



Renfrew County Courthouse

A contemporary judicial system built on tradition in Pembroke, ON

A province wide courts consolidation programme provided an opportunity to address a number of unsympathetic additions and renovations as well as the passage of time that had negatively impacted the 1860's Renfrew County Courthouse complex in Pembroke, Ontario. The architectural challenge was to restore the integrity of the original historic elements and create an addition that was clearly contemporary while also respectful of the heritage components. The result is a complex where the old and new components work together in a dialogue that reinforces the character and power of the original weathered stone building elements while also expressing the new revitalization and modernization of the facility. It embodies a contemporary judicial system built on tradition.

The 1860's landmark courthouse remains the center of the main street composition. New construction is set back on each flanking side wrapping around the original structure and almost filling the site to the north where the ground slopes down to the Ottawa River. This slope makes it possible to build a three-story addition that appears lower than the two-story historic courthouse. On the front façade, the rough texture of the addition's random ashlar limestone cladding contrasts with the smooth sandstone blocks of the original courthouse. A new public entrance is marked with a double height canopy resting on paired columns, a motif that continues inside along the public atrium that extends between the exposed walls of the heritage courthouse the new addition and the recently exposed jail to the north. The wood soffit of the entrance canopy is a part of a modern vocabulary of wood steel and glass that extends into the building interior and plays against the rustic stone of the heritage elements. This conversation between heritage and new continues into some of the courtrooms as well as the lawyers lounge where both the walls of the jail and the old registry building are exposed.

The public, private and secure circulation systems are separated and discretely threaded through the complex and new AV, IT and security systems were added bringing the complex up to modern standards without compromising the heritage spaces, particularly the restored heritage courtroom.

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CLIENT	Ministry of the Attorney General / Ontario Realty Corporation
PORTFOLIO	Justice
CATEGORY	Courthouse
SIZE	85,000 SF (7,800 SM)
LOCATION	Pembroke, ON Canada
DATE	2006
SERVICES	Architecture Structural Engineering MEP Engineering

AWARDS

- 2014 American Institute of Architects, Academy of Architecture for Justice, Award of Merit
- 2010 Building Owners & Managers International, The Office Building of the Year (TOBY), Historical Category
- 2009 Ontario Association of Architects, Award of Design Excellence
- 2009 Building Owners & Managers Regional, The Office Building of the Year (TOBY), Historical Category
- 2009 Building Owners & Managers Local, The Office Building of the Year (TOBY), Historical Category
- 2009 Ontario Association of Architects, People's Choice Award
- 2008 Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario, Award of Merit – Collaborative
- 2006 American Institute of Architects, Academy of Architecture for Justice, Award of Merit

Justice

Justice facilities demand multi-faceted design to uphold and express the legal process, and achieve efficient and functional operations, while maintaining a safe and secure environment. Our experience in the design of judicial buildings spans more than 30 years across all levels of government including courthouses, police and fire facilities and detention and correctional centers.

Multi-Faceted Design to Meet All Users' Needs

Our Justice Center of Excellence continually advances design through research, technology and practice. We believe the key to effective judicial building design is a clear understanding of complex programs and changing processes to support all participants. Working collaboratively with users and stakeholders, we use both traditional and new techniques of visualization and simulation to communicate and collaborate in the design process.

Courthouses

The design of a new courthouse must be accessible, dignified, safe and functional. Detailed design of public circulation, waiting areas, settlement rooms, holding quarters and judicial chambers is undertaken to support the needs of the courts system. NORR has completed more than 50 courthouse projects including programming assessments, standards development, accessibility studies, renovations and new-build designs.

Police and Fire Facilities

The design of police and fire facilities must respond to the increasing demands for service and security in an evolving world. Our Justice team works with multiple police and fire service organizations across the globe to realize designs that achieve efficiency, functionality, integrate technology and provide a safe environment for officers, firefighters and the public that is integrated into the community they serve.

Detention and Correctional Centers

The design of a new detention or correctional center, or overhaul of an existing facility, must emphasize elements such as rigorous security standards, operational requirements, enhanced rehabilitation potential and adaptability for future growth and services. We manage all elements in close partnership with the client and community.

CONTACT

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