

# JEFFERSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND JUDICIAL COMPLEX



# ENHANCING CONSTITUENT ACCESS, CUTTING COSTS, AND MODERNIZING OPERATIONS



For over a decade, Jefferson County officials have worked to address the challenges of balancing public access, limited space, aging infrastructure, and operational efficiency. To meet these challenges, the County Commission has approved a purchase and sale agreement for 393 N. Lawrence Street and 330 N. George Street, which will serve as the future home of consolidated County operations in a modern government and judicial complex.

Currently, the County operates out of aging buildings with numerous unsecured access points, prompting restrictions on public entry to ensure safety. These facilities also incur high energy costs and face significant deferred maintenance, placing an unsustainable strain on county resources.

The need for a long-term solution has grown even more pressing with the requirement to relocate the Tax Office to accommodate an additional magistrate in the courthouse. The purchase of the new facilities will address these longstanding issues by enhancing security, improving public access, reducing operational costs, and modernizing County services to better serve the residents of Jefferson County.

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# ADDRESSING THE CONCERNS

## 01 > SPACE

The new facilities will address critical space limitations, providing adequate room for staff and services to better meet constituent needs. Current square footage- **96,354 / 150,879** future square footage

## 03 > ACCESS

By consolidating entry points, the new complex will enhance secure and efficient access for both staff and constituents.

## 02 > COST

The move will significantly reduce energy and repair costs associated with maintaining outdated and historic buildings. Estimated annual energy and operating costs savings- **\$286,000.**

## 04 > MODERNIZATION

The complex will modernize county operations, fostering a more professional environment with updated infrastructure and technology to enhance efficiency and service delivery.



# CONCERN: GOVERNMENT SPACE

As the county has expanded in square footage over the years, it has done so without a strategic plan, resulting in a patchwork of scattered buildings poorly suited for county operations and court space. For example, the Tax Office has been located in the court building, which created complications as the number of magistrates increased. The Commission was only able to secure a temporary approval while searching for a permanent solution to relocate the Tax Office.

Additionally, for decades, the Commission has relied on renting ad hoc meeting spaces. In 2024 alone, the Commission has had to open overflow meeting space or rent larger venues six times due to the current facility being too small to meet constituent access needs.

The capacity in the current Commission meeting room is under 100. The capacity of largest meeting room in the 393 building is over 300.



+30%

The 393 Building is 30% larger (square footage) than the current County Complex.



+342%

The current County Commission meeting room is approximately 1,000 square feet. In contrast, the meeting room at 393 N. Lawrence Street will offer 4,425 square feet of space. Additionally, the move will eliminate the need for leased and rented office space, resulting in long-term cost savings and improved operational efficiency.



# CONCERN: COURT SPACE

The addition of a fourth magistrate and a full circuit has overwhelmed current facilities, creating safety concerns—especially with detainee security. Years of unplanned growth have resulted in scattered, inadequate buildings that no longer meet judicial or public needs. A strategic, permanent solution is overdue.

The Historic Courthouse lacks essential modern amenities. Elevator access is limited and operationally sporadic, creating accessibility challenges. Public restrooms are also limited or altogether unavailable in certain areas, further complicating the delivery of efficient and effective court services.

The Historic Courthouse holds an important place in Jefferson County's heritage, but its lack of modern amenities makes it particularly challenging to meet the current and growing space needs of the judiciary.



+73%

The 330 Building is 73% larger (19,110 sq ft.) than the current space occupied by the judiciary.



+100%

The Historic Courthouse has one staff elevator and one public elevator that rarely operates and does not meet modern accessibility standards. The 330 building will have 4 elevators.



+100%

330 will house 100% of detainees in the same building as the courtrooms. This design significantly improves safety and security during detainee transport.

# CONCERN: COST

The proposed complex is a more cost-effective and space-efficient option for the County. The current buildings, totaling 96,354 square feet, face imminent expenses of approximately **\$2,000,000** for major repairs and replacements to components like HVAC systems, roofs, and windows within the next ten years. Frequent “churn,” involving continuous office rearrangements and minor renovations to “band-aid” space issues, leads to inefficient HVAC operations, costly utilities, frequent networking and electrical reconfigurations, and disruptions that lower productivity. The current governmental and judicial facilities also have higher utility and operating costs, averaging \$0.79 per square foot per month and \$0.92 per square foot per month, respectively-- leading to an annual expense of \$954,600. The 393 and 330 buildings, despite being larger, boast more efficient utility and operating costs. The estimated annual energy and operating **costs savings is \$286,000**.

The 393 building is **LEED Certified Platinum**, the highest level in the globally recognized Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) system, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. The 330 building is **LEED Certified Gold**.

