

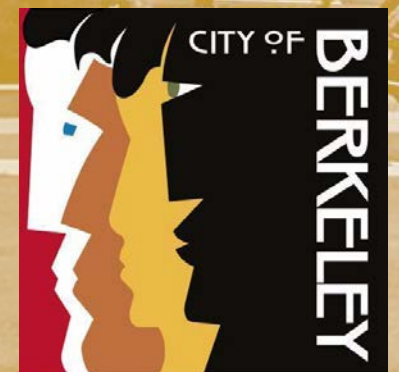
Berkeley Civic Center

Super Sub-Committee of the Commissions

February 9, 2023

SIEGEL & STRAIN Architects

Gehl ecb



Berkeley Civic Center

Agenda

01 Welcome + Introductions

02 Presentation

- Project Background
- Outreach Summary
- Design Drivers & Concept Designs
- Next Steps

03 Discussion & Comments

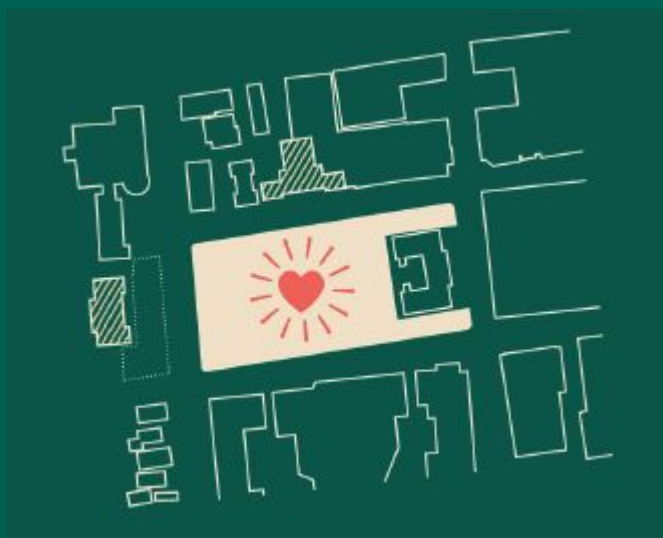
Contact: CivicCenter@cityofberkeley.info

Berkeley Civic Center

Project Background

ADOPTED!

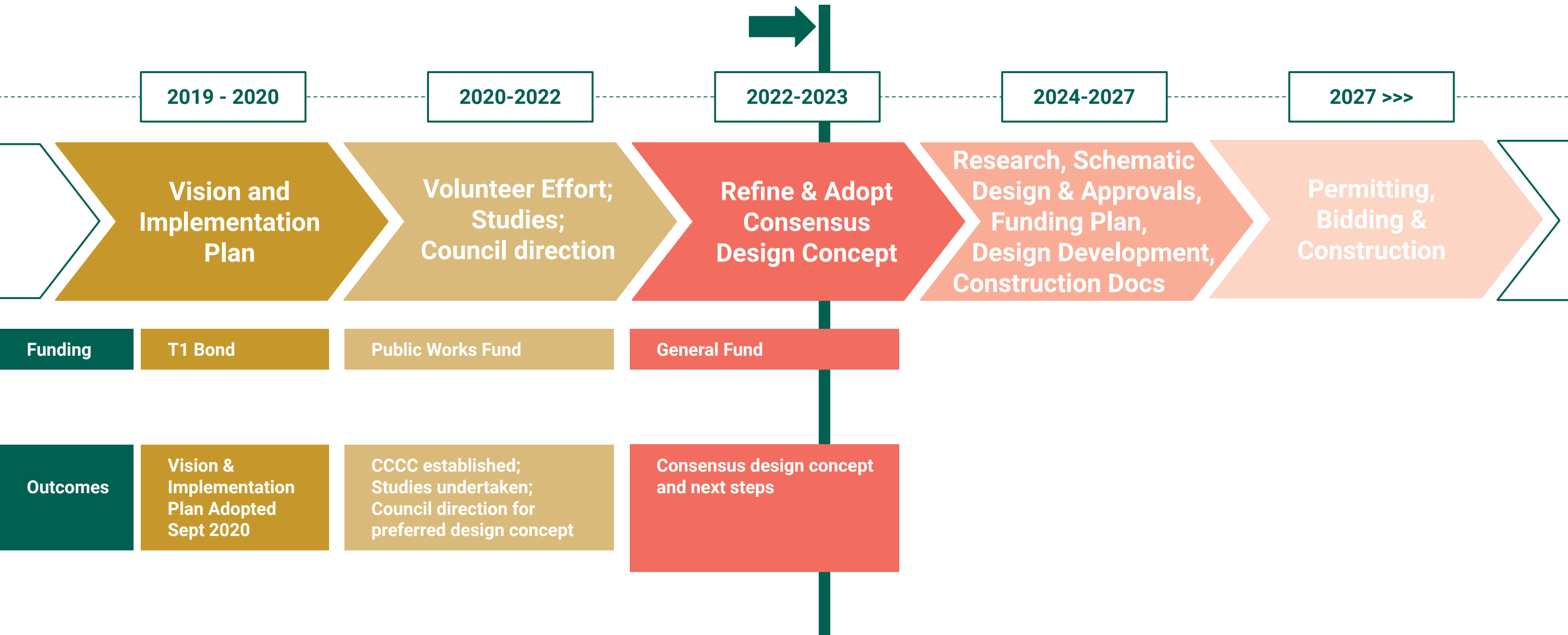
A Vision for Berkeley's Civic Center



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, the Civic Center aims to manifest the city's values, advance social justice, and demonstrate the power of true public space.

From Berkeley Civic Center Vision & Implementation Plan dated July 10, 2020 and adopted by Berkeley City Council on September 22, 2020

Overall Project Schedule



Design Concept Phase

Outreach Summary



30
Participants in Building Tours with Berkeley Historical Society
Sep 2019 & Mar 2020



21
Volunteers for Public Space, Public Life Survey
Oct 2019

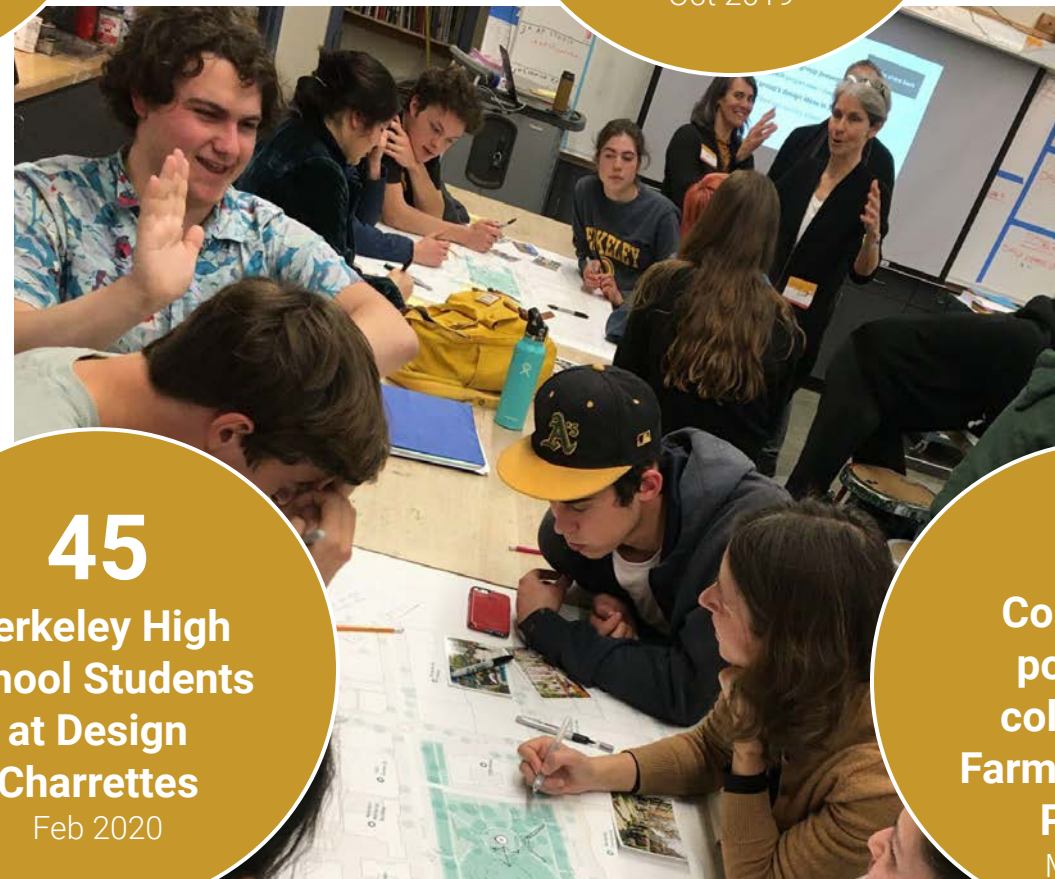


VISION PLAN

40
Participants at Visions & Values Community Meeting
Dec 2019



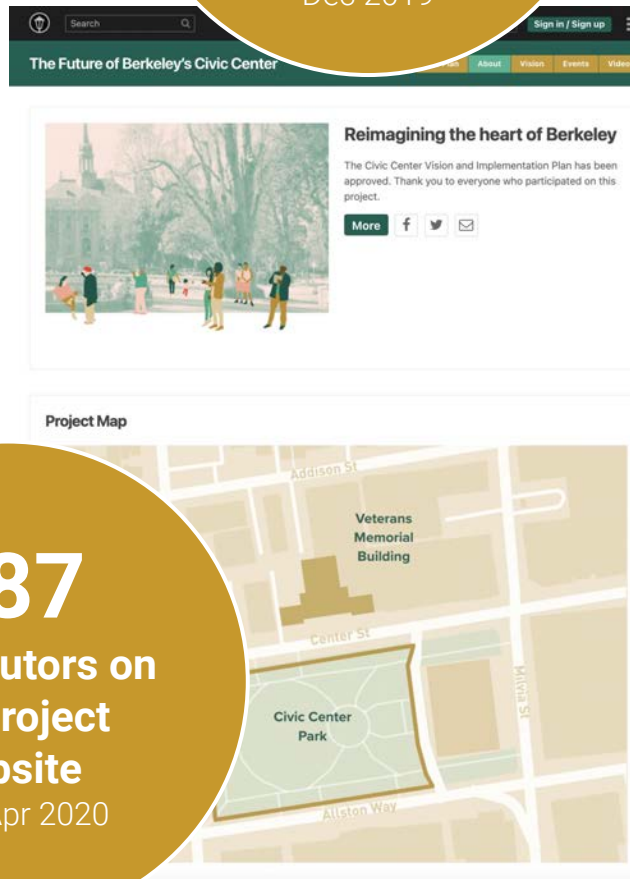
40+
Interviewees at Focused Engagement Sessions



45
Berkeley High School Students at Design Charrettes
Feb 2020



26
Community postcards collected at Farmers Market Pop-Up
Mar 2020



387
Contributors on the project website
Feb - Apr 2020

Analyzing Berkeley Civic Center



Public Space, Public Life Study Oct 2019



The survey took place on October 15 and 19, 2019



People Moving



Mode Movement Counts



Age & Gender Movement Counts

People Staying

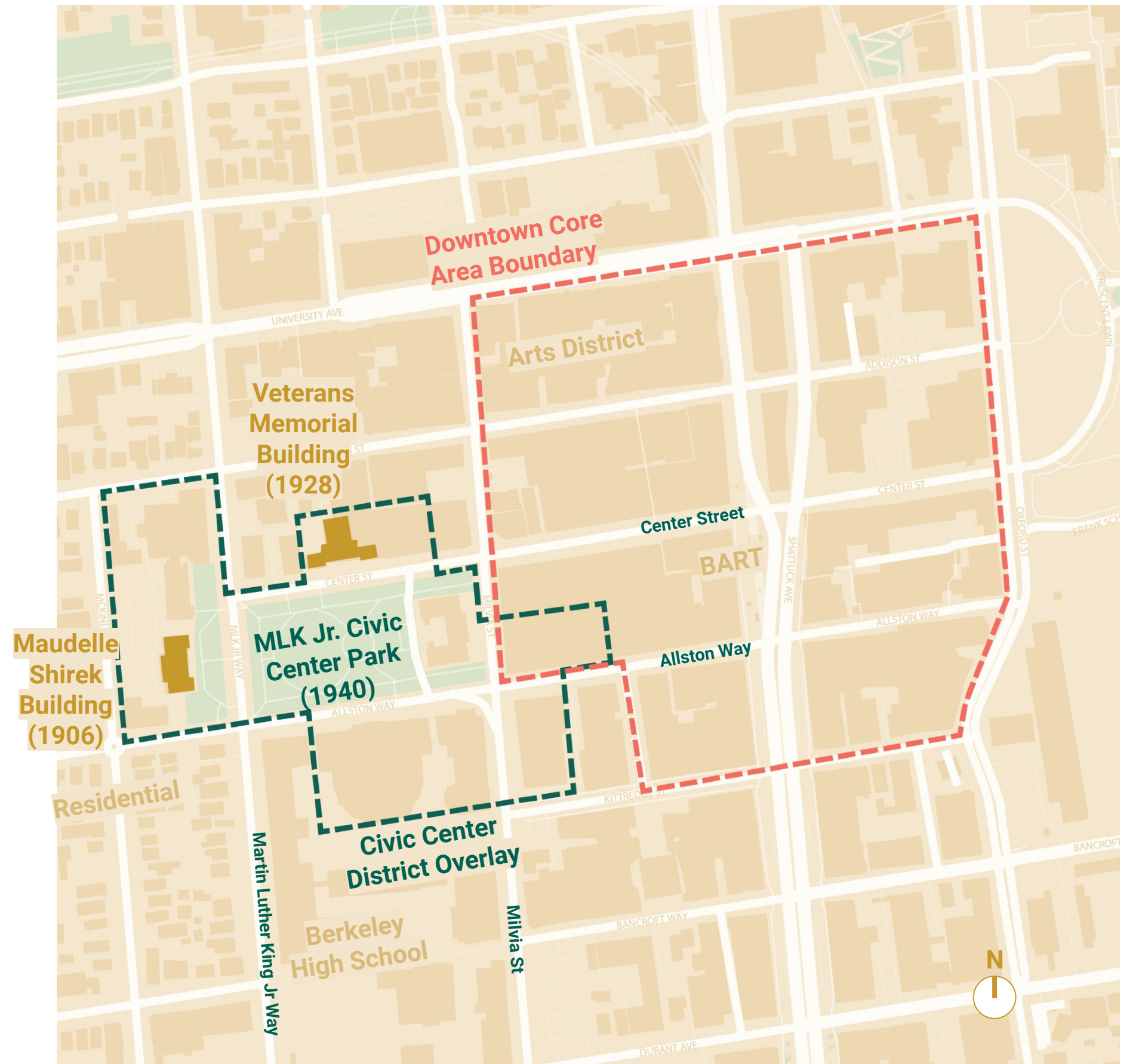


Stationary Activity Mapping

Planning Area

The Berkeley Civic Center planning area includes:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park
- Surrounding Streets
 - MLK Jr. Way
 - Center Street
 - Allston Way
- Maudelle Shirek Building
- Veterans Memorial Building



Outreach Focused Meetings

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

DESIGN
CONCEPT

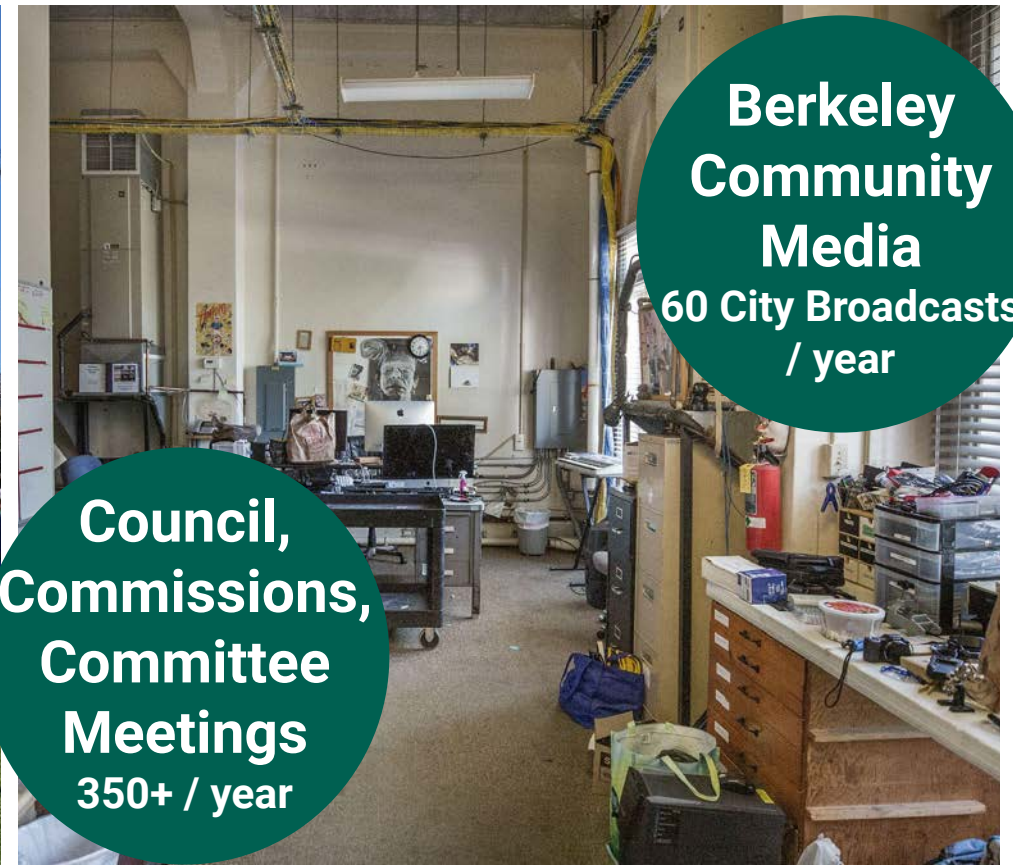
Farmers
Market
2000 vtrs/wk
60 Vendors



Historical
Society &
Museum



Special
Events
16+ / year
pre-pandemic



Berkeley
Community
Media
60 City Broadcasts
/ year

Council,
Commissions,
Committee
Meetings
350+ / year

Public Outreach Overview

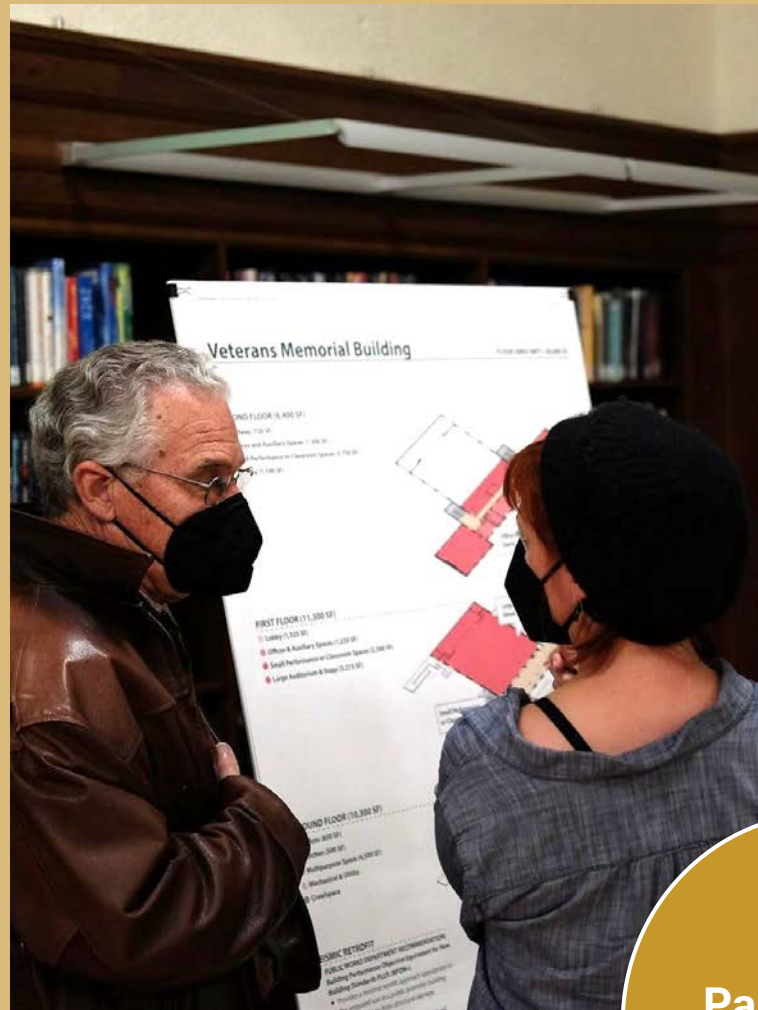
Public Open House on Nov 16, 2022

- Participants gave input on four topics: MLK Jr Civic Center Park, Surrounding Streets, Maudelle Shirek & 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

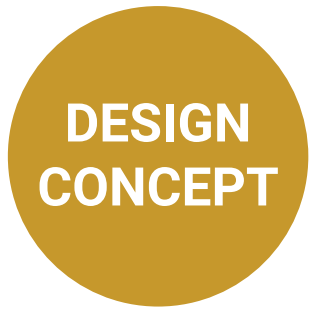


**DESIGN
CONCEPT**

40
Participants
at Open
House
Nov 2022

200+
Written
Comments on
Postcards
Nov 2022

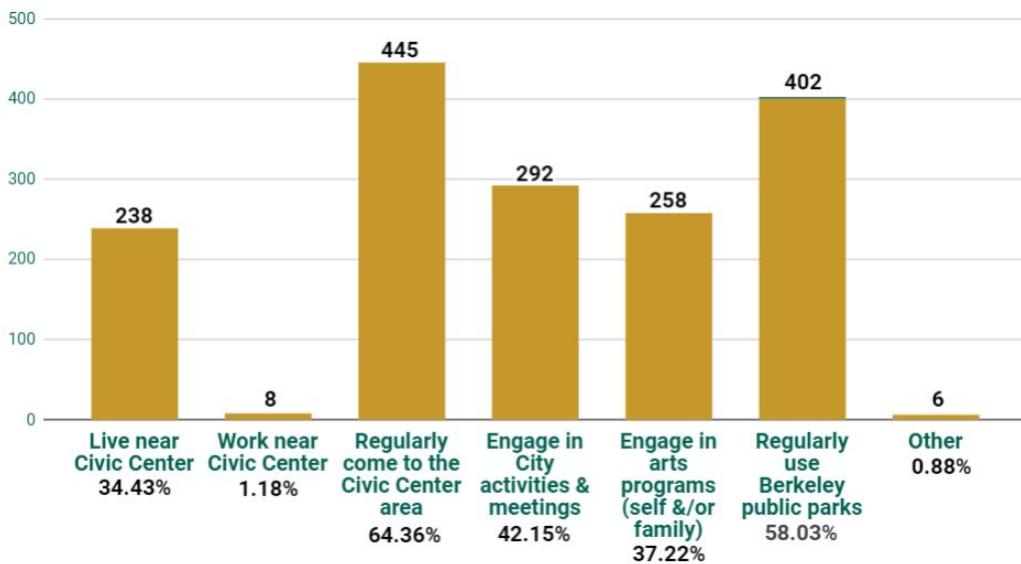




Public Outreach Respondents

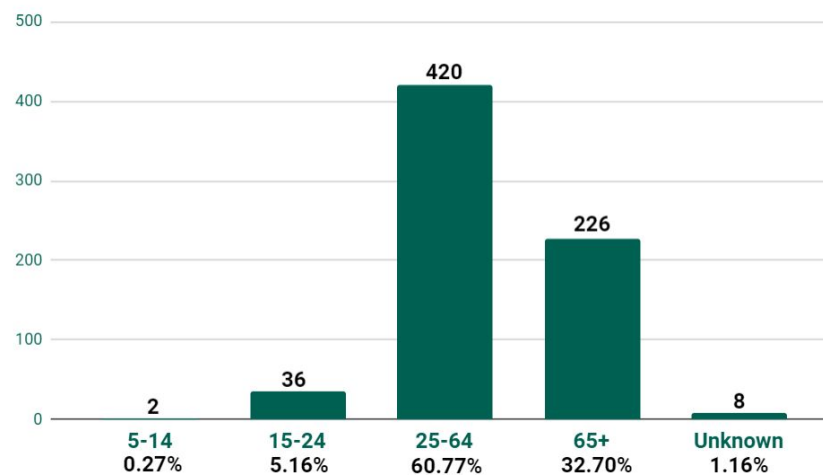
What is your relationship to MLK Jr. Civic Center Park?

