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Important Update - Court Facility Planning

1 message

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County Board Supervisors,

As you recall, on April 18, 2023 we met in closed session with Judge E. Rohl to discuss space constraints, courthouse security concerns, inmate transport issues and a number of other matters that have and continue to create inefficiencies and safety concerns in the existing Courthouse.

Since that time the Finance and Personnel Committee has created a Judicial Facility Planning Adhoc Committee and also partnered with Wold Architects and Market & Johnson to conduct a facility review as well as develop specifications for a new Court Facility to be attached to the Law Enforcement Center. There have been a number of meetings with various departments, staff and internal stakeholders with both firms regarding needs and recommendations of what a new court facility may need, addressing as many factors as possible to be incorporated into a new space and site plan.

The proposed project and results were shared with the Judicial Facility Planning Adhoc Committee yesterday evening, and after much discussion and careful consideration the Committee unanimously recommended the proposed project and associated costs be forwarded to the Finance and Personnel Committee for consideration and funding recommendation(s).

The proposed project is for an attached 64,000 sq. ft. facility consisting of 4 Courtrooms and adequate space for court related support functions considering future growth out to 20 years, underground parking to maximize the number of available spaces on site for staff/public, and a secure vestibule and elevator for jail inmates to transport themselves to/from court as well as a single point of entry for both the Court and Sheriff's Office, to list a few. This proposed site plan will also allow for (unconstructed) future expansion space for an additional 2 courtrooms and support space.

The total (all in) project cost is estimated to be \$30.9M. Market & Johnson did put this into perspective citing the inflation that has been experienced over the past 6 years. They added that the cost of the new Jail and Sheriff's Office in 2017 was \$18.5M for a 57,000 sq. ft. facility, and if that project were to be built today the cost would be \$28M.

The firm's also presented rearrangement options within the existing Courthouse and PCOB for those departments that would remain at the main campus should the new Court Facility be approve and constructed. No costs were presented as it relates to any rearrangement options.

We are currently working to identify interested and qualified firms for bond financial consulting services who would assist Administration and the Finance Committee with determining how to best structure the new and existing debt for the lowest financial impact on the taxpayers. Those results and any recommended strategies will be presented to the Finance and Personnel Committee at a future meeting, if and after a firm has been selected.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me directly, or one of your peers on the Judicial Facility Planning Adhoc Committee:

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Scott Bjork
Jim Ashback
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Respectfully,

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