To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager  
Submitted by: Jordan Klein, Economic Development Manager  
Subject: Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan

SUMMARY
This worksession provides an update to City Council on the work that has been accomplished to date to develop a vision and implementation plan 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, Old City Hall, 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.

The project commenced in summer 2019 and the goal of the project is to conduct an inclusive and transparent community process, engage meaningfully with all stakeholders, and provide a shared vision and implementable plan for the Civic Center area that supports current and future community needs while respecting and celebrating the area’s rich past and historically significant structures. The project is funded through Phase 1 of the Measure T1 infrastructure bond designated to repair, renovate, replace, or reconstruct the City’s infrastructure, facilities, and buildings.

The Office of Economic Development (OED), along with its partners in the Parks, Recreation and Waterfront, Public Works, and Planning and Development Departments, selected a consultant team led by Gehl Studio and supported by Siegel & Strain Architects, Strategic Economics and others. In this worksession report, the Office of Economic Development (OED) summarizes the progress of this initiative to date, and shares selected work products from the consultant team including the stakeholder engagement strategy, a summary and the results of the Public Space Public Life Study (PSPL) conducted in October 2019, initial findings of the historic structures report, a list of focus group interviews conducted through December 2019, a summary of the public ‘visioning and values’ workshop from December 12, 2019, and a draft vision statement for the Civic Center’s next act.
CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Project Timeline

The project began in the summer of 2019 and is anticipated to be completed by the second half of 2020, according to this approximate timeline:

- Consultant Contract Authorization by Council: July 2019
- Project Commencement: August 2019
- Public and City Engagement: Visioning
  - Technical Advisory Committee: September 9, 2019
  - “Super” Subcommittee Meeting of the Public Works, Parks and Civic Arts Commissions: September 9, 2019
  - Site Tour #1: September 9, 2019
  - Technical Advisory Committee Meeting: November 14, 2019
  - Super Subcommittee Meeting: November 21, 2019
  - Small Focus Group Interviews: October – December 2019
  - Workshop #1: Vision and Values: December 12, 2019
- Public Space Public Life Study & Historic Structures Research: October 2019
- Public and City Engagement: Draft Design Concepts
  - Workshop #2: Youth Focus at Berkeley High: Winter 2020
  - Workshop #3: Pop-Ups & Site Tour #2: Winter 2020
  - Technical Advisory Committee Meeting: Spring 2020
  - Commission Engagement: Spring 2020
  - Workshop #4: Design Concept Share & Selection: Spring 2020
- Council Presentation (Preferred Design Concept and Plan): Summer 2020

Summary of Meetings and Outreach to Date

The consultant team, led by Gehl Studio and supported by staff from OED and other City departments, kicked off the project with a series of public meetings in late August 2019 and early September 2019, including a site tour of both buildings and the park on September 9, 2019. The public outreach effort is displayed visually in the project’s Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Map (Attachment 1).
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 project RFQ in late 2018, and has since gathered formally twice with the consultant team: at the project kick off meeting in September 2019, and to review the Public Space Public Life Study (PSPL) results in November 2019. 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, and public works facility staff) have made essential contributions to the project team’s research and outreach process.

Super Subcommittee of City Commissions. In order 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 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 in order to participate. This larger group of subcommittees met twice in publicly noticed meetings at 2180 Milvia Street, first to kick off the project in September and again in November to review and comment on the findings of the PSPL and initial research of the historic structures report (Attachment 2).

Site Tours. Since releasing the RFQ in early 2019, City staff members have received many requests to tour the two buildings. The first tour of both buildings and the park was held in conjunction with the project kick off and super subcommittee meeting on September 9, 2019. A second tour is tentatively scheduled for late February 2020, to be held in conjunction with a “pop-up” public workshop.

Focus Groups and Interviews. From October through December 2019, staff and the consultant team conducted 27 one-on-one or small group interviews with Civic Center stakeholders in Berkeley, including the current Civic Center tenants, City Council Members (and/or their staff) from each district office and the Mayor’s office, representatives from the Berkeley Unified School District including the District Superintendent and principal of Berkeley High School, planners of annual community events that occur in Civic Center, arts organizations, business associations, local media outlets, city staff, and architectural heritage groups. See Attachment 3 for a complete list of interviewees.

Public Space Public Life Study
In October 2019, the Civic Center project area was analyzed using the consultant team’s unique exercise for assessing public life in civic spaces. The result of more than 40 years of research and development, Gehl’s Public Space Public Life Study (PSPL) is
a comprehensive ethnographic analysis of the relationship between human activity and the built environment in the public realm. At Civic Center, the team conducted a targeted PSPL in the surrounding streets and the park, using volunteers and digital tools to gather fine-grained, human-scale data (Attachment 4). These data, coupled with the project’s public engagement process, are fundamental in helping craft future design options that directly respond to what was observed and heard. Gehl uses pedestrian counts and stationary activity surveys to understand where and how people move and what they do when spending time in a place. Gehl also assesses the quality and condition of outdoor seating, façade conditions, the quality of paving materials and other qualitative factors that affect the public realm. Data is then distilled, and can be compared across cities, or used to better understand how people are using (or not using) a particular public space.

