reports 4 million annual visitors, of which 29% are on local day trips, 40% are on non-local day trips and 31% are on overnight trips.

The following available data help to profile tourism in Westchester County and to New York City.

TOURISM IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY

Westchester County's tourism industry is reported to rank third in New York State, after only New York City and Long Island, and it represents 52% of all visitor spending in the Hudson Valley region. Tourism and travel is a \$1.7 billion industry for the county, and was reported to be at record levels in 2014. Hotel occupancy rates increased to 70.3% compared to 69.4% in the previous year, and average room rate charges rose by 4% as well. *The implementation of the SSPM will add to the tourism infrastructure of the county.*

There is access to attractions in Westchester County by means of car, train and boat. Although there are periodic fall foliage cruises, there are currently no regular cruises on the Hudson River. However, implementation of the SSPM should help to increase the likelihood of their reintroduction, assuming a substantial and compelling visitor experience. An interview with Hornblower Cruises and Events, which operated the ferry service to both Alcatraz Island,

Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty, helps to provide insight into both the opportunities and constraints of a potential Hudson River cruise that would include the SSPM. Hornblower has expressed interest in offering such river tours.



Hudson River from Bear Mountain. Source: Flickr user danielmennerich

Main Opportunities:

- There may be an opportunity to develop a boat experience to include Sing Sing Correctional Facility on weekends and in the warmer weather months. There may also be opportunities for special event and fundraising cruises.

Main Constraints:

- There may be legal and business difficulties—with food service, ferry service to the site, etc.—associated with the proximity to an operating correctional facility.
- Alcatraz Island is a historic site while Sing Sing is more about current events. This could present a challenge in attracting visitors.
- The travel time would be substantial. It would take two hours by common 12-15 knot boats to get to Sing Sing and two hours to return. Would there be enough to entertain passengers on the way there and back? There would likely be a requirement for boats that can do 25 to 29 knots.

TOURISM IN HUDSON RIVER VALLEY HERITAGE AREA

The Economic Impact of National Heritage Areas (Tripp Umbach, 2013) indicates that the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area covers all or part of 11 counties, including Westchester County. The region reports 4 million annual visitors, of which 29% are local day trips, 40% are non-local day trips and 31% are overnight trips. Those on overnight trips are more likely to have time to visit the SSPM unless attending the museum is their primary motivation for being in the area.

Another concern for the area is that—compared to the more robust development of cultural tourism across the river in Dutchess County with institutions like Dia:Beacon—Westchester County is heavily populated with business travelers.

TOURISM IN NEW YORK CITY

The number of visitors to New York City continues to grow. It has increased every year since 2001 (35.2 million visitors in 2001 to 56.5 million visitors in 2014) with the exception of 2009 at the height of the recession. Domestic tourists accounted for 79% of all visitors with international tourists making up 21%. The top international markets for New York City are the United Kingdom and Canada, and are both more likely than the residents of other countries to be familiar with the Sing Sing brand, given the greater exposure to English language popular culture.

Passenger levels at the three New York City airports has increased by about 18% since 2005 and hotel occupancy rates are at an astounding 89.5%. The average domestic length of stay in New York City is 2.7 nights compared to 7.0 nights for international visitors. The greater the length of stay, the more likely that tourists will have time to travel outside the city.

Markets Specific to Sing Sing Correctional Facility

Although there is an existing SSPM, it is a very small gallery within the Ossining Community Center that was created in the 1990s along with a small gallery of the Old Croton Aqueduct. Neither have been changed since their opening. Moreover, the space is not staffed, admission is free and no attendance records are kept. The most impressive exhibit is the re-creation of two cells that, with the use of mirrors, makes it appear to be a long prison block. The establishment of a more substantial SSPM at the prison site would allow this space to be reused for other public purposes.

The Sing Sing Correctional Facility has about 2,000 incarcerated prisoners, 1,000 employees and 60,000 visitors per year. These are all potential markets for the SSPM.

Summary of Key Market Opportunities and Constraints

In summary, the opportunities and constraints that will need to be taken into account in consideration of potential attendance at the SSPM are as follows:

OPPORTUNITIES:

- The Town of Ossining is less than one hour from the very large New York MSA and therefore has access to large potential resident and tourist markets. This includes easy access by train and an increasing likelihood for access by boat.
- It is unique that there is no other prison museum in the region. The closest prison museum is in Philadelphia.
- Sing Sing Correctional Facility is historically part of the “New York Story”. Most of the formerly incarcerated persons at Sing Sing Correctional Facility were New York City-based. Indeed, at one time, reporters from New York City papers covered Sing Sing as part of their daily beat. Marketing the SSPM as a unique lens on the workings of New York City could attract tourists —particularly tourists who have visited New York City many times before —who are eager to see the city from a different and unique angle.
- The SSPM will be on an attractive site overlooking the Hudson River. The tourists and residents who are attracted to the urbanism of New York City may also crave the wide open spaces and scenic views of the Hudson as a respite from the density. The option of taking a cruise up the river to visit SSPM may be particularly appealing.
- The Sing Sing brand is well known within popular culture and there are famous (or infamous) formerly incarcerated people who have been associated with it.
- There is a built-in market of 60,000 persons per year who visit prisoners at Sing Sing Correctional Facility as well as those working in the prison and their families.
- There is the increasing strength of dark tourism. The Sixth Floor in Dallas, the Oklahoma City bombing site, the National September 11th Museum at the World Trade Center and Alcatraz Island are all examples of attractions that reflect dark periods in American history, yet are of very substantial visitor appeal. There is also a general public fascination associated with prisons.



Sing Sing Prison - by Flickr user mkwyman

CONSTRAINTS:

- Sing Sing Correctional Facility is a functioning maximum security prison. This limits access to the authentic experience that may be offered to visitors, and is in contrast to the full access of the no longer functioning prisons at Alcatraz Island and Eastern State Penitentiary. In addition, families with young children, elementary school groups and other potential markets may have concerns about attending a museum close to it, particularly if they do not already reside in the area.
- There are the inherent sensitivities of being located at an operating prison. The SSPM exhibitions and programs will need to be extraordinarily sensitive to the appearance of voyeurism as well as stay away from glamorizing or glorifying prisoners or prison life.
- Compared to the scale of what is offered to visitors at Alcatraz Island and Eastern State Penitentiary, the size of the 1936 Powerhouse is relatively small. There is also uncertainty about the availability of the 1825 Cell Block and a separate visitor center raises questions about the value of time spent travelling to and from Ossining for the SSPM.
- The SSPM will likely be a one-time visit for most people. Efforts to boost repeat visitation will require substantial investment in staffing and other resources to deliver programming. Such programming opportunities are most likely to be appealing to those who do not need to travel a long distance to the site.

KEY FINDINGS FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We wanted to tell the story of things like the electric chair, but we don't want it to be sensationalized. The best way to do that is probably to make it a human story.

-Ossining Community Participant

The Town of Ossining is a thriving community surrounding Sing Sing Correctional Facility. Many residents are affiliated with the prison whether through employment or family involvement. There are strong feelings on many aspects of the prison, including its economic, social and environmental impact on the town.

This chapter summarizes the key findings of a community engagement process intended to inform the planning of the long-proposed Sing Sing Prison Museum (SSPM). Community input was gained through a series of conversations with public officials, an evening public meeting with community residents and conversations with Ossining High School students. Finally, the chapter concludes with information compiled from a community survey designed to quantify the key findings.



Sing Sing Prison Museum Community Engagement

Photos by Lord Cultural Resources

In the following sections, key findings from opinion leader interviews, community workshops and focused conversations are presented in the shaded box. Each finding is followed by direct

quotes to illustrate the conclusions. To maintain anonymity, speakers are not identified. A listing of all community participants can be found in Appendix A: Acknowledgements. There are many more quotes supporting these findings; these are just a sampling. All detailed notes as well as full quotations can be found in Appendix B: Community Engagement Detail.

Engagement Methodology

There were several community workshops. They included meetings with:

- Friends of Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum
- Ossining School District
- Government and Regional Leaders
- Regional Tourism Organizations
- Area Business and Civic Organizations
- Regional Cultural Attractions/Institutions
- Volunteers working at Sing Sing Correctional Facility
- Participants and staff of the Hudson Link program



Sing Sing Prison Museum Community Engagement – Photos by Lord Cultural Resources

The objective of the workshops was to listen to the voices of some of those closest to Sing Sing Correctional Facility in a variety of ways. Whether having worked at the prison or having known someone who has been incarcerated, the input shared ultimately included feedback from those doing work with incarcerated populations and those with a historical or social connection to the prison or prison culture. According to the community participants, prison art, policy reform and educational opportunities inside and outside the walls of the prison were all important discussion topics and thought worthy of addressing at the SSPM site in the future.

Workshops included a presentation from scholar Dr. Lee Bernstein, a history professor at the State University of New York at New Paltz, about the history of the Sing Sing Correctional Facility, its connection to the Hudson Valley area and how the prison has changed over time. To lend additional context and relatability, Dr. Bernstein shared the history of the prison as represented in popular culture, such as in films and books, and in high-profile news stories regarding famous (or infamous) formerly incarcerated persons.

With an objective to receive feedback, community participants were led into conversation with the following questions:

1. What are the stories that must be told?
2. How do you see the museum addressing difficult subjects?
3. What will get you to visit the museum?

Table discussions were far-reaching and touched many important issues and opportunities for the SSPM to address. This section shares the key findings from those conversations.



Sing Sing Prison Museum Community Engagement - Photos by Lord Cultural Resources

Key Findings

What did community participants have to say? The following key findings emerged from the workshops, interviews and classroom visits. They are supported by direct statements from the participants and represent multiple voices from multiple meetings.

- A. **Humanize workers and inmates.** Participants wanted to put a human face on *the system*—prisoners, correction officers and wardens. This can be done through stories and historical objects used in programming and exhibitions at the SSPM.

- B. **Communicate the national and international significance of Sing Sing.** Community members want to know the rich and varied history of Sing Sing Correctional Facility, and the evolution of how things have changed at the prison and in the area over time.
- C. **Tell a balanced story by presenting multiple stories in multiple perspectives.** Ossining residents indicated that the SSPM should present exhibits that would allow them to get to know prisoners and correction officers. Participants felt that the SSPM should present content and exhibitions that are accessible for everyone.
- D. **Address difficult subjects.** Participants felt that the SSPM must provide a place to address controversial and difficult topics such as mass incarceration and the effect of politics on crime and punishment.
- E. **Be a conduit for economic development and revitalization along the Hudson River.** With all the benefits of the area, residents felt that Ossining has great potential to revitalize the waterfront by means of local economic development and, in turn, create more opportunities for collaboration of local businesses, new developments and the SSPM.

Key Findings Explored

A. HUMANIZE WORKERS AND INMATES

Participants wanted to put a human face on *the system*—prisoners, correction officers and wardens. Participants, especially students, were intensely interested in the daily life of the prison.

It is important to community members to acknowledge that the individuals at Sing Sing, prison staff, prisoners and families, are people and to provide opportunities to form personal connections. *These personal connections can be made through the stories, performances and objects on display in the museum as well as by including current and former correction officers and formerly incarcerated people as a part of museum programming.*

It would be interesting to interview some of the people in town [of Ossining] who were inside and outside the prison, so you get a feeling for the people and not just the institution.

There is an opportunity for the public to connect with inmates on a human level through art and performance.

This idea that once you're in the prison, you're done. If this museum could change the perception, it would be great. That's what deToqueville found: that this society is so harsh, its almost impossible to go back. The museum could be a part of breaking the concept/belief that once you go to prison, you're worthless.

We wanted to tell the story of things like the electric chair, but we don't want it to be sensationalized. The best way to do that is probably to make it a human story...maybe one way to do that is to create a space for artists to come in and interpret the issues, and to display art created by inmates.



Sing Sing Prison Museum Community Engagement – Photos by Lord Cultural Resources

Generally, I would value a prison museum that takes a humanist approach to its subject, showing empathy for both prisoners and prison officials, eschewing salaciousness in favor of an informative, narrative and complex representation of the prison's history, challenge us to ponder not only the past, but the present, while revealing how they are connected.

I understand the concern about making [prisoners] feel like zoo animals, but why would we go to the prison if we weren't going to really see their lives? If we're going to talk about the things that happen in Sing Sing...and treat them like human beings, then it would be okay.

You're in prison – the last thing you want to hear about would be people coming to look at you like a monkey in a zoo.

I'd like to meet some of the prisoners, I don't know if that would be possible. I'm thinking about getting into law, so I want to know how the people work there control the prisoners, and how many people have escaped.

There are 20-40 inmates who have outside passes every day. You could utilize them in the museum.

I want to know how they go about their day: the kitchens, the bathrooms. What do they do every day?

It would be cool to see people's last meals; what they ate, how they chose it, how it was presented to them.

I want to sit in the [electric] chair and go through the process of being strapped in so I could understand it.

B. COMMUNICATE THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SING SING

Sing Sing has a long history for being both a positive and a negative model for other correctional facilities across the globe. Many of the participants said that they wanted to see the evolution of Sing Sing and its impact across the nation and globe as well as highlight facts that might not otherwise be popular or well-known to the general public.

Many were interested in the progression of the prison and what has changed over time. The depth and breadth of the programming and exhibitions at the SSPM should address the many phases that Sing Sing Correctional Facility has endured.

We want to tell the evolution of Sing Sing and how things have changed, and to tell how society has changed and how our decisions about who to imprison have changed. The conflict between the free labor and the economy around the prison is important, as well as the national story.

We talked about the docents of the future – maybe they come from people who worked at the Prison, or maybe from former inmates. It's very important to tell the story of the officers at the Prison – what was a day in their life like?

We wanted to talk about how people in the prison gave back – what they made, the baseball team, and other things like that.



Sing Sing Prison Museum Community Engagement – Photo by Lord Cultural Resources

The state and other municipalities currently buy things from the prisoners. The policy would have to change, but we could have a gift shop where items made by prisoners were sold.³

We would love to see the women's prison discussed.

³ NOTE: Current NYS law prohibits the sale of prisoner-made goods to private industry.

The prison is notorious – it has a famous history, and its name has turned into this notorious, gloomy thing.

I'd like to hear about what was happening in the '70s and '80s, to show how things changed over time.

It'd be interesting to hear about the demographics of who was in Sing Sing and how that changed over time.

It would also tell you about what was criminalized and how that changed over time. It would be good to understand what was happening in different communities in different times, because our notion of what's right and wrong changes over time.

The connectivity to New York City and the families are important stories to tell – how does the prison being so close to New York City make people better? Is it an advantage?



Sing Sing Prison Museum Community Engagement - Photos by Lord Cultural Resources

C. TELL A BALANCED STORY BY PRESENTING MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES IN MULTIPLE FORMATS

Balancing the Hollywood lore with the seriousness of the issues of crime and punishment in the United States and the world was very important to community participants.

It was also important to participants that the SSPM visitors will be able to view factual accounts of what has happened inside the prison and the influence of politics, media and popular culture on the legal system and prison life. This could be approached through incorporating the arts, technology and other avenues of communication into all aspects of the **SSPM's** creation to provide a complete visitor experience.

We want to balance some of the stuff from Hollywood with what really happened.

In theater, a lot of the critical, difficult issues could be addressed through performance or debate. We could have alumni of RTA [Rehabilitation Through The Arts] perform, or have a live feed of current participants performing.

The museum should cover all sides of the issue of criminal justice.

The culture of media influence on society, including Babe Ruth and baseball and visitors – how were popular culture and Sing Sing intimately connected?

You hear so many stories of Old Sparky and just that, nothing beyond. Sing Sing is more than just the electric chair.

If you can, through programming and exhibits, give a reality check about what the prison experience is like, then that's a success.

Changing exhibits will help bring people back – and that could mean anything from all the movies made there, the famous people who have visited, and so on.

I'd like to see a lot of artifacts and cool things connected to Sing Sing, like a recreation of the old cells and the new cells and how they've changed over time.

I'm very into the interactive kind of thing, so if you were to do something where you could 'shoot some hoops' in the old gym with some prisoners or something.

To help keep the electric chair from being too lighthearted, you could have a piece of limestone with the names of all the people who were executed in it.

*I want to know what movies were filmed in the Prison.
I think an interesting thing for the museum to discuss would be the limestone and how the prisoners had to quarry it.*

We live in a digital world, and I think the process of construction and development can happen online. We can do programming; we can put this information out there in bits. We could even have a StoryCorps kind of thing where people could tell their stories online. This is a historical museum, but we have to operate in today's world, and that includes an online presence.



Sing Sing Prison Museum Community Engagement - Photos by Lord Cultural Resources

D. ADDRESS DIFFICULT SUBJECTS AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Many community members were keen on being clear and not avoiding controversial issues. Participants felt strongly that these current events and issues—such as mass incarceration and prison policy, and the way they are affected by the political climate—must be addressed at the SSPM in the content and exhibitions to tell a more holistic story.

It's very important to tell a well-rounded, holistic story as well as you can, and to keep it non-political, so people can make up their own minds. That particularly relates to the death penalty, but also all difficult issues.

If we engage with these issues, it will make the place dynamic. Who cares who got electrocuted or incarcerated? Why don't we use that name to make a laboratory to change the world? Ossining could be a microcosm where you start. Ossining is a small yet urban municipality that has all the traditional challenges as an urban municipality. It has a minority community that struggles. It has a challenged school system. You can start locally and grow it organically.

For me, it depends on the content. If the content isn't telling the story - it's important to tell the history, but if we're not dealing with current issues around mass incarceration and prisons, then I'm not going to come. We need to tell a story that is fair to the people who work there, the victims, and the inmates. As an Ossining resident, it's important to me that this be a space where we can talk about all types of current issues.

The educational initiatives inside the prison are so important, including the current challenges of educating and training an aging population in the prison.

Current politics always have an impact on the prison population - in terms of the numbers of prisoners and how they're treated. So, we'd have to discuss them.

Why punish? How do humans punish other humans? We have to tell stories of redemption and the different attitudes toward redemption. We have to tell people that this is a national story and that the United States has specific ways of punishing people.

We have some pretty smart people in the community and resources in the community, and we can bring those forces together to create the museum and correct a social injustice, simultaneously. You don't get so many opportunities in life to create a mission like that.

E. BE A CONDUIT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION ALONG THE HUDSON RIVER

Many participants had positive things to say about the Ossining area: its beauty and picturesque setting, the diversity of the people who live there, the good food offered in the area, the rich history of the Hudson River and the proximity of the area to New York City.

Participants also had ideas about how to ease parking woes and traffic issues. These ideas and benefits for revitalization of the area can translate well into programming at the SSPM, the marketing and buzz to create loyal audiences for the museum and the continued building of both businesses and talent to develop the waterfront in the area.

I like living next to the River.

For people to come – and come again! It needs to be integrated into the tourism of the region and of Ossining – how can we develop overnight stays and river cruises, for example?

Is there space onsite that can be commercialized? There are lots of entrepreneurs who are interested in creating new opportunities. Can we create a mini business campus at Sing Sing? You're on the river, it's gorgeous. Is there a private partner who might be willing to take a building and fix it up to use it?

We got excited about the project because you can't ignore the numbers from Alcatraz and ESP. The fact that there's a prison sitting in this town signals that it could be a great revenue stream for Ossining and for the County.

When you think about the metropolis of New York City, and the ferry system, and the train system – if you strike an arrangement with one of those ferry systems, you've got people coming right to our door.

At the end of the day, we're talking about economics, and a revitalization of our school system in terms of talent.

More and more cultural institutions are leaning toward economic development purposes, and that's part of what you're doing here. We've had long and serious conversations about how to get cultural organizations involved with the smart growth and talent growth process.

[We] will need to align with the Regional Economic Development Council's Strategic Plan for the Mid-Hudson Region that's currently in effect.

The museum could potentially mean something positive [for] Ossining and the economic development realm; The vision is of many positive economic development consequences for the Town and surrounding region, with a spillover effect on the community. [For example, creating] new business, restaurants – places to stay.

Summary of Community Survey



The community engagement survey sought the thoughts and perspective of community members around the creation of the SSPM. Like the website, the survey presented an opportunity to extend community engagement beyond those participating in the community workshops, interviews and school visits. Over 150 Ossining residents were surveyed and the majority of the respondents were older. 75% were over

the age of 45 and 90% were white non-Hispanic. Male and female respondents were about equally represented at 50% and 48% respectively, and over 50% were highly educated with graduate degrees.

The following key findings from the survey that have implications for the project include:

- Survey respondents can be characterized as those who are highly involved with the subject matter. Almost half of respondents, 47%, have been to another prison museum — mostly Eastern State Penitentiary and Alcatraz Island.
- 88% of participants said they would visit a prison museum.
- Over 80% of respondents said they had no security concerns with a museum in an operating prison.
- An overwhelming majority of participants would get to the SSPM by car.

Overall, responses were varied: some were positive and affirmed the idea that people at least want to see *something* at a prison museum; some were unapprehensive about the idea of addressing the difficult subject matter that might be on display and did not have security concerns about a museum in an operating prison; and others were not keen on the idea of a prison museum and felt uncomfortable about how prisoners and staff might be treated in the process.

It should be noted that the majority of respondents were local to the Ossining area and had also visited other prison museums in the country or internationally. Traditionally, respondents with matching demographics are seen as most likely to attend museums, but the museum landscape is changing as more diverse cultural workers bridge the gap in programming to bring diverse audiences into museum spaces. Also, as the national conversation about incarceration in this country grows and expands, the SSPM may have the potential to become an international center for dialogue on the subject.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DETAIL

Note: Throughout this section, *italics* indicate direct quotes from participants. Text without italics is commentary from project team members or general notes.

Community Meeting Notes

Location: Ossining Public Library

Date & Time: May 31, 2016; 6:30-8:30 p.m.

GROUP REPORT-BACKS:

Group 1

We wanted the story of how things started to be told, as well as the back and forth between rehabilitating people and being tough on crime. It's very important to tell the human story of inmates and to show them as people. We want to tell the evolution of Sing Sing and how things have changed, and to tell how society has changed and how our decisions about who to imprison have changed. The conflict between the free labor and the economy around the prison is important, as well as the national story. We wanted to talk about how people in the prison gave back – what they made, the baseball team, and other things like that.

We wanted to tell the story of things like the electric chair, but we don't want it to be sensationalized. The best way to do that is probably to make it a human story. We don't want it to be sugarcoated, though, so maybe one way to do that is to create a space for artists to come in and interpret the issues, and to display art created by inmates. We have to think about who's going to be visiting the prison – maybe there will be different ways to tell the story to children, adults, families and so on.

The first thing we thought of when thinking about what would bring people to the prison was PARKING! And that would get people to come back, too. We want the museum to be incorporated into the overall community, and we want it to be a place like the Schomburg Library that creates dialogue and community.

