CalSTRS H2O Campus Expansion
City of West Sacramento
Introduction
Increased staffing demands and the desire for more efficient, collaborative work space has prompted CalSTRS to move forward with the planned Phase II expansion. A fundamental goal of the project is a consistent, seamless extension of the materials, details and character of the original building. The architectural concept continues the best attributes of Phase I while responding to additional energy and sustainable materials criteria.

The design has been developed with reference to 3 important City of West Sacramento documents. The 2006 Development Agreement outlines the allowable areas, parking totals, massing, maximum heights and building setbacks for Phases I and II in addition to architectural compatibility. The 1995 Raley’s Landing Master Plan and PD-30 Standards document permitted, accessory and conditional uses. It also establishes site coverage, open space and landscape standards to create a cohesive identity for the neighborhood. The 1995 Washington Specific Plan addresses city wide goals for economic investment, connections to the riverfront, extension of the historic grid, transportation and mix of uses to enhance the neighborhood. It also includes specific requirements for the character of building frontages, sidewalks and landscaping.

Program
The Phase II building program extends the existing 5-level parking podium totaling 430 new spaces and 236,000 sf. The office program accommodates 1,185 new work stations in 272,000 sf on 5 levels. 40,000 sf of active ground floor uses include childcare, food service, coffee shop and building lobby.

Sustainability
CalSTRS’ commitment to the environment and personal health and wellness established lofty goals for Phase II. The benchmarks include Net Zero Energy, LEED V4 Platinum, Well Building v2, and Living Building Challenge Materials Petal Certification. These stringent new criteria inform the design and require different solutions than what was done in Phase I. This is particularly true of glazing percentage, window orientation and material selection.

Massing
The desire for large, efficient office floors resulted in a different massing solution than the slender Phase I office tower. Oriented with the long axis north/south, the 5-level office structure sits atop a 5-level parking podium contiguous with the Phase I structure. The west face of the office floors is set back 20’ from the property line, as required by the Development Agreement, to break up the mass of the building, reduce its scale from the property line, as required by the Development Agreement, and maintain the historic grid and building setbacks for Phases I and II in addition to architectural compatibility. The south façade and primary view of the building has the highest percentage of glazing and continues the blue glass of the existing tower. 3’ deep sunscreens recall the 8” horizontal mullion mullion caps of Phase I and reduce heat gain and glare in the new building. At the base of the building clear lobby glazing reveals exposed concrete columns to highlight the main entrance and emulate the Phase I lobby. The communicating stair on the south elevation connects all the floors of the building vertically. Folded metal panels, in a warm hue to match the porcelain tile at the base of the building, framed for fire and smoke protection. A structural steel box that is exposed at both ends. The idea continues across the north elevation. As you walk north from the Phase I, wrap the parking garage floors and allow natural ventilation. At the base of the building, board formed cast-in-place concrete with a warm tint provides seat walls and a crash barrier for the childcare outdoor play area. Patterned glass panels cantilevered vertically complete the playground enclosure and will be lit from the base at night.

The west façade along 3rd Street features glazed storefronts with active ground floor uses. A continuous awning with a wood soffit and blade signs, reduces the scale of the building and provides sun and rain protection. Board formed concrete columns cover a portion of the 3rd and 4th levels. Recesses continue vertically through the upper garage enclosure to articulate the façade. At the northwest corner, two-story glass curtain wall marks the tall interior space of the café. The west elevation of the office building is composed of vertical metal glazing, zinc paneling and glass. The concept is a metal and glass wrapper folding up and over a glass box that is exposed at both ends. The idea continues across the roof with continuous photovoltaic panels. Recesses in the mass provide a west facing deck with metal clad columns to the south and an elevated courtyard to the north. Continuous glazing at these locations, protected from the sun, allows views and natural light for the office floors.

Outdoor seating will also be accommodated on the north side of the building on E Street. A 7’-6” planter along the north façade with ground level planters will soften the building and the intrusion of some trees into the sidewalk zone, all the trees on 3rd Street will be replaced with 3” to 4” caliper Zelkovas on 30’ regular spacing. This approach meets the requirements of the Washington Specific Plan and will provide visual consistency, a gracious sidewalk and long-term health for the trees and streetscape.

