

**STATE OF NEW YORK
UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM
OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION**

**Recommendation of the First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge
Re: Capital Plan Amendment Submitted by the City of Middletown**

SUMMARY

The City of Middletown (“City”) has submitted a capital plan amendment for the renovation of a former federal courthouse building to be used as a City Court facility. The City Court has needed space for an additional courtroom and chambers since 2014, when a new full-time judge was appointed by the Legislature. The City Court has relied on the City Council chamber as an interim second courtroom. In 2017, the City moved forward to purchase the vacant federal courthouse at 25 South Street in Middletown. Though the project stalled due to various issues, the City now has sufficient funds to move forward and has begun construction. The plans for the renovated courthouse include two courtrooms and two judges’ chambers. The City engaged all parties necessary for this project, and the UCS is satisfied with the capital plan amendment. It is recommended that the Board approve the City’s capital plan amendment.

BACKGROUND

The current City Court facility in Middletown is located at 2 James Street, and it is co-located with the police department and City Hall. The current facility is insufficient because it has only one courtroom, and there are two full-time judges working in the City Court. The Unified Court System informed the City of the need for an additional courtroom, and the City recognized that the existing facility had no room for further expansion. The City identified the former federal courthouse facility at 25 South Street as an alternative facility for the City Court. Though the federal courthouse has only one courtroom space, OCA architects were able to assist with a design that would allow the building to accommodate two courtrooms and chambers space for two judges.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City moved forward to purchase the 25 South Street building in 2017. 25 South Street is a two-story building (with partial basement area) with one existing courtroom, jury room, entry lobby, holding cells, restrooms, and support offices. The design for the renovated facility provides for a large courtroom on the first floor with a second smaller courtroom space on the second floor. The design includes lobby space for metal detectors, x-ray machines, and necessary tables for security at the main public entrance to the space. The design also includes adequate queuing space for people to enter the facility. The security office will be located at the entrance and allow for observation of the lobby through one-way glass. The first-floor courtroom and support spaces (attorney conference room, jury room and bathrooms) will be renovated and

updated. The updated first-floor courtroom will accommodate 51 members of the public and provide adequate facilities for the judge, clerks, court reporters, security, witnesses, jury members, and attorneys. There are separate entrances and exits for use by different groups accessing the room.

New stairs for the public will be added to provide access to the planned second floor courtroom. The second courtroom will accommodate 21 members of the public, and it will have an adjacent attorney conference room and public bathrooms. The clerk's office, court reporters, break room, file rooms, IT room, conference rooms, and other support staff spaces will also be located on the second floor. The plumbing system and electrical system will also be upgraded to support the upper floors of the facility. The renovation will also include new rooftop HVAC units, duct work, supply and return systems for new spaces, exhaust fans, sanitary and water line improvements, sprinkler system upgrades, electrical and lighting systems, data ports, cameras, panic buttons, and other security improvements. A new membrane system will be installed on the roof to ensure the building remains weathertight.

The renovations include upgrades to the parking lot, drainage system, sidewalk, a new sally-port with gate and fenced in area, new canopy areas at the front entrance and rear entrance area to the holding cell area, and new landscaping. The City confirms that the project has been designed to meet all current building codes, ADA requirements, environmental laws, regulations and ordinances, court facility guidelines, Unified Court System and local law enforcement security requirements, and the Office of Court Administration's technology requirements.

The City completed a competitive public bid process in October of 2024, with four successful multi-prime low bids for the renovation of the facility. The City Council approved the project on November 4, 2024. Contracts were completed and executed in December 2024, and construction began in 2025. The project is expected to be completed in 365 days (completion around mid-December 2025).

BUDGET/FINANCING

The budget for the capital project is as follows:

General Construction - \$2,996,000
Mechanical Construction - \$1,024,000
Plumbing Construction - \$459,000
Electrical Construction - \$554,744

Total Construction Cost - \$5,033,744

The total cost of the construction project is \$5 million. The City is utilizing its own funds, and they are not seeking state interest aid to fund project costs.

RECOMMENDATION

The Ninth Judicial District, OCA's architectural team, and the Executive Office have reviewed the City's project plans and are satisfied with the capital work that is planned for the

court facility. First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George, acting in his official capacity as designated by the Chief Administrative Judge, recommends that the Board approve this capital plan amendment.