Group 2

We have two people in our group who have worked at the prison, so we had an edge. One of the stories we think should be told is about the construction of the prison when it was founded. The materials, the functional way of designing it, the transportation and security away from the city, which was very important. We were also interested in the economy that was built within the prison, which was a really incredible economy up to a point, and the conflict between the inside and the outside.

Rehabilitation programs inside the prison, from RTA and so on, would be great to see on a big timeline. We want to know what happened in a day of the life of a prisoner a hundred years ago, and what happens today. How much do you talk about today?

The educational initiatives inside the prison are so important, including the current challenges of educating and training an aging population in the prison.

We talked about the docents of the future – maybe they come from people who worked at the prison, or maybe from former inmates. It's very important to tell the story of the officers at the prison – what was a day in their life like?

It's very important to tell a well-rounded, holistic story as well as you can, and to keep it non-political, so people can make up their own minds. That particularly relates to the death penalty, but also all difficult issues.

It would be interesting to interview some of the people in town who were inside and outside the prison, so you get a feeling for the people and not just the institution.

Changing exhibits will help bring people back – and that could mean anything from all the movies made there, the famous people who have visited, and so on.

Group 3

Why punish? How do humans punish other humans? We have to tell stories of redemption and the different attitudes toward redemption. We have to tell people that this is a national story and that the United States has specific ways of punishing people.

Group 4

The culture of media influence on society, including Babe Ruth and baseball and visitors – how were popular culture and Sing Sing intimately connected? It's important to us that we tell the story of the prison's connection to the river, and how the train influenced it. The connectivity to New York City and the families are important stories to tell – how does the prison being so close to New York City make people better? Is it an advantage?

We want to hear about the changing demographics of the prisoners and the corrections staff, and we want to humanize the prisoners and all those involved. We want to balance some of the stuff from Hollywood with what really happened.

We would love to see the women's prison discussed.

What will the relationship be between the museum and the DOCCS? How will it impact the story the museum can tell? We don't want to exploit prisoners, but we want to serve the interests of the public and museumgoers. We want ideas of criminal justice reform to inform the talking points, and we want to empower visitors to come to their own conclusions.

For people to come – and come again! – it needs to be an experiential museum. There needs to be a permanent collection and changing exhibits. It needs to be integrated into the tourism of the region and of Ossining – how can we develop overnight stays and river cruises, for example?

There is an opportunity for the public to connect with inmates on a human level through art and performance.

Group 5

We want to tell the stories of the families of prisoners, and how many people come to visit every year. We want the museum to wake people up to see what's happening in today's world. We want there to be classrooms for corrections officers to teach classes in things like psychology or substance abuse. We want to demonstrate the loss of free will through the experience.

Parking and transportation – for individuals and school buses – will be a challenge.

Group 6

In theater, a lot of the critical, difficult issues could be addressed through performance or debate. We could have alumni of Rehabilitation Through The Arts perform, or have a live feed of current participants performing.

The state and other municipalities currently buy things from the prisoners. The policy would have to change, but we could have a gift shop where items made by prisoners were sold.

Current politics always have an impact on the prison population – in terms of the numbers of prisoners and how they're treated. So, we'd have to discuss them.

FULL GROUP DISCUSSION

This museum is not going to be functional for a while, so one of the questions I had was, what can we do in the meantime to keep the project in the public awareness? For instance, the Ramble is a series of four weekends where organizations are invited to have events for the public. There are tours that can be done right now – yes, with special arrangements – but they can help keep people aware. There are challenges with the trains and the transportation, but we have time to work them out.

We live in a digital world, and I think the process of construction and development can happen online. We can do programming; we can put this information out there in bits. We could even have a StoryCorps kind of thing where people could tell their stories online. This is a historical museum, but we have to operate in today's world, and that includes an online presence.

I'm thinking about the very strong sense of place you have when you approach the prison. What's happening down at the train station creates its own atmosphere, but it doesn't tell you you're coming to something. There needs to be a lot of thought into how you create that sense of arrival. Does something happen at the train station? Does something happen downtown and you bus people? The waterfront is one of the strongest things we have going, so we should think about that. I don't think we should infringe on commuter parking, because that's really important for a lot of people who live here.

What do you think about offsite parking with transportation to the prison museum?

The city transportation supervisor who left said the vans should look like prison museums.

We're looking to revitalize this Village, too. So we don't want people to park somewhere far off and have transportation to the museum and then back to your car. We want to have people in the Village. You want to include the entire Village and Town in this revitalization.

The concept of offsite parking with a van shows up in memos from the late 90s. As we've met with various museum operators, there are a lot of different approaches – some people use it successfully, others say it's the bane of their existence. It's an item that's on the table right now, but we recognize that it might become very difficult.

One idea for transportation access if you're having people approach by train is to have little historical plaques along the route to help people enjoy their walk from the train to the museum.

The last time – and there have been several – that we looked into the possibility of building a garage downtown (whenever we finished the comprehensive plan), the cost of a garage was about \$30,000

per space. So how many spaces do we need? Assuming that it does help to develop downtown, then we'll need spaces for people to be downtown to shop and eat, as well as to visit the museum. So we're looking at a major expense.

When the speaker was here from Eastern State Penitentiary, he mentioned that many people who visited that site were doing so as part of a day-tour or a package. Many of them were visiting other museums and attractions in Philadelphia. A general rule of thumb is that you're not going to spend more than 2 hours at an individual site, so we have to keep that in mind when thinking about the larger experience.

Consultant: At previous meetings, we've asked this question, and I don't want this meeting to end without asking it. Show of hands: is it vital to have access to the 1825 Cell Block?

Vast majority raised hands.

Is a Sing Sing Prison Museum a place that you would visit?

Vast majority raised hands.

I'm not opposed to it existing, but I am not drawn to a lot of this content. Maybe it's because I'm a parent. I'm happy to stand up and be the one in the room that's different from the rest. I think these are all important issues. If it's going to drive revitalization and tourism, I buy into all the reasons for it. But I don't know that it compels me to personally go and visit. I think part of it is that I have small children and I am not yet convinced of where this experience would fit in for them. So then you're asking me as a parent of children to take time that I don't have already to go and visit it on my own. So the question is, is this more compelling than other things? I live here, it's part of my lexicon already. What can you tell me that I don't know?

I spend a lot of time at the Hudson [River]. We have a lot of people coming from across the U.S. and from other countries asking where Sing Sing is. People are interested. We direct them to the community center, but the hours are unreliable.

For me, it depends on the content. If the content isn't telling the story - It's important to tell the history, but if we're not dealing with current issues around mass incarceration and prisons, then I'm not going to come. We need to tell a story that is fair to the people who work there, the victims, and the inmates. As an Ossining resident, it's important to me that this be a space where we can talk about all types of current issues.

Consultant: 2025 will be the 200th anniversary of the 1825 Cell Block. In museum time, that's not far off. It would be nice to set as a goal that 2025 would be the opening. Between now and then, there are many things that can be done to give visibility to this museum. It can be done virtually, we can do traveling exhibits around the county and the state.

I think there are a lot of positive, interesting things about the museum, but there are some things that I'm ambivalent about or disinterested in. One of the biggest things is figuring out who your audiences are and how you're marketing to them. I think that plays a big role in whether someone would or would not come. I haven't been to Alcatraz or Eastern State Penitentiary. I have no desire to go to Eastern State because it sounds like just another prison in the middle of nowhere, but I want to go to Alcatraz because it's become this mythical place in American pop culture. It's hard to say whether I'd want to go or not without having a better understanding of what that experience might be.

Meetings with Ossining High School Students

CLASS #1

What are your favorite things about Ossining?

Diversity.

The food. (x3)

I like how close it is to [New York] City.

I like how close we are to [New York] City, so we'll be able to get out of here. I also like the river.

The river is nice.

I like the community involvement here.

I like the diversity in the school system.

I like the history I have here. My whole family grew up here.

I like that I have access to many things here, and that I can walk so many places. I like the diversity, too.

I like the amount of college courses offered here.

I like the opportunities here at the school.

I like the bacon, egg and cheese they give me every morning.

I like the community.

I like living next to the river.

I like the parks we have, and all the things you can do in them.

What would get you to visit the museum?

Most would be interested in visiting the museum.

I'd like to see a lot of artifacts and cool things connected to Sing Sing, like a recreation of the old cells and the new cells and how they've changed over time.

I'm very into the interactive kind of thing, so if you were to do something where you could "shoot some hoops" in the old gym with some prisoners or something.

To help keep the electric chair from being too lighthearted, you could have a piece of limestone with the names of all the people who were executed in it.

I went somewhere else with the chair. I want to sit in the chair and go through the process of being strapped in so I could understand it.

I'd like to meet some of the prisoners. I don't know if that would be possible. I'm thinking about getting into law, so I want to know how the people work there control the prisoners, and how many people have escaped.

Maybe some of the prisoners that get out of Sing Sing could end up working at the museum. That way you could have some interaction with former prisoners.

It would be good to have some audio of their stories.

It would be good to use virtual reality for the electric reality experience. It would be really helpful.

I'd like to hear stories of people who died before they were exonerated. So maybe they were wrongly accused, and they died in prison before they were exonerated.

I want to know how they go about their day: the kitchens, the bathrooms. What do they do every day?

It would be cool to see people's last meals; what they ate, how they chose it, how it was presented to them.

Who are the audiences for this museum?

Everyone. Not only did it star in so many films, but Ossining and especially Sing Sing is still starring in television today. My friend lives right by Sing Sing, and many times I've gone to his house and seen a film crew outside Sing Sing taking film for Mad Men or something.

Whenever we have guests from out of the state or out of the country, we bring them to the little museum in the community center. So people who live here would go there once, but then they'd keep going every time they wanted to bring someone who didn't know about the prison.

It would be good for people who have lived here forever and might not know much about the prison.

I'd like to hear about what was happening in the 70s and 80s, to show how things changed over time.

It'd be interesting to hear about the demographics of who was in Sing Sing and how that changed over time.

It would also tell you about what was criminalized and how that changed over time. It would be good to understand what was happening in different communities in different times, because our notion of what's right and wrong changes over time.

CLASS #2:

What's your favorite thing about Ossining?

In this school in particular, one of the classes I took was about the history of Ossining. I liked that.

I like the people. I think the community's great.

I like the landscape.

I like being on the waterfront, it's a really nice view.

My favorite thing is the history of Ossining.

I like this school a lot.

It's quiet. I like that.

I love the opportunities that exist in this school and in this community.

I like how this town is very diverse.

I like the Rec Center.

I like that it's beautiful here.

I like the food here.

I like my friends!

I like all the places to swim.

I like the people. (x3)

I like all the events that happen for this community.

I like how the Native Americans used to live here.

You can't beat the view.

I like the diversity of the people.

I like the diversity.

I like the views.

I like being on the river.

I like the prison.

I like all the things going smoothly here, and the things to do.

I like the different cultures.

I like being near [New York] City. (x2)

I like the renovations happening everywhere.

I like the scenery. (x2)

I like the waterfront.

I like the diversity and the food.

I don't really like Ossining.

I like how close we are to the water.

I like the river, the school, and how close we are to [New York] City.

Would you want to visit the museum?

Most people said yes, one girl said no, "It's not that I wouldn't be interested, it's just that I probably wouldn't visit. It creeps me out a little bit."

What would you want to see at the museum?

I'd want to know about escape attempts, and whether any were successful.

I'd want to go on a tour of the prison apart from the museum.

Lots of them would want to speak to current or formerly incarcerated prisoners and correction officers. No one was interested in hearing from victims' families.

Are you going to have a model of what the cells looked like?

If you're placing it at the prison, wouldn't it be better to have a tour guide take us into the operating prison while the inmates were away so we could see how it looks and how it works?

I'm interested in how they live and how things happen on a day-to-day basis. I want to know the mechanics of how everything works.

It would be cool if there were models of cells at different times so we could see how things changed over time.

I want to know what movies were filmed in the prison.

I'd want to understand the atmosphere in the actual prison. I'd want to walk through it and see what it feels like for like ten minutes.

I don't think it would be fair to the prisoners to walk through the prison and experience that. It would be treating them almost like zoo animals, and it would be disrespectful.

I understand the concern about making them feel like zoo animals, but why would we go to the prison if we weren't going to really see their lives? If we're going to talk about the things that happen in Sing Sing, why wouldn't we go through? If we go there and treat them like human beings, then it would be okay.

Maybe you could go and set up a program with the warden where prisoners could sign up and be on the good behavior list to talk to kids about their experiences.

Some of the prisoners are killers or have done other bad things. They're not all going to treat visitors well.

Bringing in prisoners to the museum would probably be the best way to get people to go to the museum. If I saw a poster in the square on Spring Street that said there was going to be an event where you could talk to a prisoner, I would go to that.

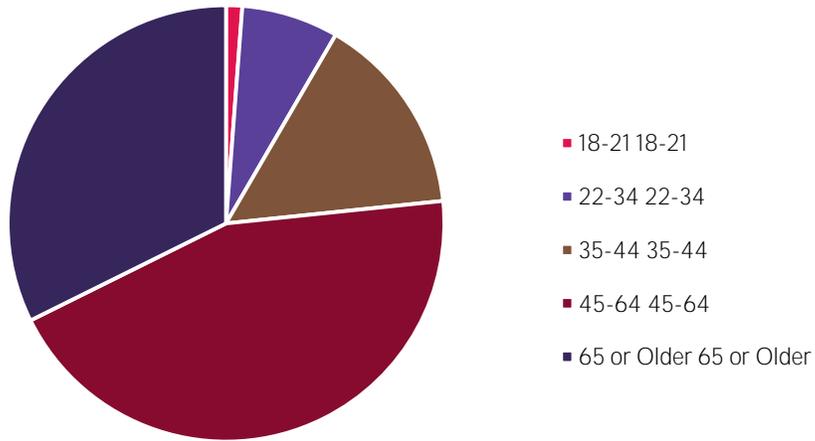
What if you were to ask inmates if they wanted to make a football team or something?

Downtown gets extremely crowded with traffic. I don't know if it could support a lot more tourists coming to see it.

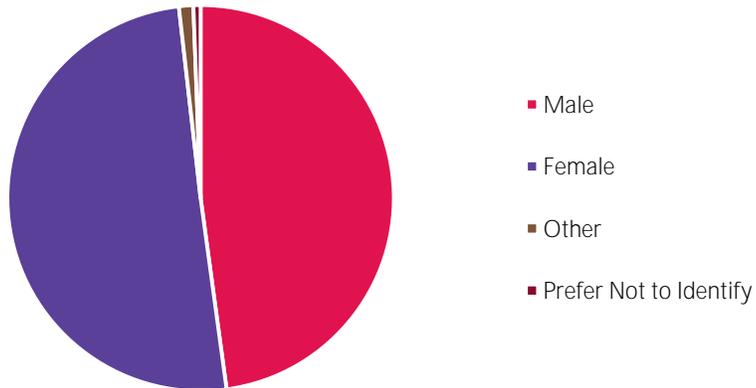
I think an interesting thing for the museum to discuss would be the limestone and how the prisoners had to quarry it.

Survey Results

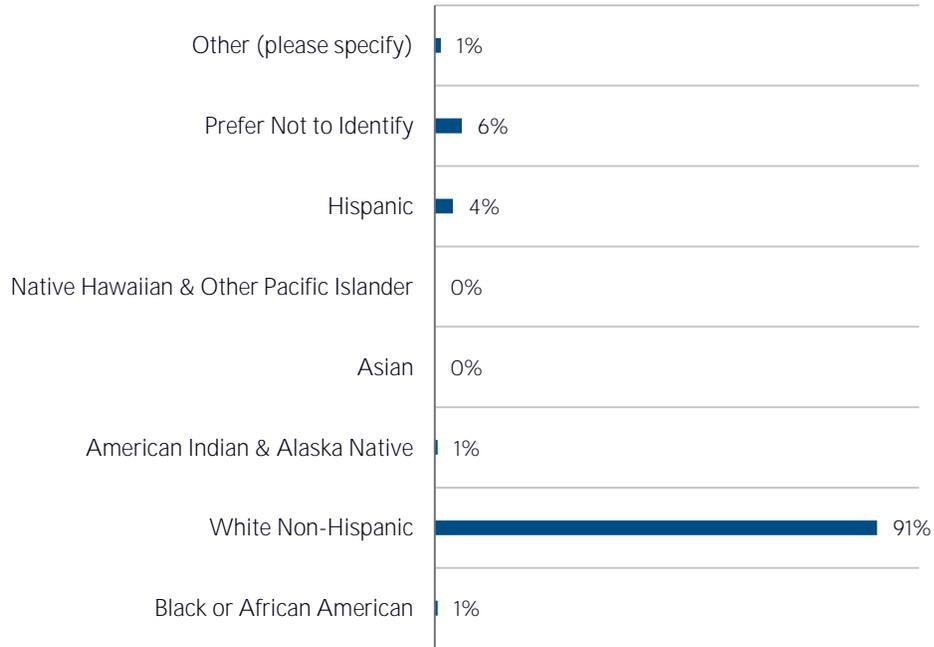
What is your age?



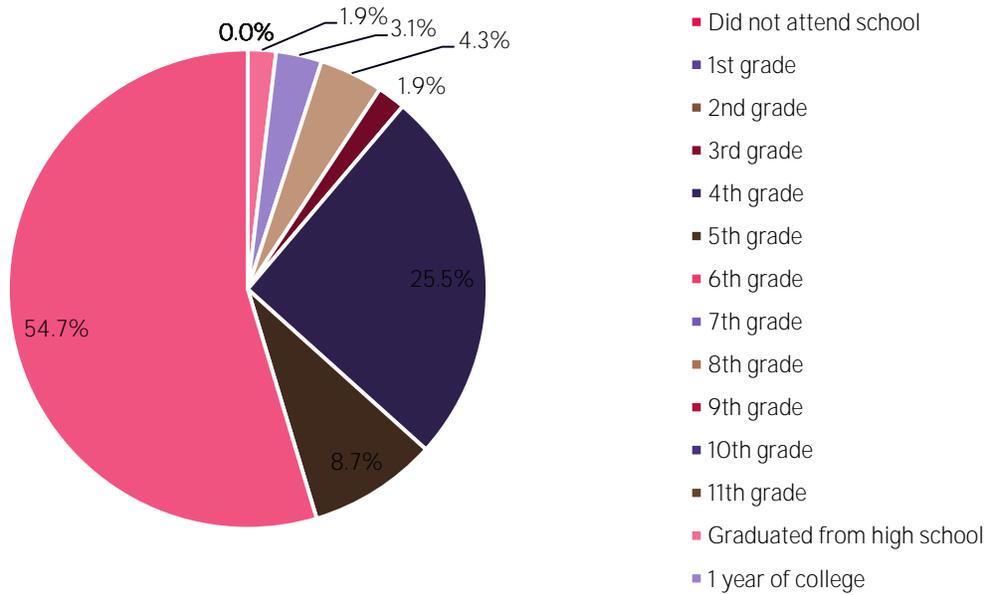
What is your gender identity?



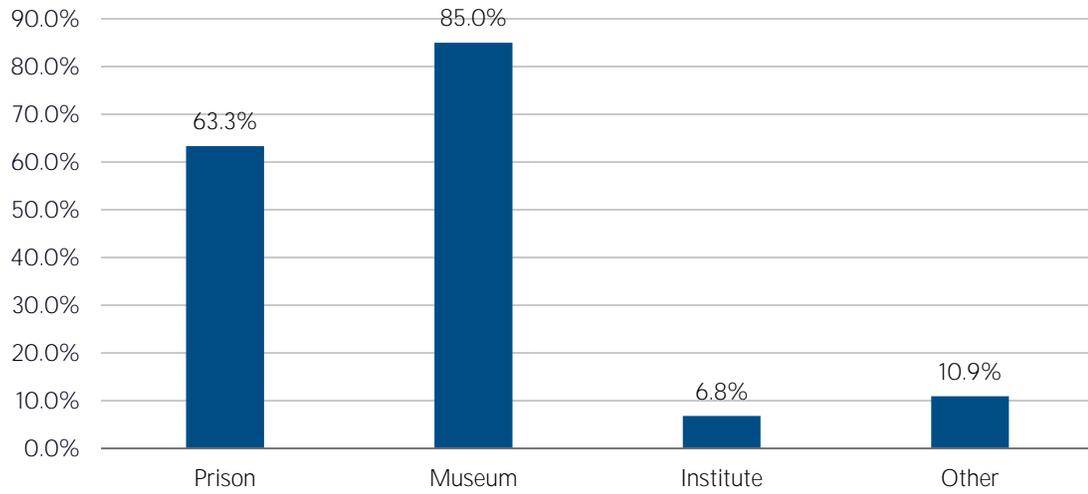
What is your racial or ethnic background?



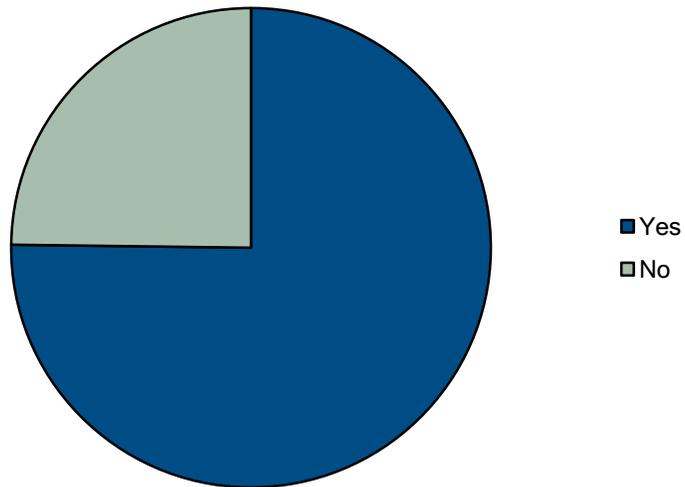
What is the highest level of education you have completed?



