



Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Second Potential Site Approved for New Modesto Courthouse

SAN FRANCISCO—The State Public Works Board (SPWB) today approved a second potential site under consideration for the proposed new courthouse in Modesto for the Superior Court of Stanislaus County. The potential site comprises two blocks totaling approximately 3.5 acres, including the former location of the Modesto Bee newspaper headquarters on the city block bounded by H and I Streets and 13th and 14th Streets, and a portion of the block across 14th Street for parking. This site was chosen for its proximity to downtown and local civic partners.

“Obviously we’re pleased with the progress that’s being made,” said Judge Jack M. Jacobson, chair of the courthouse committee. “This means we have site options for consideration, and that’s good for everyone involved in the site selection process.”

In December, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), which is managing the project, obtained SPWB approval of a competing site, the city block bounded by G and H Streets and 9th and 10th Streets in downtown Modesto. That site also includes a portion of the block bounded by H and I Streets and 9th and 10th Streets for parking. Some of the 13 parcels site that constitute the site owned by the City of Modesto; other parcels are privately owned

Approval of two potential sites is a standard part of the state’s site selection process for courthouse projects. SPWB approval allows the AOC to undertake further due diligence, an environmental assessment under the California Environmental Quality Act, and negotiations with sellers, all of which will ultimately result in finalization of the site. Site selection and environmental review, as well as site acquisition, which also requires SPWB approval, must be completed before architectural design of the new courthouse can begin. This project’s current schedule calls for completing site acquisition by fall 2012. Construction is scheduled to begin in mid-2014 and be completed approximately two years later, subject to change.

The new 26-courtroom courthouse is being planned as a full-service facility to replace the main Modesto courthouse and several other court facilities in Modesto. Consolidating these facilities will enable the court to increase efficiency by retiring leases and centralizing operations. The project would improve security by providing enhanced entrance screening; separate hallways for the public, staff, and in-custody defendants; and properly sized holding areas for in-custody defendants.

(more)

This project was ranked as an “immediate 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](#), which finances critically needed courthouse construction, renovation, and repair through a portion of judicial branch fees, penalties, and assessments, without impact on the state’s General Fund.

More information about the project is available on the California Courts website at www.courts.ca.gov/facilities-stanislaus.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.