



REILLY JOHNSON ARCHITECTURE | ANDERSON MASON DALE ARCHITECTS | HELLMUTH, OBATA + KASSABAUM, INC.

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DENVER JUSTICE CENTER FINAL REPORT

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The time and effort expended in defining the needs of this Project, developing design concepts, preparing cost models; and meeting with the neighborhood, citizen's groups, City Council, the Mayor's office, and the "end-users" of this Project has been tremendous.

The planning and design Team of Reilly Johnson Architecture and Anderson Mason Dale Architects - both of Denver - and HOK of St. Louis, was given the full and enthusiastic cooperation and assistance by all representatives from the City and County of Denver, the State of Colorado, and citizen and community groups since beginning work on this project in September 2002.

The RJA/AMD/HOK Team wishes to thank everyone for their selfless contributions to this planning, and hopes to acknowledge, through the following list, most of the organizations and individuals whose input was invaluable in the planning, to date, for this Project. And, in particular, we thank Mr. James Mejia, of the Mayor's Office, who has served as the City's project manager for this work since August 2004.

And, to those organizations or individuals, if any, whose names may have been inadvertently left off this list, we offer our sincerest apologies.

CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

Mayor's Office

The Honorable John W. Hickenlooper, Mayor
 Michael F. Bennet, Chief of Staff
 Sarah Kendall, Deputy Chief of Staff
 James Mejia, Justice Center Project Manager
 Lisa Flores, Policy Analyst
 Happy Haynes, City Council Liaison
 Nick Koncilja, Assistant Justice Center Project Manager
 Ashley Morrison, Justice Center Intern
 Roberto Venegas, Deputy City Council Liaison

Members of the City Council

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 Jeanne Faatz, District 2
 Rosemary E. Rodriguez, District 3
 Peggy Lehmann, District 4
 Marcia Johnson, District 5
 Charlie Brown, District 6
 Kathleen MacKenzie, District 7
 Elbra Wedgeworth, District 8, Council President
 Judy H. Montero, District 9
 Jeanne Robb, District 10
 Michael B. Hancock, District 11
 Carol Boigon, At-Large
 Doug Linkhart, At-Large

Asset Management

Kurt Schumacher, Senior Real Property Agent, (Facility Planning & Mgmt)
 Derek Brown, Senior Real Property Agent, Asset Mgmt.

Budget Office

Margaret Browne, Director of Finance
 Marilyn Miller, Director of Capital Improvement Projects

Community Planning and Development Agency

Peter Park, Director
 Tyler B. Gibbs, Engineer and Architect Supervisor
 Dennis Swain, Development Program Manager
 Kiersten Faulkner, Senior City Planner
 Frances Mishler, Urban Design Architect

Denver County Court

The Honorable Andrew S. Armatas, Presiding Judge
 The Honorable Raymond N. Satter, Former Presiding Judge
 Matthew M. McConville, Court Administrator

Denver Office of Information Technology

John DeAngelis, Division Director
Sara Harmer, Manager

Department of Law

Karen Aviles, Assistant City Attorney, Specialist
Scott Johnson, Assistant City Attorney, Senior

Department of Public Safety

Alvin Lacabe, Manager

Department of Treasury

Cheryl Cohen-Vader, Manager of Revenue
Deb Hinsvark, Senior Financial Analyst

Denver Sheriff Department

Fred J. Oliva, Director of Corrections and Undersheriff
Chief William R. Lovingier
Chief Ronald Foos
Captain Phillip Deeds
Major Marie Kielar
Major Gary Wilson
Captain Elias Diggins
Captain Phil Deeds

Department of Environmental Health

Debra K. Gomez, Environmental Scientist

Denver Police Department

Lt. Dan McCoy, Special Projects Manager
Sharon Sekerak, Facility Maintenance Liaison for the Police Administration

Fraternal Order of Police, Denver Sheriff's Lodge 27

Mike Britton, President
Michael Jackson, Vice President
Frank Gale, State Trustee, National Sergeant at Arms

