



COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: December 5, 2023
CATEGORY: New Business
DEPT.: Public Works
TITLE: **Public Safety Building, Project 20-49—
Conceptual Design and Public Art Budget**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve the revised project scope and site plan.
2. Select an architectural conceptual design for the building.
3. Approve a Public Art budget increase from \$400,000 to \$1 million.

BACKGROUND

The existing Police and Fire Administration facility opened in 1980 and houses fixed Police Department operations, Emergency Dispatch (9-1-1 Call Center), Fire Department administration, support staff, and the Emergency Operations Center. The 44,000 square foot building was designed prior to the Essential Service Seismic Safety Act of 1986 and does not meet current seismic standards for such structures.

The project will replace the existing facility with a completely new facility on the same 4.3-acre site at 1000 Villa Street, at the corner of Villa and Franklin Streets (see Figure 1). The neighboring sites' uses are two- to four-story commercial and multi-family buildings along Franklin Street and one- to two-story single-family residential structures along Villa Street and Oak Street. To the north, the project site adjoins West Evelyn Avenue and the Caltrain tracks, and the northwesterly quadrant

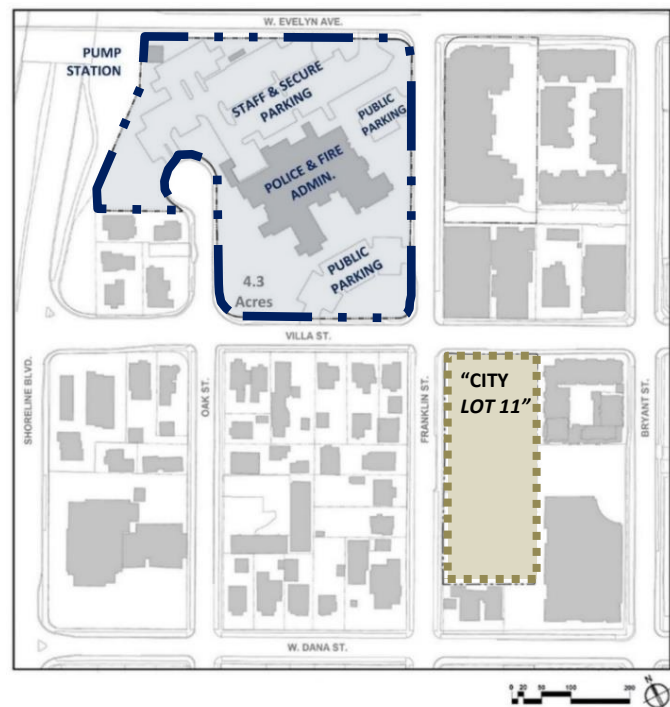


Figure 1: Location Map

of the site houses a municipal water pump station adjacent to the elevated portion of Shoreline Boulevard.

On [October 12, 2021](#), Council reviewed three project scope alternatives based on a 2030 Space Needs Assessment for the new Public Safety Building and directed staff to proceed with a new building on the existing site. Council also authorized the City Manager to amend the existing design professional services agreement with SVA Architects, Inc., to provide architectural and engineering design services through the schematic design phase.

On [September 27, 2022](#), Council reviewed site layout options and selected the most cost-effective option that would allow continuous public safety operations on the site while the new building is constructed. This option included a roughly one-acre area that would be available after the project is constructed for future City needs. Council directed staff to return to Council for approval of the conceptual design for the new facility based on the approved site layout.

On [June 27, 2023](#), Council reviewed the recommended site and architectural conceptual design and provided direction to make the following changes to the building and site layout:

1. Accommodate the expected population for the building 40 to 50 years from now and, if needed, provide more building space through the addition of another floor, another building on the remnant parcel, or another alternative;
2. Add a second egress from the garage, but aim to minimize the impact of the second egress on the future utility of the remnant parcel;
3. Add a shooting range on the parcel;
4. Maintain the corner of Villa Street and Franklin Street as a welcoming space for community activities;
5. Ensure the building engages with the street; and
6. Include architectural changes that are welcoming and provide for natural light, while also emulating the permanence and presence of the City Hall and Center for the Performing Arts buildings.

