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The 21st Century Civic Identity: Redefining the Small Town City Hall

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THE 21ST CENTURY CIVIC IDENTITY

...Redefining the Small Town City Hall

LeEllen M. Lewis

Master of Architecture Thesis Proposal, May 2010
School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation
Roger Williams University

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Bristol, Rhode Island

THE 21ST CENTURY CIVIC IDENTITY

...Redefining the Small Town City Hall

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...A community needs a
soul if it is to become a true
home for human beings.
You, the people must give it
this soul.

[Pope John Paul II]

Identity is defined as the distinguishing character or personality of an individual.

Throughout life, we as individuals, strive to create and uphold a sense of identity. Once our identity is established, we feel more comfortable with ourselves and our surroundings. However, at a larger scale, what happens when a *community* lacks a sense of identity?

Small towns especially struggle with finding their identity and creating a suitable and exciting Civic infrastructure. Often there is a lack of involvement in the community. There is no drive for contributing to the majority, whether through community service, town council meetings, government, or community events and activities.

A community without a strong Civic Identity is like a person without a personality. It can be perceived as blank, dull, and lifeless. The Civic Center of a town should encourage its citizens to become involved, to interact both with each other and the government in order to harness a sense of pride and identity through the community.

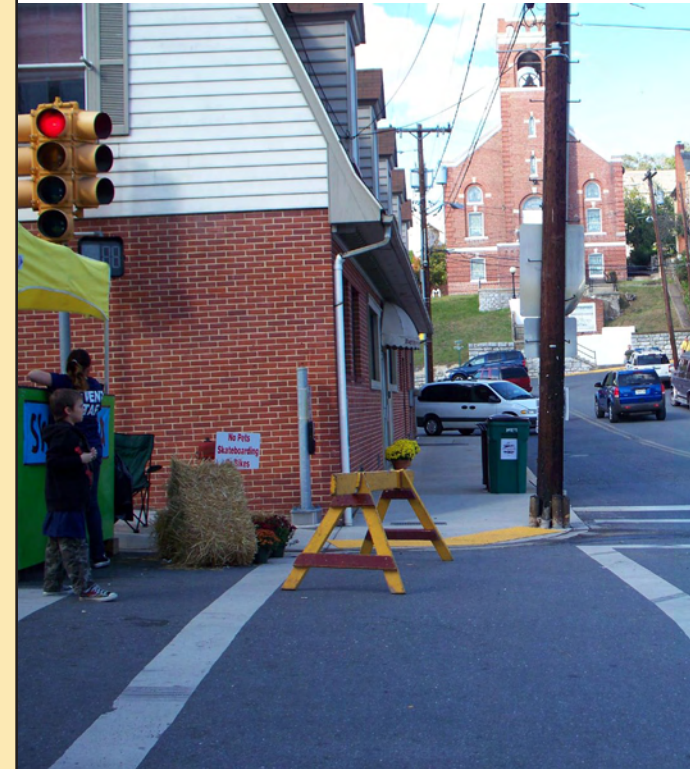
PROBLEM STATEMENT

As Architects and Master Planners, it is our job to create places where people want to come and experience what the community has to offer. By designing quality spaces that encourage human interaction, we can almost guarantee an increase in community activity.

However, it is not just our responsibility to cater to the community, but also the people who travel through and visit it. We can establish a civic identity that not only encourages interaction within the community, but also encourages commuters and visitors to continue coming back and wanting to experience what the town has to offer.

Much of our happiness in our lives comes from feeling a part of something, being able to contribute and make a difference, to have the opportunity to meet new people, and start new relationships. It is the task of the Architect to create or revitalize a city's civic identity and produce opportunities for life to happen.

Most small towns struggle to create or find an identity to spark pride and involvement within the community. Located off the Potomac River, the small town of Brunswick, Maryland does not struggle in identifying its notable contributions to the area. Both the C&O Canal & the B&O Railroad put Brunswick on the trading map in 1834. Brunswick claims to be the "Home of the Iron Horse." The issue lies in the lack of a Civic Presence within the town. Brunswick lacks in places where the citizens can come together and interact with each other and the local government. The government itself has no prominence in the downtown area, let alone the town.



PROBLEM STATEMENT



PROBLEM STATEMENT

Current Initiatives

The town is currently making efforts to improve social activities within the downtown area. The City and Mainstreet group organize festivals and events to bring people out into the center of town. These celebrations offer chances for the community to come together for a good time, make new connections, and visit local vendors and businesses. Major events include, and are not limited to:

First Friday

During First Fridays, visitors can take in gallery exhibits, enjoy live music, browse numerous boutiques and stores, and enjoy special activities. Each Friday has its own theme to help boost community spirit.

Railroad Days

Brunswick celebrates its history and heritage of railroading annually on October 3rd and 4th. Activities include live entertainment, train rides, model train show, museum tours, crafters, food, and much more.

Brunswick Music Festival

Brunswick experienced its golden years during the railroad boom. It is the construction of the railroad into the Appalachian Mountains that brought about the birth of bluegrass with the blending of the Scottish music heritage, African American banjo playing and Irish fiddle tunes.

However, on a day other than these events, a visiting tourist from another town, a biker off the C&O Canal, or a commuter stopping on their train route could walk right into the town center having no idea they were at the heart of the city.



PROBLEM STATEMENT



PROJECT STATEMENT

Located off the Potomac River, the small town of Brunswick, Maryland does not struggle in identifying its notable contributions to the area. Both the C&O Canal & the B&O Railroad put Brunswick on the trading map in 1834. Brunswick claims to be the “Home of the Iron Horse.” The issue lies in the lack of a Civic Presence within the town. Brunswick lacks in places where the citizens can come together and interact with each other and the local government.

The government itself has no prominence in the downtown area, let alone the town. As Architects and Master Planners, it is our job to create places where people want to come and experience what the community has to offer. The 21st century city hall is designed to embrace the public and bring the people into the building. The mix of administrative programs for municipal responsibilities, community rooms for various groups to gather, public interface programs, and both interior and exterior public spaces will engage the community to come into the building.

This project focuses on designing quality spaces that encourage human interaction that can successfully strengthen the relationship between the government and the people, increasing community activity. The proposed City Hall provides several opportunities and spaces not only for community activity. The most important aspect of Civic Architecture is creating spaces that relate to the individual or community member that enters the building. This project creates intimate and lively spaces to act as catalysts for community activity. After all, the house of government for the people is encouraging of its people’s needs and desires.

The proposed City Hall provides several opportunities and spaces not only for community events. Offering a number of spaces for people of the community to come to the city hall to use lounges, courtyards, cafes, and galleries, the City Hall becomes a place people want to be in and experience. Several nodes for public gatherings have been added to the project in order to bring the community into the City Hall for more than just fulfilling municipal duties. These nodes are both interior and exterior.

Creating spaces that the public will want to return to is the key to creating a successful building, especially in the case of a City Hall. Not only is the building life-expectancy improved by introducing constant activity to the City Hall; but most importantly, raising community pride and creating a sense of identity for the town. The building is made for the people of the town to excite them into becoming involved in their community and their government.

ARCHITECTURAL THEMES





Throughout the project the process of revitalizing communities and a creating civic identity from an architectural approach will be explored in a number of ways.

Power in Architecture. How can architecture showcase the power and authority held by the government? Several studies on other city halls and civic design principles will be explored and experimented.

Public Interface with in the downtown area, utilizing and encouraging the use of the City Hall and the Town Plaza not only for municipal purposes, but establishing several locations and opportunities for interactions and activities to reach out to citizens in the community.

Establishing a **Civic Identity** for the town of Brunswick and its citizens is top priority for this project along with reaching out to other communities and enticing them to experience Brunswick and what its community has to offer.

Creating an **Ambiguous Line Between Interior and Exterior.** The project dedicates itself to exploring the idea of blurring the line between interior and exterior program so that the transition from outside to inside the building is easily encouraged.

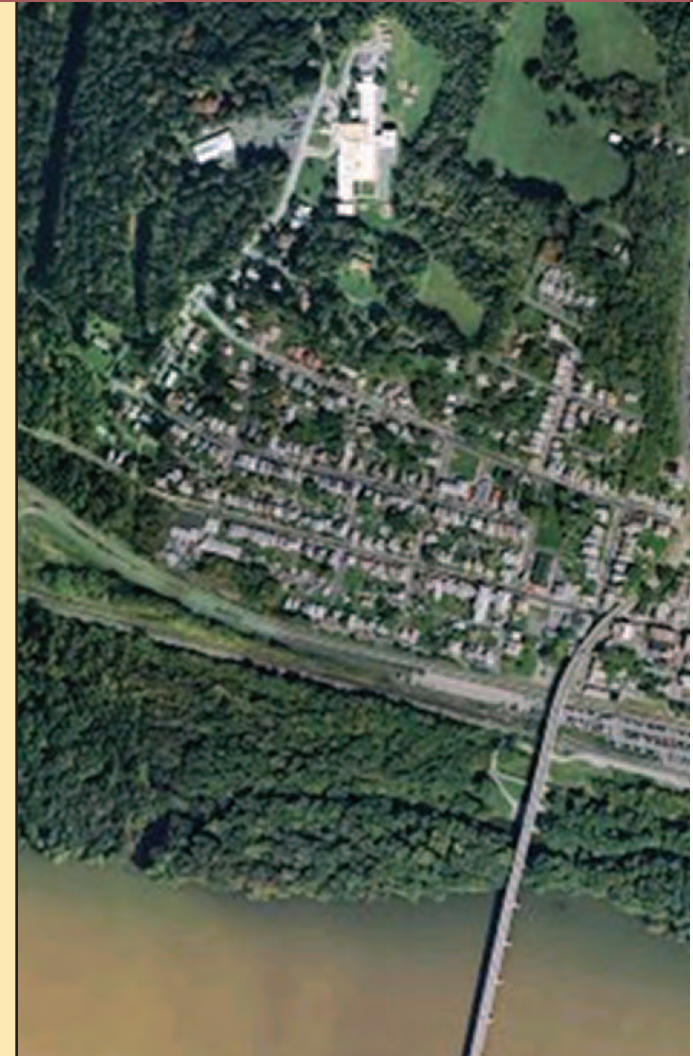
Brunswick, Maryland

Home of the Iron Horse

Most small towns struggle to create or find an identity to spark pride and involvement within the community. The small town of Brunswick, Maryland does not struggle in identifying its notable contributions to the area. Situated in the south western edge of Frederick County, it serves as a major stop on the Commuter Train (Marc) into Washington, D.C. which is an hour west. Six miles down the Potomac River east of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

Located off the Potomac River, the town served as a major trading hub by Indians and continued as such into the 1800's. The Indians called the river "Potomac," which means "gathering place" in their language as it served as the bartering headquarters between tribes in Maryland and Virginia.

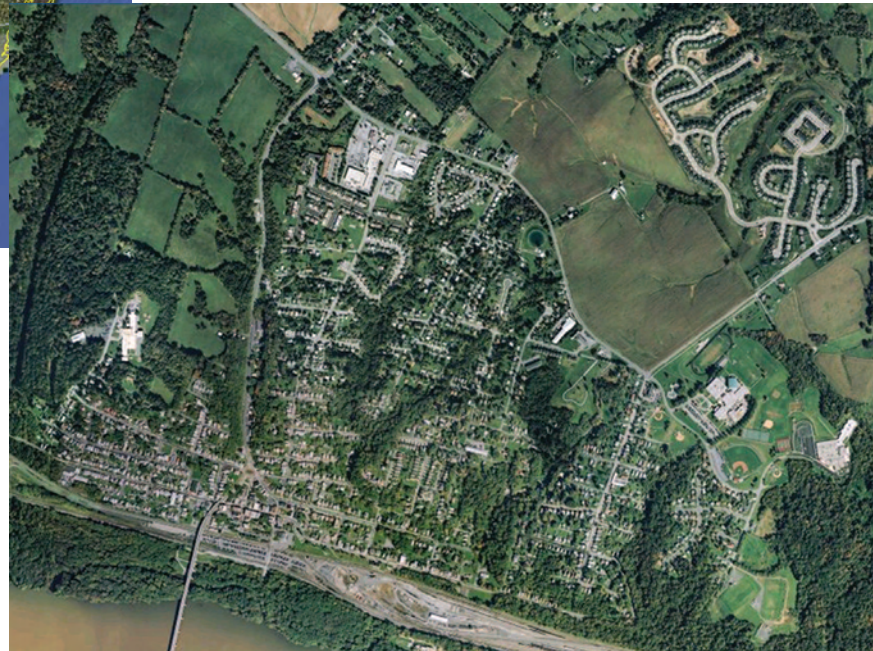
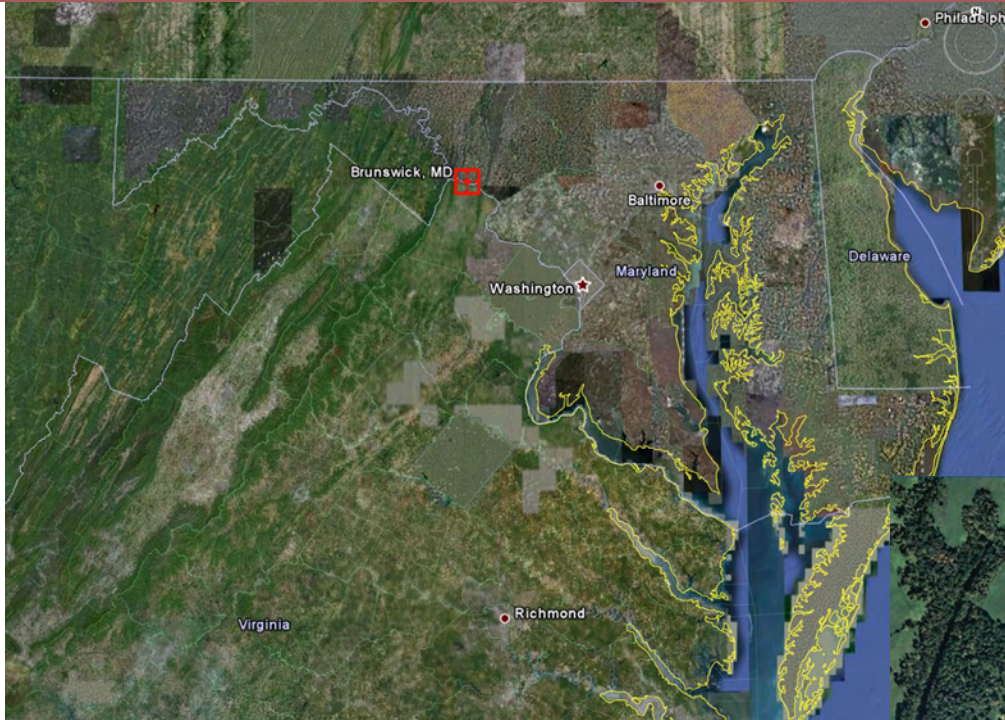
The tradition carried on when both the C&O Canal & the B&O Railroad put Brunswick on the trading map in 1834. The C&O Canal was created to get shipments up and down the river between Columbia and Ohio and the arrival of the rail soon made Brunswick a main rail yard for the B&O Railroad. Claimed to be the "Home of the Iron Horse" Steam Engine, the B&O Railroad brought more than 3,000 jobs to the community. The railroad soon surpassed the efficiency of the canal and a Park Movement was made to turn the C&O Canal into a scenic Green Belt.



SITE: HOME OF THE IRON HORSE



SITE: AERIAL VIEWS





Brunswick is accessible by several major routes:

Route 17 off of **Highway 340** from Middletown, Jefferson, Frederick, and Virginia.

Route 79 off of **Route 180** from Jefferson and Middletown.

Route 478 from Washington County and Virginia.

Route 464 from Jefferson and Point of Rocks.

Route 287 from West Virginia.

MARC TRAIN + Towpath from Washington, DC, Cumberland and Virginia + West Virginia

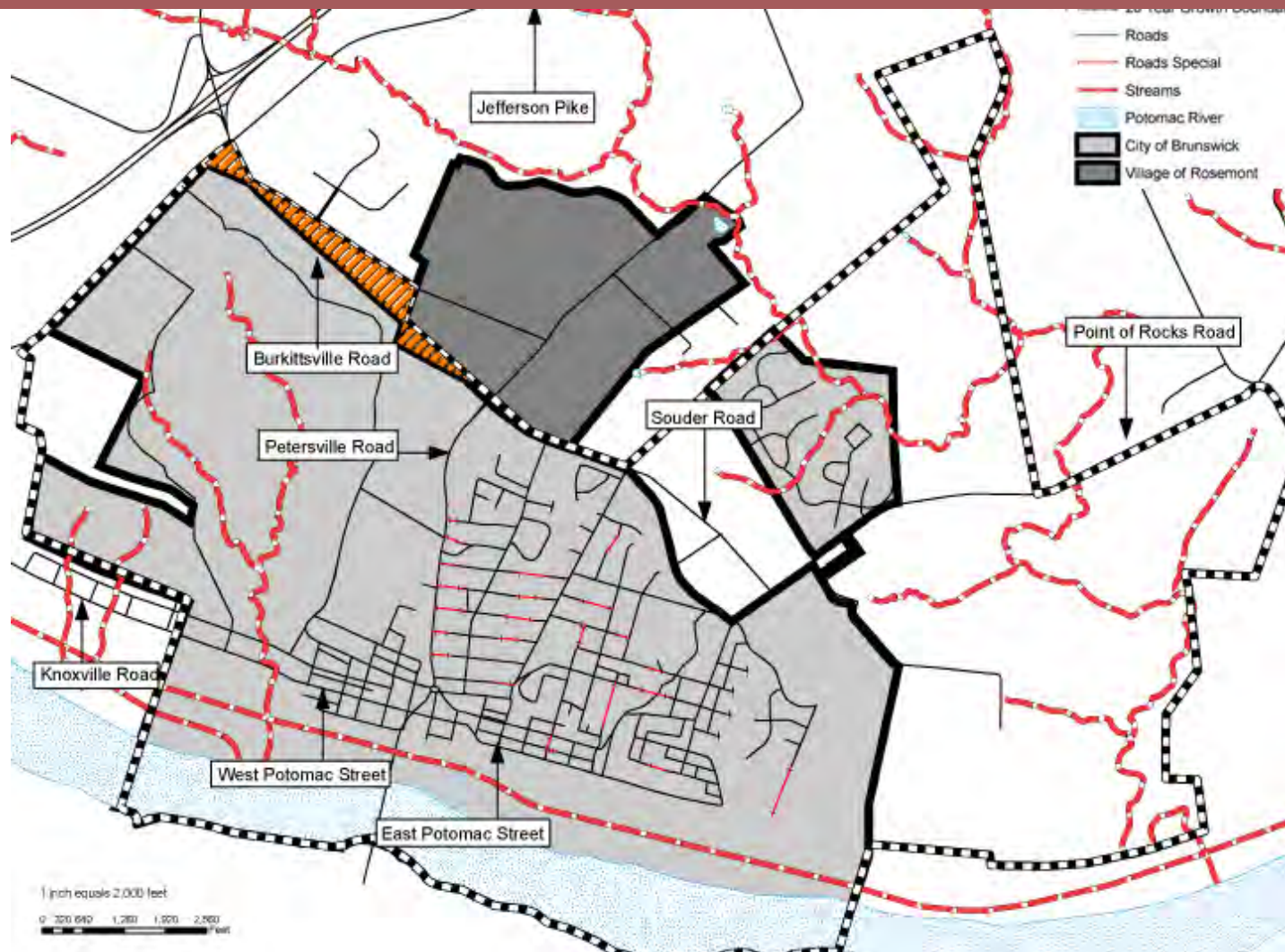
SITE: PROJECTED TOWN GROWTH

The town's current population is around 5,200 people. Once Brunswick Crossing is completed along with other expansions, the size of Brunswick, as well as its population is expected to double in size within the next twenty years. The city hall not only serves Brunswick, but Rosemont as well.

The current city hall is already outgrowing the space they have on the other side of the town green. With the population doubling, the city hall will need to expand in order to provide sufficient spaces and opportunities for the people to interact with the government and become involved in town policy and events. The more people the city is able to invite into their council chamber doors, the more successful the effort is to get citizens involved.

The map to the right shows the current town limits in a grey and the 20 year growth is shown with the black dashed line.

SITE: PROJECTED TOWN GROWTH



SITE: WALKING VICINITY

Locating the site in the central business district of the town allows for getting around downtown by foot very easy. Enmities located within a five minute walk of the site are:

Commuter Train Station (MARC)

Town Hardware Store

C&O Canal + Towpath

Brunswick Railroad Museum

Jerry's Market

Brunswick Citizen Newspaper

Local shops

- antiques

- consignment

- crafts + art

Food/Restaurant

- Beans in the Belfry

- Mummers Dinner

- Kings Pizza

Public Service

- Volunteer Ambulance Company

- Volunteer Fire Department



SITE: LOCATION IN NEIGHBORHOOD



SITE: VEHICULAR ACCESS

Accessible roads leading from outside of the downtown area to the site:

Potomac Street

main road through downtown

North Maple Street

from the town circle

South Maple Street

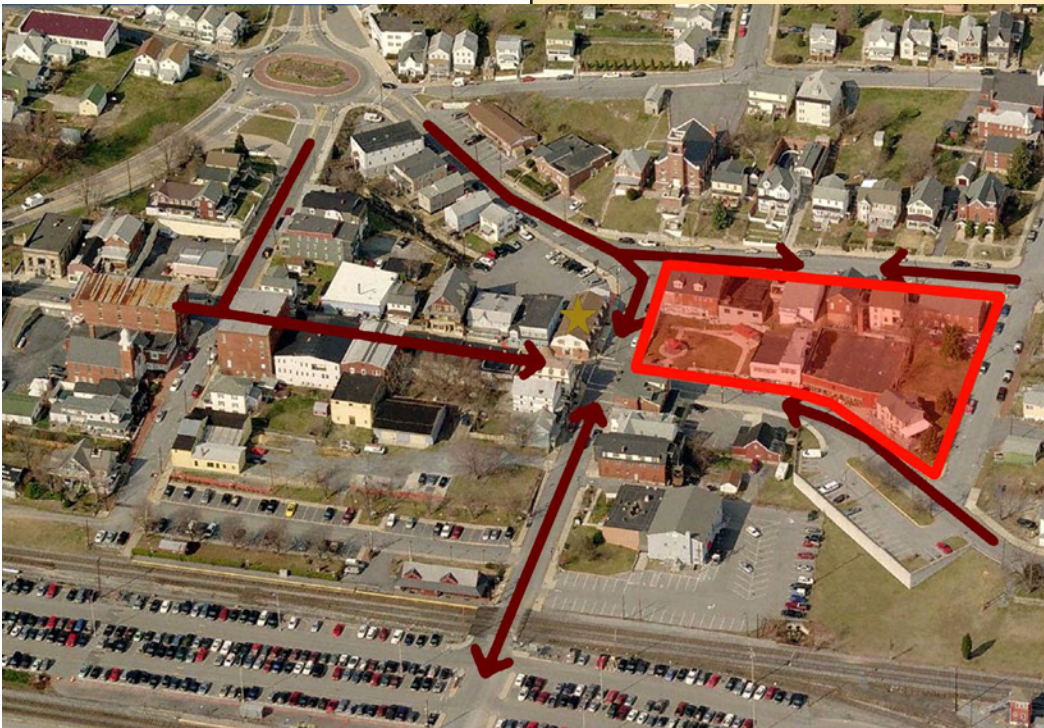
main access to and from the train station for commuters

East A Street

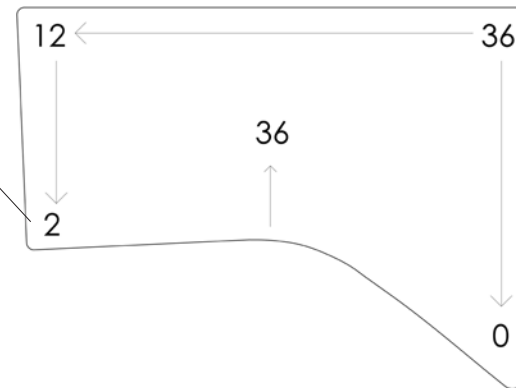
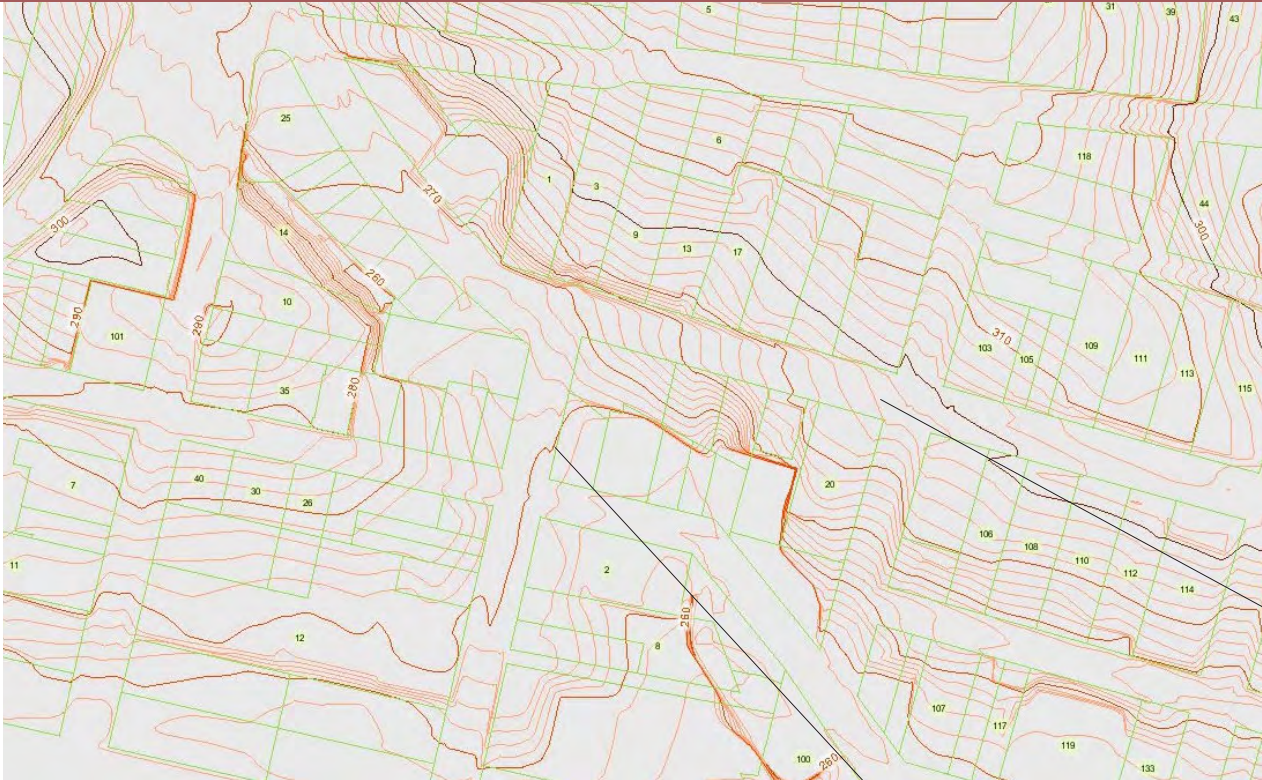
residential street connecting school district from the other side of town

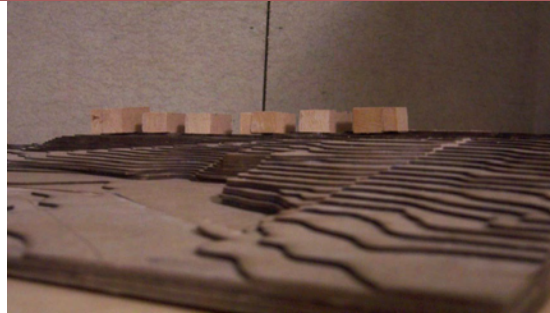
First Avenue

residential road down to Potomac Street



SITE: TOPOGRAPHY





Brunswick's Topography is made of several hills stretching from farm land down to the river. The project is nestled into the hill running up from the train station towards East A Street.



