

# Seattle Municipal Civic Center Master Plan June 1999

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## **Acknowledgements**

### **Civic Center Oversight Committee**

Cathy Baker, Council Staff  
Barbara Hadley, Council Staff  
Gerald Hansmire, Design Commission  
Dave Haworth, Downtown Seattle Association Representative  
Bruce Hayashi, Planning Commission  
Mark Howard, Seattle Police  
Dennis Meier, Strategic Planning Office  
Kenichi Nakano, Planning Commission  
Tony Puma, Justice Center Project Manager  
Dennis Ryan, University of Washington  
Catherine Stanford, Downtown Urban Center Planning Group  
Rick Sundberg, Design Commission  
Pat Colson, Seattle Public Utilities  
Maud Smith Daudon, Mayor's Office  
Denna Cline, Mayor's Office  
Melanie Reynolds, Department of Neighborhoods

### **Seattle City Council**

Martha Choe  
Richard Conlin  
Sue Donaldson  
Jan Drago  
Nick Licata  
Richard McIver  
Margaret Pagler  
Tina Podolowski  
Peter Steinbrueck

### **City of Seattle**

Norma Miller, Executive Service Department/Facility Services  
Vanessa Murdock, Design Commission  
Marty Curry, Planning Commission  
George Hayes, Executive Service Department/Facility Services  
Lucia Athens, Seattle Public Utilities  
Jun Quan, Executive Service Department/Facility Services

### **Consultants**

#### **Hewitt Architects**

**Seattle Municipal Civic Center Master Plan  
June 1999**

David Hewitt, FAIA, Principal  
Dennis Haskell, FAIA, AICP, Principal  
Jeff Benesi  
Erica Hildebrand

**Weinstein Copeland Architects**

Ed Weinstein, FAIA, Principal  
Lee Copeland, FAIA, Principal  
Lesley Bain, AIA

**Pacific Rim Resources**

Katy Warren  
Gregg Hiramawa

**Transportation Solutions, Inc.**

David Markley

**SvR**

Peg Staeheli

**The Seneca Real Estate Group**

Steve Trainer  
Craig Kinzer

## **Section 1 - Introduction**

Creating a vision for the Civic Center provides a once in a lifetime opportunity to bring to life a new heart for our city - a legacy for future generations that can inspire a physical and philosophical relationship between citizens and their government. A vision and a set of principles have been already agreed upon as a starting point for the plan, confirming that the Civic Center is based on a 100-year vision, that it optimizes public access to events and city services, and that it creates varied and comfortable public spaces belonging to the citizens of Seattle.

We begin with a dramatic site, stretching across multiple city blocks, to craft into a new landmark for public discourse and public celebration of our common life. To meet this challenge, we begin with fundamental assumptions that will direct the physical form of the space.

### **The Civic Center is primarily about public life.**

While the Civic Center includes offices for elected officials and staff, the plan must emphasize the citizenry and access to government over bureaucratic function. The Civic Center should provide multiple spaces with multiple functions - inviting and active indoor and outdoor spaces, large scale gathering areas designed to encourage public speech, and intimate spaces for conversation. The Council Chambers should be visible and identifiable; community meeting spaces and reception areas should be inviting and easy to find. In all decisions regarding the design of the Civic Center, public space should be the highest priority.

### **Bring in the sun.**

Maximizing light and sunshine in the open space and buildings is clearly a high priority in our climate.

### **Celebrate the slope.**

The topography of downtown sets Seattle apart from nearly every other city. The drama of a seventy foot grade change over two blocks should be fully exploited in the design of the Civic Center. The slope should not be simply resolved by blank facades and garage entries, but shaped with amphitheater seating and terraced gardens, highlighted with cascading water, and accentuated with an interplay of angled topography and horizontal surfaces required for human inhabitation. Emphasizing the slope will do more than anything else to create a unique and truly regional Civic Center.

### **Activate the public space.**

The amount, quality, and variety of activity in the public space will be the test of the Civic Center's success. We believe that it is critical that the open space be associated with buildings, forming and enlivening the edge where mutual benefit can occur between outdoor and indoor spaces. We believe that attachment to buildings is also necessary to an open space that functions well into the evening. Without this activation, the new public space will become a detriment rather than an asset to the city.

### **Views for the public have priority.**

The views and vistas are highly valued in our city. The public spaces should have sweeping views over the open space out toward the water and the mountains. Oblique views from all offices are preferable to reserving western views for half of the offices.

### **Extend the urban edge of Cherry Street.**

Striking historic facades line much of Cherry Street. We have chosen to continue the street line of these irreplaceable buildings, and challenge the architects of the Civic Center to match the quality of these facades and extend the quality of the urban streetscape.

### **Integrate the Municipal Courts into the composition.**

The new Municipal Courts building has a special place as the highest portion of the slope, and should be included as an integral part of the campus.

### **Showcase sustainable design.**

The Civic Center is an opportunity for the City of Seattle to set a new standard of sustainable design. Sustainable design joins the highest positive regard for our quality of life with the least ecological consequences to our environment, balancing economic, social, and environmental factors. Sustainability can and should be considered an opportunity for better design. In the Civic Center, sustainability should be integrated with all design decisions and readable in the architecture through visible concern for our region's resources and a high quality of life.

### **Make a positive gesture to a Government Center.**

The design of the Civic Center should offer the opportunity for a broader government center to evolve, including the King County properties south of James Street. The placement of open spaces and buildings should encourage the evolution of a cordial physical relationship of City and County functions reflecting a spirit of cooperation in regional government. The County should be challenged to support the philosophical basis of the Civic Center design principles in their adjacent facilities by keeping active uses as street level and contributing to a well landscaped and accessible precinct.

The preferred scheme for the Master Plan has evolved from these assumptions, and are presented in this report for your consideration. We look forward to a spirited discussion that will lead us to a bold vision for the Civic Center.

## **Section 2 - Background**

The Mayor and City Council authorized the creation of a Civic Center Master Plan in July of 1998. A great deal of work had already been done by City staff, citizens and consultants, encouraging a municipal campus that could invite participation in the public realm, express our civic identity, and be an attractive and lively gathering place for the people of Seattle. This master plan is built on those efforts, and began with a review of these recommendations and decisions regarding City goals, functions and properties.

The City acquired Key Tower in 1996 after much consideration of options for meeting their needs for space. After looking at the various alternatives, decision makers concluded that the most cost effective direction was to sell the City Light Building, and to eventually demolish the Municipal Building and the Public Safety Building. The West Precinct Police Station and the 911 Call Center would move to a newly constructed facility on City-owned property and Police support functions would move outside of the downtown. The Long Range Facilities Plan of June, 1997, called for the location of the Municipal Court into a new building on the half-block directly east of the Municipal Building.

With these decisions, the City holds property on three contiguous blocks rising up the hillside from Third Avenue between Cherry and James Streets, with Key Tower adjacent to the Municipal Courthouse site. The challenge of this plan is to develop these four blocks into a cohesive, attractive and functional civic precinct, to create the best possible access for citizens, and to best utilize the two blocks where buildings would be demolished. In addition, the plan considered reuse options for using the nearby historic buildings owned by the City: the Dexter Horton Building, the Alaska Building, and the Arctic Building.

At the time the Master Plan was authorized, the starting point for the plan was outlined in a resolution approved by the Mayor and City Council and intended to give guidance to the Municipal Civic Center Plan. The civic center is to include construction of a new building to house the Mayor, the City Council and key customer services, with approximately 170,000 gross square feet. The preferred location for this building would be on the Municipal Building block, located on the east side of the block so that the existing building could remain occupied during construction of the new City Hall. The City was to retain the Arctic Building and improve its seismic capacity, and proceed with plans to sell the Alaska Building and the Dexter Horton Building, therein since the space would no longer be necessary for City use..

This plan has been developed with direction from the Civic Center Oversight Committee, the City's Executive Services Department, and a number of well-attended workshops.

## **Section 3 - The Direction**

A series of goals has evolved through the work of City staff and citizens. A vision statement and a set of principals was developed by the Joint Municipal Civic Center Work Group and approved by Resolution 29731 in April of 1998. The following goals were included in the Long Range Facilities Plan of August 1997.

## The Vision

Seattle's Civic Center is an important public place, inviting participation and celebration, and providing a truly wonderful place for Seattle's citizens while creating an appropriate, efficient, and nurturing environment for our city government.

## The Principles

- Adopt a Civic Center Master Plan – Develop a 100-year vision for the City's center of government, retaining flexibility for future decisions and decision-makers.
- Retain Strategic City Property – Maintain ownership of the Public Safety Building and the Municipal Building sites to accommodate City needs strategically.
- Develop Public Access – Create and implement a master plan for public access to City facilities as an essential component to the City's public service goals.
- Manage Civic Center Development – Use City assets strategically to finance and guide Civic Center development.

## The Goals

Seattle's Civic Center should:

- Have a unified image, integrating the City's downtown buildings into a coherent campus which establishes a sense of civic identity and reinforces the ceremonial nature of many public functions.
- Provide accessibility for all citizens.
- Enhance and reinforce creation of a 24-hour downtown.
- The design and signage should be more internally coherent with clear access to services needed by the public.
- Have clearer connections to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Plan for the reuse of vacated properties as part of the overall Municipal Campus Plan.

## **Section 4 - The Program**

[Illustration 1: City Hall Program Elements \(Step One\)](#)

Source: "City of Seattle City Hall Space Program (Draft)" • Arai Jackson, May 1999

<b>City Hall Program Elements (Phase 1)</b>		
	<b>Usable Square Feet Space Allocation</b>	<b>Gross Square (120.5% x Usable)</b>
<b>Departments</b>		
Office of the Mayor	10,751	12,955
Seattle City Council	18,186	21,914
Chambers and Vestibule	6,100	7,351
City Clerk	5,332	6,425
City Clerk's Vault	4,050	4,880
Law, Civil Division	21,334	25,708
Office of Intergovernmental Relations	4,075	4,910
Strategic Planning Office	11,205	13,502
Hearing Examiner	3,285	3,958
<b>Public Spaces</b>		
Customer Service	15,120	18,220
Public Assembly Spaces	11,400	13,737
Partially Enclosed Public Space	5,000	6,025
Retail / Food Service	5,040	6,073
<b>Support Facilities</b>		
Child Care Center	5,922	7,136
Bicyclists' Showers	1,134	1,366
Video Studio	5,466	6,586
Copy Center	1,058	1,275
Central Mail Room	189	228
<b>Infrastructure Spaces</b>		
Loading Service Area	10,370	12,496
Mechanical, Electrical, and Data Rooms	1,638	1,974
<b>Total Usable Area</b>	<b>146,655</b>	<b>176,719</b>
Expansion Space (Unprogrammed)	13,023	15,693
<b>Total Usable Area Including Expansion</b>	<b>159,678</b>	<b>192,412</b>

Options for the Civic Center program have been examined thoroughly over the past several years. The program includes not only the location of various City functions, but also the disposition of various City owned properties. Five options that have received serious consideration are outlined here.

It is important to note that the program is based on the current needs of the City. The master plan, however, envisions a Civic Center that will be able to accommodate the needs of the City of Seattle far into the future. This need for flexibility over time highlights the importance of retaining long-term options for City owned property. For this reason, the arrangement for development on the Public Safety Building block is recommended to be a long-term lease arrangement rather than outright sale, in order to keep options open for City use of the property for future generations.

## **City Hall Open Space Program**

Review of the consultant's work to date on the Municipal Civic Center Master Plan by the Oversight Committee, and comments from the December 18th Public Workshop, have highlighted the importance of the public open space component of the master plan. The open space must accommodate a variety of functions, not the least of which is knitting together the individual buildings of the Civic Center into a cohesive whole. While there is general agreement on the importance of public open space, specifics about the nature, function, character and configuration of open space are still emerging.

The following is an outline of some of the thinking regarding objectives for a Civic Center open space program:

## **Accommodate Multiple Functions**

Adaptable open space is needed to accommodate a wide variety of activities and many different users. While all agree on the importance of open space, there is concern about striking the right balance between providing open space and creating the right conditions for ensuring its active use. The overall amount of open space, and the size and configuration of open space areas, should reflect the types of activity and overall intensity of development accommodated on the Civic Center sites. Providing too much space or the wrong type of space without sufficient activity to enliven it will deaden the complex. Open space functions that the Civic Center should accommodate include:

- Civic space for public gatherings.

The size, siting and design of open space should accommodate large public events, performances, gatherings and celebrations. In addition to accommodating these activities, the design of the open space should communicate the symbolic importance of this public place. Fourth Avenue is an established parade route already, and a potential relationship to future open space should be explored. There may also be opportunities to provide open space that complements government functions, such as informal gatherings of citizens before Council meetings, either in exterior or interior lobby spaces accessible to the Council Chambers, or other spaces that provide opportunities for elected officials, City employees, etc. to meet informally and brush shoulders with the public.

- Neighborhood open space.

While shared by the whole city, the civic center is also part of a downtown neighborhood and provides an opportunity to address some of the open space needs of that community. Providing open space for use by the substantial employment population in the area can introduce needed breathing room and help enliven the Civic Center. The conversion of the Morrison and Lyons Building to housing, and possible reuse of City buildings, like the Alaska Building, for housing, contribute to a growing residential population along Third Avenue. There is also potential for a substantial amount of housing in the residential Highrise zone just east of I-5 on First Hill. Open space adaptable to the needs of this population should be explored to further enliven the space, especially after weekday work hours and on weekends, when this part of downtown shuts down. There has also been interest in accommodating a downtown neighborhood community center or meeting facility in the Civic Center, which also present possibilities for open space use.

- Gardens.

In general, open space that is flexible and can accommodate a variety of functions is desirable. In addressing the size, siting and design of open space, bold statements that make a strong impression are appropriate, but should be balanced with elements that provide complexity and intimacy. To that end, gardens should be an important component of the overall design, providing a contrast to large, hard surface spaces. The fact that gardens require a high level of maintenance should be recognized and addressed; the commitment to including gardens should be a commitment to providing a public space that will be well tended.

- Open space for City employees and other building occupants.

All downtown development is required to provide open space for the use of building occupants and visitors. Today, employees have access to the Municipal Building's roof garden, a plaza by the Public Safety Building, and plaza space and interior arcades in the Gateway Tower. The open space program should ensure that space is meets the needs of this group, so that the working population of the Civic Center also contributes to the liveliness of its public spaces.

- Space for human service activity.

The existing open spaces in the area are used to accommodate human service activities, such as the lunch feeding program at the Public Safety Building plaza. Because the Civic Center is part of the downtown community and serves all citizens, these activities should continue to be accommodated. However, it is important that these activities be planned for and balance with other desired uses. This may require accommodating special types of spaces, both interior and exterior, as well as setting a manageable limit on the amount of this activity that can be accommodated within the Civic Center.

## **Increase Accessibility**

Open space should enhance movement within and through the Civic Center. The following factors should be considered as opportunities for improving overall accessibility and activating the area by encouraging a steady flow of pedestrians:

- Transit station entrance.

Integrating open space with the light rail station on the Public Safety Building block provides a major opportunity to emphasize this important transit portal and influence pedestrian circulation so that transit riders passing through the area help activate the space. Open space should be integrated with station access to enhance connections with various Civic Center sites. Mechanical assists needed to reach the tunnel could potentially be extended as hillclimbs providing access to upper blocks.

- Pedestrian circulation.

Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenues are all major transit streets with heavily used bus loading areas. Streets traversing the Civic Center provide east/west links between First Hill and Pioneer Square and north/south links between Pioneer Square/International District and the central downtown area. Civic Center open space should be integrated with the street environment to enhance pedestrian circulation, accommodate transit loading and reinforce connections to adjacent areas.

- Topography.

One of the biggest challenges for the Civic Center is making the area accessible given the significant change in elevation from Third Avenue to Fifth Avenue; a climb of about 70 feet. Open space should help "sculpt" this hillside to make pedestrian movement easier and more pleasant. While a constraint to pedestrian movement, the topography is also a unique characteristic of the site that the open space layout should build upon rather than obscure or ignore.

## Enhance Identity

In addition to the architecture of the buildings in the Civic Center, open space should create a strong sense of identity for the area. To achieve this sense of identity, consider the following:

- Overall legibility.

Open space should help unify individual buildings within the civic center, and integrate the civic center, physically and functionally, with adjacent areas. The siting and design of the open space should enhance the function of the Civic Center by defining its "center" and communicating how buildings should be approached, which buildings are related to each other, where principal entrances are located, etc. Use open space to establish a strong physical connection between the two blocks east and west of Fourth Avenue, identifying this area as the center of the Civic Center. Interior public areas should have strong connections to public open space.

- Gateway.

Fourth Avenue is a major route into downtown from the south. The siting and design of open space visible from Fourth Avenue should take advantage of the opportunity to identify the Civic Center and provide a gateway into the heart of downtown.

- Views.

Views made possible through the siting of open space in relation to buildings in and around the Civic Center should help integrate the center with its surroundings and contribute to the area's identity. Spaces should enhance views of adjacent historic structures and, where possible, Elliott Bay. The "backdrop" provided by surrounding development can enhance the aesthetic quality of the open space and should be considered. Visual connections possible at open space locations should help orient people in the Civic Center.

- Details.

Design, landscaping, materials, and public art should be inspired by the characteristics of the Pacific Northwest, and be compatible with positive qualities of surrounding development. The details should provide the complexity to balance bold design statements. Materials should be of highest quality to communicate a sense of permanence and the importance of this public place. Portions of the open space may be designed as gardens with planting representative of this climate and the northwest. Plantings should reflect the seasons through changing colors and textures. The gardens should require maintenance and care, thus reflecting the City's concern for the environment and its citizens.

## Enhance Massing



The Civic Center is on the edge of a transition area separating historic Pioneer Square and the International District from the modern skyscrapers of the office district. The siting of open space and Civic Center buildings should contribute to a graceful transition between these areas.

Civic Center buildings should be sited and programmed to strongly define open space areas and promote interaction between interior activities and public outdoor spaces. Building uses at the open space level should complement and, to the extent possible, contribute activity to abutting open space. Orient outdoor spaces for maximum light and sun access.

## **Integrate Civic Center with Surroundings**

Open space should help promote the physical relationship desired with surrounding development and complement activity in adjacent areas. The opportunity to use open space to integrate the City and County sites on opposing sides of James Street should be encouraged, especially on the block facing the King County Courthouse. Consideration should be given to how open space might be sited as an element of a comprehensive network of open space and public street improvements desired within downtown.

## **City Hall Program Elements (Phase 2)**

The intersection of 4th Avenue and Cherry Street is a critical corner of the Municipal Building site. It presents an opportunity to link the Civic Center with the life and activity of the surrounding downtown neighborhood. On the southeast corner of the block, at the top of the hill, the more formal structure housing the Council Chambers provides a symbol of City government. In contrast, the 4th Avenue corner would be a place for a variety of everyday activities, providing other opportunities for people to gather, mingle, enjoy the adjacent open space—in short, to participate in public life

The site possesses many features that make it well suited as a center of activity. This stretch of Fourth Avenue has a high volume of pedestrians, with active transit stops all day. A building on this corner would have access to pedestrians from 4th Avenue, from different levels of the open space terracing up the hill, and from the arcade connecting Cherry Street with the main open space about midway up the hill between 4th and 5th Avenues. Hillclimbs from the light rail tunnel station will deposit people nearby. The use of this space should capitalize on this accessibility; it should provide people with an attractive alternative to Columbia Center for services.

An appropriate treatment of this corner should address the following:

1. Create an urban "rest stop." This is a place for people to come for refreshment—whether for food available from vendors and retail spaces, quiet reflection of art displayed in public areas or on gallery walls, rest at vantage points providing views of the street and open space; meeting and people watching, or seeking a variety of other services catering to City employees, the general public, and people with special needs.
2. Introduce a variety of activity generating uses. This space will be key to generating the activity needed to enliven the adjacent public open space—the public living room opening onto the plaza. Its multiple functions should attract people from all walks of life, during the work day and after hours. Uses to consider include:
  - gallery space for displaying City's public art collection;
  - space to display items related to City's history;
  - meeting space, conference and/or class rooms for downtown community organizations, training, public receptions, community workshops, etc.;
  - retail, service and food vendors;
  - flexible, open areas for informal gathering;
  - office space for boards, commissions, human services;
  - space for community resources (computer center),
  - public information center/kiosk, public media center, video library, etc.,
  - storage for equipment for open space maintenance, vending carts, etc.,
  - government research library,
  - human services (lunch food program, emergency shelter space),
  - roof gardens/terraces, and,
  - rest area, restroom facilities.

Multiple use of spaces is desirable. Retail space and other activity generating uses should be located along street frontages and open space perimeters. Ground level floors should be as open as possible. Entrances from Cherry Street Arcade and open space terraces should be taken advantage of to provide clear, easy access to different building levels. Perhaps locate

homeless lunch program/emergency shelter area on upper level(s), accessible from Cherry Street Arcade, with various staging areas along route to accommodate lines and avoid having this activity appear to "take over" entire public area. Area where food is dispensed could have access to outdoor space on upper level setback terrace or rooftop.

3. Achieve a special quality of space. The building and its various levels should be open—a "permeable" building with multiple entrances to bring people inside from various grades along the street, from the open space terraces, and from the Cherry Street arcade; transparent walls making interior activity visible from the outside; interior atrium/gallery spaces that open interior floors up to each other vertically; plaza terraces should "flow" into the building, strengthening the connection between interior and exterior areas. As an interior public place, it should be a light, open contrast to the enclosed alternative at Columbia Center. Siting and design should draw people to it from surrounding buildings, streets, and the transit tunnel station. The lower height of this structure should distinguish it from the abutting administrative wing of the municipal building and provide scale relief on the edge of the open space, while maintaining a strong street edge on the corner.

Program elements that are symbolic and unique to a Civic Center, such as the Mayor and Council Chambers, should be expressed and emphasized. Consider including additional program elements that are customer related, such as DCLU. One approach to customer service would be to cluster the various services in a public space.

## **Additional Civic Uses**

The Civic Center would be greatly strengthened by the addition of a cultural institution of some kind. The Burke Museum or a satellite campus such as the University of Washington government studies would emphasize the civic nature of the precinct and attract people and activities.

Activating the Civic Center for 18 hours a day is a priority, and must be reflected in the selection of program elements. Arts related uses, meeting space, and a community center for the downtown residents should be considered, along with housing where appropriate.

## **Parking Requirements**

The Civic Center should include a modest amount of parking beneath City Hall, located within the envelope of the excavation for the existing parking. This parking would serve the building itself with city vehicles, some employee parking, ADA accessible parking, and drop-off from cars. Short term visitors parking should be a priority so that citizens can easily use the customer service functions. A port cochere below ground should be considered, along with street level drop-off. Ideally, ingress and egress would be off of Cherry Street.

A larger reservoir of public parking should be below the PSB site, again using the area already excavated for existing parking. Access should be off of James Street, with egress to Cherry.

These two blocks of the Civic Center are not envisioned as parking for the Justice Center Building. The City is negotiating the purchase of the SeaPark Garage to the east of the Justice Center to satisfy public parking needs for both the Justice Center and City Hall.

No above grade parking should be allowed.

## **Housing**

Housing may be appropriate for the Alaska Building, and possibly for private development along 3rd Avenue. Encouraging housing in these areas would enliven the area beyond business hours. Housing should not be included on the block with City Hall.

## **Additional Community Elements**

The priorities for various programs should come from community and City direction. However, a multiplicity of uses could be incorporated into the design of the Civic Center in a gracious way.

Social services are currently being provided on the site, with a feeding program on the PSB plaza and night time shelter for men in the lobby of the Municipal Building. These programs should not be reduced with construction of the new Civic Center, and could be integrated on the site with a dedicated entry and potentially an dedicated level providing a sense of

privacy for those needing services. The level of social services provided needs to be balanced so as to not interfere with the primary uses of the Civic Center, and planning for these programs needs to be sensitive to neighboring uses.

A day care center is included within the Civic Center program, which could replace the existing facility in the Alaska Building. Other programs serving the increasing population of downtown residents may be appropriate at the Civic Center, including meeting and/or class rooms, arts related uses, a recreational facility, and possibly a city information center.

## **The Properties**

The following discussion of City-owned properties is based on real estate analysis by The Seneca Real Estate Group. The specific analysis of these properties and their relationship to the preferred option of the master plan is included in Section 10: References.

### **Cordes Site**

The Cordes site is the half block between James and Cherry Streets east of 5th Avenue. A new building will be placed on this site to house the Municipal Courts and Police Administration offices. The site consists of approximately 26,400 square feet and is zoned DOC-I. It is estimated that a full build out of the site is 370,500 gross square feet.

### **Municipal Building Site**

The block currently occupied by the Municipal Building is roughly 56,400 square feet of land zoned DOC-I. If developed to the full extent allowed by code, some 790,000 square feet of commercial office space could be built. The existing building includes some 222,000 rentable square feet, and is scheduled for demolition in 2002. In addition to the building, there are 410 parking spaces. The site slopes steeply down toward the west, with a drop of roughly 45 feet.

A new City Hall is proposed for the site, to include from 171,000 to 230,000 square feet. The remainder of the block is to be open space, which can be usable for public gathering, public speaking, and informal use. A hillclimb assist is also programmed for the site.

### **Public Safety Building Site**

The Public Safety Building site is 56,400 square feet of land, occupied by a 259,000 square feet building in poor condition. There are 206 parking spaces. Zoning allows 560,000 square feet of residential or commercial office use with parking. There is a 240-foot height limit. The site includes an entry/exit from the Metro transit tunnel on Third Avenue. Historic buildings are on three sides - Dexter Horton, Lyons, St. Charles, Morrison and the King County Courthouse. It is one of the last developable full blocks in the downtown core.

