

King County Civic Ground





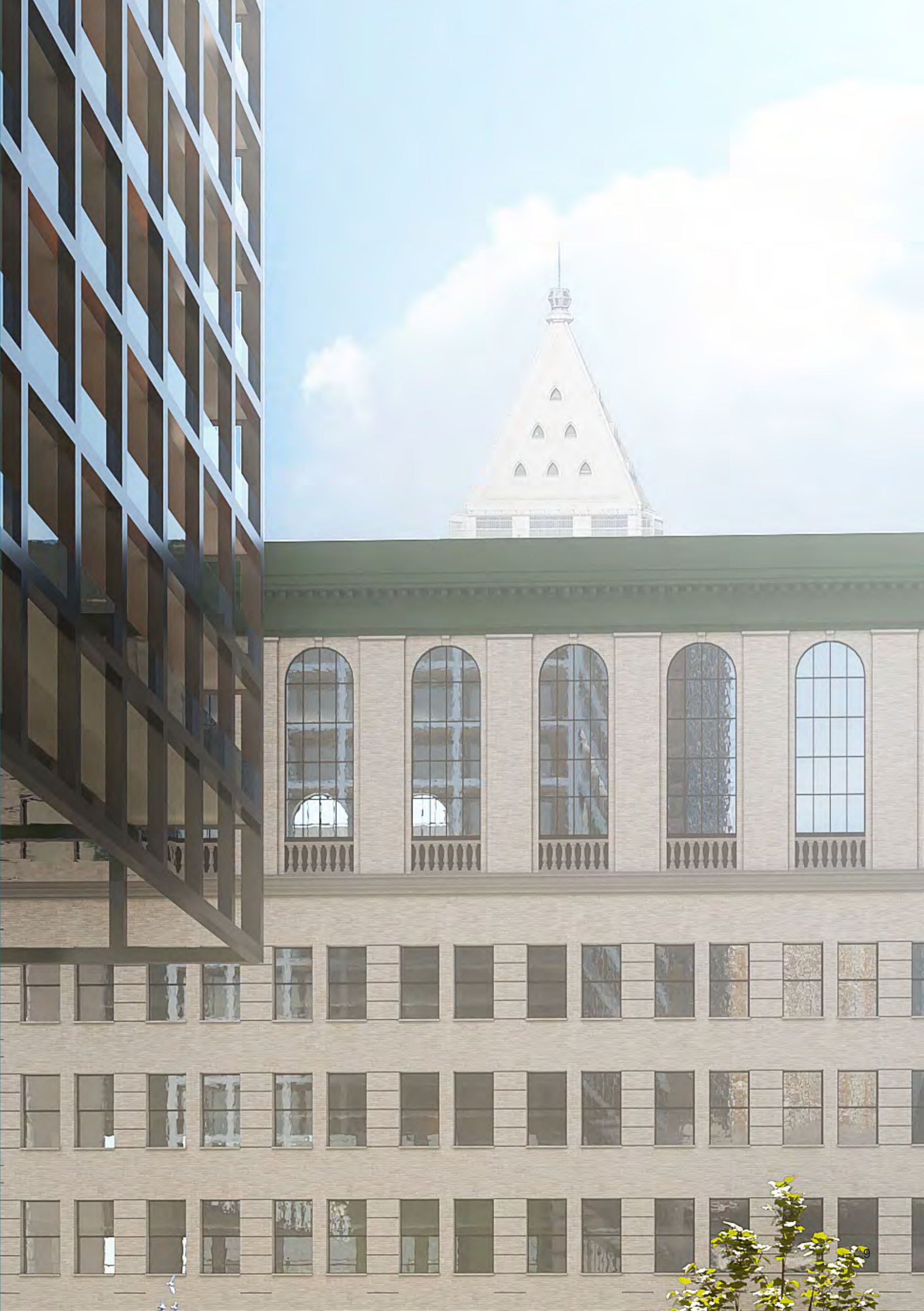


















King County Civic Ground

About King County

Located on Puget Sound in Washington State, and covering 2,134 square miles, King County is nearly twice as large as the average county in the United States. King County encompasses 39 cities and towns including Seattle, the county seat and the largest city in the state of Washington. With a population of 2,326,040 people (2022 estimate), it ranks as the 12th most populous county in the nation and is more populous than 15 U.S. states.

King County government provides fiscally responsible, quality-driven local and regional services for healthy, safe, and vibrant communities. Regional services include courts and related legal services, public health services, the county jail, public transit, wastewater treatment, records and elections, property tax appraisals and regional parks and facilities, including the King County International Airport (Boeing Field). In unincorporated communities (parts of the county which are not included in cities), King County provides both regional services and many local services, including land-use regulation, building permits, police protection, roads, and local parks. Other local services in unincorporated communities are provided by independent fire, water, library, and hospital districts.

King County's geographic boundaries include the homeland of several Indigenous tribes, including the Muckleshoot, Puyallup, Snoqualmie, Suquamish, and Tulalip peoples. The County is a diverse and dynamic community with a vision for a healthy economy and environment where all people, businesses, and organizations have the opportunity to thrive.

King County

Contents

- 18 **Preface**
- 20 **Introduction**
- 41 **Questions and Concepts**
Reframing the future for county buildings and urban spaces
- 53 **In Need of Repair and Functionally Obsolete**
King County facilities in downtown Seattle
- 83 **No Action Is Not An Option**
The need for change and the sunset of the status quo
- 89 **A Welcoming, Equitable, and Enduring Place, Inspiring Civic Life and Serving the Region**
A vision statement and guiding principles to inform the work
- 101 **Planning for the Next 100-Years**
Buildings and public spaces to serve the Best Run Government
- 121 **A Case Study in SODO**
A proposal for King County buildings and urban spaces south of downtown
- 217 **The Context for Opportunity**
Revealing hidden capacity
- 229 **The Courthouse District**
Redevelopment to shape a new district in downtown Seattle
- 307 **Timing and Next Steps**
A timeline for transformation
- 313 **Broadening the Blueprint**
Urban strategies and choices to maintain flexibility over time
- 336 Works Cited
Image Credits
Team

Preface

King County government is tasked with providing high-quality services and protecting the places that make this region special. While local governments operate at a smaller and more low-profile scale than the state and federal levels, elected leaders at King County see no higher calling than ensuring quality services that make everyday life better for its residents. From human services and the health of the community to running buses, treating wastewater, and creating housing for people of all incomes, King County government is entrusted with serving the public and—over the long haul—making sure that things the government touches are left in a better state for future generations. And while there are data dashboards and studies that validate this work, the impact left is often intangibly a part of people’s lives.

But at this moment, King County employees find themselves working to maintain high levels of service in buildings that no longer adequately support their work. The county operates a historic courthouse that is more than a century old and in desperate need of rehabilitation, a small historic office building from the early 1900s that needs revitalization, a 1960s office building (now shuttered and vacant following the pandemic), a parking garage, two vacant lots, and an obsolete jail that needs to be replaced very soon. King County’s Civic Campus Initiative planning process is focused on creating a high-level strategic plan for the development of new, contemporary facilities for county employees and services.

The county government’s current home base is spread out across eight blocks in the urban core that constitute some of the most desirable real estate in the region, but the area is stagnant. This historic area, nestled between Pioneer Square, the Chinatown International District, the Central Business District, SODO, and Yesler Terrace, can remain the center of our local government, but it can also be so much more.

In a post-Covid environment, with dramatic changes to centers of commerce led largely by remote and hybrid work, policy makers and the public are pondering the purpose of major metropolitan environments in the United States and beyond. What can a city provide for the public? What opportunities do policymakers have to

revitalize and reinvigorate downtown urban centers? As stewards of the county's resources, the county government has committed to the people it serves to do something better, to shape a future that serves the people who will call this place home for decades to come.

From a neighborhood composed entirely of government offices, this area can be transformed into a 24-hour neighborhood with capacity to include housing for people of all incomes and backgrounds. It can offer gathering spaces, retail, restaurants, the corner store, and offices that reflect the realities of working today. And most importantly, it must connect with transit, not as an afterthought, but as an integral part of the planning of a holistic environment. This place can become a center that enlivens and connects the surrounding neighborhoods, that invites people to join in, and exemplifies the best of what a city — and a true global metropolitan region — can offer. This is a huge undertaking which will require years of planning and execution. But it will be a worthy transformation in one of largest metropolitan regions on the west coast.

King County is engaging community members, city leaders, designers, and development professionals to collectively think through some of the key points of this transformation. Does the courthouse remain the ceremonial seat of county government, and together with City Hall Park anchor this new and vibrant neighborhood? Does the county invest in an obsolete jail or work towards a human-dignity focused in-custody facility? Does Sound Transit, the regional high-capacity transit agency, locate a future light rail station within this potential new district? How do we make sure that county land is used for public purposes while also fostering a mixed-use neighborhood? These are pivotal questions that have been—and will continue to be—informed by dialogue and conversation with King County employees and the surrounding communities.

Through this work, the county can begin to understand how various priorities and parallel efforts can be incorporated into a comprehensive vision for new county facilities and a new and vibrant community in the seat of county government. This is the work that must be done to steward this land for the next generation.

Introduction

King County owns and operates eight buildings spanning seven blocks located in a downtown Seattle government center. These include a functionally obsolete courthouse and correctional facility, the shuttered Administration Building, the Chinook Building, the Yesler Building, a vacant low-rise building along 4th Avenue, and a low-rise parking garage. The county also owns King Street Center located in the Pioneer Square neighborhood, southwest of the primary government center. The buildings that house King County staff range in age from the Chinook Building, which is 18 years old, to the courthouse and Yesler Buildings, which are both over 100 years old. Not surprisingly, the way county government operates is vastly different today than it was 100 years ago, and the services that county employees provide to residents have changed significantly over the last century. With changes in services and use over time, county buildings have been repurposed, renovated incrementally, and now struggle to support high-quality services. Today, some key county facilities are functionally obsolete, and the expenses to repair and maintain many of these buildings have grown at a rapid and unsustainable pace.

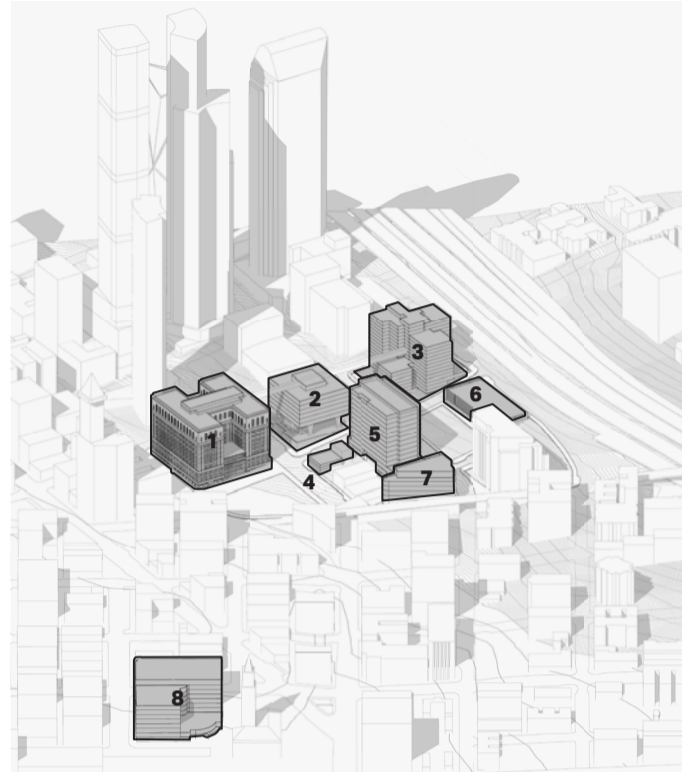
The Cost of the Status Quo

It can be tempting, or expedient, to take little or no action when it comes to improving government facilities, but every building requires regular maintenance and repair. The older the building, and the more time that has elapsed between substantial renovations, the greater the required investment to correct deficiencies and maintain aged systems. The King County Administration Building was shuttered, in large part, to mitigate roughly \$97 million dollars' worth of repair and maintenance costs needed and forecasted over the coming 20-year period. The Yesler Building faces approximately \$50 million worth of work over the same period. Both King Street Center and the Chinook Building require a combined \$155 million over the same time frame, but the cost relative to value for these buildings may be offset by more recent renovations and interior improvements. The King County Courthouse and correctional facility face the heaviest burdens over the next 20-years; at \$264 million and \$118 million respectively, these two facilities constitute over 50% of the costs for campus facility repairs and maintenance. For the county's downtown facilities, "taking no action" means spending almost \$700 million dollars just to make repairs, maintain aging systems, and perpetuate existing functional deficiencies. And for some key buildings, it may be the functional deficiencies that matter most to the county's ability to provide high quality services into the future.

Functional Obsolescence and the Cost of Half Measures

The King County Courthouse was originally completed in 1916 and expanded to its current size in 1931 and designed to serve a population of less than 500,000. In the following decades, King County has grown to almost five times that size, but the courthouse has remained static for 93 years. The century-old layout falls far short of contemporary standards to adequately serve a population of over 2,300,000 people, and that number continues to grow. The King County Courthouse has reached the point of functional obsolescence.

Likewise, the King County Correctional Facility is also at the end of its useful life. The current facility is part of a prison lineage that can be traced back to the direct supervision models of the late 1700s, and the prison warehousing models prevalent in the early 1980s. The current correctional facility was completed 38 years ago, in 1986. Today, county staff and service providers are trying to meet the current needs of the populations they serve in a building designed to fit 40-year-old jail programming that was modeled on 200-year-old ideas of punitive detention.



A diagram of the eight buildings that make up King County's current downtown government center.

- 1 King County Courthouse
- 2 Administration Building
- 3 King County Correctional Facility
- 4 420 4th Avenue
- 5 Chinook Building
- 6 Goat Hill Garage and Sites
- 7 Yesler Building
- 8 King Street Center

Repair and Renewals Estimated Costs (2024)	
Facility	Cost (\$)
King County Courthouse	264,847,000
Administration Building	97,937,000
Correctional Facility	118,818,000
Goat Hill Garage and Site	4,400,000
Chinook Building	67,360,000
Yesler Building	49,592,000
King Street Center	87,714,000
420 4th Avenue	NA
Total	690,672,000

Repair and renewal costs to address observed deficiencies and predicted renewals. Phased construction beyond 2024 would incur escalation rates between 4% to 4.5% per year.

To try and keep pace with contemporary needs for the delivery of county services, existing facilities would need to be overhauled, modernizing each facility to the extent possible. While office buildings could likely be brought up to contemporary standards through complete renovations, the King County Courthouse and the correctional facility pose challenges for consequential improvements. A complete renovation of the King County Courthouse during ongoing use would require approximately \$938 million in 2030 dollars and would not remedy all functional deficiencies related to the building's century-old design. Likewise, the King County Correctional Facility was designed and constructed approximately 40 years ago, and accommodated spaces for jail programming consistent with high-rise facilities constructed during that time. A complete renovation during ongoing use would require spending between \$1.3 billion and \$1.7 billion, and would not alter the underlying design to bring the building into alignment with contemporary in-custody facilities.

The result of a "Renovate Existing Facilities" approach is that some buildings—office buildings—could be brought in line with contemporary models, while others—courts and in-custody buildings—would receive half-measure renovations, with upgraded systems, finishes, and equipment, but only minor improvements to functional and programmatic organization. Renovations to existing buildings would be undertaken, in some cases while the buildings are occupied, resulting in increased capital costs related to extended project schedules and more onerous construction-related logistics. The total cost to renovate existing campus buildings is estimated at between \$2.5 billion and \$3.2 billion, without improving key underlying issues for courts and in-custody facilities.

No Action is Not an Option

The facility-related pressures of aging building systems and functional obsolescence are only part of the picture. Future regional transit work may radically alter the landscape on the county's existing downtown Seattle campus, demolishing county-owned buildings and severing critical functional ties between the courts and correctional facilities.

In March of 2023, Sound Transit identified a preferred alignment, for further study, for the West Seattle-Ballard Link, with potential station entrances located at the northeast corner of 4th Avenue and James Street, and the northeast corner of 4th Avenue at the Terrace Street bridge intersection. The Ballard Link Extension and station locations would require the demolition of the King County Administration Building. That demolition would remove the existing skybridge and subterranean tunnel connections, eliminating the only secure means of conducting in-custody transfers between the correctional facility and the courthouse. Even if over \$700 million were spent over the next 20 years to repair and maintain buildings, or even if \$2.5 billion to \$3.2 billion was spent to overhaul current buildings, impending transit improvements may fundamentally alter existing conditions, demanding a new scenario for the future of King County facilities.

Renovate Existing Estimated Costs (2024)	
Facility	Cost (\$)
King County Courthouse	730,000,000
Administration Building	102,000,000
Correctional Facility	1,328,000,000
Goat Hill Garage and Site	4,400,000
Chinook Building	139,000,000
Yesler Building	26,000,000
King Street Center	165,000,000
420 4th Avenue	NA
Total	2,494,400,000

Estimated costs to fully renovate existing facilities, in 2024 dollars.

Renovate Existing Estimated Costs (2030 - 2033)	
Facility	Cost (\$)
King County Courthouse	932,000,000
Administration Building	130,000,000
Correctional Facility	1,696,000,000
Goat Hill Garage and Site	5,600,000
Chinook Building	177,000,000
Yesler Building	33,000,000
King Street Center	211,000,000
420 4th Avenue	NA
Total	3,184,600,000

Estimated costs to fully renovate existing facilities, in 2030 - 2033 dollars representing escalation-phased construction.

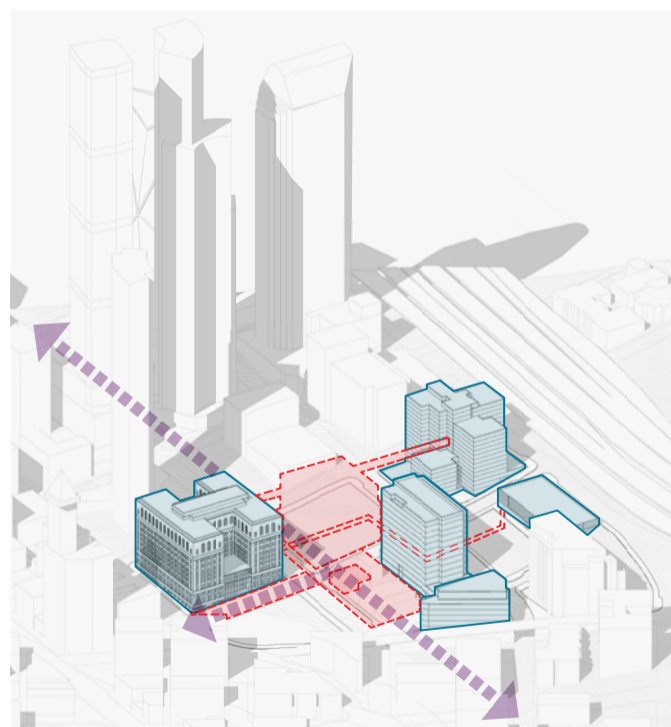


Diagram illustrating the potential West-Seattle Ballard Link Extension and the County facilities and adjacent areas affected by potential transit work.

Framing a New Scenario

With government services run by thousands of employees, and property assets spanning seven downtown Seattle blocks, the existing campus embodies an unmatched opportunity to rethink how government can better serve residents, customers, and visitors. It can also contribute to the creation of a thriving and sustainable physical environment through the development of high-quality buildings and public spaces. Arriving at a clear vision and set of principles to frame how facilities are shaped and how real estate value is converted into civic value is a key step in the planning process. Beginning in 2018 through engagement with a Vision and Guiding Principles Task Force, continuing in 2019 and 2020 with a King County Advisory Group and Oversight Committee, a vision statement and key guiding principles were developed to aid the alignment of planning strategies for new facilities and county properties with county government priorities.

A Welcoming, Equitable, and Enduring Place, Inspiring Civic Life and Serving the Region

Design for equity and fairness

Program, plan, and build to realize equity and social justice in physical space.

Ensure access to opportunity for all.

Focus on health and wellbeing through design.

Build respectful civic experiences

Contribute to a safe and welcoming environment.

Make access to government services self-evident.

Celebrate the differences we have in common.

Create resilient working places

Foreground spaces that connect people in government with the people government serves.

Accomplish long-term functional viability.

Construct workplace environments that support recruitment and retention.

Deliver financially sound projects

Plan for a future that begins now.

Unlock real estate value to realize new civic value.

Deliver projects that reduce long-term costs to taxpayers.

Design beautifully restorative environments

Be a global model for the renewal of urban ecologies, sustainable design, and low-carbon development.

Demonstrate that beauty and practicality are inseparable.

Make the unique characteristics of the county's region and culture visible in the Civic Plan.

The engagement process continued in 2023 with a Community Advisory Group that was convened to provide input on the project's Vision and Guiding Principles. Over the course of seven months, this group proposed additional guiding principles to help align the planning process with community priorities.

Contribute to a socially and economically vibrant community

Design to maximize connections between buildings, their uses, public spaces and people- visitors, employees, residents, small businesses, and entertainment.

Anchor the process in King County's Race and Social Justice Principles

King County recognizes that racism is a public health crisis that disproportionately harms community members who are black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).

In addition to providing Vision Statement and Guiding Principles input, the Community Advisory group was also engaged in a series of iterative planning sessions with the project design team. Concurrent with the Community Advisory Group, the county convened a Government Partners Advisory Group to begin working collaboratively between government entities on complex and varied issues that cross disciplinary and jurisdictional lines. These groups met monthly between March and September of 2023. During the course of those meetings both groups provided input that directly shaped physical planning scenarios and final recommendations.

Benchmarking New King County Facilities

To continue providing high-quality services to residents, King County employees need high-quality environments that support their work, and that support recruitment and retention. The county council needs space that is oriented towards the level of public involvement and visibility that enables continued responsiveness to constituents. The county's civil and criminal legal system needs a new courthouse to support the delivery of services to a growing and diverse community. And King County needs a new type of building, focused on human dignity, to support the county's in-custody population, service providers, and dedicated staff.

Strategic recommendations for buildings and public spaces are developed based on four functional groups: Officing, Courts, Council, and In-custody facilities. These categories merge work-modes and building typologies to facilitate space needs forecasting, staff and community engagement, and site strategies to meet long-term goals. Facility size forecasts are generated through benchmarking, a process of identifying other facilities or standards that are comparable and modifying those comparables based on project-specific goals and conditions.

Future Office Space

Future office space is forecasted through a combination of on-site employee counts and square footage needs per employee seat. Downtown campus on-site employee counts reflect King County's Future-of-Work occupancy projections and are escalated based on the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics 20-year historical growth-rates for local government employees. Utilizing the county RAMP data for space occupancy standards, and comparing those values with other professional sector benchmarks, results in a forecasted office space need of approximately 750,000 GSF in 2035.

A Contemporary Courthouse

Benchmarking for a proposed courthouse included the review of several recently completed facilities with minor adjustments to reflect the high-level nature of the strategic plan. The resulting recommended Civil and Criminal Courts facility area forecast is approximately 495,000 gross square feet.

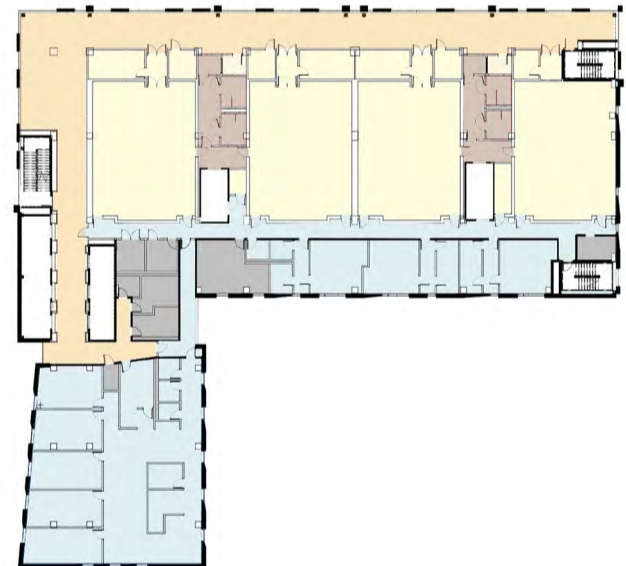
A central criterion in early planning related to area allocations is the clear organization distinct zones that aggregate and accommodate the distinct needs and inter-relationships of various user groups. A century ago, courthouses achieved identity through size, site, and architectural elements, such as columns, domes, and grand entrances. A century later, courthouses function very differently; court processes are considerably more complex and require substantially different environments to support operations. Courthouses must accommodate unique space needs for the public, jurors, judges, attorneys, victims, witnesses, in-custody defendants, court staff, and a multitude of other service providers. Each of these participants requires different degrees of security and access. Over the past decade, the judiciary and design professions have focused on the horizontal and vertical zoning of spaces within the facility to achieve thoughtfully designed environments that promote efficient operations with consideration given to workflow, adjacencies, and proper zoning of court functions. Strategic planning for the proposed courthouse employs a similar approach to confirm the required floor area for zoned planning and cost estimating purposes, and to outline an organizational goal for future facility programming and design.

Strategic planning for a new courthouse extends to the outside of the building as well. Security for all user groups begins with the building's site. Siting the courthouse to account for necessary vehicular stand-off distances and pedestrian security is a key driver for both location and configuration of the building and is factored into the siting and positioning of the proposed courts building.

King County Superior and District Courts		
	DGSF	%
Court Sets	144,800	38.0%
Judicial Office	41,800	11.0%
Jury Assembly	7,600	2.0%
Courts Offices	49,400	13.0%
Other Agencies and Uses	64,600	17.0%
Security, Central Holding	15,200	4.0%
Building Support	45,600	12.0%
Parking (in building)	11,400 ²	3.0%
Total DGSF	380,000	
Total BGSF	495,000	
# Of courtrooms	42 ¹	
BGSF/courtroom	11,785	
Total Building GSF	495,000	

Allocation of space within the proposed King County Civil and Criminal Courts facility, Building Gross Square Feet (BGSF) per courtroom with percentage of total.

1. Number of courtrooms indicated reflects a half court-set unit applied to Ex-Parte or Family Court courtrooms for area calculation purposes.
2. Additional parking allocation within total BGSF and within optional ground level floor addition.



Multnomah County Courthouse plan diagram representing a zoned organization. Portland, Oregon.

- Public Circulation
- Public Vertical Circulation (and support spaces)
- In-custody Holding and Vertical Circulation
- Courtrooms
- Judicial Staff and Jury Rooms

A New Type of Facility for Individuals in Custody

Strategic plan recommendations include a new type of in-custody environment, focused on human dignity, to support the needs of the population served, service providers, and dedicated staff.

To identify benchmark facilities for comparison, an analysis was conducted comparing the total gross square footage of the county's existing correctional facility with eight other large correctional facilities across the United States, selected based on their capacity to house over 1,000 inmates. For the facilities reviewed, the average was 364 building gross square feet (BGSF) per bed. But to achieve a more human dignity focused model, a shift in benchmarking at this early stage is needed.

Halden Prison in Norway has served as a model facility across a number of aspects related to detention and treatment. And while conditions are dramatically different from current U.S. based models, the distribution of benchmark facility area allocations are instructive for forward-thinking facilities, particularly at an early planning stage.

The proposed In-custody facility benchmark operates at a middle ground between the Halden model and the practical circumstances of a county system. And it underscores the significance of ensuring sufficient space for rehabilitation and reintegration while remaining cognizant of local and regional factors, and state requirements. This allocation is also redistributed across program categories to more closely reflect the Halden model, placing more emphasis on activities and recreation, programs, services, and the need for high-quality spaces for facility staff and service providers. The resulting recommended In-custody facility area forecast is approximately 550,000 gross square feet.

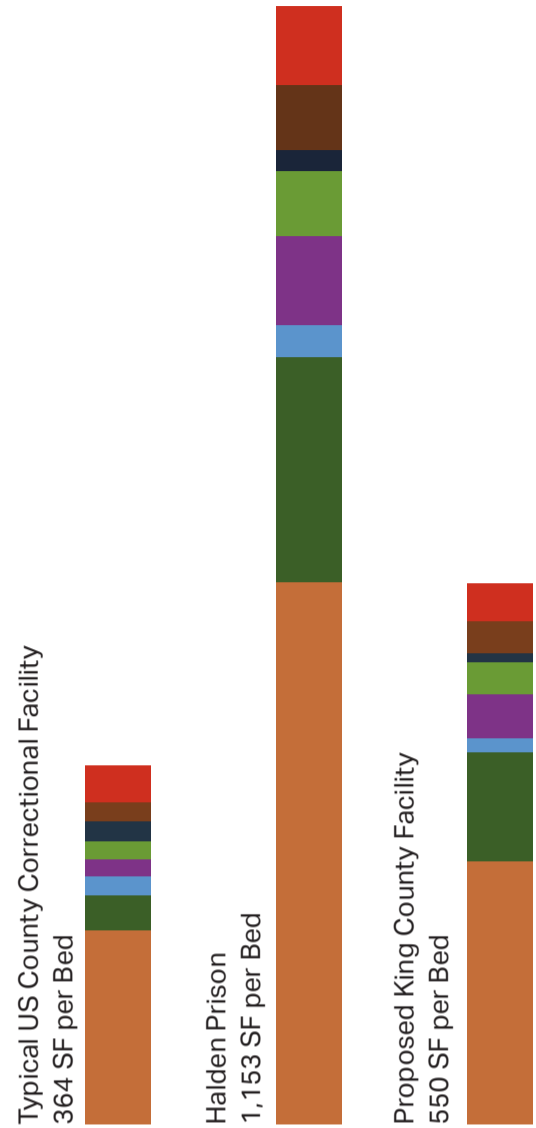
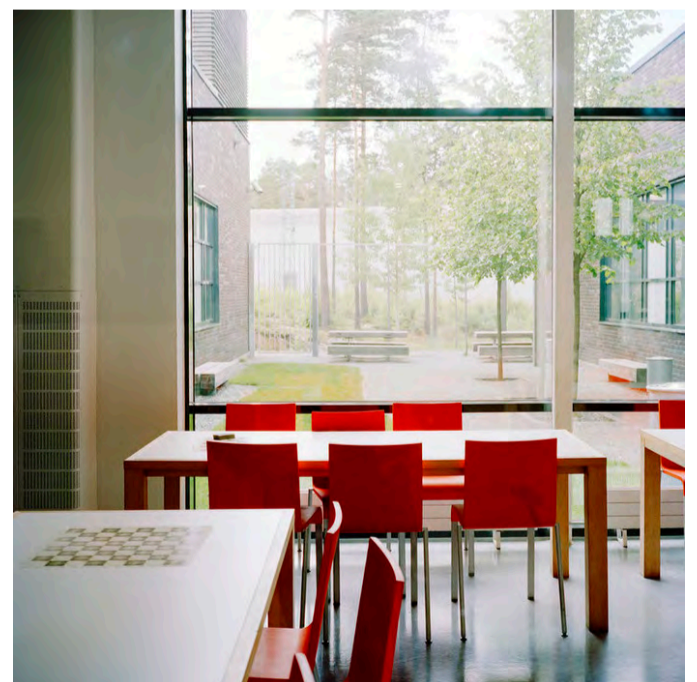


Diagram comparing the program ratios in benchmarked facilities with the recommended blended ratio for a new King County Facility.

- Male Housing
- Female Housing
- Administration
- Programs
- Services
- Transfer
- Health Care
- Support



Example common area at Halden Prison, Halden, Norway.

Paired Sites

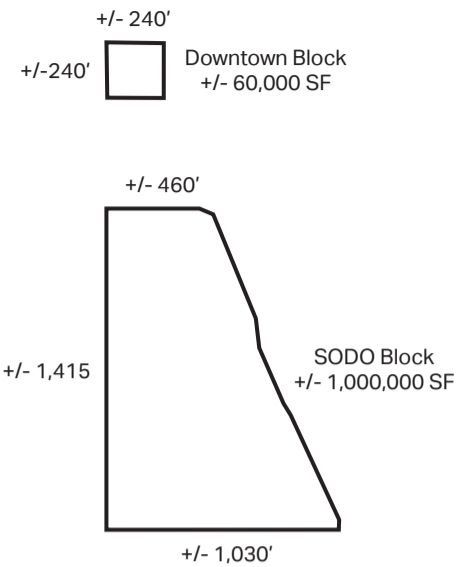
The county has a range of options to address public space and building needs, from occupying other county-owned buildings, to consolidating facilities within downtown, or relocating certain functions to a larger site.

The recommended facilities strategy plays out across a pair of well-connected sites, one in downtown at the historic center of King County government and one in SODO, possibly at the county-owned Atlantic and Central Base- an example site serving as a case study to illustrate how a potential shift in the scale of the site to may offer new possibilities for county programs and services.

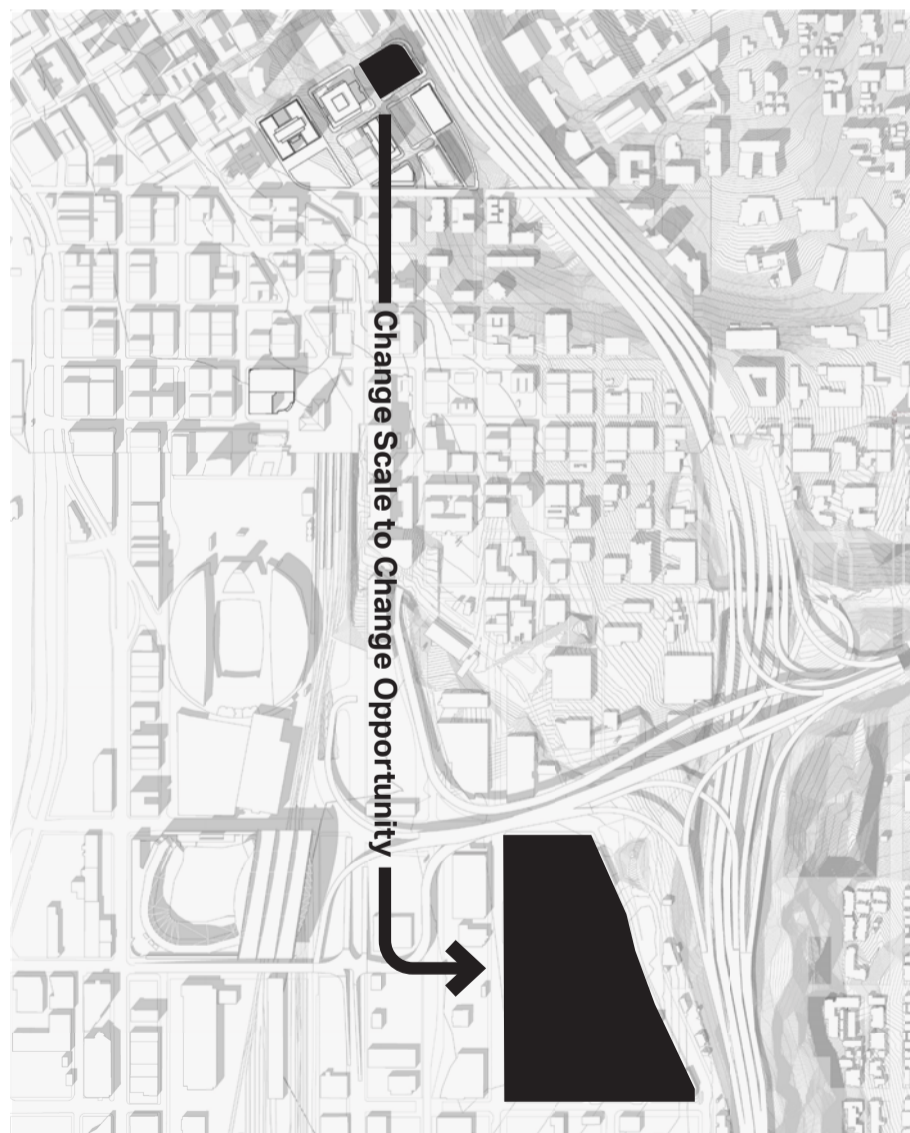
This pairing was the outcome of planning and design working sessions with the Vision and Guiding Principles Task Force, the County Advisory Group, and the Community Advisory Group to achieve contemporary programmatic opportunities for county facilities while maximizing redevelopment opportunities on county-owned land in the Central Business District.

Downtown facilities focus on the adaptive re-use of the King County Courthouse for officing and council functional groups, as well as a centralized welcome and customer service center.

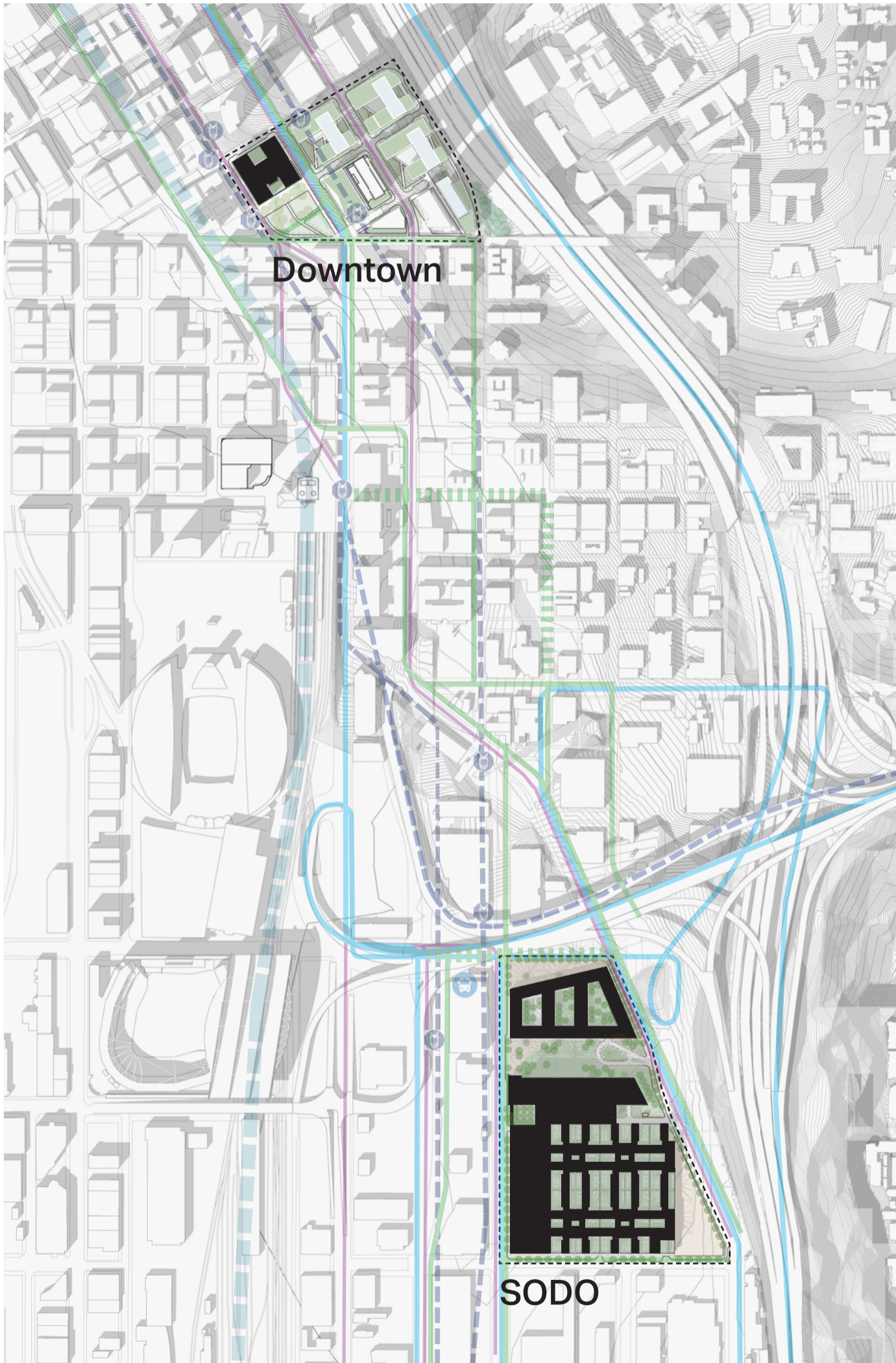
A SODO site, using Atlantic and Central Base as an example, acts as a case study and includes proposals for offices, courts, and in-custody facilities, as well as facilities for King County Metro maintenance and operations. These proposed buildings are accompanied by a series of high-quality urban spaces, on-site parking, and structures for district energy generation, taking full advantage of the scale of this site.



Size comparison between a downtown block (top) and the consolidated block in SODO at Atlantic and Central Base.



Locate large footprint functional groups on a larger site to realize new opportunities for county facilities and downtown redevelopment.



Map illustrating proposed King County facility locations in downtown (top left) and SODO (bottom right).

A Case Study Site in SODO

King County owns 24.5 contiguous acres in SODO, less than one mile from the current downtown courthouse. Currently home to King County Metro’s centrally located maintenance and operations functions, the site holds the capacity to enable a transformation in county facilities. The SODO site illustrates a rare opportunity for a municipal government to transform facilities by moving functions to a more opportune site, while remaining in essentially the same area.



Model view of the layered strategy for county facilities on the SODO case study site.

A Layered Strategy

The county could layer proposed facilities vertically with current uses to more effectively utilize county land in a dense urban environment.

The site could become home to proposed civil and criminal legal system facilities—courts and in-custody buildings—taking advantage of the site’s tremendous dimensions to realize programmatic opportunities, building, and open space types, that are not possible on a downtown block. A proposed office building is also envisioned for departments and divisions that benefit from proximity to criminal and civil legal system facilities, or King County Metro base operations, or that may simply operate more effectively with a different set of mobility options for the provision of high-quality services. The redevelopment strategy also envisions new structured facilities for Metro fleet and operations, to protect county assets from constant exposure, to accommodate new fleet technologies, and to facilitate Metro employees’ ability to efficiently and enjoyably conduct their work. And new urban open spaces are planned to create high quality outdoor environments that support and provide places for public life and moments of respite for county employees, residents, and customers.

Offices Planned with Employees in Mind

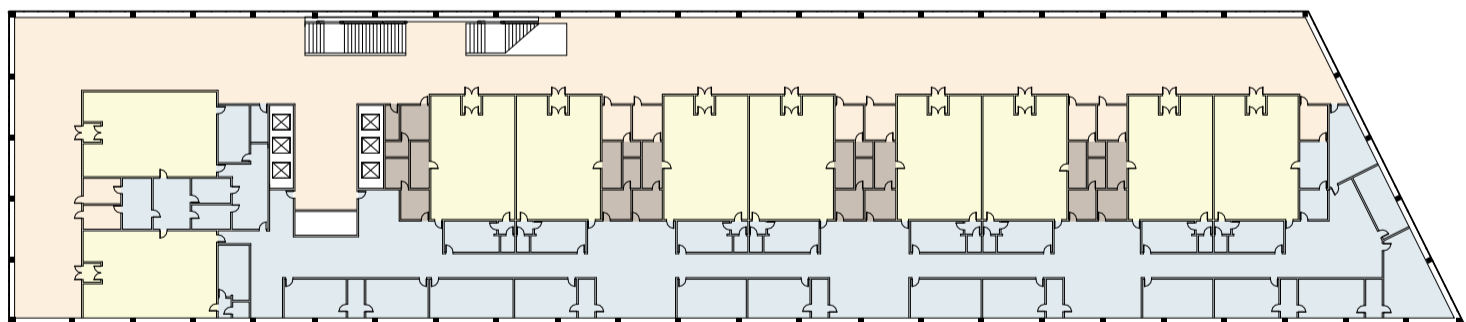
The plan calls for workplaces that enable employees to provide the highest quality services, and that support recruitment and retention. The proposed office building takes full advantage of daylighting opportunities, views, and even natural ventilation to increase workplace comfort for employees and reduce the operational costs of building systems. Outdoor courtyards are also incorporated into facility planning to provide spaces for employees to gather, hold meetings in good weather, and find moments of respite to recharge during the workday.



Interior rendering of the proposed office building on the SODO case study site.

A Contemporary Courts Building

The proposed courthouse is sized comparably with regionally benchmarked facilities, and to reflect the current number of courtrooms in use by District and Superior Courts. Gross square footages were tested to confirm alignment with current trends in vertical and horizontal zoning. The example plan below highlights horizontal zoning to accommodate the unique space needs for the public, jurors, judges, attorneys, victims, witnesses, in-custody defendants, court staff, and a multitude of other service providers.



King County SODO Courthouse, example horizontal zoning plan.

- Public Circulation
- Public Vertical Circulation (and support spaces)
- In-custody Holding and Vertical Circulation
- Courtrooms
- Judicial Staff and Jury Rooms

The courts building is also located in the center of the SODO site. This position enables the minimum standoff distance as prescribed in the UFC DOD Minimum Anti-Terrorism Standards for Buildings and the NCSC Site Security guidance. It also offers space to introduce an exterior security pavilion as recommended by the U.S. GSA Site Security Design Guide.

An In-Custody Facility Focused on Human Dignity

A new type of in-custody environment is proposed on the SODO site, focused on human dignity, to support the needs of the population served, service providers, and dedicated staff. To depart from typical U.S. models of punitive detention, the proposed facility has been benchmarked against Halden Prison in Norway, which has served as a model facility across a number of aspects related to detention and treatment. The proposed facility focuses on a two-story typology to facilitate wide flexibility in future planning for program options, including the integration of consequential outdoor spaces, and to manage future capital and operating costs.



Rendering of a proposed in-custody pod common room, with direct courtyard access.

A Modern Central Base for King County Metro

To facilitate the relocation of county offices, courts and in-custody facilities to the SODO site, the proposal recommends planning a modern and efficient two-story SODO Base, equipped to serve a zero-emissions fleet and provide high-quality workspace for Metro employees. The proposed bus facility is sited at the southern end of the SODO site and is layered below the in-custody facility to more fully leverage county-owned land in a dense urban environment.



A view of the proposed Metro SODO Base from 6th Avenue S. Metro facilities are located on the ground and second levels of the proposed project.

The Context for Opportunity

The county owns an incredible amount of high-capacity property in downtown Seattle. These properties hold tremendous value, and that value could help offset the cost of new county facilities and become a part of the solution to pressing needs in King County such as affordable housing and commercial space, and civic amenity.

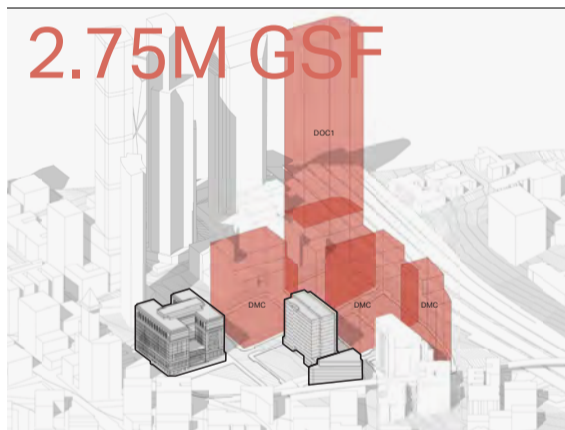
Siting proposed facilities in SODO creates potential for redevelopment on several county-owned sites downtown. Parcels on three city blocks, including the correctional facility site, and all three Goat Hill sites, become available for redevelopment. Sound Transit’s West Seattle - Ballard Link Extension creates opportunity as well. With a potential station located on the shuttered Administration Building site, that block would become available for redevelopment following the completion of Sound Transit’s construction.

The order of magnitude of potential development across these five parcels is staggering. Under current zoning, non-residential capacities total approximately 2.75 million gross square feet (GSF), while residential capacities total approximately 5.34 million GSF. But with a potential rezone of the sites highlighted in red at right to Downtown Office Core-1 (DOC1), non-residential capacities reach approximately 4.14 million GSF, while residential capacities increase to approximately 9.74 million GSF.

The remaining building stock, including the Chinook Building, the Yesler Building, and King Street Center, offer value through continued county use, or through divestment—by sale or lease—to help fund contemporary facilities and to contribute new office, institutional, or residential uses to the Courthouse District and the Pioneer Square Neighborhood. Altogether, three-and-a-half adjacent city blocks, and four existing buildings, become available for potential redevelopment in one of the nation’s densest and most rapidly growing urban environments.



Existing zoning map highlighting five parcels that represent the bulk of the county’s opportunity for redevelopment (black outlines) and the two sites identified for a potential rezone (red outlines).



Top: Modeling of calculated non-residential capacities under existing zoning.

Bottom: Modeling of calculated mixed-use residential capacities under existing zoning.

Top: Non-residential capacity tested with a rezone of two redevelopment sites from DMC 340/290-440 to DOC1 U/450-U.

Bottom: Residential capacity tested with a rezone of two sites from DMC 340/290-440 to DOC1 U/450-U and height limited to 1,100 feet.

A Courthouse District

County-owned land in Seattle's Central Business District occupies the middle of a government center that includes local, regional, and national government facilities. These buildings are occupied during peak working hours each weekday, but in the evenings, at night, and on weekends, the area is stagnant. Some buildings, like the King County Courthouse, have suffered from heavy-handed renovations that prioritized service functions over the public realm, contributing to a loss of character, quality, and the perception of a lack of safety in the district.

All around the courthouse this tract of land is surrounded by vibrant neighborhoods. And if well planned, it can become a new mixed-use, mixed-income district that lifts up, supports, and connects the surrounding neighborhoods. Seattle is one of the fastest growing cities in the country, yet there is virtually no housing in this part of the city. Redevelopment needs to include a range of affordable and market rate housing that support a wide variety of household sizes; it should make room for affordable retail and commercial spaces at ground level to foster a vibrant environment of diverse local businesses, and the area should be planned to create a coherent ground-level arrangement of spaces across the entire district that promote public life.



Rendering of the proposed rehabilitated King County Courthouse illustrating the Welcome Center and Council Chambers addition facing City Hall Park

The King County Courthouse

The King County Courthouse has been central to the notion of public life in this area since 1916. As a visible symbol of local and regional government, this iconic building has the potential to carry King County government into the next 100 years.

With a new courthouse proposed in SODO, the existing downtown courthouse can be rehabilitated to create world-class workplaces for county employees, retaining historic elements alongside new construction—supporting new workplace programming—to create a one-of-a-kind work environment in the Pacific Northwest.

County Council staff and chambers would be repositioned to the fourth floor of the courthouse, to create a stronger relationship with surrounding civic spaces, enable easier public access, and support the council's continued engagement with constituents. A new addition, between the southern "wings" of the building would house council chambers, including a larger public gallery to host larger gatherings of county residents.

And the historic main entrance would be reclaimed and incorporated into a ground level addition, also located between the southern "wings" of the building, transforming the current loading dock into a public-oriented Welcome Center to house customer service functions and make access to government services self-evident.

Reopening the historic southern entry to the building is a critical part of the equation. During the 1960s the courthouse was heavily renovated. Through that work, “The Third Avenue entry officially became the formal gateway to the courthouse, dooming City Hall Park to isolation.” (Lentz, 1984, p. 12.). Renewed focus on public functions at the historic main entry can contribute to programming and planning efforts to rejuvenate City Hall Park, which itself is an integral component of the Courthouse District.



Rendering of the proposed rehabilitated King County Courthouse illustrating the Welcome Center and Council Chambers addition facing City Hall Park

Use by King County is not the only option for the courthouse. Around 1912, when A. Warren Gould was commissioned to design the courthouse, the county commissioners requested “a plan for a building that could meet the anticipated growth of the county and possible relocation of offices in the future. Should the county decide that the facility no longer met its needs, the possibility of selling the building for commercial use was desirable” (King County, ND). The size and dimensions of the building make it an ideal candidate for adaptive reuse, offering flexibility for future decision making. Reusing the courthouse for housing could realize around 350 new apartments or condominiums, anchoring a potential mixed-use district with an iconic residential conversion. The building’s floor plate and corridor widths also align with a transition to educational use. At roughly 600,000 gross square feet, the courthouse is large enough for a vertically integrated campus for grades K - 12, Pre-K, and even day care.

Leveraging Existing County-Owned Buildings

The courthouse is not the only existing building that could help shape a new district or support existing neighborhoods. The Yesler Building, 420 4th Avenue, the Chinook Building, and King Street Center all have distinct value and potential roles to play. The Yesler Building would make wonderful housing. The exterior maintains a historic character rich in detail, while the interior—gutted during a 1970s renovation—has the flexibility to meet the modern layouts, features, and finishes of contemporary apartments and condominiums. It also occupies a prime location, adjacent to a potential light rail station and numerous Metro bus routes, and a half of a block away from City Hall Park. Sound Transit’s West Seattle – Ballard Link Extension may present a unique opportunity for county properties at 420 4th Avenue, between Jefferson and Terrace Streets. King County should work with Sound Transit to ensure that any redevelopment of that half block, and the station itself, apply the planning and urban design framework of the courthouse district. The Chinook Building and King Street Center maintain high values as office buildings. When no longer required for King County use, sale of these building may be the most reasonable strategy. And though the Chinook Building may border on suitability for an office-to-residential conversion, the option exists should repositioning this county asset become a value-add to the emerging neighborhood.

What Does "Mixed-Use" Mean in the Context of a Civic Initiative?

Mixed-use development in Seattle, including written land use codes, focuses an incredible amount of attention on delivering and regulating ground level "podiums," the building volumes that house retail and commercial activity, and building services and parking. And with the exception of code-required outdoor open space, these podiums tend to fill the entire land area of the parcels being developed. Through County Advisory Group and Community Advisory Group engagement, mixed-use redevelopment for the Civic Initiative came to mean changing the development paradigm, shifting the premise of the ground plane from a space for private profit to a space of public purpose.

Community Advisory Group input led to proposals for a ground-level that is open to everyone, and that infuses outdoor spaces with opportunities for small footprint retail and commercial spaces that can showcase local businesses, spaces for grocery stores to support the needs of a 24-hour district, and civic amenities like public restrooms. Feedback from the project's Oversight Committee pushed the design team to leverage the eccentricities that make downtown Seattle unique, exploiting the hilly nature of the sites to create an environment that can exist nowhere else. These working sessions also led to a framework for property redevelopment focused on achieving county goals while maintaining development flexibility to maximize opportunities and value over time.

Realizing Hidden Potential

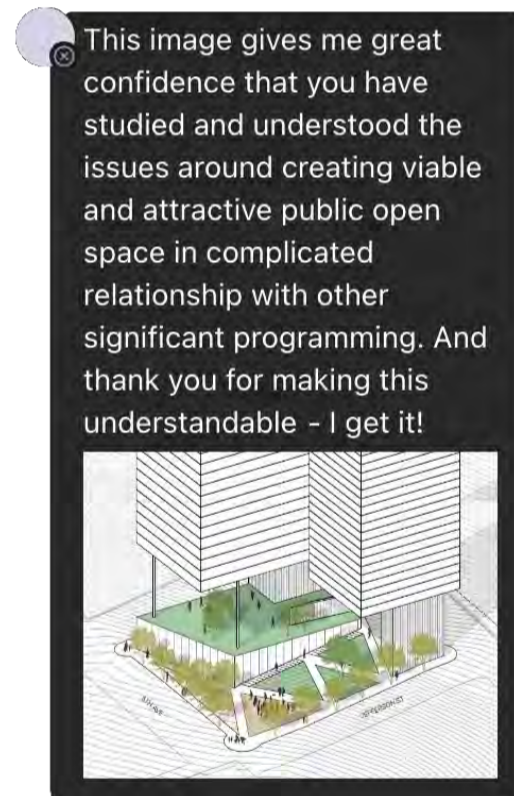
The county's downtown properties reside at the center of five diverse neighborhoods: the Central Business District, First Hill, Yesler Terrace, the Chinatown/International District, and the Pioneer Square Historic District. But current land use across county-owned properties in downtown is monolithic, part of a broad swath of public facilities that effectively form an institutional blood clot between surrounding neighborhoods. Realizing new value from potential redevelopment sites, and a true mix of uses, begins with zoning actions that can lead to the effective use of county-owned land.

While the area's existing zoning supports high-density redevelopment, a variety of uses, and the flexibility to depart from certain development standards, it is not structured to facilitate phased, coordinated development across multiple blocks. Existing area zoning is also not written to facilitate an open, accessible, and interconnected ground level throughout a district. For the Courthouse District, five inter-related regulatory approaches are recommended: Implement a Planned Action Ordinance (PAO) that establishes overarching development parameters for the district as a whole, enact a Planned Community Development (PCD) to codify elements included in the PAO, develop district specific zoning and supplementary design guidelines to custom tailor PAO and PCD projects to meet King County goals, adopt a Cooperative Development Agreement (CDA) between the City of Seattle and King County to govern implementation, and to further support the provision of new housing the base and maximum development capacities on two blocks within the Courthouse District should be rezoned from Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC to a Downtown Office Core-1 (DOC1) equivalent.

Together, these regulatory actions would support the creation of a new model mixed-use district, with a focus on four potential redevelopment sites: the shuttered Administration Building site, the Correctional Facility site, the Goat Hill North site, and the smaller Goat Hill South site. Redevelopment on these four sites likely involves private-sector partnerships, and the disposition of land through a variety of strategies that may include long-term ground leases—with King County maintaining ownership of the land asset—a condominium agreement—with King County retaining ownership of the ground plane for public purpose and a sale of the "air-rights" above for development—or a fee-simple sale—the complete sale of the land to a private entity. The mechanism chosen will ultimately depend on a range of factors but should include provisions for the county to achieve the outlined urban design and planning goals.



Strategic diagram illustrating the vertical layering of functions on potential redevelopment sites.



Posted comment from a Community Advisory Group member during the third work session between Advisory Group members and the consultant team.

Unmatched Capacity for Change

When combined, the recommended regulatory and urban design strategies yield impressive capacities. A mixed office-and-residential scenario could yield between 2.6 million and 3 million net rentable square feet (NRSF) of non-residential development and between 2,400 and 3,200 apartments and condominiums. A residential-focused redevelopment district would yield around 800,000 NRSF of retail, commercial and office space, and between 5,000 and 7,800 apartments and condominiums. And while what might be constructed or absorbed over time in the Seattle market may be different, the available capacities demonstrate a tremendous potential to convert real estate value into civic value and create a vibrant 24-hour district that benefits residents, workers, visitors, and businesses.



Rendering of the proposed Courthouse District.

Existing County Assets Could Be Used as a Funding Source

Unlike the “Renovate Existing Facilities” scenario which assumes building renovations on downtown sites, moving some facilities to a new site such as the SODO case study site, could leverage existing downtown county-owned properties for redevelopment to help fund some portion of the proposed county facilities.

Sales and ground lease values for each property were analyzed based on existing and proposed zoning, development potential, and current and future market conditions. The valuation analysis considers a series of factors including: different valuation years based on a phasing assessment of when county buildings or properties might be vacated, whether the prospective development would be mixed use or residential only, if the property would be sold or ground leased, and capacities under existing and proposed zoning. The valuation also provides low and high range estimates based on possible market conditions.

In the case of property sales, valuation estimates indicate that the eight properties could be sold for between \$687 million and \$1.5 billion depending on the timing of sale. If ground leased, the county could earn between \$29 million and \$76 million annually, depending on the timing of the ground lease, with periodic annual increases over time. Given the variety of land assets and buildings in the county’s downtown portfolio, a combination of property sales and ground leases may be considered as a part of future decision-making processes.

Estimated property values have been included for information only, and are not meant to indicate a recommendation or decision to sell or ground lease the properties.

Civic Campus Estimated Property Valuations

		MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO Existing Buildings Remain Office Use Only				RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO Existing Buildings Remain Office Use Only			
Property	Valuation Year	Value Range (For Sale)		Annual Ground Lease		Value Range (For Sale)		Annual Ground Lease	
		LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
Yesler	2028	\$27 M	\$44 M	\$1 M	\$2 M	\$27 M	\$44 M	\$1 M	\$2 M
Chinook	2028	\$167 M	\$284 M	\$5 M	\$14 M	\$167 M	\$284 M	\$5 M	\$14 M
King Street	2028	\$133 M	\$301 M	\$5 M	\$15 M	\$133 M	\$301 M	\$5 M	\$15 M
	Subtotal	\$327 M	\$628 M	\$11 M	\$31 M	\$327 M	\$628 M	\$11 M	\$31 M
KC Admin Site	2031	\$53 M	\$159 M	\$3 M	\$8 M	\$44 M	\$127 M	\$2 M	\$6 M
KC Court House	2031	\$132 M	\$213 M	\$7 M	\$11 M	\$132 M	\$213 M	\$7 M	\$11 M
KC Correctional Facility	2031	\$113 M	\$170 M	\$6 M	\$9 M	\$99 M	\$146 M	\$5 M	\$7 M
	Subtotal	\$298 M	\$542 M	\$15 M	\$27 M	\$275 M	\$487 M	\$14 M	\$24 M
Goat Hill	2034	\$66 M	\$264 M	\$3 M	\$13 M	\$56 M	\$212 M	\$3 M	\$11 M
Goat Hill South	2034	\$39 M	\$87 M	\$2 M	\$4 M	\$29 M	\$67 M	\$2 M	\$3 M
	Subtotal	\$105 M	\$351 M	\$5 M	\$18 M	\$85 M	\$279 M	\$5 M	\$14 M
	TOTALS	\$729 M	\$1,521 M	\$31 M	\$76 M	\$687 M	\$1,393 M	\$29 M	\$70 M

Valuations for County-owned land and building assets in downtown Seattle. Source: Kinzer Partners, 2024.

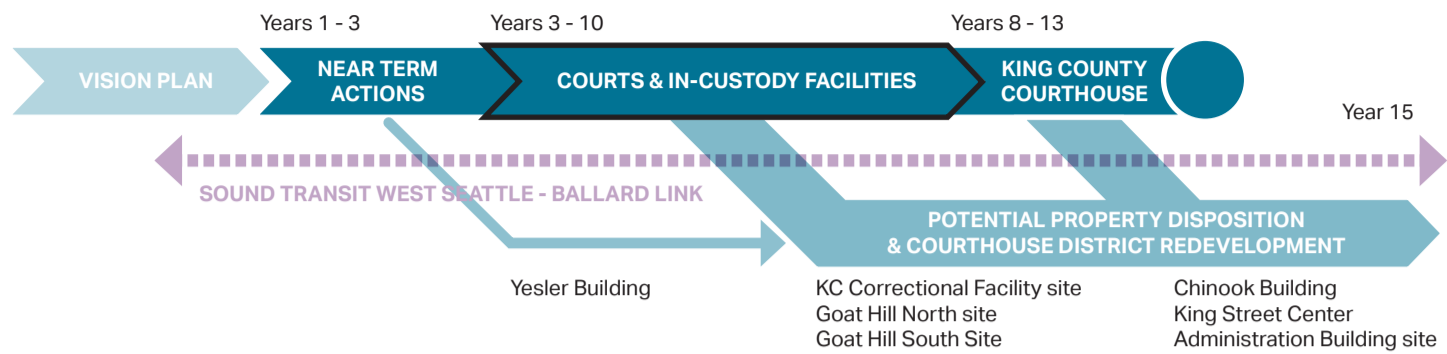
Ground leases are assumed to be 5% rent on value.

Does not include time value of money from divestment to year 2024, including totals.

Yesler, Chinook, and King Street Center are considered office use in every scenario.

Refer to the Real Estate Valuation reference section for a complete description of the valuation basis and qualifiers.

Property valuations are included for information and comparison purposes only. No policy decisions have been made.



A Strategic Timeline in Four Overlapping Phases

The timeline for action has been organized into four primary segments: Near-Term Actions, proposed courthouse and in-custody facility planning and implementation, rehabilitation of the King County Courthouse, and Courthouse District redevelopment. Potential property disposition through ground lease or sale, and the planning and implementation of mixed-use redevelopment in the Courthouse District, may depend on the relocation of select county facilities to a location outside of the existing downtown campus.

Near Term Actions

Preceding the planning, design and approvals, and construction processes for county facilities, a series of near-term actions have been outlined to illustrate initial steps that should be considered to move the overall process forward and lay the groundwork for change. These actions focus on establishing governance structures and regulatory frameworks and begin the working group processes necessary for more detailed programming and planning of future facilities.

Near-term actions may also include studies for sites and facilities and even potential projects that may be undertaken to begin the transformation of conditions within the existing county campus and lay the groundwork for future change. Near-term actions include:

- Establish a Governance Structure for Initiative planning and execution;
- Convene working groups for facility programming and planning;
- Utilize refined programming, planning, and site information to estimate costs for preferred strategies, and develop a funding plan;
- Generate facility concept studies to support working groups, site reviews, and regulatory planning activities;
- Assemble redevelopment block packages to inform future disposition strategies and fine tune building and property values;
- Begin coordination with the City of Seattle for zoning actions within the future Courthouse District and on any finalized second site for courts and in-custody facilities;
- Establish a working group to assist Sound Transit in the planning and design of potential North of CID stations to align with Courthouse District urban design frameworks;
- Begin studies, and formal processes, to vacate or remove, various alleyways, rights-of-ways, and county-owned infrastructure throughout the Courthouse District;

- Undertake a formal site selection process to identify, compare, and confirm potential locations for the proposed courts and in-custody facilities. Establish a working group with King County Metro to draft a comparative study for the SODO case study site;
- Incorporate the recent property acquisitions into the Civic Campus Initiative Planning process;
- Evaluate potential early property dispositions, including the Yesler Building and the Goat Hill South site.

New Courts and In-Custody Facilities are Key Drivers

New courts and in-custody facilities are important for the county's ability to continue providing high-quality services. The completion of proposed courts and in-custody facilities are also critical to unlocking redevelopment potential on a series of downtown campus properties, including the King County Courthouse, the King County Correctional Facility site, and the Goat Hill North site.

Rehabilitating the King County Courthouse

The plan identifies the rehabilitation of the existing courthouse for use as county government office space, County Council chambers and staff space, and a welcome and customer service center. That transformation, together with other office space located on the SODO case study site, enables the potential disposition of the Chinook Building and King Street Center.

Sound Transit Influences District Timelines

The potential construction of the West Seattle – Ballard Link Extension tunnel and the North of CID station on the southeast corner of James Street and 4th Avenue impacts the schedule for potential redevelopment of the Goat Hill North site. Tunnel work along 4th Avenue and the demolition of the Administration Building would remove below grade connections between the Goat Hill Garage and the King County Courthouse, potentially offering an earlier window for disposition and redevelopment of this site. The completion of the North of CID station superstructure would enable redevelopment of the Administration Building site.

Close coordination with Sound Transit during planning and design is essential to create alignment with Courthouse District urban design frameworks and to support future redevelopment within the maximum envelopes allowable by existing zoning or potential new regulatory frameworks established through the Zoning & Regulatory Actions process.

Broadening the Blueprint

Outlining a vision for future county facilities is an important first step in addressing the county's facility needs. However, the ability to maintain flexibility within that vision, particularly over time, is equally important. Flexibility in physical planning allows the county to navigate unforeseen challenges, seize new opportunities, respond to community needs, and ensure that the strategic direction remains relevant and effective.

While the strategic plan includes a series of proposals for future county facilities, the plan also offers a series of alternatives and addition considerations to immediately broaden the blueprint and illustrate the openness of the plan to invite continued input towards the most effective future for county facilities.

Immediate alternatives and additional considerations include;

- Maintaining a wide range of options for future county office space, including renovating and occupying existing county-owned buildings, consolidating county offices into a single expanded facility downtown, or occupying space throughout future mixed-use developments in the Courthouse District;

- Recognizing that the story of the King County Courthouse is a story of additions over time, and that adding stories to the existing structure may enable new program to maintain the long-term viability of the building;
- Maintaining flexibility about the future use of the existing courthouse. Future use as offices for King County would continue the tradition of the building's use, but adaptively reusing that historic fabric for new schools or housing could add incredible value to a future district;
- Office-to-housing conversions may play a role in the future of the Courthouse District. Consider adaptively reusing other buildings in the County's portfolio; the Yesler Building would make wonderful housing, and the Chinook Building is surprisingly adaptable for residential use;
- Engage with Sound Transit, and the properties adjacent to the county-owned 420 4th Avenue building, to extend the holistic Courthouse District environment across those potential redevelopment sites;
- Use the residual land along the WSDOT I-5 right-of-way to further connect the Courthouse District to Yesler Terrace and the Chinatown International District;
- Advocate for improvements to district thresholds at the Yesler Way and Terrace Street underpasses;
- Through future working groups, explore alternative capacity models for courts and in-custody facilities to right-size those large footprint, and large capital cost, facilities.

There may be many other alternatives and choices that fit within the framework of the plan; options that align with county policies, guiding principles, and urban design and facility frameworks should continue to be explored.

Questions and Concepts

Concept material from the project's five-year trajectory reveals key moments of questioning that helped define a future vision for King County's buildings and public spaces. These images, collages, diagrams, and models offer commentary on the origins of the work, and illustrate the ideas used to create space for thought, opening the project to new possibilities.



Some county facilities are functionally obsolete.



The story of the King County Courthouse is a story of additions over time.





Expand the experience of civic space.

What does “mixed-use”
redevelopment mean for a
civic initiative?



Reclaim the southern entry to the King County Courthouse.





Superimposing existing downtown facilities onto Atlantic and Central base to highlight the size of county-owned land in SODO.



Imagining a reinvigorated urban ecology in a redeveloped Courthouse District.

How does real estate value
become civic value?



Leveraging real estate value to realize new civic value.

In Need of Repair and Functionally Obsolete

The buildings in downtown Seattle that house King County staff range in age from the Chinook Building, which is 18 years old, to the Yesler Building, which is 115 years old. Not surprisingly, the way county government operates is vastly different today than it was 100 years ago, and the services that county employees provide to residents have changed significantly over the last century. With growth and changes in use over time, county buildings have been re-purposed, renovated incrementally, and now struggle to support high-quality services.

Today, many county facilities are functionally obsolete, and the expenses to repair and maintain these buildings have grown at a rapid and unsustainable pace.



4TH AVE.

King County
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
CLOSED
EMPLOYEES ONLY

Public Services Available at: (206) 296-0100 www.kingcounty.gov/services

Notice
The King County Administration Building ballot drop box has been moved.
Have any 2024 general election ballot boxes?
Drop them at the King County Ballot Center at 2nd Ave S and 1 King St, 3rd floor.

KING COUNTY
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING



Jefferson St

ONE WAY
←

BUS ONLY
8-11 AM
3-5 PM



Visual Management Implementation System



DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

QUIET COLLABORATION AREA









WAS HERE!

S CRAZY
ORS

ILLEGITIMATE
NON
CARBORUNDUM
MEANS

NEVER

LET THE
BASTARDS
GRIND YOU
DOWN

GEN VINEGAR
JOB STUWELL

13

MS CHERT-D
Pimps @ B riders

[Large scribbled-out graffiti]

ALL EQUAL
HIS WILL
D KING

Peace



CYCOS



**DO NOT SHOUT OR YELL.
FROM VARDOUT WINDOWS
LEWD, RESOLENT AND ABUSIVE LANGUAGE
OR COMMENTS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS MAY RESULT
IN YOUR REMOVAL FROM THE CELL AND/OR DETENTION.**

**PROHIBIDO LLAMAR Y GRITAR
DESDE LAS VENTANAS
NO SE TOLERARA EL USO DE LENGUAJE
VULGAR, OBSENO E INSULTANTE.
LA INCUMPLIDA ESTAS REGLAS SE LE PODRA DE REGRESO
A SU CELDA Y SE LE PODRA UNA INFRACCION.**



EXIT >

CARGO RAMP ONLY

ARCHIVES
SUNNORTHWEST



IF YOU NEED A KEY TO OPERATE THIS LIFT, PLEASE PICK UP PHONE TO YOUR LEFT

PEPSI







KING COUNTY

LOADING DOCK
DELIVERY HOURS
8 A.M. TO 12 P.M.
WEDNESDAYS
CLOSED HOLIDAYS & SUNDAYS

Ionic columns and pilasters. Set between these verticals are handsome metal windows composed of an iron framework clad with pressed bronze detailing. Although many windows on the ground floor have been altered, the majority at the second and third story level display the original two, four, or six light configuration. These are separated horizontally by bronze, classically detailed spandrels. The middle stories, floors four through nine of the three-part composition, are faced with pressed buff brick that is recessed every eighth course to achieve a look of rusticated ashlar. Glazed terra-cotta finished to resemble granite is applied as a trimming. The middle stories emphasize the verticality of the building with identical lines of double-hung, wooden sash windows recessed within the column grid and separated by spandrels of terra-cotta. The uppermost portion of the Courthouse is highly ornate, typical of early skyscraper treatment. The column grid continues upward as brick-faced Tuscan pilasters. Inserted between these verticals are arched, multi-paned windows two stories in height. At each corner are single smaller windows framed with pedimented tabernacle surrounds. This detail, as well as balustrades at the base of each arched window, are of terra-cotta. The crowning feature of the building is the pressed copper entablature. Its broad frieze is decorated with medallions and eagles. The cornice projects dramatically and is supported by large modillions. Ornamental anthemion once spanned the parapet wall but have since been removed.

Facade Alterations

Each facade of the Courthouse has undergone some degree of alteration since its completion in 1931. The large-scale remodeling of the mid-1960s left no exterior facade untouched. The south facade, once considered the "front" of the building, has suffered a major functional change as well. Converted to a loading dock and service entrance in the late 1960s, the formal courtyard now embraces mechanical equipment for Systems Services and handicapped parking. All landscaping, retaining walls, early light fixtures, and courtyard surfacing have been removed. Windows above the three major entrances have been replaced with blank stucco walls. Other ground-story windows along Jefferson Street have been similarly treated. Higher above, windows on the east and west facades of the courtyard have been obscured by an aluminum curtain wall system applied during the 1960s remodeling. Because of its now well-established service use, its many modifications, and its present inaccessibility the south facade presents a most challenging opportunity for historic restoration.

The west facade on Third Avenue is now commonly regarded as the front of the Courthouse. Many changes have occurred here as well. At ground level, original bronze windows with their patterned grillwork transoms have been replaced with anodized aluminum sash. These windows were intended to camouflage the plenum between floors 1 and 1a, installed in the 1960s. Windows on the fourth floor have been altered, here as elsewhere on the building. In addition, the majority of wooden sash windows on the sixth through ninth floor have been removed and the openings disguised with an extensive aluminum curtain wall. In places, this curtain wall itself is pierced by aluminum sash. This facade defacement, part of the 1960s remodeling, was an attempt to reduce noise and temperature control problems in the courtrooms. It has

An Aging Building Stock

King County owns and operates eight buildings in downtown Seattle, most of which are located on seven blocks between Fourth and Fifth Avenues and between James Street and Yesler Way. These include the King County Courthouse, the King County Administration Building, the King County Correctional Facility, the Chinook Building, the Goat Hill Garage, and the Yesler Building. The county also owns King Street Center, located southwest of the primary government center in the Pioneer Square neighborhood.

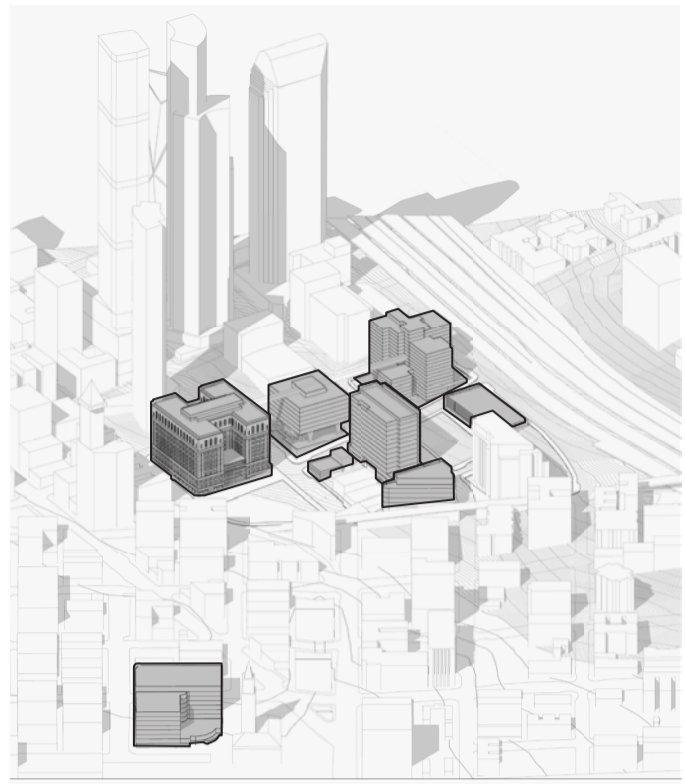
The buildings in downtown Seattle that house King County staff and services are, on average, 60 years old. Expenses to repair and maintain this aging building stock have grown at a rapid and unsustainable pace; in 2024 dollars these buildings present a collective \$700 million need over the coming 20-year period.

A Facility Condition Assessment was conducted on each building in the portfolio in 2016, and updated in 2018 (Meng, 2018). That assessment identified Observed Deficiencies and Predicted Renewal costs along with the Current (2018) Replacement Value (CRV) of each facility. With that information, one quantifiable metric for the evaluation of a building's functional life is a Facility Condition Index (FCI). FCIs are a useful benchmark for comparing relative conditions of facilities within a portfolio of assets. FCIs are calculated by taking the total backlog of a facility's deficiencies and dividing this by the current replacement value for that facility (CRV). A lower FCI represents a better relative condition score. King County has adopted 5-10% as target FCI (Meng, 2018).

The functional life of a building hovers somewhere around 50-years; after that point in time, a building's ability to continue in service depends on its flexibility to accommodate new systems and to adapt to new programs and layouts. A building's ability or inability to undergo substantial change, and to keep pace with the evolution of its intended use over time, is a key factor in the duration of its functional life.

The King County Courthouse is a perfect example of a building with a direct overlap between its inability to undergo the change required to adapt to contemporary courts models, outlined later in this chapter, and a high FCI.

This chapter will walk through conditions within each building through the lens of building use and typology, for general officing functions, and for buildings in use by the King County Council and the county's Civil and Criminal Legal System.



A diagram of the eight buildings that make up King County's current downtown government center.

Building Age and FCI		
Building	Age (yrs)	FCI (2018)
Yesler Building	115	21.9
King County Courthouse	108	13.8
Administration Building	53	21.3
Correctional Facility	38	8.8
King Street Center	26	7
Chinook Building	18	6.4
Goat Hill Garage	19	3.9

Table relating facility age and Facility Condition Index (FCI).

- FCI above King County target range
- FCI close to exceeding King County target range



Left column from top: Yesler Building, King County Courthouse, Administration Building, King County Correctional Facility.

Right Column from top: King Street Center, Goat Hill Garage, Chinook Building, 420 4th Avenue.

Existing Office Buildings Used by County Staff

Four buildings in the government center have been used primarily for officing functions. Three of those, the Administration Building, King Street Center, and the Chinook Building were originally designed and constructed as office typologies. The fourth, the Yesler Building, was originally constructed to house a wide variety of municipal functions but was gutted in the late 1970s and renovated for use as office space.

While currently in use, the Yesler Building houses only 4% of active office space among the four buildings.

The Administration Building was closed as a part of a downtown space consolidation project undertaken to reduce the ongoing repair and maintenance cost burden to the county. That consolidation also reflected contemporary remote and hybrid work-modes, based on departmental efficacy, that resulted in the need for less consolidated office space.

The Chinook Building accounts for 46% of all active office space downtown while King Street Center holds approximately 50% of office space that is actively used by county employees.

Buildings of Every Type

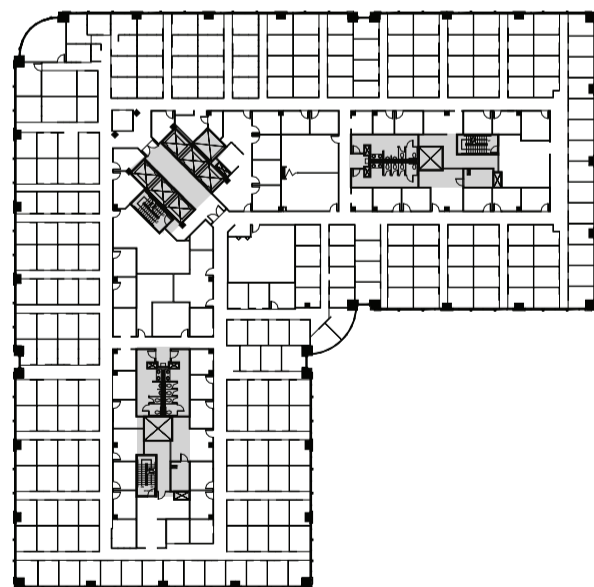
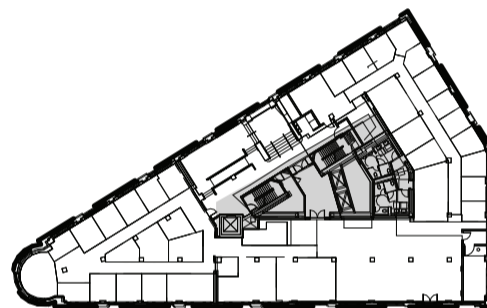
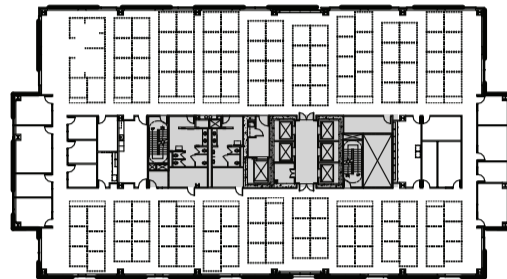
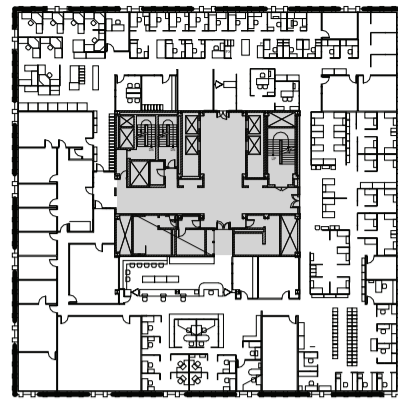
Each office building has a unique plan that reflects either the construction technology or prevalent real-estate formulas of their respective periods.

The Yesler Building is a masonry structure that was constructed over a century ago. It has a narrow floor plate surrounding the building core and characteristically short structural spans. Though eccentric in shape the floor plate remains resilient and adaptable to a wide variety of uses.

The Administration Building, designed in the late 1960s employed a structural system, known as an exterior frame system, that was popular among engineers of that era. Though providing for uninterrupted interior spans, this particular exterior frame employed, known as a diagrid, severely limited the opportunity for window openings on the exterior walls, resulting in workplace environments with a severe lack of access to natural light.

King Street Center is a prime example of speculative office building design of the 1980s. The plan focuses on maximizing the number of square feet available, often at the expense of access to natural light; the excessively deep floor plate in areas between building cores provide less than ideal workplace environments that can require users to take on more square footage than necessary to deliver a passable work environment.

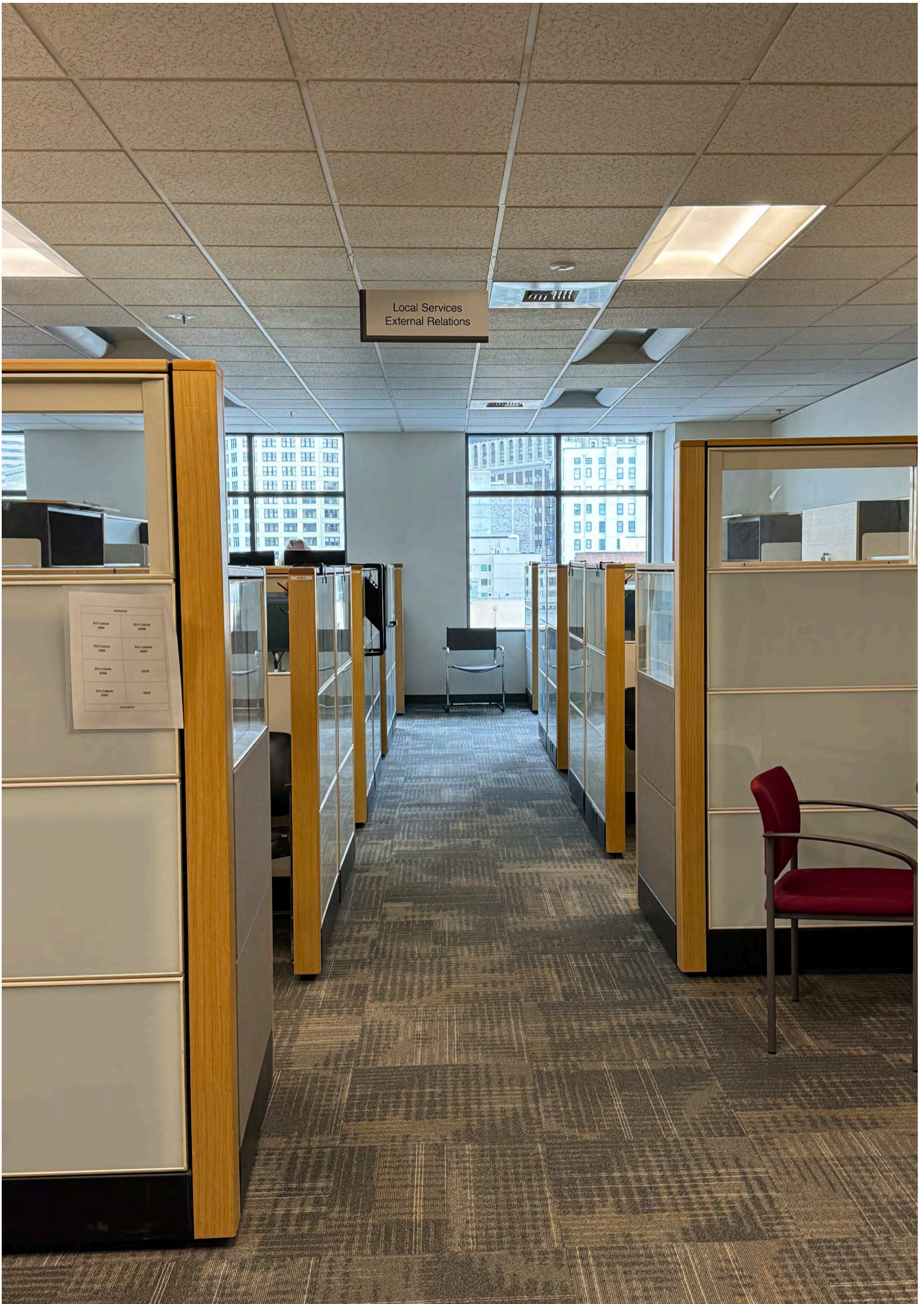
The Chinook Building meets a range of planning conditions in a good middle ground. With a consolidated building core and a clear-span medium-depth floor plate surrounding the core, the building functions well for office use.



From Top: Administration Building, Chinook Building, Yesler Building, and King Street Center. Not to Scale.



Office space inside the now shuttered Administration Building.



Typical office space in King Street Center.

Repairing and Maintaining Office Buildings

Every building requires regular maintenance. The older the building, and the more time that has elapsed between substantial renovations, the greater the required investment to correct deficiencies and maintain existing systems.

The Administration Building was shuttered, in part, to reduce that accumulated repair and maintenance burden. Prior to closure, the 2018 Facility Conditions Update identified \$18 million in observed deficiencies and \$49 million in predicted renewal costs over a 20-year period. In 2024 terms, the building faces a combined \$98 million in repairs and renewals to continue functioning, and that does not include any substantial upgrades that would bring the workplace environment into alignment with contemporary work modes.

The Yesler Building also faces an enormous burden to continue operating as office space. Today, the building requires approximately \$50 million in combined repairs and renewals to continue operations without significant improvement. Over the past century, the building's design has proven adaptable for a wide range of uses, demonstrating the building's ability to take on new programs.

Both King Street Center and the Chinook Building also require repair and regular maintenance. While both buildings combined require approximately \$155 million in repair and renewals, the cost relative to value may be offset by more recent workplace environment renewals.



Office space in the Yesler Building.

Civil and Criminal Courts in the King County Courthouse

The story of the King County Courthouse is one of change and addition over time. The original five-story building was completed in 1916. The building provided services for a county population of just over 275,000 residents. In 1931 the courthouse received six floors of new programs—additional courtrooms, offices, and a jail—that expanded the courthouse to its current size. At that time, the courthouse was designed to serve a population of less than 500,000 people.