Council also included in the motion that staff be granted discretion to recommend elements that would not substantially delay the project or increase its cost.

ANALYSIS

Staff and the design team have revised and refined the project scope and site plan according to Council direction, while ensuring public safety operational goals can be achieved. The project team also developed architectural design concept alternatives for Council's consideration.

Revised Project Scope and Site Plan

The recommended revisions to the project scope include the following:

- Increase the building size from 68,000 square feet to 75,000 square feet, which includes enlarging the multi-purpose auditorium from 1,500 square feet to 2,500 square feet;
- Add a second public safety vehicle access point from the parking structure to Franklin Street;
- Add a fully enclosed shooting range to the top of the parking garage structure;
- Increase the expanded outdoor event space outside the auditorium; and
- Increase the number of public parking spaces from 25 to 33 spaces.

These scope revisions have been incorporated into a revised site plan (see Figure 2). Accommodating these changes has required reducing the size of the future use area from 0.9 acre to 0.6 acre; however, 0.6 acre is large enough to accommodate a future City administrative building, expanded Public Safety operations, or other use. After the Public Safety Building project is completed, staff will add landscaping to this area until it is needed for a future City use.

In the revised site plan, the building continues to front along Villa Street with the primary public entrance at the intersection of Villa Street and Franklin Street. The building setback along Villa Street is about 18' from the back of curb, allowing ample space for wide sidewalks, trees, and landscaping. The auditorium and adjacent outdoor space off the visitor parking area can also be used for non-Public Safety events. Separate secure loading and staff vehicle access are provided off Oak Street and from the midblock on Franklin Street adjacent to the public parking lot.

The proposed site and landscape design balances security needs for Public Safety operations with the open presence and public use desired for a civic building in downtown. A combination of different site elements such as on-grade planters and site walls help integrate security into functional elements, providing seating/gathering opportunities while also allowing visibility and access towards the building. The proposed landscape curves, with natural forms contrasting with the building, provide interest along all three primary public frontages. The corner public entry

plaza provides greater openness and integrated seating areas, providing a clear entry into the building (see Figure 3).

