



City of Austin - Design Commission Project Review Application

The [Design Commission](#) provides advisory recommendations to the City Council to assist in developing public policy and to promote excellence in the design and development of the urban environment. The Design Commission reviews three types of projects:

1. **City projects** (see page ii for process)

The Commission reviews all municipal buildings and associated site plans to ensure they demonstrate compliance with city design and sustainability standards ([Council Resolution No. 20071129-046](#)), including those seeking [Subchapter E Design Standards Alternative Equivalent Compliance \(AEC\)](#) ([Council Resolution No. 20100923-086](#)).

2. **Destiny Bonus projects** (see page iv for process)

The Commission reviews density bonus projects for substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines for Austin in accordance with the Gatekeeper requirements of [LDC 25-2-586](#) for the Downtown Density Bonus Program.

3. **Advisory Recommendations for Private projects** (see page ii for process)

The Commission will consider Project Review Applications from private projects during its regularly scheduled monthly public meetings and may issue an advisory recommendation in the form of a Project Review Letter to the Applicant.

This Project Review Application must be submitted before your project can be presented to the Design Commission for their review. Design Commission requests project be presented in their Conceptual/Schematic Design phase. This application primarily addresses inhabited buildings and structures and their effect on the public realm; please refer to Appendix A for infrastructure type projects.

The Commission's review of projects is based on the planning/design principles in the Urban Design Guidelines for Austin. Ensure that all applicable principles are addressed in the application questions and in your presentation.

https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Boards_and_Commissions/Design_Commission_urban_design_guidelines_for_austin.pdf

The Design Commission supports the vision and principles of [Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan](#), especially those that affect the urban environment and fabric. All projects should consider this vision and principles, many of which are similar to the Urban Design Guidelines. Refer to Appendix C for the most pertinent sections of Imagine Austin.

The Design Commission expects the applicant's design team to present their project with those most knowledgeable and encourages the inclusion of sub-consultants at the presentation, when deemed necessary.

EXHIBITS TO PRESENT

- 1) Completed Project Review Application (p.1-6)
- 2) Existing zoning classification, adjacent zoning & uses, future land use map classification, topography
- 3) Vicinity plan, including public transportation and connectivity on-site and within quarter mile
- 4) Site plan and landscape plan
- 5) Ground level, basement plan, and typical floor plan
- 6) Elevations and/or 3d views
- 7) Any letters of support or findings by other commissions
- 8) Staff reports, if any
- 9) Records of public participation

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS: CITY PROJECTS

The Design Commission reviews all municipal buildings and associated site development projects to ensure they demonstrate compliance with city design and sustainability standards ([Council Resolution No. 20071129-046](#)), including those seeking [Subchapter E Design Standards Alternative Equivalent Compliance \(AEC\)](#) ([Council Resolution No. 20100923-086](#)).

1. Applicants are encouraged to meet with the Office of the City Architect prior to submitting a Project Review Application, especially if seeking Alternative Equivalent Compliance (AEC) under Subchapter E Design Standards. (See Staff Contacts on page iv.)
2. Applicant submits completed Project Review Application, including Exhibits, to Commission Liaisons a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the Design Commission meeting. (See and [Calendar of Regular Meetings](#) and "Exhibits to Present" on page i)
3. Commission Liaisons review Project Review Application for completeness. Once the Application is deemed complete, the project will be added to the agenda. (Agendas are posted online 72 hours prior to the meeting.)
4. Commission Liaisons post backup, including complete Project Review Application and letters/decisions from other Boards and Commissions, the Friday before the meeting. (See [Meeting Documents](#) website.)
5. Design Commission meets and hears a 15 minute presentation by the Owner/Applicant/Architect. The Commission asks questions and makes recommendations. At the end of the project review, the Design Commission may rely on the recommendations recorded in their meeting minutes or submit a Project Review Letter to City Staff in Development Services Department.
6. Design Commission may direct a Working Group to write the Project Review Letter. The Working Group will take comments from the full Design Commission meeting, add their comments, and coordinate with the Design Commission Chair to issue a Letter to applicable Development Services Department Staff. The Working Group shall meet prior to the next regularly-scheduled Design Commission to finalize comments on any project submittal. The goal is for this to happen in a one (1) month time frame.
7. Commission Liaisons will forward approved meeting minutes or Project Review Letters to applicable Development Services Staff.
8. Design Commission may request that an Owner/Applicant or City Staff submit an update report in the future so that the Commission can review progress as a project is further detailed.

PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS: DENSITY BONUS PROJECTS

The Design Commission reviews density bonus projects for substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines for Austin in accordance with the Gatekeeper requirements of LDC 25-2-586 for the Downtown Density Bonus Program.

1. **Six weeks prior to the target Design Commission meeting:** Applicant will contact Density Bonus Liaison with intent to schedule project on the next Design Commission agenda.
 - a. Density Bonus Liaison will provide application and submittal documentation to Applicant and notify Commission Liaisons.
2. **Five weeks prior to the target Design Commission meeting:** Density Bonus Liaison will contact Chair of Working Group to schedule a meeting, copying Commission Liaisons.
3. **By the end of the fourth week (24 calendar days) prior to the target Design Commission meeting:** The Applicant will submit all completed application requirements to Density Bonus Staff Liaison.
4. **By the end of the third week (17 calendar days) prior to the target Design Commission meeting:** Design Commission Working Group will meet to review Project Review Application and evaluate Applicant's presentation detailing substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines for Austin.
 - a. Working Group will provide Applicant comments and suggestions on improving presentation and issue a recommendation to the Design Commission on achieving substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines for Austin.
5. **By the end of the second week (10 calendar days) prior to the target Design Commission meeting:** Chair of the Working Group will send the Density Bonus and Commission Liaisons the Working Group's written recommendation to the Design Commission containing specific feedback given to the Applicant and, if lacking, detailing items to address to achieve substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines for Austin.
6. **One week (7 calendar days) prior to the target Design Commission meeting:** Once the Density Bonus Liaison receives the revised project submittal from the Applicant and the Commission Liaison receive the written recommendation from the Working Group Chair, the Commission Liaison will place project on Design Commission agenda for discussion and possible action.
7. **Design Commission meeting:** At the meeting, Design Commission will review the project for substantial compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines for Austin based on Working Group recommendations and issue a final recommendation detailing to Planning and Zoning Department Staff items needed to be addressed in order to achieve substantial compliance.
8. **Within one week after Design Commission meeting:** The Chair will issue a formal written recommendation based on the action taken by the by the Commission detailing to Planning and Zoning Department Staff items needed to be addressed in order to achieve substantial compliance.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Incomplete Applications

Should Commission Liaisons determine that the Project Review Application is incomplete, the Application shall be returned to the Applicant and the project will not be posted on the agenda for consideration by the Commission.

Submissions without the required Adobe PDF electronic file shall be deemed incomplete.

Public Notice

Posting of public notices on the proposed project site or giving notice to adjacent property owners is not required by the enabling ordinance of the Design Commission. The posted agenda for the Design Commission meetings serves to inform the public of subjects considered by the Commission. The Applicant shall note that the concomitant regulatory procedures by other boards and commissions have legal public notice requirements. Actions taken by the Austin Design Commission shall be in respect of and in compliance with such local ordinances and project review procedures.

Limits on Resubmissions

Applicants are limited to two (2) resubmissions per design phase (as described herein) and shall notify Commission Staff of the intent and desire to resubmit project(s) for review within seven (7) days of the action vote by the Commission. The Commission shall consider such resubmissions prior to issuing the Project Review Letter.

Rebuttal of Project Review Letter

Since the Commission issues advisory recommendations only, there is no instance for appeals to the Commission.

Rebuttals of such advisory recommendations may be made by the Applicant to the applicable city department, planning commission, or City Council in accordance with applicable standard processes and procedures.

