

ART AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD (AARB)

Project Data Sheet

Revised February 6, 2025

(Due by 3:00 p.m. on the Friday two weeks before the meeting to AARB@dgs.virginia.gov)

Date Submitted: Originally submitted on November 21, 2025. This revision submitted on February 20, 2026

Agency Name: Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired

Project Name, Number, and Location

Construct Outdoor Pavilion Space
Project Number: 702-18579-000
395 Azalea Avenue
Richmond, VA 23227
County of Henrico

Representatives for the Agency and the Architect/Engineer

Agency Project Owner POC:

Wallica Gaines; Deputy Commissioner for Administration, 804-371-3591, Wallica.Gaines@dbvi.virginia.gov
DBVI, 375 Azalea Ave, Richmond, VA 23227

Owners Project Consultant Representative / Project Manager POC:

Jay R. Huston, P.E. CCM; 757-390-1979, jay.huston@kci.com
KCI Technologies, 815 East Oceanview Ave, Norfolk VA 23503

Project Architect / Engineer POC:

Floyd Cybulski, AIA NCARRB, 804-273-9811 X107, fcybuldki@nbjarch.com
nbj Architecture, 11537 B Nuckols Road Glen Allen Virginia

Include names, titles, phone numbers, email addresses, and physical addresses—including contact information for the day of the meeting)

Current Project Status/Phase and Schedule [** must select one of the following*]

- Preliminary Design Submission: **XX**
- Final Design Submission:
- STATUS/Phase = Schematic Drawings and Narrative submitted to DEB on 11/19/26

(*Status/Phase = Schematic, etc. Schedule - next milestone date*)

The Schematic design drawings have been approved (with comment) by DEB. The schematic design drawings are very well developed and advanced into the preliminary design stage. The revised submitted drawings are attached to this submission email. This project is funded by ARPA federal funds which must be expended by 26 December, 2026. AARB recommended approval for this project in the December 2025 meeting. Since then DEB advised the project was over budget during the Schematic Design review. The project was redesigned to remove the Shade Structure in the outdoor space to bring the project in budget. DEB then approved the schematic design on February 4, 2026 and advised DBVI in their design comments to resubmit the design to AARB without the Shade Structure to AARB.

Request for Consent Agenda: Yes: **XX**

* Please refer to the [AARB Agency Project Submission and Presentation Guidelines](#) – Project Submission Section for additional information and guidance on the Consent Agenda versus Regular Agenda.

PLEASE NOTE: If you did not check the box for Consent Agenda, your project will be posted on the Regular Agenda and the agency will be required to attend the meeting to make a presentation to the board on the day of the meeting. ***Presentations are not to exceed 15 minutes.***

Project Description: The Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) intends to construct a multi-purpose outdoor uncovered pavilion in the area shown below of the Azalea DBVI campus. Some intended uses include class instruction, student gatherings, and agency social gatherings. No means of egress from adjacent buildings will be impacted or changed, other than by construction activities. Clear paths of egress that are to be maintained will be shown in subsequent submissions. The intention of the proposed site concept is to create an outdoor classroom environment that supports teaching blind and vision impaired persons daily living skills such as outdoor cooking and “do-it-yourself” home repair while also providing flexible gathering spaces for outdoor activities such as dining, seated events for up to 50 people, or social gatherings. The approximate area and surroundings of the proposed outdoor classroom is shown in below maps.



Architectural Aesthetic: The renovated area will maintain the existing look and architecture of the DBVI Azalea Campus. The Azalea Campus is in an isolated setting surrounded by woods with residential homes on the outside of the woods. The Classroom Pavilion is not visible from the roadway or neighboring residences. The campus includes buildings that provide dormitories, rehabilitation and physical fitness center, offices, training and classrooms, a cafeteria, a library, and maintenance buildings. The proposed architectural and site concepts consists of the following ideas and components:

- Create a landscape and hardscape that is compatible with the overall campus character, supports the educational mission of the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI), and provides functional spaces and learning opportunities for attendees and residents.
- Improve pedestrian circulation and safety by strengthening connections to and from the campus housing to the south, west, and north campus facilities.
- Nurture the health and well-being of students, faculty, staff and visitors through the incorporation of natural materials, plants, habitats, and forms.
- Encourage social interaction and learning with a beautiful outdoor space to feature a large adaptable outdoor classroom.
- Integrate sustainable landscape features adjacent to the building to support energy efficiency, reduce the heat island effect, and provide environmental benefits.
- Generate a site design that meets budget expectations while considering long-term maintenance costs and campus growth and evolution.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION AND HARDSCAPE

Pedestrian circulation and gathering places are delineated by a variety of pavement types that build on existing campus standards and highlight special spaces on the exterior of the building.