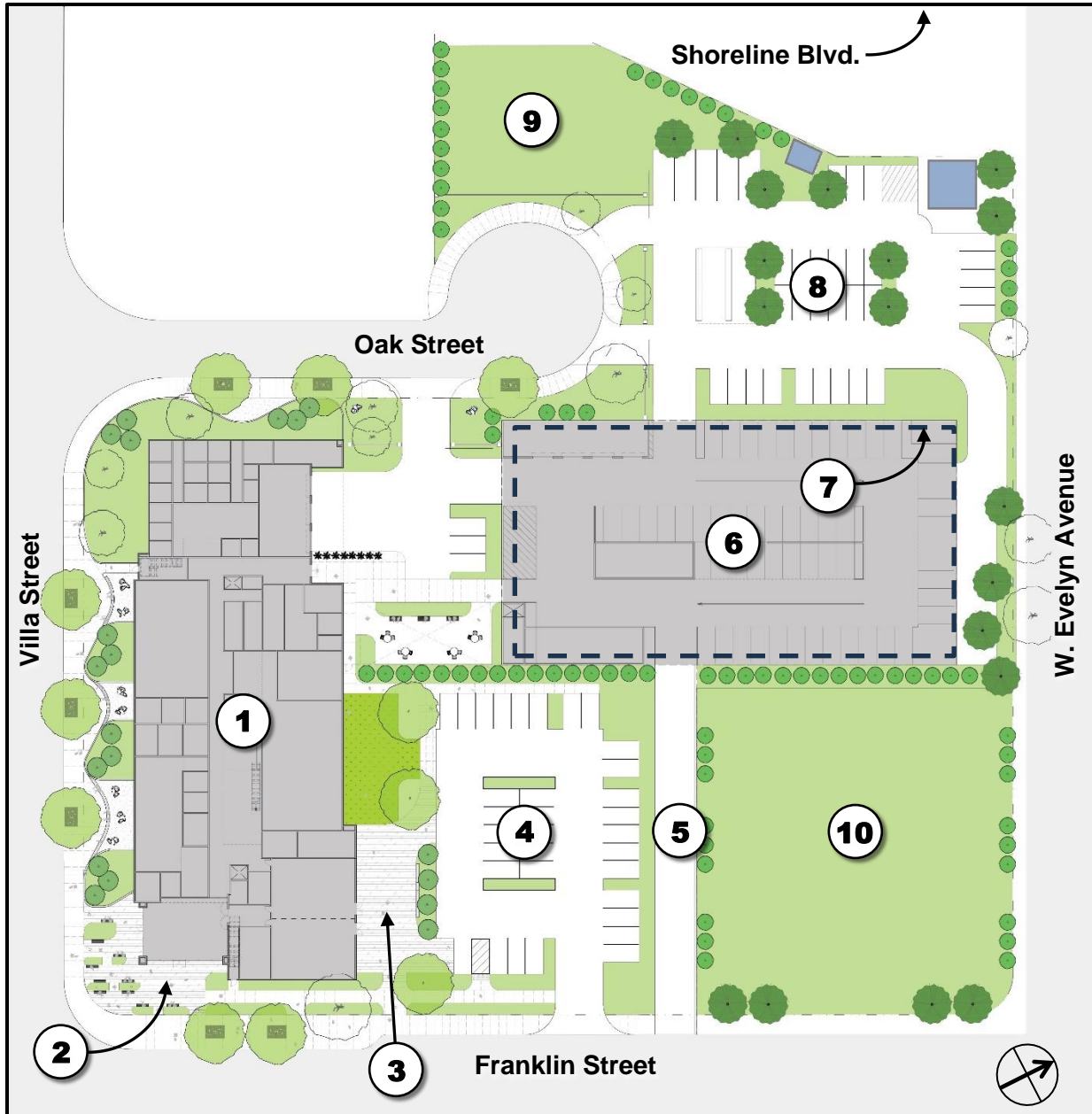


Figure 2: Revised Conceptual Site Plan

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. 75,000 square foot building | 6. Secure staff parking structure |
| 2. Corner public entry plaza | 7. 15-lane shooting range (top level) |
| 3. Public event plaza | 8. Secure staff surface parking |
| 4. Public parking | 9. K9 Training Area |
| 5. Second public safety vehicle access | 10. Future City use (0.6 acre) |

