



CALIFORNIA PRESERVATION FOUNDATION



Pause the Capitol Annex Project

The California Preservation Foundation supports the efforts of **Public Accountability for our Capitol (PAC)**, a coalition of non-profit organizations and advocates working together to protect our State Capitol and its surrounding Park. This project is projected to cost over \$750 million in the midst of a financial crisis.

What's at risk?

The National Register-listed East Annex will be demolished and replaced with a new building for state legislators and staff. The surrounding Capitol Park will be excavated to construct an underground parking garage for legislators and a Visitor's Center. This project will remove up to 100 trees in the project footprint in the historic Capitol Park. [PAC lists the following concerns:](#)

1. Inappropriate Expenditure of Public Funds

Department of General Services (DGS) documents estimate the Project will cost taxpayers

over \$750 million. While funds have been appropriated for the Project, the majority have not been spent, and only some preliminary design contracts have been awarded. Any unspent funds already allocated could be pulled back to help balance the General Fund deficit caused by the coronavirus. **Spending money on a project of this nature when many Californians are jobless, un-housed, and facing an uncertain future sends a distressing signal.**

2. Lack of Public Involvement in Design

Public outreach on the Project has been minimal and access to relevant documents is limited. The Historic State Capitol Commission, required by law to provide oversight, has been denied Project information. This led to the resignation of two Commission members (letters enclosed). Moreover, Native Communities have provided public comments indicating they have not been engaged in the process as required by law. **As Assembly member Cooley has rightfully asserted, the Capitol is the “People’s House,” yet the people have not been meaningfully included in the Project.**

3. Irreversible Loss of Unique and Historical Trees and Landscape

If this Project continues as planned, there will be shocking tree loss around the Capitol. Although DGS asserts only 20-30 trees will be removed, the contractor who conducted the DEIR acknowledged the number is much higher. **There are over 100 trees in the Project footprint. Removing these trees will fundamentally and permanently degrade the landscape of Capitol Park.**

4) Study of Feasible Alternatives

Safe and updated offices for legislators can be achieved through a combination of rehabilitating the existing East Annex and utilizing the new state office building at 10th and O Streets. We believe this can be done at a much lower cost compared to complete demolition of this building and loss of an culturally significant landscape for construction of a new underground Visitors Center and Underground Parking Lot.

Recent articles on the Capitol Annex Project:

<https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article242251211.html>

<https://www.eichlernetwork.com/blog/dave-weinstein/rallying-preserve-our-modern-capitol>

Link to PAC Letter:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/lq91ljzjeji8s2z/PAC%20Letter%20to%20Legislature%204.16.20.pdf?dl=0>

What can you do?

This is Project has a lot of momentum. We need to contact our legislators – Senators and Assembly members – and let them know that we are deeply concerned by what is about to happen to our historic State Capitol and Capitol Park and **we want them to take action right now**. The public can locate their state representatives at

<http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>.

There are alternatives to this plan that would meet the needs of modern facilities for legislators and preservation of the historic Annex and Capitol Park that have not been considered. We are a budget decision and an EIR approval away from the bulldozers. Your actions TODAY can make a difference.

#1. TODAY - CALL your own legislators, call [President Pro Tem Toni Atkins](#), call [Speaker Anthony Rendon](#), call Budget Sub Chairs. Describe who you are and why you care about preservation of the Capitol.

Ask them to:

- 1) pause the Capitol Project in its current form; and,
- 2) align the budget action on the Capitol Annex Project to that of other Sacramento state building projects which are being paused due to COVID.

#2. SEND EMAILS to the list of key Senators and Assembly members, asking the same request above:

STANDING BUDGET COMMITTEES

Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee

- Holly Mitchell – Chief of Staff – tiffani.alvidrez@sen.ca.gov
- Committee Staff Director: Joe.Stephenshaw@sen.ca.gov

Assembly Budget Committee

- Senator Philip Ting, Chair: Chief of Staff: irene.ho@sen.ca.gov
- Chief Committee Consultant: christian.griffith@asm.ca.gov

BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEES

Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4

Sub 4 consultant (same as standing committee above) - christian.griffith@asm.ca.gov

Assembly Member Jim Cooper, Chair Sub #4 - Roy Sianez, Legislative Director

roy.sianez@asm.ca.gov

Senate Budget Subcommittee #4

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair

Chief of Staff -- Aracely.Campa@sen.ca.gov

Sub #4 consultant: yong.salas@sen.ca.gov

Daily File lists this email address for submitting written comments to 5/21 hearing -

sbud.committee@senate.ca.gov

Please send bcc copies of emails to: PACAnnexProject@gmail.com.

Thank you for your quick action to protect our historic State Capitol.

Cindy Heitzman

Executive Director, California Preservation Foundation