



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: [Teresa Ruano](mailto:Teresa.Ruano@courts.ca.gov), 415-865-7447

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2012

Judicial Oversight Committee Recommends Reassessment of \$1.1 Billion in Courthouse Projects

Judicial Council to Consider Proposals April 24

SAN FRANCISCO—The Judicial Council working group overseeing the judicial branch’s facilities program is recommending that 13 planned courthouse projects be reassessed with the goal of significantly lowering their costs. Options to be considered in these projects may include significantly reducing square footage, undertaking renovations instead of new construction, evaluating lease options, and using lower-cost construction methods where feasible.

The committee will also recommend to the Judicial Council that the remaining 25 active projects funded under Senate Bill 1407 continue as planned, but undergo other cost reductions as they proceed. The list of recommendations is attached.

The Judicial Council is expected to consider the recommendations at its meeting on April 24.

“We are now in a significantly different economic climate,” said the working group’s chair, Administrative Presiding Justice Brad R. Hill of the Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District. “After years of budget cuts in the courts, we now need to look more carefully at whether we can build smaller court projects and still meet court needs, or how else we may be able to save money. The state’s current fiscal crisis and the needs of the judicial branch demand that we take a critical look at this now, before most projects are in design. We should take strong action to ensure that we are spending public money as prudently as possible.”

A subcommittee of the working group chaired by Justice Jeffrey Johnson, Associate Justice of the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, developed the recommendations and will oversee work with the affected courts. “There’s no ribbon around the status quo,” Justice Johnson said. “We’ve identified dozens of cost-reduction strategies, some of which have high cost-benefit impact that we think can be achieved, and we intend to work with the affected courts to implement them.”

[Senate Bill 1407](#) was enacted in 2008 to authorize up to \$5 billion in lease-revenue bonds for new and renovated courthouses using court fees, penalties, and assessments rather than taxpayer revenues from the state's General Fund. Since 2009, more than \$1.1 billion in funding originally designated for courthouse construction has been borrowed, swept to the General Fund, or redirected to court operations.

The working group's recommendations are expected to be considered by the Judicial Council at its April 24, 2012, meeting. The council can accept, modify, or reject the recommendations, which will be posted on the California Courts website at www.courts.ca.gov/policyadmin-jc.htm.

The judicial branch facilities program is responsible for providing local communities in California with safe, secure, accessible courthouses. In addition, the projects generate jobs, enhance local economies, and increase state tax revenues.

###

The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.

Recommendations by the Court Facilities Working Group
 Cost Reductions in Senate Bill 1407 Projects as of 04/13/2012
 Subject to change and to be reviewed by the Judicial Council

	County	Project Name	Recommendation
1	Alameda	New East County Courthouse	Continue, No Changes
2	Alpine	New Markleeville Courthouse	Canceled in December 2011
3	Butte	New North Butte County Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
4	El Dorado	New Placerville Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
5	Fresno	Renovate Fresno County Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
6	Glenn	Renovate and Addition to Willows Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
7	Imperial	New El Centro Family Courthouse	Reassess
8	Inyo	New Inyo County Courthouse	Reassess
9	Kern	New Delano Courthouse	Reassess
10	Kern	New Mojave Courthouse	Reassess
11	Kings	New Hanford Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
12	Lake	New Lakeport Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
13	Los Angeles	New Eastlake Juvenile Courthouse	Reassess
14	Los Angeles	New Glendale Courthouse	Reassess
15	Los Angeles	New Los Angeles Mental Health Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
16	Los Angeles	New Santa Clarita Courthouse	Reassess
17	Los Angeles	New Southeast Los Angeles Courthouse	Reassess
18	Los Angeles	Renovate Lancaster Courthouse	Funding request TBD
19	Mendocino	New Ukiah Courthouse	Reassess
20	Merced	New Los Banos Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
21	Monterey	New South Monterey County Courthouse	Reassess
22	Nevada	New Nevada City Courthouse	Reassess
23	Placer	New Tahoe Area Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
24	Plumas	New Quincy Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
25	Riverside	New Hemet Courthouse (Mid-Cnty Reg)	Reassess
26	Riverside	New Indio Juvenile and Family Courthouse (Desert Reg)	Reduce Costs Now
27	Sacramento	New Sacramento Criminal Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
28	San Diego	New Central San Diego Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
29	San Joaquin	Renovate Juvenile Justice Center	Reduce Costs Now
30	Santa Barbara	New Santa Barbara Criminal Courthouse	Reassess
31	Santa Clara	New Santa Clara Family Justice Center	Reduce Costs Now
32	Shasta	New Redding Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
33	Sierra	New Downieville Courthouse	Canceled in December 2011
34	Siskiyou	New Yreka Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
35	Solano	Renovation to Fairfield Old Solano Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
36	Sonoma	New Santa Rosa Criminal Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
37	Stanislaus	New Modesto Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
38	Sutter	New Yuba City Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
39	Tehama	New Red Bluff Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
40	Tuolumne	New Sonora Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now
41	Yolo	New Woodland Courthouse	Reduce Costs Now