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Preferred Site Selected for New North Butte County Courthouse

San Francisco—The State Public Works Board (SPWB) has approved the selection of a site in Chico for a proposed new courthouse for the Superior Court of Butte County. The site, approximately 4 acres in the Meriam Park area in southeast Chico north of 20th Street and east of Bruce Road, is the preferred site for the proposed new building. The proposed new courthouse will house five courtrooms and will consolidate operations from two inadequate facilities—the current Chico Courthouse and the Paradise Courthouse.

Presiding Judge James F. Reilley stated, “The construction of a new courthouse to serve the communities of Northern Butte County has been a top priority of our court for many years. It is gratifying and exciting to see that goal becoming a reality.”

Senate Bill 1407 was enacted by the state Legislature last year to authorize up to \$5 billion in funding for 41 court facilities using court user fees rather than the state’s general fund. A new courthouse for the Butte Superior Court is one of 15 projects approved to move forward in fiscal year 2009-2010 and is ranked in the “immediate need” priority category for capital projects for the judicial branch of California.

Although the site just approved in Chico is designated as the preferred location, alternative sites are still under review. However, approval of the preferred site by the SPWB clears the way for the Administrative Office of the Courts to negotiate a final acquisition agreement with the property owner, New Urban Builders, and to determine what environmental work is needed under the California Environmental Quality Act. If the courthouse proceeds on the preferred site, it will be among the first government buildings in a master-planned community that will include a small civic center as well as commercial, retail, and residential development.

The proposed courthouse site includes space for the building, of approximately 60,000 square feet, secured parking for judges, and 210 parking spaces for court visitors and staff. The courthouse project, with a total estimated cost of \$83.4 million, is scheduled for completion in winter 2014.

More about the project can be found on the California Courts Web site:
www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/projects_butte.htm

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