

## Vision Dimension 1

# The heart of Berkeley's community

Civic Center will be an epicenter of Berkeley's public life— enlivened by activity day and night, and a preferred center stage for all important civic occasions. A place where all members of the community will have a chance to meet with one another, Civic Center will represent Berkeley's diversity and foster social cohesion.





## Vision Dimension 2

# Prime space for civic life, culture and the arts

The Civic Center will concentrate some of Berkeley's most important civic functions, it will harness the pulse of Downtown activity on Shattuck Avenue and connect with the adjacent Arts District through new art and culture programming. Heritage will be preserved while shaping the city's future.

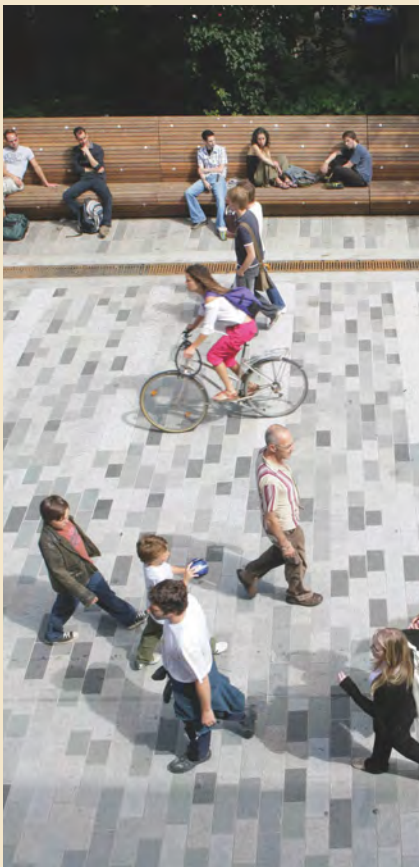




## Vision Dimension 3

# Expression of the city's values

Civic Center will respect and build upon the area's natural systems, and demonstrate Berkeley's commitment to environmental sustainability in all aspects of its transformation — from the energy consumption of its buildings, to the mobility patterns it will encourage. A true commons, the Civic Center will be both a place of collective assets, readily accessible to all members of the community, and a platform for self-expression.







# Design Development

4.1 Design Opportunities

4.2 Programs Matrix

4.3 Big Moves



## 4.1

# Design Opportunities

Following the site analysis, public life study, historical research, and engagement, the design team started to identify high level design opportunities and concepts. Three ideas emerged as key project components:

## Berkeley's Cultural Hive

Civic Center is adjacent to the Arts District and Berkeley High School. The Veterans Memorial Building lends itself to a great mixed arts venue, with performance spaces and educational arts programs — a link between the High School, a major youth stakeholder, and the Arts District.

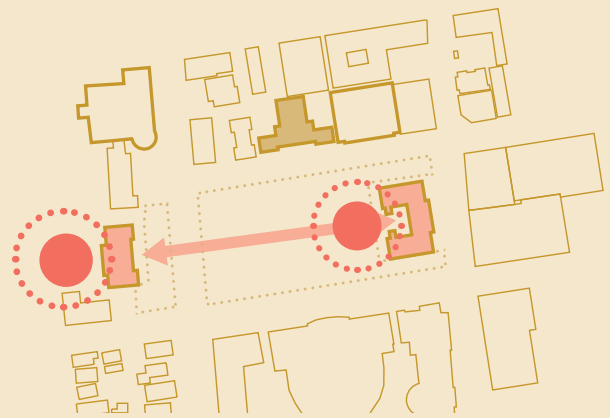
## The Berkeley Center

A hybrid museum/cultural/educational facility focusing on a constellation of local history, social justice, food... including the Berkeley Historical Society and spaces for community meetings and events.

