NEW SUSANVILLE COURTHOUSE FOR THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LASSEN:

Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

September 4, 2008

Prepared for:

Judicial Council of California
Administrative Office of the Courts
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102-4272

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AB	Assembly Bill
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Administrative Office of the Courts is the staff agency of the Judicial Council of California. The Administrative Office of the Courts is responsible for implementation of the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002, landmark legislation that shifts governance of California courthouses from California counties to the State of California. The Administrative Office of the Courts began negotiations for transfer of responsibility of all trial court facilities from the counties to the State in 2004. In 2006, Lassen County and the Administrative Office of the Courts agreed that the Superior Court could continue to use of the historic Courthouse located at 220 South Lassen Street in Susanville, and in 2007 the County transferred responsibility for the Courthouse Annex at 221 South Roop Street to the Administrative Office of the Courts.

The Administrative Office of the Courts proposes to construct a new 40,000-square foot courthouse facility containing three courtrooms in the City of Susanville (City) for the Superior Court of California, County of Lassen (Superior Court). The project will consolidate several existing courthouse facilities into a single courthouse. The project will not add any courtrooms to the Superior Court's available facilities, but it will increase the court's space. After completion of the new courthouse, the Superior Court will vacate the Historic Courthouse and Courthouse Annex. This document analyzes construction of the proposed courthouse as well as operational effects of the relocation of the Superior Court's operations.

1.1 STATUTORY AUTHORITY AND REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with Government Code Section (Section) 70391 and CEQA (Public Resources Code Section 21000-21177) and pursuant to Section 15063 of Title 14 of the *California Code of Regulations*, the Judicial Council typically acts as the CEQA Lead Agency for courthouse projects. The Judicial Council has delegated its project approval authority to the Administrative Director of the Courts (ADOC). The Administrative Director of the Courts considers a project's potential environmental impacts in its evaluation of the proposal project. If the Administrative Director of the Courts finds that there is no evidence that the project (either as proposed or modified to include mitigation measures) may cause a significant effect on the environment, then the Administrative Director of the Courts will find that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment and will adopt a Negative Declaration for the project. Alternatively, if the Administrative Director of the Courts finds evidence that any aspect of the proposed project may cause a significant environmental effect (after addition of mitigation measures); the Administrative Director of the Courts will determine that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is necessary to analyze project-related and cumulative environmental impacts. An agency can make a determination to prepare a Mitigated Negative Declaration rather than an EIR only if "there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record before the Lead Agency" that such impacts may occur (Public Resources Code Section 21080).

1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

The purposes of this Initial Study are to:

1. Facilitate environmental assessment of the project
2. Provide the Administrative Office of the Courts with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an EIR or Negative Declaration
3. Eliminate unnecessary EIRs
4. Enable the Administrative Office of the Courts to modify the proposed project to mitigate significant environmental impacts to avoid preparation of an EIR
5. Provide factual documentation for a Negative Declaration finding that the proposed project will not have a significant environmental effect

Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following specific disclosure requirements for inclusion in an Initial Study:

1. A description of the project, including the location of the project;
2. An identification of the environmental setting;
3. An identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix, or other method provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to indicate that there is some evidence to support the entries;
4. A discussion of ways to mitigate any significant effects identified in the Initial Study;
5. An examination of whether the project is compatible with existing zoning, plans, and other applicable land-use controls; and
6. The name of the person or persons who prepared or participated in preparation of the Initial Study

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The State of California's budget for the 2007-2008 fiscal year provided authorization and funding for the Administrative Office of the Courts to acquire a parcel in Susanville for construction of a new courthouse for the Superior Court.

2.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Lassen County is in northeastern California. Susanville is the County seat and is approximately 85 miles east of Redding. Lassen County is predominately rural, and the majority of the County's population lives in Susanville or the surrounding area.

2.2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Administrative Office of the Courts expects the new courthouse to help the Superior Court improve the efficiency of its operations, offer new services, and serve more court visitors. The purpose of the proposed project is to:

- Consolidate court operations into one modern facility,
- Relieve the Court's current shortage of space, and
- Provide space for new judicial services and improved facilities with better internal security and access for judicial staff and the public.

2.3 PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed Courthouse property is in southeastern Susanville. The new facility will face Riverside Drive, and it will be adjacent to other government offices, commercial buildings, and retail buildings. Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the proposed project's location.

The project site is approximately 4.5 acres. A lumber mill occupied the site, but the site is currently vacant. Utility connections are available in Riverside Drive.

The following land uses and features are adjacent to the project site:

- North—the U.S. Forest Service's office, vacant land, and several residences;
- East—Riverside Drive, commercial buildings, and retail buildings;
- South—vacant land and commercial buildings; and
- West—Grove Street, vacant land, and a storage building.

Figure 1. Susanville and Vicinity Map

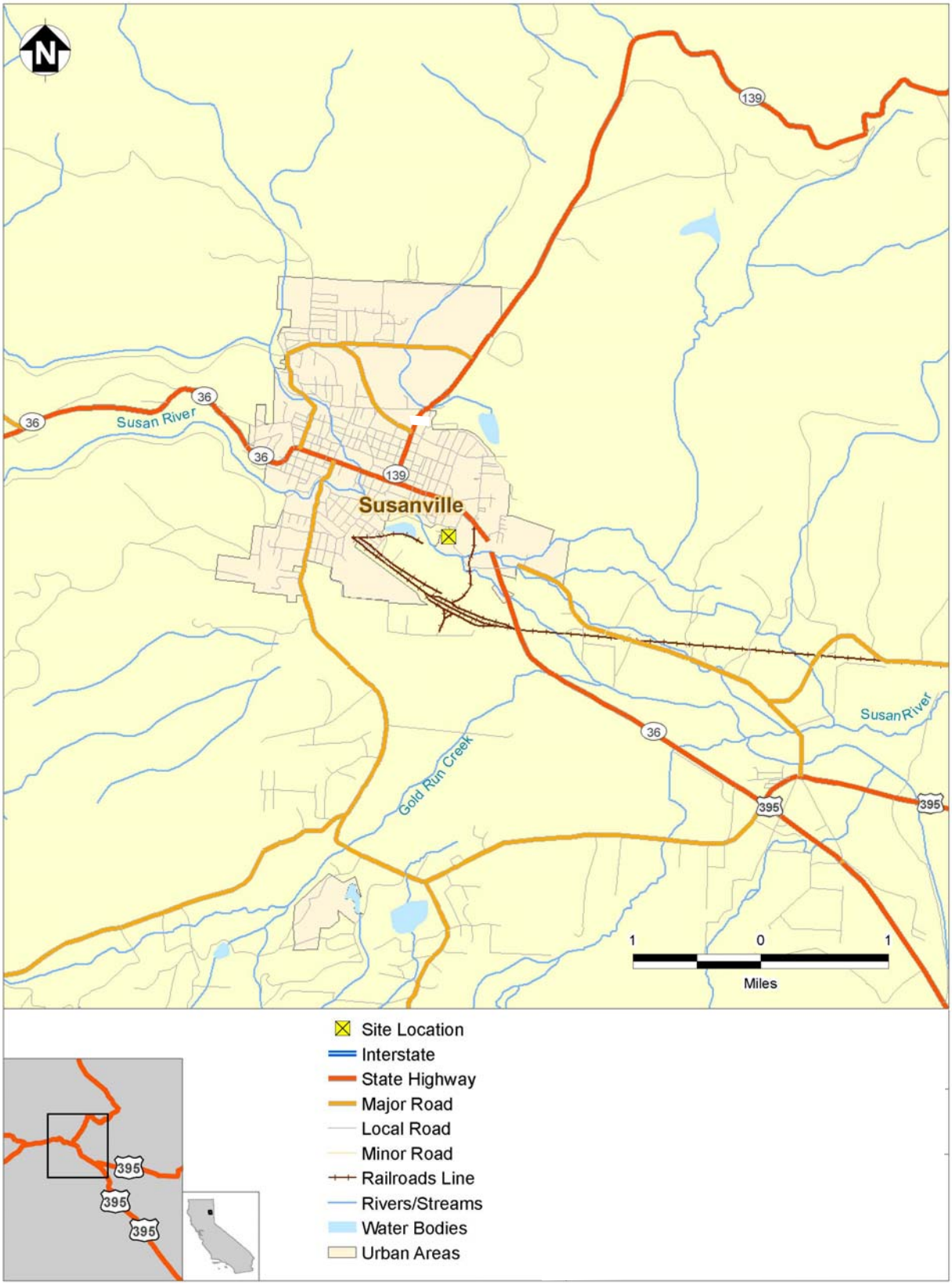
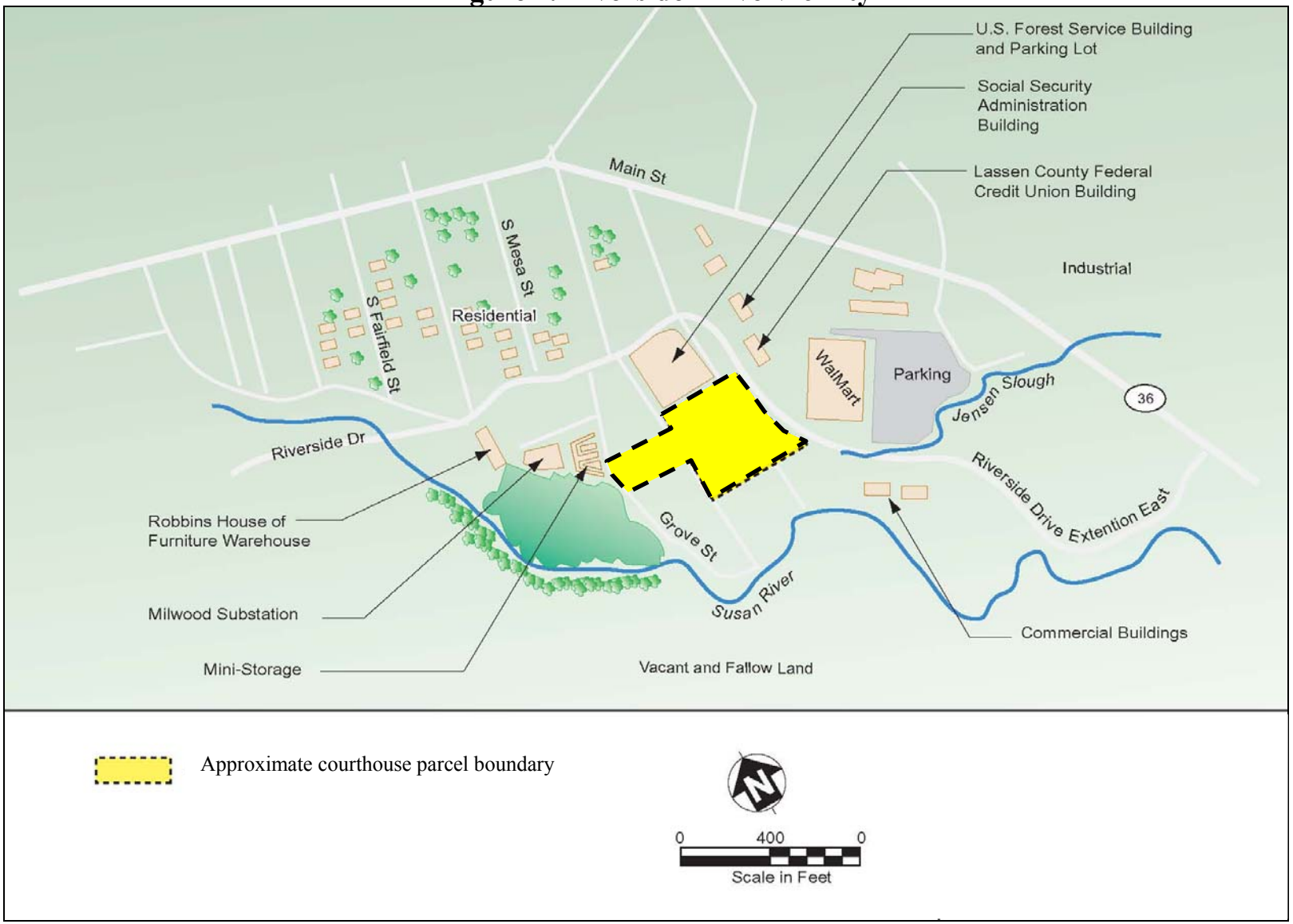


Figure 2. Riverside Drive Vicinity



2.4 PROPOSED PROJECT

The Administrative Office of the Courts proposes to acquire an approximately 4.5-acre parcel in southeastern Susanville, construct a new courthouse for the Superior Court, and operate the courthouse for the Superior Court. The proposed building will face Riverside Drive. It will have two stories, will be approximately 40 feet tall, and will have approximately 36,000 building gross square feet. Figure 3 shows a site plan drawing for the project.

