



Historic Resources Board

Staff Report (ID # 11538)

Report Type: Action Items **Meeting Date:** 9/24/2020

Summary Title: Castilleja School

Title: PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION ITEM 1310 Bryant Street, 1235 and 1263 Emerson Street [19PLN-00116]: Historic Resources Board Review of Castilleja School's Architectural Review Application; Project Alternative (Final EIR Alternative #4) Retains Castilleja's Two Emerson Street Homes With Reduced Garage and Disbursed Circulation. Phased Campus Redevelopment Proposal Associated With a Request for Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Amendment and Variance for Gross Floor Area (GFA) Replacement. Zone District: R-1(10,000). Environmental Review: A Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was Published July 29, 2020

From: Jonathan Lait

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Historic Resources Board (HRB) take the following action(s):

1. Receive the presentation of the Applicant's Project Alternative plans (Final EIR Alternative #4) retaining the two Emerson Street houses, and
2. Provide input into draft Architectural Review finding 2B (in Attachment A) with respect to historic preservation (Gunn Building).

The HRB may also wish to comment on the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR)¹ published July 29, 2020. It responds to comments and provides clarifications; particularly:

1. Chapter 2 Master Response 9 regarding historical resources (pp 2-116 to 2-122),
2. Responses to comments made during the HRB meeting (pp 3-972 to 3-975), and
3. Information responding to the HRB's September 2019 requests (DEIR Chapter 6 revised pages 6-11, 6-12, 6-21 and 6-22).

¹ Final EIR published July 29, 2020:

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=4823&TargetID=319>

City of Palo Alto
 Planning & Development Services
 250 Hamilton Avenue
 Palo Alto, CA 94301
 (650) 329-2442

Report

Summary

This staff report is to support the HRB's review of campus redevelopment plans that involve retention of the Emerson Street homes and modification to the local Historic Inventory Category 3 resource, the Gunn Building. The ARB reviewed Alternative #4 plans on August 20th; they are viewable here: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78041>. Additional applicant submittals in August and September 2020 are viewable on the Project Documents webpage: [https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/topics/castilleja_school/project_documents .asp](https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/topics/castilleja_school/project_documents.asp)

The Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) does not require HRB review of changes to Inventory Category 3 buildings outside Downtown or historic districts. However, the HRB requested to review the modifications. The HRB may also take the opportunity to provide input or comment on the draft Architectural Review (AR) finding 2B relating to historic preservation; specifically, verbiage related to the Gunn Building rehabilitation following its separation from the Rhoades Hall that is proposed to be demolished.

The HRB's September 2019 comments on the Draft EIR are reflected in meeting minutes². The Final EIR responds to the HRB request for more information on the Lockey house, with additional description and analysis. Responses to comments include discussion regarding the potential for a historic district. On the following page are Final EIR page numbers and links to assist the HRB in its review of the Final EIR.

- Responses to comments at HRB meeting in the Final EIR show as 'E2' and are found on pages 3-972 through 3-975 at this link: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/77806>
- Final EIR Chapter 2 Master Response 9, pages 2-116 through 2-122 is viewable at this link: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/77803>
- Draft EIR Chapter 6 updates, pages 6-11 to 6-12 (Lockey House) and pages 6-21 and 6-22, viewable here <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/77807>

Background/Discussion

Community Comments

City staff maintain webpages related to the Castilleja School project, including a page for public comments. Comments on the Final EIR for consideration by boards, commission and Council are viewable:

https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/topics/castilleja_school/public_comments.asp. Additional public comments submitted directly to the Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council are found on those webpages.

Submittal of Project Alternative Plans

² HRB meeting minutes September 2019 <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/77795>

The Applicant's Project Alternative, submitted in February 2020 to address community comments, re-designed walls and gates near the Gunn building. These are only slightly different than the walls and gates the HRB viewed in September 2019, but may be of interest to the HRB. As of the staff report preparation, the applicant had not yet submitted updated images for the proposed treatment Gunn building facade. The applicant has focused on responding to ARB comments of August 20, 2020.

