



# City of Orange

## Legislation Text

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**TO:** Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee

**THRU:** Anna Pehoushek, Assistant Community Development Director

**FROM:** Kelly Ribuffo, Associate Planner - Historic Preservation

### 1. SUBJECT

Design Review No. 5040-21, Hilbert Museum of California Art, 167 N. Atchison Street

### 2. SUMMARY

Recommendation of approval to the Community Development Director.

The applicant proposes to renovate two buildings to create a 20,275 square foot expanded campus for the Hilbert Museum of California Art, including partial conversion of a parking lot into a central courtyard, installation of new landscape and hardscape, and a master sign and art program.

### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant/Owner: Chapman University

Property Location: 167 N. Atchison Street and 190 N. Cypress Street

General Plan Designation: Public Facilities and Institution (PFI)

Zoning Classification: Public Institutional - Specific Plan (P-I (S-P)): Chapman University Specific Plan

Existing Development: 10,275 square foot museum with accessory dance studio and 10,000 square foot dance school

Associated Application: Minor Site Plan Review No. 1045-21

Previous Design Review Committee (DRC) Project Review: None

### 4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, Chapman University, proposes to combine two properties and renovate two existing buildings to create an expanded campus for the Hilbert Museum of California Art. The existing Hilbert Museum building, located at 167 N. Atchison Street, will be renovated inside and out and combined with the current Judith A. Partridge Dance Center building, located at 190 N. Cypress Street. The Dance Center will be relocated to the Villa Park Orchards Packing House prior to the beginning of construction.

Exterior finishes on both buildings will be removed and overhauled to create a unified project design. Design features of the project include:

## Architecture

- Smooth and medium texture stucco siding in Dunn Edwards Mission White and High Noon.
- Construction of 'urban marker' corner roof elements on both buildings.
- Open air courtyard framing walls clad in stucco with support walls clad in Arto Roman concrete tiles in Natural Gray.
- Installation of the *Pleasures Along the Beach* mosaic mural by Millard Sheets over the west entrance to the central courtyard.
- New clear anodized doors and windows.

## Landscape and Hardscape

- A new central courtyard connecting the north and south buildings, featuring a specimen Coast Live Oak tree.
- Creation of three separate themed gardens along N. Atchison Street.
- Refurbished drought tolerant perimeter landscaping in the new parking lot area.
- Custom mixed large aggregate concrete paving in the courtyard and garden walkways.

## Signs and Art

- Master sign and art program identifies placement of identification signs and locations for future public art installations.

Additional details on the design concept and plans are included as Attachments 3 and 4 of this report.

The project as proposed meets the development standards for the Chapman University Specific Plan A-2 planning area, including building height and parking requirements. The Public Works Department is currently processing a Lot Line Adjustment to combine both lots into one parcel.

Under the Chapman University Specific Plan, the Community Development Director makes a final determination on the project following a recommendation from the Design Review Committee.

## **5. EXISTING SITE**

The project site consists of two adjacent parcels at 167 N. Atchison Street and 190 N. Cypress Street.

The building at 167 N. Atchison Street was constructed in 1971 as a tilt-up industrial warehouse. In 2015, the City approved Design Review No. 4774-14 and Minor Site Plan No. 0976-14 for conversion of the building to the Hilbert Museum in 7,887 square feet of the building, with the remaining 2,338 square feet dedicated to dance studio space for the Partridge Dance Center.

The Judith A. Partridge Dance Center at 190 N. Cypress Street is also an adaptive reuse of an industrial building. The building was constructed in 1967 and was used as part of a citrus packing house operation. In 2002, the City approved Conditional Use Permit No. 2402-02, Design Review No. 3725-02, and Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 1689-02 for conversion of the building into the

Dance Center by Chapman University.

Both properties share reciprocal access to adjoining parking lots, which have access to Atchison and Cypress Streets.

## 6. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The combined property is located within the boundaries of three planning areas, as follows:

- Old Towne Historic District Located three blocks west of the Plaza, the property is a non-contributing resource within the historic district.
- Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan Area The property is located directly east across North Atchison Street from the historic Santa Fe Depot, and is identified in the specific plan as a potential redevelopment site within the specific plan area. The specific plan also identifies the opportunity to create a plaza space and mid-block pedestrian connection at the project site. For all properties within the specific plan area that are also within the boundaries of the Chapman University Specific Plan, the Chapman University document supersedes the other in terms of regulating the use and development of the property.
- Chapman University Specific Plan Area The property is located within Academic Planning Area 2 (A-2) within the Atchison Street Overlay of the Chapman University Specific Plan. Cultural facilities such as museums are permitted by right in this planning area.