The new courthouse will include three courtrooms with judicial chambers. The new courthouse will primarily support felony, misdemeanor, juvenile delinquency, civil, probate, and family law functions. To maximize functional flexibility of the courtrooms, all of the courtrooms will have holding capability for in-custody detainees. The building will also provide space for the Office of the Clerk of the Court, Executive Administrative offices, juror assembly area, public lobby, security screening operations for the building's entrances, and building support space. In addition, to improve security inside the new courthouse, the building will provide separate corridors and elevators for movement of in-custody detainees, judicial staff, and visitors throughout the building. A sallyport (a secured building entrance that connects to a secured building area) and in-custody detainee holding facilities will be at the rear of the building.

The project will provide approximately 135 surface parking spaces in front of the building for staff, jurors, and visitors. There will also be six secure parking spaces behind the building for judicial officers and Superior Court executives.

The Administrative Office of the Courts will design the building to conform to standards of a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver-certified building. The LEED Rating System for New Construction includes criteria for features that related to sustainability, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation and design processes. Projects earn points for attaining criteria listed in the LEED checklist. To achieve silver certification, a project's design must meet at least 33 of 39 criteria.

The Administrative Office of the Courts estimates that each courtroom will hold a maximum of approximately 50 visitors and 6 judicial staff. The Superior Court may add a few additional judicial staff members to serve the proposed courthouse's additional new courtroom and additional space. To maximize functional flexibility of the courtrooms, all of the courtrooms will have holding capability for in-custody detainees and access to a separate and secure corridors and elevators.

The Administrative Office of the Courts' proposed project schedule is as follows:

- Acquire the site in late 2008,
- Finish preparation of preliminary plans in early 2009,
- Complete working drawings and contract documents in late 2009,

- Begin construction in early 2010,
- Complete construction in late 2011, and
- Begin Superior Court operations in the new courthouse in late 2011.

After completion of the new courthouse, the Superior Court will vacate its existing locations on South Lassen Street near downtown Susanville.

Figure 3. Conceptual Project Site Plan

2.5 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Superior Court currently has space in the County's Historic Courthouse and the Courthouse Annex; the Superior Court also leases space in a privately owned building on South Lassen Street. The County built the Historic Courthouse in 1915. The courthouse has two courtrooms; the second floor courtroom is a beautiful historic courtroom, but it lacks in-custody detainee

holding capability, lacks security screening facilities, is not in compliance with current accessibility requirements under the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and related state and local laws, and has other deficiencies. The building also has a small courtroom in the basement, but it is also not ADA-compliant. There is a small hearing room in the facility, but it is undersized with limited public seating. There is only one (undersized) attorney/client conference room and it is located in a staff area. The Historic Courthouse has very little court support space in the building such as attorney/client conference rooms on public corridors, victim/witness waiting areas, child waiting areas, jury rooms, a jury assembly room, a grand jury room, and public waiting spaces.

The nearby Courthouse Annex has another non-ADA compliant courtroom. The Courthouse Annex also lacks security screening facilities.

Currently, the Superior Court has two full-time judges, two part-time retired judges, and a part-time Court Commissioner. The court's services include felony, misdemeanor, civil, family law, family support, juvenile, small claims, traffic, and juvenile dependency judicial proceedings. The Superior Court also serves prison prosecution felony cases from California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's California Correction Center and High Desert State Prison.

2.6 EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

Existing plans, policies, and other relevant documents include the County's zoning designation and related CEQA documents.

2.6.1 Zoning

The project site has a Commercial-2 zoning classification.

2.6.2 Other CEQA Documents

In 2007, the City prepared a mitigated negative declaration, Riverside Apartments,[1] for a proposed apartment complex on a portion of the site.

2.7 PROJECT APPROVALS

The ADOC is responsible for approving this project. The State of California's Public Works Board must also approve the selection and acquisition of real property for the location or expansion of State of California facilities; it approves plans, allocates funds, and determines the timing of major construction projects.

[1] City of Susanville Planning Department. 2007. *Riverwalk Apartments, General Plan Amendment, Rezone, Use Permit and Architectural and Site Plan Review; #GRUA*. 20 p.

3.0 INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

3.1 PROJECT INFORMATION

Section 2.0 and Table 1 describe the proposed project.

Table 1. Project Information		
1.	**Project title: New Susanville Courthouse**	
2.	**Lead agency name and address:**	Administrative Office of the Courts 455 Golden Gate Avenue San Francisco, CA 94102-3660
3.	**Contact person and phone number:**	Jerome Ripperda, Environmental Analyst Administrative Office of the Courts Office of Court Construction and Management 2860 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 400 Sacramento, CA 95833-3509 Phone: (916) 263-8865, Fax: (916) 263-8140 e-mail: Jerry.Ripperda@jud.ca.gov
4.	**Project location:** The project is in Susanville along Riverside Drive. See Figures 1, 2, and 3.	
5.	**Assessor Parcel Number:** 105-350-36, …-48, …-59, & …-60	
6.	**General plan designation:** Commercial	
7.	**Zoning:** Commercial	
8.	**Description of project:** Refer to Section 2.0, Project Description.	
9.	**Surrounding land uses and setting:** Refer to Section 2.4 Project Location.	
10.	**Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):** California Public Works Board	

3.2 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This Initial Study determines whether the project may have potentially significant impacts that warrant additional analysis and mitigation measures to reduce the project's impact to environmental resources. The assessment analyzes on-site, off-site, long-term, direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts for the construction and operation of the proposed project. For each environmental resource, the Initial Study poses questions with four possible responses for each question:

- **No Impact.** The environmental issue does not apply to the project, and the project will therefore have no environmental impact.
- **Less Than Significant Impact.** The environmental issue does apply to the project site, but the associated impact will be below thresholds that the ADOC considers significant.

- **Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated.** The project will have the potential to produce significant impacts to the environmental resource. However, mitigation measures modifying the project will reduce environmental impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- **Potentially Significant Impact.** The project will produce significant impacts, and further analysis is necessary.

Table 2 lists the Administrative Office of the Courts' initial evaluation of the proposed project's environmental effects. Section 4.0 provides additional information on the analyses of project impacts and mitigation measures.

Table 2. CEQA Checklist				
Environmental Resource	**Pot. Signif. Impact [2]**	**Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig**	**Less Than Signif. Impact**	**No Impact**
AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES–Will the project:				
Substantially degrade the existing visual character of the site and its surroundings? (Section 4.01.1)			X	
Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? (Section 4.01.2)			X	
Create a new source of substantial light or glare that will adversely affect day or nighttime views? (Section 4.01.3)			X	
AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES–Will the project:				
Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) to non-agricultural use? (Section 4.02.1)				X
Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract? (Section 4.02.2)				X
Involve other changes in the existing environment that could produce substantial conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use? (Section 4.02.3)				X
AIR QUALITY–Will the project:				
Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? (Section 4.03.1)			X	
Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? (Section 4.03.2)			X	
Create substantial objectionable odors? (Section 4.03.3)			X	
Substantially conflict with the State's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020, as set forth by the timetable established in Assembly Bill (AB) 32, California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006? (Section 4.03.4)			X	
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES–Will the project:				
Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)? (Section 4.04.2)			X	
Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the DFG or USFWS? (Section 4.04.2)				X
Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act? (Section 4.04.3)				X

[2] Pot. Signif. Impact = Potentially significant impact, Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig.= Potentially significant impact unless mitigated, Less Than Signif. Impact = Less that significant impact

Table 2. CEQA Checklist (Continued)

Table 2. CEQA Checklist				
Environmental Resource	**Pot. Signif. Impact** [2]	**Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig**	**Less Than Signif. Impact**	**No Impact**
Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? (Section 4.04.4)			X	
Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? (Section 4.04.5)				X
Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? (Section 4.04.6)				X
CULTURAL RESOURCES–Will the project:				
Have a substantial potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource or a historic resource? (Section 4.05.1)			X	
Have a substantial potential to disturb any human remains? (Section 4.05.2)				X
GEOLOGY AND SOILS–Will the project:				
Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault? (Section 4.06.1)			X	
Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving strong seismic ground shaking? (Section 4.06.2)		X		
Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving ground failure (including subsidence or liquefaction-induced lateral spread)? (Section 4.06.3)		X		
Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving landslides? (Section 4.06.4)				X
Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving expansive soil? (Section 4.06.5)				X
Cause substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? (Section 4.6.6)		X		
Destroy a unique geological feature? (Section 4.06.7)				X
Have a substantial potential to destroy a unique paleontological resource? (Section 4.06.8)			X	
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS–Will the project:				
Create a significant hazard through the routine transport, use, emission, or disposal of hazardous materials, substances, or waste? (Section 4.07.1)				X

Table 2. CEQA Checklist (Continued)

Table 2. CEQA Checklist				
Environmental Resource	**Pot. Signif. Impact** [2]	**Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig**	**Less Than Signif. Impact**	**No Impact**
Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and therefore create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? (Section 4.07.2)				X
Produce a substantial safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? (Section 4.07.3)				X
Impair implementation of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (Section 4.07.4)				X
Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires? (Section 4.07.5)			X	
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY–Will the project:				
Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or substantially degrade water quality? (Section 4.08.1)		X		
Alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a manner that will produce substantial erosion? (Section 4.08.2)			X	
Contribute runoff water that will exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff? (Section 4.08.3)			X	
Require or produce the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities? (Section 4.08.4)			X	
Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge so that there will be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a substantial lowering of the local groundwater level? (Section 4.08.5)			X	
Expose people or structures to a significant risk of flooding? (Section 4.08.6)				X
Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that will produce flooding? (Section 4.08.7)				X
Expose people or structures to a significant risk involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow? (Section 4.08.8)				X
LAND USE AND PLANNING–Will the project:				
Physically divide an established community? (Section 4.09.1)				X
Conflict with any applicable land-use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? (Section 4.09.2)				X
MINERAL RESOURCES–Will the project:				
Cause a substantial reduction of availability of a known mineral resource? (Section 4.10.1)				X

