

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH SUMMARY

FOR THE **LONG BEACH**
CIVIC CENTER

MAY 2014



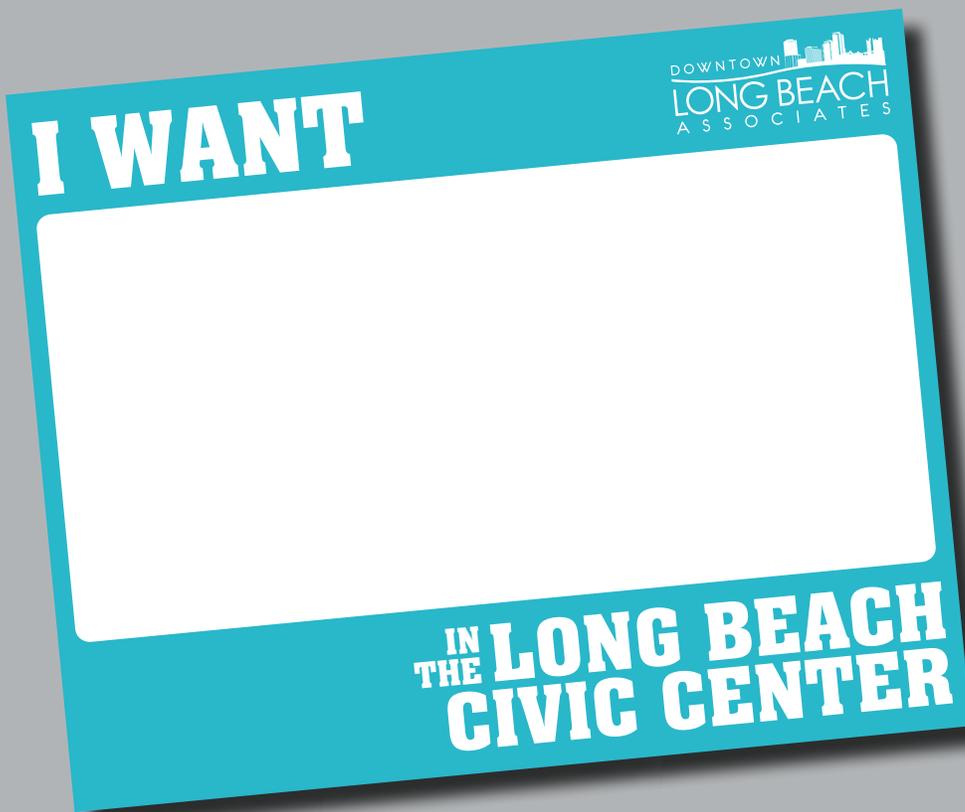
LONG BEACH
CIVIC CENTER

DOWNTOWN 
LONG BEACH
ASSOCIATES

INTRODUCTION

The City of Long Beach is in the process of identifying a development team to design, build, finance, and operate a new City Hall and Main Library on the current Civic Center site located in the heart of Downtown Long Beach. In addition to a new City Hall and Main Library, the Civic Center project will also include the revitalization of Lincoln Park, and may include private development and a permanent headquarters building for the Port of Long Beach. On February 28, 2014 the City released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to three development teams selected from an earlier Request for Qualifications. Proposals are due to the City on June 2, 2014 and shortly thereafter a preferred development team will be recommended by City Staff for City Council approval.

The Downtown Long Beach Associates (DLBA) recognizes that the Civic Center project has the potential to transform the landscape of Downtown for decades to come, and as an advocate for a safe, attractive and vibrant Downtown is engaging stakeholders to solicit their input about this important project. This document provides a summary of the input received from stakeholders at two DLBA-led community forums held in January and March of 2014.



