

# Augusta County Courthouses



# History of Augusta County Circuit Courthouse



Augusta County established-1738  
Government established-1745

- 1<sup>st</sup> Courthouse-1748
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Courthouse-1755
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Courthouse-1789
- 4<sup>th</sup> Courthouse-1855 (Thomas Blackburn)
- 5<sup>th</sup> Courthouse-1901 (T. J. Collins)
  - Expanded-1939
  - Remodeled-1949
  - Remodeled-2004
  - Remodeled-2014





## County Seat: Administrative center or seat of government.

- All County functions were at one time located in the City.
- Since 1990 government functions have been relocating to Verona. The decision to purchase the Smith Transfer facility allowed for adequate space to relocate the services.
- Functions currently located in Verona:
  1. County Administrative offices (Co. Admin, Com Dev, Parks and Rec)
  2. School Administration
  3. Sheriffs Office
  4. Social Services
  5. Middle River Regional Jail
  6. Juvenile Detention Center
  7. Service Authority
- All that remains to have all county government functions in one place is the courts.



## General District and Juvenile Domestic Relations Courts

- 1953 General District Court included within County Office Building (Staunton)
- 1990 Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court relocated to General Courts Building (County offices moved to Verona)
- 2004 / 05 General District, Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts remodeled (Sheriff and Jail moved to Verona) – \$1.2 Million





## Courts Analysis

- 2002 Courthouse Study (10-15 year scenario)
- 2007 General District and Juvenile and Domestic Study
- 2008 Old Western State Conceptual Design
- 2012 Frazier Study (1901 Building)
- 2013 Virginia Judicial Workload Assessment Report
- 2015 Moseley Conceptual Design (Verona)
- 2015 Frazier Consolidated Conceptual Design (Staunton)



# Considerations

**Functionality**  
**Security/Safety**  
**Accessibility**  
**Financial**  
**Other**





## Consider **Functionality**

- Space to meet current and future needs, including future expansions
- Proximity to other Augusta County government functions, especially public safety, jail and Sheriff's Office
- Efficiency and current code compliance for electrical, mechanical, plumbing and structural systems
- Technology needs for now and for the future
- Location of all three courts and court functions to each other



## Consider **Security and Safety**

- Separation of victims, witnesses, incarcerated, staff and the public
- Secure transport between courthouse and jail
- Adequate meeting space and safe circulation
- Secure parking
- Adequate fire protection and emergency exits
- Proximity of the Sheriff's Office and regional jail to the courts





## Consider **Accessibility**

- Proximity to major highways
- Ample handicapped parking
- Ample free on-site parking
- Accessibility inside of the buildings



## Consider Financial

- Building maintenance costs of an old building compared to a new building
- Operational savings
- Energy savings
- Staff efficiency savings
- Opportunities for increased tax base
- Utilization of existing land
- No permit fees or flood studies



## Consider Other

- Ambiance of historical 1901 Circuit Courthouse
- Moving centuries old County Seat from Staunton
- Separation of joint Juvenile Domestic Relations Courts, if moved to Verona
- Requirements to comply with the Virginia Courthouse Guidelines.



## Progression to Referendum

- **2012 Frazier Study;** Augusta County Courthouse Feasibility Study - Circuit Courthouse only - \$11 Million\*
- **2014;** Determined that the needs for General District Court, Juvenile Domestic Relations Courts, and related court functions must be included
- **2015 Moseley Study;** Space Needs Analysis & Conceptual Design for New Courts Facility - \$45Million\*\*
- **2015 Moseley Estimate;** \$45 Million Courts Facility located in Staunton, plus site specific estimated costs - \$59 Million plus unknown cost such as additional property, hazardous material abatement, etc.\*\*\*
- **2015 Frazier Study;** Staunton and Augusta County Conceptual Design for Consolidated Courts Facilities - \$51 Million\*\*\*\*

\* \$9.5M – 2012 estimate escalated to 2018 construction - \$11M

\*\* \$44M – 2015 estimate escalated to 2018 construction - \$45M

\*\*\* \$58M – 2015 estimate escalated to 2018 construction - \$59M

\*\*\*\* \$48M – 2015 estimate escalated to 2018 construction - \$51M



## 2012 Frazier Study – Circuit Courthouse



### Includes:

- Circuit Courthouse Only
- Renovation & Expansion
- 23,991 SF (3,886 SF addition)
- \$9,501,310 (Fall 2013 Construction)
- Unknown costs: Relocation of the courts during construction



## 2012 Frazier Study – Circuit Courthouse



- Excludes General District or Juvenile Domestic Relation Courts or other Court functions
- Does not provide juried courtrooms for 2 Judges for the next 20 years
- Courtroom B does not meet Virginia Courthouse Guidelines
- Inadequate size for holding cells
- Inmates and staff are on same circulation pattern

## 2012 Frazier Study – Circuit Courthouse



- No on-site parking – use on-street or municipal parking lots and deck
- Limited on-site handicapped parking
- No secure parking for the Judge
- Records would remain in the basement areas
- Historic preservation requirements and potential waivers to Code
- Does not allow for future growth
- Inadequate restroom facilities



# 2015 Frazier Study - Consolidation



Includes:

- Consolidation between Augusta County and Staunton
- Includes Circuit, General District and Juvenile Domestic Relations Courts for both Staunton and Augusta County
- 130,167 SF in 3 buildings
- \$48 Million (Fall 2016 Construction)