From the corner of Potomac Street and First Avenue up to the corner of East A Street and First Avenue, the grade rises 36 feet and slopes to 12 feet as you go down to the corner of East A and Maple Avenue, and ultimately going back down to 2' as you arrive back on Potomac Street.



This site allows for two access points into the city hall, on the upper terrace on East A Street and the Plaza on Potomac Street.

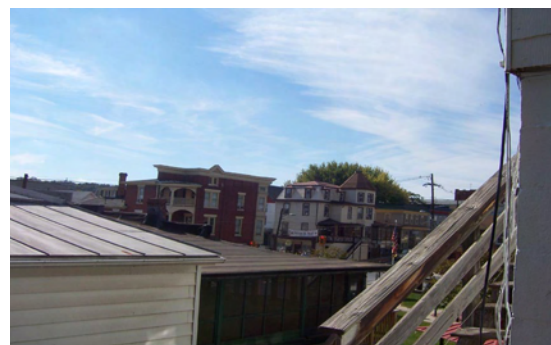
SITE: EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS + VIEWS



SITE: EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS + VIEWS



SITE: EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS + VIEWS



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SITE: EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS + PHOTOS



SITE: EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS + VIEWS

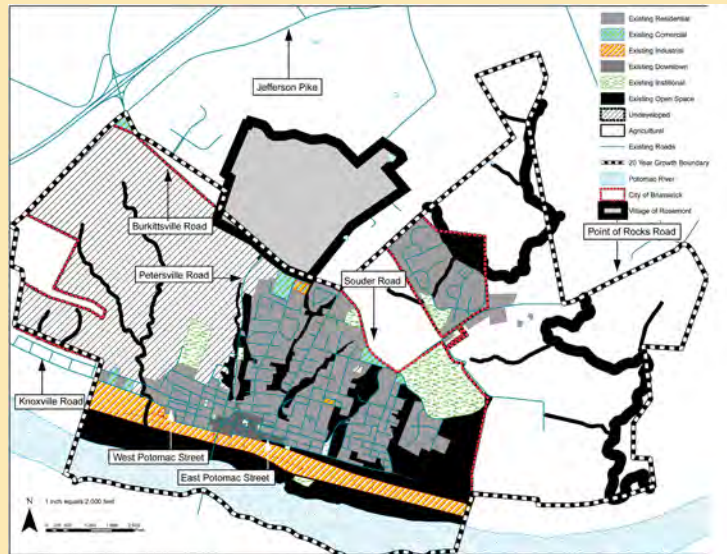


SITE: EXISTING STRUCTURES

The site straddles both the Central Business District and the Business Transitional District. This project proposes to extend the Central Business District to cover the entire site, as the only difference between the two districts is that the Business Transitional District acts as an overflow for residential development.

The site currently contains the following building uses:

- Residential
- Government/Public Service
- Retail
- Current Town Green
- Vacant/Available Space



SITE: EXISTING STRUCTURES



SITE: DEMOLITION





Majority of the buildings on the site are rundown, outgrown and are “making do” with the space they have, rarely used, or have been vacant for an extended period of time. This project proposes demolition of these buildings in order to strengthen the civic presence of the city hall, government and its relation to the citizens.

The proposed design only keeps the current Police Station in tact on the site, however it also has outgrown it’s location and is set to be reused as a Community History entity of the new design. Demolished uses are being replaced either on site (cafe), or has already been incorporated into the new Brunswick Crossing development already in motion by the city.

Proposed Demolition (current use + state)

1. Upper floor residences - rundown, Ground floor - vacant garage
2. Upper floor residences - rundown, Ground floor - vacant
3. Senior Center - too small, rundown, rarely used
4. Vacant building - hasn’t been used in at least five years
5. Single family residence
6. Vacant building - hasn’t been used in at least three years
7. Small barber shop
8. Antique Store
9. Vacant Bar - shut down two years ago

SITE: EXISTING OPEN PUBLIC SPACE

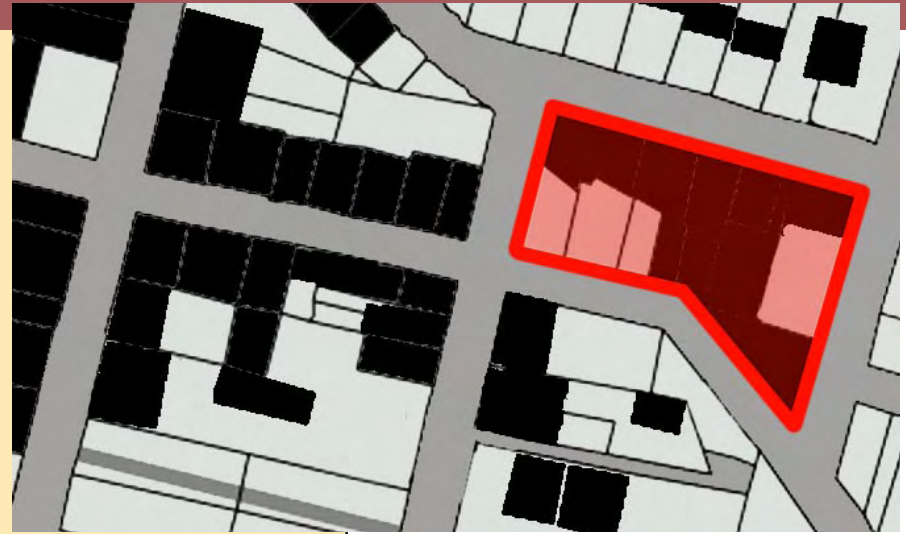
Majority of the site, as mentioned earlier, is covered in building. Many of these buildings are run down or vacant and have been so for years.

Current Open Space Ratio (approximate):

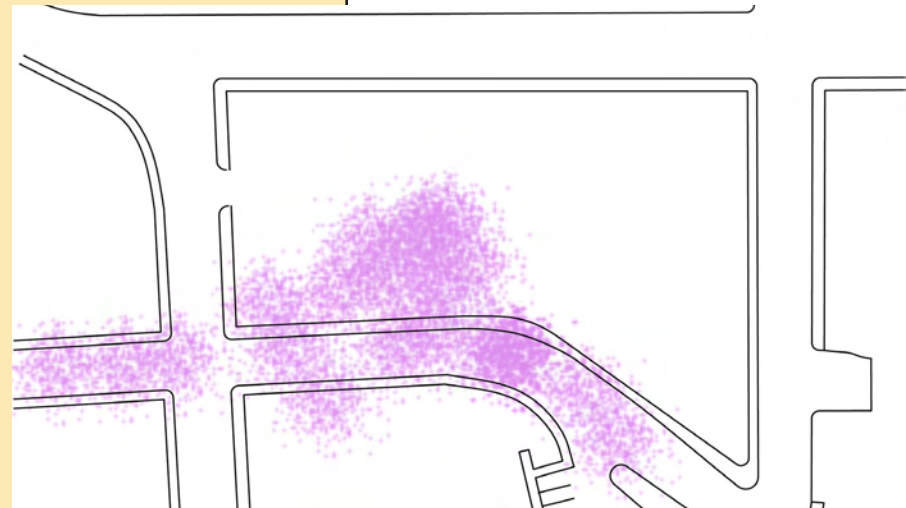
Area of Site - 50,538 sf

Area of Open Space - 19,554 sf

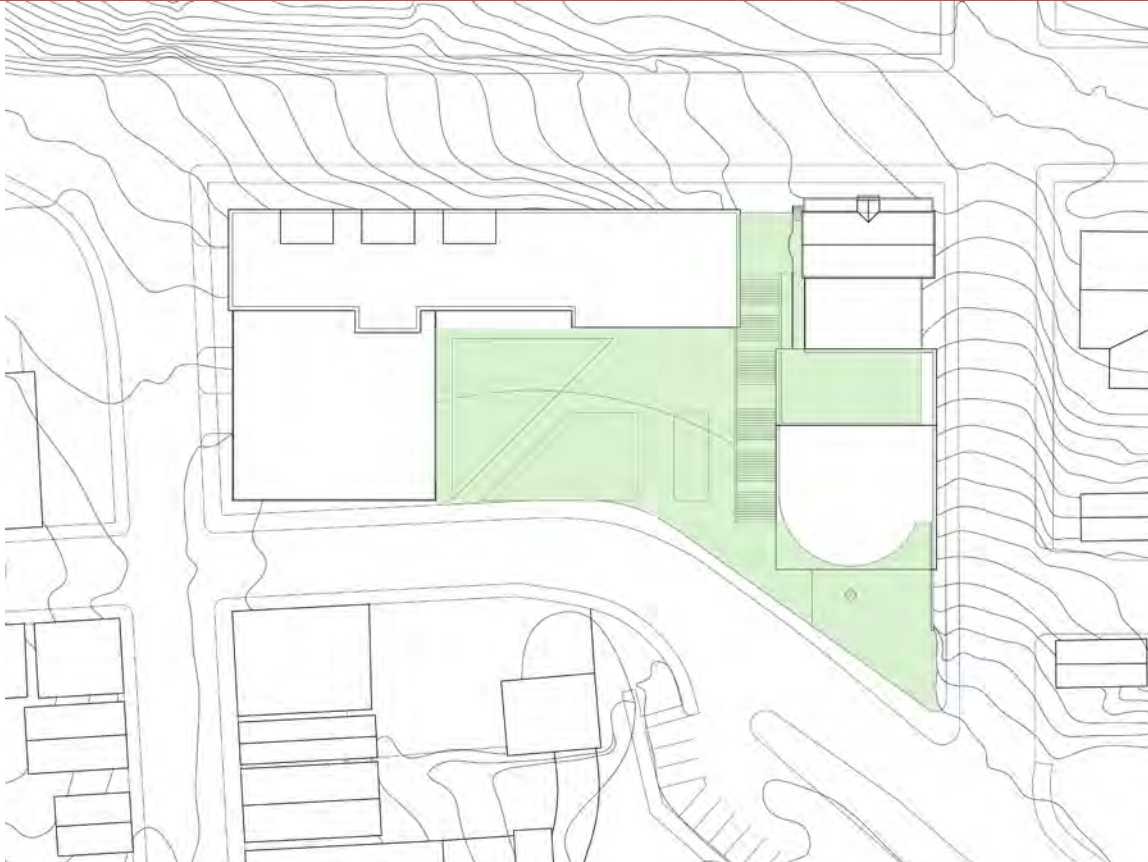
39% Open Space



The most activity downtown occurs at the intersection of North Maple and Potomac Street. On event days activity is spread into the small town green.



SITE: PROPOSED OPEN PUBLIC SPACE



Proposed Open Space Ratio (approximate):

Area of Site - 50,538 sf

Area of Open Space - 28,229 sf
55% Open Space

Improved 16% - 8675 sf

This project proposes to increase the open space to fifty percent of the site, allowing ample space for community events and individual use.

Civic buildings should create places that
both nurture and convey and understanding
that people matter.

[Curtis Fentress]

The 21st century city hall is designed to embrace the public and bring the people into the building. The mix of administrative programs for municipal responsibilities, community rooms for various groups to gather, public interface programs, and both interior and exterior public spaces will engage the community to come into the building.

The programmatic net area is approximately 30,538 sf. that fits into a building footprint of approximately 20,000 sf. The city hall combined with the master plan of the new police department allows up to 28,000 sf of open exterior space on the site.

The programmatic exploration is separated into several parts:

- Major component descriptions

- Total programmatic square footages

- Spacial quality descriptions

PROGRAM: MAJOR COMPONENTS

Major Program areas are defined as follows:

Town Offices

Municipal and administrative offices as well as supporting services are housed in this area. Public accessibility is important in the mapping of these amenities. Planning boards, Department of Public Works, and Taxation offices will be included along with other administrative offices.

Council Chamber

The Council Chamber is the main space for the people to interact and partake in the town government. This is where the governing and the governed come together to debate and discuss town issues. It is in this room that democracy is emulated and encouraged. The connection of the government and the people is the single most important relationship in a successful town.

Community Spaces

The need for various assembly spaces are needed for various events and community organization functions. This is a place for organizations like Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Adult and Youth clubs, and classes in the community to meet.

Civic Plaza

A Civic Plaza serves as a stage for community demonstrations, performances, and gathering space for the community. Such a plaza will bring the community into the Civic Center and revitalize activities in the downtown area.

TOTAL PROGRAM: SQUARE FOOTAGES

Public Interface		Administration		Community	
<i>Acts as an interface between the Community and the City Hall, lending themselves fully to the community encouraging the people inside and interacting with the building.</i>		<i>Organized in suites alternating with common spaces. The more public suites are conveniently closer to the lobby, where offices that are not frequently visited by the public are located further away.</i>		<i>The connection between the people and their government is the most vital relationship in a town; thus making the Community Entities the most important spaces in the City Hall.</i>	
Gallery / Exhibition		Office Administration		Council Hall	
Gallery	2340 sf	Secretary	195 sf	Council Chamber	2900 sf
Gallery Storage	216 sf	Tax Clerk	200 sf	Council Preparation Room	1350 sf
Permanent Town Exhibit Area	775 sf	Town Clerk	200 sf	Storage	204 sf
Community History	1538 sf	Veteran Department	136 sf	Concession	118 sf
Cafe		Recreation Department	136 sf	Chamber Lounge	1400 sf
Café	4107 sf	Planning & Zoning	463 sf	Restrooms	328 sf
Kitchen	670 sf	Conference Room	373 sf	Function Hall	
Kitchen Storage	175 sf	Restrooms	305 sf	Function Hall	2881 sf
Dining Room 1	641 sf	Office Support	123 sf	Storage	80 sf
Dining Room 2	446 sf	Mayor's Office	201 sf	Kitchen	1033 sf
Lounge	859 sf	Mayor's Conference Area	362 sf	Dishes	118 sf
Entry Lobby		Administrators Office	140 sf	Kitchen Preparation	680sf
Lobby	2491 sf	History Commission	198 sf	Storage	209 sf
Restrooms	311 sf	Support Staff	307 sf	Restrooms	236 sf
		Records	100 sf		
		Archive	100 sf		
		Financial Department			
		Finance	220 sf		
		Treasurer	108 sf		
		Accountant	100 sf		
		Department of Public Works			
		Superintendent of Public Works	100 sf		
		Assist. Superintendent of Public Works	100 sf		
		Administrative Coordinator	100 sf		
		Superintendent of Wastewater Treatment Plant	100 sf		
		Conference Room	285 sf		

SPACIAL DESCRIPTION

The most important aspect of Civic Architecture is creating spaces that relate to the individual or community member that enters the building. This project creates intimate and lively spaces to act as catalysts for community activity. After all, the house of government for the people is encouraging of its people's needs and desires.

Each major programmatic space is described on the following pages as a narrative of the individual's experience upon entering it.

"City Halls and civic centers are the hearts of our cities. In them, we need to feel at home in our world. We need to hear- in the lines and textures and colors of our civic spaces – the heartbeat of our communities."

[Curtis Fentress]

1.0 Main Lobby

This interior space is the first impression of the building upon entering the City Hall. It is important that the main lobby be inviting, bright, and interactive. The lobby stretches up three stories encouraging people to interact vertically as well as horizontally. This extremely public space acts as the main connector between the programmatic elements of the building creates numerous opportunities for interaction between administration and the community. Floor-to-ceiling glass allows outsiders to see the building full of life, further encouraging the community to come inside.

Secondary Lobby

A more intimate lobby is situated off the Monumental Stair just before entering the Council Chamber. This space serves as a warm and inviting place for those who are waiting to enter for a Town Meeting. This space also opens up to a courtyard, blurring the line between interior and exterior space, making the lobby very suitable to receptions preceding or following events.

2.0 Public Interface

These public areas act as an interface between the Community and the City Hall. Such programmatic elements lend themselves fully to the community encouraging the people inside and interacting with the building. The distinction between indoors and outdoors is erased in some cases, strengthening the buildings relationship to the community outside its doors.

Exhibition / Gallery Space

The Gallery serves as an exciting and dynamic space for members of the community to have their work on display for the rest of the town to see. Its open plan lends itself to a multitude of possible arrangements for works and exhibitions easily accessible through the lobby and directly from the courtyard. The doors recede to completely open the gallery into the main courtyard, allowing the exhibits to seep into the community. This special configuration encourages people to enter the gallery to experience fellow citizens' works and triumphs, increasing community pride and interaction.

Café

Located off West Potomac Street, this café pulls people in from main street and creates an interface between administration and citizens of the community. This provides possibilities for establishing interactions that could enhance the relationship between government and community, which will ultimately promote more involvement from the people during community events.

Community History

Brunswick is rich in history from the B&O Railroad and the C&O Canal; however, it also has a long line of traditions and activities that have helped knit the community together over the years. The old Police Station has been renovated into a Community History Gallery that is the cornerstone of the City Hall. It will display both historical and recent events such as sports championships, news breaking events, and other community activities that have shaped pride in Brunswick or book marked major changes in the community. Permanent exhibits will be located along the perimeter of the building with more current and interchangeable exhibits scattered on the show floor so members of the community can meander through the years and see where Brunswick has been and where it is headed.

3.0 Council Chamber

The Heart of the City, let alone the building, the Council Chamber represents the idea of democracy, the connection between the community and its government. Town meetings, debates, and ceremonies are held in an intimate and naturally lit space. Seating gently rises up to better allow the community members to see the council board. A translucent glass wall backs the board before the large glass paned windows of the Council Chamber look out towards the Potomac River. These vast windows along with the clerestory from the Upper Courtyard's intermediate level allow the Council Chamber to act as a "beacon" for the citizens; they can physically see where they are orientation wise and also see when there is a meeting to be held. Symbolically, the Council Chamber is the beacon to civic involvement, identity, and pride.

4.0 Administrative Offices

The Administrative Offices are organized in suites alternating with common spaces. Upon entering the offices, the more public suites are conveniently closer to the lobby. More private offices that are not as publicly visited are located further down the corridor. Above each common space on East A Street, the roof has been peeled back to allow sunlight to pour into the space and offices surrounding them.

5.0 Exterior Elements

Outdoor spaces act as the arms that pull people into a building. In creating successful exterior spaces that people will use, one increases the chances of bringing people into the building. There are several outdoor spaces surrounding the City Hall.

Main Courtyard

The town has put great effort into organizing community and family events to bring life into the heart of town, these events are now embraced and encouraged by the new City Hall. Acting as the Town Green, this area is a home to various outdoor community functions. Every Wednesday community members can buy fresh local produce from Lowery's Farmer's Market, families gather together on blankets with popcorn in hand to watch movies on the lawn, music floats through the air while a local band plays during First Friday's events, the gallery opens up its doors and exhibitions melt onto the lawn on Railroad Day's, the potential of bringing the community together on the Town Green is endless.

Upper Courtyard

The upper Courtyard welcomes the community from East A Street. Atop of the stairs you can look down onto the lawn and towards the river. From this courtyard a ramp takes you up to an intermediate level in which you can look down into the Council Chamber or the Council Courtyard. Handicap Access continues from this level to the Community History Building.

Monumental Stair

From the Upper Courtyard to the Main Courtyard level the elevation changes roughly 34 feet in the span of 110 feet. The Monumental Stair is designed as a connection between East A Street and West Potomac Street. Looking down on the lawn, council members can address the community from the stairs during various community events and people can congregate on the steps as well. At night the wall is up-lit to reveal shadow lines created by the push-and-pull of the stone, creating a play of light and depth both visually and texturally.

Council Courtyard

This open air courtyard between the Council Chamber and the Council Preparation Room not only serves as outdoor space, but as a light well to the surrounding spaces. Light spills into the Chamber Lounge and the doors retract so that the boundary between outside and inside is blurred. Receptions can spill outside from the lounge as people wait for the doors to the Council Chamber to open.

FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL





We as individuals, strive to create and uphold a sense of identity. Once our identity is established, we feel more comfortable with ourselves and our surroundings. A community without a strong Civic Identity is like a person without a personality. It can be perceived as blank, dull, and lifeless. The Civic Center of a town should encourage its citizens to become involved, to interact both with each other and the government, to harness a sense of pride and identity. Most small towns struggle to create or find an identity to spark pride and involvement within the community.

