



Office of the City Manager

WORKSESSION  
January 14, 2020

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 Oct. – Dec. 2019
  - Workshop #1: Vision and Values December 12, 2019
- ❑ Public Space Public Life Study & Historic Structures Research October 2019
- ❑ Council Worksession (Draft Vision Statement) January 14, 2020
- ❑ 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.<sup>1</sup> 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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<sup>1</sup> 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."<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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").

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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.<sup>5</sup>

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

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup>

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:

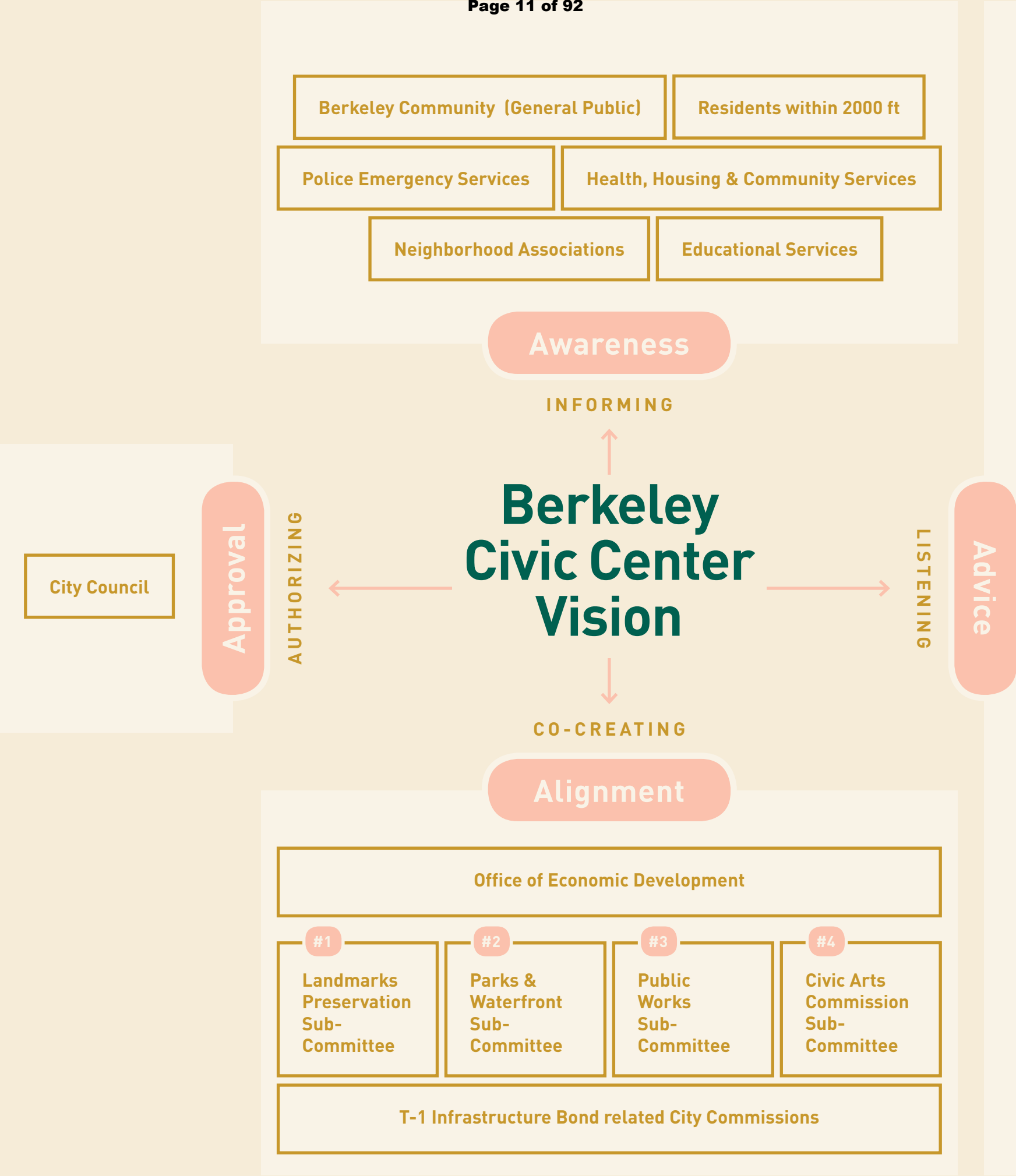
- 1: Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Map
- 2: Update to the Subcommittees, Existing Conditions & Historic Structures Report
- 3: Small Focus Group Interviewees
- 4: Public Space Public Life Study, Call for Volunteers
- 5: Berkeley Civic Center PSPL Insights
- 6: Public Workshop Meeting Flyer, December 12, 2019
- 7: Civic Center Community Workshop Meeting, December 12, 2019
- 8: Draft Vision Statement

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<sup>6</sup> Cost estimators were engaged to determine ball park *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.

# Who Stakeholder Mapping

Our goal is to reach to 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.



**Berkeley Community (General Public)**

**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 MSHHIG
- Current tenants of the Veterans 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

**Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**

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



Berkeley

# Civic Center

Work in Progress  
Update to the Subcommittees

November 21, 2019

Gehl + **SIEGEL & STRAIN** Architects | + **TAECKER**  
PLANNING & DESIGN

November  
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**

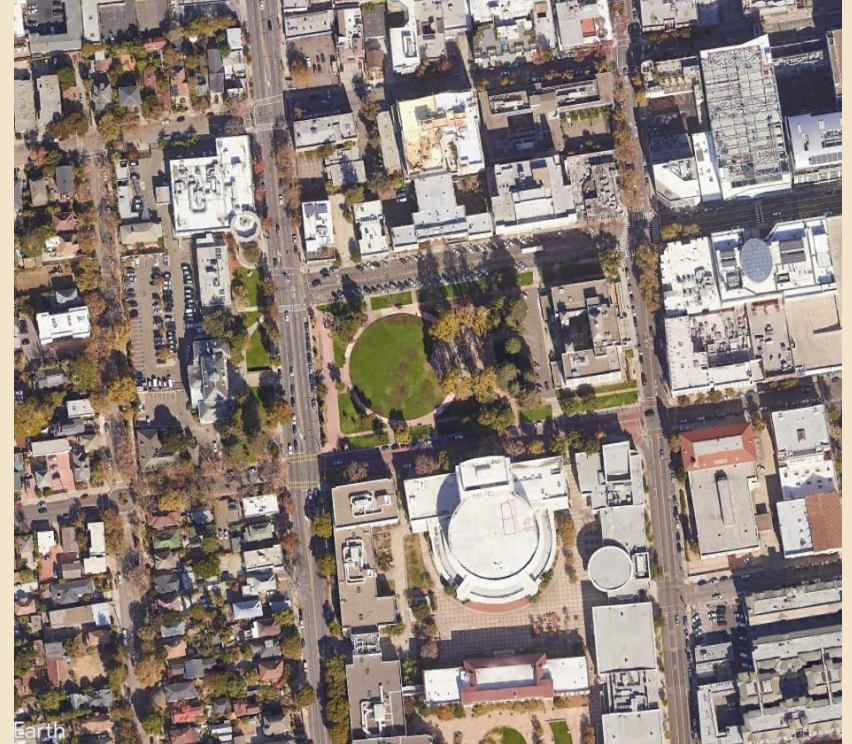
**Transportation**

**Open Space**

**Buildings**

## 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

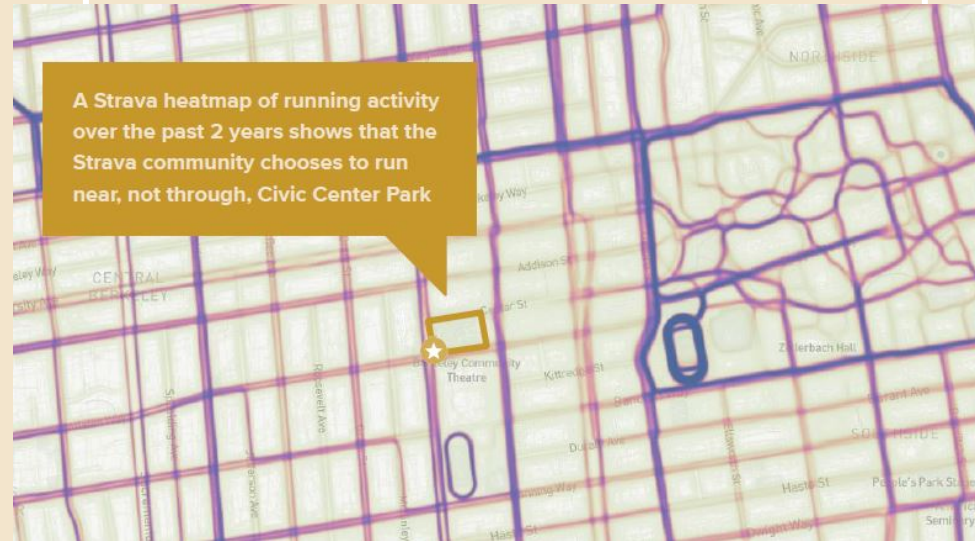
- ▶ Recreation
- ▶ Gathering & civic engagement
- ▶ Festivals & fairs
- ▶ Art & music
- ▶ Farmers market
- ▶ Green infrastructure / reveal watershed





## 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**



- ▶ **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





Historic Structures Reports

# Berkeley Civic Center Historic District

National Register and Berkeley Local Landmark #211  
Listed in 1998

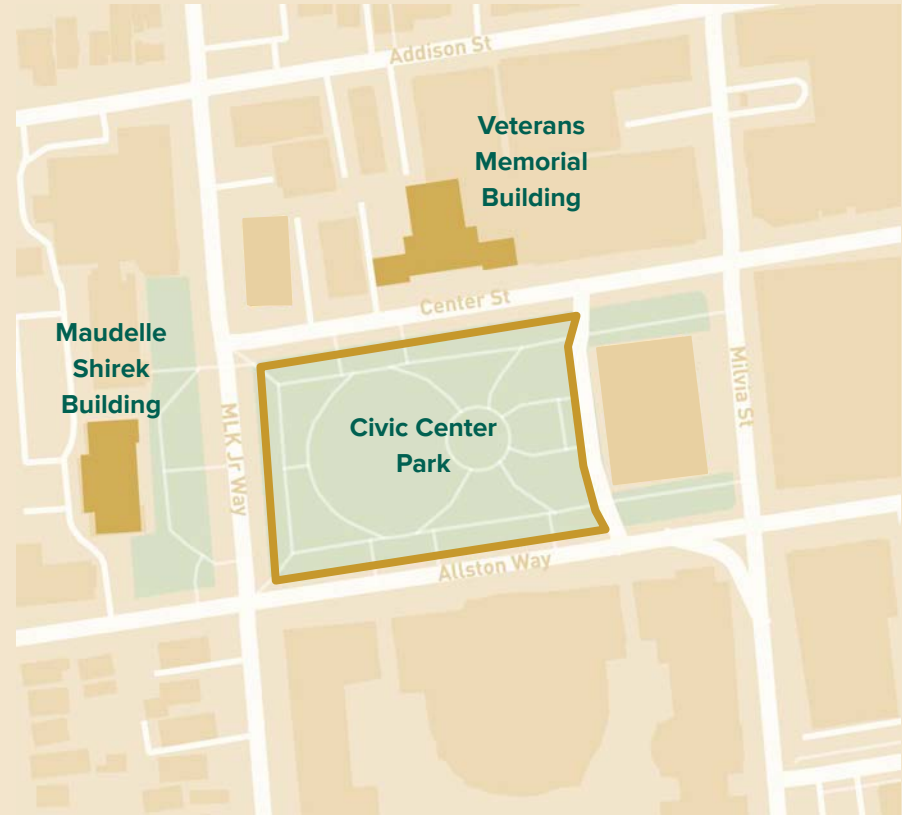
## Contributing Resources

- 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)

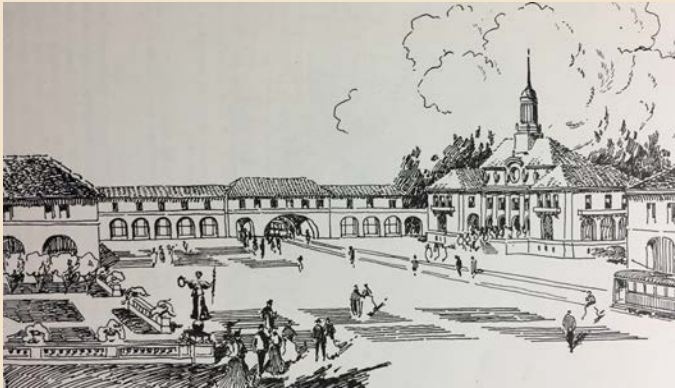


## Focus of Work

- 2 Historic Structure Reports
- Historic Landscape Assessment



## Historic Structure Reports



Proposed sketch of Berkeley Civic Center, 1914

Photo credit: The Architect and Engineer of California, June 1916

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**

## 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



## - Veterans Memorial Building -

### Historic Structure Report



## 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  
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

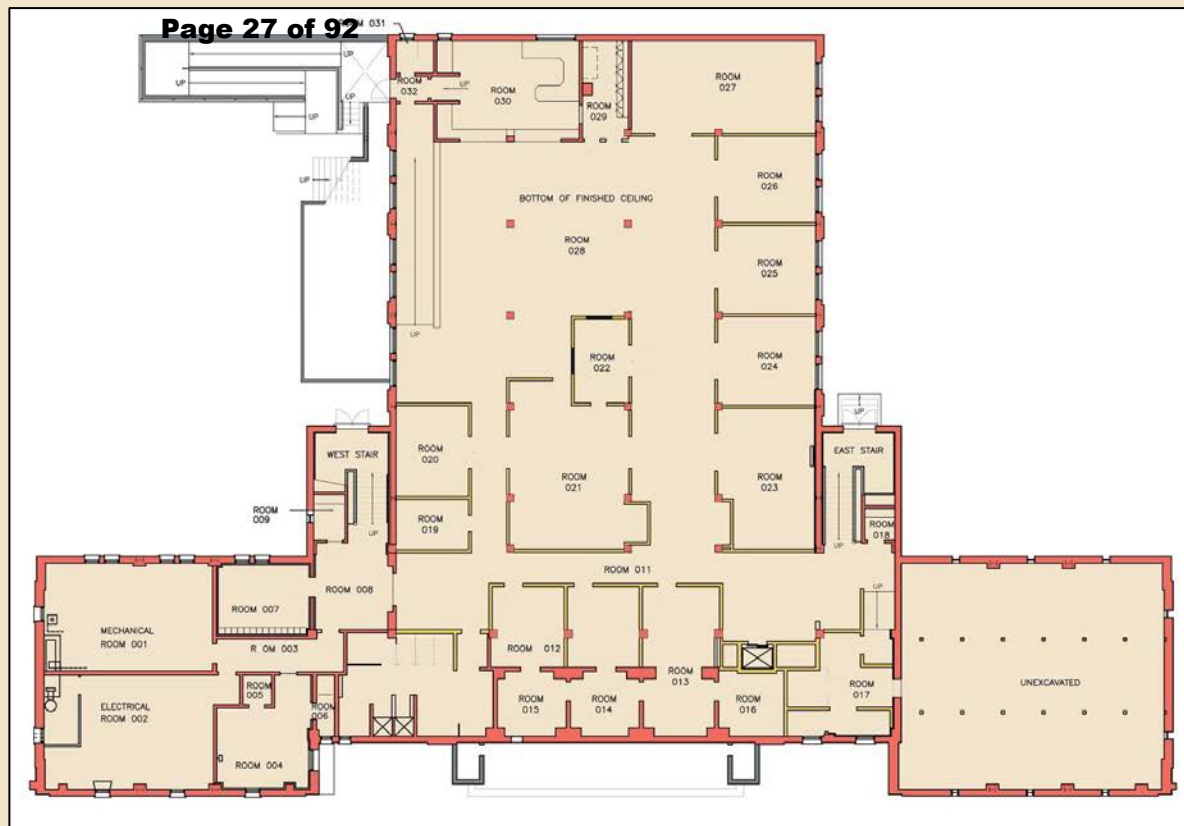


## Extant Historic Fabric



There is limited physical fabric remaining at the basement level.

