



# Recommendations

# Recommended Conceptual Design Option

The engagement and visioning process that led to the creation of the conceptual design plans has identified the main programs and features that need to be present in the new Civic Center.

The process has been instrumental in clarifying complex questions — such as what programs people want to see in Civic Center, and what kind of public realm will make Civic Center a real commons for all Berkeleyans.

The preferred conceptual design falls somewhere between option A and option C. One key topic of discussion is the location of the proposed new large meeting hall, large enough for council meetings (200+ seats). Option A, which shows such space as an addition to the Maudelle Shirek Building, and Option C, which explores a new volume connected to the west side of 2180 Milvia, facing the park — both had a lot of positive support. It's clear to the design team that both options present good opportunities, however, the extension of 2180 Milvia toward the park is the design team's recommendation.

The recommended concept, which is aligned with the Vision statement and with the community and stakeholders input, includes the following key components:

## **A new structure on the Park — Meeting Hall, Park Café and Restrooms**

This new volume on the park will:

- Give the park a much needed active edge, a building right on the park
- Offer a home to new programs that will contribute to the activation of the park — a park café, restaurant and restrooms
- Enable the Council and other groups to meet (several meetings a week and late into the evening\*) in a central location, without having to cross M.L.K. Jr Way
- Offer an opportunity for a contemporary architectural addition that complements the sensitive rehabilitation of important historic structures.

*\*In 2019 there were 67 council meeting dates (24 regular meetings, 43 special and work session meetings). To use the BUSD board room CoB currently pays \$91,200 (annually) or ~\$1,200 per use*

or about ~\$91,200(annually). More comprehensive engagement with the City Clerk’s office and other stakeholders will be needed to understand precise needs, as well as studying projected occupancy numbers and their effect of the activation of the public realm.

Veterans and Community Meeting Spaces at Civic Center

### **The Berkeley Historical Society and other tenants in a retrofitted Old City Hall**

The Historical Society is a key tenant and we support their presence at Old City Hall. Additional tenants should extend or complement the historical and education mission of celebrating the history and stories of Berkeley. Spaces for indoor gatherings — such as receptions and talks, as well as exhibition spaces, will ensure the building is open to the public. Subject to programmatic needs and funding opportunities, the scenario of extending Old City Hall toward the west should be explored.



### **The Berkeley Cultural Hive at the Veterans Memorial Building**

The Cultural Hive houses community meeting spaces, places for performing arts and arts education (after school programs for high schoolers, ballet classes, performances). It is a bridge between the Berkeley High School and the Arts District. A retrofitted auditorium, smaller performing arts studios and teaching spaces will mean more people and activity in the building. The idea of a rooftop addition, set back from the main façade, and a terrace, should be explored.

### **Meeting spaces for the Veterans groups and the community**

Veterans groups should have access to one of the multi-purpose meeting rooms in the Veterans Memorial Building, granting them special access in perpetuity to use the space for meetings

## Recommendations

and events. In our meetings with the two Veterans groups that currently use a space at the Veterans Memorial Building they expressed a desire to make use of the building and were open to the idea of sharing a space with other community groups.

### A new landscape

The new landscape of Civic Center Park celebrates its history and includes bold, ambitious and people-centered moves to make the park more accessible, comfortable and used. The preferred design alternative considers the removal of the Giant Sequoia. Although the tree is a significant landscape feature of the park and has an important history, its current size means that it significantly blocks axial view and its location is incompatible with the full integration of a new meeting hall at 2180 Milvia. Careful consideration has been taken and several strategies have been identified to mitigate for the loss of this feature, including;

- Relocation of the tree elsewhere in the park or immediate context of the National Register District
- Preparing a Historic American

Landscape Survey (HALS) documentation for the Berkeley Civic Center National Historic Register District

- Planting clones that are propagated from this tree and grown in an appropriately qualified nursery with the intent of creating the next generation of the Giant Sequoia
- Repurposing wood from the tree to be respectfully used for fine furniture in the new Council Chambers

*Refer to the Appendix for more details and mitigation recommendations.*

Civic Center Park is a place for civic events — evening concerts, rallies and fairs; but also for the big days in one’s life — it’s where you take your wedding photo; and where everyday memories are made — lunch with friends on a sunny bench, meetings at the Farmers Market, laughs at the climbing structure, outdoor classrooms, picnics, birthday parties, tai chi, community gardening. The Turtle Fountain and other sculptures and public art will celebrate people and events that have contributed to Berkeley’s collective history.

