## CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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 Staff:
 AJP-LB

 Staff Report:
 2/8/02

 Hearing Date:
 3/5-8/02

 Commission Action:

# **RECORD PACKET COPY**

## STAFF REPORT: CONSENT CALENDAR

APPLICATION NUMBER: 5-02-004

APPLICANT: Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

AGENT: Jerry Viniegra

PROJECT LOCATION: 1725 Main Street, Santa Monica

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Replacement of three County courthouse modular units, measuring a total of approximately 10,500 square feet in area, with a permanent 12,000 square foot, two-story building.

Lot Area:3 acresBuilding Coverage:6,240 square feetLandscape Coverage:1,053 square feetParking Spaces:31Zoning:Civic CenterHt above final grade:43 feet

## LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED: N/A

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS: Santa Monica certified LUP

## SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the proposed project with no Special Conditions.

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## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution:

#### I. APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

The Commission hereby **<u>GRANTS</u>** a permit, subject to the conditions below, for the proposed development on the grounds that the development will be in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976, will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, and will not have any significant adverse effects on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

### II. STANDARD CONDITIONS:

- 1. <u>Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment.</u> The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
- 2. <u>Expiration.</u> If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date this permit is reported to the Commission. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
- 3. <u>Interpretation.</u> Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
- 4. <u>Assignment.</u> The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
- 5. <u>Terms and Conditions Run with the Land.</u> These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

#### III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS: None

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS:

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

#### A. <u>Project Description and Location</u>

The applicant proposes to remove three modular units, measuring a total of approximately 10,500 square feet in area, with a permanent 12,000 square foot, two-story building. As in the

modular units, the new structure will provide three courtrooms, three judges' chambers, three jury rooms, three attorneys offices, three court reporter offices, and restrooms. In addition a new public multi-purpose room will be added.

There are 31 restricted parking spaces for County courthouse personnel, located directly behind the courthouse. The 31 spaces will remain and will not be impacted by the proposed project.

The new building will be sited in the same location as the removed modular units. The building site is located along the eastern side of the County Courthouse building. The County Courthouse is located within the City of Santa Monica's Civic Center, which is bounded by Santa Monica Freeway to the north, Fourth Street to the east, Pico Boulevard to the South and Main Street on the west. The Civic Center is located approximately three and a half blocks from the City of Santa Monica's South Beach area.

In addition to the County Courthouse, the Civic Center area also contains City Hall, the City's Public Safety Facility building, the Civic Auditorium, and approximately 1,200 surface parking spaces, and 100 subterranean parking spaces located in the Public Safety Facility building (currently under construction).

## B. Parking

Section 30252 of the Coastal Act requires that new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by providing adequate parking facilities. Section 30252 of the Coastal Act states in part:

The location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by. . . (4) providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation. . .

The Civic Center currently provides approximately 1,200 public surface parking spaces, plus 31 spaces that are restricted for Court personnel use located directly behind the courthouse. The proposed project will replace 10,500 square foot modular units with 12,000 square feet of permanent building. Although the square footage will increase by 1,500 square feet, the uses provided by the modular units will generally remain the same. The new building will continue to provide three courtrooms, three judges' chambers, three jury rooms, three attorneys offices, three court reporter offices, and restrooms. The new building will include a new approximately 1,000 square foot public multi-propose room. The size or capacity of the three new courtrooms will remain the same as the existing courtrooms. Therefore, since the number and size of the courtrooms will remain the same, there will not be an increase in the number of people attending the courthouse.

The City conducted parking lot usage studies for the existing parking lots within the Civic Center (City of Santa Monica Specific Plan traffic Study, DKS, Associates, March 1991) and for the Civic Auditorium parking lot (Santa Monica Civic Auditorium parking Lot Usage Study,

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September 1992). Based on the lot usage surveys conducted for the City, it was shown that there was a total surplus of 209 parking spaces during peak usage. In 1998, the Commission approved the Public Safety Facility (CDP# 5-98-269) which, based on the traffic study that was part of the EIR for the project, reduced the surplus to approximately 5 spaces during peak usage. However, the proposed increase of 1,500 square feet is not expected to generate an additional parking demand since the number of judge's chambers and other support rooms will remain the same, except for the addition of the multi-purpose room, which will provide the public a waiting area. The increase in size (1,500 square feet) is to provide sufficient room to accommodate current uses and to meet current building code and American Disability Act requirements.

