



Office of the City Manager

WORKSESSION
March 21, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
Submitted by: Liam Garland, Public Works Director
Subject: Civic Center Plan Phase II – Design Concept

SUMMARY

This worksession provides an update to City Council on the work that has been accomplished to date to develop a consensus design concept for Berkeley's Civic Center area, which includes the following:

- Veterans Memorial Building;
- Maudelle Shirek Building ("Old City Hall"); and
- Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park ("Civic Center Park").

The City's Veterans Memorial Building, Maudelle Shirek Building, and Civic Center Park are important cultural resources, not only due to their age, but also their architectural significance, central location, and history as the center of City government.

Phase II of the Civic Center Vision project aims to achieve design concept consensus for the Civic Center Area at the heart of Berkeley's community. The goal of the project is to document a preferred design concept by the summer of 2023, with input from community members, City commissions, and City Council. This work represents the culmination of a partnership between Public Works (PW), Office of Economic Development (OED), and the City's consultant team led by Siegel & Strain Architects.

The adopted design concept for the Civic Center Vision project will embody the [Vision for Berkeley's Civic Center](#) created collaboratively with the community and stakeholders during the first phase of the project (2019-20). The full *Civic Center Vision* statement is:

Civic Center will be the heart of Berkeley's community. Civic Center will be the prime space for civic life, culture, and the arts. It will reflect the city's diverse identities, celebrate its history, and contribute to shaping its future. A place of shared resources and a platform for free expression accessible to all, Civic Center aims to manifest the city's values, advance social justice, and demonstrate the power of true public space.

Phase I (Vision and Implementation Plan) of the project commenced in summer 2019 and was funded through Phase 1 of the Measure T1 infrastructure bond designated to

repair, renovate, replace, or reconstruct the City’s infrastructure, facilities, and buildings. Phase II of the Civic Center project was funded via a General Fund budget referral approved in the City Council’s adoption of the FY 2022 Budget. Staff work on Phase II began in September of 2022 with the goal to establish a consensus design concept through additional public outreach.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Project Timeline

The project began in September 2022 and is anticipated to be completed by June of 2023:

- Phase II Funding Authorized by Council June 29, 2021
- Project Commencement Sept. 1, 2022
- Public and City Engagement: Design Approach
 - Technical Advisory Committee Sept. 29, 2022
 - “Super” Subcommittee Meeting of the Public Works/Transportation, Landmarks, Parks and Civic Arts Commissions Sept. 29, 2022
 - 25+ Small Focus Group Interviews Sept. ‘22 – Feb. ‘23
 - Monthly meetings with Community for a Cultural Civic Center (CCCC) Sept. ‘22 – Feb. ‘23
 - Workshop #1: Open House (Berkeley Public Library) Nov. 16, 2022
 - Online Community Survey: Berkeley Civic Center Vision Project Nov. ‘22 – Jan. ‘23
 - Art Organizations Survey: Berkeley Arts Space Needs Assessment Jan. ‘23 – Feb. ‘23
- Public and City Engagement: Draft Design Concept
 - Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Feb. 9, 2023
 - Commission Engagement - Super Subcommittee Meeting #2 Feb. 9, 2023
 - Workshop #2: Youth Focus at Berkeley High Feb. 15, 2023
 - Workshop #3: Education Focus at Berkeley City College Feb. 15, 2023
 - Veterans Memorial Building Arts Space Focus Group Meeting Feb. 24, 2023
- Council Work Session - Emerging Preferred Design Concept March 21, 2023
- Council Presentation (anticipated) - Design Concept Adoption June 2023

Summary of Meetings and Outreach to Date

The consultant team, led by Sigel & Strain Architects and supported by staff from PW, OED, and other City departments, kicked off this phase with a series of public meetings in September 2022. The public outreach effort is described in more detail in Attachment 1, Section 2 – *Community Engagement*.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC is composed of City of Berkeley staff from a variety of departments, and its purpose is to provide subject matter expertise and feedback throughout the process. TAC members represent a cross-section of knowledgeable participants with an interest and stake in the Civic Center. The TAC met for the first time prior to releasing the Vision Plan project RFQ in late 2018, and has since gathered formally in this project phase twice with the consultant team: at the Phase II project kick off meeting in September 2022, and to review the draft consensus design concept in February 2023. In addition to formal meetings, ad hoc consultations with individual TAC members (e.g., the City’s special events coordinator, real estate manager, City Clerk, Public Safety, and PW Facilities Maintenance) have made essential contributions to the project.

Super Subcommittee of City Commissions. To efficiently engage with City Commissions that have an interest in this project, a “super” subcommittee meeting structure was established. Three City of Berkeley Commissions—the Public Works, Parks Recreation and Waterfront, and the Landmarks Preservation Commissions—already had established ad-hoc subcommittees to address projects funded by Measure T1 bond improvements, and the Civic Arts Commission established an ad-hoc standing subcommittee for the Civic Center visioning process. During Phase II of the Civic Center project, the super sub-committee structure continued. This larger group of subcommittees met twice in publicly noticed meetings on Zoom in the webinar format, first to kick off the project and discuss design approaches in September of 2022 and to review and comment on the draft design concept in February 2023. See <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/capital-projects/civic-center-vision-plan-project> for a complete list of materials presented at the Super Subcommittee meetings during Phase II.

Site Tours. City staff members have received many requests to tour the two buildings. During this project phase, the consultant team has toured the buildings with PW, and the park with the City’s urban forester and arborist. Members of CCCC, TAC, Super Subcommittee of the commissions, and arts organizations have also toured the buildings to help envision programmatic uses.

Focus Groups and Interviews. From September 2022 through February 2023, staff and the consultant team conducted 25+ one-on-one or small group interviews with Civic Center stakeholders, including the current Civic Center tenants, several City Council Members (and/or their staff) and the Mayor’s office, representatives from the Berkeley Unified School District including the principal of Berkeley High School, planners of

annual community events that occur in Civic Center, arts organizations, business associations, local media outlets, ecological and riparian experts, city staff, and local community groups including the CCCC. See Attachment 1, Section 2.2 for a complete list of interviewees.

Open House, Workshops & Survey. On November 16, 2022, staff and the consultant team hosted an in-person Open House Workshop at the Berkeley Public Library. Approximately 40 community members attended the session, which was designed to generate thoughts about the underlying purposes and functions of our Civic Center, and to inform the project's Preferred Design Concept development. The consultant team organized the session into stations, with opportunities for discussion in small groups and written feedback on postcards at each station. This was supplemented with an **Online Survey** that asked the same questions of respondents as the in-person workshop did. The online survey recorded 694 responses, far exceeding the stated survey goal of 400 responses. Highlights of the survey responses are summarized in Attachment 1. On February 15, 2023, staff and the consultant team hosted two **Youth-Focused Workshops**, one at Berkeley High School and one at Berkeley City College. Staff led students through a series of activities where participants were asked to identify what they liked and disliked about the draft design concept for Civic Center and asked participants to complete comment cards about their opinions related to the park and street design approach. Highlights and key takeaways of the youth focused workshops are summarized in Attachment 1, Section 2.2.

Arts Organizations. A tailored workshop, the *Veterans Memorial Building Arts Space Focus Group Meeting*, was hosted by the City of Berkeley's Civic Arts team on February 24, 2023 and included a detailed tour of the Veterans Building and dedicated focused discussions by artistic discipline. The goal of the meeting was to identify priority space needs for the Community Arts Center and to get input on the development of a spatial program to help determine if the Veterans Memorial Building has sufficient spaces to serve the programmatic needs of the community. This workshop was not open to the general public, but instead sought to elicit targeted feedback from individuals representative of Berkeley's diverse arts community. Sixteen arts professionals from the disciplines of theater, dance, music, visual arts, and literary arts participated in the focus group meeting with the aim to have representation from various areas of Berkeley, racial and ethnic diversity, and a wide range of arts disciplines and organization sizes. Feedback gathered from this workshop is summarized in Attachment 1, Section 2.2.

Emerging Preferred Design Concept

The consultant team, in consultation with staff, has developed an emerging preferred design concept that will be used to guide the subsequent phases of the project. The outreach effort during this phase of the project has affirmed the Vision Statement adopted in 2020. With the adopted Civic Center Vision serving as the north star for this project, four points on a compass emerge to further guide the design:

- **Community** – an inclusive and caring community;

- **The Arts** – expressive artistic and cultural events;
- **Governance** – good governance demonstrated through progressive policies;
- **Education** – powerful education tied directly to history and nature.

Integrating the input received through outreach efforts, and the programmatic requirements heard from current and future users of the Civic Center, the project proposes the following current and potential future uses for each project element:

Maudelle Shirek Building will be the seat of Berkeley’s democracy with flexible meeting spaces and supportive and vision-aligned city services and educational uses, accessible by all in the community. As the historic seat of government in Berkeley, this project proposes returning city functions back to the Maudelle Shirek Building. In the public engagement efforts, Hearing & Meeting Rooms, Council Chambers, and public-facing city services all scored high as priority uses for the building. Adding these functions to the heart of Berkeley’s Civic Center will bring residents to the area throughout the day and into the evenings, to attend meetings, speak at hearings, and organize with their community.

Public outreach also showed strong support for vision-aligned organizations finding a home in the Maudelle Shirek Building, including the Berkeley Historical Society & Museum, Berkeley Community Media, and a Public Policy Institute. In order to support these functions, a number of improvements will be required, including accessible improvements to the main entry and throughout, upgraded mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, improved fire and egress systems, seismic retrofit, and an addition to provide space for the uses. For further discussion of the proposed uses and improvements, see Attachment 1, Section 5.3.

Veterans Memorial Building will be a community Arts Center, run by the city, with performance venues, teaching and exhibit space, accessible by all in the community. This project identifies the building as a future Community Arts Center for the City of Berkeley, a use broadly supported by the public, Civic Arts Program, and the Community for a Cultural Civic Center. In a survey and workshop with local arts organizations who expressed interest in using the building, they identified exhibition and performance space as priorities, which aligns with the perception of need discovered in the public engagement process. Further, arts survey respondents identified a need for flexible multi-disciplinary spaces that are available to rent by the larger community, rather than controlled by a single anchor tenant. The layout of the art spaces is under further study based on the results of the recent Arts Organization focus group event.

The arts functions will require improvement to the building including accessible improvements throughout, upgraded mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, improved fire and egress systems, seismic retrofit, and possibly additions to the sides of the main stage, and at the rooftop. For further discussion of the approach to this building, see Attachment 1, Section 5.4.

Civic Center Park & Surrounding Streets will become a safe nature-based urban oasis for all of Berkeley. The park design will support community use throughout the day, evening and weekend for strolling, relaxing, sharing or having a meal, visiting, and attending an impromptu gathering or organized event.

Park Uses & Improvements

The design concept for MLK Jr. Civic Center Park builds from the existing condition of the park, and layers in new design elements and programs that support the desired everyday vibrancy of the park. It simplifies the path layout and reclaims underutilized space to fit new activity areas where possible.

The approach points towards a future for Civic Center Park that the public is asking for – a place of natural and architectural beauty that provides both calm retreat and invitation to participate in public life, through everyday activities and special events. The proposed design preserves and builds upon the existing structure of the park, including the mature tree canopy, the central green open space, and the planned Turtle Island Monument terrace.

Recommended improvements include simplified and widened path systems, native and biodiverse planting areas, a multi-use plaza w/ skate-able elements, a multi-age playground, an arts and market plaza to support the Farmers Market, expanded seating opportunities, and food and beverage vendors. For further discussion of the proposed park improvements, see Attachment 1, Section 5.2.

Creek Trade Offs

Throughout the public engagement process in Phase II, the project team heard a consistent desire from some members of the community to daylight Strawberry Creek in the area of Civic Center Park, and consistent concerns from others about cost, maintenance, and safety. An alternate design concept layout (Attachment 1, Section 5.2, pages 104-107) illustrates a partial-flow daylighting scenario. The placement of the creek along Center Street aligns with the current location of the culvert under the park, and minimizes disruption to the overall park layout and monuments. However, it does have a number of impacts that need to be considered more carefully through additional study:

- Center Street – The daylight creek reduces the width of Center Street to a minimum access vehicle aisle, allowing for emergency vehicle access. Parking and other vehicular traffic flow is removed. A parking & traffic study should be completed to understand the impact of closing Center Street to public traffic, and design solutions will need to be developed for providing delivery/drop-off to the buildings along Center. The Farmers Market also may need to be relocated to a new site with sufficient width for the market.

- Hydrology – The partial flow scenario is based on the 1999 Creek Study by Wolf Mason Associates. This report notes that the culvert is likely 18’ under the surface of the park, sloping down to the west. A full restoration of the creek would require 150’ in width and was determined infeasible. A partial flow scenario would require that the existing culvert remain, and that water is diverted through a flow control structure somewhere upstream of the park and downstream from the BART station to bring water closer to the surface. The exact width, depth, and design of a partial flow creek would need to be developed through a detailed hydrological study.
- Maintenance – any creek feature would involve new maintenance requirements and associated costs.

Parking and Circulation

In addition to the pedestrian pathway changes within the park, the concept design proposes changes to parking and circulation at both Center Street and Martin Luther King Jr Way.

- *Center Street* – aligned with the City’s goal of a Green Center Street, the design proposes making this a pedestrian priority shared street, with a flush, curb-less transition from street to sidewalk, along with adding additional street trees and bioswales for stormwater management. A curve has been introduced in the road to create a more gracious entry plaza for the Veterans Memorial Building, and to further slow vehicular traffic. The proposal shows 16 parallel parking spaces, in place of the 59 paid parking spaces currently on Center Street. These generated \$156,860 in CY 2022 (at a rate of \$3.50/hour). There are also currently reserved parking spaces on this block – five for judges at the Alameda County Courthouse, one loading spot for the City mail truck, and four accessible spaces. The 16 parallel spaces could serve as reserved parking, or a small number of paid parking spaces could be maintained.
- *Martin Luther King Jr Way* – the primary concern at this road is pedestrian safety crossing between the park and the Maudelle Shirek Building. Currently, the edge of the curb between Allston and Center does not align with the curb on the blocks to the north or the south – the road widens along the park’s edge. The concept design proposes reclaiming the portion of the road currently used as parallel parking to re-align the curbs in this area, and to create pedestrian bulb-outs at the street crossings. While the traffic lanes are not impacted, eight parking spaces would be removed.

Costs and Funding Plan

The following high-level construction cost range estimations have been developed by staff and the consulting team based on the emerging preferred design concept as presented in Attachment 1. These estimates will be further reviewed and updated by a

construction cost estimator before staff return for final approval of the Civic Center design concept in June 2023 (anticipated).

TABLE 1: PRELIMINARY HIGH-LEVEL CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE RANGE	LOW IN \$MILLION	HIGH IN \$MILLION
<p>Maudelle Shirek Building Assumes: 27,500 square feet (sf). Existing building + 15,500 sf addition (two stories, west side), seismic retrofit: immediate occupancy (or near), electric conversion</p>	\$54.107	\$70.558
<p>Veterans Memorial Building Assumes 28,000 square feet (sf) existing building + 4,000 sf roof terrace, seismic retrofit: better performance objective for new buildings, electric conversion, roof terrace in high estimate</p>	\$34.045	\$41.475
<p>Martin Luther King Jr Civic Center Park & Streets 203,000 sf (or 4.654 acres w/ Center St) paths and paving, planting and irrigation, new trees and tree protection, utilities, furnishings and bollards, lighting, playground and skate spot, bulb outs, green infrastructure, crosswalk improvements, public restrooms. Does <u>not</u> include creek daylighting.</p>	\$12.902	\$16.594
TOTAL	\$101.054 M	\$128.627 M

With an approved design concept, this project would move into its next phase of additional recommended studies (e.g., circulation/traffic, creek daylighting), environmental reviews, and initiating specific design projects. This work is estimated to cost approximately \$10 million dollars and take 2-3 years.

A variety of funding sources could contribute to the City’s approach to funding. The first approach would involve many different sources of funding all leading to one large project, phased in over the course of years. The following funding sources might contribute to the project:

- *Congressionally Directed Spending Requests (aka earmarks)*. These grants are typically in the range of \$750,000-\$1.5 million. The City has submitted a request to our federal legislators for the Civic Center project and should learn in the fall of 2023 whether the earmark request is successful. If so, funding would commence in calendar year 2024. There is no match requirement.
- *State Directed Spending Requests (aka earmarks)*. Similar to the federal process, there is no match and the most competitive applications are for

infrastructure. At this point in time the State Budget is in flux, and staff are working closely with our state advocate to be ready if opportunities become available.

- *Federal Infrastructure Funding*: staff and consultants have not yet been able to find a category within the current funding stream that is a strong fit for this project, but that may change as future opportunities arise. Grant match requirements for Federal grants vary.
- *FEMA/Cal OES Hazard Mitigation Grants*. These grants require a cost/benefit calculation that makes the BPON+ standard more likely to qualify for a grant. For that reason, the Veteran's Building is more likely to benefit. Most FEMA Grants require a 25% match.
- *Save America's Treasures Grant*. These grants which can be as much as \$750,000 per award, are administered by the National Park Service in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services are awarded to nationally significant historic properties and collections that convey our nation's rich heritage to future generations.
- *State Climate Bonds*: The state legislative process is just beginning and there is some legislation in its infancy stages that may provide future funding opportunities.
- *Sustainability/Resiliency Grants*: the state and federal government offer grants that might help fund the electric conversion, green infrastructure, permeable paving, and bio swales. Grant match requirements vary.
- *Urban Greening Grant/Coastal Conservancy Grant*: these grants may fund a feasibility study of daylighting the creek. Grant match requirements vary.
- *State Parks and Recreation Grants*: There may be future funding opportunities to upgrade and enhance open space and parks.
- *City Funding*. The City's General Fund, a future tax measure, or Certificates of Participation could contribute to the project. In addition, traffic safety and stormwater elements of the project might gain contributions from Measure BB, Gas Tax, and/or the City's Stormwater Fund.
- *Foundations and/or Private Individuals*. Given the Civic Center's history and importance, private foundations and individuals might be a component to the overall funding strategy.

If full project funding isn't secured quickly, an opportunistic approach might be available. Here, City staff would identify discrete project components that could be built without the entire project moving forward. When successful in gaining grants of other funding for these components, work could proceed, e.g., the project's crosswalks and bulb-outs. This approach would likely take more time and involve more project cost overall, given fewer opportunities for efficiencies of scale.

Regardless, this project will be significantly more attractive for funding with an adopted conceptual design. Strong plans need funding, and funding is attracted to strong plans.

Next Steps

Next steps for implementation, early design interventions and activations including food trucks, and improved furnishings are identified in Attachment 1, Section 7.2. In spring of 2023, the team will develop more detailed cost estimates for both buildings and put forth a building management strategy for the Veterans Memorial Building. These will be provided as companion to the finalized design concept anticipated to be before council by June 2023.

BACKGROUND

Originally conceived at the turn of the 20th Century, the Civic Center was planned and molded by City Beautiful Movement principles, and anchored by the 1909 construction of Berkeley's second City Hall (now known as the Maudelle Shirek Building at 2134 Martin Luther King Jr Way). The plan transformed the City's center into a cohesive group of civic buildings surrounding a central park by the 1940s. Today the Civic Center comprises portions of the area surrounding Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park including the Maudelle Shirek Building 'Old City Hall' (1909) and the Veterans Memorial Building (1928) which flank the Park on the west and north sides. The larger Berkeley Civic Center District (codified by the Civic Center Overlay Zone, 2014) itself was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998. In addition, many of the buildings in the Civic Center District, including the Maudelle Shirek Building, the Veterans Memorial Building, and the Park itself, have been individually recognized as City Landmarks. Since the 1940s seismic building codes have evolved, requiring different thresholds of required maintenance and upkeep depending on use, and presently the historic buildings show signs of deferred maintenance.

Seismic Safety and Analysis

Old City Hall and the Veterans Memorial Building were evaluated in 2002 for seismic safety. The assessment included rough cost estimates for retrofitting the structures. These 2002 figures were updated for consideration of current building code. The cost estimates and engineering solutions for addressing seismic safety in Old City Hall and the Veterans Memorial Building were released in late April of 2019.

In 2022, City Council received further information on both the buildings' seismic analysis and costing, and the buildings' leak study. The seismic analysis from Tipping Engineering and the costing from Public Works contributed to the high-level cost estimates above. Public Works' leak study identified \$1.48 million in necessary repairs for the Maudelle Shirek Building and \$1.9 million in repairs for the Veterans Building. These repairs primarily involve roof replacements and spot repairs to better prevent water intrusion.

Based on the adopted Vision Plan, and the proposed consensus design concept and building program, the following building seismic retrofit levels are recommended:

Veterans Memorial Building is a three story, heavy concrete perimeter wall building with wood framed floors and roof that is seismically deficient and could pose life safety hazards to building occupants. For the proposed design concept, a retrofit scheme of Basic Seismic Performance Objective Plus is recommended. Under this scheme, there would be some structural damage to the building in a sufficiently sized earthquake, there would be low risk of injury from the structural damage and the repair time is from several months to one year.

Maudelle Shirek Building is a three story, non-ductile concrete building that is seismically deficient and could pose life safety hazards to building occupants, as the building could collapse or partially collapse in a major earthquake proximate to the site. For the proposed design concept, a retrofit scheme of Immediate Occupancy (IO). Under this scheme, there is low risk of injury from structural damage and the repair time is matter of days.

The forthcoming cost estimates and future detailed engineering analysis together will continue to inform the subsequent design, planning and ultimately building processes of the Civic Center project.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Successful initiatives that repurpose existing buildings and civic space for subsequent generations' fruitful use promotes beneficial environmental, civic, and economic sustainability. In addition, future action to renovate the existing buildings and park will incorporate specific sustainable measures into the design concept. These will include but are not limited to: electrifying buildings, installing solar systems, incorporating native/pollinator friendly plantings, deploying best practices in bioswales & stormwater management, permeable paving, and the protection of mature tree canopy.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Using the vision statement as a guide, the project team has generated a high-quality design concept for Civic Center and its future uses. Via a broad set of community engagement activities, the preferred design concept and accompanying implementation plan will be advanced for review and adoption by City Council.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The exact fiscal impacts of the finalized design concept for Civic Center are yet unknown. Subsequent phases of the project will include the development of detailed cost estimates, financing considerations, and ongoing maintenance strategies for the proposed implementation.

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Attachment:

1: Berkeley Civic Center Design Concept Report, March 2023.



March 10, 2023

Berkeley's Civic Center

Design Concept
Report

City Council Work Session

Section

A Vision for Berkeley's Civic Center

Civic Center will be the heart of Berkeley's community. Civic Center will be the prime space for civic life, culture, and the arts. It will reflect the city's diverse identities, celebrating its history, and contributing to shaping its future. A place of shared resources and a platform for free expression accessible to all, Civic Center aims to manifest the city's values, advance social justice, and demonstrate the power of true public space.

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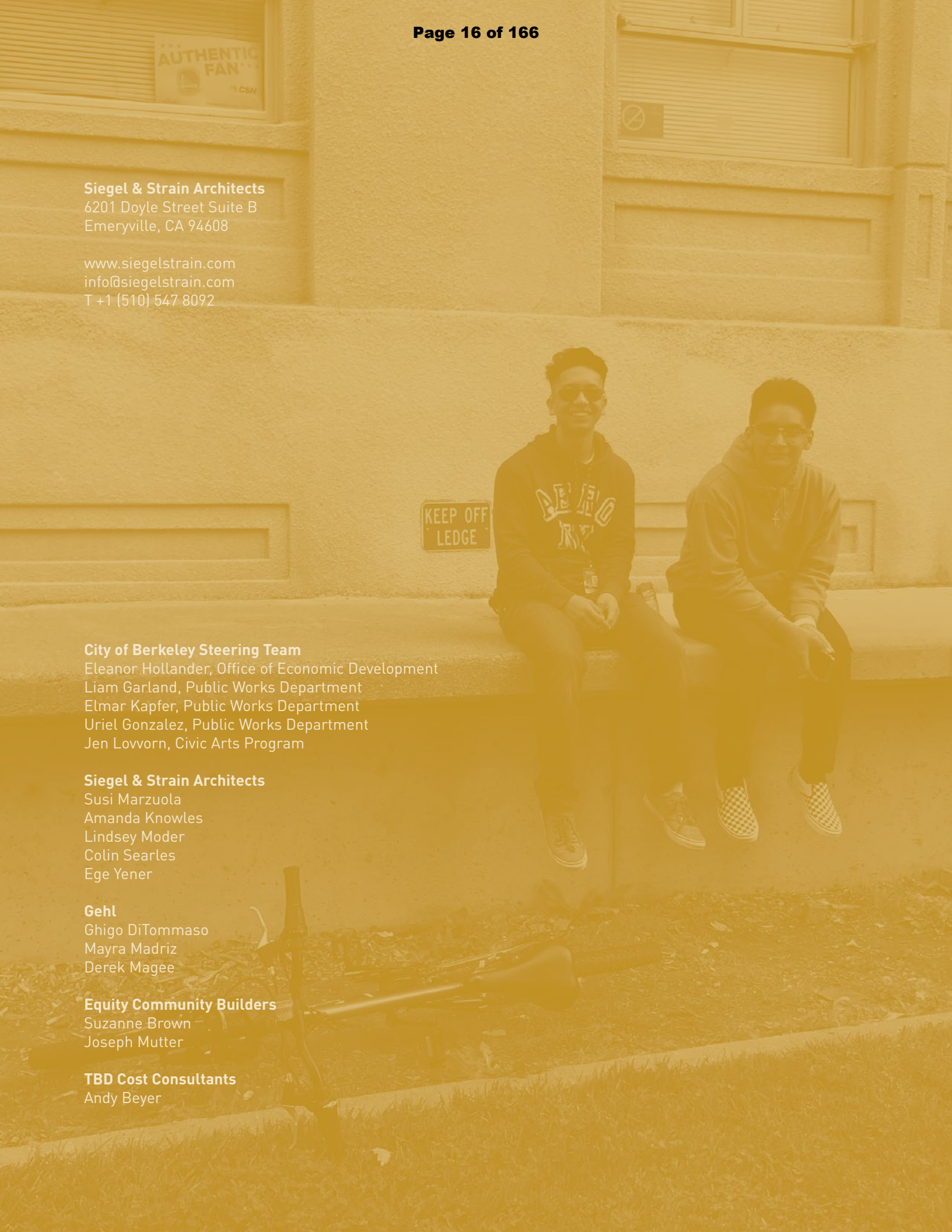
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Executive Summary

Design Concept Phase

The Berkeley Civic Center is a place in Downtown Berkeley of great community and historic significance. The 6-acre project area, set within the Berkeley Civic Center Historic District, and comprised of Martin Luther King Jr Civic Center Park, the Maudelle Shirek Building, and the Veterans Memorial Building, is located at a physical crossroads between downtown Berkeley and residential neighborhoods amid well-established educational, cultural and civic institutions. The Berkeley Civic Center is also at a crossroads in time, awaiting a re-invigoration for use by its community as an updated civic space that embodies the values the community lives by.

This design concept effort is a continuation of the work completed in 2019/20 on the Berkeley Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan. The purpose of this work is to document a design concept that reflects a synthesis of the shared aspirations captured in the vision statement and illustrates design ideas borne out of ongoing engagement with the Berkeley community. As with the previous Berkeley Civic Center effort, members of the community turned up in high numbers to work collaboratively for a common purpose, and the resulting design concept reflects their shared vision.

→ Timeline



Berkeley Civic Center

On September 22, 2020, Berkeley City Council adopted the Vision Statement articulated in the 2020 Vision & Implementation Plan Report for the Berkeley Civic Center project. This vision statement remains the north star for the project.

On June 1, 2021 and related to City Center District Visioning Resolution No. 69,579-N.S., the Berkeley City Council allocated funding and directed City Staff to provide additional public process, planning and design to develop a preferred design concept based on input from the community, City Commissions, and City Council.

The project's Steering Team, comprised of design consultants and Berkeley City Staff from Public Works, Office of Economic Development, Civic Arts, began work on the 2022/23 Berkeley Civic Center Design Concept effort in September 2022.

→ Methodology

The key components of the project team's effort for this phase are research, community engagement and high-level concept design.

The design team began this current effort by researching policies and improvements implemented since the conclusion of the 2019/20 Vision and Implementation Plan.

Working collaboratively with the project's Steering Team and with input from the Community for a Cultural Civic Center (CCCC), the design team developed an approach to community engagement with the goal of collecting input to inform a preferred concept design for the Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park, the Maudelle Shirek Building and the Veterans Memorial Building.

The engagement effort was organized into two major efforts:

- General Public Engagement, including an open house, workshops and an online survey
- Focused Engagement, including meetings and work sessions with specific organizations and entities who are currently active in the Berkeley Civic Center and/or whose missions and interests align with and support the adopted Vision Statement.

Based on the engagement effort, which included input from over 700 individuals and 20 separate entities and organizations, the design team developed key design drivers that informed the emerging preferred design concept described in the pages that follow.

The design team is now in the process of sharing a draft of the design concept with focused groups and collecting comments for incorporation into the plan. Thus far the draft plan has been reviewed by the CCCC, Commissioners on the Super Sub-Committee, City of Berkeley staff representatives, and students from Berkeley High School and Berkeley City College. The emerging design concept will be presented to City Council for input and commentary on March 21, 2023.

Executive Summary

→ Key Design Drivers

The outreach effort uncovered the following key design drivers that advance the vision statement, capture the unique identity and spirit of the Berkeley community, and inform the design concepts illustrated in the emerging plan.

1. The Civic Center park and buildings should be a place to gather as a community.
2. MLK Jr Civic Center Park should be natural in character, preserving mature trees and enhancing native biodiversity.
3. The Park and open space should offer a safe, clean, and comfortable place to be outdoors with others.
4. Many are passionate about daylighting Strawberry Creek while others raised concerns.
5. Center Street should be better integrated into the Park and open space experience.
6. The Maudelle Shirek Building should be the seat of Berkeley's democracy with meeting and public-serving spaces supporting civic participation in City government.
7. These civic uses in Maudelle Shirek Building should be paired with vision-aligned services and educational functions.
8. The Veterans Memorial Building should be a Community Arts Center for creative expression and accessible to all.
9. The Community Arts Center should be activated all day every day, hosting arts organizations and practitioners across all disciplines, delivering performances and programming for the community.

→ Design Concept

Integrating the input received through the engagement efforts, additional study on the changing context of the Civic Center, and the programmatic requirements heard from current and potential users, the Civic Center project proposes the following:

- **Maudelle Shirek Building**
Seat of Berkeley's democracy with flexible meeting spaces and supportive and vision-aligned city services and educational uses.
- **Veterans Memorial Building**
A Community Arts Center, run by the City, with performance venues, teaching and exhibit space, accessible by all in the community.
- **Civic Center Park & Surrounding Streets**
A safe nature-based urban oasis for all of Berkeley, supporting community use throughout the day, evening and weekend for strolling, relaxing, having lunch, visiting, and attending an impromptu gathering or organized event.

→ Recommended Next Steps

The project team proposed the following next steps for project implementation, outlined below and described in greater detail in Section 7 of this report.

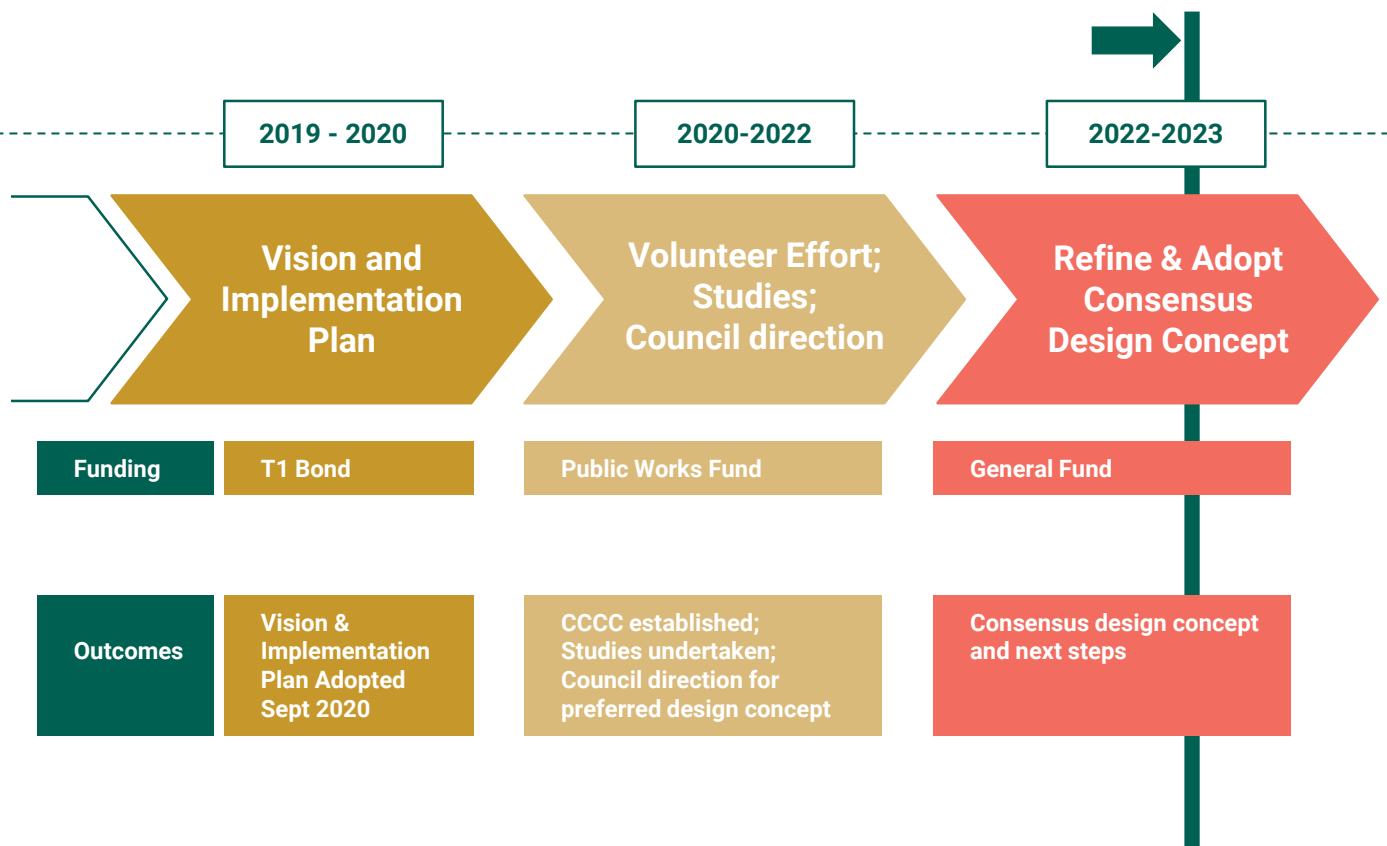
- Identify, fund and realize early activation projects.
- Complete background documentation and additional studies required for specific project design for each plan component.
- Further develop funding, phasing and management plans for each of the project components.

