



Castilleja Reimagined



MISSION:

Castilleja School educates motivated young women to become confident thinkers and compassionate leaders with a sense of purpose to effect change in the world.



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castillejareimagined.org

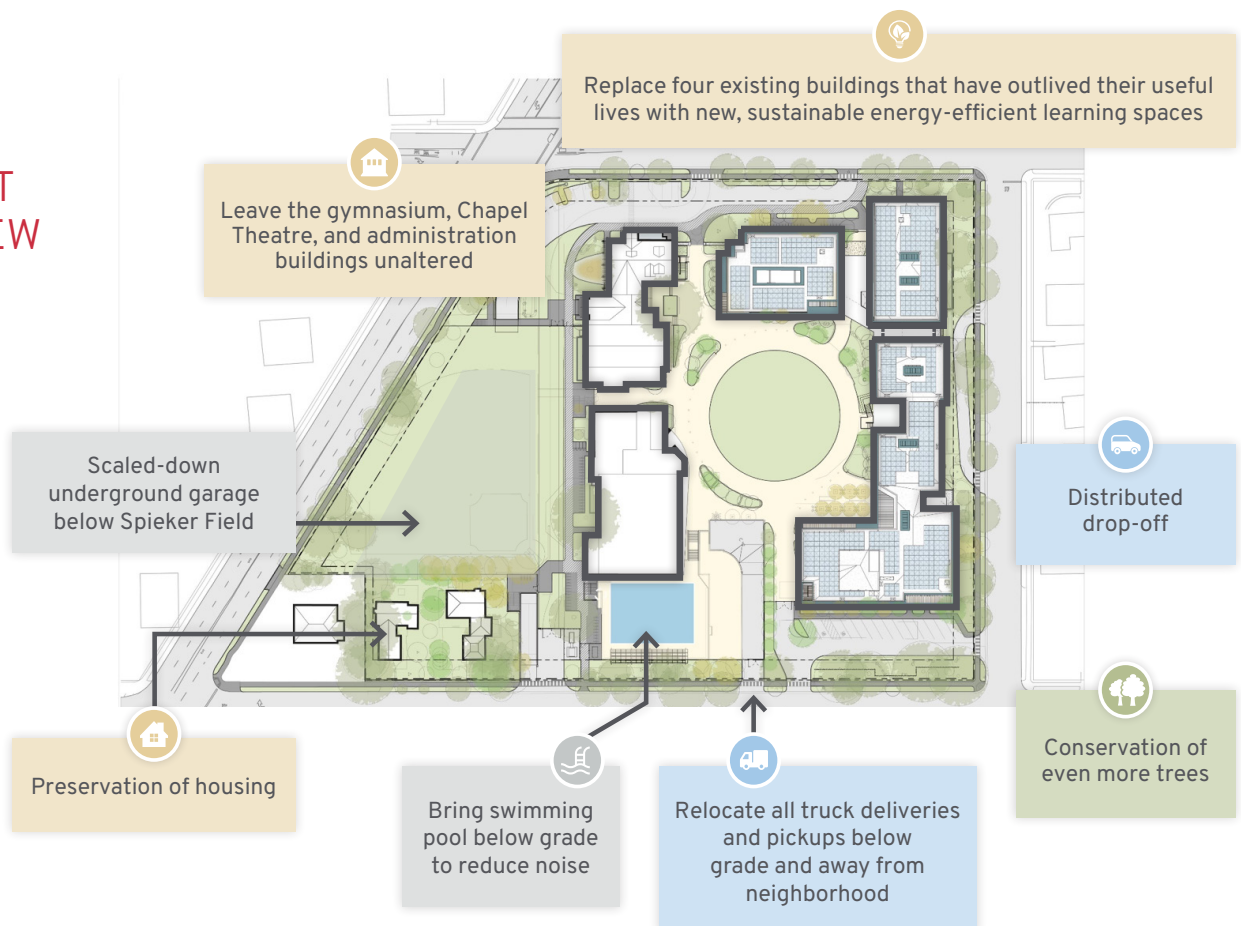
Current Master Plan

Castilleja School was founded in 1907 in Palo Alto with a mission to equalize educational opportunities for women. Since then, serving Palo Alto and neighboring communities, Castilleja has become deeply embedded in the community through a long history of engagement—working with esteemed groups such as Ada’s Café, the Palo Alto VA Hospital, and the Boys and Girls Club. We are proud to call Palo Alto home.