### Access point for Civic Support

All people should feel welcome in Civic

Green, Play, Food and Events at Civic Center



Center, therefore it is imperative to provide a physical space within the Civic Center area that helps connect the most vulnerable community members with the help they need — be it shelter, medical or other. Further studies are needed to assess the spatial requirement of this program and consider the scope and the appropriate location for these services.

### **Beyond the Old City Hall and the Veterans Memorial Building — The Civic Center Market**

In collaboration with Berkeley High School and the Ecology Center, Berkeley’s celebration of locally-grown food as a cornerstone of local culture can be given a permanent home at Civic Center. This idea needs further study but the design team found strong support among educators, political leaders and public commenters for an all-week expansion of the Farmer’s Market. Possible locations might include a pavilion in Civic Center Park or the Berkeley’s Main Post Office building.

Inevitably the preferred vision goes beyond this project’s scope and includes other nearby buildings — including the Post Office as mentioned above — that should be considered during the next stages when developing a masterplan or precinct plan for Civic Center. Matters relating to the precise location, sizing and configuration of new programs should be further studied, alongside the seismic implications, detailed cost analysis and

projected occupancy numbers and their effect on the activation of the public realm. These studies will help further detail the conceptual option presented here, and inform the development of a precinct plan that is made up of different project tracks, phasing, and/or project groups ( specifying what building projects goes with what public realm project, and how each project can be funded) — each with its own critical path.

*See Chapter 8 — Implementation.*

#### **Summary of Preliminary Program Cost Plan — Option C**

Maudelle Shirek (BPOE)	\$17,082,000
Veterans Memorial Building (BPOE)	\$21,182,000
2180 Milvia	\$9,985,000
Civic Center Park (all public realm including streets)	\$7,895,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$56,144,000</b>

*Note: Excludes rooftop addition to the Veterans Memorial Building and the new structure adjacent to the City Hall Annex*

*Seismic costs reference the Seismic Evaluation report by IDA Structural Engineers, April 2019*

## The heart of Berkeley

The Civic heart of Berkeley is green, inviting, lively, human-scaled. A new lease of life is given to its historic buildings, and additions to these structures provide much needed government and community meeting spaces, places for performing arts and arts education. The Cultural Hive is a bridge between the Berkeley High School and the Arts District. Civic Center Park is a place for civic events and everyday interactions — lunch, play, outdoor classrooms, meetings with friends, picnics, birthday parties, tai chi, community gardening. Civic Center is part of Downtown and part of a neighborhood — it's your space.



Potential for Maudelle Shirek Building extension, program TBD

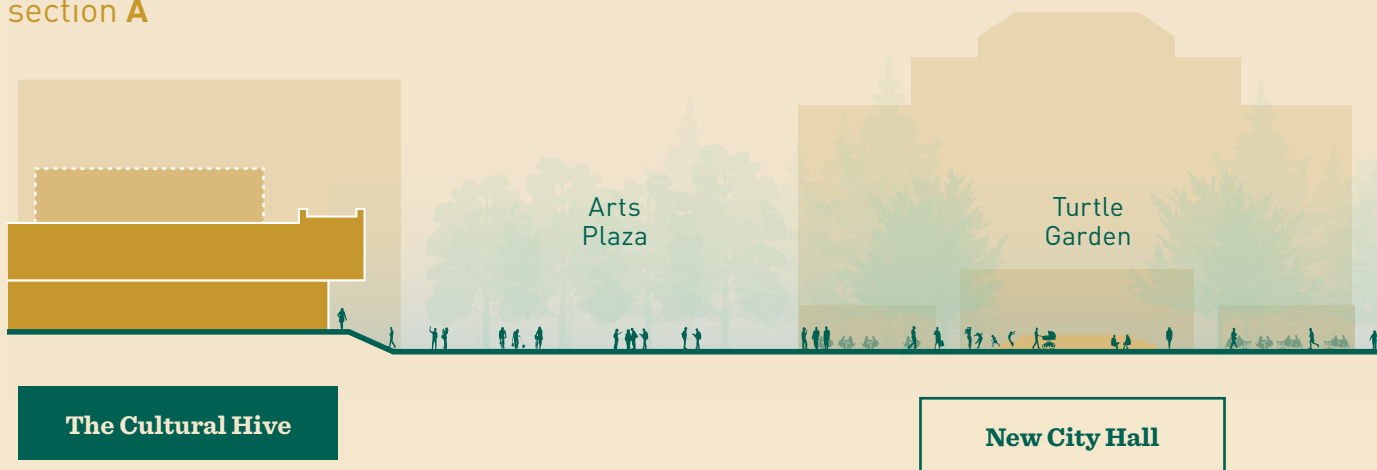


*Note: Diagram is illustrative and conceptual. It is not representative of architectural expression.*