Architectural Review Board (ARB) Review August 2020

The ARB meeting of August 20th was focused on the Final EIR and the Project Alternative (Alternative 4, discussed in Final EIR). The October 1st meeting is targeted for ARB review of the applicant's approach to massing and architectural refinements along the Academic Building's Kellogg Street facade. Documents the applicant submitted September 9th are now in review.

A total of 21 speakers addressed the project at the ARB hearing; some were speaking for multiple persons attending the meeting that ceded their time to the speaker. There were two Applicant-affiliated speakers as well. One of the Applicant-affiliated speakers was the head of school; she stated Castilleja would like to proceed with the Project Alternative (Alternative #4), the environmentally superior alternative, as the project going forward. Links to the staff report³, video⁴ minutes⁵ and staff presentation⁶ are provided in footnotes below.

The ARB continued the hearing to enable the applicant to address suggestions for design refinements. Collectively, the ARB (more than one member) voiced these comments:

- The Project Alternative is supported more than Project (don't encroach into Embarcadero setback, do not have a single garage drop off solution)
- Kellogg side is an improvement over existing, but could use modification (too long, plate height unbroken), needs to be broken up (roofline, style, mass); an entrance of importance, coordinated, should drive design
- Consider tunnel length/where it ends up (consider circle destination)/consider a symbolic entrance
- Keep the circle, but consider landscape modifications
- More info/drawings/discussion is needed on:
 - Sustainability (rooftop solar structures, rain screens, materials changes – metal, solar study)
 - Landscaping including ROW, replacement oaks spacing issue, design intent, user comfort
 - Enlarged elevations to see detail
 - Modular units for temporary campus – need to know what this will look like
 - Other aspects not design: TDM management, FAR, construction traffic, noise; study not adding students until construction is complete

³ August 20, 2020 ARB staff report: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78021>

⁴ August 20, 2020 ARB video: <https://midpenmedia.org/architectural-review-board-74-8202020/>

⁵ August 20, 2020 ARB excerpt minutes: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78325>

⁶ August 20, 2020 ARB staff presentation: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78197>

Concepts and documents responding to ARB comments will be discussed with the ARB October 1st. The adjustments include removal of a portion of the second floor at Kellogg Avenue. This component of the design is unrelated to the treatment of the historic Gunn Building.

Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) Review August and September 2020

August 26, 2020 Meeting

The PTC meeting of August 26th was focused on the Final EIR and the Project Alternative (Alternative 4, discussed in Final EIR). A total of 58 public speakers, some were speaking for multiple parties, provided comments. Additionally, two applicant-affiliated speakers provided comments during the public testimony hearing segment. The applicant's rebuttal time enabled the applicant to state an intent to submit a response letter addressing public comments regarding the garage, recirculation and the project alternative. The applicant's response letter is viewable here: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78330>

Links to the August 26, 2020 PTC report⁷ video⁸ minutes⁹ and staff presentation¹⁰ are provided in footnotes below. After completion of the public testimony, the Commissioners posed 28 questions for staff to answer during the continued hearing on September 9th.

September 9, 2020 Meeting

Staff prepared a report responsive to Commissioners' questions. Staff's report¹¹, presentation¹² and video¹³ are on the City's webpages; links are provided below. The PTC determined (on a 4-1-2 (absent) vote) the EIR was sufficient to recommend City Council action. The PTC voted 4-1-2 to continue its hearing to October 14, 2020; this enables staff to prepare draft findings and conditions for the Conditional Use Permit and Gross Floor Area Replacement Variance.

Historic Resources Board Review

The Draft EIR noted Castilleja's Emerson Street houses are ineligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources. The Project Alternative retains these two houses. This is not due to historic value; it is responsive to concerns regarding residential character and retention of housing units.

