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Montgomery County Circuit Court

Rockville, Maryland
Institutional

This project consolidates court functions into one centralized location and allows two vacated historic courthouses located nearby, to be sensitively repurposed for other government uses. The project accommodates future growth and the clearly organized plan and transparency of the facade reflect the principles of an open and democratic government. The project complements the Rockville Masterplan and encourages pedestrian engagement within the site through carefully landscaped public spaces.



Montgomery County Executive Office Building

Montgomery County Circuit Court (North Tower)

Montgomery County Council Office Building

Annex (South Tower)

District Court of Maryland - Rockville

Red Brick Courthouse

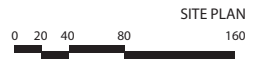
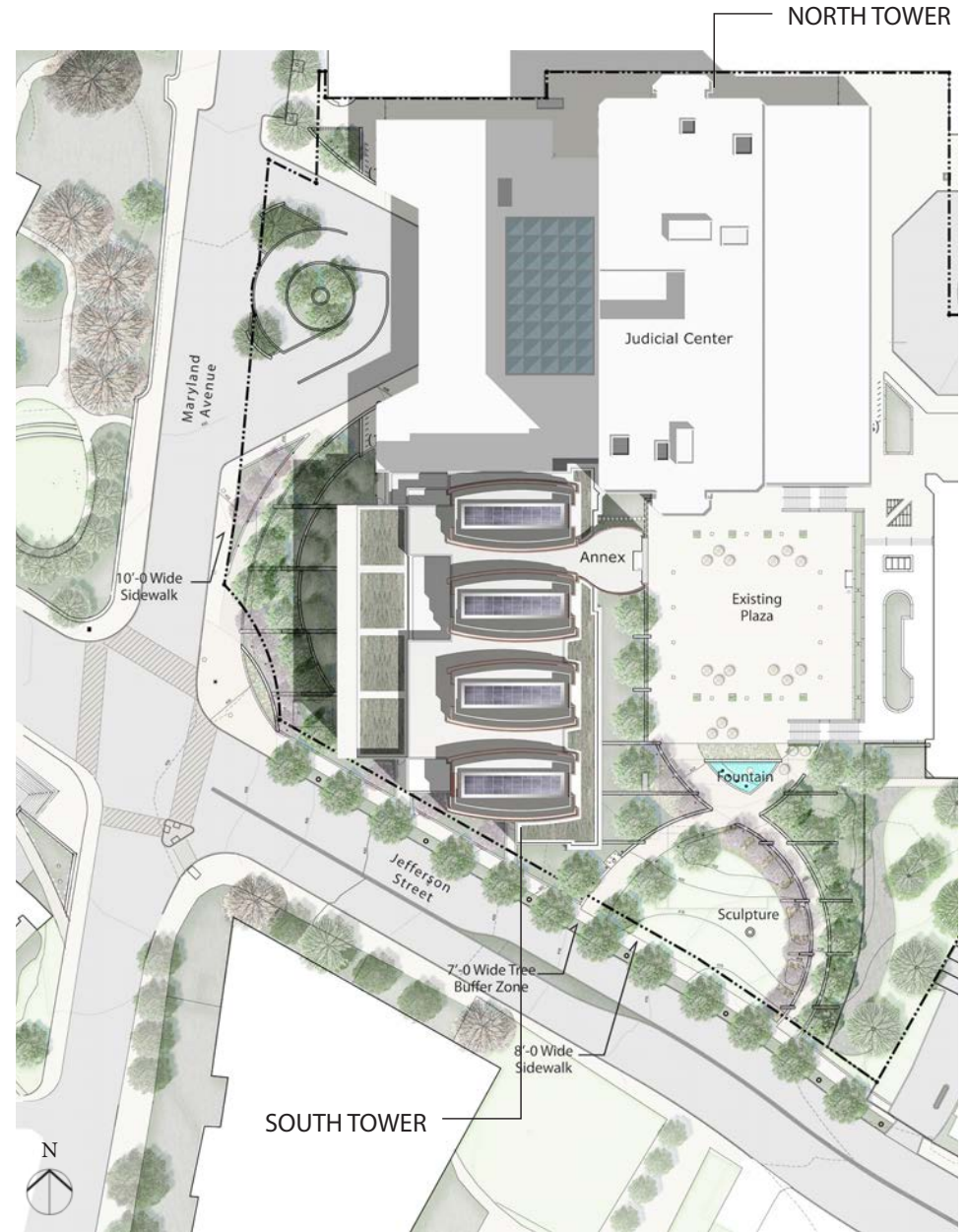
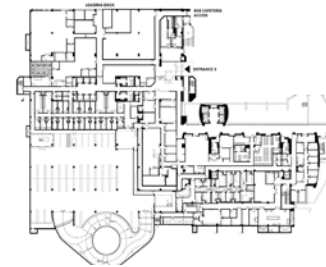
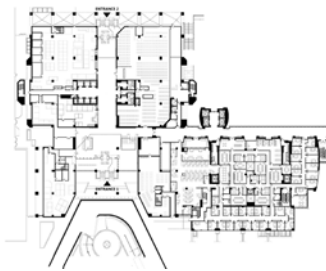
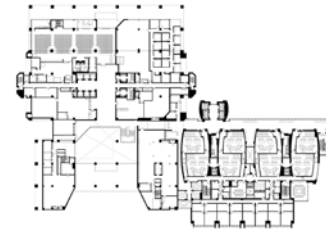
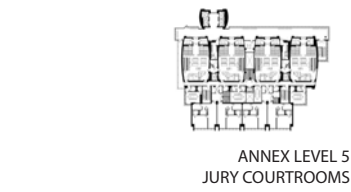
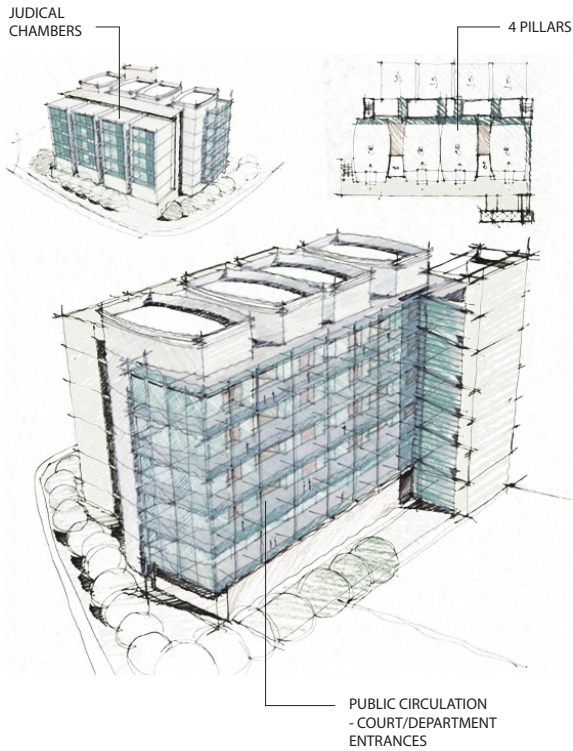
Grey Courthouse



