

**COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE**  
**Facilities & Environmental Services**  
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**Memorandum**

Date: April 8, 2021

To: Trevor Henry & Lance Stewart  
From: Blake Abplanalp  
Subject: Programming Summary - Courts Complex Additions and Renovations Project # 16101

**Background:**

The Courts Complex project architect, Fentress Architects and their team began their programming efforts for the above-mentioned project in July of 2020.

Architectural programming involves research and decision making that helps the architect and owner establish performance requirements and design criteria for the project. Programming can range broadly from identifying the project's goals and objectives, to elements such as the precise characteristics of a space. It is an essential first step before the design phase and a critical communication tool throughout the project. The program guides participants from the concept phase to final construction documents.

Program requirements are the biggest factor in determining the size and layout of the facilities of this construction project. The programming is paired with diagrams indicating operational adjacencies, which allow the project team to create the best "fit" of use, space, personnel, furnishings, and equipment.

**Summary:**

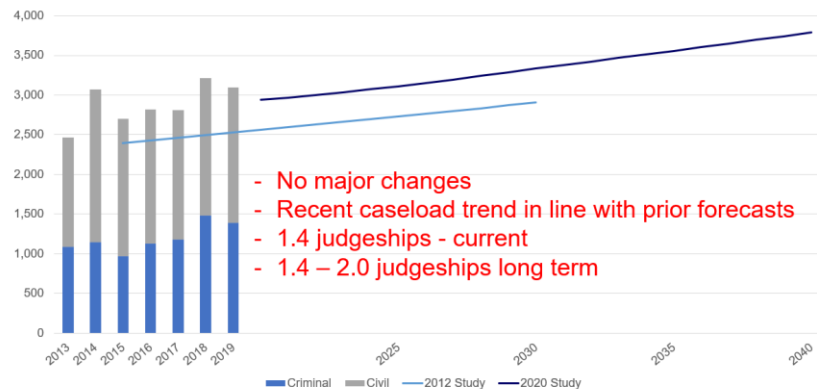
The programming consultant contracted by Fentress Architects is Fentress, Inc. (same name is a coincidence). Founded in 1988, Fentress Inc. is a planning and programming firm that specializes in court facilities. They have completed detailed programs for over 1,000 courthouses nationwide. This firm performs over 10,000 courts related caseload projections per year.

The first task that Fentress Inc. had to perform was to review and analyze data from previous County studies in 2012, 2015 and 2017. After review, they were tasked with meeting with stakeholders to update the program based on these meetings, updated actual data associated with population, court caseloads and other driving trends pertaining to the judicial system in this region. Fentress also gathered and evaluated current data pertaining to courts personnel increases or decreases, changing

space and storage requirements, changes associated with the virtual world, improved circulation / security, ADA requirements, prosecutorial discretion, and alternative sentencing options.

The programming related to the existing Albemarle County Circuit Court did not result in substantial changes to the information that was compiled in previous studies. The plan moving forward is consistent with what had been recommended in previous studies.

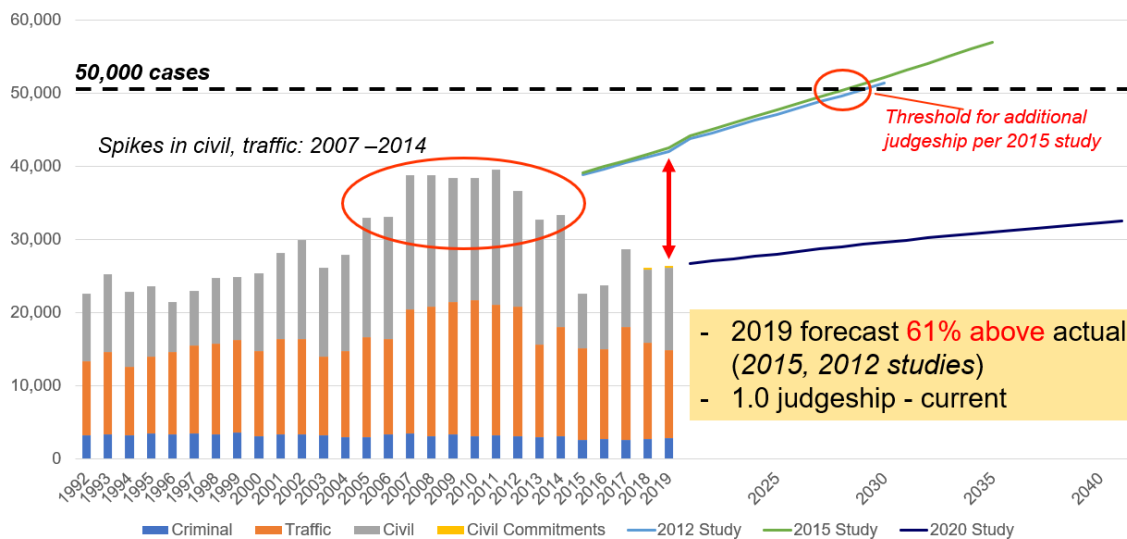
### Albemarle Circuit Court – Total Cases



