



Office of the City Manager

14

ACTION CALENDAR

September 22, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: David White, Deputy City Manager

Subject: Adoption - Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution approving *Berkeley's Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan*, and declaring Council's intention to support the vision and preferred design concepts articulated in the plan.

SUMMARY

This item presents City Council with the culmination of the work to develop a vision and implementation plan for Berkeley's Civic Center area, which includes: the Veterans Memorial Building; Maudelle Shirek Building ("Old City Hall"); and the Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park ("Civic Center Park"). These three places are important cultural resources to Berkeley, not only due to their age, but also their architectural significance, central location, and history as the center of City government. The project was funded through Phase 1 of the Measure T1 infrastructure bond designated to repair, renovate, replace, or reconstruct the City's infrastructure, facilities, and buildings.

The *Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan* project commenced in summer 2019 with the goal 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 230-page final report entitled *Berkeley's Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan* (July 2020) is presented as Exhibit A in Attachment 1. The accompanying resolution adopting *Berkeley's Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan* lays a strong foundation and clear direction for the Civic Center's next act. The Vision for Berkeley's Civic Center is:

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

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. The consultant team spent the fall of 2019 conducting a Public Space Public Life (PSPL) study of Civic Center, holding focus group interviews, hosting a site tour, facilitating a 'vision and values' workshop, and engaging with four city commissions and the project's technical advisory group composed of city staff in a wide variety of departments. In January of 2020, the team presented a draft vision statement for Civic Center to Berkeley's City Council for feedback.¹

The consultant team continued to work throughout the spring and summer of 2020 to host a variety of interactive design workshops and develop a project website for additional community input. They also delivered three interactive conceptual design options, an in-depth set of funding strategies, and a robust implementation plan. In this report, the Office of Economic Development (OED) presents the final report from the consultant team which includes a compelling vision for Berkeley's Civic Center, a summary of the design development and community engagement conducted through June of 2020, the preferred conceptual design option, and an appendix with the attendant historic structures report, landscape assessment, and cost estimates.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The exact fiscal impacts of the finalized adopted vision and implementation plan for Civic Center are to be determined. Preliminary cost estimates to achieve the design concepts discussed in the final report range from \$56,144,000 to \$92,569,000 mostly depending on the desired uses and associated required seismic upgrades for the buildings.² The development of the preferred design concept which includes: park improvements, new council chambers, and the seismic retrofits for reuse of Old City Hall and the Veterans Memorial Building is estimated to be \$56,144,000.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Project Timeline

The project began in the summer of 2019 and has proceeded according to the timeline outlined below:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| ❑ Consultant Contract Authorization by Council | July 16, 2019 |
| ❑ Project Commencement | August 2019 |
| ❑ Public and City Engagement: Visioning | |

¹ Berkeley City Council Agenda Worksession, *Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan*, [Item #1](#) January 14, 2020.

² *Berkeley's Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan*, Chapter 6, Funding Strategy, Section 6.3 Cost Summary, page 193. The preferred design concept recommends a Basic Performance Objective for Existing Buildings (BPOE) seismic upgrade scheme for each building, which allows safe egress from the building and prevents the building from collapse during a seismic event, however, the building may incur damages that are exceedingly expensive to repair.

- Technical Advisory Committee September 9, 2019
- “Super” Subcommittee Meeting of the Public Works, Parks and Civic Arts Commissions #1 September 9, 2019
- Site Tour #1 September 9, 2019
- Technical Advisory Committee Meeting November 14, 2019
- Super Subcommittee Meeting #2 November 21, 2019
- Small Focus Group Interviews Oct. – Jan. 2020
- 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
 - Project [Website](#) – with interactive features Jan. – May 2020
 - Workshop(s) #2: Youth Focus at Berkeley High February 4, 2020
 - Workshop #3: Pop-Up Market & Site Tour #2 March 7, 2020
 - Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #3 March 11, 2020
 - Super Subcommittee Meeting #3 March 12, 2020
 - Workshop #4: Design Concept Share & Selection Mar. – May 2020³
 - Preferred Option Design Preview(s) June 2 – 5, 2020
- Council Presentation (Preferred Design Concept & Plan) September 22, 2020

Summary of Meetings and Outreach

The consultant team, led by Gehl Studio and supported by staff from OED and other City departments, began the project in September 2019. The full public outreach effort is displayed visually in the project’s *Engagement Overview* (Attachment 1, page 90-91).

