

Maximizing the Value of Pershing Square

Preliminary Conceptual Plan

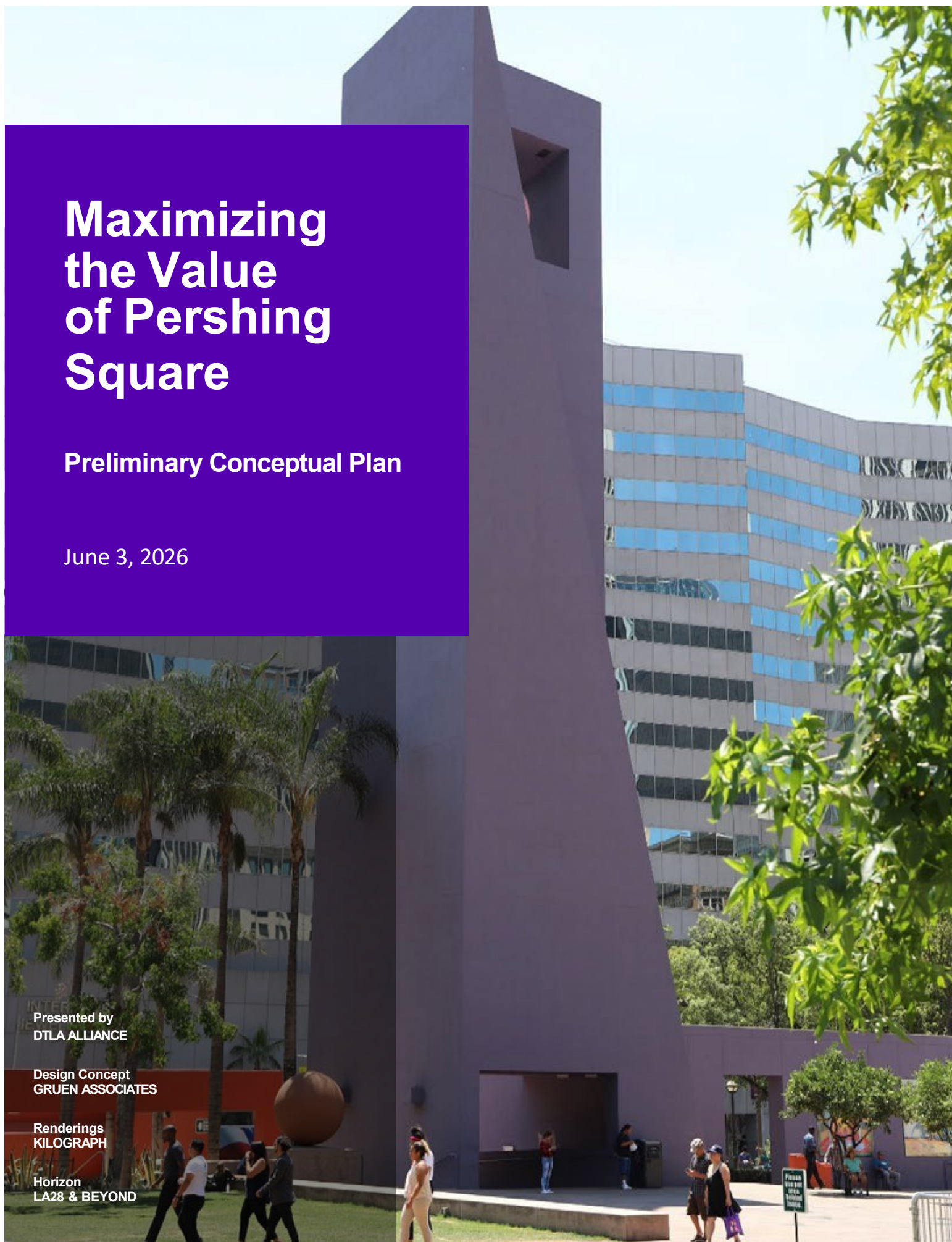
June 3, 2026

Presented by
DTLA ALLIANCE

Design Concept
GRUEN ASSOCIATES

Renderings
KILOGRAPH

Horizon
LA28 & BEYOND





The DTLA Alliance is a coalition of over 2,000 property owners in the Downtown Center district of Los Angeles. For over 25 years, the organization has been at the forefront of revitalizing DTLA with its commitment to enhancing the quality of life and economic vitality of Downtown. From 24/7 safe and clean operations to a range of economic development and marketing programs, community events, placemaking and advocacy initiatives, the DTLA Alliance helps a vibrant community of businesses, residents, workers, and visitors, reach its full potential.

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Pershing Square & Downtown LA

With the 2028 Olympics and Paralympic Games approaching, the urgency to reimagine Pershing Square has never been greater. As Los Angeles prepares to welcome the world, Pershing Square has the opportunity to evolve from an underperforming public space into a defining civic destination that reflects the creativity, diversity, and ambition of the city itself.

