

Design Review Committee (DRC)

Meeting Minutes

November 5, 2025

Meeting Location and Time:

ZOOM Meeting

11:00 am- 2:00 pm

Committee Members:

Rita Raley, Co-Chair - Academic Senate Chair

Renée Bahl, Co-Chair - Associate Vice Chancellor

Alexander Luckmann - GSA Student Representative

Alice Kimm, Architect - Design Consultant

Bill Smith - Senate Appointed Faculty Representative, Chair of the Capital Space Planning Committee

Derrick Eichelberger, Landscape Architect - Design Consultant

Julie Eizenberg, Architect - Design Consultant

Julie Hendricks, Campus Architect, Staff Representative - Design & Construction Services

Lorena Coronado Angulo - AS Student Representative

Norah Dunbar - Senate Appointed Faculty Representative

Richard Wittman - Senate Appointed Faculty Representative

Silvia Perea - University Art Museum

Welcome: Co-Chair, Renée Bahl

Ed Schmittgen – conducted roll call, all present

General Business:

Co-Chair Bahl asked for approval of the minutes from the of June 5, 2025 meeting. Minutes were approved without objection.

Ms. Bahl reviewed the charge and organization of the Design Review Committee (DRC):

In summary, the Design Review Committee is a recommending body focusing primarily on exterior features and aesthetics; siting and contextual relationship with adjacent buildings; circulation including pedestrians, bikes and vehicles; landscape design, and other environmental matters.

The DRC is comprised of faculty, students and staff, as well as consulting architects and the Campus Architect. The Committee makes recommendations to the Campus Planning Committee (CPC) and the Chancellor.

Engagement with the DRC:

- Projects From \$1,000,000 to \$10,000,000 are presented to the DRC 2 times;
 - Conceptual Site and Massing Design (also considered by CPC)
 - 95 % Schematic Design (also considered by CPC)
- Projects over \$10,000,000 are presented to the DRC 3 times;
 - Conceptual Site and Massing Design (also considered by CPC)

- 50% Schematic Design
- 95 % Schematic Design (also considered by CPC)

Action Items:

1. Childcare Facilities Expansion – Site Design & Massing Level Review
 2. (Deferred to a future date TBD) Auhll Robotics Laboratory – Site Design & Massing Level Review
 3. Ortega Dining Commons Temporary Kitchen Facilities – Site Design & Massing Level Review
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1. **CHILDCARE FACILITIES EXPANSION – SITE DESIGN & MASSING LEVEL REVIEW**

Rita Raley, Co-Chair of the Building Committee and Chair of the Academic Senate, gave an overview of the project. She emphasized that the Senate has been deeply invested in childcare expansion for several years. The longstanding campus priority has been to increase access to childcare for faculty, students, and staff, given that demand far exceeds current capacity. Existing campus childcare facilities currently serve about 200 children, ranging from 3 months to 5 years old, while the waitlist exceeds 300 families. The unmet need extends beyond the university into the broader community, reinforcing the urgency of expansion.

Site Selection:

In 2022, the Campus Planning Committee reviewed a feasibility analysis focused on determining whether childcare expansion should occur on one site or multiple sites, balancing operational feasibility, physical constraints, and potential capacity.

Two primary options emerged from this broader analysis:

- Option 1: A potential expansion connected to the Student Resources Building (SRB)
- Option 2: An expansion of the existing Orfalea Childcare Center (OFCC).

The Building Committee conducted extensive evaluations during Fall quarter 2024, reviewing both locations in depth. While expansion adjacent to the SRB was initially considered, the committee ultimately selected the Orfalea site as the preferred location. Additional analysis of the OFCC site determined that the new building should be separate from, rather than attached to, the existing facility to avoid operational, structural, and code-triggered challenges.

Team Introductions: LPA Architects

- Nicholas Casolari, Managing Director
- Lindsay Hayward, Senior Project Designer
- Steve Flanagan, Principal/Director of Higher Education
- Danielle Cleveland, Landscape Designer

Project Overview: Nicholas Casolari, LPA Architects

The planning phase engaged the campus over four to five months of site evaluation and programming. After comparing the OFCC site with the SRB site, the design team, working

closely with the UCSB team concluded that the OFCC site provides the best opportunity to expand childcare capacity without disrupting current operations.

