

# CENTENNIAL SQUARE ACTION PLAN

**Opportunities &  
Big Ideas**  
JUNE 2018

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# Contents

## INTRODUCTION

## CONTEXT AND HISTORY

CONTEXT .....	8
SQUARE HISTORY.....	10

## SQUARE TODAY

INTRODUCTION .....	16
OPPORTUNITIES .....	17
STRATEGIES .....	18
PROGRAMMING .....	19
ENGAGEMENT TO DATE .....	20

## BEST PRACTICES AND CASE STUDIES

## SQUARE TOMORROW

VISION .....	28
EMERGING THEMES .....	29

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# Introduction



**Every great city has a dynamic public square where people come together for civic gathering, public events and celebration, play, or come for quiet contemplation; a place where public life happens.**

Centennial Square is Victoria's main civic, ceremonial and recreational plaza that serves as a venue for different events and large public gatherings. This can range from protests to honouring ceremonies, demonstrations and displays of public art to theatre performances, and music and cultural festivals to local markets.

Centennial Square was constructed in the 1960s as part of a major initiative to preserve, restore and revive downtown Victoria, and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Victoria. Today, the Square lacks activities and programming outside of events and festivals. Furthermore, some

of the infrastructure (including the fountain), surface treatments, and parkade structure are aging and in need of major maintenance and repairs.

Centennial Square has been identified as a priority area for public space improvement, specifically to activate and energize the square and enhance the City's public living room and civic gathering place.

To this end, the City is undertaking a collaborative design process to identify short, medium and long term actions to guide immediate operations and maintenance needs, activity programming, and physical improvements to refresh the Square. The purpose of this document is to provide key background information and design considerations to guide the development and assessment of design options for the square. This includes key findings from an inventory and analysis, an overview of best practices, and renewed vision statement and set of opportunities and big ideas.

# Process Diagram

DECEMBER 2017

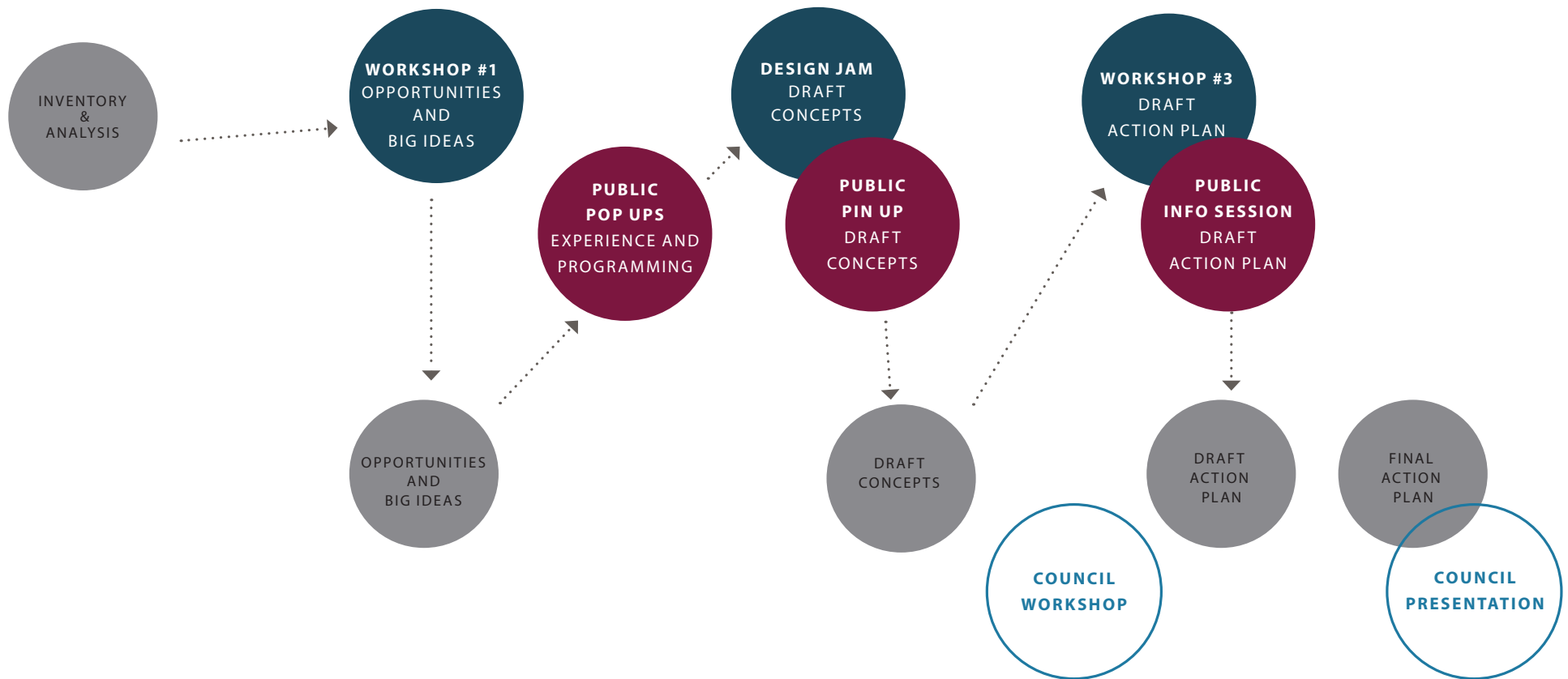
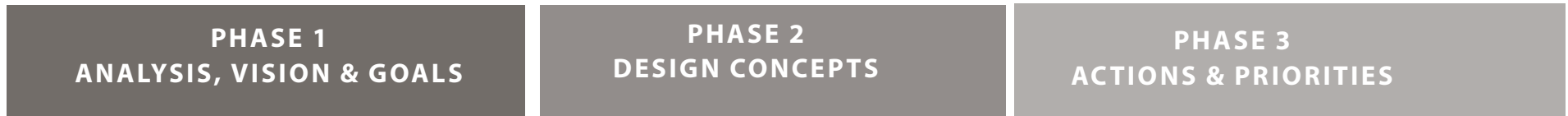
JUNE

JULY

SEPTEMBER

NOVEMBER

JANUARY 2019



An aerial photograph of a university campus. The central focus is a large, circular building with a prominent circular courtyard in the middle. The courtyard contains a fountain and is surrounded by a walkway. Several other large, rectangular buildings are scattered around the central area, connected by walkways and roads. There are many trees and green spaces throughout the campus. The overall layout is organized and symmetrical.

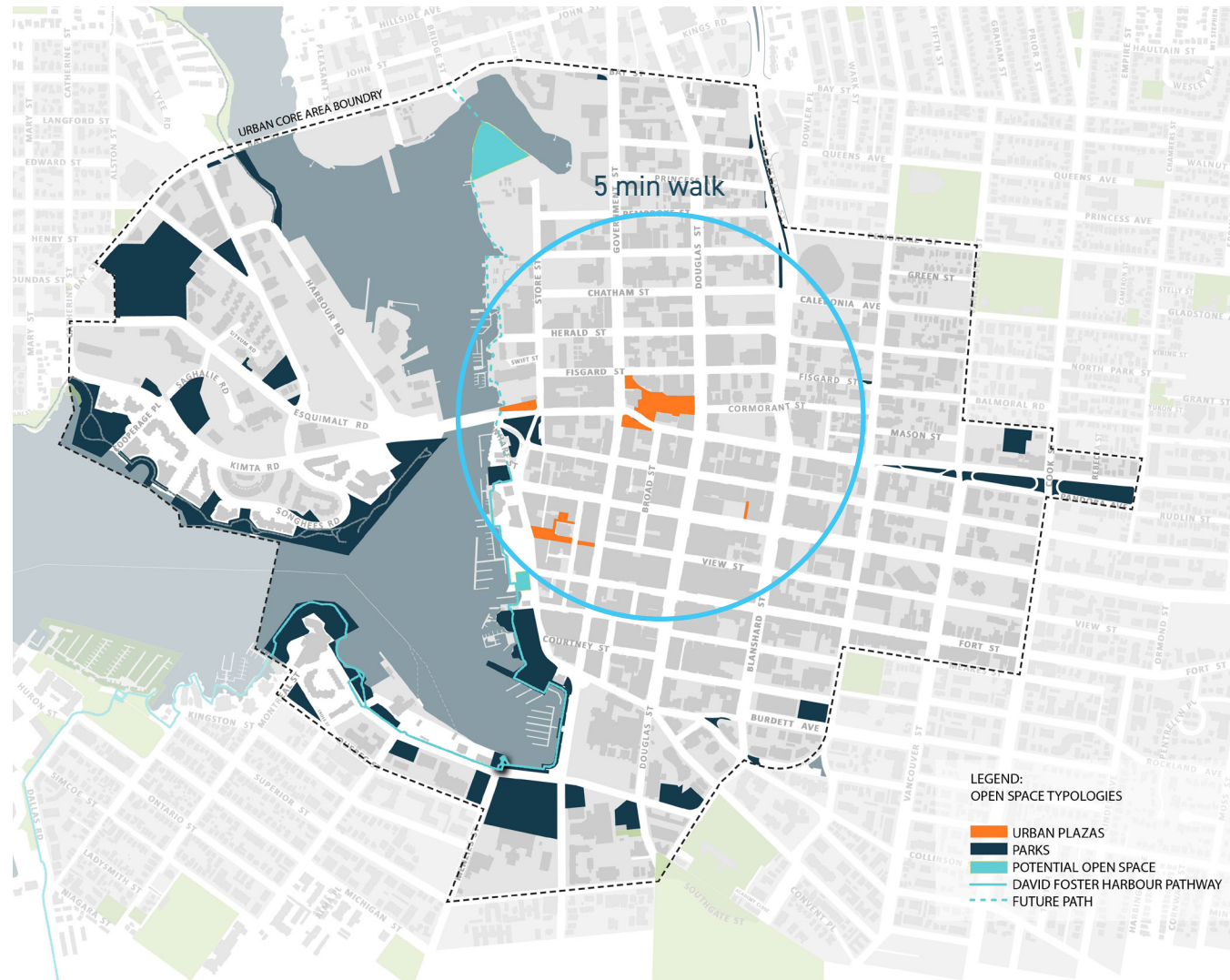
# **CONTEXT & HISTORY**

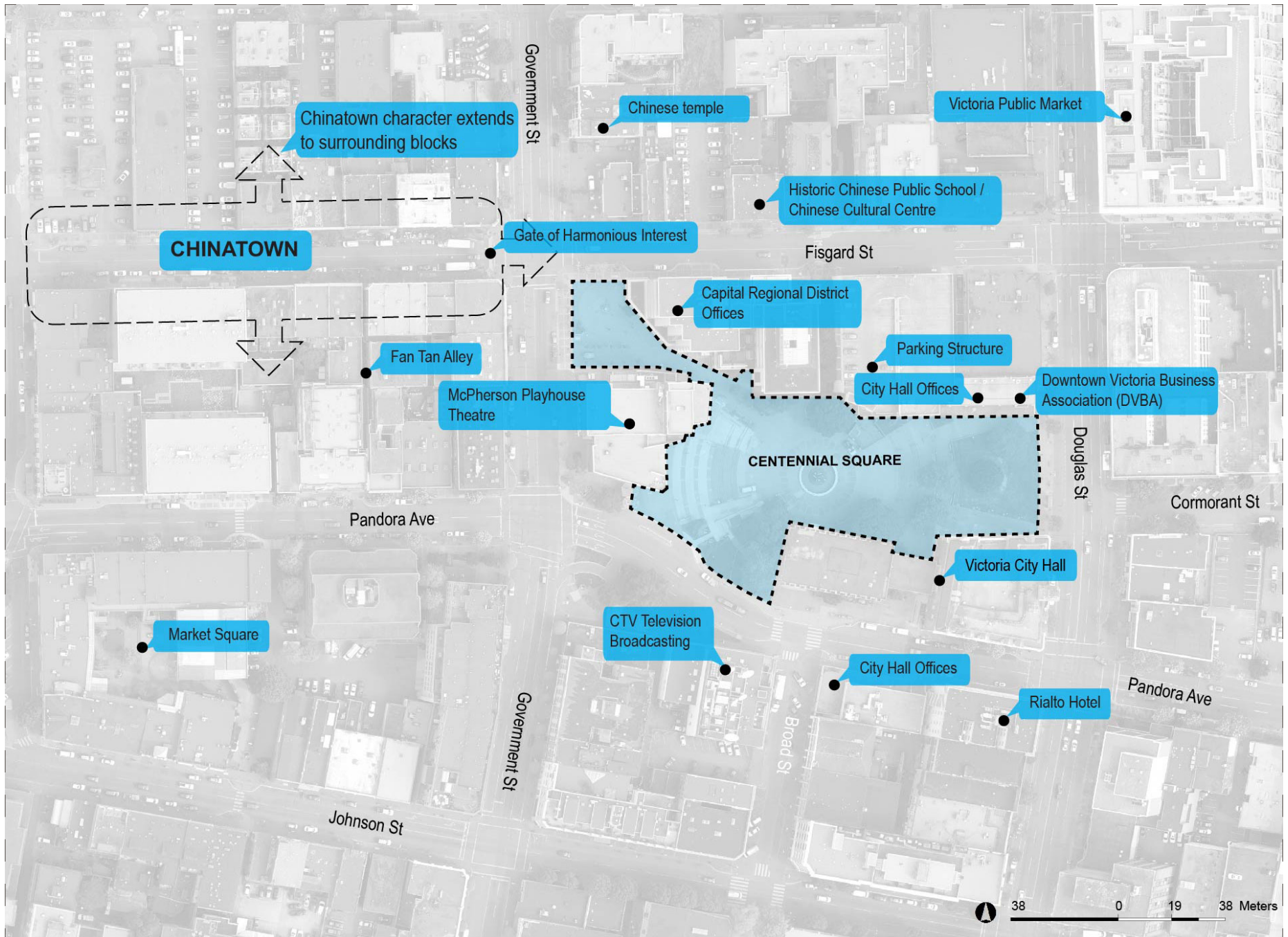
# Context

Centennial Square is located in the city centre between Government Street to the west, Douglas Street to the east, Fisgard Street to the north and Pandora Street to the south. It is within walking distance to many key city destinations.

The Square is surrounded by many important institutions including City Hall and the CRD building and it is in close proximity to Douglas Street which serves as a main transportation oriented corridor for the Downtown area with many bus routes and high pedestrian traffic.

It also sits across the street from Chinatown - a key tourist destination.





# Square History

Centennial Square project was first unveiled to the public in 1962 - Victoria's 100th year as a city - but construction work didn't begin until 1964. It was constructed as part of a major initiative to preserve, restore and revive downtown Victoria, and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Victoria.

A major renovation to the south west corner of the plaza was completed in 2009. Centennial Square is surrounded by both modern and historic structures, including historic City Hall constructed in 1891, and features a fountain incorporating a balustrade rim and mosaic concrete totems, which serve as a focal point to the plaza.

Street realignments and the demolition of an old public market allowed for the grouping of the McPherson Playhouse (Hodgson), the renovated police station (Wagg), a parkade and specialty shops (Di Castri), the Senior Citizens' Centre (Campbell) and a sunken "Knot Garden." All were arranged around a public space to form Centennial Square. The focal point is a fountain, its balustraded rim reminiscent of pieces from Oscar Niemeyer's Brazilia scheme (1958), and the mosaic concrete totems by local artist J. C. S. Wilkinson. The fountain was a centennial gift to the City from neighbouring municipalities. The scheme successfully re-established City Hall as a downtown focal point with the square as its major public recreational amenity. This was the first part of the downtown revitalization program, which called for a general paintup modelled on the "Norwich Plan" and pedestrian malls linking City Hall to a redeveloped and restored Bastion Square.

Extensive public debate preceded the decision by the city to commemorate its centenary by building a public square. Previous schemes had entertained moving City Hall into a commercial development and selling the old building as a building site. The combination of restoration (City Hall, McPherson Theatre and police station) with new construction (Council Chamber wing for City Hall, restaurant and lobby for the theatre, senior centre, family law courts and parkade & shopping arcade) was ambitious. The old city market and some buildings on Fisgard Street would be demolished. Cormorant Street would be incorporated into the square and Pandora realigned. Planning and design was coordinated by city architect Roderick Clack. The floorscape of the square was designed by landscape architects Muirhead Justice & Webb.



## Significance of Centennial Square to Urban Planning in Victoria

Centennial Square is significant as an innovative model of urban planning in which historic buildings were proactively conserved as crucial components of a larger urban renewal scheme. Like other North American cities in the 1960's, Victoria's downtown was facing increased competition from suburban shopping centres and its historic building stock was in physical decline. Mayor Richard Biggerstaff Wilson, influenced by the City's first urban planner Rod Clack and San Francisco architecture firm Wurster, Bernardi and Emmons, championed Centennial Square as a means of revitalizing the downtown and enabling the continued use of City Hall, which was once again being considered for demolition. Centennial Square became the centrepiece of the 1965 "Overall Plan for Victoria", which promoted the same conciliatory approach to old and new architecture that has maintained Victoria's reputation for heritage and culture over time.



# EVOLUTION OF THE SQUARE

**AUGUST 2,  
1962**

August 2, 1962- Centennial Square project presented to the public for the first time

**DECEMBER 1ST,  
1964**

Centennial Fountain turned on and officially gifted to the City at a ceremony involving Reeves and Councillors of Saanich, Oak Bay and Esquimalt

**FEBRUARY  
1966**

All Phases of Centennial Square complete

**MID  
1970'S**

Concrete tiara covered in roughcast to discourage loitering



Original Centennial Square Model



Centennial Square at its completion in 1966



Tiara covered in Stucco

**LATE  
1970'S**

Sequoia Tree  
planted in the lawn  
area adjacent to  
Douglas Street

**1996**

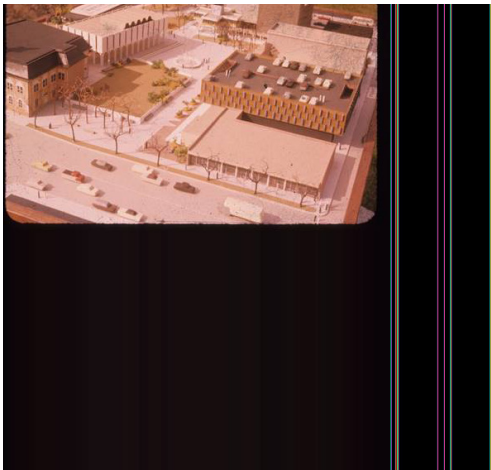
Relocation of  
police station from  
Centennial Square to  
Caledonia Street

**2006**

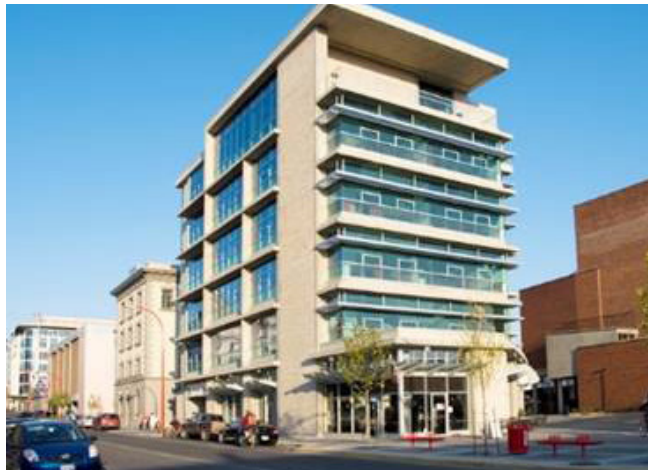
CRD Headquarters Completed,  
visual connections to Gate  
of Harmonious Interest and  
Chinese Public School created,  
Seniors Centre demolished

**2007-  
2008**

Spirit Square completed,  
restaurant pavilions  
demolished, knot garden  
removed, canopied performance  
stage introduced



Sequoia Tree, 1985



New CRD building, 2006



Spirit Square, 2008

## Important Design Elements

- The location of Centennial Square next to old City Hall between Fisgard Street and Pandora Avenue
- The radial design of the square, in which the design elements are organized around a central water feature
- The three monoliths at the centre of the water feature, each of which includes an Italian glass mosaic designed by artist Jack C.S. Wilkinson depicting the themes of youth, procreation and the struggle of good vs. evil
- The symbolic orientation of the monoliths towards each of the three municipalities who contributed to the construction of the fountain
- The use of complementary materials in the square that visually connect the conserved heritage buildings of the square to one another, and to the larger context of the Old Town neighbourhood
- The visual connections between the square and Douglas Street, Broad Street, Government Street and the Gate of Harmonious Interest in Chinatown
- The framing of the square with significant historic architecture, including Old City Hall and the McPherson Theatre (formerly the Pantages playhouse)
- The use of bricks salvaged from the demolished 1891 public market building on Cormorant Street, re-used as cladding for the retaining walls of planted areas
- The use of a water feature as the central focal point for the square
- The mature native trees, including Garry Oaks, which were planted during the original construction of the square

## The Fountain

The fountain was a birthday gift to Victoria from its neighbouring municipalities, Saanich, Oak Bay and Esquimalt. Some of the bricks set into surrounding paving are salvaged Victoria Public Market bricks (which were brought from England by sailing ships in the 1880s).

Three concrete monoliths rise from the fountain's pool. Each has a glistening Italian-glass mosaic on one side depicting a fundamental phase of life. In each case the mosaic faces towards one of those neighbouring municipalities: Esquimalt - "creation and protection", Oak Bay - "youth and growth", Saanich, third and tallest (11 meters) - "morality and man's struggle against evil".

The balustrade around the fountain, forming a circle, is shaped to symbolize a royal tiara or crown. Originally it was formed in concrete on site to serve as a seating edge to the fountain. In 1970s it was altered with a surface treatment of white stucco to prohibit the very purpose. To this day, it remains unchanged.