The full results of the PSPL are presented with detailed images and data in the accompanying Attachment 5: Berkeley Civic Center PSPL Insights. A description of the PSPL method begins on page 5, and more detail on each of the study’s ten key findings follows on page 9.

**Vision and Values Workshop**

On December 12, 2019, staff and the consultant team hosted a Vision and Values Workshop at the YMCA Teen Center (Attachment 6). 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 Vision Statement. The consultant team organized the session into fast-paced group exercises, with opportunities for discussion in small groups and ‘share-backs’ with the whole group.

When asked to articulate qualities about a favorite place in Berkeley, participants described public spaces for commerce, like the Farmer’s Market, and cited many Berkeley parks that draw diverse users and have diverse activities available. When asked to select and rank values that should be at the core of a future Civic Center, Inclusion and Gathering got the most votes, followed by Equity, Accessibility, and Diversity.

Workshop participants were also asked to select and rank images of civic activities in other cities that “most resonated with the group,” and describe the qualities depicted in the photographs as desirable or not. Top vote getters included images with green space, fountains, trees to hang out under, and trees with canopies for shade. Other top images showed people gathering in open spaces that are inclusive, with outdoor communal activities and performance. Finally, images that depicted play, including kids entertainment, distinctive play equipment, and intergenerational activities, were also popular.
Finally, participants were asked to identify essential programs, uses, events, or features of a future Civic Center. The most responses were for **Culture and Amenities**, emphasizing a desire for performance spaces that can accommodate a variety of events (music, festivals, theater, and speakers) and improved amenities like restrooms, water fountains, and seating. Workshop participants were also asked to send a postcard from Civic Center in 2030. The team collected over 30 postcards and 8-10 community members read their postcard aloud. Enshrined in the text of the cards, is a deep spirit of optimism, a sense of community, descriptions of opportunities to come together, appreciation of historic buildings, modern amenities, and space for gathering, celebrating, and reveling in the performing arts.

Workshop attendees, City staff, and the consultant team noted that there was a strong spirit of collaboration among the attendees, and broad consensus around core values for the future of Civic Center (Attachment 7).

**Vision Statement**
Four key themes emerged from the engagement that has been conducted to date. In the future, Civic Center can be experienced as:

- A **Civic Commons** that is a place for democracy, public gatherings and civic buildings;
- A vibrant and varied **Place for Youth, and for all**, to spend time;
- A **place for Arts Venues and Cultural Activities** that encourage conviviality; and
- A place for **daily needs**, including meeting, eating, errands, exercise.

The consultant team, in consultation with staff, is developing a working vision statement (Attachment 8) that distills the results of the community outreach to date, and will be used to guide the subsequent phases of the project.

Questions for consideration by City Council regarding the vision for Berkeley’s Civic Center:

- As we re-imagine Berkeley’s Civic Center, what values should be at its core? Does the draft vision statement (Attachment 8) adequately capture those values?
- How can the qualities of these values be expressed in a public place?
- What do you see as essential programs, uses, events, or features of your Civic Center?
- Consider the next generation’s use of Berkeley’s Civic Center. What will bring them here? What will they see and enjoy in this place?

**Next Steps**
In early 2020, the public engagement process will continue and include a second building tour (tentatively scheduled for a Saturday in late February) that is open to members of the public. The tour date will coincide with a second public workshop that
will elicit feedback from the community in an alternate meeting format, such as a “pop-up” stall at the Farmers’ market or at Civic Center Park. This will be an evolving public visioning session, the team will be sharing design work that seeks to translate the vision statement into spatial options and iterating on those options based on feedback received during the session.

Another public workshop, in early February 2020 will explore design concepts for the Civic Center area with students from neighboring Berkeley High School (BHS) in partnership with BHS’s Career Technical Education program. This workshop would still be open to the general public, but will seek to elicit targeted feedback from students who were identified in the PSPL as bringing “the magic of youth” to Civic Center Park. The final community session (anticipated in late March 2020) will likely take the form of a participatory pinup where the team will present design concept options, hear community feedback, and discuss through visual case studies and voting exercises a final preferred concept to advance to City Council.

The consultant team will develop up to three conceptual design concepts for the adaptive reuse of both buildings and the Park. Proposed concepts and drawings will articulate how the Veterans Memorial Building, Old City Hall, and Civic Center Park could be used. The project team will gather feedback on the design concepts via a broad set of community engagement activities, and incorporate that feedback into a preferred design concept for presentation to and adoption by City Council in the summer of 2020.

The team will also be researching and recommending financial tools and potential revenue strategies to support renovation and ongoing operations, including public investment and public-private partnerships. During the winter and early spring of 2020, the team will be working to develop a potential funding strategy for vision implementation. The finalized recommendations and strategies will be delivered as a companion to the preferred design concept selection.

