

## **Pinal County Press Release**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Construction Phase of 1891 Courthouse Renovation Underway**

FLORENCE – With the interior demolition complete and the architectural design finalized, the next and biggest step of the renovation of the 1891 Courthouse is now underway – interior construction.

“Considering the age of this building, it will be a very sensitive project. It is not typical of our past projects where we build from the ground up. You have to plan this properly, it means taking extra care during demolition and construction but this is an exciting time,” said construction project manager Archie Carreon.

Crews from Concord General Contracting in Mesa arrived Tuesday morning, ready to give the historic structure a new lease on life. The renovation comes at a time when Pinal County will need space for five supervisors, their offices and meeting chambers. Arizona State Statute 11-211(A) requires counties to have five elected supervisors once they have a population of 175,000 or more, as determined by the US Census Bureau. Pinal County’s 2010 Census population was 375,770.

In addition to the interior construction, crews will also be improving the utilities, paving new parking spaces around the building and installing new curbs and gutters.

Looking over the blueprints of the renovation, Carreon said that crews will be busy throughout most of the year getting the building ready for its 2013 debut. Work on the courthouse is scheduled to be completed by the end of November.

“There are three aspects of this courthouse that will make an immediate impression on people,” Carreon said. “One is the grand staircase at the entrance of the building. People will notice it and the high ceilings when they walk into the courthouse. Next is the complete rebuilding of the ceremonial courtroom on the second floor. Finally, the new Board of Supervisors hearing room will be much larger. The seating capacity will grow to 126 people, nearly double what the current hearing room will hold.”

Carreon added that some of the original interior highlights will be kept for all to admire. “For example, in the Supervisors’ hearing room we will have all the original brick exposed. Windows from the old jail cells, complete with bars, will be on display as well.”

There will also be the modern necessities included to make this 19<sup>th</sup> century building fit into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

“All the modern conveniences will be included in the renovation,” Carreon said. “Full insulation, up-to-date air conditioning, fire suppression and alarm equipment, new wiring, contemporary lighting and we will be ADA compliant with a new elevator.”

On January 12, 2011, the Board of Supervisors approved the renovation of the courthouse. The course of action replaced an earlier plan to build a 10,000 square foot building to house the county’s Human Resources Department as well as remodeling Administration Building A to accommodate two more supervisors and staff. The anticipated cost of the earlier project was \$3.2 million. The decision by the Supervisors meant that a one-time infusion of \$2.8 million dollars would be needed to complete the renovation.

The Arizona Historical Advisory Commission has designated the 1891 Courthouse Renovation Project an official Centennial Legacy Project. To keep up on the progress of the 1891 Courthouse renovation, log onto (shortened URL): <http://goo.gl/S5Rta>. This site contains news about the renovation and videos documenting key milestones in the renovation.

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