

Case File Number: PLN17101

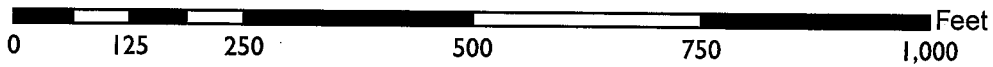
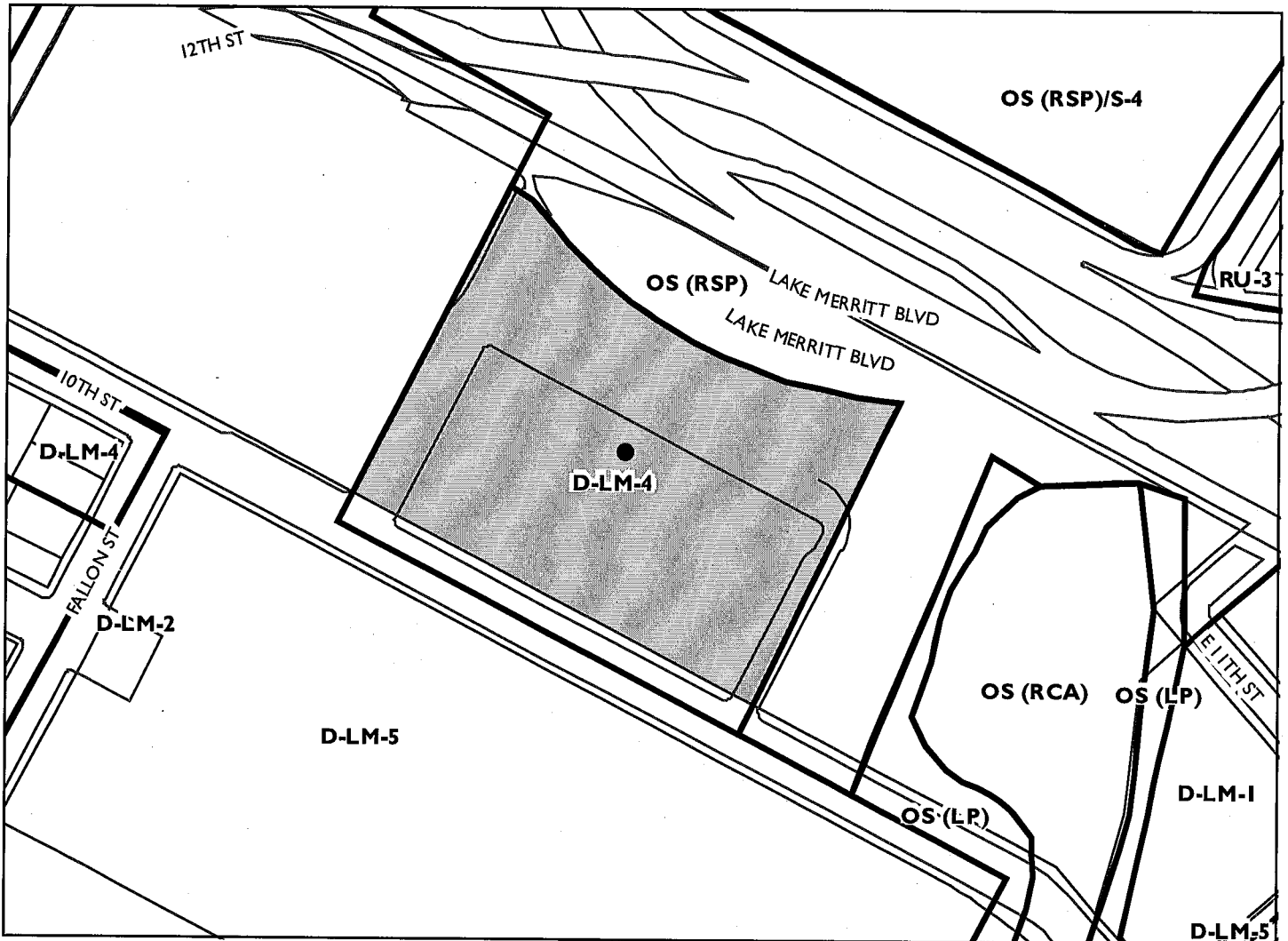
March 12, 2018

