



AIA Southwestern Oregon

A Chapter of the American Institute of Architects



Eugene City Hall, Urban Context Report

September 7, 2011

Eugene City Hall Urban Context: Scope

Urban Design Considerations for Eugene City Hall (9/07/11)

The City of Eugene is in the process of determining a design strategy for replacing the existing Eugene City Hall with a new facility. Two options are currently being discussed; both on the site of the existing city hall. One option is to tear down the existing and build a new building/complex. The second option is to retrofit the existing. Aside from which option is taken, a new city hall has an opportunity to become an important and meaningful building/complex within the Eugene urban fabric.

AIA-SWO has been asked to analyze two issues associated with the City Hall:

Analysis for Previous City Hall Studies

Analysis of the context around the proposed City Hall site.

AIA-SWO, with its strong history of providing objective, professional analysis and guidance for a variety of civic-related issues welcomes this opportunity. As part of our task in looking at the city hall context, our analysis, in order to be useful, will also include a set of urban design principles based on our analysis.

While it is not our intention to develop design proposals for the new building – that is the responsibility of the architect chosen in close conjunction with the City – there are considerations that may assist in making not only the new building/complex successful, but also improving the urban context near the city hall site. Therefore, in order for the new city hall to be successful, it is important for the immediate context to help support not only the new city hall, but to act as a catalyst for further development.

In addition, one of the most critical insights we can provide is to help with establishing a conceptual “big idea,” not a *design* “big idea” (that is the responsibility of the architects hired to design the project), but more of a philosophical idea based on the specific needs of the City of Eugene in association with understanding the uniqueness of Eugene and how that uniqueness might be translated into a meaningful building or complex of buildings. This is mentioned numerous times in one form or another in previous studies.

To assist with any new development that intends to be meaningful, the design of the new City Hall should address the **“Ten Design Principles for New Development”** developed previously by AIA-SWO (see attachment).

There have been many proposals and efforts done over the years, including the recent THA study and proposal. Those studies are summarized in the attachment titled: **“City Hall Previous Studies Summary.”** There is a lot of good information in these studies, especially with regard to community input meetings. These should not be ignored. However, before any further analysis is attempted, a clear and meaningful vision

statement is needed. To assist in establishing the vision statement, the uniqueness of Eugene and the essence of what the project is about, should first be stated and agreed upon by City officials.

In terms of our charge to examine the urban context around the city hall site, we have provided some observations, discussed some opportunities, and provided some Urban Design Principles that we feel the City should consider.

From our observations, context analysis, and extracting reoccurring themes from previous studies, we have developed a set of urban design principles that will be useful for the City to consider promoting a strong urban environment around the City Hall.

For these purposes, the Urban Design Principles are categorized into five major areas:

1. Mix of Uses
2. Urban Form
3. Public Space
4. Circulation
5. Sustainability

These five principles are specific to the area around the city hall site, but also have transferability to other similar conditions/sites. All reinforce principles that the city already has in place, or is considering. See the “**City Hall Urban Design Principles**” attachment.

Possible Direction Based on “**Background Information**”: (see attachment), previous studies, and urban design analysis and principles.

This background provides an excellent beginning to develop a Vision Statement for the new City Hall complex, with these major themes:

- Value all people and diverse populations – appreciate our differences as a source of strength
- Be responsible stewards of our physical assets and natural resources
- Foster a vibrant downtown and economy
- Provide meaningful opportunities for the arts and outdoors

Some basic ideas, in addition to Opportunities discussed in the “**Urban Context Observations**” attachment, that may be used in conceptualizing the new City Hall might include:

- a building or complex that is visually and physically accessible to residents and visitors alike (e.g., the building should not be a destination only building, but instead should be part of the urban fabric and encourages an engagement with the context of the immediate environment and beyond).