Potential use of the site was studied by The Seneca Real Estate Group in March and May of 1998 (see Appendix). Open space for at least a portion of the site could be an important community asset if designed and maintained well, and the inclusion of a hillclimb assist would not decrease the site's value. Housing would help create the 24-hour activity deemed desirable, but does not create as high a property value as commercial offices. It would likely be moderate income housing given the current neighboring housing. From a zoning standpoint, housing does not count against FAR, so that a full 10:1 FAR could be utilized.

Potential City developments listed in the report were a new City Hall, cultural institution such as a library or museum, downtown park, hillclimb assist, parking garage, hygiene center or use by other City departments.

The City must decide whether it wants or needs to control the site in the long term. Sale of the property will maximize immediate financial benefit but precludes longer term flexibility.

A long term lease arrangement, similar to the Metropolitan Tract, could also be considered.

### **Alaska Building**

The Alaska Building contains approximately 85,000 usable square feet, with the City occupying all but about 8,500 usable square feet. The current assumption is that all City departments will be moved out of the Alaska Building over the next seven to eight years, with total City vacancy expected in 2006.

A study done by The Seneca Real Estate Group in conjunction with GGLO dated June 2, 1998 concluded that residential use of the Alaska Building above the first floor is feasible and relatively efficient for housing. Many of the units would have excellent views, but the lack of on-site parking is problematic. Because housing in the neighborhood is moderate and low income, the housing at this site would likely be similar.

Financially, housing would create a more limited in value compared to its current use as office space, especially since substantial renovation would be required to convert to housing. The feasibility study showed 26 studio units, 78 one bedroom units and 26 two bedroom units, for a total of 130 units.

## **Dexter Horton Building**

The Dexter Horton Building contains approximately 250,000 usable square feet of office and retail space. The City's Master Plan for facilities contemplates a move of all departments out of the Dexter Horton Building over the next 5 to 7 years, so that it will become surplus property.

The City could wait and sell the building when it moves out, which would leave uncertainty about where in the real estate cycle we will be at that time. Or, the City could sell the building now while the market is good, in an arrangement with the buyer specifying lease rates and the timing of relocation of City tenants.

The City would receive a higher sales price by moving out sooner than scheduled so that the buyer can charge market rates for space rather than lower City tenant rents.

If the City mandates that the site be used for housing, sales price is expected to fall on the order of \$10 to 15 million. The building is extremely inefficient for housing. Gross residential area would be 240,000 square feet, but usable residential space only amounts to 150,000 square feet (244 units). Code would require the addition of four stairwells due to dead-end configuration of the wings. Many units would have limited views or window space, there is no parking, and housing would almost certainly be low or moderate income. Floors 1 - 4 are not suitable for housing because of the size and configuration of the floor plate, retail orientation and historic design. The project would more likely be mixed use, with concomitant complications and benefits.

## **Arctic Building**

The historic Arctic Building includes 59,500 square feet of usable square footage. Several scenarios for City property recommended retention of the property, and City Council decided to retain the property for City use.

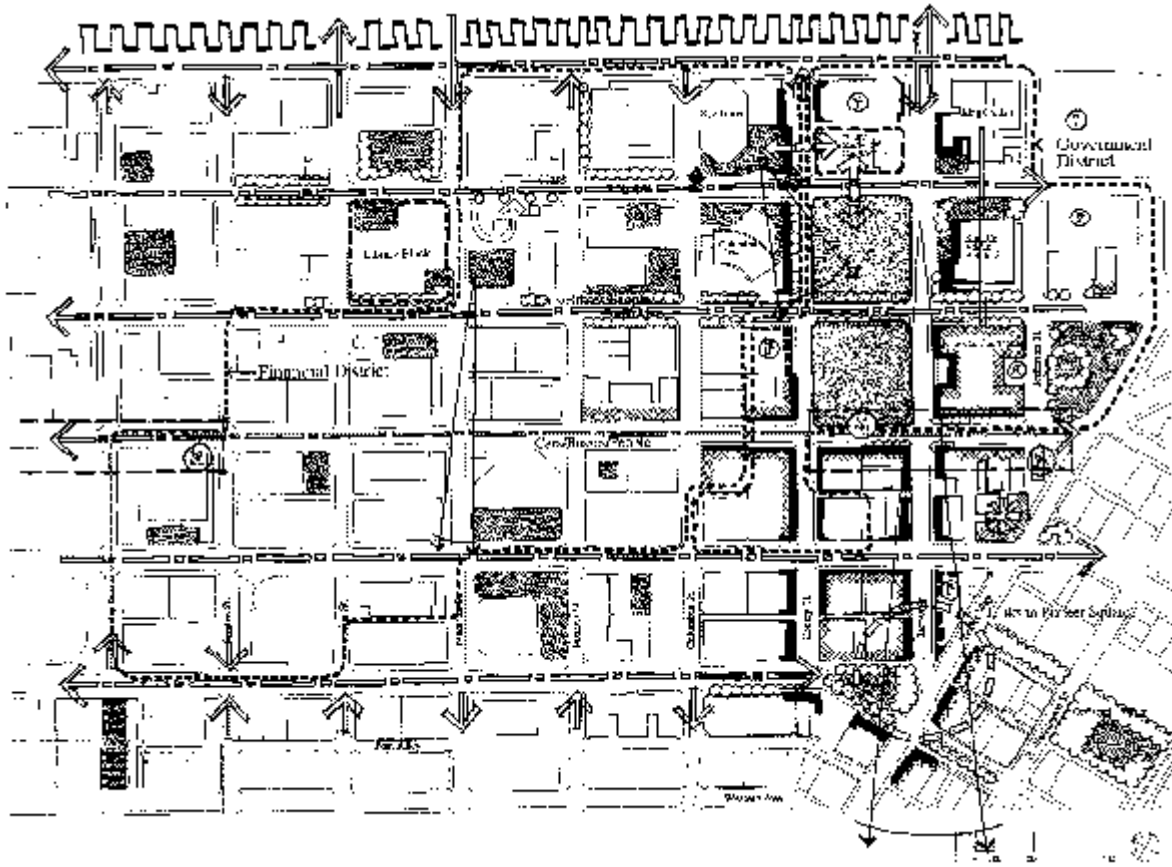
## **Key Tower**

Key Tower was purchased by the City in 1996. The building contains nearly one million square feet of usable office and retail space. Under the master plan, the City will retain ownership of Key Tower to accommodate 750,000 square feet of City administrative offices. The remainder of the building will be available for private leasing and future City expansion, if needed.

Program elements that are symbolic and unique to a Civic Center, such as the Mayor and Council Chambers, should be expressed and emphasized. Consider including additional program elements that are customer related, such as DCLU. One approach to customer service would be to cluster the various services in a public space.

## **Section 5 - Inventory and Analysis**

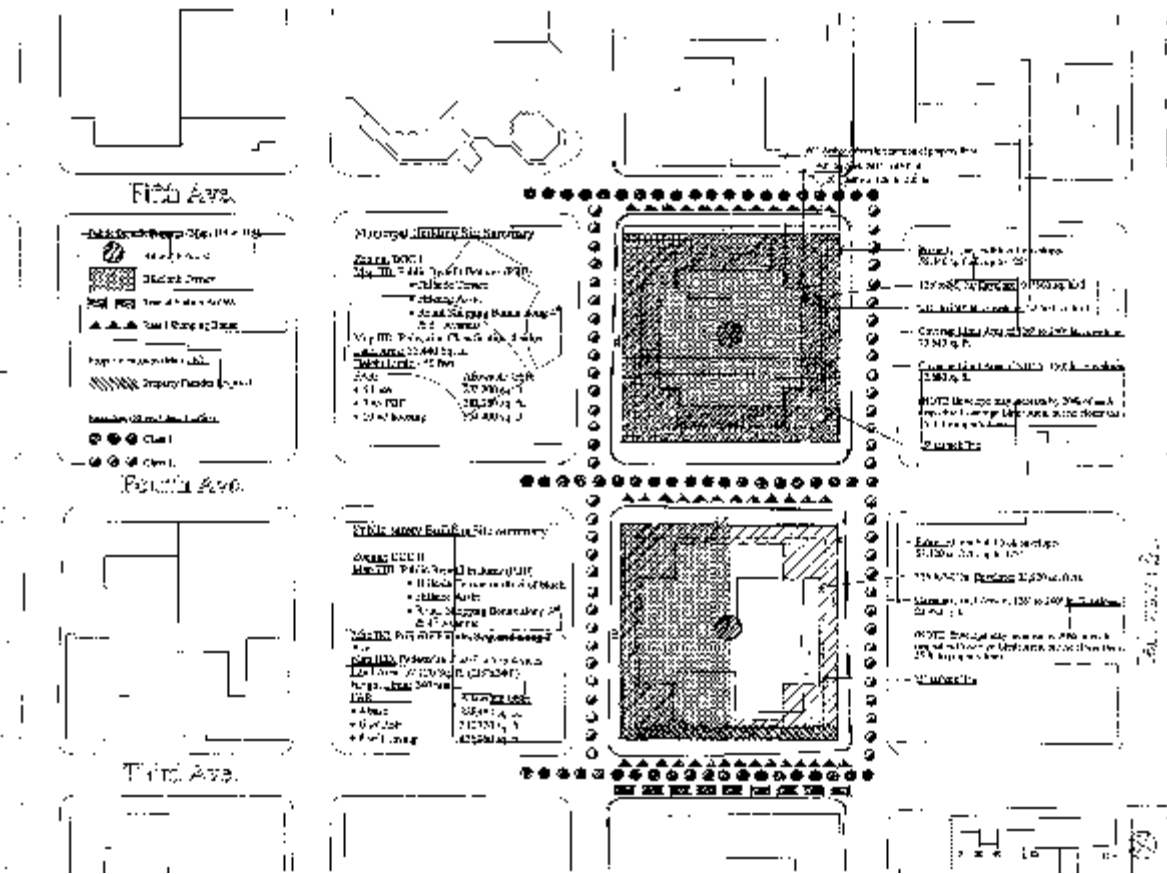
### [Illustration 2: Urban Inventory](#)



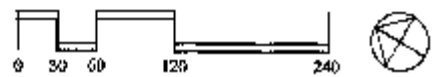
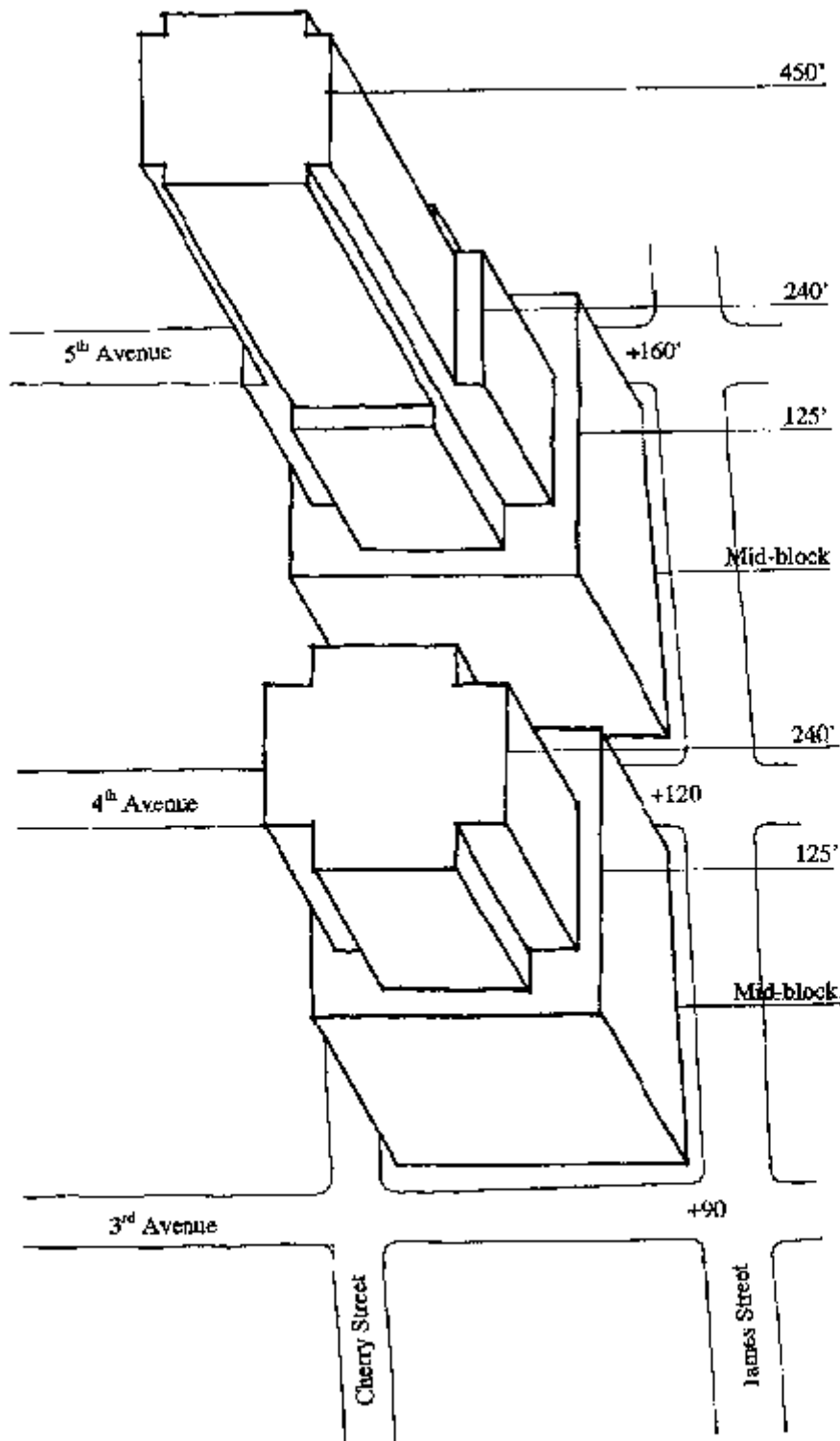
[Illustration 3: Solar Access Study](#)



[Illustration 4: Zoning](#)



**Illustration 5: Building Envelope:  
Maximum Build-Out**



## Illustration 6: Crossing Evaluation

Crossing Evaluation			
At Grade (With Signal)	At Grade (Diagonal)	Above Grade (Sky Bridge)	Below Grade (Tunnel)
<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross the street with traffic.</li> <li>• No cost.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces traditional pedestrian crossing time.</li> <li>• Low cost.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather protected.</li> <li>• Eliminates pedestrian conflicts with vehicles.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather protected.</li> <li>• Eliminates pedestrian conflicts with vehicles.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires waiting for the cross street signal to change.</li> <li>• Exposed to weather.</li> <li>• Conflicts with automobile traffic.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposed to weather.</li> <li>• Erodes traffic signal coordination.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible visual interruption.</li> <li>• Sky bridges are not supported by City Policy.</li> <li>• Difficult to tie the sky bridge into each building at a functional level due to various street grades.</li> <li>• Adds an additional point of entry to the Law and Justice building which will require additional security.</li> <li>• Costly.</li> <li>• Requires additional vertical connection.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A tunnel connecting the Law and Justice Center could require additional security.</li> <li>• Would need to be deep to avoid utilities. Existing grades may help avoid such conflict.</li> <li>• Very costly.</li> <li>• Would likely need to be bored rather than excavated to avoid collapse of clay tile drain lines.</li> <li>• Diagonal crossing requires negotiating around mid-intersection vaults and I-5 ramp inside Key Tower.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mitigation Options/Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct a sidewalk bulb on the south side of the northwest intersection corner to reduce Cherry Street crossing time.</li> <li>• Maybe possible to operate the east west pedestrian signal on the north side of the intersection to operate concurrently with the I-5 ramp.</li> <li>• Construct pedestrian shelters at building intersection corner as a refuge from inclement weather.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mitigation Options/Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct pedestrian shelters at building intersection corner as a refuge from inclement weather.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mitigation Options/Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term staff time savings may offset additional construction cost.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mitigation Options/Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term staff time savings may offset additional construction cost.</li> </ul>

### Context

The Civic Center site lies at the south end of Seattle's Central Business District (CBD). Located within what is regarded as the Government District, the site is bordered by the historic Pioneer Square district to the southwest and the Financial District of the CBD to the north. Because of its location at the southern edge of the CBD, the site has potential to serve as an entryway into the downtown from the south. Fourth Avenue, which bisects the site, could become a "gateway" to downtown Seattle at James Street.

The government center is adjacent to three of Seattle's downtown's neighborhoods - Pioneer Square, the International District, and First Hill. Because Seattle prides itself as a city of neighborhoods, the Civic Center could play an important role not only as a focal point for the entire city, but as an important center for the neighborhoods downtown as the residential population expands and the need for downtown.

### Open Space Increases

James Street is the center of the government district, with the City buildings to the north and the three major County Buildings - the Jail, the Administrative Building, and the Courthouse - to the south. The adjacency of the County and City buildings offers the potential for a strong, identifiable government district with associated public spaces.

### Topography

A topographic change of seventy feet between Third and Fifth Avenues enables the Civic Center to be unique among the world's civic architecture. The topography could be utilized to create a dramatic and expressive composition of architecture and open space that would only be possible in Seattle's downtown. The location of the site also presents an opportunity to make east-west travel easier for pedestrians by providing weather protected escalators, making the Civic Center and the



dense development along Fifth Avenue more accessible from transit, from the portion of the downtown to the west, and the waterfront. The topography also provides a strong visual link between the site and Elliott Bay which could be well utilized in the design for the Civic Center.

## [Relationship to Surrounding Open Space](#)

City Hall Park is within one block of the site, on the south side of the King County Courthouse. One of the few green spaces in the downtown, City Hall Park is an underutilized resource. There is a series of small open spaces associated with buildings along Fifth Avenue and to a lesser extent, Fourth Avenue. The nearby Pioneer Square neighborhood contains a major percentage of the open space in the downtown area, including Occidental Square, Pioneer Square, and the Waterfall Gardens. The Civic Center plan should look at the context of open space in the surrounding area in order to take advantage of opportunities to activate the street network in the government center area and provide stronger links to the financial and retail districts to the north.

## [Street System](#)

James Street and Cherry Street run east and west through the site. James Street originates at the historic pergola in Pioneer Square two blocks west of the site, and continues uphill past the Civic Center, running underneath Interstate-5 before connecting to the First Hill neighborhood. Traffic on James is two-way, and is an exit from northbound I-5. The view from the site down James Street includes the heart of Pioneer Square and glimpses of the water. James Street has the potential to become a stronger, more attractive link between Pioneer Square and the Government Center, and to become an improved pedestrian route to First Hill.

Cherry Street begins at First Avenue, and like James Street, runs underneath I-5 to First Hill. Cherry Street is lined by a number of historic facades for two and one half blocks east of First Avenue. These include the Broderick Building and the Alaska Building at Second and Cherry, and the ivory terra cotta facades of the Dexter Horton and the Arctic Buildings. Cherry Street is also the link between Key Tower and the two blocks now occupied by the Municipal Building and the Public Safety Building. Traffic on Cherry Street runs one way eastbound uphill, and would provide access outbound to the freeway via the express lanes and to southbound I-5. The view from the site down Cherry includes the historic facades, but terminates on First Avenue without continuing the water.

The north-south streets - Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenues - have a more gentle topography rising from south to north. These avenues all accommodate heavy traffic, including numerous Metro bus routes. Traffic on Third Avenue is two-way, while Fourth and Fifth Avenues form a one-way couplet, with northbound traffic on Fourth and southbound traffic on Fifth. Fifth Avenue parallels I-5, and a substantial portion of downtown traffic uses Fifth Avenue to access the freeway entrances. Entries to the express lanes out of the city are located at the base of Key Tower on the northwest and the southwest corners. Contraflow bus traffic uses Fifth Avenue to enter the express lanes at the corner of Fifth and Cherry.

Pedestrians in downtown Seattle tend to favor the north-south routes because of the easier grades. There is substantial pedestrian traffic on all three Avenues, though less than in the retail portion of the CBD to the north. Three high rise buildings, including Key Tower, are joined below grade by a system of tunnels with shops and restaurants.

## [Transit](#)

A major advantage of the site is the presence of a transit entry at the corner of Third and James. The design of the Civic Center should take maximum advantage of the accessibility of the site, and should also support the use of transit by making pedestrian access up the hill easier and fully accessible. The transit tunnel is currently used by Metro buses but will become the light rail route for Sound Transit.

All three north-south avenues are heavily used by Metro buses. Fifth Avenue has major bus stops on both the east and west sides of the street for express buses. Bus traffic is likely to increase when buses are relocated from the tunnel back to the street. People waiting for the buses should be accommodated within the Civic Center design in an ample, comfortable and weatherproof waiting area. The presence of these people should also be taken advantage of to enliven the Civic Center area.

## [Parking](#)

There is currently parking below both the Municipal Building and the Public Safety Building. Key Tower is served by an on-site 650 car parking garage.

### [Illustration 2: Urban Inventory](#)

## [Solar Access Study](#)

### [Illustration 3: Solar Access Study](#)

The building height and will have an effect on the amount of sunlight the site will receive. Because the Civic Center is primarily about public space, maximizing light and sunshine is a high priority, particularly given the climate of Seattle.

Arranging the building masses along the north and east edge of the two block site optimizes the amount of sun in the open space. The following solar access studies graphically depict sun exposure through the course of the year. During the summer months, the site is bathed in sunlight for the majority of the day. By 6:00 pm, shadows cast by the buildings along the north edge and adjacent taller buildings place the open space in shade.

A September morning finds the open space in shade. As the sun moves west the eastern portion of the open space becomes washed in sunlight. By late afternoon, 3:00 pm, the space is in total sunlight. As the diagram indicates, by 6:00 pm the majority of the site is in shade.

During the winter months, the surrounding buildings cast longer shadow because of lower sun angles. At noon pockets of sunlight penetrate the east and west ends of the open space. The greatest sun exposure occurs in the late afternoon at around 3:00 pm.

During the design phase solar orientation should carefully be studied so as to maximize sun exposure throughout the year. Wind will also have an effect on the character and comfort of the open space. Wind tunnel tests and analysis is advised during the design phase.

## [Zoning and Land Use](#)

### [Illustration 4: Zoning](#)

### [Illustration 5: Building Envelope: Maximum Build-Out](#)

The civic center site lies within two zoning designations. The Municipal Building site is in the Downtown Office Core I, (DOC-I). The Public Safety Building site is in the Downtown Office Core II, (DOC-II). The diagram on page 25 shows height limits and setback requirements at the various heights of the building envelope. The map indicates the Public Benefit Features (PBF) and the street level Pedestrian Classifications that address each block.

## [Fifth and Cherry Intersection Crossing Evaluation](#)

### [Illustration 6: Crossing Evaluation](#)

The following is an initial analysis of advantages and disadvantages of several alternatives for providing a pedestrian connection between the City Hall (Key Bank Building) and the proposed Civic Center. This connection is important because the City Executive Offices are expected to be located in the Civic Center and many of the Departmental staff will be located in either the Law and Justice Building or City Hall. Under existing conditions, this distribution of buildings and functional relationships would require staff to cross the street at grade at the signalized intersection of 5th Avenue at Cherry Street. The purpose of this analysis is intended to address the opportunities and constraints associated with several pedestrian connection options.

Four pedestrian crossing alternatives were examined and include the following: 1) at-grade crossing with the signals; 2) at-grade crossing diagonally across the intersection; 3) above grade crossing (sky bridge); and 4) below grade crossing (tunnel). This analysis is presented in a summary matrix form that identifies the strengths and weaknesses associated with each as well as additional investigation that could be performed to validate the initial findings associated with this comparative analysis.

The analysis is based on a physical inventory of conditions, available traffic volume and traffic signal timing characteristics, utility maps, and channelization drawings.

The Fifth Avenue and Cherry Street are one-way streets that carry 4-lanes of traffic southbound and 3-lanes of traffic eastbound respectively. On Fifth Avenue a contra-flow transit lane south of Cherry Street serving the peak period reversible ramp matches a southbound left turn lane north of Cherry Street. On Cherry Street at Fifth Avenue, the parking lane (for police vehicles only) transitions to an exclusive right turn lane. The traditional intersection pattern is modified by a fifth intersection 2-lane reversible ramp that serves Metro Transit and High Occupancy Vehicles (HOVs) that runs diagonally under the Key Bank Building to across the I-5 express lanes.

The intersection is controlled by a three-phase traffic signal that is interconnected as part of the downtown signal system. The downtown signal system permits the one-way streets and the traffic signals to operate efficiently. Pedestrians cross the intersection with the traffic signal north south with Fifth Avenue traffic and east west with the Cherry Street traffic.

PM peak hour traffic volumes are the highest of the day. Approach PM peak hour volumes at this intersection are about 1300 vehicles per hour (vph) eastbound on Cherry Street, 1180 vph southbound on Fifth Avenue, and 55 vph on the contra-flow lane of Fifth Avenue.

A wide variety of underground utilities run along both 5th Avenue and Cherry Street. These including storm sewer, pressure sewer, clay tile drain lines, water (24"), gas, and fiber optics lines. These utilities are most highly concentrated at intersection itself and on the north, east and west legs of the intersection.