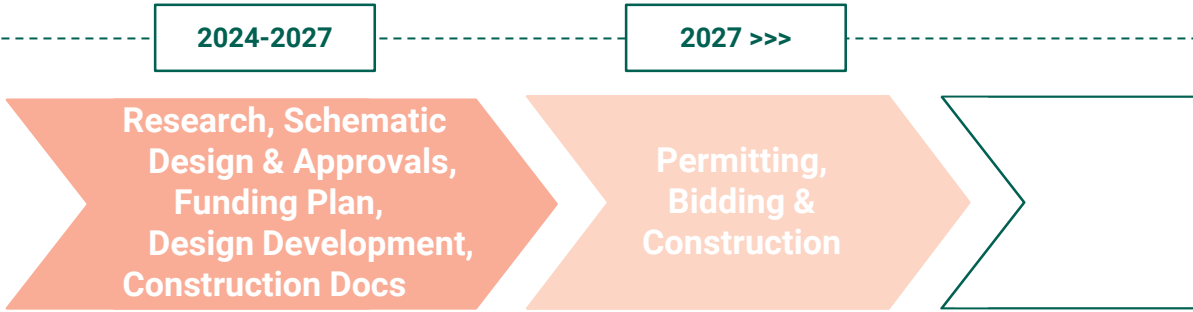


View to fountain terrace and sequoia from large green

0.2

Overall Project Schedule





Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions

1.1 Base Maps

1.2 Site Assessments

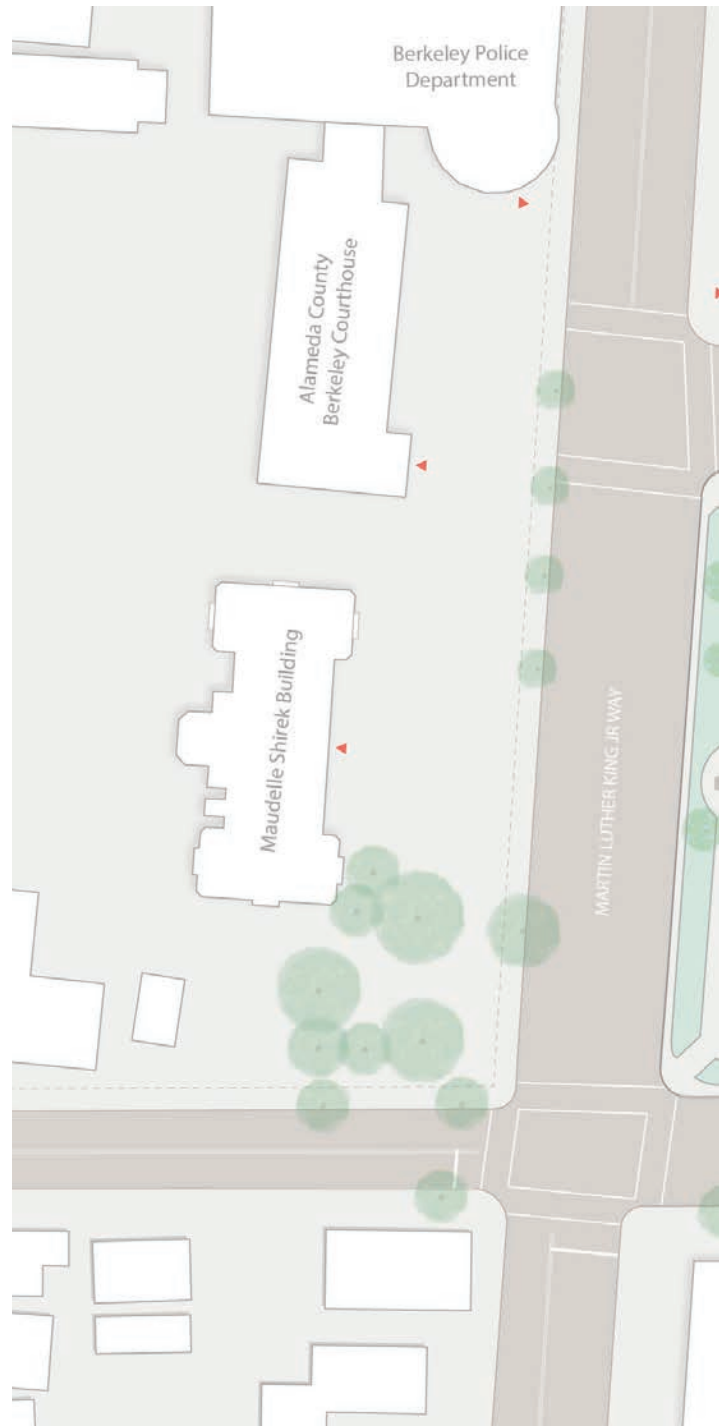
1.1

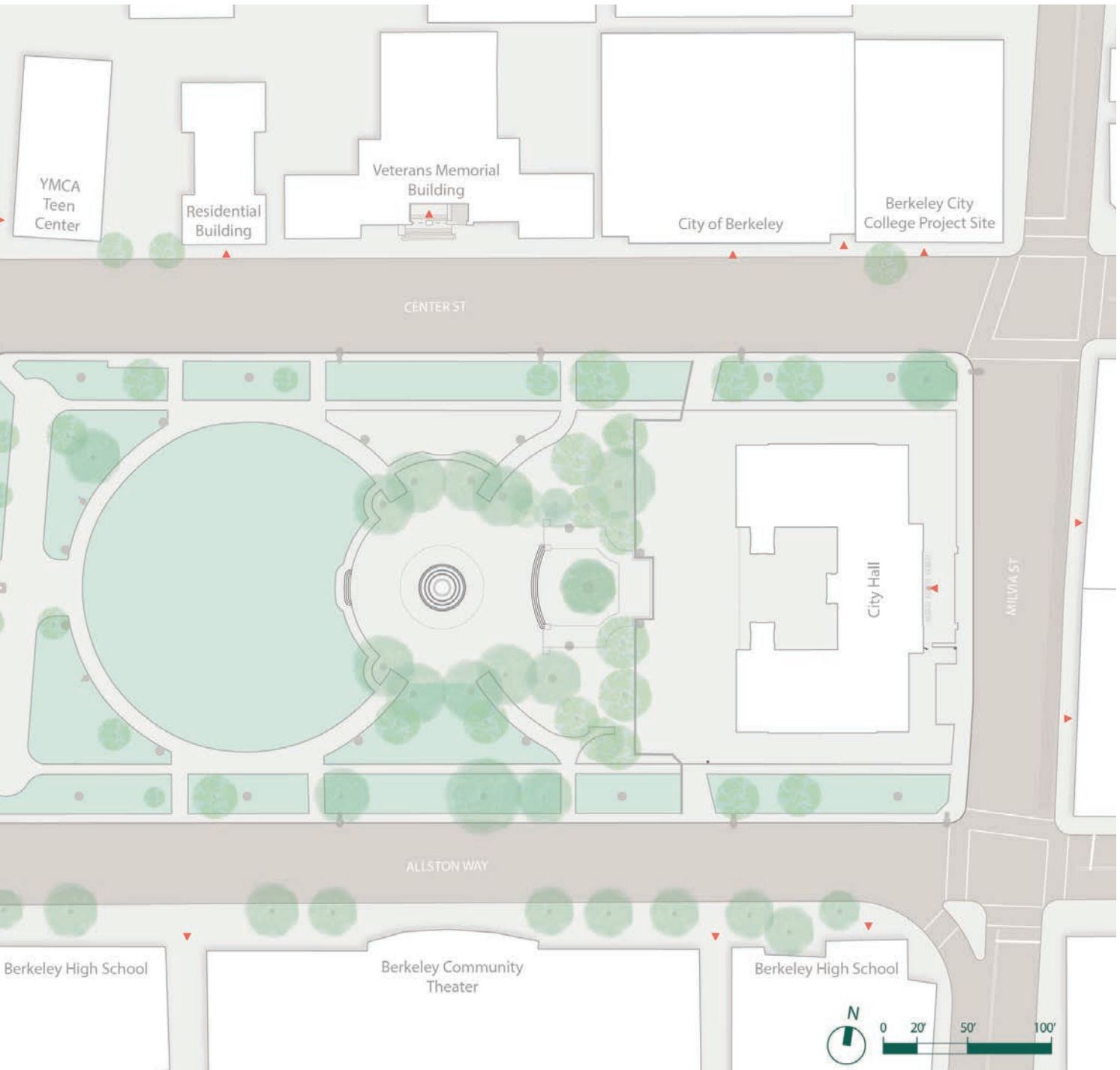
Base Maps

As part of the 2019-2020 Vision and Implementation Plan, the consultant design team developed base maps from historical plans and aerial imagery of the Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park, the Maudelle Shirek Building, and the Veterans Memorial Building in the Civic Center. The design team has continued to use these as base drawings for the current Berkeley Civic Center design concept effort.

Verification of current conditions of the buildings, park and streets are required prior to specific design efforts. See Section 7.2 for a more complete list of recommended existing conditions documentation.

Additional site assessment is offered herein as diagrams to inform the design concept.





Existing Civic Center Site Plan

1.2

Site Assessments

Project Area Map

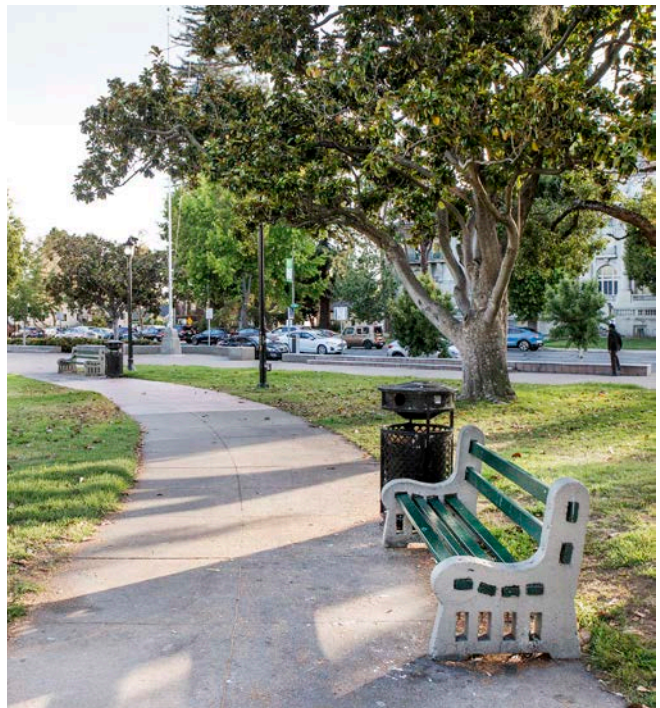
The project is located in the downtown area of Berkeley, one block west of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station, and two blocks west of the UC Berkeley campus. Directly south of the site sits the main campus of Berkeley High School. To the west, the urban fabric shifts to single family residential scale development.

As a part of this phase of work, additional site assessments were developed on the following topics:

- Policy Context
- Circulation Context
- Input since 2020
- Civic Center Park Tree Map



Civic Center Park Peace Wall



Curved Path and Bench at Civic Center Park



Project Area Map

Policy Context

A number of City Policies effect the Berkeley Civic Center study area, including recent Council-adopted initiatives listed to the right. These have implications for proposed improvements at the buildings, park and the streets.

Most notably, the project is a part of the Civic Center Zoning Overlay District, established in 2014 and which encompasses a number of historic structures in the area. All proposed uses should fall within the allowable permitted uses listed to the right.



Fountain at Civic Center Park



Vision 2050

Equity, Public Health & Safety, Strong Local Economy, Resiliency & Sustainability (May 2020)



Existing Buildings Electrification Strategy

(November 2021)



Native Species Policy

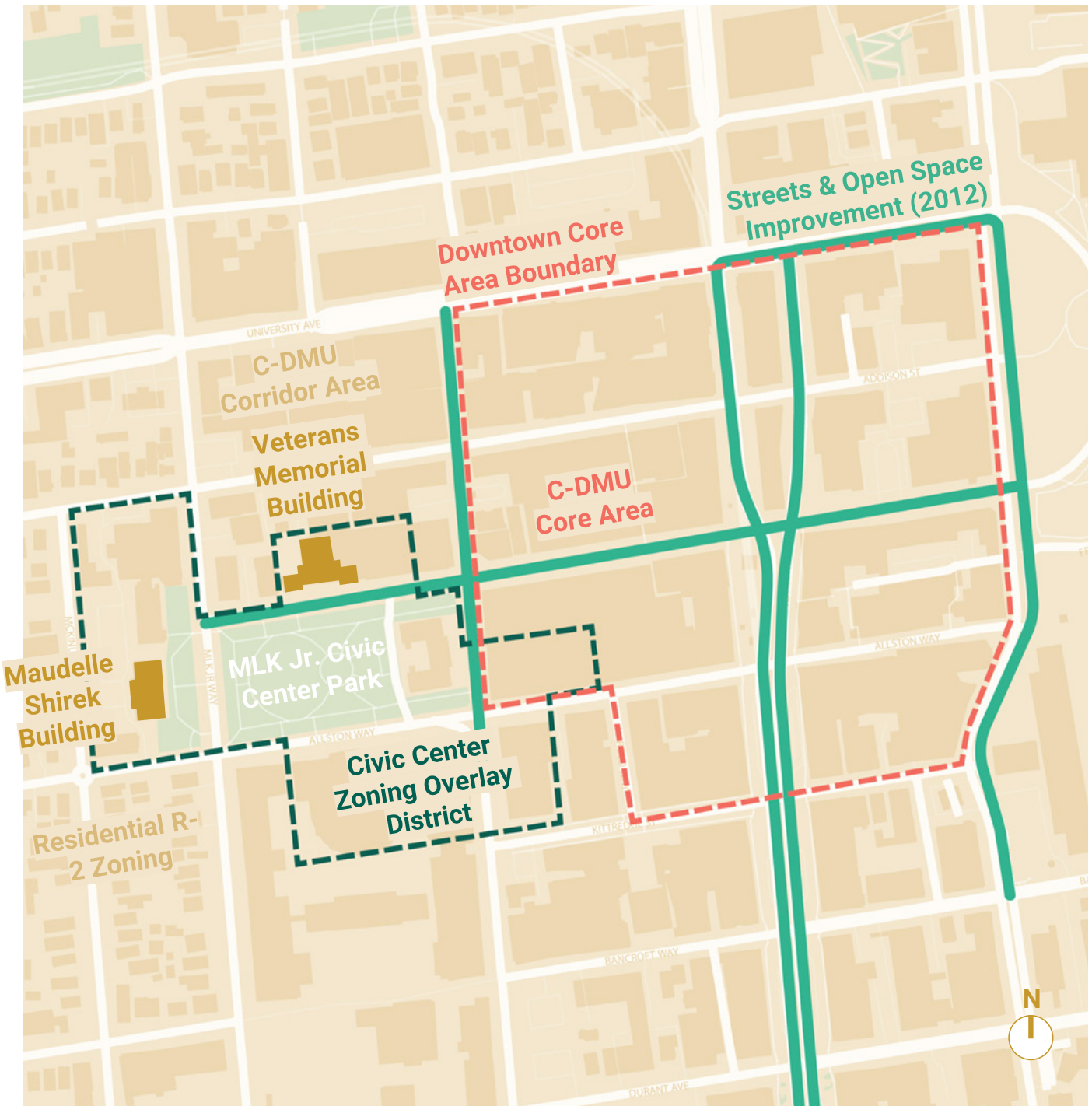
Native, Drought-Resistant, Pollinator-Friendly (April 2022)



Permitted Uses

Civic Center Zoning Overlay District (2014)

- Libraries & Museums
- Parks & Playgrounds
- Public Safety & Emergency Services
- Government Agencies / Institutions & Judicial Courts
- Public Schools / Educational Facilities
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Live Performance Theatre
- Public Market



Policy Context Map

Circulation Context

A number of improvements have been completed in the Civic Center area since conclusion of the 2020 Vision Phase.




Implementation of Milvia Bicycle Boulevard improvements changed traffic circulation west of Shattuck Avenue and the City's new Center Street Garage increased parking capacity in the downtown area.

Improved pedestrian safety is an identified priority for the area and will require changes to the streets. Proposed changes to MLK Jr Way, Allston Way and Center Street need to consider existing circulation, traffic and parking patterns.



View at MLK Jr. Way & Allston Way Intersection looking North

Legend

1. **Addison Bicycle Boulevard**
(Bicycle Plan 2017)
 2. **Milvia Bicycle Boulevard**
(Completed May 2022)
 3. **Center Street Greenway & Center Street Plaza**
(Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan 2012-23)
 4. **Center Street Parking Garage and BART Bike Parking**
720 vehicle spaces; 20 EV charging spaces; 350 bicycle spaces
 5. **Allston Way Civic Street**
(Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan 2012-23)
 6. **Pedestrian Signal Improvements**
(Pedestrian Master Plan 2019-20)
 7. **Crosswalk Bulbouts**
(Pedestrian Master Plan 2019-20)
 8. **Berkeley High School Loading**
(Completed May 2022)
 9. **Harold Way**
(Pedestrian Only)
-  **AC Transit Bus Route**
 -  **BHS Drop-off Approach Routes**
 -  **One-Way traffic**



Circulation Context Map

Input Since 2020

Since the adoption of the Berkeley Civic Center Vision Statement in 2020, the City and active community members, primarily associated with the Community for a Cultural Civic Center (CCCC), provided additional input on the Vision & Implementation Plan, including:

1. Seismic Retrofit Study

Exploration of alternate seismic approaches by Tipping Structural Engineers

2. Turtle Island Monument

Design Development & Funding

3. Meeting Hall / Council Chambers

Preference for Maudelle Shirek Building location

4. More Planting, Less Paving

Preference for integration of native species and biodiversity, preservation of existing mature tree canopy, and inclusion of a large green open space

5. Park Performance Venues

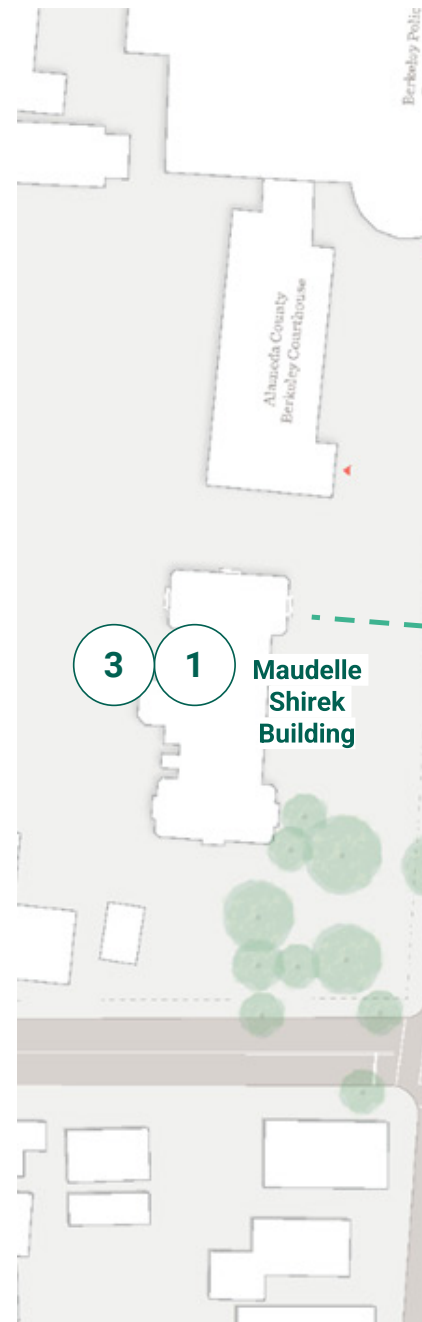
Study of Park performance venues by ELS Architecture & Urban Design

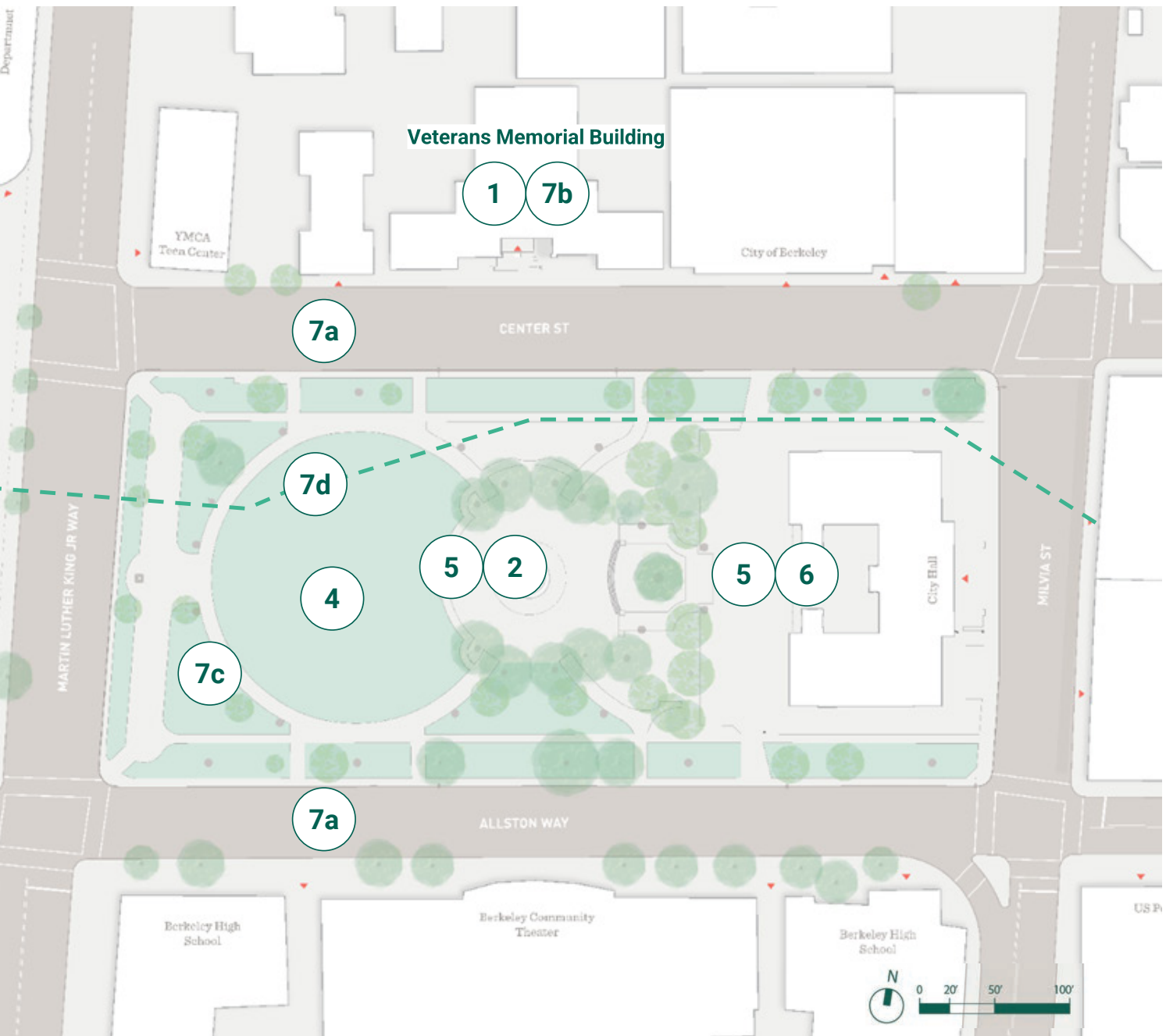
6. 2180 Milvia Parking Lot Removal

Integration of Park uses into the parking lot west of 2180 Milvia

7. Identified for additional study:

- Allston Way & Center Street closure
- Dorothy Day House & Options Recovery relocation
- Inclusion of historic interpretive panels
- Daylighting of Strawberry Creek & culverts





Site Plan indicating areas of Additional Study

Existing Conditions - Site Assessment

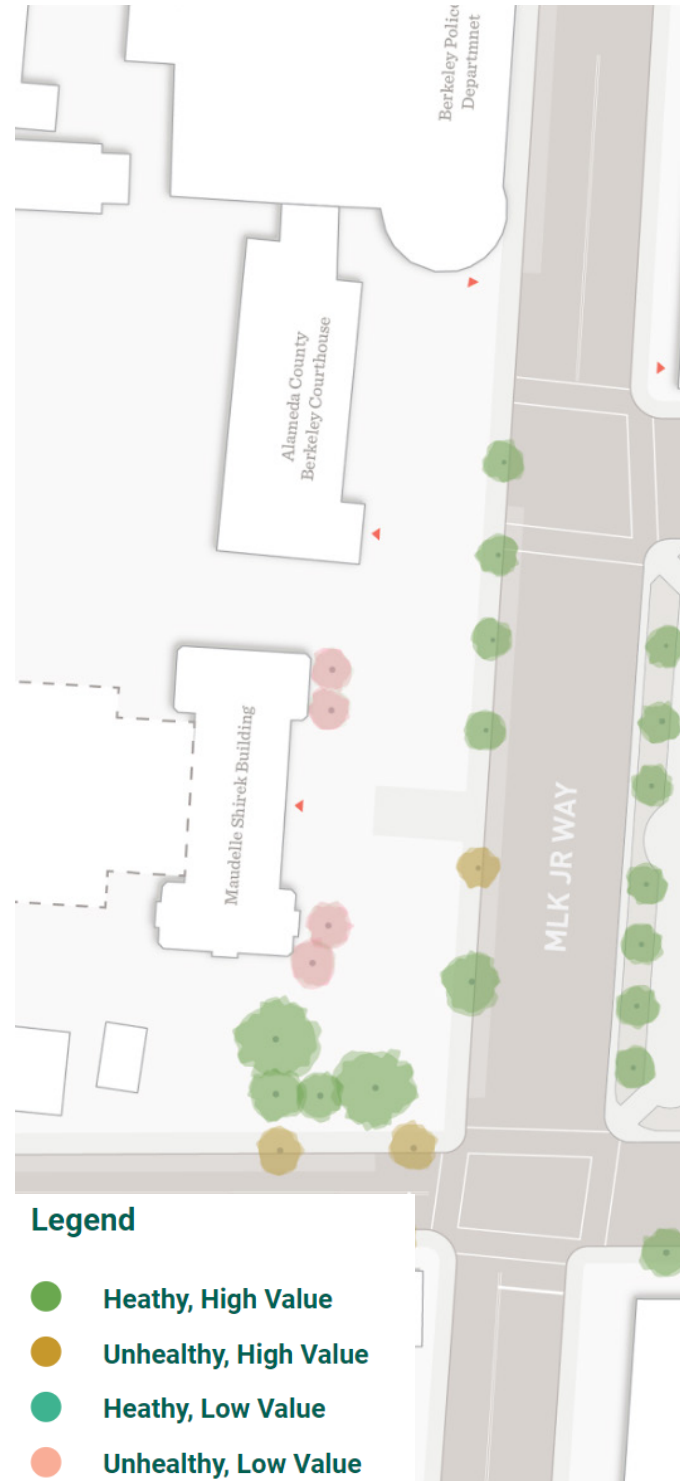
Tree Condition Map

Dan Gallanger, City of Berkeley Urban Forester, and Thomas Dodge, City of Berkeley Forestry Technician, walked the Civic Center area with the design team. Gallanger and Dodge identified the high value trees and gave the team an oral overview of the trees' health.

In addition to discussing tree protection strategies for the high value trees, the group identified the need for an updated tree survey, a tree protection plan, and a tree succession plan to support a healthy tree canopy ecosystem in the park into the future.



Sequoia (center) east of Turtle Island Monument



Legend

- Heathy, High Value
- Unhealthy, High Value
- Heathy, Low Value
- Unhealthy, Low Value



Tree Site Plan



BERKELEY FARMERS' MARKETS
The heart of the local food movement since 1937

Questions? Come see our staff at the info booth!

NO SMOKING

WE LOVE YOUR PET, BUT THEY'RE NOT ALLOWED AT MARKET

ZERO WASTE ZONE

Community Engagement

2.1 Engagement Plan

2.2 Engagement Summary

2.3 Key Design Drivers

2.1

Engagement Plan

The primary task of this phase is to create a preferred design concept for the Civic Center based on community, commission, and council input. The design team combined engagement with the general public and targeted outreach efforts to groups with specialized knowledge or interests in the project, including:

General Public Engagement

- > Open House - Nov 16, 2022
- > Online Survey - Dec 2022 - Jan 2023

Youth Engagement

- > In-person Work Sessions - Feb 15, 2023

Focused Engagement

- > Online & In-person Meetings
Sept 2022 - Feb 2023

Arts Organization Engagement

- > Online Survey - Jan - Feb 2023
- > Focus Group Tour & Meeting - Feb 24, 2023

Documentation of these efforts includes detailed meeting notes, and summaries of survey data and open-ended responses. The design team synthesized the input into key design drivers to guide the design concept.



Open House Nov 16, 2022



Veterans Memorial Building Art Organization Focus Group Tour

2.2

Engagement Summary

General Public Engagement

To complement the public outreach effort of the 2020 Vision & Implementation Plan, the design team developed a presentation and survey to reintroduce the Civic Center project to the public, and to gather feedback on design approaches to the buildings, park and streets.

The presentation and survey were shared in two forms - in person and online - to maximize the response rate. Almost **700** responses were gathered, providing the design team with feedback in the form of multiple-choice and open-ended responses.

Public Open House on Nov 16, 2022

- Participants gave input on four topics: **MLK Jr Civic Center Park, Surrounding Streets, Maudelle Shirek, and Veterans Memorial Buildings**
- Participants provided written feedback on more than 200 postcards
- Held at **Berkeley Main Library**

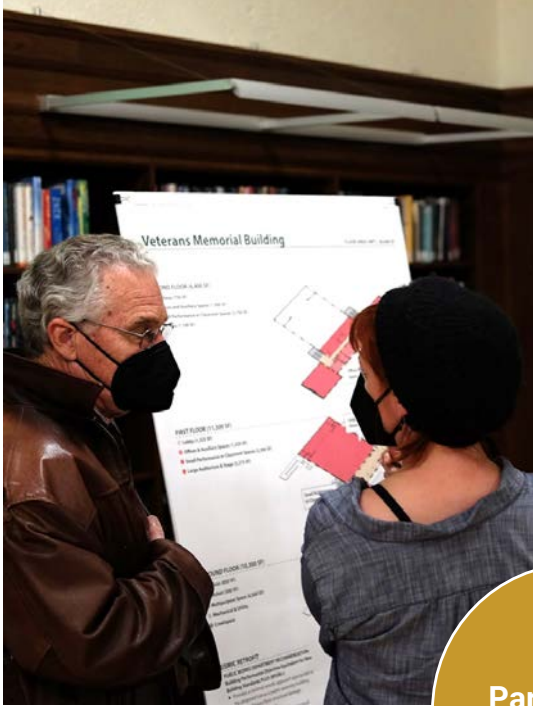
Online Survey Dec 9, 2022 to Jan 6, 2023



654

**Online Survey
Respondents**

Dec 2022 to
Jan 2023



200+
Written
Comments on
Postcards
Nov 2022

40
Participants
at Open
House
Nov 2022



Photos of Open House - Nov 16, 2022

Community Engagement - Engagement Summary

General Public Engagement Results

Participants in the outreach effort were asked to provide information about themselves, including age, district they lived in, and relationship to Civic Center area.

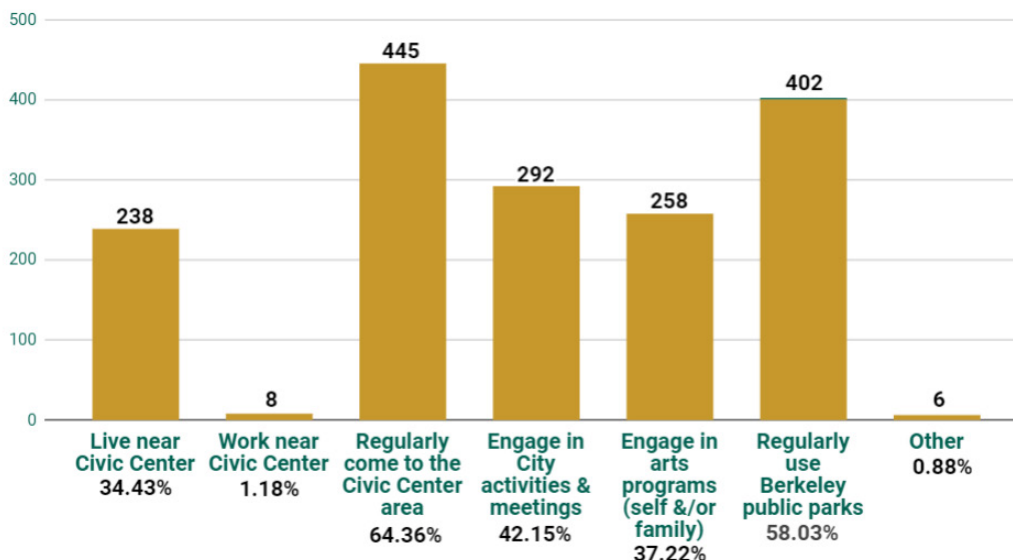
The results indicated that less than 6% of participants were between the ages of 15 and 24. With Berkeley High School and Berkeley City College in the adjacent blocks, students in this age range are important users of the Civic Center.

To address this missing age group, additional engagement events were held at Berkeley High School and at Berkeley Community College on February 15, 2023.

32 additional participants were shown preliminary design concepts and asked similar questions to the Open House participants about the parks and streets. Students were also given the opportunity to provide open-ended feedback on the design - what they liked, what they would change.

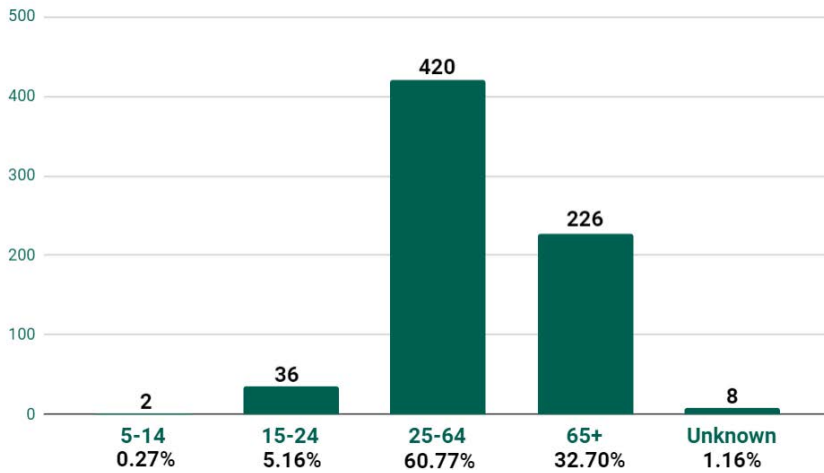
What is your relationship to MLK Jr. Civic Center Park?

Amounts are shown as a percentage of total respondents, respondents were allowed to choose more than one answer.



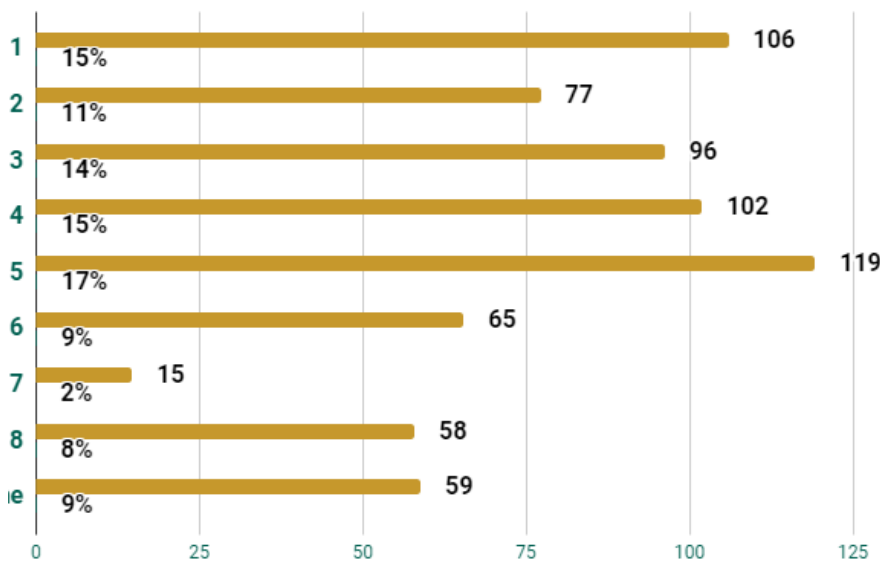
How old are you?

Amounts are shown as a percentage of 692 total respondents.



What City Council district do you live in?

Amounts are shown as a percentage of 697 total respondents.



Martin Luther King Jr Civic Center Park

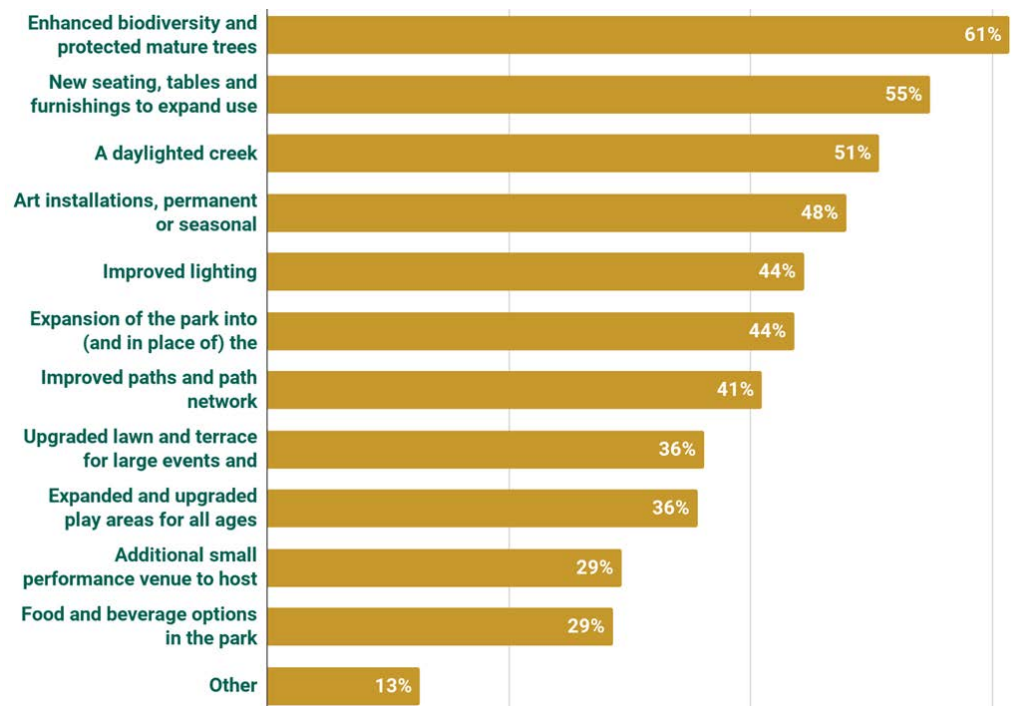
What character would you like to see in the park?