STAKEHOLDER VISIONING - JANUARY 22, 2014

On January 22 the DLBA hosted its first Civic Center stakeholder forum where nearly 100 residents, business owners, and other Downtown stakeholders gathered to discuss their vision for the Long Beach Civic Center. Surrounded by poster boards and projected slideshows providing historical context and inspiration, attendees shared their ideas on three wall size sheets of paper, as well as on "I Want 'fill in the blank' in the Long Beach Civic Center" placards. The following summarizes the key themes that emerged from the stakeholder forum.

7 KEY THEMES

1 INVITING & SAFE PUBLIC SPACES

Creating a pleasant and safe atmosphere at the Civic Center for all members of the community was a reoccurring theme. For many, it was important to have an environment that would be comfortable for all ages, particularly children and the elderly. People wanted to see a variety of outdoor spaces, from small children's play areas to parks and plazas with unique water features. Other popular open space features included dog friendly spaces, lighting, a community garden, and Wi-Fi access. The open spaces would provide places to relax, socialize, and recreate, providing a reason to come and stay in Downtown Long Beach beyond shopping or other activities.

2 WALKABLE, ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENT

Having a walkable and bikable environment in the Civic Center was very important for those in attendance. Accessibility into and within the Civic Center was a constant theme in community responses. Being able to easily access the Civic Center by foot or bicycle was essential for many. Additionally, community members felt the area should have a network of walkways and bikeways with easy access to public transit.

3 PUBLIC EVENTS AND SOCIAL SPACES

A consistent theme in community responses was a need for public gathering spaces for people to socialize and be involved in their community. People wanted to feel more connected through fairs, festivals and public events. Major civic events desired included outdoor music/concerts, a farmers market, festivals and fairs. Large public gathering spaces could provide a central focal point and sense of place in the heart of downtown where civic events could take place.

4 ADAPTIVE REUSE OF BUILDINGS

Keeping and retrofitting the existing City Hall and Library was a desire expressed by many of the attendees. Other comments included rehabilitating the Library roof garden and utilizing the original 1973 plans that included an I.M. Pei designed museum. Retrofitting and renovating the Civic Center for today's needs while preserving this iconic, locally designed, post-modern structure was a shared opinion.

5 ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE

Several attendees expressed the desire for the Civic Center to be environmentally responsible in its design and ongoing use. Other comments included the desire for buildings to be energy efficient and the use of drought-tolerant native landscaping.

6 STATE OF THE ART LIBRARY, ARTS, EDUCATION, AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS

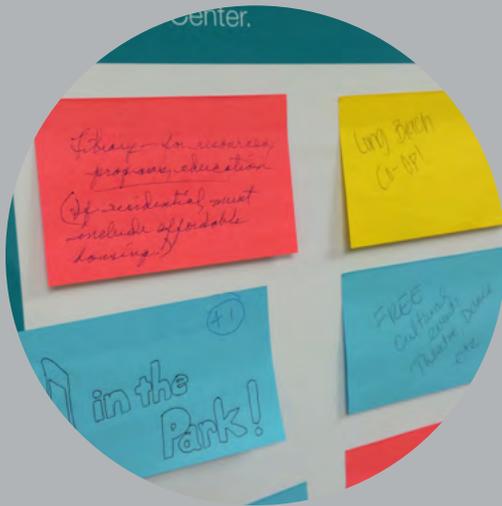
A state of the art library and facilities, including a multi-purpose community center to support art, education, and cultural programs for all residents, was repeatedly requested by attendees. Stakeholders also expressed the desire to expand the Main Library hours, provide learning opportunities for children and seniors, and offer space for local community organizations.

7 UNIQUE CHARACTER/MIX OF USES

Community members envisioned the Civic Center as a community-wide destination with a distinct character and unique mix of uses including retail/restaurants, mixed-income housing, grocery store, and museum/cultural center. Additionally community members wanted to see public art and signage highlighting Long Beach history, iconic architecture, living wage jobs, and the support of local businesses and entrepreneurs. A sense of ownership was important for many, where the Civic Center would represent the Long Beach community and its ideals.