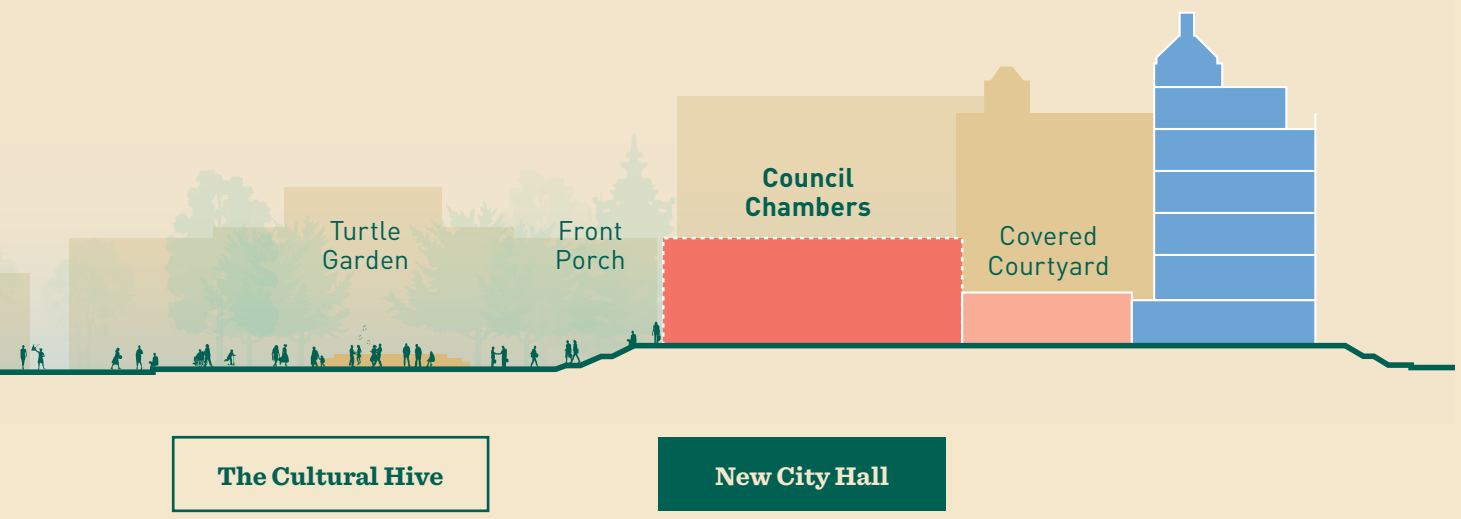
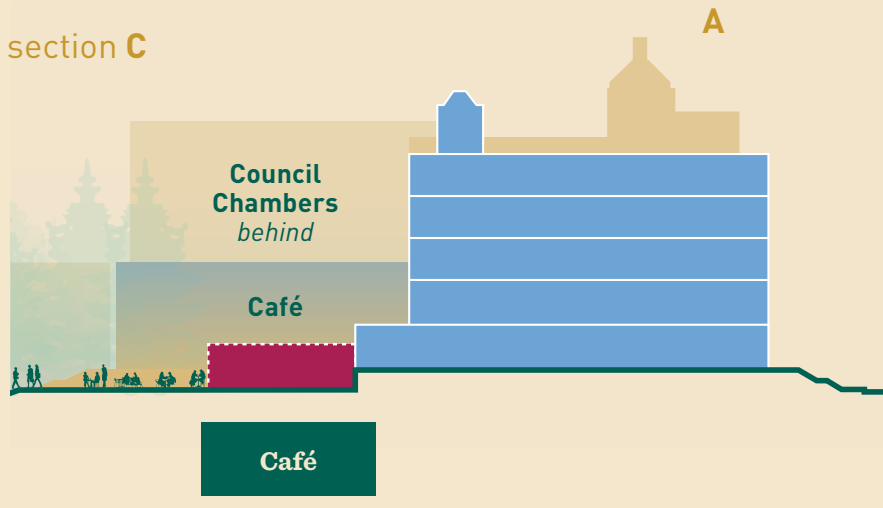
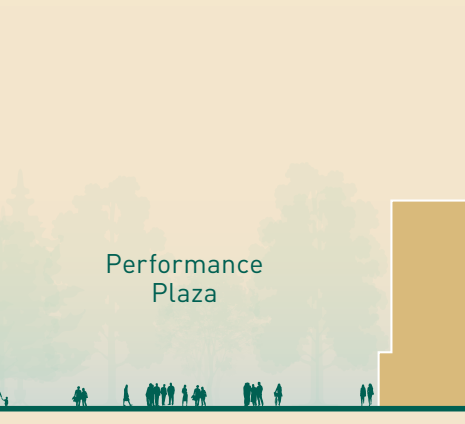
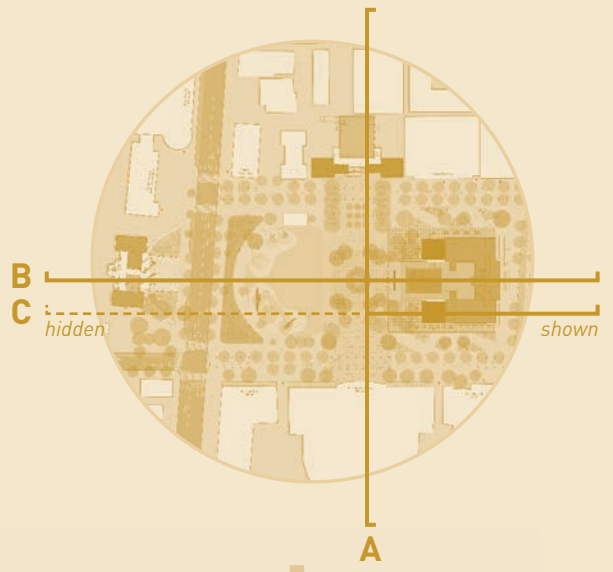
# Site Sections