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 gathered formally three times with the consultant team: at the project kick off meeting in September 2019, to review the Public Space Public Life Study (PSPL) results in November 2019, and to vet the three conceptual design options in early March 2020 (Attachment 1, page 157). 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, outreach efforts, design development, and preferred design concept selection process.

³ See *Berkeley’s Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan*, page 88 and view webpage, *The Future of Berkeley’s Civic Center*, video resources: <https://neighborland.com/berkeleycc/videos>.

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 three times in publicly noticed meetings at 2180 Milvia Street, first to kick off the project in September 2019, in November 2019 to review and comment on the findings of the PSPL and initial research of the historic structures report, and in early March of 2020 to respond to the three conceptual design options for Civic Center, labeled “A”, “B” and “C” (Attachment 1, page 158-159).

Site Tours. Since releasing the RFQ in March 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 kickoff and super subcommittee meeting on September 9, 2019. A second set of tours for the public were held on March 7, 2020, in conjunction with a “pop-up” public workshop at the Saturday Farmer’s Market on Center Street. A debt of special thanks is due to the Berkeley Historical Society and their team of dedicated docents who organized a special companion Civic Center exhibit at the society’s gallery in the Veterans Building and co-led the tours with project staff.

Focus Groups and Interviews. From October through January 2020, 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 1, page 71 for a list of participants.

Project Website. The consultant team engaged digital engagement specialists, Neighborland, to create a [project website](#) that went live in early February 2020. The website included basic project information along with invitations for site visitors to describe what currently works well at Civic Center, to map their favorite parks and community places around the world, and to share ideas of what they would like to see in Berkeley. Using metrics from the interactive website engagement regarding design opportunities (Attachment 1, Chapter 4), the project team was able to discern “project sentiment” from the accrued comments. Of 2,369 individual online respondents, 56% felt “positive” about the Civic Center “big moves”⁴ design recommendations, 40% indicated “neutral” and just 4% were negative. (Attachment 1, page 161). In late of March of 2020 the three conceptual design options for Civic Center, labeled “A”, “B” and “C” (Attachment 1, Chapter 5) were presented on the project website. A detailed

⁴ Chapter 4.3 Design Development, *Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan*, page 110-111.

discussion of the feedback received on each of the conceptual design options is presented in Chapter 5.7 *Conceptual Design Options, Community Feedback- Website*, pages 160-163.

Workshops. Throughout the course of the project, the project team conducted four public workshops in variety of settings designed to elicit creative and meaningful feedback from the Berkeley community.

Vision and Values Workshop

On December 12, 2019, staff and the consultant team hosted a **Vision and Values Workshop** at the YMCA Teen Center (located at 2111 Martin Luther King Jr Way) adjacent to Civic Center Park. 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. 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 1, page 78-79).

Youth Focused Workshop

On February 4, 2020 the consultant team hosted two **Youth-Focused Design Charrettes** at Berkeley High School (located at 1980 Allston Way) adjacent to Civic Center Park. The charrettes explored design concepts for the Civic Center area with students from neighboring Berkeley High School (BHS) in partnership with BHS's Career Technical Education program.⁵ These charrettes were open to the general public, but were specifically designed to elicit targeted feedback from students who were identified in the Public Space Public Life (PSPL) study as bringing "the magic of youth" to Civic Center Park. (Attachment 1, page 80-83). The project team introduced the students to Public Life and its importance, and heard from the students on how they engage with the park. In groups, the students came up with design concepts and described features, spaces, and amenities they would like to see in the park including "Lights, Ledges & Liquidity" and a "Social Space Multi-generation Park."

Pop-Up Workshop

On March 7, 2020 the team hosted a tent at the Saturday Farmer's Market on Center Street to share the design concepts and project information. Displays were set up and shoppers stopped by for conversation about what they would like to see in Civic Center. The **Pop up at the Farmers Market** also offered two **Tours of the Buildings and Park**, and served to inform the conceptual design of the landscape and public realm options. (Attachment 1, page 84-85).

⁵ 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.