LAND USES AND ACTIVITIES

The type of uses and activities found in civic spaces play a large role in shaping the character of that space and the surrounding neighborhood. Vibrant civic spaces include uses and activities that attract people 24/7. The following brainstorm questions about preferred land uses and activities were asked of the workshop attendees.



Name one type of business, activity or event that would bring you to the Long Beach Civic Center.

Workshop attendees expressed a desire that the Civic Center accommodate a wide variety of uses, attractions and activities. The majority of responses referenced entertainment and special events, which included outdoor music, farmers market, cultural festivals, art fairs, and movies.

Also mentioned were education programs and resources associated with the Main Library. Additional suggestions included outdoor spaces where people could gather for events, an art museum, and places to eat and shop.

Place a sticker next to the site use or event that would make for a vibrant, interesting Civic Center (City Hall and Library are assumed to be part of the project).



Overall, attendees envisioned a vibrant Civic Center as having a wide variety of uses, with almost equal mention of entertainment and events, public space and parks, shopping and dining experiences. Entertainment and events such as music, theater, art, farmers market and festivals constituted approximately 29 percent of the responses. Another 12 percent were focused on the provision of a rich outdoor environment with parks and public assembly places. In particular, seven percent of attendees desired public art as a part of the Civic Center. Educational classes, including job training, were mentioned by 11 percent of attendees. A rich diversity of unique destinations and events was desired from all, particularly for shopping and dining uses (16%). Civic and cultural uses comprised an additional 12 percent of responses, with art and museums as the most popular.

Are there other downtowns, districts, or civic spaces that should serve as inspiration for a future Long Beach Civic Center?



A wide range of downtowns and civic spaces were mentioned by community members. Half of the places mentioned were downtowns, with the most popular being Seattle, Portland, Oakland, and San Francisco. Other downtowns mentioned were Santa Ana, Santa Cruz, San Diego, Berkeley, Pittsburgh, Washington D.C., Montreal, Oslo, and Paris. Half of the responses cited specific locations, most notably Plaza de Mariachi (Guadalajara, Mexico), Pike Place Market (Seattle), Grand Park (Los Angeles), Baco Mercat and Las Ramblas (Barcelona, Spain), Tuileries Garden (Paris), State Street (Santa Barbara) and the rooftop open spaces in Japan and Chicago. The remaining responses referenced city hall buildings located in Seattle, Toronto, and Rancho Mirage, California.