## Council Chambers

A Civic Center needs a meeting place for the Council, but where is the best place for it? Extending Old City Hall could be a

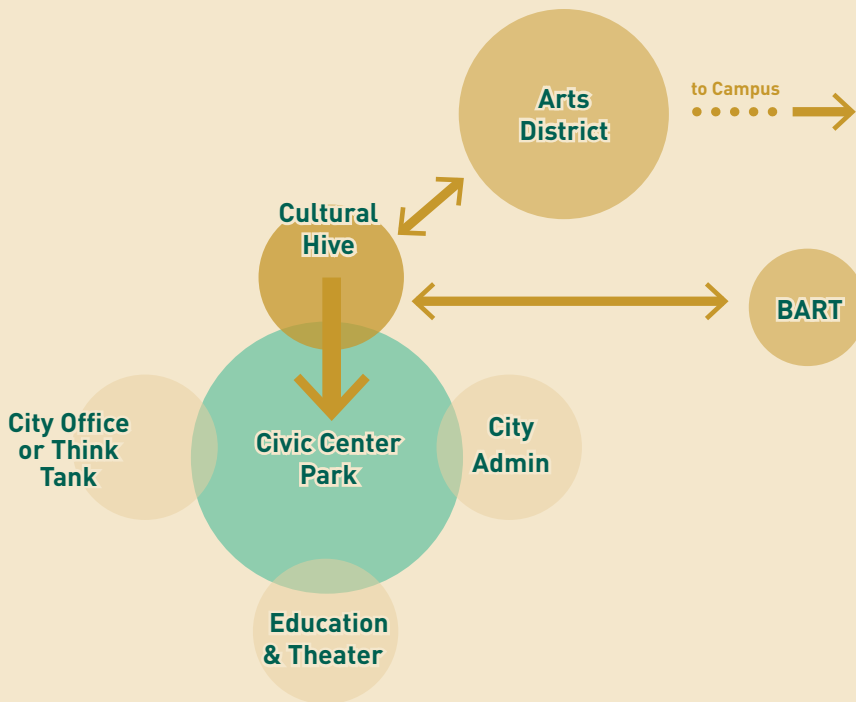
possibility, as could the west side of 2180 Milvia — providing a new front door on the park.



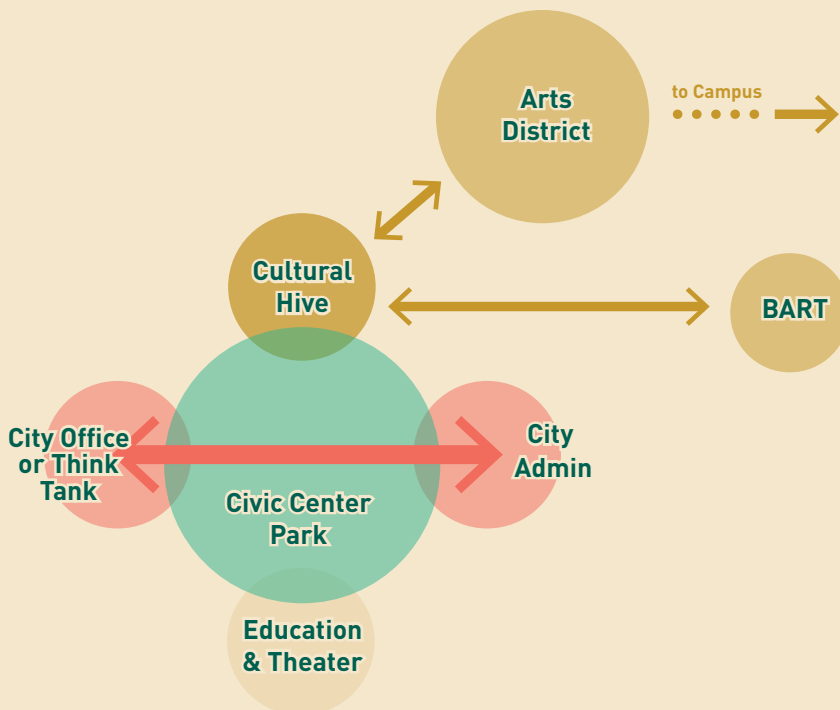
↑ An opportunity for Council Chambers to return to the heart of Berkeley's Civic Center

## Civic Center Park

Alongside a great suite of programs, the transformation of the Park and its surrounding streets will make the Civic Center the heart of the community and a great public space. A place of gathering, concerts, evening events, everyday lunch meeting, family picnics ... It will be flexible, green and lush.



↑An opportunity to transform the Veterans Memorial Building into Berkeley's Cultural Hive



↑An opportunity for Civic Center Park to be activated by a higher concentration of programs – from performing arts and cultural events, to a food venue and community gathering spaces



These initial ideas or design hunches' were presented at the January 14, 2020 City Council Worksession and were well received by council and the public present. The conceptual design options in Chapter 5 further build on these key concepts.