Centennial Square Fountain, Rod Clack architect-planner, Jack Wilkinson artist, Private collection

# SQUARE TODAY



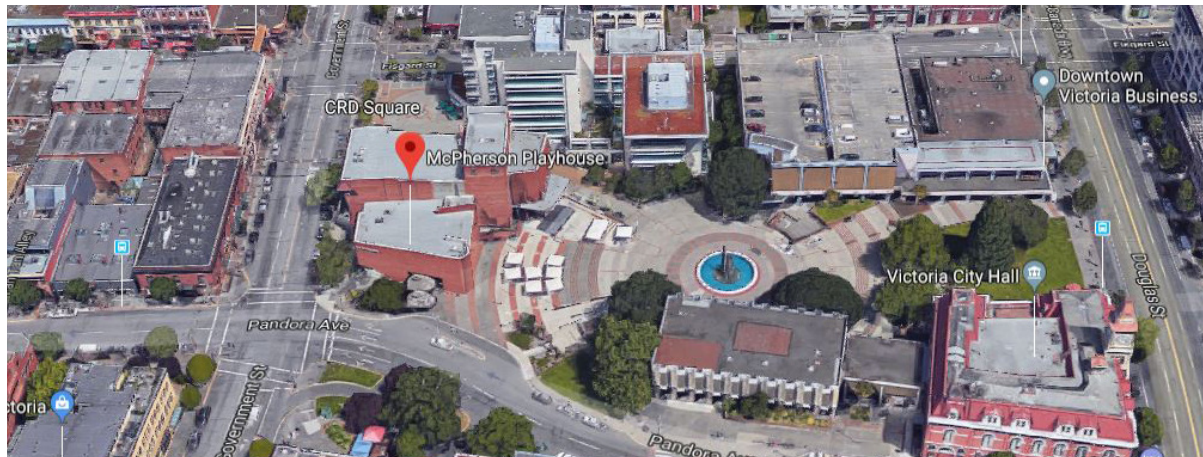
# Square Today

Centennial Square is the City's main civic, ceremonial and recreational plaza and serves as a venue for a number of different types of events and large public gatherings ranging from protests to honouring ceremonies, from demonstrations and displays of public art to theatre performances, and from music and cultural festivals to local markets.

One important challenge is to reveal the cultural richness and the modern heritage of the buildings to the citizens, and to bring life to the square. As Centennial Square is right by City Hall and on route to number of destinations downtown, it already has quite high number of people pass by. Also, theatre-goers tend to arrive just before their show and depart quickly after, spending little time on or around the square. The same rule applies to all civic workers in City Hall or office building and CRD building.

Two main goals are set in order to make the square more attractive:

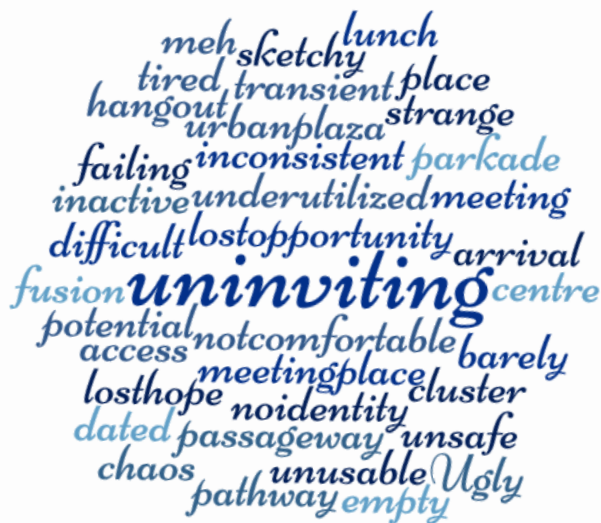
- Improve the physical quality of the square and
- Activate the square with programming and events



## ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

Public engagement for this process started with Visual Victoria. At the time, a number of open houses and other engagement opportunities were held with different community groups as well as internally among city staff. As a result, the Public Realm Plan had initial strategies related to Centennial Square mentioned in this document.

For the Centennial Square Action Plan, a number of engagement events were held with different community groups, as well as internally among city staff. Key focus of the engagement to date included looking into issues and opportunities as well as searching for some initial big ideas.



A word cloud of feedback terms in various colors and orientations. The most prominent word is 'uninviting' in large blue letters. Other words include 'meh', 'sketchy', 'lunch', 'tired', 'transient', 'place', 'hangout', 'urban plaza', 'strange', 'failing', 'inconsistent', 'parkade', 'inactive', 'underutilized', 'meeting', 'difficult', 'lost opportunity', 'arrival', 'fusion', 'potential', 'access', 'not comfortable', 'barely', 'lost hope', 'meeting place', 'cluster', 'dated', 'passageway', 'unsafe', 'chaos', 'pathway', 'unusable', 'ugly', and 'empty'.

## Square Tomorrow: Key Ideas for Improvement

**Better amenity offerings:** Retail or café space in or along the edges would give people more reasons to come and stay longer in the Square. There are also the opportunities to help concerns related to safety (people in the café/restaurant later in the day would equal more eyes/people in the area).

**Improving the cohesion of the space:** landscaping, accessibility and wayfinding infrastructure can make the space feel more unified and inviting for people.

**Fountain improvements:** the fountain is intended to be the heart of square but cannot be fully enjoyed in its current state. A water feature that is calming and enjoyable to all would improve the space.

**Improve flexibility and openness.** Remove or refit the fountain to allow access and playfulness. Flat water area for events and better set up.

**Provide more passive programming.** Allow for more interesting seating options, more intimate activities, and small retail

**Rethink undercroft.** Convert the undercroft area into a more interactive space and to build more use.

**Cleanliness.** Do better maintenance. Other than power washing, clean the facades of the buildings to make it more appealing.

**Improve connection to Douglas.** Open up visually and allow better pedestrian flow and recognition from Douglas Street. Invite people in.

**Revitalize edges.** Create a gateway and welcoming feature from Broad Street such as programming the undercroft and introducing retail, revitalize the space for exhibitions, improve lighting, and overall refresh.

**Encourage people to stay.** Provide more social seating and activities that will invite people to stay and watch or play.

**Provide more green space.** Improve the lawn area or provide more green space. Allow for an oasis feeling and peacefulness.



A word cloud of key ideas in various colors and orientations. The most prominent words are 'meeting place', 'comfortable', 'fun', 'active', 'centre', 'modern', 'oasis', 'lourish', 'inviting', 'Hub', 'energizing', 'relaxing', 'gathering place', and 'hangout spot'.

# Opportunities

## CONNECTIVITY:

Enhance entryways and connections through the plaza to connect seamlessly with the surrounding street and open space network.

## UNDERCROFT:

Animate the undercroft to support daily and special activities and make it feel safer and more welcoming.

## WATER:

Embrace water as a formal design element, focal point and play feature for the Square.

## GRADE CHANGE:

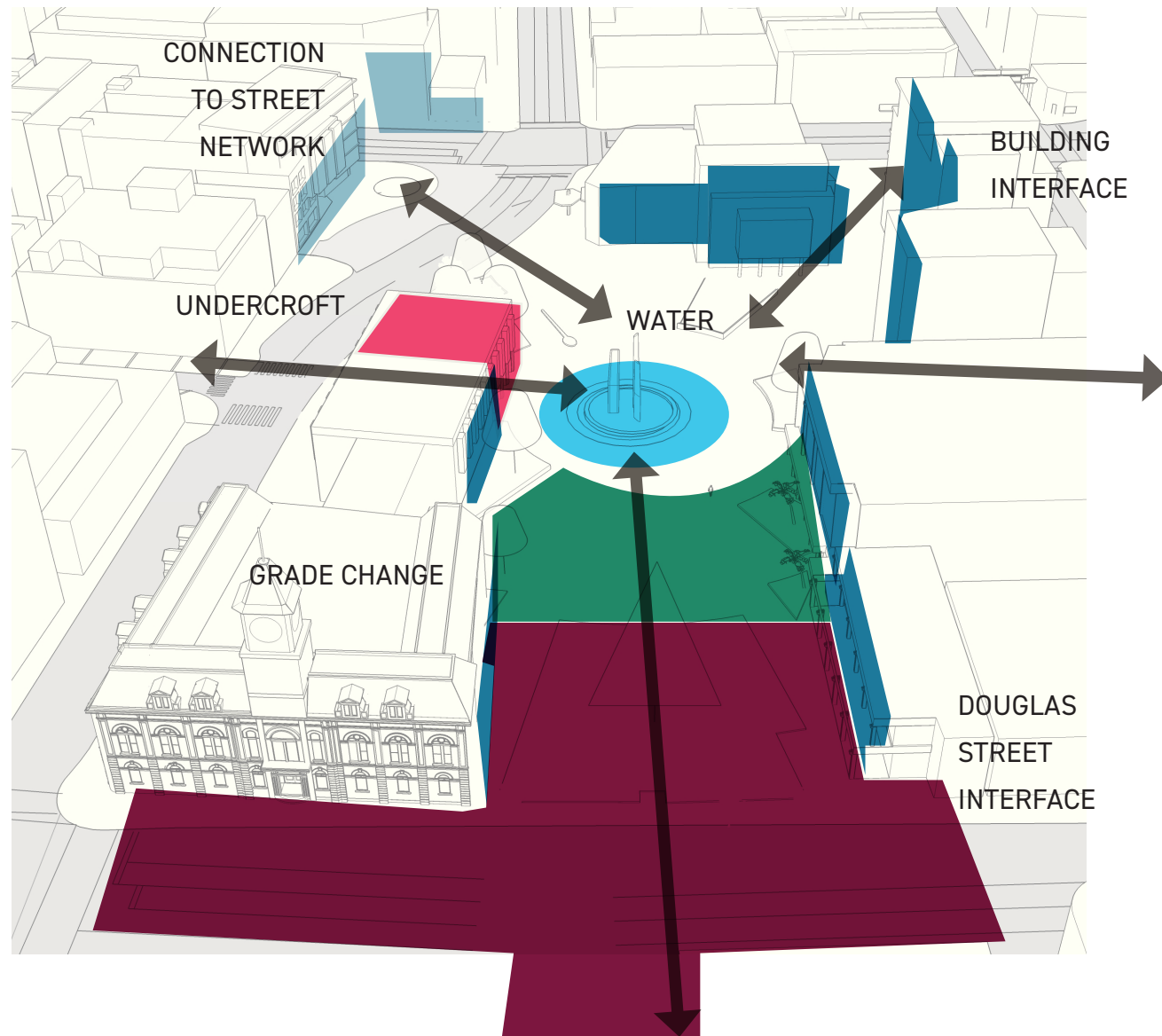
Incorporate places to sit and relax and green space within universally accessible terraced landscape.

## BUILDING INTERFACE:

Create more active, attractive and animated building edges.

## DOUGLAS STREET INTERFACE:

Open up the square to embrace Douglas Street.



# STRATEGIES

## BUILDING INTERFACE

GOAL: Create more active, attractive and animated building edges

### STRATEGIES:

- Physically and visually **improve transparency** of the units under the parkade arcade to the north. Consider change of use from institutional to commercial/ education, working studios or retail
- Provide **temporary activators** such as food trucks and coffee/ retail kiosks in the undercroft area and main plaza space
- Consider activation of the CRD building with outdoor **patio space** across the stage area
- Improve safety in covered areas by providing more lighting and exposure
- Where possible, **limit the area of vertical walls and separation** to allow better transparency to the edges
- **Improve aesthetic quality** of the facades (with paint or otherwise)
- Utilize potential of the frequent number of entrances at the north parkade side - i.e by **change of tenancy**
- **Improve** visibility and **wayfinding** for parking entry
- Explore opportunity to **repurpose the top floor of the parkade**
- Consider **re-adapting stage area** for more passive use

## DOUGLAS STREET INTERFACE

GOAL: Open up the square to embrace Douglas Street

### STRATEGIES:

- Pruning or **removal of the sequoia tree** should be considered to allow better use of the lawn area
- Create **visual connection** and better permeability to Douglas Street
- **Create a sense of arrival** at all endpoints at different scales
- **Improve sitelines** and visual connection from the surrounding streets to allow better permeability and visibility to and from the square
- Consider consolidating bus stop at Douglas into a **transportation hub** and waiting transit zone
- Provide **clear wayfinding** and maps for the bus stop locations and bus information
- Provide **weather protection** at the waiting area at Douglas
- Consider elements such a canopy structures, **art installation** that can double its function as windbreakers to help mitigate the wind tunnel effect in the square
- **Preserve** and maintain the **cherry tree** in the lawn area

## CONNECTIVITY

GOAL: Enhance entryways and connections through the plaza to connect seamlessly with the surrounding street and open space network.

### STRATEGIES:

- **Limit vertical edges** and grade change where possible
- Provide **better wayfinding** for accessibility in areas where it is not clear
- Consider **relocation of some elements** in the square to improve pedestrian circulation and visibility
- **Open up visual connections to Douglas Street** to allow better pedestrian movement into the square
- Improve visibility and wayfinding for parking entry
- Explore opportunities to repurpose top floor of the parkade
- **Add bike parking** to better serve the bike users
- Improve bike parking at south side by the city hall entrance
- Provide wayfinding for grade change to allow better navigation in the square with bike
- Improve sitelines and visual connection from the surrounding streets to allow better permeability and **visibility to and from the square**
- **Protect sitelines** into the water and the bridge along Pandora street
- Create **visual connections** and better permeability to Douglas Street
- Better connect through the narrow alleyway between the parkade building and CRD building to Fiskard St.
- Improve connection under the undercroft
- Create a **sense of arrival at all points** at different scale



## GRADE CHANGE

GOAL: Incorporate places to sit and relax as well as green space within universally accessible terraced landscape

### STRATEGIES:

- **Maintain** and regularly monitor **larger trees** including Garry Oaks
- Consider **more flexible seating** that allows for more users sharing the area at the same time
- Consider **utilizing vertical edges** as continuous seating zones
- Consider **converting edges to seating edges** when possible
- **Eliminate vertical edge of the lawn** area to better invite for seating use of all users
- Consider **removal of the sequoia tree** to expand seating option on the soft lawn area
- Consider use of **upper plaza lawn area for smaller events**
- **Consider sun** and shade distribution when placing seating zones or elements
- Consider adding **more canopy trees in pavement** area to increase urban forest canopy and shade
- Consider **upgrading single globe lights** bases to the decorative bases to elevate quality
- Review and assess the removal of large canopy trees in front of the city hall entrance due to its poor planting condition and heaving of the sidewalk
- Consider **removal of the sequoia tree** due to its damage of form and potential future growth restraints
- Remove and replace heaved paving and trees when



## UNDERCROFT

GOAL: Animate the undercroft to support daily and special activities and make it feel safer and more welcoming

### STRATEGIES:

- **Improve quality and safety** of undercroft and arcade to make them more usable for pedestrian movement and **more inviting** at all times
- **Clean** and refinish concrete panels
- Improve undercroft space safety and esthetics for more frequent use of as an **events space**
- Provide **better lighting**
- Consider partial enclosure and **retail**



## WATER

GOAL: Embrace water as a formal design element, focal point and play feature for the square

### STRATEGIES:

- Retain the water feature as a formal design element and focal point
- Consider **reinterpreting the concrete tiara** to bring back the seating quality initially intended
- Consider more **open water feature** that would allow for water play
- Improve paving quality - improve concrete panels quality, replace cracked ones and refinish others short term with a prospect of replacing the area with **higher quality materials**, such as stone, in the future



# PROGRAMMING

Special events programming allows for temporary activation of the space and generates interest. Different activities attract different users and allows the space to transform and adapt.

Currently, the square has over 130 days of programmed events and festivals. It is the off-time that remains a challenge.



## Programmed Events

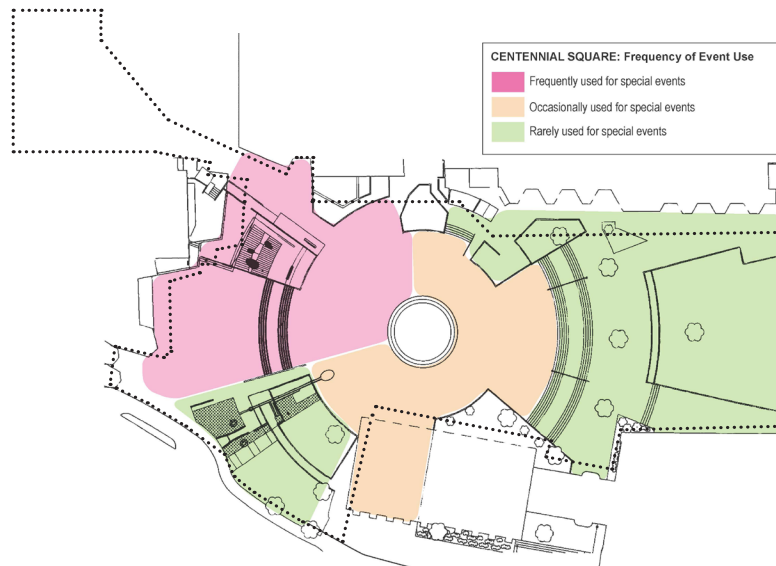
Events and festivals require a large and flexible open space in order to function well and allow organizers and participants to enjoy the show. Currently, the frequency of use shows that unobstructed open areas in front of the theatre and adjacent portion of the area around the fountain are the most popular. It has proved to be challenging to set up a good functional layout for a number of events around the fountain due to its very central location and round geometry.

- » Increase flexible open are in the central area of the plaza
- » Consider use of upper plaza lawn area for smaller events
- » Improve undercroft space safety and esthetics for more frequent use of as an events space

## Passive Programming

Centennial Square is a lively and inviting space only during a portion of the year. This is due to its seasonal programming and activities.

- » Consider improving weather protection to allow for the ability to support year round events during the wet and cold seasons
- » Consider partnerships with businesses and organizations to allow for partnered programing during colder months
- » Consider citizen-driven activation such as busking and local performances
- » consider activation of the square with non-event like programming such as games and play
- » Consider better distribution of seating



Frequency of use diagram

# BEST PRACTICES



# 10 PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL SQUARES

Source: Project for Public Spaces website.

**The ten principles are based on the study done by “Project for Public Spaces” who analyzed hundreds of squares - the good and the bad - and observed since then. What stands out the most is that design is only a small fraction of what goes into making a great square. To really succeed, a square must take into account a host of factors that extend beyond its physical dimensions.**

## 1. IMAGE AND IDENTITY

Historically, squares were the center of communities, and they traditionally helped shape the identity of entire cities. Sometimes a fountain was used to give the square a strong image. Think of the majestic Trevi Fountain in Rome or the Swann Fountain in Philadelphia’s Logan Circle. The image of many squares were closely tied to the great civic buildings located nearby, such as cathedrals, city halls, or libraries. Today, creating a square that becomes the most significant place in a city - one that gives identity to whole communities - is a huge challenge but meeting this challenge is absolutely necessary if great civic squares are to return.



A popular square in Copenhagen, Denmark.

## 2. ATTRACTIONS AND DESTINATIONS

Any great square has a variety of smaller “places” within it to appeal to various people. These can include outdoor cafés, fountains, sculpture, or a bandshell for performances. These attractions don’t need to be big to make the square a success. In fact, some of the best civic squares have numerous small attractions such as a vendor cart or playground that, when put together, it draws people throughout the day. We often use the idea of “The Power of Ten” to set goals for destinations within a square. Creating ten good places, each with ten things to do, offers a full program for a successful square.



Ghirardelli Square, San Francisco.

### 3. AMENITIES

A square should feature amenities that make it comfortable for people to use. A bench or waste receptacle in just the right location can make a big difference in how people choose to use a place. Lighting can strengthen a square's identity while highlighting specific activities, entrances, or pathways. Public art can be a great magnet for children of all ages to come together. Whether temporary or permanent, a good amenity will help establish a convivial setting for social interaction.



Circular benches provide a comfortable place to sit in Rockefeller Center, New York City.

### 4. FLEXIBLE DESIGN

The use of a square changes during the course of the day, week, and year. To respond to these natural fluctuations, flexibility needs to be built in. Instead of a permanent stage, for example, a retractable or temporary stage could be used. Likewise, it is important to have on-site storage for movable chairs, tables, umbrellas, and games so they can be used at a moment's notice.



Tennis on the square, Copenhagen.

### 5. SEASONAL STRATEGY

A successful square can't flourish with just one design or management strategy. Great squares such as Bryant Park, the plazas of Rockefeller Center, and Detroit's new Campus Martius change with the seasons. Skating rinks, outdoor cafés, markets, horticulture displays, art and sculpture help adapt our use of the space from one season to the next.



The holiday market in New York's Union Square.

## 6. ACCESS

To be successful, a square needs to be easy to get to. The best squares are always easily accessible by foot: surrounding streets are narrow; crosswalks are well marked; lights are timed for pedestrians, not vehicles; traffic moves slowly; and transit stops are located nearby. A square surrounded by lanes of fast-moving traffic will be cut off from pedestrians and deprived of its most essential element: people.



A short pedestrian crossing at Plaza Santa Ana in Madrid, Spain.

## 7. THE INNER SQUARE & THE OUTER SQUARE

Visionary park planner Frederick Law Olmsted's idea of the "inner park" and the "outer park" is just as relevant today as it was over 100 years ago. The streets and sidewalks around a square greatly affect its accessibility and use, as do the buildings that surround it. Imagine a square fronted on each side by 15-foot blank walls - that is the worst-case scenario for the outer square. Then imagine that same square situated next to a public library: the library doors open right onto the square; people sit outside and read on the steps; maybe the children's reading room has an outdoor space right on the square, or even a bookstore and cafe. An active, welcoming outer square is essential to the well-being of the inner square.



Ground floor retail rings the edge of this square in Verona, Italy.

## 8. REACHING OUT LIKE AN OCTOPUS

Just as important as the edge of a square is the way that streets, sidewalks and ground floors of adjacent buildings lead into it. Like the tentacles of an octopus extending into the surrounding neighborhood, the influence of a good square (such as Union Square in New York) starts at least a block away. Vehicles slow down, walking becomes more enjoyable, and pedestrian traffic increases. Elements within the square are visible from a distance, and the ground floor activity of buildings entices pedestrians to move toward the square.



A great square reaches out into the surrounding neighborhood, like Piazza Maggiore in Bologna, Italy.

