

**Confined in the Margins of the Margins:
The Urban Form of Mass Incarceration**

by

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B.A. in Sociology, Tufts University (2013)

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
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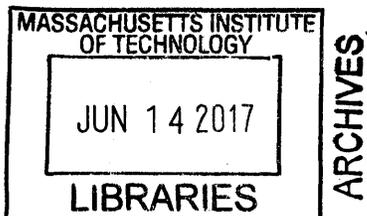
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Abstract

The historically unprecedented and internationally incomparable rate of incarceration in the United States merits an analysis of the prison as a key political, social, economic, and physical institution in America. This research sits in the gap in the existing literature between sociological research on incarceration and architectural studies of the conditions of confinement by turning my attention to urban design scale physical characteristics and their interaction with their context. It begins with the premise that the characteristics of the prison as a physical structure are entangled with the prison as cultural item, political tactic, and social concept. I ask: what is the urban form of mass incarceration? The question is investigated by focusing on a sample of 45 federal correctional complexes. Each complex is measured according to five different metrics through the use of spatial data to address three scales of concern: regional, city, and site. To address the regional scale concern of incarcerated populations being placed far from their home communities and barriers to maintaining social connections, I measure each complex's proximity to an urbanized area and accessibility to transit. I study the city scale concern of facilities being relegated to the remote and ignored margins by considering measures of visibility: distance to the nearest major road, and the number of nearby points of interest that may bring people within proximity of the prison. To investigate the building scale concern of the generous amounts of space correctional facilities demand, I compare the complex's size to the size of the hosting city. I find that correctional complexes are not well sited or designed to address the issues associated with all three scales. Analyzing the variation among the complexes, the results show that the facilities built during the rapid rise of incarceration share similar physical characteristics. Interpreting raw measures using metric-appropriate checkpoints, I find that even the complexes that are more integrated relative to others are in reality isolated and disconnected. Looking at the public comments and design descriptions for the facilities among the highest ranking and lowest ranking sites, I find that the design intention is to blend the facility into the rural landscape, and that the ability of residents to "forget that it's even there" is seen as a design success and benefit.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	8
CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT	16
Mass incarceration in America	16
Effects of mass incarceration	18
Historical context of the prison	21
Spatial reinforcement of exclusion	24
CHAPTER 3: STUDY SIGNIFICANCE AND METHOD	26
Defining the Variable	26
Urban integration index	28
Spatial analysis methodology: data sources and calculations	33
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS	37
Findings summary	37
Raw data analysis	39
Relative spread of integration	43
Most and least integrated facilities: Site and siting context	136
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	141
Looking forward towards change	143
Areas for further study and practice	149

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Mass incarceration is a uniquely American and historically novel problem. The United States has a higher rate of incarceration than any other country, housing a quarter of all prisoners in the world. There are two key characteristics of *mass* incarceration in the contemporary United States that make it a distinct phenomenon. First, mass imprisonment implies a rate of imprisonment that is “markedly above the historical and comparative norm for societies of this type.”¹ Second, the demographic concentration of imprisonment produces not the incarceration of individual offenders, but the “systematic imprisonment of whole groups of the population.”² The dramatic and concentrated growth of the number of prisons and incarcerated people is extraordinary—it cannot be explained through simple “if this, then that” logic such as “crime rose, thus incarceration rates increased.” Instead, it merits an analysis of the prison and incarceration as a key political, social, economic and physical institution in America.

The present rate and conditions of incarceration present issues with the way mass incarceration is experienced by different sectors of society. Those directly involved in the criminal justice system are often serving sentences whose length and harshness were determined by a politically motivated and racially charged process,³ are removed from the communities that they come from,⁴ and upon release are not provided sufficient resources for integration and held down by the social stigma attached to imprisonment and crime.⁵ Those who are socially connected to incarcerated people are unable to visit and maintain connections, and are witnessing the impact that losing a significant population of young men to incarceration can have on long-term social connections and structures.⁶ Those who reside in the rural cities and towns hosting correctional facilities are fighting to have the newly created jobs be filled by the residents, and are often left disappointed by the unmet hopes for

1 Garland, David. *Mass Imprisonment: Social Causes and Consequences*. New York: SAGE, 2001.

2 Garland, David. *Mass Imprisonment: Social Causes and Consequences*. New York: SAGE, 2001.

3 Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

4 Western, Bruce. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006.

5 Western, Bruce. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006.

6 , Donald. Families and the Moral Economy of Incarceration in Criminal Justice, Judah & Bryant, eds., 2004.

economic revitalization and unable to attract additional development because of the prison.⁷ And finally, those who are not directly connected to the prison are blind to the significant portion of their society that is impacted by incarceration, have inconsistent public attitudes towards desiring reform and rehabilitation,⁸ and maintain misconceptions of the populations who end up behind the prison walls.⁹

The design and siting of the prison facilities themselves has also changed with the advent of the mass incarceration era. Since 1980, the majority of new prisons have been placed in non-metropolitan areas,¹⁰ many of them in communities that historically have not had prisons.¹¹ Considered “foremost on the list of NIMBYs (‘not in my backyard’) just 20 years ago,”¹² a new correctional facility now sparks a competitive lobbying process, with cities putting together incentive packages to attract the development and employment opportunity towards their own community. Research on the lobbying processes of state facilities across the United States describes the economic development plan of rural towns that turn toward government institutions to fill a gap left behind by the decline of industrial production.¹³ The ultimate construction of the Federal Bureau Of Prisons facility in Berlin, NH, for example, represents a five year process of the city government identifying incentives (e.g., funding required environmental studies) as well as finding ways to convince residents of the facility’s economic benefits (e.g., employment from construction and facility staffing).¹⁴ The growth of incarceration numbers has led to the growth of the amount of space claimed by correctional facilities as well. As prison populations expanded in the 70s and 80s, satellite institutions were opened near or adjacent to existing prisons, typically for minimum-security custody and in the 1990s, the federal prison system opened new sites where separate institutions with different levels of custody were all designed and built at the same time.¹⁵ The high-security control unit was also introduced as a way to deal with a “small group of chronic troublemakers who were dangerous to both other inmates and guards.”¹⁶ When a rapidly growing inmate population necessitated extensive new prison production, standard plans were used as a cost-saving and

7 Hooks, G., et al. 2004. “The prison industry: carceral expansion in the U.S. counties, 1969–1994.” *Social Science Quarterly* 85(1): 37–57.

8 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

9 Coates, Ta-nehisi. 2015, October. “The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration.” *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/>

10 According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, a “metropolitan statistical area” is a central city of at least 50,000 people or an urbanized area consisting of 50,000 people or more in a city (or cities) and the surrounding counties that are economically tied to it. “Non-metropolitan” America is all that which is not included in such metropolitan statistical areas. See: Mauer, Marc and Meda Chesney-Lind, Editors. *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment*. New York: New Press, 2002.

11 Williams, Eric J. 2010. “The Big House in a Small Town: Prisons, Communities, and Economics in Rural America.” Sonoma State University, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies.

12 Williams, Eric J. “The Big House in a Small Town: Prisons, Communities, and Economics in Rural America.” 2010. Sonoma State University, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies.

13 Williams, Eric J. “The Big House in a Small Town: Prisons, Communities, and Economics in Rural America.” 2010. Sonoma State University, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies.

14 Berlin Daily Sun. 2001, November 29. “Effort to Attract Federal Prison to Berlin Began Over Five Years Ago.” Retrieved from: <http://www.berlindailysun.com/newsx/local-news/22311-effort-to-attract-federal-prison-to-berlin-began-over-five-years-ago#/>

15 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

16 Smith, Caleb. *The Prison and the American Imagination*. Yale University Press, 2011.

necessary time-saving strategy, resulting in structures that were designed and constructed with minimum regard for the surrounding context. Despite the number of prisons being constructed at record pace,¹⁷ the unrelenting growth of incarceration rates resulted in widespread overcrowding which still persists today.¹⁸ Overcrowding exacerbated the already harsh physical conditions of the prison: a Human Rights Watch survey¹⁹ of federal prisons, for example, found that cells originally designed for single occupancy were crammed with double bunks and cement slabs serving as makeshift beds, and that inmates were being fed in cramped halls with fewer chairs than people. Long exposure to living in insufficient space has been shown to be linked to public health concerns regarding the spread of disease,²⁰ as well as heightened anxiety and psychological deterioration.²¹

A growing revelation of the unsatisfactory physical conditions of incarceration has inspired design-based responses. The reform efforts that have been suggested focus inside of the prison fences: the internal conditions of correctional facilities. An architecture studio in California, for example, has led efforts to create designs that embody a restorative justice approach.²² The restorative justice approach believes in inviting the perpetrators and victims (or victims' families) into direct conversation in order to arrive at restitution and shared healing. The studio holds design workshops with incarcerated populations, with the goal of creating spaces within the prison that are conducive to holding these conversations. The designs created emphasize turning correctional facilities into "peacemaking centers" through carefully selected architectural details such as 'calming' paint colors and places two doors in the room to make people feel safe.²³ Beyond creating change at the individual room level, architectural responses have also tackled the design of the facility structure and campus as a whole. The Mas d'Enric Penitentiary²⁴ in Tarragona, Spain, for example, was created as a way to present a radically different approach to the design of correctional facilities, and it indeed does offer a new type of built environment that begins to soften the harsh, sterile edges typically found in correctional facilities today. The dining halls are designed at a more human scale, and the facade of the buildings are given a more gentle aesthetic, but the Mas d'Enric Penitentiary is located in a wooded area far from any other part of the city.²⁵ Where the project stops is at the

17 Lynch, Mona. "The Social Psychology of Mass Imprisonment." from *The SAGE Handbook of Punishment and Society*. Jonathan Simon and Richard Sparks, editors.

18 39% of federal facilities were over capacity as of September 2011. United States Government Accountability Office. 2012. "Growing Inmate Crowding Negatively Affects Inmates, Staff, and Infrastructure." Retrieved from <http://www.gao.gov/assets/650/648123.pdf>

19 Human Rights Watch. 1991, November. "Prison Conditions in the United States: a Human Rights Watch report."

20 Warmstley, Roy. 2005. "Prison health care and the extent of prison overcrowding," *International Journal of Prisoner Health*, Vol. 1(1):3-12.

21 Haney, Craig. 2006. "The Wages of Prison Overcrowding: Harmful Psychological Consequences and Dysfunctional Correctional Reactions Prison Reform: Commission on Safety and Abuse in America's Prisons." *Washington University Journal of Law and Policy*.

22 Sathian, Sanjena. 2015, August 26. "Deanna Van Buren is Making Space for a New Kind of Justice." *ZY*. Retrieved from <http://www.ozy.com/rising-stars/deanna-van-buren-is-making-space-for-a-new-kind-of-justice/40562>

23 Sathian, Sanjena. 2015, August 26. "Deanna Van Buren is Making Space for a New Kind of Justice." *ZY*. Retrieved from <http://www.ozy.com/rising-stars/deanna-van-buren-is-making-space-for-a-new-kind-of-justice/40562>

24 Archdaily. 4 April 2013. "Mas d'Enric Penitentiary / AiB estudi d'arquitectes + Estudi PSP Arquitectura." Web. www.archdaily.com/354873/mas-d-enric-penitentiary-aib-estudi-d-arquitectes-estudi-ppsp-arquitectura.

25 Archdaily. 4 April 2013. "Mas d'Enric Penitentiary / AiB estudi d'arquitectes + Estudi PSP Arquitectura." Web. www.archdaily.com/354873/mas-d-enric-penitentiary-aib-estudi-d-arquitectes-estudi-ppsp-arquitectura.



Mas d'Enric Penitentiary in Tarragona, Spain.
Source: Jose Hevia

walls of the prison—the conditions inside the fence lines are changed, but as a whole the prison is still isolated at the spatial margins. A need for a new kind of design response has been recognized by those who are designing, constructing, and operating existing facilities as well. A special “Architecture Issue” of Justice Magazine, a publication that covers news and product development related to the construction of correctional facilities, for example, highlights the creation of the “The Normative Cell.” As the construction manager of correctional facilities writes, “Our society is demanding better solutions to address the needs of those in custody.... As such, a component of this approach and part of the remedy includes improving the built environment in order to foster a change in behavior.”²⁶ Marketed as “safe, therapeutic, aesthetically pleasing, clean, efficient, and virtually indestructible,” the ‘Normative Cell’ boasts “game changing innovations in restorative design and function.”²⁷ The “innovation,” however, ultimately adds up to changes in the colors and materials used for the furniture.

These types of design responses are not enough—the conditions of mass incarceration and the impact of the hundreds of correctional facilities added to the American landscape in the last few decades requires a larger scale study. While the broader complexity of criminal justice enforcement and reform demands a response at political and economic policy levels, this research presents the spatial issues involved in the experience of imprisonment. Urban design can be a relevant tool for addressing mass incarceration at three different scales: regional, city, and site.

First, at the regional scale, incarcerated populations are housed in correctional facilities removed from urban areas and inaccessible by public transit options, even while the inmate population can be characterized as being from urban communities.²⁸ Though the Bureau of Prisons states that it “attempts” to place prisoners “within a 500-mile radius of their residence,” no hard regulations are enforced. For low-income communities, 500 miles can prove to be a prohibitive distance.²⁹ While “all forms of incarceration breed disconnection—even the closest-to-home prison placements cut people off from their families and communities...long-distance placements crystallize one of the core problems at the heart of the prison system.”³⁰

Second, at the city scale, prisons are relegated to the spatial margins, placed on inexpensive, hard to access land or disguised when they are more centrally located.³¹ This creates a sense of invisibility for the institutions and those housed inside: “Our carceral state banishes American citizens to a gray

26 Offner, Gregory. 2017, February. “What Keeps Me Up at Night: What’s New, What’s Improved & What’s Working.” *Correctional News*, vol 19(1): 30-31.

27 Offner, Gregory. 2017, February. “What Keeps Me Up at Night: What’s New, What’s Improved & What’s Working.” *Correctional News*, vol 19(1): 30-31.

28 Huling, T., Mauer, M., 2003. Big prisons, small towns: prison economics in rural America. The Sentencing Project Report. Web. www.sentencingproject.org/Admin/Documents/publications/inc_bigprisons.pdf.

29 Schenwar, Maya. 2014, November 11. “How Long-Distance Prison Placements Are Bad For All of Us.” *Life of the Law*. Retrieved from <http://www.lifeofthelaw.org/2014/11/how-long-distance-prison-placements-defeat-prisons-purpose/>.

30 Schenwar, Maya. 2014, November 11. “How Long-Distance Prison Placements Are Bad For All of Us.” *Life of the Law*. Retrieved from <http://www.lifeofthelaw.org/2014/11/how-long-distance-prison-placements-defeat-prisons-purpose/>.

31 Steil, Justin, et al. 2015. “Prisons and Teaching: Destabilizing the Margins and Center.” *Progressive Planning*, vol. 205: 33-36.

wasteland far beyond the promises and protections the government grants its other citizens.”³²

Third, at the building and site scale, prisons have been designed to have large footprints and clustered together into correctional complexes³³ that take up so much space that it restricts their ability to integrate into urban environments as they are currently understood. Land uses that consume large plots command special treatment, rather than being integrated into the urban fabric. For undesirable land uses, a project’s large scale needs can further push the use to the spatial fringes of a city.

The following research investigates the overlap of urban design and mass incarceration by focusing on a sample of 45 correctional complexes. The sample was chosen by selecting the complexes that included federal, medium security facilities in the United States. Federal prisons provide a geographically widespread look at facilities across the country without being tied to state-specific policies, quirks, and exceptions. A majority of inmates in federal facilities are serving sentences related to drug-related crime: the growth in weapon and drug offenses together make up over 60 percent of all growth in the federal prison system in the past two decades.³⁴ This research aims to answer a descriptive question, explaining the spread and variability of correctional complexes as they exist: what is the urban-design scale form of mass incarceration? Each complex is observed based on the three scales described above by measuring five different metrics through the use of geographic and spatial data. To address the regional scale concern of incarcerated populations being placed far from their home communities and barriers to maintaining social connections, I measure each complex’s proximity to an urbanized area³⁵ and accessibility to transit.³⁶ I study the city scale concern of facilities being relegated to the remote and ignored margins by considering measures of visibility: distance to the nearest major road, and the number of nearby points of interest that may bring people within proximity of the prison. To investigate the building scale concern of the generous amounts of space correctional facilities demand, I measure the complex’s relative size to the hosting city. The research first documents the raw score of each correctional complexes according to these measures. Then, each complex is assigned a scaled ‘integration index’ score—a sum created by scaling each raw score category into quintiles—and presented graphically to create a documentation of prison complexes as they exist. Finally, additional site context and siting processes were studied for facilities from the highest and lowest ends of the integration spread, in order to consider the design intentions and reactions of the public, to the extent that they are observable from publically available documents. Chapter Three provides a more detailed explanation of the research

32 Coates, Ta-nehisi. 2015, October. “The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration.” *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/>

33 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

34 Watts, J.C. et al. 2016. “Transforming Prisons, Restoring Lives: Final Recommendations of the Charles Colson Task Force on Federal Corrections.” Urban Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/77101/2000589-Transforming-Prisons-Restoring-Lives.pdf>

35 Urbanized Area is a category given by the U.S. Census Bureau for a continuous built-up area with a population of 50,000 or more. It comprises one of one or more places— *central places*— and the adjacent densely settled surrounding area— *urban fringe*— consisting of other places and nonplace territory.

36 Local bus, express bus, commuter bus, bus rapid transit, light rail, subway, commuter rail, passenger ferry, and Amtrak stations.

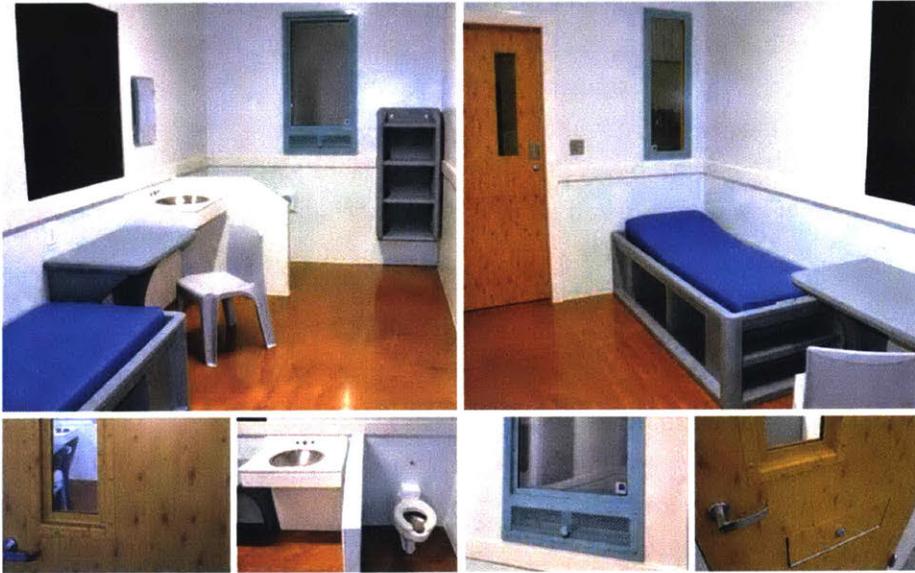


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Source: Correctional News, vol 19(1): 30-31.

significance of the described methodological steps.

In brief, I find that correctional complexes are not well sited or designed to address the issues associated at all three scales of concern: regional, city, and site. Analyzing the variation among the selected complexes, the results show that the facilities built during the rapid rise of incarceration in the 1980s and 1990s share similar physical characteristics; in fact, ten of these facilities share the exact same building footprint. Interpreting the raw measures and calculations using metric-appropriate checkpoints, I find that even the facilities that are more integrated relative to others are in reality isolated and disconnected. Even the complex with the highest accessibility, for example, is a thirty-minute walk away from the nearest transit station. Looking at the public comments and design descriptions for the facilities among the highest ranking and lowest ranking sites included in the Environmental Impact Studies, I find that the conversation is focused on the hosting city—not the people who will be incarcerated or the communities that they may be coming from. I also find that the design intention is to blend into the rural landscape, and that the ability of residents to “forget that it’s even there” is seen as a design success and benefit. In the case where the complex is indeed more integrated with the city’s other uses, the visibility becomes a point of contention for residents.

This research is informed by two separate bodies of literature—incarceration and criminal justice, and studies of the built environment—and aims to create connections between them. My research sits in the gap in the existing literature between sociological writing on incarceration and architectural studies of the conditions of confinement by turning my attention to urban design scale physical characteristics and their interaction with their context. The research makes contributions to research and reform efforts targeted at decarceration by helping to ground literature addressing the spatial isolation of prisons with a more detailed calculation and documentation of existing facilities. The research adds to the expanding field of urban design in addressing social inequity, providing a focused look at the issue of mass incarceration. While the methodology was focused on spatial measures, the research findings illuminate factors related to prison siting decisions—such as the economic decline of rural cities and the racially disparate distribution of incarceration—that urban planning can and should address.

The remainder of the thesis is organized as follows. Chapter Two provides provides an overview of the contributing political and social factors that have led to dramatic increases in incarceration rates and the impact it has on those affected by incarceration. The section also takes a historic look at the role design has played in embodying the changing ideologies behind crime and punishment. Chapter Three explains the methodology and details the data sources and calculations used to identify each variable. Chapter Four interprets the raw score of each variable, presents a visual documentation of each of the facilities, and discusses the site and siting context of two of the facilities in more detail. Finally, the thesis concludes with a discussion of the interaction between the social and spatial marginalization of disadvantaged populations.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT

Mass incarceration in America

The American criminal justice system holds more than 2.3 million people in 1,719 state prisons, 102 federal prisons, 942 juvenile correctional facilities, 3,283 local jails, and 79 Indian Country jails.³⁷ The available data regarding the number of people arrested, given a trial, serving sentences, and on parole does not offer a clear and cohesive picture of what root causes lie underneath the numbers. The concentration of the growth in time—a dramatic incline beginning in the 1970s—has served as a starting point for interpretations of the data. Between 1968 and 2013, the number of people in state and federal prisons saw a more than eight-fold increase, from 187,914 to 1,574,741.³⁸ Focusing on the years of the highest growth, 1970 to 2000, Michelle Alexander’s frequently cited³⁹ *The New Jim Crow* draws a connection between the rising inmate population to the policies of the “War on Drugs” and the bipartisan goal and strategy of appearing “tough on crime” by elected politicians, and unpacks the racially charged intentions and consequences behind them. The emphasis on the prohibition of drugs and harsher responses to crime from the Nixon, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations have resulted in policy decisions that have shaped the American criminal justice landscape and caused the rapid increase of incarceration. While the legislative process involved multiple bills and policies, the key impact of criminal policy changes were extended sentences and increased admissions for drug-related offenses—truth in sentencing laws that require convicted individuals serve a larger portion of their given sentence; mandatory minimum sentencing laws that set a federally defined low-end limit on how many years certain offenses were assigned; and Federal and State-level shifts away from parole, including for those serving life sentences.

The magnitude of influence that longer sentences has on rising incarceration rates is debated.

³⁷ The number of state and federal facilities is from Census of State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2005, The number of youth facilities is from Juvenile Residential Facility Census, 2012: Selected Findings (includes only detention centers,[] reception/diagnostic centers, and training schools/long-term secure facilities but not shelters, group homes, ranch/wilderness camps, and residential treatment centers), the number of jails from Census of Jail Facilities, 2006 and the number of Indian Country jails from Jails in Indian Country, 2014.

³⁸ Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics.

³⁹ Michelle Alexander’s *The New Jim Crow* has been cited by 3668 books and articles as of March 2017, according to information available from the Google Scholar online database.

While the explanation that mass incarceration is the result of the longer sentences for drug-related offenses put in place by the “War on Drugs” is so widely accepted that it is referred to as the “standard story” by new literature, alternative interpretations of the data have surfaced. Criminologist John Pfaff argues in his book *Locked In* (2017) that mass incarceration is a result of increased number of admissions into prisons rather than longer sentences served. This distinction is not immediately obvious in discussions of mass incarceration; incarceration rates are often charted and discussed using counts at annual check-points. This shift in viewing the rate as a result of rising admissions rather than longer sentences has potential implications for how to most effectively address the problem. To address the admission rate, reform efforts should be targeted at those in the criminal justice pipeline that makes this decision: prosecutors. Prosecutors have a high level of discretion and influence over who is admitted, since they have “complete control over which cases they file and which ones they dismiss.”⁴⁰ Prosecutors’ power is also increased by the sheer number of cases they process each year, an overwhelming majority⁴¹ of which are settled as plea bargains which take much less time than the weeks and months that would go into a trial. For all the power they hold, prosecutors receive little political attention; a majority of prosecutors run unopposed.⁴²

Taking a racially-disaggregated view of mass incarceration in America is vital. Black men have the highest imprisonment rate in every age group in state and federal facilities.⁴³ Like the Jim Crow laws of the Reconstruction period, incarceration is a manifestation of America’s control and dehumanization of black people, but one that disguises itself in racially-neutral language. Even if the political language of incarceration may avoid explicitly racialized terms, the “demographic contours of imprisonment produced large differences in incarceration rates across the population.”⁴⁴ The disproportionate increase in incarceration rates for black Americans were an effect of how the policies were implemented and framed. How the undercurrent of racially-discriminatory politics in America made its way into incarceration-related policies and practices is exemplified by the 100:1 gram-for-gram mandatory minimum sentencing discrepancy for crack cocaine—associated with low-income, black areas—and for powder cocaine—associated with suburban, white areas because of its higher price point. (The discrepancy was altered by the 2010 Fair Sentencing Act, but still remains at a 18:1 gram-for-gram sentencing disparity while the two drugs are still identical at a molecular level).⁴⁵ The “tough on crime” era of politics created a culture that labeled low-income, black neighborhoods as an “enemy” to be removed and punished by more heavily criminalizing the behavior patterns found in these areas and by over-representing black people in news imagery. The burdens and repercussions associated with incarceration are distributed disproportionately,

40 Pfaff, John. 2017. *Locked In*, 133. It is true that judges are required to sign off on pleas and can thus reject those they find unsatisfactory, but in general, they will acquiesce to the deals struck by the prosecutors and defence attorneys.

41 According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics in 2013, 97 percent of federal cases and 94 percent of state cases end in plea bargains, with defendants pleading guilty in exchange for a lesser sentence.

42 According to Ronald F Wright’s study in the article “Public Defender Elections and Popular Control over Criminal Justice” (2010), prosecutors run unopposed 84 percent of the time, a number far higher than state legislative races.

43 Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics, 2015; Federal Justice Statistics Program, 2015; National Corrections Reporting Program, 2014; Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2004; and U.S. Census Bureau, postcensal resident population estimates for January 1, 2016.

44 Western, Bruce. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006.

45 Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics, 2014.

impacting black men more than any other group. Simply reexamining the issues already discussed reveals the magnitude of the racially disparate impact of mass incarceration. Unpacking the 6.1 million who cannot vote because of felony disenfranchisement, for example, 1 of every 13 black Americans has lost their voting rights compared to 1 in every 56 non-black Americans.⁴⁶ Black defendants receive sentences that are almost 10 percent longer than those of comparable white defendants arrested for the same criminal acts. Most of this disparity can be explained by the prosecutor's initial charging decisions, particularly the filing of charges carrying mandatory minimum sentences.⁴⁷ Racial and sex disparities magnify the influence of the penal system by concentrating the resulting social and demographic effects on one portion of the population.

Effects of mass incarceration

Even after completing their assigned sentence, people who have been incarcerated face a difficult reintegration process marked by social stigma and legal hurdles. The absence of men and women due to incarceration impacts their communities' social networks; incarceration disrupts family formation, leading to lower marriage rates and higher rates of childbirth outside marriage.⁴⁸ The incarcerated are a statistical blind spot in measures of economic and political well-being, left out of figures such as unemployment rates and educational attainment rates.⁴⁹ The voices of those who are currently and have previously been incarcerated are forced out of political decisions by denying them the right of suffrage, "a fundamental matter in a free and democratic society."⁵⁰ With the exception of two states,⁵¹ people actively serving prison sentences are not allowed to vote. A striking 6.1 million Americans are prohibited from voting due to state laws that disenfranchise citizens convicted of felony offenses.⁵²

When someone is convicted of a crime today, their "debt to society is never paid."⁵³ Even if time served has not grown longer, the duration of 'total punishment' certainly has, if "formal and informal post-parole collateral consequences" are seen as part of a person's sentence. There are around 870,500 people⁵⁴ 'free' on parole, but that significantly understates how many people struggle with the restrictions that follow time in prison. Those who have been convicted of a crime face a long series of hurdles after leaving the correctional facility itself. Men and women with a felony

46 Uggen, C., Larson, L., & Shannon, S. 6 million lost voters: State-level estimates of felony disenfranchisement, 2016. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

47 Rehavi, M. Marit and Sonja B. Starr. 2014. Racial Disparity in Federal Criminal Sentences. *Journal of Political Economy*, 122(6).

48 Charles, Kerwin Kofi and Ming Ching Luoh. 2010. Male Incarceration, the Marriage Market, and Female Outcomes. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 92(3), 614-627.

49 Western, Bruce. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2016.

50 Supreme Court 1964, Reynolds v. Sims.

51 Maine and Vermont do not restrict the voting rights of anyone with a felony conviction, including those in prison.

52 Uggen, C., Larson, L., & Shannon, S. (2016). 6 million lost voters: State-level estimates of felony disenfranchisement, 2016. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project. The 12 most extreme states restrict voting rights even after a person has served his or her prison sentence and is no longer on probation or parole; such individuals in those states make up over 50 percent of the entire disenfranchised population.

53 Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

54 Bureau of Justice Statistics. Probation And Parole In The United States, 2015.

drug charge who are otherwise eligible for receipt of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits are subject to a lifetime disqualification.⁵⁵ Though banned in letter,⁵⁶ employer discrimination based on criminal background makes it all the more difficult to find employment. Even if one lands a decent job, newly released prisoners often face daunting payments to probation departments, fees for drug testing, and fines for not meeting stringent probation conditions. Public housing agencies and private landlords have adopted exclusionary policies and informal practices that deny housing eligibility to applicants with even the most minor of criminal backgrounds. When it comes to public housing, “one strike and you’re out,” as President Clinton declared in his 1996 State of the Union Address: “If you break the law, you no longer have a home in public housing, one strike and you’re out. That should be the law everywhere in America.” Restrictions need not always be formal. Imprisonment “undermines job skills, social networks, and social support in ways that complicate life in general, and things like employment in particular. These impediments can last for a long time; skills and community support do not magically return the day a person is released from parole supervision.”⁵⁷

As one previously incarcerated woman put it, ex-offenders can be left asking: “...yes I did my prison time. How long are you going to punish me as a result of it?”⁵⁸ The social label of being an ex-offender can be an isolating experience. In a penal system that emphasizes someone being removed from society—and the entitlement to civil and individual rights that come with being a citizen—for a defined amount of time, the end of that sentence theoretically symbolizes a return to society. The feeling of removal and rejection, however, often carries on. Henry, a young black male convicted of a felony, describes it this way: “It’s like you broke the law, you bad. You broke the law, bang—you’re not part of us anymore.”⁵⁹ Even in communities where a significant percentage of the population has spent time in correctional facilities, many people “struggling to cope with the stigma of imprisonment have no idea that their neighbors are struggling with the same grief.”⁶⁰ Being formally labeled as an offender can lead one to internalize stigmatizing attitudes, the psychological responses to which are associated with withdrawal from society and maladaptive behaviors.⁶¹ The burden of being labeled by a stigmatized status can be heard in the voice of Dorsey Nunn, an ex-offender: “The biggest hurdle you gotta get over when you walk out of those prison gates is shame—that shame, that stigma, that label, that thing you wear around your neck saying ‘I’m a criminal.’”

55 The ban is a result of The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, signed by Clinton on August 22, 1996. The act banned the receipt of SNAP and TANF benefits for individuals with felony drug convictions, but it gave states the discretion to opt-out of or modify the ban.

56 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes some forms of discrimination against certain categories of persons in the United States illegal.

57 Pfaff, John. *Locked In*. New York: Basic Books, 2017.

58 Quote from interview with Michelle Alexander. Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

59 Quote from interview with Michelle Alexander. Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

60 Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

61 In one study of male prisoners' (N = 450) perceived stigma was correlated with anticipated withdrawal from society (Winnick Terri A, Bodkin Mark. Anticipated Stigma and Stigma Management Among Those to be Labeled "Ex-Con. Deviant Behavior. 2008. 29:295–333.). Also, former prisoners' (N = 229) perceived stigma was positively correlated with number of lifetime probation violations and a violent felony conviction (LeBel Thomas P. Invisible stripes? Formerly Incarcerated Person's Perceptions of Stigma. Deviant Behavior. 2012. 33:89–107), suggesting that perceived stigma is linked to maladaptive behaviors in offenders as well as other stigmatized groups.