In September 2019, the HRB briefly discussed the Lockey house, the older of the two Castilleja-owned houses on Emerson Street. The HRB asked whether retention of the Emerson houses was a project alternative. The HRB focused on potential impacts to cultural resources during

⁷ PTC August 26, 2020 staff report: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78102>

⁸ PTC August 26, 2020 video: <https://midpenmedia.org/planning-transportation-commission-63-8262020/>

⁹ PTC August 26, 2020 excerpt minutes: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78326>

¹⁰ PTC August 26, 2020 staff presentation: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78198>

¹¹ PTC September 9, 2020 staff report: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78346>

¹² PTC September 9, 2020 presentation: https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/topics/castilleja_school/default.asp

¹³ PTC September 9, 2020 video: <https://midpenmedia.org/category/government/city-of-palo-alto/boards-and-commissions/planning-and-transportation-commission/>

consideration of the Draft EIR. The HRB viewed potential changes to the exposed façade of the Category 3 resource; i.e. the Gunn Administration Building. The 2019 HRB staff report¹⁴ did not include detailed description of the façade treatment; however, the Applicant's presentation included the below images illustrating façade modifications.



Many of the eight public speakers (including the Castilleja applicant team, and speakers on behalf of Castilleja) submitted individual written comments on the Draft EIR. The Final EIR responds to individual and HRB meeting comments. Speakers' concerns included:

- Demolition of Castilleja's two Emerson Street homes and removal of the six redwood trees next to the Emerson Street homes, to create the subterranean garage and landscaped open area,
- Interest in retention of the Lockey House,
- Aesthetics concerns/block character degradation, given the Emerson garage exit,
- Interest in neighborhood historic homes and context for the home at 1215 Emerson,
- Bike boulevard concern,
- Liquefaction concern for historic buildings, due to the geologic report, and
- Construction noise.

Speakers also expressed support during the HRB meeting, noting:

- The design would be compatible, given the proposed use of materials complimenting the campus' historic building, and similar scale and massing as the existing building,
- The value in separating the Gunn Building from the attached building, and
- The new gates, fencing, and landscaping were appreciated.

The HRB concluded its hearing with requests for additional information regarding the:

- Gunn Administration Building's final design considerations,
- Lockey House evaluation, and
- Consideration of a historic district, noting this is not the applicant's responsibility and that no application for a district has been submitted (Palo Alto Municipal Code Section 16.49.040 allows any individual or group to propose designating a historic district).

Project Description

¹⁴ HRB September 12, 2019 staff report <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/73280>

The Final EIR provides descriptions of the original Project and the Applicant's Project Alternative (Alternative #4), as shown in the most recent plans submitted in 2020¹⁵. The Project and Project Alternative both propose: (1) Demolishing five campus buildings (including the Leonard Ely Fine Arts Center fronting Emerson Street, classroom and campus center buildings along Bryant and Kellogg), (2) Replacing campus gross floor area (GFA) on the campus parcel in a new academic building that also increases below-grade, non GFA space, (3) Constructing a subterranean garage accessed from the existing Bryant Street surface parking lot with a two-way access ramp, and a one-way garage exit ramp 80 feet from Emerson Street to a driveway opposite Melville Avenue; garage completion is associated with the phase 1 student enrollment increase, (4) Providing a below grade pedestrian passage from the garage to campus buildings, (5) Demolishing the at-grade pool and constructing a below-grade pool and pool sound wall, (6) Providing for below-grade delivery and trash enclosures/waste pick-up with reconstruction of the Circle in the center of the campus, and (7) Installing new landscaping and fences.

Project Alternative #4

The Project Alternative (Alternative #4) is described in the Final EIR. The Applicant's plans, responsive to several community concerns, enabled further evaluation and recommendation of another alternative. This alternative does not propose changes to the Project Objectives, proposed enrollment cap, or the number and frequency of special events.

The Project Alternative:

- Reconfigures the subterranean garage footprint,
- Allows retention of Castilleja's two residential structures on Emerson Street and the row of six redwood trees at the western edge of Spieker Field;
- Reduces the overall size of the garage and moves the structure outside the Embarcadero Road setback;
- Distributes school traffic to three drop-off/pick-up locations around the campus (retaining the Kellogg Avenue drop off driveway);
- Removes the right-turn only restriction for vehicles exiting the garage, avoiding the Project's TIRE Index impact on Emerson Street, subject to mitigations that would avoid creating any new TIRE Index impacts.
- Provides on-site parking spaces meeting the code-required spaces;
- Reduces the size of the Academic Building at the ground floor level by 754 square feet (offset by increasing the building's below-grade level by 800 square feet);
- Includes site modifications; namely, reconstruction of the existing loop driveway on Kellogg Avenue, in generally the same location; and
- Retains 21 more trees than the proposed project.