## 9. THE CENTRAL ROLE OF MANAGEMENT

The best places are ones that people return to time and time again. The only way to achieve this is through a management plan that understands and promotes ways of keeping the square safe and lively. For example, a good manager understands existing and potential users and gears events to both types of people. Good managers become so familiar with the patterns of how people use the park that waste receptacles get emptied at just the right time and refreshment stands are open when people most want them. Good managers create a feeling of comfort and safety in a square, fixing and maintaining it so that people feel assured that someone is in charge.



Attentive maintenance is an essential part of good management in St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

## 10. DIVERSE FUNDING SOURCES

A well-managed square is generally beyond the scope of the average city parks or public works department, which is why partnerships have been established to operate most of the best squares in the United States. These partnerships seek to supplement what the city can provide with funding from diverse sources, including - but not limited to - rent from cafés, markets or other small commercial uses on the site; taxes on adjacent properties; film shoots; and benefit fundraisers.



Sponsorships can help fund events like Festa Italiana in Portland's Pioneer Courthouse Square.

# SQUARE TOMORROW



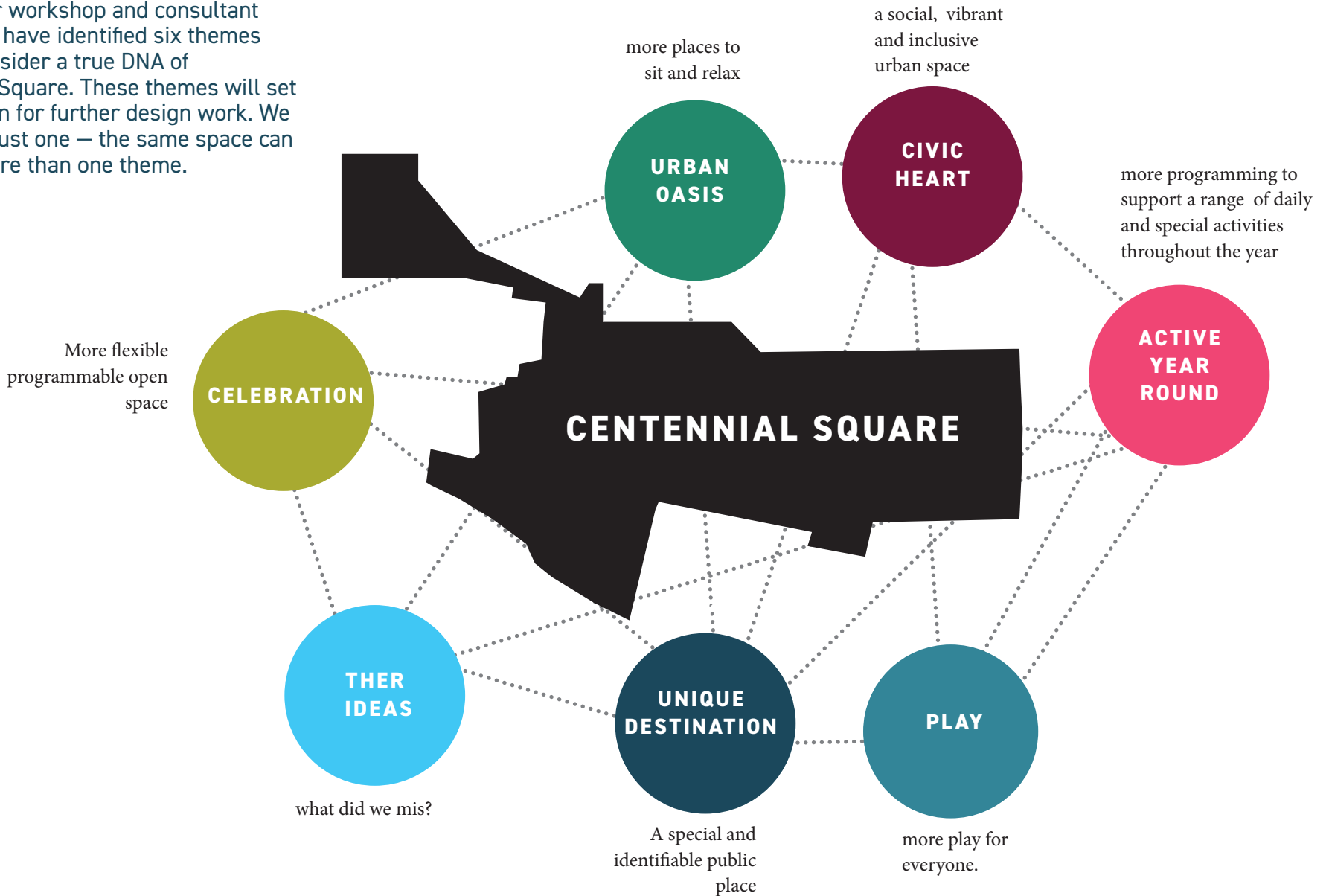
## **Vision**

CENTENNIAL SQUARE IS VICTORIA'S CIVIC PLAZA. IT IS A UNIQUE DESTINATION OFFERING YEAR ROUND ACTIVITIES TO CELEBRATE COMMUNITY WITH DIFFERENT EVENTS AND FESTIVALS. IT ALSO IS AN URBAN OASIS OFFERING PLACES TO RELAX AND PLAY AT DIFFERENT TIMES OF THE DAY, WEEK AND YEAR.

**It is our square.**

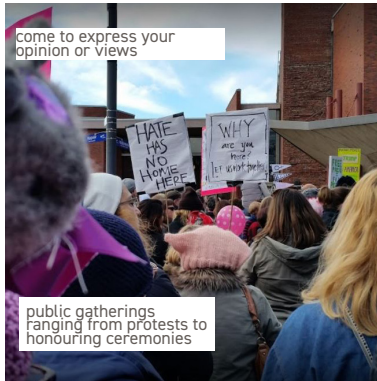
# Big ideas

Through further site analysis, a stakeholder workshop and consultant studies, we have identified six themes that we consider a true DNA of Centennial Square. These themes will set the direction for further design work. We won't pick just one — the same space can express more than one theme.



# CIVIC HEART

**Goal:** a vibrant, inclusive open space  
**Experience:** A community civic plaza and gathering place.



come to express your opinion or views

public gatherings ranging from protests to honouring ceremonies



come to hang out

our outdoor living room



come to socialize

community block party  
community gatherings



come for coffee and ice cream

grab a bite, small vendors, retail

# CELEBRATION

**Goal:** a more flexible programmable open space  
**Experience:** An open and flexible space for events and festival celebrations.



come for music and fun

come for music and large-scale staged performances



come for local events and food

farmers, food truck, night, crafts markets  
unique events



come for festivals

food trucks  
cultural festivals



come meet your neighbour

community meetings  
dancing

# URBAN OASIS

**Goal:** more places to sit and relax  
**Experience:** a place of serenity and refreshment within the downtown urban environment. A social space to sit, meet and relax.



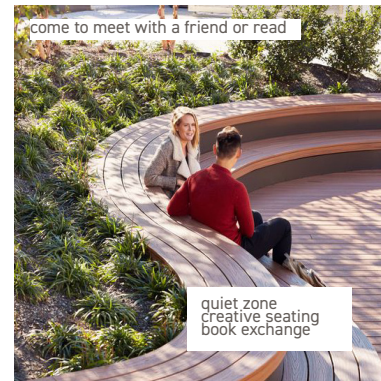
come to relax

lawn area for seating  
picnic areas  
programmed recreation



come for lunch

shady tree spots  
grab a bite  
eat and relax



come to meet with a friend or read

quiet zone  
creative seating  
book exchange



come to hang out

creative lounging,  
urban seating

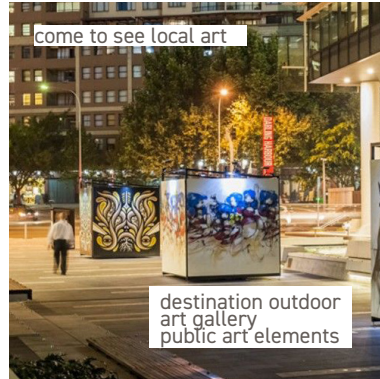
# DESTINATION

**Goal:** a special and identifiable public place  
**Experience:** a memorable and meaningful place in the heart of the city. With unique public art, rarely-seen installations, themed events people visit from all over.



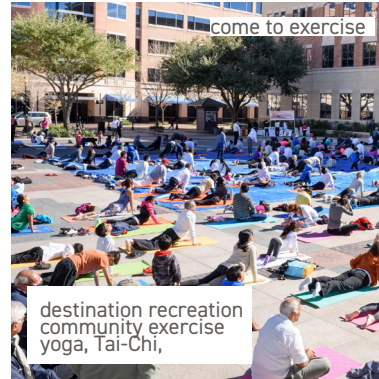
come to take a photo

iconic structure



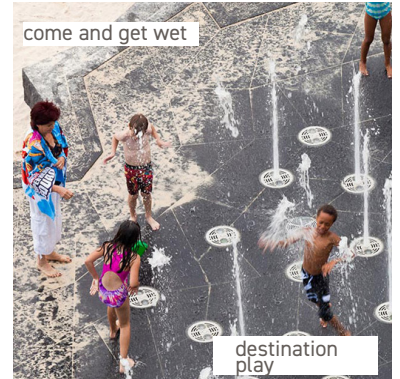
come to see local art

destination outdoor art gallery public art elements



come to exercise

destination recreation community exercise yoga, Tai-Chi,



come and get wet

destination play

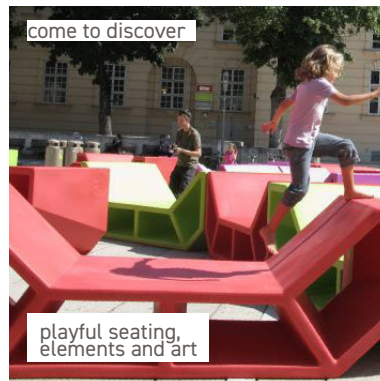
# URBAN PLAY

**Goal:** more play for everyone.  
**Experience:** a place where all generations meet throughout the day to play and develop connections. Where everyone comes together just because it's fun.



come to win

games, lots of games



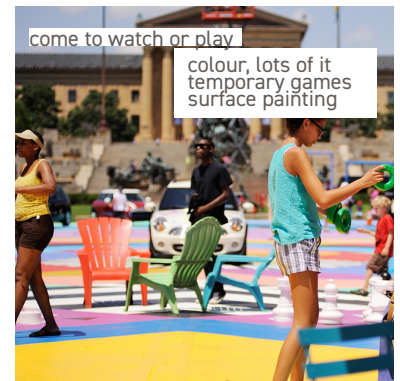
come to discover

playful seating, elements and art



come to play

destination playground



come to watch or play

colour, lots of it temporary games surface painting

# ACTIVE YEAR ROUND

**Goal:** more programming to support a range of daily activities throughout the year  
**Experience:** whether winter or summer activity, local businesses and the square support one another.



come when it's cold and rainy

winter markets light displays digital art



come bring the pop corn

movie night light shows seasonal light display



come to perform

busking small informal performances place for local culture



come play while you wait

creative bus stop zone



CENTENNIAL SQUARE  
**ACTION PLAN**

Inventory and Analysis  
JUNE 2018



# Contents

## INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND ..... 6  
PROJECT PURPOSE ..... 6  
PROCESS ..... 6  
THIS DOCUMENT ..... 6

## INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

POLICY BACKGROUND ..... 10  
CONTEXT ..... 14  
SQUARE HISTORY ..... 16  
SQUARE TODAY ..... 21  
SITE INVENTORY..... 22  
FACILITIES ASSESSMENT ..... 25  
THE ELEMENTS ..... 26  
QUALITY CRITERIA..... 28  
URBAN CONNECTIVITY ..... 28  
BUILDING FACADES ACTIVATION AND ENTRIES ..... 34  
FURNISHINGS, LANDSCAPE AND PROGRAM ..... 35  
SPECIAL EVENTS ..... 46  
CASE STUDIES..... 49

## APPENDIX



# INTRODUCTION



## BACKGROUND

Centennial Square is the City's main civic, ceremonial and recreational plaza and serves as a venue for a number of different types of events and large public gatherings ranging from protests to honouring ceremonies, from demonstrations and displays of public art to theatre performances, and from music and cultural festivals to local markets. As part of the Visual Victoria process, Centennial Square was identified as a priority public space for a significant improvement and refresh, specifically to activate and energize the square, provide support for major events and festivals and better connect to the adjacent street network/open space context.

## PROJECT PURPOSE

In response to this direction, staff have initiated a planning process to develop an Action Plan for Centennial Square to:

- Address immediate operations and maintenance issues,
- Confirm programming and 'quick win' opportunities to activate the plaza,
- Provide conceptual design for a plaza 'refresh' and phased implementation over the short to medium term, and
- Develop a long term strategic framework for future more comprehensive redevelopment of the parkade structure and office building

The plan will focus on the "phased transformation" - a series of step by step improvements that will guide budgeting and implementation over the short, medium and long term.

## PROJECT PROCESS

The process will build on design directions for Centennial Square identified in the Downtown Public Realm Plan and based on the significant public and stakeholder feedback that resulted from that process. The plan will be developed by a cross-departmental working group led by the Community Planning Urban Design team, and with the opportunity to bring in consultant expertise for specific components of the project as needed. Community and stakeholder engagement will occur at key stages throughout the process and will be designed and delivered by the City Project Team.

## THIS DOCUMENT

This document presents a detailed inventory and assessment of existing physical conditions and assets, user experience, programs and activities as well as operational costs.

This information in conjunction with the engagement process will help to identify opportunities and challenges related to the existing plaza design, layout and programming and form the basis for guiding operations and maintenance and identifying design interventions and programming over the short, medium and long term.

# PROCESS DIAGRAM

## Phase 1

### ANALYSIS, VISION & GOALS

- Inventory and analysis of existing conditions
- Opportunities and constraints
- Assessment of key areas and level of improvements
- Confirmation of vision and strategies established by the Downtown Public Realm Plan
- Alignment with other city initiatives
- Goals and objectives to form base for the design rational

## Phase 2

### DESIGN CONCEPTS

- Initial concept options for short and medium term (to be consulted with stakeholders)
- Recommendation to develop strategic framework for parkade redevelopment
- Programming strategy for short and long term

## Phase 3

### ACTIONS & PRIORITIES

- Step-by-step action plan with priorities
- Draft implementation strategy and phasing
- Programming strategy
- Deliverable: matrix of action | description | timeframe | priority | costs value for each of the components / action of the plan | design drawings and plans

# IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

## 1

### MAINTENANCE

- Strategy design / identification 2018
- Implementation 2018+
- Operations and maintenance
- Elements in need of repair

## 2

### PROGRAMMING

- Programmed events + daily plaza use
- Strategy design 2018
- Implementation 2018+
- Short term tactical interventions such as food trucks/ lighting/ paint to activate the square
- Long term programming strategy

## 3

### PLAZA REFRESH CONCEPT

- Design framework 2018
- Concept design 2019
- Implementation 2020+ (capital budget)

## 4

### STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- Design of strategic framework 2018
- Redevelopment masterplan and detailed design 2020+
- Implementation result of masterplan)

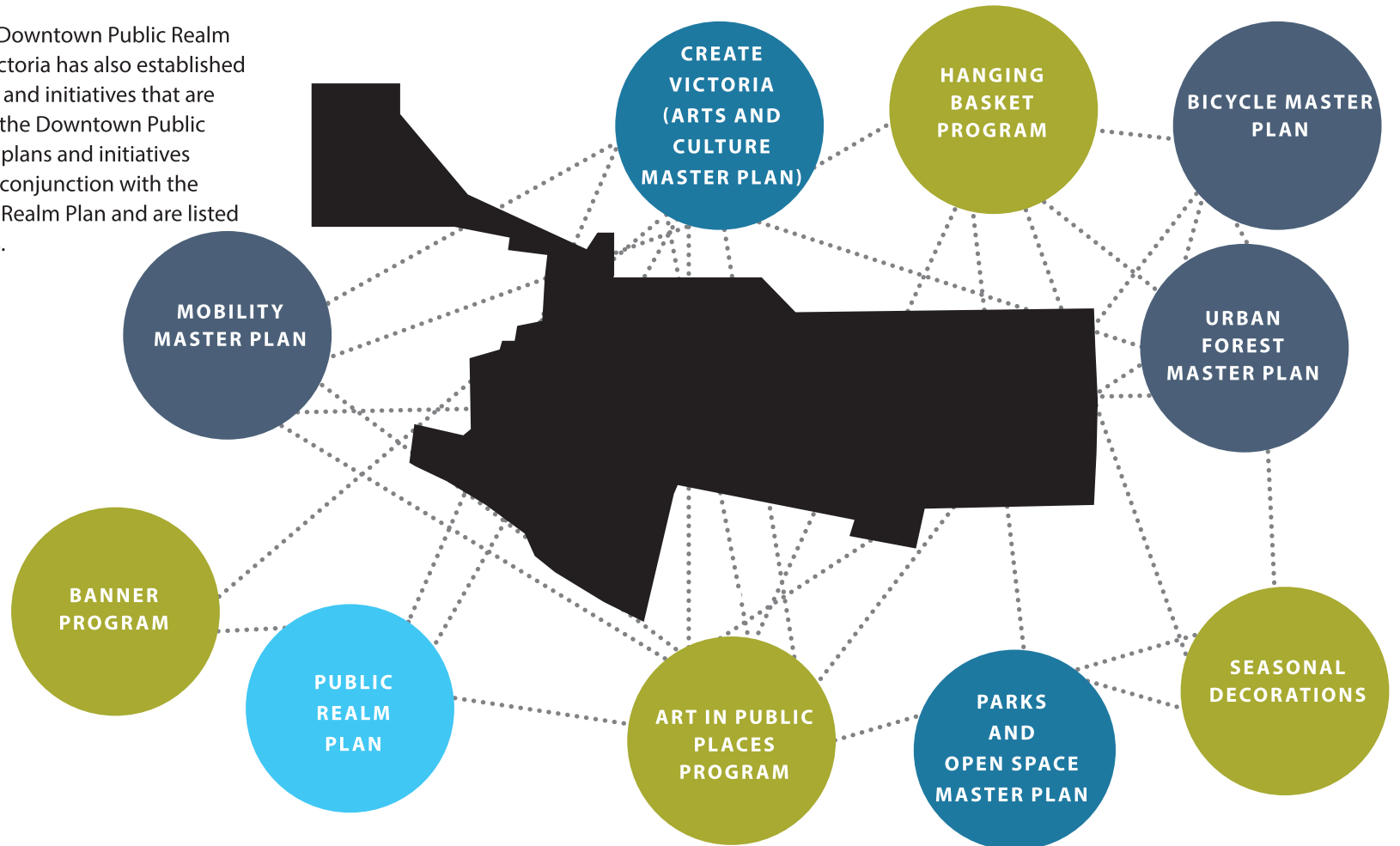


# INVENTORY & ANALYSIS



# POLICY BACKGROUND

In addition to the Downtown Public Realm Plan, the City of Victoria has also established a number of plans and initiatives that are referenced within the Downtown Public Realm Plan. These plans and initiatives should be used in conjunction with the Downtown Public Realm Plan and are listed in following pages.



## RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

### Visual Victoria Public Realm Plan

The Victoria Wayfinding Strategy has been created by the City of Victoria to facilitate transportation around the city, primarily by pedestrians, cyclists and transit users. This document is intended to be used city-wide as a reference for anyone working on wayfinding projects within the City of Victoria. The information provided includes an overview of the process and reasoning behind the wayfinding system along with descriptions of the individual components of the system and how they are to be used in a variety of contexts. Recommendations and suggested work-flow processes are provided to inform the implementation of the system. Sign construction drawings are provided to a level of detail that should allow any sign fabricator to reproduce wayfinding elements that fit seamlessly into the system.

### Create Victoria Arts and Culture

- The Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan is based on the results of an eight-month design, assessment and extensive public engagement process
- Create Victoria recognizes a shift in Victoria's evolving community cultural identity – one that is both “punk and polite”
- Victoria values artists, cultural practitioners, arts organizations, creative producers, and recognizes their role as central to innovation
- Indigenous voices and stories are reflected in planning and the Calls to Action of Truth and Reconciliation are upheld in cultural development
- Optimizes the role of the Arts, Culture and Events Office to meet the demands of, and align with community need
- Invests in cultural capital: our infrastructure and knowledge assets
- Addresses the need for both private sector and individual philanthropic support to champion artistic excellence and support our growing creative scene.
- Positions Victoria as a cultural destination by building on its music, festivals and events scene
- Aims to be future-ready by building its Creative Economy
- Commits to social inclusion, diversity multiculturalism

### The Urban Forest Master Plan

The Urban Forest Master Plan is a city-wide policy that outlines the vision, goals and strategies for the management of Victoria's urban forest until 2060. The overall vision is for a healthy, diverse and abundant urban forest which is well integrated throughout all parts of the city, and which supports biodiversity and watershed health while also enhancing the character of neighbourhoods and creating places for activity, enjoyment and relaxation. The goals and actions established in the plan provide a focus for the City's urban forest program planning initiatives such as the Downtown Public Realm and Streetscape Standards.

### Bicycle Master Plan

Victoria is implementing a network of separated bike paths as part of the implementation of the Bicycle Network Master Plan, which, when complete, will provide over twenty-four kilometres of All Ages and Abilities bicycle infrastructure. When complete, the new active transportation network will encourage people of all skill levels to ride, skate and roller blade throughout the Capital City.

## Parks and Open Space Mater Plan

The Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan is the culmination of a year-long effort to create a strategic level roadmap to help guide the planning and management of, and investment into the City's parks system for the next 25 years. The Plan is grounded in an analysis of the existing parks and open spaces inventory, community context and input from the public and stakeholders. The Plan takes a city-wide approach to the parks and open spaces system and defines an overall vision and four goals:

- GOAL 1: PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT Parks and open spaces protect and improve native ecosystems and help the city adapt to climate change.
- GOAL 2: FOSTER ENGAGING EXPERIENCES FOR EVERYONE Parks and open spaces provide a range of different experiences, encourage active living, and are multi-functional, inclusive, and accessible.
- GOAL 3: CELEBRATE VICTORIA Special places and amenities in parks and open spaces animate the city and support events for both residents and visitors.
- GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS Community members, stewards, and partners help enhance all parks and open spaces in the city.

