



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA
94102-3688
Tel 415-865-4200
TDD 415-865-4272
Fax 415-865-4205
www.courtinfo.ca.gov

FACT SHEET

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Richard E. Arnason Justice Center, Pittsburg

The new courthouse in Pittsburg, California, opens to the public in November 2010, capping a five-year effort to improve access to justice for East County residents. The new building, at 1000 Center Drive in Pittsburg's Civic Center, is named in honor of retired Judge Richard E. Arnason, for his distinguished service as a leader of the bar and bench in Contra Costa County for more than sixty years. This courthouse is the first trial court project in California funded entirely by State Trial Court Construction Funds, a significant change from previous county-funded projects.



The Richard E. Arnason Justice Center has already received significant recognition for architectural design.

Scope and Features

The new building replaces the tiny four-courtroom Pittsburg-Delta Courthouse, originally constructed in 1952. It was first funded in fiscal year 2005–2006, with funding expanded the next fiscal year to accommodate three additional judgeships. Features include:

- Two-story building, plus partial basement, of approximately 73,500 square feet (about three times larger than the existing courthouse).

- Seven courtrooms for traffic, criminal, family law, and juvenile matters, with room for future expansion.
- 15 customer service windows, a self-help/library center with a children's waiting area, a jury assembly pavilion, attorney-client meeting rooms, and 280 parking spaces (on and off site).
- Security features include entrance screening, in-custody holding area, sally port, surveillance cameras, and secure parking for judges.

The estimated total cost for this project is \$64.7 million, and the project was completed on schedule and on budget. The architect was Hellmuth, Obata, Kassabaum (HOK), and the construction manager at risk was Sundt Construction Inc.

The project has already received significant recognition for its architectural design. It will be featured in the *Justice Facilities Review 2010* of the American Institute of Architects Academy of Architecture for Justice, which represents the best in justice design excellence. It will also be showcased by the National Center for State Courts in its *Retrospective of Courthouse Design, 2001-2010* for exemplary design.

The building will be environmentally responsible and energy-efficient, and will be the first courthouse built by the Administrative Office of the Courts that has been designed to be certified LEED Silver by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Sustainability features include:

- Exceeds Title 24 energy use by 22.5 percent using energy-efficient HVAC.
- 40 percent reduction of interior water use with efficient plumbing fixtures.
- 50 percent reduction of exterior water use in drought-resistant landscaping.
- The green roof above the Jury Assembly pavilion protects the roof, slows roof drainage into storm water drainage system, and provides a garden view for courthouse visitors.
- High-efficiency lighting.
- Building oriented to minimize heat gain and optimize daylight.
- Contractor diverted more than 85 percent of construction waste from landfills.
- Bio-swales in landscaping for natural treatment of storm water to reduce burden on municipal sewage system.
- Building materials throughout selected for high recycled content, renewable content, and durability. Approximately half of the wood used in the building is certified as sustainably forested by the Forest Stewardship Council.

Local Government Collaboration

In response to a solicitation for sites, the AOC received site offers in Pittsburg (adjacent to the existing courthouse), Antioch, and Oakley. Taking important local considerations into account, including population, mass transit systems, highway growth, land development costs, and the proximity of court-related county agencies, the AOC selected the Pittsburg location. The City of Pittsburg Redevelopment Agency and the Court worked as partners to leverage their resources for site development within Pittsburg's Civic Center. The Public Works Board authorized site acquisition on September 14, 2007. Judicial leaders, court personnel, AOC staff, and county representatives also collaborated on the project's advisory team.

More Information

Project Web page:

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/projects_contracosta.htm

For further information, please email the AOC-Office of Court Construction and Management at OCCM@jud.ca.gov.