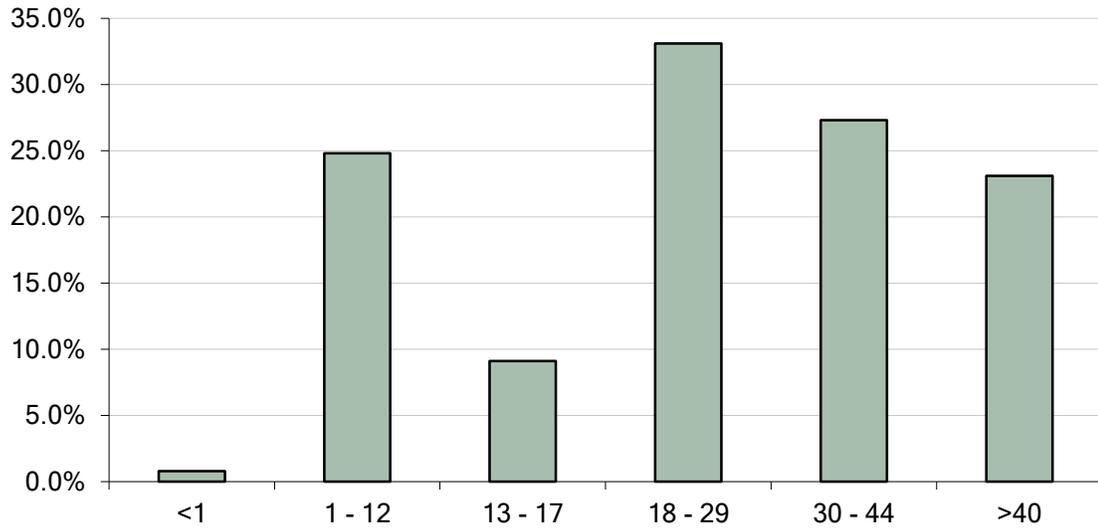
In naming the new museum at Sing Sing Prison, would you include the word(s):



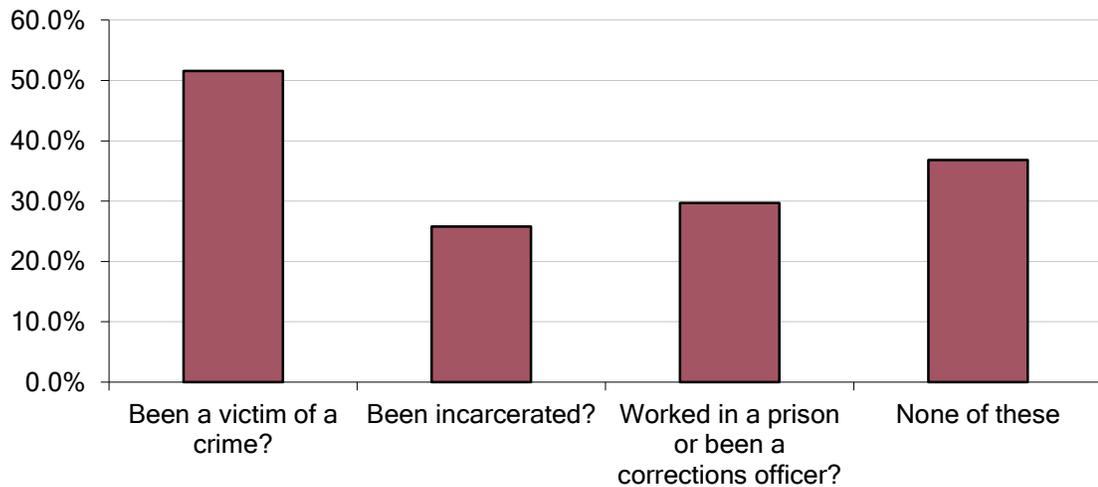
Do you have children?



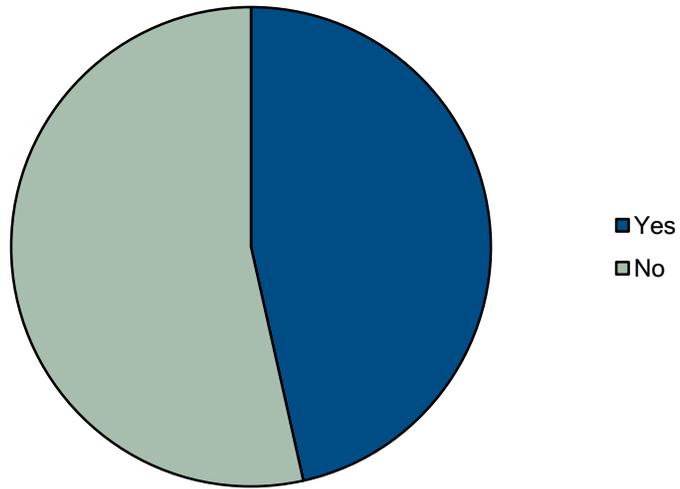
What is the age of your child/ren?



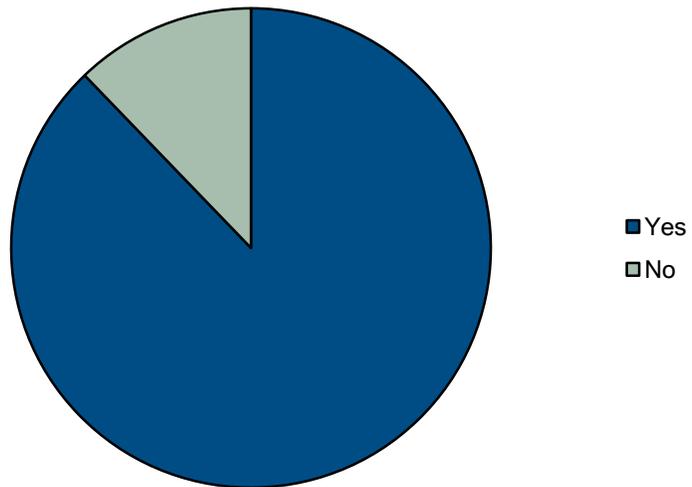
Have you or anyone you know personally (Please check all that apply):



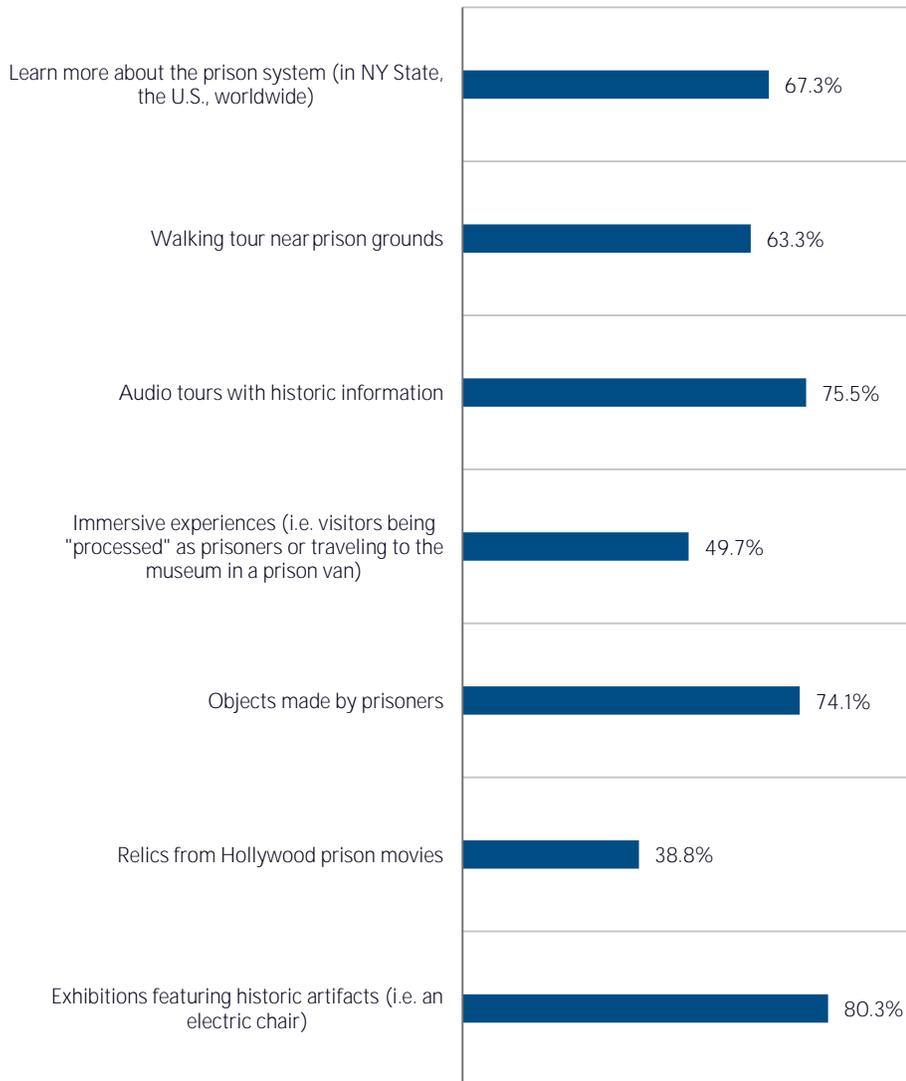
Have you visited a prison museum before?



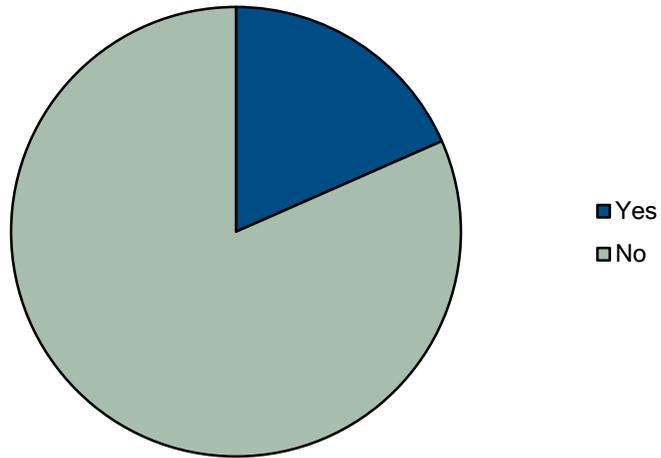
Would you visit a prison museum?



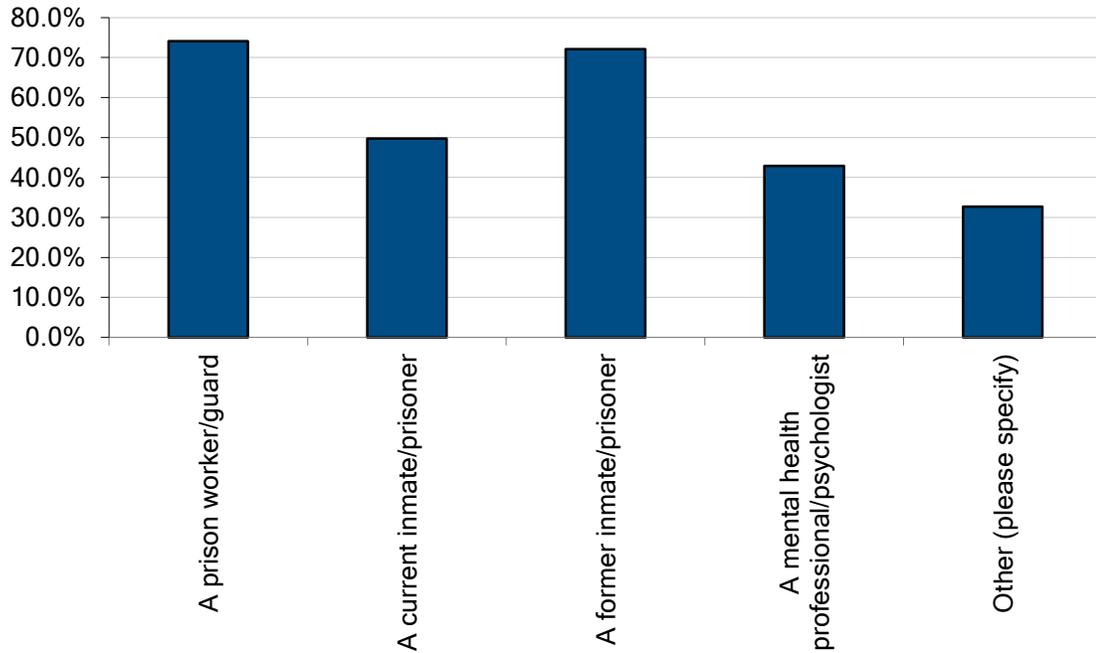
What would you like to see/do in a prison museum? Please select all that apply.



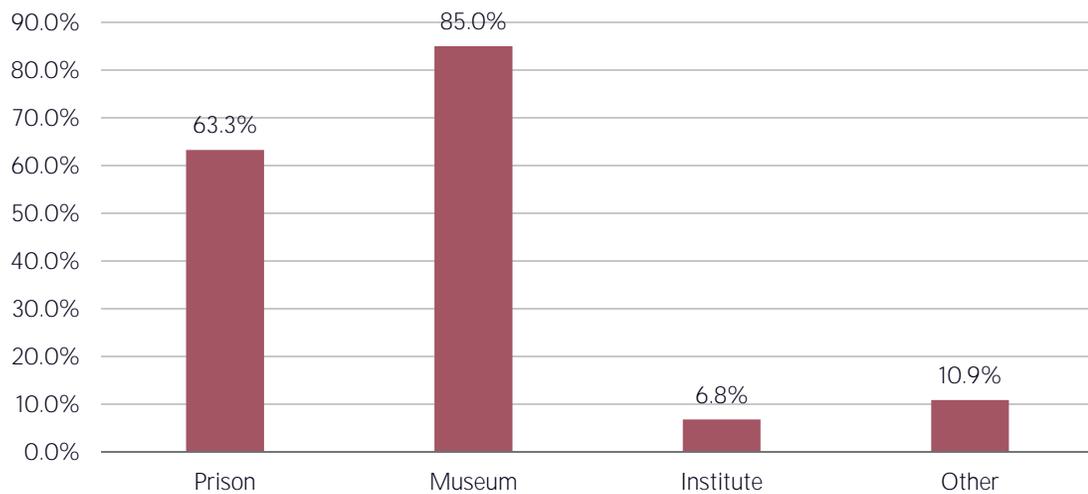
Do you have any concerns about security in a museum located at an operating prison?



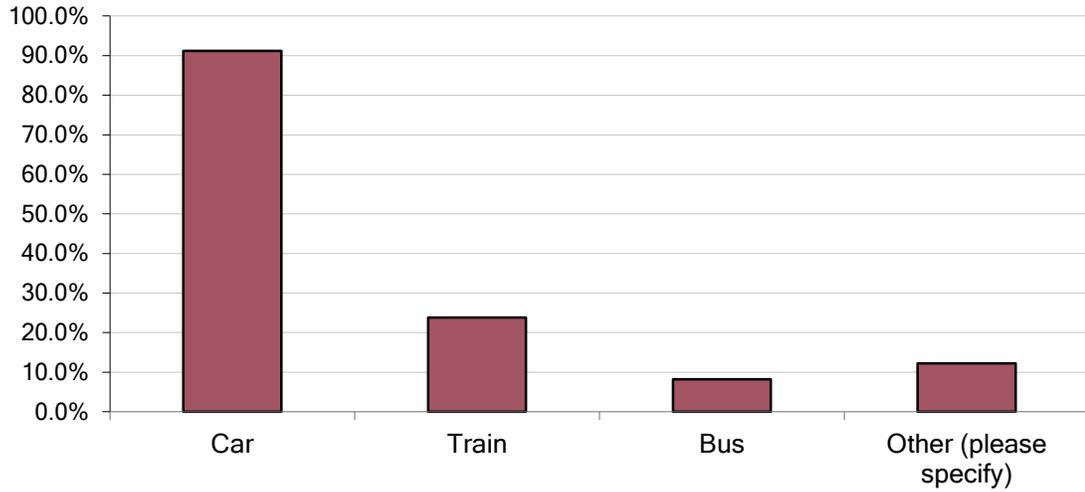
When visiting a prison museum, who would you most like to hear from? Please select all that apply.



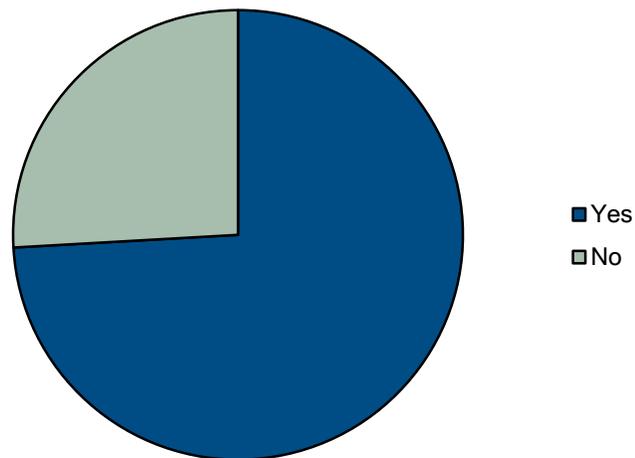
In naming the new museum at Sing Sing Prison, would you include the word(s):



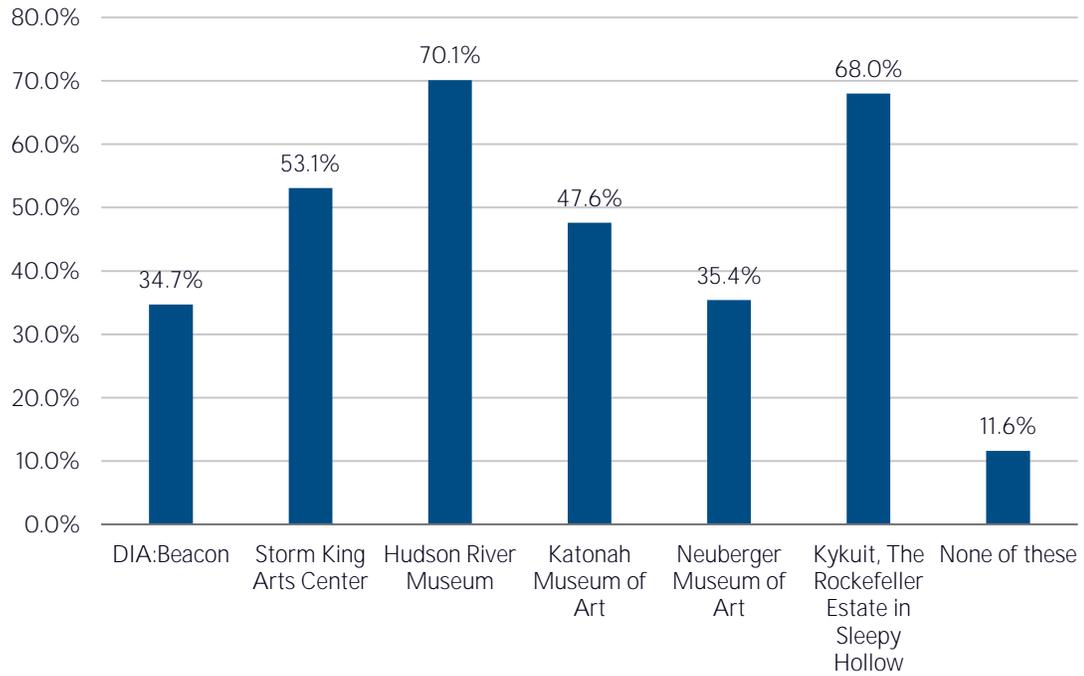
How would you get to the Sing Sing Prison Museum?
Please select all that apply.



Would you visit a visitor center with information about
the Sing Sing Prison Museum in Downtown Ossining,
NY?



Have you visited any of these institutions? Please select all that apply.



PLANNING PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"That hard bleakness and squalor fell on my soul as if its weight would press out hope and life.

I stood in what was to be my home for six and a half years and gave way to despair."

-Prisoner Number 1500, Life in Sing Sing

Visitor Experience

Interpretation will cover the prison from several vantage points: as a system, through its impact on people inside and outside the facility and through the evolving ideas and goals of incarceration and punishment.

NARRATIVE ARC

Main themes include:

- The history of Sing Sing from its creation in 1825 to the present, including reform.
- Sing Sing in the wider context of the corrections system — the local, national and international significance of Sing Sing.
- The development of the penitentiary system, architecture and methods.
- Changing concepts of punishment and impact of historic methods.
- The purpose of prison and society's changing goals for incarceration.
- The role of Sing Sing in American culture.

- The trends and goals of modern incarceration, including rehabilitation.

The Sing Sing Prison Museum experience seeks to be one that asks visitors to evaluate authenticity versus myth, examine history's examples, balance diverse perspectives and face the often uncomfortable realities of incarceration. Interpretation will cover the prison from several vantage points: as a system, through its impact on people inside and out, and through the evolving ideas/goals of incarceration and punishment.

Exhibits trace three major chapters of Sing Sing's history:

- 1825-1914: Covering the prison's origins and early years, including the significant transformations of its first hundred years. This section also touches on the prison's relationship to the nearby village.
- 1914-1972: A period reform begun and sustained by two of Sing Sing's most influential wardens, Thomas Mott Osborne and Lewis Lawes. This section also covers the mid-20th century creation of Sing Sing's popular and enduring public image.
- 1972 through today: This section begins concurrent to the steady rise in rates of incarceration marking the past 40 years⁴, exploring both causes and effects through the lens of Sing Sing. This section also asks visitors to consider the greater goal of imprisonment in the modern context.

At its very essence, interpretation will guide visitors through the timeline of the institution and situate Sing Sing within the history of the American penal system, outlining watershed moments and enduring characteristics. On a deeper level, exhibits will also illuminate how the prison both reflects and drives change in society.

Sing Sing is a storied place; it is also a working prison. The SSPM's content will balance the sensationalized or romanticized history that visitors are likely to know (tinged with elements of voyeurism and curiosity) with the critical work the Sing Sing Correctional Facility undertakes today. The SSPM will also take advantage of its potential to be a lens on timely and pressing social issues by posing questions on and provoking reactions to thornier questions surrounding incarceration, punishment and rehabilitation. Rather than take an advocate's or activist's stance, the SSPM will seek to equip visitors with the information necessary to explore complex, nuanced issues and come to their own conclusions.

The museum has the capability to capture the authentic Sing Sing and connect visitors with diverse, authentic perspectives. Exhibits will allow currently and formerly incarcerated people to tell their stories and relate their experiences without glorifying any individuals or imprisonment. Likewise, the SSPM will connect visitors to prison staff, victims of crime, and

⁴ *The Growth of Incarceration in the United States*, National Academies Press, 2014 (https://www.nap.edu/login.php?record_id=18613)

prisoners' families to present a balanced understanding of incarceration's effect not only on the prisoner, but also on his or her family and community.

Visitor Experience

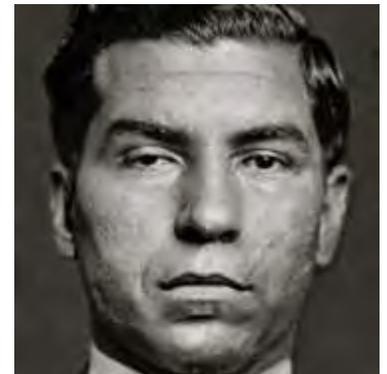
TICKETING

Design Intent

Visitors are likely to bring to the SSPM a broad set of preconceived ideas, many rooted in popular culture depictions, rumors and urban legends. To reach potential visitors, marketing could leverage some of the most iconic imagery and notorious chapters from Sing Sing's storied history, but also hint at the much richer and authentic story the museum tells as well as the *privileged* experience a visit offers.