BACKGROUND
Originally conceived at the turn of the 20th Century, the Civic Center was master 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.

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1 Berkeley Unified School District’s Career Technical Education program integrates academic curriculum with hands-on experience in job skills needed for the modern workplace, including careers in public service and civics. See: https://www.berkeleyschools.net/teaching-and-learning/cte/.
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.

In 2016, Berkeley voters passed Measure T1 Bond Funding for Infrastructure and Facilities, which authorized the City to sell $100 million of general obligation bonds to repair, renovate, replace, or reconstruct the City’s aging infrastructure and facilities, including important City facilities and buildings. As part of the City’s Measure T1 Bond Funding program, the Veterans Memorial Building and Old City Hall were slated for “Structural analysis and visioning of possible conceptual design alternatives, in concert with Civic Center Park, to help determine a direction for future capital improvements to restore and secure these facilities to maximize their community benefit.” Although the Civic Center presently serves a number of important functions for the City, in recent years City officials and community members have suggested that the space is underutilized. Community members have given voice to a variety of ideas and perspectives regarding the adaptive reuse of the buildings and open space that comprise the Civic Center including expanded recreation activities, art and cultural uses, human services, commerce, housing, and other ideas.

As such, this project takes on the development of a comprehensive community outreach strategy, to distill these wide-ranging and exciting ideas into a vision statement; an assessment of the existing supporting infrastructures of all three elements (Old City Hall, Veterans Memorial Building and Civic Center Park); and an evaluation of financial tools and ongoing resources needed to maintain the facilities and/or revenue generation strategies to sustain the ongoing upkeep and maintenance of the facilities. The anticipated outcome is a vision and implementation plan that will identify a preferred design concept for Civic Center and be adopted by the City Council.

On March 14, 2019 the City of Berkeley released a Request for Qualifications to inform the engagement of qualified firms, teams, or individuals to provide professional consultant services to assist in the completion of this project. The proposal by Gehl Studio was selected based upon the following criteria: qualifications and references, including relevant experience of project team/personnel; project understanding and approach; overall quality of the response, including completeness, clarity, organization, responsiveness; and demonstrated efficient and effective level-of-effort articulated in the project approach. Gehl is one of the world's leading urban design and architecture firms.

2 This $376,430 contract is funded entirely by Measure T1 bond proceeds (budget code 511-54-623-677-0000-000-444-612310) with $80,000 of the funding dedicated towards a historical resources study of the Veterans Memorial Building and the Maudelle Shirek Building (commonly referred to as “Old City Hall”).

3 City Council approved this solicitation at its regular meeting on January 22, 2019, item 4.
They are headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark and opened a San Francisco office in 2014. They are known for their ‘people-centered’ design strategies; in recent years, they’ve led successful redesigns of many famous public spaces, including Times Square in New York City and San Francisco’s Civic Center.

**Historic Building/Landmarks Analysis**

Siegel & Strain Architects, part of the Gehl team, is leading a team of subconsultants including architecture + history llc, PGA Design, and Architectural Conservation, Inc. to prepare **historic structures reports** for the Maudelle Shirek Building (Old City Hall) and the Veterans Memorial Building, as well as a Historic Landscape Assessment for Martin Luther King Jr Civic Center Park. All three resources are contributors to the larger Berkeley Civic Center Historic District, listed on the National Register and designated locally. These resources have played a major role in the development of Berkeley’s civic pride and are key elements of Berkeley’s civic space.

The purpose of these reports is to verify the relevant historical information and historic context contributing to each resource’s significance; understand their physical modifications and changes of use over time; document their character defining features and current physical conditions; generate cost estimates for their future rehabilitation; and develop treatment and future use recommendations. Work to date has included gathering background data from various local archives, obtaining and comparing historic and renovation drawings with existing conditions, and completing field work (Attachment 2).

**Maudelle Shirek Building (Old City Hall)**

Designed by architects Bakewell and Brown and completed in 1908-09, Old City Hall is an example of Beaux Arts Classicism. It was the first of Bakewell and Brown’s major California City Hall commissions, pre-dating the larger more elaborate buildings in San Francisco and Pasadena. Conditions assessment surveying at Old City Hall has revealed that, for its age, the building is in relatively good condition. Water intrusion has occurred at the intersection of the primary hipped roof and flanking hipped roofs. At the south wing third floor, the original wood casement windows have been replaced with inappropriate aluminum sash, and a series of post- World War II additions at the west elevation are not in keeping with the character of the older building.

