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Stockton Court Transferred to State

Paves Way for New Courthouse

Stockton—The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors approved an agreement today to transfer responsibility for the Stockton court facilities to the State of California. The transfer paves the way for the state judicial branch to replace the existing facility with a new 283,000-square-foot courthouse. Construction is expected to begin on September 2010.

“This is an important step forward in improving the court facilities that serve San Joaquin County,” said Presiding Judge Richard Guiliani of the Superior Court of San Joaquin County. “The request for funding the initial work on a new courthouse is before the state Legislature and we hope the funding for this critical project will move forward.”

“This agreement is an excellent example of the cooperative spirit between the county and the Administrative Office of the Courts, working together for the future of San Joaquin County,” said Chairman Victor Mow, County Board of Supervisors. “The county will continue to assist the state and the Superior Court of Stockton County moving this project forward.”

The new Stockton courthouse will house 30 courtrooms at a total estimated cost of \$232 million. Most of the land for the new courthouse—the Hunter Square Plaza, adjacent to the existing courthouse—will be donated by the City of Stockton. This project is one of the highest priority capital-outlay projects for the judicial branch.

“The Stockton area is currently served by 22 courtrooms in the Court Wing building and the County Administration Building on Weber Avenue, which is among the worst in the state in terms of lack of security and overcrowding,” said Rosa Junqueiro, court executive officer. She

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also noted that the facility receives a higher percentage of criminal felony filings and holds more jury trials than the state average. The existing facility cannot adequately serve the growing population in San Joaquin County.

The Stockton City Council adopted a resolution to donate land to the state for this project in the downtown Stockton area. This land donation will reduce the cost to the state and allow the project to move more quickly into the design phase.

The transfer was made possible by the 2002 Trial Court Facilities Act, which was designed to ensure that all Californians have equal access to safe, secure, and adequate court facilities. To view the text of the Trial Court Facilities Act, visit the California Courts Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/files/sb1732.pdf.

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