The interpretive experience itself would begin at the first point of visitor contact: at ticketing (whether at Grand Central Station, the cruise dock or the visitor center in downtown Ossining). Ticket-sellers should be trained to provide a brief history of being sent "up river" to "The Big House," providing a preview of the colorful and controversial history they are about to encounter. The ticket could be designed to resemble an arrest record with lines for "date booked," "fine," and "term of sentence" (length of trip).

Another option would be to use the ticketing process to introduce the prison from a human-scale vantage point through the diverse people who comprise the prison community. With each ticket, visitors might receive either a prisoner's receiving blotter document, a correction officer's badge or an ID card from another kind of prison employee (perhaps a chaplain, doctor, vocational instructor or warden). The token would not ask the visitor to assume a prisoner's or correction officer's identity, but rather engage visitors with a person whom they will meet again *on the inside*.



Top to bottom:
 Replica officer's badge (collectible)
 Receiving blotter as "ticket" (Charles Luciano receiving blotter, digitized by www.ancestry.com)
 Charles "Lucky" Luciano mugshot, April 1936 (NYC Dept of Records, New York County District Attorney, Case File 211537)
 Rabbi Irving Koslowe, chaplain who ministered to inmates on death row (oral history: The Big House, History Channel series, published 2002. <https://yss.rocks/hc-best-of-the-big-house-02of12-sing-sing>)

The token or badge would introduce how each person came to be associated with Sing Sing, his or her particular challenges and goals and the role he or she ultimately came to play in the institution's story. On the tour, visitors would look out for the individual, examine his or her story in context and, by comparing and contrasting individuals with friends and tour mates, see the ways the prison's story varies depending on the lens. Even from this early stage, interpretation encourages visitors to carefully weigh the range of perspectives surrounding the prison and incarceration that they will encounter on their tour.



Content and Assets

- Profiles of individuals associated with the prison through time
- Primary sources: receiving blotters, portraits and mugshots
- Artifacts: Historic personnel badges and passes

TRANSPORT TO THE MUSEUM

Design Intent

Visitors traveling from New York City by train or by water may hear stories on board of the transport of the first prisoners by boat, how the stone that was quarried by prisoners and used to build many of NYC's recognizable landmarks was transported over water and of prisoner escapes on boats across the Hudson River. Visitors may also arrive by car and park at the site or at the nearby train station, where parking will be particularly plentiful on the weekends. Visitors who park at the downtown visitor center will board prison buses driven by former correction officers and/or formerly incarcerated persons who will provide an introductory orientation to the town and to the prison prior to boarding as well as point out notable sites related to the prison — such as retaining walls made from Sing Sing stone or the location of a warden's home — on the trip downhill toward the prison.

Lou Capone being transported to Sing Sing by train
(Library of Congress,
<http://loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c34683/>)
SS Ossining built from remains of Sarah Jenks used to
transport prisoners upriver (OHS,
<http://www.ossining.org/ssoss1.jpg>)
Stereoscopic image of train tracks at prison (New
York Public Library G91F152_030F)
Vintage prison bus (for reference only)

WALKWAY TO THE MUSEUM

Design Intent

Visitors arriving by train or boat disembark and would be immediately greeted by a welcome station at the waterfront composed of one or more signs, as well as a clearly marked shuttle stop and trailhead for the walkway to the museum. The welcome station should beckon from afar through appealing historic imagery, strong graphic branding, or an intriguing 3D element, such as a sculpture or large model of the town. Orientation information provided would include a large map delineating the downtown with its shops and restaurants, the museum, the prison, and nearby attractions such as the Old Croton Aqueduct, trip-planning information for the museum (e.g., description, hours, ticket costs), a shuttle schedule, and information on attractions in town, including changeable displays or a brochure hand-out with advertising for the shops and restaurants in the downtown.

The walking path to the museum would be improved with special paving, landscaping and places to sit and look out on the river and activities along the waterfront. Metal footprints could be inset in the walkway along its full length to suggest the curious gait of a row of prisoners forced to move in lockstep. Sculptures and historic photos would depict people walking in lockstep, while accompanying interpretive panels would explain that early in the prison's history there were no walls and convicts were required to walk in this unusual manner to and from the stone quarry and other locations in town.

Other interpretive stations strung out along the pathway would further enliven the walk. Topics could include:

- The decision to build a prison in Ossining.
- The arrival of the first prisoners by boat to construct the prison.
- The quarrying activities of the prisoners and the shipping of stone from the dock.
- The transport of prisoners by boat and by train.
- The connections between the prison and the town.



Historic map of town via Dana White/Ossining Historical Society

Prisoners line up in lockstep (NYPL 418580)

Reference image for metal footprints in paving





Site model reference imagery



Security escort



Lockers used by inmates (Click Magazine, August 1938, page 3)



Prison clothing display reference

WELCOME AND RETAIL

Design Intent

The feeling of being within a working prison should be present from the moment that visitors step into the SSPM. The consultants envision a work-a-day welcome desk that has the utilitarian, slightly vintage appearance of a prison intake desk. The security procedures of buying and displaying an admission ticket, making one's way through security screening and depositing coats and backpacks in a secure storage area should be staged to suggest entry into a prison. Visitors might even be escorted through a steel gate by security personnel to heighten the slightly intimidating atmosphere. Vintage lockers with oversize locks and pegs for coats would be out in the open next to stacks of prison uniforms seemingly ready to be donned. To lend further weight to the experience visitors are about to undertake, the welcome desk might also include a "code of conduct," reminding guests that the exhibit is not asking visitors to sit in judgment, but rather learn the authentic history of the prison.

The entry area also provides a trip-planning site map that clarifies the visitors' location within the historic 1936 Powerhouse (not a cell block) and provides orientation to other features important to interpretation: the 1825 Cell Block, the ballfield, the building once used as the death house and modern cell blocks. The map might morph and evolve through time to show the establishment and growth of the facility through today.

The retail area is located next to the welcome desk so that staff can process purchases. Visitors will exit through this area to help increase sales.



CSPAN documentary, featuring perspectives of inmates, guards and family alike (<http://www.c-span.org/video/?90529-1/sing-sing-prison-documentary>).

SING SING CORRECTIONAL FACILITY TODAY

Design Intent

The first exhibit that visitors encounter makes it clear that they have entered Sing Sing Correctional Facility, a working maximum security prison with some 1,700 prisoners. By introducing Sing Sing as it stands today, one of New York State's "principle agents of punishment," exhibits will underscore the gravity of the institution's work, sketch a full picture of how the modern prison functions and establish a vantage point from which the prison's 200-year history and evolution can be understood.

Visitors proceed first through a series of exhibits focusing on the prison's community today. These exhibits will:

- Depict life on the inside (exploring both authenticity and legend), its challenges and drudgeries as well as its ultimate psychological impact.
- Give prisoners a voice, but present no prisoner in isolation by balancing their perspectives with those impacted by crime.
- Confront the issue of forgiveness and trace the transformative process.
- Highlight the prison's rehabilitation programs and feature prisoner-generated content, such as performances, artwork and creative writing.

- Illuminate the fact that most men in Sing Sing will be released someday. Encourage visitors to evaluate their thoughts on rehabilitation and the ultimate goal of incarceration.



Clockwise: Katherine Vockins, Director, RTA (Viorel Florescu for New York Daily News); Professor Susan Weine and Mercy College graduate Mark Dixon (Hudson Link, photo by Andrew W. Dyer); University of Sing Sing classes (The University of Sing Sing, HBO documentary); Carnegie music program (Behind Bars: Music at Sing Sing, Carnegie Hall Weill Music Institute)

Content and Assets

Introduction

- Modern prison statistics, potential updatable feature to keep information current
- Privileged views of the *inside* available only in the museum
- Quotes from current prisoners and/or recently incarcerated persons on the real Sing Sing

Who is at Sing Sing?

- Male-only facility, approximately 1,700 inmates
- Racial make-up
- 79% imprisoned for violent crimes, half have sentences of ten years or more

Life Inside

- What is Sing Sing like? Intake procedures, daily routines, challenges and fears. Possible feature: NBC interviews with current prisoners
- Prisoner-led, recorded video tours (properly curated and edited)
- Urban legends and reality: violence, assaults, gangs, prison subculture



Left to right: Carnegie music program (*Behind Bars: Music at Sing Sing, Carnegie Hall Weill Music Institute*); RTA theater performance (<http://www.rta-arts.org>)

“All of the sudden, it just doesn’t make sense to be violent because communication has become a part of the culture here. And they carry that to the outside, so maybe, when they’re in the street, instead of pulling out a gun they feel comfortable with another form of expression.”

–Rob, inmate participant in the Carnegie Hall Music program

Sing Sing: Prisoners, Correction Officers, Victims

- Interviews with prisoners on their crimes and how they came to Sing Sing: Prisoners’ stories are expanded upon or even contested by perspectives of the victims they have impacted and correction officers (and other staff like chaplains, doctors, counselors and teachers) who interact with them daily. This component would not ask visitors to serve as judges of guilt, but rather consider the many sides of the issue.
- The issue of forgiveness: is it important to prisoners and how do they come to terms with their crimes?
- A “Before/After Sing Sing” component that traces the institution’s impact on a prisoner’s life as well as the lives around him, highlighting family.

Someday they'll be your neighbors

- 95% of prisoners will be released someday.⁵ Changing views on rehabilitation, debate around questions on sentencing, such as “how long is long enough?” and “who do you want coming out on the other side?”
 - Rehabilitation programs
 - Mental health
 - Substance abuse
 - Music (Carnegie Music Program)
 - Arts (Rehabilitation Through the Arts)
 - Theater
 - Vocational training and degree programs (Hudson Link, Mercy College and the University of Sing Sing)
- Recorded or live performances (potentially via webcam), installation-style presentation of prisoners’ art and creative writing. Updatable and changing content.
- Re-entry into society, prisoners answer, “What will you do on your first day out?”

INSTRUMENTS OF PUNISHMENT**Design Intent**

Crime has always existed in society. Punishments have evolved—from body to mind, from temporary to enduring, from brutal to humane, from retribution to rehabilitation. After getting a first-hand look at the methods used by a modern penitentiary in exhibits on modern Sing Sing, visitors encounter a thought-piece installation that asks them to consider a prison’s place within the larger issue of punishment. This section shows that society has historically used diverse ways to exact retribution, and that prisons as we know them—including the long-term separation of a person from society—are a relatively new concept.

The section uses large-scale artifacts, artfully and sensitively treated, representing historic methods of correction to provoke questions about the ultimate goals and effectiveness of punishments, including shaming, pain, restraint or even death. By situating the modern notion of confining convicts to penitentiaries in its broader historical context, this exhibit asks visitors

⁵ Footnote: “Behind Bars: Music at Sing Sing,” Carnegie Hall documentary:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBYRMgPny-k>

to rethink what they just learned about modern Sing Sing, and prepares them to evaluate the historical American prison examples that follow.



Left to right: Set-piece treatment of historic forms of punishment: pillory, gossip's bridle, dunking chair (reference images)

Content and Assets

- Colonial punishment methods (inherited from Europe and Britain) were public, harsh, capricious and inflicted for a range of infractions. Many were also often temporary.
- Does the punishment fit the crime?
- Introduction of the idea that punishment is a reflection of a society, and it changes as society changes.
- The death penalty: as a preparation for “The Last Mile: Execution at Sing Sing” exhibit, this section begins the exploration of death as punishment through historic means of execution (e.g. hanging or firing squad). Visitors are alerted to the location of the electric chair in the museum.

STONE UPON STONE: SING SING, 1825-1914

Design Intent

Beginning with the genesis of the American prison system and its roots in the Enlightenment context, this exhibit guides visitors through the creation of what was to be a new model prison called Mount Pleasant near the village of Sing Sing. A period of transformation for the prison, the first “hundred years” encompass a number of important eras that will guide interpretation:

- The implementation of the Auburn system under Captain Lynds (1825-1845)
- The Antebellum period marked by pre-progressive attempts at reform and an increase in prison-made products, like iron stoves, shoes and other goods
- The late 19th century and the implications of the end of prison labor contracting

Visitors are first introduced to the routines, techniques and goals that set apart the new prison—a model of the Auburn system—from its predecessors and competitors. Visitors will get an in-depth look at the Auburn system’s unique application at Mount Pleasant (later called Sing Sing), including the calling cards that continue to color the prisoner stereotype: lockstep, prison stripes and hard labor. They will also see the brutal punishments he used to force prisoners into submission.

Drawing from a rich array of primary source documentation, first person accounts, immersive set pieces and compelling visualizations of the early prison, the exhibit will evoke the rigid daily life in the prison of the 19th and early 20th centuries, including its notorious methods and reputation for brutality. Through audio-rich environments that use sound to evoke prison conditions in visitors’ imaginations, as well as participatory tactility and interactives—potentially including a lockstep group activity, an isolation cell or a visitor operated replica multi-cell locking mechanism—exhibits will convey the dehumanization and isolation Sing Sing once sought to inflict.

A recreated quarry scene or a prisoner’s workbench might evoke the industries central to prisoners’ daily lives in the Antebellum period. These settings also provide context for questions on the proper use of prison labor, competing interests that shaped its nature and politics that led to its demise. Interpretation will also explore social issues, such as the proper incarceration of women, attempts to reform the prison’s failures and society’s changing relationship to (and interest in) the prison.



View of Sing Sing on a prime Hudson site, 1825 cellblock and other buildings (Lewis E. Lawes Papers, Lloyd Sealy Library Special Collections, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY)

Riots at Newgate prison, London

Pennsylvania system plan (Eastern State Penitentiary, <https://www.easternstate.org/explore/online-360-tour>)

Prisoner intake at Sing Sing (www.correctionhistory.org)

This section will also look at the prison's physical site near the Hudson River Village of Sing Sing (now Ossining), as well as a rich cache of quality stone that played a formative role in both the prison and the town. Through oral histories and perspectives of local residents, where available, this section will explore the sometimes tense relationship of the prison to its adjacent community.

Finally, this section will equip visitors to understand the historic 1825 Cell Block as it once functioned before they head out to the ruins of the authentic building.



Left to right: Prisoners pose atop a pile of "Sing Sing Marble" (NYPL G91F152_013F); Female prisoners via Dana White/Ossing Historical Society

Content and Assets

Punishment in a Democracy

- A new system of Quaker origins, influenced by Enlightenment thinkers and created for the new American republic, breaks away from colonial notions of punishment
- The Quaker method seeks to reform convicts, not just seek retribution. The method seeks to be rational, certain and humane
- Concept includes extended confinement, the modern concept of imprisonment
- Newgate, New York's first state prison (opened in 1797), was intended to be a model facility, but in reality, was overcrowded, riotous, filthy and violent

Competing Prison Systems Emerge: Pennsylvania and Auburn Systems

- Compare and contrast to Newgate, European examples (panopticon)
- Defining characteristics and goals of both, including self-reflection and rehabilitation by developing *habits of industry*

A Village Called Sing Sing

- History of the town on the Hudson, a village on the rise; Native American history and origins of “Sint Sinck” name
- Why the site was selected for the prison: abundant stone in the area to enable the prison’s self-sufficiency; reflection of the prison stone industry in local buildings
- The name game: Prison was called Mount Pleasant State Prison until the introduction of a railroad station at Sing Sing in 1850, at which point the prison adopted Sing Sing. Changing of village name from Sing Sing to Ossining to distance the village from the prison.
- Villagers’ relationship to the prison



Left to right: View of the prison against the picturesque backdrop of the Hudson River; Village of Sing Sing postcard with the town’s first electric light; Prisoners at work

Mount Pleasant: A Model Prison of the Auburn System

- A prison for the urban and growing population of New York City
- Captain Elam Lynds, formerly head of Auburn, takes 100 prisoners from Auburn to build and populate Sing Sing
- Design intended to maximize correction officers’ efficiency and supervision: tiered, open system with multi-door lock
- Construction by prisoners; they built their own cells
- Going “up the river” - arriving at Mount Pleasant/Sing Sing via the Hudson

Conditions at Sing Sing

- Captain Lynds maintains control through brutality at Mount Pleasant Prison. His system uses hard labor, lockstep, prison stripes and total silence
- Prisoners forced to work under the lash to generate profits to sustain the prison. Diverse industries in the prison, notably limestone
- Ritual of prison intake: stripping prisoners of identity and individualism

- First person histories documenting daily life, including cell conditions, diet, routine, labor



Left to right: "The convict's Christmas, a letter from home" (Frank Leslie's Illustrated, December 1884. Print for sale, ebay.com); Sing Sing Prison cemetery (Via Dana White, "A Brief History of Sing Sing: From Elam Lynds to the Rosenbergs"); Cell block serves as dining hall (NYPL G91F152_015F); Interior view of a cell (LOC, LC-DIG-ggbain-17943)



Left to right: "Cat o' nine tails (reference image); Iron crown (Via Dana White, "A Brief History of Sing Sing: From Elam Lynds to the Rosenbergs"); Shower bath (NYPL 814556)

The Prison and Profit

- Attempts to make the prison self-sufficient including prison industries like the quarry and later, on-site factories—in both the men's and women's facilities
- Evolving opinions on and potential questions to pose relating to prison labor: is it fair, legal or ethical? What was it meant to achieve, and did it accomplish its goal?

The "House of Fear"

- Captain Lynds, his successor Wiltse and intense brutality at Sing Sing: shower baths, dark cells and short rations, flogging by the cat o' nine tails. With these methods, it was said, there was no need for a wall
- Though inhumane, Lynds' methods were legal and even applauded at the time
- Deplorable conditions: overcrowding, prisoner violence, riots, narcotics use
- Fleeting and short-lived attempts at reform (1850s)
- 19th century creation of a reputation



Left to right: Female inmates (Via Dana White, "A Brief History of Sing Sing: From Elam Lynds to the Rosenbergs")
Mount Pleasant Female Prison Greek revival style (Via Dana White, "A Brief History of Sing Sing: From Elam Lynds to the Rosenbergs")

Mount Pleasant Female Prison

- Women's prison opened in 1839, again constructed of local materials using prisoner labor
- Old method for imprisoning women, who were believed to be more depraved than male criminals: "Turn them loose within the pen of the prison to feed upon and destroy each other."
- Reforming the brutality and deplorable conditions: Matron Elizabeth Farnham relaxes rigid discipline
- Farnham's belief in phrenology and criminal tendencies
- Conditions at Mount Pleasant: no ventilation or food services, poor healthcare, continued pregnancies, overcrowding leading to fights and a riot
- Closing of the women's prison in 1877; inmates worked until the very last contract was completed

"That hard bleakness and squalor fell on my soul as if its weight would press out hope and life.

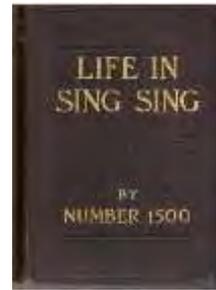
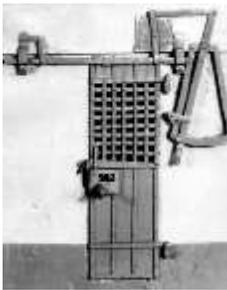
I stood in what was to be my home for six and a half years and gave way to despair."

Prisoner Number 1500, Life in Sing Sing

Further Research

- *The Penitentiary System in the United States and its Application in France*, by Beaumont and de Tocqueville, published in 1831. Account of early operation of the prison and interview with Warden Wiltse.
- *Voice from Sing Sing*, by Levi Burr, published in 1833. Account of violence in the "catocracy".
- *Life in Sing Sing*, by prisoner Number 1500, published in 1904.

- "Sing Sing Prison; Its Managers and Management." New York Times 1865 article exposes conditions at the prison.
- Richard Hoe Lawrence's photographs of Sing Sing, New York Historical Society (NYHS).
- Diaries of John Bigelow, prison commissioner, New York Public Library (NYPL).
- *A Pickpocket's Tale*, by George Appo. An account of the social life of the prison, its corruption and hierarchy.
- "Cross Boy", composed in Sing Sing Correctional Facility by a Bowery B'hoy, NYHS.
- Letters from female prisoners, mid-18th century, NYHS.



Left to right: "Multi-cell locking mechanism (Via Dana White, "A Brief History of Sing Sing: From Elam Lynds to the Rosenbergs"); Visiting day, Sing Sing (Harpers Weekly, June 1869); Prison workroom (Westchester Historical Society, OT-235); Primary sources for exploration (reference images)



"We have seen 250 prisoners working under a shed cutting stone. These men, subjected to a special surveillance, had all committed acts of violence indicating a dangerous character. Each...had a stone cutter's axe. The unarmed guards walked up and down in the shed. Their eyes were in continuous agitation."

Toqueville's diary entry for May 30, 1831

Left to right: Stereoscopic views resource (New York Public Library); Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Toqueville via Dana White/ Ossining Historical Society; Holmes stereoscope viewer; Quote from de Toqueville: <http://notorc.blogspot.com/2012/05/lower-hudson-valley-in1797-firststate.html>

CORRIDOR TO THE HISTORIC 1825 CELL BLOCK

Design Intent

A purpose-built corridor provides secure access to the prison's prime interpretive asset. Visitors are introduced to a number of 19th century individuals who visited Sing Sing as a popular tourist destination, leaving behind their observations in the form of diary entries, letters and published works. Two of the most famous — Frenchmen Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont — serve as the primary guides to the prison through numerous firsthand reports. During their visit, they pored over archival records, examined architectural plans, toured the entire site and interviewed numerous individuals with "the intention of examining [the prison] from top to bottom." Their words will be supplemented by the voices of Warden Thomas Mott Osborne (who disguised himself as a prisoner), journalists and writers, social scientists, formerly incarcerated persons and ordinary citizens on day trips from New York City.

These first-hand observations will be enhanced by glimpses of historic prison scenes witnessed through stereoscopic viewers, similar to the way that 19th century tourists were allowed to peer through peepholes in the prison wall for the charge of twenty-five cents. Thus, interpretation subtly introduces the idea of Sing Sing as an enduring tourist attraction and curiosity—as well as poses the question of a prisoner's right to privacy.