Location:	Oakland Auditorium; 10-10th Street; APN 018 045000500.
Proposal:	Renovation and adaptive reuse of the Oakland Auditorium, a City-owned, designated landmark.
Applicant:	Orton Development, Inc (Carole Bradley, (510)734-7628).
Owner:	City of Oakland
Planning Permits Required:	Major Conditional Use Permit, Design Review, compliance with CEQA.
General Plan:	Lake Merritt Specific Plan
Zoning:	D-LM-4
Environmental Determination:	TBD
Historic Status:	rated "A1+", designated Oakland landmark
City Council District:	3 – Abel Guillen
Action to be Taken:	Information Report
Finality of Decision:	NA
For further information:	Contact case planner Catherine Payne at 510-238-6168 or by e-mail at cpayne@oaklandnet.com

SUMMARY

The purpose of this staff report is to provide an update regarding the status of the application for the Oakland Auditorium project. The project applicant, Orton Development, Inc. (ODI), presented a conceptual project description to the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) at the regularly scheduled meeting on February 5, 2018. The LPAB provided comments and requested additional information. At this time, the applicant has prepared responses to some of the LPAB requests and staff has updates regarding the project entitlement schedule.

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD



Case File: PLN17101
Applicant: Nicholas Orton
Address: 10 10th Street
Zone: D-LM-4

PROJECT SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The Oakland Auditorium (Auditorium) is a 4.47-acre site located at 10-10th Street, between Chinatown and East Oakland. The Auditorium is a prominent landmark on the edge of Lake Merritt, along the 12th Street frontage. The Auditorium is located near Laney College, the Main Oakland Public Library, the Alameda County Courthouse, and the Camron-Stanford House.

Existing Conditions

The project site is occupied by the existing vacant Auditorium, which consists of a single, three-story building with three stories and one basement level, as well as associated surface parking and vehicular access. The building includes 228,000 square feet of floor area. The Auditorium originally opened in 1914 as a multi-purpose venue, and closed in 2005. The project site is listed as a City Landmark. There is a parking lot on the north and east sides of the project site with approximately 185 spaces currently used for public parking. Access to the parking lot is via two driveways on 10th Street, and an additional driveway on 12th Street. The driveway on the western side the project site contains a planted median.

Surrounding Context

The area immediately surrounding the project site contains primarily institutional and open space land uses and is located largely in the Lake Merritt Area of Primary Importance (API).

- **Lake Merritt:** Lake Merritt and the Lake Merritt Amphitheater are located north of the project site. Lake Merritt was declared a Wildlife Refuge under the California Wildlife Act in 1870 and plays an important role as a recreational asset for the City. The trails around the lake are regularly used for walking and jogging. The Auditorium is visually prominent from many vantage points along the edge of Lake Merritt.
- **Laney College:** Laney College, the largest of the four Peralta Community Colleges in Alameda County, is located south of the project site on approximately 60 acres of land, bounded by the Lake Merritt Channel, 7th, 10th, and Fallon Streets. The school serves a student population of over 14,000 students each semester, as well as more than 400 full-time and adjunct staff and employees.
- **Lake Merritt Channel:** Peralta Park and the Lake Merritt Channel are located east of the project site, and contains a multi-use path along water quality basins and restored tidal marsh along the Lake Merritt Channel. The Lake Merritt Channel connects Lake Merritt to the Estuary and San Francisco Bay.
- **The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA)** is located adjacent to the west of the project site. OMCA contains three levels of galleries, with gardens on each level, and has a parking garage with an entrance on Oak Street between 10th and 12th Streets.
- **Historic Context:** The Auditorium is a City-designated Landmark and is eligible for individual National Register listing. The Auditorium is located in and is a contributor to the Lake Merritt Area of Primary Importance (API) which generally includes Lake Merritt, the parklands on its shores, and one parcel out from the parklands surrounding the entire perimeter of the lake. A sampling of the API includes: the Municipal Boathouse; the Scottish Rite Temple; the Veterans' Memorial Building; St. Paul's Episcopal Church in the Adams Point neighborhood; the Lakeview Library; Our Lady of Lourdes Church; the Cleveland