4.2

# Programs Matrix

Successful activation of Civic Center depends on the amount and mix of uses and programs in its buildings, and how much those programs help enliven the public realm. During our engagement process, many desired programs were identified, and overwhelmingly we heard about Arts and Culture as a great complement program to Civic functions. This is where the idea of a Cultural Hive in the Veterans Memorial Buildings started to take place. Flexible meeting spaces, for both government and community uses were widely mentioned. The lack of a large meeting hall, where Council meetings could take place became an important, (currently non-existing), program desire voiced by many. The need for better park amenities, such as restrooms, and a yearning for a friendlier, much improved public realm for pedestrians and cyclists came up as a key point in making Civic Center the place it deserves to be.

***Civic Center must be a place of great civic and cultural significance in Berkeley, nothing less than any of the great public spaces around the world.***

EXISTING PROGRAMS

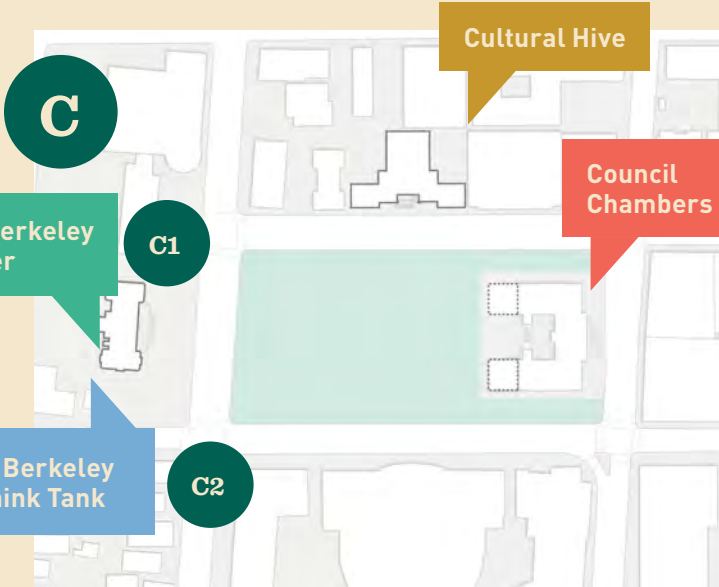
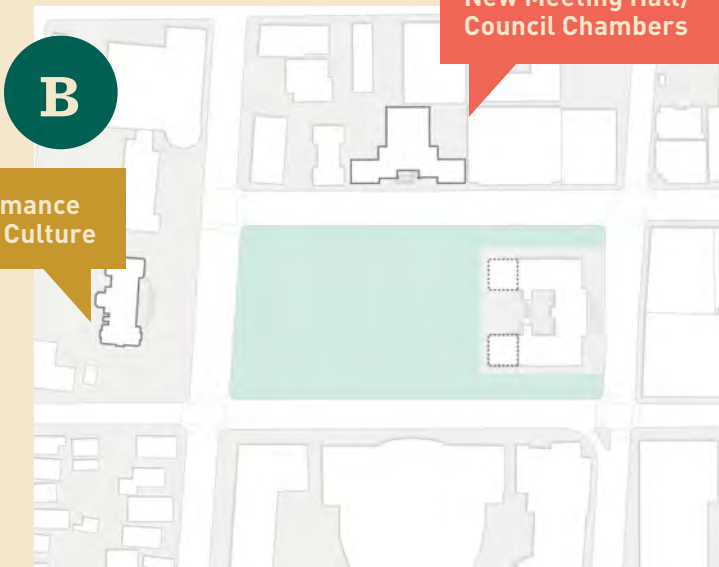
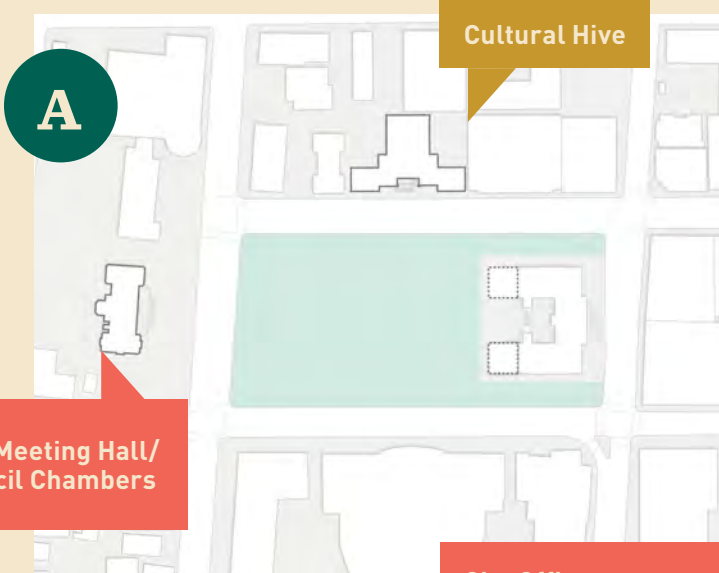
|                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| The Berkeley Historical Society | Options Recovery Services |
| Farmers Market                  | Berkeley Community Media  |
| Veterans Meeting Space          | Emergency Shelter         |
| Dorothy Day House               | Park Restrooms            |