(Amounts are shown as a percentage of total respondents, respondents were allowed to choose more than one answer; Public Workshop: 40 total respondents; Online Survey: 564 total respondents)



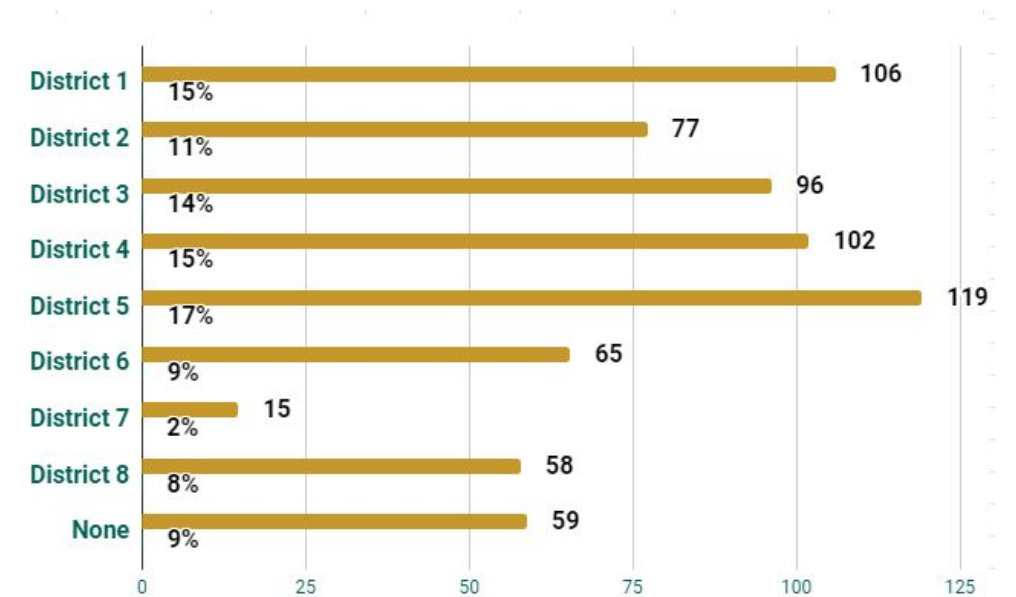
How old are you?

(Amounts are shown as a percentage of total respondents; Public Workshop: 40 total respondents; Online Survey: 568 total respondents)



What City Council district do you live in?

(Amounts are shown as a percentage of total respondents; Public Workshop: N/A; Online Survey: 575 total respondents)



1

Most want the park to be natural in character

Return nature in the urban setting

Everyone will benefit from a natural refuge

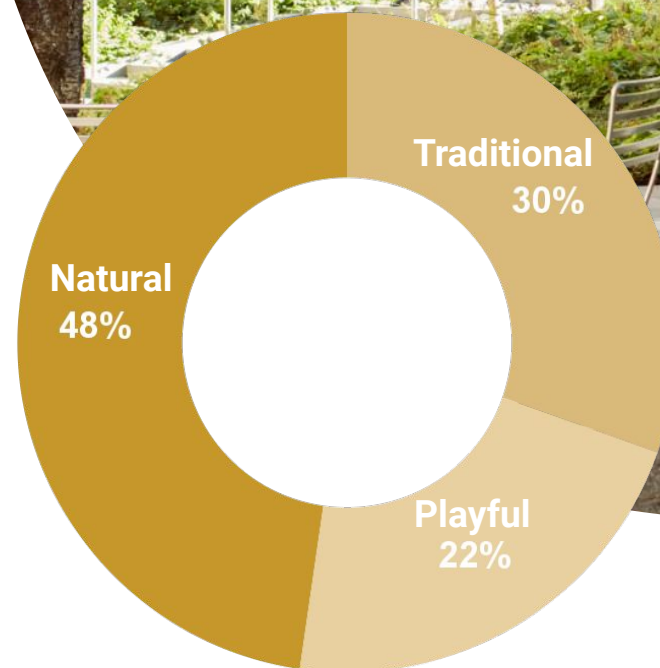
The park should be a place for relaxing with nature

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

2

A safe, clean place to be outdoors with others is high priority



“ 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

48%
of respondents prioritized art installations

44%
of respondents prioritized improved lighting



3

Places to gather as a community is also a priority use

300 +
Written comments related to community gathering

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

Inviting public space for gathering & enjoyment

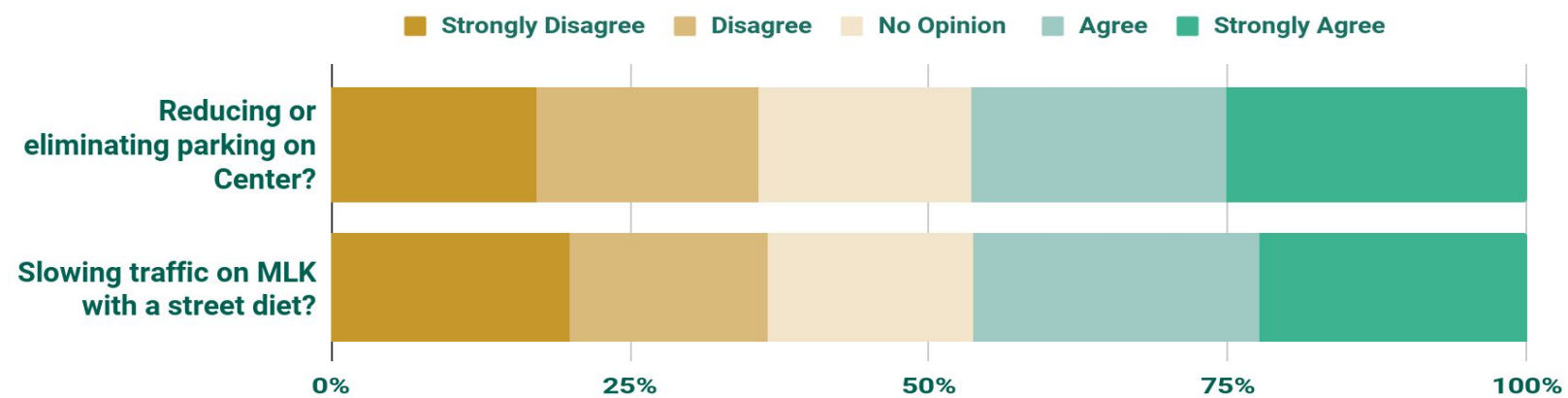
Parks should bring people together

Relaxing at performances, listening to music

An urban retreat and setting for farmers market and fairs

4

People would like Center Street to be better integrated into the park experience.





51%
of respondents
prioritized
daylighting
Strawberry
Creek

5

Many are passionate about daylighting Strawberry Creek

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

A daylighted creek offers many benefits

Daylight Strawberry Creek and bring nature back to the city. Good for our earth and our community!

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

6

Many also expressed concerns about creek daylighting

Hard to maintain

Trash / litter

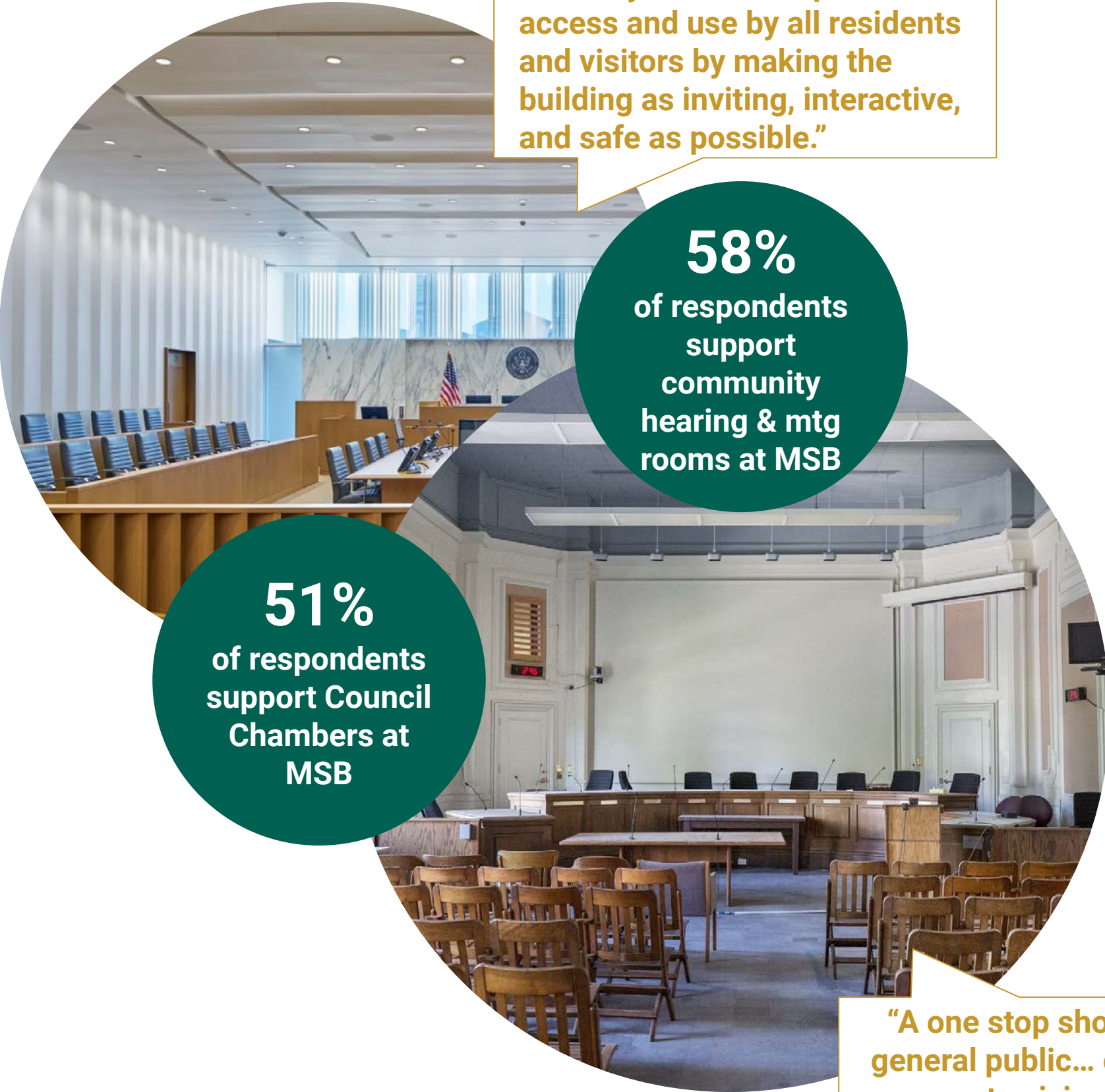
Not enough space

Too expensive / infeasible

“

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





“...the center of civic life in Berkeley. We should promote access and use by all residents and visitors by making the building as inviting, interactive, and safe as possible.”

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

51%
of respondents support Council Chambers at MSB

“A one stop shop for The general public... create and operate civics entirely transparent and comprehensive.”

7

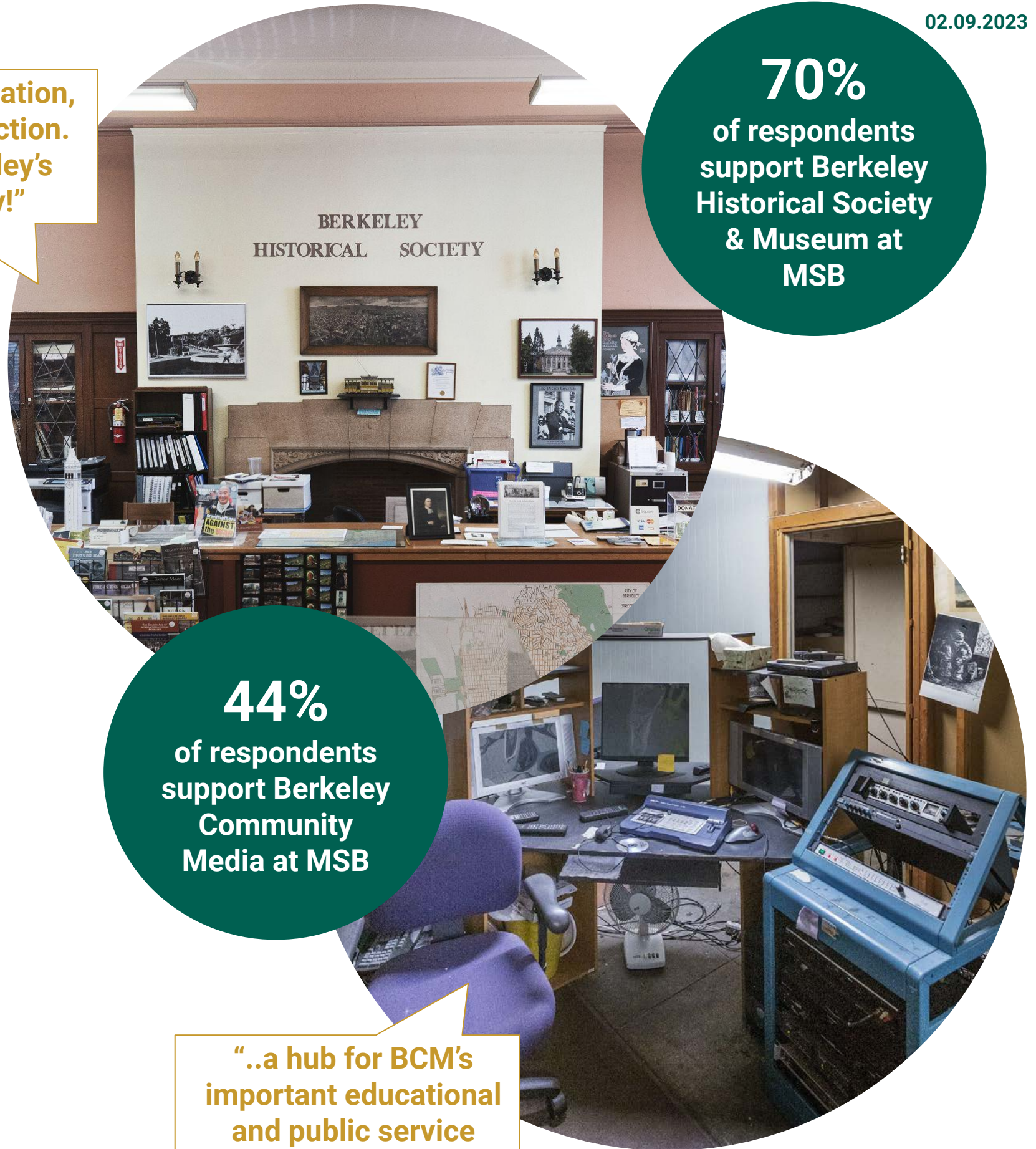
Many support returning community meeting spaces to the Maudelle Shirek Building

8

Many support complementary and vision-aligned uses at the Maudelle Shirek Building

“...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.”

“Generate lots of activity in the building day and night!”

48%
of respondents support performance spaces at VMB

44%
of respondents prioritized exhibit spaces at VMB

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

9

Priority uses for the Veterans Memorial Building are community performance and exhibition spaces

Public Outreach Arts Survey

74 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

DESIGN CONCEPT



33
Music Orgs



22
Dance Orgs



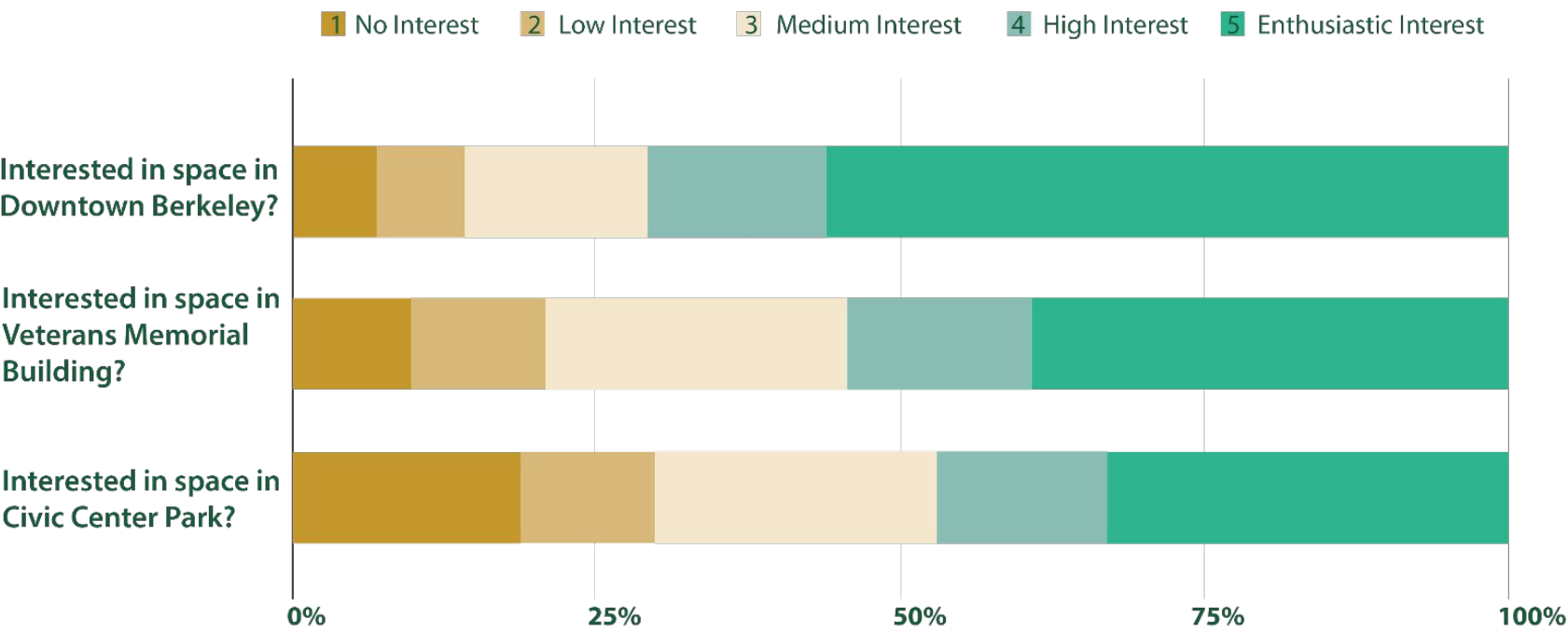
30
Arts Education Orgs



27
Visual Arts Orgs



27
Theater Orgs





10 Affirmation of 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.

Design Concept Phase

Design Drivers & Concepts

Parameters for Prioritizing Uses in Civic Center

Vision Aligned

Community building; 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 time of use (day, week, year), space type needs, access and security requirements.

