



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Cleveland County Public Relations

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Cleveland County Announces Enhanced Communications Initiative for the Justice Center Project

SHELBY, NC – As the largest and one of the most significant capital investments in County history, the Cleveland County Justice Center represents a major commitment of public resources. As such, since 2019, the Justice Center has been a topic of discussion on the Board of Commissioners' meeting and work session agenda(s) twenty-six (26) times; since 2021, the Justice Center has appeared twenty-three (23) times as a news article/story through our media partners; since 2024, County staff have participated in approximately one-hundred ten (110) owner, architect and contractor meetings along with approximately fifty (50) building/site inspections/tours and over a dozen stakeholders' meetings; the County leveraged financial consulting assistance for the project; County representatives have engaged the North Carolina Office of State Treasurer – Local Government Commission on multiple occasions; the County has commissioned two (2) audits performed by an independent construction contract auditing firm along with countless other oversight activities.

In an effort to enhance communications with our community, Cleveland County leadership is excited to announce the following engagement initiatives as we countdown to the Justice Center's opening:

- Providing a Justice Center Progress Report during each regular Board of Commissioners' meeting, including milestones, financial updates, schedule progress and key project developments.
- Launching an upcoming dedicated Justice Center information page on the County's website featuring frequently asked questions, project updates, timelines, financial information, progress photographs and other public information as they become available.
- Continuing transparent communication by providing regular updates, explaining significant project decisions and sharing the actions being taken to protect taxpayer's dollars and ensure accountability.

While construction projects of this size and complexity can present unforeseen challenges, County leadership is committed to seeing the project completed responsibly, holding all parties accountable to their contractual obligations and keeping citizens informed every step of the way.

As part of this commitment, the County has exercised its contractual rights to request additional documentation related to project costs and schedules, seek reimbursement when appropriate and require updated project timelines before releasing additional contract contingency funds. These steps demonstrate the County's responsibility to provide prudent fiscal oversight and financial stewardship in protection of the public's resources.

"Our responsibility is to ask questions, insist on accountability from all parties involved and keep our citizens informed throughout the process. The County remains steadfast in our commitment to the public," stated county manager David B. Cotton.

For additional information and future project updates, residents are encouraged to visit the Cleveland County website and/or attend regularly scheduled Board of Commissioners' meetings.

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