

Burlingame Town Square

Community input from the Social Pinpoint Website as of 04/21/2021

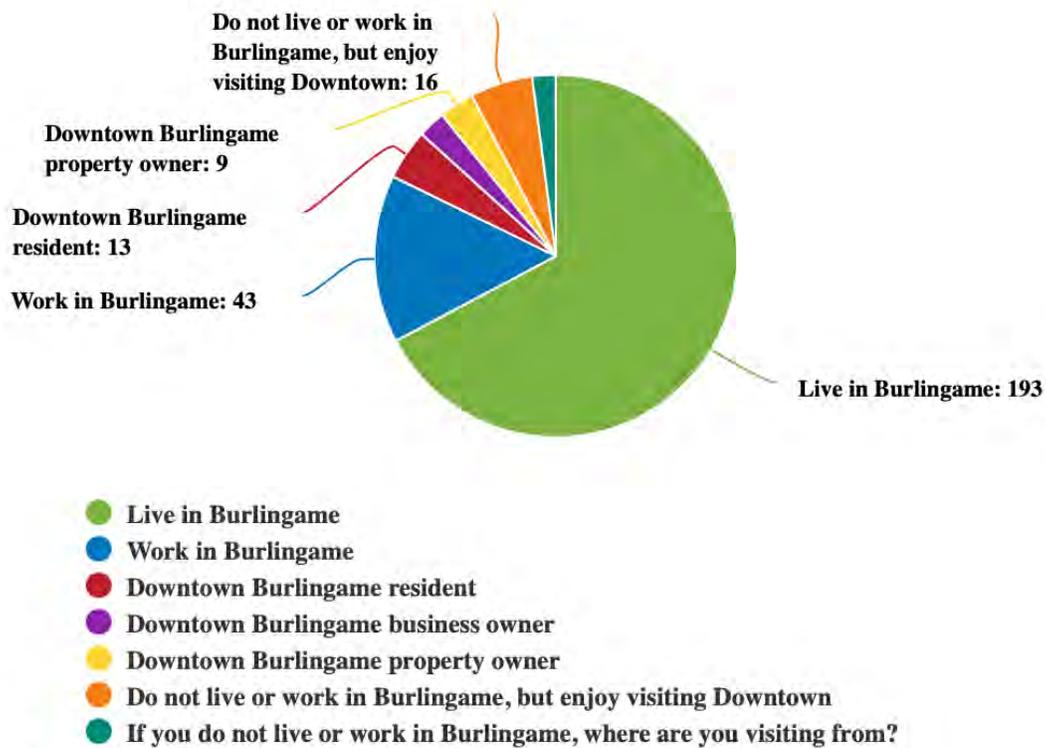
<https://burlingame.mysocialpinpoint.com/townsquare/>

Summary prepared by Urban Field Studio

A. Survey Responses

Q1: Do you live or in Burlingame? (check all that apply)

215 answers

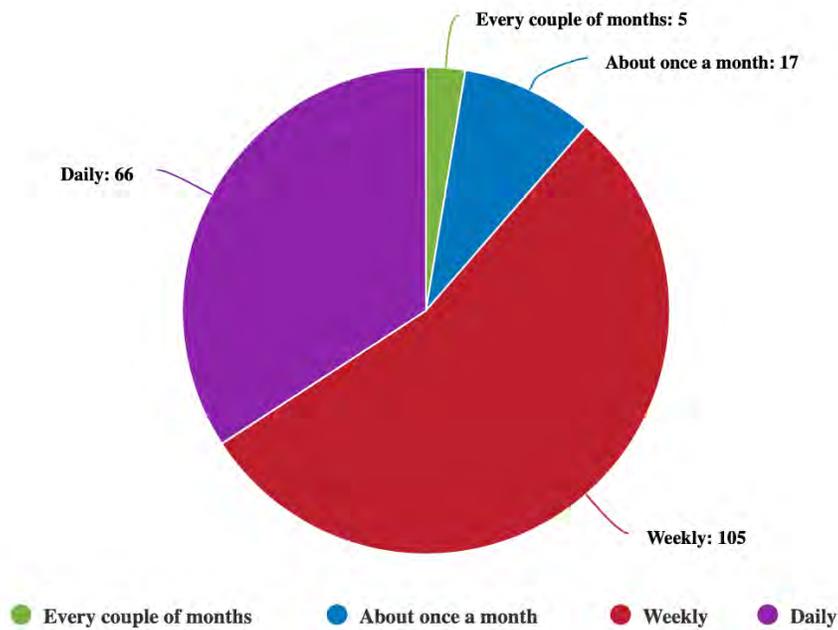


Q2: Where are you visiting from?

0 answers

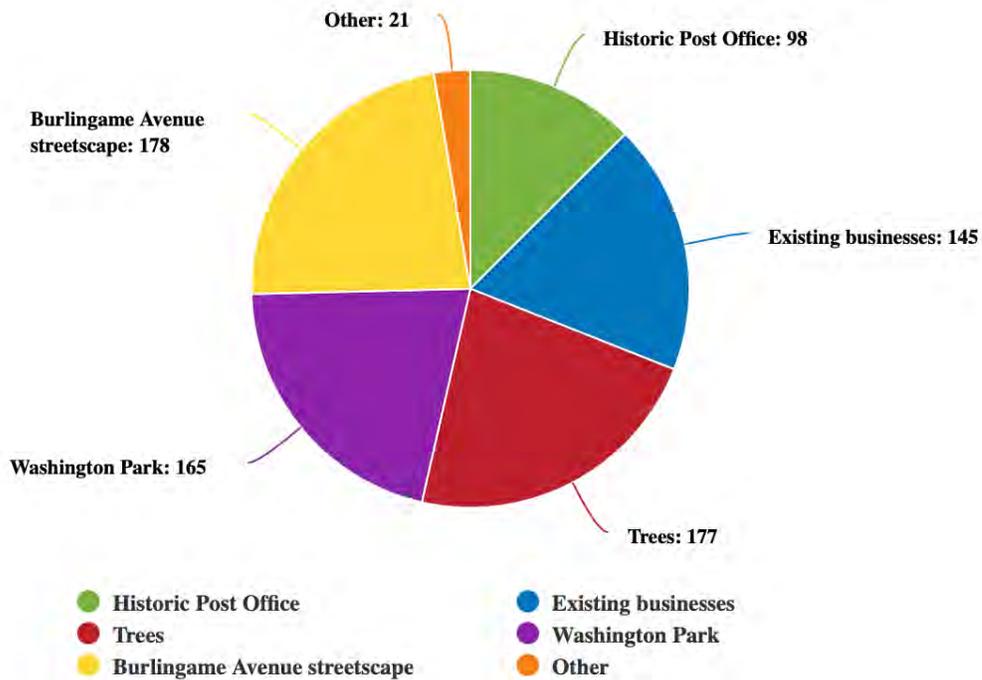
Q3: Do you visit Downtown Burlingame regularly?

