



PROTECT CAPITOL PARK

CAPITOL ANNEX PROJECT FACT SHEET

The Capitol Annex Project is overseen by the Joint Rules Committee of the CA State Legislature, and contains three main components: 1) demolition and replacement of the Legislature's existing Capitol Annex Building, 2) construction of a new underground visitor center on the west side of Capitol; and 3) construction of an underground parking lot south of the Capitol exclusively for the Legislature and other high-ranking officials.

How many trees will be cut down?

The state claims only 20-30 trees will be removed, but has conceded the number could be higher. A comparison of the project footprint with the Capitol tree map shows over 100 trees could be removed. Documents on the project's website indicate at least 64 trees will be removed (Capitol Annex Briefing, DGS Report, 7.7.2017). The parking lot alone will remove nearly 40 trees, including redwoods over 100 feet tall and trees planted in 1887 when the Capitol was first built. No significant tree-mitigation plan has been created to ensure the roots of trees adjacent to the project will be protected. The state has failed to provide specific information and appears to have grossly underestimated how many trees will be impacted.

How much will this project cost taxpayers?

The state has also failed to provide clear and consistent figures for the total cost of the project. One document from 2017 indicates a total cost of \$507 million, but another from 2019 provides a total estimate of \$755 million. (MOCA Annex Projects Overview and Timeline Presentation before Joint Rules Committee, 8.13.2019). In that document, the estimate for the underground parking garage alone is over \$50 million.

Why hasn't the public been better informed?

The state provides public updates, but only via mail to residents immediately surrounding the park and those who have signed up for the mailing list. The Capitol Annex Project webpage contains little information about the project and many of the links are out of date. The state has acknowledged it could have used more transparent forms of public notification, like placing notices on individual trees slated for removal, but chose not to do so.

How could the project be better?

We agree the Capitol Annex needs updating and that some damage to the landscape is unavoidable. However, the state can and should do the following:

- 1) Eliminate the parking lot. This aspect of the project has the largest negative impact and the least public benefit, with readily available alternatives. Legislators can continue using the parking garage in the "swing space" which will house them during the four years the project is underway.
- 2) Develop a detailed mitigation plan with certified arborists to minimize damage to as many trees as possible. Compile a list of all trees that will be impacted and inform the public by placing notices directly on each tree.
- 3) Redesign or relocate the Visitor Center to preserve the historical Plaza so it continues to serve as the front porch and gathering place for California's citizens.

Capitol Park belongs to the people – its unique landscape provides a public space to relax, gather, and recreate downtown amidst the Historic Capitol. In an era when the state is asking the public to drive less and protect our environment, removing huge trees which sequester carbon and provide urban cooling to build a private parking lot for state officials is simply unacceptable.

Take action by contacting your state legislators as well as Bill Monning, chair of the Joint Rules Committee at <https://sd17.senate.ca.gov/contact-us> and Senator Atkins! If you need to locate your representatives, search via <http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov>.