It's like a yoke around your neck, and it'll drag you down, even kill you if you let it." ⁶² Beyond the weight of stigmatization, incarceration significantly alters the life course of individuals affected far past their final day in prison. In short, "imprisonment is a turning point to fewer opportunities and attenuated citizenship," and delays entry into the "conventional adult roles of worker, spouse, and parent." ⁶³ This not only impacts the individual, but has a ripple effect to the communities they come from. Donald Braman observes the experiences of Londa, a twenty-year-old mother of three living in D.C. In the two-block radius of Londa's residence, Braman counted sixty-four arrests for drug possession and distribution over the course of a year. During that period, 120 men living within that two-block radius were admitted to the D.C. correctional system. Talking about the children in the neighborhood, Londa says, "I look around here and none of these kids have fathers. It's a mess what's happened."⁶⁴

Research that takes a life-course analysis approach has shown that the astonishing rates of penal confinement and the disparities in how that rate is distributed demographically has resulted in lasting effects not just for select individuals but for a large population cohort: less-educated and minority men. Rather than looking only at the incarceration rate at a particular time, a life course analysis approach aims to measure the likelihood an individual will go to prison by the time they are a certain age and tries to characterize a typical biography. Among the most socially marginalized men—African Americans in their twenties and thirties who had dropped out of high school—incarceration rates are nearly fifty times the national average.⁶⁵ Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the cumulative risk of imprisonment—how likely one is to go to prison—increased dramatically. The prison emerged during this period as a major institutional competitor to the military and the educational system, making the criminal justice system so pervasive that "we should count prisons and jails among the key institutions that shape the life course of recent birth cohorts of African American men."⁶⁶

For many outside of the prison walls, the reality of mass incarceration is not an active burden on everyday life—even an institutional system that impacts 2.4 million Americans is subject to the "out of sight, out of mind" effect. Mass incarceration is at once known and unknown. Occasional high-profile cases or exceptional events, such as the escape of two prisoners in upstate New York,⁶⁷ break out into everyday discussion but result in shallow reflections on the larger structures and conditions of incarceration. In his book *States of Denial* about atrocities and suffering, sociologist Stanley Cohen explains: "Denial may be neither a matter of telling the truth nor intentionally telling a lie. There seem to be states of mind, or even whole cultures, in which we know and don't know at

62 Quote from interview with Michelle Alexander. Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

63 Western, Bruce. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006.

64 Braman, Donald. *Families and the Moral Economy of Incarceration in Criminal Justice*, Judah & Bryant, eds., 2004.

65 Western, Bruce. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006.

66 Western, Bruce. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006.

67 Richard Matt and David Sweat were discovered to be missing from their cells on June 6, 2015 at the Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora, New York. The three week long search that ensued was sensationalized by news coverage, and a movie based on their story was announced barely 1 year after the escape.

the same time.”⁶⁸ The simultaneous knowing and unknowing of the negative effects of incarceration on the individuals directly affected and the communities they come from can be seen in the changing public attitudes over time. “The ambivalence that citizens throughout the world have shown towards incarcerated criminals allows cycles of humane concern and reform efforts to alternate or even coexist with periods of impatience with the criminal justice process and the desire to make imprisonment rigorous and unpleasant.”⁶⁹

Historical context of the prison

Before the end of the sixteenth century, nearly all prisons functioned primarily as “secure detention of suspected wrong-doers until the guilty among them could be executed or subjected to corporal punishment or exile.”⁷⁰ Extended solitary confinement was not presented as an alternative to gruesome violence with comparable punitive impact, but rather as a gesture of grace and God-centered rehabilitation. Solitary confinement was seen as a way for criminals to be born again by experiencing a “civil death,” an idea that echoed the spiritual ideas of death and rebirth found in the religious ideals believed by those leading the reform in the 1800s. The introduction of solitary confinement was a radical shift from existing penal systems and structures. The tone of awe found in the words of Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont in their report *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and its Application in France*, emphasizes the novelty of the American prison system focused on solitary confinement: “Can there be a combination more powerful for reformation than that of a prison which hands over the prisoner to all the trials of solitude, leads him through reflections to remorse, through religion to hope; makes him industrious by burden of idleness, and which, whilst it inflicts the torment of solitude, makes him find a charm in the converse of pious men, who otherwise he would have seen with indifference, and heard without pleasure?”⁷¹

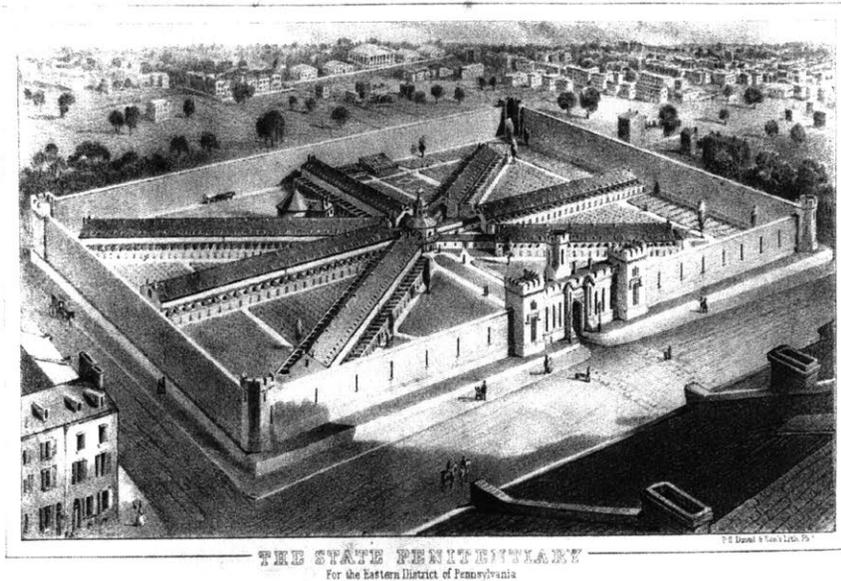
The application of solitude to the penal structure came to be known as the Pennsylvania system. The Pennsylvania system was characterized by a commitment to solitude: individual cells, individual work, and individual exercise yards. The defining principles of the Pennsylvania system were advocated by the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, whose most active members were Quakers. The Walnut Street Jail, originally opened in 1773, was the first penal institution in the United States to introduce individual cells when it was converted into a penitentiary in 1790. While solitary confinement was the goal, the overcrowding of the facility necessitated the placement of multiple men in each cell. The Pennsylvania system was more potently embodied in 1829 by the Eastern State Penitentiary at Cherry Hill, a walled prison created to house 450 people. Designed by British architect John Haviland, the Penitentiary followed a hub-and-spoke plan which consisted of a core center with seven radiating corridors of cell blocks. The Pennsylvania system

68 Cohen, Stanley. 2001. *States of Denial*. Hoboken: Wiley.

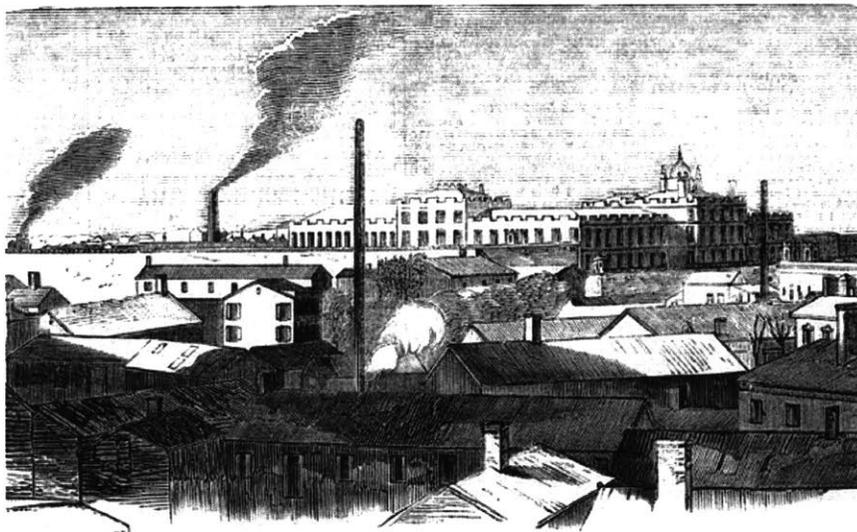
69 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

70 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

71 Tocqueville, Alexis de and Gustave de Beaumont. 1831. *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and its Application in France*.



Etching of Eastern State Penitentiary, 1855.
Source: Library Company of Philadelphia



VIEW OF THE STATE PRISON AT AUBURN, NEW YORK.—[FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY E. P. SENTER.]

Drawing of Auburn Prison, included in a newspaper in 1900.
Source: Harper's Magazine

had an unwavering dedication to solitude as a way to foster penitence and rehabilitation. Prisoners slept and ate in single-occupancy cells. Individual exercise yards was enclosed to prevent contact. Prisoners saw no one except institution officers. Prisoners were used for labor individually inside of their cells, performing work such as shoemaking or weaving. Even the plumbing system was routed with the intent of making communication between inmates impossible.

The Auburn system—named after the penitentiary constructed in 1817 in Auburn, New York—also held a commitment to solitude and saw solitary confinement as a way to redeem those who had committed a crime, but incorporated collective labor as a part of the penal system. Although the prisoners in Auburn Prison performed labor in large, factory-like spaces, strict silence was enforced as a way to continue to impose an experience of solitude and out of a fear of collusion. Collective labor did not serve to enforce a new philosophy of rehabilitation, but rather a feature that seems to have “emerged largely out of pragmatic decisions made in isolation by pragmatic men who were builders, not architects, and by men who had the day-to-day responsibilities of trying to contain in an orderly fashion the occupants of their institutions.”⁷² Designed by American architect John Cray, Auburn was made of long rectangular buildings with rows of small sleeping cells, arranged back to back on five tiers. Renamed the Auburn Correctional Facility, the prison is still active today as a maximum security state facility. Although some reformers resisted the Auburn model because they held that “every effort is made by the guilty mind to escape from reflection” and therefore “activity drowns out conscience,” the model came to be predominant across the United States.⁷³ The growth in the Auburn system was influenced by the chronic labor shortages following the Great Depression in the early 20th century. Prisons following the Pennsylvania model, designed solely for solitary confinement, were expensive to build and could not efficiently utilize the labor of their inmates. Lawmakers saw labor as a way for the prisoner to “support the expense of maintaining them in prison.”⁷⁴

The emphasis on solitude for the purpose of redemption is undeniably manifest in the architecture and urban design of the early American prison. Internally, in both the Pennsylvania and Auburn models, individual cells and exercise yards denied those serving a prison sentence contact and communication with others. Disconnection from the rest of society was also a core intention of the design. The early 19th century reformers saw the prison as a “separate and secret zone, within geographic bounds of the United States but symbolically outside American society—a place of exile from which, in time, the transgressors might step forth as remade citizen.”⁷⁵ The external wall of the early prison was at first designed by architects to impress both onlookers and the architects’ professional colleagues because prison structures were anomalies that were significantly larger and more costly to construct than other buildings found in the city. The Eastern State Penitentiary, for example, had an elaborate gothic revival style facade and was one of the most expensive public

72 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

73 Smith, Caleb. *The Prison and the American Imagination*. Yale University Press, 2011.

74 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

75 Smith, Caleb. *The Prison and the American Imagination*. Yale University Press, 2011.

buildings of its time.⁷⁶ As the number of inmates steadily rose—although the rise in incarceration rates throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries pale in comparison to the boom in the late 20th century—prisons ceased to be regarded as exceptional structures that deserved costly design. Both taxpayers and government officials “often worried about both the cost and the appropriateness of elaborate structures built to house lawbreakers.”⁷⁷

The conceptualization of solitary confinement as rehabilitation created a political and socio-imaginary distinction between the *citizen* and the *prisoner*: “The citizen belonged to the human community; the prisoner was a monstrous exile, beyond the pale of humanity, without claim to legal personhood.”⁷⁸ Those who entered the prison lost their status as a self-defining and politically-legitimized citizen, with the purpose of emerging as a new citizen upon release. The imposition of the title *prisoner* as one’s non-negotiable salient identity threads through the policies and public discourse of incarcerated populations today: complex layers of social identities—father, youth, leader, sister—are traded for the all defining singular status of being a prisoner. The power of the “prisoner” status to degrade is entangled with the history of the status of black people in America: “The civil death of felony replaced the social death of chattel slavery, and the work songs of the antebellum field evolved into the prison blues.”⁷⁹ According to the white supremacist ideology of slaveholders, African Americans were “a foreign population; they were inside the geographic bounds of the United States but alien to the body politic.”⁸⁰ Similarly, by conceptualizing reform as a process of death and rebirth, the prisoner also enters an existence that is inside the geographic bounds of a nation, city, or neighborhood but alien to its political and sense of social responsibility. In an era when slavery and explicitly white supremacist practices are illegal, the ‘prisoner’ has replaced the ‘slave’: “In ‘colorblind’ America, criminals are the new whipping boys. They are entitled to no respect and little moral concern. Like the ‘coloreds’ in the years following emancipation, criminals today are deemed a characterless and purposeless people, deserving of our collective scorn and contempt.”⁸¹

Spatial reinforcement of exclusion

In the same way that the prison as a physical structure embodied and enforced the idea of isolation as reformation, the spatial conditions of prisons today also embody and enforce the philosophy that criminals are “characterless and purposeless people, deserving of our collective scorn and contempt.”⁸² Referring to modern-day prisons as “Gray Wastes,” author Ta-Nehisi Coates writes, “It is impossible to conceive of the Gray Wastes without first conceiving of a large swath of its inhabitants as both more than criminal and less than human. These inhabitants... are the preeminent outlaws of the American imagination.”⁸³ Physical design and the built environment can reveal the

76 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

77 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

78 Smith, Caleb. *The Prison and the American Imagination*. Yale University Press, 2011.

79 Smith, Caleb. *The Prison and the American Imagination*. Yale University Press, 2011.

80 Smith, Caleb. *The Prison and the American Imagination*. Yale University Press, 2011.

81 Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

82 Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

83 Coates, Ta-nehisi. 2015, October. “The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration.” *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.>

lasting legacy of segregation that continues to exclude individuals from public spaces even though most segregation by law is no longer permissible. Writing about the physical forms of racial zoning, Schindler⁸⁴ identifies practices of “architectural exclusion,” such as the failure to maintain or secure pedestrian infrastructure, the development of highways and overpasses through low-income neighborhoods, selective routing of public transportation, and the lack of wayfinding tools such as clear signage.

While Schindler’s examples point to ways that physical design is used to exclude low-income communities from civic life, the built environment is also used by wealthy communities to exclude themselves from the rest of the city in the form of gated communities and membership-required residential buildings. What results is a landscape of “fortified enclaves.”⁸⁵ Discussing social enclaves as a new form of urban segregation, Caldeira argues that in these places, “residents’ everyday interactions with people from other social groups diminish substantially, and public encounters primarily occur inside of protected and relatively homogenous groups.... Residents from all social groups have a sense of exclusion and restriction.”⁸⁶ Similarly to the way that Coates describes the incarcerated as “outlaws of the American imagination,”⁸⁷ Caldeira observes that separation of populations in physical space fosters the sense that “different groups belong to separate universes and have irreconcilable claims.”⁸⁸

Physical design that enforces exclusion is powerful in its pernicious subtlety: “it is invisible to most, and yet it continues to solidify otherwise defunct forms of legal exclusion.”⁸⁹ The spatial translations of exclusionary attitudes reverberate for generations because once changes to the built environment are made, it can be difficult to stop its impact on people’s experiences: “Tools of legal exclusion are enforced by law enforcement officials, agencies, self-policing, and vigilante action, while architectural exclusion is enforced by its very presence.”⁹⁰ The power of physical design to exclude is also present in the urban form of mass incarceration. In addition to the policy-level forms of discrimination and segregation described in earlier in this section, the built characteristics of imprisonment can have powerful impacts on the way that incarcerated people experience their sentence and the way that they are seen by others. The following chapter describes the specific physical characteristics used in this research to measure and identify the spatial reinforcement of exclusion targeted at those labeled as criminals.

[theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/)

84 Schindler, Sarah. 2015, April. “Architectural Exclusion: Discrimination and Segregation Through Physical Design of the Built Environment,” *Yale Law Journal* 124(6): 1836-2201.

85 Caldeira, Teresa. 1996. “Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation.” *Public Culture*, 8(2): 303-328.

86 Caldeira, Teresa. 1996. “Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation.” *Public Culture*, 8(2): 303-328.

87 Coates, Ta-nehisi. 2015, October. “The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration.” *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/>

88 Caldeira, Teresa. 1996. “Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation.” *Public Culture*, 8(2): 303-328.

89 Schindler, Sarah. 2015, April. “Architectural Exclusion: Discrimination and Segregation Through Physical Design of the Built Environment,” *Yale Law Journal* 124(6): 1836-2201.

90 Schindler, Sarah. 2015, April. “Architectural Exclusion: Discrimination and Segregation Through Physical Design of the Built Environment,” *Yale Law Journal* 124(6): 1836-2201.

CHAPTER 3: STUDY SIGNIFICANCE AND METHOD

Defining the Variable: Correctional complexes that include Medium Security Federal Institutions

While the literature and theories discussed in the research address incarceration more broadly in the United States, my analysis of existing facilities focuses on forty-five⁹¹ complexes that include currently active, medium security Federal Bureau of Prisons correctional institutions (FCIs). Together, the forty-five complexes include 117 facilities, representing the incarceration conditions of 105,000 inmates.⁹² The Federal Bureau of Prisons is responsible for carrying out judgements of the federal courts whenever a period of confinement is ordered. Given that federal facilities are evenly subject to policy changes, siting processes, and construction and design guidelines, this sample allows for a consistent comparison of facilities. By surveying all forty-five, this study acts as a full atlas of the urban design characteristics of this specific type of facility, but more importantly, as a test sample of all correctional facilities more broadly. Each type of facility (local, state, federal) as well as security levels (jails, minimum, low, medium, high, max, supermax) carry inherent differences; the unique characteristics of federal facilities follows.

The federal prison system is by far the nation's single largest jailer, with a total of 191,140⁹³ inmates at the beginning of November 2016, with medium security facilities accounting for around 30 percent of that population. That's roughly 50,000 more people in custody than in the second-largest prison jurisdiction, Texas.⁹⁴ The population incarcerated in Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facilities has a profile different from States correctional facilities, marked primarily by non-violent drug-related offenses. In state prisons, the primary offense for 16 percent of the prison population is a drug conviction, weapons convictions are minimal, and immigration convictions are nonexistent. Conversely, in the federal system, drug offenses are the primary conviction for almost half (49

91 Of the 47 active medium security FCIs, 2 complexes include two medium security facilities. For this analysis, these were combined to represent one data point. This includes: FCI Butner Medium I and II; and FCI Victorville Medium I and II.

92 Inmate count measured in 2016, information included in Prison Boundaries Shapefile from the Homeland Infrastructure Foundation.

93 Federal Bureau of Prisons. https://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics_inmate_sec_levels.jsp

94 King, Ryan, Bryce Peterson, Brian Elderbroom, Samuel Taxy. "How to reduce the federal prison population." 2014. Urban Institute: <http://webapp.urban.org/reducing-federal-mass-incarceration>.

percent) of the prison population and immigration and weapons offenses account for another 25 percent.⁹⁵ Federal prison facilities are sited, designed, and built through a series of Requests for Proposals and managed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons Design and Construction Branch (DCB). The location of medium security BOP facilities are concentrated along the East Coast and Southern states.

The high percentage of drug-related charges makes federal facilities a compelling sample, compared to a geographically selected or state or local correctional facilities, because they are a primary target of decarceration reform efforts. Reducing drug-related minimum sentences, advocating for early release in cases of drug-related crimes, and pushing for parole-options for those serving life for drug charges are principal agenda items for criminal justice reform groups because it is understood as the quickest way to dramatically reduce the incarcerated population and as an easier way to garner public support (compared with addressing sentencing for violent crimes). Since populations serving drug-related charges are more likely to face decarceration,⁹⁶ a study of federal facilities helps form an understanding of what type of spaces may be left behind. Identifying physical characteristics shared by federal correctional complexes can catalyze ideas for reuse programming and retrofitting design strategies to introduce alternative conceptualizations of prison facility structures.

While the sample of complexes was determined by first identifying the federal medium security facility as a point of interest, the analysis speaks to a larger population of inmates than the thirty percent of incarcerated people in medium security FCIs.⁹⁷ Nearing the end of a sentence, people are transferred to a minimum security institution, also known as Federal Prison Camps (FPCs) for the purpose of facilitating a smoother transition into life on the “outside.” FPCs have dormitory style housing, a relatively low staff-to-inmate ratio, and limited to no perimeter fencing. Medium security facilities have cell-type housing, strengthened perimeters (often double fences with electronic detection systems), higher staff-to-inmate ratios, and internal security control measures.⁹⁸ Although the conditions of the facility may differ between FCIs and FPCs, the location of the FPC is often within the same overall correctional complex as the FCI; the overall integration and conditions of the FCI location still apply to an inmate even if they are transitioned to a minimum security institution.

Federal correctional facilities are located in larger complexes that combine multiple levels of security—the analysis presented in the research uses the overall complex that includes a federal medium security prison as the unit. This is because the interest is not in identifying how *medium* security facilities interact with other types of correctional facilities—which is what an analysis of just individual facilities would show—but rather how correctional facilities interact with other aspects of

95 King, Ryan, Bryce Peterson, Brian Elderbroom, Samuel Taxy. “How to reduce the federal prison population.” 2014. Urban Institute: <http://webapp.urban.org/reducing-federal-mass-incarceration>.

96 King, Ryan, Bryce Peterson, Brian Elderbroom, Samuel Taxy. 2014. “How to Reduce the Federal Prison Population.” Urban Institute. Retrieved from <http://webapp.urban.org/reducing-federal-mass-incarceration>

97 Federal Bureau of Prisons Statistics: Prison Security Levels. Statistics based on January 2017 data. https://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics_inmate_sec_levels.jsp

98 Federal Bureau of Prisons: About Our Facilities: https://www.bop.gov/about/facilities/federal_prisons.jsp

its physical surroundings.

Urban integration index

The correctional complexes were assessed according to five spatial measures that measure the urban integration of the selected correctional facilities. The integration index was construed for the purposes of this research. The research aim is not to assess each complex against a set of specific, separate set of desired physical and design characteristics, but the goal of the research methodology is a descriptive one—to answer the question, what are the physical characteristics of existing correctional complexes, and based on how they are currently designed, which ones are relatively more integrated?

The spatial measures included in the index were selected based on literature and field observations. Literature that describes the barriers that prison populations face during their sentence and integration post-sentence provided a foundation of what aspects of the physical characteristics may hold significance in the experience of incarceration. Urban design literature that defines characteristics that create 'urbanity' and research that specifically addresses design concerns specific to correctional facilities were used to connect social concerns to measurable, physical conditions. The following section provides a detailed explanation of the literature relevant to each measure, highlighting the social conditions of concern and the physical measures used to represent each variable. The variables are organized by scale of the impact: regional, city context, and building/site.

Field observations were conducted at four different complexes: FCI Memphis (Tennessee), FCI Talladega (Alabama), USP Atlanta (Georgia), FCI Edgefield (South Carolina). At each site, I sought to observe the facility as it would be perceived by someone who did not have direct ties or access to the correctional facilities; as such, the observations did not include entering into the facilities themselves or into restricted areas (private roads, parking lots reserved for authorized visitors). The qualitative measures documented during the observations are not used as data for the findings of this research, but provided a first-hand impression of the complexes, which corrected my distorted impressions of the sites based solely on aerial photography views. Visiting the sites expanded my understanding of what variables are relevant for measuring a complex's urban form. Driving around USP Atlanta, for example, revealed the presence of multiple commercial (gas station, music store, restaurant) and residential uses (single family homes, affordable housing condos) directly across a small, four-lane street from the prison, placing it in full view of those traveling to that area of the city for other reasons. An attempt to get a closer view of FCI Edgefield in Alabama, in contrast, emphasized how difficult it can be to get a view of the complex from roadways without restricted access despite the prison's large size.

To calculate the values included in the index, each measure was first noted as a raw score, then

sorted into quintiles and assigned a value of 1 - 5, with the highest ranking indicating higher integration for that measure. The scaled scores for the five characteristics were then added to represent a total integration index. A maximum of 25 represents the most integrated complex relative to other complexes.

Scale 1: Regional

Urban Proximity

Many prisoners in the U.S. are from urban communities, while most prisons are now in rural areas.⁹⁹ Rural areas host an outsized number of facilities, even when looking at the population spread overall. Facilities built during the prison boom have been concentrated in nonmetro areas: during the 1980s, “new nonmetro prisons amounted to 60% of the total, even though nonmetro areas [had] only 20% of the US population.” The disconnect between where incarcerated populations are from and the location of where correctional facilities are housed has consequences for the communities on either side of the situation. Urban communities have faced a rapid loss of a segment of their population (especially young, black men) to incarceration, influencing the social structures of those places. The hosting rural communities, likely with struggling economies, and low levels of higher educational achievement and land ownership, are left to find that prisons do not provide an “extraordinary boost in employment.”¹⁰⁰

Accessibility

Accessibility to the facility through public transportation options was selected as a variable to address options for visitors, an important aspect of an inmate staying connected to their relationships and neighborhoods while serving their sentence. Due to the lack of transportation options, for-profit businesses, as well as advocacy groups and public departments offer shuttle systems specifically servicing correctional facilities. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, for example, provides the “Get on the Bus” Program¹⁰¹ that provides children and their caregivers from throughout the state to visit incarcerated parents. California also has multiple private shuttle companies, such as California Prison Visitor Transit that provides rides to facilities starting at \$65, as well as “guidance on California Department of Corrections rules for prison visiting.”¹⁰² Beyond family and friends, accessibility can also influence opportunities for additional services, such as higher educational programs or counseling services, that are provided by external non-profit or public sector providers. Upon release, transportation is an immediate basic need for those completing time in a correctional facility. For those “without family members to meet them at

99 Huling, Tracy. 2002. “Building a Prison Economy in Rural America.” from *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment*. Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind, Editors. New York: The New Press.

100 Beale, Calvin. 2006. “Rural Prisons: An Update.” *Rural Development Perspectives*, 11(2): 25-27.

101 www.cdcr.ca.gov/Visitors/Get_On_The_Bus.html

102 <http://www.caprisonvisitortransit.com/>

the prison gates or DOC drop off point, public transportation is their likely source of conveyance.”¹⁰³ Difficult access to public transportation can make individuals “vulnerable to victimization and may also create opportunities for criminal behavior.”¹⁰⁴

There are significant benefits to visitation: a survey of empirical studies on the impact of visitation found that “frequent, high quality visitation can reduce prison violence, maintain family bonds, break the intergenerational cycle of incarceration, and smooth the reentry process, thereby reducing recidivism rates.”¹⁰⁵ Visitation rights are given to every inmate to some extent, not limited as a term of a specific sentence. A survey of the visitation policy of state and Federal correctional facilities across all 50 states found that while all states have some provision for prison visitation, significant barriers to visitation exist.¹⁰⁶ Examples include the limitation of set visiting hours (visiting hours are often during work hours) and the necessary approval and search process of visitors (the background search process may require a fee and long waiting period).¹⁰⁷ Additionally, all facilities provide a substantial amount of discretion to each prison’s warden or superintendent in implementing the policy directives. This results in an unpredictable and unreliable visitation schedule for inmates—research found that prisons uniformly consider visitation a “privilege” and therefore a prisoner’s access to visitors is used as a tool of sanction and reward for behavior regardless of the written policy.¹⁰⁸ Federal facility visitation rights policies are set based on security level, and distinguishes factors such as the number of visitation hours allowed, the number of people allowed on the approved visitation list, and the number of people allowed to visit at one time. The Florence ADX (Administrative Maximum), for example allows inmates five visits per month in groups up to three people. The inmates at Florence FPC (Federal Prison Camp, minimum security), do not face limitations on the number of visits and can have visiting groups up to five people.¹⁰⁹ The physical reality, however, is that despite policy level differences in the visitation rights of inmates at these facilities, they are located within the same correctional complex in the high eastern plains of Colorado where the nearest town only has two stoplights.¹¹⁰ The policy conditions of visitation are significant, but to truly achieve the “frequent, high quality visitation” that has been shown to have significant benefits,¹¹¹ the spatial limitations to accessibility must be considered.

103 La Vigne, Nancy, Elizabeth Davies, Tobi Palmer, and Robin Halberstadt. 2008. “Release Planning for Successful Reentry: A Guide for Corrections, Service Providers, and Community Groups.” Washington, DC: Urban Institute Justice Policy Center.

104 La Vigne, Nancy, Elizabeth Davies, Tobi Palmer, and Robin Halberstadt. 2008. “Release Planning for Successful Reentry: A Guide for Corrections, Service Providers, and Community Groups.” Washington, DC: Urban Institute Justice Policy Center.

105 Boudin, Chesa; Stutz, Trevor; and Littman, Aaron (2013) “Prison Visitation Policies: A Fifty-State Survey,” *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 32(1): Article 5.

106 Boudin, Chesa; Stutz, Trevor; and Littman, Aaron (2013) “Prison Visitation Policies: A Fifty-State Survey,” *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 32(1): Article 5.

107 Boudin, Chesa; Stutz, Trevor; and Littman, Aaron (2013) “Prison Visitation Policies: A Fifty-State Survey,” *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 32(1): Article 5.

108 Boudin, Chesa; Stutz, Trevor; and Littman, Aaron (2013) “Prison Visitation Policies: A Fifty-State Survey,” *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 32(1): Article 5.

109 U. S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 2014, May 7. “Institution Supplement: Visiting Procedures.”

110 Williams, Eric J. 2010. “The Big House in a Small Town: Prisons, Communities, and Economics in Rural America.” Sonoma State University, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies.

111 Boudin, Chesa; Stutz, Trevor; and Littman, Aaron (2013) “Prison Visitation Policies: A Fifty-State Survey,” *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 32(1): Article 5.



Federal Correctional Complex in Florence, CO.
Source: Jamey Stillings for the New York Times

Scale 2: City Context

Visibility

The visibility of prison facilities can have an impact on the social connection that others feel to the topic of incarceration and incarcerated individuals. In their discussion of prisons and teaching, Steil et al. discuss the negative consequences of planners, architects, and government officials seeking to hide penal facilities themselves by “relegating them to the spatial margins on inexpensive, hard to access land or seeking to disguise them when they are more centrally located.”¹¹² Reducing the visibility of the correctional facility can exacerbate the social distance that exists between prisoners and society. Those confined in the Orleans Parish Prison, for example, “were so socially isolated that planners and public officials failed to take them into account in their disaster planning and response” after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.¹¹³

Land Use Mix

As famously highlighted by Jane Jacobs,¹¹⁴ the built environment and the uses around it shape the activity that occurs within it. She identifies four essential determinants which govern or set the conditions for activity: a mixture of primary use, intensity, permeability of the urban form, and a mixture of building types, ages, sizes, and conditions. In her studies of “place diversity,” Talen¹¹⁵ also points to land use mix as a morphological variable that contributes to place diversity, which positively influences a city’s vitality, functionality, economic health and social equity. As Montgomery describes it, “the simple truth is that the combinations of mixtures of activities, not separate uses, are the key to successful urban places.”

Research investigating the economic impact of prisons has shown that prisons create “agglomerative carceral economies in rural communities at the expense of less stigmatized types of development.”¹¹⁶ While prison construction is seen by local governmental agencies as an opportunity to boost struggling rural economies, county level analysis of all prison impact over time for US prisons conducted by Hooks et al. show that “although established prisons provide growth in public sector employment to moderate or fast growing counties, established prisons do not provide an extraordinary boost in employment in depressed rural counties.”¹¹⁷

112 Steil, Justin, et al. 2015. “Prisons and Teaching: Destabilizing the Margins and Center.” *Progressive Planning*, 205: 33-36.

113 Steil, Justin, et al. 2015. “Prisons and Teaching: Destabilizing the Margins and Center.” *Progressive Planning*, 205: 33-36.

114 Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House.

115 Talen, Emily. 2006. “Design That Enables Diversity: The Complications of a Planning Ideal.” *Journal of Planning Literature* 20(3).

116 Huling, T., Mauer, M., 2003. Big prisons, small towns: prison economics in rural America. The Sentencing Project Report. Web. www.sentencingproject.org/Admin/Documents/publications/inc_bigprisons.pdf.

117 Hooks, G., et al. 2004. “The prison industry: carceral expansion in the U.S. counties, 1969–1994.” *Social Science Quarterly* 85 (1): 37–57.

Scale 3: Building/Site

Relative Size

Rather than comparing the size of the complex relative to others, the measure of relative size addresses how large the correctional complex is relative to the size of the city it is located in. The construction of land uses that consume large plots of land command special treatment, rather than being integrated into the existing urban fabric. Large scale projects have the potential for positive impact, such as museums, which can act as “urban catalysts” that spur new private development and create a desired focal point for new open space.¹¹⁸ For less desirable land uses, however, a project’s large scale needs can further push the use to the spatial fringes of a city. Certain types of land uses necessitate a large footprint and reasonably remote siting based on its intended function, such as an airport. The relative size of the correctional complex to the host city is a significant measure because the construction and presence of a spatially-dominant use can create an impetus for the hosting city to keep facilities open. Some counties host multiple correctional facilities and numerous nonmetro counties have become hosts to substantial populations of incarcerated people. Kings, CA, and Anderson and Walker, TX house each house over 10,000 inmates.¹¹⁹ The large physical, economic, and demographic footprint of a correctional facility can create an incentive for the government to keep incarceration rates high. As Huling describes, local officials “in towns with one prison often opt or are forced to lobby for more prisons, creating a ‘one-company town’ scenario over time.”¹²⁰ The tendency of states to ‘cluster’ prisons¹²¹ together has created counties where prisons dominate the community’s economic, social, political, and physical landscape.

Spatial analysis methodology: data sources and calculations

Scale 1: Regional

The following measures were selected to address the regional scale concerns of incarcerated populations being placed far from their home communities and barriers to maintaining social connections.

Urban Proximity

Urban proximity is represented by the distance from the center of the correctional complex to the nearest urbanized area. Urbanized Area is a category given by the U.S. Census Bureau for a continuous built-up area with a population of 50,000 or more. It comprises one of one or more places—*central places*—and the adjacent densely settled surrounding area—*urban fringe*—consisting

118 Grodach, Carl. 2008. “Museums as Urban Catalysts: The Role of Urban Design in Flagship Cultural Development.” *Journal of Urban Design*, 13(2):195-212.

119 Beale, Calvin. 2006. “Rural Prisons: An Update.” *Rural Development Perspectives*, 11(2): 25-27.

120 Huling, Tracy. 2002. “Building a Prison Economy in Rural America.” from *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment*. Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind, Editors. New York: The New Press.

121 Johnston, Norman. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.

of other places and nonplace territory. The distance was measured following a network of primary and secondary roads, maximizing for shortest distance.

Data	Source	Year
Urban Areas	United States Census Bureau	2015
Complex Boundary	Created using U.S. Census Bureau's TIGER Web Map Viewer	2017

Accessibility

Accessibility is represented using the distance from the entrance of the medium security FCI to the nearest transit station, in miles. The distance was measured following the network of existing roads, maximizing for shortest distance.

Data	Source	Year
Fixed route transit stations (local bus, express bus, commuter bus, bus rapid transit, light rail, subway, commuter rail, and passenger ferry)	U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics	2016
Amtrak Stations	Bureau of Transportation Statistics	2016
Passenger Stops (public transportation systems)	Bureau of Transportation Statistics	2016
County – All Roads	U.S. Census Bureau	2016
Medium Security FCI Entrance	Created using ArcGIS World Imagery, visually identifying parking lot locations around the facility boundary	2017
Prison Boundaries (Secure detention facilities at Federal, State, County, Local level)	Homeland Infrastructure Foundation	2016

Scale 2: City Context

The following measures were selected to address the city scale concern of facilities being relegated to the remote and ignored spatial margins. The two spatial measures were selected to serve as a representation of the likelihood of the prison complex being seen by those for whom the complex is not the intended destination, either due to driving on a major road (the *visibility* measure) or to visiting a proximal point of interest (the *land use mix* measure).

Visibility

Accessibility is represented using the distance from the center of the correctional complex to the nearest road classified as Primary or Secondary, in miles. The road classifications are assigned by the U.S. Census Bureau. Primary roads are generally divided, limited-access highways within the interstate highway system or under state management, and are distinguished by the presence

of interchanges. These highways are accessible by ramps and may include some toll highways. Secondary roads are main arteries, usually in the U.S. Highway, State Highway or County Highway system. These roads have one or more lanes of traffic in each direction, may or may not be divided, and usually have at-grade intersections with many other roads and driveways. They often have both a local name and a route number. The distance was measured by identifying the nearest primary/secondary road from the entrance of the medium security FCI.

Data	Source	Year
Primary Road (Feature Class Code: S1100)	U.S. Census Bureau	2016
Secondary Road (Feature Class Code: S1200)	U.S. Census Bureau	2016
Prison Boundaries (Secure detention facilities at Federal, State, County, Local level)	Homeland Infrastructure Foundation	2016

Land Use Mix

Land use mix is represented using the count and types of points of interest within a one mile radius of the center coordinates of the correctional complex. Points of interest were collected by accessing the Google Places Application Program Interface. The points of interest were categorized into broader themes of use, grouping together the 'types' labels assigned by Google, as displayed in the chart below. The land use mix measurement was calculated using $(\text{count of points of interest}) + 2 * (\text{count of unique categories})$ in order to emphasize the variety in uses surrounding each facility.

Category	Google Places 'Types'
food_bev	café, restaurant, meal_delivery, meal_takeaway, market, liquor_store, bar, bakery
transportation	airport, bus_station, taxi_stand, train_station, transit_station, subway_station
place_of_worship	church, synagogue, mosque, hindu_temple
public_institutional	city_hall, courthouse, library, park, school, police, post_office, embassy, fire_station, cemetery, funeral_home, local_government_office, university
entertainment	movie_rental, movie_theater, amusement_park, aquarium, art_gallery, casino, museum, night_club, bowling_alley, campground, zoo, spa
commercial_store	bicycle_store, book_store, clothing_store, convenience_store, department_store, electronics_store, furniture_store, gas_station, laundry, storage, car_dealer, car_rental, car_repair, car_wash, gym, lodging, parking, rv_park, stadium, jewelry_store, hardware_store, home_goods_store, shoe_store, shopping_mall, pet_store
commercial_office	electrician, florist, locksmith, general_contractor, beauty_salon, travel_agency, veterinary_care, insurance_agency, painter, hair_care, lawyer, moving_company, plumber, real_estate_agency, roofing_contractor
institutional_service	dentist, hospital, doctor, pharmacy, physiotherapist, accounting, atm, bank, finance
point_of_interest	all uncategorized places

Scale 3: Building/Site

The following measure was selected to investigate the building scale concern of the amount of space correctional facilities demand. Rather than a direct measure of the size of the complex, I decided to measure the ratio of the size of the complex to the size of the hosting city in order for the variable to act as an estimate of the correctional complex's spatial dominance within the city. The concern was not to measure the distributional spread of complex sizes, but rather to observe a physical relationship between the complex and the host city.

Relative Size

Relative size is represented using a ratio of the size of the correctional complex to the size of the city that it is hosted in, in square miles.

Data	Source	Year
City – land mass area	United States Census Bureau	2017
Complex Boundary	Created using U.S. Census Bureau's TIGER Web Map Viewer	2017

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The discussion of the findings first provides an analysis of the raw measurements and their spread for each of the physical variables observed. Since the characteristics were selected to address concerns and issues related to the experience of incarceration, the analysis of each variable describes the overall spread of the data and compares the data to metrics specifically relevant to each physical characteristic. This analysis is followed by a graphic representation of each facility, in order to provide a visual grounding of the abstracted “integration index” score given to each facility. The facilities are shown in order of this score, from highest to lowest. Finally, the section takes a closer look at two facilities among the highest scoring and lowest scoring groups, discussing the site context and siting process, pulling from the information available in the EPA mandated Environmental Impact Statements.