Table 2. CEQA Checklist (Continued)

Table 2. CEQA Checklist				
Environmental Resource	**Pot. Signif. Impact** [2]	**Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig**	**Less Than Signif. Impact**	**No Impact**
NOISE–Will the project produce:				
A temporary or periodic increase in noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? (Section 4.11.1)			X	
Permanent increases in noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? (Section 4.11.2)			X	
Generation of substantial ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or applicable standards of other agencies? (Section 4.11.3)			X	
POPULATION AND HOUSING – Will the project:				
Directly or indirectly induce substantial population growth in an area? (Section 4.12.1)				X
Displace substantial numbers of numbers of people and cause the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? (Section 4.12.2)				X
PUBLIC SERVICES				
Produce substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of fire protection facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives? (Section 4.13.1)				X
Produce substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of police protection facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives? (Section 4.13.2)				X
Produce substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of other public service facilities? (Section 4.13.3)				X
RECREATION–Will the project:				
Substantially increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities to produce substantial physical deterioration of a facility? (Section 4.14.1)				X
Require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? (Section 4.14.2)				X
TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC–Will the project:				
Cause a substantial increase in traffic in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system? (Section 4.15.1)			X	

Table 2. CEQA Checklist (Continued)

Table 2. CEQA Checklist				
Environmental Resource	**Pot. Signif. Impact** [2]	**Pot. Sig. Impact Unless Mitig**	**Less Than Signif. Impact**	**No Impact**
Exceed a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? (Section 4.15.2)				X
Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses? (Section 4.15.3)				X
Produce inadequate parking capacity? (Section 4.15.4)			X	
Produce inadequate emergency access? (Section 4.15.5)			X	
Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation? (Section 4.15.6)				X
Produce substantial safety risks due to a change in air traffic patterns, increase air traffic levels, or change in air traffic location? (Section 4.15.7)				X
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS–Will the project:				
Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources? (Section 4.16.1)				X
Require or produce the construction of new water supply facilities? (Section 4.16.2)				X
Produce a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? (Section 4.16.3)				X
Require or produce the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities? (Section 4.16.4)				X
Have access to a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? (Section 4.16.5)				X
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE–Does the project:				
Have the potential to substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal? (Section 4.17.1)				X
Have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? (Section 4.17.2)				X
Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (Section 4.17.3)				X
Have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? (Section 4.17.3)			X	

Table 2. CEQA Checklist (Continued)

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4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

4.01 AESTHETICS/VISUAL RESOURCES

The City of Susanville is in the northwest corner of Honey Lake Valley, and mountain peaks surround the City on the northeast, north, west, and south. Antelope Mountain is approximately four miles northeast of Susanville and 1,500 feet higher than the City. Susanville Peak is approximately three miles north of the City and 1,400 feet higher than the City. Other ridges and peaks are west and south of the City, and the Susan River enters the western edge of the City and flows southeast into the Honey Lake Valley.

The proposed site is located along Riverside Drive on the southeastern edge of Susanville (see Figure 2). Vacant land, the Susan River, and abandoned lumber processing facilities are west of the proposed courthouse site; a vacant parcel, a U.S. Forest Service office building, and several residences are north of the site; a Social Security Administration building, commercial office and retail buildings, and Riverside Drive are east of the site; and vacant land, commercial buildings and the Susan River are south of the site.

The Paul Bunyan Lumber Mill formerly occupied the proposed courthouse site; numerous concrete and steel pipe building artifacts and asphalt paving remain on the site. The proposed project site is generally flat and covered with ruderal vegetation.

From the site and adjacent portions of Riverside Drive, there are northward, westward, and southward views of numerous buildings in (and around) Susanville with backgrounds of forested ridge and mountain slopes. The Susan River has high banks, and riparian tree vegetation is thick along the river's banks; therefore, in the vicinity of the proposed courthouse site, viewers cannot see the river's water unless they are adjacent to the river. There is a recreational trail along the right bank of the Susan River, but tall willows and ruderal vegetation grow southwest of the proposed courthouse site and block views of the trail and river from the proposed courthouse site.

4.01.1 Substantially degrade the existing visual character of the site and its surroundings?

Less Than Significant Impact: The proposed site is currently a vacant parcel that is covered with ruderal vegetation; foundation, pavement, and plumbing remnants of the former mill buildings; and debris. The proposed courthouse site is adjacent to existing government, commercial, and retail facilities, and urban infrastructure features such as streets, curbs, sanitary sewers, and storm drains already border the proposed site.

The proposed project's courthouse will change the existing visual character of the site; the project will remove the remnants of the former lumber mill, and the new courthouse will provide attractive architectural elements and features on the site which will improve the site's appearance. The courthouse will have a height similar to nearby buildings. It will contribute infill

development to enhance the visual development of the area. The architectural features of the building, color, and massing will be consistent with the features of surrounding buildings. The Administrative Office of the Courts' design will include a landscaped entrance that will direct viewers' attention from Riverside Drive to the front of the courthouse. Since the project will provide visual features that are harmonious with the surrounding commercial and retail buildings, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the courthouse project will not substantially degrade the visual character of the site and its surroundings; instead, the project will improve the visual character of the site. Therefore, the aesthetic impacts will be less than significant.

During construction of the courthouse, the Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will employ construction equipment and structures at the site, change the site through various construction activities, stockpile construction supplies, and accumulate debris. These construction activities will change the appearance of the site, but the Administrative Office of the Courts believes that the construction operations will be similar to other construction operations that may be occurring in Susanville, the construction will not be less attractive than the current visual condition of the site, and may be attractive to some observers. Therefore, the construction operations' short-term visual impacts will be less than substantial, and the project's impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.01.2 Will the Project Have A Substantial Adverse Effect On A Scenic Vista?

Less than Significant Impact: As noted above, the proposed courthouse will primarily affect the public's southward view from the site's north side and the public's southward view from the site's east side. On the north side, because the proposed courthouse will be only approximately 125 feet wide and 40 feet tall and will be set back approximately 100 feet south of the border of the U.S. Forest Service-occupied property, the courthouse will be a minor impediment to southward views. On the east side, the proposed courthouse will be approximately 175 feet long along the Riverside Drive axis, but because it will be set back approximately 200 feet wide from Riverside Drive and the courthouse will be only approximately 40 feet tall, it will not substantially obstruct westward views from the government, commercial and retail buildings on the east side of Riverside Drive.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.01.3. Will the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that will adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less than Significant Impact: The proposed project will add light sources for exterior and interior building lighting and security lighting on courthouse grounds. Most of the building's interior lighting will be limited to the Superior Court's typical weekday operational hours and a

few hours immediately before and after the court's operations. Since the building's security lighting will not be substantially different from nearby government offices, commercial offices, and retail buildings, so the security lighting will not be a source of substantial additional light. The Administrative Office of the Courts will shield all light sources to minimize glare impacts on surrounding properties, and landscaping also will block light from these properties.

Light sources are currently present on the project site from adjacent government, commercial and retail buildings, their respective parking lots, and street lights on Riverside Drive. The project will not add building features such as metallic finishes that generate substantial glare. In addition, the project will add new trees as landscaping and to provide shade for the parking areas, and the added trees will attenuate glare. Therefore, light or glare impacts from the proposed project will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.02 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

As noted above, the proposed courthouse site is located in southeastern Susanville on the former site of wood processing facilities and not on agricultural land.

4.02.1 Will the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact: The previous owners of the proposed Courthouse parcels used the parcels for lumber processing, and the parcels contain remnants of building foundations, pavement, and utilities. The Administrative Office of the Courts has found no information that indicates that any previous landowner used the parcels for agricultural use. Since there is no agricultural use on the parcels and building remnants prevent agricultural operations on the parcels, the proposed project will not convert any Farmland to non-agricultural use.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.02.2 Will the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact: The project site has no agricultural zone designation, and the parcels' recorded titles have no record of a Williamson Act contract.[3]

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[3] Personal communication from Mary Bustamante, Senior Real Estate Analyst, Administrative Office of the Courts to Jerome Ripperda, Administrative Office of the Courts, August 2008.

4.02.3 Will the project involve other changes in the existing environment that could produce substantial conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?

No Impact: The proposed project does not involve any housing, and the project will produce only very minor changes in employment. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts believes that the project will have no effect on population growth or demand for new housing or development, and therefore there will be no project-related substantial conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.03 AIR QUALITY

The City is within the jurisdiction of the Lassen County Air Pollution Control District. Lassen County may have a non-attainment status for particulate matter PM10 (and possibly PM2.5).[4] The primary air pollution concern is accumulation of particulate matter in the winter, when air inversion events trap smoke from wood burning stoves.

4.03.1 Will the project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

Less Than Significant Impact: As noted above, the primary air pollution concern in the City and County is particulate matter from wood burning stoves. The proposed courthouse will not contain any wood burning stoves. The proposed project does not include housing and not significantly increase employment, and the Administrative Office of the Courts believes that the project will not produce population growth and the related residential use of wood stoves and creation of particulate pollutants in the winter. Since the courthouse will not generate wood burning stove-related particulate matter and the project will not produce population growth that could add more wood-burning stoves, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

The project's construction operations will include grading and excavation activities which could produce dust, but the construction activities will only cover approximately 4.5 acres and will operate only for a relatively short period of time. For these reasons, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the construction-related dust generation will not for that reason violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[4] The Lassen County APCD does not monitor particulate matter. Personal communication, Jim Donnelly, Air Pollution Control Officer, Lassen County APCD to Jerome Ripperda, AOC, July 21, 2008.

4.03.2 Will the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less Than Significant Impact: On-site construction emissions principally include exhaust emissions from construction equipment motor vehicle operation and fugitive dust from disturbed soil. Off-site emission sources include motor vehicle exhaust from delivery vehicles and worker traffic and road dust. As noted above, particulate matter from wood-burning stoves is the County's primary air pollution problem. As noted in Section 4.03.1, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not contribute to substantial dust-related pollution during construction or residential-related particulate pollution.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.03.3 Will the project create substantial objectionable odors?

Less Than Significant Impact: During construction, diesel-powered equipment will generate exhaust that will produce odors. However, the odors will be temporary in nature and will be similar to the odors of diesel-powered vehicles on the Susanville's streets. Since the proposed courthouse parcel will cover only approximately 4.5 acres, the project's ground-clearing and excavation operations will not be extensive, and the operations will therefore not contribute substantial amounts of odors. The construction operations will be approximately 150 feet from the nearest building (the U.S. Forest Service building) and approximately 600 feet from the nearest residences; the separation of the construction operations from the nearest buildings will promote dissipation of the construction odors, and the Administrative Office of the Courts does not expect exhaust fumes to become substantial or affect people. Once construction of the proposed courthouse is complete, the project will not generate substantial odors.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.03.4 Will the project substantially conflict with the State's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020, as set forth by the timetable established in Assembly Bill (AB) 32, California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006?

Less Than Significant Impact: The project will replace the current overcrowded courthouse facilities with a new courthouse that, as noted above, will conform to standards for a LEED silver-certified building, and it will therefore include more energy-efficient building materials, mechanical equipment, appliances, and sanitary waste fixtures. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not substantially conflict the State's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.04 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The proposed courthouse site is a vacant lot that was previously the site of the Paul Bunyan Lumber Mill. The site is flat. Concrete, asphalt paving, metal, and wood remnants of the mill cover portions of the site, but some ruderal vegetation is growing on the site.