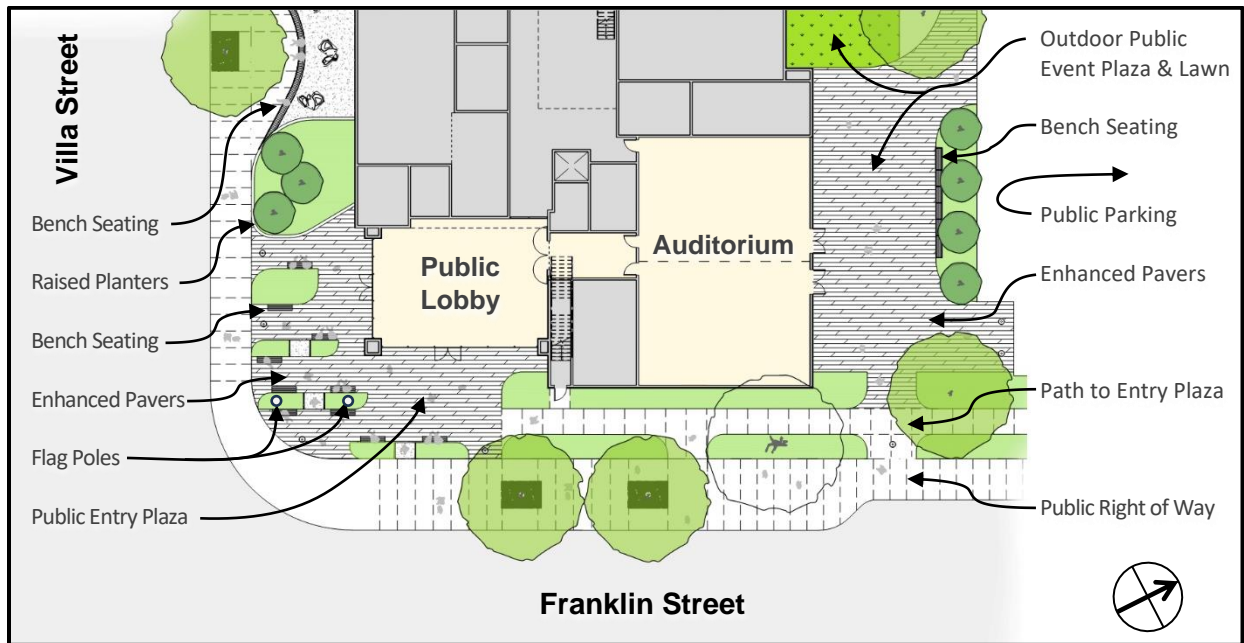


Figure 3: Conceptual Corner Public Entry and Public Event Plazas

The project still requires a phased demolition of the existing Police/Fire Administration Building and the use of the adjacent City Lot 11 for construction staging and temporary staff parking. Lot 11 will be restored as a public parking lot after the new project is fully occupied and operational.

Attachment 1 provides more detail on the building and site designs.

Public Safety Building Size and Growth Capacity

To address the Public Safety Building's future growth capacity, the building has been enlarged across all three floors to a new total size of approximately 75,000 square feet (from the previous 68,000 square feet). This approach allows for flexibility for future revisions and furniture layouts, is more cost-effective than the potential addition of a fourth floor, and eliminates the potential for underutilized space. It also only required a modest increase in the building's footprint. As noted above, the first-floor large auditorium has been enlarged to 2,500 square feet (previously 1,500 square feet) to allow for larger community meetings and staff training sessions.

The updated layout will accommodate 243 Police/Fire personnel, which is 78 more personnel than the current staffing of 165, representing a 47% increase in available staffing growth. At this size, the proposed Public Safety Building is expected to provide sufficient capacity for growth for the next 40 to 50 years.

Table 1: Building Capacity

	Current Facility	June 27, 2023 Proposal	New Recommended Size
Building Size	44,000 square feet	68,000 square feet	75,000 square feet
Staffing Capacity	165	198	243

Revised Conceptual Floor Plans

The three-story building plan is organized around a central atrium which provides circulation, natural light from above, and contains informal staff areas on each floor, including kitchens and seating. The program was divided amongst the floor levels based on functional requirements for grouping complementary uses and a priority for spaces with direct public interaction on the ground floor. Secure areas requiring limited exterior transparency for security purposes are grouped towards the site interior and Oak Street frontages on the ground floor to allow for the best exterior presence and visibility along more high-traffic frontages. The proposed concept floor plans have been reviewed multiple times with Police, Fire, and Emergency Operations staff to ensure they meet public safety mission requirements and provide a functional and collaborative environment for its users. Revised Conceptual Floor Plans are provided in Attachment 1.

Building Massing and Exterior Expression of the Program

The size and massing of the conceptual design is driven by the updated space needs and the desire to integrate the new building into the fabric of this transitional downtown/residential area. Key size and massing elements to be integrated into the selected architectural design concept include:

1. *Building Facade Strategy*—The building massing will create a two-story main entry lobby as a key corner element within a three-story building volume. This portal will be differentiated from the remainder of the facade expressions along both Villa and Franklin Streets and provide a strong element in whichever exterior architectural design option is selected.
2. *Oak Street Treatment*—The program elements along Oak Street on the first floor are intake and loading and the facade treatment will be solid, which will provide some privacy to the residences across the street.
3. *Corner Public Entry Plaza*—The plaza design will feature a series of staggered linear planters and built-in seating creating a more porous interface with the streetscapes. The proposed layout balances objectives for streetscape landscaping, building protection, and plaza use for press conferences and other gatherings.

4. *Public Event Plaza*—The greatly enlarged plaza outside the auditorium will provide space for community events with more open area as well as providing an appropriate direct entry into the auditorium that allows it to function separately from the secure areas of the building when needed.

