

## COURTHOUSE

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and the remaining 2/3 remains county property for county operations: Auditor, Treasurer, DA, Clerk, Library, etc.”

The entire arrangement is governed by several complex transfer and occupancy agreements mandated by the state; basically, any improvements to the court's share of space to meet court needs would have to be funded by the state. But to the extent they impact the county, or affect the county's share of the property, then the county would be responsible.

The county would not be able to

match the AOC's financial resources to make improvements; in recent years, it has only been able to budget \$100,000-200,000 a year for deferred maintenance for over 50 county facilities. Therefore the likelihood of the county being able to participate in any improvement plan developed by the AOC or court would be remote, and, added Carunchio, “I don't believe the AOC is interested in financing improvements to county property.”

Court Executive Officer Tammy Grumm offered some reassurance that

the historic courthouse would be far from obsolete after the completion of the new courthouse.

“The historic courthouse will remain in operation,” she said. “The county will occupy the offices that the court vacates, giving the county much needed space.” She also noted that the courthouse would be kept in “museum quality,” and that “there are no plans to do anything but allow that it be maintained as a court, used for marriages and overflow.”

Although the county won't have as

much say as it might like in the new courthouse, Supervisor Cash made certain that “we'd have the opportunity to have someone from AOC come out and have a public meeting to explain the process.”

“I think we'd be delighted to do that,” replied Lamb.

The new Independence courthouse does not yet have a schedule; said AOC Office of Communications spokeswoman Teresa Ruano, “we need to do some work with the county to transfer the property first.”

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