Amounts are shown as a percentage of 692 total respondents.



What uses would you like to see in prioritized in the park?

Amounts are shown as a percentage of 683 total respondents.



Anything else you want to share with us about MLK Jr. Civic Center Park?

Online Survey: 290 write-in responses

What, in your opinion, should the park be designed for?

Online Survey: 453 write-in responses



Write-In Response Emerging Themes

- 1 There are significant safety concerns about the presence of the unhoused population.
- 2 There's a desire for a mix of programs and spaces to invite a range of people to use the park.
- 3 People want to bring more nature to the park by promoting biodiversity and daylighting Strawberry Creek.
- 4 People want to see spaces for families & kids.
- 5 People want clean, safe, and well-maintained restrooms.

Surrounding Streets

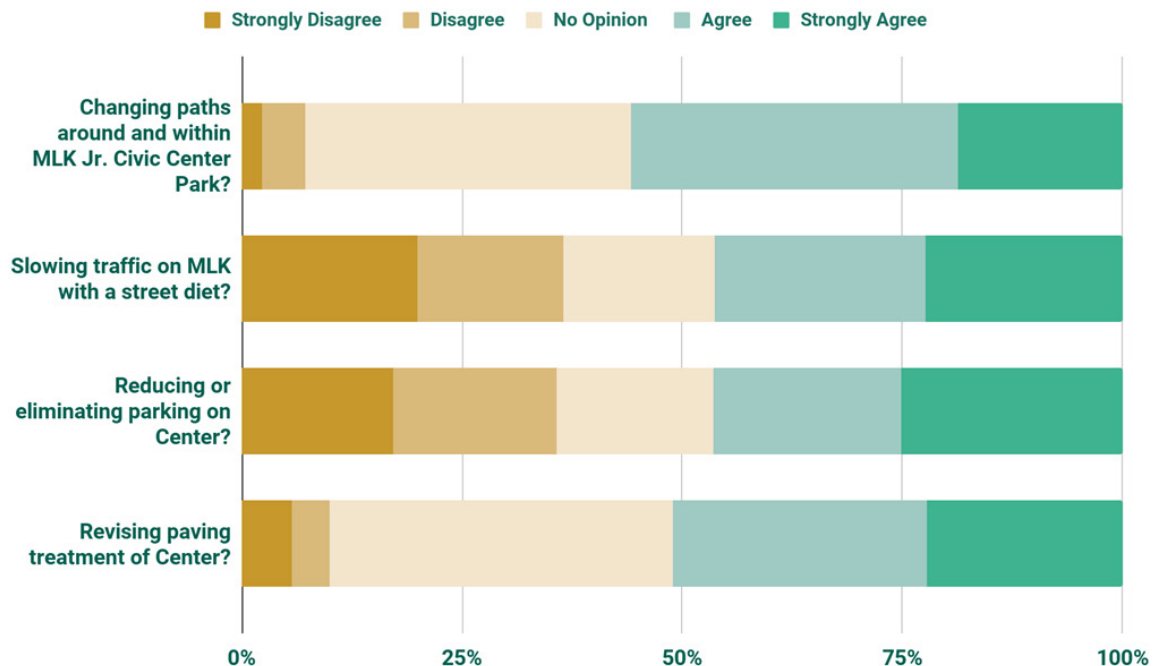
What character would you like to see in the surrounding streets?

Amounts are shown as a percentage of 665 total respondents.



How do you feel about the following design approaches to improve pedestrian safety and calm traffic around the park?

Amounts are shown as a percentage of 647 total respondents.



Anything else you want to share with us about the streets around MLK Jr. Civic Center Park?

Online Survey: 274 write-in responses



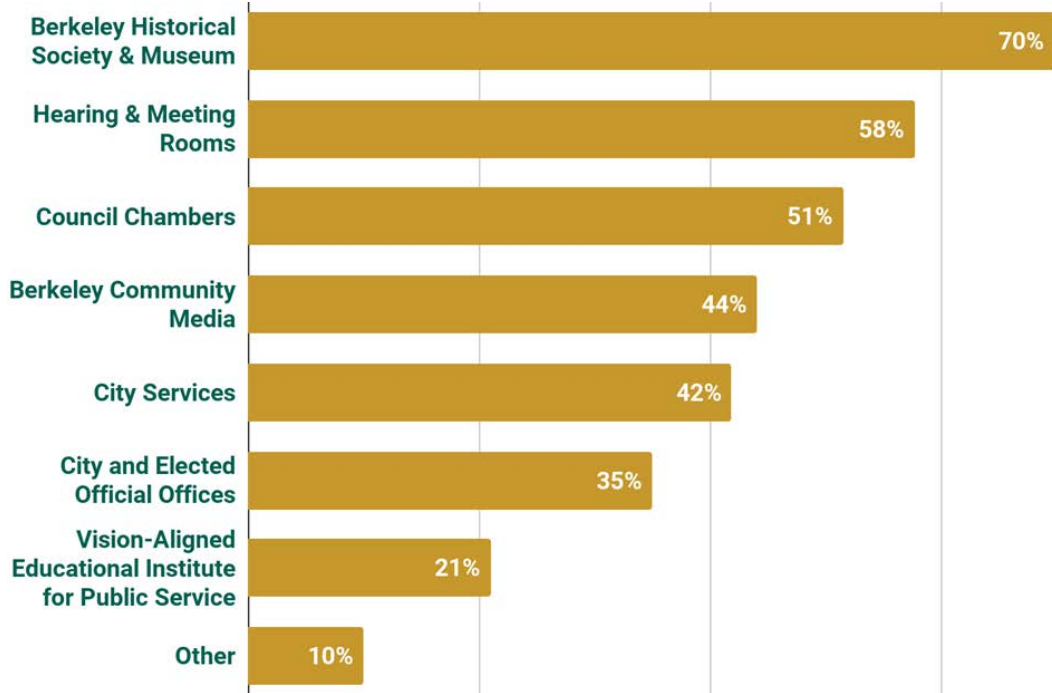
Write-In Response Emerging Themes

- 1 There are divergent opinions on traffic mitigation on MLK, however, the majority of comments are not in favor of a road diet.
- 2 People want to see pedestrians and cyclists prioritized on Center Street and Allston Street.
- 3 People want to ensure dropoff and pickup needs are met around Berkeley High School.
- 4 There are concerns about parking being removed.

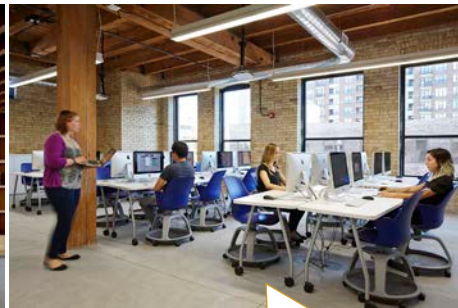
Building Uses

Which proposed use are you most excited about for the Maudelle Shirek Building?

Amounts are shown as a percentage of 564 total respondents.



“Having a go to location to vote on election day and all related Berkeley city services.”



“Active use of meeting rooms for organizing events and activism, attending City Council meetings and public meetings.”

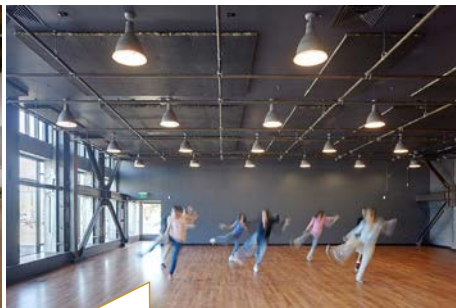
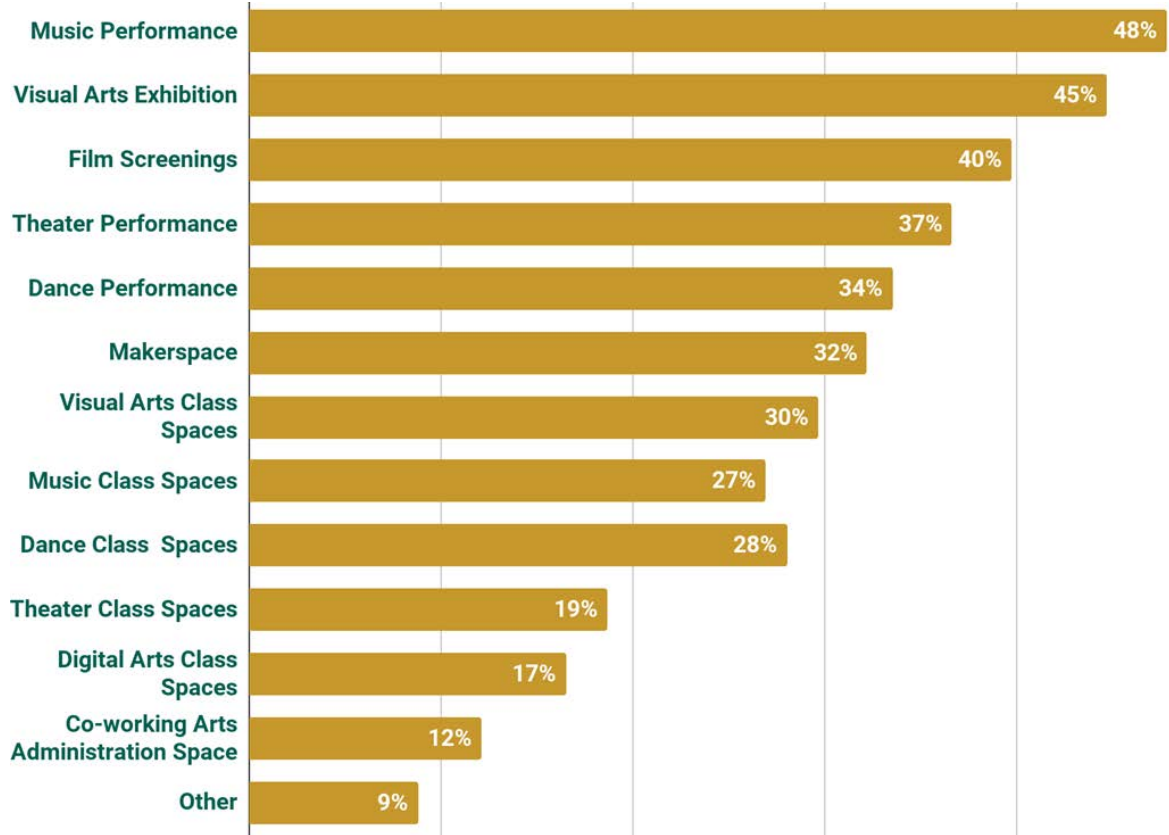


“Perhaps some sort of partnership with UC to bring new energy and researchers to the building?”

“With the co-location of the Historical Society, Vision Institute, and Community Media, the community will have better access to these resources.”

What types of programs do you think the community needs most at a new Arts Center in the Veterans Memorial Building?

Amounts are shown as a percentage of 546 total respondents.



'Film screenings and music performances!'

'There's a shortage of arts class spaces, and I think this would be a great thing for the community.'

'Love the idea of a true dance/music/arts center integrated into a revitalized & restored park.'

'I think it needs to appear more open, accessible, inviting and welcoming...signage and a well-designed entrance foyer.'

Focused Engagement

In addition to the general public, and with input from the project's City Steering Team, the design team identified City departments, park users, neighbors, and affiliated organizations who could provide detailed input on the design concept.

The design team shared drawings, diagrams, photographs, and precedent images of the park and buildings at these meetings and asked specific questions aimed at gathering insights from those most familiar with the area and its current condition.

The groups ranged from current tenants like the Berkeley Historical Society & Museum and The Ecology Center to discuss specific space needs, to the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department staff to discuss park maintenance budgets, approaches, and possible community involvement.

The design team met with representatives from some of these groups, such as BUSD and the CCCC, multiple times to solicit specific feedback.

City of Berkeley Staff & Departments

Civic Arts
City Clerk
Elected Officials
Fire Department
Parks, Recreation and Waterfront
Police Department
Public Works Department
Real Estate
Special Events
Transportation
Urban Forester

Neighbors, Users & Affiliated Organizations

Berkeley City College
Berkeley Community Media
Berkeley Commissioners
Berkeley Historical Society & Museum
Berkeley Unified School District
Community for a Cultural Civic Center (CCCC)
Creek Daylighting Advocates
Ecology Center
Potential Educational Partners
Skate XP

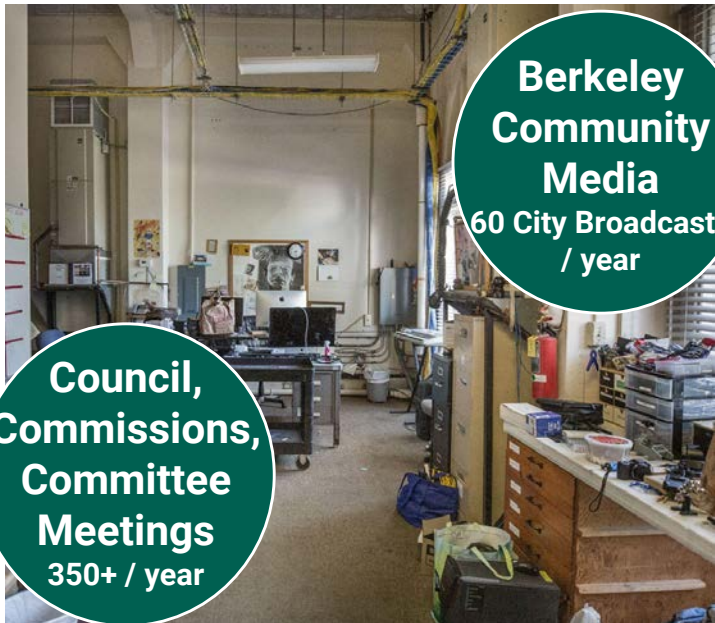
Farmers Market
2000 vtrs/wk
60 Vendors



Berkeley Historical Society & Museum



Berkeley Community Media
60 City Broadcasts / year



Special Events
16+ / year pre-pandemic



Council, Commissions, Committee Meetings
350+ / year

Berkeley Civic Center User Groups

Community Engagement - Engagement Summary

Arts Organization Engagement

As part of this effort and with assistance from the design team, the Civic Arts Division of Economic Development devised and released a survey to the recipients of City Civic Arts grants in January 2023. A focus group work session was held in February 2023 to discuss transforming the Veterans Memorial Building into a Berkeley Community Arts Center.

79 Arts Organizations and Cultural Producers responded to questions related to their current space use, space needs, and desire to be located in the Civic Center area through the online survey.

16 participants from a wide-range of organization sizes, representing the disciplines of theater, dance, music, visual arts, and literary arts, attended the focus group to identify priority space needs in the Veterans Memorial Building for a Community Arts Center and to give input on the development of a spatial program.

Veterans Memorial Building’s downtown, central location near the arts district and transit is very appealing to arts groups.

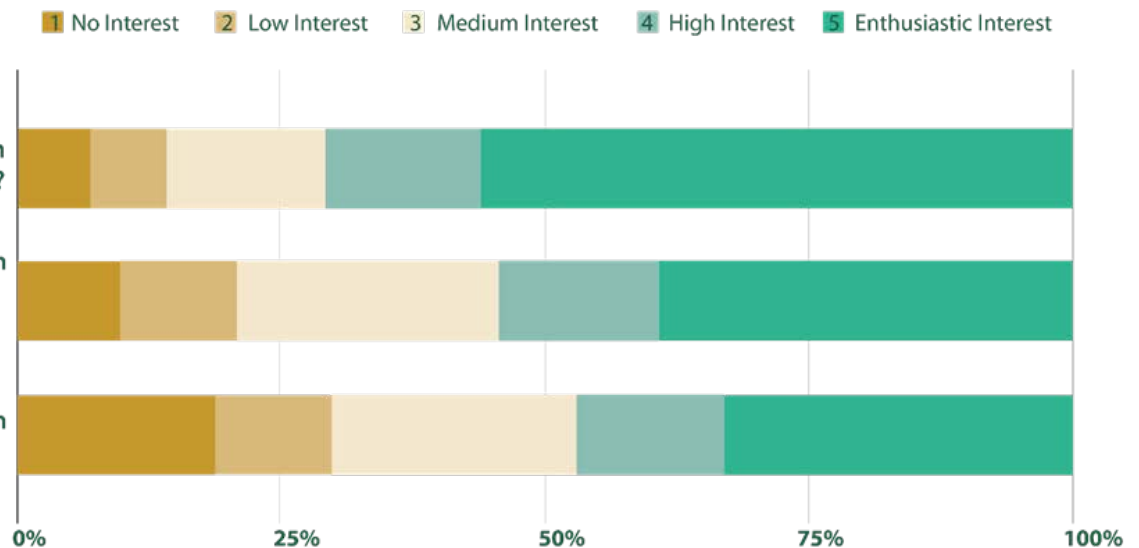
Strong interest and demonstrated need for a Community Arts Center

Survey responses demonstrate that Berkeley-based arts organizations have a need for spaces for performances, classes, workshops, exhibitions and other public programs:

43% Respondents do not have a facility for their public programming. They operate out of a home office or an administrative office and rent venues as needed for public programming.

66% Respondents rent space for their programming. This includes organizations that do not have a facility, and those that have a facility but need additional space on an occasional basis.

46% Respondents produce public programs for smaller audience sizes (250 people or less) indicating a good fit for the various public spaces in the Veterans Memorial Building.



Arts Survey Respondents



22
Dance
Orgs



33
Music
Orgs

27
Theater
Orgs

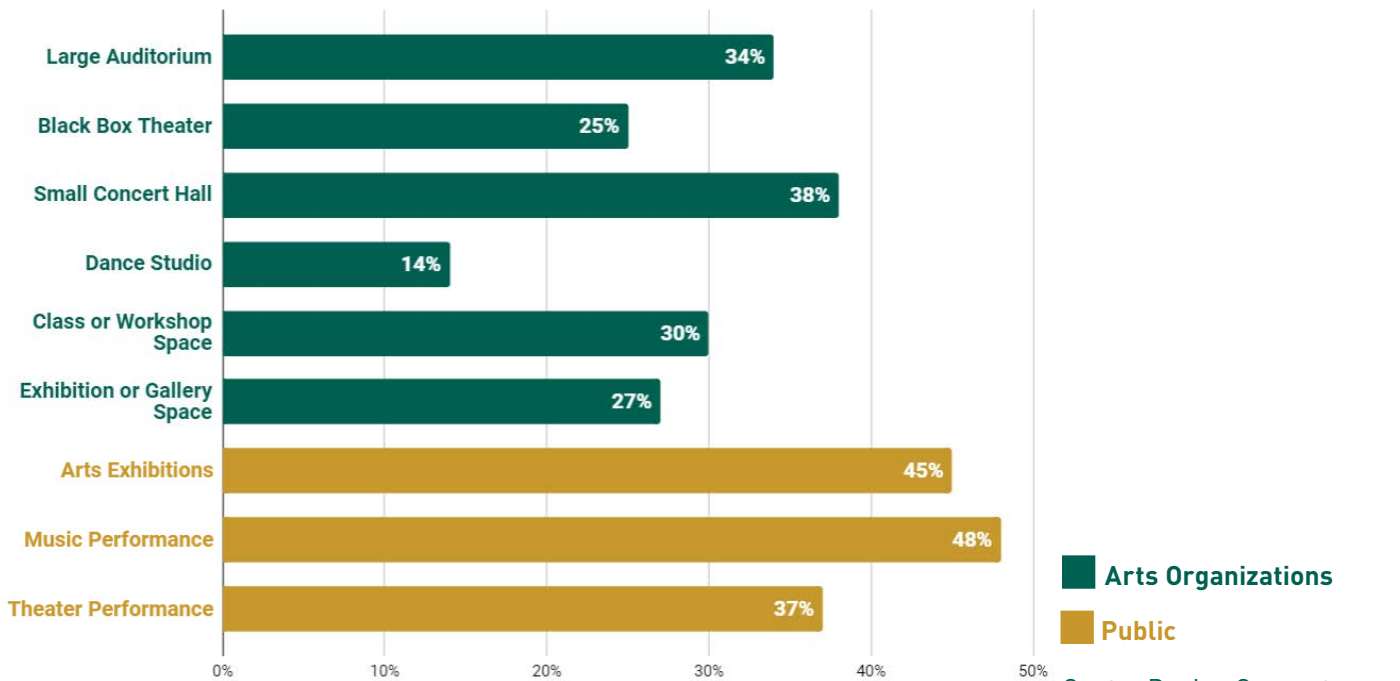


27
Visual
Arts
Orgs



30
Arts
Education
Orgs

Arts organizations are interested in multiple types of public program space in a renovated Veterans Memorial Building:



2.3

Key Design Drivers

The design team received feedback during the outreach and engagement events in a number of forms - written responses to directed and open-ended survey questions, verbal feedback, and additional feedback sent via email to the Civic Center email address. The outcome of the engagement effort was integrated into **9 key design drivers** to guide the design concept.

Overall, the community's responses during this phase reinforced the 2020 Vision Statement:

- Civic Center will be the heart of Berkeley's community.
- Civic Center will be the prime space for civic life, culture, and the arts.
- It will reflect the city's diverse identities, celebrating its history and contributing to shaping its future.
- It is a place of shared resources and a platform for free expression accessible to all.
- The Civic Center aims to manifest the city's values, advance social justice, and demonstrate the power of true public space.

Slower and Safer Streets

Anything else you want to share with us?

Answer: I would make center street part of the park - and use addition for traffic currently using center. The safest street has no cars 😊

Age: 5-14 25-64 15-24 65+

Relation to Place: Live near the Civic Center Regularly come to the Civic Center area Other:

Civic Center Design Concept | Open House | Wednesday, November 16, 2022 | City of Berkeley

MLK Jr. Civic Center Park

Anything else you want to share with us?

Answer: YES! ELIMINATE REDUNDANT PERIMETER PATHS - JUST MORE GREEN, LESS PAVING - HIDDEN ELECTRICAL/ ONE! INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGHOUT @ SYCAMORE. ADD BETTER PATH LIGHTING THROUGHOUT - ACTIVATE PARK DEFINITELY ADD FOOD ARTS - HUGE MISSING OPPORTUNITY CURRENTLY

Age: 5-14 25-64 15-24 65+

Relation to Place: Live near the Civic Center Regularly come to the Civic Center area Use Berkeley Park

Civic Center Design Concept | Open House | Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Maudelle Shirek Building

Anything else you want to share with us?

Answer: IMO - super critical to have council chamber in M. Shirek Bldg - It is the most "memorable" structure on the park - and should be part of Gov. I would also prioritize making it useful (at sale, etc) over perfect historic restoration.

Age: 5-14 25-64 15-24 65+

Relation to Place: Live near the Civic Center Regularly come to the Civic Center area Engage in City activities & meetings

Civic Center Design Concept | Open House | Wednesday, November 16, 2022 | City of Berkeley

1

The Civic Center Park and buildings should be a place to gather as a community.

Parks should bring people together

Relaxing at performances, listening to music

Inviting public space for gathering & enjoyment

“ Informal and formal gatherings of people of all ages. A safe place to be in community together.”



300 +
Written comments related to community gathering

2 MLK Jr Civic Center Park should be natural in character, preserving mature trees and enhancing native biodiversity.

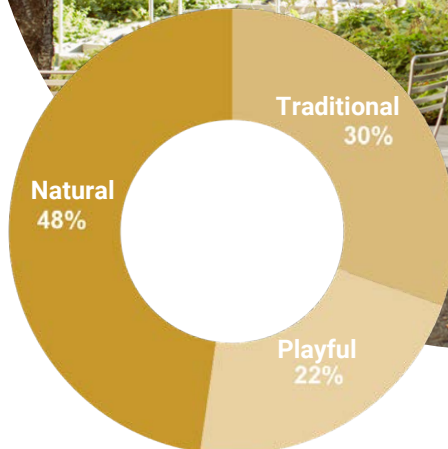
Return nature in the urban setting

The park should be a place for relaxing with nature

Amplify nature and art because that's what Berkeley is basically about.

“

As our city is becoming increasingly developed, the park should present a peaceful, calming, safe space where people can be in nature.”



61% of respondents prioritized biodiversity and protecting mature trees

3 The Park and open space should offer a safe, clean, and comfortable place to be outdoors with others.



The focus should be in day-to-day use with events being an important secondary use. Keep the park safe and accessible.

55%

of respondents prioritized new seating, tables and furnishing

Sitting & relaxing

Playing & recreating

Strolling/Walking

48%

of respondents prioritized art installations

44%

of respondents prioritized improved lighting



4 Many are passionate about daylighting Strawberry Creek while others raised concerns.



51%
of respondents
prioritized
daylighting
Strawberry
Creek

“Costs of daylighting need to be weighed against other park improvements.”

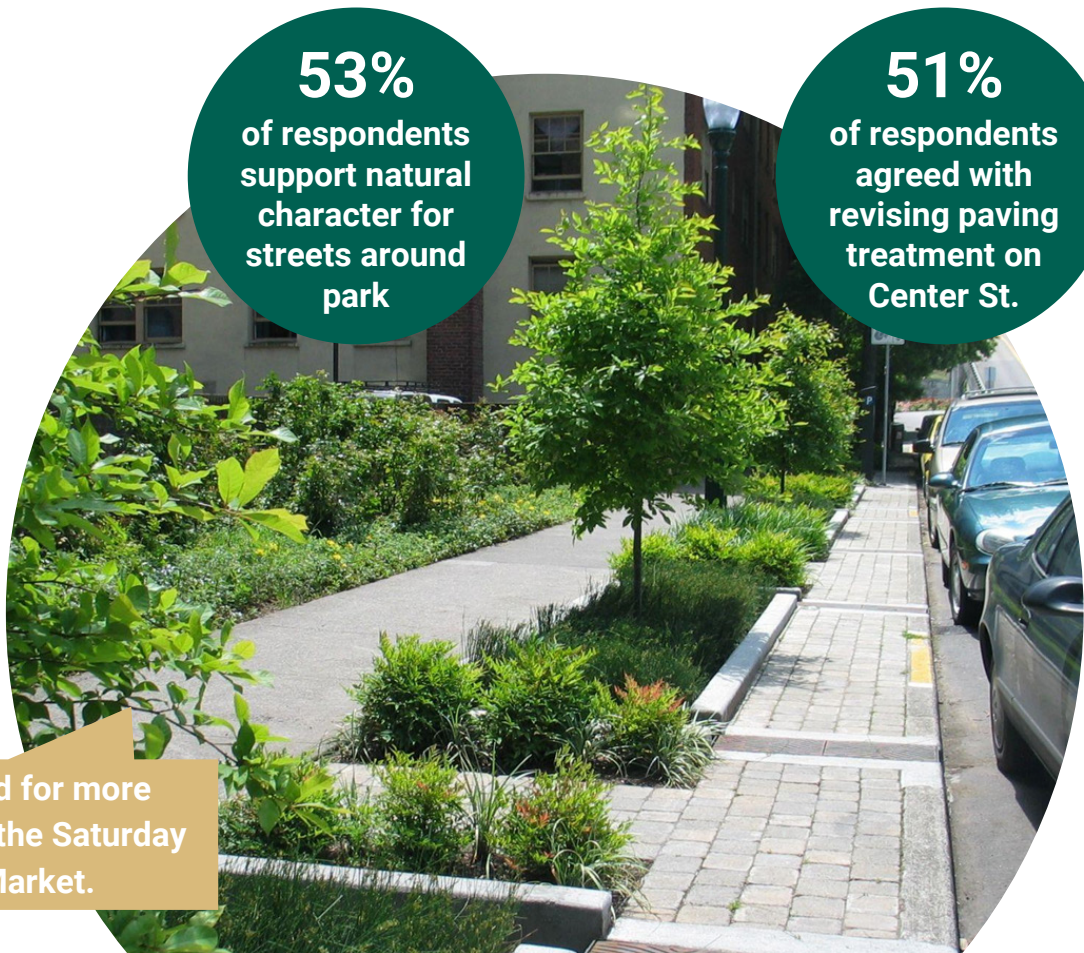
Too expensive / infeasible, hard to maintain.

A perfect opportunity to restore native plants and biodiversity, and to daylight Strawberry Creek

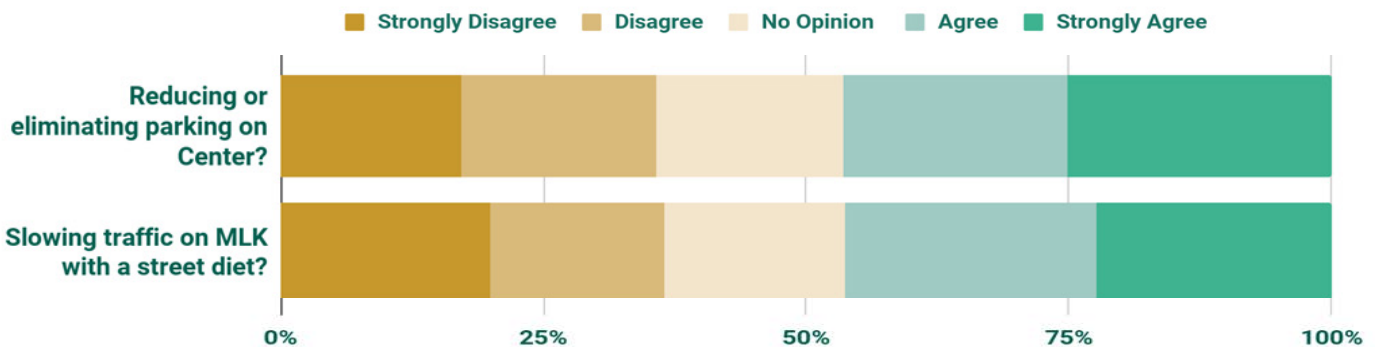
“Daylighting Strawberry Creek and restoring native vegetation can be a wonderful anchor to this vision.”

5

Center Street should be better integrated into the Park and open space experience.



Center St used for more active uses, like the Saturday Farmer's Market.



6 The Maudelle Shirek Building should be the seat of Berkeley's democracy, with meeting and public-serving spaces supporting civic participation in City government.

58%
of respondents support community hearing & mtg rooms at MSB

51%
of respondents support Council Chambers at MSB



Promote access and use by all by making the building as inviting, interactive, and safe as possible.

A one stop shop for the general public.

7 These civic uses in the Maudelle Shirek Building should be paired with vision-aligned services and educational functions.

...center for education, inspiration, and action. Celebrate Berkeley's activist history!



70%
of respondents support Berkeley Historical Society & Museum at MSB

44%
of respondents support Berkeley Community Media at MSB



..a hub for BCM's important educational and public service work.

8 The Veterans Memorial Building should be a Community Arts Center for creative expression and accessible to all.

72%
of arts survey
respondents
showed high
interest in space
downtown



It would fantastic to have a community, municipal arts space in downtown.

9

The Community Arts Center should be activated all day every day, hosting arts organizations and practitioners across all disciplines, delivering performances and programming for the community.



Generate lots of activity in the building day and night!

Proximity to BHS, BCC supports partnerships and youth engagement



Vision



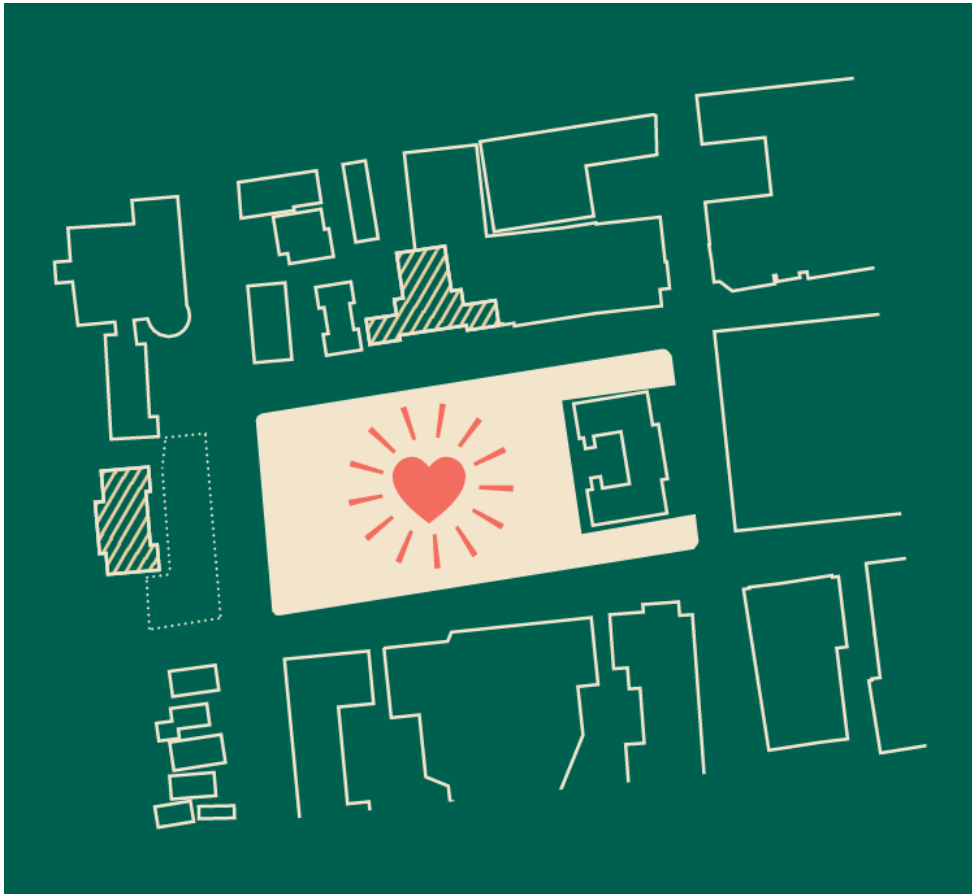
Vision

3.1 Vision Statement

3.1

Vision Statement for Berkeley's Civic Center

Reaffirmed in 2022-23 public engagement process.



Civic Center will be the heart of Berkeley's community. Civic Center will be the prime space for civic life, culture, and the arts. It will reflect the city's diverse identities, celebrating its history and contributing to shaping its future. A place of shared resources and a platform for free expression accessible to all, the Civic Center aims to manifest the city's values, advance social justice, and demonstrate the power of true public space.



Design Considerations

4.1 Opportunities

4.2 Programs & Uses

4.1

Opportunities

A Historic Asset

The Maudelle Shirek Building, Veterans Memorial Building, and Civic Center Park are contributing structures to the Berkeley Civic Center Historic District which is recognized both locally and nationally. Together they have served and are serving the community as gathering places, the seat of democracy, and settings for art and artistic expressions. They maintain much of their historic fabric, and present to the City an opportunity to reestablish the area as the heart of Berkeley's civic life.

A City Campus

This one block area of downtown contains seven structures owned or operated by the City of Berkeley. Densifying city uses in this area will further strengthen the city campus and provide flexibility for future growth and changing needs.

A Guiding Vision

With the adopted vision statement as the north star for the project, four points on a compass emerge from the engagement efforts and design thinking which are representative of Berkeley's culture and collective values:

Community

an inclusive and caring community

The Arts

expressive artistic and cultural events and pieces

Governance

good governance demonstrated through progressive policies

Education

powerful education tied directly to history and nature



"It is beautiful and should be invested in now, to preserve what we have and make it publicly usable again. Don't let it further deteriorate."