Findings summary

Correctional complexes are not well sited or designed to address the issues associated at all three scales of concern: regional, city, and site. Interpreting the raw measures and calculations using metric-appropriate checkpoints, I find that even the facilities that are more integrated relative to others are, in reality, isolated and disconnected. Even the complex with the highest accessibility, for example, is a thirty-minute walk away from the nearest transit station. Analyzing the variation among the selected complexes, the results show that the facilities built during the rapid rise of incarceration in the 1980s and 1990s share similar physical characteristics. Looking at the public comments and design descriptions for the facilities among the highest ranking and lowest ranking sites included in the Environmental Impact Studies, I find that the conversation is focused on the hosting city—not the people who will be incarcerated or the communities that they may be coming from. I also find that the design intention is to blend into the rural landscape, and that the ability of residents to “forget that it’s even there”¹²² is seen as a design success and benefit. In the case where the complex is indeed more integrated with the city’s other uses, the visibility becomes a point of contention for the residents.

¹²² Comment at the Gilmer County Scoping Meeting held on December 9, 1997. Transcript included in U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1998. “Federal Correctional Institution, Gilmer County, West Virginia.”

Raw Measures (N=45)

	Year Constructed	Urban Proximity (mi)	Accessibility (mi)	Visibility (mi)	Relative Size (sq. mi)	Land Use Mix (#)
Atlanta USP	1902	9.79	2.98	0.22	0.002	74
El Reno FCI	1930	31.2	3.35	0.20	0.002	16
Pekin FCI	1994	13.05	12.39	0.25	0.026	68
Memphis FCI	1977	8.93	10.73	0.91	0.003	78
Beckley FCI	1995	1.88	2.73	1.17	0.110	24
Cumberland FCI	1994	15.51	5.28	0.95	0.015	42
Leavenworth USP	1903	35.56	15.8	0.31	0.035	76
Forrest City Medium FCI	1997	58.42	3.66	0.84	0.041	25
Otisville FCI	1980	8.86	1.96	0.91	2.382	31
Petersburg Medium FCI	1999	18.74	7.45	0.37	0.096	19
Victorville Medium I FCI	2000	8.7	5.33	2.49	0.020	42
Allenwood Medium FCI	1952	14.18	5.27	0.88	0.066	16
Beaumont Medium FCI	1998	11.64	5.58	1.57	0.019	10
Greenville FCI	1989	43.06	28.48	0.23	0.041	66
Jesup FCI	1990	28.53	6.42	0.63	0.029	10
Marion USP	1963	11.68	6.5	0.71	0.009	10
Ray Brook FCI	1980	93.96	3.23	0.52	0.169	45
Talladega FCI	1979	28.28	26.21	0.33	0.007	28
Edgefield FCI	1993	25.16	21.07	0.87	0.055	42
Lompoc USP	1970	3.95	3.28	2.23	0.047	0
Sheridan FCI	1989	33.61	15.44	0.50	0.142	78
McKean FCI	1989	88.25	4.25	0.29	0.155	15
Phoenix FCI	1985	33.22	4.59	1.28	0.001	4
Terre Haute FCI	1940	7.85	25.51	0.51	0.051	21
Tucson FCI	1982	65.67	2.93	2.46	0.010	15
Williamsburg FCI	2000	43.24	9.01	0.27	0.970	17
Berlin FCI	2012	130.93	5.54	1.16	0.003	9
Butner Medium I FCI	1976	23.13	9.48	2.84	0.083	16
Manchester FCI	1992	98.55	21.93	0.76	0.061	60
Three Rivers FCI	1988	83.4	19.61	0.21	0.164	9
Fairton FCI	1990	12.44	4.04	2.12	0.147	0
Florence FCI	1994	34.85	21.79	0.49	0.240	9
Mendota FCI	2010	45.12	22.62	0.25	0.152	9
Yazoo City Medium FCI	1992	51.72	4.09	1.28	0.207	13
Marianna FCI	1985	38.29	37.06	1.41	0.024	16
Coleman Medium FCI	1995	23.59	11.82	1.89	4.580	6
Estill FCI	1989	54.32	30.6	0.66	0.071	6
McDowell FCI	2010	49.38	47.35	0.63	0.119	10
Pollock FCI	1995	9.69	16.05	2.00	0.589	9
Schuylkill FCI	1991	31.31	8.58	0.71	0.731	0
Hazelton FCI	2015	31.09	25.18	0.89	20.378	8
Bennettsville FCI	2004	43.52	29.24	55.15	0.054	10
Gilmer FCI	2002	92.7	51.2	0.79	0.301	9
Herlong FCI	2001	146.84	35.84	3.94	0.676	22
Oxford FCI	1985	60.82	9.74	6.34	0.989	9

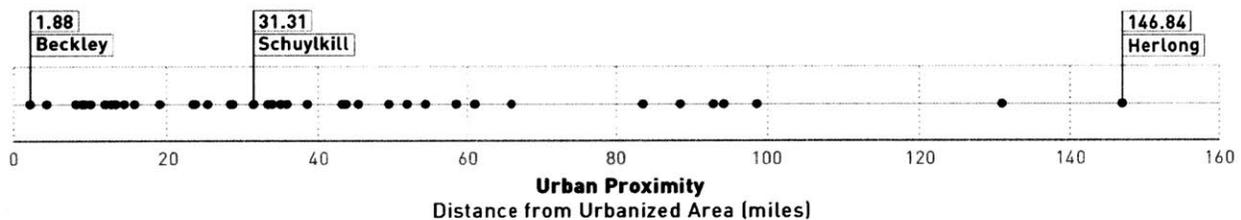
Raw data analysis

Comparing the raw scores of the facilities to metric-specific check-points, we can see that a vast majority of the facilities do not integrate at each of the scales addressed in the research. While there is a spread among the facilities when comparing them to each other, unpacking each of the characteristics reveals that even the facilities that are more integrated than others are not physically designed to positively influence the experience of incarceration for those directly serving sentences, those connected to the incarcerated population, and those who are not directly impacted. The following figure provides a summary of the raw scores for each category:

	Urban Proximity (mi)	Accessibility (mi)	Visibility (mi)	Relative Size (sq. mi)	Land Use Mix (#)
Max	146.84	51.2	55.15	20.38	78
Median	31.31	9.48	0.84	0.07	16
Min	1.88	1.96	0.20	0.00	0

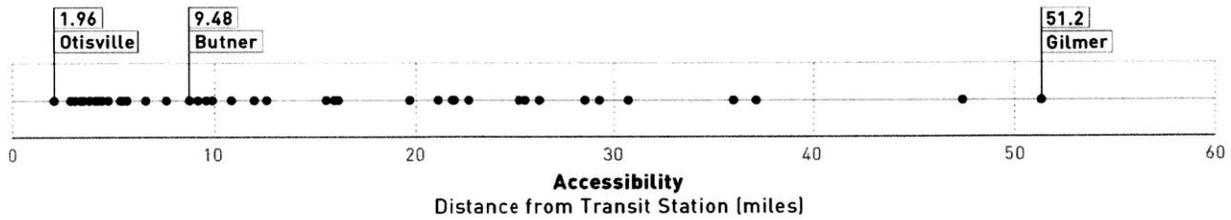
Scale 1: Regional

Urban Proximity



A majority of the complexes are at least 20 miles away from the nearest urbanized area, with a median of 30 miles. Since the measure was calculated following a road network dataset, the results can be interpreted to mean that a majority of the correctional complexes are at least approximately a 30-minute drive away from the center of the nearest urbanized area. Implied within the measurement is the approximation that the center of the designated area is the core of the city's activities and density. The urbanized areas designation is given to areas that have a population of 50,000 or more and a continuously built up area; thus the proximity comments on the urban fabric surrounding the complex as well as its distance from a dense concentration of people.

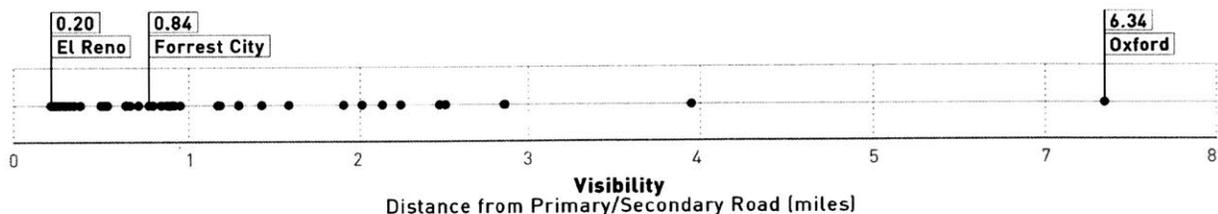
Accessibility



While there is a spread in the distance from the nearest transit station, in reality none of the facilities observed are accessible to visitors through transportation options beyond an individual vehicle or purchased shuttle service. FCI Otisville, which represents the minimum for the set, is still 1.96 miles away from the nearest transit station, roughly a 30-minute walk. Even while holding a generous assumption that visitors to correctional facilities are willing to travel more extreme distances to the destination from the transit stop, rather than the desired 15-minute maximum typically used in transportation planning, only 33 of the 45 facilities are less than five miles away from a transit station. Within a denser urban context, the transportation gap between the transit network and the facility could be served by temporary vehicular options, such as rental cars, cab services, or ride-sharing programs. Due to their remoteness from urbanized areas and locations in primarily rural areas, these types of services are not widely available. When taking into account the fact that many incarcerated populations are originally from communities in more urban areas and are very unlikely to be from the rural communities in which the prisons are located, the lack of accessibility presents a heavy financial burden for the social networks of incarcerated populations. The cost of visiting an incarcerated loved one or social service client can involve the cost of a flight to another state, the cost of a prison-specific shuttle service to reach the facility, on top of the lost work hours to meet the strict visiting time windows set by the correctional facility.

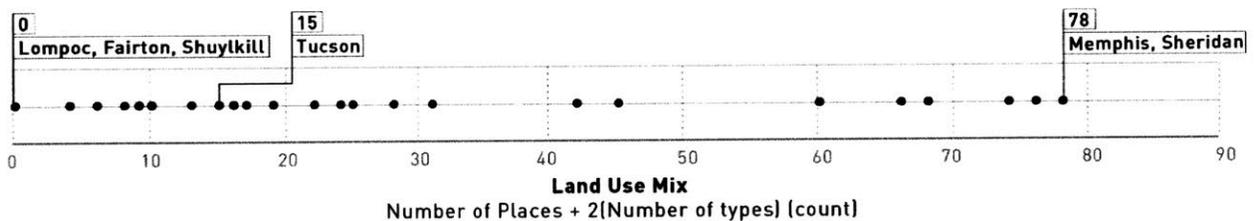
Scale 2: City Context

Visibility



Assuming visual openness and flat topography, a majority of the facilities are within the limit-of-visibility from primary and secondary roads, considered to be around 3 miles.¹²³ Primary roads and secondary roads as categorized by the Census in practical terms are roadways such as highways and major arterial streets within a city that one would likely use to travel to a variety of destinations, compared with a residential or private road whose use is typically reserved for specific destinations. The range of distances to primary/secondary roads also reveals that the roadways immediately surrounding the facilities are typically local neighborhood roads or private roads that were constructed specifically to service the correctional facility. FCI El Reno in Oklahoma, for example, is located 0.20 miles away from an Interstate highway—it is reasonable to assume that given its nearness to the highway and the type of road it is, the facility will be seen by people who many not be specifically traveling to the prison. On the other end of the spectrum, FCI Oxford in Wisconsin is surrounded by one or two-lane neighborhood and private roads, and is 6.34 miles away from the nearest through road. It is important to note that the visibility measure does not represent a fully holistic visibility analysis involving additional factors such as a complete Digital Elevation Model (DEM) that takes into account the variations in topography, atmospheric conditions such as air pollution and mist, and light variability throughout the time of day.

Land Use Mix

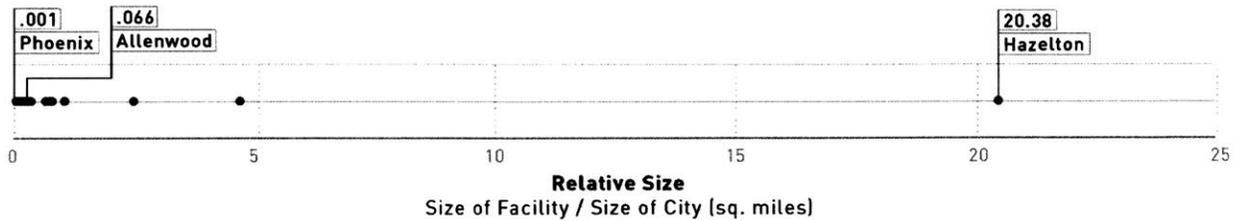


The mix of uses surrounding the correctional complex, represented through the points of interest data available through Google Places within a one-mile radius of the complex, emphasizes the spatial isolation of facilities. A median of 15 shows that surrounding the complexes, there are very few other active uses and little variety in the types of uses. As a point of reference, a similar search within the radius of a university building in an urban area such as Boston or New York brings up several hundred points of interest, and includes every place type category. The lack of uses can be interpreted as revealing the unlikelihood of people being near a correctional facility—and thus, bringing it into their spatial conceptualization of the city—unless they are directly connected to the correctional facility.

123 Wilson, Jeffery, et al. 2008. "Viewshed characteristics of urban pedestrian trails, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA." *Journal of Maps*, 4:1, 108-118

Scale 3: Building/Site

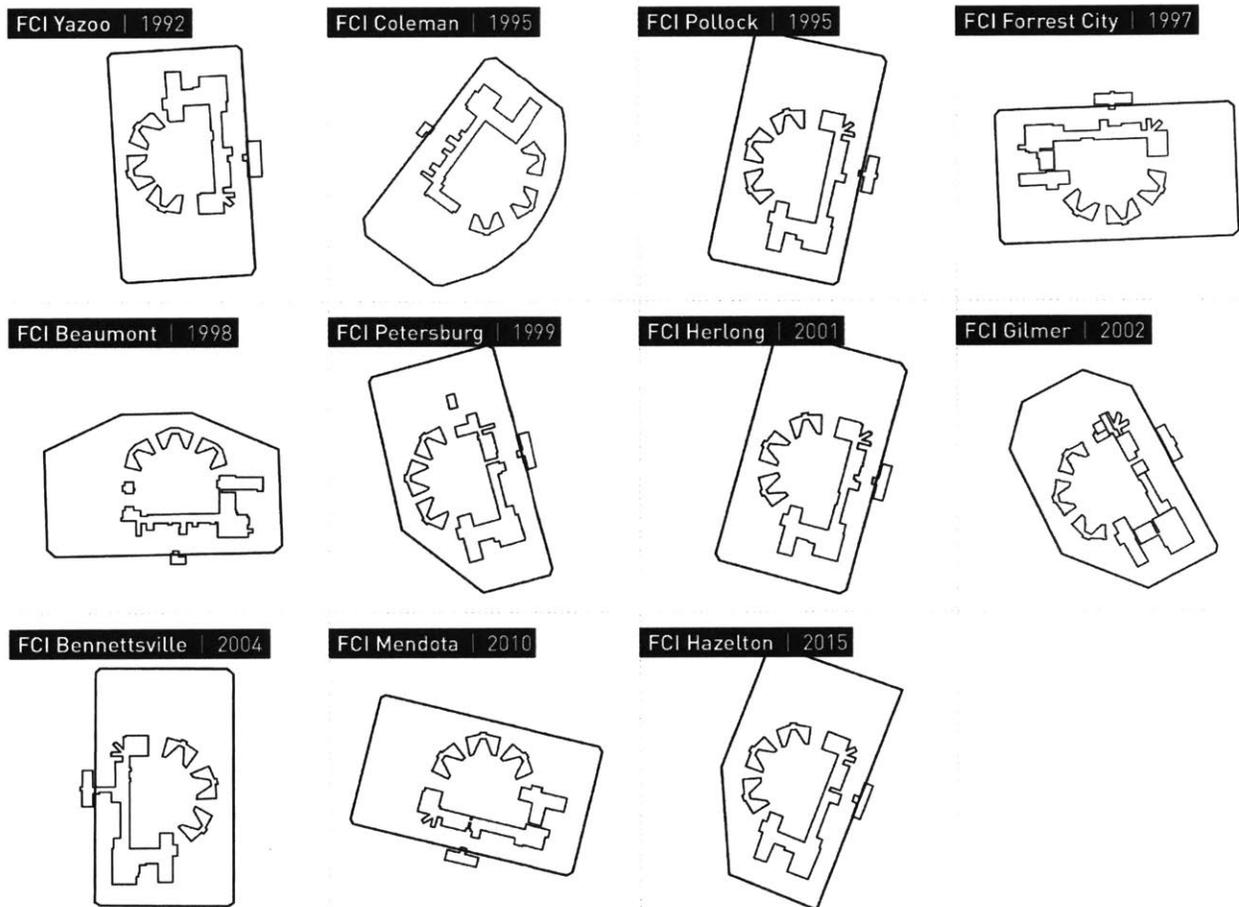
Relative Size



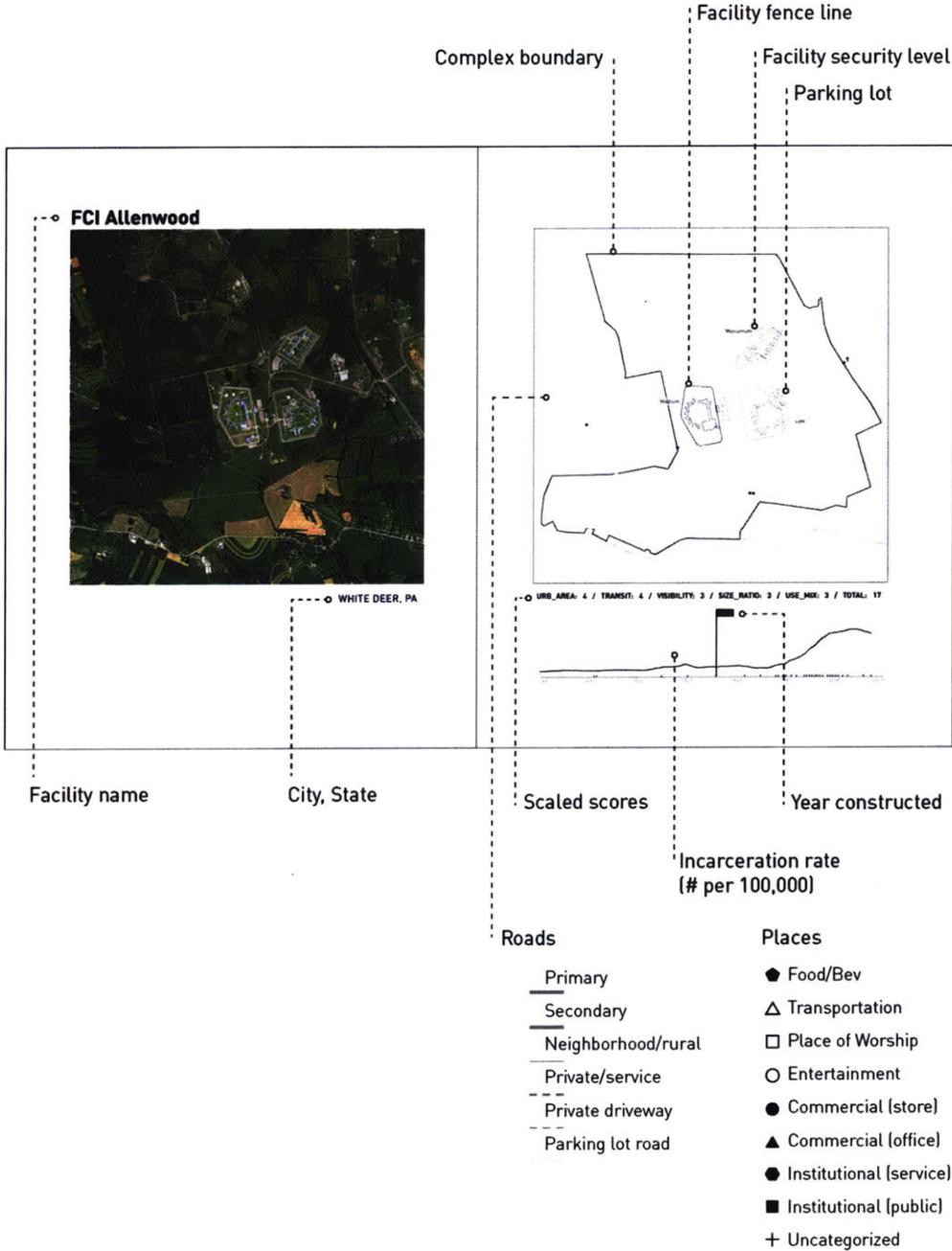
It is possible for complexes to have a relative size ratio is greater than one because the land mass measurement of the city may exclude the correctional complex in cases where the facility was built on previously unincorporated or developed land. FCI Hazelton, for example, which is 20.38 times larger in area than its host town of Bruceton Mills, WV, was constructed on previously undeveloped forested land. The complex includes four separate federal correctional facilities; one maximum, two medium, and one minimum security facility. As a point of reference, the entirety of a large educational campus (the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 0.26 sq. miles) has a ratio of around 0.03 of its host city of Cambridge, MA (7.1 sq. miles). Given that federal correctional facilities house an average of 1,000 people, the complexes are oversized in their relationship to the rest of the city. It is difficult to imagine the incorporation of facilities into urban areas when the existing facilities have created a precedent that corrections should be understood to be uses that take up large plots of land. Current design conditions have imagined them as large complexes that include multiple facilities—beyond the aggressive elements such as barbed wire, the buildings themselves are not very domineering, but because they are a part of very large plots and clustered together, correctional facilities form their own center of gravity.

Relative spread of integration

The facilities that scored higher on the ranking are those that are more integrated compared with the other facilities. This does not suggest a finding that facilities are actually more integrated than expected, but instead, it gives us an opportunity to assess the facilities as they are in order to expand on what would be a more favorable level of integration. The survey also helps to identify a “typical” correctional facility of the era of mass incarceration—a large portion of the facilities studied have similar physical characteristics and isolation measures. Eleven of the medium security facilities, shown in the figure below, built at the peak of incarceration growth between the years 1992 and 2015 all follow the exact same building footprint.



Each of the facilities are shown with basic identifying information (the name of the medium security facility within the complex, the city in which it is located, and the security levels) as well as physical characteristics (capturing the building footprints, fence lines, and the complex boundary). The complex boundary shown does not represent a physical barrier or marker, but rather a property line as identified by U.S. Census Bureau's special land use demarcations. The scaled score of each facility is listed, as well as a marker of what year the facility was built in relation to the incarceration rate per 100,000 people. The facilities are shown in the order of their scaled scores, from most to least integrated.



Scaled Scores

	Urban Proximity (mi)	Accessibility (mi)	Visibility (mi)	Relative Size (sq. mi)	Land Use Mix (#)	Total
Atlanta USP	5	5	5	5	5	25
El Reno FCI	3	5	5	5	3	21
Pekin FCI	4	3	5	4	5	21
Memphis FCI	5	3	2	5	5	20
Beckley FCI	5	5	2	3	4	19
Cumberland FCI	4	4	2	5	4	19
Leavenworth USP	3	2	5	4	5	19
Forrest City Medium FCI	2	5	3	4	4	18
Otisville FCI	5	5	3	1	4	18
Petersburg Medium FCI	4	3	4	3	4	18
Victorville Medium I FCI	5	4	1	4	4	18
Allenwood Medium FCI	4	4	3	3	3	17
Beaumont Medium FCI	5	4	2	4	2	17
Greenville FCI	2	1	5	4	5	17
Jesup FCI	3	4	4	4	2	17
Marion USP	4	3	3	5	2	17
Ray Brook FCI	1	5	4	2	5	17
Talladega FCI	3	1	4	5	4	17
Edgefield FCI	4	2	3	3	4	16
Lompoc USP	5	5	1	4	1	16
Sheridan FCI	3	2	4	2	5	16
McKean FCI	1	4	5	2	3	15
Phoenix FCI	3	4	2	5	1	15
Terre Haute FCI	5	1	4	3	2	15
Tucson FCI	1	5	1	5	3	15
Williamsburg FCI	2	3	5	1	4	15
Berlin FCI	1	4	2	5	2	14
Butner Medium I FCI	4	3	1	3	3	14
Manchester FCI	1	2	3	3	5	14
Three Rivers FCI	1	2	5	4	2	14
Fairton FCI	4	5	1	2	1	13
Florence FCI	3	2	4	2	2	13
Mendota FCI	2	2	5	2	2	13
Yazoo City Medium FCI	2	4	2	2	3	13
Marianna FCI	2	1	2	4	3	12
Coleman Medium FCI	4	3	2	1	1	11
Estill FCI	2	1	4	3	1	11
McDowell FCI	2	1	4	2	2	11
Pollock FCI	5	2	1	1	2	11
Schuylkill FCI	3	3	3	1	1	11
Hazelton FCI	3	2	3	1	1	10
Bennettsville FCI	2	1	1	3	2	9
Gilmer FCI	1	1	3	1	2	8
Herlong FCI	1	1	1	1	4	8
Oxford FCI	1	3	1	1	2	8

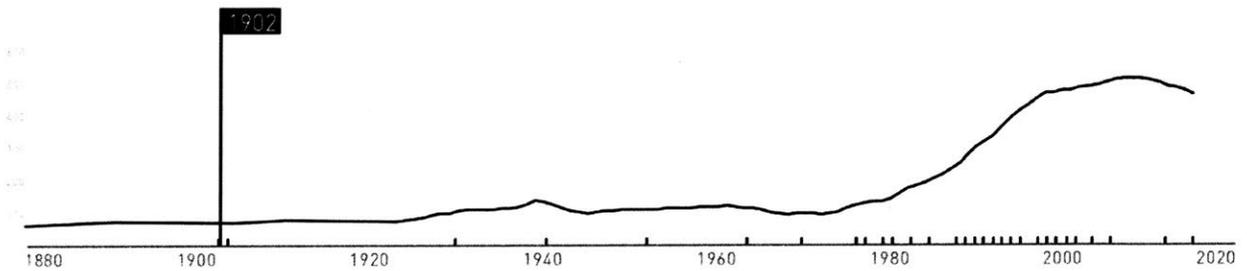
USP Atlanta



ATLANTA, GA



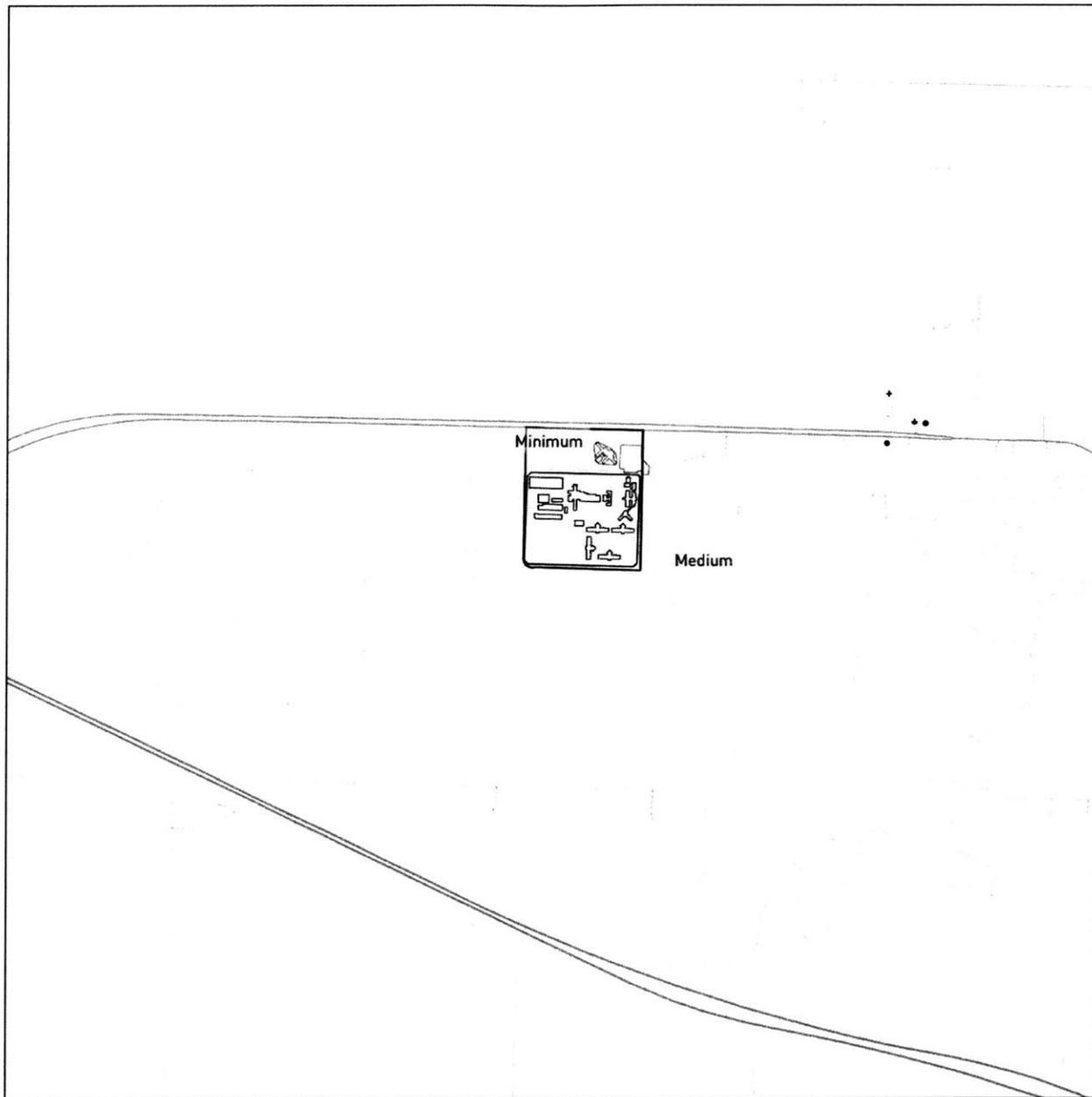
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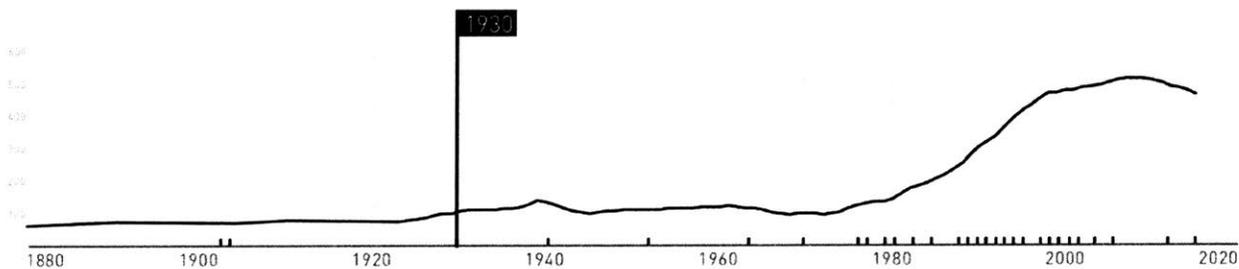
FCI El Reno



