

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

**RESOLUTION NO. 01-114**

Authorizing Funds to Determine Whether to Proceed with Renovating the Multnomah County Courthouse

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:**

- A. Since its completion in 1914, the Multnomah County Courthouse has been the strongest symbol of County government. It is an integral part of this community's cultural heritage. Its designation on the National Register of Historic Places and its listing as a City of Portland Landmark makes it a resource worthy of preservation and requires us to safeguard it for future generations.
- B. The existing Multnomah County Courthouse does not meet the requirements of the Fourth Judicial District, Circuit Court of the State of Oregon. The current size and configuration of the Courthouse do not meet the programmatic requirements of the Court.
- C. The City of Portland's examination of the viability of the urban core calls for strengthening Downtown's role as the seat of local and regional government. The Multnomah County Courthouse, along with City Hall, anchors a series of dynamic buildings that flank a chain of small parks. Along with the Justice Center, the Edith Green Wendell Wyatt Federal Office Building, the Federal Courthouse and the Portland Building, they create a "Government Center." This concept dates back to a 1912 plan outlining the future growth of our city center, and has been updated by the more recent Downtown Plan and Central City Plan.
- D. The April 2001 seismic evaluation determined that the Multnomah County Courthouse will not collapse during an earthquake. However, to meet current life/safety performance objectives, the building requires seismic strengthening. As this issue impacts public health and welfare, the seismic strengthening of the Courthouse should be undertaken within the next two years.
- E. Correcting the current deficiencies of the existing Multnomah County Courthouse will require extensive renovation. Renovation of the existing Courthouse will be required regardless of the preferred alternative to address the future courthouse needs of Multnomah County.
- F. As Multnomah County continues its commitment as a responsible steward for taxpayer funds and to be accountable, renovation of the Multnomah County Courthouse must be considered in the larger financial picture. As options for renovation and ancillary

construction are explored, the citizens of Multnomah County have the right to expect good value for their tax dollars.

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:**

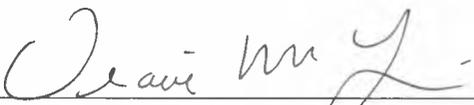
1. Renovation of the historic Multnomah County Courthouse as a courts building will maintain a significant and distinguished symbol of County government.
2. In its current condition, an earthquake may damage the Multnomah County Courthouse indefinitely disrupting court operations. It is vital that recommended seismic upgrades be accomplished as soon as practicable to safeguard the welfare of the tenants and the public, and to assure that the courthouse remains operational.
3. The Facilities and Property Management Division of the Department of Sustainable Community Development of Multnomah County is directed to spend up to \$250,000 from the Asset Preservation Fund, as part of the County Master Planning Process, to contract with architectural consultant(s) to accomplish the following scope of work:
  - a. Develop a cost analysis of either leasing and reconfiguring space as needed, or building a new county office facility for interim court operations. This shall include:
    - i. An operational assessment and space utilization analysis that will address the interim needs of the courts and other users during renovation of the Courthouse.
    - ii. Identify appropriate space in the Portland Downtown and East County areas for interim use, including possible expansion of Family Courts at the Donald E. Long juvenile detention facility and at the downtown Justice Center.
    - iii. Identify costs related to relocating the functions of the Courthouse to and from temporary spaces.
    - iv. All analysis shall include identifying operational issues and costs associated with a permanent East County courts facility with consideration for demographics, capacities of facilities, expansion potential and population trends. Identify how addressing those requirements can be integrated into meeting interim court needs during the renovations of the Courthouse.
  - b. Identify court operational needs and a more detailed cost estimate for a renovated Courthouse.
4. To proceed without delay, the consultant contract(s) will be entered no later than October 1, 2001.

5. The Facilities and Property Management Division will provide draft results to the Board of County Commissioners by December 15, 2001, and provide a complete study and assessment report to the Board by January 15, 2002. This shall include total project costs for bond measure purposes.
6. Upon consideration of the study, the Board may submit a general obligation bond measure for voter approval at the November 2002 general election.
7. If the study demonstrates that renovation into a courts facility is not feasible, the Chair will convene another process to evaluate alternative court facilities including an East County courts facility and renovation of the Courthouse for alternative purposes.

ADOPTED this 23rd day of August, 2001.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

  
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Diane M. Linn, Chair

REVIEWED:

THOMAS SPONSLER, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By   
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Thomas Sponsler, County Attorney