193 answers



Q4: What do you currently like about the area? (check all that apply)

214 answers



Q5: What do you currently like about the area?

Other:

- Library
- Our restaurants

Q6: What kind of open space should the Town Square be?

213 answers



Q7: What kind of open space should the Town Square be (other)?

9 answers

Q7. Other:



- A parking lot as it is now
- A town square is a nice concept, but I continue to be saddened that this council prioritizes such projects when so many in our community are suffering, especially now. The Rec center was sold on a similar idea and is costing the city an enormous amount of money, even more so now, given the sales tax hike that was floated to help pay for it (arguably not properly disclosed in the campaign materials) is likely not covering as much of the debt as expected. That is money that could have been used to build affordable housing--and/or partner with existing affordable housing developers to turn Burlingame into a truly inclusive city.
- Build more parking spaces and not the "Town Square." Or use \$\$s to provide parking for Broadway Ave. A "town square" on Burlingame Ave is a huge waste of money.
- Don't do it. You are creating a place for homeless, druggies and vagrants to collect. You are planning to eliminate needed parking . Available parking is key. Without it , you reduce the desire to come to the area. This has a negative impact on businesses
- Not a good idea at all. My husband and I are completely against the idea. Especially with COVID-19 going on!!
- parking lot
- This is a misguided use of city property. Not what we need fiscally plus it's a bad location. A better solution is to make Burlingame Ave a pedestrian walkway.
- We should leave it as a parking lot
- Why not postpone The Square until after all construction is finished on Post Office property? There is nothing to lose on waiting and much to be gained. Then look objectively at traffic and parking. One more thing, if you put any type of running water into the Square it's going to make people want to pee. Are you going to have bathrooms? Are you going to monitor them and clean up after the homeless? Lots to consider.

Q8: What kind of activities would you most like to see in the square?

209 answers



Q9: What kind of activities would you most like to see in the square (other)?

5 answers

- Don't do it. Seriously ...you will bring more crime to the city.
- Don't want a town square
- parking lot
- parking of cars which enables people to shop and support the existing businesses
- This is a misguided effort. See previous comments

Q10: What is special about Burlingame that you would like to be represented in the square?
144 answers



- 24/7 police
- 6 story building, too big. I would like to see a maximum, 4 story city, 5 if absolutely essential.
- A downtown that draws the community together
- A nice outdoor landscapes area. Fancy but practical. I do not want to see a mall or a movie theater in the area. I prefer Small outdoor activities and local performances. A large place free of car traffic.
- A peaceful place to sit, relax and eat. Very limited food shops. A veteran monument in an appropriate setting.
- A peaceful, safe, non-commercial space, beautifully landscaped for the enjoyment of locals and visitors alike but with a public identifies not a commercial one.
- A place for people to meet in a relaxed atmosphere. Small gathering place for public events - music, art or cultural displays.
- A place for the community to convene, relax and enjoy.
- A place to gather and eat, drink and be merry
- Architectural history! Low profile development.
- Art and fountains greenery/flowers
- As a 'green' City of Trees, let's plan a small forest to block the high-rise (which I hope will NOT be a cement block but much more tiered!), similar to Peninsula Hospital's parking facility screen of trees. Also, a 'natural' waterfall or stream, or other water feature.
- A secure setting where we and are children feel safe from those less fortunate
- A sense of community
- A small town feeling that harkens to more genteel times, that is reflective of Burlingame's Heritage. More natural elements to park.
- Beautiful trees. Friendly, welcoming people.

- Burlingame has a rich and beautiful history. The architectural style of our Gem of the Peninsula Library to the preserved cupola (in parking lot J) to the old dairy mural and streetcar round-about on Hillside Circle, speak to a more formal (but not gaudy) town square representing the refinement and beauty of Burlingame's history. This golden age style is preferable to a modern, sleek, hard lined, cold design. I suggest the town square be adorned with shade trees that offer a tree canopy.
- Burlingame is a family and older generation-oriented town. The plaza should represent its past but recognize its present and feel welcoming to all. place for peaceful sitting and for families to bring kids.
- Burlingame is a social place, and the downtown attracts not only residents but also people from other cities. Let's use this expression as a social place where people can gather for free.
- Burlingame is far more diverse than given credit for often. The open space should reflect our community and how are community tries to care for each other (except for Stanley Lo, who only is interested in making money and creating ever more bizarre flyers).
- Burlingame residents and visitors are nice people; the square should be a place where they can come together and get to know each other in community activities, events, holiday celebrations and parties.
- California history but also current relationship to the entrepreneurship, science and technology in this area.
- Charm, history, community, human scale
- Charming, quaint village type atmosphere and architecture
- Children, Elderly and Pets.
- "City of Trees" peaceful shady gathering places.
- City of trees, small town
- City of trees: trees and grasses. Benches, shade.
- comfortable for families and for the elderly
- Community
- Community!
- Community. Do not put a huge post office there! There are already enough restaurants and drinking places, this should be a place to be able to sit and enjoy the landscape and the community.
- Community - socializing.
- Family friendly community
- Family friendly, nature loving atmosphere
- Family-friendly options
- Family orientation; trees
- Family oriented, upscale, European style
- For example, Washington Park is interactive. This should do the same
- Getting back to Burlingame as a town instead of the corporate mall that city planning has allowed is preferred.
- Grass and trees

- grass, open space and trees. Sense of community, bringing people together in relaxed way
- Great weather and outdoor space
- Greenery, city of trees, open space
- Greenery, landscaping
- Green landscaping and smaller historic buildings rather than industrial high-rises
- Historical architecture. The new building/buildings should keep the historical theme that represents downtown Burlingame.
- Historical Eucalyptus trees and city founders
- historic buildings like train station
- History of the City, Community orientation, Identity for downtown Burlingame, Continuity with existing streetscape improvements
- Homes for people to live in
- I don't feel it needs to have places for kids to play. There's a playground right there. Nor do we need more trees and grass with Wash park nearby. What we don't have yet is a bigger outdoor space for events
- I enjoy the historical architecture of the city. It would be remiss to not have a eucalyptus tree grove
- I filled out the survey but then saw a proposed photo. I think what makes Burlingame particularly special as a town and sets it apart from other towns on the peninsula is the quaint architecture. I think it is a mistake to continually add large modern buildings with no character to the downtown landscape. We are losing what makes the town unique and special.
- I love Burlingame. I have lived here my entire life. This is NOT the time to be doing this. Nonessential expenses should NOT be spent right now. Burlingame can't even make Burlingame Avenue feel safe. People completely ignore the mask guidelines without penalty. People are without jobs because the pandemic is out of control since people ignore guidelines. Burlingame needs to enforce guidelines by a presence on Burlingame Avenue so that people follow guidelines. Then the pandemic will get back under control. Then, if the economy improves, one may consider nonessential expenditures.
- I love that it smells like chocolate - maybe an ode to Guittard?
- I love the Farmers Market. It would be great to get that "feel" in the square.
- Integrate back of commercial buildings on Burl Ave.
- I personally like the fact that we have some shops that are not big names
- I think Burlingame has an old New England town/Philadelphia neighborhood feel.
- It is a warm, friendly, family-oriented atmosphere---mixture of old and new neighborhoods, comfortable for all ages
- It's a city of trees and gardens
- It's a stupid idea!! I have lived on Burlingame all my life (68 years) and disapprove of this idea.
- It should be well designed most of all, a water feature would be nice, lots of trees to soften all the buildings around it.
- it's not broken so don't fix it.

