

**PAGE COUNTY  
JAIL STUDY  
OCTOBER 19, 2021**



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## INTRODUCTION

Page County engaged The Samuels Group to complete an existing conditions facility assessment for the Page County Sheriff's Department Office and Jail in Clarinda, Iowa with a primary focus on the Jail portion of the structure. The Samuels Group performed site visits, interviewed key staff members and researched additional documentation as directed by the County. This assessment is intended to give Page County Supervisors and Residents a better understanding of the conditions of the existing Page County Sheriff's Department and Jail building. Some information in this report was provided by others and may not have been verified by The Samuels Group. This report is not intended to propose specific options, solutions, or costs for the issues that the existing facility and County face at this time.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

## THE SAMUELS GROUP ASSESSMENT

The facility tour and assessment of the Page County Sheriff's Department and Jail occurred on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 between 10:00 am and 1:15pm. Members of The Samuels Group who toured the facility included Sid Samuels (President), Greg Wilde (Business Development Manager) and Henry Kropp (Designer). Members representing Page County during this tour and assessment included Jacob Holmes (County Supervisor), Lyle Palmer (Sheriff), Charles McCalla (Chief Deputy), Anthony Shackelford (Jail Administrator) and Carl Sonksen (County Attorney).

## JAIL CAPACITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS

The Jail is rated for a maximum capacity of 35 inmates based on current accommodations. There is a mix of holding cells, a dorm and two pods. There are 2 holding cells without showers, a pod that can hold up to 21 inmates, a pod that can hold up to 8 inmates, and another dorm for up to 4 inmates. At the time of the walkthrough, the current inmate count was 15 total people (13 males and 2 females). However, Jail staff reported that it is not uncommon for the facility to be at maximum capacity and is then required to ship inmates to other jails.

Per the Iowa Department of Corrections Regulations Section 201.50.13.1, sight, sound and physical separation is required for the following groups in different degrees: juveniles from adults, females from males, felons from misdemeanants, pretrial from sentenced, witnesses from charged, violent prisoners, prisoners who pose health risk to others, sexual deviant prisoners, and prisoners who are likely to be victimized by other inmates. Page County currently has informal agreements to trade outsourced inmates when possible to help minimize cost to taxpayers when the facility cannot meet separation requirements. Juveniles are typically sent to neighboring County Jails that can accommodate them since there is no ability to have proper separation within the existing Page County Jail due to its physical set up. As is common in many old jails like this, the Sheriff is forced to ship inmates out to other Counties due to sight and sound classification reasons more often than it does for overall capacity problems. The separation and classification violations are some of the greatest challenges the existing facility has which affects operations and safety of the building.

The existing facility does not have a safety (padded) cell similar to the example image to the right. Additionally, the existing Jail does not have the ability to have a proper medical isolation or quarantine cell. These types of safety or isolation cells are becoming more important to jails as mental health problems become more common. Mental health is expected to become a much greater problem for the Page County Sheriff's Department and Jail due to the recent reduction in funding for mental health facilities in Iowa. When hospitals or other mental health facilities are not able to treat the individuals, they often end up in Jail. These types of cells help to protect the inmate from injuring themselves and surrounding inmates and staff. The only tool Page County Jail Staff have at their disposal to help protect themselves and the inmate from injuring themselves is an old, modified restraint chair that is shown to the right.



Safety Cell Example



Page County Jail restraint chair

During our walkthrough, there was an event that is worth noting. There was an inmate who was particularly upset, shouting, and slamming things against the metal cell walls/bars and furniture which echoed very loudly. This individual is known to do this type of thing on occasion. Being that the dorm is not a large space, with metal and concrete walls, the sound can echo and be amplified making it an even worse environment to be in. When there are incidents like this, one unruly inmate can agitate the rest of the inmates which can cause them to act in similar ways. Once this type of thing occurs for an extended period, it puts a great deal of additional stress on the staff and inmates.

Due to the physical limitations of the existing facility, there are minimal accommodations and resources when compared to modern industry standards. Food service is currently contracted and delivered through a third-party company and the food is brought in through the main Sheriff's Department entrance since there is no sallyport like you would see in modern facilities that contract food service. There is no medical exam room like you would typically see even in a smaller jail like the Page County Jail's capacity. If inmates have need for a medical exam, deputies must transport the inmates to a hospital and then back to the jail which carries risk and takes a deputy away from their regular duties. Laundry services is provided by the Jail staff using a residential washer and dryer that is in the basement of the Jail.

When inmates are being held in the holding cells, there is not an adjacent shower as required by DOC standards. Staff are required to walk the inmates from the holding cells, through the visitation area, through booking, into a narrow corridor, down a narrow stairwell into the basement of the Sheriff's Department Office area, through part of the basement storage area, to a concrete block bathroom area. This entire path is riddled with safety problems along the approximately 120-foot rout from the holding cell door to the basement shower. The inmates are exposed to all kinds of items that could be used as weapons as well as sensitive documents and equipment along the route.

Another issue is that staff occasionally needs to house inmates in the holding cells for extended periods of time which causes issues with the Iowa DOC requirements. Typically, a holding cell would be used by an inmate for up to 24 hours. When used by an inmate for over 24 hours, Iowa DOC requirements require that a dayroom be made available to the inmate which is not possible due to the physical limitations of the existing facility. The Iowa DOC Jail Inspector has allowed these rooms to be used on a more permanent basis without use of a dayroom to aid the Page County Jail staff in their separation problems. See the sequence images on the following page.





Holding cells / visitation through this door

View to booking / processing area.  
1



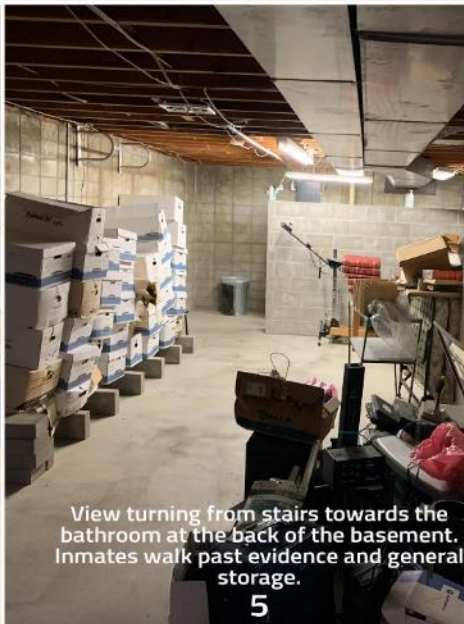
View of corridor between booking and Sheriff's Department Office area where the stairs are located. Door at end of hallway is where inmates enter from outside.  
2



View of narrow stairway to Sheriff's Department Basement. Note the cleaning supplies on the left ledge.  
3



View at bottom of stairs. Note the items being stored and no barriers to access those items.  
4



View turning from stairs towards the bathroom at the back of the basement. Inmates walk past evidence and general storage.  
5



View of basement bathroom that is used by inmates housed in the holding cells.  
6

From touring the facility and looking at the image sequence above, it is clear that there are many security concerns with this facility. With the unguarded, non-detention grade doors around the booking/holding/visitation areas, a prisoner escape attempt is very possible if the guard was overtaken. Many of the everyday items being stored along the routes could also be used as weapons by inmates and cause harm to the staff.