Site and Landscape Strategy: Danielle Cleveland

The expansion occupies the eastern parcel adjacent to the existing OFCC, allowing the two buildings to operate as a unified campus connected through a central entry plaza. Site vehicular access changes the current single shared access point to a safer separation of parent arrival from staff and service circulation. Staff and fire access now follow an outer loop, while parents, bikes, and strollers enter directly into the heart of the expanded OFCC.

The landscape vision extends the nature-based design recently implemented in OFCC's renovated outdoor play areas. Shaded play yards, natural materials, and developmentally appropriate outdoor zones are organized to support flexible infant and toddler use. Conceptual plans also integrate the tree canopy for shading, updated fencing, and a cohesive material palette to link the new and existing facilities visually and functionally.

Architecture & Building Massing: Lindsay Hayward

The architectural massing, building organization, and program flexibility; emphasized a child-friendly scale that aligns with the low rooflines of the existing OFCC. The proposed single-slope roof improves daylighting, supports natural ventilation, simplifies water management, and provides photovoltaic opportunities. Material studies focused on warm, natural palettes consistent with the campus context and the nature-based play environment. Interior concepts highlight durable, soft, developmentally appropriate finishes with strong indoor-outdoor connectivity.

Program flexibility emerged as one of the key priorities during the early programming meetings. The childcare team emphasized the significant waitlist for infants in particular, followed by ongoing demand as children transition into toddler care. The goal was to make the new facility capable of shifting between infant and toddler uses with minimal effort.

Parking & Circulation: Danielle Cleveland, and LPA Team

The site plan provides 65 total parking spaces serves the facility and improves overall circulation by clearly separating parent access from staff and service vehicles. The intent is to minimize conflicts and create a predictable, intuitive arrival experience. Parents park their cars and walk directly into the central plaza, where they can safely unload car seats, strollers, and multiple young children. Staff and fire vehicles circulate along the site perimeter, maintaining full emergency and service access without crossing parent drop-off routes.

Site Logistics: Nicholas Casolari & Lindsay Hayward

The team emphasized that constructing a new detached building will avoid disruptions to the existing year-round childcare operations. The modular classroom approach allows for future capacity adjustments, phased expansion if needed, and long-term adaptability.

DRC Q&A:

Architecture:

DRC: Commented that while the functional logic of the building is sound, the architectural expression feels generic and lacks the sense of joy. Encouraged a shift from purely practical problem-solving to creating a more uplifting, child-centered environment with generous glazing and experiential qualities. Also recommended giving the new phase a more playful and distinct architectural identity rather than mirroring the existing building, suggesting that simple volumes could be broken apart, rotated, or composed more dynamically.

- LPA: Agreed the architecture can be more playful, open, and experience-driven. Noted that licensing requirements and safety constraints shape some decisions but do not limit opportunities for expression. The team will re-evaluate glazing, materials, and building organization to create a more engaging and distinct architectural character.

Site & Massing:

DRC: Asked how the building's form, transparency, and orientation respond to the adjacent natural reserve and existing trail network. They also asked about the relationship between the new facility and the existing childcare center, and how that influenced massing. Recommended exploring separation or reorientation of classroom blocks to create stronger outdoor connections and new experiential opportunities (e.g., murals or interactive features).

- LPA: The new facility is designed to function independently while still compatible with the existing center. By separating the buildings this helped preserve flexibility and maintain compliance. LPA agreed that classroom block separation and reorientation could be explored further to strengthen outdoor connections and enrich site experience.

Landscaping:

DRC: Emphasized that the site's adjacency to natural open space is an opportunity to create a deeper connection to landscape. Expressed concern that current strategies feel generic. Encouraged a more immersive, nature-driven experience tied to the scenic path of arrival and the trail network. Raised concerns about wildlife intrusion, specifically raccoons, and asked how fencing and landscape strategies will mitigate this.

- LPA: Noted that the landscape concept uses natural materials, new tree plantings, and outdoor play areas that extend classroom activity into nature. Acknowledged the need to strengthen experiential qualities and child engagement with landscape. Confirmed they are reviewing the existing Orfaea perimeter and will incorporate wildlife-deterrent methods, exploring additional planting strategies and non-electric alternatives. The team will continue refining landscape to more fully reflect the site's natural context.