Design Workshop and Remote Engagement. Following the pop-up workshop of March 7, the plan was to hold a design workshop with pin up design boards in the Cypress Conference Room of 2180 Milvia Street on March 26, 2020. Due to the shelter in place order issued on March 16, 2020, the engagement strategy was adapted to accommodate an entirely virtual approach. The project team (from home!) was quickly able to develop a [series of videos](#) to accompany the Civic Center design options and presented them on the interactive project website. The project team used video conferencing tools to record themselves describing the design process, vision statement, and the design options.⁶ Thanks primarily to local sources publicizing the design videos and the opportunity to engage⁷, the Civic Center project website generated over 350 comments in one week, and more than 12,500 page views. (Attachment 1, page 161).

Design Concepts A, B, and C

The engagement and visioning process that led to the creation of the conceptual design plans first identified the main programs and features that needed to be present in all versions of the design concepts for Civic Center. These features are detailed in *Chapter 4: Design Development* (Attachment 1, page 106-111). The process also identified priority public realm improvements for Civic Center Park (Attachment 1, page 153). Using those, the team presented three varied design concepts titled “A”, “B” and “C”. Comprehensive drawings and summaries of the concepts are presented in *Chapter 5: Conceptual Design Options* (Attachment 1, pages 113-151). A short description of each is also below:

Design Option A shows Old City Hall is restored for use as a new City Hall with council chambers, the Veterans Memorial Building is converted into a “Cultural Hive” and the existing restrooms and storage spaces on the west side of 2180 Milvia are replaced with larger additions for food and beverage services.

Design Option B shows Old City Hall renovated as a Performing Arts & Culture Center, the Veterans Memorial Building houses a meeting hall for council and other public entities, select city offices and uses. Storage spaces on the west side of 2180 Milvia are converted into food and beverage kiosks.

In **Design Option C** Old City Hall is renovated as ‘The Berkeley Center,’ housing the historical society, a bookstore, and exhibit halls and/or renovated and rented to a small institution or a Think Tank. The Veterans Memorial Building is, as in Option A, transformed into a Cultural Hive. 2180 Milvia is expanded on the west side to house a new meeting chamber – for council and other public entities.

As the team developed and presented different iterations of the design concepts, it became important to establish a criteria for analyzing how options compare to each other on key measures. For example, all options successfully translated the vision statement into a spatial configuration. However, there were differences in the costing of

⁶ Gehl Blog, [People-centered engagement, even if not in-person](#), May 6, 2020.

⁷ Berkeleyside, [Pick your favorite design now for Berkeley’s Civic Center Park](#), April 15, 2020.

each option and on the community and stakeholder support they each received. For a full view of the design options appraisal see Attachment 1, Page 165.

Preferred Design Concept – Recommendations

The recommended concept, which combines elements of both Design Option A and Design Option C is aligned with the Vision statement and with community and stakeholder input. The preferred design concept, visualized on page 200 of the Plan and detailed in *Chapter 7: Recommendations* includes the following key components:

A new structure on the Park — including a Council Meeting Hall, Park Café and Restrooms. This new building on the park will offer an opportunity for a contemporary architectural addition that complements the sensitive rehabilitation of important historic structures. It will also offer a home to new programs that will contribute to the activation of the park — a park café, restaurant and restrooms. Finally, it will enable the Council and other groups to meet (late into the evening) in a central location with modern amenities.

The Berkeley Historical Society and other tenants populate a retrofitted Old City Hall – known as *The Berkeley Center*. Additional tenants should extend or complement the historical and education mission of celebrating the history and stories of Berkeley. Spaces for indoor gatherings — such as receptions and talks, as well as exhibition spaces, will ensure the building is open to the public. Subject to programmatic needs and funding opportunities, the scenario of extending Old City Hall toward the west should be pursued for services and other uses.

The *Berkeley Cultural Hive* at the Veterans Memorial Building. The Cultural Hive will house community meeting spaces, places for performing arts and arts education (i.e. after school programs for school-aged children, performances etc.) and meeting spaces for the Veterans groups and the community. The *Cultural Hive* will serve as bridge between the Berkeley High School and the neighboring Arts District on Addison Street with a retrofitted auditorium, smaller performing arts studios, and teaching spaces. The idea of a rooftop addition for an outdoor event space, set back from the main façade, and a terrace, should be explored (the rooftop addition is not included in the cost estimates).

In addition, a new landscape for Civic Center Park is proposed to celebrate the Park's rich history and includes bold, ambitious and people-centered moves to make the park more accessible, comfortable and used. See pages 209-218 of Attachment 1 for a detailed description of park design concepts.