## **Section 6: Concept Development**

[Illustration 7 - Concept A](#)

[Illustration 10 - Concept 1](#)

[Illustration 8 - Concept B](#)

[Illustration 11 - Concept 2](#)

[Illustration 9 - Concept C](#)

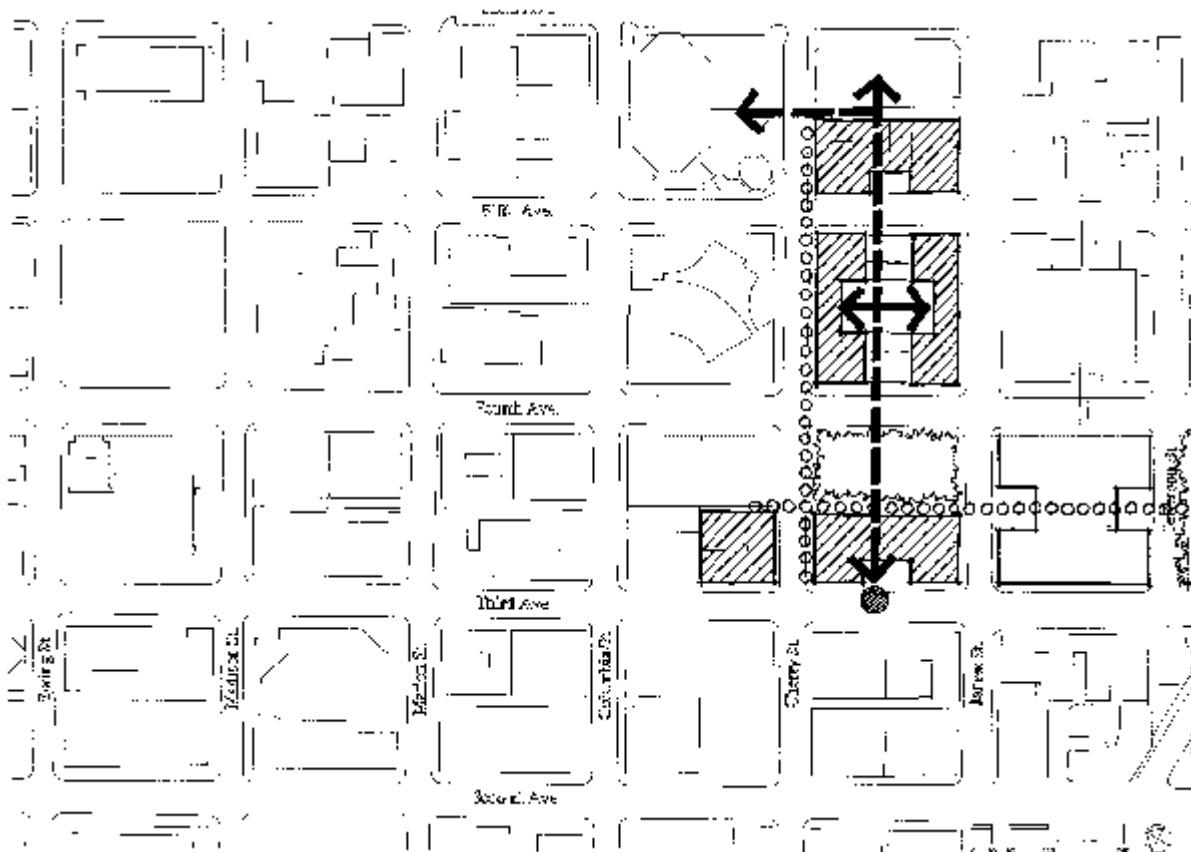
[Illustration 12 - Concept 3](#)

[Illustration 13 - Concept 4](#)

## **Open Space Configurations**

### **Concept A**

[Illustration 7 - Concept A](#)

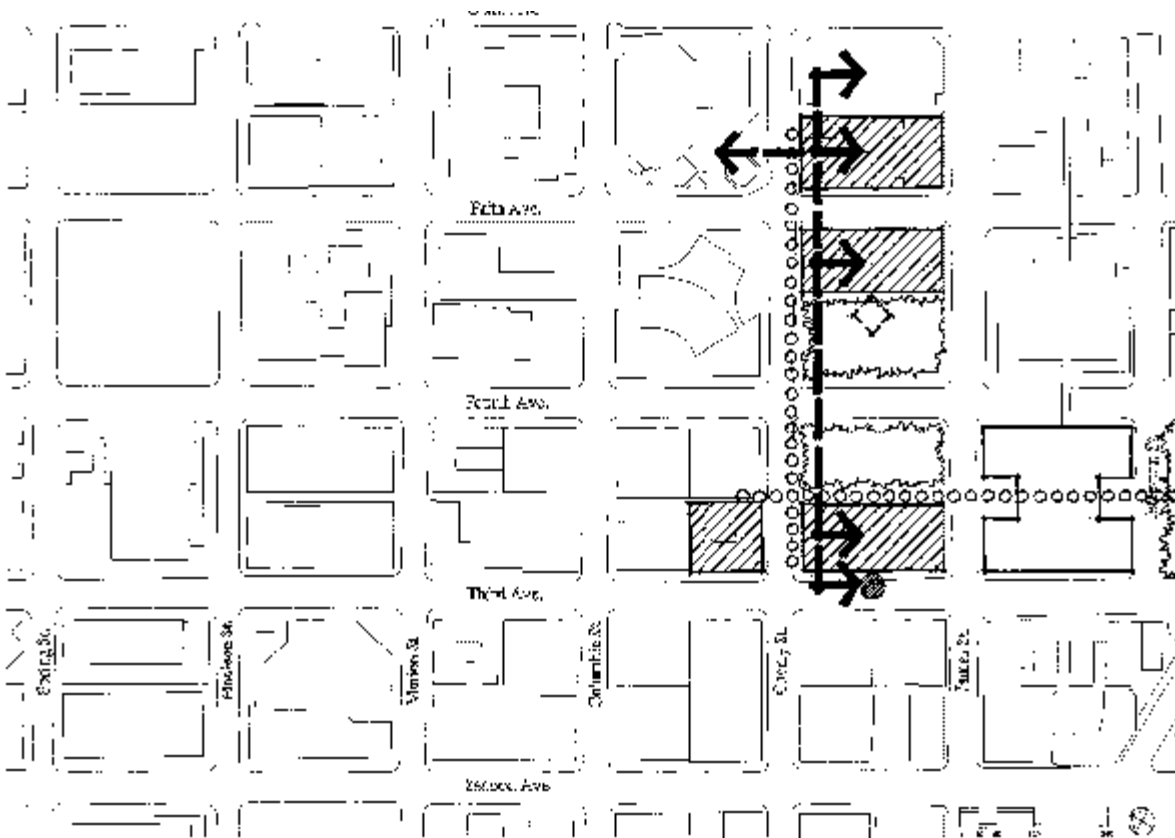


This concept is centered and symmetrical. The new Municipal Courthouse is assumed to be symmetrical, which as it turns out, isn't. The Municipal Courthouse forms the eastern terminus to the Civic Center. The City Hall block is planned with two flanking buildings on Cherry and James Streets with a center public open space stepping down the hill and a plaza in the center of the block. The public space on this block, while open to the sky, is of limited size, and would generally be shaded. The flanking buildings would be needed to be built as a second step.

The Public Safety Block includes a major open park space on the eastern portion of the block off of Fourth Avenue and a building on the western half. Stairs and a hill climb would be developed in the interior of the blocks, extending from the transit/ rail tunnel up the hill to the courthouse and possibly the garage to the east and to a bridge to the Key Tower. The southern side of Cherry Street would be improved for pedestrians and a connection could be made from the Public Safety block to and through the King County Court House and the City Hall Park to the south.

## Concept B

[Illustration 8 - Concept B](#)



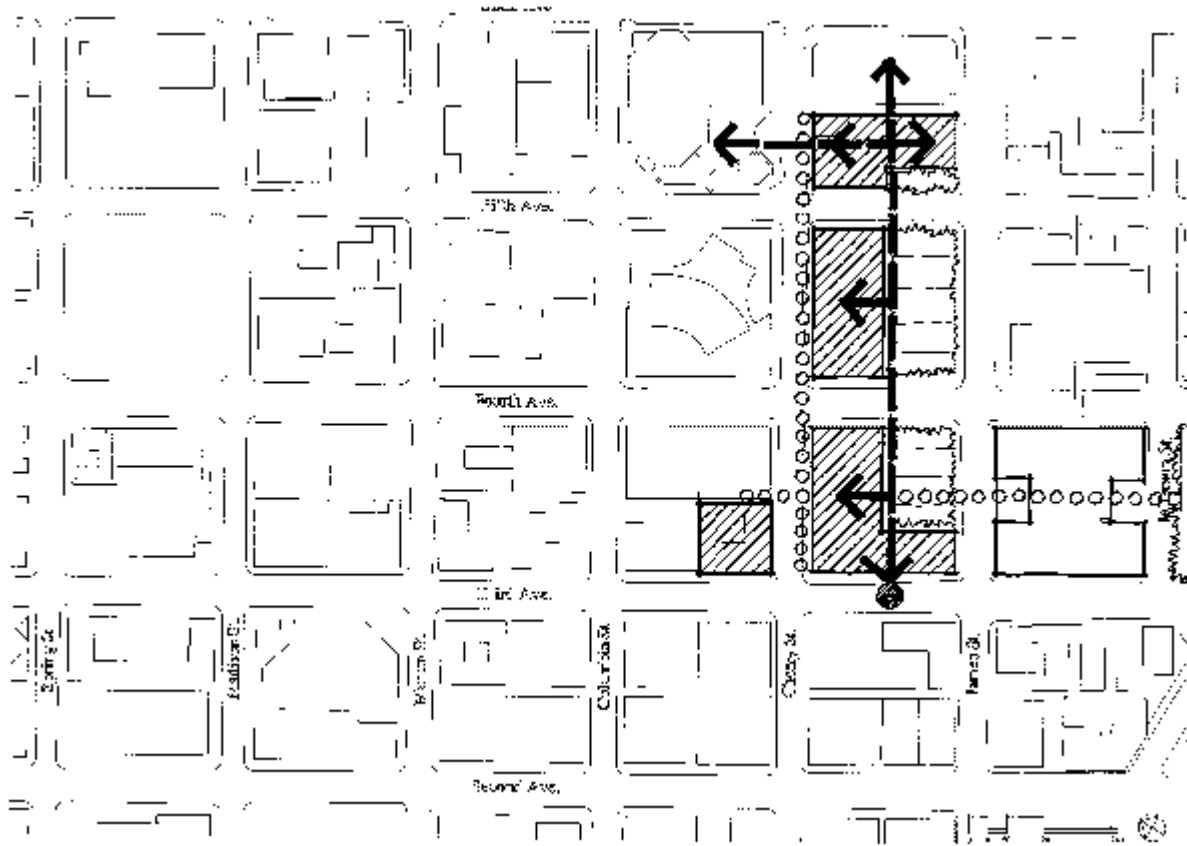
This concept concentrates the public open space on both sides of Fourth Avenue and places the new City Hall at the eastern flank of the Municipal Building block on Fifth Avenue. In this location, the new City Hall blocks the Municipal Court House, and prevents it from becoming an integral part of the Civic Center. The public open space is bisected by Fourth Avenue.

On the Public Safety Block, the western end of the Civic Center and the open space is enclosed by a building fronting on Third Avenue. A hill climb would be developed along Cherry street extending from the Sound Transit tunnel to the Municipal Court House, in conjunction with an improved pedestrian walkway.

The open space would receive sunlight from the south. Generally this concept does not "celebrate" the topography. The implication is that the public space would be largely level at the Fourth Avenue elevation, and elevation changes would be taken up in the two main buildings at the top and bottom on 5th and 3rd avenues. These two buildings would afford views to the west for half of the tenants in each building. This concept does not develop an urban edge along Cherry responsive to the historic buildings on the north side.

## Concept C

[Illustration 9 - Concept C](#)



This concept concentrates the public open space on the southern portion of both blocks extending from Fifth Avenue west to a building on Third Avenue at the western end. The Municipal Court House forms the eastern end of the Center, clearly recognized as a contributing part of the Seattle Municipal Civic Center. The open space terraces down the hill over nearly two blocks, emphasizing and celebrating the topography characteristic of Seattle and placed on the south with the City Hall on the north on Cherry street and a private or public building on the north side of the Public Safety site. The open space will receive sunlight from the south as will the facades of the flanking buildings to the north. The buildings will be afforded oblique views toward the water from both flanking facades while strengthening the urban edge and relation to historic buildings on Cherry Street. The buildings on Cherry also mediate or make a transition from the larger Columbia and Key Towers to the public open space.

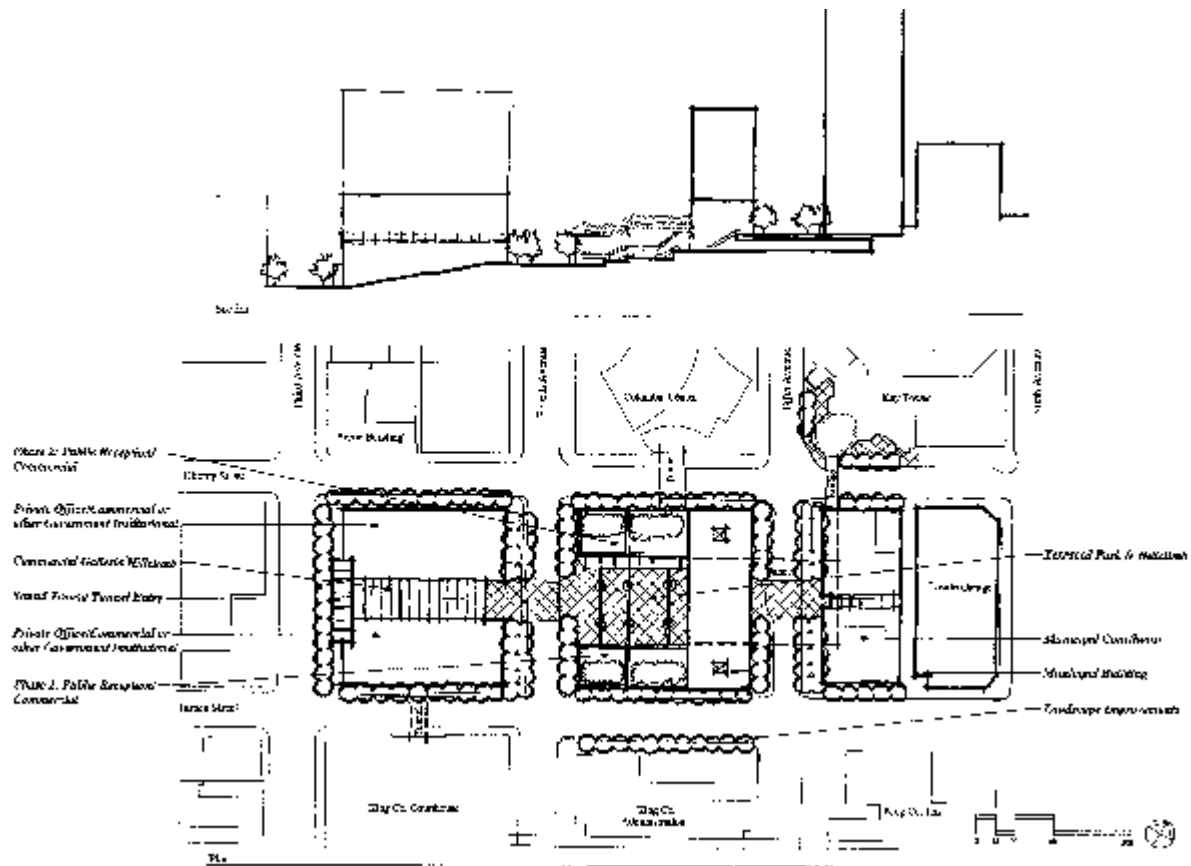
A hill climb is located at the northern side of the open space at the edge of the buildings, extending from the Sound Transit tunnel to the Municipal Court House.

## **Alternative Design Concepts**

Schematic concepts were developed during the initial step of the master planning work, in order to study options for configuring the buildings and open space. After considering three initial concepts, a fourth scheme evolved with the intent of combining some of the best features of the original three concepts.

## Concept 1

[Illustration 10 - Concept 1](#)



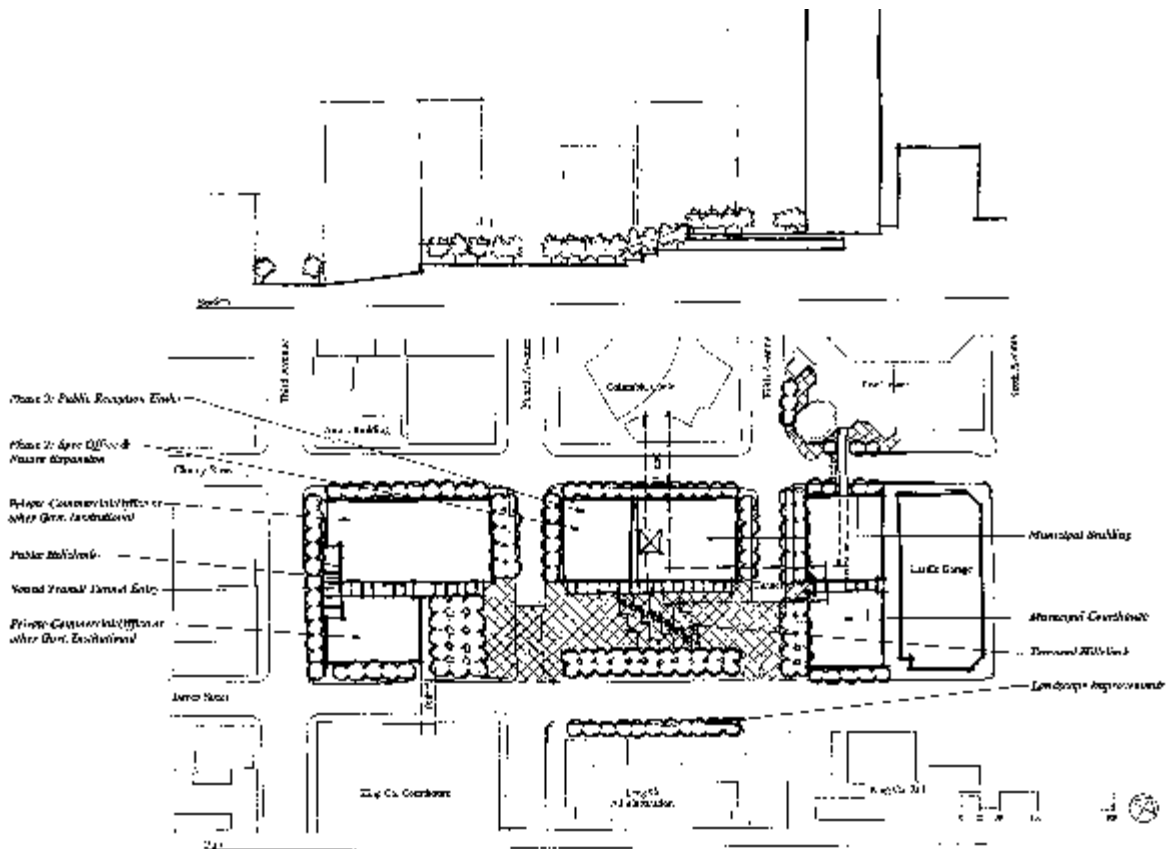
The open space in this concept is concentrated in the center of the block between Fourth and Fifth Avenues to include a terraced park, plazas and a hillclimb. The location of the open space would necessitate most of it being implemented in a second step following the removal of the existing Municipal Building. The open space would connect to a public reception hall at the Fourth Avenue level. The Public Safety block to the west would include a central commercial, enclosed Galleria with a hill climb connecting at the western end to the Sound Transit tunnel entry on Third Avenue.

The new City Hall, 12 to 13 stories high, would front on Fifth Avenue between Cherry and James Streets with main entrances on Fifth Avenue and from the open space. The main level lobby and reception on Fifth would be transparent, opening directly on to the open space to the west and in essence acting and functioning as an extension of the open space directly into the lobby of the City Hall. A lower level could extend under Fifth Avenue to the new Municipal Court building. The City Hall would be in the shape of a "U", enveloping the open space on three sides. The main building bulk would be on Fifth Avenue and two lower wings, two to three stories high, would be on Cherry and James with terraced, landscaped roofs. Community and customer services, public reception and commercial uses would be located in these lower wings, accessible from the streets as well from the public open space. Parking, service and drop-off would be provided in the space under the City. Additional parking could be provided on the Public Safety block below ground as well.

In addition to the Galleria, the Public Safety block would include development of two new buildings which could be private office/commercial or additional government institutional uses, or a combination of both.

## Concept 2

[Illustration 11 - Concept 2](#)



In the second concept, the open space is concentrated on the southern portion of the existing City Hall block and a portion of the Public Safety block in order to optimize exposure to southern sunlight. The open space is substantially larger than in Concept 1. A large level plaza fronts on the east side of Fourth Avenue and extends across the street to the west to an additional level plaza with trees. The plaza on the City Hall site would include a reception hall at the level of the street and plaza. Approximately mid-block between Fourth and Fifth Avenues a terraced area forms an amphitheater as well as a stairway.

Another level plaza would be located at the top, on the level of Fifth Avenue. A hill climb would run along the edge of the buildings enclosing the open space. Substantial tree planting and landscaping is shown at the southern perimeter on James, and across the street in front of the King County Administration building.

The new City Hall would be sited on the northeast corner of the block, approximately 13 stories high, with its main entrance on Fifth Avenue. The new City Hall would have exposure to both the open space and Cherry Street, with entries from both. The configuration of buildings and open space in this concept integrate the Municipal Courthouse building into the Civic Center. Parking and service would be accommodated in a way similar to Concept 1. Tunnels linking under Fifth Avenue to the Municipal Courthouse and under Cherry to the Columbia Center would be possible. This latter connection could afford access to an existing tunnel between the Columbia Center and the City owned Key Tower. The new City Hall should provide a major entrance on Fifth, facilitating pedestrian access to and from Key Tower. Direct access from Cherry and the public open space will also be provided.

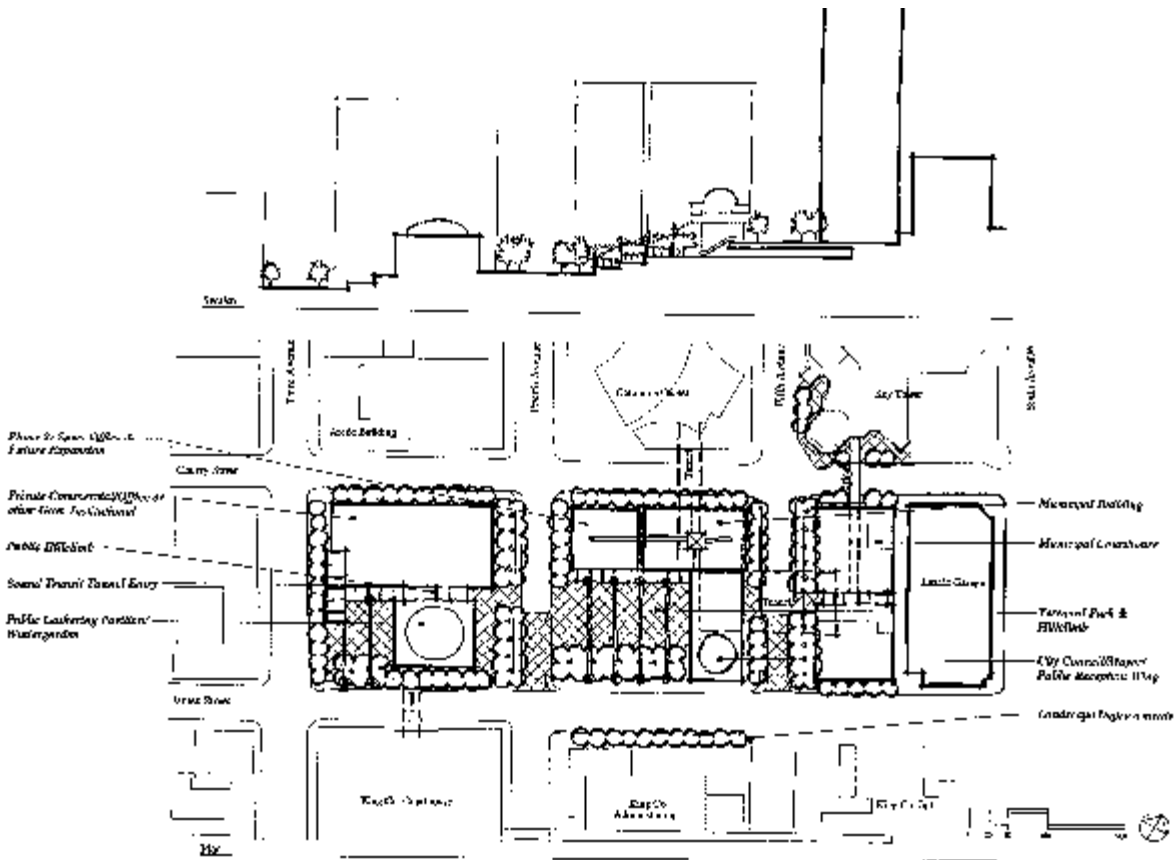
The northwestern portion of the block, developed a second step after the removal of the existing City Hall could be literally an extension to, and expansion of the new City Hall. The extension could alternatively be a private/commercial development, other governmental space, or a community center and community meeting spaces in conjunction with the street level public reception space. This step could be similar in height to the City Hall, or, as illustrated, lower in height, but 10 to 13 stories above Fourth avenue. Materials and detailing should be similar to the new City Hall.

