



Media Advisory

Board of Supervisors to receive Courts Master Plan from National Center for State Courts

Monday, May 20, 2013 – 9:30 a.m.

What: The Polk County Board of Supervisors will receive a presentation of the Courts Master Plan from the National Center for State Courts and OPN Architects.

Who: Polk County Board of Supervisors

When: 9:30 a.m., Monday, May 20, 2013

Where: Polk Administrative Office Building
111 Court Avenue, Room 120
Des Moines, Iowa

Background: On April 29, 2008, a referendum to construct additional court space failed. The referendum considered a courthouse plan to address the current and future space needs of the courts. The plan included the full use and renovation of the historic courthouse and construction of a new court facility on County owned land immediately south of the present courthouse site at a 2009 construction cost not to exceed \$127 million dollars. By state law, Polk County is responsible to provide space for its state courts. Polk County's Courthouse was originally built in 1906 with four courtrooms.

Following the defeated referendum, the Board of Supervisors directed the County Administrator to develop a phased approach plan and financial scenario to alleviate the courts space issue based upon the recommendations of the National Center for State Courts. A Phase I Study was completed in August of 2010 and included the establishment of a criminal courts annex within the old main jail.

The Courts Master Plan which will be presented on May 20th, outlines a phased approach to resolving the courts space issue which includes utilizing existing downtown buildings (the old main jail and Wellmark), moving court and County Attorney functions out of leased space, and provides for the renovation of the historic courthouse.

Contact: Sue Elliott, Project Manager
Polk County Board of Supervisors
(515) 286-3128

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