

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Date: April 11, 2019

To: Responsible Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations

Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Capitol Annex Project, Sacramento, California

Lead Agency: State of California Department of General Services

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Comment Period: April 11, 2019 to May 13, 2019

PURPOSE OF NOTICE

The California Department of General Services (DGS) is the lead agency responsible for preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) for the proposed Capitol Annex Project (proposed project), located in downtown Sacramento.

Pursuant to provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), DGS has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed project. Once a decision is made to prepare an EIR, the lead agency must prepare a NOP to inform all responsible and trustee agencies that an EIR will be prepared (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082). The purpose of this NOP is to provide agencies, interested parties, and organizations with sufficient information describing the proposed project and the potential environmental effects to enable meaningful input related to the scope and content of information to be included in the EIR.

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project site is bounded by 10th Street on the west, N Street on the south, L Street on the north, and 12th Street on the east (following the alignment of 12th Street across Capitol Park), on the site of the State Capitol building. The site encompasses portions of the western half of Capitol Park (Figure 1, below).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project would involve the demolition and reconstruction of the approximately 325,000 square foot existing Capitol Annex building (Annex), which was added to the east side of the Capitol building in 1952 (Figure 1). The existing Annex is occupied by the Legislature and executive branch and contains offices, hearing rooms, conference rooms, and supporting facilities. The Annex basement contains underground parking for the Legislature and executive branch.

Replacement of the Annex is proposed to address numerous deficiencies in the existing building including:

- life safety/building code deficiencies,
- non-compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards,
- overcrowding,

- aging and failing infrastructure (e.g., plumbing, electrical, heating/cooling), and
- insufficient public and working space

The new Annex would serve the same purpose as the existing Annex, providing office space, hearing rooms, conference rooms, and supporting facilities for the Legislature and executive branch. The new Annex would be occupied by approximately the same number of elected officials and staff as the existing Annex. However, the new Annex would provide up to approximately 515,000 gross square feet of space compared to the 325,000 square feet in the existing Annex. The new Annex would meet all current building codes, ADA standards, and energy efficiency standards. It has not yet been determined whether the new Annex would be connected to the Capitol Building (e.g., current Capitol Building/Annex configuration) or would be a stand-alone building slightly to the east of the Capitol Building with a walkway between both buildings. The new Annex building would be no taller than the base of the existing Capitol dome.

During project construction, the Legislature and executive branch offices and related facilities would be temporarily located in the new 10th and O Street Office Building, which is currently under construction. The building site is located between 10th Street and 11th Street, north of O Street. An EIR for the 10th and O Street Office Building Project (State Clearinghouse NO. 2018072065) was certified in December 2018 (EIR available at: <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/RES/RESOURCES/Real-Estate-Services-Division-Resources-List-Folder/Information-and-Resources-for-CEQA>). A potential underground connection between the Capitol and the 10th and O Street Office Building and/or the existing Legislative Office Building (LOB) at 1020 N Street is being considered as part of the Capitol Annex Project. Adjustments to traffic flows on N Street between 10th and 11th Streets, including temporary closures, are also being considered to facilitate pedestrian movement between the Capitol and the LOB and 10th and O Street Office Building.

Existing public entry/security checkpoints at the Capitol are provided at the north and south sides of the Annex. When the Annex is closed for demolition, these entries/security checkpoints would be closed. To provide continued safe and efficient public entry to the Capitol while the Annex replacement is underway, and after completion of the project, the project would include a new underground visitors center on the west side of the Capitol (Figure 1). The new visitor's center would be approximately 30,000 square feet and would be located between 10th Street and the west steps of the Capitol. An above-ground entrance would be provided near 10th Street with both stair and elevator access. Visitors would then move underground, through a security checkpoint, and enter the Capitol through the basement. Surface ground disturbance would be primarily in the area between 10th Street and the Capitol west steps.

The existing parking in the Annex basement would be abandoned. This underground parking would be replaced with new underground parking on the south side of the Capitol (Figure 1). Surface ground disturbance would primarily be in the area between N Street and the Capitol south steps. The new underground parking would accommodate up to 200 parking spaces. The current Annex basement parking has entries/exits on both L Street and N Street. Entry and exit from the new underground parking would be provided on N Street. It is not yet known if entry and exit would also be provided on L Street.

RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

For the purposes of CEQA, the term "Responsible Agency" includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15381). Discretionary approval power may include such actions as issuance of a permit, authorization, or easement needed to complete some aspect of the proposed project. It is anticipated that approval from various City of Sacramento departments would be required to complete construction of the Capitol Annex Project. Where city approval may constitute a discretionary decision, such as potential approvals related to street abandonments or utility connections, it is expected that the City would use the EIR for the Capitol Annex Project to support these decisions. Other agencies whose approval may be required for the project include, but may not be limited to, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, State Historic Preservation Officer, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, and Sacramento Municipal Utility District.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIR will describe the direct and indirect environmental impacts of construction and operation of the Capitol Annex Project. It is anticipated that the EIR will address potential impacts associated with the proposed project in the following issue areas. In addition, the EIR will evaluate alternatives, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts.

Land Use

The project site is located in downtown Sacramento; construction and operation of a new Annex and related facilities would not physically divide this community. The project would not develop new roadways/freeways/arterials, lengthy walls or fences, or other physical impediments to cross-community access. Although the project site is located in the City of Sacramento, the site is under the jurisdiction of the State; therefore, the project is not subject to city land use plans or zoning. Nonetheless, in addition to evaluating consistency with the State's Capitol Area Plan, the EIR will discuss the project consistency with relevant City of Sacramento planning policies. There are no habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans applicable to the project area.

Population, Employment, and Housing

Because the purpose of the project is to replace an existing building with a new building to support roughly the same number of elected officials and staff, operation of the project is expected to have little to no effect on local population and housing. Project construction could result in a temporary increase in employment and local population. Therefore, the EIR will describe the existing population and housing characteristics of the region and downtown area; identify potential effects of the project on population and housing, including the need for additional housing, effects on existing housing in the Capitol Area, and the effect on the local housing inventory.

Transportation and Circulation

The project would increase the total square footage of office space in downtown Sacramento but would have little to no effect on the number of employees/elected officials served by that office space. Therefore, project operation would result in few, if any, new vehicle trips relative to existing conditions. The project could affect local traffic patterns in the immediate vicinity around Capitol Park during construction, if vehicle entry to/exit from underground parking is altered relative to existing conditions, or if pedestrian or bicycle movement patterns are altered. The EIR will evaluate the project's construction-period and operational AM and PM peak hour trip generation and how the project may affect delays and level of service at key intersections. Vehicle miles traveled and access to the project site will also be assessed. The EIR will analyze project impacts on the roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit systems.

Utilities and Infrastructure

The EIR will evaluate the project-related impacts to infrastructure and capacity of water supply and treatment, sewer and wastewater treatment, drainage and stormwater, electricity, and natural gas. Wastewater treatment and disposal for the proposed project would be provided by the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP). Under existing conditions, wastewater generated in the project area is conveyed to the SRWTP by the City's combined stormwater runoff and sanitary sewer system. The City of Sacramento is the water supplier for the project site; any project-related changes in water demand will be evaluated in the EIR. Like for the existing Annex, heating and cooling for the new building and related facilities may be supplied by steam and chilled water delivered via underground pipeline from the State's Central Plant at 7th and P Streets. If the project requires any new or modified utility infrastructure, the environmental effects of that utility work will be evaluated in the EIR.

Air Quality

The proposed project site is located within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB), within the jurisdiction of the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD), which administers local, state, and federal air quality management programs for Sacramento County. As is typical of construction projects, movement of equipment and wind over bare soils could generate airborne dust. Construction equipment would emit exhaust, including ozone precursors, particulate matter, and air toxics. Due to the new building being a replacement of an existing building, the planned increase in energy efficiency relative to the existing building, the availability of transit access, the urban location, and based on SMAQMD air quality screening criteria, the project is anticipated to comply with SMAQMD operational emissions levels; therefore, the preparation of an Air Quality Mitigation Plan is not planned. However, total regional operational emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors will be assessed based on project-specific information (i.e., traffic study, energy usage, building location) and compared to applicable SMAQMD significance thresholds for operational emissions.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change

Although the project would be more energy efficient than the existing building it replaces, construction and operation of the project would result in the generation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Therefore, the EIR will quantify GHG emissions from construction and operational (i.e., building energy, vehicle trips) activities.

Noise

Implementing the proposed project would result in short-term and potentially long-term increases in ambient noise levels. The EIR will include a description of the existing noise environment, including noise sources and sensitive receptors in the project area. The EIR will then assess potential short-term (i.e., construction) and long-term (i.e., operational) noise impacts to sensitive receptors. Operational noise changes may be generated by proposed stationary sources such as emergency backup generators, and changes in access to parking facilities, as well as mobile sources such as vehicle trips.