Lighting at the base of the glass panels highlights this important corner at night.

3rd Street will benefit greatly from the elimination of surface parking, replaced by a transparent building façade with active ground floor uses. A 12’ sidewalk adjacent to the building allows gracious pedestrian movement. A 6’ planting strip between the sidewalk and curb continues the landscape theme that characterizes the neighborhood. Between the tree planters, concrete pavers extend to the curb to provide areas for outdoor dining or benches. Due to the extreme amount of pruning required to hold back the existing tree canopy from the face of the new building and the intrusion of some trees into the sidewalk zone, all the trees on 3rd Street will be replaced with 3” to 4” caliper Zelkovas on 30’ regular spacing. This approach meets the requirements of the Washington Specific Plan and will provide visual consistency, a gracious sidewalk and long-term health for the trees and streetscape.

Urban Design
Phase II provides an opportunity to enhance pedestrian connections around the site and to the riverfront. On the south side of the building, adjacent to Waterfront Place, the existing wide diagonal sidewalk forms an important connection to the riverfront from neighborhoods to the west. The primary entrance to the Phase II is located adjacent to this path. At this location the walkway extends to the south to form a plaza with seating areas and enhanced paving and landscaping. At the corner of Waterfront Place and 3rd streets the childcare outdoor play area is defined by board formed concrete seat walls with cantilevered patterned glass panels to provide security and visual interest. Recessed lighting at the base of the glass panels highlights this important corner at night.

The east elevation is similar to the west and receives the bridge connection from the existing building. This façade is important when viewed from the roadways and bridge to the northeast.

Materials
The Phase I palette is characterized by three primary materials including blue tinted glass, silver metal panels and warm-hued porcelain tile at the base of the building. Phase II continues this aesthetic while responding to more challenging energy and materials criteria. The south façade and primary view of the building has the highest percentage of glazing and continues the blue glass of the existing tower. 3’ deep sunscreens recall the 8” horizontal mullion mullion caps of Phase I and reduce heat gain and glare in the new building. At the base of the building clear lobby glazing reveals exposed concrete columns to highlight the main entrance and emulate the Phase I lobby. The communicating stair on the south elevation connects all the floors of the building vertically. Folded metal panels, in a warm hue to match the porcelain tile at the base of the building, framed for fire and smoke protection. A structural steel box that is exposed at both ends. The idea continues across the north elevation. As you walk north from the Phase I, wrap the parking garage floors and allow natural ventilation. At the base of the building, board formed cast-in-place concrete with a warm tint provides seat walls and a crash barrier for the childcare outdoor play area. Patterned glass panels cantilevered vertically complete the playground enclosure and will be lit from the base at night.

The west façade along 3rd Street features glazed storefronts with active ground floor uses. A continuous awning with a wood soffit and blade signs, reduces the scale of the building and provides sun and rain protection. Board formed concrete columns cover a portion of the 3rd and 4th levels. Recesses continue vertically through the upper garage enclosure to articulate the façade. At the northwest corner, two-story glass curtain wall marks the tall interior space of the café. The west elevation of the office building is composed of vertical metal glazing, zinc paneling and glass. The concept is a metal and glass wrapper folding up and over a glass box that is exposed at both ends. The idea continues across the roof with continuous photovoltaic panels. Recesses in the mass provide a west facing deck with metal clad columns to the south and an elevated courtyard to the north. Continuous glazing at these locations, protected from the sun, allows views and natural light for the office floors.

The north elevation features continuous curtain wall to highlight the office floors. At this location no sun protection is required, and silver mullion caps continue the glazing details of Phase I. The folded metal panel garage enclosure screens views of cars and mechanical equipment.

Between the buildings is provided by the ground floor concourse level and a bridge at the second office floor of the new building.