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FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL

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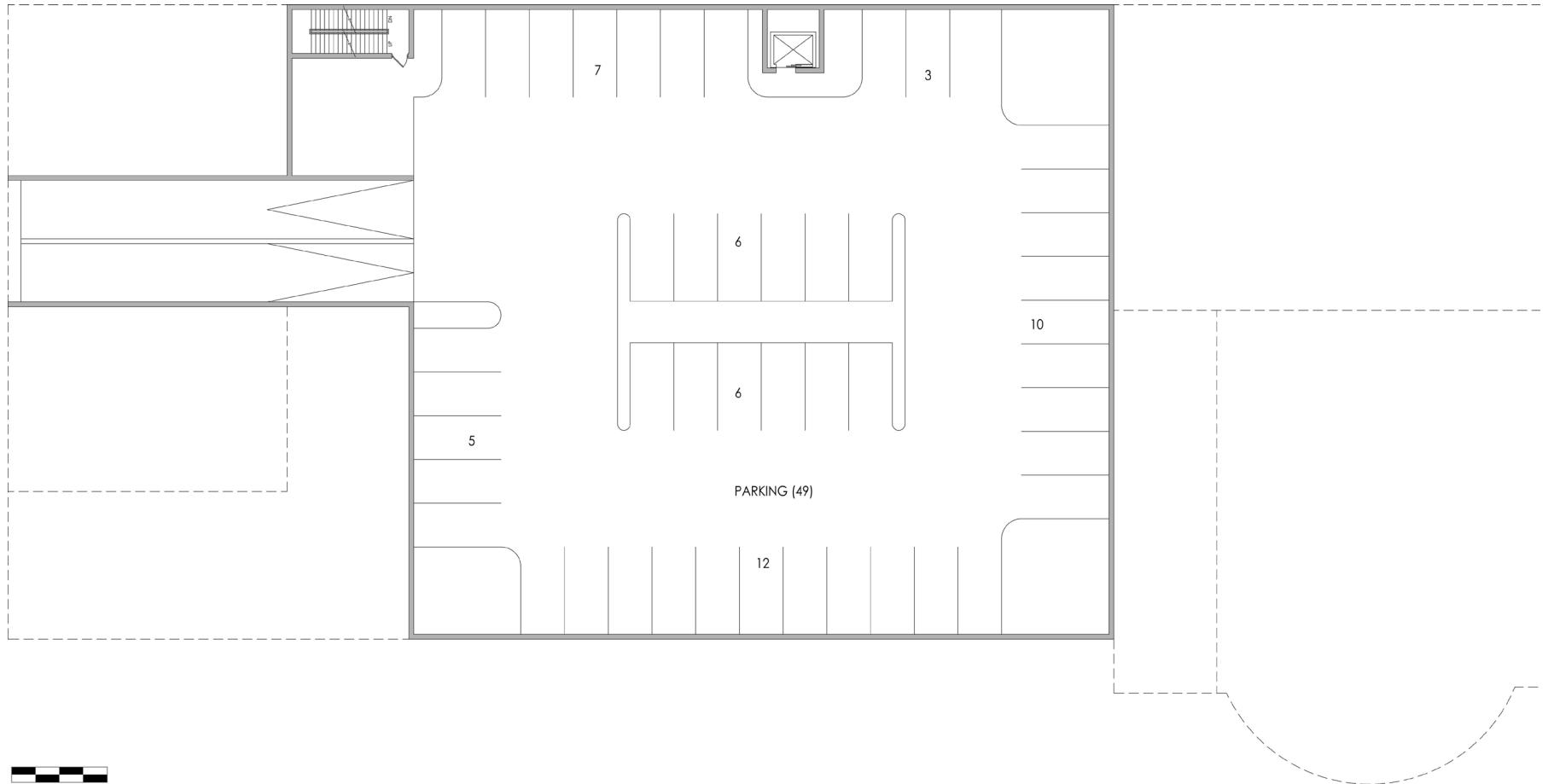
SITE PLAN



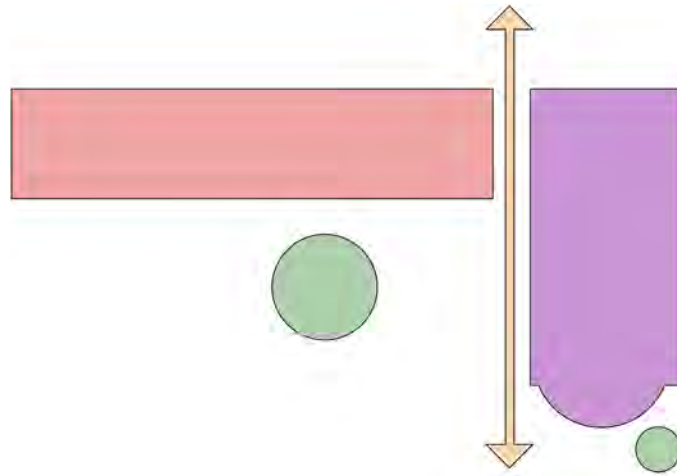
As you can see from the previous page, the downtown area has a lot of surface parking. This project proposes to reduce runoff off of the site by creating an underground parking structure for the City Hall.

Entering the Parking on North Maple Street reduces the amount of digging required to make clearance for parking.

UNDERGROUND PARKING



GROUND FLOOR



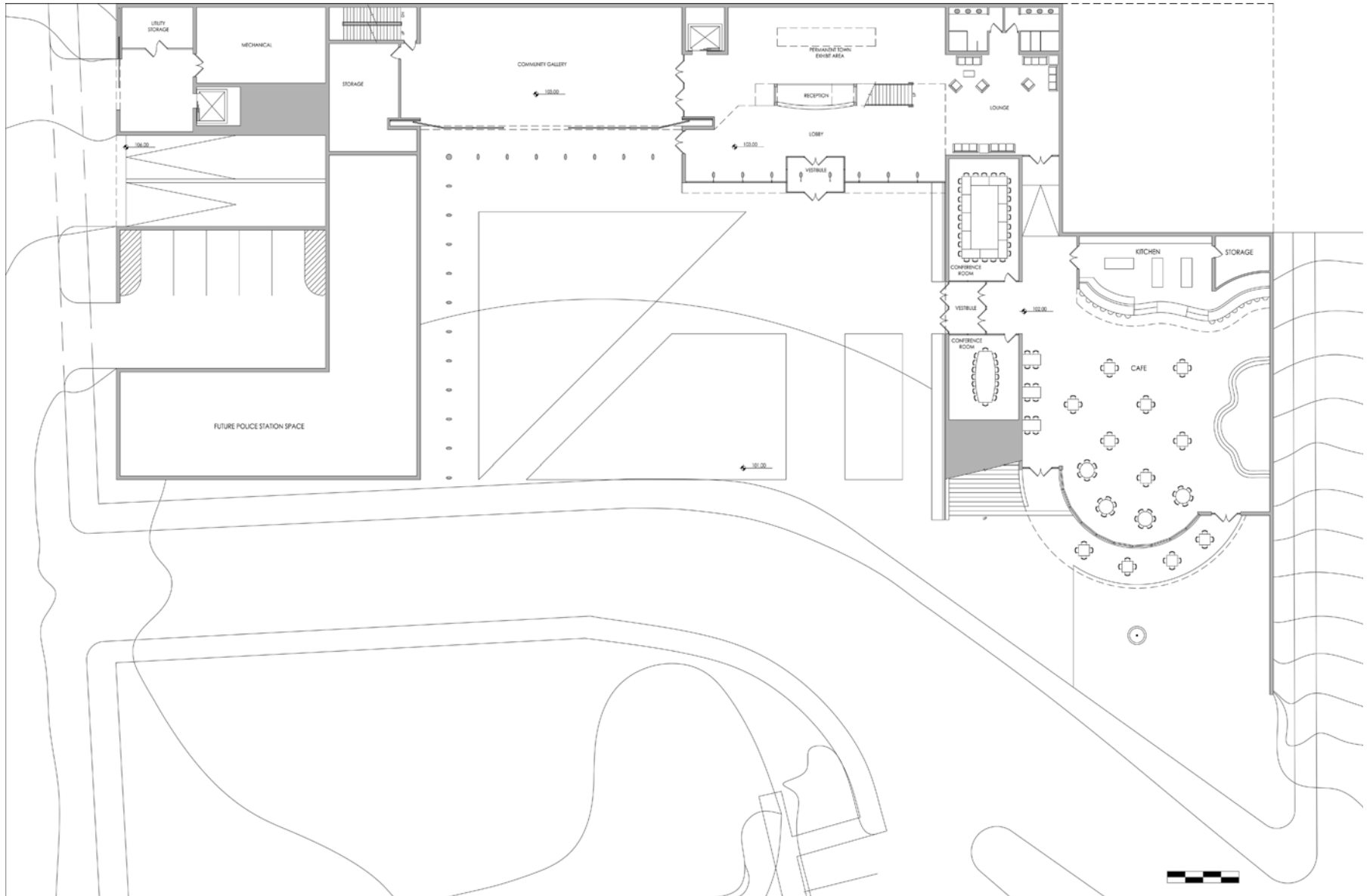
Parti

The administrative wing in red connects to the community entities in purple. The monumental stair acts as a connector from East A Street down the 36' grade change to Potomac Street. The main courtyard allows ample room for outdoor events.

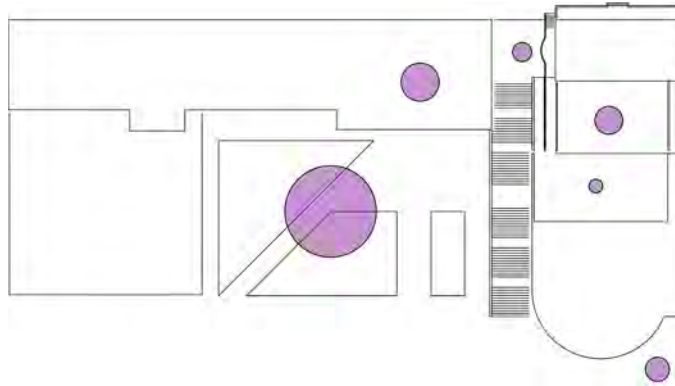
The first floor is dedicated to the public interface. These public areas act as an interface between the Community and the City Hall. Such programmatic elements lend themselves fully to the community encouraging the people inside and interacting with the building:

- Community Gallery
- Cafe
- Main Courtyard
- Main Lobby Entry

GROUND FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



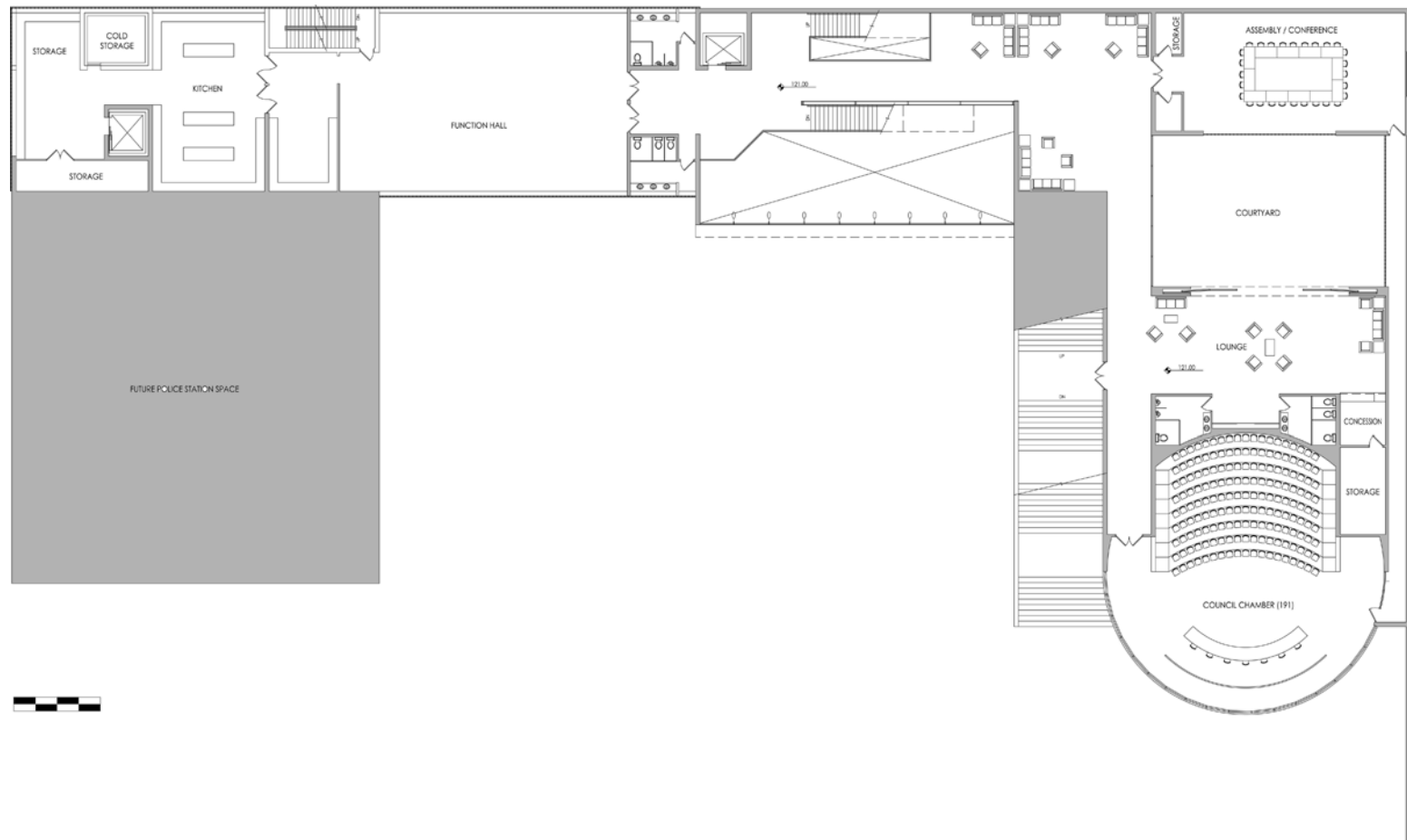
Nodes

Several nodes for public gatherings have been added to the project in order to bring the community into the City Hall for more than just fulfilling municipal duties. These nodes are both interior and exterior.

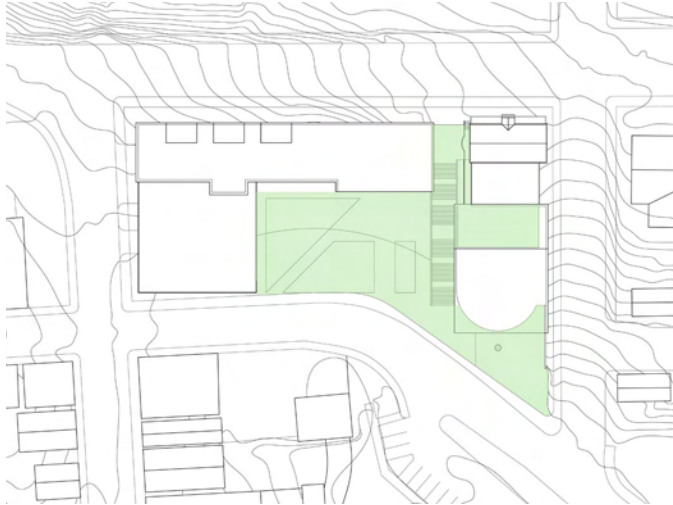
The second floor is dedicated to the community. These public areas are used by the community whether it be in a banquet, club meeting, or council meeting. These spaces are where the government and the people become one entity for the stronger good of the town:

- Council Chamber
- Council Courtyard
- Function Hall

SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



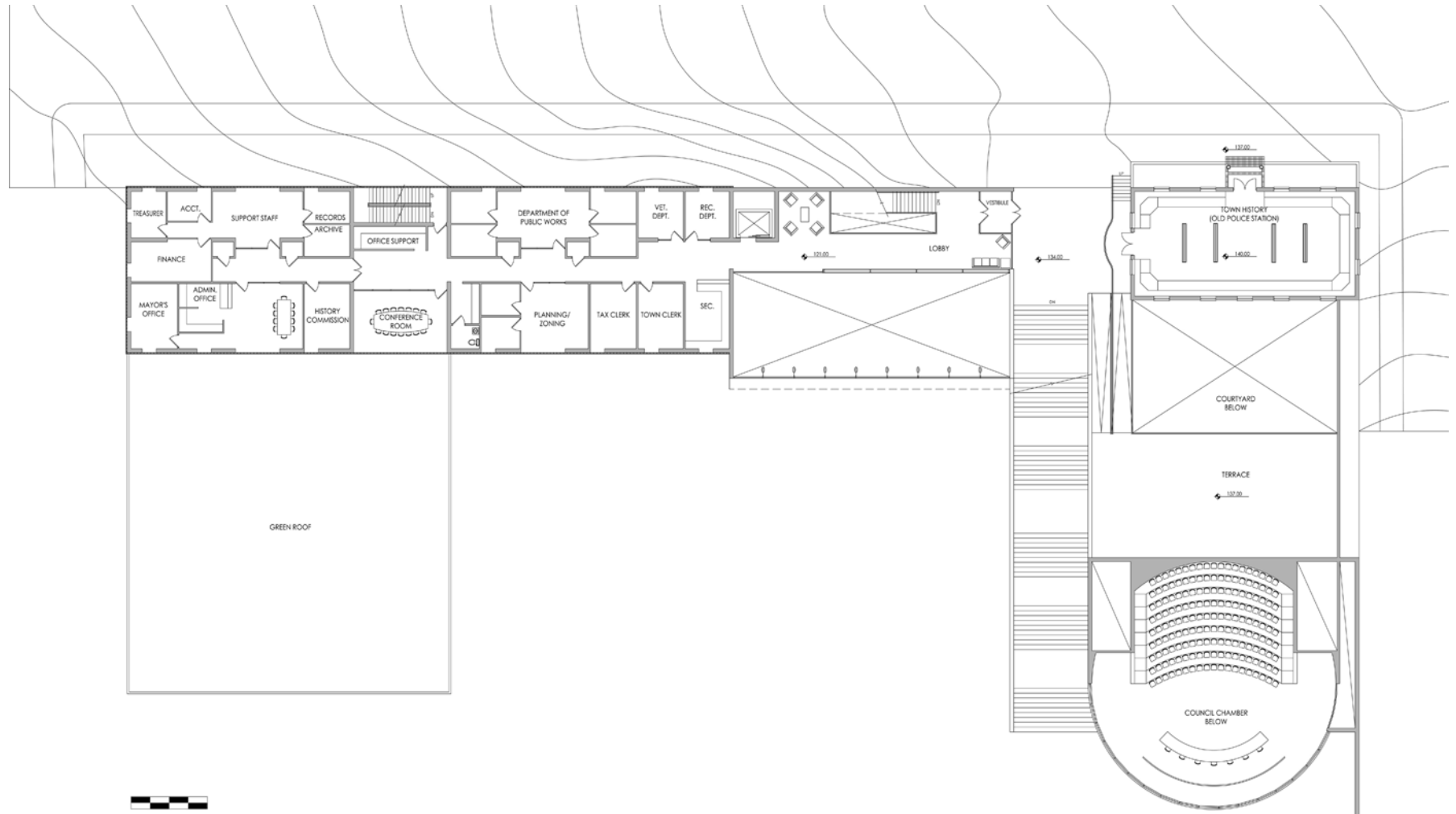
Open Air Space

The project offers 55% of the site to open air spaces created to bring people into the site to enjoy. Community events can take place on the main courtyard and private parties can reserve the council courtyard.

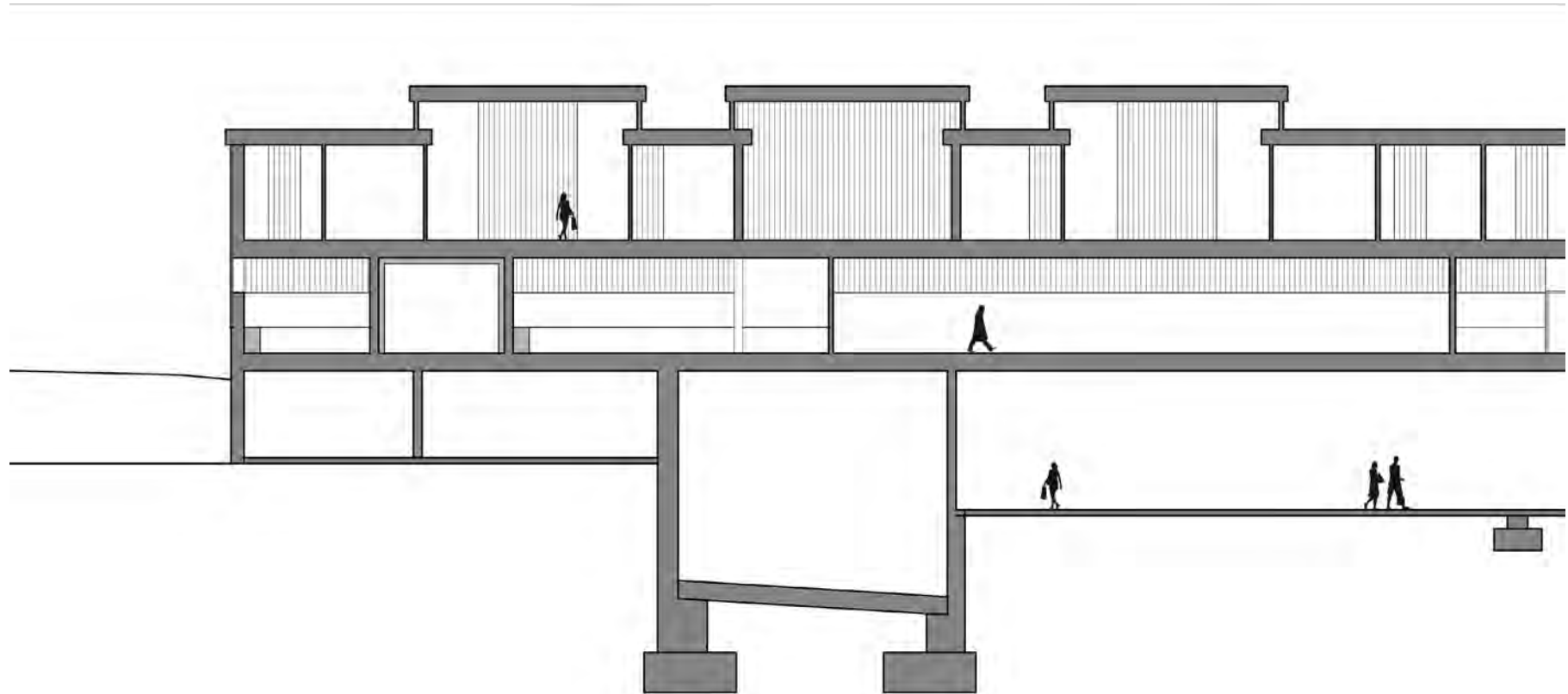
The third floor houses the government and town offices. Upon entering the offices, the more public suites are conveniently closer to the lobby. More private offices that are not as publicly visited are located further down the corridor.