Located at the symbolic and geographic center of Downtown Los Angeles, Pershing Square is surrounded by office towers, hotels, transit, cultural destinations, residential neighborhoods, and millions of annual visitors. It has the foundations of a great civic space: a central location, infrastructure for major events, and a recognizable public identity.

Yet despite these strengths, Pershing Square remains underutilized for much of each day, week, and year. Outside of major events and seasonal programming, the park often feels inactive and disconnected from the surrounding energy of Downtown Los Angeles. Challenges related to visibility, comfort, maintenance, activation, and public perception have limited its ability to serve as a vibrant gathering place for residents, workers, and visitors alike.

The future of Pershing Square also carries significant economic importance for Downtown Los Angeles. Research from the Central City Association and the DTLA Alliance’s own analysis demonstrate that vibrant, well-managed public spaces increase foot traffic, support local businesses, improve the perception and reality of safety, and strengthen confidence in surrounding neighborhoods. At a time when Downtown is struggling to recover economically and repair its image, locally and globally, Pershing Square represents a major opportunity to drive activity, investment, tourism, and community engagement in the urban core.

“To help ensure the accessibility, safety, and quality of Los Angeles parks, the City must explore sustainable and equitable funding solutions to address RAP’s budget challenges. New, dedicated funding streams for RAP could include voter approved sales or property taxes, municipal bonds, or partnerships with nonprofits and conservancies.”

- City of LA, Department of Recreation & Parks, Parks Needs Assessment, 2025

Today, the City’s Department of Recreation and Parks provides stewardship of the square, including security, maintenance, and programming. However, like many public agencies, Recreation and Parks operates with limited resources and competing citywide priorities. Specifically, as cited in Mayor Bass’ Capital Improvement Project, the department’s recently completed Parks Needs Assessment (PNA) found that its current staffing levels are inadequate to meet the needs of its growing parks system. We believe that Pershing Square requires exactly the kind of sustained and coordinated effort to reposition and revitalize the park that can be effectuated through a public-private partnership model.

Cities across the country have successfully revitalized urban parks through partnerships focused on programming, operations, maintenance, hospitality, and safety. Examples such as Bryant Park, Millennium Park, and Klyde Warren Park demonstrate how sustained activation and stewardship can transform public spaces into thriving civic and economic anchors.

The common thread across these successful models — and the key to unlocking the full potential of Pershing Square — is activation. Consistent programming, maintenance, and visible stewardship create a park that feels welcoming, active, and safe, and gradually reshapes the public’s perception and the community’s utilization of the park, while helping to strengthen Downtown Los Angeles as a whole.

[illegible]

7,500
Hotel Rooms

Reimagining & Repositioning

The Park's Purpose and Identity

To increase park usage and strengthen its public identity, we recommend defining several overlapping anchor uses for Pershing Square. The park should serve different audiences across the day, week, and year, creating a more dynamic and consistently active civic space for a broad constituency of Angelenos.



Downtown Commons

A welcoming daily destination for workers, residents, and visitors featuring shaded seating, food offerings, games, and flexible gathering spaces.



Art Park

A rotating outdoor gallery for immersive public art, temporary installations, and cultural experiences that draw visitors from across Los Angeles and beyond.



Neighborhood Backyard

A community-centered park for families and residents with recreational amenities, wellness activities, markets, and neighborhood programming.



Civic Stage

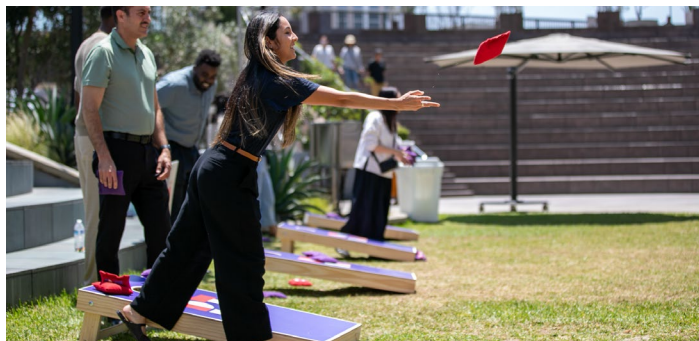
A premier outdoor venue for concerts, festivals, film screenings, and major civic events that bring together audiences from across the region.

Clean, Safe, and Welcoming

To support this renewed identity and increased activity, the park must look and feel safe and clean, which it can through the combined efforts of a public-private partnership that provides more frequent wash-downs, graffiti removal, and coordinated security.

Programming & Activation

Consistent programming and amenities are key to transforming Pershing Square into a continuously active civic destination, with layered daily, seasonal, and signature uses.



Daytime & Weekly Programming

Lunchtime concerts and food trucks, farmers markets, wellness classes, cultural performances, family play days, workshops, and roaming performers that activate the park throughout the week.