PUBLIC REALM

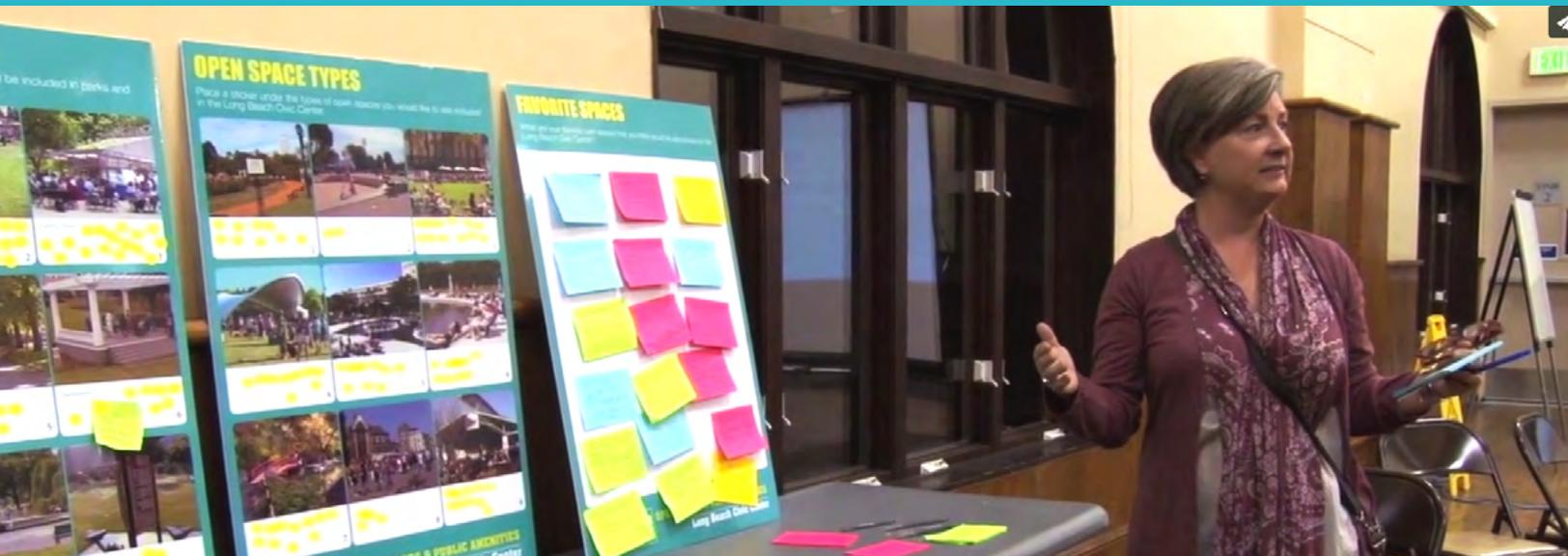
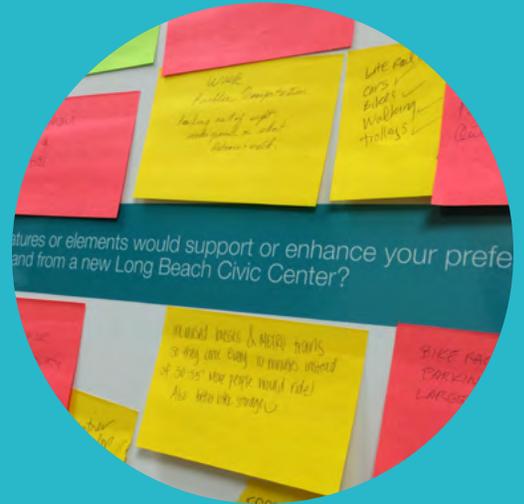
The public realm includes streets, sidewalks, parks and plazas, and is one of the most important distinguishing characteristics of urban places. The following brainstorm questions and visual preference surveys were presented.

What would be your preferred mode of travel to get to and from a new Long Beach Civic Center?

Approximately 35 percent of attendees stated their preferred mode of travel to the Civic Center would be by bicycle, followed by public transit (30%), walking (26%), and automobile (9%).

What features or elements would support or enhance your preferred mode of travel to and from a new Long Beach Civic Center?

Safety and comfort were a recurring theme of responses to this question, with attendees mentioning the desire for safe pedestrian street crossings, clean and safe sidewalks, shade trees, lighting, drinking fountains, and wheelchair accessible amenities. Circulation through the site was also important for many attendees—in terms of accessing key destinations and parking, as well as ensuring safe and direct circulation for pedestrians and bicyclists. People mentioned the need for bike racks and covered bike storage, as well as dedicated bicycle paths. Also mentioned were the desire for increased frequency of bus and light rail connections and the availability of free vehicle parking.



Visual Preference Surveys

Community members were also polled for their preference for streetscape types, streetscape features, and civic center character. The first visual preference survey included a series of streets and public spaces presented at different scales, activities, and physical design elements. The second preference survey was more focused on streetscape features and elements such as seating and signage. The third visual preference survey presented images of civic buildings and was intended to get the viewer's preference for physical design characteristics such as building height, bulk, materials and design. Although not shown on the board, ten percent of responses identified the existing Civic Center as a preference. The results from each survey are on the next page.