The property is surrounded by the following land uses:

- North: Chapman University Digital Media Arts Center and Dodge College of Film and Media Arts (P-I (SP))
- East: Residential Houses (OTMU-15S (SP))
- South: Automotive Repair/Service (OTMU-15S (SP))
- West: Santa Fe Depot/Ruby's Diner (OTMU-15S (SP)).

## 7. ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

### Issue 1. Compatibility with Surrounding Development:

The project site is located within three planning areas with complementary design standards and goals. Overall, all three documents emphasize preservation of the industrial character of the area surrounding the Santa Fe Depot through adaptive reuse of buildings, enhancing pedestrian access, and encouraging cultural uses that serve both Chapman University and the community at large.

Section 5.2 of the Chapman University Specific Plan requires compatibility of Specific Plan area development with the surrounding Old Towne Historic District. The buildings on the project property are non-contributing resources to the Old Towne Historic District. Therefore, staff focused analysis on the compatibility of the development with adjacent historic resources and the surrounding setting. The property is located within an area identified as the railroad/packinghouse corridor in the Old Towne Design Standards and within the boundaries of the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan, directly adjacent to the Depot building. Character-defining features of the area include a mix of industrial and vernacular buildings associated with the citrus packing industry, minimal right-of-way improvements, and focus on the Santa Fe Depot and Depot Park as the primary destination in the area.

It is the opinion of staff that the proposed project meets the development intent and design

standards, and urban design framework for the Santa Fe Depot area, as follows:

- The project maintains the existing development pattern of the site by keeping both smaller buildings as part of the museum expansion versus constructing one larger building.
- Additional building height added through the corner urban markers and courtyard enclosure is within the range of existing building mass and scale present along Cypress Street, gradually stepping up from E. Chapman Avenue to E. Sycamore Avenue.
- Proposed exterior finishes are within the palette of materials used on adjacent properties and consistent with the simple architecture of the buildings.
- The simple architectural design of the building does not compete with or diminish the architectural importance of the Spanish Colonial Revival style of the Santa Fe depot.
- The central public courtyard maintains a view of the Santa Fe Depot from Cypress Street and creates a pedestrian connection between the Orange Transportation Center, Metrolink Parking Structure, and the Old Towne Plaza. This courtyard implements a key element of the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan urban design framework (Attachment 8) providing an amenity-rich public courtyard and mid-block pedestrian connection for the Depot towards the Plaza.
- Proposed landscaping along N. Atchison Street incorporates some of the plant palette from Depot Park, creating a design connection between the two properties framing the Orange Transportation Center.

#### Issue 2. Sign Program:

The applicant has prepared a master sign program for the Hilbert Museum that addresses identification signs, temporary banners for advertising exhibits, and future placement of public art on the exterior of the building.

The proposed program complies with the size and number limits set in the Chapman University Specific Plan for wall mounted and ground mounted monument signs. The maximum number of signs is specified for each sign type. Potential alternative locations are identified in the sign program for some sign types, but the overall number cannot be exceeded for each type on a given elevation.

Chapman University Specific Plan Section 5.5.8 sets forth requirements for art-in-public places, but does not set a limit on the size or number of art pieces that may be displayed. In the interest of providing for predictability in the appearance of the building, the sign program identifies potential locations for future art installations on the exterior of the building. Installation artwork will be coordinated with the Community Development Director to confirm conformance with the sign program.

It is the opinion of staff that the sign program sets reasonable limits for signage for the Hilbert Museum given the length of the campus frontage facing Atchison Street, Maple Avenue, and Cypress Street. The requirement for approval by the Community Development Director prior to installation

also ensures future installations of signs and art conform to the intent of the sign program.

## 8. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Staff reviewed the proposed project on April 28, 2021, July 14, 2021, and September 1, 2021 and has recommended approval of the project subject to conditions of approval in Attachment 7.

## 9. PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 7.8 of the Chapman University Specific Plan (Amendment #6) on September 24, 2021, mailed notification of the Design Review Committee meeting was sent to 1,327 owners and occupants within the boundaries of and within 300 feet of the Chapman University Specific Plan Area. The property was posted in eight locations on the same date.

## 10. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

**Categorical Exemption:** The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines 15301 (Class 1 - Existing Facilities). The project consists of alterations to existing buildings to allow for a new use permitted by the applicable zoning regulations for the project property. No public notification is required for a categorical exemption.

## 11. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

Findings for DRC applications come from four sources:

- The Orange Municipal Code
- The Infill Residential Design Guidelines
- The Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne (commonly referred to the Old Towne Design Standards (or OTDS)
- Orange Eichler Design Standards (or OEDS)

The Findings are applied as appropriate to each project. Based on the following Findings and statements in support of such Findings, staff recommends the DRC recommend approval of the project to the Community Development Director with recommended conditions.