- Mayor + supporting staff
- Department of Public Works
- Financial and Tax offices
- Community History + Terrace

THIRD FLOOR

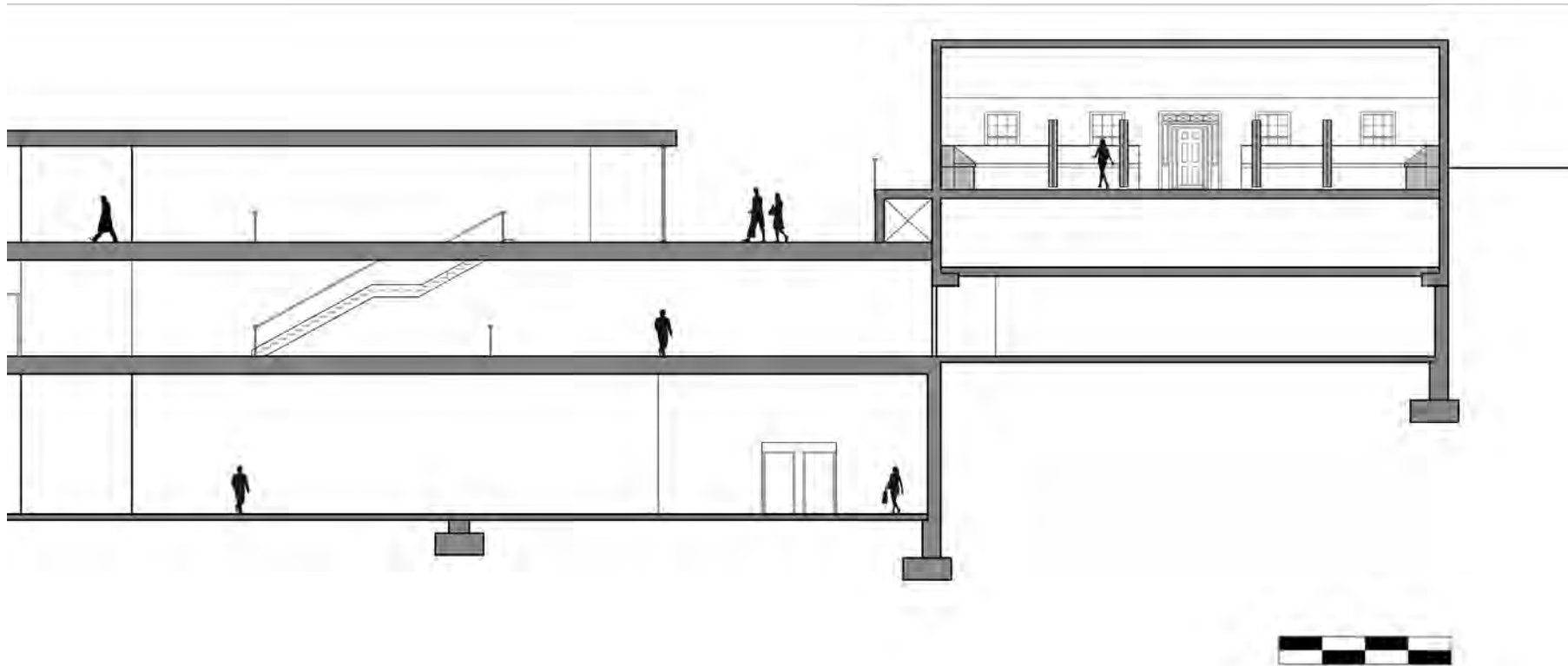


BUILDING SECTIONS

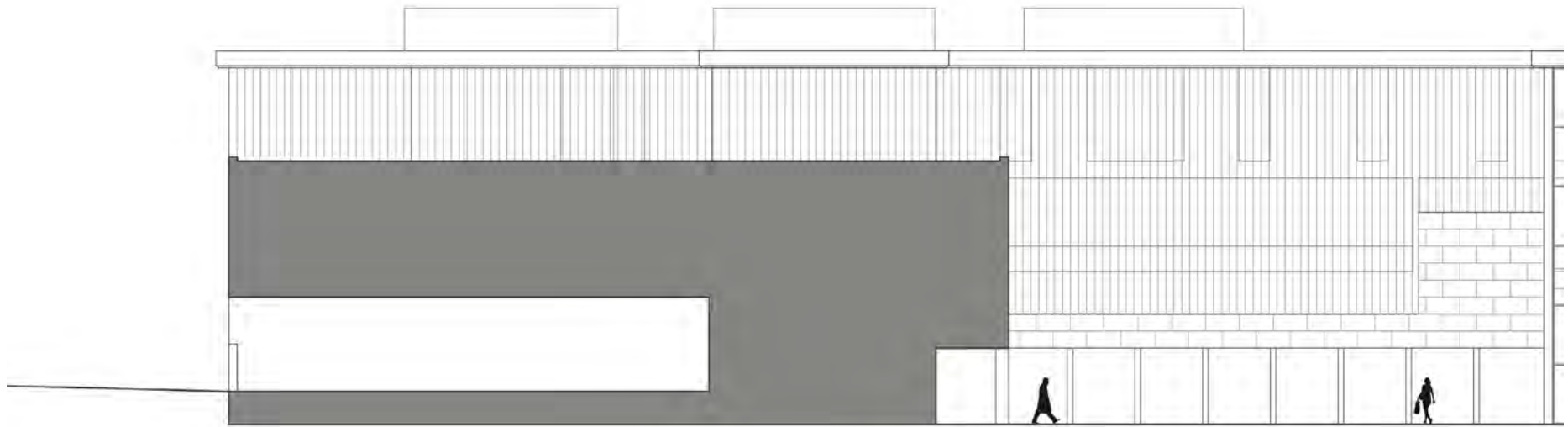


Administration Section

BUILDING SECTIONS

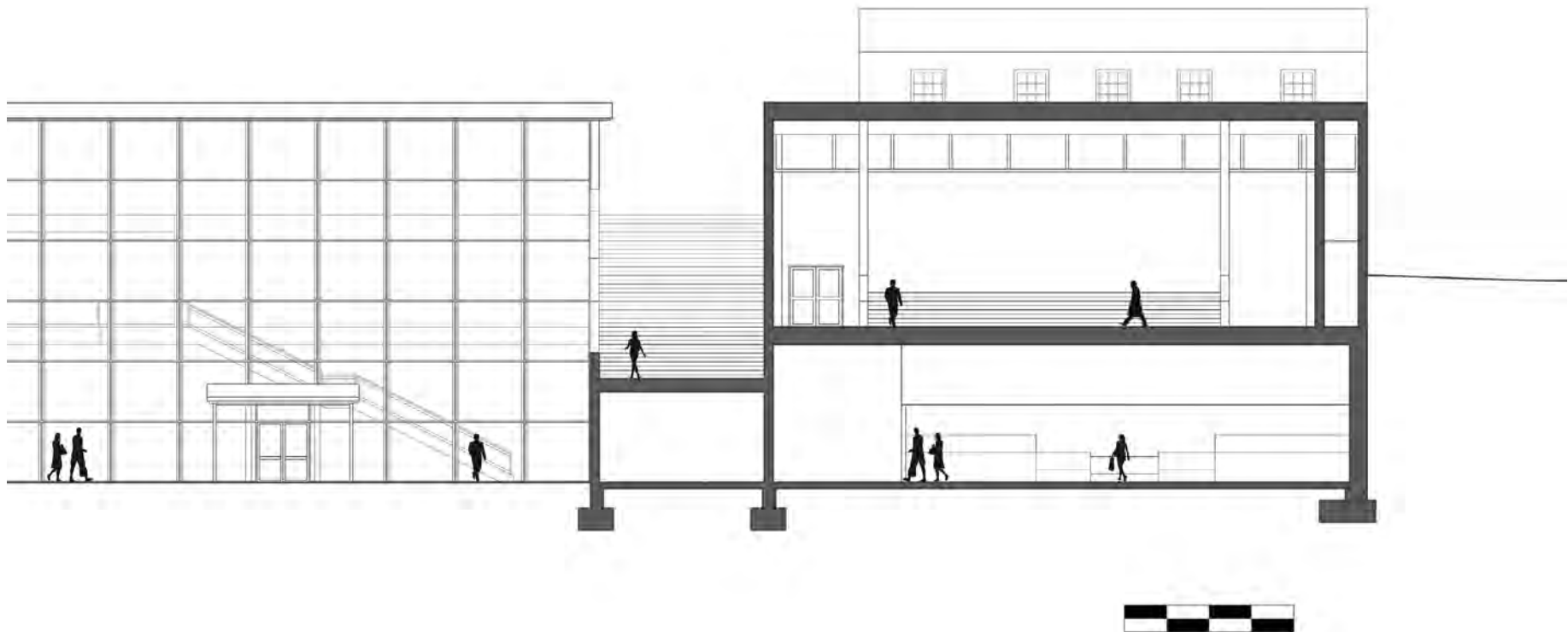


BUILDING SECTIONS

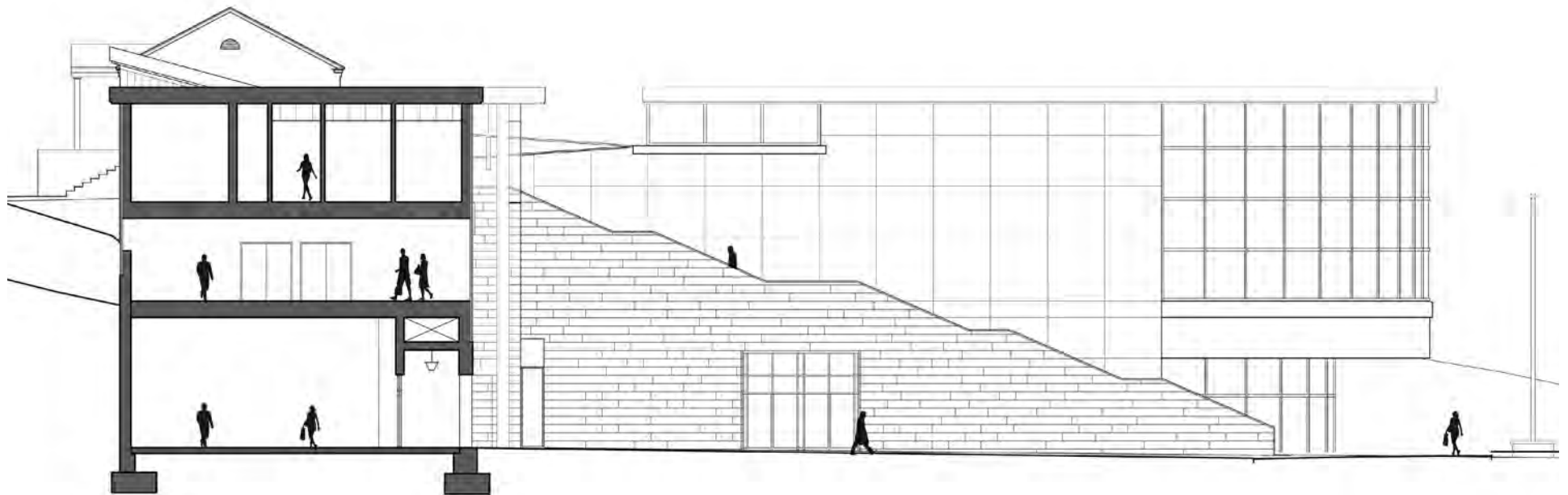


Plaza Section

BUILDING SECTIONS

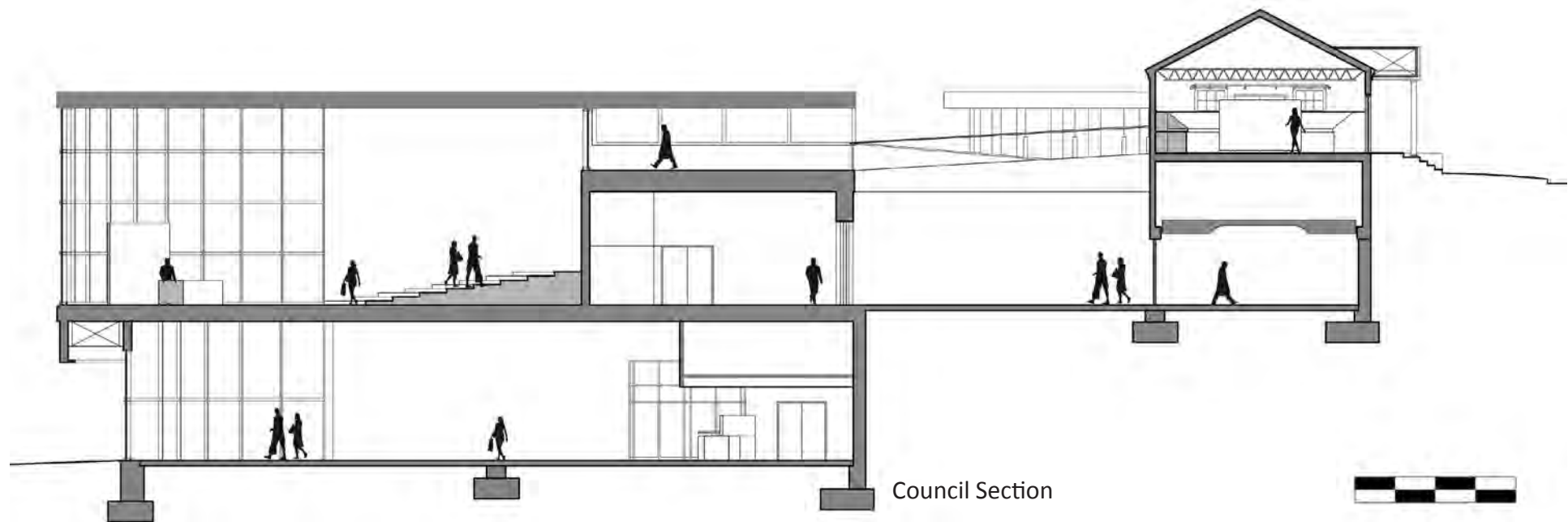


BUILDING SECTIONS

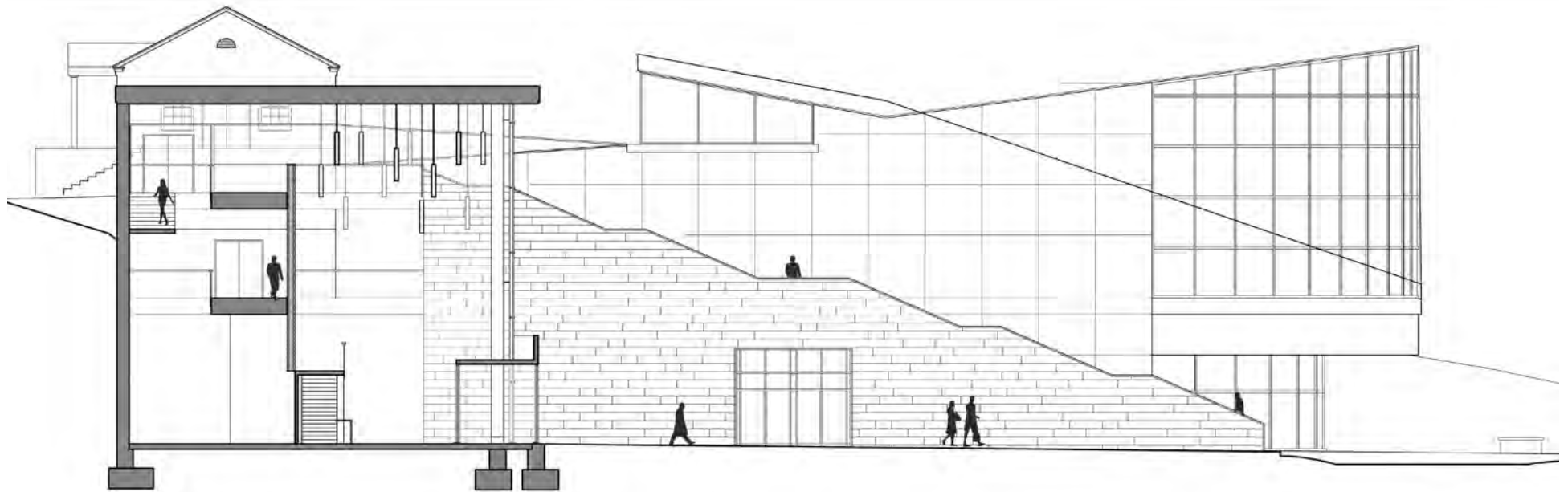


Banquet Section

BUILDING SECTIONS



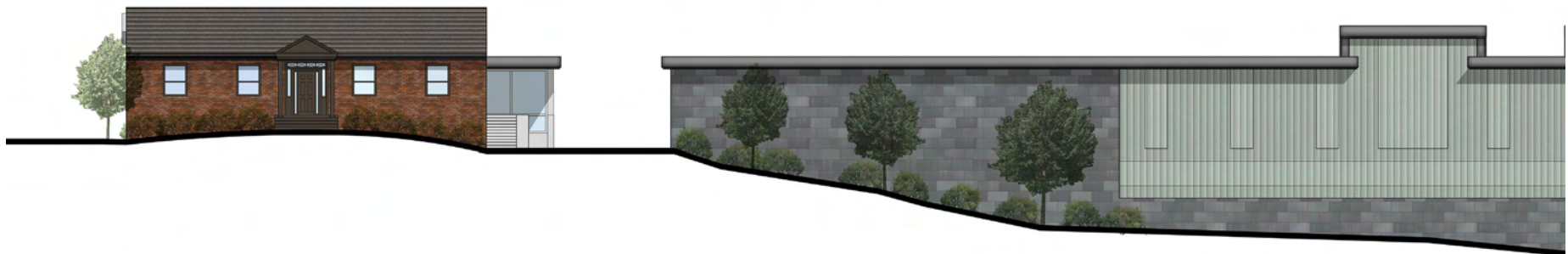
BUILDING SECTIONS



Lobby Section



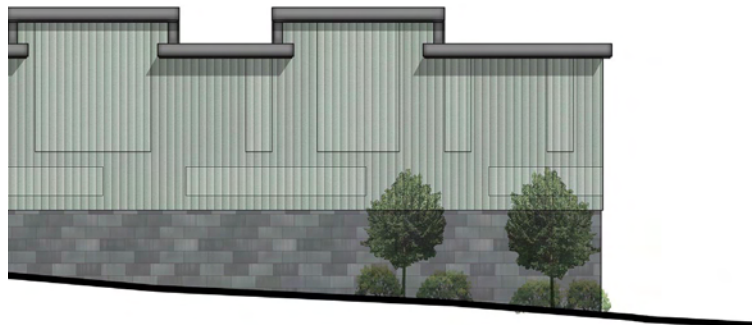
ELEVATIONS + ELEVATIONAL DETAILS



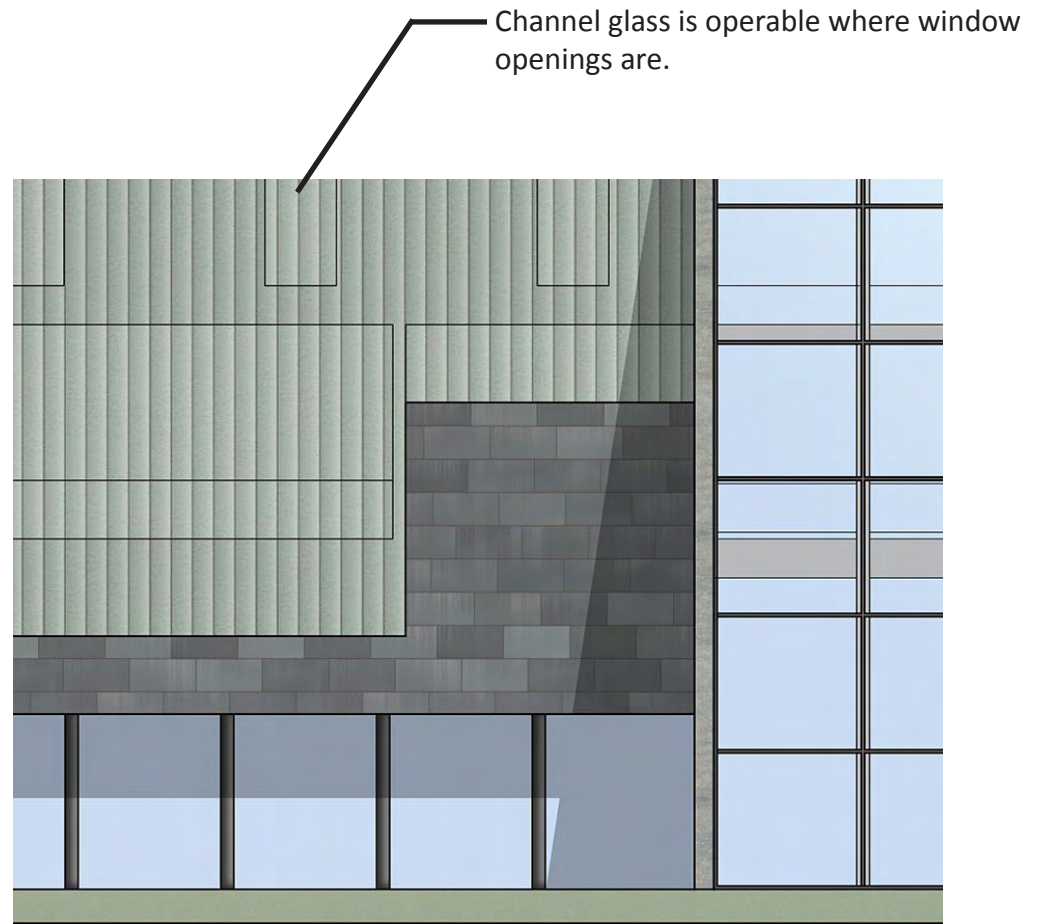
ELEVATIONS + ELEVATIONAL DETAILS



North Elevation



South Elevation



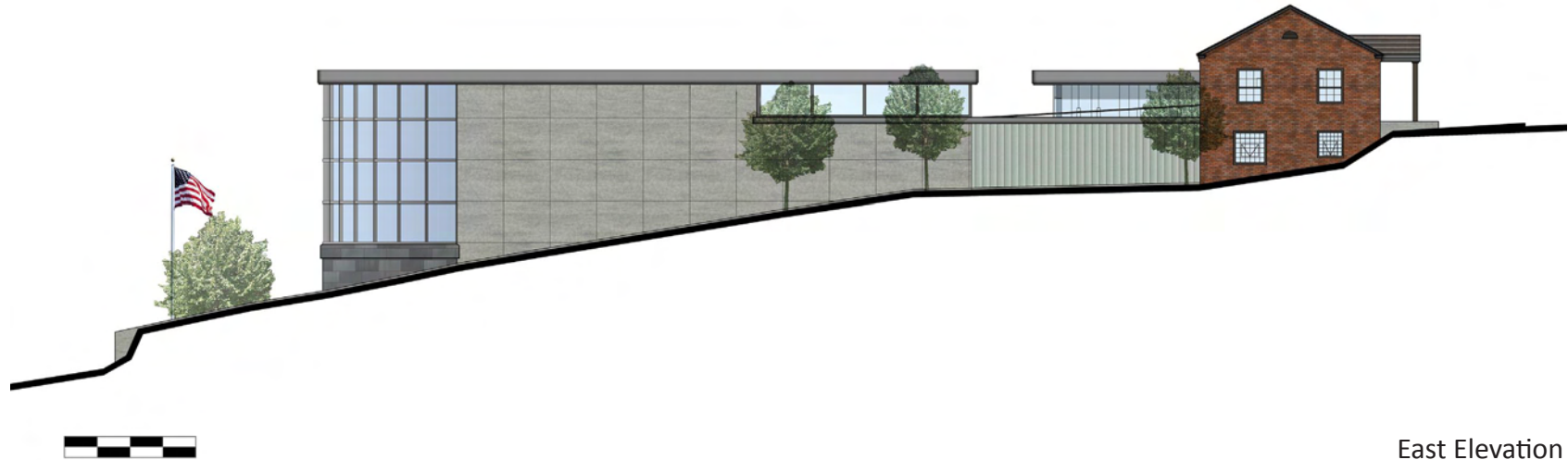
Channel Glass acts as vertical cladding that over laps slate panels

ELEVATIONS + ELEVATIONAL DETAILS



West Elevation

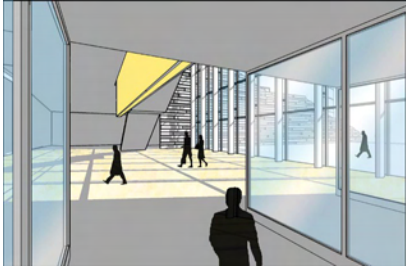
ELEVATIONS + ELEVATIONAL DETAILS



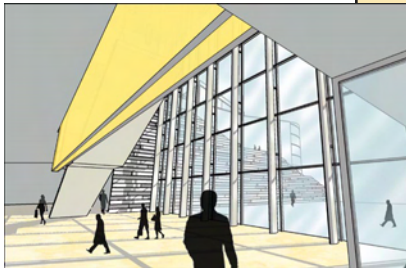
East Elevation

SPACIAL ATMOSPHERE

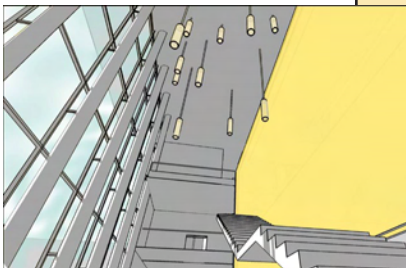




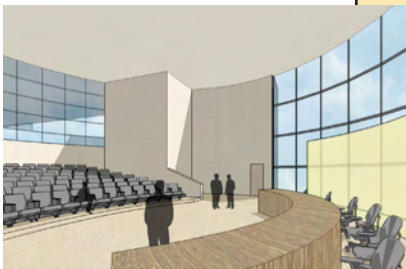
Creating spaces that the public will want to return to is the key to creating a successful building, especially in the case of a City Hall. The building is made for the people of the town to excite them into becoming involved in their community and their government.



The Main Lobby is the first impression of the building upon entering the City Hall. It is important that the main lobby be inviting, bright, and interactive.