**Veterans Memorial Building**

The Veterans Memorial Building was completed in 1928, one of about a dozen Alameda County Veterans Memorials constructed in the late 1920s. Research has revealed that Mildred Meyers, daughter of Henry H. Meyers, to whom the building is attributed, played a much larger role in the design of the building than originally known. The building suffers from severe water infiltration at both interior stairwells; likely caused from material failure at the roof. A remarkable amount of historic fabric, including light fixtures and historic finishes remain at the first and second floors.
Martin Luther King Jr Civic Center Park
The Civic Center Park was completed in 1942. Berkeley had intended for a Civic Center Park years earlier, but complications of land acquisition and competing design interests prevented an earlier result. A committee of well-known architects and landscape architects resolved the decades-old problem, the park opened to great fanfare and celebration when it was finally realized during WWII. The overall layout of the park has remained relatively unchanged over the Park’s 77-year history. The edge conditions of the Park are most visibly different, having originally been planted with many trees and shrubs. These plantings have been removed over time to accommodate new plaza areas and parking spaces. Their removal greatly changed the way a user perceives and uses the park.

The team is currently working on a 75% draft of each historic structure reports, which will be submitted for review by the City’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in late January.

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, under the direction of the City’s Public Works Department. 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 and the full reports are available to the public online.\(^4\)

The engineering reports found the Veterans Memorial Building, a 90 year old, three story, heavy concrete perimeter wall building with wood framed floors and roof, to be seismically deficient and to pose life safety hazards to building occupants. Two concept seismic retrofit schemes, one to meet the lower Basic Seismic Performance Objective (BPOE) and one to meet the higher Immediate Occupancy (IO) - Enhanced Seismic Performance Objective, were projected. The grand total project cost and budget (including construction, consultant, management and permit costs and testing and inspection fees) was estimated at $17,707,538 for the BPOE scheme and $61,886,725 for the IO scheme.\(^5\)

The seismic evaluation for Old City Hall, a 110 year old, three story, non-ductile concrete building indicated that the building is seismically deficient and poses life safety

\(^4\) ASCE 41-17 Tier 2 Seismic Evaluation of Berkeley Old City Hall at 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley, California, IDA Structural Engineers, April 2019 and ASCE 41-17 Tier 2 Seismic Evaluation of Berkeley Veterans Memorial Building at 1931 Center Street, Berkeley, California, IDA Structural Engineers, April 2019.

\(^5\) Cost estimators were engaged to determine ball park construction budgets for both schemes in the Veterans Building; the estimated cost for the BPOE scheme is $11,275,000 and for the IO scheme is $39,392,000.
hazards to building occupants; potentially the building could collapse or partially collapse in a major earthquake proximate to the site. The grand total project cost and budget (including construction, consultant, management and permit costs and testing and inspection fees) for Old City Hall was estimated to be $13,030,311 for the BPOE scheme and $32,844,985 for the IO scheme.\footnote{Cost estimators were engaged to determine ball park \textit{construction} budgets for both schemes in Old City Hall; the estimated cost for the BPOE scheme is $9,983,000 and for the IO scheme is $25,163,750.}

These cost estimates and the results of the historic structure reports together will continue to inform the subsequent vision and implementation planning process.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**
Successful initiatives that repurpose existing buildings and civic space for subsequent generations’ fruitful use promotes beneficial environmental, civic, and economic sustainability.

**POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION**
Using the vision statement as a guide, the project team will generate design concepts regarding Civic Center and its future uses. Via a broad set of community engagement activities, a preferred design concept and accompanying implementation strategy will be advanced for review and adoption by City Council.

**FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION**
The exact fiscal impacts of the finalized adopted vision and implementation plan for Civic Center are yet unknown. As noted above, the adaptive reuse of Old City Hall and the Veteran’s Memorial Building will require seismic improvements, the total costs of which would likely range from $30M to $95M (including both buildings). Subsequent phases of the project will include the development of cost estimates and financing strategies for the proposed implementation.

**CONTACT PERSON**
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Eleanor Hollander, Economic Development Project Coordinator, (510) 981-7536

Attachments:
1: Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Map
2: Update to the Subcommittees, Existing Conditions & Historic Structures Report
3: Small Focus Group Interviewees
4: Public Space Public Life Study, Call for Volunteers
5: Berkeley Civic Center PSPL Insights
6: Public Workshop Meeting Flyer, December 12, 2019
7: Civic Center Community Workshop Meeting, December 12, 2019
8: Draft Vision Statement
Our goal is to reach a broad representation of the community—to hear many voices, and diverse voices. In a spirit of creative collaboration, we will listen and engage with a variety of stakeholders, inform community groups, service-providers and organizations, and align research and thoughts with key City of Berkeley teams and Committees.

