



NEWS RELEASE OC 57-11
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Site Approved in Downtown Yreka for New Siskiyou Courthouse

SAN FRANCISCO—The State Public Works Board (SPWB) today approved selection of a site in downtown Yreka for the proposed new courthouse for the Superior Court of Siskiyou County. The site, multiple parcels currently owned by Siskiyou County, the City of Yreka, and private parties, is approximately 2.4 acres bounded by Oregon Street, South Street, Fourth Street, and Butte Street. The site is located across the street from existing court facilities and the jail.

Site selection approval enables the state Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), which is managing the project, to undertake further due diligence, environmental assessment under the California Environmental Quality Act, and negotiations that will ultimately result in finalization of the site. The project team will also evaluate an alternate site, for which it will seek SPWB approval at a later date. Site selection and environmental review, as well as site acquisition (which also requires SPWB approval), must be completed before architectural design of the new courthouse can begin. The architecture firm of EHDD has been selected to design the new courthouse.

The planned new six-courtroom courthouse will replace the current four-courtroom Siskiyou Courthouse, which is overcrowded and has significant security deficiencies. For example, it lacks on-site in-custody holding and separate circulation for in-custody defendants, staff, and the public. The current courthouse also has severe functional deficiencies and lacks accessibility for people with disabilities.

The new courthouse project was ranked as an “Immediate Need” in the judicial branch’s Capital-Outlay Plan, making it among the judicial branch’s highest-priority infrastructure projects. It is among 41 projects funded by Senate Bill 1407, which finances critically needed courthouse construction, renovation, and repair through a portion of judicial branch fees, penalties, and assessments, without impact on the state’s General Fund.

The state Budget Act for fiscal year 2011–2012 contains significant cuts to the judicial branch budget in general and to the account that funds SB 1407 projects in particular. These cuts may cause delays in SB 1407 projects. It will be several months before the impact of these cuts on specific projects is known, but in the meantime, the Yreka project will continue with site selection.

More about the project may be found at the California Courts website at:
www.courts.ca.gov/facilities-siskiyou.htm

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The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for

ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.