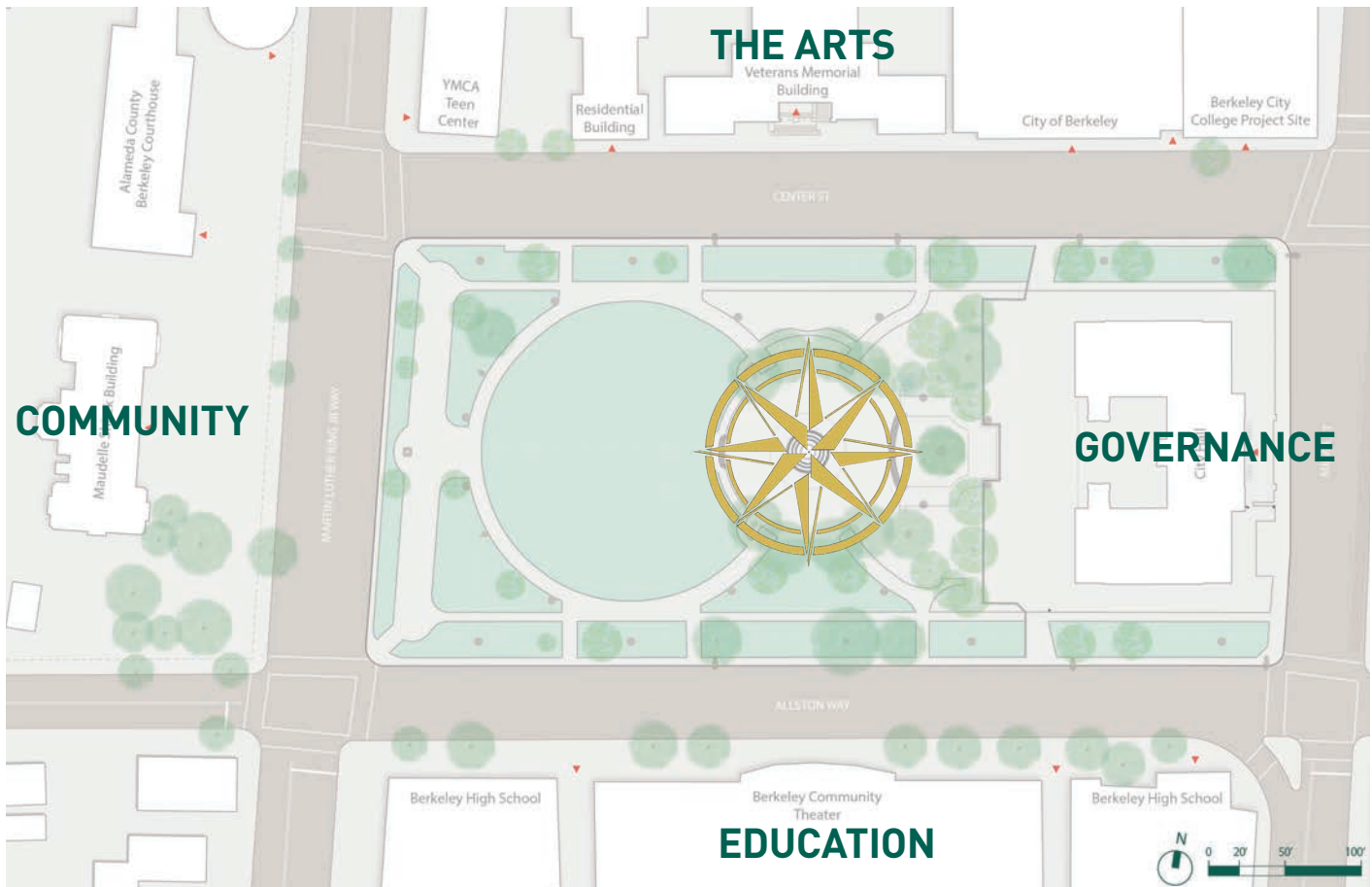
"It is a historical architectural treasure that needs our love and funding!"

"It is beautiful, and an asset to the city."



Maudelle Shirek Building Entry

Veterans Memorial Building Ceiling



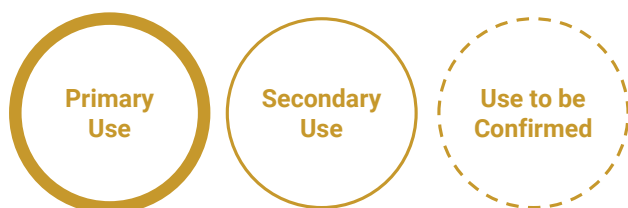
4.2

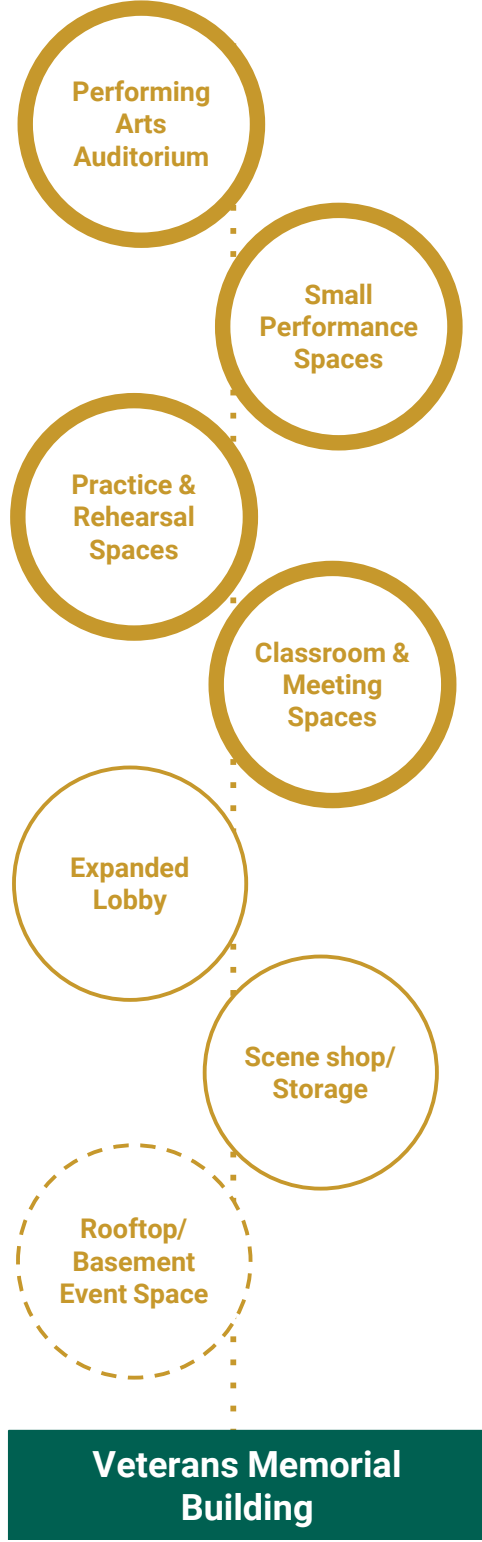
Programs & Uses

Parameters for Prioritizing Uses

Through the public outreach effort, many programs and uses were proposed and discussed for the Civic Center Park, Maudelle Shirek Building, and Veterans Memorial building. In order to prioritize those uses in the available space, the design team considered three additional parameters:

- **Vision Aligned** - Strengthen community; support civic life, culture and the arts; reflect diverse identities; celebrate Berkeley’s history; and manifest the city’s values.
- **Use Aligned** - Complement co-located uses based on space type needs, access and security requirements, and time of use to activate the area 24/7.
- **Funding** - Draw on sources of outside funding to bring investment to the restoration and enhancement of this historic district.





Civic Center Park

PARK ELEMENTS	NOTES
Civic Gathering Space Large Green	Utilized for civic events, festivals
Turtle Island Monument	Separate project under Civic Arts and Park, Recreation and Waterfront Department
Performance Spaces Large Performance Venue Small Performance Venue(s)	Co-located with civic gathering Identify multiple small performance spaces
Neighborhood Park Functions Seating for individuals and groups Play Areas Skate Spot	Multi-age, natural in character Multi-use plaza w/ skatable elements
Natural Habitat Native plants Historic/Mature Trees	Pollinators and habitat builders Protect existing tree canopy, develop tree succession plan
Food & Beverage Leasable space for vendors Cafe seating	For high school and city college students, people who live & work in area
Farmers Market Stalls, Food Trucks, Fresh Produce, Prepared Food, Crafts	Center Street, expansion into park
Daylit Creek	Partial-flow most likely, needs further study



Civic Center Park



Entrance to fountain terrace from green



Skate spot along MLK Jr Way



Large central green

Design Considerations - Programs / Uses Matrix

Maudelle Shirek Building

USE	NOTES
<p>Hearing Rooms - 9,600 SF Large Multi-purpose meeting room/ Council Chambers Conference Room Historic Hearing Room New Hearing Room Support S</p>	<p>Seats 200-300</p> <p>Can be used for closed sessions Historic Council Chambers, seats 70 Seats 120</p>
<p>Meeting Rooms - 2,165 SF Small Meeting Rooms Large Meeting Rooms</p>	
<p>Public-Facing City Offices - 3,375 SF Reception Area Private & Open offices Conference Room Print, Storage & Support Break Room/Kitchenette</p>	
<p>Berkeley Historical Society & Museum - 8,000 SF Permanent & Temporary Exhibit Offices, Research Room, Meeting Rooms Exhibit Preparation Room Archival Storage Bookstore/Gift Shop</p>	<p>3500 SF, may be located off-site</p>
<p>Berkeley Community Media - 5,500 SF Broadcast, Podcast & Green Cove Studios Offices, Editing Suites Lounge/Classroom Kitchenette</p>	
<p>City Offices - SF Varies</p>	<p>To be determined, dependent on department</p>
<p>Public Policy Institute - SF Varies Classrooms, Meeting Rooms Offices</p>	<p>To be determined, dependent on program development</p>



Maudelle Shirek Building



Historic Hearing Room Dias



Central Stair at Second Floor



Second Floor Office Space

Veterans Memorial Building

USE

NOTES

Performance Space

Large Performance Auditorium
Small Performance Rooms
Backstage

300-500 seats
100-120 seats
Needs considerable expansion

Multi-functional Spaces

Rehearsal Spaces
Lecture/Conference spaces
Classrooms/Workshops

Also function as small performance
Could utilize large auditorium
Identify one "messy" classroom for visual arts/crafts

Exhibition Space

Visual Arts Exhibition Hall
Flexible Arts Exhibition Space

Climate controlled, gallery lighting
In public halls, temporary exhibits

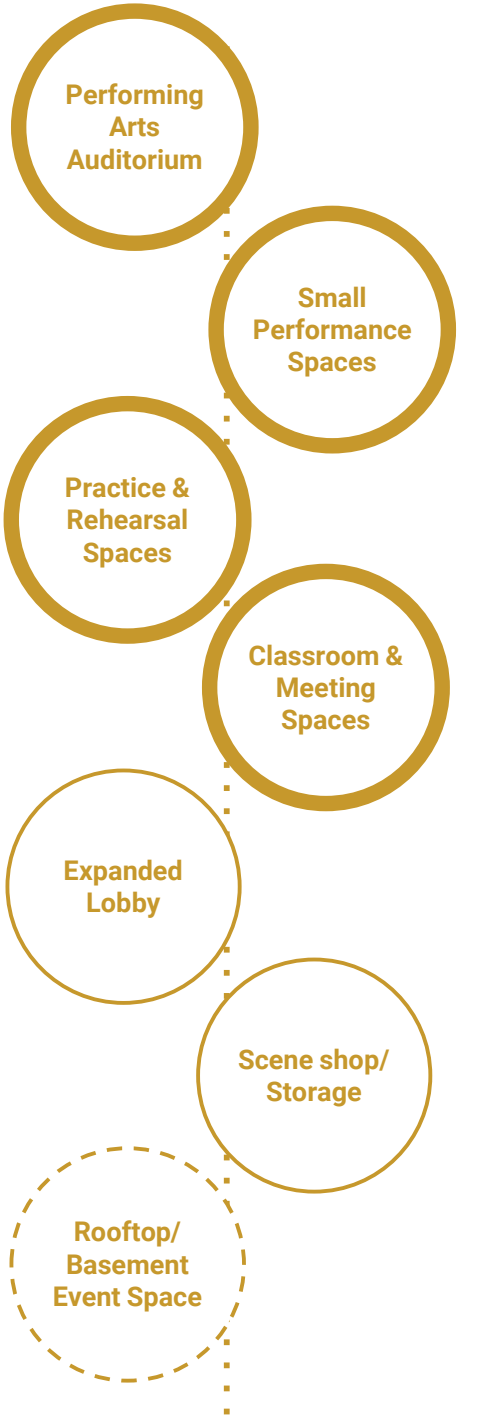
Support Spaces

Offices
Bathrooms
Storage
Stage/Scenery Shop

Event Space

Entry Porch
Lobby/Pre-function Space
Banquet Area
Commercial Kitchen
Rooftop Terrace

Historically located in basement
Exists in basement



Veterans Memorial Building



Veterans Memorial Building facade



Large Auditorium



Balcony ceiling

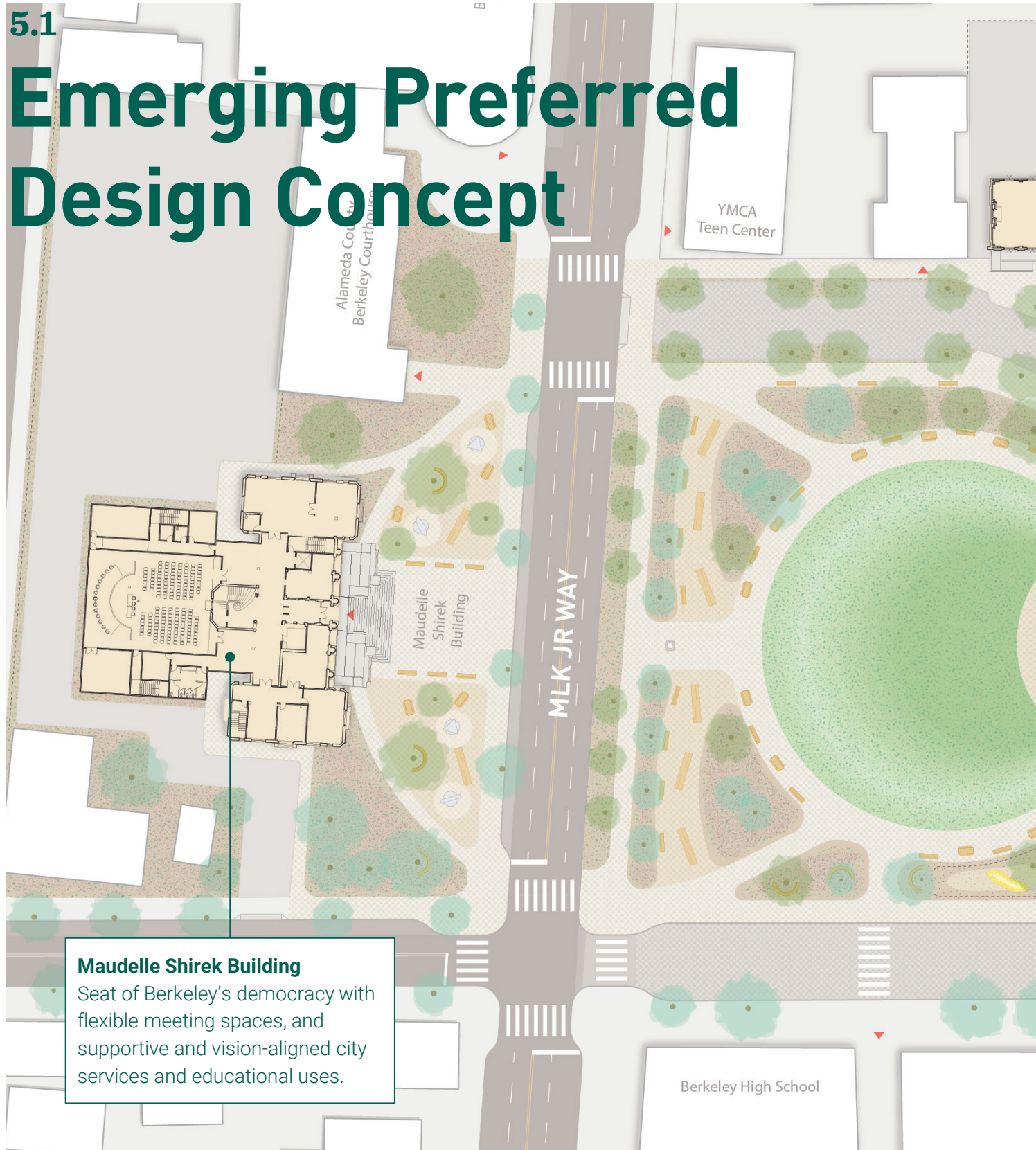


Design Concept

- 5.1 Emerging Preferred Design Concept
- 5.2 MLK Jr Civic Center Park & Surrounding Streets
- 5.3 Maudelle Shirek Building
- 5.4 Veterans Memorial Building

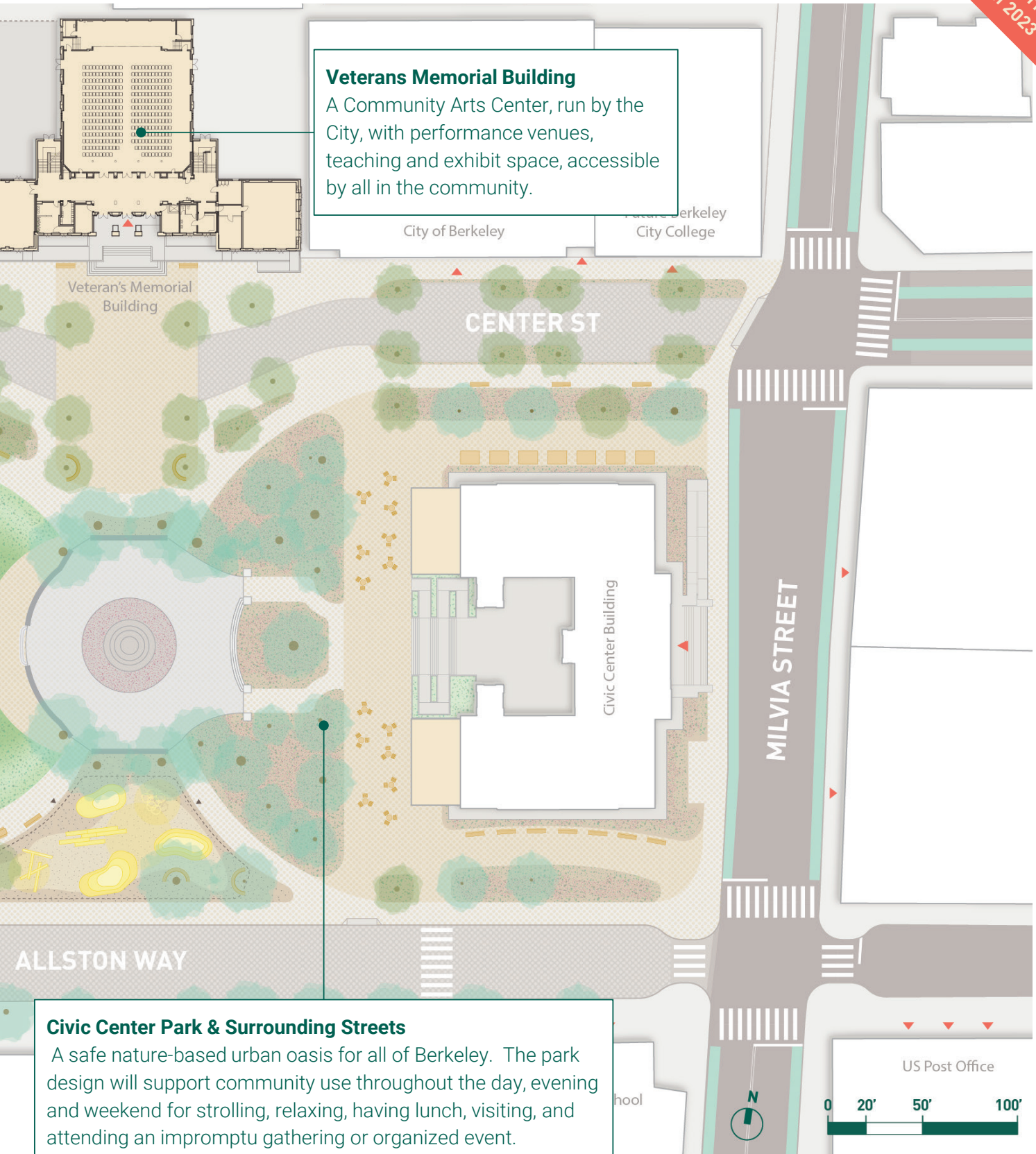
5.1

Emerging Preferred Design Concept



Maudelle Shirek Building
Seat of Berkeley's democracy with flexible meeting spaces, and supportive and vision-aligned city services and educational uses.

Note: All drawings are illustrative and conceptual. Further landscape and architectural design is required in future specific design phases.



Veterans Memorial Building
 A Community Arts Center, run by the City, with performance venues, teaching and exhibit space, accessible by all in the community.

Civic Center Park & Surrounding Streets
 A safe nature-based urban oasis for all of Berkeley. The park design will support community use throughout the day, evening and weekend for strolling, relaxing, having lunch, visiting, and attending an impromptu gathering or organized event.

5.2 MLK Jr Civic Center Park & Surrounding Streets

5.2

Design Goals

MLK Jr Civic Center Park and Surrounding Streets

Civic Center Park has the potential to be an urban oasis for residents and visitors to Berkeley's Downtown, and also provide a central gathering place for civic life - from outdoor performances to political demonstrations.

The design concept for Civic Center Park builds from the existing organization of the park, and layers in new design elements and programs that support the desired everyday vibrancy of the Park. The proposed design concept also simplifies the layout and reclaims underutilized space to accommodate new activity areas where possible.

The design concept is based on six key design goals to be achieved through targeted reconfiguration and refurbishment of the Park.

All of these drivers point towards a future for Civic Center Park that the public is asking for: **a place of natural and architectural beauty that provides both calm retreat and invitation to participate in public life**, both through everyday activities and special events.



1

Preserve and build upon Civic Center Park's strengths

2

Improve pedestrian safety and usability of paths

3

Enhance natural features, promote biodiversity and green design

4

Expand invitations for a variety of everyday uses

5

Enhance the potential of the Park to host weekly and special events

6

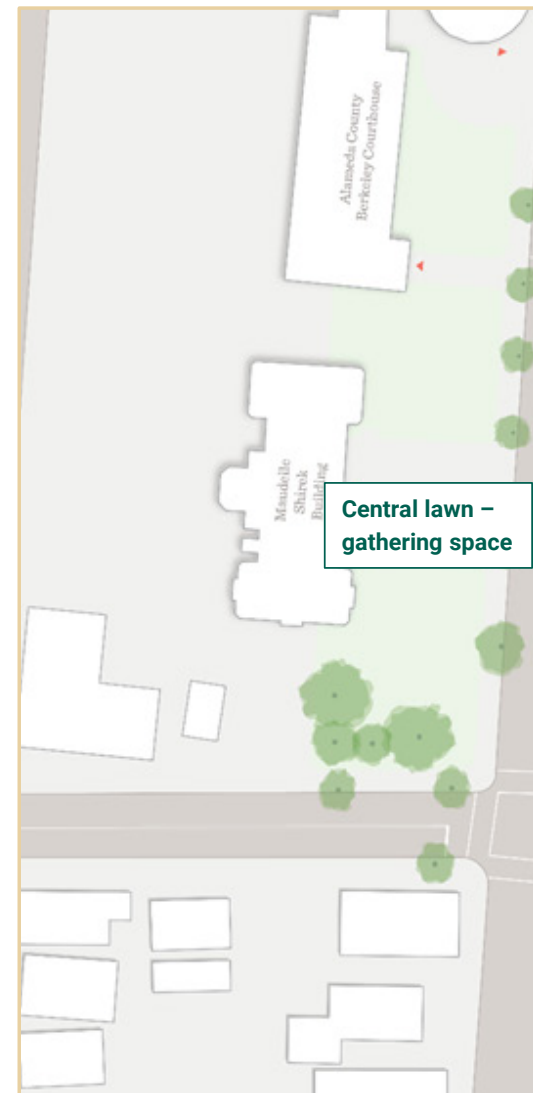
Study feasibility and tradeoffs of daylighting Strawberry Creek

1

Preserve and build upon the strengths of Civic Center

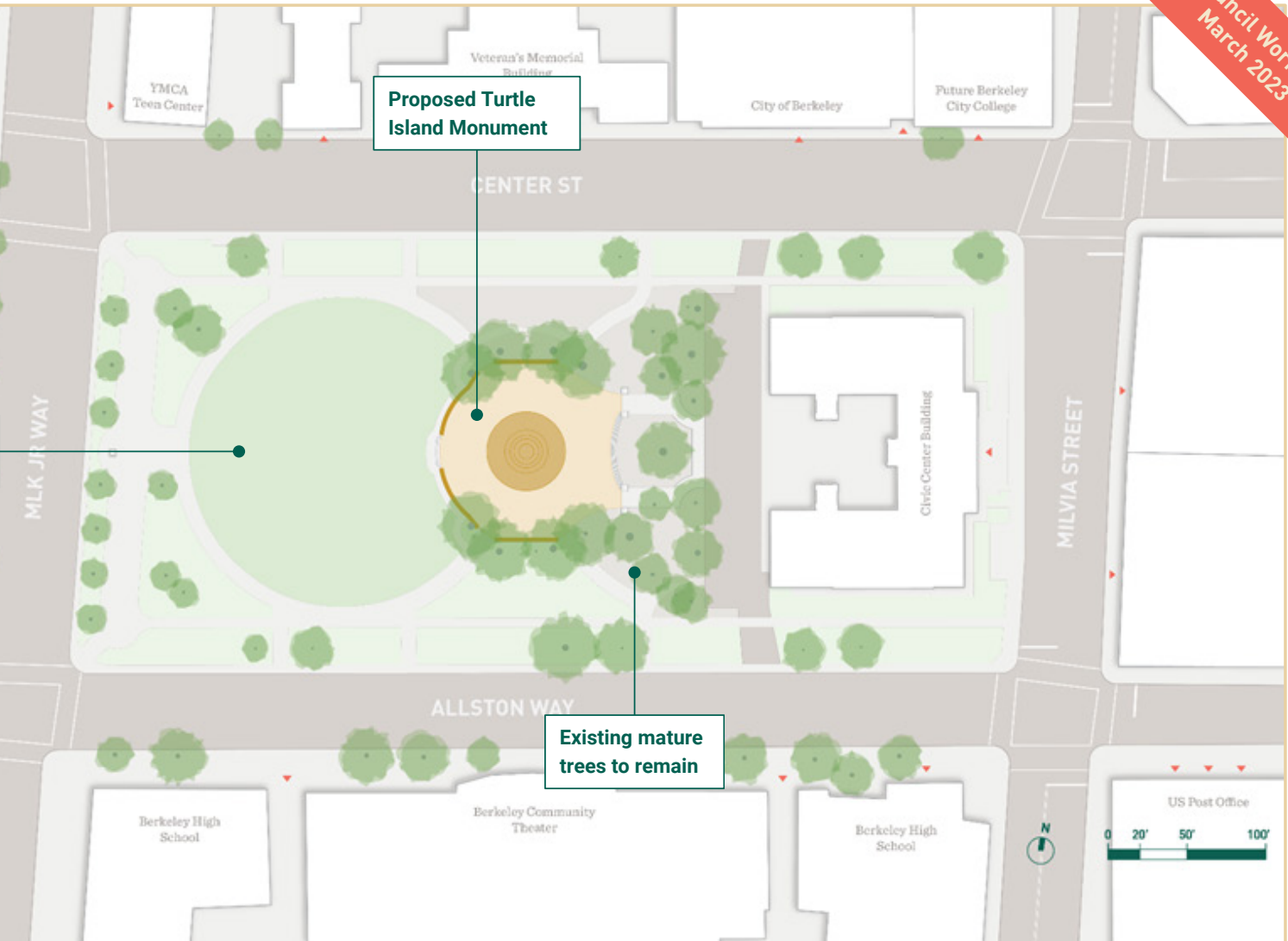
The design process for the Park and surrounding streets began with a thorough analysis of the existing elements in the Park to **determine what needs to remain and what should be improved**. This was also informed by insights into what aspects of the Park were performing well and could be enhanced through public realm upgrades.

This led to a design approach that **maintains the overall structure of the park**, and **preserves existing mature trees, important monuments and memorials, and the main central gathering space - the lawn**. Any upgrades to the Park will also need to be reviewed by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.



Mature Trees, MLK Jr Civic Center Park

Note: All drawings are illustrative and conceptual, further landscape design will be required.



Site Plan with Existing Elements to Remain



Peace Wall and site of future Turtle Island Monument



Central Lawn, MLK Jr Civic Center Park

Learning from feedback on the 2020 Vision Plan

During the 2019/2020 Vision and Implementation Plan effort, multiple alternative design concepts were developed for the park and neighboring buildings, shown on the opposite page. These options varied in levels of intervention and big moves that organized the park.

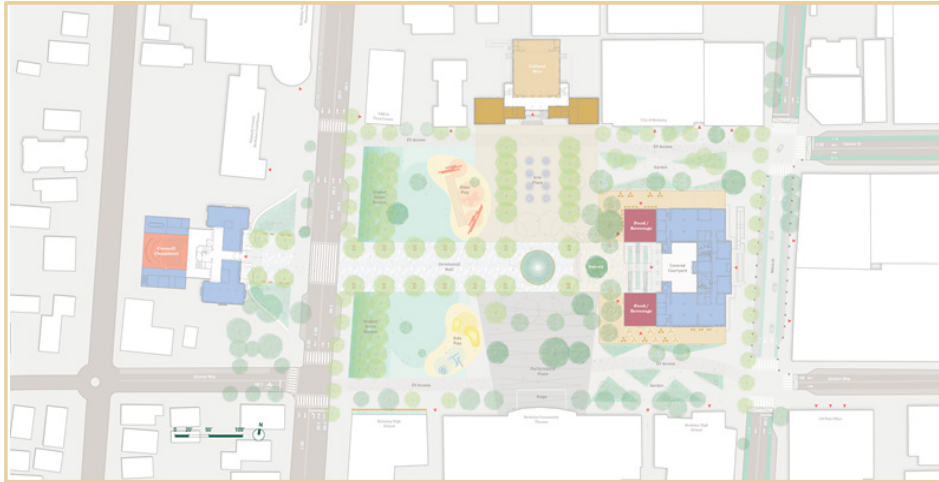
While the overall vision statement was supported and accepted, the recommended design concept was not adopted or instructed to move forward.

For this design concept effort, the design team employed a lighter touch towards the park, seeking a balance between retaining the historic character and key elements with park enhancements for everyday vitality and user experience.

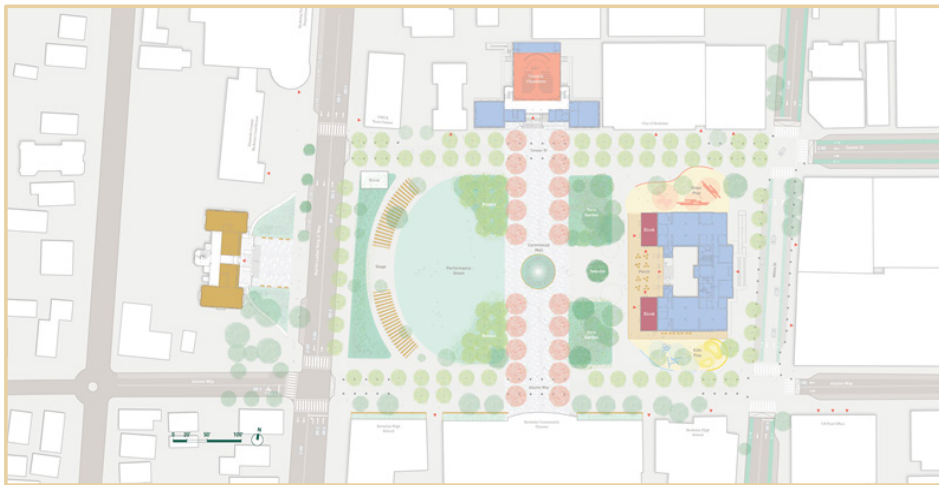
Key guidance from the feedback received during the Vision Plan process was applied to the updated design concept:

- ➔ Avoid introducing too much new hardscaping and retain as much green space and softscape as possible.
- ➔ Avoid removing existing trees if possible, especially mature trees that help create the iconic canopy and support biodiversity
- ➔ Keep Allston Way open for vehicle circulation as a key east-west connection through Berkeley

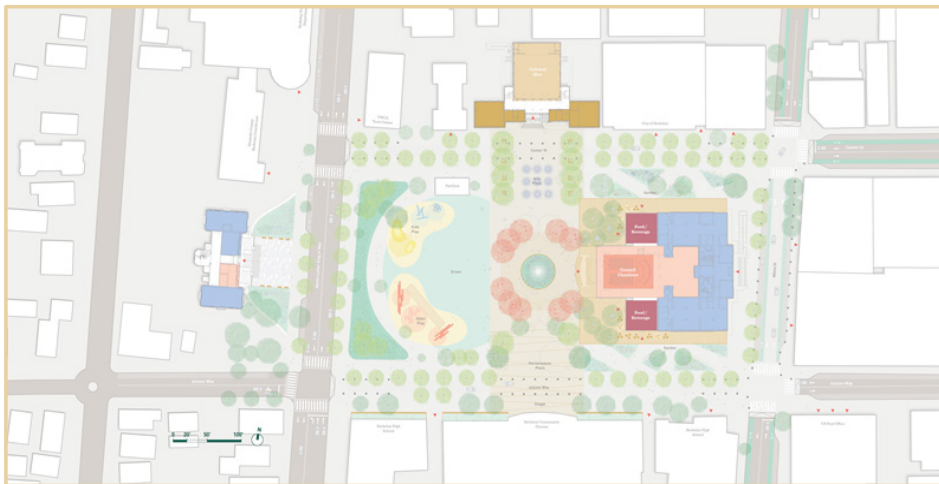
A



B



C

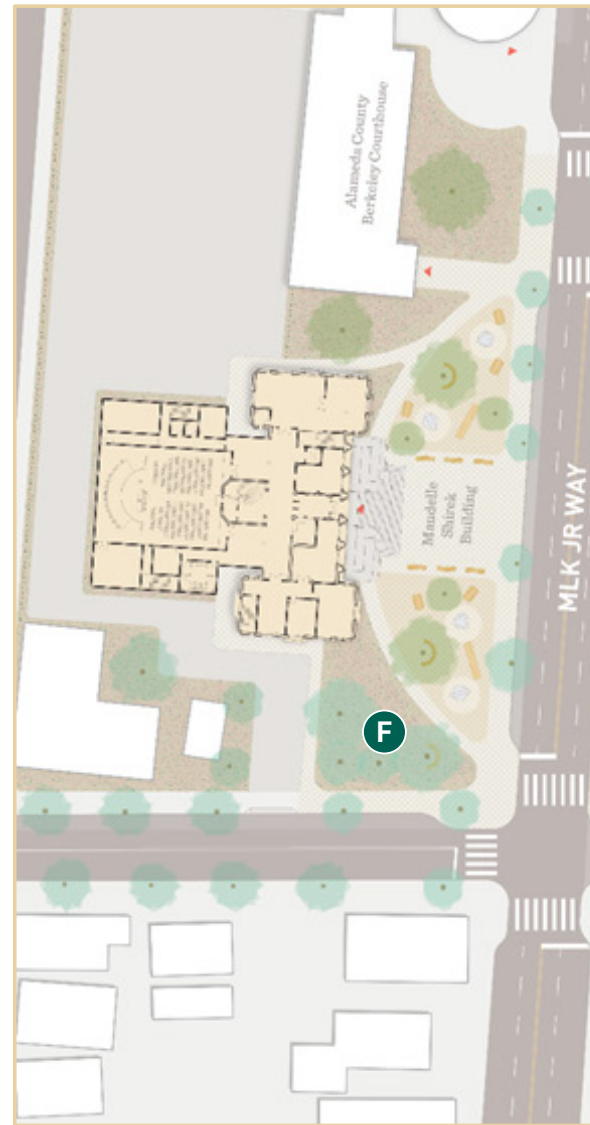


2019/2020 Vision Plan Alternative Site Plans

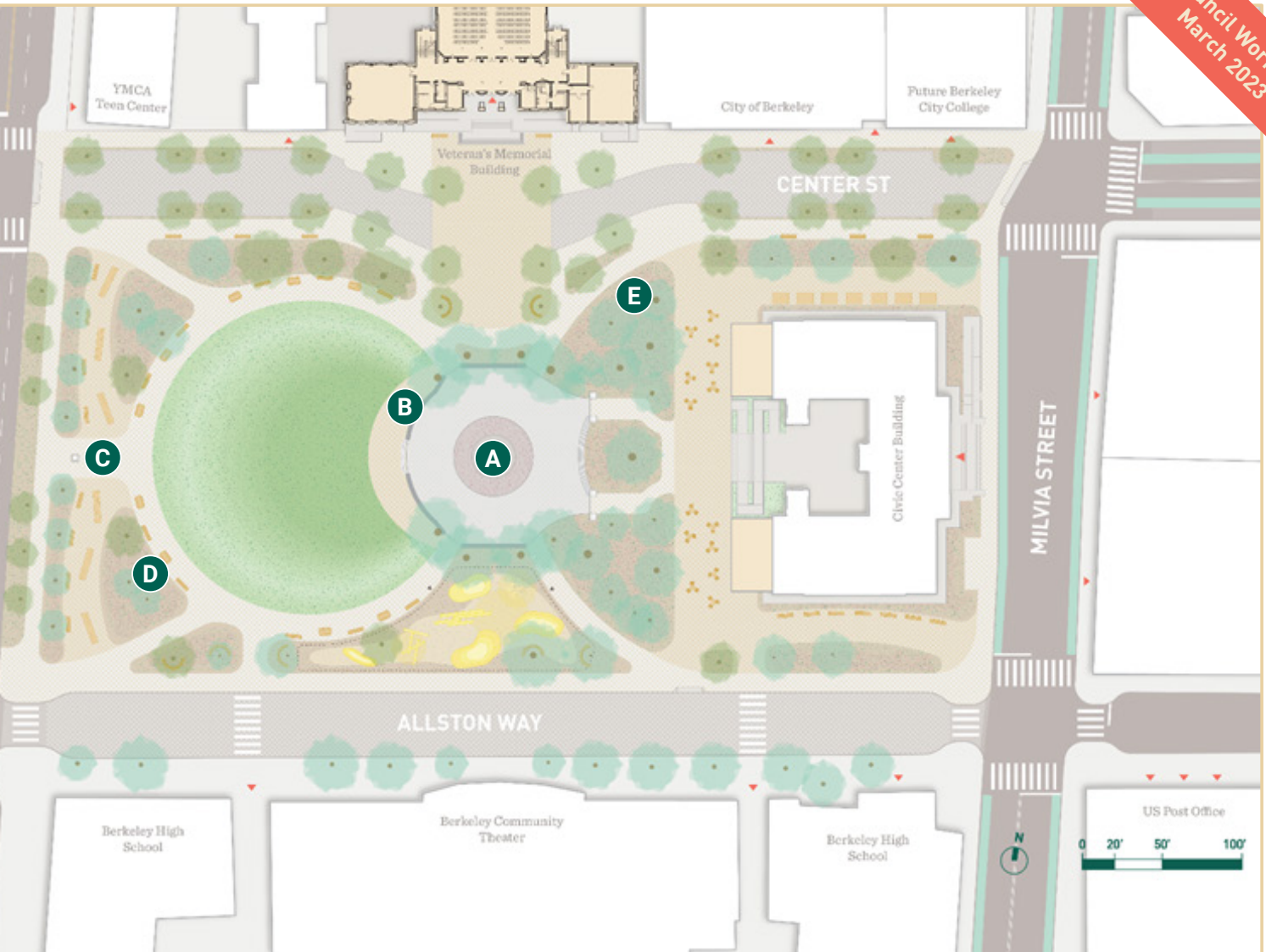
Monuments and Memorials

The emerging design concept proposes keeping the following monuments and memorials in their current locations:

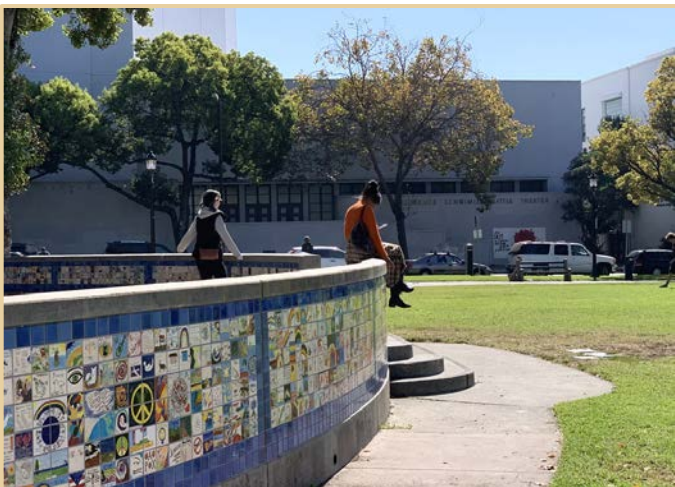
- A Turtle Island Monument**
A proposed indigenous monument that will restore the center of the park and create a new focal point.
- B Peace Wall**
Perimeter wall at fountain terrace, with mosaic of individually decorated tiles, rebuilt in 1988.
- C Existing Flag Pole**
One of the first elements of the park. It was relocated to its current position in 2006.
- D Strawberry Tree Memorial**
Two trees and a plaque were placed to honor Irish students who died in a nearby balcony collapse.
- E Peace Marker**
A small marker was placed here as part of the Peace Pole Project, date unknown.
- F Old City Hall Markers**
This area has a few ground marking plaques. A proposed sculpture is also to be installed in this area.



