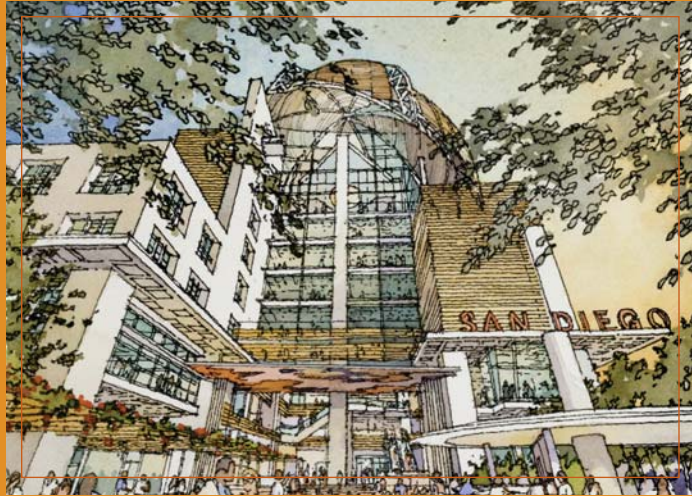


8



PUBLIC FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

The Downtown Community Plan is subject to and must comply with all of the provisions of the City of San Diego General Plan and Strategic Framework Element and Action Plan as may currently exist or as may be amended in the future by the City of San Diego. The provisions thereof are specifically adopted herein by reference.

An essential component for accomplishing downtown's potential as a livable place and a regional center is a strong framework of public facilities and amenities. Parks and open spaces and schools are vital to support the growing population; police and fire stations are essential for safety. Facilities such as the Civic Center, Convention Center, and institutions of higher learning also act as catalysts for redevelopment and economic activity.

This chapter focuses on educational facilities, police and fire emergency facilities, community facilities, the civic center, and libraries. Additional types of public facilities are addressed in other chapters of the Community Plan:

- *Chapter 3: Land Use and Housing;*
- *Chapter 4: Parks, Open Space, and Recreation;*
- *Chapter 7: Transportation;*
- *Chapter 10: Arts and Culture;* and
- *Chapter 12: Human Services*



8.1 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The most eclectic cluster of educational facilities in the region is located in downtown San Diego. A law school, architecture and design schools, language academies, and City College bring a spirit of scholarship, progress, and creativity to downtown. Several options are available to youth and children, including the public Washington Elementary School in Little Italy and San Diego High School and Garfield High School in the East Village neighborhood, in addition to public charter and private schools. These institutions contribute to the area's urban culture while at the same time supporting downtown business and living.

There is great potential for expanding the presence of higher learning establishments in downtown, through additional schools with special focuses (business, arts, communications, or real estate) or satellites of some of the major universities in the region. Schools and universities located in the milieu of commerce, government, and culture provide opportunities for mutually beneficial relationships, involving field training for students and the infusion of new ideas and approaches for the downtown community. Students could also have the opportunity to live within walking distance of their respective institutions.

Schools for youth and children are typically developed as the younger population grows. Since residential growth to date has been dominated by empty nesters and younger adults, pressure for new school construction has not been considerable. As the downtown population increases in future years, the number of families will grow, increasing the student population. Given the diversity of downtown activity, the interests of downtown dwellers, and land constraints, smaller public schools with special topical focuses may be more desirable than mainstream public schools. Downtown institutions could partner with charter schools to enrich curricula. Not only would such schools serve the downtown population, but they would also draw students from outlying neighborhoods.

Regardless of the type, future schools downtown will require urban designs that make efficient use of land and integrate into the dense community, rather than following low-rise, sprawling suburban models.



There are many higher learning facilities downtown including the New School of Architecture (top), California Western Law School (middle), and City College (above). Expanding and increasing the number of such institutions is an exciting opportunity for invigorating downtown commerce, government, and culture.

Goals: Educational Facilities

- 8.1-G-1** Encourage the provision of quality and accessible educational facilities to downtown families and adult learners.
- 8.1-G-2** Expand and strengthen the presence of higher education, particularly focused in East Village and Civic/Core.
- 8.1-G-3** Seek special focus schools for children and youth that build on downtown's offerings.
- 8.1-G-4** Integrate new school buildings and improvements with downtown's urban environment.

