

State budget may impact building courthouse in Tahoe City

By Bridget Jones, Auburn Journal

Plans for a new courthouse in Tahoe City by 2015 are “up in the air” after a state budget approved by the California Legislature Tuesday.

The new building is scheduled to be funded by Senate Bill 1407, which passed in 2008 and authorized the statewide increase in court use fees. The bill approved the issuance of up to \$5 billion in lease revenue bonds for 41 courthouse projects throughout the state, including this one. The bonds are expected to be repaid by court fees, penalties and assessments, according to the California Administrative Office of the Courts, which is managing the project.

Teresa Ruano, spokeswoman for the Administrative Office of the Courts, said Wednesday the project’s original timeline to pick a site in the next month or so could be delayed until it is understood just how much SB 1407 funding will be impacted by the budget.

“This may delay projects,” Ruano said. “We don’t know how much delay will be involved.”

Ruano said the Judicial Council of California, which is the policymaking body for the California court system, will meet about the state judicial branch’s budget in mid-July, and after that the AOC might have a better idea of how the courthouse construction will move forward.

There is no plan at this point to completely cancel the project, Ruano said.

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