Turtle Island Monument, MLK Jr Civic Center Park (2023 rendering by PGAdesign)



Site Plan with Monuments and Memorials



Peace Wall, MLK Jr Civic Center Park



Flag Pole, MLK Jr Civic Center Park

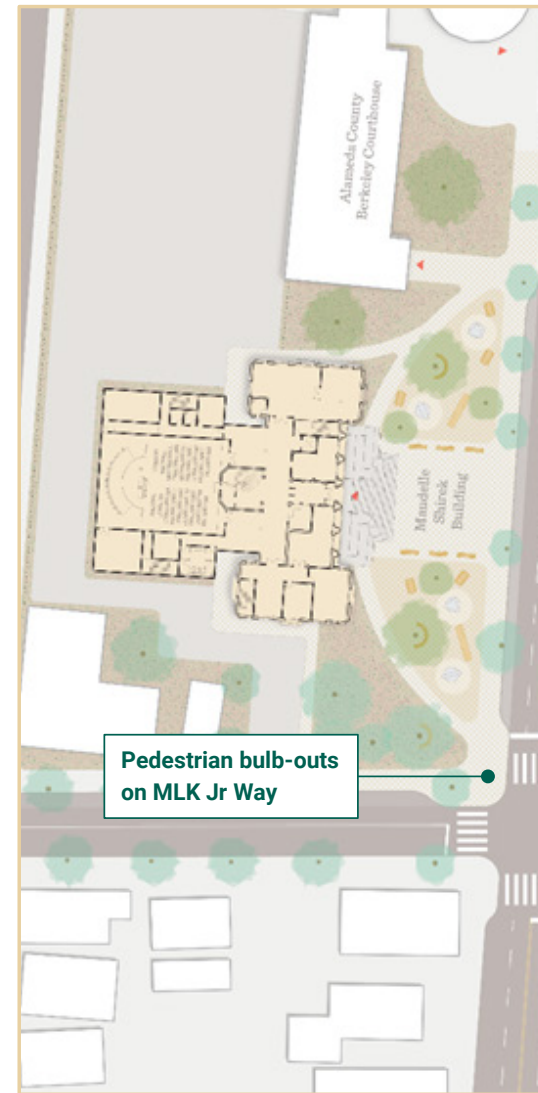
2

Improve pedestrian safety and usability of paths

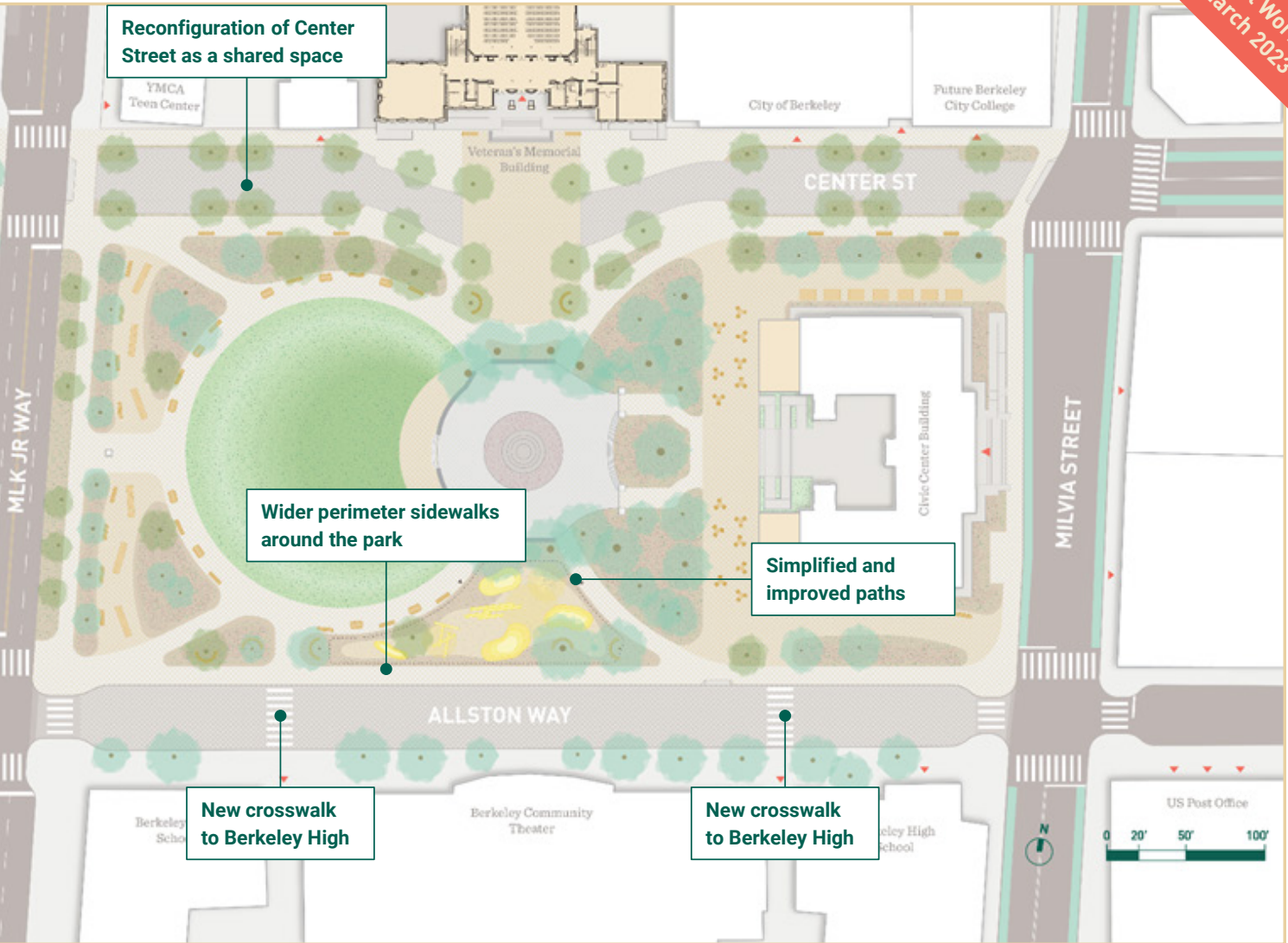
In order to better connect the park to its surrounding context and invite more pedestrian activity, the design concept shows a number of treatments to **increase safety and enhance the pedestrian experience.**

Key elements of these treatments include **pedestrian bulb-outs at intersections** on MLK Jr Way, **new crosswalks** between Berkeley High School and the Park, and **a new flush-surface, shared street** on Center Street.

Another pivotal change is the **realignment of the park path network, elimination of the secondary interior paths, and widening of the perimeter sidewalks** to allow for a more comfortable walking experience.



 Funnycross, Madrid



Site Plan with Pedestrian Improvements



Inviting and wider paths

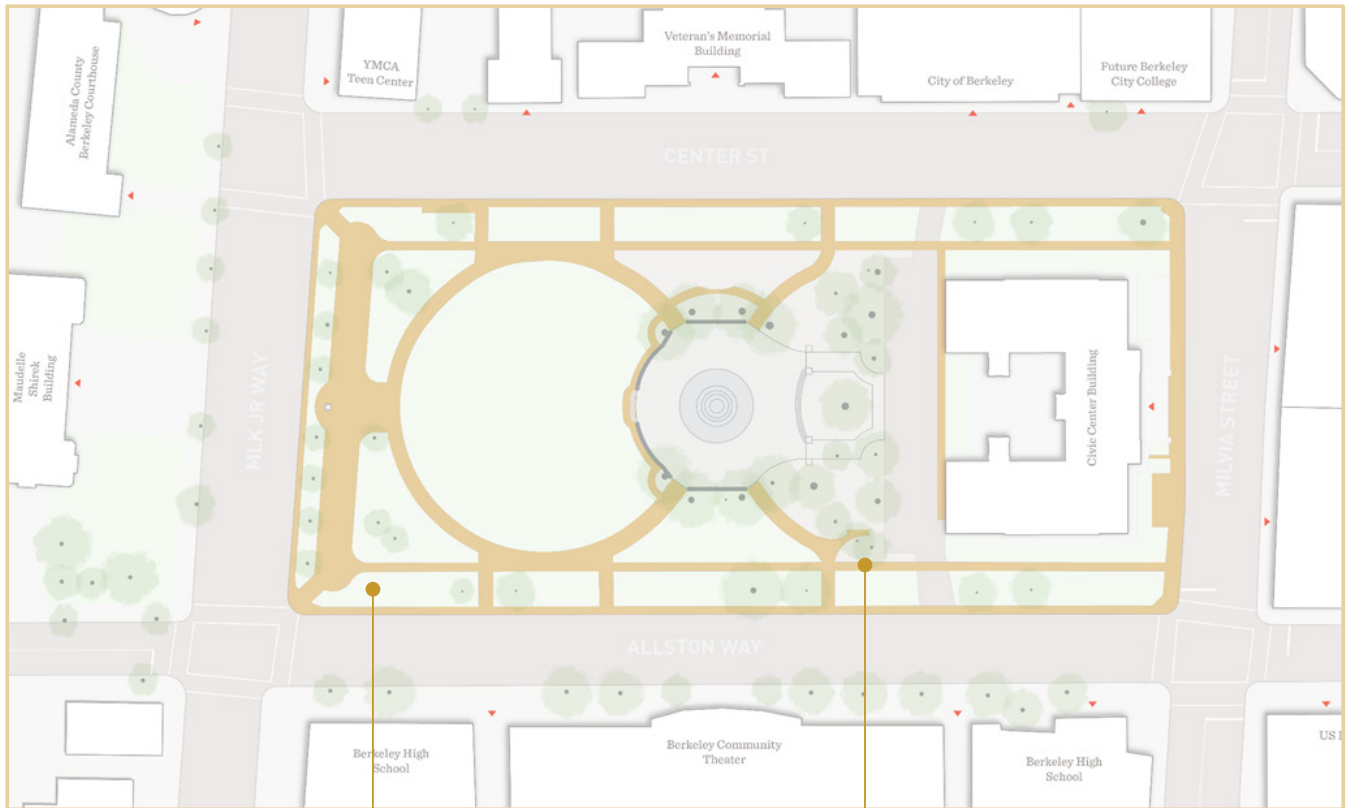


Pedestrian priority shared street

HtO Park, Toronto

Clematis Street, West Palm Beach

Design Concept - MLK Jr Civic Center Park & Surrounding Streets

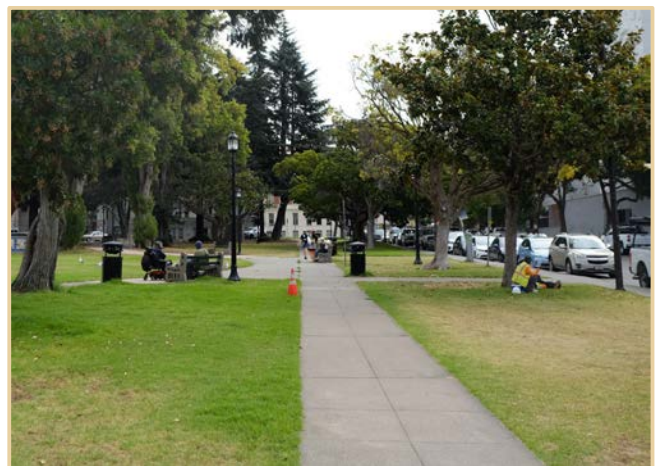


Small open spaces left between path divisions

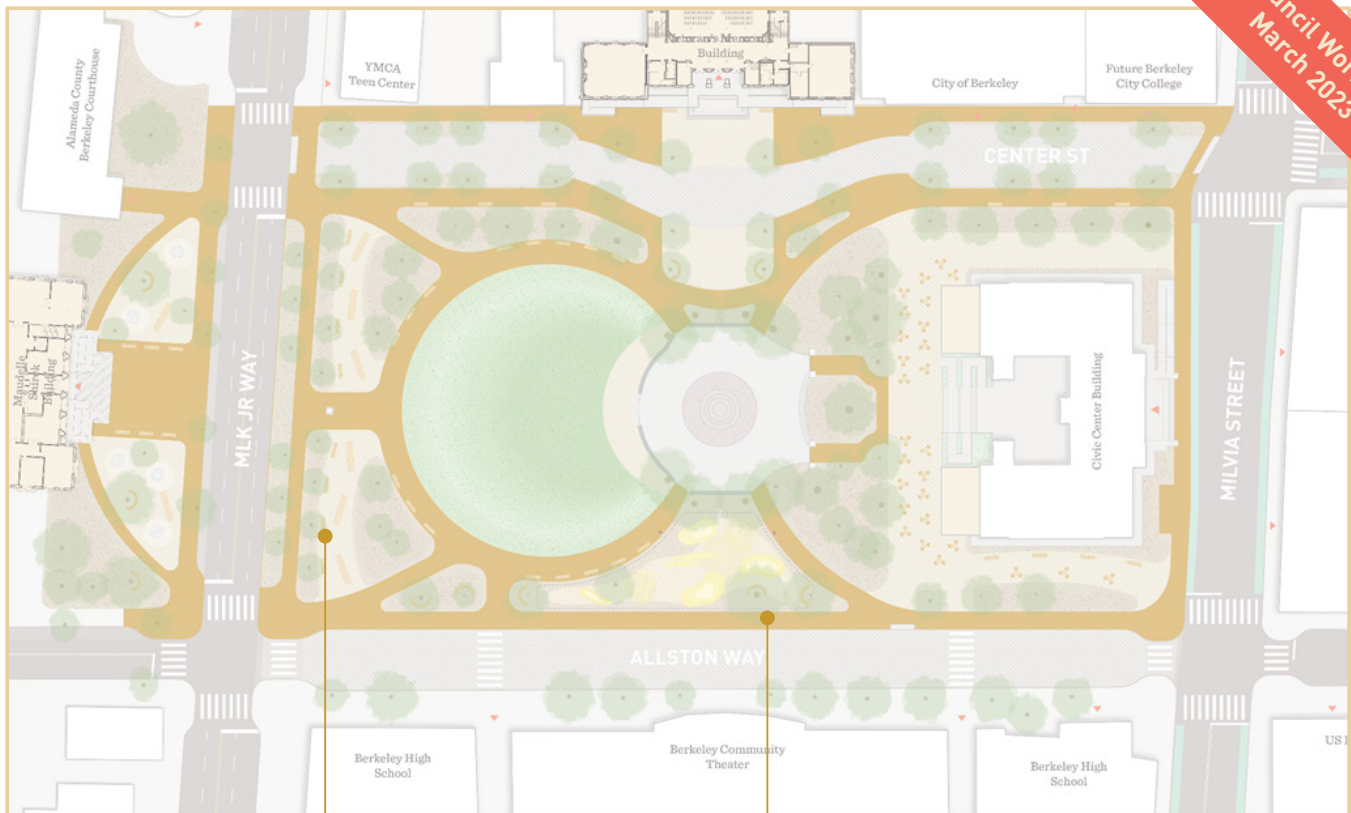
Parallel network of narrow perimeter paths

Existing Path System

The existing path system is notably defined by the narrow perimeter sidewalk and redundant parallel path running nearby. While the original intent was to encourage more people to walk within the park, both sets of narrow paths end up providing a substandard pedestrian experience. Additionally, this layout carves the park into a multitude of small spaces that are harder to occupy and program.



MLK Jr Civic Center Park, Present



Consolidated program areas between fewer paths

Wider sidewalks around the perimeter of MLK Jr Civic Center Park

Proposed Path System

The proposed path network eliminates redundant internal parallel paths while widening both the perimeter sidewalk and the remaining internal pathways. This provides a better pedestrian experience while creating larger program areas between the paths. It also better accommodates furnishings for pop-up programming.



Remiseparken, Copenhagen

3

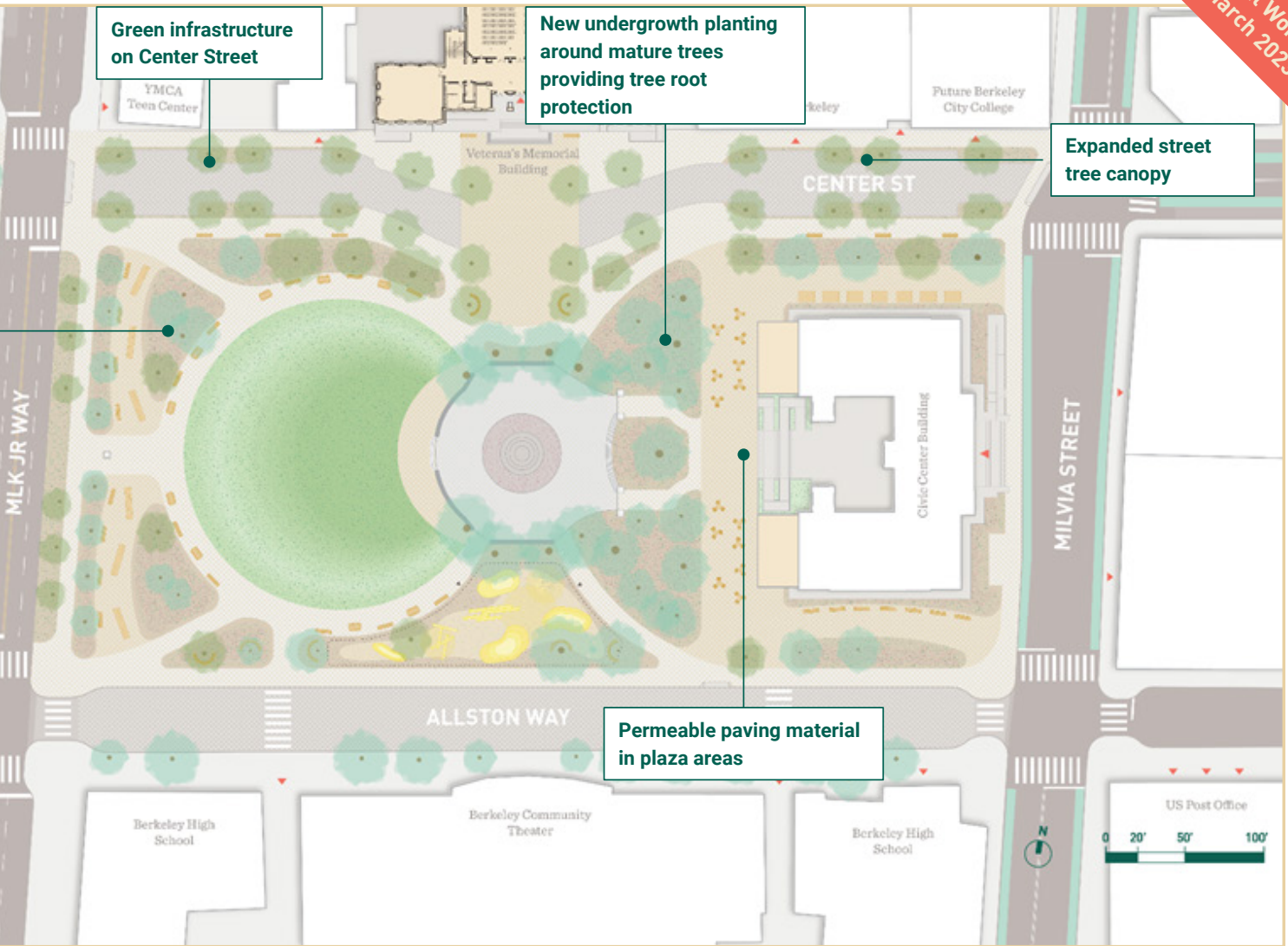
Enhance natural features, promote biodiversity and green design

During the 2022/23 Design Concept public engagement process, participants were very clear about **prioritizing nature** in the MLK Jr Civic Center Park.

The design concept incorporates this commitment to nature in multiple ways, including the retention of almost all existing mature trees, a **“Green” Center Street** that features **stormwater infrastructure and bioswales**, and enhanced planting areas to introduce **more pollinator-friendly, native, and less water-intensive softscape** to the park.



Existing Giant Sequoia and other mature trees, Civic Center Park



Site Plan with improved plantings & green infrastructure



Bioswales and permeable paving for stormwater runoff



Pollinator-friendly, native plantings

SW 12th Avenue, Portland, OR

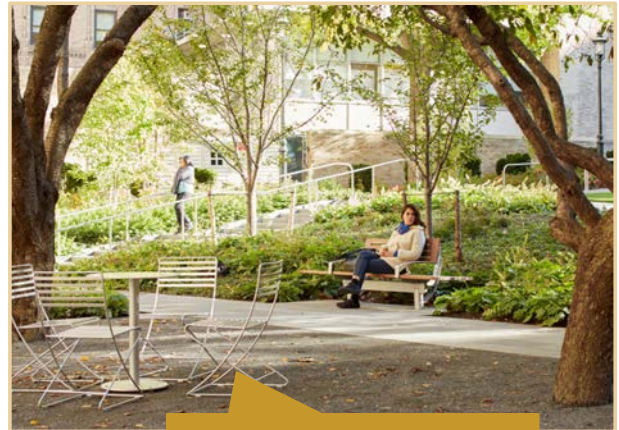
California Native Plant Society

Landscape and Planting Palette

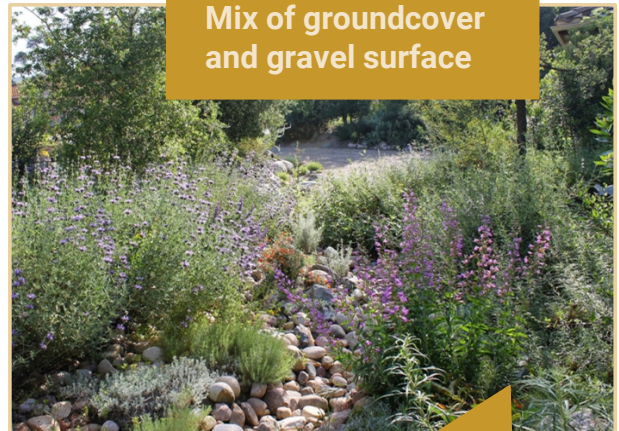
While the mature tree canopy is an irreplaceable asset for the Park that will be retained in the design concept, other existing softscape and planting areas leave room for improvement.

The design concept proposes a series of planting areas that ring the main open space, enhance the existing mature tree root zones, and help create a strong buffer along MLK Jr Wy.

These planting areas will balance spaces for nature with quiet spaces for people, mixing a variety of species and programs - from quiet seating under mature trees to pollinator gardens to bioswales managing stormwater.

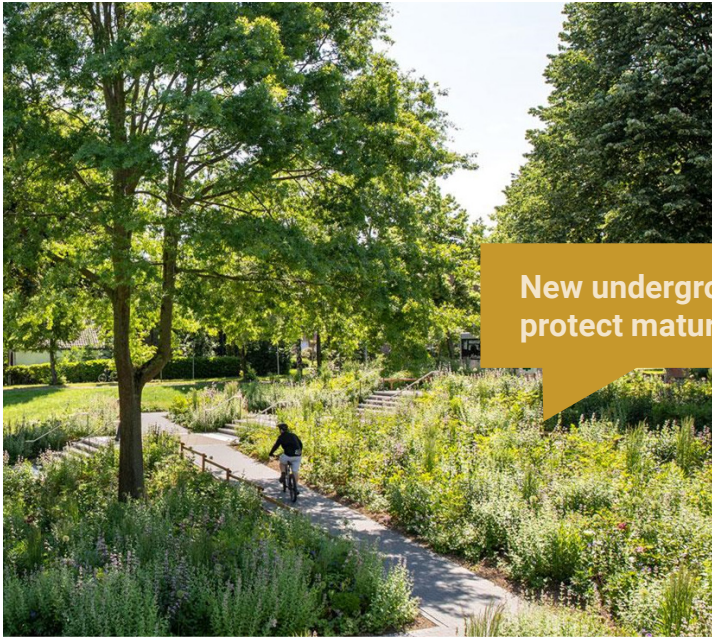


Mix of groundcover and gravel surface



Native, pollinator, friendly species





New undergrowth to protect mature trees



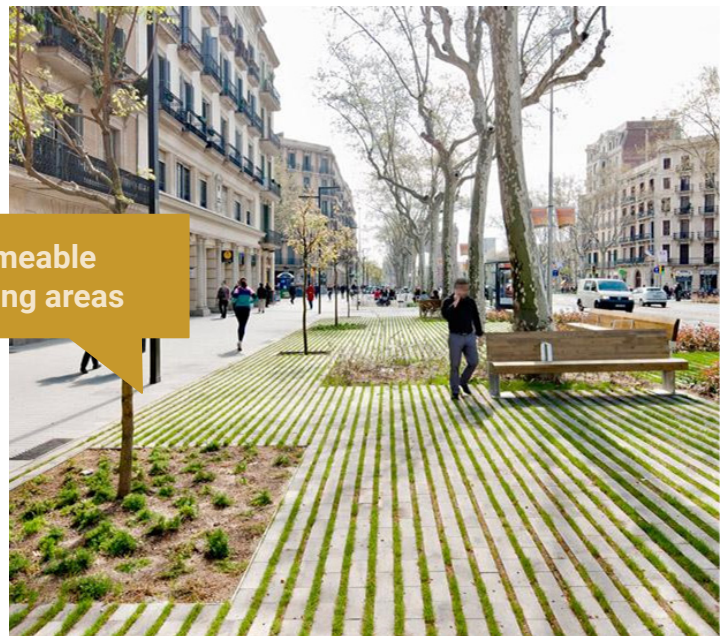
Expanded street tree canopy



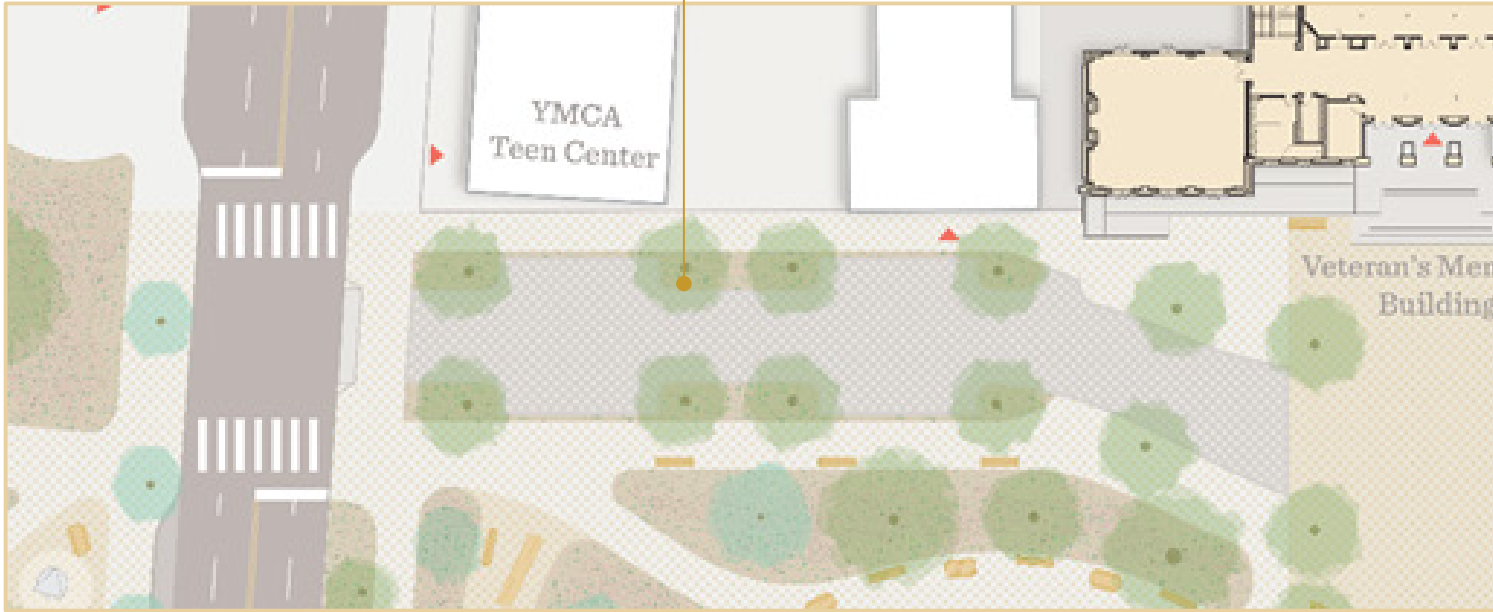
Green infrastructure for stormwater management



Permeable paving areas



New street trees
throughout



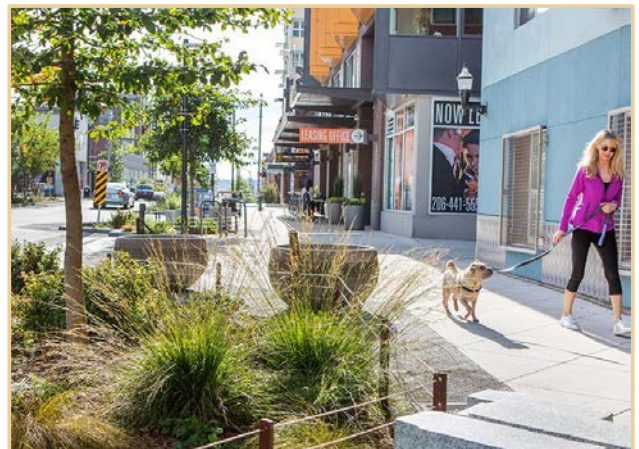
B

“Green” Center Street

A space for all modes of transportation that prioritizes pedestrians and landscaping, aligned with the City’s Streets and Open Space Improvement Plan.

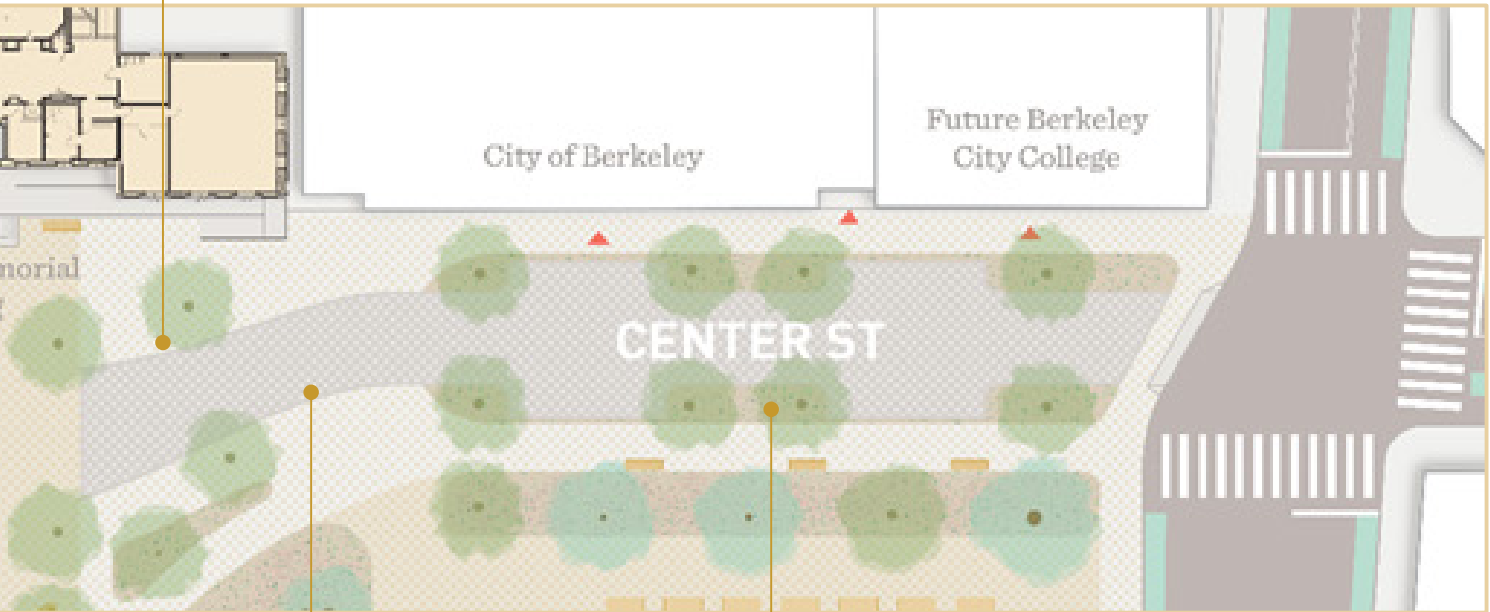


Bell Street Park, Seattle



Bell Street Park, Seattle

Realignment to create plaza space in front of Veterans Memorial Building



Flush, curbless transition from street to sidewalk

Green infrastructure and bioswales for stormwater management and greening



Occidental Ave, Seattle



Woonerf, Odense

4

Expand invitations for a variety of everyday uses

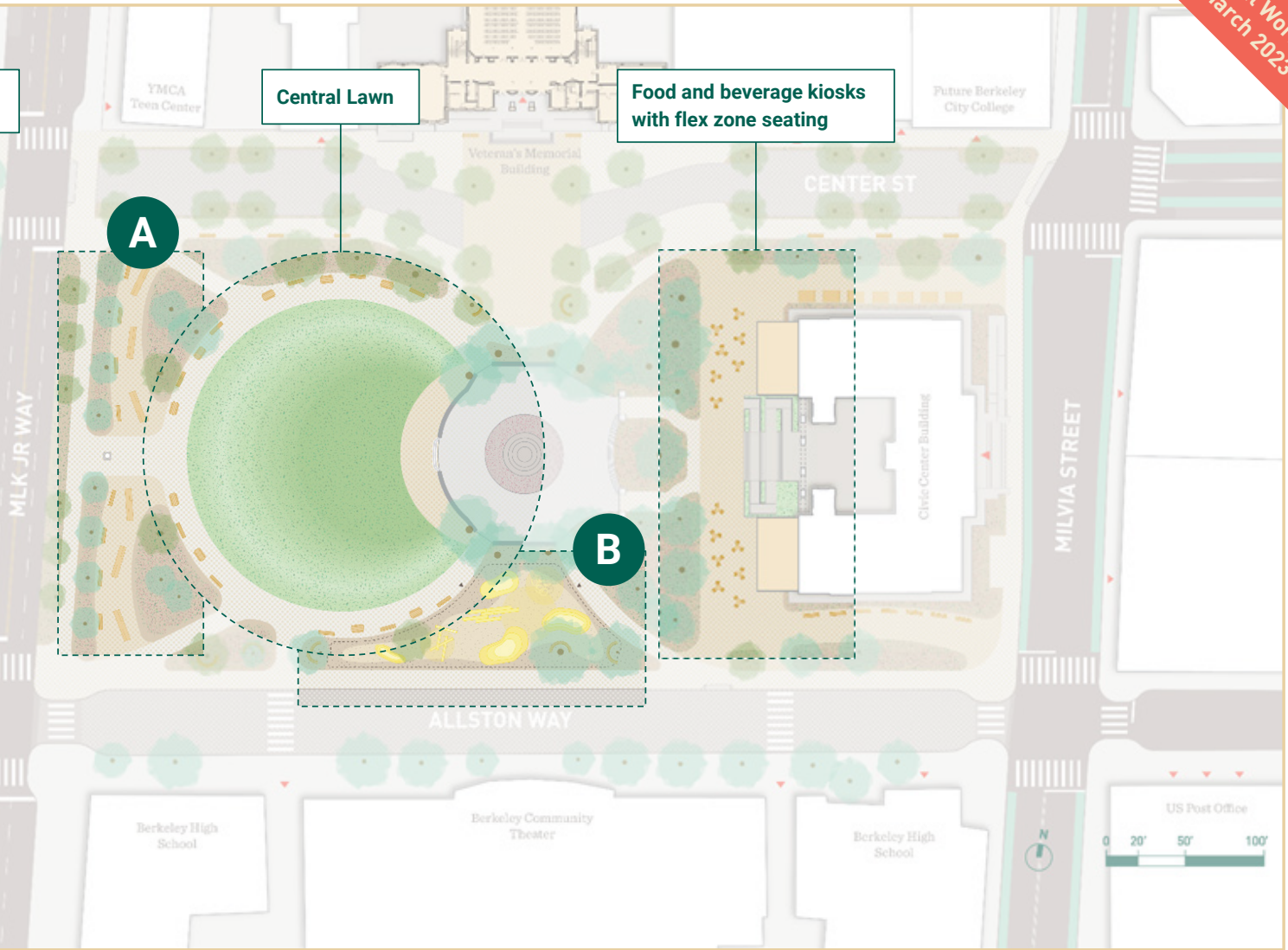
While the existing park is well-activated a few times a year for large events and festivals, it lacks furnishings and sufficient programs to enliven it on a daily basis.