Cascade Steps; and the Necklace of Lights. Within the immediate vicinity of the Auditorium, contributors include the Camron-Stanford House, the Fire Alarm Building and the Alameda County Courthouse.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is the rehabilitation of the vacant Auditorium and the surrounding site, which is owned by the City of Oakland, to provide new uses while preserving the existing building

- **Building:** The Project would preserve the existing building envelope, seismically upgrade the existing building via a podium along the north side of the building, and possibly introduce one or two glass “lean-to” pavilions on the podium to create a comfortable indoor-outdoor gathering space on the podium. The Project also would include two theaters: rehabilitation of the approximately 1,350 seat, existing Calvin Simmons Theater; and an approximately 300 seat theater in a third floor ballroom. The venues would represent a reduction in seating capacity relative to the original 1913 design. In addition, a new marquee would be located on the north side of the building indicating the directions of the arena and theater components of the building, as well as a skylight in the roof, similar to the original building skylights that were previously closed. The Project uses are generally organized within four areas of the Project building: the Theater, Podium, Basement, and Arena:
 - **Calvin Simmons Theater:** The 28,000 square-foot Calvin Simmons Theater is located on three floors of the building and would be rehabilitated, preserving the primary historic architectural details and the acoustics of the space. The theater area would function as a performing arts center, hosting live performances and providing performance and practice spaces for arts organizations.
 - **Ballrooms:** The two grand ballrooms outside the upper floors of the Calvin Simmons Theater would likewise be preserved and restored. A new restaurant on the ground floor would serve the building tenants and the surrounding Lake Merritt Area, with possible service to theater events such as performances and fundraisers.
 - **Podium:** The Project would include a new, approximately 15,000 square foot outdoor podium added to the north façade of the building to add seating for restaurant and other public facing uses. The eastern portion would include a new approximately 11,500 square foot public terrace with café seating, and new planters. The western 3,500 square foot portion would add seating for restaurant uses. Additional improvements could include one or two glass “lean-to” enclosures on either end of the podium (and against the northern exterior wall of the building) to frame the podium gathering space and provide comfortable indoor-outdoor space looking over Lake Merritt.

- Basement: The Basement area would include new space for ancillary office space, art and music studios, and storage space for tenants. An option would include office and conference room space totaling approximately 40,000 square feet; space for small-scale production of artisan and/or custom products, music and arts practice rooms totaling approximately 12,000 square feet; and the existing 15,030 square feet of general tenant/building storage.
- Arena: The Arena area of the Project building is approximately 37,000 square feet on the ground floor with a 30,000 square foot mezzanine overlooking the Arena floor. The Arena could accommodate civic, group assembly or commercial activities with non-structural retrofits.
- Other Characteristics of the Project:
 - Demolition Plan: The building renovations would include a series of demolition elements including the following:
 - seating and partition wall removal inside of the existing building for the purposes of opening the space for circulation and new uses. On the first floor, some bleacher seating would be removed in the Theater to allow for a new stepped floor.
 - In the Arena, partition walls and the stage at the west end would be removed.
 - Portions of the floor and the stage lift would be removed to allow for a new skywell to the basement.
 - On the second floor, a portion of the Arena seating and partition walls would be removed.
 - The intermediate diagonal steel beams would also be removed to allow for the open floor area, however, the main diagonal steel beams would remain.
 - On the third floor, partition walls would be removed, and the arena seating would remain.
 - Additionally, a portion of the roof would be removed to allow for new skylights within the historic skylight area, and coverings over existing windows would be removed to allow for window restoration as needed.
 - Landscaping, Open Space, and Tree Removal: The project would likely include tree removal and tree plantings to accommodate seismic support of the building and site planning improvements. In addition, the Project would install new street trees, as required, along all of the street frontages. Open space and amenities include a new approximately 6,100 square foot public terrace with café seating that would be located on an outdoor podium on the north side of the building, as well as a north-south pedestrian promenade between the Oakland Museum of California theater and the Calvin Simmons Theater connecting to 10th Street, and a flexible parking area that could be used for events.
 - Parking and Circulation: The project would provide up to 187 vehicle parking spaces by modifying the existing surface parking lot located to the north and east of the existing building. A loading area would be provided on 10th Street. As noted

above, the existing parking lot would be more generally modified to provide a flexible use space for outdoor events and festivals.

