The Civic Center Public Realm Plan is creating a unified vision for long-term improvements to Civic Center’s plazas, streets, and other public spaces. The Public Realm Plan is part of the City’s larger efforts to improve the area as both a neighborhood gathering space and a public commons for all San Franciscans. The plan is an interagency City effort and is being developed in close collaboration with the community and the many diverse stakeholders in the Civic Center area.

Thank you for joining us this evening for our community open house!

**PLAN COMPONENTS**

**PUBLIC SPACE & PUBLIC LIFE STUDY**

An exploration of how people use and access Civic Center’s sidewalks and public spaces.

**STREET DESIGN CONCEPTS**

Design concepts for upgrades to streets in Civic Center including parking, streetscape materials, lane configurations, transit improvements, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

**PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN CONCEPTS**

Conceptual designs for key public spaces within Civic Center, including Civic Center Plaza, Fulton Street, United Nations Plaza, and Grove Street.

**USE & ACTIVATION PLAN**

Plan for using and activating under-used public spaces, focused on both programming and long-term changes that will increase public use and enjoyment.

**IMPLEMENTATION & MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Public space management, operations, and implementation/ funding strategies for Civic Center’s public spaces will be developed as part of the plan.

**PLAN TEAM**

**Interagency Team:**

**Consultant Team:**

CMG Gehl KENNERLY ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

**WHAT’S NEXT?**

After today’s open house, the project team will continue to seek community input on the draft concept plan. Informational presentations at city commissions will also take place in the Spring.

Feedback received will be reflected in a draft plan document. From there, the plan will enter environmental review which is expected to take up to two years. Plan adoption hearings would then take place, likely in Summer 2021.
Over the past twenty years the Civic Center area has grown as both an arts and culture district and as a residential neighborhood. Through the Civic Center Commons initiative and related efforts, the City has been working to improve Civic Center’s public spaces to better serve the area’s population of residents, workers, and visitors.

**ACTIVE PLANS AND PROJECTS IN THE CIVIC CENTER AREA**

- **VAN NESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**
  The Van Ness Improvement project will create dedicated bus lanes along two miles of Van Ness and South Van Ness Avenues, from Lombard to Mission streets. The lanes will be used by Muni 49 and 47 routes and Golden Gate Transit.

- **CIVIC CENTER PUBLIC REALM PLAN**
  The Civic Center Public Realm Plan will build on recent plans and studies and create one coordinated, interdepartmental plan for long-term improvements to the area’s streets, plazas, and other public spaces. Today’s Open House is about this Plan.

- **SAN FRANCISCO REC AND PARK INVESTMENTS**
  San Francisco Recreation and Park Department is continuing to invest in the area’s parks and open space. This includes the Bi-Rite kiosk in Civic Center Plaza, remodeled park facilities for several of the area’s parks, and a new SoMa Park at 11th and Natoma.

- **THE HUB PUBLIC REALM / PLAN REFINEMENTS**
  Over 4,900 new housing units are projected in the Market Street Hub Plan Area. The Plan evaluates opportunities to enhance implementation of the policy goals of the Market & Octavia Area Plan around affordable housing, coordinated transportation planning and place making.

- **BETTER MARKET STREET**
  Better Market Street is the City’s multi-agency proposal to transform 2.2 miles of Market Street, from Octavia Boulevard to The Embarcadero - improving safety and accessibility, providing more reliable and efficient bus and streetcar service, and enhancing the streetscape and public realm.

- **NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS**
  The round symbols represent the number of net new housing units within a half-mile of City Hall. This data includes active projects in the pipeline and expected new units resulting from the rezoning underway as part of the Market Street Hub project.

---

**Collective Knowledge Improving 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.
- Over 4,900 new housing units are projected within a half-mile of City Hall. This number of net new housing units includes active projects in the pipeline and expected new units resulting from the rezoning underway as part of the Market Street Hub project.

**BETTER MARKET STREET**

- 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.
- Over 4,900 new housing units are projected within a half-mile of City Hall. This number of net new housing units includes active projects in the pipeline and expected new units resulting from the rezoning underway as part of the Market Street Hub project.

**SAN FRANCISCO REC AND PARK INVESTMENTS**

- San Francisco Recreation and Park Department is continuing to invest in the area’s parks and open space. This includes the Bi-Rite kiosk in Civic Center Plaza, remodeled park facilities for several of the area’s parks, and a new SoMa Park at 11th and Natoma.

**NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS**

- The round symbols represent the number of net new housing units within a half-mile of City Hall. This data includes active projects in the pipeline and expected new units resulting from the rezoning underway as part of the Market Street Hub project.
Designed + managed through an inclusive process that fosters equity

PLACE PRINCIPLES

1. A landmark that celebrates shared history and tradition
   - Goal: Celebrate the National Landmark Beau Arts District in a contemporary way
   - Goal: Celebrate the best of the City’s neighborhoods and cultures
   - Goal: Create an iconic and authentic destination that is memorable for visitors and residents and embodies the best of San Francisco to the rest of the world

2. A flexible, accessible, inviting space for all to gather
   - Goal: Support large public gatherings, celebrations, protests, and marches
   - Goal: Create meeting spaces serving tenants and visitors of diverse ages and income ranges: multi-generational and multi-functional
   - Goal: Transform a car-centric public realm into a place for people

3. The City’s cultural hub and political heart
   - Goal: Celebrate the diversity of San Francisco as a global city
   - Goal: Provide opportunities and space for expression, performance, and public art in the public realm
   - Goal: Celebrate the rich history of political activism at Civic Center

4. A source of beauty, delight, and wellness
   - Goal: Provide access to nature
   - Goal: Provide access to beauty, festivities, color, flowers
   - Goal: Make a comfortable and welcoming environment day and night – a place that is pleasant to be in and linger
   - Goal: Responsible steward shared resources

5. A generous space that meets the basic needs of diverse publics
   - Goal: Provide basic amenities in the public realm and address the specific needs of the spaces: bathrooms, water fountains, seating, lighting
   - Goal: Ensure that basic amenities are a physical element of generosity
   - Goal: Support the public spaces with a public health agenda that prioritizes recreation, wellness, and healthy uses

6. The safest place in San Francisco
   - Goal: Maintain a clean, safe, and inviting environment
   - Goal: Ensure Civic Center is an accessible, resilient resource in the heart of the city after an emergency event
   - Goal: Sustain community ambassadors program to help make people feel comfortable and discourage anti-social behavior

7. Designed + managed through an inclusive process that fosters equity
   - Goal: Economic inclusion - local vendors (affordable rent, affordable food)
   - Goal: Support and augment the Farmers’ Market, local jobs and commerce
   - Goal: Support small businesses in non-competitive way: incubate
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

CIVIC CENTER STORIES
Summer 2016 & 2017
Civic Center Stories was an early engagement effort that took place at the start of the plan’s development. In the summer of 2016 & 2017, the Planning Department reached out to individuals in Civic Center who were willing to share their stories and experiences in the area. The project aimed to bring a human face to the individuals who spend time in the area.

PHASE 1 WORKSHOP & COMMUNITY SURVEY
Fall 2017 - Winter 2018
Over 70 people attended the plan’s first workshop/open house and provided feedback via interactive boards and focus group discussion. Following the open house, a survey was conducted. 280 surveys were conducted on-site in Civic Center, with two-thirds conducted in a language other than English. Over 2,000 online survey results were also collected via the project’s website. Results from Phase 1 outreach helped shape the design frameworks for Civic Center’s public spaces.

PUBLIC SPACE & PUBLIC LIFE STUDY
Spring 2017
In Spring of 2017 the Planning Department worked with Gehl to conduct a Public Space & Public Life Study of Civic Center. Part of the study included focus groups and an on-sight survey of people passing through or spending time in Civic Center’s public spaces. Over 400 people filled out the survey. Survey results and focus group discussions informed the plan’s analysis of existing conditions in the area.

IN-LANGUAGE & YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS
Fall 2017
In an effort to get feedback and perspectives from communities sometimes under-represented at City outreach events, four focus group discussions were held with the local residents from the following communities in Fall 2017:
• Vietnamese (Conducted in Vietnamese)
• Chinese (Conducted in Chinese)
• Latino (Conducted in Spanish)
• Youth, Ages 13-17 (Conducted in English)
Findings were summarized in a Focus Group Report which directly informed the development of the design frameworks for Civic Center’s public spaces.

What best describes your relationship to Civic Center?

What brings you to the space today?