In the intervening decades, King County has grown to almost five times that size, but the size and organization of the courthouse has remained largely static for 93 years. The current courthouse struggles to adequately serve a population of over 2,250,000 people, and that number continues to grow.

Substantial Changes

A large-scale remodeling of the building occurred in the mid-1960s. That modernization project addressed upgrades to the building's heating, electrical, plumbing, and ventilation systems. The project also reconfigured interior spaces to accommodate offices and added more courtrooms where possible.

During that work, and as a clear demonstration of the old building's inability to meet modern demands, the main entry to the courthouse was converted into a loading dock and service entrance. The 3rd Avenue entrance was designated as the new main entrance to the courthouse.

The 3rd Avenue entrance is quite small, and the sequence of spaces between the entry vestibule and the main elevator lobby were not originally sized to accommodate modern security needs. Security screening and the small lobby size at this entrance of the courthouse can create long lines, often in the rain, that delay entry. Many King County residents are compelled to visit the courthouse in response to jury summons every week. It is important that residents have a safe, welcoming, and efficiently organized courthouse for justice services.



Top: King County Courthouse, circa 1916.

Bottom: King County Courthouse, circa 1944.



Above: The former main entrance to the King County Courthouse is currently a service entry and loading dock.

Right: The current 3rd Avenue main entrance is located between two bus shelters.



A Constant Need for Repair and Renewal

After the Nisqually Earthquake, a major renovation and upgrade package for many building systems and areas was completed as part of necessary seismic work undertaken in 2002. That project updated a number of court and staff spaces, including offices that had been built through repurposing other rooms in the 1960s.

But the continued greater demand from a much larger population, with very different justice service needs, coupled with a century's worth of use, means the courthouse has developed serious problems that can no longer be deferred.

The 2018 Facility Conditions Assessment Update identified \$40 million in observed deficiencies and \$141 million in predicted renewals over the coming 20-year period. When escalated to 2024, the courthouse requires an investment of approximately \$264 million to simply continue functioning as it does today, with no improvements to meet the space needs of contemporary justice services.




Interior space re-purposed and upgraded for judicial staff offices.


The Seattle Times

King County leaders consider courthouse repairs that could top \$150M

Originally published September 6, 2015 at 6:45 pm | Updated September 7, 2015 at 3:22 pm



The nearly century-old King County Courthouse is facing a costly maintenance backlog that's raising red flags for some county leaders.

By [Jessica Lee](#) 
Seattle Times staff reporter

Deep within the King County Courthouse, maintenance workers for years have been slapping Band-Aid fixes on faulty fans and boilers and leaky pipes.

"We're doing what we can, but there's only so much," maintenance operating engineer Keith Skinner said, noting that some repair parts aren't even available because equipment is so outdated.

Next May the courthouse turns 100 years old, and county leaders are discussing a full-body repair project that could cost more than \$150 million and take several years.

The conversation on the behind-the-scenes maintenance work has started another on the design of the building and how in some ways it no longer meets the needs of courthouse operations.

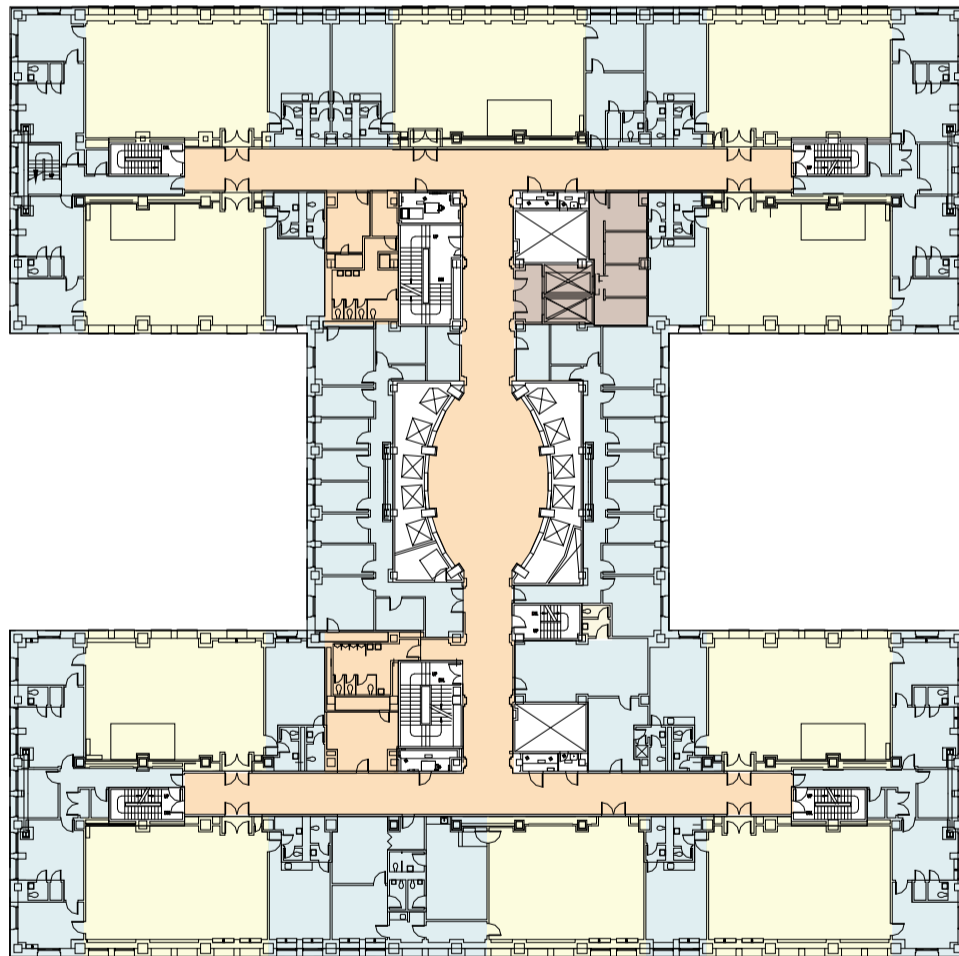
Seattle Times article focused on the mounting repair costs facing the King County Courthouse (Lee, 2015).

The Inadequacy of a 100-Year-Old Plan

Planned in the late 1920s, the layout of the courthouse falls short of contemporary standards for judicial system functionality.

The design concentrates vertical circulation in the middle of each floor, but evenly distributes courtrooms, spaces for judges and court staff, and jury members, along common circulation routes on each floor. This raises serious concerns for the courts and the public given the courthouse's limitations on separating criminal defendants from judges, witnesses, and jury members. The 100-year-old design of the existing courthouse creates security concerns for court personnel, crime victims, witnesses and the general public because in-custody defendants can't be kept separate in public hallways. There is also a lack of adequate rooms where attorneys and clients can meet. For some courts, the only space available for confidential attorney-client meetings is on a bench in the public hallway, in full view and audible range of media, the general public, prosecuting attorneys, and court staff.

With a lack of adequate organization, and a deficit of space types to meet contemporary needs, judicial system functions face extraordinary challenges in the long-term use of the King County Courthouse.



The floor plan of the King County Courthouse illustrates the distributed organization court functions along common public circulation areas.

- Public Circulation
- Public Vertical Circulation (and support spaces)
- In-custody Holding and Vertical Circulation
- Courtrooms
- Judicial Staff and Jury Rooms



Chief Criminal Court arrival hallway.

The King County Correctional Facility's Prison Lineage

Late 18th-century prisons demonstrated a marked shift away from the ad-hoc structures of prior centuries that were often unsafe and unhygienic. The Panopticon model that emerged was focused on direct supervision, with constant surveillance, and servility in the detained population (Mass Design Group & Vera Institute of Justice, 2018).

After a 200-year hiatus, the Direct Supervision model came back into service in the mid-1970s and extended into the warehousing models prevalent in the early 1980s. These facilities were organized around constant surveillance and resulted in a lack of privacy and personal space for detainees, a lack of substantial communication between detainees and guards, an environment where detainees outnumber guards, and places where detainees experience a lack of agency. In these models, detainees are numbers in a vast, impersonal system.

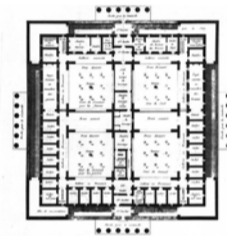
MAKESHIFT PRISONS



12th century
Prison rooms at Mont-Saint-Michel are subterranean dungeons with no access to light



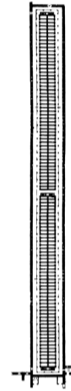
1417-1789
The Bastille, constructed in 1370, is converted from its use as a fort to a state prison until the French Revolution



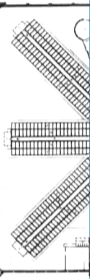
1786
Claude Nicholas Ledoux's prison project for Aix-en-Provence classifies groups of prisoners, organizing surveillance



1791
Jeremy Bentham proposes the Panopticon as a diagram of surveillance and rehabilitation



1828
The Auburn System is featured at the Sing Sing Correctional Facility



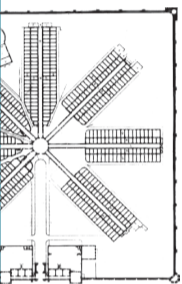
1829
The Pennsylvania Penitentiary is adopted by John Haviland as a model for rehabilitation reform

BIRTH OF THE MODERN PRISON
SURVEILLANCE AND PANOPTICISM

FIRST GENERATION PRISONS
LINEAR-INTERMITTENT SURVEILLANCE

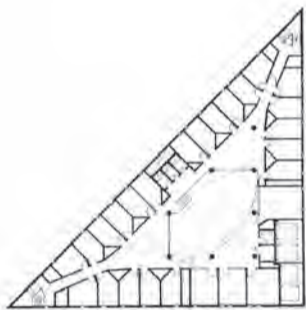
Mass Design Group & Vera Institute of Justice, 2018.

SECOND GENERATION PRISONS
 PODULAR REMOTE SURVEILLANCE



1960s
 Jail and prison design are subdivided into smaller, manageable "pods" with a guard stationed in an enclosed control center.

NEW GENERATION PRISONS
 PODULAR DIRECT SUPERVISION



1974-75
 U.S. Bureau of Prisons opens three prototype Metropolitan Correctional Centers based on the direct supervision concept, including the Chicago MCC, shown above, by Harry Weese and Associates

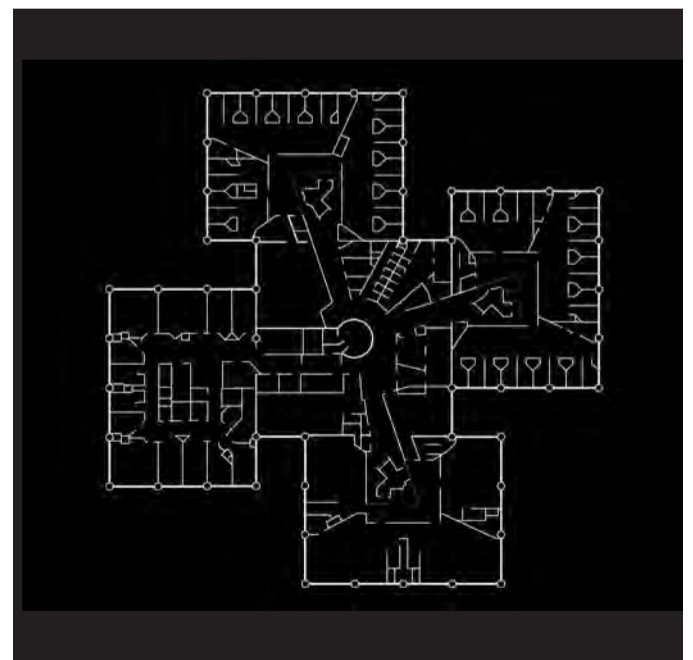


1980s
 Prisoner warehousing and prison privatization begin

sylvania System
 d at Eastern State
 ry, designed by
 land on ideals of
 tion and moral

An Obsolete Design

The current facility is the offspring of a prison lineage that can be traced back to the late 1700s. The building itself was programmed and designed between the late 1970's and early 1980s and was completed 38 years ago, in 1986. This means that county staff and service providers are trying to meet the current needs of the populations they serve within a building that was designed to fit 40-year-old jail programming that was modeled on 200-year-old ideas of punitive detention.



King County Correctional Facility plan illustrating adherence to the Direct Supervision models of the 1970s and 1980s.

An Obsolete Environment

The 40-year-old environment occupied by detainees, staff, and service providers is functionally obsolete. The building was not designed to accommodate contemporary programs, or to create environments that foster the health and wellbeing of the populations served. Of the many conditions within the facility, there are two which highlight the degree to which the current facility's environment fails the detainee population.

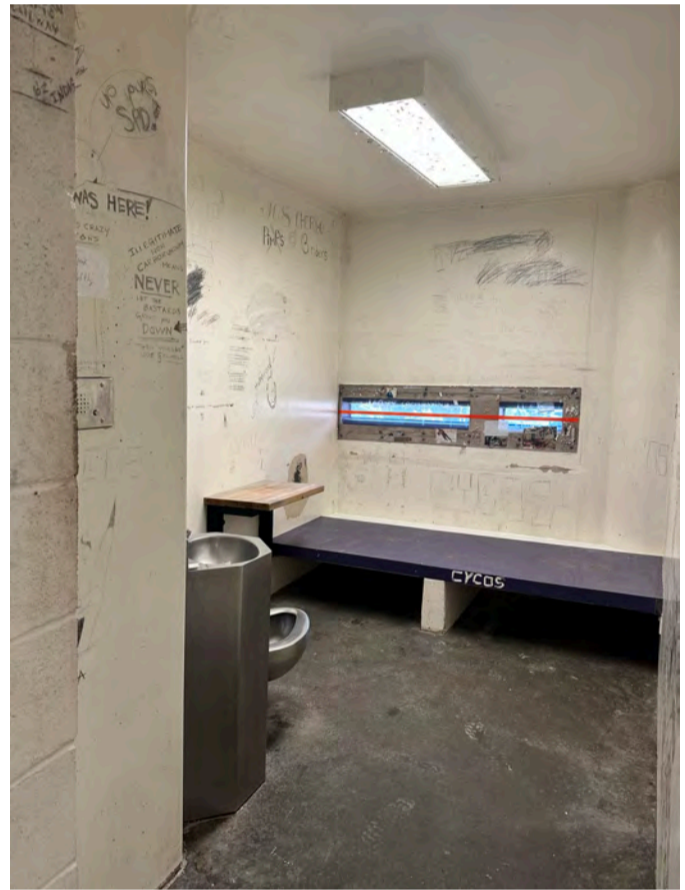
The facility's floor plan, organized for maximum direct supervision, radically reduces the opportunity for privacy and personal space. Even basic personal functions like toileting and bathing occur in partial view of security staff and other detainees.

The opportunity for access to outdoor space is relegated to leftover floor area in-between cell-block towers. Access to views, light, and fresh air is almost non-existent.

Upgrades have been made over time, but the building's reinforced concrete construction limits the county's ability to substantially reorganize the underlying structure of detainee and staff spaces.



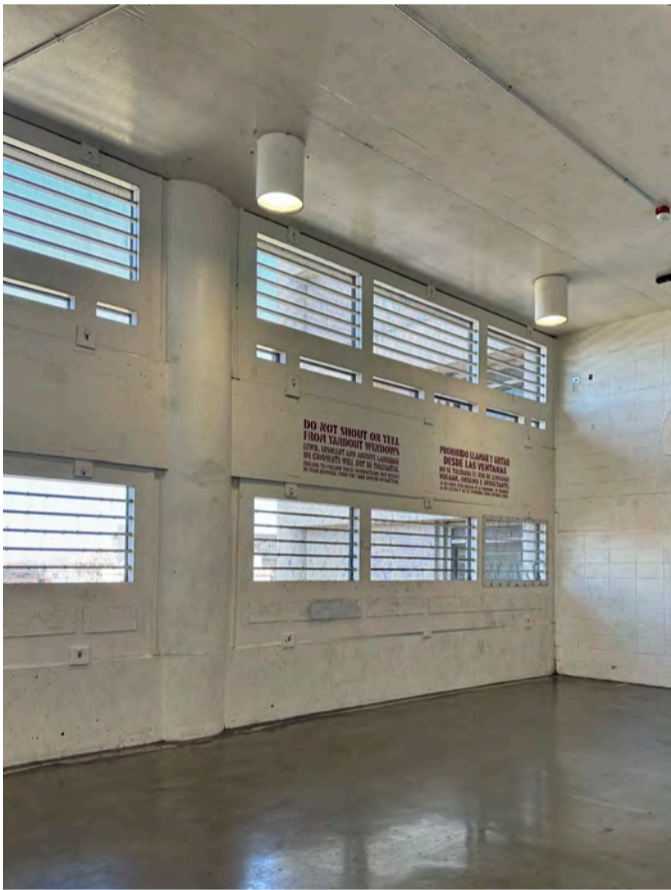
The lack of privacy and personal space extends to basic human functions. View of an open toilet located in a library, multifunction room, or yardout (outdoor space)



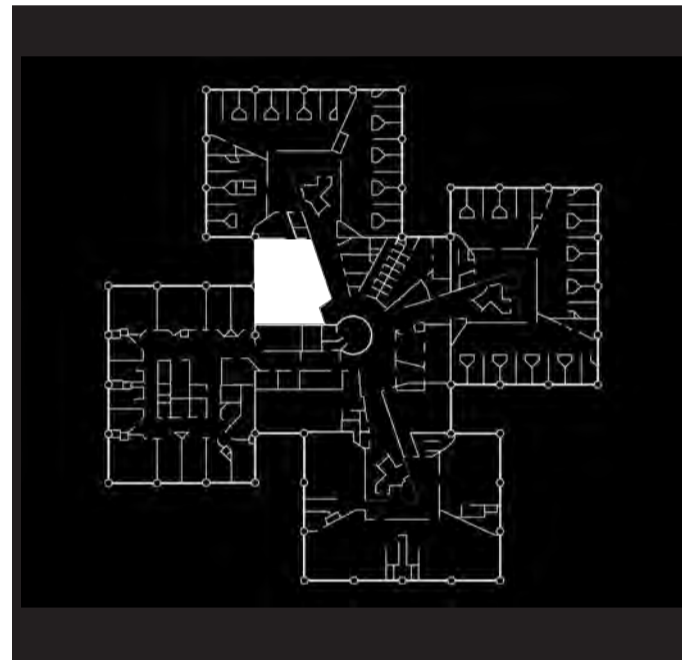
A typical individual cell.

The Costs of Obsolescence

The 2018 Facility Conditions Assessment Update identified almost \$18 million in observed deficiencies and \$63 million in predicted renewals over the coming 20-year period. When escalated to 2024, the correctional facility needs over \$118 million in ongoing repair to simply continue operating like a 1980s jail, with no improvements to meet contemporary needs of the detainee population or the staff who deliver services.



Top: The Yardout. An opportunity for detainees to be outside.



The area of a Yardout (outdoor space) highlighted in proportion to the plan of the correctional facility.



The view from a fresh-air opening in the Yardout, the primary type of outdoor open space in the King County Correctional Facility.

No Action is Not an Option

County buildings in downtown Seattle face enormous costs for ongoing maintenance and repairs, but need more substantial changes to keep pace with contemporary needs. And though all buildings could be overhauled through full renovations, some key structures, such as the courthouse, designed over 100 years ago, and the correctional facility, designed over 40 years ago, were simply not constructed to accommodate contemporary functional needs.

But the 'internal' pressures of building systems and functional organization are only part of the picture. Future regional transit work will radically alter the landscape on the county's existing downtown Seattle campus, demolishing county-owned buildings and severing functional ties between the courts and correctional facilities.

The combination of aged systems, functionally obsolete buildings, future transit infrastructure and decarbonization projects, demand a new solution to continue providing high-quality services to the residents of King County.

Taking “no action” means spending almost \$700 million dollars just to make repairs, maintain aging systems, and perpetuate existing functional deficiencies.

The Cost of the Status Quo

At a minimum, existing facilities must be kept in repair. The scopes of work for renewals and replacements, outlined in the 2018 King County Facility Conditions Assessment, serve to maintain existing conditions over time. These costs do not necessarily incorporate upgrades to existing systems, new components or technologies, or renovations to change use—or format of use—for existing buildings or interior spaces. Costs for repairs and renewals listed in the table at right are derived from the Observed Deficiencies and Predicted Renewals outlined in that 2018 report and escalated to 2024 dollars based on historical escalation factors. The cost data presented does not include building system issues that may have occurred since 2018.

Based on data included in that report, maintaining the status quo potentially costs King County around \$700 million dollars over the coming 20-year period, without making any upgrades or changes to bring existing spaces in line with contemporary standards.

Repair and Renewals Estimated Costs (2024)	
Facility	Cost (\$)
King County Courthouse	264,847,000
Administration Building	97,937,000
Correctional Facility	118,818,000
Goat Hill Garage and Site	4,400,000
Chinook Building	67,360,000
Yesler Building	49,592,000
King Street Center	87,714,000
420 4th Avenue	NA
Total	690,672,000

Repair and renewal costs to address observed deficiencies and predicted renewals. Refer to the included County Facility Reference Information for additional data.

Overhauling existing buildings requires spending \$2.5 to \$3.2 billion without improving key underlying issues for courts and in-custody facilities.

The Cost of Half Measures

To try and keep pace with contemporary needs for the delivery of county services, existing facilities would need to be overhauled. As a baseline scenario, costs to completely renovate the existing buildings were estimated, modernizing each facility to the extent possible.

While county office buildings, including the Administration Building, the Chinook Building, the Yesler Building, and King Street Center, could likely be brought up to contemporary standards through complete renovations, the King County Courthouse and the Existing Correctional Facility pose challenges for functional improvements. The King County Courthouse was designed over a century ago, reflecting courts operations of that century. A complete renovation of the courthouse would not remedy the functional deficiencies related to the building’s underlying design. Likewise, the King County Correctional Facility was designed and constructed approximately 40 years ago, and accommodated spaces for jail programming consistent with high-rise facilities constructed during that time. A complete renovation of the correctional facility would not alter the building’s underlying design and would not bring the building into alignment with contemporary in-custody facility models.

Renovating existing buildings would be undertaken, in some cases, while the buildings are occupied, resulting in increased capital costs related to extended project schedules and more onerous construction-related logistics. The overall schedule for sequenced renovations has been factored at a six-year period to account for cost escalation.

Retaining all existing facilities necessitates that the two vacant parcels on the Goat Hill sites remain in the county portfolio; these parcels form the only adjacent future expansion opportunities available to the county. This results in no options for facility or property disposition to offset costs incurred for facility renovations.

The result of a “Renovate Existing Facilities” strategy is that some buildings—office buildings—could be brought in line with contemporary workplace models, while others—courts and in-custody buildings—would receive half-measure renewals, with upgraded systems, finishes, and equipment, but only minor improvements to functional and programmatic organization.

The cost to renovate the existing campus facilities and retain their current functions, without improving functional conditions for courts or in-custody facilities, could range between \$2.5 billion and \$3.2 billion.

Facility	Cost (\$)
King County Courthouse	730,000,000
Administration Building	102,000,000
Correctional Facility	1,328,000,000
Goat Hill Garage and Site	4,400,000
Chinook Building	139,000,000
Yesler Building	26,000,000
King Street Center	165,000,000
420 4th Avenue	NA
Total	2,494,400,000

Estimated costs to fully renovate existing facilities, in 2024 dollars.

Facility	Cost (\$)
King County Courthouse	932,000,000
Administration Building	130,000,000
Correctional Facility	1,696,000,000
Goat Hill Garage and Site	5,600,000
Chinook Building	177,000,000
Yesler Building	33,000,000
King Street Center	211,000,000
420 4th Avenue	NA
Total	3,184,600,000

Estimated costs to fully renovate existing facilities, in 2030 - 2033 dollars representing phased construction.

As Seattle continues to change and grow around county facilities, options to simply maintain or overhaul existing facilities lose functional viability.

Sound Transit West Seattle - Ballard Link Extension

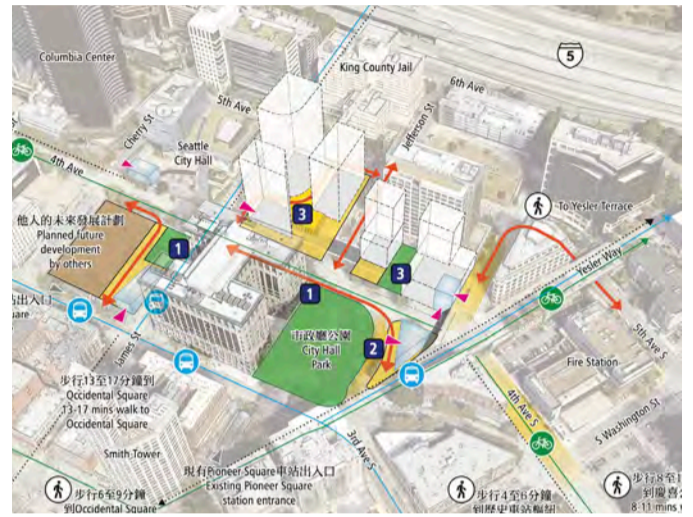
In March of 2023, Sound Transit identified a preferred alignment, for further study, for the West Seattle and Ballard Link North of CID station, with entrances located at the northeast corner of 4th Avenue and James Street, and the northeast corner of 4th Avenue at the Terrace Street Bridge intersection. And in April of 2024, Sound Transit presented a study for connecting the Midtown (James Street) Station with the existing Pioneer Square Street Station below grade along the Jefferson Street ROW north of City Hall Park. Both actions radically affect King County's existing facilities.

The Ballard Link Extension and station locations would require the demolition of the Administration Building. That demolition would remove the existing skybridge, eliminating the means of conducting in-custody transfers between the existing correctional facility and the King County Courthouse. That work would also remove underground tunnel access between the Goat Hill Garage and the courthouse, eliminating the sole accessible route from staff and visitor parking to the existing courthouse.

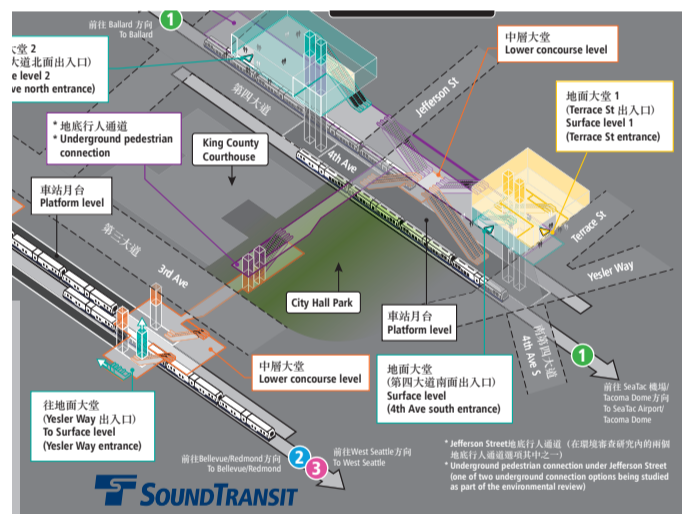
Though the Administration Building is currently shuttered, the demolition of this building would remove it from the county's portfolio of office space, eliminating the possibility of a future full renovation for staff work environments that meet contemporary standards.

Current studies for a connection between the potential new station at 4th and James Street and the existing Pioneer Square Station would render the King County Courthouse loading dock unusable for the period of construction, forcing alternative operational solutions on this constrained site.

Local and regional transit access improvements may alter the functional picture; existing conditions may fundamentally change, demanding a new scenario for the future of county facilities.



Sound Transit Exhibit showing the board identified preferred Station North of CID (James Street Station), currently under study.



Jefferson Street Concourse linking new North of CID Station platforms with the existing Pioneer Square Station platforms, currently under study.

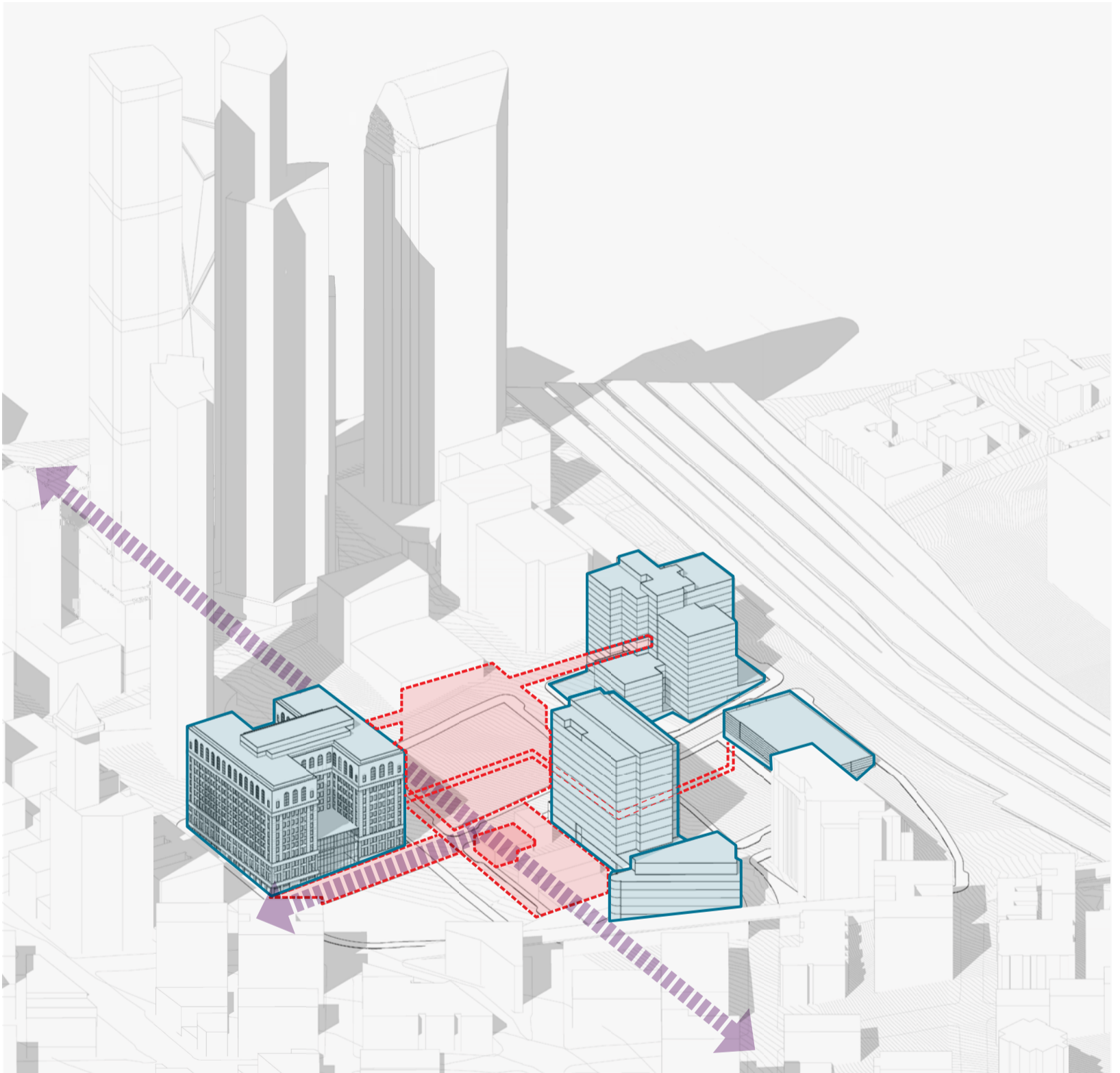


Diagram illustrating the existing the West - Seattle Ballard Link Extension and the county facilities and adjacent areas affected by potential transit action.

- ST West Seattle - Ballard Link Extension
- County facilities and adjacent areas affected
- Existing county facilities to remain

If “No Action” is not an option, what is?

Located in the heart of downtown Seattle, King County government delivers a wide range of services to millions of people. With government services run by thousands of employees, and property assets spanning eight downtown Seattle blocks, the existing campus embodies an unmatched opportunity to rethink how government can better serve employees, residents, customers, and visitors. It also holds the potential to contribute to the creation of a vibrant and sustainable community through the buildings and public spaces that it has the ability to shape. Arriving at a clear vision and set of principles, to frame how facilities are shaped and how real estate value is converted into civic value, was a key step in the planning process.

Beginning in 2018 through engagement with a Vision and Guiding Principles Task Force, and culminating in 2023 with Community Advisory Group engagement, a vision statement and key guiding principles were developed to aid the alignment of planning strategies for new facilities with county and community priorities.

Vision and Guiding Principles

In 2018, the county convened a Vision and Guiding Principles Task Force and an Oversight Committee to participate in the Civic Campus Initiative's planning process.

Vision and Guiding Principles Task Force meetings were held between June and December of 2018. Attending groups included the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, King County Department of Executive Services, King County Elections, King County Sheriff's Office, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, King County Auditor's Office, King County Assessor's Office, King County Facilities Management Division, King County Council, King County District Court, and King County Superior Court. This group worked to create a vision statement and draft five guiding principles that reflected county leadership and employee priorities.

That group transitioned to a County Advisory Group in January of 2019 and met periodically to review planning progress and alignment with the draft guiding principles through the fall of 2020.

An Oversight Committee was also convened in 2018 and met periodically through the fall of 2020. This committee included government representatives, elected officials, and community leaders. Attending groups included the King County Executive and members of the Executive Leadership Team, King County Department of Executive Services, the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget, King County Council, King County Sheriff's Office, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, King County Superior Court, King County District Court, King County Assessor's Office, the Chief Seattle Club, the Downtown Seattle Association, the Seattle International District, City of Seattle OPCD, King County Coalition of Unions and Teamsters 174, 4Culture, the Seneca Group, Seattle's 2030 District, the Pioneer Square Alliance, and the University of Washington College of Built Environments Department of Urban Design and Planning. This committee worked together to comment on the initiative's draft guiding principles and reviewed planning progress to offer insight into the relationships between Initiative planning studies and related city and neighborhood efforts.

In early 2023, the county convened a Community Advisory Group to provide input on the Initiative's Vision and Guiding Principles, and to participate in iterative planning sessions with the design team. Attending groups included the Downtown Emergency Services Center, the Downtown Seattle Association, the Alliance for Pioneer Square, Nitze-Stagan, the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle, the Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness, the Chief Seattle Club, the Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority, the SODO Business Improvement Area, the King County Coalition of Unions, and the Washington State Bar Association.

Concurrent with the Community Advisory Group, King County convened a Government Partners Advisory Group to begin working collaboratively between government entities on complex and varied issues that cross disciplinary and jurisdictional lines. Attending groups included the City of Seattle Mayor's Office, Seattle City Council, the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, the Seattle Design Commission, the Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development, the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection, Sound Transit, King County District and Superior Court, King County Council, King County Department of Elections, the King County Assessor's Office, the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, and King County Metro.

These groups met monthly between March and September of 2023. Over the course of those meetings, the Community Advisory Group offered two additional guiding principles in order to further align the Initiative's work with community priorities: Contribute to a Socially and Economically Vibrant Community, and Anchor the Process in King County's Equity, Race, and Social Justice Principles.

A Welcoming,
Equitable, and
Enduring Place,
Inspiring Civic Life
and Serving the
Region.

Design for equity and fairness

Program, plan, and build to realize equity and social justice in physical space.

Create a network of physical buildings and spaces that conveniently and reliably link county residents and employees to the services and environments that they need to thrive.

Contribute to an urban environment that:

- Identifies and participates in dismantling systemic and structural barriers to opportunity that have historically been embedded in physical space;

- Provides pathways to opportunities for self-determination and advancement, optimizing the placement of key government resources;

- Is culturally agile, responsive, and welcoming to the county's diverse communities; and,

- Acknowledges the contributions and histories of indigenous peoples.

Ensure access to opportunity for all.

Safe and accessible spaces should connect seamlessly with the larger city and its mobility network. Buildings and public spaces should welcome people of all ages by:

- Connecting the campus to its edges in ways that offer safe, accessible, and legible mobility options; and,

- Supporting sustainable modes of access and connection.

Focus on health and wellbeing through design.

Environmental quality is a critical factor in mental and physical health. County government can deliver on its commitments to improve health outcomes for all residents, workers, and visitors by designing buildings and spaces that:

- Seek to improve air and water quality, eliminate material toxins, and support disease prevention;

- Provide a range of opportunities for active mobility, including human interaction and collaboration, and respite and contemplation; and,

- Provide access to spaces where people can experience the restorative qualities of nature and functional ecologies.

Build respectful civic experiences

Contribute to a safe and welcoming environment.

The County has a leadership role to play in creating welcoming public spaces that can form the core of a vibrant urban place by:

Creating a plan that fosters energetic public-private partnerships on issues of safety and security, public events and programming, and day-to-day operations and upkeep;

Encouraging a diversity of new uses including mixed-income housing, private sector office space, retail, hospitality, education, and civic amenities; and,

Weaving government services, including consideration for locating security-appropriate county uses, and civic amenities into a dense urban fabric of mixed-use buildings and public spaces.

Integrating design and development solutions that reduce the energy burden, combat extreme heat and other climate change impacts, and reduce seismic risk.

Make access to government services self-evident.

The physical organization of the urban realm should be intuitive, accessible, and convenient for all through:

Locating and designing public-facing county services to provide a recognizable and welcoming interface between the public realm and county programs; and,

The Integration of wayfinding and a "Welcome Center" to help county residents and customers navigate county services.

Celebrate the differences we have in common.

King County's diverse population is one of its greatest assets. The Civic Campus Initiative should:

Acknowledge, through design, the differing needs between departments and branches of government;

Encourage inclusivity and socioeconomic diversity by creating opportunities for county residents and employees to work and live within the districts developed;

Create safe spaces for gathering, including spaces for civil protest and public speech; and,

Design for all ages and abilities. Enhance pedestrian mobility throughout the urban realm so that older adults, parents with children, and people with disabilities feel comfortable visiting and navigating the public spaces and buildings created.

Create resilient working places

Foreground spaces that connect people in government with the people government serves.

Personal interaction with customers are incredibly important. For the customer, these interactions shape perceptions about the quality and efficacy of service. For the provider, these interactions offer insight into how services are used and valued, and may be improved. The Civic Campus Initiative should make the space of these interactions its "Front Door," signifying a commitment to accessibility, transparency, accountability, and an interest in continued improvement by:

Placing staffed, public-facing government functions in street-level storefronts, or within a welcome or arrivals center, that may rotate based on time of year or service delivery schedules; and,

Designing facilities and workplaces through outreach and engagement with employees and customers.

Accomplish long-term functional durability.

"Long-term functional durability" means the capacity of facilities and building infrastructures to maintain their usefulness over time, while minimizing costs related to maintenance and replacement. The "total cost of ownership" should be considered during design, rather than simply the initial-cost of facilities. County workplaces should be designed and built to last, and should be able to adapt to change over time, including:

Accommodating changing space configurations and tenancies;

Planning for evolving building systems;

Changes in workspace furniture, finishes, and equipment that reflect changes in work modes; and,

Spaces that facilitate collaboration beyond the boundaries of the individual facilities constructed.

Construct workplace environments that support recruitment and retention.

Workplace quality is a vital component of an employees daily life. Planning for new facilities and urban environment should:

Use evidence-based design and analysis to align working spaces with the needs of employees and with the competitive recruitment landscape.

Expand access to workplace amenities as well as daily needs such as safe and affordable options for housing, recreation, and open space;

Include end-of-trip facilities into the base program for workplace environments.

Work to improve the quality of the commute for employees, customers, and visitors, including the experience of arrival and departure and accessibility to multiple modes of transit.

Deliver financially sound projects

Plan for a future that begins now.

Civic Initiative planning must address the fact that the county's functions, properties, and the surrounding neighborhoods will continue to change.

Tackle urgent repairs in the context of long term objectives;

Regularly update inventories and needs forecasts for facilities and operations;

Include short and long term emissions reduction, climate equity, green jobs and climate preparedness objectives and potential strategies; and,

Identify realistic actions to support near-term, mid-term, and long-term success.

Unlock real estate value to realize new civic value.

The current downtown properties use only half of the zoned development capacity available. At the same time, most of the existing facilities do not meet current or projected operational needs, or are limited in their adaptability, and some properties are underutilized or undeveloped.

Strategically reposition under-performing real estate assets to support the effective delivery of government services and meet county-wide priorities and provide for the high-quality delivery of services; and,

Consider opportunities to monetize real estate assets through disposition, leasing, and/or partnerships with the private sector.

Deliver projects that reduce long-term costs to taxpayers.

A strategic assessment of the county's downtown facilities and real estate assets should be undertaken to better leverage the value of county assets. This assessment should include:

Prioritizing return on investment in the downtown real estate portfolio, even if that requires balancing strategic returns with single agency or department needs;

Deploying results-based Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems to establish benchmarks for performance, methods for measuring progress, and mechanisms to make ongoing course corrections;

Focus facility types and systems, or system upgrades, that reduce energy demand and carbon emissions as well as ongoing operational and maintenance costs;

Conducting life cycle cost analyses to inform sound long-term decisions; and,

Identifying synergies and cultivating relationships with partner organizations to optimize investments related to ongoing operations and maintenance.

Design beautifully restorative environments

Be a global model for the renewal of urban ecologies, sustainable design, and low-carbon development.

County facilities that span a network of buildings and spaces, and include a range of programs and services, presents an opportunity to engage, leverage, and restore ecological systems at a variety of scales.

Prioritize urban design strategies that protect and restore ecological systems functions; and,

Use design to demonstrate the interactions between natural ecologies, culture, and civic life.

Develop integrated solutions that use environmental resources efficiently, advance sustainable practices and can adapt to extreme weather conditions.

Demonstrate that beauty and practicality are inseparable.

Civic buildings and spaces should embrace a design approach that reveals the beauty in honest, practical, and functional solutions. In many ways, this approach is emblematic of a high-functioning representative government, serving in a way that is elegant in its effectiveness, and as a result, valued by the people it serves. The Civic Campus Initiative should:

Design physical spaces and buildings to reinforce a sense of timelessness, attention to usefulness, and durability, communicating that representative government will always “be there” for the people; and,

Celebrate functionality, efficiency, and authenticity in design.

Make the unique characteristics of the county’s region and cultures visible in the Civic Campus Initiative.

As the seat of government for over two million citizens, Civic Campus Initiative planning is inseparable from its social and environmental contexts. The Civic Campus Initiative should embrace these conditions and seek to:

Implement art programs and/or installations that facilitate a public dialogue about cultural diversity, regional climate, race and social justice, economics, health, and access to opportunity throughout the county; and,

Create a welcoming “Living Room” for the county that celebrates the climate, ecologies, geography, and people of the Pacific Northwest.

Contribute to a socially and economically vibrant community

Design to maximize connections between buildings, their uses, public spaces and people – visitors, employees, residents, small businesses, and entertainment.

Create a space easily navigable with excellent wayfinding making access to government services, businesses, entertainment, public spaces and residences enjoyable and efficient.

Design with geographic, economic and social context in mind.

Review existing buildings and development opportunities in the space to determine their place in a future which will be driven by sustainable, equitable social and economic development.

Anchor the process in King County's race and social justice principles

King County recognizes that racism is a public health crisis that disproportionately harms community members who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).

The planning process and outcomes should be anchored in King County's Equity, Race, and Social Justice principles: Inclusive and collaborative, Diverse and people focused, Responsive and adaptive, Transparent, and Accountable, Racially Just, and Focused Upstream and where needs are greatest.

Community Advisory Group, Key Takeaways

Affordable housing and culturally relevant housing for larger families and multi-generational households.

Need for “middle housing” and creating neighborhoods that are vibrant and attract all income levels and communities. Avoid creating another redlined environment or neighborhood.

Affordable commercial spaces.

Economic development and resiliency in support of small and BIPOC-owned businesses.

Equitable access to employment opportunities.

Varied and engaging urban outdoor spaces.

Safe space for public discourse and protest that welcomes dialogue and activities not just legally allows it. Recognize harm that civic spaces have done to BIPOC communities.

Civic amenities, such as public restrooms, and spaces for positive gathering in community rooms or classrooms.

Incorporate public art.

Clear wayfinding.

Prioritize walkability and access to mass transit. Mobility-focused travel that makes hills and terrain more manageable and accessible to all.

Coordination with City and other relevant parties for any changes in SODO. Make sure we are realistic about impacts and how much change is feasible.

Lot of people don't know what the government does and who represents them. Having a design goal for this initiative that makes government understandable, accessible, and user friendly.

Government Partners Advisory Group, Key Takeaways

Consider equity in all parts of the work.

Studies and actions to consider in further work include: Traffic studies and mitigation given the proximity of the sports stadium to the Atlantic Base site, coordinating with the freight network, addressing sound/ noise pollution for civic campus functions.

Continue including security needs for the Courthouse and easy access between the correctional facility and the courthouse.

Consider community services relative to the Courthouse akin to those provided off-site in libraries and community centers.

Coordinate service needs between Harborview and the KCCF.

Work towards ADA compliance and better accessibility throughout civic campus functions, and in downtown, while maintaining the eccentricity and charm of Seattle's topography.

Coordinate the connectivity and proximity to transit of civic/ government services.

Highlight opportunities to leverage existing office space for housing conversions.

Include a range of housing options for families, and build homes in a livable area- families may not want to live near a correctional facility.

Mix affordable housing and market rate housing.

Allow space for affordable grocery stores.

Safe space for public discourse, one that invites it in and not just allows it.

Consider folks who work nighttime hours. How is the campus promoting safety and accessibility for them?

Develop the transition into and out of this district.

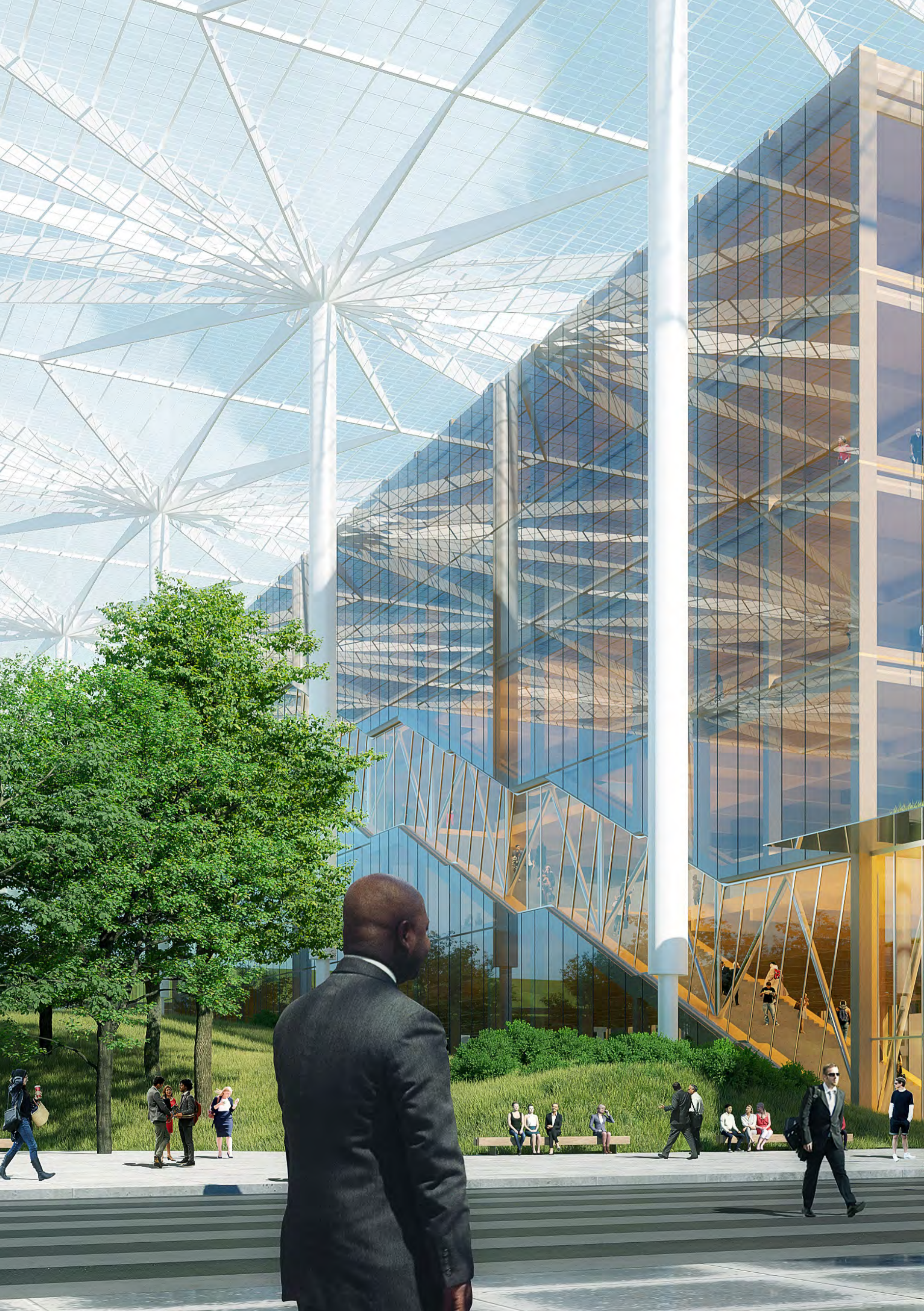
Coordinate on the redesign and activation of City Hall Park.



















Planning for the Next 100 Years

To continue providing high-quality services to residents, King County employees need high-quality environments that support their work, and that support recruitment and retention. The County Council needs space that is oriented towards the level of public involvement and visibility that enables continued responsiveness to constituents. The County's Civil and Criminal Legal System needs a new courthouse to support the delivery of services to a growing and diverse community. And King County needs a new type of building, focused on human dignity, to support the county's in-custody population.

Strategies for buildings and public spaces are developed based on four functional groups: Officing, Council, Courts, and Corrections. These categories merge work-modes and building typologies to facilitate space needs forecasting, staff and community engagement, and siting strategies to meet long-term goals.

Develop strategies for King County buildings and public spaces through forecasting the needs of functional groups.

Functional Groups

Government branches, divisions, departments, agencies, and offices that occupy space in downtown Seattle have been aggregated into four Functional Groups to facilitate strategic planning studies. Functional Groups are based on employee work modes and facility typology, and include Officing, Council Functions, Courts Functions, and Corrections.

The Officing Functional Group includes staff who engage in administrative functions with work-modes that primarily utilize a variety of office types, including workstations, meeting rooms and breakout spaces, and customer service spaces. This functional type includes workspaces for most Executive Branch employees, including Metro staff spaces located at Atlantic and Central Base, but does not include yard or service areas for Metro equipment and operations.

The Council Functional Group includes staff who engage in legislative functions with work-modes that primarily utilize a variety of office types, workstations, and meeting rooms. This functional type includes specialized public assembly spaces such as legislative chambers, and specialty programs such as media support spaces.

The Courts Functional Group includes staff who engage in civil and criminal legal system functions through specialized public assembly spaces, such as courtrooms and jury assembly rooms. This functional group also utilizes a variety of office types, workstations, and meeting rooms, along with specialized spaces for in-custody transfer and holding, that support courtroom operations. Integral to the primary functions of this group are related programs including jury support spaces and community services.

Although Corrections overlaps with the Officing and Courts functions, the Corrections Functional Group is identified separately due to its highly specialized facility requirements. This functional group includes a wide range of staff from law enforcement and corrections officers to support corrections staff, healthcare staff, and outside service providers that require a wide range of specialized workspaces. This functional group also includes housing and support spaces for in-custody individuals.

Functional Group Relationships

The relationship between Functional Groups was reviewed during King County Staff Advisory Group working sessions. Attending groups included the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, King County Department of Executive Services, King County Elections, King County Sheriff's Office, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, King County Auditor's Office, King County Assessor's Office, King County Facilities Management Division, King County Council, King County District Court, and King County Superior Court. The Advisory Group identified strong relationships between the Courts and Corrections Functional Groups that would require those facilities to be collocated. The group's preference was for Executive and Legislative Groups to be located in close proximity or collocated.

Gross Floor Areas Forecasts

Based on facility-type benchmarks and calculated values, outlined within the section on each facility, the county requires approximately 750,000 gross square feet (GSF) for Officing functions—inclusive of Council officing—495,000 GSF for Courts functions, and 550,000 GSF for Corrections.

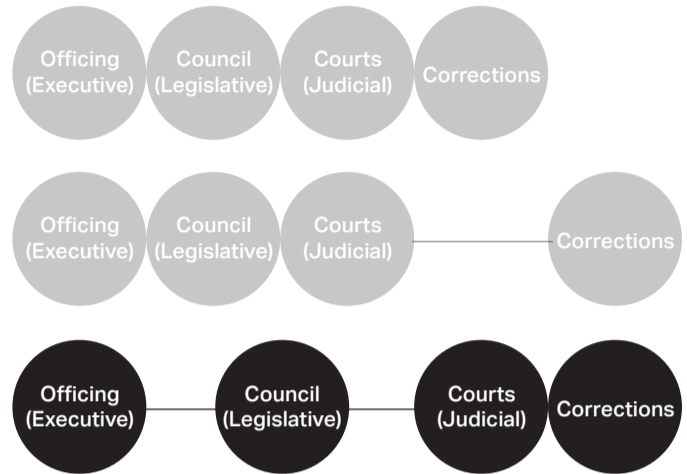
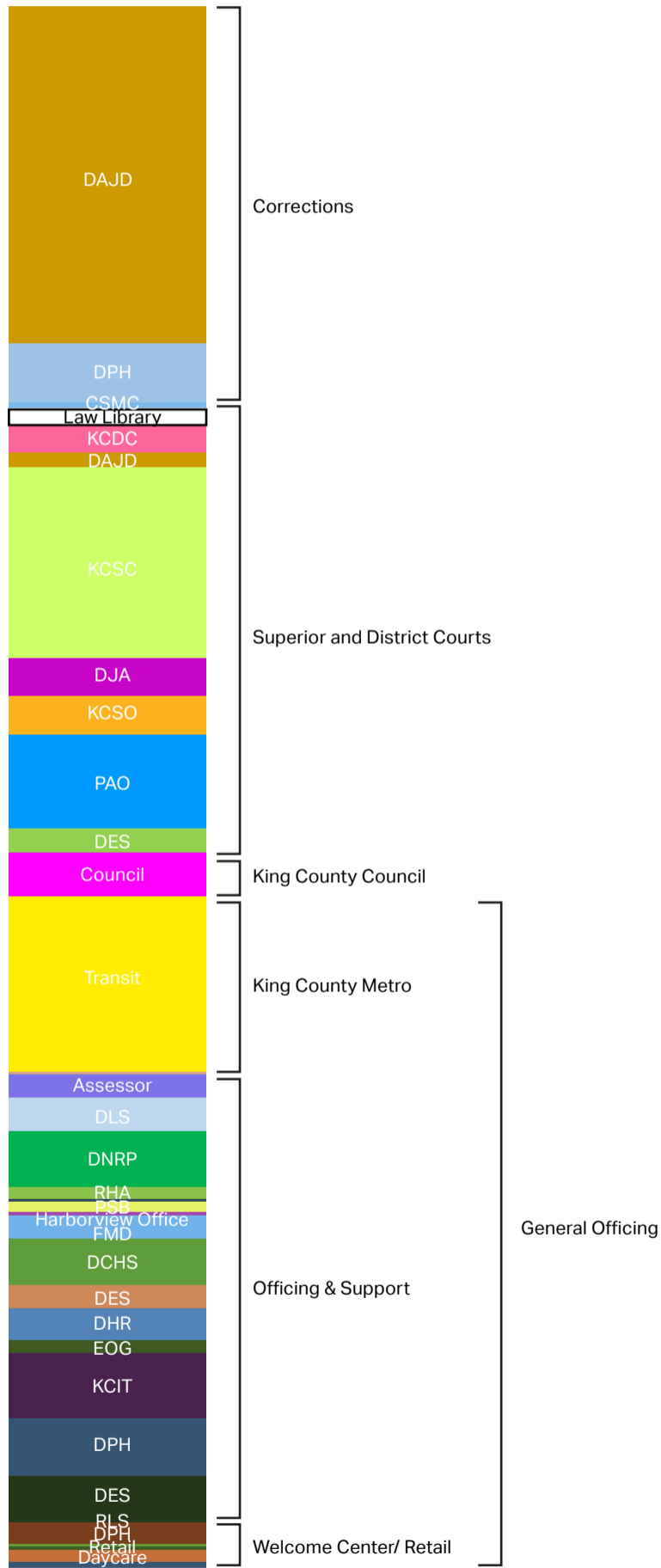


Diagram of recommended Functional Group adjacencies. King County Staff Advisory Group, 2019.

Proposed County Facility Gross Areas (2035)	
Functional Group	GSF
Officing (Executive)	750,000
Council (Legislative)	Incl. above
Courts (Judicial)	495,000
In-Custody (Corrections)	550,000

Forecasted Gross Square Feet (GSF) by Functional Group.



Existing departments and divisions clustered into Functional Groups.



Forecasted space needs by Functional Group for proposed facilities.

King County has a range of options for meeting its building and public space needs.

Occupy Existing County-Owned Buildings

The county may elect to continue occupying buildings that are in the county’s downtown portfolio including the recently acquired Dexter Horton Building. Continued occupancy may require renovations to meet future needs.

Consolidate County Facilities Downtown

The county may choose to consolidate space on the downtown campus into high-rise facilities for all functional groups.

Occupy Space throughout the Courthouse District

The proposed Courthouse District includes a number of sites for potential mixed-use redevelopment. The county may elect to occupy non-residential space within redevelopment projects.

Pair Sites in Town

Locate facilities on a pair of well-connected sites that are selected based on the ability to realize transformational potential for county facilities and for the surrounding urban realm.

There are policy and financial tradeoffs for each of these options. Further planning and decision-making should be undertaken to determine the specific path forward.

A Paired-Site Strategy

The strategic plan focuses on the opportunities and benefits of pairing two sites: one located in the county’s traditional center of government in downtown Seattle, and the other located on county-owned land at Atlantic and Central Base in Seattle’s SODO neighborhood—an example site serving as a case study to illustrate a potential shift in traditional civic ground to realize civic gain.

The SODO site at 24.5 acres, is eighteen times larger than a typical downtown block, large enough to accommodate new models for courts and in-custody facilities. The site is located south of the current downtown campus, on previously developed land that is currently owned by King County and is home to King County Metro Atlantic and Central Base; both sites are linked by a wide array of transportation and mobility options. Future detailed site evaluation processes should be undertaken to confirm physical and operational conditions alongside future facility workgroup, planning, and design efforts.

This pairing of sites enables new programmatic and organizational opportunities for county facilities and maximizes redevelopment opportunities on county-owned land downtown.

Downtown county facilities include the proposed adaptive re-use of the King County Courthouse for officing and council functional groups, as well as a centralized welcome and customer service center.

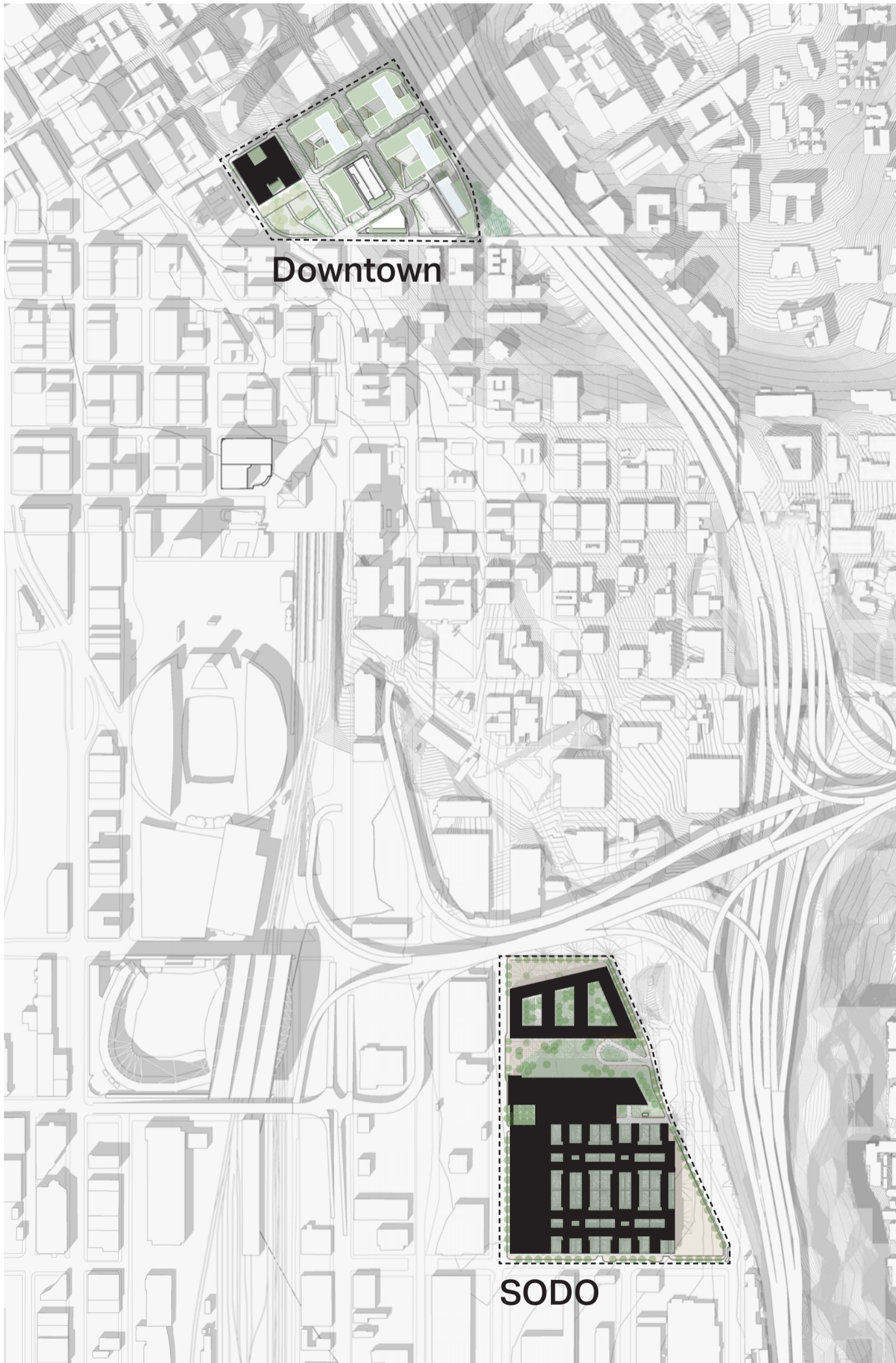
The SODO case study site, at Atlantic and Central Base, includes proposed county facilities for officing, courts, and in-custody functional groups, as well as King County Metro facilities and operations. Alongside these new buildings, the site hosts an Arrivals Hub for courts and in-custody facilities, a series of high quality urban spaces, on-site parking, and structures for district energy generation.

Downtown King County Courthouse	
Functional Group	GSF
Officing	585,000
Council	40,000
Total Facility Area	625,000

Forecasted Gross Floor Areas, by Functional Group, located in Downtown Seattle.

SODO Facilities	
Functional Group	GSF
Officing	200,000
Potential Expansion	100,000
Courts	495,000
In-Custody	550,000
King County Metro	
Officing	Incl above.
Maintenance and Operations	90,000
Bus/ Trolley Parking (Linear Feet)	36,000

Forecasted Gross Floor Areas, by Functional Group, located in SODO.



Map illustrating proposed King County facility locations in Downtown (top left) and SODO (bottom right).

A wide range of mobility options link the downtown and SODO sites.

Mobility Network

The downtown and SODO sites are linked to one another by a wide range of mobility options that continue to expand with an ever-growing bike network, pedestrian infrastructure, and new light rail planning.

Both sites are located near and amongst numerous transit options including access to the Link light rail, local and regional bus services, and regional ferries. The sites are also readily accessible from highway and interstate connections to northern, southern, and eastern King County.

The downtown site serves as a major transportation connection point for service providers throughout the Puget Sound region. A variety of bus routes provide direct point-to-point connections, with five-to-ten-minute travel times between the South Downtown and SODO sites.

Seattle Streetcar, Sounder and Link Light Rail services offer county employees and commuters a fast and convenient way of moving between the two sites and around the region. The Seattle Streetcar, as it operates today, provides connections to several neighborhoods within the City of Seattle. Currently, Sounder service runs from Everett to Lakewood with a major connection point at King Street Station, located between the two sites. Link Light Rail currently runs from Angle Lake to the University of Washington and serves the downtown site from both the existing Pioneer Square station and the existing Chinatown/International District station. Service will soon extend to the east (Bellevue and Redmond), to the north (Northgate, Shoreline, and Lynnwood), and to the south (Federal Way). Planning for Sound Transit's West Seattle - Ballard Link Extensions have identified preferred station alignments that dramatically increase light rail options for both the downtown and SODO sites. The current travel times between Pioneer Square and Stadium Station is approximately ten-minutes.

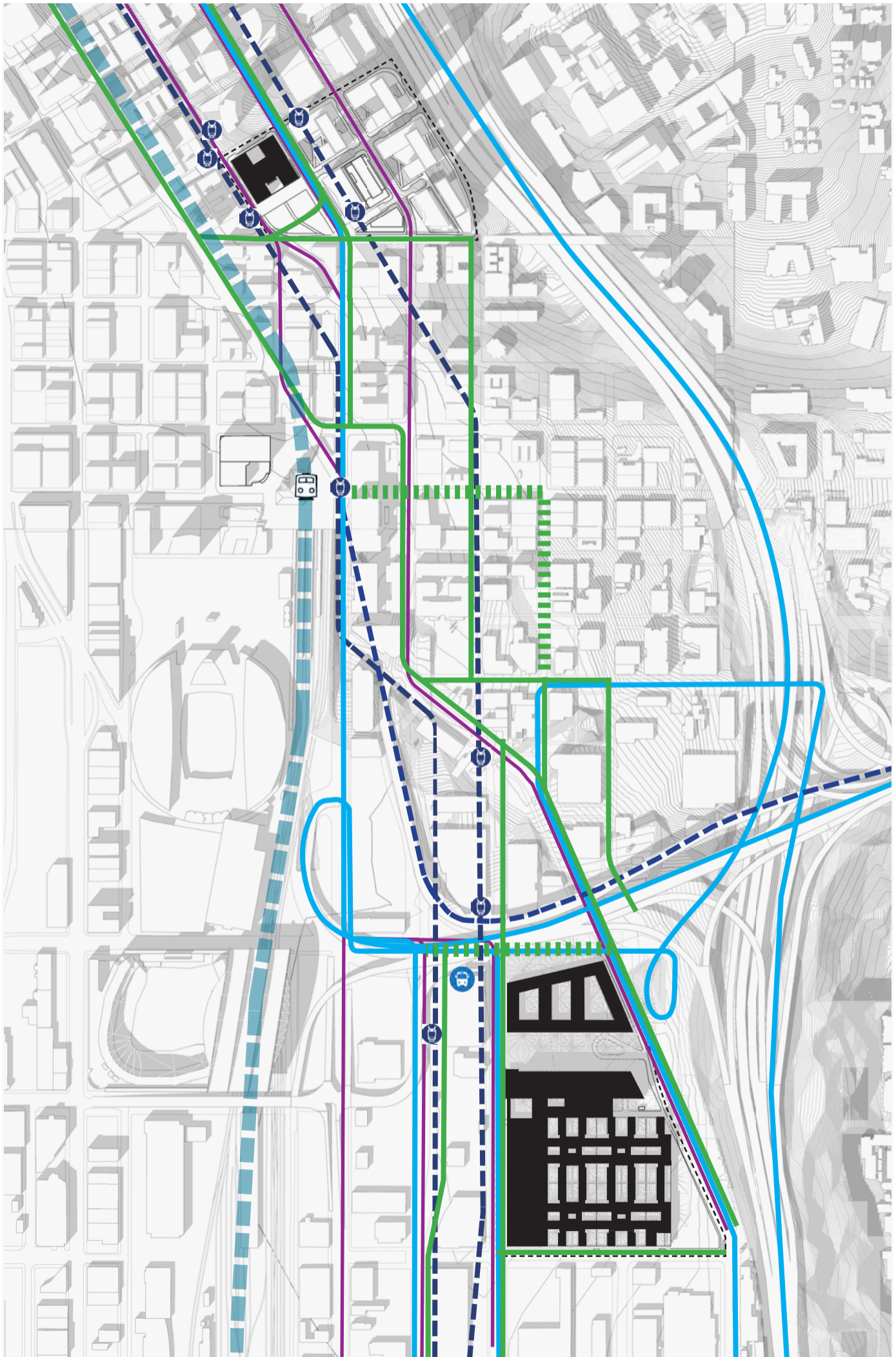
Colman Dock, located west of the downtown site, is a major hub for water transportation services including WSDOT ferries, and Kitsap and King County Metro water taxis. Those who live in areas such as Bainbridge, Bremerton, or Vashon Island and commute by boat can easily access both the Downtown and SODO sites via bus and rail connections.

Although hilly, the City of Seattle has worked hard to make Seattle an enjoyable place to commute by bike. Several current and future protected bike facilities make biking a safe and convenient option for those commuting between the downtown and SODO sites. Cycling between the two sites is a short five-to-ten-minute ride.

Downtown Seattle has complete sidewalks and ADA accessible curb ramps, making walking a convenient form of transportation, though steeper sites downtown may require new planning strategies for more comprehensive accessibility. The SODO site is predominantly flat and, though topographically quite walkable, pedestrian areas should be carefully orchestrated to minimize impacts on freight and industrial/manufacturing traffic in this area. Walking between the two sites takes roughly 25 minutes.

Transportation Emissions

Transportation is the largest greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions contributor in the region. The King County Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) calls for reducing passenger car trips and vehicle emissions. This paired site strategy aims to deliver on GHG emissions goals through the siting of facilities in locations that increase land use density on proposed development sites and provide a range of transit and mobility options between sites and throughout the region.



Map illustrating mobility routes serving King County facility locations in South Downtown (top left) and SODO (bottom right).

Planning for the next 100 years means responding to the region's microclimate and planning for sustainable and resilient development.

The downtown and SODO sites are rooted in existing urban systems. County facilities and sitework should integrate itself into the local ecosystem, improve the comfort of the public realm for the community, and provide climate change resilience to the strategic plan. The scale of the strategic plan, along with its unique site conditions, enables it to leverage site-wide design concepts to provide meaningful and measurable reduction in environmental impacts and enhance the social interaction necessary for a vibrant public realm.

Responding to the Regional Microclimate

Microclimates are defined by the climatic factors that affect or alter the outdoor Comfort Zone: when temperature and humidity levels encourage outdoor activity. Climatic factors range from moisture—humidity and precipitation—to temperature, through solar radiation and cloud cover, and winds near ground level. Outdoor comfort is also affected by qualitative factors including daylight and darkness. Water, wind, and sunlight are incredible natural resources, but rain, gusts, and darkness can drive public life indoors.

Weathering Cover

On average, it mists, rains, or snows approximately 165 days per year in Seattle. Proposed projects should provide weathering cover in outdoor urban spaces, to promote public life more days each year. Weathering cover should also be planned to dovetail with site lighting strategies for appropriate illumination during dusk and nighttime hours to promote safety and encourage outdoor activity throughout more times of the day.

Urban Windbreaks

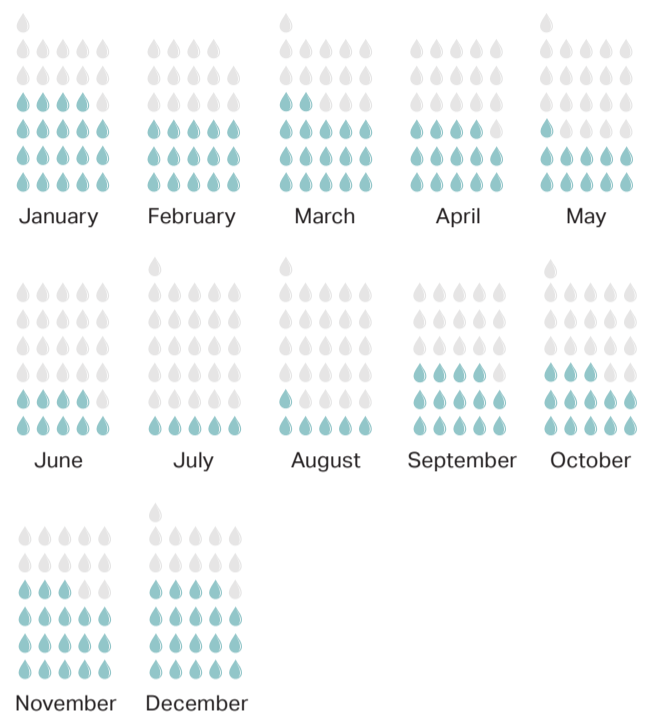
Downtown and SODO site strategies should incorporate urban windbreaks along the southwestern and northeastern sides of urban open spaces to reduce high-velocity street level winds during seasonal events. Drawing from windbreak strategies in the Great Plains, site trees should be lower in the front rows and higher in the back to roll the wind over protected spaces. Seasons change and deciduous trees lose their leaves; evergreens are essential to slow the wind during shoulder seasons and to manage understory currents in the summer. Shifting a microclimate from gusts to breezes means that outdoor spaces become more useable and more programming becomes possible.

Sun, Shade, and Heat

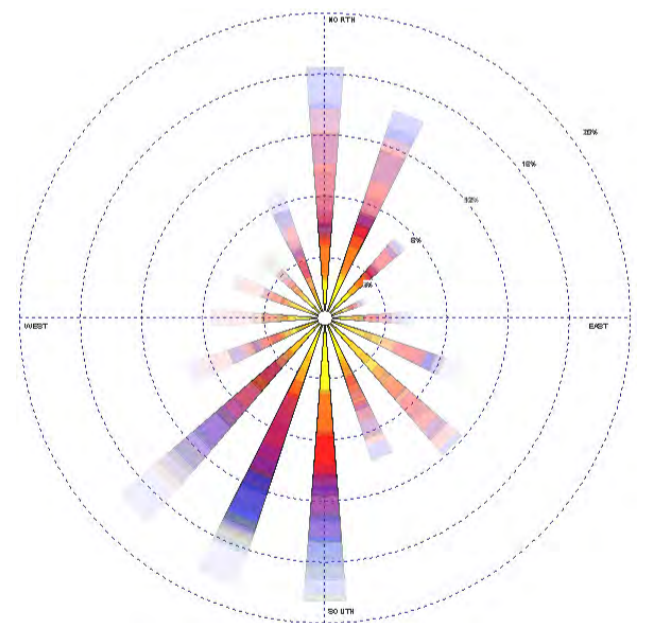
Seattle has around 152 sun days a year. Spring, summer, and fall are the peak seasons for outdoor activity. In spring and fall, the sun is slightly lower in the sky and temperatures are manageable. But in the summer, particularly in the future, shade can make the difference between being outside comfortably and remaining indoors during heat events. Weathering cover planned for downtown and SODO sites should work in tandem with the tree canopies of urban windbreaks and provide shade to help mitigate extreme heat.

Outdoor Green Space

Both the downtown and SODO sites should incorporate consequential urban outdoor spaces; landscape systems that could provide ecosystem services such as habitat provisioning, nutrient cycling, air purification, climate resilience and water quality management. Provisions for urban windbreaks, alongside robust urban open space planning could shape



Overall percentage of rain days per month in Seattle between 1948 and 2017.



Wind rose illustrating annual consolidated average speed and direction of wind in downtown Seattle based on a 30-year dataset.

urban forests in downtown and in SODO, and contribute to the effort to make project sites more habitable in the face of atmospheric extremes—helping slash temperatures, sequester carbon, and absorb runoff.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG)

The King County Strategic Action Plan has set targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Addressing the operations and transportation GHG emissions of the strategic plan is essential. Building materials contribute to GHG emissions just one time, but it's on a very large scale, so tacking them is also necessary. Proposed development should aim to address the three main drivers of GHG emissions in the built environment: operational, embodied materials, and transportation.

Operational Emissions

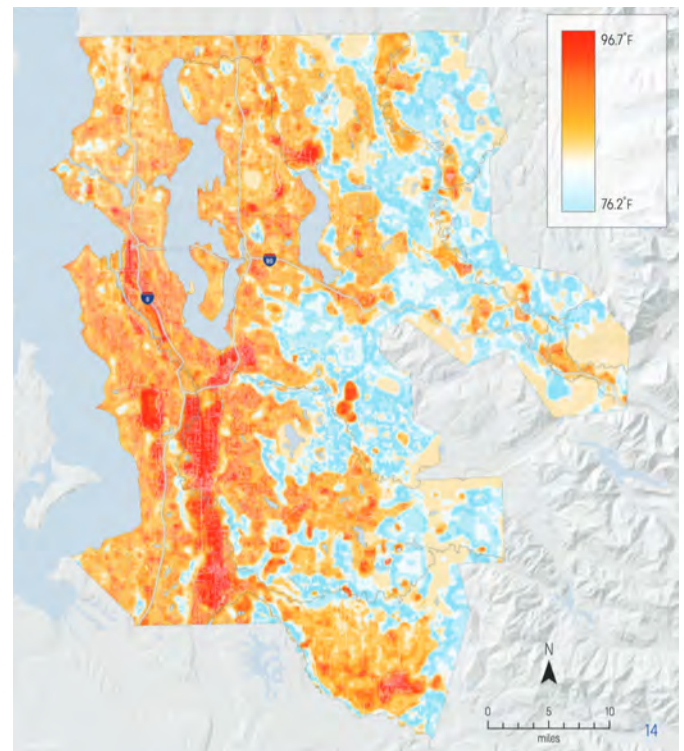
Energy use in the proposed facilities affects both operating costs and greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing energy efficiency correspondingly reduces utility costs as well as greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy consumption. The King County Strategic Climate Action Plan has adopted GHG reduction and on-site renewable energy generation goals. Reducing utility costs assists in making proposed facilities more affordable for long-term operation. Downtown and in SODO, county facilities and proposed redevelopment sites should leverage relative adjacencies to provide integration of heating, cooling and power systems to enable the sharing of resources. A district-scale approach downtown would achieve a high efficiency of systems and provide an opportunity for district-wide energy recovery. In SODO a district-scale approach may also involve the integration of renewable energy generation sources on-site, such as photovoltaics.

Embodied Materials Emissions

Building materials are still largely from virgin sources and consume energy in every step of their extraction, manufacturing, and transport. The choice of material, its origin and the processing needed for it to become ready for use are critical criteria that have a large impact on the material's embodied GHG emissions. Further, strategies that reduce carbon emissions are more valuable now than strategies that reduce the same total carbon emissions over time; there is a time value to carbon savings that must inform design decisions. As building energy efficiency increases, the proportion of the total emissions associated with the extraction, manufacturing, and transportation of construction materials constitutes the majority of the project's carbon footprint. Adaptive reuse is as good as new construction on operational carbon, and better on embodied carbon. In downtown, repurposing existing buildings not only saves carbon, it also helps limit new construction and preserves open space which is critically needed for carbon sequestration. For new facilities in SODO, the plan is to employ carbon sequestering materials. The mass timber structures proposed are an initial high-level step in bringing facility projects with embodied carbon to zero without offsets.

Water Conservation and Reuse

Water resources in the Seattle area face pressure from rising water consumption, pollution, and climate change. Proposed facilities are affected not only by use and discharge of water within the proposed sites but also by the context in which they operate. Water use in Seattle is not carbon-intensive, as much of the water supply comes from the gravity-fed clean sources of the Cedar and Tolt watersheds. Proposed King County facilities sit at a nexus for water and climate resilience that present an enormous opportunity for change. Proposed facilities should take a holistic approach by tackling water demand, water supply, and water management. By limiting water use through conservation and non-potable reuse, the development could address increasing water costs, and assist with improving the resilience of Seattle's water system. A zero-water waste goal would ensure that all non-potable water demands in the project are met using recycled water.



Heat map of modeled temperatures or heat indices for afternoon area-wide predictions illustrating that areas with more natural landscape, and shaded areas, retain less heat.







THEN OUT CAME THE SUN

SODO

King County owns 24.5 contiguous acres in SODO, less than one mile from the current downtown campus. Currently home to King County Metro's centrally located maintenance and operations functions, the site holds tremendous value as a case study to illustrate the potential of a radically larger and centrally located site to transform county facilities.

The case study employs a layered collocation strategy, offering an organizational roadmap to create a courthouse that is in line with contemporary models for civil and criminal legal system service delivery, a human dignity focused in-custody facility to meet the needs of the populations served, purpose-built Metro facilities, and offices to support county functions.

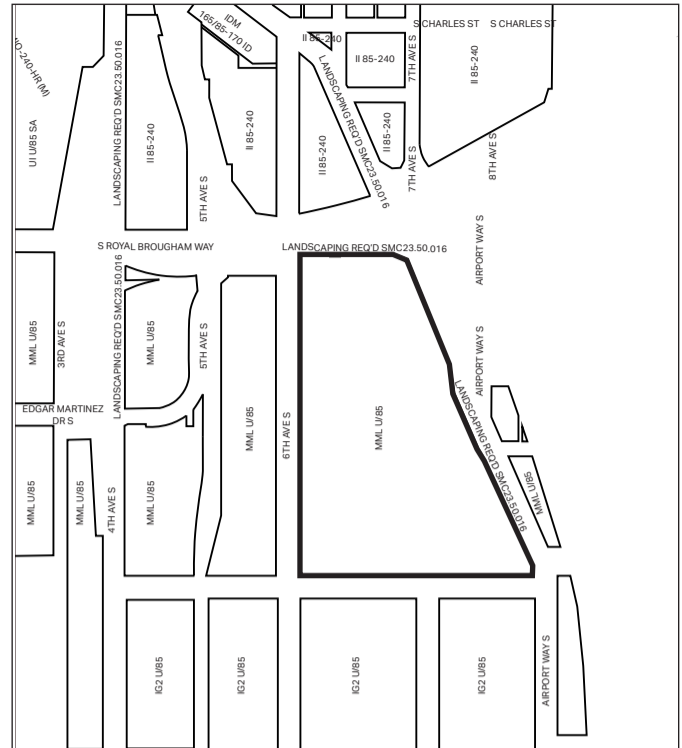
As a case study, the SODO site demonstrates the opportunity for a municipal government to transform facilities by moving functions to a more opportune site, while remaining in essentially the same area.

County-Owned Parcels in Seattle's SODO Neighborhood

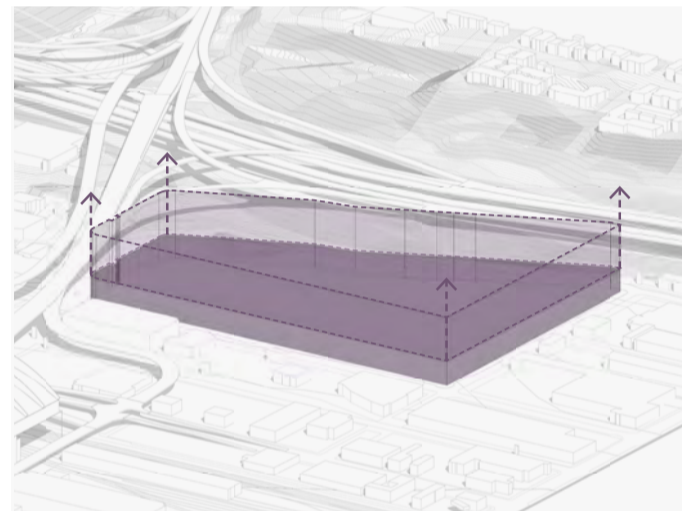
The SODO study area includes seven contiguous county-owned parcels that total approximately 24.5 acres. Currently known collectively as Atlantic and Central Base, the property is an integral part of King County Metro's Central Campus. The property is currently within the Maritime Manufacturing and Logistics (MML) land use zone that was created by ordinance in 2023. The current MML zone focuses permitted uses on Agriculture, select Commercial, Manufacturing, Storage, Transportation Facilities, and Utilities. The MML zone imposes no height limits on permitted principal uses, but does impose an 85-foot height limit on non-industrial uses.

Under current zoning, office use is permitted, but limited to a total of 10,000 SF per parcel. Select public facilities are permitted as a Council Conditional Use (CCU), while work-release centers and jails are not currently permitted. Bus bases are permitted as a Conditional Use (CU).

With an FAR of 2.5 for the zone, the currently zoned permitted use capacity is 2,668,050 SF. Existing facilities total approximately 160,000 square feet, equating to only 6% of the FAR for allowable uses under current zoning.



Existing zoning map, plates 116 & 130, highlighting county-owned parcels.



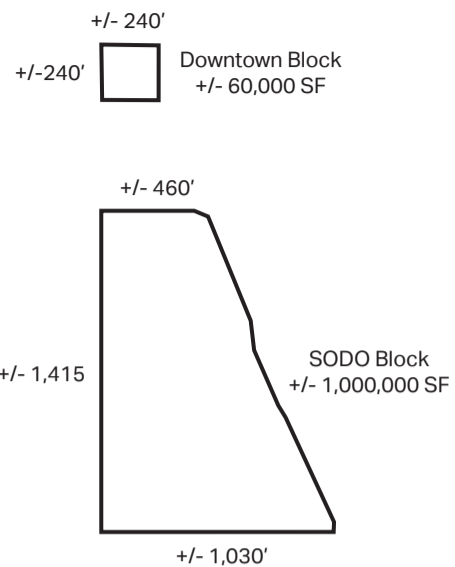
Permitted uses zoned capacity diagram depicting existing permitted principal use at ground level, and the remaining zoned capacity above.

The Opportunity in SODO

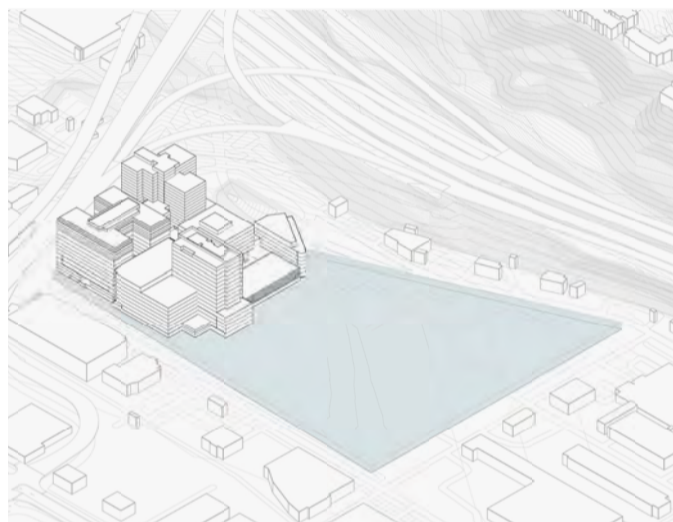
The typical block structure on the county's current downtown Seattle campus is approximately 240 feet x 240 feet with a total footprint of approximately 58,000 - 60,000 SF per block. That land area and dimension work well for most uses, but some public facilities, like collocated correctional facilities and courthouses, may benefit from additional land area and dimension.

At over 1,000,000 SF, with boundary dimensions 2x-to-6x those of a downtown block, the Atlantic and Central Base site in SODO represents a unique opportunity for the long-term future of county facilities.

In fact, if directly relocated, all of the county's current downtown facilities would fit on less than half of the SODO site's footprint, as would all of the proposed floor areas forecasted for proposed facilities.



Size comparison between a downtown block (top) and the consolidated block in SODO at Atlantic and Central Base.



All of King County's current downtown facilities shown in reference to the size of the site at Atlantic and Central Base.

Atlantic and Central Base

The SODO site is far from vacant. Even though only a small area of the site is occupied by structured facilities, only 7% of the site's FAR, the vast majority of the site is used for surface parking and driveways by King County Metro's fleet of buses and trolleybuses.

"Metro Transit's Atlantic/Central Base currently supports the operation of a large fleet of electric trolley, diesel, and hybrid coaches serving the core of its transit network. Most of the routes operating from the Atlantic/Central Base include segments within downtown Seattle. The principal function of the Atlantic/Central Base is to provide the core functions directly related to the operation and maintenance of the coach fleet. The Atlantic/Central Base requires large areas for parking coaches. Dedicated maintenance and service buildings are located on the Atlantic/Central Base for trolley, diesel, and hybrid coaches. There are operations facilities for dispatching drivers and coaches. Various locations around the Atlantic/Central Base, some of which are temporary, provide parking for employees. These base functions are interrelated and need to remain in balance to provide reliable transit service" (King County Metro, 2013, p. 7).