### Veterans Memorial Building



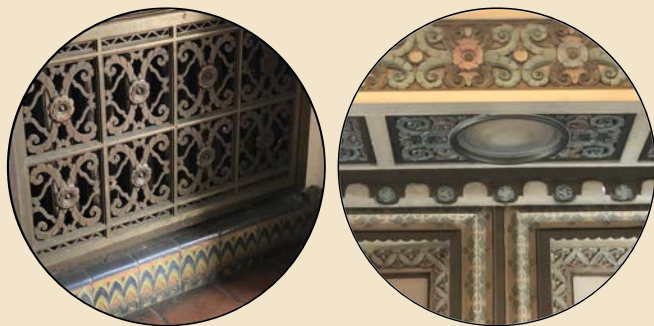
Current Basement Floor Plan

ORIGINAL

NEW

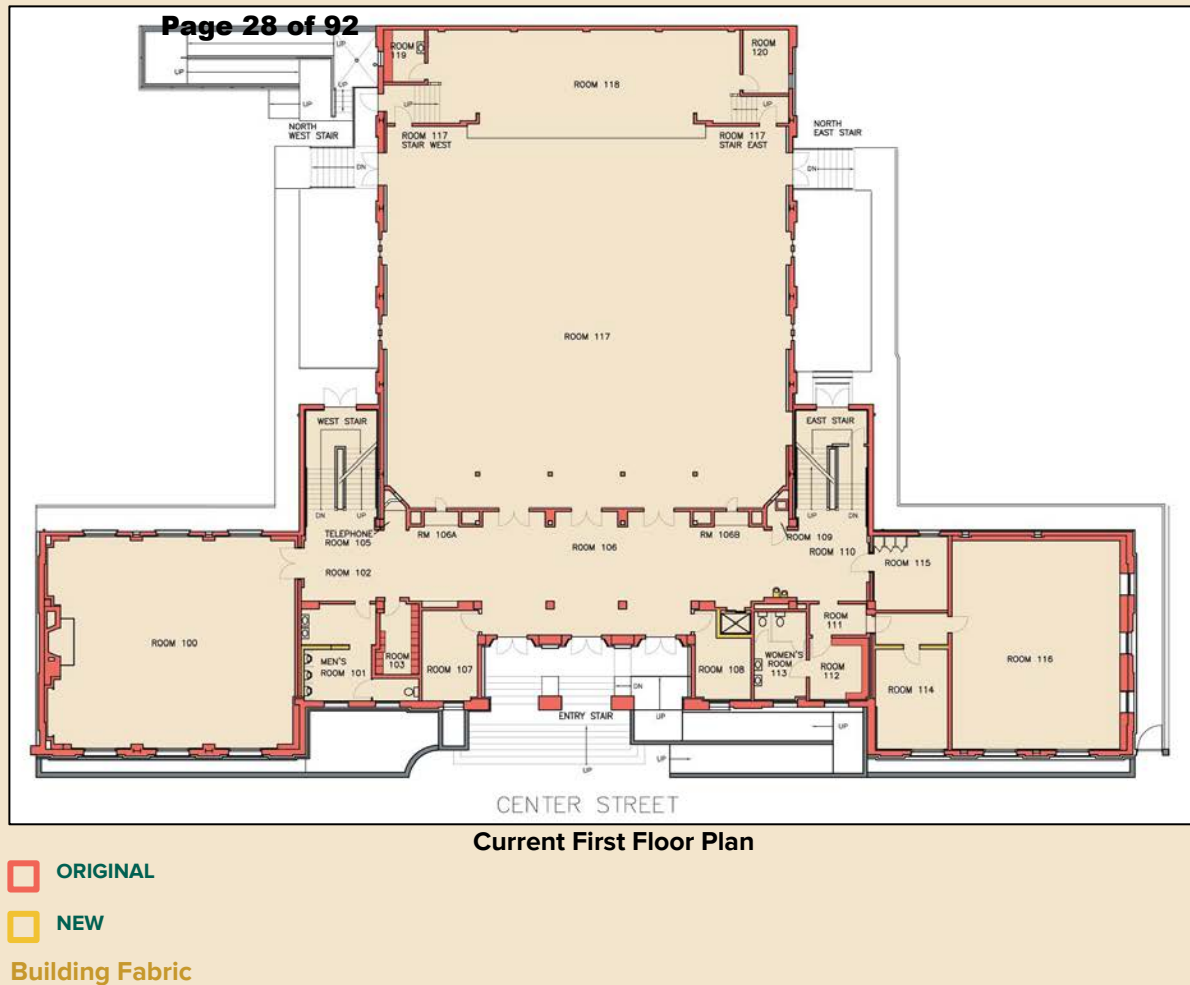
Building Fabric

## Extant Historic Fabric



There is a large amount of historic fabric remaining at the first floor.

