

The David Brower Center: Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the David Brower Center?

The nonprofit David Brower Center is a vibrant place that inspires, sustains, and brings together people committed to environmental and social action. The Center offers educational and arts programs, stunning conference and event facilities, and high-quality office space for nonprofits — all in the greenest building in Berkeley. It is named to honor David Brower, a Berkeley native who many consider the father of the modern environmental movement.

What is in the Brower Center?

The Center boasts 50,000 square feet of space, almost half of which is devoted to office space for nonprofit organizations on the second and third floors. Office suites range in size from 850 to over 5000 square feet.

The Center also includes:

- 180-seat state-of-the-art theater
- Two special event/conference room (capacities of 170 and 120)
- Gallery for exhibits and events (capacity of 200)
- Restaurant opening in fall 2009

How much did the Brower Center cost and how was it funded?

The total hard cost budget to build the Center was \$19 million. It was funded through a capital campaign, thanks to the generosity of individual donors and foundations, as well as bank financing and New Market Tax Credits.

The Brower Center was built adjacent to Oxford Plaza, affordable family housing with retail on the ground floor, and over a City owned underground parking facility.. The Brower Center and Oxford Plaza are independently owned, but were designed together as a mixed-use, transit-oriented development. (The cost above is for the David Brower Center only.)

How much did the City of Berkeley or taxpayers contribute?

None. While the Brower Center is grateful to the city for its cooperation, the city provided no funding. The city did provide funding to Oxford Plaza housing, located next to the Brower Center.

How “green” is the Brower Center building?

Very. We anticipate receiving a LEED Platinum rating, the highest available from the US Green Building Council. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. The certification process begins later in the year. (For more information, visit www.usgbc.org/leed.)

The Brower Center's design features include:

- Daylighting of all office areas, so on a normal day resident organization staff won't need to turn on any lights;
- Extremely low energy mechanical systems using radiant heating and cooling within the building's concrete structural slabs -- 70 percent less energy than used by a conventional building, and 50 percent less than the newest, most stringent building codes;
- Photovoltaic panels on the roof and the cornice at the top of the building, which provide sunshading to protect offices from solar heat gain;
- Solar shading devices on all south-facing windows, which at the same time reflect daylight deep into the offices
- High efficiency lighting with automatic controls that sense when adequate daylight is available;
- Concrete with high slag content (foundation 70%; superstructure 50%), significantly reducing the CO2 footprint by 45% while increasing strength, saving more than a million pounds of CO2 emissions;
- Operable windows and low pressure ventilation via the raised floor system to maximize indoor air quality and occupant comfort;
- Co2 sensors that call for extra fresh air as required;
- Collection and reuse of all rainwater for irrigation and toilet flushing;
- Sustainable materials that maximize recycled content, avoid off-gassing, and minimize environmental impacts from production and transportation;
- Innovative *Self-Healing* structural system -- a vertically post-tensioned system that will minimize damage due to earthquakes.

Who designed and built the Brower Center?

- Daniel Solomon, Principal Architect, **Solomon E.T.C - WRT**, San Francisco;
- John Clawson, Developer, **Equity Community Builders**, San Francisco;
- George Loisos, Daylighting, **Loisos and Ubbelohde**, Oakland;
- David Mar, Structural Engineer, **Tipping Mar + associates**, Berkeley;
- Peter Rumsey, P.E. Mechanical Engineer, **Rumsey Engineers**, Oakland;
- Larry Strain, LEED & Materials Consultant, **Siegel & Strain Architects**, Emeryville; and
- **Cahill Contractors, Inc.**, San Francisco.
- Peter K, Buckley, Founder/President, **David Brower Center** (client)

Which organizations work from the Brower Center?

The Brower Center includes 24,000 square feet of new office space, home to organizations working for environmental and social justice. They include:

- Earth Island Institute, a nonprofit organization that grows environmental leadership through education and activism (www.earthisland.org).
- The Center for Ecoliteracy, a leader in the nationwide movement of educators, parents, and others who are teaching sustainable living to young people in K-12 schools (www.ecoliteracy.org).
- The Redford Center, a nonprofit organization that brings together visionary artists with prominent leaders, thinkers and policy makers as a means of creating innovative, solution-based paradigms for a more sustainable future (www.sundancepreserve.org).
- International Rivers, an international environmental and human rights organization with staff on five continents, working on the global struggle to protect rivers and the communities that depend on them (www.internationalrivers.org).
- Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), a 30-year old nonprofit building a movement of rural and urban people to foster family-scale agriculture that cares for the land, sustains local economies and promotes social justice (www.caff.org).
- Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE), a nonprofit organization that creates innovative projects to support sustainable regional food and agriculture (www.sagecenter.org).
- Equity Community Builders, real estate developer committed to the responsible development and management of property that contributes to the strength and vitality of neighborhoods and communities throughout Northern California (www.ecbsf.com).
- Madera Group, a full-service agency providing services to social profit organizations and businesses (www.maderagroup.net).
- Regenerative Ventures, a consulting firm that works with entrepreneurs and corporate management to achieve their sustainable building goals. (www.regenerativeventures.com)
- Terrain, a restaurant, café and bar featuring sustainable, organic, local, seasonal fare (www.terrainrestaurant.com).
- StrateGen, a management consulting firm that helps businesses create sustainable value through clean energy solutions (www.strategen.com).

Who was David Brower?

Considered by many to be the father of the modern environmental movement, the Berkeley native followed in the footsteps of John Muir, the man who founded the Sierra Club, an organization David Brower led to new levels of achievement and success in the 1950s and 60s. Beginning his career as a world-class mountaineer with more than 70 first ascents to his credit, Brower served as the first executive director of the Sierra Club

from 1952 to 1969. Under his leadership, the club's membership expanded tenfold, from 7,000 to 70,000 members, becoming the nation's leading environmental membership organization.

Brower later founded Friends of the Earth, a worldwide environmental network now active in 52 countries, and co-founded the League of Conservation Voters, the nation's most influential environmental political action group. In 1982, Brower founded Earth Island Institute, an incubator organization that fosters and supports activist projects around the world.

David Brower successfully fought to stop dams in Dinosaur National Monument and in Grand Canyon National Park. He led campaigns to establish 10 new national parks and seashores, including Point Reyes, the North Cascades and the Redwoods. He was instrumental in gaining passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which protects millions of acres of public lands in pristine condition.

Why is there a parking garage under the Brower Center?

Before the Center was built, the City of Berkeley owned and operated a block-long surface parking lot. In exchange for the construction of an underground garage that would replace the existing parking, the city allowed the Brower Center and Oxford Plaza to be built. The new parking garage is exclusively city-owned and operated. Historically the City of Berkeley owned and operated a parking lot at the Brower Center site. In exchange for development air rights, the Brower Center and Resources for Community Development constructed an underground garage to replace the surface lot, and transferred that facility to the city.

The Brower Center is designed to encourage use of transit, and was built within blocks of BART and multiple bus lines by design. It features safe bicycle parking and showers for office tenants who commute by bike or foot.