Public Works

Dennis Royer, Deputy Manager
David Bufalo, Director, Design + Construction Management Division
Terri L. Goodwin, Parking Management Budget Analyst
David Weaver, Engineer Supervisor
Mark Narjarian, Senior Engineer
James Anderson, Assistant Director of Parking
Anderson Moore, Director of Parking

STATE OF COLORADO

Colorado Supreme Court

Mary Mullarkey, Chief Justice

Denver District Court

The Honorable H. Jeffrey Bayless, Chief Judge
The Honorable Karen Ashby, Presiding Judge Juvenile Division
Miles Flesche, District Administrator
Robin Blackwell, Clerk of Denver Juvenile Court
Shana Kloek, Supervisor/Acting Clerk of Juvenile Court

District Attorney Office

Mitch Morrissey, District Attorney
Norm Brisson, Legal Administrator

Public Defenders Office

David S. Kaplan, Colorado State Public Defender
Charles Garcia, Deputy State Public Defender

State Court Administrator's Office

John A. Gossett, Facilities Planner

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Golden Triangle Association

Mickey Zeppelin
Dennis Humphries
Janis Frame
Paul Grattet
Billie Bramhall
Eric Boyd

Downtown Denver Partnership

Cindy Christensen

**REILLY JOHNSON ARCHITECTURE
ANDERSON MASON DALE ARCHITECTS
HOK**

Reilly Johnson Architecture

Robert D. Johnson
Robert B. Brashears
Richard A. Backes
Richard X. Halm
Lisa K. Bobulinski
Rosemary Paolillo

Anderson Mason Dale Architects

Ronald L. Mason
Charles D. Schmidt
Dru Schwyhart
John Baskfield
Todd Swarts
John Selle
Dan Bishop
Dan Craig
John Graham
Kenny Davis
Pam Loomis

HOK

Mike H. Frawley
Robert Wm. Schwartz
Ripley Rasmus
Don Federko
Ben Fehrmann
Derek Prior

Civitas

Urban Design and Planning
Mark Johnson
Dick Farley

McFall Konkel Kimball

Mechanical and Electrical Engineering
Stuart D. Monical
John Jansons

National Center for State Courts

Chang-Ming Yeh

Preconstruction Services, Inc.

Construction Cost Estimating
Bill G. Brown

S. A. Miro

Civil and Structural Engineering
James C. Atkinson
Bradley J. Buehler

Shen Milsom Wilke

Court Communications and Technology
Howard Steele

Systems Design International

Food Service and Laundry Consulting
Eli Osatinski
Steve Young

In November 2001, the voters in the City and County of Denver narrowly defeated a ballot question that would have provided financing of a new Justice Center at the Sears site, near 6th Avenue and Interstate 25. With denial of the ballot question, the City was left without a masterplan for solving the overcrowding of the Denver County Jail at Smith Road, and the Pre-Arrestment Detention Facility (PADF) in downtown Denver.

In the Spring of 2002, the Denver Newspaper Agency - an entity formed by the Joint Operating Agreement (JOA) between the Denver Post and the Rocky Mountain News - announced that it wanted to sell the Rocky Mountain News properties in downtown Denver. These properties included the entire block containing the headquarters office building at 400 West Colfax Avenue, the surface parking lot on the north portion of the block immediately south, and various parcels on the west-side of the 1300 block of Elati Street used for surface parking.

With this land becoming available, the City was presented with an opportunity it had not seen in decades - a single owner willing to sell over five acres, a block from the City & County Building. Consequently the City became interested in examining the potential of these properties to satisfy some of the long-term needs of the Denver Sheriff Department, as well as the County and District courts.

In early May 2002, the City asked Reilly Johnson Architecture (RJA) to assess whether the Rocky Mountain News property could accommodate a Detention Center (of at least 900 beds), and County and District criminal courts currently housed in the City & County Building. Reilly Johnson Architecture prepared a concept design that demonstrated the site (the 400 West Colfax Avenue block) could accommodate at least 1000 beds, and 18 courtrooms, with the certainty of increasing both figures.

