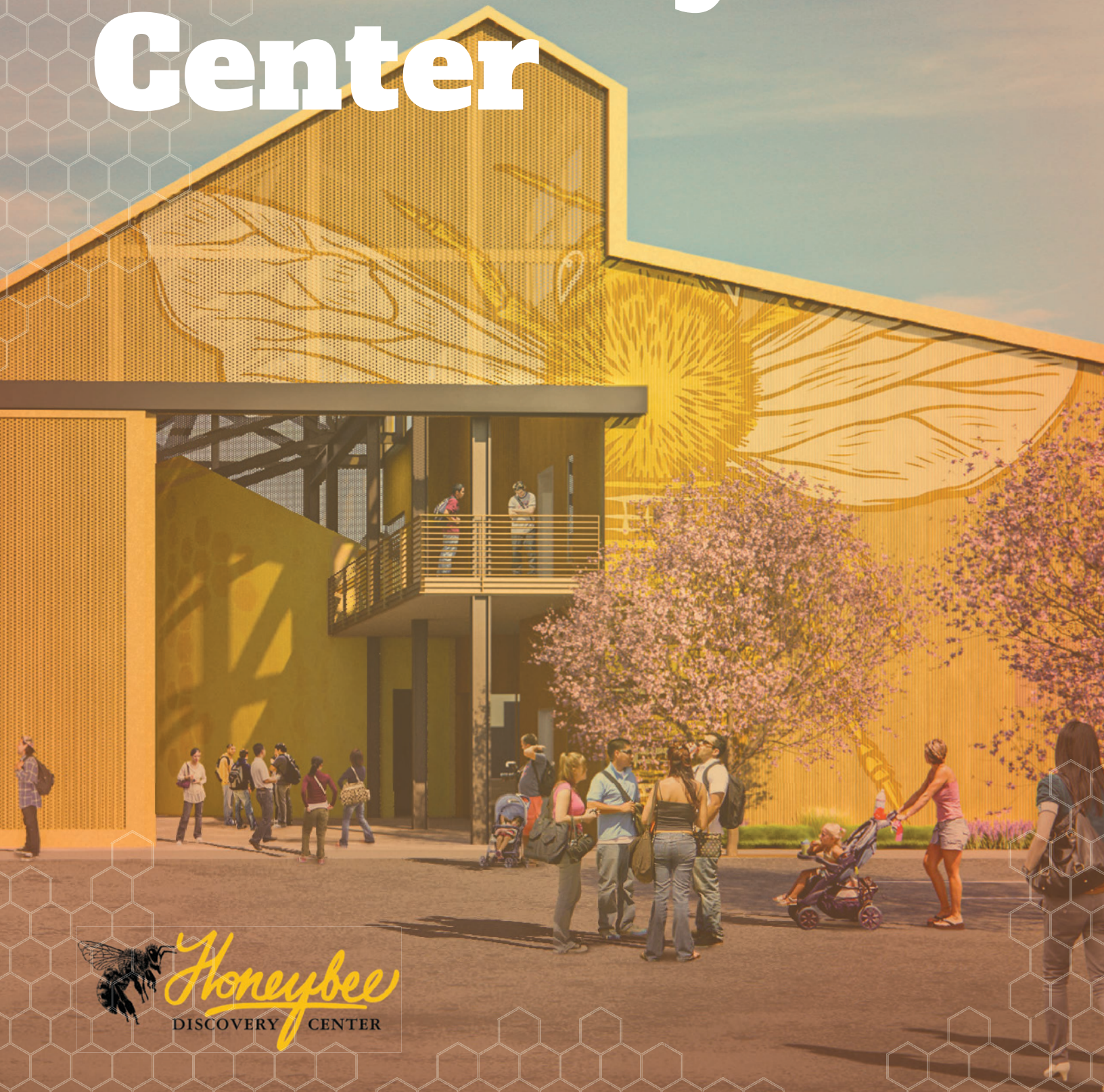


# Honeybee Discovery Center



*Honeybee*  
DISCOVERY CENTER



**Orland, CA**



**Watch this video  
to learn more!**



<https://youtu.be/llgSwSn6SUg>

## **Explore the world of honeybees at a new state-of-the-art center in the heart of the Queen Bee Capital of North America.**

The Honeybee Discovery Center is a nonprofit dedicated to advancing the public's understanding of honeybees, pollinators, and their relationship to the environment. Located in the heart of Orland, California—the Queen Bee Capital of North America—its new home will be an exciting and innovative place for education and community that complements the local agricultural context. It will become the nation's only center of its kind.

### **Background**

Did you know that honeybees are the only insects that produce food humans eat? In fact, a third of all food we eat is directly or indirectly derived from honeybee pollination. Almond trees are pollinated by honeybees, and 81 percent of the world's supply of almonds comes from California.