## RELEVANT PROGRAMS

### Art in Public Places Program

Art in Public Places is a vital ingredient in the cultural fabric and streetscape of a creative city. The City of Victoria intends to promote the creation and inclusion of works of art in its public buildings and public spaces through the Art in Public Places Policy. The City of Victoria will provide the cultural leadership to guide the evolution of a distinct and vibrant artistic character for civic public places and ensure a visual legacy. Art in Public Places is a vital ingredient in the cultural fabric and streetscape of a creative city. The Art in Public Places Policy commits \$150,000 annually to public art which is placed in a reserve fund, ten percent of which is dedicated towards the maintenance of existing art works. As well, exceptional, significant civic construction projects will include public art for up to one percent of the project's construction costs. For these projects, funds can be used to incorporate public art into a project's design, to create a stand-alone piece on site or for public art at another location. The City of Victoria's Art in Public Places Policy reflects current best practices and creates a broad range of opportunities for citizen participation. The Art in Public Places Policy is revised every five years and will be revised as a part of Create Victoria, a five-year Arts and Culture Master Plan.

### Hanging Baskets Program

The City's hanging basket program was started in 1937 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Victoria. The annual hanging flower baskets are now a trademark recognized around the world, and an important character defining element of Old Town in the summer. The basket program currently consists of over 1,300 hanging baskets, placed on lamp standards throughout downtown between June and September each year. The hanging basket program is operated by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Facilities Management.

## Seasonal Decoration Program

Over the years, the City has coordinated the installation of seasonal decorations for Christmas, Halloween, Chinese New Year and other seasonal celebrations. Design of the program has generally been through joint discussion (and partnership in Centennial Square) with the DVBA, which has also undertaken an annual Christmas decoration program. A review was undertaken in 2014 to determine improvements to the program. Capital and operational budgets have been in place to support the purchase of new decorations as well as installation and removal. Development of an updated seasonal decorations program defining objectives, criteria, responsibilities, partnerships and funding is recommended as an action of this plan. To align with Visual Victoria and the Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan, the City of Victoria will develop of a formal process for addressing seasonal banners and decorations to ensure that they are physically attractive, liveable and “user friendly”.

## Banner Program

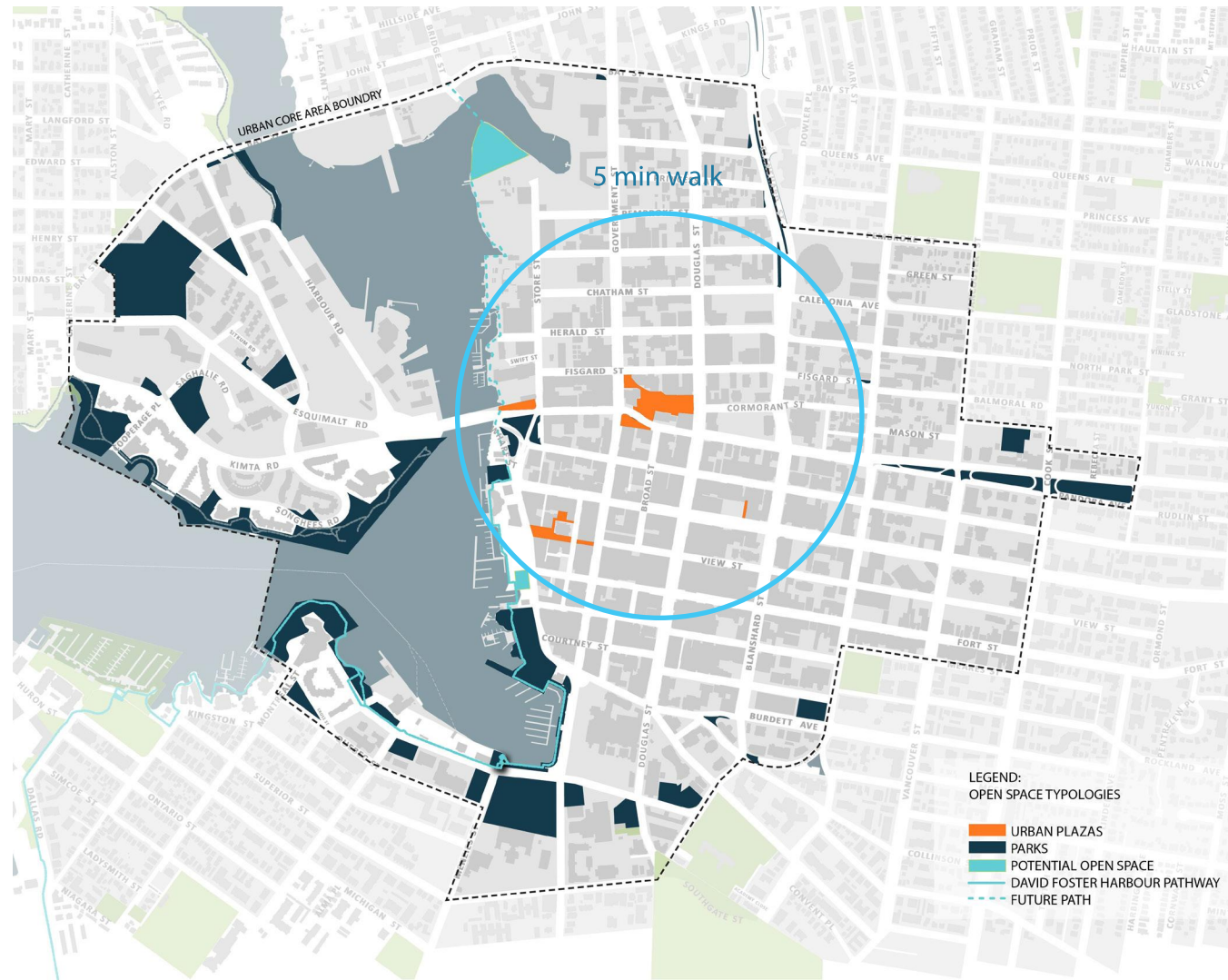
Over the years, the City has coordinated a banner program in partnership with the DVBA. Art competitions open to the public have been held every two years since the program was initiated approximately twenty years ago. Banners were also introduced for the Christmas program in order to bring daytime colour during daylight shopping hours when lights were not yet on. Neighbourhoods were offered small banner programs to animate their neighbourhood/village centres in 2007. City banner programs have focused on art, vibrancy and, to some extent, location identity (e.g. Chinatown). Organizations interested in promotion of events, commemorations and non-for-profit fundraising have been directed to the cross-street banner administered by Public Works on Douglas at Pembroke. Commercial advertising is not permitted at any banners sites. Periodically, there is a request for the City to install banners for a national celebration or commemoration (e.g. Veterans, Cultural Capitals) where operational costs may or may not be covered. Development of an updated Banner Program defining objectives, criteria, responsibilities, partnerships and funding is recommended as an action of this plan to ensure that it is physically attractive, liveable and “user friendly”.

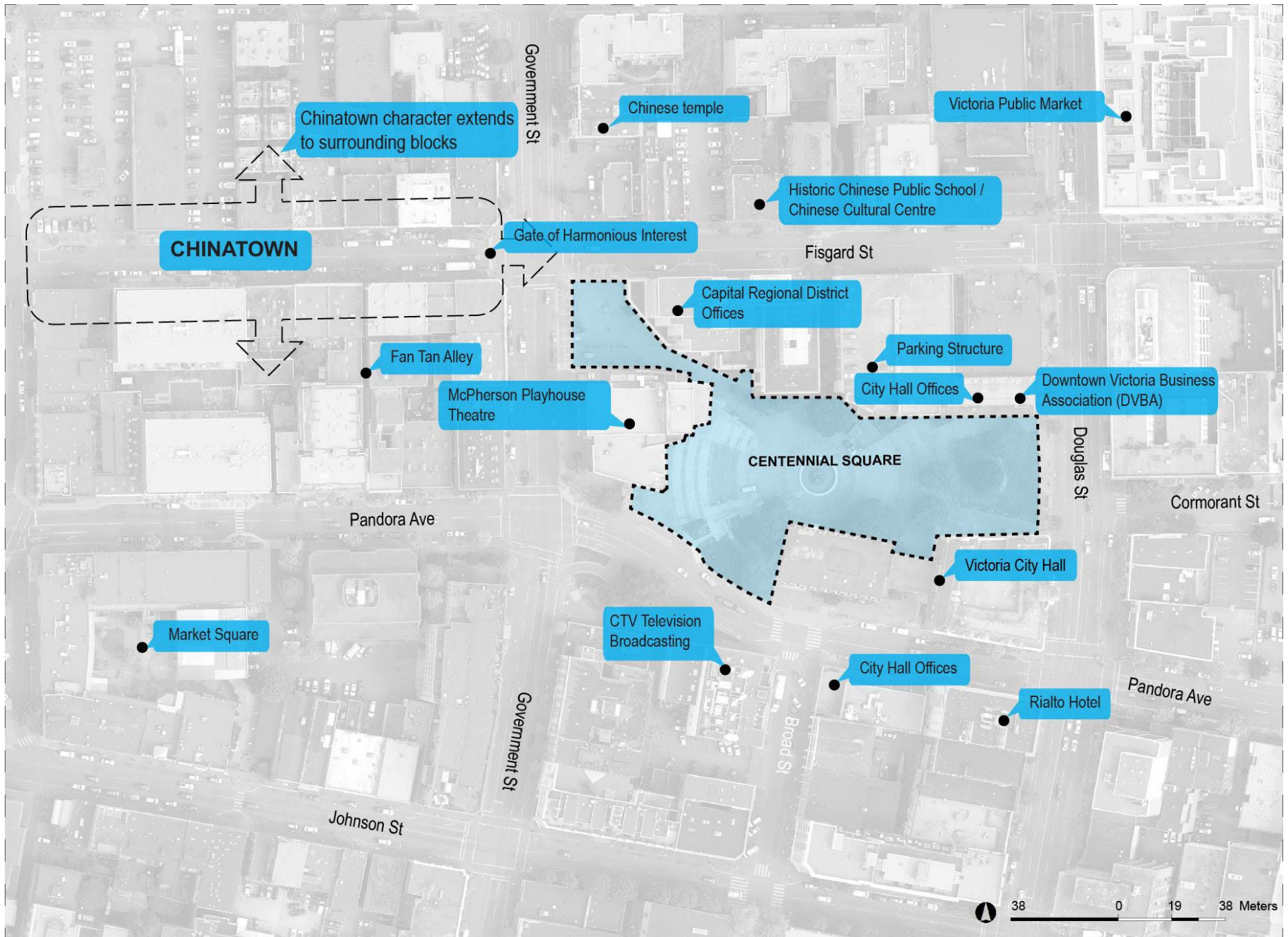
# Context

Centennial Square is located in the city centre between Government Street to the west, Douglas Street to the east, Fisgard Street to the north and Pandora Street to the south. It is within a walking distance to many key city destinations.

The square is surrounded by many important institutions including City Hall, CRD building and it is in close proximity to Douglas Street which serves as a main transportation oriented corridor for the Downtown area with many bus routes and high pedestrian traffic.

It also sits across the street from Chinatown - a key tourist destination. In fact the CRD plaza section of the Square is considered to be in Chinatown.





**CHINATOWN**

**CENTENNIAL SQUARE**

**Market Square**

Chinatown character extends to surrounding blocks

Gate of Harmonious Interest

Chinese temple

Victoria Public Market

Historic Chinese Public School / Chinese Cultural Centre

Fan Tan Alley

Capital Regional District Offices

Parking Structure

McPherson Playhouse Theatre

City Hall Offices

Downtown Victoria Business Association (DVBA)

Pandora Ave

Douglas St

Cormorant St

Victoria City Hall

CTV Television Broadcasting

City Hall Offices

Rialto Hotel

Pandora Ave

Government St

Broad St

Johnson St

38 0 19 38 Meters

# Square History

Centennial Square project was first unveiled to the public in 1962 - Victoria's 100th year as a city - but construction work didn't begin until 1964. It was constructed as part of a major initiative to preserve, restore and revive downtown Victoria, and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Victoria.

A major renovation to the south west corner of the plaza was completed in 2009. Centennial Square is surrounded by both modern and historic structures, including historic City Hall constructed in 1891, and features a fountain incorporating a balustrade rim and mosaic concrete totems, which serve as a focal point to the plaza.



Street realignments and the demolition of an old public market allowed for the grouping of the McPherson Playhouse (Hodgson), the renovated police station (Wagg), a parkade and specialty shops (Di Castri), the Senior Citizens' Centre (Campbell) and a sunken "Knot Garden." All were arranged around a public space to form Centennial Square. The focal point is a fountain, its balustraded rim reminiscent of pieces from Oscar Niemeyer's Brazilia scheme (1958), and the mosaic concrete totems by local artist J. C. S. Wilkinson. The fountain was a centennial gift to the City from neighbouring municipalities. The scheme successfully re-established City Hall as a downtown focal point with the square as its major public recreational amenity. This was the first part of the downtown revitalization program, which called for a general paintup modelled on the "Norwich Plan" and pedestrian malls linking City Hall to a redeveloped and restored Bastion Square.



Extensive public debate preceded the decision by the city to commemorate its centenary by building a public square. Previous schemes had entertained moving City Hall into a commercial development and selling the old building as a building site. The combination of restoration (City Hall, McPherson Theatre and police station) with new construction (Council Chamber wing for City Hall, restaurant and lobby for the theatre, senior centre, family law courts and parkade & shopping arcade) was ambitious. The old city market and some buildings on Fisgard Street would be demolished. Cormorant Street would be incorporated into the square and Pandora realigned. Planning and design was coordinated by city architect Roderick Clack. The floorscape of the square was designed by landscape architects Muirhead Justice & Webb,



# EVOLUTION OF THE SQUARE

**AUGUST 2,  
1962**

August 2, 1962- Centennial Square project presented to the public for the first time

**DECEMBER 1ST,  
1964**

Centennial Fountain turned on and officially gifted to the City at a ceremony involving Reeves and Councillors of Saanich, Oak Bay and Esquimalt

**FEBRUARY  
1966**

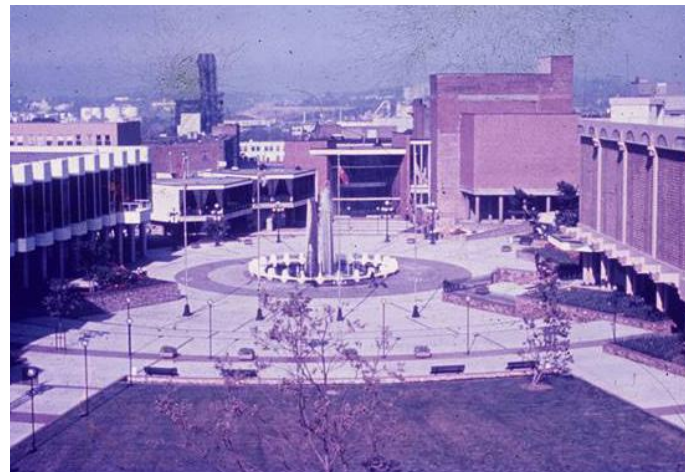
All Phases of Centennial Square complete

**MID  
1970'S**

Concrete tiara covered in roughcast to discourage loitering



Original Centennial Square Model



Centennial Square at its completion in 1966



Tiara covers in Stucco

**LATE  
1970'S**

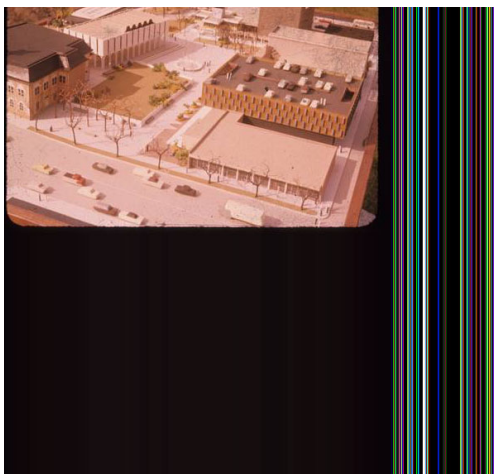
Sequoia Tree  
planted in the lawn  
area adjacent to  
Douglas Street

**1996**

Relocation of  
police station from  
Centennial Square to  
Caledonia Street

**2006-  
2008**

CRD Headquarters Completed,  
visual connections to Gate  
of Harmonious Interest and  
Chinese Public School created,  
Seniors Centre demolished



Sequoia Tree, 1985



New CRD building, 2006



Spirit Square, 2008

## Significance of Centennial Square to Urban Planning in Victoria

Centennial Square is significant as an innovative model of urban planning in which historic buildings were proactively conserved as crucial components of a larger urban renewal scheme. Like other North American cities in the 1960's, Victoria's downtown was facing increased competition from suburban shopping centres and its historic building stock was in physical decline. Mayor Richard Biggerstaff Wilson, influenced by the City's first urban planner Rod Clack and San Francisco architecture firm Wurster, Bernardi and Emmons, championed Centennial Square as a means of revitalizing the downtown and enabling the continued use of City Hall, which was once again being considered for demolition. Centennial Square became the centrepiece of the 1965 "Overall Plan for Victoria", which promoted the same conciliatory approach to old and new architecture that has maintained Victoria's reputation for heritage and culture over time.



## Important Design Elements

- The location of Centennial Square next to old City Hall between Fisgard Street and Pandora Avenue
- The radial design of the square, in which the design elements are organized around a central water feature
- The three monoliths at the centre of the water feature, each of which includes an Italian glass mosaic designed by artist Jack C.S. Wilkinson depicting the themes of youth, procreation and the struggle of good vs. evil
- The symbolic orientation of the monoliths towards each of the three municipalities who contributed to the construction of the fountain
- The use of complementary materials in the square that visually connect the conserved heritage buildings of the square to one another, and to the larger context of the Old Town neighbourhood
- The visual connections between the square and Douglas Street, Broad Street, Government Street and the Gate of Harmonious Interest in Chinatown
- The framing of the square with significant historic architecture, including Old City Hall and the McPherson Theatre (formerly the Pantages playhouse)
- The use of bricks salvaged from the demolished 1891 public market building on Cormorant Street, re-used as cladding for the retaining walls of planted areas
- The use of a water feature as the central focal point for the square
- The mature native trees, including Garry Oaks, which were planted during the original construction of the square

## The Fountain

The fountain was a birthday gift to Victoria from its neighbouring municipalities, Saanich, Oak Bay and Esquimalt. Some of the bricks set into surrounding paving are salvaged Victoria Public Market bricks (which were brought from England by sailing ships in the 1880s).

Three concrete monoliths rise from the fountain's pool. Each has a glistening Italian-glass mosaic on one side depicting a fundamental phase of life. In each case the mosaic faces towards one of those neighbouring municipalities: Esquimalt - "creation and protection", Oak Bay - "youth and growth", Saanich, third and tallest (11 meters) - "morality and man's struggle against evil".

The balustrade around the fountain, forming a circle, is shaped to symbolize a royal tiara or crown. Originally it was formed in concrete on site to serve as a seating edge to the fountain. In 1970s it was altered with a surface treatment of white stucco to prohibit the very purpose. To this day, it remains unchanged.



Centennial Square Fountain, Rod Clack architect-planner, Jack Wilkinson artist, Private Collection

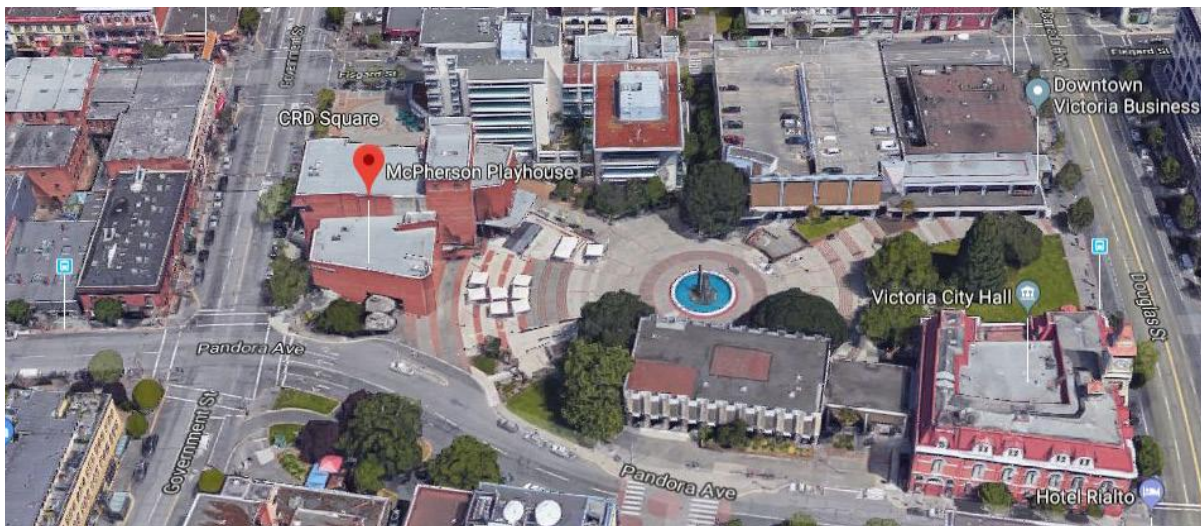
# Square Today

Centennial Square is the City's main civic, ceremonial and recreational plaza and serves as a venue for a number of different types of events and large public gatherings ranging from protests to honouring ceremonies, from demonstrations and displays of public art to theatre performances, and from music and cultural festivals to local markets.

One important challenge is to reveal the cultural richness and the modern heritage of the buildings to the citizens, and to bring life to the square. As Centennial Square is right by City Hall and on route to number of destinations downtown, it already has quite high number of people pass by. Also, theatre-goers tend to arrive just before their show and depart quickly after, spending little time on or around the square. The same rule applies to all civic workers in City Hall or office building and CRD building.