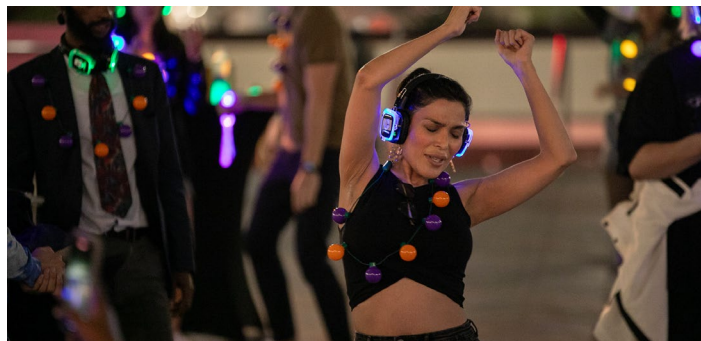
Holiday Programming

Building on the Holiday Ice Rink, additions like a makers market, themed skating nights, and immersive lighting displays.



Amenities & Infrastructure

Movable seating, shaded areas, food kiosks, visitor information, game carts, recreational tables, and family zones to support everyday use and programming.



Signature Seasonal Events

Large-scale civic and cultural events such as seasonal festivals, Día de los Muertos celebrations, creative industry showcases, harvest programming, and expanded holiday installations.



Public Art & Placemaking

Rotating large-scale installations—murals, sculptures, inflatable works, and suspended artworks—building on past successes like Liquid Shard to continuously reimagine the park.

Reconfiguring & Refreshing

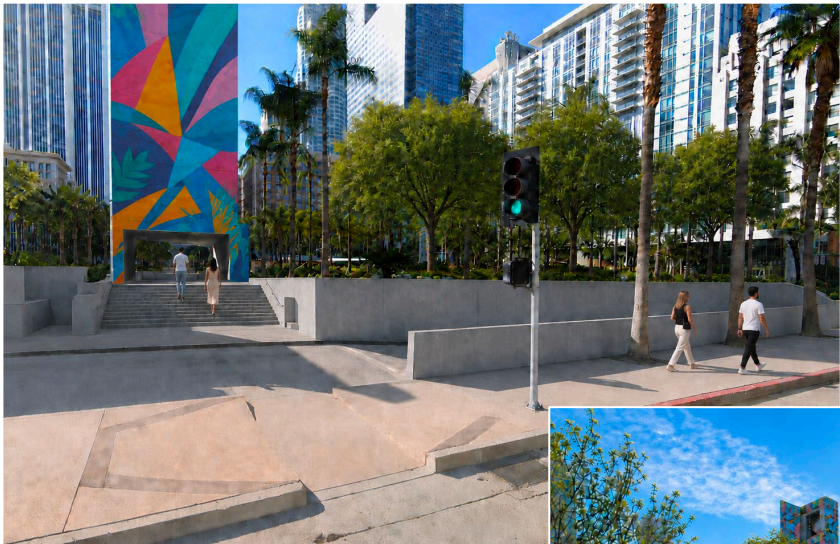
Physical Improvements that Support Activation

While operations and programming should lead the revitalization effort, targeted physical improvements can significantly enhance the usability, comfort, and connectivity of Pershing Square—signaling a new era for the park and a commitment to its long-term success.

Gruen Associates, the park renovation’s architect of record, has developed an interim improvement strategy that can be implemented quickly and cost-effectively alongside enhanced programming and maintenance, to immediately shift public perception and increase utilization of the park while building momentum toward larger capital investments in the future.

Even modest interventions, such as movable seating, café lighting, umbrellas, games, food kiosks, and temporary art – when coupled with enhanced programming and maintenance – can meaningfully transform how the park feels and functions day to day.





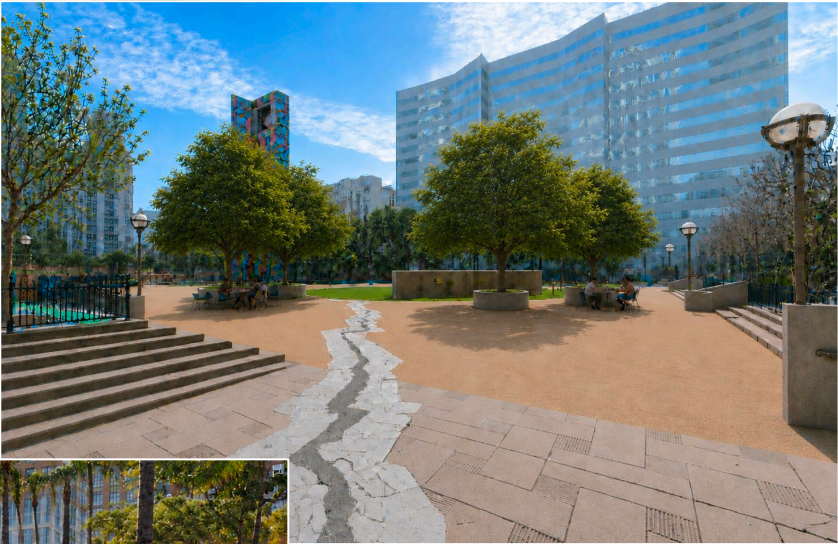
Key design priorities include:

Enhanced Visibility & Accessibility

Removal and reduction of walls to improve sightlines and ease of access to the park.

