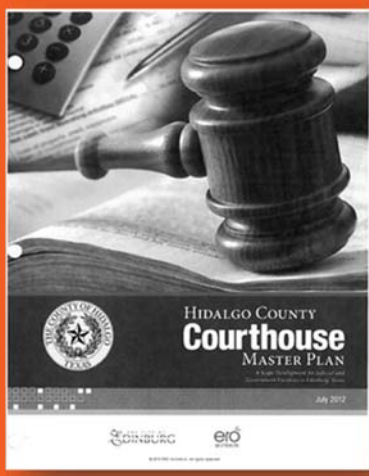


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HIDALGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE REVIEW

FINAL REPORT / MARCH 24, 2015



HIDALGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE

PEER REVIEW REPORT

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HIDALGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It has been our pleasure at HOK, to work with Hidalgo County during the past several months in reviewing the schematic design that was created for the proposed Hidalgo County Courthouse. This booklet serves as a synopsis of the review efforts that have taken place over the past several months, and also gives recommendations for how Hidalgo County can move forward on this very important project.

HOK was tasked with providing a peer review of the Schematic Design, which was prepared by ERO and HDR Architecture. The scope of work included review of the following documents: the space program, the published Schematic Design Package, the cost estimate and total project cost. We further met with stakeholders to verify and validate the information included in the documents, and to better understand the needs and goals of the project. This report includes our findings and recommendations for moving forward with the project. Findings are detailed in the report, but some of the highlights are as follows:

Space Program Inconsistencies:

The current schematic design provides Hidalgo County 43,500 sf more space than the space program.

Spaces shown on the floor plans that are not included in the space program:

- a. Court of Appeals
- b. Additional Central Holding space on Level 1
- c. Court Floor Holding areas on Court Floors. The square footage of holding space between courtrooms is significantly larger than the space program.

Staff numbers provided in the space program do not always align with the number of spaces provided in the S.D. floor plans.

Future Growth Inconsistencies

Methodology used for determining future growth for both courtrooms and office spaces was inappropriate for this specific building type. The specific space requirements for this specialized building type were not addressed, nor were specific staff increase projections. There are inconsistencies between the Schematic Design Report and the Space Program.

Detailed Review of the proposed Floor Plans

Some basic observations of the floor plans indicate that critical basic building code requirements have not been addressed. Infrastructure spaces for critical building services have been included in the narrative information, but have not been located on the floor plans. Spaces indicated as required by the space program are also not located on the floor plans. Critical security requirements appear to have not been addressed. Courtroom sizes are inconsistent between the space program and the floor plans.



Cost Estimate Inconsistencies

The Total Project Cost (TPC) included in the Schematic Design Package does not include some basic infrastructure items that have bearing on the bottom line including utilities and other site related infrastructure requirements; existing building demolition costs; parking cost considerations.

HOK's Recommendations

Significant design changes that can be made that will decrease the square footage and cost for the new Hidalgo County Courthouse. Many items are noted in detail in the following report. Some of the major changes includes:

- Change the building design to include 6 courts per floor. This, and other proposed changes, would decrease the height of the building to 6 levels in lieu of 10 levels.
- Eliminate the interior atrium or large enclosed space. There are other ways to introduce natural light into the interior courtrooms.
- Reduce the number of inmate and judge's elevators to a more common number of elevators.
- Reduce the number of escalators in the building.
- Evaluate the courtrooms to determine how many large courtrooms are needed in the facility.
- Evaluate the Inmate Holding Areas in the building.
- Redesign the building so that instead of building shell space now, the building is planned to be easily added to in the future.

Proposed Revised Total Project Cost

If the project is redesigned to accommodate the items noted in this review, it can be more efficient and significantly less costly. The result would be more in alignment with the needs of Hidalgo County. The total project cost, including redesign would be under \$150,000,000.



HIDALGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE

PEER REVIEW REPORT

SECTION 2: FINDINGS, SUGGESTED PLAN REVISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



2.1 FINDINGS

The Schematic Design submitted to Hidalgo County for the new courthouse needs to be significantly altered before the project moves into the Design Development phase of the project. See below for discussion of items we recommend be redone. In moving forward, any architect and/or contractor will require resolution of these items below.

Space Program

The different square footages shown in the 2014 Schematic Design package for the project are tracked in items a through f below.

HOK and ERO/HDR have discussed these differences. ERO/HDR stated the following spaces shown on the drawings need to be removed and are not to be included in the project cost estimate square footage. Note, these spaces are shown in the floor plans and building perspectives. If you remove these spaces from the HOK 545,741 GSF take-off:

- atrium (phantom) space (approximately 9,000 sf)
- inmate sallyport (approximately 8,500 sf)
- secured judicial parking (approximately 12,000 sf),

The overall gross square footage for the building comes to approximately 515,000 sf, which is similar to the item D square footage shown below. In addition:

1. **In calculating the square footage used for the cost estimate, ERO/HDR have removed all stairs, elevators and shaft (approximately 4,400 sf per floor) from the building square footage. This process reduces the 515,000 sf noted above, to approximately 471,500 sf.**

However, the fact remains the design shown in the Schematic Design package totals 515,000 sf, and 545,741 sf. That doesn't compare to the 471,500 sf, because the 471,500 sf they have derived removes what amounts to the grossing factor, which is in fact part of any building.

The current schematic design provides Hidalgo County 43,500 sf more space than the space program.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. Original Program | 470,163 GSF – Page 42 |
| b. Program, Page 71 | 500,544 GSF – Page 71 |
| c. Revised Program | 463,804 GSF – Page 42 |
| d. Area Calculations from S.D. floor plans | 515,392 GSF – Page 120 & 121 |
| e. Cost Estimate – per cost estimate | 483,000 GSF |
| f. Floor Plan Actual Take Offs | 545,741 GSF – provided by HOK |



2. There are spaces drawn in the S.D. floor plans that are not included in the space program. These include:
 - a. Court of Appeals
 - b. Additional Central Holding space on Level 1. ERO/HDR stated the Sheriff's Department told them to make the basement inmate holding area larger.
 - c. Court Floor Holding areas on Court Floors. The amounts of holding space between courtrooms are significantly larger than the space program.
 - d. This is part of the reason the actual design floor plans are larger in square feet than the space program. **Therefore, going forward with the current design will most likely result in cost over-runs at the next phase of the project if this is not corrected.**
3. Staff numbers provided in the space program do not always align with the number of spaces provided in the S.D. floor plans. We recommend a program validation with departments to ensure the right amount of spaces are shown.

Future Growth

4. The method for determining future growth in the courtrooms is inappropriate for these types of spaces. When a courtroom needs to be added for the County, the courtroom must have the appropriate Judicial Chambers and support spaces as well. This doesn't fit with the 5%, 10% and 15% growth patterns currently used in the space program.
5. 5%, 10% and 15% growth numbers used to project future space needs for the different types of departments in the facility is also unrealistic. Departments need to show actual projected areas of growth in the space program, in order to realistically layout departments with space for future growth in the building.
6. Future growth of 84,000 SF on page 42, is inconsistent with what is shown for growth in the detailed program document in the S.D. book.
7. Future growth options, past the 1 ½ floors shown in the SD drawings, are not provided, and should be shown. ERO/HDR stated that after the 5 shelled courtrooms, they were told the County would build a new tower in the plaza for future growth.

Site Plan

8. In the SD solution, what is the plan for the old courthouse structure once the new courthouse construction is completed? Will the building be removed? How will this portion of the site be utilized in the future? This is an important element that needs to be decided as the old courthouse structure occupies valuable space on the courthouse property that could be used for expansion and/or parking, or possibly a better positioning of the new courthouse
9. Public Parking in front of the new courthouse was significantly reduced to create the plaza. We understand the desire to create a public plaza for the project. However, we suggest re-evaluating the entire site layout for the courthouse square in order to achieve more on-site parking for public that will be visiting the building.