- the City Hall, in order to encourage a vibrant downtown, may want to integrate businesses (e.g., shops, cafes, coffee shops), the arts (e.g., a downtown art gallery or institute, a museum such as a Historical Museum. As a great city integrating the outdoors and art, there may want to be opportunities for outdoor sculpture or changing art exhibits, as well as outdoor spaces that are conceived less as “art in the park” and more as the “park as art.” (consider using part of the 1+ % for the Arts Budget to have a first-rate landscape architect design a wonderful outdoor space with an excellent public artist in addition to any specific art pieces that might be commissioned).
- the new City Hall complex may want to have public outdoor space(s) that act as a community room for various functions. This could be viewed as a “City Room.” Access to the various City departments may be achieved by passing through this common outdoor space vs. one entry typical of most office buildings, where a decision by a user needs to be made as to whether he or she should leave the *public* realm of the sidewalk and enter into the *private* realm of the City. The complex might therefore be viewed more as a public realm complex (especially since the security issues associated with the police department are not a factor anymore). There may not be a highly defined (typical) city sidewalk, but instead the public realm is seen as continuous from the street to inside indoor spaces.

There are many other considerations to be identified and considered. But a Vision Statement for the New City Hall needs to be made. It may take the form of something similar to:

The new City Hall of Eugene, Oregon, radically changes the perception of many city governments working behind closed doors, and instead contributes to a vibrant downtown that invites and encourages all residents and visitors to engage in a variety of civic, governmental, cultural and recreational activities through its engagement to its immediate context. By doing so, the new City Hall will be a catalyst for new and meaningful development and will assist in uniting other civic functions in the downtown area.

Summary

While AIA-SWO feels very comfortable discussing urban design issues and providing urban design principles, it is not our intention to suggest a specific direction for the actual building design of the City Hall. This is the responsibility of the architects hired. However, the building ideas and vision statement presented are meant to be only an example of what the City could provide the architects. Some direction is needed but the final direction should be a constructive dialogue between the City and the architects. Hopefully the information provided herein by AIA-SWO will be useful in this endeavor.

List of Attachments:

Note: These five attachments should all be considered as important parts of our overall report.

- City Hall Previous Studies Summary
- Some Urban Context Observations
- Background Information
- Ten Design Principles for New Development
- City Hall Urban Design Principles

City Hall Previous Studies Summary

A Long Range Plan for a County Civic Center

1954

Although not a conventional study, ending in a conventional report, this four-page pullout section from the December 5, 1954 *Eugene Register-Guard* should be required reading. Two dozen architects and planners met twice a week for a year and presented to the community a comprehensive vision (“a direction, not a design”) for a civic center, flowing six blocks south from Skinner’s Butte to Broadway along Oak Street. This was before the current City Hall was built. It was even before the *old* library was built! But many of the assumptions these men made have proved to be durable and valuable. Gathering all the civic spaces together in a central location to create a sense of civic pride. Those concepts continue.

The vision of a collection of civic buildings (and the logic beneath the vision) has largely been realized — from the same starting point (the Park Blocks), but along a different axis. What the architects envisioned along Oak Street is in large part what 8th Avenue has become. The Hult Center, Eugene Conference Center, Hilton, “new” facilities for city and county employees, a federal courthouse, and even the beginnings of a return to the river.

Council Committee on City Hall Alternatives

November 9, 1999

The report created by the Council Committee on City Hall Alternatives was charged with the task to recommend a plan for relocation and development options if the current site was chosen for the Federal Courthouse site. The current City Hall is not seismically stable and not seen as a building to house the current programs. Public Safety functions were desired to be relocated closer to the 2nd and Chambers 911 site.

The committee established two policies to help organize their report. The first policy was the City administration to stay downtown for both short-term and long-term locations and, second, to plan for future expansion space. A variety of options were discussed for the location of the City Hall and the required amount of square footage for the program. Three main scenarios were outlined: Consolidation of a variety of non-police and fire city services, replacement of existing square footage plus 17% increase for circulation and public zone, the replacement of the current program and accommodate for needs until 2007.

It was concluded by the committee that Police facilities should be relocated away from downtown, however, a customer service presence is still required downtown and a new

Civic Center is recommended in West Downtown near the Eugene Library and Atrium Building. In addition, flexible expansion spaces, planning for future, parking needs and goals to minimize long-term maintenance costs were outlined as important requirements.

