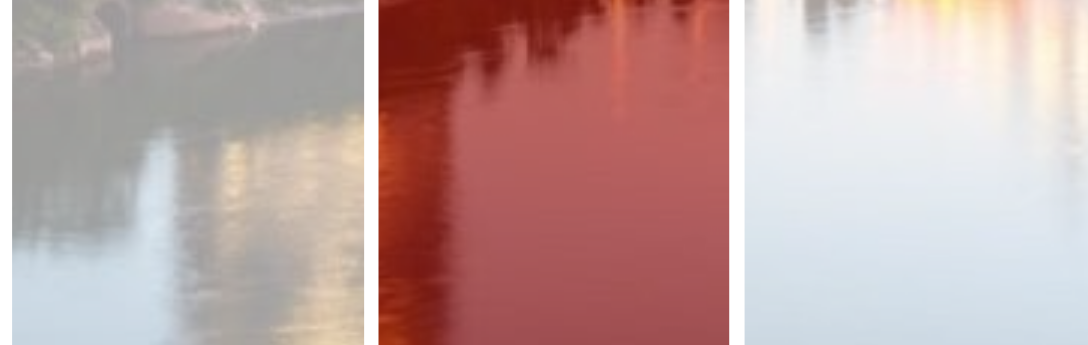
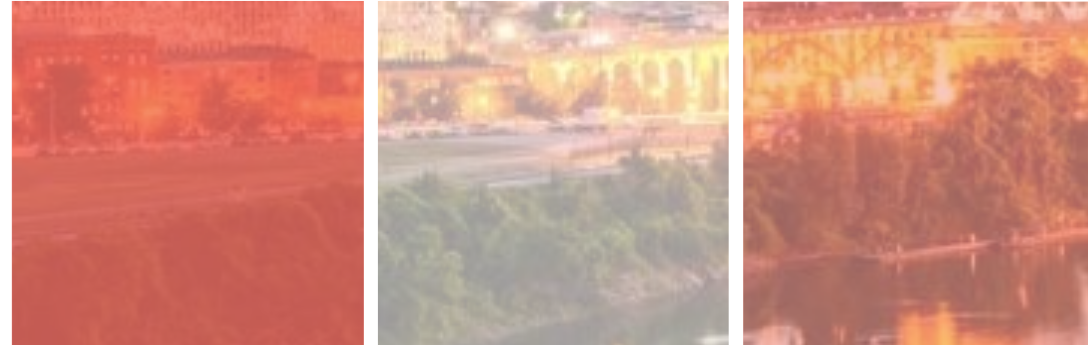
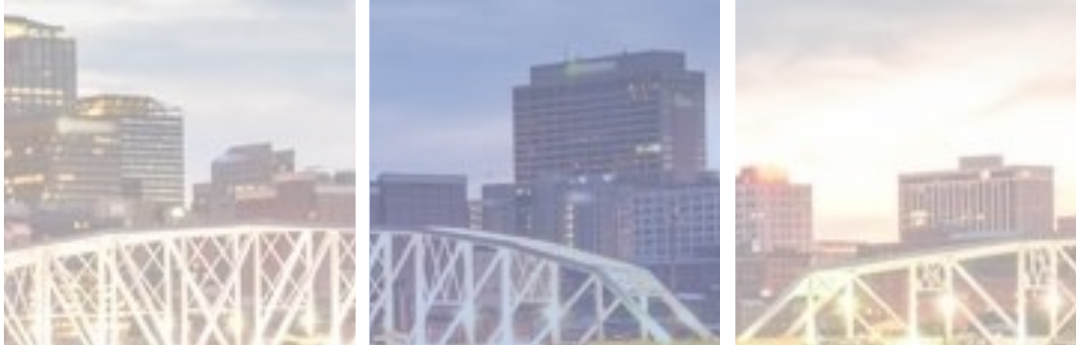



**State of Tennessee**  
**Department of Children's Services**



# Real Estate Strategic Plan

Executive Summary Document

July 2023



# DCS real estate and facilities strategy | introduction

DCS requires unique facilities to support mission responsibilities in today's challenging environment

## Situation

- **DCS serves as the State's child welfare agency**, providing care, treatment and support for the most vulnerable youths across Juvenile Justice ("JJ") and Dependent & Neglected ("D&N") populations
- **DCS has experienced various challenges in years past**, largely consistent with the experience of many other States across the nation
- **Macro-level challenges** range from staffing shortages, aging infrastructure and under-funded programs / facilities to structural challenges with foster care capacity, adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing acuity of care needs across both populations

## Complications

- **The facility ecosystem is extremely complex**, as facility types serve different needs and missions; facilities are highly regulated with varying ownership structures, operating models and unique requirements
- **DCS facilities are not stand-alone but rather serve together as a network**; youths flow throughout the system to address different care and treatment needs coupled with different levels of security and mobility; challenges at any individual facility can impact the entire network
- **DCS operations rely on both State-provided services and third-party provided services**, which presents complexity and strategic questions around future facility ownership and operating decisions

## Key Questions

- Should key facilities be renovated, rebuilt or remain as-is to address **capacity needs looking forward**?
- Does the **purpose and use of key facilities** need to change to better serve today's complex youth needs?
- What are the **most value-add facility improvements and investments** that can help DCS advance the delivery of its mission and best serve the State?
- What actions can be taken **immediately, in the short-term and over the longer-term**?