4.04.1 Will the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact: The site has no substantial native vegetation, and concrete rubble, asphalt paving, and building debris covers part of the site. Some Susanville residents currently use the site for off-road driving and squatters' camping.[5] The site does not provide substantial cover or habitat for native candidate, sensitive, or special status species. Therefore, due to its current condition and use, the proposed project will no substantial direct or indirect adverse effect on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.04.2 Will the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact: As noted above, the site is a former lumber mill facility and has no riparian habitat or sensitive natural community. Therefore, the proposed project will not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitats or other sensitive natural community identified by any local State of federal authorities.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.04.3 Will the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

No Impact: As noted above, the site is a former lumber mill facility and has no wetlands. Therefore, the proposed project will not have a substantial adverse effect on any federally protected wetlands.

[5] Tetra Tech EM Inc. 2008. *Final Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment: Jack Thurman Family Trust property, Riverside Drive, Susanville, Lassen County, California*. 241 p.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.04.4 Will the project substantially interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or substantially impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Less Than Significant Impact: As noted above, the site is a former lumber mill facility. Although ruderal vegetation is growing on the site, the site's concrete, asphalt paving, metal, and wood remnants of the mill cover portions of the site and have inhibited development of dense vegetation cover. Due to the absence of adequate vegetation, the presence of human disturbance on the site, its relatively small size and location, the site does not play an identifiable role in the movement of any native resident or migratory species or migratory wildlife corridors or serve as a native wildlife nursery site; therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that project will have a less than significant impact in these areas of concern.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.04.5 Will the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No Impact: As noted above, the site is a vacant parcel that was formerly a lumber mill facility and currently has only ruderal vegetation growing on the site. The City of Susanville's Riverwalk Initial Study stated that the site was not within any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Since the site has only ruderal vegetation, no large native trees, building remnants that inhibit establishment of native vegetation, and has a commercial zoning designation, construction of the project will not conflict with local policies or ordinances.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.04.6 Will the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact: As noted above, the site is a vacant parcel that was formerly a lumber mill facility, and ruderal vegetation and building remnants cover the parcel. The Administrative Office of the Courts has not identified any Habitat Conservation Plan or other approved plan that any agency has adopted for the site. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service does not list a Habitat Conservation Plan for the Susanville area,[6] and the California Department of Fish and Game does not list a Natural Communities Conservation Plan for the Susanville area.[7]

[6] http://ecos.fws.gov/conserv_plans/servlet/gov.doi.hcp.servlets.PlanReport. Accessed on August 3, 2008.
[7] http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/nccp/status.html, Accessed on August 3, 2008.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.05 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The proposed courthouse site is located in southeastern Susanville on the former site of the Paul Bunyan lumber mill. The site is flat. Concrete, asphalt paving, metal, and wood remnants of the mill cover portions of the site, with only ruderal vegetation is growing on the site.

4.05.1 Does the project have a substantial potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource or a historic resource?

Less Than Significant Impact: The Administrative Office of the Courts' Phase 1 environmental assessment indicates that the previous lumber mill operated on the site since at least 1939 until the late 1960s. The site is now vacant with only concrete, asphalt paving, metal, and wood remnants of the mill covering portions of the site. Due to the site's long history of disturbance, the past use as a mill, and its current vacant condition, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes, that the site has a very minor potential for the presence of significant archaeological resources or historic resources, and that the proposed project does not have a substantial potential to cause a substantial adverse effect on an archaeological resources or a historic resource.

Mitigation Measure: No mitigation measures are required.

4.05.2 Does the project have a substantial potential to disturb any human remains?

No Impact: As noted above, a lumber mill previously occupied the site and neither the Administrative Office of the Courts' Phase 1 environmental assessment nor the preliminary title review reports obtained by the Administrative Office of the Courts[8] reveal any historic use of the site as a cemetery or other interment location. The Administrative Office of the Courts therefore concludes that the project will not disturb any human remains.

Mitigation Measure: No mitigation measures are required.

4.06 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The California Department of Conservation's geologic map for the Susanville area[9] indicates that Susanville is located in the Honey Lake Fault Zone. The map shows four quaternary faults, none of which are located within one mile of the project site.

[8] Personal communication from Mary Bustamante, Senior Real Estate Analyst, Administrative Office of the Courts to Jerome Ripperda, Administrative Office of the Courts, August 2008.
[9] Lydon, P.A., Gay, T.E. and Jennings, C.W., 1960, *Geologic map of California : Westwood sheet: California Division of Mines and Geology, scale 1:250000*. Available at http://ngmdb.usgs.gov/ngm-bin/ILView.pl?sid=371_1.sid&vtype=b. Accessed on August 3, 2008.

4.06.1 Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault?

Less Than Significant Impact: The site is not located in any of the California Geological Survey's Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zones, and there is no evidence of active faulting the immediate vicinity of the site.[10] Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that no designated or potentially active fault trace passes through the property, and the proposed project will not expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.06.2 Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving strong seismic ground shaking?

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated: As noted previously, there is no evidence of active faulting the immediate vicinity of the site, but the U.S Geological Survey lists several historical earthquakes in the Susanville area.[11] The Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project could expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving strong seismic ground shaking, but a mitigation measure will reduce the potential impact to a level that is less than significant.

Mitigation Measure: Geology and Soils 1— The Administrative Office of the Courts will prepare a geotechnical report to provide guidance and requirements for design and construction activities. Registered geologists and registered engineers will prepare the report, and it will describe the methods and results of a geotechnical exploration; develop design recommendations for foundation type, grading, pavement design, and other pertinent topics; and verify that the AOC can develop the site as planned. The courthouse designers and construction contractor will use the geotechnical report and other data to construct the building in conformance with the requirements of the California Building Code to withstand anticipated geological risks.

4.06.3 Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving ground failure (including subsidence or liquefaction-induced lateral spread)?

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated: Liquefaction occurs when saturated, unconsolidated, fine-grained sediment temporarily transforms to a fluid-like state due to earthquake ground shaking. Subsidence is the lowering of the land-surface elevation from changes that take place underground such as human pumping of water, oil, and gas from

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[10] Personal Communication, Patrick J Jenks, Senior Engineering Geologist, and David R. Gius, Jr., Senior Engineer (Wallace Kuhl & Associates, Inc.) to Don Mariano (Lionakis Beaumont Design Group, Inc.). 2008. Source: Lionakis. 2008. *Comparative Site Study for New Susanville Courthouse*. Prepared for the Administrative Office of the Courts. xxp.

[11] U.S. Geological Survey. California Earthquake History 1769-Present. Available at: http://pasadena.wr.usgs.gov/info/cahist_eqs.html. Accessed on August 3, 2008.

underground reservoirs; dissolution of limestone aquifers (sinkholes); collapse of underground mines; drainage of organic soils; and initial wetting of dry soils.

The available geotechnical data reveals no evidence to conclude that there is a high potential for substantial adverse effects involving ground failure, but the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project does not have sufficient information to conclude that the project will not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving ground failure. A mitigation measure will reduce the potential impact to a level that is less than significant

Mitigation Measure: Geology and Soils 1— The Administrative Office of the Courts will prepare a geotechnical report to provide guidance and requirements for design and construction activities. Registered geologists and registered engineers will prepare the report, and it will describe the methods and results of a geotechnical exploration; develop design recommendations for foundation type, grading, pavement design, and other pertinent topics; and verify that the AOC can develop the site as planned. The courthouse designers and construction contractor will use the geotechnical report and other data to construct the building in conformance with the requirements of the California Building Code to withstand anticipated geological risks.

4.06.4 Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving landslides?

No Impact: The project site is flat, and flat terrain surrounds the project site. Therefore, there is no potential for landslides at the site.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.06.5 Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving expansive soil?

No Impact: Expansive soils are soils that contain clay minerals that attract and absorb water and swell the soil's volume.

Based on available geotechnical data,[10] there is no evidence to conclude that there is a high potential for substantial adverse effects involving expansive soils. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving expansive soil.

Mitigation Measure: No mitigation measures are required.

4.06.6 Will the project cause substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated: As noted elsewhere, the project site is flat and vacant.

During construction, the Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will remove the site's topsoil and stockpile the topsoil; the construction contractor will utilize the stockpiled topsoil later for the courthouse's landscaping. The construction contractor will also excavate, grade, strip and stockpile other soils, add fill or replace stripped soil, compact soil; and excavate trenches. Although the site is flat, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that rain or wind could cause substantial erosion or topsoil loss during construction; this impact is potentially significant, but a mitigation measure will reduce the potential impact to a level that is less than significant.

The completed project will cover the site's surface with structures, paved materials, and landscaping. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts does not expect substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil after completion of the courthouse.

Mitigation Measures: Geology and Soils 2— The Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to reduce erosion during construction and operation. The SWPPP will include measures to control soil erosion and topsoil loss. The construction contractor shall furnish the Administrative Office of the Courts with a copy of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board's approval of the SWPPP prior to the contractor's initiation of site clearing operations or site grading operations.

4.06.7 Will the project destroy a unique geological feature?

No Impact: As noted elsewhere, the site is flat, and a lumber mill previously occupied the site. Administrative Office of the Courts staff observed no unique geological features at the site.[12] Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not destroy a unique geological feature.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.06.8 Will the project have a substantial potential to destroy a unique paleontological resource?

Less Than Significant Impact: As noted elsewhere, the site is flat, and a lumber mill previously occupied the site. The Administrative Office of the Courts believes the past construction operations of the site have eliminated the possibility of observing any potential paleontological resources on the surface of the site. Since unique paleontological resources are rare and historical construction operations have already disturbed the upper soil strata, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not have a substantial potential to destroy a unique paleontological resource.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[12] Jerome Ripperda, AOC personal observation, May 2008.

4.07 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

4.07.1 Will the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use, emission, or disposal of hazardous materials?

No Impact: The project proposes the construction and operation of a new courthouse facility that will not involve the routine transport, use, emission, or disposal of hazardous materials. Construction of the project may include items such as oils, paints, and fuels, and these materials can be hazardous or toxic materials if handled improperly or if large amounts of the materials are present. The Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contract will require the construction contractor to store all materials in a manner that complies with State and local regulations, and the Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will not be storing amounts of the materials that could create a significant hazard.

The Administrative Office of the Courts' or Superior Court's use of potentially hazardous materials will be limited to small amounts of commonly available, routinely used cleaning products and infrequent applications of pesticides and herbicides to landscaped areas. Use of these materials will be similar to maintenance operations at typical office facilities, and the Administrative Office of the Courts believes that the use will not be a significant hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use, emission, or disposal of hazardous materials.

Since the project's use of potentially hazardous materials involves use of only typical use of commonly used materials and storage of only small amounts of materials, the Administrative Office of the Courts considers potential impacts from the use of hazardous materials to be less than a significant hazard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.07.2 Will the project be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and therefore create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No Impact: The project site is not on a list of hazardous materials sites. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that construction or operation of the proposed courthouse facility will not for that reason create significant hazard to the public or the environment.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.07.3 Will the project produce a substantial safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact: The project proposes the construction and operation of a new courthouse facility and will not produce a substantial safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.07.4 Will the project impair implementation of an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact: The proposed project will not create barriers, limit access to public thoroughfares, or create dead-end roadways and so it will not impair implementation of any adopted emergency response or evacuation plan.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.07.5 Will the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

Less Than Significant Impact: The vegetation covering the project site and the area surrounding the project site includes ruderal and riparian vegetation. Since the site is flat, the Susan River flows nearby and provides a water supply for maintaining the health of nearby trees, the area has fire hydrants, and the Susanville Fire Department services the site, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes the project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.08 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The proposed project site is generally level with a very slight slope to the southwest. Currently storm water runoff flows from the site to the Susan River.

