



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA
94102-3688
Tel 415-865-4200
TDD 415-865-4272
Fax 415-865-4205
www.courtinfo.ca.gov

FACT SHEET

March 2009

Improving Trial Court Facilities: Butte—New North Butte County Courthouse

In October 2008 the Judicial Council adopted an updated Trial Court Capital Outlay Plan and a list of 41 projects to be funded by SB 1407. AOC staff has completed a funding request for 15 projects, 13 of which have initial funding included in the FY 2009-2010 Budget Act. Approval of these projects mark important progress toward implementing needed improvements for courts across California.

Funding for this project—the Butte—New North Butte County Courthouse—has been included in the FY 2009-2010 Budget Act.

New North Butte County Courthouse

A new North Butte County Courthouse is proposed by the AOC for initial funding of \$14.5 million for FY 2009-2010. The new facility will house five courtrooms. The estimated total cost for this courthouse of approximately 60,000 gross square feet is \$83.4 million (escalated to construction mid-point in spring 2012). This project is ranked in the Immediate Need Project Priority Group of the Trial Court Capital-Outlay Plan and is one of the highest priority capital-outlay projects for the judicial branch.

Lack of Security, Severe Overcrowding, Poor Physical Conditions, and Reduced Access to Court Services

The proposed new courthouse will accomplish the following immediately-needed improvements to the superior court and enhance its ability to serve the public:

- Consolidate two unsafe, overcrowded, and physically deficient facilities—one in the City of Chico and one in the Town of Paradise;
- Expand court services—including the return of criminal case processing to the northern part of the county—by increasing judicial-proceedings capacity, moving from three to five courtrooms to accommodate one funded Senate Bill 56

(Dunn) judgeship and one new judgeship in Assembly Bill 159 (Jones) in FY 2007-2008;

- Enhance access to court services by providing expanded services in the county's population center (i.e., the greater Chico/Paradise Ridge area) where the majority of social services, justice partners, and local bar members are also located; and
- Reduce overcrowding at the existing Butte County Courthouse in the City of Oroville.



No Security Screening at the Chico Courthouse

Local Government and Organizations Collaborate on Project

The Butte County Board of Supervisors, the City of Chico, and the Butte County Bar Association each support the need to replace the existing Chico and Paradise courthouses with a new facility in the greater Chico area. The AOC will work collaboratively with the County of Butte to select a site for the new facility and to develop a project that meets the goals of the local community. The County of Butte is currently in the process of implementing its county-wide facilities master plan, which is aimed at consolidating their greater Chico area offices into a new northern government complex. The new courthouse project is aligned with this plan, and the county is committed to locating its future complex in a location suitable to both the local court and the AOC. In doing so, the likelihood exists that a donation, a land

swap, or a sale at a below-market rate would be available, either directly with the state or through the county, to provide a site for the new courthouse.

Long-term Funding Needs

The enactment of SB 1407 was the major first step in funding 41 urgently needed courthouse improvement projects across the State of California. The Trial Court Capital-Outlay Plan includes another 112 projects for which funding has not been secured. California judicial branch will continue to explore additional, alternative means to fund the state's sizable need for courthouse infrastructure improvements while it implements the 41 projects to be funded by SB 1407.

More Information

A project feasibility report for the New North Butte County Courthouse, dated December 21, 2007, was prepared by AOC staff. This report documents the poor functional and physical conditions of the existing Chico and Paradise court facilities in Butte County, explores options for how best to meet the needs of the court and of the public, and estimates the cost to construct a new facility. This document can be downloaded from the following Web site:

http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/documents/final_butte_pfr_to_dof_07_12_21.pdf

For further information, please email the AOC-Office of Court Construction and Management at OCCM@jud.ca.gov.