



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA
94102-3688
Tel 415-865-4200
TDD 415-865-4272
Fax 415-865-4205
www.courtinfo.ca.gov

FACT SHEET

June 2007

Improving Trial Court Facilities: Fiscal Year 2007–2008 Funding Requests

San Benito—New Hollister Courthouse

Calaveras—New San Andreas Courthouse
Lassen—New Susanville Courthouse
Los Angeles—New Long Beach Courthouse
Madera—New Madera Courthouse
Riverside—New Riverside Mid-County Region Courthouse
San Bernardino—New San Bernardino Courthouse
San Joaquin—New Stockton Courthouse
Tulare—New Porterville Courthouse

In April 2007 the Judicial Council adopted an updated Trial Court Capital Outlay Plan that includes 175 new construction, major renovation, and expansion projects estimated to cost \$9.8 billion (January 2007 dollars). In August 2006 the Judicial Council directed staff of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to submit, as part of the fiscal year 2007–2008 budget process, funding requests for nine new trial court facilities. The initial funding request for these nine urgently needed projects is \$31.2 million in 2007–2008 with total project costs estimated to be \$1.2 billion, which would be funded by State Court Facilities Construction Funds. If approved, these projects mark important progress toward implementing needed projects for courts across California. As noted below, the judicial branch will additionally pursue alternative revenue sources over the next several years to support the full implementation of the statewide capital plan.

New Hollister Courthouse

A new Hollister courthouse is proposed by the AOC for initial funding of \$541,000 for fiscal year 2007–2008. The new facility will house three courtrooms. The estimated total cost for this 36,478-gross-square-foot courthouse is \$36.2 million (escalated to construction mid-point estimated as fall of 2010). While a site has not been selected for the new courthouse, both the County of San Benito and the City of Hollister have indicated willingness to provide property to the state for the new court facility. This project—ranked in the Immediate Need priority group of the Trial Court Capital-Outlay Plan—is one of the highest priority capital outlay projects for the judicial branch.

No Security, Severe Overcrowding, Poor Physical Conditions, and Reduced Access to Court Services

The County of San Benito is served by a superior court operating primarily out of the Civic Center Building. The court has leased space for the Family Law Facilitator and Mediator because the Civic Center Building is severely overcrowded. The court facilities are functionally deficient and among the worst in the state in terms of security and physical conditions. The existing facilities will remain incapable of meeting the region's growing demand for court services. The deplorable conditions of the existing facilities and the public's hindered access to court services are among the reasons why the proposed new Hollister courthouse is urgently needed.



Prisoners are regularly escorted through the entrance and corridors designated for judicial, court staff, and county staff.

Local Government Collaboration on Project

In July 2006 the San Benito County Board of Supervisors and the City of Hollister Redevelopment Authority both adopted resolutions to donate land to the state for this project in the Hollister area. A land donation will reduce the cost to the state and allow the project to move more quickly into the design phase.

Long-term Funding Needs

The California judicial branch is exploring additional, alternative means to fund the state's sizable need for courthouse infrastructure improvements. Options include pursuing bond funding—consideration will be given to both revenue and general

obligation bonds. Another potential consideration involves increasing criminal penalties and other filing fees to be contributed to the State Court Facilities Construction Fund for the sole purpose of funding court construction projects. While these initiatives evolve, the Judicial Council will pursue annual funding requests to begin to address the most critical deficiencies in the state's courthouses.

More Information

A project feasibility report for the New Hollister courthouse, dated September 8, 2006, was prepared by AOC staff to document the poor functional and physical conditions of the existing court facilities in San Benito County, explore options for how best to meet the need for improved facilities, and estimate the cost to construct a new facility. This document can be downloaded from

http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/documents/final_hollister_pfr_06_09_08.pdf.

For further information, please contact Kelly Popejoy at 818-558-3078 or email at kelly.popejoy@jud.ca.gov.