Two main goals are set in order to make the square more attractive:

- Improve the physical quality of the square and
- Activate the square with programming and events



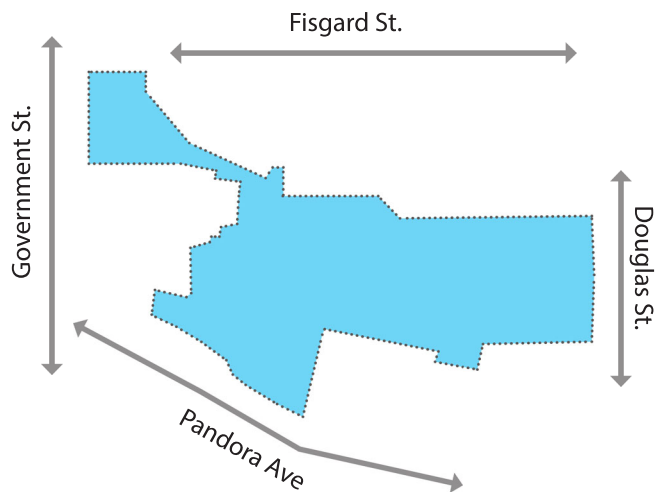
# Site Inventory

The site is contained within a large city block between Fisgard Street to the north, Pandora Avenue to the south, Douglas Street to the East and Government Street to the north.

**Area:** It is an area of around 7500m<sup>2</sup>

**Edges:**

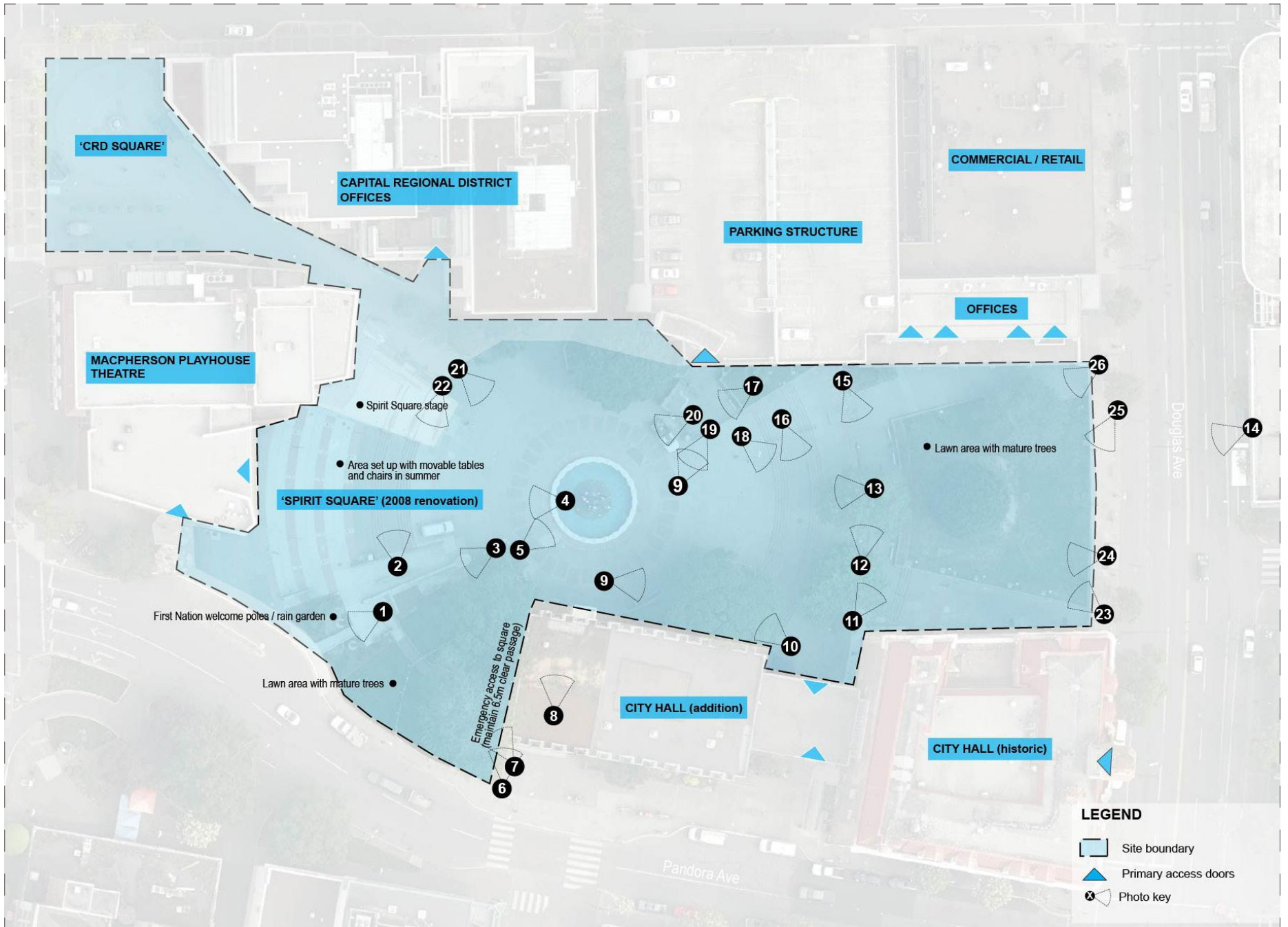
- 3 storey building of City Hall with it's 2 storey extension and Under-croft to the South



- 2-3 storey McPherson Playhouse to the West
- 6 storey CRD building to the North
- 4 storey parkade building + 1 story office buildings to the North East

## Inventory of elements:

- 27 Benches
- 1 Centennial Fountain
- 1 Fish Fountain
- 1 Globe Fountain
- 1 Sun Yat Sen memorial
- 400SF Washrooms
- 866 SF Promontory
- ~1,000SF Stage
- 69 SFGuard Booth
- 17 Bike Rack (spaces)
- 1 Little Library
- 2 Totem Poles
- 1 Ladle
- 1 Spirit Square
- 1 Rain Garden
- 5 Whales (play)
- 21 Light poles
- 8 Sound System(speakers)
- 5 Umbrellas
- 10 Bistro table + chairs
- 2 Fire Hydrants
- 9 Water meter box
- 15 Garbage cans
- 11 Handrails
- 2 Electrical Kiosk
- 2 Flag Poles
- 1 Signage Pylon
- 6 Plaques
- ~200 SF Mayor's Terrace
- 1 SS Gravity main
- 4 SD Gravity main
- 34 SD Catch basin
- Electrical
- 2 Fibre Optic
- 1 Water Main
- 1 Water main fitting
- 1 Water main abandoned
- 13 Water Service valve
- 1 Fountain Pump house
- 1 Fortis Distribution
- 3 Hydro Conduit
- 3 Hydro Vault
- 3 BC Hydro manhole
- 1 Shaw Conduit
- 1 Telus Cable
- 34 Trees
- Planters
- ~14,000SF Grass areas
- 2 BCH Easements
- 1 CoV Easement(around crd)





# FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

## FOUNTAIN

A number of reports and assessments had been done to assess the current state of the fountain as well as establish recommendations for repair and maintenance work. Here are key recent reports that inform the conclusion of this analysis:

- 2011 - Centennial Square Fountain Finishes by GOAL Engineering Ltd.
- 2016 City of Victoria Fountains - Electrical Survey by Emery Electric Ltd.
- 2016 Centennial Square Fountain- Lighting Survey by Emery Electric Ltd.
- 2016 Centennial Fountain Condition Assessment by Stantec
- 2016 Mechanical Assessment by AMEGroup Engineers

The fountain is showing signs of age, requiring a set of technical recommendations in order to substantially extend the life of the fountain. A comprehensive condition assessment report was completed by Goal Engineering in November 2011, outlining possible repair solutions with an estimate of cost. In 2016, an additional report was produced by Stantec that built on the Goal assessment, providing an updated summary of conditions requiring remediation, complete with an updated estimate of cost (in appendix).

The fountain's mechanical system was partially rebuilt in 2017:

- replaced the sand filters, valves, pump and associated piping

Still left to be done is:

- Replace the DMX lighting system as it is compromised and non-functional
- Repair/replace broken and missing tiles on the monoliths
- Repair the concrete ribs on the back of the monoliths.
- Deep clean of monoliths
- Mortar repairs in rock work.
- Paint fountain bed
- Paint perimeter bench

## Conclusion

In summary, the fountain is functional but in need of significant capital repairs to bring it back to its original state.

# The elements

## WIND AND RAIN

### Analysis

facts: Source: <https://en.climate-data.org/location/631/>

The climate in Victoria is warm and temperate. There is more rainfall in the winter than in the summer in Victoria. This climate is considered to be **Csb** according to the Köppen-Geiger climate classification. The average temperature in Victoria is 9.8 °C. Precipitation here averages 718 mm. The north facade has the most shade at City Hall and the city hall extension receives the most sun.

### Rain:

- There is 148 days with precipitation a year in Victoria. The driest month is July, with 17 mm of rain. With an average of 121 mm, the most precipitation falls in December.

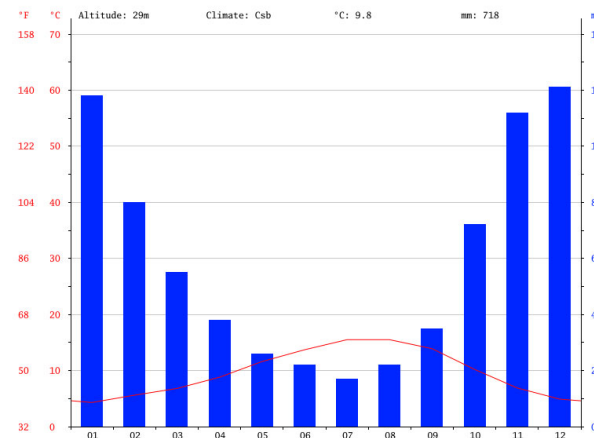
### Temperatures:

- July is the warmest month of the year. The temperature in July averages 15.5 °C. January has the lowest average temperature of the year. It is 4.3 °C.

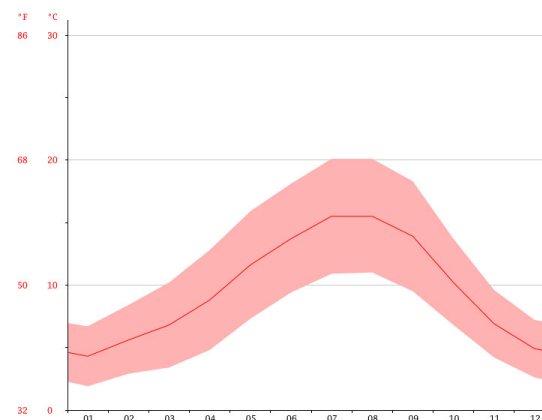
### Wind:

Centennial Square is a wind tunnel. Wind tunnels get created as a result of long roads parallel to the wind direction.

- An average of 3 days a year with strong wind blows at least 52 kph (32.3 mph), Victoria, British Columbia
- An average wind of 9.1km/h



Annual precipitation graph



Annual temperature graph

## Conclusion

Numerous studies show that people's choices of seating, stopping, and even movement in the street and public plazas is largely driven by its exposure. Sunny, bright spaces are more inviting, they feel safer.

### Recommendations:

- » Distribution of sun and shade should be carefully considered when doing physical design of the Square, especially allocation of seating areas, movable furniture and permanent rest zones.
- » Shade structure and better weather protection should be given a careful consideration to counterpoint the natural conditions.
- » Consider elements such as canopy structures, art installation that can double its function as windbreakers to help mitigate wind tunnel effect in the square.

# SUN AND SHADE STUDIES

## Analysis

As part of this analysis, shade and sun studies were conducted to understand the locations with the most shade and sun. This work will contribute and better inform design decisions up for consideration.

Sun exposure of the Square varies dramatically by the season. It is a dark and shady space in the winter, as well as hot and sunny in the summer.

- » Most shady: north facade of the city hall and city hall extension
- » Most sunny: fountain area

## Conclusion

Currently, Centennial Square offers a variety of options with sun and shade. It has an even distribution of seating around the edges. Mature trees in the square, especially the Sequoia, has a large impact on how much shade the green areas are.

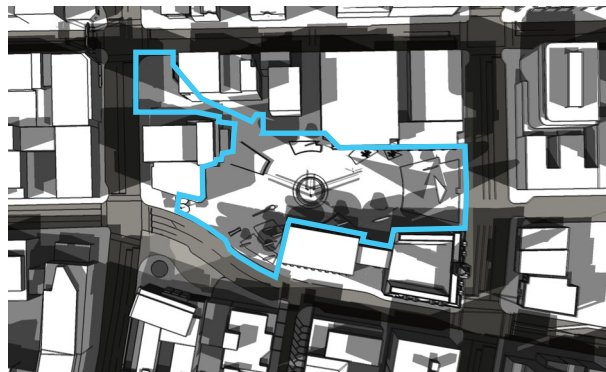
- » Distribution of seating should be reviewed to allow for maximizing rest opportunities in different seasons
- » Pruning or removal of Sequoia should be considered to allow better use of the lawn area



March 21, 8am, noon, 4pm



June 21, 8am, noon, 4pm

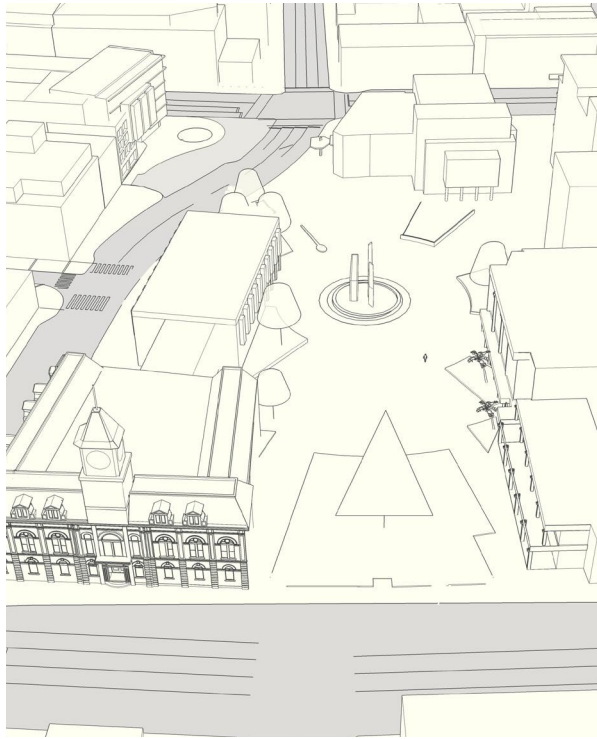


March 21, 8am, noon, 4pm



June 21, 8am, noon, 4pm

# Quality Criteria



The Quality Criteria help us understand and compare quality in the built environment and its ability to either contribute to the flourishing of public life or hinder it. The criteria can be correlated with the amount of public life diversity in a space.

These Criteria were developed by Jan Gehl in the 1960s and have been used by Gehl's practice for the past 15 years to collect qualitative data about a place. This survey complements quantitative data and can be correlated with the amount of public life diversity in a space.

An inviting place that encourages public life has elements of protection, comfort, and enjoyment. These categories are further detailed into 12 Quality Criteria at right.

## METRICS

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### 1 Quality of place, including:

#### Protection

- Protection against Vehicular Traffic
- Protection against Crime + Violence
- Protection against Unpleasant Sensory Experiences

#### Comfort

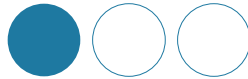
- Invitations for Walking
- Invitations for Standing and Staying
- Invitations for Sitting
- Invitations for Seeing
- Invitations for Hearing + Talking
- Invitations for Play + Recreation

#### Enjoyment

- Dimensioned at a Human Scale
- Positive Aspects of Climate
- Aesthetic Quality

## PROTECTION

Protection against Vehicular Traffic



Protection against Crime + Violence



Protection against Unpleasant Sensory Experiences



## COMFORT

Options for mobility



Invitations for Standing and Staying



Invitations for Sitting



Invitation for Visual Contact



Day/Evening/Night Activity



Invitations for Play + Recreation



Audio & Verbal Contact

Varying Seasonal Activity



## Analysis

There were number of surveys conducted during different times of the day by different age groups. This is a summary of the results of the Quality of Centennial Square today:

## Conclusion

Key findings of the survey:

- » Protection: most people felt protected
- » Comfort: majority felt in between with less options for play and recreation
- » Enjoyment: for most, the scale of the plaza felt comfortable but it is lacking esthetic quality and weather protection

## ENJOYMENT

Dimensioned at a Human Scale



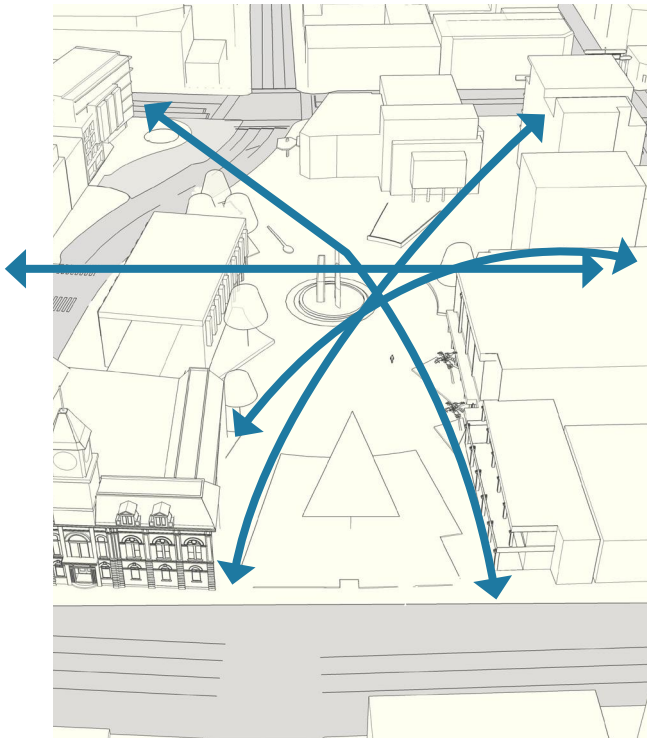
Positive Aspects of Climate



Aesthetic Quality



# Urban Connectivity



The ability of the street grid to foster mobility is an important precondition for places that attract public life from adjacent neighborhoods. The Urban Connectivity measure identifies how well the street grid facilitates neighbourhood connections.

## METRICS

---

- 1 Urban Connectivity value
- 2 Pedestrian circulation
- 3 Mobility network

# OPEN SPACE NETWORK

## Urban Fabric

Centennial Square lays in the very centre of the city urban core. It is located close to many key amenities and destinations of the historic Old Town and Chinatown. It is in close, walkable proximity to other city open spaces such as Janion Plaza, Reesen Park, Bastion Square and Ship Point that are all well connected to the water and the Inner Harbour. This is of great value.



Open Space network diagram

# STREET NETWORK

## Urban Connectivity

The granularity of the urban fabric is a key element in defining connectivity. Downtown Victoria is a small grain grid network of streets and alleyways that allows pedestrian circulation and easy travel in any direction. Centennial Square lays in an epicentre of the network itself being a main hub and place where many streets and pedestrian connections meet. There are number of very direct connections to all areas around the square through the street network:

- to the East across Douglas Street through Cormorant Street
- to the South through Broad Street
- to the West across Pandora Street
- to the West towards Fisgard Street through a pedestrian passageway



Urban connectivity diagram

## Conclusion

The Square is physically connected into the larger open space network and streets around it but lacks visual connection and invitation. It also lacks a sense of arrival.

- » Improve sitelines and visual connection from the surrounding streets to allow better permeability and visibility to and from the square
- » Protect sitelines into the water and the bridge along Pandora Avenue
- » Create visual connection and better permeability to Douglas Street
- » Better connect through the narrow alleyway between the parkade building and CRD building to Fisgard Street
- » Improve the connection under the under-croft
- » Create a sense of arrival at all entry points at different scale

# MOBILITY NETWORK

## Accessibility

Currently, the Square is accessible by all abilities and ages. However, that access is not visible or well marked. It can be accessed on foot, by bike and by car.

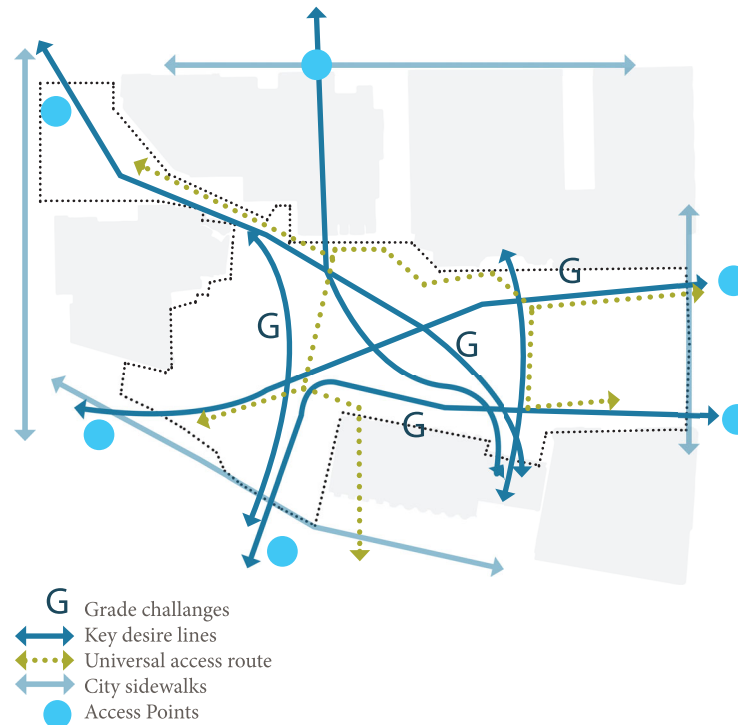
## On Foot

There are 6 points of pedestrian access into the square:

- North (Fisgard St.): Pedestrian passageway between the CRD building and Parkade
- North-East (Douglas St.): Sidewalk under the arcade of the parkade building and expansion of it beyond building edge
- Sidewalk along City Hall from the sidewalk under-croft from South (Broad St.)
- South-West (Pandora Ave & Government St.): Sidewalk along McPherson Theatre and Spirit Square
- North-West (Pandora Ave & Fisgard St.): CRD Square

The majority of the circulation and walking (desire lines) are diagonal across the square and around the fountain.

There is also movement north-south across from the parkade building to City Hall. There is very little movement internally within the Square. It serves primarily as a pass through function during non-event times.



