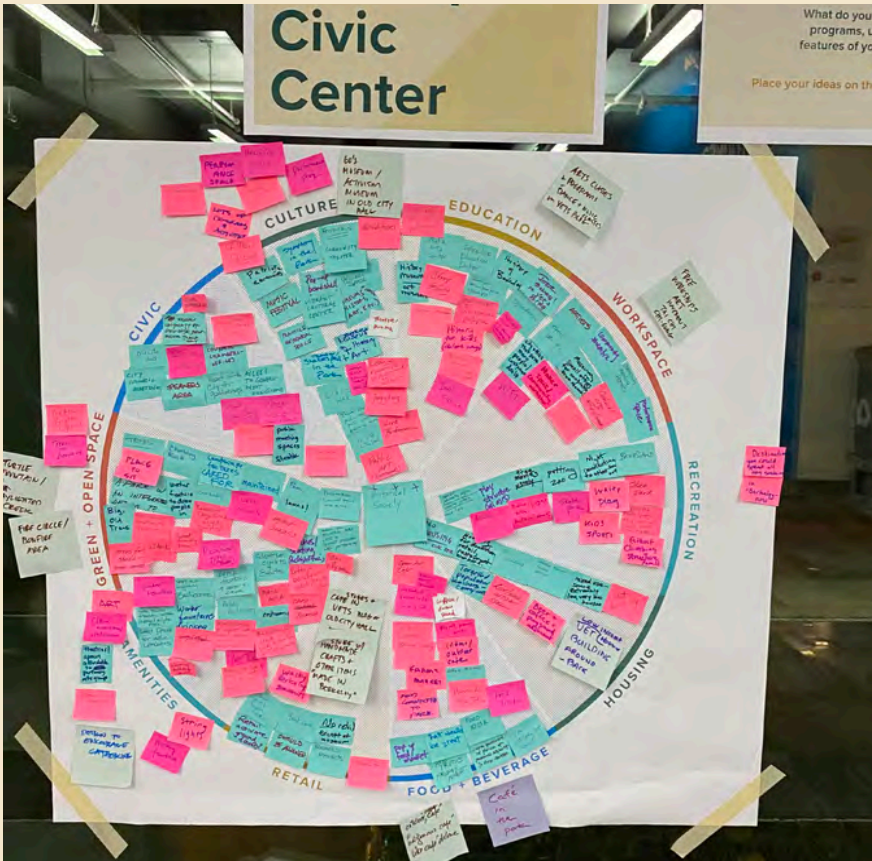


Workshop participants were also asked to send a postcard from Civic Center in 2030. The team collected over 30 postcards and 8-10 community members read their postcard aloud. Enshrined in the text of the cards, is a deep spirit of optimism, a sense of community, descriptions of opportunities to come together, appreciation of historic buildings, modern amenities, and space for gathering, celebrating, and reveling in the performing arts. →



← 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.



← 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.

2.5

Berkeley High School

With over 3,000 students enrolled, and the park at their doorstep, the Berkeley High School community is a key stakeholder of the Civic Center project. In February 2020 we took the opportunity to engage with two classes of Berkeley High juniors and seniors, where we facilitated design charrettes with a focus on the Park design concepts and the students' ideas for improving their everyday interaction and use with the public space closest to their school.

The project team introduced the students to Public Life and its importance, and heard from the students how they engage with the park, what was missing and what they liked and disliked. In groups, the students came up with design concepts and described features, spaces and amenities they would like to see in the park. Group design proposals included:

- **Fun! - An all-around playground**
- **Better with Food**
- **Social, Relaxing, Biophilic**
- **Homeless-Friendly Park & Community**
- **Lights, Ledges & Liquidity**
- **A Social Space Multigeneration Park**

Popular ideas:

- Active areas for sports, skating
- Being allowed to sit on the ledge
- More seating (seats with tables, in the sun)
- Car free Allston Way
- Food Trucks during lunchtime
- Illumination of the trees
- Open other schoolgates between the School and the park
- Amphitheaters/ changes in elevation.

What is missing at the Civic Center Park?

- Seating and tables, outdoor furniture, places to sit in the sun (that's not wet grass)
- Seating for groups
- Water (drinking fountains, visual features), a working fountain
- School garden (gardening project)
- Cross walkway, bigger pedestrian area
- Activities, such as: basketball, rock climbing, Farmers Market, flea market, book fair.

What do you dislike at the Civic Center Park?

- The toddler's playground (nobody is playing there, it seems unused)
- Riding a bike through Civic Center is complicated
- The open grass area in the center is not very popular – it's wet most of the time
- The Ford bikesharing system is rarely used by school kids – takes too much space and blocks passage into the park from the main gate
- Shady fountain area.



↑ Project Opening & What is Public Life discussion



↑ Groups working on their design concepts



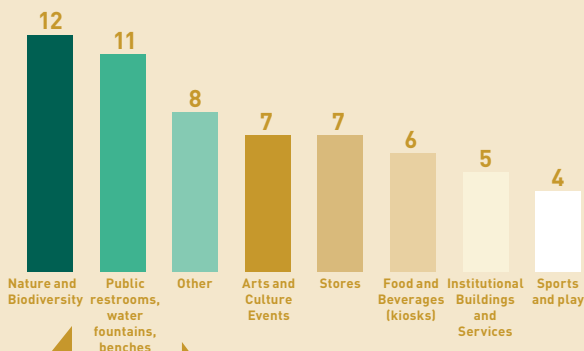
↑ Students describing their Park design ideas

Berkeley High School Questionnaire and Survey Results

Following the Civic Center designed charrettes with Berkeley High School we asked the students to complete a survey. Their answers helped us assess the students' sentiment about the park and the Civic Center area in general, as well as gain a better understanding of how students use the park today and what they would envision a transformed Civic Center might include. We collected 40 responses. A transcript of the engagement can be found in the Appendix.