Funding

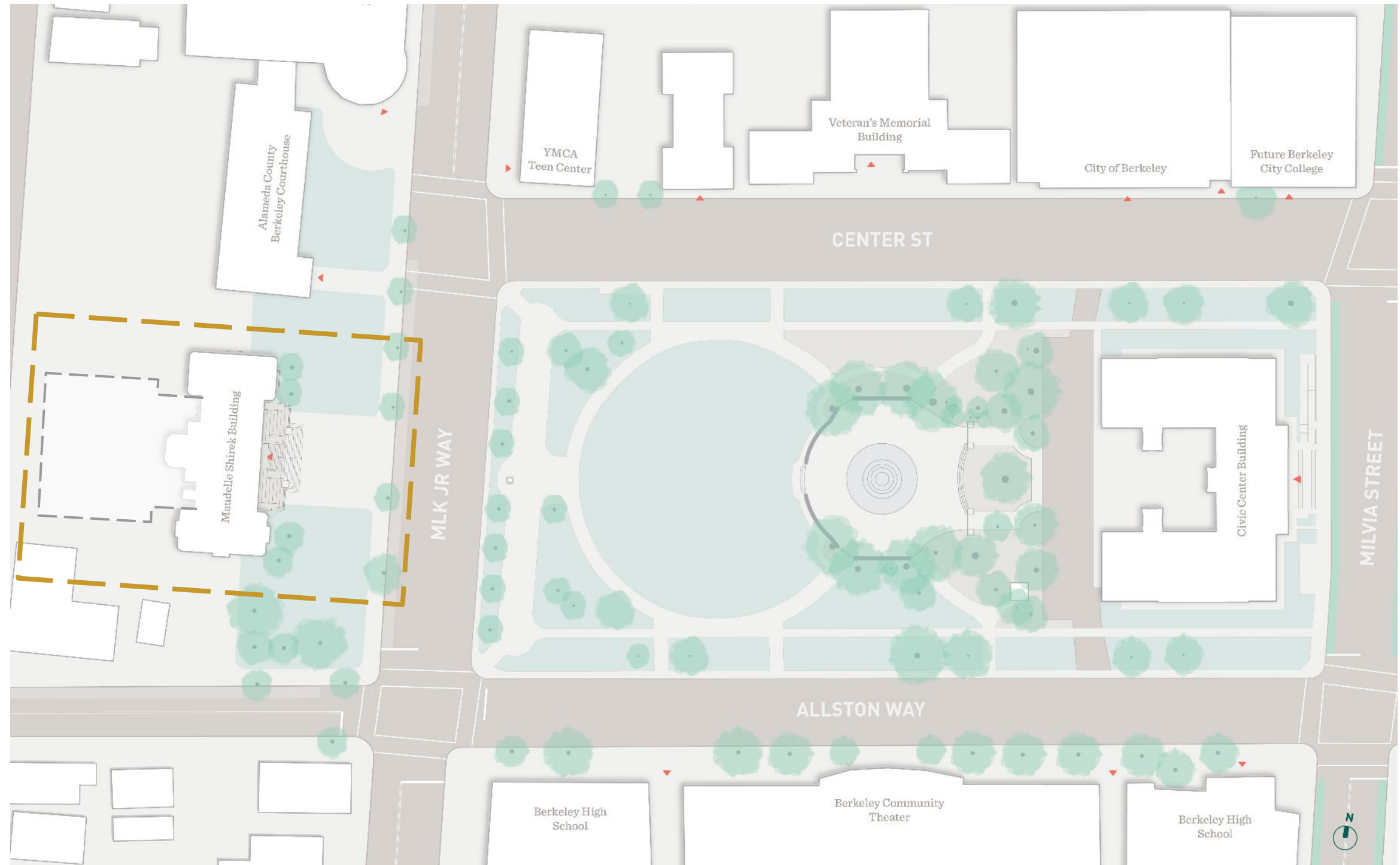
Draw on a source of outside funding to bring investment to the restoration and enhancement of this historic district

Design Drivers

Maudelle Shirek Building

Maudelle Shirek Building - Historic Asset

- Anchor building for Civic Center Historic District.
- Historic seat of city government, and location of many important legislative decisions
- Namesake is a long-term and important member of Berkeley City Council, who served eight terms, retiring at 92.



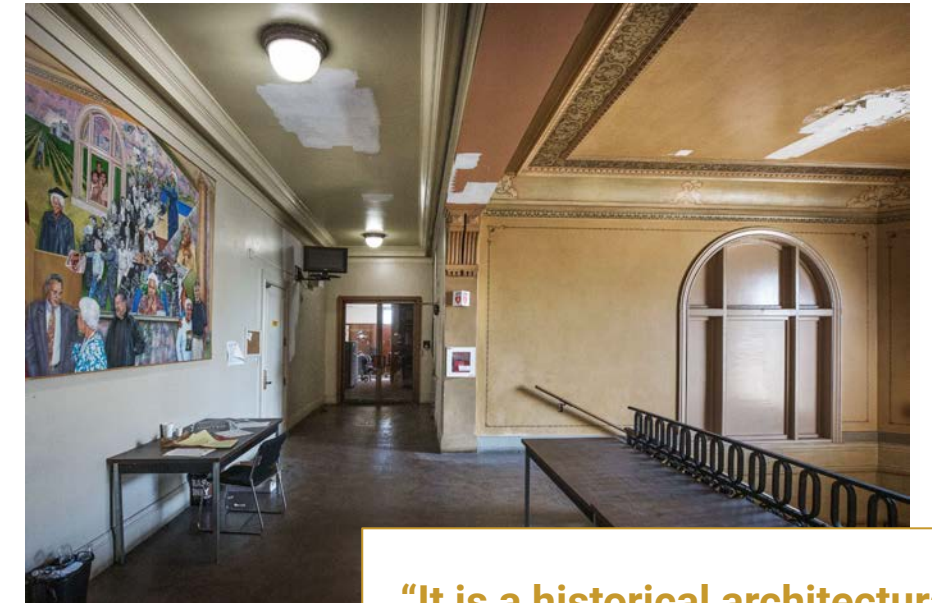
Maudelle Shirek Building - Historic Asset

- Designed by Bakewell & Brown, completed 1909
- Primary example of Beaux Arts Architecture in Berkeley
- Character-defining features intact
- Investigations into condition of enclosure, roof structure, and water conveyance needed
- Priority projects: structural survey and material testing at front entrance, seismic strengthening, removal of incompatible additions at rear.



“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 historic and attractive building that should be restored...and made into a centerpiece of the Civic Center.. ”

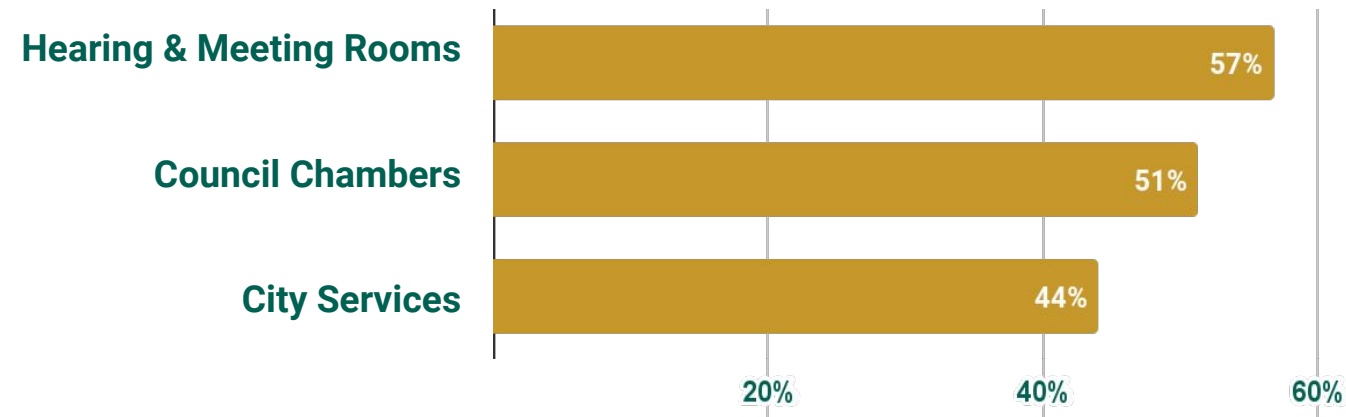


“It is a historical architectural treasure that needs our love and funding!”



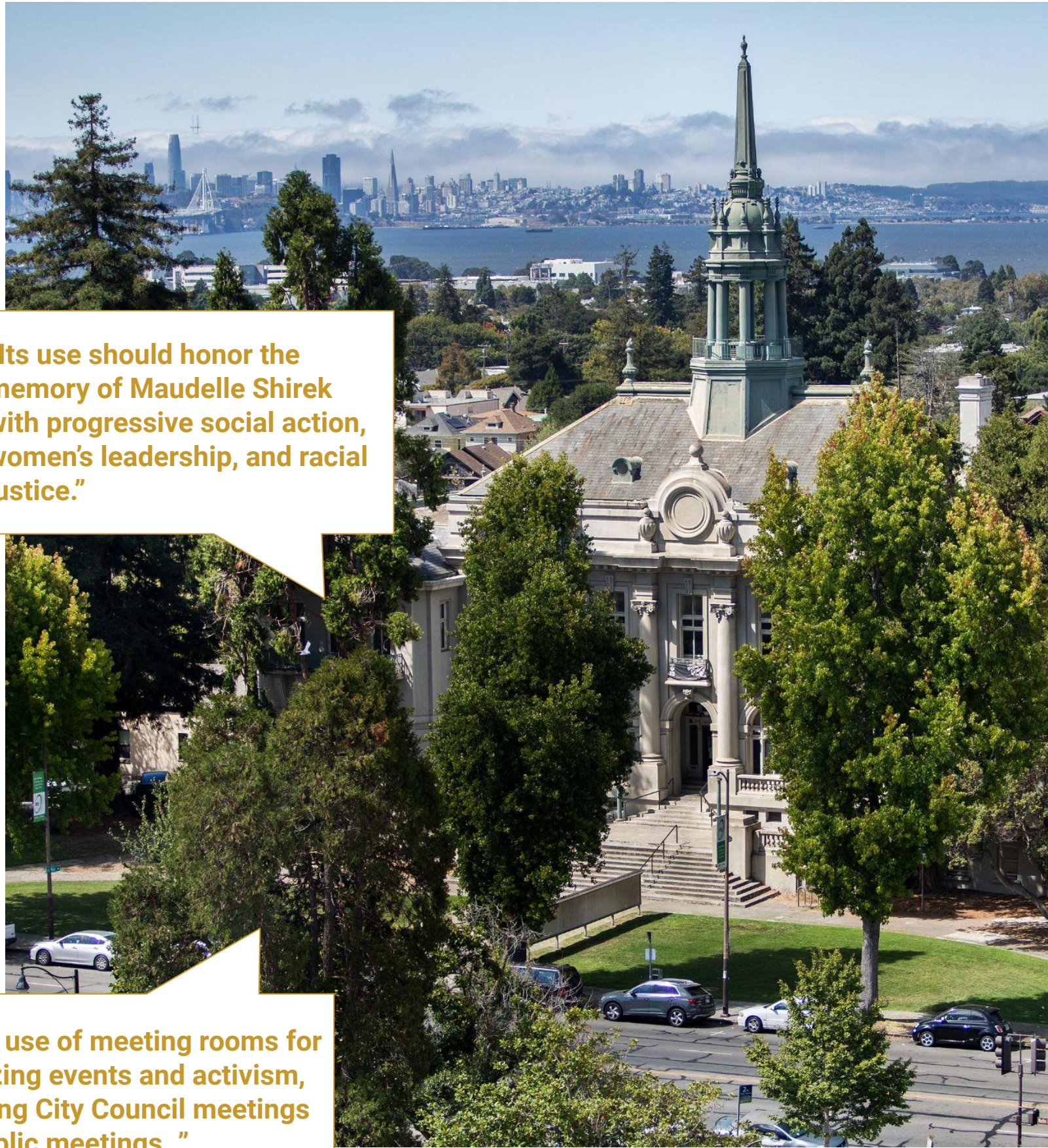
Maudelle Shirek Building - Seat of Berkeley's Democracy

Utilize this symbol of our City as the center of democratic action.



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

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



Maudelle Shirek Building



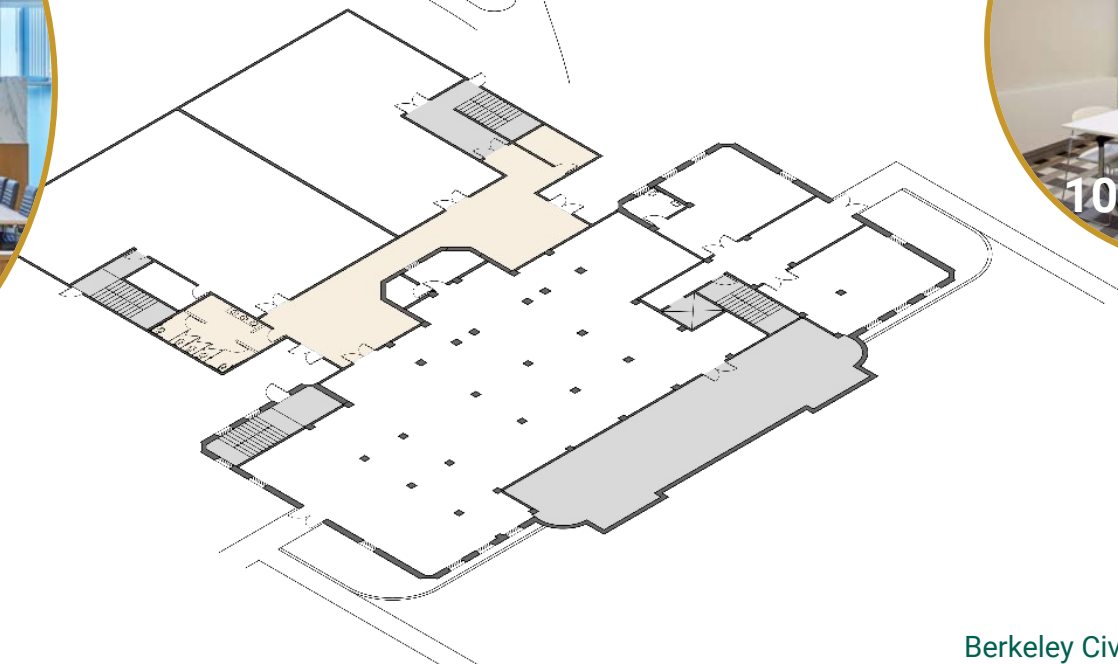
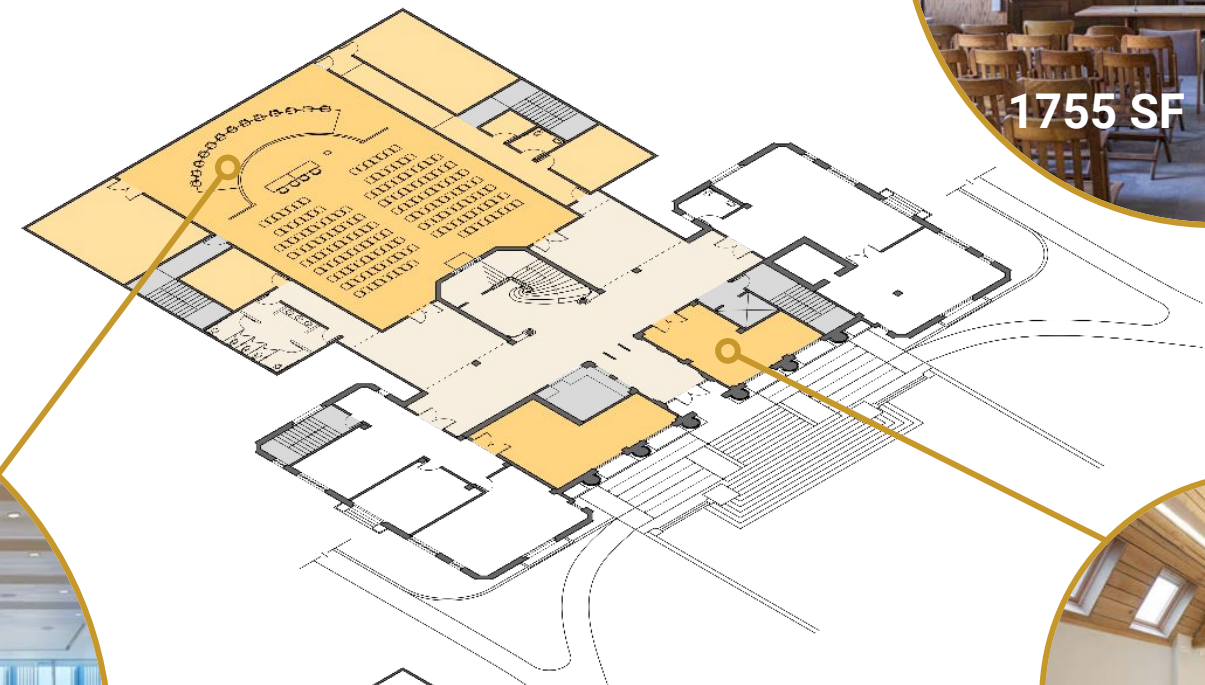
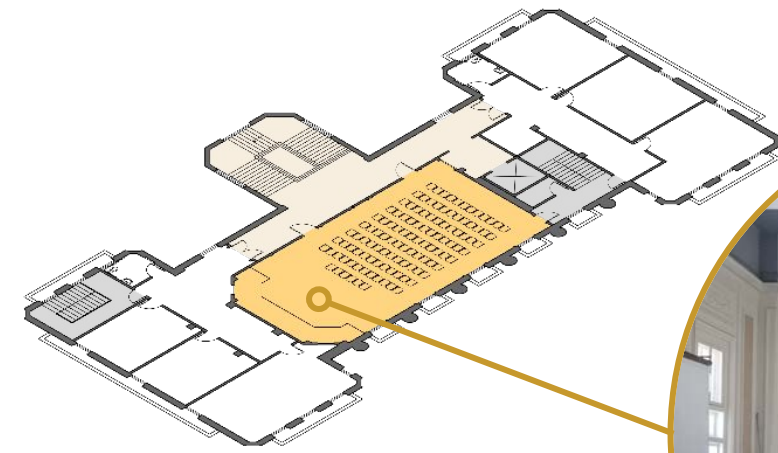
Maudelle Shirek Building - Meeting & Hearing Rooms

Bring the public to here to participate in governance in Council Chambers and meeting rooms.

City hosts over 300 meetings annually.

Space Use - 9000 SF

- Council Chambers/Large Multi-purpose Room
- Historic Hearing Room
- Small Meeting Room
- Large Meeting Room
- Closed Chambers Room
- Council Support Spaces

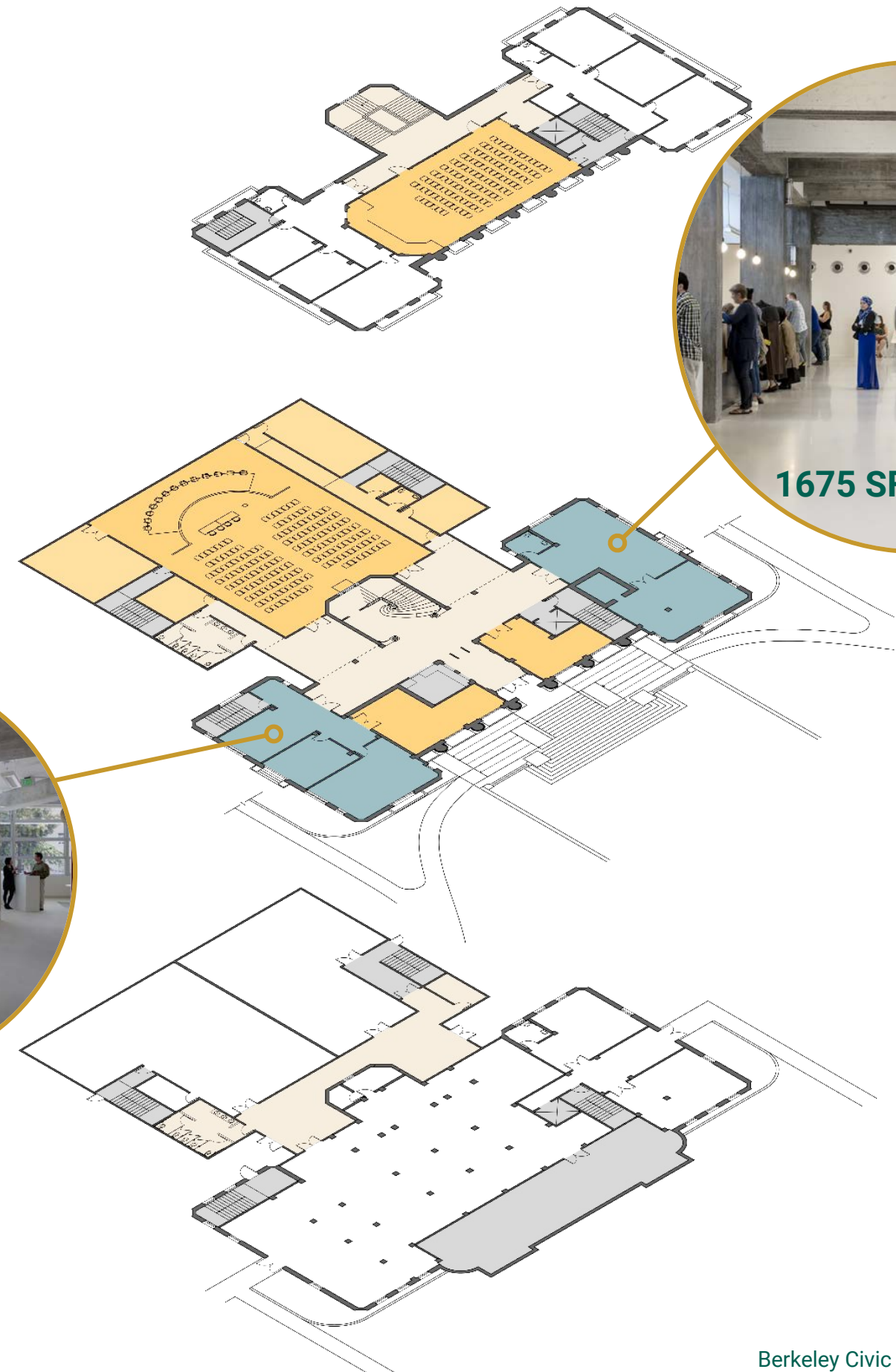


Maudelle Shirek Building - Public-facing Offices

Bring the public to the building for daily activities and needs, such as Vital Records, Permit Offices, Customer Service Center.

