

The **Pennsylvania Department of General Services** thanks the 690 respondents who reviewed the online summary presentation and provided comments on the land use feasibility study for the future disposition of the former State Correctional Institution (SCI)-Pittsburgh. Your comments will help us address the concerns of the community as we move forward with this project.

The Department has prepared this document to address the most frequently asked questions posed through the public comment period from June 12 – June 26, 2023.

The final SCI-Pittsburgh Feasibility Study will be published on June 30, 2023.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What will happen with the community of feral cats that currently call the prison home?

The Department of General Services and ALCOSAN are coordinating with the Prison Cats' caretaker to ensure the cats are protected during the planned construction activities (i.e., SCI-Pittsburgh demolition and ALCOSAN river tunneling project). The SCI-Pittsburgh Feasibility Study recommends creating a ~5.2-acre public park from the portion of the prison property that is situated between the Ohio River and the Main Penitentiary Building. This public park can accommodate the relocation of the cat colony.

2. The prison is a major historical landmark in Pittsburgh, will the external structure be preserved?

Based on extensive and ongoing discussions with local project stakeholders that included the Mayor's Office, Marshall-Shadeland Neighborhood Group, the Urban Redevelopment Authority, Pittsburgh Film Office, and other community and economic development interests, the consensus is to fully demolish the property for industrial and public park use. In light of this recommendation, the Department of General Services has coordinated with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) pursuant to the PA History Code and to prepare a comprehensive Historical Resource Survey of SCI-Pittsburgh. The Historical Resource Survey will be used to preserve the site's history and it is anticipated that a historical marker will be placed at the site and possibly within the proposed park area of the site.

3. Have you worked with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to consider converting the prison to a juvenile detention center or reopening it as a state penitentiary?

SCI-Pittsburgh was permanently closed in 2017 by the Commonwealth to cut costs amid a growing revenue shortfall and budget. The Commonwealth will not reopen the facility and the State Legislature authorized the Department of General Services through Act 24 of 2022 to convey the property through a competitive solicitation for proposal process.

4. Will this project impact the ability to use the Three Rivers Heritage Trail?

The SCI-Pittsburgh Feasibility Study recommends that the Three Rivers Heritage Trail be preserved and enhanced by creating a ~5.2-acre public park from the portion of the prison property that is situated between the Ohio River and the Main Penitentiary Building. The study recommends that the park include a new and improved trailhead facility for trail users.

5. Will the prison be opened for paranormal investigations?

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6. How will the project impact future abilities of filmmakers to use the prison for filming?

The proposed full demolition of the property and its redevelopment into public park space and industrial development will no longer permit the film industry to use the site.

7. Is there consideration to use the property to house the homeless?

The SCI-Pittsburgh property is located in the Riverfront General Industrial Zoning District and housing or any residential reuse of the property is not permitted under the City Zoning Code. The prison facility use predated the current zoning code requirements.

8. Has the project considered using it for tourism (museum, ghost tours, prison tours, festivals/event venue)?

The SCI-Pittsburgh Feasibility Study has confirmed that full demolition of the site and its redevelopment for industrial and park uses are the highest and best use of the property.

9. How can I find updates on the project as it moves into the next phases?

The Department of General Services will provide periodic updates on the project through press release, its website, and social media posts. Also, the Department will continue to keep your state and local elected officials apprised of the project.