CIVIC CENTER PUBLIC REALM PLAN
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #1 | NOVEMBER 7, 2017
WORKSHOP
OVERVIEW

1. Welcoming Remarks

2. Presentation
   Project Background
   Nick Perry, SF Planning
   Civic Center Today
   Anna Muessig, Gehl
   Civic Center Tomorrow
   Willett Moss & Lauren Hackney, CMG

3. Small Group Discussion

4. Open House Discussions
PROJECT BACKGROUND
The c. 1912 plan for Civic Center guided the location and design of buildings and public spaces in the area into the 1950s.

After World War II new plans to expand and modernize Civic Center were developed.

In the 1980s a growing interest in historic preservation led to new plans focused on adaptive reuse and restoration.
CIVIC CENTER PUBLIC REALM PLAN

PLANNING HISTORY
Since the 1990s, the Civic Center area has grown as both an arts and culture district and as a residential neighborhood.

ACT’s Strand Theater is one of a number of new arts venues in Civic Center.

The conversion of 100 Van Ness from office to residential is one example of Civic Center’s growing residential population.

New affordable housing, such as the TNDC’s Eddy & Taylor Family Housing, will expand the number of people using Civic Center’s open space.

Up to 9,000 new housing units are projected in the Market Street Hub Area, near the Market/Van Ness intersection.
NEW PLANS & STUDIES FOR CIVIC CENTER AREA

San Francisco Civic Center Historic District Cultural Landscape Inventory

Inventory of Civic Center’s landscape features completed in 2015.

Civic Center Playground Renovation

Concept design finalized in 2015, construction began in Winter 2017.

Better Market Street

Environmental review began in 2015.

Central Market/Tenderloin Strategy


Civic Center Sustainable Utilities District Plan

SFPUC plan for Civic Center utilities district released in 2015.

Van Ness Transit Improvement Project

ENLIVENING CIVIC CENTER’S PUBLIC SPACES
A new City initiative led by the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, focused on near-term improvements, activation, stewardship, and management of the public spaces linking Market Street to City Hall.
QUALITY OF LIFE & SOCIAL SERVICE INTERVENTIONS
The Civic Center Public Realm Plan will build off recent plans and studies and create one coordinated, interdepartmental plan for long-term improvements to the area’s streets, plazas, and other public spaces.

INTERAGENCY PROJECT TEAM:
**CONSULTANT TEAM:**

**Prime Consultant:**

**CMG**

- Landscape
- Architecture

**Sub-Consultant Team:**

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<td>Gehl</td>
<td>KENNERLY ARCHITECTURE &amp; PLANNING</td>
<td>a+h</td>
<td>InterEthnica</td>
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<td>JSN+ALD</td>
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<td>M LEE CORPORATION</td>
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<td>Lighting Design, LLC</td>
<td>Engineering solutions for a better environment</td>
<td>Construction Management &amp; Consulting Estimating &amp; Scheduling</td>
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WHAT CONSTITUTES THE CIVIC CENTER’S PUBLIC REALM?

**Streets**
- Polk & Grove Intersection

**Plazas & Parks**
- War Memorial Courtyard

**Other Public Spaces**
- Brooks Hall
DESIGN FOCUS AREAS: STREETS

POLK STREET

LARKIN STREET

MCALLISTER ST.

GROVE STREET

FULTON/FRANKLIN

Interagency Design Team
DESIGN FOCUS AREAS: PLAZAS & PARKS

CIVIC CENTER PLAZA

FULTON STREET

UNITED NATIONS PLAZA

Prime Consultant:

CMG Landscape Architecture
DESIGN FOCUS AREAS: OTHER PUBLIC SPACES

BROOKS HALL

BILL GRAHAM CIVIC

Brooks Hall

Bill Graham Civic Auditorium
"a pedestrian mall would occupy all of fulton street between market and larkin streets"
CIVIC CENTER PUBLIC REALM PLAN

PLAN COMPONENTS

Public Space & Public Life Study

An on-the-ground, people focused approach to understanding the opportunities and challenges of public space.
COMMUNITY OUTREACH
Throughout the plan’s development the project team will build partnerships and work closely with Civic Center’s many stakeholders.

