

An Architectural Program for California's Capitol May 2017

California Capitol Architectural Program

- An architectural program is a tabulation of space needs based on projected future population and support requirements, as determined from past trends.
- Such analysis supports an orderly plan for the efficient development of the project facility in the future.
- Such a program helps establish goals by alternative proposals that can be weighed so ensuing decisions are consistent with these goals.
- The planning process will support weighing concepts and differing design solutions that offer an improved, functional work environment, preservation of the all-important sense of a publicly accessible seat of democratic government, all in accord with contemporary standards.

Architectural Program: First Steps

- In 2016, the Legislature passed SB 836 which was signed into law. SB 836 provides funding to address deficiencies in the State Capitol Building Annex, the home to the Legislative Branch of California Government. Governor Brown signed a 1975 law which established the Legislature's unilateral ability to reconfigure the Annex facility on its own initiative without prior Executive approval (Government Code 9105-9108).
- Last year's annex funding statute took as a given that prior to its implementation, the Legislature would deliberate upon and choose among alternatives as to the specifics of such a remedial project. This need to decide among as yet unidentified alternative choices is evident in the language of SB 836 (in Government Code Section 9112 (a)) which provides "*the Joint Rules Committee may pursue the construction of a state capitol building annex or the restoration, rehabilitation, renovation, or reconstruction of the State Capitol Building Annex described in Section 9105.*"

Architectural Program: Next Steps

- The Legislature's job to choose on what type of repair or rebuilding of the annex it favors is emphasized in SB 836's drafting in Government Code Section 9112 (b) (1) which provides, "*All work performed pursuant to this article shall be administered and supervised by the Department of General Services, subject to review by the State Public Works Board, pursuant to an agreement with the Joint Rules Committee.*"
- This need to memorialize in an agreement with the Department of General Services the details of what the annex project is to entail - in order to advance the work envisioned by SB 836 - makes it a matter of first importance for the Joint Rules Committee to begin a process which can identify what reasonable, feasible, and desirable choices are available to the Legislature for its possible consideration.
- As the seat of the Legislative branch of California government, this project will shape the work done by the Legislative Branch for the next century.

THE IMMEDIATE NEED

- The Legislature's immediate need is to secure an experienced architectural consultant who can begin to conduct site surveys, interviews of stakeholders, and launch the process of systematizing and bringing forward to the Legislature issues and options available to it as part of an annex project that fits well in Capitol Park and the downtown Sacramento surroundings.
- That necessarily includes examination of feasible alternatives, including whether it wishes to pursue:
 - ***"construction of a state capitol building annex"***
- or, in the alternative,
 - ***"the restoration, rehabilitation, renovation, or reconstruction of the State Capitol Building Annex described in Section 9105"***
- as SB 836 of 2016 frames the most basic choice which must be decided by the Legislature in the near term.

Legislative Vision to Guide DGS

- As the Legislature's goals for the annex project are understood and developed with greater specificity, the Architectural Consultant can assist the Legislature, in collaboration with the Legislative Counsel Bureau, in the drafting and proper memorializing of the Legislature's desires in the form of the agreement with DGS required by SB 836.
- That agreement will set the terms and scope of the Legislature's delegation of the annex project work responsibility to the Department of General Services so it is vital that the specific terms reflect:
 - the Legislature's understanding of what it wants done;
 - how it is to be structured; and
 - the degree of control and direction the Legislature wishes to maintain.

Basic Aim: Better Lawmaking

- As the seat of California's Legislative Branch of Government, the project must consider how building layout and design can strengthen lawmaker capacity and the legislature as a co-equal branch of government.
- This approach fits with what Winston Churchill's famously observed about architecture:
 - *"We shape our buildings and afterwards they shape us. They regulate the course of our lives."*
- Since the Constitution establishes the 40 Members of the State Senate and 80 Members of the Assembly as equal in their essential responsibilities and voters have fixed their maximum tenure at 12 years, the most basic function of California's legislative building is to maximize the effectiveness of 120 people times 365 days times 12 years.
- The California Capitol Architectural Program entails considering in a structured way how building design can assist, or complicate, the ability of California's 120 lawmakers to perform their constitutional duties. Its aim should be to make each lawmaker's time as productive as possible as they engage in the work of the Legislative branch of government.

