



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF BUTTE

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

MEDIA ADVISORY

Court media contact: Kimberly Flener (530) 532-7013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 19, 2012

Re: North Butte County Courthouse

The North Butte County Courthouse project recently underwent a cost-reduction effort prior to submitting it for approval for the October 18, 2012, bond sale. This project, which was designated by the Judicial Council as a cost reduction demonstration project, is among the first three projects in the State funded by Senate Bill 1407 to reach a bond sale, which will finance the construction.

The new court facility will be a LEED [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design] Certified two-story structure (plus basement) and will house five courtrooms. Unlike the current Chico and Paradise facilities, all courtrooms will be fully ADA-compliant and will be capable of handling in-custody matters. The facility will also include a Jury Assembly room.

The project's journey started in July 2002, when the AOC Facilities Master Plan identified the need for a single facility to replace the existing inadequate facilities in the cities of Chico and Paradise, both in the northern part of Butte County.

In September 2002, SB 1732, the Trial Court Facilities Act passed, which began the process of shifting facility responsibilities from the individual counties to the State.

In July 2004, negotiations began for the transfer of responsibility of trial court facilities to the State.

On April 27, 2007, the Judicial Branch Five-Year Infrastructure Plan was adopted by the Judicial Council. The Butte County North County Courthouse project was identified in the first group of the "Immediate Need Priority Group" projects.

The Project Feasibility Report for the Butte County Project was finalized on December 21, 2007. This Report compared the feasibility of constructing a new facility with that of renovating and expanding the current Chico Courthouse on Oleander Avenue, and concluded that expansion of the existing facility was not a viable option.

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SB 1407 passed in September 2008, authorizing new fees to fund courthouse construction. SB 1407 further provided specific authorization for the Judicial Council authorization to acquire a site for the Butte County Project.

A Court Project Advisory Committee was appointed in April 2009. Interviews to select an architect were held in September 2009. Although this is a State building project, the Butte County Superior Court participated fully in the selection process, and the architectural firm ultimately selected, Tate Snyder Kimsey, was the consensus choice.

In October 2009, the California Public Works Board approved site selection, and in May 2010, program development commenced.

In November 2010, the Public Works Board approved site acquisition of approximately four acres located in the new Meriam Park development in East Chico off Bruce Road between 20th Street and Highway 32.

In November 2011, the Public Works Board approved the preliminary plans for the facility, with project savings of over \$4.6 million from the initial budget.

On September 19, 2012, the cost reduction subcommittee of the statewide Court Facilities Working Group again reduced the construction budget for the project. The project had to meet or exceed cost-reduction targets set earlier by the Judicial Council. The project team, including the Superior Court of Butte County, the Administrative Office of the Courts, the project architect and construction manager, proposed changes that would not only meet the targets, but exceed them. After the cost reduction subcommittee reviewed all proposed cost-cutting ideas, it directed the project team to find a further \$300,000 in savings. In total, nearly \$7 million has been carved out of the construction budget for this project.

The State Department of Finance approved the detailed scope and budget for the project, and on October 10th the State Public Works Board approved the project for bond sale. The State Treasurer's Office issued lease-revenue bonds for the project on October 18, 2012. The bonds will be repaid by court user fees and criminal penalties specifically created by SB 1407 for this and other court construction projects. No General Fund money is involved.

Construction is currently scheduled to start in early 2013, with completion in late 2014. A ceremonial groundbreaking will be planned.

The North Butte County Courthouse project has thus far been a very collaborative and successful project, thanks in no small part to the active participation and support of the City of Chico and County of Butte. As we proceed ahead we see only continued positive outcomes

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leading to a successful project completion for the benefit of our state and local communities. The completed facility will mark the culmination of many years of planning and reorganization of court facilities in Butte County, and is expected to satisfy the needs of the local community for many years to come.

Contributions to this press release came from the following:

- Superior Court of California, County of Butte
 - Hon. Stephen E. Benson, Presiding Judge
 - Hon. Kristen A. Lucena, Assistant Presiding Judge
 - Hon. Steven J. Howell (Ret.), Chair, Project Advisory Group
 - Kimberly A. Flener, Court Executive Officer
 - Richard L. Holst, Assistant Court Executive OfficerContact person: Kimberly Flener – (530) 532-7013

- Judicial Council / Administrative Office of the Courts
 - Hon. Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, Chief Justice, California Supreme Court; Chair, State Judicial Council
 - Hon. Steven Jahr (Ret.), Administrative Director of the Courts
 - Jody Patel, Chief of Staff, Administrative Office of the Courts
 - Lee Willoughby, Director, Office of Court Construction and Management
 - Rob Uvalle, Manager, OCCM Design and Construction
 - Mike Courtney, Project DirectorContact person: Rob Uvalle – (916) 263-7949

- City of Chico
 - Brian Nakamura, City Manager
 - John Rucker, Assistant City ManagerContact person: John Rucker – (530) 896-7200

- Tate Snyder Kimsey, Architects
Contact person: Kevin P. Quan, Project Manager – (702) 456-3000

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