Eugene Urban Design Charrette

Dec. 2, 2000

Although this single-day design workshop did not focus on City Hall options directly, it serves as a testament for the energy and creativity to be harnessed by public involvement in our community. Forty participants focused their professional design training on three big ideas and three sites, looking for “opportunities for making great downtown places.” It is in many ways the opposite of the 1999 committee report. That report had a few people solving a particular problem over three months, using spreadsheets and scenario planning. This one used dozens of people for a single day without preconceived notions, no spreadsheets but plenty of pictures.

By this time, the Federal Courthouse location was settled and the architect chosen. (No designs had yet been published, but anticipation was building.)

Three big ideas:

- Create an urban civic gateway and gathering space at the Train Station.
- Create an urban place where the built meets the natural along the Willamette River’s edge.
- Create an urban downtown street along Broadway from High Street to Charnelton Street.

The report is encyclopedic in its visions for making downtown a more vibrant, interesting place: daylighting the millrace, improving pedestrian access to the river to the east, a ceremonial stair from the peak of Skinner’s Butte to the train station, a tower by the train station to mark the northern end of Willamette Street, improving connections between train, car, and bus, restoring the train station, adding a trolley, etc.

Eugene Civic Center Visions

Jan. 24, 2004

These next two studies are essentially a pair. The first comes from a full-day charrette with 75 participants. That marked the starting point for a committee of 18 to codify the work started at the charrette over several meetings spanning four months. WBGS [now PIVOT] and Eric Gunderson facilitated the charrette and served as a technical consultant to the committee that followed.

Oregon Research Institute (ORI) was contemplating a development at the Sears Building, so the lure of the empty space across from the library was waning. In fact, the

two tables tasked with exploring this west downtown location for a civic center rebelled and chose the current City Hall site (or very nearby) instead.

The focus seemed to be tightening onto the current city block that is the current City Hall, plus the half-block immediately south. Additionally, the Butterfly lot north of the Park Blocks has become an egregious example of underutilization. Although it is owned by the county and there are deed restrictions to be considered, any rethinking of the city's civic space should consider how it can help the county make its next steps congruent with the same vision.

Consensus has also emerged that moving the police out of City Hall makes good sense operationally, economically, and geographically.

Quotables

"In the broadest sense, ['civic' represents] the intersection of government and culture. It is a place of art, free speech, public debate, and expression of the spirit of Eugene. It is a place for events of public ceremony, enjoyment, and a fundamental part of what makes us a community."

"The Park Blocks remain the best known and most intensively used outdoor civic space in the downtown."

"Civic buildings should front on civic open spaces."

"Design building edges to define the open spaces."

"Civic Center is a place (not a building.)"

"The location of a new Civic Center or improvement to an outdated building has great potential for creating a welcoming hearth for Eugene."

Eugene Urban Design Charrette

April 2001

The 2000 charrette touched on three important areas of the downtown region: the Eugene Depot, the Riverfront, and Broadway Street. While the site of the City Hall is not located directly in any of these areas, we think there are a number of essential characteristics and connections the site can address. It is also seen as a goal not to deemphasize any of the goals set out by the City of Eugene in these three areas. The desire is for the City Hall to act as a catalyst or example to help strengthen the downtown area.

Two main goals of the Eugene Depot area were outlined in the study, to Reconnect the Train Station to the City and create a Civic Plaza. The riverfront was seen as an area to help reconnect the city grid to the river, create a destination and bring the Millrace back to the surface. Currently, the Riverfront has an abundance of underutilized real estate and the desire to create a more intimate connection to the river was seen through the writing and sketches of the Charrette. Broadway Street was seen as a way to create an entrance to the downtown, allow this to be a main thoroughfare for visitors to explore the rest of the city and contribute again to the community by reinvigorating

the plaza. The goals of each of these areas are important to consider as urban context for the City Hall Site.

We thought it best to pull from this charrette, the emphasis to reconnect the city to the Riverfront and the relationship of the downtown to the Federal Court House. Given the exit off the Ferry Street Bridge, a presence along 8th will help create an entrance into the downtown area.