Space Use - 3250 SF

- Reception Area
- Private offices
- Open office
- Conference Room(s)
- Print Room
- Break Room/Kitchenette
- Storage & Support Spaces



Maudelle Shirek Building - Complementary Uses

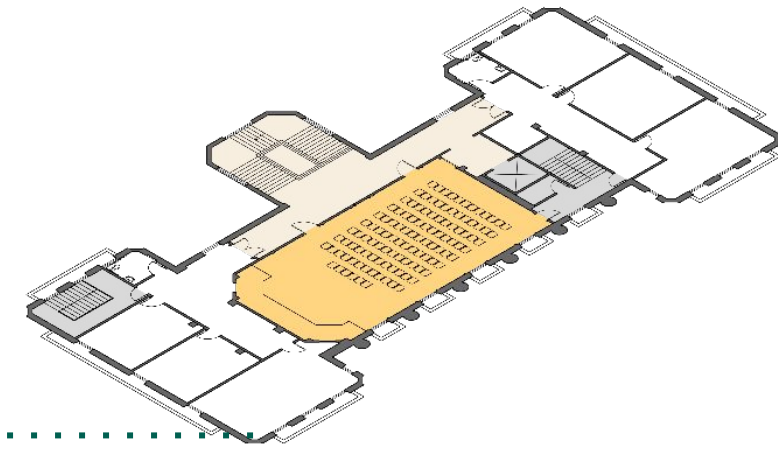
Enrich the public-facing functions of our city government by co-locating complementary uses in the Maudelle Shirek Building. The following uses have risen to the top through public outreach.

Berkeley Historical Society & Museum - 8500 SF

Berkeley Community Media - 5500 SF

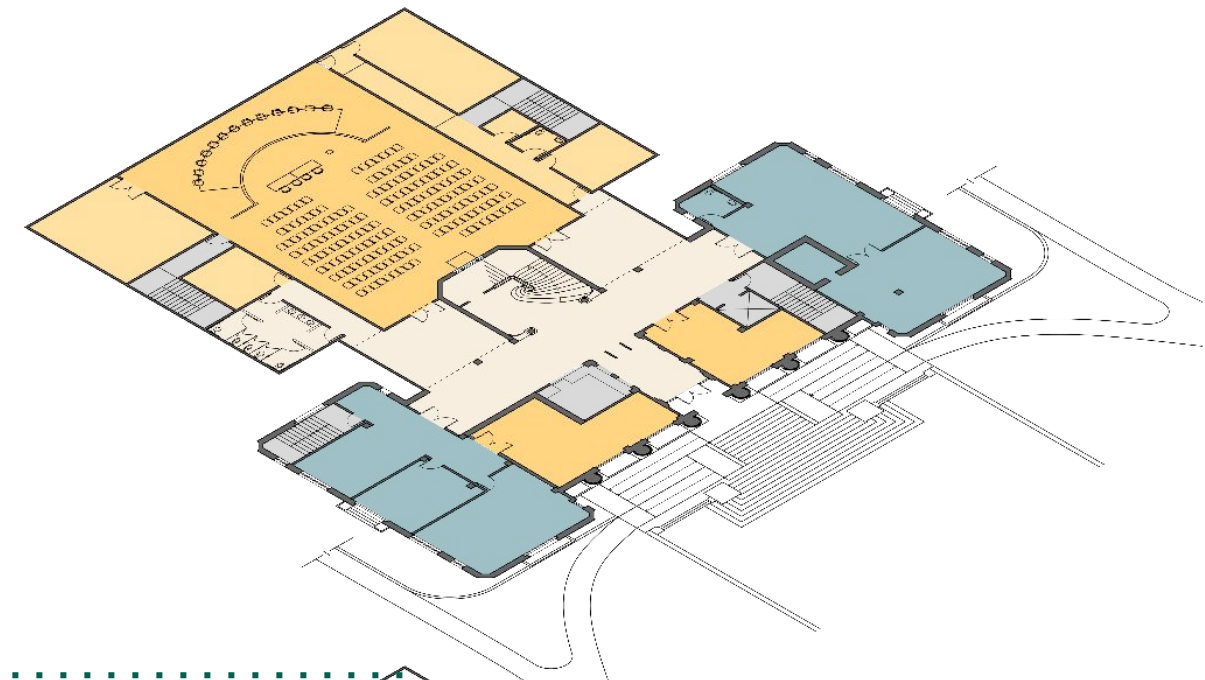
Public Policy Education - 2000 SF

City Offices - VARIES



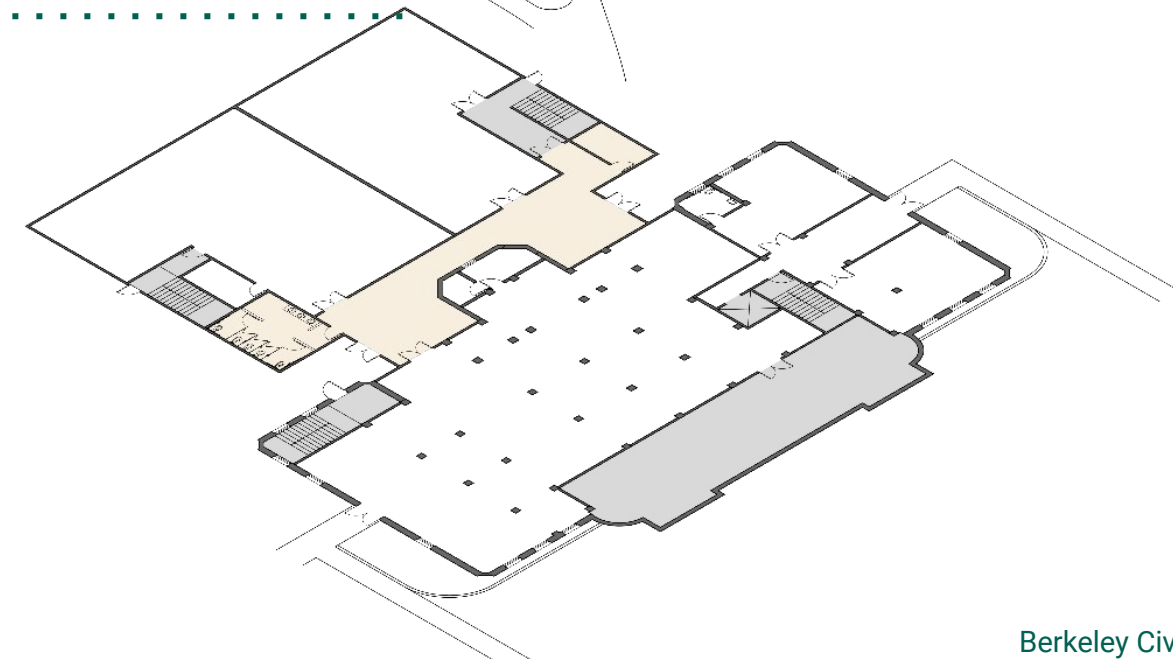
SECOND FLOOR

3380 SF - existing



GROUND FLOOR

7000 SF - existing
6800 SF - addition



Maudelle Shirek Building - Berkeley Historical Society & Museum

Showcase the City of Berkeley as a place where ideas emerge that influence the rest of the country and the world.

Space needs - 5000 SF

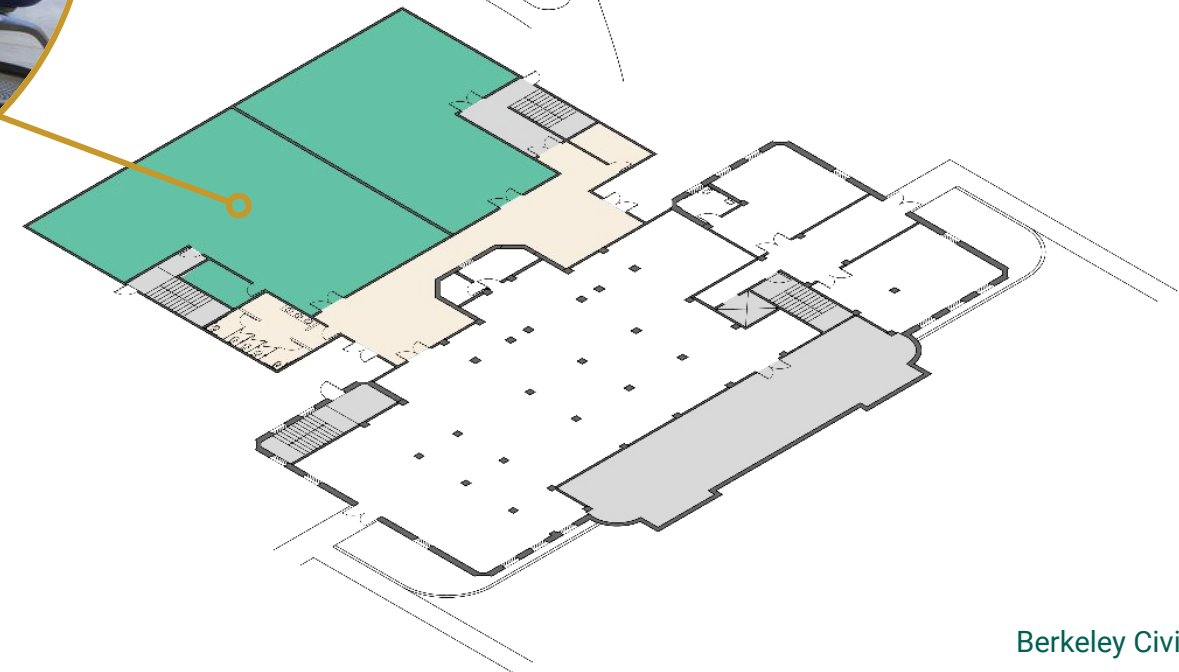
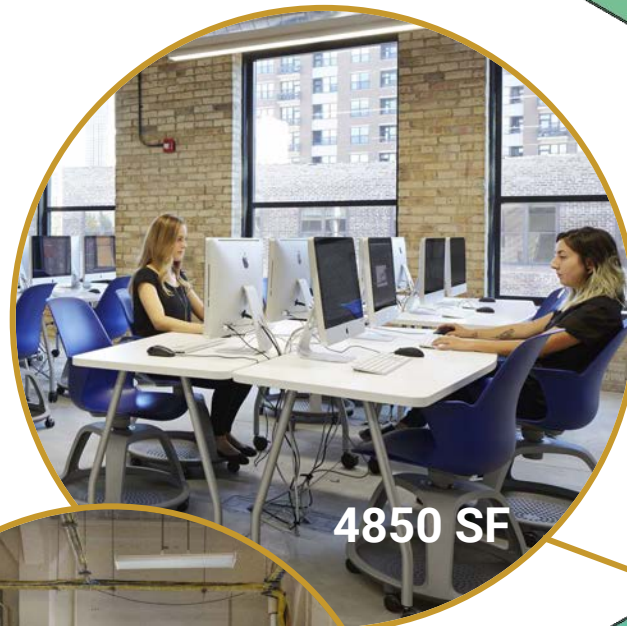
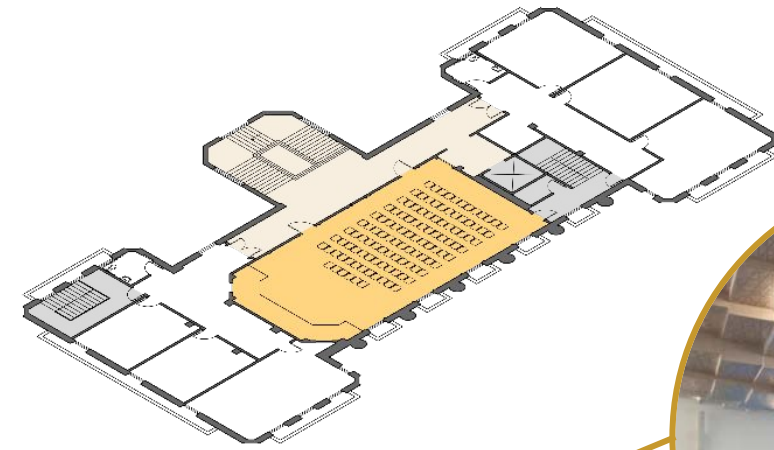
- Permanent Exhibit
- Temporary Exhibit
- Offices
- Exhibit Preparation Room
- Research Room
- Archival Storage (3500 SF, located off-site)
- Bookstore/Gift Shop
- Multi-purpose Meeting Rooms

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



Maudelle Shirek Building - Berkeley Community Media

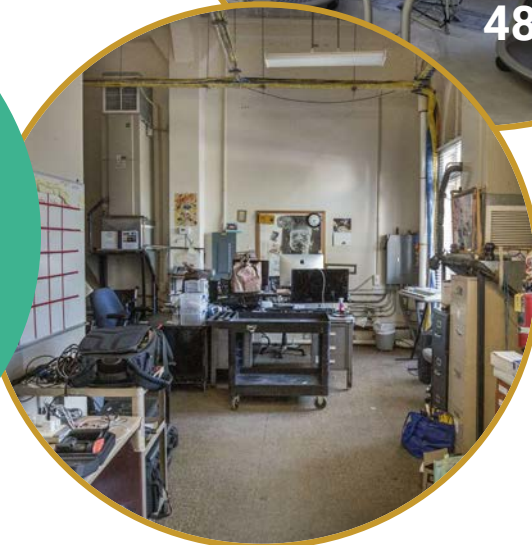
Broadcasts meetings and other city events in support of open and transparent governance.



Space needs - 5500 SF

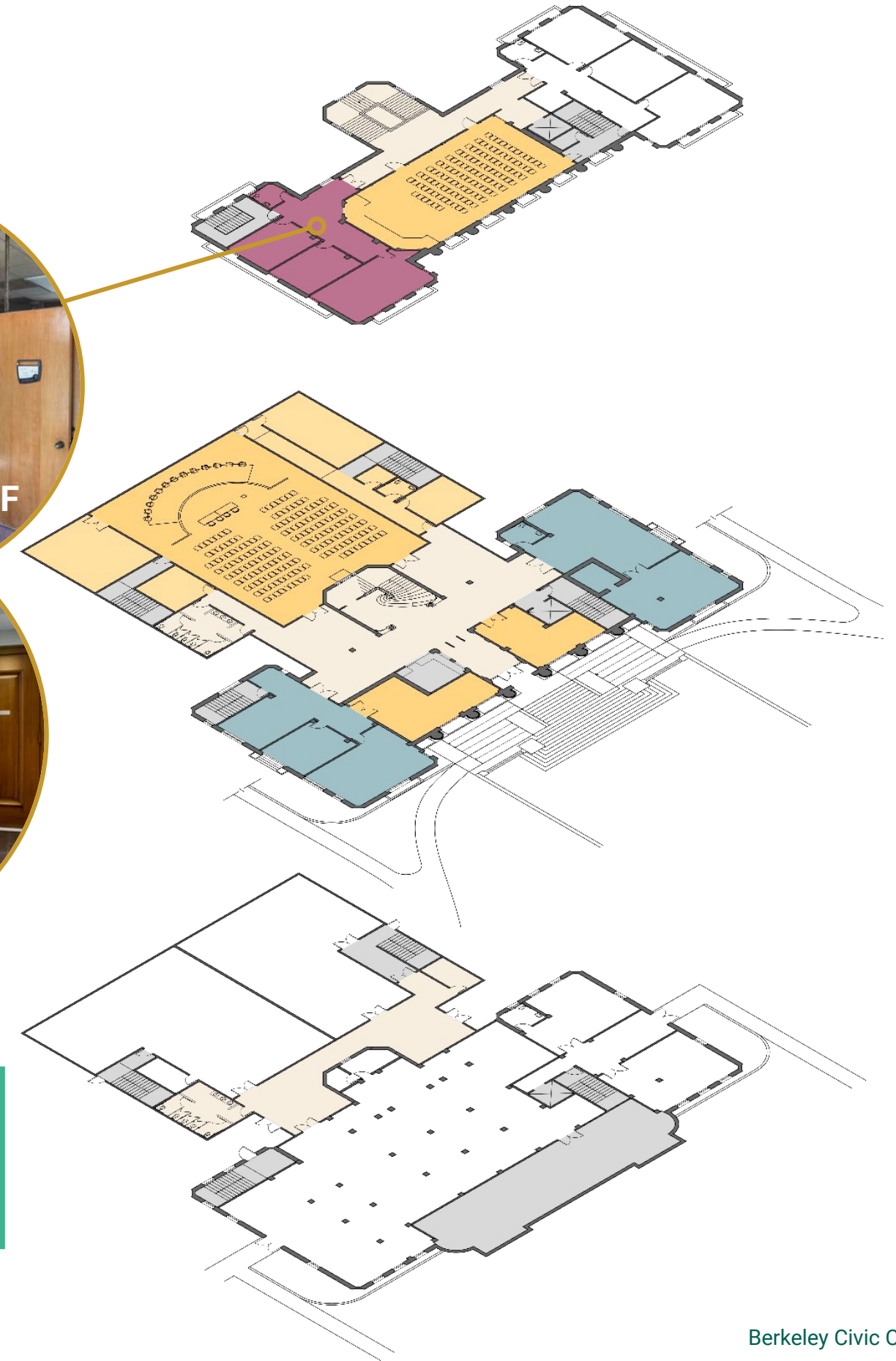
- Broadcast Studio
- Offices
- Editing Suite
- Small studios (podcast, green cove)
- Lounge/Classroom
- Kitchenette

44%
of respondents
support Berkeley
Community
Media at MSB



Maudelle Shirek Building - Policy Education Center

Support the development of future decision-makers to tackle the challenges of our day by pursuing progressive policies through direct interaction with the active democratic process in Berkeley.



- Space needs - 2000 SF**
- Classroom(s)
- Meeting Room(s)
- Offices

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."

Maudelle Shirek Building - City Offices

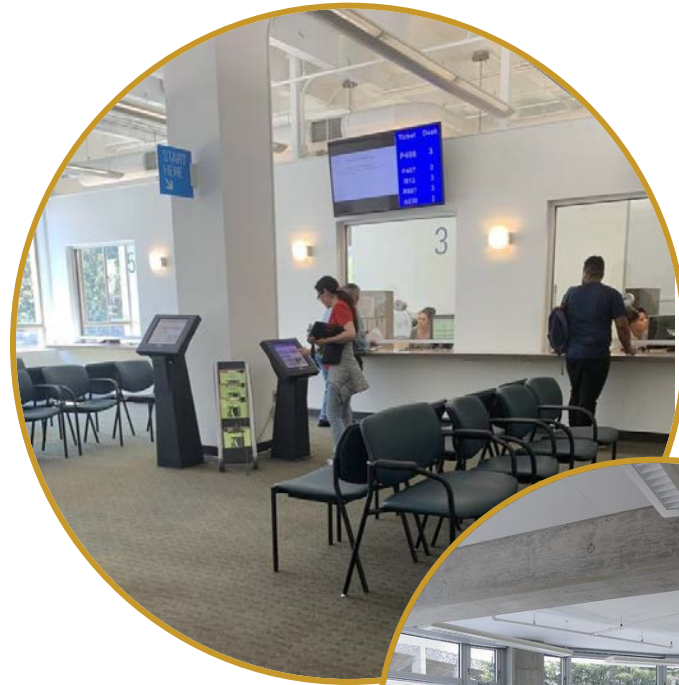
Build out the City campus around Civic Center with adjacent city-owned buildings.

- 2100 MLK Jr Way - Public Safety Building
- 2120 MLK Jr Way - Alameda County Courthouse
- 1931 Center Street - Veterans Memorial Building
- 1947 Center Street - City offices
- 2180 Milvia - New City Hall
- 1835 Allston Way - Options Recovery Building
- 1930 Allston Way - Berkeley Community Theater



Maudelle Shirek Building - City Offices

Customer Service Center
Permits
Public Safety Offices
City Trainings



Space needs - VARIES

Offices
Reception spaces
Support spaces



42%
of respondents
supported adding
City Services to
MSB.