Policies: Educational Facilities

- 8.1-P-1** Attract additional higher learning facilities—such as professional schools, design institutes, and satellites of the major universities—and work with existing institutions to help maintain strong activity levels and meet expansion needs.
- 8.1-P-2** Coordinate with City College on new development, programming, and facilities that bolster its mission and contribute to downtown commerce, culture, and living.
- 8.1-P-3** Work proactively with the San Diego Unified School District and the various private educational institutes to meet the needs of downtown’s growing population and to provide quality educational opportunities to the urban population.
- 8.1-P-4** Pursue charter schools with special curricula in the areas of art, music, design, leadership, science, and the performing arts and help to identify downtown organizations and institutions that could serve as partners or sponsors.
- 8.1-P-5** Anticipate school development in areas of high expected residential growth, and focus facilities around open spaces.
- 8.1-P-6** In designing and programming new educational facilities, emphasize connections with surrounding uses, relationships to neighboring structures and streets, efficient use of land, and multi-story urban models.
- 8.1-P-7** Promote shared use of facilities such as playing fields, public parks, parking, community meeting spaces, exhibit halls, and studios.



8.2 POLICE AND FIRE FACILITIES

Facilities for fire and police emergency services affect planning goals for livability and safety. The growing population downtown will increase the number of fire, medical, security, and criminal incidents requiring emergency services. New special events, commercial development, and visitor amenities will likewise raise demand. The City Police and Fire departments will need to build up staff levels, equipment (especially for high-rise development), and facilities to meet these greater needs. A new station(s) will likely be more urgent for the Fire Department, although expansion and relocation of existing community police storefront facilities may be called for as well. The presence of the Police Department headquarters in East Village benefits public safety efforts.

Careful attention to the design of buildings and public spaces can contribute to an environment that deters unlawful behavior, thereby reducing the demands upon emergency service providers. While such design measures will help to make downtown safe, by no means will they mitigate the need for adequate fire and police service capabilities.

Securing construction and operational funds for new facilities will be challenging, and require commitment, leadership, and perseverance

New urban schools will likely be needed for downtown’s growing cadre of youth (top). Downtown elementary schools, including the public Washington School in Little Italy (middle) and private Harborside School (above) serve children of residents and workforce alike, and continued population growth will likely generate a need for additional schools.



among City officials, downtown stakeholders, and residents. Developers should be expected to help offset the incremental service demand generated by their projects.

Goals: Police and Fire Facilities

- 8.2-G-1** Maintain a safe and livable environment downtown working with the City to ensure appropriate levels of fire and police services proportionate to population and activity level.
- 8.2-G-2** Work with City fire and life safety departments to anticipate construction and expansion of fire and police facilities.
- 8.2-G-3** Consider public safety in the design of new development and public spaces.

Policies: Police and Fire Facilities

- 8.2-P-1** Institute the collection of development impact fees for all development projects to help pay for the needed fire and police facilities.
- 8.2-P-2** Work closely with Fire and Police department representatives on facility improvement and expansion projects, paying close attention to siting and accessibility requirements. Prioritize the first new fire station in the Northeast sub-district of East Village.
- 8.2-P-3** Integrate new fire and police facilities into mixed-use development projects to the extent possible, to help achieve overall development intensity goals established for downtown.
- 8.2-P-4** In close proximity to emergency facilities, avoid special events that require street closure and/or cause severe traffic congestion that could impede response.



The presence of the Police Department headquarters (above) and Fire Department station benefit public safety efforts, but additional police and fire stations will be needed to maintain service levels in future years.



Downtown has a fine collection of houses of worship, many of which provide a variety of community services. New facilities will be directed to Neighborhood Centers to strengthen community relationships and locally meet the needs of residents.

8.3 OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A functioning diverse urban environment where needs can be met without driving includes community facilities such as houses of worship, child care, and space for professional organizations, neighborhood groups, community meetings, and special events. As downtown evolves, these types of community spaces will contribute to the vitality of Neighborhood Centers. They will also strengthen community relationships and support diversity.

Recreation, cultural, and human service facilities are taken up in chapters 4, 10, and 12 of the Community Plan.