The Public Safety block includes a substantial building on the northern portion which could be private commercial/ office, government or institutional use. The built portion of the site could be sold, or leased for private development. The southern part of the block includes an extension of public open space as described previously, a public hillclimb connecting to the Sound Transit tunnel and an additional building on the southwestern corner of the site which could be private commercial/office, other government or institutional use. Ideally, however, this building in the open space would be an

indoor "living room" for the community, such as a reading room. A connection from the site to the King County Court House should also be considered.

### Concept 3

[Illustration 12 - Concept 3](#)



Open space in Concept 3 is concentrated on the southern portion of the site in a similar manner to the previous scheme. Conceptually, the open space extends through the entire two blocks, from Fifth Avenue down the hill to Third Avenue. However, a substantial public gathering/ wintergarden pavilion would be sited in the open space between Third and Fourth Avenues. A public hill climb would be included on the northern edge of the open space at the adjacent to the buildings. Both blocks would include level plazas, terraces, hardscape and gardens, with an amphitheater on the block between Fourth and Fifth Avenues. Landscape buffering and screening would be included on the southern edge of the site along James, but access from both James and Cherry to the open space would be afforded.

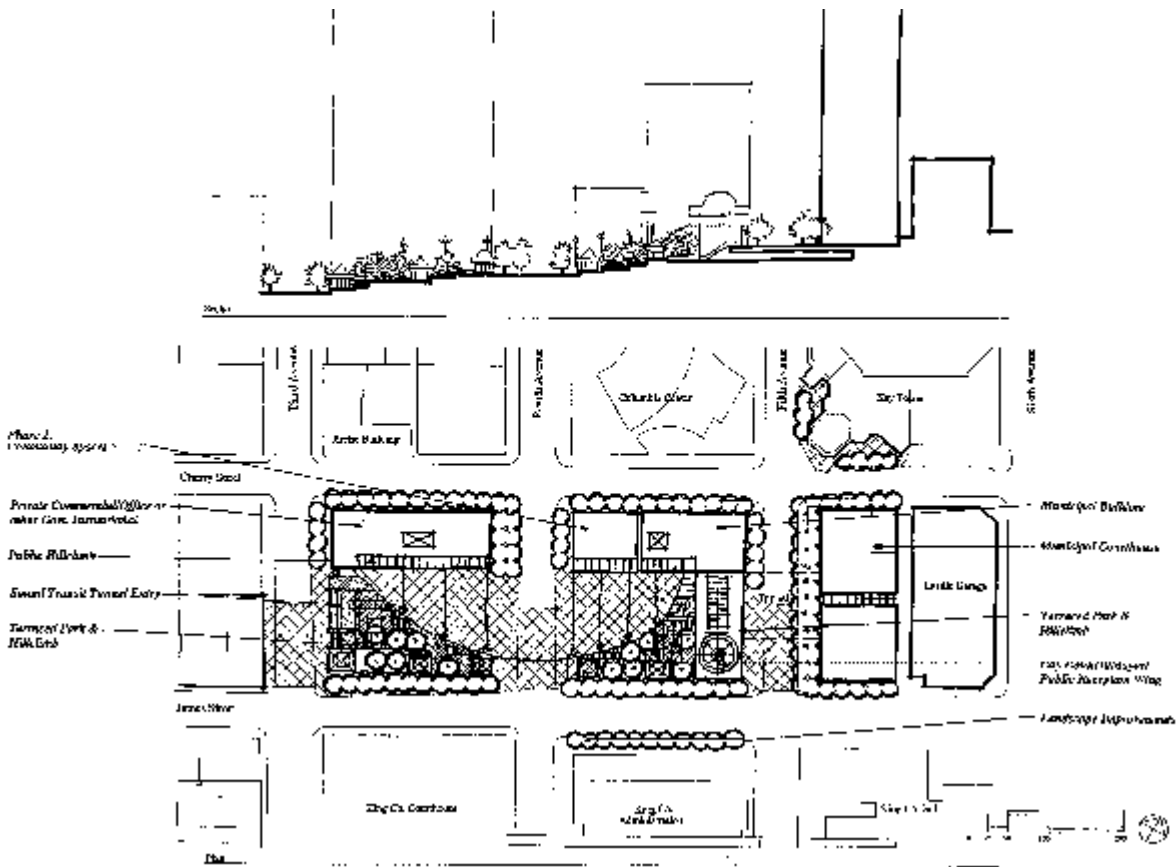
The new City Hall is sited similar to Concept 2, forming the northern edge of the public open space, but with one significant difference. The City Hall would be extended along Fifth Avenue as a three story structure, open to reception on the main level, with two floors of City Council offices above and the City Council chambers anchoring the southern end at the corner of Fifth Avenue and James. The public open space extends from the west into the entrance/reception area of the City Hall at the Fifth Avenue level, and may include a lower level connection under Fifth Avenue to the Municipal Courthouse. This bridging wing would be similar in height to the lower floors of the Courthouse, establishing a relationship across Fifth Avenue. This wing will be transparent at the main level and low enough in mass to allow the courthouse to remain as part of the formation at the eastern edge of the Civic Center space.

The northwestern corner of the City Hall site will include, as part of a second step, an addition to the City Hall similar to Concept 2. The Public Safety block will include a private commercial office or government building on the northern edge of the open space, on Cherry Street, with open space and the public gathering/ wintergarden pavilion previously described, and a hill climb linking the Civic Center to the Sound Transit tunnel.

### Concept 4 / Preferred Alternative



Illustration 13 - Concept 4



This concept combines the preferred qualities of the previous concepts in order to achieve the best sense of a Civic Center and sense of place with the potential of being truly representative of the City's center of government, establishing a sense of civic identity while reinforcing the ceremonial nature of many public functions.

The public open space, like Concept 3, extends from Fifth Avenue to Third Avenue facing south, with buildings along Cherry Street forming the northern edge of the space. The space is entirely open, without the public gathering/wintergarden pavilion in the open space on the Public Safety block. This function is integrated into the street level of the building proposed on the northwest corner of the City Hall site at Fourth and Cherry as proposed in Concept 2. It is recommended that the public open space be substantial, to have a presence in the built-up urban fabric of downtown, and includes all of the activities anticipated for public gatherings and celebrations, an amphitheater for performances and speeches, room for receptions, plazas, gardens, water and places to sit comfortably alone, with a few friends, to eat lunch, or drink coffee. The open space is conceived to include relatively large level plazas at the elevation of Fourth Avenue rising to the east through an amphitheater to a belvedere, with the mezzanine and lobby of the new City Hall culminating on Fifth Avenue. The plaza on the west side of Fourth Avenue cascades down to Third and continues down to the mezzanine of the Sound Transit tunnel, transforming as it moves from the plaza to terraced gardens and water. The southern portion of the space will include cascading gardens and water, following the slope of James Street and providing a terminus at the western end of the open space at Third Avenue. The gardens will include intimate areas with seating. Two food service pavilions may be included off the plazas in the gardens near Fourth Avenue.

The new City Hall is similar to Concept 3, with the bulk of City Hall concentrated in the northeast corner of the city hall site, 12 to 13 stories high. A three story structure runs south across the site along Fifth Avenue, housing the City Council chambers, offices, entrance and reception and a portion of customer services on the Fifth Avenue level at the northeast corner. The Mayor's offices may be located on the Fourth floor of the City Hall, opening on to the roof terraces of the three story structure.

Access to City Hall will be provided through a connection between Cherry Street and the beveled edge of the public open space. A public hill climb assist should be developed on the southern face of the buildings on both blocks along the edge of the open space.

A second step on the City Hall site will include additional open space and a building on the north edge housing a public reception space at Fourth Avenue and a City information area, along with retail space and possibly a community center with public meeting spaces.

The Public Safety site will include, in addition to a substantial portion of the public plazas and gardens, a building on the north which could house private offices, institutional uses or government space. The level of the building on the plaza and Fourth Avenue should include retail space, as should the lower level on Fifth Avenue. Private uses for this building could be on property purchased or leased from the City, but the public open space portion of the site should remain under City ownership.

Parking and service will be provided under the new City Hall site within the footprint of the existing parking, with access from Cherry, including a drop-off area. Parking will also be provided under the Public Safety block development.

## Section 7: The Master Plan

Illustration 14 - Concept Plan

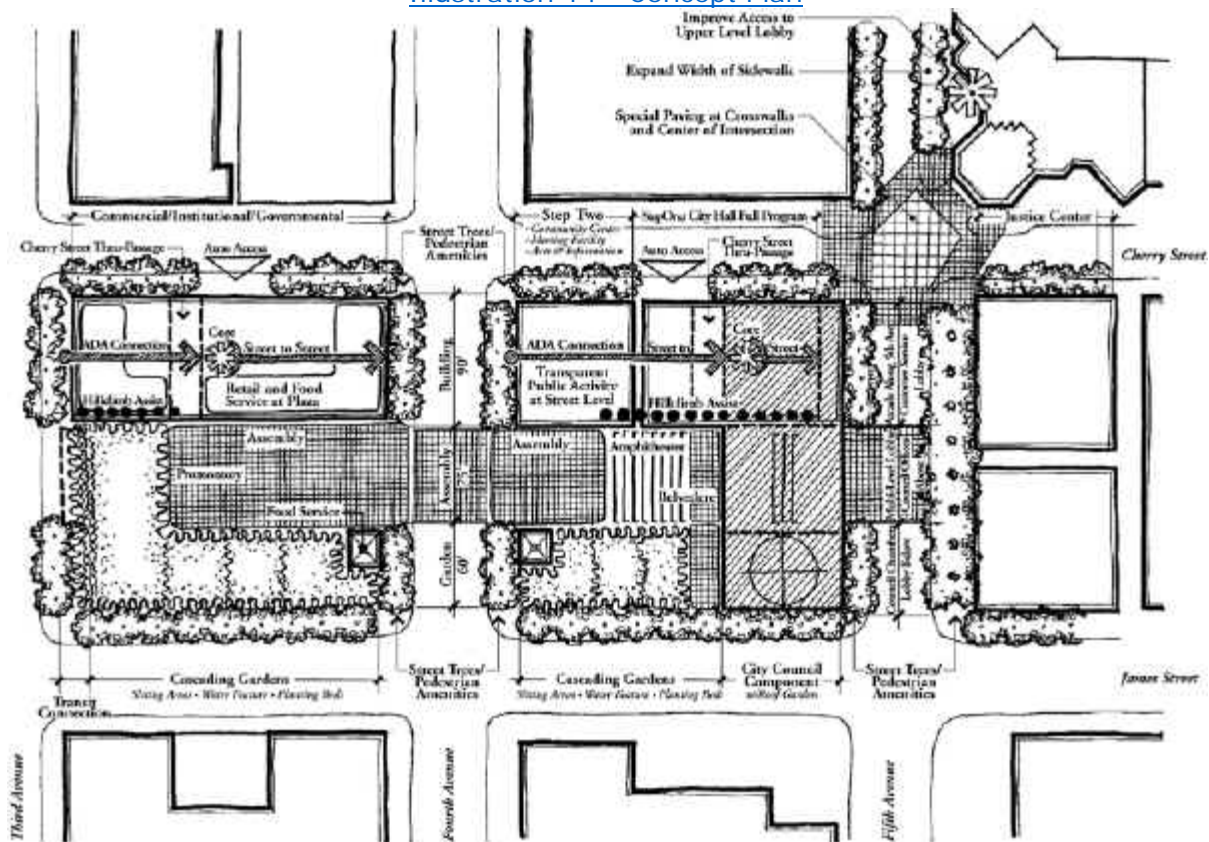
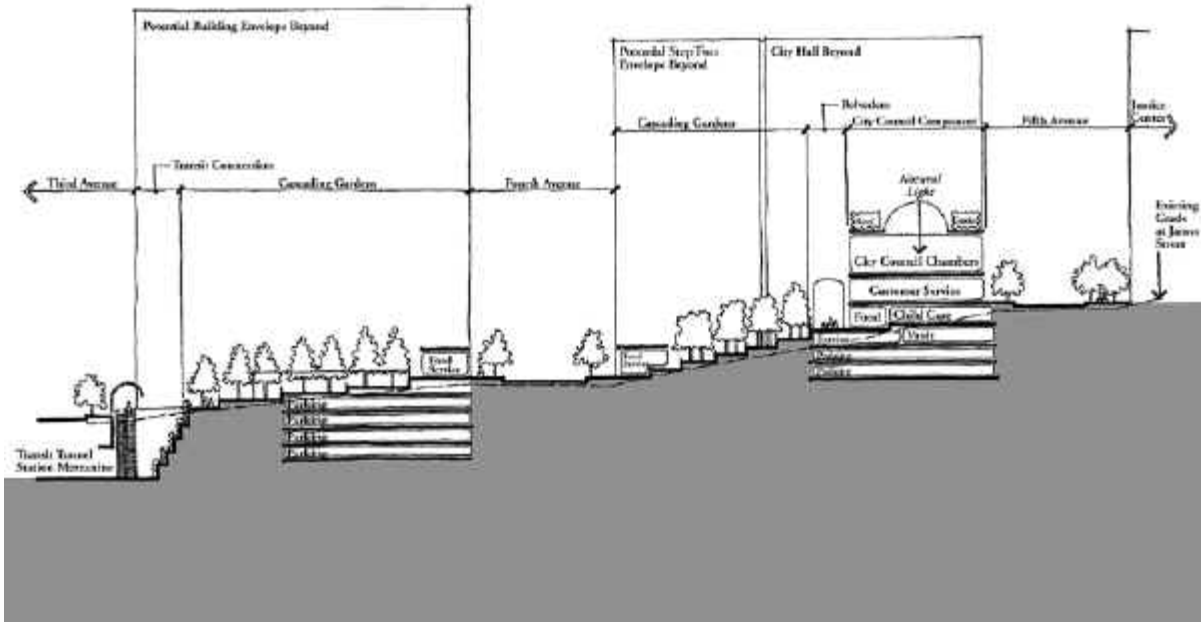
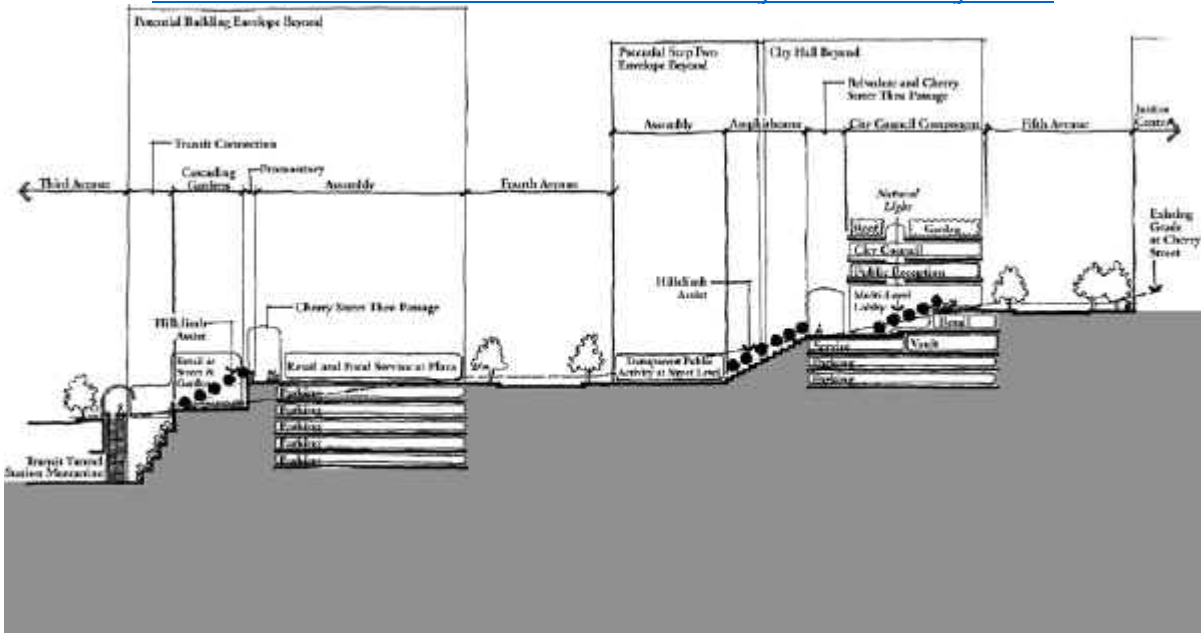


Illustration 15 - East West Section Thru Council Chambers & Cascading Gardens



[Illustration 16 - East West Section Thru Lobby and Assembly Areas](#)



[Illustration 17 - North South Section Thru Tower, Lobby, and Council Chambers & East West Section Thru Tower](#)

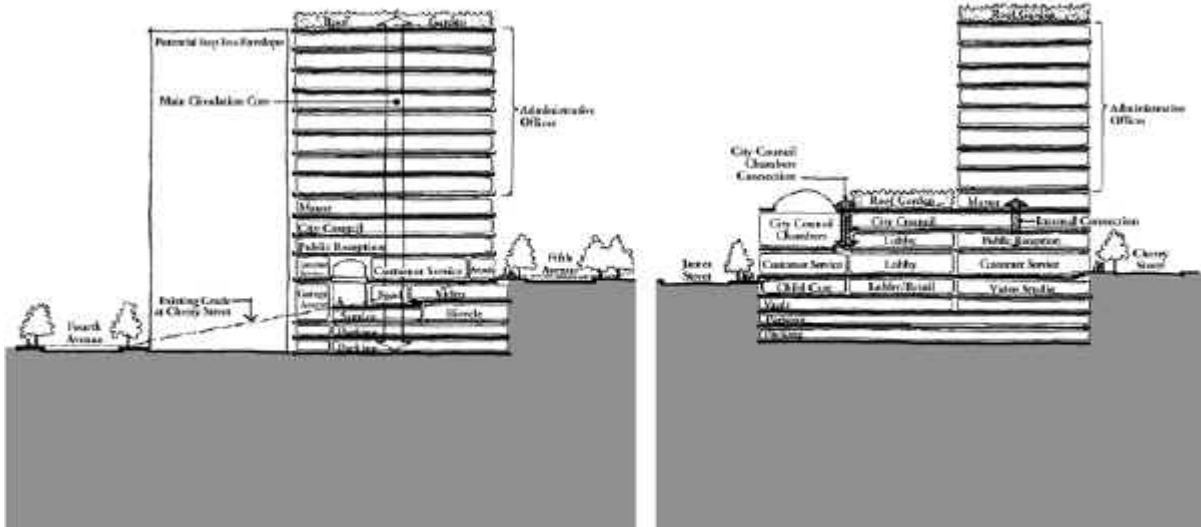


Illustration 18 - City Hall Program Distribution

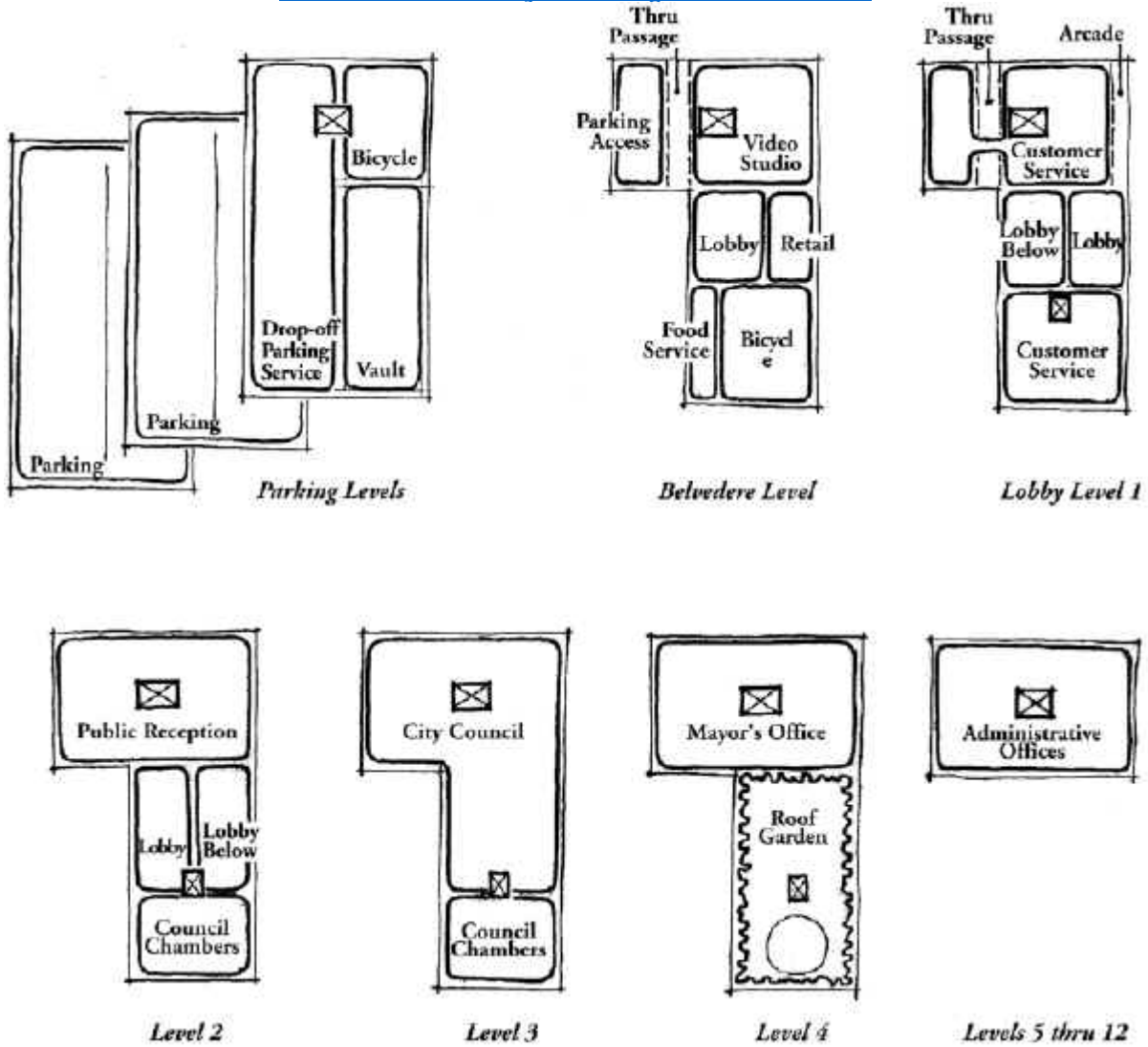
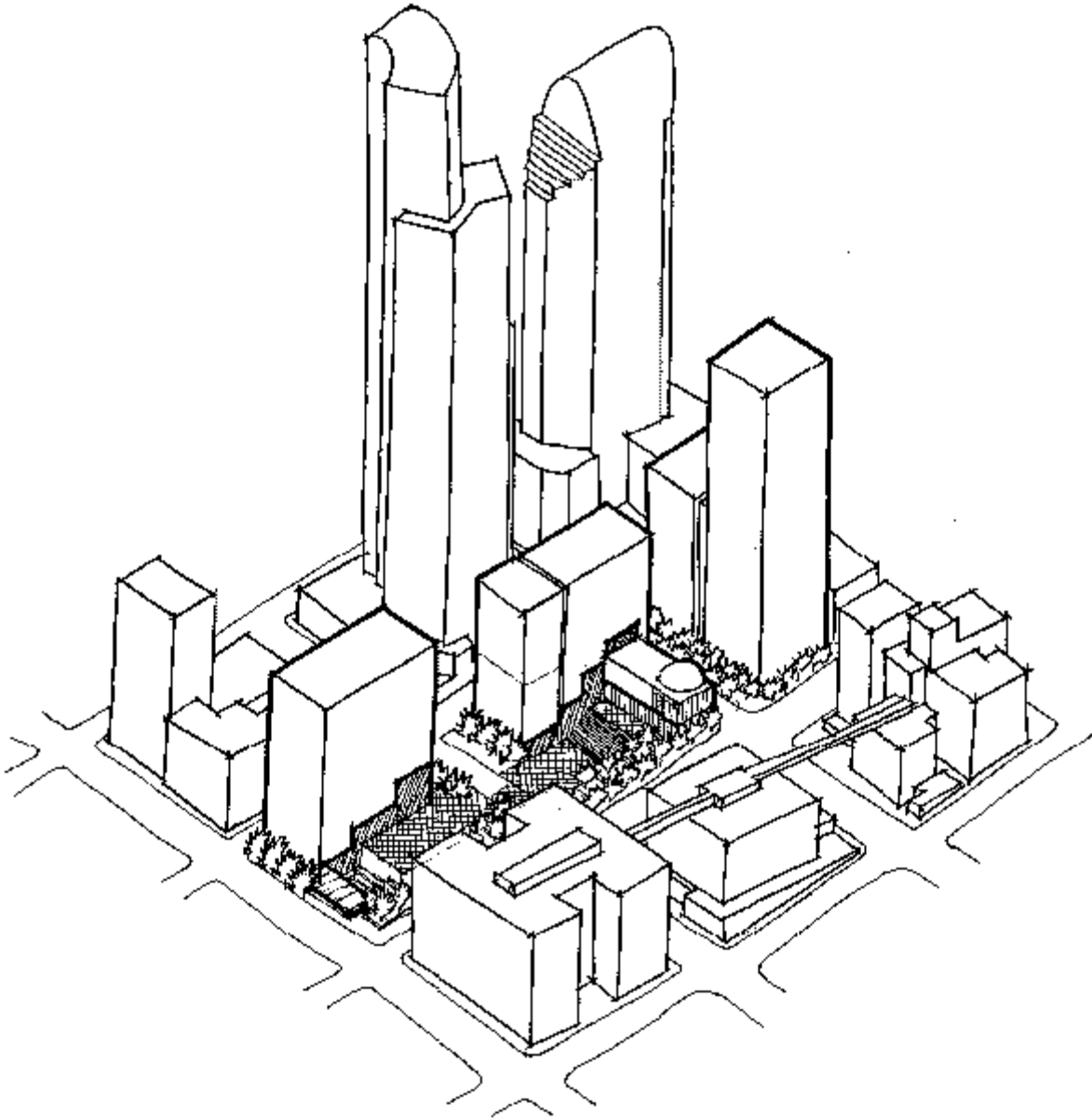