STAFF CONTACTS

By appointment, City Staff is available for consultation on submittal requirements. To schedule a pre-submission conference or for information on any of the above submittal requirements, please contact:

City of Austin, One Texas Center, 505 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, TX 78704

Commission Liaisons:

Executive Liaison: Benjamin.Campbell@austintexas.gov, (512) 974-7691

Staff Liaison: Nichole.Koerth@austintexas.gov, (512) 974-2752
Urban Design Division, Planning and Zoning Department, 5th floor

City Architect: Janice.White@austintexas.gov, (512) 974-7997
Office of the City Architect, Public Works Department, 9th floor

**Density Bonus
Program Coordinator:** Anne.Milne@austintexas.gov, (512) 974-2868
Urban Design Division, Planning and Zoning Department, 5th floor

A. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name

Dougherty Arts Center Redevelopment Project

Project Type:

☐

Infrastructure

☒

City building & site

☐

Density bonus

☐

Private project

☐

Other

Project Location/Address

1110 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX 78704

Applicant

Kevin Johnson - City of Austin Parks
Department, Project Manager

Property Owner

City of Austin Parks Department

Applicant Mailing Address

919 W. 28th 1/2 St., Austin TX 78705

Property Owner Mailing Address

919 W. 28th 1/2 St., Austin TX 78705

Applicant Telephone Number

512-974-9506

Property Owner Telephone Number

919 W. 28th 1/2 St., Austin TX 78705

Project Start Date

Summer 2018

Project Completion Date

Winter 2022/2023

Applicant's Architect

RVi/Studio 8 (Preliminary Phase only)

Applicant's Engineer

UDG (Preliminary Phase only)

1] Indicate if proposed Project is required by City Ordinance to be reviewed by the Design Commission.

Eventually, yes. But we have completed only a preliminary/planning phase to date. The project will come back to the design commission once the design phase is underway, as required by the site development permit process.

2] Describe the recommendation that you are requesting from the Design Commission.

We are seeking a recommendation to Council for approval of the proposed Dougherty Arts Center redevelopment site at Butler Shores Park.

3] Current Design Phase of Project (Design Commission prefers to see projects right after approved schematic design).

Preliminary design phase is complete, including extensive community engagement.

4] Is this Project subject to Site Plan and/or Zoning application approvals? Will it be presented to Planning Commission and/or City Council? If so, when?

Yes - site plan development permit will be required. The site is already zoned P-NP City of Austin Parkland.

We will present the preliminary design phase results to design commission on 3/26/19, and to council in April 2019. We are seeking approval of the proposed site before moving into a larger design phase.

5] Does this Project comply with Land Development Code Subchapter E? List specifically any Alternative Equivalent Compliance request if any. Please refer to website for Alternate Equivalent Compliance (AEC) requirements.

https://www.municode.com/library/tx/austin/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT25LADE_CH25-2ZO_SUBCHAPTER_EDESTMIUS

Yes, but the proposed design is preliminary in nature. We will address these issues more comprehensively once in the design phase of the project. Subchapter E compliance will require AEC along Toomey Rd. due to existing underground easements.

B. PROJECT BACKGROUND

6] Provide project background including goals, scope, building/planning type, and schedule. Broadly address each of the "Shared Values for Urban Areas" that are listed on Page 6 of the Urban Design Guidelines. Attach additional pages as needed.

This information is included in the backup presentation, attached.

The project endeavors to capitalize on the values espoused at the current Dougherty Arts Center, but in a facility that better meets the needs of all users. The building should convey a sense that this is a place to make art and create community.

7] Has this project conducted community/stakeholder outreach? If so, please provide documentation to demonstrate community/stakeholder support of this project.

This information is included in the backup presentation, attached.

The project team conducted 2 public meetings in the summer/fall of 2018, and engaged with an electronic survey. 54% of respondents support the relocation, 23% are neutral and 23% have some opposition to the idea.

8] Is this project submitting for the Downtown Density Bonus Program? If so, please provide a completed Downtown Density Bonus Application.

No

9] Has the project been reviewed by COA Department (i.e. DAC) Staff? If so, please describe and cite any relevant comments or feedback that the Commission should be aware of.

We have conducted several preliminary review meetings with DSD and other City staff to identify significant development constraints. The siting of the building complies with all known site constraints.

10] Are there any limitations to compliance or planning principles due to the specific requirements of this project that the Commission should be aware of?

This site is relatively free of significant constraints, and the mission of the arts facility is well-aligned with the parkland setting. There are no issues complying with the Waterfront Overlay.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CONTEXT

11] Identify connectivity to public transportation including, bicycle and pedestrian routes and/or multi-modal transportation. Does the project comply with ADA requirements? Provide a site context map and attach additional pages as needed.

Refer to the Context Map in the attached presentation. This site is directly accessible by the Butler Hike and Bike trail, multiple Capital Metro bus routes and sidewalks. The site has no significant ADA compliance constraints.

12] Identify and describe any existing features that are required to be preserved and/or protected such as heritage trees, creeks or streams, endangered species (flora and/or fauna)? Attach additional site diagrams as needed.

There are several protected and heritage sized trees on this site. However, the proposed siting of the building responds to the placement of these trees and preserves all heritage sized. The opportunity to further develop the parkland currently serving as softball fields provides ample opportunity to plant new trees, well-beyond mitigation requirements.

13] Is this project within any City of Austin planning district, master plan, neighborhood plan, regulatory district, overlay, etc.? If so, please illustrate how this project conforms to the respective plan. Attach additional pages as needed. (See below for requirements.)

Butler Shores is part of the Zilker Neighborhood Planning District (listed as Suspended). Because the site is adjacent to Ladybird Lake, it is part of the Waterfront Setbacks Overlay and the Butler Shores Waterfront Overlay. A capital view corridor abuts the western edge of the site as it meets Barton Creek. It is also within the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Verification Zone.

The project is setback from the lake as required, compatible with zoning requirements and out of all view corridors.

14] List any project program and/or site constraints that should be considered.

Access to the site from both Riverside Drive and Toomey Road provides opportunity to minimize traffic impact to adjacent residents on Toomey Road, and the building is setback from the lake frontage as far as possible.

D. RELATIONSHIP TO PUBLIC REALM

Public realm is defined as any publically owned streets, pathways, right of ways, parks, publicly accessible open spaces and any public and civic building and facilities. The quality of our public realm is vital if we are to be successful in creating environments that people want to live and work in.

15] The shared values outlined in the Urban Design Guidelines include Human Character, Density, Sustainability, Diversity, Economic Vitality, Civic Art, A Sense of Time, Unique Character, Authenticity, Safety and Connection to the Outdoors. How is the project addressing these unique community characteristics? Is the project developing any public amenities for urban continuity and vital place making?

While it is too early to describe the exact features that address the Urban Design Guidelines, the principles were considered in defining the framework of the preliminary plan. The plan suggests a range of tree-covered open outdoor gathering areas including an entry plaza, outdoor classrooms, gardens, and patio spaces adjacent to the café and upstairs gallery or event space. We envision large expanses of shaded glass walls at public entries and facing the existing park areas. No specific building materials have been proposed as part of the preliminary plan, although the concept envisions a mix of sustainable and durable materials like concrete, stone and glass.

The project would present a human-scale streetscape along Toomey Road which could include public art. It would also provide a connection from Toomey Road to Lady Bird Lake and the Hike and Bike Trail. The Cultural Park would not only encourage a

16] Does this project encourage street level activity to engage and respond to functional needs such as shade, rest areas, multi-modal transportation storage and paths?

The main entry is through a tree covered plaza. There are several seating and rest areas in this space. The building entry accents itself to the existing trees. The project would engage Toomey Road with improved amenities like shade trees and a public plaza as well as the possibility for permanent or changing public art installations.

17] How will the project be a good neighbor to adjacent properties? For example, describe the treatment of the transition area between properties, i.e. fence, landscape improvements, etc.

The building is 2 stories on the Toomey Rd. side and steps up to 3 stories as it gets away from the existing Multi-family housing across the street. The tree covered main entry creates a vegetation buffer between the multi-family and the proposed building. To the east, the project proposes a space for public art near the parking garage adjacent to the Whisenhunt and Kleberg Theatres. To the west the building opens itself up to the existing park, which is intended to be activated as a better public use space than its current function.

The development of a cultural park adjacent to the DAC would provide public open space for all surrounding uses. Landscape enhancements along Toomey Road and the Butler Hike and Bike Trail would improve the vehicular and pedestrian experience.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABLE ISSUES

The Austin Urban Design Guidelines set a goal that, "All development should take into consideration the need to conserve energy and resources. It should also strive for a small carbon footprint."