Increased Softscape

Replace areas of paving with decomposed granite to soften the park's hardscape.



Enhanced Landscaping

Refurbish the park's understory, adding new California native planting to existing landscape.

Increased Shade

Plant canopy trees and add shade umbrellas and sails to increase comfort in the park.

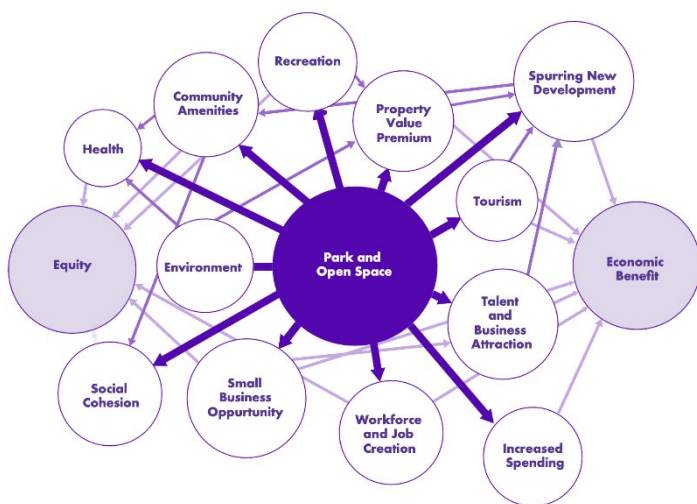


Ripple Effect of Revitalizing Parks

Public-Private Partnerships Work

Research from the Central City Association’s *Creating Vibrant Urban Parks and Open Spaces through Public-Private Partnerships: Lessons for Los Angeles* underscores a clear point: urban parks succeed when cities pair public investment with long-term, structured partnerships that bring additional capacity, funding, and stewardship to operations, programming, and maintenance.

As Downtown Los Angeles continues to grow, projected to reach roughly 250,000 residents by 2040, the demand for high-quality public space will only intensify. At the same time, the scale and expectations of modern civic parks increasingly exceed what traditional municipal operating models can deliver alone. The CCA report highlights that while the City of Los Angeles plays a critical role in owning and operating parks, leading examples across the country rely on nonprofit management organizations, conservancies and other partnership structures to achieve consistent activation and world-class performance. These entities bring together diversified funding streams—public support, philanthropy, sponsorships, earned income, concessions, and value capture—to sustain high levels of service over time.



Importantly, this model is not about replacing public oversight but augmenting it. City government often provides essential “seed” capital and regulatory frameworks, while partner organizations deliver the operational flexibility and fundraising capacity needed for long-term success.

In Downtown contexts, this can include collaboration with Business Improvement Districts, cultural institutions, foundations, and private property owners, all of whom have a direct stake in the vitality of the public realm.

CCA's report emphasizes that well-managed parks generate measurable return on investment— through increased visitation, higher adjacent property values, improved business performance, and enhanced civic life— making them catalytic infrastructure for urban recovery and growth.

The report also provides several instructive case studies demonstrating that coordinated management, consistent programming, strong maintenance standards, and dedicated operational stewardship tend to improve public perception and drive sustained economic and social impact.

These models demonstrate that when parks are supported by nimble, well-resourced operating entities, they become not only civic amenities, but economic engines—anchoring downtown recovery, strengthening community identity, and delivering outsized public benefit relative to their investment.

Results from Around the Country

Bryant Park

NEW YORK

“Heavy, compelling programming schedules can drive activation, transforming parks that suffer challenges of public perception and helping to reduce crime with more “eyes on the street.”¹

“A seven-year push combined supplementary park maintenance, temporary kiosks, and public events ranging from historical park tours to concerts, which reduced crime by 92 percent and doubled the number of annual park visitors.”²



Klyde Warren Park

DALLAS

“The park stimulated adjacent real estate development and increased tax revenue. Impact studies project \$312.7 million in economic benefit and \$12.7 million in direct tax revenue. Adjacent commercial rents have increased 32%.”³



Market Square Park

HOUSTON

“On August 28, 2010, Market Square Park reopened to the public and spurred a neighborhood revitalization that makes the park and the Historic District surrounding it among the most popular destinations in the city.”⁴



Fountain Square

CINCINNATI

“The renovation continues to bring people back to downtown Cincinnati in record numbers and has resulted in the investment of nearly \$403 million in additional private dollars in the Fountain Square District and Backstage District. It continues to serve as a catalyst for new residential, retail and restaurant venues.”⁵



¹ “Examining Public Private Partnerships to Create Vibrant Urban Parks and Open Spaces, CCA, 2022

² <https://bryantpark.org/blog/history>, accessed 5/29/2026

³ USDOT Ladders of Opportunity Every Place Counts Design Challenge Case Study, Klyde Warren Park

⁴ Culturemap Houston, August 28, 2015

⁵ <https://www.3cdc.org/project/fountain-square>, accessed 5/29/2026

MAXIMIZING THE VALUE OF PERSHING SQUARE



Pershing Square Aerial



Economic Impact

Due to Pershing Square's central location and its density, the park’s revitalization could have substantial impacts not just on the surrounding area, but on Downtown more broadly. With the extent of its current underutilization and the effect that has on activity and conditions in the immediate vicinity and on perceptions of Downtown, even modest improvements could have significant effects.

