



# Courts

# Introduction and Overview

- The County has studied the expansion, renovation, and safe and efficient operation of the Albemarle County Circuit and General District Courts and related facilities since 1999
- The County has considered multiple options over the years, including the relocation of County Court facilities to other locations in the County and the City
- County and City staff began the latest series of negotiations with the City in January
- A draft Memorandum of Agreement is presented for the Board's consideration and action

# Goals

Security and functionality	Court security and building functionality
Capacity	Meeting the County Courts' current and future capacity needs
Costs	As stewards of the revenues received from the County's taxpayers, considering the costs of land and construction
Accessibility	Ensuring persons working in and using the County Courts can easily access those facilities, to provide good customer service
Economics	Recognizing that capital investments can serve as a regional economic driver

7<sup>th</sup> & Market lot



East Market Street

Jefferson Street

High Street



Levy Building

Albemarle General  
District & Circuit Court

03/19/2018

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# How the Goals are Achieved: Security and functionality

- Modern security design and features will be added to existing court facilities and included in new court facilities
- The court facilities will be renovated and designed to function as needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century judicial systems

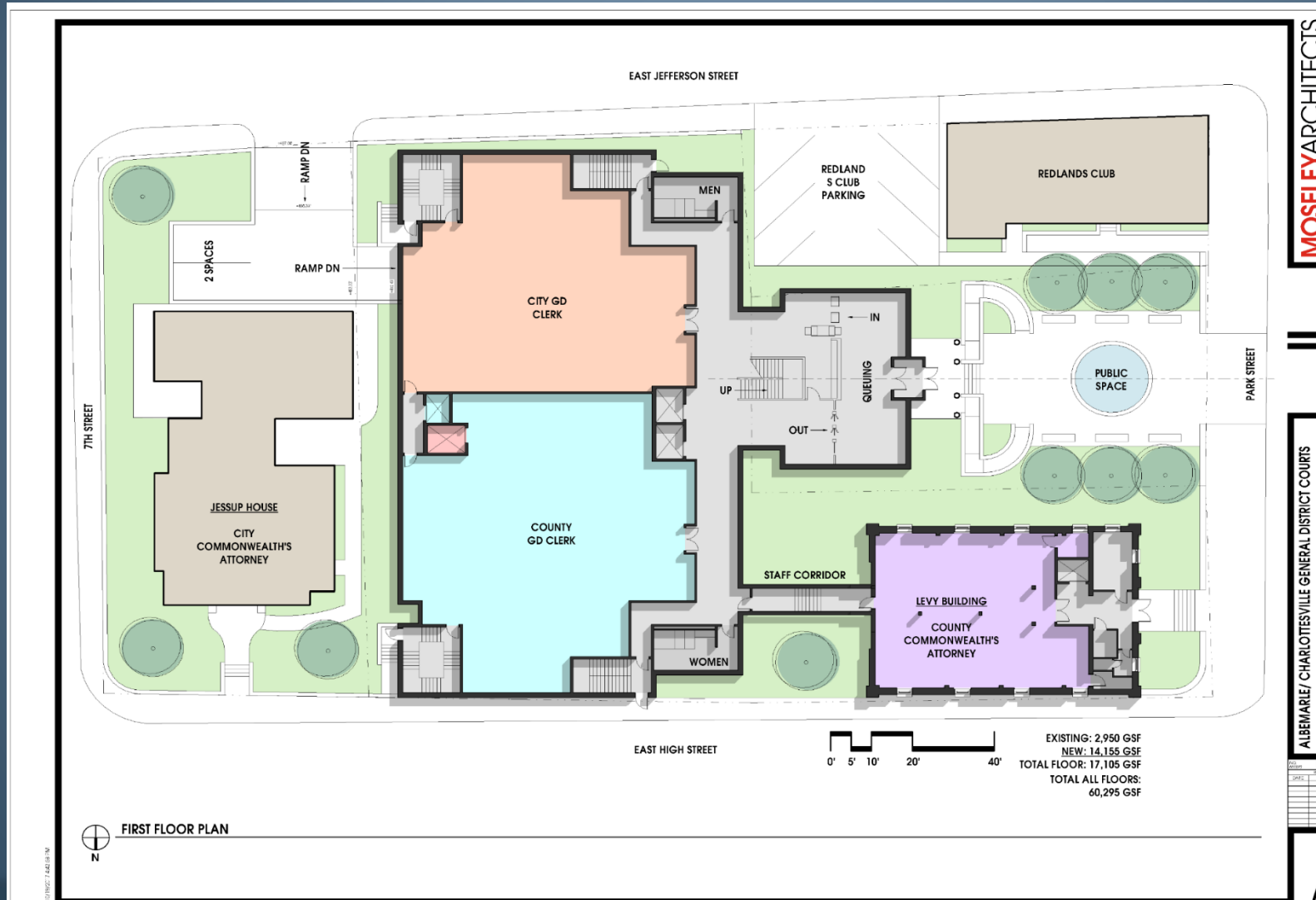
# How the Goals are Achieved: Capacity

- Circuit Court at current historic courthouse
  - 2 courtrooms/chambers
  - Clerk's office, including land records/archives
  - Renovation and small addition totaling ~ 32,034 Square Feet (SF)
- General District Court at County/City owned Levy Site, ~ 60,730 SF, including a 3-story ~ 51,000 SF new addition:
  - 2 County Court Sets
  - 1 Shelled County Court Set
  - 1 City Court Set
  - 2 Clerk's offices (City/County)
  - Secured Underground parking
- Commonwealth's Attorney at renovated Levy Opera House ~ 9K SF
- Sheriff (holding and court security only)