- **SEATWALLS / RETAINING WALLS**
24-inch wide, free-standing brick seat walls enclose the outdoor classroom on the east and west side of the space. The structure of these walls is reinforced concrete on a concrete foundation. A 4" thick brick veneer to match the building and existing columns is applied to all exposed vertical sides of the walls. The seat walls are capped with architectural precast concrete to match the existing columns. A low retaining wall will replace the existing 6x6 timber wall at the covered walkway. The retaining wall will be 12" wide with a brick cap to match the existing brick cheek wall at the steps and accessible ramp.
- **WALKWAYS**
New scored concrete walks connect the existing and proposed outdoor spaces with building entrances and remaining walkways. Walk widths are 6' to match existing and 10' where more space is needed. Concrete steps connect the existing dormitory entry pavilion to the DBVI outdoor classroom. A short concrete walk will connect the rear Recreation Building terrace to the new gazebo location.
- **OUTDOOR CLASSROOM**
The 2,200-sf. outdoor classroom is the primary element in this courtyard area and features the following components:
 - Decorative concrete pavers and banding to match the new VRCBVI Main Building Patio and resurfaced event/parking area.
 - Brick seat walls with architectural precast concrete caps to match existing columns on campus are located along the east and west side of the outdoor classroom.

- ~~Shade structures to provide shaded areas at most times throughout the day. The structures also provide a mounting surface for adjustable flood/down lighting.~~ The Shade Structure was deleted due to budget restraints.
 - Multiple electrical receptacles are included for instructional use with power tools and various types of electrical equipment. GFCI receptacles are recess mounted in the seat walls and spaced no greater than 10' on center.
- GAZEBO
The *existing* prefabricated gazebo will be relocated to the south patio at the Recreation Building. The gazebo will be used as a smoking shelter; therefore it is located near building entrances with a minimum separation of 25' from building door openings. Electrical service is provided to operate lighting and ceiling fan. A short concrete walk is provided for barrier free access.

SITE FURNISHINGS, AMENITIES AND LIGHTING

The proposed site concept includes the following site furnishings, amenities, and lighting for the comfort and safety of residents, faculty, and staff. The site furnishings have been provided as a family of related elements that complement previously selected furnishings, the building character, and reflect the existing campus style. Refer to the schematic design drawings for locations.

- ~~SHADE STRUCTURES~~
~~The shade structures shall be incorporated into the project via a delegated design process. They shall be integrated into the seatwall columns, and shall accommodate adjustable flood/down lighting. The material finish shall match the existing white building components, but can be designed to reflect a more modern / contemporary look.~~ Shade Structure deleted due to budget constraints.
- TRASH AND RECYCLING RECEPTACLES
Trash and recycling receptacles are not specified in this area. Trash and recycling materials are brought indoors for disposal.
- PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING
The pedestrian light fixtures are similar to fixtures previously specified on recent campus projects. The combined height of the pole and fixture is 20 feet. All metal poles and fixture housings are a dark bronze color similar to existing. The light is LED, and it must be a full cutoff fixture to be dark sky compliant. Voltage requirements will vary based on the selected fixture. The pole is straight, square and has a decorative base cover.

LANDSCAPE PLANTINGS

The landscape design includes a simple lawn ground plane with trees to match the rest of the campus. Shrubs and perennial beds are used primarily to accent key use areas and to replace lawn in difficult to reach or mow areas. Plants are selected and spaced so that they do not provide hiding places for people. Plant species are selected to be drought tolerant. The following paragraphs outline specific features or characteristics of each plant type.

- TREES
Medium size deciduous shade trees are placed south of the VRCBVI Main Building to frame the VRCBVI Main Building Patio. Ornamental trees are added along the east-west walk at the VRCBVI Main Building Patio. Evergreen trees are located between the outdoor classroom and the existing covered walk to provide a wind screen and visual-sound separation for the outdoor classroom.

- SHRUBS

Shrubs are used strategically to provide spatial definition, screening, visual interest, and barriers. All shrubs are selected for a maximum height of 3' to maintain clear visibility and easy maintenance. A combination of evergreen and deciduous flowering shrubs creates year- round interest and accent key points on the site.

- PERENNIALS AND ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

Perennial groundcovers, plants, and ornamental grasses are used sparingly as accents around the site. Low maintenance species are specified to eliminate the use of fertilizer and pest control. The plants are planted close together to reduce the need for weeding. The ornamental grasses will require once-a-year maintenance to remove dead foliage.

- LAWN

The primary groundcover for the site is lawn. Sod is used where exposed soil remains along backfilled walks and paved surfaces. The lawn (sod) blend consists of a mix of shade, sun, and drought-tolerant species.



Relationship to Approved Master Plan

All site work will conform to existing plans and compliment or match aesthetics and architecture.

[* this section must contain information for Board review, do not leave blank]
(Include the date of the master plan and how this project relates to a larger program effort, if applicable)

Existing Architectural Context

Henrico High School across Azalea Ave from the DBVI campus approximately ¼ to the East on Azalea Ave. Outside the campus wooded boundaries are residential single home residences and a nearby church. The campus buildings surrounding the Classroom Pavilion consist of dormitories, a rehabilitation, physical fitness center, paved parking spaces, offices, training and classrooms, a cafeteria, a library, and maintenance buildings. The Classroom Pavilion area does not have any historical significance.



(The surrounding community, historic significance, adjacent site, the identity of the agency or institution, etc.)

AARB History (for return presentations on the same project): This project was approved as part of the December 2025 Consent Agenda. The approval is attached to this email submission. Due to funding constraints, the shade structure was eliminated from this plan.