Streetscape Character



13%



16%



21%



5%



11%



7%



13%



7%



7%

Streetscape Features



Water Fountains

10%



District Signage

6%



Seating

21%



Bike Racks

9%



Sidewalk Markers

3%



Lighting

11%



Public Art

14%



Wayfinding

13%



Information Kiosks

13%

Civic Center Character



9%



7%



5%



2%



12%



7%



5%



26%



17%

10% - Existing Civic Center

OPEN SPACES AND PUBLIC AMENITIES

Urban open spaces contribute to the vitality of cities by providing a safe and comfortable place for people to relax, play, congregate, and mingle. The type and scale of open spaces, along with their associated amenities and activities, help to define its role in the larger community. The following brainstorm question and visual preference surveys were presented at the workshop.

What are your favorite park spaces that you think would be appropriate for the Long Beach Civic Center?

Stakeholders responded to this question in three ways, naming specific parks, park features, and activities that they would like to see in open spaces. Several responses cited parks located in Long Beach, including Bixby Park, Bluff Park, Lincoln Park, El Dorado Park, Deukmajejan Courthouse Garden, Terrace Theater Plaza, and Belmont Plaza Olympic Pool. Other specific parks or open spaces mentioned were Golden Gate Park (San Francisco), Park Guell (Barcelona), Central Park (New York City), Olympic Sculpture Park (Seattle), South Coast Botanic Garden (Costa Mesa), and Disneyland (Anaheim).

Park features mentioned included native landscaping, walkways, public art, gathering spaces, movable furniture, bandstands, play areas, food vendors, formal gardens, and museums. Activities cited included outdoor music classes, farmers markets, art walks, and cultural events.

Visual Preference Surveys

Stakeholders were also polled for their preference for specific park types and features. The first survey included a series of park spaces that presented different scales, activities, and physical design elements. The second preference survey was focused on park features and amenities such as seating areas, lawns for passive recreation and public art. The results from both surveys are shown below.

Open Space Types



12%



3%



16%



12%



12%



12%



15%



5%



13%

Open Space Features



Public Art
21%



Community Gathering
19%



Eating Area
19%



Play Area
5%



Promenade
13%



Bandstand
2%



Dog Run
6%



Passive Recreation
7%



Fitness Area
8%

OUR COMMUNITY

Civic centers are places where we celebrate life events, where we run into old friends, where we mingle with diverse cultures, and where we directly interact with government. Civic center's represent the shared values of the communities in which they sit. The following brainstorm questions pertaining to the values that embody the Long Beach community were presented at the workshop. The following word clusters represent the most common responses to the 'Our Community' questions.

Name one or two adjectives that would describe your vision of a new Long Beach Civic Center?

Engaging & Dynamic
Openness and Welcoming
Grassroots and Homegrown
Artistic
ADAPTIVE REUSE
REFLECTIVE & HISTORY
unique

What community values should the Long Beach Civic Center be representative of?

Community Driven
artistic
Compassion and Understanding
Diversity
Environmentally Responsible
Inclusive
Creative

NEXT STEPS

The DLBA is providing the City of Long Beach and the development team finalists the input that was collected at both DLBA-led stakeholder forums. The stakeholder input summarized in this report, along with the input collected at City-led project meetings will be used by the City and the development teams to assist in the prioritization of project benefits. The project timeline (below) includes multiple steps after the project team is selected, including public outreach and project approvals by the Planning Commission and City Council. Throughout the life of the Civic Center project the DLBA will be an engaged participant in the process as well as an advocate for a Civic Center that represents the priorities and values of the Downtown community.

For additional information about the Civic Center project visit the City's project website at www.lbciviccenter.com. You can also provide your input about the project via a short survey at www.lbciviccenter.com/survey.php.

To learn about future opportunities for input visit the DLBA's Civic Center Outreach webpage (www.downtownlongbeach.org/civic-center) or sign up for the DLBA newsletter (www.downtownlongbeach.org/newsletter-signup).

CIVIC CENTER PROJECT TIMELINE