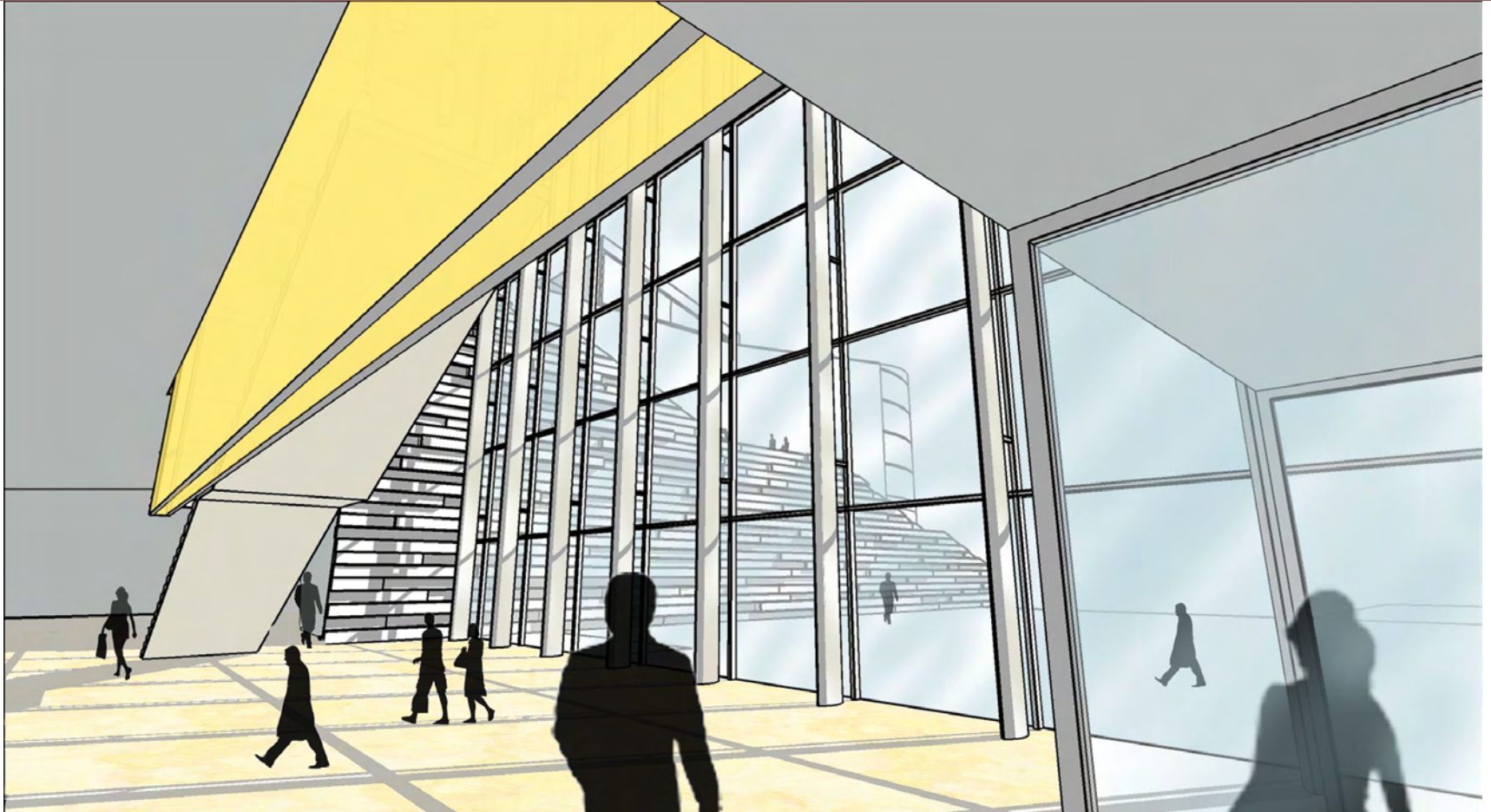
Floor-to-ceiling glass allows outsiders to see the building full of life, further encouraging the community to come inside.



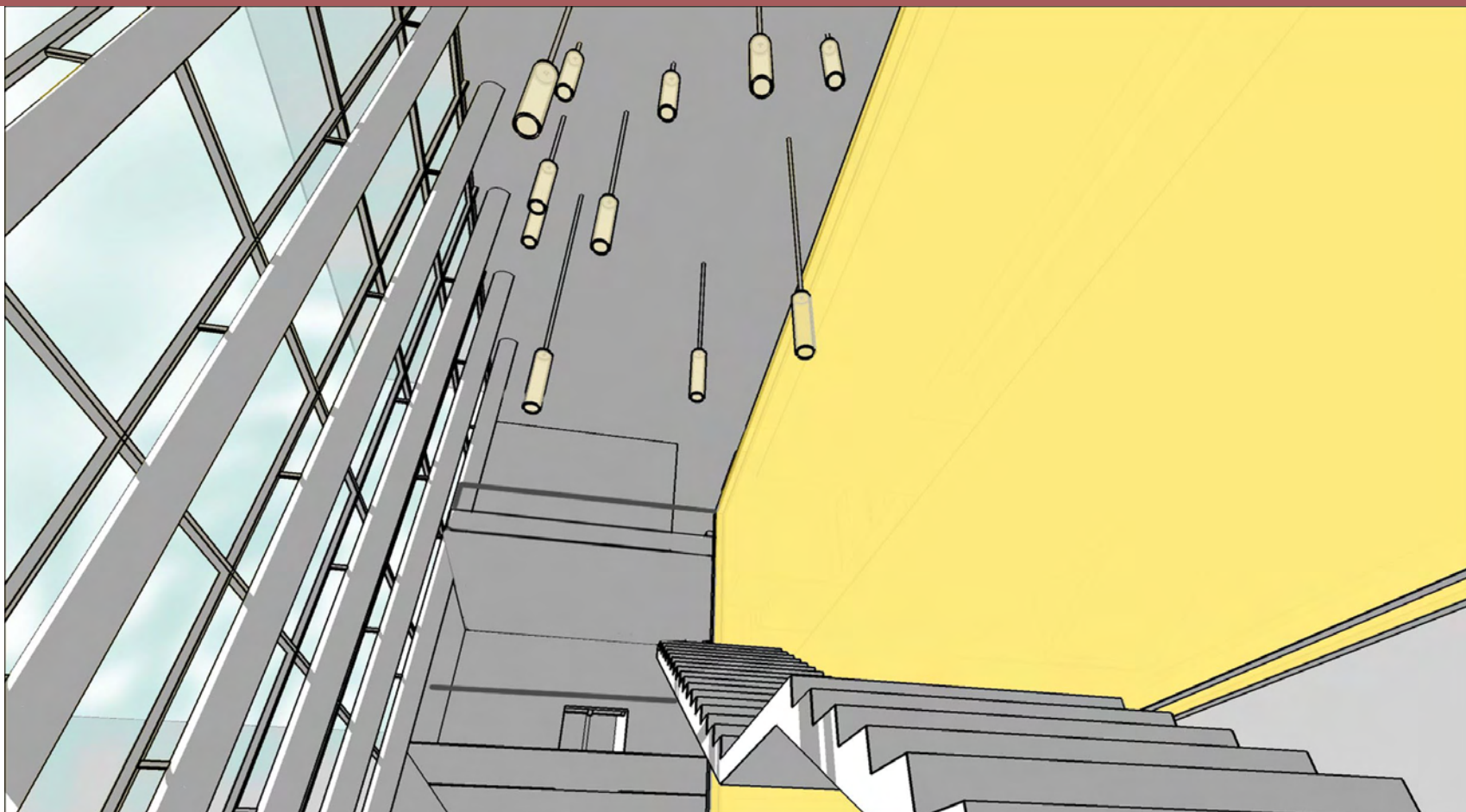
The Council Chamber represents the idea of democracy, the connection between the community and its government. Seating gently rises up to better allow the community members to see the council board. Symbolically, the Council Chamber is the beacon to civic involvement, identity, and pride.

SPACIAL ATMOSPHERE

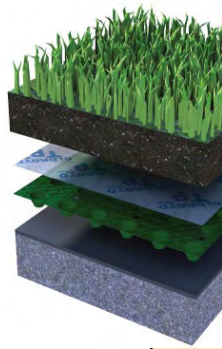




SPACIAL ATMOSPHERE







Green Roof

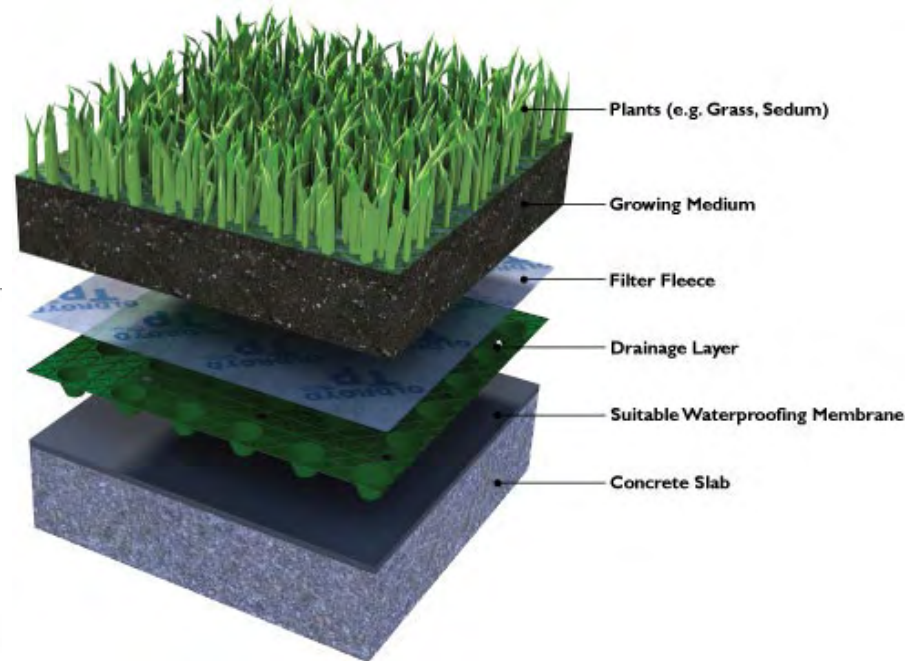
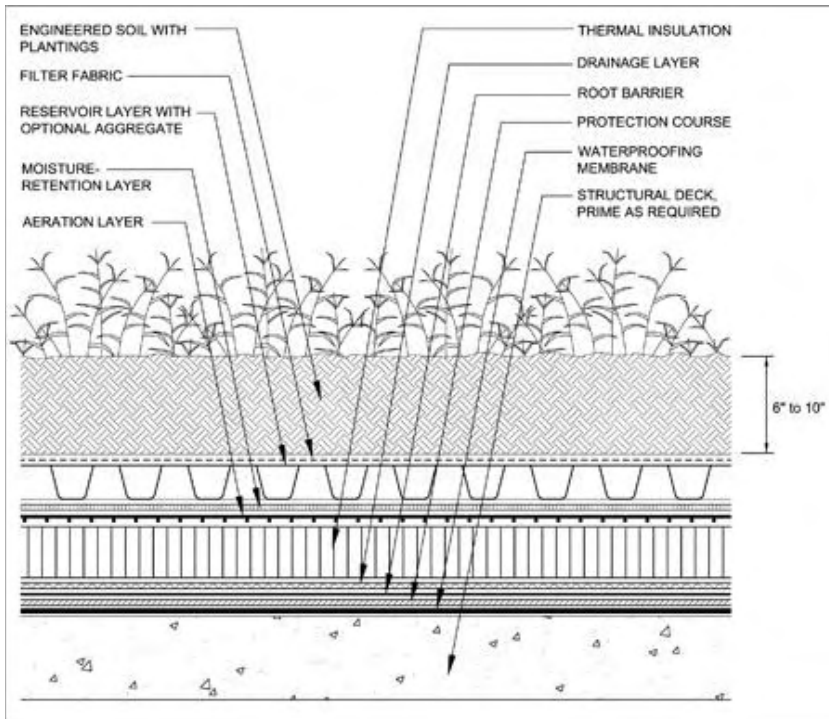
Given the residential area located above East A Street, the city hall proposes to have green roofs to reduce the amount of bare roofing seen from the housing over looking to the train station. The Green roof also reduces the amount of runoff from the buildings as well.



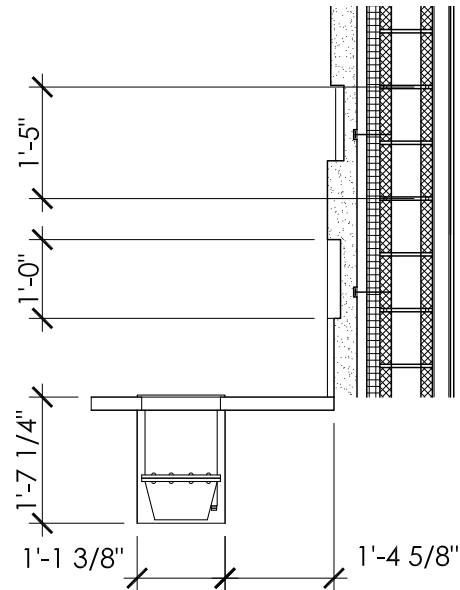
Green Stair

The large monumental stair uses a semi-polished concrete paneling system that allows for vegetation to grow out of it. The inspiration for this came from Eric van Egeraat's competition design for the terraced gardens of the Columbuskwartier Housing Project in Almere, Netherlands.

DETAILS



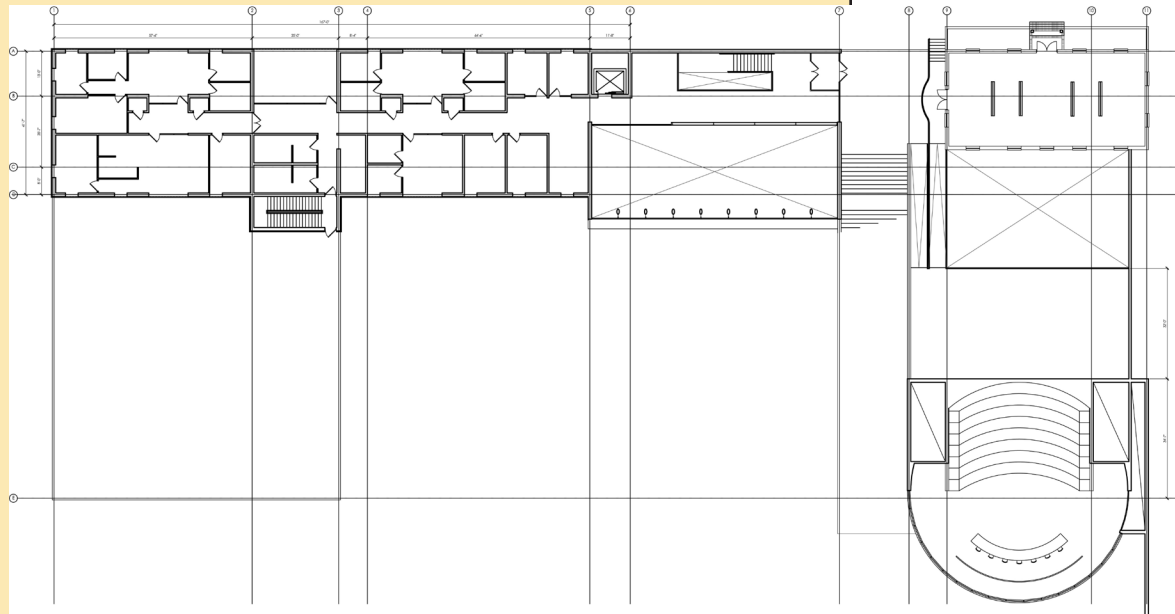
DETAILS

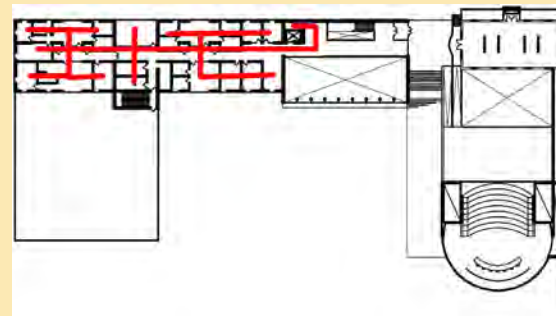
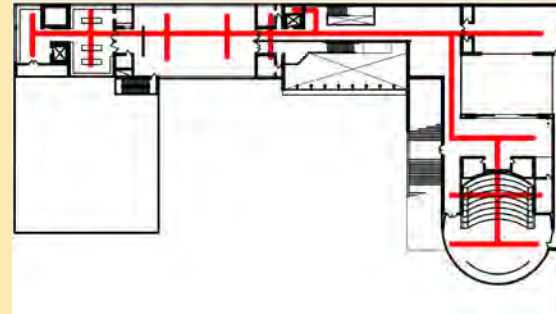
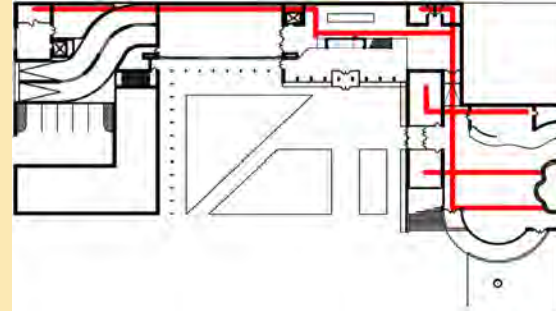


$\frac{1}{2}$ " GWB W/ PAINTED FINISH
 3" METAL C-CHANNEL, 16" O.C.
 8x8x16" CMU BLOCK W/ GROUT
 POURED IN PLACE
 4" FIBERGLASS RIGID INSULATION
 2" AIR CAVITY
 POURED IN PLACE CONCRETE
 VARIED IN WIDTH

DETAILS

Structurally, the building is supported by steel frame and runs on two grids. The administrative wing runs on a 45' x 25' grid and the council chamber runs on a 32' x 40' grid with a 32' x 10' grid on the outsides of the council chamber. The Community History basement floor was dropped and supported by load bearing walls.





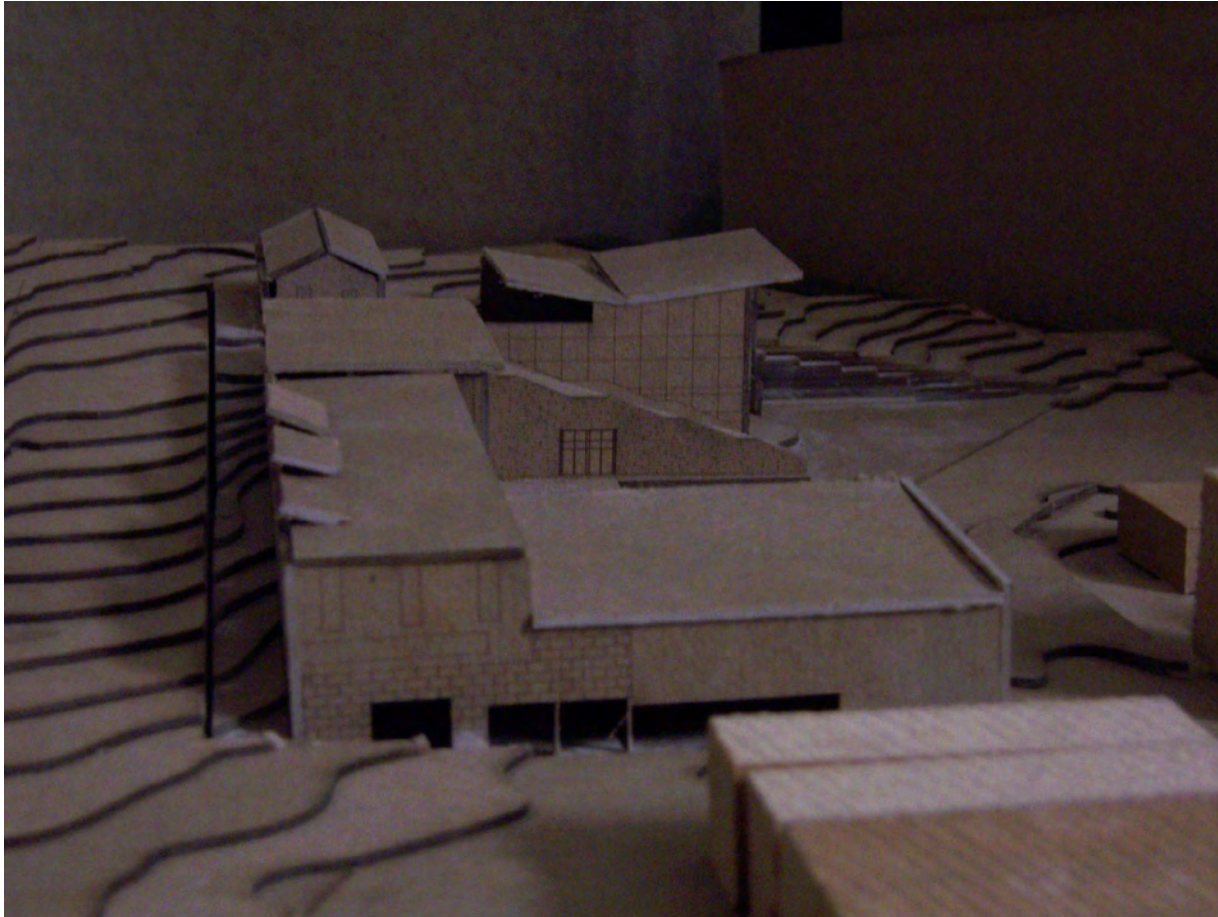
The city hall proposes to use a geothermal CAV mechanical system. The geothermal system reduces duct sizes, and allows the use of borrowing the coils horizontally into the hill of East A Street.

SITE MODEL





SITE MODEL





FINAL PRESENTATION BOARDS

THE 21ST CENTURY CIVIC IDENTITY

DELLEN LEWIS

GRADUATE THESIS STUDIO - PROF. A. COHEN

JANUARY 28, 2010



IDENTITY: THE DISTINGUISHING CHARACTER OR PERSONALITY OF AN INDIVIDUAL

Throughout life, we as individuals, strive to create and adopt a sense of identity. Once our identity is established, we feel more comfortable with ourselves and our surroundings. However, at a larger scale, what happens when a community lacks a sense of identity?

Often there is a lack of involvement in the community. There is no drive for contributing to the majority, whether through community service, town council meetings, government, or community events and activities.

A community without a strong Civic Identity is like a person without a personality. It can be perceived as blank, dull, and lifeless. The Civic Center of a town should encourage its citizens to become involved, to interact both with each other and the government, to harness a sense of pride and identity.



PROJECT PROPOSAL

A Civic Center should represent the community, show where the town has been and where it is going, what is important to the people, as well as the unique contributions of businesses and citizens in the community.

This project proposes to bring the sense of "community" back into the town by revitalizing the civic identity of downtown Brunswick. The approach will capture the history, pride, and identity that were catalyzed by the railroad, bringing citizens back into the center of town for something other than performing municipal duties and special occasions.

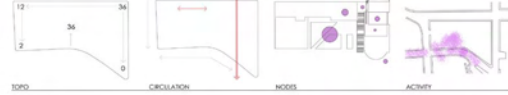
Most small towns struggle to create or find an identity to spark pride and involvement within the community.

Located off the Potomac River, the small town of Brunswick, Maryland does not struggle in identifying its notable contributions to the area. Both the C&O Canal & the S&O Railroad put Brunswick on the map in 1834. Brunswick claims to be the "Home of the Iron Horse."