Floor Plans – Technical Comments

General

10. The quantity of elevators shown for inmate circulation is more than necessary. Typically there is one inmate elevator per pair of courtrooms, not one per one. ERO/HDR stated the additional inmate elevators were discussed with the Sheriff's office and were provided for redundancy in case an inmate elevator becomes inoperable.
11. Quantity of elevators shown for staff circulation is also more than necessary. This should be re-evaluated. Reducing the number will save square footage, elevator costs and operational costs in the future.
12. The facility needs to have a Freight Elevator. Currently, there is not one shown.
13. The escalators run up to Level 6 in current layouts. This is uncommon for escalator systems in courthouses. Escalator usage in courthouses is typically related to large amounts of public traffic to certain areas, and should be limited as these are expensive to install and maintain.
14. A Grand Jury space is not shown in the space program or on the floor plans. The District Attorney's Office has requested there be a Grand Jury space, which is normal for most large Court Facilities.
15. Probation Department space is not shown in the floor plans. During conversations, the Probation Department has stated due to new State requirements they will need more space in the building.
16. At the completion of the Schematic Design Phase, mechanical rooms, electrical rooms, shafts and major equipment should be clearly delineated to coordinate stacking of these spaces in a high-rise building, and this has not been done.
17. Narrative on page 37 of the SD document explains some of the locations of air handler units.
 - a. Where will the air handler unit be for the 5th floor? Are the mechanical rooms shown on level 4 and level 6 large enough to include the air handler units that are needed for the 5th floor?
 - b. The narrative states the mechanical room on level 3 will house the air handler for level 2. Level 2 is a very large floor plate. It is likely there will be more than 1 air handler for this level. Will this fit in the mechanical space shown on level 3, along with electrical rooms and other support spaces that will be required?
 - c. What is normally mechanical space on Level 10, is allocated to be Court of Appeals support space. What is the mechanical and electrical strategy for this level?
 - d. ERO/HDR stated they were not paid to include MEP engineering input into the Schematic Design of the building, and that this would be worked out in the next phase of the project. **This will end up causing redesign of the building floor plans, when the amount of and locations of these spaces are determined.**



18. Dedicated Firefighters Elevator and Lobby for high rise buildings, per code, are not shown in the current layouts. These can have a big impact on the court floor layouts, and would extend down through every floor of the building.
19. Column line E-2, shows a column in the middle of one of the holding cells on level 1.
20. Access from Loading Dock or Service Area to the Cafeteria / Kitchen located at front of the building will require service to go through public spaces and public elevators, which is not common for a large facility like this. Reconsider the location of the Kitchen for the building to rectify this issue.
21. For security purposes, the loading dock area needs to have a space for future x-ray of packages that are delivered to the building.
22. How is mail being delivered to the building, where is the mail room for the building?
23. Generally, more than 1 loading dock will be needed for a building of this size.

Court Floors

24. The Courtrooms are drawn at 2,200 NSF, the space program was reduced to 1,900 SF in the revised space program document in the Schematic Design package. When meeting with ERO, they stated they actually increased the courtroom size to 2,400 sf for all of the courtrooms at the end of the SD phase, however this information was not in the space program that the County received in their final Schematic Design package. We have found that in many cases, a 1,900 sf courtroom size is adequate for courtroom needs. Courtroom spaces are expensive. If necessary, a couple large courtrooms can be provided if the Judiciary feels this is necessary, to handle large profile cases. This should be discussed in more detail with the judges.
25. All Courtrooms currently have spectator seating shown for over 100 seats. Most courtroom proceedings do not require this much seating. Standardizing all courtrooms to be this large is expensive. Reducing the amount of seating will enable the courtrooms size of 1,900 SF to work. This has been discussed with some of the Judges, and it appears they would support reducing the spectator seating in courtrooms, from what is currently shown in the S.D. package.
26. The corridors in the judicial secure corridor on court floors are drawn at 7'-6" wide. There is no reason for these corridors to be this wide.
27. Sliding doors are shown at Jury Deliberation sound locks. This is uncommon and will likely present an acoustical issue, and will definitely present a privacy issue as they appear to be glass doors on the drawings.
28. The courtroom ramping and ADA compliance planning is not worked out. For instance, a ramp is missing at the jury box exit to the private corridor. Introducing ramps for ADA compliance will change the courtroom layouts, available space for spectator seating, and the well of the courtroom.
29. There are numerous single fixture toilets in the floor plans that have the plumbing located where occupy the space below, which will require floor plan revisions and will impact overall square footage.



- 30. For Court Floor Holding, the space program shows 1 - 80 sf holding cell per courtroom. Yet in the S.D. Floor Plan drawings, in addition to the 80 sf holding cell per courtroom there are also large holding rooms for each courtroom. Holding rooms have been added, that are not in the space program. This greatly increases the square footage for the Court Holding spaces, and has a significant impact on Court Floor layouts and overall project cost.
- 31. Similar situation for the Central Holding area on Level 1. The space drawn on the SD Plans is significantly larger than what is shown in the space program. Even with planning for future growth, this space is much larger than necessary. The Chief Deputy agrees.
- 32. The vehicle sallyport for bringing inmates to the facility is shown to be significantly larger in the SD plans than what is shown in the space program.

Cost Estimate

- 33. The Total Project Cost (TPC) shown in the SD book is **\$176,790,000**, when factoring in escalation. Due to the delay the project has seen, this escalation cost is now needed for the project, due to rising costs of construction.
- 34. There are some costly items that are currently not included in the Total Project Cost (TPC). These items should be included so Hidalgo County knows what their TPC will be in moving forward on the project. These include include:
 - a. Infrastructure costs \$8,500,000 (this number was given by ERO/HDR, and it was stated the City would pay for these infrastructure costs)
 - b. Existing building demolition costs \$3,000,000 (allowance)
 - c. Off-site and on-site parking costs \$4,500,000 (allowance)
 - d. Adding these costs to the SD book increases the TPC.
 - e. **Revised SD Total Project Cost** **\$192,790,000**
 - f. Per the project schedule in the SD package, and the escalation percentages shown in the SD package, cost escalation rises approximately **\$9,125,000 per year**.



2.2 SUGGESTED REVISIONS

Per our discussion on March 9, there has been a major change in the amount of space needed in many areas of the proposed Hidalgo County Courthouse. These revisions will make the project significantly more efficient, more functional and affordable for the County. We recommend holding meetings with all departments to validate departmental space needs in the building. After completing the validation, the space program will be updated to reflect current and future needs. The validated space program will serve as a record to all departments in the building that the project is properly sized for their space needs.

SPACE PROGRAM

1. Major changes in space needs include: Central Inmate Holding, Vehicle Sallyport, Kitchen/Cafeteria, utilizing the Jury Assembly Area as a large Courtroom (this changes the location required for this space), Adult Probation, Courtrooms, Inmate Holding Areas on Courtroom Floors.
2. Spaces that have never been included in the space program need to have a space list and agencies developed. These include the Court of Appeals, Grand Jury Room.

FLOOR PLANS

There are many areas that need to be redrawn to make the project more efficient functionally and to reduce the amount of square footage which will make the project more affordable. See the list below:

LEVEL 1

1. Revise Central Holding Area to be smaller
2. Delete redundant inmate and staff elevators
3. Move District Clerk to Level 2, County Clerk to Level 1
4. The footprint of the building will be different, with the removal of the Atrium. This impacts all floors of the building
5. The location of the Jury Assembly area; if this is also going to be used as one of the large courts, the location of this needs to be revised. This is an excellent idea, however it does require a repositioning of the space. At the current location, there will not be a secure access to this courtroom for the Judge or for inmates. Since this would likely be used for high profile trials, secure circulation would be needed to this large courtroom space.
6. Due to the building reorganization, the structural column layouts need to be revised
7. The current access for food deliveries from the loading dock to the kitchen area is not good. We recommend moving the food service to a different location so there can be a connected service connection from back-of-house to the kitchen.
8. The vehicle sallyport should be revisited. This is currently much larger than the space program square footage.
9. There is insufficient space at the dock for future mail/package screening space, and mail room. These spaces are put in all large new courthouses today.