Through upgrading existing park activity areas like the skate spot and lawn, and introducing new programs like food and beverage and a multi-age play area, the design concept expands the everyday potential of the space.

Along with these key program areas, upgrading and adding seating and lighting will make the park a safer and more inviting space.



 Berggruen Museum, Berlin



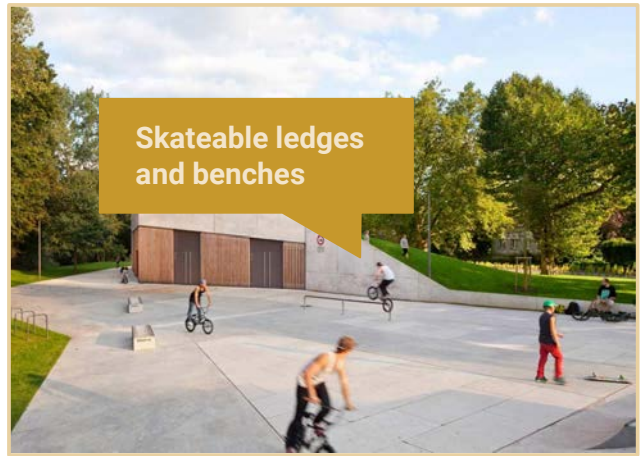
Site Plan with improvements for everyday uses



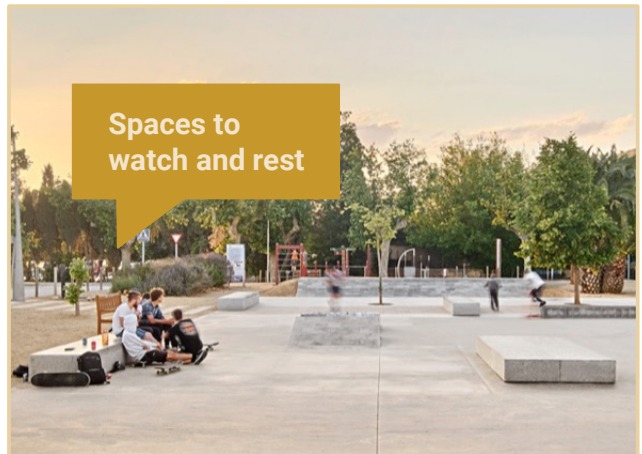
Jubilee Gardens, London



The Italian Gardens Cafe, London



Youth Centre, Oberhausen, Germany



Skate Plaza, Torroella, Spain



Skate Spot

A plaza area with skateable features and furnishings mixed with general seating and plantings.



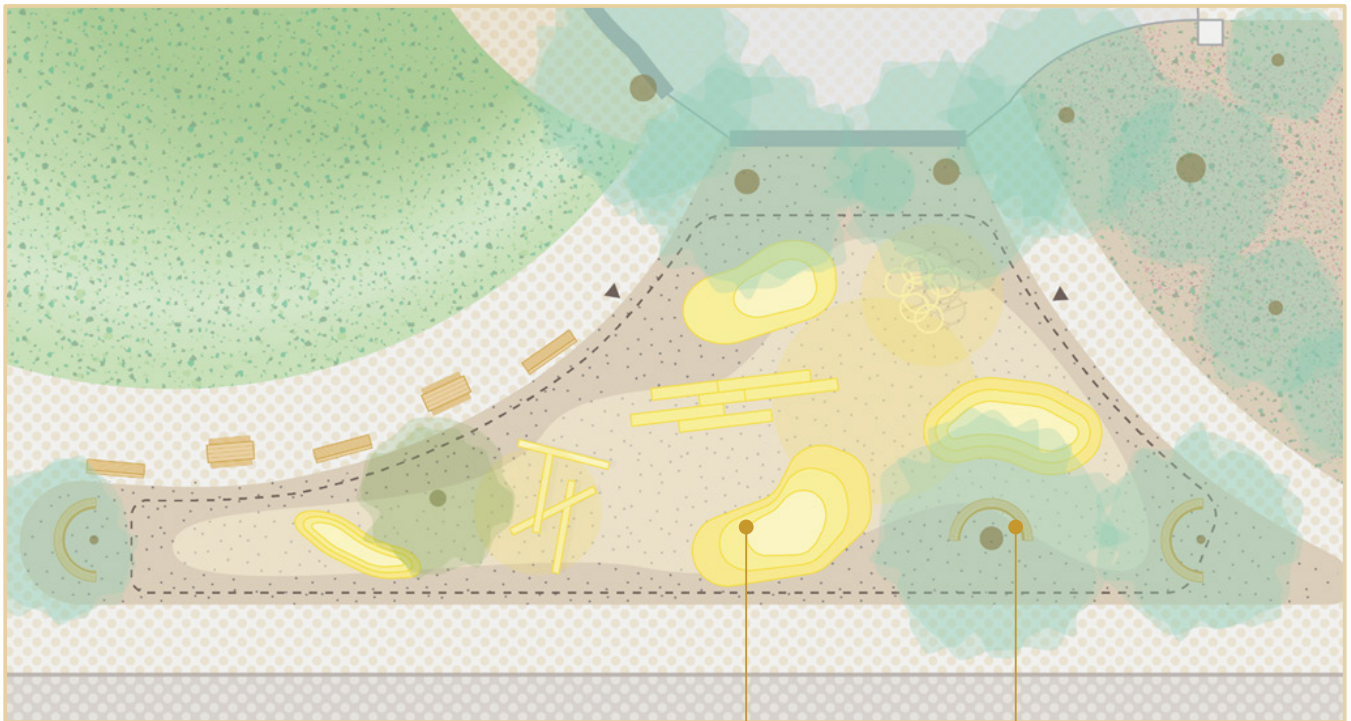
Nature-based play

Tunnel Tops Park, San Francisco



Dynamic play elements

Osdorp Oever, Amsterdam



B

Playground

A natural play area for children mixed with landscaping and trees.

Nature-inspired play features

New benches to protect tree root zones

Seating and Furnishings

One of the key components of the design concept is the desire to expand invitations for people to use and stay in the Park by increasing the amount, variety, and quality of furnishings available.

Fixed benches in activity areas, cafe seating near new food and beverage options, and possibly larger signature seating fixtures will create space for a variety of users - from farmer's market attendees to Berkeley High students on their lunch break. Additionally, well-designed benches can be placed under mature trees to protect the roots while providing a quiet place of repose.

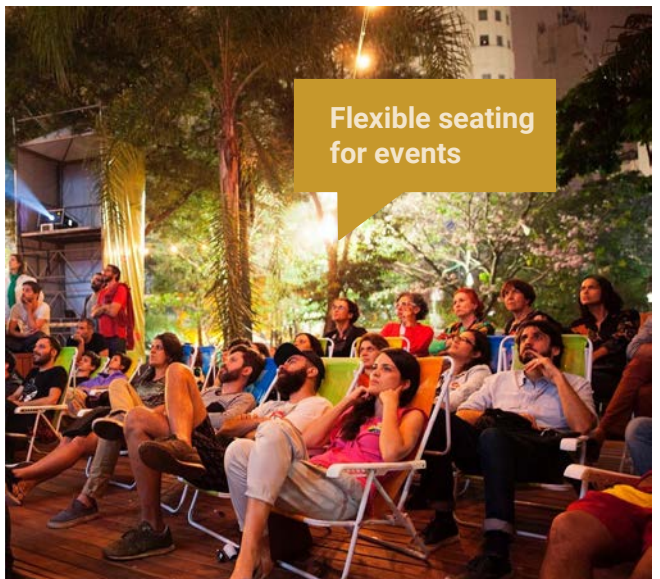
Beyond seating, other key opportunities to improve the level of comfort and safety for park users include upgrading lighting, signage, art installations, and trash receptacles.



Play spaces for all ages



Comfortable microclimates



5

Enhance the potential of the park to host weekly and special events

Along with the everyday experience, the Park also needs to accommodate a variety of weekly and special events.

The design concept focuses on a few key areas that are able to **flex between everyday activity and the special gatherings** that happen at Civic Center, from outdoor music performances to craft fairs.

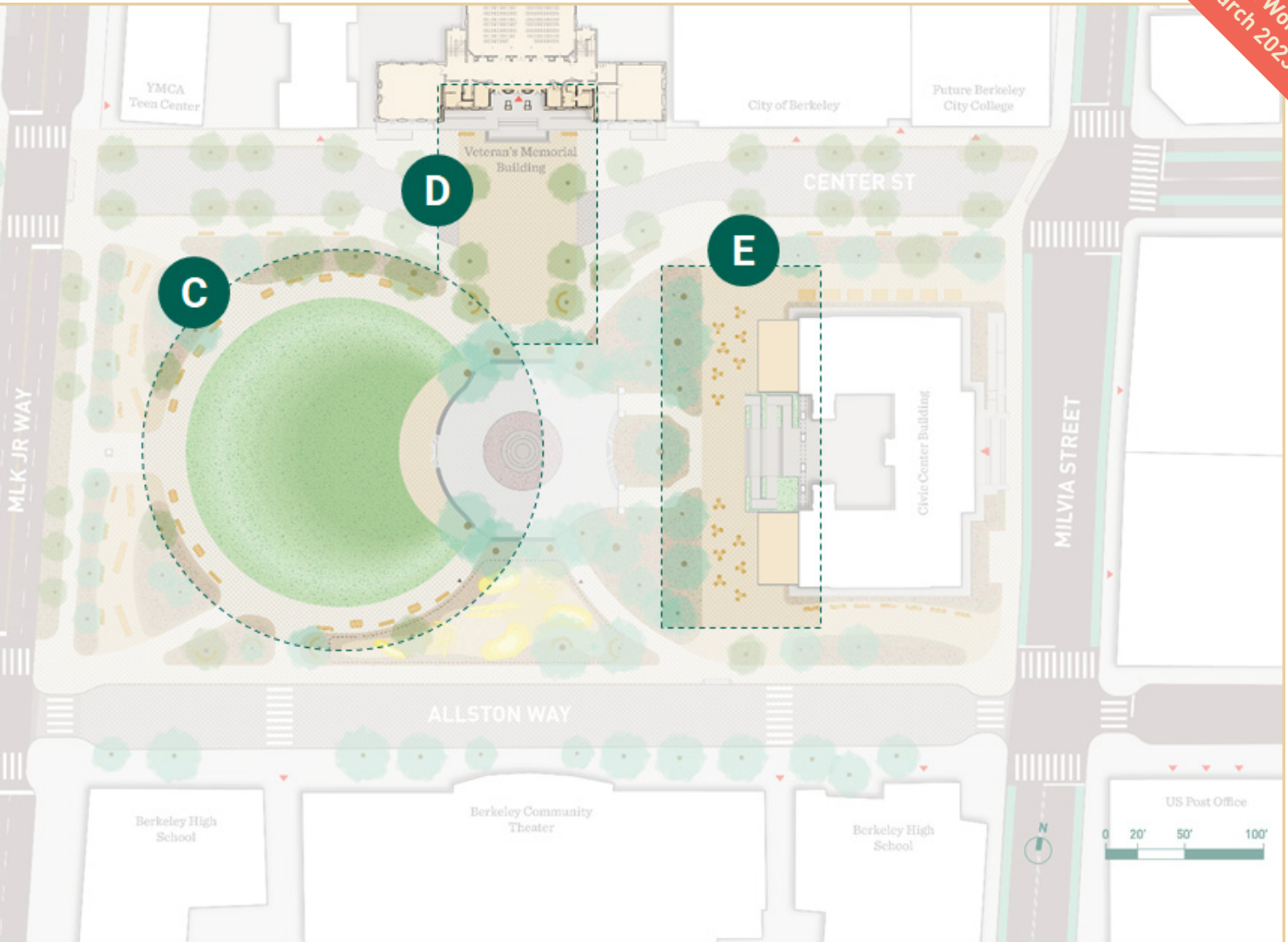
There is also an opportunity to **rethink the relationship between the farmer's market and the Park**, and create a more integrated experience between the two.



Central green for events and performances



MFA Concerts in the Courtyard, Boston



Site Plan with improvements for special events

Flexible space for markets and fairs

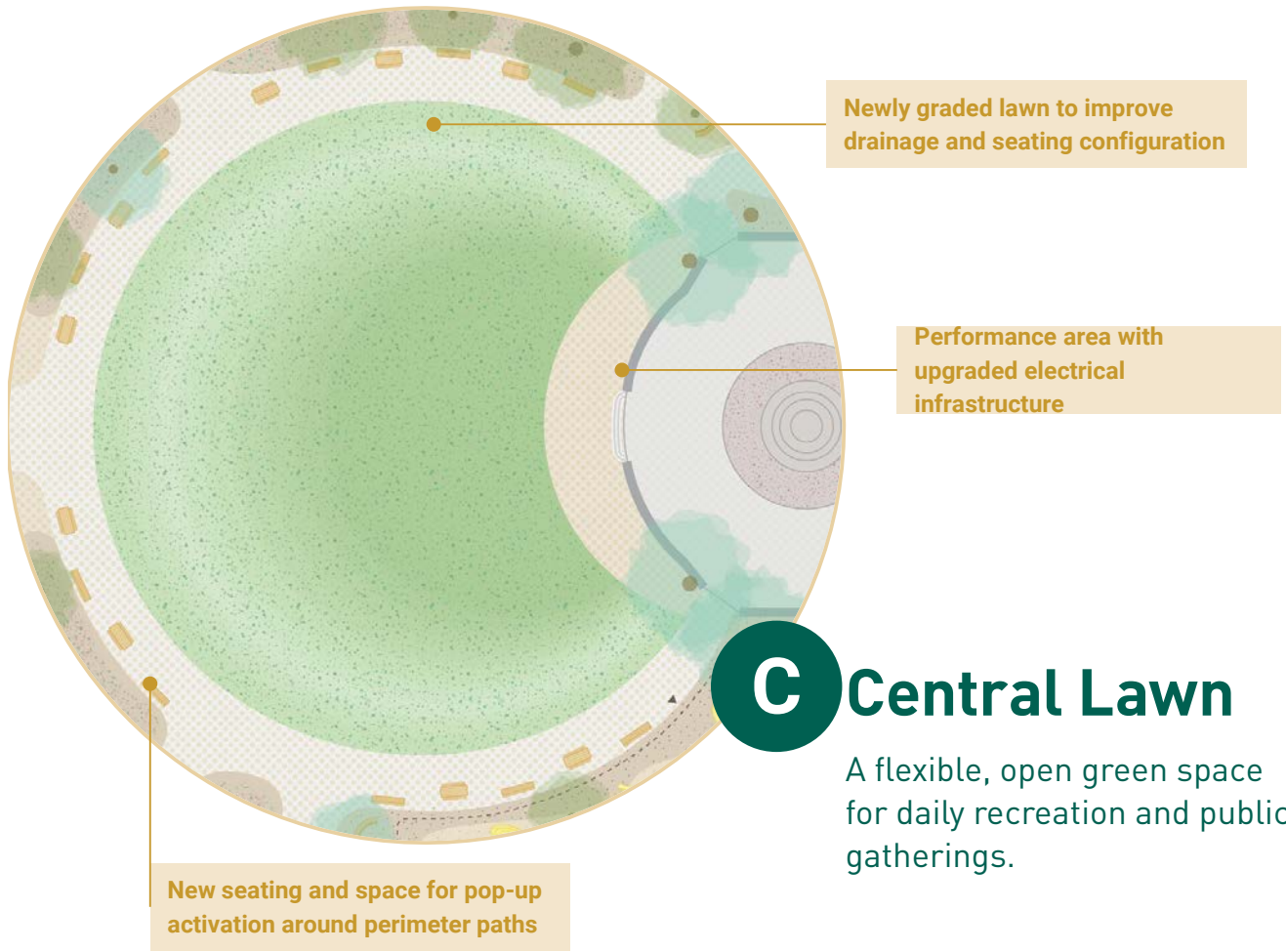


La Placita, Mission, San Francisco

Seating for everyday social gatherings



Grand Park, Los Angeles



C Central Lawn

A flexible, open green space for daily recreation and public gatherings.



Queens Park, Toronto



Brunnsparcken, Gothenburg

Space for markets and commerce



Bell Street Park, Seattle

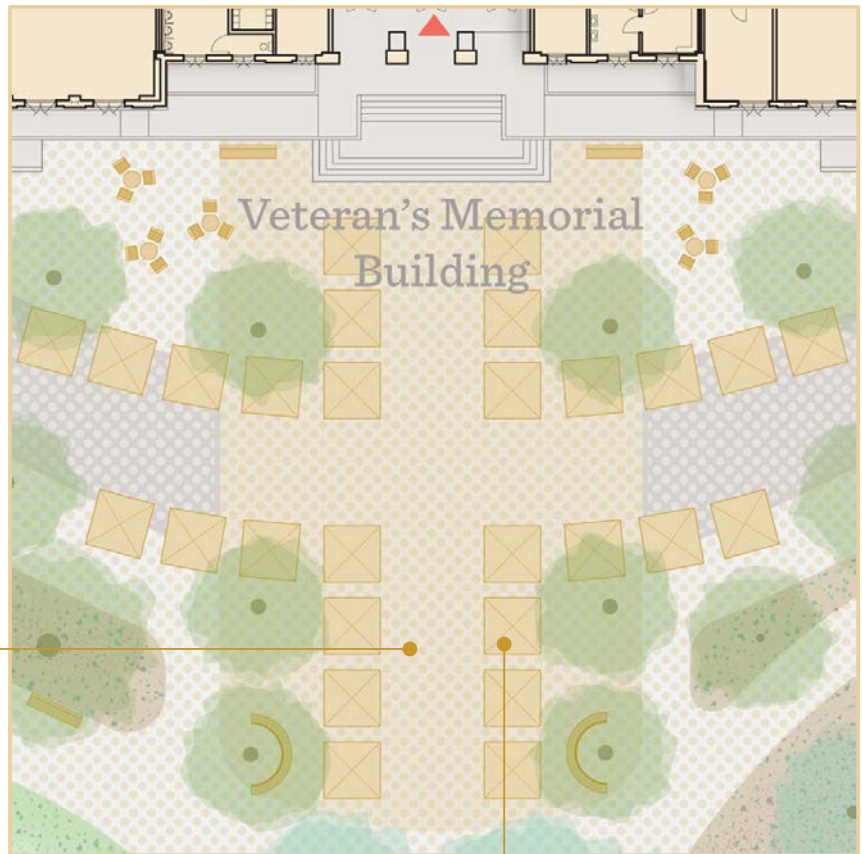
Performance areas



The Porch at 30th, Philadelphia

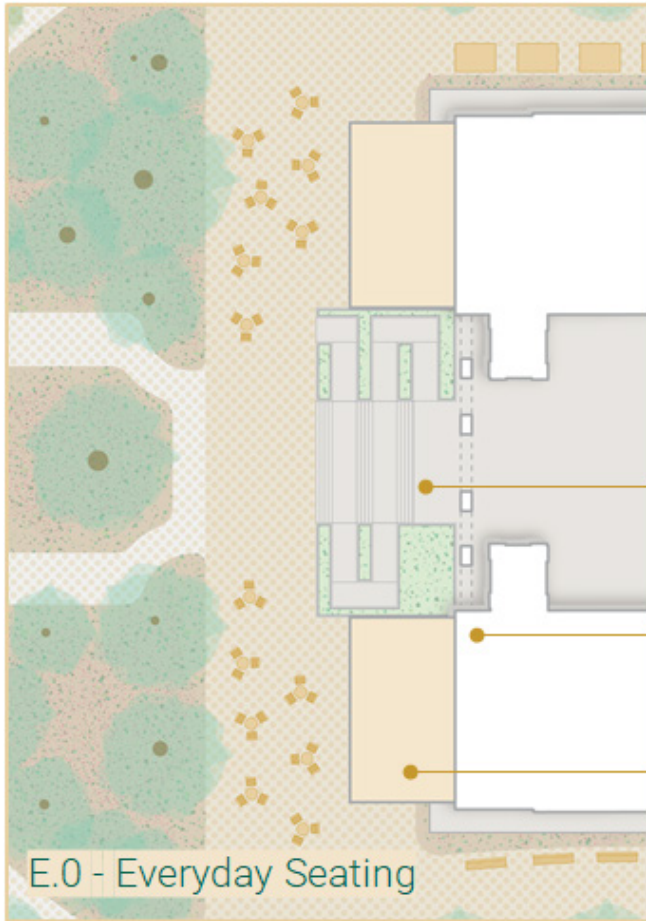
D Arts and Market Plaza

A dignified accessible entrance to the Veterans Memorial Building that integrates Center Street and the park.



Permeable paving surface

Space to allow the farmer's market to expand into the park



E

Flex Zone

A space for food, beverage, and outdoor seating that can flexibly accommodate events, performances, deliveries, and support functions for the park.

New open back stair and ramp entrance to 2180 Milvia

Permeable, drivable paving treatment to accommodate a variety of uses

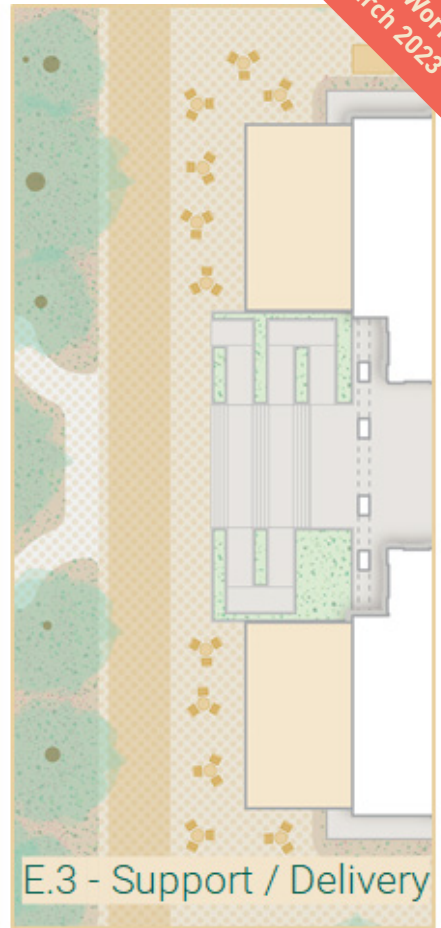
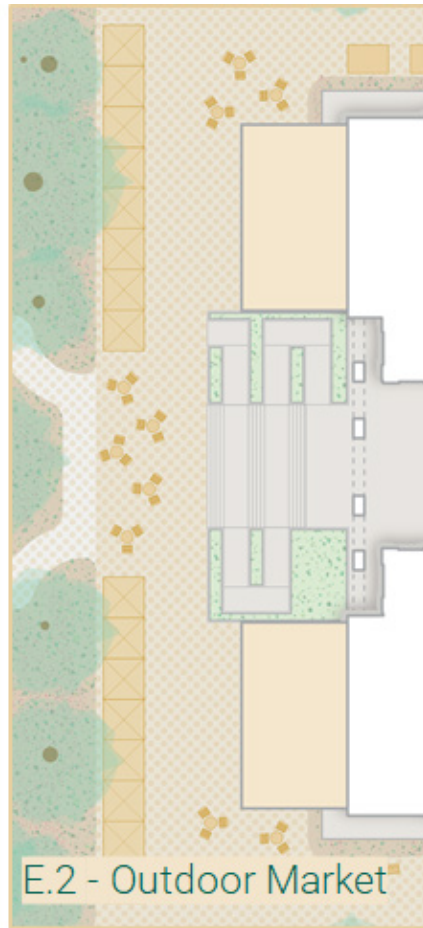
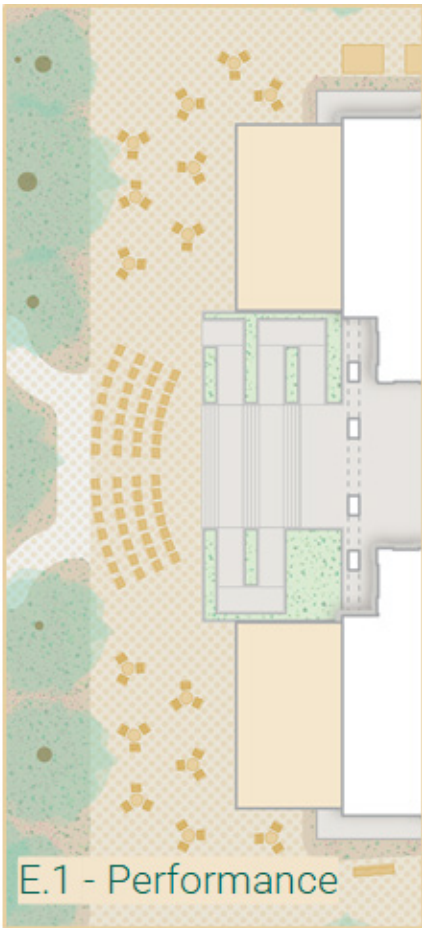
New food and beverage kiosks at rear of building



Lower Sproul Plaza, Berkeley



Monash University, Melbourne



Lincoln Center, New York



Flower Market, Barcelona

6

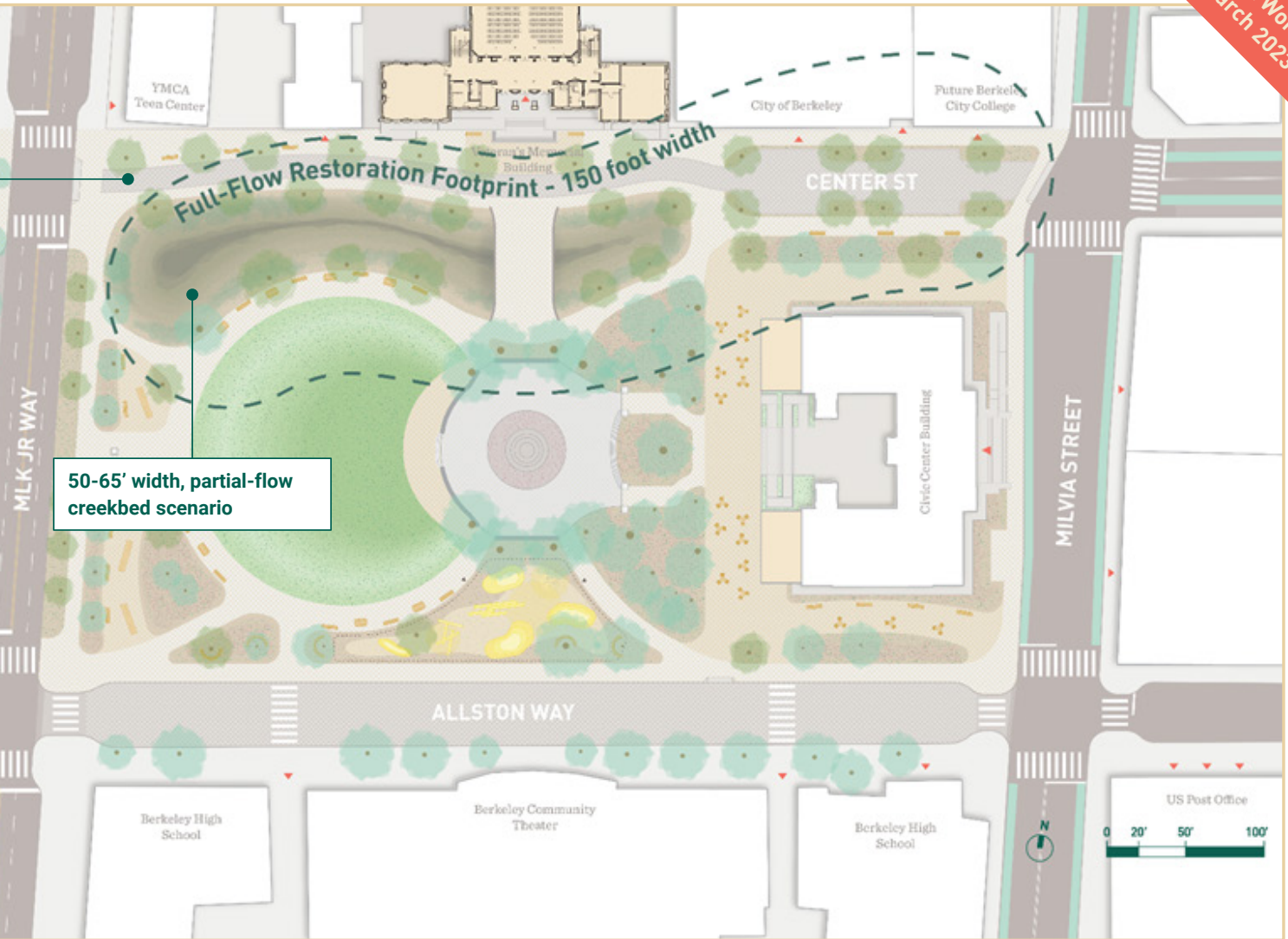
Study feasibility and tradeoffs of daylighting Strawberry Creek

While public engagement revealed a consistent desire to daylight Strawberry Creek, it also brought up concerns of feasibility, cost, maintenance, and spatial constraints.

This alternate design concept illustrates a **partial-flow daylighting scenario** that minimizes disruption to the overall park layout and key monuments, while reducing Center St to a minimum-required driving lane for emergency access. Deliveries and drop-off to the Veterans Memorial Building would be impacted, and need further study. The size of the Arts & Market Plaza has been reduced to a bridge spanning the daylight creek, and the farmer's market would need to be relocated to another site.



Strawberry Creek, Berkeley



Site Plan with partial flow daylit Strawberry Creek



Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt, Oakland

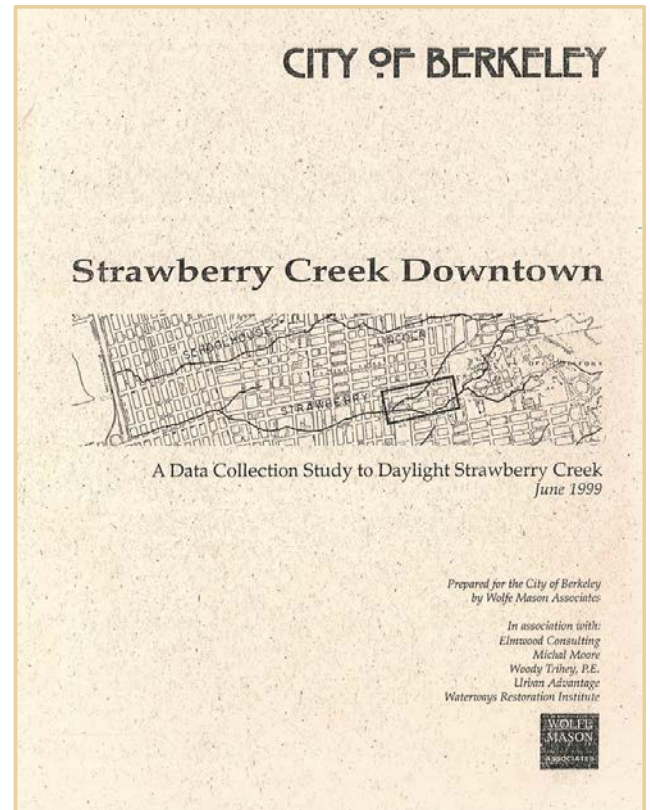


Los Angeles State Historic Park, LA

Daylighting Considerations

A 1999 Creek Study prepared by Wolfe Mason included investigation of various daylighting scenarios in Downtown Berkeley, including a partial flow scenario. Key takeaways from the report and its implications on MLK Jr Civic Center Park are as follows:

- ➔ The existing culvert is estimated to be roughly 18' under the surface of the park, sloping down to the west.
- ➔ Because of this depth, a full restoration of a natural creek bed would require over 150' of width, which is considered infeasible.
- ➔ Partial-flow scenarios would require retaining the existing culvert and introducing a flow control structure somewhere downstream of the BART line, most likely near the northeast corner of Civic Center Park.
- ➔ If physical daylighting is deemed infeasible, the creek can be acknowledged symbolically.



Wolfe Mason Report Cover, 1999

Further study will be required to ultimately determine feasibility for daylighting the creek. Many of the park upgrades can be completed outside of the area of impact while the study is completed.



Existing Strawberry Creek culvert location in Downtown Berkeley
(based on Wolfe Mason Study From 1999)

5.3 Maudelle Shirek Building

5.3

Maudelle Shirek Building- Seat of Berkeley's Democracy

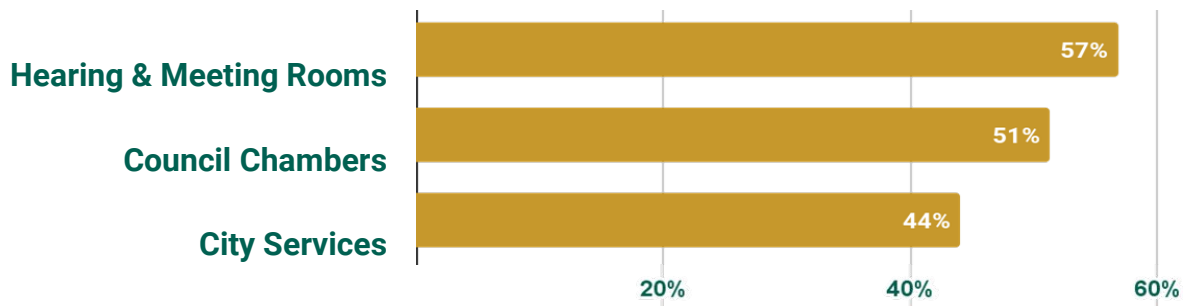
As the historic seat of government in Berkeley, this project proposes returning city functions back to the Maudelle Shirek Building. Input from public engagement scored Hearing & Meeting Rooms, Council Chambers, and public-facing city services as priority uses for the building.

Returning these functions to the heart of Berkeley's Civic Center will bring citizens to the area throughout the day and into the evening to attend meetings, hearings, and gatherings.