In addition to the existing structures, the site includes approximately 33,000 linear feet of bus and trolleybus parking, not including related emergency and service vehicle drive aisles.

The facilities on Atlantic and Central Base were constructed between 1941 and 2011, with select recent renovations. Though a single base for all purposes, the organization of buses and trolleybuses, and the facilities that serve each, maintain the legacy of two separate bases as indicated in the diagram of the base at right. This results in two separate wash facilities, two separate fuel facilities, and two separate maintenance facilities. The shared Base Operations buildings straddle the line between the two areas, while the Non-Revenue Maintenance Shop and Tire & Millwright Shop are located solely on the Atlantic Base property.

King County policies are driving a change in fleet technology; King County Metro is working toward a 100% zero-emissions fleet by 2035. To accomplish this mission, Metro is in the beginning stages of a plan for electrification of Atlantic and Central Base, and major improvements are needed to affect that change. Future coordination between King County agencies and departments is essential to merging the goals for proposed county facilities with existing transit agency timelines.

Collocating proposed offices, courts, and in-custody facilities with the existing surface uses on this site offers a unique opportunity to take full advantage of centrally located county-owned land, because occupying land in a dense and growing urban environment means building vertically, and the true opportunity on the SODO site resides in the airspace above a largely single-story existing condition.



Area designated as Atlantic Base shown in blue, and the area designated as Central Base shown in green. Existing facilities are shown in yellow.



Aerial view of Atlantic and Central Base, 2023.

Construct county facilities in SODO, layered vertically with current uses, to more effectively utilize county land in a dense urban environment.

Layering functions on the Atlantic and Central Base Site allows county facilities to leverage the site's potential development capacity, width, and breadth.

The redevelopment strategy envisions structured facilities, for Metro fleet and operations, to protect county assets from constant exposure, to accommodate new fleet technologies, and to facilitate Metro employees' ability to efficiently and enjoyably conduct their work.

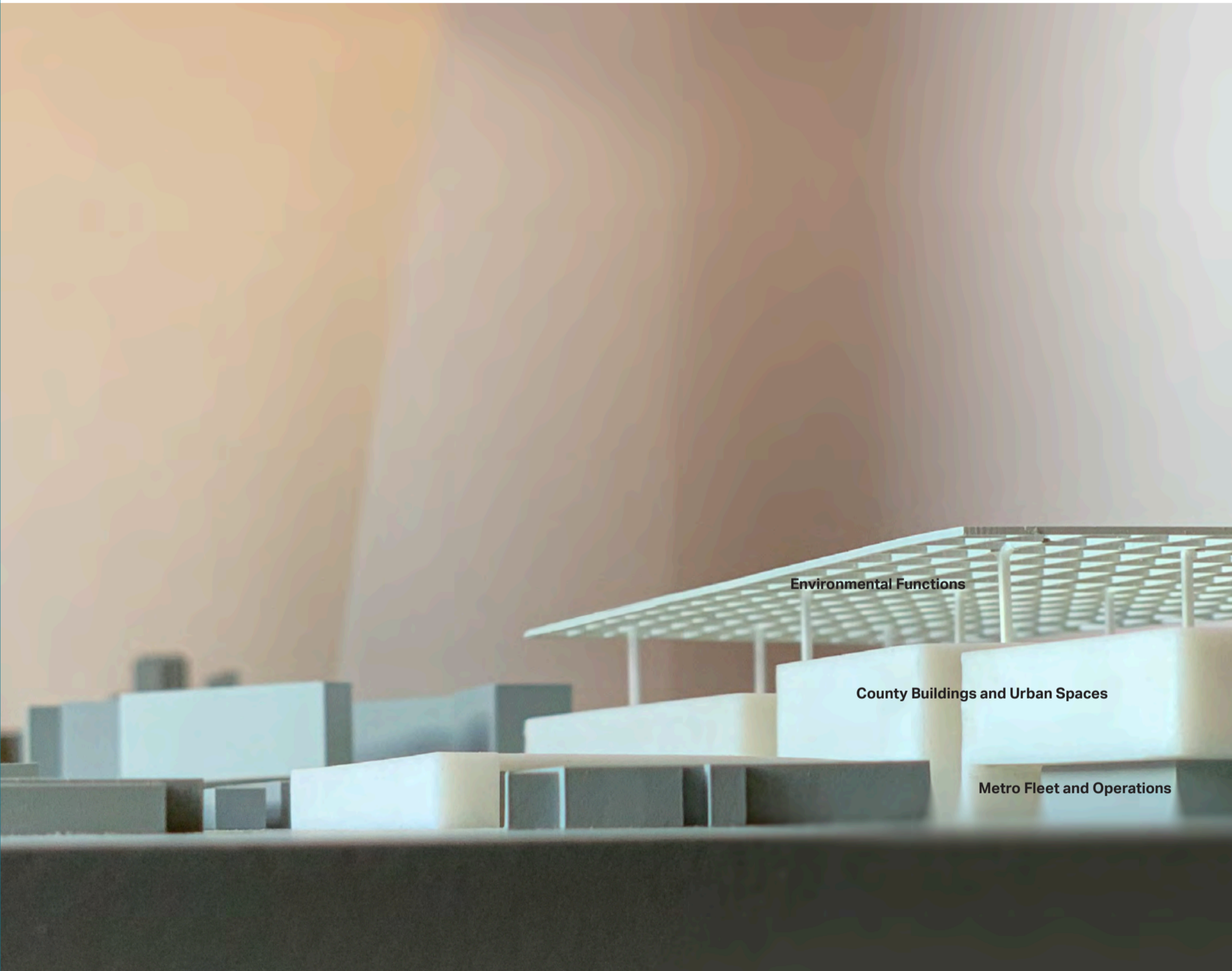
The site may become home to proposed Civil and Criminal Legal System facilities, courts and in-custody buildings, taking advantage of the site's tremendous dimensions to realize programmatic opportunities and building and urban space types that are not possible on a downtown campus block.

A proposed office building is also constructed for departments, divisions, or offices that require or benefit from proximity to Criminal and Civil Legal System Facilities, or Metro base operations, or that may simply operate more effectively with a different set of mobility options for the provision of high-quality services.

And proposed urban open spaces are planned to create high-quality outdoor environments that support county employees, residents, and customers.



Model view of the proposed layering strategy for county facilities on the SODO case study site.



Layering Functions

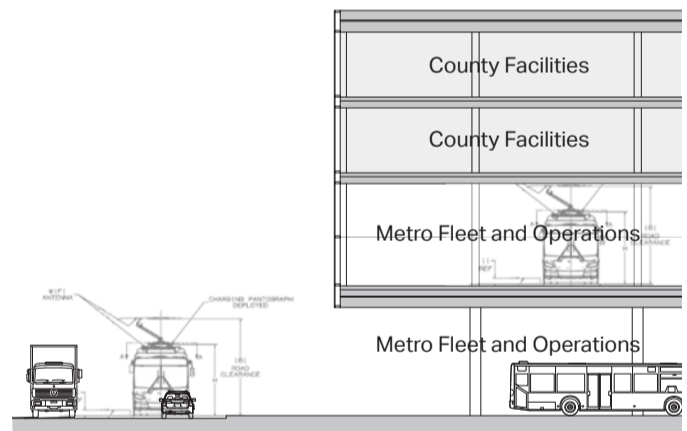
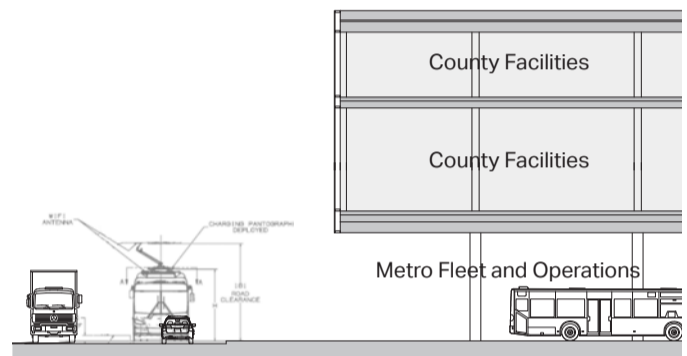
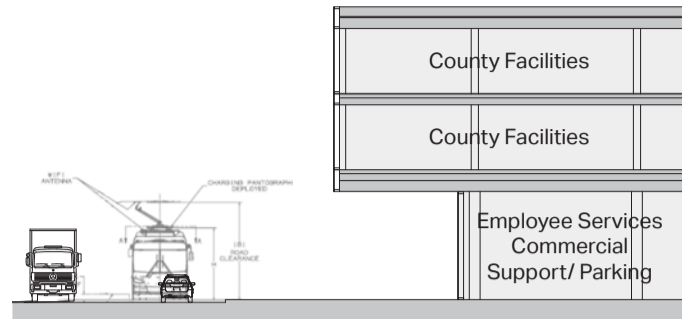
Layering functions on the Atlantic and Central Base Sites allows county facilities to take full advantage of the site's potential development capacity, width, and breadth.

The redevelopment strategy envisions structured facilities for Metro fleet and operations, to protect county assets from constant exposure, to accommodate new fleet technologies, and to improve Metro employees' ability to efficiently and enjoyably conduct their work.

Information shared by King County Metro led to the development of a sectional diagram for layering potential facilities above Metro fleet, operations, and maintenance. Metro is aligning with the SAE J-3105-1 standard for overhead pantograph down charging. That standard requires 181" of clear space between the bottom of the charger and the ground. The pantograph assemblies are approximately 20" deep. Assuming a ceiling deck that supports direct attachment, meaning that no gantry structure is required within the covered zone, another +/- 4" should be included for Unistrut rails. This brings the total minimum clearance to approximately 205", or roughly 18'-0" floor to ceiling, with the ability to vary this dimension, and to vary the ceiling/ floor deck between Metro functions and uses layered above.

Transit agencies in other cities are currently working through similar layered strategies. Projects in San Francisco and New York, outlined on the following page, are planning multi-level bus bases below affordable housing and commercial office towers respectively. Both projects must respond to the technical challenges of multi-story fleet circulation, emerging battery-electric fuel sources, and a wide variety of vehicle types. The sectional strategies proposed offer early concepts for facility organization, drawing from precedent projects in other cities. More detailed facility planning and study will be required to adequately respond to a wide range of operational, safety, and technical considerations.

The vertical organization of the program, with bus and trolleybus maintenance and operations below county government functions, is an organizational roadmap for utilizing the potential development volume of the site for proposed county functions.



Top: Section diagram illustrating county facilities located above multi-functional service floor.

Middle: Section diagram illustrating county facilities located above proposed at-grade Metro facilities

Bottom: Section diagram illustrating county facilities located above proposed two-story Metro facilities.

Engaging Precedents

Other municipalities are working on similar projects in dense urban environments that must replace or upgrade aging facilities, accommodate new bus fleet technologies or service capacity requirements, and in some cases even provide regional solutions to resident needs such as affordable and workforce housing.

San Francisco, California

Potrero Yard in San Francisco has embarked on a modernization project that includes demolishing the existing 1915 bus yard and developing a new fully enclosed four-level bus facility with integrated housing and retail opportunities. The new bus facility is designed to maintain all bus movements within the yard to minimize interactions with pedestrians and bicycles to improve safety. Bus turning movements have been studied for 40-foot and 60-foot buses for safe, efficient travel paths. The new facility also improves employee wellness by providing more natural light in work areas and dedicated employee outdoor spaces (SFMTA, 2024).

The ground floor level will enclose and centralize maintenance activities. The second level will house Muni’s Training headquarters and offices for SFMTA staff. This level also features a room that can be reserved for eligible community meetings and events. The third and fourth levels will contain bus parking, charging and bus wash areas. The new Potrero Yard will continue to serve as an electric trolleybus division, and the facility will include an overhead catenary system. However, it will also be “future-proofed” with underlying infrastructure to support battery electric buses, if fleet needs change. This project would allow Muni to continue as a national leader in delivering sustainable transit service (SFMTA, 2024).

Early in the project development, it was determined that while the modernization of the bus yard was crucial to keeping San Franciscans moving, there was a great need and opportunity to utilize the airspace above the facility. For this project that airspace is dedicated to a series of affordable housing and commercial components (SFMTA, 2024).

New York, New York

In New York, The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as lead Federal Agency, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), as the local project sponsor and joint lead agency, propose to replace the existing Port Authority Bus Terminal (PABT) in Manhattan, New York. The project expands commuter and intercity bus capacity, with the ability to accommodate modern buses (electric, double-decker, or articulated), and improve sustainability and operations. It also includes a new storage and staging facility, and new ramp structures providing direct connections to the Lincoln Tunnel crossing the Hudson River (PANYNJ, 2024).

A key feature of the redevelopment project is the inclusion of up to five-million square feet of private development, in the form of two commercial office towers, located on top of the new Main Terminal building (PANYNJ, 2024).



Top: Section diagram of the Potrero Yard replacement project illustrating affordable and workforce housing located on the podium above the new bus facility.

Bottom: Aerial View of the proposed affordable and workforce housing located on the podium above the new bus facility.

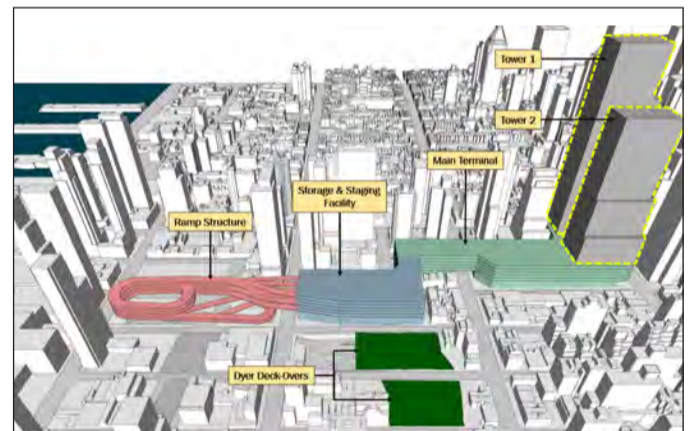


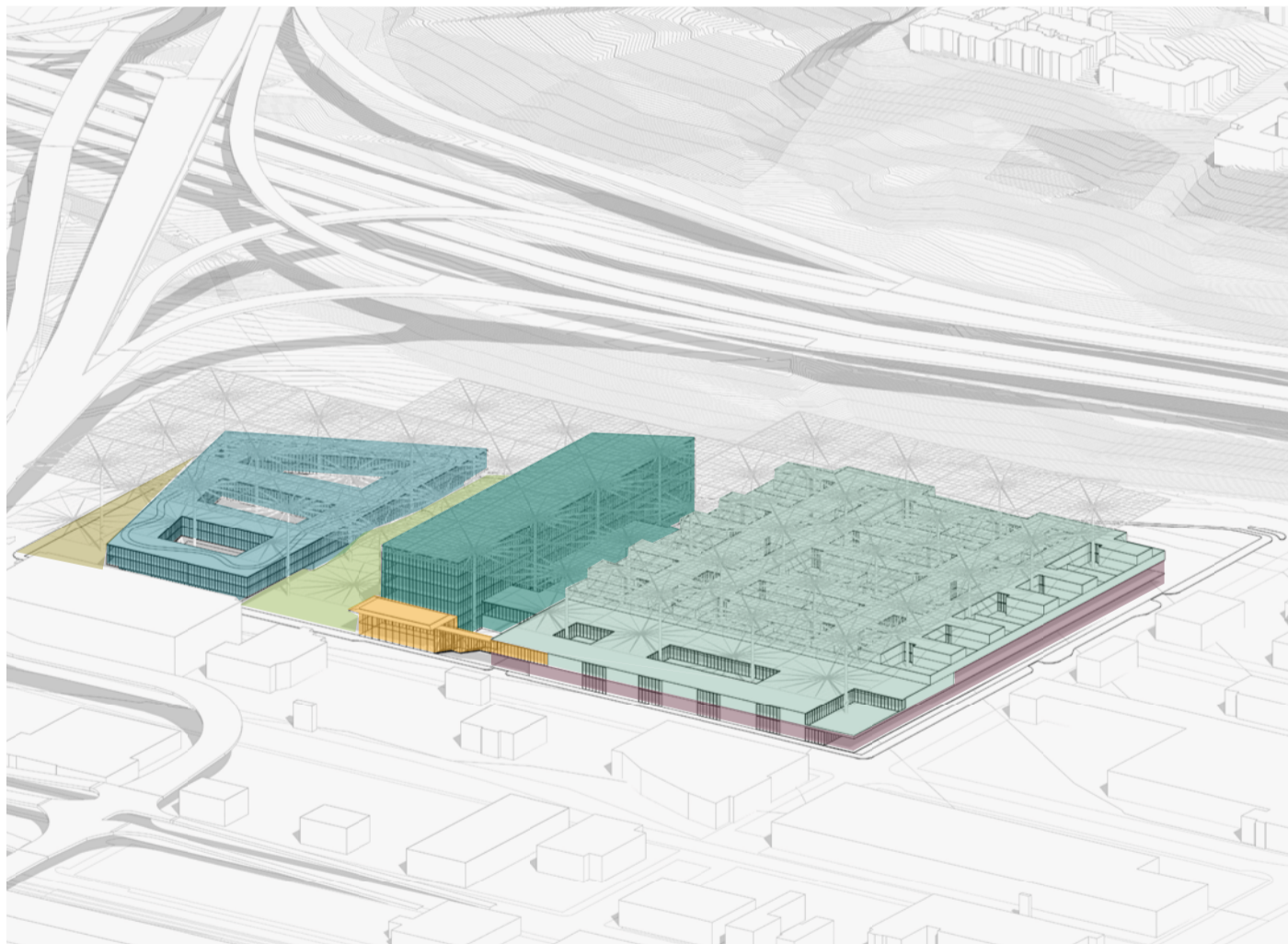
Diagram illustrating the PANYNJ plan for private commercial development (Tower 1 and Tower 2) located above the multi-story Midtown Bus Terminal (Main Terminal).

Organize buildings horizontally on the site, placing pedestrian-oriented uses closer to local and regional mobility options.

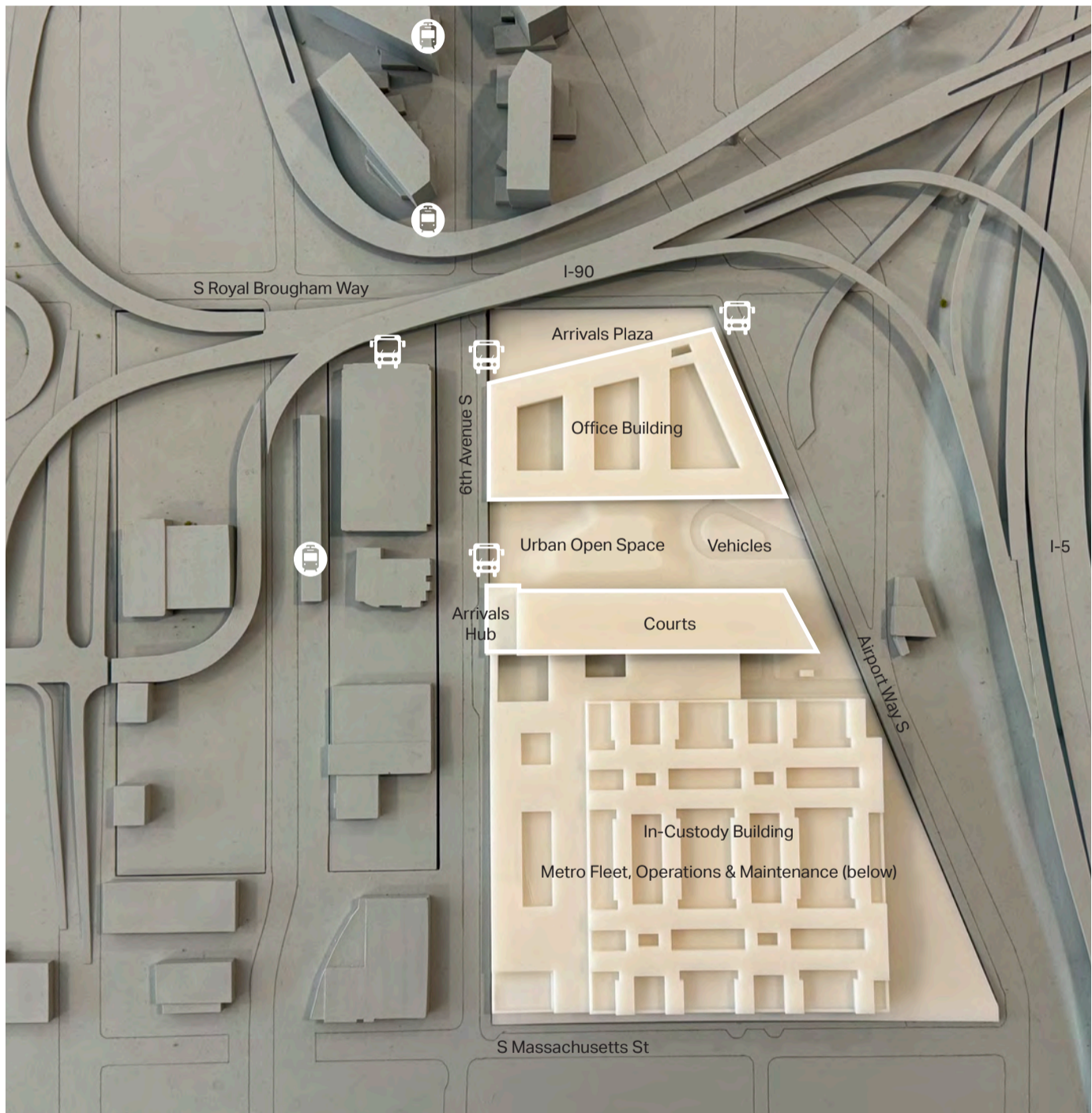
County buildings and urban spaces are sited to place high-traffic employee and customer uses near existing and potential transit stations. An arrivals plaza is located at the north end of the site to create a space for commuters arriving via light rail, bus, or bike. An office building is located south of the arrivals plaza, with ground floor space for retail and commercial storefronts to serve county employees and the broader neighborhood. The site's primary urban open space is located south of the office building. This verdant and vibrant outdoor space provides a place of gathering for employees and visitors. A vehicular court is located east of this space, offering a place for transit stops, vehicular drop-offs, and entry into the ground-level parking area below the office building. The courts building is positioned to take advantage of this outdoor space, and the arrivals hub that serves the courts building and the in-custody building is located adjacent to this public space, with frontage on 6th Avenue South. The in-custody building is located south of the courts, and tethered to the courts building through ground level and second level shared program spaces. Metro Operations and Maintenance is located below the in-custody building, with frontage on, and direct access to Airport Way, S Massachusetts St, and 6th Ave S.

SODO Buildings and Urban Spaces	
Functional Group/ Space	GFA
Arrivals Plaza	40,000
Officing (Executive)	350,000
Potential Expansion/ Growth	200,000
Urban Open Space	80,000
Vehicular Court	20,000
Arrivals Hub	10,000
Courts (Judicial)	495,000
In-Custody (Corrections)	550,000
Metro Maintenance and Operations	90,000
Total area of Metro development	850,000
Metro Bus Parking (Linear Feet)	36,000

Program elements and program area distribution.



- Arrivals Plaza
- Office Building
- Central Urban Space
- Arrivals Hub
- Courts and Community Services
- In-Custody Building
- Metro Fleet, Maintenance & Operations



Model photograph of proposed facilities in SODO illustrating the siting of high-traffic employee and customer uses on the northern end of the site. Solar/ stormwater management canopy not shown.

Passing Under

At the northern end of the site, the I-90 overpass and Sound Transit's elevated light rail create a canopy of infrastructure between the future South of CID light rail stations and the site for King County's proposed buildings and public spaces.

In the last decade, many cities have embraced the residual space around heavy infrastructure to serve as useful guides for design and programming.

The Bentway

As Toronto has grown increasingly more dense, the city has grown around the Gardiner Highway. Today, more than 200,000 people live next door to the elevated portion of the expressway in dense high-rise developments that are in desperate need of public space for cultural life. Together with partners, The Bentway is transforming the Gardiner from highway obstacle to hybrid opportunity, helping build a healthier, more connected, and more inspiring city (The Bentway, 2024).

The Bentway was primarily funded through philanthropic giving.

The East River Esplanade

The East River Esplanade is a two-mile-long, city-owned public open space offering community programming, recreation, and unparalleled views from Manhattan's eastern shore, from historic Battery Park at the tip of the island to East River Park, the Lower East Side's principal open space. The new waterfront walkway includes traditional waterfront amenities such as seating and plantings, as well as innovative improvements such as new cladding and enhanced lighting beneath FDR Drive. New pavilions underneath the FDR viaduct include commercial, cultural and community uses that complement the public open space experience by bringing activity and the vitality of the city to the water's edge (NYCEDC, 2024).

The East River Esplanade is primarily funded by the City of New York.

The Miami Underline

The Miami Underline is transforming the underutilized land below Miami's Metrorail—from the Miami River to Dadeland South Station—into a 10-mile linear park, urban trail, and public art destination. The project will transform 120 acres of Miami-Dade County, City of Miami and City of Coral Gables owned-land adjacent and below to the existing Metrorail guideway, from the Miami River (Brickell area) to the Dadeland South Metrorail Station, into a world-class, multi-modal urban trail.

The project is funded by Miami-Dade County, The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the State of Florida, City of Miami, City of Coral Gables, the Knight Foundation and private contributions.

Once all phases are completed, this project will be Miami-Dade County's first true mobility corridor uniting all modes of transportation and enhancing accessibility to eight Metrorail stations within its path and neighboring communities. The Underline will serve 107,000 residents within a 10-minute walk, provide access to public transportation to one university and 24 schools, two hospitals, three urgent care facilities, four major malls and over 10,000 businesses.

The 10-mile corridor, which will vary from 70 to 170 feet wide, will provide pedestrian and bicycle paths, improvements to over 30 intersections, access to public transportation, lighting, and wayfinding. In addition to the transportation components, recreational features will include butterfly gardens, playgrounds, exercise equipment, basketball and volleyball courts, soccer fields, picnic areas, dog parks and more. (Miami Dade County, ND).



Aerial rendering illustrating I-90 and Sound Transit infrastructure located between the proposed South of CID station and the proposed SODO county facilities.



Top: The Bentway, Toronto, Canada.

Middle: East River Esplanade, New York, New York.

Bottom: The Miami Underline, Miami, Florida.

Embrace infrastructure to create a one-of-a-kind urban space that is designed to make passage a pleasure.

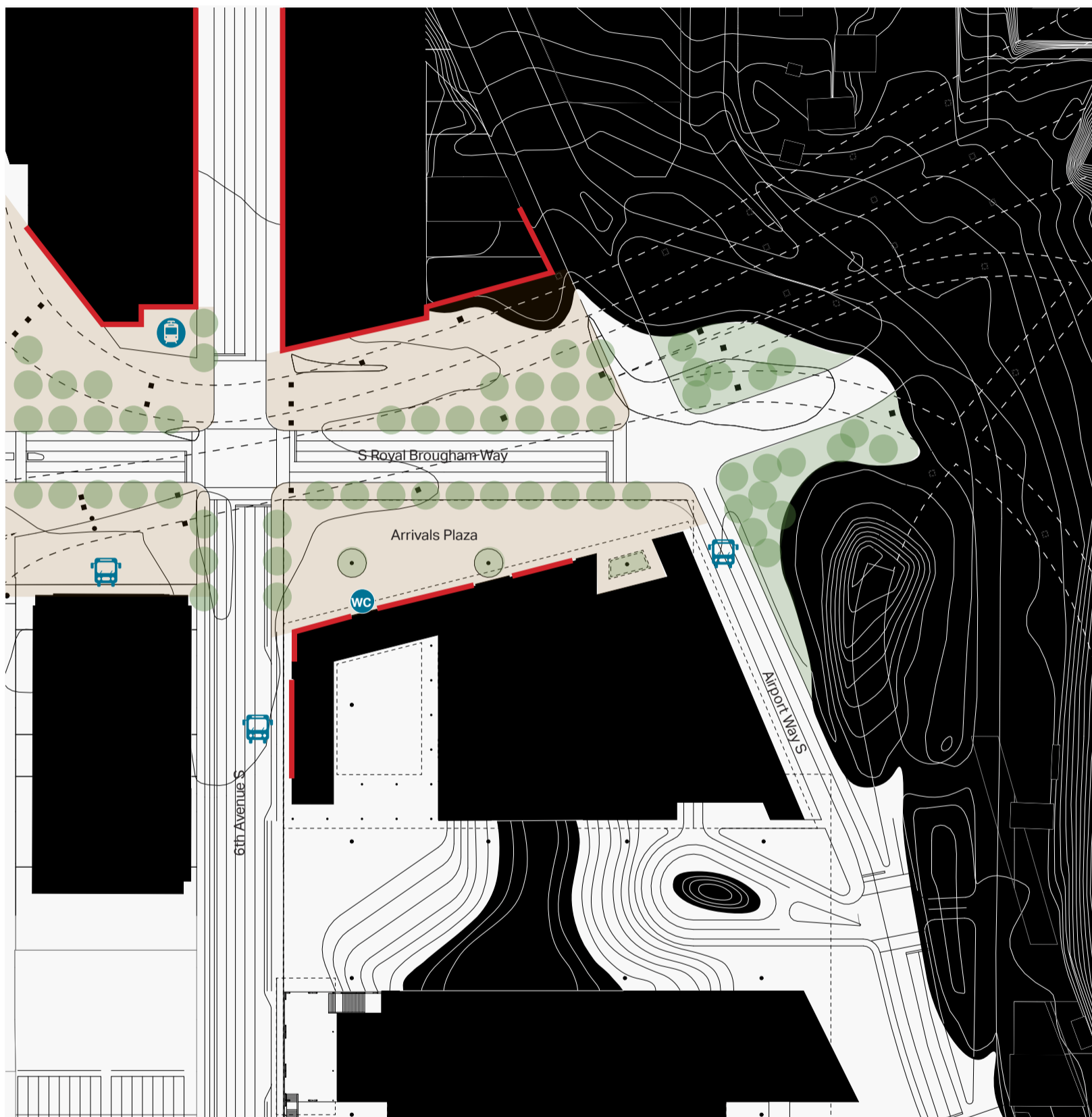
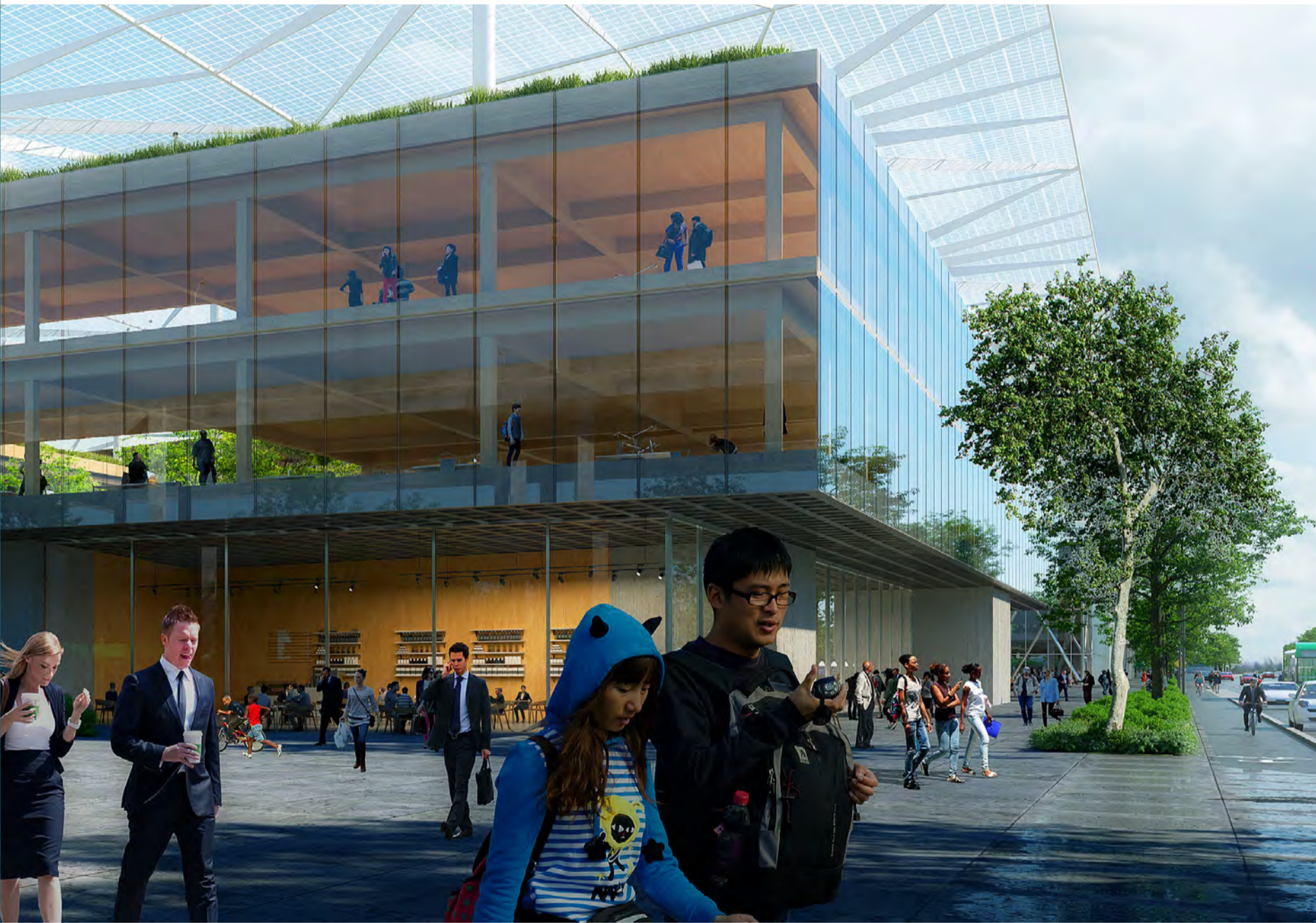


Diagram illustrating the area of the arrivals plaza and I-90 underpass envisioned as a holistically designed high-quality urban space.

— Retail/ commercial frontage



View of the SODO arrivals plaza looking south from S Royal Brougham Way with a proposed office building for county employees and services in the background.



Plan for workplaces that enable employees to provide the highest quality services, and that support recruitment and retention.

Strategic planning for future office buildings focuses on three key conditions that affect the quantity, quality, and longevity of the building.

The project must define a target capacity (seatcount) to establish total gross square footages for future consideration, and the project must be able to expand in order to grow with future needs.

To promote longevity in facility planning, the floor-to-floor height plays an important role in ensuring adequate under-floor or above-ceiling space for necessary changes to building systems over time.

Plan for narrow floor plates to increase the quality of the working environment for county staff. Planning for narrow floor plates requires concomitant attention on the open space around the building, driving different site-use strategies and different FAR utilization rates for any given site.

And where possible, make proposed office buildings low-rise to mid-rise structures for more immediate access to building entries, outdoor spaces, and the more frequent use of communicating stairs between floors.





Interior view of the proposed office building in SODO.

A Proposed Office Building in SODO

Located on the northern end of the site, the proposed office building is sited in close proximity to existing and proposed transit options for the benefit of staff and customers.

The building is entered through a courtyard adjacent to the site’s primary urban outdoor space, offering clear wayfinding for employees and customers.

The building is 350,000 gross square feet and three stories in height. The ground floor is dedicated to building entrances, space for retail and commercial storefronts to serve staff and visitors, and parking. The second and third floors are primarily office space, with exterior courtyards for use by staff located on the second floor. With a two-story scenario for the office floors, code permits that both floors may be open to one another; single-flight communicating stairs make moving between floors efficient and enjoyable, and allow for a greater degree of collaboration between teams on different floors.

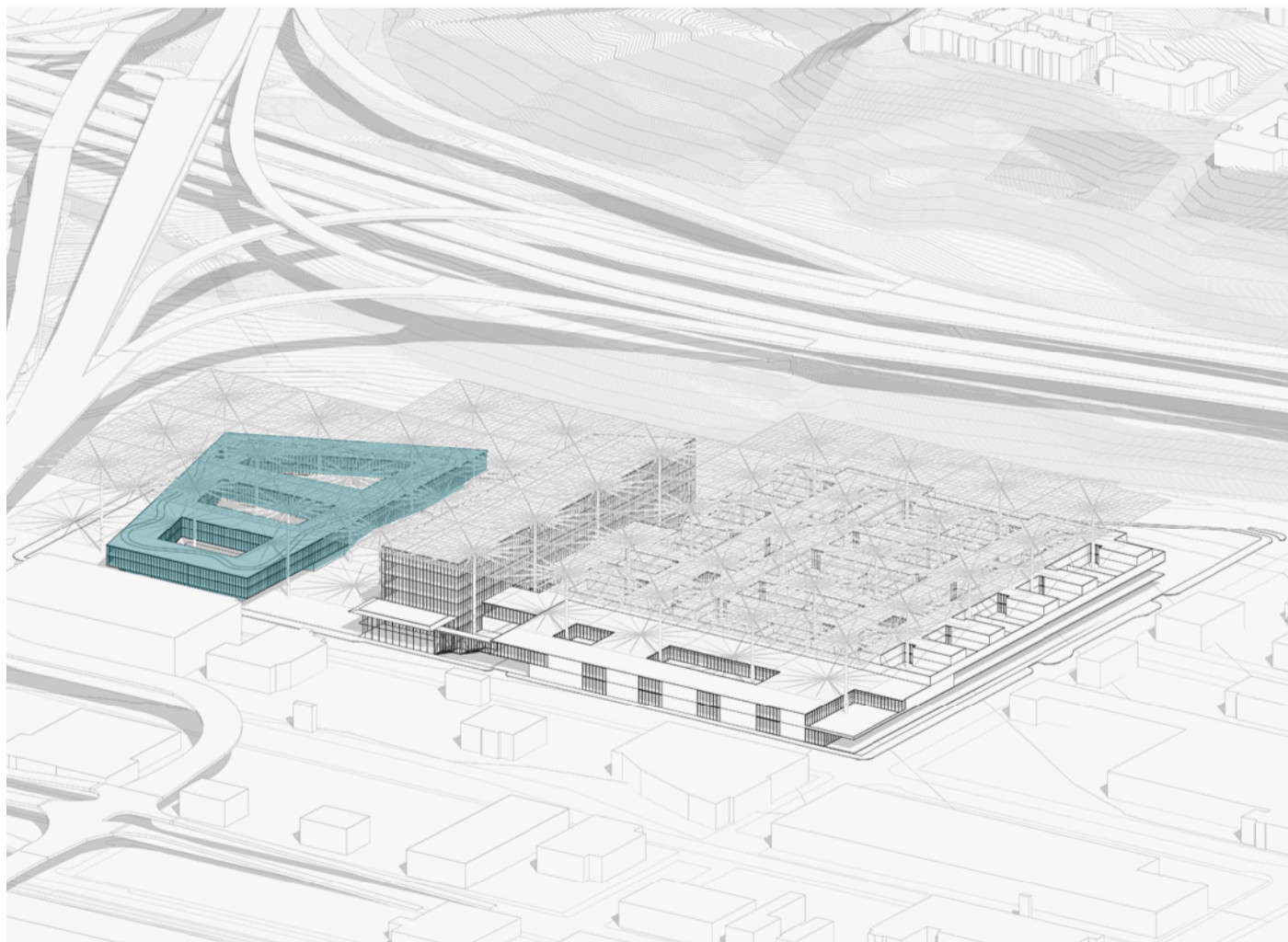
Building floor-plates are approximately 65-feet wide, offering the opportunity for generous daylighting as well as visual and physical access to exterior staff courtyards.

An intensive green roof is planned across the bulk of the building, with select spaces dedicated as occupiable, and for building equipment and support.

The proposed office building includes the potential for up to 100,000 additional gross square feet for a one-story addition, without exceeding high-rise limits imposed by building code. An additional approximately 130,000 gross square feet of parking area could be constructed within the high-bay ground level of the building.

SODO Office Building		
Floor/ Level	Space Type	GSF
Ground Floor	Retail/ Support	20,000
	Parking	130,000
	<i>Entry Courtyard</i>	<i>25,000</i>
First Floor	Office	100,000
	<i>Courtyard</i>	<i>25,000</i>
Second Floor	Office	100,000
	<i>Courtyard</i>	<i>25,000</i>
Roof	<i>Intensive Green Roof</i>	<i>80,000</i>
	<i>Occupiable/ Support</i>	<i>20,000</i>
Total (enclosed area)		350,000

Gross square footage table for the proposed SODO office building.



Location of the proposed office building.

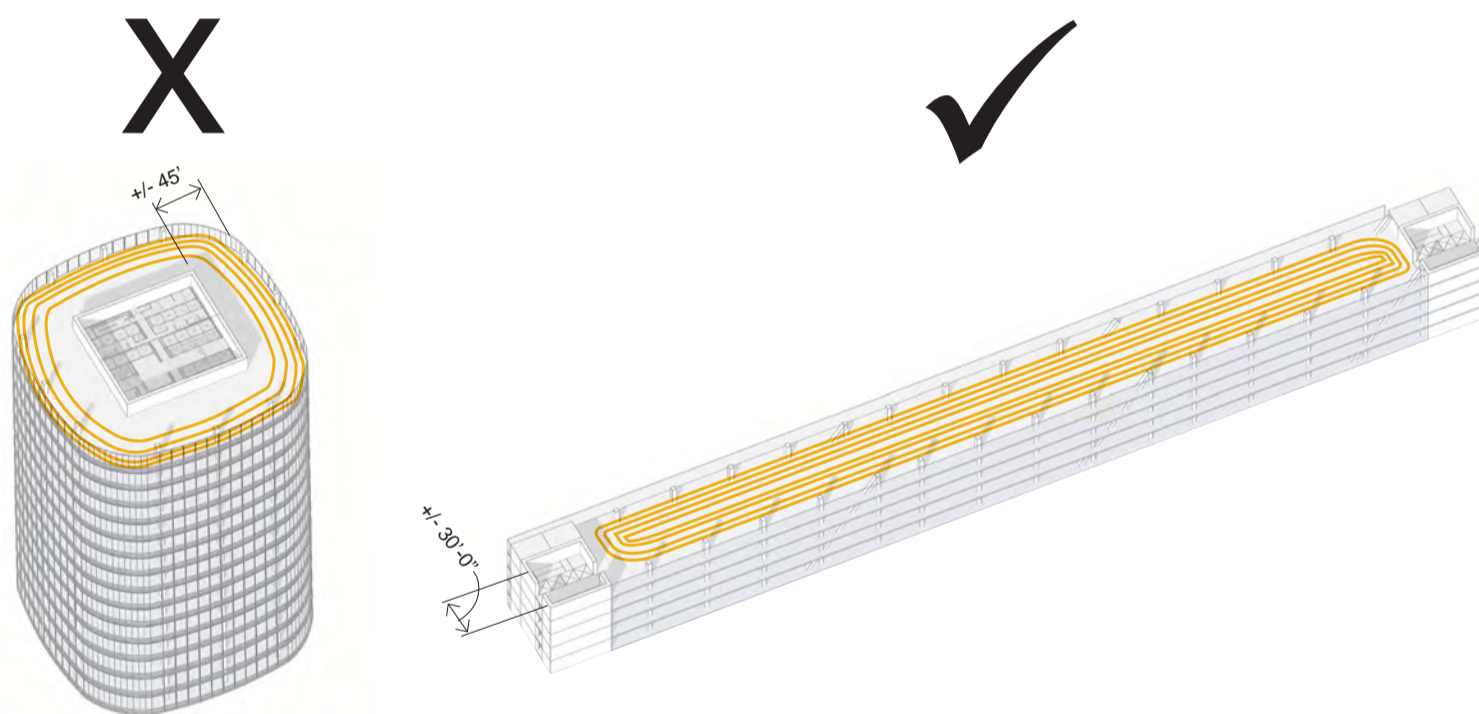
A New Office Typology for King County

All of King County's existing office spaces are housed within buildings designed as point-core towers, some of which have excessively deep floor plates. In these older building typologies, only perimeter workstations or offices have access to natural light and views, interior spaces—nearer the building's core—are often only artificially lit but constitute many of the most important meeting and collaboration spaces in daily use by county staff.

In contrast, narrow floor plates, of approximately 60-feet in depth, present opportunities for daylighting, views, and even natural ventilation for a wide array of workspaces. This can increase workplace comfort for employees and reduce the operational cost for electric lighting and even mechanical ventilation and cooling. Planning for narrow floor plates requires simultaneous attention to the open space around the building, driving site-use strategies and FAR utilization rates for any given site.

Future building design should take guidance from model codes like the EU's Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, which encourages designs that optimize natural light and ventilation (often resulting in narrower floor plates), and New York City's zoning codes or California's Title 24, which support energy efficiency but also focus on occupant well-being through other prescriptive and performance requirements.

New office buildings should be planned with narrow floor plates to potentially lower building systems operating costs, increase the quality of the working environment for county staff, and support recruitment and retention of employees in a highly competitive regional environment.



Left: Diagram of a point-core tower designed for maximum leasable areas outside of the building core. This model results in deep floor plates that limit access to natural light.

Right: Diagram of a narrow floor plate building illustrating the daylighting potential within an approximately 60 foot floor plate depth.

Floor-to-Floor Height for Longevity

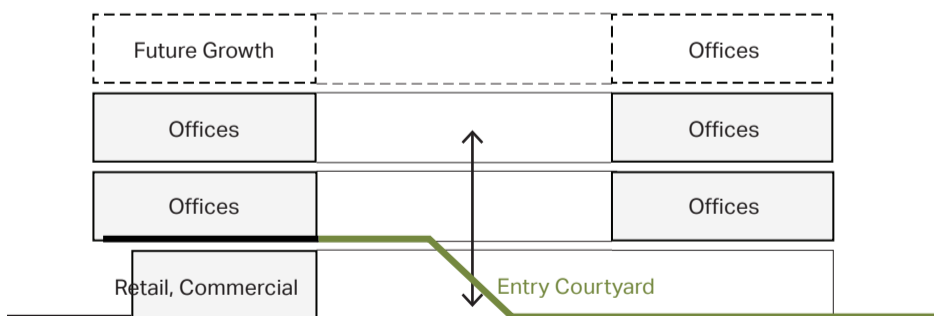
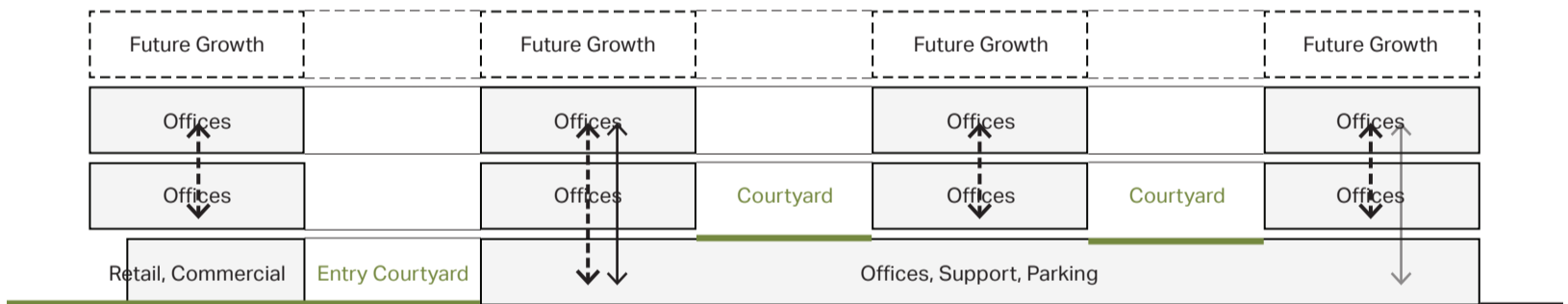
The useful life of any facility is governed, in part, by the ability to make substantial changes over time to heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems (HVAC), information technology systems (IT), and facility security systems. And although that capacity for change resides in the future design of a building, the strategic plan incorporates that design-capacity by establishing a minimum height from one floor to the next of 14-feet to 16-feet for office buildings. That height range allows ample dimension for the horizontal distribution, and easy access for maintenance or replacement, of building systems. Outlining detailed assumptions at this early stage allows capital cost estimates to account for proper building volumes, exterior envelopes and interior partition heights, and applicable building systems.

Floor-to-Floor Height and Site Capacity

For strategic planning purposes, establishing minimum floor-to-floor heights is also an important part of estimating site development capacity. Higher floor-to-floor dimensions can affect the number of floors possible within established zoning height limits, and by extension, the maximum square footage available to construct. Establishing a minimum floor-to-floor height of 14-feet to 16-feet, together with the FAR and any floor-plate limits imposed by zoning code, provides the information required for parcel-level development capacity checks.

Stacking Functions

The diagrams below illustrate the vertical stacking of functions within the office building, demonstrating the sectional relationship between office interiors and exterior staff courtyards, potential future growth and expansion capacity above, and the positioning of retail, commercial, building support, and parking functions below.



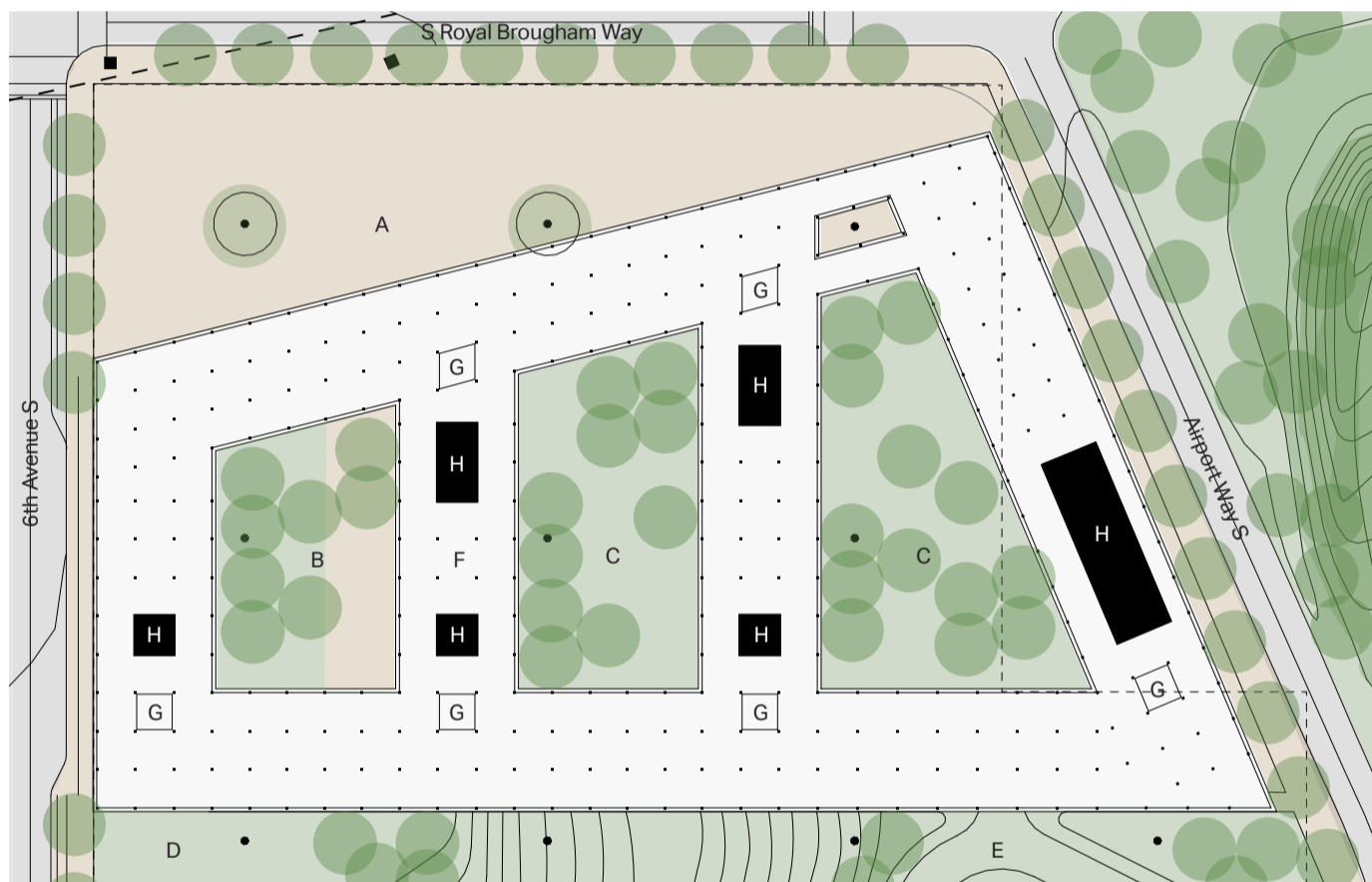
Top: East-West office building stacking diagram.

Bottom: North-South office building stacking diagram.

- ←---→ Communicating Stairways
- ←→ Employee and Public Elevators
- ←→ Service Elevators
- Future Expansion Capacity

Conceptual Site Layout

The site plan below uses the second floor of the office building to illustrate a potential configuration that achieves: space north of the building for the arrivals plaza, a floor plate depth of approximately 65'-0", and the relationship between interior office space and high-quality exterior landscapes and staff courtyards.



Office building plan test to confirm capacity, organization, and strategic building ad urban relationships.

- A Arrivals Plaza
- B Entrance Court
- C Staff Courtyard
- D Primary Urban Space
- E Vehicular Court
- F Office Floor Plate
- G Communicating Stair
- H Building Core/ Services

Create a consequential urban open space that offers a place of assembly, a place of respite, and a place that supports the activities of daily life for county employees and customers in SODO.

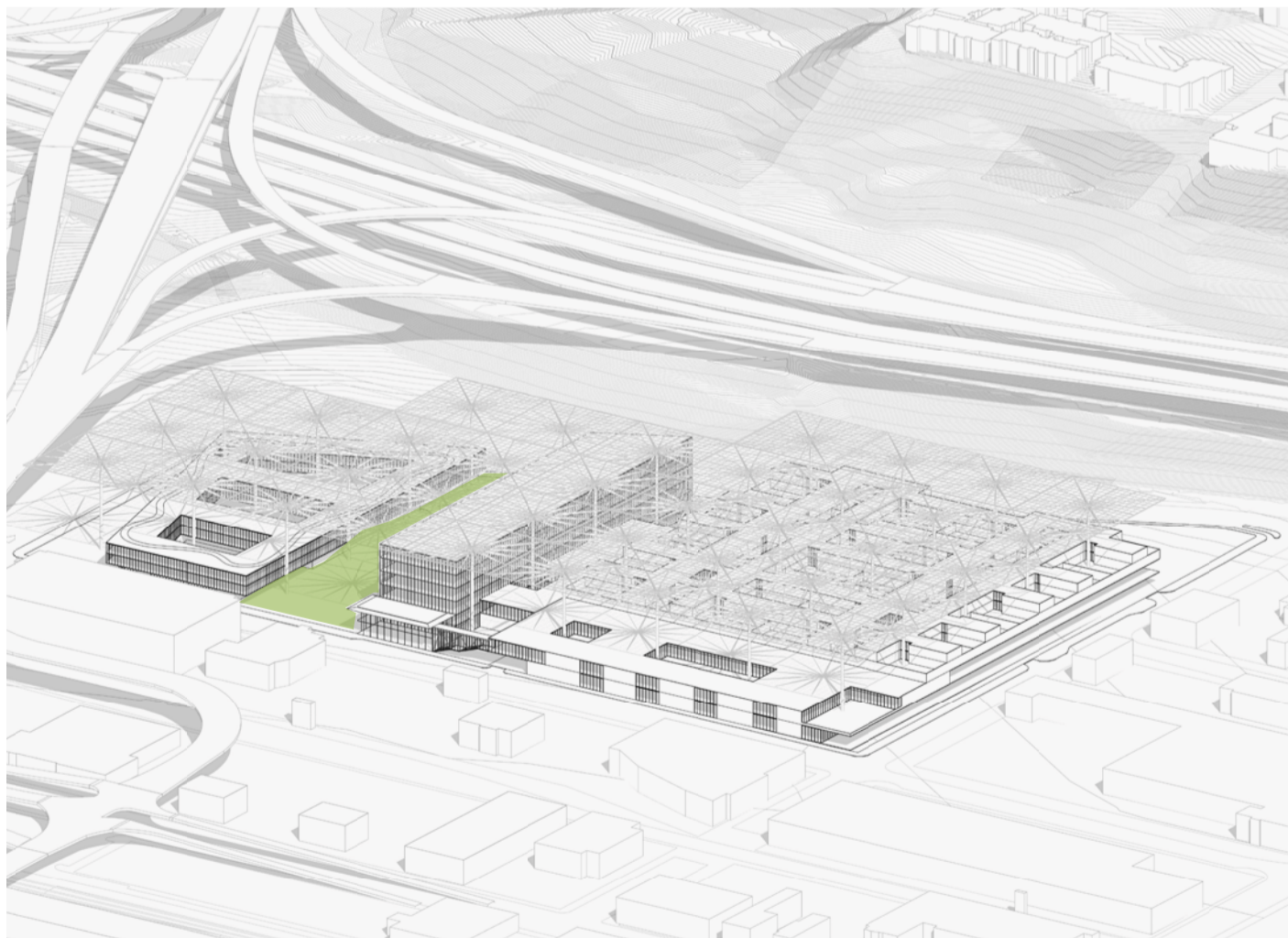
Approximately two-acres of land are reserved to create an urban space at-scale with City Hall Park in downtown Seattle. This proposed landscape is located between the Office Building, to provide a large-scale outdoor space for employees and customers, and the Courts Building, to allow the interior of this proposed building to open onto outdoor spaces to support trauma-informed courthouse design (Jandura, 2018).

SODO county Facilities		
Floor/ Level	Space Type	GSF
Ground Level	Urban Outdoor Space	80,000
Ground Level	Vehicular Court	20,000

Gross square footage table for central urban outdoor space.

This central landscape spans the full breadth of the SODO block, extending from 6th Avenue S to Airport Way S. The 6th Avenue S end of the space includes a large pedestrian plaza as well as verdant landscapes built atop a central hill that is graded for accessibility. On the other side of the hill, at the Airport Way S end of the space, a vehicular court accommodates vehicular ingress, and loading/ unloading services, into the Office Building, as well as car drop-off zones and bus stops for commuter convenience.

Positioned between buildings, on the western side of Beacon Hill, and beneath a high-level solar canopy, this outdoor urban space offers protection from wind and rain, enabling safe occupancy by employees—and the community—more times of the day, and more seasons of the year.



Location of the proposed central urban space.



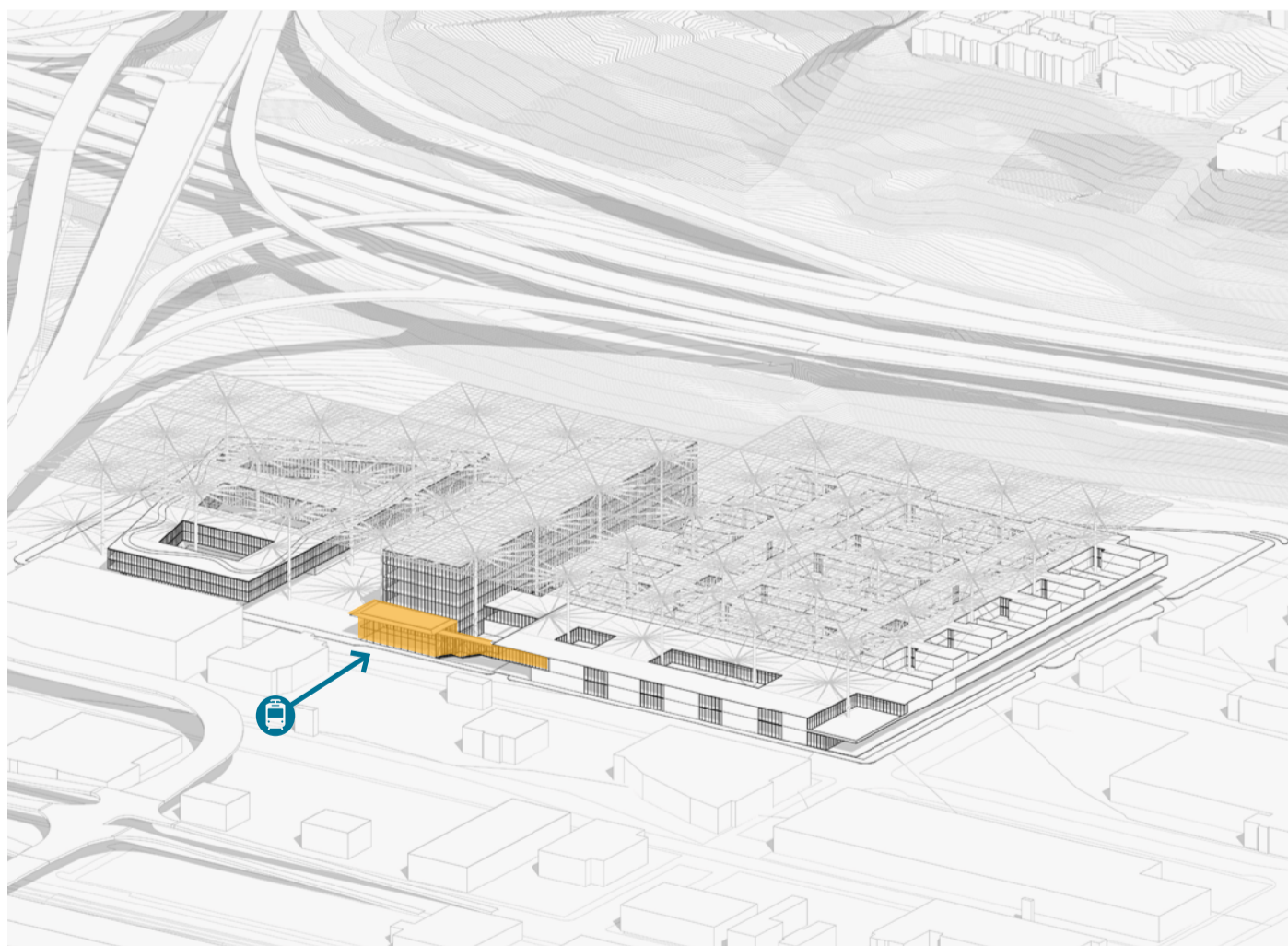
A view of the proposed central urban space opening onto 6th Avenue S, between the proposed office building (left) and arrivals hub and courthouse (right).

Incorporate an arrivals hub that greets everyone equally.

Located between the courts building and the in-custody building, the arrivals hub presents a clear third-space, and independent front-room that serves both buildings. It is a welcoming space for everyone participating in the civil and criminal legal system and related community services.

For individuals entering the courts or in-custody buildings, adequate space must be provided to accommodate the equipment, staffing, and queuing necessary for security screening. The arrivals hub provides a generous space within which security measures and staffing can be designed to be efficient and unobtrusive.

The pavilion is located along 6th Avenue S, and in a prominent location astride the primary urban outdoor space. And although the Hub is easily accessible via a short walk from the site's Arrivals Plaza, it is positioned on the site to take advantage of a potentially more direct relationship with Stadium Station. It is a low-slung and transparent structure, sited in front of both the courts and in-custody building, creating a more informal entry into both.



Location of the arrivals hub, illustrating the hub as positioned to take advantage of a potentially more direct relationship with Stadium Station.



Organizational relationship between the arrivals hub (Security and Entry Pavilion) and courts, community services, and the in-custody facility.



Render diagram illustrating primary circulation from the arrivals hub serving and connecting the courts and in-custody buildings.

Plan for a courthouse that is organized around contemporary needs for civil and criminal legal system services.

Strategic planning for a proposed courthouse focuses on establishing an appropriate size, framing organizing principles that may affect building size, identifying key site security considerations, and describing key critical adjacencies with other county facilities.

Unlike office buildings or general assembly spaces, establishing the initial size for a courthouse is based on a range of factors including the number of courtrooms needed and the types of related services provided. At the strategic planning stage this is established through benchmarking with other contemporary courts buildings.

Benchmarking with recent projects also highlights organizational trends and best practices that help organize the building to accommodate the distinct needs and inter-relationships of contemporary courts planning.

Organizing a proposed courthouse extends to the outside of the building as well. Security for all user groups begins with the building's site. Siting the courthouse to account for necessary vehicular stand-off distances and pedestrian security is a key driver for both location and the ultimate size and configuration of the building.

Another key driver for facility location is the tethered relationship between the courts building and the building housing in-custody individuals. These two buildings travel together, and that critical adjacency will define site selection and ultimately factor into the size and configuration of both proposed facilities.





Rendering of the proposed courthouse as viewed from across 6th Avenue S. with the arrivals hub shown in the foreground.

A Proposed Courts Building in SODO

The proposed courts building, together with the arrivals hub, mark the southernmost end of the SODO property's public realm. The building is entered through the arrivals hub, offering clear wayfinding for employees and King County residents participating in court services.

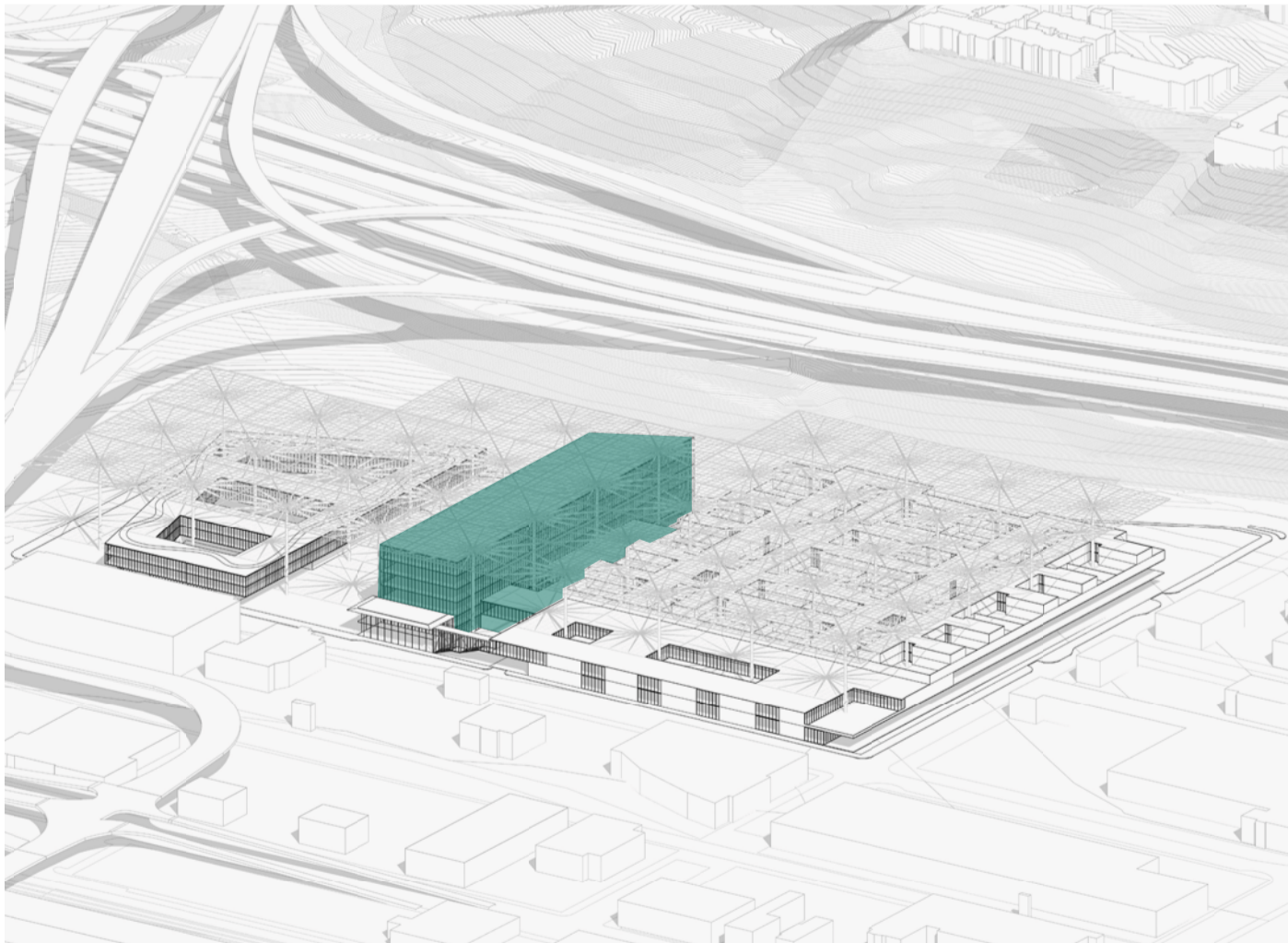
The building is 495,000 gross square feet, and six stories in height. The ground floor is dedicated to community services, offices, support and parking. The second floor accommodates administration spaces, jury assembly and support spaces, judicial offices, and in-custody transfers. The third through sixth floors include courtrooms, judicial offices, and support spaces. Building floorplates are organized to accommodate contemporary horizontal and vertical zoning of user groups to promote personal security for occupants and efficient court operations.

A gracious public staircase begins at the arrivals hub and rises alongside the adjacent urban landscape, serving all six floors. Hallways on each floor face the central outdoor space and offer views of a vibrant and verdant landscape.

An intensive green roof is planned across the bulk of the building's roof, with select spaces dedicated for building equipment and support.

Program Type and Area by Floor		
Floor/ Level	Space Type	GSF
Ground Floor	Community Services Offices, Support, Parking	97,500
Second Floor	Administration, Jury Assembly, Transfers, Courtrooms, Judicial Offices	97,500
Third Floor	Courtrooms, Judicial Offices, Support	75,000
Fourth Floor	Courtrooms, Judicial Offices, Support	75,000
Fifth Floor	Courtrooms, Judicial Offices, Support	75,000
Sixth Floor	Courtrooms, Judicial Offices, Support	75,000
Roof	<i>Intensive Green Roof</i>	66,000
	<i>Support</i>	20,000
Total (Enclosed area)		495,000

Gross square footage table for the proposed SODO courts facility.



Location of the courts building.

Benchmarking for Courts Gross Square Footage

The potential proposed courts building for King County has been benchmarked against two recently completed projects: The Multnomah County Courthouse in Portland, Oregon, and the Travis County Courthouse in Austin, Texas. These facilities were targeted because of their integration of community-focused programs and environmental sustainability.

The two facilities incorporated programs such as a welcoming and legible main entry, outdoor spaces, childcare facilities, and community services that seek to ease the stress of typical courthouse experiences. Dedicated separate and safe victim waiting areas, state of the art law libraries, a self-help law center, and a centralized Public Service and Payment Center. Though various other programs in the benchmark facilities may not be directly applicable, those square footages become transferable to potential programs more relevant for King County, such as community services that may wrap around District or Superior Court services.

Both facilities were designed for varying degrees of LEED certification. And both facilities utilized the project’s siting to contribute to the surrounding environments by featuring spacious sidewalks, pedestrian benches, bike racks, and public plazas, all easily accessible by foot, bus, and bike. While the courthouse in Austin, Texas includes space for public and jury parking, the courthouse in Portland, Oregon does not, relying instead on nearby parking garages and lots.

Owing to regional, operational, and urban similarities, the Multnomah County Courthouse, at 11,777 Building Gross Square Feet per Courtroom (BGSF), was selected as a precedent for a BGSF/ courtroom allocation.

Allocations are applied to 32 Superior Court courtrooms, six District Court courtrooms, and eight Ex-Parte or Family Court courtrooms, for a total of 46 courtrooms. With trends in Ex-Parte or Family Court courtrooms averaging smaller than general Superior or District Court courtrooms, each of the eight Ex-Parte or Family Court courtrooms has been assigned one-half unit each for gross area planning purposes. The total courtroom count, for purposes of square-footage allocations is 42 courtrooms, while the total count for facility program organization remains at 46 courtrooms.

The table at right indicates the percent distribution Departmental Gross Square Feet (DGSF), with a total of 380,000 DGSF. Applying a grossing factor of 30% (1.3 times the DGSF total) yields a total for the proposed King County Civil and Criminal Courts facility at 495,000 Gross Square Feet, with a calculated final allocation from the rounded value 11,785 BGSF/ courtroom.

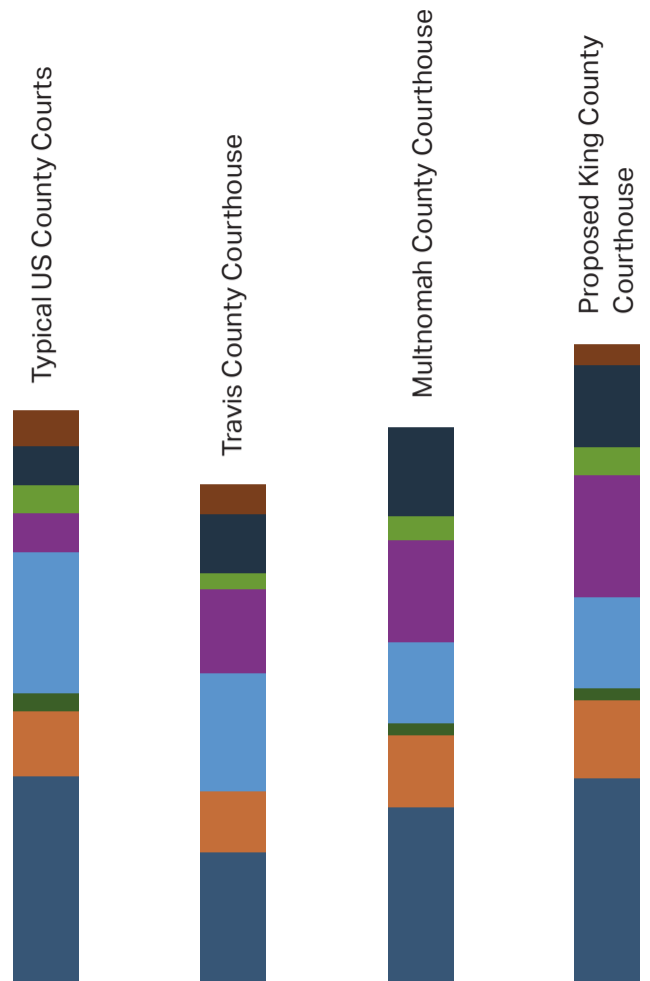


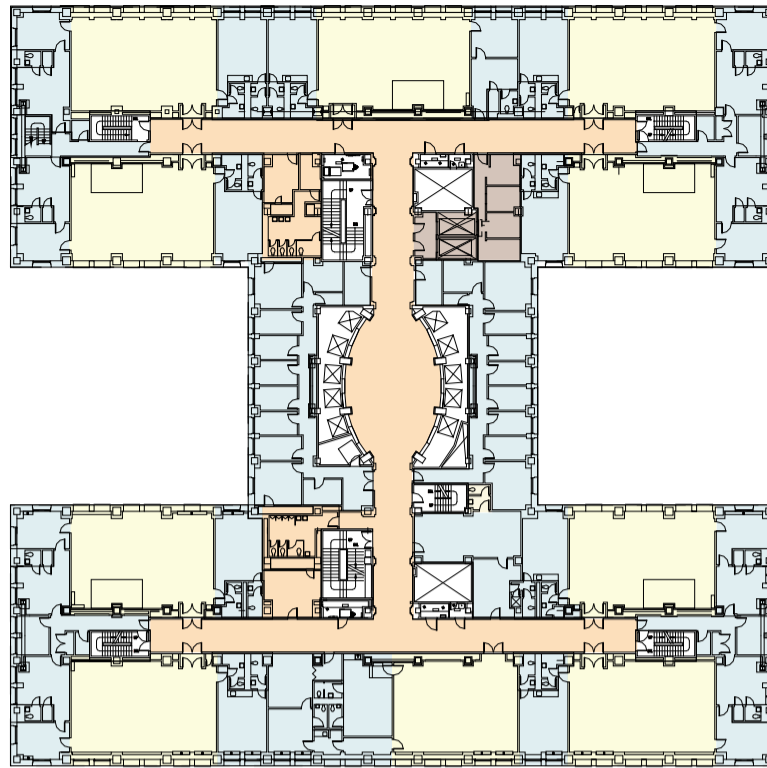
Diagram comparing the program ratios in benchmarked facilities with the recommended ratio for a proposed King County Courthouse.

- Court Sets
- Judicial Offices
- Jury Spaces
- Courts Offices
- Other Programs
- Security
- Support Spaces
- Parking

Program Type and Area by Percent		
Program Type	DGSF	%
Court Sets	144,800	38.0%
Judicial Office	41,800	11.0%
Jury Assembly	7,600	2.0%
Courts Offices	49,400	13.0%
Other Agencies and Uses	64,600	17.0%
Security, Central Holding	15,200	4.0%
Building Support	45,600	12.0%
Parking (in building)	11,400 ²	3.0%
Total DGSF	380,000	
Total BGSF	495,000	
# Of courtrooms	42 ¹	
BGSF/courtroom	11,785	

Allocation of space within the proposed King County Civil and Criminal Courts facility, Building Gross Square Feet (BGSF) per courtroom with percentage of total.

1. Number of courtrooms indicated reflects a half court-set unit applied to Ex-Parte or Family Court courtrooms for area calculation purposes.
2. Additional parking allocation within Total BGSF and within optional ground level floor addition.



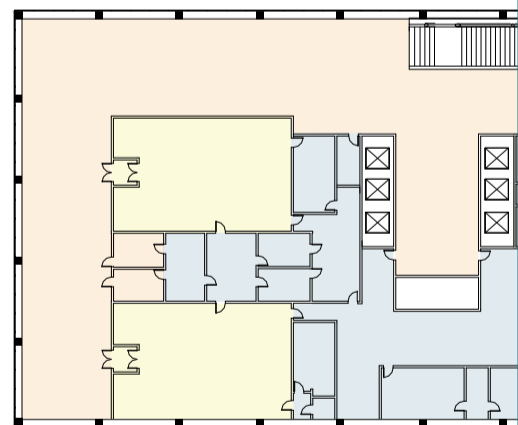
King County Courthouse plan organization.

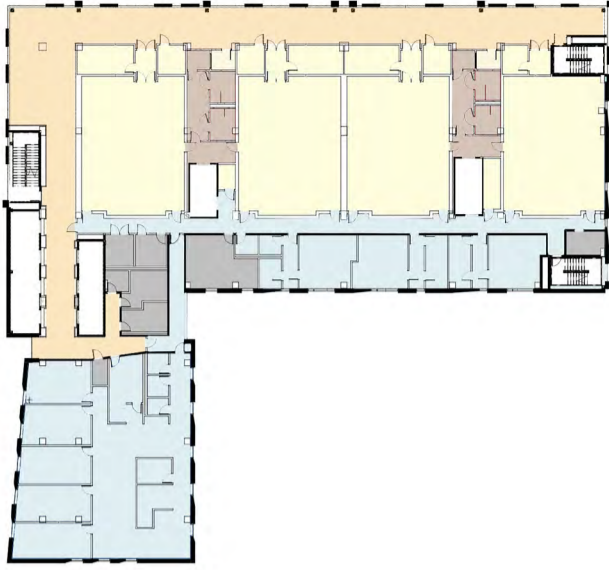
- Public Circulation
- Public Vertical Circulation (and support spaces)
- In-custody Holding and Vertical Circulation
- Courtrooms
- Judicial Staff and Jury Rooms

Contemporary Layouts for Contemporary Courts

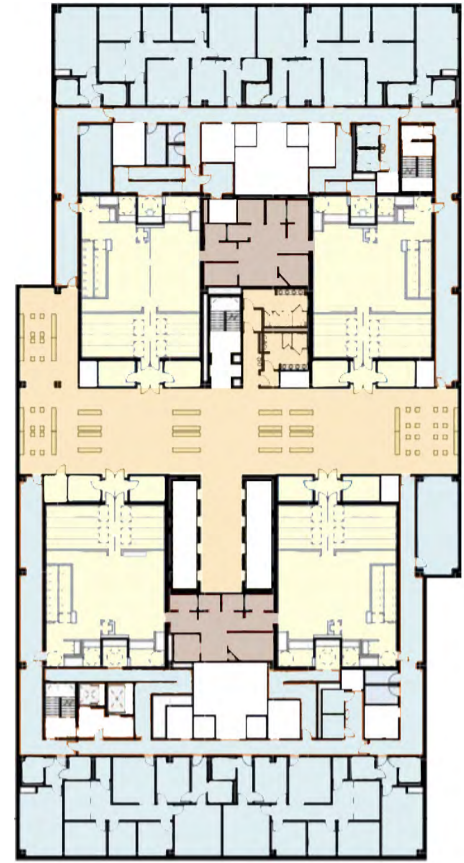
A century ago, courthouses achieved identity through size, site, and architectural elements, such as columns, domes, and grand entrances. A century later, courthouses function very differently, court processes are considerably more complex and require substantially different environments to support operations. Courthouses must accommodate unique space needs for the public, jurors, judges, attorneys, victims, witnesses, in-custody defendants, court staff, and a multitude of other service providers. Each of these participants require different degrees of security and access. Over the past decade, both the judiciary and design professions have focused on the design and organization of, "...spaces for adjudication, support areas, public service areas, and court-related offices within the facility. Thoughtfully designed environments promote efficient operations with consideration given to workflow, adjacencies, and proper zoning of court functions. Provisions are often made in the building and operational infrastructure to streamline interaction with court justice partners and promote efficient case processing" (The National Center for State Courts, 2021, p. ix).

The King County Courthouse, designed almost 100 years ago, was not designed for the contemporary organization of court functions; court functions on each floor share common circulation pathways, and the overlap in user groups creates operational inefficiency as well as privacy and security concerns. The organization of contemporary courthouses now mirrors the importance of the activities within and incorporates specific spaces and services that are unique to the communities that the court serves.





Multnomah County Courthouse plan organization. Portland, Oregon.



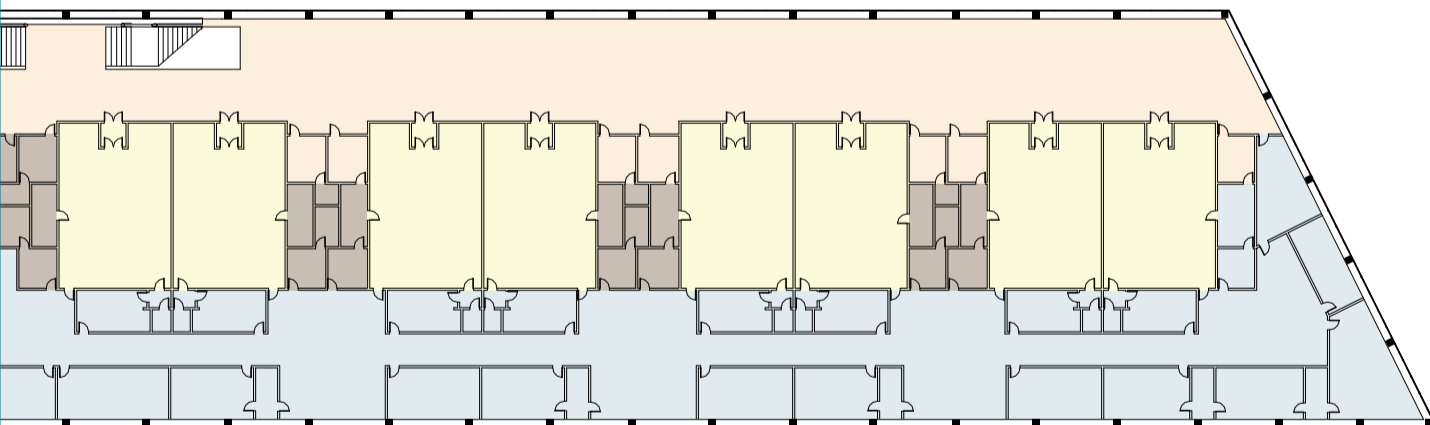
Travis County Courthouse plan organization. Austin, Texas.

Examples of Horizontal Zoning

The two examples above illustrate this trend in courthouse design: The Multnomah County Courthouse in Portland, Oregon, the Travis County Courthouse in Austin, Texas, and the Denver Justice Center in Denver, Colorado. A central criterion in the planning for each building was the clear organization of the floor plan into distinct zones that aggregate and accommodate the distinct needs and inter-relationships of each user group. While each plan is different based on particular program requirements and site conditions, they all share a common organizational strategy that promotes efficient operations, legibility in use, and privacy and personal security for occupants.

King County Courthouse Zoning

Strategic planning for a proposed King County Courthouse employs a similar horizontal zoning approach in order to embed both the required floor area for planning and cost estimating purposes, and an organizational goal for future programming and design.

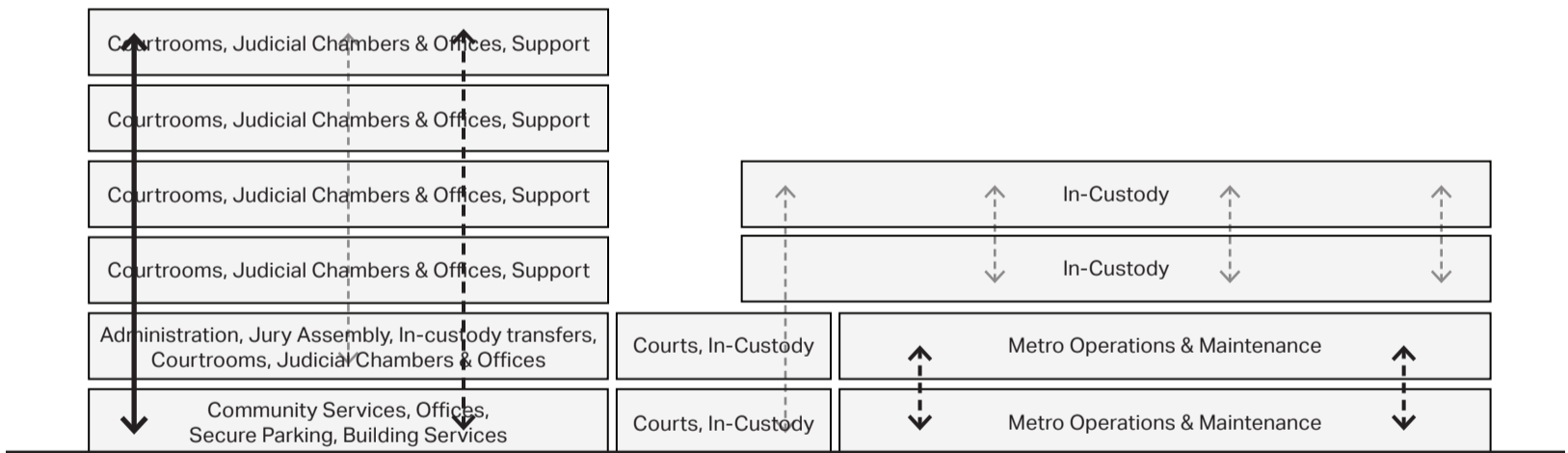
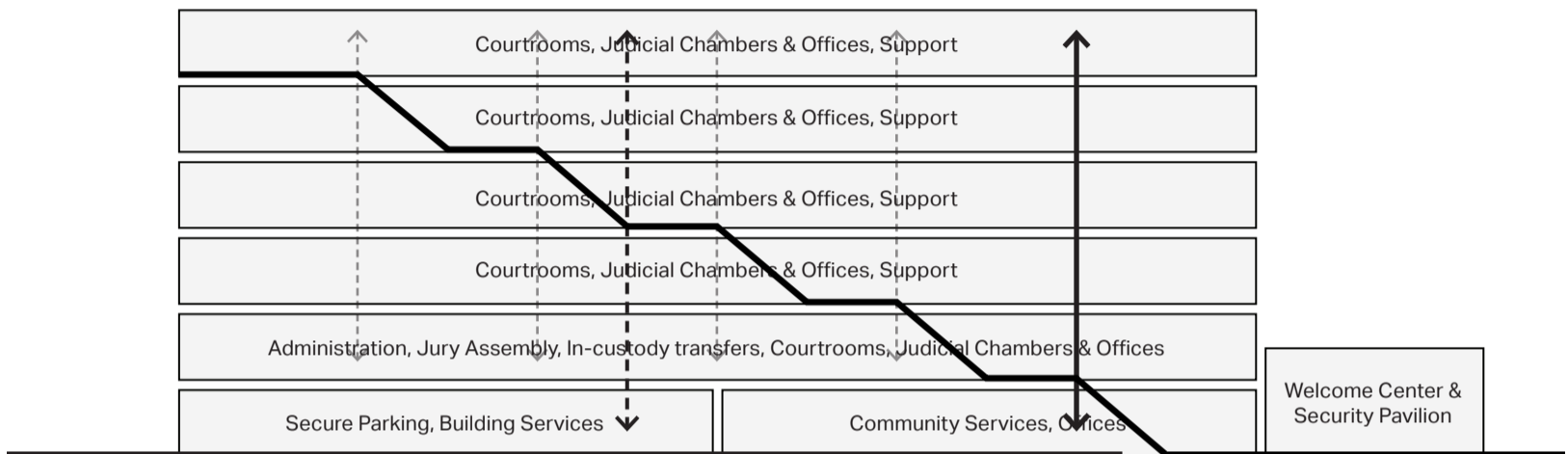


Example plan for a proposed King County SODO Courthouse illustrating horizontal zoning.