ADDITIONAL DESIRED PROGRAMS

|                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| ★ Berkeley Cultural Hive | ☆ Community Meeting Space |
| ★ City Council Chambers  | ☆ Food & Beverage         |
| Berkeley Think Tank      | Community Care            |
| Berkeley First Center    | Day Care                  |
| City Offices             | ☆ New Park Restrooms      |

- ★ Priority program
- ☆ Important program

*Identified during the engagement process*



**All options consider/ include:**

- Adaptive reuse of the historic buildings and the Park
- A large meeting hall with space for Council Chambers at Civic Center
- Activation of the west side of 2180 Milvia, removing parking and turning its current back into an active frontage toward the park
- Public realm improvements beyond the Park, to include Center St, Milvia Street, MLK Jr Way and key intersections.

- Performance Arts & Culture
- The Berkeley Center
- Council Chambers
- Social Services
- Think Tank (incl. City Offices)



# 4.3

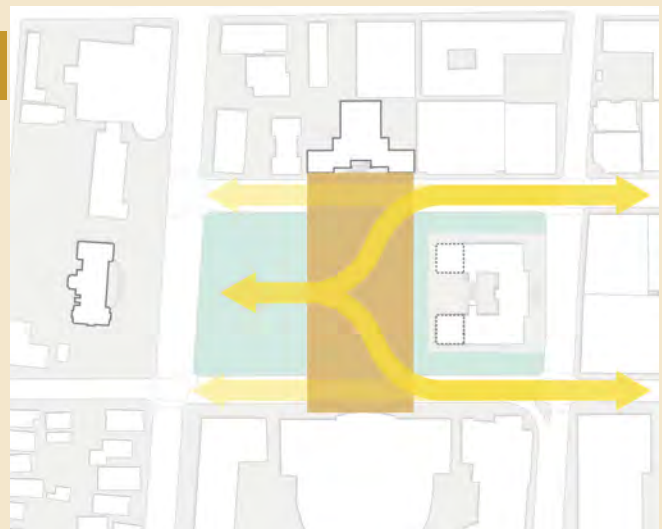
# Big Moves

## Spatializing the Vision

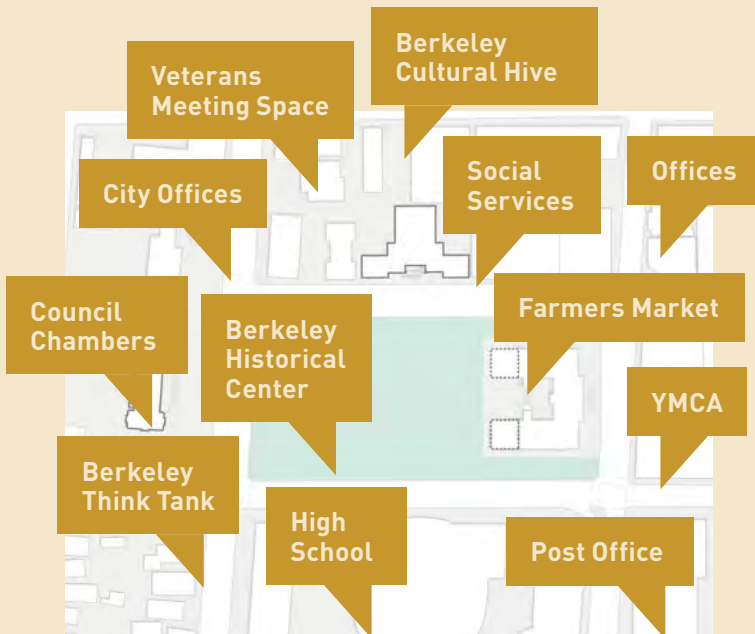
Stemming from the Vision statement, the Civic Center urban design concept can be summarized in seven big moves. These key spacial objectives anchor all the iteration and conceptual design options that follow.