EL RENO, OK



URB_AREA: 3 / TRANSIT: 5 / VISIBILITY: 5 / SIZE_RATIO: 5 / USE_MIX: 3 / TOTAL: 21



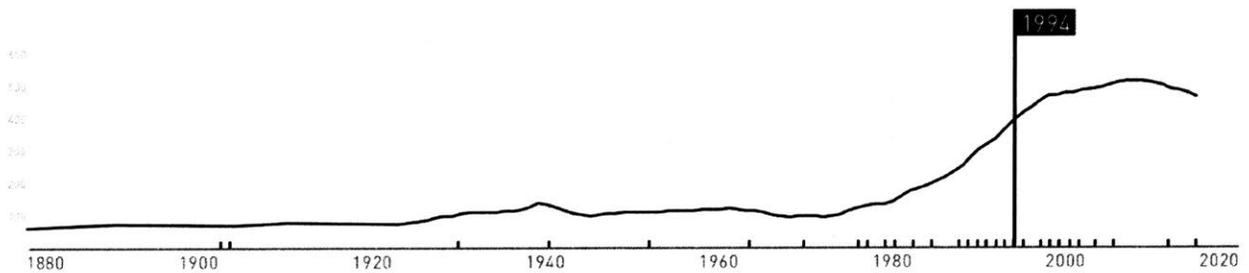
FCI Pekin



PEKIN, IL



URB_AREA: 4 / TRANSIT: 3 / VISIBILITY: 5 / SIZE_RATIO: 4 / USE_MIX: 5 / TOTAL: 21



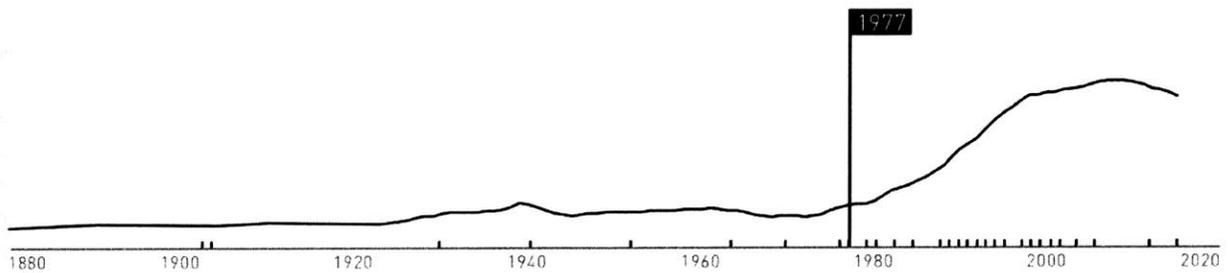
FCI Memphis



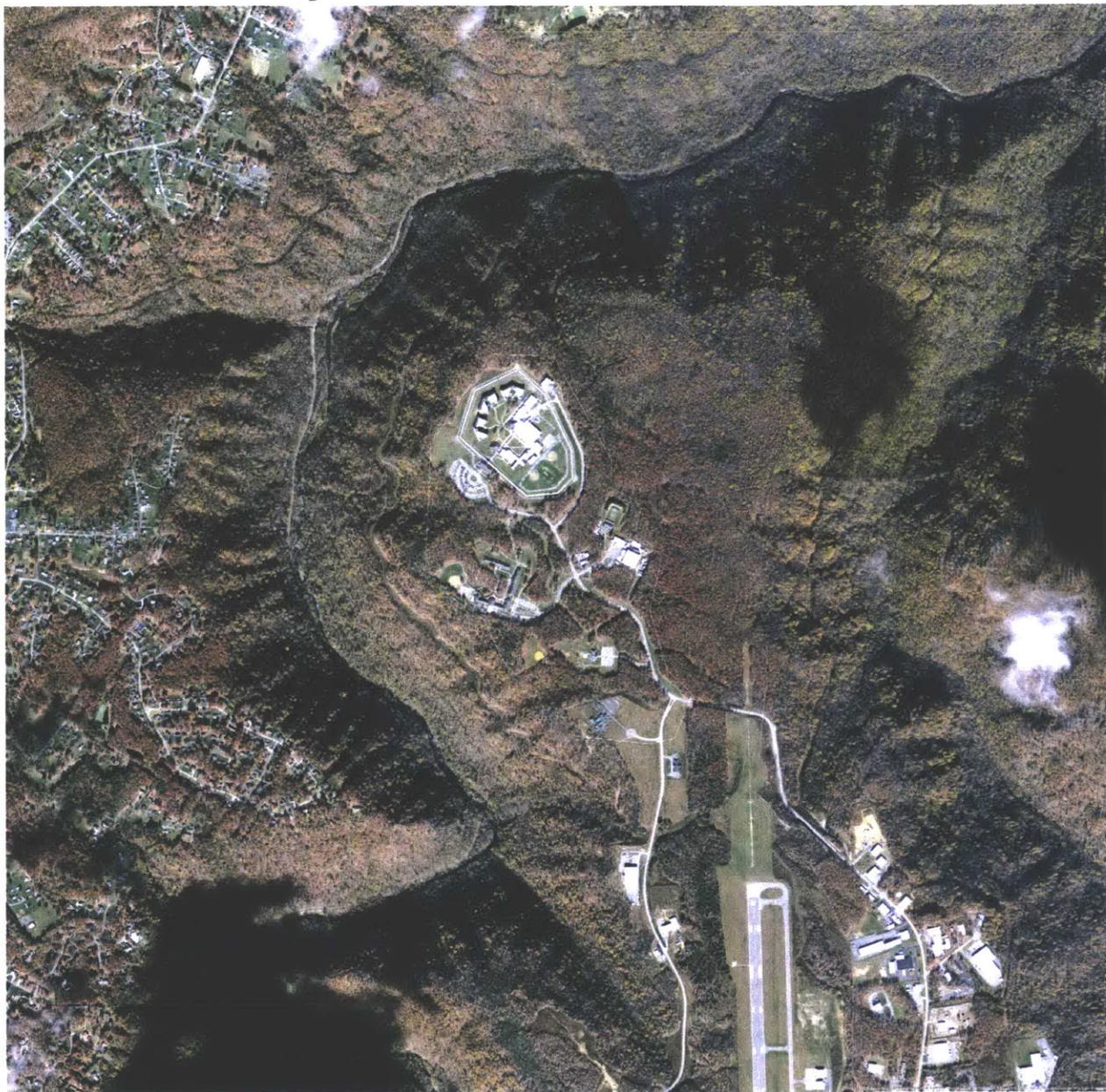
MEMPHIS, TN



URB_AREA: 5 / TRANSIT: 3 / VISIBILITY: 2 / SIZE_RATIO: 5 / USE_MIX: 5 / TOTAL: 20



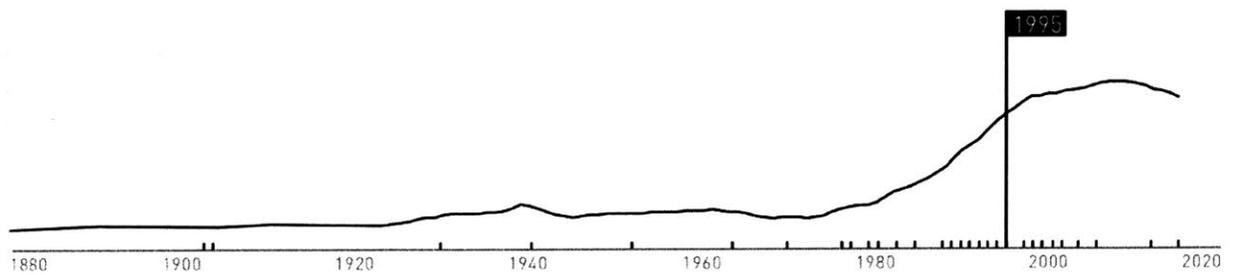
FCI Beckley



BEAVER, WV



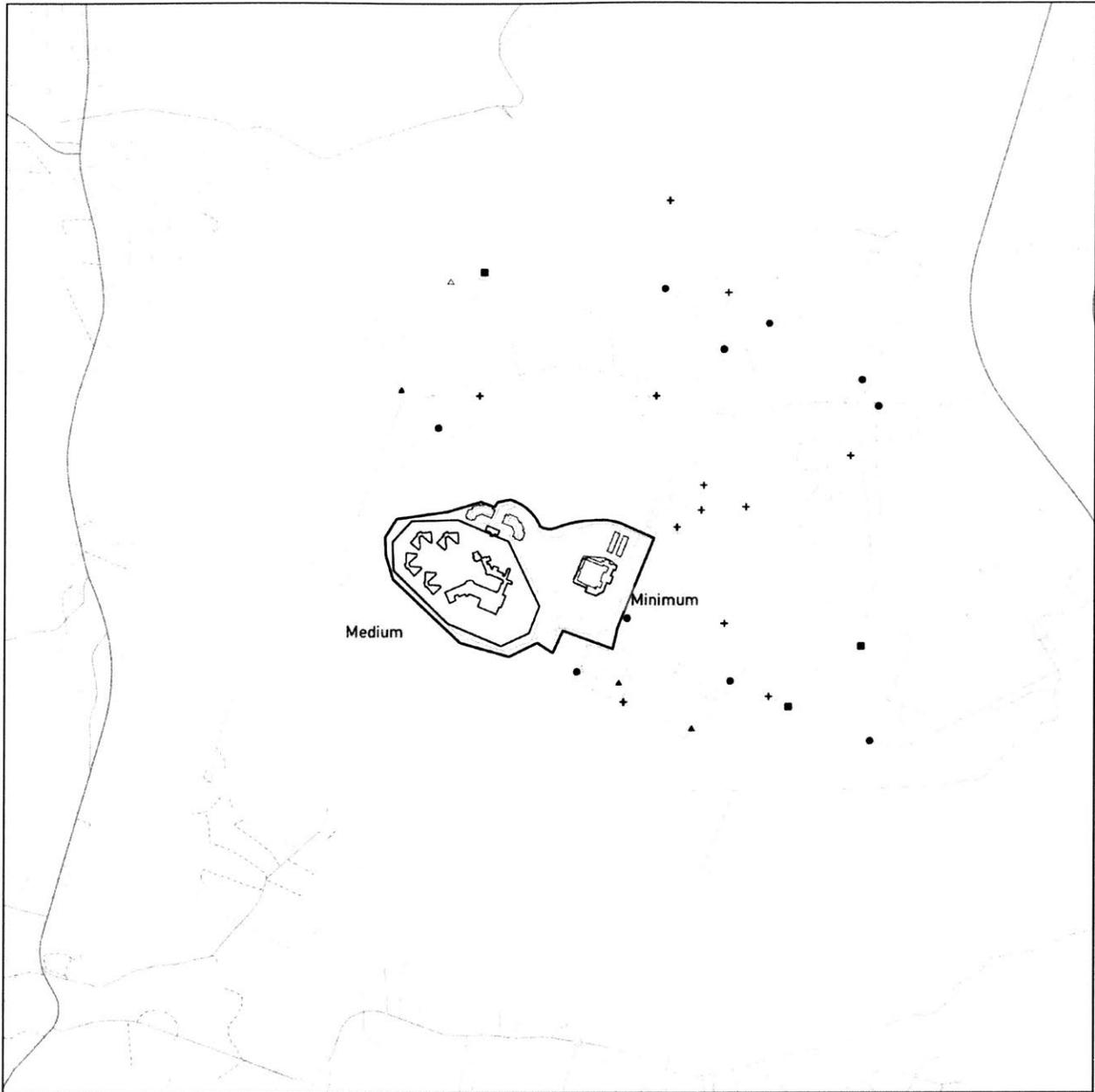
URB_AREA: 5 / TRANSIT: 5 / VISIBILITY: 2 / SIZE_RATIO: 3 / USE_MIX: 4 / TOTAL: 19



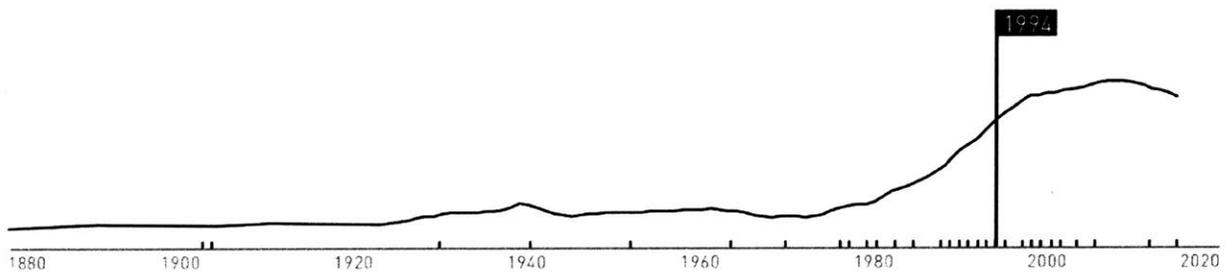
FCI Cumberland



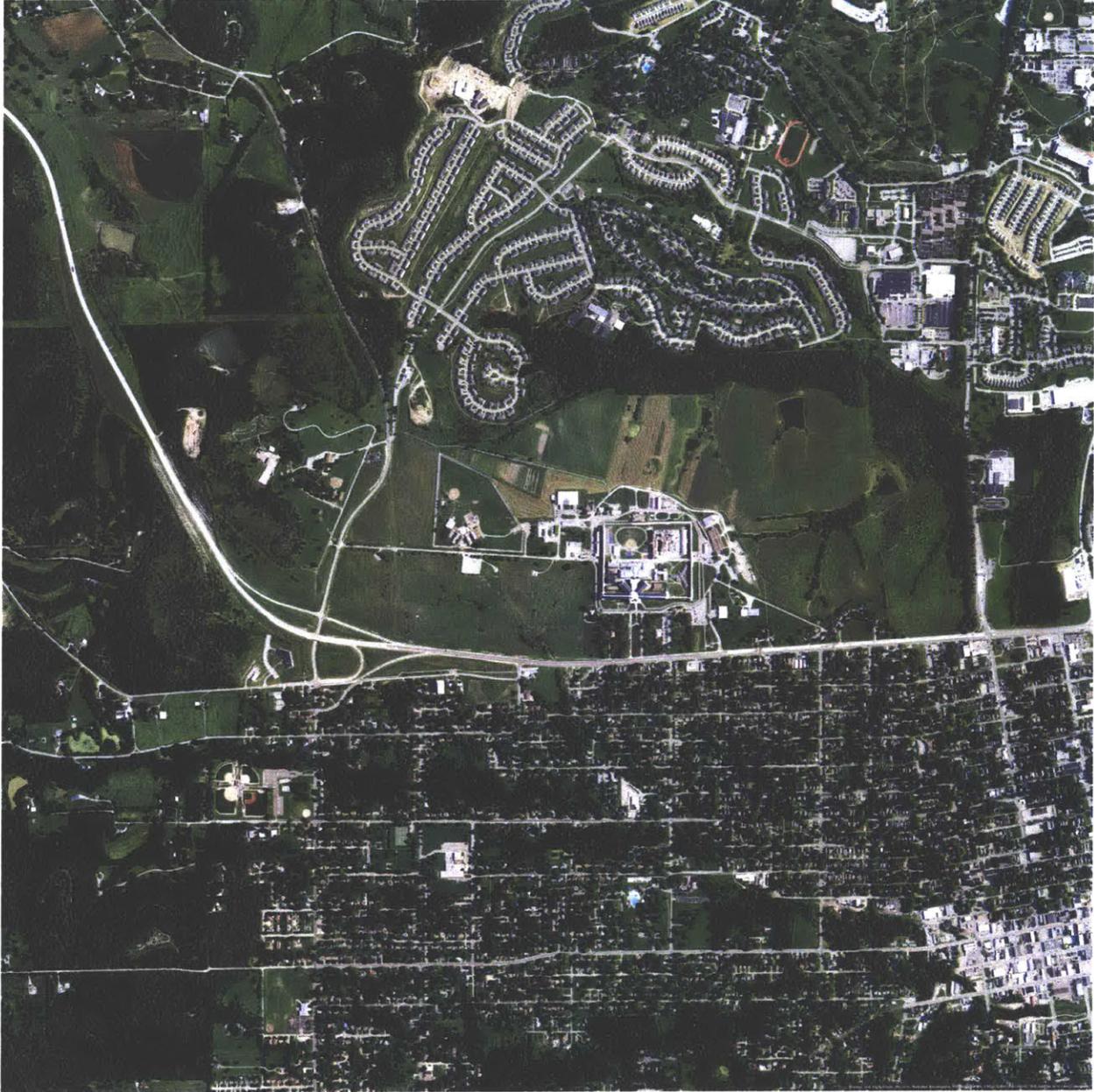
CUMBERLAND, MD



URB_AREA: 4 / TRANSIT: 4 / VISIBILITY: 2 / SIZE_RATIO: 5 / USE_MIX: 4 / TOTAL: 19



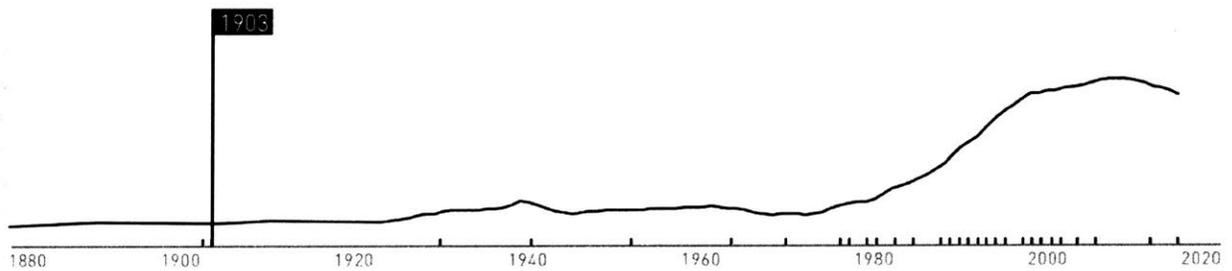
USP Leavenworth



LEAVENWORTH, KS



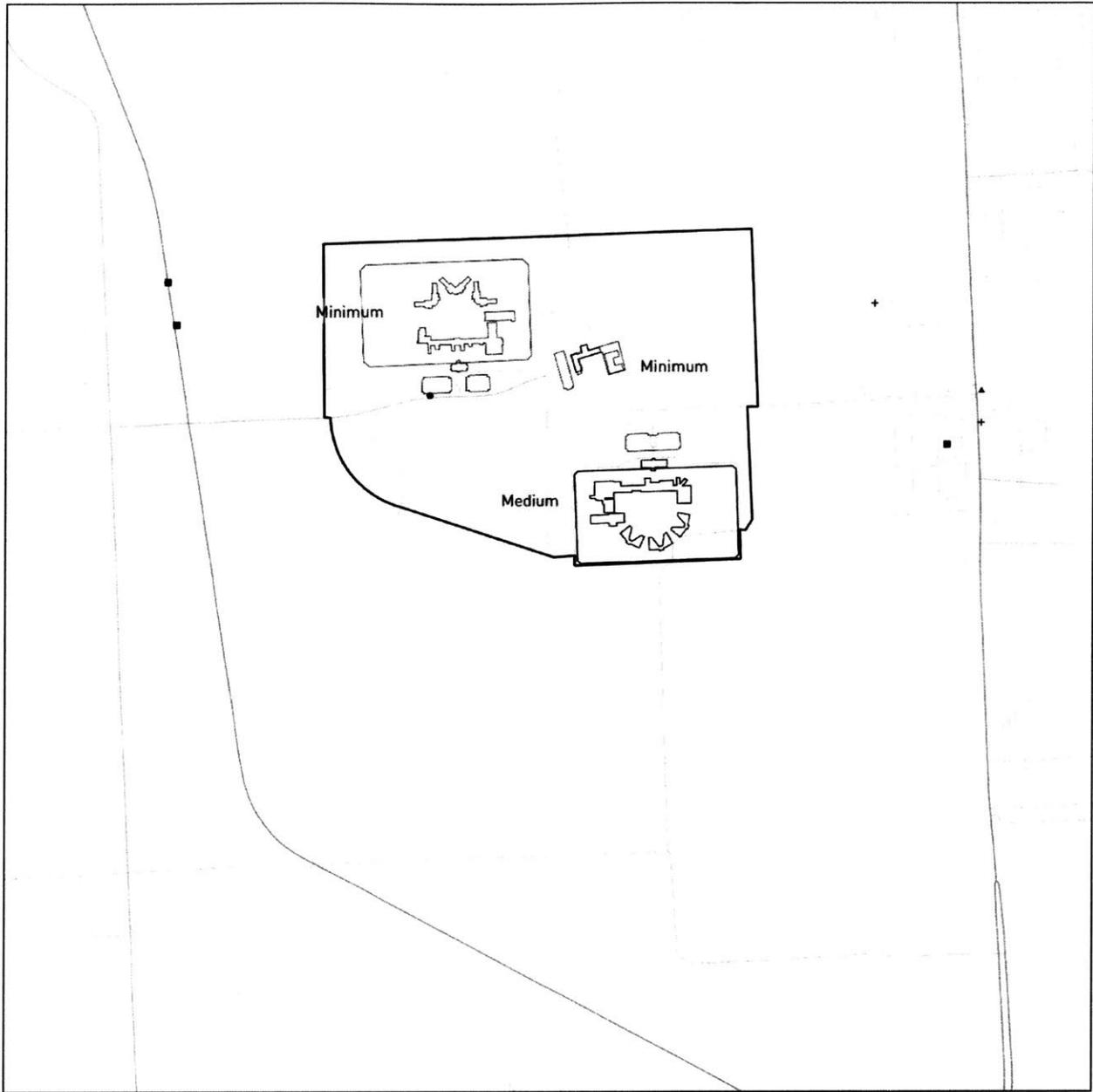
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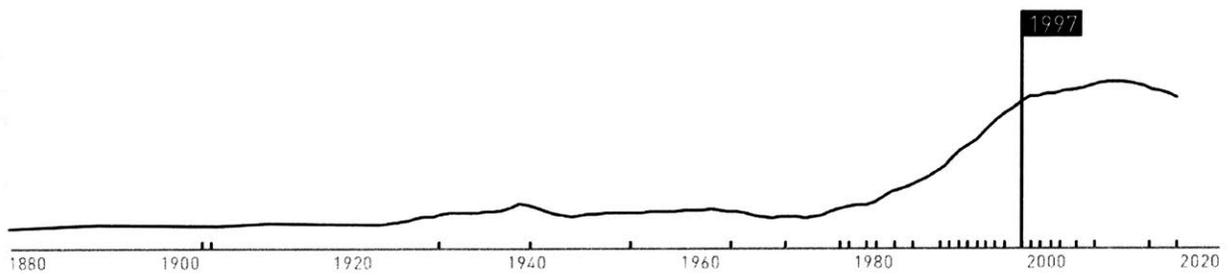
FCI Forrest City



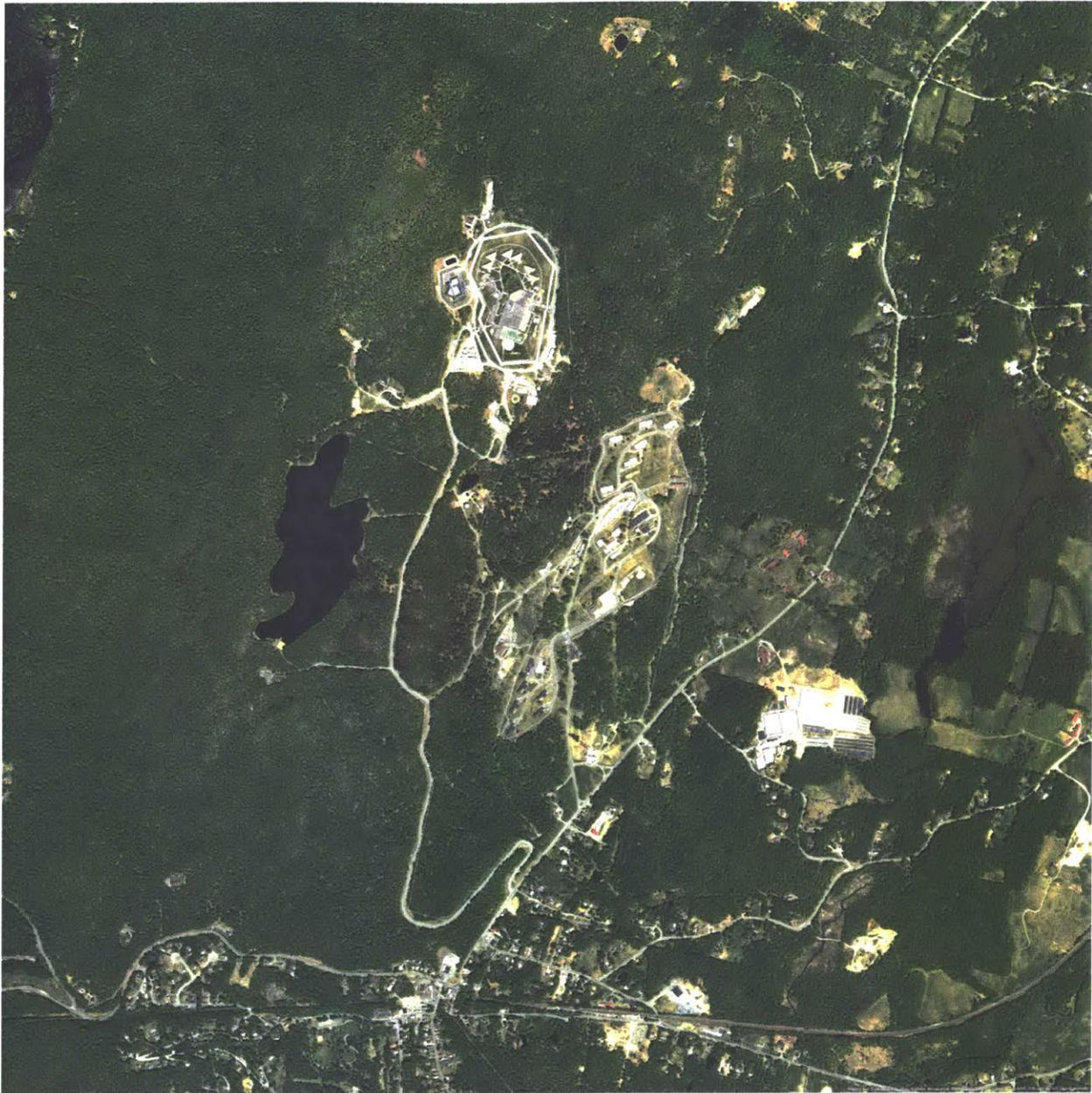
FORREST CITY, AR



URB_AREA: 2 / TRANSIT: 5 / VISIBILITY: 3 / SIZE_RATIO: 4 / USE_MIX: 4 / TOTAL: 18



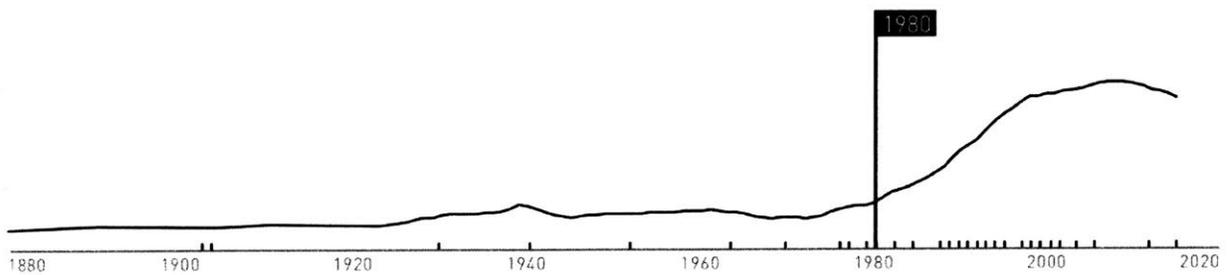
FCI Otisville



OTISVILLE, NY



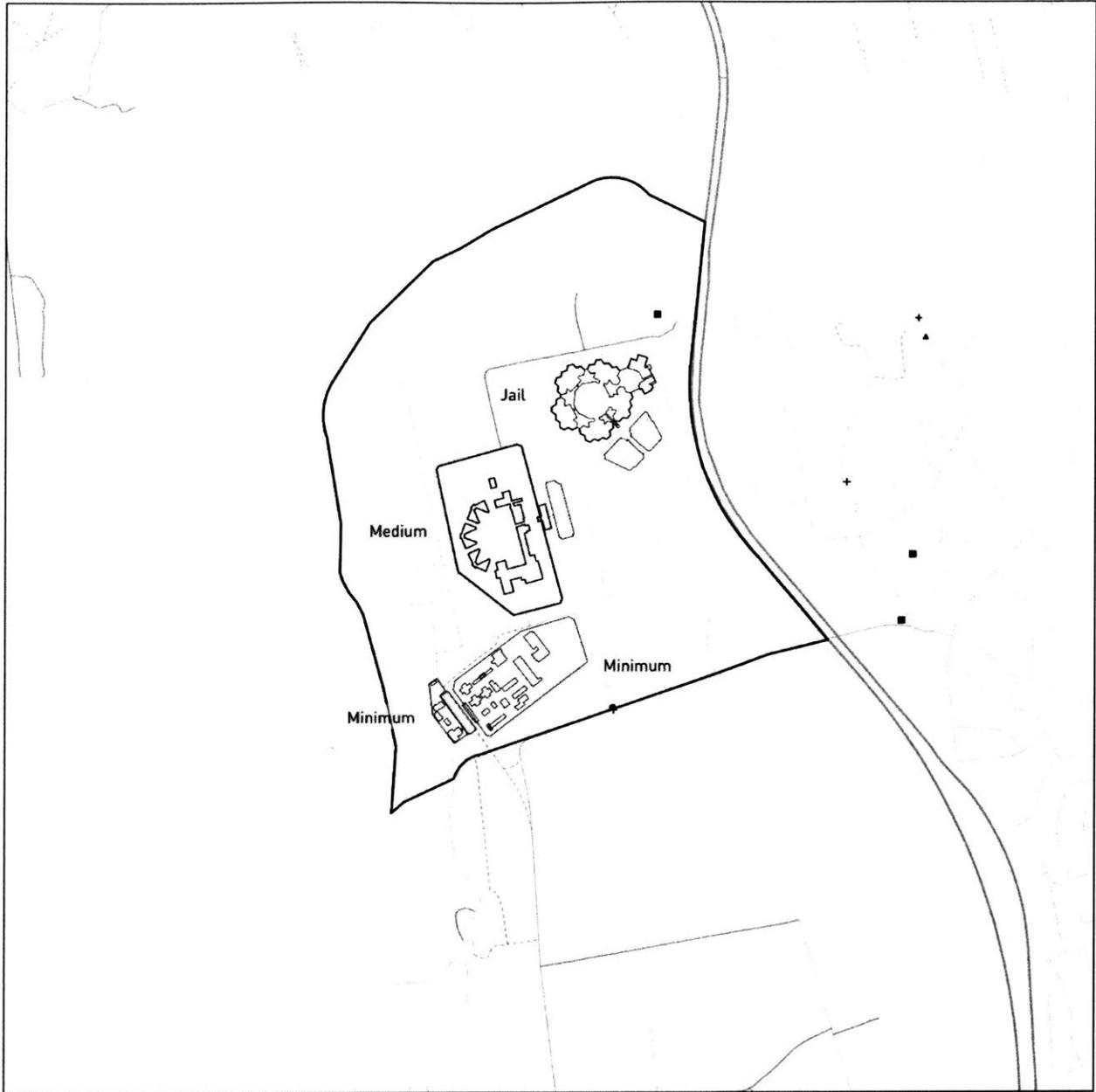
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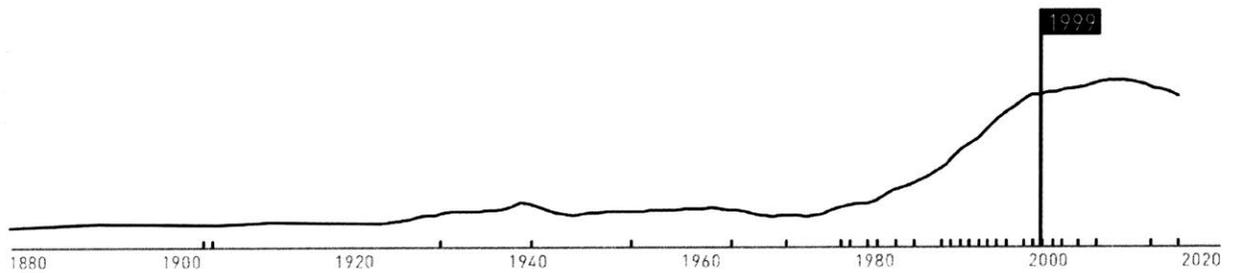
FCI Petersburg



HOPEWELL, VA



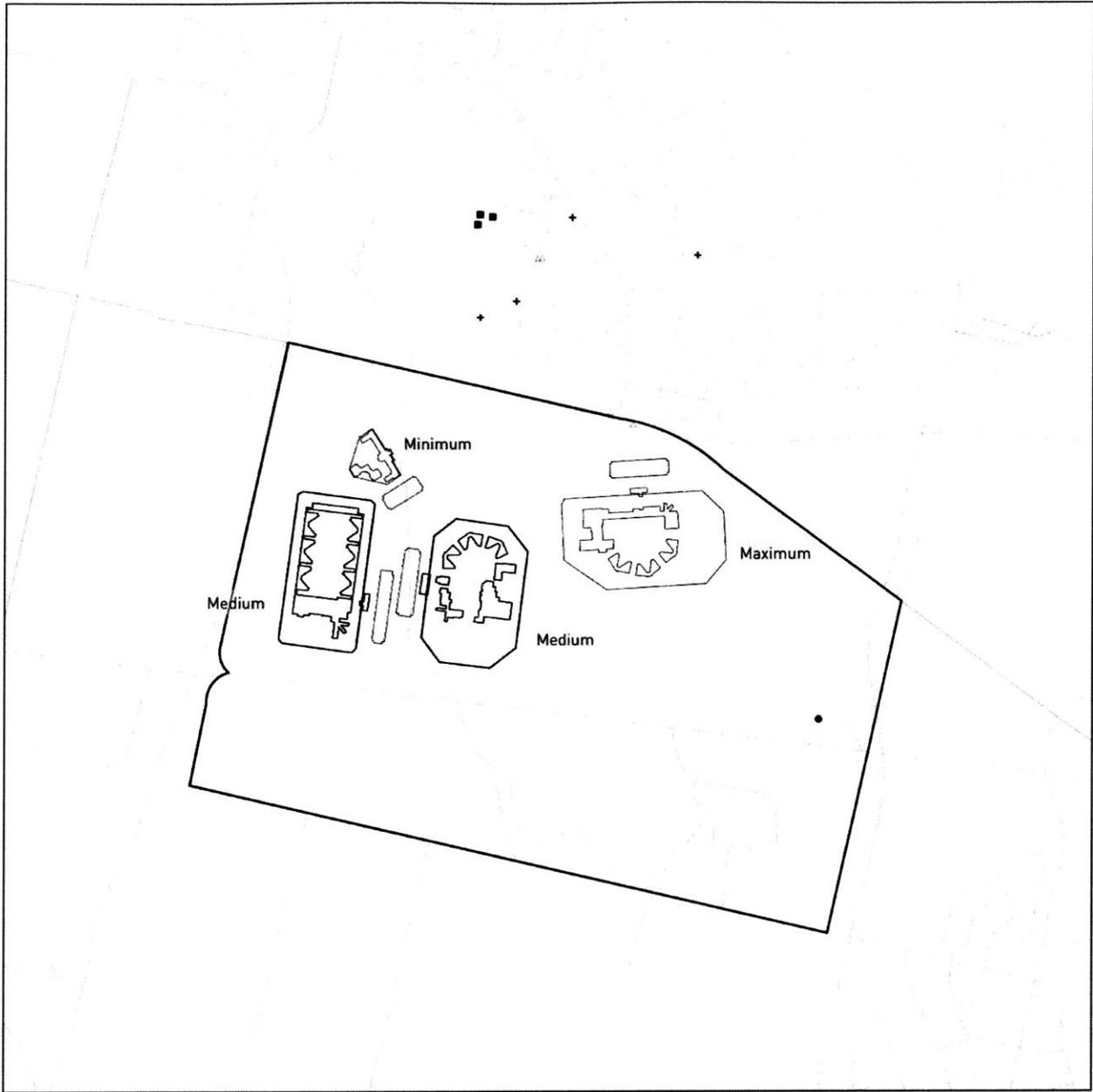
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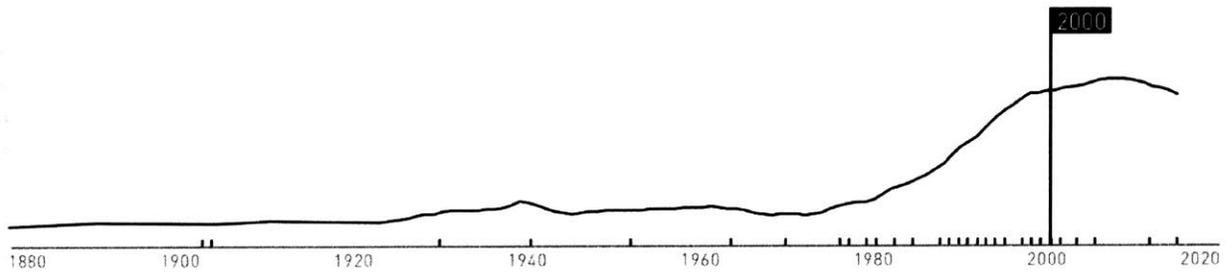
FCI Victorville



VICTORVILLE, CA



URB_AREA: 5 / TRANSIT: 4 / VISIBILITY: 1 / SIZE_RATIO: 4 / USE_MIX: 4 / TOTAL: 18



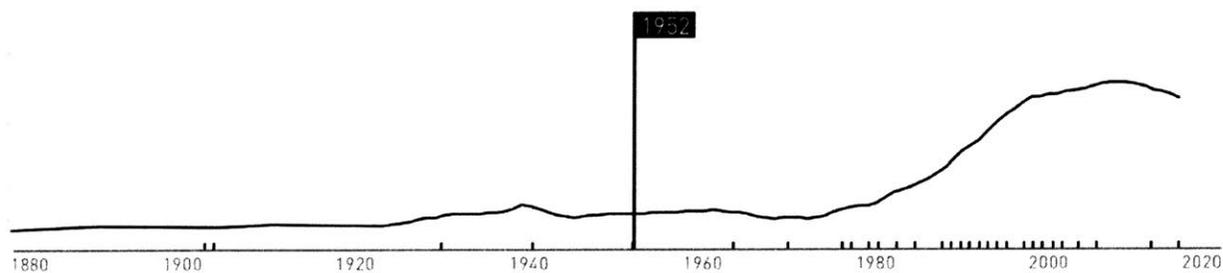
FCI Allenwood



WHITE DEER, PA



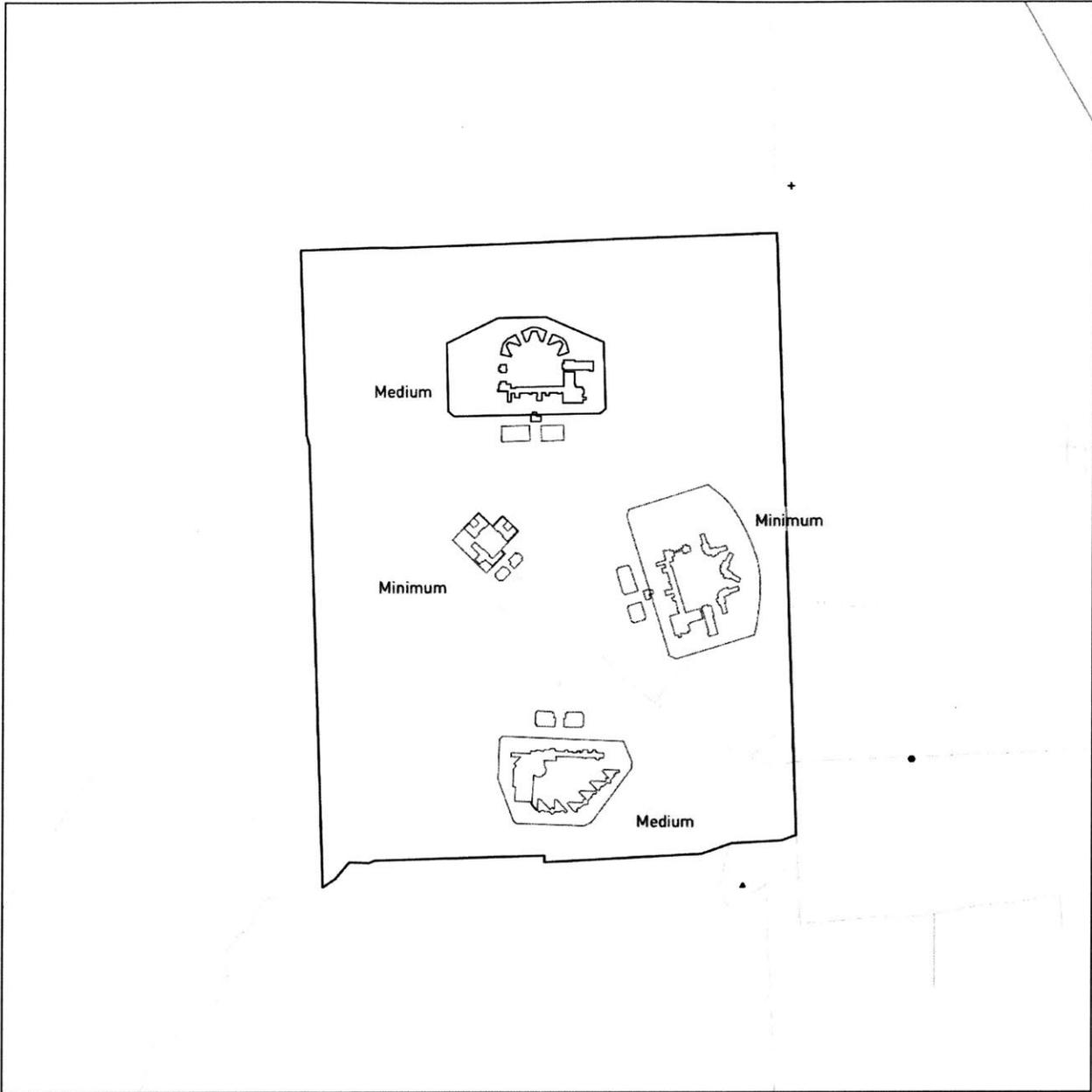
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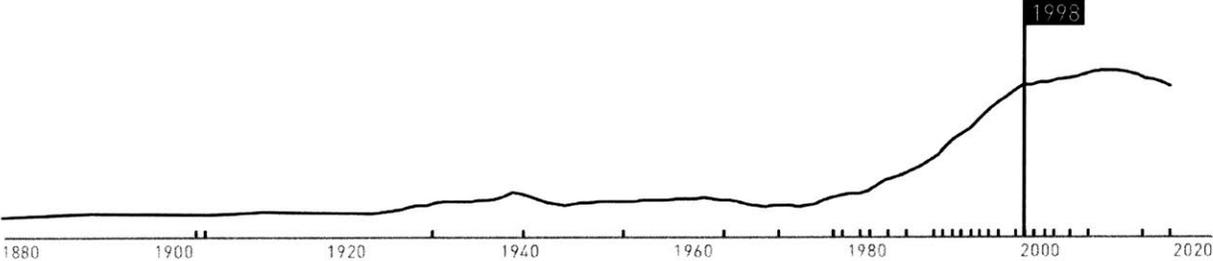
FCI Beaumont