Parking Circulation, Circulation & Site Logistics:

DRC: Emphasized improving the arrival experience from the parking lot, encouraging a more natural, less suburban character with a clearer transition from paving to landscape and fencing. Requested a

larger entry plaza to better support parent interaction. Also asked how trail connections, group circulation, stroller access, safety, wildlife management, and operational relationships between the existing center and the new building will be addressed.

- LPA: Agreed the arrival sequence should be strengthened and will refine the plaza to make it more generous and community-oriented. They will study landscape screening, enhanced fencing, and layout adjustments to reduce parking visibility and create a more natural edge for classroom and play areas. LPA also noted that pathways are sized for group movement and integrate with existing trail-based activities. The new facility can operate independently if needed, and they will continue evaluating perimeter strategies, fencing, circulation, and operational logistics to ensure safe and flexible daily use.

DRC Liaison Summary:

Architecture:

The current layout intentionally separates the facilities while allowing them to function jointly or independently. Internal program flexibility is a priority: classrooms, support spaces, and circulation are configured to allow future adjustments depending on how the combined campus is operated. Several reviewers noted opportunities to make the architecture more varied, joyful, and playful, particularly since this is a children's environment. Suggestions included introducing non-right-angle geometries, creating moments of surprise, discovery, and exploration, such as murals and overhead suspended lighting.

Site and Massing:

Comments focused on placement of the buildings relative to the parking lot and views. Concern was raised that too many classrooms currently look toward the parking lot, limiting visual connection to nature. Several alternatives were suggested: Considering whether any portion of the site plan—or even the entire layout—could invert the placement of parking and buildings to reduce the sense of being “hemmed in.” Suggestions were made to explore more organic circulation, more varied building footprints, and spatial sequences that align with the experiential quality of the surrounding natural landscape and the drive in. Potentially reorienting certain classroom blocks to face play yards or open space instead of cars.

Landscaping:

Points of discussion included: The desire for a more natural, immersive, and layered landscape appeared throughout the comments. Integrating native ecology, cultural landscape narratives, and references to the coastal environment. Creating meaningful threshold zones separating parking, the entry plaza, and classroom yards through planting, use of berms, and better transitions.

Parking and Circulation:

Points of discussion included: The parking lot feels too central, visually dominant, and limits connections to nature. Arrival is currently not expressing the “joyful threshold” appropriate for early childhood education. Exploring relocation or redistribution of some parking, possibly shifting staff parking off-site or using adjacent open areas to reduce the size of the parking area. This would ensure sidewalks and circulation paths on all edges are generous enough to support parents unloading children in car seats, strollers, or carriers.

Site Logistics:

Sidewalks exist along all parking perimeter edges to accommodate stroller and carrier movement. Safety and operational needs (circulation, storage, stroller management, licensing requirements, wildlife protection) remain foundational to site planning. The project must balance capacity, safety, usability, and experiential quality as the layout continues to evolve.

Adjournment: Childcare Facilities Expansion - Action Item 1

The second Action Item was presented and reviewed.

2. ORTEGA DINING COMMONS – TEMPORARY KITCHEN FACILITIES

Willie Brown, Associate Vice Chancellor of Housing, Dining & Auxiliary Enterprises, introduced the project. He noted that while the DRC has previously reviewed the larger East Campus Housing Project, what was not discussed was the impact the project will have on existing dining operations. To maintain uninterrupted service, a series of temporary and permanent relocations are required throughout construction.

Today's presentation focuses on two temporary facilities necessary to keep food service operations functioning during the East Campus Housing construction phase.

Ernesto Villegas, Associate Director, HDAE, added that this ancillary project is directly tied to the necessary renovation of the Ortega Dining Commons. The team is in the process of selecting design-build contractor. Today's focus is on site placement and massing, as well as providing an overall introduction to the project.

The presentation was provided by 19-6 Architects, represented by Rosa Alvarado and Rachel Strange, who prepared the criteria documents that form the basis for the forthcoming design-build contract.

Project Overview: Rosa Alvarado & Rachel Strange 19-6 Architects

The criteria architects began by explaining their role to date: working with the HDAE team including the Baker Group, the campus's kitchen consultant. Together, they developed the program for the temporary dining facilities to support ongoing operations during the Ortega Dining Commons renovation.