Portraits of people in Civic Center from SF Planning’s “Civic Center Stories” Project
CIVIC CENTER PUBLIC REALM PLAN

RECENT COMMUNITY OUTREACH

July 2017

- Public Space & Public Life Study Focus Group Discussions
  - Neighborhood/Community Leaders
  - Public Health & Safety Officials
  - Arts & Cultural Organization Representatives
  - Planning & Design Policy Advocates
  - Public Space Management & Operations Experts
- War Memorial Trust Board Presentation

August 2017

- Civic Center Stories Second Edition Interviews
- Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corp. Presentation/Discussion
- Civic Center Arts Organizations Presentation/Discussion
- SPUR Presentation on Public Space & Public Life Study

October 2017

- Central City SRO Collaborative Presentation/Discussion
- Hospitality House Presentation/Discussion
- Civic Center Commons Third Thursday
- Vietnamese-language Focus Group Discussion
- Spanish-language Focus Group Discussion
- Chinese-language Focus Group Discussion
- Youth Focus Group Discussion
- Intercept Surveys (300 respondents in six languages)
- In-person workshop invites to 50 neighborhood organizations

Mobile Outreach Station at Civic Center Commons Third Thursday

Our team welcomes suggestions for additional community outreach opportunities!
CIVIC CENTER PUBLIC REALM PLAN

PLAN TIMELINE
Subject to change

2017

- Community Workshop/Open House
- Public Life Study
- Existing Conditions Analysis
- Design Concept Alternatives

2018

- Engagement
- Preferred Design Concept Development
- Draft Plan
- Environmental Review (Est. completion in Summer 2020)

2019

- Community Workshop/Open House

= Community Workshop/Open House
Public Space + Public Life in Civic Center
Why a Public Space Public Life Survey?

To find **human stories**
To inform **strategy and design**
To provide **evidence** on which to base **objective choices**
To **benchmark** progress
To discover **new opportunities**
To create **urgency for change**
A data-driven approach to amplifying public life in Civic Center
Public Life Survey Locations

Nearly 100 volunteers collected public life data
## Age + Gender

### Age & Gender (Pedestrians, 10 minutes)

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<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</tr>
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<td>15-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>65+</td>
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**PROCEDURE:**
Count pedestrians moving across the indicated line, noting age and gender for 100 people or 10 minutes, whichever comes first.

**DATE:**

**NAME:**

**TIME:**

**LOCATION:**

Surveyor #7
HOUR 4
7B

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### Methods

Gehl — Making Cities for People

Civic Center PSPL 2017
Pedestrian and Cyclist Counts
(10 min each)

HOUR 1  HOUR 2
PEDESTRIANS
Total
Total
CYCLISTS
Total
Total

HOUR 3  HOUR 4
PEDESTRIANS
Total
Total
CYCLISTS
Total
Total

PROCEDURE:
Count pedestrians and cyclists moving across the indicated line for 10 minutes each. Mark Jaywalkers with a line on the map. If there are obstructions, adjust the location of your line as necessary to maintain a clear sightline from end to end.

Methods
People walking and biking

Gehl — Making Cities for People
Civic Center PSPL 2017
Stationary Activity and Age and Gender Mapping

PROCEDURE:
Walk through the area indicated in red above to capture a snapshot of the stationary activities and age / gender of the people present in the public space.

Mark exact locations of people on the map using a number for each, starting with 1
For each person, quickly 'X' the box that fits best in each category (age, gender, posture, activities)

If you reach 30, continue on to a new sheet and begin where you left off, starting with 1 again

DATE:  
NAME:  
TIME:  

INTOXICATED / AGGRESSIVE
SLEEPING (NOT CAMPING)
CAMPING OUT / SLEEPING
PANHANDLING
HARD DRUGS
WAITING FOR TRANSIT
COMMERCE (“I” INFORMAL)
CIVIC WORK
ACCOMPANIED BY ...
- IMPROVISED
SITTING - PRIVATE / CAFES
SITTING - PUBLIC SEATING
STANDING

65+ YEARS OLD
15-19 YEARS OLD
FEMALE
IN A GROUP? (Y/N)

PERSON OR GROUP GENDER

TOTALS:
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
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11
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29
30
Methods

People spending time

Body Posture

Standing

Lying

Sitting - Improvised

Sitting - Public
Methods

People spending time

Activities
Methods

People spending time

Activities - including sleeping, drug use, and encampments

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Aggressive</th>
<th>Hard Drugs / Intoxicated</th>
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<tr>
<td>Panhandling</td>
<td>Encamped</td>
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Gehl — Making Cities for People