- It's quaint and feels like a small town
- Its tight knit community and their involvement make Burlingame so special. I've been a resident for over a decade, while I was single and now raising my young family. I'd love for the square to be representative and welcoming for all residents and visitors, with plenty of space to socialize, relax, and come to with the entire family. I also love all the greenery and landscaping everywhere in Burlingame.
- It would be great to celebrate the history of Burlingame, such as with the milk billboard near the train station. Perhaps there is a historical element we can focus on for the town square?
- I've lived in Burlingame my entire life (65+ years) and have always loved the feeling of community. As a child I spent my summers at the Rec Center. I would love to see a gathering spot where friends, family and neighbors could meet to visit. We have enough restaurants/places to eat & drink but not enough places to just gather for a visit. It would be lovely to see the space used for music events like we have in Washington Park in the summer.
- I would like the old Post office restored and turn it into an indoor farmers market open year-round and also as a multi-use space like the ferry building in SF
- I would like to keep some of the space affordable for local people to run a business in this space. No large commercial businesses.
- landscaping encompassing native flora and fauna
- Local independent businesses
- Localized historical background
- lot of trees (city of trees), sophisticated coffee/tea shop (similar to Teavana Yerba Buena in sf)
- Love the historic post office building. Wish the building and parking lot behind could be used for this purpose and the development happen on the parcel currently earmarked for the town square.
- Military recognition
- Neighborly but not sure how that would work
- Nice landscapes and trees
- None
- No need to pick one thing to emphasize. We are and always have a great place to live or visit with a very warm and welcoming atmosphere.
- Nothing. There is no need for a town square, especially at this time. Ludicrous
- Older looking architecture vs modern
- open green space with trees. A place for the community to gather with lots of places to sit and for kids to play
- Our trees, architecture, and "savoir faire" !
- Our wonderful trees!
- outdoor sense of space, trees, interactive art
- pedestrian friendly

- Preserve the history of the post office, create a community outdoor space that keeps Burlingame's "small town" feel. I don't like the 6-story building adjacent to the square - feels way too big for the space!
- Pretty and safe
- Quaintness
- quiet
- Seems like a place where there should be public art - perhaps temporary public art that changes periodically (every quarter, or every 6 months)
- Sense of Community
- Small Businesses
- Small scale satellite city with a strong sense of community, enjoying in the economic growth of the San Francisco Bay Area. So, we have both the larger context and our local version of it.
- Small town feel
- Small town feel.
- small town feel, beautiful trees and flowers, place to gather
- Small town feel. Don't like the rendering that suggests a building with 6 stories overlooking the square. That would block the sun and make it feel claustrophobic. Why bother with a public space at that point?
- Small town feel. Some big buildings are just fine. Music and social gathering place would be ideal and good for the downtown economy.
- Small town, friendly
- small town, trees everywhere
- Small town vibe, trees, community feel
- Something that pays homage to the train station and to Anson Burlingame
- Suburban feel
- that it has a small-town feeling
- That's the problem. Hosting a "united against hate" week while basically avoiding and ignoring the real issues that hate creates is embarrassing. Holding your hand up in a BLM fist does not make you a Black Lives Matter supporter. We need to do more. We need to recognize systemic racism and acknowledge many people who live here--myself included--have been privileged our entire lives. And, government needs to step in and use public money wisely and fairly -- not for yet ANOTHER beautification project. Actions speak louder than words.
- That was a community richly connected to our history while continually striving to grow toward a more just, more connected, more caring community.
- The #1 goal of the square should be to have lots and lots of people there regularly, especially in the evenings. The biggest danger is that all the action will remain on Burlingame Ave. and the square will just be a sideshow for occasional events. It's important that it flow very naturally from the Ave. to the square. Outdoor businesses could be a part of that, as would making a very natural pedestrian flow from the Ave. to the square.
- The beauty of trees all around the city should be integrated to this project

- The grammar of this question is incorrect. Square is misguided.
- The history and walkability and sense of community outdoors.
- The people are special! I would like to see a town square that everyone used, for a variety of reasons,
- The quaintness of our town. The wonderful community. I don't want any more business or condos in downtown. This should be a place to gather. Whatever is sold there should be "pop-up". Food trucks, farmers market, drinks etc... NO big business!
- There is a strong sense of community and a focus on the needs of our children (thank you, Margaret Glomsted). I appreciate our city's commitment to being green and hope that green would be a focus.
- There needs to be a draw for all ages, so the square gets used: grass as well as hardscape; unique playground for kids; plenty of seating; water feature for noise reduction, and NO HIGH RISE BUILDING BLOCKING THE SUNSHINE, which unfortunately is in the plan now. People do not relax next to high rise buildings. 6 stories is out of character for Burlingame. Low rise is the standard to meet.
- The sense of community
- The small-town feel, the trees and urban canopy, and a place to meet and relax.
- The trees and landscaping is great here. I also like the small community feel of the city in general.
- The trees everywhere is what makes Burlingame special and Washington Park.
- The trees naturally. But also, how about celebrating more diversity? Our growing Asian population and current Latinx community seem a bit under-represented.
- They city is once again finding more ways to put small business to death. Your survey is front-loaded to make the assumption that eliminating even more parking is a good idea. It is not. The new garages are too far and will be homeless toilets in 24 hours.
- traditional architecture
- Trees
- Trees!!
- Trees and flowering plants
- Trees and history
- Trees! and our history
- Trees, a sense of quiet and calm
- Trees, great weather,
- Trees, property values, special place to raise a family. It would be nice to keep moving into a more sophisticated look, one more representative of the property values here.
- Trees, space for community to socialize
- We are the City of Trees, so I think it is important to have large CA native trees with a broad canopy for shading during the hot summers.
- We have Washington Park for larger events and play as well as the nearby playground for kids. It would be really nice to have a quiet, green, peaceful place to talk to friends, take your takeout food to sit and eat, or read etc in the Downtown area. Occasional art fairs, etc on a small scale. But I'd prefer an oasis in the area rather than a venue for constant events, etc.

