



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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Dear Senator Taft:

As you requested on April 18, 1972, we obtained information on the Cuyahoga County Justice Center to be constructed in Cleveland, Ohio.

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Cuyahoga County has acquired all 18 properties needed for constructing the Center. We believe the county paid a reasonable price for these properties. Demolition and site clearance work on the properties started in April 1972 and is scheduled for completion by December 1972. The Center is scheduled to be completed in 1975.

As of May 1972 Federal grants totaling \$1.46 million had been awarded for planning and initial construction of the Center. No Federal funds were used to purchase land. Details on our review follow.

#### JUSTICE CENTER

The Justice Center--a planned three-building complex containing law enforcement and court facilities--is a joint effort of the city of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County. The county estimated that the cost of the Center would be about \$80 million and stated that its construction would be financed partly by a \$61 million bond issue approved by the voters.

The Center will be located in downtown Cleveland in an area bounded by Lakeside Avenue, West Third Street, St. Clair Avenue, and Ontario Street. Cuyahoga County began acquiring the land, comprising 18 parcels, in 1971 and made the final purchase in May 1972. The land was purchased with funds from the bond issue.

The county commissioners' office hired six appraisers to value properties to be purchased for the Center. Two appraisers were assigned to each property, and each made an independent appraisal. The commissioners' policy was to purchase each property at the higher of the two appraisals, if the property owner agreed to sell without time-consuming condemnation proceedings and if the difference between the two

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appraisals did not exceed 10 percent. The difference between the two appraisals for the parcels acquired ranged from 0.7 to 9.1 percent.

However, the parcel occupied by the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law and owned by the State of Ohio was purchased for \$25,000 more than the higher appraisal, \$900,000, made for the county. The State also had two appraisals made of this property and agreed to sell it for the average of the higher of the two appraisals made for the State and the higher of the two appraisals made for the county. The purchase prices appeared reasonable on the basis of our comparison of the purchase price for each of the 18 parcels with the 1970 tax appraisal adjusted to fair market value.

#### DEMOLITION AND SITE CLEARANCE

Demolition and site clearance work is to be done under four contracts. The county commissioners' office sent invitations for bids for three contracts to nine wrecking companies and on April 3, 1972, awarded the three contracts to the lowest bidders. The number of parcels to be cleared and the amount of each contract are shown in the following table.

<u>Contract number</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Parcels to be cleared</u>
13870	\$104,362	6
13871	110,230	6
13885	<u>192,400</u>	<u>4</u>
	<u>\$406,992</u>	<u>16</u>

As of May 25, 1972, invitations for bids were being prepared for the fourth contract covering the two remaining parcels. The county commissioners' office expects to award the contract in June 1972. Demolition and site clearance work started in April 1972, and work under all four contracts is scheduled to be completed by December 1972.

#### FEDERAL GRANTS

2 By May 1972 the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), Department of Justice, had granted \$5.5 million for planning and implementing law enforcement and criminal justice 167

programs in Cuyahoga County. These grants were made under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3701).

Of this amount, \$1.46 million was awarded specifically for the planning and initial construction of the Center. As of May 1972 the county had received \$724,026, as shown in the following table.

<u>Grant number</u>	<u>Date of award</u>	<u>Amount</u>	
		<u>Awarded</u>	<u>Received by county</u>
122-04-E-70	8-31-70	\$ 71,160	\$ 71,160
1082-04-A8-71	10-22-71	37,280	3,106
1279-04-A8-71	10-22-71	1,200,000	649,760
72-DF-05-0022	3- 8-72	150,000	-
		<u>\$1,458,440</u>	<u>\$724,026</u>

Also the county has applied for an additional LEAA grant of \$1.48 million to be used for construction of the Center.

County records showed that \$87,713 had been spent as of May 20, 1972. The funds were used to pay for staff services, a traffic and parking study, a space requirements study, and demolition work. We found that all expenses had been properly authorized and adequately documented.

We did not obtain written comments from any of the parties involved in the matters discussed in this report. We plan to make no further distribution of the report unless copies are specifically requested, and then we shall make distribution only after your approval has been obtained or public announcement has been made by you concerning the contents of this report.

Sincerely yours,

Deputy

Comptroller General  
of the United States

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The Honorable Robert Taft, Jr.  
United States Senate