Dense & Economically Important

Representing just 1.4% of the total land area of the City of Los Angeles, DTLA plays an outsized role in the city’s economy and acts as a central hub for Angelenos.

36%

of the office space
in the City of LA

19%

of the jobs

29%

of the hotel rooms

26%

of new multifamily housing
since 2010

10x

density of restaurant and retail
businesses vs. the City of LA

Visitation

Pershing Square does not draw a significant number of visitors on days without programming. When not activated, there are rarely more than a handful of people using the space. Data from nearby locations suggests that there is substantial room for growth even if only by drawing some of those visitors to the park.

Pershing Square Visitation

400-500

on the lowest
visited days

3K-11K

attendees at major
events

1.5K

average daily
visitors

5K

average weekday
boardings at Pershing
Square station

Annual Visitation		
	Visits	Visitors
DTLA	102.3M	17.1M
Pershing Square	576K	294K
FigAt7th	3.2M	844K
The Bloc	2.7M	764K
Grand Central Market	1.3M	985K

Economic Impact

The immediate area surrounding Pershing Square has tremendous opportunity for improvement, with half of its retail space and a third of its office space currently sitting vacant. Moreover, within just a short walk sits a massive commercial inventory and a growing residential population.

	Facing Pershing Square	1/4 mile radius	1/2 mile radius
Office Space (SF)	3,300,000	13,500,000	33,000,000
Retail Space (SF)	60,000	5,000,000	12,000,000
Residents	700	8,000	32,000
Employees	3,000	42,000	100,000
Hotel Rooms	700	1,600	7,500

Hypothetical Projected Economic Impact

While projecting the financial benefits of revitalizing a space like Pershing Square can be difficult, even an extremely conservative estimate demonstrates the potential return on investment. Based on these estimates, the City of LA could see increased revenues from \$1.3M to over \$6M per year.

Based on properties within ½ mile of Pershing Square:

Property Value	Increased Property Value	Tax Revenue
+1%	\$220,000,000	+\$440,000
+5%	\$1.1 Billion	+\$2,200,000
Hotel RevPAR	Increased Room Revenue	Transient Occupancy Tax
+1%	\$4,100,000	+\$580,000
+5%	\$20,500,000	+\$2,900,000
Retail/F&B Sales	Increased Sales	Sales Tax Revenue
+1%	\$24,000,000	+\$240,000
+5%	\$120,000,000	+\$1,200,000

Potential Partners

City & County Partners

- Office of the Mayor
- Council District 14
- Department of Rec & Parks
- Department of Cultural Affairs
- Los Angeles Tourism
- LA County Supervisor District 1
- LA County Department of Arts and Culture
- LA Metro

Major Properties on Pershing Square

- The Gas Company Tower, County of LA
- Park Central Building, Jany Shabanian
- Pershing Square Building, JMF Development
- PacMutual, Leonid Pustilnikov
- Park Fifth, MacFarlane Partners
- The Biltmore, Millenium Hotels
- Title Guarantee Building, Pacific Properties
- City National Bank Building, Robhana Group
- California Jewelry Mart, Robhana Group
- Heron Building, Tai Lam
- International Jewelry Center, The Moinian Group
- Western Jewelry Mart, Western Gold Enterprises

Major property owners in DTLA (not comprehensive)

- AEG
- Atlas Capital
- CIM Group
- CommonWealth
- Equity Residential
- Essex Property Trust
- Jamison Services
- Onni Group
- Related California
- Silverstein

Philanthropic

- Los Angeles Parks Foundation
- California Community Foundation
- California Endowment

Potential Corporate Partners

16 companies who occupy 100K SF or more within a half mile

- Capital Group
- City National Bank
- EY
- Jones Day
- Latham & Watkins
- Lewis Brisbois
- Oaktree Capital
- O’Melveny& Myers
- Paul Hastings LLP
- TCW
- U.S. Bank
- Wilshire Law Firm

Potential Funding Streams

There are a variety of potential sources of funding for enhanced programming, maintenance, and the renovation of Pershing Square. Revenues from the Pershing Square Garage and TOT are based on the current conditions. Improving the area through a revitalization of Pershing Square would almost certainly lead to increased revenues from both sources. Corporate sponsorships can eventually play an even bigger role, though they may want to see a track record before making a sizeable investment.