18] Please list any significant components of the project that contribute to meeting this goal. If the project has been designed to accommodate future inclusion of such components (for example, by being built "solar ready") please list them.

The project will be LEED Silver or higher, as required for City of Austin buildings per council resolution 45. 50% of available roof space will be solar ready, as required by local code.

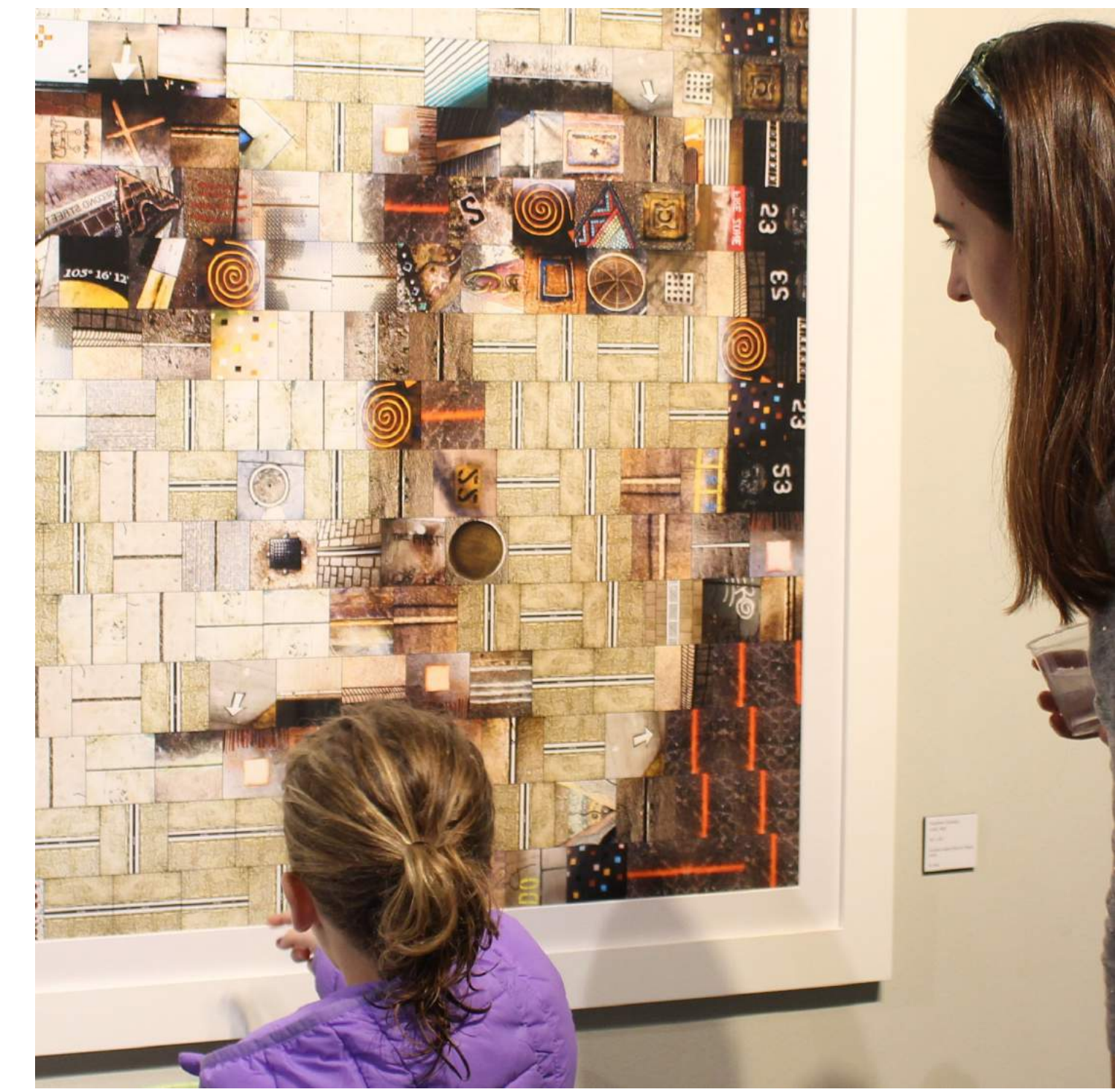
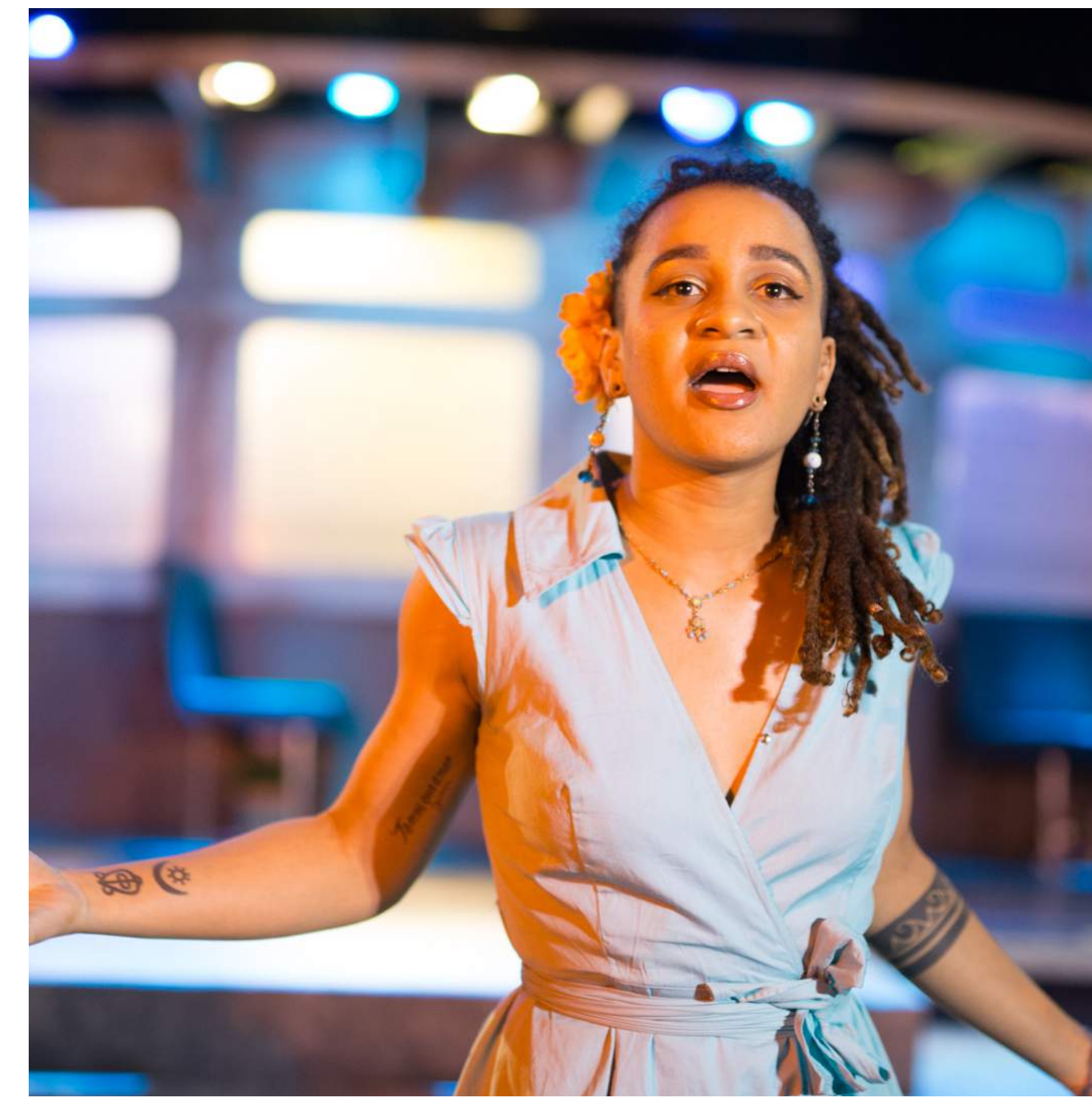
In addition, the central location of the site allows for multi-modal access.