The new annex is designed to clearly express the internal components which make up the building and define the legal process. The courtrooms are intended to be the central expression of the buildings purpose. Each of the four sets of stacked courtrooms is given a unique figural expression as a powerful column or "pillar". In most historic courthouses (including the Grey Courthouse in Rockville) the courthouse pillars at the entry portico were the primary symbol of the courthouse. For the annex the six story tall courtroom "pillars" represent the dignity and gravitas of the court system. Clad

in a richly textured skin of copper toned metal panels, the "pillars" provide a warm counterpoint to the crisp glass curtainwalls and pre-cast panels of the remainder of the building.

Each courtroom pillar is topped by glass "lanterns" which provide an elegant profile for the Rockville skyline. During the day the translucent glass creates a cap to each "pillar" reinforcing their individuality. During dusk and early evening hours the "lanterns" are internally lit to create subtly glowing beacons highlighting the importance of the courts system.





ELEVATION - SOUTH



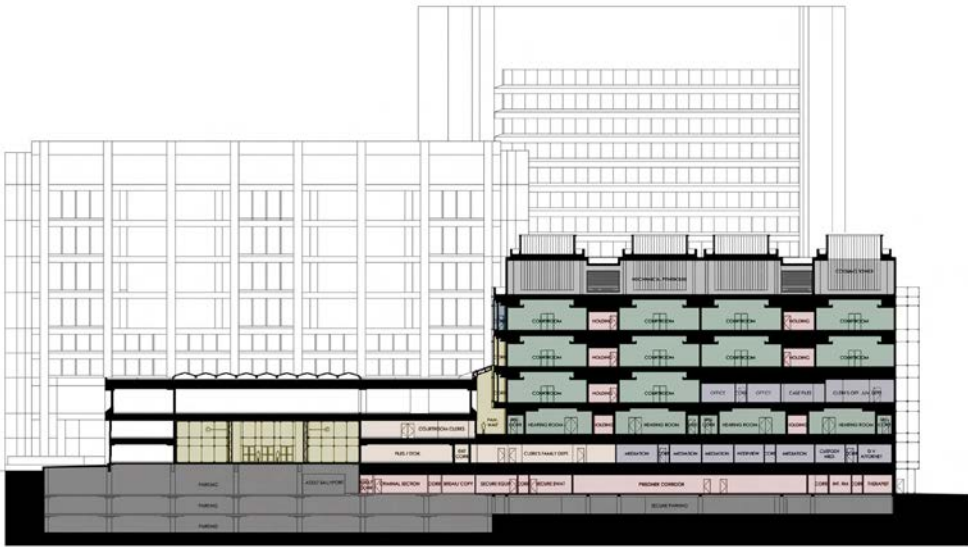
ELEVATION - WEST



ELEVATION - NORTH



ELEVATION - EAST



SECTION - NORTH-SOUTH



SECTION - EAST-WEST





TRANSPARENCY

Transparent justice is expressed through a curtainwall which allows views into court prefunction areas from the adjacent landscaped plaza. Chambers and judicial office spaces are located on the opposite side and overlook the District Court and historic court plaza.





