



# Prison Closure Roadmap Overview

## Introduction

The Close California Prisons campaign, anchored by Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB), presents this roadmap to outline a concrete strategy for timely and safe prison closure in California. In light of CDCR's recent announcement that it will be closing down Chuckawalla Valley State Prison (CVSP) and terminating the contract with California City Correctional Facility (CAC), this roadmap comes at an opportune and critical juncture.

This roadmap illustrates how California can prepare for and carry out closures while simultaneously supporting the communities impacted by incarceration and the towns where prisons will be closed. We exhibit a *decarceral just transition* framework, whereby California can support any city or town with a prison in shifting the local economy and community away from a perceived reliance on incarceration, and toward healthy and life-affirming investments and infrastructure.

that folks currently eligible for release are no longer imprisoned.

- California should end all forms of extended sentencing in the interest of public health, fiscal responsibility, and facilitating the releases necessary for prison closure. Such draconian sentencing policies include the Three Strikes Law, life without parole (LWOP), and gang and gun enhancements.
- When transfers cannot be avoided, CDCR must minimize their harmful effects on people who are being transferred and their families. This can be done by ensuring that prisons close within one year, giving incarcerated folks autonomy over the transfer process and location, and ensuring continuity in all aspects of healthcare and personalized programming.

## II. Selecting Prisons for Closure

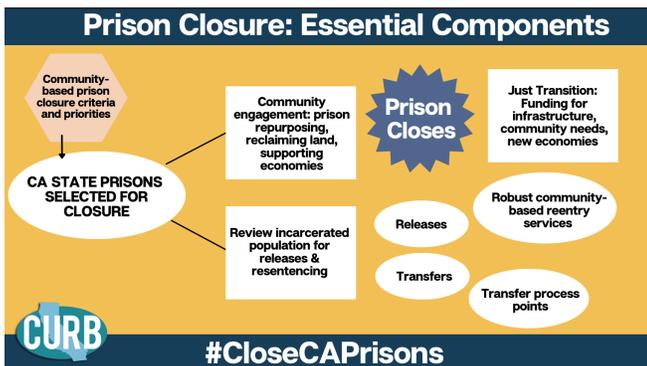
Based on CURB's 2021 survey in [The People's Plan for Prison Closure](#), which gathered input from 2,386 systems-impacted people representing every prison in the state, the coalition identified five top criteria for prison closure. Using these criteria, CURB identified 10 state-owned prisons as priorities to close by 2025:

- California Substance Abuse Treatment Facility
- California State Prison - Los Angeles
- California Medical Facility
- Avenal State Prison
- California Men's Colony
- California Rehabilitation Center
- Kern Valley State Prison
- Pleasant Valley State Prison
- California Correctional Institution
- North Kern State Prison

## I. Prison Population Reduction and Facility Closure Strategies

- California must prioritize releases over transfers when closing prisons. The state must strengthen implementation of previously passed legislation – including SB 483 (RISE Act, Senator Allen); AB 3234 (Elderly Parole, Ting); and SB 775 (Becker) – so

While CURB is a proponent of closing all prisons, CURB's recommended priority prisons include some of the worst when it comes to overcrowding, exposure to Valley Fever, contaminated water, isolation from loved ones, and more.



### III. Decarceral Just Transition: Support for Impacted Communities

- Far from hurting local economies, closing prisons offers a vital opportunity to divert resources wasted on prisons to support communities, which only increases public safety. Prison spending funds can be appropriated for alternatives to incarceration, giving California a historic opportunity to transform its carceral landscape. By closing prisons, the state can both right the wrongs of reliance on punitive systems and free up money for a *decarceral just transition* to new economies that are innovative and revitalizing.
- CURB recommends an Economic Transformation Pilot Program that leverages tax credit strategies to incentivize prison closures; California Redevelopment Grants for repurposing prisons; and funds from existing environmental, housing, and mental health programs to deliver resources to communities in need of restorative services.

### IV. Prison Repurposing

- Prison repurposing is an emerging practice across the United States. If California wants to become a national leader on prison closure, there is much to learn from other states where prisons have been repurposed to become art galleries, film studios, business parks, campgrounds, and more.
- The federal government can provide financial assistance for prison repurposing efforts in California.
- Prison Repurposing will emphasize the importance of focusing on community needs and reimagining the role of previous prison infrastructure in meeting these needs. Essential elements are:
  - Establishment of a committee/commission to oversee the process;
  - Preparation of budget and user-friendly guiding documents;
  - Educational activities that empower all participants as decision-makers; and
  - Participation of community members in visioning and project design.

### Conclusion

Prison closure is happening in California. What has been missing is a concrete roadmap for how California can close more prisons successfully and shift billions of dollars in cost savings from wasteful prison spending to the communities most impacted by incarceration.

Californians need such a roadmap now more than ever before. The closure of CVSP and termination of the contract with CAC will require strategies such as those proposed in this roadmap. Additionally, in the enacted 2022-23 budget, Governor Newsom announced that at least three more prisons could be closed by 2024-2025. These impending changes to the carceral landscape necessitate a serious strategy for closing prisons and supporting impacted communities in their wake. This strategy should ensure that:

- Closed prisons must be torn down or repurposed for positive, non-carceral use;
- Prison populations must be reduced through more releases, not just transfers to other facilities;
- When transfers do happen, they must happen safely and bring people closer to their loved ones;
- Corrections budgets must be slashed;
- Investments in reentry and other services must be prioritized;
- Voices of justice-impacted people must be heard; and
- Labor and economic solutions for communities impacted by incarceration and prison closures must be prioritized.

CURB presents the Prison Closure Roadmap as an actionable strategy for facilitating prison closures across California.

**To join our campaign and get alerts and updates about additional actions you can take to support CURB's #CloseCAPrisons campaign, go to: <https://bit.ly/CloseCAPrisons2025>**