19] If the project is being designed to meet any sustainability/environmental standards or certifications (for example, LEED Silver), please list them here and attach relevant checklists or similar documents that demonstrate how the standard or certification will be achieved.

The project will be LEED Silver or higher, as required for City of Austin buildings per council resolution 45. Given the parkland scope of this project, there is also interest in exploring a SITES certification.

20] If the project contains other significant sustainability components not included above that the Commission should note, please list them here.

Specific design elements will be further addressed in future phases.



Dougherty Arts Center Redevelopment

Planning and Community Engagement Phase



Studio8



Context Map



Theater and Special Events



Gallery



Youth Studio

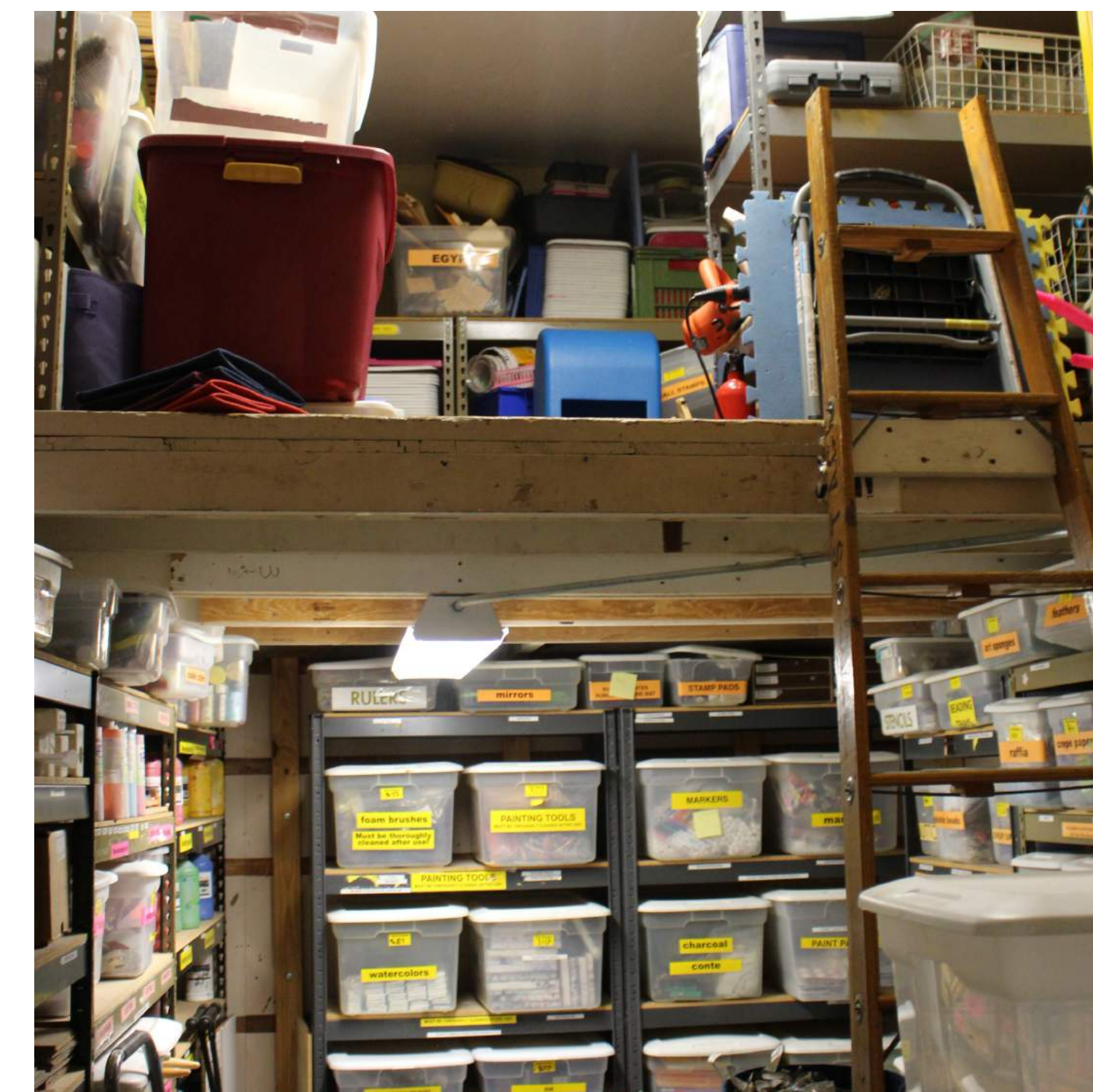


Adult Studio



Artist Professional Development

The mission of the Dougherty Arts Center (DAC) is to support emerging through established artists who create, showcase, and experience the arts first hand. We envision the DAC as Austin's cultural living room where people of all ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, genders, sexual orientations, socio-economic statuses, nationalities, and religions gather to create community through the arts.