- Barcelona by Sagrada Familia: tree canopy that gives filtered light over plenty of outdoor seating. Relaxed atmosphere where you can either get food from nearby cafes or bring something from home to share at a picnic. Impromptu street artists play music/sing.
- Barcelona square
- Bruges, around 5 stories with ground floor retail and a big open space in the middle
- Brugge has a great town square. It's very open with almost no curbs (making it easier for bicycles and strollers). There are cafes lining the square which provides activity and makes the square feel safe. It's also quite flexible, allowing for different events-- concerts, festivals, Christmas booths, etc. More realistically, maybe the side street off of Broadway in RWC, the one next to the movie theater. Based on the plans provided, this space looks really cramped and small.
- Burlingame
- BURLINGAME
- Burlingame's is the nicest on the Peninsula! Mountain View Castro St. is also nice. Bay Meadows for its green open space and walkability. Stanford campus, an island with cyclists and pedestrians, beautiful architecture and plazas.
- Cartagena, All over Europe, Yerba Buena SF
- Central Park, NYC. Green everywhere, walking paths, ponds. something for kids & adults to experience.
- Check out the new one in Merryfield, VA. Nice ideas for a relatively small space.
- Chelsea Market in New York City -- great places to eat and a cool, industrial vibe tied to the history of the city; Piazza Maggiore in Bologna, Italy -- spacious, historic, vibrant full of people just hanging out and having a nice time
- Daylighted creeks: See San Luis Obispo Creek, Strawberry Creek Park in Berkeley. It would be great to daylight even a little bit of the underground creek!
- European style plazas lined with shops, room for vendors, interactive art
- Golden Gate Concourse. SF (with more grass); Redwood City with restaurants and places to sit and eat and concerts and art in summer
- Healdsburg, ca. lot of trees and a stage for small performances
- Healdsburg
- Healdsburg, CA
- Healdsburg, CA, Two Harbors, MN (many years ago, not seen recently)
- Healdsburg has a lovely town square. It has a small stage and plenty of benches far enough apart to have a private conversation. The greenery makes it a beautiful place to sip coffee from a nearby cafe.
- Healdsburg is perfection. Burlingame should exercise caution in height setting of new construction of surrounding buildings. If the Golden Ratio is violated, the plaza will feel claustrophobic and over-shaded.
- Healdsburg, Jackson Hole, Santa Fe
- Healdsburg or Sonoma
- Healdsburg Plaza, Healdsburg, CA and Market Square, Portsmouth, NH - Integrated naturally into surroundings. Not forced. People naturally move through the space or

come to it for a purpose. Other shoehorned public spaces fail, because people have no reason to go there, i.e. Foster City, even San Carlos (a town I like a lot)

- Healdsburg Plaza, Sonoma
- Healdsburg Square
- Healdsburg town square: Historic, greenery, community space and provides a focal point.
- Healdsburg
- High Line: lots of greenery and places that draws people together (I know it's not a square!)
- HILLSBOROUGH
- I like European plazas that do not have cars. I would like a place to relax and listen to music artist. A plaza with modern water fixture. I do not want it to be surrounded by large buildings or housing. It should be open with nice landscaping. I would hate to see a shopping mall. I think Burlingame Avenue has enough shops already and 1/4 of them are empty. We need outdoor space to enjoy a glass of wine or a cup of coffee.
- I like some of the naturalized play areas near the new Bay Meadows development - adjacent to the Roam. I am not a fan of the square directly in front of Roam that is mostly hardscaping.
- I like the one at Union Square in SF - it has a cafe and space to sit and also display art or performances
- I like the public area in Chicago at Millennium Park where they have restaurants and water area where kids can play, plus lots of green space
- I like Union Square
- I loved Boston Gardens when I lived in Beacon Hill, beautiful park space to escape the city. It was popular and well-used but lovely and peaceful.
- I LOVE Rittenhouse Square - Philadelphia. I think it's a beautiful spot in the city. I LOVE that they light the Christmas tree in the center, has a ton of trees on the outline as well as throughout the park with grass for picnics. It has path space for people to walk or sit along the benches, and a fountain with hardscape for kids and adults to enjoy.
- I love Santa Fe town square - but that's pretty unique and not the style we would need - but it is a beautiful place to visit and definitely a focus of the community
- I love the town square in St. Helena with the gazebo and the square in Sonoma. Although there's a lot of activity near those squares, the squares themselves are simple and peaceful and perfect for gathering for a visit.
- In Europe and US many- what I like is a combo of family-friendly and also sophisticated, supporting culture and local history, and here in CA we can add plants and trees.
- In the city of Bordeaux is a plaza called the Water Mirror. I suggest a modified version. It is spectacular and a family gathering spot.
- Italian squares provide wonderful open spaces, usually surrounded by restaurants and other eating areas. I love how there is open space to play, convene, relax and enjoy the surrounding art and people watching
- Jackson Hole, Healdsburg
- Kennebunkport, ME; Mill Valley Lumber Yard

