



**FRANKLIN COUNTY GOVERNMENT
COURTHOUSE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATE
10/17/2019**

The pace has certainly picked up around the Benton Public Square as the renovation project at the Campbell Building along with painstaking plans to demolish the Franklin County Courthouse and build a new facility are hitting full stride.

River City Construction began work on Sept. 30, 2019 at the Campbell Building. The county board approved River City as the successful low bidder on Sept. 27. Cost for the renovation will be \$1.4 million. The plan calls for construction of two offices on the south end of the ground floor that will permanently house the county clerk's and county treasurer's office. Additionally, the 10,000-square foot basement will be renovated to temporarily house the circuit clerk's office, women's advocate office and three courtrooms with judge's chambers.

Plans are currently being discussed that would allow the basement offices to be used to house county offices, such as Franklin County 911, Franklin County Emergency Management and CASA, after the new courthouse is completed and the circuit clerk's office and the court system is moved back to the new facility.

Another aspect of the Campbell Building renovation is expected to have a direct impact on limiting parking problems and traffic congestion on the Public Square. A 40-feet-by-24-feet addition is currently being constructed on the east side of the building. This addition will serve as the main entrance to the Campbell Building. The north entrance of the Campbell Building (the door onto the Public Square) will be used for an exit door only. As per the contract between the county and River City the work is scheduled to be completed by December 20, 2019.

A new elevator and a stairway to the basement area will be included in the new east side addition. The county also recently agreed to a purchase price of \$45,000 to buy the building that formerly housed the Benton Evening News. The purchase is expected to be completed within the next 30 days. After the sale is completed the building will be torn down and a parking lot constructed. The county recently obtained a \$99,999 grant through the U.S. Department of Agriculture for parking. The grant will be used to cover the purchase price and for additional work on the lot.

Additionally, meetings are ongoing between the architect firms of White & Borgognoni and Fentress Architects concerning 'needs-assessment' for the new courthouse. County officials, including the chief judge, county board members, sheriff, state's attorney, county engineer and circuit clerk have been involved in the meetings discussing the size and design of courtrooms, circuit clerk's office, conference rooms, women's advocate office, county board room, sally-port and security concerns.

Important dates approaching concerning the transition and closing of the courthouse begins on January 17 through January 20, 2020. During that four-day span the majority of items in the courthouse, including desks, printers, computers, files, etc. will be moved to the Campbell Building. Universal Moving Solutions, located in Herrin, IL, has been contracted to complete the mammoth task. The county clerk's office and the county treasurer's office will get new furnishing and the circuit clerk's office will use existing furnishings and computers. Tentative plans call for no court settings from January 20, 2020 through February 7, 2020. A skeleton crew will keep the courthouse functioning until the transition is completed to the Campbell Building.

The old courthouse is scheduled to be demolished in February, 2020 with construction set to begin in July 2020. It's projected to take 14 months to complete the new three-story courthouse with a completion date set for November 2021.

The county received the first installment of the county-wide 1 (one) percent sales tax on Oct. 11, 2019. The amount received was \$191,707.50 and was for July 2019. The first quarterly payment on the 2019 Debt Certificates is due on Dec. 15, 2019 in the amount of \$220,662.72.

PHOTOS 1 & 2:

Metal stud walls are going up quickly on the ground level floor at the Campbell building in an area that will house the County Clerk and the County Treasurer offices.



PHOTO 3

Digging began on Oct. 15 on an area east of the Campbell Building, a 40-by-24 feet addition that will house security, stairs to the basement and a new elevator.