Administrative/Support Space

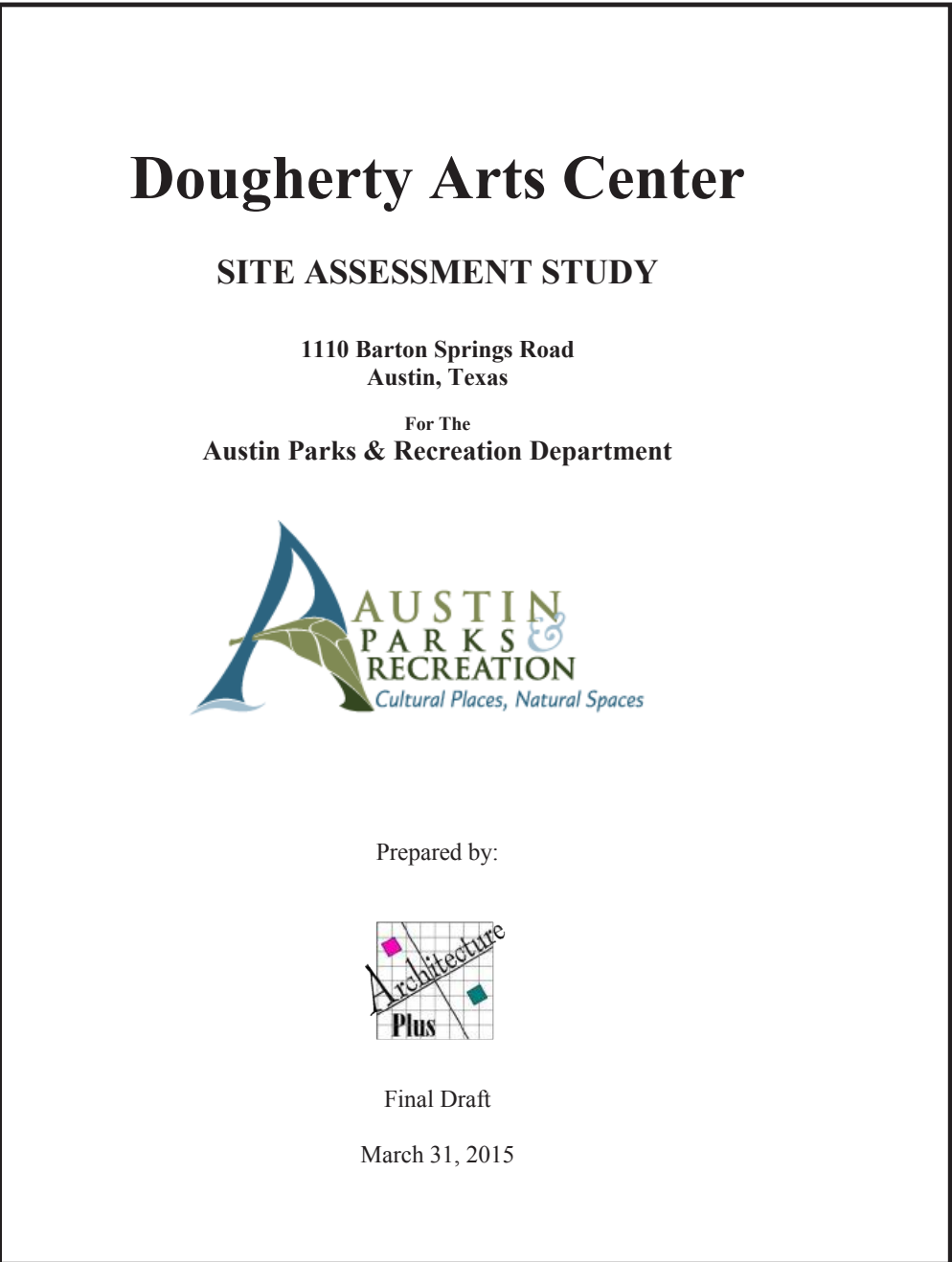
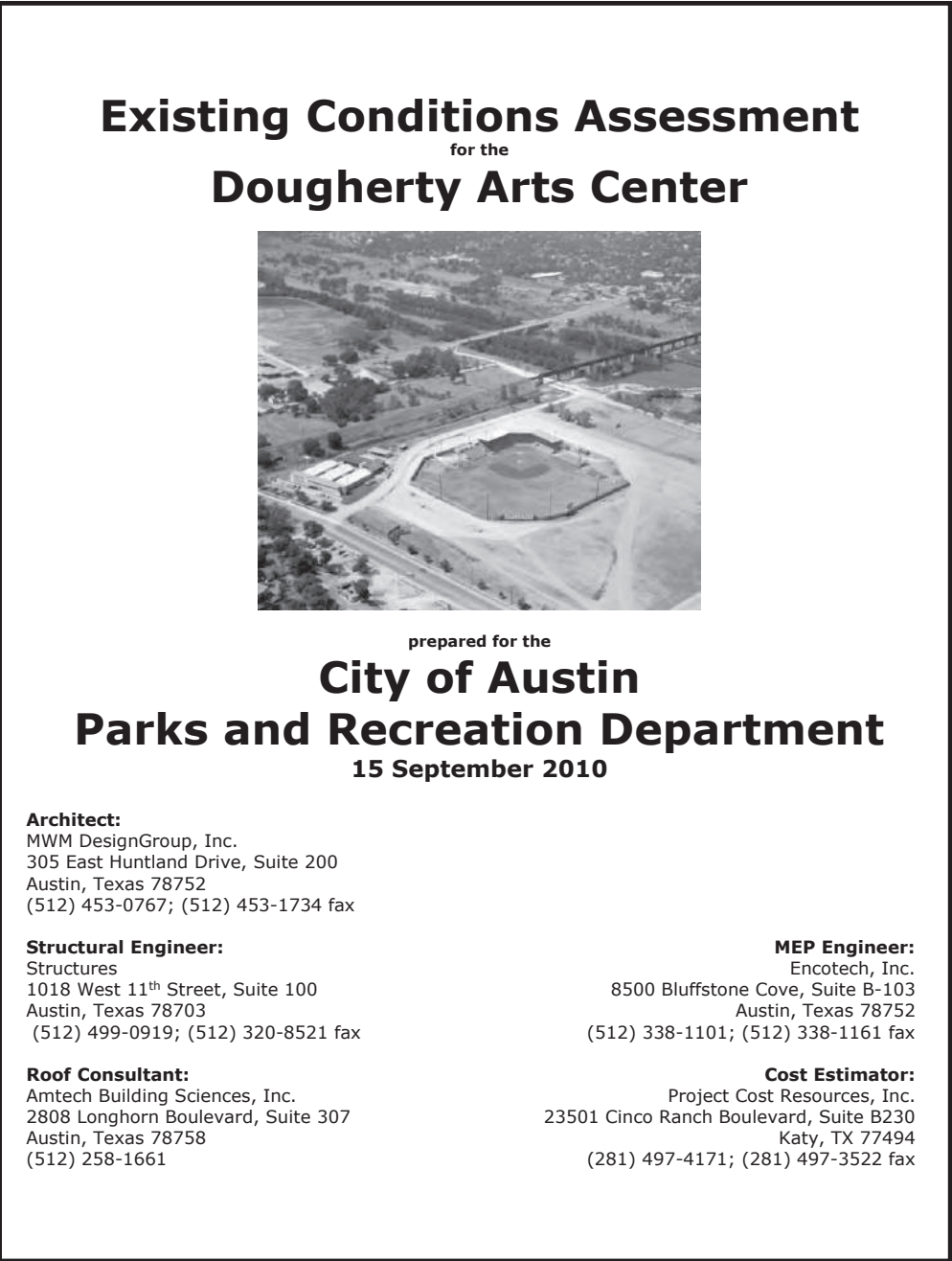


Outdoor Spaces

Mission and Program



1947	The current structure is built as the Navy and Marine Reserve Building
1978	Building is purchased and donated to the CoA by the Dougherty family
1984	Town Lake Park Comprehensive Plan envisions Butler Shores as a cultural park
2009-10	Existing Conditions Assessment determines building is beyond useful life and poses risks to health and safety
2010-11	Five stakeholder groups are conducted to envision program requirements for the DAC
2013	Site is registered with the TCEQ as a former landfill
2015	Site Assessment study is completed and determines that floodplain prevents rebuilding on the site
2017	Programming and Vision Study is completed to determine the feasibility of the Butler Shores site
2018	PARD Bond Proposition passes, dedicating \$25 million toward a new DAC



How We Got Here



Previous Sites Studied

- Existing site, both east and west of Dawson Rd.
- Travis County Palm School
- Proposed Travis County Courthouse
- AISD Campuses
 - Baker School
 - Ann Richards School
 - Dawson Elementary
- Shared facility at expanded Palmer and Long Centers
- Developer-partnership with CoA Budget office and Strategic Facilities team
- Visits with the CoA Office of Real Estate
 - Office building at 7703 N. Lamar
 - Former church complex at South First Street and Alpine
 - Outpost on Rollingwood Drive
 - Former Howdy Honda site at Ben White and IH 35
 - Building at 901 Barton Springs Road
 - Property behind Carver Museum and Cultural Center

Existing Conditions



Previous Sites Studied and Existing Conditions



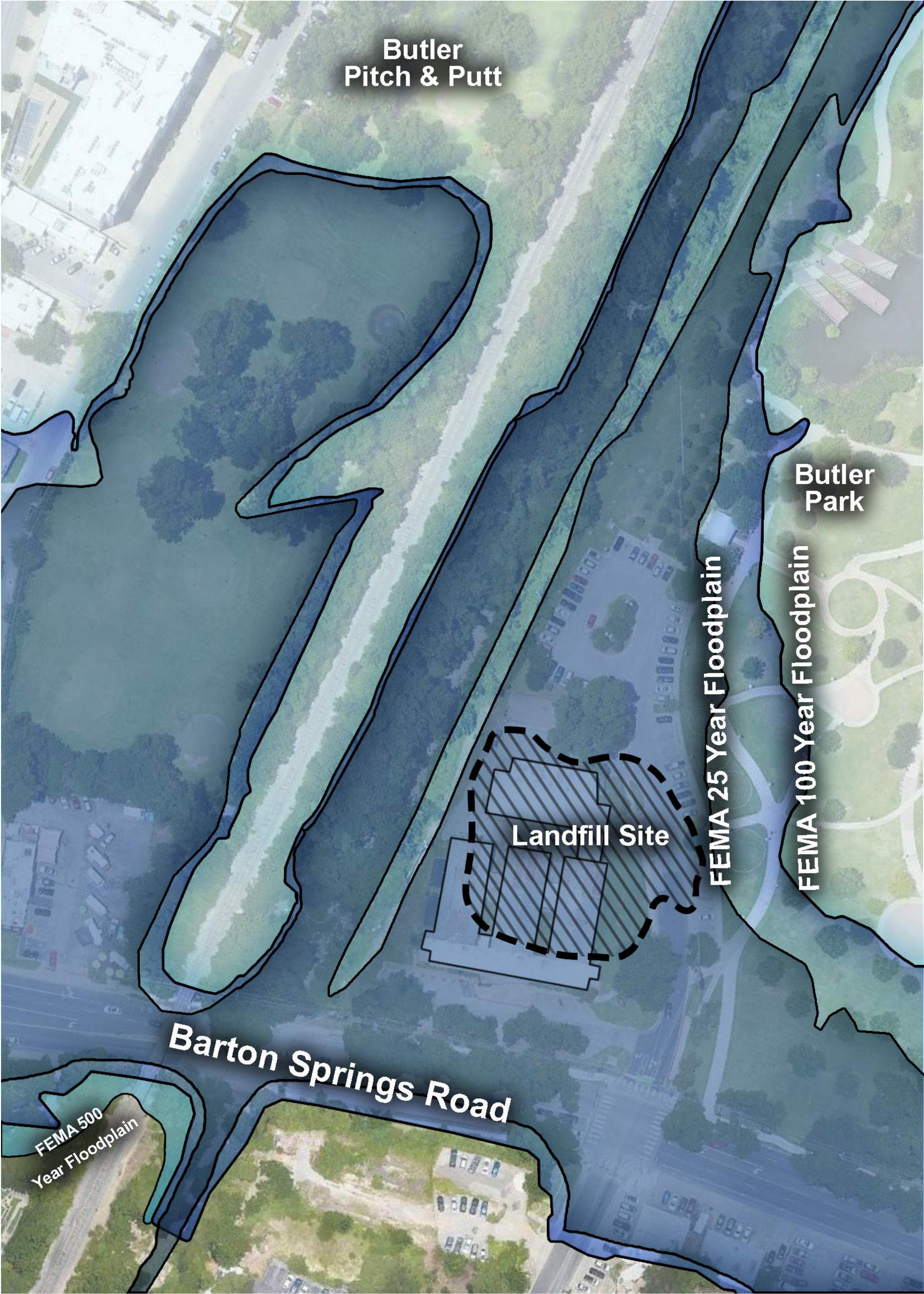
- Building sits within CoA and FEMA floodplains (25 and 100 year)
- Property frequently floods, and emergency access/egress is limited
- Any new structure in the floodplain would negatively impact area drainage
- Rebuilding on current site could cause multi-year closure of DAC
- Future floodplain limits will be more restrictive
- Facility was built over a landfill



