

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 621-5390
(530) 622-3645 Fax

Kim Dawson
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September 10, 2019

Sent via Email

Judicial Council of California
Administrative Office of the Courts
CFAC@jud.ca.gov

This comment letter is submitted in response to the Judicial Council's recently circulated Draft Statewide List of Capital Projects and Latest Update to Draft Revised Methodology. In 2008, replacement of the Placerville Courthouse was identified by the Judicial Council as a "critical need." The Preliminary Report and updated Priority List for new State courthouse construction projects has determined that 29 courthouses are now in greater need of replacement than El Dorado County's Court facilities, effectively eliminating the possibility of a new Placerville Courthouse any time in the near future.

In El Dorado County, those facilities included the Main Street Courthouse in Placerville, the court in Cameron Park, the court facility in South Lake Tahoe, and the court facilities located in County operation buildings, including our recently vacated Placerville Juvenile Hall.

El Dorado County has consistently supported the development and construction of a new Placerville Courthouse. In order to consolidate all work space for the Courts, and to provide for a new facility, a 7.7-acre site immediately west of the existing County Jail was selected by the Judicial Council. The County acquired 5.2 acres of private land adjacent to the county-owned property, and has committed to transferring title to the 7.7 +/- acres to the State of California for the new court facility. Due to the delay in the funding and construction of the new courthouse, the County continues to house Court operations in buildings partially occupied by County staff, and retains the Main Street Placerville Courthouse as well as the 7.7 acres of vacant land.

Additionally, the County has committed to funding roadway improvements for access to the new facility, and therefore has annually budgeted \$3 million for the approximate costs of those improvements, carrying this funding over from year to year. As part of the FY 2019-20 Recommended Budget, these funds were placed in a separate designation (reserve). At this point, in anticipation of a new Courthouse, these funds are not available to fund on going, critical County services.

Additionally, the City of Placerville, in conjunction with the El Dorado County Transportation Commission, has programmed funds for improvements related to the anticipated new courthouse. Specifically, the City of Placerville has incurred approximately \$24 million in the development of the Western Placerville Interchange, which supports, in part, the anticipated additional traffic related to the new courthouse.

This letter summarizes, for the record, the current circumstances of the court transfer agreements and arrangements, the commitments that the County has made toward the project and the impact to the County of a significant delay in the courthouse construction project. The letter does not propose to support or oppose the revised assessments themselves, as this lies outside the expertise of County staff. However, we feel it is important to emphasize a couple of facts that relate to the condition of the El Dorado County Courthouse.

First, in 2009 the County was pursuing the transfer of the El Dorado County Courthouse to the State as required by SB1732 State Mandate. During that process the attached letter was received outlining the State's refusal to accept transfer due to the environmental condition of the building (see attached letter).

Second, in a February 3, 2016 letter (attached) the Judicial Council of California concluded, "The existing courthouse locations no longer meet the basic needs of the court system. Any further delay in the courthouse project presents the potential to impact the construction of this important project", refers to the Western Placerville Interchange. The City and County's continued investment in transportation improvements supports the new Courthouse construction.

While this is a State of California and Courts project, the courthouse project is interwoven with County needs and priorities, and has the potential to impact the County's decision making ability far into the future.

Sincerely,

Sue Novasel, Chair
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Attachment

- c. The Honorable Suzanne N. Kingsbury, Presiding Judge, El Dorado County Superior Court
Cleve Morris, Manager, City of Placerville
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

2860 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 400 • Sacramento, California 95833-4336

Telephone 916-263-7885 • Fax 916-263-1966 • TDD 415-865-4272

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Real Estate & Facilities Management

February 3, 2016

Ms. Sharon Scherzinger
Executive Director
El Dorado County Transportation Commission
2828 Easy Street, Suite 1
Placerville, CA 95667

RE: Western Placerville Interchange Phase 2 Funding

Dear Director Scherzinger:

The Judicial Council of California was recently made aware of the funding shortage in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the potential impact to the Western Placerville Interchange Phase 2 project. It is my understanding this project is programmed with \$5.5 million in the 2016-2017 fiscal year through the STIP, along with additional programmed federal funds.

The Judicial Council of California has been working with the City of Placerville and El Dorado County on the consolidation of court functions in a new courthouse to be built for the Superior Court of El Dorado County. The existing courthouse locations no longer meet the basic needs of the court system. Any further delay in the courthouse project presents the potential to impact the construction of this important project.

I am writing to encourage you to keep the funding in place for the 2016-2017 fiscal year for the Western Placerville Interchange Phase 2 Project, which provides necessary traffic circulation to the court house project. This project is critical to the state court house project and any delay could further delay the new court house and potentially jeopardize \$79 Million in state funding for our project.

February 3, 2016

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Your support of this important interregional project is appreciated. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L F Sainz".

Laura Sainz
Manager, Environmental Compliance and Sustainability