Many of the buildings on our campus have not been renovated since the 1960s, so we are seeking permission to build sustainable spaces that will last for generations while better integrating with the aesthetic of the neighborhood. In order to offer this unique educational opportunity to more girls and young women and strengthen our program, we also hope to gradually increase our high school enrollment by 25-27 students per year until our total school enrollment is 540. By enhancing our Traffic Demand Management measures at the same time, daily car trips to campus will not increase above recent average levels.

Our new Master Plan creates sustainable, energy efficient spaces, minimizes the impact on our surrounding neighbors, and blends into the neighborhood aesthetic. We are delighted that the environmental review of our project found it to be 100% compliant with Palo Alto’s Comprehensive Plan, the City’s guiding tool for preservation and development. Throughout this process we have revised our plans in response to City and community feedback, including the Project Alternative #4 with a scaled-down garage that conserves trees, preserves housing, improves safety along the Bike Boulevard, and restores the neighborhood feel on our residential streets.

PROJECT OVERVIEW



Castilleja Listens to Community Feedback and Responds

In 2012, soon after Nanci Kauffman became the new Head of School, she came forward to report that the school was over-enrolled. In early 2014, the City required an annual enrollment reduction schedule, which the school has complied with. At the same time, the school has been working with architects, the City, and the community to develop a Master Plan to modernize the school's campus while improving conditions in the neighborhood—a process that included over 60 community meetings with neighbors in large and small working groups.

In July 2019, the City of Palo Alto released the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the project, and while the DEIR attested to many strengths—including the plan's sustainability goals, reduced noise impacts in the neighborhood, and enhancement to the visual character of the neighborhood—it also pointed to areas for improvement. The school closely reviewed the DEIR's findings, public comments, and feedback from neighbors to design a project alternative to directly address those impacts and concerns. The result was Project Alternative #4, which was included in the Final Environmental Impact Report, identified as the environmentally superior option, and deemed to have no significant impacts. We are grateful for the thoughtful and vibrant give and take that led us to an even better project than we imagined when we began this process eight years ago.



In response to community input and the DEIR findings, Castilleja's proposal:

- ✓ Reduces the size of our underground parking facility from our original submittal by 12,850 square feet, or 28 percent
- 🚗 Reduces the underground parking spaces by 30 percent, or 35 spaces
- 🌳 Conserves 16 more trees than our original preservation plan
- 🏠 Preserves two homes on Emerson Street to provide much-needed housing and protect the neighborhood feel
- 🚗 Distributes student drop-off to avoid traffic impacts
- 🏢 Reduces the massing of the facade on Kellogg Street
- 📏 Eliminates the underground encroachment into the setback along Embarcadero
- 🚚 Moves food deliveries and garbage pick-up off-street and below-grade
- 🏊 Redesigns the pool to be below-grade and behind a sound wall
- 🏠 Updates the buildings to blend with neighborhood aesthetic
- 📅 Reduces the number of events held on campus

Understanding the Facts

With Castilleja's proposal coming before the City Council, it is more important than ever to understand the facts: This project improves quality of life for the neighborhood and the City while allowing the school to thrive. Contrary to claims made by opponents, a large number of immediate neighbors support the project. The Environmental Impact Report found no significant and unavoidable impacts and deemed the project 100% compliant with the City's Comprehensive Plan. The facts below support a vote to approve Castilleja's proposal.