### Veterans Memorial Building



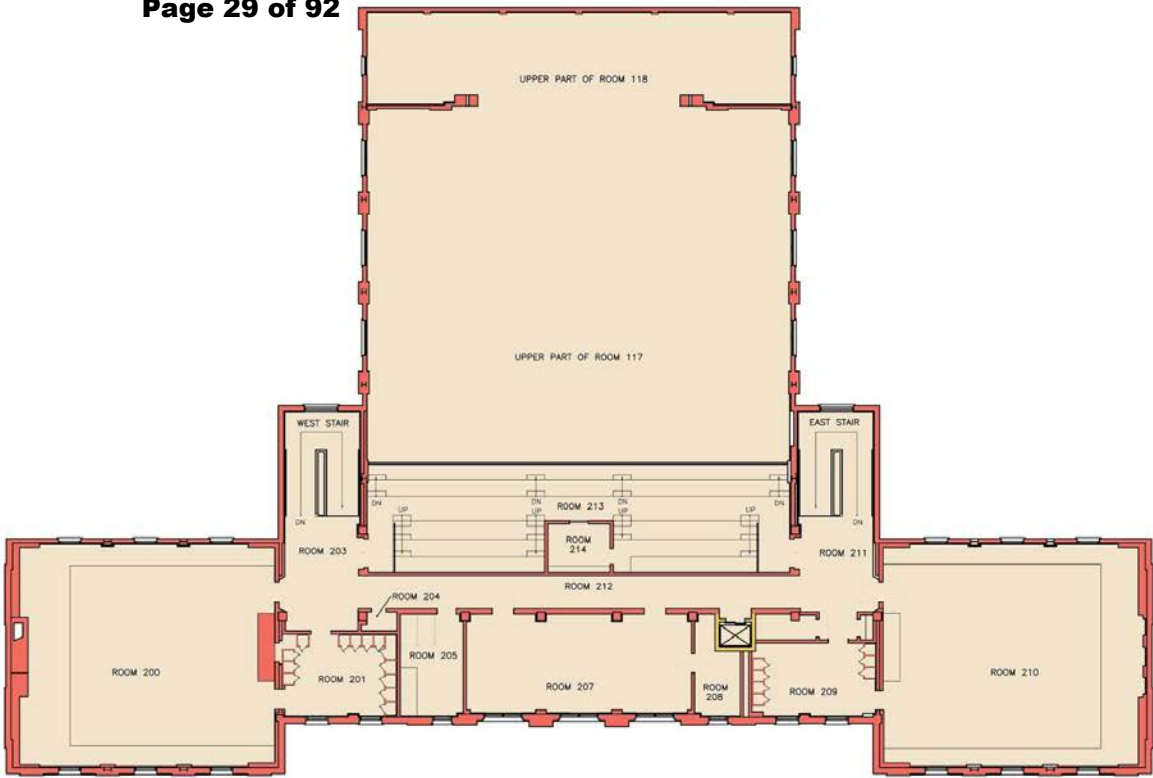


## Extant Historic Fabric



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

### Veterans Memorial Building



Current Second Floor Plan

ORIGINAL

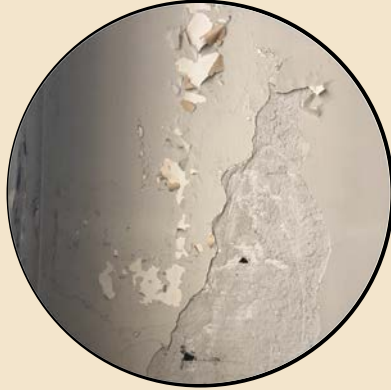
NEW

Building Fabric

## 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



Maudelle Shirek Building

- ▶ **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



## Attachment 3: Small Focus Group Interview Participants (Conducted Fall 2019)

Interviewee	Organization	Date Interviewed
Angie Chen	Berkeley City Council staff - District 7	06-Nov
Ann Harlow	Berkeley Historical Society	24-Oct
Anna Marie Taylor	MSHHIG McGee-Spaulding Hardy Historical Interest Group	24-Oct
Anthony Bruce	Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association	02-Dec
Anthony Bruzzone	Berkeley Design Advocates	02-Oct
Arlene Silk	Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association	02-Dec
Arnett Moore	American Legion Post 7	17-Dec
Barbara Hillman	Visit Berkeley	06-Nov
Becky O'Malley	Landmarks Preservation Commission	12-Dec
Brent Stephens	Berkeley Unified School District Superintendent	17-Dec
Brian Scott	Berkeley Community Media	24-Oct
Carle Brinkman	Ecology Center	24-Oct
Cheryl Davila	Berkeley City Council District 2	06-Nov
David Flores	Berkeley Community Media	24-Oct
David Snippen	Turtle Island Foundation	24-Oct
David Stegman	Dorothy Day House	17-Dec
Deborah Durant	Turtle Island Foundation	24-Oct
Emilie Raguso	Berkeleyside	24-Oct
Erin Schweng	Berkeley High School	17-Dec
Hae Won Rhew	YMCA	24-Oct
James Chang	Berkeley City Council staff - District 3	08-Nov
Jennifer Lovvorn	City of Berkeley - Civic Arts	24-Oct
Jill Randal	Berkeley Cultural Trust/Shawl-Anderson Dance Center	06-Nov
Jim Tibbs	Berkeley Symphony	06-Nov
John Aronovici	Berkeley Historical Society	24-Oct
John Calise	Berkeley Unified School District	17-Dec
John Caner	Downtown Berkeley Association	24-Oct
Julie Sinai	Berkeley Unified School District Board Director	17-Dec

## Attachment 3: Small Focus Group Interview Participants (Conducted Fall 2019)

Interviewee	Organization	Date Interviewed
Kate Harrison	Berkeley City Council District 4	06-Nov
Kerry Birnbach	Berkeley City Council staff - District 8	08-Nov
Lars Skjerpig	Berkeley Mayor's Office - staff	06-Nov
Loni Hancock	Former Mayor of Berkeley	24-Oct
Lori Droste	Berkeley City Council District 8	08-Nov
Mark Numainville	City of Berkeley, Clerk	24-Oct
Nina Scoville	Ecology Center	24-Oct
Phil Allen	Landmarks Preservation Commission	04-Nov
Rashi Kesarwani	Berkeley City Council District 1	06-Nov
Rigel Robinson	Berkeley City Council District 7	06-Nov
Rosa Lowinger	RLA Conservation (Arts Collection Assessment)	24-Oct
Ruscal Cayangyang	Berkeley City Council staff - District 2	06-Nov
Sarah Griffin	RLA Conservation (Arts Collection Assessment)	24-Oct
Shallon Allen	City of Berkeley, Special Events	06-Nov
Sharon Dolan	Freight & Salvage	06-Nov
Sophie Hahn	Berkeley City Council District 5	06-Nov
Steven Finacom	Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association	02-Dec
Susan Wengraf	Berkeley City Council - District 6	08-Nov
Tom Bates	Former Mayor of Berkeley	24-Oct
Tom Gorman (+ staff member)	Options Recovery Services	24-Oct

# 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](http://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](mailto:Aja@gehlpeople.com)

Can't survey but want to know more about the Berkeley's Civic Center project? Visit: <https://tinyurl.com/yxmxwuwH>



Berkeley

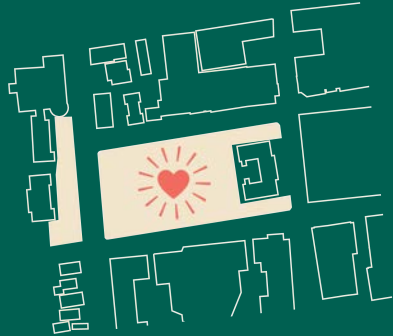
# Civic Center

Work in Progress

December  
2019



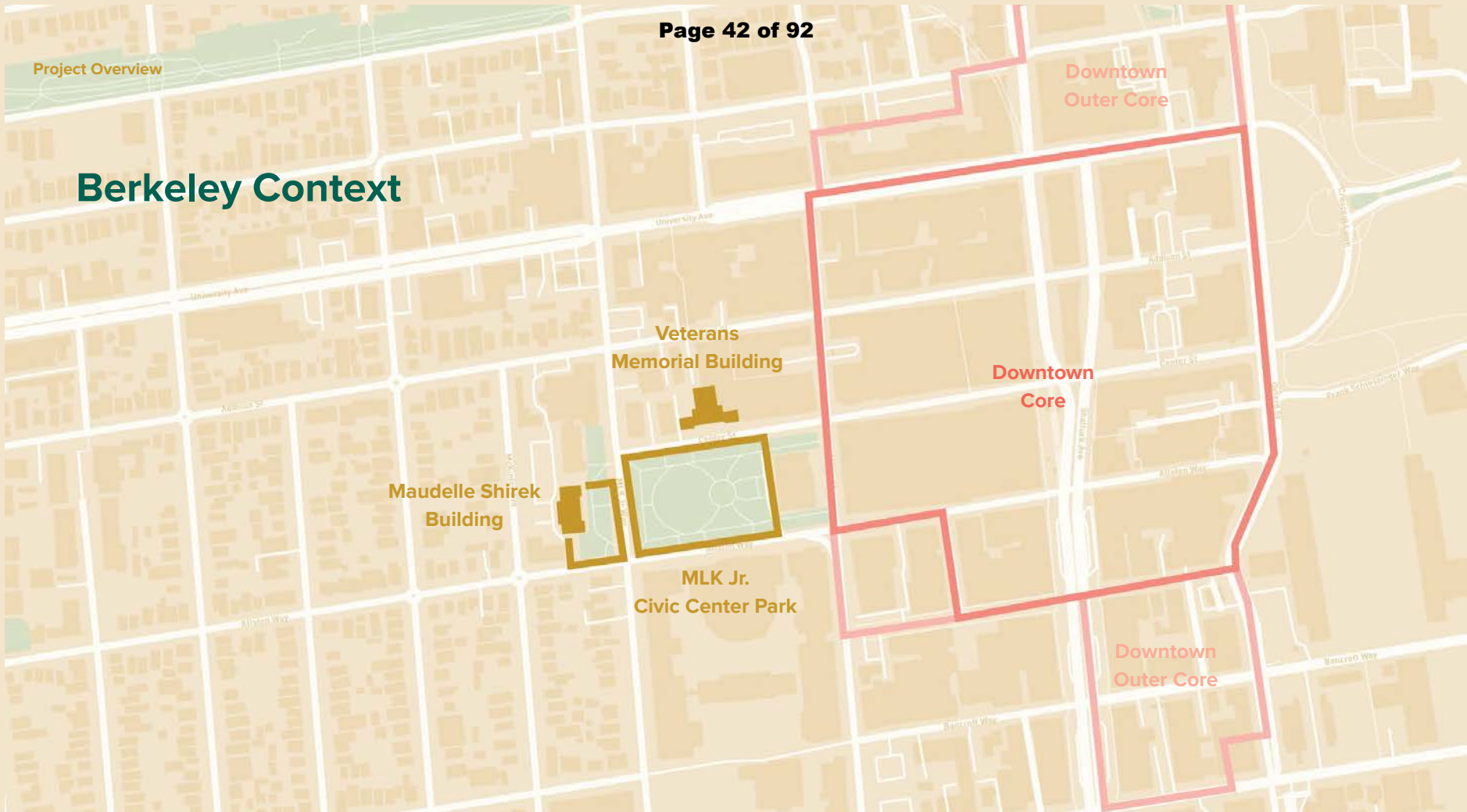
**Project mandate –  
Reimagining the  
heart of Berkeley**