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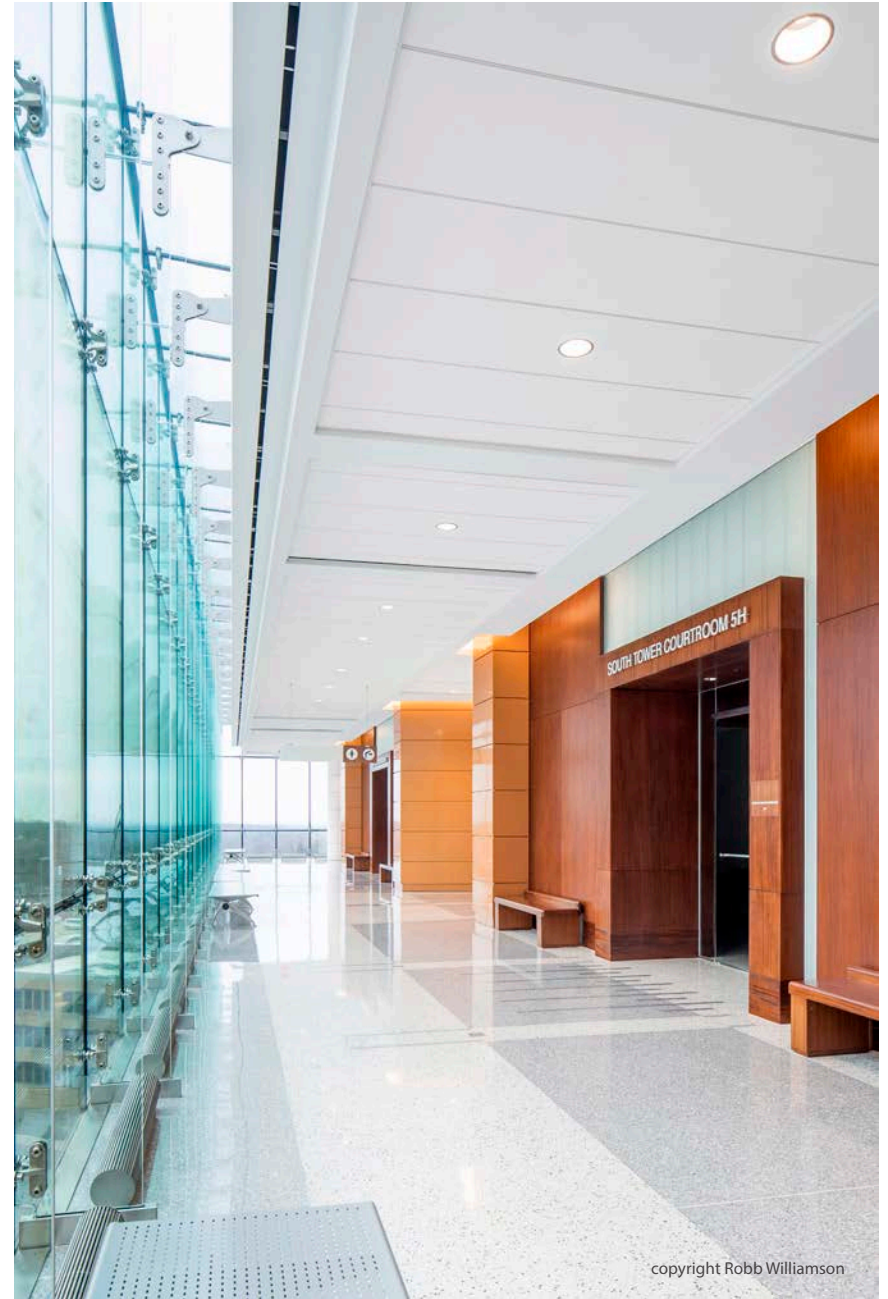
ENTRY CIRCULATION

The design significantly improves access and circulation throughout the complex. Screening stations were expanded by capturing exterior space beneath an existing arcade. The design accommodates extensive indoor queuing to address inclement weather conditions. Existing escalators were replaced by a monumental public stair which occupies a smaller footprint and eases lobby congestion.

Reuse of existing entries and creation of a new first floor public corridor leading to the annex, provides simple, clear public wayfinding.