Hallmarks of a Good Plan

- Can thoughtful design produce a harmonious, updated Capitol complex that is popularly embraced as a gift and legacy to the future, as enduring as the re-building of the West Wing of the Capitol has been?
- Can the Annex be updated for current workplace practice and tools while honoring the aesthetic integration with the historic Capitol?
- Can the Annex be designed so that it is well-adapted to contemporary needs and technology, to function as the seat of California participatory democracy for the foreseeable future?
- Can today's need for a secure design be met without a "fortress feel" at odds with open government?
- Can design promote a safe setting for the conduct of the state's public work and for visitors to participate and visit their government? (For example: tourists and school groups.)
- How can the Capitol improve the learning and participatory efforts of tourists and school groups?
- Can a well-conceived design support building and public operations that are both functional and technologically-adapted?

Seeking a “Best Practices” People’s House

- California will be undertaking to update its “People’s House” so that it is well-adapted to the changing security and public safety needs and insights of the 21st Century.
- Applying lessons of California’s highly successful tech companies, can we explore how the building can foster greater collegiality and collaboration?
 - Can Member adjacency to key legislative work spaces be improved? Should Chairs (or Vice Chairs) be near committees, hearing rooms, Chambers, and key support services?
 - How does building form, corridors, stair connections, proximity and ease of movement/circulation facilitate, or hinder, public interaction and collaboration?
 - What is the available technology to support engagement and transparency? What is off-the-shelf or in use in other jurisdictions or settings?
 - How can the layout of the Capitol building and its facilities and circulation patterns support greater education and civic engagement of the schoolkids and other guests who visit the State Capitol each year?

A Checklist of Red Flags

Key Existing Building Considerations to Evaluate:

- **Overcrowding** far beyond design capacity leads to substandard space use, inefficiencies and interference with work flow and essential safe evacuation plans/exits.
- **Code deficiencies** related to old wiring and construction techniques (impeding addition of vehicle charging facilities for example).
- **Re-examination of safety basics:** Effective fire detection, alarm and suppression systems.
- **Critical structures review:** Are key structural elements sufficiently shielded from fire damage?
- **Fire progression hazards:** An assessment of potential fire containment deficiencies in working spaces, ceilings, and similar areas is needed to understand their ability to block the spread of fire and keep it from critical areas.
- **Facility inefficiencies** tied to loading and unloading of supplies and cargo at a loading dock are not well-suited to the array and frequency of modern supply and delivery activity.
- **Lack of updated Americans With Disabilities Act access** and reasonable accommodation design elements appropriate for California's seat of government.
- **Estimated hourly BTU loss** due to antiquated energy cooling systems, window design, and age-associated deficiencies?
- **Deteriorated water, sewer and drain lines**
- **Water intrusion structural damage** from leaks and water entry into the structure.

Elements of Updated Redesign

- Offices: Member, committees, and support staff functions
- Pedestrian circulation plan, ADA and traffic routing and essential associated features, including security
- Security (integrated and state of the art): Can a strong adaptive design reduce the sense of a "fortress" Capitol in this important public building?
- Parking plan to fit with the pedestrian and security needs?
- Loading Dock
- Updated mechanical and electrical systems for green-building, sustainability, security, disaster planning, and fire fuels and fumes suppression.
- Food service/dining
- Communications, including loud sound sensors (all state of the art capacities)
- Press center facility? Incorporation of technology resources and e-media/HD upgrades?
- Hearing rooms: Number and size? Can Committee staff offices and hearing room proximity be improved?
- Addition of varying sizes of conference rooms or auditorium?
- Other high technology adaptations?
- Strategies for improved public access for educational, transparency, and public participation purposes?

Elements of Redesign Strategy Cont.

- Impact of high Sacramento water table. (Sacramento downtown water table is about 10-15 feet down, cf. Austin, Texas water table at 1500 feet below Capitol.)
- Can updated technology support and heighten public participation, access and safety?
- Specialty building materials, glazing, wood from historic Civil War Trees?
- State of the art communications (wireless antennas, video, access to agendas, registration of testimony pro/con?).
- Technology adapted hearing rooms: Electronic maps, agenda access, and other high technology adaptations?
- High technology security adaptations? Electronic directories?
- Committee testifying
- Use of newer online tools?

Due Diligence Fact-Finding To Date:

- Capitols
 - Austin, TX (Texas State Preservation Board) (2015)
 - Boise, ID (Idaho State Capitol Commission) (2016)
 - Salt Lake City, UT (Utah State Capitol Preservation Board) (2017)
 - Cheyenne, WY (Capitol Building Restoration Oversight Group for “Capitol Square Project” (2017)
 - Albany, NY (Informal Visit, 2016)
- Federal Courthouses with Updated Secure Designs
 - Los Angeles Federal Courthouse (The Cube) (2016)
 - Robert Jackson Federal Courthouse, Buffalo, NY (Informal Visit, 2016)
 - Robert Matsui Federal Courthouse, Sacramento, CA. (Informal Visit, 2016)