Furthermore, if the additional square footage generates an increase in parking demand, the increase would be nominal due to the relatively small increase in square footage. Moreover, the courthouse is not operated during the weekend. The area is not used for beach parking because of the distance from the beach, parking is limited on the weekends since the Civic Center parking lot is closed during the weekend, and there is a lack of direct access to the beach and Pier from the Courthouse area. Therefore, the proposed project will not adversely impact beach parking. The Commission, therefore, finds that the proposed project is consistent with Section 30252 of the Coastal Act.

## C. Development

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states in part that:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural landforms, to be visually compatible with the character surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas.

The proposed project site is directly behind and east of the existing courthouse building. The existing courthouse building extends to a height of approximately 44 feet. The proposed addition will have a roof height of approximately 30 feet with a 2-foot parapet, and an elevator penthouse extending to 43 feet. The proposed project, because of its lower height and location behind the exiting courthouse building will not be visible from the frontage street

Buildings within the Civic Center measure two and three stories, while the Civic Auditorium measures approximately 60 feet in height. The proposed development will be located approximately three and a half blocks from the Santa Monica beach area. Because of the project's location and existing development between the project site and the ocean, the proposed building will not have any adverse impacts on public coastal views. The Commission, therefore, finds that the proposed project will be compatible with the character

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and scale of the surrounding uses and will be consistent with Sections 30251of the Coastal Act.

## D. Control of Polluted Runoff

Section 30231 states:

The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.

Development poses a potential source of pollution due to contaminated runoff from increase in hardscape and loss of pervious surfaces, and proposed parking lots. The City of Santa Monica, to mitigate potential impacts caused by development, has adopted an Urban Runoff Pollution Ordinance. The ordinance is designed to reduce the amount of urban runoff pollution from sites. The ordinance requires projects to incorporate best management practices with extensive recommendations and measures to reduce or prevent contaminants from running off the site during construction and operation of the proposed development. Furthermore, the City has constructed a new state-of-the-art stormwater treatment facility that treats all dry weather storm runoff. Runoff from all new development is directed to existing stormdrains, which direct stormwater to the treatment facility.

The proposed project will be sited in the same location as the modular buildings that will be removed and will reduce the site's overall building footprint by approximately 3,000 square feet and will increase the amount of landscaping by 1,053 square feet, from 43,296 square feet to 44,349 square feet for the 3 acre County property. Therefore, the amount of pervious surfaces on the site will increase. In addition, perforated drainlines will be installed to increase collection of subsurface site percolation and all drainage from the site will be directed to the existing drainage system, consistent with the City's urban runoff requirements. The Commission, therefore, finds that the proposed development is consistent with Section 30230 and 30231 of the Coastal Act.

## E. Local Coastal Program

(a) Prior to certification of the Local Coastal Program, a Coastal Development Permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the Commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of this division and that the permitted development will not prejudice the

ability of the local government to prepare a Local Coastal Program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3.

In August 1992, the Commission certified, with suggested modifications, the land use plan portion of the City of Santa Monica's Local Coastal Program, excluding the area west of Ocean Avenue and Neilson Way (Beach Overlay District), the Santa Monica Pier and the Civic Center. Therefore, the project site is not covered under the LUP. On September 15, 1992, the City of Santa Monica accepted the LUP with suggested modifications.