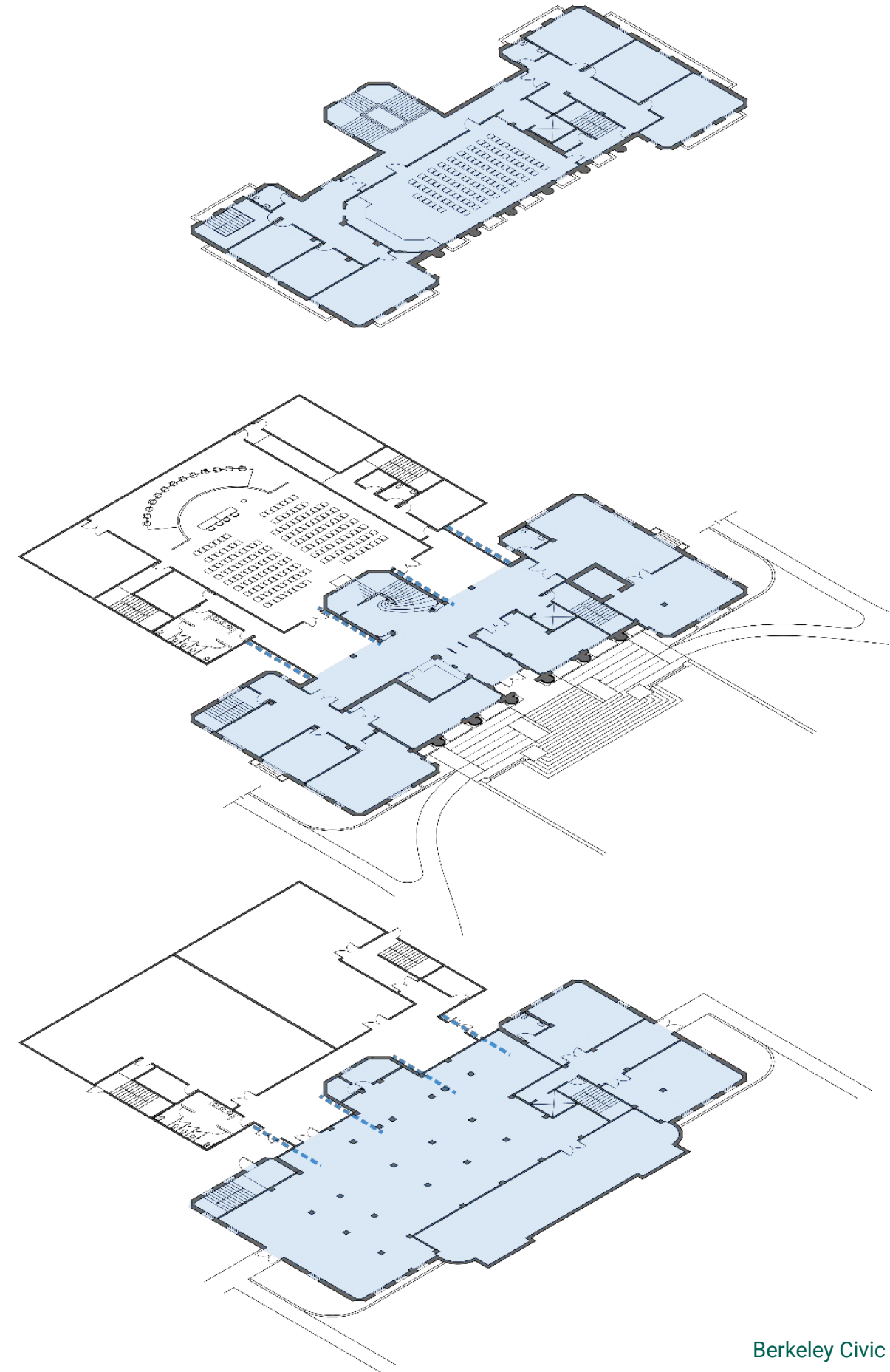


Maudelle Shirek Building - Damage Control + to Immediate Occupancy Upgrades

Provide maximum flexibility for use of this asset by city functions now and in the future. Provide the opportunity for the building to function as a care & shelter location in an emergency.

Approach: Aim for Damage Control Plus (DC+) to Immediate Occupancy (IO) level retrofit through adding buttresses at rear of building and tying into the historic structure.

Result: Building is occupiable days after a major earthquake event.



Maudelle Shirek Building - Other Improvements

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

"...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"

System Upgrades



Building Performance



Accessibility



Finishes



Egress/Safety

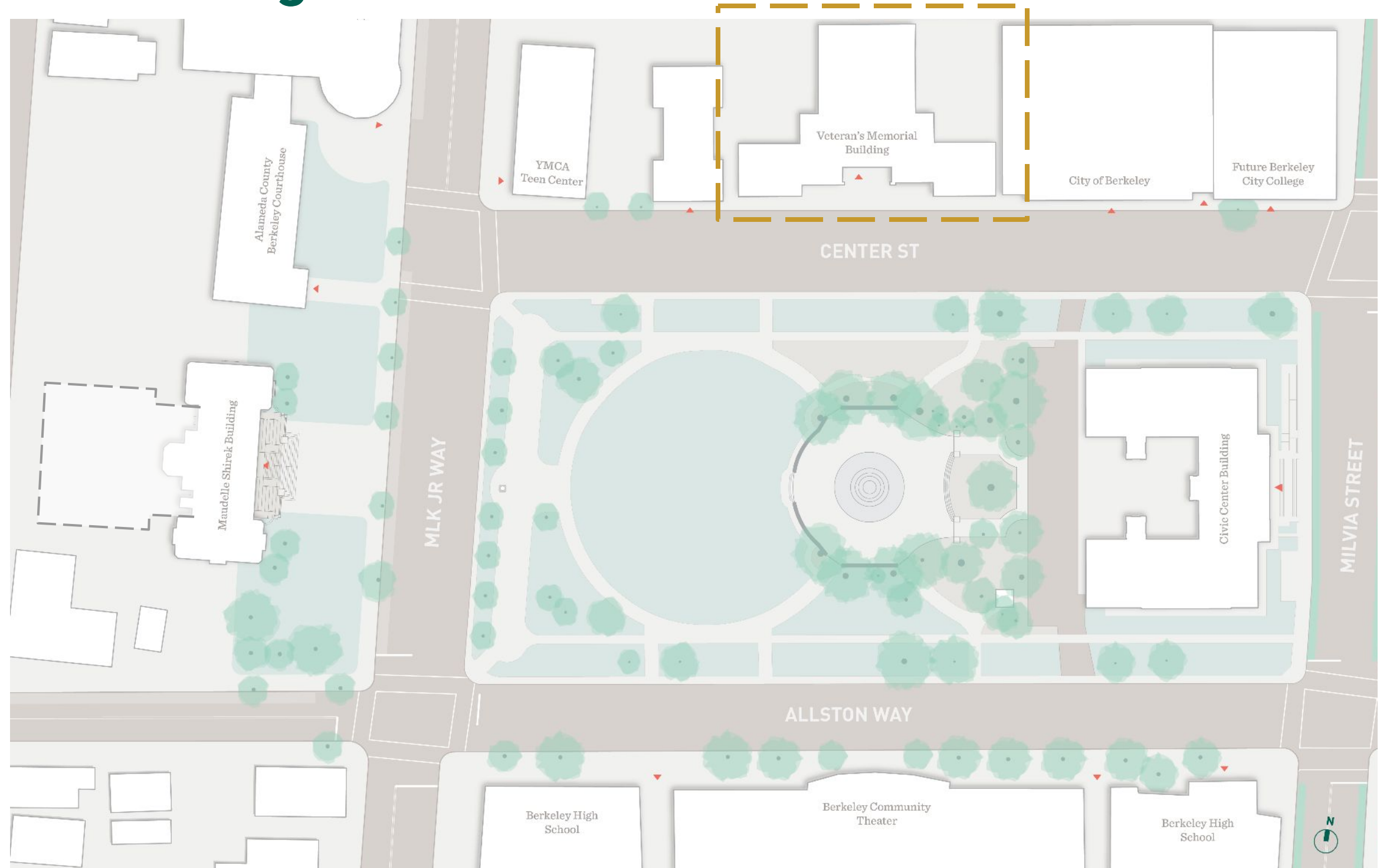


Design Drivers

Veterans Memorial Building

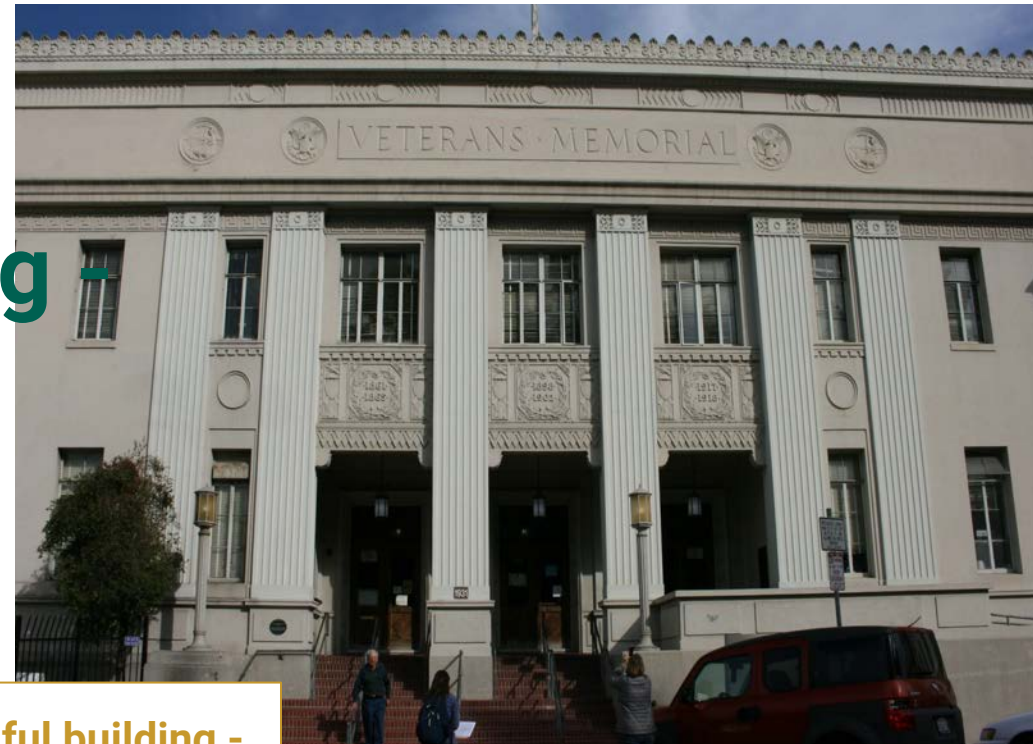
Veterans Memorial Building - Historic Asset

- Contributing building to Civic Center historic district
- Part of a building campaign of numerous Veterans Memorials across the County
- Opening on Nov 11 1928 to celebrate Armistice Day



Veterans Memorial Building - Historic Asset

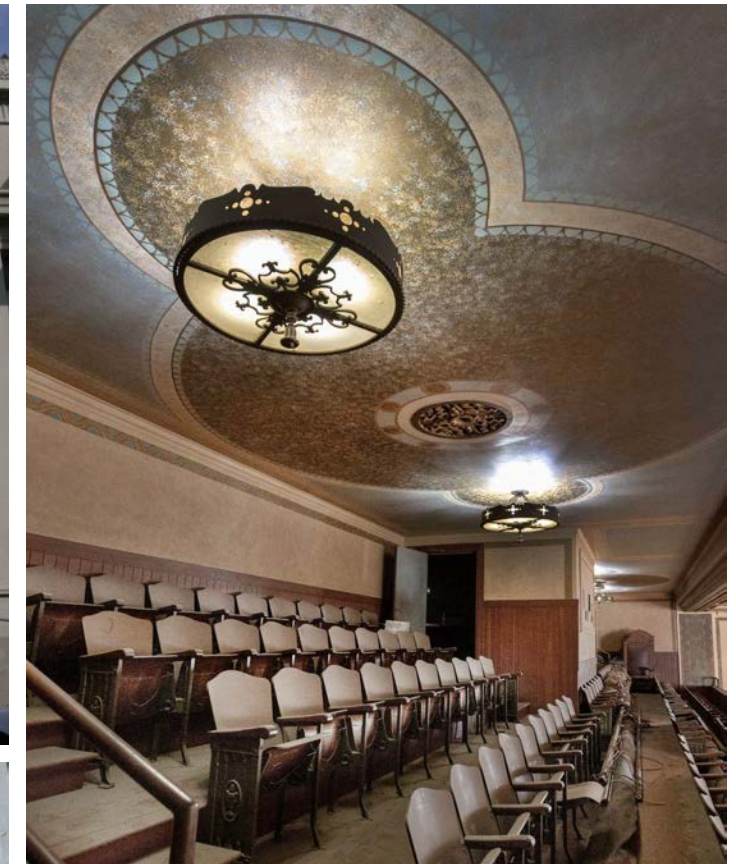
- Designed by Henry H. Meyers, completed 1928
- Classical Modern with Art Deco aesthetic
- Character-defining features intact
- Investigations into condition of enclosure, parapet, and water conveyance needed
- Priority projects: correct source of water infiltration at stairs, seismic strengthening that prioritizes historic fabric, provide working elevator.



"Beautiful building - please preserve it"

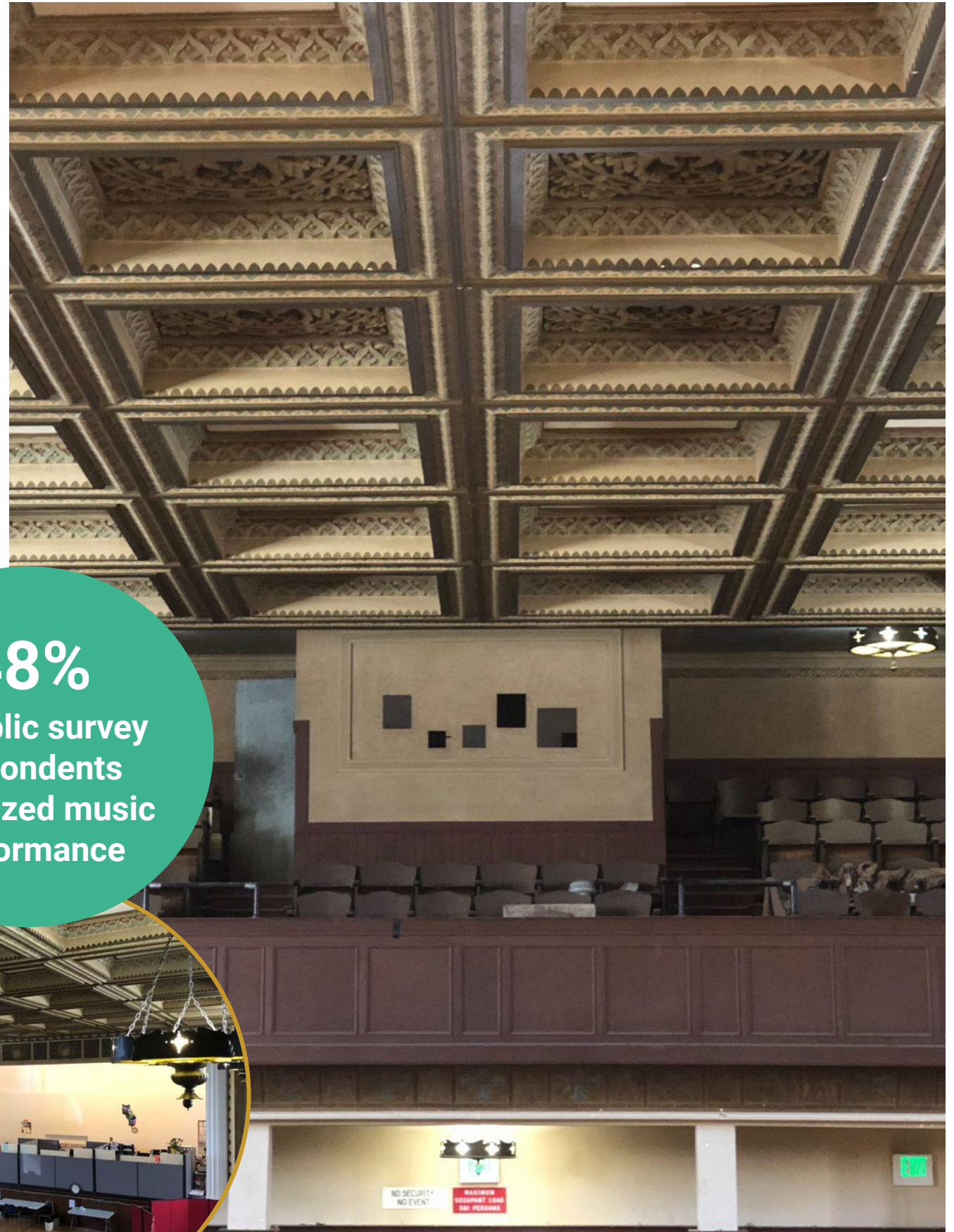
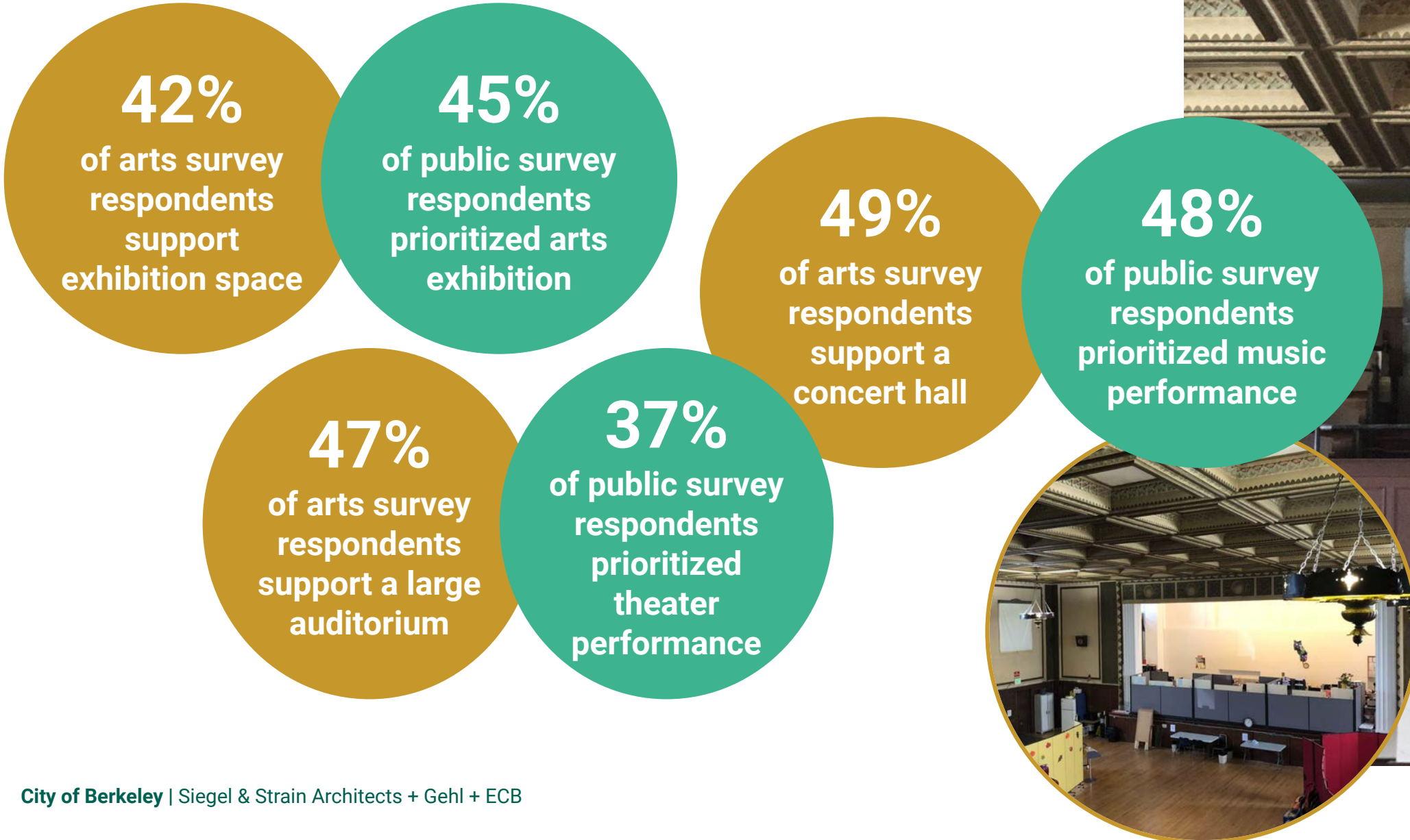


"It is beautiful, and an asset to the city."



Veterans Memorial Building - Cultural Center for the Community

Revitalize the building by bringing performance and exhibition into the Civic Center - 54% of arts groups surveyed showed enthusiastic or high interest in using spaces in the Veterans Memorial Building.