Inevitably, the preferred vision goes beyond this project's scope and includes other nearby buildings that should be considered during subsequent phases of the Civic Center project. Future studies will further detail the preferred conceptual design option and help deepen the development of project phasing, and/or project groups (i.e. specifying what building projects goes with what public realm project, and how each project can be funded) going forward.

Preferred Design Concept – Previews

During the process of iterating on the preferred design concept, one key topic of discussion was the location of the proposed new, large (200+ seats) meeting hall designed to accommodate City council meetings. Option A, articulated the new council meeting space as an addition to the Maudelle Shirek Building, and Option C, explored a new volume connected to the west side of 2180 Milvia, facing the park — both locations for the meeting hall had a lot of positive support. In order to get clarity for the final design proposal, the team invited all current seated councilmembers and the Mayor's office (in groups of three districts each) to a small focus group session to preview the preferred design option(s) during the week of June 1-5, 2020. It was clear to the design team and the focus group participants that both options for the council chamber location presented good opportunities. However, the sentiments expressed in the design preview focus group sessions affirmed the design team's initial recommendation - that an extension of the 2180 Milvia building toward the park would be the optimal location for a new meeting hall.

As a result of the design preview sessions, additional revisions and recommendations to the final report were clarified and refined. These additions include the following elements:

- Further articulating the **Berkeley Historical Society** as a key tenant at Old City Hall; other tenants should complement and add to the historical and education mission of celebrating the history and stories of Berkeley. The conceptual plan should continue to show the possibility of a physical addition to Old City Hall, possibly for social services/civic support.
- Adding the provision of **an access point for civic support in Civic Center**, a place where the most vulnerable community members can get directed to help — be it shelter, medical or other.
- Noting that **the Veterans** should have access to the multi-purpose/meeting rooms in the Veterans Memorial Building, granting them special access in perpetuity to use the shared space for meetings and events.
- Suggesting possible locations, such as a **pavilion** in Civic Center Park, as a place for a **fresh food market** operated in conjunction with Berkeley High School's technical educational program and the Ecology Center.

A summary of the above, and all the associated Civic Center programs that are included in the final plan are presented on pages 204-207 of Attachment 1 and are described in *Chapter 7: Recommendations*.

Next Steps

Using the adopted vision plan as a guide, subsequent phases of this project should address the accompanying implementation strategy and associated action items.⁸ Dedicated staff and allied consultants will be necessary to secure funding, advance planning, develop detailed architectural designs, align programming, manage construction, and make the vision for Civic Center a reality.

⁸ Chapter 8, Implementation, *Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan*, page 222-225.

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 Veterans Building (1931 Center Street) was built in 1928 and designed to honor Berkeley's war veterans and provide a meeting place for their organizations. Other neighboring buildings including portions of Berkeley High School were constructed in this same era, and by the 1940s, Berkeley's Civic Center emerged as a cohesive group of civic buildings surrounding a central park.

Today the Civic Center comprises portions of the area surrounding Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park including the Maudelle Shirek Building 'Old City Hall' (1909) and the Veterans Memorial Building (1928) which flank the Park on the west and north sides. The larger Berkeley Civic Center District (codified by the Civic Center Overlay Zone, 2014) itself was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998. In addition, many of the buildings in the Civic Center District, including the Maudelle Shirek Building, the Veterans Memorial Building, and the Park itself, have been individually recognized as City Landmarks. Since the 1940s seismic building codes have evolved, requiring different thresholds of required maintenance and upkeep depending on use, and presently the historic buildings show signs of deferred maintenance.

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."⁹

As such, this project has executed a comprehensive community outreach strategy, distilled a number of wide-ranging and exciting ideas into a vision statement; performed an assessment of the existing supporting infrastructures of all three elements (Old City Hall, Veterans Memorial Building and Civic Center Park); identified a menu of programs and functions for the two buildings, identified complementary public realm improvements for the Park, and presented a suite of financial tools and revenue generation strategies to sustain the ongoing upkeep and maintenance of the facilities. The final *Vision and Implementation Plan* identifies a preferred design concept for Berkeley's Civic Center for adoption by the City Council.

Project Team

⁹ 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").

