
Courthouse Renovation

City Council Meeting
September 19, 2023





Why Is Courthouse Renovation Important?

- In October 2021 the City purchased the 21,459sq.ft. former courthouse building from Tulare County without any intended immediate use but rather to complete City ownership of the entire block in preparation for some future use.
- The building has remained vacant for many years and in order for it to be reused for office space it is required to go through a significant renovation and be brought up to meet current building codes which includes installation of an additional stair well, elevator or lift, new mechanical systems, and other miscellaneous improvements including accessibility and energy code compliance.
- The City does not have an immediate need for the space other than approximately 5,000sq.ft. for the police investigations unit. Management does anticipate the balance of the space will be used by the City at some point in the future. The cost of renovating the building in the future would likely be much more expensive than renovating the building at this time.
- Given the City's focus on Downtown Redevelopment and Economic Development, in November 2021 the City Council elected to obligate \$1,300,000 in federal ARPA funds towards its renovation as a business incubator in support of 12-24 startup businesses with a portion to be used by the police investigations unit plus parking lot resurfacing. The ARPA funds must be obligated by December 2024 and spent by December 2026.
- In June 2022 City Council approved a contract with a design firm (4 Creeks) to prepare preliminary design plans along with final construction drawings for the project. The project was bid out but no bids were received, therefore in July 2023 City Council approved an agreement with a contractor to solicit bids and manage the project the results of which will be presented this evening.
- This project will bring additional businesses and citizens to Downtown during the day and in the evenings for the lecture series, business training, and hopefully for use of the maker space. The maker space would involve further renovation of 2,000sq.ft. in the basement but is not currently under consideration for approval. The City has received preliminary approval from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) to fund up to \$600,000 of that project.
- It is Management's belief that this project, coupled with Zumwalt Park Redevelopment, will help jump start our Downtown Redevelopment efforts.



How Do We Know It Will Work?

- The proposed business incubator and maker space (should that later be approved) are both interim uses until the City elects to occupy the entire building. It is far better to advance an interim use than leave the building vacant.
- Management has direct previous experience in establishing a business incubator and involvement in a separate maker space, both of which have been successful, growing, and in operation for over a decade:
 - The Power Plant business incubator was established in 2012 and since that time has resulted in over 700 jobs created, 36 graduate businesses, and over 1,200 entrepreneurs assisted. There are currently 14 resident businesses.
 - The Hacker Lab maker space has relocated and evolved offering more tailored services including partnership with educational institutions.
- A business incubator may be a new concept in the City of Tulare but business incubators have been in existence for over 60 years, there are currently 1,400 throughout the U.S., and there are currently 9 establishments within the Central Valley which offer business assistance but none that offer same level of business support as proposed for this project.
- The Tulare Chamber of Commerce is our operating partner the management team of which has significant experience and success at managing the affairs of the Chamber and is well integrated into the business community which supports the project. The Chamber has also developed a number of partnerships which are prepared to bring support and resources to the project assuming Council approval. The proposed lease terms are designed to ensure success.
- Based on the 2021 National Establishment Time Series NETS database; there were 250 business startups in the City of Tulare in 2021 which has remained consistent over the past decade. On average over the past decade, there are 12 business establishments moving into the City of Tulare annually. In 2022 there were 4,344 businesses within the City of Tulare of which approximately 32% are cottage industry or home-based. These numbers represent a very good initial candidate pool of businesses to attract to the business incubator whether as residents or for technical training and support.



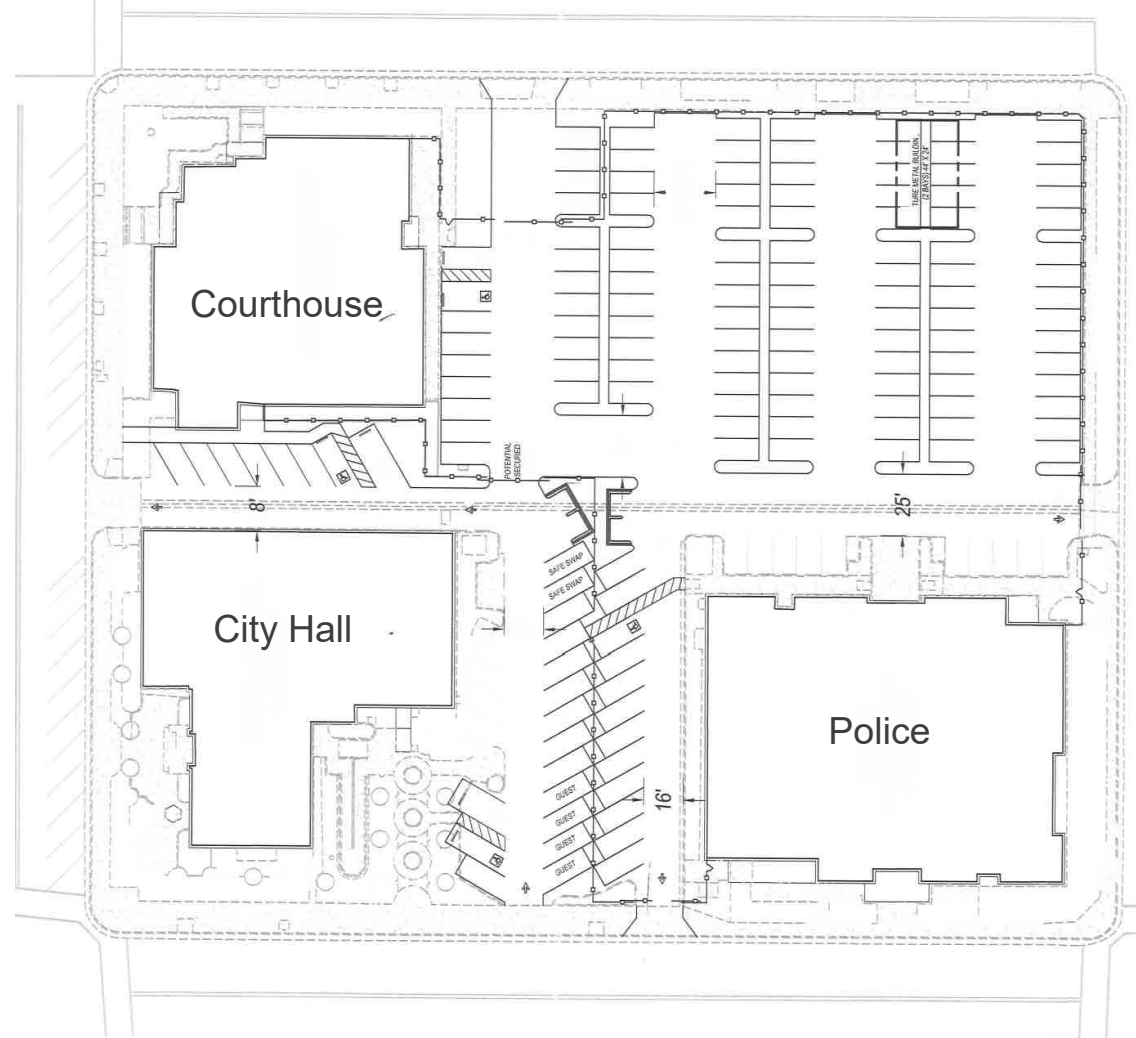
What Is Included In The Design?





What Is Included In The Design?

Site Plan





What Is Included In The Design?

Main Floor Plan





What Is Included In The Design?

Basement Floor Plan





What Is Included In The Design?

Interior Design





Questions?