Content and Assets

- Historic and stereoscopic views of the 19th-century prison
- *On the Penitentiary System and its Application in France*, authored by Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville
- Observations of the 19th century prison by Thomas Mott Osborne (warden disguised as prisoner), New York newspaper journalists, guards, convicts and others

WITHIN THE WALLS: THE HISTORIC 1825 CELL BLOCK

Design Intent

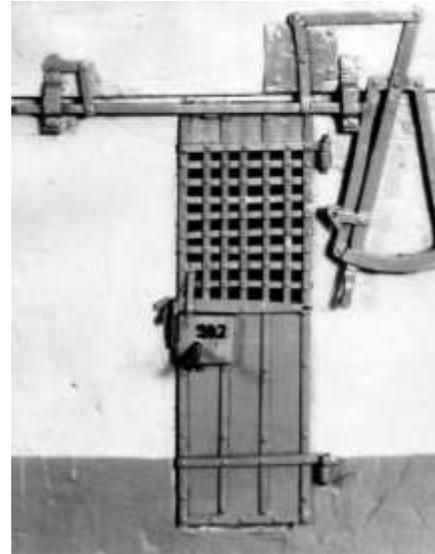
A fundamental goal of the Sing Sing interpretive experience will be to provide first-hand access to the prime historic asset, the 1825 Cell Block. When visitor access becomes feasible, interpretation at the Cell Block ruin will enable visitors to envision how life functioned within the walls and the impact of the building's architectural design upon its inmates. A recreated cell accessed through a replica cell door, which visitors may unlock, will provide the tangible, immersive experience of being incarcerated in a small 3.5' x 7' space.

Augmented-reality digital media viewers will swivel and pan to provide expansive views of a digitally reconstructed cell block, layering historic photographs on top of the existing ruin, and providing supplemental digital experiences such as primary source recollections of life inside the 1825 cell block from prisoners and correction officers, interviews with contemporary subject matter experts, architectural reconstructions, question-and-answer interpretations, etc. This digital reconstruction could be accompanied by a tactile scale model that can be viewed and discussed by groups or used by docents.

The relationship of the prison to the quarry and the hard labor required to extract the building materials could also be brought fully to bear through 3D tactile displays of stone-working and other construction techniques.



Panorama, interior prison yard (Westchester County Historical Society, G-04841)



View down the original cellblock, with guards (Westchester County Historical Society, M-2095)
Cell block door (Via Dana White/ Ossining HS)
Pepsi Max augmented reality viewer at bus stop

Content and Assets

- Animated 3D architectural reconstructions showing building stages
- Original architectural drawings (NYHS) showing 800 stacked cells
- Touchable materials and models showing construction techniques
- Modernization projects over time, expansion of the 1825 Cell Block to six levels, prison complex, building of the wall around the prison
- Moving of prisoners out of Cell Block in 1943, fire in 1980s
- Further research to be undertaken with the Ossining Historical Society



Film stills from movies shot in Sing Sing

THE BIG HOUSE: SING SING, 1914-1972

Design Intent

Taking advantage of the soaring multiple levels the 1936 Powerhouse offers, a series of exhibits occupy a range of tiers and spaces to evoke “The Big House” of the 20th century and the era in which Sing Sing became a modern cultural icon.

An array of large-scale objects and set pieces is distributed across The Big House’s second-floor gallery, preserving the open feel and views through windows. The pieces serve as touchstones to themes and events that characterized Sing Sing and might include:

- A replica section of a New York Central railroad car that allows visitors to travel along with the newly convicted as they embark on the sobering process of heading to one of the most notorious prisons in the nation.
- A prison bus of the kind used to transport inmates around the prison complex serves as a setting to cover the prison’s growing footprint, daily life, routines and restrictions.
- A tableau of Warden Thomas Mott Osborne’s or Lewis Lawes’s desk (complete with barred window), delving into the impact of an effective warden’s leadership and reforms that turned Sing Sing into a model prison. Osborne’s accounts of going undercover to investigate conditions by disguising himself as a prison will be featured.
- A recreated isolation cell, reminding visitors that even as it underwent reform, Sing Sing has always been, first and foremost, a penitentiary for convicted felons and an *agent of punishment*.



Potential large-scale objects or set pieces: train car, prison bus, isolation cell, warden's desk

Five prisoners being escorted via train to Sing Sing (www.gettyimages.com)

Warden Lewis Lawes in his office (Lewis E. Lawes Papers, Lloyd Sealy Library Special Collections, John Jay College of Criminal Justice CUNY)

James Moran enters Sing Sing, exterior view (www.historicimages.com)

Isolation cell model (Lewis E. Lawes Papers, Lloyd Sealy Library Special Collections, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY)

Potential additional topics, objects and reproductions in this exhibit bring to life the stories and facets of life in Sing Sing; they could cover the Mutual Welfare League's prison economy, internal court system and programs or the Black Sheep prisoner sports teams and their games against greats like Babe Ruth.

Visitors are invited to traverse two mezzanines or catwalks that overlook the space. By leveraging this vantage point, interpretation might cover the 1936 Powerhouse itself and note its relationship to the bigger prison complex.

The catwalks also provide access to three tiers of re-created cell blocks. Constructed in the 20th century (but remarkably similar to the 1825 Cell Block's design), the cells depict living conditions in Sing Sing and bring visitors face-to-face with some of the prison's most notorious prisoners. Throughout, primary sources as well as first-person histories from prisoners, correction officers and wardens alike, balance perspectives and throw into high relief the differences between the prison's realities and its mythic legends, particularly those created by popular media. The exhibit might also balance the famous few with the multitude of *every day* prisoners through an array of prison photos or mugshots coupled with statistics on the number of years prisoners have accumulated—a nod to Warden Lewis Lawes's telling book, *20,000 Years in Sing Sing*.

A theater provides a space to explore how media attention both created and fed an intriguing and even thrilling image of Sing Sing that has survived to the

present day. Programming might cover Sing Sing's role as a key feature on New York City newspaper reporters' daily beats, Warden Lawes's astute use of the radio, the tell-all books that have given readers a look at life on the inside and the hugely popular Hollywood films that have cemented Sing Sing in the popular imagination.

Content and Assets

The Big House

- Getting to Sing Sing, new prisoner intake ritual

"Do good, make good"

- Progressive Era changes instituted by Warden Thomas Mott Osborne and the move to replace brutality with earned privileges, abolition of lockstep and prison stripes, freedom with responsibility
- Concept that "liberty alone fits a man for liberty"
- Mutual Welfare League and prisoner-led initiatives

Rebuilding Sing Sing: Warden Lewis Lawes and the Era of Reform

- Lawes's books, radio program, innovations, opposition to the death penalty
- All games are "home" games: Sports at Sing Sing, including the baseball team plays the New York Yankees and Babe Ruth, and the Black Sheep Mutual Welfare League football team
- Physical rebuilding and expansion
- Massive A and B Blocks added
- Powerhouse: the 1936 structure in which visitors stand, its uses, relationship to the Death House



Mutual Welfare League Band (Via Dana White, "A Brief History of Sing Sing: From Elam Lynds to the Rosenbergs")

Prison library (www.gettyimages.com. ID 107877004)



Sing Sing Black Sheep football game program (www.correctionhistory.org)

Mutual Welfare League "Do Good Make Good" token (reference)





Sing Sing on the silver screen (reference screen captures and film posters)

Sing Sing in the Movies Theater

- Media attention from New York City's newspapers
- Hollywood films: *The Big House*, *Up the River*, *Angels with Dirty Faces*, *20,000 Years in Sing Sing*, *Alias: Jimmy Valentine*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, Warner Brothers "Big House Bunny", *Dick Tracy Show* (episode 24), *Analyze That*
- Performances and famous visitors, including Ma Mabley, Charlie Chaplin, BB King, Joan Baez
- Warner Brothers builds a gymnasium at the prison in exchange for filming rights

Locked up at Sing Sing: Famous Prisoners

- Charles "Lucky" Luciano
- Lewis Lepke Buchalter (Murder, Inc.)
- Willie Sutton
- Charles E. Chapin, the Rose Man of Sing Sing
- Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, A-bomb spies
- Albert Fish

- Ruth Snyder
- Martha M. Place, first woman to die by electric chair, 1899
- Lonely Hearts Killers: Raymond Fernandez and Martha Beck
- James Larkin
- David Berkowitz (“Son of Sam”)
- A prison for New York City, Sing Sing’s urban prisoners
- Perspectives from “Old Timers”, oral histories from correction officers (See Sing Sing Oral History: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3hpRTVdQLO)



Top: General prison population mugshots, Willie Sutton Bottom: James Larkin, Lewis Buchalter, Albert Fish

Not Locked Up at Sing Sing: Escapes

- Prison has been noted as being fundamentally “unsecure” due to its proximity to both rail and river routes out
- Hijacking freight trains, sewing themselves into mattresses, jumping trains when on leave for funerals
- Joseph Riordan’s and Charles McGale’s 1940 attempt, which cost the lives of correction officer John Hartye and Ossining Officer James Fagan

- Seymour Snyder escape from work release program, 1964

"20,000 Years at Sing Sing" Wall

- Mugshots or prison photographs of thousands of *everyday* prisoners



View of the death chamber (Patrick Burns/The New York Times); 20,000 Years in Sing Sing promotional image (Lewis E. Lawes Papers, Lloyd Sealy Library Special Collections, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY)

THE LAST MILE: EXECUTION AT SING SING

Design Intent

Thematically and chronologically tied to “The Big House” exhibits on the floor below, a discrete exhibit area covering executions at Sing Sing sits on the third floor. Interpretation chronicles the application of capital punishment at the prison, including the development of electrocution as a more humane means of execution as well as the controversies surrounding its use. Visitors are afforded a look inside the “last mile” corridor leading up to the Death House as well as key rooms within, such as the room containing the electric chair, the gallery for observers and the autopsy room. Visitors learn the stories of some of the 614 prisoners executed there, including famous cases, such as the Rosenbergs, Lewis Buchalter and Albert Fish as well as hear the perspectives of executioners.

The exhibit also examines the issue of capital punishment itself, its abolition in New York State and its current status. Rather than take a position on the issue, interpretation will equip visitors with a context in which to evaluate their own assumptions and beliefs, and form their own conclusions concerning this controversial issue.

Because of its self-contained location on the third floor, visitors may bypass this exhibit.



Content and Assets

A More Humane Method

- Replacement of hanging with electrocution, perfected by Edison scientists
- First use of the electric chair: Arthur Kemmler at Auburn

The Sing Sing Death House

- Moving of all state executions to Sing Sing, 1914
- Process of execution: the last meal and the “last mile”
- Role of the executioner, chaplain, witnesses and others involved
- Stories of some of the 614 prisoners executed at Sing Sing before retiring the chair in 1963

Capital Punishment

- Definition and sides of the debate

Status of the Death Penalty Across the United States

- What is cruel and unusual punishment? *Furman v. Georgia*, 1972



Ruth Snyder’s electrocution on the front page of the Daily News, January 13, 1928 (www.time.com)
 Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (Via Dana White, “A Brief History of Sing Sing: From Elam Lynds to the Rosenbergs”)
 NY Daily Mirror covers the Lonely Hearts Killers, March 8, 1951 (New York Public Library)
 Potential objects or recreations: straps and restraints (reference images)
 Executions register (Up the River: Sing Sing, downtown Ossining exhibit)



The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Exploring Causes and Consequences
http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CLAJ/Growth_of_Incarceration/index.htm

Portraits from "I Am More Than My Record" project
<http://morethanmyrecord.tumblr.com/>

Video visitation of prisoners
 (reference images)

ONE IN 100: INCARCERATION IN AMERICA

Design Intent

After exploring nearly 200 years of one prison’s history, exhibits turn the focus to the larger questions and controversies surrounding incarceration throughout the United States. This thought-provoking end piece seeks to examine the recent history of imprisonment and its impact beyond a prison’s walls. The goal of interpretation is to lay out facts, trace trends and, by providing opportunities for feedback, ask visitors to use what they have seen at Sing Sing to weigh in on the role of prisons in society. Changing exhibit areas within the gallery and easily updateable and/or real-time displays allow the exhibit to remain current and topical.

Content and Assets

1 in 100 Adults in the United States is Behind Bars

- High impact statistical data summary of incarceration in the United States and at Sing Sing
- Sing Sing in national context of the prison system
- Jail vs. prison, state vs. federal
- Built-in ability for changing and updating, tracking change over time

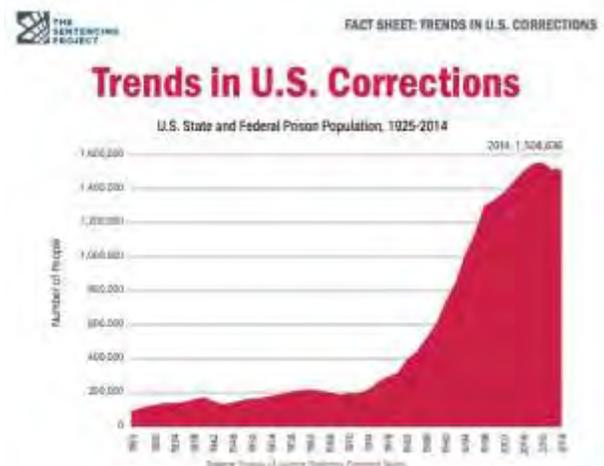
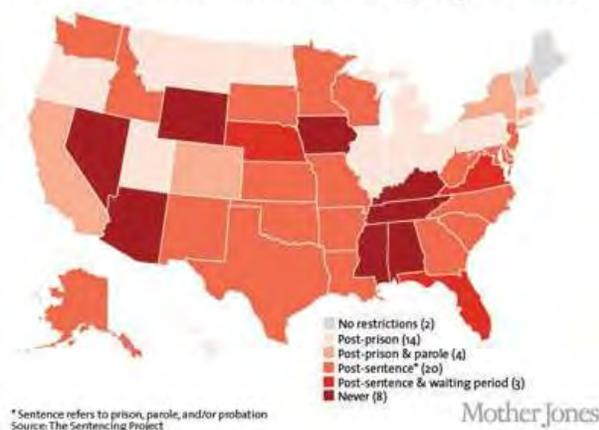
Collateral Damage

- Families left without a parent, spouse, sibling, breadwinner
- Communities left without contributing, voting, educated members
- How long is a felon a felon? Loss of rights, status
- Lost opportunities for education and employment

Dialogue and Debate Surrounding Why Rates are So High

- Race, poverty and prisons
- Recidivism
- What impact does prison have on crime?
- Does prison work? The exhibit might incorporate visitor feedback or another conversation-building means to pose this critical question.

When Do Felons Get Their Voting Rights Back?



Voting rights infographic, dated February 2014 (Mother Jones: <http://www.motherjones.com/mojo/2014/02/felony-convictions-voting-rights-black-american-african-disenfranchisement>)
Trends in U.S. Corrections Fact Sheet graph (The Sentencing Project: <http://sentencingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Trends-in-US-Corrections.pdf>)

Programmatic Design and Preliminary Facility Planning

The design recommendations and visitor experience proposed within this document are based on a shared set of assumptions that have emerged from discussions with the client, the stakeholders, Lord Cultural Resources project staff, and other team members. These assumptions are:

- The Powerhouse building outside the prison wall will house the SSPM and provide the primary visitor experience.
- A downtown visitor center will be the first point of contact for visitors arriving by car. The Visitor Center and a new adjacent parking garage will be funded separately from the museum project. The garage would provide parking space for museum visitors and additional parking for visitors to the downtown. A small amount of parking, perhaps 80-90 spaces, will be available at the Powerhouse museum site.
- The downtown visitor center will provide orientation to the prison museum, a small retail outlet and shuttle service to the Powerhouse building. The visitor center will be staffed by the town and not the SSPM. Orientation might include a small exhibit and/or a short film on the significance and history of Sing Sing Correctional Facility to encourage visitation and occupy visitors waiting for the shuttle. The Visitor Center will also include interpretation of other nearby points of interest and visitor venues. The retail outlet will be a secondary site to the main gift store within the museum, and may include town-related merchandise, not just prison museum merchandise.
- Visitors arriving by train or boat will walk to the SSPM or take the shuttle. The Powerhouse building is within easy walking distance of the MetroNorth rail station and the ferry dock. The shuttle from the downtown visitor center can also make a stop at these sites for visitors who are not easily able to make the walk or to accommodate visitors arriving in inclement weather.
- Site improvements will be made along the walking path from the waterfront. A clear and safe route will be laid out so that pedestrian and vehicular traffic are kept separate. Amenities such as shuttle bus shelter, plantings, benches and artistic and/or interpretive elements may also be added.
- The entrance to the Powerhouse building will be at the garage structure on the north end. The garage facade on the north end is nearest for walkers, features three large doors and is appropriately monumental. Signage here will be visible at a distance.
- The 1825 Cellblock will be part of the visitor experience. This historic structure is the largest potential artifact that the museum has access to and could be a huge draw for visitors.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The site and physical layout of the proposed museum, the topics to be interpreted, and the presence of an adjacent maximum security prison pose many challenges, but also suggest opportunities for creating a unique visitor experience.

- New York City is nearby. Huge numbers of tourists — national and international — are attracted to Manhattan each year. While most will want to stay in Manhattan or the nearby boroughs, there will also be some willing or wanting to venture out to more far-flung sites, if the offering is sufficiently captivating. The fact that Ossining is just a short and inexpensive train ride away makes the site particularly appealing.
- **Sing Sing Prison is historically part of the “New York Story.”** Most of the prisoners at Sing Sing were New York City-based criminals. Indeed, at one time, reporters from the New York papers covered Sing Sing as part of their daily beat. Marketing Sing Sing Prison Museum as a unique lens on the workings of New York City could attract tourists — particularly tourists that have visited New York many times before — who are eager to see the city from a different and unique angle.
- Ossining is on the Hudson River. The tourists and residents that are attracted to the urbanism of New York City, also may crave the wide open spaces and scenic views of the Hudson as a respite from the density. The option of taking a cruise up the Hudson to visit Sing Sing Prison Museum may be particularly appealing. Similarly, the potential for beautiful views upriver from the rooftop of the museum should not be under-emphasized as a potential draw.
- The excursion to Sing Sing Prison Museum can be an experience. The train ride or boat ride from New York City to Ossining may be part of the appeal of Sing Sing Prison Museum for some tourists. The “fun factor” of these modes of transport could be increased with the addition of specially-designed tickets, themed environments in train cars or on the boat, dramatic guides or interpreters on board (possibly in period prisoner/guard/warden costumes), and interpretation in seat backs for the traveler to peruse (e.g., prisoner and warden biographies, history fun facts, themed quizzes and games).
- Sing Sing is an operating Maximum Security Prison. Unlike many other prison museums, visitors to Sing Sing come within close range of not only potentially dangerous criminals, but also are likely to cross paths with prison staff and visiting family members. The lighthearted fun of the transport scenarios described above needs to be tempered by an acknowledgement and understanding that many lives are deeply impacted by crime and incarceration. Interpretation needs to be reviewed by these critical stakeholders to ensure that the right tone is taken, and that the prison experience is fairly, accurately and authentically conveyed.

Indeed, the potential exists to not only invite the prison community to review interpretation, but actually deliver it through a presence and role within the walls of the museum. Formerly incarcerated people, retired guards and family members may serve as

docents, security guards, ticket sellers, guest lecturers, or in other positions. Multimedia presentations can include the firsthand testimony of those closest to the experience of crime and its punishment. Real prison stories and programs can be prominently featured and interpreted by those most involved. While, for some visitors, this may cause discomfort or anxiety, most — we believe — will be appreciative of the unmediated access to authentic prison experiences.

- The 1825 Cell Block is difficult to access. While the 1825 Cell Block is undoubtedly the most historically compelling artifact available to the project, the long walk to this artifact need not be uneventful or boring. The ritual quality of all visitors moving towards an end goal along a narrow passageway is sure to build anticipation and heighten the sense of “the group.” The firsthand observations of 19th century visitors, such as de Tocqueville and de Beaumont, will be strung along the corridor and accompanied by stereoscopic views of the prison to simulate a visit to the prison during this period and enliven the journey.
- The 1825 Cell Block is a ruin. The cellblock currently consists only of stone walls which are in need of preservation and stabilization. Rather than cover over the austere beauty of the stonework with ersatz interior fittings, we would favor allowing visitors to contemplate the structure as a ruin first. Interpretive panels at an overlook and a 3D model recreation can help visitors to fill in the scene using their own imaginations. Augmented reality viewers can take the next step by overlaying a custom illustration of “the way it was” atop a framed view of the stone walls. Multimedia programs that include historical information about the structure, interviews with subject matter experts and footage of the structure’s renovation, can further enhance visitor’s appreciation.

PROGRAMMATIC DESIGN

Available Building Space

The spaces available to the SSPM exist within four distinct building volumes. The Powerhouse building contains three of these volumes:

- Garage: This one-story space features a soaring trussed roof with skylights. Three arched openings face the train station and dock, and provide a suitably monumental entry facade.
- West Bay: This one-story side bay off of the garage space features large windows on the north and west facades. The presence of the windows suggests that this building be used for support spaces such as restrooms, classrooms and administration offices rather than as exhibit space.
- Main Powerhouse Building: This multi-story building features huge monumental windows on all facades, a skylight at the top of the building, and a rooftop deck with beautiful views of the river. The building connects to the garage space on the north. The windows on the southern facade look onto prison grounds and will need to be blocked.

The one-story side bay east of the garage (aka East Bay) houses mechanical equipment essential to the functioning of the prison. Most of this bay is not occupiable by the SSPM, although a small room at the southern end and the basement accessible from this space may be available for storage, collections or other museum support functions.

The fourth building volume that is potentially available to the SSPM is the 1825 Cell Block, the first prison building constructed on site. It exists as an open-air, stone-walled “ruin” located at some distance from the Powerhouse building cluster. This historic building is the most important artifact available to the SSPM and would greatly add to the *authenticity of place*. The 1825 Cell Block lies within the bounds of the operating prison and would need to be accessed by a long corridor paralleling the train tracks. The difficulties in incorporating this building include distance from the Powerhouse, narrowness of the circulation corridor needed to access the building, obstacles in ensuring safety for visitors traveling within the bounds of the prison and in securing potential prisoner escape routes. In addition, there is the costs of constructing the circulation corridor and exhibit spaces within the Cell Block, costs of stabilizing the stone walls and costs of structures and enclosures needed to separate visitors from prisoners.

If these difficulties can be overcome, then the 1825 Cell Block could become the high point of the visitor experience. The consultant recommends that the access corridor to the 1825 Cell Block as well as an exhibit space overlooking the Cell Block interior be climate-controlled so that visitors can comfortably visit the space without the need to carry coats or rain gear. An open-air observation deck off of the exhibit space, outfitted with additional interpretive exhibits, would provide a means for visitors to get a closer look and/or photograph the ruin during good weather.

