

**COLUSA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
AGENDA REPORT –**

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**APPLICANT:** County of Colusa – Sheriff’s Department

**FILE #:** #15-28

**REQUEST:** Approve CEQA document for the Colusa County Jail Housing Replacement Project – to construct new housing unit addition designed to house a total of 96-inmates.

**APN:** 002-101-001

**LOCATION:** Bridge Street and Fremont Street, Colusa, CA

**ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS:** A: Initial Study/Negative Declaration  
B: Conceptual Site Plan

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**STAFF COMMENT:** Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the Negative Declaration regarding environmental analysis as detailed in the Initial Study dated June 9, 2015.

**PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION:**

Location: The proposed project would be located adjacent to the existing jail, located at 928 Bridge Street, Colusa, California. The existing jail facility is collocated with and shares operations with dispatch and Sheriff administration functions.

Description: The proposed new housing unity would be designed to house up to 96-inmates and would have a floor space of roughly 25,000-square feet, as well as outdoor exercise areas encompassing at least 600-square feet. The unit will be two stories and will contain replacement beds (for substandard beds in the existing facility) and some support services areas.

Surrounding Land Use and Compatibility: The proposed project site is collocated with the existing Sheriff’s facility, which houses the existing jail, as well as other County occupancies (e.g., Animal Shelter). The Colusa Regional Medical Center is immediately northeast from the proposed project site. A shopping center occupies the site to the south, across East Carson Street. Occupancies across Bridge Street are residential and mixed use, comprised of retail and commercial. The County occupies the site north across Fremont Street, adjacent to Dallar General further north. Residential complexes occupy sites east from B Street.

## **ANALYSIS:**

Project Need: The manner and style in which the jail was originally constructed, in a linear fashion, resulted in a layout with poor sight lines. All inmate movement must be escorted, which is staff-intensive. Many services are located off the main corridors, which at times requires inmate and staff restrictions. The jail was originally built with 98-beds in 1962. In 1993, an expansion and renovation project was completed on the intake and booking portion of the facility. The incorporation of a safer sobering cell and three new holding cells in the intake area resulted in the reduction of the rated capacity to a total of 92-beds.

The Colusa County Jail has been added onto and remodeled several times, resulting in space that is overall disjointed and inefficient. The age of the buildings have resulted in extensive maintenance requirements, making the facility expensive to operate.

Justification of Project: The proposed new housing unit addition is necessary for the following reasons:

- Improve safety for both inmates and staff;
- Replace existing substandard inmate housing;
- Provide adequate bed space to meet current detention demands;
- Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements;
- Provide needed space for inmate instruction/programming, medical and mental health services, interview rooms, staff support, and other functions necessary for operation of a jail in compliance with current requirements; and
- Reduce maintenance and staffing costs through increased efficiency and improved systems.

Project Siting: A Jail Needs Assessment conducted by the County determined that locating the new housing unit addition next to the existing jail and Sheriff's facility would result in the opportunity for mutually beneficial consolidation of services. For example, the proposed siting would allow mutual support between both facilities.

Issues and Concerns: No issues or concerns were identified in the environmental review/analysis.

## **FINDINGS:**

- A. The proposed use of property will not impair the integrity and character of the zone in which the surrounding land lies, and that the use would not be injurious or detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood, or to the general health, welfare and safety of the County.
  1. The project would not be unreasonably incompatible with surrounding land uses. The project is an addition to the existing facility, for the same purposes, and the existing facility has proven itself to not be unreasonably incompatible for over 50-years.

2. The design and improvement of the project will not conflict with easements, access through or use of the property, which the addition is to be located.
- B. The project is consistent with the Colusa County General Plan Circulation and Land Use Elements goals and policies.
  - C. The project will not have a significant impact on biological resources as determined found in the Initial Study dated June 9, 2015.
  - D. The project will not have a significant impact on hydrology and water quality as determined in the Initial Study dated June 9, 2015.

**ACTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- I. Adopt the Negative Declaration
  - A. Find that the Initial Study was completed in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act, that said study did not identify any potential significant environmental effects and that a Negative Declaration is proposed.
  - B. Find that the proposed Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the County, which is the lead agency.
  - C. Adopt the Negative Declaration regarding the lack of environmental impacts, as detailed in the Initial Study dated June 9, 2015.