Civic Center PSPL 2017
Methods

Intercept survey

Taken by 419 people
Methods

Public Space Analysis

12 Quality Criteria

Land-use Analysis

Amenity Mapping

Test Walks

Facade Quality
Survey Days

There is no typical day in Civic Center

PSPL Survey
Captured everyday and weekly activities, as well as some monthly events
Survey Days

Playgrounds
pre-construction
Saturday, February 11
Tuesday, February 13

Night-time Counts
7pm-11pm
Friday, September 22

“Quiet” Weekday
Thursday, May 25
Cloudy until around noon
Min 54°F Max 61°F Wind 2m/s

“Busy” Weekday
Thursday, June 7
Farmers’ Market @ UN Plaza, Warriors game @ Civic Center
Min 52°F Max 59°F Wind 4m/s

“Quiet” Weekend
Saturday, June 10
Min 54°F Max 63°F Wind 4m/s

“Busy” Weekend
Saturday, May 27
Concert @ Bill Graham + Prom
Min 54°F Max 61°F Wind 2m/s

Gehl — Making Cities for People
Civic Center PSPL 2017
Public Space
Key Findings
Civic Center is a powerful symbol of San Francisco
Striking architecture makes Civic Center a San Francisco Icon

Among the great squares of the world and central to San Francisco democracy
There's no center in Civic Center
Civic Center has many of the elements of a complete neighborhood but they are clustered on the periphery.
The civic axis is broken
The civic axis is broken

Strong visual Axis is interrupted by high-traffic streets and a dull public realm

Peak hour traffic counts:
(weekday)

City Hall: 773
Market Street: 2616
More people than cars cross Polk Street at peak
Fragmented stewardship and governance
Disconnected public realm is mirrored in jurisdictional boundaries.
Look but don’t touch: Civic Center is unfriendly to the human scale
Missing the basics of urban quality

Protection

- Protection against traffic & crashes — feeling safe
- Protection against crime & violence — feeling secure
- Protection against unpleasant sensory experiences

Comfort

- Opportunities to walk/cycle
- Opportunities to stop & stay
- Opportunities to sit
- Opportunities to see
- Opportunities to talk & listen
- Opportunities for play & exercise

Enjoyment

- Dimensioned at human scale
- Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate
- Aesthetic qualities + positive sensory experience

Scale

- Poor
- Fair
- Good

Gehl — Making Cities for People
Civic Center PSPL 2017
Missing the Basics

- Drinking Fountains
- Wayfinding
- Bench
- Restrooms
- Play Areas
- Public Art
The limited ability of the Beaux-Arts plan to support public life has been eroded over time.
The limited ability of the Beaux-Arts plan to support public life has been eroded over time.

The few human-scale elements in public space have been removed over time.
Public Space Highlights

1. Civic Center is a powerful symbol of San Francisco
2. There's no center in Civic Center
3. The civic axis is broken
4. Fragmented stewardship and governance
5. Look but don't touch: the space is unfriendly to the human scale
6. The limited ability of the Beaux-Arts plan to support public life has been eroded over time
Public Life

Key Findings
Lots of people are moving through Civic Center
People come here for work and events — but not in their spare time

Even a “busy” weekend isn’t that busy

Lots of people are moving through Civic Center

Even a “busy” weekend isn’t that busy

“Busy” weekend

Average Pedestrian Counts

Wed, June 7 - Busy
Thurs, May 25 - Quiet
Sat, June 10 - Quiet
Sat, May 27 - Busy

Market Day

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Civic Center PSPL 2017

Gehl — Making Cities for People Civic Center PSPL 2017
Peaks in activity do not generate ‘spillover’ impacts
Spaces to not function as one
Few people choose to spend time in Civic Center
The number of people spending time is relatively low

Scale comparison: two basketball courts

Civic Center
~ 4 per 10ksf

Patricia’s Green
~ 18 per 10ksf

Trafalgar Square
~ 39 per 10ksf

Pier 39
~ 88 per 10ksf

Few people choose to spend time in Civic Center
Each space in Civic Center has a unique public life heartbeat.
Each space in Civic Center has a unique heartbeat

UN Plaza

During Farmer’s Market

Hourly avg. 7.8 people per 10,000SF
Hourly avg. 110 people in UN Plaza

Lunch!