In July and August 2002, RJA was engaged by the City to prepare a Master Plan for

the County and District courts to assess the long term needs of civil, criminal, probate, and juvenile courts. This planning confirmed that the City & County Building could accommodate Traffic, Civil, and Probate courts for the next 20+ years, if the County and District criminal courts, and the Juvenile/Family courts were moved out of the City & County Building into a new Denver Justice Center.

In September 2002 the City contracted with Reilly Johnson Architecture (Denver) and its Team - the principal members of which included Anderson Mason Dale Architects (Denver), and HOK (St. Louis), to: determine the space requirements and other programmatic needs, prepare a conceptual design, and develop a total project cost model for a proposed Denver Justice Center on the property then owned by the Rocky Mountain News (Scripps Howard Corporation) in downtown Denver, as described above.

By late October 2002, the work of the RJA Team had progressed far enough to demonstrate that a Pre-Sentenced Detention Center of 1500 beds, and a Criminal Courts facility of 30 courtrooms could be built on the 400 West Colfax Avenue block; and that a Juvenile Courts facility of 11 courtrooms could be built on the surface parking lot on the north side of the Pre-Arrestment Detention Center (PADF); and that a parking structure of 500 spaces could be built on the north end of the block immediately south of the 400 West Colfax Avenue block.

On November 11, 2002 the City closed on the purchase of the properties from the Rocky Mountain News for \$16.1 million.

In July 2003, Mayor John Hickenlooper and 10 new City Council members took office. For the next five months, the RJA/AMD/HOK Team continued its work on the project and produced its final report (11" x 17"), titled Denver Justice Center, dated December 19, 2003.

As Mayor Hickenlooper had promised in his campaign for mayor, he invited the

Urban Land Institute (ULI) to come to Denver to examine the merits of the proposal to build a Denver Justice Center downtown.

The ULI accepted the Mayor's invitation and was in Denver from Sunday, April 11th through Friday, April 16th, 2004, with a panel of 5 experts from around the country. During that week, the Reilly Johnson Architecture Team, and many others, provided written and graphic materials, and made presentations to the ULI.

The ULI publicly presented its recommendations for the Project to the City on Friday, April 16, 2004. Their recommendations were that the Project was very much needed, and that the downtown location was appropriate. However, their recommendations included some changes in what, and where, to build, as follows:

1. The Criminal Courts facility and the Pre-Sentenced Detention Center should be split into two distinct buildings; and the City should also acquire the block to the west of the Rocky Mountain News to provide enough land for the buildings to be separated.
2. The Juvenile/Family Courts should be co-located with the Criminal Courts rather than be located in a separate building on the north side of the PADF as previously proposed.
3. A Parking Structure should be built to serve the new Pre-Sentenced Detention Center and the new Criminal Courts facility.
4. Once the new Pre-Sentenced Detention Center is built downtown, the Pre-Arrestment Detention Facility (PADF) should be converted to other uses.

The County Jail at Smith Road and Havana Streets should be used for "long-term detention" primarily for the housing of "sentenced" inmates.

In May 2004 the Mayor's Office asked the Reilly Johnson Architecture Team to submit a Proposal to continue its work on the Denver Justice Center, in the context of the ULI recommendations. And, in early June 2004, the Reilly Johnson Architecture Team was asked to begin this second phase of its work on the Denver Justice Center.

The principal components of the RJA Team's scope of work for this second (post-ULI) phase included:

1. Revising the detailed Space Requirements for Criminal/Juvenile Courts and the Pre-Sentenced Detention Center necessitated by the separating of courts and detention, and by the combining of criminal and juvenile courts.
2. Developing conceptual Space Requirements for the expansion of the County Jail at Smith Road
3. Developing design concepts for the Criminal and Juvenile Courts, Pre-sentenced Detention Center, and the Parking Structure including: Site Plans, Detailed Floor Plans, Building Sections, and Elevations.
4. Developing design concepts for the expansion of the County Jail at Smith Road including Site Plan and simplified Floor Plan.
5. Preparing "core-shell" floor plans for the PADF (interior demolition, new street level public lobby, and new: exits, telecommunications and electrical closets, janitor closets, and restrooms).
6. Preparation of Total Project Cost Models, including detailed construction cost estimates for all construction downtown including conversion of the PADF to an office building, and the Parking Structure.
7. Preparation of a Total Project Cost Model for expansion of the County Jail at Smith Road.
8. Preparation of conceptual renderings of the Justice Center.
9. Attendance at Meetings with the Golden Triangle Association, City Council, and citizen groups.