Illustration 19 - Concept Massing



[Illustration 20 - Area Wide Concept](#)

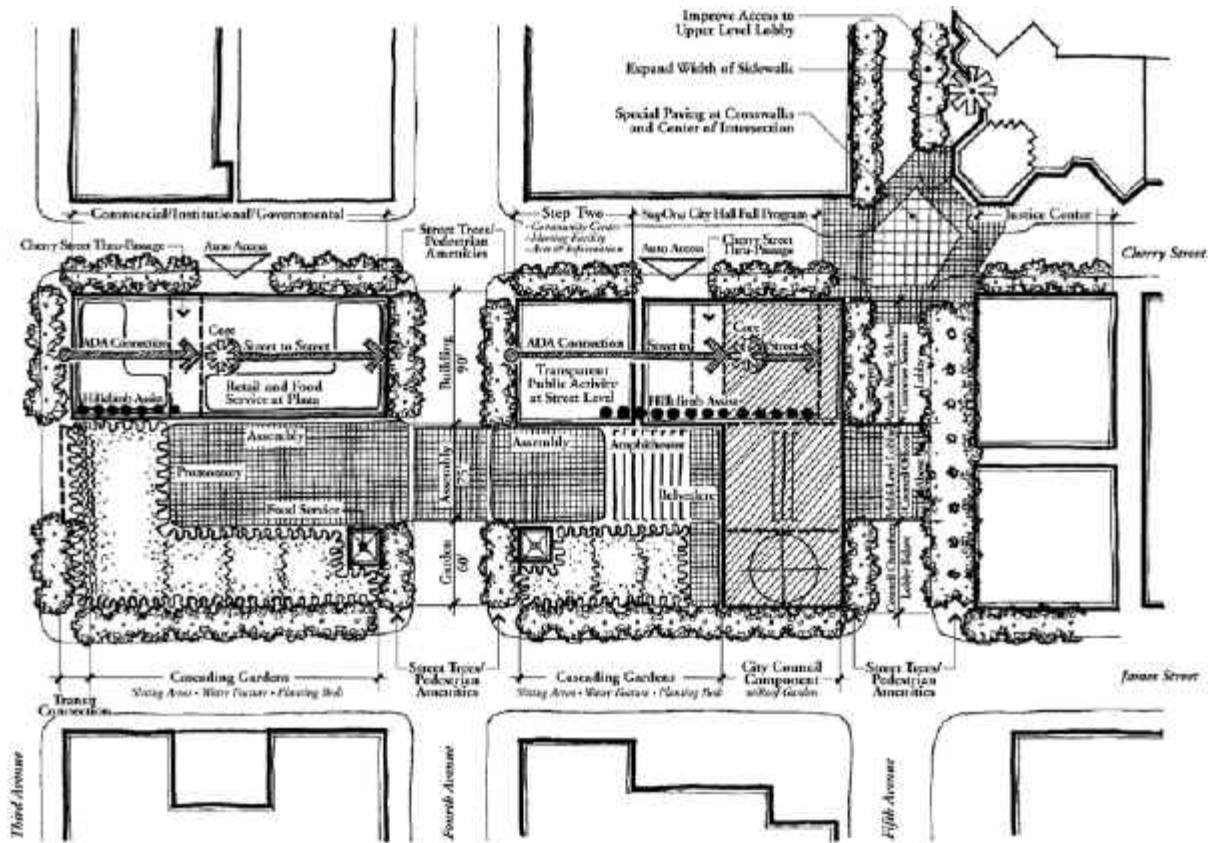
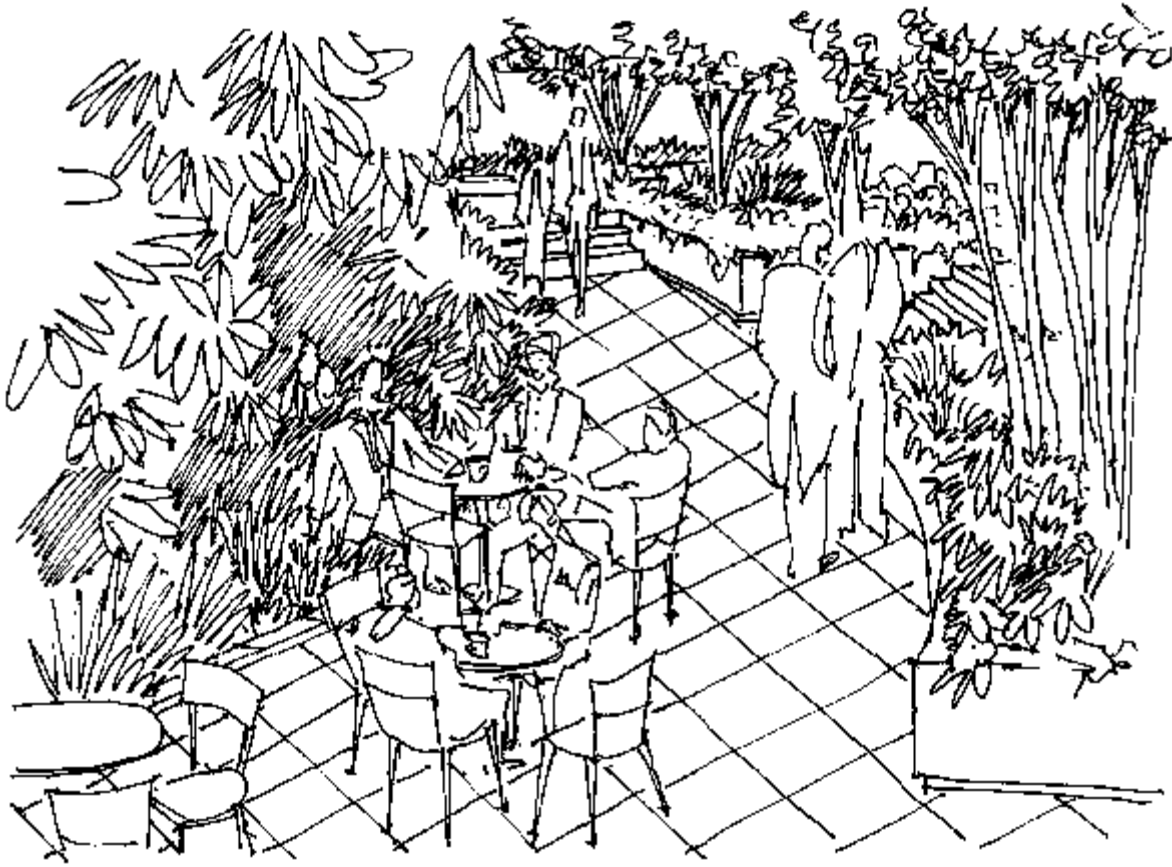
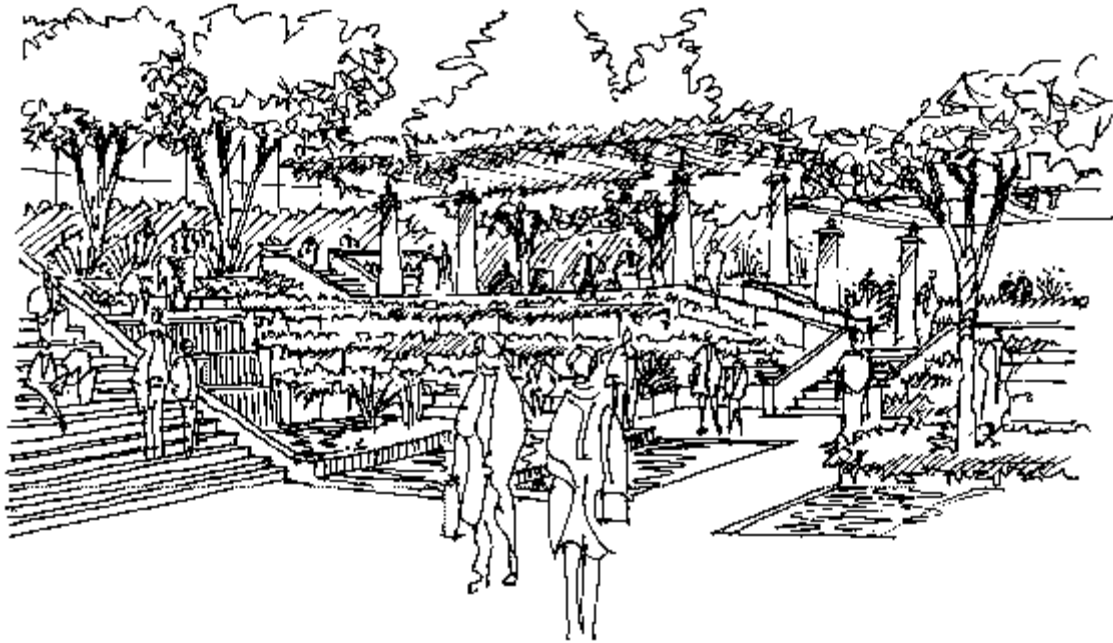


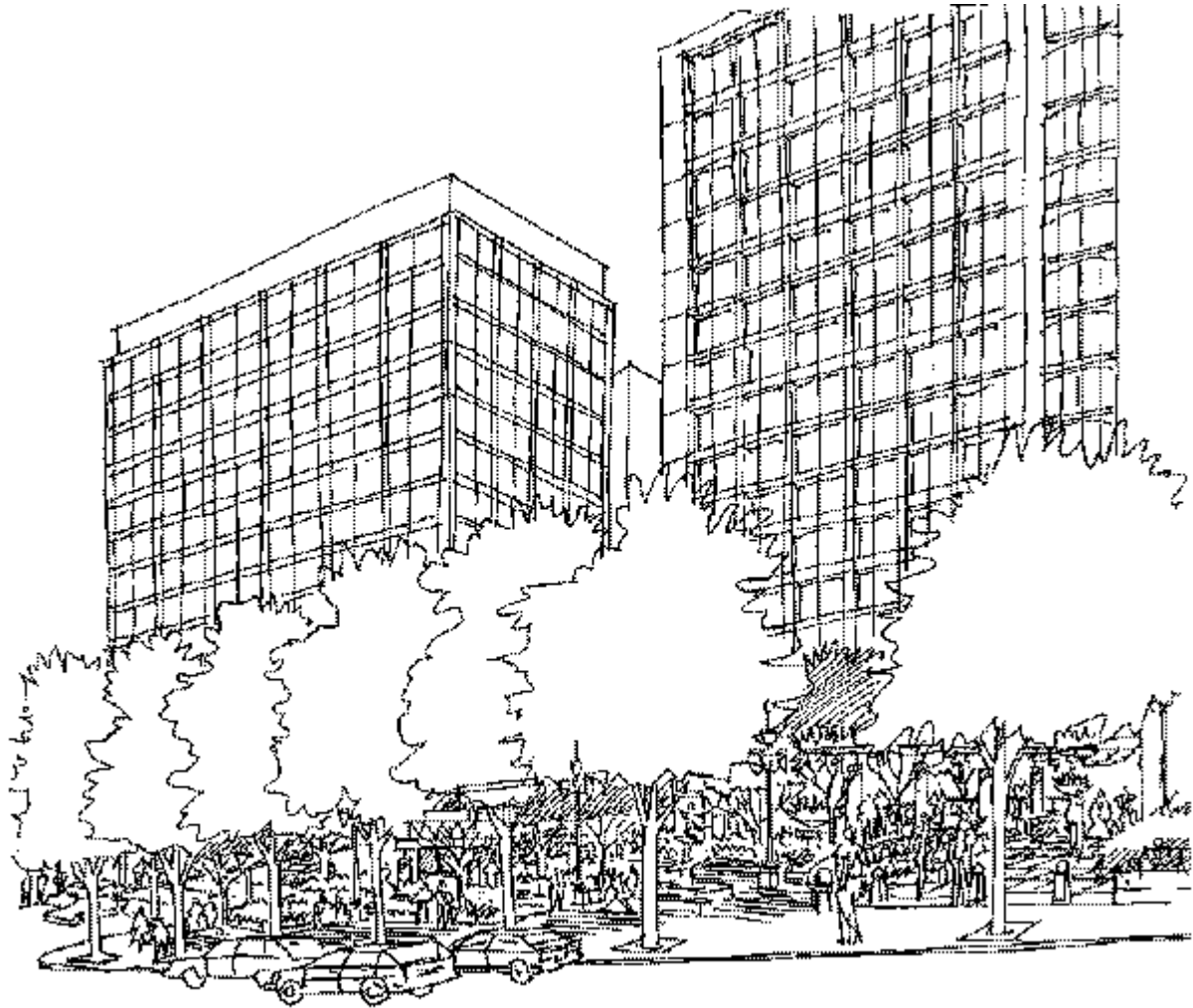
Illustration 21 - Key Tower Connection



[Illustration 22 - Cascading Gardens from Within](#)

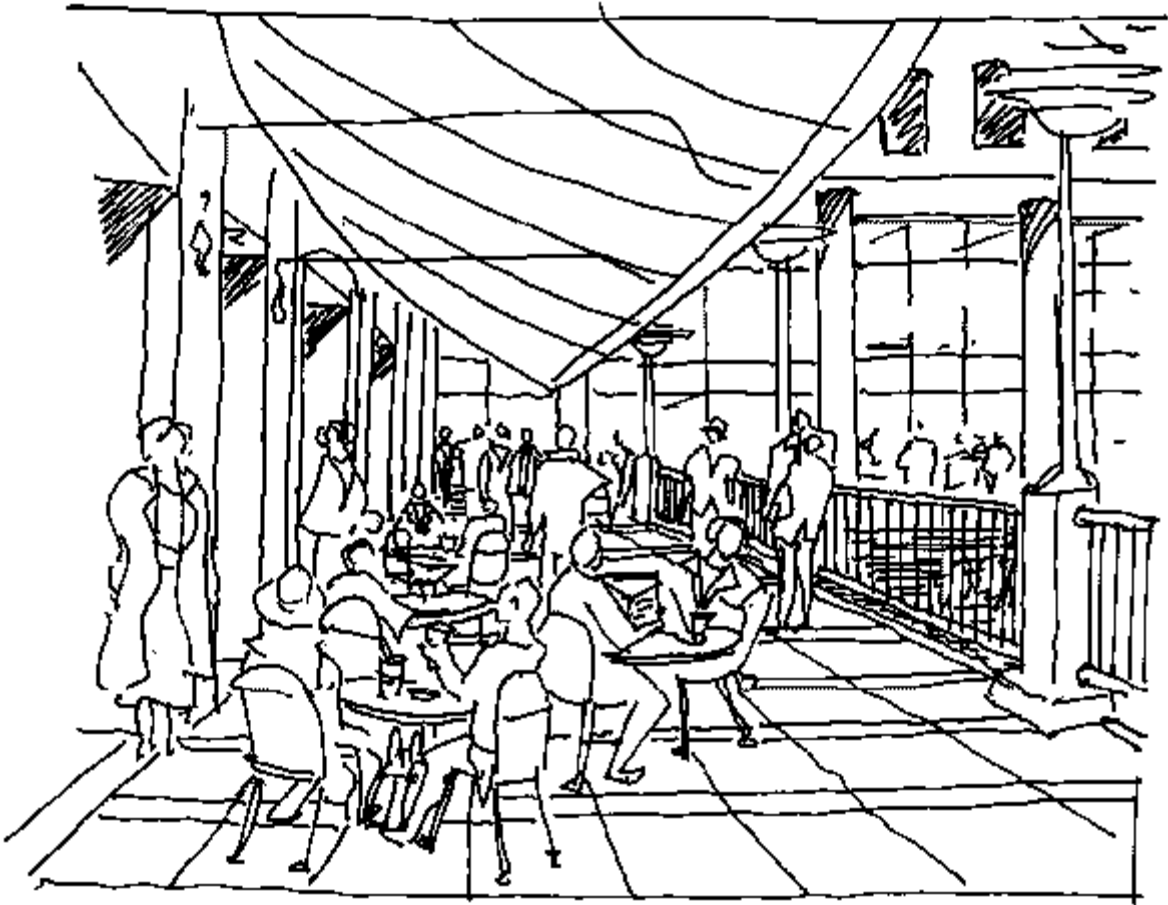


[Illustration 23 - Cascading Gardens from Assembly Area](#)

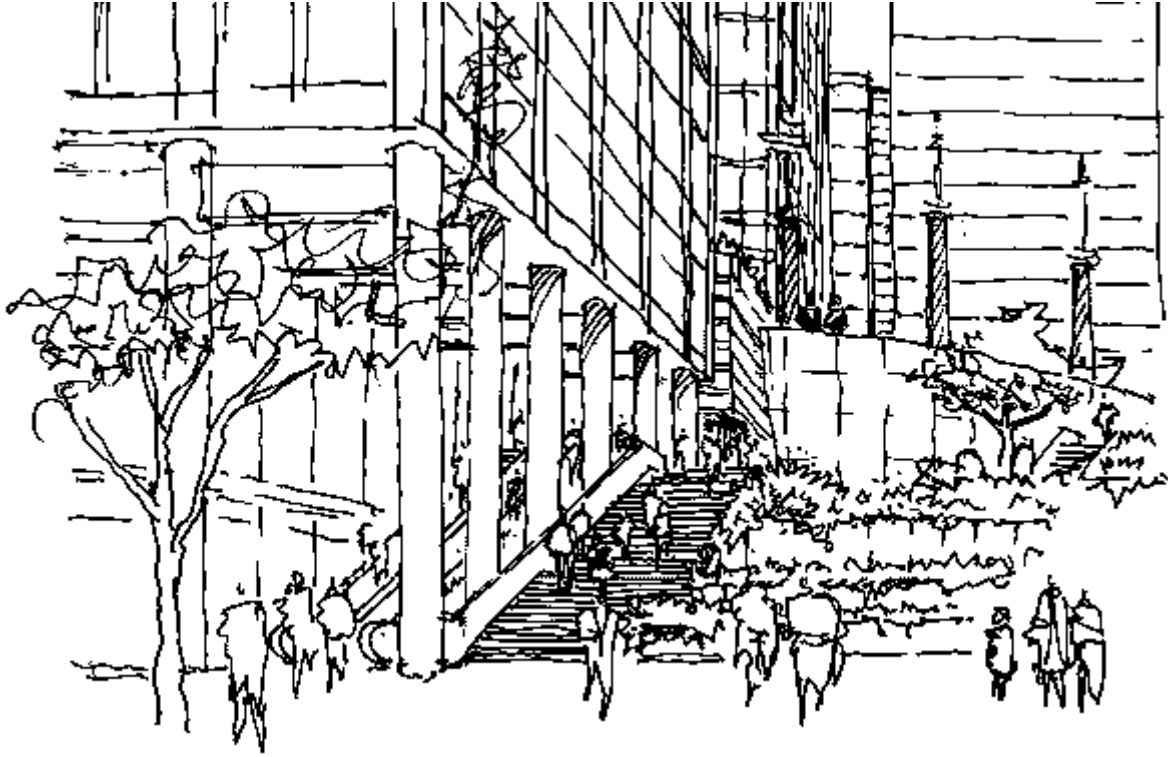


[Illustration 25 - Activity Along Plaza Edge](#)

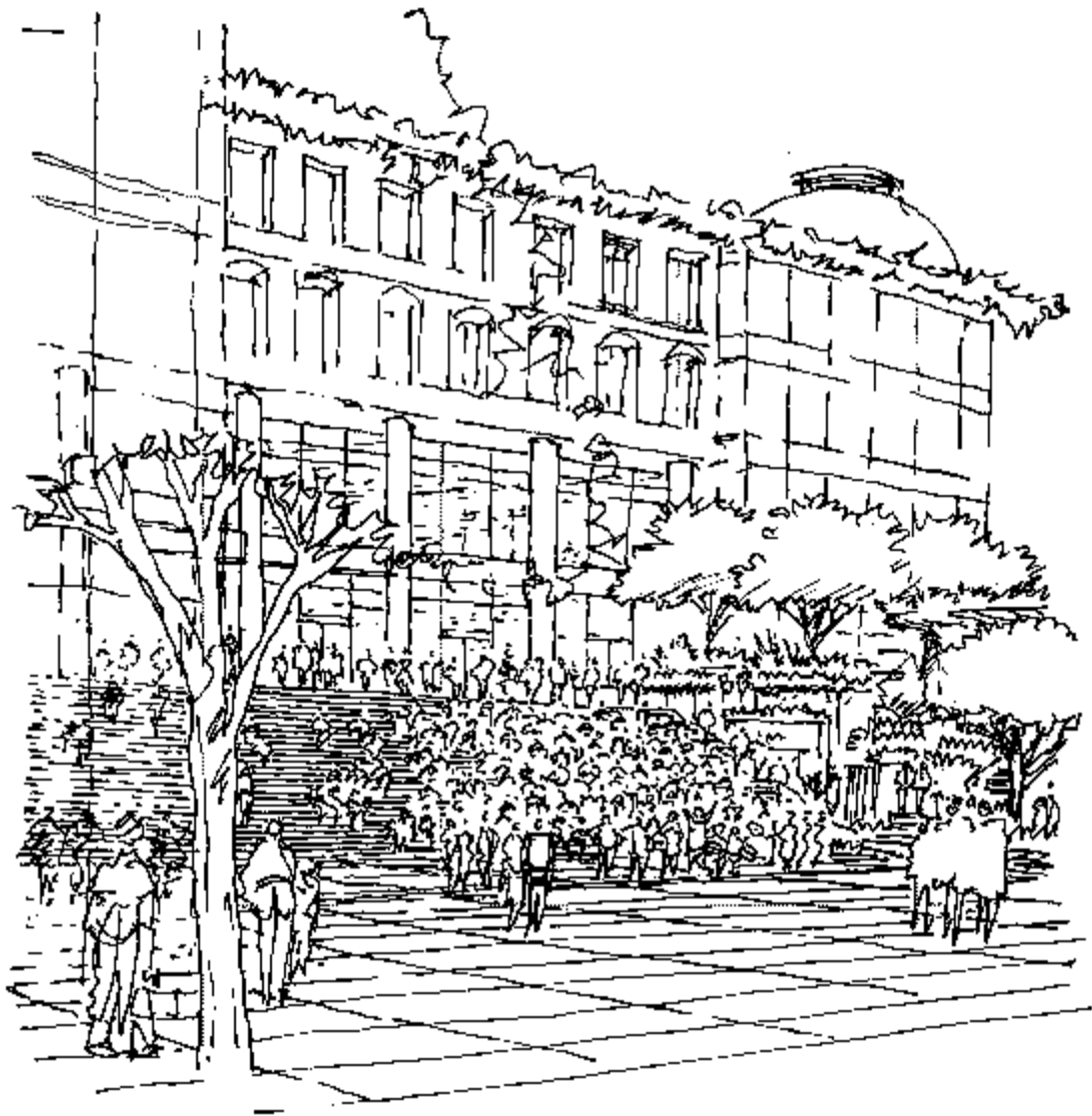




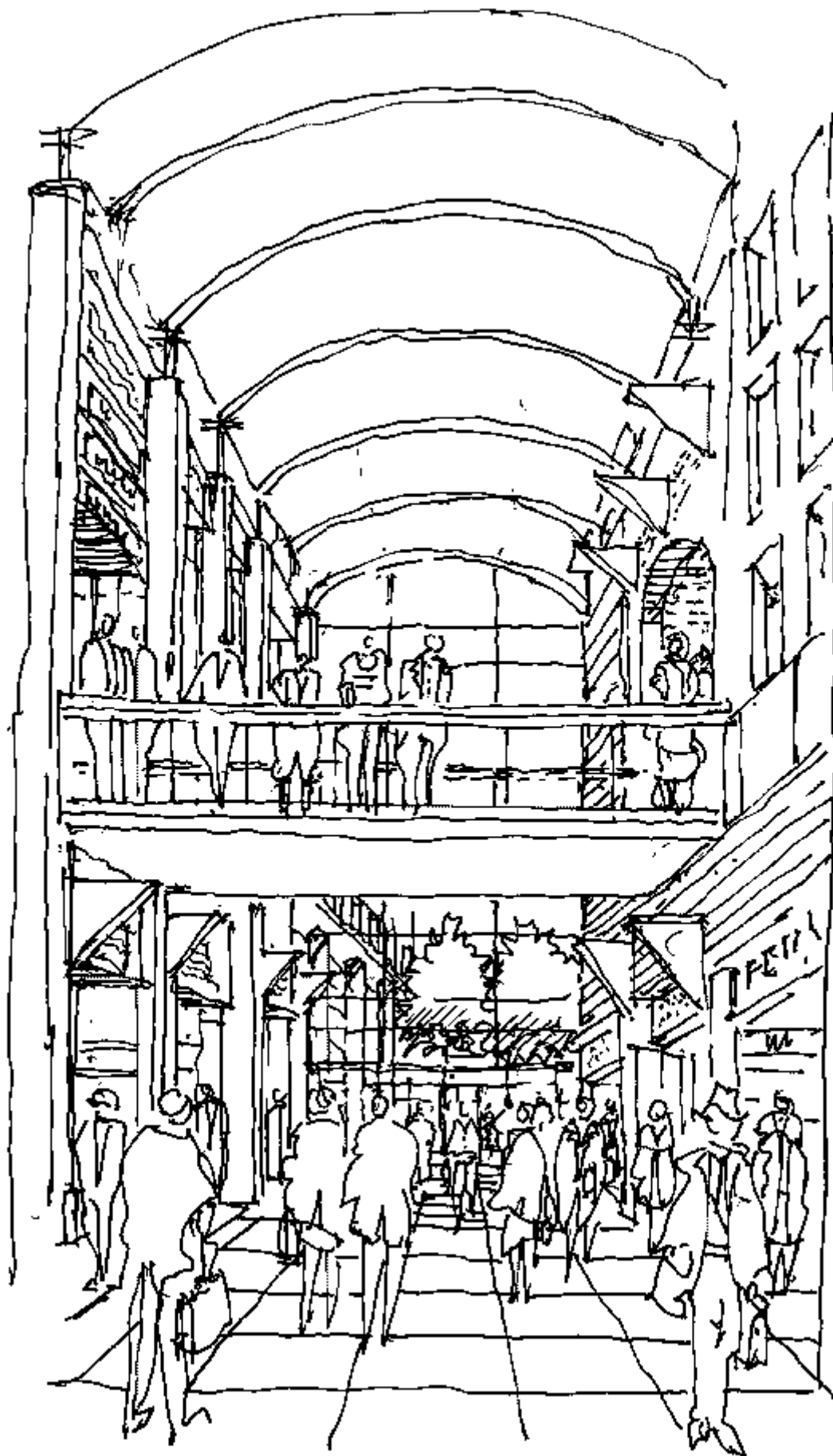
[Illustration 26 - The Promontory](#)

