

## **Competitive bids expected for downsized Gresham courthouse project**

by Nathalie Weinstein

Published: February 12th, 2010



Paul Boundy, principal of LRS Architects, is the new project manager for the East County Courts project in Gresham. Multnomah County is in the process of choosing a construction manager/ general contractor for the project, which will be constructed at Southeast Stark Street and 185th Avenue. (Photo by Dan Carter/DJC)

It's take two for the East County Justice Center project in Gresham.

Along with a new architect, the Multnomah County-owned project will have a new construction manager and general contractor in the coming months. A request for proposals for CM/GC services deadline last week.

The project, now called the East County Courts project, faced budget challenges in 2008 after a \$14.6 million budget figure ballooned to nearly \$42 million during programming discussions. As a result, the county put the project on hold and hired project manager **Shiels Obletz Johnsen** to look at reducing the scope of the project.

"Due to the change in the scope of work, we felt it was appropriate to rebid the project," said Peggidy Yates, economic development policy advisor with Multnomah County.

Both **Hoffman Construction**, and architecture firms **HDR** and **Emmons Architects**, were notified of the situation by the County and invited to rebid for the project, according to project manager Steve Cruzen of SOJ.

"Hoffman never dropped out and no one was ever fired," Cruzen said. "Nothing negative ever happened. We let both parties know this was the case."

Under a new plan, the scale of the justice center has been reduced, and a new design team made up of **LRS Architects** and global design firm **HOK** has been assigned to the project. LRS project manager Paul Boundy said design work is just beginning on the facility.

"This will be the first significant new public building in Rockwood," Boundy said. "It needs to reinforce the community without dominating the area. Working this into the

fabric of the Rockwood community will be a challenge.”

The justice center building will need to blend with nearby buildings, which are occupied by a Taco Bell restaurant and a Parr Lumber outlet.

Planned for construction by early 2012, the new justice center will be built at Southeast Stark Street and 185<sup>th</sup> Avenue and will include 35,000 to 40,000 square feet of space. Up to three civic courtrooms and related space for the state of Oregon District Court, as well as offices for the Multnomah County District Attorney, will be included in the schematic design, which is expected to be completed in mid-April.

The court facility will cost between \$17.4 million and \$20.7 million to construct, depending on how many courtrooms are included in the design.

“The lower cost would be a building with two courtrooms,” said Cruzen. “The highest cost would be with three courtrooms. And there are a couple of other options in between.”

Hoffman Construction, the firm that was originally selected as the CM/GC for the project in 2007, has again responded to the county’s RFP. Hoffman vice president Bart Eberwein says he expects competition for the government project to be fierce.



Multnomah County is replacing its courthouse facility in Gresham. (File photo/DJC)

“There are a lot of hungry, good contractors out there,” Eberwein said. “We told the county to let us know when the clock starts again. The county has provided a level playing field and access to information. We’re just happy to be invited to the party.”

JE Dunn Construction Co., Emerick Construction, Bremik Construction, Skanska, Robinson Construction, Howard S. Wright and Lease Crutcher Lewis also responded to the county’s call for RFPs. Yates says oral interviews for the RFP will be conducted the week of February 22.