



News
Desk



THE NEWS DESK

The News Desk is a collection of news, notes and breaking items affecting the Fredericksburg community.

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Work on courthouse \$1M under budget

BY PAMELA GOULD / THE FREE LANCE-STAR

The \$35.4 million Fredericksburg courthouse project is currently \$1 million under budget, a construction official told City Council on Tuesday.

Bill Downey, managing principal of Downey and Scott construction management services, gave the council a status report on where the project is in each of its four phases.

As part of that, he shared that the project is currently coming in under budget by a little more than \$1 million. That includes furniture, fixtures and equipment expense running \$220,000 below budget, and design and construction costs running \$782,336 below budget.

Two council members expressed pleasure with the financial news.

Councilman Fred Howe, a vocal opponent of the courthouse, immediately gave a thumbs-up and said, "Good news," when he heard of the savings.

Councilman Brad Ellis said it was good news so far and asked whether Downey expected the project to maintain the \$1 million savings through completion of the project.

"We're pretty sure those numbers are going to hold," Downey told him.

The first two phases of the project are completed.

Phase one involved creating an interim facility for the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court that was finished in July 2012. That court is being temporarily located on the first floor of the Executive Plaza building.

Phase two, which finished in February, included renovating the Visitors Center and installing new public restrooms.

Phase three, the largest, is construction of a new, 76,468-square-foot courthouse at the corner of Princess Anne and Charlotte streets.

Demolition of the structures that had been on that site began in August 2012. Construction of the three-story building is now about halfway finished and is expected to be completed by June.

At that point, contractors expect to start construction on the current General District Court building, which will be repurposed to house the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court and Court Services.

Architectural, civil and structural design on that building is 90 percent complete, Downey said. Mechanical, electrical and plumbing design is half way finished. Design plans are expected to be finalized by the end of the year.

The work on that building is expected to take a year, with completion slated for June 2015.

The main courthouse will have three stories and have two courtrooms each for the circuit and general district courts. It also will have office space for the court clerks, holding cells for defendants and space for the Sheriff's Office.

Pamela Gould: 540/735-1972

pgould@freelancestar.com

COURTHOUSE UPDATE

A \$35.4 million project to include a new courthouse is under way. Below is the status of each part.

PHASE 1: Creation of an interim facility for the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court was finished in July 2012.

PHASE 2: Renovations to the Visitors Center and installation of new public restrooms were completed in February.

PHASE 3: Construction on the new building is about about halfway finished with completion expected in June.

PHASE 4: Construction work to renovate the current General District Court building should begin in June 2014 and be finished in June 2015.