

California Legislature

Joint Committee on Rules

ROOM 3016 — STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 94249-0001
TELEPHONE: (916) 319-2804

Memorandum

To: Colleagues
From: Assemblymember Ken Cooley, Chair, Joint Committee on Rules
Senator Anthony Cannella, Vice Chair, Joint Committee on Rules
Re: California Capitol Annex Project Report

The accompanying "California State Capitol Annex Project Planning Study" by CSHQA is a historic and comprehensive analysis of the current deficiencies and future design goals for a revamped Capitol Annex.

California's new Capitol Annex should convey to visitors California's positive and hope-filled outlook, founded upon the deliberative Democracy which unfolds there, by welcoming all Californians, engaging all Californians and safeguarding the future of all Californians. It should demonstrate healthful, accessible, and sustainable designs, while preserving the beauty and vistas of California's legacy Capitol Park and inviting all its guests to explore and take pride in the most energy efficient Capitol in the nation.

Built in 1952 before ADA standards and modern security needs, the Capitol Annex, housing the Governor, 115 of California's 120 lawmakers, and key legislative support offices, is among the state's most-visited public buildings. In 2016, its almost 2 million visitors included tens of thousands of school children.

As outlined in the report, the 65 year old Annex has a myriad of serious deficiencies that undermine its accessibility, safety, hospitality, and government efficiency. These deficiencies are all compounded because it was built with materials intended to last only 50 years. As an aging building with failing systems built before the invention of many modern technologies, it presents the California's Executive and Legislative branches with the question of how to replace it with the best-adapted building we can imagine. As one example of the need, the Annex's electric supply system cannot supply enough power to charge the electric cars that are commonplace today.

This is a project that will shape how Californians engage with government for the next 100 years.

Design goals included in the report highlight key 21st Century needs such as civic engagement, ADA access, life and safety improvements, electrical and mechanical systems upgrades, use of natural light and the need for more and larger hearing rooms as well as informal conference and other collaborative spaces.

In brief, the report proposes:

- For parking to be moved outside the Annex's perimeter foundation as a security improvement to a site underground which retains expansive Capitol Park lawns atop;
- Adding a highly educational Visitor Center that separates the typical entry for big tour groups from those used by persons in the Capitol on business, and permits their direct entry into the West Wing basement; and
- A newly constructed Annex that raises the first floor so it matches the West Wing, eliminating a major ADA barrier in today's "People's House", and thus opens the possibility of using the resulting high-ceilinged basement level for a campus of larger hearing rooms with state-of-the art technology and an ability to empty quickly in an emergency directly into Capitol Park on the eastern side of the building.

We are pleased to provide the accompanying report which documents how our State's most important "People's House" can be re-envisioned to be safer, more welcoming and better adapted to support the public, thoughtful deliberations on which the future of California rests.