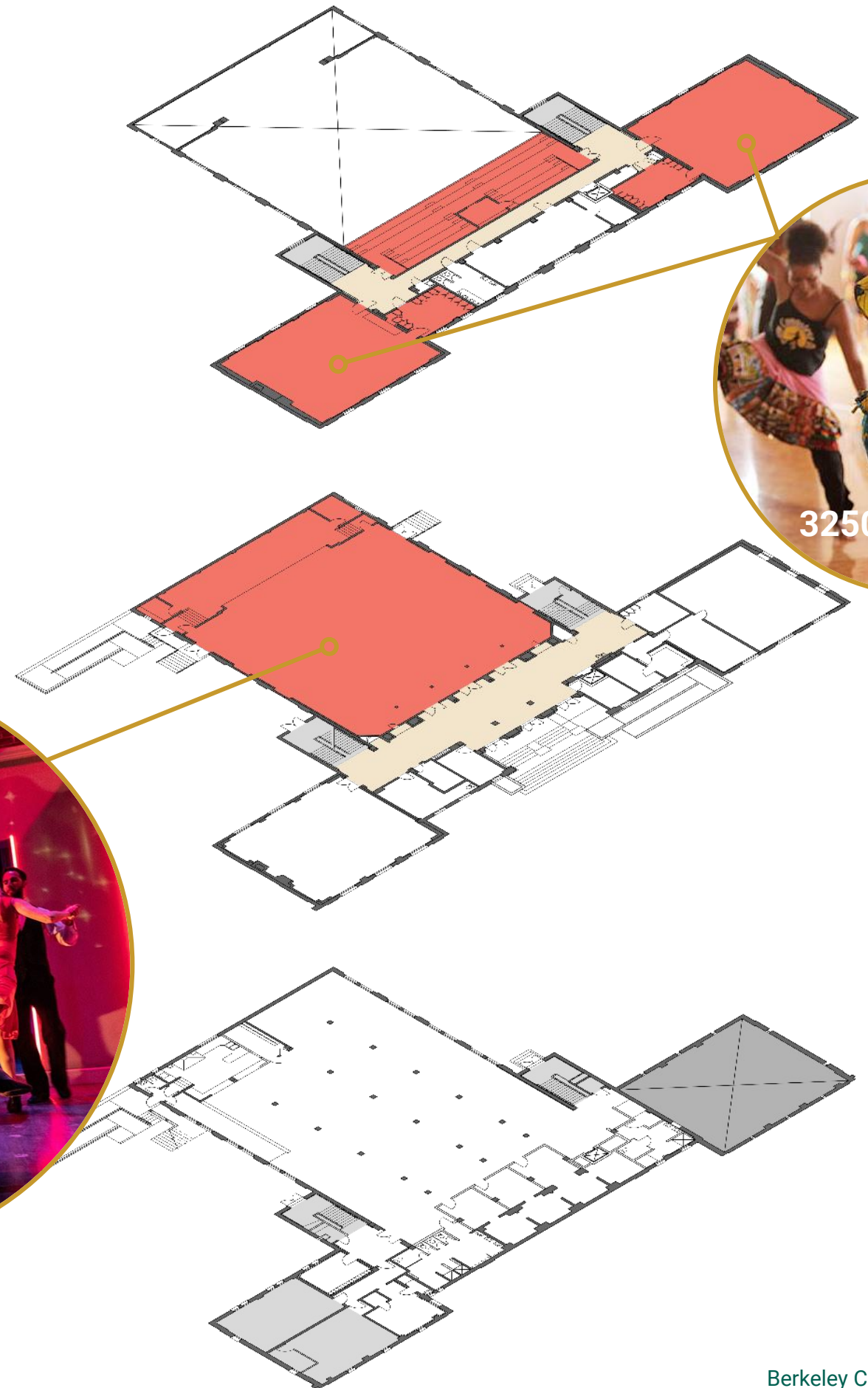
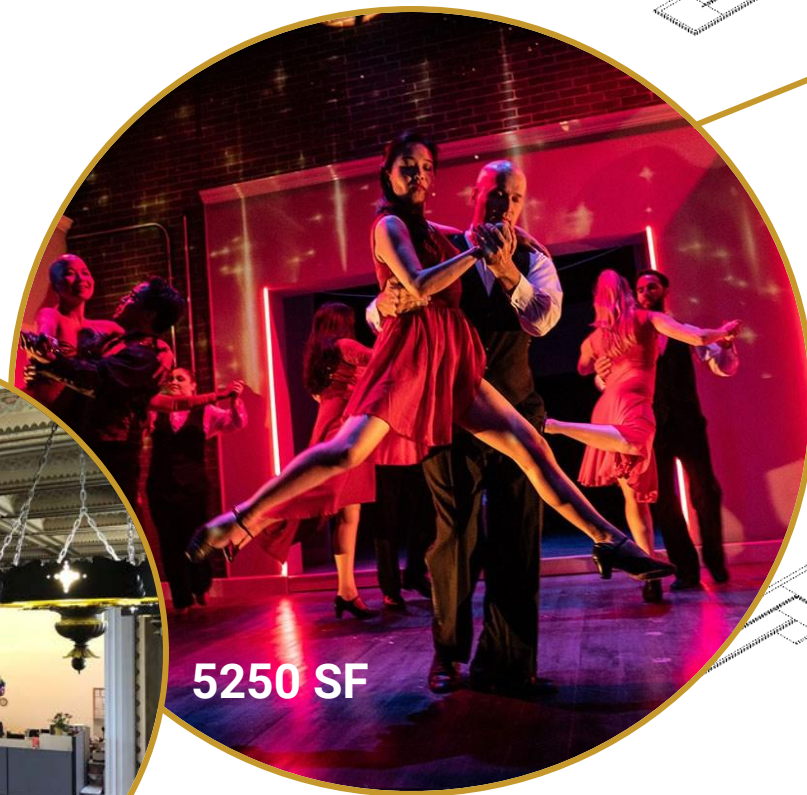
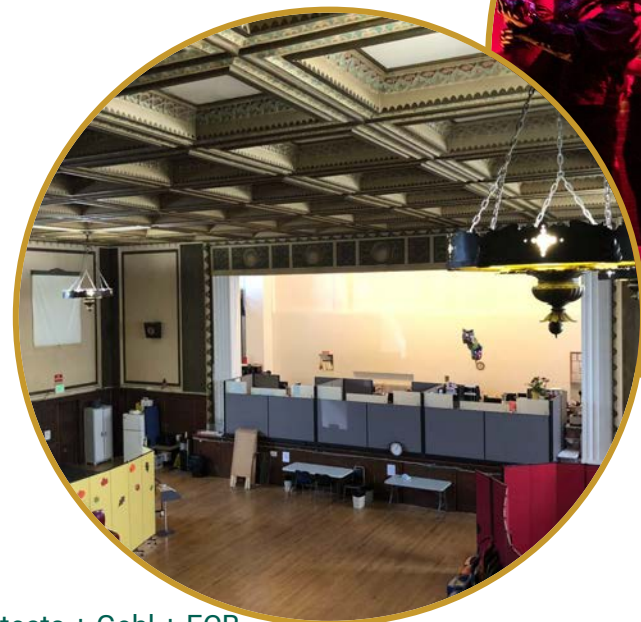


Veterans Memorial Building - Performance Space

Fulfill a need seen by the recipients of City Civic Arts grants, and the larger community for multi-disciplinary performance spaces available to rent by the larger community.

Space Use - 10,500 SF

- Lobby
- Large Performance Space
- Small Performance Spaces
- Backstage

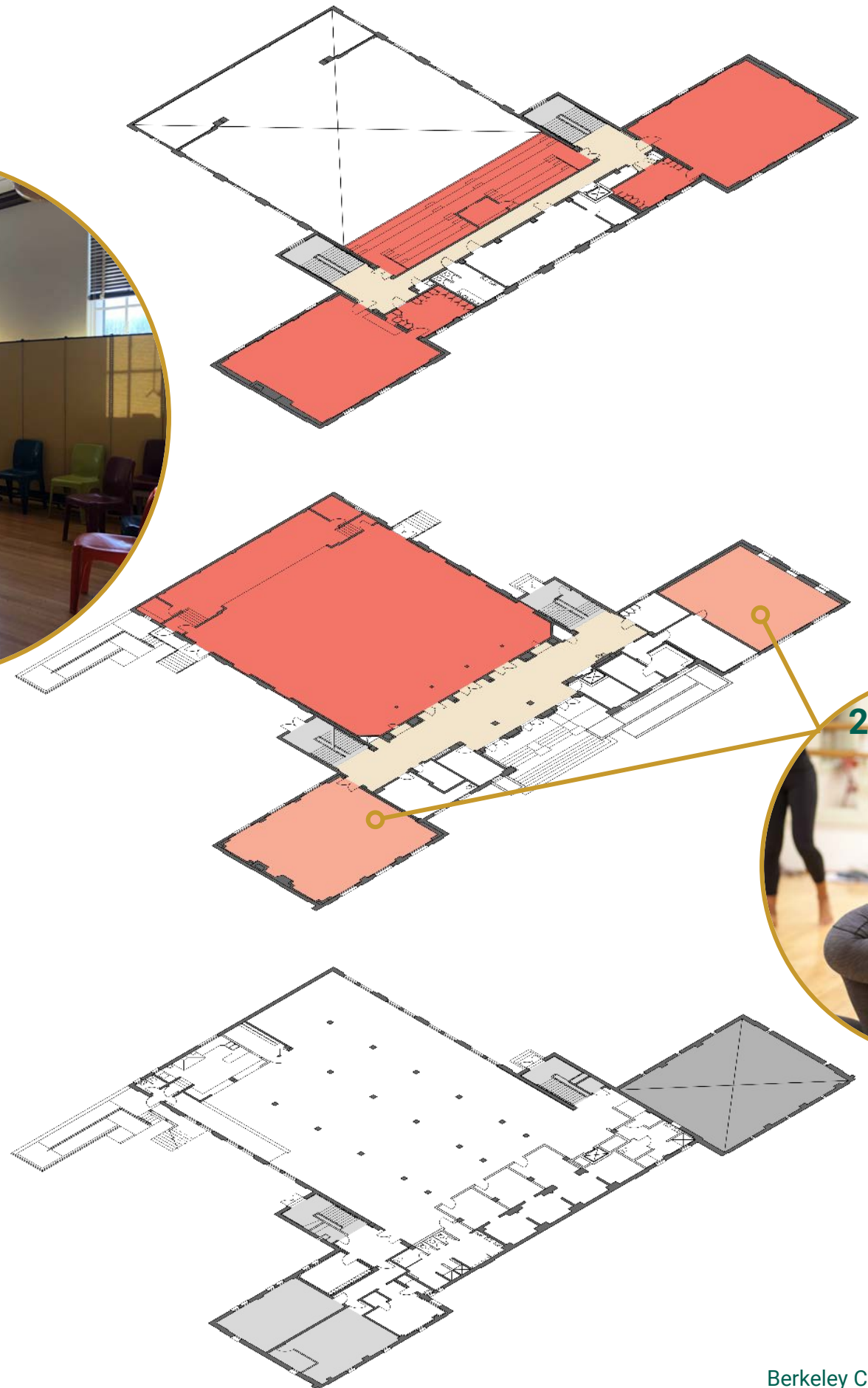


5250 SF

3250 SF

Veterans Memorial Building - Practice Space

Create flexible space offerings that can be used by many types of arts organizations for classes, events or practices.



Space Use
Rehearsal Spaces
Classrooms

44%
of arts survey
respondents support
rehearsal space

42%
of arts survey
respondents
support
classrooms

Veterans Memorial Building - Support Spaces

Provide high quality support spaces for a modern cultural arts center, drawing users and generating revenue.

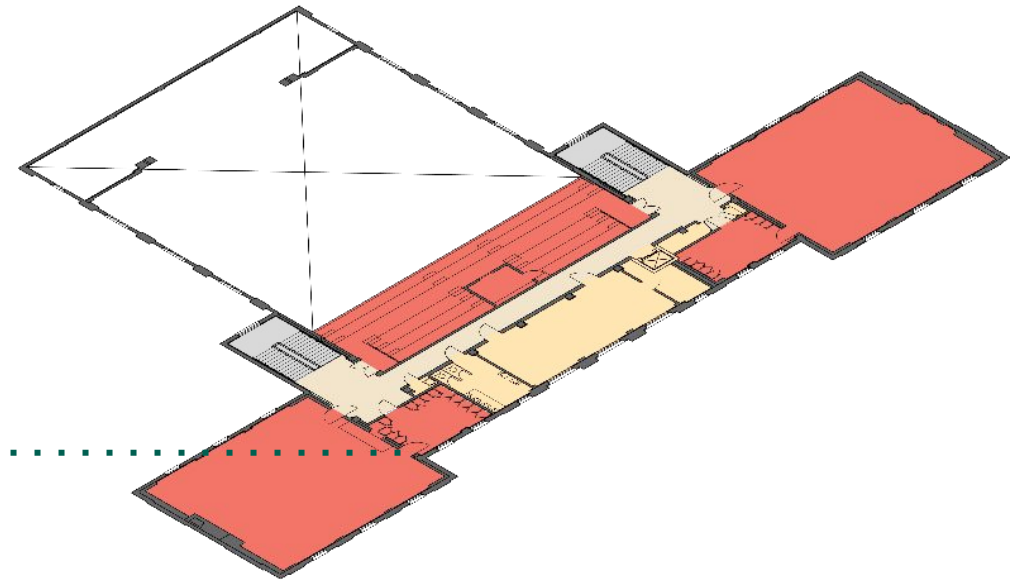
Space Needs

- Offices
- Bathrooms
- Storage
- Stage/Scenery Shop
- Makerspace



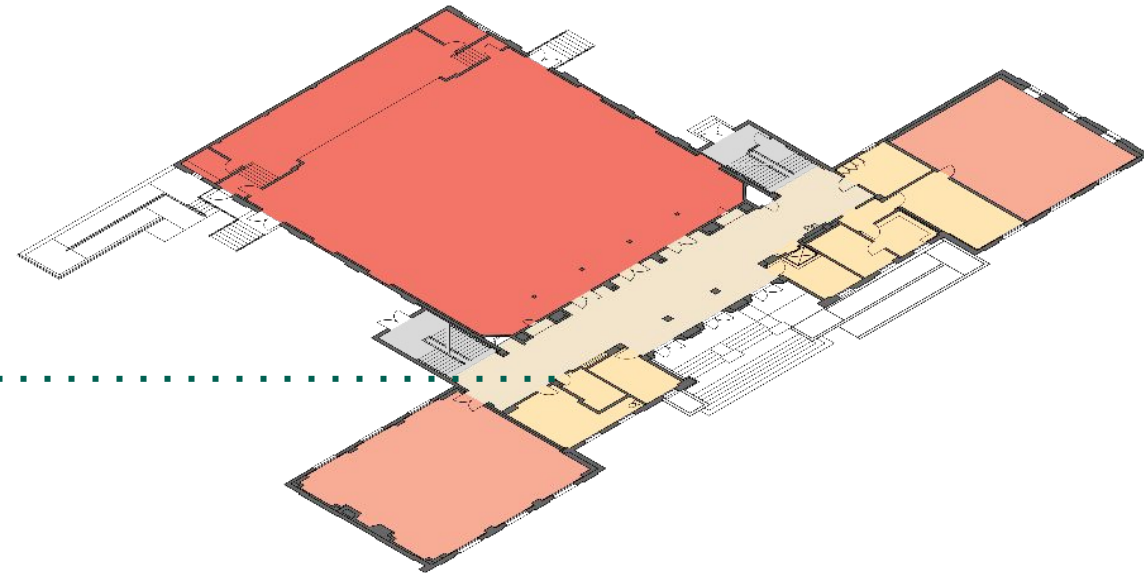
SECOND FLOOR

1000 SF



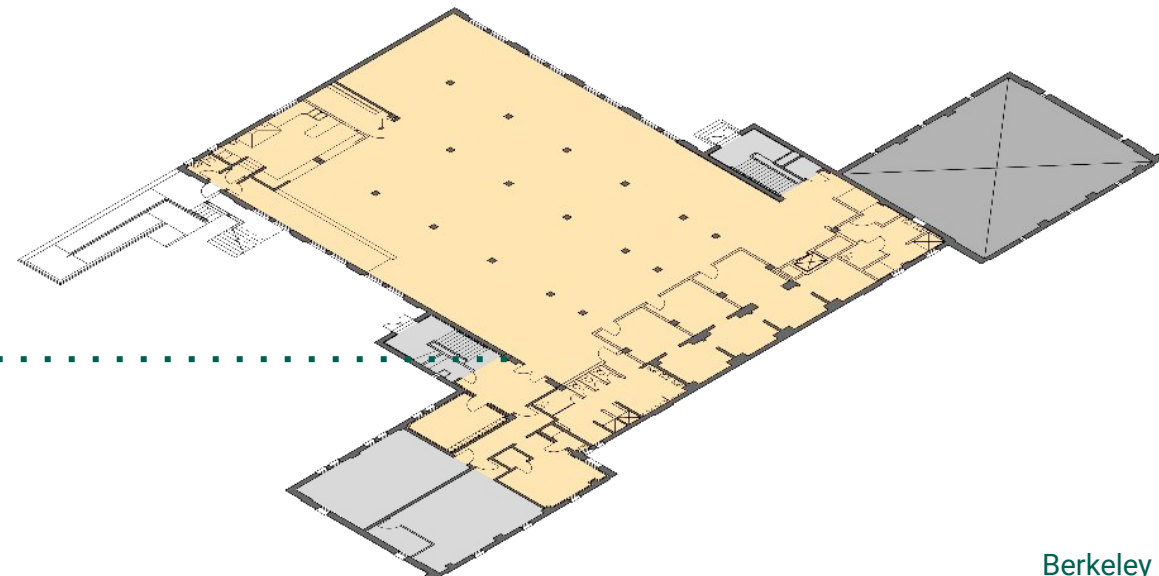
FIRST FLOOR

800 SF



BASEMENT

9750 SF



Veterans Memorial Building - Municipal Arts Centers

Outreach to local successful municipal art spaces that provide flexible and accessible space for members of the community.

Lesher Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek

Palo Alto Art Center

Studio One Art Center, Oakland



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

"A public arts space open to all artist."

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

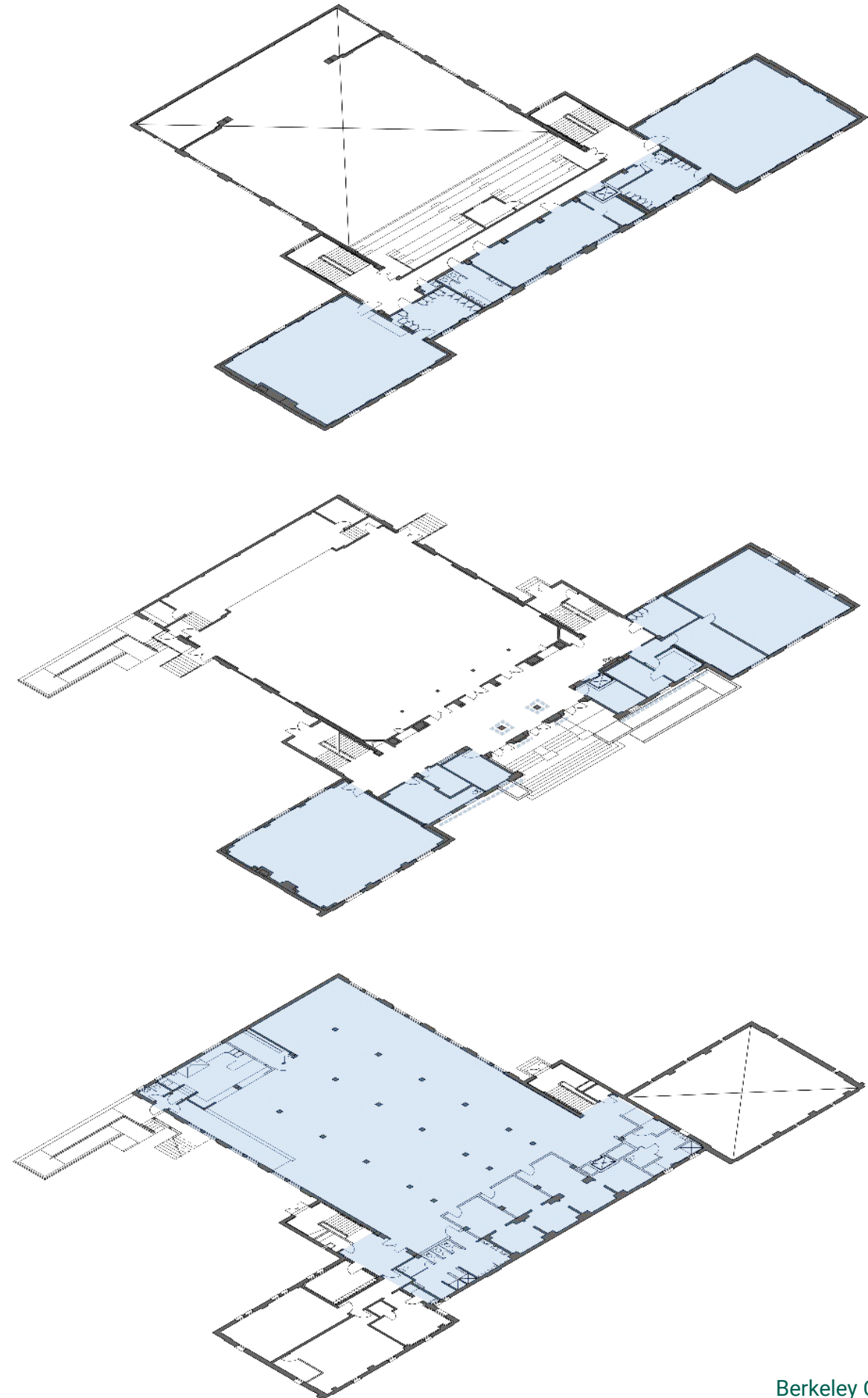


Veterans Memorial Building - Building Performance Objective for New Buildings Upgrades

Improve seismic performance of the building by utilizing the intrinsic structural value of the existing fabric while minimizing the disturbance of historic finishes.

Approach: Aim for BPON+ performance by strengthening the existing diaphragms and improving floor to wall and wall to roof connections, reinforcing select areas with shotcrete or carbon fiber.

Result: Building may experience some localized structural damage, with low risk of injury. Reoccupied several months to a year after event.



Veterans Memorial Building - Improvements

“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.”