# General District Court (GDC) – Basement Plan (Concept)

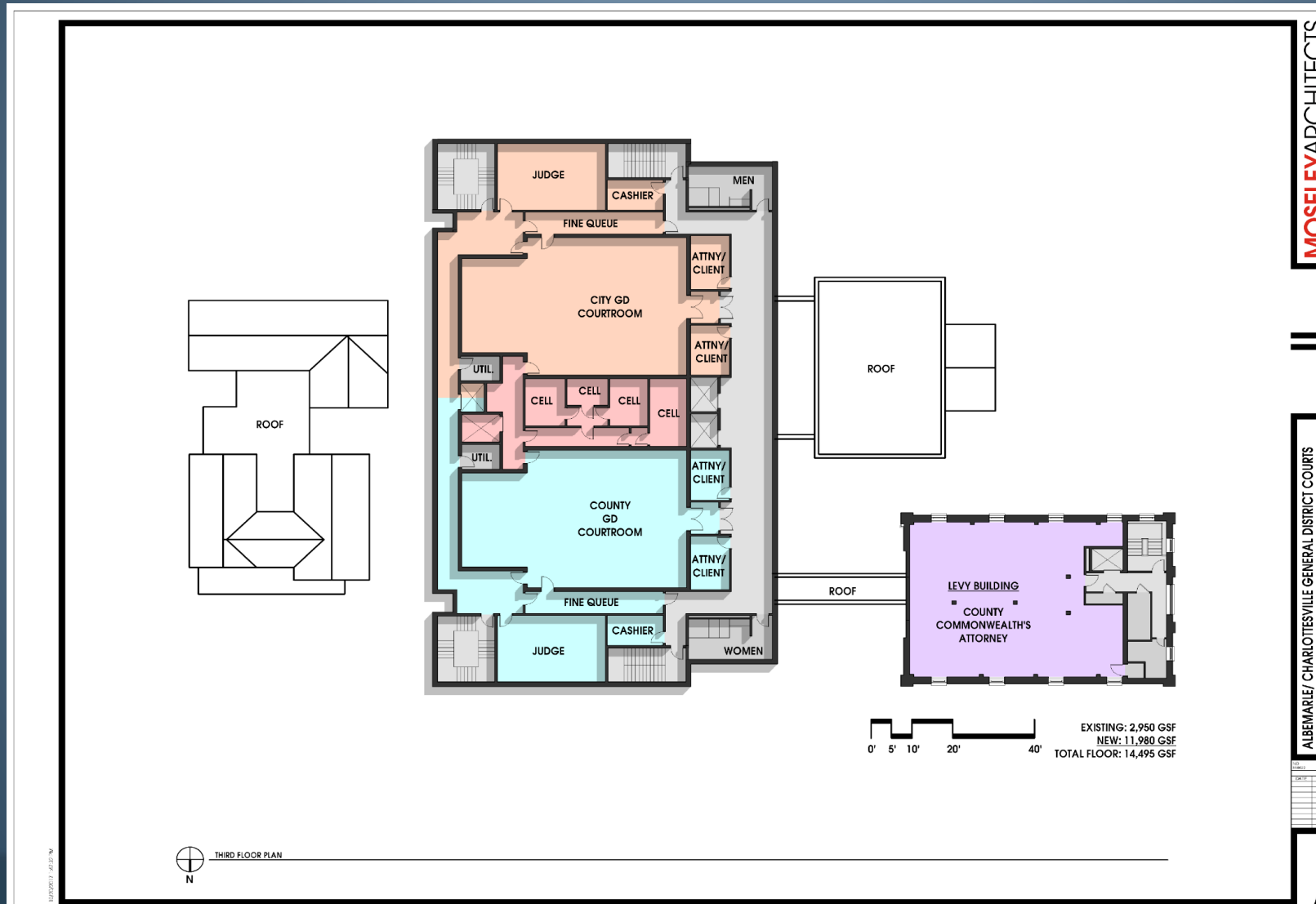


# GDC – First Plan (Concept)

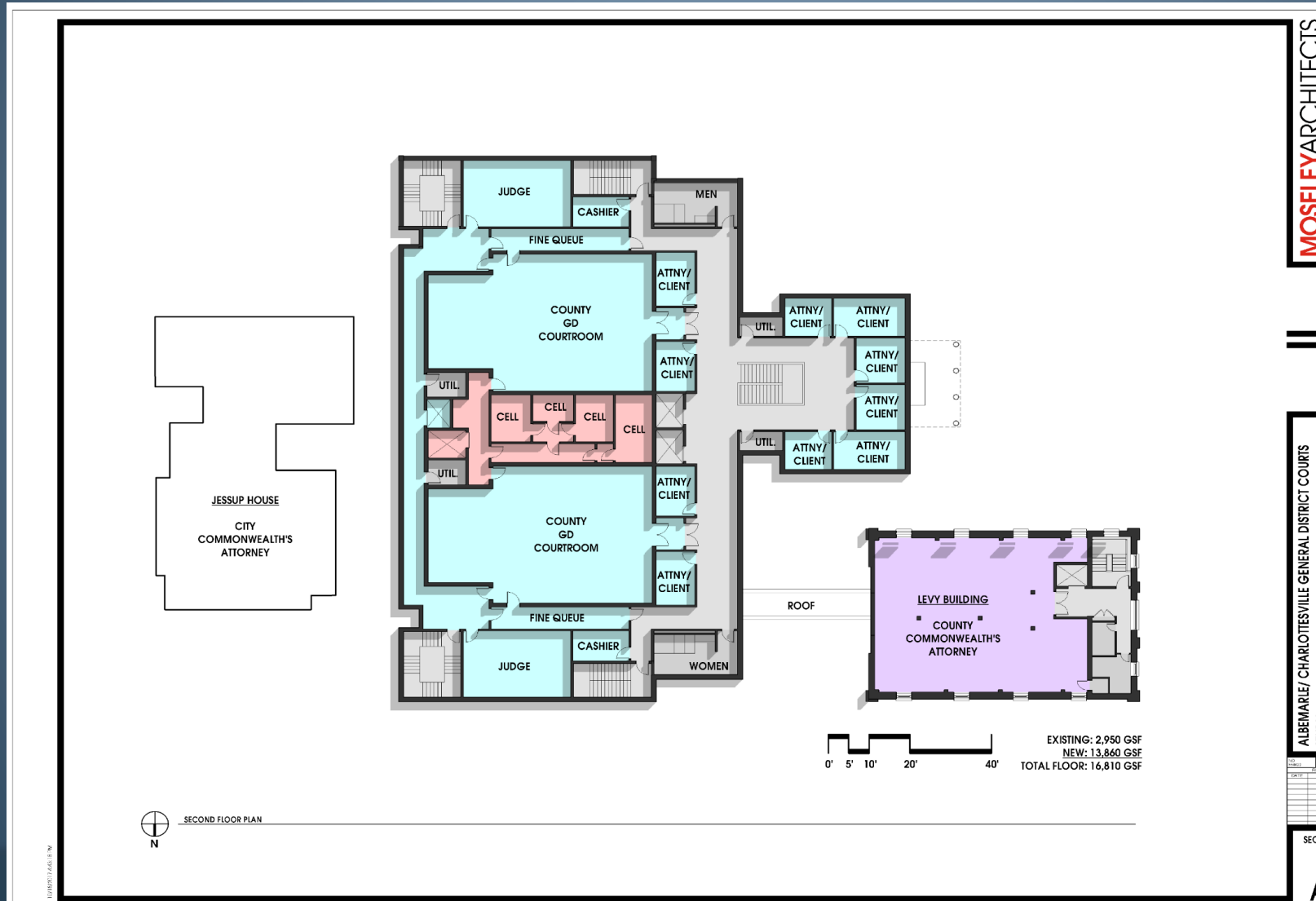




# GDC – Second Floor Plan (Concept)



# GDC – Third Floor Plan (Concept)



# How the Goals are Achieved: Costs

- The option to which this Agreement pertains is the Downtown Levy option (Option 1) that has been considered for the past several years
- This is the least costly option at approximately \$44M:
  - Circuit Court project: Approximately \$14M
  - General District Courts project: Approximately \$30M, of which the City will contribute an amount between \$6.8M and \$6.9M
- The Stantec study found that this is the most cost efficient option

## How the Goals are Achieved: Accessibility

- Ensuring that safe and convenient parking is provided to Court workers and users is one of the central issues of the proposed Agreement

# The Agreement provides:

- The County would sell its one-half interest in a jointly (City-County) owned East Market Street parcel
- The City will construct and operate a multi-level parking structure at the East Market Street parcel at no cost to the County
