



Office of the City Manager

REVISED AGENDA MATERIAL for Supplemental Packet 1

Meeting Date: July 11, 2023

Item Number: 33

Item Description: Civic Center Phase II – Design Concept

Submitted by: Eleanor Hollander, Office of Economic Development

The attached supplemental item provides edits to the original item that are *not intended to change the substance of the item*, but just clarify (1) that Council is asked to only affirm a high-level design concept for Civic Center with this item, and (2) that all subsequent project decisions will be subject to the proper environmental review. The edits contained herein also ensure that terminology in the report is used precisely; as the word “project” has a specific definition with respect to environmental review.



Office of the City Manager

ACTION CALENDAR
July 11, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Liam Garland, Public Works Director

Subject: ~~Adoption~~—Civic Center Phase II - Design Concept

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution approving *Berkeley's Civic Center Design Concept ~~Plan~~*, and declaring Council's intention to support the preferred design concept and necessary future studies ~~and projects~~ articulated in the plan and directing staff to pursue the next steps identified in the plan, including seeking funding and conducting further studies.

SUMMARY

This item presents City Council with the culmination of the work to build on the adopted Civic Center Vision and Implementation Plan for Berkeley's Civic Center area ("Vision"), which

includes a vision for the following:

- Veterans Memorial Building;
- Maudelle Shirek Building ("Old City Hall"); and
- Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park ("Civic Center Park").

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 City's Veterans Memorial Building, Maudelle Shirek Building, 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. Adopting a shared Vision for Civic Center was an important Phase 1 accomplishment. Phase II ~~of the Civic Center project~~ sought to sharpen the vision-aligned consensus design concept for Civic Center and ~~set a~~ describe a potential course for the next steps of implementation. Phase I (Vision) of the project commenced in summer 2019 and 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. Phase

II (Design Concept Plan) ~~of the Civic Center project~~ was funded via a General Fund budget referral approved in the City Council's adoption of the FY 2022 Budget. Staff work on Phase II began in September of 2022. The 156-page final report entitled *Berkeley's Civic Center Design Concept Report* (May 2023) is presented as Exhibit A in Attachment 1. The accompanying resolution adopting *Berkeley's Civic Center Vision Aligned Design Concept Plan* provides direction for the Civic Center's next act.

The Public Works Department and Office of Economic Development (OED) worked with a consultant team led by Siegel & Strain Architects. The consultant team spent the fall of 2022 and winter/early spring of 2023 conducting a public workshop about Civic Center, holding focus group interviews, hosting site tour(s), facilitating two "youth focused" workshops, and an in-depth session with Berkeley's art and culture organizations, attending approximately eight briefings with the Community for a Cultural Civic Center (CCCC) group, and engaging with five city commissions and the project's technical advisory group composed of city staff in a wide variety of departments. In March of 2023, the team presented a draft design concept for Civic Center to Berkeley's City Council for feedback.¹

The consultant team continued to work throughout the spring of 2023 to deliver a refined conceptual design, update cost estimates, provide an in-depth set of funding strategies, and develop a robust implementation plan or "next steps" for further study. This report presents the final report from the consultant team (Attachment 1) which includes a design concept for Berkeley's Civic Center, a summary of the community engagement conducted through May of 2023 and the resulting design drivers, next steps including future studies needed to accommodate a design with a daylit creek, and an appendix with the updated cost estimate for this once-in-a-generation project.

Design Concept – Recommendations

Integrating the input received through the engagement efforts, additional study on the changing context of the Civic Center, and the programmatic requirements heard from current and potential users, the Civic Center Design Concept Plan ("Plan") proposes includes the following vision:

- *Maudelle Shirek Building* - seat of Berkeley's democracy with flexible meeting spaces and supportive and vision-aligned city services and educational uses.
- *Veterans Memorial Building* – a Community Arts Center, run by the City, with performance venues, teaching and exhibit space, accessible by all in the community.
- *Civic Center Park & Surrounding Streets* - a safe nature-based urban oasis for all of Berkeley, supporting community use throughout the day and strolling, relaxing, having lunch, visiting, and attending an impromptu gathering or organized event on evenings or weekends.