Geology and Soils

No known faults or Alquist-Priolo special studies zones are located in or adjacent to the City of Sacramento; therefore, the proposed project site would not be subject to fault rupture. Site-specific geotechnical evaluation will be prepared and the project design will be required to comply with applicable seismic and other building codes. Although the proposed project would adhere to these construction standards, and the seismic risk in Sacramento is low, the risk associated with constructing a the equivalent of a new office building, as well as underground facilities, will be assessed in the EIR, including geologic and soils hazards such as liquefaction, expansive soils, and lateral spreading. Soils exposed during construction and grading can be susceptible to erosion and such erosion potential will also be evaluated in the EIR.

Hydrology and Water Quality

It is anticipated that the project's principal water quality concerns will be related to construction activities, particularly grading and excavation, which could result in increased erosion and sedimentation associated with stormwater runoff. Urban contaminants such as oil, grease, heavy metals, and pesticides and herbicides from proposed development could also be present in runoff. The project will need to comply with the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Construction Activities, including preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and site-specific erosion control measures and Best Management Practices. Because much of the project site is currently developed with impervious surfaces (e.g., existing Annex, walkways, concrete, sidewalks), the project would not result in a substantial increase in ground coverage such that interference with groundwater recharge would occur.

Hazardous Materials and Public Health

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment will be prepared for the project and will identify known hazardous materials or sources of potential hazards (e.g., existing building materials, contaminated soil or groundwater) on the project site or vicinity. If present, hazardous materials could be released during grading/earth moving and/or building demolition during construction of the new building and facilities. The proposed project would not involve activities such as industrial or manufacturing uses that could generate hazardous emissions. However, the Annex would involve the use and storage of small quantities of hazardous materials, such as cleaning materials, commonly used at office and commercial locations. The routine transport, use, and disposal of such materials would be limited. Federal, state, and local laws regulate every aspect of hazardous materials transport, use, and storage. These regulations are designed to avoid significant hazards to the public and environment. Nonetheless, these issues will be analyzed further in the EIR.

Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources

The EIR will use the results of a historical resources analysis to determine potential impacts to cultural and tribal cultural resources. In addition, the Capitol, the existing Annex, and the surrounding Capitol Park are historic resources, or contribute to historic resources, which would trigger consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer per Public Resources Code Section 5024/5024.5 addressing the treatment of State-owned resources. In addition, outreach to the Native American community and local historical groups will be conducted to solicit information on tribal cultural resources and any known cultural resources concerns or issues. There is the potential for buried prehistoric and historic-era resources within the project area, as there is in much of downtown Sacramento, and potential impacts to these resources during project construction will be considered in the EIR.

Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources are those protected by federal, state, or local resource conservation agencies and organizations. The project site is developed with buildings and park facilities and is not anticipated to support sensitive habitats and is unlikely to support special-status species. The EIR will disclose the common biological resources in the area, including vegetation and wildlife, and if identified, the EIR will evaluate the project's potential to impact common and sensitive biological resources.

Public Services

The Sacramento City Fire Department (SCFD) provides fire protection and emergency medical services to the project area, including State-owned office buildings. Although the proposed project would be designed and constructed in compliance with all applicable fire protection regulations, the EIR will evaluate the project's potential impact to the provision of fire protection services. Police protection to the project site is provided by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) Office of Capitol Protection (OCP). Although it is anticipated that existing police services would be adequate to serve the proposed project, the EIR will evaluate the project impact to law enforcement. The potential minor change in employees/elected officials downtown will also be considered in evaluating the project's potential impacts to the provision of parks and recreation facilities. Because the project does not propose removal or construction of housing, it is not anticipated to have an impact on schools.

Aesthetics/Light and Glare

The proposed project site and areas that may be considered for related facilities are located in downtown Sacramento and are currently developed with urban and park uses. The EIR will evaluate the project's potential impacts to the visual character of the developed downtown environment and to Capitol Park, including building heights, mass, and setbacks; tree removal; obstruction of important view corridors; and any potential increase in light and glare or shadow effects.

Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the proposed project could potentially result in significant impacts to some of the above resource areas. When taken together with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects, the project's contribution to the overall cumulative effect of all these activities could be considerable. Cumulative impacts and the project's contribution to those impacts will be evaluated in the EIR.

Alternatives

In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15126.6), the EIR will describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that are capable of meeting most of the project's objectives, and that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The EIR will also identify any alternatives that were considered but rejected by the lead agency as infeasible and briefly explain the reasons why. The EIR will provide an analysis of the No-Project Alternative and will also identify the environmentally superior alternative.

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

This Notice of Preparation is being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 32 days beginning April 11, 2019. An open house format scoping meeting will be held from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel, 13th and J Street Sacramento, CA 95814. Agencies and individuals may attend the scoping meeting at any time to obtain information on the project, ask questions of project team members, and provide comments. A brief presentation on the proposed project and the CEQA process will be given hourly. Written comments will be accepted by DGS through 5:00 p.m. on May 13, 2019. Comments must be delivered or mailed to Ms. Stephanie Coleman at the address listed above.