ARCHITECTURE

- The EIR supports Project Alternative #4 as the environmentally superior alternative
- The new learning spaces blend more gently into the neighborhood
- Palo Alto's ARB and HRB have both recommended approval of the design plan



VARIANCE TO MAINTAIN FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)

- Castilleja's current permitted above-ground square footage predates the current code
- The variance would allow Castilleja to maintain the above-ground square footage, not to expand it
- The new learning spaces slightly reduce the above-ground square footage¹

UNDERGROUND PARKING FACILITY

- The Zoning code does not prohibit underground parking in R-1 for non-residential use
- EIR states that underground parking is the environmentally superior option
- Palo Alto's Comprehensive Plan prefers underground parking to surface lots and street parking
- Removing parking from surface lots and streets and putting it underground mitigates visual and noise impacts associated with cars.
- Kol Emeth establishes precedent for underground parking in R-1 zone

1. Based approved use permits and as-built plans located in the City record/archive, the current above grade square footage of buildings that Castilleja seeks to remove totals 84,572 S.F and the project proposes to build 81,942 S.F. of new above-grade improvements.

Understanding the Facts CONTINUED

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Enrollment

- PTC members correctly argued that impacts should be managed, not enrollment per se
- 540 students is the critical number for enhancing programs in the high school
- Accountability: the school cannot increase enrollment if the impacts (e.g., events, traffic) exceed CUP limits

Events

- Recommendation from PTC to limit to 74, a 25% decrease
- School can compromise to meet this goal

Traffic/Car Trips

- Castilleja has demonstrated leadership in Traffic Demand Management (TDM) by reducing daily trips by 25–31%
- Proven commitment since 2013, and the school culture has changed
- Current levels are successful and do not call for further reductions

Electronic Monitoring of Daily Car Trips

- Equity: Not required elsewhere in Palo Alto
- Scale: Unreasonable burden on small neighborhood school; only Facebook has this requirement
- Cost: Significant burden on small non-profit



Traffic Demand Management and Parking



TDM AND CURRENT DAILY TRIPS

At Castilleja, we are committed to drastically reducing traffic. In 2013, the City of Palo Alto asked the school to launch a more robust Traffic Demand Management program. Since that time, Castilleja has reduced daily car trips to campus by up to 31%, and everyone agrees that current peak trip levels are excellent.

Since 2012, we have changed how people commute:



