

Board approves construction contract for Sutter County campus

[By Ben van der Meer/Appeal-Democrat](#)

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A college center in Sutter County took another step forward Wednesday when Yuba Community College District trustees approved a construction contract on a unanimous vote.

The \$15.9 million contract for the center, slated to be built north of Yuba City, was approved without discussion, after a long debate at last month's district board meeting over committing \$18 million in bond money to the project.

In addition, the contract, with DPR Construction of Sacramento, has a \$300,000 allowance for changes in the scope of the project or because of site conditions.

Al Alt, the district's vice chancellor for administrative services, told trustees in a separate item the money the district plans to spend on Sutter's campus won't be the end of Measure J funds.

He said the district's sale earlier this week of Series C bonds under the measure netted the district \$34.1 million, with a repayment interest rate of below 6 percent.

"That's very significant for us, and more significant for the taxpayers," Alt said, explaining as a result, property owners paying off the Series C bonds will be paying less than the \$25 for \$100,000 of assessed property value, the maximum amount allowed.

"We know now there will be some money left over," he said, referring to both the Sutter campus and a \$13 million project to establish a campus in Clear Lake.

District officials were previously concerned the drop in property values since the bond was passed in 2006 would limit how much work they could do. After the meeting, Trustee Jim Kennedy said some Series C monies, along with unspent money for the Clear Lake and Sutter projects, will end up benefiting the core Yuba College campus in Linda.

"It's been horribly neglected for almost the whole 50 years since it was built," said Kennedy, who cast the only vote last month against committing money to the Sutter and Clear Lake projects because he didn't see a commitment to repairs at Yuba College.

Since then, he said, new district Chancellor Douglas Houston has also identified a need for Yuba College upgrades.

Because of their condition, some buildings at Yuba may need to be replaced rather than rehabilitated, Kennedy said, but doing so is also likely to be cheaper.

Alt did not say in his presentation when actual work would begin on what's known as the Sutter County Educational Facility. The college district has already spent about \$10 million on the site, and the total price tag is estimated at \$37 million.

Building a campus center in Sutter County was a vow proponents of Measure J made in the campaign for it.

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