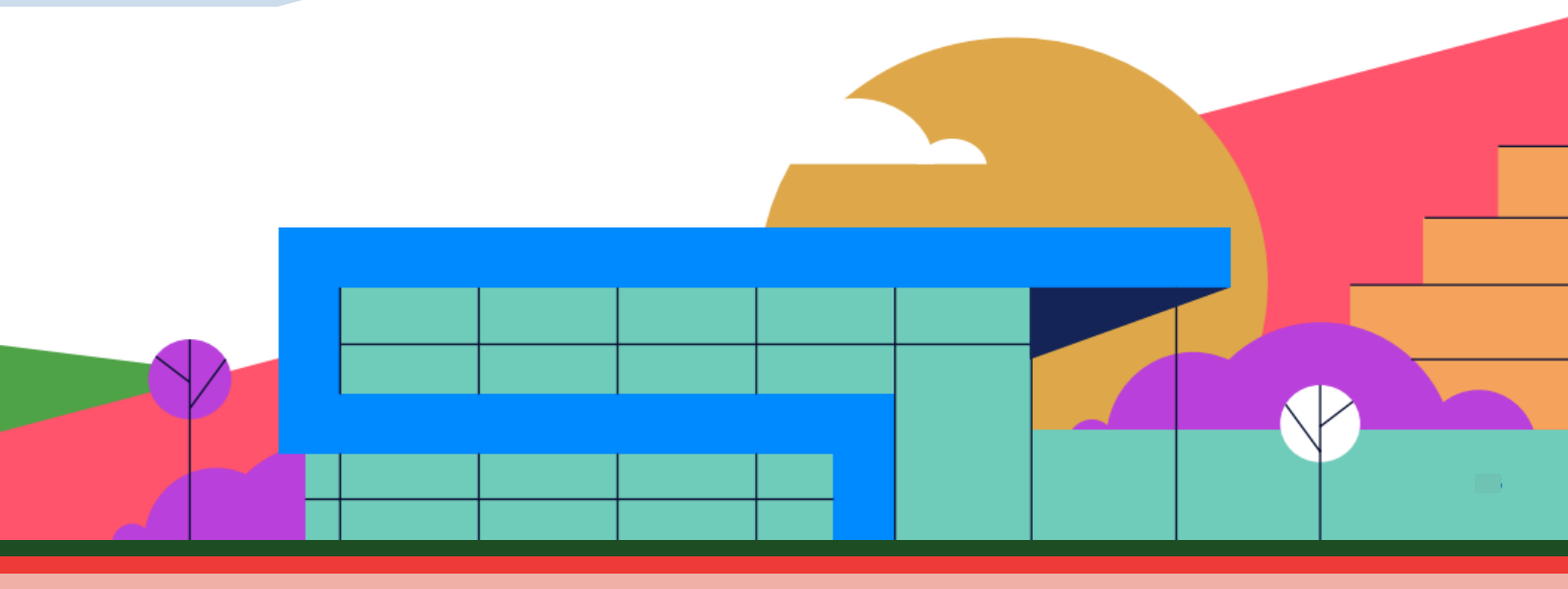


May 2025

**MAPS 4**

**Clara Luper Civil  
Rights Center**



**M4 - RF020  
Preliminary Report**



**MAPS4**  
**FREEDOM CENTER**  
of Oklahoma City  
ATELIER CORY HENRY  
BOCKUS PAYNE

**THE CITY OF OKLAHOMA CITY**

**APPROVAL SHEET**

M4-RF020

MAPS 4 Clara Luper Civil Rights Center


Prepared by

Bockus Payne Architecture  
1001 NW 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 300, Oklahoma City, OK 73116  
405-842-0858




Bockus Payne Architecture

Recommended for Approval



David E. Todd, P.E.  
MAPS Program Manager



Debbie Miller, P.E., Director  
Public Works/City Engineer

**RECEIVED** by the Council of the City of Oklahoma City this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

ATTEST:

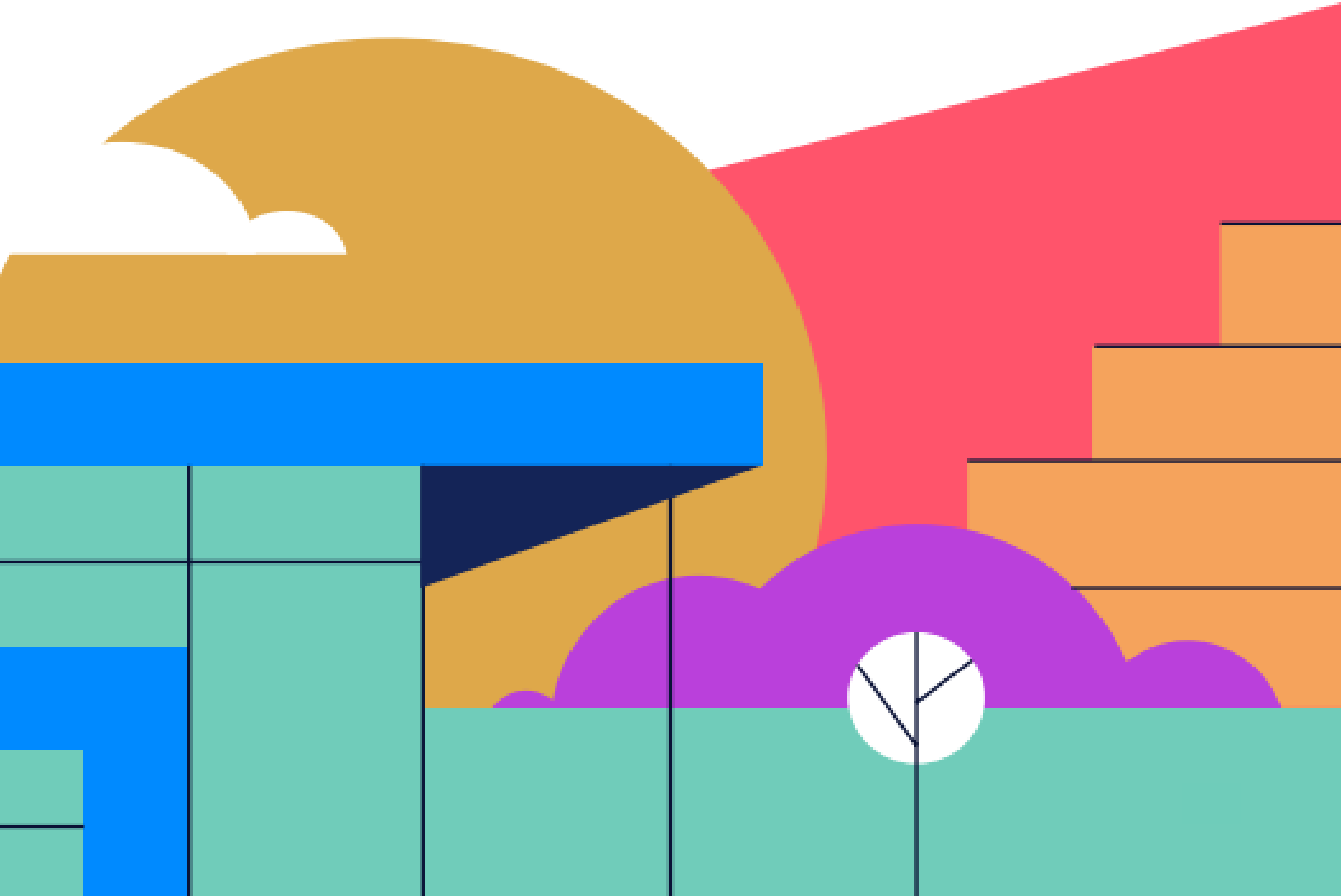
**THE CITY OF OKLAHOMA CITY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

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# Executive Summary

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Clara Luper Civil Rights Center, set to open in 2027, will serve as a beacon of education, community engagement, and activism, honoring the legacy of Clara Luper and her pivotal role in the civil rights movement in Oklahoma City. Clara Luper, an educator and activist, led the NAACP Youth Council in a series of sit-in demonstrations from 1958 to 1964, making significant strides in the fight for equality. The historic Freedom Center, which housed the council for nearly 40 years, is currently being revitalized to enhance the educational offerings as visitors journey to and from the of the new Clara Luper Civil Rights Center, ensuring that the lessons of the past resonate in today's community.