¹ Berkeley City Council Agenda Worksession, *Civic Center Phase II - Design Concept*, [Item #2](#) March 21, 2023.

The preferred design concept, visualized on pages 70-71 of the Plan is detailed in *Section 5: Design Concept* (Attachment 1).

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Adoption of the Plan does not commit Council to completing the design elements described therein. The exact fiscal impacts of the finalized design concept plan for Civic Center are to be determined. Preliminary construction cost estimates to achieve the design concepts discussed in the final report range from \$103,753,000 to \$131,587,000. These estimates assume additions and improvements that support the desired uses for the buildings, associated required seismic upgrades, and other park and street improvements.²

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Project Timeline

Phase II (development of the Plan) ~~of the Civic Center project~~ began in September 2022 and will be completed by June of 2023:

- Phase II Funding for Conceptual Design Plan Authorized by Council June 29, 2021
- ~~Project-Phase II~~ Commencement Sept. 1, 2022
- Public and City Engagement: Design Approach
 - Technical Advisory Committee Sept. 29, 2022
 - “Super” Subcommittee Meeting of the Public Works/Transportation, Landmarks, Parks and Civic Arts Commissions Sept. 29, 2022
 - 25+ Small Focus Group Interviews Sept. ‘22 – Feb. ‘23
 - Monthly meetings with Community for a Cultural Civic Center (CCCC) Sept. ‘22 – Feb. ‘23
 - Workshop #1: Open House (Berkeley Public Library) Nov. 16, 2022
 - Online Community Survey: Berkeley Civic Center Vision Project Nov. ‘22 – Jan. ‘23
 - Art Organizations Survey: Berkeley Arts Space Needs Assessment Jan. ‘23 – Feb. ‘23
- Public and City Engagement: Draft Design Concept
 - Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Feb. 9, 2023

² *Berkeley’s Civic Center Design Concept*, Attachment 1, Sections 5.3, 5.4. The design concept recommends a Building Performance Objective for New Buildings Plus (BPON+) seismic upgrade scheme for the Veterans Memorial Building (Attachment 1, Section 5.4). A combined Damage Control Plus (DC+) / Immediate Occupancy (IO) scheme, abbreviated as “DC+/IO” is recommended for the Maudelle Shirek building (Attachment 1, Section 5.3).

- Commission Engagement - Super Subcommittee Meeting #2
Feb. 9, 2023
- Workshop #2: Youth Focus at Berkeley High
Feb. 15, 2023
- Workshop #3: Education Focus at Berkeley City College
Feb. 15, 2023
- Veterans Memorial Building Arts Space Focus Group Meeting
Feb. 24, 2023
- Council Work Session - Emerging Preferred Design Concept
March 21, 2023
- Monthly meeting with CCCC group
April 25, 2023
- Four Arts Organization Meetings
April - May 2023
- Super Sub Committee of the Commissions Briefing
May 16, 2023
- Council Adoption (anticipated) - Design Concept
July 11, 2023

Summary of Meetings and Outreach

The consultant team, led by Sigel & Strain Architects and supported by staff from PW, OED, and other City departments, kicked off this phase with a series of public meetings in September 2022. The public outreach effort is described in more detail in Attachment 1, Section 2.

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 [RFQ for the Vision Plan project RFQ](#) in late 2018, and has since gathered formally in this [project](#) phase twice with the consultant team: at the Phase II [project](#) kick-off meeting in September 2022, and to review the draft consensus design concept in February 2023. 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, Public Safety, and PW Facilities Maintenance) have made essential contributions to the [projectPlan](#).