**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.**



## Berkeley Context




## Scope and Process



## 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

People Moving



### 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.



People Staying



### 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.

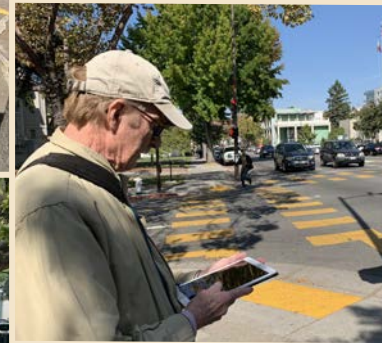




21 volunteers

2 typical survey days (no special events), 1 weekday, 1 weekend day

Thanks to all of our volunteers who observed the Public Life in Civic Center!



## 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

# 1 Civic Center is not in the center, it's on the sidelines





Downtown  
Berkeley  
land use



Washington  
Elementary School



Berkeley  
High School



Downtown  
Berkeley YMCA



Berkeley  
Public Library

Downtown  
Berkeley BART

DOWNTOWN  
CORE

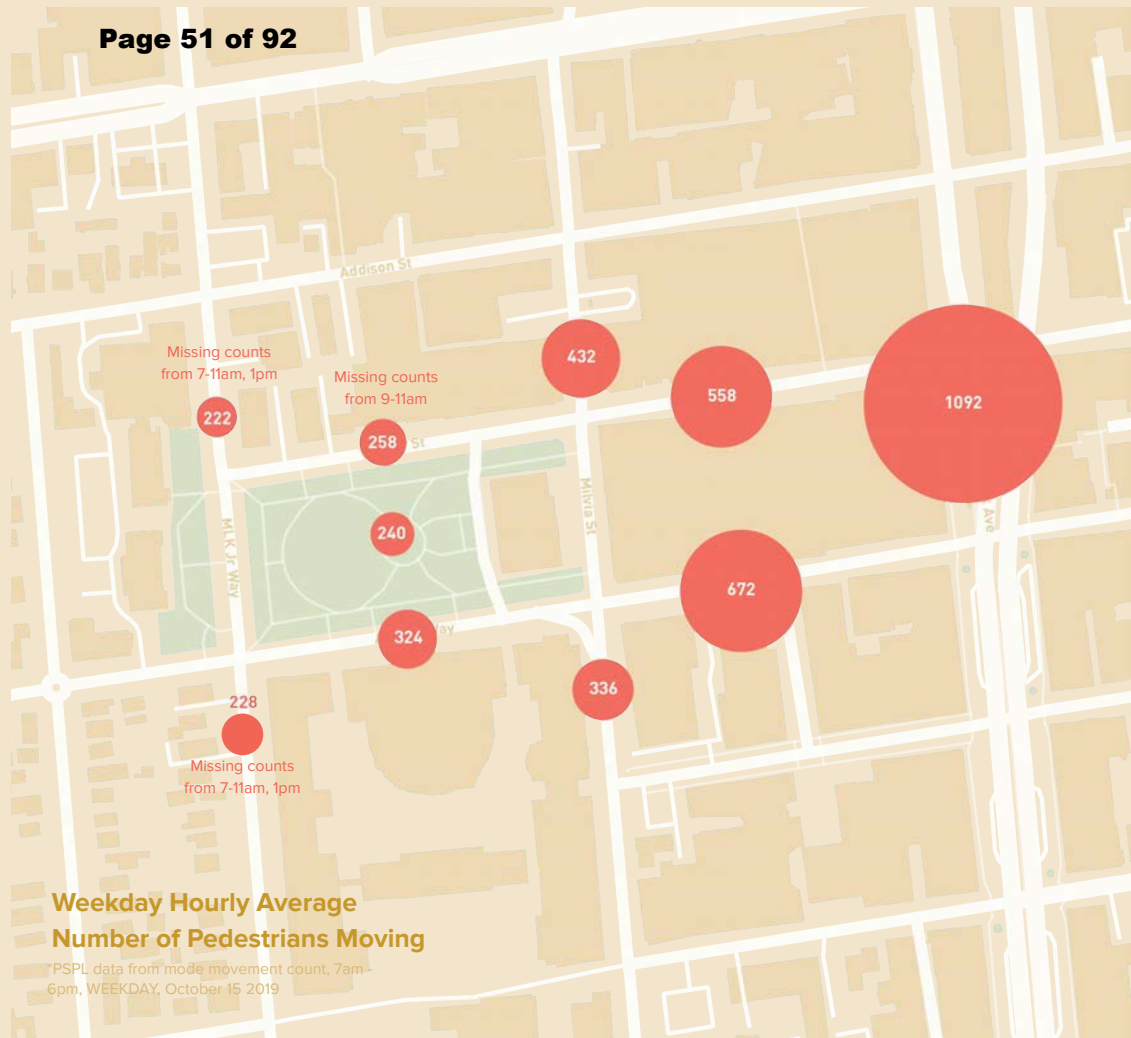
DOWNTOWN  
OUTER CORE

UC BERKELEY  
CAMPUS

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.





## MAP VIEWS

Streets

Corridors

Routes

Heatmap

## FILTERS

Time period

November 2017 - October 2019

Activity type



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

People  
Running  
Heatmap  
(Strava  
Community Data)

