

**June 26, 2023**

**Curious on where things stand with the devastating Capitol Annex Project?  
Here's a quick breakdown:**

**APPEALS COURT DECISION**

An appeals court decision on April 18, 2023, halted most work on the Capitol Annex Project. The Court allowed for demolition of the historic Capitol Annex building, but ordered all other work to stop. The ruling declared that the Legislature and Governor violated the California Environmental Quality Act by not sufficiently providing the public a chance to review and comment on:

- The Project's proposed location for a Visitor's Center, which disrupts the West Plaza and steps of the Capitol.
- The location of the proposed Parking garage, which uproots and displaces many historic Capitol Park trees.
- The radical exterior design of the proposed replacement Capitol Annex, which is wider and taller than the existing Annex and clad in a glass exterior not compatible with the 1860's Capitol granite and white plaster exterior.

**REVISED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Since the decision, the Department of General Services (DGS), acting for the Legislature, released a Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report ([RDEIR](#)) that discussed the three deficiencies. DGS held an overview workshop and two public hearings, receiving public comments until June 15<sup>th</sup>. During the comment period, comments were made by Public Accountability for our Capitol ([PAC](#)) and Save Our Capitol! ([SOC](#)) representatives, as well as community members. Comments included,

- Feasible, less expensive, and less disruptive alternate locations outside Capitol Park for the proposed parking garage
- How [alternate locations](#) for the visitor center could work just as well and [protect the West Steps](#) gathering place for the public as well as protect the view down Capitol Mall.
- How the proposed Annex could satisfy the Legislature's space needs without being taller or wider than the 1860's Capitol and could have a matching granite and white plaster exterior that would be compatible with 1860's Capitol. The alternative is superior to the Legislature's

proposed glass exterior--[not only a security risk](#) but incompatible with the Governor's Climate Change Plan.

- [Other comments](#) demonstrated ways the RDEIR did not follow the Court's order and displayed photographs showing that promises made in the RDEIR for careful handling of the historic trees [have not been kept](#).

### **RALLY AND PRESS CONFERENCE**

Many comments from the public hearings were also made in a rally held by volunteer group [Save Our Capitol!](#) on May 31, 2023. This rally was widely covered by local news outlets, such as [ABC 10](#), [KCRA 3](#) and [FOX 40](#). The event featured remarks from Assemblyman Josh Hoover, whose bill protecting the West Steps was killed by the Assembly committee that is overseeing the Project.

### **NEXT STEPS AND WHAT YOU CAN DO!**

Now the Legislature and DGS will study the comments, perform analyses, and publish a Final EIR responding to the comments. That may occur in late August or early September. After that, DGS must adopt a new EIR before construction can resume.

In the meantime, some of those making comments have requested formal [mediation](#) with the Legislature and DGS to discuss ways to protect the Capitol and Park and still meet the Legislature's space needs. Mediation should occur by mid-July.

The Legislature withheld a key document upon which the RDEIR is based wanting to redact some information out of the public eye. As of June 21st, it has still not released the document even though the comment period is now over. *In spite of the court ruling the Legislature has taken down and transplanted approximately 20 of the palm trees that previously surrounded Capitol Park, and some of them are dying in their new location. Legal action in the face of the violation of the court order is possible.*

There is still time for the GovernorS and Legislature to modify the Capitol Annex Project to protect our history, Capitol Park and save hundreds of millions of tax dollars. [Take action](#), and please write to your legislators, call their offices, and make your voices heard!