System Upgrades



Building Performance



Accessibility



Finishes



Egress/Safety



Design Drivers

MLK Jr Civic Center Park & Surrounding Streets

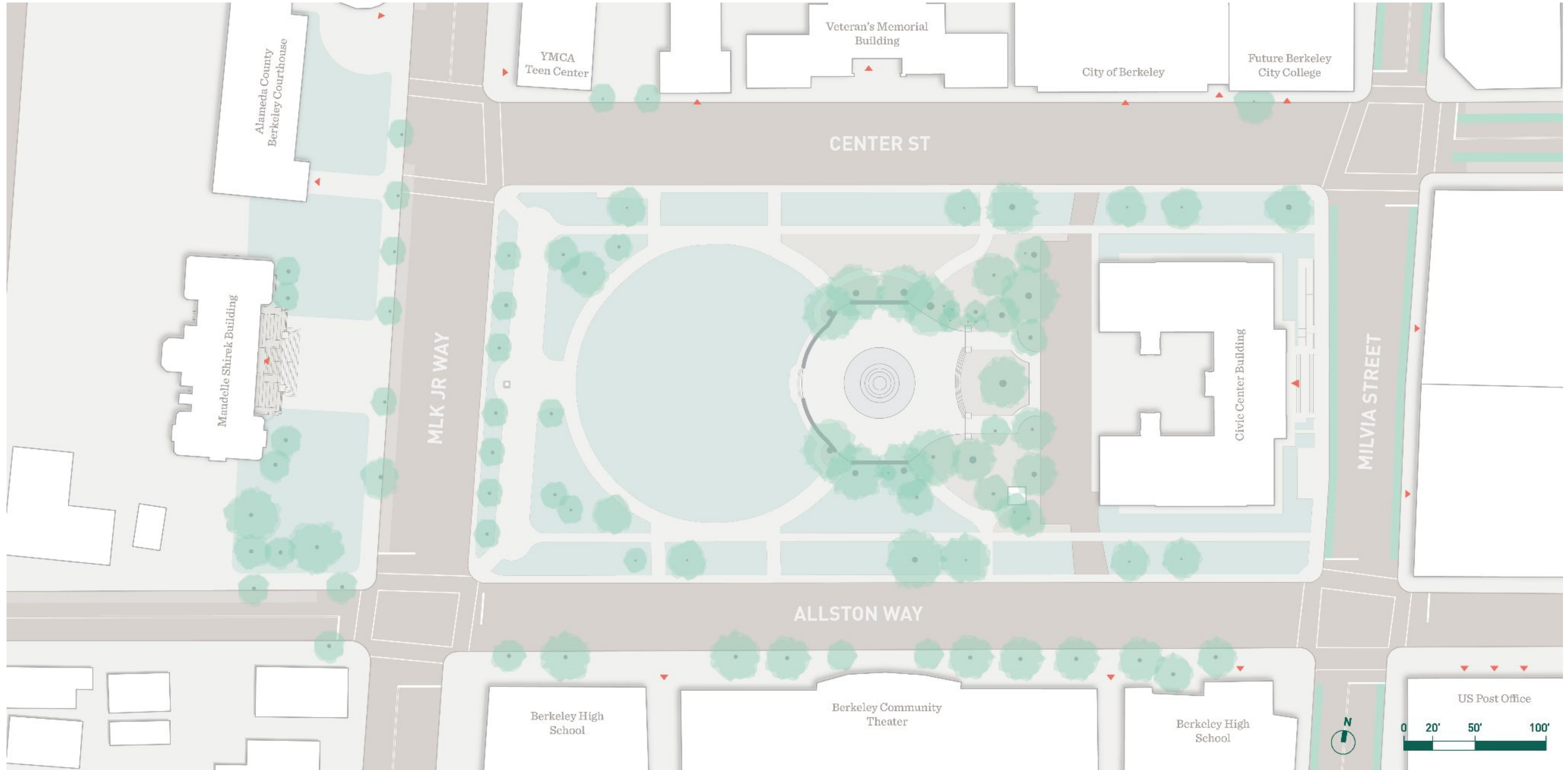
What have we learned since Phase 1?

New information that is reflected in the updated concept design:

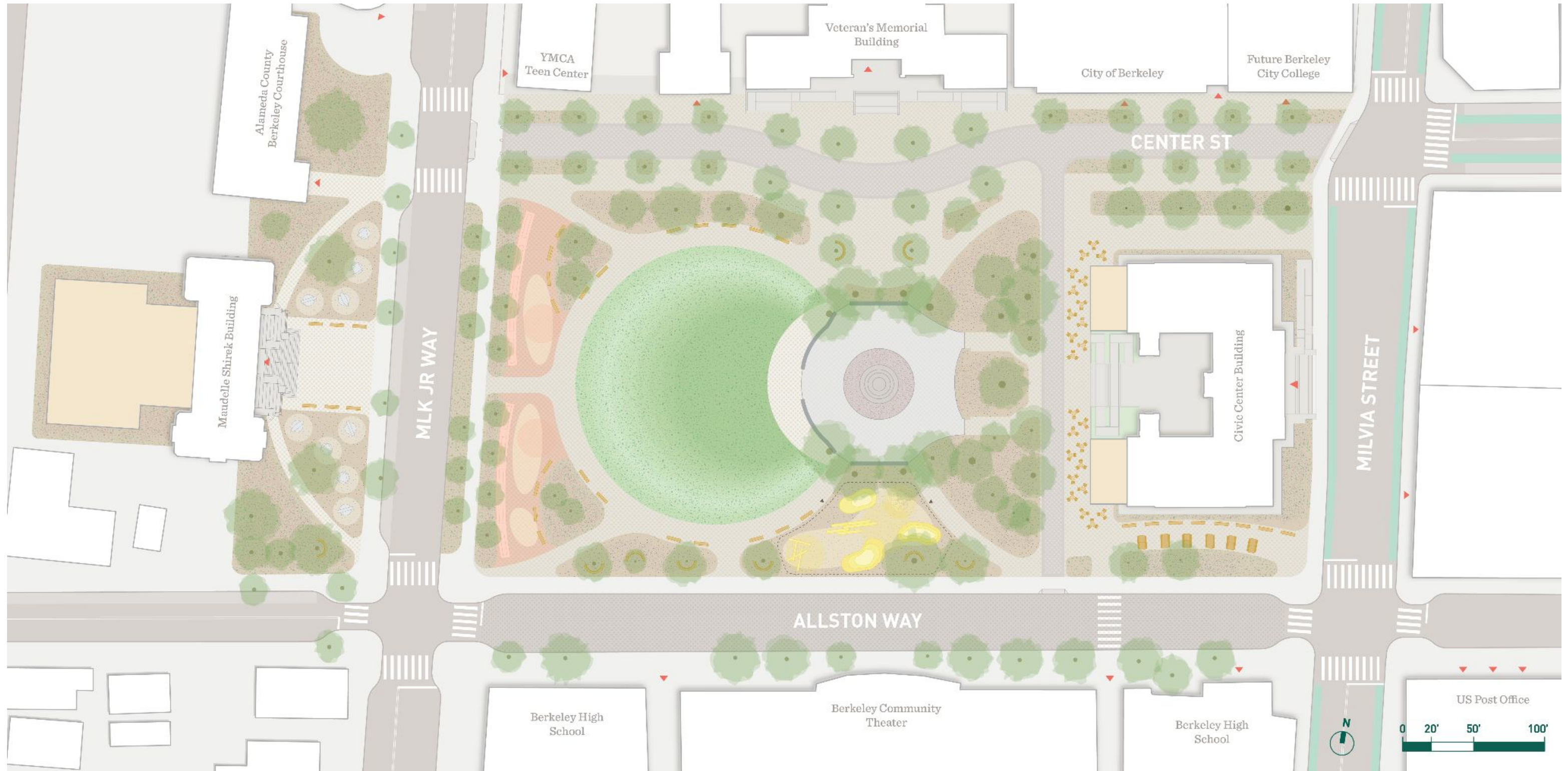
- Additional public input on desired amenities and character for the park.
- Additional context from event organizers including farmer's market.
- Proposed Turtle Island Monument
- Potential daylighting scenarios for Strawberry Creek
- Performance venue study



Site Plan - Existing



Site Plan - Proposed



Design Drivers

MLK Jr Civic Center Park and Surrounding Streets

1

Preserve and build upon the strengths of Civic Center

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

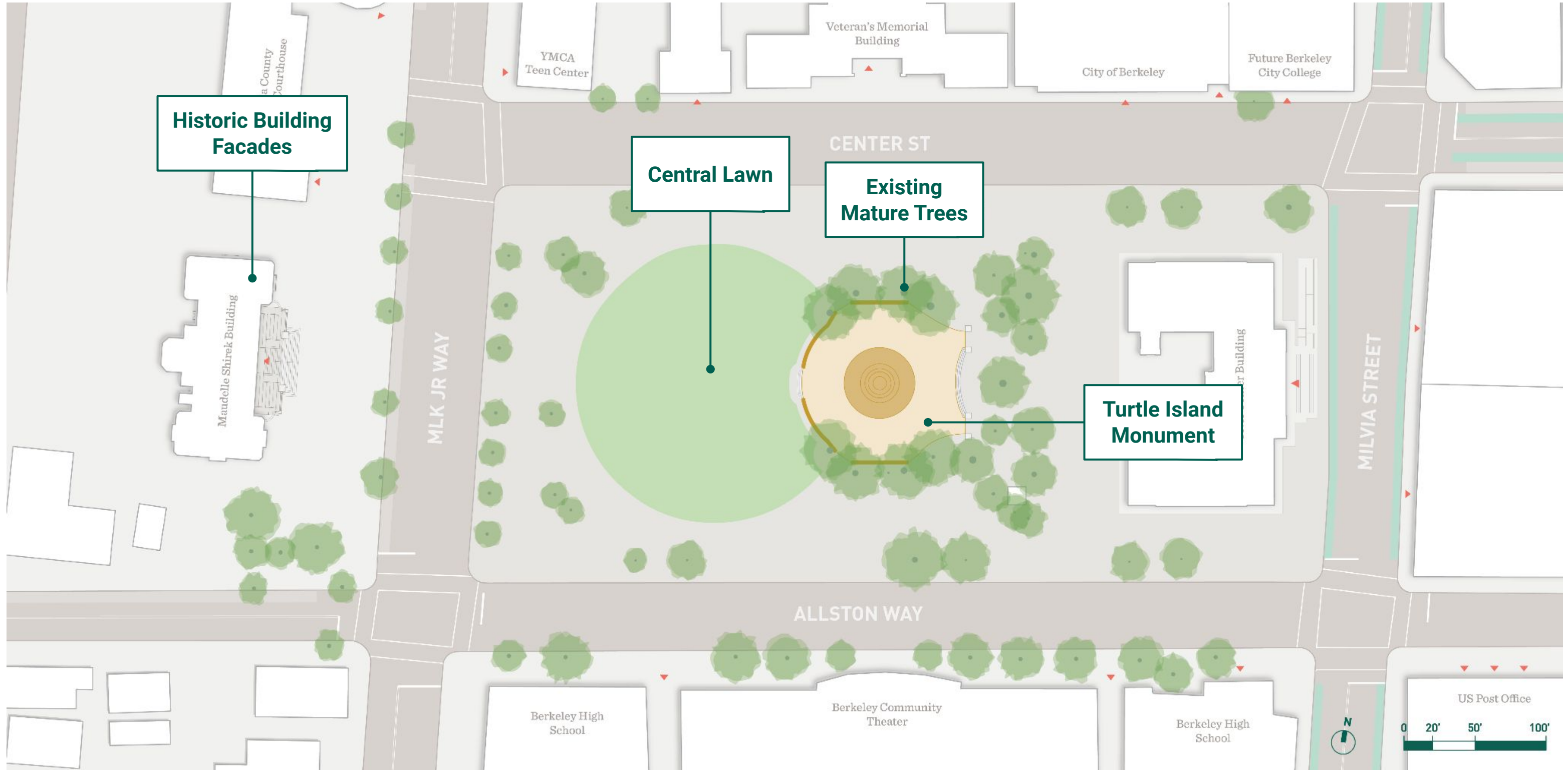
1

Preserve and build upon the strengths of Civic Center



1

Preserve and build upon the strengths of Civic Center



2

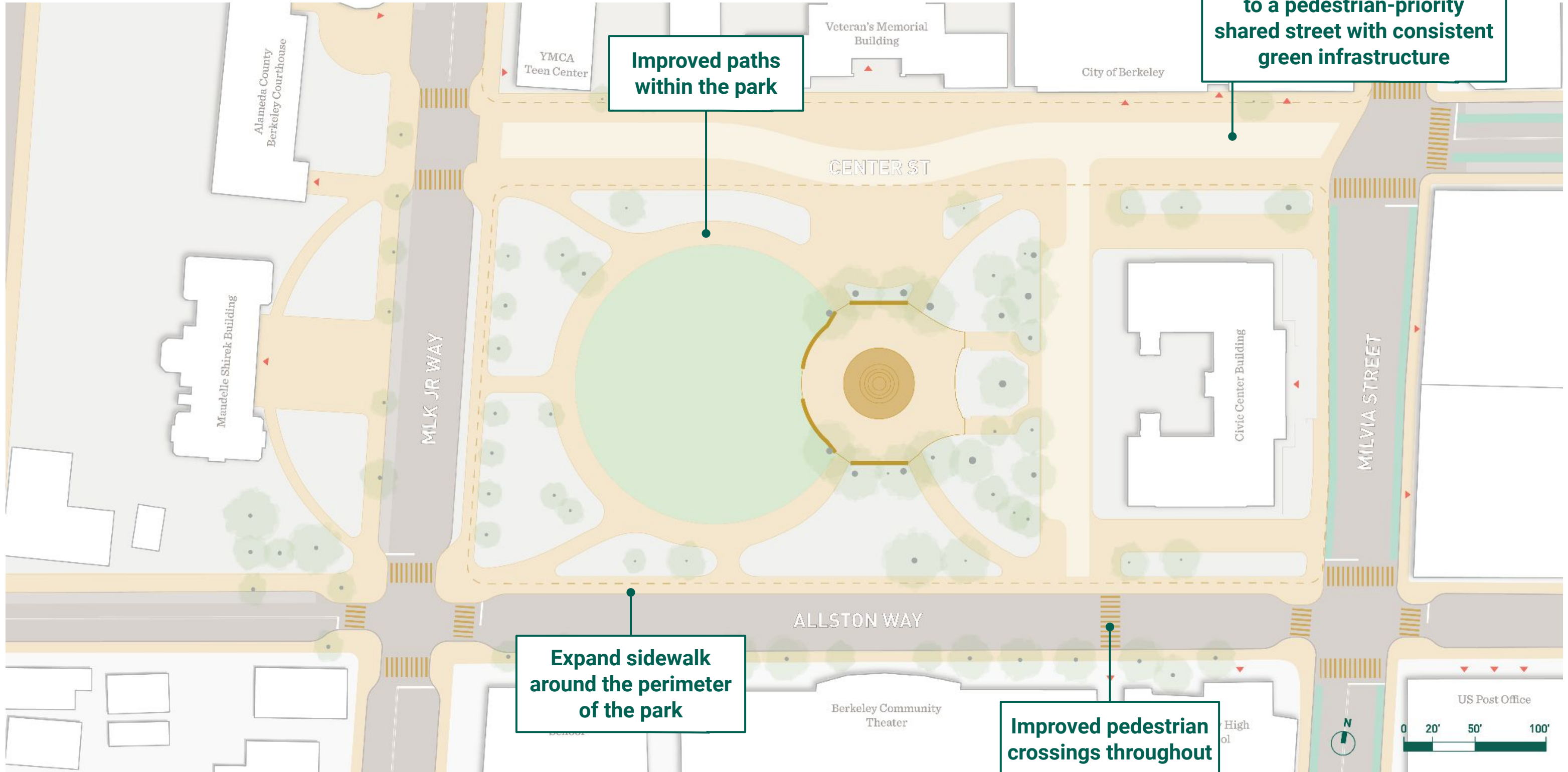
Improve pedestrian safety and usability of paths

“This space is highly used by pedestrians, but doesn't feel as if it is designed for that purpose. It would be wonderful if the space were redesigned to prioritize pedestrians and recreational use.”



2

Improve pedestrian safety and usability of paths



3

Enhance natural features, promote biodiversity and green design

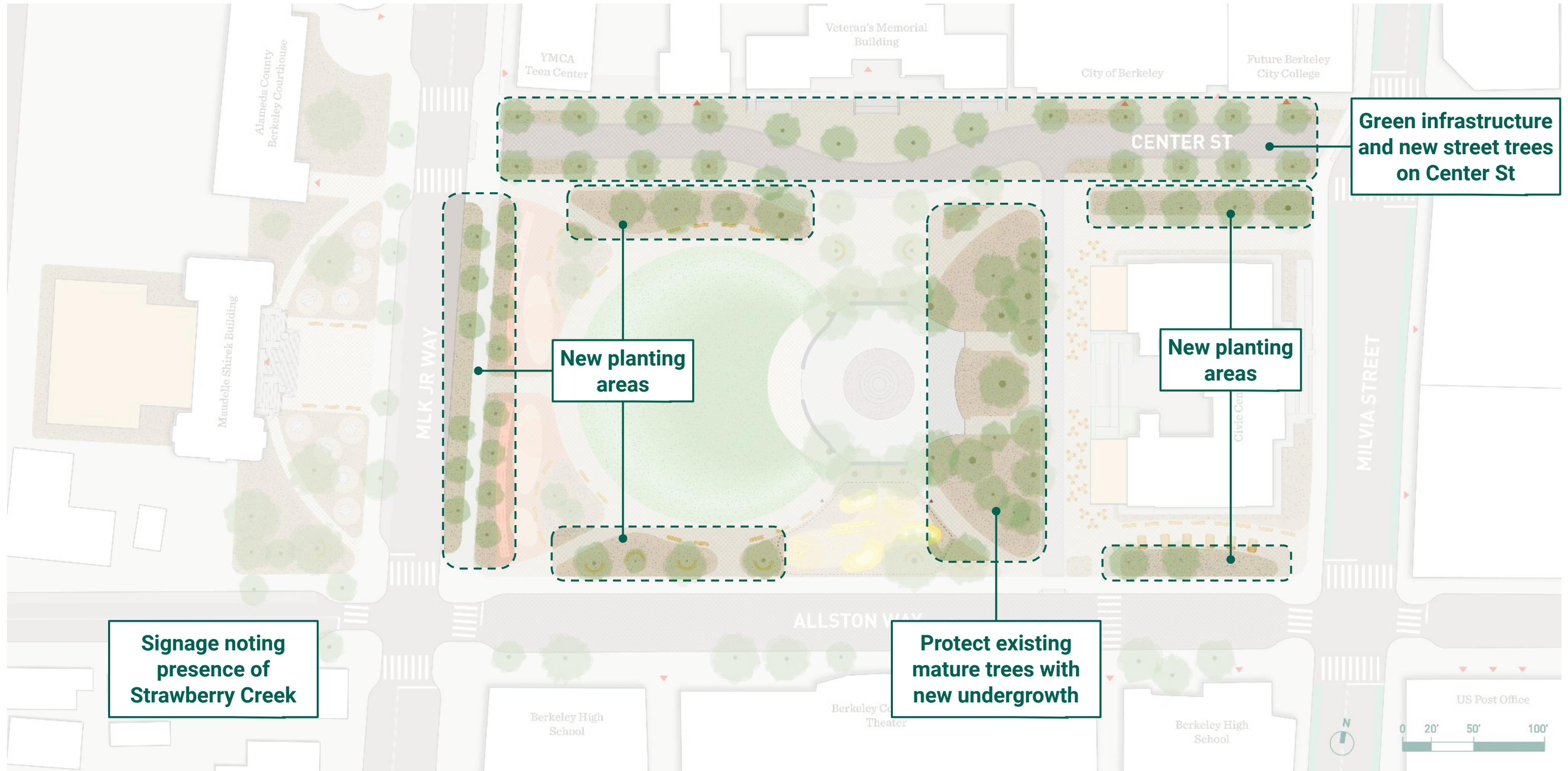


“The park and streets all around it are a perfect opportunity to restore native plants and biodiversity and daylight Strawberry Creek, and bring nature back to the city.”



3

Enhance natural features, promote biodiversity and green design



4

Expand invitations for a variety of everyday uses

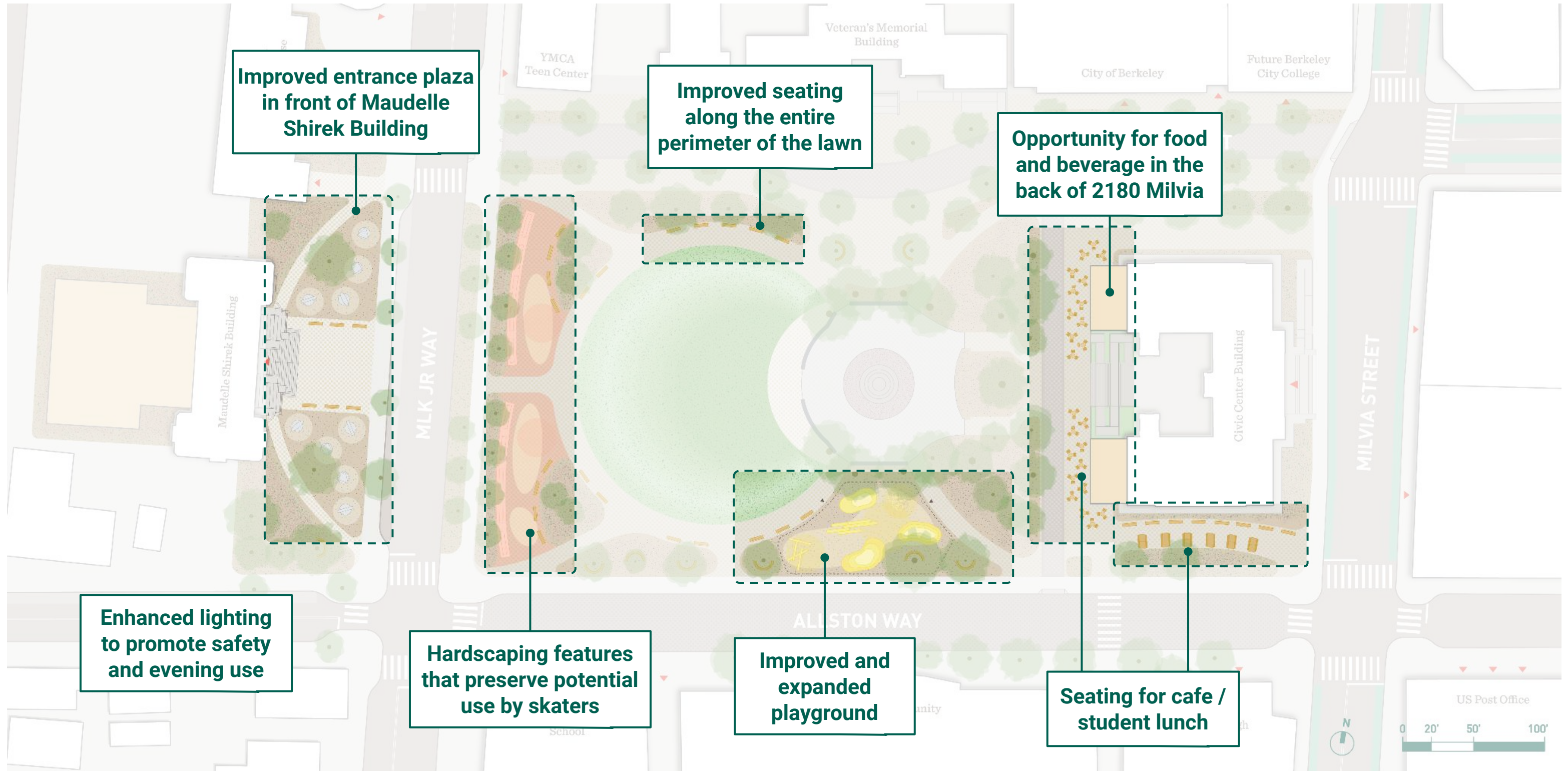
What, in your opinion, should the park be designed for?