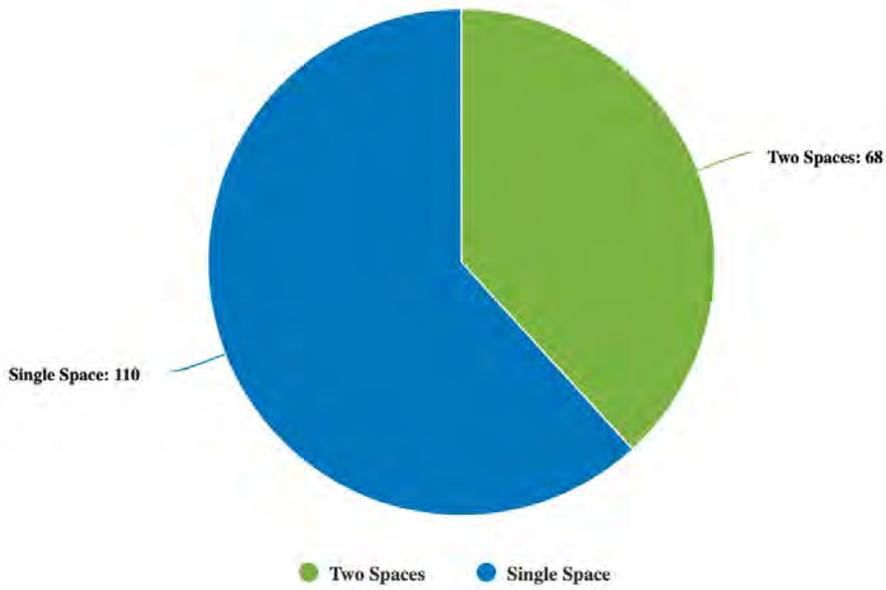
- Lafayette Square in New Orleans. I enjoy the landscaping and surrounding architecture. Redwood City has a cute downtown square but the rest of downtown has turned into a series of high-rise apartments.
- Leister square, London
- Levis Plaza; Justin Herman Plaza
- Los Gatos town square has gorgeous, towering redwood trees
- Lots of squares are lovely, but without much seating (SF, Rome, Krakow, Brussels, Amsterdam) - perhaps we could add 'natural' seating, i.e. boulders, or set out café tables/chairs daily.
- Luxembourg Gardens in Paris. It has a pond for sailing boats.
- Many in Europe. There is one in Lake Forest, IL that is nice.
- Mill Valley has a few sweet elements that would be lovely to model: small open space where kids run and play, tables with chess/checkers built in. Coffee and book shop on square for reading/leisure. I also love the Santa Maria Square in Trastevere, Rome. Cafes surround the square - no cars permitted - children run, street performers play, adults sit in sidewalk cafes and dine/eat/drink. There is fountain in the center, built up on surrounding stairs. People often pack a lunch and use the stairs to sit. It has such a wonderful and casual vibe. There is also a lovely square in London within the Somerset House museum area. If you google Somerset House, you will see the wonderful water play area. Again, there are little cafes and a museum that surround the space. Within the center, the water jets go off and kids run and play for hours. The jets are often turned off and the space is used for farmers market, ice skating, etc....
- n/a
- None
- No...they all have created problems
- Not one in particular, but my favorite elements are contemporary with beautiful greenery, art, plenty of seating and family friendly so kids can run freely and safely.
- Not specifically but a small-town feel, unique.
- Open space with water sounds
- Oxaca's socolo.. sp that is phonetic! town square. Trees and artist painting and selling their lovely wares and lots of people!
- Parque das Nações (Portugal)
- Paso Robles. It has space for picnics, it is surrounded by outside dining and shops, it has open green space to enjoy.
- Paso Robles- serene, peaceful gathering spaces.
- Pedestrian only areas in many UK cities
- Piazza della Famiglia in San Diego's Little Italy. This is a fabulous community gathering space although it is entirely urban, and we probably need more green space in ours.
- piazza Navona
- Piazza Navona
- Plazas are the best. Love Sonoma and Healdsburg Plazas. An outdoor cafe would be amazing.
- Redwood City!

- Redwood City Courthouse Square and all its activities
- Redwood City courthouse square and Faneuil hall are good spaces - we have parks - this should be stone or brick with space for events and gathering including removable tables
- Redwood City courthouse square. It's beautiful, open, center of town. People can hangout, events are there. Would be really nice if Burlingame can do something like that.
- Redwood City has done an amazing job with their town square.
- Redwood City Square - gets a lot of use and offers many events during the day and night, has live music theater(s) that fronts the square, near movie venue, restaurants nearby, transit available
- Redwood City town square is a multipurpose space for performances, festivals, lounging, and outdoor dining.
- Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA Although surrounded by streets, businesses and multifamily buildings, this urban park is a great escape from the bustling city
- San Francisco
- San Luis Obispo, although I understand daylighting the creek does not make sense.
- San Mateo
- Santana Row "ish"
- Santa Rosa, historical
- Seabrookwa.com
- Sienna Italy
- Small town squares in Italy where people come together to meet, eat and talk with friends and there are small cafes and stores that are part of the community for generations to come.
- Soho Square in London. Green space in busy city.
- Sonoma
- Sonoma - concerts and green-scaped lounging options; various towns in Italy - cafes for coffee/drink surrounding a central meeting place
- Sonoma, Healdsburg, Faneuil Hall/Quincy Market in Boston, Central Park in San Mateo. The hallmark of each of these places is that they welcome people to come and share fun events, food, and entertainment together.
- Sonoma – a lot of surrounding restaurants - aspen - high end vibe - would be nice if stores backing onto square could create patios/rear entrances for more foot traffic and would make it safer
- Sonoma plaza
- Sonoma square
- Sonoma town square and City of Cotati town square. picnic areas/benches, pond with ducks, trees, lawn, business close by but not adjacent
- Sonoma Town Square, Noe Valley Town Square
- Sonoma town square. Simple. Retail surrounding instead of incorporating it would be preferred. Six story office mixed use of old USPS discourages small town feel. Too much car ability instead of keeping traffic on outskirts of town.
- Sonoma, with its trees surrounding the square

- Streets of Brentwood- Sand Creek Road 94513
- Tallinn Town Hall Square: dining and drinking right on the square, so there are always lots of people around. Paved with stones, so it feels like it is meant for people and not for cars.
- The famous square in Prague. Nothing better than being able to sit and enjoy a drink and meal outside while the children run around and play. The Point in El Segundo, is another great mixed use plaza.
- The High Line: hybrid public space where visitors experience nature, art, and design.
- There are plazas all over the world that serve as the heart of the community - with space for casual gathering, memorial or other artwork, relaxing, coming together for community events, etc.
- Those in Healdsburg, Santa Fe, all the small campos in Italy
- Though it has no greenery, my favorite is Courthouse Square in R.C., but it is far larger than what we have here. I also love the transplanted mature tree at Santana Row. Wish we could transplant one of the gorgeous magnolias growing along Lorton (that will unfortunately be ripped out for the office/retail project) and use as a focal point in one of the two open spaces. I prefer plazas with flexible space, moveable furniture as is frequent in small spaces in San Francisco, without too much in the way of permanent features, at least until people start settling in and it becomes more evident, how, exactly the space is be used before substantial investment in a fixed design.
- Town square in Morristown, NJ = 300 yrs old and very historic, plus accessible to downtown
- Trees, benches, ice cream shop nearby, water feature of some sort
- Washington Park in Burlingame CA
- Washington Square in New York City. I like it because of the iconic arch, the vast amount of outdoor seating for picnics or hanging out with friends (I think there is plenty of outdoor seating at restaurants), and the surrounding green spaces.
- Washington Square in San Francisco (cleaned up, without homeless) is a great multi-use space. People exercise and also enjoy the park benches and green space and there are events held there.
- We are a small, fairly homogenous town of 26,000 people, in the middle of the suburbs. Sometimes I think people forget that and want to be something else.
- Yes! I love the four "antler arches" in the corners of the town square in Jackson, Wyoming. It would be so neat to have something similar with a huge sign that says "BURLINGAME" on top that people could post photos with. Also, something a little like the big Amsterdam letters.