Visions of Eugene Civic Center

February 2004

This charrette was instigated to explore options for a new Civic Center, which incorporated a City Hall and a new Police facility. The charrette explored options for both relocation and re-use of the current City Hall Site. The data collected prior to the charrette can be seen as appropriate background material for the current City Hall study as well.

Background material described the area from Willamette to Mill Street as the historic Civic Center and the connection to the historic Park Blocks. It also outlined the need for public parking and established a new parking garage was required and would also serve as parking for the Federal Court House. In addition, downtown parking was seen as an incentive for private development.

Used as a planning principle, the Eugene Downtown Plan Draft dated December 1, 2003 provided a summary of key goals for the charrette. To establish a Civic Street along 8th Avenue, enhance public places by way of streetscape, plazas and the inclusion of public art, enhance the sense of public safety, provide universal accessibility, provide Great Streets and support development by coordinating with current and future public and private projects.

This charrette established a set of Design Principles similar to the Urban Design Principles established for the current City Hall Study. They included Art as an architectural design current and relative to the place, Urban Design principles outlined and established to help drive street activity, Sustainability goals to encourage the city's goal of lessening the impact of buildings on the earth, Longevity valued to allow flexibility and changing needs, Visioning used as a description to work with planning principles and future development, and finally, Safety and Security giving the city the support during an emergency.

A critical piece of this charrette concluded the West Side of downtown was not a viable location for the Civic Center. This is contradictory to the previous suggestions made in the 1999 Committee report. The relationship to the historic Civic Center and the City of Eugene's desire to keep a Civic Street along 8th were key elements in the recommendation for the City Hall to be sited near or at the existing City Hall site. Other influential pieces of their conclusions included the desire to reduce dead zones on

nights and weekends, restoration of the north Park Block, civic buildings should front on civic open spaces, civic open spaces should face south and the building edge should define open space. The current city hall is not applicable to these concepts as it currently faces Pearl Street and its presence is unknown to those entering the downtown region.

Mayor's Civic Facilities Visioning Committee

June 2004

The Mayor's civic facilities visioning committee was tasked with the goal to form a vision of a Civic Center for Eugene based on the recommendations and findings in the February 2004 design charrette. The committee provided a more detailed and thorough exploration of locating the Civic Center in the historic Civic district of Eugene. They concluded and recommended the existing City Hall site to be their preferred location for a new City Center.

Described in the previous summary, a set of major policy principles were established as guiding principles for promoting and implementing future development of the Civic Center and other areas of the Civic district. They are as follows:

Consolidate civic functions

Reinforce 8th Avenue as the Great Civic Street

Enhance open space

Develop partnerships

Include Public Safety Services

Provide adequate parking

Employ cost-effective development approaches.

Community elements of the civic space were described as elements that incorporated the public in downtown activities, improved access and efficiency to services, provided open space and contributed to the Great Civic Street concept. The civic center was seen as a place not just to house civic services but a place that contributed to the downtown 8th Street as a destination worth investigating and enjoying.

In addition to the major policy principles, a set of Urban Design Principles were prescribed to help organize and guide the committee for its alternative scenarios for the Civic Center.

:

They are as follows

Key Principles

Form partnerships
Compact land use
Make it green
Liven streetscapes
Universal Design/
Accessibility

Other Principles

Orientation
Civic Squares
Mixed use
Support Private
Development
Sequence
Development
Build Community
Interest

Safe & Secure
Police Services
City all Design
Develop North Park Block
Revitalize Vacated
Buildings
Future Grown Planning

Overall, the committee concluded the option to re-use the current City Hall site as the location for the Civic Center was the preferred option. It reinforced the Great Civic Street along 8th, created a presence for those entering from the Ferry Street Bridge, and was the most viable building type, as any other development would not flourish as well in the civic area.

Quotables

“The integration of public facilities and outdoor spaces is desirable and necessary in a true civic center.”

Eugene City Hall Complex Master Plan

Summer 2008

Thomas Hacker Architects, Inc. compiled an extensive Master Plan for the Eugene City Hall Complex during the summer of 2008. Two site options were examined for the complex based on previous recommendations by the Visioning Committee. They were the RNR/Butterfly lot and the existing City Hall site. Their preferred site was the Butterfly lot, however, conflicts and cost impacts discouraged the idea and the existing site became the recommended site. Concept designs for this site, sustainable strategies and public involvement as well as a cost analysis were included in the plan.