Super Subcommittee of City Commissions. To efficiently engage with City Commissions that have an interest in this [projectPlan](#), a “super” subcommittee meeting structure was established. Three City of Berkeley Commissions—the Public Works, Parks Recreation 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. During Phase II ~~of the Civic Center project~~, the super sub-committee structure continued. This larger group of subcommittees met twice in publicly noticed meetings on Zoom in the webinar format, first to kick off ~~the project~~ [Phase II](#) and discuss design approaches in September of 2022 and [then](#) to review and comment on the draft design concept in February 2023. The Super Subcommittee of the Commissions, and representatives of a fifth commission,

the Commission on Disability, had an in-person briefing in May 2023 to go over the final design concept report and discuss engagement of their “home” commissions prior to the final report publication in June of 2023. See <https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/capital-projects/civic-center-vision-plan-project> for a complete list of materials presented at the Super Subcommittee meetings during Phase II.

Site Tours. City staff members have received many requests to tour the two buildings. During ~~this project~~ Phase II, the consultant team has toured the buildings with PW, and the park with the City’s urban forester and arborist. Members of CCCC, TAC, Super Subcommittee of the commissions, and arts organizations have also toured the buildings to help envision programmatic uses. Several site tours were also conducted in the Vision phase of this planning effort (2019-2020).

Focus Groups and Interviews. From September 2022 through February 2023, staff and the consultant team conducted 25+ one-on-one or small group interviews with Civic Center stakeholders, including the current Civic Center tenants, several City Council Members (and/or their staff) and the Mayor’s office, representatives from the Berkeley Unified School District including the principal of Berkeley High School, planners of annual community events that occur in Civic Center, arts organizations, business associations, local media outlets, ecological and riparian experts, city staff, and local community groups including the CCCC. See Attachment 1, Section 2.2 for a complete list of interviewees.

Open House, Workshops & Survey. On November 16, 2022, staff and the consultant team hosted an in-person Open House Workshop at the Berkeley Public Library. 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~~ Preferred Design Concept development. The consultant team organized the session into stations, with opportunities for discussion in small groups and written feedback on postcards at each station. This was supplemented with an **Online Survey** that asked the same questions of respondents as the in-person workshop did. The online survey recorded 694 responses, far exceeding the stated survey goal of 400 responses. Highlights of the survey responses are summarized in Attachment 1, Section 2.2. On February 15, 2023, staff and the consultant team hosted two **Youth-Focused Workshops**, one at Berkeley High School and one at Berkeley City College. Staff led students through a series of activities where participants were asked to identify what they liked and disliked about the draft design concept for Civic Center and asked participants to complete comment cards about their opinions related to the park and street design approach. Highlights and key takeaways of the youth focused workshops are summarized in Attachment 1, Section 2.2.

Arts Organizations. A tailored workshop, the *Veterans Memorial Building Arts Space Focus Group Meeting*, was hosted by the City of Berkeley’s Civic Arts team on February 24, 2023 and included a detailed tour of the Veterans Building and dedicated focused discussions by artistic discipline. The goal of the meeting was to identify priority space needs for the Community Arts Center and to get input on the development of a spatial

program to help determine if the Veterans Memorial Building has sufficient spaces to serve the programmatic needs of the community. This workshop was not open to the general public, but instead sought to elicit targeted feedback from individuals that are representative of Berkeley's diverse arts community. Sixteen arts professionals from the disciplines of theater, dance, music, visual arts, and literary arts participated in the focus group meeting with the aim to have representation from various areas of Berkeley, racial and ethnic diversity, and a wide range of arts disciplines and organization sizes. Feedback gathered from this workshop is summarized in Attachment 1, Section 2.2.

City Council Worksession. The consultant team, in consultation with staff, developed an emerging preferred design concept, and draft concept design report that was presented to the Berkeley City Council members and the general public for feedback at a Berkeley City Council Worksession on March 21, 2023. The final report (Attachment 1) incorporates feedback received at the March 2023 Council Worksession and hews closely to the draft concept design presented in March 2023. The construction cost estimates and the Implementation chapters (Sections 6 and 7) are the areas of the report with the most updates since March 21, 2023.

