



Town of North Castle Court and Police Department Facilities Needs Assessment

February 2025



Methodology



Conducted interviews with key Court and Police Department Staff



Visited the Town of North Castle Townhall and attended a Court Session



Reviewed Townhall's Site Plan and Guidelines from NYS and the IACP

Court Facilities Observations

Current court facilities are inadequate for the Town's needs

- The courtroom space is laid out as a meeting room. This creates space issues when used as a court.

There is no well space or separation from public.

- Defendants stand too close to the Judge's Bench.
- Attorneys lack enough desk space.
- People in custody stand against the back wall.

There is no Jury Box.

- During jury trials the jury sits in an area usually used as public seating.

There is no Jury Deliberation Room.

- Jurors deliberate in the Judge's Chamber or staff kitchenette.
- Jury walks through public spaces.

No Attorney/Client Meeting Spaces

- Attorneys currently meet with clients in the hallways and public spaces.



Court Facilities Observations



Limited storage for court files in Clerk Space

- Clerk's have storage upstairs but only space for one year of case files in their office.

Accessibility accommodations could be improved

- Not much space for someone in a wheelchair or someone with a service animal to observe court proceedings.

Judge's Chambers are inadequate

- Judge does not have a dedicated conference room or a private restroom to use.

Police Department Observations

Space is cramped, causing suboptimal procedures

- Hallways are narrow requiring a modified escort technique.
- Only one officer can be in the Sgt.'s office at a time

Workflow for patrol officers is inefficient

- Patrol officer needs to stop into a minimum of 4 different spaces to be prepared for their shift.

Communications area should have 2 full consoles

- Communication officers must switch between several stations to complete tasks.
- Second communicator uses improvised workstation

Locker rooms are deficient

- Have experienced sewer backups, needed retrofitting and repairs
- Not enough lockers in men's locker room
- Just enough in women's locker room

There are an inadequate number of bathroom facilities

- Locker rooms have only one toilet in each locker room and one on the main floor available for officers to use.



Police Department Observations

Training room can only be used for classroom type activities

- Cannot train using role plays and interactive scenarios in the training room

Servers need their own secure space

- Recommended practice would be for server to be kept in a secured, climate-controlled closet with redundant power source.

Lacks dedicated space for interviews

- There is dedicated space for juvenile interviews, but department lacks dedicated room to conduct interviews or meet public about police matters

Need more climate control for evidence and storage

- Department makes the best of its available space to store evidence and other items but need more and better climate control in these spaces

Lieutenants' and Detectives' offices are too small

- Inadequate for the materials, audio privacy and tasks required of these personnel.



Police Department Observations

Armory lacks sufficient space

- Armorers in the department operate out of a converted broom closet and use folding wooden shelf in the hallway

Should have a Sally Port for the transfer of people in custody

- Current process of taking a person in custody in and out of a patrol vehicle while it is in the parking lot and then going up stairs and through two doors presents several opportunities for adverse events.



Conclusion

- Current space is not sufficient and cannot be further modified.
- The Town of North Castle should strongly consider investing in new facilities for both the Town Court and North Castle Police Department
 - New facility would be a safer environment for employees and the public and should meet current state guidelines

Questions?