Many communities in the United States are faced with prison overcrowding and aging facilities in need of renovation. In some instances, communities like Douglas County are building a whole new prison.

In Lawrence, Kan., the Douglas County Jail was faced with the problem of overcrowding and a somewhat outdated facility. The county was spending nearly $200,000 to house inmates in different facilities in the area. Today, with a new facility, the Douglas County Jail is bringing in inmates from other communities experiencing overcrowding. The new jail has all the modern features now becoming standard in correctional facilities across the country, from a video courtroom for hearings and arraignments to an exterior insulation and finish system.

The new $22 million, 196-bed facility was originally supposed to be an addition to the existing facility in downtown Lawrence.
but architects and county officials were faced with a variety of logistical challenges. Adding space to the existing facility would not be a viable option and, after a lengthy public process, a site was selected on the outskirts of town.

The original design was meant to blend in with the existing architecture in downtown Lawrence, but with a new location, the proposed stone and brick exterior would look out of place. In devising a new exterior, architects had to keep in mind there was a growing residential neighborhood not far from the new site, so the design had to be appealing to the eye and work in a rural setting.

“We went from downtown to the prairie, and the Dryvit exterior gave us the flexibility as a good logical system for that particular setting,” said Dan Rowe, principal at Teanor Architects in Topeka, Kan., the architects for the new facility.

Contour Products, Inc. of Kansas City, Kan., provided the Dryvit Outsulation® System, the foam shapes for the project.
and the finish. “Treanor Architects constantly push the envelope on color, texture, expanded polystyrene foam shapes and architectural grooves,” said Bob Nickloy of Contour. “They used [an EIF system] because it offers design flexibility.”

With more than 77,000 square feet of wall area, Midwest Drywall Company, Inc. in Wichita, Kan. was the EIFS applicator/contractor on the project. With 10 people working on the application of the EIF system, Midwest Drywall, as with all projects, made sure the application was of the highest quality. Midwest Drywall employs more than 1,000 people and has seven offices in the region.

“Quality workmanship is what will get you the next project in this business,” said Dennis Martens, director of marketing for Midwest Drywall. “By combining skilled craftspeople with a quality product . . . you can guarantee the project manager, architect and owner will be satisfied with the final product—a durable, impressive looking exterior.”