



SAVE OUR CAPITOL!

Planned Capitol Annex Building— Glaringly Incompatible, Unsafe, Non-Compliant!

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties ("SOIS") provide that when additions are made to existing historic properties, the new construction shall be **"compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment."**



Rendering released by California Department of General Services, March 22, 2021

**The design of the proposed Annex is incompatible
with the restored 1874 historic Capitol.**

This rendering of a glass Annex released by the California Department of General Services, March 22, 2021, was the first—but not the last—design of the State's proposed new Annex.

Every variation of the design of the Annex violates the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties because it is incompatible with the historic Capitol.

The new proposed Annex is a massive, modern glass structure which would overwhelm, diminish, and clash with the brick and granite Classic Revival style of the historic Capitol.

It is difficult to conceive of two buildings more glaringly incompatible with each other.

Exterior design continues to change— becoming even more inconsistent and incompatible.

The Department of General Services approved the design of the new Annex below without adequately analyzing and disclosing its incompatibility with the historic Capitol and its noncompliance with the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards \(SOIS\)](#).



The National Park Service (“NPS”), which publishes the SOIS, provides examples of compatible and incompatible design of new construction at historic sites.

In the example depicted below, with respect to the construction at the back of an historic house, NPS explains that “the materials, design, and location . . . are important factors in making this a compatible new addition.” In this example, the addition is aesthetically similar and secondary to the existing historic structure.

Unlike the examples deemed compatible by NPS, the planned glass Annex depicted above would be larger than the historic Capitol and would represent a gross deviation from the historic Capitol in size, style, and materials.



October 2023, *Save Our Capitol!* initiated a CEQA action challenging DGS’s approval of the design of the new Capitol Annex. SOC!’s opening brief is available [here](#).

The state kept the public in the dark until after the close of the public comment period.



The rendering above was disclosed in July of 2021, after the **Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) public comment period** was over, precluding public input on the design of the glass monstrosity.

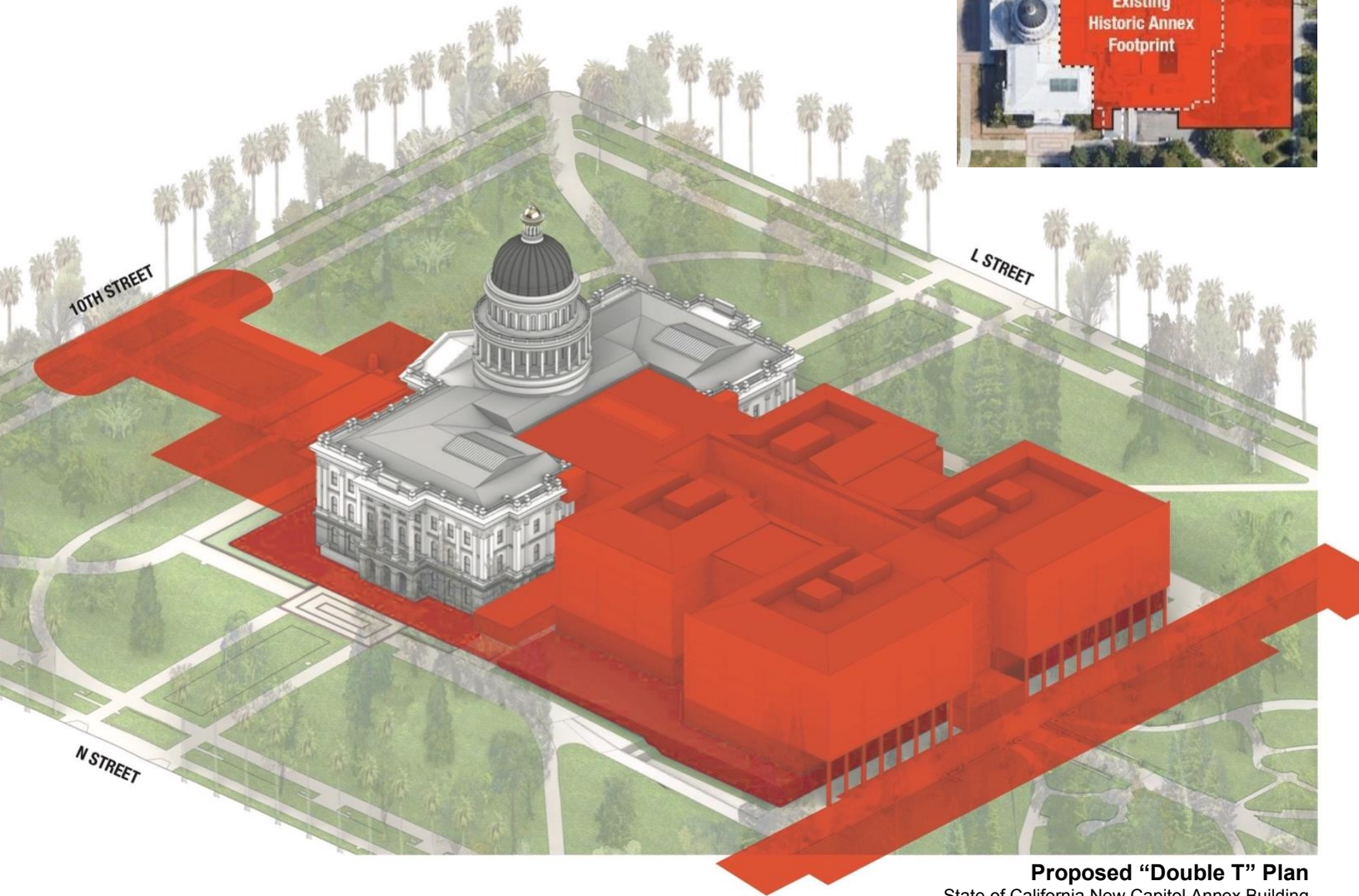
By April of 2023, the building again had been redesigned as shown below.



