

## Courthouse may be up for sale

# County plans major expansion

by JOHN KLINE

"This county is busting at seams," noted one Clackamas County commissioner in a newspaper interview. What is needed is more office space, he said. The quote has a familiar ring to it. The cry from Oregon City for more county office and courtroom space has been out for many years now.

As it happens, those words were spoken in 1965 by former Commissioner Darrell Jones. Jones joined with his two commissioner colleagues in calling then for additional construction of a county government complex at the area known as Red Soils in southeastern Oregon City.

Thirteen years and several government buildings later, the call for more courtroom and office space is still being made. And government planners from the county seat are out in full force letting the cry be heard.

A four-man team of planners was in Sandy Monday night for a public hearing on the matter of long-range building for the county. The four — two from the county staff and two from a citizens advisory committee — spent two hours presenting a series of proposals for alleviating the space problem to a nearly empty city council chamber.

The less than overwhelming turnout for the hearing did not come as a surprise to the men from Oregon City. The Sandy hearing was the fourth of five such public meetings to be held on the matter; the three persons in the audience represented the largest turnout the planners have seen.

But despite the lack of public enthusiasm for providing input on the long-range plans, the county is forging ahead with proposals to alleviate what is generally

regarded in Oregon City as a crucial problem of courtroom, jail and office space.

The overall plan is to consolidate as many of the county administrative, technical services and law and justice functions in a centralized location.

Presently, the county office building and operation centers are located in three parts of the city. (See other story this page.)

### Four options proposed

In an effort to come up with a long-term solution to the problems of inadequate space and a county government which is spread out over several areas of the city, the commissioners appointed a 15-member citizens advisory committee in September, 1977, to look into the matter.

In addition, the commissioners spent \$49,000 for a study by Facility Sciences Corporation, a private space planning consulting firm from Los Angeles, to make recommendations on possible solutions to the problem.

Facility Sciences came up with four proposals which the county could implement to alleviate the space shortage. It is these proposals which the advisory committee and members of the county staff have set out to explain in the public hearings throughout the county.

The final public hearing was held in Oregon City Wednesday night where considerable opposition to relocating the courthouse away from the downtown business district is a hotly contested issue.

The committee will choose one of the four alternatives and present it as a recommended course of action to the commissioners July 20. The commissioners will then begin to get the wheels in motion for implementation of the agreed on plan.

But one area which neither

## 4 alternatives

Four possible alternatives have been proposed by the consulting firm hired by the county commissioners to alleviate the long and short term county office space problem.

Three of the four alternatives would have the present courthouse remain in use as a county facility. A fourth proposal would have the county vacate the courthouse and sell it for top dollar on the open market.

A number of problem areas regarding the relocation or expansion of present facilities must be considered by the commissioners.

One major problem is the lack of parking space in downtown Oregon City. If the county decides to keep the present courthouse as a government building, a multi-level parking deck will have to be built. The cost of such a facility would run to around \$3 million.

The four alternatives which the consulting firm saw as the best possible solutions are:

1. Total centralization at the Red Soils area, this proposal would involve vacating the present courthouse. Officials believe the county could sell the building for \$1.5 million. Consolidation of the government operations would require the construction of just over 300,000 square feet in new buildings and additions.
2. Development of a new law and justice center at Red Soils while retaining the existing courthouse for general governmental functions. The planners see a need for 120,000 square feet of new buildings and additions if the alternative is adopted.
3. Expansion of the existing courthouse to accommodate all law and justice functions while relocating the general government offices at Red Soils. It would require remodeling of the present courthouse plus the addition of 308,000 square feet of new construction.
4. Relocation of the law and justice center plus the general county government offices on a new site near the proposed route of the Oregon City bypass. It would require vacating the present courthouse and construction of 307,000 feet of new facilities.

the citizens committee nor the consulting group has looked into is where the funds will come from to pay for new construction.

"The timing for this is not the greatest," said Don Williams, staff assistant to the commissioners. "We realize that coming up with the funding package is going to create some problems."

The consulting firm estimates that upgrading the present facilities and constructing new buildings to

meet the space demands will cost a minimum of \$26 million in 1978 dollars. The top figure for the most expensive of the four alternatives is \$43 million.

### New Courthouse

What to do with the county courthouse on Main Street in the heart of the downtown core area is a main stumbling block for long range planning. A number of county officials would like to see as many of the county offices as possible (including

the courthouse) located in the 102-acre Red Soils complex outside of the downtown area.

Currently, the county library is located there as is the sheriff's department and jail, public health department and the data processing center.

The county has outgrown the confines of the present courthouse and is bulging at the seams of the 42-year-old landmark.

Courtroom and office space in the courthouse is now utilized to the maximum. It houses the commissioners and staff, the sheriff's civil and tax divisions, the finance department, records and elections as well as court offices.

The short-range problem, according to county officials, is the need for a new courtroom "yesterday," and at least one more within a year.

"The space problem is a real one," Williams said at the hearing Monday night. "The consulting group said

the county needs 49,000 square feet of office space right now.

"We have to come up with a solution to that problem for now and we also have to plan for the next 20 years," he said.

Sandy Recreation and Senior Center Director Dick Halvorson raised the question of how the needs of rural residents living apart from the county seat could be better served by the 20-year plan.

"I'm concerned about the driving distance of people who live in areas such as Sandy," Halvorson said. "When you have to go as far away as Oregon City to get to the available government services, then there will be people who are not going to take advantage of them."

Williams pointed out that part of the long-range county plan would be to construct satellite county buildings in two or three rural areas of the county. One such facility could be constructed in the Sandy-Estacada area, he said.