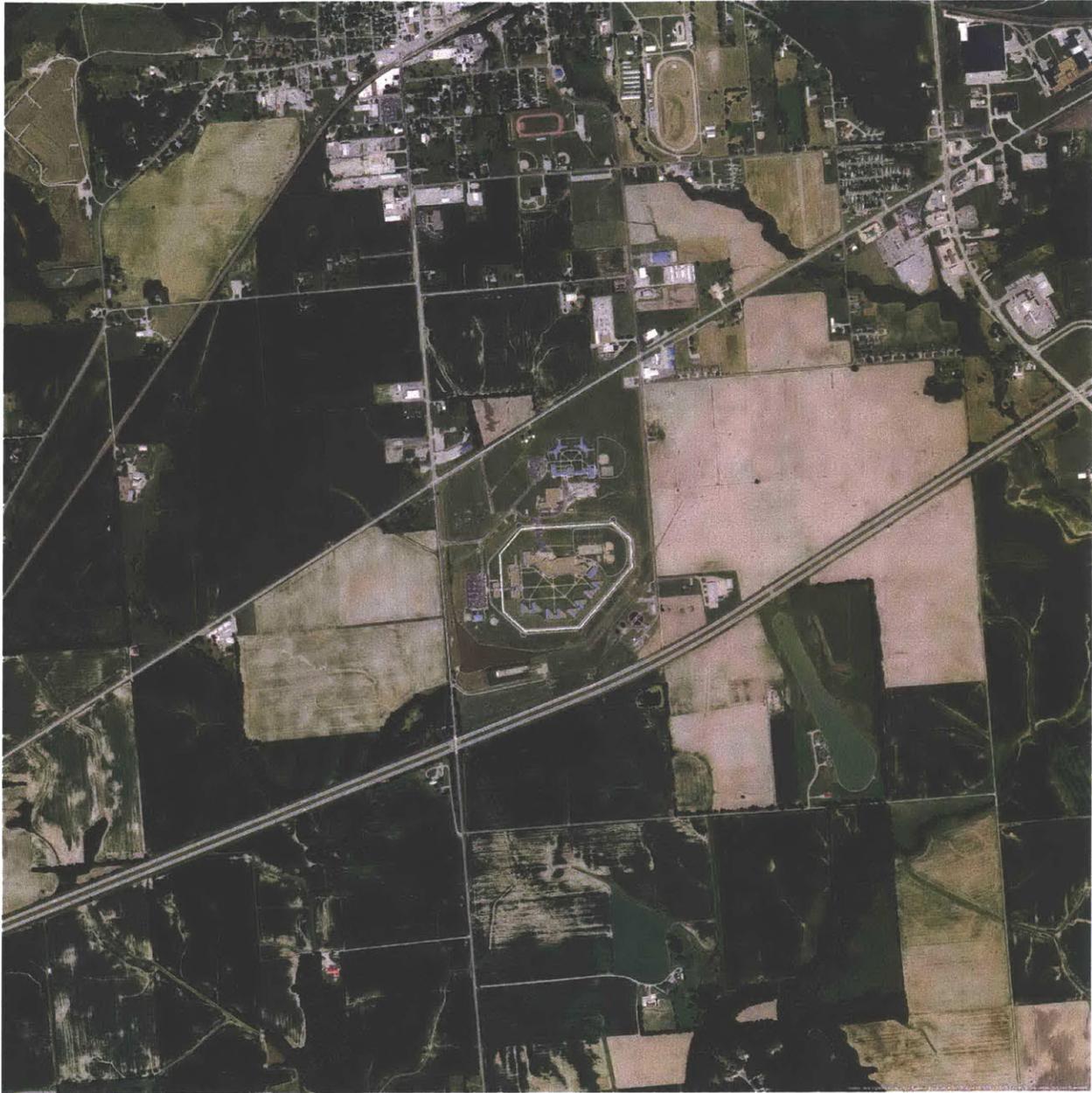
BEAUMONT, TX



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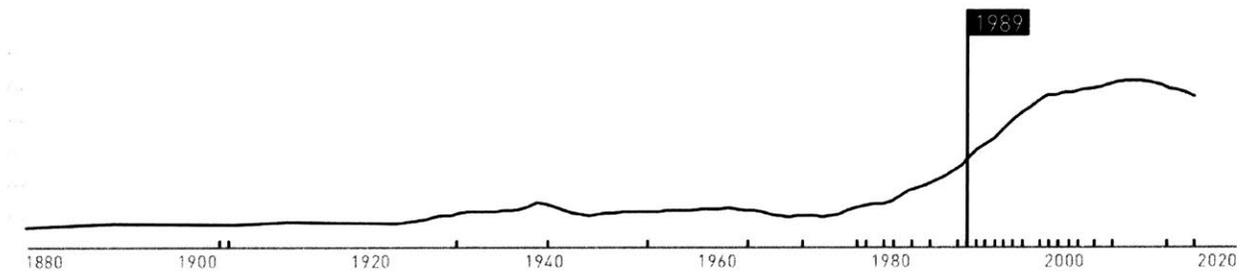
FCI Greenville



GREENVILLE, IL



URB_AREA: 2 / TRANSIT: 1 / VISIBILITY: 5 / SIZE_RATIO: 4 / USE_MIX: 5 / TOTAL: 17



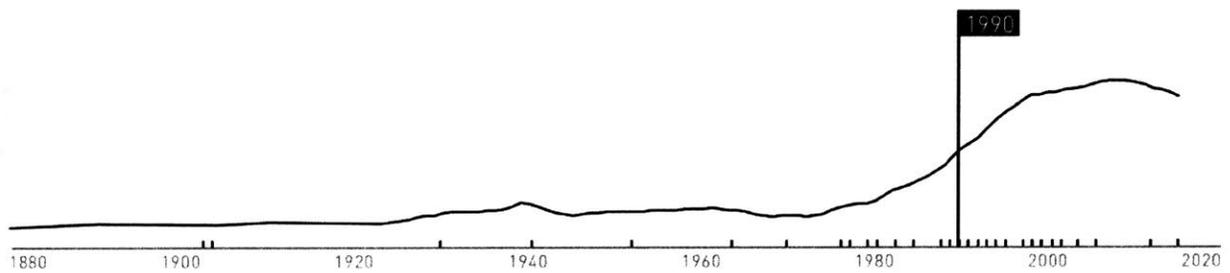
FCI Jesup



JESUP, GA



URB_AREA: 3 / TRANSIT: 4 / VISIBILITY: 4 / SIZE_RATIO: 4 / USE_MIX: 2 / TOTAL: 17



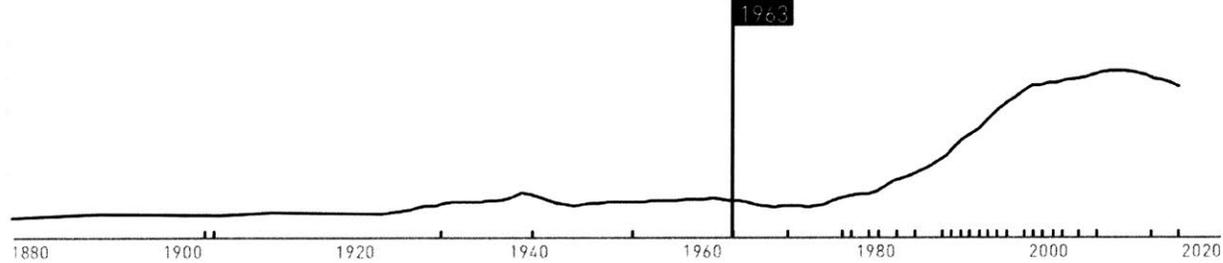
USP Marion



MARION, IL



URB_AREA: 4 / TRANSIT: 3 / VISIBILITY: 3 / SIZE_RATIO: 5 / USE_MIX: 2 / TOTAL: 17



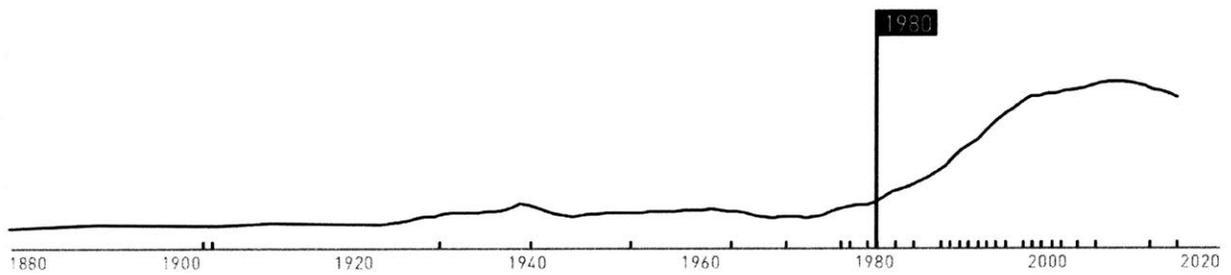
FCI Ray Brook



RAY BROOK, NY



URB_AREA: 1 / TRANSIT: 5 / VISIBILITY: 4 / SIZE_RATIO: 2 / USE_MIX: 5 / TOTAL: 17



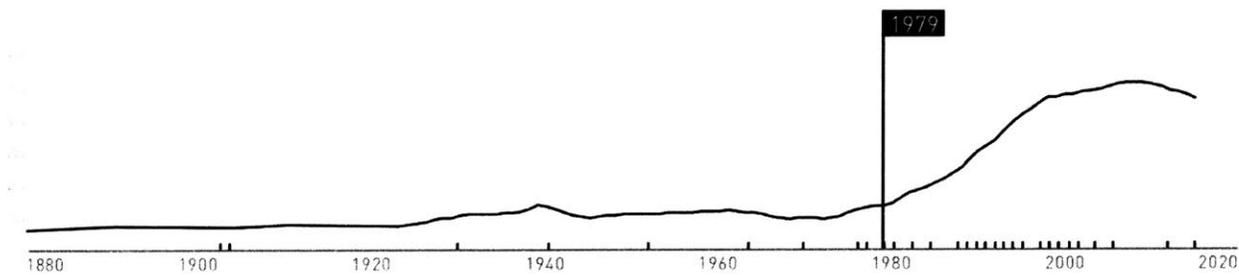
FCI Talladega



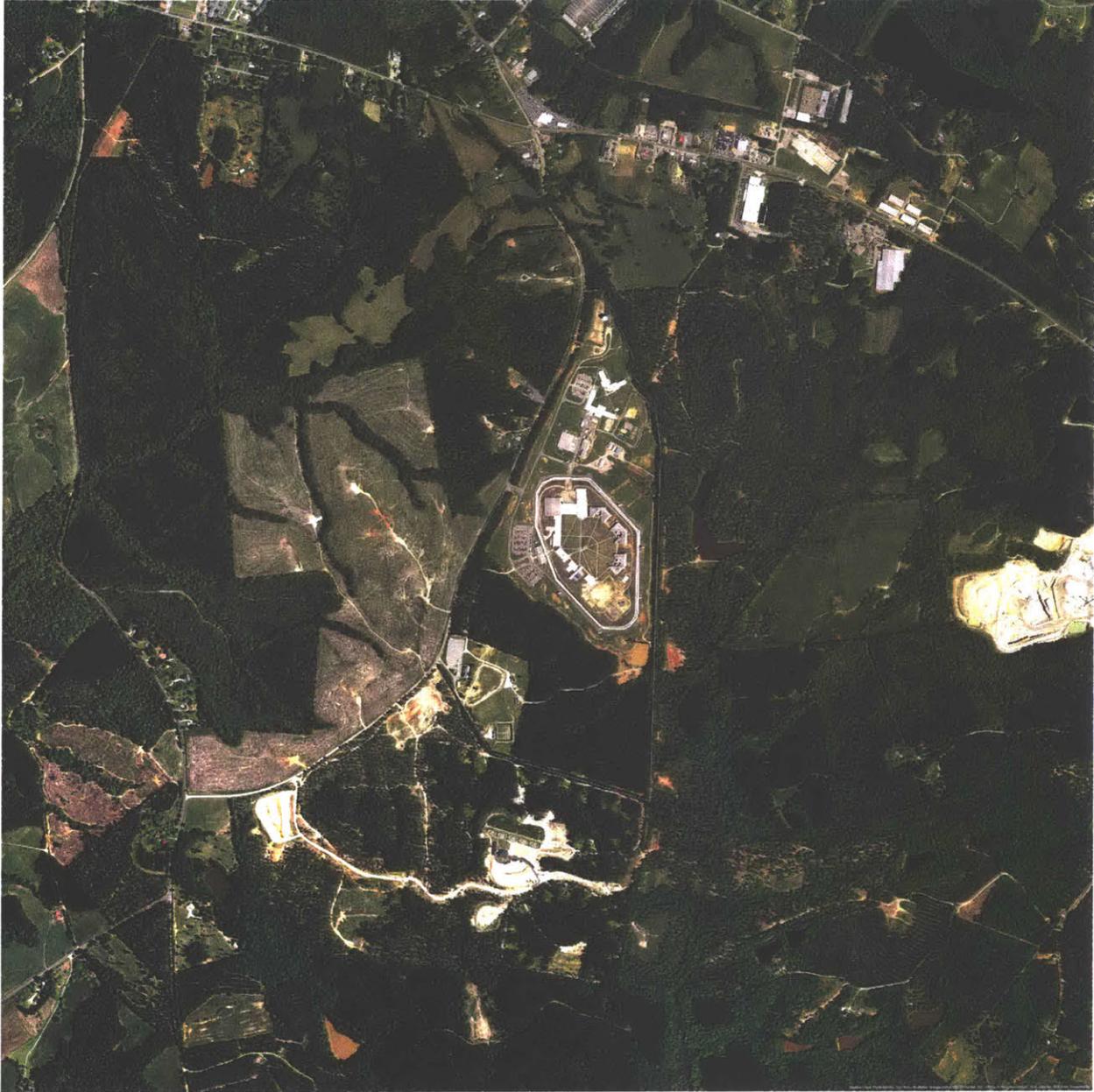
TALLADEGA, AL



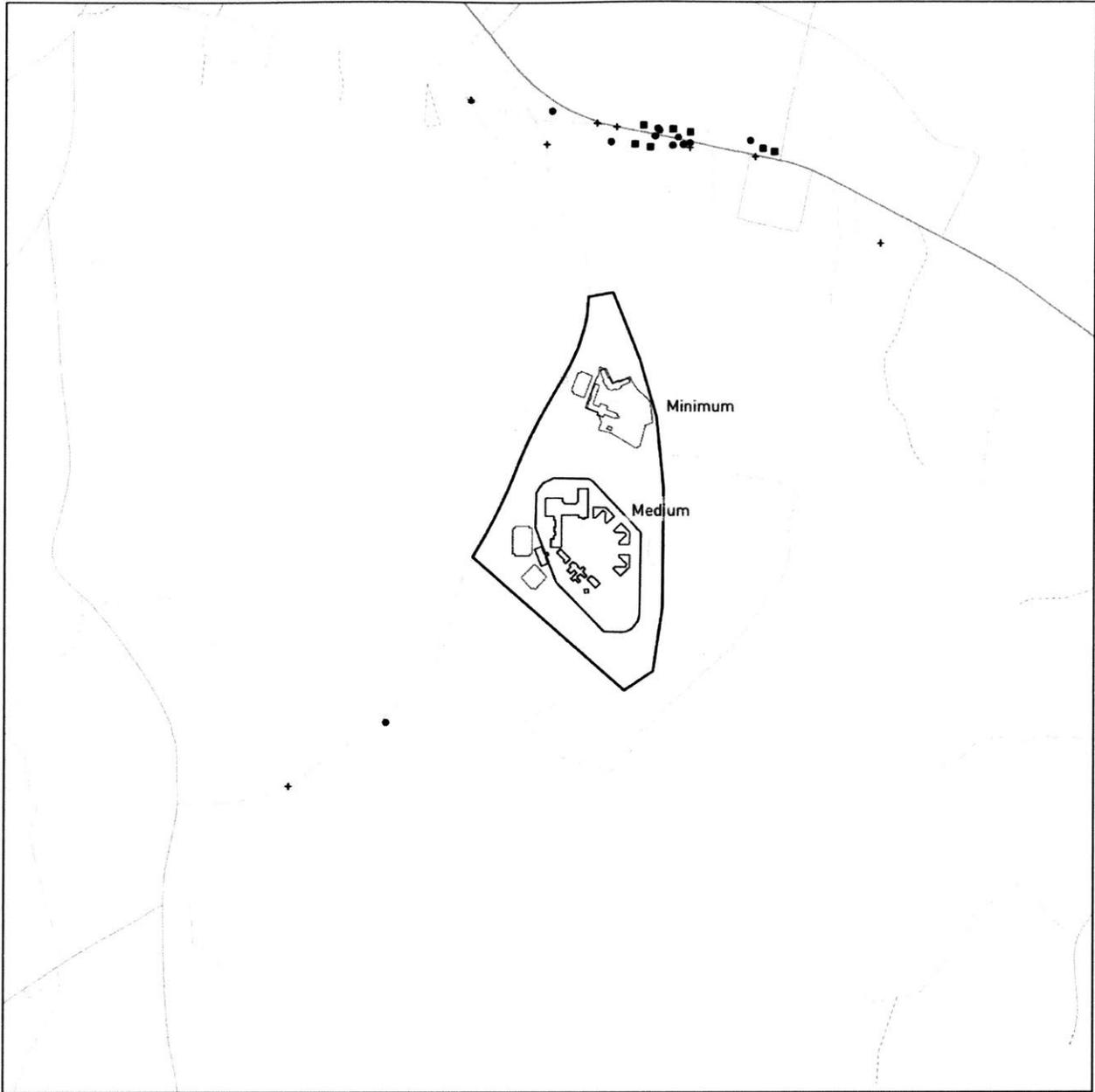
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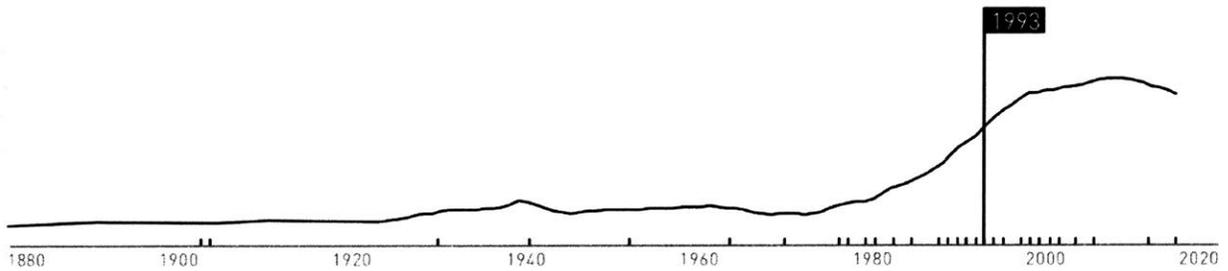
FCI Edgefield



EDGEFIELD, SC



URB_AREA: 4 / TRANSIT: 2 / VISIBILITY: 3 / SIZE_RATIO: 3 / USE_MIX: 4 / TOTAL: 16



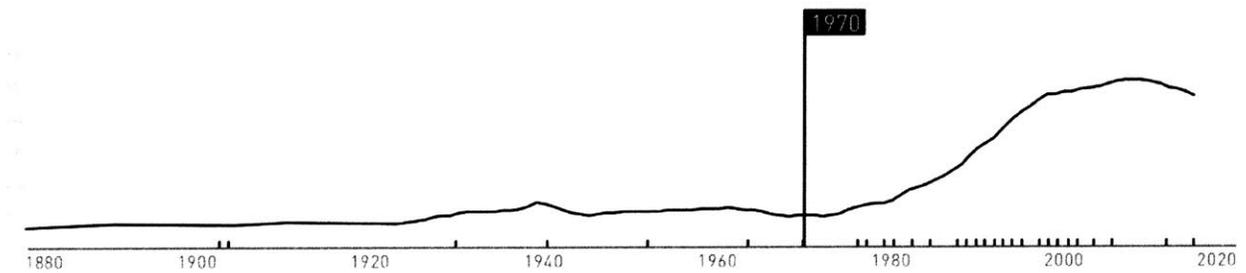
USP Lompoc



LOMPOC, CA



URB_AREA: 5 / TRANSIT: 5 / VISIBILITY: 1 / SIZE_RATIO: 4 / USE_MIX: 1 / TOTAL: 16



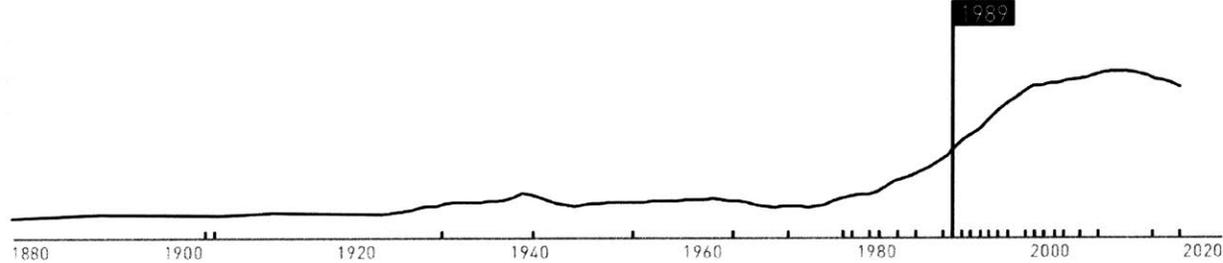
FCI Sheridan



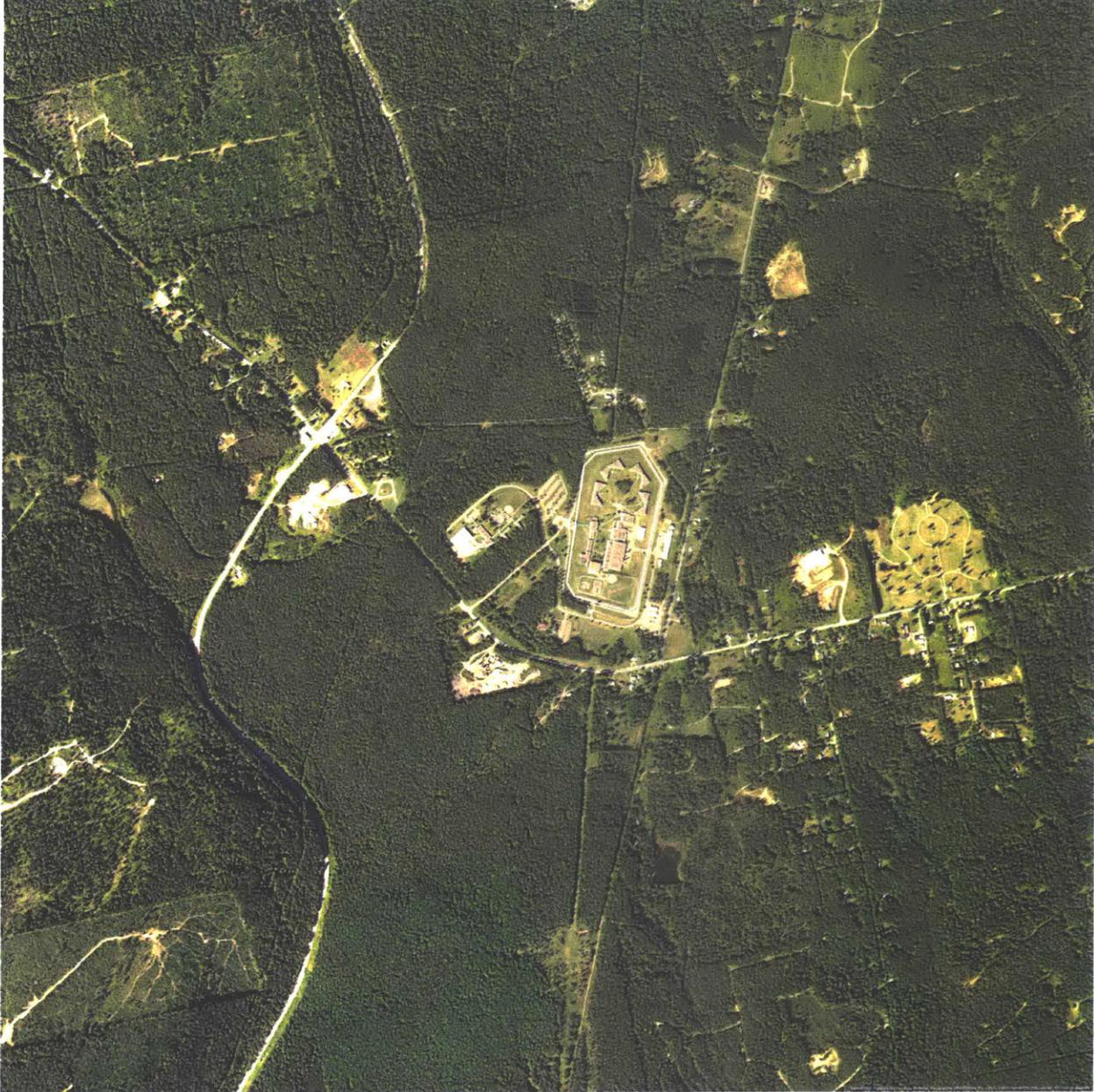
SHERIDAN, OR



URB_AREA: 3 / TRANSIT: 2 / VISIBILITY: 4 / SIZE_RATIO: 2 / USE_MIX: 5 / TOTAL: 16



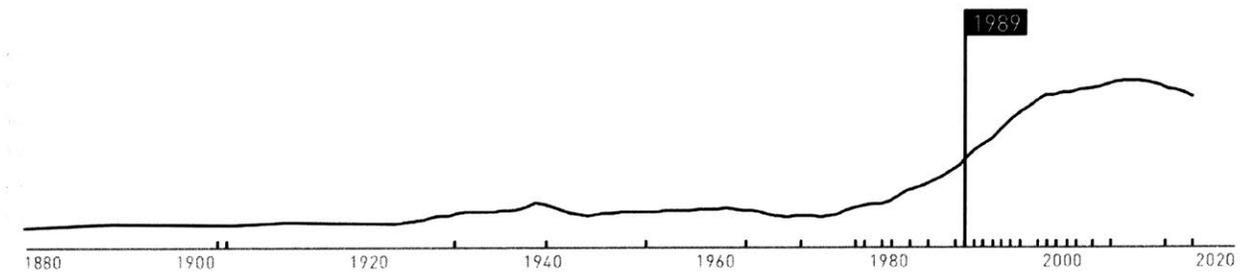
FCI McKean



LEWIS RUN, PA



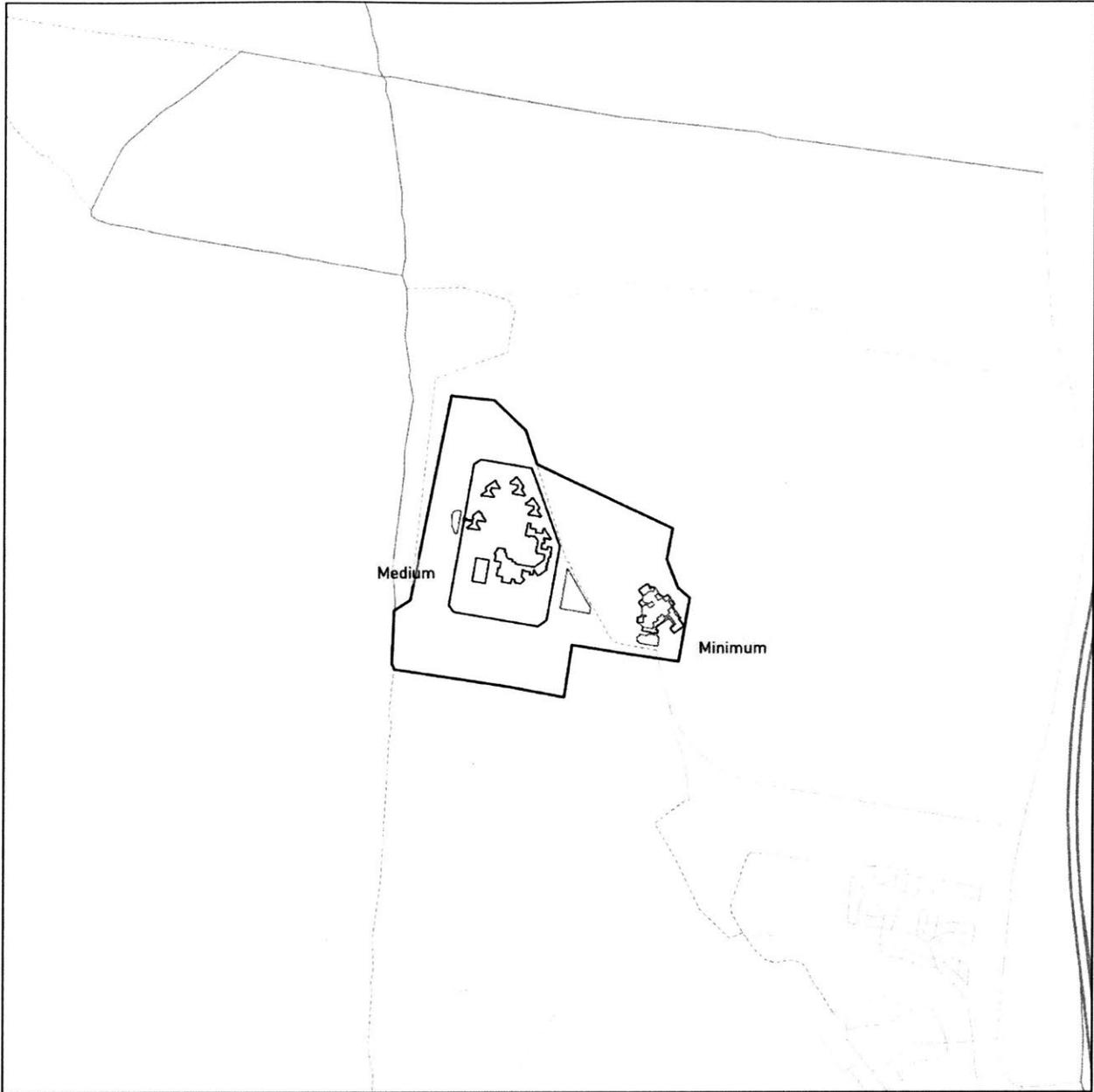
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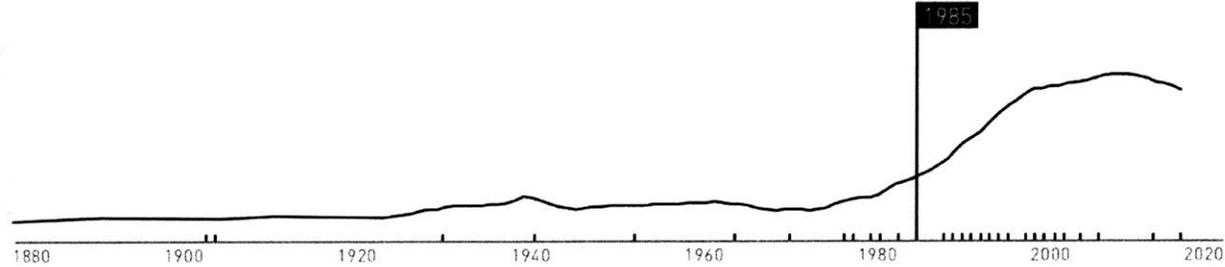
FCI Phoenix



PHOENIX, AZ



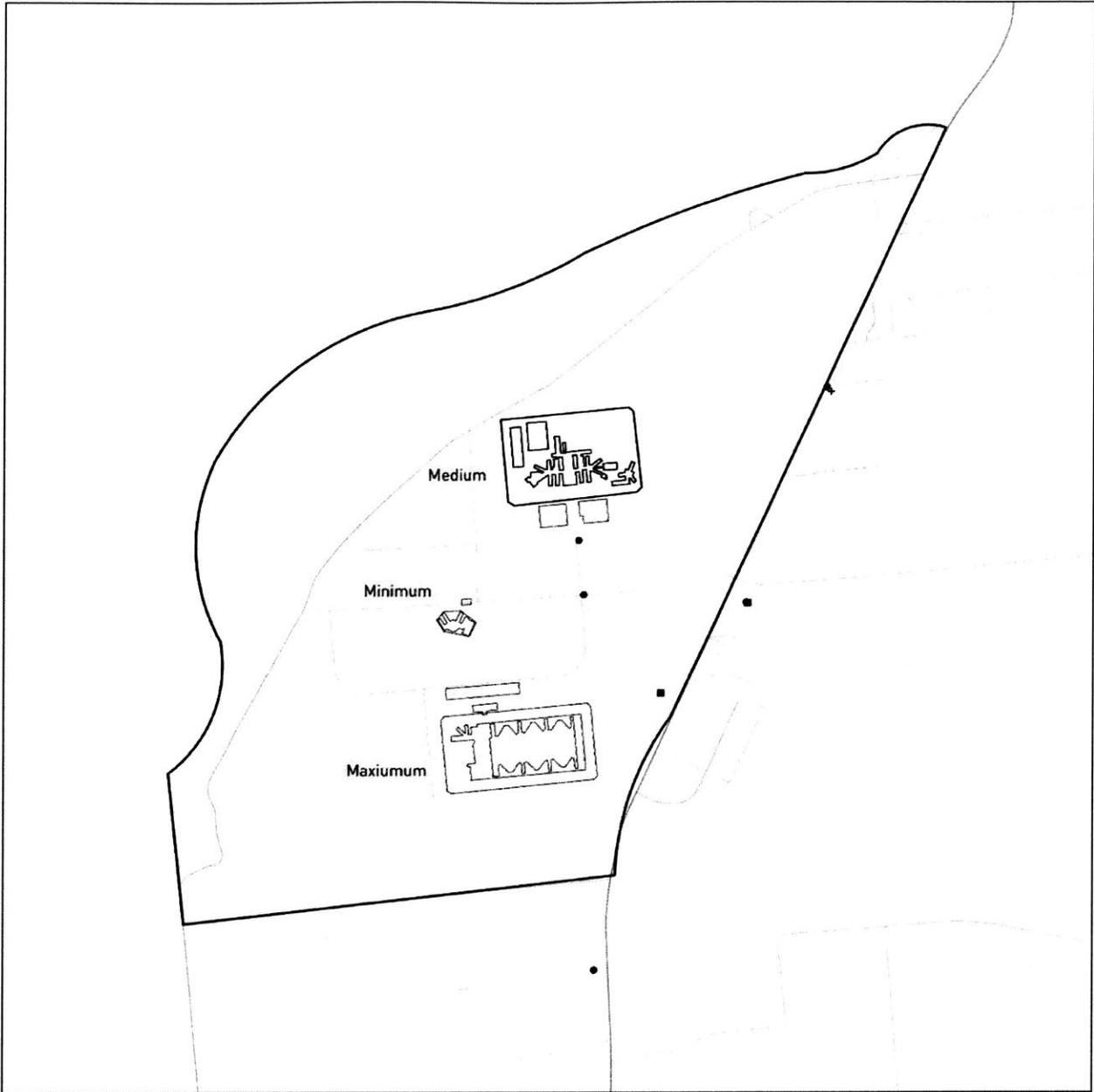
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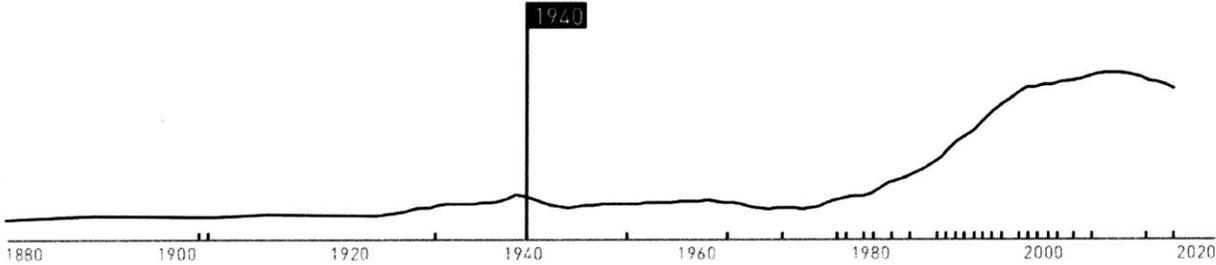
FCI Terre Haute