Gunn Building:

Changes to this historic resource include:

¹⁵ Project Alternative Plans reviewed by the ARB and PTC in August:
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78041>

- Refinishing the exterior wall on the eastern façade following demolition of the classroom building to cover the exposed sections of the wall with stucco on the first floor and wood shingles on the second floor, consistent with the existing building materials and finishes.
- Installing new doors on the first and second floors and new exterior stairs to provide access to the second floor.
- Matching the existing exterior finishes in material, color and dimension and the not altering the building dimensions.
- Continuing to convey the building's distinctive features, finishes, construction techniques, and examples of fine craftsmanship, to maintain and preserve the Administration Building's character-defining features (stucco- and shingle-clad exterior walls, wood shingle roofing, and Craftsman style features).

The applicant does not propose any modifications to the Elizabeth Hughes Chapel Theater which is adjacent to the Gunn Building.

Discussion

The 2020 Project plan set includes before-after images of the Gunn building as viewed from Bryant Street. Below left, it is attached to the Rhodes Hall. Below right, it is separated from the new Academic building. Landscaping and open gate are viewable between the buildings.

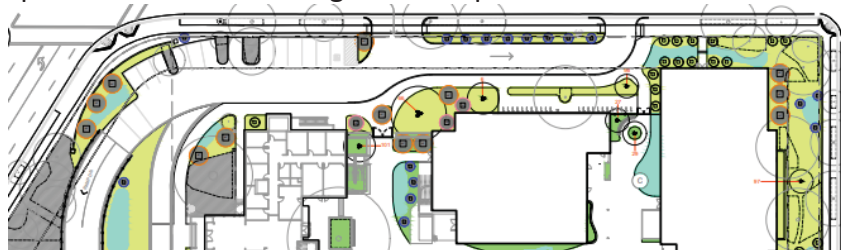


Before – Rhodes Hall Attached to Gunn Building



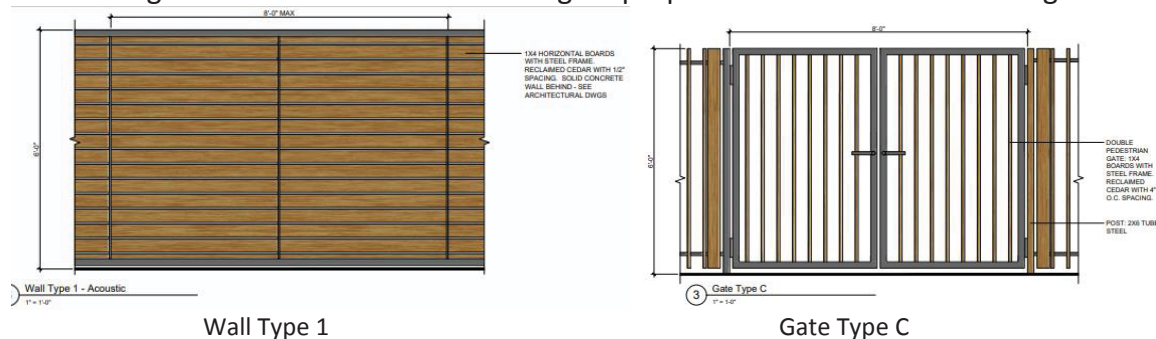
Proposal - Rhodes Hall Removed

Project plan set Sheet L2.0 shows landscaping, gate, wall, and pathways in between the Gunn building and proposed Academic building. An excerpt of this sheet follows.



The proposal is to install a solid, six-foot-tall concrete wall finished with reclaimed cedar in a horizontal pattern, with a double gate of 1x4 reclaimed cedar boards with 4-inch spacing in a steel frame, attached at each side to 2x6 tube steel posts. The 2020 plans for this location

differ from the 2019 plans, which showed a low brick wall with metal vertical pickets. The below images show the fence and double gate proposed between these buildings.