- The County will receive 90 parking spaces designated for County Court use
- The County will have a 20-year lease for those 90 parking spaces at \$1 per year, with an option to extend that lease an additional 20 years at \$1 per year
- The County will receive 15 on-street parking spaces abutting Court Square that will be designated for County Court use
- If the City does not construct the parking structure, it will provide 100 parking spaces designated for County Court use in the Market Street parking garage
- The City parking structure project and the County Courts project will conclude at approximately the same time

# How the Goals are Achieved: Economics

- The City's financial contribution to the General District Courts project allows the County to achieve its goals for providing safe, functional, and accessible Court facilities goals at the lowest cost to the County's taxpayers
- Many law offices and court-related businesses, organizations, and court-system related service providers are already located in the City's downtown area
  - This Agreement ensures the ongoing and improved efficient delivery of Court services at a lower cost to the County and court-system related service providers than other options would have allowed
- The County's capital investment can serve as a regional economic driver even though the County does not pursue a placemaking opportunity in the County
  - The Stantec Cost Benefit Analysis Report stated: "...we believe the cheaper downtown options to renovate the Courts downtown **would better position the County to preserve funds for other economic development programs and incentives that would attract jobs, invest in placemaking and other initiatives in the county . . .**"

# Next steps

- Consider and act on the proposed Memorandum of Agreement
- Obtain amendments to State law required to allow the County Courts project to happen as proposed:
  - Because the General District Courts project site is jointly owned by the County and the City
  - Because the General District Court would be relocated across the street but outside of the “county seat”



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HISTORIC  
COURT  
SQUARE