Farmer’s Market

People per 10,000 Square Feet

Eating/Drinking  Exercise/Play/Recreation  Cultural/Performance
Waiting for Transport  Commerce  Civic Work
Accompanied by Pets  Political/Religious Advocacy  Other Activities (drug use, encampments, sleeping, aggressive behavior)
Passive: Just sitting or standing
Activities like sleeping and encampments can be overwhelming, and even when they are not, have a ripple effect.
During the day, 9% of all people spending time in the space were sleeping, encamped, doing drugs, intoxicated, panhandling or exhibiting aggressive behavior.

Day
Number of people doing each activity during daytime counts, all spaces, all days.
At certain times and places **50%** of all people spending time in the space were sleeping, encamped, doing drugs, intoxicated, panhandling or exhibiting aggressive behavior.
Different users of Civic Center experience the same spaces differently.
Different users have different experiences

Different users experience the same spaces differently - and want different things from the space.
Women tend not to spend time in Civic Center’s public spaces

Gehl — Making Cities for People
Civic Center PSPL 2017

The Ripple Effect
Public Life Highlights

1. Lots of people are moving through Civic Center.
2. Peaks in activity do not generate ‘spillover’ impacts.
3. Few people choosing to spend time in Civic Center.
4. Each space in Civic Center has a unique public life heartbeat.
5. Activities like sleeping and encampments can be overwhelming, and even when they are not, have a ripple effect.
6. Different users of Civic Center experience the same spaces differently.
What kind of life do we want to invite in Civic Center?
Civic Identity

Inclusive Public Space
Who Does Civic Center Serve?

How do Civic Center’s three public spaces compare to beloved neighborhood and destination parks around San Francisco?

“Civic Center is a park that doesn’t know it’s a park, and a plaza that doesn’t know it’s a plaza”
Neighborhood & Workforce
Who Does Civic Center Serve?
Communities within a 1/2-Mile Radius

### Neighborhood density:
- **Population per square mile**
  - Downtown/Civic Center: 65,411
  - Western Addition: 34,121
  - SOMA: 22,658
  - Chinatown: 70,416
  - City Average: 17,081

### Proximity to open space & recreation:
- **Amount of public recreation space within 2 miles**
  - Downtown/Civic Center: Low
  - Western Addition: Medium
  - SOMA: Medium
  - Chinatown: Low
  - City Average: Medium

### Equitable access to services & amenities:
- **Proportion of households with a motor vehicle**
  - Downtown/Civic Center: 17%
  - Western Addition: 53%
  - SOMA: 41%
  - Chinatown: 20%
  - City Average: 70%

Sources: US Census 2010 Data; <data.sfgov.org, www.sfindicatorproject.org>
Sources: San Francisco Planning Department 2011; <www.sfindicatorproject.org>
Sources: American Community Survey, 2009-2013; <www.sfindicatorproject.org>
Who Does Civic Center Serve?

Employment Snapshot within a 6-Block Radius

- Public Administration: 35%
- Health Care: 17%
- Transportation & Warehousing: 13%
- Professional Services: 11%
- Accomodations & Food Services: 3%
- Educational Services: 4%
- Other Services: 11%
- Arts & Entertainment: 6%
Neighborhood/Daily Use
Public Space Principles

1. Civic Center will be a **diverse & inclusive** place that is **authentic to San Francisco and to the surrounding neighborhoods**.

2. Civic Center will have a **vivid, bold identity** that **inspires civic pride**.

3. Civic Center will be a **beautiful, durable** place to enjoy **everyday and in all seasons**.

4. Civic Center will include **varied amenities** for daily use and **flexible spaces** for large events.

5. Civic Center will be a healthy, safe **space of respite** and a place to **meet your neighbors**.

6. Civic Center will demonstrate best practices for **sustainable, resilient** urban infrastructure.
Three Design Goals

Connection & Cohesion

Quality & Comfort

Invitations & Vitality
CONNECTION + COHESION

Reinforce key connections, unify the public realm as a place for pedestrians, and create a vivid district identity.
Car-centric, fragmented public spaces.
The Civic Center Landmark District has varied historic resources.
Preserve historic resources + relationships.
Vehicles dominate key views.