These certifications ensure reduced environmental impact, energy savings, and healthier indoor spaces that enhance occupant well-being.



**-30%**

The new governmental and judicial complex, although larger, has an annual cost savings of **\$286,000** for energy and operating costs



**-\$2,000,000**

Cost savings on deferred maintenance.

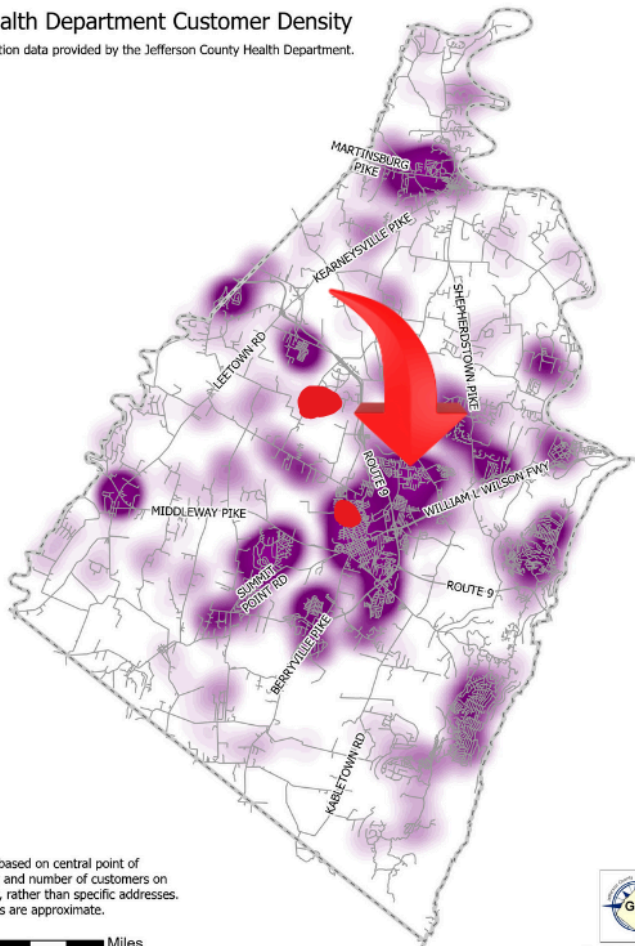




# CONCERN: ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT AND COURT OPPORATIONS

Multiple entry points to county government and court buildings cause confusion, accessibility issues, security concerns, and inefficiencies in service delivery. Visitors often face navigational challenges due to scattered entrances, leading to frustration and difficulty completing transactions across dispersed offices. Limited connectivity between departments exacerbates these challenges, requiring multiple trips between offices. Not all entry points are equipped with necessary accessibility features like ramps or automatic doors, restricting access for those with mobility issues. The Jefferson County Health Department's remote location and lack of public transportation further hinder access for disadvantaged individuals needing health services. Streamlining entry points and improving accessibility are crucial for enhancing the public experience and equitable service access.

Health Department Customer Density  
Location data provided by the Jefferson County Health Department.



100%

Departments or courts accessible through one entry point.



+300%

Increase in residents able to attend in-person Commission meetings due to increased meeting space.



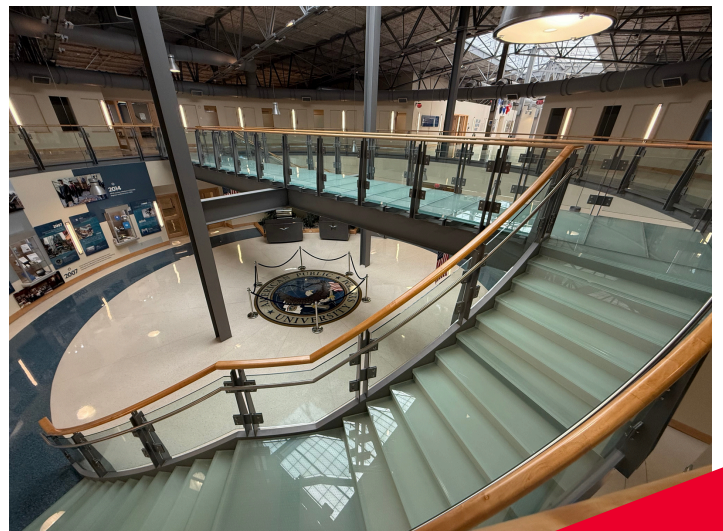
+350%

Increased parking to ensure access.