### Stakeholder Mapping

**Who**

**Berkeley’s Civic Center Vision**

- Berkeley Community (General Public)
- Residents within 2000 ft
- Police Emergency Services
- Health, Housing & Community Services
- Neighborhood Associations
- Educational Services

**Stakeholders:**

**Youth**
- Berkeley High School (BUSD)
- Teen Center / YMCA

**Arts & Culture**
- Berkeley Design Advocates
- Berkeley Cultural Trust
- City of Berkeley Art Collection assessment partners (RLA)
- Group advocating for museum space

**Community & Civics**
- Downtown Berkeley Association
- Group, including District 4, working with the Veteran’s Memorial Building and MOHIG
- Current tenants of the Veteran’s Memorial Building and the Maudelle Shirek Building
- Ecology Center/Farmers Market
- Local media/ Clerk’s office

**Heritage & Built Environment**
- Berkeley Historic Society
- Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association
- Turtle Island Foundation
- Owners of building between Teen Center and VMB
- Local theatre and music venues (Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Freight City Council)

**Office of Economic Development**

- Landmarks Preservation Subcommittee
- Parks & Waterfront Subcommittee
- Public Works Subcommittee
- Civic Arts Commission Subcommittee

**T-1 Infrastructure Bond related City Commissions**

**Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**

- Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department
- Planning Department
- Public Works Department
- City Manager’s Office

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*Gehl—Making Cities for People*
Berkeley Civic Center

Work in Progress
Update to the Subcommittees

November 21, 2019
Existing Vision & Policies
Overarching Themes

- Community driven
- Inclusive
- Cohesive
- Context sensitive
- Secure
- Thriving

- Livable
- Amenity-rich
- Culturally-rich
- Well-maintained
- Pedestrian- & Bike-oriented
- A great place!
Land Use  Transportation  Open Space  Buildings
Existing Vision & Policies

**Land Use**

- **Civic focal point & destination** (Park, government, farmers market, events, Arts District)
- **Government & community services**
- **Housing** (DAP emphasis on diversity & affordability, but not allowed by Zoning overlay)
- **Office** (DAP encouraged if for local workforce and start-ups, but not allowed by Zoning overlay)
Open Space

- Recreation
- Gathering & civic engagement
- Festivals & fairs
- Art & music
- Farmers market

Green infrastructure / reveal watershed
Transportation

- Streets as civic space
- Prioritize pedestrians
- Bike-friendly (Milvia Bikeway planned)
- Traffic calming (especially crossing MLK)
- Reduce car use / TDM (move City staff’s on-street parking to garage, manage BHS drop-off)
- Wayfinding
Buildings

- Restoration & adaptive reuse
- Streetwall continuity & build-to line
- Tripartite with aligned cornices
- Compatible materials, color, rhythm, modulation, recessed openings
- Recognize that heights vary downtown
- Model green building practices
Historic structures preliminary findings
Berkeley Civic Center
Historic District

Historic Structures Reports

Berkeley Civic Center Historic District
National Register and Berkeley Local Landmark #211
Listed in 1998

Contributing Resources

1. Maudelle Shirek Building
2. Martin Luther King Jr Civic Center Park
3. The Veterans Memorial Building
4. The Federal Land Bank Building / Civic Center Building
5. Berkeley High School Theater
6. Young Men’s Christian Association Building
7. United State Post Office
8. State Farm Insurance Companies Building
9. City Hall Annex
10. Hall of Justice (demolished)
Focus of Work

- 2 Historic Structure Reports
- Historic Landscape Assessment
Understand and frame the historical and cultural SIGNIFICANCE and CONTEXT

Identify the CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Verify that the resource retains INTEGRITY per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

Record EXISTING CONDITIONS

Formulate an APPROACH TO FUTURE REHABILITATION

Historic Structures Reports

Proposed sketch of Berkeley Civic Center, 1914
Photo credit: The Architect and Engineer of California, June 1916
Work to Date

- Field work and research
- Compare original drawings to existing conditions to determine extant historic fabric
- Determine chronology of alterations
- Research chronology of use
- Assess conditions of common materials and features
Building Chronology

Veterans Memorial Banquet Dedication Banquet, Nov. 11, 1928
Photo courtesy Berkeley Historical Society

Veterans Memorial Building

1928 - Veterans Memorial Building opens;
    Designed by Henry H. Meyers and Mildred Meyers

1948 - Elevator added to building

1985 - Designated City of Berkeley Landmark #91

1990 - Basement floor converted to
t    homeless shelter;
    Rear entry made accessible

1992 - Berkeley Historical Society moves in

1995 - Front entry made accessible

1998 - Listed as contributor to National Register/ Local
    Civic Center Historic District
There is limited physical fabric remaining at the basement level.

Veterans Memorial Building

Current Basement Floor Plan
There is a large amount of historic fabric remaining at the first floor.

Veterans Memorial Building

Building Fabric

- ORIGINAL
- NEW
There is a large amount of historic fabric remaining at the second floor.

Veterans Memorial Building
Existing Conditions

The building **INTERIOR** shows signs of excessive water damage.

The building **EXTERIOR** has consistent cracking and staining.

**Veterans Memorial Building**
- City Hall -

- Maudelle Shirek Building -

Historic Structure Report
Building Chronology

1909 - Berkeley City Hall opens; Designed by John Bakewell and Arthur Brown, Jr.

