



November 26, 2017  
*by electronic transmission*

City of Oakland  
Planning and Zoning Division  
Michael Bradley, Planner II  
250 Frank Ogawa Plaza Suite 2114  
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Bradley,

Oakland Heritage Alliance would like to express its strong support for the Oakland Unified School District's current plan to rehabilitate its vacant historic Administrative Building, known as the Paul Robeson Building, and the Annex, known as the Ethel Moore Memorial Building. We understand that earlier this year, the District retained the services of Shah Kawasaki Architects, an Oakland firm known for historic restoration projects, to lead the design team.

We understand that, based on Michael Corbett's Historic Evaluation and Condition Assessment Reports, the SKA Project Team will restore significant exterior and interior features of both buildings, while adapting them to modern office use. We were informed that the District and SKA had several meetings with the City of Oakland's historic preservation planner, Betty Marvin, to discuss renovation strategy. We also discussed the SKA design approach to these two B-rated structures with Ms. Marvin, who generally approved of the plans. We understand that the project will use the 2016 California Historical Building Code as the applicable code, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation as the guide for renovation. We support use of these two standards, allowing OUSD to retain the historic character of the buildings while providing needed seismic and energy upgrades. Our only caution is to urge that the new access tower to the Ethel Moore Building be executed as sensitively as possible.

Having closely followed the OUSD administrative facilities planning for several years, we applaud the current plan and would support an effort by the District's CEQA consultant, Michael Baker International, to demonstrate that the proposed renovation could be eligible for a negative declaration under the CEQA requirements for cultural resources.

We appreciate the work Joe Dominguez, Deputy Chief of Facilities Planning and Management, has done during the planning and design process—his effort to reach out to us and other stakeholders, his concern for the historic buildings, and his willingness to work with the City of Oakland to achieve a project that both serves the District well and preserves Oakland's built legacy.

Please contact us if you have any questions, at our office, telephone 510-763-9218, email [info@oaklandheritage.org](mailto:info@oaklandheritage.org), or our preservation committee board member, Naomi Schiff, telephone 510-835-1819, [naomi@17th.com](mailto:naomi@17th.com)

We look forward to a reinvigorated and functional facility on 2nd Avenue!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alison Finlay".

Alison Finlay  
President  
Oakland Heritage Alliance

cc: Betty Marvin, Historic Preservation Planner, City of Oakland  
Joe Dominguez, Deputy Chief, Facilities Planning & Management, OUSD  
Cesar Monterrosa, Director, Facilities Planning & Management, OUSD  
Jenny Wong, Division Operations Coordinator, Facilities Planning & Management, OUSD