Activity

Low

High

## MAP VIEWS

Streets

Corridors

Routes

Heatmap

## FILTERS

Time period

November 2017 - October 2019

Activity type



Show most popular route



Show most direct route

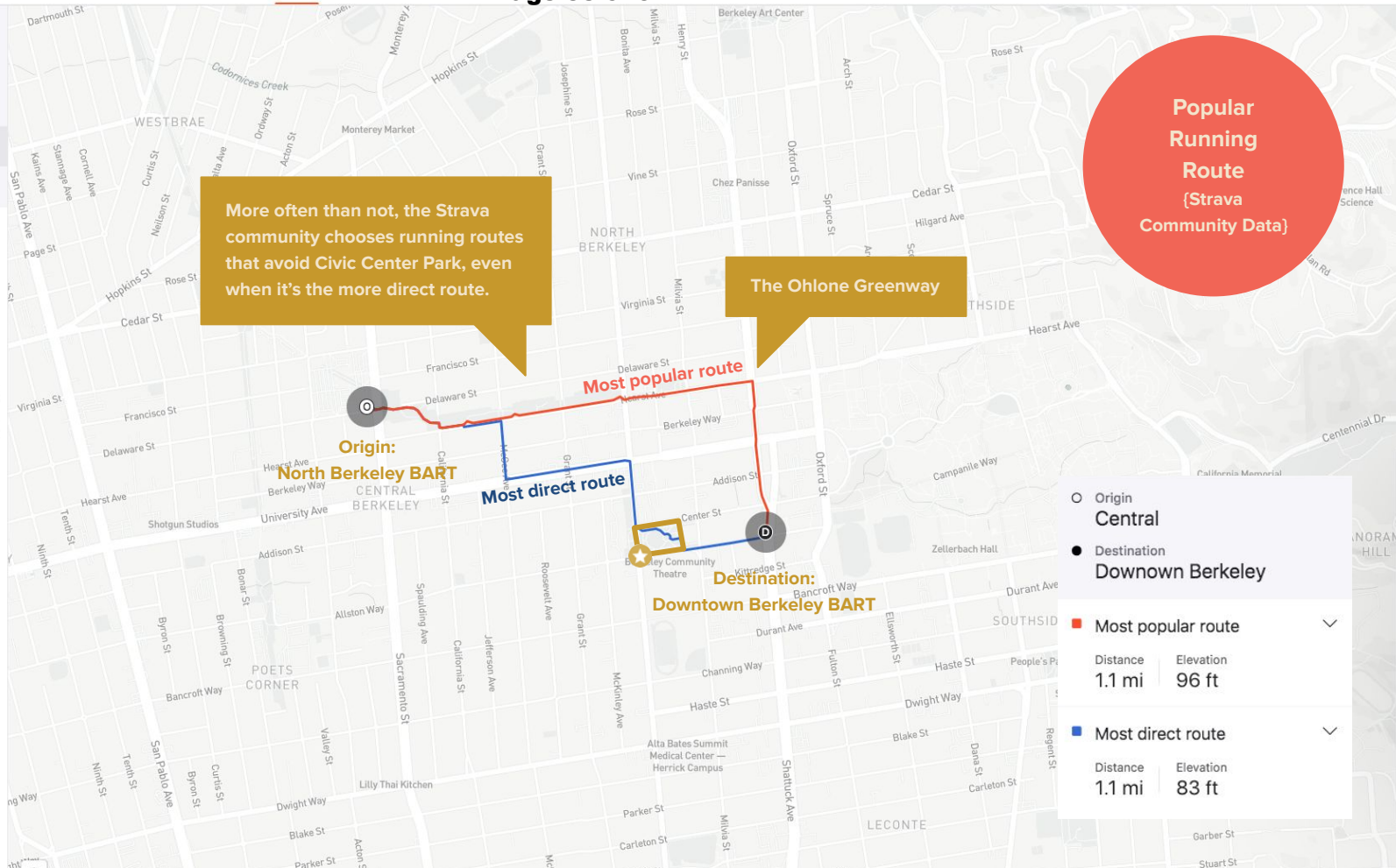


Show custom route



Direct

Popular



# 2 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



There's no there there – Civic Center isn't a destination

## 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.



### 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



# 3 Civic Center repels, it doesn't attract

Center 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

# 4 Even during Farmers' Markets, there's not much spillover into the park



**Farmer's  
Market** (Center St)

**1,092**

**hourly moving  
peak**  
weekend - 11am

vs.

**BART Plaza**

**930**

**hourly moving  
average**  
weekend

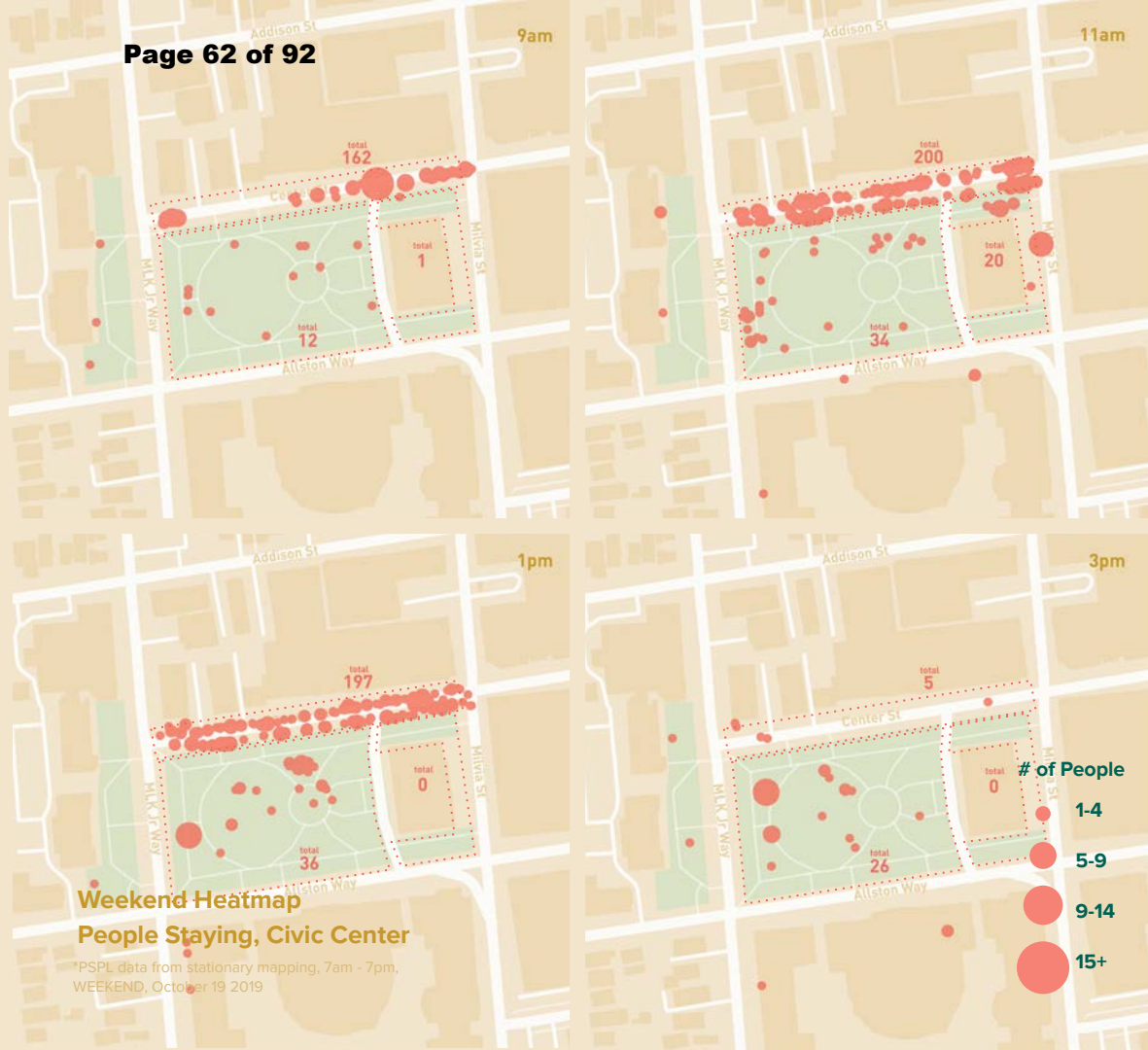
At its peak hour, the flow of pedestrians moving through the Farmer's Market is about the same as the hourly average for the BART plaza



Even during Farmer's Markets, there's not much spillover into the park

## 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.



BE  
YOU

YOU'RE  
OK

IT'S  
NOT A  
DUMB  
IDEA

People are here ...

...but not here







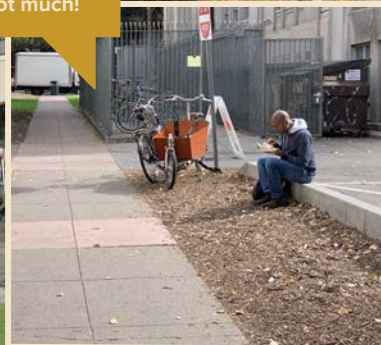
A few near the edges



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A little spillover activity, but not much!



