



NEWS RELEASE OC 23-10

Contact: Teresa Ruano, 415-865-7447

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Preferred Site Approved for New Hanford Courthouse *Site Immediately West of County Jail*

San Francisco—The State Public Works Board (SPWB) has approved the selection of a site in Hanford for a proposed new courthouse for the Superior Court of Kings County. The site is approximately 9.5 acres immediately west of the County Jail and adjacent to 12th Avenue.

“This new building will provide a safe and secure location for the residents of California to have their cases heard and will replace some older buildings where security has become difficult to maintain,” said Presiding Judge George Orndoff of the Superior Court of Kings County. “The proximity to the county jail will be an asset to law enforcement’s ability to protect the participants in court related matters. The court and Kings County have cooperated to make this dream come true. We will finally be able to bring all cases in the Hanford-Lemoore area under one roof.”

The site, currently owned by Kings County, is near transit and close to the Hanford Civic Center Complex. The county plans to extend Kings County Drive north for access to the site. Before selecting the site, the AOC conducted an open market search and worked with the Project Advisory Group (see listing, page 2) to identify site selection criteria. Sites were rated and ranked according to the site criteria, and the PAG then validated selection of the county site as the preferred location.

The state expects to acquire the land by way of an equity exchange in which the county would receive a portion of the state’s equity in the various current court facilities commensurate with the property’s market value. Approval of the site by the SPWB clears the way for the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to proceed with the equity exchange agreement and to determine what environmental assessment is needed under the California Environmental Quality Act. The AOC expects to complete site acquisition by the end of 2010.

The proposed new building will house 12 courtrooms and will consolidate operations from 5 buildings in Hanford and Lemoore into a single courthouse to handle all types of proceedings and all court operations and services. The proposed project is being funded by Senate Bill 1407, enacted by the state Legislature in 2008 to authorize up to \$5 billion for 41 new and renovated court facilities using court user fees rather than the state’s General Fund. A new courthouse for the Superior Court of Kings County is ranked in the “immediate need” priority category for capital projects for the judicial branch of California.

The site includes space for the building, of approximately 144,460 square feet, secured parking for judges, and 360 parking spaces for court visitors, jurors and staff. The site is also large enough to

accommodate future expansion for two new judgeships. The courthouse project is scheduled for completion in fall 2014.

More about the project can be found on the California Courts Web site:

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/projects_hanford.htm

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

New Hanford Courthouse, Superior Court of Kings County Project Advisory Group

Mr. Tony Barba, Kings County Board of Supervisors

Mr. Todd Barton, Court Executive Officer, Superior Court of Kings County

Hon. Shane Burns, Judge, Superior Court of Kings County

Mr. Ron Calhoun, District Attorney, Kings County

Ms. Kim Davis, Manager, Administrative Office of the Courts

Hon. Thomas DeSantos, Judge, Superior Court of Kings County

Mr. Greg Gatzka, Community Development Director, Kings County Planning Division

Ms. Marianne Gilbert, Indigent Defense Attorney Coordinator

Mr. Michael Johnson, Griswold, LaSalle, Cobb, Dowd & Gin, LLP, President, Kings County Bar Association

Mr. Chris Jordan, Sheriff, Kings County Sheriff's Department

Mr. Jeff Lewis, Chief Deputy Executive Officer, Superior Court of Kings County

Mr. Hilary Straus, City Manager, City of Hanford

Hon. James LaPorte, Judge, Superior Court of Kings County

Ms. Monika Newman, Deputy Court Administrator – Admin. & Business Services, Superior Court of Kings County

Hon. George Orndoff, Presiding Judge, Superior Court of Kings County

Mr. Michael Reinhart, Chief Deputy District Attorney, Kings County

Ms. Sandra Salyer, Deputy Court Executive Officer, Superior Court of Kings County

Mr. Larry Spikes, Chief Administrative Officer, Kings County

Mr. Harry Verheul, Public Works Director, Kings County