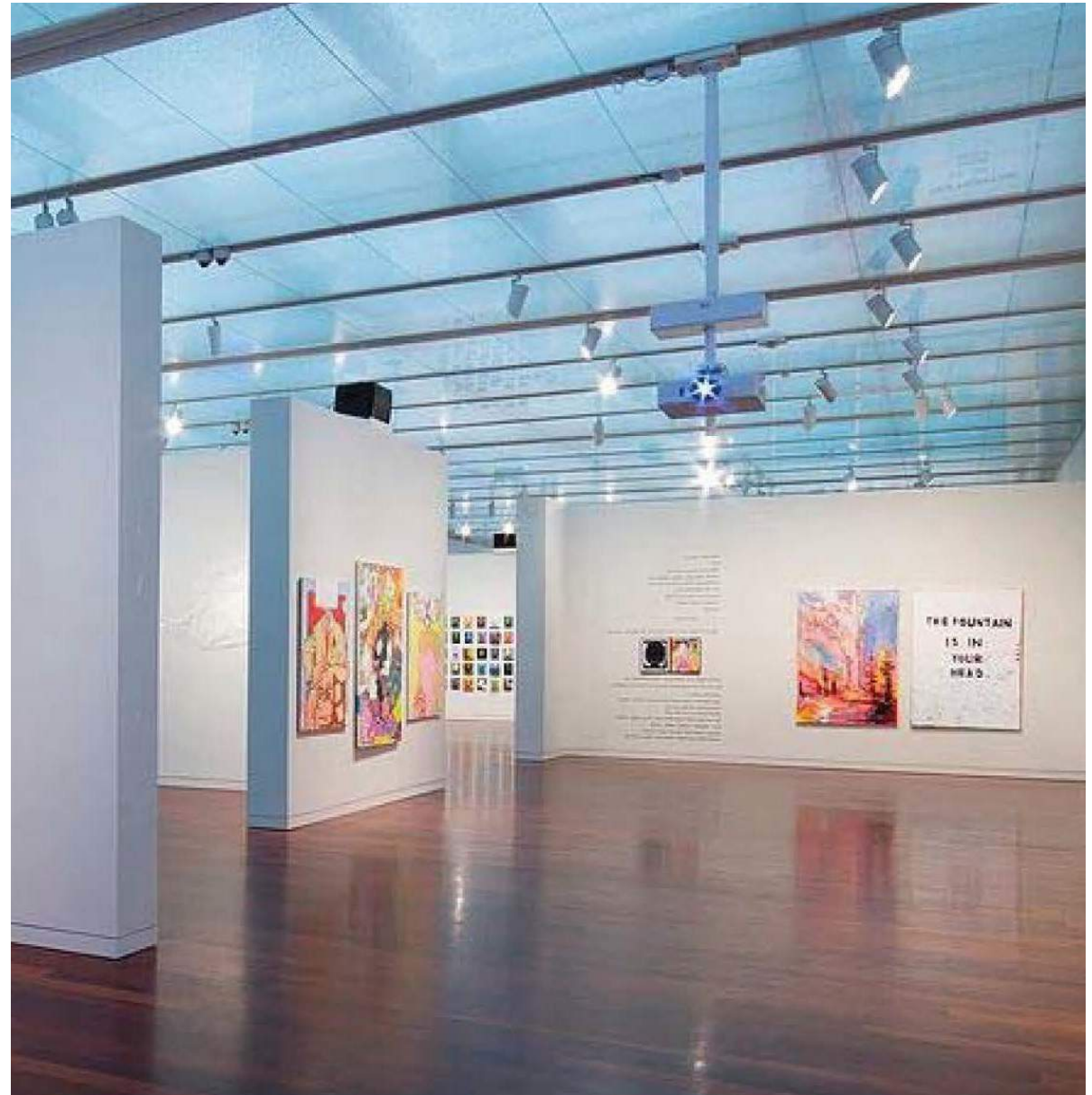
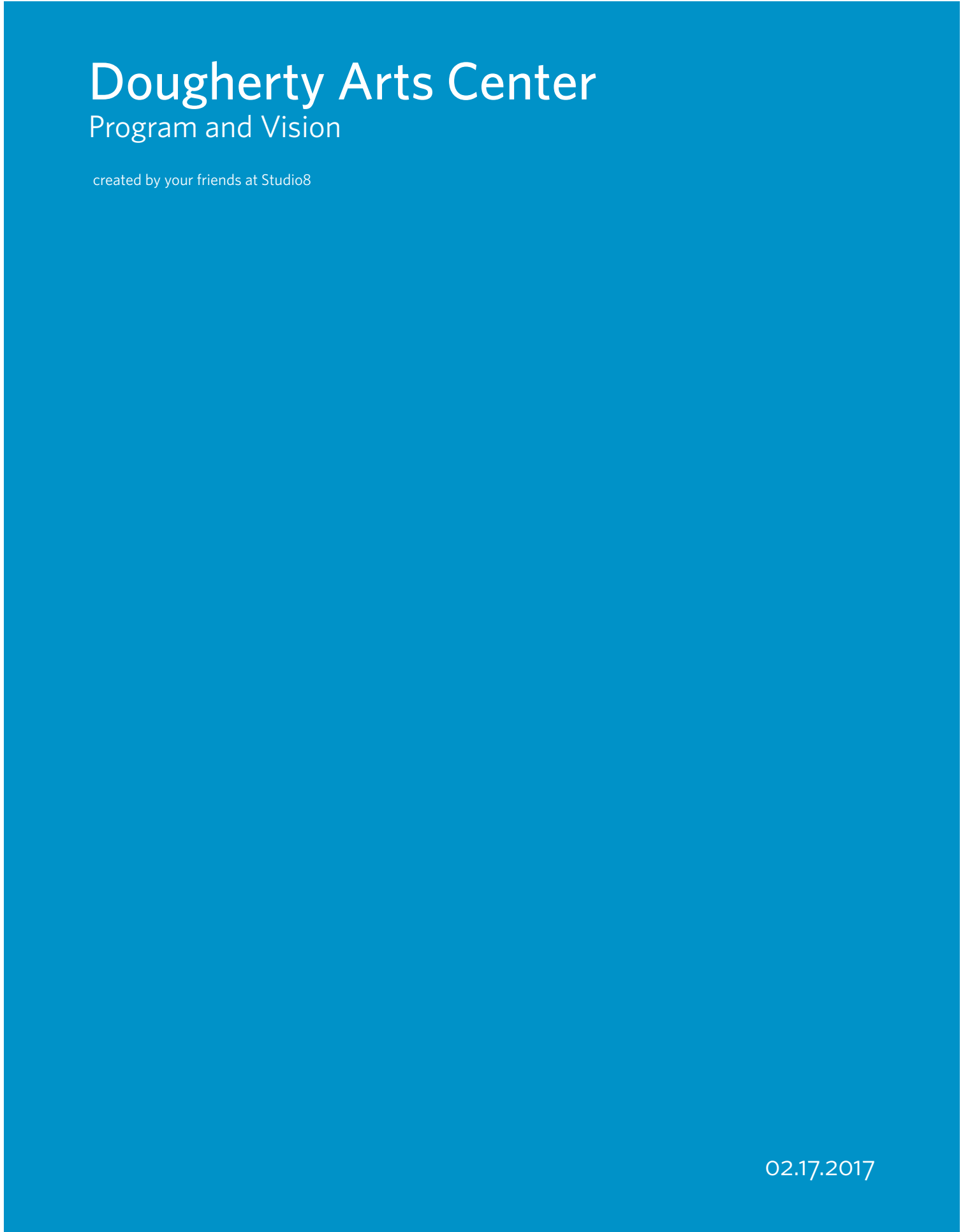
Why Can't Current Site be Redeveloped?