What transformations would you like to see happen at Civic Center?

Highest priority



Nature was top on the students' list

Closely followed by park amenities

Overview of students' responses

Favorite things about Civic Center

- The ledge
- The grass
- The skate park

Least favorite thing about Civic Center

- There's a lot of trash
- It smells
- It's dark around the fountain

Words that describe Civic Center

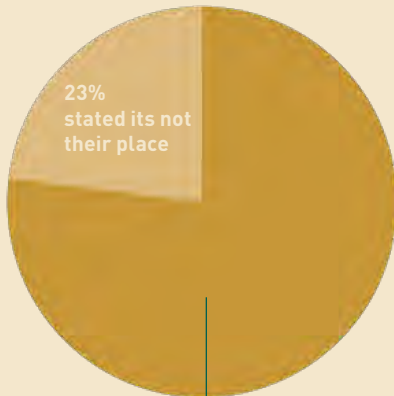
- Green, grassy, sunny
- Shady, dirty, unused
- Berkeley, social, open

What would make you go there more often?

- More events, craftspeople, food
- More seating, less mud
- Less homeless people
- More skate ledges
- Cleaner spaces
- A working restroom
- Barbecue grills

Survey findings

Is Civic Center your place?



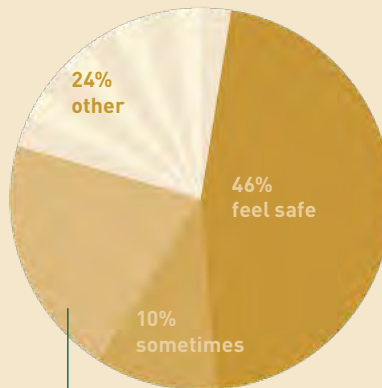
77% told us Civic Center is *their place*

“

I don't really identify with it at all or choose to go there other than to eat lunch.”

I don't have any particular affinity to the space.”

Do you feel safe?



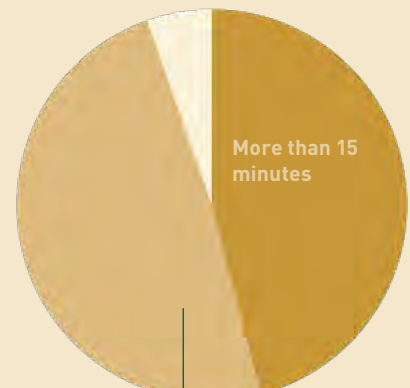
20% of students said they feel unsafe at Civic Center Park

“

I can see why others find the environment unsafe. The park tends to have homeless or drug-addict populations.”

Because it's not well lit.”

How long do you typically spend at Civic Center Park?



Less than 15 minutes

“

I would go there if other people went there. In other words, if it was a commonly enjoyed area, a meeting place.”

All quotes from Berkeley High School students

2.6

Farmers Market Pop-up

On Saturday March 7th, 2020 members of the project team went out to meet the community at the Farmers Market. Displays were set up and shoppers stopped by for conversation about what they would like to see in Civic Center. We asked people to write down their ideas on postcards and distributed flyers announcing a future design workshop and the project website.

Overall, we collected 26 comments written down on postcards with ideas ranging from cafes along the park, to space for forest school activities, improved lighting, movie nights, better bike storage. These ideas have informed the conceptual design of the landscape and public realm options. Please refer to the Appendix for a transcript of the community ideas collected at the Farmers Market Pop Up.

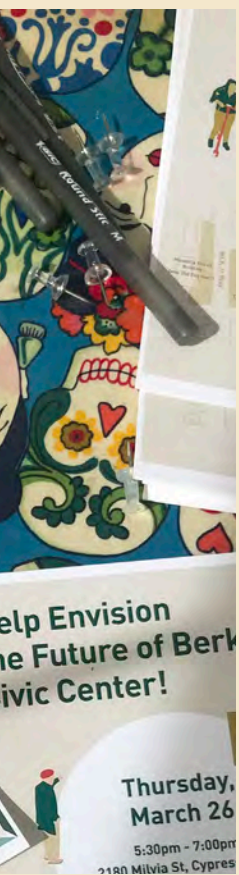
Many thanks to the Ecology Center who facilitated a table, shelter and a great spot, right opposite the Veterans Memorial Building.



↑ Community Feedback Cards



↑ Farmers Market Pop-up



↑ Pop-up boards



↑ A record of community ideas

2.7

Building Tours

On two stages of the Vision project —at project inception, in September 2019 and in March 2020, when the Vision Statement had already been presented to City Council — the City and design team organized Building Tours open to the public. This was a great opportunity for the community to see inside these great buildings, assess their current state and imagine their future.

The first tour took place at the start of the project, and members of the Technical Advisory Committee composed of city staff, members of the Berkeley Historical Society, Commissioners from the T1 Bond Subcommittee (Public Works and Parks) as well as Landmarks and Civic Art groups joined this tour, where we were able to visit all accessible spaces in the Veterans Memorial Building and the Maudelle Shirek building. This was also an important moment for the design team to see the buildings inside for the first time and ask questions to members of the Landmarks commission and City staff.

The second day of public tours took place on Saturday, March 7th, 2020, and two tours at different times of the day were offered. Members of the community were able to see inside the Veterans Building and Old City Hall. Concurrently with the tours, the project vision statement, urban design concepts and design ideas were set up on boards at the Farmers Market for community input.

Approximately 30 people attended both the September and March tours. Many thanks to the Berkeley Historical Society who advertised the tours, opened up the whole building and acted as co-guides — answering many questions, and setting up relevant materials from part of their extensive archive.