



## RS Means and California Courthouse Construction Costs

### Trade Associations

"AGC of California, the largest general contractor association in California, surveyed its members regarding the construction costs of courthouses built in California. The cost histories were based on factual data. Those histories, on projects which were procured and built in a competitive environment (none were negotiated), point toward a construction cost of at least \$550 per square foot for California courthouses in the current, highly competitive market" --Tom Holsman, CEO, Associated General Contractors of California

"It would be virtually impossible to build a California courthouse meeting all of the requirements of the state – from building codes, specialized security, and seismic requirements to sustainable design – for the RS Means cost of \$200–250 per square foot. California's building environment is more challenging than many other parts of the country. Importantly, California court facilities are designed to provide long-term value to the tax payers of California and will be long lasting assets for many generations of Californians." Paul W. Welch Jr., Hon. AIA, Executive Vice President, American Institute of Architects, California Council

### Cost Estimating Firms

#### Cumming

"The RS Means square foot cost for a court building represents a base model specification. It does not represent an historic cost of an actual courthouse. For an accurate and comprehensive construction budget, one needs to add excluded scope, code requirements, site costs, and higher program requirements, such as for security, as well as government mandates. Our analysis indicates that those factors more than tripled the Means reference cost." --Bill Rodgers, Managing Principal, Cumming

#### Davis Langdon

"It is our opinion that the RS Means Square Foot Costs book does not reflect the cost of courthouse construction in California. Davis Langdon does not use the RS Means Square Foot Cost book for developing construction budgets, and we do not feel that the cost data adequately addresses the complex and unique nature of individual court projects in various locations across the state." -- Peter Morris, Director of Davis Langdon, an AECOM Company

#### Don Todd Associates

"RS Means square foot cost data cannot be applied directly to determine California costs appropriately. Major adjustments to the RS Means cost model are needed to determine reasonable costs in California, particularly for courthouses." --Emil E. Vinuya, PE; Project Manager/Sr. Cost Estimator, Asst. Vice President, Don Todd Associates

#### Faithful+Gould

"Faithful+Gould does not use RS Means cost data for estimating. Instead, we employ experts with years of experience in the construction industry. There is a substantial difference between our historical costs for courthouse facilities and the RS Means model costs. The RS Means costs model represents a much more simplistic courts facility than the complicated buildings California courthouses have become." --Michael D. Dell'Isoda, PE, CVS, FRICS, Senior Vice President, Faithful+Gould

#### Leland Saylor

"It is my opinion that generic cost models are not appropriate tools for developing local, project-specific budgets. These models should not be used on a stand-alone basis to predict the actual procurement costs of a new courthouse without proper adjustment and a thorough understanding of exactly what costs the generic model depicts." --Brad Saylor, Vice President, Leland Saylor



**O'Connor Construction Management, Inc.**

"The RS Means cost model is based on inadequate design assumptions...the basic building type is so divergent with the reality of actual design and specifications of California courthouses that it is not an adequate resource for California courthouse construction costs." --John Mauk, CPE - Regional Manager, O'Connor Construction Management, Inc.

**Sierra West Group**

"The RS Means square foot construction costs are not applicable to actual project costs for California courthouse construction, even for budgetary purposes." --Mary E. Wallers, President, Sierra West Group