The small booking room serves multiple functions including booking, attorney visits, telecom/zoom court appearances, storage, and an interview room. Modern jail design standards would typically assign each of these functions to a separate room to allow sufficient space for the actual function as well as limit potential for safety & security problems associated with multi-functional spaces in a jail. This booking area is smaller than those of a new facility even if it only served the single function of booking. The room lacks sufficient security features such as multiple cameras and detention grade furnishings that you would see in a modern facility. The room does not have sufficient storage space and there are frequently sensitive items left out on tables that inmates have access to when being processed or passing through to the holding cells. This booking space only has enough room to process one individual at a time. There is not enough space or accommodations to process a group of people

The existing Jail does not have a dedicated activity/program space on the interior as required by Iowa DOC requirements and modern jail design standards. It is important to provide activity/program space to inmates to encourage self-betterment and a way to pass the incarceration time in a positive manor. Many of the activities and programs occur through electronic devices that are distributed to inmates who have privileges to use them. There is a

small exterior exercise area that is fenced in on the west side of the facility. Two inmates have escaped from this exercise area in recent years because they were able to climb between the joints of the chain-link fence. There is a wooden privacy fence to prevent views to and from



inmates, as well as to prevent them from exposing themselves to the public. There have been many studies which show that inmates who have access to activities and programs during their sentence, typically have a lower recidivism rate and are less disruptive while incarcerated.



## STAFFING, OPERATIONAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

The Jail has eight full time staff members and the Sheriff’s Department has nine full time deputies (including the Sheriff), one full time civilian, and between seven and nine active reserves available. There is a 911 Dispatch Center located in a separate building in Clarinda with nine to ten staff members at two stations. The separate 911 Dispatch Center is leased from another owner for approximately \$13,000 a year. At one time estimated by the County to cost over \$100,000 to relocate the equipment and utilities required to another location.

Throughout both the Jail building and Sheriff’s Department Office area, it is evident that the functions are mixed which is not recommended by modern industry standards from a safety, security, and functional standpoint.

Page County is experiencing more violent crimes than it has seen in the past and the arrest counts have been increasing over the last 5 years.

Staff strongly believe that some of them contracted COVID from inmates because of the proximity of the inmates to each other allowed for quick spread among the population and staff and not having access to isolation or quarantine cells.

It has been reported that attorneys often try to strike deals as to not overburden the Jail and staff.

The chart below shows a comparison of the existing Page County Sheriff’s Department & Jail compared to other more recently constructed jails of various sizes. The point of this comparison is to look at the square feet per occupant where you can see that the Page County facility is lacking in overall space.

LOCATION	TOTAL OCCUPANTS (INMATE & STAFF)	BUILDING SF	SF / OCCUPANT
PAGE COUNTY, IA	53	12708	240
DALLAS COUNTY, IA	177	57000	322
GUTHRIE COUNTY, IA	55	16000	291
FLOYD COUNTY, IA	77	38145	495
GREEN LAKE COUNTY, WI	158	75693	479
WAUSHARA COUNTY, WI	208	66747	321
		<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>358</b>

