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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **New Hanford Courthouse Design Approved**

SAN FRANCISCO—The State Public Works Board (SPWB) today approved preliminary plans for the new Hanford Courthouse for the Superior Court of Kings County. Located on approximately 9.5 acres, the new facility will be immediately west of the county jail and adjacent to the new intersection of Kings County Drive and 12th Avenue.

“This is a fantastic project for the community,” said Todd Barton, Executive Officer, Clerk of Court and Jury Commissioner. “It should offer many new jobs during the construction phase of the new courthouse. The new courthouse will accommodate the needs of those individuals that have to report for jury duty. Presently, jurors must wait outside in inclement weather before they register with the Jury Commissioner. The new facility should eliminate the need for jurors to be subjected to this weather.

“The new courthouse will be designed to work better for perimeter security and the delivering of inmates from the jail or prisons. Unlike most counties in the State of California, Kings County has three prisons. It is important that the public are cognizant of this fact. The holding cells will also be more secure to hold these inmates.

“The Kings County courthouse will better accommodate the public, judges, and staff for the next 50 to 100 years. We must not remain a static community, and we know the community will grow over the years to come.”

Approval by SPWB marks completion of the preliminary plans phase and enables the project to move into working drawings. In the meantime, SUNDT Construction, selected in May 2011 as the project’s construction manager at risk, is performing outreach to ensure that local subcontractors and suppliers have the opportunity to participate in prequalification and bidding. All qualified subcontractors, lower-tier subcontractors, and suppliers will be considered. The new courthouse is expected to generate hundreds of construction jobs and thousands more jobs through indirect benefit to the local economy.

Construction is scheduled to begin in early 2013, and will be conducted with mitigation measures in place for air quality, noise, traffic controls, and other environmental considerations, as specified in the project’s final study under the California Environmental Quality Act. The project is scheduled for completion in early 2016.

(more)

The DLR Group’s design for the 12-courtroom, 144,000-square-foot building features an expanded plaza, reflective of the long-dry Tulare Lake, which also pays tribute to the area’s agricultural roots. The four-story courthouse features a full-height atrium and a lobby waiting area with a skylight allowing an abundance of natural light. The design includes significant improvements in security with a new underground tunnel from the adjacent jail to the courthouse for transportation of in-custody defendants, as well as seismic safety, easy access, ample parking, and efficiency for visitors and staff.

The modern design of glass and limestone incorporates numerous environmental and sustainability features. The courthouse will be built using recycled, green, and regionally sourced materials. Shading devices and new glass technologies will mitigate summer heat. Building systems have been chosen for a high level of energy efficiency, and the landscape design features native and drought-resistant plants that use less irrigation water. Because of all these features, the new courthouse is expected to qualify for a LEED Silver rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. These energy-saving features will make the courthouse more economical to operate over time.

The courthouse project was ranked as a “critical need” in the judicial branch’s capital-outlay plan, making it among the branch’s highest-priority infrastructure projects. It is funded by Senate Bill 1407, enacted in 2008 to provide up to \$5 billion in funding for new and renovated courthouses using court fees, penalties, and assessments; rather than taxpayer revenues from the state’s General Fund.

More information about the project can be found on the California Courts website at:

[www.courts.ca.gov/facilities-kings.htm](http://www.courts.ca.gov/facilities-kings.htm)

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