SPACE PROGRAM SUMMARY

Interior Zones		Net Total NSF	% of Total NSF
A	Public Non-Collection Space	6,550	11.1%
B	Public Collection Space	34,636	58.8%
C	Non-Public Collection Space	1,250	2.1%
D	Non-Public Non-Collection Space	1,300	2.2%
E	Non-Programmable Spaces	15,189	25.8%
O	Outdoor Space		
TOTALS		58,925	100.0%

Interior Zones		Net Total NSF	% of Total NSF
A Public Non-Collection Space			
A1	LOBBY		
A1.1	Welcome and Orientation (H+R 1.1)	500	
A2	VISITOR AMENITIES		
A2.1	Retail (H+R 1.8)	780	
A2.2	Public Restrooms	1,015	
A2.3	Multipurpose Gathering Space (H+R 4.1)	1,670	
A3	PROGRAMMING, EVENTS and EDUCATION		
A3.1	Sing Sing in the Movies Theater (H+R 2.3)	790	
A3.2	Theater (H+R 3.2)	1,190	
A3.3	Classrooms	605	
Subtotal A - Public Non-Collection Space		6,550	
B Public Collection Space			
B1	EXHIBITS		
B1.1	Convicts and Community: Sing Sing Prison Today (H+R 1.2)	1,040	
B1.2	Instruments of Punishment (H+R 1.3)	331	
B1.3	Stone Upon Stone: Sing Sing 1825-1914 (H+R 1.4)	5,060	
B1.4	Corridor to 1825 Cellblock (H+R 1.5)	12,900	
B1.5	1825 Cellblock Site (H+R 1.6)	1,520	
B1.6	1 in 100: Incarceration in America 1972-2016 (H+R 1.7)	1,040	
B1.7	The Big House: Sing Sing 1914-1972 (H+R 2.1)	3,260	
B1.8	Locked Up (3-tiered cellblock recreation) (H+R 2.2)	4,300	
B1.9	The Last Mile: Execution at Sing Sing (H+R 3.1)	1,930	
B1.10	Changing Exhibits (H+R 3.3)	3,255	
Subtotal B - Public Collection Space		34,636	
C Non-Public Collection Space			
C1	COLLECTIONS STORAGE		
C1.1	Collections Storage	1,250	
Subtotal C - Non-Public Collection Space		1,250	
D Non-Public Non-Collection Space			
D1	ADMINISTRATION		
D1.1	Admin Program	1,165	
D1.2	Kitchen	135	
Subtotal D - Non-Public Non-Collection Space		1,300	
E Non-Programmable Spaces			
E1	NON-PUBLIC CIRCULATION		
E1.1	First Floor	460	
E2	PUBLIC CIRCULATION		
E2.1	Stair 1	2,580	
E2.2	Stair 2	1,950	

Interior Zones		Net Total NSF	% of Total NSF
E2.3	Public Elevator	705	
E2.4	Mezzanine Catwalk - 3rd Floor Mezzanine	1,090	
E2.5	All Floors	4,484	
E3	INACCESSIBLE SPACES	1,770	
E4	MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL SPACES	2,150	
Subtotal E - Non-Programmable Spaces		15,189	
O	Outdoor Space		
O1	1825 Cell Block Overlook	884	
O2	80-90 Parking Spaces		
O3	Entrance Plaza		
Subtotal O - Outdoor Space			

LAYOUT OF MUSEUM SPACES

Each of the building spaces available has its own unique architectural characteristics. The program of museum spaces takes these factors into account in assigning functions.

The garage faces the path of travel for those arriving by foot from the train station, ferry dock or by shuttle bus from the downtown visitor center, and offers a monumental facade that provides a natural point of entry. Like the typical museum lobby, its central location allows it to function as a centrally-located hub for programmed spaces, a space of arrival and also a space to return to upon departure. Welcome/Orientation/Ticketing has been located directly behind the arched opening at the center and designated as the main entrance. The retail store location behind the other arched opening provides an attractive window display of wares, pleasant views from the store, the opportunity for the welcome desk to also service retail sales and a circulation path which steers visitors through the store upon exit, thereby increasing sales.

Because the garage has a beautiful trussed roof with skylights, the consultants' impulse was to keep this space as open as possible rather than dividing it into many separate spaces and running partitions up to the roof. The consultants located the contemporary exhibits in this location with the thought that they might be more exploratory and more closely resemble an art installation as opposed to historical exhibits which typically follow a chronological linear path requiring extensive partitioning. The consultants were also intrigued with the idea of starting the visitor experience with an upfront acknowledgement that visitors have arrived at an operating maximum security prison. While possibly running counter to visitors' perceptions of Sing Sing as a place with a storied past, the consultants felt that playing with visitor expectations could be an advantage.

The West Bay building has beautiful, large windows which are appropriate for administrative offices and/or meeting and classroom spaces, but which would be problematic for most

exhibits. For these reasons, the consultants have put most museum support spaces in this building.

The first floor of the Powerhouse building directly connects with the garage space, has lower ceilings than the upper stories and provides a doorway for accessing the 1825 Cell Block. Locating interpretation on the early years of the prison in this space means that visitors could receive historic context for the 1825 Cell Block prior to taking the long walk to visit the authentic site. Partitions in the gallery would direct visitors through chronological interpretation, ending with the 1825 Cell Block as a highlighting and concluding experience.

The second and third floors of the Powerhouse building feature dramatic vertical spaces with large, double-story windows. The views of the operating prison from windows on the south side of these floors would need to be blocked and/or obscured. The opportunity exists to recreate a 20th century multi-story cell block as an immersive experience, allowing visitors to “meet” prisoners who have been sentenced to Sing Sing within the individual cells and to “meet” the correction officers and prison staff who roam the hallways. This would provide a nice complement to the 1825 Cell Block ruin while meaningfully addressing visitors’ voyeuristic urges to “go to prison” and/or “be behind bars”. The decision was made to use a section of the double height space on the second floor for this purpose and to tie the cell block experience to the interpretation of the middle years of the prison (i.e. the reform period that runs roughly from 1914 through 1972). This period encompasses the *gangster* era and is responsible for Sing Sing’s worldwide notoriety, mainly through films set at the prison and shown within the SSPM in a theater with tiered stadium seating. The double height of the space at the northern section of the second floor provides a suitable location for displaying large set pieces related to this period in the prison’s history, including a train car used to transport prisoners, a warden’s desk, a prison bus, etc.

The “Electric Chair” exhibit then becomes a third floor gallery, seen after visitors have walked the corridors and walkways of the second floor cell block. To access the gallery, visitors must walk intentionally up the stairs, which heightens the ritual quality while also ensuring that visitors who do not wish to explore this controversial and sensitive material can bypass the experience.

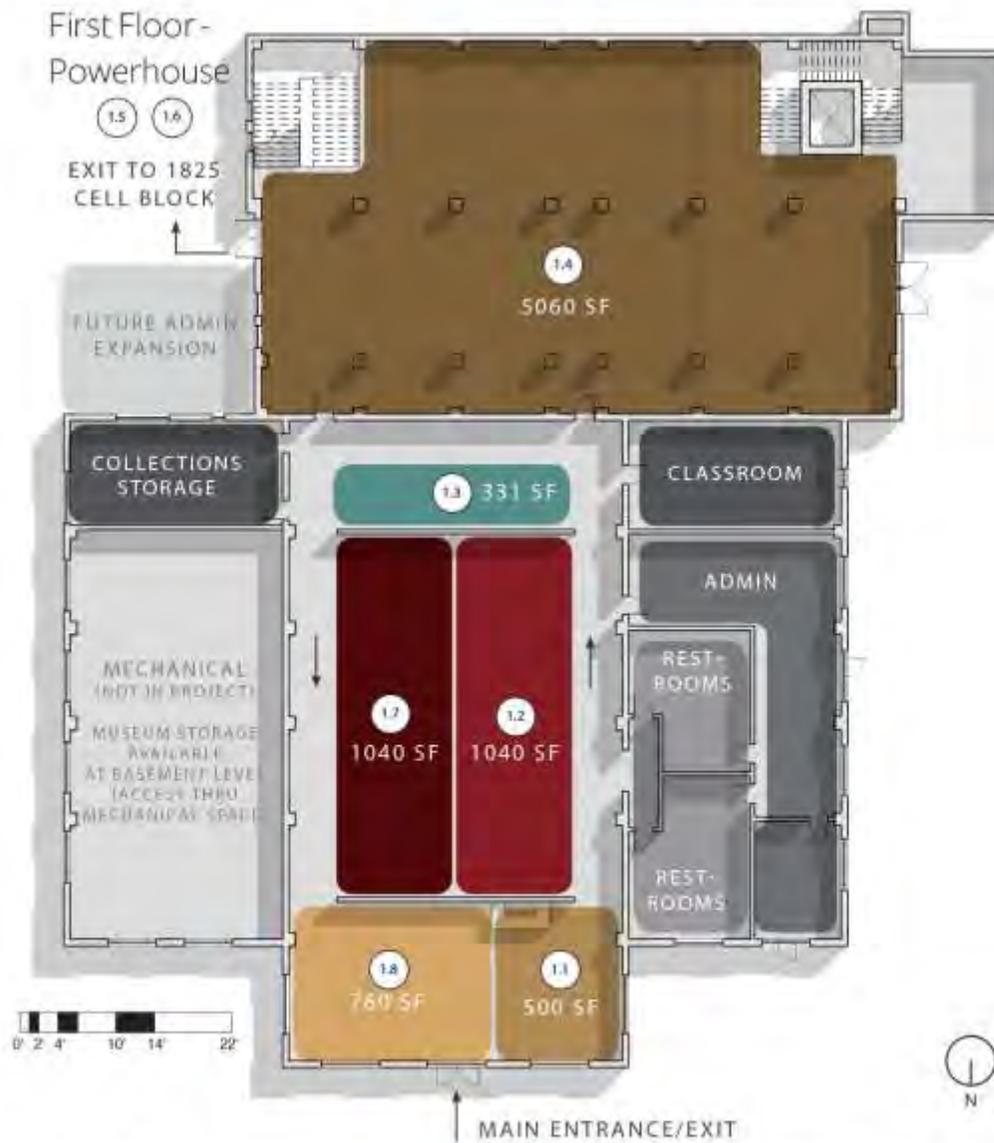
The remaining portion of the third floor is devoted to a changing exhibit and a larger sit-down theater. The views out of the windows and the double height of the changing exhibit gallery make it particularly appropriate for large scale art installations. Additionally, the location of the theater and adjacency to the changing exhibit space means it may be used as an adjunct to the exhibit or be its own separate destination.

The top floor of the main Powerhouse Building includes a long linear room with a north-facing skylight window wall and access to the roof deck and river views. This space would make a spectacular gathering space for public programs and special events, and could be rented out to provide revenue for museum operations. The space could also act in concert with the

Changing Exhibit Gallery below and be available for opening receptions, gallery talks and other special programs. Note that the skylight on this level would provide light to the Changing Exhibit Gallery below, which would be a fabulous feature for art shows.

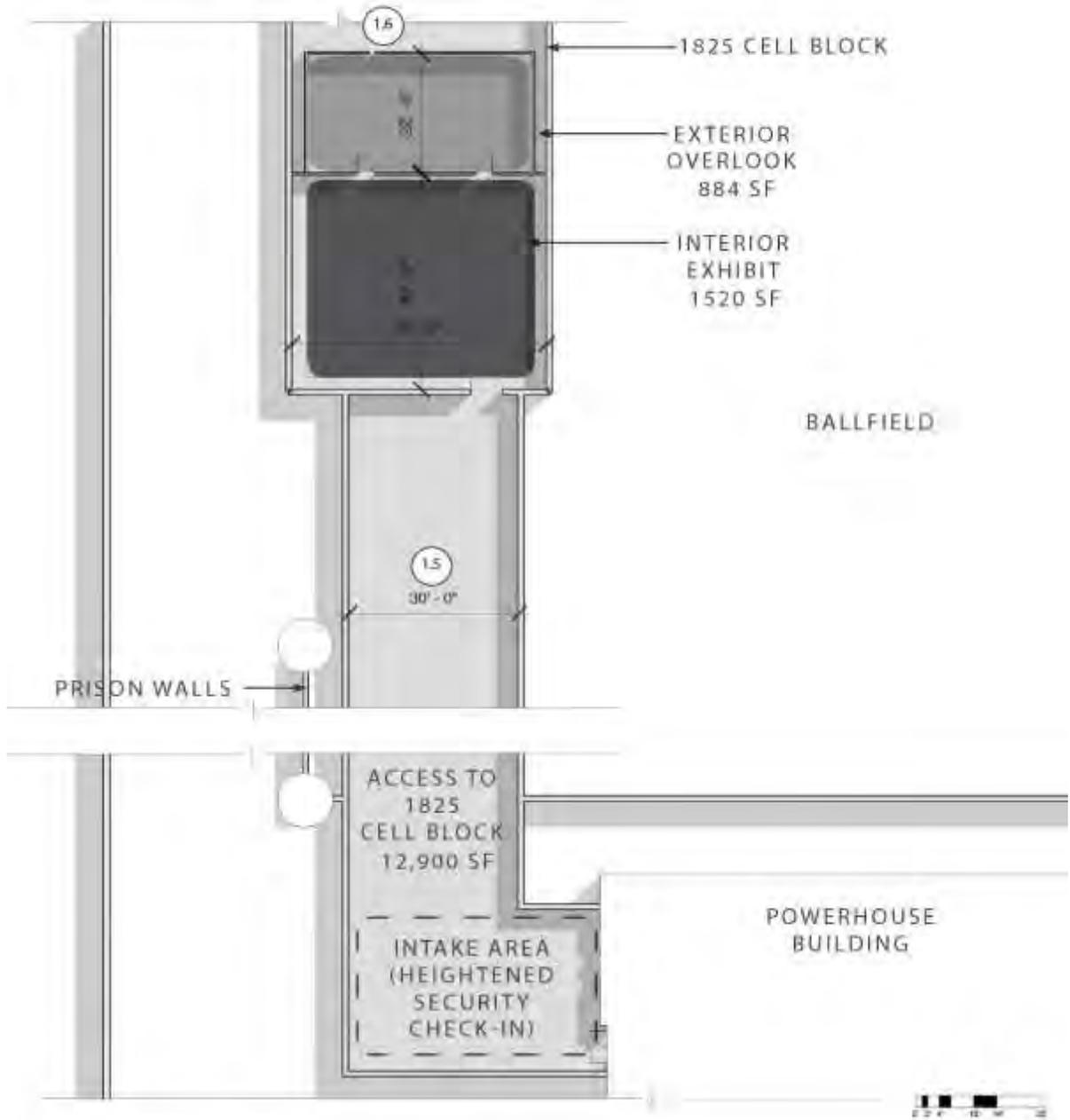
CONCEPTUAL DIAGRAMS

The conceptual diagrams provided on the following pages illustrate the programmatic use of each space, the functional adjacencies, and suggest circulation patterns between and among spaces.

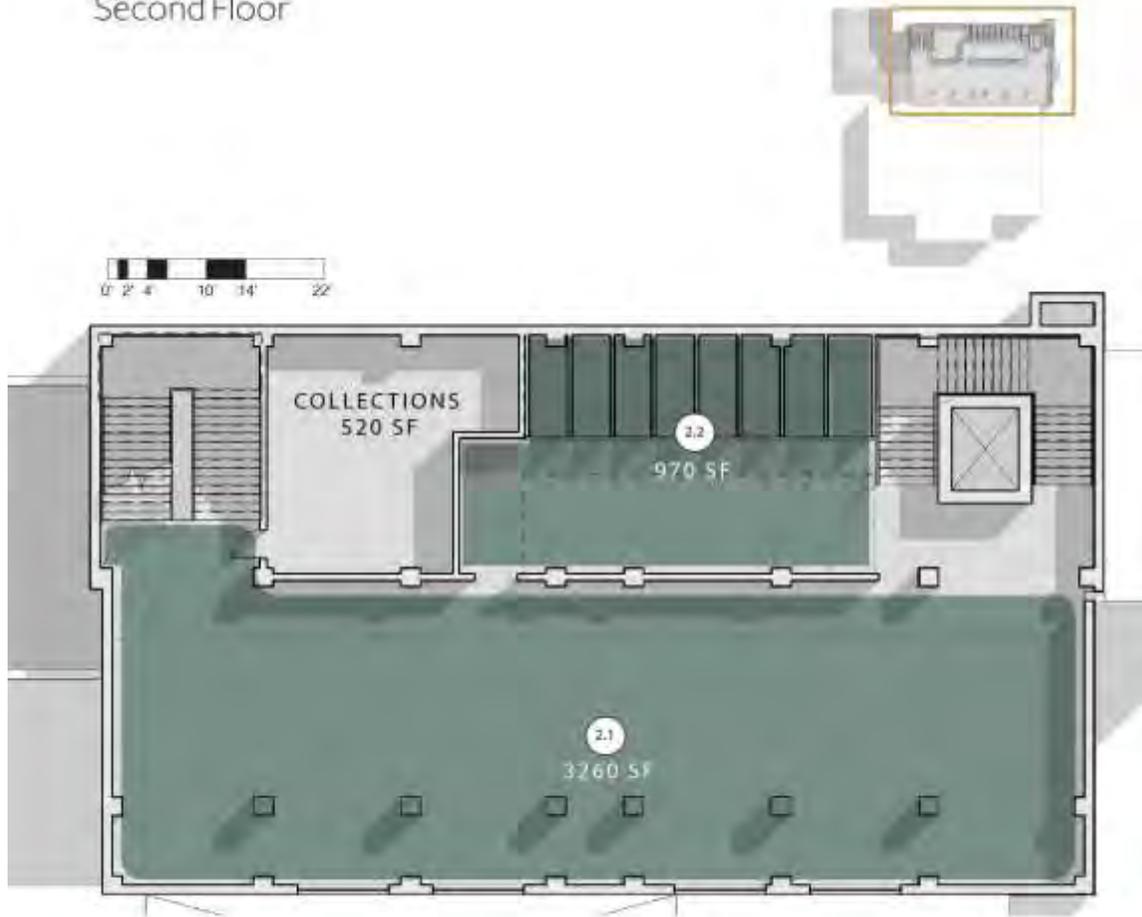


- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-----|--|
| 1.1 | Welcome and Orientation | 1.5 | Corridor to 1825 Cell Block |
| 1.2 | Sing Sing Prison Today | 1.6 | 1825 Cell Block site |
| 1.3 | Instruments of Punishment | 1.7 | 1 in 100: Incarceration in America, 1972-present |
| 1.4 | Stone Upon Stone: Sing Sing 1825-1914 | 1.8 | Retail |

1825 Cell Block

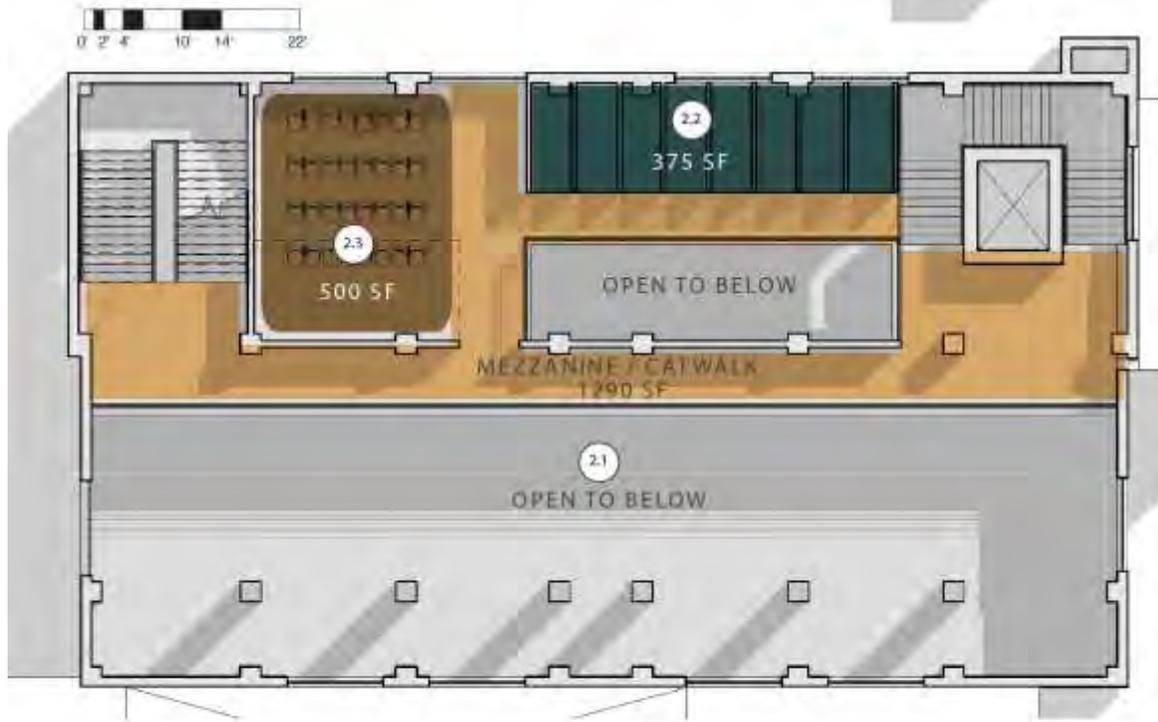


Second Floor



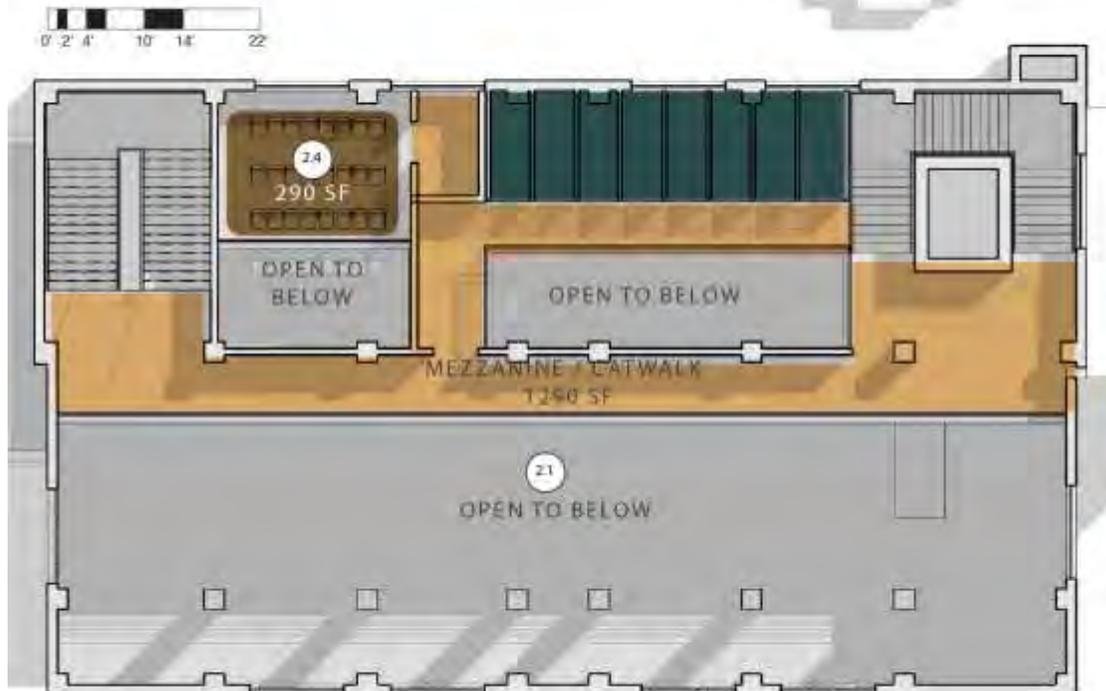
- 2.1 The Big House: Sing Sing 1914-1972
- 2.2 Locked Up (3-tiered cell block recreation)