Estimates of Hypothetical Funding Streams for Pershing Square

		Potential Funding	
Public Sector Support			
Parking	Revenue	5%	10%
Pershing Square Garage	\$4M per year	\$200,000	\$400,000
Transient Occupancy Tax	Revenue	1%	2%
7,500 rooms in 1/2 mile	\$57M per year	\$575,000	\$1,150,000
	Subtotal	\$775,000	\$1,550,000
Private Sector Support			
	Levels	Low	High
Corporate Tenant Support	\$10K to \$25K	\$100,000	\$250,000
Signature Sponsor	\$100K to \$250K	\$100,000	\$250,000
Additional Sponsors	\$100K to \$250K	\$100,000	\$250,000
Special Event Sponsors	\$25K to \$50K	\$150,000	\$300,000
	Subtotal	\$450,000	\$1,050,000
	Total	\$1,225,000	\$2,600,000

While a longer-term prospect, establishing a dedicated BID for Pershing Square funded by property tax assessments on surrounding properties is a viable option.

Property Assessments			
Area	SF	\$0.01 PSF	\$0.02 PSF
Facing Pershing Square	5M	\$50,000	\$100,000
Grand, 4th, Broadway, 7th	12M	\$120,000	\$240,000
1/3rd mile	30M	\$300,000	\$600,000

Estimated Costs

Existing Resources (<\$25,000 Annually)

Using existing DTLA Alliance Clean Team resources, enhanced services could be deployed immediately to support improved park conditions and public perception. These efforts may include increased cleaning sweeps, expanded power washing, rapid graffiti removal, detailing benches and playground equipment, and modest placemaking improvements such as decorative string lighting at key park entrances and gathering areas.

6-Month Pilot Park Programming (\$25,000 - \$50,000)

To jumpstart improvements in the park, and to have an immediate impact on people’s perceptions of the park, small scale weekly programming such as a lunchtime concert series, food trucks, and sunset jazz performances could be deployed quickly. Events like these should cost between \$500 - \$1,000 each, and generate buzz in the park, creating an energy that “there’s always something happening” in this place.

1-Year Pilot Park Programming (\$100,000 – \$1,000,000 Annually)

Programming investments can scale based on available funding from sponsorships, grants, philanthropic and corporate partnerships. A modest pilot program — including recurring small-scale concerts, movable tables and chairs, umbrellas, and limited weekly activation — is estimated at approximately \$100,000 annually.

More ambitious programming initiatives, such as holiday markets, flower festivals, cultural celebrations, large-scale watch parties, and signature seasonal events, would require additional funding, generally ranging from \$50,000–\$100,000 per major event depending on scale and production needs.

Interim Infrastructure Improvements (~\$10 Million)

Gruen Associates has developed an expedited infrastructure improvement approach focused on creating a more presentable, approachable, and activation-ready park in advance of larger-scale, longer-term renovations.

This “Minimum Viable Product” strategy is estimated at approximately \$10 million and would prioritize high-impact improvements that support accessibility, programming, large-scale events, watch parties, landscaping, seating, lighting, and overall visitor experience.

Timeline

Key Upcoming Dates

June 5, 2026
Pershing Square Beautification Day

June 16, 2026
Juneteenth Celebration of Biddy Mason

These events offer a timely opportunity to draw focus on Pershing Square and its revitalization ahead of LA28. The City Council motion to rename Pershing Square as Biddy Mason Park is still pending and could be enacted at no cost and announced in conjunction with the Juneteenth event on Broadway.

Summer, 2026

Based on this Preliminary Conceptual Plan, the City could begin a low-cost pilot partnership with the DTLA Alliance to provide enhanced maintenance and programming with seed funding from the Mayor’s Office, CD14, local property owners, and other supporters.

The support of additional partners like CCA, DTLA RA, DLANC, LA County, Metro, LA Parks Foundation, Biddy Mason Foundation, local property owners and businesses could also be enlisted, beginning the larger-scale, longer-term effort to fund and execute the capital improvement part of the plan.

Construction Schedule

Fall, 2026

Leveraging work already approved through plan check, the Interim Renovation Plan could be completed in 17 months - in time for LA28 if begun by October 2026.

Update plans 2 months	Contractor procurement 2 months
Presentations and consensus building 1 month	Construction 8 months
Review updated scope and get permit 2 months	Contingency 2 months

Park Rebrand: Honoring Biddy Mason

The park at the center of Downtown Los Angeles was originally named La Plaza Abaja (1866), and was subsequently renamed Los Angeles Park (1870), 6th Street Park (1886), Central Park (1890s), and finally, Pershing Square (1918), under which it has had a century-long run.



In 2024, a City Council motion was introduced to rename Pershing Square as Biddy Mason Park in honor of the pioneering Black entrepreneur and philanthropist Bridget “Biddy” Mason whose life and legacy are deeply tied to the history of Los Angeles, particularly Downtown, including her role in building community, providing care, and shaping early civic life after gaining her freedom in California.