Two designated sites were selected to maintain existing vehicular circulation around the lagoon as well as Channel Islands Road.

The two temporary facility sites are:

Anacapa Lawn – Temporary Takeout

This location maintains a clear, accessible path of travel for students with meal plans and is less than a quarter-mile from the Anacapa, Santa Cruz, San Nicolas, and San Miguel residence halls.

Parking Lot 5 –Temporary Catering

This site allows direct access to required utilities and Channel Islands Road, and benefits from adjacency to existing back-of-house functions at De La Guerra dining hall including loading docks and service vehicle access.

Site & Massing:

Preliminary massing diagrams were presented to illustrate the general footprint needs for each site. At Anacapa Lawn, the takeout dining facility is expected to be approximately 7,600 SF. The placement minimizes impacts to underground utilities. At Lot 5, the catering facility would be approximately 8,850 SF, accompanied by a roughly 950 SF administrative trailer for leadership offices. The siting allows efficient vehicle movement, delivery, drop-off, and loading operations.

To convey the potential scale, the team provided simple preliminary massing diagrams for both sites, depicting structures approximately 18 feet in height. The design will be developed by the architect of record once the design-build team is selected. An example photograph of an existing temporary facility was shown to depict the nature of the finished product. The team emphasized that the photograph demonstrated that the structures will be visually utilitarian, which was considered acceptable due to the nature of the temporary installations.

Site Logistics:

Initial planning focused on operational continuity with minimal site modifications. Lot 5 provides immediate adjacency to existing back-of-house operations. Lot 5 also provides direct access to Channel Islands Road, supporting efficient loading, deliveries, while keeping lagoon road access routes intact. Both sites offer utility access and require limited infrastructure changes. The facilities are designed for straightforward installation and removal once the permanent Ortega renovation is complete.

Parking & Circulation:

Both sites maintain existing campus circulation patterns. At Lot 5 some parking loss is expected but minimized. Anacapa Lawn maintains strong pedestrian access serving nearby residence halls.

Landscaping:

Landscape impacts are limited due to careful site placement. The Anacapa Lawn facility footprint avoids major underground utilities and reduces the area requiring restoration. At Lot 5, the use of an existing paved parking area minimizes landscape disturbance. Final restoration and any temporary landscape adjustments will be defined in the later design phases.

The presentation concluded with an overview map showing both temporary facility locations on campus.

DRC Q&A:

Architecture:

DRC: *Are the temporary buildings part of a larger kitchen expansion, or is there another component providing student access to food?*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: These are temporary modular trailers. Ortega was originally planned to be part of the East Campus Housing project, but due to budget constraints, that renovation was removed. Ortega currently supports both catering and takeout, but that building will go offline in 2027.

We are splitting operations: the takeout facility ($\pm 2,000$ meals/day) moves into a short-term modular facility for about a year; catering moves into a different modular building for a longer duration. When Ortega is renovated, it becomes a full-time takeout facility; catering will not return to Ortega.

DRC: *Due to the modular and temporary nature of this project, the DRC questioned how they can provide meaningful contributions to the design. They suggested the temporary buildings could perhaps be improved with graphics, color, and supergraphics*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: Given the modular nature, design flexibility is limited. Treatments such as graphics, paint, and minor enhancements will be explored. The intention is to make them as attractive as possible. However, note that the East Campus Housing project will introduce cranes and ultimately tall buildings nearby, permanently altering the current view corridors.

Site & Massing:

DRC: *How does the Anacapa lawn function today for students?*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: It is a flat lawn used heavily by residents for sunbathing, recreation, and adjacent beach volleyball. Summer conferences also use it. During construction access will be limited, but proximity and access for east campus residents will remain.

DRC: *For Anacapa, would shifting the building south interfere with utilities? Moving it to the south would provide a more contiguous view area.*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: Moving it south could open the lawn's view corridor. However, the current northward placement reduced noise and service impacts to dorms. The existing utilities may accommodate a southern shift, but this requires verification. This can be explored further in design.

DRC: *Could we see construction fence lines next time?*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: Yes.