-27%
CAR



+100%
WALK/BIKE



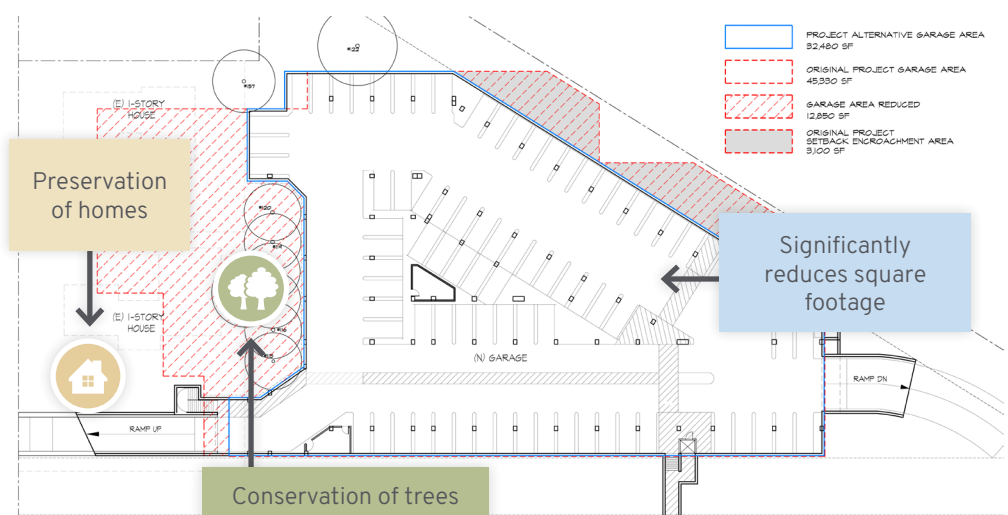
+700%
TRANSIT/SHUTTLE

UNDERGROUND PARKING FACILITY

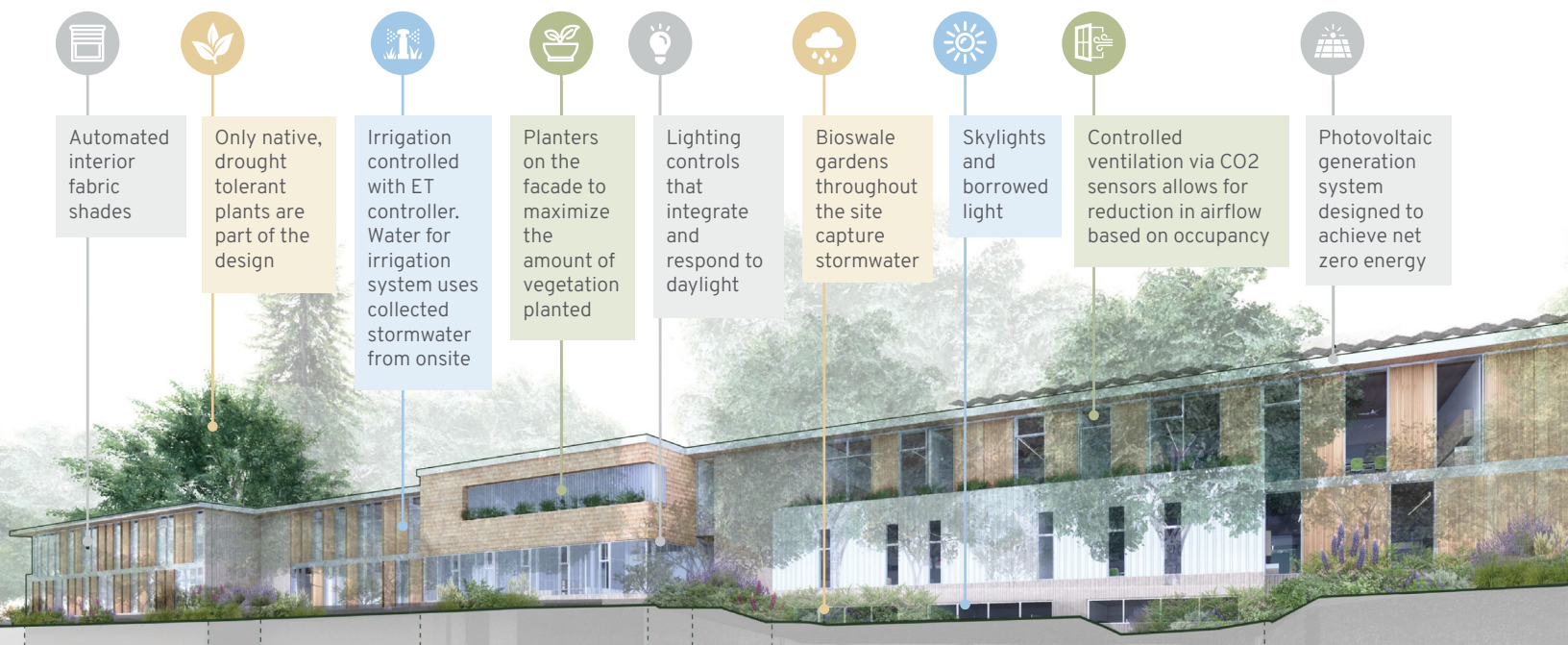
The Project Alternative #4 offers a revised underground parking structure that is 28% smaller than our original proposal. Surrounded by lush landscaping and trees, a single-lane entry situated well onto the campus and a well-disguised exit aligned with Melville. Originally included in the project in response to neighbor feedback, the structure will have a positive impact by restoring the residential feel to the streets that surround campus. It also improves safety along the Bike Boulevard by reducing activity associated with street parking. Additionally, the underground structure will not increase traffic because trips are capped at 440, the current daily trip maximum. It will also comply with the parking requirements within the Municipal Code. Finally, moving parking below ground adds to greenspace.

