



GSA Pacific Rim Region

**SEP 20 2002**

The Honorable Dick Murphy  
Mayor, City of San Diego  
City Administration Building  
202 "C" Street, 11th floor  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mayor Murphy:

I am writing to request your support on the following key issues for the new San Diego Courthouse. We are currently in the process of selecting an Architecture and Engineering (A/E) firm (See Attachment 1 for a description of General Services Administration's (GSA's) Design Excellence process). As a precursor to our design process, we would like your assistance in the following areas:

#### Street Closure

We are requesting the permanent closure of Union Street (between Broadway and the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) driveway) and E Street (between Union and State Streets) to motor vehicles. Closure of these streets would provide advantages to our project and better support the City's urban design goals. The remaining portion of Union Street (between the MCC driveway & F Street) would remain open to restricted vehicles.

Street closure will enable us to achieve our required minimum security setbacks with a larger building footprint. Because the building would not need to be setback from the closed streets, the courthouse could be placed closer to Union Street. This would provide us with greater opportunities in developing an efficient building with appropriate height and massing. It would enable the building's placement to more closely support the neighborhood's traditional patterns. The street would remain visually open, accessible to pedestrian traffic, and closed only to vehicular traffic. We do not intend to build upon Union Street, but rather we plan to develop it as an open pedestrian public plaza. The closure of E Street will also allow greater opportunities for the placement and orientation of the new courthouse.

Because the design is dependent upon the future disposition of these streets, we would like to begin discussions with the City's Development Services shortly. Although we would not need to close the streets until the start of site work, we would appreciate your early support of these closures.

U.S. General Services Administration  
450 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102-3434  
[www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)

### Community Input

We look forward to working with you and the community during the selection of the A/E and the development of the design of the new courthouse through final concepts. Since we share the community's goal that the new courthouse will be a beneficial addition to downtown San Diego and will have a positive impact on the downtown, we are going to be soliciting community input. We would like you to establish a community representative committee. It could consist of all or part of the committee that you have already selected to collaborate on the courthouse project, in addition to some representatives from local historical groups and neighboring residents. We would request only that the group be of a manageable size, perhaps six to eight persons. In order to maximize community support, we would appreciate if you would appoint this committee by the end of September so that they could be prepared to participate in a 'walk through' of the site with the prospective A/E firms on October 8, 2002. Attachment 2 is a summary in greater detail of how we envision this committee will work.

We have already begun the process of soliciting community input through our meeting of August 9<sup>th</sup> with representatives of the Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC), the City of San Diego's Planning Office and Historical Resources Board, and members of your appointed Courthouse Committee. I understand that it was a positive meeting.

The group discussed several key issues on which I would like to provide you with updates:

Front Street – Because of Front Street's importance as a thoroughfare, we do not intend to request the closure of Front Street beneath the Federal Building. Instead, we are addressing the security risks through a variety of other measures.


Existina Federal Building/Courthouse Lona Ranae Plan - Our property management staff is continuing to work to enhance the public areas around our existing federal building and courthouse. We held a workshop to obtain the community's input on this in the summer of 2001. Since then, we have developed several concepts that we hope to implement within the next year. We are working with CCDC to help prioritize our efforts and to coordinate our improvements with the City's plans and goals.

GSA's Urban Design Collaborative Process – We solicited input from the group and incorporated their specific language on the City's urban design goals for the neighborhood into our evaluation of prospective design teams for the Stage I selection of A/E firms. (See Attachment 3)

**D. Murphy**  
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I am confident that our mutual efforts will deliver the highest quality work place for the U.S. Courts and a noteworthy addition to downtown San Diego, an addition that makes the most of opportunities to support the City's goals. We look forward to working with the City on these and other projects of mutual benefit. If you would like to discuss these or other issues, please feel free to contact the Project Manager, Mario Ramirez, at (415) 522-3158.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter G. Stamison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Peter G. Stamison  
Regional Administrator

Enclosures

cc:

The Honorable Chief Judge Marilyn L. Huff, U.S. District Courts  
The Honorable Judge John S. Rhoades, U.S. District Courts  
Walter Rask, San Diego Centre City Development Corporation

## Attachment 1

### Summary of GSA Design Excellence Program (two stage process)

The GSA Design Excellence Program streamlines the way GSA selects architects and engineers. It simplifies the proposal requirements, the cost of preparing submittals and reduces GSA's evaluation time. This in turn opens up opportunities for emerging talent, and small, women-owned, and small disadvantaged businesses.

Under the GSA Design Excellence Program, GSA conducts a two-stage procurement to hire the Architect/Engineer Team, which consists of the following stages:

#### Stage I of Architect Selection – Portfolio Evaluations – Selection of Lead Designer(s)

Placement of the A/E solicitation notice in the Government's Website, FedBizOpps.gov, and national design magazine announcements. This began on July 11, 2002.

