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## **Potential Sites for New Ukiah Courthouse Announced**

SAN FRANCISCO—Two potential sites are currently being considered for a new courthouse in Ukiah, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) announced today. The short list of sites includes:

- The railroad depot site at 309 West Perkins
- A site near the library, bordered by Perkins, Main, and Mason, and including properties fronting Smith Street

“We are happy with the progress we have made in cooperation with the AOC and our Project Advisory Group to identify two sites that would serve the needs of our justice partners and the citizens of this community,” said Cindee Mayfield, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Mendocino County.

The two potential sites, both of which are between four and five acres, came out of an extensive site selection process conducted by the AOC, which manages the project, and the Court. Following the Judicial Council’s standard site selection policy, the AOC worked with the Court to customize a set of objective criteria that will be used to evaluate potential sites. These criteria were then validated by the project advisory group, which represents the community and provides advisory input to the AOC and the Court.

The project team ultimately considered 16 potential sites before narrowing the list down to the short-listed sites, also endorsed by the Project Advisory Group. The railroad depot site is close to downtown and to the existing courthouse and county justice partners. The City of Ukiah has an option to purchase this property from the current owner, and if this site is selected, the AOC would purchase it from the City. The second site would involve an assemblage of different parcels with different owners, including the City. The two sites will be scored and ranked against the criteria in order to make the selection process as objective and thorough as possible. It is important to note that the site selection process is still in its early stages, and it is possible that any or all of the current sites under consideration may not work out for any of a variety of reasons. Should that occur, the project team may revisit other potential sites considered earlier in the process or new sites entirely.

Once a preferred site and one or more alternate sites are selected and approved by the State Public Works Board, the project team will conduct an environmental assessment under the California Environmental Quality Act before acquiring a site. Site selection and acquisition typically take between one and two years depending on the complexity of the required environmental assessments, but the project team will accelerate the schedule if possible.

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The proposed project will house nine courtrooms in approximately 113,760 square feet. It will replace two unsafe, overcrowded, and physically deficient court facilities: the old Mendocino Courthouse, which dates to the 1950s, and the Willits branch, which was closed at the end of 2009.

The new courthouse project, with an estimated total cost of \$119.9 million, was ranked as a “critical need” in the judicial branch’s capital-outlay plan and is among the judicial branch’s highest-priority infrastructure projects. It is among 41 projects to be funded by Senate Bill 1407, which finances critically needed courthouse construction, renovation, and repair through a portion of judicial branch fees, fines, and penalties, without impact on the state’s General Fund. The AOC also recently announced selection of the award-winning global architecture firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP to design the courthouse.

More information about the project is at:

[www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/projects\\_ukiah.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/projects_ukiah.htm)

The Judicial Council’s Site Selection and Acquisition Policy for Judicial Branch Facilities is at:

[www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/documents/site\\_selection\\_acquisition\\_policy.pdf](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/documents/site_selection_acquisition_policy.pdf)

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