LEVEL 2

1. Move County Clerk to Level 1, District Clerk to Level 2
2. Delete redundant inmate and staff elevators/shafts
3. Probation office space is missing
4. No Grand Jury Space has been included in the building, this is the likely floor for this space
5. If the Appeals Court is included in the building, it could be located on any of the levels 2 through 6. This will require other departments to be relocated.

LEVELS 3 thru 8

1. Reduce the inmate holding areas between the pairs of courtrooms
2. Delete redundant inmate and staff elevators
3. Delete the interior Atrium
4. Revise the Jury Rooms to have appropriate vestibules with soundproof, swing doors
5. Reduce the width of the large 7'-6" wide secure judicial corridor
6. Delete the extra atrium space on the north side of the public circulation space and the east side of the building
7. With the atrium gone, the entire middle of the building would now likely be courtrooms. The structural grid and the mechanical/HVAC spaces would be significantly revised.
8. Many courtrooms will be reduced in size

REMAINING LEVELS

1. If we move forward with a 6 court per floor scheme, the entire building footprint would change

SITE

Revise site development drawing to incorporate revised public access, future expansion planning, and future demolition of the existing courthouse.



2.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Design Recommendations

We believe there are significant design changes that can be made that will decrease the square footage and cost for the new Hidalgo County Courthouse. Many items are noted in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 above. A quick synopsis of the major changes includes:

- i. Change the building design to include 6 courts per floor. This would decrease the height of the building to 8 levels in lieu of 10 levels.
- ii. Eliminate the interior atrium or large enclosed space. There are other ways to introduce natural light into the interior courtrooms. This would reduce County Maintenance Costs as well.
- iii. Reduce the number of inmate and judge’s elevators to a more common number of elevators.
- iv. Reduce the amount of escalators in the building.
- v. Evaluate the courtrooms to determine how many large courtrooms are needed in the facility.
- vi. Evaluate the Inmate Holding Areas in the building.
- vii. Redesign the building so that instead of building shell space now, the building is planned to be easily added to in the future.

Total Project Cost based on Design Recommendations

If the project is redesigned to accommodate the items noted in this review, it can be more efficient and significantly less costly. A goal would be to get the project to be well below the current space program square footage, rather than over. The result would be more in alignment with the needs of Hidalgo County, and the overall cost model would be similar to the following:

Building Construction Cost	\$136,130,973
Site Infrastructure costs	\$8,500,000
Existing Courthouse Demolition Costs	\$3,000,000
Off-site Surface Parking	\$4,500,000
Total Project Cost	\$147,630,973
Cost to regenerate Schematic Design per recommendations	\$960,000



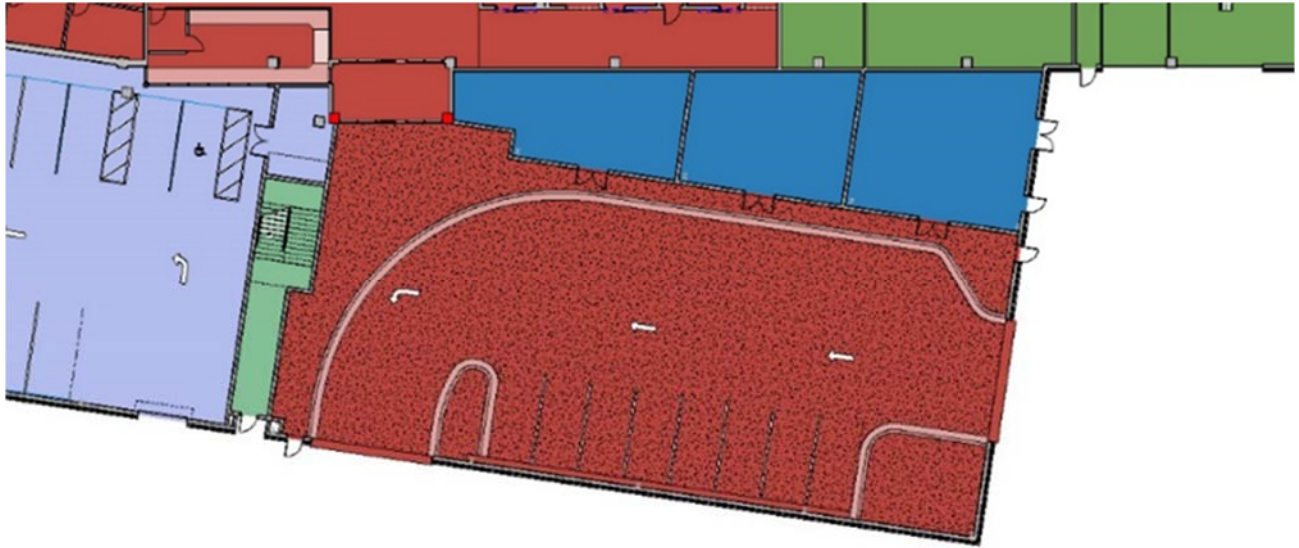
HIDALGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE

PEER REVIEW REPORT

SECTION 3: ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sections from the Schematic Design are analyzed in detail in this section of the report

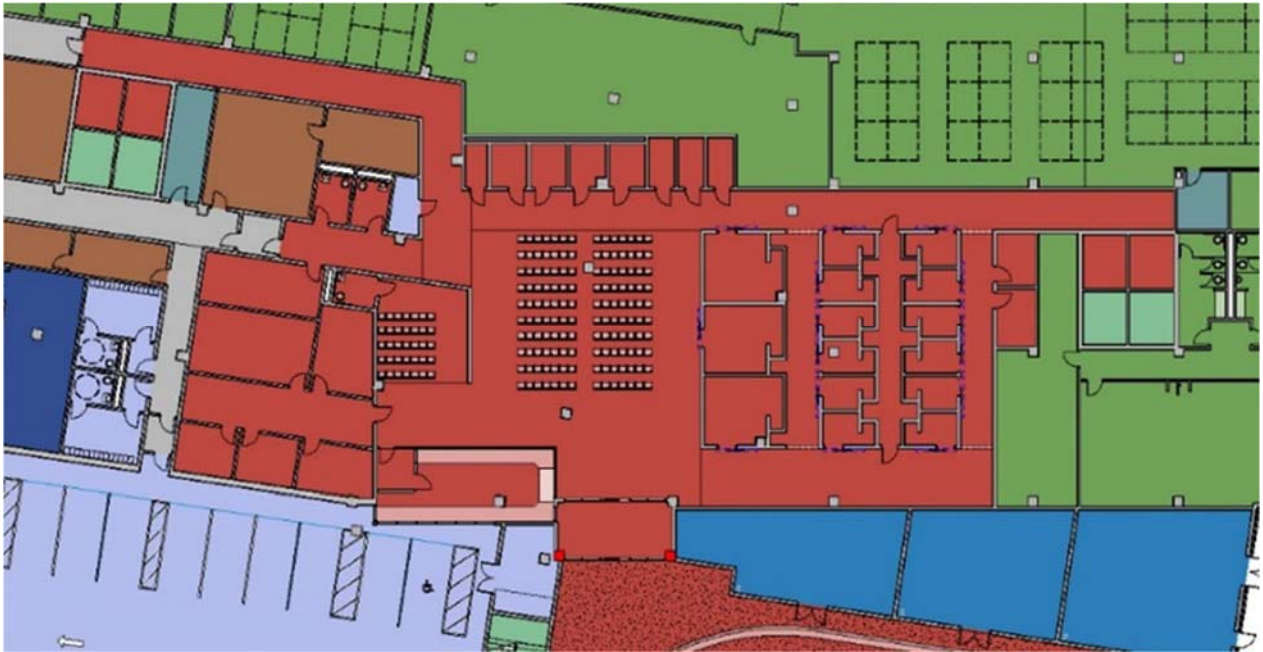
3.1 INMATE MOVEMENT AND VEHICLE SALLYPORT



Current Design Vehicular Sallyport Illustration

- The space program shows a 1,500 sf vehicle sallyport
- The drawing shows a vehicle sallyport sized at about 8,500 sf.
- Due to the significant increase in size from the space program, the intent of the vehicle sallyport needs to be discussed to determine an appropriate size
- Additionally, opening mechanical equipment spaces to the vehicle sallyport can be a security issue when routine maintenance needs to be performed and inmates are being delivered to the building

