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720-865-2670**City Officials Break Ground on Denver Justice Center Post Office/Parking Garage Building*****First Phase of Construction Begins on Justice Center Complex***

(DENVER) Mayor John Hickenlooper and District 10 Councilwoman Jeanne Robb joined U.S. Post Office officials, community leaders and members of the Denver Justice Center design and construction team on Thursday to break ground on the Denver Justice Center Post Office and Parking Garage building on the southeast corner of 14th Ave. and Elati St. The groundbreaking of the Post Office and Parking Garage building begins the first phase of construction on the new Denver Justice Center Complex, which will also include a courthouse and detention facility.

"This groundbreaking marks an exciting step forward for both Civic Center's built environment and Denver's public safety and justice systems," Hickenlooper said. "Today we begin transforming paper-and-pencil design into bricks and mortar, the tangible result of months of planning and partnership by community members, architects and contractors, and citizen task forces and juries. As we watch this building begin to take shape, we are grateful to everyone who has generously given their input, and we again thank Denver voters for supporting the Justice Center bond initiative."

Construction on the Post Office and Parking Garage building is anticipated to be completed in 12 months. The U.S. Postal Service will occupy the majority of the retail and office space, and the remaining space will be leased by private retail establishments. The garage will provide parking for courthouse and detention center visitors, as well as designated parking for Denver Public Schools, the Denver Sheriffs Department, and U.S. Postal Service customers and employees.

"I look at the parking garage as a port or point of entry to the Justice Center," said Councilwoman Robb, in whose district the Justice Center will reside. "It should welcome all people – jurists who serve on justice system, neighbors who visit their local post office, victims, and those who support the imprisoned."

The construction of the Post Office and Parking Garage building precedes construction of the courthouse so that the U.S. Postal Service can relocate from the future courthouse site on the northwest corner of 14th Avenue and Elati Street. Construction on the detention facility and courthouse will begin in January 2007 and July 2007, respectively, after the existing Rocky Mountain News building and U.S. Post Office Building are demolished. The entire Justice Center complex is anticipated to be completed in December 2009.

"We recognize former Mayor Wellington Webb for having the foresight to acquire the Rocky Mountain News site at a time and a price that enabled us to move forward with this initiative in the most cost-effective and strategic manner possible," said Hickenlooper, who subsequently enlisted the expertise of the Urban Land Institute to independently confirm the site's suitability and desirability before proceeding with the 2005 bond initiative and land acquisition negotiations with adjacent landowners.

The Post Office and Parking Garage building was designed by AR7 Hoover Desmond Architects of Denver to fit within the Justice Center Framework Plan developed by the Master Urban Design Architect team of David Owen Tryba Architects, DMJM Design and Mundus Bishop Design. It will be constructed by Haselden Construction.

The design was reviewed by a 16-member Citizens Advisory Committee representing adjacent and downtown neighborhoods, including Councilwoman Robb and representatives from Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation, Downtown Denver Partnership, Golden Triangle Association, Golden Triangle Arts District, Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods, and the Silver Triangle neighborhood.

Jacobs is representing the City and County of Denver in the capacity of overall program manager for the downtown site and will provide project management services for the courthouse and detention facility. Nick Kontas, Denver Public Works architect/engineer supervisor, is the project manager for the post office/parking garage building.

The Courthouse design team, Steven Holl Architects of New York and Klipp Design of Denver, and the Detention Facility design team, Hartman Cox of Washington, D.C. and Denver's Oz Architecture, will present their designs at a public meeting on September 21, 2006.

AR7 HooverDesmondArchitects

Recipient of the 2005 AIA-Denver Architect of the Year Award and the 1992 AIA-Western Mountain Region Firm of the Year Award, the AR7 HooverDesmondArchitects team brings parking garage and post office experience to the project. www.ar7.com

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