USE IN CONTEXT

1/8" = 1' 0"

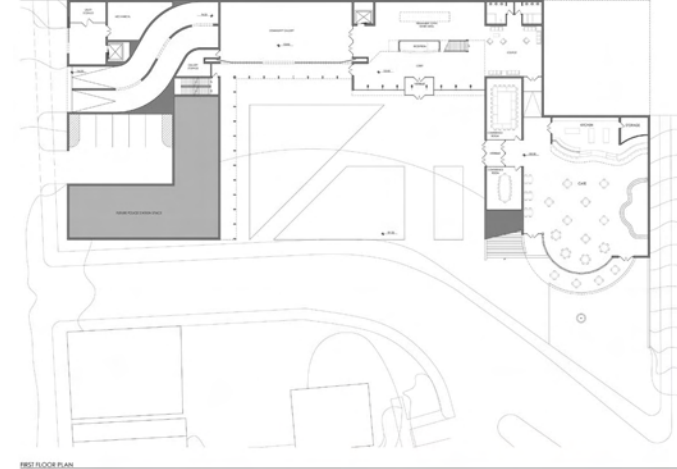


FORM

CIRCULATION

NODES

ACTIVITY



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1/8" = 1' 0"



SOUTH ELEVATION

1/8" = 1' 0"



NORTH ELEVATION

1/8" = 1' 0"



EAST ELEVATION

1/8" = 1' 0"



WEST ELEVATION

1/8" = 1' 0"



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

1/8" = 1' 0"



CIRCULATION

FORM



PLAZA SECTION

1/8" = 1' 0"



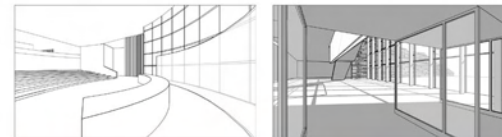
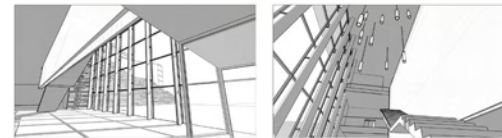
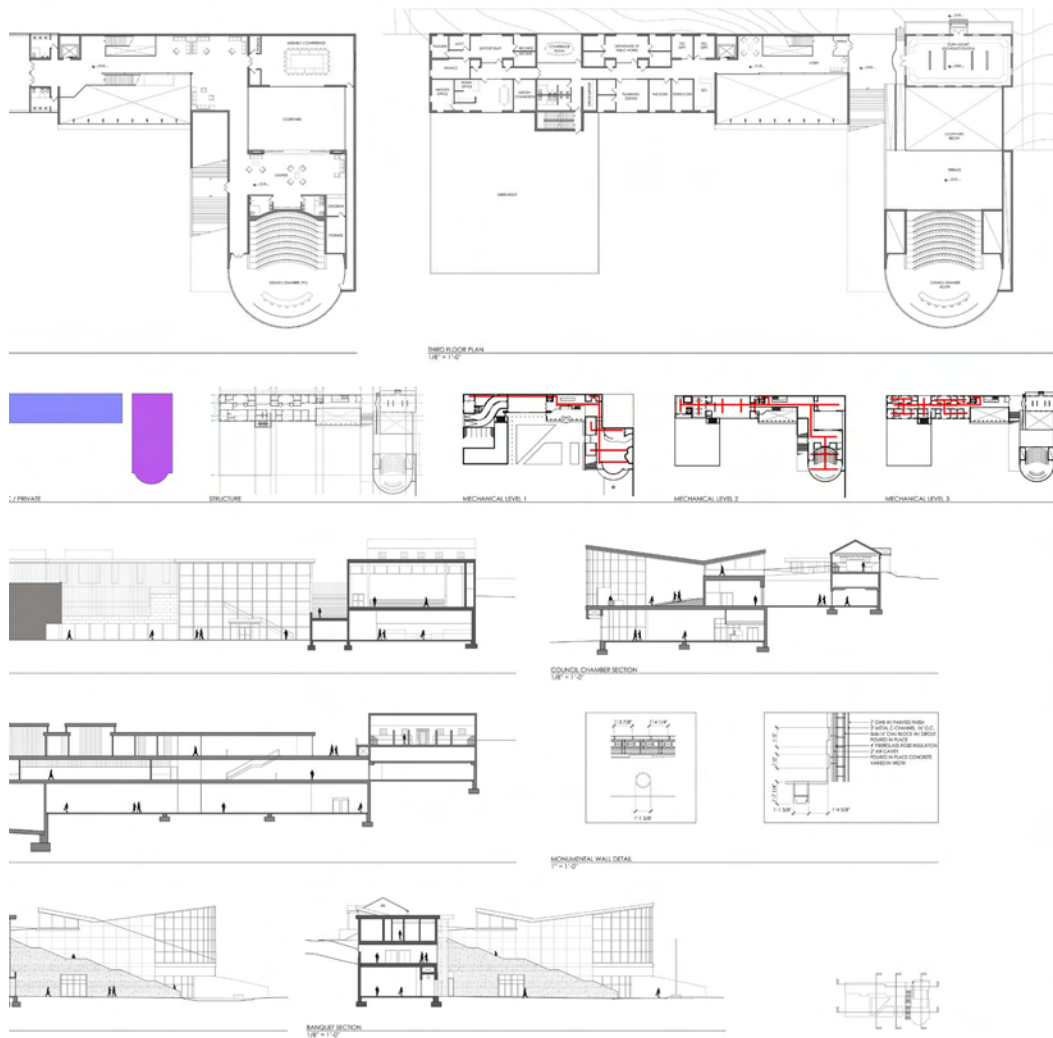
ADMINISTRATION SECTION

1/8" = 1' 0"



LOBBY SECTION

1/8" = 1' 0"



CONCLUSION

The importance of designing for the people is one of the most prevalent challenges throughout the practice of architecture. Creating a building that people enjoy being in should be seen as the ultimate goal when designing. Through this project I was able to explore this process of quality space making to better improve my methods of designing a building with an extended life expectancy.

When designing a Civic Building the emphasis of community involvement is key. After all, the government is for the people and of the people, shouldn't its architecture be of the people? Designing quality spaces that engage the community and encourage them to enter the city hall and civic plaza brings activity to the center of town. Thus making opportunities for the government and the people to develop relationships. This relationship is the foundation for a successful community.

Looking back on the semester I have seen changes in my thought process and my design strategy. I started asking questions about what the people need and desire, rather than being concerned with what they don't want. Designing to win rather than designing not to fail pushed the project further. In conclusion, this project has opened my eyes to the importance of creating spaces that engage the public and bring them in the doors out of choice rather than responsibility.

Changing the idea of the city hall from just a "municipal duty" to an experience that provokes involvement and pride is an on going exploration and one I look forward to continuing.

SPECIAL THANKS

Family + Friends

Andrew Cohen

Bill McQueen

Joann Silva + Janet Lewis

Sue Contente

David Dunn

Brunswick City Administrator

APPENDIX

92	Precedents
101	Design Process
118	Codes + Ordinances
128	References

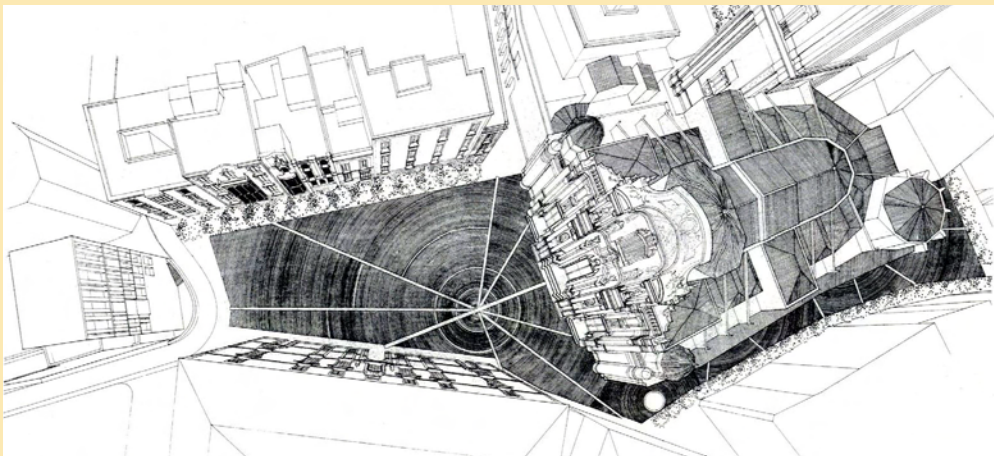
PRECEDENTS

Murcia City Hall - Murcia, Spain

Architect: Rafael Moneo

Plaza Cardenal Belluga in Murcia, Spain was the stage to the Cathedral de Santa Maria. But in 1998 the City of Murcia decided to expand the City Hall and give it a public and monumental face in the plaza, joining two major community influences, the Church and Government.

The building allows the government to now engage in the public plaza and life of Murcia's citizens. Respecting its neighbors and predecessors on the plaza, entrance to the City Hall is not located directly on the plaza. The ground floor allows for entrance off of Polo Medina Street. The lower level creates an entry patio that is sunken below the plaza level, "further buffering" space between the building and the plaza.



Site Plan



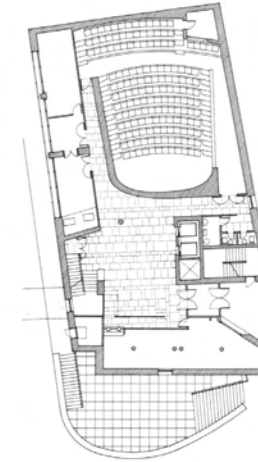


View to Church - Civic Balcony

Solid at its base, the monumental façade opens views from the City Hall Balcony, of which was the basis for the rest of the building's grid system. The ground floor being the most public, houses programs such as City Information and Tourism desks as well as access to the Council Chamber. Above floors house offices, conference rooms, and other support amenities.

The major opening on Moneo's stone pillared façade looks into a room fitting for large gatherings and events.

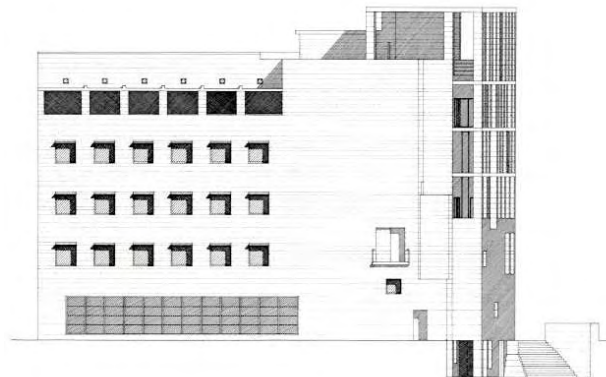
Side Elevations relate to the streetscape's muted facades.



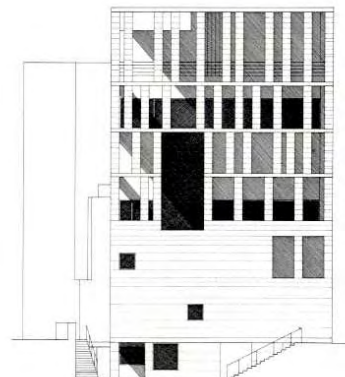
Ground Floor



First Floor



South Elevation



East Elevation -Plaza

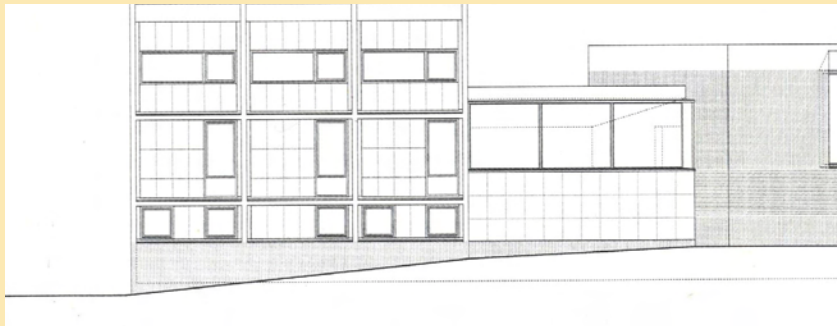
PRECEDENTS

Valdemaqueda Town Hall - Valdemaqueda, Spain

Architects: Paredes Pedrosa

Small in size, Valdemaqueda Town Hall was designed under a number of limitations. The town had a lack of resources, space, and money to build a suitable City Hall. Madrid Regional Authorities saw the importance of a house of government for the town and helped fund and commission the project.

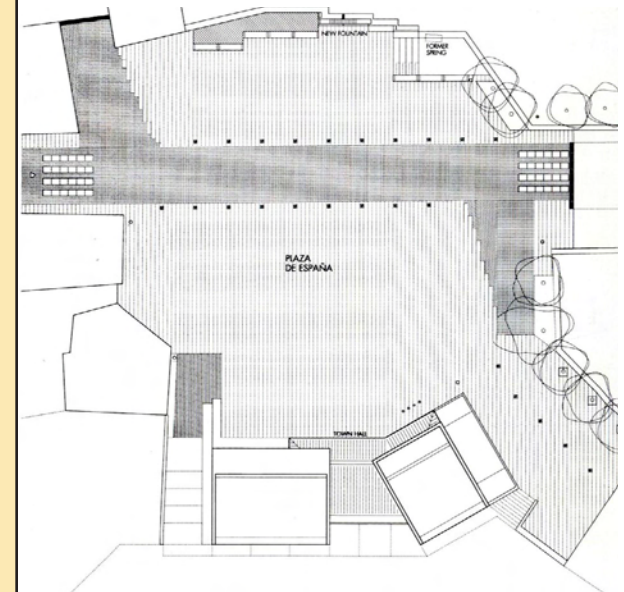
Valdemaqueda is composed over several dispersed volumes; this idea was translated into the language of the City Hall. The design was tackled by Paredes Pedrosa Architecture Firm, and composed of two volumes – the working offices are connected to the Council Chamber by a large entry vestibule.



South Elevation



Main Entry Approach



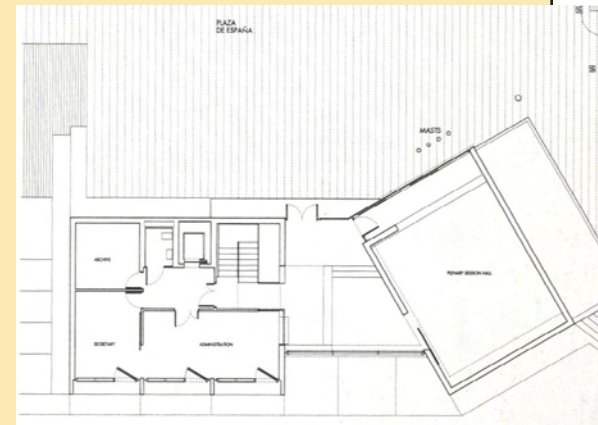
Site Plan



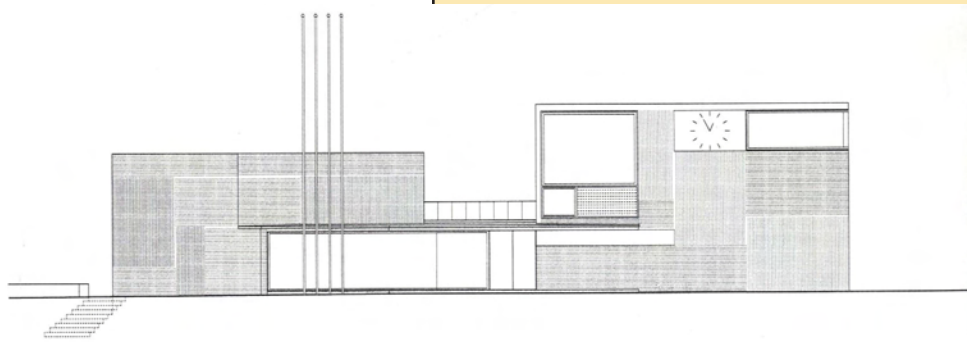
South Elevation

The project took advantage of local materials while keeping a formal appearance. Concrete and slate emulate the solidity and monolithic presence of the government, with glass allowing public views both in and out of the building to the Plaza de Espana.

Valdemaqueda incorporates several elements of traditional city halls, such as a large clock and celebrated stairs from the plaza to the main entry lobby.

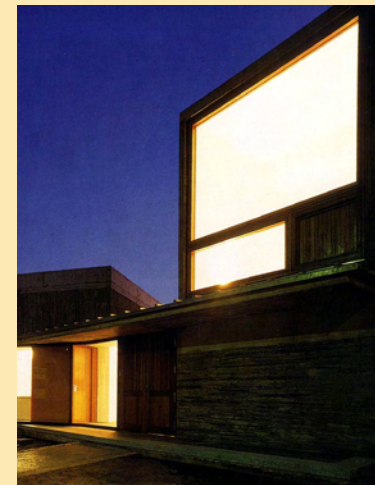


Floor Plan



North Elevation

Windows allow a vast amount of light into the building as well as creating a lantern effect at night.



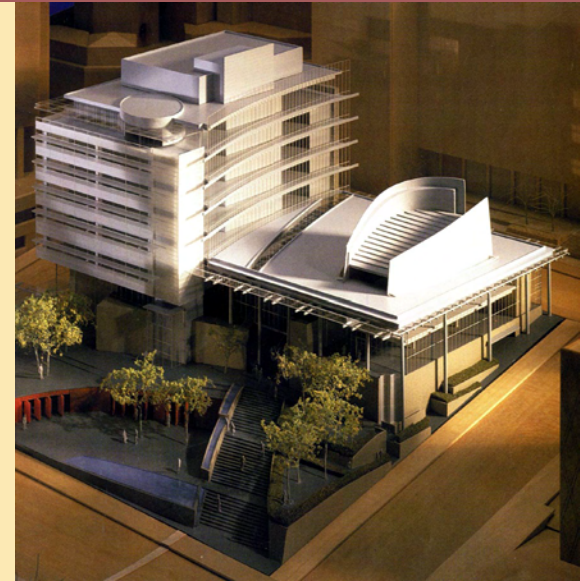
PRECEDENTS

Seattle City Hall - Seattle, Washington

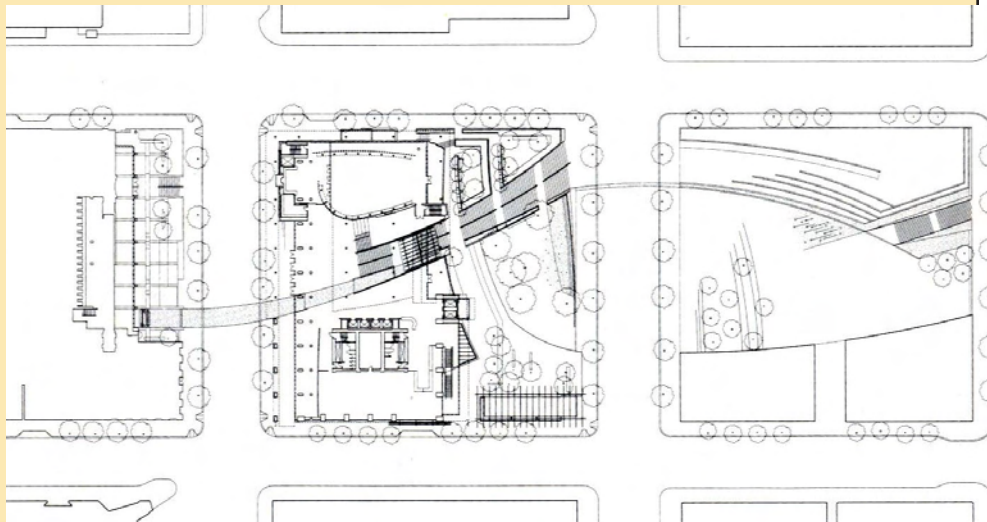
Architect: Bassetti Architects and Bohlin Cywinski Jackson

Due to decay and safety issues, Seattle's old city hall was in dire need of renovation or replacement. Renovation was not worth the expense and the City of Seattle decided to commission a new Civic Center complex would be more worthwhile.

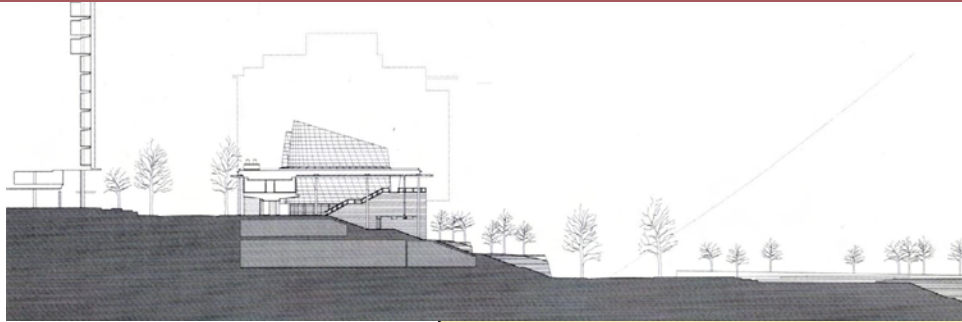
Bassetti Architects & Bohlin Jackson developed a "Civic Campus" that would revitalize the prominence of city government and the connection between the public and their government. The campus stretches across three city blocks progressing 100' in elevation. The new City Hall is located on 4th Avenue overlooking the civic plaza descending down to 3rd Avenue.



Seattle City Hall Model



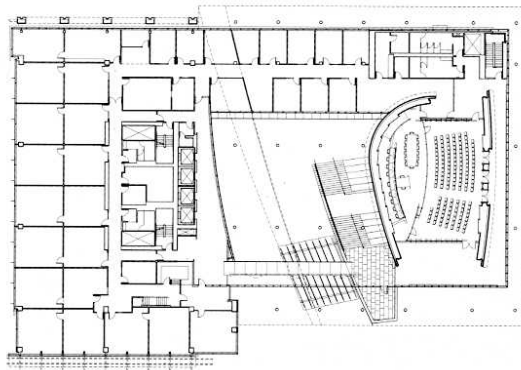
Site Plan



City Hall Section

Seattle City Hall is composed of two volumes - a tower which houses the government offices and the Council Chamber volume. Within the tower, the main offices of the government and their support spaces are found.

The glass wall symbolizes the openness of the government to its people at the Chamber of Council Camber, while also acting as a light beacon. The Chamber itself serves the sole purpose of holding public meeting and hearings. Ceremonial meeting areas encourage Seattle's citizens to enter and be a part of the community and contribute to the government practices and decisions.



Ground Floor Plan



Rendering - View from Plaza

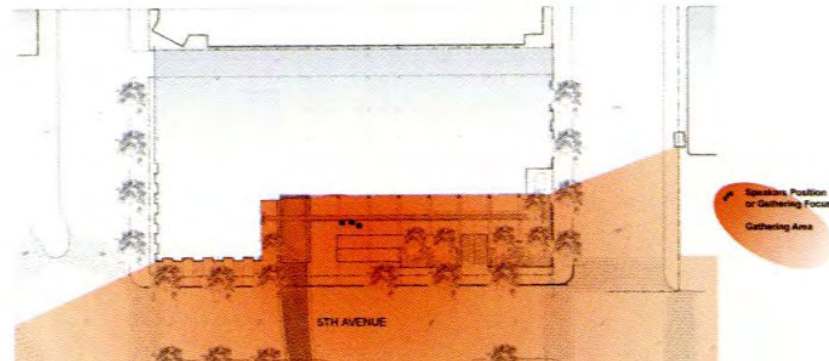
PRECEDENTS

Seattle Civic Plaza - Seattle, Washington

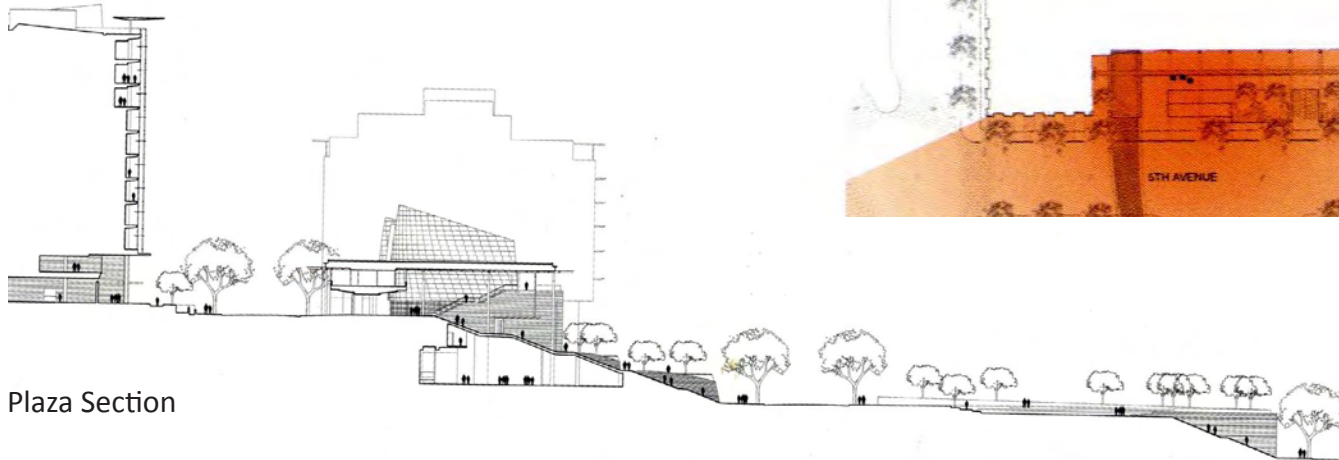
Architects: Gustafson Partners and Swift & Company

Gustafson Partners and Swift & Company were behind the design of the city's space for "reflection of democratic life."

With the need of a new City Hall and Civic Catalyst, the City of Seattle recognized the importance of a civic plaza to be incorporated into the civic campus.

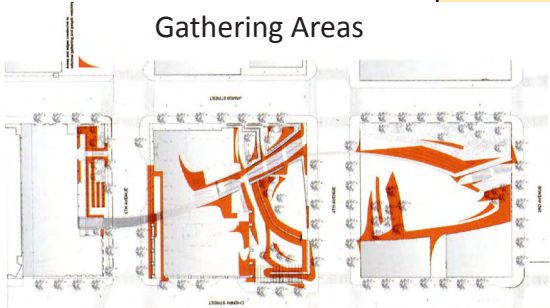


Civic Plaza - Site Plan



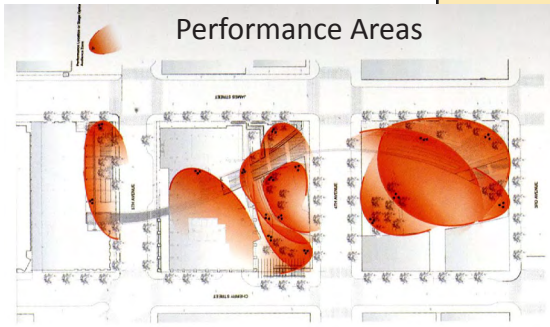
Plaza Section

Gathering Areas



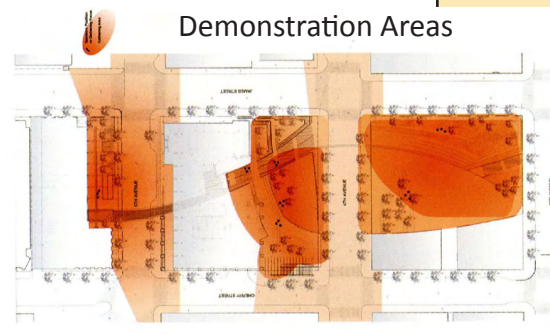
◀ The change in grade proved to be too steep for a civic mall; however designers harnessed the slope and developed a system of terraced spaces. These nodes create the opportunities for many demonstrations, exhibitions, and concerts to take place for the community as well as providing intimate areas for activities as simple as games, reading, and people watching.