Should the public spaces have more planting or paving?

Examples of survey results from the Public Space & Public Life Study

Examples of feedback received via in-language and youth focus groups.

"We don’t need another space for people to get together, we need a green space. In San Francisco there’s lack of trees, lack of greenery, lack of shade. This would attract more people and be better for the environment."

"I like to go to the park and exercise after I drop my kids off at school. I like to take my daughter to the surrounding parks, the ones close to where we live."

"I would like to have places where we can get food to eat, drink, and get refreshments and things; where you can go out onto the streets and do stuff they shouldn’t do. They could have soccer, basketball."

"Offer activities for the children and teens that would really grab their attention so they wouldn’t go out onto the streets and do stuff they shouldn’t do."

"Don’t lose the space for the kids."

What new events and attractions would you like to see in Civic Center’s public spaces?

Examples of survey results showing preferences for the balance between paving and flexible space in each of Civic Center’s public spaces.

Examples of survey results showing events and attractions people would most like to see added to Civic Center’s public spaces.
A group of local residents reflecting the diverse populations that surround Civic Center has been convened by InterEthnica to help the design team better understand community sentiments as the plan has been developed. Working Group members have also helped share news of the plan within their communities. Some examples of the working group’s feedback are summarized below.

**PHASE 2 WORKSHOP, SURVEY, & FOCUS GROUPS**

**On-Going**

Over 140 people attended the plan’s second workshop/open house where “framework plans” were shared illustrating three different approaches to Civic Center’s public spaces: “Culture Connector,” “Civic Sanctuary” and “Public Platform.” Two options for improving Grove and Polk streets were also shared at the workshop. Attendees were given an opportunity to create their own framework plan by piecing together favorite pieces of each framework. Following the open house, approximately 200 surveys were collected on-site in Civic Center (over 50% non-English) and over 800 individuals responded to an online survey that invited feedback on the three frameworks. In addition, six multi-lingual focus groups were conducted where participants also completed the “favorite plan” activity.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS**

**COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP**

The community was invited to provide feedback on three framework plans for Civic Center’s public spaces (illustrated to the right) and street design options during Phase 2 of the plan’s concept design development.

**What is one thing you like about Civic Center and would want to keep?**

- All communities. Some examples of the working group's feedback have also helped share news of the plan within their communities.

**What are two improvements you would like to see implemented?**

- Generally more comfortable and cleaner
- Public restrooms, water fountains, and trash cans.
- They also talked about installing more greenery, trash cans, and tables and chairs to help make the place more inviting.

**Which set of themes do you think should be emphasized the most in the design of Civic Center Common?**

- The design for Civic Center Plaza must balance the amount of large spaces for major events (lawns, paving) with smaller spaces for everyday use (playgrounds, planted areas). Which design strikes the right balance between large spaces for events and smaller spaces for everyday use? Which set of themes do you think should be emphasized the most in the design of Civic Center Common?

**Which framework plan do you prefer?**

- The “Create Your Favorite Plan” activity helped the design team weigh general preferences for the design of each of Civic Center’s public spaces. The preferred framework for each public space is shown in the diagram above.

**Which design strikes the right balance between large spaces for events and smaller spaces for everyday use?**

- The fountain is a key feature of UN Plaza, but has long-standing maintenance, use, and design issues. Select your preferred approach to its design.

- Trees and planting are important features of nature in the city that can also buffer from wind and provide shade. However, trees and planting can limit flexible space for other uses. Which draft design best represents the ideal amount of trees and planted areas?
Recent and Interim Improvements at Civic Center

Advancing the Vision
The long-term vision for the Civic Center Public Realm Plan will be phased over time. The phasing plan depicted below is currently being considered by the City.

In addition to these long-term improvements, the City will continue to pursue immediate opportunities like those shown above. These include activities and amenities to Civic Center’s public spaces that build towards the overall vision. For more information on these efforts visit: www.civiccentercommons.org

The long-term vision for the Civic Center Public Realm Plan through a public review process, including community input, will be developed and refined. The phasing plan depicted below is currently being considered by the City.

The long-term vision for the Civic Center Public Realm Plan through a public review process, including community input, will be developed and refined. The phasing plan depicted below is currently being considered by the City.

Proposed Phasing and Implementation

**Tentative pending further street analysis, design, and costing.**