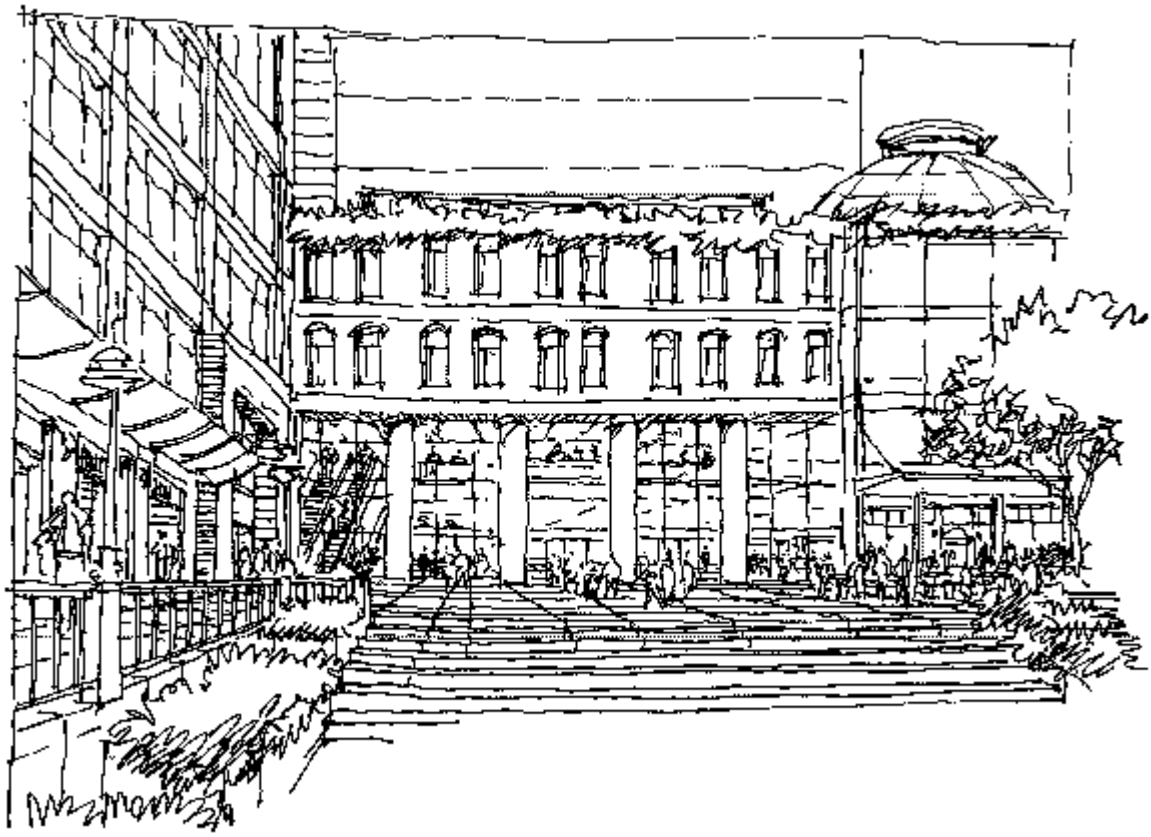


[Illustration 27 - Transit Connection/Cascading Gardens](#)

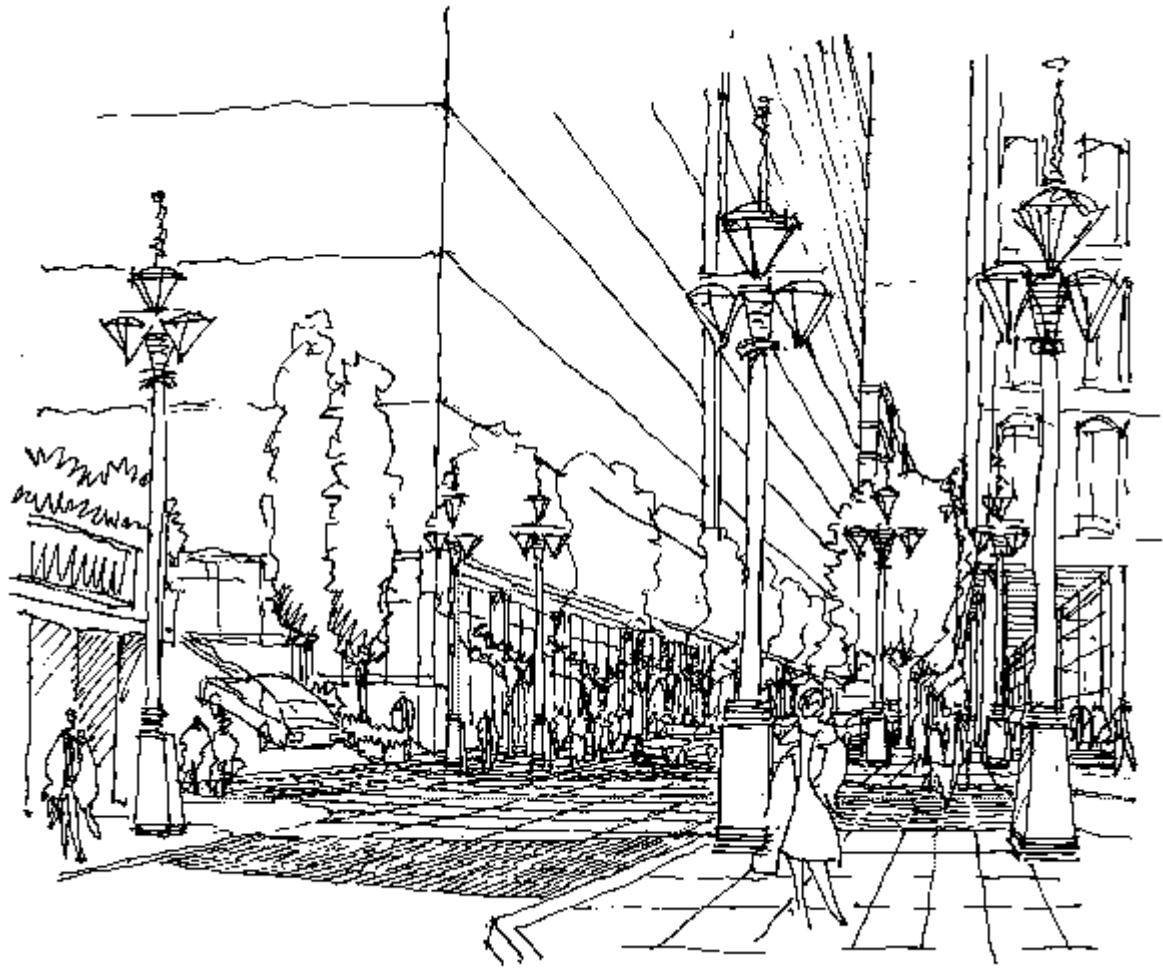


[Illustration 28 - Amphitheater](#)



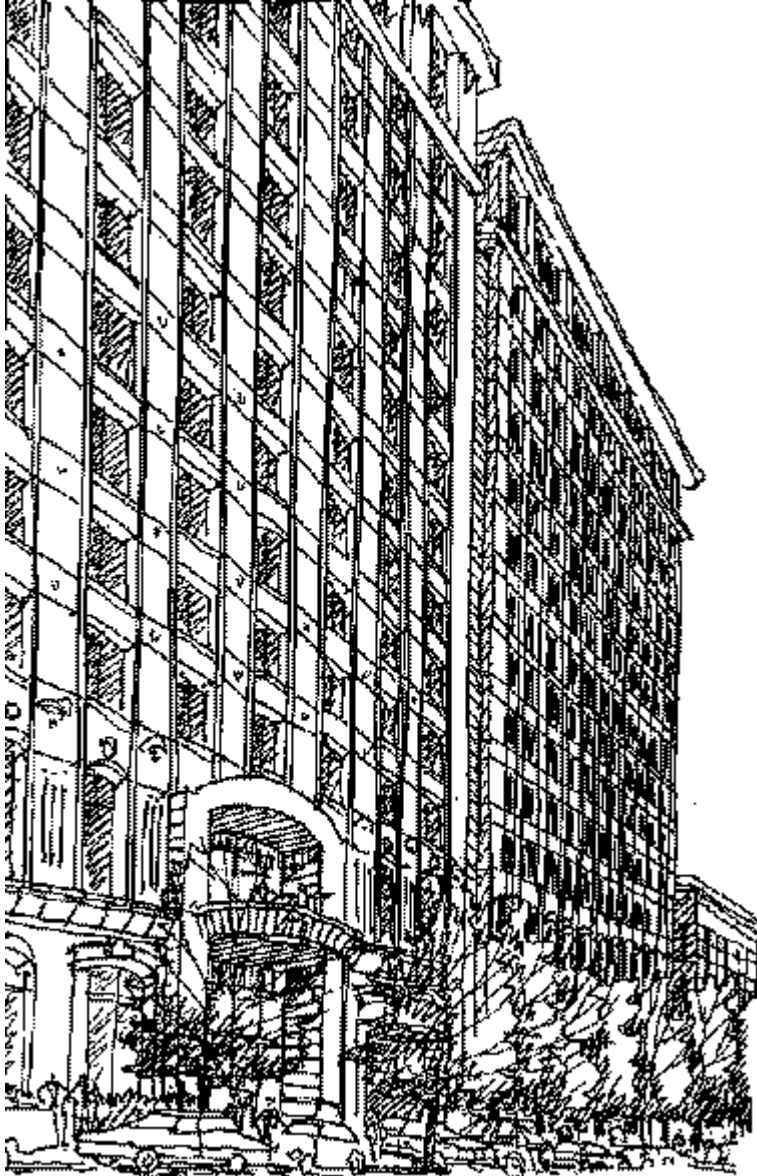












## **Concept Plan**

The recommended plan combines the preferred qualities of the variety of concepts considered to achieve the best qualities of a Civic Center. These qualities include a sense of place with the potential of being truly representative of the City's center of government, while establishing a sense of civic identity and place for public life, as well as reinforcing the ceremonial nature of many public functions. Following is a description of the plan concept.

## **Public Open Space**

The public open space extends from Fifth Avenue to Third Avenue facing south, with buildings along Cherry Street, forming the northern edge of the space. By locating the buildings directly on the northern edge of the public open space, it is intended that ground level activities, including City functions and commercial functions, will attract people and contribute to enlivening the spaces.

Additionally, the buildings will be located on the edge of Cherry Street to the north, reinforcing the urban edge and providing the opportunity to relate the new buildings to the historic buildings across Cherry Street between Second and Fourth Avenues.

It is recommended that the public open space be substantial, to have a presence in the built-up urban fabric of downtown, and include all of the activities anticipated for public assembly and celebrations. Such activities might include an amphitheater for performances and speeches; room for receptions; plazas; gardens; water; and places to sit comfortably alone, or with a few friends, to eat lunch or drink coffee.

The open space is conceived to include relatively large level plazas for gathering at the elevation of Fourth Avenue, rising to the east through an amphitheater located between Fourth and Fifth to a belvedere, with the mezzanine and terraced multi-story lobby of the new City Hall continuing the public open space through the lobby to its termination on Fifth Avenue.

The level plaza on the west side of Fourth Avenue terminates on the west at a promontory, and transforms into terraced gardens and water cascading down to Third Avenue and the mezzanine of the Sound Transit tunnel.

The southern portion of the public open space will include terraced, cascading gardens and water following the slope of James Street and providing a terminus at the open space at Third Avenue. The gardens will include intimate areas with seating, pedestrian-through access from James, and food service pavilions at the edge of the plazas and gardens near Fourth Avenue.

## **City Hall**

The new City Hall will be sited on the northeast corner of the block, approximately 13 stories high, with a three-story high structure extending south across the eastern length of the site along Fifth Avenue. This location will allow for the implementation of the new City Hall in step one prior to the removal of the existing Municipal Building. The configuration of buildings and open space provides for the new Justice Center, sited on the east side of Fifth Avenue, to be integrated into the Civic Center. The three story structure will house and facilitate expression of the entrance lobby and reception, City Council chambers, and customer services, to be located off of a lobby and colonnade on the Fifth Avenue level at the northeast corner. The colonnade will provide weather protection from the northeast corner into the new City Hall, while the northeast corner will provide the easiest street level access to the City owned Key Tower.

The Mayor's offices may be located on the fourth floor of the new City Hall, opening on to the roof terraces of the three-story structure.

The second step to be constructed on the Municipal Building site after its removal will include additional open space (amphitheater, a plaza off of Fourth Avenue, and additional gardens), and an addition to City Hall on the northwestern corner. The plaza level should include a public room for receptions, exhibits, meetings, and celebrations and the upper stories could include a community center, meeting spaces, services, and City Hall expansion, if required over time.

Parking and services, including handicapped parking, will be provided beneath the new City Hall site, within the footprint of the existing parking on the eastern portion of the site. Access will be provided from Cherry Street, including an internal drop off area. Parking will also be provided under the Public Safety block development.

## **Public Safety Site**

The Public Safety Site will include, in addition to a substantial portion of the public plazas and gardens, a new building on the north, which could house public, institutional, or private office activities. The level of the building on the plaza and Fourth Avenue, and at the lower level on Third Avenue, should include retail activity and/or services, which would attract people. Private uses for this building could be on property purchased or leased from the City, but the public open space portion of the site should remain under City ownership.

Development policies should ensure the inclusion of uses on the ground floors compatible with the public open space, accessibility within the building through the block, development of a hill climb assist, and architecture which reinforces, contributes to, and complements the new City Hall and the sense of the entire Civic Center.

ADA Access must be provided on both blocks from each street to the cores of the new buildings, providing access from Third Avenue to Fourth Avenue, and Fourth Avenue to Fifth Avenue. Additionally, a hill climb assist, probably in the form of escalators, will be located on the northern edge of the public open space within the perimeter of the buildings, possibly within a colonnade, on both blocks. Both the Public Safety site and the Municipal Building site will include entries and through walks from Cherry Street into the public open space, possibly with access from these through walks to services within the buildings.

## **Connection to Key Tower**

The Fifth Avenue and Cherry Street intersection has a number of complex vehicular circulation, access, and turning movements which conflict with pedestrian access from Key Tower to the City Hall / Civic Center site. Improvements to this intersection could include lighting and landscaping common to the Civic and Justice Centers that would extend north on Fifth Avenue to the Key Tower site, as well as paving in the pedestrian crosswalks, which would emphasize the pedestrian zone and links to the Civic Center.

The access at Key Tower to the upper lobby level over the tunnel must be improved, possibly including escalator access. A more detailed study is required to determine a feasible solution. The upper plaza facing the new Civic Center (where there is an existing restaurant) might include landscaping, signage, and lighting common with the Civic Center, in order to link Key Tower to the Civic Center.

The pedestrian environment at the street level at Key Tower must be significantly improved. Currently the sidewalk width along the eastern side of Fifth Avenue is only ten feet wide. It should be at least twenty feet to accommodate pedestrians comfortably and safely and to create an environment in scale and character appropriate to a city civic center. Eliminating the current left-turn only traffic lane opposite the southbound, contra-flow bus lane that enters the tunnel can widen the sidewalk. Traffic volumes in this block appear to decline to a level where closure of an existing lane would still allow traffic to flow effectively. More detailed study of specific impacts and tradeoffs is required. Fifth Avenue currently is a three lane arterial through the retail core of downtown where traffic volumes are greatest.

## **Area Wide Improvements**

There are several off-site improvements that should be undertaken that would improve the overall quality of the Civic Center, would contribute to knitting the Civic Center into the fabric of downtown, and would facilitate connections to adjacent neighborhoods.

Site and landscape improvements along the north side of the King County Administration Building would make it a better neighbor to the new City Hall and would contribute to enhancing the open space character being proposed for James Street in this block.

Improving sidewalks and pedestrian amenities along James Street would provide a more safe and friendly connection from the First Hill neighborhood to the Civic Center and from the Civic Center to Pioneer Square and the Waterfront. Similarly, increased sidewalk improvements and pedestrian amenities along Cherry Street from Second Avenue to Sixth Avenue would provide an intra-neighborhood connection integrating the various components of the Civic Center with themselves and adjacent commercial and retail activities.

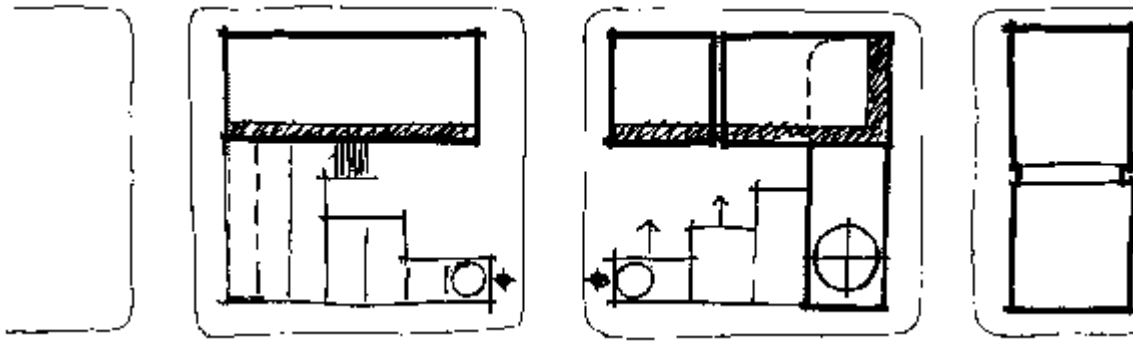
Extending the Fifth Avenue LID improvements south to James Street would result in better integration of the Civic Center into the retail core while picking up the new city library along the way. Similar street improvements and pedestrian amenities along Fourth Avenue, from City Hall Park on the south to the Library site on the north, would provide a safer and more pleasant connection between public open spaces and civic facilities. These improvements would also establish a gracious entry into the downtown for vehicular traffic traveling north on Fourth Avenue.

Regional transportation connections would be facilitated by improved Metro bus stops along Fifth and Fourth Avenues at Cherry Street and by the enlarged and more open tunnel entry to the Sound Transit light rail system.

There is an existing tunnel under Fifth Avenue from Key Tower to Columbia Center. As discussed previously, the potential exists for extending a tunnel connection from Columbia Center to the Civic Center thereby providing a weather-protected connection between the city's administrative offices and the more public City Hall. The potential for a similar tunnel under Fifth Avenue between the Justice Center and the City Hall also exists. Technical, financial and aesthetic considerations will require further study before any definitive decisions can be made regarding the feasibility of these tunnels. The Master Plan allows for their possibility. A tunnel under James Street for the movement of prisoners between the Justice Center and the King County Jail will be provided.

## **Section 8: Design Guidelines**

[Illustration 36 - Open Space Configuration Studies](#)



## Open Space

### Intent and Functions

The public open space is arguably the most important element of the Civic Center, as an unenclosed living space, or front porch, welcoming all of Seattle's citizens and visitors. Its character should represent the spirit of the city; its activities should reflect the involvement of a wide range of people in the heart of governance, and its maintenance should represent a level of care and commitment to the city as a whole.

The open space should be civic in size, scale, definition and demeanor, with the topography of the site expressed as a core value. The open space should include a garden that is inspired by the characteristics of the Pacific Northwest. Plazas should be shaped to encourage a multiplicity of events and activities. These areas need to be sufficiently large to allow for large public gatherings and public debate, but also need to be attractive areas for individuals and small groups on a day-to-day basis. The open space should be designed to invite and encourage pedestrian circulation, and small scale food service should be available to encourage use of the gardens for lunches.

### Character of Open Space

#### Attitude of Natural vs. Man-made

The open space should incorporate references to the natural environment that is a fundamental value of the region. However, it should be clear that the landscape is in an urban, man-made environment, and landscape should not attempt to recreate an isolated piece of the natural environment.

#### Formal vs. Informal

The open space should have within it a variety of characters and places. A more formal area for public gathering is appropriate adjacent to the building. Informal and intimate spaces should be incorporated into the garden areas.

#### Four Season Usage

Design and materials should maximize the usage of the open space during all times of the year. Good drainage and non-slip materials should ensure safe and pleasant walking conditions in the rain, and sheltered areas should be offered for those waiting for the bus. The hillclimb assisted route should be weather-protected. The changing of the seasons should be visible in plant materials, ensuring greenery in the winter months, and changing colors in both permanent plantings and perennial plantings.

#### Relationship to Topography

The prominent topography of Seattle's downtown is almost unique. The Civic Center site is one of the steeper areas of the downtown, with a grade change of over seventy feet between Third and Fifth Avenues. The design of the open space

should use the topography to its advantage, emphasizing views and perspectives, while also making it as easy as possible for pedestrians traveling uphill. The slope should be used to create amphitheater style seating on a grand stairway, and the topography should be used to emphasize the hierarchy of uses within the building by placing the symbolic functions at a visual high point.

## **Size and Configuration**

Sizing is based on generous spaces for the variety of activities essential to the Civic Center, and based on a well proportioned relationship of built and open areas. These activities include hard surface areas for public gathering, performances, speakers and demonstrations. Other activities in the open space are more informal, intimate spaces for conversation, outdoor lunches, or private thoughtful time. The space needs to be large enough to accommodate sizeable groups participating in the public, civic life of the city, and of a size to represent a heart of the city.

The open space should be of a size and configuration that maximizes available light and sunshine. It is primarily for this reason that the open space has been located on the south side of the site.

The configuration should allow the character of the site to be revealed in the topography. Partly for this reason, the open space was configured in an east-west direction. Other schemes that captured the open space in flat plazas within the site, or used the buildings to resolve the slope did not take advantage of the potential drama of the slope.

The configuration of the open space needs to relate to the program of the building and interconnect the functions of the outdoor and indoor areas. The assembly areas should be accessible to the adjacent indoor spaces, and openable during warm weather. Outdoor and indoor connections also need to be configured with integrated handicap accessibility.

## **Materials, Plantings and Furnishings**

The materials for the open space should be chosen in conjunction with the materials selected for the buildings. They should evoke a sense of permanence, and be sufficiently durable in order to withstand many years of heavy public use. In the assembly areas and along travel routes, paving materials should be slip-resistant when wet and should be detailed to drain well.

Plant materials should be reflective of the region, and should include a mix of deciduous and evergreen materials. Provisions should be made for display of seasonal color. Plants should be ample in size at the time of planting, especially those chosen for their ability to screen undesirable views across James Street.

Furnishings also need to be selected to be compatible with the character and materials of the building and its furnishings. They will need to be durable, without being overly institutional in nature. Furnishings will include seating, tables, trash receptacles and light standards.

Water features are encouraged in order to highlight the slope, to provide a focal point and to mask noise. Consideration should be given to a counterpoint to the water feature that provides a sense of warmth, dryness and protection during damp weather, for example the fireplace in the Grand Central Arcade in Pioneer Square.

## **Lighting**

Lighting needs to be incorporated into the Civic Center to highlight both buildings and open space, and to create a safe environment during evening hours. While overall lighting levels need to be sufficient for the perception of safety in all portions of the space, lighting should be used to highlight landscape features and promote wayfinding.

The Center and surrounding streets should include cobra lights on the sidewalks (existing), pedestrian light standards, lighting in the landscape, on stairs, etc., highlighting textures and for reasons of safety, special lighting, events and holidays, and lighting of the building facade to create illuminated walls to the outdoor space.

## **Art**

Art should be integral with the open space, and coordination with artists should begin as early as possible in the process. Artwork should be in scale with the space, and civic in nature, and conveying some meaning or interpretation of "Seattle", our community and citizens.