Pedestrian Circulation Diagram

## Conclusion

The Square is well connected into the larger open space network as well as into the immediate streets that surround it. Internal pedestrian circulation is challenged by the grade change and elements in the plaza and can be improved.

- » Eliminate vertical edges and grade change where possible
- » Provide better wayfinding for accessibility in areas where it is not clear
- » Consider relocation of some elements in the square to improve pedestrian circulation and visibility
- » Improve quality and safety of under-croft and arcade to make them more usable for pedestrian movement and more inviting at all times
- » open up visual connections to Douglas Street to allow better pedestrian movement into the square

## By Bike

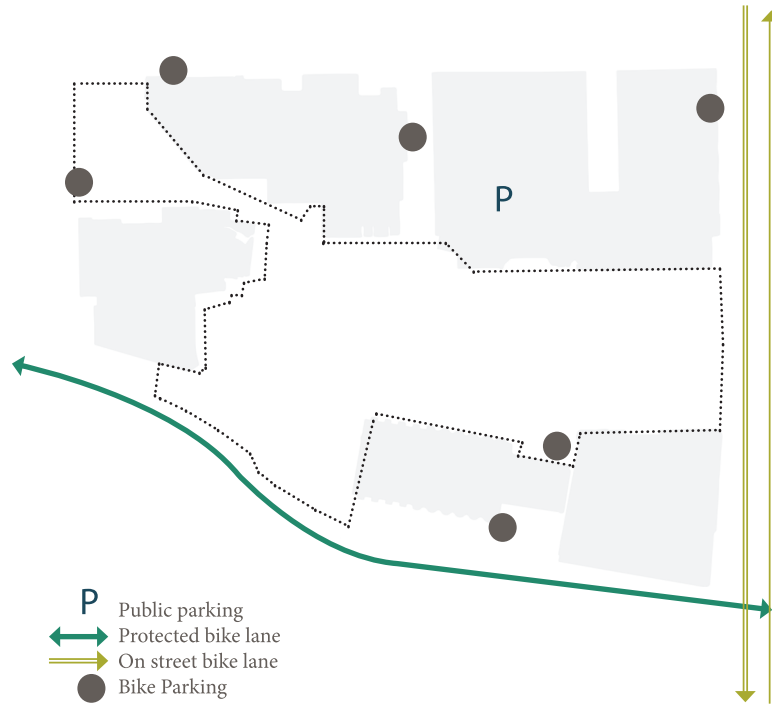
Centennial Square is in close proximity to two key bike lane facilities:

- Pandora Avenue separated bike lane to the south
- On-Street Douglas Street bike lanes to the East

There is a number of bike parking spread throughout the Square. Bike parking by City Hall entrances are difficult to access because of the grade change and the necessity to carry bikes up or use ramps. Some of the bike parking are hidden and not well used. The Square is not very visible from the bike lanes when passing by. As well, the Square is a dismount zone and biking is not allowed.

## By Car

There is a city parkade adjacent to the Square with car access from Fisguard St. and pedestrian entrances at Centennial Square and Fisguard St. The parkade is well used throughout the day.



## Conclusion

For cars:

The Square is easily accessible by car. There is car parking available adjacent to the Square.

- » Improve visibility and way-finding for parking entry
- » Explore opportunity to repurpose top floor of the parkade

For bikes:

The Square is easily accessible by bike from all directions but has limited bike parking.

- » Add / recolate bike parking to better serve the bike users
- » Improve bike parking at south side by the city hall entrance
- » Provide way-finding for grade change to allow better navigation in the Square

# BUS STOPS

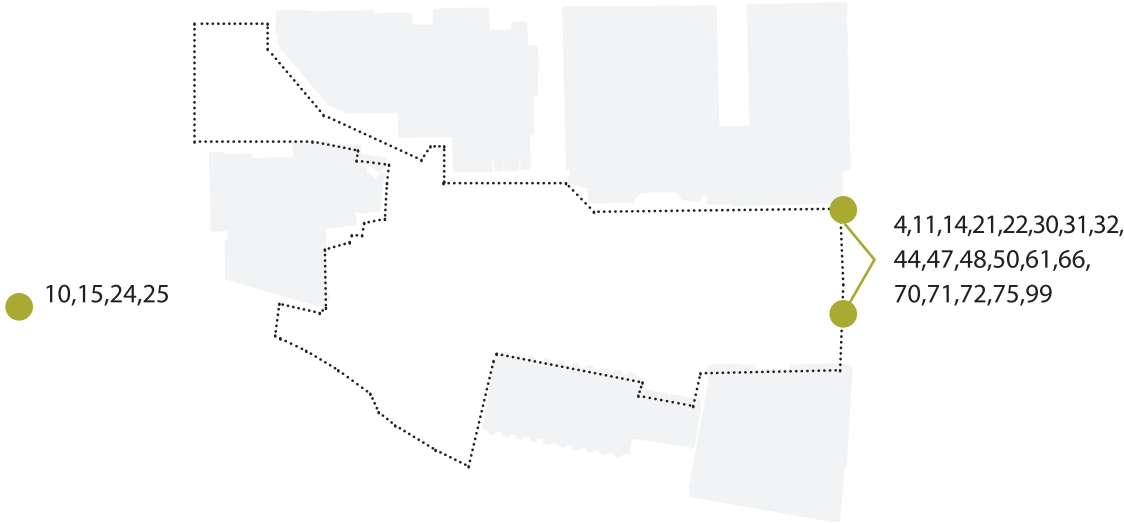
## Analysis

There are 3 bus stops in close proximity to the Square. The stops along Douglas Street are busier and tend to be more busy during morning and afternoon rush hours. Adjacent to the bus stops is a passive lawn area, currently not utilized for waiting. Pandora Avenue bus stop has a lower volume of buses and as a result less pedestrian traffic. It is also separated with a 2-way bike track from the main sidewalk.

## Conclusion

The Square is well serviced by public transit and it offers an opportunity to serve as a downtown transportation hub, especially the eastern portion along Douglas Street.

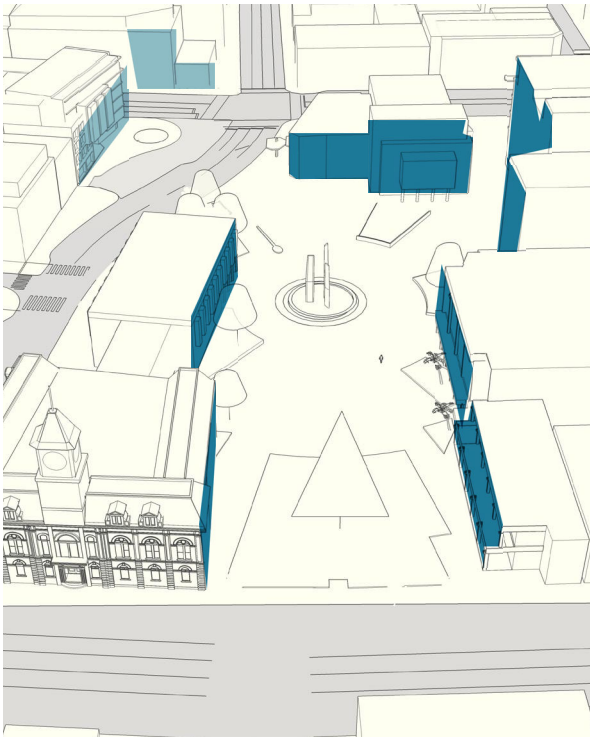
- » consider consolidating the bus stop at Douglas into a transportation hub and waiting transit zone
- » provide clear way-finding and maps for the bus stop locations and bus information
- » provide weather protection at the waiting area at Douglas



Access to transit. Bus stops and bus routes in close proximity to the square.

4,30,31,32,44,47,48,50, 61,66,70,71,72,75,99

# Building Facades Activation and Entries



The activation of a facade and the number of entrances is a strong predictor of when people will slow down and engage in activities other than simply walking. An active facade presents opportunities for people to meet and mix, and provides an attraction for different types of people. Facade quality may be an essential precondition to creating places that invite all types of people.

## METRICS

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- 1 The number of entries per linear foot
- 2 The Building Facade Activation rating

# EDGES

## Vibrant

- Small units with many doors
- High transparency
- No vacant or passive units
- Lots of character
- Good articulation, materials and details

## Active

- Relatively small units
- Some transparency
- Few passive units
- Some articulation and detail

## Dull

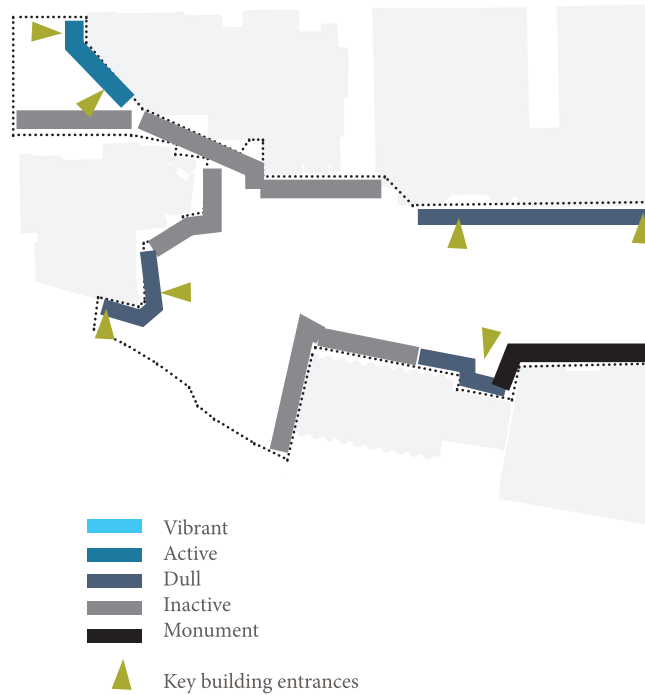
- Large units with few doors
- Low transparency
- Some passive units
- Few or no details

## Inactive

- Parking or vacant lot
- Large units with few doors
- Very little or no transparency
- Many passive units
- Uniform facades with no details or nothing to look at

## Inactive

- A historic or visually interesting facade that may not be very active or transparent, but is visually remarkable



Edges tylopogy diagram

## Facades

The Square is defined by its edges. Currently, most of the edges in Centennial Square are inactive or dull with a lack of transparency, access or clear definition. This creates an environment that is not inviting to stay but rather a pass through character without areas to “stick” to.



## Building Entries

There is total of 13 building entrances facing the square:

- 2 at the CRD building
- 9 at city parkade building/ offices
- 1 at City Hall
- 1 at McPherson Theatre

Although this is a high number, most of those entrances are dull or only partially activated. There is very little animation in adjacent uses.

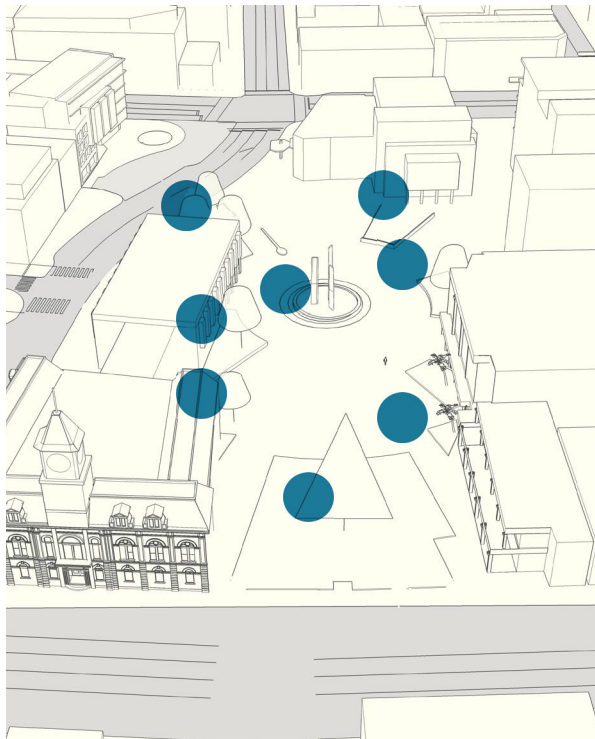


## Conclusion

The Square has a good number of entrances but it needs activation of its edges.

- » Physically and visually improve transparency of the units under the parkade arcade to the north. Consider change of use from institutional to commercial / education, working studios or retail
- » Provide temporary activators such as food trucks and coffee / retail kiosks in the under-croft area and main plaza space
- » Consider activation of the CRD building with outdoor patio space across the stage area
- » Improve safety in covered areas by providing more lighting and exposure
- » Where possible, limit the area of vertical walls and separation to allow better transparency to the edges
- » Improve quality of the facades (with paint or otherwise)
- » Utilize potential of the frequent number of entrances at the north parkade side - i.e by change of tenancy

# Furnishings, Landscape and Programming



There is a close correlation between public life and public space. If there is nowhere to sit, people will not sit. If there is no tree canopy to mediate temperature or create visual interest, walking will be less pleasant and therefore less prevalent. If there is no inclusive programming, some people will never find a reason to spend time in public space in the first place. It is important to understand the relationships between the built environment and the ability of a place to foster social mixing and sense of community.

## METRICS

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- 1 Seating
- 2 Lighting
- 3 Trees
- 4 Bus stops
- 5 Pavement Quality and Materials
- 6 Widths
- 7 Programming

# SEATING

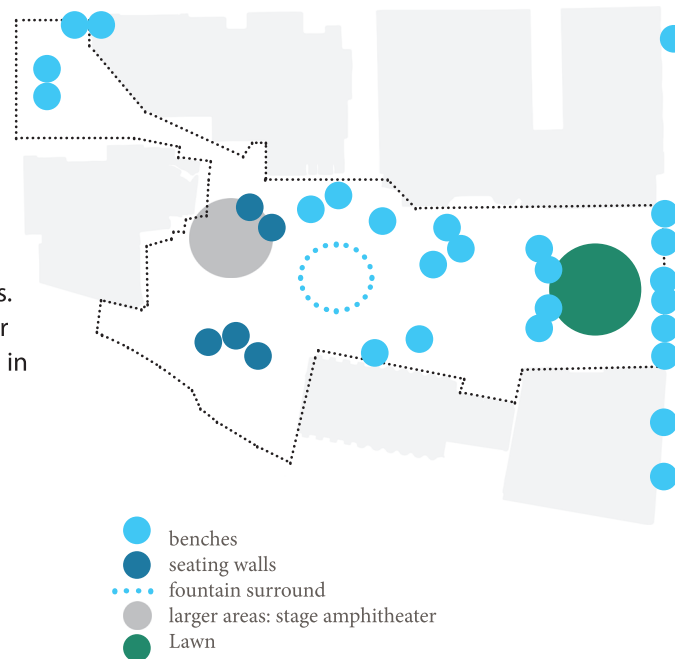
## Analysis

### Seating typologies:

- » Benches with backs
- » Seating walls with bench tops
- » Steps
- » Fountain surround
- » Free standing tables and chairs in front of Mcpearson theatre (summer time only)
- » Stage area by theatre (no formal seating)
- » Lawn area at east plaza (no formal seating)

The majority of the seating in the square is being used at different times of the day. Seating in sun exposed areas are better used in the winter months. The lawn area is being occasionally used in summer time. Seating around the fountain surround is used in summer months as well as during larger events.

The covered stage area is a popular loitering area.



Seating typologies diagram

## Conclusion

The Square has a good variety of seating options with somewhat even distribution of formal bench seating. A lot of times, there is not enough seating to allow for all Square visitors. With new development in the area, it will soon be in need to support a larger population of daily workers and visitors.

- » Consider more flexible seating that allows for more users sharing the area at the same time
- » Consider utilizing vertical edges as continuous seating zone and bench
- » Consider opening up elevated area to the north (by the ramp) for seating
- » Eliminate vertical edge of the lawn area to better invite for seating use of all users
- » Consider removal of Sequoia tree to expand seating option on the soft lawn area



# LIGHTING

## Analysis

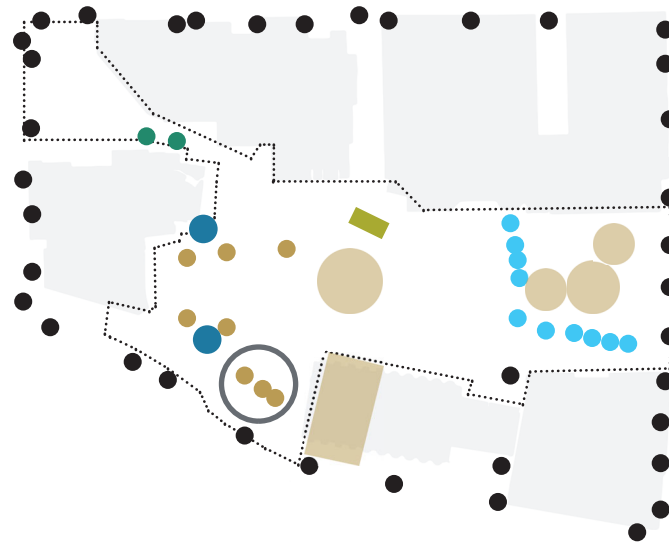
There are 21 light poles in the Square (official boundary). All streets framing the square have cluster globe lights. Internally, the lights have been updated with a more modern look in the South-West section (with the revitalization and creation of the Spirit Square). The upper plaza at Douglas Street has a number of single globe lights that are situated in a way that corresponds and marks the main path of travel.

There are also a number of feature lighting installations in the Square, such as Christmas decorations on the trees: Sequoia, cherry tree and oak trees as well as twinkle lighting in the under-croft area.

The fountain has a lighting installation that was upgraded in 2015 which has helped to provide engaging lighting displays throughout the year.

There is a small number of in ground uplights in the Spirit Square area that are not regularly monitored.

All lighting at the Square is functional and maintain regularly.



- Cluster globe light
- Single globe light
- Modern tube pedestrian light
- Wall mounted lights with post support
- Feature seasonal lighting
- Portable electrical kiosk
- Electrical plug ins

Lighting typologies diagram

## Conclusion

There is a large variety of lighting fixtures in the Square with different esthetic qualities and sizes. Overall, it is recommended that better coherency is provided for light fixtures in the Square.

- » Consider upgrading single globe lights bases to the decorative bases to elevate quality
- » Consider the same paint colour for all lights
- » Consider simplifying lighting variety
- » Explore the idea of globe lights as primary light of the square to tie visually to Old Town as originally intended



Lighting inventory and electrical box example

# TREES

## Analysis

There are 31 trees in the Square (official boundary) and 35 trees in close proximity of one block (outside legal boundary). Majority of trees are deciduous. There are 2 palm trees and one evergreen specimen (Sequoia). The diagram to the right illustrates a condition of the trees in the Square based on a February 2018 Arborist assessment (full report in appendix of this document).

## Sequoia Tree

Given size and scale of the Sequoia tree, it is considered a feature tree. It was not planted as part of the original plan but brought in later in late 1970s. An arborist assessed the Sequoia at the end of 2017 to check the damage to the tree from the decorative lighting hardware. The tree has started putting on response growth to compensate for the damage and girdling to the main trunk. Although there will always be a defect present in the damaged areas, the top of the tree should not die. The top will continue to be suppressed over time and the damaged areas will continue to be monitored each year.

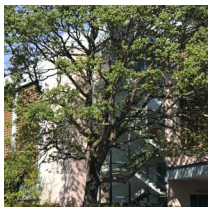


Tree quality diagram

## Conclusion

Deciduous trees planted in the elevated planters areas were brought to the Square as large, mature specimen trees to help give a true maturity to the space. Now, after over 50 years, they seem to be out of scale but at the same time, add an incredible value of green canopy to the otherwise paved area.

- » Review and assess removal of large canopy trees in front of the city hall entrance due to poor planting conditions and heaving of the sidewalk
- » Maintain and regularly monitor larger trees, including Garry Oaks and Sequoia tree
- » Consider removal of Sequoia tree due to its damage of form and potential future growth restraints
- » Consider adding more canopy trees in pavement area to increase urban forest canopy and shade
- » Preserve and maintain a cherry tree in the lawn area due to its sentimental value



# PAVEMENT QUALITY

## Analysis

### Paving Layout and Quality:

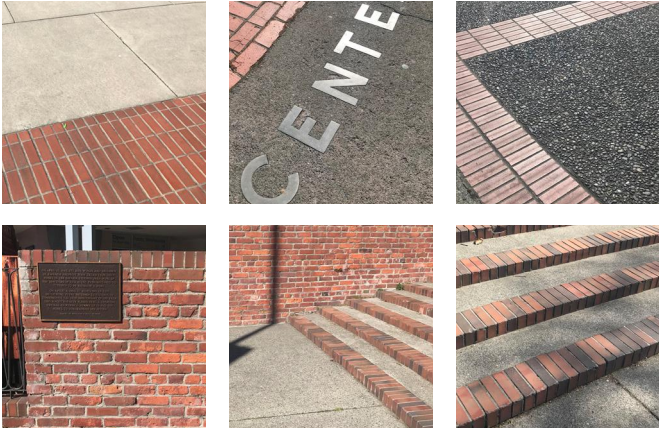
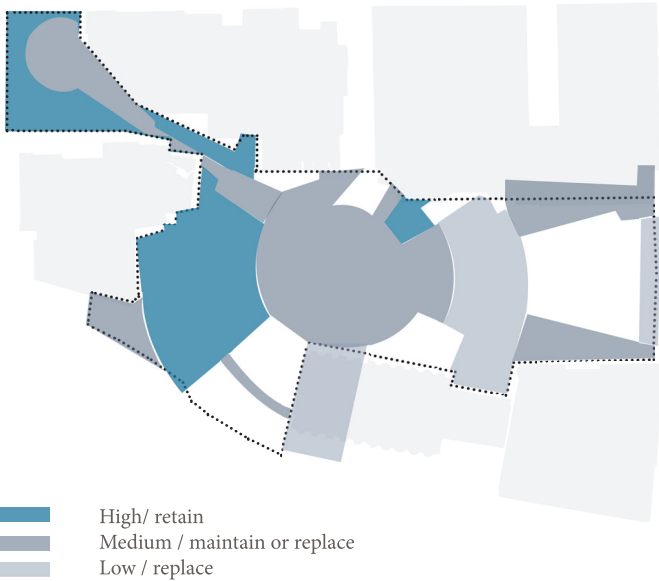
The majority of Centennial Square is paved, with the exceptions of raised planters that hug the edges. Most of the paving surface is a natural broom finished concrete, or exposed aggregate concrete with red brick patterning and banding. The concrete portion around the fountain are CIP concrete panels and not a monolithic pour. There is a very strong geometric circular pattern made of brick that revolves around the fountain. Metal letters on the ground are also embedded that were part of the gift of the Monoliths. The North-West section of the Square known as the CRD plaza has sections at the perimeter paved in yellow square unit pavers. The central portion of that plaza is CIP exposed aggregate.

