

# MILLS CROSSING CIVIC CENTER

## In the Heart of Our Community



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Q: What is the Mills Crossing Civic Center?

**A:** The City of Rancho Cordova is making great progress toward its goal of developing a civic amenity right in the heart of our community. This public-private partnership's goal is to develop a 10-acre, city-owned parcel into a beautiful urban hub for our community that focuses on the arts, health and wellness, cultural and community space, and creative maker spaces. Located on Folsom Boulevard adjacent to Folsom Lake College/Rancho Cordova Center and across the street from the Mills Station Arts & Culture Center (The MACC), the Mills Crossing Civic Center would offer both indoor and outdoor flexible gathering spaces, as well as market-rate and affordable housing, while further revitalizing Folsom Blvd. and maximizing a transit-oriented center.

### Q: What is the focus of the public spaces at the Civic Center, and how was this decided?

**A: The process:**

- Since incorporation in 2003, the City of Rancho Cordova has envisioned an active, mixed-use central gathering hub at this transit-oriented development site and has been working steadily to implement this vision.
- **In 2018**, the city purchased the site and then conducted four community visioning sessions to determine the goals, uses and activities for the project.
- **In July 2019**, following the community sessions, the city requested proposals from qualified developers to find a developer partner to bring the Civic Center to fruition.
- **In July 2020**, the city selected the developer team of Griffin Swinerton, RIOS design firm, Related California and Mogavero Architects to prepare the final site design and use proposal for City Council approval.
- **On April 27, 2021** the City Council selected a preferred development proposal, and the project team is now finalizing this proposal, moving one step closer to constructing the center and realizing the community's dreams.



**The site:**

- The selected site proposal includes 80,000 – 100,000 square feet of indoor community facilities focused around arts, health and wellness, cultural and community space, and creative maker spaces.



**Potential indoor uses include:**

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| ❖ A flexible black box theater              | ⋮ | ❖ Yoga/exercise/dance studios |
| ❖ Artist studios                            | ⋮ | ❖ Community health clinic     |
| ❖ Gallery/exhibit space                     | ⋮ | ❖ Daycare center              |
| ❖ Maker space/incubator/learning hub        | ⋮ | ❖ Teaching kitchen            |
| ❖ Podcast and audio/visual production space | ⋮ |                               |



**A hybrid plaza/park as well as a community park would be available for central outdoor gatherings that include:**

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| ❖ An interactive water feature    | ⋮ | ❖ Kiosks (coffee, farm stand, etc.) |
| ❖ A stage/performance plaza       | ⋮ | ❖ Outdoor meeting/dining            |
| ❖ Shaded café seating             | ⋮ | ❖ Habitat garden                    |
| ❖ Outdoor meeting and work lounge | ⋮ | ❖ Outdoor fitness areas             |
| ❖ Flexible lawns                  | ⋮ | ❖ Nature play areas                 |

- A 3-story parking garage mitigates on-street parking.

**Q: How is the community space being planned, including the 80,000-100,000 sq ft of buildings, 250-300 required parking spaces, and the 1.5 acres of public outdoor space?**

**A:** The development team is carefully evaluating multiple facets of this project to ensure it is highly successful, including:

- Selecting community uses that will make this project unique from other similar community spaces, such as the Village Green amphitheater, the Cordova Community Pool at Hagan Park, the existing Rancho Cordova Library, or other facilities.
- Balancing (1) the city’s financial ability to construct, operate and maintain brand new community facilities of this size while making them affordable to the community nonprofits; and (2) not overburdening the city’s residents with heavy financial liability.
- Finding the right balance between demand for and size of community space, so the Civic Center is a consistently busy hub of activity.
- Ensuring that spaces are flexible enough to be reconfigured for future uses.
- This is an ambitious project for an ambitious young city. The space plan with 80,000 - 100,000 square feet of community facilities greatly exceeds the amount of community center space in neighboring cities, such as Elk Grove, Citrus Heights and West Sacramento.