TERRE HAUTE, IN



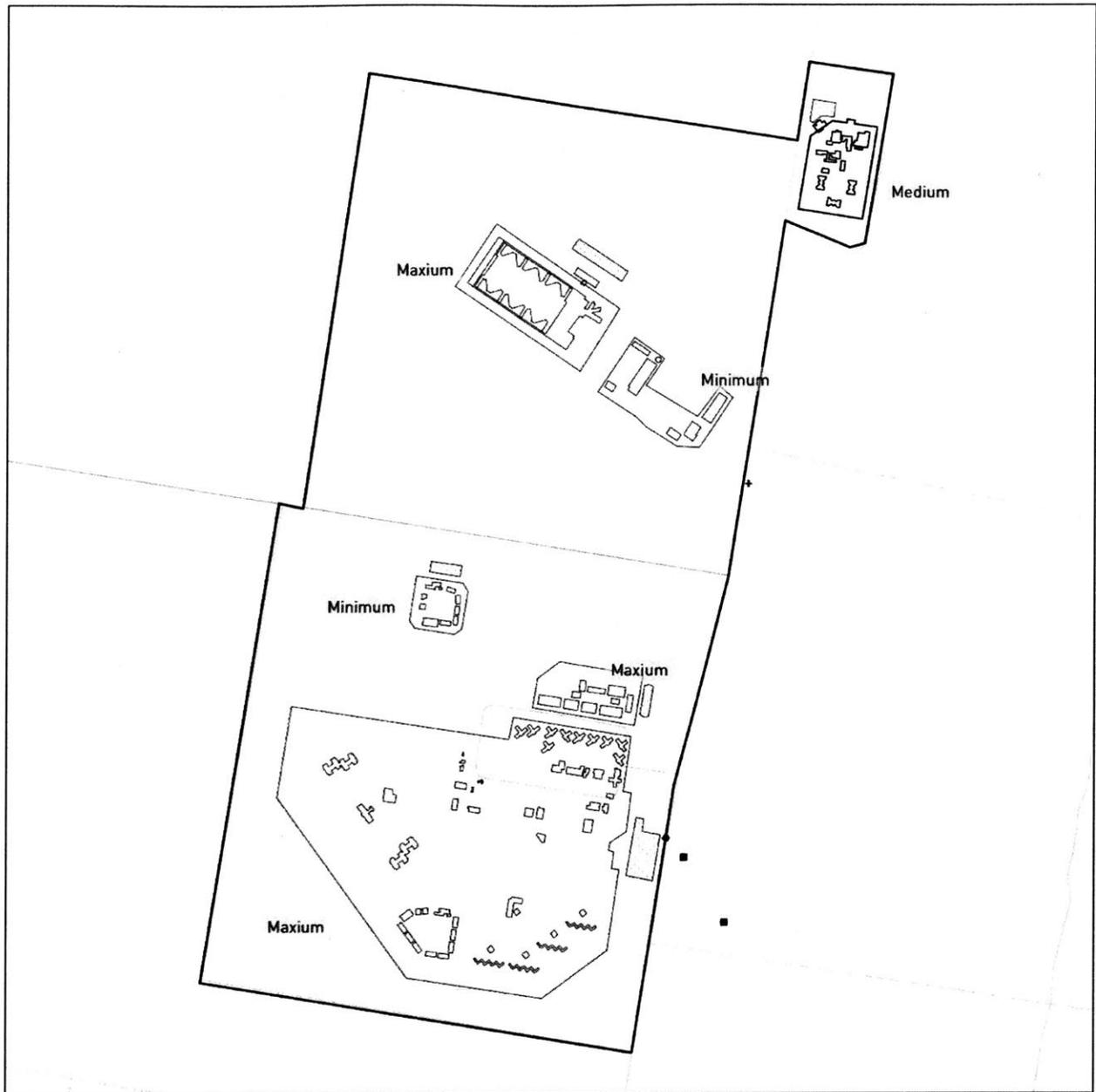
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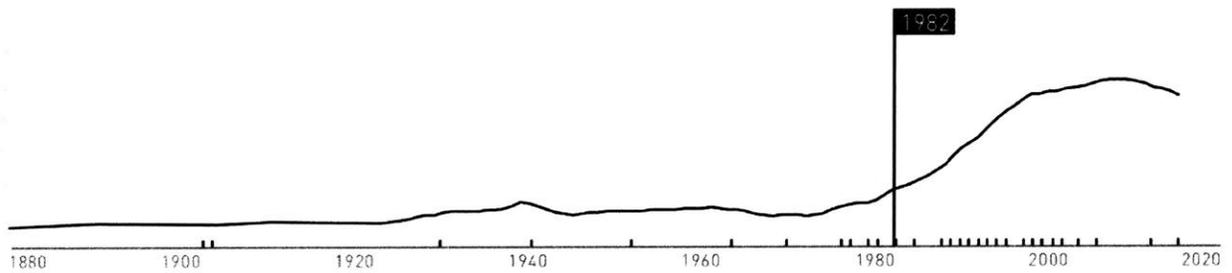
FCI Tucson



TUCSON, AZ



URB_AREA: 1 / TRANSIT: 5 / VISIBILITY: 1 / SIZE_RATIO: 5 / USE_MIX: 3 / TOTAL: 15



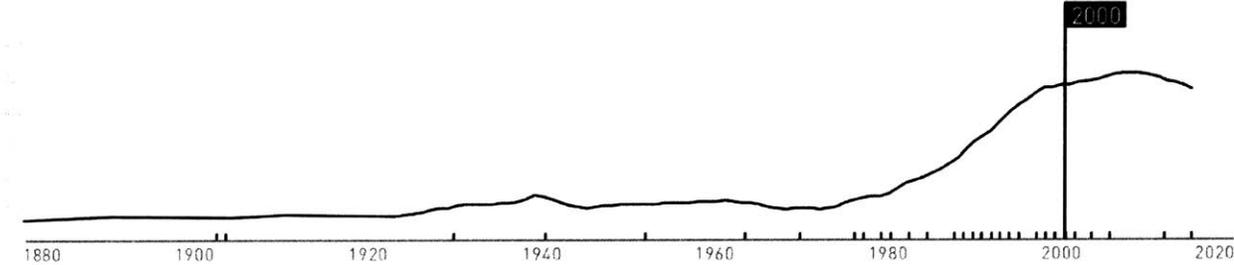
FCI Williamsburg



SALTERS, SC



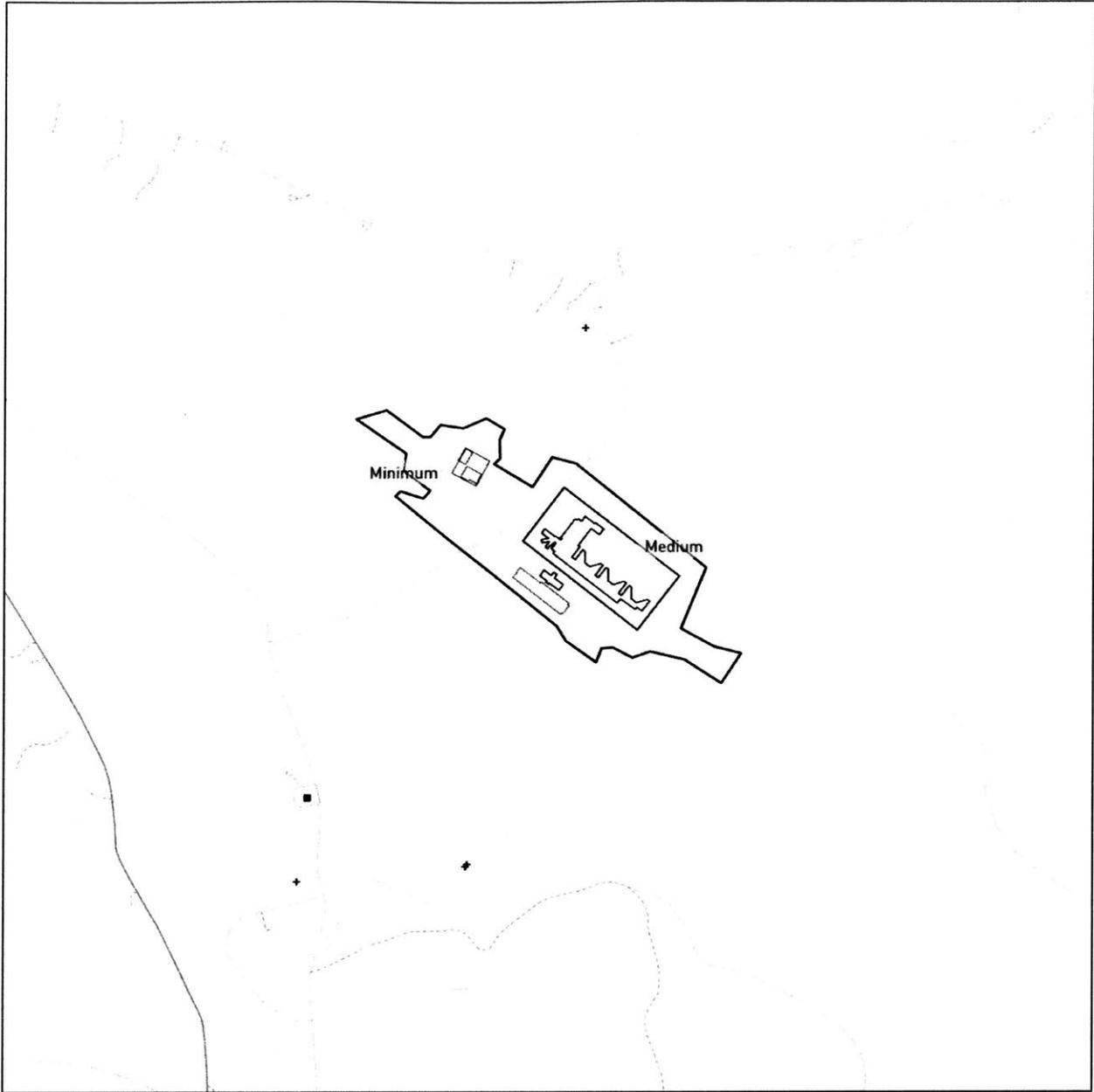
URB_AREA: 2 / TRANSIT: 3 / VISIBILITY: 5 / SIZE_RATIO: 1 / USE_MIX: 4 / TOTAL: 15



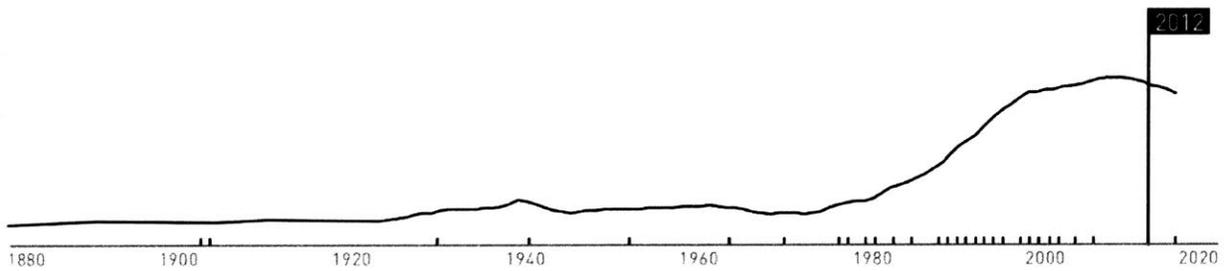
FCI Berlin



BERLIN, NH



URB_AREA: 1 / TRANSIT: 4 / VISIBILITY: 2 / SIZE_RATIO: 5 / USE_MIX: 2 / TOTAL: 14



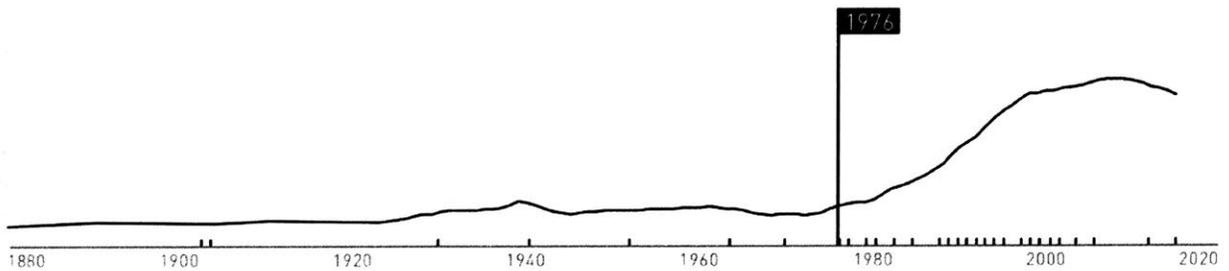
FCI Butner



BUTNER, NC



URB_AREA: 4 / TRANSIT: 3 / VISIBILITY: 1 / SIZE_RATIO: 3 / USE_MIX: 3 / TOTAL: 14



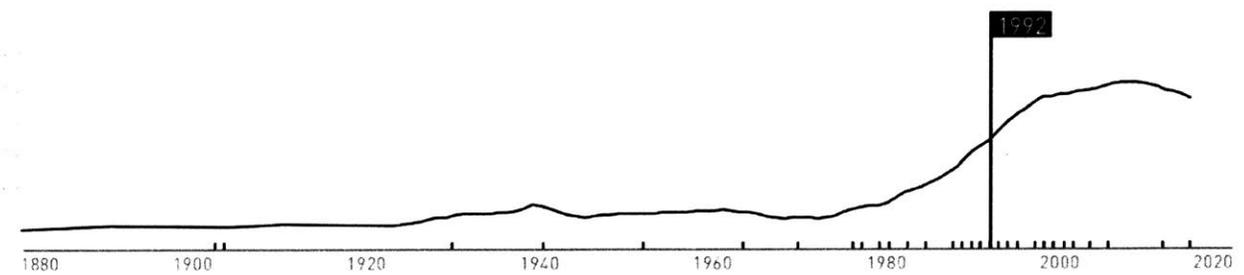
FCI Manchester



MANCHESTER, KY



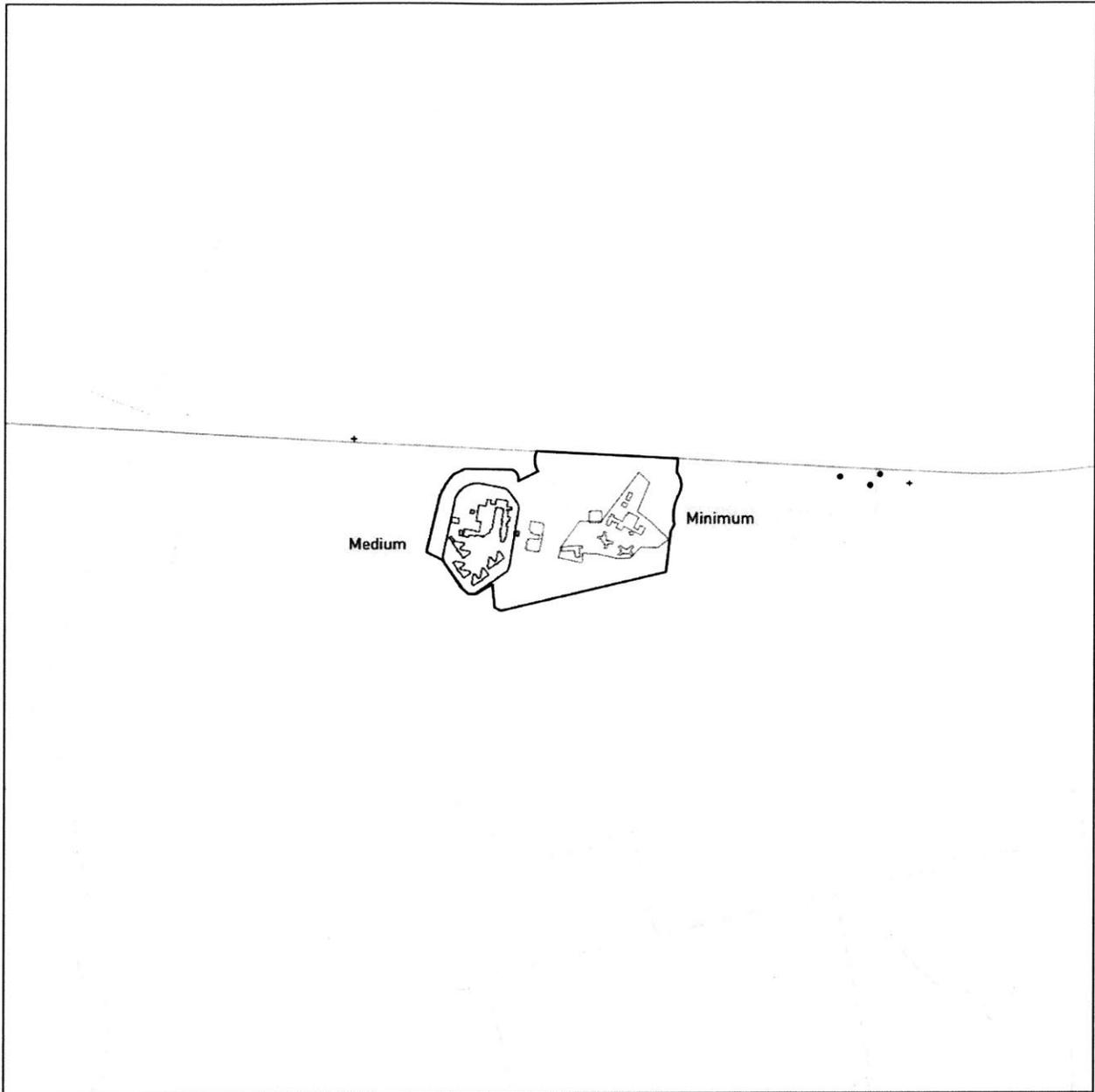
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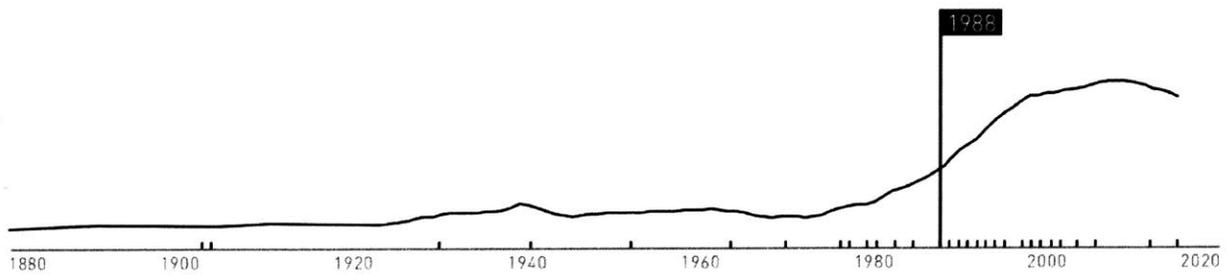
FCI Three Rivers



THREE RIVERS, TX



URB_AREA: 1 / TRANSIT: 2 / VISIBILITY: 5 / SIZE_RATIO: 2 / USE_MIX: 2 / TOTAL: 12



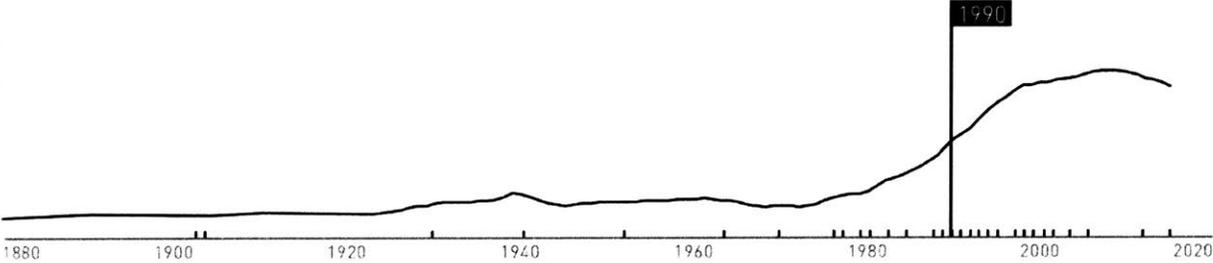
FCI Fairton



FAIRTON, NJ



URB_AREA: 4 / TRANSIT: 5 / VISIBILITY: 1 / SIZE_RATIO: 2 / USE_MIX: 1 / TOTAL: 13



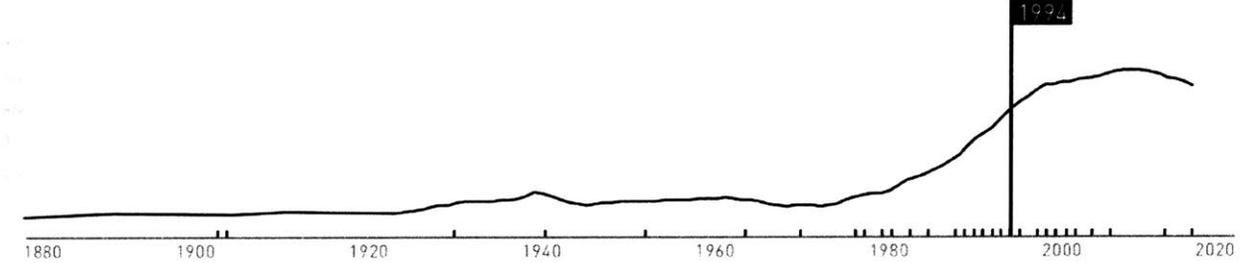
FCI Florence



FLORENCE, CO



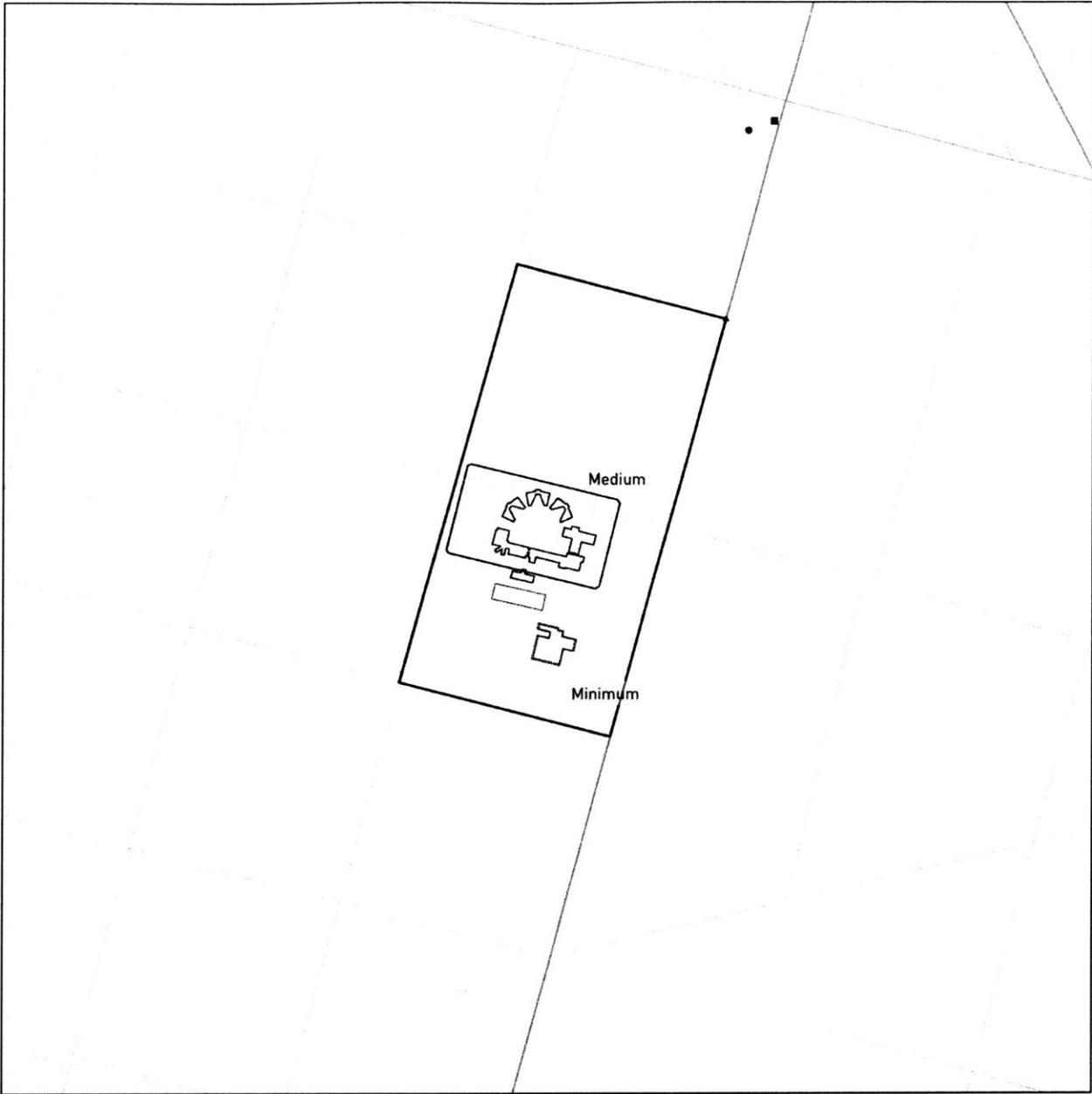
URB_AREA: 3 / TRANSIT: 2 / VISIBILITY: 4 / SIZE_RATIO: 2 / USE_MIX: 2 / TOTAL: 13



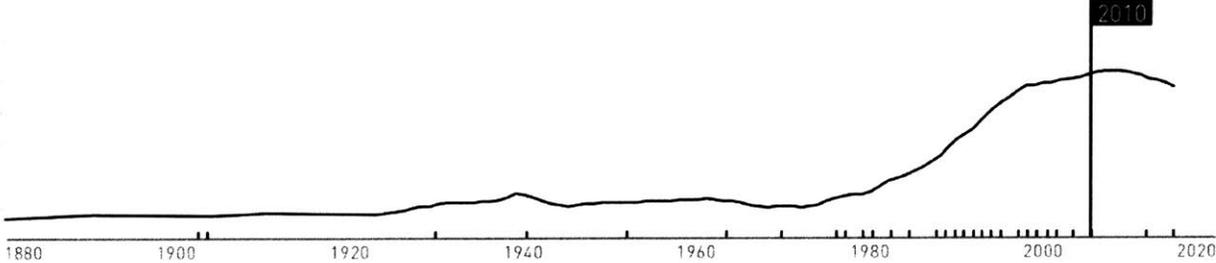
FCI Mendota



MENDOTA, CA



URB_AREA: 2 / TRANSIT: 2 / VISIBILITY: 5 / SIZE_RATIO: 2 / USE_MIX: 2 / TOTAL: 13



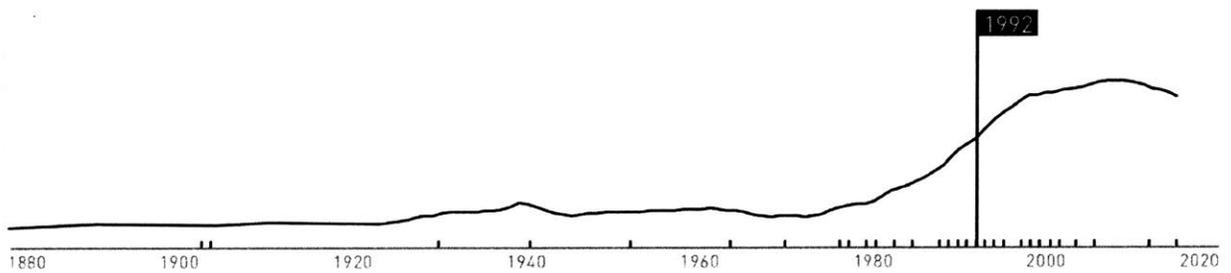
FCI Yazoo City Medium



YAZOO CITY, MS



URB_AREA: 2 / TRANSIT: 4 / VISIBILITY: 2 / SIZE_RATIO: 2 / USE_MIX: 3 / TOTAL: 13



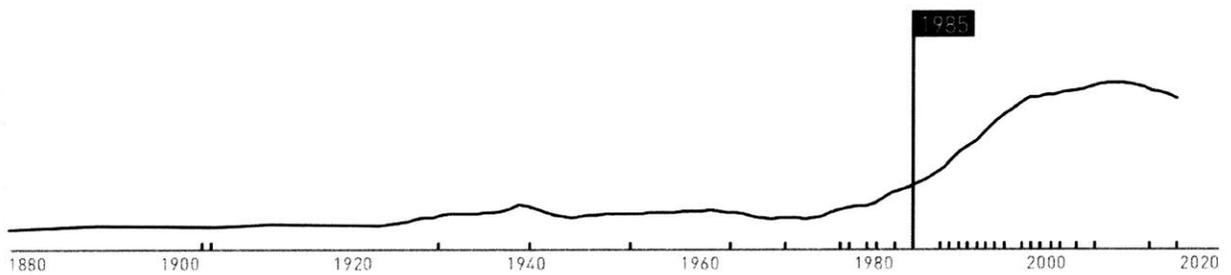
FCI Marianna



MARIANNA, FL



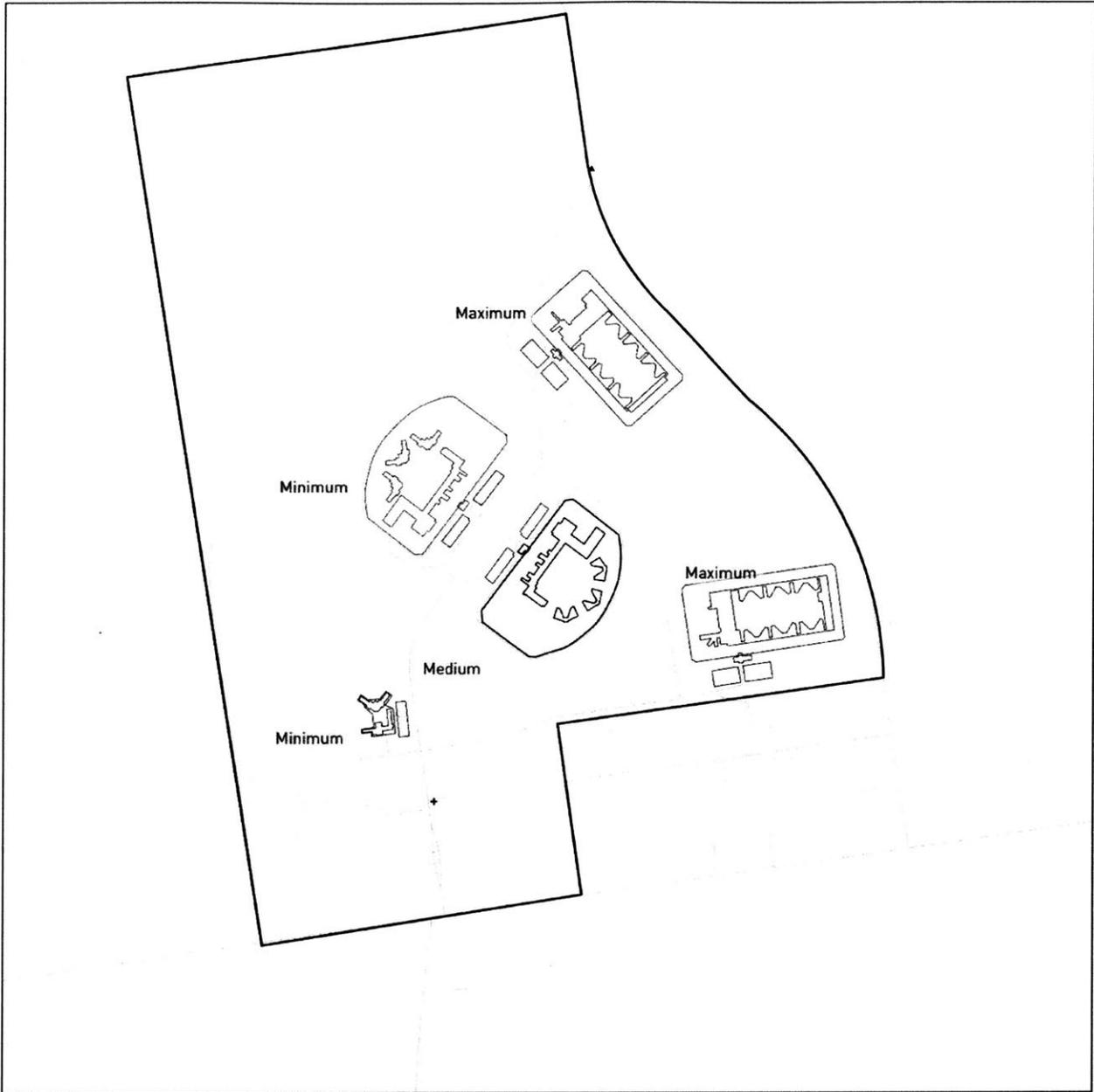
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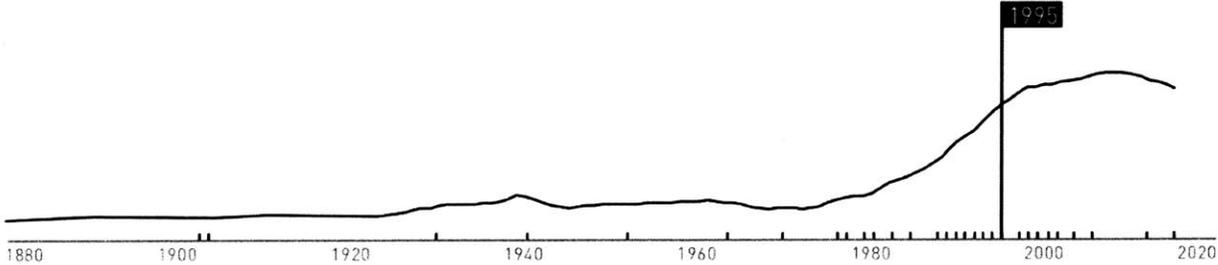
FCI Coleman