Environmental Review

Page references pertinent to historic preservation topics in the Final EIR are provided on page one of this report. The Revised Draft EIR Chapter 6, Cultural Resources, and Final EIR Chapter 2 Master Responses regarding the potential for a historic district and tree views from Professorville are pertinent to the HRB's purview. Content is viewable in these locations:

- Gunn Building Alterations: DEIR Chapter 6 pages 6-21 and 6-22 (No adverse effects to the historic significance and integrity of the Administration Center and Chapel Theater);
- Lockey Alumnae House is not eligible for CRHR: DEIR pages 6-11 and 6-12;
- Historic District Potential – Campus and Neighborhood: Master Response 2.9.2; and
- Landscape Features: Master Response 2.9.4.

Next Steps

On October 1, 2020, the ARB will resume its public hearing to provide direction to the Applicant on concepts for adjusting the Academic Building. The ARB will also have the opportunity to discuss Architectural Review findings, of which Finding 2B (see Attachment C) is related to historic preservation. Draft approval conditions and CUP and Variance findings will be prepared and published prior to the PTC public hearing October 14, 2020.

Report Author & Contact Information

Amy French, AICP, Chief Planning Official
 (650) 329-2336

amy.french@cityofpaloalto.org

HRB¹⁶ Liaison & Contact Information

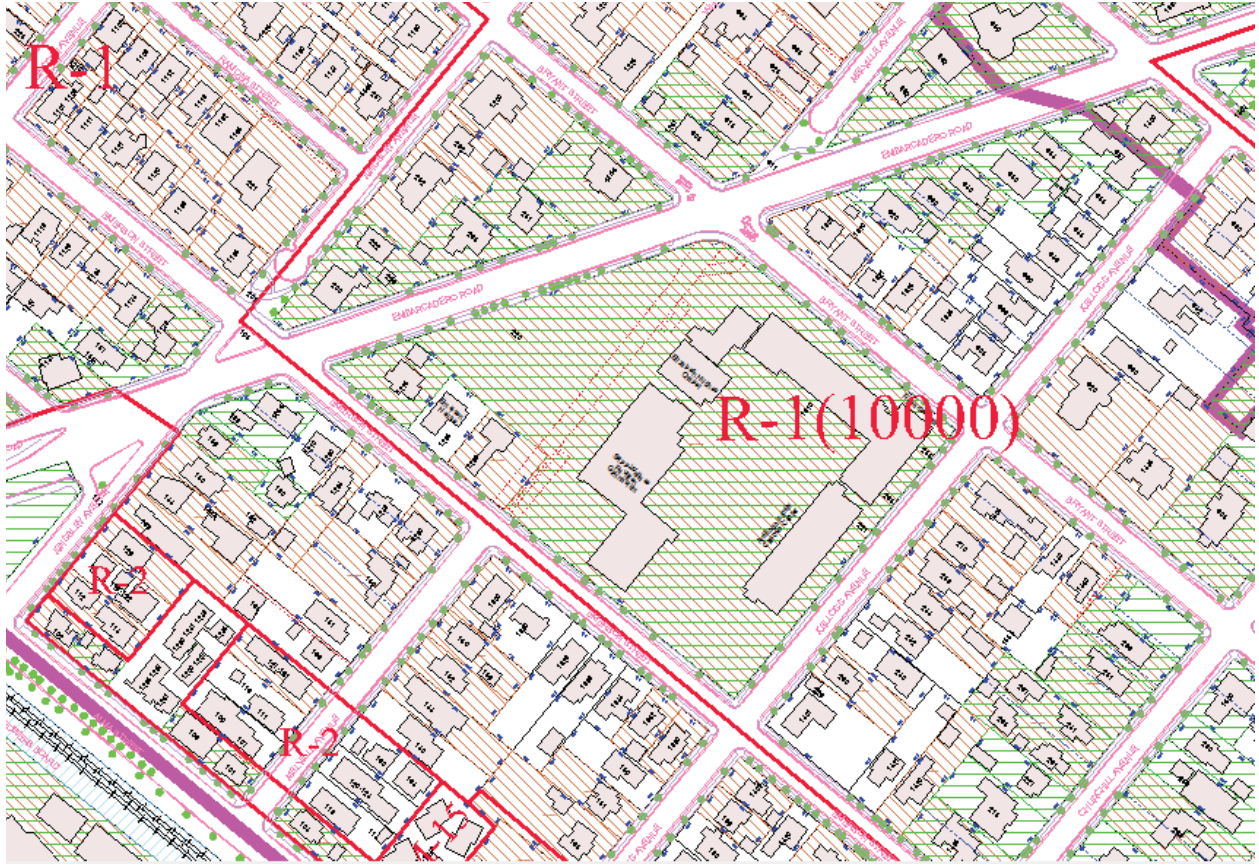
Amy French, AICP, Chief Planning Official
 (650) 329-2336