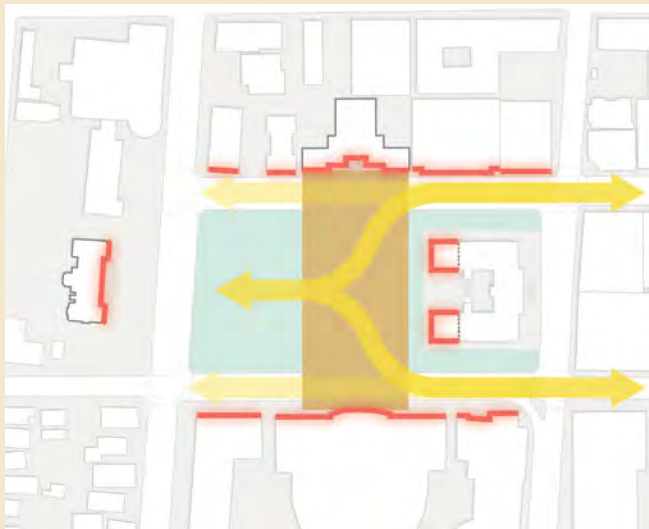
**2** Bring people here from Shattuck Ave and beyond.  
BART to Park!



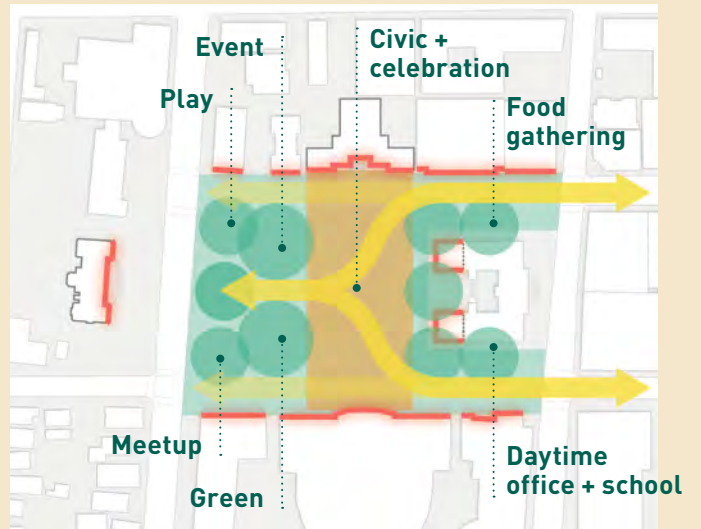
**3** Create a dignified plaza at the terminus of a green Center St.  
A strong sense of arrival!



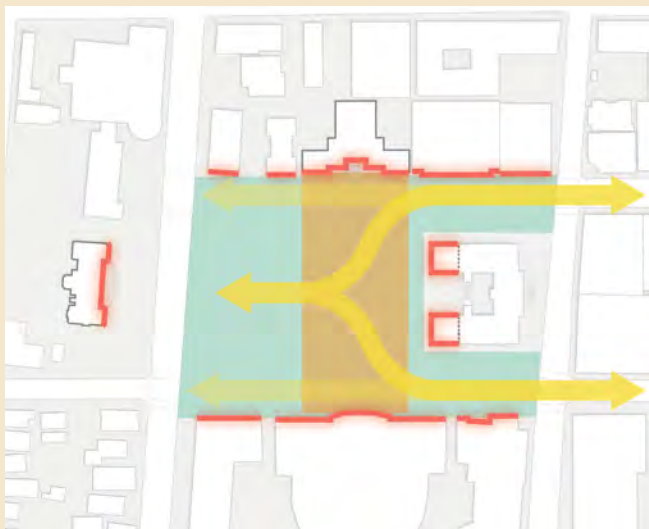
**1** Activate the space with a suite of programs  
More programs will bring more people and life to Civic Center!