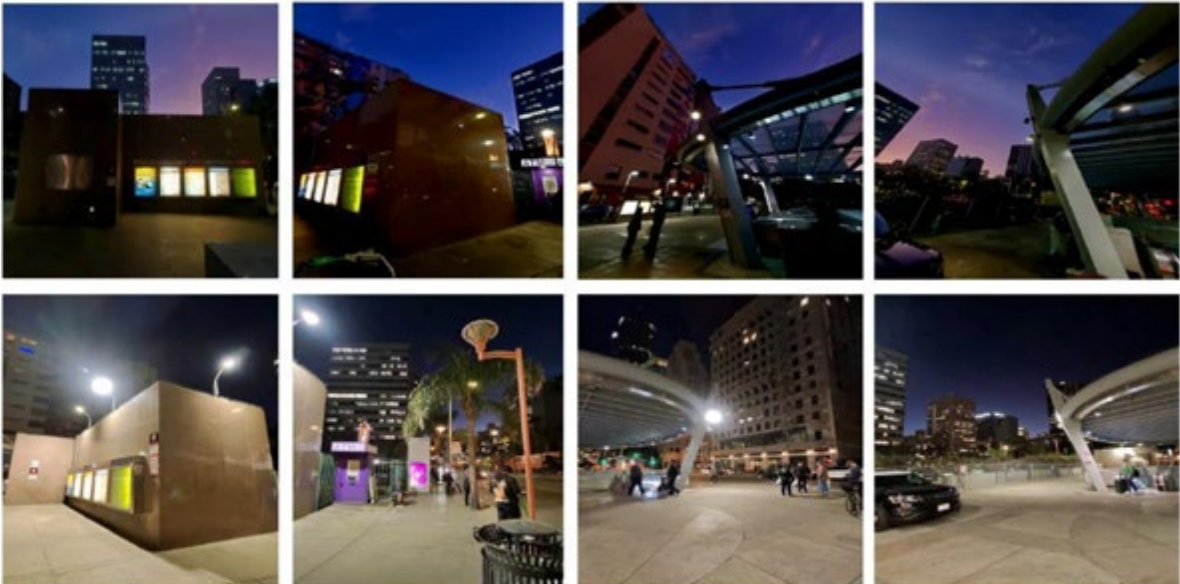
In addition to celebrating an iconic Angeleno, a rename presents a timely opportunity to reframe the identity of the square as a park, emphasizing themes of resilience, community stewardship, and civic contribution. Rebranding the park also presents new fundraising opportunities. In the context of a broader revitalization effort, the name change would reinforce the park’s evolution as a dynamic, welcoming and meaningfully rooted public space for all Angelenos.

Metro Pershing Square Station

Station & Plaza Improvement Plans

Metro’s Station Experience Department has made several improvements to Metro’s Pershing Square station, including improved lighting at the 5th Street/Hill Street entrance, as well as inside the platform. At 4th Street/Hill Street, a new Throne bathroom has been added, coupled with lighting improvements conducted in partnership with the DTLA Alliance and CRA at Angels Knoll. Planning is also underway for improvements to the 5th Street/Hill Street entrance, by moving the fare gates to the perimeter of the station area, updated and upgraded graphics and wayfinding, and the replacement of the existing restroom with a new Throne system.

B/D Line Pershing Square Lighting Improvements (complete)



B/D Line Pershing Square Station Improvements (planned)



Throne Restrooms
(4th/ S. Hill St)



Taller Faregates

LA28

With the 2028 Summer Olympics and Paralympics quickly approaching, Pershing Square will have a unique moment to serve as Downtown Los Angeles’ central LA28 fan zone and community watch party space.

Its central location, transit access, and existing event infrastructure make it well-suited for live screenings, cultural programming, and large-scale gatherings throughout the Games.

Recent host cities, including Paris in 2024, activated parks and public plazas as official fan zones, transforming them into major gathering spaces with live broadcasts, entertainment, food, and community events. These sites allowed residents to experience the Olympics collectively even without event tickets.