Performance Areas



Seattle's prominent connection to the water is symbolized in a continuous flow of water starting at the Justice Center, the highest point of the civic center, through the City Hall and down through the Civic Plaza. The public plaza will be extended down to the first block of the civic campus (as mentioned earlier).

Demonstration Areas



City Hall Plaza - West Elevation

Throughout the semester there were a series of design reviews. Preliminary design explored the site mostly through model and massing, the midcrit focused on materiality and human scale, where gate started getting into program and space more.

The project moved very slowly during the first few reviews, struggling with program and the idea of civic presence. At times appearance was too modest to be considered a monumental City Hall.

A big push was made in the project just before gate and continued on to the final. Evidence of development throughout the semester was clear, but slower. Finally after throwing “preconceptions” out the window, major decisions were made to better the project.

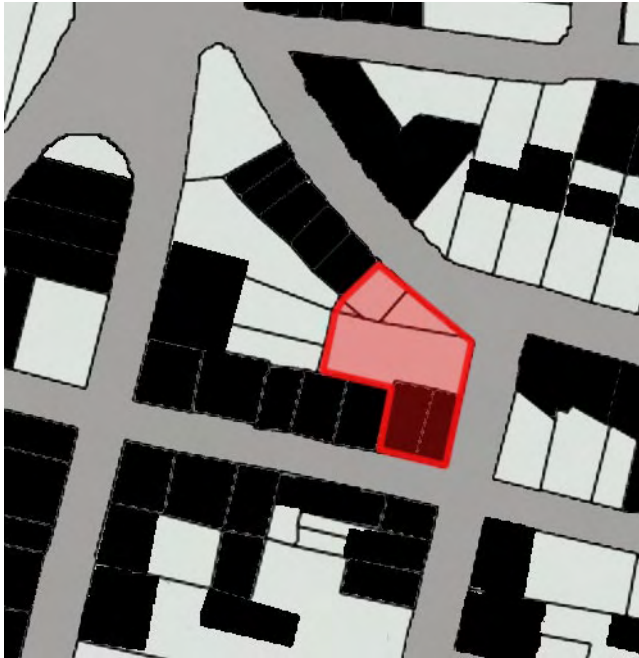
PRELIMINARY DESIGN

In the beginning stages of the project, massing studies were prominent. Several experiments with modeling were conducted. Program adjacencies were explored.

However, the programmatic elements were running weak. The general ideas were there, but the meat was not. The two schemes tested the green as an interactive place and as a passive place.

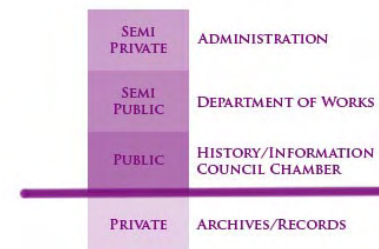
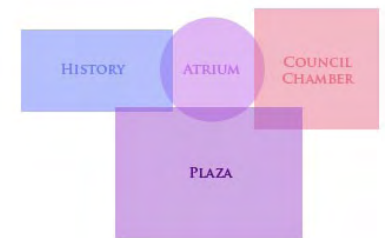
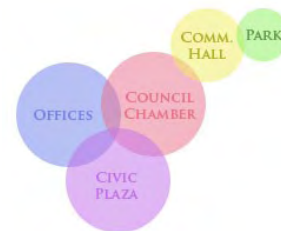
In scheme 1 the green engaged the public and had them moving and climbing. An amphitheater was designed to suggest the gathering of people.

Scheme 2 however, was designed more as a flat and opened space. Allowing events and activities to leak into it. Providing space for farmers markets and demonstrations or kids at play.

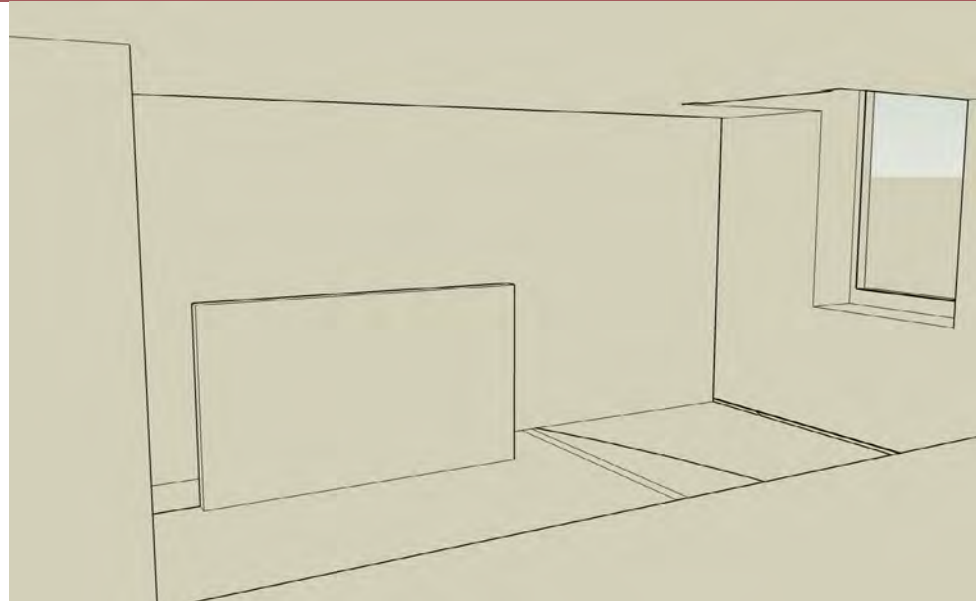
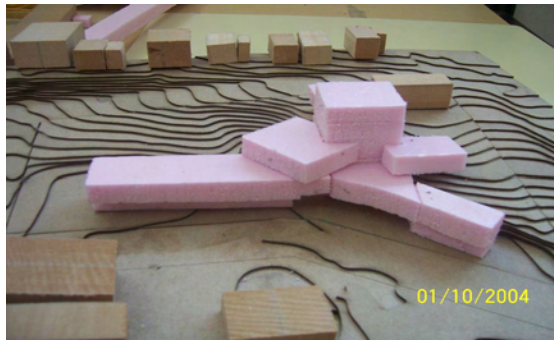


Preliminary Site

Program Exploration



PRELIMINARY DESIGN: SCHEME 1



Council Chamber

Scheme 1 started the idea of “interlocking” within a vertical circulation space.

The town green was pushed to the back of the site to bring the City Hall’s presence to Potomac Street.

The green acted as an amphitheater for outdoor assemblies.

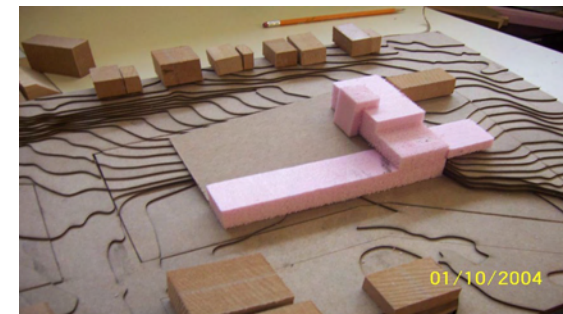


Council Chamber

Scheme 2 also used the “interlocking” volume and pushed the green to East A Street.

This time the green was slightly sloped to raise the City Hall from the street. This also made it easier to have events on the green.

However, with the activity being on Potomac, neither of these schemes embraced the town green and activity together



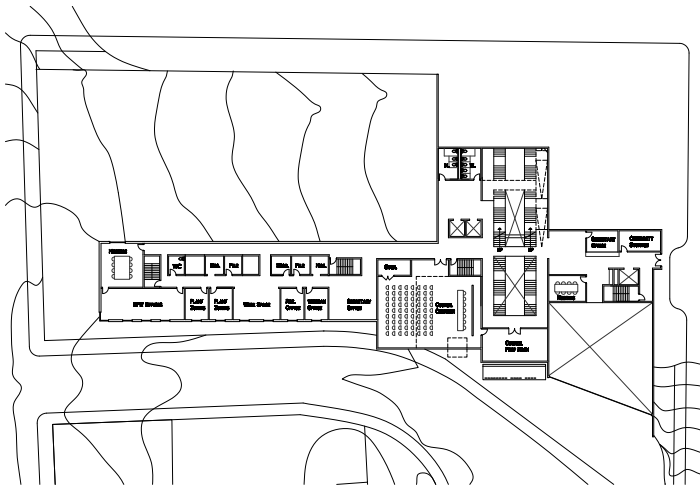
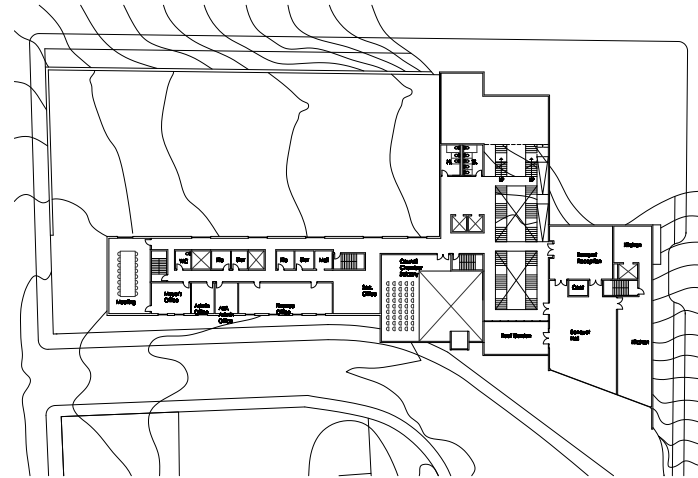
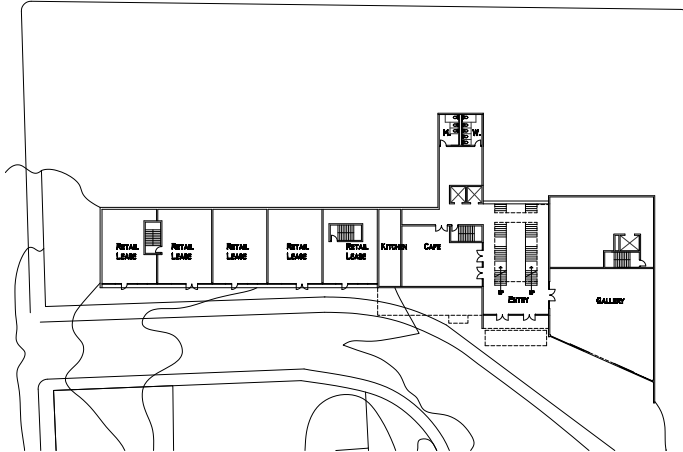
MIDCRIT DESIGN

The Midcrit Review focused mostly on the elevational studies and appearance of the City Hall. Material studies were done and explored in hopes to find a scale that would relate to the pedestrian and also relate to the “public-privateness” of each program area.

Still experimenting with the City Hall fronting Potomac Street, the green is cut off from community activity that is orchestrated on the street during events.



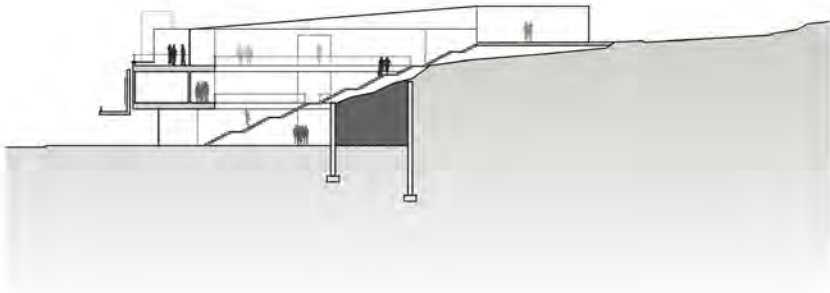
MIDCRIT DESIGN: FLOOR PLANS



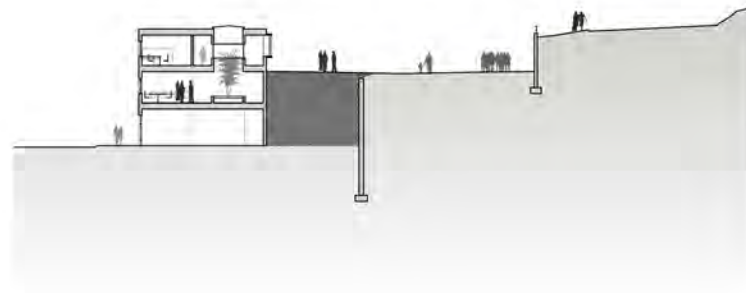
Experimentation with the connecting stair occurred often during and after the Midcrit. At this point, the stair was interior still acting as a connector.

However, as it was not located at the “elbow” so this was not a strong enough gesture for the idea of a “connector.”

MIDCRIT DESIGN: SITE SECTIONS



The idea of cutting into the hill of East A Street

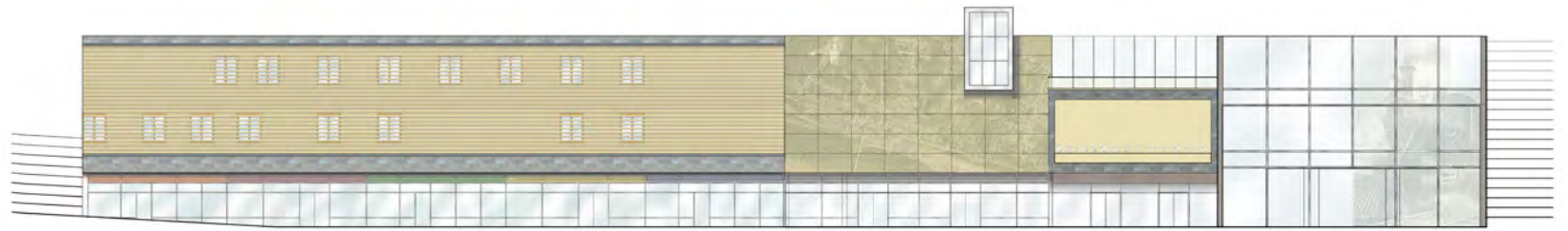


Courtyard still on backside of City Hall



Three story with Administration above + Public Interface below

MIDCRIT DESIGN: ELEVATIONAL STUDY



Elevational Study



Material Inspiration



GATE DESIGN

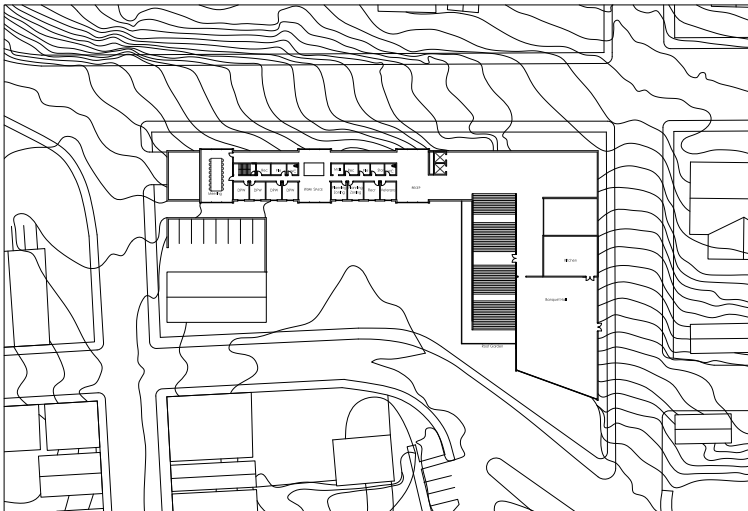
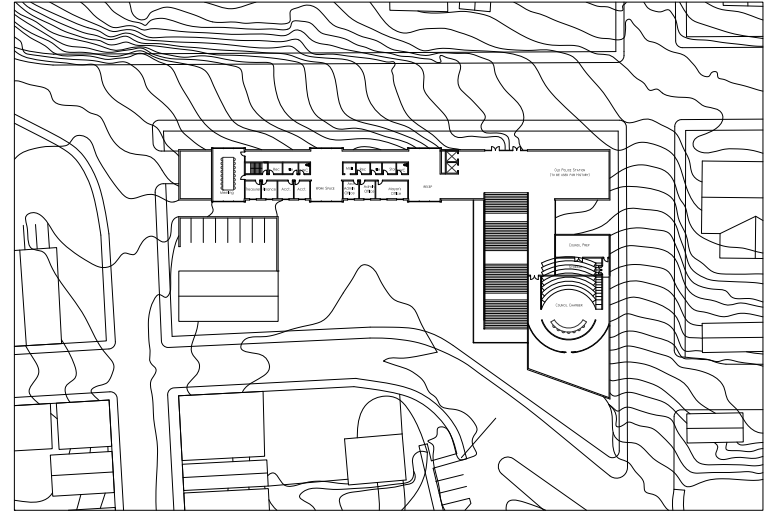
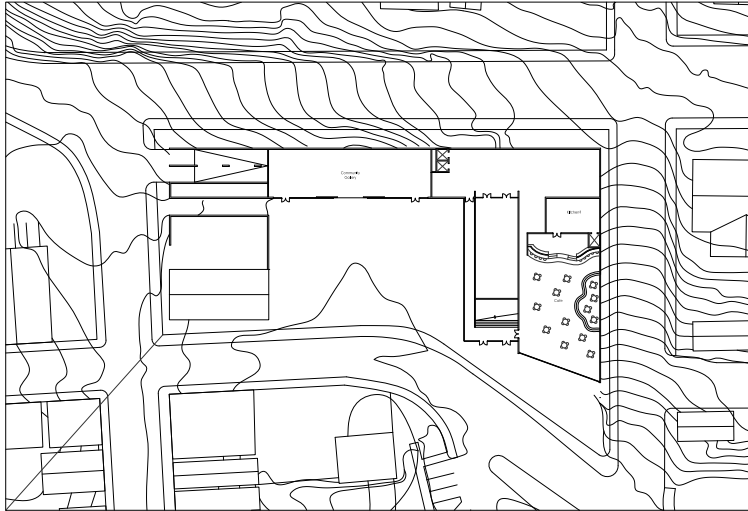
Prior to the gate review the main green location was contemplated, ultimately moving the green to Potomac Street. This large green provides a larger area for community events such as First Fridays and Railroad Days to gather.

The monumental stair is still struggling in this phase as it is too massive to be an interior stair, and yet if made smaller is unproportionate with the building.

Master Planning has entered the mix in the decision to incorporate the old police station into the linking between the administrative wing and the community functions.

The City Hall has taken over approximately 70% of the site. Further developments experiment with increasing the amount of exterior space to provide more areas for the public to come in.

GATE DESIGN: FLOOR PLANS

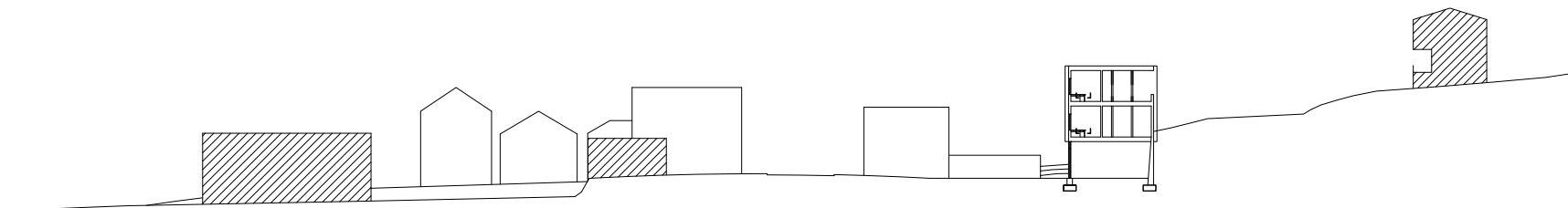
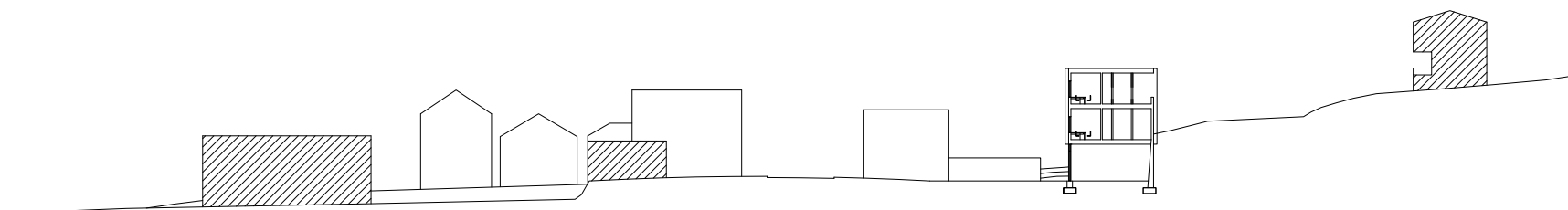
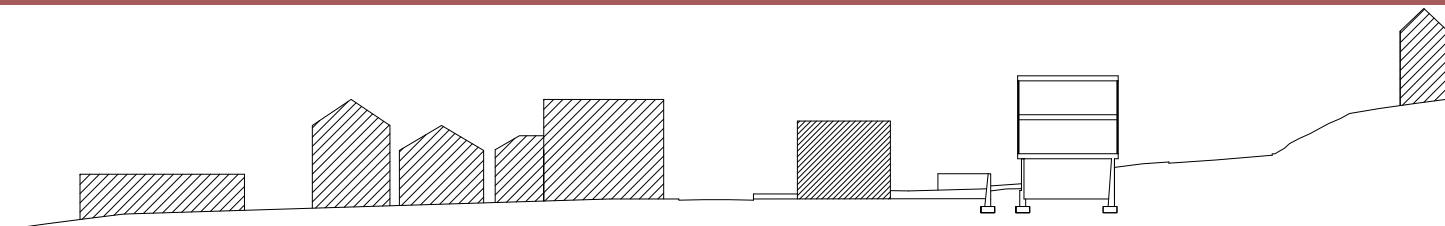


The stair has become a link between Potomac Street and East A Street that differ in grade by 36 feet. The stairs can be used as circulation as well as outdoor space to socialize on.