## SITE OVERVIEW

Located on the southeast corner of NE 24th and Martin Luther King Ave, the Clara Luper Civil Rights Center will connect the adjacent block, home to the recently renovated Freedom Center, creating a cohesive narrative of civil rights history. The Civil Rights Center will feature versatile event spaces, along with future planned exhibits that spark community participation and engagement.

## DESIGN VISION

Envisioned as a "diamond within the community," the design of the Clara Luper Civil Rights Center will create an immersive journey through Oklahoma City's civil rights history. The building's layout will emphasize accessibility and inclusivity, providing a welcoming environment for all visitors. The center will not only honor the past but also inspire future generations through its educational resources.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PLANNING

The success of the Clara Luper Civil Rights Center is rooted in community connection. Our robust outreach campaign included:

- Listening Sessions at the Ralph Ellison Library, where community members shared their thoughts and ideas about the center's purpose and design.
- Neighbors Night Out events that brought together residents from surrounding neighborhoods to foster dialogue and build connections.
- Door-to-Door Outreach and Demolition Information to ensure that community residents were informed about the project and could voice their opinions.

Additionally, benchmarking tours to notable civil rights and cultural institutions, such as the Bob Dylan Museum, Gilcrease Construction Site, and Greenwood Rising, provided valuable insights into best practices for design and community engagement. These tours helped us gather inspiration for our approach and refine our vision for the center ensured that local voices were heard and considered throughout the planning process. This collaborative approach has helped us develop a design that reflects the community's values and aspirations.

## PROGRAM FEATURES

The Clara Luper Civil Rights Center will encompass a single story of approximately 17,835 square feet of flexible space, including:

- A welcoming lobby with lounge and prefunction areas
- Educational spaces for workshops and classes – two classrooms, a digital and maker's space
- Event spaces that can adapt to varying group sizes, complemented by a catering kitchen
- Future phases, while not funded within this project's initial scope, are planned as privately funded additions. These will introduce a visitor center featuring retail and café options, alongside exhibit space and archival storage, further enriching the community experience. The project will focus on:
  - Emphasis on educational resources rather than a traditional museum
  - Commitment to reducing barriers and ensuring accessibility
  - A holistic approach to community connection
  - Flexibility in space design to support diverse programs and generate alternative revenue sources
  - Long-term adaptability to meet evolving community needs

PROJECT TEAM

The project is guided by a talented team dedicated to realizing this vision:

- Lead Designer: Atelier Cory Henry
- Lead Architect / Architect of Record: Bockus Payne
- MEP/IT: Alvine and IP Design Group
- Structural: ZFI
- Civil: CEC
- Landscape: Laud
- Exhibit Designer: Gallagher & Associates
- Operator: Freedom Center of Oklahoma City (a 501(c)(3) organization)
- Owner/Developer: The City of Oklahoma City

CONCLUSION

The Clara Luper Civil Rights Center represents a transformative opportunity for Oklahoma City. By honoring Clara Luper’s legacy and actively engaging the community, we aim to cultivate an inclusive environment through design that educates and inspires. Our collaborative design process has involved residents, operators, and stakeholders, ensuring that diverse voices are heard and valued throughout each step of this process. Our team has hosted workshops, community forums, and traveled to explored interactive exhibits that encourage participation and dialogue. These initiatives have not only enriched our project as it has unfolded but also deepened our excitement as we draw inspiration from other impactful efforts across the country.

We are committed to integrating feedback from community members and leaders, ensuring that the building truly reflects the needs and aspirations of those it serves, not only in these preliminary report findings, but as we continue the process of making the vision a reality. This project not only celebrates the trials and successes of history but also sets the stage for a brighter, more equitable future.

SNAPSHOT OF COST ESTIMATE

PROJECT BUDGET:.....	\$12,400,000
MAPS FIXED LIMIT OF CONSTRUCTION:.....	\$11,800,000
PRIVATE DONATION:.....	\$600,000

BASE BID CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATE.....	\$12,306,593
INCLUDES EXHIBIT/STORYTELLING ELEMENTS	

ALTERNATE #1

CONCRETE STORM SHELTER.....	\$105,688
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ALTERNATE #2

MLK POWER LINE BURIAL.....	\$152,400
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