The Proposed Annex: A Billion-Dollar Glass Monstrosity!

The planned new Annex violates the Secretary of the Interior Standards because it is plainly incompatible with the historic Capitol in materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing.

The planned new Annex—approximately 60 percent larger than the demolished Annex—would overpower and diminish the historic Capitol.



Proposed “Double T” Plan

State of California New Capitol Annex Building
JRC Presentations, September 9, 2020, March 22, 2021

Color-coded to reveal impact on entire site

**It's like forcing a big foot into a small glass slipper!
IT DOES NOT FIT!**

**The Legislators' proposed “BIGFOOT FOOTPRINT”
OVERPOWERS our historic Capitol!**

- Too tall • Too wide • Out of scale • Out of character • Alien to Capitol integrity
- Wasteful of taxpayer dollars • Too costly

“We must protect the history of our state, the history of our freedom of speech, and the history of our buildings which deserve our protection and care, not our destruction.”

“This entire compound of our State Capitol and our Capitol Park is on the National Register of Historic Places for a reason.”

“This is the heart of California, and it must be saved.”

**“That building could go anywhere within the state.
It should not be vandalizing our historic State Capitol.”**

—Victoria Kastner

Architectural Historian

Hearst Castle’s Official Historian, 1996-2018

[Capitol Annex Project: The Facts](#)



This rendering released by California Department of General Services, March 22, 2021, depicts two massive glass sections of the Double-T design, glaringly incompatible with the historic Capitol and in violation of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.

Glass Annex Design Poses Grave Security Risks!

Now, more than ever, security is critical for the safety of our Capitol and the people inside. Yet, the Joint Committee on Rules (JRC) intends to construct a largely transparent glass building.

The JRC claims that this building is necessary, in part, because of security concerns.



Rendering released by California Joint Committee on Rules, Annex Hearing Presentation March 22, 2021

“In these turbulent times when we are routinely reading news reports of attacks on our schools and government buildings” . . . increased security is needed “. . . to ensure the safety of our children and government workers.”

“If you look at State Capitols around the country, you’ll find some similarities—they’re sturdy, tough buildings made out of materials such as marble, sandstone, granite, or brick. Why?

Because the architects involved in each Capitol’s creation knew that a state’s legislative hub needs to be regal, functional, and, most importantly, safe. Even today, the California State Capitol stands firmly with its Neo-Classical style; why would we weaken [it] by attaching a . . . glass building to the back?

California’s lawmakers are choosing a trendy design over the safety of staff and the millions of visitors who tour the Capitol each year.

It’s time to stop this wasteful, and now, dangerous project.”

—Michael Leighton

California architect,
Army Special Forces,
Qualification Course Graduate
Weapons and Demolitions

The Independent, October 15, 2021

In September 2021, Save Our Capitol! initiated a CEQA action challenging the Capitol Annex Project. After the Superior Court denied SOC's petition, the Court of Appeal reversed that decision in part, holding that the EIR for the project violated CEQA in multiple respects. During oral argument on SOC's appeal, Justice Hull of the California Court of Appeal stated:

“We’re not dealing with an apartment complex or a shopping center here. We’re dealing with the State Capitol. . . . It doesn’t belong to the Legislature or the Executive. It belongs to the people of California.”

—California Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District
Save Our Capitol! v. Dept. of Gen'l Servs., Case No. C096617 (Nov. 14, 2022).



Photo by Stan Drury