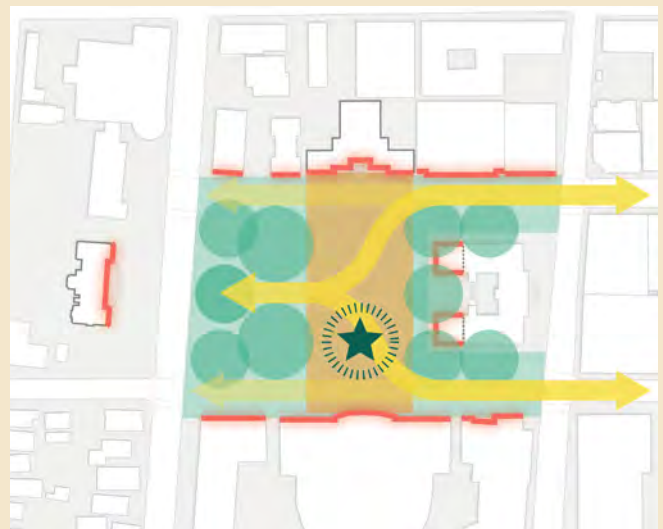
**4** Energize the space with all of the surrounding buildings.  
Face the park!



**6** Subdivide the park into human-scaled spaces.  
Right-size the room!



**5** Consider the park as a space from building edge to building edge.  
Wall to wall green carpeting!



**7** Create a draw.  
A distinct, regional attractor!







# Conceptual Design Options

**5.1 Options Overview**

**5.2 Option A**

**5.3 Option B**

**5.4 Option C**

**5.5 Landscape and Public Realm**

**5.6 City and Commission Subcommittee Engagement**

**5.7 Community Feedback – Website**

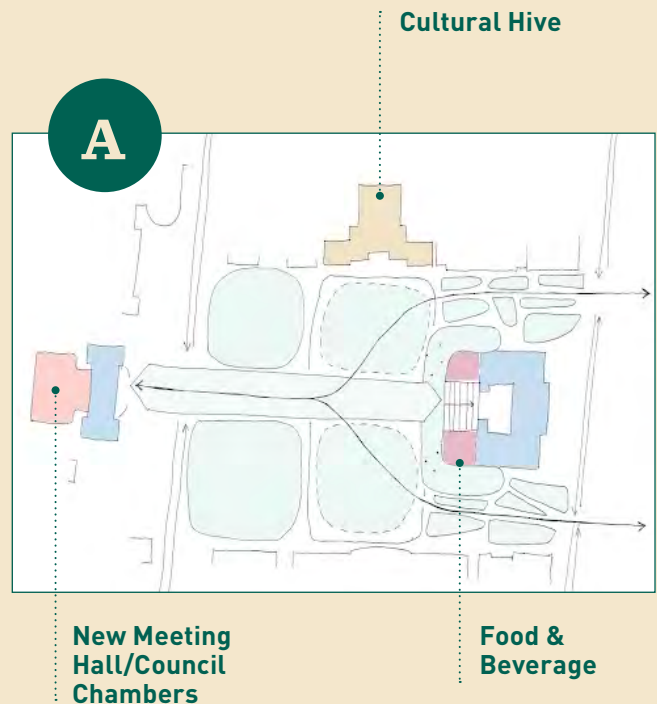
**5.8 Design Options Appraisal**

## 5.1

# Overview of Options Considered

In this chapter we describe three conceptual design options for the park and the two buildings considered in our scope of work. Based on the findings from the site analysis, the historic structures studies and the engagement process, the different options describe three future scenarios for the transformation of Civic Center. Each option considers building programs, how programs are distributed, and a conceptual street design and landscape vision. Case studies and image references are used to help paint a picture of three possible futures for Civic Center.

These options were presented to the Technical Advisory Committee, to the project Sub Committee group and the community for their input; you will find a summary of their feedback at the end of this chapter. In Chapter 7 you will find our recommendations and the proposed Civic Center Vision.



## Design Option A

Old City Hall is restored for use as a new City Hall with council chambers, the Veterans Memorial Building is converted into a “Cultural Hive” and the existing restrooms and storage spaces on the west side of 2180 Milvia are replaced with larger additions for food and beverage services.