Second Floor -
Mezzanine 1



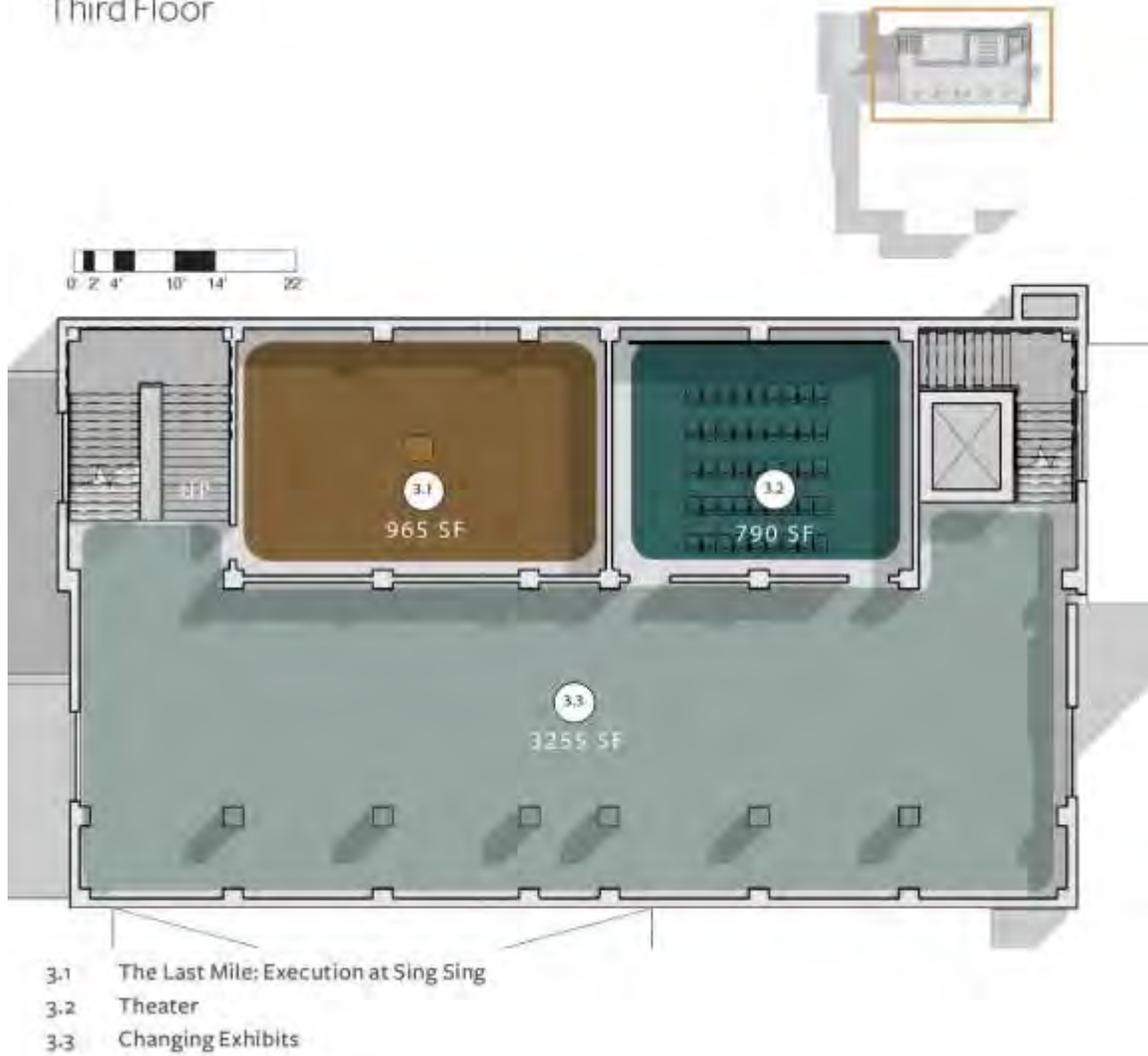
- 2.1 The Big House: Sing Sing 1914-1972
- 2.2 Locked Up (3-tiered cell block recreation)
- 2.3 Sing Sing in the Movies Theater

Second Floor -
Mezzanine 2

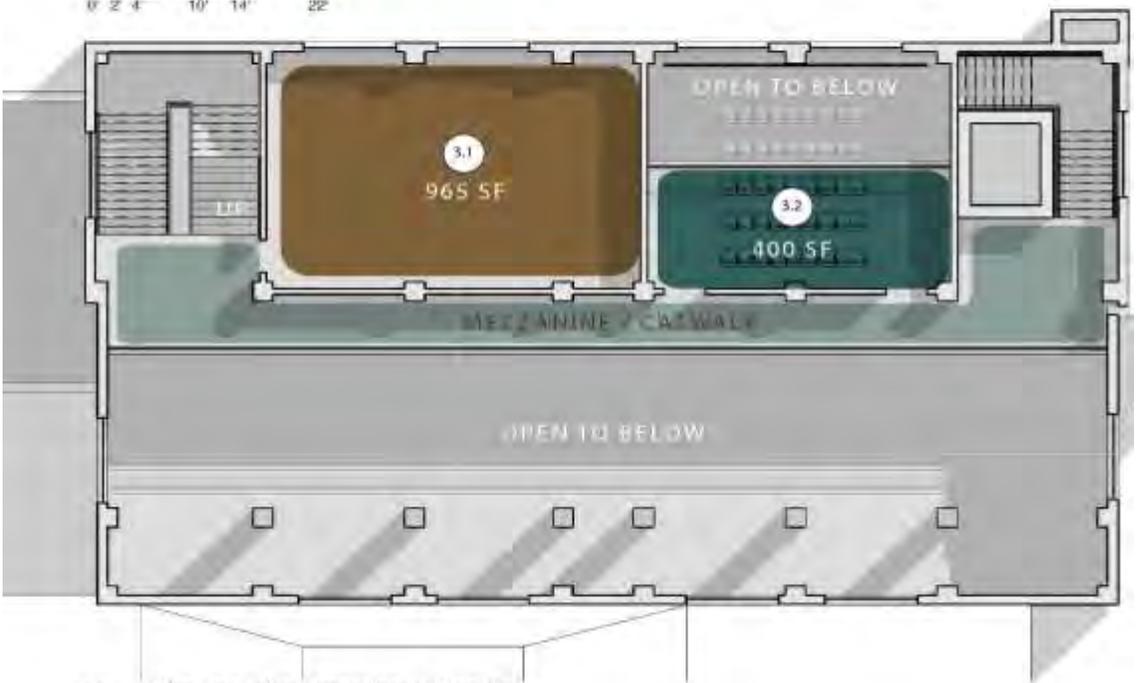


- 2.1 The Big House: Sing Sing 1914-1972
- 2.2 Locked Up (3-tiered cell block recreation)
- 2.3 Sing Sing in the Movies Theater

Third Floor

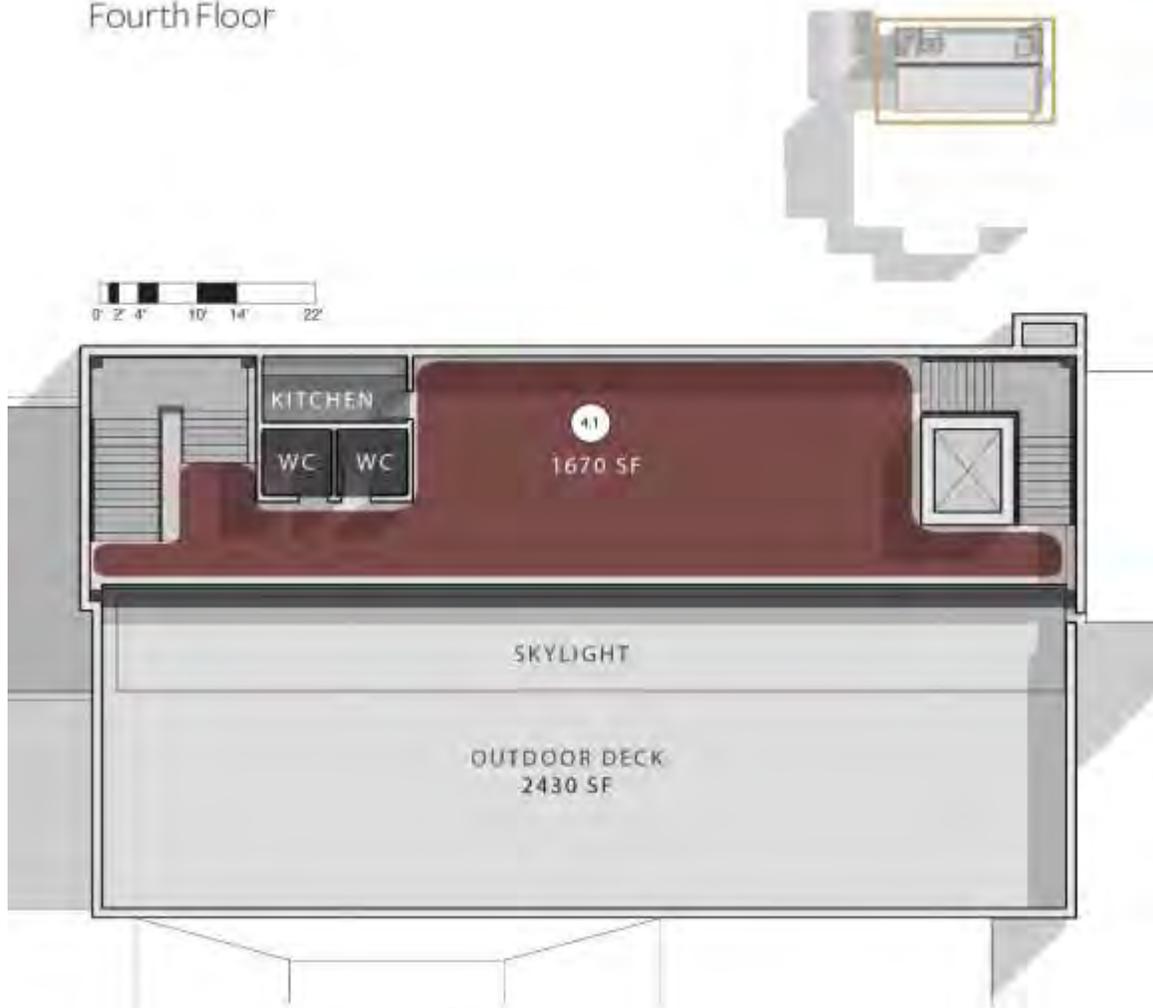


Third Floor -
Mezzanine



- 3.1 The Last Mile: Execution at Sing Sing
- 3.2 Theater
- 3.3 Changing Exhibits

Fourth Floor



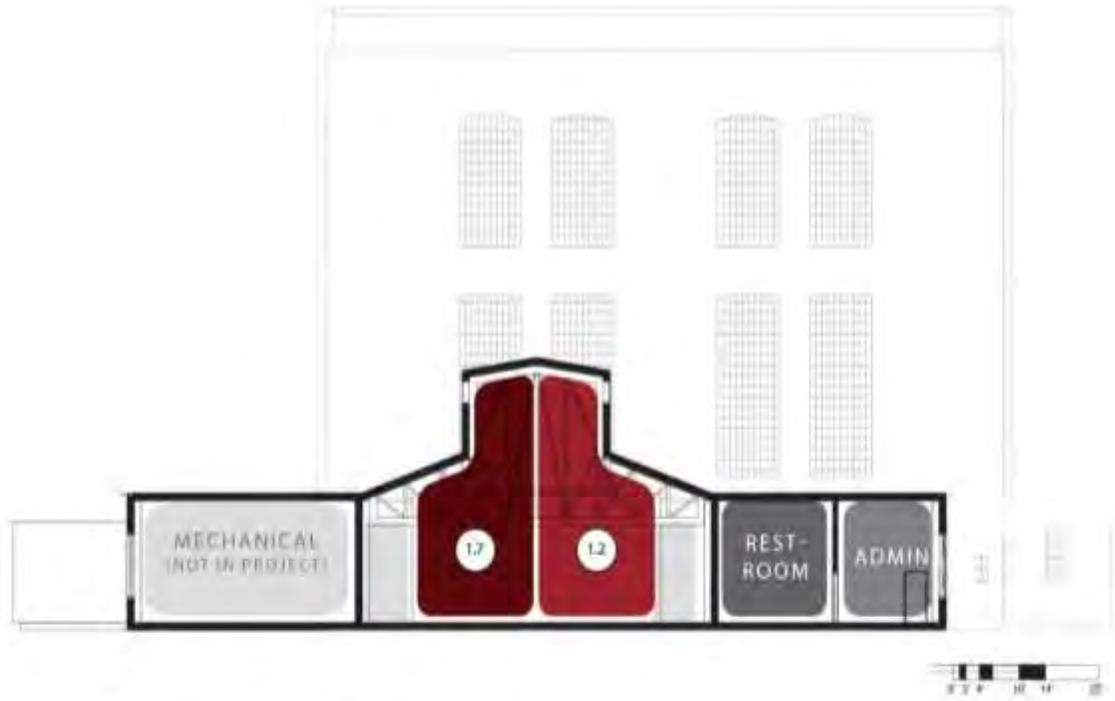
4.1 Multipurpose Gathering Space (indoors)

Section Views

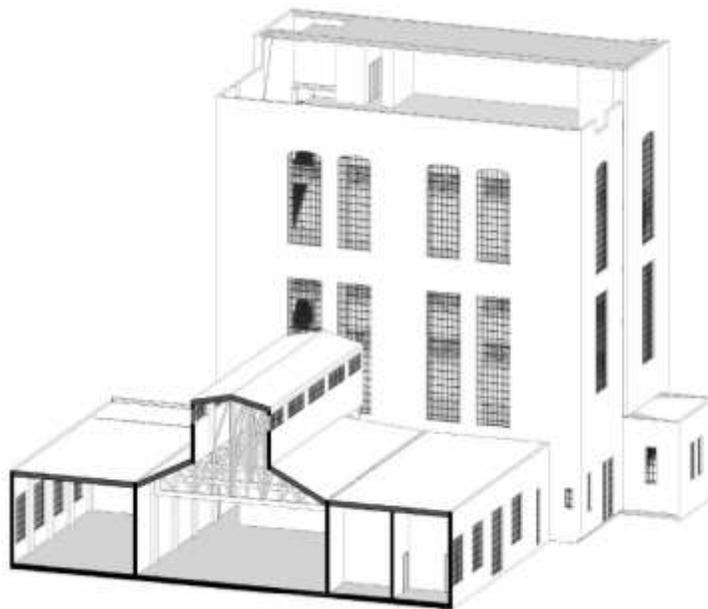


- | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 1.8 | Retail | 2.3 | Sing Sing in the Movies Theater |
| 1.3 | Instruments of Punishment | 3.1 | The Last Mile: Execution at Sing Sing |
| 1.4 | Stone Upon Stone: Sing Sing 1825-1914 | 3.3 | Changing Exhibits |
| 1.7 | 1 in 100: Incarceration in America, 1972-present | 4.1 | Multi-purpose Gathering Space |
| 2.1 | The Big House: Sing Sing 1914-1972 | | |

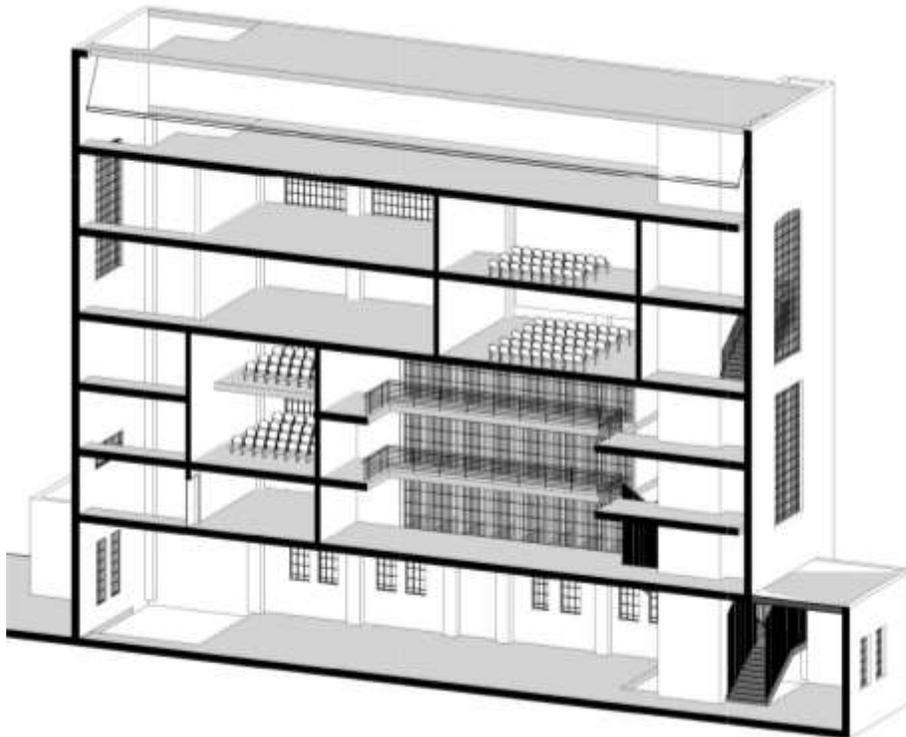
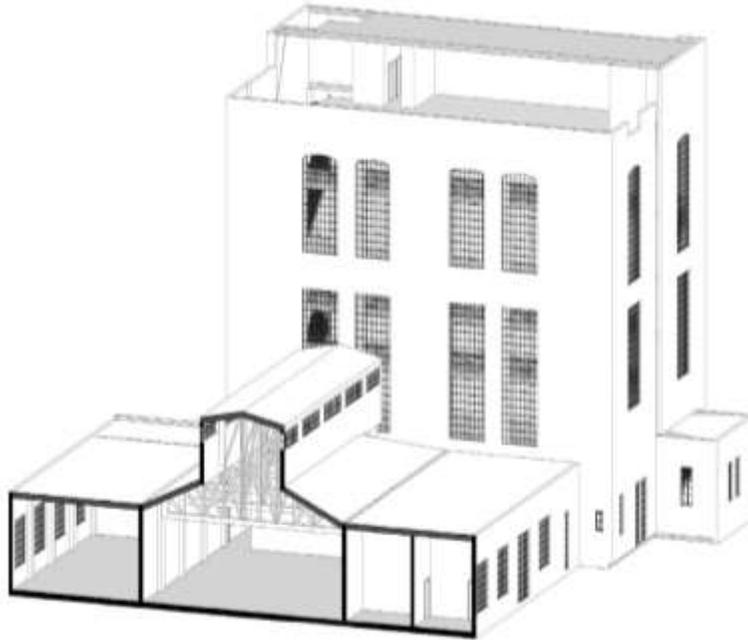
Section Views



- 1.2 Sing Sing Prison Today
- 1.7 1 in 100: Incarceration in America



Section Views



Operational Parameters

The following sections are included here as a record of the work completed in phase one of this project, to show the information that contributed to the recommendations in the Museum Program Plan. In order to become assumptions that will underlie the attendance, operating revenue and expense projections in the next phase of the study, each recommendation must either be approved, modified or rejected, and alternatives agreed upon. The key operational recommendations for the SSPM have been grouped into the following categories.

- Operating Schedule
- Admission Charges
- Retail Store
- Food Service
- Facility Rentals
- Membership
- Other Revenue Centers
- Target Markets and Strategies to Attract Them
- Governance and Staffing
- Other Operational Issues

OPERATING SCHEDULE

The consultants make the following recommendations:

- Although attendance levels are likely to be much lower during the cold weather months and there are some seasonal attractions in the region *year-round operation* for the SSPM is recommended. This reflects that it is an indoor attraction and that visits to the prisoners of Sing Sing Correctional Facility take place on a year-round basis. A year-round operation will also increase the economic development benefits of the project.
- *Evening operating hours for the general public are not recommended* because it is likely evening attendance levels could not justify the additional operating costs. Evening hours are assumed to be available to facility rentals and museum programs. *The consultants recommend a heavy program calendar as many diverse audiences – including those who work 9 a.m.-5 p.m. – will be reached through museum programs.*
- The consultants recommend following common museum patterns, which are also found in the region, of being *closed to the public for one day per week – Mondays.*
- *Reduced operating hours during the colder weather months is recommended.* This will help to control staffing and other operating costs.

- The recommended operating schedule is as follows, with opportunities for pre-booked school and other tour groups to attend outside these hours. An objective is to offer *consistent, easy-to-remember hours that would not change on a daily basis*:

Public Days/Hours	April through October	November through March
Tuesday to Sunday	10 a.m. to 5 p.m.	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

ADMISSION CHARGES

The consultants recommend the following:

- Admission to the SSPM should be *self-guided with the exception of the 1825 Cell Block*, which should be available only on scheduled guided tours for an additional charged amount.
- Access to the *visitor center components, whether downtown or integrated into the Powerhouse building, should be available for free*. This would include the lobby, restrooms, orientation film and retail store.
- Given the focus and nature of the SSPM, we recommend *free admission for children 12 and under and for school groups*; ideally, both will be sponsored.
- Those categorized as *indirect paid* include rentals, members and program visitors.
- Sponsorship should also be sought for *free admission provided to correction officers, their immediate families, those who are visiting prisoners and to formerly incarcerated persons and their immediate families*.
- *Incentives should be provided to attend during the colder weather months* when people are less likely to travel and to reflect a shorter open period.
- The definition of an *adult should be from ages 25-61* to recognize the price sensitivity of youth, particularly those not in university and no longer supported by their families. This allows for a youth rate from ages 13-24 and eliminates the need for a student rate.
- The definition of a *senior should be a person at age 62*, the first year that social security is available.
- The *surcharge for a guided tour of the 1825 Cell Block* is recommended at \$5.00 per person, no matter their ticket category, but free to SSPM members. The tour should be available only to those who have paid the regular admission charge.