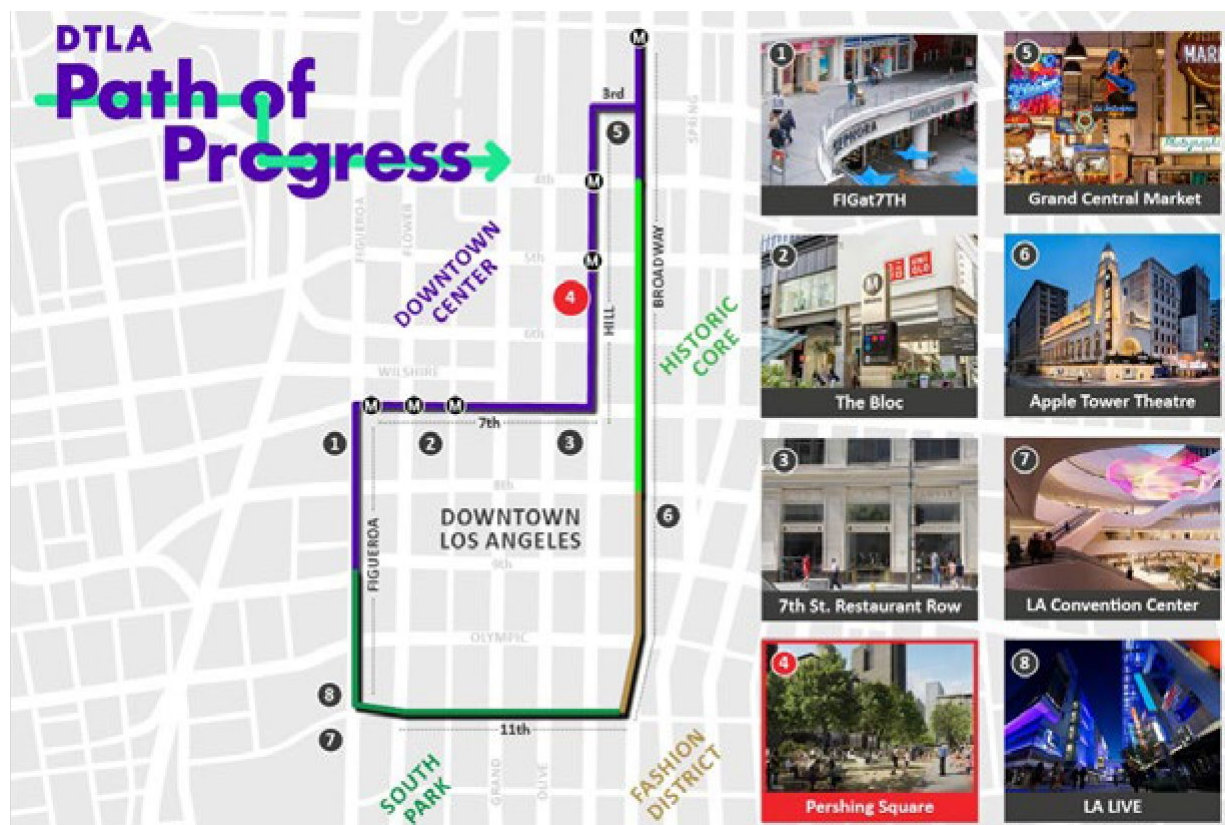
For Downtown Los Angeles — home to more than 80,000 residents — Pershing Square could serve a similar role as a civic “living room” during LA28, bringing the Games into the heart of the community while reinforcing the park’s long-term potential as a premier public gathering space.

LA28 presents a golden opportunity to catalyze Pershing Square’s revitalization – which under this plan would already have begun – and position it to take another great leap forward, both in terms of local usage and broader public perception.



DTLA Path of Progress

DTLA Path of Progress is a public-private initiative to improve public safety and the experience of Downtown Los Angeles before, during, and after the LA28 Olympics by connecting major visitor attractions with safer, cleaner, and greener streets, parks, and transit hubs.



Along the main corridors of Figueroa, 7th, Hill, and Broadway, the Path of Progress includes some of Downtown’s busiest locations and most popular destinations including the Los Angeles Convention Center, 7th Street Restaurant Row, the Jewelry District, and Grand Central Market.

Pershing Square is at the geographic center of the Path of Progress and the heart of its aspiration to make Downtown Los Angeles a clean, safe, vibrant, and appealing urban place – particularly as we prepare to welcome millions of visitors and billions of viewers for the parade of global events headed our way. Revitalizing Pershing Square has the potential to draw in and radiate out the kind of positive energy and activity that will help DTLA reach its full potential, attracting new residents, workers, visitors, businesses, investment, and development.

Like Path of Progress, the successful revitalization of Pershing Square will be a group effort – a public-private partnership involving a coalition of organizations and individuals including the Mayor’s Office, CD14, Rec & Parks, the LA Parks Foundation, DTLA Alliance, CCA, DTLA RA, LAPD, Metro, local property owners, major corporations, and philanthropic supporters.

DTLA Alliance

The DTLA Alliance is a 501c6 non-profit organization that manages the Downtown Center Business Improvement District, a 65-square block section of Downtown Los Angeles which encompasses Bunker Hill, the Financial District, Jewelry District, and at its center, Pershing Square.

The DTLA Alliance Safe & Clean team provides security and maintenance throughout the district with sidewalk washdowns, trash pickup, graffiti removal, tree-trimming, safety patrols, and homeless outreach among its services. The marketing team oversees the DowntownLA.com website, newsletters, and social media channels for sharing information and promoting DTLA. The economic development team is the leading source of information about the Downtown market and maintains relationships with property owners, office tenants, retail businesses, and the broader professional community of DTLA. The placemaking team produces a range of events and activations for the Downtown community and undertakes public realm improvements ranging from street lighting to public art murals.

With these resources, capabilities, knowledge, and relationships across all sectors of the Downtown ecosystem, the DTLA Alliance is well positioned and equipped to partner with the Dept of Rec & Parks to provide enhanced programming, maintenance, security, and promotion for Pershing Square.

