



Community & Economic Development Department
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Planning Division

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD MEETING DATE: DECEMBER 18, 2024
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 4

PROPOSED PROJECT

Case Numbers	DP-2024-01493 (Certificate of Appropriateness)	
Request	To consider a Certificate of Appropriateness for the exterior rehabilitation of the Cesar Chavez Center (City Landmark #49) including: 1) replacement of wood windows and repair of steel windows; 2) reroofing, including reinstallation of existing clay tiles; 3) installation of new lighting; 4) repainting, including stripping of paint from the decorative front and side entries; and 5) various site improvements.	
Applicant	City of Riverside General Services Department	
Project Location	2060 University Avenue, at the southwest corner of University and Douglas Avenues	
APN	221-040-025	
Ward	1	
Neighborhood	Eastside	
Historic District	Not Applicable	
Historic Designation	City Landmark #49	
Staff Planner	Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer 951-826-5507 swatson@riversideca.gov	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Cultural Heritage Board:

- DETERMINE** that the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Sections 15301 (Existing Facility) and 15331 (Historic Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation) as it constitutes as rehabilitation of an existing historic structure that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties; and
- APPROVE** Planning Case DP-2024-01493 (Certificate of Appropriateness), based on the facts for findings outlined and summarized in the staff report, and subject to the recommended conditions of approval (Exhibit 1).

BACKGROUND

The 13.71-acre project site (Exhibit 2) was developed in 1928 with the two-story Spanish Renaissance Revival/Spanish Colonial Revival Style University Heights Junior High School, designed by notable architect John C. Austin. A separate vocational education building was also constructed to the rear and side (southeast) of the school. The gymnasium building designed by local architect Bolton Moise was constructed behind the main school building in 1951, and later remodeled in 1969. A large swimming pool, tennis court, snack shop, and a baseball diamond were constructed between 1968-1978. The school remained in operation until 1972, and today serves as the Cesar Chavez Center. In 1985, wood bleachers and a soccer field were added.

The property was designated as City Landmark #49 on December 17, 1980 (Exhibits 3, 4, & 5). In 1993, the property was listed in the National Register (NR) of Historic Places and automatically listed in California Register (CR) of Historical Resources (Exhibit 6). The City Landmark and NR/CR listings identify only the two-story main school building as being historically significant. All other structures are identified as non-contributing site features.

Exterior character-defining features of the former main school building includes: a cross-shaped ground plan on a raised basement; poured-in-place concrete construction; red clay tile topped mansard and hipped roofs to the front (north) and flat roof at the rear (south); an octagonal tower situated slightly to the east of the front entrance capped with a conical clay tile roof topped with an art-stone, onion dome-shaped finial; a centrally located elevated entrance embellished with Churrigueresque-style art-stone and plaster cast ornamentation surrounding the large double, glass-door with a glass fanlight transom; simplified versions of the front entrance at the east and west entrances; and a variety of recessed wood windows including multi-pane double-casement, some topped with a fanlight, and triple sash awning style windows.

Interior character-defining features include: In the Corridors and Lobby - transom light openings above classroom and ancillary room entrances and in central lobby, arched transom lights at office and community room entrances, historic interior doors where they remain in place, bulletin boards, wood ornamental features where they remain in place; built-in wood display cases and chalkboards; in the Classrooms - historic wood frame and chalk trays, existing fenestration pattern and wood window surrounds and sills, built-in cabinetry with glazed upper doors, historic wood panel doors with transom light openings, historic baseboards, chair rails, and window surrounds; in the Office - double-door opening with arched transom, remaining wood-panel doors, and internal transoms; in the Auditorium - wood-panel doors and wainscoting; In the community Room - glazed wood door; and, in the cafeteria - Glazed wood-panel double door at interior entrance, and three-over-three double-hung and tripartite hopper-type wood-sash windows.

Cultural Heritage Board members were invited to a site visit with City staff and the project architect on October 2, 2024. Five board members visited the site both individually and in pairs. Board member comments on the project primarily focused on the wood windows. Board members expressed that a study needed to be completed which demonstrates the existing window conditions and the feasibility of repair; that any window replacement should match the dimensions and profile of the existing window; and recommended no alterations be completed to the main entry steps.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposes to complete an interior and exterior rehabilitation of the Cesar Chavez Center. The proposed exterior modifications including:

- Replacement of wood windows
 - New windows are proposed to be aluminum clad fixed windows.
 - Proposed windows will match the size profile of the sashes and muntins of the existing windows.
 - The function of the windows is proposed to be changes from triple awning to fixed windows for building heat, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) efficiency.
 - Color will closely match the existing
- Repair of existing steel windows as needed
- Reroofing
 - Removal and salvage of existing clay tiles for reinstallation.
 - Installation of new weather proofing underlayment on tile roof sections.
 - Replace existing rolled asphalt roofing to match existing on the flat roof sections.
- Installation of new architectural lighting to highlight the two end walls.
- Repainting of exterior walls in a white color
- Strip no original paint from the decorative front and side entries via a masonry safe chemical stripper.