In March of 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.¹⁰ The proposal by Gehl Studio and design partners was selected based upon the following criteria: qualifications 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. The team also included a robust roster of sub-consultants in a number of relevant specializations including: architecture, historic preservation, economic analysis, cost estimating, zoning, planning policy, and digital engagement.

Historic Building/Landmarks Analysis

The project team, including Siegel & Strain Architects, has lead a skilled team of sub-consultants including architecture + history llc, PGA Design, and Architectural Conservation, Inc. to prepare Historic Structures Report(s) 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. 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 pose treatment plans and future use recommendations. The historic structures reports also gather background data from various local archives, compare historic and renovation drawings with existing conditions, and are the result of significant documentary field work. All three resources (both buildings and the park) 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. Each historic structure report is presented in full in the Appendix of the final *Vision and Implementation Plan*.

Funding Strategy and Implementation Matrix

Chapter 6: *Funding and Financing Strategy* of the Plan details funding sources that are most relevant to the major project types presented in the Vision Plan. A number of common sources of funding can be potentially used to pay for different kinds of projects included in the Plan's preferred design concept. They include: public agency grants, philanthropic grants, tax credits, rent payments, developer equity, citywide bond measures, value capture mechanisms, corporate sponsorships, and city revenues.¹¹

Accompanying the project's ambitious vision is a solid implementation plan. The matrix described in Chapter 8 of the Plan begins to identify immediate next steps and more long-term tasks and actions needed to realize the vision. At this stage there are still many unknowns, and many possibilities relating to funding streams, programs, and

¹⁰ City Council approved this solicitation at its regular meeting on January 22, 2019, [item 4](#).

¹¹ See *Figure 1: Common Funding Sources by Project Type and Implementation Phase* (page 190) and pages 168-173 of the Plan for a detailed discussion of each source type.

design. On a project of this complexity, the implementation matrix must continue to be developed collaboratively with a City of Berkeley Civic Center project manager.

Seismic Safety Analysis and Cost Estimates

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 to modern for seismic safety. 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 are available online.¹²

A critical component of the cost estimate plan is the level of seismic upgrade. Two options have been considered for each building. A Basic Performance Objective for Existing Buildings (BPOE) scheme allows safe egress from the building and prevents the building from collapse during a seismic event, however, the building may incur damages that are exceedingly expensive to repair. An Immediate Occupancy (IO) scheme allows safe egress and provides enhanced protection to the building such that it could be reoccupied almost immediately following a seismic event. A BPOE retrofit scheme is common for existing buildings and can accommodate any number of building uses. An IO scheme is typically undertaken for buildings that house "essential services," such as hospitals and emergency services. In the three design concepts, Option A considers an IO scheme for Old City Hall and a BPOE scheme for the Veterans Building, and in Option B, the reverse. Option C slates both buildings for the "lower" cost BPOE scheme. The cost estimate for each of the design concepts is presented in full in the Appendix of the final *Vision and Implementation Plan* and is summarized on page 193 of Attachment 1.

Together the cost estimates and the historic structure reports will continue to inform the subsequent implementation phases of the building use program, planning, and construction process for the preferred design concept.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Successful initiatives that repurpose existing buildings and civic space for subsequent generations' fruitful use promotes beneficial environmental, economic, and civic sustainability. This plan also supports the City's Strategic Plan goal to, "Provide state-of-the-art, well-maintained infrastructure, amenities, and facilities."

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

In this final report presentation, the preferred design concept for the adaptive reuse of both buildings and the Park articulates how the Veterans Memorial Building, Old City Hall, and Civic Center Park can be used going forward. The accompanying research

¹² 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.

includes cost estimates and a survey of financial tools and potential revenue strategies to support renovation and ongoing operations for programs in Civic Center. By adopting the final *Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan* the City Council sets a clear direction for subsequent phases of this keystone project.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

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Attachments:

- 1: Resolution Adopting Berkeley's Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan
Exhibit A: Final Report: *Berkeley's Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan*,
July 10, 2020.