In order to return the highest and best use to this site, the Maudelle Shirek Building required additions, modern amenities, seismic upgrades, and other repairs.

"Active use of meeting rooms for organizing events and activism, attending City Council meetings and public meetings."

"Its use should honor the memory of Maudelle Shirek with progressive social action, women's leadership, and racial justice."





View to Maudelle Shirek Building from roof of Veterans Memorial Building

Additions & Improvements

Main Entry

The main entry to the Maudelle Shirek Building is up an inaccessible flight of stairs. This plan proposes an improved plaza and universally accessible ramps leading up to the main entry on the first floor. The ramps curve from the two crossings at Martin Luther King Jr Way towards the central entry terrace, creating a gracious way for all to access the building through the same main entry.

A new addition on the west side of the building replaces the a historical rear additions, and is sited on the southern portion of the Public Service Building's controlled parking lot.

A study of the police and fire departments parking capacity and needs is required to confirm that they can be met on this site or nearby.



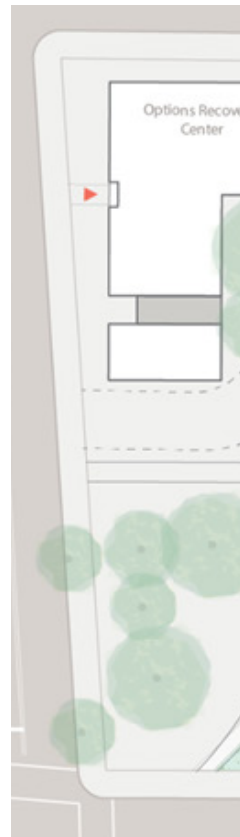
Conceptual Ramp Approach

Rear Addition

The design concept includes an addition at the rear of the building, creating space for a modern and appropriately sized multi-purpose gathering room that can serve the community as a space for large public events and City Council meetings.



Existing Rear Addition





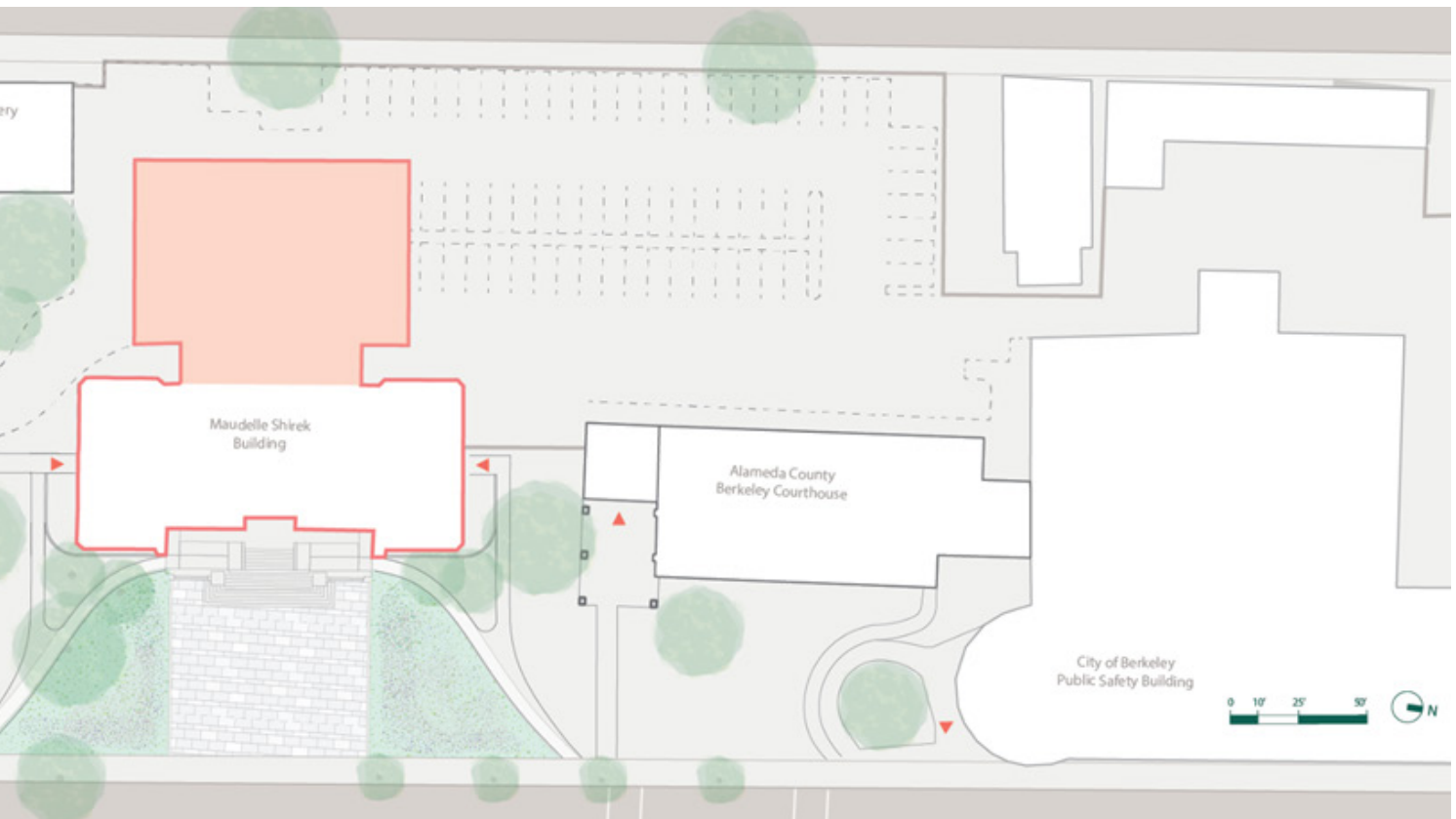
Addition at the Exploratorium, San Francisco



St. Johns Library, Winnipeg, Canada



East Bay Performing Arts Center, Richmond



Site Plan - Proposed Addition Location

Seismic Improvements: Damage Control + to Immediate Occupancy

Approach: City's Public Works Department recommends a seismic upgrade for the Maudelle Shirek Building to the level of Damage Control Plus (DC+) to Immediate Occupancy (IO) by adding buttresses at rear of building and tying into the historic structure.

At this level of seismic retrofit, the building would be occupiable days after a major seismic event.

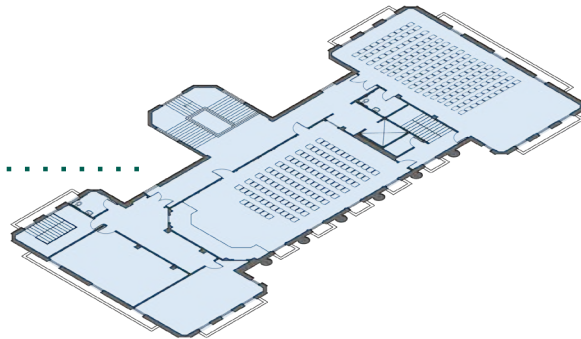
Discussion: An Immediate Occupancy (IO) upgrade will provide maximum flexibility for City and public use of this asset now and in the future. With this level of improvement, the building can function as an emergency operations and service center during emergencies and in the events of natural disasters.

Prior to the 2020 Vision Plan, the City investigated an IO solution that featured base isolators in the ground level spaces of the Maudelle Shirek Building. This approach takes up significant space on the ground level and impacts the historic fabric of the building.

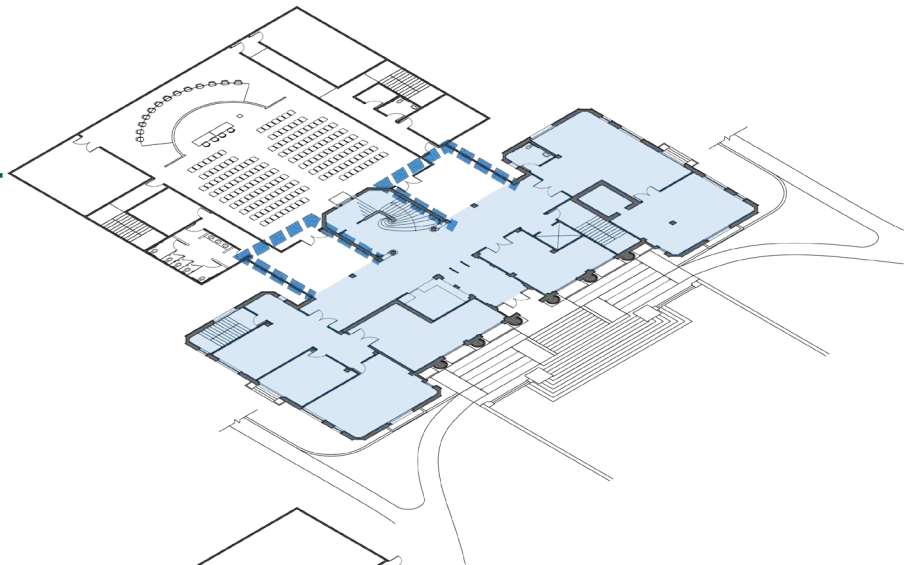
After the completion of the 2020 Vision Plan, Tipping Structural Engineers developed a concept for achieving near Immediate Occupancy levels through buttressing on the rear of the building. This approach is documented in their 2021 report on the Civic Center buildings.

By adding a new structure to the rear of the building the design concept proposes pursuing the buttressing approach in place of base isolators, to reach DC+ to IO seismic performance, providing flexibility for city uses and maximizing usable area.

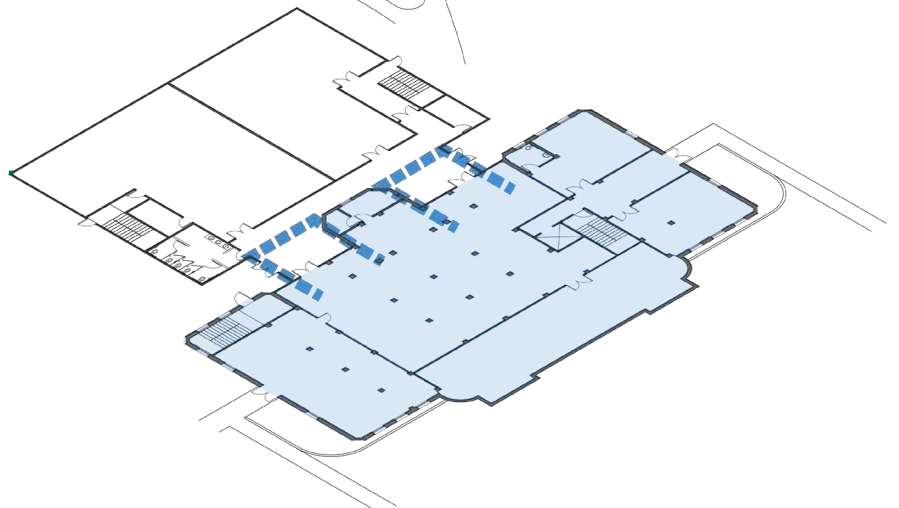
SECOND FLOOR (6,500 SF)



FIRST FLOOR (14,400 SF)



GROUND FLOOR (16,350 SF)



Seismic Improvement Locations

Other Improvements

Beyond the additions, a specific design will need to address other required improvements. These include addressing the mechanical, electrical, lighting and plumbing systems to bring them into compliance with current building code and City policy. The City of Berkeley is committed to converting buildings to be all-electric, including this historic structure. Relatedly, energy production through solar panels on the roof of the addition should be explored. Improvements and repairs to the building envelope (enclosure) will help to stabilize the structure. All of this work taken together results in a more sustainable and resilient building.

Beyond the improved entrance, accessibility upgrades will be required throughout including: adjusting door widths and locations, clearing accessible pathways, installing a modern elevator core, and modifying elements to meet accessible reach requirements.

Egress from the building does not comply with modern fire codes. Proper exit separations and paths will need to be added, as will additional stair cores and exits from the building for the increased occupancy.

An existing attic space could be upgraded to serve as storage space with improvements to the vertical circulation. This will require further study in a specific design phase.

All of these changes will need to be addressed while respecting the historic nature of the building, and meeting Secretary of the Interior standards for historic preservation. As a part of that effort, the beautiful historic finishes will need repairs and restoration, and non-historic elements will be replaced with modern, healthy and resilient materials.

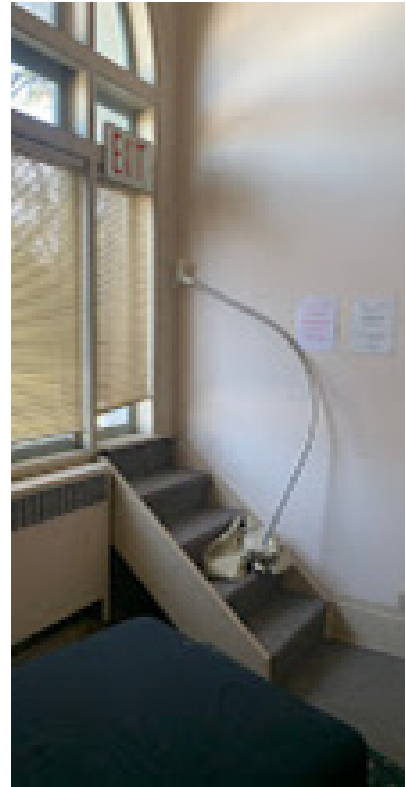
Accessibility



Finishes



Egress/Safety



System Upgrades



Building Performance



"...upgrade to LEED standards, include solar panels...advanced MERV/HVAC...light filled with natural materials."

"...it was a pain to get to and move between rooms and floors"

"...accessibility through the front door is important."

Space Use

Meeting & Hearing Rooms

Between Council, Commissions and Boards, the City hosts over 350 public meetings every year. Currently City Council meetings are held at the BUSD board room on Addison Street, and most other meetings are held in various locations around Berkeley. Providing new meeting spaces in Civic Center will create a central building in the City of Berkeley that is a symbol of citizen involvement in governance.

Creation of a multi-purpose hearing room or meeting space similar in size to that of BUSD's Board Room will require an addition to the Maudelle Shirek Building, best located on the west side or behind the building.

As a two-story structure, this new addition could house the large multi-purpose hearing room with seating for over 200, plus an expanded public lobby on the first floor. This level could also contain multiple support spaces for the hearing room - closed session meeting rooms, AV support, restrooms, storage, and more. Near the entry, two small meeting rooms can be used by City staff, commissions, and the public.

The historic meeting room on the second floor could be refurbished for smaller meetings of around 70 people. A proposed second small hearing room on the north wing could hold over 100 occupants and the south wing could be divided into two additional meeting rooms.



Uppsala Town Hall, Sweden

51%
of respondents
support returning
Council
Chambers

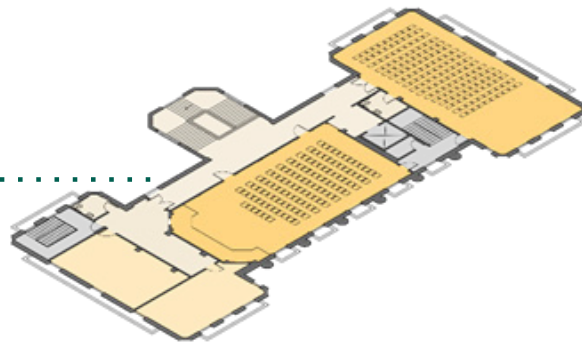


Historic Hearing Room, Maudelle Shirek Building

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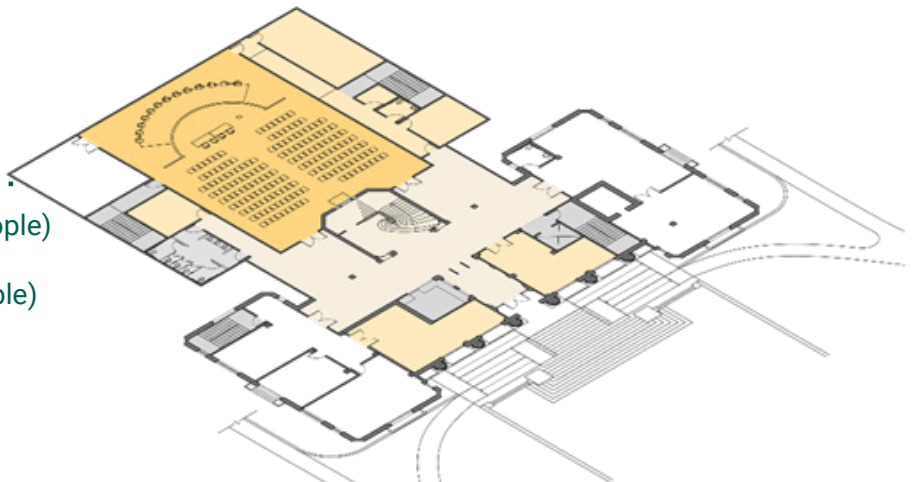
SECOND FLOOR (6,500 SF)

- Small Hearing Rooms (70-120 people)
- Large Meeting Rooms (20-30 people)

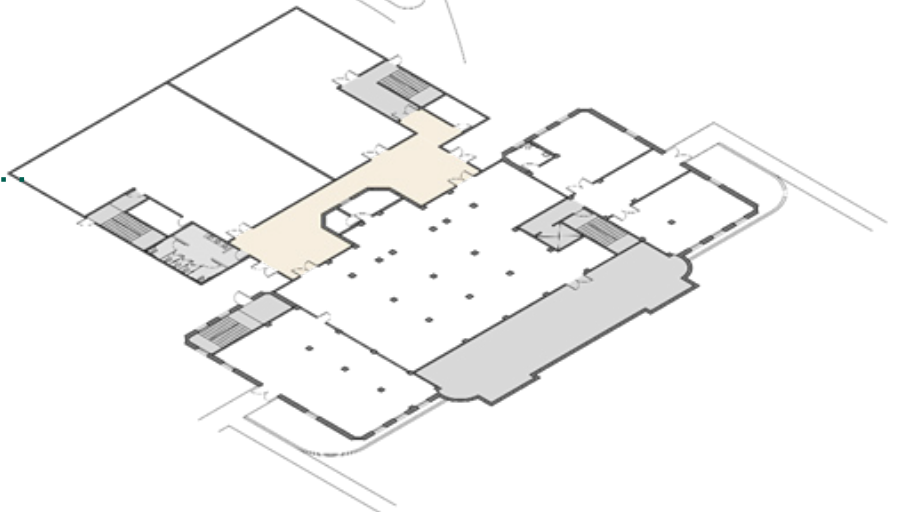


FIRST FLOOR (14,400 SF)

- Large Hearing Room (200-300 people)
- Council Support Spaces
- Small Meeting Rooms (10-20 people)



GROUND FLOOR (16,350 SF)



Space Use

Public-Facing City Services

An approach to bringing more residents into the governing process is to provide opportunities for interaction with government in action. Public engagement participants reacted positively to the idea of co-locating public-facing city services with the hearing and meeting rooms in the Maudelle Shirek Building to achieve this result.

The large high-ceilinged spaces to either side of the lobby on the first floor could serve as public-facing city departments, such as the Customer Service Center or Vital Records.

The two wings total approximately 3250 SF, providing ample space for a reception area, offices, and other support functions. In a future specific design phase, additional programming work with city staff is required to determine which public-facing City uses are most appropriate for supporting foot traffic, and the real space needs of the selected department.

44%
of respondents
support city
services being
located here



Public Lobby at Deventer City Hall, Netherlands

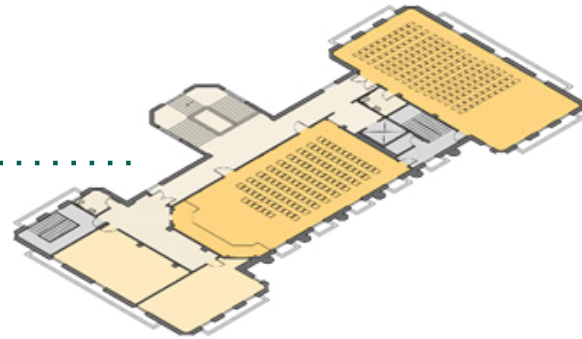
“center for civic life...a one stop shop for the general public....”



Leiden City Hall Lobby, Netherlands

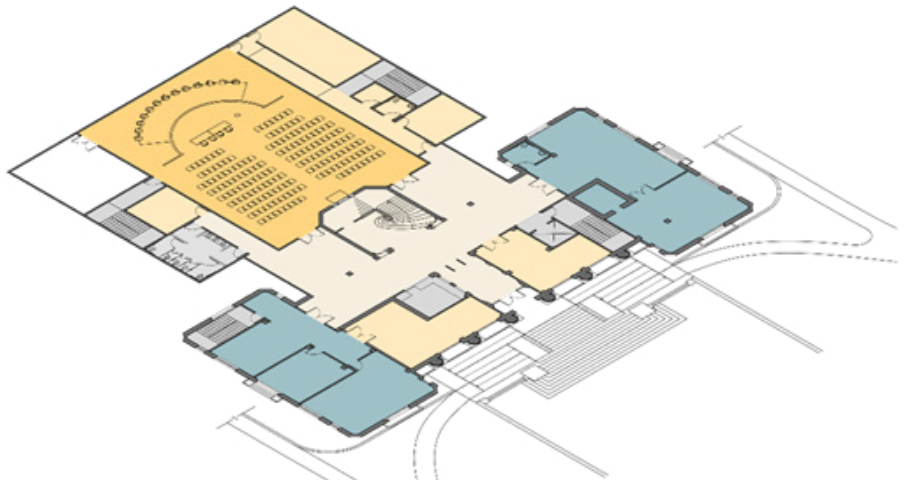
ATTIC (not shown)

SECOND FLOOR (6,500 SF)

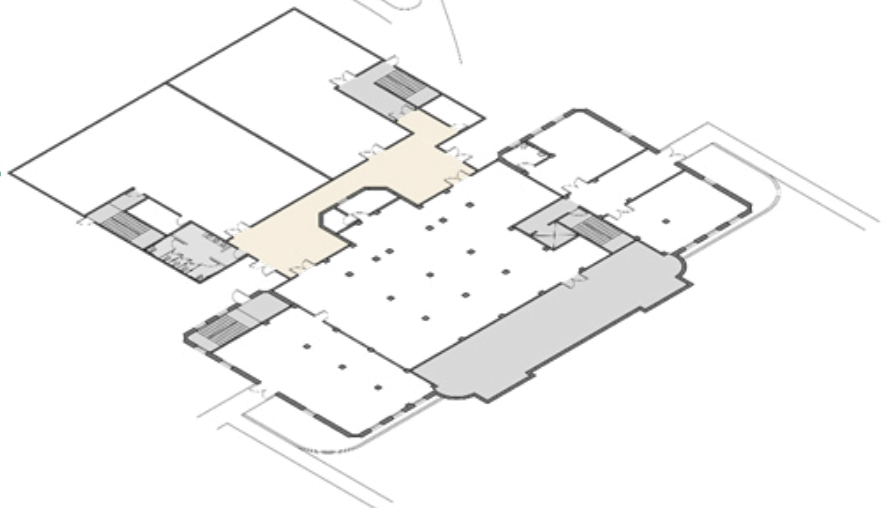


FIRST FLOOR (14,400 SF)

- Reception Areas
- Offices
- Conference Rooms
- Support Spaces



GROUND FLOOR (16,350 SF)



Space Use

Berkeley Historical Society & Museum

The Historical Society envisions a museum that “engages visitors of all ages in learning what has made Berkeley ‘Berkeley,’ and showcases the City as a place where ideas emerge that influence the rest of the country and the world.”

Providing a source of information and inspiration for the current participants in the City’s government is a strong use of the space that aligns with the vision of the Civic Center as the heart of civic life in Berkeley. The public halls and lobbies of the Maudelle Shirek Building could host rotating exhibits that can be explored either as a visitor or while waiting to attend a public meeting or for a turn at the customer service desk.

On the ground floor, a permanent exhibit, research room, offices, and exhibit preparation room are proposed. Archival storage could be located either off-site, in an improved attic, or on the ground floor of the building, depending on other space needs.

Siegel & Strain Architects

Controlling access between the exhibits and more secure spaces of the building could present a conflict, and would need to be carefully managed. Sources for funding a museum expansion should be further studied.

70%
of respondents
support Berkeley
Historical Society
& Museum at
MSB



African American Museum & Library, Oakland CA



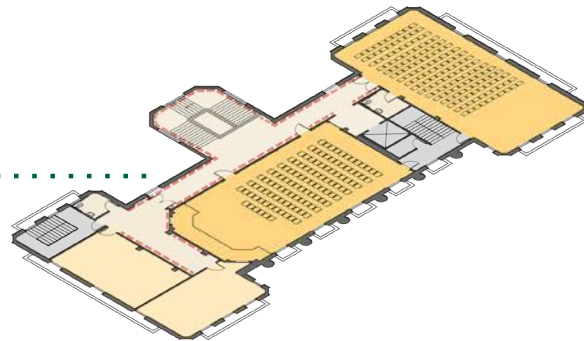
Square Headquarters, San Francisco CA

ATTIC (not shown)

(Alternate Archive location)

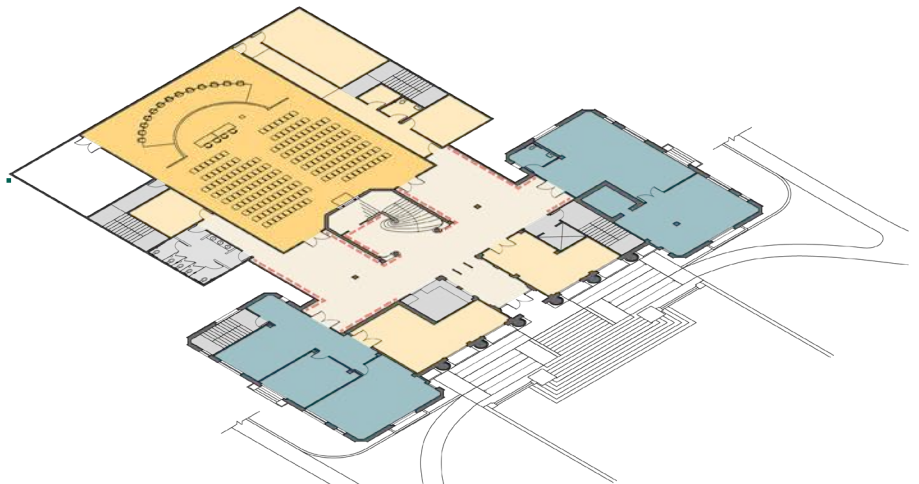
SECOND FLOOR (6,500 SF)

Exhibition Space



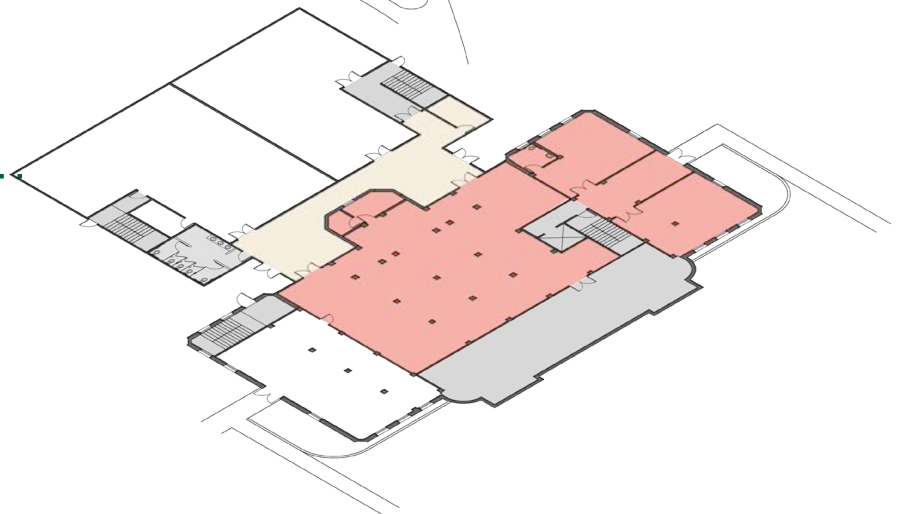
FIRST FLOOR (14,400 SF)

Exhibition Space



GROUND FLOOR (16,350 SF)

Exhibit Prep Room
Offices
Research Room
Exhibition Space
(Alternate Archive location)



Space Use

Berkeley Community Media

BCM serves multiple functions related to the city government. They broadcast city meetings, including Council, ZAB and Rent Stabilization meetings; they work with governmental non-profits and politicians; and they offer support in developing Public Service Announcements. Their internship program teaches students media literacy and production technology.

BCM's space needs are substantial, and many of them are single-use. They currently operate mostly through funding from the City and grants. Their mission and function are well aligned with returning public meeting spaces to the building, and with the larger vision of the Civic Center.

BCM's space needs include a broadcast studio which can double as a press conference room which is a complementary use to Council Chambers with similar controlled access requirements. BCM also needs smaller studio spaces, editing suites, offices, lounge and kitchenette.

44%
of respondents
support
Berkeley
Community
Media at MSB



Marwen Classroom, Chicago IL



David Brower Center, Berkeley CA

ATTIC (not shown)

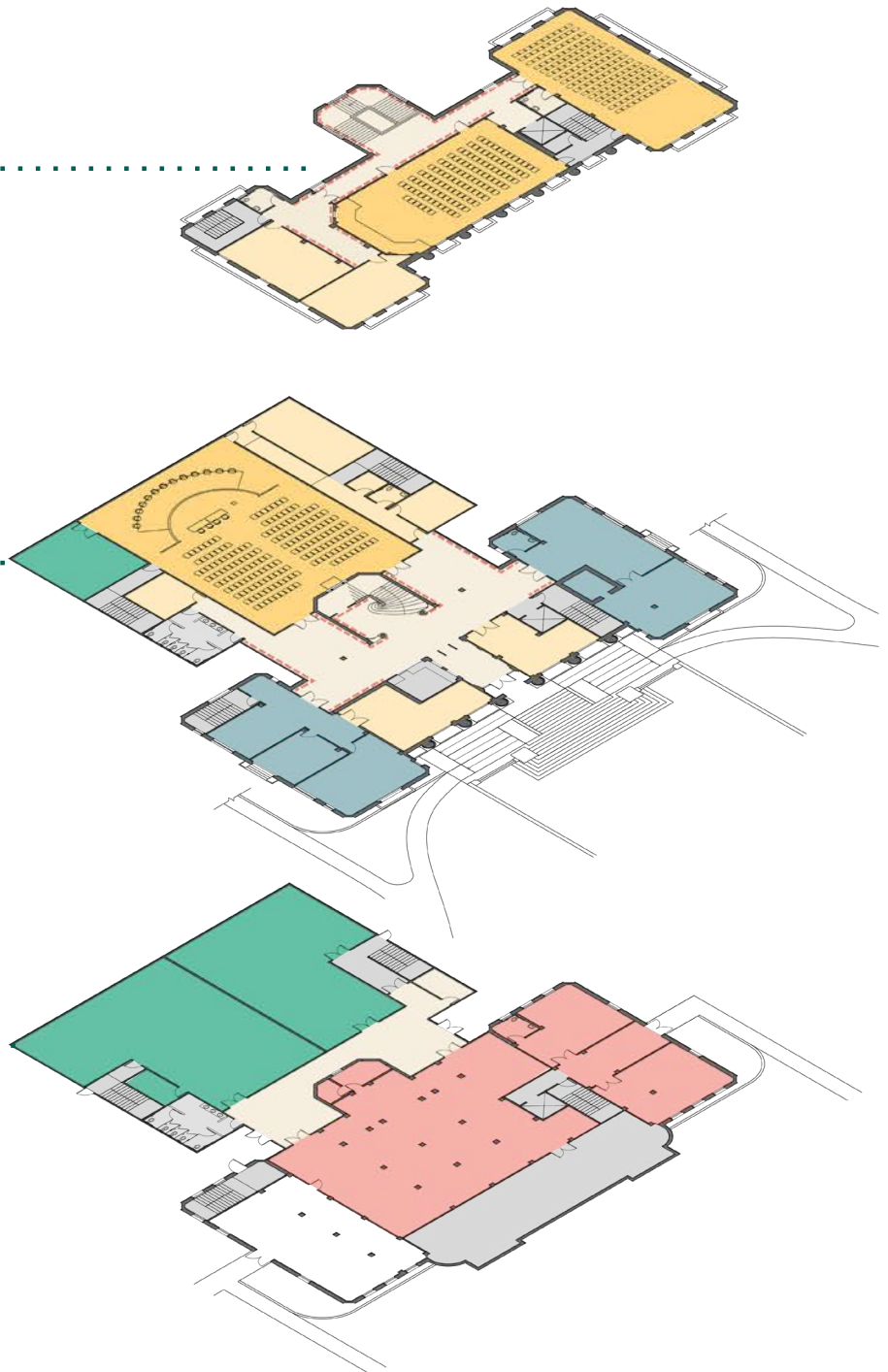
SECOND FLOOR (6,500 SF)

FIRST FLOOR (14,400 SF)

Broadcast Studio

GROUND FLOOR (16,350 SF)

Offices
Editing Suite
Small Studios
Lounge/Kitchenette



Space Use

Public Policy Institute

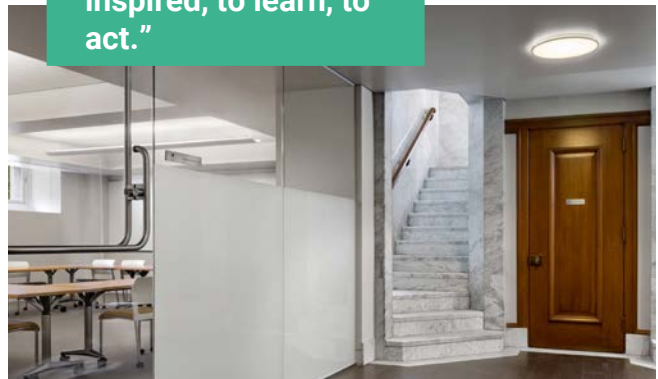
The idea of a public policy institute is being actively pursued by members of the City Council and Community for Cultural Civic Center (CCCC). The concept is to integrate a public policy education center into the Maudelle Shirek Building to interface with City policy makers, City staff and the public. Goals of this partnership would be to support the development of future decision makers, and to help secure funding with an educational institution.

While this idea did not draw a lot of public support, multiple respondents expressed a desire to learn more about the concept. A benefit of a partnership with a university or higher education organization at this location would be bringing a younger age group into the building on a regular basis.

The space needs for this function are minimal, and spaces such as meeting rooms and classrooms could be shared with the other uses proposed for the building.

I'd like to see see more active uses...perhaps some sort of partnership with UC to bring new energy and researchers to the building?"

"... provide open doors & programs for all citizens to be inspired, to learn, to act."