SUMTERVILLE, FL



URB_AREA: 4 / TRANSIT: 3 / VISIBILITY: 2 / SIZE_RATIO: 1 / USE_MIX: 1 / TOTAL: 11



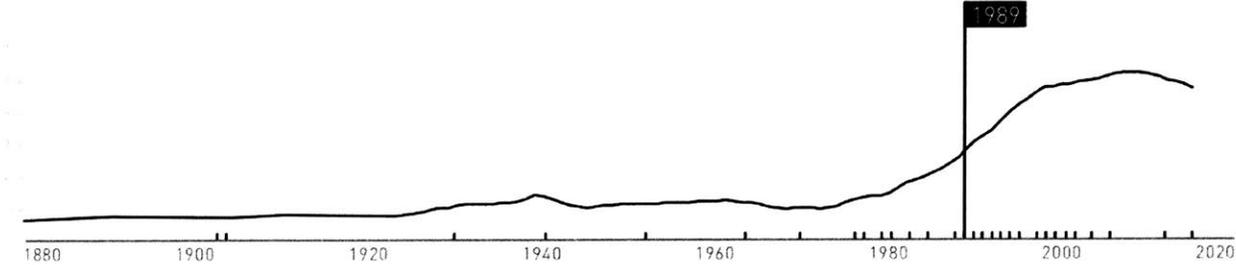
FCI Estill



ESTILL, SC



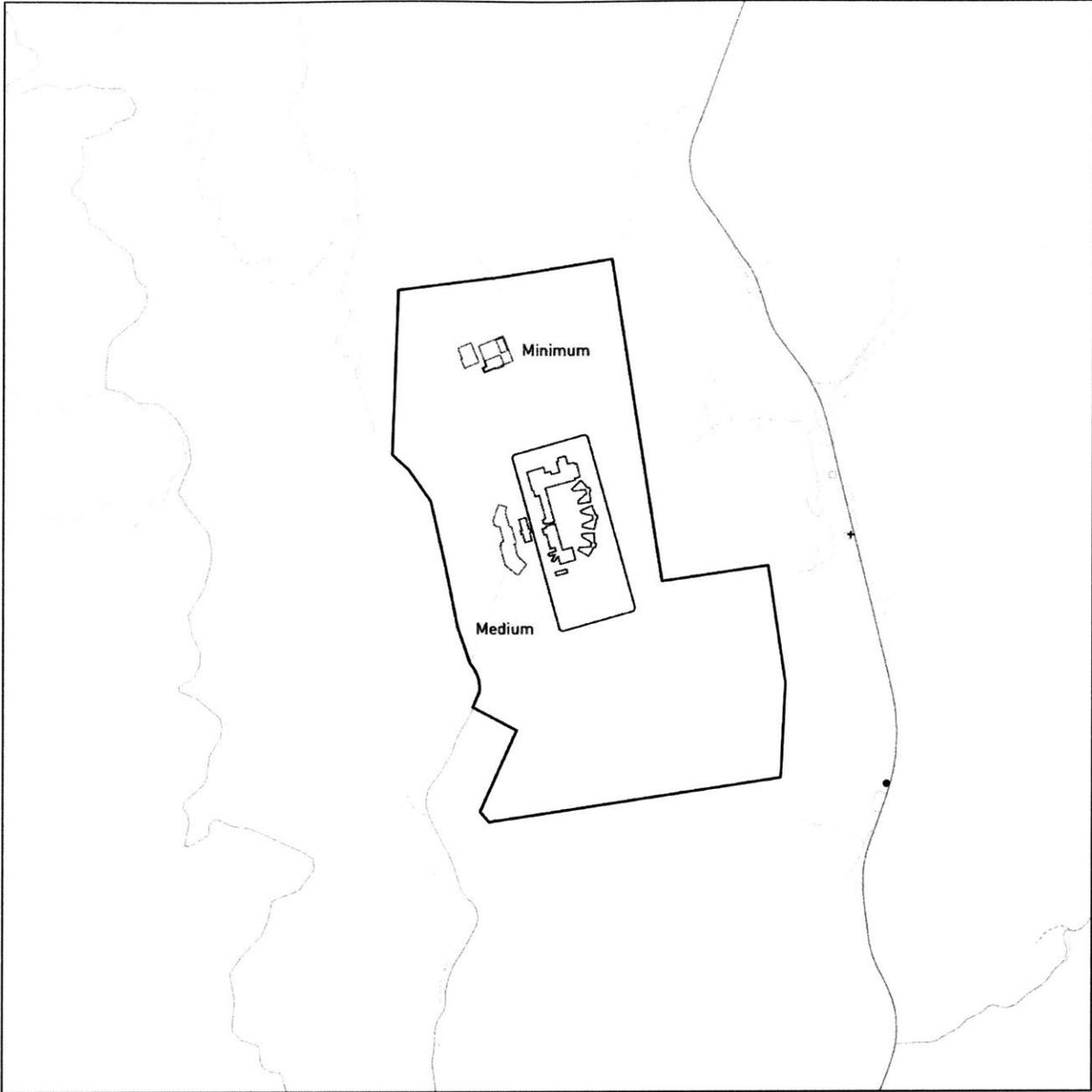
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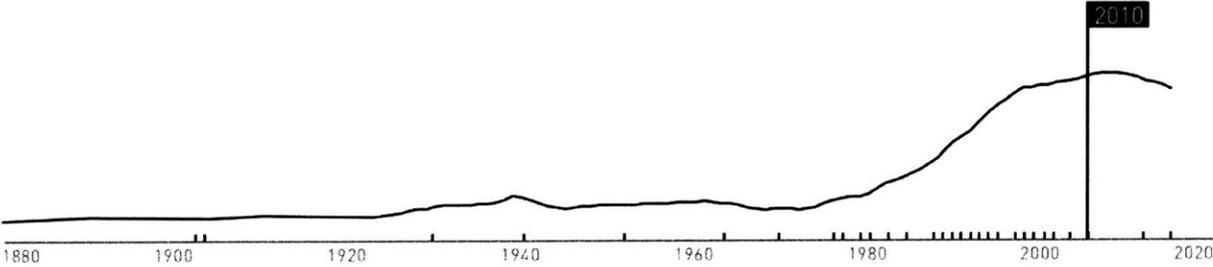
FCI McDowell



WELCH, WV



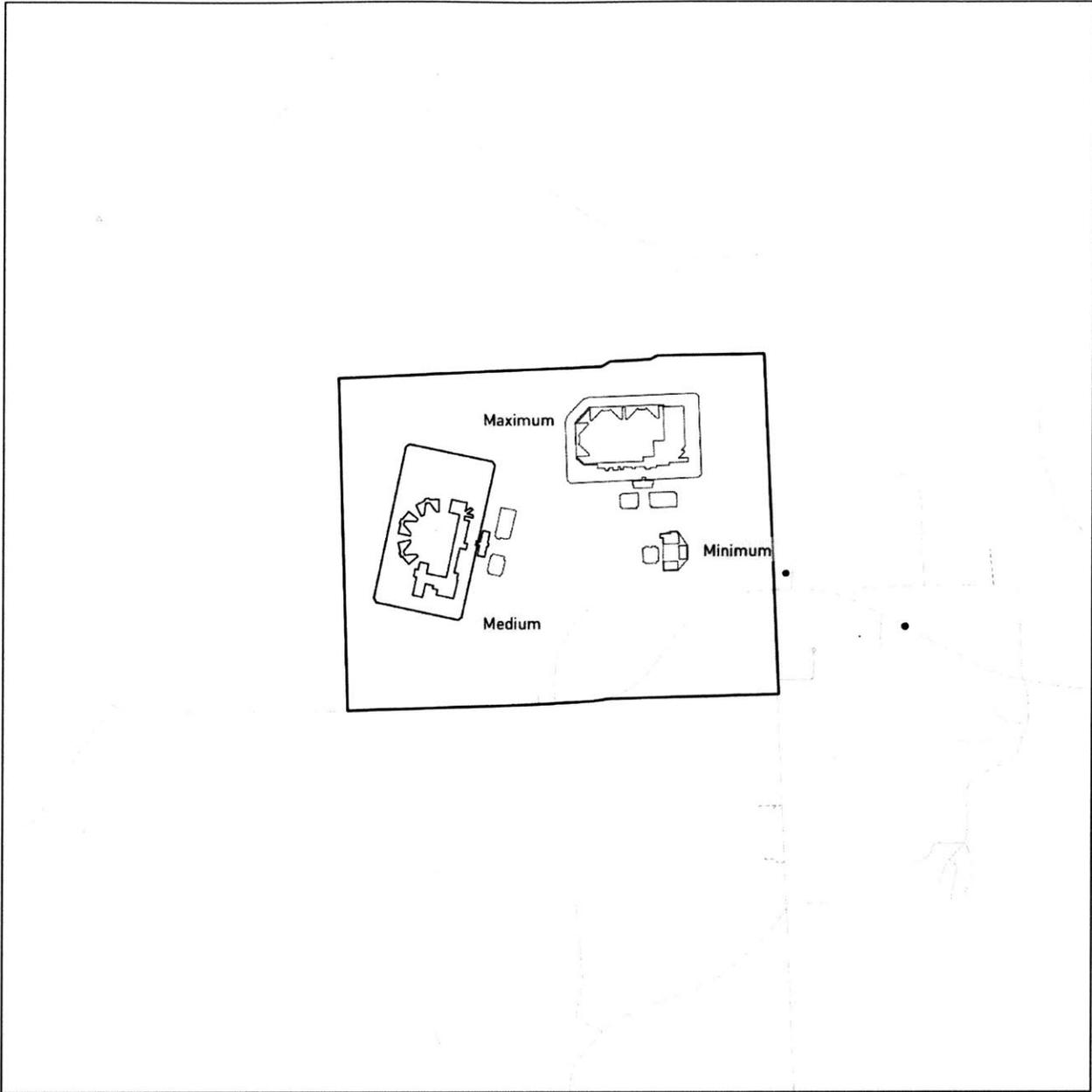
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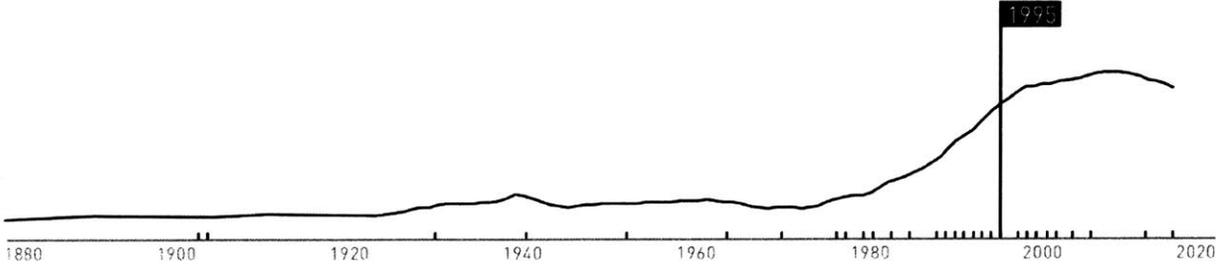
FCI Pollock



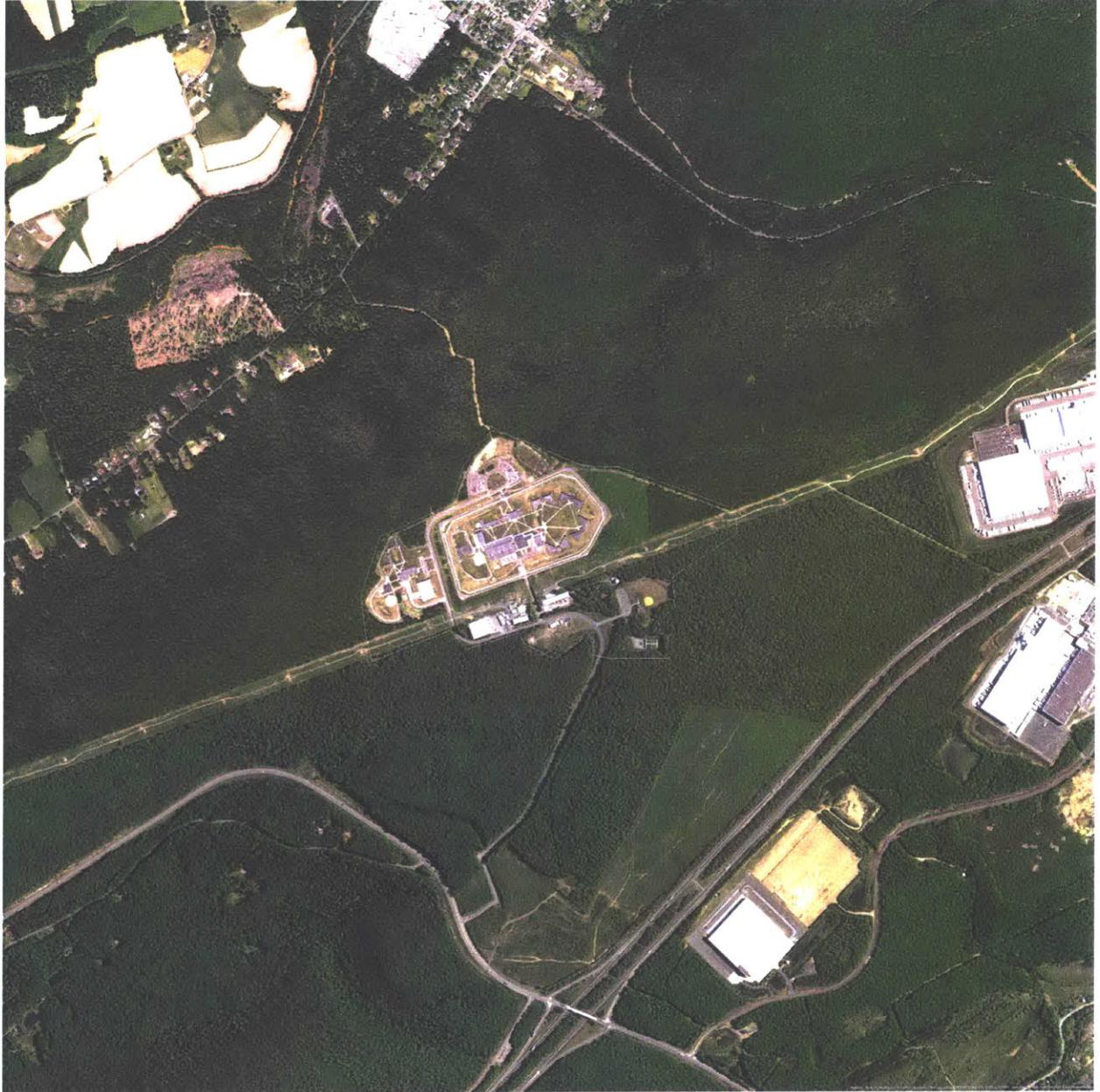
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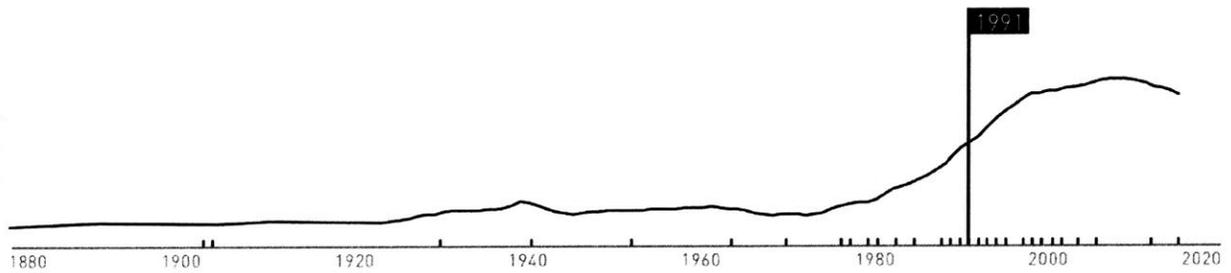
FCI Schuylkill



MINERSVILLE, PA



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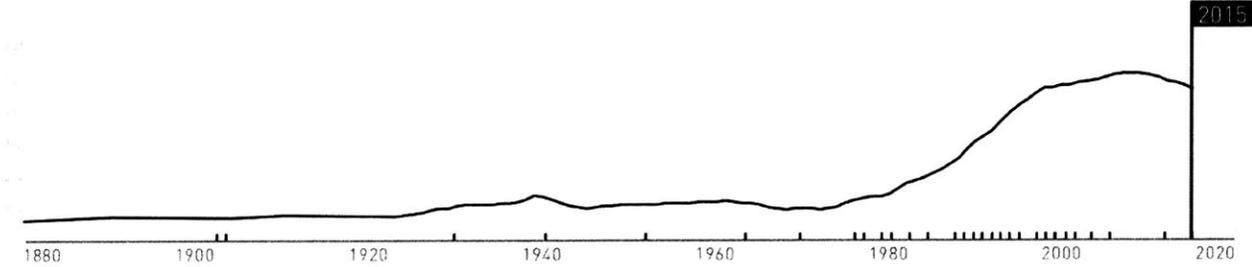
FCI Hazelton



BRUCETON MILLS, WV



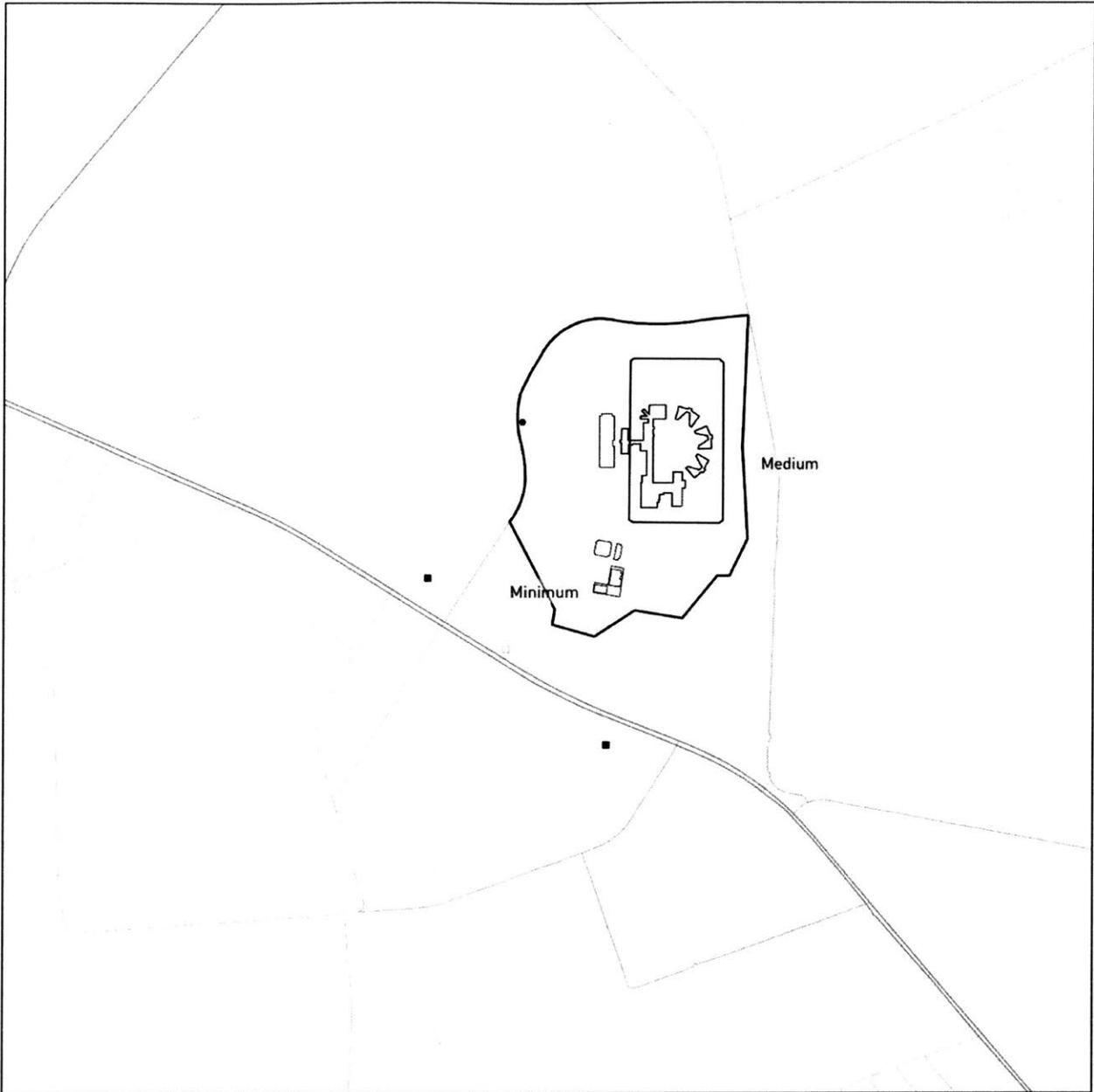
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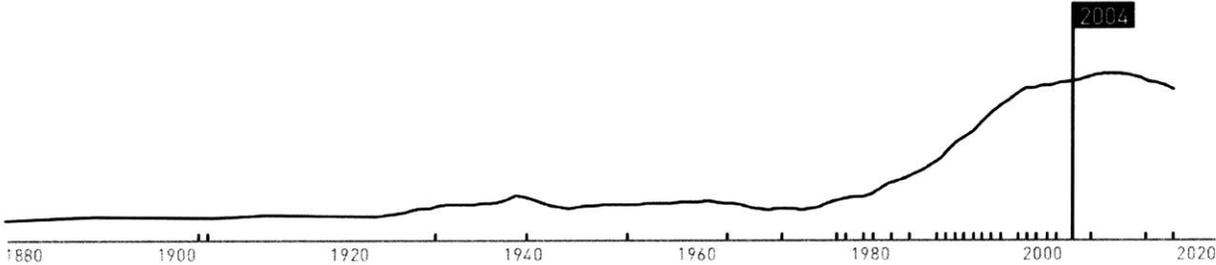
FCI Bennettsville



BENNETTSVILLE, SC



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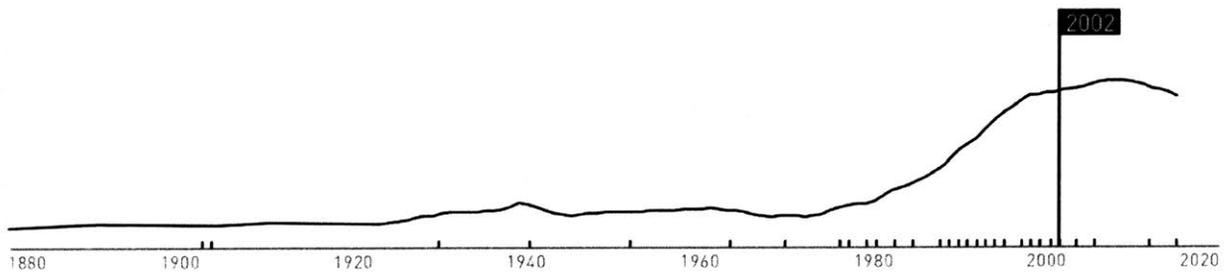
FCI Gilmer



GLENVILLE, WV



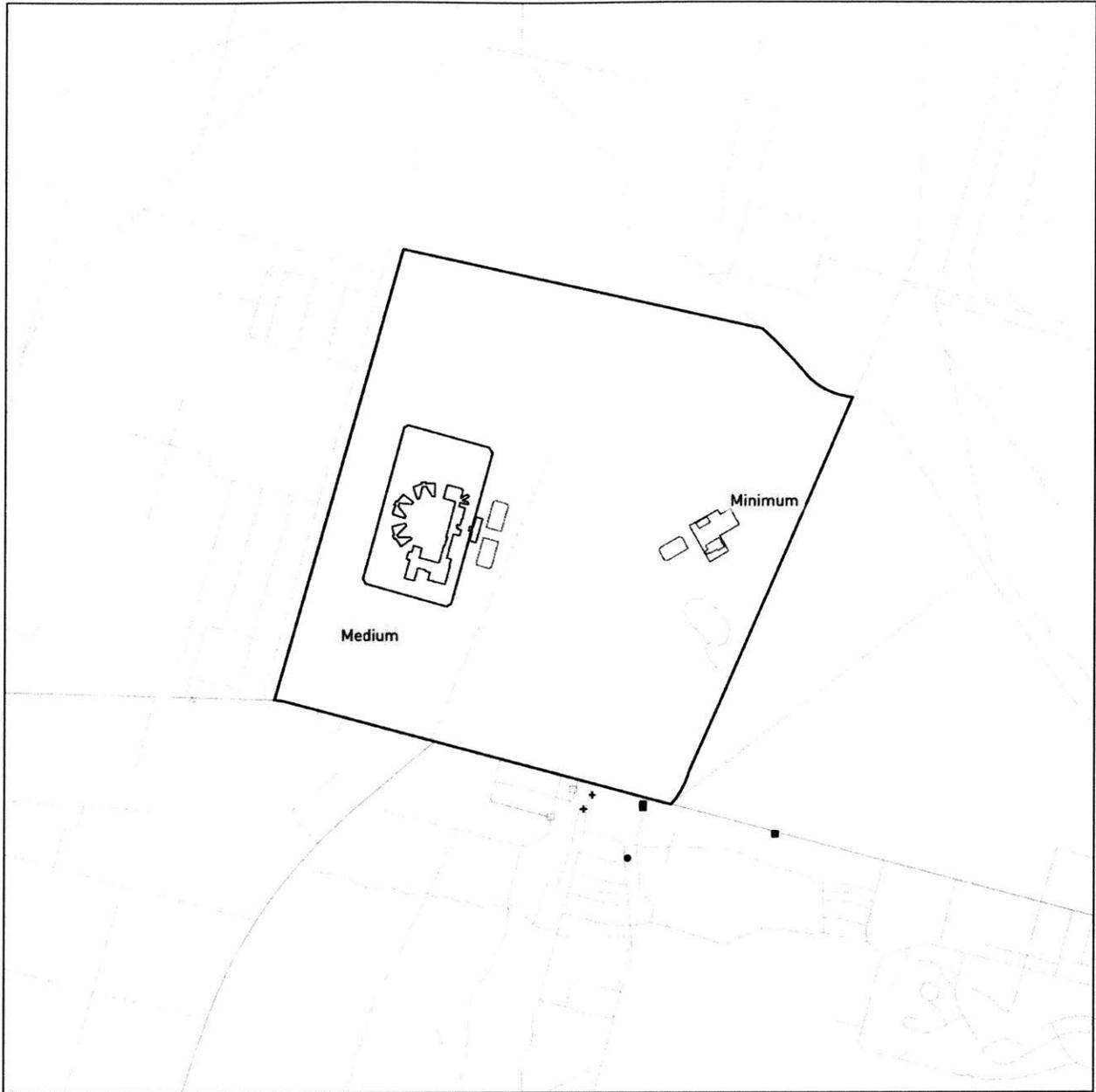
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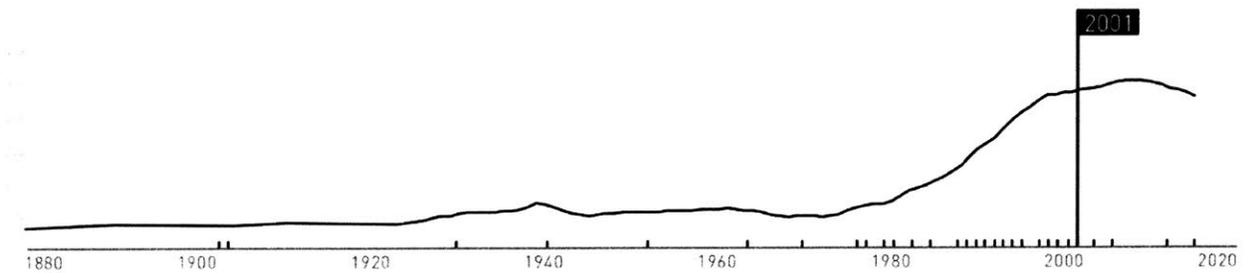
FCI Herlong



HERLONG, CA



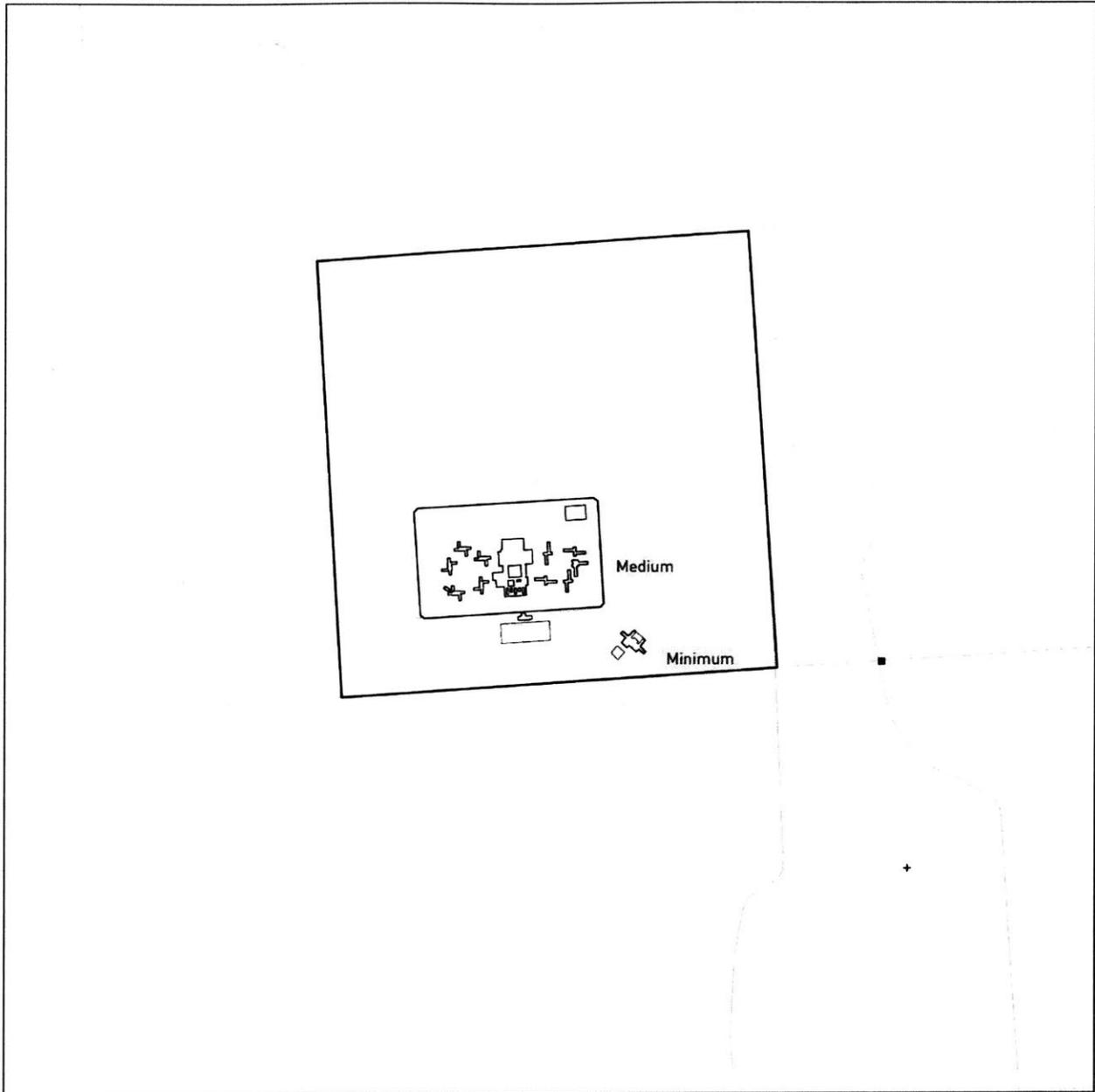
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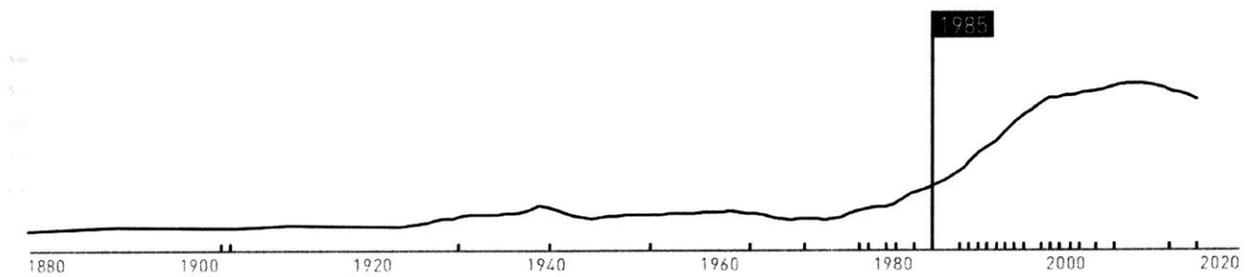
FCI Oxford



OXFORD, WI



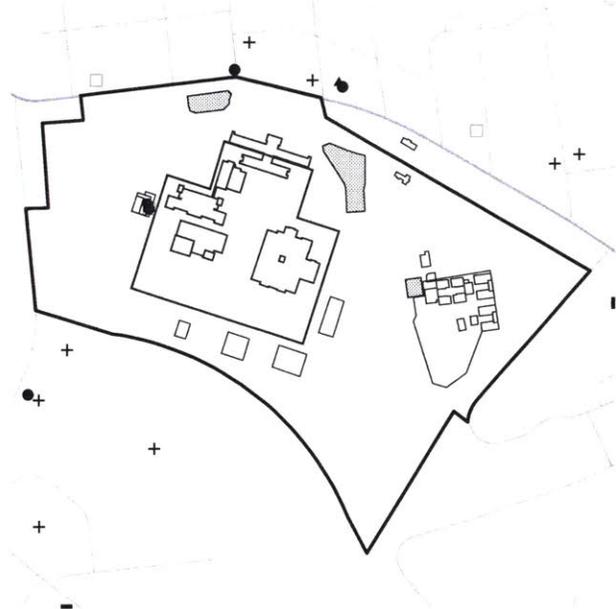
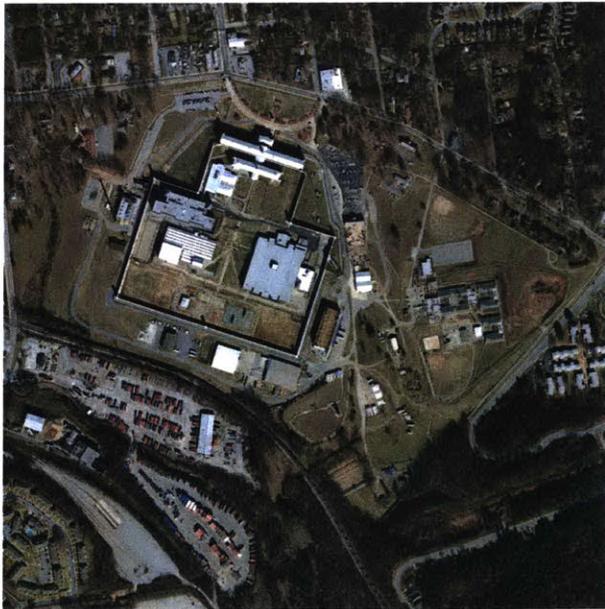
URB_AREA: 1 / TRANSIT: 3 / VISIBILITY: 1 / SIZE_RATIO: 1 / USE_MIX: 2 / TOTAL: 8



Most and least integrated facilities: Site and siting context

The required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) written before the construction of the facilities can offer a view to the intended effects and impact of the design, as well as help reveal the conversations between those constructing the prison and the communities in the cities. The Environmental Impact Statement is a document required as a part of the process established under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, to ensure that environmental consequences of Federal projects are adequately taken into account. The statements are submitted by the U.S. Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Prisons, with the document itself prepared by a third party consulting firm that specializes in writing and compiling EIS documents. While much of the information focuses on details of environmental concern, such as soil and water conditions, the EIS also provides an explanation of the project's expected impact on the aesthetic qualities of the area and provides transcripts of correspondence with the Bureau of Prisons and residents of the city.

USP Atlanta - Atlanta, GA



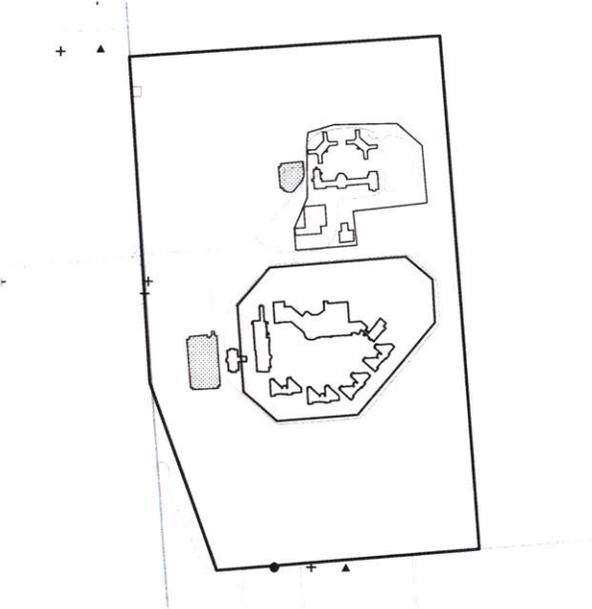
Atlanta USP

	Urban Proximity (mi)	Accessibility (mi)	Visibility (mi)	Relative Size (sq. mi)	Points of Interest (#)	Place Types (#)	Land Use Mix (#)
Raw	9.79	2.98	0.22	0.002	60	7	74
Scaled	5	5	5	5			5

Based on the scaled scores, Atlanta was at the most integrated end of the range for each variable. This facility, however, is an outlier case among the set of medium security federal correctional institutions because it was constructed in 1903—before the distinction between state and federal

facilities was even established—and was subsequently changed in designation to a FCI, and was continuously modified with additional buildings as it was adapted to fit evolving correctional needs and approaches. The institution in Atlanta was among the first three federal prisons to be established. In 1889 congress authorized the acquisition of sites for a federal prison in the North, West and South: Atlanta was opened in 1902, McNeil Island (off the Washington coast) in 1903, and Leavenworth in 1906. Physical expansion of the Leavenworth and Atlanta institutions continued into the 1920s. Prior to the establishment of the Federal Bureau of Prisons in 1930, there were seven federal prisons, each funded separately by Congress and operated under policies and regulation established individually by each warden. Due to the fact that the facility was built as far back as the early 1900s, the Atlanta facility is an exception because rather than being placed within the context of an existing fabric, much of the surrounding buildings and roads developed following the construction of the facility.