“For all Berkeleyans to use on a daily basis, especially kids, students and elderly people who need places to gather and play.”



4

Expand invitations for a variety of everyday uses



5

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

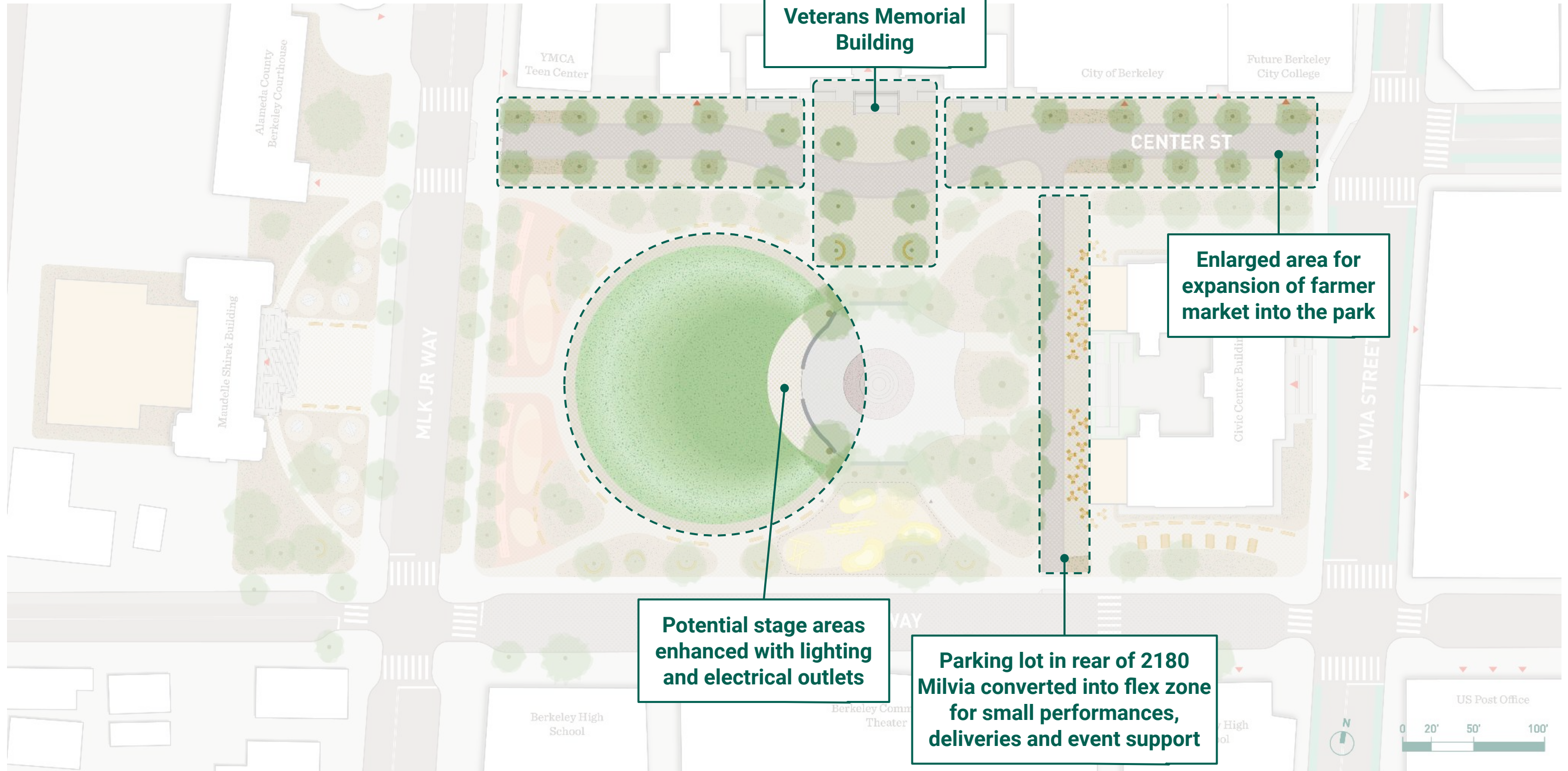
VISION:
"Civic Center will be the prime space for civic life, culture, and the arts."

"The park should be designed for children, Berkeley High Students, civic, arts, and cultural events. I would love it to be similar to the way Bryant Park in NYC was reimagined as a place for everyone."



5

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



6

Explore opportunities to daylight Strawberry Creek

→ *Requires additional study to determine feasibility*



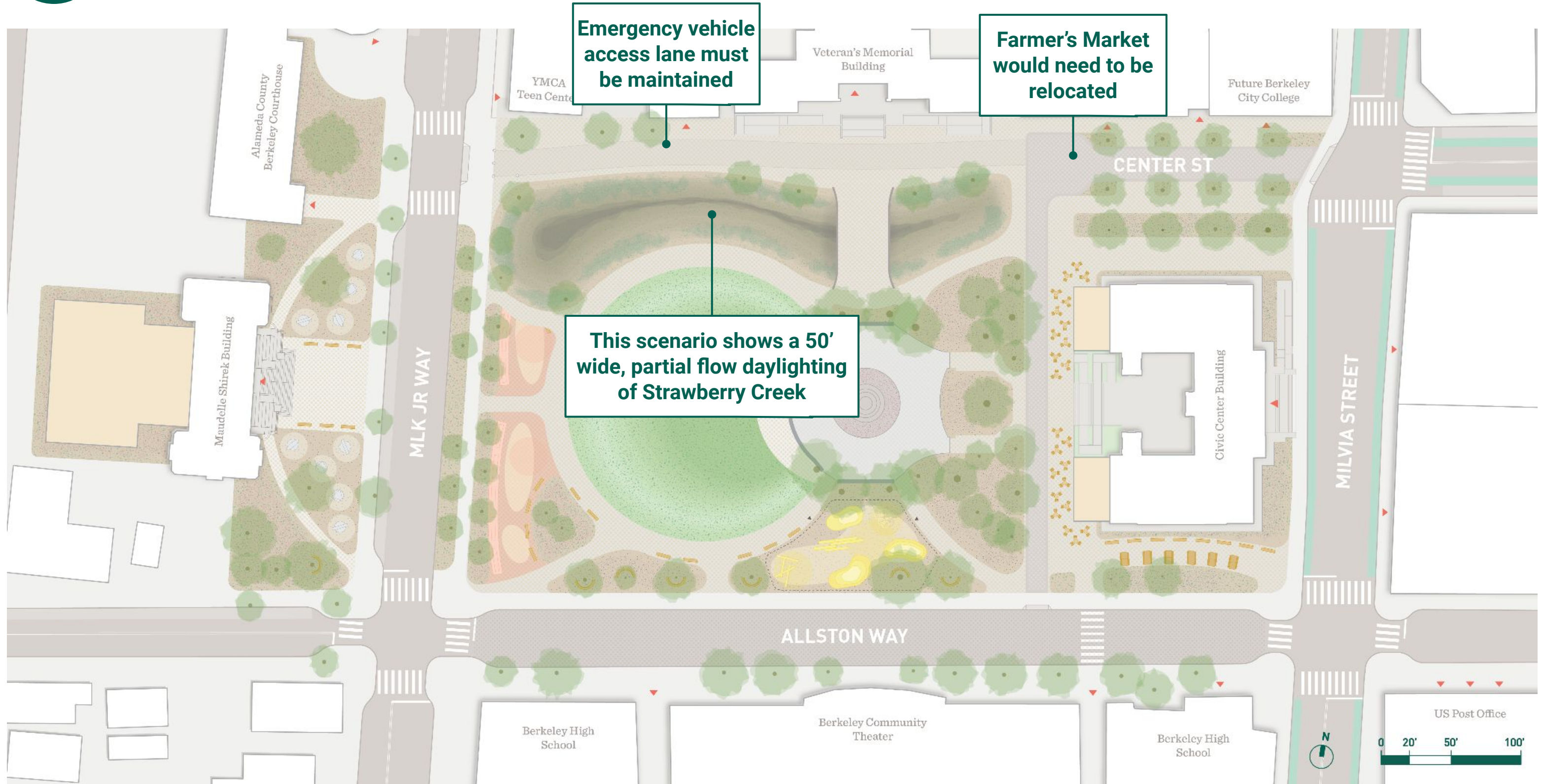
VISION:
"Celebrating it's history... aims to manifest the city's values"

"The park and streets all around it are a perfect opportunity to restore native plants and biodiversity and daylight Strawberry Creek, and bring nature back to the city."



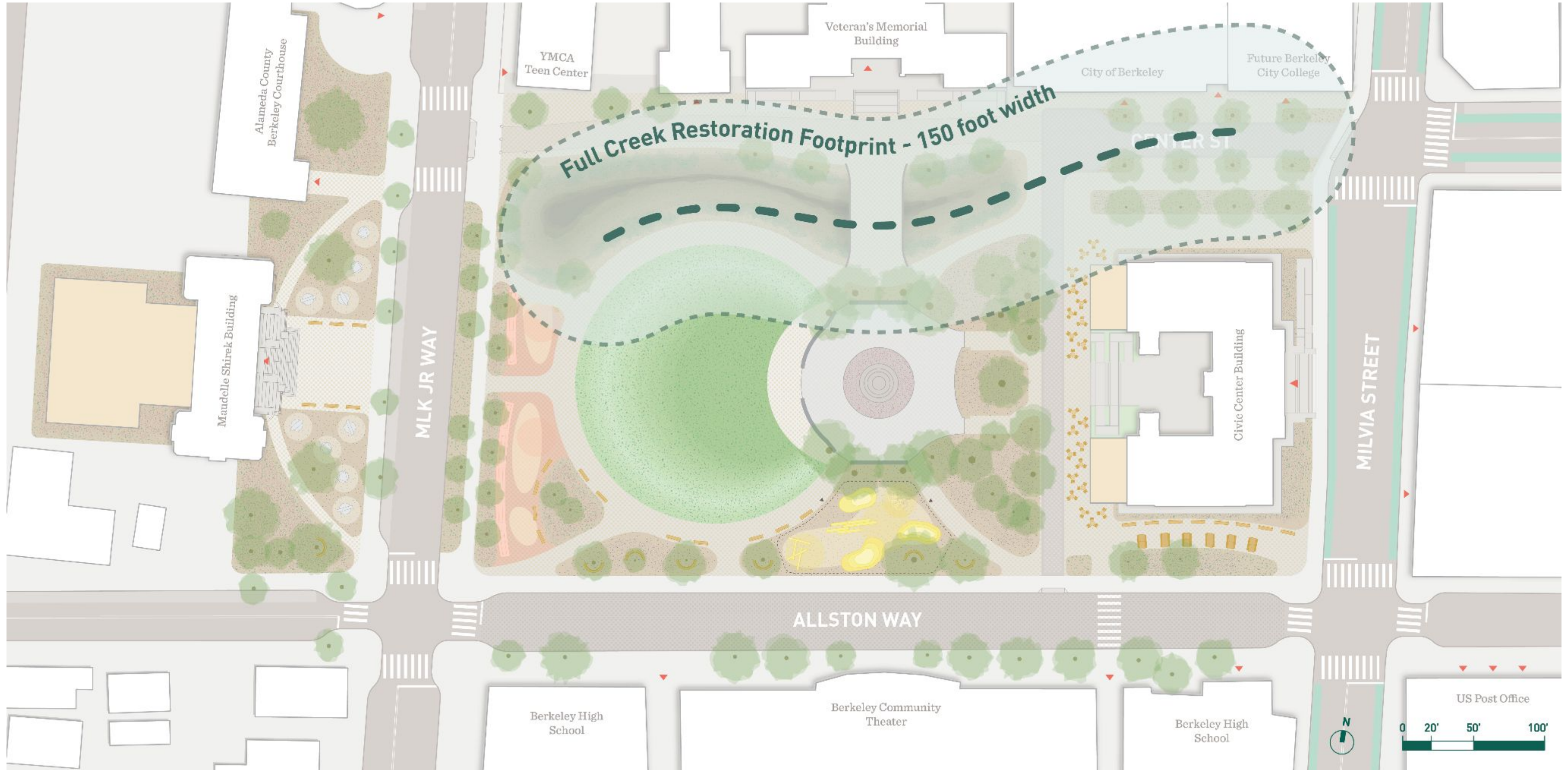
6

Explore opportunities to daylight Strawberry Creek



6

Explore opportunities to daylight Strawberry Creek

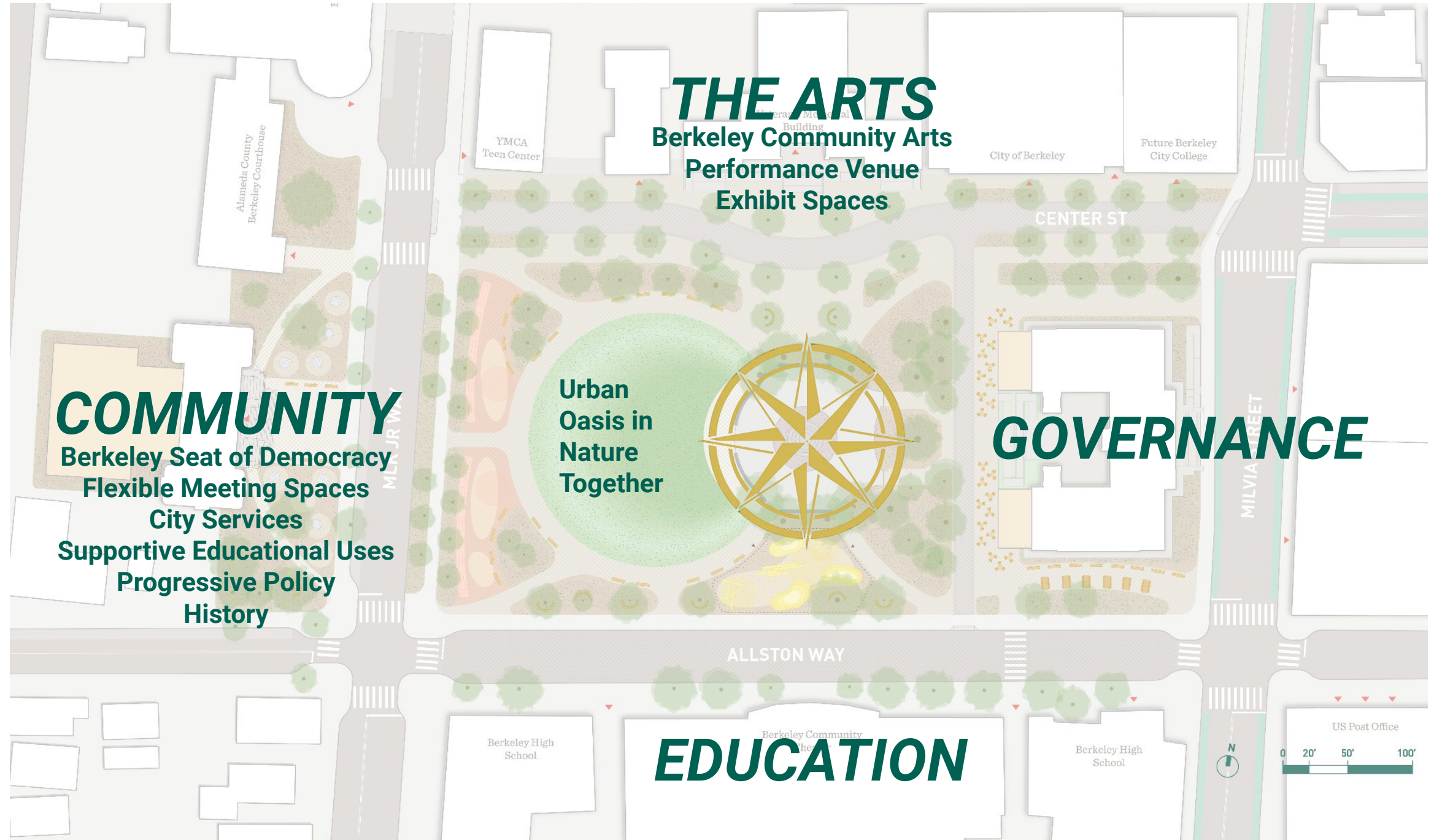


Themes

“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**.”



Next Steps

Design Concept Phase

→ 2/15/23 - Focused Outreach to BHS and BCC students

Outline management/lease strategy for Arts Center in Veterans Memorial Building

Identify early implementation projects

→ 3/21/23 - Council Work Session

Construction cost estimate (design concept level) for full project

Draft Report

→ June 2023 - City Council Presentation

Next Steps

Early Implementation Phase

In transparent collaboration with vision-aligned partners and non-profit organizations

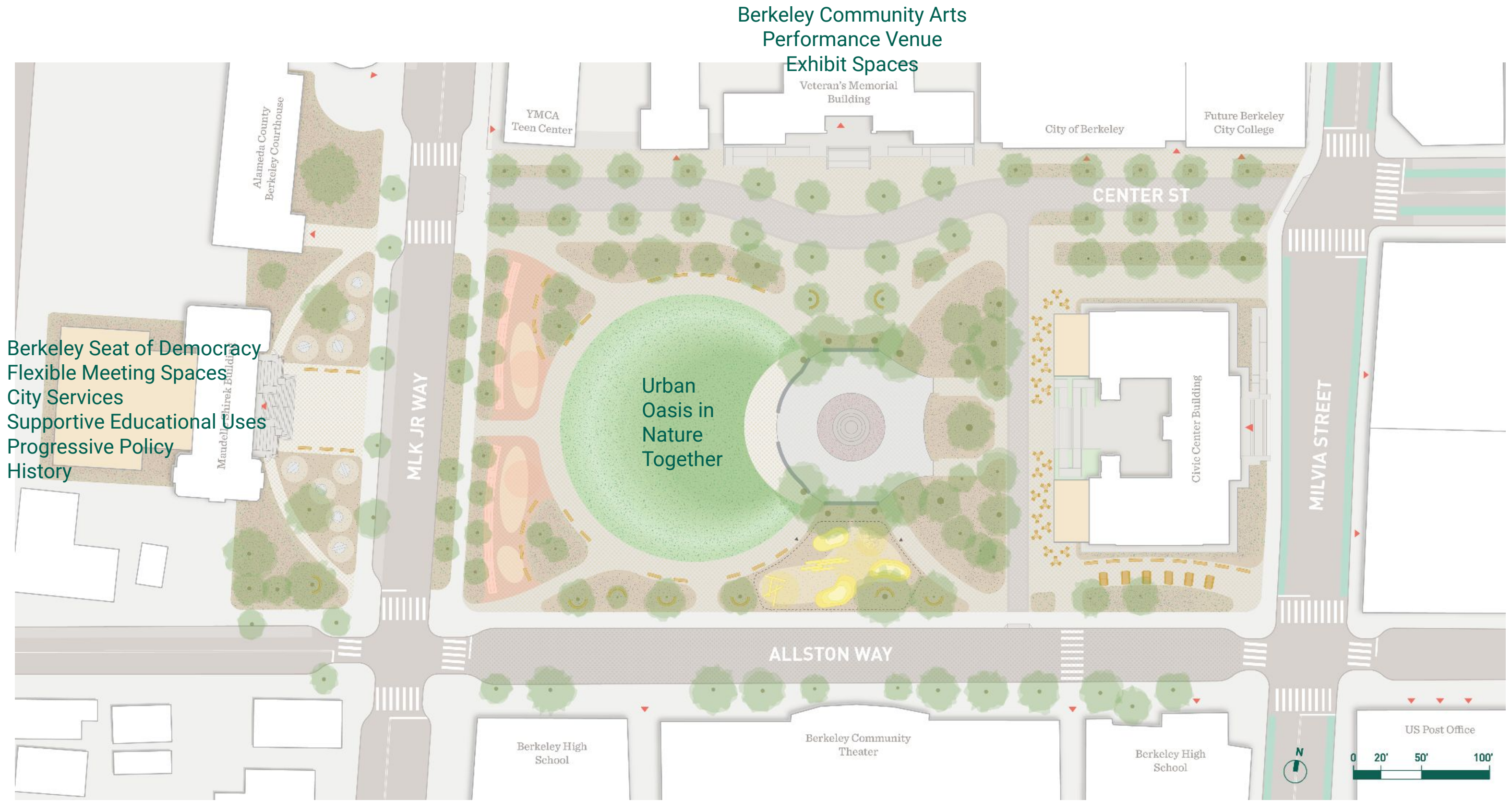
PARK

- Initiate, scope & design early implementation and activation projects
 - ◆ Furnishings, paths, lighting, restroom upgrades
 - ◆ Tree protection & succession plan
 - ◆ Biodiversity enhancement
 - ◆ Improvements related to events, gatherings
- Conduct comprehensive creek daylighting study
- Update park operations, maintenance, lease agreements

BUILDINGS

- Develop funding plans with phasing considerations
- Develop use agreements, memos of understanding
- Develop detailed spatial programs based on need
- Stabilize the historic structures

Berkeley Civic Center - Emerging Consensus Design



Berkeley Community Arts
Performance Venue
Exhibit Spaces

Berkeley Seat of Democracy
Flexible Meeting Spaces
City Services
Supportive Educational Uses
Progressive Policy
History

Urban
Oasis in
Nature
Together



Thank you

Contact: CivicCenter@cityofberkeley.info

SIEGEL & STRAIN Architects

Gehl ecb