Atlas 14 floodplain (proposed)
@ approx. 454' MSL

Existing CoA 100 yr. floodplain
@ approx. 452' MSL
Proposed 25 yr. floodplain
@ approx. 452' MSL
Existing DAC level 1
@ approx. 449' MSL



- Public gathering areas (inside and outside) that foster a sense of community for Austinites of all ages
- Spaces that inspire creativity; a feeling that this is a place to make things
- Gallery space that meets the requirements of the Smithsonian Institution
- Rentable rehearsal rooms and public space that can be reserved by students, faculty, or the public
- New technology options for students and faculty
- Spaces that are flexible enough to serve multiple needs, yet able to accommodate their specific function well
- Facility that embraces the history and emotion of the DAC
- Top Words to describe the new DAC facility: flexible, cutting edge, light, functional, industrial, human-scale, comfortable, and beautiful
- 100% of respondents said a connection to nature is important to consider in the design of the new DAC facility.



Architectural Program Overview



Butler Shores Existing Conditions Map

- Central location best meets needs and service area of existing DAC
- Opportunity to improve parkland adjoining the PARD Main Office and new DAC
- Supports the idea of an emerging arts district on the South Central waterfront
- Opportunity for shared structured parking facility
- Opportunity to enhance Toomey Road streetscape and pedestrian connectivity to Zilker Park
- Consistent with recommendations in Town Lake Park Comprehensive Plan, Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan
- Central location and adjacent amenities are attractive to both artists and patrons
- Adjacency to PARD Main Administrative Office
- Proximity to and potential partnership opportunities with the ZACH Theatre
- Site is City of Austin Parkland and properly zoned for construction of a parks facility



Butler Shores Site: Existing Conditions

Potential Benefits of Butler Shores Location





Butler Shores Conceptual Scenario



Open House # 1 - June 21, 2018
Dougherty Arts Center



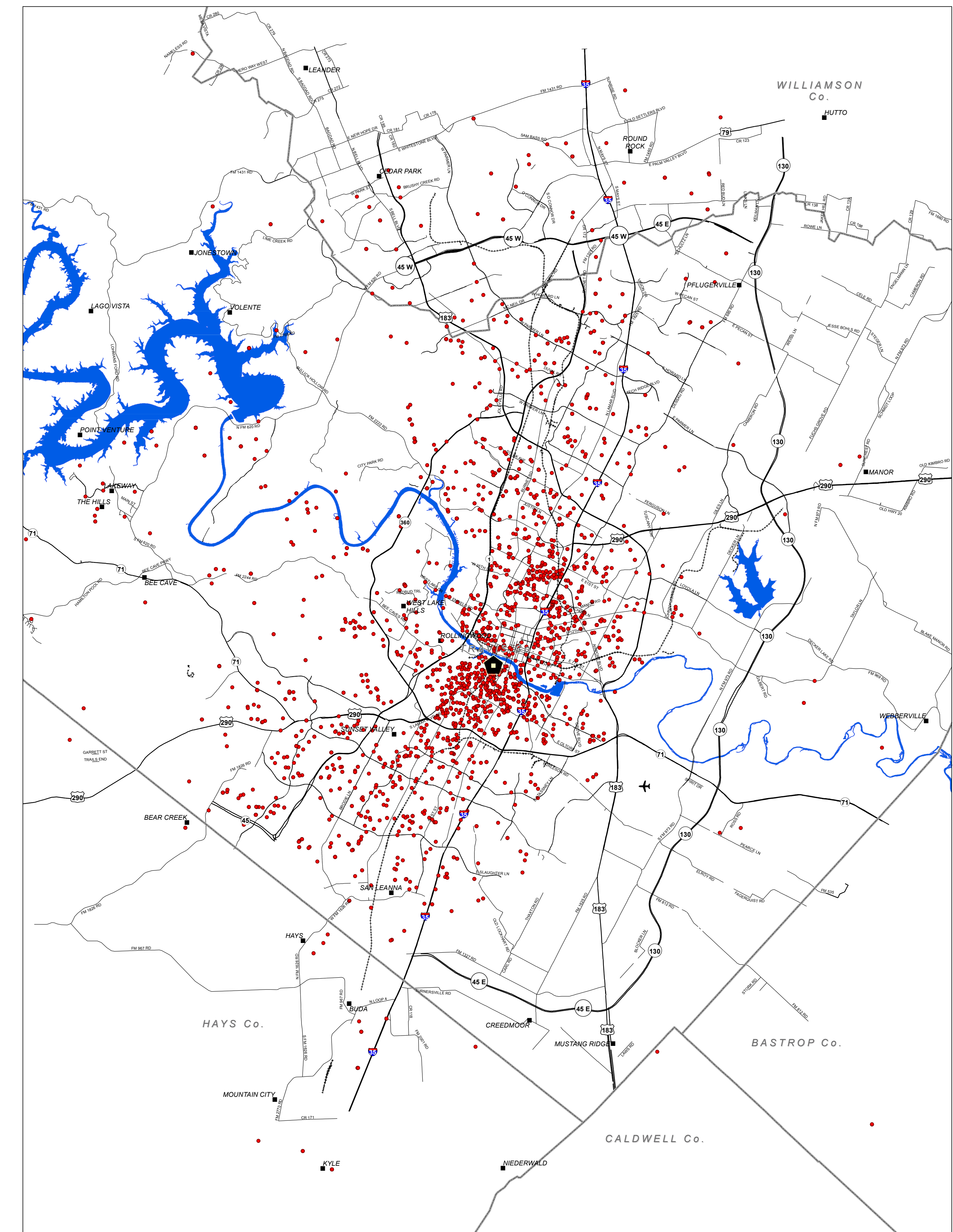
Open House # 2 - October 19, 2018
Zilker Botanical Garden

How do you think the DAC can improve its facility?

- Expand the space and allow for more programming
“Parking, parking, parking”
- Provide a better outdoor space for children
“Update and upgrade!”

What do you think are the most critical needs Austin artists have in regards to space and resources?