# CONCERN: MODERNIZATION

The 393 and 330 buildings stand out as superior, modern facilities compared to the current aging and historic county buildings. Unlike the older structures that face limitations due to outdated infrastructure and design constraints, the 393 and 330 buildings incorporate contemporary features that support efficient operations, flexibility, and adaptability. Their advanced HVAC systems, energy-efficient lighting, and modern building materials contribute to better environmental control, lower utility costs, and improved occupant comfort. Additionally, the 393 and 330 buildings' layouts support modern workspaces, allowing for seamless reconfigurations and future technological upgrades without the challenges posed by retrofitting historic buildings. This modernization ensures enhanced productivity, operational efficiency, and a more sustainable future for county services.



# CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS- BUY VS. REBUILD

In the early phases of planning, consideration was given to constructing new governmental and court facilities. Under this scenario, the current buildings would be demolished to provide space for the new construction.

Construction costs for a new mid-rise commercial buildings range from \$330 to \$870 per square foot. The mid-range of \$600 per square foot was used for this construction cost estimate.

The estimated new construction cost of a 105,415 mid-rise commercial building, a 45,464 court complex with sally port, and a parking deck would be **\$54,000,000 (mid-rise office building)**, **\$35,100,000 (court complex with parking deck)** for a total of **\$89,100,000**.

*Other expenses to consider with new construction:*

During construction, county departments and courts would need to be relocated. Unless there is another alternative locally, temporary office trailers would need to be leased. This also presents a challenge in finding a suitable location to place the trailers.



-73.6%

Purchasing 393 and 330 represents a **73.6% cost savings** over new construction.



-4 YEARS

New construction would put departments and courts in upheaval for four years, significantly reducing work efficiency. In comparison, purchasing 393 and 330 offers a **four-year savings** over the costs and disruptions associated with new construction.



-2 YEARS

The Commission has received “temporary approval” from the WV Supreme Court. The Commission meets final approval **2-years early**.

# REVIEW TIMELINE

PAGE 1 OF 7  
(1990- 2019)



1990-2016

Expansion of the Charles Town campus begins.

- All buildings within the 100 block of East Washington Street are acquired and occupied by County departments.
- St. Margaret's Judicial Building opens.
- The Old County Jail was renovated for court and office space.
- The Sheriff's office relocates to Bardane.
- The Gray Building was acquired for the Prosecuting Attorney's office.
- Expansions are limited to those immediately necessary- no strategic planning for future needs.



2019

The County Commission identifies need for significant building improvements to meet code, access, and space needs. The Commission approves first space study to ascertain needs and understand options.



MAY 2019

Planning began regarding a new County administrative building. A working group was formed, including the county administrator, county engineer, finance director, facilities director, and County Commission President. The proposed location was East Washington Street, between the Courthouse and the Hunter House.

2019- 2024



# REVIEW TIMELINE

PAGE 2 OF 7  
(2019-2024)

## > AUGUST 2019

The County Commission approved releasing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select professional architectural and engineering firms for a space feasibility study and design work for the new facility.

## > OCTOBER 2019

RFQs were received, evaluated, and shortlisted by the working group.

## > NOVEMBER 2019

Shortlisted professional architectural and engineering firms present their proposals to the working group.

## > DECEMBER 2019

Contract negotiations begin with professional architectural and engineering firms for a space feasibility study and design work for the new facility

## > 2020- 2024

Space and building issues compound:

- Parking becomes progressively an issue including staff returning home because they are unable to park near the Charles Town campus.
- Constituents became increasingly upset about issues navigating the Charles Town campus and access to buildings and seating at Commission meetings.
- Staff often have to relocate because of sensitivity to mold or Sick Building Syndrome (SBS).

2020- 2024





# REVIEW TIMELINE

PAGE 3 OF 7  
(2020-2023)



JANUARY 2020

The County Commission approved the contract with ZMM Architects & Engineers.



MARCH 2020

The plans to construct a new courthouse ended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



JUNE 2022

The Director of Fleet & Facilities Management (FFM) began discussions with magistrates regarding courtroom space needs, anticipating the addition of a fourth magistrate in Jefferson County.



JANUARY 2023

The West Virginia Supreme Court's administrative offices conducted a study to assess court space needs. Pending Supreme Court approval, a fourth magistrate would appear on the 2024 ballot.



# REVIEW TIMELINE

PAGE 4 OF 7  
(2023)



MARCH 2023

The FFM Director revisited the 2020 contract with ZMM. ZMM agreed to honor the original contract pricing and amended the contract to explore the option of purchasing an existing building rather than constructing a new one. This was approved for the FY24 budget deliberations.



APRIL 2023

Official approval was granted for a fourth magistrate in Jefferson County by the West Virginia Supreme Court. Office space would be needed for the new magistrate and assistant by January 2025.