## **Activation**

The open space should be made easily accessible to major centers of population, and made attractive as a pedestrian link through weatherproof connections and hillclimb assists. The Sound Transit station needs to be well integrated into the site, with clear orientation and direction at the surface level.

It is essential that the space be actively programmed and managed in order to provide ongoing public activities, life and energy. The programming at the Seattle Center could serve as an example of the frequency and variety of events. An ongoing series of programs and activities attractive to a wide spectrum of the population needs to be scheduled for the spaces and well publicized. Program elements in the Civic Center should draw people to the site during and beyond work hours.

The comfort level of the outdoor spaces is critical to its use. Comfort includes environmental factors such as temperature, wind, moisture and noise, and other subtle factors including materials used for seating, and which direction seating faces. Outdoor spaces should be oriented for maximum light and sun, and allow for public events and performances. Seating and tables are encouraged, with food services available. Outdoor and indoor spaces and activities should be related and linked. Kiosks and seating areas for commercial activity, exhibits, information should be integrated with landscape into the southern edge of the space off of James Street.

## **Maintenance**

The maintenance of the space reflects the amount of concern that the community has for the Civic Center. The space should not be designed to minimize maintenance; instead, the care of the space should be highly visible. Showcasing flowering plants that are on a changed on a regular basis is one way in which the care of the space is made visible. The presence of maintenance workers also helps with the perception of the space as cared for and safe.

## **Safety**

Lighting, the presence of staff, and good design will all contribute to the safety of the Civic Center. The ability to close portions of open space during certain times or special events may be considered, but not if it detracts from the overall feel of welcome and openness of the Civic Center.

The most important factor in the safety on the site is the presence of people and activities. While the design of the space needs to accommodate and encourage use of the facilities, there is an important on-going requirement for adequate staff and funding to support and publicize a variety of programs on a regular basis. The design of the space and connections to it must also emphasize bringing people into and through the Civic Center. Strong pedestrian connections is essential to localized centers of population such as the transit station and the high rise buildings to the north.

## **Design Components**

### **Assembly Areas**

Public gathering places are envisioned on both sides of Fourth Avenue. These assembly spaces are relatively flat, with hard surface, and they relate both to the buildings on the north side and the planted areas to the south. They form a foreground to City Hall, with a grand stair that also functions as seating for the assembly areas. These two spaces may differ somewhat in character due to the differences in the two buildings they adjoin. The design of the assembly space adjacent to City Hall should be driven by its use as an outdoor "room" for the various functions of City Hall. Each assembly space should be large enough to comfortably accommodate civic scale events.

### **Cascading Gardens**

The cascading gardens provide a green counterpoint to the hard surfaces of the assembly spaces. In addition, they mediate the slope between the flatter gathering spaces and the grade of the sidewalk along James Street. The cascading gardens should take advantage of the drama of the slope in their design, providing smaller intimate spaces within a broad sweep of green along the hill. One or two routes through the gardens in each block should be considered as links to the sidewalk.

### **Amphitheater**

The amphitheater is created by using the grade change to create seating for performances and events. The design of the amphitheater space should take into account sight lines, height for seating, orientation to sun and wind, acoustics, and the visual backdrop for performers and speakers. Steps will be integrated into the amphitheater leading between the assembly area and the entry level of City Hall.

## Promontory

The elevation change on the site also allows for particular places to enjoy the views of the Civic Center. A promontory is shown at the west end of the assembly area on the Public Safety site, looking out over the cascading gardens near the transit tunnel. Conversely, the promontory could serve as a point of interest looking up the hill from Third Avenue. The promontory is located along the through connection from Cherry Street.

## Belvedere

This element creates a terrace above the City Hall assembly space, connected to the through connection to Cherry Street and as a threshold to the City Hall entry. The terrace would be an overlook for the gathering space below, and part of the passageway from Cherry Street to the Civic Center and the gardens. The belvedere terrace should be deep enough to serve as a forecourt to the City Council wing.

## Pavilions

The non-civic functions such as the food service are housed in smaller, separate pavilions adjacent to the gardens. Their form and materials may have an element of informality, or whimsy, that would not be appropriate for the other structures of the Civic Center, but relate to the garden and terrace areas.

## Transit Connections

The transit tunnel will be an important point of entry for the Civic Center. Because its mezzanine level is substantially below street level, it presents an opportunity to further reinforce the drama of the grade change over the site. The section illustrates the potential to create a steep cascade that continues the water and plantings of the Civic Center into the underground level of the tunnel.

The Civic Center design should include clear wayfinding from the exit of the tunnel at the street level. The view of the Civic Center at this point should be understandable to a person emerging from the tunnel who is unfamiliar with the area. In addition, signage should be located at the tunnel exit identifying the major destinations within the Civic Center and in the surrounding neighborhood. Signage should also help direct people from the upper levels of the site to transit stops.

Buses will continue to play an important role on the street level on Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenues. The areas where people wait for the buses should be ample and comfortable places in all kinds of weather and after dark.

## Passage Ways to Cherry and James Streets

Two clear connections through the buildings are included from Cherry Street. These are envisioned as double height spaces serving both as visual and physical connections from the north into the assembly spaces and gardens. These will be level, accessible routes with connections into the building and the adjacent spaces.

The gardens should have one or two through routes from James into the assembly spaces on each block. It may be desirable to have these links run through to the Cherry Street connections.

## Sidewalk Improvements on Site

The Civic Center should encourage use of the sidewalks as well as the new routes being created. Sidewalks along Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenue should be a minimum of 15 feet wide, and wider where bus stops or drop offs are located. Standard concrete sidewalks with scored two foot squares would be adequate rather than a strongly differentiated sidewalk setting the Civic Center apart from the fabric of the city. Some subtle differentiation may be considered.

Street trees are included on all three blocks of the Civic Center, to be coordinated with City standards.

## Related Off-Site Improvements

The City is encouraged to work with King County in coordinating improvements to James Street, Third Avenue and Fourth Avenue. Screening of the north side of the King County Administration Building should be pursued, and coordination should occur between the City and the County in regard to anticipated changes at the County Courthouse. The Civic Center and improvements to the County properties could work synergistically and create a better governmental center than either

entity could create alone. Employees and patrons of the County buildings should be encouraged to use and enliven the open space of the Civic Center, and links to City Hall Park should be explored.

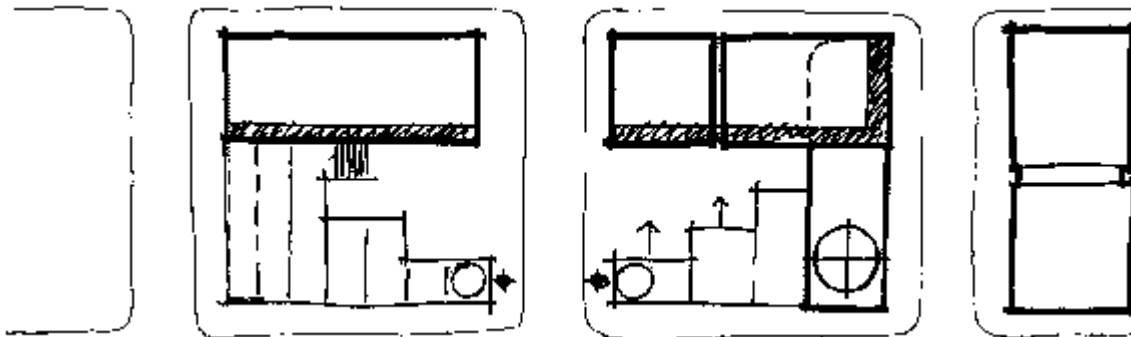
On Fifth Avenue, consider taking cues from the L.I.D. improvements further north. The surface connection on Fifth Avenue most important as a link between the Civic Center and Key Tower.

The open space on the Civic Center site should be designed to fit into a larger context of the surrounding neighborhood. Connections to Pioneer Square, to First Hill and to portions of the downtown to the north and south should be considered, in terms of landscape materials and treatments and in terms of visual connections and vistas. Perceptual links to First Hill and to Pioneer Square are particularly encouraged.

## **Configuration**

Within the framework of the master plan guidelines are numerous potential configurations for the design of the Civic Center. The diagrams on the following page illustrate four variations for the open space that all fall within the design guidelines.

[Illustration 36 - Open Space Configuration Studies](#)



## **Building Character**

### **Intent and Functions**

The intent of the Civic Center buildings is to provide good, functional work space for government with excellent access for all citizens. The building form should be readable in terms of hierarchy of functions; it should be recognizable and imageable as the heart of civic governance, while fitting well into its urban context.

Functions included in the Civic Center include the Mayor's Office, the City Council offices and Chamber, some offices supportive of the Mayor and Council, and key customer services. Community services and non-profit organizations are encouraged on the City Hall block as well. The Municipal Court building east of Fifth Avenue will contain the City courts in one half of the building and Police administrative functions in the other half. The new building on the Public Safety Building site has not been resolved, but will most likely have retail at the base and either public or private sector office space above.

### **Size and Configuration**

The buildings are located along Cherry Street to provide an edge and a backdrop for the open space, to continue the urban feel of Cherry and relate in scale to the historic buildings. The most symbolic element of the Civic Center, the Council Chamber area, runs north-south along Fifth Avenue as a culmination of the composition. This three story structure will be open to reception on the main level, with two floors of City Council offices above and the City Council chamber anchoring the southern end at the corner of Fifth Avenue and James. This bridging wing should be similar in height and modulation to the lower floors of the Courthouse, establishing a relationship across Fifth Avenue. This wing will be transparent at the main level and low enough in mass to allow the courthouse to remain as a part of the formation at the eastern edge of the Civic Center precinct.



The Municipal Courthouse footprint by necessity takes up nearly the entire half-block site.

The City Hall building will include between 171,000 and 230,000 gross square feet of space on the current Municipal Building block. This amount of space will be built east of the existing Municipal Building on the plaza and parking garage portion of the block. A second step will bring the new City Hall building out to the corner of Fourth and Cherry.

## **Setbacks**

Where buildings are along the street edges, the intent is to maintain an urban character to the streetscape. Along Cherry Street, the buildings should be on or close to the property line. Along Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenues, the sidewalks should be spacious, but the buildings still need to strongly define the street edge. Setbacks should not exceed twenty feet.

## **Orientation and Views**

The buildings are oriented east to west, which allows oblique views toward the water from both sides of the long sides of the building. The long facades face north and south, affording the best opportunity for solar access and control. Vistas from the sidewalks and other pedestrian areas should be encouraged toward the water and Pioneer Square.

## **Footprint**

Building footprints on the Municipal Building block should run east-west, with a width of about 90 feet. The footprint for the first step of the City Hall building should fit within the footprint in the northeast corner of the block so that the existing Municipal Building can remain operational during construction of the new City Hall.

The building footprint on the Public Safety Building site should run east-west similar to and continuing the Municipal Building block, also with a width of about 90 feet. The building footprint should run the full length of the block along Cherry Street.

The building footprint for the new Municipal Courthouse will utilize almost the entire half block, with at least enough setback along Fifth Avenue to accommodate people waiting for buses.

## **Scale and Massing**

The buildings along Cherry will be similar in scale to the nearby Alaska Building and Dexter Horton. These buildings also will mediate or provide a transition in scale between the Columbia and Key Tower and the Civic Center open space.

## **Heights**

The intent of building heights is to create a consistent, related edge along Cherry Street. On the Municipal Courthouse site, the dual function of the building is visible in the height of the two portions of the building. The higher portion, containing the courts, is on the south side in order to leave room between it and the high-rise buildings north of Cherry.

The height of the symbolic portion of the City Hall should relate to the cornice height on the facades of the Municipal Courts and the buildings along Cherry Street.

The buildings on Cherry Street should have the same height, near elevation 288'. This would result in a ten story building at the Municipal Courthouse, approximately a fourteen or fifteen story building along Fourth Avenue, and a roughly seventeen story building on 3rd Avenue. The southern portion of the Municipal Courthouse site, which contains the courts, will be the tallest element of the Civic Center, at or near elevation 475'.

## **FAR**

The program for the Municipal Building block and the Public Safety Building block does not utilize allowable FAR. Transfer of FAR may be considered.

## **Character**

The architecture should be civic in scale, in choice of materials and detailing. It should respond to the topography and to the context of the historic buildings on Cherry.

## **Base**

The buildings should reflect a strong connection to the ground at the base. The base should express entrances, and support the street activities which will differ from level to level. Permanent canopies over entries should be considered, and colonnades will be integral to the base along primary pedestrian routes.

## **Top**

The top of the City Council Chamber building should be a distinctive form. The block of buildings along Cherry may have a top cornice line that ties them together compositionally.

## **Intermediate Cornice Lines**

The use of an intermediate cornice line will help visually relate the buildings of the Civic Center to one another. It could highlight the interplay between the slope of the ground and the perpendicular floors of the buildings. The height and the materials of the intermediate cornice lines should be consistent between the Municipal Justice Center, the Civic Center and the building on the PSB site.

## **Elevations**

The building facades should be sympathetic to the historic buildings in regard to the richness of texture, patterning, rhythm and scale, without strict adherence to historic motifs.

## **Transparency**

In the portion of the City Hall building at Fourth and Cherry, the building should be sufficiently transparent to feel the presence of the plaza beyond.

## **Permanency**

Materials should be chosen for durability, and construction details should ensure protection from weathering (i.e. at cornices).

## **Regionalism**

The exterior materials should come from within the region, and the design and colors should reflect the local climate and light conditions.

## **Timelessness**

Design character should be contemporary while respecting qualities found in historic neighbors regarding the honest expression of materials, structure, craft and multiple layers and scales. Recognize the public nature and the monumentality of the buildings, and avoid limited personal expression.

## **Materials**

The materials selected for the Civic Center buildings should reflect a sense of quality and permanence. Stone is recommended as a base material, and should be of sufficient dimension to read as more permanent than a thin veneer. The use of terra cotta should be considered because of its history of use in Seattle and the predominance of its use along Cherry. The use of wood on the interior is suggested for its importance in the region and its ability to impart a sense of warmth.

## **Entries**

The Civic Center should have multiple entries, and Civic Center should have entries from both Fourth Avenue and Fifth Avenue. These multiple entries need to be resolved at a single, clear place of arrival. The address of City Hall should be off of Fifth Avenue. A semi-private entry dedicated to social service functions may be located on Cherry Street. Other points of entry may include entries to specific activities (such as public services or community meeting spaces), and internal public space off of Cherry Street and the hill climb assist.

Access to service and parking beneath buildings will likely be from Cherry Street.

## **Internal Organization**

The placement of cores and lobbies need to support easy access and wayfinding for all citizens. Their location will also need to accommodate the building in Step One as well as in its final form after Step Two construction. The elevator core will serve both the taller east-west building and the wing housing the City Council.

## **Step One**

The phasing strategy arises out of the need to retain the existing Municipal Building during the construction of the new City Hall building. The required square footage for the new City Hall, some 171,000 to 230,000 gross square feet, will be built on the east side of the block so that employees in the Municipal Building will require only one move into the new facility. The west end of Step One will be a wall that will become part of a "gasket" to later construction.

## **Step Two**

The second step completes the City Hall building, bringing it west to the corner of 4th and Cherry. The program for this building may include non-profit agencies, community center functions such as public meeting rooms, and arts other community service organizations. Step II is intended to have the same cornice height as Step One.

## **Response to Context/Other Buildings**

### **Relationship to Historic Buildings**

The buildings along Cherry Street should be sympathetic in scale and massing to the historic buildings nearby, including the Arctic Building, the Alaska Building and the Dexter Horton Building.

### **Relationship of City Hall to Planned Municipal Courthouse**

The symbolic portion of City Hall, while lowest in building height, is unique in its scale and form. Its height should relate to facade elements in the new Courthouse and the new east-west buildings. The massing of the new Courthouse should form a backdrop for the symbolic portion of City Hall, rather than distracting from the predominance of the City Hall.

### **Relationship of City Hall to Key Tower**

The Civic Center should concentrate on creating clear and pleasant pedestrian connections at multiple levels. At the street level, consider landscape and paving improvements that can create a visual continuity extending to Key Tower. Additional tree planting and widening of sidewalks on Fifth Avenue in front of Key Tower and improvements at the upper plaza level and mezzanine will create a sense of public space and should be considered.

City Hall and Key Tower are assumed to have consistent pedestrian traffic during business hours. Pedestrian access is very important between these two buildings and should be improved at street level to the extent possible. The most common pedestrian route is north across the west side of 5th then east on the north side of intersection. This route should be emphasized with elements such as paving materials, plantings, signage and lighting. The architecture of the City Hall should include a colonnade or arcade that would help direct pedestrians and provide weather protection.

### **Relationship of Municipal Courthouse to Key Tower**

Pedestrian traffic between these two buildings will be fairly limited. The prosecutors have the only strong presence in both buildings. Consequently, a bridge or tunnel connection is presumed to be a low priority given the cost of creating the connection.

## **Relationship of Civic Center Buildings to James Street and County Buildings**

The Civic Center should create opportunities for a positive relationship between the City and County functions. If the PSB site is public or cultural, the connection to the County Courthouse is even more important. James Street should have an edge treatment of some kind, and improvements to the facade of the King County Administration Building should be encouraged. The buildings to the south on James should be screened so that the edge of the space is green, and attention is focused within the open space. The north side of the King County Courthouse should have an entry to the open space and Sound Transit, and street level activities should be encouraged.

Three County buildings are on the south side of James Street - the County Jail east of 5th Avenue, the Administration Building between 4th and 5th, and the County Courthouse between 3rd and 4th. In one sense, these buildings, together with the Civic Center, combine to form a governmental center. The architectural character of the County buildings, however, does not contribute to the environment of the Civic Center. However, there is potential for some improvement including new, large scale landscaping along the north edge of the Administration Building, and a planted area in the north inset of the County Courthouse as part of its upcoming renovation. Retail use at street level should be encouraged in the County's plan for the Courthouse, along with streetscape improvements to 3rd and 4th Avenues to help link City Hall Park and the new Civic Center open space.

## **Relationship to Streets & Plazas [activities/amenities]**

### **Relationship of City Hall to Cherry Street**

There should be multiple entries to City Hall from Cherry Street. At the 5th Avenue and Cherry intersection, there should be a clearly identified entry or route to an entry. Mid-block, there may be a dedicated entry to a social service program area on the interior of the building. An identifiable entry or route to an entry should also occur at the intersection of 4th and Cherry.

### **Retail at Base**

Commercial uses should be located in at least a portion of the street level within the Civic Center. Commercial uses are most appropriate along the street level at Third Avenue and Fourth Avenue, and along the plaza level on the Public Safety Building block.

### **Colonnade**

An arcade along Fifth Avenue will provide cover for pedestrians, and help link City Hall and Key Tower. A colonnade along the south edge of the buildings will create a weather-protected place for hillclimb assist, and help tie the buildings together compositionally.

### **Art**

Art should be included in the building program, and integrated as early as possible into the design process. Art work should be located in the public spaces, and should enhance the civic scale of the public spaces.

### **Lighting**

Building lighting should support the use of the Civic Center during evening hours, with sufficient illumination for the perception of a safe environment after dark. Lighting should also be used to highlight the character of the building and accentuate architectural elements. Specifically, the City Council Chamber space should be lit as a "beacon" visible from Third Avenue.

### **Graphics, Signing, Identification**

Identify the Civic Center precinct, and include orientation maps which also shows nearby activities such as the library, County Buildings, transit, and Pioneer Square. Less permanent signage, concentrated at kiosks, should identify current activities and events.

### **ADA**

ADA access is through elevators within the buildings because of the steep topography on both blocks. People will be able to enter at the low level of the building and take the elevator to either the intermediate plaza level or continue on and exit at the level of the higher street.

The outdoor amphitheater and gathering spaces will be accessible from Fourth Avenue. Access to the community center meeting spaces and reception hall will be directly off of the assembly spaces, but elevators will be required to upper level activities. Access to social services will most likely be by elevator.

## **Linkages**

Provide street trees and other amenities along both James and Cherry, strengthening links to Pioneer Square and City Hall Park. Along Fourth and Fifth Avenues, link into the existing streetscape improvements, reaching toward the library along Fourth and toward the Fifth Avenue L.I.D. improvements.

A connection would be desirable to City Hall Park, especially if the PSB site is a public or cultural use. At a minimum, the City should encourage the County to include street level commercial uses at the King County Courthouse.

## **Hill Climb Assist**

A series of escalators open to the air but weather protected. Level areas between escalator runs link to floors of adjacent building (City Hall or PSB Site building) and to north - south linkages from Cherry Street into the public open space.

## **Sidewalk Improvements @ Access Routes along Right of Way**

Sidewalks should be similar to others in the downtown (2 square foot concrete scoring) or similar to public open space in civic center. Portions of sidewalk where adjacent to open space and linking across street could be treated as a piece.

## **Street Network**

Vehicular traffic arriving from Interstate 5 will continue to arrive primarily from James, and return to the freeway via Cherry, due to the configuration of the ramps.

The expectation is that the most of the pedestrian traffic would be coming from the primary activity centers of downtown - Pioneer Square to the west and the office core to the north. There is a large population of nearby employment in the highrises along 5th. Heavy pedestrian traffic is expected from the light rail station at 3rd Avenue. Bus stops and vehicular drop offs on site should be integrated into the design. The Civic Center should invite pedestrians into and across the precinct.

Connections to First Hill should be considered in the streetscape improvements. The residential population of First Hill is likely to increase, and a better pedestrian route under the freeway would strengthen the link to downtown.

## **Bus Stops & Drop-offs**

The most likely scenario for transit in the future is that bus traffic will increase, with 3rd carrying primarily City routes, with 2nd and 4th as a couplet for suburban routes. The bus routes on 5th Avenue are also heavily used, and require space for people while they wait. The Civic Center could benefit from the activity generated by people arriving and waiting for buses. Generous hardscape should be available for people waiting for the bus on the east side of Fourth Avenue and on the east side of Fifth Avenue.

Drop-offs will be necessary for citizen access and for VIPs. The intent is to have drop off areas on the west side of Fifth Avenue and a below grade port cochere in the parking area. The day care will need priority in a drop off area either on street or in the parking area. The Justice Center will need to accommodate drop offs for prisoners in a safe and separated route.

## **Sound Transit**

The Sound Transit station is considered to be an important element in the Civic Center plan. There should be clear way finding from the station's arrival point at the street, both to the Civic Center and to other nearby areas, such as Pioneer Square. The station needs to be easily visible and identifiable from surface level.

The master plan also recommends that the route down into the train level be integrated into the Civic Center open space, potentially enlarging the opening connecting the tunnel on the mezzanine level, and incorporating cascading water that is part of the open space water feature.

## **Midblock Crossings**

The hillclimb assist will be located on the south side of the buildings, adjacent to the open space. There will be a pedestrian desire line from the assembly spaces on either side of Fourth Avenue, and a mid-block crossing should be considered, possibly with a paving pattern or material on Fourth Avenue denoting the pedestrian crossing.

On Cherry Street, there will be a pedestrian desire line from the south side of the Columbia Tower to the Civic Center through passage. Pedestrian safety should be considered at this natural crossing point.

## **Parking**

The Civic Center should include a modest amount of parking beneath City Hall, located within the envelope of the excavation for the existing parking. This parking would serve the building itself with city vehicles, some employee parking, ADA accessible parking, and drop-off from cars. Short term visitor's parking should be a priority so that citizens can easily use the customer service functions. A port cochere below ground should be considered, along with street level drop-off. Ideally, ingress and egress would be off of Cherry Street. Types of parking that must be accommodated include fleet vehicles, a small amount of employee parking, ADA accessible parking, and a generous amount of short term visitor parking. Short term visitor parking should be emphasized in order to provide good citizen access.

A larger reservoir of parking should be below the PSB site, again using the area already excavated for existing parking. Access should be off of James Street, with egress to Cherry. These two blocks of the Civic Center are not envisioned as parking for the Municipal Courts Building. No above grade parking should be allowed.

Inclusion of parking for buildings that the City may sell is a possibility under the Public Safety Building site, if it improves the overall economics of the sale.

## **Sustainability**

Sustainability should be clearly visible in the design of the Civic Center and celebrated as a core value to the community. Sustainable design principles should be an integral part of shaping the architecture, of designing the open space, of selecting materials, of designing mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, of incorporating art work, and of formulating operating policies. Sustainability should be a criteria in budget decisions, emphasizing long term benefit over short term capital outlay. The following are goals for including sustainable principles into the Civic Center design and operation:

## **Design Integration**

Sustainability should be integrated into all steps of the design process, using a whole systems approach which balances social, economic, and environmental factors. Sustainability should be incorporated into the earliest design discussions with a sustainable design charrette to kick-off the project to insure that all design and construction team members are familiar with sustainability concepts and basic sustainable building practice. The charrette can be utilized as a group process to define and refine sustainable design goals and priorities to aid in the design optimization process. Throughout the sustainable design process, collaborative, multi-disciplinary design teams should explore opportunities for to design integratively and serve multiple functions with individual design elements.

Sustainable design should incorporate Life Cycle Cost Analysis into budget projections. Life Cycle Cost Analysis defines the projected useful life of a project and looks at the net present value of design options as investments. The goal is to achieve the highest environmental performance possible at the least cost. In addition, the design team should conduct building performance modeling in order to investigate the interrelationships of economic and environmental performance of various building systems. Performance modeling should define the boundaries of differing design scenarios to investigate trade-offs and optimize performance. In order to measure design sustainability by national standards, well-established, credible sustainable design rating systems such as LEED should be used.