- Vehicular Access: Surface parking lot ingress and egress driveways would be located from the north off of 12th Street and from the south off of the eastern side of 10th Street. The Project would utilize existing curb cuts, and reconfigure the existing surface parking lot.

BACKGROUND

Historic Resource

In the wake of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, the City of Oakland saw an opportunity to become the major cultural center of the Bay Area, and the city went into a period of rapid growth. The Oakland Auditorium was constructed between 1913 and 1915 as one of many public and private projects planned during this growth period. The Oakland Hotel, constructed in 1910-12, was a companion project built to accommodate those attending conventions and other events at the auditorium. The Oakland City Hall, another major civic building, was completed in 1914. The Oakland Auditorium was originally planned as a convention center, and in 1912 a \$500,000 bond was issued for the project.

The Auditorium is a monumental-scaled rectangular, Beaux Arts-style building now surrounded by a large parking lot and vehicular access on three sides and fronting 10th Street on the fourth side. The north façade includes seven arched niches decorated with terra cotta sculptural reliefs. The works were created by the nationally renowned artist Alexander Stirling Calder and are titled the "Riches of the Earth." Each of the seven designs shows a unique scene, each with its own subtheme and title. The interior of the building originally housed both an arena and a theater. The east end of the building houses a 7,900-seat arena and the west end houses a 1,924 seat theater. A stage in the middle was originally designed to serve both.

Minor alterations have occurred to the Oakland Auditorium over the years, including beam and truss repairs in the arena in 1935; replacement of landscaping with a parking lot circa 1946; alterations to the south balcony wall in 1949, including new beams; and interior renovations in the early 1980s. Historic photos and aerials show landscaping surrounding the building to the north, west, and east, and Lake Merritt Boulevard further north running along the edge of the lake in 1946.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

The City of Oakland is currently preparing environmental analysis for the proposed project in order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act. The LPAB and public will have the opportunity to review the document and provide comments at a public hearing prior to consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council.

DESIGN AND RELATED ISSUES

Response to Previous Comments from LPAB

In February, 2018, the project applicant presented conceptual design ideas to the LPAB. The LPAB had a few comments and many questions. Staff and LPAB agreed that the applicant would provide responses to the LPAB's questions at the next regularly scheduled meeting. At this time, neither the applicant nor staff have answers to all of the LPAB questions; however, in an effort to be informative and transparent, staff is using this opportunity to memorialize the LPAB questions, provide responses where possible and provide an update with regards to the status of the entitlement application.

Please see Attachment A to this report for the applicant's responses to LPAB questions and comments. In general, the applicant has provided requested documents where possible, and has indicated responses to conceptual design questions. The applicant has indicated to staff that they are currently preparing schematic design which will provide further answers at a future date.

Current Entitlement Schedule

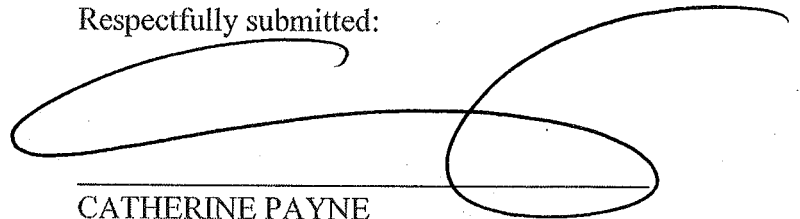
The proposed project will be subject to discretionary permits, including design review, as well as compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff will bring the entitlement package, including the environmental analysis, before the LPAB for a recommendation to the Planning Commission. This public hearing will occur once the entitlement application is complete and after publication of the environmental review document. This will likely occur in late Spring or Summer 2018, at the earliest.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board make a motion to:

- A. Take public comment on the proposed project; and
- B. Provide staff with any additional comments on the proposed project.

Respectfully submitted:



CATHERINE PAYNE
Acting Development Planning Manager

Attachment:

- A. ODI Response Memo and Exhibits, submitted to City of Oakland on February 28, 2018
 - Exhibit 1: State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) Historic Preservation Certification Application Part One (Available electronically at <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/agenda/oak069361.pdf>)
 - Exhibit 2: State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) Historic Preservation Certification Application Part Two (Available electronically at <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/agenda/oak069361.pdf>)
 - Exhibit 3: Proposed Plans