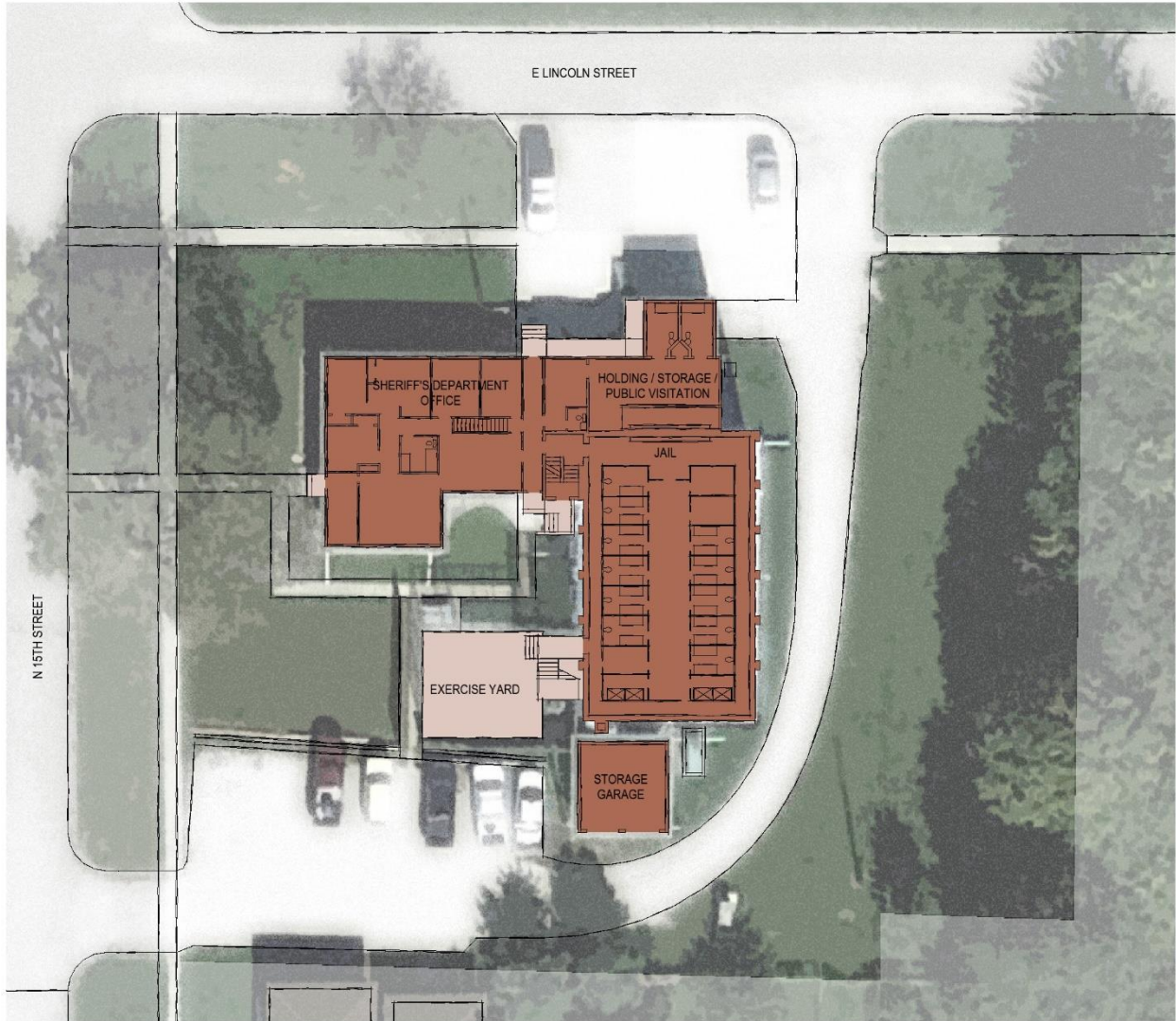
## BUILDING HISTORY & CONSTRUCTION

Based on conversations with staff and additional research, the existing jail was constructed in 1936 to replace a late 1800's brick jail that did not meet the Counties needs anymore. The 1936 structure was constructed of poured concrete exterior walls, steel columns and beams in the basement level, steel pan and poured concrete floors at the first floor, poured concrete floor at the second floor, and arched steel trusses at the roof level. The overall layout and function of the current Page County Jail is based on hybrid first-generation and second-generation jail design that were common in the early 1900's.

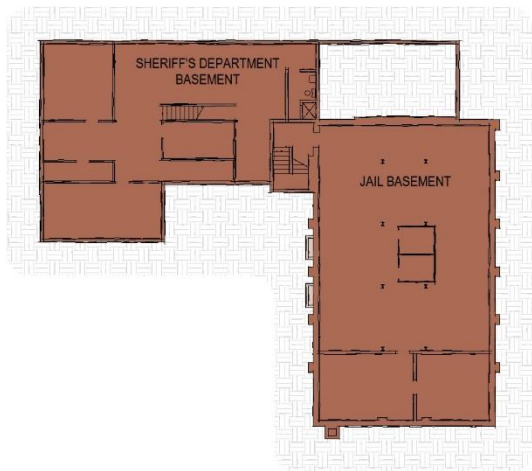
The Sheriff's Department utilizes a residence for its office that is attached to the jail and appears to have been built in the 1970's. It is a typical concrete block foundation, wood stud framed walls, wood truss roof, vinyl siding and asphalt shingle roof building that is typical residential construction. It was originally used by the Sheriff as their residence attached to the Jail, at a time when much fewer staff and deputies were needed.

The office and jail areas remain rather close to their original with some additions and renovations over the past 85 years. Some of those documented changes include:

- Jail window replacement done in the 1970's with aluminum frames, double pane glass, exterior steel bars and translucent panels for limited views.
- Addition and renovation of the Jail done in 1982 that included a new Visitation Room and small exterior fenced in exercise yard.
- Renovation & addition of the Jail Visitation Room in 2000 that included new masonry holding cells.
- Renovation of Jail's second floor in 2001 that included a small new Dorm.
- See following page for floor plan diagrams.



**MAIN LEVEL**



**LOWER LEVEL**

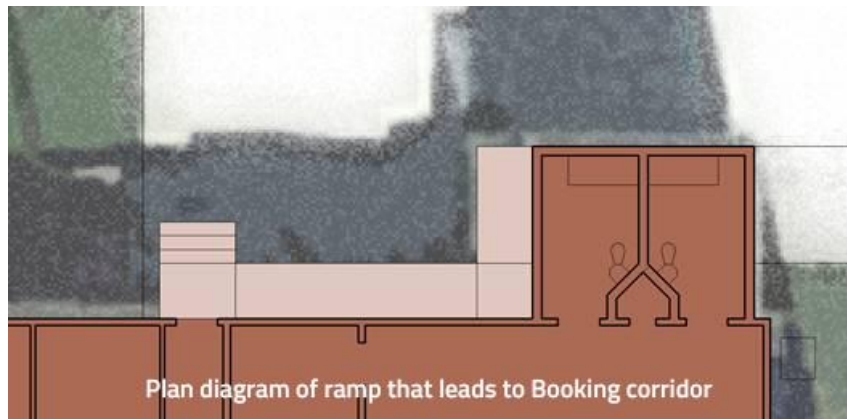


**UPPER LEVEL**

## ADA ACCESSIBILITY

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal civil rights law that was passed in 1991 that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. Buildings that the public utilize are required to comply with the accessible design standards during any new construction projects and are recommended to remove barriers in existing facilities where feasible. When it comes to county jails, the Department of Justice classifies them as a Title II building as it is operated by the public sector. ADA standards address various forms of disabilities including physical, hearing, vision, speech, and others. In 2010, there were approximately 56.7 million people in the US with some kind of disability, and a 2015 DOJ publication found that nearly 40% of inmates reported having at least one disability. Fully complying with ADA standards also helps people move through the built environment who have temporary injuries or impairments that may not be considered a legal disability. Non-compliance with ADA standards can lead to costly legal action against organizations.

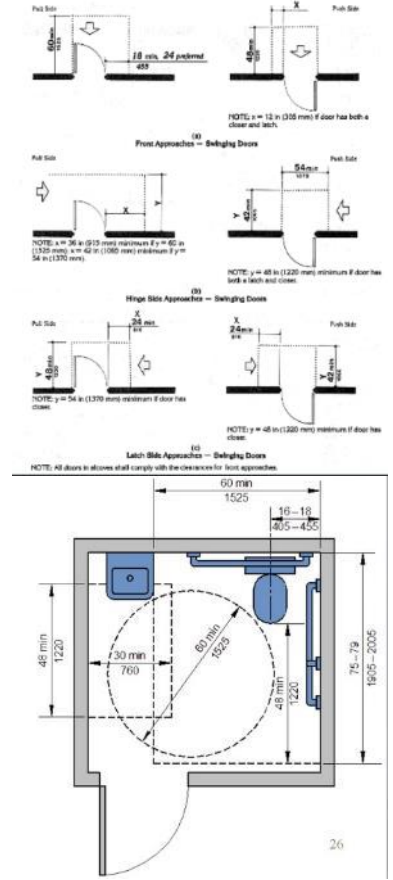
The main entrance to the Sheriff's Department on the west side of the building is not ADA accessible as there are steps to enter the building rather than a ramp or being at grade. A wood framed ramp with covering was added to the north side of the building at the inmate processing entrance. While this provides accessibility to the first floor of the Sheriff's Department and Jail, it is within the secured area of the Sheriff's Department Office, but is outside of the secured Jail area.



There are several doors throughout the facility without the proper maneuvering clearances. ADA Standards require a 12" to 18" clearance at the side of the doors and between 42" and 60" in front of the door depending on whether it is on the push/pull side, if the door has a closer or not, and how a person approaches the door.