UC Berkeley Durant Hall, Berkeley CA



Offices on second floor of Maudelle Shirek Building

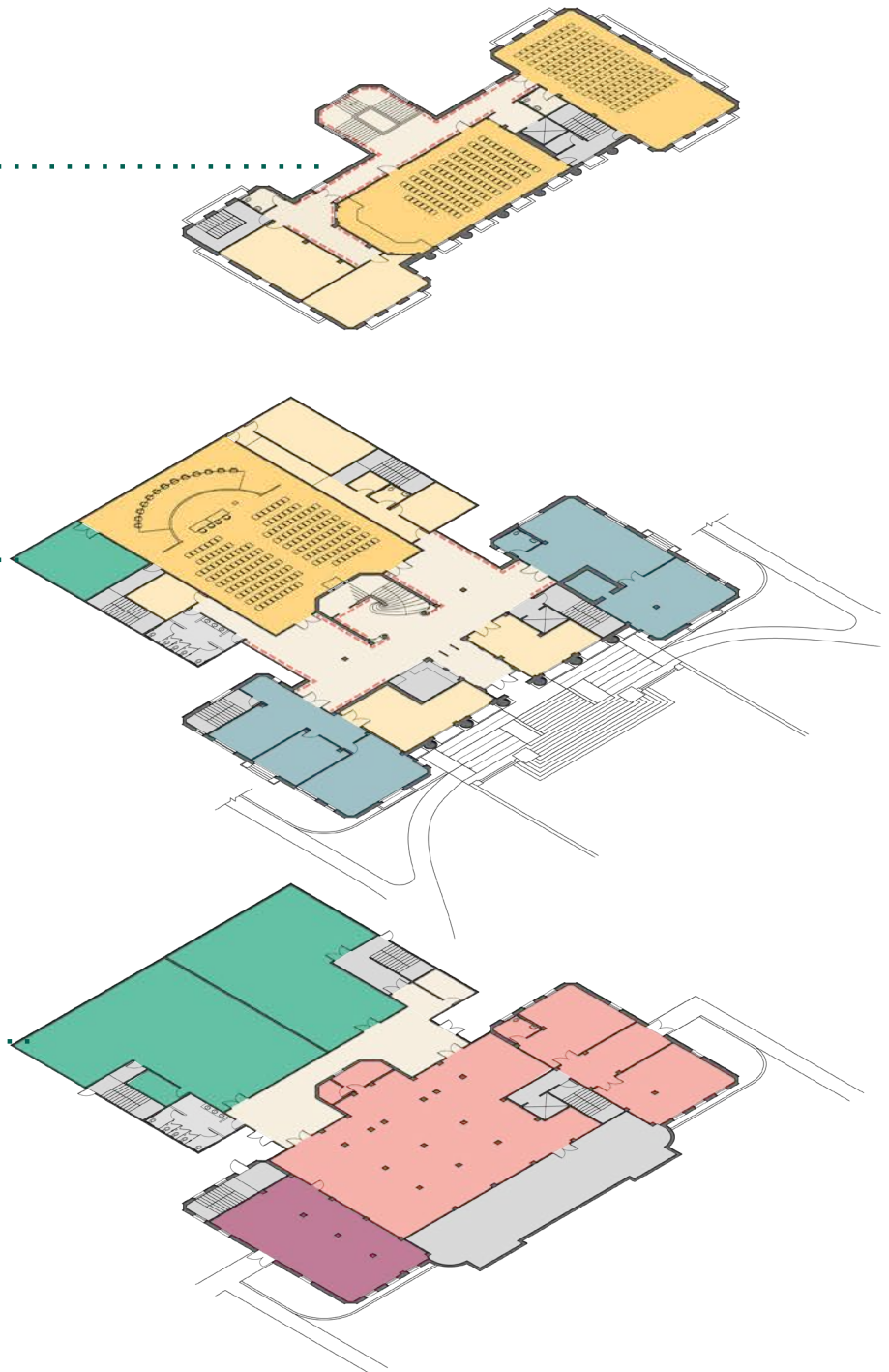
ATTIC (not shown)

SECOND FLOOR (6,500 SF)

FIRST FLOOR (14,400 SF)

GROUND FLOOR (16,350 SF)

- Offices
- Classrooms
- Meeting Room



5.4 Veterans Memorial Building

5.4

Veterans Memorial Building- Community Arts Center

The public, Berkeley's arts community, Civic Arts Commission, and the Civic Arts Program broadly support the use of the Veterans Memorial Building as a Community Arts Center. To ensure that the building is a shared resource and platform for creative expression accessible to all, the Community Arts Center would be owned and operated by the City of Berkeley for the benefit of our community. Community need demonstrates that the Veterans Memorial Building could be active throughout the day, every day of the week, presenting and hosting all types of arts organizations and artists across all disciplines including music, theater, dance, visual arts, literary arts, and more.

New art functions may require additions, particularly related to the stage. Further study with arts organizations, Civic Arts staff, related commissions and the interested public is required to determine the detailed space needs and the best way to meet them. In a survey with local arts organizations who

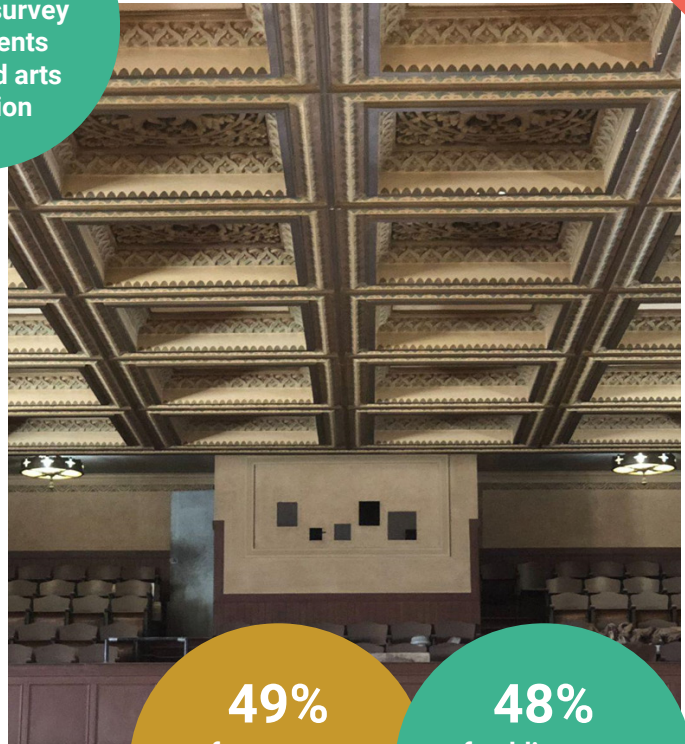
expressed interest in using the building, many expressed interest in utilizing all the spaces that the VMB has to offer for public programming. These takeaways align with the perception of need in the general public survey responses.

Veterans Memorial Building is very desirable as an arts center:

- Downtown, central location near arts district and transit is very appealing to arts groups.
- Multi-unit residential buildings are located nearby; VMB is accessible by walking.
- Historic structure with tall ceilings and natural light. Architectural features worth preserving.
- Unique flexible spaces and smaller performance spaces for 100–200 audience members.
- Adjacent to park, where outdoor performances could be located
- Relationship to nearby educational facilities – BHS and BCC.

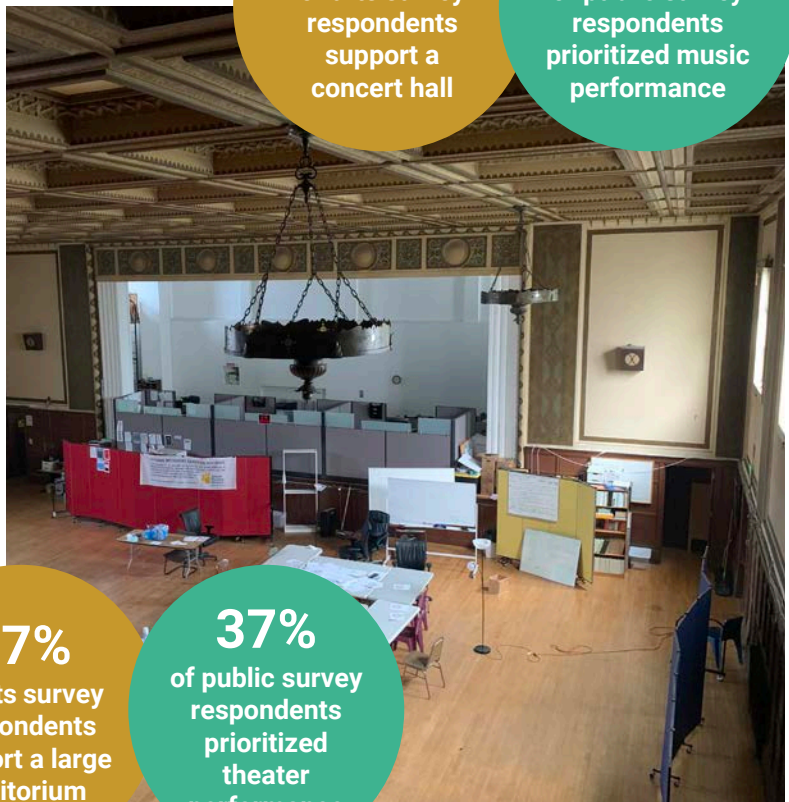
42%
of arts survey
respondents
support
exhibition space

45%
of public survey
respondents
prioritized arts
exhibition



49%
of arts survey
respondents
support a
concert hall

48%
of public survey
respondents
prioritized music
performance



47%
of arts survey
respondents
support a large
auditorium

37%
of public survey
respondents
prioritized
theater
performance

Existing Conditions

Additions & Improvements

Seismic Improvements: Building Performance Objective for New Buildings Plus

Approach: City's Public Works Department recommends a seismic upgrade for the Veterans Memorial Building to the level of Building Performance Objective for New Buildings Plus (BPON+) by strengthening the existing diaphragms and improving floor-to-wall and wall-to-roof connections, and reinforcing select areas with shotcrete or carbon fiber.

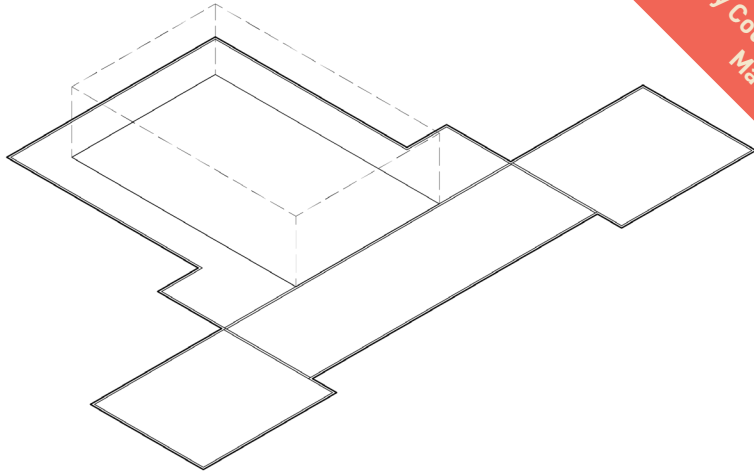
At this level of seismic retrofit, the building may experience some localized structural damage with low risk of injury, and could be reoccupied several months to a year after a major seismic event.

Discussion: In its current condition, the building does not meet modern seismic codes, and as such is not fully occupied. Improvements can be made to the building to reach BPON+ by utilizing the structure of the existing building which would minimize the disturbance of historic finishes.

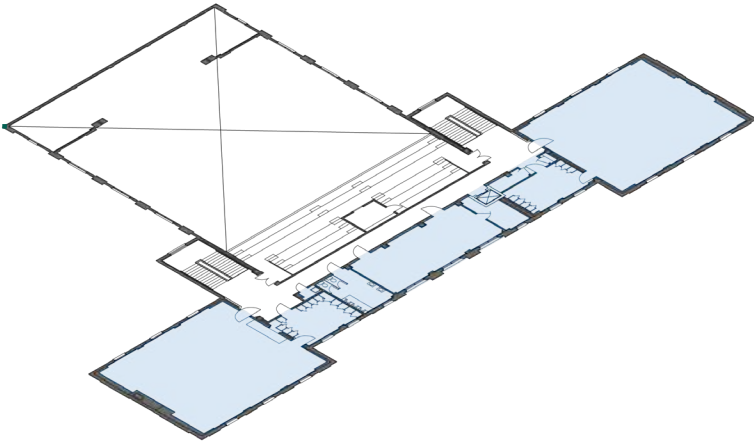
Prior to the 2020 Vision Plan, the City investigated two approaches - Building Performance Objective for Existing Buildings (BPOE), a lower standard, and Immediate Occupancy (IO), a higher standard.

A second seismic upgrade report prepared by Tipping Structural Engineers in 2021 proposed an upgrade to meet Building Performance Objective for New Building standards (or BPON+). The report also proposed a buttressing solution that reached a higher standard (Damage Control+).

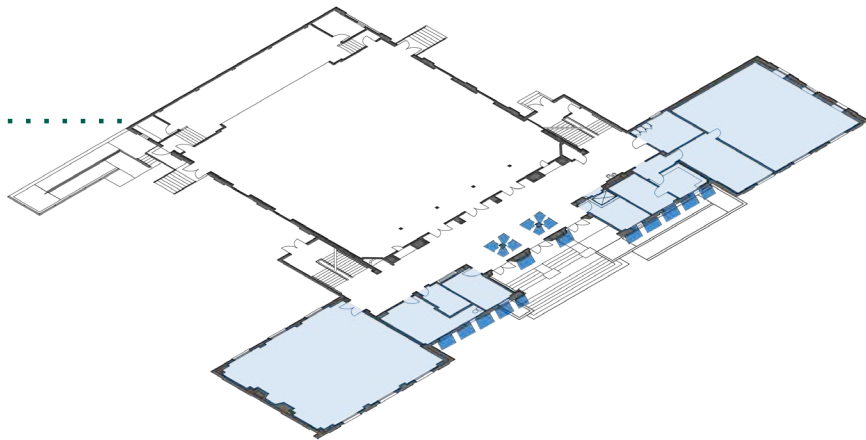
ROOFTOP (4,000 SF)



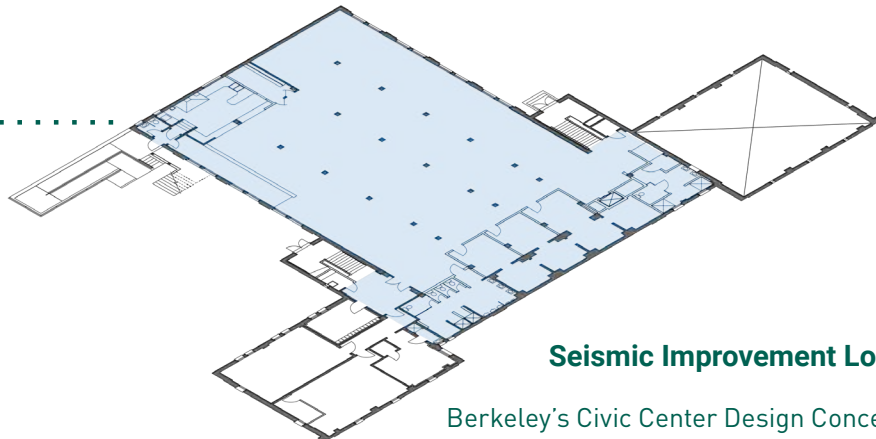
SECOND FLOOR (5,900 SF)



FIRST FLOOR (10,000 SF)



BASEMENT (9,300 SF)



Seismic Improvement Locations

Additions

While the proposed seismic buttresses in the DC+ retrofit could be incorporated into additional space on the rear of the east and west wings, the results of arts organization engagement showed a real need for additional space on either side of the stage in the large auditorium. Proposed uses include a loading dock, additional backstage and greenroom spaces, a new vertical access core to the basement level, and storage for scenery. The layout of a possible addition will be further explored by the design team in this effort.

Other Improvements

A specific design will need to address other required improvements. These include new mechanical, electrical, lighting and plumbing systems to bring them into compliance with current building code and City policy. The City of Berkeley is committed to converting buildings to all-electric, including this historic structure. Relatedly, energy production through solar panels on the roof should be explored. Improvements and repairs to the building envelope (enclosure) will help to stabilize the structure. All of this work taken together will result in a more sustainable and resilient building.

Accessibility upgrades will be required throughout the building, including a new and more gracious accessible entry ramp sequence, a modern elevator core, and adjustment of doors and other elements to meet accessible clearance and reach requirements.

Egress from the building does not comply with modern fire codes, in particular from the basement level. Proper exit separations and paths will need to be added. Additional exits from rooms and out to the public right of way will need to be created.

All of these changes will need to be addressed while respecting the historic nature of the building, and meeting Secretary of the Interior standards for historic preservation. As a part of that effort, the historic finishes will need repairs and restoration, and non-historic elements will be replaced with modern, healthy and resilient materials.

Accessibility



Finishes



Egress/Safety



System Upgrades



Building Performance



"Please make sure gender-neutral bathrooms are included."

"it needs to appear more open, accessible, inviting and welcoming"

"...refurbish front doors and restrooms so visitors have a more pleasant experience."

Space Use

Program Spaces

Arts Survey participants and the public all noted a need for multi-disciplinary spaces available to rent by the larger community.

During the focus group session, participants more specifically described a need for flexible, multi-use spaces that can support all types of performances, exhibitions, classes, screenings, studios, conferences, panel discussions, and readings.

The layout of the large auditorium should be carefully considered to maintain flexibility. Ideas discussed include lowering the stage, creating additions to the east and west for more backstage space, and deployable risers to allow for many performance configurations.

Some of the smaller lodge rooms on the first floor might have specific functions - a municipal gallery on the west side and a classroom that supports visual arts with storage and sinks on the east side. Others can remain flexible open spaces.

30%
of arts survey
respondents
support class
or workshop
spaces



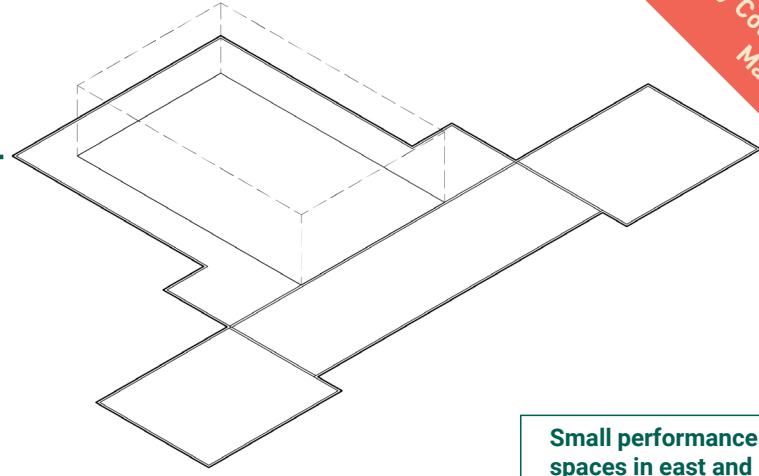
Shawl-Anderson Dance Company

44%
of arts survey
respondents
support
rehearsal
space



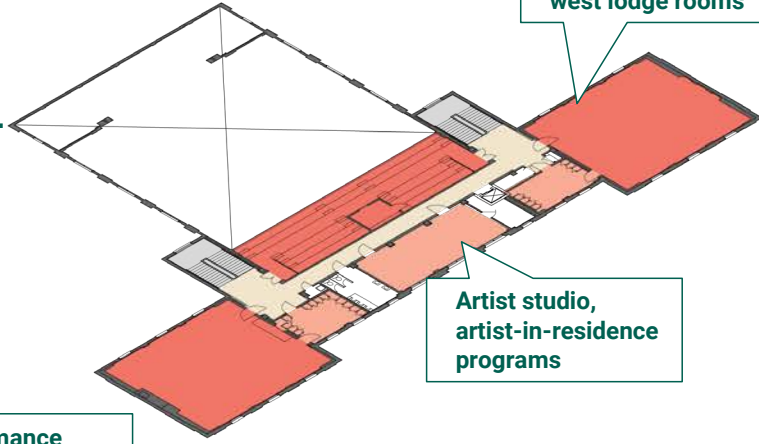
View to stage at Veterans Memorial Building

ROOFTOP (4,000 SF)



SECOND FLOOR (5,900 SF)

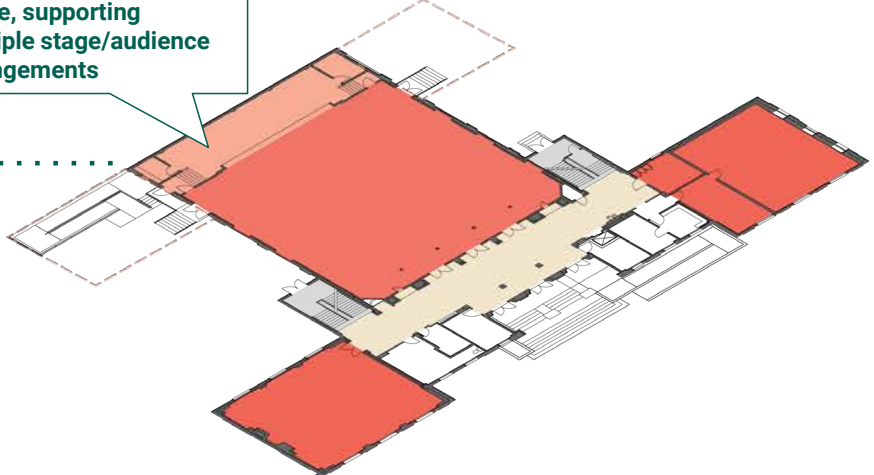
- Small Performance
- Balcony
- Backstage areas
- Learning Lab



Flexible performance space, supporting multiple stage/audience arrangements

FIRST FLOOR (10,000 SF)

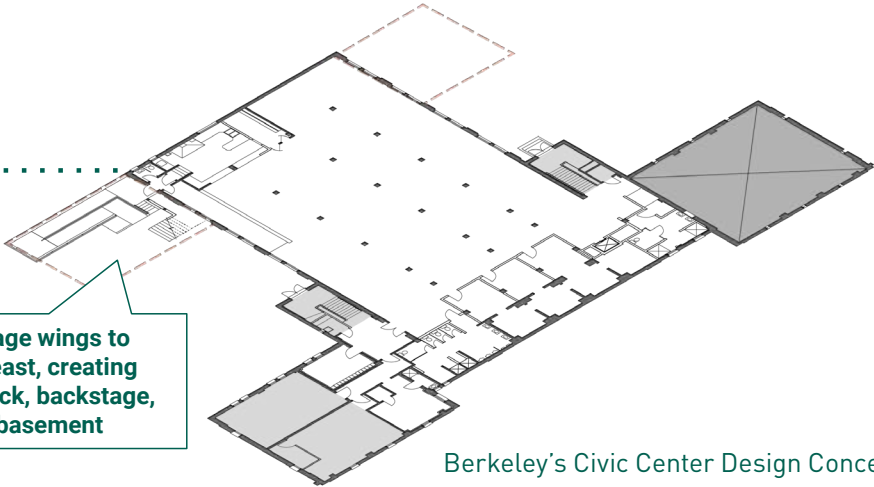
- Auditorium
- Gallery/Visual Arts rooms
- Stage & Backstage areas



BASEMENT (9,300 SF)

- Mechanical/Crawl Space

Expand stage wings to west and east, creating loading dock, backstage, access to basement



Space Use

Support Spaces

Transforming the Veterans Memorial Building into a successful arts center will require significant and high-quality space dedicated to support functions.

One major support function mentioned by the participants in the focus group was the ability to host donor events in a large downtown space. During the 2020 Vision Plan, a rooftop event space was suggested, an approach that will be further studied by the design team as part of this phase.

Spaces between the east and west wings on the first and second floor can accommodate offices, restrooms, storage, and other support spaces required for hosting classes, events, and performances in the venue.

The large open area on the basement level could be repurposed for any number of back-of-house functions including a stage shop and additional backstage and practice spaces for groups renting the large auditorium.

Back-of-house types of uses include:

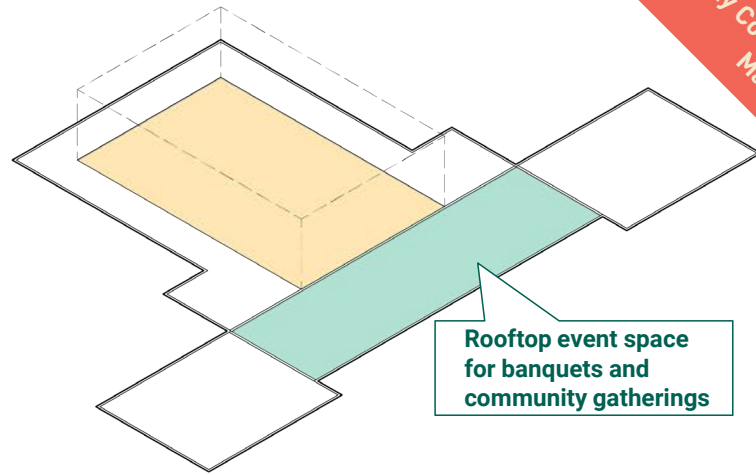
- Dressing/Changing rooms
- Offices
- Rehearsals
- Storage for productions and facility
- Storage for City's public art collection



Studio Gang Island in the Sky, Chicago IL

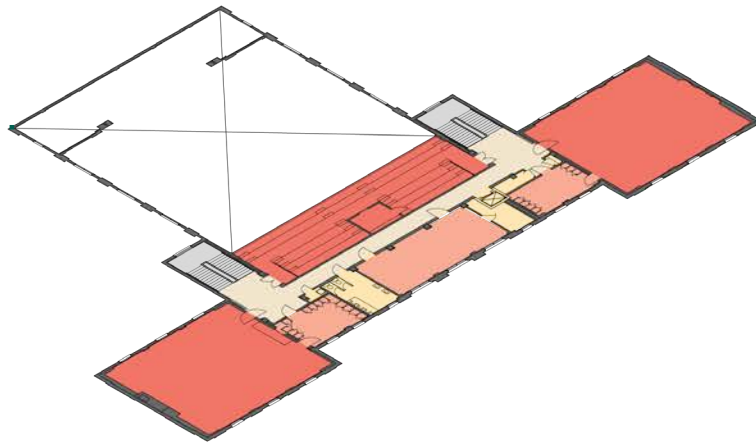
ROOFTOP (4,000 SF)

- Event Space
- Rooftop Terrace



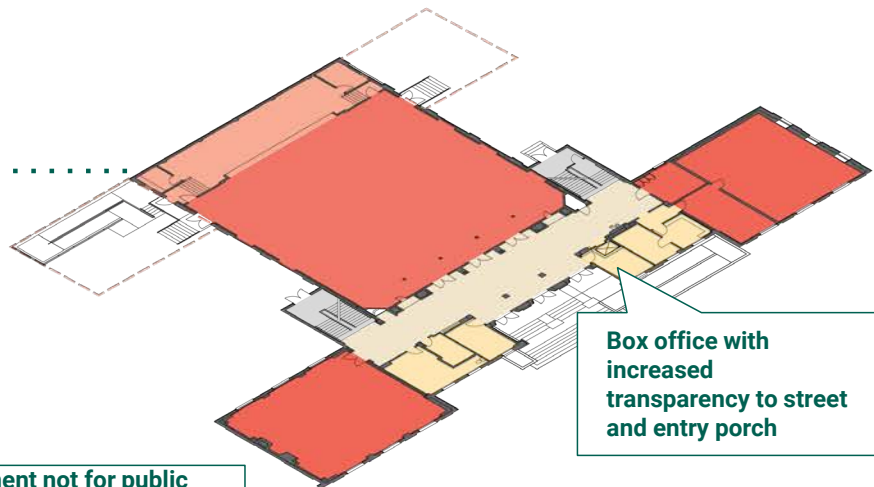
SECOND FLOOR (5,900 SF)

- Storage Space
- Restrooms



FIRST FLOOR (10,000 SF)

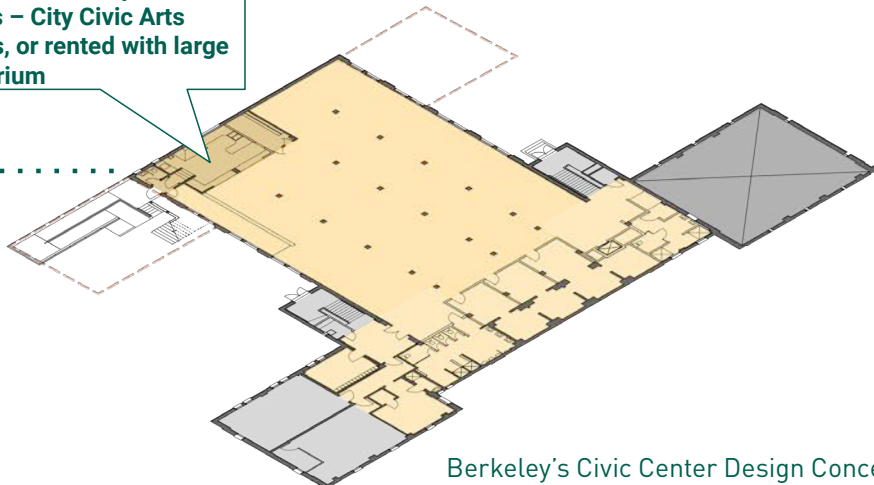
- Offices
- Restrooms
- Box Office



Basement not for public access – City Civic Arts spaces, or rented with large auditorium

BASEMENT (9,300 SF)

- Commercial Kitchen
- Stage/Scenery Shop
- Restrooms
- Storage





Cost Summary

6.1 Preliminary Cost Ranges

6.1

Preliminary Cost Ranges

An updated cost estimate will be completed by TBD Cost Estimators after the integration of City Council feedback, and prior to the completion of the final report in June 2023.

Preliminary cost ranges provided in this report are based on information from:

- 2020 BCC Vision & Implementation Plan
- Tipping Structural Engineers
- Berkeley Public Works Department

	Construction Cost Estimate	
	Low (\$Million)	high (\$Million)
Maudelle Shirek Building -- 27,500 g.s.f. existing building + 15,500 g.s.f. addition	\$54.107	\$70.558
Seismic Retrofit - Immediate Occupancy (or near Immediate Occupancy)	\$25.000	\$35.000
Envelope, Systems (inc Electrification), Accessibility, all other building upgrades & finishes	\$11.000	\$13.750
Two story addition on west side	\$15.500	\$18.600
Site improvements & utilities	\$2.607	\$3.208
Veterans Memorial Building -- 28,000 s.f. existing building + 4000 s.f. roof terrace	\$34.045	\$41.475
Seismic Retrofit - BPON+ (or Better Performance Objective for New Buildings)	\$14.000	\$19.000
Envelope, Systems (inc Electrification), Accessibility, all other building upgrades & finishes	\$19.565	\$16.555
Roof terrace (including 1,500 s.f. enclosure & 2,500 s.f. roof deck) in HIGH only	\$0	\$5.200
Site improvements (paved areas in back for loading/service) & utilities	\$0.480	\$0.720
NOTE: No addition to VMB included		
Martin Luther King Jr Civic Center Park & Streets -- 203,000 s.f. (4.6 acres)	\$12.902	\$16.594
Paths and paving, planting and irrigation, new trees and tree protection, utilities, furnishings and bollards, infrastructure and lighting, playground and skate spot, other park and street specialty items such as bulb outs, green infrastructure, crosswalks	\$11.152	\$14.194
Improvements to 2180 Milvia western entry, VMB entry and public restrooms in Park	\$1.750	\$2.400
NOTE: Creek Daylighting not included		
TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST	\$101.054	\$128.627
	Low (\$Million)	high (\$Million)

NOTES:

1. Cost ranges are escalated assuming start of construction in 2028.
2. Cost ranges do not include:
 - Soft cost - design fees, permit fees
 - Contingencies
 - LEED or other rating systems
 - Surge/moving costs
 - Photovoltaic systems
 - AV/IT equipment
 - Utility connections
 - Existing conditions reports and surveys
 - Operations and maintenance costs



Implementation

7.1 Organizational Management Structure

7.2 Recommended Next Steps

7.1

Organization Management Structures

Maudelle Shirek Building - The Seat of Berkeley's Democracy

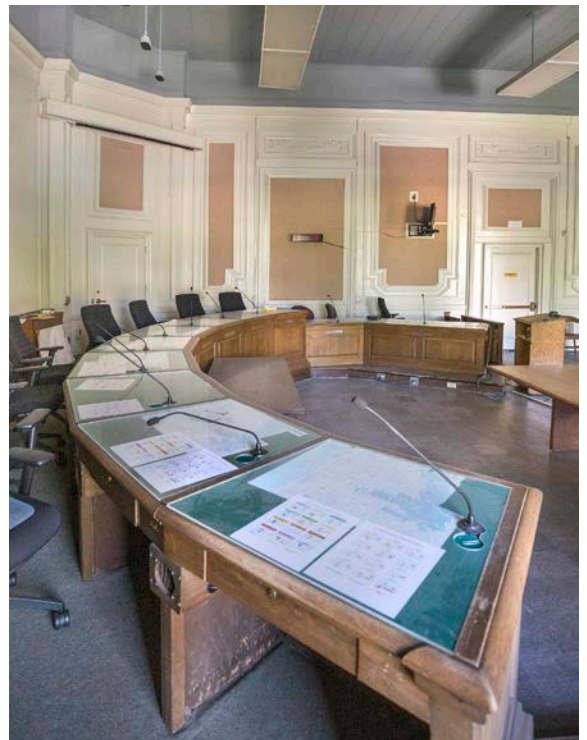
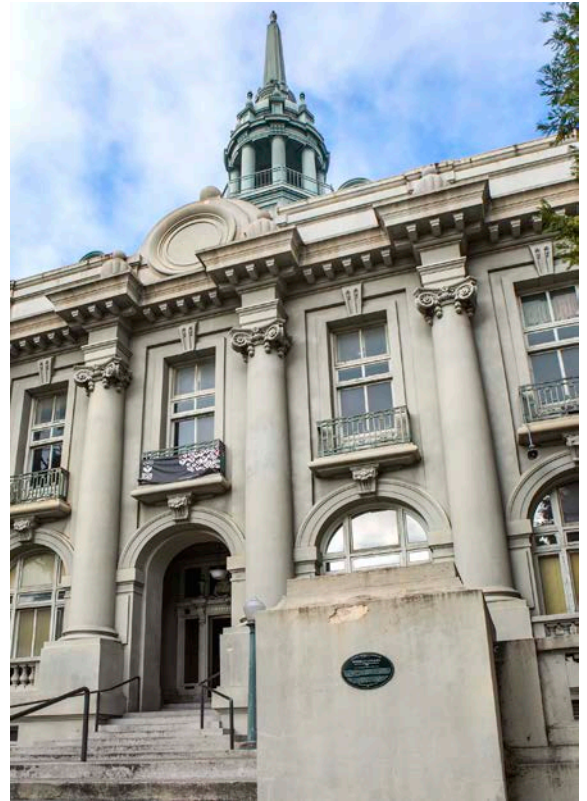
The project team recommends a City-owned and operated model for the Maudelle Shirek Building.

With the primary uses being city and public meeting rooms, and city offices, control of the building should remain within the City. This will ensure that the meeting spaces are available to all citizens of Berkeley, aligning with the Vision Statement's ideal of a *place of shared resources and platform for free expression for all*.

To proceed into a specific design phase, the City will need to create formal partnerships with the selected vision-aligned non-profits. How space is allocated in the final design will be impacted by both the space needs and the available funding of these non-profit



Baltmannsweiler Council Chambers , Germany



Geldrop-Mierlo Town Hall, Netherlands

Existing Conditions at Maudelle Shirek

Veterans Memorial Building - Municipal Arts Center

**A shared resource and platform for
creative expression accessible to all.**

The project team recommends a City-owned and operated model for the Veterans Memorial Building.

The design team and Civic Arts staff explored two approaches to the management of the Veterans Memorial Building: a City-run arts space or an anchor tenant-run arts space.

Taking into consideration the community support for an open and accessible arts center, the Vision Statement, and the desire to maximize the activation of the Civic Center, the project team is recommending a City-run Art Center, and envisions an organizational structure that supports performances in the evenings, classes for adults and students during the day, and afterschool and weekend programs for children.

To understand how this model will function, Civic Arts staff are holding outreach meetings with local examples of municipal-run cultural and arts centers.

From these conversations, the project team is researching how others have operated and maintained spaces that are accessible to the community for use while also generating revenue to support operations. The research includes learning about what programs generate revenue, what level of staffing and management is required, how programs are selected for the facilities, and what operating budgets include for this type of facility.

The long-term management and staffing of Veterans Memorial Building and its associated programs need to be better defined through further study. The Civic Arts staff will coordinate with their colleagues in the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department for successful models and lessons learned on other City-owned and operated facilities and programs.

"A public arts space open to all artists."

"..bring in revenue to maintain the building."

"...a space for community arts of all kinds - and for all age groups"



Studio One Art Center, Oakland



Palo Alto Art center



Leshner Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek

7.2

Recommended Next Steps

As the City continues to develop a funding and long term implementation plans for the Civic Center Park, surrounding streets, the Maudelle Shirek Building and the Veterans Memorial Building, immediate steps for improvements are offered as a way to initiate improvements and enhance the Civic Center experience. Some of these steps can be undertaken in collaboration with vision-aligned partners and non-profit organizations.

Early Activation Projects

To offer a better experience of the Civic Center Park, the City and City partners could fund early activation projects that reinvigorate the Park in advance of more significant future improvements, including:

- Installation of new furnishings, including tables and seating or picnic tables with benches, specifically selected and placed for lunch time use
- Introduction of pop-up food vendor events and/or food trucks during the weekdays
- Installation of new tree protection elements
- Biodiversity enhancement through new plantings
- Lighting and path repairs and upgrades
- Restroom repairs and upgrades
- Review of current special events needs and lease agreements for Civic Center Park, considering changes to agreements specific to this Park
- Increase funding for Park operations and maintenance

Future Studies

Additional information is needed to support specific design projects for the Civic Center Park, surrounding streets, Maudelle Shirek Building and Veterans Memorial Building. These include:

- Creek Study for daylighting Strawberry Creek in the Civic Center area.
Recently the City submitted a grant pre-application to the California Coastal Conservancy for funding of this effort and while the application reviewers were excited about the project “because of the ecological and community benefits”, they suggested the City apply to the Urban Greening program at the California Natural Resources Agency.
- Traffic Study to identify impacts to traffic flow of daylighting the creek and reduced parking on Center Street and MLK Jr Way.
- Topographic Survey of the Civic Center Park and surrounding streets
- Updated Arborist Report for Civic Center and surround street trees
- Tree Succession Plan
- As-Built drawings & Existing Condition reports for buildings

Longer Term Efforts

Prior to the implementation of specific project design and construction efforts, the City may consider:

- Establish relationships with potential non-profit partners and funding entities to engage in a capital improvement campaign
- Develop funding plans for each of the constituent projects – the Park, surround streets and the historic structures
- If necessary, stabilize the historic structures, which will depend on the timing of the funding and implementation plans
- Initiate specific design projects, including documentation of detailed spatial programming