Goals: Other Community Facilities

8.3-G-1 Encourage a diversity of community facilities in the downtown neighborhoods, including religious facilities, recreation centers, daycare, and youth centers.

Policies: Other Community Facilities

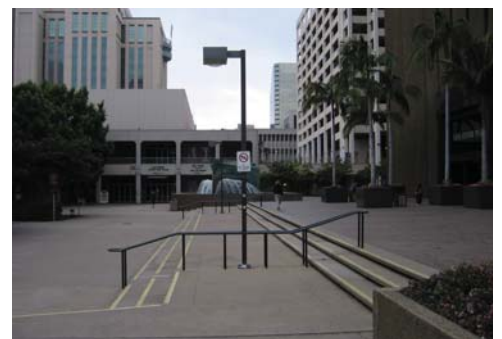
8.3-P-1 Encourage location of community facilities in mixed-use buildings in the Neighborhood Centers.

8.3-P-2 Provide incentives for the development of facility space for community facilities and institutions. These spaces, where provided as part of mixed use development on Main and Commercial streets on first floors, are exempt from FAR calculations, per standards in the Planned District Ordinance.

8.4 CIVIC CENTER

The City's Civic Center complex includes the Civic Center Theater, the Concourse, the City Administration Building, Golden Hall, and an above-grade structured parking lot. Government offices and facilities together are one of the largest employers and strongest anchors for downtown's central business district, and the Civic Center is a prominent functional and visual landmark. There is wide consensus that redevelopment of the Civic Center is needed to ameliorate faulty urban and architectural design, functional, and structural components. In addition, current uses have outgrown the facility, as can be seen by the fact that over half of the space occupied by downtown city staff is leased in private office buildings.

A redeveloped Civic Center that is physically accessible to the surrounding areas and provides an inspiring yet functional regional center for government, civic engagement, and culture is important to achieving downtown's potential. Deteriorated building conditions and inactive facilities and plazas will change when the complex is redesigned as outward-facing, welcoming, and reconnected to the street grid. Iconic architecture reflecting regional values will create a landmark status not enjoyed to date, the respectful quality of the environment will honor the diversity of interests coming together to pursue the public good, and a sunny plaza will provide an inspiring open space for employees and visitors. The improved connections to the heart of downtown will heighten the prominence of the Civic Center for public assembly and ceremony.



With the long awaited redevelopment and redesign, the Civic Center complex (seen from the air at top and from the 3rd Avenue entrance at bottom) will become outward-facing, welcoming, and reconnected to the street grid, to achieve its potential as a true center of civic engagement.