## Man held in burglary

Clackamas County sheriff's deputies are holding a 20-year-old Kansas City man on a charge that he broke into his grandparents' home in Sandy and stole \$600 in cash.

Arrah Ethel and Charles Carlstrom told sheriff's deputies Saturday that a man in a grey raincoat ran through their house as they were preparing to leave on a trip and stole Mrs. Carlstrom's purse which contained \$600.

Deputies and Sandy police were called to the home that evening when their custodian reported a man was inside the house.

After a stakeout and a chase, officers caught the

man, who identified himself as Ronald Mills of Kansas City. Mills told the officers the Carlstroms were his grandparents, which deputies later verified.

## Free clinic set for tots

A free vision and hearing screening clinic for children three-to-five-years old and not entering first grade will be held Friday, June 30, at Mt. Pleasant School in Oregon City.

The clinic is being sponsored by the Clackamas County Public Health Division.

# PGE

## ENERGY UPDATE

### Electricity and Water Don't Mix

A plunge in the backyard swimming pool is a mighty fine way to cool off on a hot summer day and if you are planning to install one, below or above ground, make sure that you locate it away from overhead electric wires.

The National Electric Safety Code requires that the edge of any swimming pool — even above ground pools — be at least 25 feet from the spot on the ground that is directly underneath an electric line. If a line cuts across your swimming pool, or across any area of your yard that is within 25 feet of the edge of the pool, you are violating the law — and endangering the lives of everyone who goes in or near the pool.



If you know of a pool that violates the law, it should be reported to PGE. Either the pool or the lines has to be moved — at the homeowners expense. And remember — when cleaning your pool, keep those long aluminum poles away from the wires, too.

### Nuclear Power Provided 12% Of All U.S. Electricity Last Year

A recent Atomic Industrial Forum survey revealed that production of electricity by nuclear plants during 1977 neared the 250 billion net kilowatt-hour mark which represented approximately 12 percent of all the electricity sold in the United States last year. The Trojan plant alone accounted for 6.5 billion kwh of that total making it the second highest producing plant of the 168 commercial nuclear plants in the Free World. As a result of this nuclear generation, the savings to consumers, when compared to weighted cost average of nuclear with oil and coal combined, amounted to more than \$2 billion.

### "Long Distance" 89 Years Ago, Short by Today's Standards

This month, June of 1978, marks the beginning of PGE's 89th year of providing power to Oregonians. It all started at the Oregon City falls where a predecessor Company of PGE reversed up the dynamos in the powerhouse there and sent electricity a dizzying distance of 14 miles to energize some street lights in downtown Portland. That was some feat — a pioneering "first" in the use of energy — and PGE is, to this day, credited with the nation's first long distance transmission of electricity and the beginning of PGE, "Oregon's Pioneer Electric Utility."



### PGE Energy Saver Home Program Aimed at Cozier Construction

If you're planning on building or buying a new home, you'll be interested in PGE's Energy Saver Home program. What it does is suggest new, more stringent construction and insulation guidelines for the builder to follow resulting in added comfort and energy and money savings during the lifetime of the home. We suggest to builders, for example, double glazing of all glass areas, extra "R's" of insulation in ceilings, walls and floors, and a host of many other energy-saving suggestions. The program is new, so if your builder is not thoroughly familiar with the program, drop us a note or call your nearest PGE office and we'll send you our brand new folder. It's free.

### Use Good Old Summertime To Fight Winds of Winter

One effective way to weatherize your home and realize substantial savings in energy and money — and be more comfortable, too — is to seal and weatherstrip the cracks and crannies that let heat and dollars escape into the great outdoors. Now, when the weather is warm, is a good time to get out the caulking gun and take aim at the open joints in your homes. To help you, PGE has two free-for-the asking booklets. One is how to weatherstrip windows and another on how to caulk and weather-strip. Drop a request or call the Conservation Center at the PGE office nearest you. Phone numbers and addresses are on the back of your bill.

### Thought for the Day

"Man's mind, stretched to a new idea, never goes back to its original dimension"  
Oliver Wendell Holmes

PGE Portland General Electric

## Judge shows Commissioners to the door

OREGON CITY — Judge Charles Sams is kicking the rascals out of their offices.

Sorry — that's not a coup taking place in the Clackamas County courthouse. The "rascals," courthouse to the former Groener, Bob Schumacher and Stan Skoko, voted last week to move out of the courthouse to the former Trans-american building at Ninth and Main streets, along with their assistants and the county counsel office. A courtroom for Sams will occupy their space on the second floor of the courthouse.

Sams, currently the sole district court judge for the county, becomes the fifth circuit court judge on July 1, a position created by the 1977 state legislature.

Had the commissioners not moved out, Sams might have ended up a judge without a courtroom. As it is, he will hold court in Judge Howard Blanding's courtroom and in the commissioners' conference room until the west side of the courthouse is remodeled.

The commissioners, their staff and the county counsel will move to the Trans-america building around the middle of July, said staff assistant Mike Bateson.

Sams' courtroom should be completed by the middle of August, and another chain of moves should be completed by the end of summer, said Court Administrator Mike Maier.

The county is budgeting \$200,000 for Sams' courthouse, and \$15,000 for other courthouse remodeling, Bateson said.

The county will pay \$23,000 annual rent on the Trans-america, with \$45,000 going toward remodeling.

# Now Open in Sandy!



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-- Bill Johnston and David Edwards --

# Gifts of the Earth

38776 Proctor Blvd. in Sandy next to C&L Remodeling