# Situation | systemic challenges

DCS facilities are not conducive to modern rehabilitative approaches

## DCS facilities were designed and built for the needs of youth 20-30+ years ago

- **Acuity of care needs** has significantly increased across both JJ and D&N populations (i.e., severe behavioral, medically fragile, non-verbal)
- **Severity of juvenile crimes** continues to increase across the U.S.
- Modern, leading practice facilities employ a more **trauma-informed and rehabilitative approach**, bringing technology-enabled clinical services to purpose-built spaces

## Growth in bed capacity has not kept pace with population expansion and key trends over time

- **DCS is capacity-constrained** across the JJ population, lacking sufficient beds across both hardware secure residential and staff secure residential facilities
- **Facilities are past their useful life** (e.g., Wilder); deferred maintenance remediation and other improvements are cost prohibitive with regards to adding capacity
- Without locations to bring Dependent & Neglected youth experiencing trauma and limitations on third-party facilities, **DCS lacks transitional bed capacity for short-term stays across the State**

## Looking forward



**New, modern facilities will significantly increase bed capacity, address current unmet needs and allow DCS to continue serving as the provider of last resort**



**In parallel, DCS will provide defined staffing, programming and operational strategies to make these facilities most impactful**

# Go-forward strategy | strategic investments

11 projects are required to significantly increase capacity and align existing beds with intended populations

ID	Project	Population Served	Project type	Rationale
1	Standing Tall additional hardware secure improvements	JJ	Additional security & infrastructure improvements	Standing Tall is a hardware secure residential facility by design
2a	Existing Wilder fire life safety improvements	JJ	Additional security & infrastructure improvements	Existing Wilder facilities will remain in use until a new Wilder facility is designed and constructed
2b	Existing Wilder security and primary electrical upgrades			
3	Harpeth & Stones (Clover Bottom) renovation	D&N	Renovation	Provides <b>48 beds</b> for temporary assessment center
4	Assessment center renovation (West GD, proposed at TBI Memphis)	D&N	Renovation	Former TBI Memphis facility becomes the first <b>permanent 16-bed</b> assessment center
5	Existing Woodland Hills renovations	JJ	Renovation	Adds up to <b>72 new staff secure beds</b> (temporary)
6	Smoke evacuation upgrades at Mountain View	JJ	Renovation	Required safety improvements
7	Assessment center renovations (two centers; Middle and East GDs)	D&N	Renovation	Permanent assessment centers with 16-beds each
8	Six (6) intake facilities identification, acquisition, design and renovation	D&N	Renovation	Adds <b>72 new intake beds</b> for short-term, transitional needs across the State
9	New Woodland Hills staff secure facility (to hardware secure specs.)	JJ	New construction	Adds <b>72-96 new staff secure beds</b>
10	New Wilder hardware secure facility	JJ	New construction	Adds <b>72-96 new hardware secure beds</b>
11	New Wilder staff secure facility (to hardware secure specs.)	JJ	New construction	Adds <b>24-48 new staff secure beds</b>

# Go-forward strategy | generational impact

Investments will serve youth in-need, DCS and the State for the next 50+ years

## New and improved facilities will serve at least 450,000 TN youth over the next 50+ years

- DCS' custodial population (approximately 9,000 youth per year) will benefit from new, leading practice facilities
- The State's ability to place youth in best-fit environments, apply trauma-informed therapies, pursue step-downs and complete rehabilitations will dramatically improve

## Total program investment will continue to serve youth over the next 50+ years

- DCS will make purposeful investments in approximately 500 beds (majority new), serving a wide variety of needs to help break the generational cycle of incarceration and maltreatment

## Program strategies are interrelated and should be considered comprehensively

- Facilities form a complex ecosystem serving the needs of DCS youth
- Completing some projects but not others will dilute value and reduce DCS' ability to meet anticipated needs across the entire system



## Broad-based community benefits

- Trauma responsive systems
- Successful community reintegration
- Improved economic stability
- Stronger families
- Healthy childhood development
- Life skills development
- Brighter futures