The Sheriff's Department Office Toilet Room is not currently accessible due to dimensional clearances or additional features such as toilet grab bars.



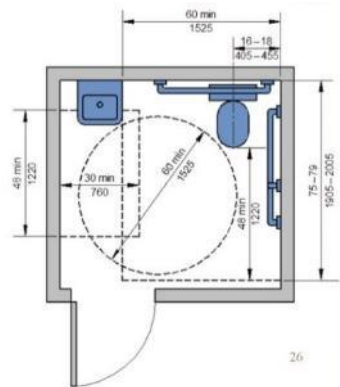
There are several doors in the Sheriff's Department Office area that have door knobs which violate current ADA Standards because they can be difficult to operate in an emergency or by individuals with arthritis for example.



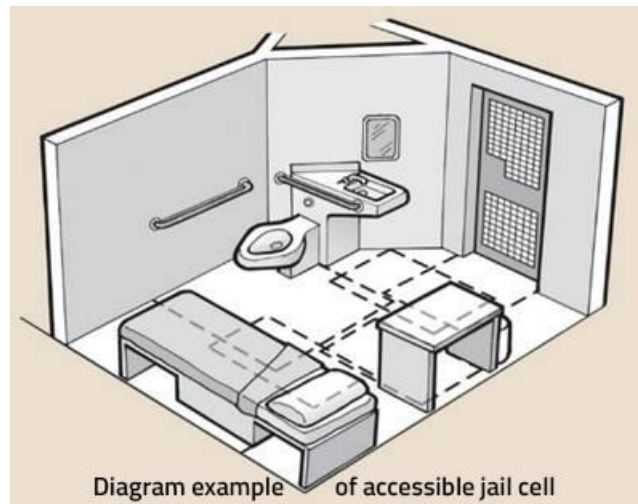
Examples of Accessible Door Hardware			
Handle	Pull	Bar	Lever



The toilet room in Booking/Processing is not ADA accessible due to insufficient dimensional clearances and other features. Since this toilet room is intended to be used only by inmates being processed for security reasons, it should be accessible.



Throughout the main dorms and cells of the Jail, there are many additional ADA Standards which are not being met such as accessible cells, accessible furnishings, accessible restrooms and additional features. This is mostly due to the physical layout and construction of the facility. Some of the ADA standards that apply to jails include: at least 5% of beds in dorms of 25 or more have clear floor space by the beds, at least 3% of the cells must be accessible for individuals with mobility disabilities, accessible cells must be provide within each classification level as well, 2% of the general holding cells to be equipped with communication features (phones, visual alarm signals, etc..) that allow deaf or hard of hearing individuals the ability to communicate, 32" minimum door clear widths, turning radiuses accommodated, accessible showers provided, among others.

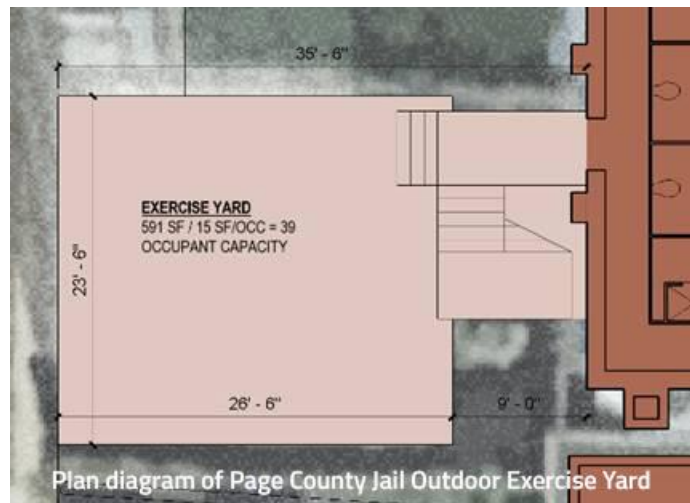


## BUILDING CODE

The term "Building Code" is a general one which covers several governing building codes including the 2015 International Building Code (IBC), 2015 International Existing Building Code (IEBC), 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), 2012 NFPA Life Safety Code, among others which have been adopted by the State of Iowa. Building codes are not meant to be retroactive, only new work is required to comply with the codes. However, it can be useful to compare older facilities with those of new facilities that are in full compliance to understand the deficiencies.

According to the International Building Code (IBC), a jail is classified as an Institutional Group I-3 building use. This basically means that the facility is inhabited by people who are under restraint or incapable of self-preservation in the event of an emergency due to the security measures necessary for the safe operation of the facility. There are 5 additional sub-classifications within I-3 facilities that have to do with the level security required that we will not be reviewing for the purpose of this initial assessment. Portions of the Sheriff's Department Office area would be classified as a Business B building use. In modern facilities, there would typically be vehicle garages and a sally port for safe inmate transfer which would be classified as Storage S-2 use, but those spaces are not present on this existing facility.

One requirement of the IBC is in regard to what is called Exit Discharge. Exit Discharge means the open area on the outside of the building where people can safely gather when leaving a building emergency. IBC Section 408.3.6 states that the Exit Discharge for I-3 facilities shall not be less than 50 feet from the building, have capacity for a minimum of 15 square feet per occupant and can be in an enclosed yard or court. The fenced in exterior Exercise Yard is the only secured area on the exterior of the Jail but does not meet the 50-foot separation requirement from the building. This space could meet the IBC requirement for the 35 inmates that the facility is rated for if it was located 50 feet from the building.



Building codes set limits for the size of a building in square footage, building height and the number of stories. This is done to ensure the building is safe and that the occupants can exit the building in case of an emergency. There are ways to increase the normally allowed building heights and areas, but those typically are not applied to existing buildings. Per the IBC, the jail portion matches the construction type characteristics of Type IIB which is an unprotected noncombustible steel or concrete structure that is not sprinklered. The Jail would be allowed to be a maximum of 55 feet in height with one story above grade and a maximum of 10,000 square feet per floor level. The existing Jail meets those basic building size requirements of a non-sprinklered facility. It is important to note that the IBC requires all new jails to be fully sprinklered to improve life safety during an emergency.

The Sheriff's Department Office area would be classified as Type VB which is an unprotected wood frame structure, similar to common house construction. The office area would be allowed a maximum of 40 feet in building height with 2 stories above grade and a maximum of 9,000 square feet per floor level. The existing office area meets those basic building size requirements of an existing non-sprinklered facility. However, if you compared it to a modern code-compliant facility, you would not be allowed to have an un-sprinklered facility as it is required by code to have the entire facility sprinklered. This is to ensure proper life safety in the event of a fire or similar emergency to allow time for staff and inmates to evacuate safely.