The California Water Resources Control Board, through the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, regulates waste discharges into waters of the State through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit system. Under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit, two permits may apply to projects: (1) construction projects over one acre must obtain coverage under the statewide general construction permit through the development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, and (2) projects of new development and significant redevelopment must obtain coverage under the statewide permit through the development of a Water Quality Management Plan.

The purpose of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan requirement is to identify potential construction–related pollutant sources that may affect the quality of discharge, identify non-storm water discharges, and to design the use and placement of "best management practices" to effectively prohibit the entry of pollutants from the construction site. Project proponents must consider erosion and sediment source control best management practices for both active and inactive (previously disturbed) construction areas.

The purpose of the Water Quality Management Plan is to guide the development and implementation of a program to minimize the detrimental effects of urbanization on the beneficial uses of receiving waters, including effects caused by increased pollutant loads and changes in hydrology. These effects may be minimized through the implementation of site designs that reduce runoff and pollutant transport by minimizing impervious surfaces and maximizing on-site infiltration, controlling water sources, and/or on-site structural treatment control measures, or participation in regional or watershed-based structural treatment control measures.

4.08.1 Will the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or substantially degrade water quality?

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated: As noted earlier, the Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will remove the site's crop stubble and topsoil; excavate, grade, strip and stockpile other soils, add fill or replace stripped soil, compact soil; and excavate trenches. The construction excavation operations could cause short-term water quality impacts such as erosion and sedimentation.

Since the proposed project's area is greater than one acre, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System compliance requires the project to prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan to identify sources of sediments and pollution that could potentially affect storm water quality. In addition, since the proposed project creates parking lots larger than 5,000 square feet that will be exposed to storm water and the project development is greater than 100,000 square feet, the project must prepare a Water Quality Management Plan to minimize post-construction impacts to water quality.

Mitigation Measure: Hydrology and Water Quality 1— The Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will secure the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board's approval of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan to protect water quality during construction. The construction contractor shall furnish the Administrative Office of the Courts with a copy of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board's approval of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

4.08.2 Will the project alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a manner that will produce substantial erosion?

Less Than Significant Impact: As noted earlier, the Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will remove the site's topsoil; excavate, grade, strip and stockpile other soils, add fill or replace stripped soil, compact soil; and excavate trenches. These types of construction operations may leave the site's surface exposed to erosion. However, the proposed project site is flat and has an area of only approximately 4.5 acres. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project's construction operations will not alter the existing drainage pattern in a way to have the potential to produce substantial erosion.

After completion of the project's construction, the new courthouse and parking lot will increase the amount of impervious surface on the site; however, the project's landscaping will include vegetated swales to slow runoff, and the project's final graded topography and paved areas will direct most of the site's runoff water to on-site drains that will convey the water to the City's storm drain system. Since the flat terrain will ensure that water flows do not move rapidly, the project's landscaping will keep unpaved surfaces covered with vegetation, and building surfaces and paved areas will drain runoff to drains, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the completed courthouse will not have drainage features that produce substantial erosion or otherwise alter the existing drainage pattern so as to have the potential to produce substantial erosion.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.08.3 Will the project contribute runoff water that will exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Less Than Significant Impact: The City's storm drain system extends through Riverside Drive along the east side of the proposed courthouse site. The project's new courthouse and parking lot will increase the amount of impervious surface on the site; however, the project's landscaping will include vegetated swales to slow runoff, and the project's final site grading will direct runoff water to the City's drains. The City indicated in 2007 that there was sufficient capacity to serve a proposed residential project at the same site. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the completed courthouse will not contribute runoff water that will exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.08.4 Will the project require or produce the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities?

Less Than Significant Impact: As noted above, the proposed project will not contribute runoff water in excess of the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems and so the proposed project will not require the construction of new off-site storm water facilities.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.08.5 Will the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge so that there will be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a substantial lowering of the local groundwater level?

Less Than Significant Impact: The proposed project does not include new housing, and it will have a very minor increase in employment. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not increase water consumption or related depletion of groundwater supplies. Since the project covers only approximately 4.5 acres, the project's conversion of current exposed ground to paved areas or structures will be a very minor reduction in the area's available groundwater recharge surface. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or significantly interfere with groundwater recharge.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.08.6 Will the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of flooding?

No Impact: The proposed project does not include housing and is not located within a designated 100-year floodplain. Therefore, the project would not expose people or property to any significant risk of flooding.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.08.7 Will the project place substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that will produce flooding?

No Impact: As discussed above, the site is flat, it covers only 4.5 acres, it is not within a designated flood zone, and the project will convey runoff from its structures and paved areas to the City's storm drain. Therefore, the proposed project will not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that will produce flooding.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.08.8 Will the project expose people or structures to a significant risk involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

No Impact: There is no water body near the project site that will be susceptible to a seiche or tsunami; therefore, there is no risk of seiche or tsunami. Since the project site is relatively level and distant from slopes, there is no risk of mudflows.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation is required.

4.09 LAND USE AND PLANNING

4.09.1 Will the project physically divide an established community?

No Impact: The project site is approximately 4.5 acres and is on the southeastern edge of the City. Since the site is only approximately 500 feet from the City's southeastern limits and no residential developments or City streets are southwest of the project site, the project will not physically divide the established community.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.09.2 Will the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No Impact: The proposed courthouse site has a commercial zoning designation, and the nearby parcels on Riverside Drive also have commercial designations. The courthouse project is consistent with the General Plan designation and does not conflict with any other plan, policy or regulation adopted by any agency having jurisdiction over the project for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.10 MINERAL RESOURCES

4.10.1 Will the project cause a substantial reduction of availability of a known mineral resource?

No Impact: As stated earlier, the Administrative Office of the Courts' environmental site assessment indicates that the site's owners have used the site since for lumber processing activities since at least 1939. Therefore, the site has not historically been a location of a substantial mineral resource. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the proposed project will not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.11 NOISE

4.11.1 Will the project produce a temporary increase or periodic increases in noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

***Less Than Significant Impact*:** During construction, workers' operation of earth-moving equipment and other construction equipment will generate noise. While the noise contribution from worker vehicles will be temporary and small, the noise from construction equipment may be appreciable for short periods of time. However, the Administrative Office of the Courts' proposed construction site is over 400 feet from the nearest sensitive receptor location, the residences northwest of the courthouse site. Since the distance between the construction site and the residences will reduce the sound impacts and the earth-moving construction activities will have a short duration, the Administrative Office of the Courts believes that the impact of temporary construction-related noise levels will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.11.2 Will the project produce permanent increases in noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Less than Significant Impact: The courthouse will generate some noise from heating, ventilating, air conditioning mechanical equipment. Since the mechanical equipment will be typical equipment for an office building, the Administrative Office of the Courts does not expect the equipment's noise generation to exceed 50 dBA at a distance of 100 feet. The Administrative Office of the Courts believes that 60dBA is an acceptable threshold for residential areas. Since the building's projected noise will be less than the threshold, the project will not produce permanent increases in noise levels residential areas in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

After the Superior Court begins its operations in the new courthouse, the additional vehicles traveling to the site will increase noise levels adjacent to nearby roads. However, the traffic increase will be minor, and most of the traffic near the proposed courthouse will utilize Riverside Drive. Because there are no residences on Riverside Drive, the Administrative Office of the Courts believes any permanent increases in noise levels caused by the project's traffic-related and operational noise levels will not be in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.11.3 Will the project generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

Less Than Significant Impact: During construction, large trucks and other heavy equipment may generate ground-borne vibration and ground-borne noise during grading operations. The nearest sensitive receptor location are the residences northwest of the courthouse site which are approximately 400 feet from the courthouse site. Ground-borne vibration from bulldozers and large trucks will have a very minor impact on nearby sensitive receptors because the construction impacts will be small, irregular, and persist for only short durations. The distance between the construction site and the residences will also dissipate vibration and noise impacts. The Administrative Office of the Courts does not expect that the project will result in generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING

4.12.1 Will the project directly or indirectly induce substantial population growth in an area?

No Impact: The project proposes construction of a new courthouse on an approximately 4.5 acre site; it does not include new housing, and its very minor potential employment increase is unlikely to induce any new direct or indirect population growth.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.12.2 Will the project displace substantial numbers of numbers of people and cause the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact: The proposed project involves construction of a new courthouse on a currently vacant lot and will not displace any people or existing housing.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.13 PUBLIC SERVICES

4.13.1 Will the project produce substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of fire protection facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives?

No Impact: The City of Susanville's Fire Department has a fire station at 1505 Main St. The proposed courthouse project will be adjacent to existing development and within close proximity to the fire station. Therefore, the project will not have any substantial adverse physical impacts

on the provision of fire protection facilities in terms of fire response times or other performance objectives and will not otherwise create a substantially greater need for fire protection than already exists.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.13.2 Will the project produce substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of police protection facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives?

No Impact: The proposed project is construction of a new courthouse, relocation of the Superior Court, and operation of a new courthouse facility. The County of Lassen's Sheriff's Department provides security at the Superior Court's courthouse facilities. The project will reduce police protection needs since the project will consolidate Superior Court operations into fewer and more secure facilities. The new courthouse will have improved security features that improve the efficiency of Superior Court's security operations, in-house facilities for security operations, and the new courthouse will reduce the number of Superior Court building entrances requiring security personnel. Therefore, the project will not have any substantial adverse physical impacts on the provision of police protection facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives or otherwise require additional police services or require new police facilities.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.13.3 Will the project produce substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of other public service facilities?

No Impact: The proposed project does not involve residential development, and it will not cause an increase in residential housing. It will not increase the need for related additional schools or other government facilities in the surrounding area. Therefore, the project will have any substantial adverse physical impacts on the provision of other public service facilities or otherwise create a substantially greater need for schools or other facilities.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.14 RECREATION

4.14.1 Will the project substantially increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities to produce substantial physical deterioration of a facility?

No Impact: The proposed project does not involve residential development or recreational facilities, and the Administrative Office of the Courts believes that the project will not influence the City's population or the distribution of the population. Therefore, the project will not increase

the use of neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities or produce substantial physical deterioration of a facility.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.14.2 Will the project require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact: The proposed project does not involve residential development or recreational facilities, and it will not require related construction or expansion of recreational facilities or an increase in the use of neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.15 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

State Route 36 passes through the City via Main Street and is the City's primary east/west thoroughfare passing through the City's downtown area. Riverside Drive also follows a general east/west orientation; it connects to Main Street and follows a curvilinear route south of Main St. until it connects to South Weatherlow St. and Richmond Road. North St. and 2nd St., 4th St., and Bunyan St. also provide important east/west routes.