WAYFINDING

The design delineates a linear 4 court layout that is emphasized through the metal clad "pillars." These elements are articulated inside and outside the building and act as a visual cue to orient building occupants. The annex has been branded as the South Tower and the renovation of the existing building, the North Tower. Public spaces utilize the same material palette in both towers. Large super graphics have been incorporated at connection zones to guide users to their intended destination. Department, courtroom and elevator lobby entries are highlighted with changes in terrazzo pattern.



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FUNCTION

The design accommodates a larger, more functional jury assembly space prominently located within the renovation. The jury assembly area provides multiple seating and work spaces as well as other amenities. The space is flooded with natural light and provides views to the courthouse entry. The jury space is located conveniently off the elevator lobby on the second floor. Super graphics depicting the historic courthouse highlight the space. A child waiting area is provided on Level 1 near the Family Services Department. This brightly lit, colorful space provides a respite for young children while their parents are engaged in court business.

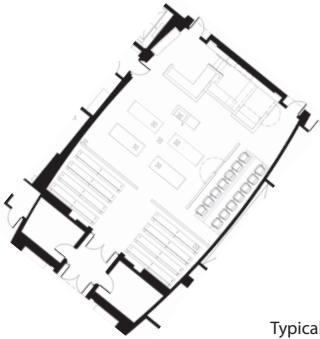
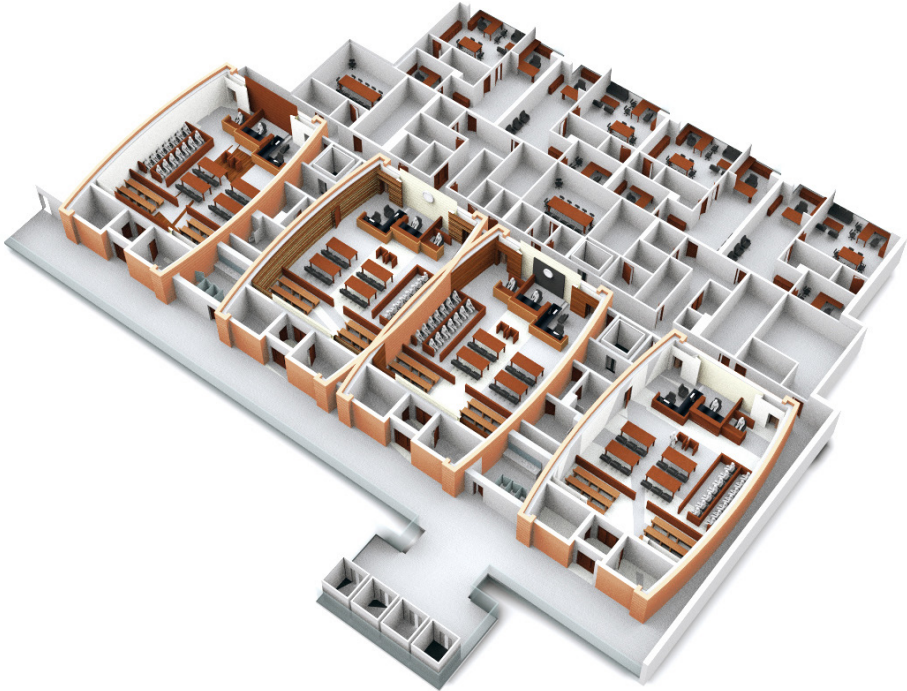
CHILD WAITING



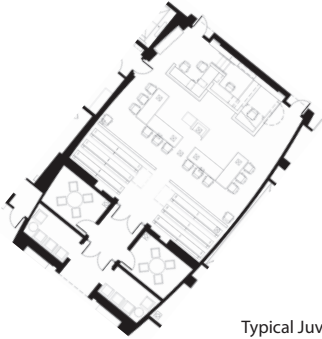
JURY ASSEMBLY

COURTROOMS

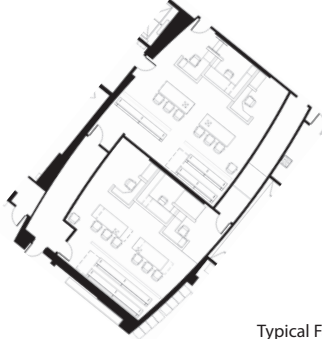
The design approach focuses on the compelling ideals of an orderly society. Courtrooms are prominently displayed and are the central expression of the building. Each of the four sets of stacked courtrooms is given a unique figural expression as a powerful column or "pillar" which is highlighted with copper-toned metal panels, representing the dignity of the judicial system. Pillars are capped by glass "lanterns" which glow as beacons, representing the importance of the judicial system. Lanterns are powered by photovoltaic cells.



Typical Jury Courtroom



Typical Juvenile Courtroom



Typical Family Hearing Courtroom