3.2 INMATE MOVEMENT AND HOLDING LEVEL 1



Current Design Central Inmate Holding Area Illustration

- Central Inmate Holding Area shown in red with space for 223 inmates
- Managing 175 multi-classified inmates in an open seating area is not common. This needs to be discussed in more detail with Sheriff Dept. This is expensive to build and operate.
- Additionally, each Courtroom has a group holding cell plus a single holding cell. Space for 312 inmates
- **Total Holding capacity at the courthouse = 535 inmates**

3.3 INMATE MOVEMENT AND DETENTION

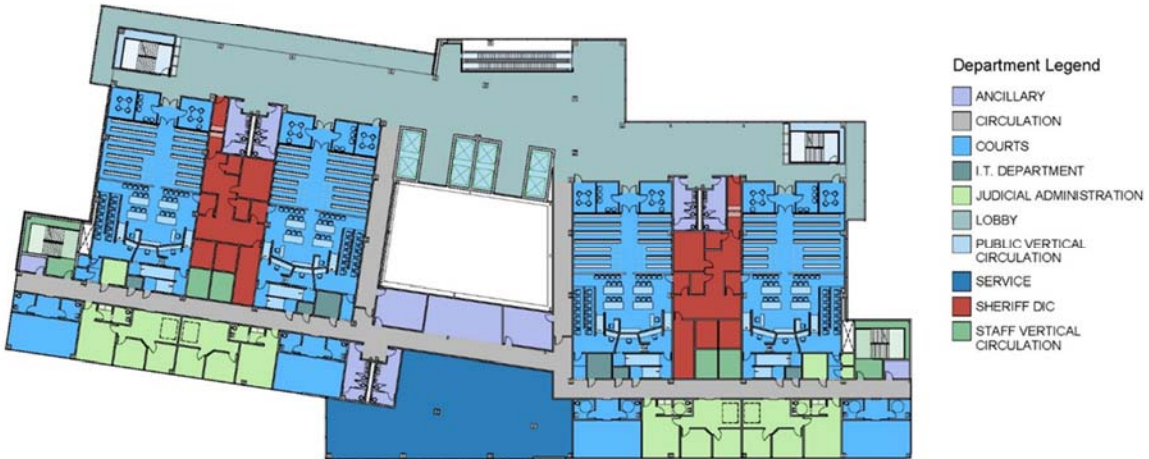


Current Design Typical Courtroom Holding Illustration

- Program shows 1 single holding cell per court.
- Drawings show a single and a group holding cell for each court
- 1 Inmate Elevator for each courtroom, twice the number typically seen
- We need to discuss with the Sheriff Department how inmates will be managed and moved through the building
- **Fewer than 200 inmates are delivered to the Courthouse each day**

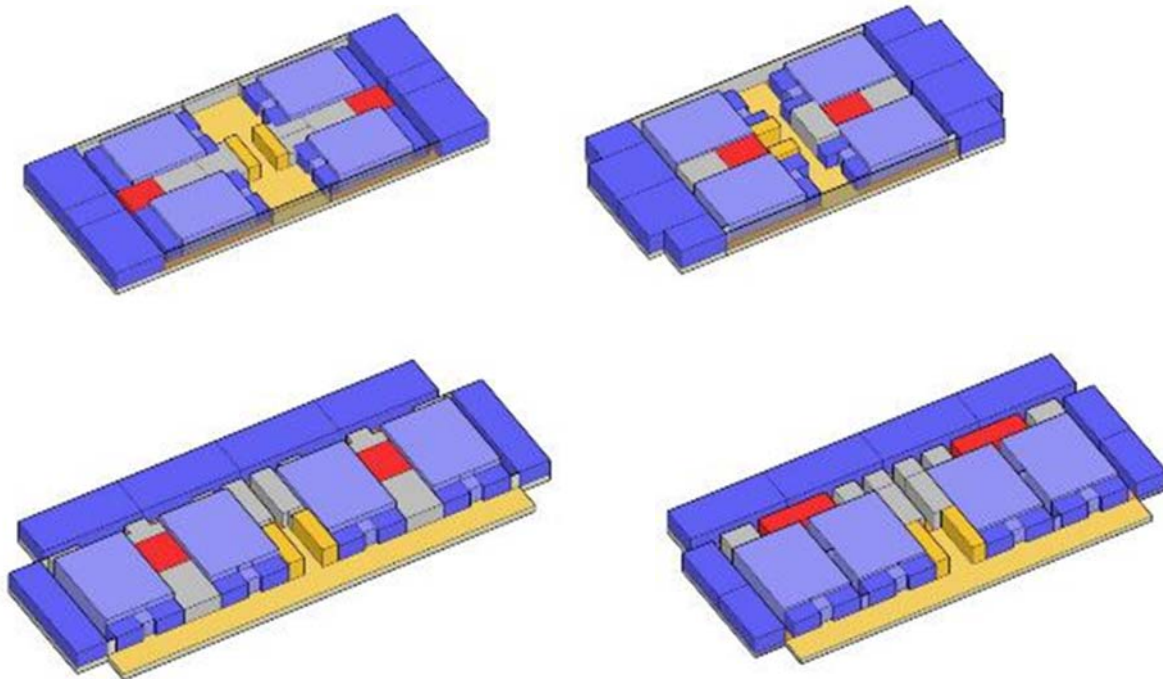
3.4 COURTROOM FLOORS

3rd, 4th & 6th Floors



Current Design Typical Courtroom Floor Illustration

Floor Plan Efficiency



Planning options for another courthouse in an urban setting in Texas



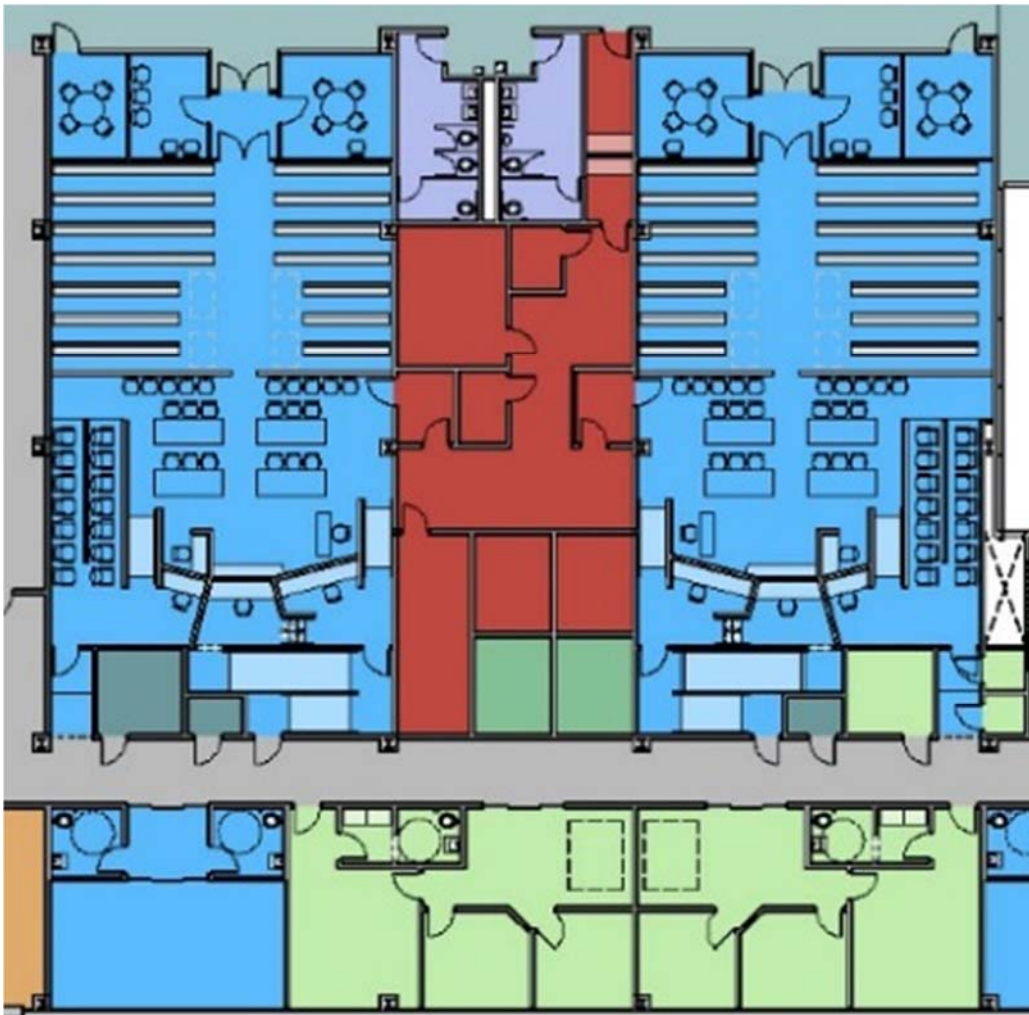
- Typical floor plans of 4 courts per floor for a similar Texas project (average approx. 38,000 sf per floor)
- Current Hidalgo County SD plan of 4 courts per floor (Approx. 43,400 sf per floor)