Civic Center Design Concept

The outreach effort during ~~this phase of the project~~[Phase II](#) (2022-23) affirmed the Vision Statement adopted in 2020. With the adopted Civic Center Vision serving as the north star for this [project Plan](#), four points on a compass emerged to further guide the design concept:

- **Community** – an inclusive and caring community;
- **The Arts** – expressive artistic and cultural events;
- **Governance** – good governance demonstrated through progressive policies;
- **Education** – powerful educational activities tied directly to history and nature.

Integrating the input received through outreach efforts, and the programmatic requirements heard from current and future users of the Civic Center, the [project Plan](#) proposes the following current and potential future uses for each ~~project~~ element:

Maudelle Shirek Building will be the seat of Berkeley's democracy with flexible meeting spaces and supportive and vision-aligned city services and educational uses, accessible by all in the community. As the historic seat of government in Berkeley, this ~~project Plan~~ proposes returning city functions back to the Maudelle Shirek Building. In the public engagement efforts, Hearing & Meeting Rooms, Council Chambers, and flexible spaces for public-facing city services all scored high as priority uses for the building. Adding these functions to the heart of Berkeley's Civic Center will bring residents to the area throughout the day and into the evenings, to attend meetings, speak at hearings, and organize with their community.

Public outreach also showed strong support for vision-aligned organizations finding a home in the Maudelle Shirek Building, including the Berkeley Historical Society & Museum and Berkeley Community Media. In order to support these functions, a number

of improvements to the building will be required, including accessible improvements to the main entry and throughout, upgraded mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, improved fire and egress systems, seismic retrofit, and an addition to provide space for the uses. For further discussion of the proposed uses, improvements, and management structure for the Maudelle Shirek building see Attachment 1, Sections 5.3 and 7.1.

Veterans Memorial Building will be a community Arts Center, run by the city, with performance venues, teaching and exhibit space, accessible by all in the community. This project identifies the building as a future Community Arts Center for the City of Berkeley, a use broadly supported by the public, Civic Arts Program, and the Community for a Cultural Civic Center. In a survey and workshop with local arts organizations who expressed interest in using the building, they identified exhibition and performance space as priorities, which aligns with the perception of need discovered in the public engagement process. Further, arts survey respondents identified a need for flexible multi-disciplinary spaces that are available to rent by the larger community, rather than controlled by a single anchor tenant.

The arts functions will require improvement to the Veterans Memorial building including accessible improvements throughout, upgraded mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, improved fire and egress systems, seismic retrofit, and possibly additions to the sides of the main stage, and at the rooftop. For further discussion of the approach to this building, see Attachment 1, Sections 5.4 and 7.1.

Civic Center Park & Surrounding Streets will become a safe nature-based urban oasis for all of Berkeley. The park design will support community use throughout the day, evening and weekend for strolling, relaxing, sharing or having a meal, visiting, and attending an impromptu gathering or organized event.

Park Uses & Improvements

The design concept for MLK Jr. Civic Center Park builds from the existing condition of the park, and layers in new design elements and programs that support the desired everyday vibrancy of the park. It simplifies the path layout and reclaims underutilized space to fit new activity areas where possible. The proposed design preserves and builds upon the existing structure of the park, including the mature tree canopy, the central green open space, and the planned Turtle Island Monument terrace. Recommended improvements include simplified and widened path systems, native and biodiverse planting areas, a multi-use plaza with skate-able elements, a multi-age playground, an arts and market plaza to support the Farmers Market, expanded seating opportunities, and food and beverage vendors. For further discussion of the proposed park improvements, see Attachment 1, Section 5.2.

Creek Daylighting Considerations

Throughout the public engagement process in Phase II, the ~~project~~ team heard a consistent desire from some members of the community to “daylight” or bring Strawberry Creek to the surface area of Civic Center Park, and consistent concerns

from others about cost, maintenance, and safety of a daylight creek. An alternate design concept layout (Attachment 1, Section 5.2, pages 104-107) illustrates a partial-flow daylighting scenario. The placement of the creek along Center Street aligns with the current location of the culvert under the park, and minimizes disruption to the overall park layout and monuments. However, it does have a number of impacts that need to be considered more carefully through additional study:

- **Center Street** – The daylit creek reduces the width of Center Street to 26' travel path, allowing for emergency vehicle access. Parking and other vehicular traffic flow is removed. A parking & traffic study should be completed to understand the impact of closing Center Street to public traffic, and design solutions will need to be developed for providing delivery/drop-off to the buildings along Center Street. The Farmers Market also may need to be relocated to a new site with sufficient width for the market.
- **Hydrology** – The partial flow scenario is based on the 1999 Creek Study by Wolf Mason Associates. This report notes that the culvert is likely 18' under the surface of the park, sloping down to the west. A full restoration of the creek would require 150' in width and was determined infeasible. A partial flow scenario would require that the existing culvert remain, and that water is diverted through a flow control structure somewhere upstream of the park and downstream from the BART station to bring water closer to the surface. The exact width, depth, and design of a partial flow creek would need to be developed through a detailed hydrological study and will likely call for an engineered solution.
- **Maintenance** – any creek feature would involve new maintenance requirements, flooding mitigation considerations, and associated costs.

Parking and Circulation

In addition to the pedestrian pathway changes within the park, the concept design proposes changes to parking and circulation at both Center Street and Martin Luther King Jr Way.

- **Center Street** – aligned with the City's goal of a Green Center Street, the design proposes making this a pedestrian priority shared street, with a flush, curb-less transition from street to sidewalk, along with adding additional street trees and bioswales for stormwater management. A curve has been introduced in the road to create a more gracious entry plaza for the Veterans Memorial Building. The proposal shows 16 parallel parking spaces, in place of the 59 paid parking spaces currently on Center Street. These parking spaces generated \$156,860 in calendar year 2022 (at a rate of \$3.50/hour). There are also currently reserved parking spaces on this block – five for judges at the Alameda County Courthouse, one loading spot for the City mail truck, and four accessible "blue curb" spaces. The remaining 16 parallel spaces articulated in the plan could

serve as reserved parking, or a small number of paid parking spaces could be maintained.

- *Martin Luther King Jr Way* – the primary concern at this road is pedestrian safety crossing between the park and the Maudelle Shirek Building. Currently, the edge of the curb between Allston and Center does not align with the curb on the blocks to the north or the south – the road widens along the park’s edge. The concept design proposes reclaiming the portion of the road currently used as parallel parking to re-align the curbs in this area, and to create pedestrian bulb-outs at the street crossings. While the traffic lanes are not impacted, eight parking spaces would be removed. Another consideration for a future design phase will be raised pedestrian crosswalk or tables at Center and Allston.

In a next planning phase-of-work, a full traffic study should be implemented for this area to understand the impacts of the proposed improvements on traffic flow, circulation delays, intersection capacity, parking, and emergency response times.

Project Costs

The following high-level construction cost range estimations (Table 1) have been developed by staff and the consulting team (TBD Consultants working with Siegel & Strain) based on the design concept as presented in Attachment 1, Section 5. The total construction costs from TBD Consultants are very similar to the draft report presented at the March 21, 2023 Council Worksession. Additional cost information has been provided; including the construction costs of photovoltaic panels at both buildings and an addition at the Veterans Memorial building. In addition, a discussion on Operations & Maintenance Costs, a 10% construction contingency and 20% City costs have been added to the report (Section 6.1).

Other Costs

With an approved design concept, this project the City can move into its the next phase of additional recommended studies, environmental reviews, and initiating specific design projects. This work, to get to the “shovel ready” stage is estimated to cost approximately \$15 million dollars and take 2-3 years to complete (Attachment 1, Sections 0.2 and 7.2).

