

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

*Superior Court – Building 321
3221 Cameron Park Dr.
Cameron Park*

Reason for the Report

The Grand Jury selected the Superior Court - Cameron Park as a general review for 2002/2003.

Scope of the Investigation

The members of the Grand Jury:

- Made unannounced visits to the Superior Court – Cameron Park on December 12, 2002 and March 24, 2003;
- Toured the facilities and grounds with the Clerk and the Bailiff ;
- Was briefed on the various judicial operations of the facility;
- Inspected the building and grounds;
- Spoke informally with various staff members;
- Reviewed previous Grand Jury reports and found no findings or recommendations for year's 1999/2000, 2000/2001 and 2001/2002.

Background

The building was constructed in 1982. The building served as a criminal court until January 2003 when it was converted for use as a civil court. This change was made to consolidate the criminal courts at the main courthouse in Placerville.

The landscaping appears modern and adequately maintained. The overall condition of the building is acceptable, however, there are some outstanding maintenance issues that need to be addressed as listed in the findings.

Findings

F1. The prisoners' entrance door is rusting.

Response to F1: The respondent agrees with the finding. The County agrees that the identified condition exists. However, the existence of the condition does not render the building deficient or unsuitable as a court facility. As the grand jury's Background section points out, the "overall condition of the building is acceptable." The County provides

necessary and suitable facilities for the courts, taking into account the reasonable needs of the court and the county's fiscal condition. The County also maintains the facilities at an appropriate and adequate level to support the designed level of service. None of the conditions described in the grand jury's findings present a significant threat to life, safety or health; there is no unacceptable seismically hazardous condition; and the conditions alone or in their totality are not significant to the functionality of the facility, so the conditions do not render the court facility legally deficient.

As the result of recent legislative enactments, the County will soon undertake the process of negotiating an agreement with the State to transfer ownership of local court facilities to the State, and for future payments representing historic maintenance and operations costs. Once the facility is transferred, the State will assume the obligation to maintain it, and can then determine the appropriate maintenance standard it wishes to fund.

F2. The prisoners' entrance wooden door frame is deteriorating.

Response to F2: The respondent agrees with the finding. Please see response to F1, above.

F3. The downspouts at rear of the building are not connected to the drainage field pipes.

Response to F3: The respondent agrees with the finding. Please see response to F1, above.

F4. The rain gutters are full of leaves and pine needles.

Response to F4: The respondent agrees with the finding. Please see response to F1, above.

F5. The HVAC vents/registers are dirty.

Response to F5: The respondent agrees with the finding. Please see response to F1, above.

F6. The courtroom ceiling tiles are water stained.

Response to F6: The respondent agrees with the finding. Please see response to F1, above.

F7. The courtroom and office area walls have cracks.

Response to F7: The respondent agrees with the finding. Please see response to F1, above.

F8. The drinking fountain fascia plate is improperly attached.

Response to F8: The respondent agrees with the finding. Please see response to F1, above.

Recommendations

R1. The prisoners' entrance door should be repaired and painted.

Response to R1: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. General Services has scheduled the repair and painting of the door to be completed in September, 2003. However, it should be noted that the grand jury found that the overall condition of the building is “acceptable” in its current state.

The existence of the identified condition does not present a significant threat to life, safety or health, nor does it present an unacceptable seismically hazardous condition, nor does it alone, or when combined with the other conditions identified in the grand jury’s findings, significantly affect the functionality of the facility. The existence of this condition does not mean that the building cannot sustain its designed level of service.

As the result of recent legislative enactments, the County will *soon* undertake the process of negotiating an agreement with the State to transfer ownership of local court facilities to the State, and for future payments representing historic maintenance and operations costs. Once the facility is transferred, the State will assume the obligation to maintain it, and can then determine the appropriate maintenance standard it wishes fund. R2. The prisoners’ entrance door frame should be repaired.

Response to R2: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. General Services has scheduled the repair and painting of the door to be completed in September, 2003. Please see the response to R1, above.

- R3. The downspouts at rear of the building should be reconnected to the drainage field pipes.

Response to R3: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. Rain gutters and downspouts are inspected, cleaned and repaired every fall in accord with an annual maintenance schedule. The County expects that the condition will be inspected and appropriate work completed by the end of October, 2003. Please see the response to R1, above.

- R4. The rain gutters should be cleaned.

Response to R4: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. Rain gutters and downspouts are inspected, cleaned and repaired every fall in accord with an annual maintenance schedule. The County expects that the condition will be inspected and appropriate work completed by the end of October 2003. Please see the response to R1, above.

- R5. The HVAC vents/registers should be periodically cleaned.

Response to R5: The recommendation has been implemented Court facilities are periodically cleaned according to a maintenance schedule. The vents should be cleaned in September 2003. Please see the response to R1, above.

R6. The source of the water staining the ceiling tiles of the courtroom should be investigated and repairs should be made.

Response to R6: The recommendation has been implemented. The roof was repaired in January 2003. The County does not believe that there is any active leak at this time. Please see the response to R1, above.

R7. The cracks in the courtroom and office area walls should be repaired.

Response to R7: The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. General Services will consider adding this recommendation to its Capital Improvement Project. It is not clear when any repair will be completed. As explained in the response to R1, above, the County will soon undertake the process of negotiating an agreement with the State to transfer ownership of local court facilities to the State, and for future payments representing historic maintenance and operations costs. Once the facility is transferred, the State will assume the obligation to maintain it, and can then determine the appropriated maintenance standard it wishes to fund. It is impossible to predict at this time how long this process will take nor when it will be completed. All maintenance and repair issues will be affected by this negotiation. Please see the response to R1, above.

R8. The drinking fountain fascia plate should be properly reattached.

Response to R8: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is unreasonable. Court facilities are periodically cleaned, maintained and repaired according to a maintenance schedule. The drinking fountain fascia should be rectified in September 2003. Please see the response to R1, above.

Responses Required for Findings

F1 through F8

El Dorado County Department of General Services
Chief Executive Officer for Superior Court

Responses Required for Recommendations

R1 through R8

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