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NEWS RELEASE

Jacksonville Mayor John Delaney broke ground today on the new County Courthouse Complex. As part of The Better Jacksonville Plan, the city is building a new \$211 million facility that will cover several blocks just west of the new Federal Courthouse. The facility will become a part of a comprehensive judicial complex and is expected to be dedicated in 2005.

“This signature building will reflect the dignity and the importance of the judicial system in our community,” said Mayor Delaney at today’s groundbreaking ceremony. “Courthouses are where our constitutional rights are protected every day, and that is essential to our freedom and democracy.”

The new Courthouse Complex will showcase timeless architecture. The entire complex will encompass nearly 900,000 square feet, including the renovation of the existing old Federal Courthouse. The main building will feature a large atrium with a domed roof, which will quickly become a visible landmark of downtown Jacksonville.

The new Courthouse Complex will be more than twice as large as the current courthouse on Bay Street, which was built in the 1950s. The new complex will allow for 43 courtrooms, a state of the art law library, secure basement parking for judicial officials, and expanded JSO prisoner holding areas. It will also include an improved jury assembly area, private meeting rooms adjacent to the courtrooms, ample interior and exterior public space and the Clerk of the Courts Office. The State Attorney and Public Defender Offices will be housed in the old federal courthouse building, which will undergo extensive renovations. Once the work is complete, it, too, will be state-of-the-art to mirror the new buildings in the County Courthouse Complex.

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The County Courthouse Complex will be bordered by Duval Street to the north, Broad Street to the west, Forsyth Street to the south and Julia Street to the east.

As part of the city's Art in Public Places ordinance, $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1% of the construction budget is reserved for public art. That means an estimated \$897,000 will be set aside for artwork.

Once the new Duval County Courthouse Complex opens in late 2005, the old courthouse on Bay Street will be vacated. This will give the city the opportunity to sell the courthouse on Bay Street to a private developer and put that riverfront property back on the tax rolls.

For more information, call Sharon Ashton at (904) 630-7377.