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

APPROVING BERKELEY'S CIVIC CENTER VISION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Berkeley voters passed *Measure T1 Bond Funding for Infrastructure and Facilities*, to repair, renovate, replace, or reconstruct the City's aging infrastructure and facilities, including important City facilities and buildings; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, on January 22, 2019 City Council approved this solicitation at its regular meeting and approved the engagement of a qualified project consultant team to assist in the completion of this project at its regular July 16, 2019 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley's project team has conducted an inclusive and transparent community process, engaged meaningfully with stakeholders, and provided a compelling and shared vision 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; and

WHEREAS, *Berkeley's Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan* determines a direction for future capital improvements to restore and secure these facilities to maximize their community benefit; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Council approves and adopts *Berkeley's Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan* (Exhibit A) and declares its intent to support the vision and preferred design concepts articulated in the plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is hereby authorized to further the implementation of the plan and its ambitious vision for the future of Berkeley's Civic Center:

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

Exhibits:

A: Final Report: *Berkeley's Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan*, July 10, 2020



July 10, 2020

Berkeley's Civic Center

Vision and Implementation Plan

A Vision for Berkeley's Civic Center

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

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Cathy Garrett, Landscape Architect, PGAdesign

Matt Taecker, Taecker Planning & Design

Dena Belzer, Strategic Economics

Andy Beyer, TBD Cost Consultants
Asia Kan, TBD Cost Consultants

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Reimagining the heart of Berkeley

Developing a bold yet pragmatic vision for the future of Berkeley's Civic Center.

When it comes to community building and civic engagement, there are few places that compare to Berkeley. Arguably, few cities have championed so passionately and unconditionally the fundamental values that make a city a city — namely the sharing of collective resources and a true respect for individual expression. A laboratory of new political ideas since its founding, Berkeley has always advanced our understanding of the word Community. Yet, unlike other cities that play a similar role on the world stage, Berkeley lacks an updated civic space that truly embodies the values its community lives by.

Certainly, Berkeley doesn't lack great public spaces. Tilden Park provides wonderful recreation in nature. The Berkeley Marina grants breathtaking views of the Bay and connects us with its waterfront. Indian Rock and the Rose Garden offer special places for respite and contemplation.

Even if mostly for “gown not town”, The UC Berkeley campus itself is in fact a grand, world-class, public place, and People's Park speaks of our understanding of public space as a space of solidarity. Yet, we couldn't point to any of these places as the center of Berkeley's Public Life. We are left with the question: Where is Berkeley's Heart? Where's the public space of prime community identity that all Berkeleyans use, the place that gathers us as one, weaving together our daily lives? Thinking of it, many central squares in other cities we might travel to are exactly that— the thriving heart of their community. Why shouldn't Berkeley have something similar? Why can't Civic Center, which was designed 100 years ago with that idea in mind, serve this very purpose for the next 100 years?

We know that, in its current condition, the site comes with challenges that prevent it from realizing its full potential. (1) The site is slightly off-center from the most active

part of downtown, enough to be just off the beaten path. (2) Some of its buildings are not only in need of capital intensive restoration, but they also give their back to the central open space, with ground floors that are not active or permeable. (3) As a consequence to these two first points, with the exception of the Farmers' Market and a few other periodic events, Berkeley residents have organized their daily public life around other spaces and destinations and, as of today, Civic Center doesn't make the list of the places people like to go. In day to day life, the park remains underutilized therefore prone to accommodate socially undesirable behaviors. Yet the opportunities outplay the challenges. The site features some of the most historically significant buildings in the city, all of which revolve around a central open space that has been patiently waiting to be further activated by the community for years, like a canvas awaits the final strokes of paint to become a distinguished work of art.

With this project, Berkeley's community has been presented with a once-in-a-generation opportunity. Members of the public from all walks of life came together to reimagine the identity and function of Civic Center and reaffirm it as the beating heart of its tight-knit community. Berkelyans have shown a true desire to transform this place and the commitment to work together to make it happen. All stakeholders donated their time generously to help us understand what the unmet needs and undiscovered possibilities of the place are. Members of the community turned up in very high numbers in each and every public event organized throughout the arc of the project and demonstrated they know how to work collaboratively for a common purpose.

The result is a bold yet pragmatic vision for the future of the place, one that gives Berkeley the Heart of the City it deserves, matching the unique identity and the larger-than-life spirit of its people.



Existing Conditions

1.1 Introduction, Site & Context

1.2 Site Assessment

1.2.1 Historic Structures

1.2.2 Policy Context

1.2.3 Public Space Public Life study results

1.1

Project Background

The Berkeley Civic Center Vision Project

The purpose of this project has been to develop a shared community vision, design concepts and implementation plan for Berkeley's Civic Center area, with a transparent public process rooted in analysis of how people use Civic Center today, community needs, site analysis, and historic structures analysis. The planning area includes Martin Luther King Civic Center Park, the Veterans Memorial Building, and City Hall — the Maudelle Shirek Building.