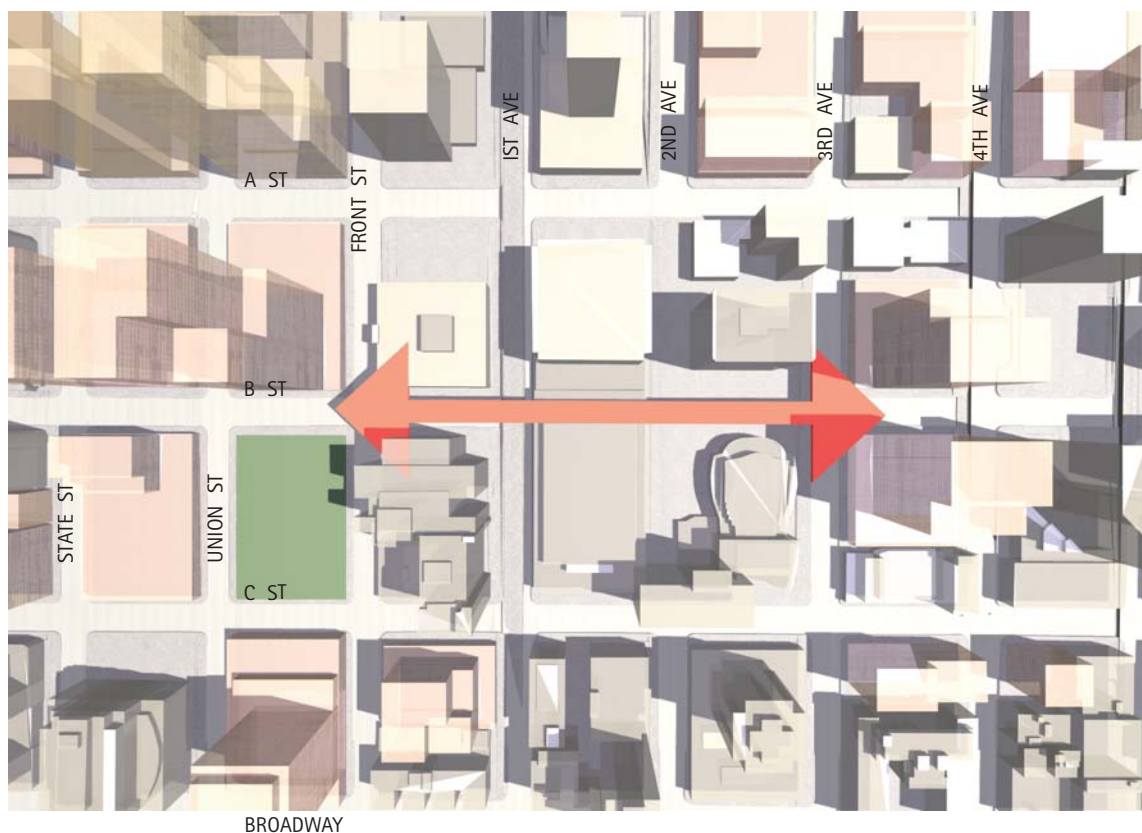


Goals: Civic Center

- 8.4-G-1** Sustain the City Civic Center Complex as a regional center of public activity and an anchor of the government center.
- 8.4-G-2** Work with other agencies and the private sector to redevelop the Civic Center, prioritizing accommodation of space needs, integration with the downtown fabric, inspiring architecture and open spaces, and assemblage of the diversity of people and ideas that make up San Diego.

Policies: Civic Center

- 8.4-P-1** Provide a new Civic Plaza/Park on the block surrounded by Union, B, Front, and C streets, as the focus of a revitalized, mixed use Civic Center. Allow below-grade parking at the park.
- 8.4-P-2** To integrate the Civic Center with downtown, extend the street grid across the site; and interface open spaces, plazas, and buildings with the streets.
- 8.4-P-3** Continue all efforts to obtain funding for the Civic Center redevelopment program and accelerate the schedule to the greatest extent possible.
- 8.4-P-4** Provide for large new/renovated civic meeting spaces that could be available and affordable for civic groups and non-profits to rent.



Civic Center

8.5 LIBRARIES

The long-awaited Main Library will become a cornerstone of downtown's emerging cultural and educational community. With nearly 380,000 square feet of facility space—including reading rooms, book stacks, office space, public meeting rooms, and an auditorium—it will serve the local downtown community as well as the region. New academic, research, and artistic institutions will likely be drawn into downtown by the exciting, contemporary facilities. The landmark architecture will add to the civic experience of library visitors as well as grounding the emerging architectural vernacular of the eastern neighborhoods. In addition, completion of the new Main Library will continue the rebirth of East Village and enhance the Park-to-Bay link.

There are future possibilities for special-topic libraries downtown that could partner with the Main Library; serve the business, government, and academic sectors; and act as new catalysts for future creative endeavors. These could include libraries focusing on law, design, military activities, art, technology, civic leaders, and other topics of particular interest to the region, and be operated by both public and private interests. Such libraries will advance overall downtown goals for activity focuses and new cultural, academic, and economic development synergies.

Goals: Libraries

- 8.5-G-1** Encourage the completion of the Main Library as one of downtown's premier public facilities.
- 8.5-G-2** Integrate the Main Library in planning for downtown connections and activity nodes.

Policies: Libraries

- 8.5-P-1** Locate smaller topical libraries primarily in the Civic/Core and Columbia districts, Neighborhood Centers, near City College, and around the Main Library.
- 8.5-P-2** Encourage library co-location with other civic, academic, and cultural facilities for the benefit of amassing activity that draws new attention and uses.



For the region and downtown alike, the new Main Library will become a significant cultural, civic, and educational landmark. The iconic architecture will help to define southern East Village, and synergistic uses are expected nearby.



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