Comparative Alternate



Illustration of 6 Courts per floor in the same footprint as 4 court per floor

- 6 Courthouse Floors x difference of 5,400 sf per floor = 32,000 sf, which equates to \$11,858,400 of savings

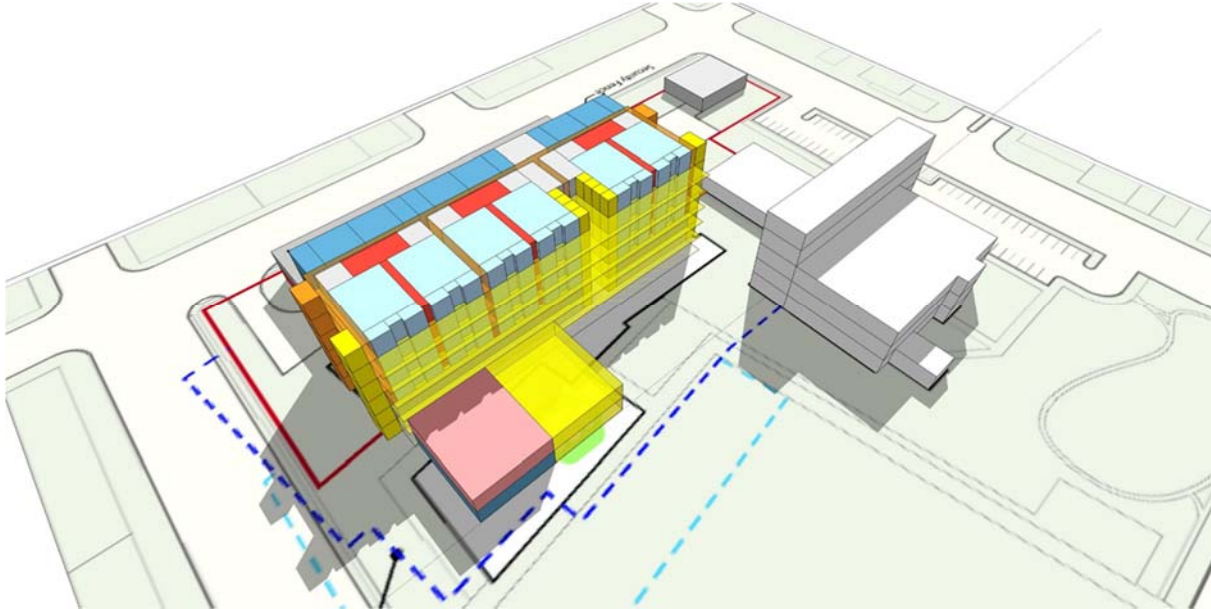


Current Design Courtroom Illustration

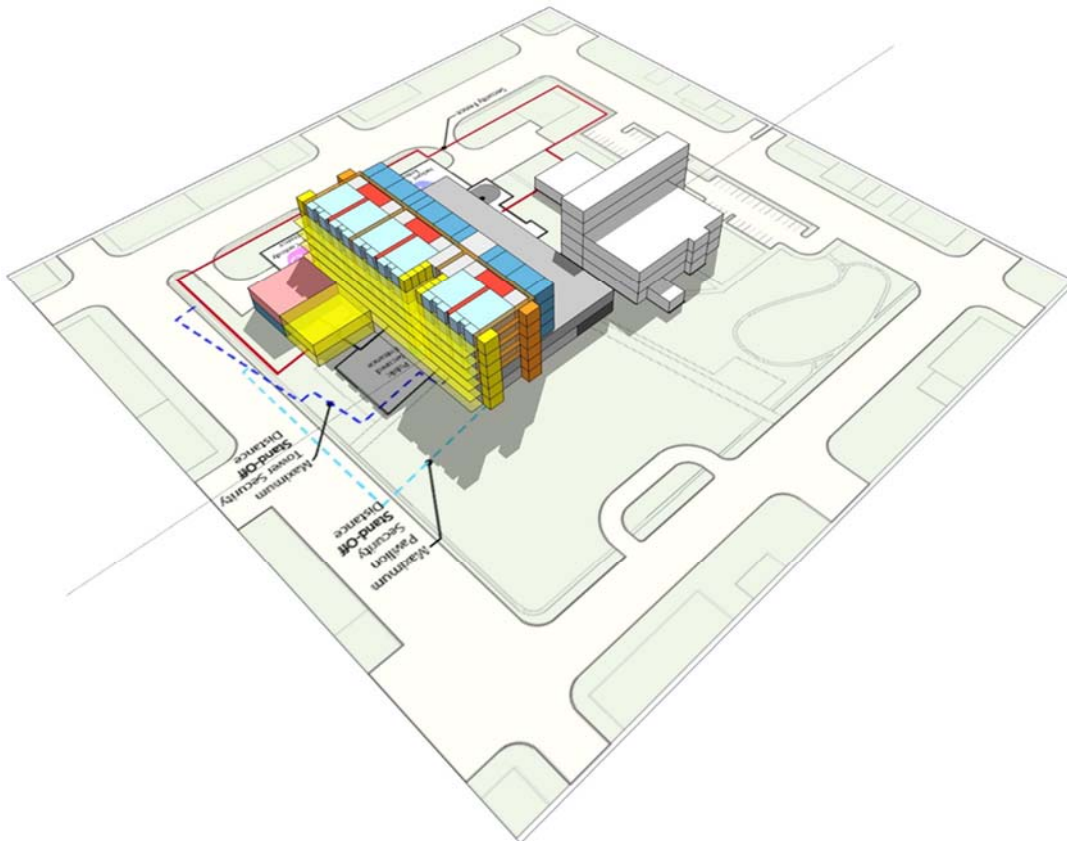
- Seating for 100 Courtroom sizes
- Space Program shows 1,900 sf; Drawing shows 2,200 sf; Revised program shows 2,400 sf
- 2,400 sf for all courtrooms is excessive
- Chambers not Shown on drawings
- Determine where Court Reporter and Baliff will be. These also are not shown on the drawing