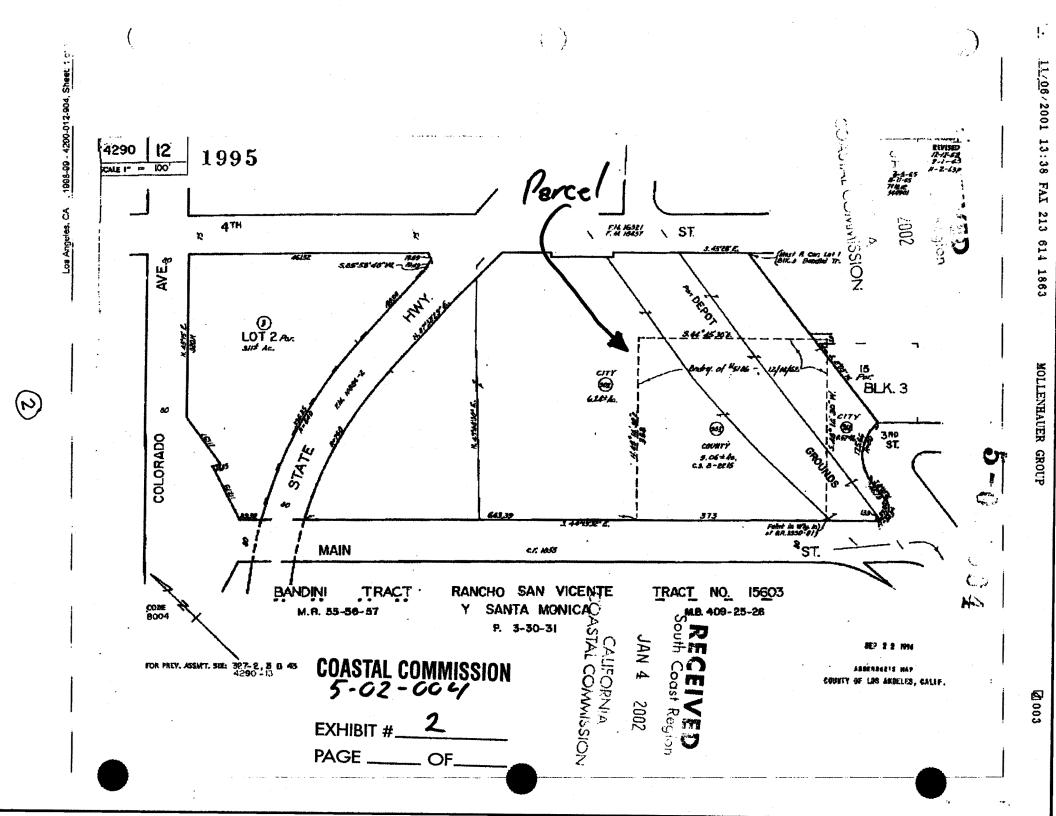
As discussed above, the Commission finds that the proposed project will be consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the City to prepare a Local Coastal Program consistent with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, as required by Section 30604(a).