In modern facilities, both the office area and jail are typically Type IIB construction so that all the primary elements of the building are non-combustible. Office areas are usually steel column/beam/joist structures, with metal stud infill but may mix in concrete block/precast concrete floor/roof construction where more hardened construction is warranted. Most modern jails are constructed of concrete block and precast concrete floors/roofs. Some jail cells or pods may utilize modular steel cells that are placed within a masonry or concrete structure.

While the existing building is "grandfathered", it does not meet many of the current IBC's standards of Fire and Smoke Protection Features, Fire Protection Systems, Means of Egress, Accessibility, Interior Environment, Energy Efficiency among other code sections.

## STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS

The Samuels Group performed casual observation walkthroughs inside and outside of the building, and reviewed drawings of the individual buildings that were made available. The purpose of this assessment was to identify any major structural deficiencies that are present in the existing buildings.

There are signs of building movement between the floors of the building within the Jail portion which have resulted in cracks and sloping in the concrete slab floors. This building movement has caused floors to slope and drop nearly an inch in some places. In 2018, Page County Jail was required by the Iowa Department of Corrections Jail Inspection to undergo an evaluation and potential repair of this issue. That report also indicated that the building had approximately 5 years of life expectancy left due to the structural problems of the facility. Though the problem appeared to be resolved for the time being, continual observation of this issue is critical as it could show signs of additional problems. It is not uncommon for older buildings, especially ones constructed of heavy poured concrete to have settling issues as decades pass due to soil and foundation issues under the buildings. Poured concrete buildings can have structural issues with cracks and settling, but if they are monitored and repaired those issues can be resolved so that the building can continue to have a useful life but can be expensive repairs. It is also important to note that concrete can have small hairline cracks that do not necessarily mean there is a structural problem, it could be related to the natural curing process that concrete goes through.



There were no significant structural issues discovered during the walkthrough of the Sheriff's Department Office area.

## BUILDING ENVELOPE CONDITION

The Samuels Group performed casual observation walkthroughs inside/outside of the building, and reviewed drawings of the individual buildings that were made available. The goal was to assess not only the condition of the existing materials to identify repairs needed, but also the energy efficiency of the building envelope. Diagrams were created which identify the existing building assemblies and compare those to a 2012 International Energy Conservation Code requirements or typical industry standard for the given type of space or building. Energy efficiency is typically measured by R-values and U-factors. When looking at R-values, the higher the number the better. When looking at U-factors, the lower the number the better.

The Jail portion of the building above grade appears to be approximately 14" thick of poured concrete with rebar reinforcing and 4" brick façade. This is a common construction type for a jail of the 1930's. However, by today's standards, it is not an energy efficient building because the solid masonry construction makes it a thermal conductor. Meaning that in winter, when air temperatures are cold and humidity levels are very low, that cold can easily migrate through the masonry and concrete to the interior making it more difficult to heat. The same type of problem is true in summer when it is hot and humid outside, and the air conditioners struggle to maintain decent conditions inside the building. One benefit of mass masonry construction should be noted and that is that it can store a great deal of energy and moisture relatively safely. This means that once it is heated up or cooled down it can store and slowly release that energy for several hours. Buildings that use thermal mass effectively have many additional passive heating design elements that allow winter sun to penetrate the building through large windows which allow a thermal mass (walls/floors) to release heat at night. Then in summer there are typically overhangs that shade the sun to limit solar gain within the building. Having large windows is not practical in jails.



The graphic below compares the existing construction of the Jail and Sheriff's Department Office area to that of a modern code compliant facility. You will notice a large difference between the Jails construction due to the lack of insulation in the existing Jail's walls. Effective R-Values account for the fact that in stud wall construction, the cavity insulation is only truly there for about 75% of the wall assembly, and the other 25% is taken up by the stud material itself which is considered a thermal bridge making the entire assembly less effective without continuous insulation on the outside which is today's standard for energy efficient buildings.

EXISTING JAIL		EXISTING SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT OFFICE		NEW JAIL		NEW SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT OFFICE	
MATERIAL	R-VALUE	MATERIAL	R-VALUE	MATERIAL	R-VALUE	MATERIAL	R-VALUE
4" BRICK EXTERIOR FINISH	0.17	VINYL SIDING	0.61	4" BRICK FINISH	0.17	MASONRY FINISH	0.17
14" MASONRY STRUCTURE	0.80	1/2" PLYWOOD SHEATHING	0.61	1 3/4" AIR GAP	0.80	1 3/4" AIR GAP	0.80
GRAOUT	0.16	2X6 WOOD STUD	0.00	3" POLYISO INSULATION (R-18.6)	18.60	3" POLYISO INSULATION (R-18.6)	18.60
CONCRETE 14"	1.12	FIBERGLASS BATT INSULATION (R-19)	19.00	AIR / WATER / VAPOR RETARDER	0.00	AIR / WATER / VAPOR RETARDER	0.00
INTERIOR AIR FILM	0.68	1/2" GYPSUM BOARD	0.45	8" SOLID GROUTED CMU	1.11	5/8" EXTERIOR SHEATHING	0.68
-	-	INTERIOR AIR FILM	0.68	CONCRETE BLOCK 8" SOLID GROUTED	0.68	8" AIR SPACE / 8" METAL STUD @ 16" O.C.	2.00
-	-	-	-	INTERIOR AIR FILM	-	5/8" GYPSUM BOARD	0.56
-	-	-	-	-	-	INTERIOR AIR FILM	0.68
<b>TOTAL ASSEMBLY R-VALUE</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSEMBLY R-VALUE</b>	<b>21.57</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSEMBLY R-VALUE</b>	<b>22.36</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSEMBLY R-VALUE</b>	<b>24.50</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSEMBLY EFFECTIVE R-VALUE</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSEMBLY EFFECTIVE R-VALUE</b>	<b>18.19</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSEMBLY EFFECTIVE R-VALUE</b>	<b>22.36</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSEMBLY EFFECTIVE R-VALUE</b>	<b>23.36</b>

The Jail windows are metal frames, single pane glass with metal mesh and have a translucent finished glass in the windows to prevent views in and out. The windows also have steel bars at the exterior for security reasons. There appears to be rust on the windows and the paint is peeling in many places. These windows do not let quality light enter the building and are not energy efficient.



In the past there had been many reports of and observed water leaks in the roof. Those water leaks have stopped after the County hired a contractor to use a closed cell spray foam covering with a waterproof paint over the existing roof. This coating assembly can conform to the arched roof and unique transitions. A very thin layer of this same assembly/coating was applied to the exterior brick walls of the Jail soon after. The closed cell spray foam and waterproof coating should give the building an improved insulation or R-Value to the roof.