The interior alterations are not subject to a Certificate of Appropriateness as the project does not include alteration of interior character-defining features. As a matter of information alterations to the auditorium floors, stage, seating, and exit door hardware; removal of non-historic acoustical ceiling treatments in corridors and classrooms; accessibility upgrades to the restrooms; refinishing of interior wall and floor surfaces; replacement of some interior lights with pendant schoolhouse light fixtures, and the removal of non-historic partitions in classrooms and other interior spaces.

The applicant has submitted a Secretary of the Interior Standards compatibility assessment completed by Rincon Consulting, Inc. The report finds, "the proposed project as described in this letter report largely conforms with all the Standards for Rehabilitation and would not change its eligibility for listing in the NRHP and CRHR or local designation."

PROJECT ANALYSIS

FACTS FOR FINDINGS

Pursuant to Chapter 20.25.050 of Title 20 (Cultural Resources) of the Riverside Municipal Code (RMC), the Cultural Heritage Board and Historic Preservation Officer must make applicable findings of specific Principles and Standards when approving or denying a Certificate of Appropriateness. For proposed projects involving individually significant Cultural Resources (i.e. City Landmarks, Structures of Merit, eligible Landmarks, etc.), the project should demonstrate:

**Chapter 20.25.050.A – Principles and Standards of Site Development and Design
Review for Individually Significant Resources**

Consistency or compatibility with the architectural period and the character-defining elements of the historic building, such as colors, textures, materials, fenestration, decorative features, details, height, scale, massing, and method of construction.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Facts:

- The propose does not propose any modification to the height, scale, and massing of the existing structure.
- The roofing will be repaired and replaced, as needed, to match existing. The original tile roof will be salvaged and re-installed on new underlayment. As stated in the report by Rincon, “Reroofing of areas currently glad in character-defining clay roofing tiles will be completed in-kind. To complete this element of the project, all roofing tiles will be removed and inspected. Existing tiles that are in good condition will be salvaged and reinstalled. If it is necessary to replace tiles, due to poor condition of some units, new clay tiles of the same type will be matched to the existing tiles as closely as possible. If it is necessary to use a combination of existing and new tiles, historical tiles will be consolidated on the primary elevation and other areas of high public visibility, thus ensuring a consistent appearance from one location to the next, in addition to prioritizing the historic appearance of the most visible portions of the exterior.”
- As asserted by Rincon, the proposed “window replacements, despite some differences in materials and dimensions from their historic counterparts, have been designed to specifications that will make them essentially visually indistinguishable from the existing units and will, therefore, represent a good alternative to in-kind replacement that would help to maintain the essential appearance of the building and allow it to continue to convey the reasons for its historical and architectural significance.”
- The proposed white color wall paint and the removal of paint from the decorative entries will be consistent with the architectural style of the building.
- Non-original paint on the decorative entries will be removed via a chemical stripper designed to safely remove paint from masonry material.

The proposed project does not destroy or pose a substantial adverse change to an important architectural, historical, cultural or archaeological feature or features of the Cultural Resource.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Facts:

- Asserting that the project will have no adverse impact to architectural and historic features, the report from Rincon states, “... once painted, the new aluminum materials will be, from most vantage points, indistinguishable from their wood predecessors. In addition, the slight modification in the operability may also be tolerated, if necessary, and so long as it has ‘minimal visual impact’.”

Chapter 20.25.050.A – Principles and Standards of Site Development and Design Review for Individually Significant Resources			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As previously stated, the original clay tiles will be reused and replaced in-kind as needed. As previously stated, paint to be removed will be completed via a gentle method rather than sand blasting. 			
Compatibility with 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.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed project will not alter the building orientation and/or footprint. A small concrete walkway is proposed along the front of the building from the east parking lot. As asserted in the report by Rincon, "The area to be affected is part of a park-like setback included in the property's original design and maintained to this day. While the work will convert a limited section of the lawn to a new use, the proposed concrete walkway is consistent with two similar historic features that pass through the landscaped area at the front of the site and not substantially change the character of that part of the site, which will remain characterized by broad lawns planted with mature trees and other smaller plants." 			
Consistency with the principles of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facts: A complete Secretary of the Interior's Standards Analysis is including the report by Rincon (pgs. 14-19). In summary, the project is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The property will remain in use as a community center after the completion of the project, which is consistent with its historical function." The historic character of the property will be retained and preserved. "... the project would prioritize the repair or in-kind replacement of deteriorated elements, such as the clay roofing tiles and metal-sash windows. While the replacement of the historic wood-sash windows with similar-looking aluminum-clad windows is not a preferred treatment under the Standards, it is likely the best feasible option and will substantially maintain the essential appearance of the windows. Therefore, Standard No. 6 is satisfied." "... to ensure the preservation of the cast stone at these locations, harsh treatments such as sandblasting or a pressurized abrasive treatment with other media, including walnut shells, were eschewed in favor of hand stripping following a solvent paste marketed as Prosoco Enviro Klean Safety Peel 1." "The impacts of repainting, refinishing of cast stone entrance surrounds, repair and replacement of windows, and re-roofing have been discussed above, where it was explained that, despite the loss of historic materials (especially due 			