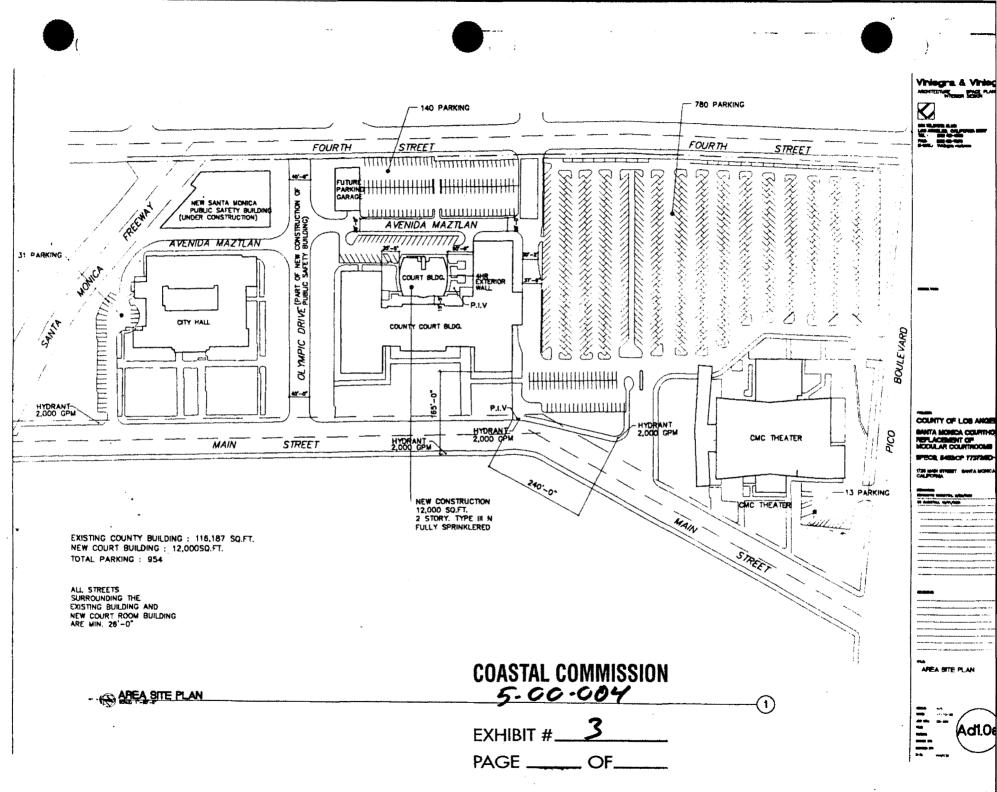
## F. <u>CEQA</u>

Section 13096 of the Commission's regulations requires Commission approval of Coastal Development Permit applications to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available, which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact, which the activity may have on the environment.

As proposed, there are no feasible alternatives or mitigation measures available, which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact, which the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the proposed project is found consistent with CEQA and the policies of the Coastal Act.

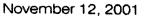






VINEGRA & VINEGRA

Architecture Space Planning Interiors



## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES SANTA MONICA COURTHOSE

SUBJECT: Replacement if existing Modular Courtrooms.

<u>REQUEST:</u> This project be <u>CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION</u> from Negative Decloration or Environmental Impact Reports.

#### BASIS OF REQUEST:

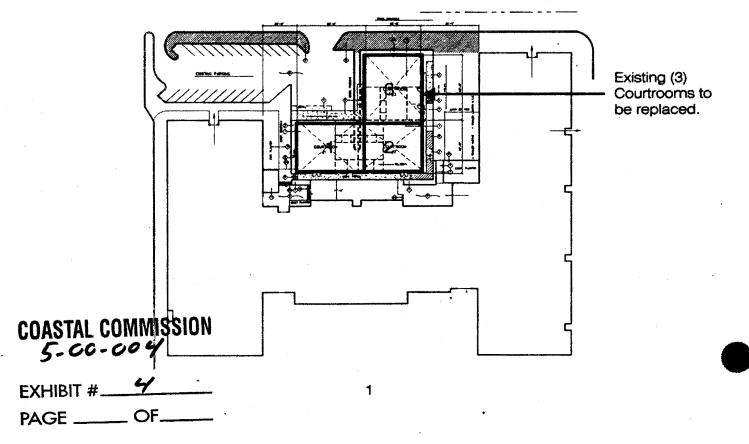
Appendix G: Categorically Exempt Projects.

<u>CLASS 2: Replacement or Reconstruction</u>: Class 2 consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

## **EXISTING STRUCTURE:**

The current 3 Courtrooms are housed in 3 Modular Buildings joined together to form a Single Building Housing:

- Courtrooms (3)
- Judges Chamber (3)
- Jury Rooms (3)
- Attorneys Offices (3)
- Court Reporter Offices (3)
- Parking for 31 Secured Spaces.
- Gross Square Footage of the Existing Courtrooms and Ancillary Spaces is approximately 10,500 Sq. Ft. in a single story type 5 structure.