- Convene a Pre-Submittal Meeting in San Diego with prospective designers. This was held on August 13<sup>th</sup>. We gave prospective designers the courthouse's "Design Program," which is a brief description of the project's scope and defining principles. Among the defining principles, we directed that the new courthouse must contribute to the redevelopment and enhancement of downtown San Diego. We developed specific language for this at our August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting with input from CCDC and other City representatives. A copy of the narrative is attached (see Attachment 3).
- Submission of Design Firms and Lead Designers Portfolios. The defining principles and criteria set forth by the design program, and the project description set the tone for the project. Prospective designers are expected to respond to these principles and criteria when they submit their portfolios, due September 6<sup>th</sup>. In this way, our initial evaluation of the designers includes an assessment of their ability to create projects that enhance their surroundings and support the City's goals.
- In mid September, GSA's Evaluation Board convened to consider the designers submitted portfolios. The Board selected a "short list" of designers to proceed into the second stage of the Design Excellence procurement. GSA will announce on the FedBizOpps website the list of three (3) to six (6) designers by the end of September, including the criteria for the Stage II submission.

#### Stage II of Architect Selection – The Short-Listed Design Firms and their Lead Designers are invited to assemble their complete A/E Teams.

## Attachment 1

- In October, GSA will convene an onsite project 'walk through' with the short-listed designers, and discuss development and urban design opportunities. The designers will respond to these and other project goals in their Stage II submission.
- GSA will shortly thereafter hold a Networking Session in San Diego. This offers an opportunity for Small Businesses, Women-Owned Businesses and Small Disadvantaged Businesses to meet and team with design firms/lead designers.
- Submission of complete project teams including a list of past projects, team organization, project qualifications and their narrative vision statement for the new courthouse is due about four weeks after the Networking Session.  
After evaluation of the A/E Stage II submission, interviews of the A/E teams with the GSA Evaluation Board will follow. The Board will rank the teams and recommend to the GSA Selection Authority the highest-ranking A/E team.
- After price negotiations, it is expected that the selected designer would be on board early next year.

The Design Process – Once hired, GSA's designer would proceed directly into the Programming, Pre-Design, Preliminary Concepts and Final Concepts phase. During these phases, the designer would spend 10 to 14 months developing three different schemes to meet project goals. By early 2004, GSA would approve a single concept that a design/builder would carry forward into design and construction. Construction would begin in FY2005 and be complete and occupied in FY2009.

## Attachment 2

### Summary of planned community representative committee:

- This community committee will be comprised of six to eight community representatives, appointed by the Mayor and who will meet with the GSA to establish guidelines.
- This community committee will provide input during A/E selection Stage I (City's Urban Design Goals) and Stage II (Site Walk through). The "walk through" process will accord the City and the committee representatives the opportunity to discuss urban design goals, visions, concerns, and opportunities for the project prior to the designer's development of their vision statement.
- This community committee will meet with the selected A/E prior to design and express concerns and issues surrounding urban design.
- Along with other project stakeholders, the community representative committee will have the opportunity to review and comment on the design as it develops into final concepts at key milestones. The community committee's written comments will be subject to the same timeliness requirements imposed upon the project team's internal reviewers.
- The community committee understands and agrees that there cannot be any review of interior plans for security reasons, and, therefore, the review will be limited solely to the exterior "shell" exterior elevations and site design only.
- GSA has the sole right and discretion to make design decisions. GSA shall be under no obligation to incorporate, adopt, or otherwise include design comments received from outside the GSA design team, but will make a good faith effort to do so as per 40 U.S.C. §619. The community committee is permitted consultation, and not approval.
- GSA does not pay for any costs for review.

### **Attachment 3**

#### San Diego Urban Design Goal in the Design Program:

##### *Create a Building that Contributes to the Redevelopment and Enhancement of Downtown San Diego*

The facility must provide a civic presence and contribute to the architecture of the local community. Building organization, scale, fenestration, and materials should enhance downtown San Diego. The building should respect and support the City of San Diego's Centre City Community Plan where possible and be a complementary addition to the downtown. Furthermore, the building should support and strengthen the character of downtown San Diego, creating an architectural language that is timeless and providing an example for designers to look to as inspiration for future projects in the downtown area. The building should respect the historic pattern of development (streets, blocks, parcels and building sitting), especially on the frontage of Broadway – San Diego's "main street". Special emphasis should be placed on creating a pedestrian friendly environment at street level on all street frontages and a civic strength of character and vitality appropriate to the courts.