The eco-charrette summarized three main ideas essential to the organization and execution of the concept design:

- A living building, that integrates flora into indoor and outdoor spaces, employs concepts of bio-mimicry to clean air and water, and is restorative to its environment and occupants.
- A 100-year horizon, for a building constructed to last a minimum of a century. This warrants special focus on the future, anticipating a wide range of possibilities associated with societal and environmental change.
- A building that models, demonstrates, and educates. City Hall should inspire its occupants and visitors toward sustainable methods and the building will demonstrate those methods in a variety of ways.

Public involvement through the entire length of the project were described and stressed as a crucial element. In addition, like the previous studies, there was a set of goals described, adding to the sustainable goals that helped drive the design. These were very similar to the previous ideas as well, safety and security, social, environmental and fiscal sustainability, a “sense of welcome” and universal design, flexibility when planning for the future. Over 200 pages of detailed comments, mostly from the public, follow a 12-page executive summary. Cost estimates per square foot (pg. 131) are listed at \$342.31, not including an additional estimate of 40% more for soft costs.

A number of essential elements were pulled from this study that can be applied to the current City Hall studies. It was recommended that the site directly across 8th Street be retained for future flexibility. The complex fit the entire block and was divided into a number of structures all relating to each other as a single unit. The main entrance of the building faces 8th Street assisting in the presence along the “Great Civic” Street. Other city departments located throughout the city were consolidated and established as the new building program. City divisions most closely interacting with the community are located on the main floors. Universal design and accessibility goals were executed through the use of ramps and other strategies described in detail in the report. It is recommended the new City Hall studies re-visit this report and pull from it the feedback received from the THA offices.

Some Urban Context Observations:

Gleaned from previous city Hall and Urban Core studies.

Positives

- There are a number of small districts and corridors in the vicinity that have a desirable urban feel:
 - Broadway from Pearl westward toward Olive and beyond. Mostly small shops, restaurants, and a few office buildings characterize this. Good example of a mix of uses, although lacking in full range of housing options. Good use of consistent streetscape (e.g., landscaped median, street trees) that provides a form of consistency.
 - Willamette Street from 7th to 11th. Similar uses but the streetscape is not as consistent as Broadway.
 - Pearl Street, to some degree, around the Broadway intersection, for a half block north and south of Broadway.
 - The Fifth Street Market area.
 - Eighth Avenue, starting at the Park Blocks for one block to Willamette and just beyond, is also developed with small shops and office buildings.
 - The open space (Kesey Plaza) at the intersection of Willamette and Broadway is used effectively for special events and without curbs, this intersection works well when the street is closed.
 - The Park Blocks work well for Saturday Market (underutilized at other times)
 - The Hult Center and other cultural locations (e.g., art galleries)
 - Proximity to other governmental offices.

Less Positive/Negative

- Areas comprised of uses or elements that don't promote an urban feel:
 - Eighth Avenue from the Park Blocks to the Federal Courthouse is comprised of a combination of blank walls (no pedestrian access), parking lots, and a few houses used as offices. As a result, this is not a primary pedestrian route.
 - Some isolated object buildings surrounded by parking areas (e.g., credit union on Mill/Eighth, Todd's Place, Tattoo Parlor, Bates Steakhouse, Goodwill, Café Arirang) are auto-oriented buildings with little pedestrian traffic to and from.
 - Mill Avenue at Eighth Avenue, while safer now with the traffic control, is not conducive to pedestrian activity.
 - Area around Federal Courthouse does not contribute to a strong urban context.
 - Very few buildings "speak" of addressing sustainability issues (one exception is the Oveissi Rug Company building and Rowell/Brokaw Architects offices with the horizontal sun-shading devices on the south side of the building.
 - Overall lack of density of uses to promote a strong pedestrian and urban feel.
 - 6th Avenue is primarily auto-oriented; butterfly garage does not contribute to a pedestrian environment.