In the upper plaza area, in front of the City Hall there is number of spots with hiving surfaced due to tree routes growth.

### Materials:

Key materials used in the construction of the square are:

- Brick: walls, paving bands, low curbs, stairs, accents
- Concrete: main paving newer seat walls
- Exposed aggregate: paving areas
- Concrete unit pavers: accent paving



## Conclusion

Overall, the quality of paving material in the Square varies from 'good' at recently renovated section of the Spirit Square at South-West section to 'very poor' at central sections of the Square with cracked concrete panels. Incremental upgrades and refinishing would be recommended to lift the overall quality of the space. In the long term, other materials, such as stone, should be considered as part of the Public Realm Plan direction.

- » Spirit Square - maintain the area as is and ensure long term maintenance program for all newer sections of the Square
- » Central Square with fountain - improve concrete panels quality, replace cracked ones and refinish others in the short term (with a prospect of replacing the area with higher quality materials, such as stone, in the future)
- » Eastern stairs - maintain and refinished when possible
- » Upper Plaza - remove and replace heaved paving and trees when necessary. Refinish existing concrete along the lawn area / replace with pavers or stone when redevelopment opportunity comes
- » CRD Plaza - maintain concrete unit pavers, replace / update exposed aggregate section with new concrete (vehicle rated to avoid cracking)
- » Under-croft - clean and refinish concrete pannels

# WIDTHS

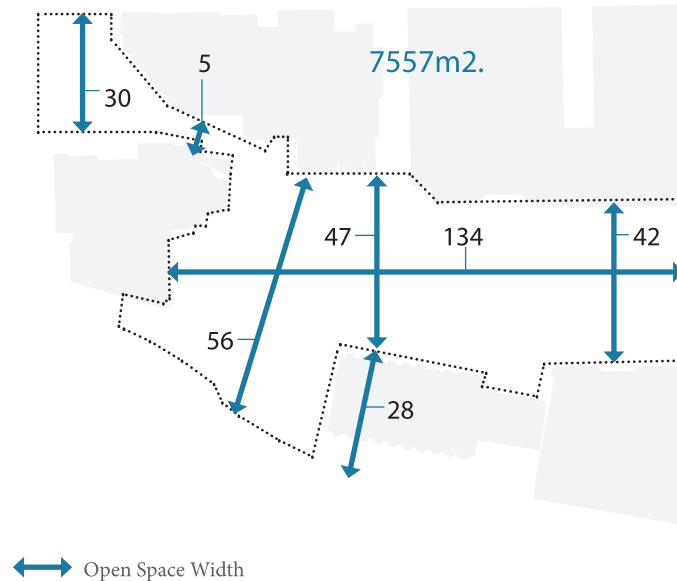
## Analysis

### Spatial Measurements

Centennial Square stretches in the East-West direction at 135m and between 56m at it's widest to 42m at its narrowest in the North-South direction. It also contains a North-West extension called CRD Plaza that hugs the corner of Government and Fisgard St. The narrowest point is at the passage from main plaza area towards CRD Plaza where it is 5m wide. The total area of the Square comes to 7557m<sup>2</sup>.

The overall geometry of the Square is rectangular, stretching in East-West direction with a small, slightly separated extension called the CRD Plaza that sits at the corner of Government St. and Fisgard St. Within the rectangular area, there are three (3) zones that seems to be defined by its geometry as well as grade change / separation.

- a. Upper plaza at Douglas Street
- b. Central plaza at the fountain
- c. Lower plaza by the McPherson Theatre



### Spatial proportions

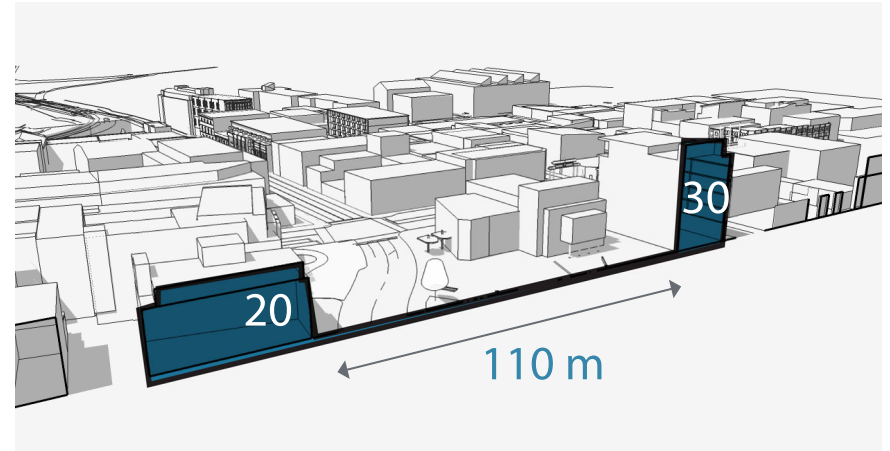
Centennial Square is a cluster of smaller spaces. They are all visually connected and yet, experienced differently. Its rectangular proportions strengthen the transient nature of the Square today.

The amount of space available can allow for the introduction of more "sticky" edges and more seating areas, as well as an rearrangement of the green spaces / planted areas.

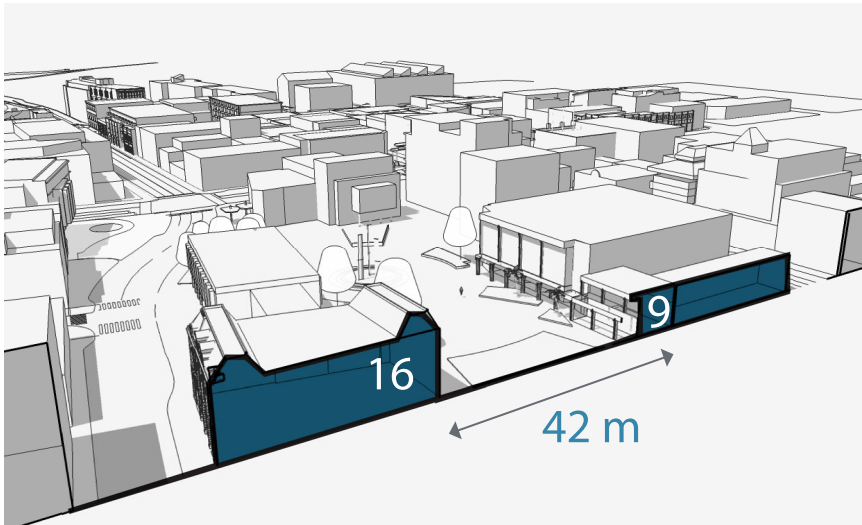
## Conclusion

Spatial proportions of the Square of vertical walls to its widths vary from 3:1 to 5:1 ratio. The greater the proportions, the lesser of integrity and enclosure and space definition. That being said, most of the areas of the Square feel well-framed and contained by the buildings around it.

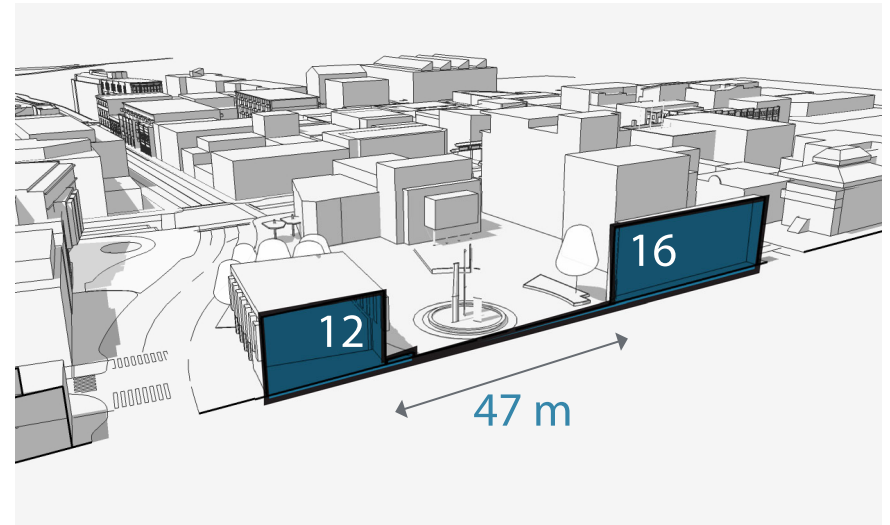
- » Careful consideration to be given to size and nature of the potential redevelopment of the parkade and offices building to the North - change of its form can really affect the form and importance of the City hall building and size of the City hall building



Wester Section: space proportions are 4:1 and 5:1



Eastern section: space proportions are 3: 1 and 5:1



Central section: space proportions are 4:1 and 3:1

# PASSIVE PROGRAMMING

## Analysis

This analysis was performed with the Gehl Institute “Stationary Activity Mapping” survey. By creating a map of how people spend their time provides a snapshot of all activities taking place in the Square at a given moment. It is not based on a predesignated amount of time.

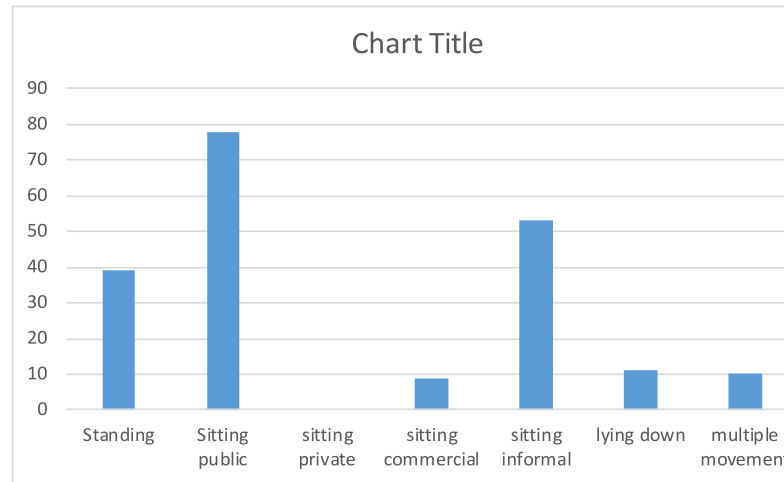
There are 2 categories identified for mapping and analysing passive uses of the space:

### Passive Programming:

- » Waiting for transportation
- » Consuming food and beverage
- » Commercial activity
- » Conversing
- » Cultural activity
- » Recreation and play / exercise

### Postures:

- » Standing
- » Public seating
- » Private sitting
- » Commercial sitting
- » Informal sitting
- » Lying down
- » Multiple movement



## Conclusion

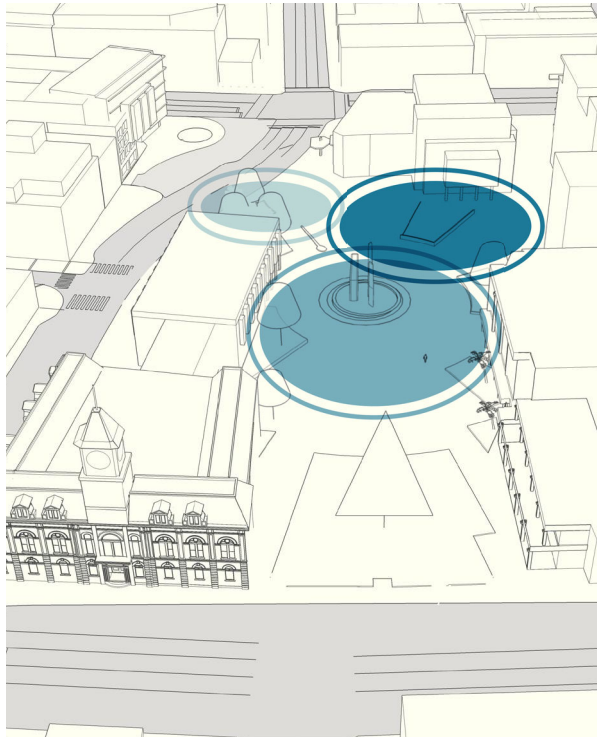
Centennial Square is a transient place with some options for seating but not many alternatives. The majority of people are passing through and those who stay, tend to sit and occupy a bench. Although there are steps in the Square, the steps are rarely used for seating.

There are number of different groups hanging out on the lawn areas, both, by Spirit Square and Sequoia tree. However, neither of those groups are welcoming or inclusive and predominantly take over the space when they are present.

The whales installation seem to be popular with kids when they are present.

- » Provide more places to sit and eat
- » Provide more play elements (they are popular)
- » Add picnic tables with umbrellas
- » Consider public art interaction opportunities
- » Consider more installations for sitting and playing
- » Remove stucco from fountain seats to bring back its function
- » Allow for more farmers market / café

# Special Events



Special events programming allows for temporary activation of the space and generates interest. Different activities attract different users and allows the space to transform and adapt.

## METRICS

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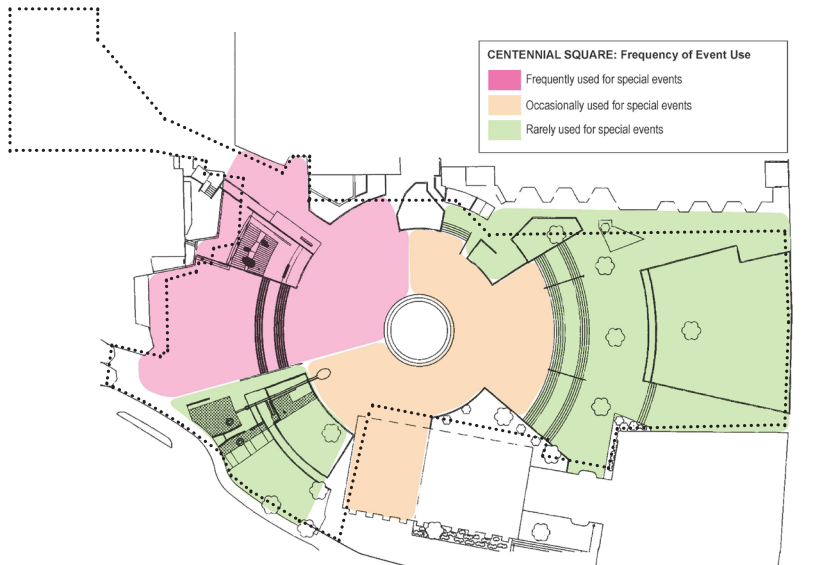
- 1 Frequency of Use
- 2 Activity Size
- 3 Seasonality

# FREQUENCY

## Analysis

The most active area used for events is the McPherson stage area and seating, as well as the adjacent plaza space in front of the Playhouse.

The central area of the square is less frequently used as it is more difficult to arrange in and around the fountain. Green / lawn areas are rarely used for event set ups but are used by the spectators to sit on during some events.



Frequency of use diagram

# ACTIVITY SIZE

## Analysis

Below are examples of different size events held in the Square during summer season:

- Family Theatre Festival - 500
- Flamenco Festival – 3,750 (at total festival, including external workshops and Cameron Bandshell)
- Fringe Festival – 19,000 (including other venues)
- India Mela – estimate approximately 5,000 over the weekend at the Square.
- JazzFest – 47,568 (including other venues)
- Rendez-Vous – 7,000

## Conclusion

Programming events and festivals require a large, flexible, open space in order to function well and allow organizers and participants to enjoy the show. The current pattern of use shows that unobstructed open areas in front of the theatre and adjacent portion of the area around the fountain are the most popular. It is challenging to set up a good functional layout for a number of events around the fountain due to its very central location and round geometry.

- » Increase flexible open space in the central area of the plaza
- » Consider use of upper plaza lawn area for smaller events
- » Improve under-croft space safety and esthetics for more frequent use of as an events space



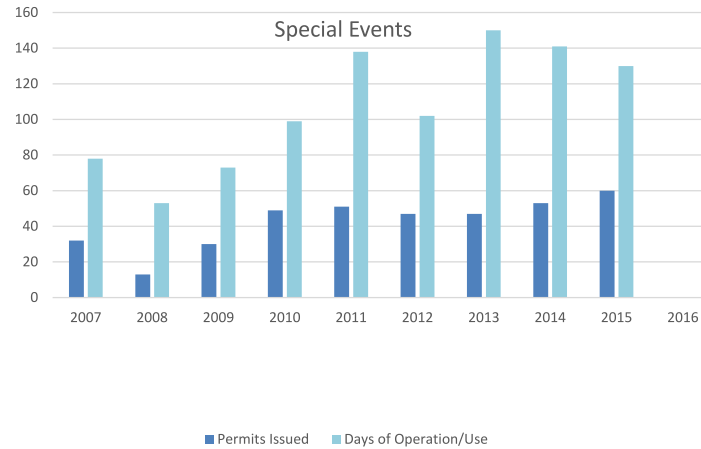
# SEASONALITY

## Analysis

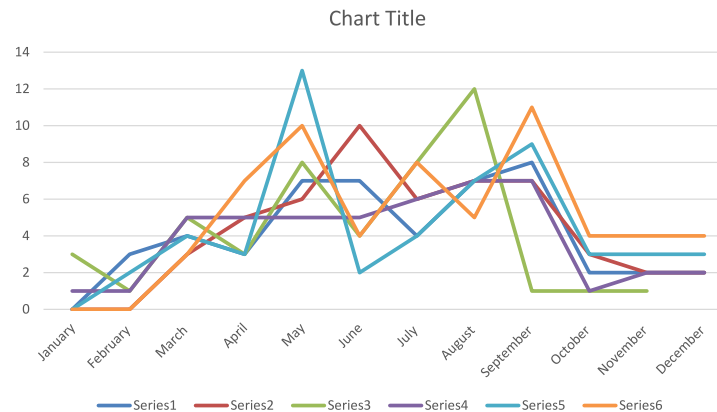
From 2007-2015, Centennial Square has seen an increase in the number of days of operations / active programming use. The general trend shows that in the last 3 years, it stayed active for more than 130 days of the year.

The most active months are June, July, August and September with May being a shoulder season.

The activities are a mix of private and city organized events. As well, private events are managed by permits.



Activity trends chart



Seasonality chart

## Conclusion

Centennial Square is a lively and inviting space only during a portion of the year. This is due to its seasonal programming and activity.

- » Consider improving weather protection to allow for ability to support year round events during the wet and cold seasons
- » Consider partnerships with businesses and organizations to allow for partnered programming during colder months
- » Consider citizen-led activation, such as busking and local performances
- » Consider activation of the Square with non-event programming, such as games and play

# CASE STUDIES



# SCHOUWBURGPLEIN ROTTERDAM'S CULTURAL CITY SQUARE

The Square is surrounded by cultural institutions that attract about 2.5 million visitors a year. Visitors to Rotterdam typically walk from Rotterdam Central Station, across the Schouwburgplein to the city. Hundreds of people live on the Square and dozens of companies are located there.

The Square is on the list of most beautiful square in the world, as well as the ugliest. The Square serves as a roof of a parking garage because the design, material and size is difficult to get it to function properly.

Source: STIPO and “the City at Eye Level” book.

An interview was conducted with René Dutrieux, a Project Manager in the planning department of the Municipality of Rotterdam. Dutrieux will tell you something about Schouwburgplein and the Theatre Square in the centre of Rotterdam. He will explain its course of time and their challenges, like the low amount of activity on the Square. People tend to pass the Square or enter the buildings without staying in the Square before the beginning of a show. By explaining its solution and secrets, the reader gains great insight about the improvement of Schouwburgplein through a course of time.



“Enzo’s” and a small outdoor stage were placed on the square.

## TIMELINE

- 1887 - Construction of the Grootte Schouwburg (theatre)
- 1940 - Bombing of city centre destroying a part of Rotterdam, Schouwburg
- 1947 - Opening of temporary Schouwburg
- 1953 - Opening of the Lijnbaan, the world's first car-free pedestrian street with shops and housing
- 1962 - Opening of De Doelen concert hall at the Schouwburgplein
- 1966 - Construction of parking garage under the square
- 1987 - Demolishing of temporary Schouwburg
- 1988 - Construction of the new Schouwburg
- 1996 - Reconstruction of the square and opening of cinema
- 2010 - Founding of the Vereniging Verenigd Schouwburgplein (Association of United Schouwburgplein)

## CONTEXT

The Schouwburgplein (Theatre Square) is situated in the city centre of Rotterdam, which was rebuilt and modernized after the WWII bombing. The city's most important cultural institutions in performing arts are located around the Schouwburgplein, attracting millions of visitors per year. The Square is also close to the modernist Lijnbaan shopping complex, an iconic area that was reconstructed after the war and the first major pedestrian-only shopping street in the world. Despite the many visitors to the institutions and the nearby shopping streets, the Square has been a void in the city instead of a place for (cultural) gathering.

## CHALLENGE

One important challenge is to reveal the cultural richness and the modern heritage of the buildings to the citizens, and to bring life to the Square. As the Schouwburgplein is just outside the main flow of pedestrian traffic, people don't coincidentally pass by. Also, theatre-goers tend to arrive just before their show and depart quickly after, spending little time on or around the Square. Three main goals were set in order to make the square more attractive:

- Improve the physical quality of the square
- Bring visibility to the culture inside the buildings and
- Activate the square with programming and events.



Square on a weekday in the afternoon.

## SOLUTION

In 2008, the City Council made a proposal to the cultural institutions: the municipality would invest in physical improvements of the public space, while the institutions would program events outside their buildings to activate the Square. This created an association called the Vereniging Verenigd Schouwburgplein in which the nine cultural institutions, community organizations, and the business association were represented. The association's role was to strengthen the square as a hospitable metropolitan cultural plaza for all Rotterdammers (thereby, economically strengthening the area). Since its start, the association has worked on a multi-annual program to activate the Square. In recent years, many changes have occurred. Spatially, the mobile seatings "Enzo's" and a small outdoor stage were placed on the Square. The association has also built a multi-annual program working in close collaboration with the cultural institutions. The programs are based on the location and activity in which the character of the Square and the type of activities are determined.