Copies of the Notice of Preparation may be reviewed at the following locations:

- ▲ Sacramento Central Library at 828 I Street during library hours;
- ▲ Department of General Services, Environmental Services Section between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.; or
- ▲ request a copy by email at: environmental@dgs.ca.gov.
- ▲ <http://bit.ly/DGSCEQA>

Your views and comments on how the project may affect the environment are welcomed. Please contact Ms. Coleman if you have any questions about the environmental review process for the Capitol Annex Building Project.

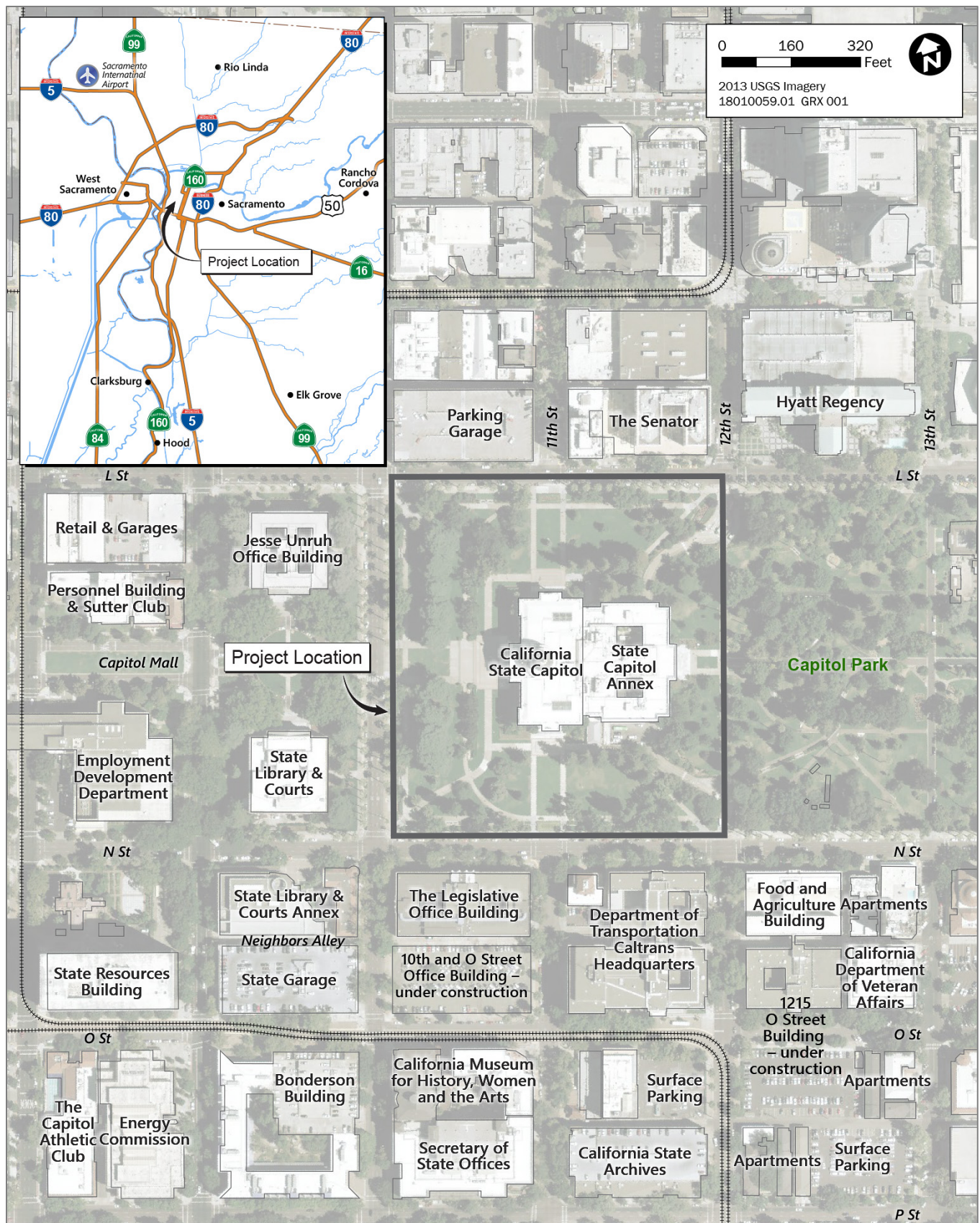


Figure 1 Project Location