Opportunities for a Strong Urban Environment

- Provide a complete set of uses in the downtown area, including housing that will contribute to a 24-hour environment.
- Development of the area around the Federal Courthouse and the City Hall that will help connect the EWEB mixed-use site with downtown uses and be a strong pedestrian link.
- Consideration of all streets in the downtown area for appropriateness of one-way vs. two-way auto circulation that may provide a greater pedestrian emphasis.
- Greater Consistency in Streetscape/Pedestrian elements.
- Development of Mill and Broadway as a strong visual entrance to downtown from the north and from the west.
- Reinforce the Great Civic Street concept.
- Provide for open and public space within the civic area. The desire to eliminate dead zones and contribute to the urban environment of downtown by activating its streets is outlined in the previous studies and reports.

Background Information

The following information and observations may be useful in developing a direction for the new City Hall, acknowledging the uniqueness of Eugene and what makes it a special city and how that uniqueness may be translated in a meaningful way.

Background (specific information that helps define Eugene’s uniqueness)

“The City of Eugene, incorporated in 1862, is a home rule charter city. This charter is the basic law under which the City operates. Amendments to the charter can only be made by a vote of the people and can be placed on the ballot by the Council or by the voters through an initiative process. Ordinances enacted by the City Council also govern the city. The Council can change an ordinance at any time or the voters of Eugene can initiate an ordinance change....”

“The City of Eugene’s Mission Statement promises to respect the perspectives and lifestyles of our active and diverse citizenry and commits the city to providing a safe community where people feel secure and respected, and a local government that works openly and respectfully with and for the community.”

“The Sustainability Commission works to create a healthy community now and in the future by proposing measurable solutions to pressing environmental, social and economic concerns to the City of Eugene, its partners and its people.”

Eugene City Council Vision, Goals & Outcomes as of April 26, 2010

“Value all people, encouraging respect and appreciation for diversity, equity, justice, and social well-being. We recognize and appreciate our differences and embrace our common humanity as the source of our strength; Be responsible stewards of our physical assets and natural resources. We will sustain our clean air and water, beautiful parks and open spaces, livable and safe neighborhoods, and foster a vibrant downtown, including a stable infrastructure; Encourage a strong, sustainable and vibrant economy, fully utilizing our educational and cultural assets, so that every person has an opportunity to achieve financial security.”

Goals and Outcomes

Safe Community

A community where all people are safe, valued and welcome.

- Decreased property crime
- Greater sense of safety (especially downtown)
- Visible and accessible police presence

- Better police/community relations

Sustainable Development

A community that meets its present environmental, economic and social needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- Increased downtown development
- Strategic job creation/decreased unemployment
- Support for small and local business
- Decision-making that weighs economic, social equity and environmental (triple bottom line) effects

Accessible and Thriving Culture and Recreation

A community where arts and outdoors are integral to our social and economic well-being and are available to all.

- Accessible to all incomes
- Preserve strength in arts and outdoors
- Invest in arts and culture as an economic engine

Fair, Stable and Adequate Financial Resources

A government whose ongoing financial resources are based on a fair and equitable system of revenues and are adequate to maintain and deliver municipal services.

- A long-term sustainable budget
- New or expanded revenue sources
- Accessible and transparent financial information

Effective, Accountable Municipal Government

A government that works openly, collaboratively, and fairly with the community to achieve measurable and positive outcomes and provide effective, efficient services.

- Transparent and interactive communication
- Public engagement that involves the community broadly
- Stronger partnership

Other Comments (from various sources):

“Eugene has a significant population of people in pursuit of alternative ideas, and a large original hippie population. Beginning in the 1960s, the countercultural ideas and viewpoints espoused by Ken Kesey became established as the seminal elements of the vibrant social tapestry that continue to define Eugene. The Merry Prankster, as Kesey was known, has arguably left the most indelible imprint of any cultural icon in his hometown. He is best known as the author of One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest and as the male protagonist in Tom Wolfe's The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test. In 2005, the city council unanimously approved a new slogan for the city, "World's Greatest City for the Arts & Outdoors." While Eugene has a vibrant arts community for a city its size, and is well situated near many outdoor opportunities, this slogan was frequently criticized by locals as embarrassing and ludicrous. In early 2010, the slogan was changed to "A Great City for the Arts & Outdoors."