3.5 COURT PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

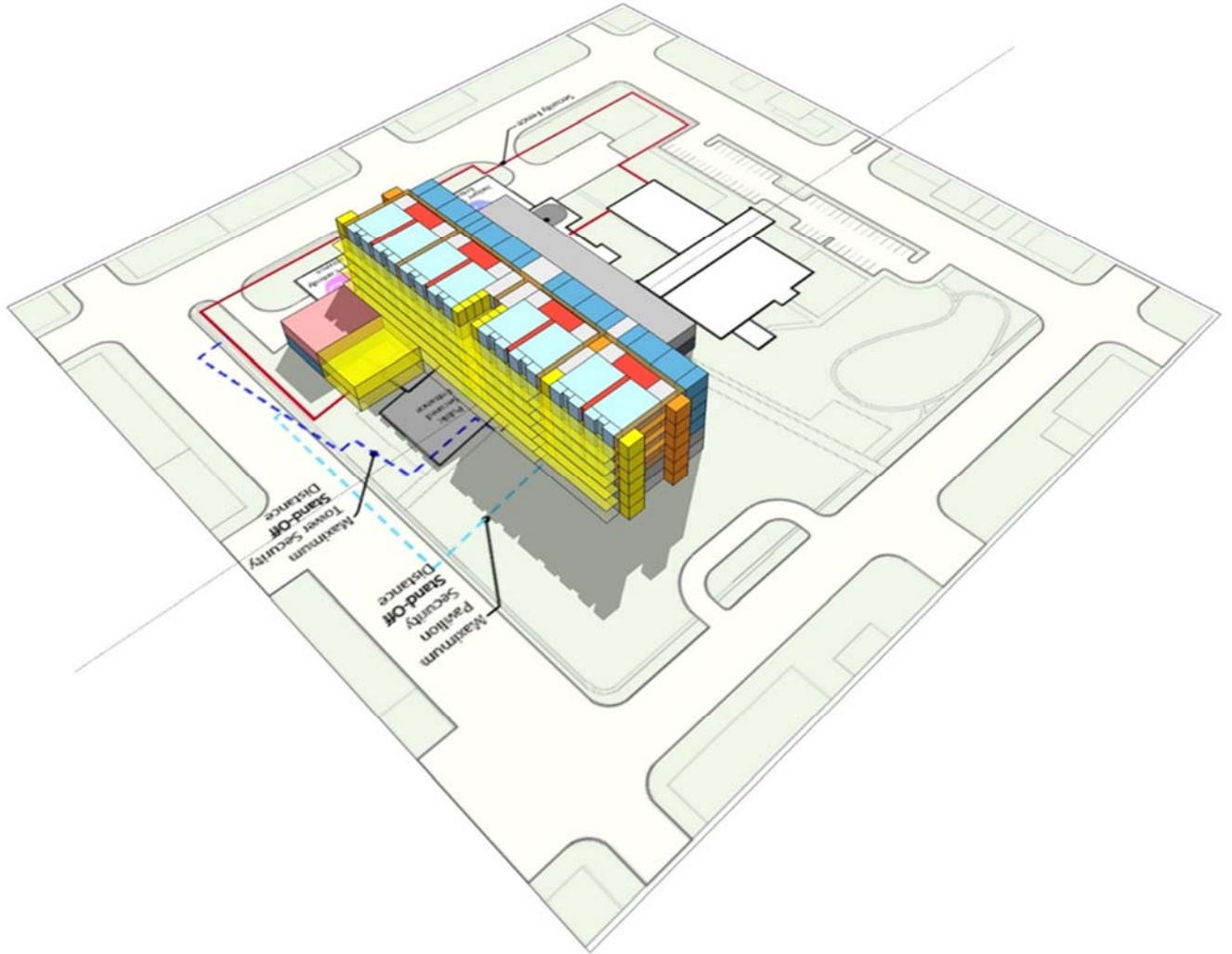
- 6 Story Building, 6 courts per floor
- 2 Podium floors
- Smaller footprint than the Current Design



Option 1 – same location as the current design



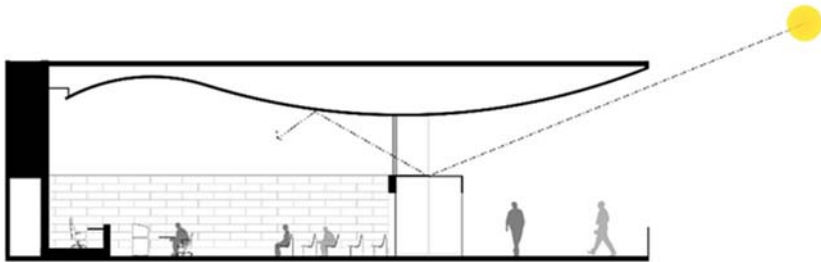
Option2 – Alternate Building position on the site



Option 3 – Alternate Building position with Future Expansion



3.6 DAYLIGHTING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COURTROOMS



Reflected light from the lobby/waiting area



Daylight Harvesting examples

3.7 VERTICAL CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS



Current Design elevator and escalator redundancy

- There are double the number of inmate and judicial elevators than normally seen:
 - 4 extra elevators, 10 floors, \$30,000 per stop = \$1,200,000, plus 4,160 sf @ \$366 = \$1,522,560
 - Escalators are costly and less efficient for transportation after 4 floors. Concentrate high volume traffic areas on lower floors, decreasing number of escalators. Eliminating 2 floors of escalators = savings of \$800,000
 - Potential Vertical Circulation savings of \$3,522,560
 - Plus the Operating Cost – Energy use and maintenance contracts

3.8 OTHER STAKEHOLDER ACCOMMODATIONS

- Grand Jury Room Location – currently not included in the drawings or space program or cost estimate
- Probation – currently not included in the drawings
- Inconsistent locations of mechanical rooms



Current Design – Ground Floor Plan

- County Clerk has the highest level of public interaction, has stated they would like to be on Level 1 instead of District Clerk



HIDALGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE

PEER REVIEW REPORT

PROPOSED PROJECT SCHEDULE





HIDALGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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APPENDIX



5.1 MEETING MINUTES

Meeting #1

1. We presented our findings to the Office of the Hidalgo County Judge. Findings included the following:
 - a. There are inconsistent square footages throughout the documents, and significant growth in the project scope from the Master Plan to the Schematic Design Phase. . These include:
 - i. 2012 master plan – 427,000 sf for Courts, Clerks and Support Spaces
 - ii. 2014 SD Program, Page 42 – 463,804 sf
 - iii. 2014 SD Program, Page 71 – 500,544 sf
 - iv. Schematic Design Plans (take-Off) – 545,741 sf
 - b. The actual Schematic Design Floor Plans size totals 545,741 sf, which is considerably larger than the SD Program of 463,804. The cost estimate produced for the Schematic Design Phase is based on the 483,000 sf, not the 545,741 sf.
 - c. The Court Floor layouts are significantly larger than they need to be, which increases the project cost significantly. The building will need to be redesigned to get back to a reasonable budget. Reducing the court floor plan to be more efficient would likely save \$11,858,000 in construction costs.
 - d. The square footage reported in the book, as the schematic design square footage, is 515,392 sf. The actual floor plan square footage comes to 545,741 sf. So, the cost estimate shown in the SD Package is significantly less than the floor plans that are shown.
 - e. There is inconsistency in the staff counts noted in the space program, for multiple departments such as Adult Probation, District Attorney, IT, Sheriff, Facilities.
 - f. The ‘growth’ noted in the space program needs to be further developed in order to be accurate. Things missing from the space program include:
 - i. Clear description of ‘future’ growth
 - ii. County space standards need to be identified and incorporated into the space program
 - iii. New filing trends ‘electronic’ vs hard copy, may change space needs
 - iv. Utilize multi-use, shared support spaces for break rooms, staff restrooms and meeting rooms
 - v. Consider specialized courtrooms types to save space
 - vi. Develop a court calendar to determine peak usage of court spaces and to assist in figuring out future growth of court spaces
 - g. Several significant site development costs are not included in the Total Project Cost. These include:
 - i. Site Infratstructure
 - ii. Parking Lot development
 - iii. Demolition of the existing courthouse structure
 - h. Vertical circulation shown in the Schematic Design package is excessive. There are more elevators than needed. Escalators serving up to the 6th floor of a building is not common. Decreasing the extra elevators would reduce project cost by \$1,522,560.



Decreasing the escalators by 2 floors would reduce project costs by \$800,000. Total savings of \$2,322,560.