Furthermore, coordination takes place with the other squares in the city to align activities and events. Physically, the plinths of the theatre and the concert hall are now more open and accessible with investments from the municipality. The theatre's lobby is turned into a meeting place where you can go without visiting a show. As well, De Doelen concert hall is being upgraded with a more hospitable and open entrance, including an inviting grand café to the street.

## SECRETS

The association is the main contact for all activities and ensures quality control for all events. A program leader collaborates with the cultural institutions and programs the cultural activities. Additionally, a "Square Master" functions as the liaison between the surrounding residents, entrepreneurs, and with the municipality. This creates connections inside and outside of the buildings. The buildings of the cultural institutions around the square were internally focused and didn't display what is happening inside. The theatre's lobby is now open to the public, and the concert hall is undergoing renovations for a more hospitable and open entrance.

To turn the Schouwburgplein into a lively public place, more activities and events were needed. New activities and events on the square have activated the square and attracted new visitors.

## LESSONS

An important lesson was to determine the profile of the place and how to regulate the kind of activities and events according to the quality profile of the square and its institutions. For Schouwburgplein, this is the starting point for all activities and events. The location profile has an official status, determined by the city council, and has some strict rules on noise and type of events. The location profile is also useful in communicating with the surrounding residents, when discussing possible events. Slow transformations and small steps: instead of some big events and activities, the association is working on a longtime transformation of the square. It takes time to build new cultural traditions and to change the physical appearance. These slow transformations apply to the nature of being a city.

## IMPACT

The primary output is an active and structural cultural program (from 2011 onwards) with events organized by the cultural institutions and 'external' parties. Part of the programming are larger, day events that recur every year (such as the Circus City Festival, the 24 Hours of Culture Festival, and the Dance Week), but also small weekly events on Sunday like yoga sessions and performances. In 2009, only 11 events took place on the square; in 2014, that number increased to 60 events. These events on the Square attracted 75,000 visitors. The eventual aim is to offer around 100 events on the square in 2016. More than before, Schouwburgplein has gained a reputation as a cultural square in Rotterdam.

## DO

- Cooperate between all parties with common purpose
- Activate with programs and events
- Open the plinths and ground floors to the public



Samples of programming and art installation the square

## IN CONCLUSION

The slow transformation of the Schouwburgplein into a vibrant cultural square consists of physical, functional and organizational aspects. The association works well for all parties to collaborate on the improvement of the square, both physically and functionally. By upgrading the quality of the public space and strengthening the relation with the plinths of the building, the programming of cultural events and activities will attract more visitors and bring public life to the square. Over the last years, the programming of activities at the Square has increased by cultural productions of the institutions as well as external events.

# APPENDIX



# PUBLIC REALM PLAN INITIATIVES 2017

## 2.4 PRIORITY PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

### 2.4.1 ENERGIZE CENTENNIAL SQUARE

Centennial Square is the City's main civic, ceremonial and recreational plaza and serves as a venue for a number of different types of events and large public gatherings ranging from protests to honouring ceremonies, from demonstrations and displays of public art to theatre performances, and from music and cultural festivals to local markets. Centennial Square was constructed in the 1960s as part of a major initiative to preserve, restore and revive downtown Victoria, and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Victoria. A major renovation to the south west corner of the plaza was completed in 2009. Centennial Square is surrounded by both modern and historic structures, including historic City Hall constructed in 1891, and features a fountain incorporating a balustrade rim and mosaic concrete totems, which serve as a focal point to the plaza.

Today, outside of when there are events and festivals, activity in the square is lacking. Further, infrastructure in the square, including the fountain, some of the surface treatments, and parkade structure, is aging and in need of major maintenance and repairs.

As part of the Visual Victoria process, Centennial Square was identified as a priority public space for significant improvement and refresh, specifically to activate and energize the square, provide support for major events and festivals and better connect to the adjacent street network/open space context. Over the short term, this could be accomplished by updating and refreshing surface treatments, and programming the plaza to have more 'sticky edges' (active edges that draw people into the square and make them want to stay). This could also include incorporating strategies to create stronger visual and physical connections to the adjacent streets and open spaces, and strategies to open up the plaza and create a more open, continuous and usable open space to support the plaza as the City's major events, festivals and cultural space.





#### LONG TERM CHANGE BEGINNING WITH TEMPORARY INTERVENTIONS.


Over the long term, this could include redevelopment of the aging parkade structure into a new mixed-use building that incorporates active ground floor uses with a potential mix of civic, institutional, and cultural/community uses above, and an underground parking structure below.


Both short and long term strategies would be explored and committed to as part of a Master Planning process for Centennial Square, which is a key recommended action of this Plan. Below is a summary of potential strategies to explore as part of a future master planning process for Centennial Square to create a more continuous, integrated, and vibrant civic environment.


- 1 Create 'sticky edges' with new building development**  
Increasing ground-level commercial and café/restaurant space will transform the square around the clock.


- 2 Create 'sticky edges' with temporary installations or activities**  
Temporary café kiosks or food trucks can build an instant sense of place and become a destination.

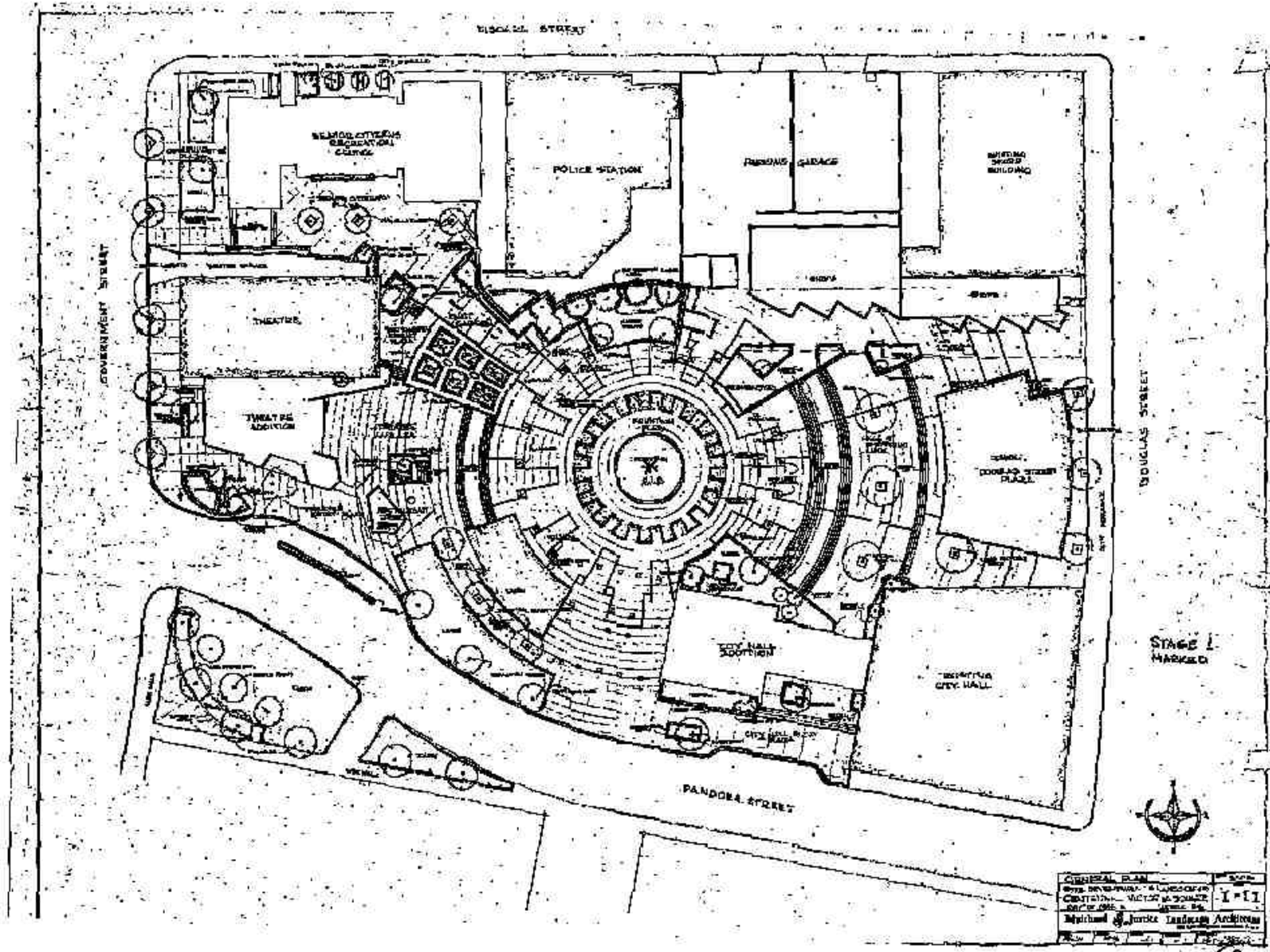

- 3 Connect to Douglas Street**  
Replacing the grassed area to the east of the square with a hard surface treatment, and incorporating a unique canopy structure that could double as a transit shelter at Douglas, will create stronger visual and physical connections to Douglas and help enliven the space with people.


- 4 Incorporate Play Elements**  
Incorporate permanent and temporary elements to help activate the plaza and to make it more inviting and welcoming for children and families.


- 5 Use high quality materials**  
Introduce natural stone paving as a key surface material to complement the existing heritage brick in order to enhance the quality of materials befitting the City's main civic square.



# HISTORY - ORIGINAL PLAN



# HISTORY - HERITAGE VALUES

PASSING IMAGES • JOHN BRYANT

## Gift of symbolism

2 Dec 2001

**I**T HARDLY SEEMS possible that more than 40 years have gone by since the old Victoria Public Market was demolished (and a couple of streets closed) in 1959 to clear the run-down area around City Hall in preparation for urban renewal.

The "Centennial Square Project" was first unveiled to the public in 1962 — Victoria's 100th year as a city — but construction work didn't begin until 1964. The City Hall extension, theatre restoration, restaurant, shopping plaza, senior citizens' centre, parkade and the rest are all familiar to us now as is the square's centrepiece, the bold and beautiful Centennial Square fountain.

Of course, we all know the fountain was a "birthday gift" to Victoria from its neighbouring municipalities, Saanich, Oak Bay and Esquimalt — after all, it says so in large letters set around its rim. Also set into the surrounding paving are salvaged Victoria Public Market bricks (which were brought from England by sailing ships in the 1880s).

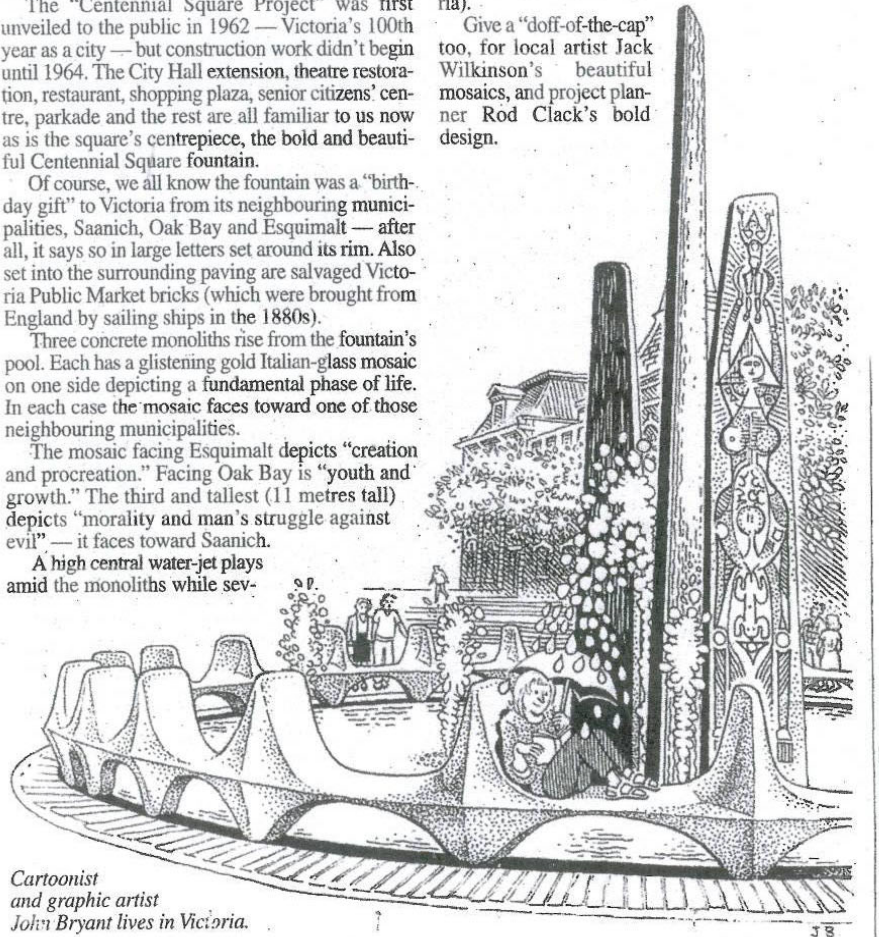
Three concrete monoliths rise from the fountain's pool. Each has a glistening gold Italian-glass mosaic on one side depicting a fundamental phase of life. In each case the mosaic faces toward one of those neighbouring municipalities.

The mosaic facing Esquimalt depicts "creation and procreation." Facing Oak Bay is "youth and growth." The third and tallest (11 metres tall) depicts "morality and man's struggle against evil" — it faces toward Saanich.

A high central water-jet plays amid the monoliths while sev-

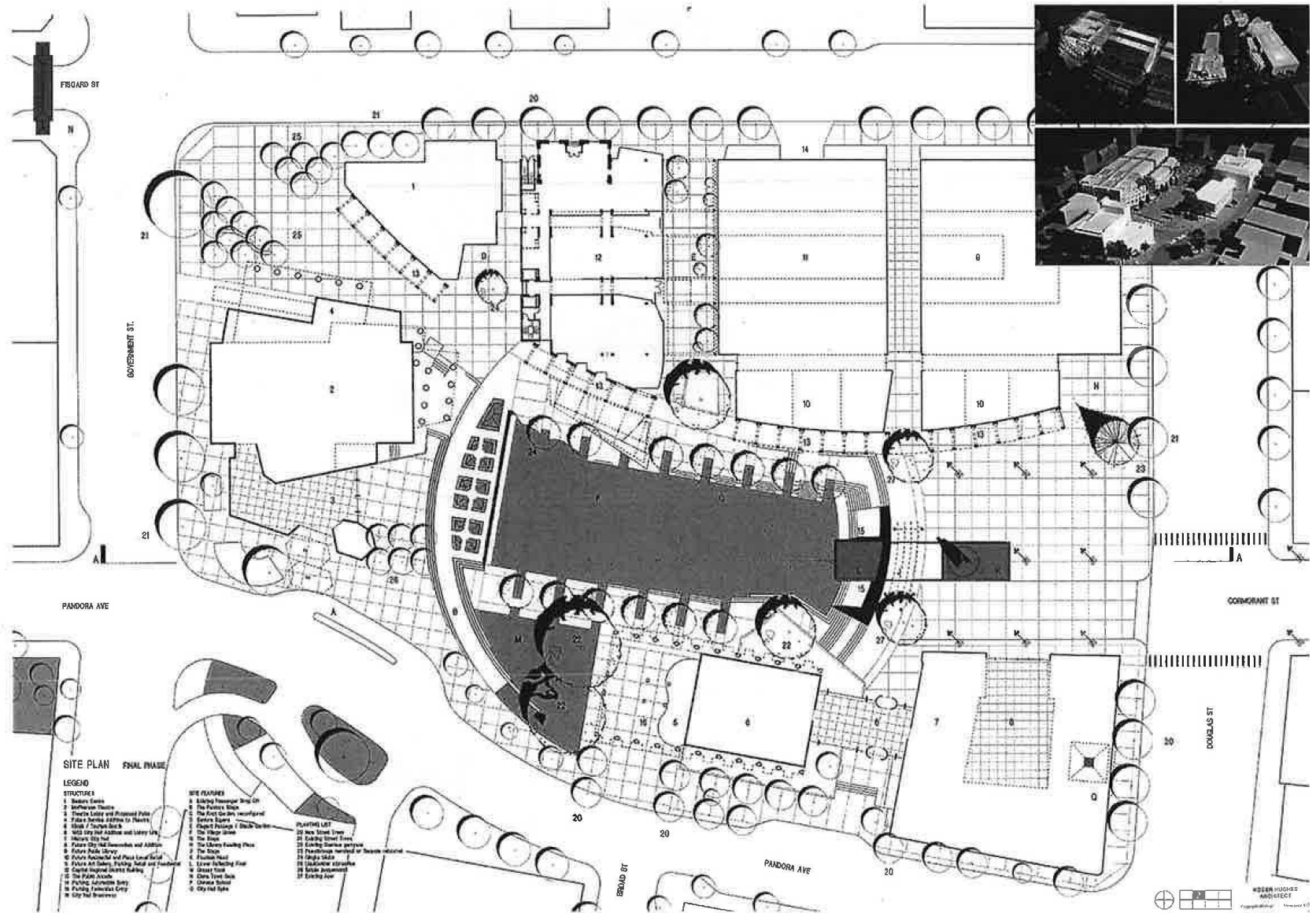
eral smaller jets spout from coloured lights beneath the water's surface. All around the pool's edge is a balustrade forming a circle, its shape symbolizing a royal tiara or crown (a "tip-of-the-hat," as you might say, to Queen Victoria).

Give a "doff-of-the-cap" too, for local artist Jack Wilkinson's beautiful mosaics, and project planner Rod Clack's bold design.



Cartoonist and graphic artist John Bryant lives in Victoria.

# HISTORY - COMPETITION CONTEST 1996



# TREE QUALITY ASSESSMENT

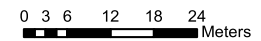


## Centennial Square Tree Inventory

Trees labelled with Site ID



Date: 2/28/2018





# SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING

Permitted Special Events										
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Permits Issued	32	13	30	49	51	47	47	53	60	
Days of Operation/Use	78	53	73	99	138	102	150	141	130	
<b>Events by Month</b>										
January				0	0	3	1	0	0	
February				3	0	1	1	2	0	
March				4	3	5	5	4	3	
April				3	5	3	5	3	7	
May				7	6	8	5	13	10	
June				7	10	4	5	2	4	
July				4	6	8	6	4	8	3
August				7	7	12	7	7	5	1
September				8	7	1	7	9	11	
October				2	3	1	1	3	4	
November				2	2	1	2	3	4	
December				2	2		2	3	4	
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>60</b>	
<b>City Programming</b>										
Chess/Board Games in the Square				0	15	0	15	15	18	17
Lunchtime Concerts				45	45	43	64	37	33	36
Dancing in the Square				6	6	6	7	6	6	33
Christmas Events				3	1	2	0	0	0	0
Other				2	2	2	1	30	50	21
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>56</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>107</b>

**Other 2010**

Surface Arts Festival  
Living Colour Olympic Celebration

**Other 2011**

Culture Days  
Governor General Visit

**Other 2012**

Ryder Hesjedal Celebration  
Olympic Athlete Homecoming

**Other 2013**

Culture Days

**Other 2014**

Hip Hop Dance Instruction  
Eventide Music Series  
Yoga and Zumba Instruction  
United Way Bootcamps

**Other 2015**

Staff Yoga Class (6)  
Wellness Programming: Zumba, Yoga and Aerobics (15)  
Eventide Concert Series (10)  
Salsa Sundays in the Square (14)  
Hip Hop (4)  
Panam Games Welcome Home Celebration (1)

# FOUNTAIN REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE SUMMARY

## CITY OF VICTORIA - CENTENNIAL FOUNTAIN CONDITION ASSESSMENT

budget of remedial work  
August 12, 2016

### RECOMMENDATION

Prepare and repaint concrete with a suitable product, paint and gloss to match existing.

Specify, supply and install new paint under a Master Painters Institute (MPI) program of inspections and warranty.

### 3.0 BUDGET OF REMEDIAL WORK

Building on the estimate of repairs presented by Goal in 2011, the budget listed below is an updated estimate of repairs based on 2016 market values on the scope of work outlined in this report.

Mobilization/Demobilization		\$5,350
Repairs		
Moss on Concrete		\$500
Corroded Steel Repair		\$3,210
Concrete Sealer		\$2,140
Tile Repair (including surface preparation)		
Option A		\$28,350
Option B		\$51,150
Film on Tile		\$2,140
Mortar Repair		\$1,070
Light Fixture Housing		\$5,350
Fountain Pool Finish		\$2,000
Bench Finish		\$750
Subtotal Option A		\$50,860
Subtotal Option B		\$73,660
Contingency Option A (@15%)		\$7,629
Contingency Option B (@15%)		\$11,049
<b>Total Estimated Cost excl. tax Option A</b>		<b>\$58,489</b>
<b>Total Estimated Cost excl. tax Option B</b>		<b>\$84,709</b>

# ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS

## Centennial Square Annual Operating Cost

### Building Maintenance - Includes Centennial Square Washroom

Work Order	Service	Cost
WO# 175529	Building Fabric	\$8,200.00
WO# 100149	Carpentry	\$2,000.00
WO# 100225	Painting	\$200.00
WO# 175530	Electrical	\$2,200.00
WO# 175531	Mechanical	\$6,000.00
WO# 103617	Security	\$280,000.00
WO# 101179	Utilities	\$2,500.00
WO# 175332	Graffiti	\$5,500.00
Total		\$306,600.00
Total excluding security		\$26,600.00

### Building Services - Includes Centennial Square Washroom

Work Order	Service	Cost
WO# 139556	Janitorial	\$165,000.00

### Approximate Capital Investment Required

Centennial Square Fountain	\$120,000.00
Government Street Fish Fountain	\$10,000.00
Government Street Globe Fountain	\$0.00
Washroom	\$0.00
Total	\$130,000.00