The Berkeley Civic Center Historic District (the same geographic area as the Civic Center Overlay Zone) was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998 and includes multiple local Landmarks *(please refer to the Historic Structure*



Report in the appendix for additional information). The Veterans Building and the Maudelle Shirek Building are in need of seismic upgrading, American Disabilities Act compliance, and show signs of deferred maintenance. The Park, although successful as a gathering space during events and rallies, does not attract an everyday intensity of use that matches its central location and symbolic status.

In 2016, Berkeley voters passed Measure T1, which authorized the City to sell \$100 million of general obligation bonds to repair, renovate, replace, or reconstruct the City's aging infrastructure, including important City facilities and buildings. The Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan is funded as a T1 Phase 1 project.

The T1 funding is for the structural analysis and visioning of possible conceptual design alternatives for the Veterans Memorial Building, the Maudelle Shirek Building and Civic Center Park, along with streets and adjacent structures necessary for context-sensitive solutions. The Vision Plan aim to help the City and the community clarify what their Civic Center can become, and to determine capital improvement priorities for this area.

The T1 bond program is administered by Parks, Recreation & Waterfront and Public Works departments. The Office of Economic Development (situated within the City Manager’s Office) is managing the project across multiple City Departments



and with the consultant team led by Gehl.

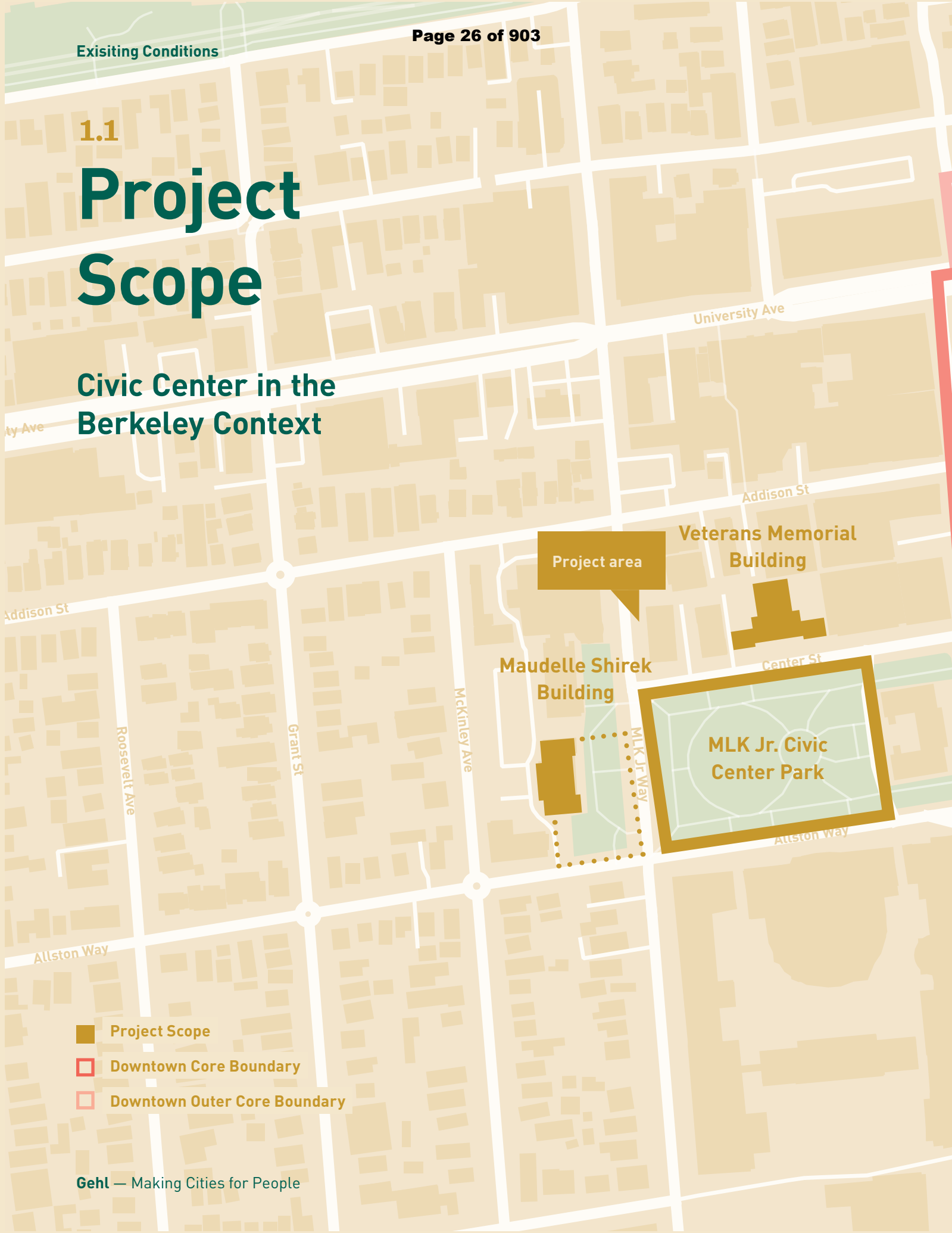
The Vision Project addresses planning, development, historic preservation, transportation, and arts programming issues, and has seen involvement from Landmarks, Parks, Public Works and Civic Arts Commissions. Other important bodies — such as Berkeley Unified School District, and local stakeholders — such as the Ecology Center, YMCA, the Berkeley Historical Society, existing tenants, including the Veterans organizations themselves and local Arts organizations, have been engaged with *(see chapter 2)* and have informed the shaping of the Vision and Implementation Plan.