Staff recommends that Council approve the revised project scope and site plan as shown in Figure 2, which includes an increased building size to 75,000 square feet, a shooting range, an expanded outdoor event space outside the auditorium, an increased number of public parking spaces, a second public safety vehicle access point from the parking structure to Franklin Street, and approximately 0.6 acre for future City use.

Architectural Design Options

Per Council direction and using the above massing strategies, the design team revisited the exterior architecture of the project to develop distinct design alternatives that better represents the permanence and presence of a civic building. Even though the architectural styles explored were broader than the prior round, the design team still sought to embody the characteristics of *civic mission, urban context, and City values*, as follows:

1. *Civic Mission*: The design must reflect the mission of the public safety departments it houses to convey trust, responsibility, and a sense of permanence. The architecture should reflect this with a combination of modern design elements that are based on timeless design principles of patterns, proportion, and balance.
2. *Urban Context*: The building must address the urban context of downtown—both the building and exterior spaces should complement surrounding buildings and streetscape design, while addressing updated community goals for an inviting pedestrian realm.
3. *City Values*: The building should reflect the City’s values, including sustainability, transparency, and service to the community in a financially responsible manner.

The design team developed several alternatives for the exterior scheme to explore a full variety of styles that are appropriate for the above goals and the context of the project site. These were then reviewed internally with Police, Fire and Planning to select and refine four potential candidates for further review (see Attachment 2). Two of these options are being presented for Council’s consideration: Civic Traditional and Civic Americana. Both of these architectural styles emulate the presence and characteristics desired for a civic building as well as having connections to existing buildings within the City of Mountain View.

Civic Traditional: This option is an expression of perhaps the quintessential architectural style in California—the Mission style. The style provides a familiar vernacular with a mixture of the gravitas appropriate for a public safety building. The tower and the arches add a sense of grace and elegance and are well-suited to accentuating the main entry and breaking up the long Villa Street elevation. The traditional scheme’s materials would feature stucco with a stone or precast wainscot as well as a tile roof. This style is reminiscent of Mountain View’s old town hall from the 1920s (photo included in Figure 5). Figure 4 provides sketches of the proposed Civic Traditional style for the Public Safety Building while Figure 5 provides photo examples of this style. Additional elevations, renderings, and example photos are provided in Attachment 3.

Figure 4: Civic Traditional Concept Sketches



View along Villa Street



View of Corner Public Entry Plaza at Villa and Franklin Streets

Figure 5: Civic Traditional Examples



Old Town Hall (the 1920s)—401 Castro Street



Calabasas Library, Calabasas, CA



775 Franklin Street, Santa Clara, CA

Civic Americana: This option is a classic American architectural style, commonly used for both civic and transportation buildings. The building is characterized by large massing elements, prominent gable roof forms, and strong symmetry. Similar to the traditional style, the elevations provide a balancing of glazing and solid materials to convey civic character as well as the security needs of the Public Safety Building. The Americana scheme would include precast siding and/or stone veneer, as well as a standing metal seam roof at the gables. Figure 6 provides sketches of the Civic Americana style for the Public Safety Building. Figure 7 has photo examples of this style in Mountain View and other cities. Additional elevations, renderings, and example photos are provided in Attachment 3.

Figure 6: Civic Americana Sketches



View along Villa Street



View of Corner Public Entry Plaza at Villa Street and Franklin Street

Figure 7: Civic Americana Examples



Castro Station, Evelyn Avenue



Mountain View Train Station



Lake Forest, CA

Design Concepts Not Recommended

The two candidate concepts in Attachment 2 that are not being recommended are Civic Modern and Civic Expressive. While each of these concepts meet the goals of expressing a “civic mission” and sense of permanence for the new Public Safety Building, they have characteristics that present challenges.

The Civic Modern design expresses its “permanence” through large, solid massing and ridged rectilinear detailing that, while appropriate for a civic structure, is not as relatable in a municipal building setting. Its larger massing and absence of human-scale details are more suitable for a State or Federal building and may seem out of place in a transitional residential/downtown Mountain View context across the street from single-family residences.

