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## **Progress Continues on New Madera Courthouse**

SAN FRANCISCO—The new courthouse in Madera reached two important milestones this week, with close of escrow on the property and approval by the State Public Works Board of preliminary plans, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) announced today. Preliminary plan approval enables the project team to proceed to working drawings, the final phase of architectural design. Close of escrow caps years of collaborative effort between the Madera Redevelopment Agency (RDA), the Superior Court of Madera County, and the AOC to locate the new courthouse in a convenient, accessible site in downtown Madera.

"There are many things to be thankful for in regards to our courthouse," said Judge Charles Wieland of the Superior Court of Madera County. "One of the most important is the involvement of our community. Citizens have volunteered useful suggestions, the City of Madera has made significant contributions, and the County of Madera has moved services from the site. Now, we look forward to encouraging local businesses to join us in this project."

The RDA assembled and prepared the site, 2.24 acres between Sixth and Seventh Streets, immediately south of the current Madera County Courthouse Museum. Part of the state's payment for the land is in the form of an exchange of its equity interest in the existing courthouse. The city will also donate an additional half-acre of adjacent land for an above-ground parking structure of 250 spaces.

The new courthouse will replace the current Madera Courthouse, a twice-condemned former elementary school originally built in 1911, which is now overcrowded and has significant security, operational, safety, and accessibility problems. The new four-story building will hold 10 courtrooms in 110,000 square feet. Designed by architect AC Martin Partners, the contemporary building reflects the dignity of the justice system while paying homage to the Yosemite Valley and is designed to use local granite and other materials. Its sustainable design will conserve energy and materials and is expected to be eligible for LEED Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Construction manager Gilbane Building Company is scheduled to conduct subcontractor and supplier bidding with emphasis on local outreach efforts in late 2011 or early 2012. Groundbreaking will occur in spring 2012, and construction is scheduled for completion in late 2013. The new courthouse is funded from within the judicial branch by a portion of fees, assessments, and penalties collected statewide, without reliance on the state's General Fund.

More information about the project is available on the California courts website at [www.courts.ca.gov/2785.htm](http://www.courts.ca.gov/2785.htm).

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