Table 1: High-Level Construction Cost Estimate Range

SUMMARY PROJECT COSTS	SITE AREA (Total Square Foot, or SF)	\$/SF MIDRANGE	MID- RANGE (\$ in Millions)	LOW (-10%) \$ in Millions	HIGH (+10%) \$ in Millions
Maudelle Shirek Building <i>(Assumes 27,000 Gross Square Feet (GSF) Existing + 15,500 GSF Addition, DC+/IO seismic retrofit, upgraded building envelope & systems)</i>	43,000	\$1,323	\$56.9	\$51.2	\$62.6

Veterans Memorial Building <i>(Assumes 28,000 GSF Existing + 5,950 GSF addition, BPON+ seismic retrofit, upgraded building envelope & systems)</i>	33,950	\$987	\$33.5	\$26.3	\$36.9
MLK Jr Civic Center Park & Streets <i>(4.6 acres including park & streets with improved paths/paving, planting/irrigation, trees/tree protection, utilities, furnishings, lighting, public restroom improvements)</i>	223,000	\$82	\$18.3	\$16.47	\$20.13
SUBTOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST		\$1,413	\$108.7	\$93.97	\$119.63
CONTINGENCY Cost (Construction)	10%	\$141	\$10.87	\$9.783	\$11.957
CONSTRUCTION COST <i>(with contingency)</i>		\$1,554	\$119.570	\$103.753	\$131.587
SUMMARY PROJECT COSTS, continued	SITE AREA (Total Square Foot, or SF)	\$/SF MIDRANGE	MID-RANGE (\$ in Millions)	LOW (-10%) \$ in Millions	HIGH (+10%) \$ in Millions
CITY COSTS <i>(including permitting, inspections, design fees, technical reports, consultants, Construction Management and Project Management)</i>	20%	\$311	\$23.914	\$21.523	\$26.305
TOTAL PROJECT COST <i>Including contingency (10%) and city costs (20%)</i>		\$1,865	\$143.484	\$125.276	\$157.892

Project Funding Plan

A variety of funding sources could contribute to the City’s approach to funding. The first approach would involve many different sources of funding all leading to one large project, phased in over the course of years. If full project funding isn’t secured quickly, an opportunistic approach might be available. Instead, City staff would identify discrete project components that could be built without the entire project moving forward. When successful in gaining grants of other funding for these components, work could proceed. This approach would likely take more time and involve more ~~project~~ cost overall, given fewer opportunities for efficiencies of scale. See Attachment 1, Section 7.2 for a detailed discussion of funding strategies. In any case, ~~the Civic Center project~~ implementing the Vision will be significantly more attractive for funding with an adopted conceptual design. Strong plans need funding, and funding is attracted to strong plans.

Next Steps

The next steps ~~for project implementation~~ for implementing the Civic Center Vision are outlined below and described in greater detail in Attachment 1, Section 7.3. They include:

- Identify, fund and realize early activation projects.
- Initiate efforts for next phase of work including further studies and specific designs including environmental review as appropriate.
- Develop funding and phasing plans for each of the project components.

Effect of Approving the Design Concept Plan

The proposed Design Concept Plan is not a “project” for purposes of CEQA or NEPA because it does not commit the City to a definite course of action. Council retains full discretion to mitigate environmental impacts, select other feasible alternatives that will avoid environmental impacts, balance the benefits of any future actions against the environmental impacts, or decline to carry out any of the design concept elements, all based upon information generated by the environmental review process.

BACKGROUND

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

Seismic Safety and Analysis

The Maudelle Shirek Building and the Veterans Memorial Building were evaluated in 2002 for seismic safety. The assessment included rough cost estimates for retrofitting the structures. In 2019, the 2002 figures were updated for consideration of current building code. In 2022, City Council received further information on both the buildings’ seismic analysis and costing, and the buildings’ leak study. The seismic analysis from Tipping Engineering and the costing from Public Works Department have contributed to the development the high-level cost estimates presented in Table 1 above. Public Works’ leak study identified \$1.48 million in necessary repairs for the Maudelle Shirek Building and \$1.9 million in repairs for the Veterans Building. These repairs primarily involve roof replacements and spot repairs to better prevent water intrusion.