amy.french@cityofpaloalto.org

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Location Map (DOCX)
- Attachment B: Project Plans on Building Eye (DOCX)
- Attachment C: General AR Findings Highlighting Draft Finding 2b for HRB Input (DOCX)

¹⁶ Emails may be sent directly to the HRB using the following address: hrb@cityofpaloalto.org



Attachment A Location Map – Castilleja School

Attachment B

Project Plans

These plans and other documents are available to the HRB and the public online at www.cityofpaloalto.org/castilleja

Project Alternative Plans: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/78041>

Project Plans Part 1: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/77810>

Project Plans Part 2: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/77811>

Note that the Project Alternative is Alternative #4 in the EIR. Project Plans contain a large number of plan sheets; many are applicable to the Project Alternative as well.

Directions to review Project plans and other public documents on Building Eye:

1. Go to: <https://paloalto.buildingeye.com/planning>
2. Search for "1310 Bryant Street" and open record by clicking on the green dot
3. Review the record details and open the "more details" option
4. Use the "Records Info" drop down menu and select "Attachments"
5. Open the attachment named "project plans"

**ATTACHMENT C
GENERAL FINDINGS FOR ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW APPROVAL**

1310 Bryant Street
19PLN-00116

In order for the ARB to make a future recommendation of approval, the project must comply with the following Findings for Architectural Review as required in Chapter 18.76.020 of the PAMC.

Finding #1: The design is consistent with applicable provisions of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code, coordinated area plans (including compatibility requirements), and any relevant design guides.

Finding #2: The project has a unified and coherent design, that:

- a. creates an internal sense of order and desirable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community,
- b. preserves, respects and integrates existing natural features that contribute positively to the site and the historic character including historic resources of the area when relevant.
- c. is consistent with the context-based design criteria of the applicable zone district,
- d. provides harmonious transitions in scale, mass and character to adjacent land uses and land use designations,
- e. enhances living conditions on the site (if it includes residential uses) and in adjacent residential areas.

2b. The project retains and improves the existing Historic Resource Category 3 resource, the Gunn Administration Building, in a way that demonstrates compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, by:

- *Separating it from the Rhoades building to be demolished;*
- *Refinishing the exterior wall on the eastern façade with stucco on the first floor and wood shingles on the second floor, consistent with the existing building materials and finishes;*
- *Adding new doors on the first and second floors and constructing new exterior stairs to provide access to the second floor;*
- *Maintaining and preserving distinctive finishes and character-defining features, including its stucco- and shingle-clad exterior walls, wood shingle roofing, and Craftsman style features;*
- *Installing stucco and shingle cladding to match the existing exterior finishes in material, color and dimension; the refinishing plans would not alter the building dimensions;*
- *Enabling, upon project implementation, the Administration Center to continue to convey its distinctive features, finishes, construction techniques, and examples of fine craftsmanship.*

Finding #3: The design is of high aesthetic quality, using high quality, integrated materials and appropriate construction techniques, and incorporating textures, colors, and other details that are compatible with and enhance the surrounding area.

Finding #4: The design is functional, allowing for ease and safety of pedestrian and bicycle traffic and providing for elements that support the building's necessary operations (e.g. convenient vehicle access to property and utilities, appropriate arrangement and amount of open space and integrated signage, if applicable, etc.).

Finding #5: The landscape design complements and enhances the building design and its surroundings, is appropriate to the site's functions, and utilizes to the extent practical, regional indigenous drought resistant plant material capable of providing desirable habitat that can be appropriately maintained.

Finding #6: The project incorporates design principles that achieve sustainability in areas related to energy efficiency, water conservation, building materials, landscaping, and site planning.