

## THE HISTORIC CIVIC AUDITORIUM

### Preserve and rehabilitate the landmarked Civic Auditorium.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Rehabilitate the landmark Santa Monica Civic Auditorium.**

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium was designated as a city landmark in 2002. Rehabilitation plans will have to receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Landmarks Commission to ensure that its character defining features are preserved. These constraints still allow a great deal of flexibility in adapting the outdated venue to modern standards.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Satisfy the community's desire for an iconic, innovative, state-of-the-art, professional performing arts venue that is the anchor of a cultural campus.**

From the earliest planning documents about the Civic Center site to the current public process, participants have overwhelmingly supported the historic use of the Civic Auditorium as a performing arts venue. Research has shown that, if it were professionally managed, this use would be most likely to remain self-sustaining.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Consider taking advantage of the Civic Auditorium's flexibility to enable it to serve both performing arts and special events, including community events.**

When the Civic Auditorium was built in 1958, the hydraulic floor that provided the flexibility to host both flat-floor and raked-floor events was one of its many celebrated features. Today, the original floor remains in good working order and could still serve us in the same manner, but it will not be a required element of any new plan.

## A CULTURAL CAMPUS

### Create a vibrant community hub around the Civic Auditorium.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Strive to create a signature Civic Auditorium arts and cultural campus that will serve as the city's cultural center for the performing arts.**

Additional cultural uses surrounding the Civic, as well as dining and retail opportunities on the site will end the auditorium's long period of isolation and could result in a lively place for Santa Monicans to have cultural experiences around the clock.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Include synergistic arts and cultural features and uses that add to an exciting experience for patrons, such as a flexible performance event space.**

The community has shown interest in additional smaller venues on the site that would be available for use by local performers, and that would expand the type of offerings within the campus to attract a broader demographic.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Integrate complementary uses that create activity during both daytime and evening such as cafes, restaurants and open space.**

Availability of food and public open space will enhance the experience of visitors and encourage them to stay at the cultural center longer by providing a high level of convenience and thus activating the area around the Civic Auditorium for periods well before and after events.

**Consider private land uses that support and enhance the cultural campus.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Ensure that any private land uses are synergistic with the spirit and activities planned for the site, and add to its vibrancy.**

Private land uses proposed for the site should relate in some way to the cultural atmosphere there and attract people who will take advantage of it or add to the depth or range of the cultural activities offered.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Collaborate with the city to commemorate the lost Belmar neighborhood that predated the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium on the site.**

The land assembled in 1957 for construction of the Civic Auditorium was taken through eminent domain from African Americans who had established homes and businesses there. Proposals will include a way to creatively address the history of the site.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Ensure that any private land uses create a smooth, interactive connection to the surrounding neighborhood through compatibility of use and scale.**

The site was originally designed to face inward without physical or visual connections to adjacent blocks. This shortcoming should be addressed and improved by any proposal through compatibility of scale and uses on the edges and via open pathways that will incorporate the mega-block back into the fabric of the city.

**Create a flow between the Civic Auditorium and the surrounding community.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Visually and physically connect the Civic Auditorium, the site, adjacent amenities, streets, neighbors and institutions.**

The community life on Main Street, the additional venues on the SAMOHI campus, the recreational possibilities of Tongva Park and the proximity of the light rail terminus station, Pier, Beach and Promenade should all be easy to interact with through the establishment of clear pathways and signage.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Prioritize uses that enhance linkages and connectivity between the Civic campus, Santa Monica High School, Main Street, Pico Boulevard, Tongva Park, the Pier and the beach.**

Uses on the Civic site should not only be synergistic with the main cultural programming of the Auditorium, but must also be compatible with adjacent areas to create a seamless flow integrating the site into the surrounding neighborhood.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Consider establishing a cultural network with the Santa Monica High School performing arts venues including Barnum Hall and the Greek Theater, and other shared use possibilities with Santa Monica High School.**

Take advantage of the additional venues in very close proximity to the Civic for joint programming, multi-venue events and festivals or other opportunities that would support and extend the reach of the Civic cultural center.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Integrate the site with the City's mobility plans for pedestrians, vehicles, bike, and transit.**

Plans for reconnecting the broader Civic Center back into the flow of the city, such as Olympic Drive, are underway. Studies have been done and new ideas have surfaced during the recent process. Multi-modal connectivity will be critical at the Auditorium site for it to be fully integrated.

## **PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**

### **Include open space on the site.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Include open space that encourages cultural, recreational, and athletic uses consistent with a vibrant cultural campus.**

Virtually every participant in the CWG workshops expressed a desire for some kind of open space on the Civic Auditorium site. Preferences range from passive space for picnics and relaxation, to flexible space for festivals and outdoor performances, to athletic fields.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Investigate plans that would allow for a full size multi-use field on the site.**

The 2005 Civic Center Specific Plan included an athletic field. This choice for open space use continues to have strong support from sports-minded community members.

## **A VIABLE PROJECT**

### **Generate innovative and financially sustainable proposals for the Civic and its site.**

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Consider creating a consortium of public and private management entities.**

An open minded and creative approach to management structures is encouraged by the CWG to maximize the quality of programs and efficiency of operations.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Ensure financial strategies for capital are viable, meaning that they fund estimated costs for Civic Auditorium rehabilitation and any other planned capital improvements on the site.**

The rehabilitation of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium and its reestablishment as an important performance venue must be viable as part of any proposal for the site.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Ensure financial strategies for the Civic Auditorium, site operations and programming are viable and do not rely upon open-ended subsidies from the City's general fund.**

The operations of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium and any site programming should be structured efficiently enough to be substantially, if not completely self-sustaining.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE:**

**Evaluate private philanthropic funding and non-traditional sources of funding for renovation and operation of the Civic Auditorium.**

Funding for the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium rehabilitation and operations has been challenging the city for many years now. Creative financing methods or funding from multiple sources or partnerships should be explored.