Based on the adopted Vision ~~Plan~~, and the proposed ~~design concept and building program~~ Plan, the following building seismic retrofit levels are recommended:

Veterans Memorial Building is a three story, heavy concrete perimeter wall building with wood framed floors and roof that is seismically deficient and could pose life safety hazards to building occupants. For the design concept, the City’s Public Works Department recommends a seismic upgrade for the Veterans Memorial Building to the level of Building Performance Objective for New Buildings Plus (BPON+). At this level of seismic retrofit, the building would be reoccupied several months to a year after a major seismic event.

Maudelle Shirek Building is a three story, non-ductile concrete building that is seismically deficient and could pose life safety hazards to building occupants, as the building could collapse or partially collapse in a major earthquake proximate to the site. For the proposed design concept, the City’s Public Works Department recommends a seismic upgrade for the Maudelle Shirek Building to the level of Damage Control Plus (DC+) at the historic structure and the new addition be built to the Immediate Occupancy (IO) level. At the DC+ level of seismic retrofit, the Maudelle Shirek Building would be occupiable weeks to months after a major seismic event. The addition, built at the IO level, could be re-opened days after a major seismic event.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Successful initiatives that repurpose existing buildings and civic space for subsequent generations’ fruitful use promotes beneficial environmental, civic, and economic sustainability. In addition, future action to renovate the existing buildings and park will incorporate specific sustainable measures into the design concept. These will include but are not limited to: electrifying buildings, installing solar systems, incorporating native/pollinator friendly plantings, deploying best practices in bioswales & stormwater management, permeable paving, and the protection of mature tree canopy.

[Any required environmental review under California Environmental Quality Act \(CEQA\) and the National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\), including consideration of mitigation measures and alternatives, will be conducted prior to committing to construct any of the above Plan elements.](#)

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The preferred design concept for the adaptive reuse of both buildings and the Park articulates how the Veterans Memorial Building, the Maudelle Shirek Building, and Civic Center Park can be used going forward. The accompanying research includes cost estimates and potential revenue strategies to support renovation and ongoing operations for programs in Civic Center. By adopting the *Civic Center Design Concept Plan* the City Council sets a clear direction for [achieving the Vision](#).

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSON

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Eleanor Hollander, Economic Development Manager, (510) 981-7536
Elmar Kapfer, Supervising Civil Engineer, Public Works, (510) 981-6435

Attachments:

- 1: Resolution ~~Adopting~~ Berkeley’s Vision Aligned Civic Center Design Concept
Exhibit A: ~~Final Report: Berkeley Civic Center Design Concept~~, May 2023.

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

~~APPROVING~~ BERKELEY'S VISION-ALIGNED CIVIC CENTER DESIGN CONCEPT

WHEREAS, in September 2020, the Berkeley City Council adopted a Vision for Berkeley's Civic Center to, "*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.*"; and

WHEREAS, the development of the Civic Center Vision Plan (2019-2020) was underwritten by the *T1 Bond Funding for Infrastructure and Facilities*, to repair, renovate, replace, or reconstruct the City's aging infrastructure and facilities, including the Veterans Memorial Building, the Maudelle Shirek Building, and 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, in August of 2022, the city engaged a qualified project consultant team underwritten by general fund dollars to assist in the completion of Phase II, ~~of the project~~ and the development of a consensus design concept aligned with the adopted vision for Civic Center; 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 design concept 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 Design Concept Plan* ~~determines~~ describes a direction for future capital improvements to restore and secure these facilities, park, and surrounding area 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 Design Concept Plan* (Exhibit A) and ~~declares its intent to support the vision and design concept articulated in the plan~~ directs staff to pursue the next steps identified in the Plan, including any necessary environmental review.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that Council retains full discretion to mitigate environmental impacts, select other feasible alternatives that will avoid environmental impacts, balance the benefits of any future actions against the environmental impacts, or decline to carry out any of the design concept elements, all based upon information generated by the environmental review process.

~~BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that, to the extent that prior environmental review is not required, the City Manager is hereby authorized to further the implementation of the design concept as it embodies, reflects, and advances Berkeley's ambitious vision for its Civic Center.~~

Exhibits:

A: ~~Final Report: Berkeley's Civic Center Design Concept~~, May 25, 2023

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