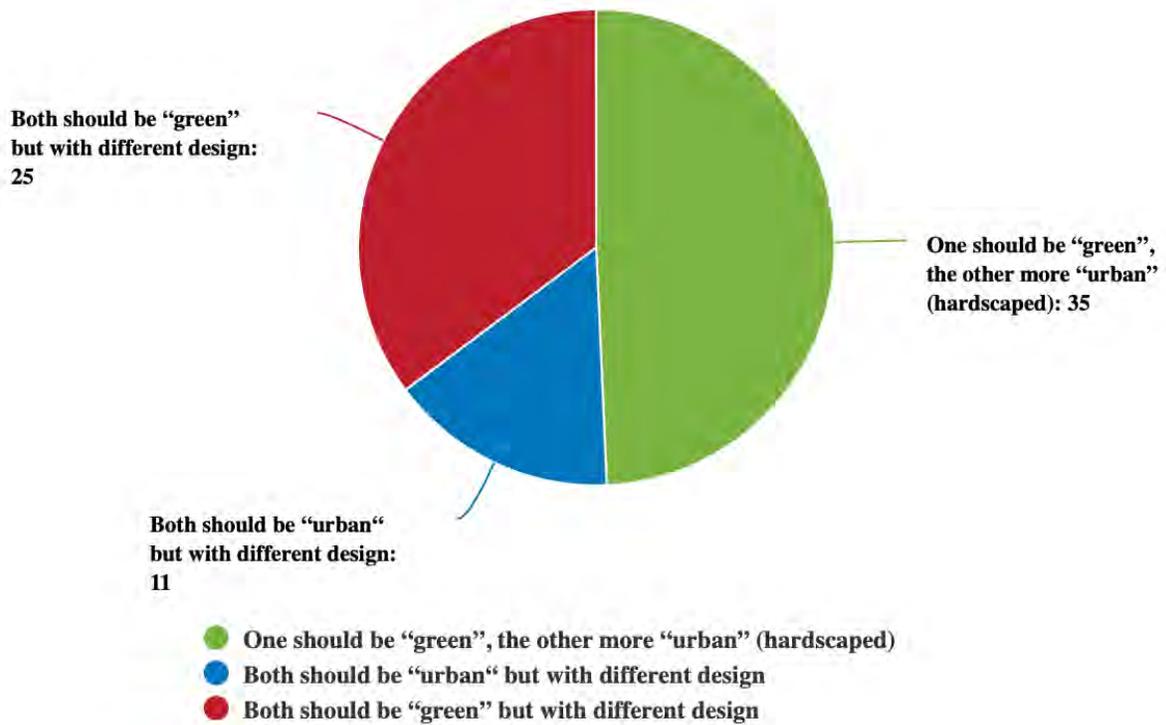
Q12: There are two offset squares in our future public open space. Do you think the design would be better with two different treatments or “rooms”, or one single large space?

178 answers



Q13: If the square has two spaces, what character should they have?

67 answers

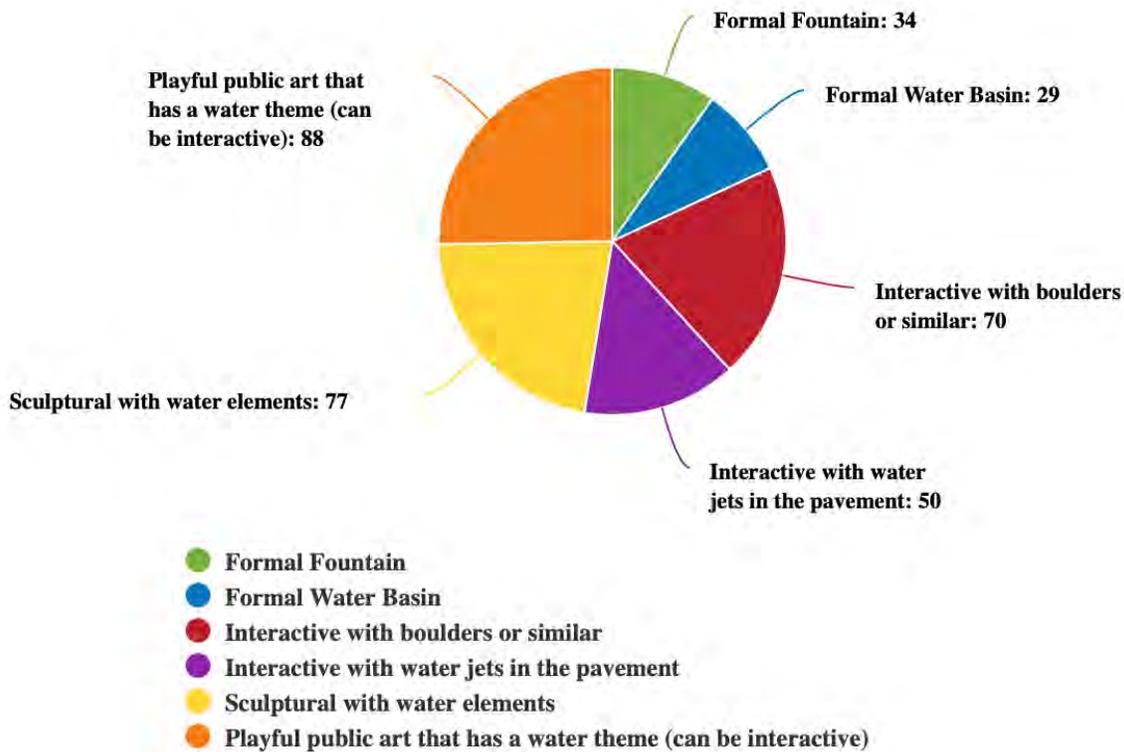


- It will be great to bring some theater experience to Burlingame
- Lots of benches, trees & historic information about Burlingame. Please move the drop off mailboxes to conveniently location.
- Make Burlingame's downtown like NY central park with lots of different things!
- Natural features and less is more!
- Need a lot of space to have enough room for people to eat, drink and hang out. But I don't agree with removing parking from downtown so need to make up for that.
- None
- No statues please. Needs to be modern. Functional and elegant. Do not create a big building with multiple stories two to 3 should be the maximum. Please consider making it a pedestrian, bike only area so children and families can enjoy.
- No water feature
- Please hire an excellent architect for this project. The Safeway (El Camino & Howard) took ten years to approve and it is a design abortion.
- Please make the investment in large, healthy trees. The trees that were planted on Burlingame Ave during that renovation have looked unhealthy and sparse from the start.
- Please make this space beautiful, open for all. Do not fill it with big businesses.
- Prefer NO water features. Impractical, cost/maintenance, wasteful.
- Preserve and open up the existing creek as an amenity. Shows history of Burlingame, creates green space and water feature, historic value
- Shade is important so people can sit, walk through and enjoy being outside. Water is fun but droughts are real. A stage for small performances- battle of the bands, dance performances would be fun.
- Should be a continuous space and Park should be closed to have Farmers market bleed into the park
- Single space, with options for simultaneous events
- Squeezing a "town square" or "park" between a new 6 story mixed-use building and existing businesses fails to address all of the noble and valid purposes for creating a town square. If a town square at this spot is to be realized, then the historic post office should be purchased by the city and remodeled into a the new city hall, both because it makes it more of the public/civic space a town square should have as well as keeping a "lower" historic structure and further preserving current open space next to post office that will be covered with development. If the post office will be redeveloped for private purposes, then area/intersection between city hall and the library should be the focal point for redevelopment into the Town Square. City Hall (especially a rebuilt one) and the Library already make this a civic space, even though dominated by a large intersection today (actually my favorite intersection in Burlingame truly). Spend energy on a integrated city hall, library, town square space, because we already think of that area a nice, parklike, civic area which is the focus for the civic events like the tree lighting. Yes, traffic intersection needs to be considered but think of integrating a large traffic circle or redirected flow in order to "combine" city hall corner, library, and intersection area into a large grand Town Hall.