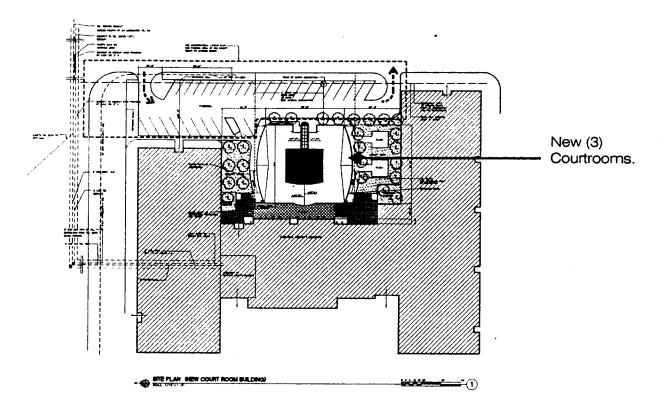


## **REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE:**

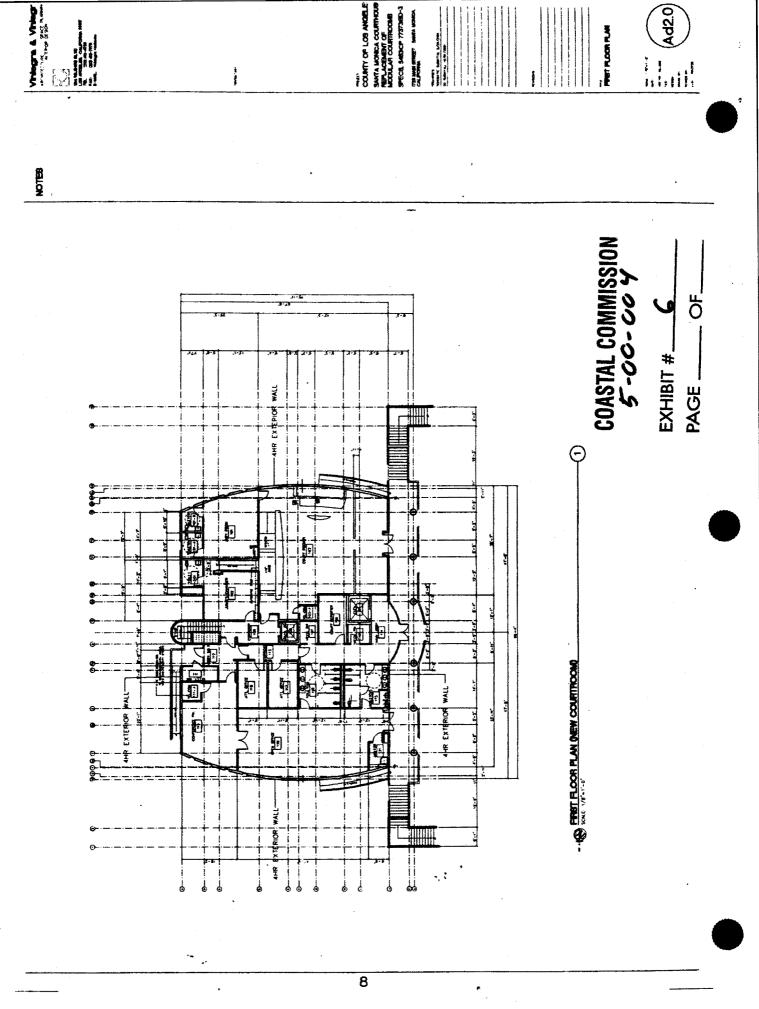
The Replacement Building Consist of the following:

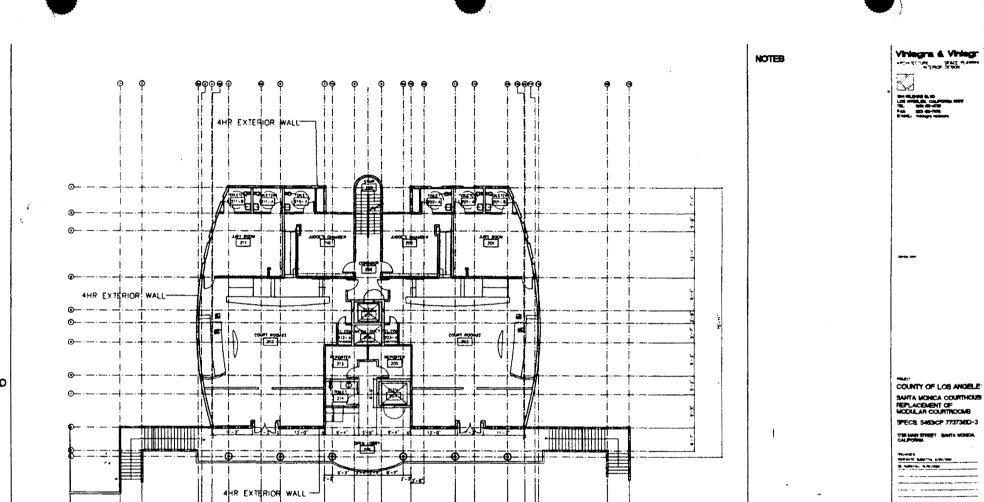
- Courtrooms (3)
- Judges Chamber (3)
- Jury Rooms (3)
- Attorneys Offices (3)
- Court Reporter Offices (3)
- Parking for 31 Secured Spaces.
- Gross Square Footage of the Existing Courtrooms and Ancillary Spaces is approximately 10,500 Sq. Ft. in a single story type 5 structure.

Square Footage of Replacement Building is approximately 12,000 Square Footage in a 2 Story Type III Fully Sprinkled Structure.



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