Conditional Use Permits were introduced in Palo Alto after zoning regulations were established to ensure that community assets such as schools, parks, museums, and libraries would be able to continue to thrive within residentially zoned neighborhoods. Through the permitting process, Castilleja has been granted permission to build and maintain facilities that support school use. The underground parking facility is essential because it allows Castilleja to comply with City parking requirements; it is also supported by the Comprehensive Plan and has been deemed the preferred alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Report. Because Castilleja operates in an R-1 zone under a conditional use permit, there is nothing in the Palo Alto Municipal Code that prevents Castilleja from incorporating an underground parking facility in its design, nor does it require the square footage to be counted in FAR (square footage).

REVISED GARAGE PLAN



Sustainability and Trees



Castilleja School's campus Master Plan sets a new bar for enduring, environmentally-sound design and construction. California recently outlined new sustainability benchmarks for the world, committing to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by the year 2050. The City of Palo Alto recently approved the Sustainability Climate Action Plan (S/CAP) outlining strategies to reach that goal even sooner—by 2030. Castilleja's new campus Master Plan surpasses both standards, with even more comprehensive solutions for a clean and sustainable future. The following sustainable elements working in tandem:

- **Fossil Fuel-Free** - outside of instructional use in science labs
- **Energy** - entirely generated through on-site solar, heat recovery, or renewable credits
- **Transportation** - new electric shuttle routes, ride-sharing, bike parking, and charging stations for electric vehicles
- **Water** - high-efficiency and recycled-water infrastructure
- **Landscaping** - dozens of new trees and drought-resistant plantings
- **Green Materials** - non-hazardous and responsibly sourced
- **Light and Air** - optimized ventilation and efficiency
- **Deconstruction** - disassemble old campus buildings and separate materials on-site to maximize reuse and recycling
- **Reuse** - salvageable building materials from old campus buildings in new campus design

Castilleja is not only committed to minimizing its environmental footprint on campus but also to integrating environmental education into the curriculum. By teaching students to be environmental stewards, the seeds of conservation will be planted in the next generation of leaders.

TREE PRESERVATION

The new tree plan is guided by, and is 100% compliant with, Palo Alto's Tree Technical Manual. Within the current proposal, 141 original trees will be preserved, including the precious redwoods at the edge of Spieker Field along Embarcadero Road. Overall, only 16 trees will need to be removed, many of them badly damaged by recent years of drought. Then 103 new trees will be added, meaning the campus will have about 50% more trees than there are now. This improvement will increase the canopy, and new drought-resistant younger trees will thrive in our current climate.

FAQ

IS CASTILLEJA VIOLATING ITS CUP?

In 2012, Head of School Nanci Kauffman came forward to report that the school was over-enrolled. In early 2014, the City established an enrollment reduction schedule, which the school has followed faithfully.

WHY DOESN'T CASTILLEJA SPLIT ITS CAMPUS AS OTHER SCHOOLS HAVE DONE?

The Environmental Impact Report did not support splitting campus as an alternative. Other schools have opened new campuses when their enrollment has grown by over 60% or they created entirely new divisions. By contrast, Castilleja is seeking to add no more than 6%—or 25–27 students per year, all in the Upper School. If the Traffic Demand Management (TDM) program succeeds, the Upper School would be allowed to grow by another 25–27 students annually until total enrollment reaches 540. Total enrollment growth will not exceed 30 percent, an increase that does not justify a second campus. Furthermore, splitting campuses is not the same for an all-girls school as it is for a coed school. Remaining on one campus allows for mentorship, an essential element of girls' education. Therefore, we have chosen incremental growth with a cap at 30% rather than larger-scale growth that would require a second campus and run counter to our mission.