Landscaping:

DRC: *The buildings are essentially "plop architecture" landing on two sites, what landscape improvements can be used to better integrate the building on the site.*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: Landscaping will be minimal. Because the buildings are temporary and leased, the intent is to avoid permanent alterations. Reverting back to the current state once the project is complete. Landscaping will be protected and disturbed as little as possible.

DRC: *Will utilities and landscape disruptions be reviewed later?*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: Yes.

Parking & Circulation:

DRC: *For Lot 5, how is parking displacement handled?*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: Lot 5 is currently staff parking with some coastal access and paid spaces. The temporary facility will use about 50% of the lot; the remainder stays open for current uses.

DRC: *Is this part of a larger traffic or parking management plan?*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: Yes. These relocations occur within the larger East Campus Housing construction traffic plan. The current plan allows deliveries to continue as they do today.

DRC: *Could you provide input on bike parking and bike circulation around both sites?*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: Lot 5 access will be restricted, but will incorporate designated bike parking during the design phase. The Anacapa site will be coordinated with the East Campus Housing project to ensure viable bike and pedestrian access during heavy construction.

LC: *It looks like the temporary catering facility is blocking the fire access lane off Lot 5.*

- 19-6/HDAE Team: The scheme has not been finalized.

Site Logistics:

DRC: *What other sites been considered, especially given the lagoon view and the risk of "temporary becoming permanent"? If these must be temporary, where would be the best place for them? What is the expected duration of the project?*

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: We must locate these facilities near existing dining halls. Only two options exist: Carrillo and De La Guerra. Carrillo lacks adequate land area or access; Lot 5 meets all criteria: delivery access, proximity to dining operations, and service routing.

- Since the buildings are leased, temporary buildings they are intended to be removed, not permanent. They are not campus-owned.
- The takeout modular is needed for around 12 months; the catering modular will be needed longer while the new catering facility is developed, there is no timeline for the new catering facility.

DRC: Will students come to the Lot 5 catering building?

- 19-6 / HDAE Team: No. Lot 5 is for staff and catering operations only. Food will be delivered across campus to event locations; students will not access that building.

DRC Liaison Summary:

It was generally acknowledged that the proposed facilities are temporary in nature and accepted as such. The DRC deferred endorsement of both project sites pending more detailed planning and comprehensive analysis.

Architecture:

Ideas such as supergraphics, paint schemes, and other visual enhancements were discussed to improve the project's appearance as it moves forward.

Site and Massing:

Given the campus's history with temporary structures, the DRC expressed concern that the proposed temporary facilities might remain in these locations longer than intended. Members also questioned whether alternative sites had been considered, noting that both proposed locations occupy prominent areas with ocean views.

Additionally, for the Lot 5 Catering Facility - discussion included the potential for exploring alternative orientations of the modular buildings to enhance view corridors. For the Takeout Dining project on Anacapa Lawn, comments included shifting the structure further south as well as possible reorientation of the building to preserve view corridors.

Landscaping:

Landscaping will be minimal due to the temporary nature of the project and the intent to avoid permanent alterations to the site.

Parking and Circulation:

It was noted that Parking Lot 5 primarily serves as staff parking, and this project will take up about half the parking lot. The DRC noted that the 900 SF administrative building appears to encroach into the fire access drive to the lagoon service road; this should be reviewed. Minor adjustments to the proposed parking layout may be needed to ensure safe and efficient circulation.

Additional discussion focused on bike circulation and bike parking associated with both project sites, especially at Anacapa Lawn. Members noted that circulation could be challenging in certain areas and recommended considering opportunities to improve bike flow and provide adequate bike parking.

Site Logistics:

The DRC requested that the construction fence line for the dorms be shown at the next presentation to allow for proper evaluation and review. Finally, the DRC emphasized the importance of verifying existing utilities and capacities in the project area as design advances, since utility locations and availability may affect the overall project layout.

Adjournment: Ortega Dining Commons – Temporary Kitchen Facilities - Action Item 2

Meeting Adjournment – Co-Chair Bahl

The Ortega Dining Commons project will be going to the CPC this month. The Child Care Expansion project is scheduled to go to the CPC in January. We expect to have a couple of projects to review in the coming months so we plan to schedule another DRC meeting in the February. We will be in touch to check your availability.