- *In the Old Towne Historic District, the proposed work conforms to the prescriptive standards and design criteria referenced and/or recommended by the DRC or other reviewing body for the project (OMC 17.10.070.G.1).*

The project complies with the Old Towne Design Standards. Character-defining features of the area include a mix of industrial and vernacular buildings associated with the citrus packing industry, minimal right-of-way improvements, and focus on the Santa Fe Depot and Depot Park as the primary destination in the area.

The project retains the industrial character of both buildings through the use of simple architectural elements and materials that are consistent with the size and materials of surrounding properties. Additional building height added through the corner urban markers and courtyard enclosure is within the range of existing building mass and scale present along Cypress Street, gradually stepping up from E. Chapman Avenue to E. Sycamore Avenue. Proposed landscaping along N. Atchison Street incorporates some of the plant palette from Depot Park, creating a design connection between the two properties framing the Santa Fe

Depot Orange Transportation Center without overdevelopment of the right-of-way landscaping.

- *In any National Register Historic District, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines (OMC 17.10.07.G.2).*

The subject property is not a contributing resource to the National Register-listed Old Towne Historic District. However, the property is adjacent to the Santa Fe Depot and the project was evaluated based on its potential to affect the setting of the streetscape along N. Atchison Street and N. Cypress Street.

The proposed project does not adversely impact the integrity of the historic character of the Santa Fe Depot area. The project maintains the existing development pattern of the site by keeping both smaller buildings as part of the museum expansion versus constructing one larger building. Building improvements are within a similar palette of the material, color, mass and scale of adjacent development. The simple architectural design of the building does not compete with or diminish the architectural importance of the Spanish Colonial Revival style of the Santa Fe depot. Furthermore, proposed landscaping is a mix of discrete gardens and more general landscaping connecting the property to the historic Depot Park at the corner of Atchison Street and Chapman Avenue.

- *The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of an internally consistent, integrated design theme and is consistent with all adopted specific plans, applicable design standards, and their required findings (OMC 17.10.07.G.3).*

As proposed, the project complies with the Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne, the Chapman University Specific Plan, and the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan. The project is internally consistent with an integrated design theme. Both buildings will be remodeled to have the same exterior finishes, with roof corner markers and a courtyard roofline to join the two buildings together as one development. The project also has a unified sign program that governs exterior signage and public art installation. The proposed courtyard is also consistent with, and supports, the urban design and pedestrian connection framework of the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan.

Furthermore, the project respects the historic context of the surrounding Old Towne Historic District and the Santa Fe Depot. Proposed exterior finishes are within the palette of materials used on adjacent properties and consistent with the simple architecture of the buildings. The simple style of the architecture also serves as a backdrop to the Spanish Colonial Revival style Santa Fe Depot and will not compete with the building for prominence along N. Atchison Street.

## 12. CONDITIONS

The approval of this project is subject to the following conditions:

1. This project is approved as a precise plan. All work shall conform in substance and be maintained in general conformance with the plans included as Attachment 3 (date stamped September 23, 2021) of this report, including modifications required by the conditions of approval, and as recommended for approval by the Design Review Committee. Any changes from the approved plans shall be subject to subsequent review and approval by the Design Review Committee.
2. After any application has been approved, if changes are proposed regarding the location or alteration of any use or structure, a changed plan may be submitted to the Community Development Director for approval. If the Community Development Director determines that the proposed change complies with the provisions and the spirit and intent of the approval action, and that the action would have been the same for the changed plan as for the approved plan, the Community Development Director may approve the changed plan without requiring a new public meeting.
3. The applicant agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the City, its officers, agents and employees from any and all liability or claims that may be brought against the City arising out of its approval of this permit, save and except that caused by the City's active negligence.
4. The final approved conditions of approval shall be reprinted on the first or second page of the construction documents when submitting to the Building Division for the plan check process.
5. Construction permits shall be obtained for all future construction work, as required by the City of Orange Building Division. Failure to obtain the required building permits will be cause for revocation of this permit.
6. If not utilized, project approval expires 24 months from the approval date. Extensions of time may be granted in accordance with OMC Section 17.08.060

## 13. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2 - Letter of Explanation
- Attachment 3 - Project Booklet
- Attachment 4 - Architectural Plans date stamped September 23, 2021
- Attachment 5 - Sign Program
- Attachment 6 - DPR Forms for 167 N. Atchison Street and 190 N. Cypress Street
- Attachment 7 - Staff Recommended Conditions of Approval
- Attachment 8 - Excerpt from the Santa Fe Depot Specific Plan