- i. The Inmate Transfer process and Inmate Holding areas on the court floors need to be further examined and developed. These areas seem very large for the courthouse.
- j. The Total Project Cost of \$176,790,000 shown in the Schematic Design document is based on 483,000 sf. If the project cost estimate were adjusted to support the actual 545,741 sf, the TPC could grow to \$202,989,000.
- k. The change in project costs has increased from \$112,973,000 for the 2012 Master Plan, to \$202,989,000 for the 2014 Schematic Design. This is an increase of over \$90,016,000.
- l. Courtrooms are drawn at 2,200 sf in the floor plans, yet are listed as 1,900 sf in the space program.
- m. Courtrooms are shown on the floor plans as seating 160 per courtroom. This is likely larger than necessary.
- n. There are odd things in the 'secure' spaces of the building, including:
 - i. Sliding doors and glass fronts to the jury rooms
 - ii. Location of jury rooms makes them difficult to be used for ADR or other uses
- o. The court spaces need to be worked out in order to ensure these will function correctly, i.e. judges bench, court reporter, clerk, witness, jury...
- p. Expecting additional floors to be added to the top of the building after the building is occupied, is not a good idea.
- q. There is a more efficient way to get daylight into the courtrooms than providing an expensive atrium in the center of the building.

User Meetings

Before each of the User meetings, Michael Leo reviewed the history of the project and current status. He introduced HOK, stating we were hired to complete a reassessment to validate the design and make sure this is what they need. Michael cited HOK's extensive courthouse experience.

Meeting #2

1. We met with representatives of the Judicial group, which included the Chief Judge and multiple other Judges. Conversation included the following:
 - a. The group generally felt they were very involved during the master plan phase of the project, however they had very little involvement in the project during the schematic design phase.
 - b. When asked about the duplicate elevators for Judicial and Inmates in the building, they agreed this was not necessary.
 - c. When asked about the amount of spectator seating needed in the courtrooms, they agreed they did not need seating for 160 in all of the courtrooms. This amount could be reduced down to 80 seats in most courtrooms.
 - d. When asked about the amount of inmate holding they needed on the court floors, they agreed this could be reduced.
 - e. The judges had no involvement in the layout of the courtrooms. They had a lot of comments regarding the layout of the bench, court reporter, witness, jurors and the well of the courtroom.



- f. They did feel they needed a jury room for each courtroom.
- g. Regarding natural light in the courtrooms, the judges were open to alternatives in how natural light can be introduced into the courtrooms, in lieu of the large atrium space in the current design.
- h. They wanted to make sure they have secured parking spaces that have a solid wall or enclosed area, so people cannot see into their secured parking area.
- i. The judges are concerned with the future growth, in adding floors to the top of the building while they are occupying the structure.
- j. At the end of this meeting we toured several of the existing courtrooms in the building to gain more understanding of some of the operational issues they currently have in the existing building. Items noted:
 - i. Very small spaces, no separate, secured circulation pathways for Judicial, Inmates and Public, very limited level of security for the building and especially the judges in the building, the court clerks currently office in the courtrooms, limited public space outside the courtrooms.
 - ii. The Judges are very interested in going on tours and seeing other, newer courthouses.
 - iii. The Chief Judge noted we should tour the mock courtroom at a law school in Reno Nevada. Other tour locations could be Hays County, Tarrant County and Wake County.
 - iv. The Judges would like to have more input into the design process as the project moves forward.

Meeting #3

1. We met with District Clerk, Probation, District Attorney, Public Defender, County Clerk, Indigent Assistance
 - a. We asked how involved this group has been on the project. Some had involvement in the schematic design phase, others did not.
 - b. This group had concern about the length of distance from much of the available parking to the front door of the new courthouse. They felt a parking structure would be a great way to get a lot more parking closer to the building.
 - c. The District Attorney thought there was going to be a link from his building to the new Courthouse.
 - d. We briefly discussed electronic jury call process, and how this might decrease the need for a very large jury assembly area in the building, which would help to reduce cost.
 - e. The Public Defender said there are current changes in some of their workload. They no longer have a Juvenile Section, and they have added a Child Welfare section. The space program needs to be updated to include these changes in work structure.
 - f. Everybody felt the County Clerk's office should be on level 1 in lieu of level 2. So, moving the County Clerk to the first floor, and the District Clerk to the second floor is preferred.
 - g. They did not like the idea of a large atrium for the building, and viewed this as a maintenance concern.



- h. There is currently a great lack of security in the building for this group. They want to make sure the new facility incorporates a much more secure environment for all involved.
- i. There was a question about the location of the Grand Jury and Probation department in the building. In the program, the Probation department is scheduled to have two work spaces for floor plus an interviewing room at the substation (central holding).
- j. Indigent Representation Notes:
 - i. 6% of representation is by private attorneys managed by the department
 - ii. 40% of representation is by Public Defender's office
 - iii. They need 2 conference rooms with video link to jail for private attorneys, to interview clients
 - iv. They accept applications for representation for those who qualify
 - v. People are sentenced to community service work in the office

Meeting #4

- 1. We met with representatives of Hidalgo County Sheriff's Department.
 - a. There is a new Sheriff since the project design was completed, so most of the representatives in the meeting were new and have had no involvement in the master planning or Schematic Design Phase of the project. There was 1 individual who explained the thought behind the large Inmate Intake area on Level 1 of the building.
 - b. We discussed the large open waiting area that currently is sized to hold over 200 inmates in custody. The Sheriff's department representatives agreed they need to regroup now that they have seen the new layout, and discuss how they want this space to function. They are interested in seeing other facilities where the courthouse is separated from the detention facility, and how they handle bring inmates to/from one facility to the other. There needs to be additional discussion and understanding about holding capacity requirements.
 - c. They currently transport 170 – 10 per day, between the jail and courthouse.
 - i. ¾ of the transports are in the morning
 - ii. Most leave the courthouse by noon
 - d. In terms of building security, they stated the current courthouse is woefully inadequate in terms of being secure, however it is much better than it was a year ago.
 - e. Currently, County staff and attorneys have badges and are allowed to bypass security screening. The Sheriff's Department will need to discuss how this will be handled in the new facility.
 - f. Currently, officers often take up to 10 inmates into the courtroom at 1 time, in an effort to quickly move from one case to the next. This is why the facility has been designed to have the large inmate waiting areas between the courtrooms.
 - g. There are some courtrooms where this is done, and others where it is not, so the large waiting areas on the court floors are not needed at all courtrooms. More investigation



- needs to be done to determine which courtrooms need large holding areas. Reducing the size of the inmate holding areas would significantly reduce construction costs.
- h. Currently the Sheriff brings inmates to the facility in the morning only. They try to have all inmates back to the jail by late afternoon.
 - i. Currently, there is no separate circulation for inmates once they get to the court floors.
 - j. Inmates are in shackles and cuffs when moved through the facility.
 - k. Inmates are delivered to the facility in large vans and squad cars.
 - l. The large inmate holding area on Level 1 was sized for expansion.
 - m. Building security currently is not able to control the installation of locksets in the building, so they have great difficulty clearing the building in the event of a bomb threat.
 - n. A central control room will be needed to monitor all cameras throughout the building.
 - o. The Sheriff Department does not expect to have an inmate elevator for each courtroom.
 - p. There needs to be discussion with the Judges about how inmates will be brought into the courtroom, and what the appropriate size of the holding areas on the court floors would be.
 - q. The Texas Commission on Jail Standards has reviewed the current solution. They noted no large issues with the layouts, however noted to reduce blind spots as much as possible.
 - r. There needs to be a large area outside the building for people to go to, in the event of trying to clear a bomb threat.
 - s. The group at the meeting were not involved in any meetings during the SD Phase that discussed threat assessment for the new courthouse
 - t. The County will need to know what it it will cost to operate the new courthouse
 - u.

Meeting #5

- 1. We met with Facilities Management and IT (Information Technology).
 - a. IT was very happy to be at this meeting, and in on discussions at this point of the project, as they typically are not included until very late in the project.
 - b. Concerns included:
 - i. Current lack of emergency generator for emergency power, so they need this in the new building. They prefer the emergency generator be natural gas powered, not diesel.
 - ii. When the existing courthouse is vacated, they will need to relocate servers currently in this building. This serves as the County's main data center, so this move will need to be well planned. The existing MDF room in the existing courthouse contains the main county data center.
 - iii. They currently do not have redundancy of services to the existing main data center. This will need to be addressed when the design moves forward.
 - iv. We need to make sure, due to the current length of the floor plan, there are intermittent IDF rooms for IT. Their cabling has limitations in terms of distance from an IDF to a piece of equipment.