Sources: State Compensation Board Reports; Albemarle County, VA Courts Master Plan Study, September 2012  
 \*Due to changes in caseload reporting beginning in 2013, only caseload figures for 2013 through 2019 were used to produce projections.

Where Fentress Inc. found a rather significant change to previous programs was in their analysis of the General District Court (GDC). What they found was that the overall number of Albemarle County GDC cases have been trending markedly downward for several years for a variety of reasons that will be discussed in staff’s presentation to the Board of Supervisors on April 17 2021. Given these trends, Fentress Inc. could not reasonably validate the previous caseload forecasts and the associated forecast of a second full-time resident GDC judge to manage the Albemarle County caseload.

### Albemarle GDC – Total Cases

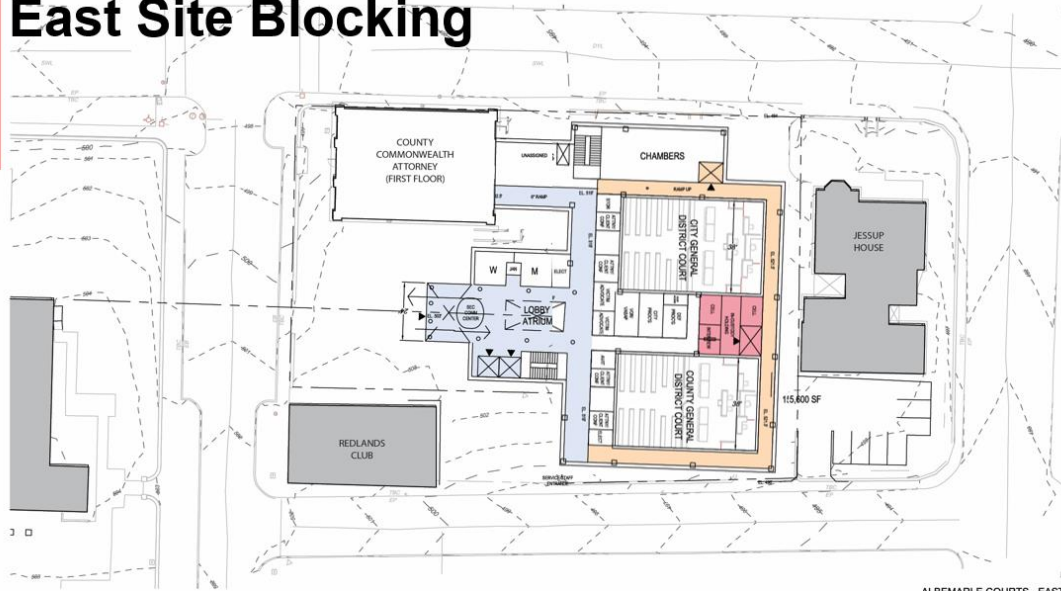


Sources: VA Judicial System’s website; Albemarle County, VA Courts Master Plan Study, September 2012; County of Albemarle City of Charlottesville Feasibility Study for a Combined General District Court Building, August 2015

As a result, an updated needs projection has been submitted with current caseload and judgeship projections. These projections were presented to Albemarle County GDC Judge Matthew Quatrara, Albemarle County GDC Clerk Leola Morse and they concurred with the submitted conclusions. Fentress also consulted with Criminal Justice Planner for the Thomas Jefferson Area Community Criminal Justice Board, Neal Goodloe. Fentress provided their findings and data, and Mr. Goodloe concurred with the



# East Site Blocking



ALBEMARLE COURTS - EAST SITE  
SCENARIO 1A - FIRST FLOOR