Chapter 20.25.050.A – Principles and Standards of Site Development and Design Review for Individually Significant Resources			
<p>to the replacement of wood-sash windows), the exterior changes to the property would be completed in such a manner that the property will maintain its overall historic character."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project does not propose new additions or adjacent or related new construction. Rehabilitation Standard No. 10 does not apply. 			
As applicable, consistency with other federal, state, and/or local guidelines.	N/A	Consistent	Inconsistent
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional federal, state, and/or local guidelines apply to this project. 			

AUTHORIZATION AND COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

Regulatory Codes	Consistent	Inconsistent
<p>Historic Preservation Code Consistency (Title 20)</p> <p>The proposed project is consistent with Section 20.25.050 of the City of Riverside Municipal Code. The proposed new rehabilitation project is compatible with existing materials and use of architectural features of former University Heights Junior High School building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No interior character-defining features will be impacted as part of the project. Original clay tile will be salvaged and reinstalled. Original steel framed windows will be repaired as needed. New aluminum clad windows will match the look of the original windows, as previously discussed. Paint will be stripped via the gentlest means possible. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and therefore is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the follow:

PUBLIC NOTICE, COMMUNITY MEETINGS, AND COMMENTS

The proposed project has been found consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and therefore is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Sections 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15331 (Historic Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation)

as it constitutes as rehabilitation of an existing historic structure that is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

APPEAL INFORMATION

Actions by the CHB, including any environmental finding, may be appealed to City Council within ten calendar days after the decision. Appeal filing and processing information may be obtained from the Planning Division by calling 951-826-5371.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This item contributes to the Envision Riverside 2025 City Council Strategic Priority 5 – High Performing Government (Goal 5.3 – Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making).

This item aligns with the following Cross-Cutting Threads:

1. Community Trust: The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is being reviewed at a public meeting of the CHB and notices were sent to property owners within a 300-foot radius of the property, providing an opportunity to comment on the project.
2. Equity: The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness will be discussed at a CHB meeting meetings which is available to all residents and can be viewed both in person and virtually.
3. Fiscal Responsibility: The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness has no impact on City General Funds.
4. Innovation: The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness makes use of historic design principle and innovative new materials to eliminate potential impacts to the historic resource.
5. Sustainability and Resiliency: The proposed rehabilitation will allow the City to better serve the residence, allow for future needs, and make efforts in reduced energy use.

EXHIBITS LIST

1. Staff Recommended Conditions of Approval
2. Aerial Photo/Location
3. CHB Staff Report 12-17-80
4. CHB Minutes 12-17-80
5. CHB Resolution No 11
6. National Register Nomination
7. Site Photos
8. Project Plans (Site plan, floor plans, elevation, materials sheet, renderings, height).
9. Window Refurbishment and Replacement Analysis
10. Secretary of the Interior Standards Assessment by Rincon Consulting, November 6, 2024

Prepared by: Scott Watson, Historic Preservation Officer
Approved by: Maribeth Tinio, City Planner



CITY OF
RIVERSIDE

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT PLANNING DIVISION

EXHIBIT 1 – CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

PLANNING CASE: DP-2024-01493

MEETING DATE: December 18, 2024

CASE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

1. **Salvage:** Salvaged roof tiles shall be stored in a secure location for later reinstallation.
2. **Paint Stripping:** Paint stripping shall be completed by gentlest means possible. Blasting of any type is not acceptable. Stripping method shall be tested in an inconspicuous location on a side entry and shall be review by the City Historic Preservation Officer prior to moving forward on full paint stripping.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

3. There is a one-year time limit in which to secure the necessary building permits required by this Certificate of Appropriateness. If unable to obtain necessary permits, a time extension request letter stating the reasons for the extension of time shall be submitted to the Planning Division. HP staff may administratively extend the term of a Certificate of Appropriateness for one year, no more than twice.

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THE APPLICANT WILL NOT BE NOTIFIED BY THE PLANNING DIVISION ABOUT THE PENDING EXPIRATION OF THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.

4. The project must be completed in accordance with the Cultural Heritage Board's (CHB) Certificate of Appropriateness approval, including all conditions listed. Any subsequent changes to the project must be approved by the CHB or HP staff.
5. 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.
6. Granting 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.