- The City should consider exercising eminent domain on the Delorme building and parking area to eliminate the pinch point in the middle of the square. The enlarged square should then be landscaped in a way that permits large events and gatherings while preserving the ability to use smaller areas for concurrent activities.
- There was a proposal in the past to open up this area to the creek that's underground. That would be beautiful!
- The space should flow visually and physically and not be choked off by a small neck connecting the two
- Think about exposing the underground creek as part of the water feature!
- This is a wonderful idea and would be a great addition to downtown Burlingame.
- This space is actually quite small for a town square, so the design elements become more important and need to be integrated in the cityscape around it. A six-story high rise is inappropriate in the adjacent space.
- Too abstract for most people. Need examples.
- Too small for two rooms.
- To really appreciate a sense of space, I think the area should be large and open. Therefore I recommend one larger space. Even though the squares are offset, you can turn that into a plus by creating meandering curved walkways.
- Very Important: We support a town square. But our condo community is less than two blocks away. Noise and traffic are real concerns. Occasional daytime events on weekends OK. But not at night, please. We pay a premium to live in the downtown and welcome street activity. But not a square that would compromise our quality of life.
- While there may be different emphasis in the two areas, design features should be consistent with seating everywhere.
- worrying about the height (up to 6 stories) of the building to the south/east~ if too tall will block out the morning sun which will make the space will be dark & less inviting. sunlight is so important as the height of the building are getting taller & blocking out the sunlight.

Q15: With respect to water features, there are water features that are more formal, like fountains with statues, and those that are more fun, like water jets or boulders with water. Which do you think would suit the Burlingame Town Square better, if any?

182 answers



B. Ideas Wall Comments

Activities

I think there needs to be green space and trees in at least one of the two town square spaces. There is currently no green space right downtown, so it would be nice to have an area for picnics or for kids to run around that's right next to the shopping areas. And some sort of a kids play area is a must, even if it's just a climbing area or something more low-key than a play structure. (6 Likes)

Burlingame USED to have a wonderful free museum that featured California artists with 30 working artist studios attached. They lost their home at 1777 California due to "transit corridor" building. It might be a great addition to the Burlingame plan to include something, or this Peninsula Museum of Art, in the current plans somehow. Affordable artist space is so very hard to come by on the peninsula and it offers so much to the community by way of art, culture, and education. (5 Likes, 1 Dislike)



What is missing from downtown Burlingame today is a place where people can gather for free in a social setting and the Town Square could fill that role. The option of deciduous trees will provide good shade in the summer and access to sunlight in the winter when the leaves drop. The biggest challenge with water features (either decorative or interactive) is that we can expect to have extended periods where it would be dead space in times of drought. (5 Likes)

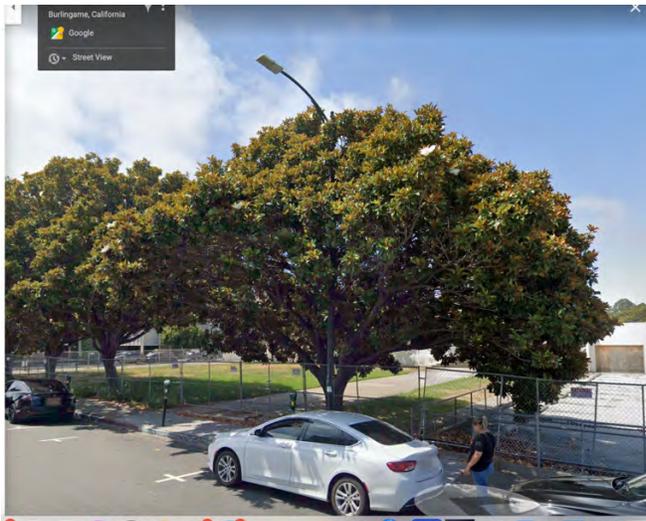
Connections

Hello - can you please keep me informed about this great idea. I hope it happens and has lots of green space vs. grey hardscape. Thanks (2 Likes)

I hope the space can be anchored by a mission and vision statement about Burlingame values. I hope it can feel like a destination that connects our community versus a space that people walk through. Art installations, murals, naturalized play spaces, ample green space and places to gather would all be wonderful. But I also think we can take a capital project and make it a statement about who we are as a community. Thank you for listening. (2 Likes)

Examples of Squares

I think it would be a mistake to "program" too much into that particular space. I see it more as a respite area and hope there is minimal hardscape. The slide of Santana Row's beautiful transplanted mature oak is intriguing to me. Since we will lose all of the beautiful (circa 1940s) magnolias along Lorton, I think it would be great and a further homage to the site's past, to investigate the viability of transplanting even just one of these into the created open space as a "green" focal point. (3 Likes)



For inspiration as to the design principles of a town square my mind immediately turns to Italian Piazzas; here's the historical perspective on piazzas: "In medieval cities, each piazza had its own function: one served as the city's political center, another as its religious base, and a third as the nucleus of its economy." <https://www.walksofitaly.com/blog/things-to-do/italian-piazzas> So first principles might be to consider what FUNCTIONS we see Burlingame Square serving?



Historic Post Office

Squeezing a "town square"/park between a new 6 story mixed-use building and existing businesses fails to address the noble and valid purposes for creating a town square. For a great town square at this spot, then the city should buy the historic post office and remodel it into a

new city hall. Creates a large public/civic space; preserves a "lower" historic, civic structure; saves existing open space next to post office. Otherwise, create an integrated City Hall, Library, Town Square there. (3 Likes)

The Post Office is not architecturally significant. There are many, many beautiful post offices in CA (Santa Barbara for example), but Burlingame Post Office is poorly sited, incorrectly scaled, and lacking in detail. Bulldoze the building, salvage some parts, and free up the design to eliminate this limiting factor. (1 Like, 4 Dislikes)

The back warehouse side of post office is not that interesting, but main lobby plus new build for public purposes and keeping the less dense, existing post office footprint is an attractive idea. However, this property now seems destined for private office development. Getting more open space downtown with park in lot E would be a nice addition but agree that I don't see an open space next to a tall office building as a communal town square, in the civic sense. (3 Likes)

