



Community & Economic Development Department

Planning Division

3900 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92522 | Phone: (951) 826-5371 | RiversideCA.gov

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD MEETING DATE: MAY 15, 2019
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 3

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

I. CASE NUMBER(S): P19-0243

II. PROJECT SUMMARY:

- 1) **Proposal:** Certificate of Appropriateness request for a proposed project that includes in-kind repairs and minor exterior modifications to the existing Riverside Public Library – Main Branch (City Landmark #135) for conversion to the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art, Culture, and Industry.
- 2) **Location:** 3581 Mission Inn Avenue, situated on the northeast corner of Mission Inn Avenue and Orange Street
- 3) **Ward:** 1
- 4) **Applicant:** City of Riverside – General Services Department
- 5) **Case Planner:** Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer

III. RECOMMENDATION:

That the Cultural Heritage Board:

1. **DETERMINE** that Planning Case P19-0243 is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301 and 15331 because the project is a minor alteration to an existing facility and is a Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation project consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (Exhibit 1); and
2. **APPROVE** Planning Case P19-0243, based on the findings summarized below, subject to the attached conditions (Exhibit 2), and contingent on the adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration, thereby issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project.

IV. BACKGROUND/HISTORY:

The Riverside Public Library - Main Branch, constructed between 1963 and 1965, features the New Formalism style of architecture. Some of the character-defining features include the symmetrical square plan, monumentality, flat roof with wide overhanging eaves, square pilasters, running-bond brick walls between the pilasters, sculptural perforated screens, an elevated podium with centrally located stairs, and a centrally located entry with a projecting half barrel-shaped canopy with broken arched ends.

On May 16, 2017, City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among Richard "Cheech" Marin, Riverside Art Museum and the City of Riverside to determine the feasibility of a public center for Chicano Art, Culture and Industry at the Riverside Public Library – Main Branch. On October 24, 2017, City Council approved a Professional Services Agreement with Page and Turnbull for architectural design services related to the project (Exhibit 3).

On April 3, 2018, in agreement with the recommendation of the Cultural Heritage Board, the City Council designated the Riverside Public Library as City Landmark #135.

V. DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The adaptive reuse of the Riverside Public Library – Main Branch includes conversion of the building to the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Arts, Culture, and Industry. The adaptive reuse mostly consists of interior modification that are not subject to Certificate of Appropriateness review. The exterior components that require the Certificate of Appropriateness include:

- The existing entry storefronts will be replaced with a new compatible aluminum storefront, which will have a symmetrical configuration. The replacement storefront will have a finish similar to the existing.
- The existing podium, steps, and ramp are in poor condition and exhibit extensive cracking. The podium will be replaced with a new podium to match the existing in height, width, depth, and materials. Although original to the design of the building, the existing podium trees appear to be the cause of the damage and will be removed.
- The existing non-historic railing around the podium will be removed and new concrete benches will be added in a compatible manner to serve as new safety barriers.
- The steps and ramps will be replaced with new steps and ramps. The proposed curved configuration of the steps and ramps will relate to the curved canopy at the entrance. The curved configuration will be compatible with the building in their material (concrete), texture, and symmetrical design.
- The existing roof will be replaced, in-kind.
- New rooftop mechanical units will be installed. Two new stucco clad walls that match the existing walls will be constructed north of the existing walls to screen the new equipment. The existing metal screen to the north will be moved further north to screen the new roof top units.

- A utilitarian door on the west elevation of the building will be infilled with brick that matches the existing door if detailed plans show it is not needed as an emergency exit.

VI. PROJECT ANALYSIS:

- **Compliance with section 20.25.050 of the City of Riverside Municipal Code:**

The proposed project is consistent with all applicable findings (Exhibit 1) required for a Certificate of Appropriateness. The project is also consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and demonstrates the compatibility and differentiation suggested by the Rehabilitation Standards.

The proposed project includes the in-kind repair of roof and the existing concrete podium. The new podium will match the material, thickness, and texture of the existing. The reconfigured storefront will match the material and finish of the existing aluminum storefront. New roof top mechanical screens will match the existing stucco screen walls and the decorative metal screens will be repaired.

The reconfigured steps and ramps will match the placement, material and style of the existing steps. The proposed curved configuration is compatible with the architectural style of the building as it is influenced by existing architectural features found on the building, specifically the barrel-vault canopy. The curved design also allows the new construction to be differentiated from the existing building.

- **Environmental Compliance:**

The project is categorically exempt from CEQA review pursuant to Section 15301 and 15331 as it is a minor alteration/addition to an existing facility and is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. A discussion on the project's consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards is included in the attached staff Recommended Findings (Exhibit 1).

VII. PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENTS:

Public notices were mailed to property owners adjacent to the site on April 19, 2019, at least 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting. As of the writing of this report, no comments have been received.

IX. EXHIBITS:

1. Staff Recommended Findings
2. Staff Recommended Conditions of Approval
3. Project Plans
4. Aerial Map



EXHIBIT 1 – STAFF RECOMMENDED FINDINGS

CASE NUMBER: P19-0243

MEETING DATE: May 15, 2019

FACTS FOR FINDINGS: (From Section 20.25.050 of the Riverside Municipal Code)

The Board and Historic Preservation Officer or Qualified Designee shall make findings of the following standards when applicable to approving or denying a Certificate of Appropriateness.

FINDING: The application proposal is consistent or compatible with the architectural period and the character-defining elements of the historic building.