**Q: Why is housing being considered at the Civic Center site?**

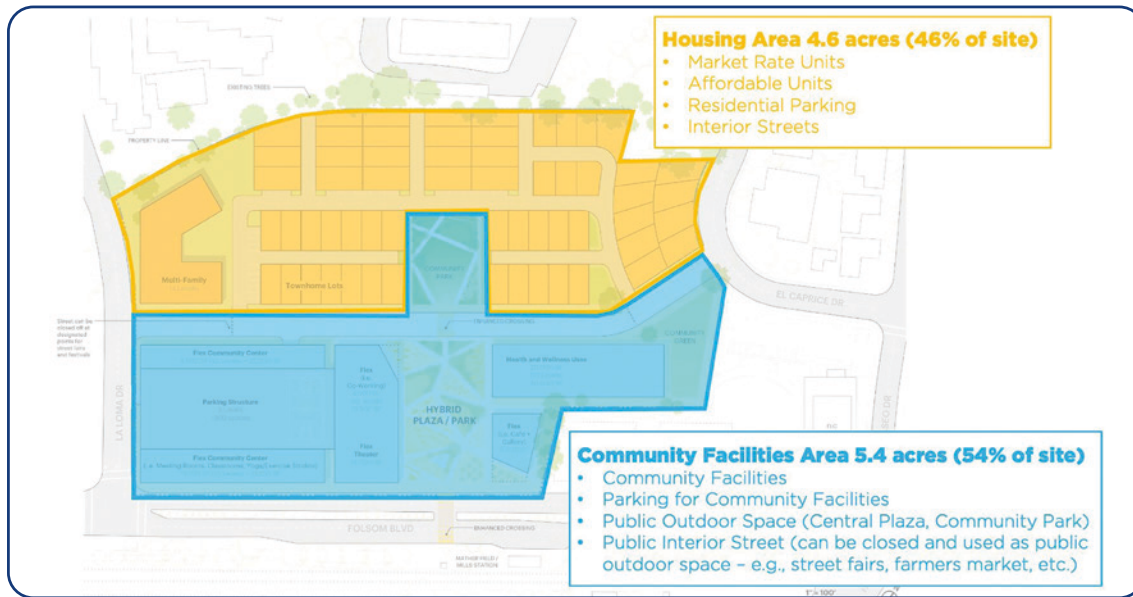
**The Civic Center site is one of only a few transit-oriented development (TOD) locations in the city. Best practices in TOD design and planning call for:**

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| ❖ Mixed uses where people visit, gather, live, work, learn, and play.  | ⋮ | ❖ “Future-proofing” to incorporate flexibility and a mix of “gather, work, live, learn, play” uses in order to accommodate a community’s diverse and varied needs, especially in light of a post-pandemic reality. |
| ❖ Multi-faceted spaces that serve a diverse set of needs for communities and residents while also serving as a catalyst for future development opportunities nearby. | ⋮ |  |

- Housing has always been part of the city’s vision for this site. Since 2008, the site has been zoned Residential Mixed-Use to maximize the adjacent Mills light rail station, the adjacent Folsom Lake College Rancho Cordova Center, and now the Mather Arts and Culture Center (MACC).
- Housing close to public spaces ensures overall activity and more safety at the site.
- The selected site proposal includes approximately 60-70 units of for-sale urban townhomes and 50-60 units of multi-family apartments.

**Q: I’ve heard there will be more housing than community facilities on the site?**

**A:** No, the preferred development identified by the City Council on April 27, 2021 includes 54% (5.4 acres) for community facilities and 46% (4.6 acres) for housing. The primary focus of the 10-acre parcel where the Civic Center would be built is the planned 80,000 – 100,000 square feet of indoor community space, in addition to over 1.5 acres of outdoor gathering space.



**Q: Will city tax dollars be spent to build privately owned housing?**

**A:** No. The city’s allocated funding for this project will go towards the community spaces, Civic Center parking, public plaza and parks. Market rate housing covers its own costs. Any affordable housing may be partially funded through tax credits, other State subsidies, and bank financing, which are separate funds already dedicated for affordable housing.

**Q: Will City Hall be located at the MCCC?**

**A:** No. Early on in the visioning process, City Hall, City offices and other City services were ruled out as possible uses of a future Civic Center.

**Q: Will a Youth Center or Boys and Girls Club be located at the Civic Center?**

**A:** No. Development of a Youth Center less than a mile away at 10455 Investment Circle is already well underway. The design is complete, and the renovation of the facility will be begin in Fall 2021, with an anticipated completion date and opening in Summer 2022. More information can be found on the city’s website here: [CityofRanchoCordova.org/YouthCenter](http://CityofRanchoCordova.org/YouthCenter).