The Reilly Johnson Architecture Team's second phase (post-ULI) work began in July and August 2004 with the development of urban design concepts dealing with the "siting" of the two primary buildings (courthouse and detention center) downtown, and related public and staff parking.

One of the most important constraints on this urban design was the height limitation of nominally 100 feet, along the Delaware Street "edge" of the 400 West Colfax Avenue block. This constraint is established by the State Capitol Mountain View Ordinance, governing the height of buildings when looking west from the west steps of the State Capitol.

The design concept that prevailed was to place the Pre-Sentenced Detention Center on the "east block" (400 West Colfax - Rocky Mountain News Headquarters) adjacent to the US Mint, and to place the Courts facility on the "west block" (500 West Colfax). Since the US Mint relies on the 1400 block of Delaware Street for arrival of all truck deliveries to its facility, it seemed this "service related" nature of Delaware would always exist, and, therefore, that the "service" aspects of the detention center (arrestee arrival, food delivery, trash pick-up) might also make use of this street.

It was also considered by many that the court facility should be on the "west-block" to serve as a "bookend" for the complex, precluding any possibility that the detention center would grow westward,

and providing what most thought would be a more attractive building for those approaching the Justice Center from the west on Colfax Avenue.

The Pre-Sentenced Detention Center and the Courts facility would be connected underground to allow for the secure movement of inmates to, and from, courts; and to allow for the movement of judges and magistrates from their parking under the Pre-Sentenced Detention Center; to, and from, the Courts facility. In this design concept, Gene Amole Way (Elati Street) remained open to vehicular traffic.

Among other things, the Pre-Sentenced Detention Center is programmed to have 20 typical inmate housing units comprised of 32 double-bunked cells providing a capacity of 64 beds each. There are also four Special Management inmate housing units of 48 single-bunked cells each, and a Medical Unit of 31 beds. As programmed, the total "bed count" is 1,503. Staff parking for detention officers, and those judges and magistrates working in the new Courts facility, was proposed to be under the new Pre-Sentenced Detention Center.

With the exception of one District Court "Special Proceedings" courtroom - programmed to have spectator seating for 120 - all the courtrooms in the new Courts facility were programmed to be identical "jury" (possessing a 14-seat jury "box") courtrooms of 1,836 square feet, with spectator seating for 80.

Various concepts were examined for "siting" the Parking Structure, and because of the desire to have significant open space (hardscape and softscape) around the Pre-Sentenced Detention Center and the Courts buildings; and to mitigate the risk, and effects, of any bomb blast, it was decided that the safest and most cost-effective location for the Parking Structure should be on the north end of the block immediately south of the 400 West Colfax block.

The design concepts prepared by the RJA Team, included the possibility of relocating the United States Postal Service from the west-side of the 1400 block of Elati Street (Gene Amole Way) to the ground floor of the proposed Parking Structure on the south side of 14th Avenue. And, they included reserving the top deck of the Parking Structure (nominally 150 parking spaces) for the Denver Public Schools (Emily Griffith Opportunity School) since their parking on the “west block” would be lost in construction of the new Courts facility.

This design concept was not intended to be binding upon the design work that would follow a successful election on May 3, 2005. Rather, it was intended, and necessary, to enable the following:

1. Demonstrate that the programmed Space Requirements for the Pre-Sentenced Detention Center and the Courts (criminal and juvenile) could be satisfied on the two blocks, while honoring the height limitation imposed by the Mountain View Ordinance, having reasonable vehicular ingress and egress, and allowing for appropriately sized and placed public “hardscape” and “softscape”.
2. Demonstrate that a design solution was achievable within the programmed total gross square footage requirements for both (detention and courts) buildings.
3. Provide a “tool” for examination by the Sheriff Department enabling them to establish Staffing Requirements for the Pre-Sentenced Detention.
4. Provide a “tool” for discussion with the Golden Triangle Neighborhood Association that would assist in the understanding of the possible scale and location of the buildings.