Multi-Story Organization

Most courthouses require multi-story construction in order to arrange courtrooms and services within easy distances between each, and to the building's public entry. Very old courthouses, like the existing King County Courthouse, often relied on a single, centrally located building core for the vertical circulation of all user groups. Contemporary planning recognizes the necessary vertical zoning of user groups to promote personal security for occupants and efficient court operations.

This approach requires more infrastructure for vertical circulation which must be accounted for in planning the Building Gross Square Footage (BGSF) for a proposed building. Both the Multnomah County Courthouse in Portland, Oregon, and the Travis County Courthouse in Austin, Texas, employ vertical zoning as a design strategy. Area planning for a future King County Courthouse includes contemporary zoning for vertical circulation and the separation of user groups.



Top: East-West stacking diagram illustrating the vertical organization of building program and the separation of vertical circulation for different user groups. Primary stairway serving all levels shown.

Bottom: North-South stacking diagram illustrating the vertical organization of building program and the separation of vertical circulation for different user groups.

- ↔ Public Circulation
- ⋯ Staff Circulation
- ⋯ In-custody Circulation



View of the primary stairway within the courts building as viewed from the central urban landscape.

Facility and Urban Security

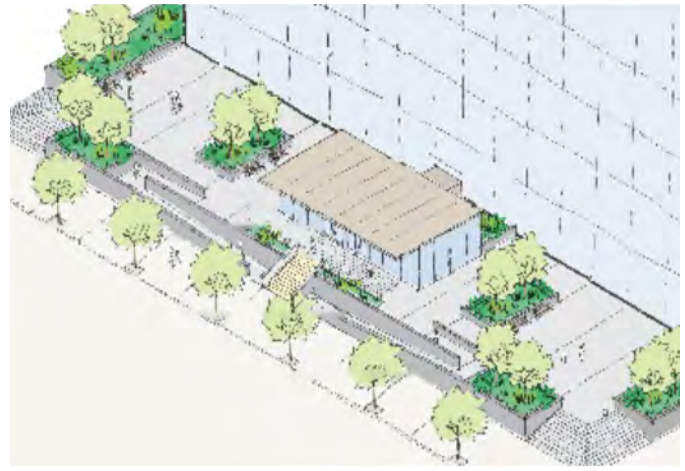
Courts facilities face unique security challenges. While the organization of interior spaces and circulation can provide proper separation of user groups for privacy and personal security, the facility itself must be sited to mitigate external threats. Security planning involves a number of interrelated conditions ranging from the neighborhood, standoff perimeters, site and site access, building envelope, and facility operations. The two types of threats that inform strategic planning efforts are related to standoff conditions, from vehicles approaching the building and individuals entering the building. Mitigating these threats may require a location that affords enough dimension on-site to sufficiently setback the building.

"Whenever possible, the courthouse should be set back from the perimeter of the property to protect the exterior from vehicular attack. Security measures, however, should remain as unobtrusive as possible" (NCSC, *The Courthouse: A Guide to Planning and Development: Security*, n.d.).

The proposed courts building is located in the center of the SODO site, a position that enables the minimum standoff distance as prescribed in the UFC DOD Minimum Anti-terrorism Standards for Buildings and the NCSC Site Security guidance, which is 50 feet within the installation perimeter. That "standoff" distance, or "setback" distance when referring to separation from unsecured building faces, should be carefully considered because objects like bollards and obtrusive site walls can convey an unintended message. "The use of overt security measures evokes an image of justice held hostage" (NCSC, *The Courthouse: A Guide to Planning and Development: Security*, n.d.). The U.S. GSA Site Security Design Guide identifies opportunities that align with local context and policy initiatives, such as planted drainage channels (bioswales) that reduce storm water runoff and support urban open space, while also preventing vehicle entry.

A Security Pavilion

For individuals entering the building, adequate space must be provided to accommodate the equipment, staffing, and queuing necessary for security screening. The U.S. GSA Site Security Design Guide advocates for the introduction of exterior security pavilions, "which protects the building against person-delivered explosives and manages queuing." Space allocations for an external pavilion are introduced into the strategic plan so that gross square footages and site considerations can be marked for future planning.



Example Security and Entry Pavilion from the U.S. GSA Site Security Design Guide, Diagram 2.7.

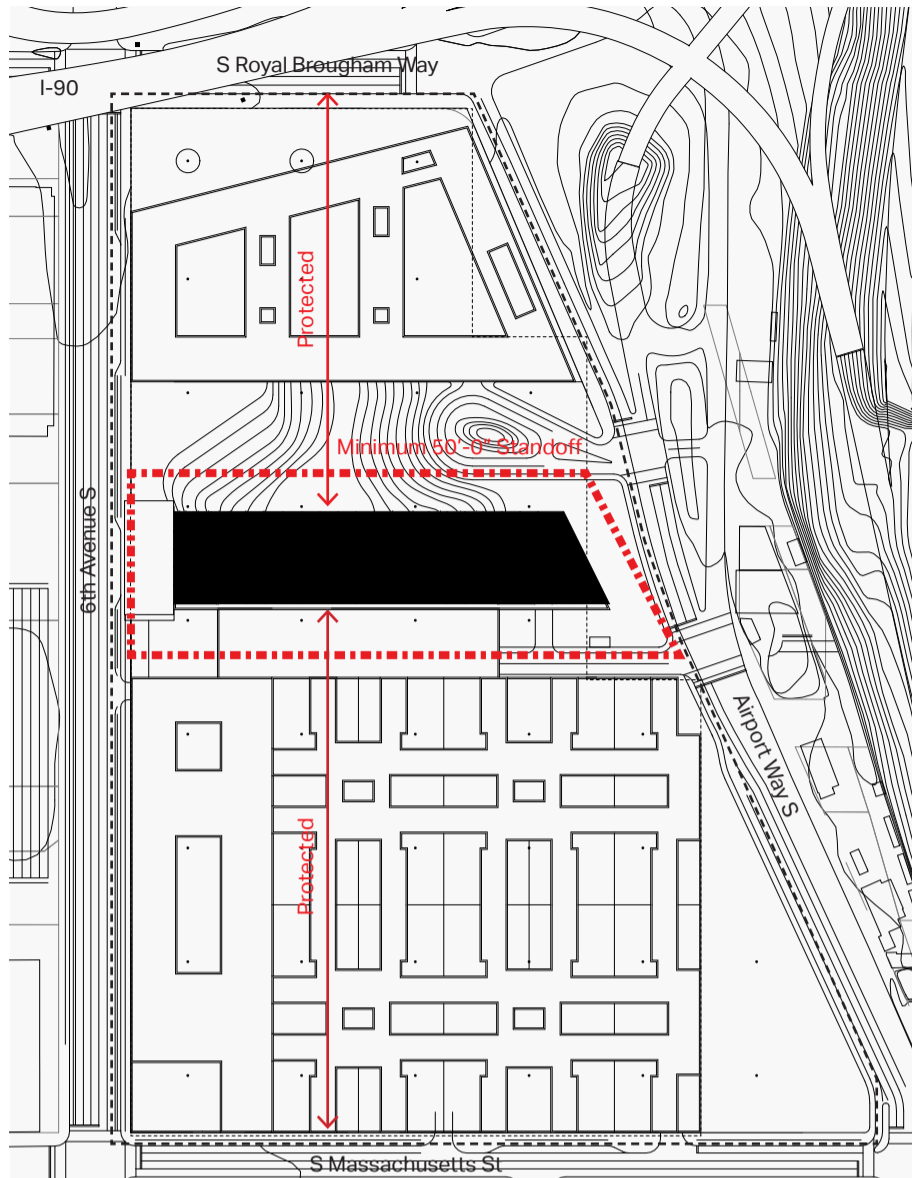
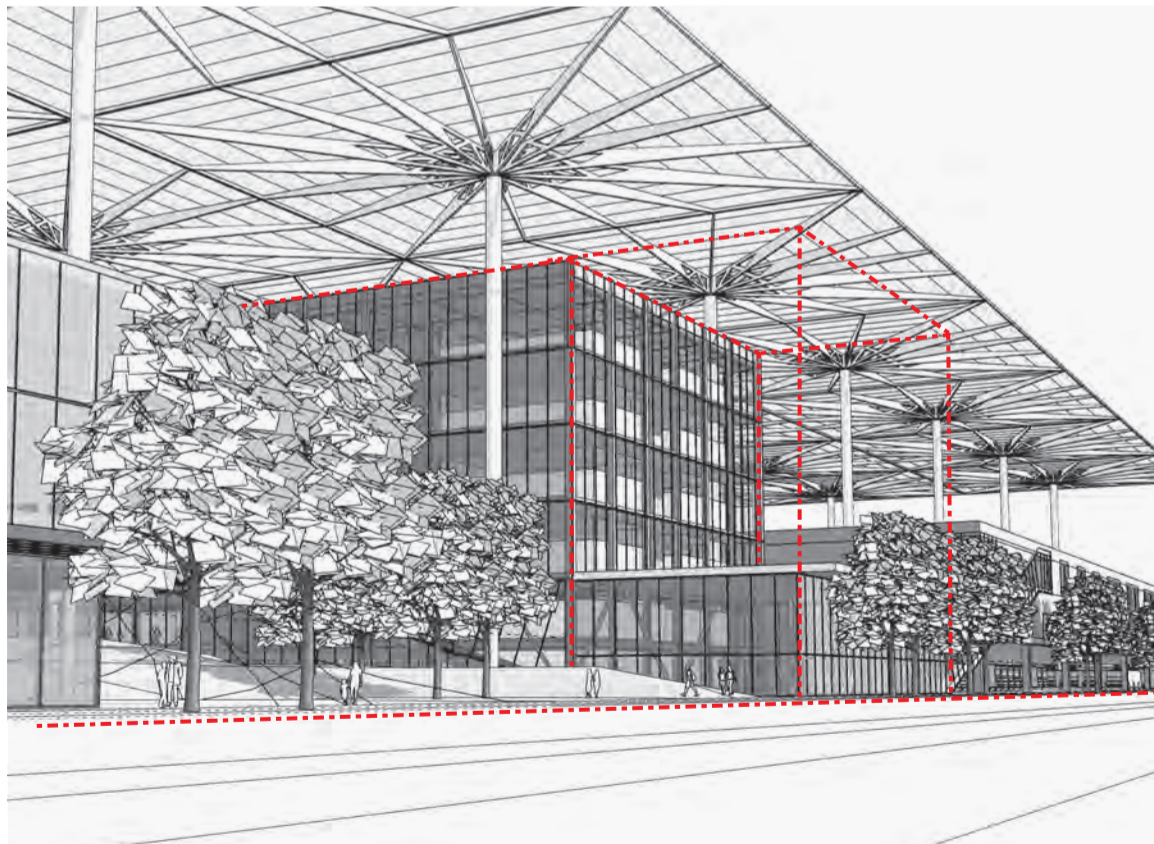
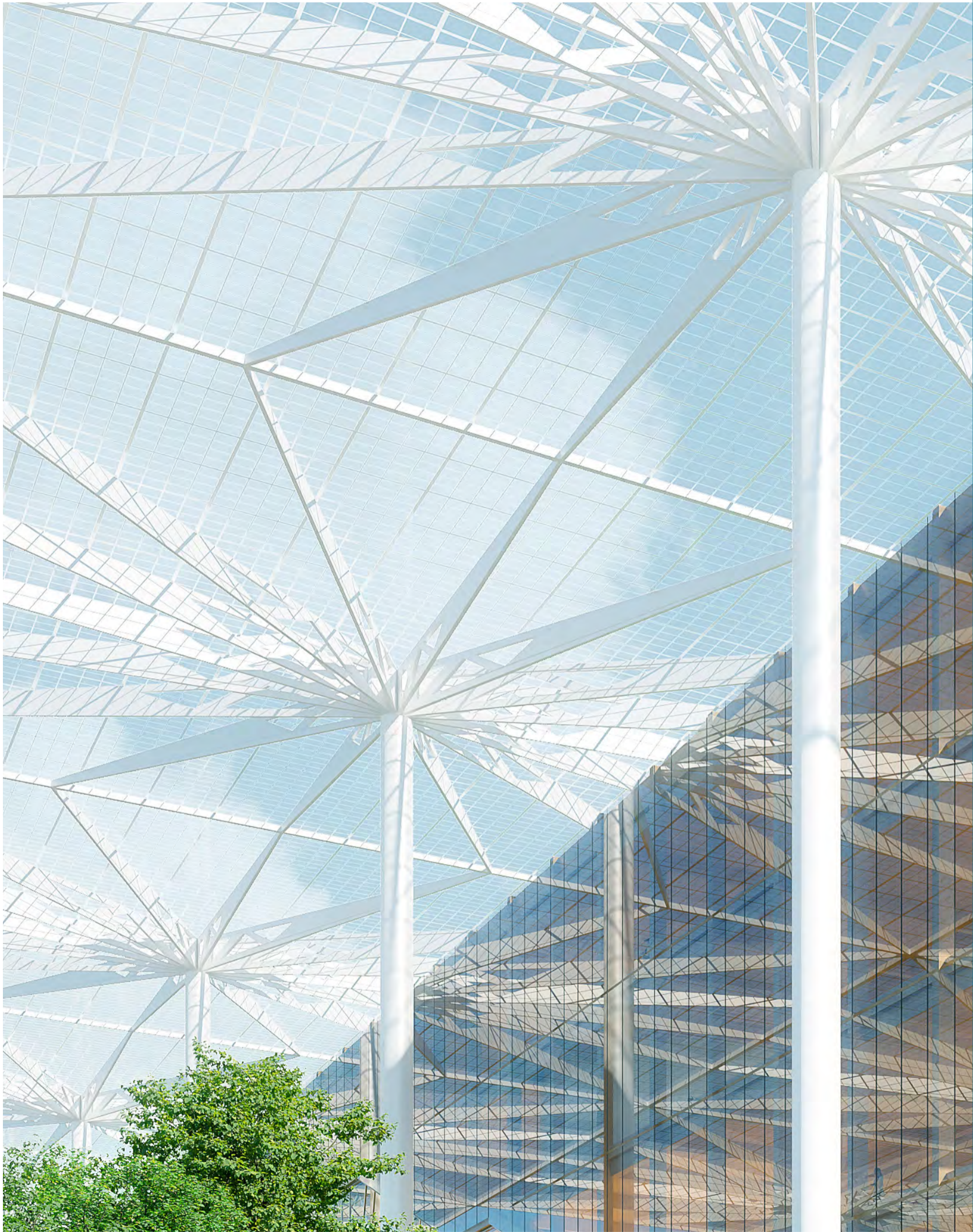


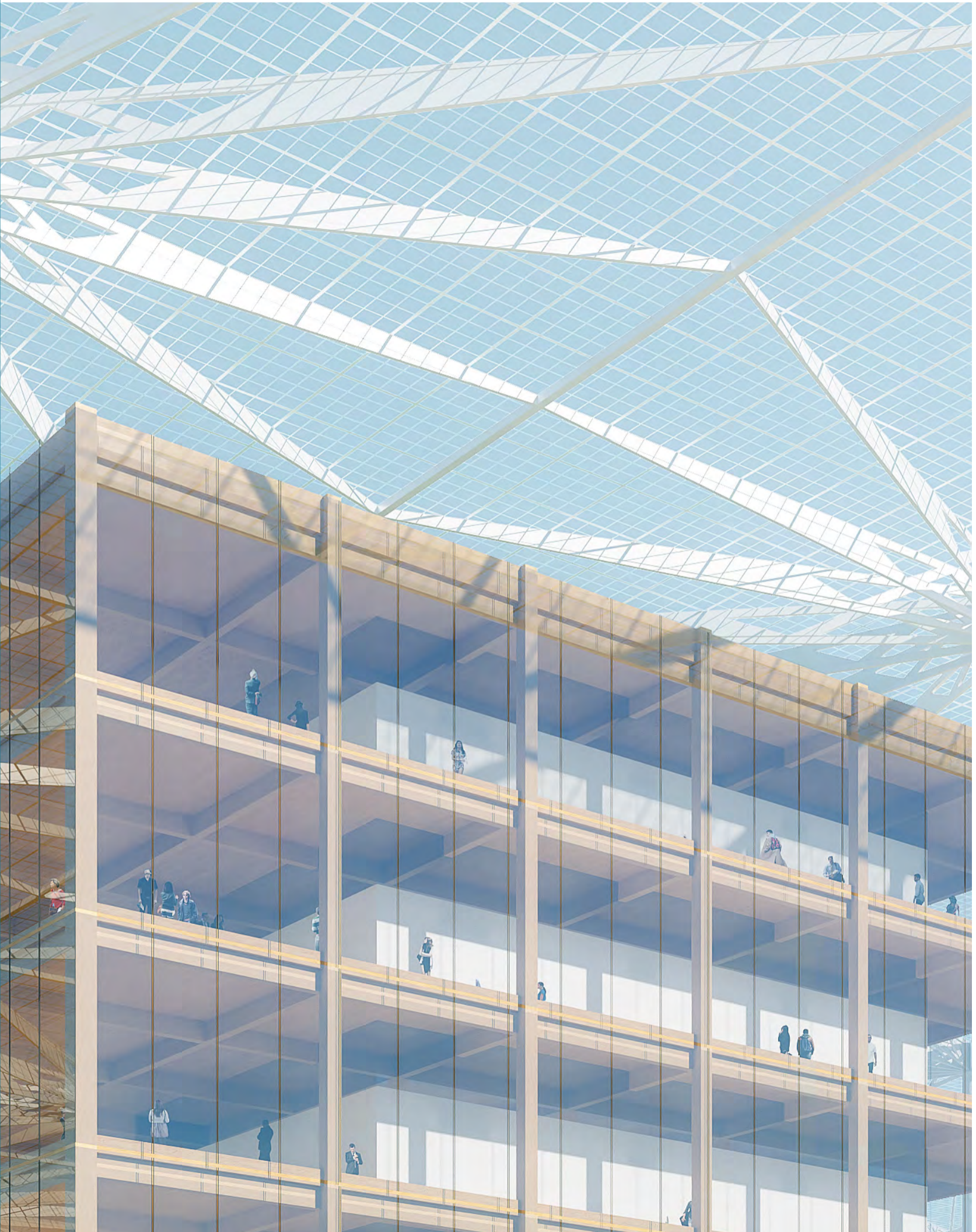
Diagram illustrating minimum established standoff distances (50'-0") and protected edges surrounding the courthouse.



Render diagram illustrating the minimum established standoff distances (50'-0") occupied by the arrivals hub (security and entry pavilion).



View of the proposed courts building.



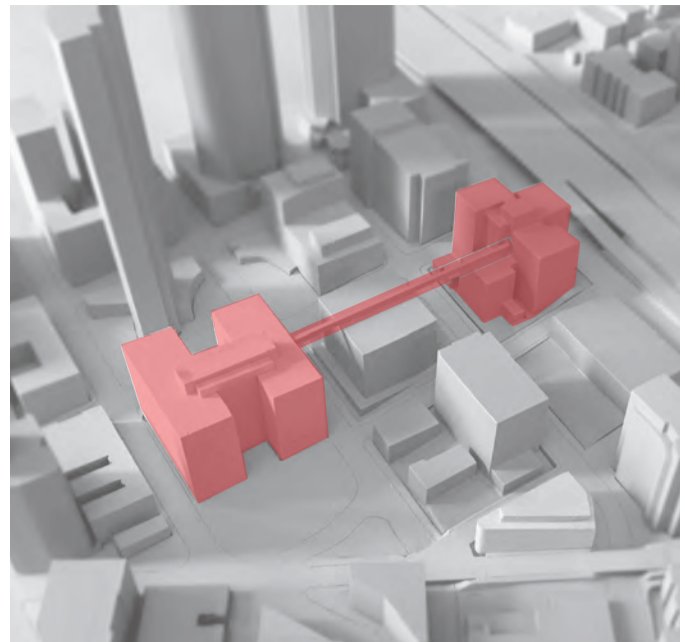
A Critical Adjacency Between Courts and In-Custody Facilities

Operational efficiency between King County Superior and District Court and the King County Correctional Facility require a direct physical connection between these two functional groups for efficient operations.

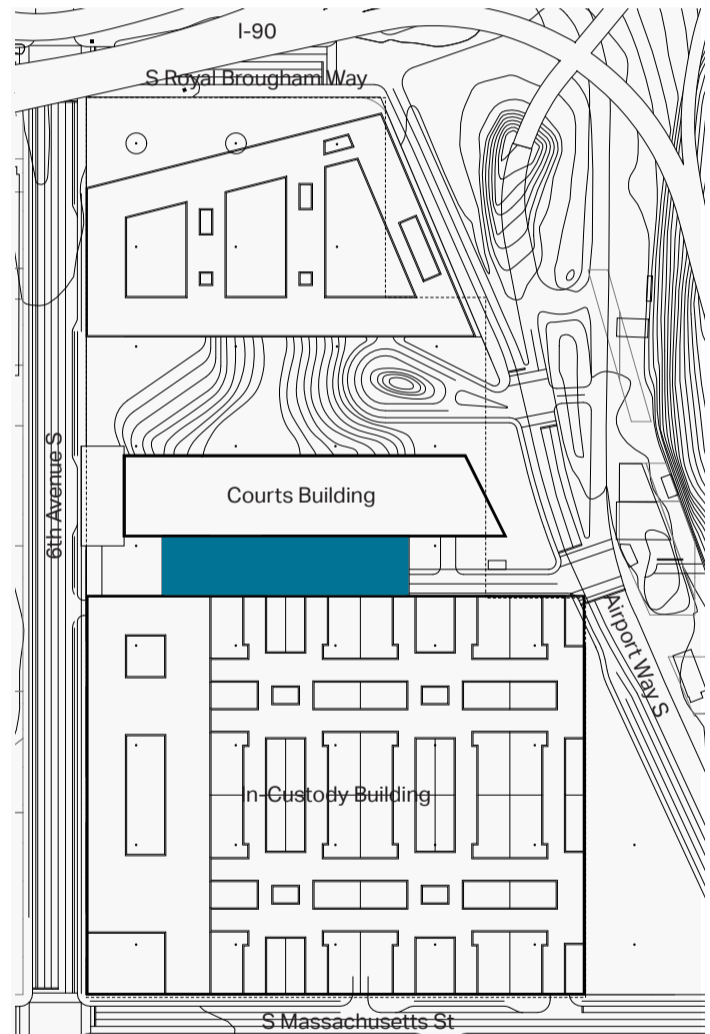
Examination of a single courtroom in the courthouse illustrates the importance of this functional relationship. The King County Chief Criminal Court handles a high volume of in-custody cases on a daily basis. The caseload on Monday through Thursday averages one in-custody case every four-and-a-half minutes; the caseload on Friday averages one in-custody case every six minutes. Though other courtrooms also require appearances by in-custody individuals, the volume of transfers between the Correctional Facility and the Chief Criminal Court alone highlight the needed proximity.

This necessity is already starkly represented by the existing skybridge connecting these two facilities in downtown Seattle. This tethering forms a critical adjacency between functional groups, and informed site conditions required to achieve that relationship as well as the independent goals for each facility.

For the proposed facilities, transfers are accommodated within a low, two-story, structure located between the courts building and the in-custody building. This structure is positioned mid-block and is screened from the public realm along 6th Avenue S by the arrivals hub, its connecting stairway, and site landscapes. Vehicular entry into this structure is located via a driveway along Airport Way S.



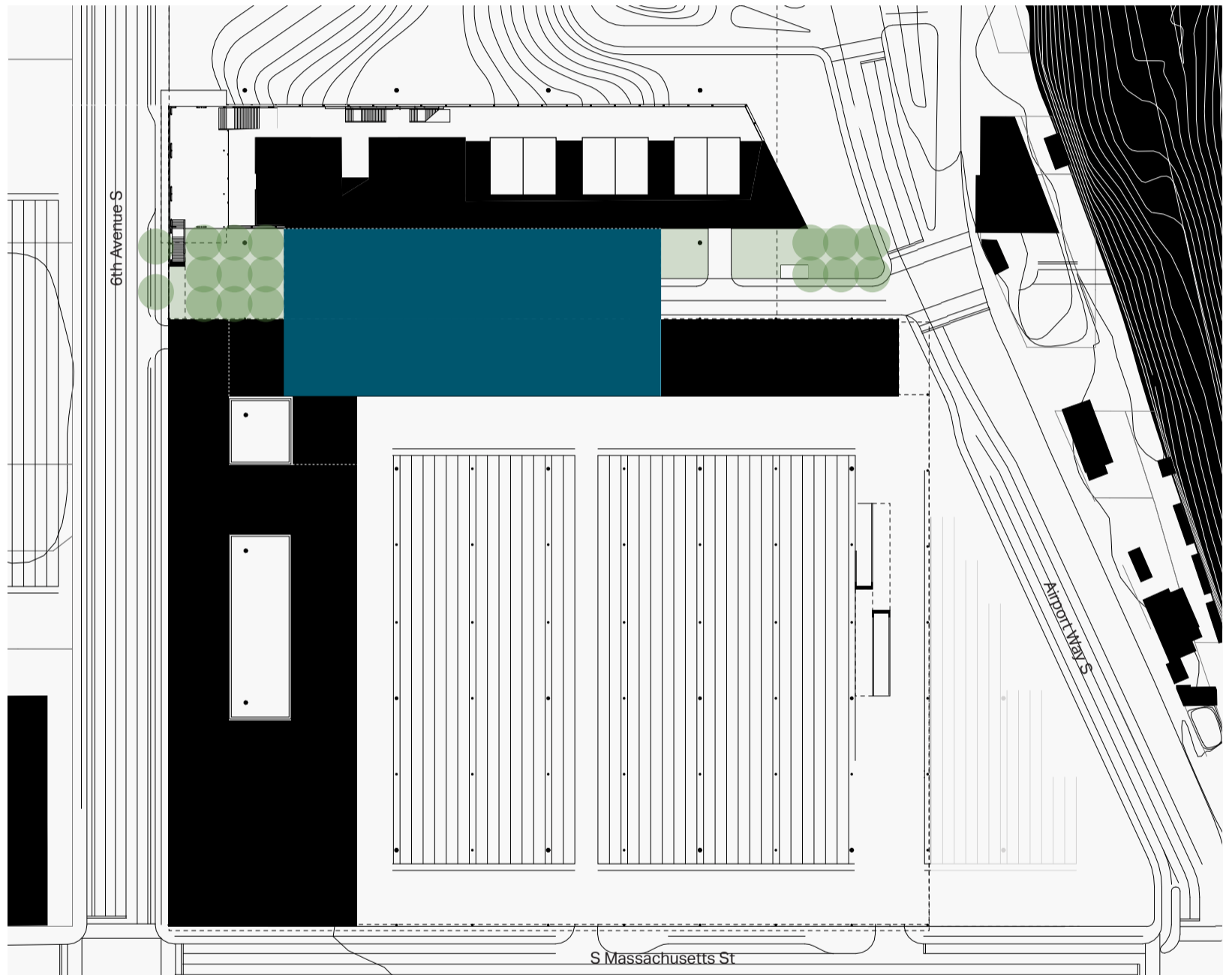
Model photograph of the tethered relationship between the courthouse and correctional facility illustrated by the existing skybridge.



Location plan illustrating the location of the structure connecting the courts and in-custody buildings

Conceptual Site Layout

The site plan below uses the second floor of the two-story structure connecting the courts and in-custody buildings to illustrate the overlap of building volumes as well as the landscape screening along both 6th Avenue S and Airport Way S.



Site Plan, taken at the second-floor level, illustrating the two-story structure connecting the courts building and the in-custody building. Landscape screening along 6th Avenue S and Airport Way S shown.

Plan for a new type of in-custody environment focused on human dignity, to support the needs of the population served, service providers, and staff.

To depart from typical U.S. models of punitive detention, the county should plan for a new type of building that focuses on human dignity, and the needs of the population served.

Strategic planning for a proposed in-custody facility requires aligning three interrelated considerations: facility goals, the size of a proposed facility, and its typology.

Conversations about facility goals have begun through a series of workshops and planning sessions with county staff, service providers and community groups through general working sessions.

Similar to the process for sizing a courts facility, at the strategic planning stage sizing is established through benchmarking with other contemporary in-custody buildings. Benchmarking with recent projects—and with best-in-class example facilities—highlights space allocation trends and forms the basis for a recommended future facility size.

Building typology influences a range of factors, including capital costs and operational costs, programmatic opportunities, and environmental quality within the facility for in-custody individuals, staff, and service providers.



Render of a proposed in-custody pod common room, with direct courtyard access.



Corrections Transformation Focus Groups

In the fall of 2023, King County and the project team conducted two focused work groups to begin a discussion on the potential of a future facility model, focused on human dignity, for both the populations served and the employees and staff providing services. One session was held with county staff working directly in the current downtown correctional facility, and one other session was held with groups providing medical, educational and social services to in-custody individuals. Future working groups should be established to conduct more detailed discussions focused on facility goals.

Corrections Transformation Focus Group

Meting Number 1

Facility Staff and System Partners

“I would love this to be a space that supports the [in-custody] residents.”

“Think about what you would provide this person if they were not in the jailed facility.”

“Restorative health, healing environment, bringing people back into society. A facility that fosters hope and not hopelessness. We are all part of the same community.”

“Visiting spaces that support family bonding and reunification allow for physical interaction, not phone visits through glass.”

“Proud to live in a county/neighborhood that is taking an innovative approach to the jail, leading the way for reform.”

Participant input from the Corrections Transformation Focus Group. Session Number 1.

**Corrections Transformation Focus Group
Meeting Number 2
System Providers**

“For staff and agency providers, natural light allows for a better feeling while working.”

“In-building training locations. Facility provides areas for staff training and needed certifications.”

“Facility provides room for sleeping and housing for staff that need it in emergency or as-needed basis.”

“Larger staff break rooms, natural light, adequate amenities. Kitchen should be large with ample storage needs to serve the staff properly.”

“Facility is safe and secure and allows staff to do their jobs.”

“Flexible space to allow for jail population and staff to work together safely and effectively.”

Participant input from the Corrections Transformation Focus Group. Session Number 2.

Benchmarking for Gross Square Footage

The potential for a new type of building requires identifying the basic parameters that inform typical facility sizing in order to identify shifts in those parameters that can inform a much-needed paradigm shift.

To identify benchmark facilities for comparison, an analysis was conducted to compare the total gross square footage of the county's existing correctional facility with eight other large correctional facilities across the United States. These benchmarking facilities were selected based on their capacity to house over 1,000 inmates. Facilities are situated in diverse locations, encompassing eight states: California, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The complete space program for each comparison facility was divided into the use categories to identify the percentage of total space that was allocated to each category.

More detailed benchmarking focused on the Jackson County Detention Center in Kansas City, CA, the San Mateo County Correctional Facility in Redwood City, CA, and the Los Colinas Women's Detention Facility in San Diego County, CA. The emphasis on treatment and care in these facilities, combined with various custody levels, mirrors the potential goals and priorities expressed during visioning workshops with King County. When averaged, the areas allocated within these facilities are roughly in line with recent standards applied to numerous completed facilities across the country. Benchmark square footages are divided by the number of beds in the facility to arrive at an industry reference standard of Building Gross Square Feet per Bed (BGSF/ bed). For the facilities reviewed, the average was 364 BGSF per bed.

Emerging trends generally adhere to the typical space allocation by percentage but increase the amount of space dedicated. This general increase provides for increased flexibility to meet new initiatives focused on program development, treatment services, and healthcare programs. The result is a general increase from 364 to 416 BGSF per bed within facilities currently in the planning stages. With trends in square footages per bed supporting greater areas dedicated to in-custody individuals, new models for the redistribution of that square footage are needed.

Use Categories All Benchmark Facilities	
Facility Component	
Male Housing	53.6%
Female Housing	6.4%
Administration	5.4%
Programs	2.0%
Services	3.7%
Intake/Release/Transfer	5.7%
Health Care	5.3%
Support Services	10.3%

Typical United States Recent Standards		
Facility Component	%	BGSF/bed
Male Housing	54%	197
Female Housing	10%	36
Administration	5%	18
Programs	5%	18
Services	5%	18
Intake/ Release/ Transfer	6%	23
Health Care	5%	18
Support Services	10%	36
Total BGSF/ bed	100%	364

Emerging Trends		
Facility Component	%	BGSF/bed
Male Housing	54%	223
Female Housing	10%	42
Administration	5%	21
Programs	5%	21
Services	5%	21
Intake/ Release/ Transfer	6%	25
Health Care	5%	21
Support Services	10%	42
Total BGSF/ bed	100%	416

Top: Percentages of total space allocated to program categories within 1,000 bed facilities.

Middle: Typical U.S. square footage standards for recently constructed facilities.

Bottom: Per bed square footage increases in facilities currently in the planning stages.

Shifting the Benchmark Basis

Halden Prison in Norway has served as a model facility across a number of aspects related to detention and treatment. And while conditions are dramatically different from current U.S.-based models of facility operation, the redistribution of area allocations within the facility are instructive for forward-thinking facilities, particularly at an early planning stage.

Halden Prison in Norway is a maximum-security prison that has a capacity that can range from 248 – 252 beds. The Halden Benchmark, stemming from the progressive Halden Prison model in Norway, currently stands at an impressive 1,153 building gross square feet (BGSF) per bed. In contrast, the emerging U.S. average space allocation is significantly lower at 416 BGSF/bed. The proposed in-custody facility targets a 550 BGSF/bed.

The rationale behind this recommendation is rooted in the acknowledgment that the applicability of the Halden model to the United States requires a discerning approach. While the Halden Prison model is renowned worldwide for its focus on humane conditions and rehabilitation, it's vital to recognize the substantial distinctions in scale, budget, and cultural considerations between a Norwegian facility and the broad U.S. correctional context.

The proposed benchmark of 550 BGSF per bed operates at a middle ground between the values of the Halden model and the practical circumstances of a county system. It recognizes that overall square footages result in a very different BGSF/bed figure when applied across 1,000 beds rather than 250 beds. And it underscores the significance of ensuring sufficient space for rehabilitation and reintegration while remaining cognizant of local and regional factors, and state requirements.

This allocation is also redistributed across program categories that more closely reflect the Halden model, placing more emphasis on activities and recreation, programs, and services.

The table at right represents the benchmark breakdown for a facility with the space allocations of the Halden model and the practical circumstances related to an approximately 1,000-bed facility for King County.

Future Capacity Planning

A 1,000-bed facility has been used as a basis for study and does not include projections for the types of beds needed. But a future facility may require a different capacity. Future workgroups should be convened to outline engagement, review, and planning processes in order to determine the number and type of beds required for any future facility.

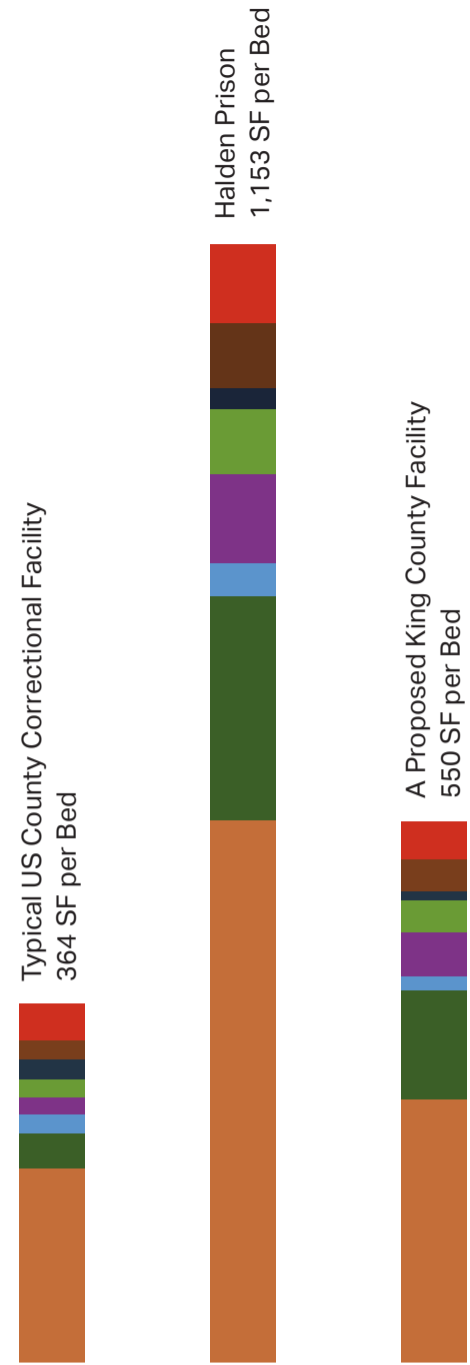


Diagram comparing the program ratios in benchmarked facilities with the recommended blended ratio for a proposed King County Facility.

- Male Housing
- Female Housing
- Administration
- Programs
- Services
- Transfer
- Health Care
- Support

King County, WA		
	%	BGSF/bed
Housing	48%	264
Activities and Recreation	20%	110
Administration	3%	17
Programs	8%	44
Services	6%	33
Intake/ Release/ Transfer	2%	11
Health Care	6%	33
Support Services	7%	39
Total BGSF/ bed	100%	550

King County (future) facility benchmarking, Building Gross Square Feet (BGSF) per bed.

Focus on a Lower Rise Building

Building typology can influence a wide range of factors, including capital cost. In 2010, Whatcom County conducted a comparative site assessment study for a new facility. "The option of a vertical rather than a horizontal jail was examined during the initial phases of site selection. HDR recommended a horizontal jail due to lower operational costs, the ability to scale the amount of housing construction to the immediate and short horizon need, and potentially higher initial construction costs [for a high-rise jail]. While accepting HDR's expertise in the field of public facility construction, additional research was done to compare the desirability of vertical VS horizontal structures. Resource materials available from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) indicate that, if possible, horizontal construction is a more desirable option." (HDR, 2010, pp. 2-3,5) (Whatcom County, Horizontal vs Vertical, n.d.).

In 2008, the City of Seattle performed a similar study. That report concluded that capital costs and operating expenses would be less with a low-rise jail (CGL, 2008).

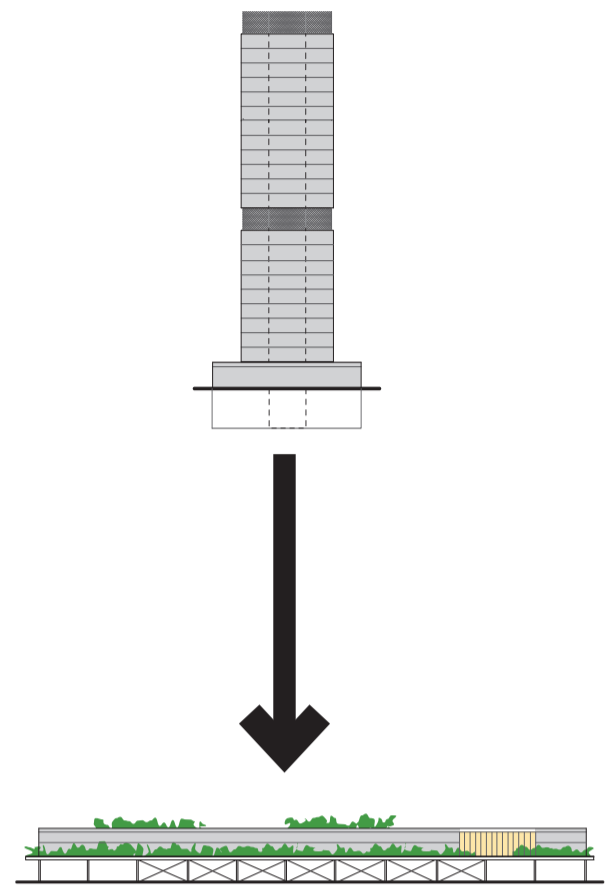
In a more recent 2017 study for the replacement of the outdated and crowded Oahu Community Correctional Center, the preliminary cost estimates for a 1,300-bed facility ranged from \$433 million for a low-rise facility to \$673 million for a high-rise structure (Budiono, 2017). Escalating those 2017 estimates to 2024 translates to \$632 million for a low-rise facility to \$982 million for a high-rise facility.

But to maintain facilities that are geographically proximate to families and support networks for in-custody individuals, some cities have no alternative to high-rise construction. New York City's plan to close Ryker's Island proposes the construction of four borough-based jails. The costs of those high-rise facilities continue to grow, with the Brooklyn Detention Site contracted at \$2.96BN for a 1,050-bed facility, and the Queens Detention Site estimated at \$4BN for a 1,150-bed facility.

Although the program composition and site conditions most certainly vary between these new facilities in New York and any proposition for a roughly 1,000-bed building in Seattle, it is worth noting that comparatively the "overall construction cost city-index between New York and Seattle is similar (however on a product basis, such as steel or lumber, New York is more expensive than Seattle by only 4% to 8%)" (Source: DCW Cost Management).

In general terms, the capital cost premium pricing factor, used by the CGL Companies, for high-rise construction, as opposed to standard construction, is 25%. The maintenance and energy premium rises after a facility passes six levels vertically; the systems needed for the overall height, the vertical lift systems, the heat gain/loss from glass, etc. will generally cost 30% more for maintenance and as much as 50% more for utility costs.

As planning for future facilities progresses, the potential capital and operating cost advantages of low-rise construction should continue to be studied in greater detail.



Moving from a high-rise to a low-rise typology for in-custody facilities.

Changing Typology to Change Opportunity

Building typology also shapes the opportunity for a variety of programmatic opportunities. Opportunity for access to quality outdoor space is a prime example. U.S. jails and prisons often restrict incarcerated people from going outside, even though the ability for outdoor recreation can shape mental health in correctional environments (Morris & Izenberg, 2023).

Often the restrictions cited are in reference to the scant number of hours per week permitted for outdoor activity; Washington State requires only five to seven hours per week of outdoor activity. But the nature of the outdoor space must also be considered.

The King County Correctional Facility (top right image) includes a series of ventilated rooms that serve as outdoor recreation areas, known as yardouts. These spaces occupy residual floor area between housing wings and, due to the position of the building's elevator and service core, are restricted in overall size.

Some high-rise facilities, like the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Chicago, Illinois, locate the exercise yard on the roof of the building. The MCC's rooftop yard is enclosed by 30-foot tall concrete walls with horizontal fenced openings.

Fundamentally, U.S. jail and prison authorities should strive to expand access to outdoor recreation wherever and whenever possible, not only because of research indicating its role in supporting mental health and other health-related outcomes, but also in recognition of outdoor access as a basic human right (Morris & Izenberg, 2023).

Other comparisons can be made between space-types in low-rise and high-rise facilities including the organization of medical spaces horizontally rather than vertically, visitor and family spaces that feel less like a visit to prison, and the ability to create spaces for staff that are separated from in-custody population circulation and services.

As planning for future facilities progresses, specific program needs for the populations served by the King County in-custody facility should continue to be refined to ensure that detailed planning meets the county's long-term goals.



Top: High-rise facility. King County Correctional Facility. Typical outdoor open space (yardout).

Middle: High-rise jail. Primary outdoor open space located on the rooftop at the Metropolitan Correctional Center, Chicago, Illinois.

Bottom: Low-rise courtyard outdoor space. Halden Prison, Halden, Norway.



Halden Prison, Individual confinement outdoor area.



Halden Prison, Common outdoor space.



Halden Prison, Active outdoor recreation areas.



Halden Prison, Common corridor.



Halden Prison, Common room.



Halden Prison, Cell block corridor.



Halden Prison, Individual cell.



Halden Prison, House (Pod) common kitchen.

A New Type of In-Custody Building

The proposed in-custody building is sited at the southern end of the SODO case study site. The proposed building rolls up a series of inputs; feedback from King County Staff and Community Advisory Groups, early input from Corrections Transformation Focus Groups, and a recalibration of facility program areas to align more closely with the humane standards followed in the Halden Prison example project.

The proposed building includes a public entry via the arrivals hub, with staff entries—including vehicular ingress and egress—from Airport Way S. The facility is located on three floors, with the majority of the program area positioned above King County Metro Operations and Maintenance.

The benchmarked floor area was set at 550 GSF per bed, translating to 550,000 total GSF for enclosed areas. The distribution of floor areas by program type and across facility floor levels are indicated in the tables at right. Owing to varying site conditions, exterior areas are not generally represented in the GSF by Program Type Table, but those totals have been included in the GSF by floor table. When divided by the number of potential occupants, the facility is planned for approximately 150 GSF per bed of outdoor open space.

The organization of the facility positions Gateway, Administration, and Visitor areas in the northwest corner of the building, closest to the arrivals hub, and courts/ transfer connection. Areas for recreation, activities, educational services, and medical services are located on the second and third floors of the building along the 6th Avenue S. frontage. Housing and supporting spaces represent the majority of the facilities gross area; standard housing units—and associated outdoor spaces—form a lattice of buildings and open spaces across the center and southwest portion of the site.

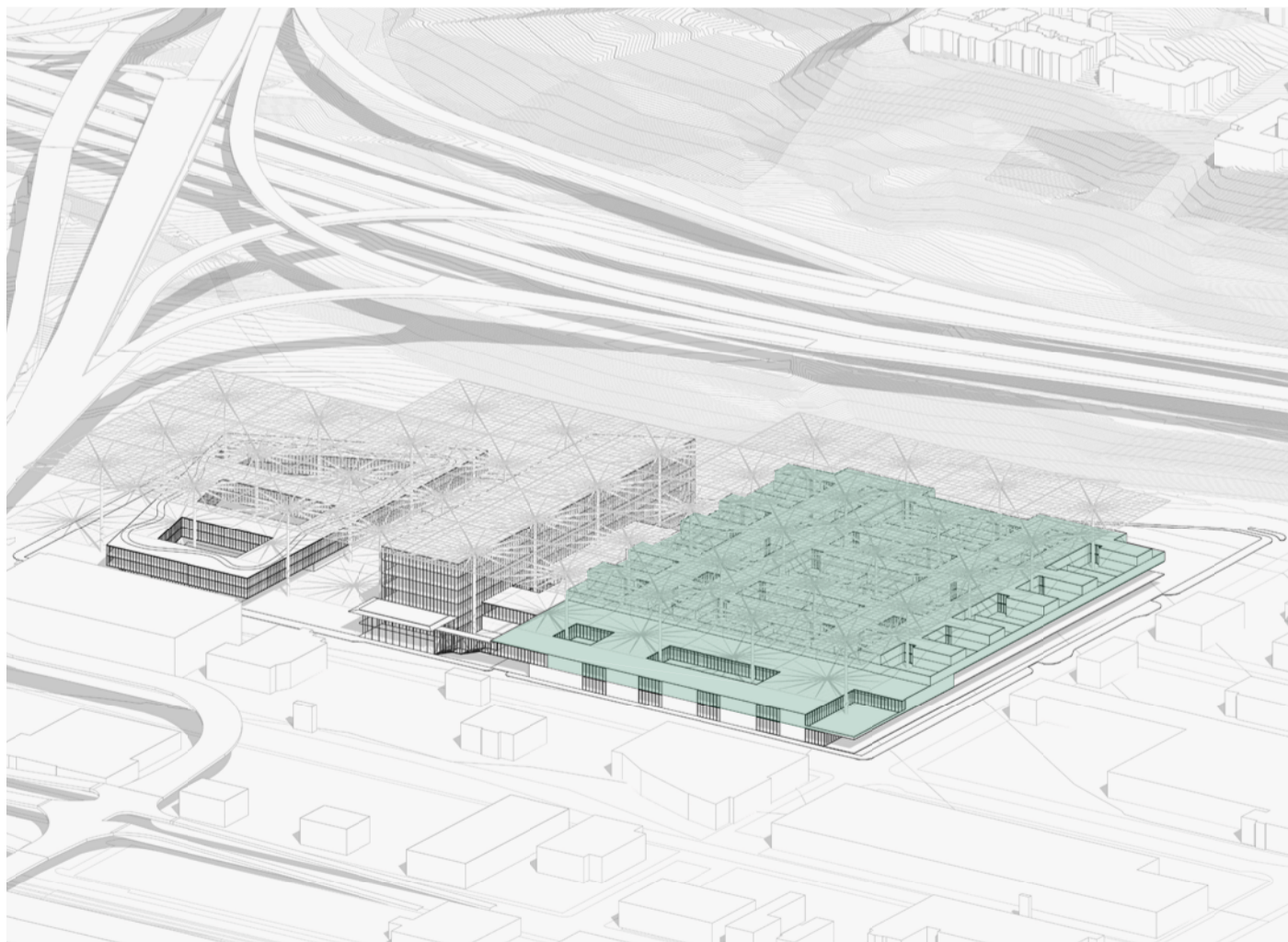
An intensive green roof is planned across the bulk of the building’s roof, with spaces and routes for circulation and observation, and with select spaces dedicated for building equipment and support.

SODO In-Custody Facility, GSF by Program Type		
Program Type	%	GSF
Housing	48%	264,000
Activities and Recreation	20%	110,000
Administration	3%	16,500
Programs	8%	44,000
Services	6%	33,000
Intake/ Release/ Transfer	2%	11,000
Health Care	6%	33,000
Support Services	7%	38,500
Total (Enclosed Area)	100%	550,000

SODO In-Custody Facility, GSF by Floor		
Floor/ Level	Space Type	GSF
Ground Floor	Mixed Program Types	10,000
Second Floor	Mixed Program Types	90,000
	<i>Outdoor Open Spaces</i>	<i>25,000</i>
Third Floor	Housing and Mixed Program Types	225,000
	<i>Outdoor Open Spaces</i>	<i>100,000</i>
Fourth Floor	Housing and Mixed Program Types	225,000
Roof	<i>Intensive Green Roof</i>	<i>300,000</i>
	<i>Support</i>	<i>25,000</i>

Top: Gross square footage table for the in-custody building listed by program type.

Bottom: Gross square footage table for the in-custody building listed by floor level.



Location of the proposed in-custody building.

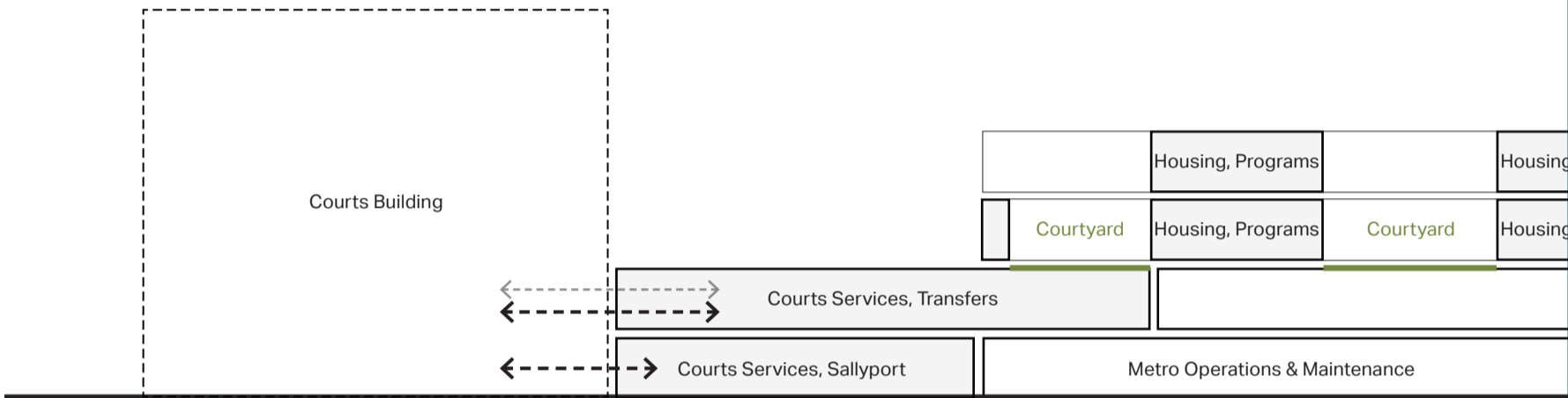
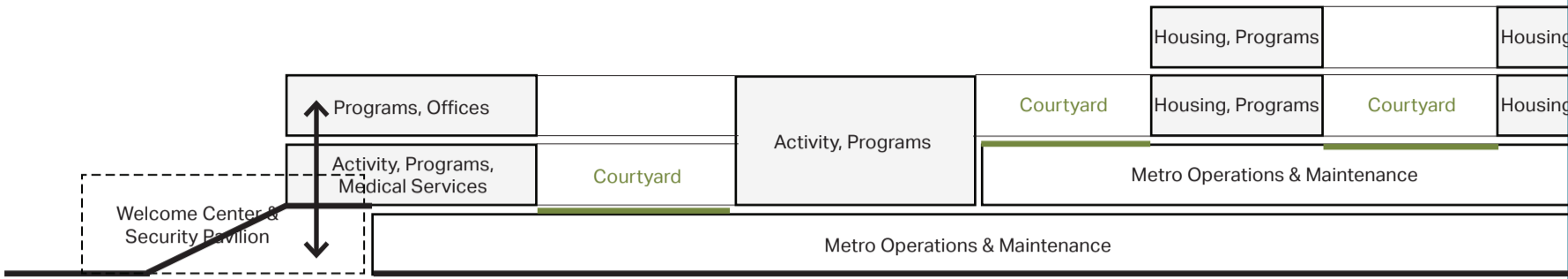
Conceptual Site Layout

The site plan below uses the fourth (top) floor of the In-Custody Standard Housing wings to illustrate a potential organization for standard housing wings. Additional program areas are outlined in site plan plates No.1 through No.3 in this section.



In-custody building. Fourth floor plan cut through housing and program blocks.

- A Gateway Area, Administration (Below)
- B Visitor Area (below)
- C Activity, Program(s), and Medical Area (below)
- D Staff Area (below)
- E Staff Courtyard
- F Standard Housing Wing, Programs
- G Standard Housing Common Area
- H Program Areas, Offices
- J Standard Housing Courtyard
- K Sallyport and ITR (below)



Top: East-West stacking diagram illustrating the vertical organization of building program for the in-custody building located above Metro Operations and Maintenance.

Bottom: North-South stacking diagram illustrating the vertical organization of building program for the in-custody building located above Metro Operations and Maintenance.

- ↔ Public Circulation
- ←- - - - -> Staff Circulation
- ←- - - - -> In-custody Circulation

Stacking Functions

The stacking diagrams above illustrate the relationship between facility program areas.

Housing, Programs		Housing, Programs		Housing, Programs		Housing, Programs	
Housing, Programs	Courtyard	Courtyard	Housing, Programs	Courtyard	Housing, Programs	Courtyard	Housing, Programs
Metro Operations & Maintenance							
Metro Operations & Maintenance							

Housing, Programs		Housing, Programs		Housing, Programs		
Housing, Programs	Courtyard	Courtyard	Housing, Programs	Courtyard	Housing, Programs	Courtyard
Metro Operations & Maintenance						
Metro Operations & Maintenance						

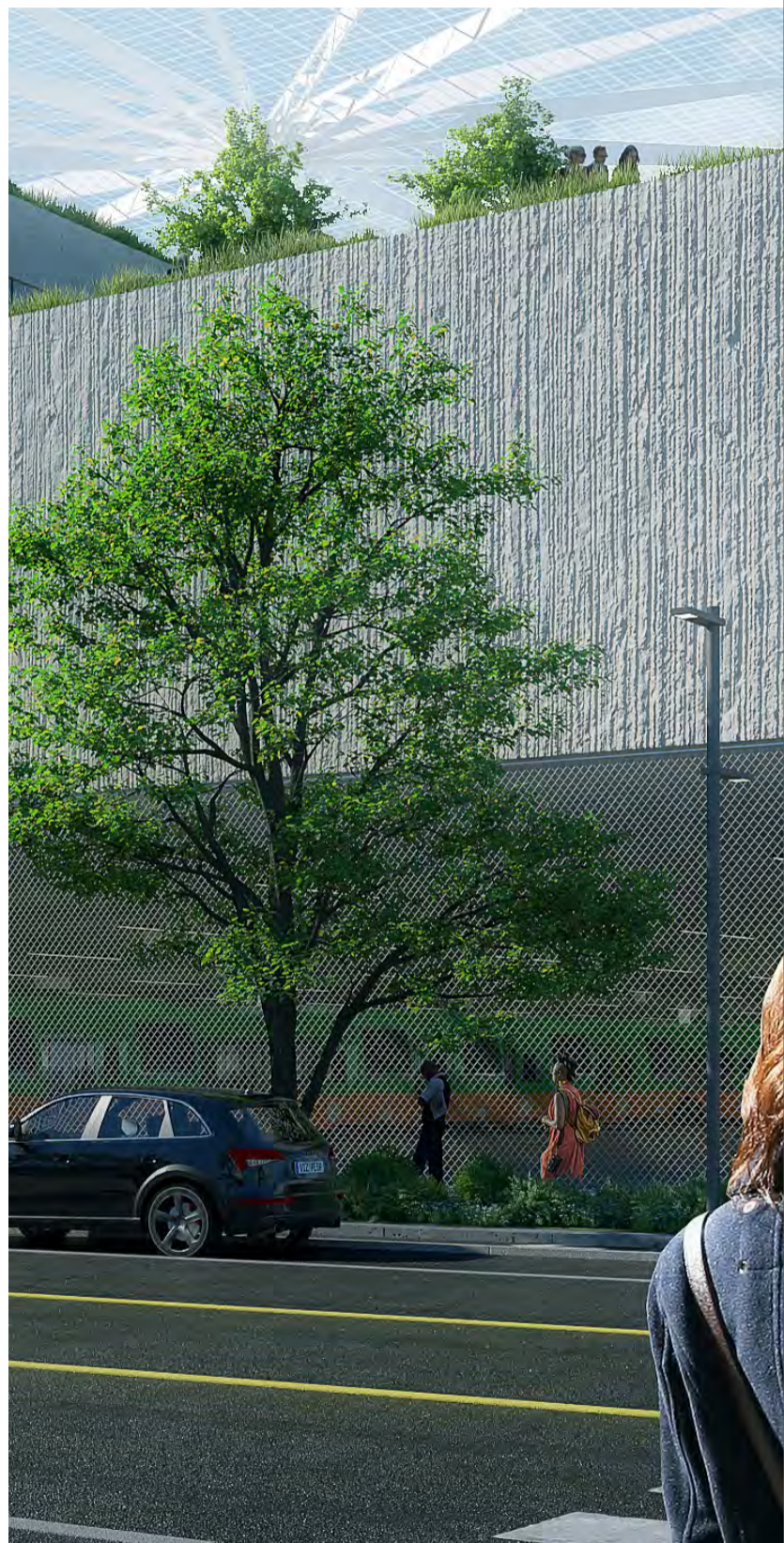


View of an in-custody building courtyard associated with standard housing units.

Plan for a purpose-built, modern and efficient SODO Base equipped to serve a zero-emissions fleet and provide a high-quality workspace for King County Metro employees.

Plan for a purpose-built bus base for Metro fleet and operations, to protect county assets from constant exposure, to accommodate new fleet technologies, and to improve Metro employees' ability to efficiently and enjoyably conduct their work.

Collocating other county functions on the SODO site—including other Metro employees and services currently located at King Street Center—may bring additional resources and amenities to Metro's SODO-based employees.



A view of the proposed Metro SODO Base from the intersection of 6th Avenue S and Massachusetts St. Metro facilities are shown on the ground and second levels of the proposed project.



SODO Metro Base

The proposed Metro Base is sited at the southern end of the SODO property, fronting Massachusetts St, and occupying the full width of the block between 6th Avenue S and Airport Way S.

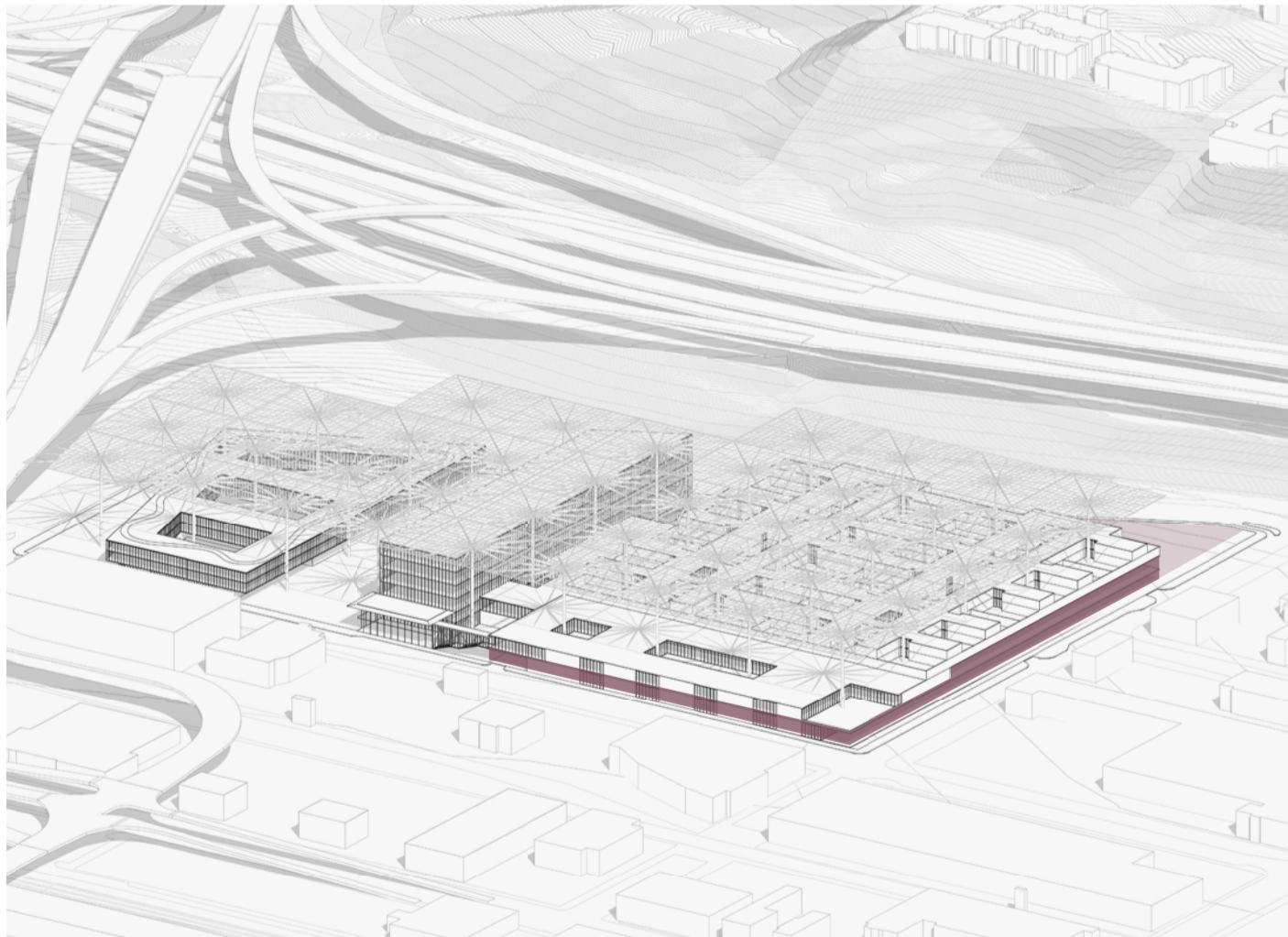
Strategic planning for the proposed base includes an expansion of the Airport Way S ROW to include a lay-by lane for return bus queuing. The Massachusetts St ROW includes a lay-by lane for return or departing bus queuing. With three extensive street frontages, a wide range of entry and exit points are available for future planning. The proposed example includes primary base entrances, and exits, along Massachusetts St, with an additional entrance and exit located along 6th Avenue S.

The SODO base building occupies two floors. The ground floor is occupied by bus and trolleybus parking, and the vehicle maintenance and wash facility. The second floor is occupied by bus and trolleybus parking, fleet operations and support spaces. Additional office and amenity spaces for Metro employees and operators is located in the proposed office building to the north.

The proposed project would need to respond to the technical challenges of multi-story fleet circulation, emerging battery-electric fuel sources, and a variety of vehicle types. More detailed facility planning will be required to adequately respond to a wide range of operational, safety, and technical considerations. Future coordination between King County agencies and departments is essential to merging the goals for proposed county facilities with existing transit agency timelines.

SODO Metro Base		
Floor/ Level	Space Type	GSF
All Floors	Total Area Developed	850,000
Ground Floor	Maintenance, Wash Stations, Support	90,000
	Bus Parking (lineal feet)	22,000
Second Floor	Support/ Ops	20,000
	Bus Parking (lineal feet)	14,000
Office/ Ops	See office building GSF data	

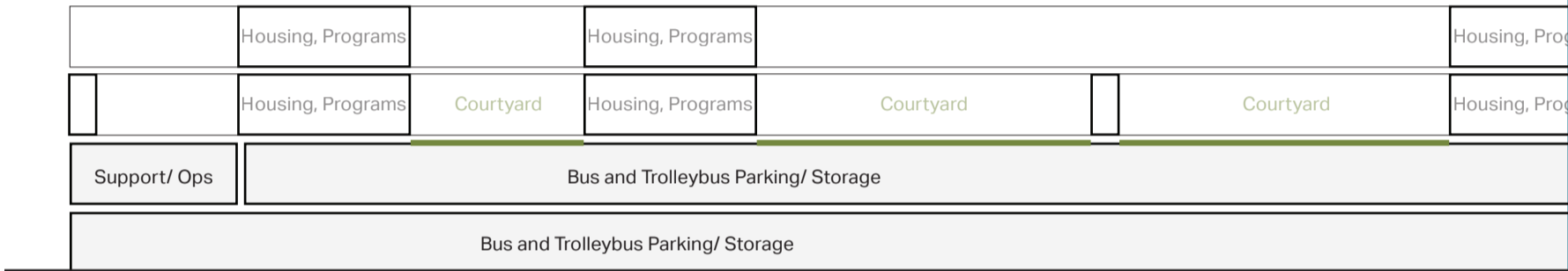
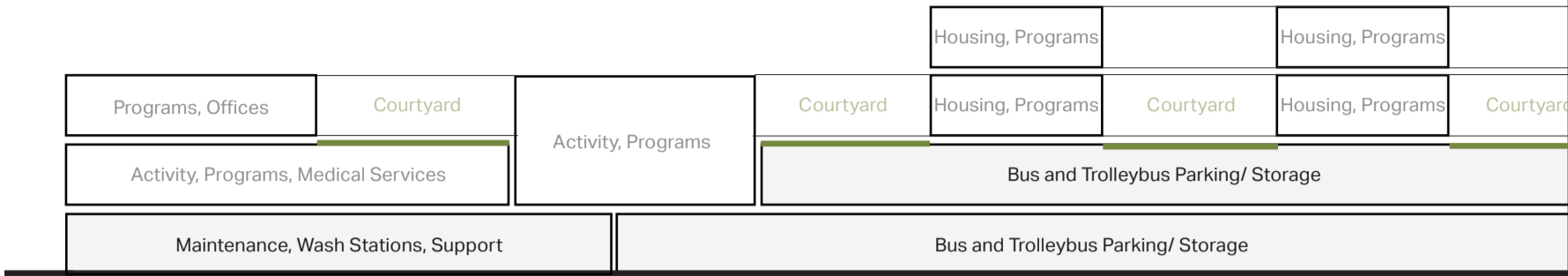
Gross square footage table for the proposed SODO Metro Base. Bus parking allocations indicated in lineal feet.



Location of the proposed Metro SODO base.



A view of the proposed Metro SODO base from 6th Avenue S.



Top: East-West stacking diagram illustrating the vertical organization of building program for Metro Operations and Maintenance facility. In-custody facility shown above the Metro Facility for reference.

Bottom: North-South stacking diagram illustrating the vertical organization of building program for Metro Operations and Maintenance facility. In-custody facility shown above the Metro Facility for reference.

Stacking Functions

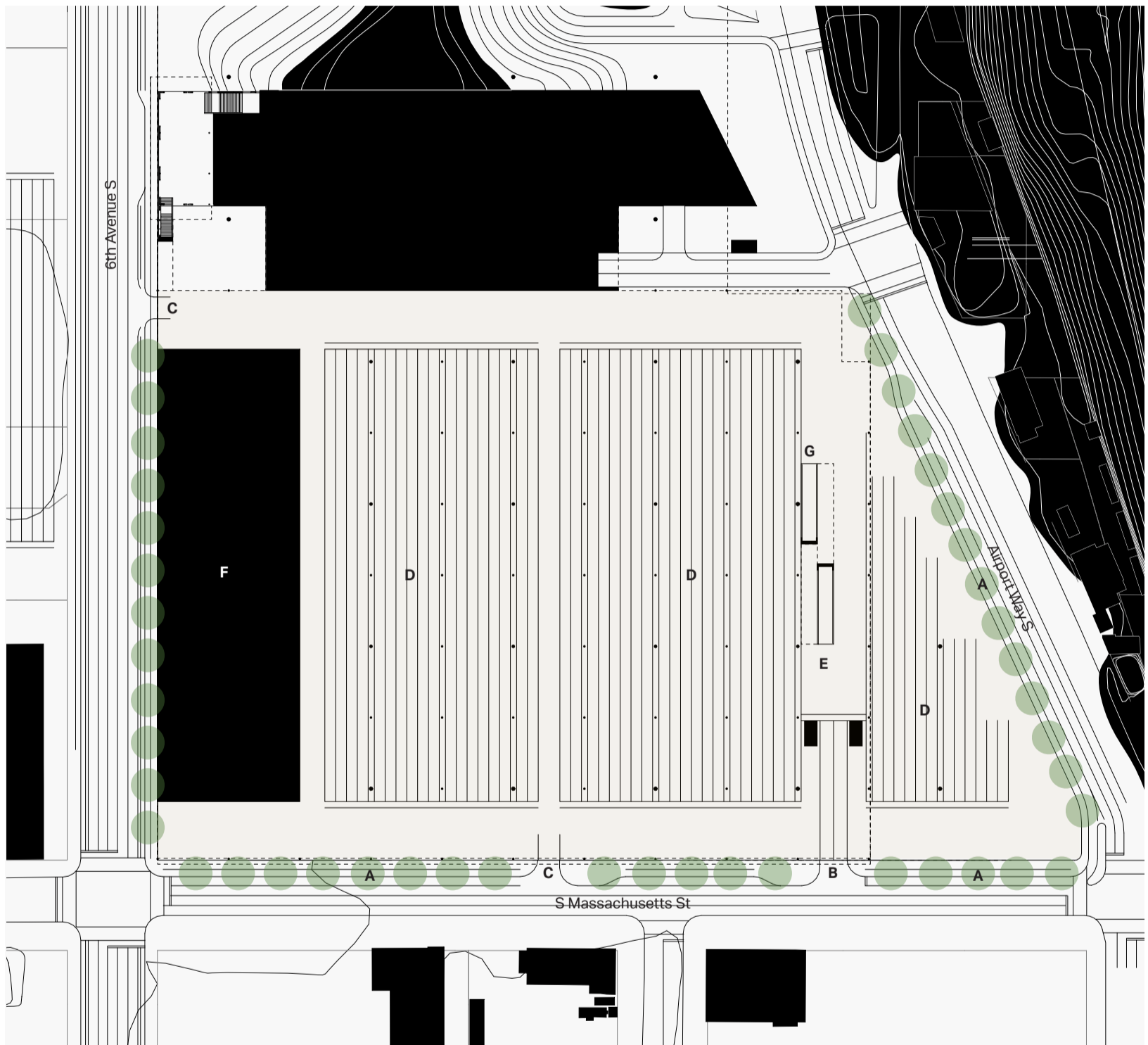
The diagrams above illustrate the vertical stacking of functions within the proposed SODO Metro Base, demonstrating the relationship between maintenance, operations and support facility areas and bus parking areas.

		Housing, Programs		Housing, Programs		Housing, Programs
	Courtyard	Housing, Programs	Courtyard	Housing, Programs	Courtyard	Housing, Programs
Bus and Trolleybus Parking/ Storage						
Bus and Trolleybus Parking/ Storage						

grams		Housing, Programs	
grams	Courtyard	Housing, Programs	Courtyard
Bus and Trolleybus Parking/ Storage			
Bus and Trolleybus Parking/ Storage			
Bus and Trolleybus Parking/ Storage			

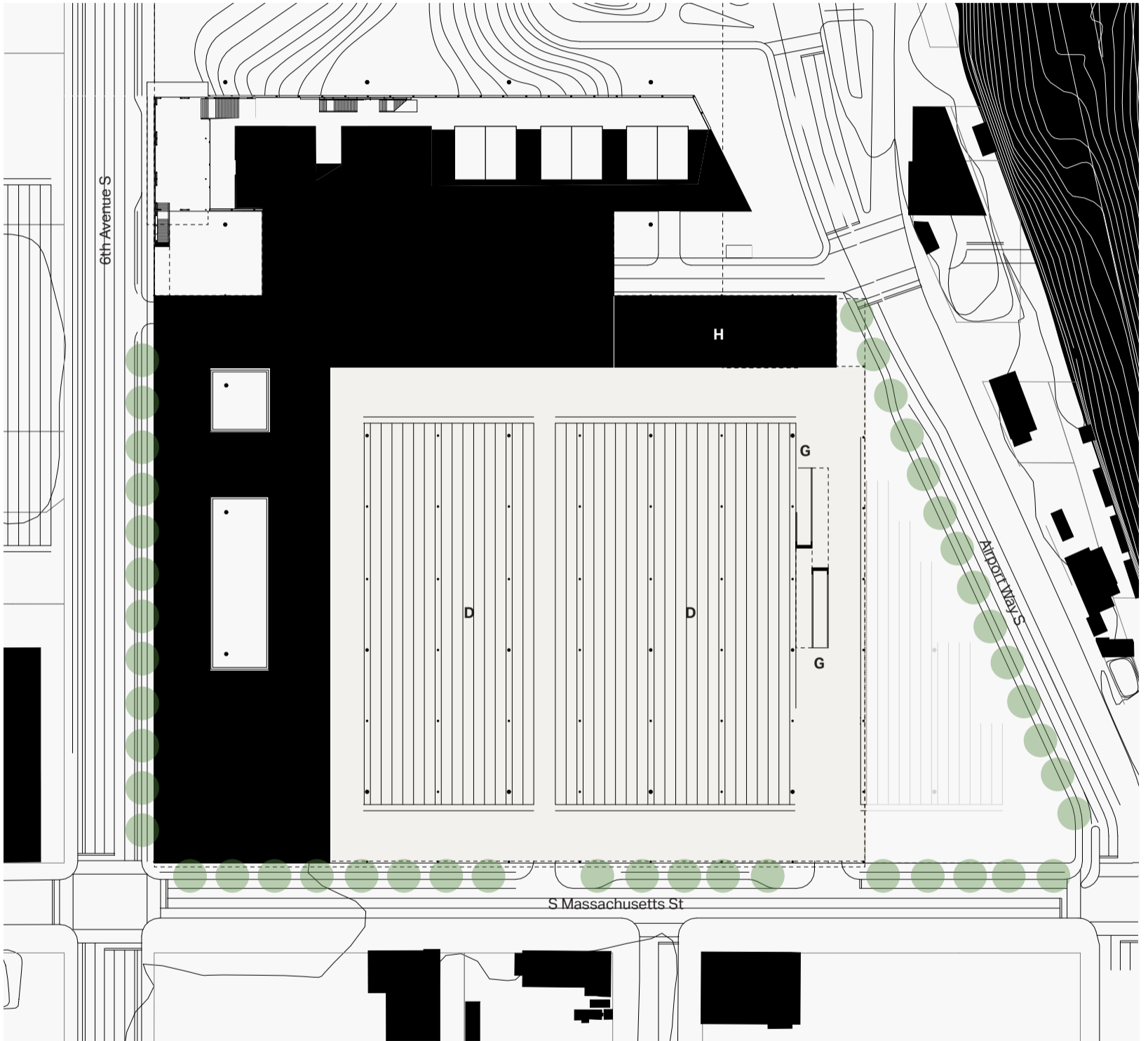
Conceptual Site Layout

The site plans, below and at right, illustrate a potential organization for basic programmatic areas on both floors of a proposed Metro SODO Base.



Site Plan, illustrating the ground floor of the proposed Metro Facility.

- A Bus Lay-by Lane
- B Bus and Trolley-Bus Entrance
- C Bus and Trolley-Bus Exit
- D Bus and Trolley-Bus Parking
- E Vehicle Ramps to Second Floor
- F Maintenance Facility, Wash Station
- G Vehicle Ramps to Ground Floor
- H Operations/ Support



Site Plan, illustrating the second floor of the proposed Metro Facility.

Leverage the accessibility and size of the SODO site to zone circulation, reducing potential conflicts and increasing the ease of movement to and from county facilities.

The SODO site is nearly flat. The diagram at right shows that the entirety of the site, and the surrounding streetscapes, have an existing topography that slopes less than 5% in any direction. This makes the entire site accessible to county employees, King County residents, and customers.

The SODO site is also incredibly large. This, alongside the siting of facilities on the property, provides for a straightforward organization of three zones to manage circulation flows to-and-from county facilities.

Zone 1 focuses on pedestrian movement between district transit options and primary entrances to county facilities. This zone is located at the northern end of the site. Primary pedestrian flows move between bus stops and (future) light rail stations at the intersection of 6th Avenue S. and S. Royal Brougham Way and the arrivals plaza, the proposed office building, the central urban space, and the arrivals hub- for access to the courts and in-custody facilities.

Zone 2 includes parking entries, service and loading entries, and official vehicle entries. These access points are located on the eastern side the site, along Airport Way S., and are central to the block. A vehicular court serves parking and loading/ service deliveries to the office building, and provides a drop-off zone serving all other facilities. Provisions are made for vehicular drop off lay-by lanes along 6th Avenue S. in front of the arrivals hub and office building.

An official vehicle (secured and screened) entry is located between the courts building and Metro SODO Base. This entry is envisioned to be a staffed position, with vehicle interdiction devices to provide an adequate standoff for unscreened vehicles.

Zone 3 organizes circulation for Metro buses and trolley-buses on the southeastern, southern, and southwestern portions of the site. Along the Airport Way S. ROW, a portion of the SODO site is used to create a lay-by lane for return bus queuing. The primary base entrance, and exit, is located along Massachusetts St, with another exit located along 6th Avenue S.

In addition to the zones described above, bike lanes are introduced into the 6th Avenue S. ROW consistent with the City of Seattle Right-Of-Way Manual Street Type Standards.

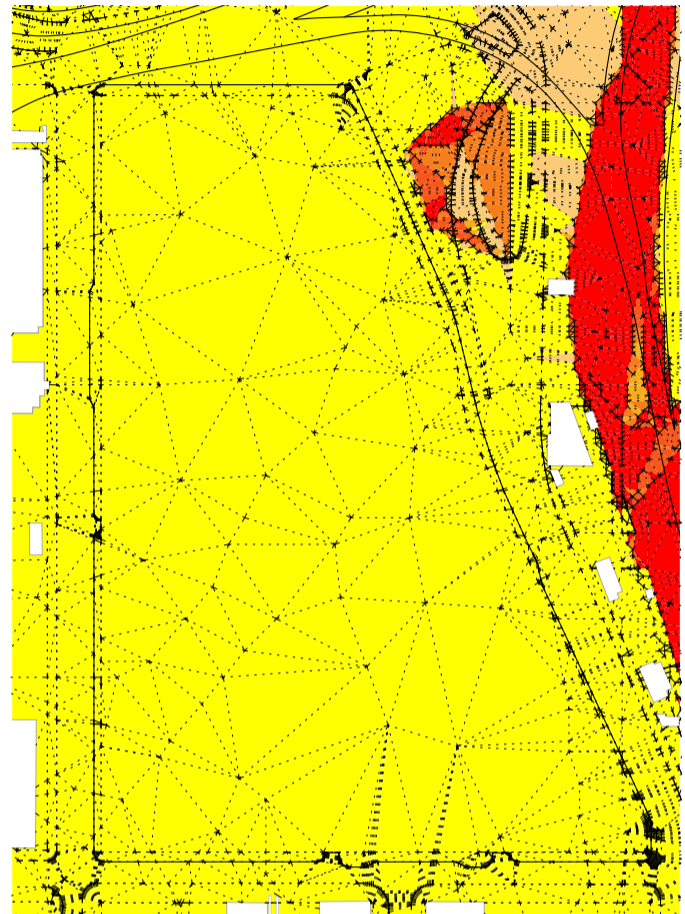


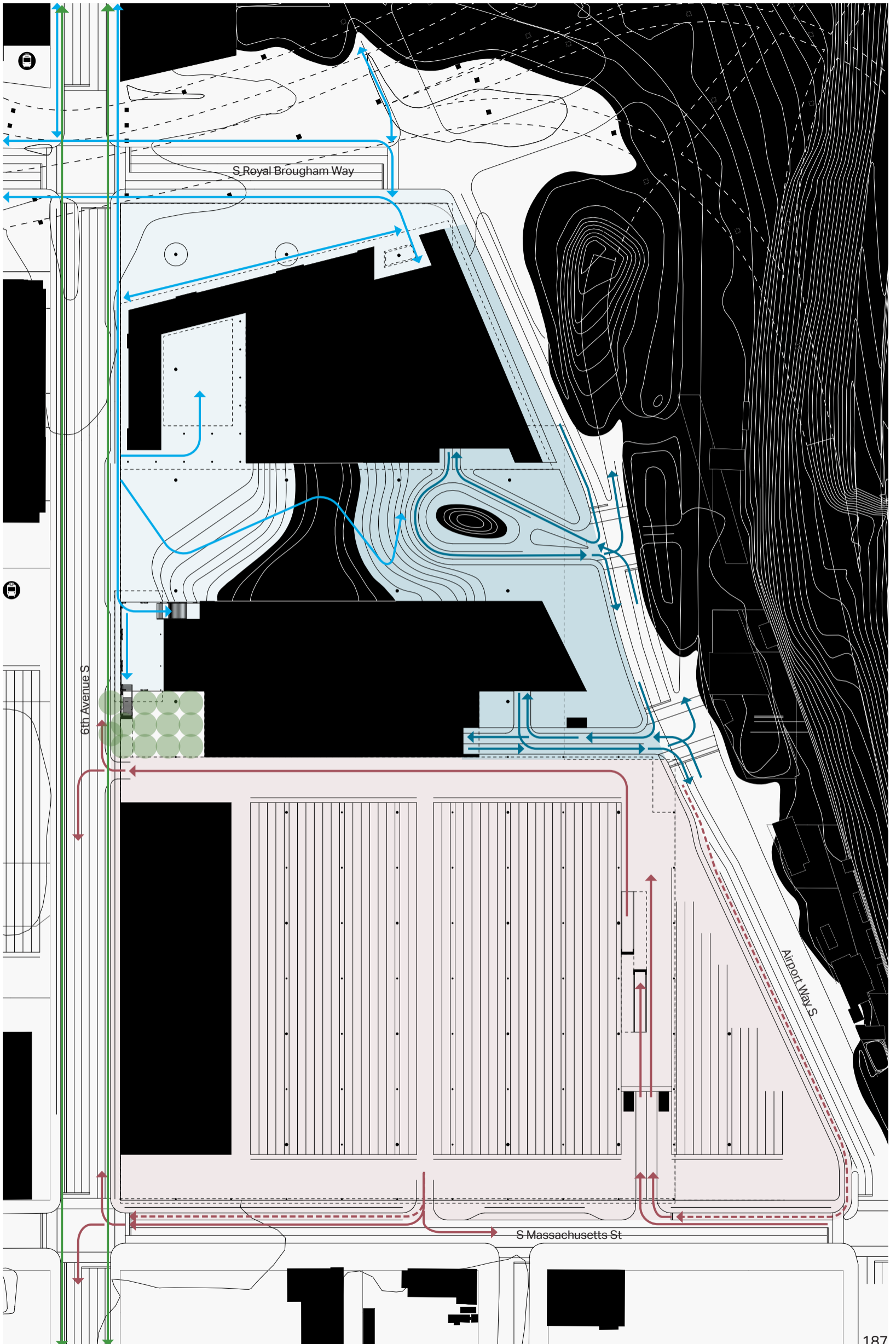
Diagram of slopes across the SODO site.

- Slopes between 0% and 5%
- Slopes between 5% and 10%
- Slopes between 10% and 15%
- Slopes between 15% and 20%
- Slopes between 20% and 25%
- Slopes greater than 25%

Opposite: Site plan diagram illustrating the three distinct circulation zones along with notional circulation pathways for clarity.

- Zone 1 Pedestrian Movement
- Zone 2 Staff and Official Vehicles, Service and Deliveries
- Zone 3 Metro SODO Base Fleet

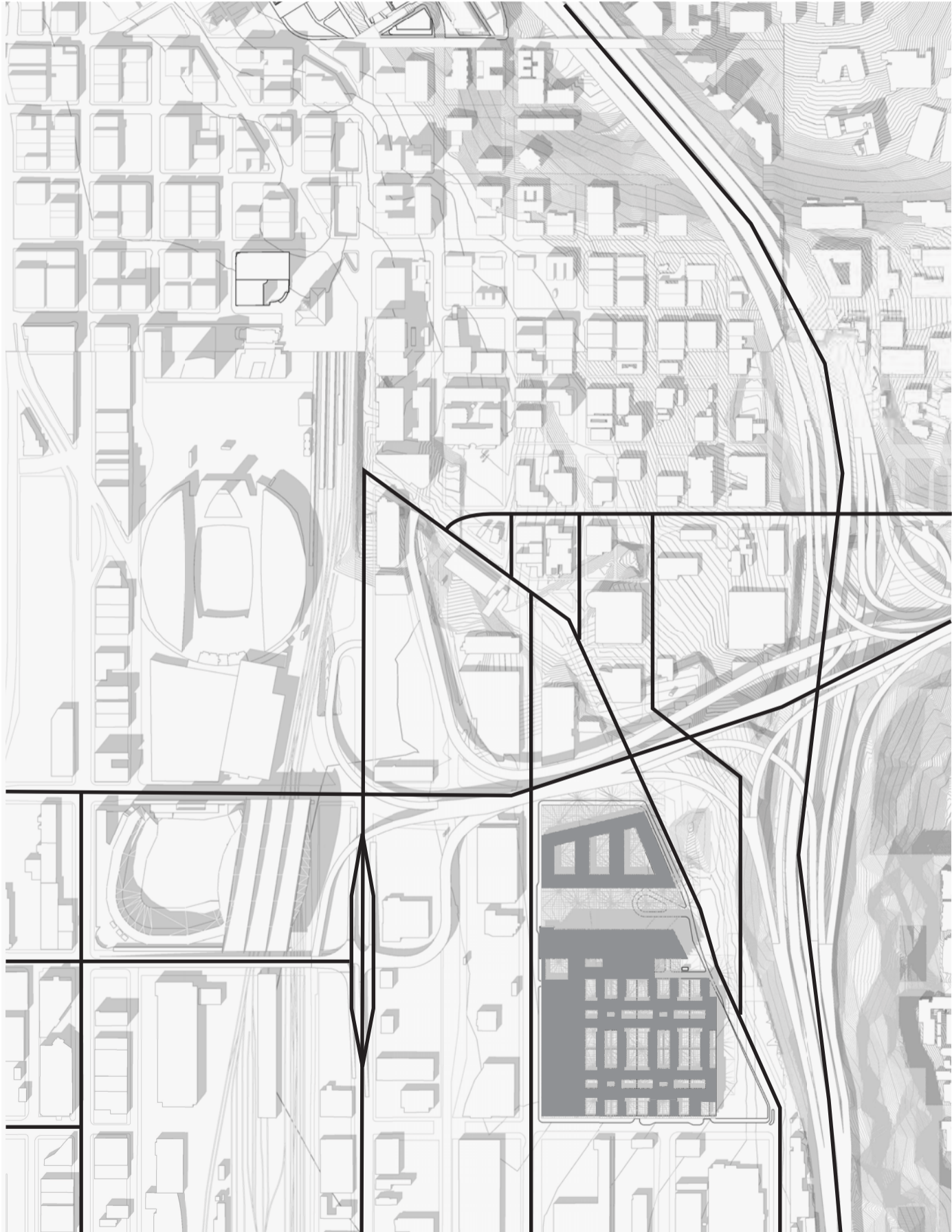
- ↔ Pedestrian Circulation
- ↔ Protected Bike Lane
- ↔ Staff and Service Vehicles, Official Vehicles
- ↔ Metro Buses and Trolley Buses



Seattle Major Truck Streets

The Seattle Major Truck Street Map identifies primary routes for the movement of goods and services. This Freight Network is composed of limited access routes (I-90, I-5, and HWY-99) along with Major and Minor Truck Streets, and First and Last Mile Connectors.