However, due to the thin nature of the coating on the walls it would not be significant. Possibly the greatest change that the structure will experience with this new coating is that it has become waterproof and vapor impermeable assembly. This means that rainwater or water vapor will have a difficult time penetrating the building. This can be either a good thing or bad thing depending on the mechanical systems performance inside the building which we will discuss more in the Mechanical Systems section of this report.



The Sheriff's Department Office area has newer double pane vinyl windows with insect screens which appear to be in very good condition. There is a mix of double hung and fixed windows. Some of the double hung windows are sized such that they could be used as an egress window if needed. Most decent quality vinyl windows have a life expectancy of 20 to 40 years depending on quality and abuse.



The exterior of the Sheriff's Department Office area appears to be in good condition. The vinyl siding is in good shape and should last the life of the building as long as it is not damaged. The asphalt shingles on the roof appeared to be fairly new, so it is probable that they should last another 20 years without unusual abuse.



The exterior of the Storage Garage south of the Jail appears to be in good shape. The concrete block showed minimal signs of cracking and movement and the painted exterior coating is in pretty good condition. It is an unheated space used for general storage. There are older



wood windows on the garage that need reglazing minimally or replacement all together. The roof shingles were replaced at the same time as the Sheriffs Department Office and should last for another 20 years if not unusually damaged. The wood trim around the overhead doors have started rotting where they touch the ground and could warrant replacement or repairs.

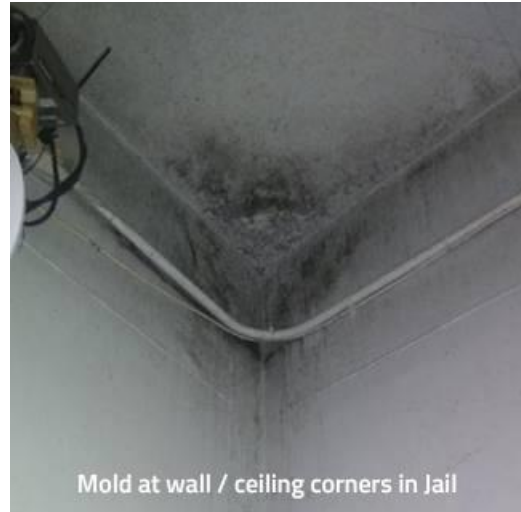
## MECHANICAL SYSTEMS

The Samuels Group performed casual observation of the existing mechanical systems, reviewing utility bills that were made available. The goal was to identify the type of equipment present, assess the condition, likely maintenance/replacement requirements, as well as comparison to a modern facility to serve as a benchmark for the County.

The Jail is heated and cooled by 4 residential style furnaces and condensers which were installed in June 2014. For a building of this size and configuration it is reasonable to use residential style equipment and gives the staff the ability to zone different units without expensive controls to supply the proper temperature and humidity as needed. Newer residential style units can be very energy efficient to operate, but typically have a life expectancy of 15-20 years. Frequent inspection and maintenance is key to keeping the units running at peak efficiency for as long as possible. A number of the units are located within the Jail's corridors which presents a major safety and security problem. The likely reason for the units being located in these corridors is due to the difficulty in cutting openings into the poured and reinforced concrete walls / floors for duct work. Cutting openings the size of duct work typically requires structural reinforcing which can become expensive and disruptive in order to not compromise the structural integrity. There was an additional air handling unit added around 2001 to the first floor to help control the humidity and reduce the mold problem. The Jail basement is served with a single hanging gas heating unit.



At a number of locations throughout the Jail you can see mold developing on the wall and ceiling surfaces. This is an issue that has been reported in nearly every Jail Inspection Report from the last 10 years. This problem is likely due to a combination of HVAC units being undersized, insufficient air circulation, and the sprayfoam/waterproof coating on the exterior of the building preventing any transfer of water vapor through the building assembly. Additionally, mold can thrive by condensation forming on the walls due to



high levels of temperature/humidity levels between the interior and exterior. Corners of walls and ceilings, like the photo on the previous page, provide the perfect location for mold to form as those are the pockets where the conditioned air is least able to reach and circulate which provides the stagnant air mold loves. Traditionally mass masonry buildings did not have vapor barriers and could safely transfer water vapor inside or outside depending on where the vapor drive was migrating. This mold requires staff to constantly clean and sanitize surfaces in an effort to provide a healthy environment. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), mold can seriously affect individuals with respiratory or immune system problems. It can also negatively affect normally healthy individuals.

The ductwork throughout the Jail is mostly original. Most of the ductwork is exposed to the inmates and have been damaged on occasion. Due to the low ceiling heights in the Jail, it is not very feasible to reroute or conceal the ductwork to keep it out of reach of inmates so it will likely continue to be a safety/security problem.



On the electrical side, the building has a mix of modern breaker panels along with old fuse boxes. The old fuse boxes are becoming harder to acquire and require more frequent replacement. It would be advisable for the County to look into replacing the old fuse boxes



with breaker panels from both a maintenance and safety standpoint. There is a centrally monitored fire alarm system that was installed in 2009 which was required by the Iowa DOC.

There is a 45KW natural gas generator in the southeast corner of the Garage / Jail that is sized to power the entire building in the event of a power outage. This generator is tested regularly and appears to be in good condition.



Throughout the Jail, there is exposed electrical conduit and lines which are readily accessible to inmates. There was a wire mesh welded to the steel bars in an effort to prevent inmates from tampering with the electrical systems however the inmates would then work to pry off sections of the wire mesh and create weapons out of it. Due to the physical layout of the Jail, it is not feasible to move the conduit and wires because there is limited space in the narrow hallways, with open cells to the hallway.



On the plumbing side, one of the first issues noticed is that the basement of the Sheriff's Department Office has experienced flooding on a number of occasions. Sheriff staff have determined that the issue is caused by a City of Clarinda storm drain lines being tied into the sewer lines which then causes the flooding. It is evident on the walls, doors, furnishings and other elements that the flooding has occurred a number of times and is causing damage to those elements.





In the cell areas of the Jail, there are very minimal floor drains to take on water from leaks, messes and regular cleaning activities. Along with only a few floor drains, there are limited drain shutoffs which help to prevent backups to the drainage system when inmates put items in the drains or other build up occurs. This has led to temporarily unsanitary conditions for the inmates. Most of the drain lines are original cast iron lines which show signs of rust and degradation. These drain lines are often exposed in the corridors where inmates are moved through and accessible to inmates in the cells at locations. Due to the construction of the facility, it would be costly and very disruptive to daily operations of the Jail to add additional and proper floor drains. Many of the P-



Narrow corridors in Jail due to exposed utilities

Traps are cast within the concrete floors so they are not readily accessible for repairs or cleaning. Many of the plumbing lines have paint peeling due to the rust forming from excessive moisture and leaks.