Mesa St., Fairfield St., Spring St., Sacramento St. are north/south routes that intersect Main St. and serve significant residential areas in eastern Susanville. In central Susanville, State Route 139 extends on Ash St. to its intersection with Main St. Alexander Ave. and Richmond Rd. are main routes from southern Susanville to Main St. and central Susanville; Grand Ave. and Weatherlow St. serve as the main routes from northern Susanville to Main St. and central Susanville. The main intersections in central Susanville are Main Street's intersections with Weatherlow St., Grand Ave., and Ash St.

As noted in Section 2.5, the Superior Court currently has approximately 40 employees, and the Administrative Office of the Courts estimates that the Superior Court may add as many as five new employees. The Superior Court calls a maximum of approximately 70 jurors at any one time. The Administrative Office of the Courts estimates that the maximum number of other visitors during the AM peak hour is approximately 50 persons. Taking all of these factors into account, the maximum existing morning peak traffic demand is approximately 165 persons. The Administrative Office of the Courts estimates that 10 percent of the employees commute in carpools, and that 30 percent of the visitors arrive in trips with two or more persons per vehicle; therefore, the total maximum trips is approximately 140 trips. The Administrative Office of the Courts presumes that persons driving to the existing courthouse use the following routes:

- • From northern Susanville, northeastern Susanville, and northern Lassen County, drivers reach the courthouse through routes such as Cherry Terrace, Weatherlow St.,

and Ash St. that connect with Main Street. Drivers pass through the Main St./ Ash St. intersection and the Main St./Weatherlow St. intersection to the Lassen St./Main St. intersection and proceed on southbound Lassen St. to the courthouse area;

- From eastern Susanville and eastern Lassen County, drivers reach the courthouse from Main. Drivers pass through the Main St./ Ash St. intersection and the Main St./Weatherlow St. intersection to the Lassen St./Main St. intersection and proceed on southbound Lassen St. to the courthouse area;

- From southern Susanville and southern Lassen County, drivers reach the courthouse through routes that coalesce onto northbound Richmond Road/Weatherlow St. and proceed on Mill St. or Cottage St. to the courthouse area; and

- From western Susanville and western Lassen County, most drivers reach the courthouse area through routes that coalesce onto eastbound Hillcrest to Main St.4th St. and then proceed on southbound Lassen St. to reach the courthouse area.

For the Superior Courts of California, Mondays or Tuesdays are typically the days with the greatest number of courthouse visitors, while other days have successively lower courthouse populations. In addition, the hours from 8:00 to 10:00 AM are typically the hours with the greatest courthouse population. The courthouse population typically declines from the early peak until noon, rises to a second peak from 1:00 to 2:00 PM, and then declines steeply to a population low during the 4:00 to 5:00 PM hour. The Superior Court's facilities are typically open from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

4.15.1 Will the project cause a substantial increase in traffic in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system?

Less than Significant Impact: As noted above, the Administrative Office of the Courts estimates that the maximum number of other courthouse-related trips during the morning peak hour will be approximately 140 vehicle trips.

The Administrative Office of the Courts expects that the Superior Court's proposed new location will change the City's traffic patterns by shifting most courthouse-related traffic from the current South Lassen St. location toward the southeastern part of the City. The Administrative Office of the Courts' presumes that the project will reduce westbound traffic on Main St. from eastern Susanville; southern Susanville traffic proceeding northbound on Richmond Rd. to make a left turn on westbound Main St.; northern Susanville traffic proceeding southbound on Weatherlow St., Ash St., to make a right turn on westbound Main St. for future trip routes to the proposed courthouse. After completion of the proposed courthouse on Riverside Drive, the Administrative Office of the Courts presumes that persons driving to the new courthouse use the following routes:

- From western Susanville (including traffic from western Lassen County entering Susanville from State Routes 36 and 44), drivers will proceed on eastbound Main St. and turn onto Alexander Ave., McDow St., Mesa St., and other north/south streets in southeastern Susanville to reach Riverside Drive and the new courthouse;

- Drivers from northern Susanville (and drivers from northern Lassen County entering Susanville via State Route 139) will proceed on the City's main north/south streets to Main St. Drivers will proceed on eastbound Main St. and turn onto Alexander Ave., McDow St., Mesa St., and other north/south streets in southeastern Susanville to reach Riverside Drive and the new courthouse;

- Drivers from eastern Susanville (including drivers from eastern Lassen County entering the City on State Route 36) will turn lest at the Main St./Riverside Drive intersection and proceed on Riverside Drive to the courthouse;

- Drivers from southern Susanville and southern Lassen County take Richmond Road to Riverside Drive and continue on eastbound on Riverside to the courthouse.

Administrative Office of the Courts staff[13] observed morning peak hour traffic on Main St. and Riverside Drive and the Main St. intersections with Weatherlow St., Grand Ave., and Ash St. Traffic queues at red lights were typically only a few vehicles and typically cleared in one traffic signal cycle. Since the proposed project will not substantially increase total traffic, will shift traffic from movements toward the existing courthouse in western Susanville to the Riverside Drive area in southeastern Susanville, and the City's intersections and streets do not indicate that traffic levels are near the streets' capacities, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the projects' traffic impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.15.2 Will the project exceed a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

No Impact: Lassen County does not have a Congestion Management Plan that establishes a level of service standard and so the proposed project will not cause a level of service effect.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[13] Jerome Ripperda, Administrative Office of the Courts, personal observation, May 2008.

4.15.3 Will the project substantially increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses?

No Impact: The State Fire Marshall, and the State Architect, the Superior Court, the Lassen Sheriff's Department, and the Susanville Fire District will review the Administrative Office of the Courts' development of the project site, and the multi-level review will ensure that the proposed project will not increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible use.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.15.4 Will the project produce inadequate parking capacity?

Less Than Significant Impact: As noted Section 4.15.1, the Administrative Office of the Courts expects the Superior Court to have approximately 35 employees and call a maximum of approximately 75 jurors at any one time. The maximum number of other visitors during the AM peak hour will be approximately 50 persons. The maximum number of persons will be approximately 165 persons, and the Administrative Office of the Courts estimates that these persons will arrive in approximately 140 vehicles. The new courthouse will provide approximately 135 public parking spaces for visitors and staff and 6 secure spaces for the Superior Court's staff. In addition, on-street parking Riverside Drive and Grove Street is also available. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the proposed project will have sufficient parking capacity.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.15.5 Will the project produce inadequate emergency access?

Less Than Significant Impact: Since the proposed project does not include closure of any public through street, the project will not affect existing emergency access routes. The Administrative Office of the Courts' development of the project site will conform to recommendations of the Superior Court, the Lassen Sheriff's Department, the Susanville Police Department, and the Susanville Fire District to ensure adequate emergency access considerations. There are multiple routes from Main St. to the courthouse area on Riverside Drive; therefore, the project will have adequate emergency access. The Administrative Office of the Courts believes that the project will not interfere with an adopted emergency response plan, and the project will have no impacts on emergency access.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.15.6 Will the project conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation?

No Impact: The project has no features which conflict with alternative modes of transportation. The Administrative Office of the Courts is not aware of any adopted policies, plans or programs

supporting alternative transportation that local agencies have adopted for the area in which the site is located or the area to be served by the new courthouse. The Administrative Office of the Courts believes that the project will not interfere with any adopted policies, plans or programs supporting alternative transportation.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.15.7 Will the project produce substantial safety risks due to a change in air traffic patterns, increase air traffic levels, or change in air traffic location?

No Impact: There is no nearby airport, and the proposed project will not influence air traffic in the area. Therefore, the project will have no impact on any air traffic-related issues.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.16 UTILITIES/SERVICE SYSTEMS

4.16.1 Will the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources?

No Impact: AOC Because the City indicated in 2007 that it had sufficient supplies to serve a proposed residential project at the same site, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the City has sufficient water to serve the proposed courthouse project.

As noted previously, because the proposed project does not include any housing and will provide only a very minor increase in employment, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not thereby increase demand on the City's water supply.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.16.2 Will the project require or produce the construction of new water supply facilities?

No Impact: As explained for Section 4.16.1, the Administrative Office of the Courts' proposed project will not contribute to a significant increase in water demand, and the project will be able to connect to existing water supply lines located in Riverside Drive. Therefore, the project will not require or result in the construction of new water facilities or require the expansion of existing facilities.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.16.3 Will the project produce a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

No Impact: Because the City indicated in 2007 that its existing wastewater treatment services could serve the proposed Riverwalk residential project , the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that sufficient wastewater treatment capacity exists to serve the proposed courthouse project. As noted previously, because the proposed project does not include any housing and will provide only a very minor increase in employment, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the project will not thereby increase demand on the existing wastewater treatment providers. For these reasons, the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that the wastewater treatment provider will determine that it has adequate existing capacity to serve the proposed project.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.16.4 Will the project require or produce the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities?

No Impact: The proposed project will connect to existing City wastewater treatment facilities. The project does not include any housing and may increase Susanville's employment by only a very minor amount. The Administrative Office of the Courts therefore believes that the project will not produce an increase in population or the related demand for wastewater treatment capacity or facilities and it will not require construction of new wastewater treatment facilities.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.16.5 Will the project have access to a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

No Impact: The City indicated in 2007 that there was sufficient capacity to serve a proposed residential project at the same site, and by comparison, the Administrative Office of the Courts' proposed project will not contribute a significant solid waste demand. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that the existing landfill serving the City will have sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the projects projected solid waste disposal needs.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.17 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.17.1 Does the project have the potential to substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal?

No Impact: The proposed project site is a flat, vacant field that was the former site of a lumber mill. It is adjacent to streets, developed parcels, and vacant parcels. In addition, the proposed project will cover only approximately 4.5 acres. The site is not home to or part of the range of any rare or endangered plants or animals. The Administrative Office of the Courts concludes, therefore, the proposed project will not have the potential to substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.17.2 Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory

No Impact: The proposed project site is a flat, vacant field that was the former site of a lumber mill and contains no historically significant features. The Administrative Office of the Courts concludes, therefore, that the proposed project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.17.3 Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?

No Impact: The proposed project is consistent with the City's General Plan; its location is adjacent to other government, commercial, and retail facilities; and the Administrative Office of the Courts' analysis did not identify any project-related cumulatively considerable impacts. The proposed project will not cause any impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required

4.17.4 Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than Significant Impact: Section 4.6.2, Section 4.6.3, Section 4.6.6, and Section 4.8.1 (Geology and Soils) discuss potentially significant impacts. These sections proposed mitigation measures to reduce these potential significant impacts to a level that will not be significant. There are no other foreseeable substantial effects on human beings.

Mitigation Measures: Sections 4.6.6 and 4.8.1already provide sufficient mitigation measures to reduce the impacts to levels that are not significant. No additional mitigation measures are required.

5.0 REFERENCES

City of Susanville Planning Department. 2007. Riverwalk Apartments, General Plan Amendment, Rezone, Use Permit and Architectural and Site Plan Review; #GRUA. 20 p.

Lionakis. 2008. Comparative Site Study for New Susanville Courthouse. Prepared for the Administrative Office of the Courts. 147p.

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Tetra Tech EM Inc. 2008. Final Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment: Jack Thurman Family Trust property, Riverside Drive, Susanville, Lassen County, California. 241 p.

U.S. Geological Survey. California Earthquake History 1769-Present. Available at: http://pasadena.wr.usgs.gov/info/cahist_eqs.html. Accessed on August 3, 2008.