WILL INCREASED ENROLLMENT BRING MORE CARS TO CAMPUS?

No. Since 2013, when the City asked the school to launch a more robust TDM program, Castilleja has reduced the number of peak car trips to campus by 25–30 percent. Our proposed increase in enrollment is contingent upon continuing our successful TDM program; we will only be permitted to grow if we keep cars to campus below our City-approved limit.

WILL THE GARAGE BRING MORE CARS TO CAMPUS?

No. The Conditions of Approval associated with our CUP expressly limit car trips to campus. By contrast, the garage is designed to meet parking requirements for the project in a way that moves parking below ground (i.e. avoiding at-grade parking), where possible.

WHY DOES CASTILLEJA NEED A GARAGE IF NO NEW CARS WILL BE COMING TO CAMPUS?

All projects must provide sufficient parking spaces, in compliance with Code. The Municipal Code requires that parking be located on the same site as the project. The EIR supports the conclusion that the underground parking facility makes the Project more attractive (enhancing the aesthetics and increasing open space) and more efficient (improving circulation and reducing transportation impacts), all to protect the neighborhood feel around campus. Our Project Alternative reduces the size of the garage by 28%, conserves trees, and protects two homes. The garage entrance and exits will be landscaped to blend with the neighborhood aesthetic.

IS AN UNDERGROUND PARKING FACILITY ALLOWED FOR A SCHOOL IN R-1 NEIGHBORHOOD?

This question involves a nuanced understanding of the Palo Alto Municipal Code. To be clear, the Code does not prohibit an underground parking facility to be located in the R-1 zone for non-residential use, nor does the Code prescribe that the parking facility which supports a non-residential/school-use count



FAQ CONTINUED

toward gross floor area. The Code classifies the space as a basement and does not prohibit the underground parking from extending beyond a building footprint for a non-residential use. Furthermore, because the basement is uninhabitable, the Code explicitly excludes the basement from gross floor area. The below grade parking facility is also supported by the Comprehensive Plan¹ and recent precedent².

HOW WILL CYCLISTS ON THE BRYANT BIKE BOULEVARD BE AFFECTED?

Cars can enter the garage on Bryant Street only by taking a right turn. This means that turns into the garage do not cross the bike boulevard. The Environmental Impact Report indicates the project has no impact on the bike boulevard.

HOW DOES CASTILLEJA'S PLAN AFFECT ITS TREES?

A recent change in the California Green Building Code has allowed us to conserve more trees. In our Project Alternative, we are removing 16 trees, many of them badly damaged by recent years of drought. Meanwhile, we are preserving 141 trees and planting 109 new trees. By the completion of the project, we will have more 50% more trees on campus, nearly doubling the number of trees on campus.

WHAT IS THE DURATION OF CONSTRUCTION?

We estimate the project will take less than three years to complete. Within that period, the garage will be the first to be completed. As that work concludes,



the construction of other aspects of our Master Plan will begin. We are committed to minimizing disruption during the construction phase and therefore are deeply invested in completing the work as quickly as possible.

HOW DOES CASTILLEJA BENEFIT THE CITY OF PALO ALTO?

Castilleja has been an integral part of Palo Alto almost since the City's founding and has forged strong relationships with PAUSD and many not-for-profit organizations. The all-girls setting provides a unique and supportive learning environment for those seeking it, and 21% of Castilleja's students benefit from the school's robust tuition assistance program.

1. Palo Alto's Comprehensive Plan does not limit the use of below grade parking to multi-family and commercial zones. To the contrary, Goal T-5.6 strongly encourages the use of below-grade parking, instead of surface parking, for new developments of all types.

2. Congregation Kol Emeth, located in the R-1 Zone, obtained approval both for a conditional use permit and a below grade accessory parking facility. Their underground accessory parking facility was excluded from gross floor area.