JULY 2023

A space feasibility study kick-off meeting took place between ZMM and county staff.



SEPTEMBER 2023

County departments and elected officials were interviewed regarding their space needs at the Charles Town campus. Tours of downtown buildings and a potential space at 330 North George Street (330) were conducted.

2024



# REVIEW TIMELINE

PAGE 5 OF 7  
(2024)

2024



## FEBRUARY 2024

The architect submitted a block space plan for the 330 building. It was determined that this building did not meet current space needs for governmental offices nor did it allow for future growth for those offices.



## MARCH 2024

Discussions continued with ZMM to reassess space issues, and temporary solutions for the fourth magistrate were explored in coordination with the WV Supreme Court and magistrates.



## APRIL 2024

County staff conducted a walkthrough and explored the option of purchasing a larger building at 393 North Lawrence Street (393).



## MAY 2024- PRESENT

Commission staff meet with representatives of Charles Town NOW and Charles Town staff regarding the future (generally) of the the Charles Town Commission campus.



## JUNE 2024

The FFM Director presented the county's office building and space needs challenges to the County Commission at their June 27th meeting.

# REVIEW TIMELINE

PAGE 6 OF 7  
(2024)

2025



## JULY 2024

Another walkthrough of the 393 building was conducted with ZMM.



## AUGUST 2024

ZMM provided a space block plan for the 393 building. The County Administrator and FFM Director met with elected officials, who approved minor revisions, agreeing that the plan met their space needs.

The County Commission reviewed the space block plan for the 393 building in executive session.

Minor renovations were completed at St. Margaret's Judicial Center to temporarily accommodate the fourth magistrate and assistant. The Supreme Court approves these renovations as temporary until non-court staff can be relocated.



## OCTOBER 2024

Additional walkthroughs of the 393 building were conducted by County staff.



## NOVEMBER 2024

Building walkthrough to evaluate information technology infrastructure.

Walkthrough with elected officials who approved of the building and plans for their offices.



# REVIEW TIMELINE

PAGE 7 OF 7  
(2025)



## EARLY 2025

At the direction of the Commission, staff begin working with ZMM to develop block plans for the 330 building.



## FEBRUARY 2025

Commission staff take key members of the judiciary to the 330 building to review draft block plans and seek input on the building as the future site of Jefferson County's judicial complex.

The Commission requests an extension on the due diligence period in order to consider the purchase of 330.



## MARCH 2025

The Jefferson County Commission counter-signed a purchase and sale agreement for 330 N. George Street at a reduced rate of \$154 per square foot—lower than the \$158 per square foot price previously agreed to for 393 N. Lawrence Street. Both purchase and sale agreements include furnishings.

# OUR INVESTMENT

Building Purchase	Status	Total
Down payment	<u>Estimated</u>	\$7.552 million
Financing	<u>Estimated</u>	\$16 million
Agreed upon price	Final	\$23.552 million

Sources	Status	Annual	10 year
Amount saved for the future building (Capital Outlay)	Actual	November: \$17,741,088	November 2024: \$17,741,088*
Annual Repair Savings	<u>Estimated</u>	\$200,000	\$2,000,000
Annual Energy & Operational Savings	<u>Estimated</u>	\$286,000	\$2,860,000
Additional impact fees collected specially for the building repayment	<u>Estimated</u> **	\$406,436 (Years 1-10) \$392,638 (Years 11-20)	\$4,064,356 (Years 1-10) \$3,926,387 (Years 11-20)

\* Annual contributions to Capital Outlay and/ or the Financial Stability fund have averaged \$4 million for the last 5 fiscal years.

\*\* The Commission voted to increase impact fees in June 2025. A May 2025 study conducted by Tischler Bise estimated 20-year impact fee revenues at \$7,990,756.



# NEXT STEPS

Signing the Purchase and Sale Agreement is just the initial step toward acquiring the new governmental and judicial complex. Now begins the critical due diligence period, during which the Commission has until July 7th, to complete essential tasks such as securing financing, conducting ordinance reviews by the Building Commission, and performing thorough building and land inspections.

Should the purchase proceed, the next phase will involve finalizing build-out plans, relocating departments and courts into the new facilities, and collaborating with Charles Town to regarding next steps with current Charles Town campus.

The Commission has already taken a proactive step by designating the Bardane campus as the strategic site for Jefferson County's first-of-its-kind Public Safety Center.

## JULY 7, 2025

Possible closing on the building after due diligence

## JULY 2025- DECEMBER 2026, EST.

Building build out and department move.

The Commission identifies sources of funds to build out the judicial complex.

Commission works with stakeholders regarding the current Charles Town buildings.