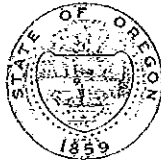


Thomas A. Balmer
Chief Justice



1163 State Street
Salem, OR 97301-2563
Phone: 503.986.5717
Fax: 503.986.5730
Oregon Relay Service: 711
Thomas.Balmer@ojd.state.or.us

OREGON SUPREME COURT

April 25, 2016

Via e-mail only

Planning and Sustainability Commission
City of Portland
1900 SW 4th Avenue
Portland, OR 97201

Re: Multnomah County Central Courthouse (MCCCH) Project: Amendment to Minimum Height On Block 8, Portland

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the requested building height increase for the Multnomah County Central Courthouse.

The Oregon Judicial Department has a vital interest in ensuring that the Oregonians who work and seek justice in Oregon courts do so in a safe environment. Replacing the existing central courthouse has been studied for decades. It not only is seismically dangerous, but also mingles crime victims and alleged offenders in the same public area and has other security deficiencies.

The new courthouse structure will address those critical safety and security needs, and it also will allow consolidation of many court services and court-related services, making them more accessible to the public and more efficient to administer.

The current plans to replace the existing aged and dangerous courthouse will continue this key government service in the downtown area and meet many of the policy objectives of the City of Portland. But to do so requires a height variance for the proposed structure.

I appreciate the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners making this project a priority, and urge you to give favorable consideration to the request for a height increase for this badly-needed structure.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Balmer
Chief Justice