Yet, this delicate cycle is increasingly threatened. Climate change is a significant contributor to stressors that affect honeybees and other pollinators. Increases in CO2 emissions can decrease the protein content of plants, some of which are used by honeybees as a food source. A 2020 study showed a 46 percent decline in some North American bee populations over the past half-century, a period that also showed a steady increase in global warming.

Educating the public is the key to change. The Honeybee Discovery Center envisions an exciting and informative place in the center of almond country to engage people about this rich and urgent topic.







### The Vision

The new center will be a modern facility dedicated to learning about honeybees, the pollination cycle, the history of beekeeping, and the interconnectedness of ecology and industry, nature and culture, and all living things. Audiences will include global travelers, national visitors, regional

school children, local communities, and scholars from everywhere. The center also will serve as a gathering place for the local community, with events such as the Harvest Festival, World Honeybee Day, and 'OktoBEEfest.' The new Honeybee Discovery Center can be the catalyst to making Orland a global destination.



### The Experience

The entire center—exhibits, building, and site—will be dedicated to education and enjoyment. Dedicated exhibits will range from traditional displays, artifacts, and interactive kid-friendly play areas to immersive multimedia and high-tech augmented reality interfaces. Children and adults will enjoy a diversity of experiences that stimulate mind, body, and spirit. A collecting archive and display for the rich history of beekeeping in Northern California will include artifacts drawn from the regional community. A cylindrical theater can hold an entire class of school children and immerse them in a 360-degree, larger-than-life cinematic introduction to the world of honeybees. A large observation hive allows you to watch bees in action. An interactive exhibit gallery guides you through the pollination cycle. A multifunctional classroom houses lectures, hands-on labs, instructional workshops,

culinary classes, honey-tasting events, and more. The Main Hall stages informal gatherings, community events, temporary exhibits, and private functions.

Outdoors is a variety of gardens and plazas. On the north side, a butterfly garden with pollinating plants is visible from inside the gallery. Above the main entrance at the south, a rooftop pollinator garden is rich with abundant and colorful flowering plants that attract bees so we can see them at work—from a safe distance. The busy bees on the roof are displayed in large, real-time video feeds inside, so visitors can study them more closely. The south arrival plaza doubles as an event space and spills into a shaded park for smaller gatherings and quiet contemplation.

The Honeybee Discovery Center will achieve net-zero energy, LEED Platinum, and Living Building Challenge, making it **one of the world's most high-performance buildings.**





The building itself is an exhibit, demonstrating to visitors how bees can inspire intelligence in how we shape the human environment. Inspired by the ingenuity of both bees and the "prairie cathedrals" of regional farm buildings, the structure is designed not only to house the center but also to embody its principles. The rooftop garden combined with a large solar array creates a doubly photosynthetic roof, harnessing the power of the sun while shading the interior for

comfort. The main hall is heated and cooled without any traditional mechanical systems. Emulating the ventilation of honeybee hives, it passively uses physics to move air through the space and keep people comfortable year-round. The result is a cost-effective and extremely high-performance facility that will not only achieve net-zero-energy, LEED Platinum certification, and Living Building Challenge certification, it will also become one of the world's smartest buildings.

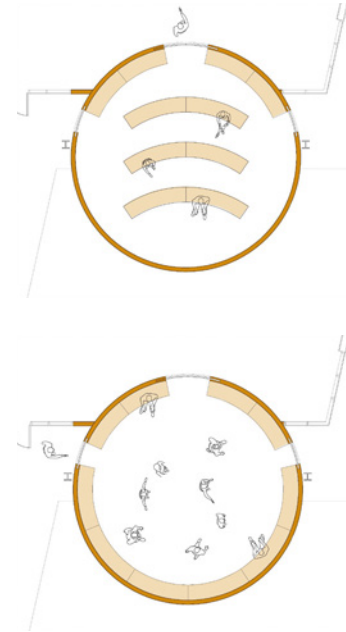


Picture a sign in the lobby: **"No bees were harmed in the making of this building."**





## Immersive Experiences



**Watch this video to learn more about the honeybee theater!**

<https://youtu.be/zJVE2JT2WVo>



Hive Tower. The stair space emulates the light, sound, and temperature of the inside of a honeybee hive.



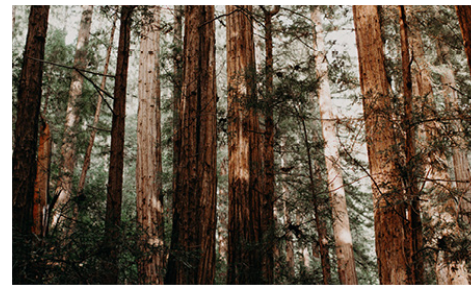
## Design Team

HMC Architects

Gyroscope, interpretive planning and exhibit design

Spurlock Landscape Architecture

Integral Group, environmental engineering



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