1964 - Addition completed at rear north side

1975 - Addition completed at rear south side - Designated a City of Berkeley Landmark #7

1977 - Becomes administrative home of BUSD

1998 - Listed as contributor to National Register/Local Civic Center Historic District

2018 - City Council meetings moved out of building - Berkeley Community Media moves in - Building used for emergency homeless shelter
Existing Conditions

Inappropriate building material
Deferred maintenance
Overgrown planting
Damage

Maudelle Shirek Building
- Civic Center Park -

Historic Landscape Assessment
Park Chronology

1942 - Park opens
   Designed by Henry Gutterson, John Gregg, Julia Morgan, Bernard Maybeck et. al. / Federal WPA
1991 - New playground installed
   Paving around fountain changed to flagstone

General Findings

- Overall layout remains largely unchanged
- Changes to accessory functions over time (shuffleboard, playground)
- Plantings have matured

Civic Center Park
Existing Conditions

Wear and tear

Some unhealthy trees

Well-"disguised" amenities

Civic Center Park
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Date Interviewed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angie Chen</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council staff - District 7</td>
<td>06-Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ann Harlow</td>
<td>Berkeley Historical Society</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
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<td>Anna Marie Taylor</td>
<td>MSHHIG McGee-Spaulding Hardy Historical Interest Group</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthony Bruce</td>
<td>Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association</td>
<td>02-Dec</td>
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<td>Anthony Bruzzone</td>
<td>Berkeley Design Advocates</td>
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<td>Arlene Silk</td>
<td>Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association</td>
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<td>Arnett Moore</td>
<td>American Legion Post 7</td>
<td>17-Dec</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Hillman</td>
<td>Visit Berkeley</td>
<td>06-Nov</td>
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<td>Becky O'Malley</td>
<td>Landmarks Preservation Commission</td>
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<td>Brent Stephens</td>
<td>Berkeley Unified School District Superintendent</td>
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<td>Brian Scott</td>
<td>Berkeley Community Media</td>
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<td>Carle Brinkman</td>
<td>Ecology Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheryl Davila</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council District 2</td>
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<td>David Stegman</td>
<td>Dorothy Day House</td>
<td>17-Dec</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deborah Durant</td>
<td>Turtle Island Foundation</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
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<td>Emilie Raguso</td>
<td>Berkeleyside</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erin Schweng</td>
<td>Berkeley High School</td>
<td>17-Dec</td>
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<td>Hae Won Rhow</td>
<td>YMCA</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Chang</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council staff - District 3</td>
<td>08-Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer Lovvorn</td>
<td>City of Berkeley - Civic Arts</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jill Randal</td>
<td>Berkeley Cultural Trust/Shawl-Anderson Dance Center</td>
<td>06-Nov</td>
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<td>Jim Tibbs</td>
<td>Berkeley Symphony</td>
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<td>John Aronovici</td>
<td>Berkeley Historical Society</td>
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<td>John Calise</td>
<td>Berkeley Unified School District</td>
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<td>John Caner</td>
<td>Downtown Berkeley Association</td>
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<td>Julie Sinai</td>
<td>Berkeley Unified School District Board Director</td>
<td>17-Dec</td>
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<td>Interviewee</td>
<td>Organization</td>
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<td>Kate Harrison</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council District 4</td>
<td>06-Nov</td>
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<td>Kerry Birnbach</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council staff - District 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lars Skjerping</td>
<td>Berkeley Mayor's Office - staff</td>
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<td>Loni Hancock</td>
<td>Former Mayor of Berkeley</td>
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<td>Lori Droste</td>
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<td>Mark Numainville</td>
<td>City of Berkeley, Clerk</td>
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<td>Nina Scoville</td>
<td>Ecology Center</td>
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<td>Phil Allen</td>
<td>Landmarks Preservation Commission</td>
<td>04-Nov</td>
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<td>Rashi Kesarwani</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council District 1</td>
<td>06-Nov</td>
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<td>Rigel Robinson</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council District 7</td>
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<td>Rosa Lowinger</td>
<td>RLA Conservation (Arts Collection Assessment)</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
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<td>Ruscal Cayangyang</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council staff - District 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Griffin</td>
<td>RLA Conservation (Arts Collection Assessment)</td>
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<td>Shallon Allen</td>
<td>City of Berkeley, Special Events</td>
<td>06-Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharon Dolan</td>
<td>Freight &amp; Salvage</td>
<td>06-Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sophie Hahn</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council District 5</td>
<td>06-Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steven Finacom</td>
<td>Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association</td>
<td>02-Dec</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Wengraf</td>
<td>Berkeley City Council - District 6</td>
<td>08-Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Bates</td>
<td>Former Mayor of Berkeley</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Gorman (+ staff member)</td>
<td>Options Recovery Services</td>
<td>24-Oct</td>
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Help Envision the Future of Berkeley’s Civic Center!

Volunteer for a mini-Public Life Survey organized by Gehl

What we’re doing
Developing a community vision, design concepts and implementation plan for Berkeley’s Civic Center. Our study area includes Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park, the Veterans Memorial Building, and the Maudelle Shirek Building (aka Old City Hall).