Development of county functions on the SODO site requires coordination with the Seattle Department of Transportation's (SDOT) Freight Program, Bike Program, SODO Vision Zero Program, and with the Port of Seattle, to ensure that the organization of movement, to and from the county's facilities, enhances district safety and maintains the movement of goods efficiently and predictably.



Map illustrating major truck streets in relationship to the SODO site.

Applying Street Type Standards

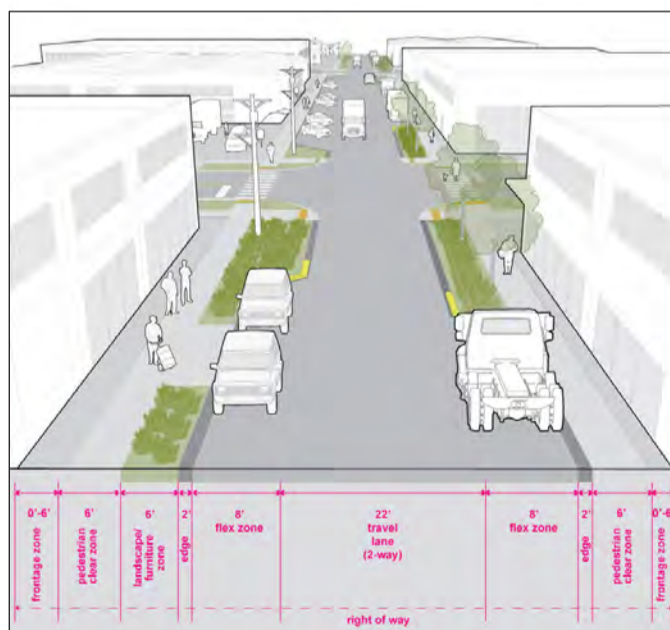
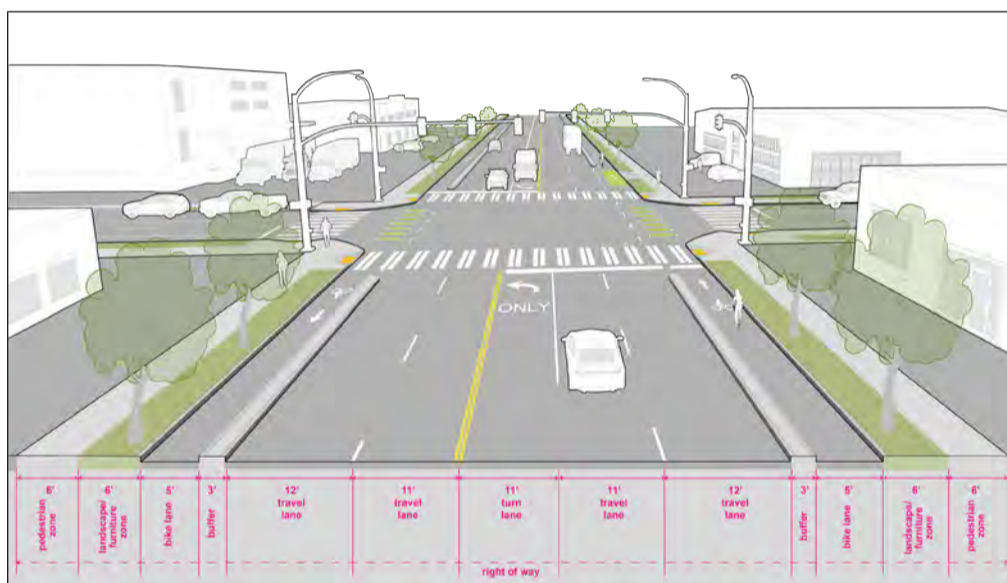
Streetscape sections are coordinated with the Seattle Right-Of-Way Improvements Manual. The streets surrounding the SODO site are classified for industrial access, and are typed as either Industrial Access—6th Avenue S and Airport Way S—or Minor Industrial Access—S Royal Brougham Way and Massachusetts St. The City of Seattle has developed street type standards that are designed to maintain and promote efficient movement of freight and industrial traffic while promoting multi-modal safety.

6th Avenue S and Airport Way S

Industrial Access Streets are adjacent to industrial and manufacturing land uses. They are designed to accommodate significant volumes of large vehicles such as single unit trucks, tractor trailers, and other delivery vehicles. For the section of 6th Avenue fronting the SODO site, protected bike facilities are factored into the cross section providing physical separation to encourage proper positioning of bicyclists and vehicles.

S Royal Brougham Way and Massachusetts St

Minor Industrial Access Streets are located within the Manufacturing and Industrial Centers and serve a range of existing uses such as industrial, commercial, or manufacturing. These streets are designed to accommodate the standard design vehicle, SU-30 with a 42' turning radius. This street type depicts a curbsless condition with large flex zones that can accommodate bioretention, parking for larger vehicles, or larger street trees.



Top: Seattle Streets Illustrated, Diagram 2.13 Industrial Access.

Bottom: Seattle Streets Illustrated, Diagram 2.13 Minor Industrial Access

Plan for sustainable development strategies that leverage the scale of the site, and incorporate best practices to address climate change.

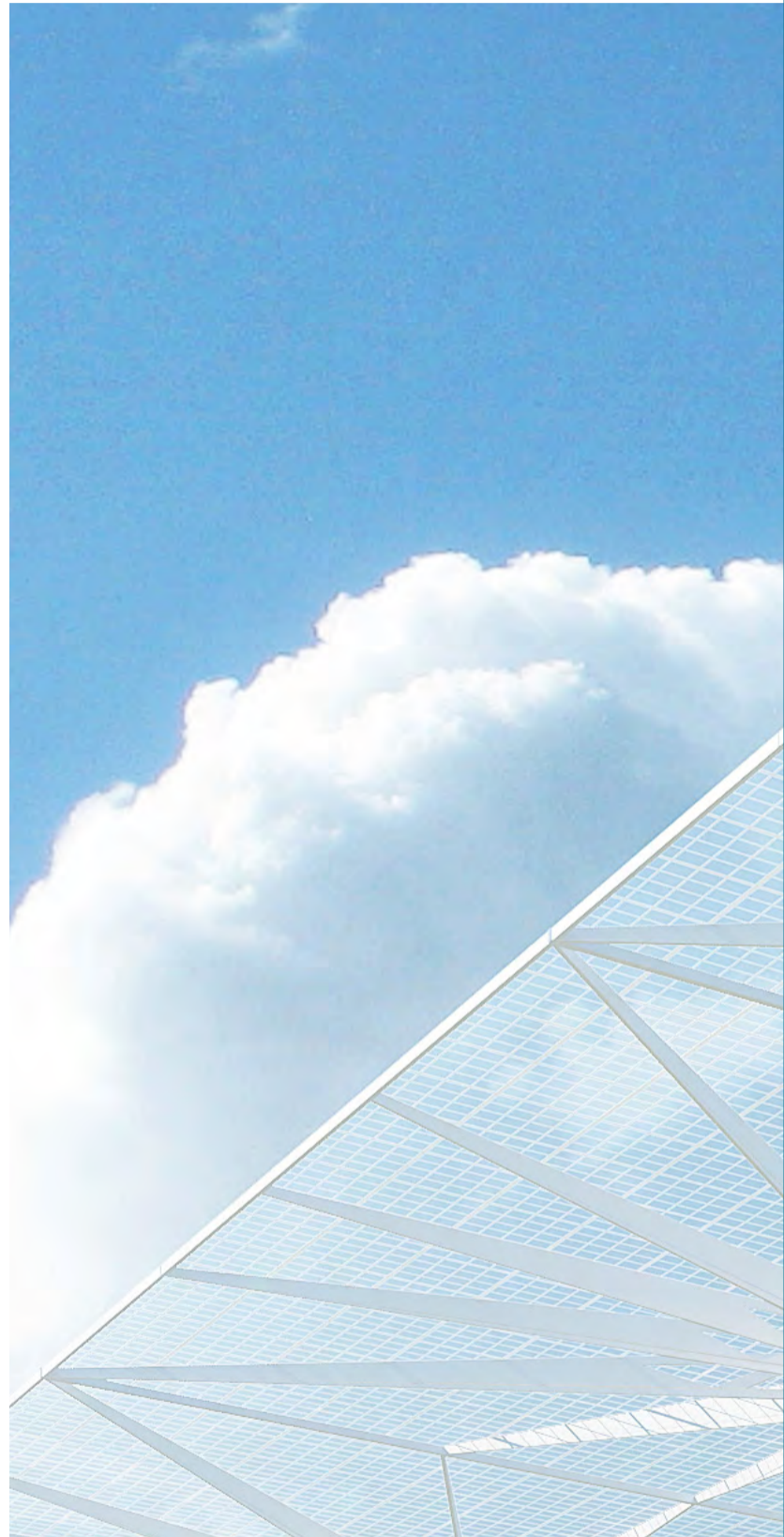
The SODO site holds tremendous opportunity for contributions to King County efforts to address climate change and realize sustainable development goals.

The relocation of large footprint facilities, like the tethered courts and low-rise in-custody facilities, to a previously developed area, helps preserve open land.

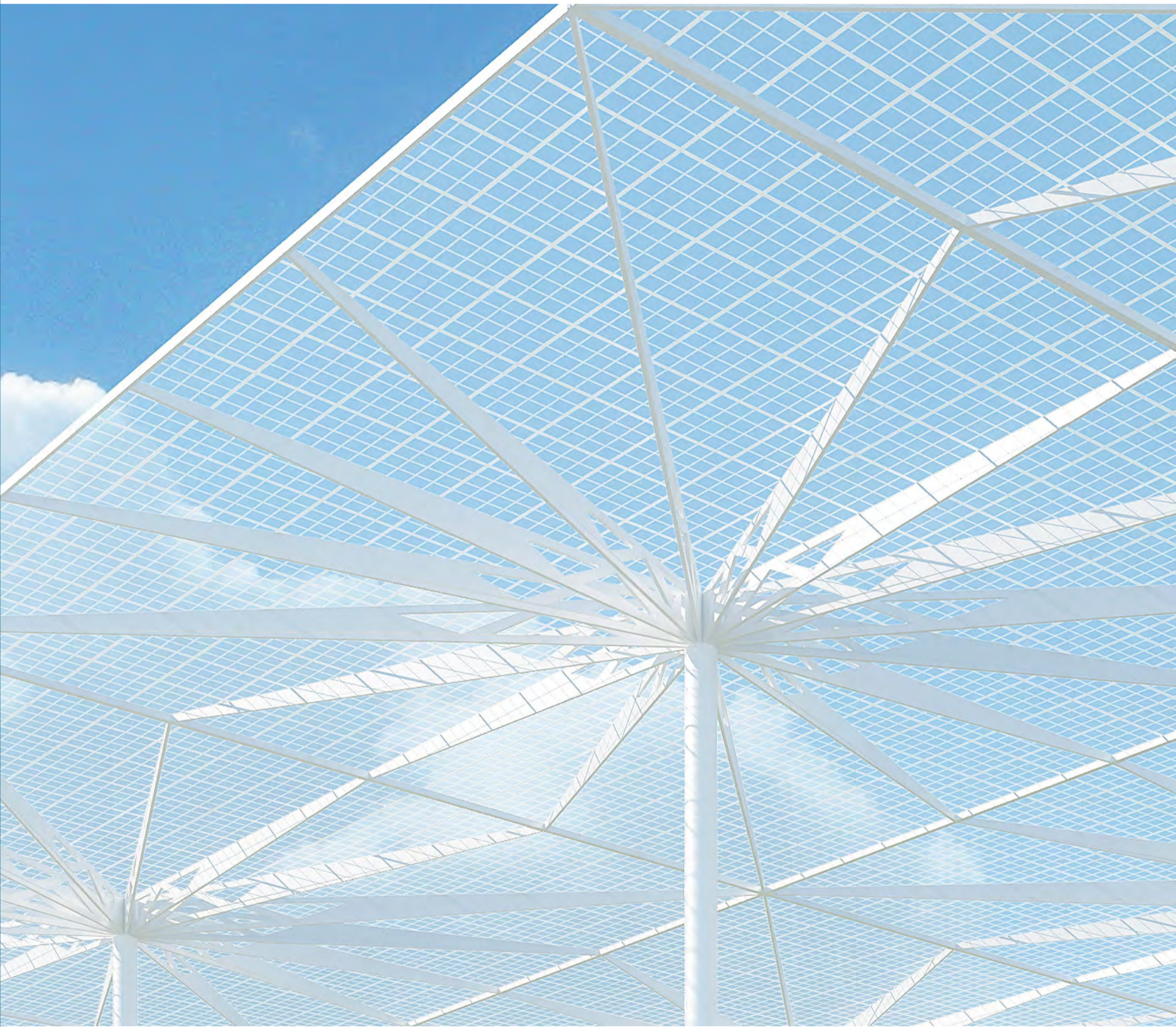
The site's size offers a unique opportunity for large-scale on-site power generation through the inclusion of an overhead photovoltaic canopy. This canopy can multitask to provide weathering cover to outdoor open spaces and shade those spaces to help mitigate the effects of extreme heat.

Proposed facilities and sitework should identify strategies for addressing water conservation and reuse, and greenhouse gas emissions operational, embodied, or transportation oriented.

Future programming, planning, and design of proposed facilities should adhere to King County Strategic Climate Action Plan and Green Building Ordinances.



A view of the proposed overhead photovoltaic canopy.



Propose Ideas at the Scale of the Site

Owing to the site's unique size, opportunities for on-site power generation are also possible. The diagram below illustrates a potential 20-acre photovoltaic (PV) canopy designed to provide solar power to county facilities, positioned approximately 35'-0" above the roof of the courts building. At 60% of area coverage, the realistic estimate of the area that would be covered by the PV cells, and factoring Seattle's Global Horizontal Radiation, the high-level solar canopy could deliver impressive results.

Standard High-Efficiency Panel: these panels are typically made from monocrystalline silicon, known for its high efficiency and durability. They offer superior performance and are completely opaque, blocking all light transmission.

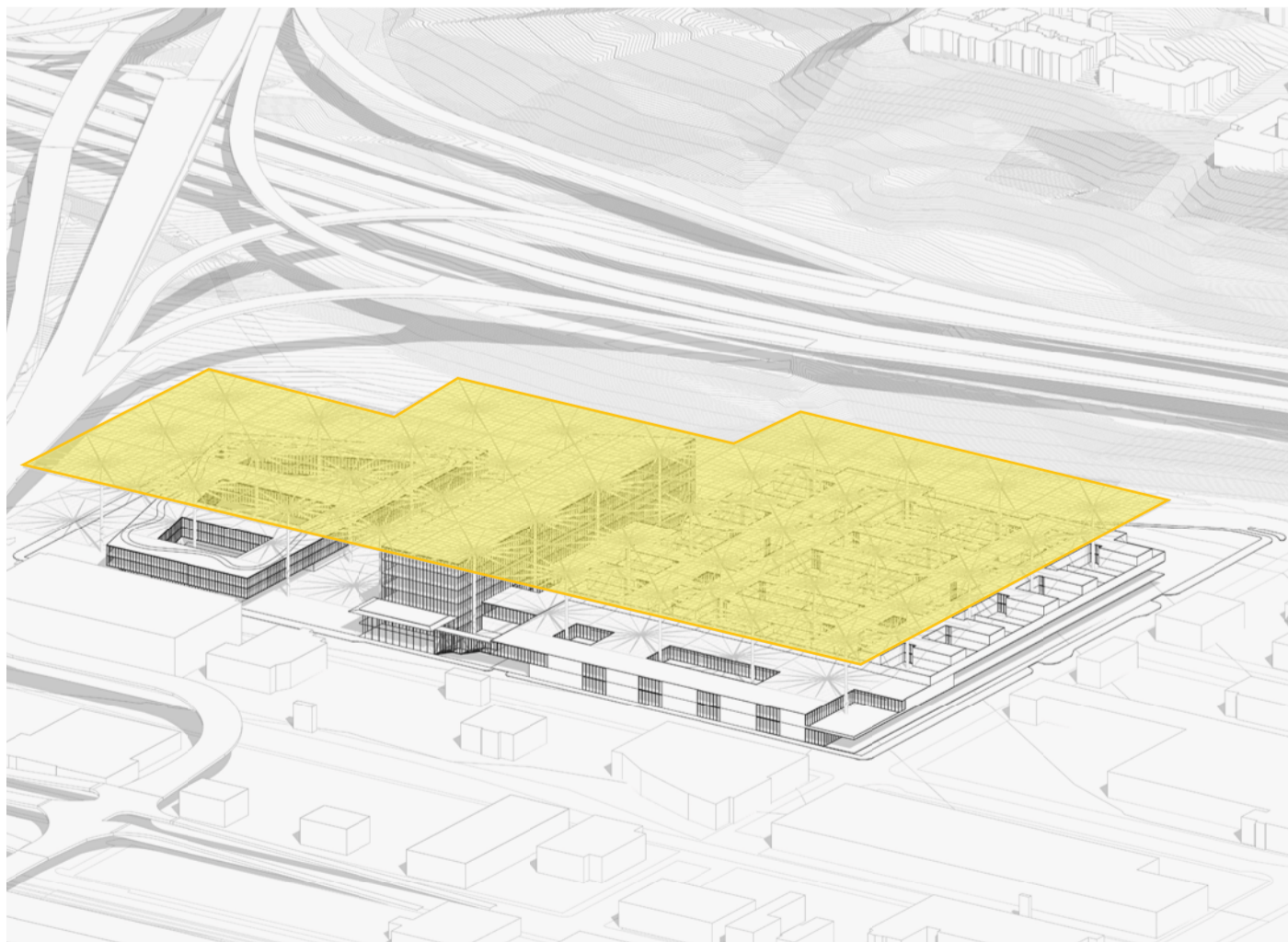
Onyx Crystalline, Mid-Density Panel: these panels use crystalline silicon cells configured with spacing between them to allow some natural light to pass through. The mid-density configuration balances efficiency with moderate translucency, making these panels ideal where partial shading and light transmission are desired.

Onyx Amorphous, Mid-Translucency Panel: Made from amorphous silicon, these panels are less efficient than their crystalline counterparts but offer greater flexibility and higher translucency. The mid-translucency level allows for significant light penetration, suitable where the panels serve both as an energy source and a visual or light-permitting element.

Onyx Crystalline panels are recommended based on energy performance and the ability to balance natural light and partial shading over proposed green spaces. Based on the high-level calculations at right, the energy produced by an Onyx Crystalline Canopy would approximately equal the annual energy consumption of the office building and courts building if properly engineered.

Solar Canopy			
Effective Coverage (60% of total)			48,600 M ²
Global Horizon Radiation			1,500 kWh/m ² /yr
Results	kwh/yr	Mwh/yr	kBTU/yr
Standard high-efficiency panel			
	13,626,669	13,627	46,494,195
Onyx Crystalline (mid-density)			
	7,000,800	7,000	23,887,000
Onyx Amorphous (mid-translucency)			
	2,500,306	2,500	8,531,000

Estimate of PV production based on the range of PV transparencies currently available.



Location of the site's proposed solar canopy at full coverage.

Operational Carbon Reduction

Energy use in the buildings on the SODO site affect both operating costs and greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing energy efficiency correspondingly reduces utility costs as well as greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy consumption. County buildings could take advantage of collocation on a single site to provide integration of heating, cooling and power systems that would enable the sharing of resources. A district-scale approach would achieve a high efficiency of systems and provide an opportunity for district-wide energy recovery. The SODO facilities should embrace the integration of on-site renewable sources, such as photovoltaics, through a high-level solar canopy.

Strategies for operational carbon reduction include:

1 Optimized facade

Building envelope tuned to reduce glare, solar gains and bring useful daylight.

2 Indoor comfort

High efficiency electrical & HVAC systems, with no use of fossil fuels.

3 High efficiency building systems

State of the art low energy building systems with integrated passive cooling, ventilation, and lighting strategies.

4 District heating & cooling.

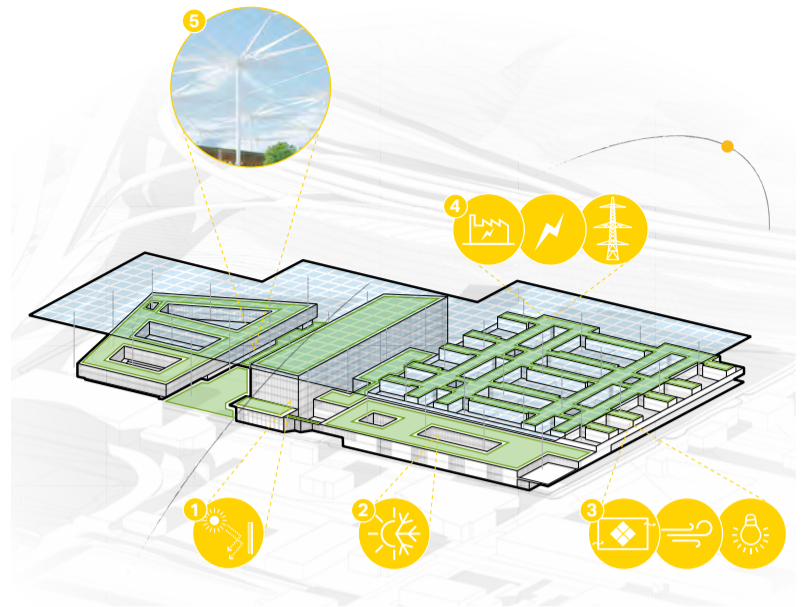
District plant saves spaces, frees up roof, and allows heat recovery. All electric systems and electric infrastructure to improve grid interface and control GHG emissions

5 On-site renewable energy

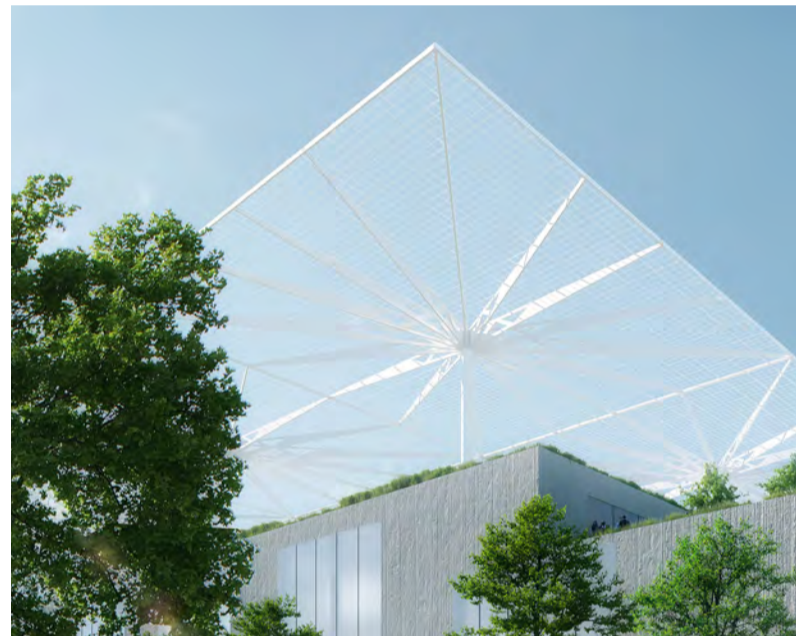
PVs integrated into shading canopy. Two types of panels are considered:

Onyx Crystalline, Mid-Density Panel: These panels use crystalline silicon cells configured with spacing between them to allow some natural light to pass through. The mid-density configuration balances efficiency with moderate translucency, making these panels ideal where partial shading and light transmission are desired.

Onyx Amorphous, Mid -Translucency Panel: Made from amorphous silicon, these panels are less efficient than their crystalline counterparts but offer greater flexibility and higher translucency. The mid-translucency level allows for significant light penetration, suitable where the panels serve both as an energy source and a visual or light-permitting architectural element.



Top: Operational Carbon diagram



View of the proposed solar canopy above King County SODO facilities.

Embodied Carbon Reduction

Building materials are largely sourced from virgin sources and consume energy in every step of their extraction, manufacturing, and transport. The choice of material, its origin and the processing needed for it to become ready for use are critical criteria that have a large impact on the material's embodied GHG emissions. Further, strategies that reduce carbon emissions now are more valuable than strategies that reduce the same total carbon emissions over time; there is a time value to carbon savings that must inform design decisions. As building energy efficiency increases, the proportion of the total emissions associated with the extraction, manufacturing, and transportation of construction materials constitutes the majority of the project's carbon footprint.

Strategies for embodied carbon reduction include:

1 Mass timber structures

Mass timber as replacement for steel and concrete structures.

2 Local FSC Wood

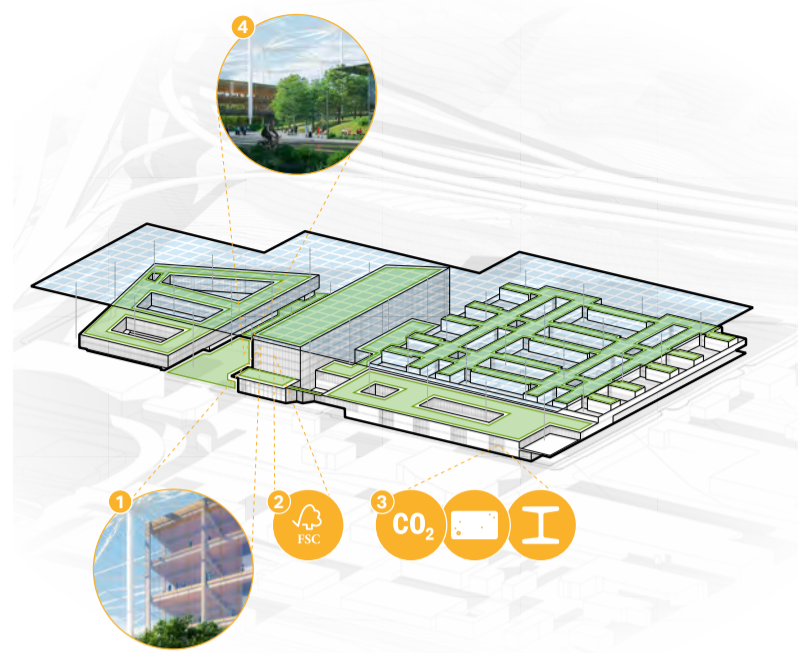
Showcases local and responsibly-sourced wood in interior finishes and supports local industry and creation of green jobs.

3 Low carbon materials

Interior finished with low embodied carbon. Utilize concrete with high cement replacement and locally sourced aggregate. Use structural steel and rebar with high recycled content.

4 Low carbon landscape

Design for a high vegetation to hardscape ratio. Minimize hardscape in favor of pervious area.



Top: Embodied Carbon diagram



View of the proposed mass timber office building.

Water Conservation & Reuse

Water resources in the Seattle area face pressure from rising water consumption, pollution, and climate change. The SODO buildings are affected not only by use and discharge of water within the site but also by the context in which projects operate. Water use in Seattle is not carbon-intensive, as much of the water supply comes from the gravity fed clean sources of the Cedar and Tolt watersheds. County facilities should take a holistic approach by tackling water demand, water supply, and water management. By limiting water use through conservation and non-potable reuse, the development could address increasing water costs, and assist with improving the resilience of Seattle's water system. A zero-water waste goal would ensure that all non-potable water demands in the project such as irrigation, toilet flushing, and cooling tower water use are met using recycled water.

Strategies for water conservation and reuse include:

1 Water efficient fixtures

Low flow and flush fixtures.

2 Indoor water capture & reuse

Collection of restroom and kitchen wastewater, HVAC condensation, and water for treatment and reuse.

3 On-site stormwater management

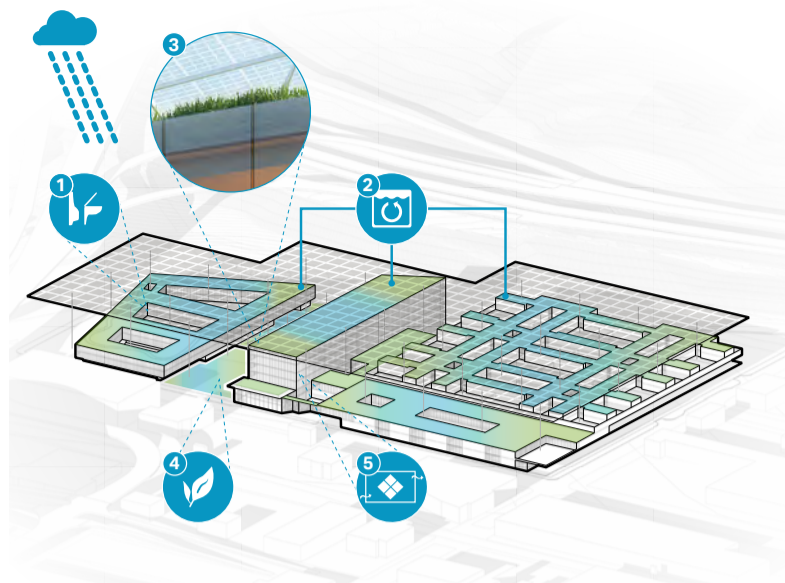
Capture and retain stormwater through low-impact development. Manage all stormwater to prevent runoff. Adaptable outdoor spaces that function as public squares in the dry season and are designed to retain water after rain events. Visually designed to connect visitors to water flows. Roof and canopy water collection integrated in landscape design.

4 Native and low irrigation vegetation

Native landscape and plantings require minimal irrigation.

5 HVAC water reduction

High efficiency building design to minimize HVAC water use.



Top: Water Conservation and Reuse diagram.



View of a rain garden and detention basin at the base of the solar canopy for stormwater collection.

Take a focused zoning approach to meet the needs of government services without altering the general maritime and industrial lands zoning protections.

In October 2023, the City of Seattle enacted a sweeping package of legislation updating the regulatory framework for the city’s maritime and industrial lands.

The King County Metro Ryerson, Atlantic, and Central Base transit facilities occupy a transitional position in this industrial land base, located along the eastern edge of the high-intensity activities generated by the stadiums, at the northern boundary of the function-focused Maritime and Marine Logistics (MML) zone, and immediately south of the Chinatown International District and its bordering Industry and Innovation (II) zone. As the county looks to the future of its civic facilities, the proposed courts, corrections, and administrative functions at the SODO site can help to provide a vital buffer from the pressures of non-industrial encroachments.

While transit functions are permitted outright in the MML zone, office uses larger than 10,000 square feet and jails are currently prohibited.

Zoning would need to be revised to permit larger quantities of office use and jails. Revisions should follow a targeted two-part approach.

Part 1: Text Amendment

A text amendment may be achieved through specific legislation or through the Seattle Land Use Omnibus Ordinance process, which occurs periodically to remove textual inconsistencies, repeal obsolete terms and provisions, correct inadvertent clerical errors, and clarify existing code language. Since government-related offices and next-generation correctional facilities—especially those geared towards human dignity—limited duration stays, and public health and safety are compatible with the MML zone’s goal of supporting long-term land-use predictability and reducing speculative development pressure, the code could be updated to permit these facilities through a targeted text amendment. The limitation on the size office use could be adjusted by adding a footnote to Table A for 23.50A.080 (top right). This amendment would adjust the size limitation for office space used for government offices only, enabling county functions while retaining district restrictions on commercial office development.

Example Text Amendment Language for Office:

Add the following to SMC Table A for 23.50A.080:

Office (5)	10,000	15,000	15,000	N.S.L.
<p>Key to Table A for 23.50A.008 N.S.L. = No size limit Footnotes to Table A for 23.50A.008 (1) Size of use limits do not apply to ancillary uses in the UI zone. (2) Where permitted under Table A for 23.50A.004. (3) The size limit applies to principal use drinking establishments such as bars and tasting rooms or tap rooms that are unaffiliated with a brewery or distillery within 1,500 linear feet. (4) Except indoor sports and recreation facilities have a maximum size of use limit of 50,000 square feet. (5) Except government offices.</p>				

The prohibition on jails would be addressed by adding a unique exception and specific locational criteria permitting that use only on Atlantic and Central Base properties.

Example Text Amendment Language for Jails:

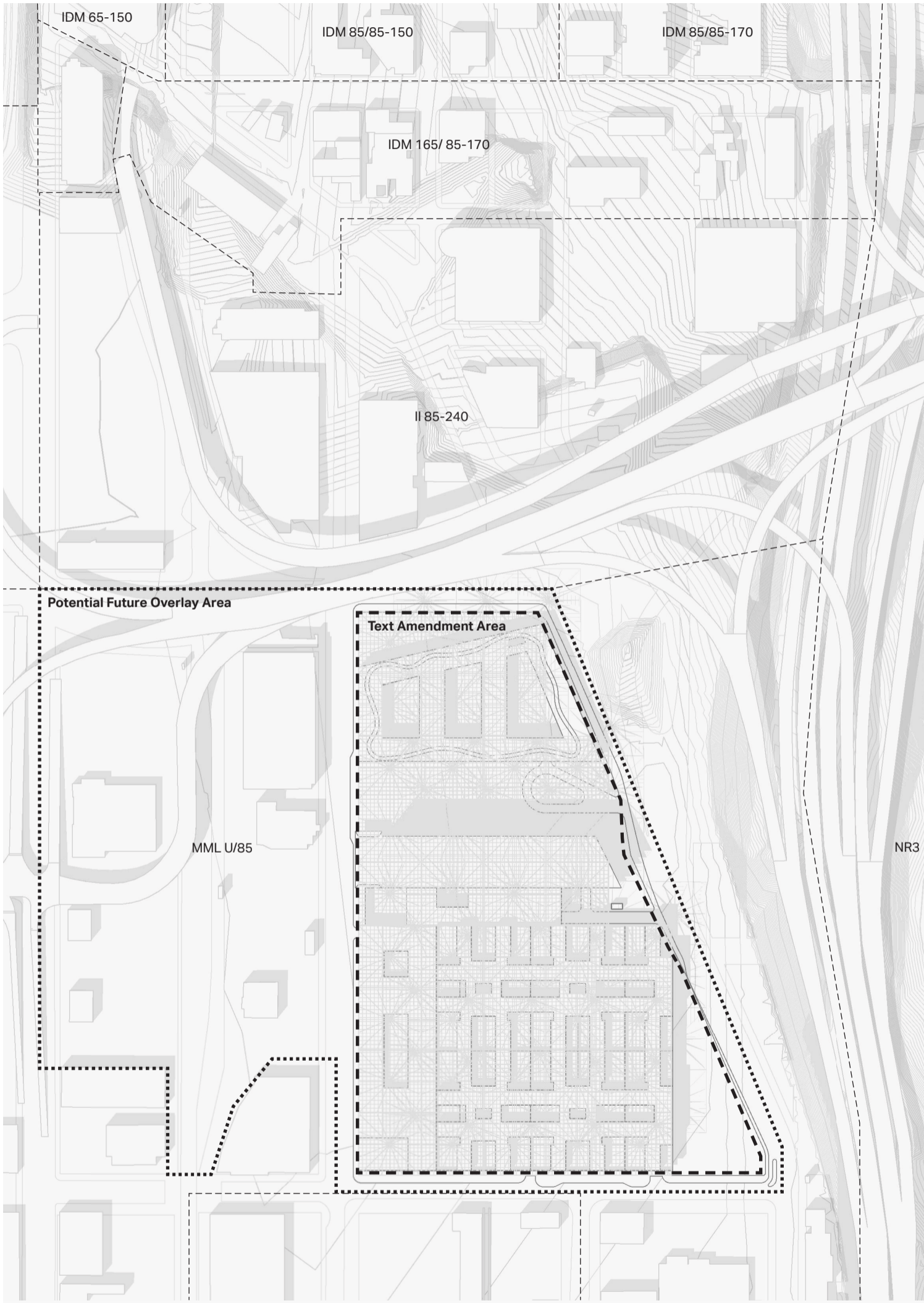
Add the following to SMC Table A for 23.50A.040:

Uses	Qualifies as Industrial?	Permitted and prohibited uses by zone			
		MML	II	UI	IC
I. PUBLIC FACILITIES					
I.1. Jails	N/A	X (15)	X	X	X
I.2. Work-release centers	N/A	X	X	X	X
I.3. Other public facilities	No	CCU	CCU	CCU	CCU
<p>Key for Table A for 23.50A.004 CU = Administrative conditional use CCU = Council conditional use EB = Permitted only in a building existing on June 1, 2023 EB/CU = Administrative conditional use permitted only in a building existing on June 1, 2023 P = Permitted X = Prohibited</p>					
<p>Footnotes to Table A for 23.50A.004 (15) Except in MML zones, by Council Conditional Use (CCU), on parcels bounded by at least three of the following four streets: 6th Avenue South, South Massachusetts Street, S Royal Brougham Way, and Airport Way South.</p>					

Part 2: Land Use Overlay

In the future, with multiple light rail options nearby, and the potential for a station area rezone—alongside existing stadium activity and a six-tower office and retail development already permitted north of Royal Brougham Way—this area of SODO is likely to continue to receive significant development pressure.

As a long-term strategy, the county should consider establishing a district-scale overlay zone that can facilitate a holistic approach to future development across county properties, tailoring standards to the county’s operational needs, and the needs of the Maritime, Manufacturing, and Logistics District.

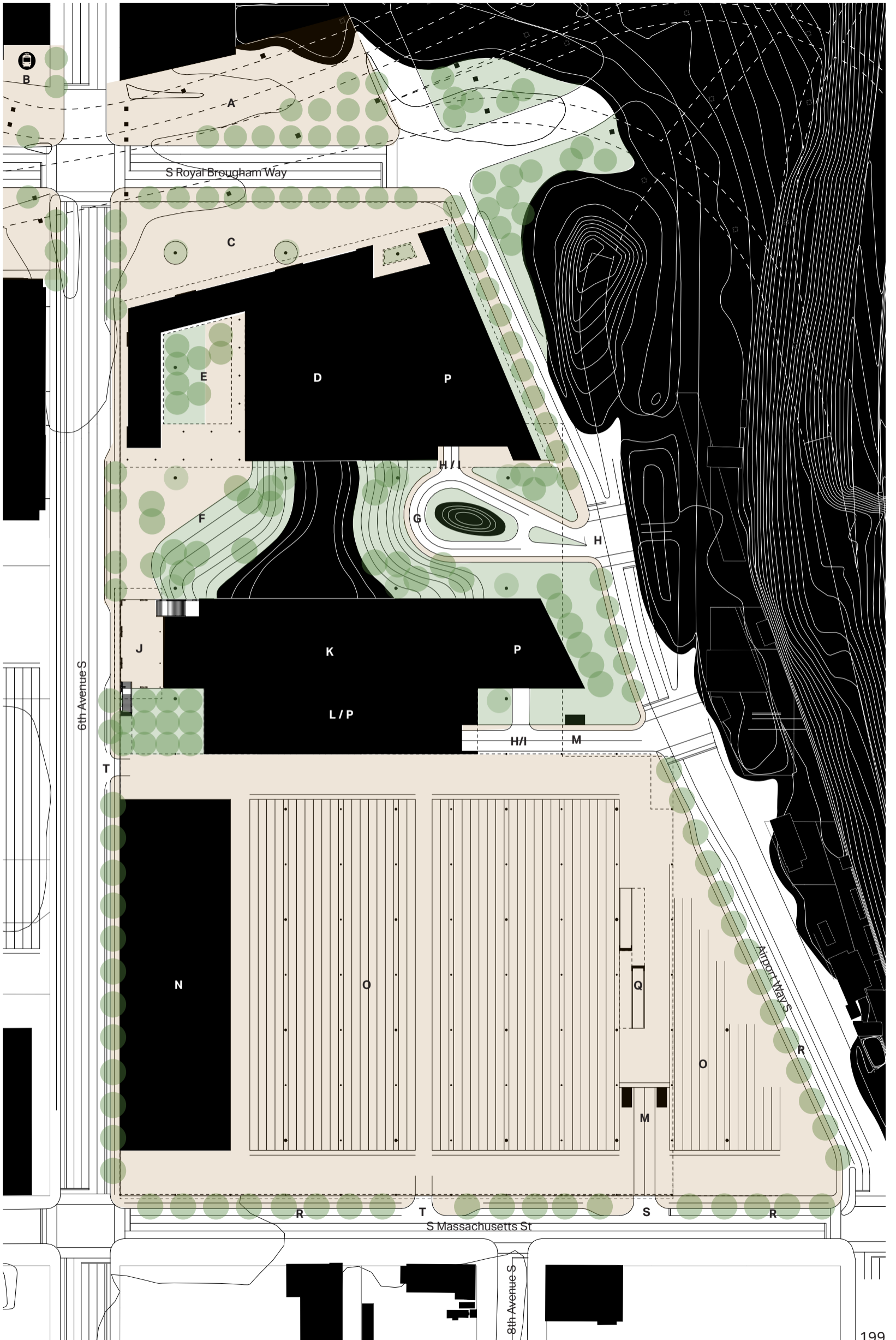


Proposed zoning map for proposed county facilities on the SODO case study site.

6th Avenue Site Plan

Opposite: Site plan diagram illustrating the ground floor level of the proposed SODO buildings and urban spaces.

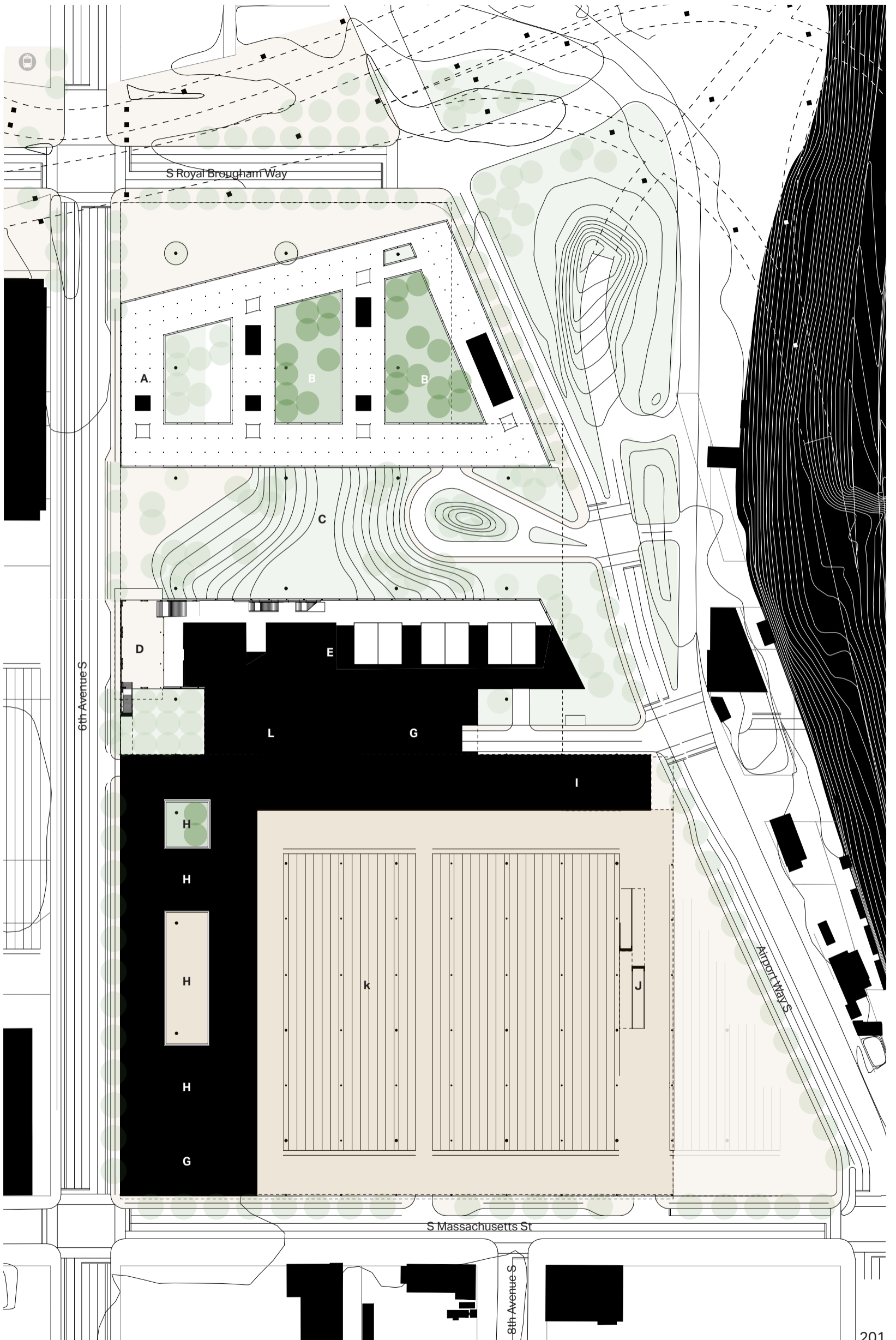
- A I-90 Underpass
- B Light Rail Station
- C Arrivals Plaza
- D Office Building
- E Entry Courtyard
- F Civic Green
- G Vehicular Court
- H Vehicle Entry/ Exit
- I Parking/ Loading Entry
- J Arrivals Hub
- K Courts and Community Services
- L In-Custody Facility (Sallyport/ ITR)
- M Staffed Checkpoint
- N Metro Maintenance, Wash, Fuel
- O Bus Parking
- P Parking/ Loading/ Service
- Q Bus Drive Ramps (Example)
- R Bus Lay-by Lane
- S Bus/ Trolley Entry (Example)
- T Bus/ Trolley Exit (Example)



Second Floor Site Plan

Opposite: Site plan diagram illustrating the second floor level of the proposed SODO buildings and urban spaces.

- A Office Building
- B Courtyard
- C Civic Green
- D Arrivals Hub
- E Courts and Community Services
- F In-Custody Facility (Sallyport/ ITR)
- G In-Custody Facility Staff Areas
- H In-Custody Facility Common Programs & Courtyards
- I Metro Operations Area (Partial)
- J Bus Drive Ramps (Example)
- K Bus Parking



S Royal Brougham Way

6th Avenue S

S Massachusetts St

Airport Way S

A.

B

B

C

D

E

L

G

H

H

H

H

G

k

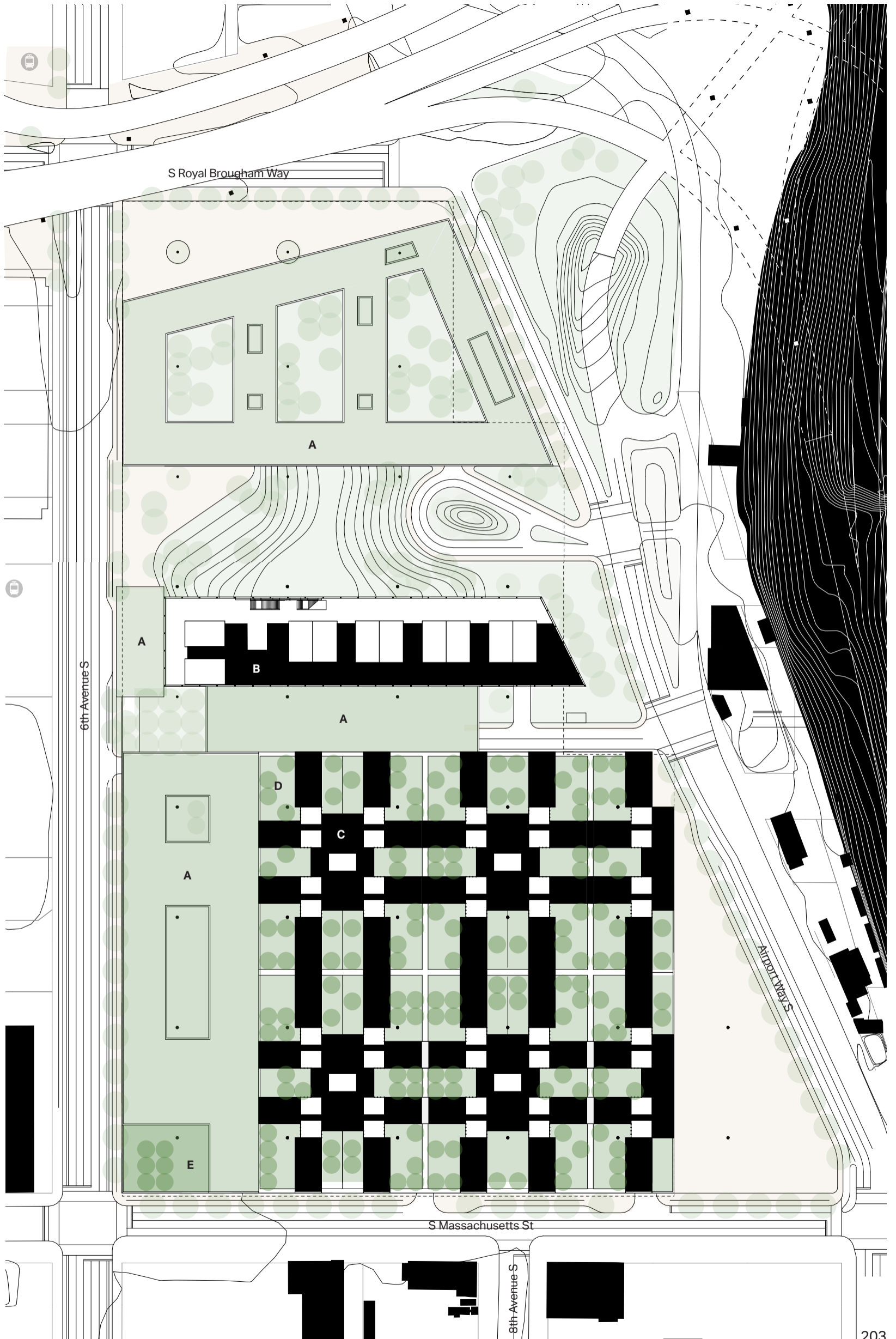
J

8th Avenue S

Fourth Floor Site Plan

Opposite: Site plan diagram illustrating the fourth floor level of the proposed SODO buildings and urban spaces.

- A Green Roof
- B Courts and Community Services
- C In-Custody Facility Housing & Programs (Typical)
- D In-Custody Facility Housing Courtyards (Typical)
- E In-Custody Facility Staff Courtyard



S Royal Brougham Way

6th Avenue S

Airport Way S

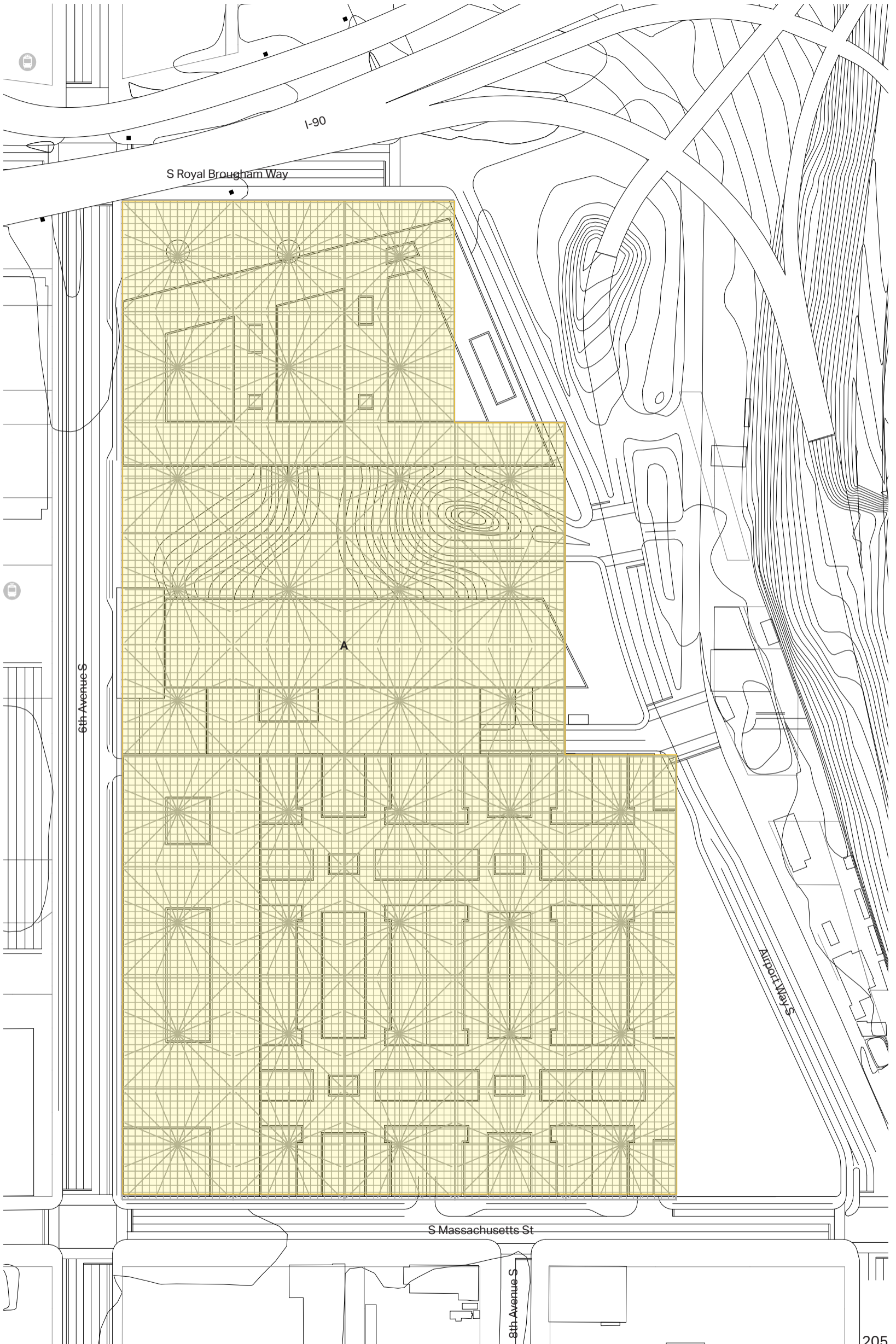
S Massachusetts St

8th Avenue S

Roof (Solar Canopy) Site Plan

Opposite: Site plan diagram illustrating the Solar Canopy located above the proposed SODO buildings and urban spaces.

A Solar Canopy



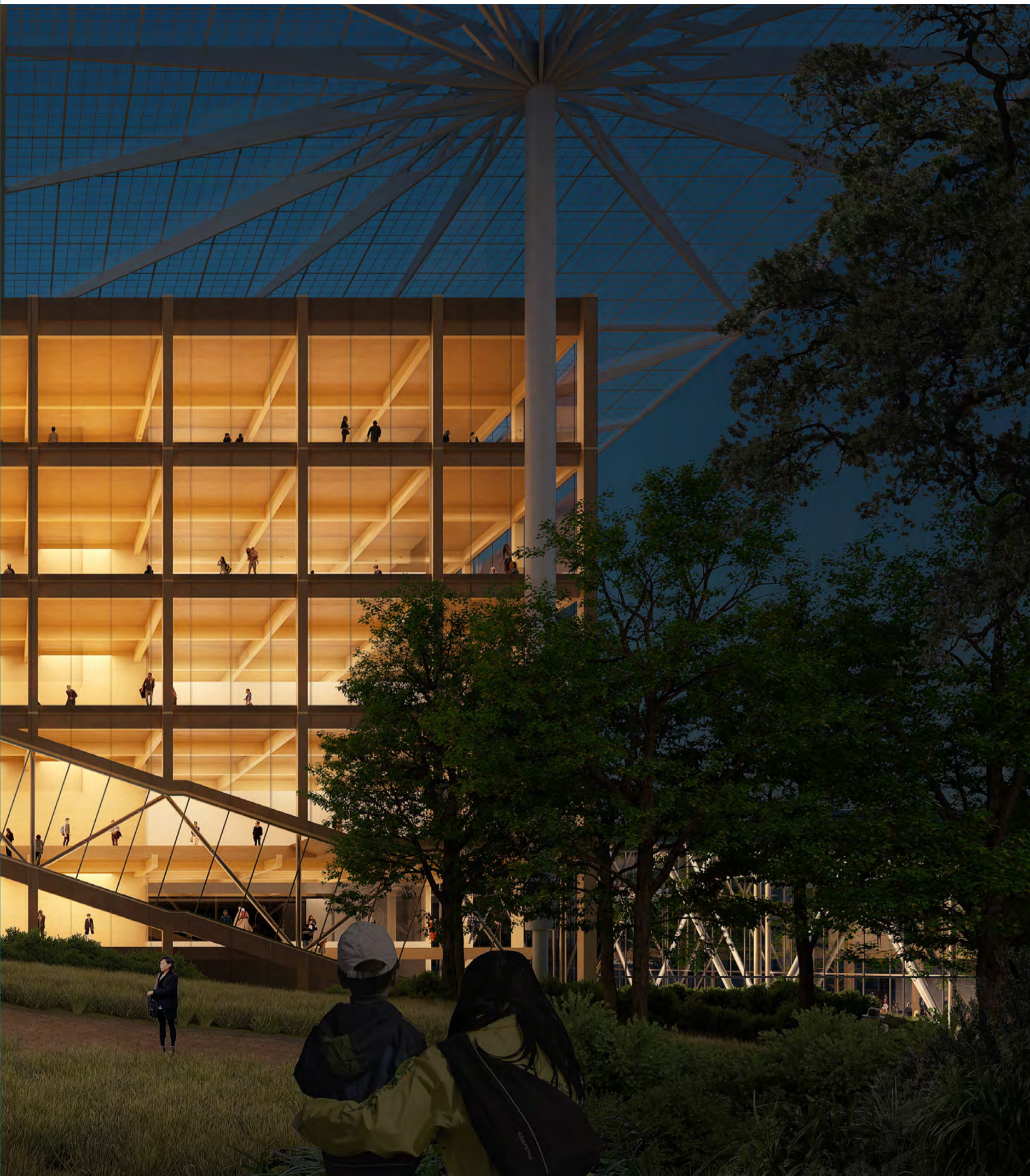






















The Context for Opportunity

The county owns an incredible amount of high-capacity property in downtown Seattle. These properties, whether the buildings or the land beneath them, hold tremendous value; and that value should be used to help offset the cost of new and much needed county facilities, and to become a part of the solution to pressing needs in King County, such as housing, affordable commercial space, environmental stewardship, and civic amenity.

Over the last several decades that capacity for change has remained hidden within the City of Seattle's land use code, and within four existing buildings that, when taken together, represent a scale of potential transformation almost unheard of in contemporary American cities.

Realizing Hidden Potential

Siting new facilities in SODO creates potential for redevelopment on a number of county-owned sites on the county's downtown campus.

Locating new civil and criminal legal system facilities in SODO would result in the vacation of the King County Correctional Facility site, making that site—currently the highest yield site in the county's portfolio—available for redevelopment. The Goat Hill Garage, which serves the correctional facility, the King County Courthouse, and downtown offices, could then also be vacated. With the garage site open, the two currently vacant adjacent parcels, would also become available for redevelopment.

And in the context of consolidating county office space in the courthouse and a new building in SODO, Sound Transit's West Seattle - Ballard Link Extension creates new opportunities as well. The new North of CID station could be located on the western half of the King County Administration Building site. That existing building is currently shuttered and would be demolished as part of that transit system work. Once Sound Transit's work is complete, that site would also become available for redevelopment.

The model image at right has removed the Administration Building, the Correctional Facility, the Goat Hill garage, and the two vacant parcels on the Goat Hill sites, to highlight the voids in the urban fabric of South Downtown that form raw opportunity sites for the creation of a district serving the surrounding neighborhoods and broader King County.

The remaining building stock offers value through the ability to provide continued use for county staff and services, or through divestment—by sale or lease—to help fund contemporary facilities and to contribute new office, institutional, or residential uses to the district.

Altogether, three-and-a-half adjacent city blocks and four existing buildings become available for potential redevelopment in one of the nation's densest and most rapidly growing urban environments.



Voids in this study model highlight the potential redevelopment sites in Downtown Seattle.

County-Owned Parcels in Seattle's Urban Core

The downtown study area includes nine county-owned parcels in Seattle's Central Business District totaling an incredible 8.2 acres.

These parcels, shown on the adjacent map, are located within three distinct land use zones: Downtown Office Core-1 (DOC1); Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC); and Pioneer Square Mixed (PSM). The King County Courthouse, the former Administration Building, the Chinook Building, and the Goat Hill Parking Garage and adjoining sites are located within the Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC) zone. The King County Correctional Facility is located within the Downtown Office Core-1 (DOC1) zone. The Yesler Building and King Street Center are located within the Pioneer Square Mixed (PSM) zone. All county properties (with the exception of King Street Center) are located within the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) Overlay.

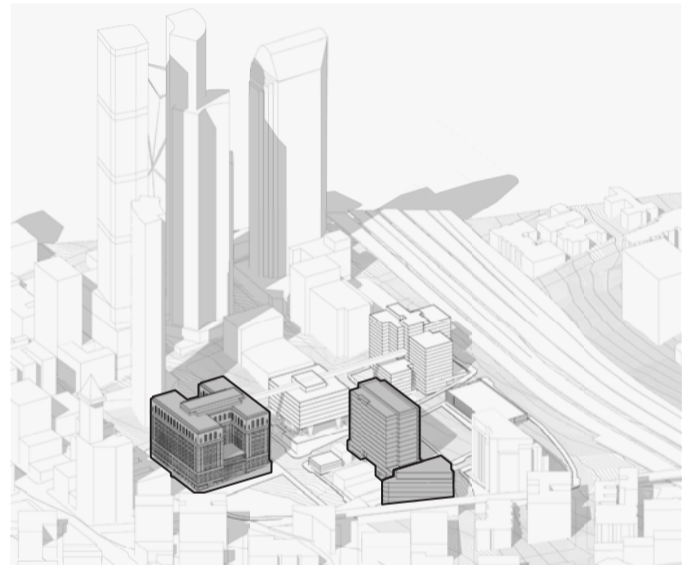
DOC1, DMC, and PSM are some of the highest capacity zones in the city, and even though the county maintains approximately 2.3 million square feet across seven buildings, as a whole these parcels are radically underutilized.

Of the nine parcels owned by the county, the four parcels occupied by the King County Courthouse, the Chinook Building, the Yesler Building, and King Street Center currently maximize development capacity under existing zoning. But the remaining five parcels offer an opportunity to reveal capacities long hidden by under-built facilities.

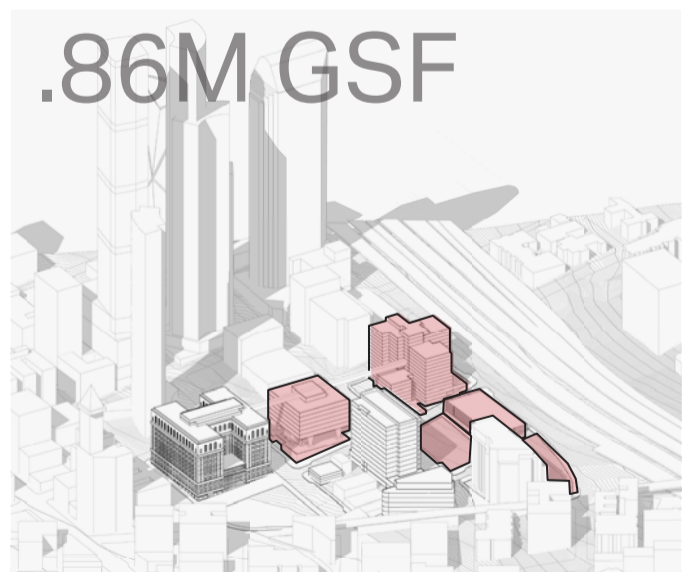
Two parcels, comprising 1.25 acres—fifteen percent—of the total land area studied, are entirely vacant. The remaining three parcels are occupied by a shuttered facility (the King County Administration Building), a functionally obsolete building (the King County Correctional Facility), and a low-rise parking garage. Together, these five parcels represent the bulk of the county's opportunity for redevelopment and form the basis for studying potential new uses and capacities.



Existing zoning map, plate 116, highlighting county-owned parcels. King Street Center not shown.



Four existing county buildings maximize development capacity under the parcel's existing zoning (King Street Center not shown).



Five parcels are occupied by empty or functionally obsolete buildings, low-rise structures that underutilize zoned capacities, or are entirely undeveloped.

Revealing Hidden Capacity

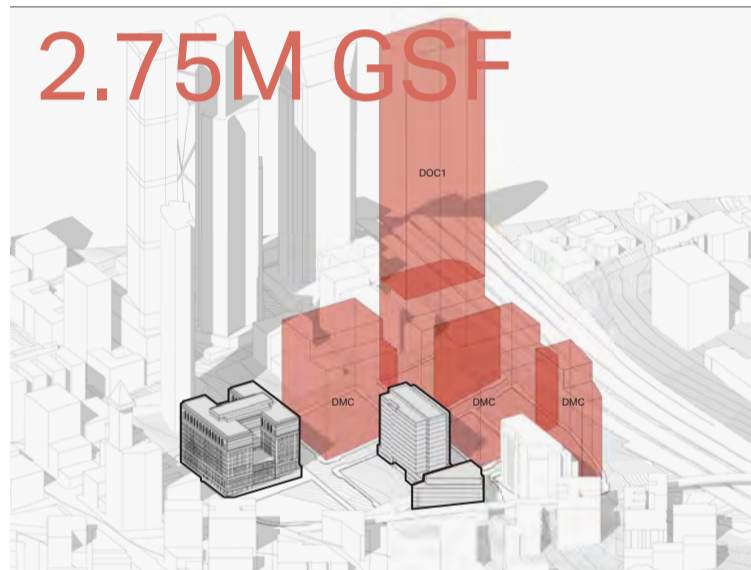
Across the five parcels identified for redevelopment studies highlighted on the adjacent map, current development totals a mere .86M square feet. Visualizing the capacities that exist under current zoning highlights the magnitude of unrealized potential. Capacities were tested for both non-residential and mixed-use residential scenarios, and maximizing developable areas for each scenario produces surprising results.

Calculated non-residential capacities total approximately 2.75M square feet. From a purely non-residential standpoint and considering current below-grade building areas that are not counted in FAR calculations, existing county buildings leave over 70% of that zoned capacity undeveloped.

When calculated for residential use, and when maximizing floor plates within developable envelopes, these five sites hold the capacity for approximately 5.34M square feet of new residential use; 58% of that potential comes from the DOC1 zoned Correctional Facility site alone.



Existing zoning map highlighting five parcels that represent the bulk of the county's opportunity for redevelopment.



Top: Modeling of calculated non-residential capacities under existing zoning.

Bottom: Modeling of calculated mixed-use residential capacities under existing zoning.

Sound Transit Creates New Opportunity

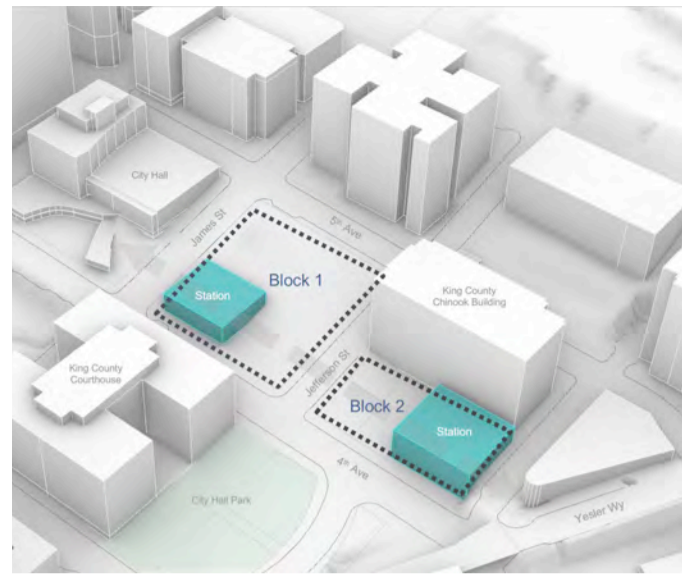
On March 23, 2023, the Sound Transit Board identified a preferred alternative for the light rail route and station locations for the Ballard Link Extension. The alignment includes stations south and north of the CID and shifts the Midtown Station to two properties located along 4th Avenue, between James Street and Yesler Way (Sound Transit, March 24, 2023). That station's alternative planning positions a future Sound Transit tunnel below the western half of the Administration Building site at 500 4th Avenue.

When undertaken, tunnel and station construction would necessitate the demolition of the King County Administration Building, resulting in a full-block site that would become available for redevelopment.

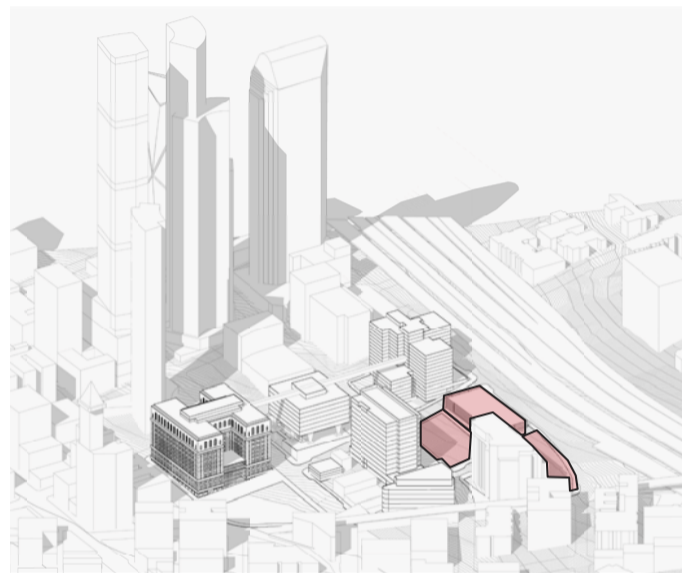
The potential location of light rail transit access on site, coupled with the high level of transit access already located in the district via the Pioneer Square Station, positions the 500 4th Avenue property as an ideal candidate for a rezone consideration from the DMC zone to the DOC1 zone. That potential rezone would better align this property with past station area up-zoning efforts and regional principles focusing on maximizing the benefits of Transit Oriented Development.

Goat Hill

The three parcels that make up Goat Hill include one parcel occupied by a low-rise garage, and two parcels that are almost entirely undeveloped. Together these three parcels account for 1.89 acres of land (82,557 square feet) that has the potential for redevelopment. In reviewing transit access for potential station area rezoning boundaries, adjacency to the DOC1 zone at the King County Correctional Facility site, and the ability to maintain a stepped DMC zone transition between DOC1 and PSM, the Goat Hill (north) parcels, inclusive of the alley, are included in studied up-zone capacity tests.



Draft location for the West Seattle - Ballard Link Midtown Station at 4th Avenue, between James Street and Yesler Way.



Three parcels are occupied by either low-rise structures that underutilize zoned capacities, or are almost entirely undeveloped.

Testing the Upper Bounds

Identifying the upper boundary of development potential requires calculating capacities that are allowable under a DOC1 zone, the highest adjacent zoning designation. Stepping northward from the PSM zone, and retaining transitional DMC zoned parcels, a DOC1 rezone of just two sites, the Administration Building and Goat Hill Garage sites changes the potential for the entire district.

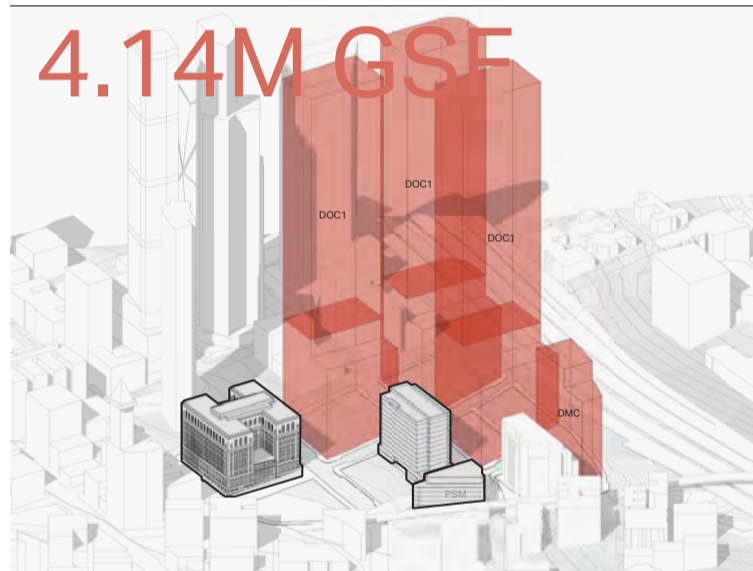
With that DOC1 rezone, calculated non-residential capacities would total approximately 4.14M square feet.

Residential capacities would also increase dramatically. When calculated for residential use, utilizing DOC1 allowable floor plates and a developable envelope limited only by an assumed maximum height of 1,100 feet, these five sites hold the capacity for approximately 9.74M square feet of new residential use.

The number of apartments and condominiums represented through existing or up-zoned square footages is staggering. With an industry standard benchmark of 750SF per dwelling, the total number ranges between 7,000 and 13,000 residences. And while what might be constructed or reasonably absorbed over time in the Seattle market may be quite different, the calculations demonstrate a tremendous potential for change.



DOC1 zoning applied to the King County Administration Building and Goat Hill Garage Sites.



Top: Non-residential capacity tested with the rezone of two redevelopment sites from DMC 340/290-440 to DOC1 U/450-U.

Bottom: Residential capacity tested with the rezone of two redevelopment sites from DMC 340/290-440 to DOC1 U/450-U and height limited to 1,100 feet.

Four Existing Buildings

Four county-owned buildings including the King County Courthouse, the Yesler Building, King Street Center, and the Chinook Building currently maximize development capacity under existing zoning. Unlike potential redevelopment parcels, the value of this existing building stock is found in the ability to support the Civic Campus Planning Initiative through continued use for county services, or through divestment—by sale or lease—to help fund more contemporary facilities.

King Street Center

Completed in 1999, King Street Center is a Class B office building located next to one of the region’s premier transportation hubs. The property is located within both the PSM zone and the Pioneer Square Preservation District. The building is 397,000 gross square feet, has ten total floors, includes approximately 420 parking stalls, and offers the opportunity for long-term value as high-quality office space.

The Chinook Building

The Chinook Building is 350,000 gross square feet, has sixteen total floors, and includes approximately 72 parking stalls. The property is located within the DMC zone. The building was completed in 2007 and achieved a LEED Gold rating and offers the opportunity for long-term value as high-quality office space. The Chinook Building also borders on suitability for an office-to-residential conversion; the option for conversion exists should repositioning this county asset become a value-add to the emerging neighborhood.



Top: King Street Center, 2023.

Bottom: The Chinook Building, 2023.



Top: Yesler Building, 2023.

Bottom: King County Courthouse, circa 1944.

The Yesler Building

The Yesler building was originally constructed in 1909, and in the 115 years since the building has housed a jail, a hospital, the police department, the department of health and sanitation, the milk inspectors office, the city attorney, municipal court, and various other city and county departments. During rehabilitation in the late 1970s, the building's interior was gutted for redevelopment into office space. At approximately 120,000 gross square feet with nine total floors, the Yesler Building has demonstrated a capacity for adaptation to a wide variety of needs over time. It is an excellent candidate for adaptive re-use strategies to meet contemporary county government or community needs, such as conversion to high-quality residential units, or institutional uses. The property is in the PSM zone. The Yesler Building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and located within the City of Seattle's Pioneer Square Preservation District boundaries

The King County Courthouse

At just over 600,000 gross square feet, the King County Courthouse holds more floor area capacity than any other single county building in downtown Seattle. The property is in the DMC zone and the building is a designated King County landmark and included in the National Register of Historic Places Pioneer Square-Skid Road district. The current courthouse is the product of additions and renovations over time; The original five-story building was completed in 1916, and received six floors of new program—additional courtrooms, offices, and a jail—in 1931. Decades later, a major modernization project in 1967 that resulted in some loss of architectural integrity to the exterior facades and interior spaces. The building's organization and relatively narrow floor-plate depth make it an ideal candidate for conversion to high-quality office space, for a variety of institutional uses, and even for residential conversion.

Leverage building values and land redevelopment opportunities as a potential funding source for future county facilities.

Unlike the "Renovate Existing Facilities" scenario which assumes building renovations on downtown sites, moving some facilities to a new site such as the SODO case study site, could leverage existing downtown county-owned properties for redevelopment to help fund some portion of the proposed county facilities.

Sales and ground lease values for each property were analyzed based on existing and proposed zoning, development potential, and current and future market conditions.

The valuation analysis considers a series of factors including: different valuation years based on a phasing assessment of when county buildings or properties might be vacated, whether the prospective development would be mixed use or residential only, if the property would be sold or ground leased, and capacities under existing and proposed zoning. The valuation also provides low and high range estimates based on possible market conditions.

King County Property values shown in this summary are calculated using projected dollar/square foot (\$/SF) rents, capitalization rates, and land value based on \$/developable SF. These forecasted measures are supported by regression analysis of historical data combined with an estimate of future key metrics such as interest rates, inflation, construction costs, growth in the Seattle economy and employment. The amount of developable SF is calculated using office floor area ratios (FAR) and residential zoning limited by height and setbacks. These SF amounts are set by zoning and design parameters for two scenarios: Residential only, and mixed-use office and residential. All scenarios include some retail use and keep existing buildings as office use; no residential conversions are included in estimated property valuations. Refer to the real estate valuation reference section for a detailed report supporting the valuation exercise.

In the case of property sales, valuation estimates indicate that the eight properties could be sold for between \$687 million and \$1.5 billion depending on the timing of sale. If ground leased, the county could earn between \$29 million and \$76 million annually, depending on the timing of the ground lease, with periodic annual increases over time. Given the variety of land assets and buildings in the county's downtown portfolio, a combination of property sales and ground leases may be considered as a part of future decision-making processes.

Estimated property values have been included for information only, and are not meant to indicate a recommendation or decision to sell or ground lease the properties.

Civic Campus Estimated Property Valuations

		MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO Existing Buildings Remain Office Use Only				RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO Existing Buildings Remain Office Use Only			
Property	Valuation Year	Value Range (For Sale)		Annual Ground Lease		Value Range (For Sale)		Annual Ground Lease	
		LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
Yesler	2028	\$27 M	\$44 M	\$1 M	\$2 M	\$27 M	\$44 M	\$1 M	\$2 M
Chinook	2028	\$167 M	\$284 M	\$5 M	\$14 M	\$167 M	\$284 M	\$5 M	\$14 M
King Street	2028	\$133 M	\$301 M	\$5 M	\$15 M	\$133 M	\$301 M	\$5 M	\$15 M
	Subtotal	\$327 M	\$628 M	\$11 M	\$31 M	\$327 M	\$628 M	\$11 M	\$31 M
KC Admin Site	2031	\$53 M	\$159 M	\$3 M	\$8 M	\$44 M	\$127 M	\$2 M	\$6 M
KC Court House	2031	\$132 M	\$213 M	\$7 M	\$11 M	\$132 M	\$213 M	\$7 M	\$11 M
KC Correctional Facility	2031	\$113 M	\$170 M	\$6 M	\$9 M	\$99 M	\$146 M	\$5 M	\$7 M
	Subtotal	\$298 M	\$542 M	\$15 M	\$27 M	\$275 M	\$487 M	\$14 M	\$24 M
Goat Hill	2034	\$66 M	\$264 M	\$3 M	\$13 M	\$56 M	\$212 M	\$3 M	\$11 M
Goat Hill South	2034	\$39 M	\$87 M	\$2 M	\$4 M	\$29 M	\$67 M	\$2 M	\$3 M
	Subtotal	\$105 M	\$351 M	\$5 M	\$18 M	\$85 M	\$279 M	\$5 M	\$14 M
	TOTALS	\$729 M	\$1,521 M	\$31 M	\$76 M	\$687 M	\$1,393 M	\$29 M	\$70 M

Valuations for County-owned land and building assets in downtown Seattle. Source: Kinzer Partners, 2024.

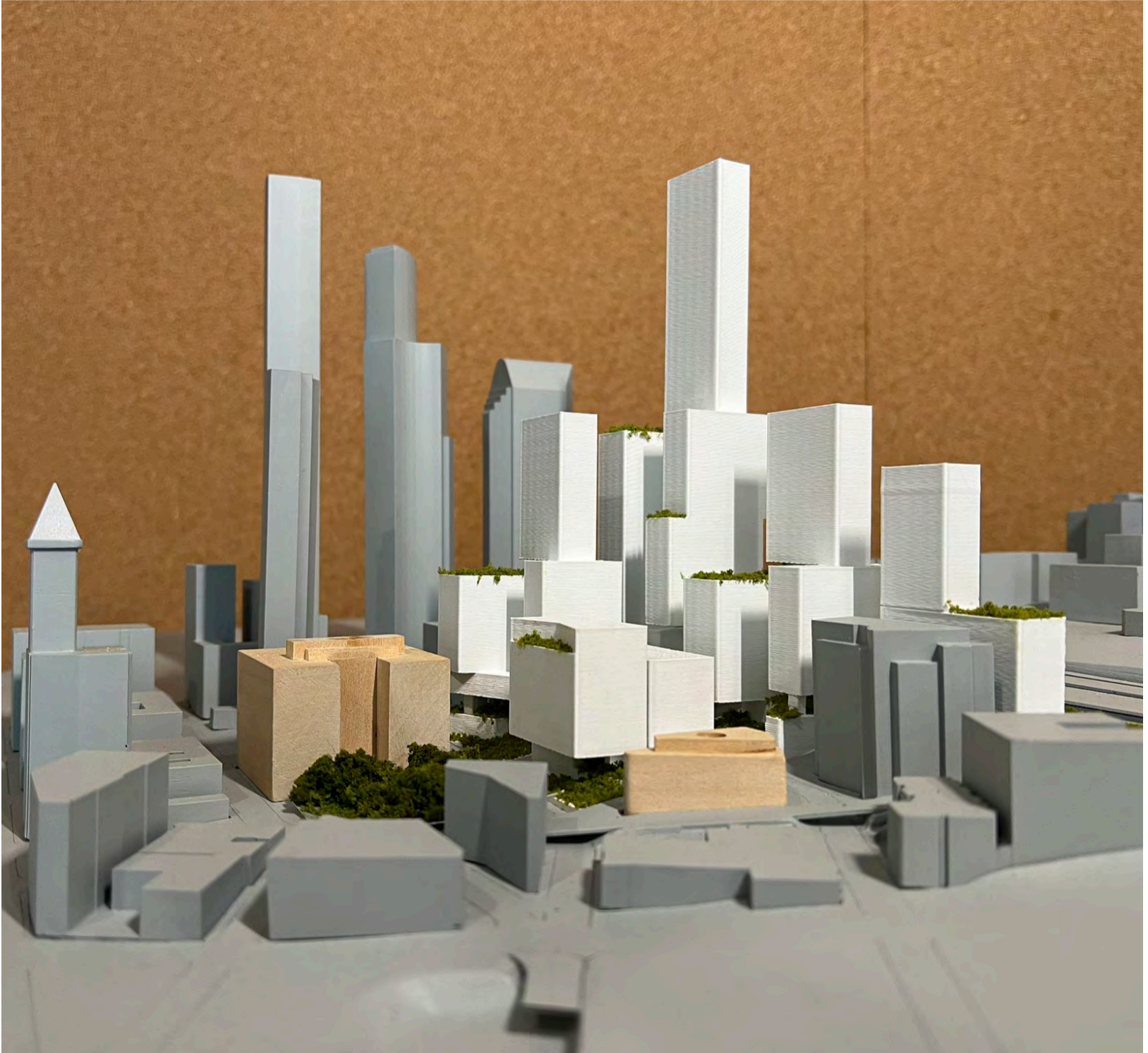
Ground leases are assumed to be 5% rent on value.

Does not include time value of money from divestment to year 2024, including totals.

Yesler, Chinook, and King Street Center are considered office use in every scenario.

Refer to the Real Estate Valuation reference section for a complete description of the valuation basis and qualifiers.

Property valuations are included for information and comparison purposes only. No policy decisions have been made.



Study model of zoning capacity tests on downtown redevelopment sites to illustrate the magnitude of potential change.

The Courthouse District

Since 1916, the King County Courthouse has been a visible symbol of local and regional government, and this iconic building has the potential to carry King County government into the next 100 years. Through creative rehabilitation, the courthouse can provide offices for county employees, a home for the County Council, and a welcome center that makes accessing county services clear.

The rest of the county-owned land downtown holds truly transformative capacity. Seattle is one of the fastest growing cities in the country, yet there is virtually no housing in this part of the city. The existing area is founded on offices, but it needs to include housing, retail, commercial storefronts, and urban open spaces that will serve the people who will call this place home for decades to come.

1918



Streetcar at Seattle City-County Building (now the King County Courthouse), 1918.

1943



Boeing employees protest meeting in Seattle's City Hall Park, 1943.

A Government District

The eight county-owned parcels in Seattle's Central Business District occupy the middle of a government center that includes facilities for local, regional, and national government entities. These buildings are occupied during peak working hours each weekday, but in the evenings, at night, and on weekends, the area is stagnant.

Some buildings in the area, like the King County Courthouse, have suffered from heavy-handed renovations that prioritized service functions over the public realm, contributing to a loss of character, quality, and the perception of a lack of safety in the district.

But this tract of land is surrounded by vibrant neighborhoods, and if well planned, it can become a new 24-hour district that lifts up, supports, and connects the surrounding communities.