## **Reinforce Natural Systems**

The design should respond to local climatic and ecological context by incorporating solar patterns, wind patterns, hydrology and geology into design features, interpretive signage and philosophy. A regional design palette should be used for both

plants and other materials. The site should be developed using ecological design principles to mimic natural systems function. Increase the benefits of vegetation by maximizing planted areas both indoors and out.

## **Conserve Energy Resources**

Design strategies for the Civic Center should increase energy efficiency by maximizing with solar access and harvesting of natural site resources such as daylight and geothermal heat. Building energy usage should reduce electricity consumption, eliminate unnecessary demand, and emphasize equipment efficiency and energy efficient control strategies. In addition, use of alternate energy resources should be explored wherever possible. The design of the Civic Center should help promote use of public transit over private automobiles through parking strategies, and create incentives for bicycling and walking access to basic services.

## **Manage Material Resources**

The Civic Center should be designed for adaptability and minimize material use with efficient space planning, engineered materials, and modular design. Design should be low maintenance and specify durable materials. Crime and graffiti preventing design should be considered. Sustainable materials that minimize environmental impact as well as re-used, salvaged materials and recycled content materials should be used. In addition, use materials with minimal packaging waste that is recyclable, and materials that are easily recycled once their useful life has ended. Waste reduction and recycling should be encouraged by recycling construction demolition and waste with a jobsite waste management plan, and with provision of easy access recycling stations and pick-up areas.

## **Protect Environmental Quality**

The design of the Civic Center should aim to reduce pollutant sources in both interior and exterior environments. This will particularly affect design of mechanical systems and the choice of interior materials, finishes, and adhesives. Ozone-depleting chemicals in mechanical equipment and insulation should be avoided. The health of building occupants and construction workers/installers/maintenance staff should be protected.

## **Protect Water Resources**

Designers should consider the feasibility of harvesting on-site flows by reclaiming graywater, roof runoff and groundwater. Natural water flows should be maintained by minimizing erosion and encouraging stormwater infiltration. Potable water use should be reduced by appropriately sizing systems and using water efficient technologies. Water quality should be protected by avoiding use of toxic materials and utilizing Integrated Pest Management.

## **Service Access**

Minimize size and intrusion on Cherry Street sidewalk. Service docks, trash containers and storage should be internal.

## **Section 9: Implementation Strategies**

[Illustration 37 - Civic Center Project Organization](#)

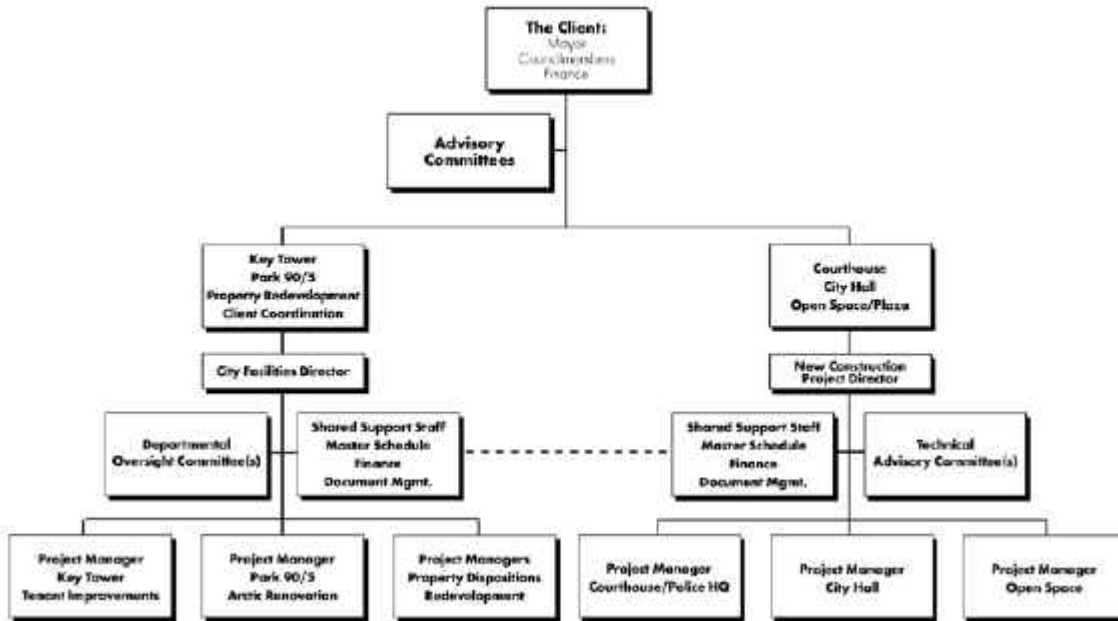


Illustration 38 - Primary

Primary Planning Dates of the Civic Center Master Plan					
	Project	Program	Design	Construct	Occupancy
<b>Step One</b>	Justice Center	1997-1999	1998-1999	2000-2001	2002
	City Hall	1999	1999-2000	2001-2002	2003
	Key Tower Relocations	1999	2000-2004	2001-2005	2001-2006
	Park 90/S Relocations	1999	2000-2001	2001-2003	2001-2003
	Arctic Renovation	2000	2001	2002	2004
	Open Space / Plaza	1999-2000	2000		2003
	Property Dispositions	1999-2004			
<b>Step Two</b>	PSB Demolition		2001	2002	
	Municipal Building Demolition		2002	2003	
	City Hall Annex	2001	2002	TBD	TBD
	Remainder of Open Space	1999-2000	2000	2003	2004
	PSB Redevelopment	2000	2000-2001	2002-2003	2004

Planning Dates of the Civic Center Master Plan



Financial Assumptions		
Discount Rate		6%
Interest Rate	Non-taxable	6%
Interest Rate	Taxable	8%
Inflation Rate	Market leases	3% annually
Inflation Rate	Operating Costs	3% annually
Inflation Rate	Capital Costs	6% 1999-2002
	Capital Costs	3% after 2002
New Construction	City Hall	\$300/GSF
	Courthouse	\$325/GSF
	Police Administration	\$230/GSF
Renovations	Key Tower	\$ 35/GSF
	Arctic	\$100/GSF
	Park 90/5	\$144/GSF
Furniture		\$ 15/GSF
Open Space	Municipal/PSB Sites	\$100/GSF

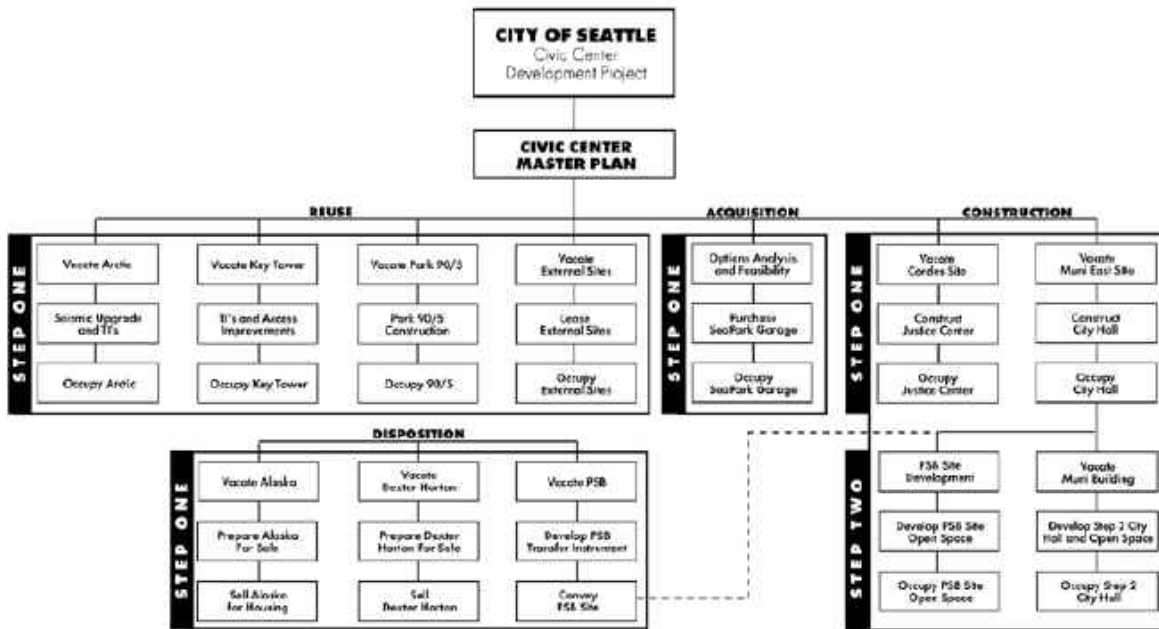
Illustration 39 - Financial Assumptions

Capital Projects			
	Building/Site Improvement Per Master Plan	Estimated Project Size (Gross Square Footage/GSF)	Estimated Capital Cost
<b>Step One</b>	Parking		\$9 million (net)
	Justice Center	300,000	\$80 million - \$92 million
	City Hall	200,000	\$50 million - \$66 million
	Arctic Seismic Renovation	67,000 (RSF)	\$9 million
	Open Space/Access Improvements	40,000	\$14 million
	Property Dispositions		(\$15 million)
	Tenant Improvements	1,000,000 (RSF)	\$38 million - \$45 million
<b>Step Two</b>	Demolitions	500,000	\$4 million
	City Hall "Annex"	TBD	TBD

Illustration 40 - Capital Projects

Debt Capacity Table (in millions)							
Debt Capacity	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
High	768.6	833.9	858.9	884.7	911.2	938.6	966.7
Existing Commitment	(551.2)	(565.0)	(586.9)	(615.0)	(586.6)	(554.8)	(521.3)
City Hall	0.0	(6.0)	(36.5)	(66.7)	(65.8)	(64.9)	(63.9)
Justice Center	(8.9)	(48.7)	(88.1)	(86.9)	(85.7)	(84.4)	(83.7)
PSB/Lease	0.0	(1.1)	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.8	6.8
Other	(19.2)	(18.7)	(21.7)	(30.6)	(29.1)	(28.1)	(27.0)
Total Debt	(579.2)	(633.5)	(689.6)	(725.0)	(694.4)	(660.4)	(625.3)
Debt Available	189.3	200.4	169.3	159.7	216.8	278.1	341.5

Illustration 41 - Debt Capacity Table (in millions)



Debt Capacity Table (in millions)							
Debt Capacity	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
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Debt Available	189.3	200.4	169.3	159.7	216.8	278.1	341.5

Illustration 42 - Project Work Plan

## Introduction

The Civic Center Master Plan is not a static document. The Plan is intended to anticipate long range needs and provide sufficient specificity to guide the Civic Center development over the next ten years, while also being sufficiently flexible to accommodate the unknown. Thus, the Plan is actually an on-going "activity" which goes beyond locating, designing and

constructing the buildings and public spaces. In order to meet all of the goals and objectives of the Plan, regular review , a formal update process and oversight of the Implementation strategies and policies are as important as the Plan itself.

The intent of the Implementation Strategies section is to outline key strategies and management accountability necessary to implement the Civic Center Plan. These key strategies include:

- I. Plan Oversight, Advocacy and Updates
- II. Phasing and Implementation Schedule
- III. Financial Assumptions and Debt Capacity
- IV. Trends and Policies in Support of the Implementation Plan
- V. Sub-Plans
- VI. Work Plan

## **Strategy I: Civic Center Plan Oversight, Advocacy and Updates**

### **Plan Oversight**

It is the Mayor's responsibility, as Chief Executive Officer of the City, to implement the adopted Civic Center Master Plan. To that end, the Mayor has convened a decision-making body ("The Client Group") specifically to provide policy guidance and oversight for implementing the Plan. The "Client Group" will advise the Mayor on the specifics of the planned projects and monitor the Plan's scope, schedule, and budget. The Client Group, upon review of staff analysis, will review and monitor approved projects specifically identified in the Plan and recommend funding strategies to the City Council. They will also recommend project and "sub-plans", as necessary, in order to meet the Plan's vision and goals.

The Client Group's membership will include:

- The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, City Finance Director and three City Council Members.

The Client Group has decided on a two-pronged approach to project organization, which is displayed in a chart on the following page.

### **Plan Advocacy**

The Client Group will request further studies and recommendations in order to estimate the capital and operating resources necessary for successful Plan implementation during the biennial City budget process. Such a recommendation will be included in the Capital Strategic Plan and any fiscal notes prepared for individual projects. Operations and Maintenance plans of the City will also include the Client Group's recommendations to ensure the intent of the Civic Center Master Plan is carried out.

### **Plan Updates**

The Client Group will recommend to the Mayor and City Council updates to the Civic Center Master Plan upon review of recommended changes. Updates will also be reviewed by the City's Design Commission for concurrence.

Proposed changes will be formally transmitted to the City Council for adoption by Resolution.

The Plan's goals, strategies and guidelines will be formally reviewed every two years during the biennial budget review. Updates to the Plan should also reflect changes to the City's strategic capital initiatives adopted by the City Council.

The administrative responsibility for the Plan will rest with the ESD Facility Division.

[Illustration 37 - Civic Center Project Organization](#)

## **Strategy II: Civic Center Phasing and Implementation Schedule**

There are two implementation steps in the Civic Center Plan:

Step One:

- Acquire parking requirement
- Relocate departments into Key Tower and Park 90/5;
- Construct the Courthouse/Police Administration Building and City Hall;
- Renovate Arctic Building; and
- Dispose of vacated properties

Step Two:

- Demolish Public Safety, Municipal Buildings;
- Construct Open Space/Plaza;
- Construct City Hall "annex" and
- Private re-development on PSB site

Step One and Step Two are not sequential: some aspects of Step Two are expected to begin before all aspects of Step One are completed.

The timing of the Civic Center Plan's implementation is affected primarily by the availability of funds AND the availability of space in Key Tower. The proposed Implementation Schedule was built upon determining optimum departmental adjacencies and square footage requirements and then identifying spaces in Key Tower that have lease expirations which can meet these needs.

New construction and seismic upgrade schedules for existing facilities were based on the City estimating standard of four-year design/construction schedule. Demolition plans were estimated to take twelve months, from design and permitting through clean-up. City Council approval, designs and contractual agreements will dictate final schedules.

Schedule planning assumptions were reviewed with City Council in 1997 and 1998. The primary planning dates are displayed on the following page.

[Illustration 38 - Primary Planning Dates of the Civic Center Master Plan](#)

## **Strategy III: Financial Plan**

### **Financial Assumptions**

Although the Civic Center Plan has evolved over time, the proposed approach is consistent with the City's decision in 1995 to acquire Key Tower and not to attempt renovation of the existing Municipal, Public Safety and City Light Buildings.

Each redevelopment option was evaluated on a net present value and annual cashflow basis. The decision to acquire Key Tower and build a modest amount of new was shown to be about \$90 million less expensive (on a net present value basis) than renovation. The City also determined that their choice was less expensive than constructing large amounts of new space.

All options were considerably more expensive than the status quo. However, continued occupancy of the existing buildings without very expensive upgrades was not (and is not) a reasonable alternative, given the condition of the buildings.

The cost of implementing the Civic Center Plan includes the site and capital improvements, operations and maintenance and financing.

In 1995, the City hired The Seneca Group and Craig Kinzer and Associates to perform numerous real estate and financial analyses for evaluating options for the civic center. Most of the development cost estimates are from their analyses. The City's financing policies relative to debt, cost of debt, and financing are directed from the City's Chief Financial Office.

Key financial assumptions used throughout the financial analyses:

[Illustration 39 - Financial Assumptions](#)

## Financial Plan: Project Costs

The Master Plan proposes a specific development concept, which allows the City to estimate project costs. The following capital project costs are presented as estimates based on a combination of prior internal and external experiences and unit costs applied to the Civic Center Plan. They are not project budgets nor cost estimates based on specific designs, materials and contracting procedures since the programs and designs do not exist at this time. Final costs could vary significantly from the estimates included here, depending on final programs and design solutions. Project designs and budgets will be presented to the Client Group and City Council for final approval and funding determination.

The capital projects that follow are intended as guideline amounts for accomplishing the Civic Center Plan's development concept (updated to 1999 dollars):

[Illustration 40 - Capital Projects](#)

## Financing

The City currently "budgets" for its downtown space costs in the biennial budget of the various funds. Occupancy costs (approximately \$13 million annually for downtown space) are generally paid by the central landlord agency (Executive Services Department) and charged back via a rate structure based on actual square feet utilized by a given department. The annual amounts include operating costs, leases and debt or capital investment.

Debt service for acquisition of a facility is paid by the "owning" fund (General Fund for general municipal properties and the specific utility fund for utility properties) and serviced through the operating budget.

Capital improvements generally are funded through the Cumulative Reserve Subfund (CRF). The CRF is funded from Real Estate Excise Taxes (REET) and the General Fund. Projects compete for funding based on a priority system which includes building integrity, safety, or improvement. Specific tenant improvements are funded through the operating budget and paid by the tenant department.

When the City purchased Key Tower and Park 90/5 in 1996, it chose to use Councilmanic debt for the acquisition, which is consistent with existing practice for financing space or infrastructure costs. It is anticipated that the City would sell 20 or 30 year debt for new Civic Center construction and seven year debt for tenant improvements. General Fund debt service would be provided either through a direct General Fund payment or through a similar user charge-back system as exists today. This assumption has been built into the City's long term budget sustainability plan.

As the table above indicates, implementing the entire Civic Center Master Plan is estimated to cost approximately \$224,000,000 in today's dollars.

## Debt Capacity

The Table below summarizes the current General Fund debt capacity. It begins with current commitments, which includes outstanding debt and the debt that is planned for making tenant improvements prior to moving into Key Tower and Park 90/5. In addition, several other planned commitments have been allowed for, including a new Southwest Police Precinct, public safety technology projects, DCLU technology improvements, the parking garage for the new Library, and the planned capitalization of some portions of the proposed Seattle Center/Community Centers levy lid lift renewal.

The Table shows that implementing the Civic Center Master Plan will cause the City's available debt capacity to drop to \$143 million in 2002. This is still above the \$100 million emergency reserve required by City policy. The available debt capacity recovers quickly and exceeds \$250 million again by 2004. Key Tower fund balances are used as a cost offset, which results in reducing the amount of debt the City must issue by roughly \$6 million. The sale of a (capitalized) ground lease for the Public Safety Building site more than offsets the borrowing requirements for that building's demolition.

## Debt Service

The City currently has about \$22 million of annual net debt service which it is obligated to pay from the General Fund (out of an annual budget of \$500 million). Existing and planned commitments will raise that to about \$29 million by 2001 and \$36 million by 2004. Adding debt to finance the Civic Center would add about \$14 million annually by 2004.

[Illustration 41 - Debt Capacity Table \(in millions\)](#)

## Financial Plan: Offsetting Revenues

While it is the City's usual practice to treat each capital project as a stand alone financial project, the financial planning for the Civic Center anticipated a revenue stream from sale or lease of vacated property and the leasing revenue stream from Key Tower and Park 90/5. Any offsetting revenue reduces the City's need to borrow funds.

The key property dispositions and associated estimated revenue assumptions that the Client Group and the City Council have adopted are shown below. "TBD" indicates an unknown amount that is to be determined once development plans and feasibility studies are complete:

- Proceeds from sale of Dexter Horton Building:  
\$ 0-\$7 Million (net of existing debt)
- Proceeds from sale of Alaska Building:  
(\$0-2 Million)\*
- Proceeds from long term lease of PSB site:  
\$ 8-13 Million
- Lease revenue in Key Tower:  
\$ 6 Million (net)
- Leases at Park 90/5:  
\$ 2 Million (net)
- Misc. Development Rights:  
\$ TBD
- Misc. Offsetting revenue:  
City Hall Park \$ TBD  
Step Two City Hall retail \$ TBD

\* The Alaska Building is expected to sell for less than its outstanding debt.

## Building Operating Costs

Very early in the Civic Center analysis, measuring operating costs among the different development options was imbedded in the financial analysis. We were able to look at each option from not only the capital costs but also the long term operating cost impacts. The analyses benchmarked Key Tower's operating costs as the average operating cost for new construction and added \$1.50/RSF for an additional shift of security and janitorial service to support the City's extended service hours. The final analysis includes an annual operating cost reduction of roughly \$3,000,000. The annual inflation adjustment for operating costs is estimated at 3%. Remaining building operating costs reflect actual expenses with 3% annual inflation adjustments.

## Open Space and Community Spaces Operating Costs

The Civic Center Plan contemplates a significant amount of public and community space and two half-blocks of Open Space. A goal of the City policy makers and the Civic Center Oversight Committee is a commitment to the on-going development and maintenance of these newly created spaces in order to adhere to the goals of the Civic Center Plan. This is a new program for the City's biennial budget.

The Open Space/Plaza is estimated at approximately 40,000 square feet, and will cost approximately \$2.00/SF in on-going landscape maintenance, and \$1.50/SF for eighteen hours a day, seven days week security.

The "annex" to City Hall, together with the public spaces in City Hall and the Open Space/Plaza, will be of a scale that enhances interaction among a diversity of people throughout the day and evening. The "annex" is envisioned as able to generate some revenue in order to partially offset the capital investment by the City for the facility. To ensure success and to draw the necessary retail, commercial and 18-hour activity into the Civic Center, the City will produce a detailed development plan and conduct a feasibility analysis before the City's capital investment is secured. The study will also explore private fundraising for a Civic Center open space maintenance endowment strategy and plan. Such an endowment

strategy could include partnerships with horticultural organizations for the sustainability of the gardens and/or a relationship with other downtown non-profits that share the same security and maintenance goals for public spaces.

Under all circumstances, managing the new public spaces will require an entrepreneurial spirit and expertise that should be separate from the daily operations of either City buildings or City parks. It will most likely require a separate development model for achieving the stated goals. Beyond a separate and new entity of City facilities and parks staff, there are three models that could provide the requisite expertise and accountability for management of the new Civic Center public spaces:

- Contract maintenance and management to private sector firm
- Seattle Center
- Partnership maintenance and management with a non-profit or DSA-type organization

The development plan and feasibility analysis will review each option and make a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council. This new commitment for event-oriented "management" is estimated to cost approximately \$150,000/year (in 1999 \$) for property management, marketing and "event" development in addition to the \$100,000 for landscape maintenance and security.

### **Financial Plan: Long Term Sustainability, Operations, Maintenance**

The Civic Center is an opportunity for the City of Seattle to set a new standard of sustainable design that will impact the on-going operations of City facilities. The Civic Center Plan concept prioritizes sustainable design principles as an integral part of shaping the architecture, the open space, type and use of materials and systems which emphasizes long term benefit over short term capital outlay.

## **Strategy IV: Trends and Policies in Support of the Implementation Plan**

The Civic Center Master Plan was developed over a period of years and was framed by a number of trends and adopted policies. Those trends and policies include:

- Generally, City government employment will see modest growth over the next twenty years.
- Many services traditionally provided downtown may also be provided in neighborhood civic centers and made accessible through technological mechanisms.
- The City's strategic business plan is framed in the Comprehensive Plan; expansion of new service provision is not contemplated.
- Multi-disciplinary, "one-stop shopping" for citizens accessing City government information and transacting business is a high priority.
- City office and conferencing space will become more "team" oriented rather than private office oriented.
- Departmental space plans will utilize the adopted City space standards.
- New technologies will continue to have significant influence on how work is accomplished and how work spaces are used.
- New technologies are developing at such a rapid rate that new construction or renovations must maximize infrastructure flexibility in order to plan for the future.
- With multiple buildings in the Civic Center, communication among all aspects of City government will become more critical as a unifying organizational force.
- Child care will be provided on-site downtown.
- Existing social services will be provided in the Civic Center .
- A consistent signage system will be placed throughout the Civic Center.
- Economic resources continue to be limited, so flexible use of interior space must be maximized before leasing or constructing new space is considered.
- Environmental impacts and sustainability in the use of all natural resources will impact how facilities are built and operated
- Concern about personal as well as workplace safety is increasing.
- Accessibility for all citizens and employees is of the highest priority in design, operations and public spaces.
- Art will be a unifying mechanism within the Civic Center and possibly a connection to the neighborhood civic centers.

## **Strategy V: Sub-plans**

The Civic Center Master Plan is the framework for many smaller "sub-plans" that will ultimately guide long range facility decisions as the Plan is implemented. Such plans will include:

- Strategic Plan for Customer Service/one stop shopping in City Hall
- Technology Plan for infrastructure and multi-disciplinary services
- Departmental Space Plans
- Parking Plan
- Accessibility plan throughout the Civic Center
- Key Tower Fitness Facility Plan
- Sustainable Operations and Maintenance Plan for the Civic Center
- Step Two City Hall "Annex" Development Plan
- Open Space/Public Space Development Plan
- Re-Use and development Plan for the Public Safety Buildings site
- Disposition strategy for Dexter Horton, Alaska Buildings
- Severe weather/public feeding program transition plan
- Link to Sound Transit Tunnel
- Art Plan
- Civic Center Security Plan
- Residential needs analysis

## **Strategy VI: Work Plan/ Next Steps**

The Project Work Plan is a logical, but significantly more detailed, extension of the Master Plan. Its highest level of definition is encapsulated in the following graphic. (See next page.)

The Project Work Plan, as well as the Civic Center Plan Phasing and Implementation Schedule, will be greatly amplified by the Project Master Schedule, which will produce and maintain a detailed work/task breakdown with all corresponding time and precedence relationships for each element of the referenced Plans.

The Project Master Schedule will be employed as the principal tool for defining and controlling all work necessary to carry out the intent of the Civic Center Master Plan.

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