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Architect Engaged for Study of Current Nevada City Courthouse Site

SAN FRANCISCO— Northern California architecture firm RossDrulisCusenbery has been engaged for a study to assess the feasibility and costs associated with reusing the site of the existing Nevada City Courthouse and Annex for the planned new courthouse, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) announced today.

Based on input received at its community meeting on December 14, 2010, the AOC is seeking additional feasibility information and cost data to more thoroughly assess reuse of the current site. The architecture firm study team will meet with representatives of the AOC, the Superior Court of Nevada County, justice partners, city government representatives, and others who have provided input and will develop a cost comparison between building on a new site and building on the existing site, including relocation expenses associated with a temporary location for the court during construction and for county offices that would need to permanently vacate the buildings.

The Sonoma-based architecture firm of RossDrulisCusenbery was established in 1985 and has extensive civic architecture experience, including several California courthouses. Examples include the Contra Costa County Family Law Center and interiors for both the San Francisco Civic Center Courthouse and the Napa County Criminal Court and Administrative Center. For the AOC, the architecture firm is already engaged to design a new courthouse in Yuba City for the Superior Court of Sutter County. Preliminary design of that project is expected to begin this spring. The firm also was recently selected by the AOC to design the new courthouse in Quincy for the Superior Court of Plumas County.

The current historic Nevada City Courthouse is a significant town landmark but no longer adequate to serve as the main facility for the Superior Court of Nevada County. The court's current space is unsafe, substandard, overcrowded, and functionally deficient. A state study applying current design standards indicates that the court needs more than twice the square footage it currently occupies. The planned project is for a six-courtroom facility of approximately 84,000 square feet. The project will be funded by Senate Bill 1407 (2008), which finances critically needed courthouse construction and renovation through a portion of judicial branch fees, penalties, and assessments, with no impact on the state's General Fund. The new courthouse was authorized in May 2010, and the project schedule called for approval of candidate sites by the State Public Works Board by late spring 2011.

For more information, visit www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/projects_nevada.htm.

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