Vehicular Area (Travel, Parking, + Loading)

- View to Market Street from Fulton St
- View Across Civic Center Plaza from Bill Graham Civic Auditorium
46% of the public realm is dedicated to vehicles.
These streets are designated as **high-injury corridors** by Vision Zero.
Street parking & loading dominate the street experience.
Civic Center has poor-quality gateways at important connections.
Enhance the civic spine + pedestrian connections.
Support the public spaces with great streets that prioritize pedestrians, bicyclists, & transit.

MULTI-MODAL STREETS

SHARED STREETS / STREET CLOSURE

SAFER CROSSINGS
Civic Center is on the periphery of several neighborhoods.
What *is* Civic Center?

Public Realm Plan Area
Landmark District Boundary
Civic Center Commons

Civic Center Commons
Tenderloin CBD
PUBLIC REALM PLAN
LANDMARK DISTRICT
CIVIC CENTER COMMONS
TENDERLOIN CBD
Connect the district to surrounding neighborhoods.
Unify our civic heart: create a vivid district identity.
QUALITY + COMFORT

Create a high-quality, sustainable neighborhood open space that connects people to their environment.
Uninviting microclimate and bleak environment.
San Francisco has one of the smallest tree canopies of any major U.S. city.

**Urban Tree Canopy Comparison**

Using aerial photos, the size of an urban forest can be monitored and its growth or decline tracked over time. The benefits and services provided by trees are directly related to the extent of a city’s canopy cover. Larger leaf surface areas indicate the increased capacity of trees to clean air, absorb stormwater and beautify streets and neighborhoods.

- **13.7%**  
  San Francisco  
- **17%**  
  Chicago  
- **21%**  
  Los Angeles  
- **23%**  
  Seattle  
- **24%**  
  New York City  
- **30%**  
  Portland

Civic Center’s urban forest lacks diversity: 3 species comprise ~50% of all trees.
81% of trees within a 1/2-mile radius are in fair, poor, or critical health.
Transform Civic Center’s character + climate with healthy trees.
Trees can contribute to district identity and a sense of wonder.

“To see delight in Civic Center is an unusual experience.”
Rethink the district as a model for sustainable urban ecology.
Civic Center feels inhospitable on windy days & after dark.
Block wind & enhance sunny locations to make Civic Center inviting in all seasons.
Transform Civic Center at night with iconic lighting.

“It’s the only part of the city that shuts down this way”

“Civic Center doesn’t end at 8pm”
Civic Center lacks typical public space characteristics.

Little to delight the 5 senses

In 730,000 square feet of public open space...few invitations to touch, smell, taste Civic Center.

Successful public spaces appeal to all of the senses - not only the delight of beautiful architecture, but also touch, smell, and taste.
Define spaces and create rooms with paving.
Provide essential amenities...
And varied ways to sit and linger.
INVITATIONS + VITALITY

Provide necessary infrastructure to welcome diverse activities, visitors, and uses.
Few reasons to visit or stay in the public realm.
Civic Center’s public spaces do not provide for basic needs.

“It’s an ice cold place.”

“We need to flood the market with things we need: it's just as easy to take care of 4 bathrooms as it is to take care of 1 bathroom - we need more of everything.”

“You can’t even hijack a statue if you want to sit down”

“No water fountains. People are suffering from dehydration and rely on the library for restrooms”

“Space is vast; needs to be subdivided & made human scale.”
Provide inclusive neighborhood programs and amenities for daily use.
Short-term events and installations have been very successful!
Provide new civic features that reflect San Francisco's diversity + culture.
Build in flexibility to accommodate varied events.

Civic Center Today
about 3 people per 10,000 SF

UN Plaza Farmer' Market
about 9 people per 10,000 SF

Civic Center Protest
about 1,000 people per 10,000 SF
Civic Center has an incredible array of cultural and civic institutions.
Open institutions to new audiences and make Civic Center a venue for cultural experience + expression.
Activate sunny locations along Civic Center’s edges.
Brooks Hall sits underutilized and inaccessible.
Ensure City assets serve highest + best use.
Identify a sustainable funding strategy for managing the public spaces.

Who is it for?
Who will operate it?
How will we pay for it?
What will it cost?
Can it generate revenue?
Small Group Discussion