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6.0 REPORT PREPARATION PERSONNEL

Administrative Office of the Courts

Senior Project Manager:	***Lisa Hinton***
Senior Real Estate Analyst:	***Mary Bustamante***
Environmental Analyst:	***Jerome J. Ripperda***

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Section 4.06.2 (Geology), Section 4.06.3 (Geology), Section 4.06.6, and Section 4.08.1(Hydrology and Water Quality) identified potentially significant environmental impacts.

The Administrative Office of the Courts has added the following mitigation measures to reduce the potential impacts to a level that is less than significant:

- Geology and Soils 1— The Administrative Office of the Courts will prepare a geotechnical report to provide guidance and requirements for design and construction activities. Registered geologists and registered engineers will prepare the report, and it will describe the methods and results of a geotechnical exploration; develop design recommendations for foundation type, grading, pavement design, and other pertinent topics; and verify that the AOC can develop the site as planned. The courthouse designers and construction contractor will use the geotechnical report and other data to construct the building in conformance with the requirements of the California Building Code to withstand anticipated geological risks;
- Geology and Soils 2— The Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to reduce erosion during construction and operation. The SWPPP will include measures to control soil erosion and topsoil loss. The construction contractor shall furnish the Administrative Office of the Courts with a copy of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board's approval of the SWPPP prior to the contractor's initiation of site clearing operations or site grading operations; and
- Water Quality 1— The Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will secure the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board's approval of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan to protect water quality during construction. The construction contractor shall furnish the Administrative Office of the Courts with a copy of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board's approval of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

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8.0 MITIGATION MONITORING PLAN

Section 15097 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires all state and local agencies to establish monitoring or reporting programs for projects approved by a public agency whenever approval involves the adoption of either a Mitigated Negative Declaration or specified environmental findings related to an Environmental Impact Report. The Administrative Office of the Courts intends that its staff and other parties shall use this plan to ensure compliance with mitigation measures during project implementation.

The Administrative Office of the Courts prepared this Mitigation Monitoring Plan for the New Susanville Courthouse project. The intent of the Mitigation Monitoring Plan is to identify responsibilities and time periods for properly and successfully implementing the project's mitigation measures to reduce or avoid significant environmental impacts.

The following table provides a summary of all mitigation measures and monitoring actions for the project. It also identifies the responsible monitoring party and implementation phase.

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Implementation Method/ Monitoring Action	Mitigation Timing	Monitoring Party/ Parties
GEOLOGY AND SOILS				
Potential effects involving strong seismic ground shaking (Section 4.06.2)	Geology and Soils 1— The Administrative Office of the Courts will prepare a geotechnical report to provide guidance and requirements for design and construction activities. Registered geologists and registered engineers will prepare the report, and it will describe the methods and results of a geotechnical exploration; develop design recommendations for foundation type, grading, pavement design, and other pertinent topics; and verify that the AOC can develop the site as planned. The courthouse designers and construction contractor will use the geotechnical report and other data to construct the building in conformance with the requirements of the California Building Code to withstand anticipated geological risks	Ensure preparation of geotechnical report and include report's requirements in architect's contract	During project design	Administrative Office of the Courts' Project Manager
Potential effects involving ground failure (Section 4.03.3)	Geology and Soils 1— The Administrative Office of the Courts will prepare a geotechnical report to provide guidance and requirements for design and construction activities. Registered geologists and registered engineers will prepare the report, and it will describe the methods and results of a geotechnical exploration; develop design recommendations for foundation type, grading, pavement design, and other pertinent topics; and verify that the AOC can develop the site as planned. The courthouse designers and construction contractor will use the geotechnical report and other data to construct the building in conformance with the requirements of the California Building Code to withstand anticipated geological risks	Ensure preparation of geotechnical report and include report's requirements in architect's contract	During project design	Administrative Office of the Courts' Project Manager

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Implementation Method/ Monitoring Action	Mitigation Timing	Monitoring Party/ Parties
Potential effects involving soil erosion (Section 4.06.6)	Geology and Soils 2— The Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to reduce erosion during construction and operation. The SWPPP will include measures to control soil erosion and topsoil loss. The construction contractor shall furnish the Administrative Office of the Courts with a copy of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board's approval of the SWPPP prior to the contractor's initiation of site clearing operations or site grading operations	Ensure preparation of geotechnical report and include report's requirements in architect's contract	During project design	Administrative Office of the Courts' Project Manager
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY				
Potential violation of any water quality standards or waster discharge require-ments or substan-tially degrade water quality (Section 4.08.1)	Water Quality 1— The Administrative Office of the Courts' construction contractor will secure the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board's approval of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan to protect water quality during construction. The construction contractor shall furnish the Administrative Office of the Courts with a copy of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board's approval of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.	Ensure approval of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan	Prior to any grading	Administrative Office of the Courts' Project Manager and Construction Inspectors

9.0 RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

The Administrative Office of the Courts filed a Notice of Completion for the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration on August 4, and the public review period for the document extended from August 4 through September 3. Written public comments and the Administrative Office of the Court's responses are included below.

1. Comment from various persons:

Mr. Jerome Ripperda
Administrative Office of the Courts
Office of Court Construction and Management
2860 Gateway Oaks, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95834
E-mail: Jerry.Ripperda@jud.ca.gov
Telephone: 916-263-8865
FAX: 916-263-8140

RE: New Susanville Courthouse on Riverside Drive

Dear Mr. Ripperda

We the undersigned residents of Lassen County are pleased to lend our support for the construction of the new Court facilities on Riverside Drive in Susanville for the following reasons:

1) The new Courthouse Facility will fit in well with the other new facilities built in the last few years by Lassen National Forest, the Social Security Administration and the Bureau of Land Management among others.
2) Riverside Drive has become an important alternative to the congestion on Main Street and Riverside Drive has been designed with further development in mind.
3) The new Riverwalk opened by the City of Susanville is adjacent to the Courthouse site and will provide a welcome retreat or place to take a refreshing walk during the workday.
4) The alternative access to the Courthouse complex from Grove Street will enhance security for the Courthouse
5) There is ample undeveloped land near the Courthouse Site to provide space for professional offices or specialty shops.
6) The Susan River will be in the view shed of the new Courthouse complex and that will encourage the best use of that asset
7) Consolidation of the Courts into one location will better serve the Courts and allow the County of Lassen to consolidate some of its offices into the old Courthouse making County operations more efficient.

For all of the above reasons in addition to the economic benefit to Susanville we support and encourage you in your efforts to bring this state of the art facility to Susanville!

Thank You

Smith Properties
Laura Tew - Lassen County Times
SUSANVILLE FORD
INTEGRATED INSURANCE PARKER
Johnstonville Rd SUSANVILLE

08/19/2008 00:47 Smith Properties (FAX)5302572442 P.001/001

Response—Comment noted.

2. Mr. Michael Meyer of 708-100 Wingfield Rd. in Janesville, CA 96114 stated: "I wish to inform you that the courthouse location at Riverside was under a half a foot of water in 1997. As the past state watermaster for Lassen County, I would not recommend your choice to locate the courthouse you proposed next to the Susan River just above the Old Channel Dam (located behind the BLM building."

   Response—Mr. Leland Roberts, Senior Project Manager, Administrative Office of the Courts contacted Mr. Michael Meyer, former Watermaster for the Honey Lake drainage area which includes the Susan River, and the California Department of Water Resources on September 4. Mr. Meyer and the California Department of Water Resources' representative explained that they have no written records of the 1997 Susanville flooding event. Mr. Roberts asked Mr. Meyer where he recalls seeing 6" of standing water as he mentioned in his comment on the New Susanville Courthouse Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration. Mr. Meyer stated that he recalls the standing water to be near where the Susan River crosses State Route 36 but he did not observe standing water at the proposed future site of the courthouse; in addition, Mr. Meter the bridge's pilings and abutments trapped debris and caused blockage of the river's flow. The constricted flow caused the flooding near the bridge.

3. Bill Nebecker, Planning Director, City of Susanville:

City of Susanville

(530) 257-1000 • 66 North Lassen Street • Susanville, CA 96130-3904

September 2, 2008

Mr. Jermone Ripperda
Administrative Office of the Courts
Northern/Central Regional Office
2860 Gateway Oaks, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95833-3509

RE: New Susanville Courthouse – Mitigated Negative Declaration

Dear Mr. Ripperda:

Thank you for giving the City of Susanville the opportunity to comment on the mitigated negative declaration for the new Susanville Courthouse. We understand that the state will not be required to obtain a building permit from the city, however all improvements within the city right of way must be in accordance with plans reviewed and approved by the city and in accordance with city standards.

The attached comments directly address our concerns with the proposed initial study and mitigated negative declaration, as well as general comments regarding development issues of the project. We look forward to a revised study that includes the city's concern with this development.

If you have any questions regarding these comments please call me at 530 252-5114 or Fred Nagel, City Engineer at 530 257-1055. The City looks forward to working with the state on the design, construction and completion of this project.

Sincerely,

Bill Nebeker

Bill Nebeker
Community Development Director

Attachments

Kurt Bonham
Mayor
Vernon H. Templeton
Mayor pro tem

Councilmembers:
Lino P. Callegari
Douglas Sayers
Joseph Franco

City of Susanville comments on Mitigated Negative Declaration for:
New Susanville Courthouse for Lassen County (City File #E-08-013)
September 2, 2008
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The City of Susanville provides the following comments on the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for this project:

Location: The City would have preferred that the courthouse remain in the uptown area, closer to the original courthouse site, or at least not in a prime commercial area. We understand that there are limited sites in the uptown, but wonder if all the options were explored. There are sites available for redevelopment on South Street, Hospital Lane and West Street.

Response—Comment noted. The Administrative Office of the Courts advertised for interested landowners to suggest potential courthouse sites, consulted with other parties, evaluated several sites, and chose the Riverside Drive site.

4.13 Public Services

4.13.1 The MND states that there will be "no impact" to the City of Susanville's ability to serve this development with fire protection services. The reasons stated were that the proposed courthouse is adjacent to existing development and in close proximity to the fire station. The City of Susanville Fire Department is under funded and as a result, understaffed. This department cannot provide service as usual for new development within the city. Each new project constructed adds an increasing burden to the overall department's operations and capital facilities, which are no longer supported by conventional financing means from the City's general fund (sales & property taxes.) New development increases the demand and the need for fire protection services. The City has conducted a study of the impacts of new development on fire protection services (and also street maintenance and police protection services) within the City. The study entitled "Police, Fire and Street Maintenance Facilities Mitigation Analysis" prepared by the Abby Group, Inc. sets forth a relationship between new development, facilities needed to accommodate new development, and the estimated cost for improvement of these facilities. Based upon the study, the City of Susanville has adopted capital facility impact fees to offset the street maintenance and fire and police protection impacts resulting from the construction of new structures within the City. Capital facility impact fees mitigate a project's potential impacts related to street maintenance and fire and police protection. Without payment of these fees new development, particularly those that pay no property taxes, add a cumulative burden to the City to provide these services without compensation. If the new courts building will be paying city mitigation impact fees, particularly for fire and streets, then the City agrees that the impact to these public services will be less than significant. However if the courts will not be paying these fees then there will be an impact and additional mitigation will be necessary. (City mitigation impact fees are currently the following per square foot of new construction: Streets $0.92, Police $1.19, Fire $1.08.)