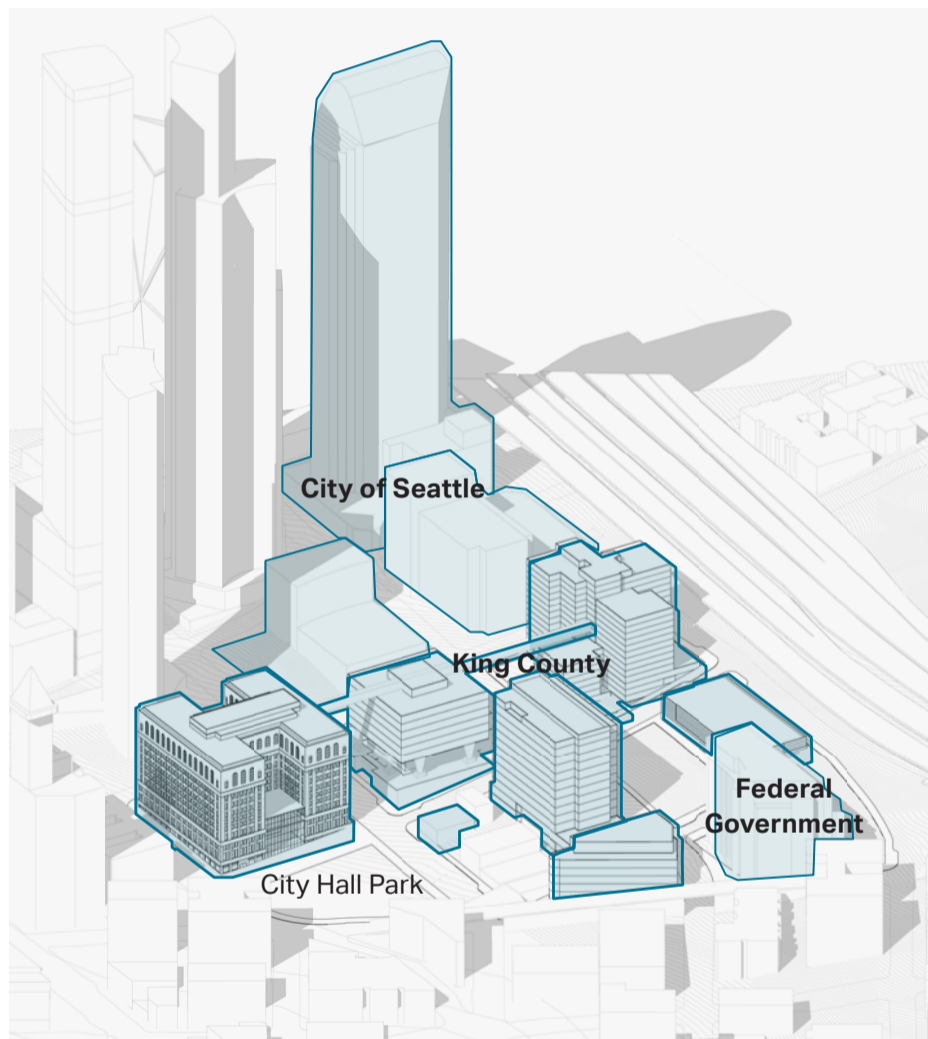


Diagram illustrating local, regional, and federal government facilities on, and in the vicinity of, the study area.

2024



A view of the Jefferson Street service drive, alongside the historic southern entry of the King County Courthouse, 2024.

2035



Proposed new urban open spaces anchored by the King County Courthouse, 2035.



A view of Jefferson Street in front of a renovated King County Courthouse, 2035.

A new district begins with the next chapter in the life of a courthouse.

Adaptive Reuse of the Courthouse

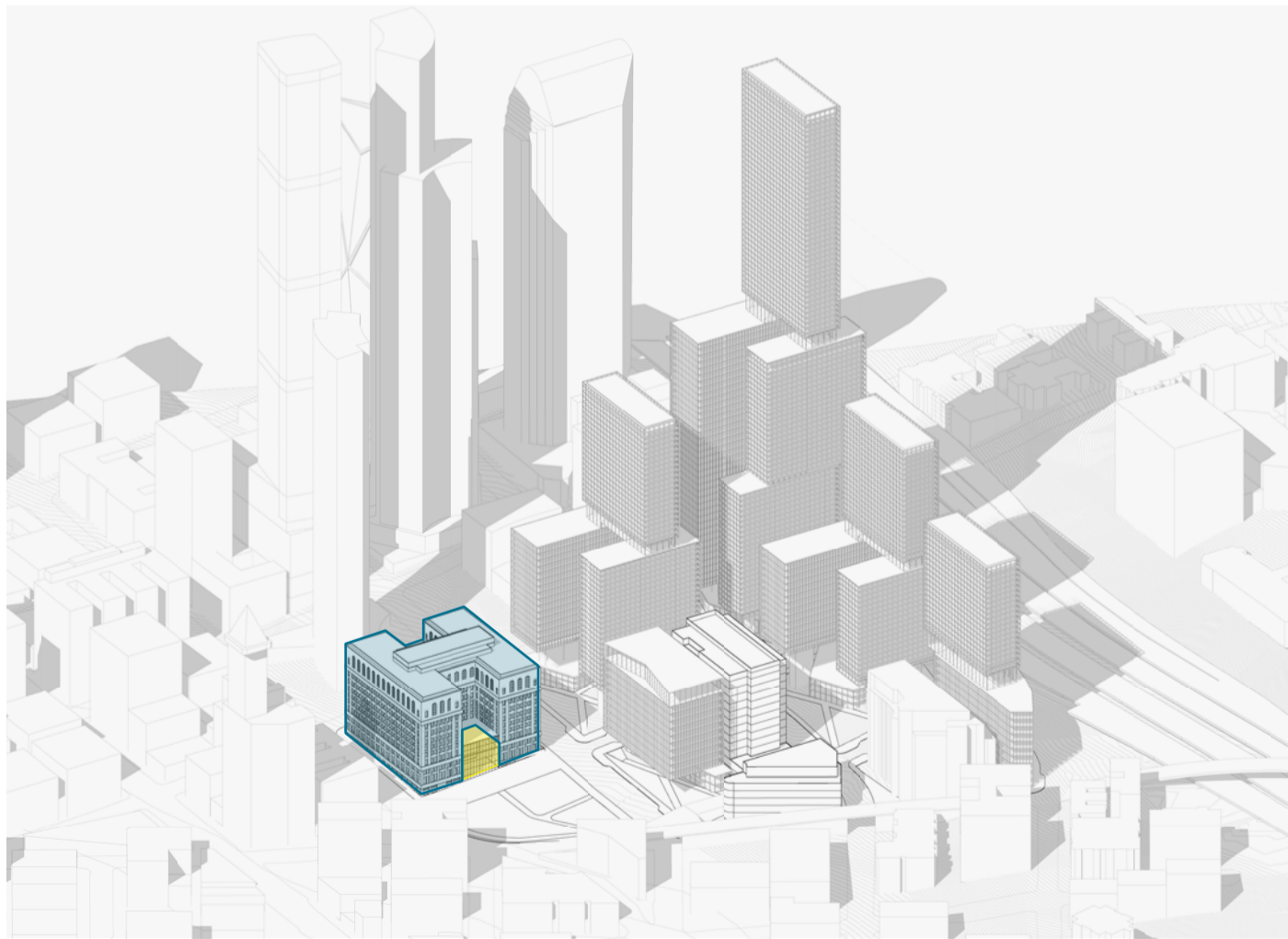
When A. Warren Gould was commissioned by the county to design the new courthouse, around 1912, the county commissioners requested “a plan for a building that could meet the anticipated growth of the county and possible relocation of offices in the future. Should the county decide that the facility no longer met its needs, the possibility of selling the building for commercial use was desirable. The architect’s challenge then, was to provide a plan for a civic/commercial building as well as an elastic structure” (King County, n.d.). One-hundred-twelve years later, a proposal for the adaptive reuse of the King County Courthouse is a testament to the quality of that “elastic structure.”

The renovated courthouse would be home to county offices, new Council staff offices and chambers, a new welcome center to house customer service functions, and retail or commercial opportunities on the ground floor. Building facades would be restored so that interior programs can take advantage of daylighting made possible by the combination of large original windows and relatively shallow floor plates.

Select programs, including common employee spaces, the welcome center, and council chambers would be accommodated through additions to the existing courthouse. These additions are located in-between the “wings” of the existing building and designed as transparent structures that complement the historic fabric of the building and allow easy differentiation between the old and the new.

King County Courthouse		
Floor/ Level	Space Type	GSF
Basement	Office/ Support	46,250
First Floor	Retail/ Commercial	2,500
	Offices/ Support	49,000
First Floor 'A'	Offices/ Support	35,500
	N. Addition Wel. Cntr.	6,000
Second Floor	Offices/ Support	43,000
	N. Addition (Offices)	6,000
	Retail/ Commercial	2,250
Third Floor	Offices/ Support	45,250
Fourth Floor	Offices/ Support	45,250
	S. Addition (Chambers)	6,000
Fifth-Tenth Flrs	Offices/ Support	45,250
Eleventh Floor	Offices/ Support	20,500
Twelfth Floor	Offices/ Support	45,250
Total (enclosed area)		624,250

Gross square footage table for the proposed renovation of the King County Courthouse.



Location of the King County Courthouse downtown, anchoring new development on county-owned parcels to the east.

Rehabilitation would retain the historical and cultural heritage of the building and allow the courthouse to contribute to the revitalization and rejuvenation of the surrounding urban landscape. Reopening the historic southern entry to the building is a critical part of the equation.

During the 1960s the courthouse was heavily renovated. Through that work, "Jefferson Street became a service drive to the loading dock and a point of access for prisoners under escort in or out of the tenth-floor jail. The Third Avenue entry officially became the formal gateway to the Courthouse, dooming City Hall Park to isolation," (Lentz, 1987).

Renewed focus on the southern facade and historic main entry can contribute to programming and planning efforts for renovations to City Hall Park, itself an integral component of the success of the Courthouse District.



King County Courthouse, 1949.

Breathe new life into the King County Courthouse; create world-class workplaces in the historic seat of county government.

Adaptively rehabilitate the King County Courthouse to accommodate new high-quality office space for county employees, leveraging the original structure's strengths for a range of new uses.

Retain designated historic elements, alongside new construction that supports new programming, to create a one-of-a-kind work environment in the Pacific Northwest.



Example adaptive reuse for high-quality office space. Hill Offices, New York, New York. Andrew Franz Architect.



What's Old is New Again

Owing to the architectural styles employed in the early 1900s, and to the structural spans possible at that time, floor plates in the existing King County Courthouse are more in-line with contemporary trends towards shallow floorplate offices than the point-core towers developed over the last several decades.

At approximately 80-feet in width, the overall floorplate within the courthouse is deeper than the roughly 65-foot depth of the SODO office building, but the historic hallways and public spaces within the courthouse change the equation. With historic hallways that are set out on a 15-foot centerline, the floor plate on either side of that hallway is roughly 32.5-feet deep, more or less a half-floor-plate match for the SODO office building. That half-floorplate depth, combined with the large original window openings in the courthouse, once renovated, offer daylighting, views, and opportunities for natural ventilation on par with newly constructed buildings. When stripped of existing interior partitions, the daylighting potential, illustrated in the diagram below, is easily seen.

But a clean floorplate is not entirely possible. Many floors display significant historic features, including elevator lobbies and corridors that should be preserved and incorporated alongside the needs for new uses.

King County Courthouse Officing		
Floor/ Level	Space Type	GSF
Basement	Office/ Support	46,250
	Offices/ Support	49,000
First Floor 'A'	Offices/ Support	35,500
Second Floor	Offices/ Support	43,000
	N. Addition (Offices)	6,000
Third Floor	Offices/ Support	45,500
Fourth Floor	Offices/ Support	45,500
Fifth-Tenth Flrs	Offices/ Support	45,500
Eleventh Floor	Offices/ Support	20,500
Twelfth Floor	Offices/ Support	45,500
Total (enclosed area)		609,750

Gross officing square footage table for the renovated King County Courthouse.

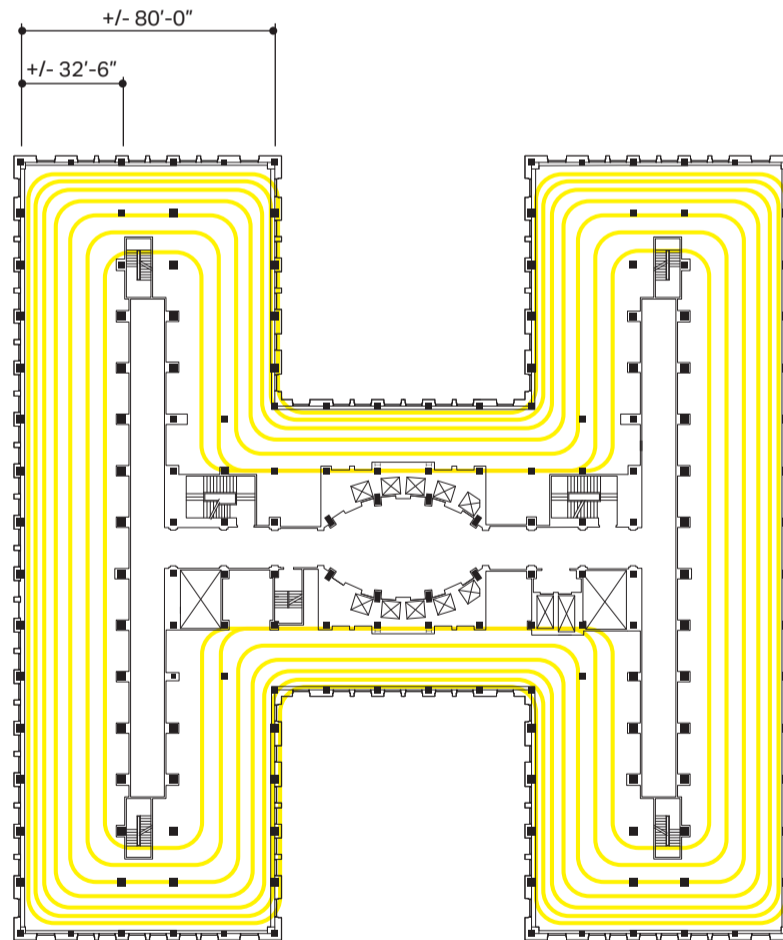


Diagram illustrating daylighting potential within a rehabilitated King County Courthouse

Rehabilitation

The King County Courthouse is a contributing building in the Pioneer Square-Skid Road National Register Historic District and a designated King County landmark. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties provides a guide on how to approach the adaptive reuse of properties identified and listed as historic. The standards identify four types of treatments: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Rehabilitation would be the most appropriate standard to reference for the conversion of a historic courthouse to a new use.

"In rehabilitation, historic building materials and character-defining features are protected and maintained as they are in the treatment Preservation. However, greater latitude is given in the Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings to replace extensively deteriorated, damaged, or missing features using either the same material or compatible substitute materials. Of the four treatments, only rehabilitation allows alterations and the construction of a new addition, if necessary for a continuing or new use for the historic building," (Weeks & Grimmer, 1995/2017).

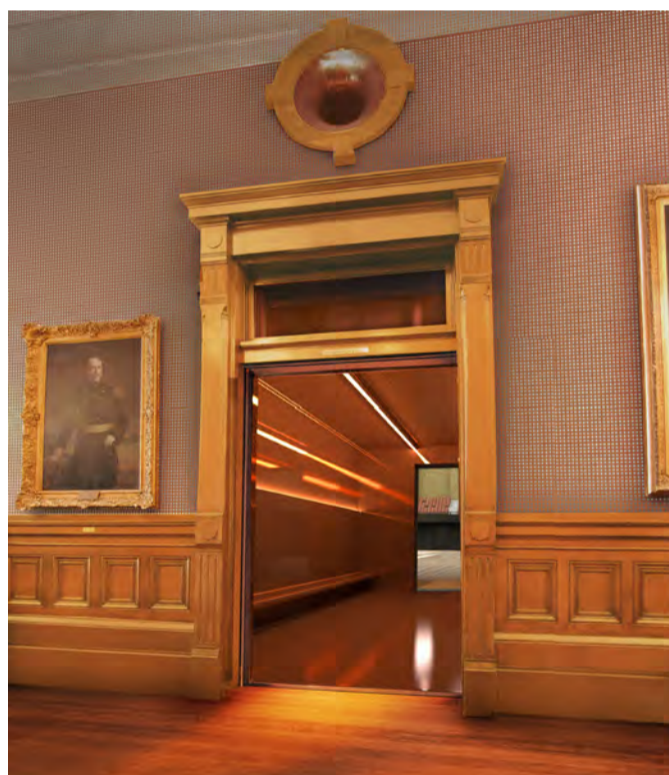
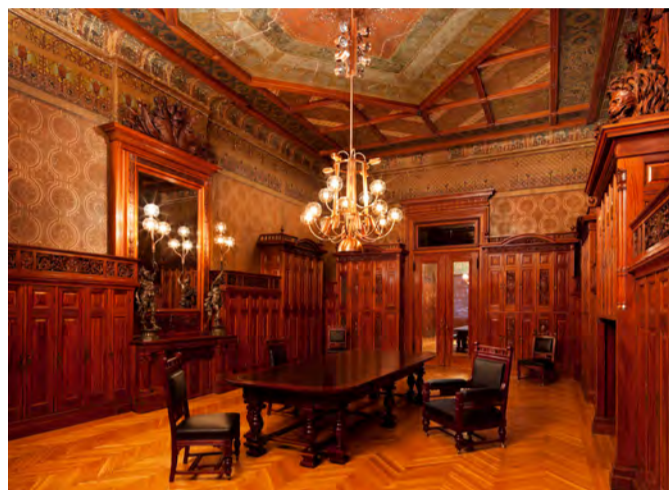
Alteration to significant features listed in the King County Landmark Designation would first require obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the King County Landmarks Commission. The COA process is a separate design review from the building permit process. COAs must be obtained before building permits can be issued.

Two reference projects illustrate the high quality and wide variety of finished conditions that can result from rehabilitation.

The Hill Offices project in New York, New York, illustrated on the prior spread, shows the potential for incorporating new open workspaces within a historic structure. The project adapts a 1913 building interior to create a textural mix of vintage and new elements (Andrew Franz Architect, ND.)

The Park Avenue Armory project, at right, also located in New York, New York was built between 1877 and 1881. The rehabilitation of that building takes a similar approach, however prior to renovation the Armory had fallen into disrepair-many spaces within the Armory were beyond preservation or even restoration. Within that context the project created a striking mix of renovated spaces, alongside new designs resulting from the needs of a new use for the building. This juxtaposition of old and radically new give the Park Avenue Armory a highly unique character.

Both precedents demonstrate the opportunity latent within the King County Courthouse for the creation of world-class workspaces that extend the life of the building into the next century.



Top: Park Avenue Armory exterior view.

Middle: Park Avenue Armory. Interior restoration of select spaces.

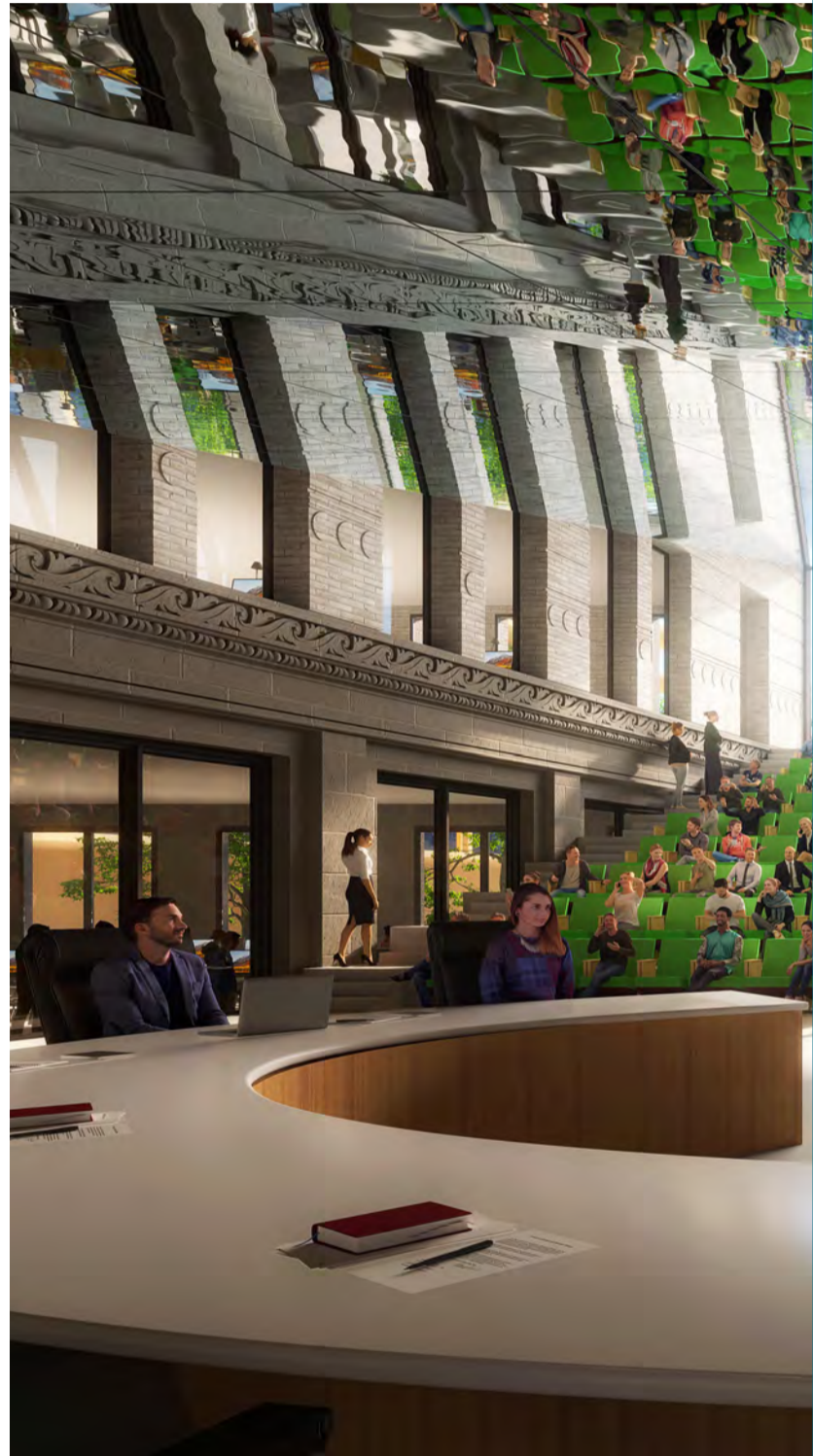
Bottom: Park Avenue Armory. Insertion of new architecture, and art, into the historic fabric to realize new functions.

Reposition Council Chambers to achieve a greater degree of public presence and accessibility to support the County Council's engagement with constituents.

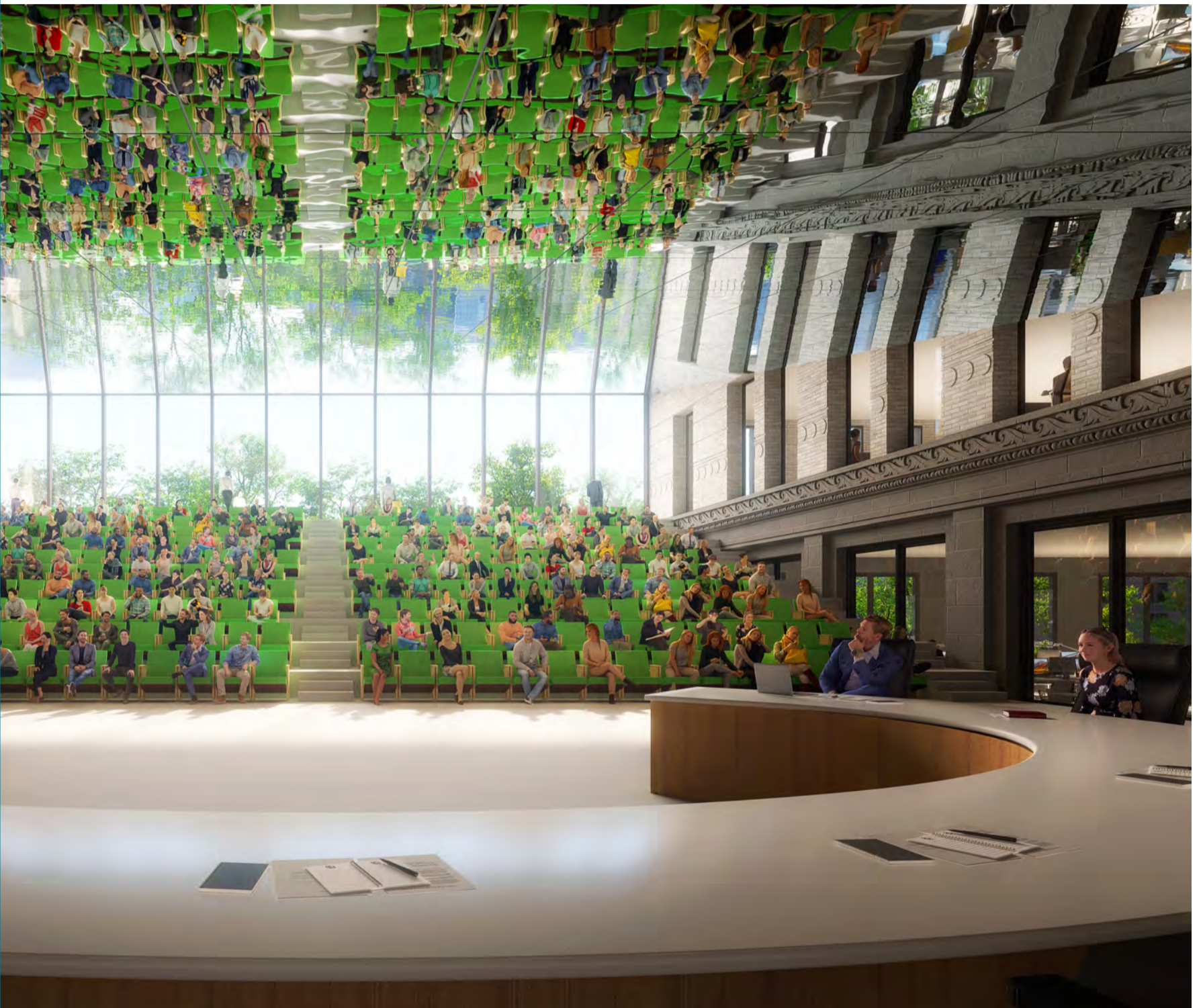
Construct new council chambers that includes a larger public gallery capable of hosting county residents in small groups or for larger gatherings.

Move away from a model design for presentation and reporting; change the format of the chambers space to invite the community to participate in, and observe, council's debates and discussions.

Reposition council chambers to a lower level in the courthouse, to create a stronger relationship with surrounding civic spaces, enable easier access, and provide more direct engagement between the council and county residents.



View of a re-imagined council chambers located on the 4th floor, and within a new addition to the King County Courthouse.



Sizing Chambers for Constituent Participation

Council members, staff, and support spaces currently occupy a total of approximately 34,000 square feet in the existing King County Courthouse. While the quantity of centralized offices and meeting spaces utilized by council members and staff see a modest increase from current levels to factor potential growth over time, the greatest difference is in the space allocated for new chambers.

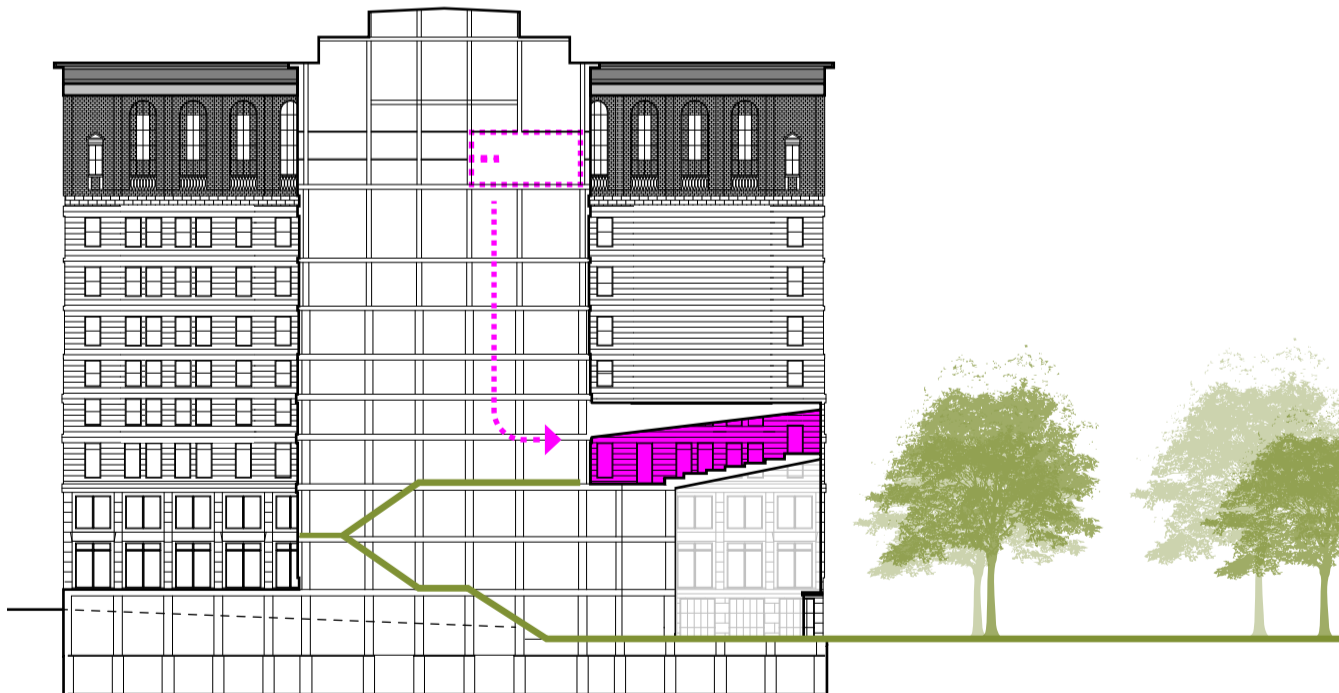
Relocating council chambers to a more readily accessible location offers the ability for more county residents to participate in legislative session processes. The space available for council meetings should be increased to accommodate a potentially higher volume of attendees. Current public gallery seating is limited to approximately 70 individuals. The quantity of gallery seating should be increased to allow between 150 and 200 attendees. A space allocation of approximately 6,000 gross square feet (GSF) has been held for new chambers. This value is a product of the location proposed for chambers and the gallery seating range identified.

A More Accessible Governing Body

Council chambers is buried on the 10th floor of the King County Courthouse. At that height, and behind a series of undifferentiated windows, council chambers are physically and perceptually removed from the public realm. Council chambers should be relocated to promote ready access by county residents, achieve more visibility for the activities of government, and take advantage of City Hall Park, which is immediately adjacent to the south side of the courthouse. Adding a new council chambers on the fourth floor, atop a new welcome center, places chamber within easy access via new staircases or existing elevators. The chamber frontage overlooks City Hall Park, offering county residents a prominent place to assemble and petition their government.

King County Council	
Space Type	GSF
Council Chambers/ Waiting	6,000
Offices & Support	34,000
Total	40,000

Area allocation for King County Council chambers, offices, and support spaces.



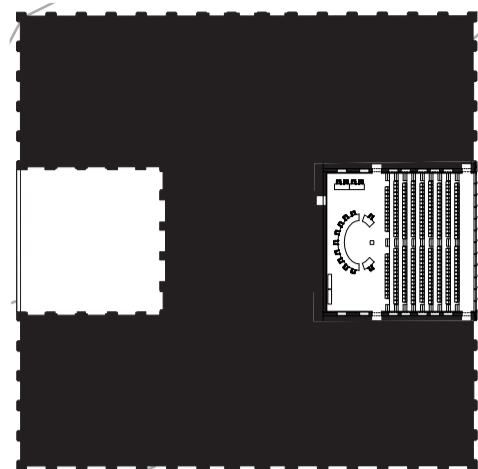
Courthouse section illustrating the repositioning of council chambers.

Shifting the Chambers Typology

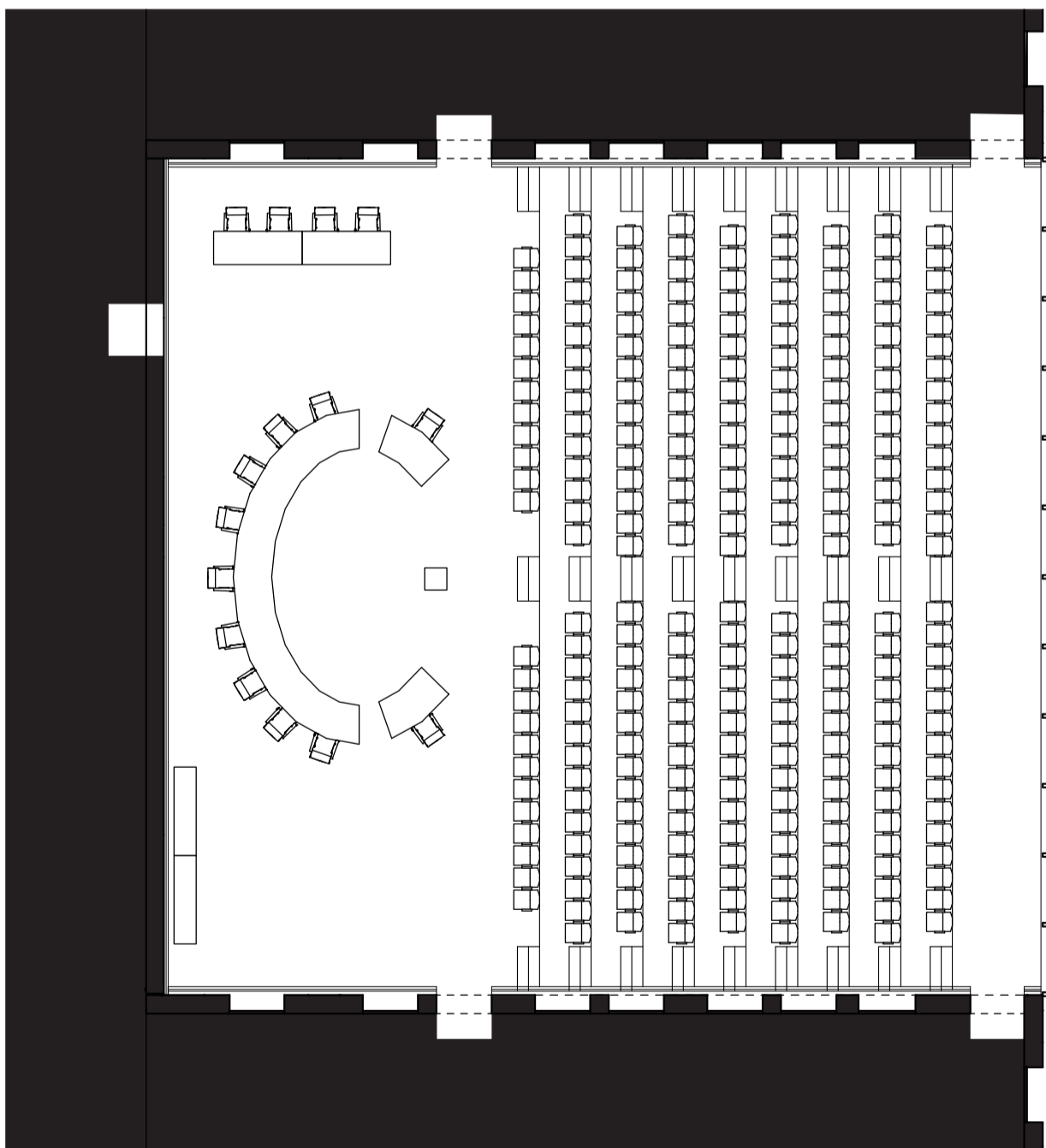
In his article "Rethinking Council Chambers Design" Scott Lazenby, the City Manager of Lake Oswego, Oregon, observes that council chambers are often designed like theater spaces for presentation to an audience rather than deliberation or discussion between members of a governing body (Lazenby, 2019).

Reimagine the council chambers; change the relationship between council members at the dais to promote engagement between members, staff, and constituents with business before the council. And reset the relationship between the attending public and the council dais; rather than seating the gallery below a raised dais, bank the gallery seating up from the dais to strengthen the perception of public participation.

These types of design propositions are not new. In "The City Council Chamber: From Distance to Intimacy," Charles T. Goodsell notes that "In Contemporary chambers, audience and officials sit much nearer to each other than in earlier chambers." And that "Elevation differentials have also been changed. The daises, platforms, and chairs occupied by officials are now lower; in fact, daises are sometimes down on the main floor itself and are no higher than a comfortable writing surface. Audience seating may also be banked, so that citizens are elevated above officials, rather than the other way around" (Goodsell, 1984).



Location plan for the proposed council chambers addition within the King County Courthouse.



Concept plan for the proposed council chambers.

Make access to government services self-evident.

The King County Staff Advisory Group identified a welcome center, or customer service center, as a key component in both navigating government services and in making those services more accessible. On April 20, 2023, King County opened a Customer Service Center located on the second floor of King Street Center. The Center was designed as an in-person storefront, with on-line queuing options, for the most-requested services offered by the county.

Building on that early proof-of-concept, relocating that center to the main entry of the courthouse brings the welcome center to the historic—and iconic—home of county government. The move also collocates the welcome center with the bulk of county office space, also located in the courthouse.

Design a contemporary structure that complements the existing courthouse without mimicking its historic fabric, and that allows easy differentiation between what has been newly added and what was a part of the original construction. The new welcome center is planned as a ground-level addition to the courthouse, filling in the southern courtyard (currently a loading dock) with a glass enclosed structure that promotes transparency and activity between the courthouse and City Hall Park. Support staff and offices related to welcome center functions take place on the same floor—or on floors one level up or down—with close physical relationships to departments, divisions, and offices located elsewhere in the building.

Collocating the new welcome center with the main entrance to the courthouse also leverages the position of the welcome center to enliven City Hall Park by providing foot traffic that supports daily use of the park.

Welcome Center and Support Offices	
Space Type	GSF
Welcome Center Addition	6,000
Offices & Support	(up to) 25,000
Total	(up to) 31,000

Area allocation for King County Welcome Center and supporting departmental offices.



Courthouse section illustrating the position of the welcome center addition fronting City Hall Park.



A view of the welcome center addition to the King County Courthouse, shown with the council chambers addition above.

Improve connections between City Hall Park and the surrounding urban fabric.

Work towards the closure, vacation, or removal of infrastructure that has produced an insular public space, so that the park can be woven into the fabric of the surrounding urban realm and doubled in size.

Change the topography across a vacated Dilling Way and the county service tunnel to connect the park to Yesler Way.

Collaborate with Sound Transit and the City of Seattle to make City Hall Park a destination within the regional transit system.

Orient the park towards the courthouse, leveraging a renovated historic structure with public-facing programs at grade.





View of a renovated City Hall Park and pedestrian-oriented Jefferson Street.

Reintegrate City Hall Park

City Hall Park is inseparable from downtown county facilities. Although owned and operated by the City of Seattle, the park serves as the primary civic space associated with county facilities and services.

City Hall Park is located between the Jefferson Street Right-of-Way and the King County service tunnel drive. The northern edge of the park is bounded by the Jefferson Street right-of-way, now a service drive leading to the courthouse loading dock. The southern edge of the park is bounded by Dilling Way, used as a parking lot for emergency vehicles. The park includes a small land area fragment located between Dilling Way and the King County service tunnel drive, now abandoned. The eastern and western edges of the park are bounded by 4th Avenue and 3rd Avenue respectively. Existing primary pedestrian routes within the park and between public right-of-way are limited to those connecting mid-block between 3rd Avenue and 4th Avenue.

Achieving a greater degree of accessibility and integration with the surrounding urban fabric requires structural changes to the infrastructure that currently borders City Hall Park:

Incorporate the Jefferson St right-of-way into the park's design, connecting the courthouse to the park, and creating a pedestrian space—and walking route—along the northern side of the park. Convert the Dilling Way roadway and vehicle parking lot into park grounds and pathways, expanding the area of the park and connecting fragmented park parcels into a consolidated whole. Remove or cover the courthouse service tunnel drive and create a grade-transition that connects City Hall Park to Yesler Way. A simple topographic rise, from the northernmost boundary of the (former) Dilling Way up to Yesler Way would enable strategic pedestrian connections, and an accessible route, from Yesler Way directly into City Hall Park.

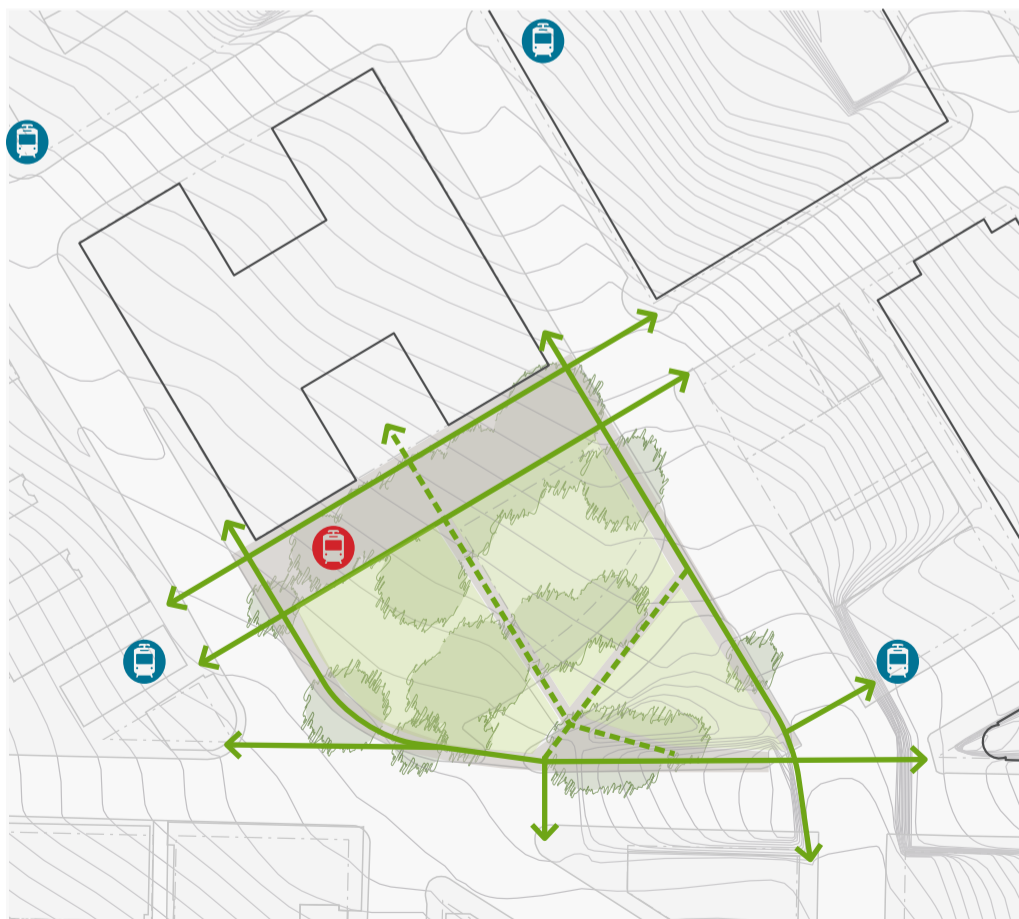
Structural changes to the confining infrastructure surrounding the park, that more than double the size of downtown's primary urban green spaces, can achieve a more expansive and programmable public realm within which to develop lasting surface design improvements.

City Hall Park	
Land Area	GSF
Existing Park Parcels	24,500
Jefferson Street	+/- 15,500
Dilling Way	+/- 10,000
King County Tunnel Drive	+/- 5,000
Total	+/- 55,000

Area allocation for King County Welcome Center and supporting departmental offices.



City Hall Park existing surface infrastructure and restrained connections.



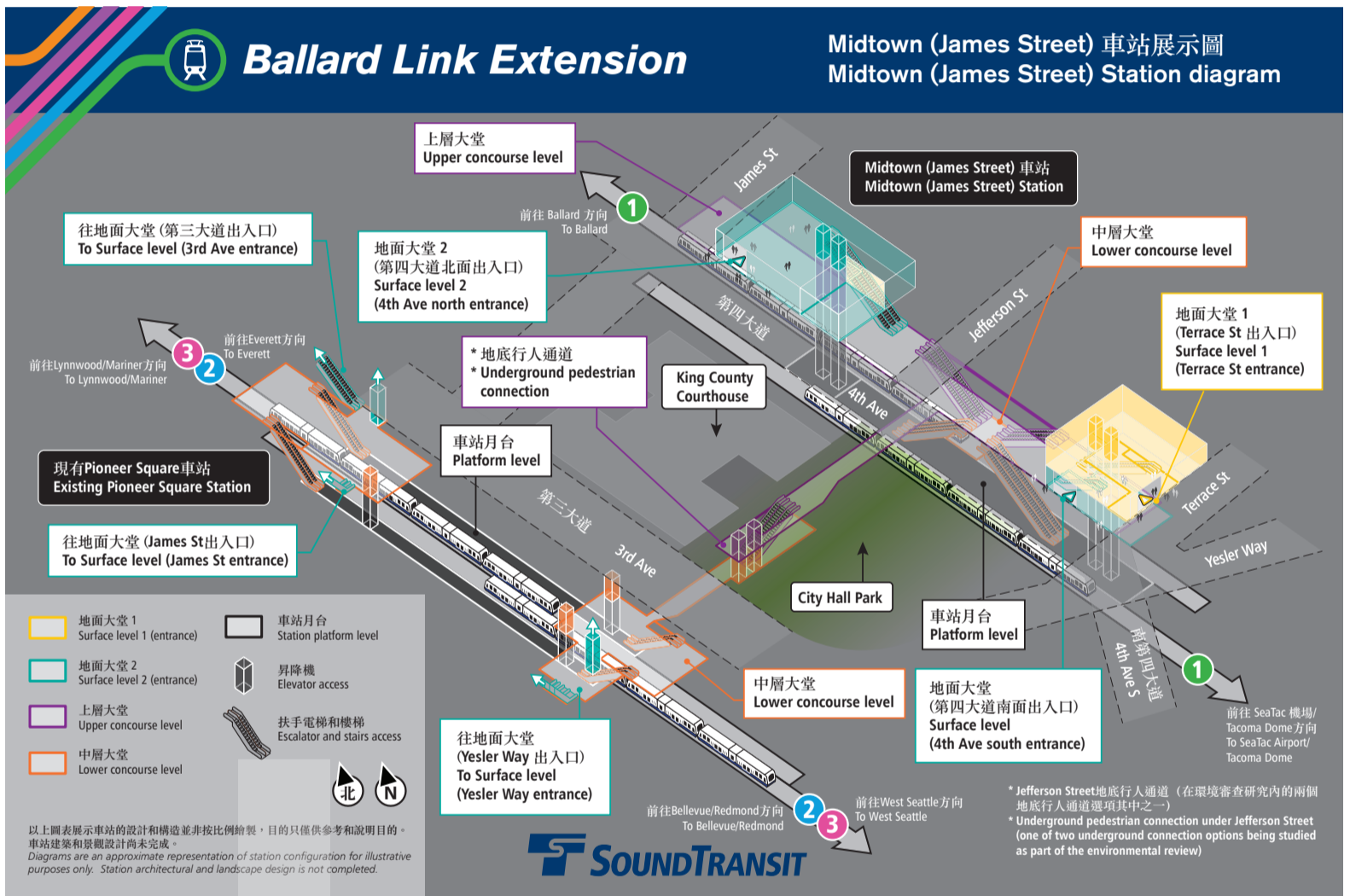
Proposed infrastructure vacations and closures to increase integration with the surrounding urban fabric. New proposed light rail exit shown in the vacated Jefferson Street ROW.

Jefferson Street Concourse and a City Hall Park Transit Exit

The Courthouse District is well served by many mobility options, light rail included. The Pioneer Square Light Rail station entrances are located along 3rd Avenue with access via Prefontaine Place and the 3rd Avenue / James Street entrance.

In 2023, Sound Transit identified a preferred alignment for further study, for the West Seattle - Ballard Link North of CID station, with entrances located at the northeast corner of 4th Avenue and James Street, and the northeast corner of 4th Avenue at the Terrace Street bridge intersection.

King County and The City of Seattle, in working with Sound Transit, should continue work to connect the North of CID and Pioneer Square stations through a mezzanine level connection underneath the Jefferson Street ROW. That connection would make the Courthouse District a key transfer center for regional light rail ridership. And locating a demure station exit in the Jefferson Street ROW would help make City Hall Park a consequential urban space destination within the regional transit system.



Jefferson Street Concourse linking new North of CID Station platforms with the existing Pioneer Square Station platforms, currently under study.

Convert real estate value into civic value and create a vibrant 24-hour district that benefits residents, workers, visitors, and businesses.

Capitalize on the relocation of the courthouse and in-custody buildings to the SODO case study site; build a new mixed-use, mixed-income district that lifts up, supports, and connects the surrounding neighborhoods.

Create a coherent ground-level arrangement of spaces across the entire district that promotes public life.

Make room for affordable retail and affordable commercial spaces at ground level to foster a vibrant environment of diverse local businesses.

Shape new buildings and open spaces to reflect the unique opportunities and characteristics inherent in this tract of land in downtown.



An aerial rendering of proposed redevelopment in the Courthouse District.



Courthouse District Regulatory Strategy

While the area's existing zoning supports high-density redevelopment, a variety of uses, and the flexibility to depart from certain development standards, it is not structured to facilitate phased, coordinated development across multiple blocks. Existing area zoning is also not written to facilitate an open, accessible, and interconnected ground level throughout the district.

For the Courthouse District, five inter-related regulatory approaches are recommended.

Implement a Planned Action Ordinance (PAO) that establishes overarching development parameters for the district as a whole.

PAOs authorize local governments conducting multi-block or district-scale developments to proactively prepare a programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) during the planning stage, rather than waiting to react to the myriad individual development proposals and SEPA reviews that may follow. In this way, a PAO enables the coordinated assessment of impacts and benefits across multiple future projects and allows developments that are consistent with the EIS and PAO to bypass additional SEPA review. This streamlines the implementation process by expediting permit approvals, and it lowers development uncertainties by clarifying in advance the mitigation measures that projects must address in their design.

Enact a Planned Community Development (PCD) to codify elements included in the PAO.

In downtown zones, PCDs may be permitted by the director as a Type II Land Use Decision pursuant to Chapter 23.76, "Procedures for Master Use Permits and Council Land Use Decisions." PCDs allow bonus increases in floor area, in return for the identification and prioritization of public benefits to be provided by development projects, such as low-income housing, historic preservation, public open space, improvements in pedestrian circulation, urban form, integration of transit facilities, and green stormwater infrastructure. PCDs are a natural corollary to a PAO; PCDs allow programmatic components, such as floor area, to be balanced across the district as a whole, "considering all of the lots within the PCD boundaries as a single lot," rather than requiring projects to stand alone on a lot-by-lot basis.

Develop new neighborhood-specific zoning and supplementary design guidelines to custom tailor PAO and PCD projects to meet county goals.

The Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC) and Downtown Office Core (DOC) zones were established by Ordinance 112303 in 1985, codifying standards initially developed for downtown nearly a half century ago. Likewise, the Downtown Design Guidelines shaping current projects were adopted in 1999. This means that projects developed in downtown are being designed for a vision of the city that is between 25 and 40 years old.

DMC and DOC zoning codes, and the corresponding Downtown Design Guidelines, should be updated to reflect the contemporary goals and objectives of new development within the Courthouse District.

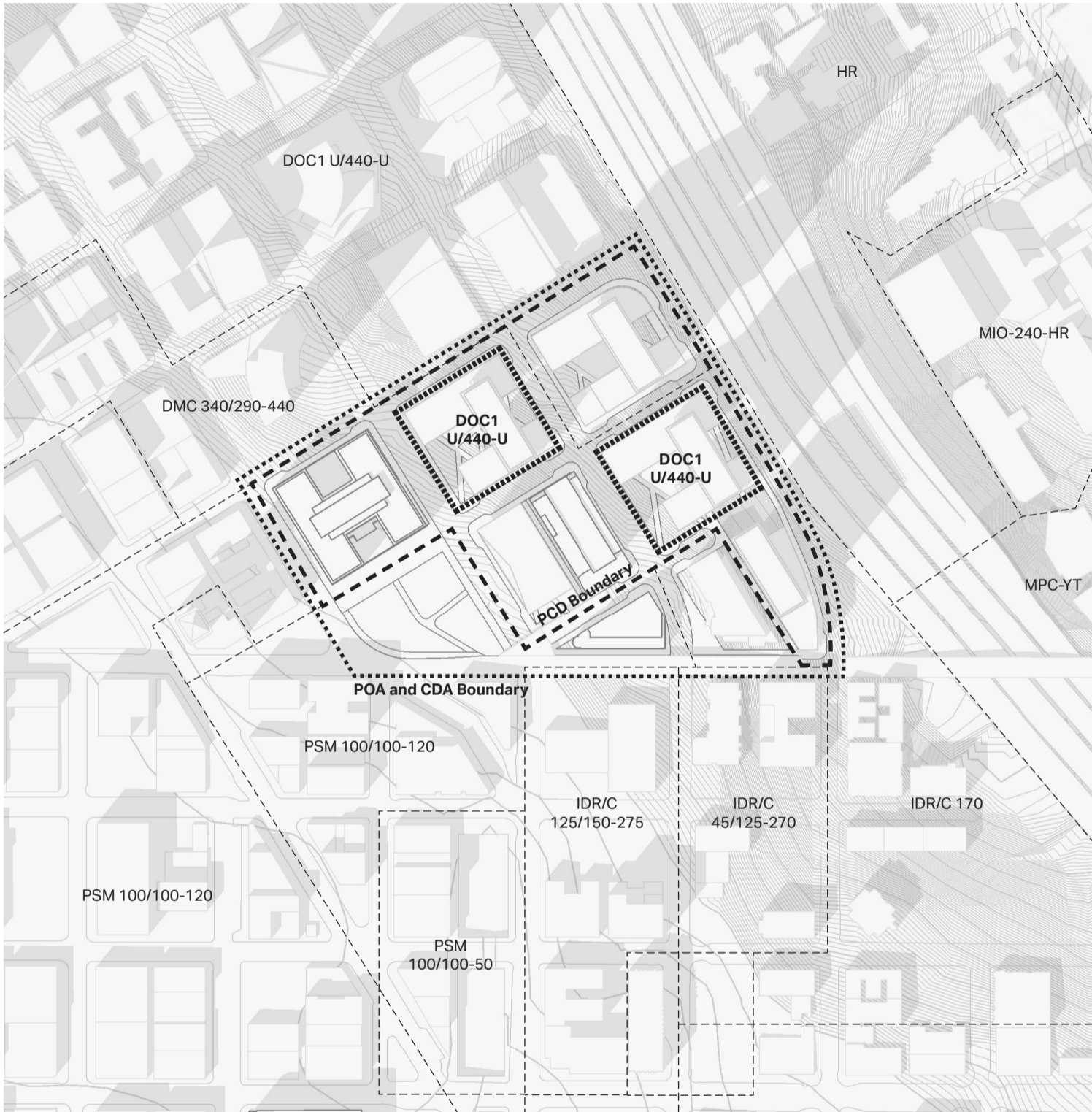
Increase the Base Development Capacity

The DMC and DOC1 zones do not regulate residential floor area, except through provisions establishing the maximum size and separation of tower floor plates above the podium level. This is intended to ensure adequate light and air in the high-density downtown zones and to incentivize housing development within prescribed height limits.

To further support the provision of new housing downtown, while ensuring an open and publicly accessible ground plane, the base and maximum development capacities on two blocks within the Courthouse District should be rezoned from a DMC equivalent to a DOC1 equivalent. In conjunction with neighborhood specific zoning adjustments, supplementary design guidelines, and an overarching PCD, this would allow greater flexibility in the distribution of floor area across the district and provide an opportunity to move podium level programs higher into the development envelope. See plan at right for locations of capacity changes on the former Administration Building site and the Goat Hill North site.

Adopt a Cooperative Development Agreement (CDA) to govern implementation.

Because the city and the county have a shared interest in redevelopment in the Courthouse District, the county should facilitate the adoption of a Development Agreement to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the parties, and the standards and conditions that would govern regulatory activity, planning, design, and implementation.



Proposed PAO, PCD, and CDA boundaries for the Courthouse District.

Connecting Diverse Neighborhoods

The county's downtown properties reside at the center of five growing, changing, diverse neighborhoods: the Central Business District, First Hill, Yesler Terrace, the Chinatown International District, and the Pioneer Square Preservation District.



Aerial Photograph of the Courthouse District sites in relationship to surrounding neighborhoods.

From a Monolithic to a Mixed Land Use

The five surrounding neighborhoods exhibit a mix of land uses, ranging from Commercial/Mixed-Use and Multi-Family to Master Planned Communities and Parks or Open Space.


Current land use across county-owned properties in downtown is monolithic, part of a broad swath of major institutional and public facilities that effectively form an institutional blood-clot between surrounding neighborhoods.

The zoning actions leading to the redevelopment of county-owned land and the repositioning of county-owned buildings in downtown presents an opportunity to create a mixed-use district that not only changes the map, but changes the environment between neighborhoods.



Top: Map detail, highlighting existing land uses in the Courthouse District.

Bottom: Map detail, highlighting proposed land uses in the Courthouse District.

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Commercial/Mixed-Use |  Major Institution/ Public Facilities/Utilities |
|  Multi-Family |  Parks/Open Space/Cemeteries |
|  Master Planned Community | |

What does “mixed-use redevelopment” mean for a civic initiative?

Change the Paradigm

Mixed-use development in Seattle, including written land use codes, focus an incredible amount of attention on delivering, and regulating, ground level "podiums," which are the building volumes that house retail and commercial activity, and building services and parking. And with the exception of code-required outdoor open space, these podiums tend to fill the entire land area of the parcels being developed.

Mixed-use redevelopment for a civic initiative means changing the development paradigm and shifting the premise of the ground plane from a space for private profit to a space for public purpose.

NOT JUST THIS



THIS!!



Expand our Civic Ground.

Plan for a ground level that is open to everyone.

Leverage the eccentricities that make downtown Seattle unique, exploit the hilly nature of the sites to create an environment that can exist nowhere else.

Employ a development model that creates more outdoor space to host the outdoor life of a new district.

Infuse outdoor spaces with opportunities for small-footprint retail and commercial spaces that can showcase local businesses, and spaces for large commercial activities, like a grocery store, to support the needs of a new 24-hour district.



View of the open public ground level on the former Administration Building site, facing west towards a rehabilitated King County Courthouse.



Navigating Seattle's Topography

King County's downtown sites slope quite steeply from east to west, from the I-5 corridor to 3rd Avenue. In fact, the four sites that hold the highest opportunity for new mixed-use development are also the steepest.

The former King County Administration Building and King County Correctional Facility sites slope 55 feet from avenue to avenue, while the Goat Hill North sites slope approximately 75 feet from 5th Avenue to 6th Avenue. Taken across a roughly 240-foot block this equates to slopes between 25% and 32% respectively, a full 20% to 27% steeper than the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) identify as the maximum running slope for accessible routes.

The future Courthouse District, rich in transit options, urban outdoor spaces, and local retail and commercial activity, should include an accessible public realm. Natural topography has long formed an exception to the requirements of reference standards for accessible design, but in some cases even the hilliest sites can be made part of an inclusive public realm. Solving for accessibility is key to ensuring that a high-quality urban environment is used and enjoyed by as many people as possible.

A Legible Urban Framework

Sites across the county's downtown properties were studied, outlining accessible routes along each street edge, as well as diagonally through each block, to identify possible route combinations that could provide a framework for planning across all sites (opposite top right).

By expanding and lengthening key sidewalk frontages in the north-south direction, projects can reduce the steepness of downtown streetscapes and make more of the public realm accessible. When that same inflection is extended to create accessible routes across all blocks in the north-south direction, a legible urban framework emerged; a framework built on accessibility (opposite bottom).



Photograph of Jefferson Street illustrating the steep slope between 4th Avenue and 5th Avenue along the existing King County Administration Building frontage.

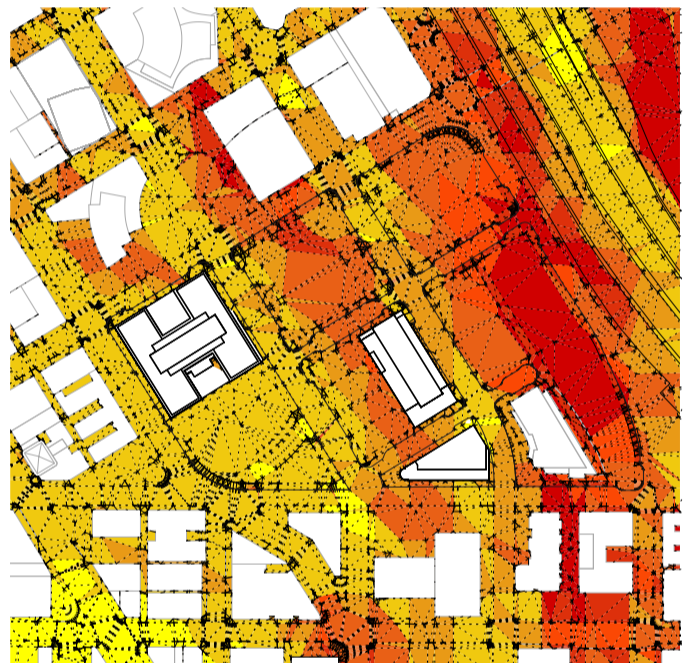
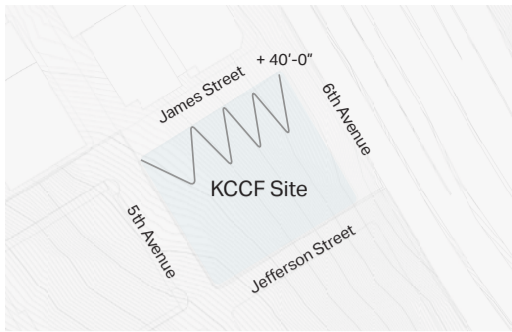
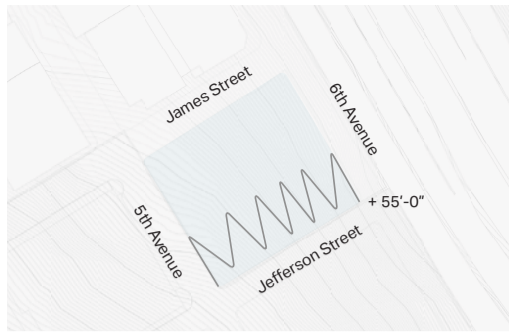


Diagram of slopes across King County's downtown properties.

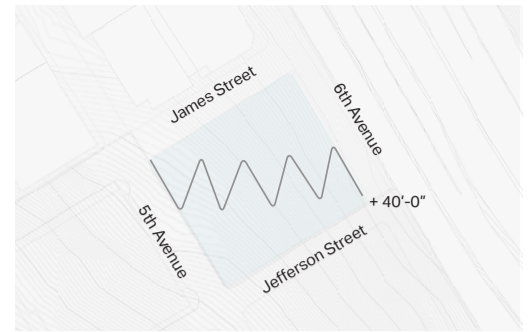
- Slopes between 0% and 5%
- Slopes between 5% and 10%
- Slopes between 10% and 15%
- Slopes between 15% and 20%
- Slopes between 20% and 25%
- Slopes greater than 25%



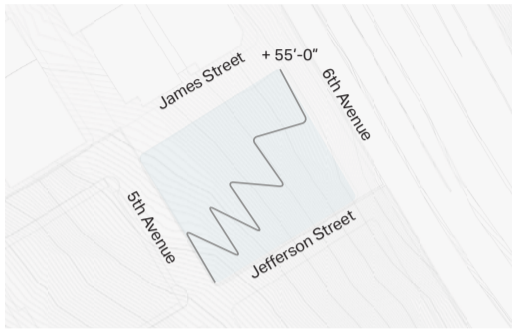
King County Correctional Facility Site. James Street site edge, +/- 40-foot traverse.



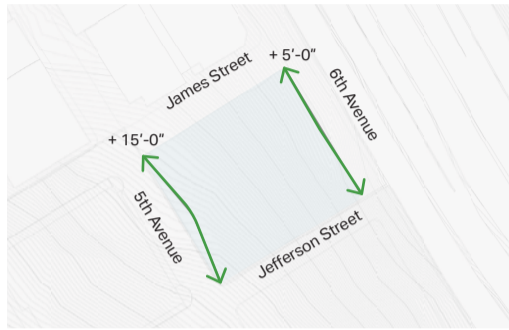
King County Correctional Facility Site. Jefferson Street site edge, +/- 55-foot traverse.



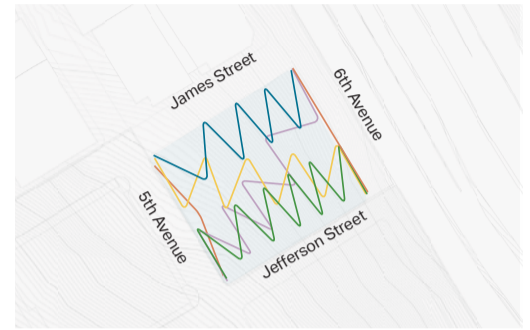
King County Correctional Facility Site. East-West diagonal crossing, +/- 40-foot traverse.



King County Correctional Facility Site. North-South diagonal crossing, +/- 55-foot traverse.



King County Correctional Facility Site. 5th Avenue and 6th Avenue site edge aligned, +/- 5-foot and +/- 15-foot traverse.



King County Correctional Facility Site. All crossings.



North-south street-edge diagram illustrating that accessible routes can form legible urban frameworks.

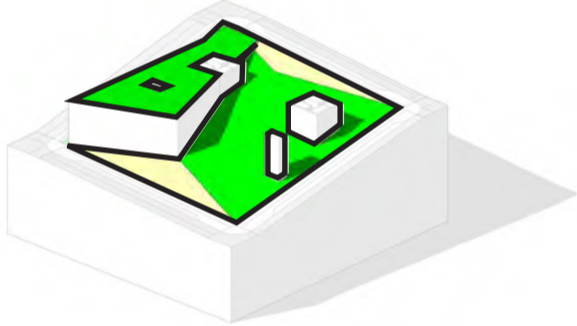
From Framework To Site Strategies

The former King County Administration Building site offers a good example of the deployment of accessibility and open space strategies across Courthouse District redevelopment sites.

Incorporating the minor inflection along the 4th and 5th avenue street edges creates an accessible route in the north-south direction. That inflection carries pedestrians into the site, creating a deep landscape and stormwater management buffer between mid-block spaces and vehicular and bicycle activity in the ROW.

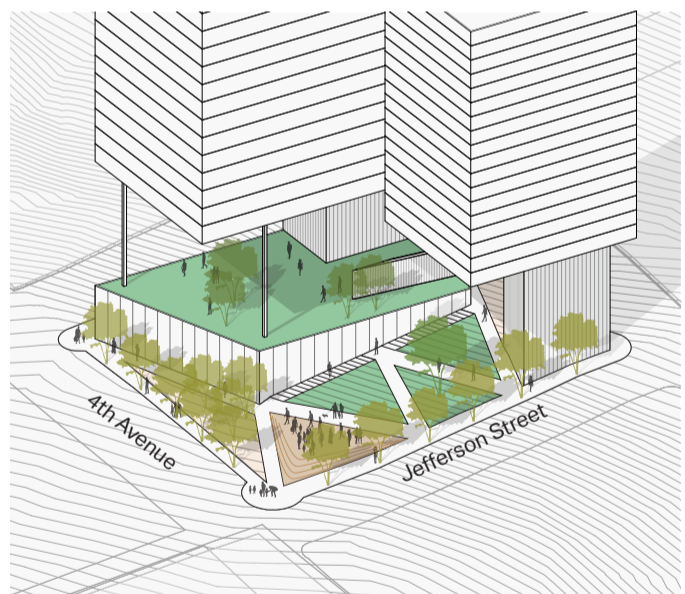
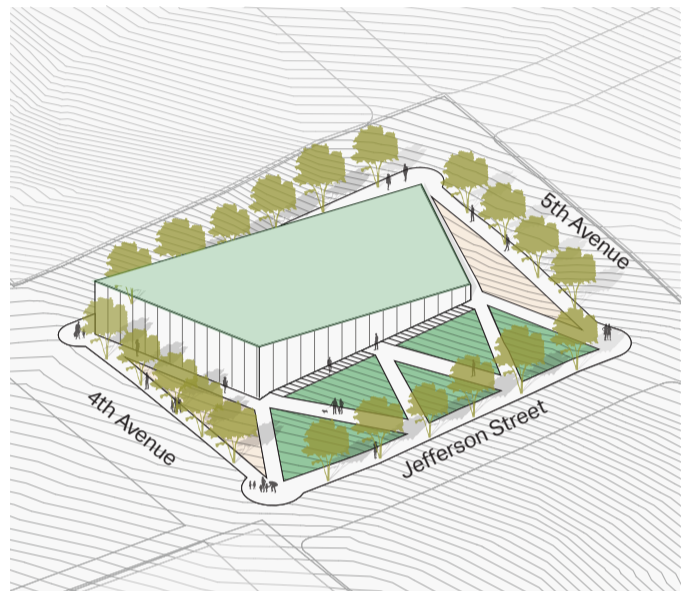
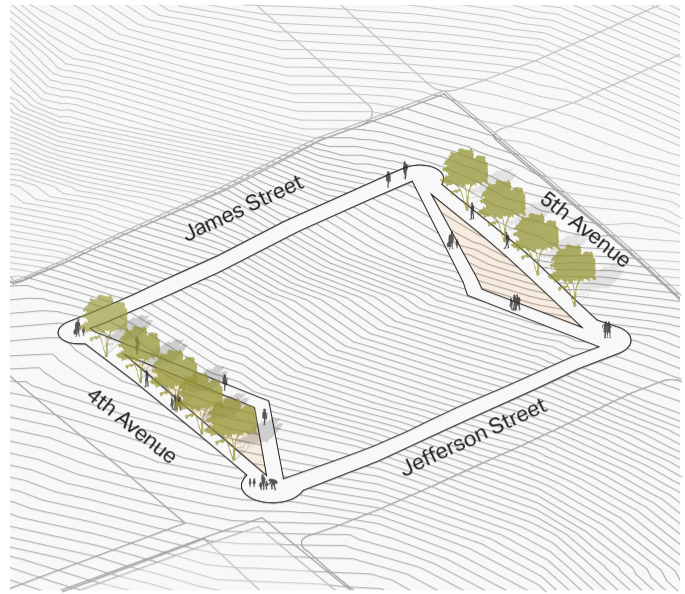
At-grade retail and commercial spaces, along with potential future transit stations are planned to occupy no more than 40% of the ground plane. The occupiable roof surface of each ground-level volume may extend no higher than the average grade of the highest north-south accessible route. This ensures that rooftop outdoor spaces are open and accessible at grade, extending the public realm of the streetscape and forecourt landscapes. Accessible routes traverse the hillside in the east-west direction, linking 4th and 5th Avenues, and creating a series of smaller, discrete outdoor spaces that may be programmed to match the needs of site and district development.

The bulk of the developable FAR for each site, whether for residential or non-residential use, is lifted above grade to provide for a public realm that is uninterrupted, save for a prescribed allowable percentage of development.



An Open Civic Ground

Feasible and straightforward ground level performance standards, that identify required civic ground open space, provide projects a framework for meeting district requirements through design, and certainty about the character and quality of development on adjacent blocks.



Top: North-south accessible routes positioned along 4th and 5th Avenues at the former King County Administration Building site.

Middle: Creating space for ground level retail and commercial activity, and east-west accessibility through switchback pathways and variegated outdoor spaces.

Bottom: Lifting the bulk of site development to reserve the ground plane for civic purpose.

Almost 300% More Outdoor Space

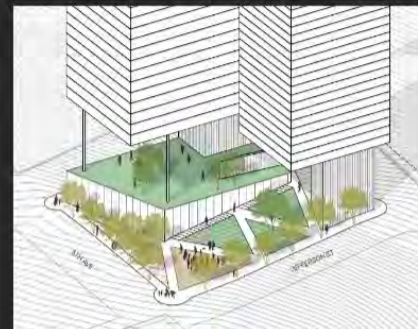
When applied to all of the identified redevelopment sites, a strategy that reserves the ground plane for public purpose add approximately four acres of outdoor urban space to the Courthouse District, a roughly 285% increase over existing.

Together with a converted Jefferson Street Plaza, City Hall Park, and Prefontaine Place, the Courthouse District and vicinity boast an incredible 5.4 acres of high-quality outdoor space.

A Variegated Urban Landscape

Applying a strategy to achieve accessible routes across site landscapes, a wide variety of outdoor space sizes and configurations are possible. This variety represents an opportunity to incorporate a range of programmed and unprogrammed outdoor spaces for future workers, visitors, tourists, and residents of the Courthouse District and the surrounding neighborhoods.

This image gives me great confidence that you have studied and understood the issues around creating viable and attractive public open space in complicated relationship with other significant programming. And thank you for making this understandable - I get it!



Posted comment from a Community Advisory Group member during the third work session between Advisory Group members and the consultant team.

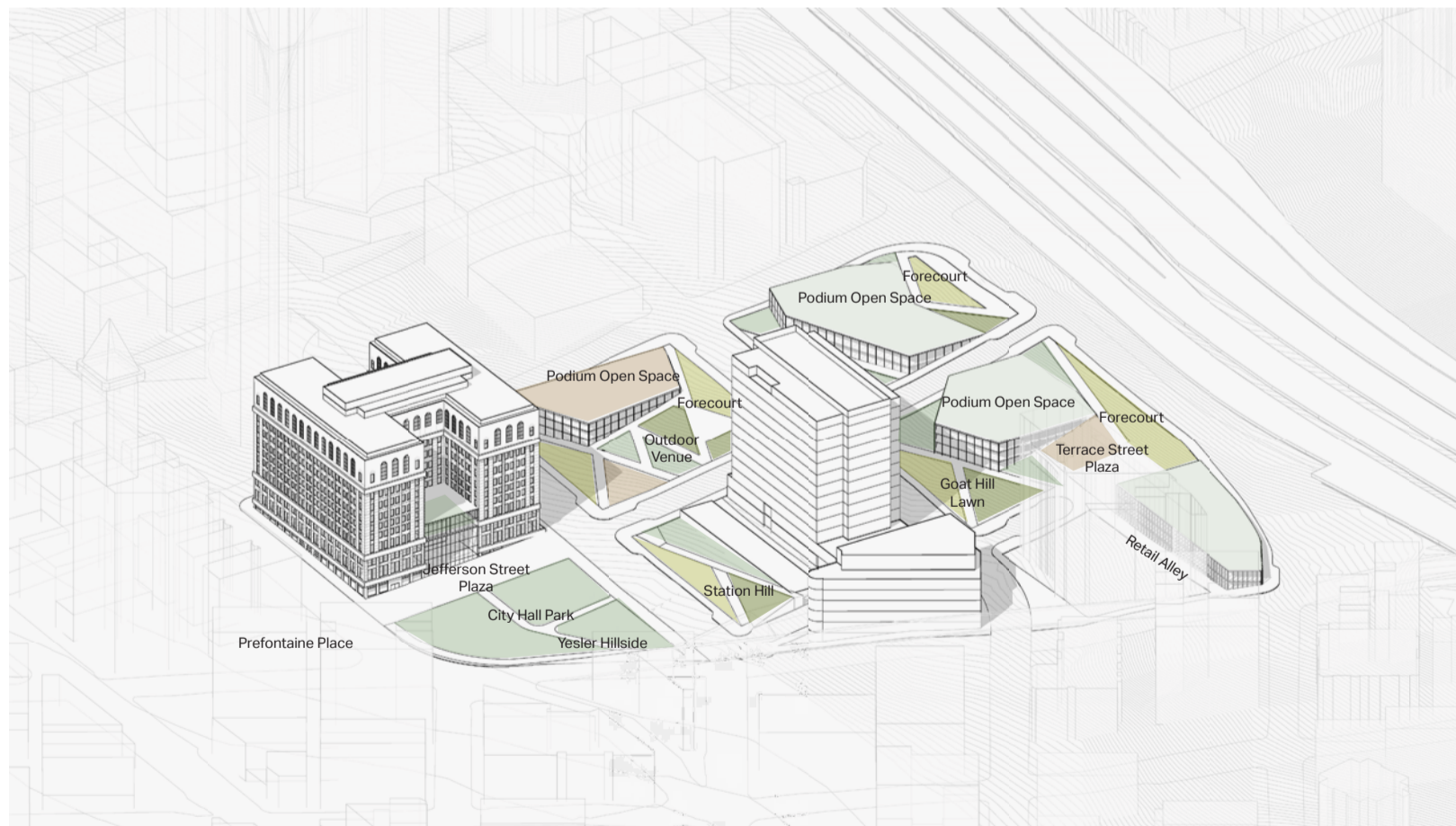


Diagram illustrating a variety of open and accessible ground level spaces across Courthouse District sites.



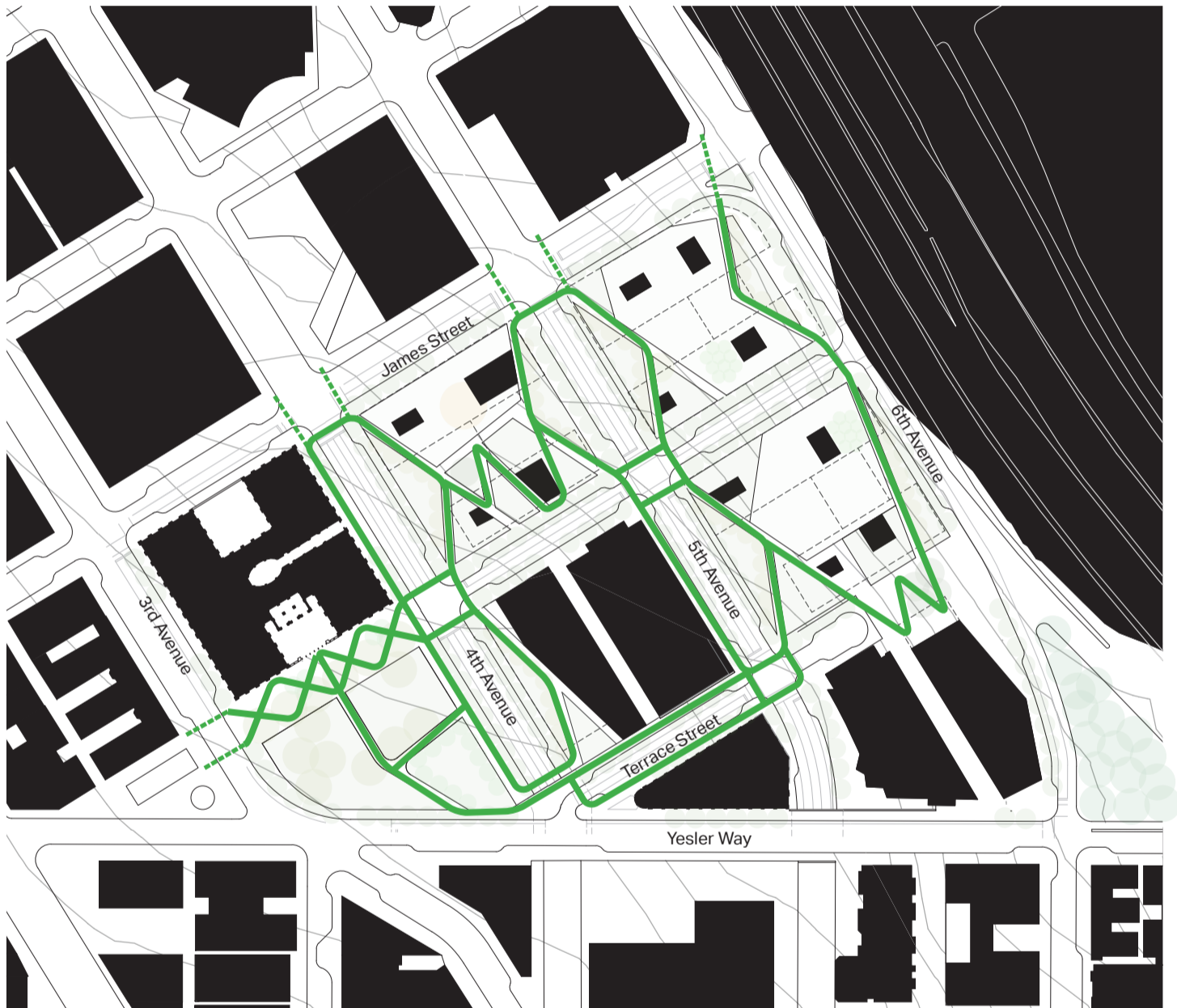
Site plan diagram illustrating example outdoor open space designations.



Overhead view looking down on the verdant and variegated civic realm on the former King County Administration Building site.

Planning Accessible Pedestrian Loops

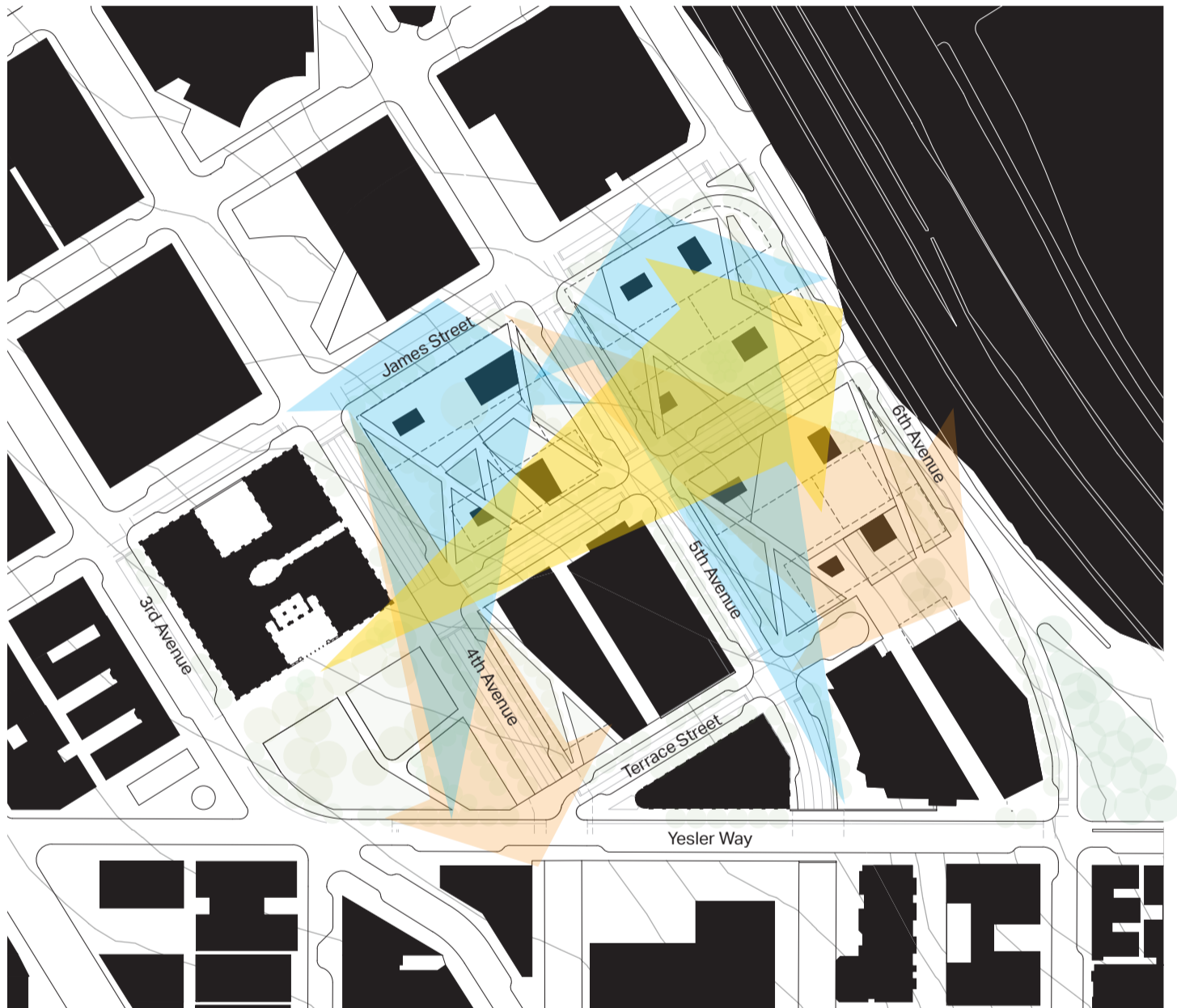
Accessible routes are an important element in the urban environment. Often routes are only destination based; routes lead from a parking space or a roadway intersection to a building or storefront entry. By creating routes that link to one another across sites, pedestrian loops are created that foster a greater degree of district-wide mobility and offer spaces for exercise and active recreation.



Site plan diagram illustrating accessible pedestrian loops within the Courthouse District.

Views Across City Blocks

The district's open ground level offers a new experience of the city. Crossing the unseen urban thresholds at James Street or Terrace Street, or walking north through City Hall Park, street-level views open up across multiple blocks to shape the perception of a common ground.



Site plan diagram illustrating example open ground plane viewsheds across district sites.

3rd Ave Site Plan

Opposite: Courthouse District site plan.

- A King County Courthouse
- B King County Welcome Center Addition
- C Jefferson St Plaza
- D Yesler Way and Terrace Street Underpass



4th Ave Site Plan

Opposite: Courthouse District site plan.

- A King County Courthouse
- B King County Welcome Center Addition
- C Jefferson St Plaza
- D Yesler Way and Terrace Street Underpass
- E King County Courthouse Office Addition
- F Retail & Commercial
- G Chinook Office Building
- H Yesler Residential Conversion
- I 420 4th Avenue Mixed-Use Development



5th Ave Site Plan

Opposite: Courthouse District site plan.

- A King County Courthouse
- B King County Council Chambers Addition
- C Jefferson St Plaza
- D Yesler Way and Terrace Street Underpass
- E King County Courthouse Addition Green Roof
- F Retail & Commercial
- G Chinook Office Building
- H Yesler Residential Conversion
- I 420 4th Avenue Residences
- J Urban Open Spaces
- K Rooftop Landscape
- L 6th & Yesler Mixed-Use Development



6th Ave Site Plan

Opposite: Courthouse District site plan.

- A King County Courthouse
- B King County Council Chambers Green Roof
- C Jefferson St Plaza
- D Yesler Way and Terrace Street Underpass
- E King County Courthouse Addition Green Roof
- F Retail & Commercial
- G Chinook Office Building
- H Yesler Residential Conversion
- I 420 4th Avenue Residences
- J Urban Open Spaces
- K Rooftop Landscape
- L 6th & Yesler Mixed-Use Development
- M 400 4th Avenue Mixed-Use Development



Roof Site Plan

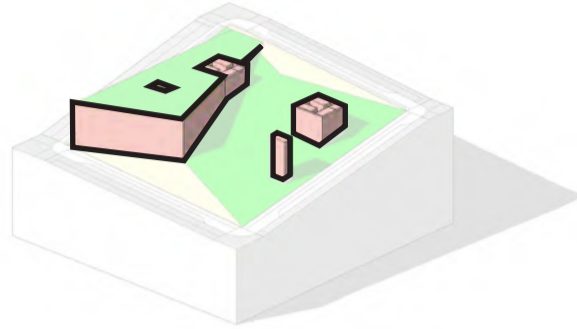
Opposite: Courthouse District site plan.

- A King County Courthouse
- B King County Council Chambers Green Roof
- C Jefferson St Plaza
- D Yesler Way and Terrace Street Underpass
- E King County Courthouse Addition Green Roof
- F Retail & Commercial
- G Chinook Office Building
- H Yesler Residential Conversion
- I 420 4th Avenue Residences
- J Urban Open Spaces
- K Rooftop Landscape
- L 6th & Yesler Mixed-Use Development
- M 400 4th Avenue Mixed-Use Development
- N 400 5th Avenue Mixed-Use Development
- O 415 6th Avenue North Mixed-Use Development
- P 415 6th Avenue South Mixed-Use Development



Ground Level Retail, Commercial Space, and Frontages

Thriving neighborhoods provide access to a diversity of daily needs such as groceries, healthcare and wellness services, education, recreation and entertainment. In the Courthouse District these functions are to be embedded within the hillside landscapes and streetscapes of each block.



Limit Enclosed Programs Above Grade

Broad ground level capacity standards for enclosed program provide projects wide latitude to meet district requirements through design that is compatible with individual developments.