What’s a Public Life Study?
Understanding patterns of life and activity for Berkeley’s Civic Center will form the basis for a design vision that puts people first. We will be outside studying how people move to and through this area and how the built environment impacts how people use the space. Volunteering for this survey is a great way to play an active role in future changes to Civic Center and to learn about the Gehl approach to people-first urban planning and design. Public Life Studies have been putting people first in the city-change process for over 50 years, from Shanghai to Times Square to San Francisco Civic Center. To learn more visit: www.gehlpeople.com/story

Survey Dates
Pick one or more shift on Tuesday, October 15 and/or Saturday, October 19. We invite you to do a Tuesday and a Saturday shift.

Tuesday, October 15
7:00am - 11:00am
11:00am - 3:00pm
3:00pm - 7:00pm

Saturday, October 19
7:00am - 11:00am
11:00am - 3:00pm
3:00pm - 7:00pm

Recommended video training session
Thursday, October 10
11:00AM - 12:00PM
Online video call via https://tinyurl.com/y5n2mrpt (no camera necessary, but web access required)

What you’ll need to bring
A curiosity about how people use space, water and comfortable shoes and clothes. We’ll provide the rest: clipboards, pens, iPads, clickers etc. Letters to supervisors, professors or teachers available upon request.

To confirm your participation and for questions, email Aja: Aja@gehlpeople.com

Can’t survey but want to know more about the Berkeley’s Civic Center project? Visit: https://tinyurl.com/yxmxwuwh
This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to remake a vibrant Civic Center – bringing the right activities and programs, and completing the downtown’s public space network.
Scope and Process

### Research + Engagement

- Existing conditions research
- Outreach
- Engagement
- Financial tools assessment

### Vision

A shared vision is only achieved through inclusive participation and engagement.

An emerging Vision Statement will be presented at the first City Council worksession on January 14th. The Vision will continue to be adjusted to reflect the outcomes of the ongoing community engagement.

### Design

- Up to three conceptual designs for adaptive reuse of the park and buildings
- Implementation matrix
Public Life Study – Putting people at the center of urban change

All cities conduct detailed analyses of traffic and parking. Motor vehicles are ever-present in the planning process. It is unsurprising then that many plans and policies are oriented around the behaviour of cars, instead of people. A growing number of cities now count and observe how people actually use the city, how they move through the city and what they do when they spend time there.

Measuring how people use space allows cities to optimize public space for people's comfort and active mobility, allowing for holistic solutions that take all users of the public realm into account.
Guiding questions

What are the **daily patterns** of life in Civic Center?

Who does Civic Center *invite* and who is missing?

How are the **surrounding buildings** supporting (or repelling) Public Life?

How is Civic Center connected to the pulse of activity on **Shattuck Ave**?
Survey methods

Mode
Movement Counts

Measures how many people pass through a space and by what means. Notes whether people are moving as a pedestrian, cyclist, mobility-impaired person, or on an e-scooter/skateboard.

Age & Gender
Movement Counts

Measures how many people pass through a space while also noting the age and gender representation of each person.

Stationary
Activity Mapping

Provides insights into where people are spending time, what they are doing, and how they are occupying space. It provides a snapshot of all the activities happening in the survey area at a given time. It also records people’s observed age and gender representation.
Thanks to all of our volunteers who observed the Public Life in Civic Center!

21 volunteers

2 typical survey days (no special events), 1 weekday, 1 weekend day
Public Life, Public Space —
Key Findings

1. Civic Center is not in the center, it’s on the sidelines
2. There’s no heart there - Civic Center isn’t a destination
3. Civic Center repels, it doesn’t attract
4. There’s not much spillover from the Farmer’s Market into the park
5. There aren’t that many park activities in Civic Center Park

6. A few dominant activities negatively impact the perception of safety
7. Civic Center is surrounded by a high density of life + legacy of gathering
8. Civic Center is surrounded by public buildings awaiting their next act
9. With the right invitations, people do want to spend time here
10. Civic Center is a multigenerational space
Civic Center is not in the center, it’s on the sidelines
People aren’t choosing Civic Center

Despite the proximity to the downtown commercial core, UC Berkeley, and other major destinations, people aren’t moving through Civic Center.
A Strava heatmap of running activity over the past 2 years shows that the Strava community chooses to run near, not through, Civic Center Park.
More often than not, the Strava community chooses running routes that avoid Civic Center Park, even when it's the more direct route.
There’s no heart there – Civic Center isn’t a destination
It’s a general meeting place. It’s not anyone’s turf, it’s like Switzerland.”
– Frequent Civic Center Visitor

I just come to this park because it’s here and right next to school, it’s nothing special.”
– Berkeley High School Student
People aren’t choosing to spend time in Civic Center

Civic Center Park isn’t inviting people to spend time. Especially when compared to other civic spaces and public squares, Berkeley’s Civic Center is falling short of its potential to act as a center of public life and activity.

