

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**



Office of the Director

May 29, 2024

Mr. Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

The Department of Corrections (DOC) has major concerns about your proposed capital budget cuts for the Correctional Treatment Facility Annex (CTF Annex). Your proposed FY25 budget would cut \$19M in FY25, \$20M in FY26, and \$40M in FY27. Although there is increased funding in FY28 and FY30, your proposed cuts will severely delay the CTF Annex project and may very well derail it entirely.

I want to be absolutely clear about the impacts of your proposed cuts: Without the necessary funding in FY25, it will be impossible to move this project to the architecture phase and there is no possibility of breaking ground on a new correctional facility in FY27.

The FY25-FY27 funds for jail construction in the Mayor's proposed budget are critical to fund design and pre-construction services. Reducing that budget presents a huge risk to the project's construction schedule, cost control, and quality assurance. ***The Council's proposed changes will prevent DOC from proceeding with construction activities and will subject the project to inflation and increased construction costs.***

The development of the project funding stream was a thorough process performed by subject matter expert consultants and District Government agencies. The Council's arbitrary reduction and shifting of funds, while it may appear to be relatively small in comparison to the overall cost, will cause a significant funding pressure that may not be realized until latter stages of the project. In my professional opinion as a corrections specialist, ***the Council's proposed shifting of funds will effectively shelve the current jail annex project.***

As you are aware, DOC operates and maintains the 450,000 square foot Central Detention Facility (CDF) and the 450,000 square foot Correctional Treatment Facility (CTF). The CDF, which

opened in 1976, and houses medium- and maximum-security residents, is an aging and outdated facility, with significant maintenance issues and a significant lack of programming space. The conditions within the facility are unfortunately deteriorating and require significant investments to keep the facility operational. This includes an aging plumbing (cast iron) infrastructure and inefficient airflow for the heating, ventilation, air and cooling system. Furthermore, the outdated design and layout of the facility means we are unable to fully provide the mental health, behavioral health, educational, and reentry programming that we want to give our residents. Any further delay in the construction schedule also continues very concerning issues of conditions of confinement for jail residents and the staff who must work daily in these deteriorating conditions. Budget actions causing further delays should not be acceptable for continuing to house residents, and for staff to work in conditions, for an even longer period.

With these issues and the complex and costly challenge of maintaining the current CDF, Mayor Bowser pledged her commitment to providing District residents with a correctional treatment facility that meets the standards and the needs of District residents. The mission of the CTF Annex is to replace the aging CDF with a modern, secure, and resilient facility that has the necessary infrastructure to address the critical rehabilitation, treatment, and reentry needs of individuals in the custody and care of DOC. ***This significant investment is key to strengthening and advancing public safety and justice in the District.***

To support DOC's long-term operational goals and vision and ensure continued public safety, Mayor Bowser allocated \$463 million in the city's FY25 capital budget proposal to design and build an Annex to the CTF. This is a multistep process that began with the pre-design phase in 2023. To move forward to design phase in FY24-FY26, and ultimately groundbreaking in FY27, significant additional funding is required. Mayor Bowser's proposed capital budget for FY25-FY30 covered the cost to begin the necessary process of replacing and dismantling the deteriorating CDF facility. ***Without the funding as proposed in Mayor Bowser's capital budget, this project will be effectively shelved.***

I strongly encourage the Council to reconsider these proposed cuts and encourage you to support our efforts to design and build a new correctional facility. Please let me know if you have any additional questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Faust", written in a cursive style.

Thomas N. Faust
Director