Ten Design Principles for New Development

Any new building should address the Ten Design Principles developed previously by the AIA-SWO Design Excellence Committee as follows:

1. The purpose of the project is clearly defined with a thorough understanding of the essence and/or uniqueness of the project.
2. Design intentions to address the uniqueness of the project are stated in a clear and concise manner and are intended to meet the needs of the client and building users.
3. Design solutions are translated appropriately and integrate building components/elements in a synthesized and comprehensive manner and not simply as a “check list” of issues.
4. The design recognizes not only immediate site conditions, but also the context, both physical and social/cultural. Consider the new design as a model in establishing a more positive context for future development in the area.
5. The design is sustainable, both in terms of all energy related issues, but also sustainability issues associated with *community*. It considers life-cycle costs of energy use, maintenance, and the embodied energy required to make and transport materials. It uses locally produced materials and labor where appropriate and it reuses existing building materials where possible.
6. The design responds to natural conditions of sunlight, wind, noise, soils and slope, existing vegetation, animal and bird habitats, views, drainage and disposal of storm-water and sanitary sewage, site access, etc.
7. The design encourages and promotes alternative modes of transportation (e.g., bike, public transportation, walk ability) instead of the automobile and in doing so, reduces the number of automobile parking spaces to the minimum necessary.
8. The design considers issues of expansion, flexibility, change in use, alterations, deconstruction considerations and modernization.
9. The design has a well-considered budget and schedule.
10. The design is attractive in its overall appearance, and is considered a positive addition to the community now and into the future.

“City Hall Urban Design Principles”

1. Mix of Uses

Any urban area seeking to be memorable, vibrant, and sustainable as a community, depends on a complete mix of uses: retail, offices, cultural, institutional, governmental, residential, and open space/recreational. Some of these uses can be stand alone uses (e.g., the Hult Center) but many should be considered in one building (e.g., retail on the ground floor, offices included, with residential above). Or in some cases, a mix of uses on the same block, but in separate structures, may be acceptable if meeting the desired effects stated in other principles such as urban form considerations.

2. Urban Form

How buildings meet the public realm of the sidewalk and street is extremely important in developing a strong urban environment.

All blocks should have multiple public entrances from the public realm of the sidewalk to promote a strong pedestrian environment. A building with a single entrance, such as a large office building that fronts an entire block, is not desirable. Instead, multiple storefronts along a streetscape with separate entrances helps to contribute to a stronger pedestrian environment and helps to diminish the use of automobile traffic associated with a destination only use or building.

The relationship of the first two floors of any building to the streetscape is more important than overall height issues. If the first two floors suggest a human scale, then the overall height may be less important. Therefore, all new buildings should articulate a strong human/pedestrian scale by the use of smaller, defined architectural elements, and not relying on large blank or opaque surfaces. Canopies or covered walkways may help to contribute to the pedestrian emphasis, which will also be useful in less desirable weather conditions (both rainy and hot).

To provide as much sun to public spaces as possible, buildings on the south side of an east-west street may want to step back at upper levels to provide more sun exposure to the street in the winter months. Buildings on the north side of an east-west street may not require a setback, other than when addressing issues of human scale.

Buildings along any street should be continuous as much as possible, eliminating the “missing teeth” effect that interrupts the urban pedestrian realm. Where alleys or pedestrian paths interrupt the continuous building form, consider second floor building connections, as well as public uses along the walkway (e.g, a special alley café). Parking lots, where absolutely needed, should be in either parking garages, or in the center of blocks, and not taking up valuable street frontage that inhibits the pedestrian realm.

Buildings on corners should address in a positive manner both streets with strong pedestrian entries. Buildings on an entire block should promote a strong pedestrian environment with as many access points as possible.