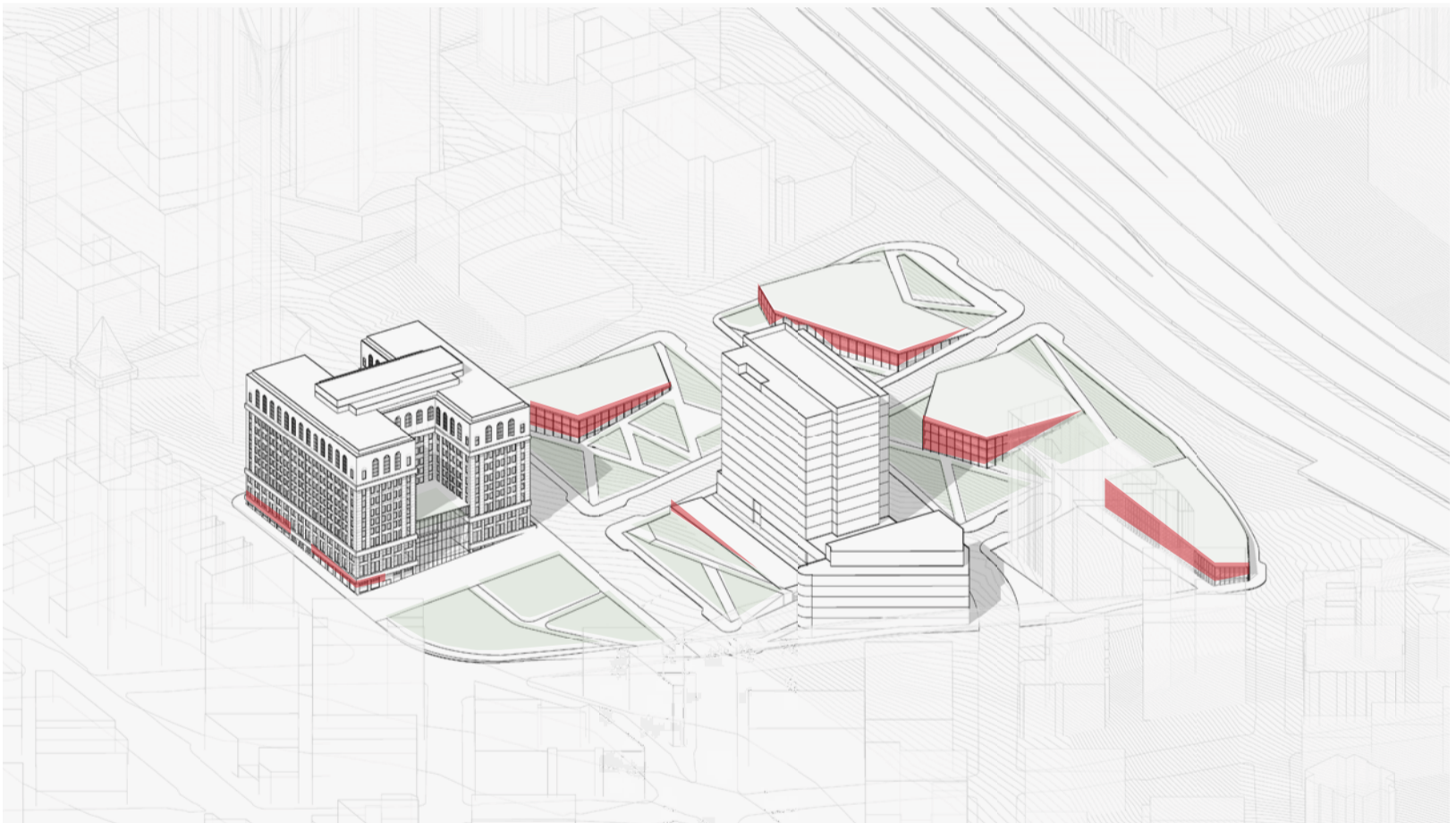
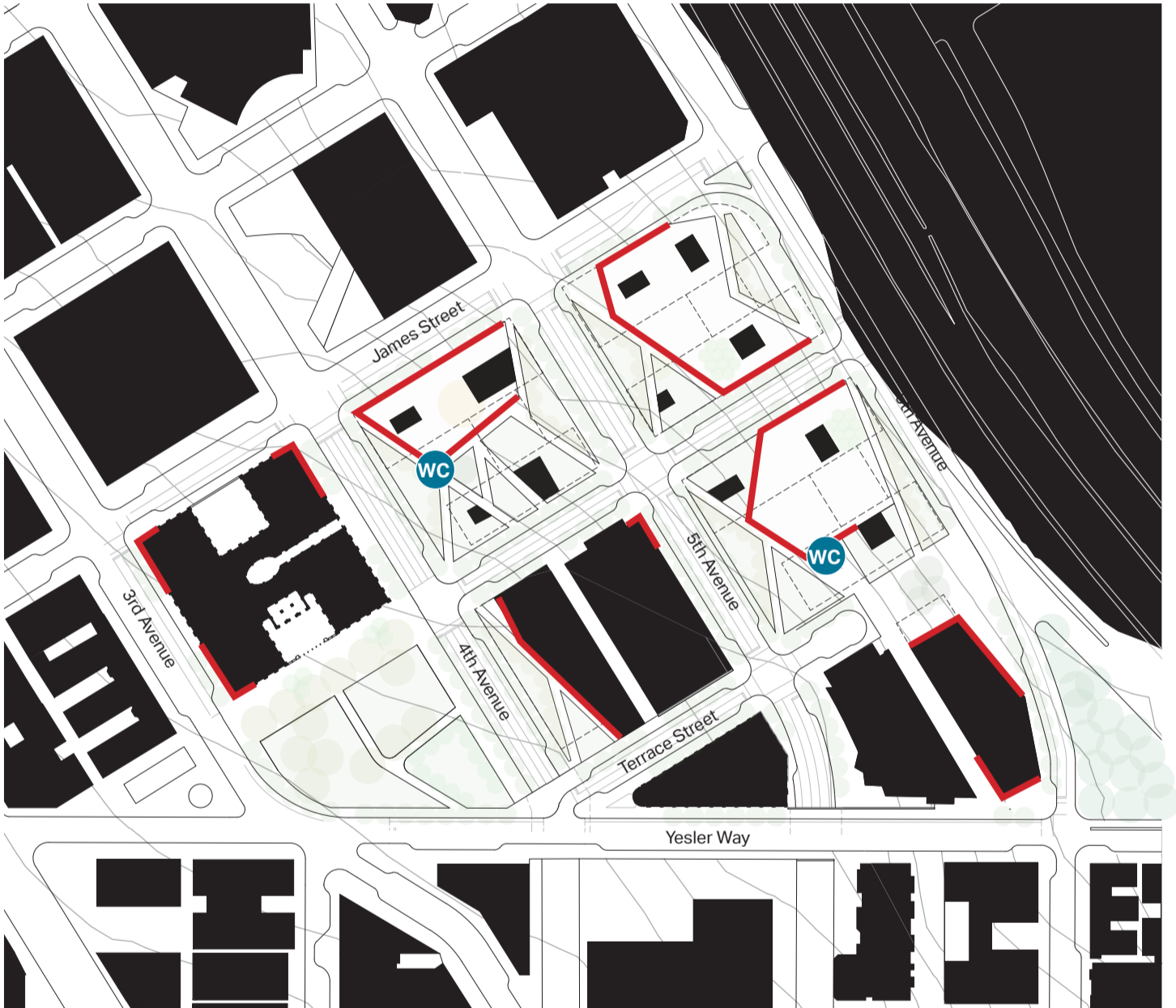


Diagram illustrating potential ground-level retail and commercial frontages within Courthouse District sites.



Site plan diagram illustrating ground level retail and commercial frontages and district civic amenity facilities.

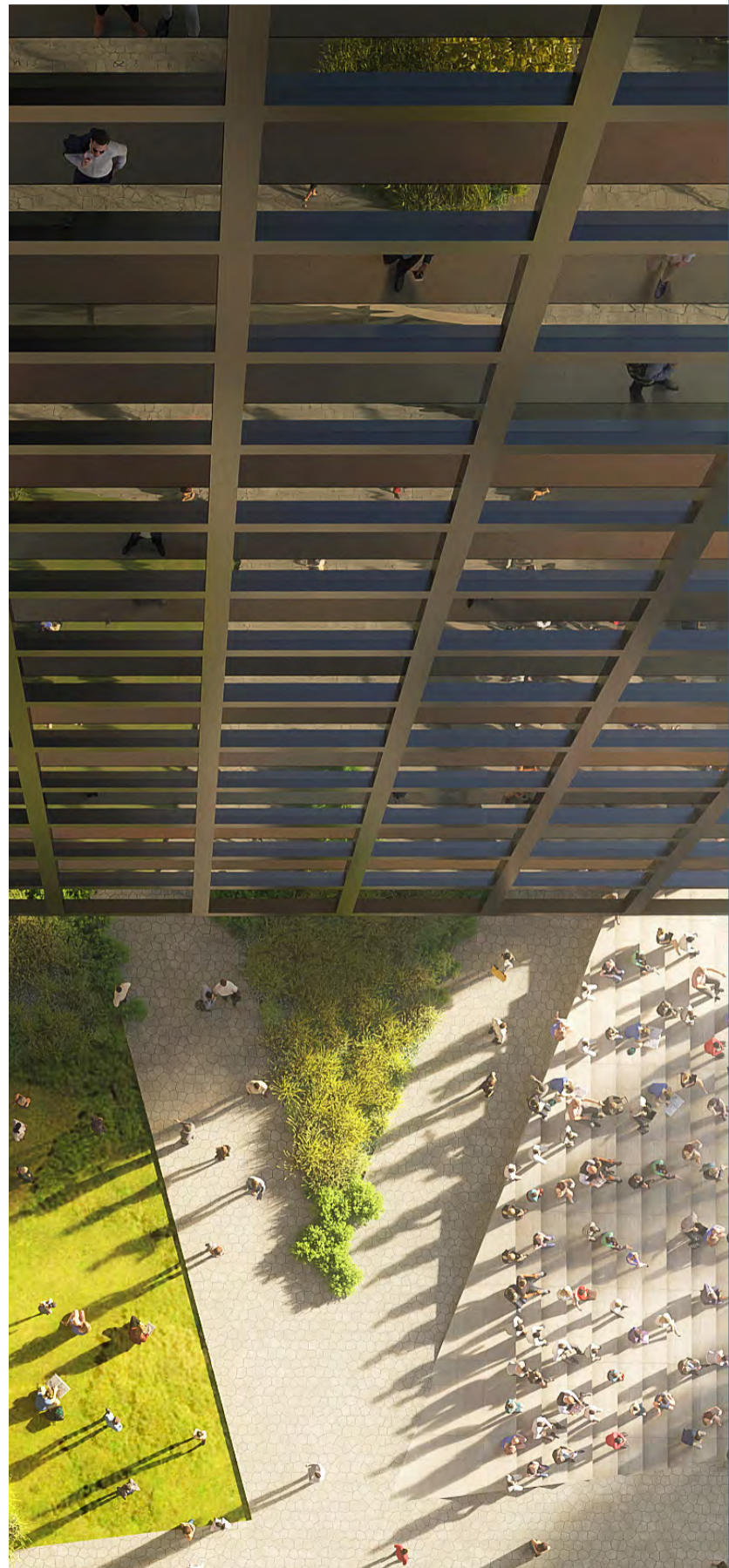
Create new buildings that participate with an open ground plane below, wrapping new public spaces with the 24-hour activity that comes from a mix of residential and commercial use.

Pursue a distributed-tower model for new development, maximizing the opportunity for new housing and commercial space, while creating a more open and porous urban environment.

Banish the podium. Allocate the first 85' above average grade on each redevelopment site for public space, civic amenity, and ground-level retail or commercial spaces.

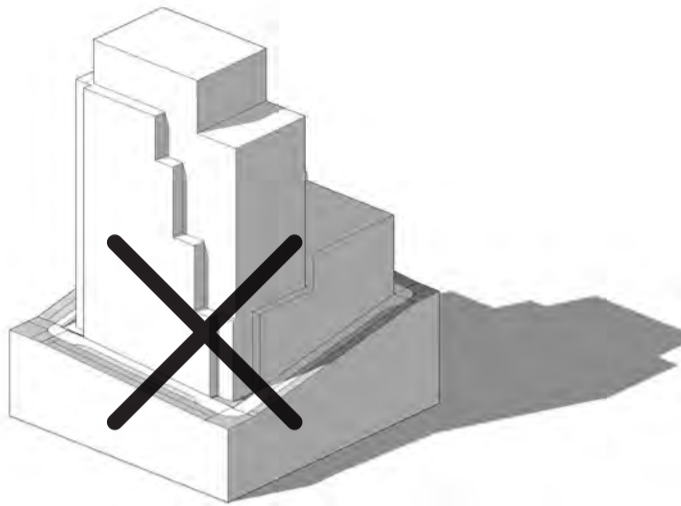
Craft developments that draw from current zoning, but that reframe technical language in service of achieving district-wide goals.

Create a flexible build-type framework that allows for the mix of uses in any single development to shift with the market over time.



A view of a new residential building, on the former King County Administration Building site, overlooking site landscapes below.



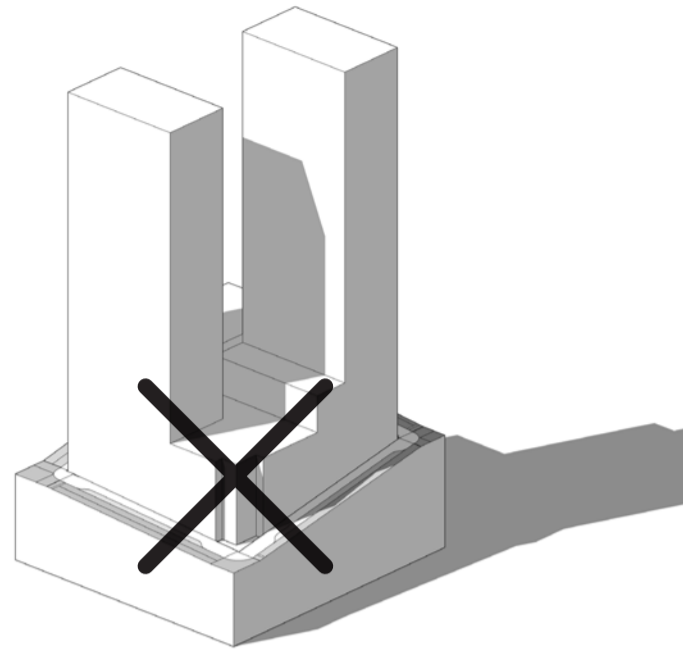


Solid Podium Block and Modulated Tower

Existing downtown development standards for non-residential use focus on the placement and transparency of facades at the street level and the varied articulation of upper-level building forms. This regulatory emphasis on the block perimeter overlooks the fact that the frequency and functionality of public through-block connections can shape urban vitality.

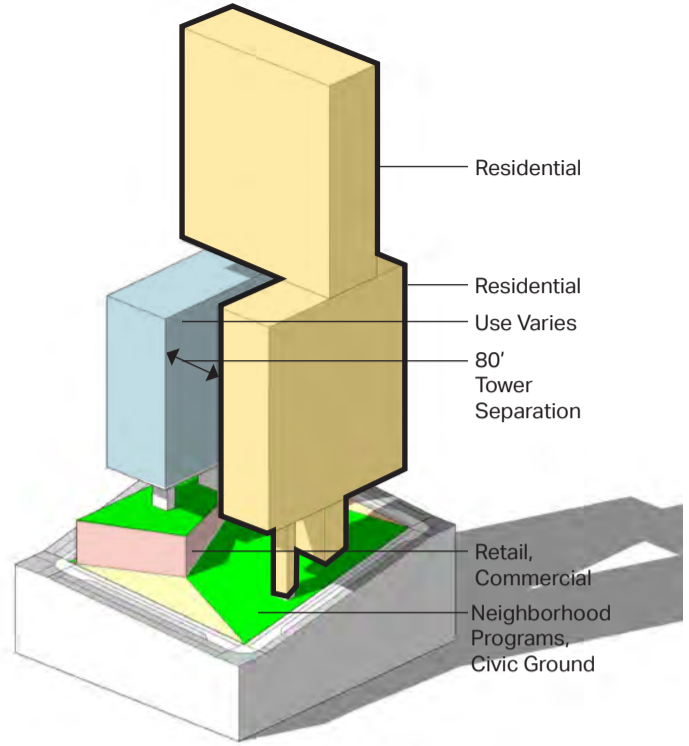
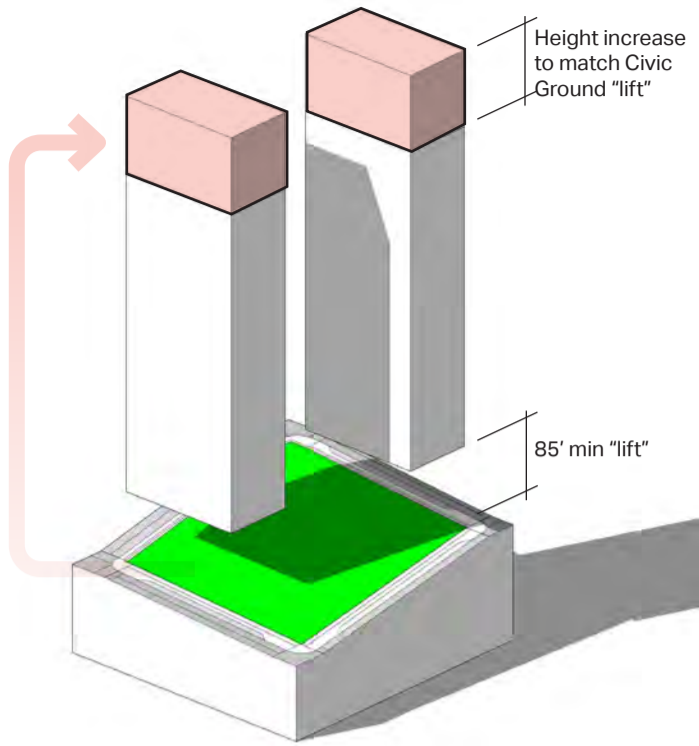
Update Downtown Zoning and Design Guidelines

The Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC) and Downtown Office Core (DOC) zones were established almost 40 years ago; the Downtown Design Guidelines shaping current projects were adopted 25 years ago. DMC and DOC zoning codes, and the corresponding Downtown Design Guidelines, should be updated to reflect the contemporary goals and objectives of new development within the Courthouse District.



Solid Podium Block and Point Towers

Similarly, existing downtown development standards for residential use focus on the size of upper level "tower" floor plates, and the required separations between them, rather than public functions at the tower base. While bonus floor area incentives exist to encourage open space areas, a payment in lieu option limits their effectiveness.

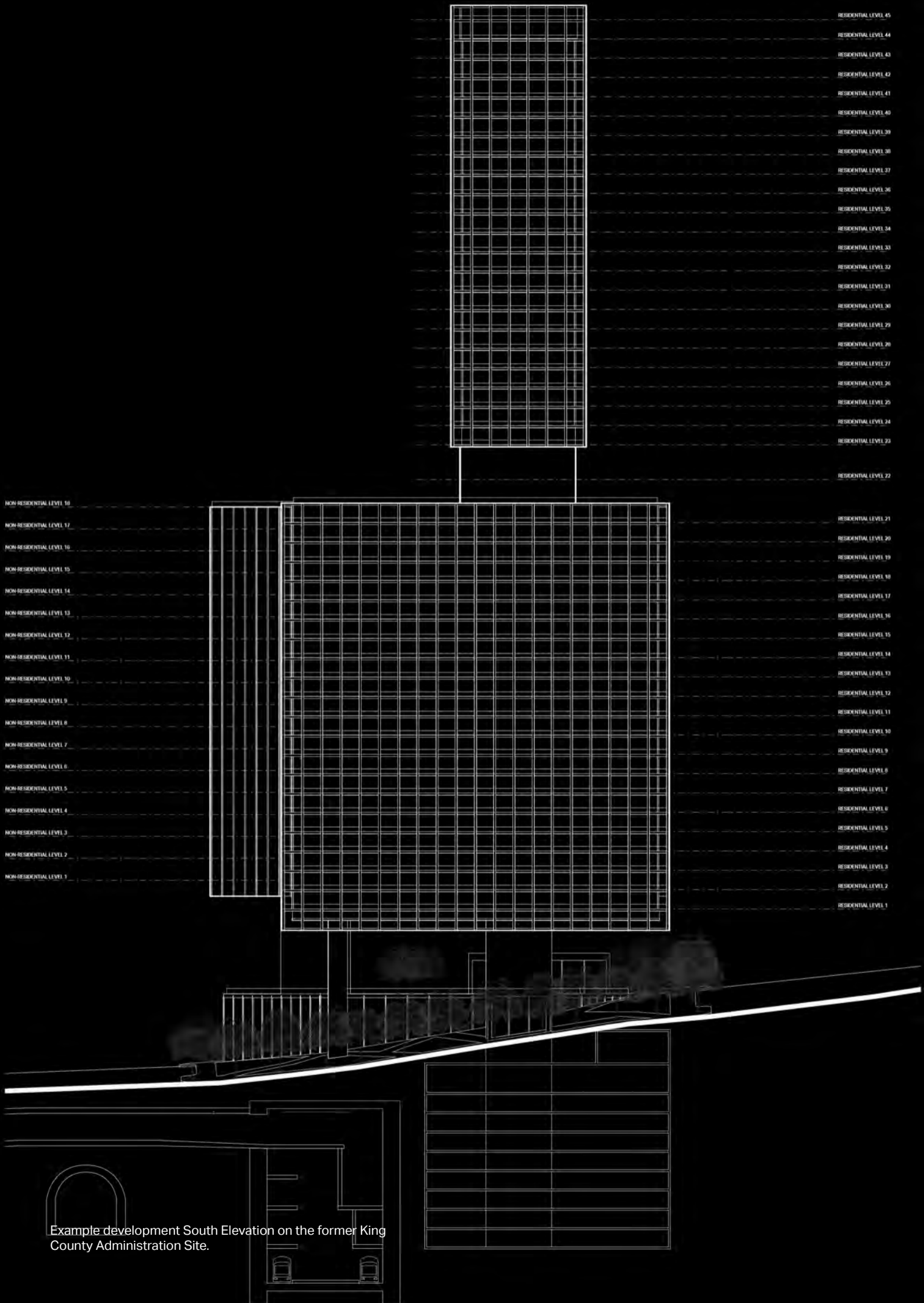


Reposition Private Programs for Public Benefit
 Drafting updates to the DMC and DOC1 zones within the Courthouse District, to open up critical ground level areas for neighborhood programs and civic functions, can help to revitalize the streetscapes and create a unique urban identity.

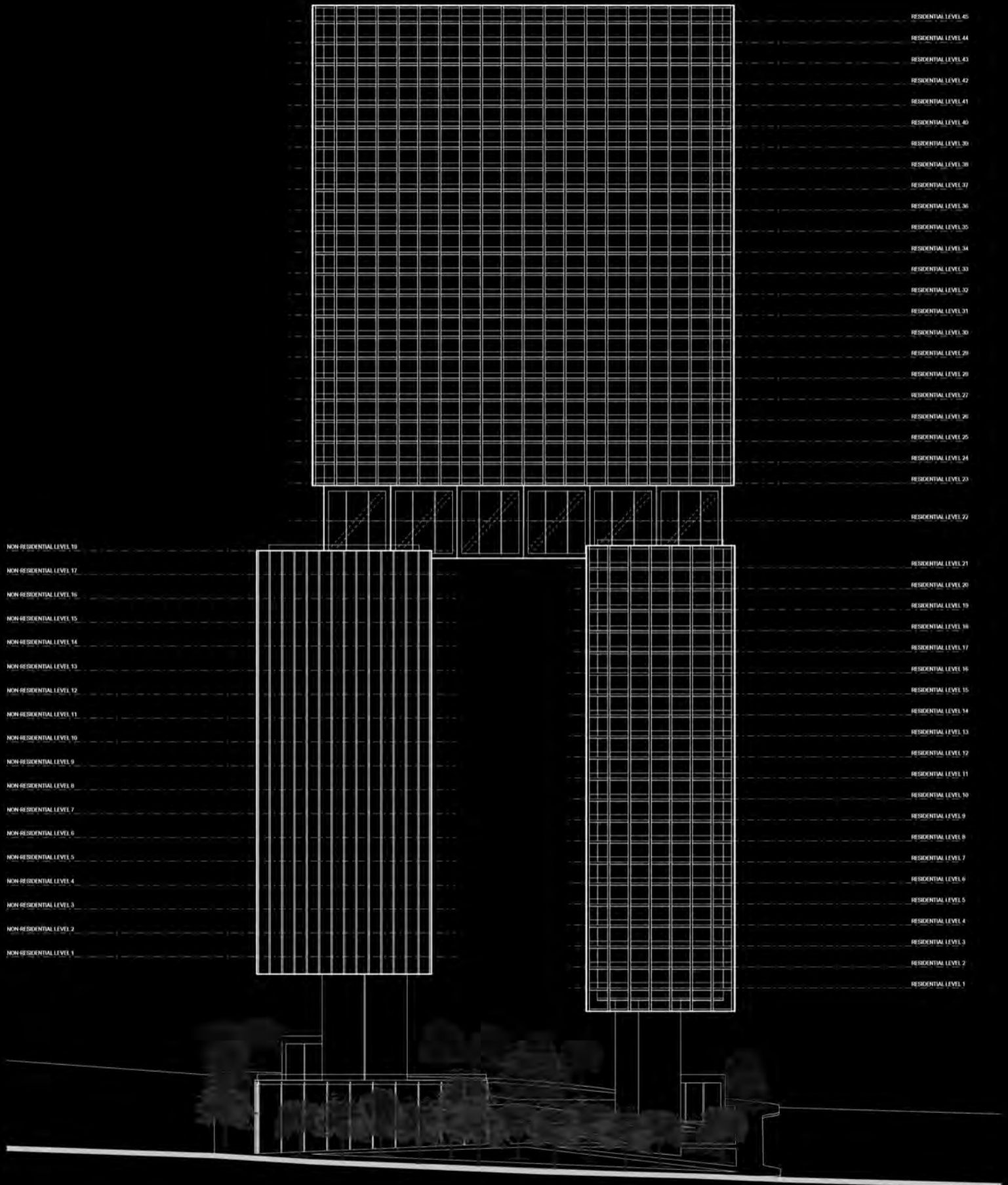
Codify Neighborhoods on Each Block
 Adjusting upper-level development standards can allow multiple towers and orientations on a single block, enabling each development site to function as a neighborhood, with interspersed open spaces, viewsheds through the block, and a variety of building types and uses.



Strategic diagram illustrating the vertical layering of functions on potential redevelopment sites.

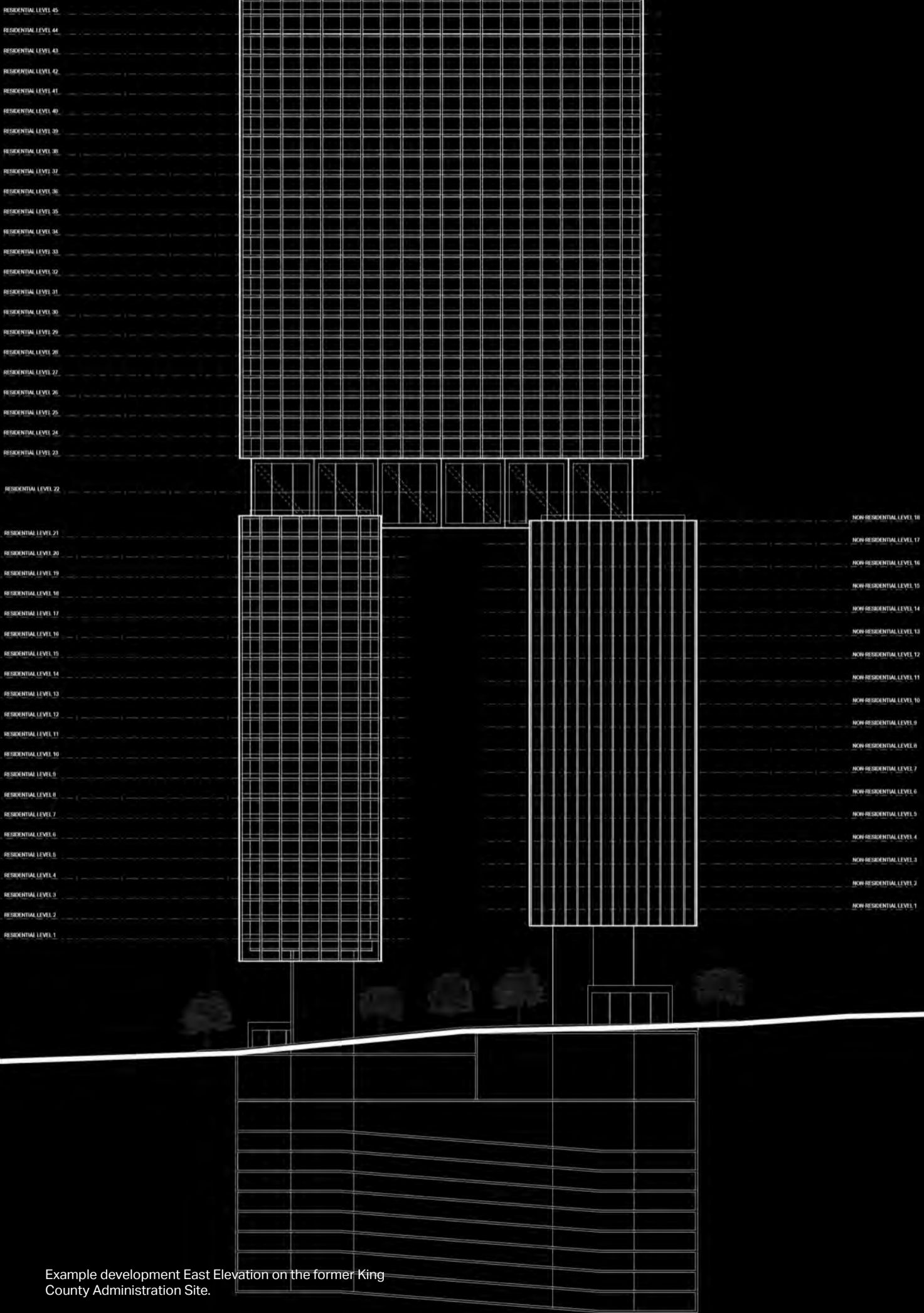


Example development South Elevation on the former King County Administration Site.

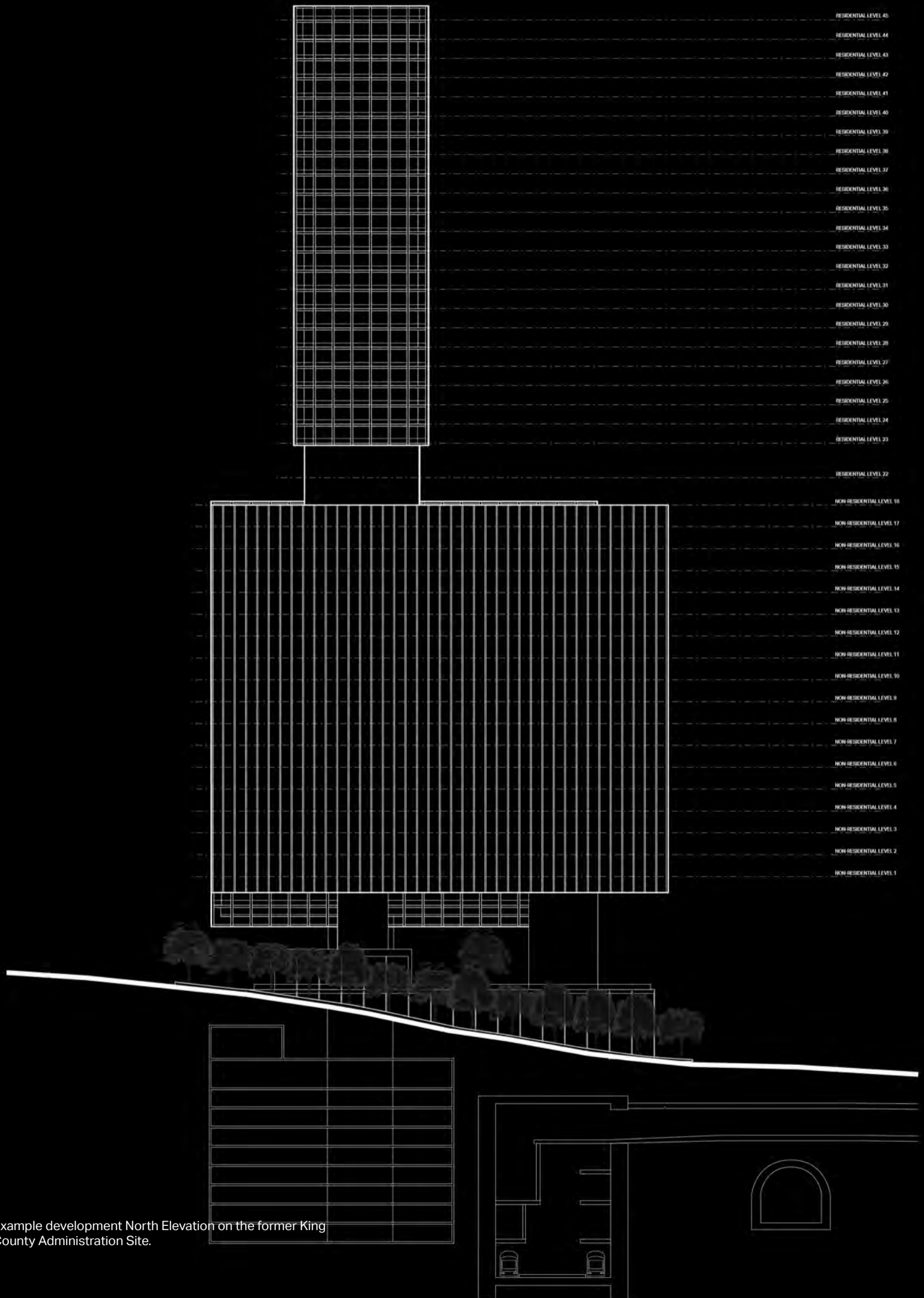


Example development West Elevation on the former King County Administration Site.

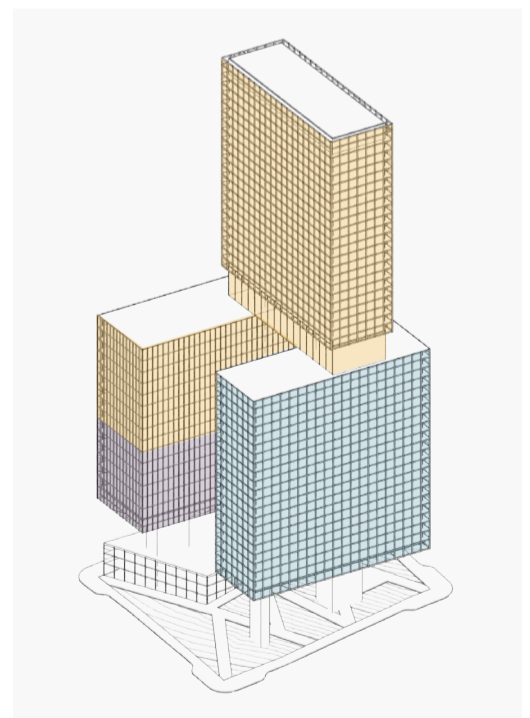
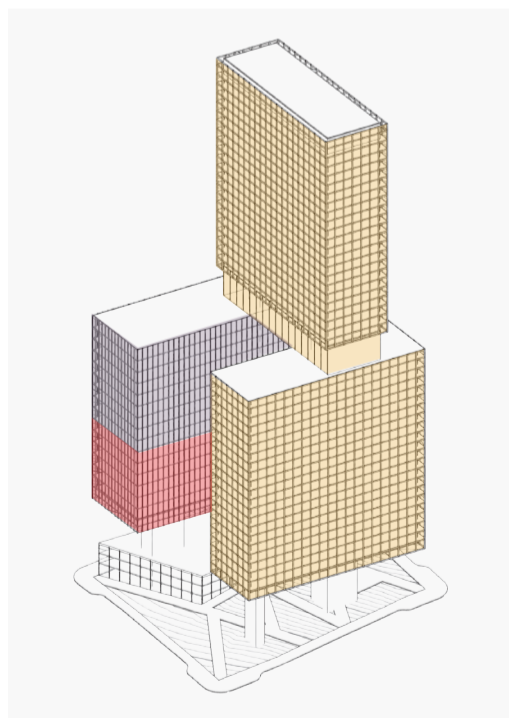
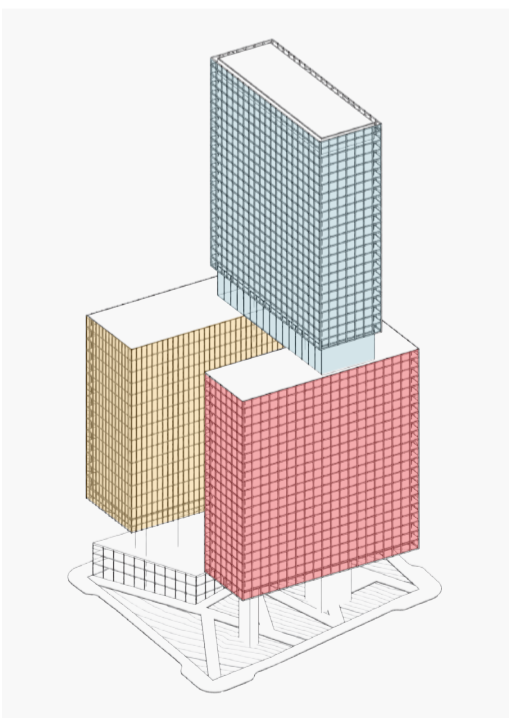
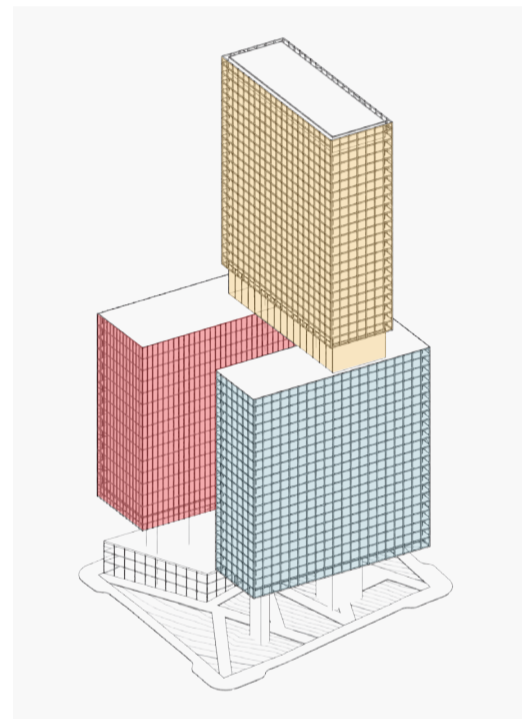
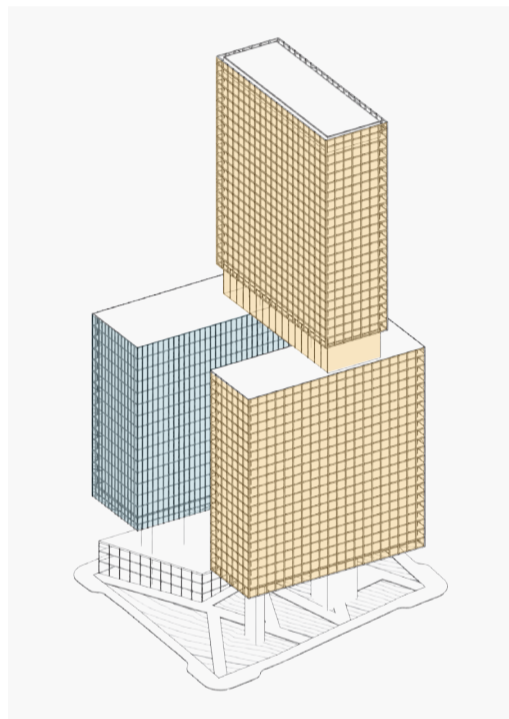
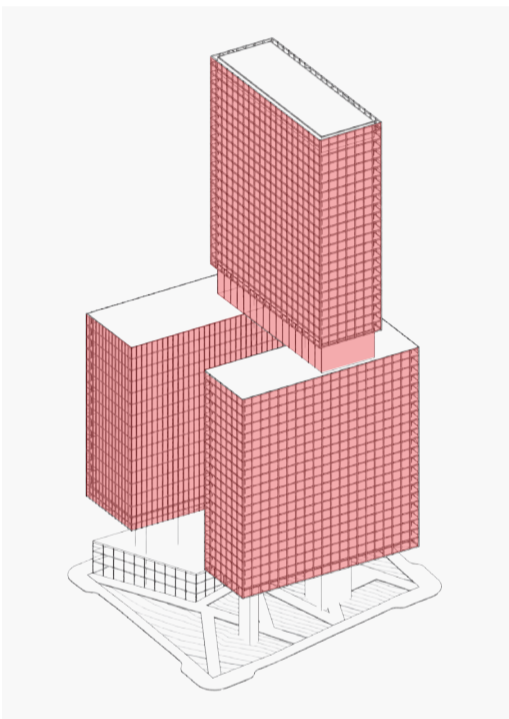
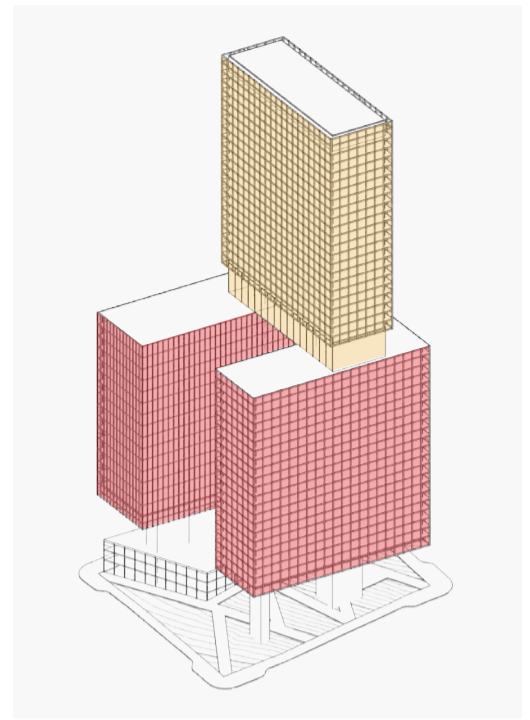
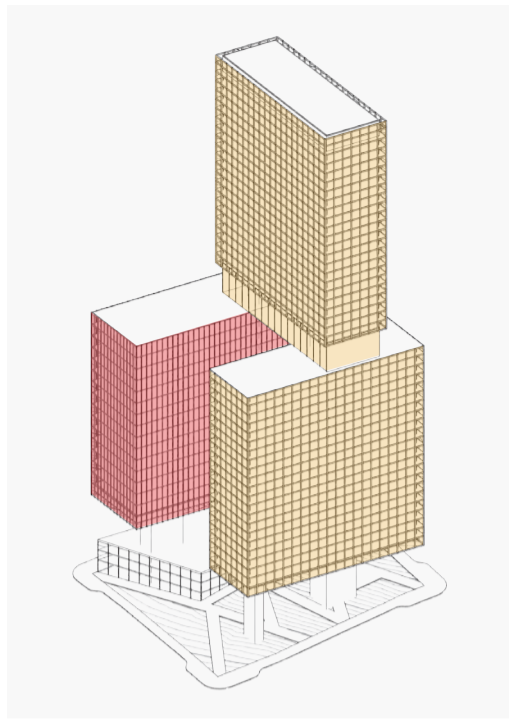
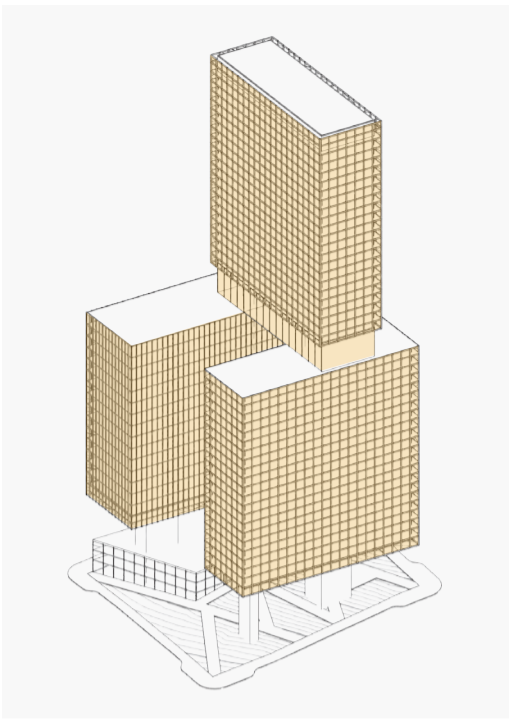




Example development East Elevation on the former King County Administration Site.



Example development North Elevation on the former King County Administration Site.



Example alternative use combinations on a single redevelopment block in the Courthouse District

Maintain the option to vary the uses on each block to maximize redevelopment flexibility and future value over time.

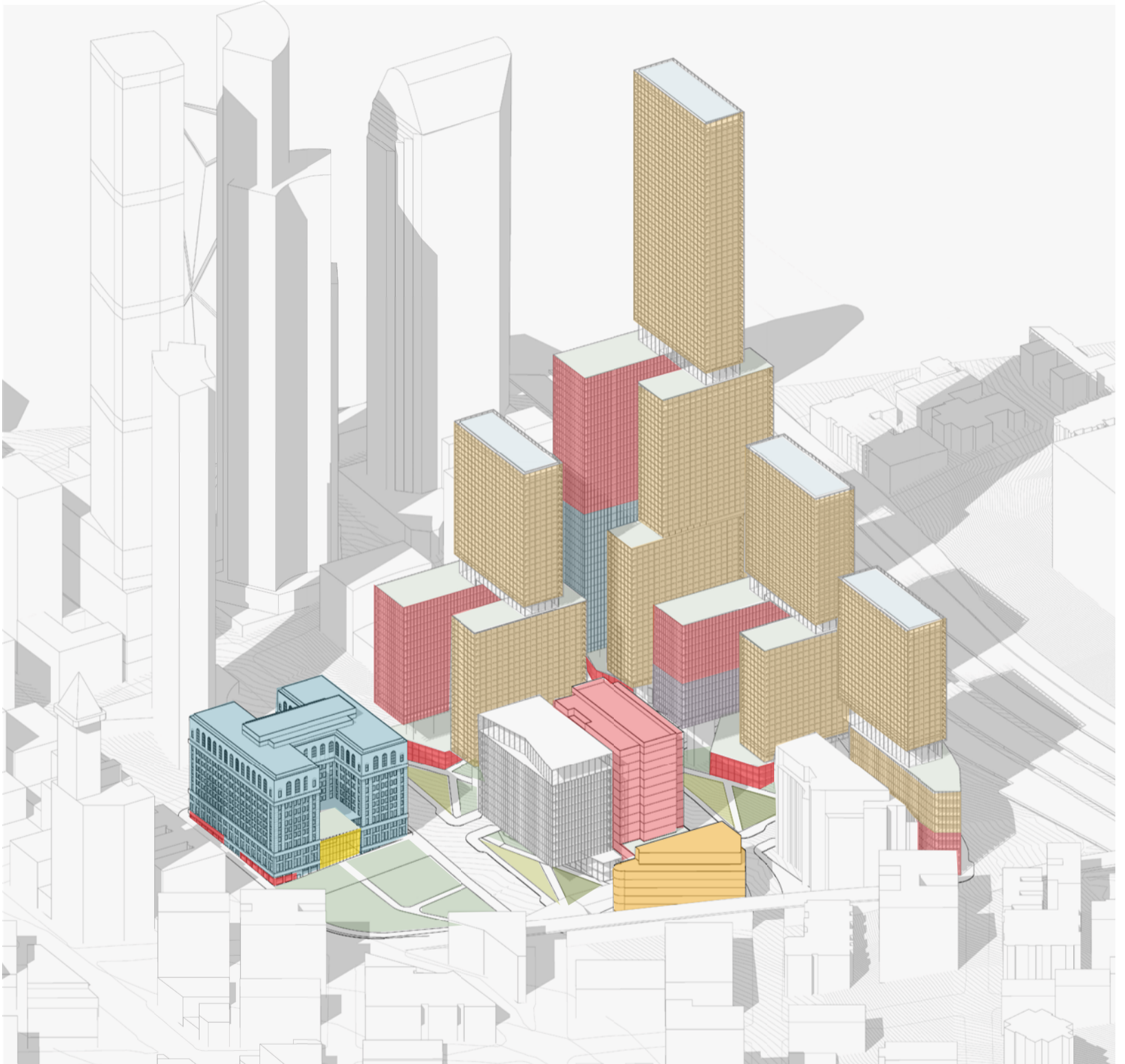


Diagram illustrating a mixed-use district scenario with a range of uses on each block.

- Residential
- Office (non-residential)
- Hotel (non-residential)
- School (non-residential)
- Retail/ Commercial
- Office-to-Housing Conversion
- King County Government
- Urban Open Space

Testing a Combination of Office and Housing Uses

Each redevelopment site has been tested to understand potential capacities for a combination of residential and non-residential uses. The following table, and diagram on the opposite page, illustrate the potential capacities for retail and office use, and the number of residential units possible, on each site and across the district as a whole. These tests are based on the proposed development framework and are an indication of available capacity; individual site development models may vary based on market conditions.

Building or Property	Retail and Office Net Rentable Square Feet (NRSF)		Residential (Number of Units)	
	NRSF (DMC Zoning)	NRSF (DOC1 Zoning)	Unit Yield (DMC Zoning)	Unit Yield (DOC1 Zoning)
Existing Buildings				
Yesler Building Residential-to-Housing Conversion			150	150
Chinook Building	304,000	304,000		
King Street Center (not shown at right)	321,000	321,000		
Subtotal Existing Buildings	625,000	625,000	150	150
Redevelopment Sites				
500 4th Avenue Former Administration Building Site	396,000	634,000	477	1,331
500 5th Avenue Former Correctional Facility Site (all values DOC1)	794,000	794,000	1,177	1,177
514 6th Ave Goat Hill North Site	437,000	700,000	489	1,067
514 6th Ave Goat Hill South Site (all values DMC)	305,000	305,000	179	233
Subtotal Redevelopment Sites	1,982,000	2,433,000	2,322	3,029
Total Redevelopment	2,607,000	3,058,000	2,472	3,179

Table of values for a district scenario with mixed-use residential buildings on potential redevelopment sites. Unit yields as based on a average unit size of 750 NRSF. All values represent calculated capacities.

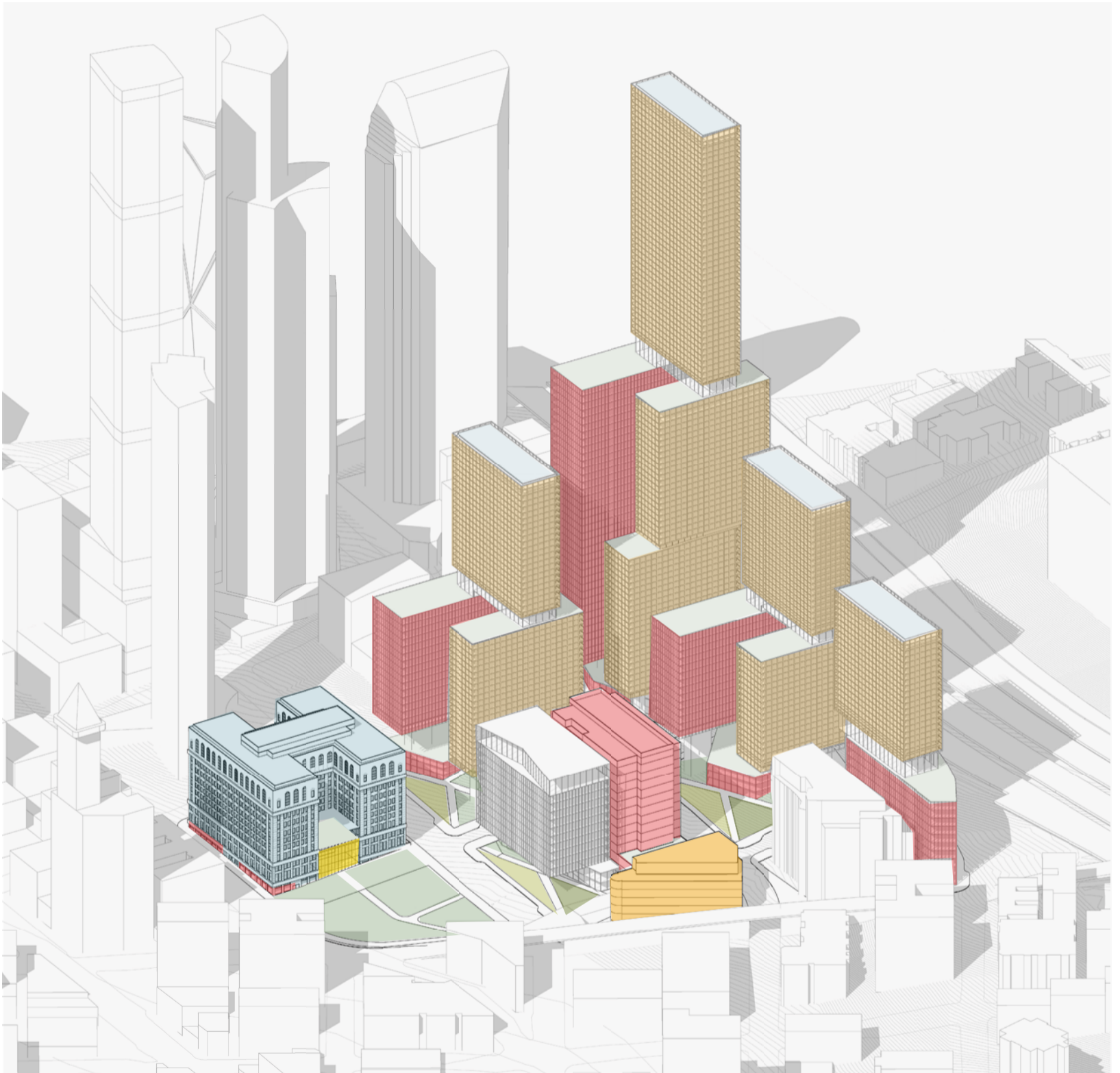


Diagram illustrating a district scenario with mixed office-and residential buildings on potential redevelopment sites.

- Residential
- Office (non-residential)
- Hotel (non-residential)
- School (non-residential)
- Retail/ Commercial
- Office-to-Housing Conversion
- King County Government
- Urban Open Space

Testing a Residential District

Each redevelopment site has been tested to understand potential capacities for residential use, with mixed-use retail and commercial areas at the ground plane. The following table, and diagram on the opposite page, illustrate the potential capacities for retail and office use, and the number of residential units possible, on each site and across the district as a whole. These tests are based on the proposed development framework and are an indication of available capacity; individual site development models may vary based on market conditions.

Building or Property	Retail and Office Net Rentable Square Feet (NRSF)		Residential (Number of Units)	
	NRSF (DMC Zoning)	NRSF (DOC1 Zoning)	Unit Yield (DMC Zoning)	Unit Yield (DOC1 Zoning)
Existing Buildings				
Yesler Building Residential-to-Housing Conversion			150	150
Chinook Building	304,000	304,000		
King Street Center (not shown at right)	321,000	321,000		
Subtotal Existing Buildings	625,000	625,000	150	150
Redevelopment Sites				
500 4th Avenue Former Administration Building Site	32,000	32,000	990	2,043
500 5th Avenue Former Correctional Facility Site (all values DOC1)	51,000	51,000	2,307	2,307
514 6th Ave Goat Hill North Site	161,000	161,000	890	2,665
514 6th Ave Goat Hill South Site (all values DMC)	13,000	13,000	635	635
Subtotal Redevelopment Sites	257,000	257,000	4,822	7,650
Total Redevelopment	882,000	882,000	4,972	7,800

Table of values for a district scenario with mixed-use residential buildings on potential redevelopment sites. Unit yields as based on a average unit size of 750 NRSF. All values represent calculated capacities.

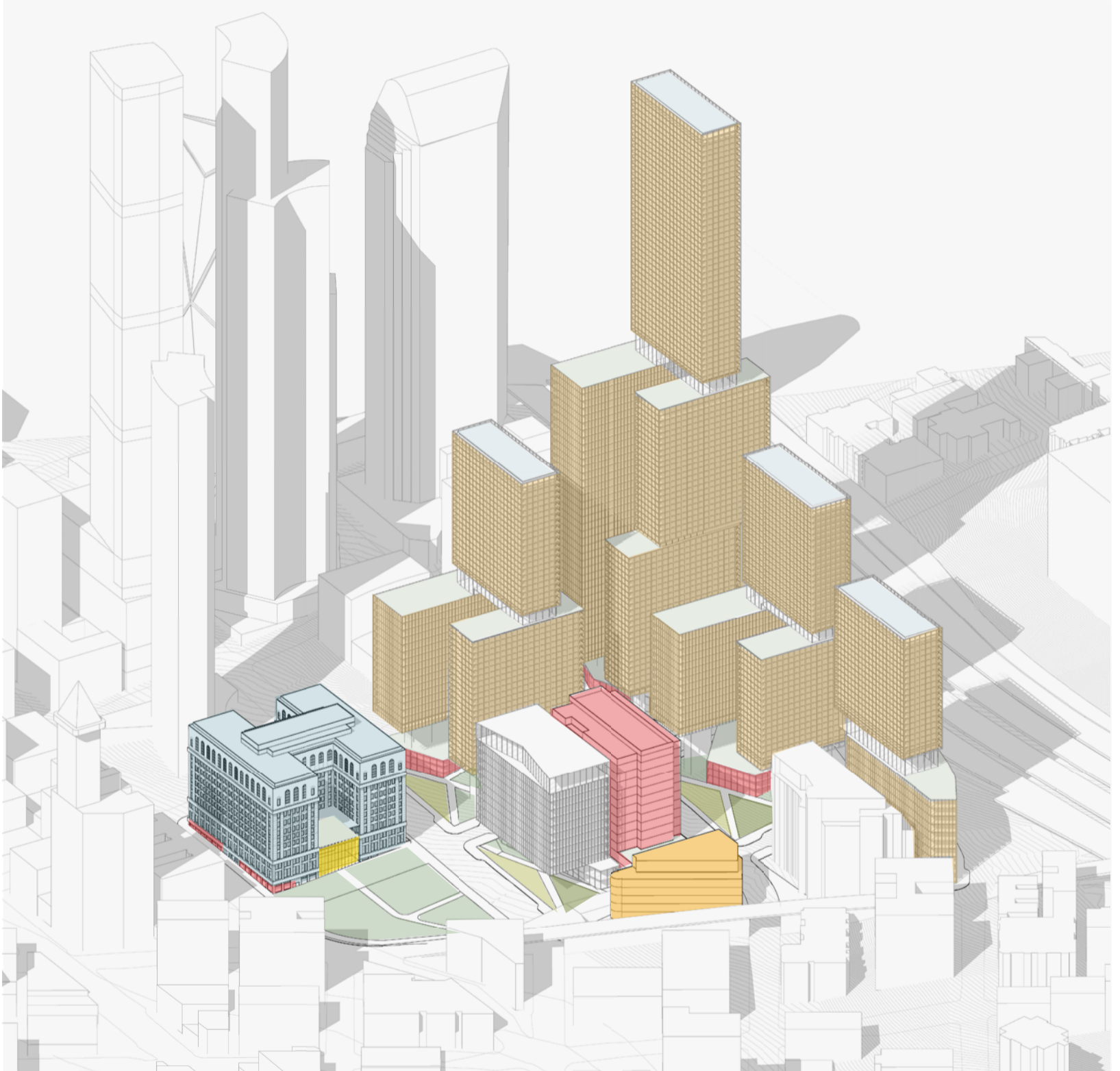


Diagram illustrating a district scenario with mixed-use residential buildings on potential redevelopment sites.

- Residential
- Office (non-residential)
- Hotel (non-residential)
- School (non-residential)
- Retail/ Commercial
- Office-to-Housing Conversion
- King County Government
- Urban Open Space

Plan for sustainable strategies that leverage redevelopment across district sites and incorporate best practices to address climate change.

The Courthouse District has the opportunity to institute a multi-block plan that supports King County's efforts to address climate change and realize sustainable development goals.

Courthouse rehabilitation and proposed redevelopment sites should work together to provide integration of heating, cooling and power systems that would enable the sharing of resources. A district-scale approach downtown would achieve a high efficiency of systems and provide an opportunity for district-wide energy recovery.

Adaptively reuse the King County Courthouse to limit new construction and preserve open space.

Incorporate urban design criteria that promote overhead weathering cover to provide protection from rain and mist, and shade outdoor spaces to help mitigate the effects of extreme heat.

Plan for verdant landscaped systems in urban outdoor spaces and create windbreaks to reduce high-velocity street level winds during seasonal events so that outdoor spaces become more useable, and more programming become possible.



A view of proposed outdoor urban areas within the Courthouse District.



Operational Carbon Reduction

Energy use in the buildings of the district affect both operating costs and greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing energy efficiency correspondingly reduces utility costs as well as greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy consumption. Reducing utility costs assists in making the development more affordable for occupants and tenants. The district should take advantage of its prominent downtown location to provide integration of heating, cooling and power systems with neighboring sites that would enable the sharing of resources. A district-scale approach would achieve a high efficiency of systems and provide an opportunity for district-wide energy recovery. The district could tackle electrical energy use by requiring strategies that enable the reduction of lighting and appliances and integration of on-site renewable sources such as PVs on site to the degree possible.

Strategies for operational carbon reduction include:

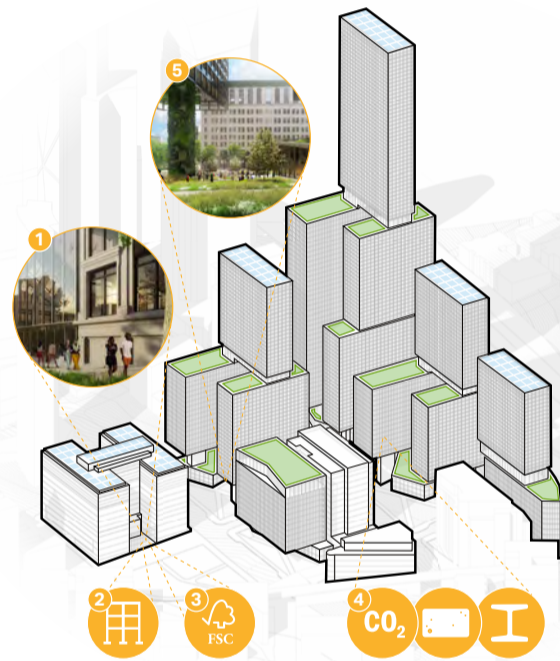
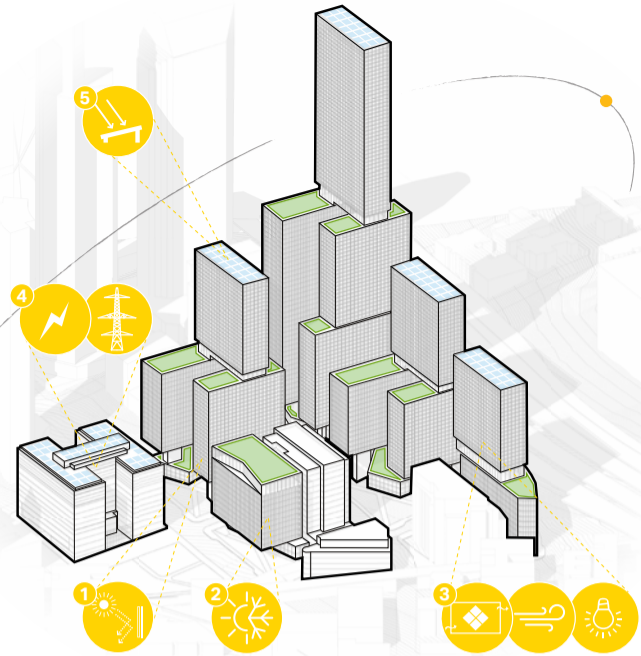
- 1 Optimized facade**
Building envelope tuned to reduce glare, solar gains and bring useful daylight.
- 2 Indoor comfort**
High efficiency electrical and HVAC systems.
- 3 High efficiency building systems**
State of the art low energy building systems with integrated passive cooling, ventilation and lighting strategies.
- 4 All Electric Systems**
Electric infrastructure to improve grid interface and control GHG emissions.
- 5 On-site renewable energy**
Rooftop PVs.

Embodied Carbon Reduction

Building materials are largely sourced from virgin sources and consume energy in every step of their extraction, manufacturing, and transport. The choice of material, its origin and the processing needed for it to become ready for use are critical criteria that have a large impact on the material's embodied GHG emissions. Further, strategies that reduce carbon emissions now are more valuable than strategies that reduce the same total carbon emissions over time; there is a time value to carbon savings that must inform design decisions. As building energy efficiency increases, the proportion of the total emissions associated with the extraction, manufacturing, and transportation of construction materials constitutes the majority of the project's carbon footprint.

Strategies for embodied carbon reduction include:

- 1 Adaptive Reuse of Existing Buildings**
Reuse of existing structures. Avoids material waste to preserve embodied carbon
- 2 Mass timber structures**
Mass timber for additions to historic structures and ground level podiums. Less carbon intensive, lightened structures, result in smaller foundations and less material use.
- 3 Local FSC Wood**
Showcases local and responsibly sourced wood in interior finishes and supports local industry and creation of green jobs.
- 3 Low carbon materials**
Low embodied carbon interior finishes selected from manufactures that will take back used materials, especially for materials that are replaced most often.
- 4 Low carbon landscape**
Design for a high vegetation to hardscape ratio. Minimize hardscape in favor of pervious area.



Top: Operational Carbon diagram.

Middle: Embodied Carbon diagram.

Water Conservation & Reuse

Water resources in the Seattle area face pressure from rising water consumption, pollution, and climate change. Water use in Seattle is not carbon-intensive, as much of the water supply comes from gravity fed clean sources of the Cedar and Tolt watersheds. County facilities will take a holistic approach by tackling water demand, water supply, and water management. By limiting water use through conservation and non-potable reuse, the development will address increasing water costs, and assist with improving the resilience of Seattle's water system. A zero-water waste goal will ensure that all non-potable water demands in the project such as irrigation, toilet flushing, and cooling tower water use are met using recycled water.

Strategies for water conservation and reuse include:

1 Water efficient fixtures

Low flow and flush fixtures.

2 Indoor water capture & reuse

Collection of restroom and kitchen wastewater, HVAC condensation, and water for treatment and reuse.

3 Recycled Water Supplier

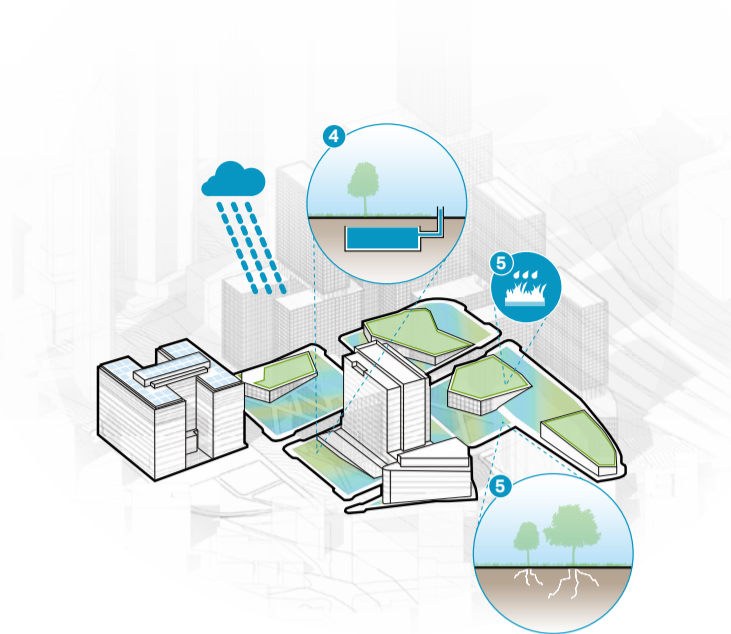
Export treated water to neighboring buildings to further reduce potable water consumption even outside of the district. Support a municipal purple pipe recycled water grid in downtown Seattle.

4 On-site stormwater management

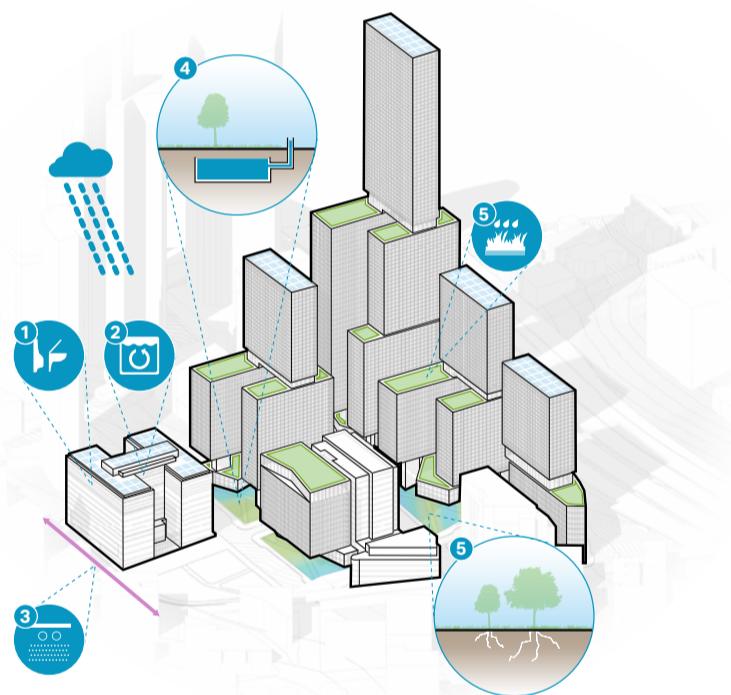
Capture and retain stormwater through low impact development and below-grade retention vaults. Manage all storm water to prevent runoff and support infiltration. Adaptable outdoor spaces that function as public squares in dry seasons and are designed to retain water after rain events. Visually designed to connect visitors to water flows. Native landscape and plantings to require minimal irrigation.

5 Groundwater Recharge and Infiltration

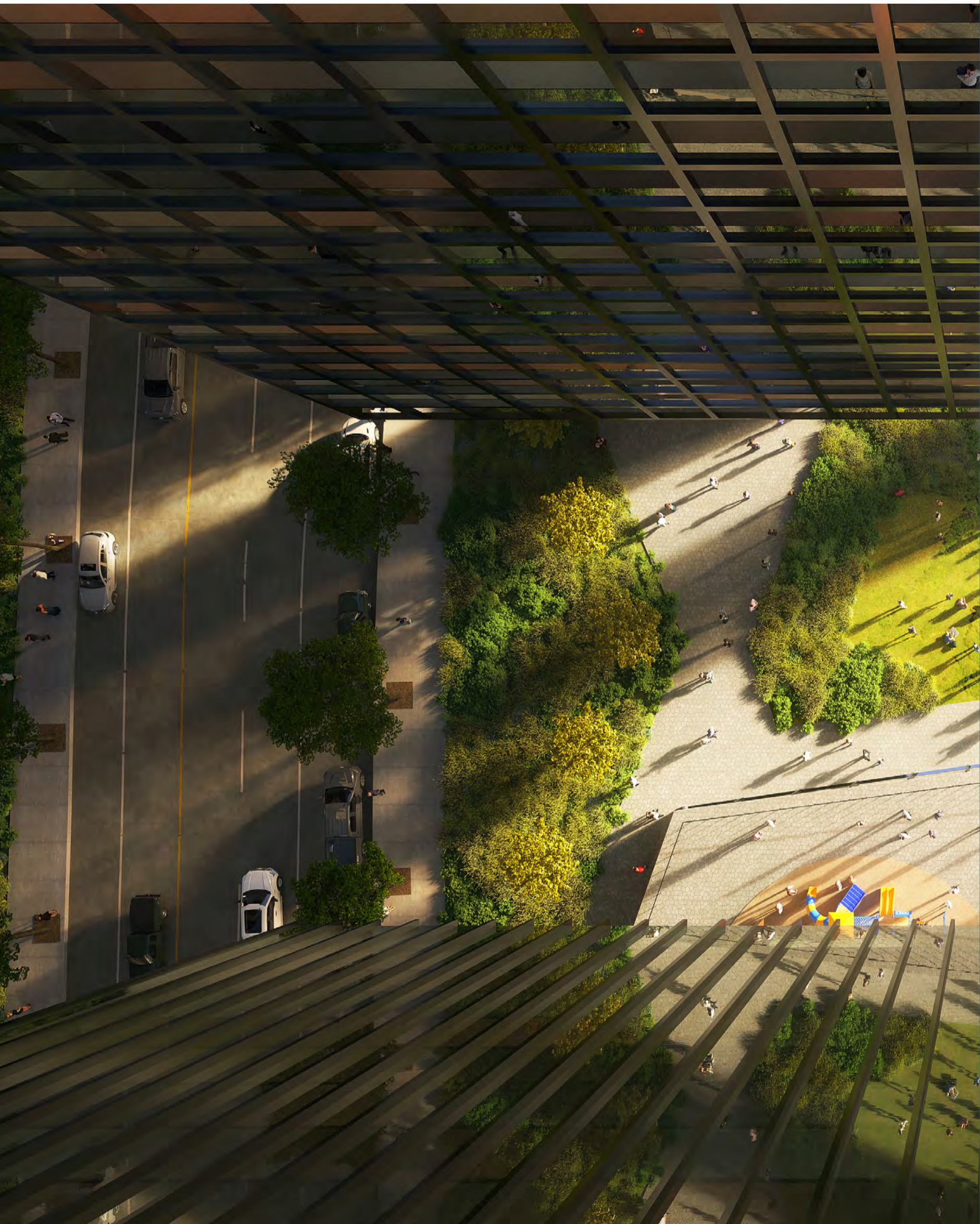
Vegetated areas and bioswales help filter and manage stormwater as well as facilitate recharging of groundwater.

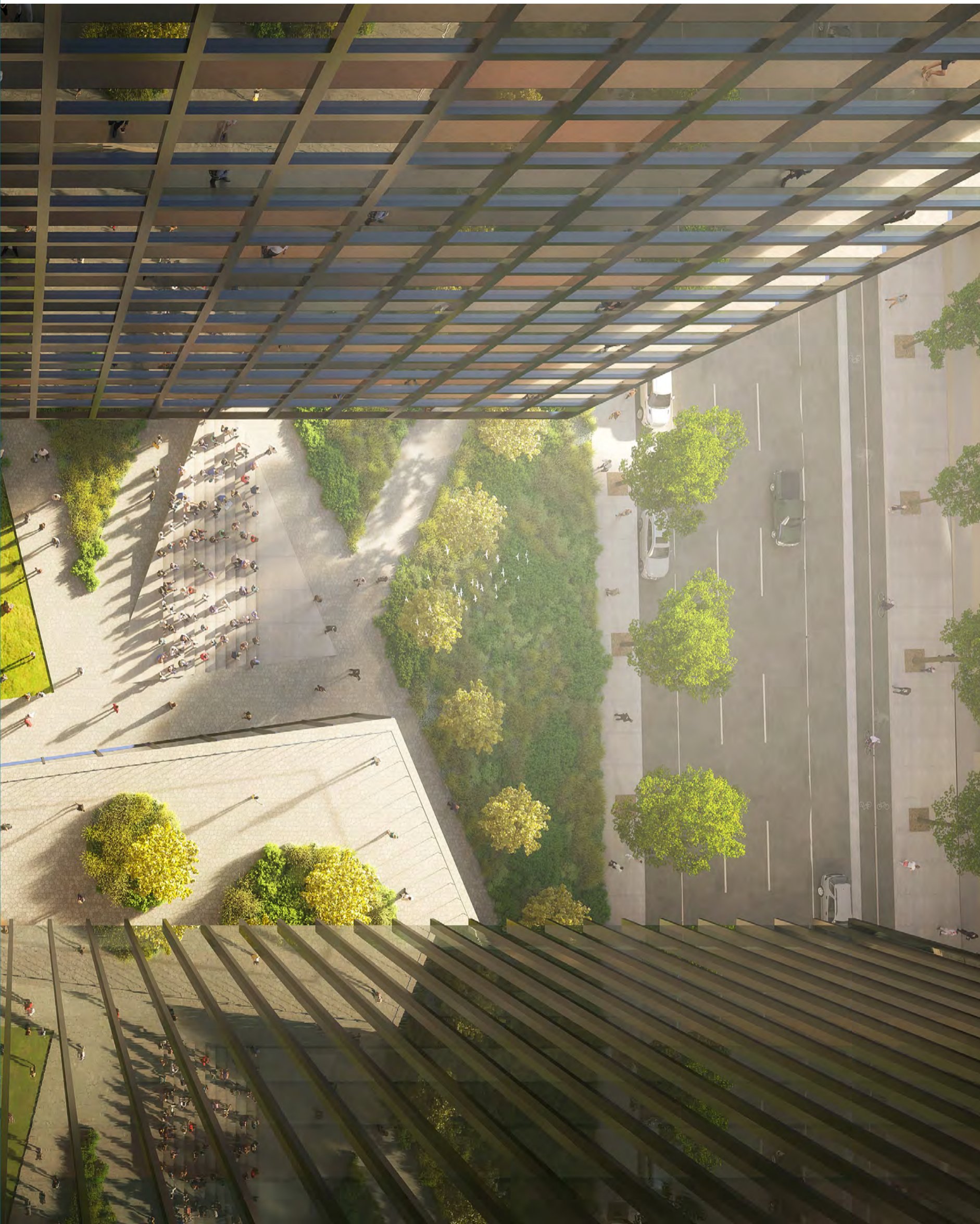


Ground and podium level Water Conservation & Reuse diagram. Overhead development removed for clarity.



Water Conservation & Reuse diagram.













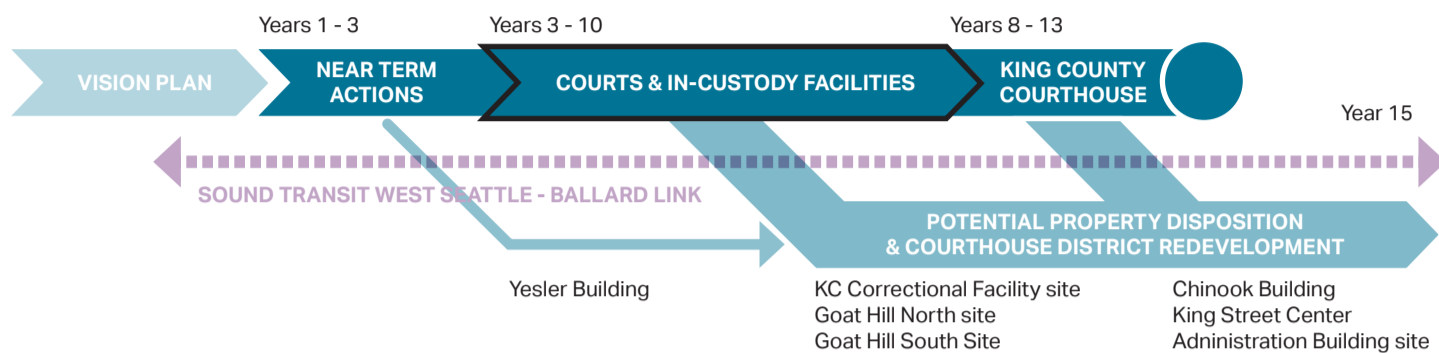


Timing and Next Steps

Realizing purpose-built county facilities and Courthouse District redevelopment is a long-term process, with many steps and variables along the way.

To illustrate the steps involved, a fifteen-year timeline is used to represent the planning, design, and construction of county facilities, and the transformation of a government district into a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. At the front end of that timeline, a series of near term actions have been outlined to inform the next steps in King County's Civic Campus Planning Initiative, and lay the groundwork for change.

Project phases, a sequencing schedule, and recommended near term actions



A Strategic Timeline in Four Overlapping Phases

The timeline for action has been organized into four primary segments: Near-Term Actions, proposed courthouse and in-custody facility planning and implementation, rehabilitation of the King County Courthouse, and Courthouse District redevelopment.

Near Term Actions

Preceding the planning, design and approvals, and construction processes for county facilities, a series of near-term actions have been outlined to illustrate initial steps that should be considered to move the overall process forward and lay the groundwork for change. These actions focus on establishing governance structures and regulatory frameworks, and begin the working group processes necessary for more detailed programming and planning of future facilities. Near term actions may also include concept studies for sites and facilities and even potential projects that may be undertaken to begin the transformation of conditions within the existing county campus.

New Courts and In-Custody Facilities are Key Drivers

New courts and in-custody facilities are important for the county's ability to continue providing high-quality services. The completion of proposed courts and in-custody facilities are also critical to unlocking redevelopment potential on a series of downtown campus properties, including the King County Courthouse, the King County Correctional Facility site, and the Goat Hill North site.

Rehabilitating the King County Courthouse

The plan identifies the rehabilitation of the existing courthouse for use as county government office space, county council chambers and staff space, and a welcome and customer service center. That transformation, together with other office space located on the SODO case study site, enables the potential disposition of the Chinook Building and King Street Center.

Courthouse District Redevelopment

The plan outlines redevelopment opportunities for county-owned land and buildings in downtown Seattle. Most parcels or buildings require initial action on proposed county facilities in order to dispose of, through sale or ground lease, existing asset on the downtown campus and in the Pioneer Square neighborhood.

Redevelopment of the King County Correctional Facility site, the Goat Hill North, and the closely related Goat Hill South site, are linked to the completion of courts and in-custody facilities.

The Chinook Building and King Street Center are linked to the completion of future county office space located in a rehabilitated King County Courthouse.

The Administration Building site and the property at 420 4th Avenue, depend on the completion of Sound Transit's West Seattle - Ballard Link station and tunnel superstructure prior to redevelopment.

The Goat Hill South site, though not linked to future facility requirements, would benefit from the vacation of the Terrace Street right-of-way (an identified near-term action) prior to disposition and redevelopment. Only the Yesler Building requires no related actions for potential disposition and redevelopment.

A Sequence of Events and Activities

The sequencing schedule on the opposite page uses a fifteen-year timeline to illustrate the general order of project-related events, and dependencies between events, for the proposals outlined in the strategic plan. Emphasis should be placed on project activities and dependencies rather than on the timeframes used; actual durations will be defined through the implementation of near term actions, further planning, and decision-making by county leadership.

Near Term Actions

Activities identified for action within the first three-years include:

Governance Structure: Identify and implement a framework that defines how the Civic Campus Planning Initiative's future work would be controlled and monitored.

County Facility Working Groups: Establish working groups to begin the programming process for potential new facilities. Alongside county staff, working groups may include related services providers, stakeholders, and community leaders.

At a minimum, working groups should be established for courts and in-custody facilities and should include overlapping membership to disseminate and coordinate work between groups. Facility working groups should coordinate with other planned or currently established working groups or policy studies ranging from Alternatives to Incarceration to District and Superior Court operational master planning.

An in-custody facility working group, or groups, may include, at a minimum, representatives from the following groups: County Executive, Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, Sheriff's Office, Prosecuting Attorney, Public Defender, Probation, Health and Medical Services, Behavioral Health Services, Human Services, Superior Court, Facilities Management Division, Performance Strategy & Budget, City Police Departments within King County that may utilize the potential facility, Labor Relations, Information Technology, operations and maintenance staff, other service providers, community leaders, and previously incarcerated individuals.

A courts facility working group, or groups, may include, at a minimum, direct users such as District and Superior Court judges and staff, Judicial Administration, Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, Sheriff's Office, Prosecuting Attorney, Public Defender, Community Corrections, Facilities Management Division, Performance Strategy & Budget, Information Technology, providers for court-related wrap-around services, Labor Relations, operations and maintenance staff, other service providers, and community leaders.

Working groups for office facilities, and council chambers and staff facilities, may be internal to King County staff and may be convened to focus on specific planning targets related to new construction or renovation projects.

Facility Concept Studies: Engage consultant services to assist working groups in the visualization of information, to aggregate and synthesize programmatic information from various working groups, and assist working groups in understanding the physical relationships within facilities and the site requirements to meet group-identified facility needs.

Alongside studies to assist facility working groups, technical concepts studies would be undertaken in concert with the site selection and review process. Consolidated programming and technical concept studies form the basis for zoning and regulatory action, and facility cost estimating.

Cost Estimating and Funding: Utilize refined programming, planning, site information, and concept studies to estimate costs for preferred strategies, and develop a funding plan.

Redevelopment Block Packages: Engage consultant services to assist the county in the creation of initial property information packages to support future RFP/ RFQ processes for disposition and/ or joint development. The early development of initial block packages would assist the county in evaluating property retention or disposition trade-offs.

Zoning and Regulatory Actions: Begin the coordination process with the City of Seattle for zoning actions within the future Courthouse District and on any preferred second site for courts and in-custody facilities. This work may include the implementation of a Planned Action Ordinance (PAO), enactment of a Planned Community Development (PCD), the codification of new neighborhood-specific design guidelines, along with potential zone change or text amendment proposals. Additional work includes organizing future project SEPA and EIS processes to inform near-term zoning actions and facility concept studies, and the preparation of a draft Cooperative Agreement between King County and the City of Seattle.

West Seattle - Ballard Link Coordination: Establish a working group to assist Sound Transit in the planning and design of potential North of CID stations to ensure alignment with Courthouse District urban design guidance, and to support future development within the maximum envelopes allowable by existing zoning or potential new regulatory frameworks established through the Zoning & Regulatory Actions process.

Assist Sound Transit in the planning and Design of the potential below-grade Jefferson Street connection, between the proposed North of CID stations and the existing Pioneer Square Station, along with any above-grade station entrances or exits within the Jefferson Street ROW to ensure alignment with Courthouse District urban design guidance.

Review potential construction schedules for the West Seattle - Ballard Link tunnel and station superstructures to determine interim impacts to county operations that may influence the timing or configuration of elements outlined in the strategic plan.

Infrastructure Actions: Studies, and formal processes, to vacate, or remove, various alleyways and rights-of-way throughout the district should be considered at this early stage to ensure future property and facility studies are undertaken with confirmed site boundary conditions. The list of actions includes:

Initiate Right-of-Way (ROW) vacation processes for Jefferson Street, appending the vacated ROW to the courthouse property to facilitate public realm design linking the southern main entry to City Hall Park.

Support the City of Seattle in the vacation of the Dilling Way ROW, reverting that ROW from SDOT to Parks ownership to allow more holistic redesign opportunities to be undertaken in City Hall Park.

Initiate the vacation of the service alley located between the Goat Hill Garage and the western Goat Hill Parcel, and study combining these two parcels with the vacated ROW to form a single development parcel.

Initiate the vacation of the Terrace Street ROW located between the Goat Hill garage and the Goat Hill South parcel, study appending that vacated ROW to the Goat Hill South parcel as dedicated district open space.

Study the vacation of the through-lane portion of 6th Avenue, south of Terrace Street to include the residual WSDOT land in Courthouse District connectivity and redevelopment projects.

Initiate studies to remove or realign and cover the existing courthouse service tunnel to foster at-grade connections between City Hall Park and Yesler Way.

City Hall Park: Collaborate with the City of Seattle on the recommended changes to surface infrastructure surrounding City Hall Park and the design and construction of a topographic rise, from the northernmost boundary of the (former) Dilling Way, up to Yesler Way to enable strategic pedestrian connections, and an accessible route, from Yesler Way directly into City Hall Park.

Site Review, Confirmation or Selection: Undertake a formal site selection process to identify potential locations, including the SODO site, for courts and in-custody facilities. Selection and review processes should utilize the SODO site case study as a conditions benchmark for evaluation.

Coordination with King County Metro: Establish a working group to review technical issues, conditions, and schedule considerations associated with SODO site case study recommendations, and identify potential solutions for evaluation by the county.

Evaluate Recent Property Acquisitions: Incorporate the recent acquisition of the Dexter Horton Building into the Civic Campus Initiative Planning process. Review potential alternate strategies that result from the potential long-term use of the Dexter Horton building for county offices. Identify the office-to-housing conversion potential of the building to provide flexibility in long-term decision making.

The Yesler Building: The Yesler Building does not represent a critical path schedule component and may be available for early action under a rehabilitation scenario for office use or as a candidate for office-to-housing conversion.