- Affordability, availability and space
“Affordability is the heart of the issue for artists”



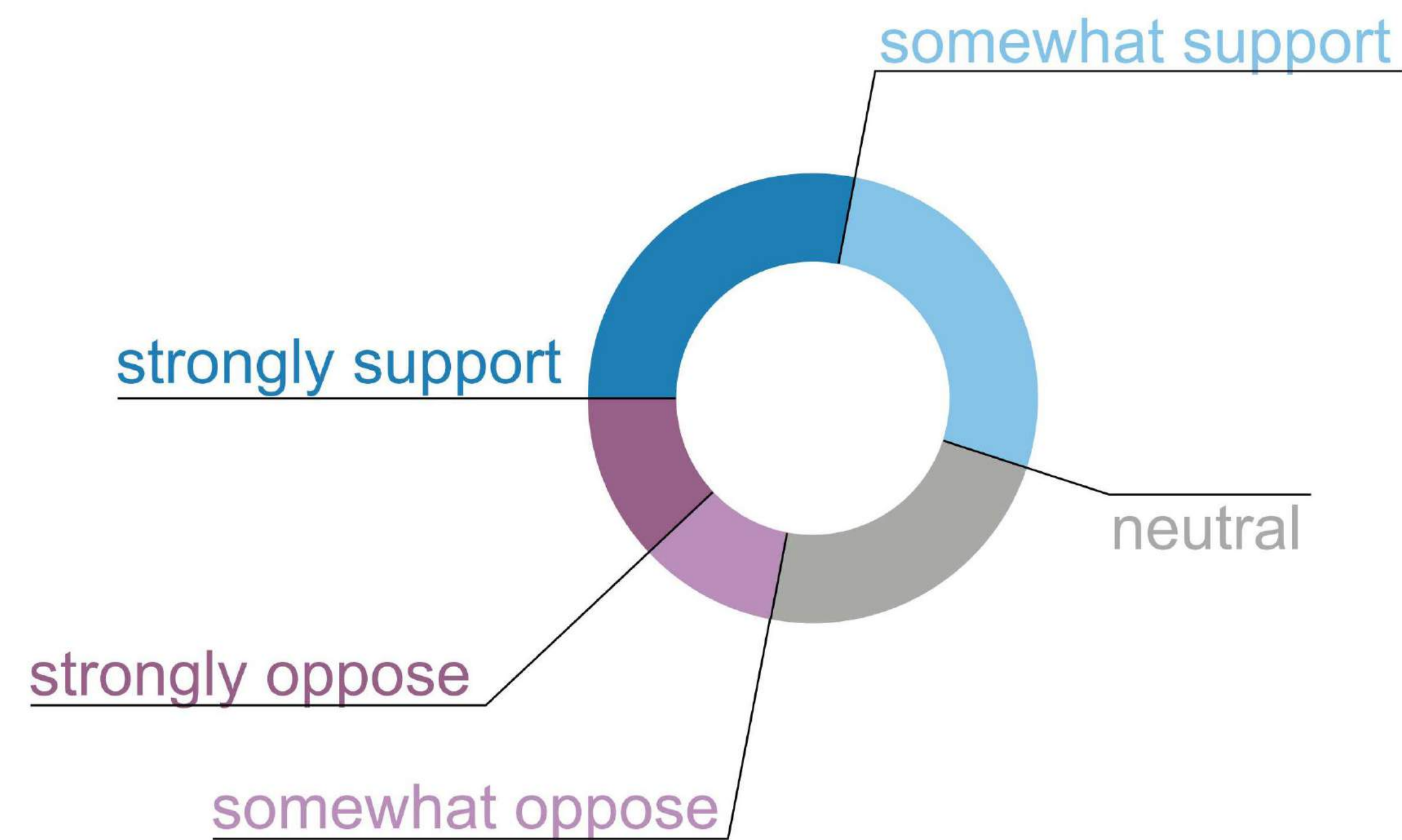
Dougherty Arts Center Program Participants
Adults, 2012-2017

Community Engagement and Input

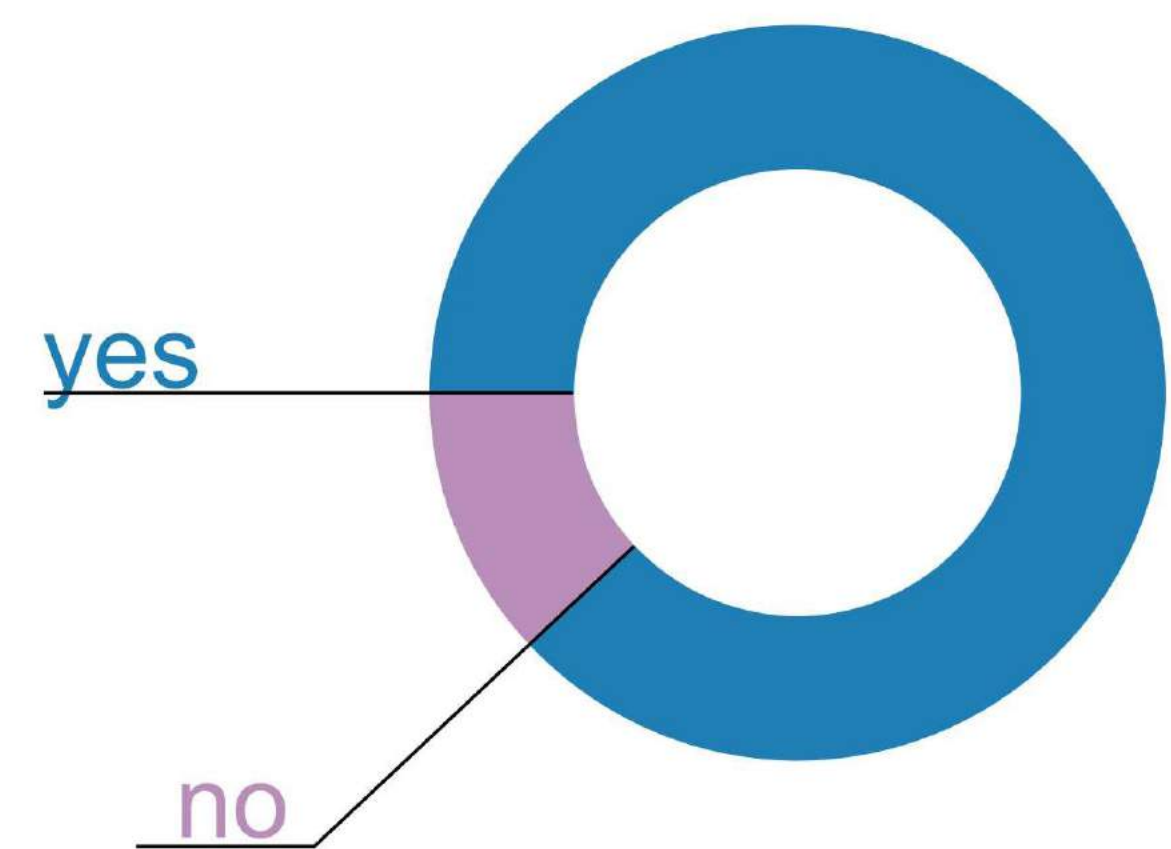


The DAC community survey was available from June 21, 2018 to July 25, 2018 and received 616 survey responses.

54% of respondents are supportive of the relocation and 23% are neutral to the relocation



88% of the respondents believe the existing DAC is conveniently located (central Austin, south of Lady Bird Lake).



“Please keep the DAC downtown in the same area - it’s key to serving all members of the Austin community!”

What do you like about the current DAC facility?

- “The affordability of the activities offered there. The down-to-Earth, fun staff.”
- “Location, large gallery space, variety of affordable classes.”
- “The Dougherty is an amazing concept. A centrally located arts facility is very Austin.”
- “Unpretentious and a great location.”
- “It’s funky, it’s functional and truly multipurpose.”

What is your primary concern about relocating the DAC on the Butler Shores site?

- “Do not alter those little league fields!”
- 50% of respondents were primarily concerned with parking and traffic
- Returning the current site to parkland
- Rising cost of venue rental/classes and programs to offset construction costs



Adjustments Based on Feedback

- Removed vehicular drive in favor of pedestrian connection to adjacent green space
- Strengthened trail connection across the site to connect to Hike and Bike Trail
- Enhanced concepts for Cultural Park and reconfigured circulation routes to preserve more existing trees
- Redesigned Toomey pedestrian plaza to accommodate attractive, green space



Areas for Further Study

- Traffic calming and mitigation
- Riverside Drive and Toomey Road access
- Parking counts and strategies
- Coordination with surrounding facilities
- Streetscape improvements
- Parkland amenities

What We Heard/What We Learned



Fall 2018 November 6th Bond Passes

Winter 2018 - Spring 2019 Seek Board, Commission and Council approvals of proposed site

Spring 2019 - Fall 2019 Issue RFQ, negotiate design contract and seek Council approval

Fall 2019 - Summer 2021 Community engagement, design, permitting and bidding

Summer 2021 - Winter 2022/23 Construction phase

Next Steps