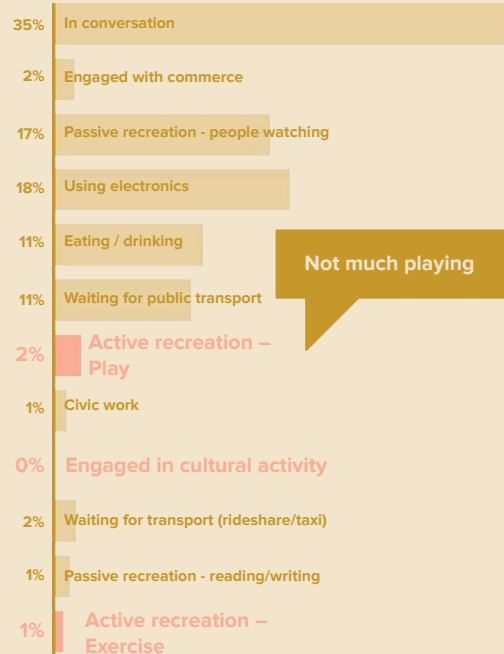
# 5 There aren't that many park activities in Civic Center Park

There aren't that many park activities in Civic Center park

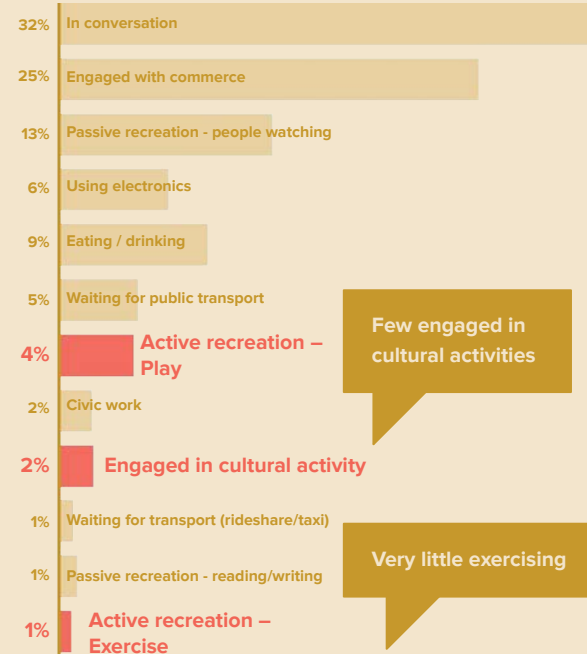
## People aren't engaged in many cultural or recreational activities

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!

### weekday



### weekend



### Stationary Activity Breakdown Civic Center

\*PSPL data from stationary mapping, 7am - 7pm,  
OVERALL, October 15 + 19 2019



There aren't that many park activities in Civic Center park

## 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)

Singular use

Swings only for  
young kids

No place to sit  
for families

Careful of sharp  
objects in the fountain!

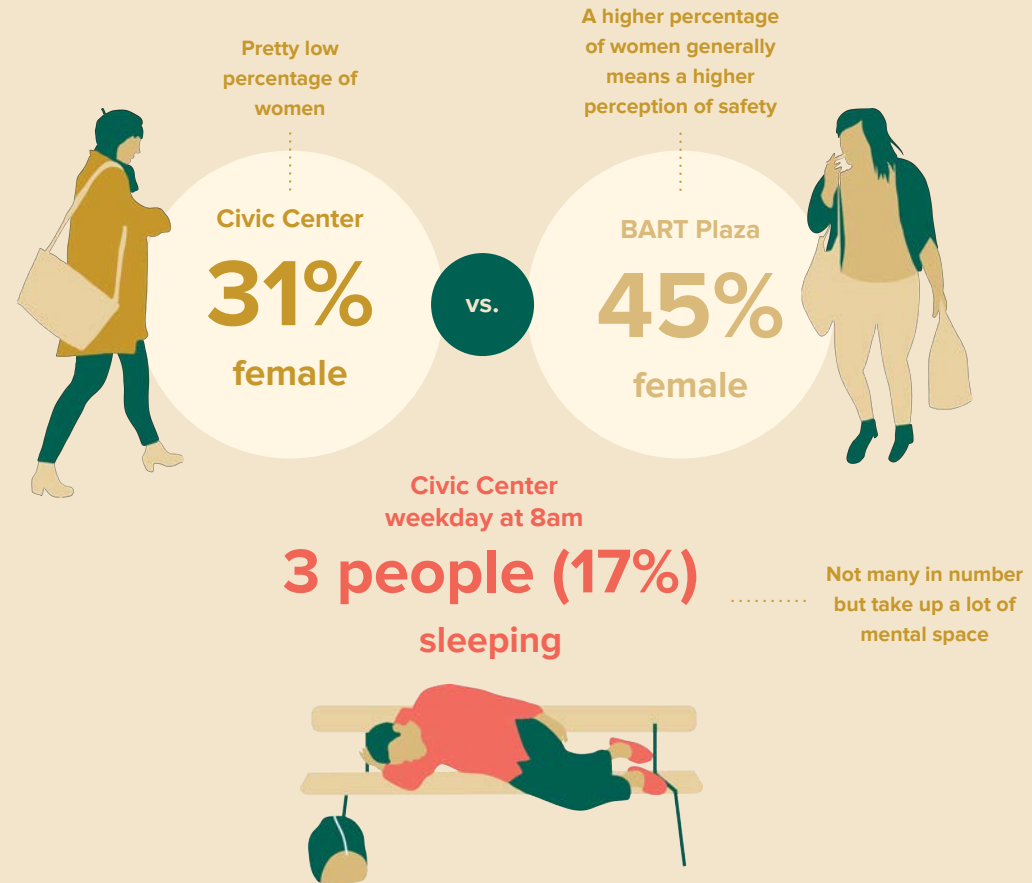
It's not very  
clean in here

# 6 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.



\*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...

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.