## section A



## section B






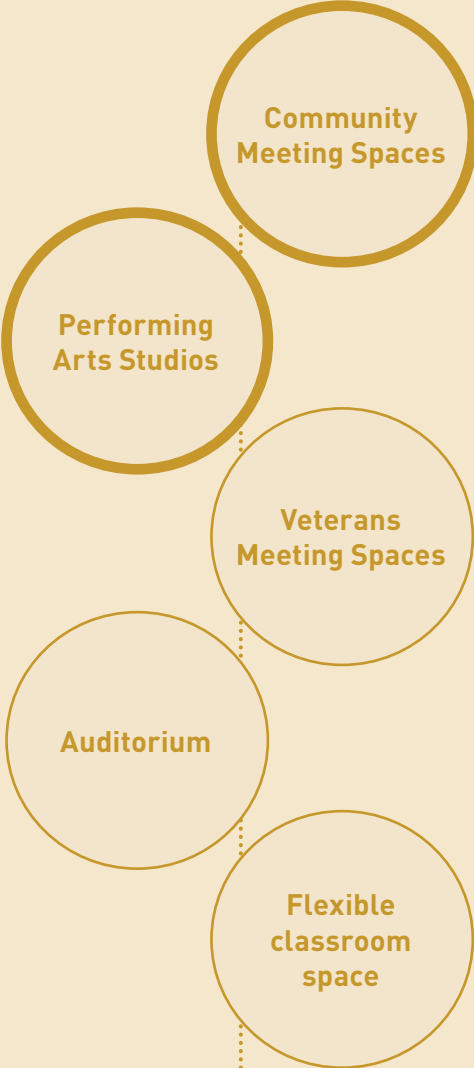


## Program Overview





-  Program
-  Program, Primary
-  Program, Location TBD



**The Cultural Hive**

Veterans Memorial Building



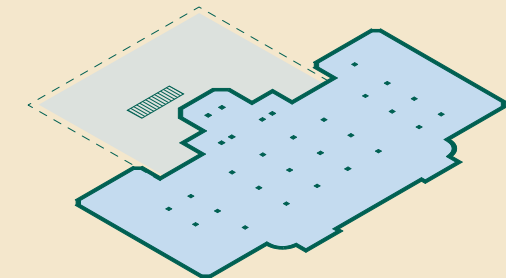
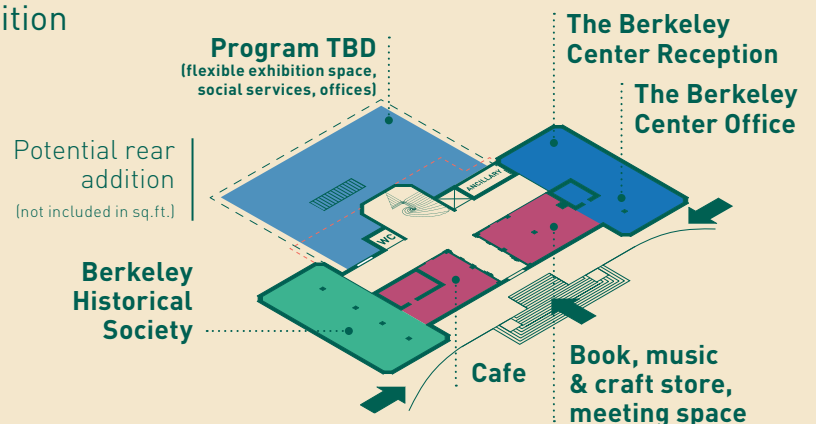
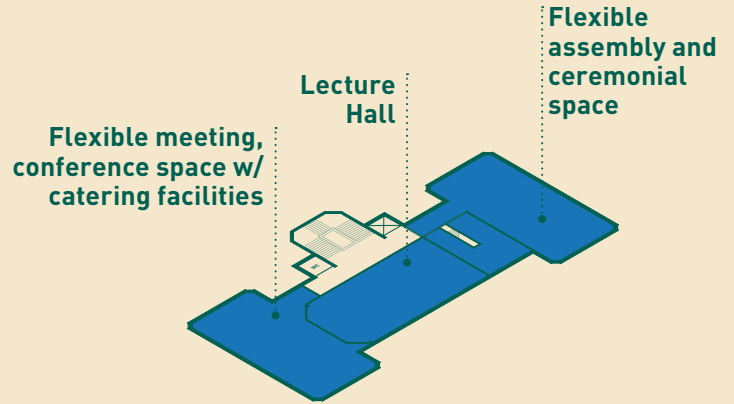
**New Meeting Hall/Chambers**

2180 Milvia Extension

# Program Overview by Building

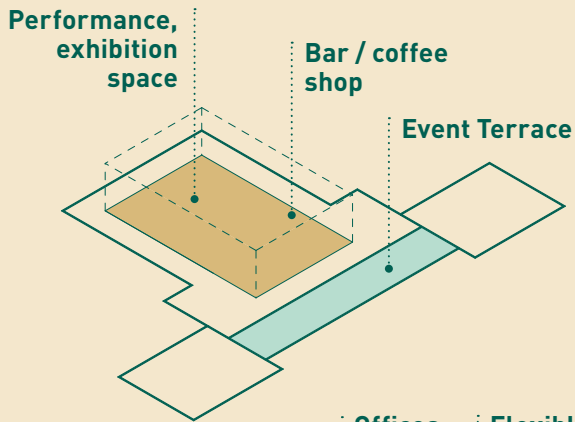
These diagrams give an overview of the distribution of programs across the Maudelle Shirek Building, the Veterans Memorial Building and 2180 Milvia, and an approximation of the total area by program. Existing City office space in 2180 Milvia, the potential Old City Hall extension and the Veterans Building rooftop addition have not been accounted for.

- The Berkeley Historical Society**  
1,675 sq. ft.
- The Berkeley Center**  
7,185 sq. ft.
- Archives / Storage**  
8,600 sq. ft.
- Office: City**
- Performing Arts**  
15,327 sq. ft.
- Auditorium**  
4,950 sq. ft.
- Terrace**  
~1,300 sq. ft.
- Meeting Hall / Council Chambers**  
10,200 sq. ft. (and courtyard)
- Small Retail / Food & Beverage**  
5,310 sq. ft.
- Primary Entrance**