Broadening the Blueprint

Outlining a vision for future county facilities is an important first step in addressing the county's facility needs. However, the ability to maintain flexibility within that vision, particularly over time, is equally important. Flexibility allows the county to navigate unforeseen challenges, seize new opportunities, respond to community needs, and ensure that the strategic direction remains relevant and effective.

The strategic plan offers a series of proposals for future county facilities and frames a departure point that weaves together project guiding principles, forecasted need, facility types, and siting options that leverage county-owned land assets for county facilities while supporting the creation of a vibrant neighborhood in downtown.

But needs evolve and new opportunities arise over time; within the framework of this plan those options will need to be explored. This is a crucial aspect of long-range planning that must be embraced. To start that process now, the plan offers a series of options and additional considerations to immediately broaden the blueprint, illustrating the openness of the plan and inviting continued input towards the most effective future for county facilities.

King County maintains a wide range of options for office space in the proposed Courthouse District.

The strategic plan includes occupancy of the existing King County Courthouse for future county offices, County Council chambers and council staff spaces, as well as a welcome and customer service center. But the county has a wide range of options for office space within the future Courthouse District.

Occupy Existing County-Owned Buildings

The county may elect to continue occupying buildings that are currently in the county's portfolio, including the Chinook Building, King Street Center, and the recently acquired Dexter Horton Building. The Dexter Horton Building adds approximately 390,000 gross square feet (GSF) to the county's downtown portfolio. Together these three buildings total approximately 1,137,000 GSF of office space in downtown Seattle. Continued occupancy may require renovations to meet future county office space needs.

Consolidate County Offices

The county may choose to consolidate office space into a single location downtown. The collection of sites west of the Chinook Building offers an example for a consolidation strategy that leverages an existing county-owned building. The sites west of the Chinook Building total approximately 28,000 SF of land area. Vacating the alley between sites would yield an additional 5,000 SF of land area, and it would allow new construction on the western properties to connect to the Chinook Building. That land area, at a floor area ratio (FAR) or 11, would add approximately 363,000 GSF of non-residential development area, not including additional area below-grade. When combined with the Chinook Building, this would yield over 715,000 GSF of potential county office space. As a part of a district-wide Planned Community Development (PCD) more building area may be available for distribution to this site, within allowable height limits.

Occupy Space throughout the Courthouse District

The proposed Courthouse District includes a number of sites for potential mixed-use redevelopment. Consistent with that strategy, the county may elect to occupy non-residential space within one or more of these redevelopment projects. This strategy may offer the county government the ability to right-size space needs over time, and county employees the opportunity to participate in the daily life of new district development. The diagram on the opposite page illustrates county offices located on the lower floors of three potential redevelopment project sites.

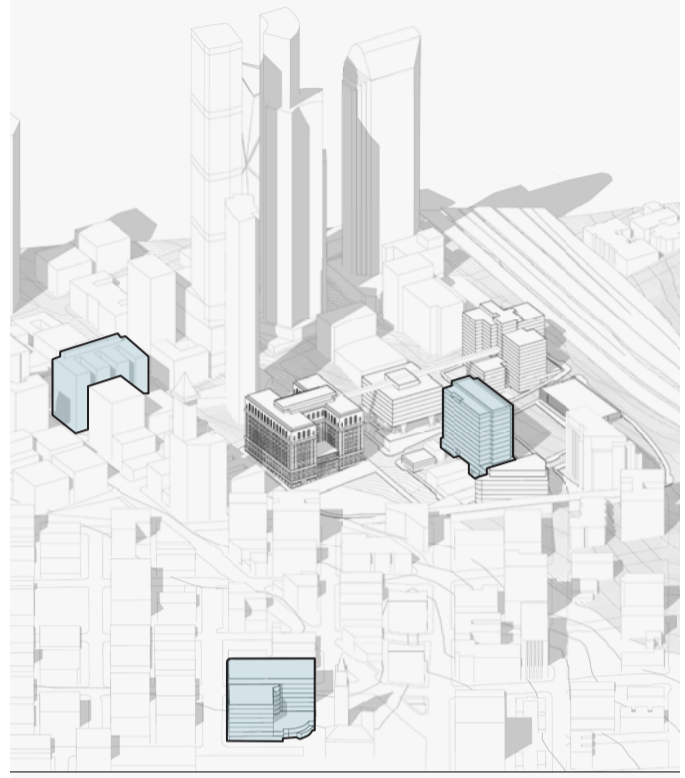


Diagram illustrating the Chinook Building and King Street Center, and the recently acquired Dexter Horton Building (upper left).

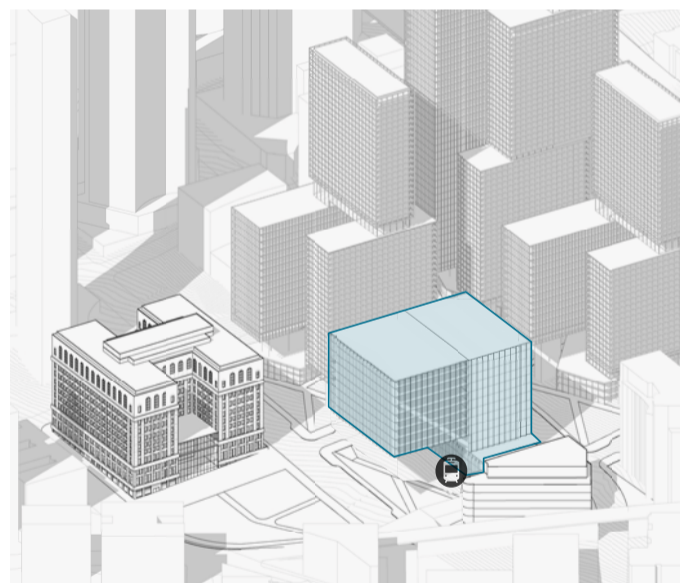


Diagram illustrating the potential redevelopment of properties along 4th Avenue for office use as an addition to a renovated Chinook Building.

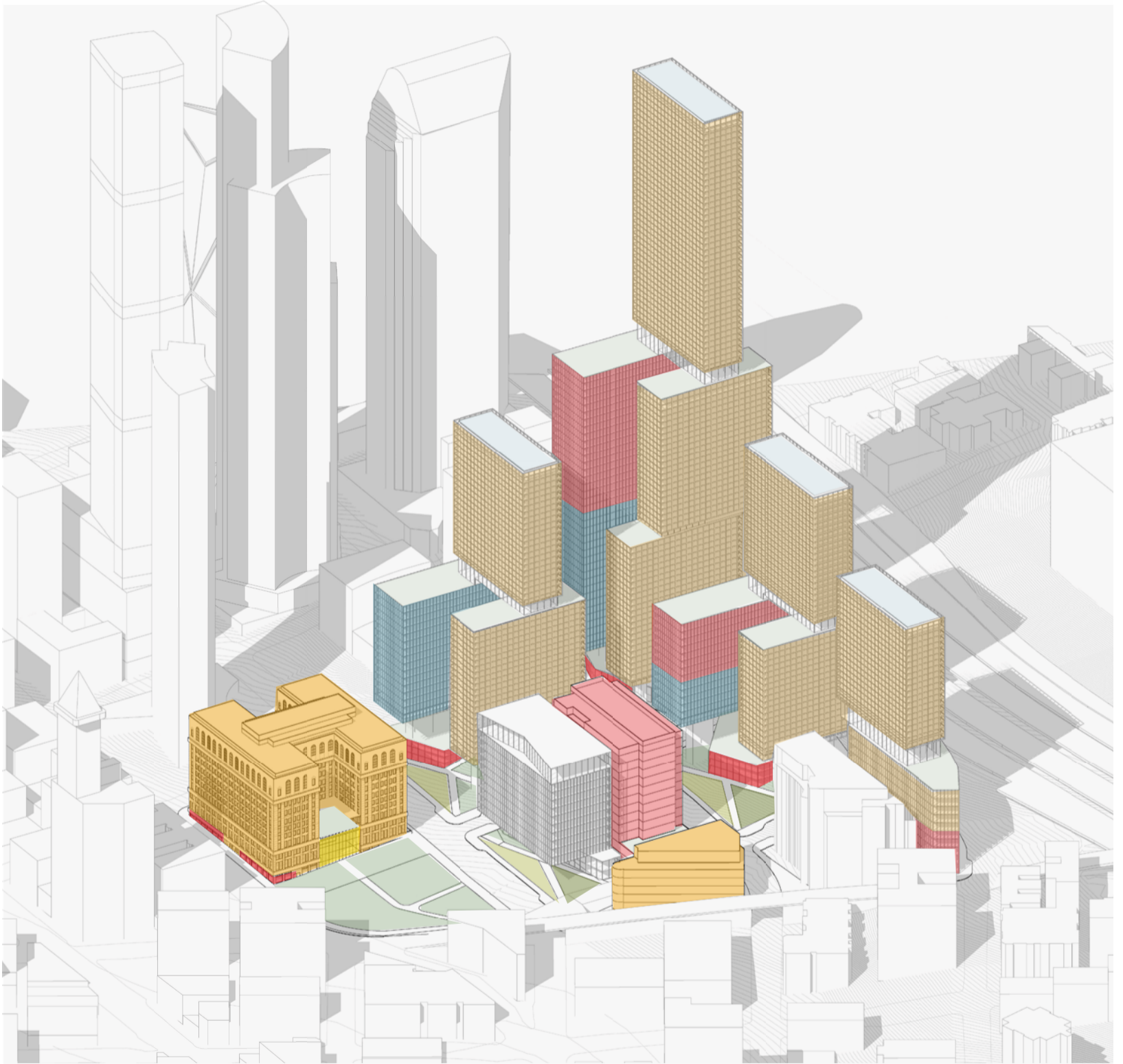


Diagram illustrating a mixed-use district scenario with a range of uses on each block.

- Residential
- Office (non-residential)
- Hotel (non-residential)
- School (non-residential)
- Retail/ Commercial
- Office-to-Housing Conversion
- King County Government
- Urban Open Space

The history of the King County Courthouse is a story of additions over time.

A Twenty-Three Story Plan

Shortly after the turn of the century, architect A. Warren Gould was retained by the county to design a new courthouse. "Gould proffered a design of monumental proportions, a 23-story skyscraper with setbacks terminating in a pyramid-roofed tower. The base of the building was an H-shaped plan, 13 stories in height, with central courts." (Lentz, 1987).

A Three-Then-Five Story Building

"The county commissioners agreed to a three-story building with the option to add additional stories as necessary. The Seattle city government, however, proposed to share the cost of the building with King County in exchange for a 20-year lease. The \$600,000 in funds provided by the city allowed the architect to add an additional two stories to the building with the expectation that the county would inherit this additional space in time." (King County, n.d.).

Adding Five More Stories

Amid regional prosperity ten years later, the inadequacy of the current courthouse space, and the city's condemnation of the county's jail facility, set the stage for an addition to the original structure.

In June of 1927, the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) issued a report that outlined the logic for a proposed addition:

"If we do not add, at this time, to the upper stories on the present City-County Building as originally intended, the courts now housed there are doomed to continue indefinitely (sic) in quarters which are untenable for their purpose. Are we to abandon it or scrap it when all of its structural members are as sound as the day it was build? (sic) ...Or shall we give the City-County Building its intended additional stories..." (Lentz, 1987).

The resulting 10-story structure included new courtrooms, offices, and a jail at the top floor, extending the life of the courthouse from the completion of this 1929-1930 addition until today.



Top: The original five-story courthouse completed in 1916.

Middle: The courthouse under construction in 1929. Additional floors were added to accommodate new and expanded programs.

Bottom: The King County Courthouse, circa 1949.

An Addition for the Next One Hundred Years

At ten-stories, the courthouse is still 13-stories away from Gould's original vision. Continue the story of the courthouse and, "give the City-County Building its intended additional stories..."

Adding onto the courthouse would form part of a Courthouse District Planned Community Development Ordinance (PCD) permitting additional height, and changes to floor-plate width limits, if necessary. The existing courthouse is a designated King County Landmark, and it is listed as primary contributing structure within the Pioneer Square National Historic District; the process for an addition would require reviews at almost every level of government. But, if necessary to accommodate a new program, and for the long term viability of the structure, a 13-story addition would almost double the square footage of the existing structure, making roughly 450,000 additional square feet available for new programs and uses.

This strategy of making a consequential addition to older and historic structures has been undertaken worldwide to great success, at projects such as the Hearst Tower in New York, the *Ephiharmonie* in Hamburg, the Museum of Military History in Dresden, the Port Authority Building in Antwerp, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, and the Tate Modern in London. The next chapter in the story of the King County Courthouse may be to join a company of historic buildings that are taking on new roles and making new contributions to the cities in which they reside.

Example Courthouse Addition	
Number of Floors	GSF
13 Floors	+/- 35,000
Total Additional Floor Area	+/- 455,000

Example additional floor area possible through a 13-Story addition to the existing courthouse.



Model photograph of an approximately 13-story addition, as a part of a Courthouse District PCD, on top of the existing King County Courthouse.

Maintain flexibility in decision-making about the future use of the King County Courthouse.

The strategic plan proposes the King County Courthouse as a future home for County offices, the county's Customer Service Center, and County Council offices and chambers. But the building's floor plate sizes and dimensions make it suitable for a wide range of uses that may offer flexibility for future decision making.

Converting History into Housing

Adaptive reuse, the practice of transforming historic buildings into modern uses, provides a compelling pathway for the conversion of a community landmark from an icon of government to a symbol of a neighborhood's rebirth.

Rehabilitation may include reclaiming the historic entry and forecourt for a new residential entry and residential courtyard, providing a next-door constituency for active daily use of City Hall Park. It may also include removal of the 1960s metal panels that have long obscured the Second Renaissance Revival facades to enable high-quality residential units within an otherwise deep floor plate; reintroducing the historic window opening sizes creates space to incorporate recessed terraces that provide outdoor space to new residences and adjust typical floor-plate depths to better match contemporary residential models.

Lower levels with deep atypical floor plates offer spaces for common areas and amenities to serve a residential population, and ground-level retail and commercial uses may be introduced to integrate the rehabilitated structure into the surrounding neighborhood.

Adaptively reusing the courthouse for housing presents the opportunity to realize around 350 new apartments or condominiums.

From Courthouse to Schools

Courthouse floor plate dimensions, and existing corridor widths, also offer a unique opportunity to transition the existing building into educational use.

At roughly 600,000 GSF, the existing building is over twice as large as Garfield High School or Issaquah High School, almost five times as large as Edmond S. Meany Middle School or three times as large as Kirkland Middle School, and almost six times as large as Kimball Middle School in Ranier Valley. In an educational conversion scenario, the courthouse building may represent an opportunity for a vertically integrated school campus for all grades, including Pre-K, and day care. The table at right illustrates a range of schools that could all be reasonably accommodated within the existing building.

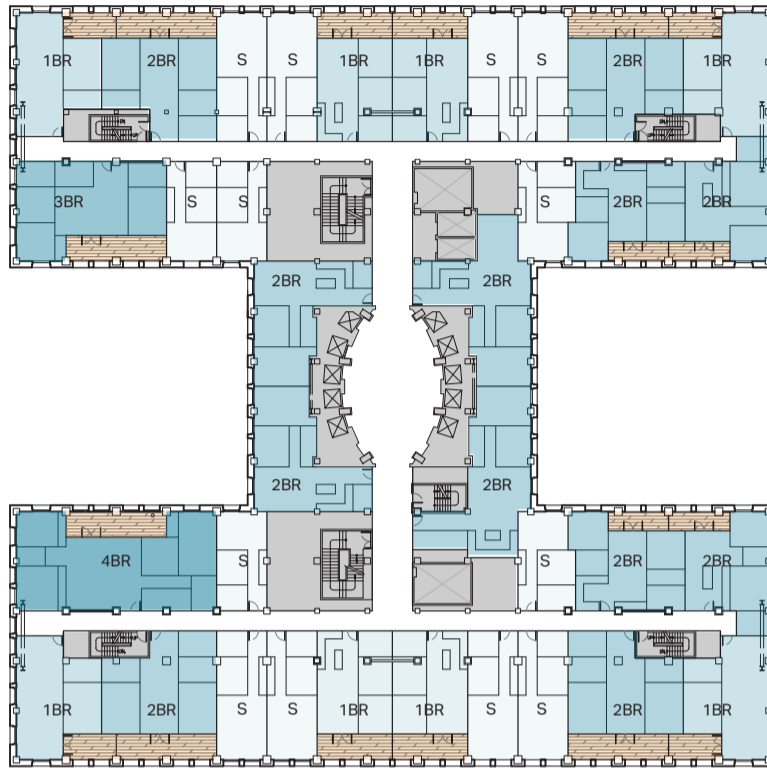
In an educational conversion scenario, the capacity may exist to supplement school functions with community and non-profit partners, and with ground-level retail or commercial space to more fully integrate the rehabilitated structure into the surrounding urban fabric. As the Courthouse District takes shape, educational uses may be required to support district housing and create a true mixed-use neighborhood; as an alternative to future county government offices, a vertical campus within the courthouse could form an anchor for a new neighborhood.

Courthouse Residential Conversion Example Typical Floor Plan Mix	
Apartment or Condominium Size	Qty
Studio	13
1 Bedroom	8
2 Bedroom	12
3 Bedroom	1
4 Bedroom	1
Total per Floor	35
Potential Yield (10 Floors)	+/- 350

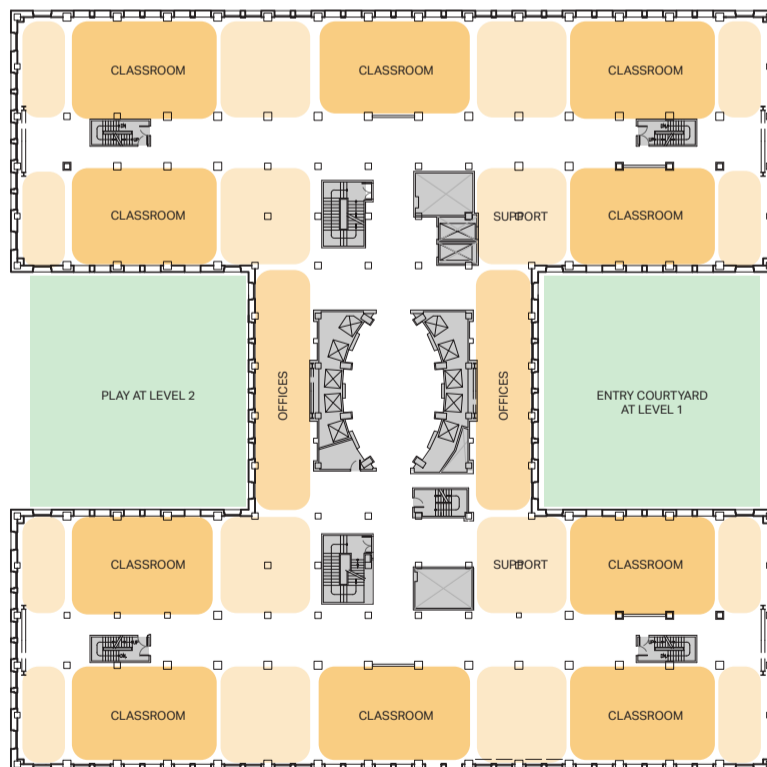
Example residential mix for a typical H-shaped floor plate, and approximate total residential yield based on typical floor plate conditions. Additional yield possible on atypical floors.

Courthouse Institutional Conversion Example Gross Area Distribution	
School or Entity Type	GSF
High School	+/- 250,000
Middle School	+/- 100,000 - 200,000
Elementary School	95,000
Community Partners	Varies
Non-profit Partners	Varies
Day Care Center	Varies

Example gross square footages for contemporary public school categories in Seattle and King County.



Example typical H-shaped floor plan organization for a court-house-to-residential conversion.



Example typical H-shaped floor plan organization for a court-house-to-schoolhouse conversion.

Office-to-housing conversions may play a role in the future of the Courthouse District.

Office-to-Housing Conversions

There are a wide range of factors affecting a structure's ability to be converted to residential use, including suitability, the cost associated with conversions, challenging permit processes and timelines, the availability of financial incentives, and the alignment of zoning regulations to remove barriers to conversion.

The City of Seattle is engaging in a legislative process to remove regulatory barriers for converting existing commercial buildings to residential use. "The proposed legislation would establish clear guidelines for determining what qualifies as a residential conversion and provide broad exemptions from design development standards any time an existing structure is converted to housing from another use, or residential uses are added within an existing building. Additionally, these changes would reduce the cost of conversion to residential use by exempting conversions to housing from the City's Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) requirements. The proposed changes would apply to all areas of the city where non-residential structures such as office or retail spaces commonly exist, and multifamily residential uses are allowed." (Braxton, 2024)

Within the context of a city-wide initiative to activate downtown Seattle, King County properties in south downtown may become more attractive as office-to-housing conversion options.

The Yesler Building Would Make Wonderful Housing

The Yesler Building is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is located within the boundary of the Pioneer Square Preservation District. Since it was completed in 1909 the building has been used for a wide range of government uses, for offices, and for community services. It is an excellent candidate for adaptive re-use strategies to help meet current housing needs in King County.

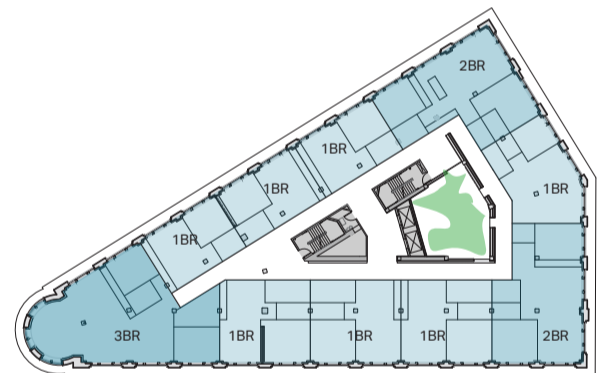
The building is relatively small. It is 121,000 GSF and, due to two basement floors, has a usable floor area of approximately 98,000 SF and a typical floor plate size of approximately 15,000 GSF. The floor plan at right illustrates an example residential mix arriving at 10 apartments or condominiums per floor.

The exterior of the building maintains a historic character rich in detail, while the interior of the building—gutted during a 1970s renovation—has the flexibility to be completely redesigned to meet modern layouts, with features and finishes expected in contemporary apartments and condominiums.

The Yesler Building also occupies a prime location, across Terrace Street from a potential light rail station entrance, within one block in all directions from numerous Metro bus routes, and half a block away from City Hall Park.



Photograph of the Terrace Street entrance to the Yesler Building.



Example typical floor plan organization for an office-to-residential conversion of the Yesler Building.

Yesler Residential Conversion Example Typical Floor Plan Mix	
Apartment or Condominium Size	Qty
1 Bedroom	7
2 Bedroom	2
3 Bedroom	1
Total per Floor	10
Potential Yield (6 Floors)	+/- 68

Example residential mix for a typical floor plate, and approximate total residential yield based on typical floor plate conditions. Additional yield possible depending on apartment or condominium mix.

The Chinook Building is Less Efficient, but Surprisingly Adaptable

The Chinook Building is 350,000 GSF with a usable floor area of approximately 287,000 SF. Each typical floor plate is approximately 22,000 GSF. The floor plan at right illustrates an example residential mix arriving at 16 apartments or condominiums per floor.

The Chinook Building is a good example of a commercial structure that borders on suitability for conversion.

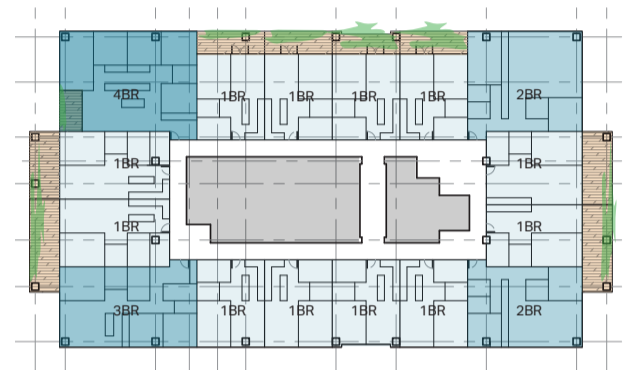
Vertical building services are located in a relatively deep zone in the middle of each typical floor plate. The depth of that core zone means that conversion efficiency of the floor plan is lower than traditional commodity development ratios. That lower "efficiency-ratio" may pose challenges unless creative use of the space, for revenue or non-revenue generating program, can be identified.

Conversion to residential use may also require a full replacement of the building's exterior envelope. The floor plan opposite right illustrates the addition of exterior terraces on building ends, and the incorporation of recessed terraces on the building's southern side to compensate for the overly deep floor plate south of the building core. Existing curtain wall vertical mullions are set out on a wide bay spacing that may not align well with the introduction of new interior partitions that fully separate independent apartments or condominiums. And windows may need to be operable to some degree, to give future residents the ability to open windows for fresh air and temperature control without relying solely on mechanical means.

The vertical services core and building envelope illustrate two of the many challenges that arise when evaluating a building for office to housing conversion potential. And though the Chinook Building may border on suitability, the option exists should repositioning this county asset become a value-add to the emerging neighborhood.



Photograph of the Chinook Building.



Example typical floor plan organization for a office-to-residential conversion of the Chinook Building.

Chinook Residential Conversion Example Typical Floor Plan Mix	
Apartment or Condominium Size	Qty
Studio	0
1 Bedroom	12
2 Bedroom	2
3 Bedroom	1
4 Bedroom	1
Total per Floor	16
Potential Yield (12 Floors)	+/- 192

Example residential mix for a typical floor plate, and approximate total residential yield based on typical floor plate conditions. Additional yield possible depending on apartment or condominium mix.

Work with properties along 4th Avenue to create a holistic environment around the courthouse and City Hall Park.

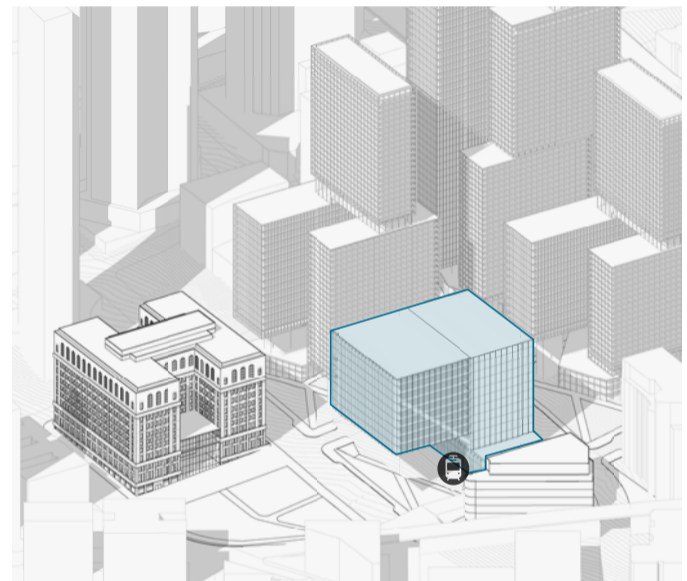
King County currently owns two parcels on the half block located between the Chinook Building and 4th Avenue, 411 Jefferson Street and 420 4th Avenue (outlined in black in the diagram at right). Sound Transit's preferred alignment, for further study, identifies this half block as a potential site for a West Seattle - Ballard Link Extension station entry. The Ballard Link Extension and station location would require the demolition of all buildings located on the half block, outlined in red at right and collectively referred to as the 4th Avenue sites.

These sites may be redeveloped under a wide range of scenarios ranging from an office space addition onto the neighboring Chinook Building to a mixed-use housing developed.

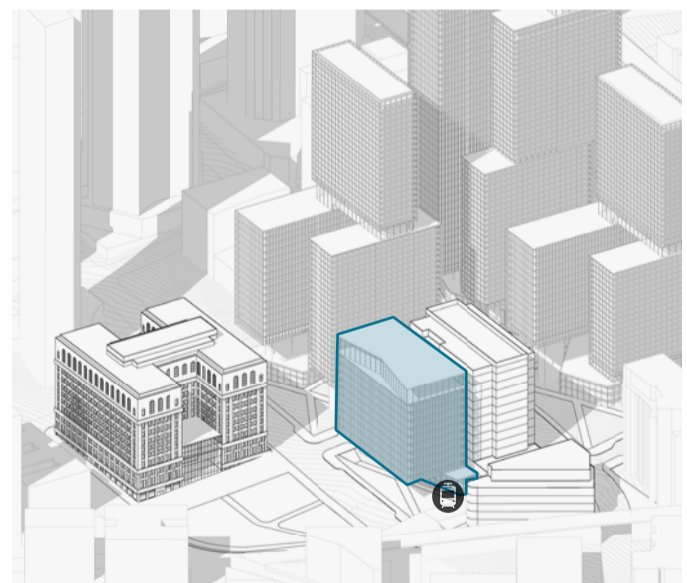
King County should work with Sound Transit to ensure that redevelopment of this consolidated half block, and the station itself, utilize guidance elsewhere in this strategic plan to integrate this property into the design of the courthouse district.



Existing zoning map, plate 116, highlighting county-owned parcels. King Street Center not shown.



Top: Redevelopment of the 4th Avenue sites for office use as an addition to a renovated Chinook Building.



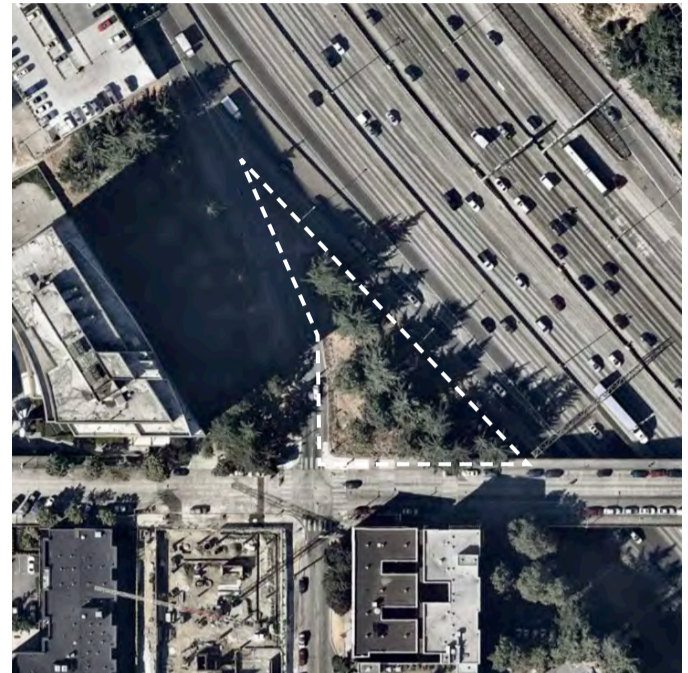
Bottom: New mixed-use residential development on the 4th Avenue sites.

Use residual land to further connect the Courthouse District to the surrounding neighborhoods.

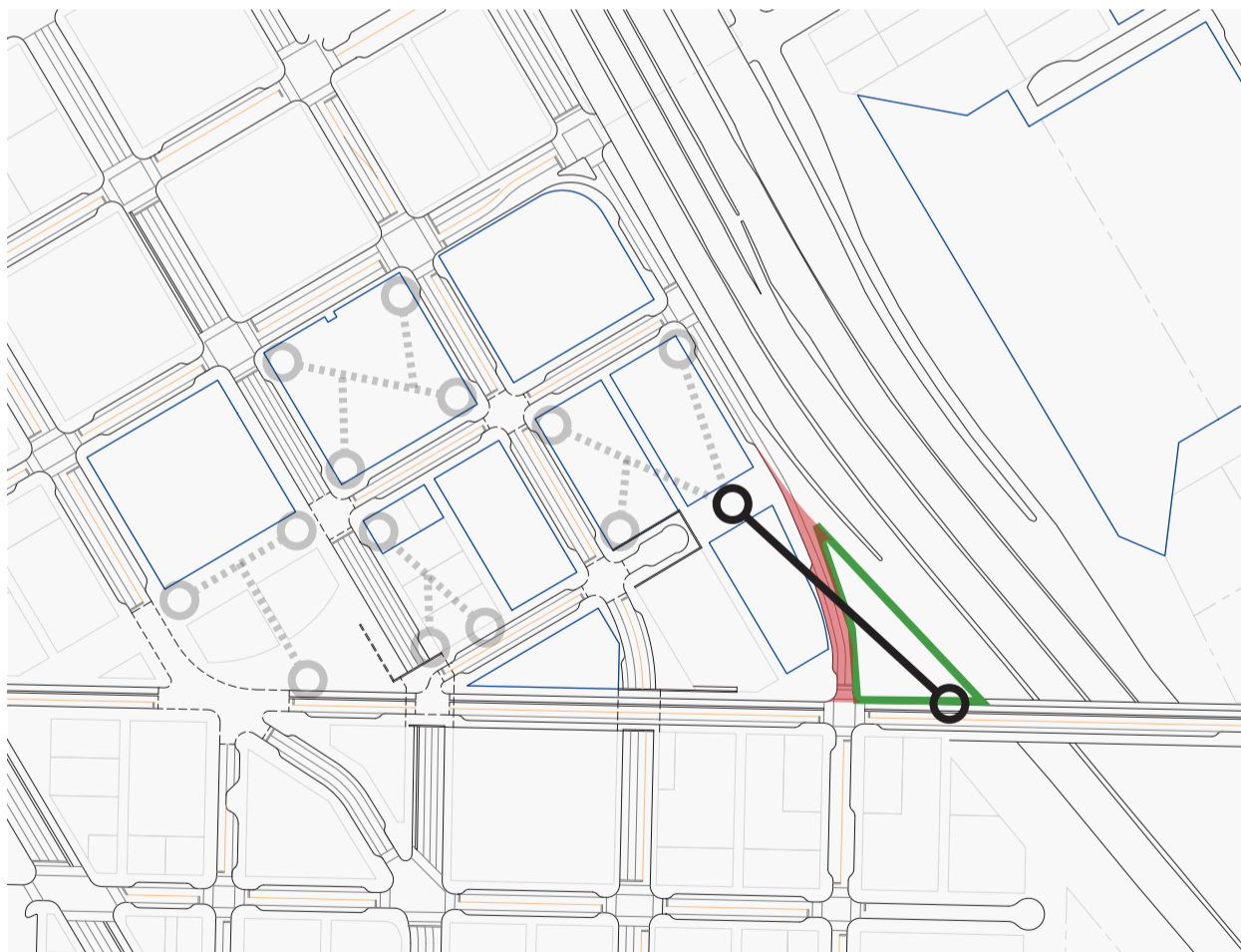
Pedestrian connections linking the Courthouse District to Yesler Terrace and the Chinatown International District could be further strengthened through the use of residual land located in the right-of-way between 6th Avenue, Yesler Way, and I-5.

Activating that residual land for a pedestrian connection would require the closure of the through-lane portion of 6th Avenue, south of Terrace Street. The acceleration lane would be extended north from Terrace Street to begin at Jefferson Street. Closure of that portion of 6th Avenue would require Jefferson Street to be designated as one-way, westward from 6th Avenue to 5th Avenue. Jefferson Street would serve as the last exit for traffic not wishing to continue onto I-5 Southbound. Closure of that portion of 6th Avenue would provide the route and dimension to achieve an accessible pathway from Yesler Way into the Courthouse District.

Beyond pedestrian connectivity, that residual land may hold additional potential for redevelopment. The conversion of that residual land to a developable parcel, and extension of the Goat Hill South site, would enable the desired pedestrian connectivity while increasing the redevelopment potential within the Courthouse District, adding approximately 33,000 SF, at an 11 FAR, for potential housing and commercial uses.



Aerial photograph of the residual ROW land located between 6th Avenue, Yesler Way, and I-5.



Map identifying the section of the 6th Avenue through-lane recommended for closure, and the Critical Connection made possible as a result.

- Residual Land
- Critical Connection
- ROW Vacation/ Roadway Closure

Advocate for improvements to the southern thresholds into the Courthouse District.

There are four ways to approach the Courthouse District from the South: by moving north along 3rd Avenue S, 4th Avenue S, 5th Avenue S, or 6th Avenue S. Two of those routes, 4th and 5th Avenues, pass underneath Yesler Way and Terrace Streets. Those underpasses represent an enormous opportunity for the creation of inviting thresholds into the Courthouse District.

The 4th Avenue underpass, which moves underneath the intersection of Yesler Way and Terrace Street, should take advantage of potential work by both Sound Transit and King County.

Sound Transit's potential new West Seattle - Ballard Link Station at 4th and Terrace Street should review incorporating the residual areaway underneath Terrace Street into the station design. Incorporating that areaway, and corresponding 4th Avenue street frontage, would radically improve the existing underpass through the pedestrian activity generated, and by the presence of the station during the day, and as a lit beacon at night.

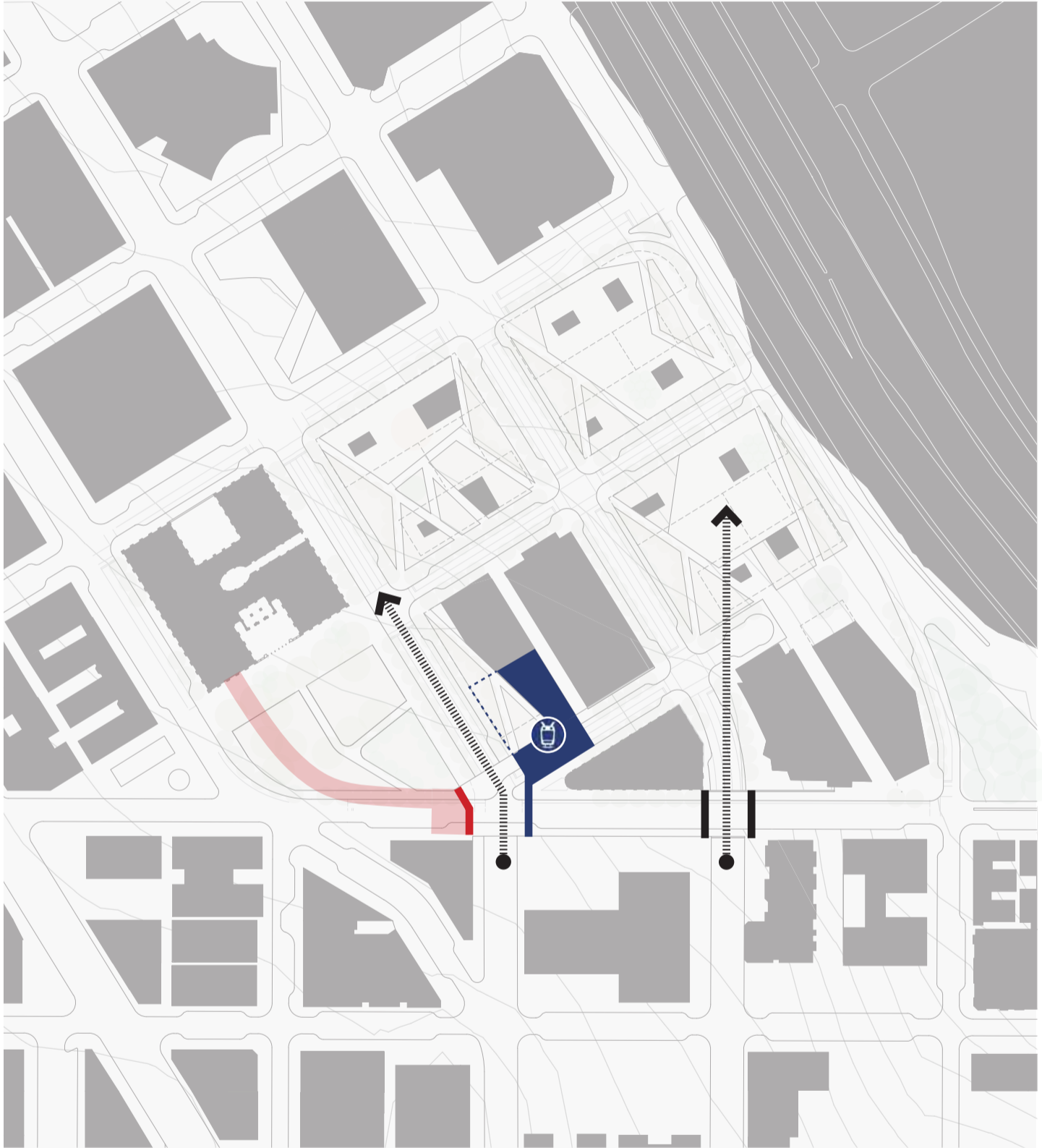
On the opposite side of 4th Avenue, King County owns an abandoned service tunnel drive that once served the King County Courthouse. Alongside City Hall Park recommendations, to create a simple topographic rise from the northernmost boundary of the (former) Dilling Way up to Yesler Way for an accessible pedestrian connection into the park, the county should consider covering the courthouse service drive and potentially shifting the entrance to the drive beneath the western side of the 4th Avenue underpass. Relocating the tunnel entrance and resizing the tunnel landing to the full width of Yesler Way above, may form a new and enclosed loading and receiving bay, large enough to accommodate off-street deliveries. While the tunnel structure is too small for delivery vehicles, it is large enough for electric pallet jacks and forklifts to ferry deliveries from the potential underpass loading bay to the courthouse.

This service route may conflict with a Jefferson Street Sound Transit connection, between the potential West Seattle - Ballard Link Station on 4th Avenue and the existing Pioneer Square Station and should be studied further.



Top: The existing Terrace Street underpass seen from City Hall Park.

Bottom: The existing Yesler Way underpass seen from 5th Avenue looking south.

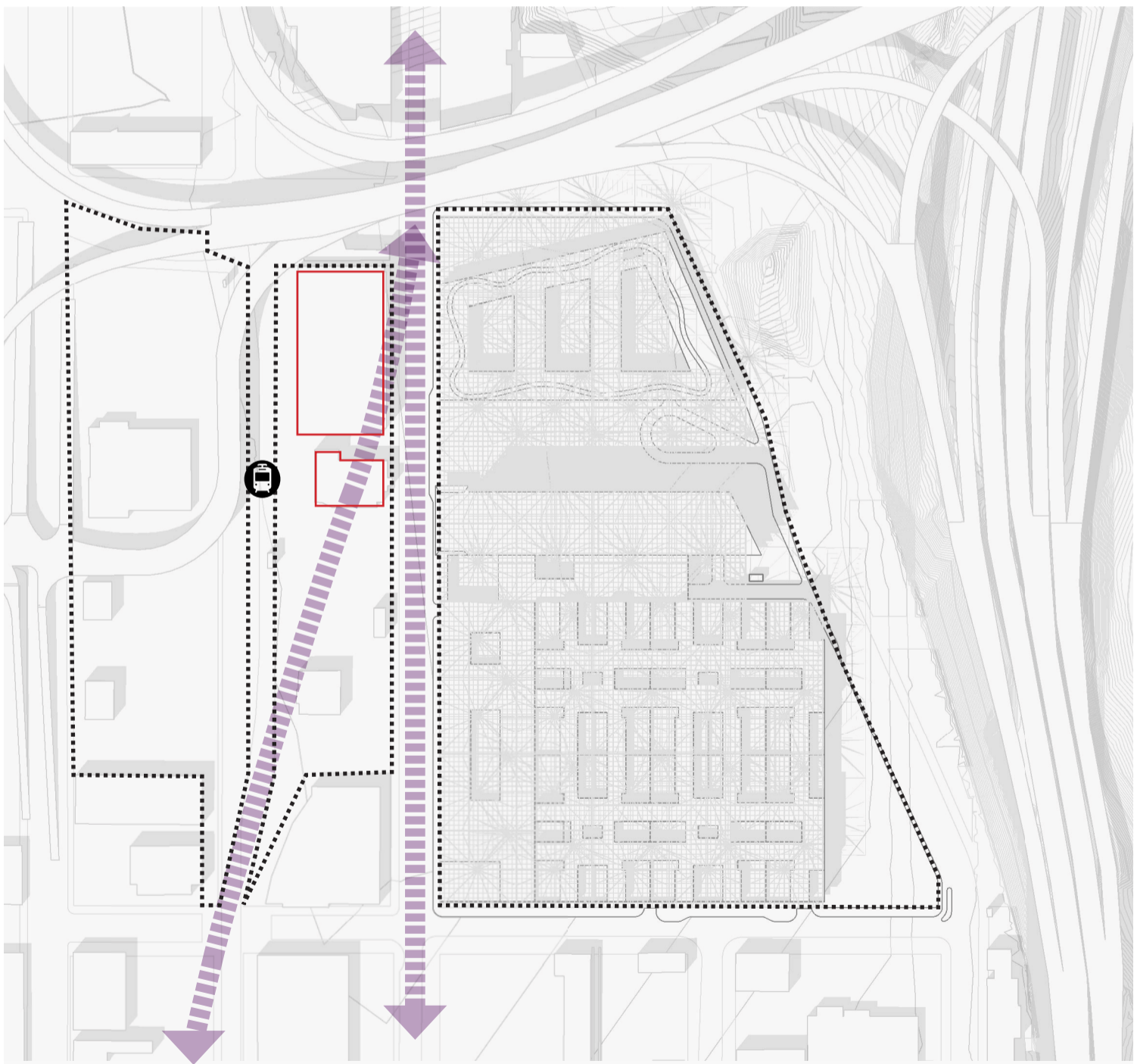


Site plan highlighting the underpasses at 4th Avenue, adjacent to the potential Ballard Link Station, and 5th Avenue as entrances to the Courthouse District.

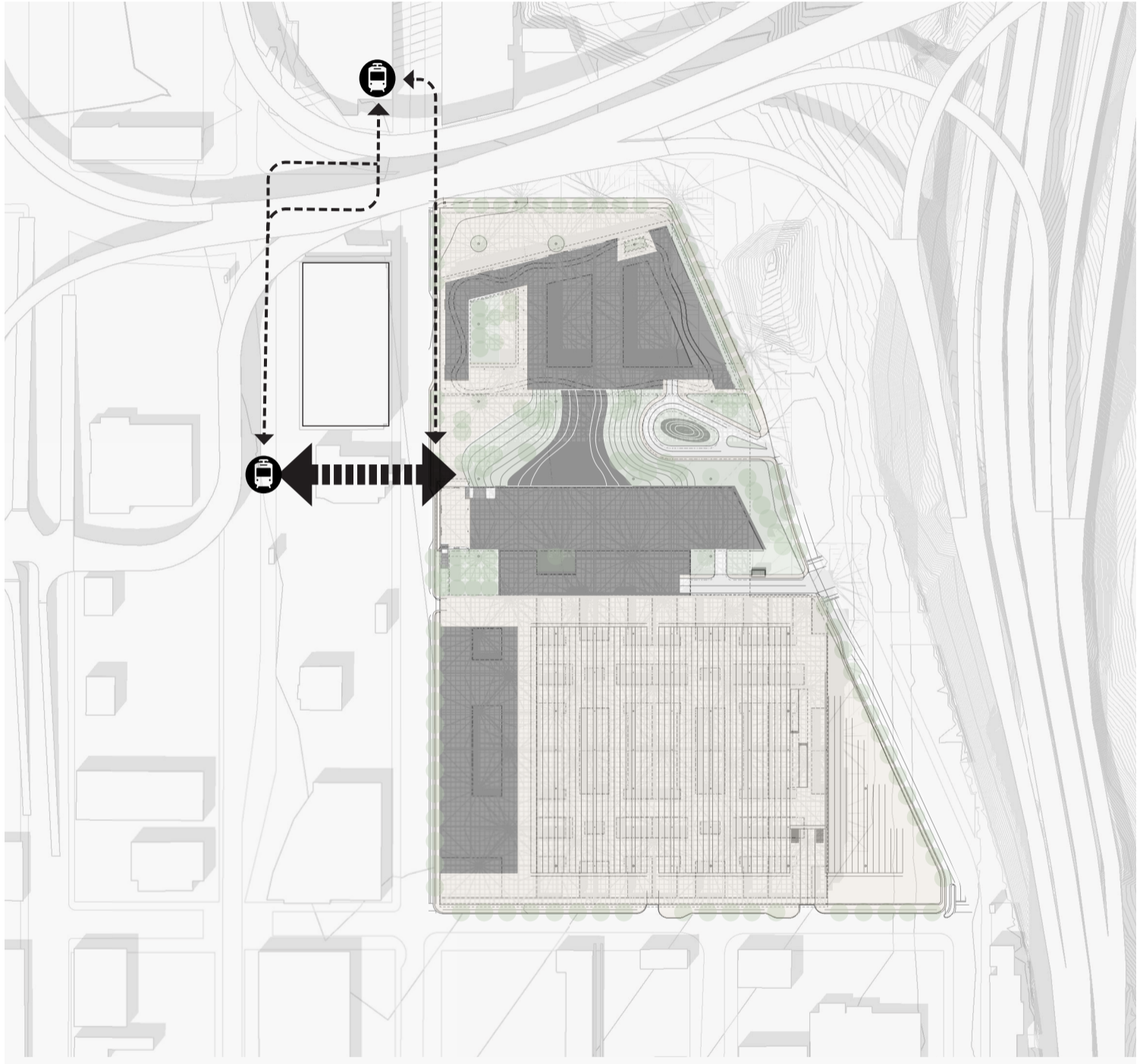
The West Seattle - Ballard Link Extension alignment may open more direct connections to transit.

Sound Transit is in the process of reviewing and reconciling the preferred alignments for the West Seattle - Ballard Link Extension. Final alignment may impact existing county-owned facilities located to the west of 6th Avenue S.

If select existing county facilities require demolition, the county should consider opportunities to create a more direct connection between the potential SODO campus and the existing Stadium Station, shown in the diagram on the opposite page. That connection would enable direct access to the SODO campus arrivals pavilion and central outdoor space, forming a pedestrian circulation loop that offers greater connectivity between the existing Stadium Station and the potential South of CID Station.



Potential Sound Transit West Seattle - Ballard Link Extension alignments in relationship to the SODO case study site and King County facilities located west of 6th Ave S (indicated in red).



Potential Stadium Station connection to the SODO case study site's arrivals hub and central urban space.

Sizing a future In-custody facility to meet the needs of the Criminal Legal System.

The number and type of in-custody beds that may be needed years after any potential facility is completed may vary from the 1,000-bed capacity facility outlined in the strategic plan.

Facility capacity and capital cost are intrinsically linked. In order to represent the gross square footage (GSF) of varying facility sizes, two additional facility size calculations have been included representing a lower count, 500-bed facility, and a higher count 1,500-bed facility. Both facility sizes utilize the benchmark basis established for the 1,000-bed facility.

Future workgroups should be convened to outline engagement, review, and planning processes in order to determine the number and type of beds required for any future facility.

A Potential 500-Bed Facility

Gross square footages for a potential 500-bed facility are estimated by omitting the "Housing and Mixed Program Types" area allocation, for 500 beds, from the proposed 1,000-bed facility program. Other program areas remain constant to reflect a conservative area reduction and acknowledge that program types other than housing may not be able to be reduced below certain minimum sizes, to be determined, for operational need.

A Potential 1,500-Bed Facility

Gross square footages for a potential 1,500-bed facility are estimated by using the benchmarked 500 BGSF for all 1,500 beds. This reflects a conservative estimate for area increases, and acknowledges that all program areas would require square footage increases to accommodate a larger in-custody population.

500-bed In-Custody Facility Reductions from Proposed SODO Facility Areas		
Floor/ Level	Space Type	GSF
Ground Floor	Mixed Program Types	10,000
Second Floor	Mixed Program Types	90,000
	<i>Outdoor Open Spaces</i>	25,000
Third Floor	Housing and Mixed Program Types	225,000
	<i>Outdoor Open Spaces</i>	100,000
Fourth Floor	Omitted	0
Roof	<i>Intensive Green Roof</i>	300,000
	<i>Support</i>	25,000
Total Enclosed Area		325,000

Gross square footage table reflecting the removal of 500-beds, and associated program, from the proposed 1,000-bed facility.

1500-Bed In-Custody Facility Gross Areas Based on BGSF/ Bed Benchmark		
Program Type	%	GSF
Housing	48%	396,000
Activities and Recreation	20%	165,000
Administration	3%	24,750
Programs	8%	66,000
Services	6%	49,500
Intake/ Release/ Transfer	2%	16,500
Health Care	6%	49,500
Support Services	7%	57,750
Total (Enclosed Area)	100%	825,000
Total BGSF per Bed		550

Gross square footage table for a 1,500-bed facility based on the benchmarked 550 BGSF/ Bed.

Explore a change in operations to reduce the size and capital cost of a new courthouse.

The proposed SODO courthouse includes 46 courtrooms; that general program assumes one courtroom per judge for weekday operating hours between 8:30am and 4:30pm.

Programming and planning for a future courthouse should consider a data-informed review of the number of courtrooms required to support the existing and anticipated civil court and criminal court caseloads to determine if a reduced number of courtrooms, resulting in a reduced facility capital cost, is a viable option for District Court and Superior Court operations in King County.

Courtroom quantity reductions often take one of two forms, courtroom sharing—based on utilization data—and shifts in operating hours for court activities.

There are a number of factors that impact the viability of realizing efficiencies from courtroom sharing including, but not limited to: the use of collegial chambers, space for the required number of judicial officers and staff, economies of scale within the proposed facility, utilization of virtual court, and courtroom utilization targets and policy. Likewise there are a number of factors that impact the viability of changing select court operations to a 16-hour day, two-shift cycle, often referred to as “Night Court,” including, but not limited to, changes in policies and processes, and agreement among the significant number of parties affected by a change in operating hours.

As an example of GSF differences related to a reduced number of courtrooms, an alternative was calculated based on 26 total courtrooms rather than the 46 total courtrooms included in the proposed SODO case study facility. This lower count represents an aggressive reduction based on the utilization of courtroom sharing, as well as night court and virtual court when applicable on a consistent basis. The area reduction is included to represent the order-of-magnitude potential change in capital cost associated with a change in the number of courtrooms constructed. Reducing the proposed facility to 26 total courtrooms, reduces the estimated area by approximately 150,000 GSF.

Future workgroups should be convened to determine the most appropriate courtroom count and operating model for any new courthouse.

Program Type and Area by Floor		
Floor/ Level	Space Type	GSF
Ground Floor	Community Services Offices, Support, Parking	97,500
Second Floor	Administration, Jury Assembly, Transfers, Courtrooms, Judicial Offices	97,500
Third Floor	Courtrooms, Judicial Offices, Support	75,000
Fourth Floor	Courtrooms, Judicial Offices, Support	75,000
Fifth Floor	Removed	0
Sixth Floor	Removed	0
Roof	<i>Intensive Green Roof</i>	66,000
	<i>Support</i>	20,000
Total (Enclosed area)		345,000

Gross square footage table reflecting potential area reductions for the proposed SODO courts facility.

County facilities on the SODO case study site may be focused on facilities that directly benefit from being located on a large site.

Recognizing that the county maintains a wide range of options for office space in the proposed Courthouse District, the plan acknowledges that new development on the SODO case study site may be focused on facilities that benefit from a site with a larger land area and dimensions, including the civil and criminal legal system facilities (courts and in-custody buildings) and King County Metro’s maintenance and operations base.

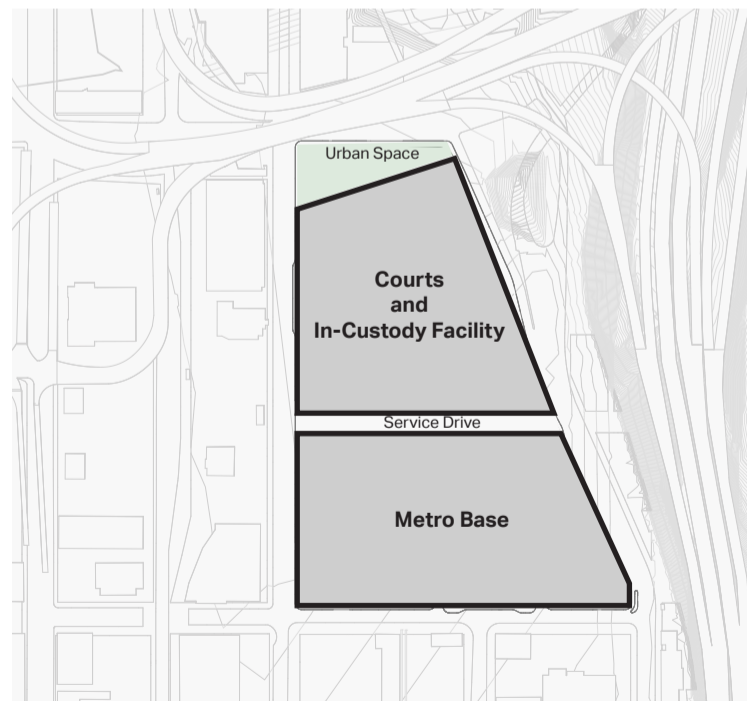
A consolidation of office use in downtown may permit the removal of a new office building from the SODO case study site. That removal would allow courts and in-custody facilities to move to the northern end of the SODO site, as shown in the diagram below and on the opposite page.

County buildings and urban spaces would be sited to place high-traffic employee and customer uses near existing and potential area transit stations. An urban plaza is located at the north end of the site to create a space for commuters arriving via light rail, bus, or bike, and becomes the site’s primary outdoor urban space. The courts building is positioned to take advantage of this outdoor space, and the arrivals hub that serves the courts building and the in-custody building is located adjacent to this public space, with frontage on 6th Avenue South. The in-custody building is located south of the courts, and tethered to the courts building through ground level and second level shared program spaces.

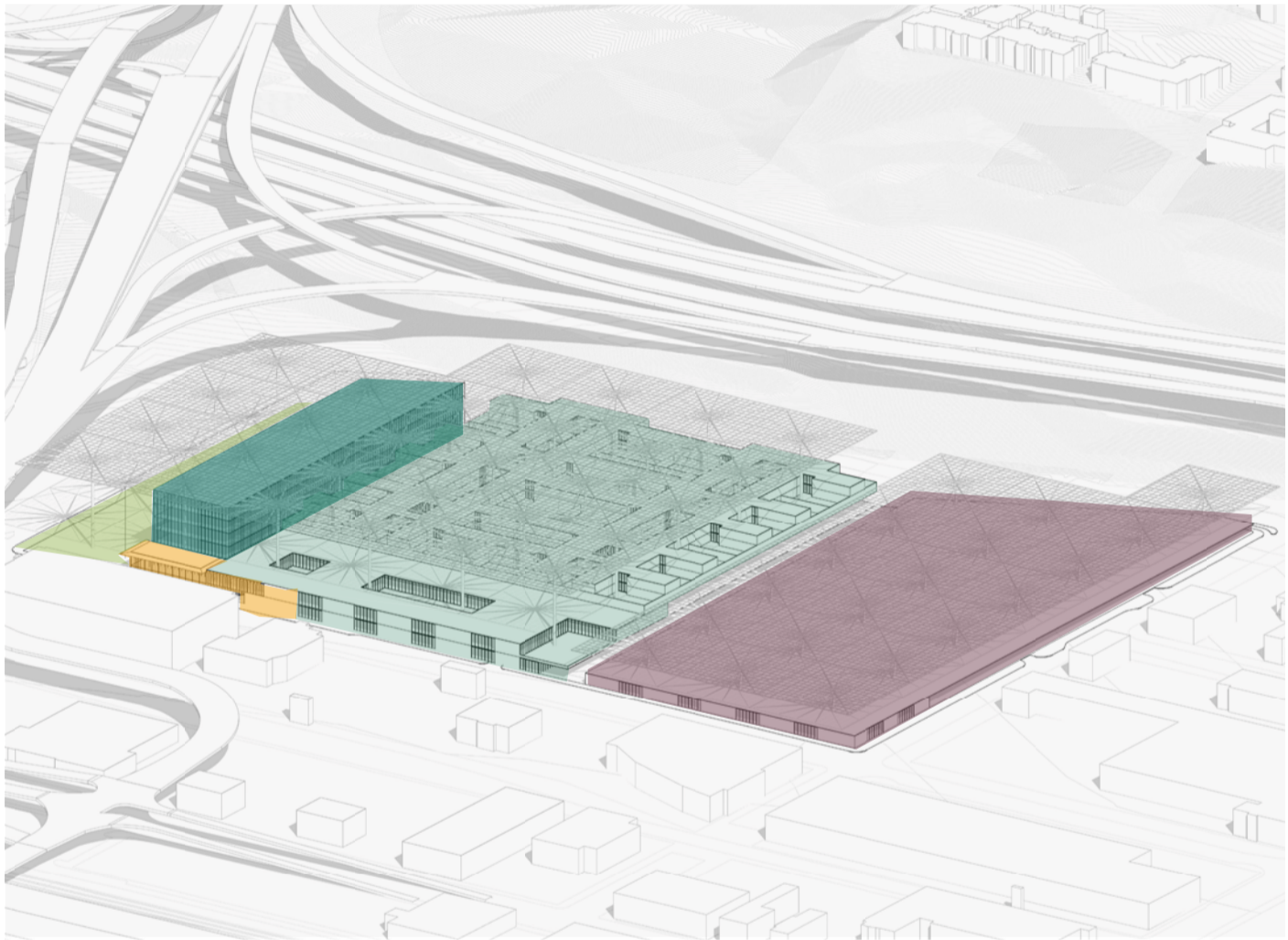
Metro Operations and Maintenance would be located south of the in-custody facility as an independent two-story structure. The proposed Metro base maintains frontage on Airport Way, S Massachusetts St, and 6th Ave S.

SODO Buildings and Urban Spaces	
Functional Group/ Space	GFA
Urban Plaza	+/- 40,000
Arrivals Hub	10,000
Courts (Judicial)	495,000
In-Custody (Corrections)	550,000
Metro Maintenance and Operations	+ 90,000
Total area of Metro development	+ 850,000
Metro Bus Parking (Linear Feet)	+ 36,000

Program elements and program area distribution.



Plan diagram illustrating the potential to shift program and facility siting on the SODO case study site.

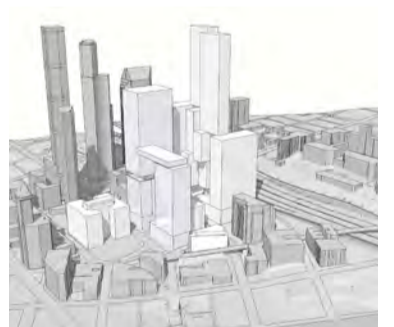
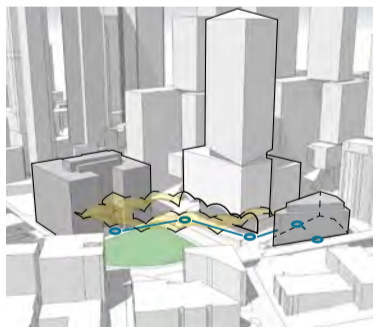
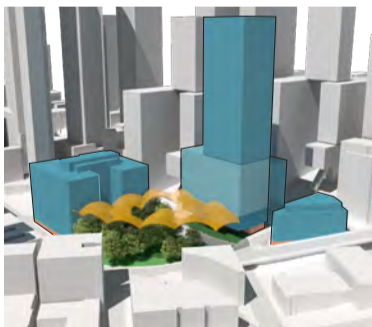
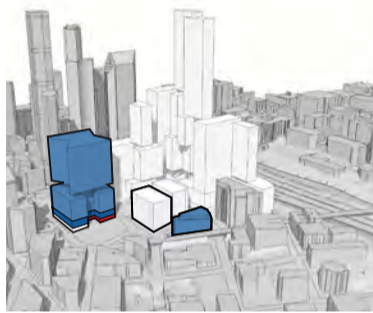
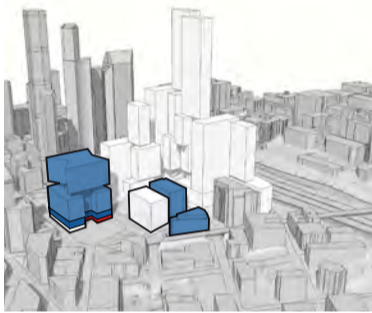
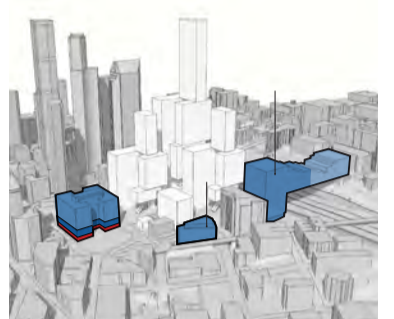
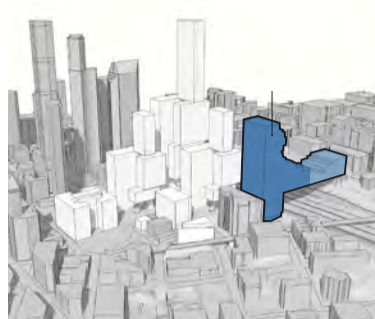
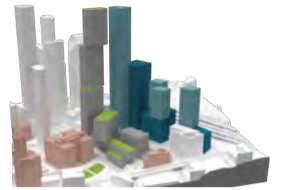


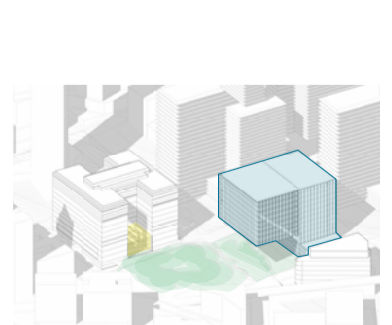
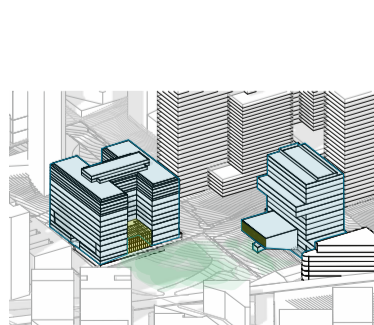
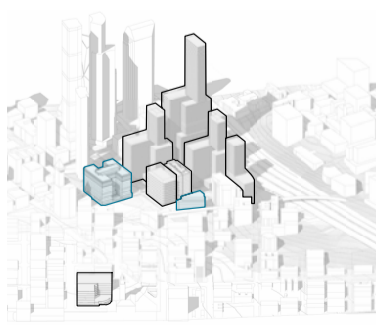
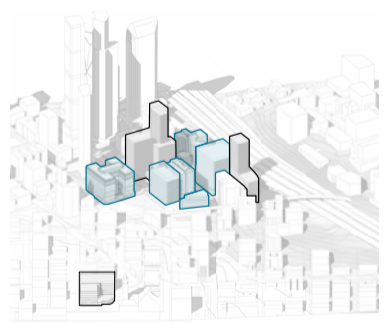
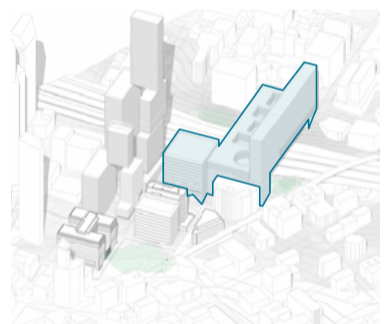
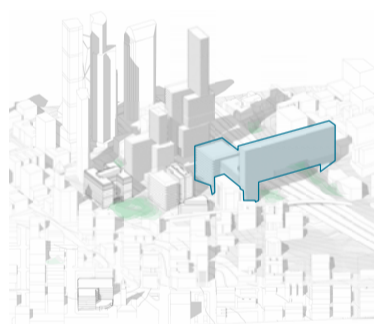
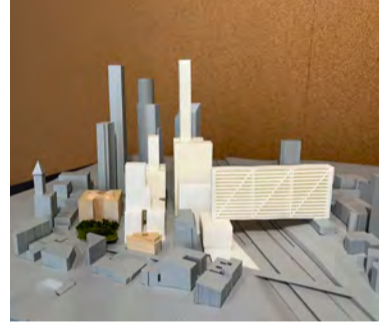
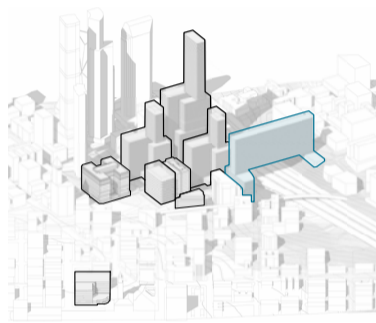
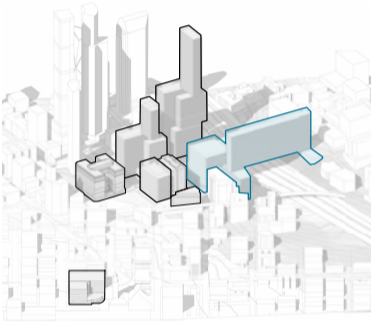
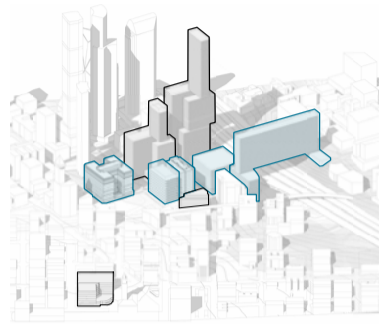
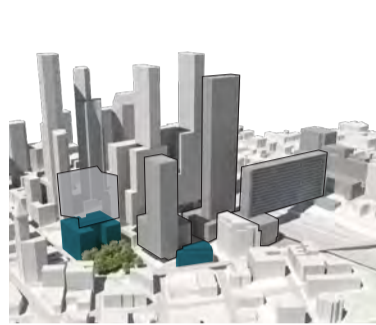
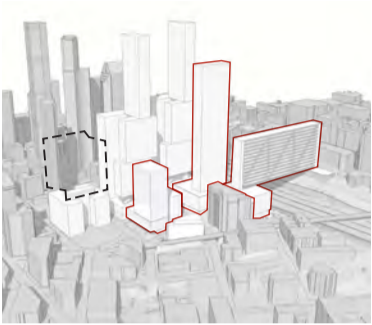
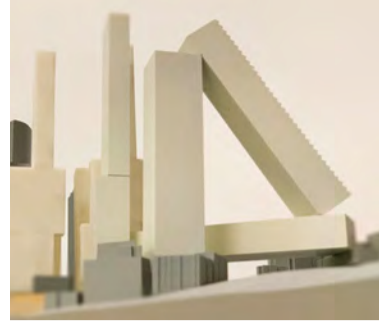
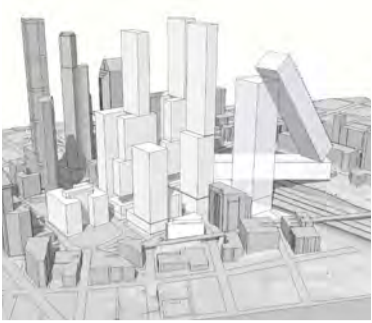
- Primary Urban Space
- Arrivals Hub
- Courts and Community Services
- In-Custody Building
- Metro Fleet, Maintenance & Operations

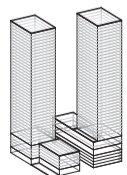
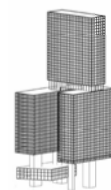
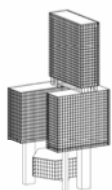
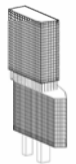
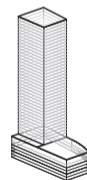
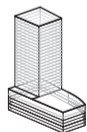
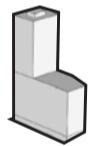
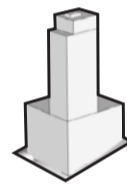
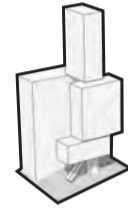
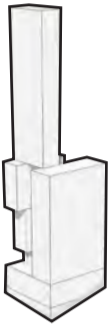
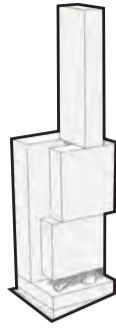
Looking backward, looking forward

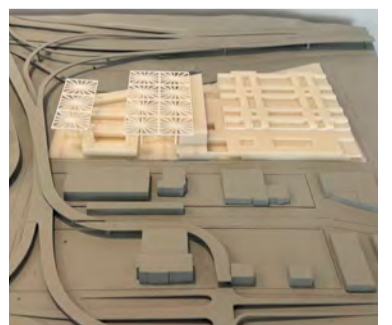
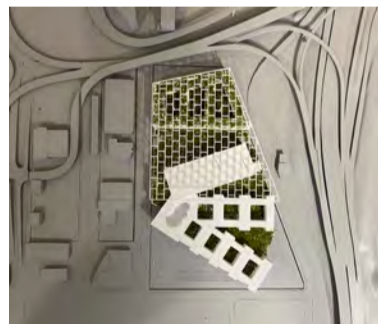
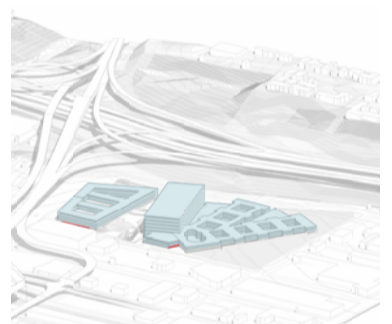
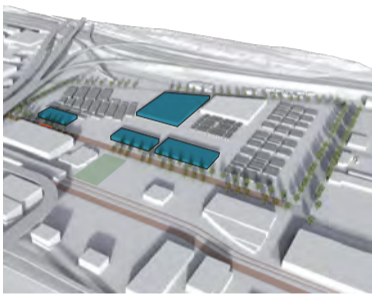
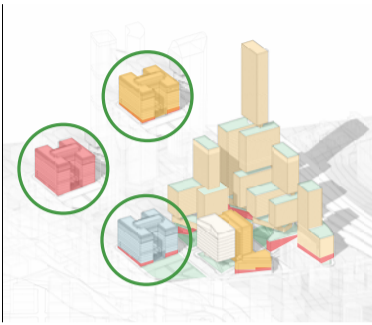
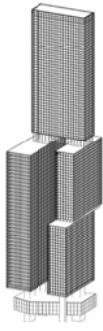
The physical and digital models on the following pages represent studies undertaken over the course of the work that were instrumental in exploring and communicating concepts and organizational possibilities so that diverse stakeholders could actively participate in the design process.

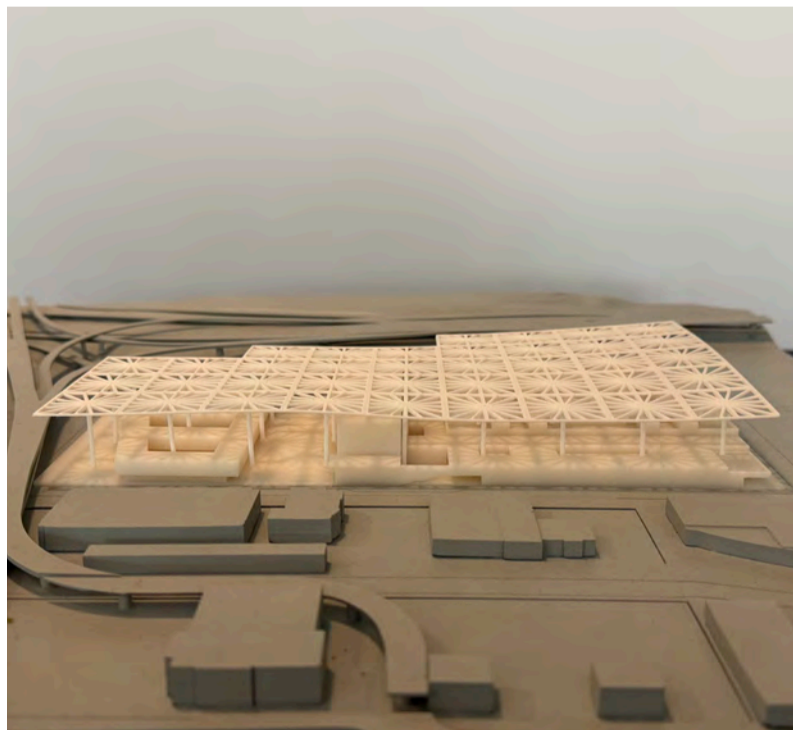
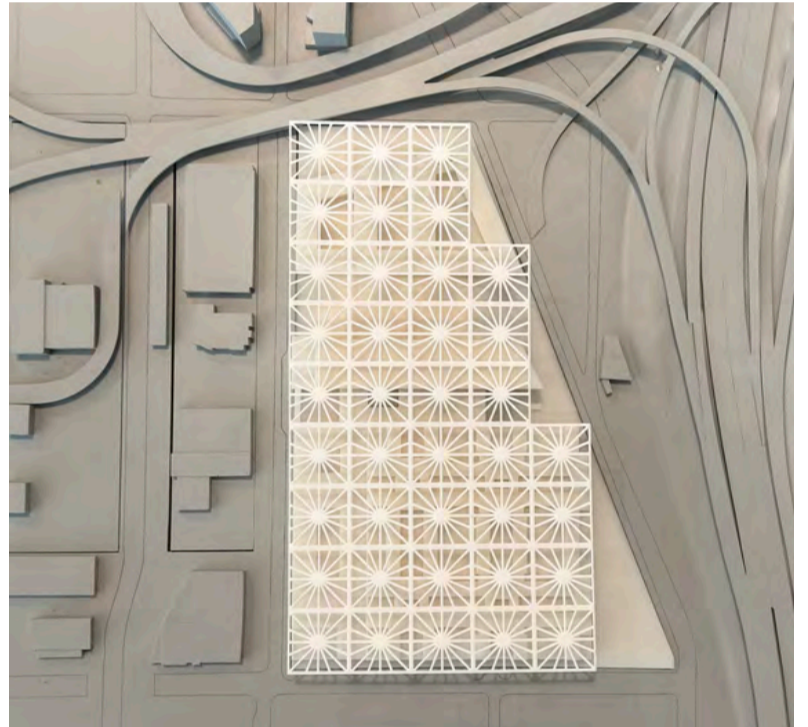
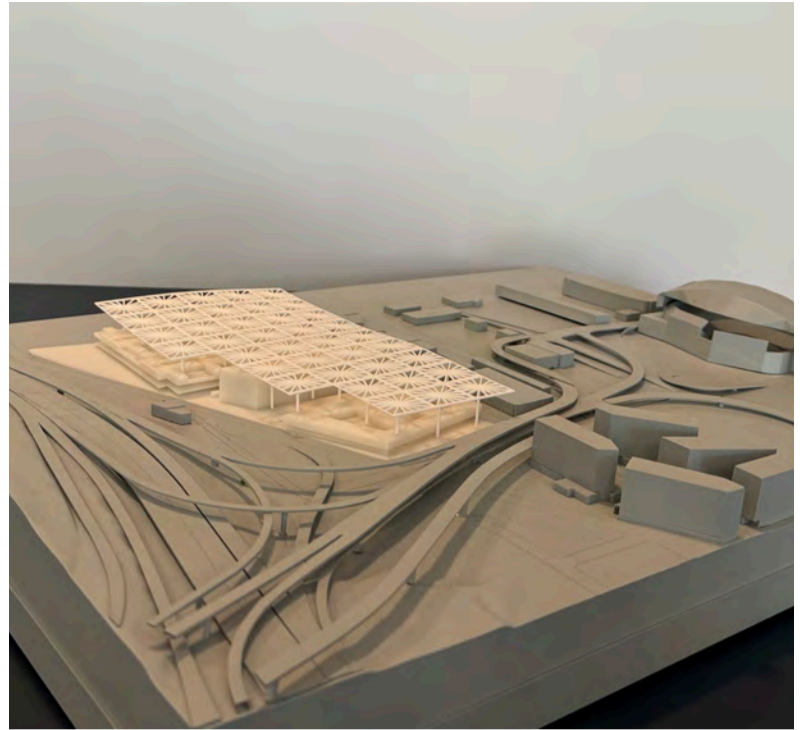
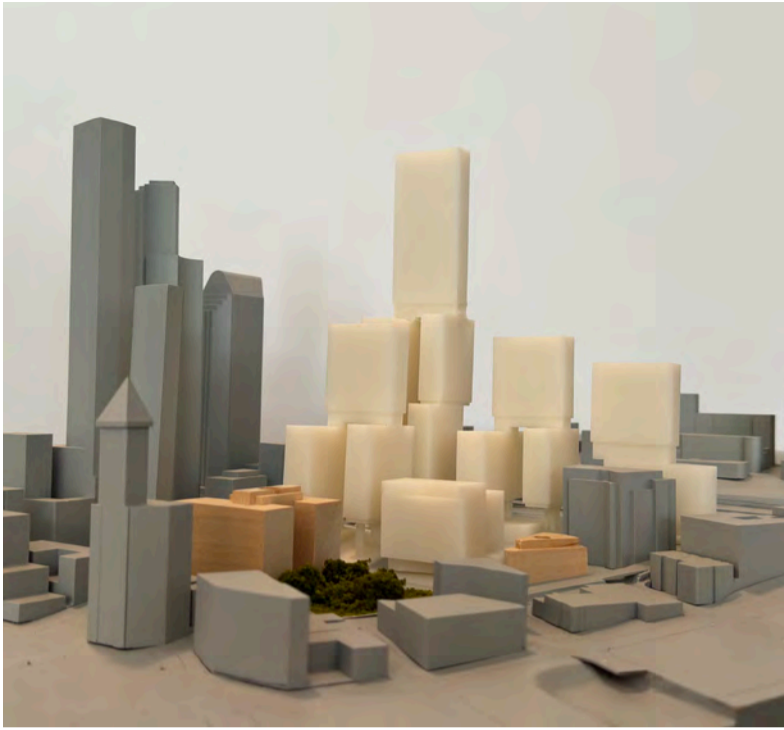
These studies were part of a collaborative process that shaped facility and redevelopment proposals, but they also offer a window into a future that includes continued exploration within the framework of the strategic plan.











Works Cited and Image Credits

Works Cited

Braxton, Karissa. (2024, March 14). Mayor Harrell Proposes Legislation to Support the Conversion of Existing Buildings from Commercial to Residential Uses Citywide. City of Seattle: Office of the Mayor. <https://harrell.seattle.gov/2024/03/14/>

Budiono, Victoria. (2023, September 11). The Cost of A New Oahu Jail is Now More than \$900 Million. Honolulu Civil Beat. <https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/09/the-cost-of-a-new-oahu-jail-is-now-more-than-900-million/>

CGL Companies. (August 2008). City of Seattle Comparative Study of the Cost of Low and High-Rise Jails, Final Report. https://clerk.seattle.gov/public/archives/cfs/CF_309536i.pdf

CGL Companies. (n.d.). The Courthouse of the Future. <https://cglcompanies.com/insights/discover-the-courthouse-of-the-future/>

City of Seattle, Seattle Department of Transportation. (2017). Seattle Right-Of-Way Improvements Manual. Streets Illustrated. <https://streetsillustrated.seattle.gov>

Genlser. (n.d.). Travis County Civil and Family Courts. <https://www.genlser.com/projects/travis-county-civil-and-family-courthouse>

Goodsell, Charles T. (1984). American Public Buildings: The City Council Chamber: From Distance to Intimacy. The Public Interest, New York Volume 74, Winter: 116.

HDR. (2010). Whatcom County Adult Corrections Facilities and Sheriff's Headquarters, Site Evaluation Report.

Jandura, Ken. (March, 2018). Trauma-Informed Courthouse Design. Court Manager, Volume 33#1 – Spring 2018. <https://thecourtmanager.org/articles/trauma-informed-courthouse-design-33-1/>

King County. (n.d.). Courthouse History. <https://kingcounty.gov/en/legacy/about/contactus/locations/courthouse/courthousehistory>

King County Metro. (2013). King County Metro Transit Facilities Master Plan, Atlantic/Central/Ryerson Base Complex.

Lazenby, Scott. (2019, March 11). Rethinking Council Chambers Design. International City/County Management Association. PM Magazine, March Edition.

Lee, Jessica. (2015, September 7). King County leaders consider courthouse repairs that could top \$150M. The Seattle Times. <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/politics/time-to-replace-money-pit-king-county-courthouse>

Lentz, Florence K. (1987). King County Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. King County Office of Historic Preservation.

MASS Design Group and The Vera Institute of Justice. Reimagining Prison: Design strategies to increase public safety and improve societal well-being (New York: Vera Institute, 2018), <https://www.vera.org/downloads/mass-design-group-reimagining-prison-booklet.pdf>

Meng Analysis. (2018). Facility Condition Assessment. King County Facility Management Division.

Miami-Dade County. (2024). The Underline. <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/transportation/the-underline.page>

Morris, Nathaniel P., & Izenberg, Jacob B. Mental and Legal Implications of Access to the Outdoors during Incarceration. The Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, Volume 51, Number 1.

Multnomah County. (2018). Multnomah County Central Courthouse: Factsheet. <https://www.multco.us>

Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ). (2024). Midtown Bus Terminal Replacement. <https://www.panynj.gov/bus-terminals/en/port-authority/Midtown-Bus-Terminal-Replacement.html>

National Center for State Courts (NCSC). (2021). Retrospective of Courthouse Design, 4th Edition. www.ncsc.org

National Center for State Courts (NCSC). (n.d.). The Courthouse: A Guide to Planning & Design: Security. <https://www.ncsc.org/courthouseplanning/security>

New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC). (2024). East River Waterfront esplanade. <https://edc.nyc/project/east-river-waterfront-esplanade>

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA). (2024). Protero Yard Modernization Project. <https://www.sfmta.com/projects/potrero-yard-modernization-project>

Sound Transit. (2023, March 24). Sound Transit Board identifies preferred alternative for Ballard Link Extension. <https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/news-events/news-releases/sound-transit-board-identifies-preferred-alternative/>

The Bentway. (2024). The Bentway, Toronto's Shared Space. <https://thebentway.ca>

United States General Services Administration (USGSA). Public Buildings Service. (2007). The Site Security Design Guide.

Project Team

Weeks, Kay D. & Grimmer, Anne E. (1995, 2017). The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Whatcom County. (n.d.). Horizontal vs. Vertical. <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/632/Horizontal-vs-Vertical-Design-PDF?bidId=>

Image Credits

Luxigon: Covers, 8, 10, 12, 29, 30 (top, bottom), 32, 33, 35, 101, 102, 104, 106, 108, 118, 120, 132 (top), 134, 136, 143, 146, 153, 156, 160, 177 (bottom), 178, 181, 190, 193 (bottom), 194 (bottom), 195 (bottom), 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 234, 235, 243, 247, 249, 253, 261, 267, 283, 297, 300, 302, 304, 306

Skypix: 2, 216, 256

King County: 4, 6, 125

Knut Egil Wang/ Institute: 25, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173

Northwest Studio: 28, 34 (bottom), 43, 44, 46, 48, 49, 50, 52, 54, 55, 56, 58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74 (bottom), 75 (top), 77, 80, 81, 82, 127, 131, 145, 158 (top), 167 (top), 219, 224, 225, 228, 233, 262 (top), 265 (top), 317, 320 (top), 321 (top), 324, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335

Seattle Municipal Archives: 74 (top, middle), 230, 231, 237, 316

Seattle Times: 75 (bottom)

Mass Design Group & Vera Institute of Justice: 79 (middle)

Sound Transit: 86, 222, 251

CAPA Strategies: 117

King County Metro: 124

SFMTA: 129 (top, middle)

PANYNJ: 129 (bottom)

The Bentway: 132 (middle)

The City of New York: 132 (middle)

Miami Dade County: 132 (bottom)

U.S. GSA Site Security Design Guide: 154

Alamy Stock Photo: 167 (middle)

Halden Fengsel, Kriminalomsorgen: 167 (bottom)

Osytein Thorvaldsen: 168

The City of Seattle: 189

Atelier Ten: 193 (top), 194 (top), 195 (top), 298, 299

Andrew Franz Architect: 238

Herzog & de Meuron: 241

Mapbox: 323

Architecture and Urban Design
Northwest Studio Architects Urban Designers

Facilities Programmer
Clark Barnes

Financial Analysis
EcoNorthwest

Real Estate Analysis
Kinzer Partners

Community Engagement
S&A Communications

Public Affairs
Cocker Fennessy

Justice Systems
CGL Companies

Cost Estimation
DCW Cost Management

Sustainability
Atelier Ten

Mobility
Nelson Nygaard

Landscape
Communita Atelier

Visualizations
Luxigon

Aerial Photography
Sky-Pix Aerial Photography

Architectural Models
Rauda Scale Models
Forge Labs