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



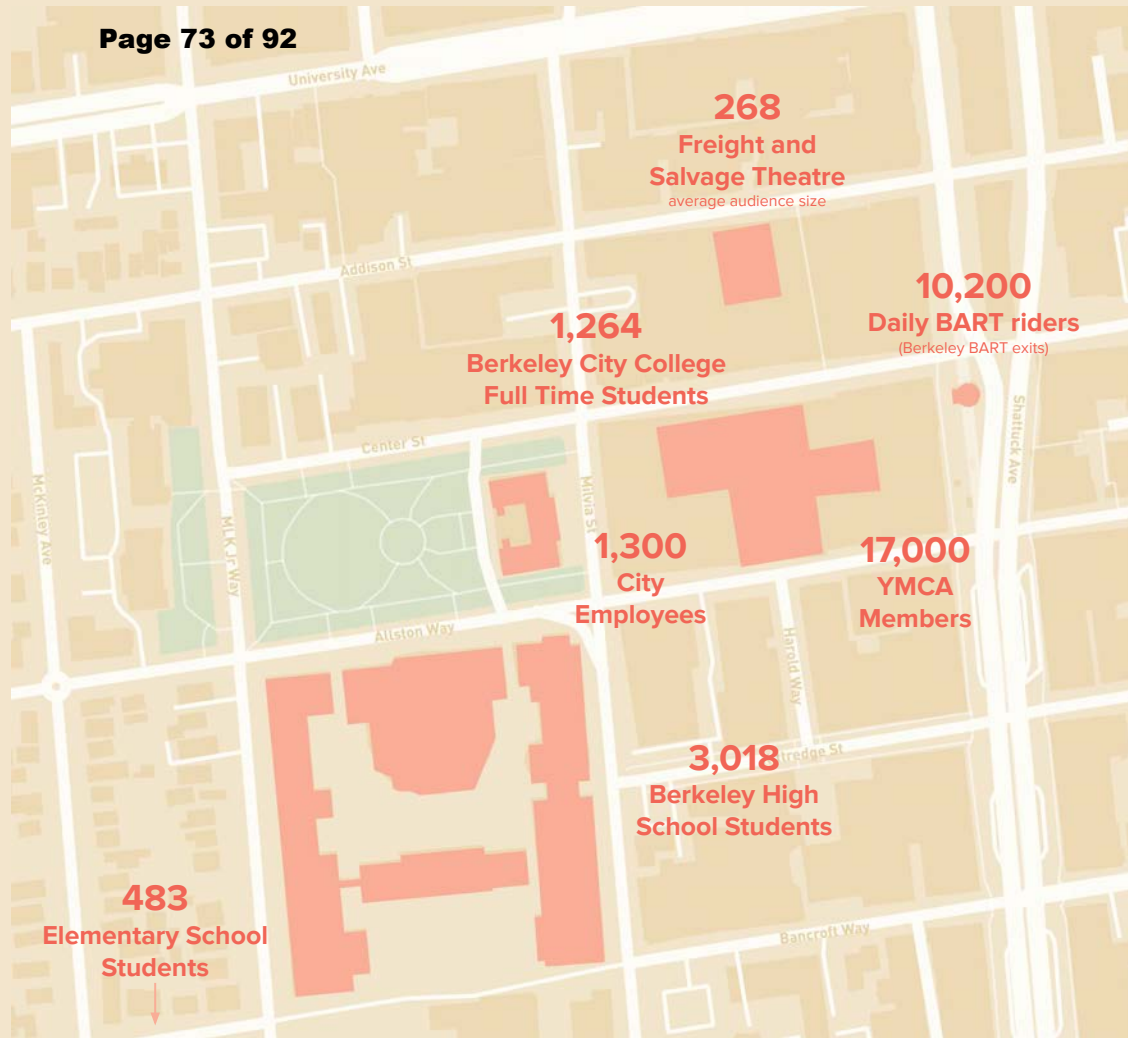
# 7 YET, Civic Center is surrounded by a high density of life + legacy of gathering

— 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

YMCA members

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

Civic Center is both a  
space for the everyday  
and for special events ...





Civic Center  
Park, 1952

Berkeley Historical Plaque Project Photo  
BAHA Archives



Civic Center  
Park, 1971

Photo courtesy of the Nick DeWolf Foundation  
© Nick DeWolf Foundation

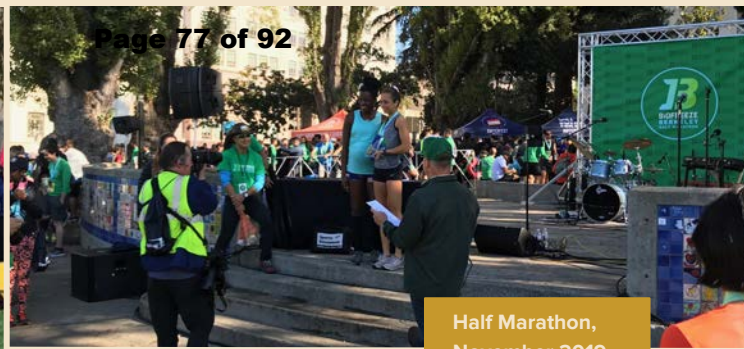


Photo courtesy of the Nick DeWolf Foundation  
© Nick DeWolf Foundation





PowWow,  
October 2019



Half Marathon,  
November 2019



Old Time Music Festival,  
September 2019



# 8 Civic Center is surrounded by public buildings awaiting their next act

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.





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)



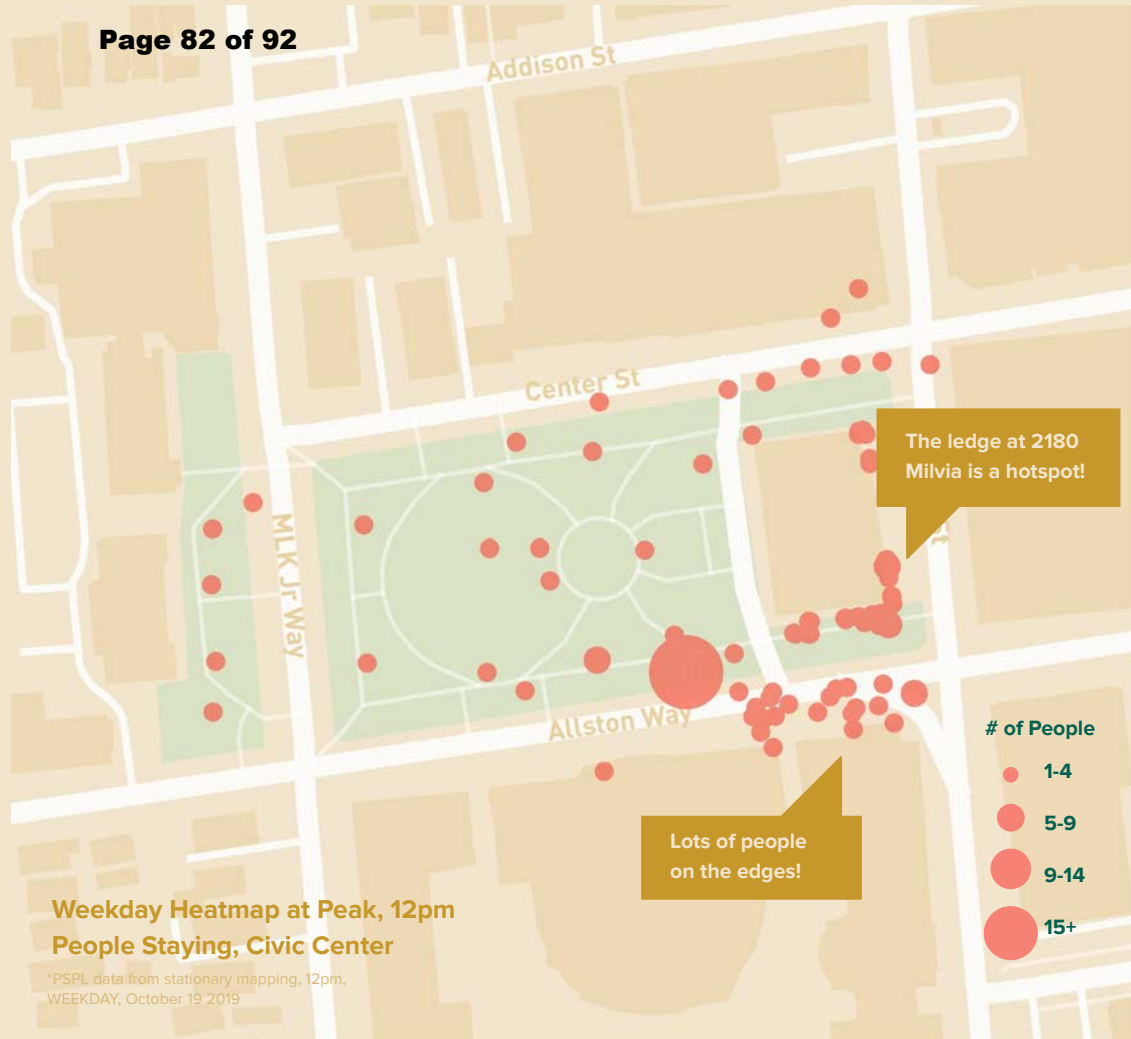


9 With the right invitations,  
people do want to spend  
time here

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.



An outdoor living room

A place to catch up with friends

The ledge at 2180 Milvia is human scaled with a comfortable microclimate, giving people a reason to stay.

People spend time on the edge despite the 'keep off ledge' signs

A sunny spot for a midday break