FACTS: The repair of the podium and replacement of the existing storefront will be completed in-kind and will match the existing materials. The proposed steps and ramps will match the concrete material and texture of the existing steps and ramps. They will be symmetrical and be have a central placement on the façade, maintaining the monumentality demonstrated as a character-defining feature of the building. The curved design of the step and ramp are influenced by the barrel-vaulted canopy, thereby relating the configuration to existing features of the building.

FINDING: The application proposal is compatible with existing adjacent or nearby Cultural Resources and their character-defining elements.

FACTS: The future Cheech Center for the Arts is located within the Mission Inn Historic District, Seventh Street Historic District, and directly adjacent to other City Landmarks to the east, south, and west. These Landmark structures have a variety of styles including Mission Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Churrigueresque, and Richardsonian Romanesque. With this wide variety of styles, the proposed project must be compatible with the New Formalist architecture of the former library building and will not adversely impact adjacent resources.

FINDING: The colors, textures, materials, fenestration, decorative features and details, height, scale, massing and methods of construction proposed are consistent with the period and/or compatible with adjacent Cultural Resources.

FACTS: The replaced storefront entry will match the aluminum material of the existing storefront. The existing configuration is not essential to the character of the building and reconfiguration of doors and windows within the storefront system will not impact the design of the building. The concrete podium, steps, and ramps will be replaced with matching concrete material. The infilled utilitarian door on the east elevation will match the existing brick material.

- FINDING:** The proposed change does not adversely affect the context considering the following factors: grading; site development; orientation of buildings; off-street parking; landscaping; signs; street furniture; public areas; relationship of the project to its surroundings.
- FACTS:** The proposed project is primarily repair or replacement of existing features. There will be no alteration to the building placement or context.
- FINDING:** The proposed change does not adversely affect an important architectural, historical, cultural or archaeological feature or features.
- FACTS:** As the project is primarily repair and in-kind replacement, the project will not adversely affect important architectural, historical, cultural or archaeological feature or features based on the other findings outlined in this section. The central placement of the steps and ramps on the façade of the building is an important architectural feature of the building, as it helps to create the monumentality of the building and a progression from exterior to interior. The steps placement are being maintained.
- FINDING:** The project is consistent with the Citywide Residential Historic District Design Guidelines, approved guidelines for each Historic District, and/or any other applicable Design Guidelines.
- FACTS:** The guidelines that apply to the Mission Inn Historic District, and this portion of the Seventh Street Historic District, are incorporated into the guidelines for the Downtown Specific Plan – Raincross District. These guidelines state, “Existing buildings should be restored/maintained in a historic style that reflects the actual, historic appearance of the building at its period of historic significance.” The exterior components of the proposed project are the in-kind repair/restoration of historic features, as suggested by the guidelines, and minor modifications to meet current code requirements. The reconfiguration of the steps, ramps, and storefront are designed to be compatible with the historic New Formalism style of the building.
- FINDING:** The application proposal is consistent with the Principles of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- FACTS:** Staff concurs with the Secretary of the Interior Standards analysis completed by Page and Turnbull and included as part of the project submittal (Exhibit 3). The proposed project adaptively reuses the existing library as a museum. This reuse will allow continued use of the building with minimal exterior modification. When repairs are required, they will be in-kind. The reconfigured steps and ramps will be compatible in terms of material, style, scale, and method of construction. The proposed curved design will differentiate the new construction from the historic building.



EXHIBIT 2 – STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

CASE NUMBER: P19-0243

MEETING DATE: May 15, 2019

General Conditions

1. The project must be completed, per the Cultural Heritage Board's approval, including all conditions listed below. Any subsequent changes to the project must be approved by the Cultural Heritage Board or the Cultural Heritage Board staff. Upon completion of the project, a Cultural Heritage Board staff inspection must be requested to ensure that the approved plans have been executed and that all conditions have been implemented.
2. If a building permit is not issued, this approval for the Certificate of Appropriateness will expire in one-years on May 15, 2020.
3. This approval for the Certificate of Appropriateness is for design concept only and does not indicate the project has been thoroughly checked for compliance with all requirements of law. As such, it is not a substitute for the formal building permit plan check process, and other changes may be required during the plan check process.
4. The granting of this Certificate of Appropriateness shall in no way exclude or excuse compliance with all other applicable rules and regulations in effect at the time this permit is exercised.

Project Specific Conditions of Approval

5. The proposed concrete podium repair and/or replacement should closely match the color, texture, and finish of the existing concrete podium.
6. If the proposed concrete benches are no longer intended to be used as shown in the project proposal, the applicant shall submit to staff, for approval, an alternate railing design or method of meeting building code requirements.
7. The applicant shall submit to staff, for review, any proposed modification of landscaping associated with the proposed project. Any future redesign of the plaza shall be submitted for Cultural Heritage Board review.
8. **Prior to Release of Utilities and/or Occupancy:** A comprehensive signage program, subject to RMC Section 19.620 and the Downtown Specific Plan, shall be developed and submitted for review.

APPEAL INFORMATION:

The applicant or any interested person may appeal the Board's decision or any condition of approval. To appeal this decision, a letter must be submitted stating what you wish to appeal and why, the General Application form and the corresponding appeal fee.

The Community & Economic Development Department offers a packet on filing an appeal that you might find helpful. Appeals may be delivered in person or mailed, but they must be received by May 27, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. twelve days following action on this case.

The Community & Economic Development Department's address is:

City of Riverside
Community & Economic Development Department
Planning Division
3900 Main Street, 3rd Floor
Riverside, CA 92522

Appeals will be considered by the Land Use Committee of the City Council at their next available meeting.