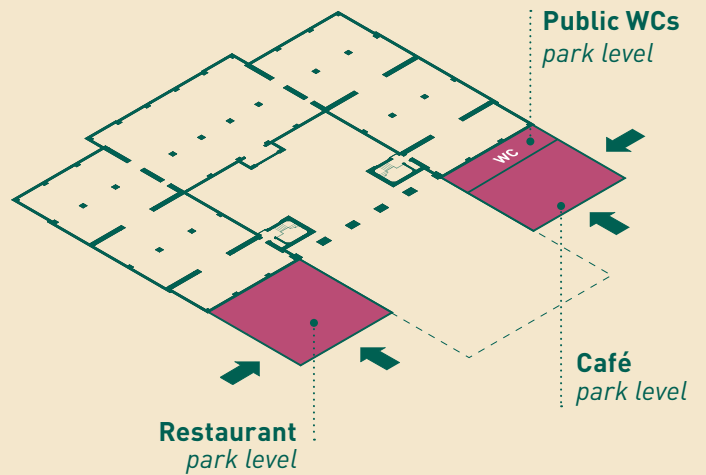
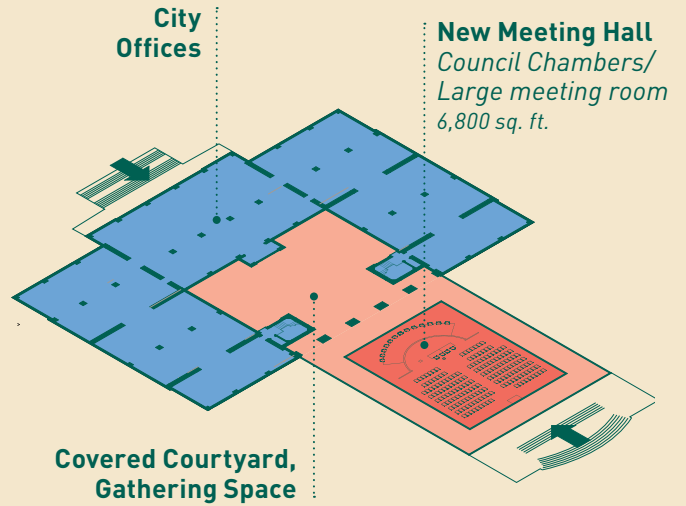
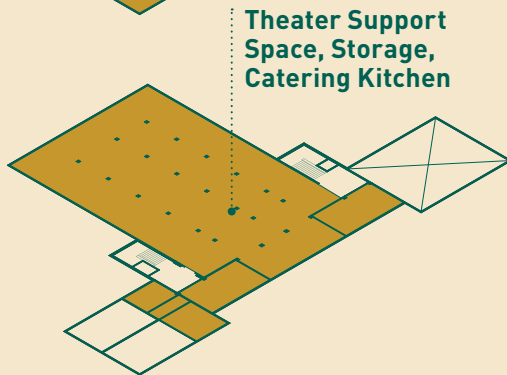
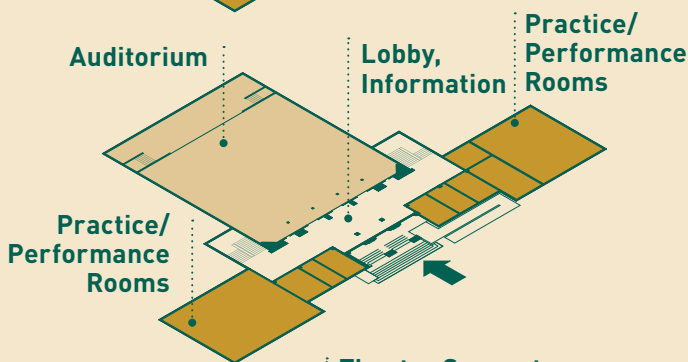
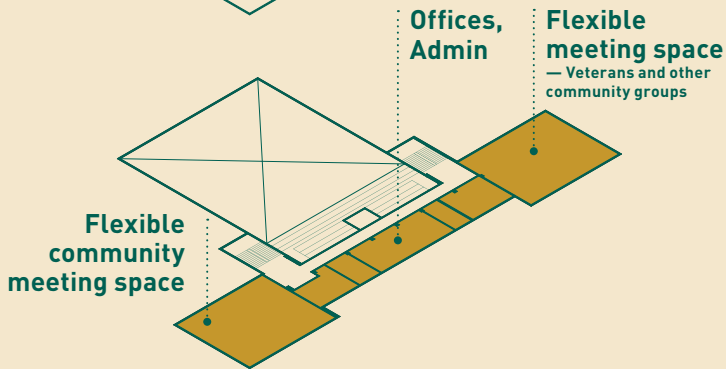


## The Berkeley Center

Maudelle Shirek Building



Potential rooftop addition  
 (not included in sq.ft.)



## The Cultural Hive

Veterans Memorial Building

## New Meeting Hall/Chambers

2180 Milvia Extension