Administrative Office of the Courts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2019

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MORA COUNTY MAGISTRATE COURT MOVES TO NEW COURTHOUSE

MORA, NM – The Mora County Magistrate Court will open for business Monday, May 13th in a newly completed complex that serves as the county courthouse and will house the county's administrative offices.

"The opening of the new court facility in Mora County is wonderful news for the people served by the magistrate and district courts of the Fourth Judicial District," said Arthur Pepin, director of the Administrative Office of the Courts. "The people of Mora County now have an inviting, modern place to resolve legal matters."

The county has been without a courthouse since 2005, when its 59-year-old courthouse was condemned and vacated because of mold contamination, asbestos and the structure's overall deterioration. The Magistrate Court relocated to a small portable building at the Mora High School.

"Our court looks forward to serving the public from its new home in the Mora County complex and will continue do its best to carry out the Judiciary's mission of providing fair, timely and equal justice for all," said Magistrate Judge John Sanchez.

The county started a construction project for a new courthouse more than a decade ago, but a nearly completed shell of the building sat unfinished for years after funding was exhausted. In 2013, the Legislature approved additional funding but directed the county to collaborate with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to ensure completion of the project. An agreement with the county delegated project oversight to the AOC along with approval of financial decisions. Structural remediation was necessary and to save costs.

The magistrate court occupies part of the building's second floor under a long-term lease with the county. The district court also will use the courtroom in the building although larger trials may be held at the San Miguel County Courthouse in neighboring Las Vegas. County offices, such as the treasurer, assessor and clerk, will occupy the first floor and are expected to move into the building in the next few weeks. About half of the building will remain vacant for a future build-out and development by the county.

"Congratulations to Mora County for successfully overcoming the great challenges this project encountered," said Pepin. "I am grateful for the support of local legislators as well as the Mora County Commission during the time Statewide Facilities Manager Luis Campos and other members of the Administrative Office of the Courts have been working to complete the project that had stalled."

Mora County Complex

From left: Court Manager Cindy Garza, Magistrate Judge John Sanchez and Judicial Specialist II Francine Trujillo

Mora County Magistrate Courtroom

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