Rust and peeling paint on Jail cell bars, utilities exposed to inmates

Many of the water supply lines are also original to the building and exposed in corridors and are able to be tampered with at some locations by the inmates. The supply lines also show signs of deterioration.



Jail cell bars and exposed utilities with rust and peeling paint



Exposed utilities in Jail corridors

## SAFETY & SECURITY

The Samuels Group performed casual observations of the existing facility and had discussions about ongoing security measures as well as desires for the future. Safety & Security should be looked at for both the inmates and staff needs. When assessing additional security measures are meant to reduce risk, both in preventing and limiting the intensity of the incident. Safety and security are some of the most prominent concerns discussed when looking at Sheriff's Department Offices and Jails. Operating and maintaining a Jail can be a very dangerous task that the Sheriff's Department and Jail staff must undertake with great care and professionalism.

Many of the other categories of assessment in this report show there is a crossover of facility problems with safety & security issues. From the exposed electrical wires, plumbing lines and HVAC equipment in the narrow, crowded corridors that staff must transport inmates through, rooms serving multiple functions that should be separated, to the wire mesh that has been damaged and turned into weapons, it is very clear that the physical layout and construction of the current jail does not meet the Counties needs and does not meet current standards for such a facility. It is important to remember that safety & security needs to be considered for both the Sheriff's Department Staff, Jail Staff and the inmates.



The mold and rust issues that are present throughout many areas of the Jail and cellblocks is likely to be a problem that will not go away without major renovations and modifications to the jail.

Another major issue with the current facility is the lack of camera coverage and recording ability. The Jail currently has coverage of 7 out of 35 beds which is only 20%. The vast majority of the facility is not properly covered by security cameras. The current security camera system is video only (no audio). Video is only able to be stored for a maximum of 60 days. Due to the coverage, quality and storage limitations, along with lack of audio recording, staff have reported missed opportunities to properly monitor the facility or aid investigations. While there is no minimum requirement dictated by the Iowa DOC regarding security cameras, standard practices have proven that increased coverage, coverage and duration can help lead to safer facilities for both staff and inmates. There is no dedicated control area within the Jail or Sheriff's Department office to monitor the cameras.

Due to the facilities limitations and problems, staff and deputies have missed 12 days of work, had to undertake 94 days of light duty restrictions and spend an additional \$3,133.65 in the past seven and a half years. Over that course of time, there have been incidents where inmates were injured due to the facilities limitations that cost the tax payers \$25,906.55 in

expenses. Over that time there have been no liability claims which could be far more costly and should not be seen as a guarantee that no future claims will be made. During the same time, there has been one death by natural causes and one death by suicide in the Jail.

## INTERIOR ENVIRONMENT

The Samuels Group assessed the overall condition of interior finishes and fixtures by walkthroughs and discussion with County Staff. This was done to assess the overall health of the building along with the work and living environment for the building's users.

The Jail's cells are primarily constructed from steel bars and welded wire mesh that was added later to prevent inmates from tampering with the building utilities and reaching out as others walked in the narrow corridors surrounding the cells. These steel bars show significant signs of rust and peeling paint which can pose health problems. This rust/peeling issue is due to water leaks, moisture problems and corrosion from contact with the concrete structure. It is quite likely due to the age of the building, that much of the paint throughout this area is lead based paint which is known to pose health problems. Attempts have been made to repair and repaint the steel only for it to peel and rust again shortly after. There have been many instances where cells have not been able to be used due to the problems with rust, peeling paint, and the buildings mechanical.



When issues like these are present, it violates the Iowa DOC Standards and then requires that staff not allow inmates to use the spaces. When cells need to be shut down, it reduces the Jails true capacity and may force the inmates to be transferred to neighboring counties. So far there have not been successful lawsuits against the Jail due to the facilities problems, but those could cost the County hundreds of thousands of dollars at minimum as have happened in other places.

Another important thing to evaluate when looking at steel bar cells is that it can further promote the idea that the inmates are nothing more than caged animals rather than human beings and is considered by most modern correctional standards to be an inhumane way to house inmates.



The construction of the Jail cells, pods and dorms make for highly reflective and loud spaces. This creates a negative environment for all of the occupants when inmates are upset, yelling or smashing against the concrete and metal surfaces. The openness allows inmates to communicate with each other that are required to be separated based on Iowa DOC Classification Standards.

As mentioned in many places within this report, there are several spaces that serve multiple functions split between Jail and Sheriff's Department. Furthermore, there are spaces open to one another that are supposed to have different levels of security. One such space worth noting is the Visitation Room. This room has a fabric curtain separating the public's visitation area from the holding cells. While the curtain may provide a small degree of sight separation between the public and inmates housed in the holding cells, it certainly does not provide sound separation.

Throughout the facility there is a lack of proper storage spaces, whether for the Jail or Sheriff's Department. Inmate storage is primarily handled with metal lockers located in the same space as the public visitation and holding cells. Another example of the facility not having proper storage spaces is that there are many places next to the cells, on tables, in the stairways, in the shower and other places where they are used for storage of cleaning supplies, chemicals and other items that inmates have easy access to and should be kept in separate locked rooms or cabinets. The staff simply does not have sufficient space to securely store items. The images below and to the right show items that are in stored in the visitation room, or next to the cells / dorms.





Within the Jail space, windows are covered with translucent panels. These panels are necessary in the existing facility due to its physical design and layout to prevent views to and from the inmates. These panels do not allow a significant amount of light, or quality light into the inmate pods and dorms which likely contributes to the negative moods and incidents within the jail. The Iowa DOC only says that natural light shall be provided but does not specify a measurable amount of natural light. Modern jail facilities would minimally provide skylights and some provide windows with views of secured outdoor areas from activity spaces so that inmates can have access to real daylight which is proven to improve people's moods.

Evidence is stored in scattered areas of the Sheriff's Department basement or in the exterior garage rather than a centralized secure location like you would see in a modern facility. There have been incidents in the past where items have temporarily gone missing due to them not being in a secured location. Additional storage space is needed than what is currently available so that the evidence can be properly stored.

The Sheriff's Department Office has a mix of broadloom carpet and vinyl flooring. In most places the flooring itself is in fair condition. There are a few locations where the carpet has been ripped/torn as shown in the image below. The transitions between various floors are handled with metal transition strips.



## JAIL INSPECTION REPORTS

The Samuels Group has reviewed the Page County Jail Inspection Reports from 2010 to 2020 that were performed by the State of Iowa Department of Corrections. We found that many of the items from 2010 were commented on year after year and have been ongoing problems for this facility. The physical limitations of the facility have made it a challenge for the Sheriff's Department and Jail staff to provide the level of care required.