FCI Pekin - Pekin, IL



Pekin FCI

	Urban Proximity (mi)	Accessibility (mi)	Visibility (mi)	Relative Size (sq. mi)	Points of Interest (#)	Place Types (#)	Land Use Mix (#)
Raw	13.05	12.39	0.25	0.026	54	7	68
Scaled	4	3	5	4			5

FCI Pekin, in Pekin, Illinois, has one of the highest integration scores from the measures used. The site of the facility is in Tazewell County, on Illinois State Route 29, a half mile south of the City of Pekin. The site is located approximately one mile east of the Illinois River and is generally bounded

by farmland to the immediate north, east, and south and surrounded by minor residential, and commercial and light industrial strip development to the west and south. The site is zoned industrial, but prior to the FCI construction was actively farmed with on-site vegetation (domesticated corn, soybean, and wheat crops). At the time of proposal, the site was surrounded by other agricultural uses and industrial lots, such as concrete mixing plants and auto storage facilities. Prior to the construction, the site was outside the boundaries of Pekin, but within the zoning jurisdiction of Tazewell County. The City of Pekin, like the rest of Tazewell County, saw a dramatic decrease in population and employment following the economic recession in the 1980s. Population at the time of the proposal was 31,290, a drop from 33,953 people in 1980. A vast majority (99.14%) of the population is white. Unemployment rates in the area rose sharply after 1980, reaching a peak of 19.2%, and decreased as people moved out of the county; the unemployment rate in Pekin at the time of proposal was 9.1%.

The physical characteristics of the facility are described as “being of residential scale, not unlike a college campus,” with most buildings being one or two story structures. According to the report, the architectural composition of the facility is meant to “present a visually simplified and unified image aesthetically pleasing and compatible in terms of setting, color, and material with the surrounding area” by selecting design elements reminiscent of barn-like structures and landscaping that includes clustering fruit trees. The facility development, including buildings, roads, and infrastructure occupies approximately 100 to 125 acres of the total 250-acre site, allowing for a “buffer zone of undeveloped acreage surrounding the property” to provide a visual setback from the property boundaries.

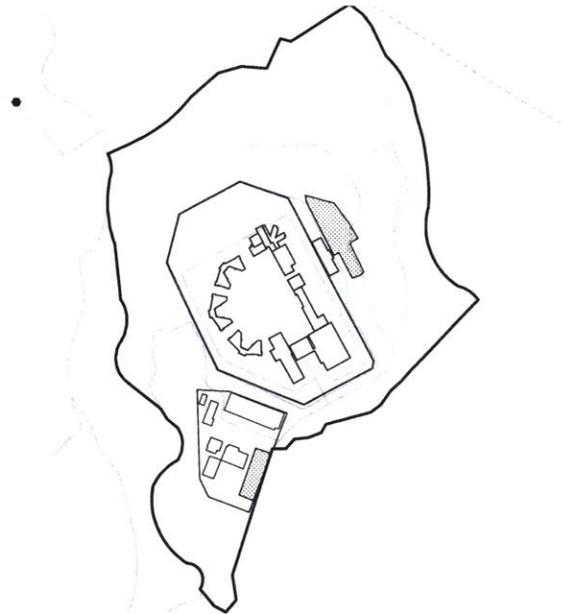
Based on the comments of the residents represented in the mailed-in comments to the Bureau of Prisons and the transcriptions of the public meetings, visibility of the correctional facility is implied to be an undesirable factor. At a public meeting, one resident who supported the construction of the prison commented that he has lived in two other cities that housed a federal prison, and that “if you talk to the people in those two communities on the street, they’d have to stop to think, even remember, that these two facilities are in their communities.”¹²⁴ Another resident, who is against the construction of the prison, cites the proximity of the facility to residential uses as the reason for his rejection of the proposal: “I’m appalled at the chosen site... I think it’s terribly irresponsible to have a prison right across, I heard people here tonight say I live right across the street. No one should live right across the street from a prison. I know there are areas where there is wasteland. Put it there.”¹²⁵ Another resident expressed similar sentiments in a letter: “The prison is much too close to residences and schools and for this reason it shall not be considered.”¹²⁶

124 Comment at the Second Scoping Session held on September 13, 1989 at Pekin High School. Transcript included in U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1990. “Federal Correctional Institution, Pekin, Illinois.”

125 Comment at the Second Scoping Session held on September 13, 1989 at Pekin High School. Transcript included in U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1990. “Federal Correctional Institution, Pekin, Illinois.”

126 U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1990. “Federal Correctional Institution, Pekin, Illinois.”

FCI Gilmer - Glenville, WV



Gilmer FCI

	Urban Proximity (mi)	Accessibility (mi)	Visibility (mi)	Relative Size (sq. mi)	Points of Interest (#)	Place Types (#)	Land Use Mix (#)
Raw	92.7	51.2	0.79	0.301	3	3	9
Scaled	1	1	3	1			2

FCI Gilmer, in Glenville, West Virginia, has one of the lowest integration scores from the measures used. FCI Gilmer was built in 2002, at the peak of the dramatic rise of incarceration. The EIS for the facility reveals this as well, with the main need for the facility pointing to the need for the Department of Justice to address overcrowding. Glenville is the county seat of Gilmer County, a largely wooded, mountainous area whose main industries include agriculture, light industry, and professional services. Located on a 327-acre site in east-central Gilmer County, the site was undeveloped and forested previous to the construction, and is surrounded by a mountainous terrain dotted with small towns made up of a few blocks and buildings. At the time of the proposal, the uses surrounding the site included a cemetery, a few scattered and isolated residences, an abandoned church, and a quarrying operation. The City of Glenville saw a population decline after the 1980's, with an estimated population of 7,350 in 1995 (from 8,330 in 1980). The population in Glenville and the rest of Gilmer County is predominantly white, with a total of one percent of the entire county being part of a minority group (African-American, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, or other). Most of the employed residents in the county work in services industries, such as education, real estate, and insurance; the remainder were involved with industries related to natural gas, oil, and quarrying activities.

The physical characteristics of the facility are described as "similar in scale and appearance to a

light industrial park or secondary school,” with a “buffer zone of undeveloped acreage surrounding the site [to] provide a visual setback from the site boundaries.” The intention of the architectural composition is described to be “unobtrusive as possible,” with visually sensitive vantage points given particular attention during the design process.

The available transcripts of the public meetings and the written comments submitted to the BOP is mainly made up of voices that are expressing their support for the prison facility based on the desire for economic development possibilities. One business owner writes, “I feel the prison coming to the area would be very beneficial to our whole community, therefore I greatly support it!”¹²⁷ Another resident writes, I would like to see the prison come so me and my family would all have better job opportunities.”¹²⁸ The public meeting comments also reveal that there were voices in the community that were against the siting of the prison—a criminal justice advocacy group who is specifically against the idea of building a prison (“If prisons are a growing industry and that is a sign of the times, then maybe it is a sign that that society needs to make drastic changes.”¹²⁹), citizens who skeptical of the promised benefits (“One only need read the newspapers or listen to the news on radio or T.V. to determine that our federal government is not always candid in their dealings with the public.”¹³⁰), and citizens who were concerned about the idea of bringing crime into the neighborhood (“Visitors coming here to visit on visiting days will be a large influx of minorities. Then our children will be able to buy dope at any street corner.”¹³¹)

In the face of oppositional comments and throughout the document, those interested in having the facility be approved (the Bureau of Prisons and the city-level political leaders in favor of the project) use the design of the facility as a way to reassure residents that the facility will not intrude on their experience of their city beyond the employment and economic development benefits. The reports and the transcripts of the public correspondence show that the BOP representatives lead with the promises of an economic boost, and then go on to explain the measures they are taking to ensure that the prison’s physical presence is well hidden and tucked away. Examples of physical characteristics used to make this argument include the size of the plot that the facilities are built on, which allows for a large setback and often forested barrier, and the use of facade colors that are chosen to blend into the surrounding context. Light pollution is addressed as well, with a need to provide sufficient light views of the facility for security reasons, while also limiting the light that impacts the surrounding areas.

127 Letter sent by Larry Fredrick, May 20, 1998. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1998. “Federal Correctional Institution, Gilmer County, West Virginia.”

128 Letter sent by Carolyn A. Putnam, May 20, 1998. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1998. “Federal Correctional Institution, Gilmer County, West Virginia.”

129 Comment from Donna Morningstar, at the Gilmer County Scoping Meeting held on December 9, 1997 at Gilmer County Rec. Center. Transcript included in U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1998. “Federal Correctional Institution, Gilmer County, West Virginia.”

130 Comment from R.C. Coberly, at the Gilmer County Scoping Meeting held on December 9, 1997 at Gilmer County Rec. Center. Transcript included in U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1998. “Federal Correctional Institution, Gilmer County, West Virginia.”

131 Comment from Jim Cooper, at the Gilmer County Scoping Meeting held on December 9, 1997 at Gilmer County Rec. Center. Transcript included in U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1998. “Federal Correctional Institution, Gilmer County, West Virginia.”

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

In the era of mass incarceration, people are pushed further and further to the margins of society and space. While economic development arguments may be the ones spoken out by those interested in siting prisons in remote locations, a longer perspective shows that the scale and concentration of incarceration is a continuation of the story of marginalization. Disadvantaged populations of color are too often relegated to places in the urban environment that are at the margins of economic, environmental, and social resources.¹³² Within the confines of the incarceration system, as this research shows, the already marginalized populations are pushed even further away, in rural areas like Tazewell and Gilmer counties. Even within the county itself, the facility is placed on the spatial margins, hidden from sight and concern. The removed placements of prisons impacts the prisoners' home community as well: "Every dollar transferred to a "prison community" is a dollar that is not given to the home community of a prisoner, which is often among the country's most disadvantaged urban areas."¹³³ As Loic Wacquant has more thoroughly described in his work, the "punitive containment of urban marginality"¹³⁴ has knit together a "carceral-assistential lattice"¹³⁵ that penalizes poverty and splinters social interaction and spatial location along class lines. In America, the men and women who find themselves in prison are not picked at random; they "draw from the most socioeconomically unfortunate among us."¹³⁶ Prison is "no longer a rare or extreme event among our nation's most marginalized groups. Rather it has now become a normal and anticipated marker in the transition to adulthood."¹³⁷

The splintering and disconnect that results from marginalizing certain communities to the extreme has resulted in prisons—and the people inside them—being at once invisible and hypervisible. In the past quarter-century, "a whole galaxy of novel cultural and social forms, indeed a veritable industry

132 Wacquant, Loic. 2008. *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

133 Lawrence, Sarah and Jeremy Travis. 2004. "The New Landscape of Imprisonment: Mapping America's Prison Expansion." Washington, DC: Urban Institute Justice Policy Center.

134 Wacquant, Loic. 2010. "Crafting the Neoliberal State: Workfare, Prisonfare, and Social Insecurity." *Sociological Forum*, vol 25(2).

135 Wacquant, Loic. 2010. "Crafting the Neoliberal State: Workfare, Prisonfare, and Social Insecurity." *Sociological Forum*, vol 25(2).

136 Coates, Ta-nehisi. 2015, October. "The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration." *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/>

137 Pager, Devah. 2007. *Marked: Race, Crime, and Finding Work in an Era of Mass Incarceration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

trading on representations of offenders and law enforcement, has sprung forth and spread.”¹³⁸ The fascination with the experience of prisoners is a lasting motif in the media that Americans produce and consume—the popularity of “true crime” stories recently experienced a new spike in the form of podcasts¹³⁹, documentaries,¹⁴⁰ films, and “reality shows”¹⁴¹—and the embeddedness of equating prison-sentence as an appropriate consequence is revealed in the frequent, impassioned chanting of “lock her up”¹⁴² at the Republican National Convention about the Democratic candidate leading up to the 2016 presidential election. Everywhere, law-and-order has become a “core civic theater”¹⁴³ whose stage political officials and cultural producers use to dramatize concepts of crime and punishment. Yet the version of prison that exists in the “image environment”¹⁴⁴ for the majority of society that is not directly connected to conditions of incarceration, is one that only exists as a “theatricalization of penalty.”¹⁴⁵ In this characterization and understanding of incarceration, the humanity of incarcerated people and the complexity of their experience is invisible. *Mass* incarceration in particular has exacerbated the erasure of the marginalized and incarcerated. The kind of “deindividuation that exists in mass incarcerative prisons” is not totally new, but current incarceration is “of a scale and level of acceptance that renders individualization obsolete even as an idea.”¹⁴⁶

The characteristics of the prison as a physical structure is entangled with the prison as cultural item, political tactic, and social concept. Since the establishment of incarceration as punishment, the physical design of the prison has reflected the ethos of reform at the time. As discussed in Chapter Two, single-occupancy cells and individual exercise yards—something now reserved for facilities of the highest security levels—was initially introduced to reflect the idea that solitude as character rehabilitation was a more humane alternative to prisons as temporary holding cells for those awaiting harsh, violent punishment. Throughout the policy era of the “war on drugs” the rhetoric and policies took retributive attitude towards crime.¹⁴⁷ The attitude was that certain people were “criminals” at their core, and that people should be removed once they participated in any criminal behavior.¹⁴⁸ One strike and you’re out.¹⁴⁹ Based on the findings from this research, the design of the

138 Wacquant, Loic. 2010. “Prisoner reentry as myth and ceremony.” *Dialectical Anthropology*, vol 34(4):605-620.

139 The podcast series “Serial” produced by [2014] was the fastest podcast to reach 5 million downloads after its release according to data released by Apple.

140 The documentary series “Making of a Murderer” (2015) produced by Netflix following the story of Stephen Avery reached 19.3 million viewers in its first 35 days, according to Symphony Advanced Media.

141 Examples include: Cops, 911, America’s Most Wanted, American Detective, Bounty Hunters, Inside Cell Block F.

142 Fahrenthold, David A., Mary Jordan and Louisa Loveluck. “The GOP’s new convention theme: ‘Lock her up!’” *The Washington Post*. 20 July 2016.

143 Wacquant, Loic. 2010. “Prisoner reentry as myth and ceremony.” *Dialectical Anthropology*, vol 34(4):605-620.

144 Davis, Angela. *Are Prisons Obsolete?* New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003.

145 Wacquant, Loic. 2010. “Prisoner reentry as myth and ceremony.” *Dialectical Anthropology*, vol 34(4):605-620.

146 Lynch, Mona. “The Social Psychology of Mass Imprisonment.” from *The SAGE Handbook of Punishment and Society*. Jonathan Simon and Richard Sparks, editors.

147 Coates, Ta-nehisi. 2015, October. “The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration.” *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/>

148 Pager, Devah. 2007. *Marked: Race, Crime, and Finding Work in an Era of Mass Incarceration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

149 Clinton, William J. “Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union,” January 23, 1996. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. Retrieved from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=53091>

prison during this time reflects these attitudes: the siting process ignores the experience of inmates and the structure is meant to be hidden from sight. The “banishment”¹⁵⁰ of incarcerated populations to the spatial margins not only reflects the philosophy towards criminal justice, but also exacerbates ideas of separation: “urban morphologies of fear give new forms to inequality, keep groups apart, and inscribe a new sociability which runs against the ideals of democracy” which necessitates that “people acknowledge those from different social groups as co-citizens, i.e., as people having similar rights.”¹⁵¹

Looking forward towards change

The incarceration system as it currently stands in America faces a pivotal moment. Politically, recent events suggest a lean away from the popularity and political efficacy of building a “tough on crime” platform. A sitting U.S. President visited and spoke with inmates at a federal prison for the first time,¹⁵² a former president acknowledged the role of their policy action (specifically, the 1994 Crime Bill) in rising incarceration rates,¹⁵³ and the candidates of the 2016 election-cycle on both sides of the partisan divide promised policies to address incarceration rates.¹⁵⁴ Research results from both government-initiated and independent research groups are pointing towards similar recommendations for change. The results from a blue-ribbon Task Force¹⁵⁵ established by Congressional mandate, for example, includes the recommendation to “reserve prison for those convicted of the most serious crimes” in addition to promoting a culture of safety and rehabilitation, incentivizing participation in risk-reduction programming, ensuring successful reintegration by using evidence-based practices, enhancing system performance and accountability, and reinvesting savings to expand treatment programs. This echoes the recommendation often given by respected research institutions, such as this statement from the Urban Institute: “Use incarceration sparingly. Prison should be reserved for people who have committed the most serious crimes.”¹⁵⁶ Voices from the inside the prison facility are also demanding change in a coordinated way. September 9,

150 Coates, Ta-nehisi. 2015, October. “The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration.” *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/>

151 Caldeira, Teresa. 1996. “Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation.” *Public Culture*, 8(2): 303-328.

152 Horsley, Scott. 2016, July 16. “Obama Visits Federal Prison, A First For A Sitting President.” NPR. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/sections/itsallpolitics/2015/07/16/423612441/obama-visits-federal-prison-a-first-for-a-sitting-president>

153 Merica, Dan. 2015, July 15. “Bill Clinton says he made mass incarceration issue worse.” CNN. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/15/politics/bill-clinton-1994-crime-bill/>

154 Coates, Ta-nehisi. 2015, October. “The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration.” *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/>

155 The Charles Colson Task Force on Federal Corrections was established by Congressional mandate in 2014 as “a nine-person, bipartisan, blue ribbon panel charged with developing practical, data-driven recommendations to enhance public safety by creating a more just and efficient federal corrections system. Informed by over a year of fact-finding, rigorous data analysis, and discussions with key experts and stakeholders, the independent Task Force’s recommendations to the US Congress, the President, and the Attorney General provide a blueprint for reforms to the federal corrections system that are sensible, cost-effective strategies to reduce crime and restore lives.” Watts, J.C. et al. 2016. “Transforming Prisons, Restoring Lives: Final Recommendations of the Charles Colson Task Force on Federal Corrections.” Urban Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/77101/2000589-Transforming-Prisons-Restoring-Lives.pdf>

156 La Vigne, Nancy, et al. 2015, May 15. “Want to reduce mass incarceration? Do no harm and invest in people and communities,” [Web log]. Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/urban-wire/want-reduce-mass-incarceration-do-no-harm-and-invest-people-and-communities>

2016—the anniversary of the 1971 Attica prison uprising¹⁵⁷—marked the launch of the largest prison strike in U.S. history,¹⁵⁸ with incarcerated people coordinating a mass refusal to report to prison jobs. As the Call to Action states: “Forty-five years after Attica, the waves of change are returning to America’s prisons. This September we hope to coordinate and generalize these protests, to build them into a single tidal shift that the American prison system cannot ignore or withstand. We hope to end prison slavery by making it impossible, by refusing to be slaves any longer.”¹⁵⁹

Policy and design should take full advantage of the opportunity for reform that seems to be drawing near based on recent political, academic, and organizing activity. As the literature review has previously suggested and as the findings of this research show concretely, prisons are physically isolated and prisoners are socially inaccessible. Although the results of this research—that Federal correctional complexes are in remote, difficult to access locations—was not unexpected, I was surprised by the degree to which the removal of incarcerated populations was reinforced at every level, from the physical design, to the siting process, to sentencing policies, to the political attitude towards criminal justice. In order to address the harmful effects of mass incarceration faced by the incarcerated and their communities discussed in Chapter Two, there must be change at each of these levels of concern. Below I outline recommendations and possibilities for reform that could impact the isolating conditions of mass incarceration, starting from changes most directly relevant to the physical structure of the correctional complex to the broader concepts of alternative approaches to criminal justice structures.

Question the siting process and design limitations

An expansion or reimagining of Environmental Impact Statements is a potent opportunity for change because it is already a built-in function of the process of developing large projects, and it includes requirements that involve stakeholder engagement, such as accepting and responding to written comments as well as organizing public meetings. The process as it exists, however, narrowly defines the “stakeholders” as those who live in the city that the facility will be located in. The language used by the representatives from the Department of Justice in the transcripts of the public meetings for the two facilities I studied more closely—FCI Pekin and FCI Gilmer—frames the conversation as one that is focused on easing the concerns of the residents of the potential host city. This process and conversation, however, lacks the voices of those who are more directly impacted by the prison once it is completed. In addition to public meetings that invite the thoughts of residents in a prison’s host community and environmental impact analyses, the process should also involve the voices

157 A prisoner led uprising against the conditions in Attica Prison in Upstate New York in 1971 ended in a violent clash between authorities and inmates that lasted several days. Gopnik, Adam. 2016, August 29. “Learning from the Slaughter in Attica.” *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/08/29/learning-from-the-slaughter-in-attica>

158 Speri, Alice. 2016, September 16. “The Largest Prison Strike in U.S. History Enters Its Second Week.” *The Intercept*. Retrieved from <https://theintercept.com/2016/09/16/the-largest-prison-strike-in-u-s-history-enters-its-second-week/>

159 Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee. 2016, September 9. “Announcement of Nationally Coordinated Prisoner Workstoppage for Sept 9, 2016.” [Web log comment]. Retrieved from <https://iwoc.noblogs.org/post/2016/04/01/announcement-of-nationally-coordinated-prisoner-workstoppage-for-sept-9-2016/>

of criminal justice advocates, the currently and formerly incarcerated, and those who have social relationships with the incarcerated.

A “bent on an Environmental Impact Statement” has also been suggested by previous literature observing the impact of design on marginalized neighborhood, with the idea that in addition to the proposed project’s impacts on socioeconomics, the statement could also consider the exclusionary effects of architectural design choices on “certain underrepresented groups, including poor people and people of color.”¹⁶⁰ The Environmental Impact Statement for correctional facilities could apply this idea, requiring projects to discuss ways that the physical design would aid or limit the incarcerated population’s ability to stay connected to their home communities beyond the conditions of their sentence.

We should also question whether or not we need to site new prisons at all. Existing corrections-related facilities that are presently closer to urban centers—such as courthouses and local jails—can serve as strategic sites for redevelopment and retrofitting design projects that can expand the capacity of urban areas to house inmate populations as a complement to reducing the construction of new facilities. Through design adjustments to address security concerns and population capacity, already existing facilities in the city can be introduced as a new physical home of mass incarceration. This is a more desirable way to incorporate prisons into the fabric of urban areas, compared with the alternative approach of building up a fabric around the facility, resulting in a place similar to USP Atlanta, which demonstrated the most relatively integrated characteristics because of the city’s development following the construction of the prison. This option is not a realistic one, however, given the size and removed distance from currently urbanized areas of many of the host cities of the existing prisons, as demonstrated by the results of this research.

In order to bring the idea of an urban prison into the realm of possibility, we must first accept a smaller-scale conceptualization of correctional facilities, compared with the sprawling complexes that exist today. Large footprints and plot sizes of correctional complexes are not inherent to the function of housing a specific population of people under secure conditions, but it is the form that it has taken over time. Even though there is a process associated with each new facility—at minimum through the requirements of the Environmental Impact Statement—the design of the structure itself is not critically considered. The process accepts the existing norms of prison design, with statements often including a generic diagram of a “typical” facility layout. The 11 different facilities with the exact same building footprints as shown in Chapter Four demonstrate this reality. The design instead should be called into question with the proposal of each new facility, critiquing the consequences of previous facilities and complexes. The specific form of a new American prison depends on broader dynamics ranging from changes in corrections technology, to the extent of policy-driven decarceration, to the changing trends of urban design aesthetics. As a starting principle, however, reimagining the prison as a smaller-scale land use and building form can help reduce incentives

160 Schindler, Sarah. 2015, April. “Architectural Exclusion: Discrimination and Segregation Through Physical Design of the Built Environment,” *Yale Law Journal* 124(6): 1836-2201.

to maintain high incarceration rates and to increase the possibility of prisons becoming more integrated into urban centers.

Rethink the way we understand security levels

In addition to the length of the sentence, differentiated security levels (minimum, medium, maximum, supermax) are used as a way to categorize the severity of punishment a criminal act requires. As discussed with the example of Florence, Colorado in Chapter Three and demonstrated in all 45 complexes included in this research, individual facilities of multiple security levels are sited within the same correctional complexes, exposing all inmates (regardless of sentence) to the same level of inaccessibility and isolation. It is important to note here that this recommendation and discussion is focused on the larger urban scale—this research did not unpack in detail the differences in internal conditions of the facilities, and I do not mean to suggest that being held in solitary confinement cells within the Administrative Supermax facility is the same experience as being held at a minimum security prison for the incarcerated individual.

The framing of the reintegration process provided by the Federal Bureau of Prisons is based on the structure of differentiated security levels. Nearing the end of a sentence, for example, people are transferred to a Federal Prison Camp with the goal of starting to transition back to life on the “outside.” The Federal Prison Camps are located in the same complex as the Medium or Maximum security that the person would be transferring from. This framing of reintegration focuses on the person’s experience inside of the facility: they are moving from more strict controls of movement to more lenient conditions of confinement. If the aim of the move to Prison Camps is to support the transition for inmate populations towards the end of their sentence, the framing must include larger scale considerations. Thinking specifically about the physical and design aspects of a reintegration process, the transition for incarcerated populations should include more than a move from a fenced to non-fenced facility. Instead, a goal of reintegration, I believe, should result in correctional facilities that are better integrated into the urban fabric for the purposes of reducing the barriers faced by the social networks of those who are incarcerated, and increasing the possibility of external social and educational service providers being able to work with inmate populations.

At the start of the research process, I expected to frame the design methodology along facility security lines as well, reasoning that selecting a sample of medium security prisons would allow me to investigate a subset of the overall Federal correctional system that houses inmates who are not within the most strict conditions of confinement and would be expected to reintegrate after serving their sentence. When visiting correctional facilities in Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina, however, I was struck by the reality that the urban design of incarceration took on the form of large, sprawling complexes. In Memphis, for example, the concern is not about how the single medium-security federal facility interacts with the urban form around it, but rather how the cluster of five different federal facilities together form a footprint on the city context. In analysing the results

of the research and considering the magnitude of the isolation and inaccessibility of each complex, the framework of defining reintegration as a move in security levels seems drastically insufficient: allowing an inmate more visitation rights on paper rings hollow and meaningless when considering the reality that the Federal Camp is just as difficult to reach as the maximum security facility.

Release the “tough on crime” approach

As described in more detail the literature review, the dramatic rise in incarceration levels beginning in the 1970s is entangled with the bipartisan politician’s strategy of appearing “tough on crime,” resulting in policies from the Nixon, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations that increased minimum sentences and the harshness with which drug-related behavior in particular was criminalized. Policies that address pivotal sentencing amendments are crucial for reducing mass incarceration. When the 2015 decline in National incarceration rates (the first decline in multiple decades) is disaggregated by state, it is revealed that the state of California is responsible for a majority of the decline. Two specific laws have contributed to this decline in California, and subsequently in the overall national incarceration rates. Proposition 36, passed in 2012, reduced the severity of California’s three-strikes law by requiring that an offender’s “third strike” offense be a serious or violent felony. Proposition 47, passed in 2014, reclassified certain low level drug possession and theft offenses as misdemeanors rather than felonies. Importantly, both propositions applied to all individuals sentenced under these laws, including those incarcerated.¹⁶¹

Recent political developments, however, suggest that the “tough on crime” mindset and attitude towards justice and incarceration is still persistent. In a memorandum published on May 10, 2017, attorney general Jeff Sessions overturned the sweeping criminal charging policy of former attorney general Eric Holder Jr. and directed his federal prosecutors to charge defendants with the most serious, provable crimes carrying the most severe penalties.¹⁶² When asked to provide justification for directing federal prosecutor resources to drug offenders rather than violent crimes, Sessions responded: “Drug trafficking is an inherently dangerous and violent business. If you want to collect a drug debt, you can’t file a lawsuit in court. You collect it with the barrel of a gun.”¹⁶³ The characterization of a person based on the single fact of being charged with a drug-related offense in this statement is similar to the assumptions about the incarcerated found in the public meeting documents in the siting of FCI Pekin and FCI Gilmer: “...Then our children will be able to buy dope at any street corner.”¹⁶⁴ The policy as well as the language used to justify its implementation echoes the separation between the *citizen* and *prisoner* as described by Smith and Alexander explained in

161 Eaglin, Jessica. 2015, February 17. “California Quietly Continues to Reduce Mass Incarceration.” *Brennan Center for Justice*.

162 Sessions, Jeff. 2017, May 10. “Memorandum for all Federal Prosecutors.” Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gov/opa/press-release/file/965896/download>.

163 Balko, Radley. 2017, May 12. “Reactions to Sessions’s call for tougher sentencing.” Retrieved from www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-watch/wp/2017/05/12/reactions-to-sessions-call-for-tougher-sentencing/?utm_term=.9d20bb78901b.

164 Comment from Jim Cooper, at the Gilmer County Scoping Meeting held on December 9, 1997 at Gilmer County Rec. Center. Transcript included in U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. 1998. “Federal Correctional Institution, Gilmer County, West Virginia.”

the literature review: "...criminals are the new whipping boys. They are entitled to no respect and little moral concern." The approach of being "tough on crime" oversimplifies the complex dynamics of criminology into the simple, swift move of labeling all those who participate in a criminalized behavior as bad people undeserving of concern and care.

Embrace community-based justice

An alternative approach to the "tough on crime" mindset is one that embraces the idea of community-based justice. Seeing criminal justice as a community-based concern changes the focus from legal cases to think about *places*. Going back to the original framing of what makes *mass* imprisonment a unique phenomenon introduced at the beginning of this thesis, the two key characteristics are the rate of imprisonment and the demographic concentration of imprisonment. Mass incarceration is not a consequence of sending specific individuals to prisons, one by one, but rather the "systematic imprisonment of whole groups of the population."¹⁶⁵ The concentration of incarceration on less advantaged communities of color—especially on young, black men—has altered the life trajectory of this population, and the communities they call home.¹⁶⁶ Due to this concentration, a community-based justice approach is vital. Community justice as a framework extends to multiple levels of the criminal justice system: policing, courts, and corrections. The following outline of the aspects of community justice relies on the synthesis and explanations provided by *Community Justice*.¹⁶⁷

Policing was in large part the first aspect of criminal justice to apply concepts of community-focused justice, with the goal of improved community relations and more effective crime prevention. The tactics of community policing focuses on strengthening the community's own ability to reduce crime (e.g., neighborhood watch groups). The strategies are oriented towards identifying structural problems rather than rooting out problematic individuals: "strategies are based on the idea that crime emanates from particular, persistent circumstances that can be identified, documented, and then overcome through systematic action, and that police should be more thoughtful and innovative when dealing with neighborhood issues."¹⁶⁸ Infusing community-based justice into the court system asks the question: how can the court procedures adopt a concern for the quality of life of the whole communities that the courts serve? Rather than seeing the offender as someone severed from the rest of the community and the sole concern of the prosecutor, community justice expands the definition of what voices should be heard in the court. Victim-offender mediation, for example, is an approach to sanctioning that enables the victim to confront the offender with the harm that has been done, and then invokes a process whereby the victim and offender come to an agreement about the appropriate sanction to be imposed as a consequence. In family group conference, the family of

165 Garland, David. 2001. *Mass Imprisonment: Social Causes and Consequences*. New York: SAGE.

166 Western, Bruce. 2006. *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

167 Clear, Todd, et. al. 2010. *Community Justice*. New York: Routledge.

168 Clear, Todd, et. al. 2010. *Community Justice*. New York: Routledge.

the offender, the victim, and the community come together with a trained facilitator to develop an appropriate sanction for the offender's actions.

Community justice initiatives in correctional facilities are aimed at reducing the isolation of prisoners from community life, starting with the principle that incarceration should be organized to make return to the community more likely to be successful. One way to incorporate this philosophy is to place an emphasis on facilitating the maintenance of family ties through visitation programs and access to long-distance telephone services. (Currently, operator-assisted collect calls from prisons are among the most expensive calls in the industry.¹⁶⁹) Prisoners can receive the kinds of wages that enable them to contribute some money back to the family and to pay for a portion of the necessary restitutions as well. Inmates can also be allowed to interact with community groups and communicate with outsiders who might play a role in social supports upon release. In order for community ties to truly be maintained, and even strengthened, during a person's sentence, the physical location and design of the prison must be considered.

To bring an end to the era of mass incarceration, the past approaches of being "tough on crime" and allowing the title of "criminal" to become an unrelenting and punishing label that follows individuals around far beyond their sentence, criminal justice must reorient itself to see crime and corrections as community and place-based systems. Beyond specific policies that respond to existing patterns of criminalizing behaviors along racially-disparate lines and strategic additions to the correctional facility siting process, I believe corrections and the rehabilitation of those who have engaged in criminal behavior must be seen as a shared responsibility, even with those who were not directly involved in the situation, and that the correctional institutions and actions should be built on the foundational principle that all communities and individuals have dignity.

Areas for further study and practice

Potential areas for future research range from the specific methodological limitations of this research, to the currently lacking body of literature of which this research simply scratches the surface, to the continuous academic work needed to support efforts of criminal justice reform and to improve the lives of those directly impacted by incarceration. The spatial measures and calculation methodology included in the study provides a starting point for identifying measurable proxies for understanding the integration of correctional facilities. Additional field observations and photography, as well as more technologically sophisticated methods of cartographic analysis—such as raster-based material categorization, topographic details, and qualitative observation methods—could enrich the complexity and understanding of the correctional complex to its surroundings. It would also be valuable to expand the sample size to include more facilities or to conduct a comparative analysis of jurisdictional or geographically defined categories (e.g., state or local facilities compared with federal facilities).

¹⁶⁹ Clear, Todd, et. al. 2010. *Community Justice*. New York: Routledge.

The Environmental Impact Statements—and the public meeting transcripts included in them—offer a peek into the interests and language of the Bureau of Prisons and the public, but is limited as a document because it is compiled after the site and building architecture has already been selected. While there is a significant body of writing delving into the economic development impact on rural host cities of prisons, the literature lacks a sociological study of the the stakeholders, processes, and institutional bodies involved in the siting and construction of a facility, with a focus on the prison as a physical space. Potential stakeholders include firms that specialize in the design of “justice architecture,” private companies that produce prefabricated cells, and consulting firms that specialize in facilitating governmental correctional projects. A study of these stakeholders would also contribute to the existing literature on the private profiteers of incarceration (referred to as the “prison industrial complex”) which is currently focused on privately-operated prisons, service contractors, and corporations that take advantage of prison labor. Research seeking to address the impact of correctional facilities on the rural communities that fight to attract them should also include a deeper investigation of the physical impact, especially since facilities are often constructed on previously undeveloped land.

This research sought to contribute an investigation that sits at the overlap between two separate bodies of literature: incarceration and criminal justice and studies of the built environment. There is a large body of existing literature about the sociological and political story behind incarceration, typically focusing on the war on drugs and the disadvantage of communities of color in America. Also, there is a significant existing work on the architecture of authority and corrections, with Jeremy Bentham’s idea of the Panopticon proving to be a relentless fascination for those interested in writing about imprisonment. There is ample potential for research that looks at mass incarceration from a spatial and physical planning angle without zooming into the architectural detailing of confinement.

Research and urban design practice can become allies in decarceration and reform efforts. Grassroots organizations¹⁷⁰ have started to explore the creative and innovative reuse of abandoned prison facilities in rural areas, and this type of research and direct work will become ever more important. Correctional complexes in rural areas will hopefully become a rich area opportunity for planners and urban designers who seek to address the revitalization of struggling rural communities. The uniform construction and repetitive patterns found among facilities built during the rapid rise of incarceration perhaps provide a unique advantage for the scalability of design interventions that are imagined for facilities once they are no longer in use.

¹⁷⁰ In Wagram, North Carolina, under the umbrella of the non-profit GrowingChange, a group of formerly incarcerated young men, military veterans, criminal justice stakeholders and farming enthusiasts are coming together to transform the site in Wagram into an educational and recreational center for its local community. A case study of this effort and other examples of prison adaptive reuse can be found in Mohammed, Insiyah. 2017. “Delinking Economic Development and Mass Incarceration: Imagining New Futures for Rural Communities.” Master’s thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

“The most difficult and urgent challenge today is that of creatively exploring new terrains of justice, where the prison no longer serves as our major anchor.”

Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*

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