- v. The new courthouse needs to have lightning protection
 - vi. Flooding is a concern. MDF room needs to be on the second floor. Consideration should be shown for location of critical services.
 - vii. The power grid is vulnerable.
- c. Facilities Management previously had no involvement in the design process. They want to see a ground mounted central plant if possible. This reduces the difficulty of maintaining large chillers and cooling towers.
- i. They would like to have input into the equipment and systems used in the new building. They want to make sure the building gets a system that their staff can service.
 - ii. They are concerned with the maintenance that would be required of a large atrium space, and would prefer that go away.
 - iii. We discussed drainage issues at the site. The county installed a large area drain in the parking area where the new building will be located. This needs to be taken into account when the building is sited.
 - iv. They recommend the building have no basement spaces, as that is a constant issue to maintain sump drains at this site. The site apparently is a very low point, and has very high ground water (8' below grade).
 - v. Dock areas and service delivery areas need to be well thought out. There are a lot of deliveries to this type of building.
 - vi. There is concern that the location of the kitchen is at the front of the building, very remote from the dock area. This will make delivery of food and supplies to the kitchen area difficult.
 - vii. They have no experience with escalators, so minimizing these is a good idea to the Facilities Management Group.
 - viii. The building needs to be designed to have durable materials. The County doesn't build facilities often. This will be the largest County facility they have.
 - ix. Maintenance said it will take 12 to 14 people to maintain the building including a licensed electrician, mechanical and plumber. General maintenance includes lights, ballast and locks.
 - x. They would recommend janitorial services schedule be from 3 PM to 11 PM. They would dedicate 3 PM to 5 PM cleaning secure areas that judges want supervised.
 - xi. There was a question about the capability of the Edinburg fire department to service a 10 to 12 story courthouse building.
 - xii. The County currently has a mail person pick up their mail at the post office box, he then sorts and distributes.
 - xiii. For access control, they currently use Primus Keys for doors, area masters and prime masters.
 - xiv. The Sheriff's department controls keys for the courthouse. All key requests go through the sergeant.
 - xv. The existing courthouse has a chiller system.



Meeting #6

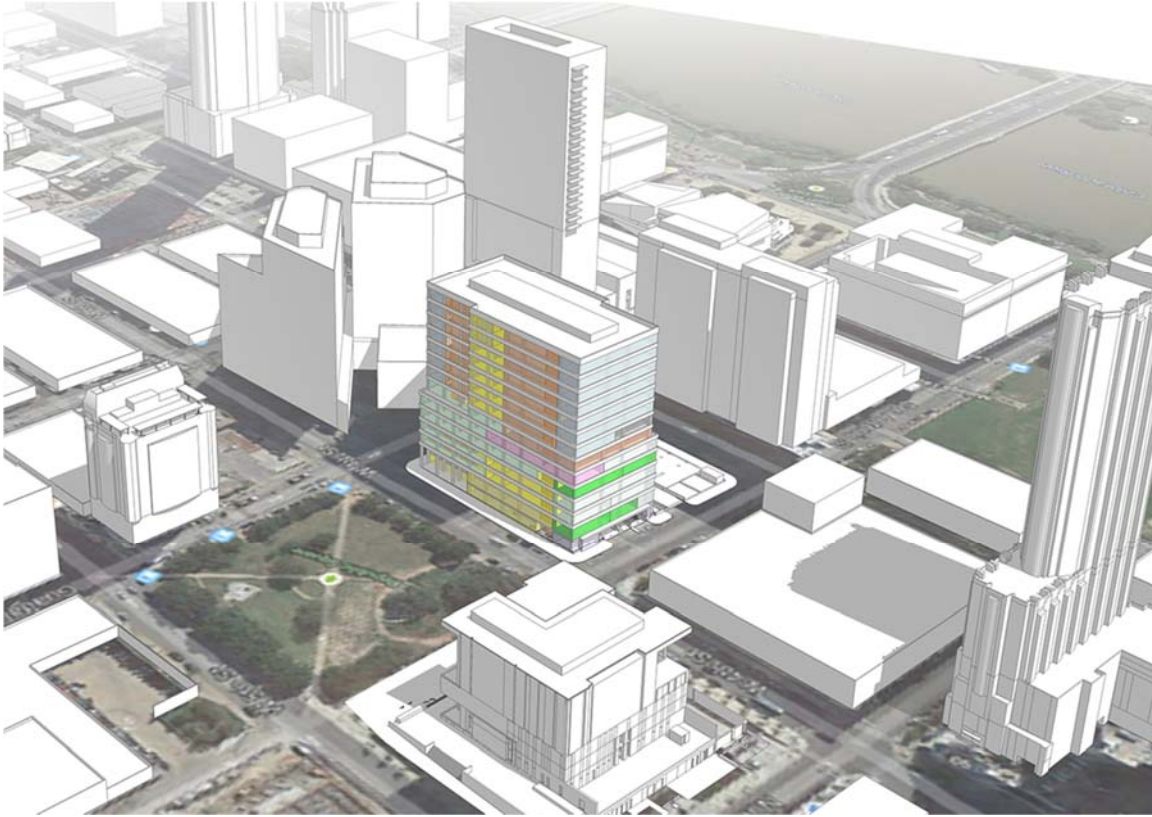
Wrap-up meeting with County Judge, Commissioner Chiefs, City Manager and County staff

1. It was noted at the start of the meeting that this is a preliminary discussion, and the contents of the meeting are not to be disclosed.
2. The same presentation was give that was given on Thursday morning to the county Judge's office.
3. Items of action noted in the meeting:
 - a. HOK to review management and movement of inmates with the sheriff's department.
 - b. Future expansion is not typically done on top of an existing courthouse. They would like to explore expansion horizontally in lieu of vertically.
 - c. Make sure the central plant is located above flood level.
 - d. Verify what is in the cost estimate, (site work, infrastructure
 - e. Limit escalators to 4 levels
 - f. Reduce judge/staff and inmate elevators



5.2 HOK QUALIFICATIONS

The illustrations and photographs on the following pages exemplify a fraction of the courthouse projects completed by HOK.



Travis County Civil and Family Courthouse, Austin, Texas



Tarrant County Civil and Family Courthouse, Fort Worth, Texas



Miami Dade Children's Courthouse



Alfred A. Arraj US District Courthouse Annex, Denver, Colorado

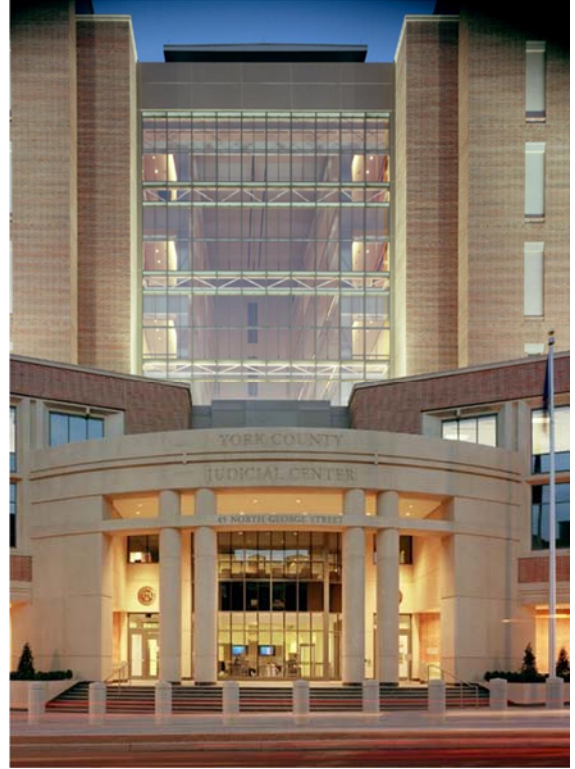




Kent County Courthouse, Grand Rapids, Michigan



Wake County Justice Center, Raleigh, North Carolina



York County Justice Center, York, Pennsylvania



Phoenix Municipal courthouse, Phoenix, Arizona