For new public buildings, consider breaking down the distinction between the public realm of the sidewalk and the private realm of the building. Access to public buildings should be inviting and not seen as “crossing over” into the private realm of authority. To encourage public use, buildings should be visually and physically accessible. Buildings on a plinth or raised above grade often are not seen as inviting or accessible. One method to break down the distinction between the public realm of the street and the public realm of a building is to provide transitional spaces, such as plazas, or a courtyard or a simple setback that widens the public realm of the sidewalk. Paving materials of the same type may be continuous from the sidewalk to the interior, thus further breaking down the perception of public vs. private. This applies to any building that wishes to promote a strong public realm.

The City should encourage all vacant, underutilized or large on-grade surface parking lots to be developed to provide greater density of a variety of uses and a greater population in the downtown area. This includes the area around the City Hall site, but also around all other vacant areas, especially the area around the Federal Courthouse.

3. Public Space

Public Space is seen in many forms: in streets and sidewalks, in parks and plazas, in public parking areas, in entertainment venues, in uses with a strong public presence, and in governmental buildings where the public has access to governmental services.

To be truly public, these areas should be multi-functional and not used only for one purpose. For example, a plaza can be used for casual recreation such as eating and reading and watching people, but it can also be used for special events, as well as acting as a transition into public buildings. To encourage multiple uses of public space, direct access from public uses in buildings is desirable. A plaza may be “defined” as a courtyard if it is enclosed on three sides, but if the three sides are blank, then the courtyard will not be engaged with the building’s uses and more likely a destination only courtyard. Therefore, transitional spaces or a hierarchy of levels of public to private space should be encouraged. The Park Blocks are separated from other uses by streets on all sides, therefore their use is not as flexible and desirable as they could be.

Consider public art in public open space but don’t limit it to “plop art” but consider the “park as art” in addition to “art in the park.”

4. Circulation

Circulation takes on many forms and characteristics in cities: public transit, pedestrian, bicycle, motorcycles and automobiles, and other. However, the public realm of the street and sidewalk, in many instances, is the critical component in helping to define memorable urban areas. Even with a lack of a consistent building form along a block, if

the streetscape framework provides some consistency, then the street may be memorable (e.g., Broadway between Pearl and Oak). Thus, provide all streets with a consistent streetscape approach (consistent within one street for a specific length but may be very different for different streets) with the use of paving materials, width of sidewalk, street trees, streetlights, seating, etc. To promote development, the city should consider developing a strong streetscape framework plan in areas not yet developed, such as the Federal Courthouse area. A new streetscape, in place, will show developers the city is committed to improvements, and will more likely attract development than areas with little infrastructure improvements. Along with a good set of urban form and use guidelines in these areas, the city can front the costs of infrastructure and be repaid as part of the approval process for new developments. This will help to insure a desired effect instead of a haphazard approach of each developer doing something different.

Consider developing major circulation routes as themed streets (e.g., East Broadway as a great street and entrance to the downtown area, strong links from public transportation to other downtown areas to include the train station, Greyhound bus station, and LTD Bus Station, and examine the uniqueness of each street to determine its character and reinforce that character with a streetscape plan.

Provide circulation for bicycles to encourage bicycle traffic with as many easily accessible entries from major areas outside of the downtown area (e.g., the University, the river). Provide bicycle parking areas in many and frequent downtown locations.

5. Sustainability

Sustainability takes place in many ways: in the embodied energy costs associated with building new structures; with the heating and cooling of buildings; in life-cycle issues of materials, maintenance, and longevity of practical use; as well as the sustainability of community. While the design of any new structure should be thoughtful in terms of standard design practices of sustainability, and to reinforce Eugene's emphasis on the environment, all new buildings should either visually demonstrate energy efficiency (e.g., sun-shading devices used appropriately, meaningful landscape strategies, appropriateness of materials) or demonstrate through other means how it is reducing its impact on energy consumption. All public building should be required to demonstrate sustainable design strategies and those strategies should be useful as a public learning tool. For example, the new Jaqua Center on the UO campus has many energy efficient strategies associated with it, but it does not appear by its all glass exterior to demonstrate sustainability to the general public. A simple introduction of glass sun-shading devices on the exterior would have done that while maintaining the jewel like character of the building.

Regarding sustainability of community, if the four previous principles are addressed in a meaningful way, then downtown Eugene should be sustainable for all residents and visitors for a long time to come.