**Q: How does the amount of outdoor public space provided in the site concepts compare with other civic centers?**

**A:** The amount of public space—approximately 1.5 acres—exceeds or is comparable to other significant community gathering spaces around the region, including the West Sacramento Community Center (1.4 acres), Patricia’s Green Park at Hayes Valley in San Francisco (.9 acres), Music Center Plaza in Los Angeles (1.35 acres), and The Park at the Pearl District in San Antonio (1 acre).

### Q: What is not being considered, and why not?

**A:** The selected site concept does not include a bowling alley, standalone movie theater, large retail shopping destination, or a public library. These uses were mostly ruled out during the community visioning process that began in 2018. Prior studies have determined that Folsom Blvd has an overabundance of retail spaces that may cause additional retail at the Civic Center to struggle. The city is continuing to look and plan for an appropriate location for a future Rancho Cordova library.

### Q: Is this selected site proposal the final draft? Will there be any more changes to this proposal?

**A:** On April 27, 2021 the City Council selected this proposal as the preferred development alternative and directed city staff and Griffin Swinerton, the city's developer partner, to move forward with finalizing these plans and securing future users for these spaces. Depending on the outcome of these efforts, small adjustments may be made to the size and location of the proposed uses prior to finalizing these elements.

### Q: What is the Evaluation Committee, and is it still active?

**A:** The Evaluation Committee, comprised of community partners, was convened Summer 2019 to review and rank the developer proposals to assist the City Council's selection of a master developer partner. The Evaluation Committee recommended the selection of the Griffin Swinerton/RIOS/Related California/Mogavero Architects team and is no longer active.

### Q: Who is the city's Master Developer Partner on this project?

**A:** The city has selected the development team of Griffin Swinerton and Related California (with architects/designers RIOS and Mogavero Architects) to be the Master Developer Partner on this project. This team was selected through a year-long competitive process that started in 2019 and culminated in July 2020.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THESE PARTNERS

**Griffin Swinerton** combines the complementary strengths of its well-respected partner firms, Griffin Structures and Swinerton Builders, each with decades of experience serving public sector clients throughout California and the U.S. With over \$3 billion in development experience in the past 40+ years, Griffin Swinerton is known for its trusted, committed reputation with public sector partners, who are often long-term repeat clients. Notable projects include the Riverside Convention Center Expansion, the Burlingame Community Center, the Yorba Linda Library & Cultural Arts Center, and the Discovery Cube Science Center in Orange County.

**RIOS** is a multidisciplinary design firm, working together to create singular, integrated and comprehensive solutions for a variety of design challenges. Combined, RIOS's talents comprise a wide range of professional skills, including architecture; landscape architecture; urban planning; and graphic, interior, exhibit and product design. In 2007, they were awarded "Firm of the Year" by the California Council of the American Institute of Architects. Notable projects include the redesign of San Diego's Horton Plaza, Grand Park in Los Angeles, Downtown Commons in Sacramento, the renovation of the Los Angeles Music Center Plaza, and its 2019 research initiative Toward a Playful City.

**Related California** has a 30-year track record of delivering top-quality, mixed-income housing and mixed-use developments across California. Related works with world-class architects and designers to create distinctive new urban spaces that fit seamlessly into the fabric of existing communities. In the past five years alone, Related earned 20+ awards, including the Global Award for Excellence from the Urban Land Institute and the Housing and Community Design Award for Excellence from the American Institute of Architects and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.





**Q: Where is this project in the overall process of development?**

**A:** Griffin Swinerton, the city’s developer partner, and city staff are currently reaching out to potential users to determine whether spaces can be filled as proposed in the selected site concept. Following these discussions, the city will formalize the site plan through a Development Agreement with Griffin Swinerton and move towards the final design and construction of the project. Construction is expected to take between 2-3 years, with spaces being filled in 2025 or 2026.

**Q: Will pop-up activities be scheduled to test potential uses of the site?**

**A:** Yes. The Civic Center may be developed in phases, so there is an opportunity to test potential uses on the undeveloped portions of the site. For example, we may test outdoor uses such as food and beverage service, outdoor movies and performances, a pop-up circus, a community garden, or wellness programming such as clinic tents.

**Q: How will the proposed uses affect traffic in the area?**

**A:** Griffin Swinerton will conduct a traffic study to learn how the Civic Center will affect traffic in the area and will identify ways to mitigate traffic issues.