Some of the issues that were repeatedly brought up in the inspection reports include:

### **IAC 201-50.14(356,356A) Cleanliness and hygiene.**

#### **50.14(1) Housekeeping.**

**a. The jail shall be kept clean and sanitary. Toilets, wash basins, showers and other equipment throughout the facility shall be maintained in good working order. Walls, floors and ceilings shall be well maintained.**

**Comment:** Page County has committed a tremendous amount of time, effort and resources to address the rust issue in the jail. There has been a major improvement in the facility; however rust is a reoccurring problem. The dormitory needs a thorough cleaning; and in particular the ceiling. The Page County Jail is an older facility requires continued maintenance to provide a healthy and sanitary condition for prisoners to live and employees to work.

**Corrective action:** Please continue with the diligence to provide quality living and working conditions.

### **201—50.4(356,356A) Physical plant—general.**

**50.4(4) Cells. Maximum security cells shall be equipped with tamper-resistant bunks, secured table(s) and seat(s), plus a toilet and washbasin recommended for jail or prison use. Cells shall have an adequate supply of both hot and cold water; mixing valves may be used. Housing areas of less secure design need not contain tamper-resistant fixtures.**

**Comment:** Water supply was not readily available in the southeast cell on the second floor of the jail.

**Corrective actions:** Please ensure adequate water is available at all faucets and stools.

**IAC 201-50.14(356,356A) Cleanliness and hygiene.**

**50.14(1) Housekeeping.**

**a. The jail shall be kept clean and sanitary. Toilets, wash basins, showers and other equipment throughout the facility shall be maintained in good working order. Walls, floors and ceilings shall be well maintained.**

**Comment:** Several showers are rusty around the drains.

**Corrective action:** Please ensure this issue is addressed to prompt sanitary and healthy living and working conditions.

**IAC 201—50.4(356,356A) Physical plant—general.**

**50.4(8) Storage.**

**b. Adequate storage space for prisoners' personal clothing and property shall be provided. Space provided shall be secure, and the prisoner's name or identification number shall be affixed to the storage space. Property shall be inventoried and accounted for as provided in Iowa Code section 804.19.**

**Comment:** Prisoner property storage is in the same area as the public access for visitation.

**Corrective action:** This is a security concern and a plan of action should be developed to enhance security.

**IAC 201-50.14(356,356A) Cleanliness and hygiene.**

**50.14(1) Housekeeping.**

**a. The jail shall be kept clean and sanitary. Toilets, wash basins, showers and other equipment throughout the facility shall be maintained in good working order. Walls, floors and ceilings shall be well maintained.**

**Comment:** Cells 1 and 3 on the first floor have drains exposed from the second floor housing unit. These drains are leaking, thereby causing health and sanitation hazards.

**Corrective action:** Cells 1 and 3 shall not be used until repairs are made and inspection of these cells completed to ensure sanitary living and working conditions.

**IAC 201—50.4(356,356A) Physical plant—general.**

**50.4(4) Cells. Maximum security cells shall be equipped with tamper-resistant bunks, secured table(s) and seat(s), plus a toilet and washbasin recommended for jail or prison use. Cells shall have an adequate supply of both hot and cold water; mixing valves may be used. Housing areas of less secure design need not contain tamper-resistant fixtures.**

**Comment:** Hot water was not available in the holding cell.

**Corrective action:** Please ensure hot water is available at all times in each cell.

**50.4(1) Building to meet existing codes.** All facilities are required to be structurally sound and to meet existing building code and health code requirements.

**50.4(2) Professional inspections.**

**a.** The state jail inspector may require for good reason that an agency operating a jail cause it to be examined by an architect, engineer, licensed electrician, health inspector, plumber, heating and air conditioning specialist, food establishment inspector, state fire marshal or fire inspector or any other person with expertise which may be of assistance to the state jail inspector in making an informed decision relative to the jail operation or structure. Inspection by a municipal inspector qualified in these areas may be permitted.

**b.** Any facility determined to be deficient following inspection may be ordered closed by the jail inspector, or specific conditions limiting its operation may be imposed in lieu of closing. An order of closure shall contain the following:

- (1) Statute(s) and rule(s) violated.
- (2) A brief description of the deficiencies.
- (3) The effective date of the order.
- (4) An explanation of remedies required before reopening.

An order of closure shall adhere to subrules 50.3(1) and 50.3(2). This order shall be the notice of noncompliance pursuant to Iowa Code section 356.43 and 201—Chapter 12 concerning contested cases. The matter shall then proceed in accordance with 201—Chapter 12.

**c.** In the event that any agency fails to cooperate in an inspection, the jail inspector may arrange for an inspection and the agency operating the facility shall be financially responsible for any expense involved.

**Comment:** The structural integrity of the Page County Jail appears to be deteriorating. Cracks, separations, sloping floors, and plumbing issues are present and need to reviewed by a professional engineering firm.

**Corrective action:** Page County shall contract with a professional engineering firm with expertise in buildings to determine structural integrity, and to provide a recommended plan of corrective action. A copy of the engineer report and a plan of corrective action shall be forwarded to Iowa Department of Corrections, 510 E. 12<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, Iowa 50319 no later than August 13, 2018.

There were a few years where the Page County Jail Inspection reports did not call out specific issues due to the great number of them and the reoccurring nature problems. Rather, they described how the facility is outdated and did not effectively meet the needs of the staff, prisoners, and citizens of Page County. Reasons cited for the building not meeting needs include those mentioned throughout this report such as the rust, exposed mechanical utilities, lack of proper security due to building layouts among other issues. It is important to note that the inspector continuously praised the Page County Sheriff's Department and Jail staff for their efforts to make the facility as effective as possible given the buildings limitations and constant challenges.

## SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

One of the comments in the 2020 Page County Jail Inspection Report very well sums up the condition of the existing facility:

Page County Jail is an older facility that is outdated, does not meet the current needs of staff, prisoners, or the citizens of Page County. Prisoners continue to have access to the HVAC equipment, exposed telephone wires, cleaning supplies and chemicals, and plumbing during exercise and visitation when they are removed from their cells for exercise or visitation.

The jail has a considerable amount of rust, corrosion and deterioration throughout the facility. Jail staff is doing a very good job of maintaining a clean facility considering the condition of the jail and what they have to work with.

The physical limitations of the existing Page County Jail facility make it extremely difficult to maintain proper conditions to meet the needs of the staff and inmates. There have been past proposals which looked at modifications and renovations to the Jail, but those options appeared to have not been financially feasible or responsible given the limitations the existing building would still impose and were not pursued by the County. The existing facility is a necessary function for Page County to operate, and should be given more thought to what is to be done with it now and in the future, even if that includes a new facility.