# 2015 Frazier Study Consolidation



- Utilizes 3 different Buildings: 1901 Courthouse, Cochran Building & new 84,000 SF Building
  - Purchase property (Union Bank) - \$2,400,000 est.
  - Building demolition (Union Bank) - \$450,000 est.
  - Construct new building – \$21,561,250 est.
  - Renovation of the Cochran Building - \$2,650,000 est.
  - Renovation & expansion of the 1901 Courthouse - \$7,700,000 est. (exc. basement)
  - Unknown cost: Relocation of the courts during construction



## 2015 Frazier Study - Consolidation

- Less efficiency with the 3 separate buildings to maintain
- Multiple security stations – Additional staff needed
- Future expansion - Only expansion opportunity is to build additional floors to an existing building
- The conceptual plan generally meets the Virginia Courthouse Guidelines – Courtrooms are of minimum
- One entrance in the new building
- Requires General Assembly approval



## 2015 Frazier Study - Consolidation

- Circuit Court Clerk function will be separated from Courts - Offices proposed on 2 floors and 2 separate buildings
- General District Clerks offices proposed on 2 floors
- Flood plain / flood way and new development
- Need to upgrade Johnson Street parking garage - \$250,000 est.



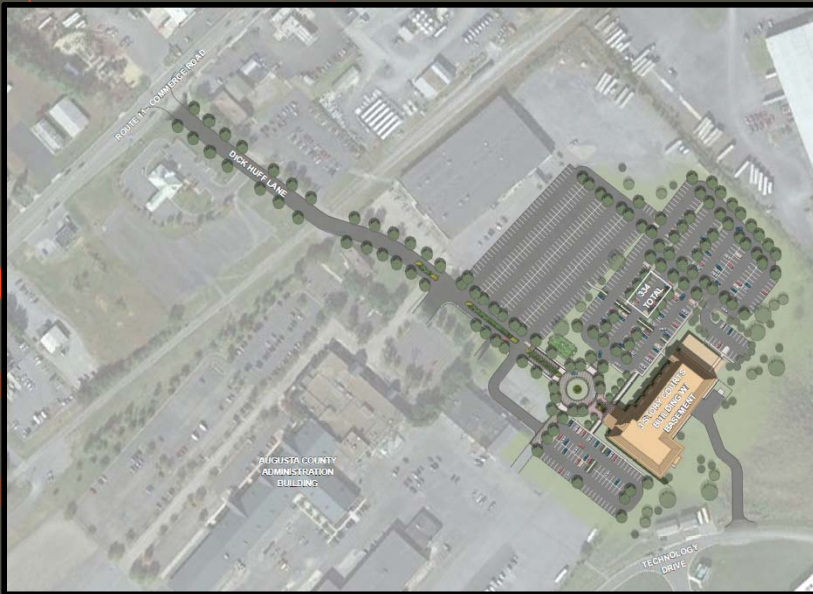




## 2015 Moseley Study - Verona

Includes:

- All three Courts and Court functions in one building
- New construction on existing land
- 118,170 SF
- \$45 Million (Fall 2018 Construction)





## 2015 Moseley Study - Verona

- Existing number of courtrooms – 5
  - \* One of which meets the Virginia Courthouse Guidelines
- Existing total square footage of court facilities – 67,965 SF
- Current space needs – 89,712 SF
- Proposed building - 118,170 SF
  - \* Includes 20 year planning horizon



**Augusta County Courts – Preliminary Budget Estimate**

May 2, 2016 as prepared by Moseley Architects

**Construction Cost**

New Courts Building	118,170 SF @ \$253	\$29,900,000
Site Work	14 acres	<u>\$3,900,000</u>
<b>Construction Cost Subtotal</b>		<b>\$33,800,000</b>

**Other Costs**

Furniture Allowance		\$2,960,000
Geotechnical Study		\$10,000
Boundary & Topographic Survey		\$10,000
Testing & Inspections		\$338,000
Architectural/Engineering Services		\$2,940,000
Data/Telephone Allowance		\$598,000
Moving Expenses Allowance		<u>\$20,000</u>
<b>Other Costs Subtotal</b>		<b>\$6,876,000</b>

**Project Cost Subtotal** \$40,676,000

**Budget Contingency** \$4,070,000

**Total Preliminary Budget Estimate** \$44,746,000

**Financial - Payment Plan**

The new Courthouse in Verona is estimated to cost \$45,000,000.

Additional tax increases are not planned in order to fund the Courthouse in Verona. As with current school construction, projects have been planned for and budgeted accordingly without a tax increase.

The County will borrow funds to pay for the Courts Complex. Payments will be made over a period of years, using funds set aside from the sale of surplus property and the 2015 real estate tax increase. A portion of future growth in real estate values will be dedicated to funding the project, until such a time the debt is fully funded.





## Courthouse Referendum

Board of Supervisors approved the resolution and petition to allow the County to go to referendum on May 11, 2016

Date: Tuesday, November 8, 2016

### Ballot Question:

Shall the Courthouse of Augusta County be removed to the Augusta County Government Center complex in Verona, Virginia, and shall the Board of Supervisors be permitted to spend \$45,000,000 therefore?

Yes     No



## If the Referendum does not Pass

- If citizens vote “no,” the matter cannot be reconsidered by the voters for ten years.
- The County Circuit Court Judge could rule that the existing Court facilities are not “secure, in repair, or otherwise sufficient”. If they are found to be insufficient, required improvements could follow. The cost is depended upon the improvements required.

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