- Recommended regular admission charges are as follows:

Regular Admission Charges	April through October	November through March
Adult (25- 61)	\$12.00	\$11.00
Senior (62+)	\$10.00	\$9.00
Youth (13-24)	\$8.00	\$7.00
Non-School Group (15 persons or more)	\$7.00	\$6.00
Child (12 and under)	\$0.00	\$0.00
School Group	\$0.00	\$0.00
Indirect Paid and Other Unpaid	\$0.00	\$0.00

RETAIL STORE

The consultants' recommendations and assumptions are as follows:

- The focus of the *product line should be on mass market items that reflect public familiarity with the Sing Sing brand*. However, there should also be serious books that reflect consideration of important issues of justice and incarceration in America.
- It is understood that Sing Sing prisoners no longer produce items that could be sold in the store, so *no prisoner-produced items* are assumed.
- *If there is a downtown visitor center, then retail items should be available at both it and the Powerhouse building*. If there is no downtown visitor center, then there would be only one retail store within the Powerhouse building and it would be larger than if there is also a retail store in a downtown visitor center.
- To limit staffing requirements, the *admissions and retail functions will be integrated* so that they can be handled by one staff person during slower attendance periods.
- Assuming there is a retail store in a downtown visitor center, ideally people returning to the visitor center from the SSPM will need to go through the retail store before they can get to their cars. This may not be practical given design considerations.

FOOD SERVICE

The consultants do not recommend allocating space to a restaurant or café for the SSPM. This reflects the limited space available in the Powerhouse building, the need to contribute to economic development by encouraging visitors to eat downtown or elsewhere in Ossining and because café or restaurant operations in museums are generally not significant profit centers.

Instead, *the consultants recommend discount food and retail coupons to downtown businesses valid on the date of the visit or the following day.*

FACILITY RENTALS

Whereas cafés or restaurants are primarily for visitor service and not for revenue generation, facility rentals are often very important sources of earned income. In addition, such rental opportunities tend to expose potential funders to the SSPM and, therefore, helps to increase contributed income as well. The interview process indicated mixed feelings regarding the revenue potential of the SSPM as a place for evening rentals. Some felt there was limited competition in and near Ossining and that it would be successful, especially if a rooftop facility with a waterfront view was developed. Others believed there was limited demand in the area and/or that having parties close to a prison was inappropriate, especially if the prisoners could hear music or other festivities.

- The consultants' recommendation is that there should be no initial investment in a rooftop rentals venue and that other spaces be utilized where practical.

MEMBERSHIP

The key issue here is whether or not the SSPM should develop a membership program. The main arguments for not doing so are the staff and other resources that need to be allocated to a membership program, and the discounts that need to be offered to members. Also understood is that membership is often a revenue center only in the upper-level membership categories, that the SSPM is likely to be a one-time visit for most people and that the value of lower-level membership will, therefore, be limited.

The main arguments in favor of a membership program are that the SSPM has an opportunity to be a focal point for serious discussion of the past, present and future of criminal justice and incarceration in America. Accordingly, this should lead to support from corporations, foundations and individuals for upper level membership. Upper level membership (say \$250 and higher) is also a stepping stone to moving supporters to donor categories. In addition, membership is a performance measure expected by funders, both private and public.

- Although the consultants do not anticipate a large membership base, it is recommended that implementation of a membership program include both lower- and upper-level categories.
- Lower-level membership categories are recommended to include individual, dual and family memberships, and should focus very much on value for money in unlimited free admission, discounts on retail, programs and rentals.
- Upper level categories with traditional names like Patron, Benefactor, etc., or alternative names associated with criminal justice and Sing Sing in particular would be motivated by a support for the mission of the SSPM and/or civic pride.

OTHER REVENUE CENTERS

Other potential revenue centers for the SSPM include:

- An annual fundraising gala dinner to support the operation of the SSPM.
- Donation boxes that would make clear that the donations help to support free admission for children and school groups.
- Vending machines.
- A menu of sponsorship opportunities to support free admission and other programs outlined in this report.
- Other opportunities to be identified by management at the time.



TARGET MARKETS AND STRATEGIES TO ATTRACT THEM

The SSPM, once implemented, will not only be a visitor attraction, but also it will join other sites of conscience that tell a dark story. Among sites in the United States that have been very successful in developing “dark tourism” are the 911 Memorial Museum, the Sixth Floor Museum, Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum and Alcatraz Island. The difference between these sites and the SSPM is the reality of a functioning maximum security prison that will create security fears for some potential visitors. Free admission for children and school groups, and web sites and brochures showing women and children attending will help to hopefully mitigate fears about attending the museum that will be felt by some.

The greater concern associated with a functioning maximum security prison is that there is much less authentic content available than at former prison sites. An interpretive center in a former Powerhouse building is simply not the same as the substantial access provided to visitors at Alcatraz Island and Eastern State Penitentiary. This emphasizes the importance of having the 1825 Cell Block as part of the visitor experience from the outset if the SSPM is to maximize its potential attendance. It will also be necessary to develop and utilize a collections base to help tell the Sing Sing story and to offer a high quality visitor experience in the Powerhouse building. And to help overcome the weakness of less access to an authentic experience, parking, admissions and related aspects of visiting will need to be as positive as possible.

School groups are an important market segment for all museums. School curriculum links to a prison museum are limited and the best links are at the high school level in which fewer field trips take place. For this reason, the consultants have recommended sponsored free admission to children and school groups as part of the marketing strategy to help maximize attendance levels.

Those who work at Sing Sing Correctional Facility, their immediate families, those visiting prisoners and formerly incarcerated persons would be another target market. Sponsored free admission to these persons will also be an important marketing strategy.

All new museums require adequate marketing budgets and this will be particularly important for the SSPM given the challenges discussed earlier in this chapter as well as the need to build on the opportunities. Mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations will be required not only with the institutions mentioned earlier, including Hudson Link, but also Metro-North, the ferry service and other transportation providers seeking to widen the market for their services. In addition, collaborations with the Jacob Burns Film Center, the Brieant Center, the Greater Ossining Chamber of Commerce and other local and regional organizations for common benefit will need to be developed. This might include joint programming, marketing, ticketing and other initiatives.

GOVERNANCE AND STAFFING

- It is recommended that the SSPM operate as a *non-profit 501(c)(3) organization* able to issue tax receipts for donations and governed by a voluntary Board of Directors.
- Given the national importance of the SSPM, it is recommended that the Board of Directors composition be both local and national.

The following staff list seeks to offer a balance between what is required for a professional museum operation and the reality that controlling staff costs is just as important as revenue generational to the viability of a museum. The staffing plan assumes that the SSPM will respect the rehabilitation of formerly incarcerated persons who have paid their debt to society through its hiring policies. The determination of what positions will be filled by which formerly incarcerated persons will be made by the Museum Director at the time.

The staff list on the following page reflects positions at other museums. It totals 26.5 FTE staff (both full- and part-time) and is subject to variation once it is assumed whether or not there is a downtown visitor center and shuttle service. The assumption here is that the downtown visitor center, if implemented, will be staffed by the Greater Ossining Chamber of Commerce/Tourist Information Center and the shuttle drivers will be employed by the Town of Ossining and/or downtown merchants' association.

The following table illustrates the position, status as full-time or part-time and the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) number of positions needed. The consultants do not recommend contracted staff despite the savings on benefits paid because of the constant training requirements needed given high turnover levels.

Position	Status/FTE
Executive Director	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Executive Assistant/Bookings Clerk	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Curator/Archivist	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Exhibitions Manager	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Preparator/Curatorial Assistant	Full-Time - 1 FTE
School Programs Manager	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Public Programs Manager	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Exhibits and IT Maintenance	Full and Part-Time - 1.5 FTE
Tour Guides/Experience Animators/Education Assistants	Part-Time - 3 FTE
Visitor Services and Volunteer Coordinator	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Business Manager (retail, rentals, other revenue generation)	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Admissions and Retail Staff	Part-Time - 2.5 FTE
Evening Rentals and Weekend Staff	Part-Time - 2 FTE
Accountant/Bookkeeper	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Facility Manager	Full-Time and Part-Time - 1.5 FTE
Maintenance/Janitorial/Security	Full-Time and Part-Time - 3 FTE
Development and Grants Manager	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Marketing and Communications Manager	Full-Time - 1 FTE
Membership Coordinator and Development Assistant	Full-Time - 1 FTE

Preliminary Planning Assumptions

It is an objective of this study to seek to identify ways and means to increase the likelihood of implementation and operational sustainability of the SSPM. This requires both building on opportunities and seeking ways and means to mitigate challenges. The planning principles and assumptions outlined here serve as a foundation for the subsequent recommendations in this chapter.

UNDERSTANDING SUCCESS FOR THE SING SING PRISON MUSEUM

The idea of a Sing Sing Prison Museum has been discussed for many years. Initial planning took place over 15 years ago, but did not lead to implementation. To achieve objectives associated with implementation and long term sustainability, there is a need for not only a compelling visitor experience and other strategies to build on the opportunities, but also recognition that there are challenges to overcome and the need for a realistic definition of success.

A realistic definition of success should begin with an understanding that, on average, earned income accounts for 30-40% of the operating budgets of charged admission museums. The SSPM, like other museums, will also require support from a combination of private/endowment and government sources to lead to a sustainable operation. Furthermore, it will need to balance the requirements of an adequate professional staff with the need to control staffing and other operating costs.

Realism is also needed regarding potential attendance levels at the SSPM. Attendance will be limited by the challenges of proximity to a functioning maximum security prison in which there is much less of an authentic experience available to visitors and also because of security concerns for some potential visitors. Visitor experience and operational strategies/recommendations presented in this study are intended to help mitigate these issues, but their importance must be understood. While it is clear that attendance and earned income levels may increase by responding to the mass market fascination with Sing Sing, what is not clear is the extent to which there will be private and governmental support for a SSPM that will also be a focal point for serious discussion of the past, present and future of criminal justice and incarceration in America and the important narrative of reform and rehabilitation of the Sing Sing Correctional Facility and the New York Department of Corrections and Community Supervision .

The definition of success for the SSPM should not only be limited to attendance and earned income levels, but also on how it contributes to economic development in the region and its role in focusing the dialogue on issues of criminal justice in a country that accounts for 4% of the world's population but 22% of the world's prisoners, many of whom are African American.

THE CENTRALITY OF THE 1825 CELL BLOCK

For those who have been to or heard of Alcatraz Island or the Eastern State Penitentiary, there will be an expectation by many for access to authentic opportunities, including to see cell blocks, the electric chair and other aspects of prison life at Sing Sing. A key assumption is that the 1936 Powerhouse building just beyond the prison fence will house the SSPM and provide the primary visitor experience. It is certainly suitable as an interpretive center, but the authentic aspects of it are limited to a history of providing power to the prison and as a place where, in later years, correction officers stored their uniforms.

The workshop and interview process confirmed that there would be substantial disappointment if the visitor experience did not also include access to at least part of the 1825 Cell Block. It is one of the most important historic sites associated with incarceration, not only in America, but also in the world. It is the consultants' judgment that the viability of the SSPM project is very much dependent on the availability of the 1825 Cell Block to visitors. One option that has been identified is to provide access to a long, securely enclosed corridor leading from the Powerhouse building to the 1825 Cell Block, while another is to relocate the wall that separates the inside and outside of the prison, recognizing that the wall has been moved in the past; perhaps there is another engineering solution to be identified and implemented as well. *If methods are not found to offer access to the 1825 Cell Block while also maintaining the security requirements of a maximum security prison, then we would question the ability of the SSPM to attract more than a modest number of visitors, and thus not contribute to the economic development objectives associated with the project.*

THE NEED TO CONSIDER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROJECT

To help achieve needed government and private funding support for implementation, there may be a need to meet not only the needs of a sustainable SSPM, but also wider community needs. To provide economic development benefits to Ossining, it was commonly heard within the planning process that visitors should not simply travel to the SSPM and then directly back home. They should be encouraged to eat in downtown restaurants, shop in stores and be exposed to other attractions in the region. Interviews also indicated that despite opportunities to travel to the site by train, boat or tour bus, most potential visitors will arrive by private automobile. If they drive to and park their cars near the Powerhouse building, some may also be encouraged to go downtown by incentives, such as having SSPM admission tickets include a discount to downtown stores and restaurants. Visitors who start their SSPM experience in downtown Ossining at a downtown visitor center will more likely be exposed to downtown businesses. Such a starting point for visiting the SSPM was also heard to help mitigate the security concerns of the functioning Sing Sing Correctional Facility.

The downtown visitor center, if implemented, could include ticketing, retail and a small exhibit and/or a short film on the significance and history of Sing Sing Correctional Facility; however, it should not be a substitute for attending a charged admission museum at the Powerhouse building and the 1825 Cell Block. It should, therefore, be modest in size. One option would be for it to be part of a larger Ossining Regional Visitor Information Center to be operated by the Greater Ossining Chamber of Commerce and provide interpretation regarding other points of interest and visitor venues. The retail outlet could be operated by the Greater Ossining Chamber of Commerce as well, and include items associated with both the SSPM and other tourist-related merchandise.

A downtown visitor center, if implemented, would require additional parking downtown as well as a shuttle service. However, a shuttle service linking a downtown visitor center and the SSPM may not be convenient or useful for those who arrive by train or boat and can easily walk to the Powerhouse building, or those who arrive by automobile or tour bus and wish to only attend the SSPM. Visitors would need to have both options available to them and incentives would be needed to encourage visitors to use the shuttle service. This would likely need to include free downtown parking and a shuttle service that is frequent, free, informative and entertaining. However, an inefficiency of a downtown visitor center is that it would require allocation of space and staff for admissions, ticket-taking, retail and orientation in both the Powerhouse building and the downtown visitor center.

Adequate parking will be needed to serve the SSPM one way or the other. There are reported to be 80-90 potential parking spaces next to the Powerhouse building. If there is a downtown visitor center, interviews suggested that there would be a need for a new parking garage to serve both it and downtown businesses, thus contributing to downtown revitalization.

Although a downtown visitor center would be helpful to downtown revitalization and economic development, the reality is that it is not a necessity for the SSPM. Accordingly, the capital costs associated with a downtown visitor center and parking garage should not be part of the capital costs attributable to the SSPM project. Separate capital funding for a parking garage would need to be achieved by the Town of Ossining and, ideally, the visitor center would be part of a privately-developed mixed-use project, as discussed further below. Moreover, there will be operating costs associated with a shuttle service that would need to be borne by the town and/or the downtown merchants' association.

If there is no separate funding for a downtown visitor center, an associated parking garage and a shuttle service, then it should be assumed that the visitor center and parking functions will be integrated with the Powerhouse building and a shuttle service will not be provided.

THE MUSEUM WILL NEED TO SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO HIRE REHABILITATED FORMERLY INCARCERATED PERSONS OF SING SING AS STAFF AND INTERNS

Although there were comments heard during the interview process that it would be too risky for the SSPM to hire formerly incarcerated persons to have contact with the public, the consultants strongly disagree with that sentiment, as did others interviewed. The consultants believe that the SSPM must not only “talk the talk” about how Sing Sing has successfully rehabilitated numerous formerly incarcerated persons who should be given opportunities for re-entry into the workforce, but also the SSPM must “walk the walk” by giving preference to formerly incarcerated persons recommended by Hudson Link and the Sing Sing Correctional Facility as suitable candidates for staff and volunteer positions at the museum. These might range from shuttle bus drivers to tour guides to museum professionals if they have adequate training. Associated with this, the consultants believe that the hiring of formerly incarcerated persons should be easily sponsored by private or government supporters of the project. If so, it would help to control staffing costs, which is the largest single operating cost of all museums.

THE MUSEUM SHOULD OFFER SPECIAL BENEFITS TO FORMERLY INCARCERATED PERSONS, CORRECTION OFFICERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Just as veterans and active duty military personnel are usually offered free admission to military museums, another planning principle associated with the SSPM is that it should offer free admission to family members and friends visiting the prisoners, to correction officers and their families and to formerly incarcerated persons of Sing Sing. Sponsorship should be sought to pay for the lost admission revenue.

PLANNING THAT SEEKS TO BALANCE KEY ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH SING SING

Chapter 3 discussed both market-related opportunities and challenges of attracting visitors to the SSPM. There are other opportunities and challenges associated with the planning and implementation of the SSPM that require achieving a balance between:

- Emphasizing the past versus the present and future of crime and punishment in America.
- Stories of punishment versus rehabilitation.
- The sensitivities of both the families of the incarcerated and the families of the victims of crime.
- A mass market *fun* attraction versus an educational resource.

- The stories of infamous prisoners at Sing Sing versus stories of prisoners receiving college degrees, and Hudson Link interventions that lead to only 2% of formerly incarcerated persons returning to prison.
- The electric chair “Old Sparky” as an item of fascination versus the electric chair as a more humane form of punishment than hanging.
- The need for an adequate professional and support staff that can increase employment opportunities in the region versus the reality that controlling staffing levels and costs are just as important as maximizing attendance and revenues for a museum to be operationally sustainable.
- The need for an adequate marketing budget versus the pressure to limit marketing and other expenditures through partnerships and collaborations.
- An operating schedule that seeks to maximize regional economic development objectives versus the need to help limit staffing and other operating costs.

OTHER KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- It is assumed that *an institute focused on the present and future of criminal justice and incarceration in America will be developed in the future in partnership with one or more of the academic institutions and other organizations* discussed later in this chapter and with the New York Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.
- Site improvements will be made along the walking path from the waterfront to the Powerhouse building. A clear and safe route will be laid out so that pedestrian and vehicular traffic are kept separate. Amenities such as shuttle bus shelter, plantings, benches and artistic and/or interpretive elements may also be added.
- The entrance to the Powerhouse building will be at the garage structure on the north. The garage facade on the north is nearest for walkers, features three large doors and is appropriately monumental. Signage here will be visible at a distance.

SITE OF A DOWNTOWN VISITOR CENTER (IF IMPLEMENTED)

The issue of site evaluation is very much associated with the location of a visitor center for the SSPM. This is because it is already assumed that the former Powerhouse building will be the interpretive center of the project and the 1825 Cell Block is an essential component of the visitor experience recommended to be offered from the outset. Both of these sites are fixed and clear.

As discussed above, a key issue regarding the site is whether or not there is a downtown visitor center, associated parking and a shuttle service or whether the visitor center components of the SSPM and parking will be integrated within the Powerhouse building. That

decision is largely a political one. If the decision is based on the needs of only the SSPM, then the visitor center need not be downtown. If an objective is to maximize the economic development benefits of the project, then the visitor center and parking garage should be located downtown. Assuming there will be a downtown visitor center, this section evaluates the downtown sites that were toured. They were, in alphabetical order:

- Main Street Firehouse
- Market Square
- Opera House
- Printex
- Public Works
- Westerley Road

Compelling Reasons to Reject Specific Sites

In considering the merits of each of the sites recommended by Historic Hudson River Towns (HHRT) and the client team for a downtown visitor center, the consultants focused very much on recommending compelling reasons to reject specific sites. These are as follows:

- The consultants recommend rejection of sites that are privately owned. The reality is that money is finite and the more money allocated to site acquisition, the less that is likely available to invest in the visitor experience. It is the visitor experience – exhibitions and public programs – that attracts visitors and leads to repeat visitation, the amount that might be charged in admission and a willingness to become members. This results in rejection of the Westerley Road, Printex and Opera House sites.
- The consultants recommend rejection of sites that do not offer proximity to downtown businesses and that are too close to the SSPM. If the objective of a downtown site is to facilitate benefits to downtown revitalization and economic development, then sites located a distance from downtown businesses should be rejected. At the same time, a visitor center site that is too close to the SSPM is not good because the site must be far enough away to make getting on and off a shuttle bus worthwhile and to create drama about visiting the SSPM while on the bus. This serves to eliminate the Public Works site.
- The consultants recommend rejection of sites that do not allow for the introduction of shared space opportunities with associated synergies. If there is a downtown visitor center, it is essential that it not be a substitute to a visit to the SSPM. This means limiting its size and role. In particular, a visitor center is, by nature, a free admission opportunity that orients people to the actual destination. The parallel would be a tourist information center that is free and orients visitors to attractions in the region, many of which involve charged admission. If the SSPM Visitor Center were to offer too much interpretation, it would potentially have a negative impact on charged admission to the core of the SSPM. Therefore, the visitor center should be small to include only an orientation film, a very small exhibit, ticket sales and retail store. The ideal scenario would be for it to be part of a larger mixed use project whose other components are capable of attracting visitors, and thus, exposure to the SSPM Visitor Center. This serves to reject the firehouse site, which

would be, however, the second choice if the recommended site discussed below is not implementable.

Recommended Downtown Site

If there is a downtown visitor center that will serve as the starting and ending point for most visits to the SSPM, the consultants recommend that it become part of the long-planned mixed use development of the Market Square site. Having a visitor center be part of the Market Square project should increase the likelihood of private investment in its implementation. The other components of the mixed-use development that should increase the likelihood of private investment in it could include a ground floor tourist information center for other attractions in the region integrated with the SSPM visitor center; a privately-operated restaurant; second floor rent-paying offices of the Greater Ossining Chamber of Commerce; a business incubator; Hudson Link; the Charles Brieant Center for at-risk youth, etc. and upper floor residential studio apartments to help create a built-in singles and couples market for the downtown.

Also increasing the likelihood of private investment in the mixed-use project will be implementation of a *publicly-funded parking garage next to it.* The parking garage would be the appropriate place for those driving to Ossining to park their cars, use the visitor center, and then take a shuttle to and from the SSPM. Although beneficial to the SSPM, the primary function of the parking garage would be to add to the parking infrastructure downtown, and thus contribute to downtown revitalization and economic development.

The consultants believe the majority of visitors to the SSPM will arrive by private automobile and, therefore, would be exposed to the downtown visitor center if directional signage encouraged it. Those who arrive by train, boat or tour bus will need to have the option of proceeding straight to the Powerhouse building. In addition, there should be an option of proceeding straight to the Powerhouse building for those who drive, especially in the non-peak seasons. A plan exists for 80-90 parking spaces adjacent to the Powerhouse that would meet this need for both staff and visitors. Incentives for parking downtown could include a free parking charge based on a ticket validation system, while parking at the Powerhouse building could be charged, if practical.

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Working list as of August 31, 2016

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The State of New York
NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
Friends of Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum
Hudson Link
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