![Chart showing stationary activity comparison between Civic Center Park in Berkeley, Market Square in Pittsburgh, Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, and Robson Square in Vancouver.](chart.png)

**Stationary Activity, Hourly Average**

*PSPL data for the number of people staying in MLK Jr. Park from stationary mapping, 7am - 7pm, OVERALL, October 15 + 19 2019*
Civic Center repels, it doesn’t attract
Monumental buildings give their back to the park

Several buildings around the edge of Civic Center have inactive facades and treat the park as their ‘back of house’ with blank walls, loading entrances and exit doors facing the public space.
A big space but not a lot of people here
Even during Farmers’ Markets, there’s not much spillover into the park
At its peak hour, the flow of pedestrians moving through the Farmer’s Market is about the same as the hourly average for the BART plaza.

Farmer’s Market (Center St)

- 1,092 hourly moving peak
- weekend - 11am

BART Plaza

- 930 hourly moving average
- weekend
The influx of people during the Farmer’s Market doesn’t bring more people to Civic Center Park

The number of people who are spending time in Civic Center Park don’t change much over the course of the day despite the increased number of people coming to Center Street for the Farmer’s market midday.
People are here ...

...but not here
A few near the edges

A little spillover activity, but not much!
There aren’t that many park activities in Civic Center Park
People aren’t engaged in many cultural or recreational activities

The activity breakdown of people in Civic Center shows that people aren’t spending time playing, exercising or participating in cultural events or performances – all activities that you would expect to happen in a park!

Stationary Activity Breakdown
Civic Center

*PSPL data from stationary mapping, 7am - 7pm, OVERALL, October 15 + 19 2019
There aren’t many little kids spending time in the park

Civic Center Park isn’t very sticky for toddlers and kids! **Stickiness is the ratio of people moving through (pedestrian counts) per person spending time (stationary activities).** The ‘stickiness’ ratio for toddlers and kids shows that this age group isn’t choosing to spend time in Civic Center Park.

Weekend Stickiness, 0-4 and 5-14 year olds

**Civic Center Park**

*PSPL data from age and gender movement counts, 7am - 7pm, WEEKEND, moving peak for toddlers + kids at 3pm, October 19 2019

Stickiness is the ratio of people moving through (pedestrian counts) per person spending time (staying activities)
Berkeley Civic Center Project

It's not very clean in here.

Singular use

Swings only for young kids

No place to sit for families

Careful of sharp objects in the fountain!

It's not very clean in here.
A few dominant activities negatively impact the perception of safety
A few dominant activities negatively impact the perception of safety

The gender breakdown in Civic Center Park is unbalanced

Generally, public spaces that have a balanced (or higher) ratio of women indicates that the space has a high perception of safety. In the park in Civic Center, the low ratio of women could indicate an underlying sense that the space doesn’t feel safe or welcoming.

Pretty low percentage of women

A higher percentage of women generally means a higher perception of safety

Civic Center

31%

female

3 people (17%)
sleeping

BART Plaza

45%

female

Not many in number but take up a lot of mental space

*PSPL data from stationary mapping, 7am - 7pm, OVERALL, October 15 + 19 2019
Only a few people around which impacts the perception of the park greatly...

... if there are many activities happening, a single activity (like ‘encamped’), doesn’t impact the space very much.

Patricia’s Green in Hayes Valley, San Francisco, is an example of an open space that invites a range of uses and users, where one single activity doesn’t dominate the space.
YET, Civic Center is surrounded by a high density of life + legacy of gathering — so important but often difficult to achieve
Civic Center is surrounded by a high density of life

People are already around Civic Center

A challenge for any public space is attracting people to the area but in the case of Berkeley’s Civic Center, the park is already surrounded by numerous institutions and downtown destinations with high volumes of people.
Lots of people moving around!

Berkeley High School students

On Saturdays, the Farmers’ Market attracts a large number of people

YMCA members
Civic Center is both a space for the everyday and for special events ...
Civic Center is surrounded by public buildings awaiting their next act
The architecture is interesting and varied – lots of potential!

There are several public buildings surrounding Civic Center park that are architecturally very interesting and varied in character.
Berkeley Civic Center Historic District

National Register and Berkeley Local Landmark #211
Listed in 1998

Contributing Resources

1. Maudelle Shirek Building
2. Martin Luther King Jr Civic Center Park
3. The Veterans Memorial Building
4. The Federal Land Bank Building / Civic Center Building
5. Berkeley High School Theater
6. Young Men’s Christian Association Building
7. United State Post Office
8. State Farm Insurance Companies Building
9. City Hall Annex
10. Hall of Justice (demolished)
With the right invitations, people do want to spend time here
With the right invitations, people do want to spend time here.

2180 Milvia’s edges and ledges are magnetic – people spend time where they’re comfortable.

There may not be a lot of people spending time in Civic Center Park but, when they are there, they spend time on the edges and ledges. These hotspots are human-scaled and provide invitations to enjoy the positive aspects of the climate, like soaking up the sun.
The ledge at 2180 Milvia is human scaled with a comfortable microclimate, giving people a reason to stay.

An outdoor living room

A place to catch up with friends

People spend time on the edge despite the ‘keep off ledge’ signs

A sunny spot for a midday break