Response— The City's comment emphasizes service-related impacts of new development. The Administrative Office of the Courts understands that the proposed new courthouse will replace the Superior Court's use of the existing facilities. The project may increase demand of services for the new courthouse location, but the project will correspondingly reduce demand for services for the existing courthouse locations. Therefore, the Administrative

Office of the Courts maintains its conclusion that the project will not have significant impacts on services and utilities.

4.14 Transportation/Traffic

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The description of the driving patterns to the existing courthouse is flawed. Several named streets and intersections described in the dot points on page 40 do not exist. (There is no Santa Ana Street, Meridian Street or Westside Blvd. in Susanville; Lassen Street does not intersect with 3rd or 4th Streets, Hillcrest Street is a dead-end with no access to the courthouse; there is an erroneous reference to San Juan Bautista; 4th Street does not access the courthouse, etc.) It is impossible to make sense of this section with these erroneous street names.

Response— The Administrative Office of the Courts regrets the incorrect description. Revised text is on page 39 in Section 4.15.

4.15.3 Increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses

Both Riverside Drive and Grove Street have design flaws/hazards that must be corrected otherwise there will be an impact. Riverside Drive is a two-lane, windy road with on street parking, no turn lanes and the road is in poor condition. The City is currently exploring a joint project with the county to restripe the road for a continuous center turn lane, while eliminating parking on both sides of the street.

Grove Street is a county road that accesses a few homes and businesses in unincorporated Lassen County. The road is narrow, without curb, gutter or sidewalk and in extremely poor condition. There is no regular maintenance of this road by the county and only sporadic snow plowing by the city. The intersection of Grove Street and Riverside Drive is atop a slight hill that is difficult to access in the winter months, according to the neighbors. The intersection is awkward and off-set from the adjoining intersection.

The MND states that a multi-level review will ensure that the project will not increase hazards due to a design feature. Unless the multi-level review ensures the Court's participation to cooperate with the city and county to fix and maintain these roads, the increased traffic from the courts *will* increase hazards on these roads and there will be a significant impact. Without participation in the correction of these design flaws, court employees and visitors will have a difficult time accessing the courts buildings, particularly via the Grove Street access.

Response— The proposed project will not provide public access from Grove Street to the proposed new courthouse. The Superior Court's future use of Grove Street will be limited to several judicial officers' and judicial executives' access to the secured parking area and

Sheriff's vehicles' access to the sallyport. This traffic will be minor, and the Administrative Office of the Courts' staff[14] observed existing two-way traffic on Grove Street. Therefore, the Administrative Office of the Courts believes there are no significant design hazards on Grove Street.

Regarding Riverside Drive, the segment between the Grove St./Riverside Drive intersection and the Main St. (State Route 36)/Riverside Drive intersection is relatively new and wide; although the segment has several curves, the Administrative Office of the Courts does not believe the segment's features merit designation as hazardous. The Riverside Drive segment between the Grove St./Riverside Drive intersection and the Alexander Ave./Riverside Drive intersection has curbs, is relatively straight, and the Administrative Office of the Courts believes there are no significant design hazards in this area. On other portions of Riverside Drive, the Administrative Office of the Courts does not foresee a significant change of court-related use from the existing conditions; therefore the Administrative Office of the Courts concludes that there will be a project-related hazard.

Regarding the City's concern for review of the thoroughfares, the Administrative Office of the Courts is willing to discuss concerns with local agencies.

4.15.4 Parking Capacity

The MND states that on-street parking will be available on Riverside Drive and Grove Streets. As described above, on-street parking is proposed to be eliminated on Riverside Drive and it is questionable whether Grove Street is wide enough to allow on-street parking. It is presumed that the courts have a pretty good idea of how many parking spaces are needed for these court facilities that are located throughout the state. Overall there appears to be adequate on-site parking, but in case there is a shortage it cannot be made up on Riverside Drive.

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Response—Comment noted. The Administrative Office of the Court believes that the proposed project will have adequate parking.

[14] Jerome Ripperda, May 2008, personal observation

In addition to the comments pertaining to the MND, the following are general comments from the City Engineer and Fire Department regarding the project:

1. The City of Susanville Public Works Department must review all project plans for off-site improvements to public roads and utilities and on-site plans for utility extension locations. Please contact Susanville Sanitary District at 530 257-5665 for hook up to the sanitary sewer system. All off-site improvements must be done in accordance with city standards.
2. Curb, gutter and sidewalk will be required along Riverside Drive. No on-street parking will be allowed here since the street is proposed to be restriped to allow for a center left turn lane and right turn pocket for the courthouse driveway. The driveway should be a "street type" rather than a "driveway type".
3. Grove Street is a county road and will need upgrading and some improvements to accommodate additional traffic thereon. Contact the County Public Works Department for more information. The City recommends curb, gutter and sidewalk on Grove Street adjacent to the future courthouse property since Grove Street is located within the City' Sphere of Influence and will likely be in the city limits in the future.
4. The City will control any changes required to the Grove Street/Riverside intersection. The County is responsible for snow plowing and other maintenance of Grove Street. Since the area that Grove Street serves is virtually an island there has not historically been much maintenance of this road. Access to the back of the courthouse via Grove Street may be difficult in winter months unless the courts make provisions with the county to maintain and plow this road and/or have the state plow the road.
5. A Cul-de-sac or some other means for a turnaround at south end of Grove should be designed into the project unless all turnaround traffic will flow through the site to Riverside Drive.
6. The City of Susanville owns land adjacent to the Susan River and south of the end of Grove Street to be used for a future park. Access to this property was eliminated when the southerly extension of Grove Street was vacated. The City requests an easement over the western boundary of future courthouse property for vehicular access to their future park site.
7. The City's Well No. 3 is located north and west of the project boundary. The well will need to be protected and provided with a service access. Currently the well is flushed as necessary to adjacent surface areas. Either site drainage facilities would need to accommodate this flushing, or a separate flushing main would need to be installed, presumably to the west. Details on location of access and flushing areas can be discussed during final plan review.
8. This project will need to address the existing "piecemeal" water main situation which has sufficed as long as the site was vacant. A new water main loop, at least 8 inches in size will be needed from Riverside to well #3 and continuing

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to Grove Street. The main will be needed for fire hydrant spacing and flows also. Water and gas mains must be dedicated to the city together with appropriate easements.

9. Normal water and gas connection and in-lieu fees will apply to this project.
10. Susanville Fire Department must review final plans for adherence to fire codes, installation of fire sprinklers, hydrant spacing, etc.

Response—Comments noted. The Administrative Office of the Court notes that the comments do not suggest that there are significant environmental effects. The Administrative Office of the Courts is willing to discuss concerns with local agencies.

The Administrative Office of the Court held a public comment meeting in Susanville on August 27. Stakeholders' comments included:

1. Mr. Bill Nebeker, Planning Director, City of Susanville asked whether the Administrative Office of the Courts will allow the City to review infrastructure and utility plans for the new courthouse.

   Response—Mr. Jerome Ripperda responded that the Administrative Office of the Courts will consult with the City regarding infrastructure and utility plans.

2. Mr. Stephen Adams explained that homeowners along Grove Street currently have septic tank systems. Although the homeowners are interested in connecting to the City's sanitary waste system, a connection from Grove Street to the sanitary system main near the intersection of Riverside Drive/Grove Street will require an expensive pumping lift station. The homeowners wish to consider an alternative connection to Riverside Drive via a line that passes through or near the proposed courthouse site. Mr. Adams asked whether the State of California allows utility easements on State of California property.

   Response—Mr. Ripperda responded that the State of California grants easements on State of California-owned property, but that the interested parties must negotiate an agreement.

3. Mr. Norm Scharz noted that Grove Street is very narrow, and he asked whether the Administrative Office of the Courts' plans include widening Grove Street and whether the Administrative Office of the Courts will notify parcel owners of planned work.

   Response—Mr. Ripperda responded that the Initial Study identifies all parcels that the Administrative Office of the Courts intends to use for construction activities; if the

Administrative Office of the Courts plans to conduct construction activities on another owner's parcel, the Administrative Office of the Courts must acquire the owner's permission to conduct the construction activity.

Mr. Scharz also noted that Grove Street and adjacent parcels are outside the City of Susanville's city limits. Although the County of Lassen is responsible for maintaining Grove Street and providing snow clearing, the County of Lassen does little or no work on the street. Mr. Scharz asked whether the Administrative Office of the Courts will be responsible for ensuring that court personnel can use Grove Street to access the proposed courthouse.

Response—Mr. Ripperda responded that the the Administrative Office of the Courts will be responsible for ensuring that court personnel can use Grove Street to access the proposed courthouse.

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10.0 OTHER REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT INITIAL STUDY

The Administrative Office of the Courts has made revisions to the Draft Initial Study. The following texts shows deleted text from the Draft Initial Study in strike-through font and new text is in bold italics. The Final Initial Study's changes include:

On page 39:

- From northern Susanville, northeastern Susanville, and northern Lassen County, drivers reach the courthouse through routes **such as Cherry Terrace, Weatherlow Street, and Ash Street** that ~~coalesce onto southbound Lassen St. Many of these~~ **connect with Main Street**. Drivers pass through the ~~Lassen~~ **Main** St./~~Santa Ana~~ **Ash** St. intersection and the Main St./Weatherlow St. intersection to ~~, and almost all of these drivers probably pass through~~ the Lassen St./**Main** ~~3rd~~ St. intersection and **proceed on southbound** Lassen St.~~/4th St. intersections~~ **to the courthouse area**;

- From eastern Susanville and eastern Lassen County, drivers reach the courthouse from Main ~~Meridian~~ St. ~~(including the eastern portion of 4th St.); most of these drivers probably pass through the Lassen St./4th St. intersection. In addition, drivers proceed westbound on Hillcrest St. and access the downtown area via the eastern portion of South St.~~ Drivers pass through the Main St./ Ash St. intersection and the Main St./Weatherlow St. intersection to the Lassen St./Main St. intersection and proceed on southbound Lassen St. to the courthouse area;

- From southern Susanville and southern Lassen County, drivers reach the courthouse through routes that coalesce onto northbound **Richmond Road/Weatherlow**~~Lassen~~ St.~~, Westside Blvd.,~~ and **proceed on Mill St. or Cottage St. to the courthouse area**~~other miscellaneous streets that serve downtown Susanville~~; and

- From western Susanville~~, San Juan Bautista,~~ and western Lassen County, most drivers reach the courthouse area through routes that coalesce onto eastbound **Hillcrest to Main St.**4th St. and then proceed on southbound Lassen St.~~, while some drivers utilize South St.~~ to reach the courthouse area.

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11.0 LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION

11.1 DETERMINATION

Based on the initial study checklist (Table 2) and related analyses included in Section 4:

☐ I find that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment, and the Judicial Council will prepare a Negative Declaration for the project.

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect on the environment because the Administrative Office of the Courts has added mitigation measures that will reduce the project's impacts to a level that are not significant, and the Administrative Office of the Courts will prepare a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project.

☐ I find that the proposed project may have a significant impact on the environment, and the Administrative Office of the Courts will prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the project.

☐ I find that the proposed project may have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An Environmental Impact Report is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, all potentially significant effects have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and all potentially significant effects have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project. Therefore, nothing further is required.

11.2 CERTIFICATION

I certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached sections present the data and information required for this initial evaluation to the best of my ability, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Jerome J. Ripperda	September 4, 2008
Signature	Date
Jerome J. Ripperda	Administrative Office of the Courts
Printed Name	For