The Civic Expressive design has many of the similar characteristics as the Civic Modern in terms of massing and repetition of forms and explored the idea of introducing whimsical and playful screening elements that tie the building’s facades together. The “expressive” screen concept is intended to evoke the symbolic Mountain View oak trees. While staff considered this option as a way to provide a more iconic and unique design solution, the final detailing and execution of this approach are not clear enough to ensure a successful outcome. The design team was not able to find examples of where this approach as presented here has been built. This option carried the risk that it would be determined during further design that the desired effect would be difficult to achieve and/or an acceptable final design may not be possible, resulting in costly delays for a redesign.

Upon reflection of what was most appealing about the Civic Expressive design, it was concluded that this design created an impression of art along the Villa Street frontage. A similar effect could be achieved by selecting and installing art within the setback area between the sidewalk and building along Villa Street. This would be in addition to public art inside the building and a possible focal art piece in the corner public entry plaza and/or outdoor public event plaza. The Public Art budget for the building based on Council Policy K-5 is \$400,000; however, to provide for the scale of art described here, staff recommends increasing the Public Art budget to \$1 million for the project.

Staff recommends that Council select either the Civic Traditional or Civic Americana design style for the building, provide any additional feedback on refining the selected design style, and increase the Public Art budget to \$1 million.

Next Steps

Upon approval of the Conceptual Design, the design team will commence schematic and final design to further develop the architectural and engineering designs as well as delve into more detailed landscape and site development. Staff will return to Council in early 2024 for the garage

architectural design. Staff will also return to Council in fall 2024 for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) clearance and to bring a recommendation for Heritage tree removals and mitigations.

Staff will meet with the Visual Arts Committee in fall 2024 to review public art options for this project.

FISCAL IMPACT

Public Safety Building, Design, Project 20-49, is currently funded with a total of \$2 million from the Construction/Conveyance Tax Fund, which is sufficient to complete conceptual and schematic design. At the completion of schematic design, staff will return to Council to request an appropriation for the final design and for approval to amend the design agreement with SVA Architects to add funding for final design. No additional appropriation is being requested at this time.

Per the [June 27, 2023 Council report](#), the previous estimated cost for this project was between \$160 million and \$165 million, depending on the final design details. That estimate assumed the project would begin construction in or about March 2025 and be completed in late 2027. With the proposed changes to the building size and program as well as the revised project timeline and increased Public Art budget, the current estimate has been increased by \$39 million and is now between \$199 million and \$204 million. The increased costs are attributed to the following factors:

1. Increased Building Size and Public Art Budget:	\$16 million
2. Added Shooting Range:	16 million
3. Cost Escalation:	<u>7 million</u>
Total Increased Costs:	<u>\$39 million</u>

This updated estimate assumes that the project will begin construction in fall 2025 and be completed in mid-2028. Delays in this schedule will add \$5 million to \$10 million a year in escalation costs.

CONCLUSION

The recommended revisions to the project scope and the site layout will meet the functional requirements of the project for at least the next 40 to 50 years and ensure optimum use of the project site.

The proposed architecture styles embody the principles of civic architecture, offering a timeless and adaptable design that accommodates the diverse needs of the community. The design

ensures that the City’s civic buildings are not only visually compelling, but also highly functional and welcoming to all. An increase to the Public Art budget to \$1 million will allow the artistic elements to match the scale and importance of the project to the larger Mountain View community.

Staff is seeking approval of the increased project size, the conceptual site and floor plans, and direction from Council on the architectural style of the project so detailed design can commence.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Modify the revised project scope and/or site plan.
2. Select the Civic Modern or Civic Expressive design concept alternative.
3. Direct staff to develop additional conceptual architectural design alternatives for Council’s consideration.
4. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting and mailers to residents and property owners within a 750' radius of the project boundaries.

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Attachments: 1. Revised Conceptual Site and Floor Plans
 2. Conceptual Architectural Treatment Options
 3. Elevations and Renderings of the Proposed Concepts