Existing Conditions

1.1

Project Scope

Civic Center in the Berkeley Context



Project area

Veterans Memorial Building

Maudelle Shirek Building

MLK Jr. Civic Center Park

- Project Scope
- Downtown Core Boundary
- Downtown Outer Core Boundary

Berkeley Downtown
Outer Core

Berkeley
Downtown Core



BART

Shattuck Ave

Addison St

Center St

Allston Way

Oxford St

Frank Schlessinger Way

University of
California
Berkeley

Berkeley Downtown
Outer Core

Bancroft Way

Bancroft Way

1.1

Project Timeline

Where are we in the process?



2019 2020

SEP — | — OCT — | — NOV — | — DEC — | — JAN — | — FEB — | — MAR —

Tour

PSPL

Historic Structures Research

Concept Design

TAC

TAC

Community Meeting

Community Meeting

SSC

SSC

City Council

Tour

Focus group interviews

Draft Report

Historic Structure Reports

■ Research / Design

■ Engagement

■ Deliverables

TAC= Technical Advisory Committee

SSC= Super Subcommittee of the Commissions (Including: T1 Public Works, Parks Recreation & Waterfront, Landmarks, and Civic Arts)

PSPL= Public Space and Public Life studies

Design Concepts

MAR —||— APR —||— MAY —||— JUN —||— JUL —||— AUG —||— SEP

TAC Community Meeting

SSC

City Council

Website

Final Draft

Final Report

1.2

Site Assessment

Although surrounded by varied architecture, just a block away from the bustling BART Plaza and with great views up Center Street into campus, Civic Center is a challenging public space.

Issues summary

- 2180 Milvia — the only building in the park — turns its back to the park (opens up to a parking lot)
- Blank façades surround the park
- Central lawn is often too wet to sit on, few public benches
- Certain groups, although small in number, negatively impact the sense of security
- Lack of good night lighting
- Lack of sense of safety
- Lack of maintenance and lots of litter
- No food or beverage offer
- Play provision is inadequate
- Restrooms are inadequate
- Shaded and dark spaces around the main seating areas (near fountain)
- The green is too large and empty
- The main buildings don't have a ground floor that opens onto the street or the park
- The park's pedestrian paths compete with the sidewalks
- There is extensive on-street parking
- Traffic dominated environment of surrounding streets

Opportunities summary

- 3,000 students at Berkeley High School daily
- Center Street connects the BART to the Park — opportunity to create a terminus
- Further green and landscape
- High quality buildings
- Large residential community to the west
- Location adjacent to Arts District
- On the edge of but also part of downtown
- Opportunity to remove parking and traffic on Center and Allston Streets
- Provide food and beverage in the park
- Re-orient facades toward the park, potentially subdividing interior spaces for various tenants to have a front-door onto the park and providing multiple entry points to buildings
- Walking distance to public transit