5. Provide a “tool” for use in preparation of the detailed Construction Cost Estimates, affording those estimates more credibility and reliability.

In October 2004, the Mayor announced the creation of the Justice Center Task Force comprised of three Citizen’s committees to assist with the planning for the Denver Justice Center. These committees were: Program, Finance, and Design/Construction. The RJA Team attended the meetings of, and made presentations to, these three Citizen’s committees from early October 2004 through early January 2005.

From August 2004, through January 2005 the RJA Team made numerous architectural models and three-dimensional computer renderings of the downtown buildings in response to the comments of the Golden Triangle Association, the Justice Center Task Force, the Courts (County, District, and Juvenile), the Sheriff Department, Council members, and the Mayor’s office.

In addition to the Team’s planning for downtown facilities, planning was also undertaken for the County Jail at Smith Road, as recommended by the ULL. That planning was to eventually demolish the physically and functionally obsolete Buildings 6 - 13 on the south and east ends of the complex, and to construct a new inmate housing building on the land where Buildings 6-8 now stand.

Numerous Construction Cost Estimates and Total Project Cost models were prepared for the three buildings downtown (Pre-Sentenced Detention Center, Courts Facility, and Parking Structure), as well as for the demolition and construction at the County Jail at Smith Road, and the conversion of the existing Pre-Arrestment Detention Facility (PADF) to general office use. Detailed construction cost estimates are provided in the Appendix of this booklet.

After much consideration by the City, and by the Justice Center Task Force, of all the programmatic (space requirements), concept designs, and cost modeling prepared by the RJA Team, the scope of the Project was established as the following.

1. Pre-Sentenced Detention Center

This facility has a “rated” (per the American Correctional Association Standards) of about 1500 beds and, among other things, includes two County Court Arraignment courtrooms, and underground parking for 164 detention officers, and 37 judges and magistrates. This building is located on the “east block”. The total programmed size of this facility is 430,864 gross square feet, plus 77,520 gross square feet for underground parking.

2. Criminal and Juvenile Courts Facility

This building is to be located on the block west of the present Rocky Mountain News. It would have a total of 35 courtrooms, including 34 typical jury courtrooms, 1 special proceedings courtroom, and in-custody defendant holding below grade for adults and juveniles. Total programmed size of this facility is 320,150 gross square feet.

3. 14th Avenue Parking Structure

This building of 254,000 gross square feet, is proposed to be built on the south side of 14th Avenue between Delaware and Elati streets. The first floor would contain approximately 22,500 square feet of retail/commercial space to fulfill requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Total parking spaces in the structure would be approximately 684, with 140 of those dedicated to the Denver Public Schools as replacement for parking they had on the “west block”.

4. Inmate Housing Building at the County Jail (Smith Road).

This building would be built on the site of current Building 6 - 8. It would be 82,000 gross square feet, having 6 identical housing units of 32 double-bunked cells each, with a total capacity of 384 beds. This new housing building will be sited within the context of a master plan for future expansion.

The total cost of the Project, excluding the PADF (the PADF was not to be financed via the ballot question), and interest on the debt is \$378 million. Part Five of this booklet presents a summary breakdown of that figure, and Total Project Cost Models for each of the downtown buildings and for the demolition and new construction at the County Jail at Smith Road.

In early February 2005, the City Council voted unanimously in support of a resolution to place a question on the ballot concerning the financing of this proposed Justice Center.

On May 3, 2005 the voters of the City and County of Denver approved financing for the Project by a 56 to 44 percent margin.

Construction should begin downtown in 2006, and construction should begin at Smith Road in 2010 after construction of the Pre-Sentenced Detention Center is completed downtown.