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PROJECT JUSTIFICATION
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The materials palette for Phase II has been chosen to extend and compliment the best attributes of Phase I. More stringent energy requirements and sustainable materials goals require careful consideration, and in some instances, different solutions. The predominant materials of Phase I are the blue glass curtain wall, silver metal panels and warm-hued porcelain tile. The blue glass will be continued in Phase II with some variation required by enhanced energy codes. The silver metal panels will be repeated on the east and west facades of the addition but oriented vertically to create texture and pattern. Warm-hued folded metal panels will wrap the garage and extend the character of the porcelain tile used at the base of Phase I. Board formed concrete column covers and planters will add texture and pattern to the ground floor elevations. A continuous awning along 3rd Street will have a wood soffit for warmth and scale.
The Phase II expansion will replace the existing surface parking lot at the west end of the site and establish a vibrant urban edge along 3rd Street. Five levels of new office space will sit atop 5 levels of structured parking. Active ground floor uses along 3rd Street will animate the streetscape and draw pedestrians to the site.
New sidewalks, street trees and site furniture will enhance pedestrian circulation on 3rd Street and strengthen connections to the riverfront from surrounding neighborhoods. To the south the diagonal walkway will be extended to provide an entrance plaza. On E Street a wide walkway with plantings and street trees will lead to a demarcated crosswalk at 2nd Street, taking pedestrians to the north side of the street and on to the riverfront.
At the Southwest corner of the building the upper mass of the office floors is angled to the east to reduce the scale of the façade. Along the rest of the 3rd Street, at the 36’ elevation, the office floors are set back 20’ as required by the 2006 Development Agreement. These features minimize shading of adjacent properties to north and west. The Childcare exterior play area is screened by vertical patterned glass panels providing safety and security. Cast-in-place concrete planters allow seating and a crash barrier at the corner.
The Childcare exterior play area is bordered by low board-formed concrete walls providing bench seating and a vehicle barrier. A planter will help soften the ground plane and add color to the streetscape. Vertical patterned glass panels complete the play area perimeter and will be illuminated from the base to glow at night.
Transparent storefronts highlight active ground floor uses along 3rd Street with building entrances marked by tinted board formed concrete column covers. The metal garage screen is broken at two locations to highlight the entrances and break up the scale of the façade. The office tower cladding is composed of vertical windows to maximize daylighting and colored metal panels to provide pattern and texture. Recessed terraces in the upper façade articulate the office block and provide exterior spaces for employees.
Active ground floor uses along 3rd Street will animate the sidewalk. Glass and aluminum storefronts articulated with stainless steel base will define entrances and integrate blade signs. A continuous awning with a wood soffit provides sun and rain protection and reduces the scale of the façade. A 12’ wide sidewalk and 6’ wide planting zone will allow gracious pedestrian movement and ample tree planters. Between the planters, concrete pavers will extend to the curb allowing exterior dining areas, locations for benches and bicycle parking. Historic light fixtures will continue the district theme and enhance safety and security.
The northwest corner is highlighted with two-story curtain wall enclosing the north end of the café. The metal garage screen continues the mass of the podium and incorporates the rollup doors that screen the loading docks. The glassy north face of the office floors repeats the character of the south façade.
The northwest corner of the building features the two-story volume of the café. This will provide vibrant activity at the intersection and a focal point for drivers and pedestrians moving south on 3rd Street. A wide sidewalk along E Street will allow exterior dining adjacent to new street trees and landscaping. The sidewalk will be articulated by colored concrete patterning and pavers between the planters defining the furnishing zone.
While it is a worthy goal to retain the existing street trees along 3rd Street, the realities of building construction and creating an appropriate urban sidewalk create a significant challenge. A 6' clear zone from the face of building at the property line is required for construction activities. For some of the existing trees this means cutting the canopy back severely. Both the health of the trees and their aesthetic character will be compromised. Room for a 12' wide sidewalk is also problematic for some of the existing trees. For these reasons the project team proposes to replace all the existing trees along 3rd Street. The tree species and spacing will then be consistent along 3rd Street as required by the Washington Specific Plan landscape requirements.