Would be great to extend the concept of a town square into the building itself. Many SF office towers have nice, large public spaces on the ground floor that provide needed social and work spaces, particularly during inclement weather. (1 Like)

Physical Plaza Elements

Open up the existing drainage channel that was a creek. Creates historic value of original City. Could be beautiful landscaped feature with water play as an option. Don't ignore an opportunity that exists on site! (2 Likes, 1 Dislike)

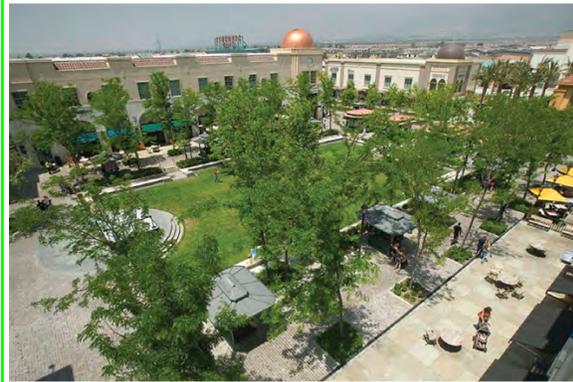
This space presents an opportunity for public art that is lacking in Burlingame. A program of temporary public art - artists create site-specific installations for a period of time (3-6 months for example) - would energize and activate the space while also providing opportunities for local artists. If not temporary art, the square would also be an excellent opportunity for an enduring site-specific public art commission. (2 Likes)

It will need shade structures--perhaps with art incorporated into or on top of those structures, with plenty of fixed seating below, located perhaps at the periphery of the town square, as defining gateways into the square at both ends. Consider an amphitheater for performances. Less grass and plantings leave more room for temporary kiosks, tables with umbrellas and chairs, and eliminate maintenance and water usage. Solar lighting? Public self-cleaning bathrooms like in France.

C. Image Gallery – Images Liked

Please pick the photo examples you like best by posting the photo number as a comment. Feel free to add why you like them. Note that you can also leave comments in response to other people's posts.

1. Square Character



#1: Formal Square: Central lawn, seating along edges, and a small stage



#2: Formal Square: Hardscaped plaza and movable chairs



#3: Formal Square: Open space with different "green rooms"



#4: Formal Square: Plaza with retail pavilions



#7: Informal Square: Organically shaped lawn and edges



#8: Informal Square: Lush small park

Comments:

- 7, 8, and 1. Even though I prefer an informal design, I also appreciate design #1 because it has so much greenery, which is important. I know lawns are difficult to maintain and not drought-friendly, but an alternative with native plantings and a lot of greenery could be considered.
- 1 or 8
- 1 although it says formal this is the freest feeling of the bunch. You need a non-corporate design by module designer. someone who has an artistic bench and a feel for both Burlingame and nature. Otherwise you are just going to have a thing that feels like that place in the mall where you go to relax with your just purchased drink in a "disposable" cup.
- 1
- 3,2,4

2. Square Elements: Structures



#1: Iconic canopy structure



#3: Trellis with a large tree



#4: Food/Coffee pavilion



#5: Outdoor Market Hall



#7: Shade Structure



#9: Community board



#10: Shade Structure

Comments:

- 1,3,7
- 9 and 10
- 4, 5, 10

3. Square Elements: Seating



#2: Stand-alone bench objects



#9: Benches with planters



#11: Large seating platform



#11: Traditional benches



#12: Small amphitheater



#3: Seating with landscaping

Comments:

- Depending on the overall design almost any of these would be nice. Dislike 4,7, and 14; and there isn't enough space for 15
- 12
- 3 but not as much of a formal structure as pictured. The idea is to feel loose and relaxed and not as if you were in a cookie-cutter corporately designed thing.
- 2, 9, 11, 15

4. Square Elements: Landscaping



#2: Tree grove for shade



#3: Signature tree



#4: Modulated ground



#5: Green Wall



#6: Dense landscaping



#8: Large lawn with paved edges and steps



#10: Iconic shade tree

Comments:

- 2,3,4, and 10. Understanding that a signature tree or iconic shade tree doesn't happen overnight. I think green walls will be outdated sooner rather than later.
- 2, 6, 10
- None of these feel organic they are all too formulaic. The is design but no life in these designs.
- 2, 5, 8

5. Square Elements: Play Areas



#1: Large-scale play structure



#2: Play for kids and grown-ups



#3: Interactive public art



#4: Playground



#6: Temporary play features



#9: Temporary play structures

Comments:

- 2,3,5, and 6. Since there is a playground nearby on Primrose, I don't think a large scale playground is needed here.
- 1, 2 and 4 This feels good for one of the 2 rectangles.
- None of these feel organic they are all too formulaic. The is design but no life in these designs.
- 2, 3, 6, 9

6. Square Elements: Water Features



#1: Interactive water jets



#4: Traditional fountain



#5: Traditional fountain



#7: Small water sculpture



#8: Walkable water feature



#9: Water play element



#10: Large water fountain



#11: Linear water feature

Comments:

- 1, 7, 8, 9, and 11. Interactive water jets would need to have a fairly small footprint.
- 1 and 8. 1 for the family area and 8 for a meandering effect throughout the parklet
- None of these feel organic they are all too formulaic. There is design but no life in these designs.
- 1, 4, 5, 10

7. Square Elements: Materials



#1: Hardscape for flexibility for different uses



#2: Softscape materials like gravel or decomposed granite



#3: Combination of hardscaped and softscaped areas



#4: A mix of soft surface materials



#5: Hardscape plaza with different pavers



#6: A mix of organic pavement patterns and landscaping

Comments:

- 2, 3, 4 and 6
- 4. Hard concrete defeats the purpose or at least defeats the feel of a park atmosphere. Concrete and other extremely hard surfaces discourage play except for skateboarding.
- 5, 1, 6

8. Square Elements: Public Art



#1: Illuminated art sculptures



#2: Large-scale sculpture



#3: Usable art



#4: Temporary art



#5: Overhead lights

Comments:

- 1, -but not purple :) , 3, 5 and 6
- 4 all of the others do not feel like art they feel like "oh, we need an "art feature" so let us look for one in this catalogue from Art Is Us. Do not confuse art with art feature. You know when it is art when you stop and feel it otherwise it is an articial feature. The idea of real artwork on temporary display from local artists sounds real good.
- 1, 2, 3,

9. Square Elements: Activities and Events



#1: Outdoor dining



#2: Outdoor events



#3: Farmers Market and food stands



#4: Mobile food stand



#5: Small outdoor stage

Comments:

- All of these activities would be welcome in the space, although I do not like the design of the stage in photo 5
- 5. A small outdoor stage would be nice and when not in use kids could play on it and perhaps it could also serve as an impromptu music space. That would be great. Anything larger should be at Washington Park just 2 blocks away.
- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5