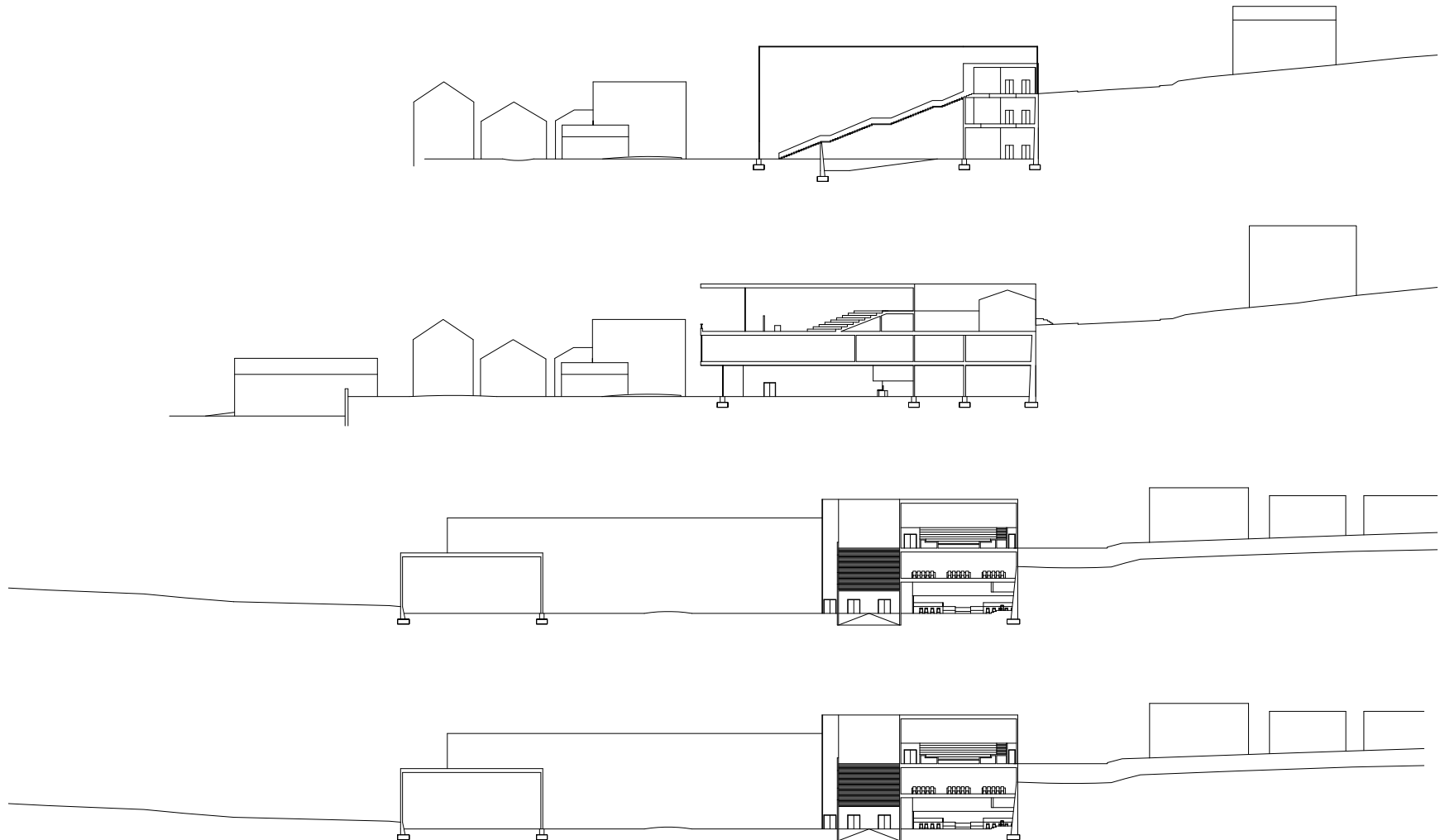
The town green has moved to Potomac Street to embrace the activities of community events.

A master plan of a new police station has been incorporated so that the old can be used for Community History and serve as the “elbow” of the building.

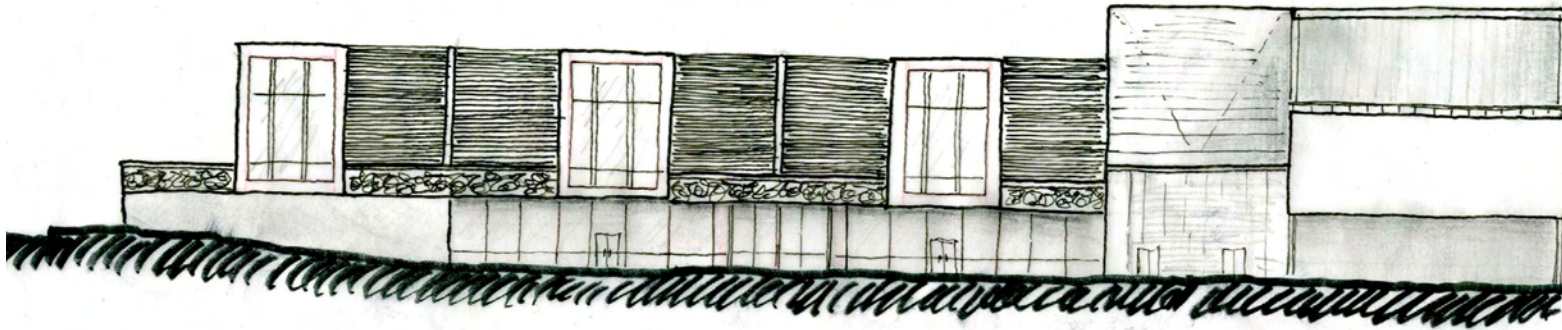
GATE DESIGN: SITE SECTIONS



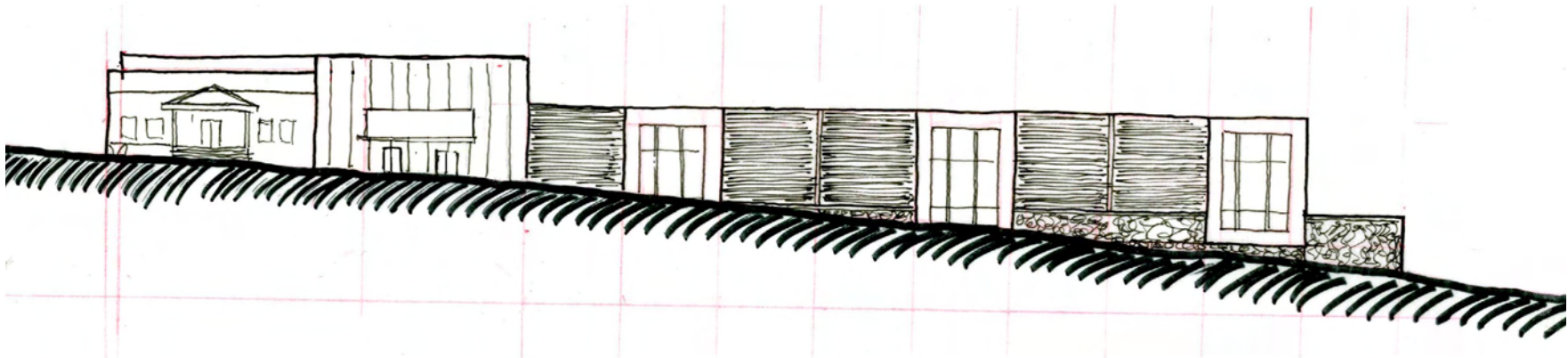
GATE DESIGN: SITE SECTIONS

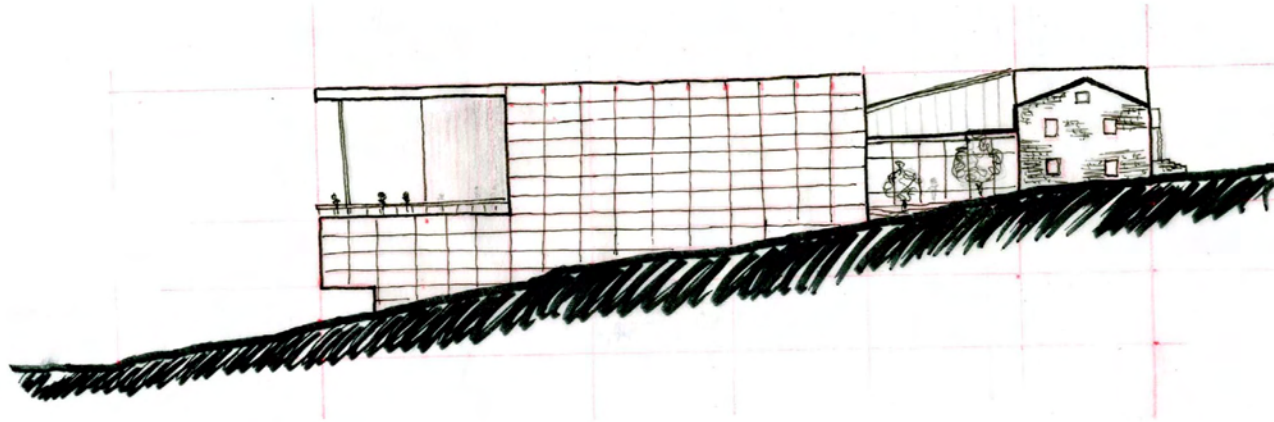


GATE DESIGN: ELEVATIONAL STUDIES

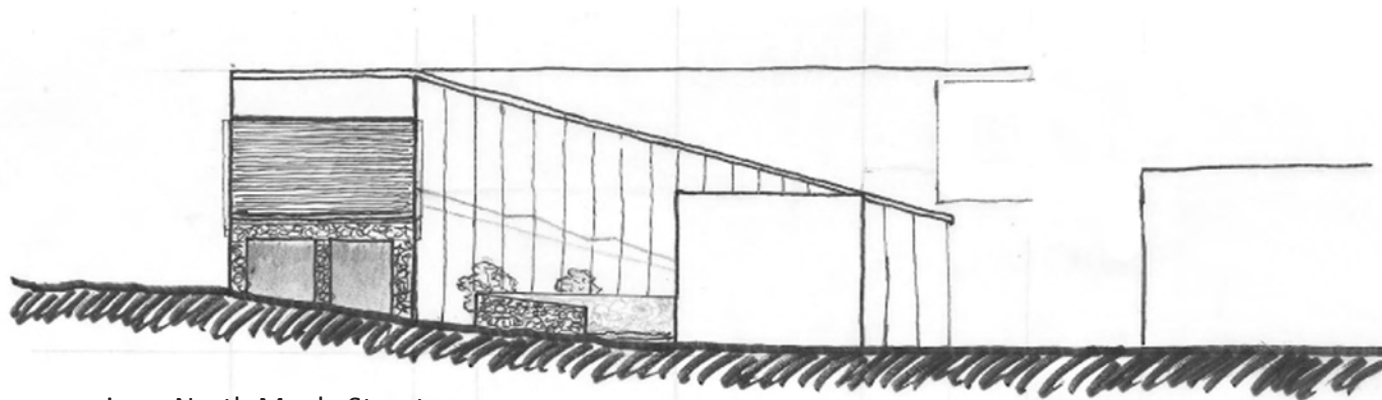


Cladding idea developed for offices



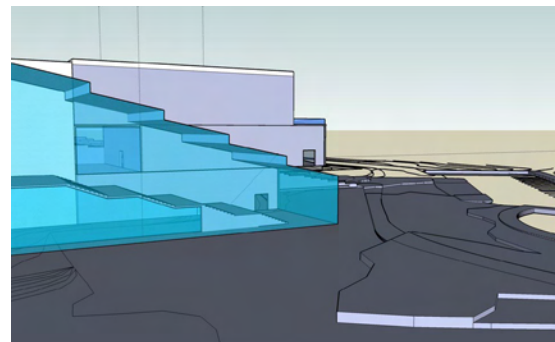
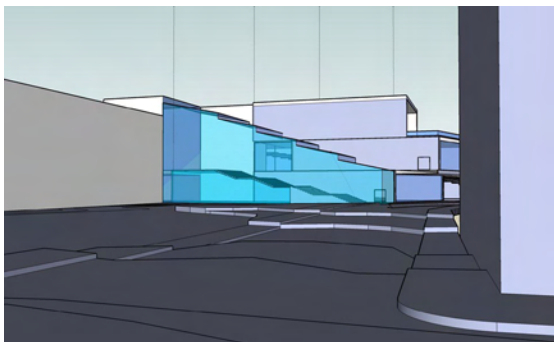
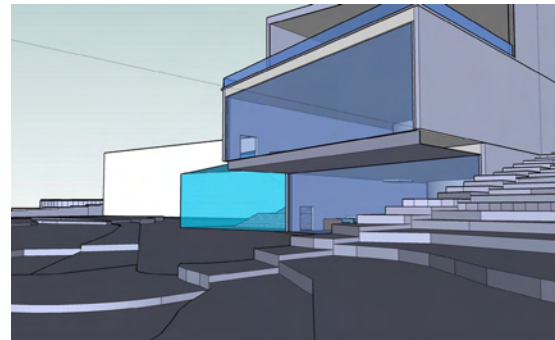
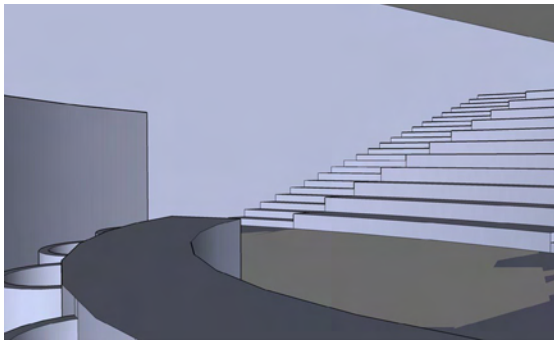


Stone paneling used for council chamber



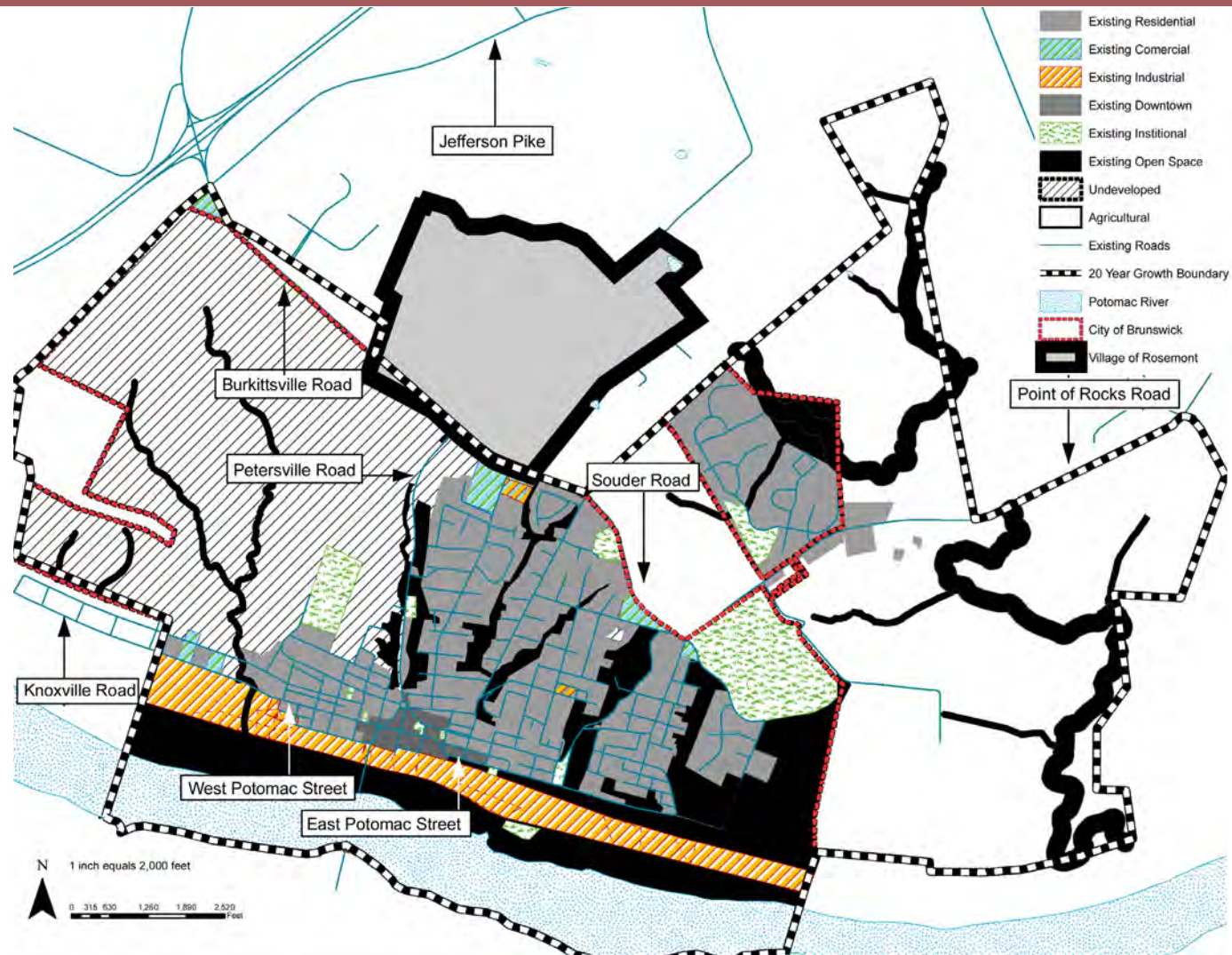
Parking access is on North Maple Street

GATE DESIGN: INTERIOR STUDIES





ZONING MAP



ZONING ORDINANCES

DETAILED NEIGHBORHOOD ZONING

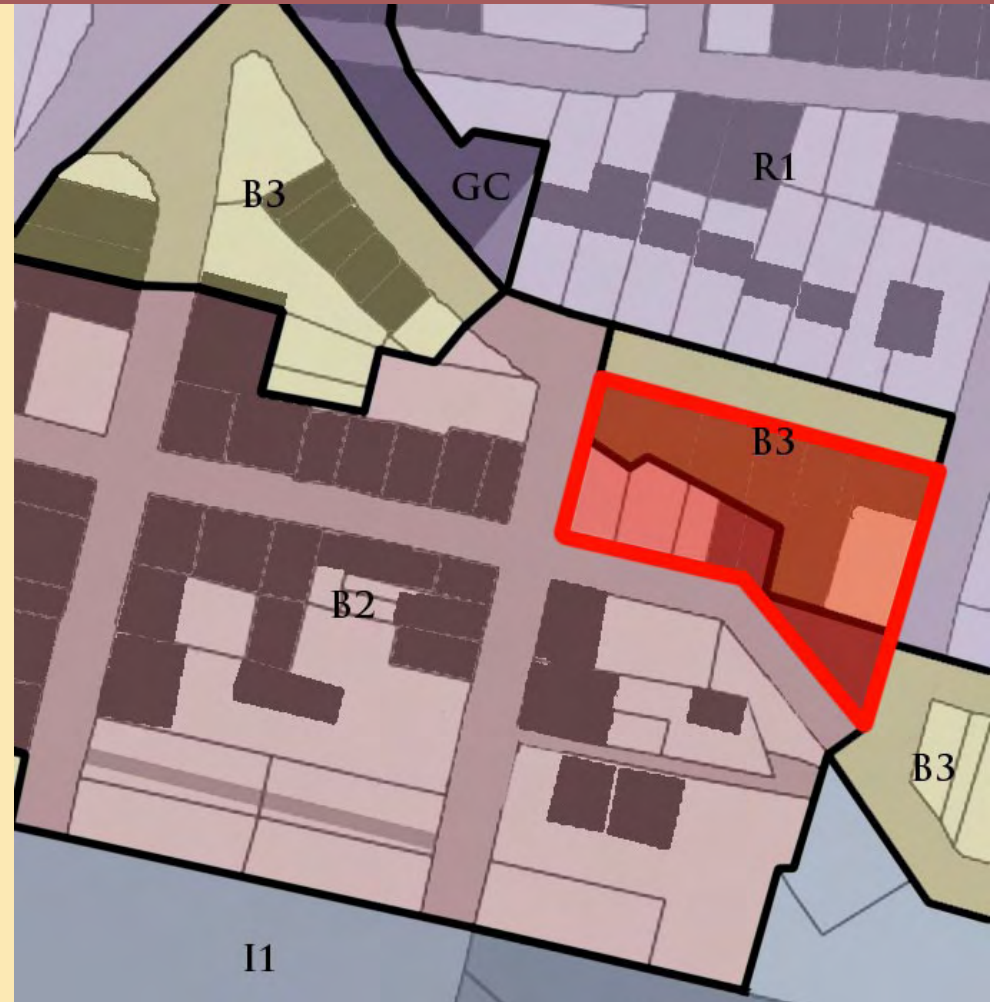
B2 CENTRAL BUSINESS

B3 BUSINESS TRANSITIONAL

GC GENERAL COMMERCIAL

I1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

R1 LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL



The following buildings/structures, and uses are permitted in the B-2 District.

- A. Single-family, two-family, duplex, and multi-family dwellings are permitted except as follows:
 - 1. Any building or lot of record identified as being used for commercial, office or other business use will not be permitted to convert the first floor (street level) to residences unless the gross square footage of the first floor exceeds twelve hundred (1200) square feet, in which case fifty percent (50%) of the first floor may be converted to residential use, however, this shall not include the "store front" area visible to pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- B. Department and clothing stores.
- C. Furniture and appliance stores.
- D. Paint and hardware stores.
- E. Banks and savings and loan institutions.
- F. Specialty shops, including jewelry, stationery, florist, pet shops, and video rental shops.
- G. Business and professional offices.
- H. Small appliance and shoe repair shops.
- I. Indoor recreational establishments, including theaters, bowling alleys, and health clubs.

ORDINANCES: CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

- J. Automobile service stations and minor repair shops.
- K. Restaurants, including entertainment activities, excluding drive-through eating establishments.
- L. Funeral homes and mortuaries.
- M. Grocery, liquor and convenience stores.
- N. Building tradesman office, workshop, and indoor storage.
- O. Personal services, including laundry/dry cleaning, sewing/tailoring and beauty/barber shops, and pet services with no outdoor kennels.
- P. Laundromats.
- Q. Printing & publishing establishments.
- R. Antique shops.
- S. Broadcast studios.
- T. Public/governmental buildings and properties which are cultural, recreational, administrative, or public service in nature, but not including storage yards, warehouses, or garages.
- U. Fire and rescue services.
- V. Commercial automobile parking lots.

LOT AREA, WIDTH, AND SETBACK REQUIREMENTS FOR THE B2 DISTRICT

PRINCIPAL PERMITTED AND SPECIAL EXCEPTION USES	MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQ. FT.)	MINIMUM LOT AREA PER DWELLING UNIT OR USE (SQ. FT.)	MINIMUM LOT WIDTH (FT.)	FRONT YARD SETBACK (FT.)	REAR YARD SETBACK (FT.)	SIDE YARD SETBACK (FT.)	OTHER SETBACK REQUIREMENTS
All uses		*			20		20' side yard setback from any adjacent residential use

*Residential dwellings and/or commercial uses shall be limited to one (1) per one thousand (1000) sq. ft. of lot area or one (1) per one thousand (1000) sq. ft. of net floor area of the building, whichever is greater.

ORDINANCES: BUSINESS TRANSITIONAL DISTRICT

The following buildings/structures and uses are permitted in the B-3 District.

- A. Single- and two-family dwellings.
- B. Duplexes.
- C. Townhouses.
- D. Multiple-family dwellings.
- E. Houses of worship.
- F. Public schools and educational institutions.
- G. Public/governmental buildings and properties which are cultural, recreational, administrative or public service in nature, but not including storage yards, warehouses or garages.
- H. Recycling centers.
- I. Fire and rescue services.
- J. Parks, playgrounds and community centers.
- K. Business and professional offices.

ORDINANCES: BUSINESS TRANSITIONAL DISTRICT

- L. Child care centers, provided they meet the Child Care Administration's Licensing requirements for commercial child care facilities.
- M. Indoor storage and warehouse buildings for the purpose of indoor storage of goods and/or material which will be retailed, processed, or disposed of off premises, but not including auto wrecking, junk or other salvage storage yards or truck terminals.
- N. Commercial automobile parking lots.
- O. ⁵⁸ Nursing homes and domiciliary care/assisted living facilities, provided that one (1) off-street parking space is provided for each employee and for each three (3) patients to be cared for therein.
- P. Medical and dental clinics.

The following accessory buildings/structures and uses are permitted in the B-3 District.

- A. Those buildings, structures and uses customarily accessory and incidental to any principal permitted use or authorized special exception of the B-3 District.
- B. Parking, in accordance with Article 23, except where otherwise expressly stated in this Article.
- C. Fences, in accordance with Section 5.10.

ORDINANCES: BUSINESS TRANSITIONAL DISTRICT

- D. Home occupations and resident professional offices, in accordance with Section 5.11.
- E. Signs, in accordance with Article 22.

The following buildings/structures and uses are permitted in the B-3 District with Board of Appeals approval only, and are subject to conditions of approval as listed below. Other conditions of approval may be imposed by the Board of Appeals.

- A. Those retail businesses permitted in the B-1 Neighborhood Business District and the B-2 Central Business District.
- B. Limited manufacturing and assembly uses.
- C. Any other use determined by the Board of Appeals to be of the same general character as the principal permitted use or authorized special exceptions of the B-3 District.

All Special Exceptions must conform to the following conditions:

- 1. All businesses, services or processing shall be conducted wholly within a completely enclosed building.
- 2. Processes and equipment employed and goods processed shall be limited to those which are not objectionable by reason of hazard, odor, dust, smoke, cinders, gas, fumes, noise, vibration, radiation, refuse matter or water-carried waste, and must

ORDINANCES: BUSINESS TRANSITIONAL DISTRICT

LOT AREA, WIDTH, AND SETBACK REQUIREMENTS FOR THE B2 DISTRICT

PRINCIPAL PERMITTED AND SPECIAL EXCEPTION USES	MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQ. FT.)	MINIMUM LOT AREA PER DWELLING UNIT OF USE* (SQ. FT.)	MINIMUM LOT WIDTH (FT.)	FRONT YARD** SETBACK (FT.)	REAR YARD SETBACK (FT.)	SIDE YARD*** SETBACK (FT.)	OTHER SETBACK REQUIREMENTS
Single-family dwelling units	5,000	5,000	50	25	30	6	
Two-family dwelling units	5,550	2,750	50	25	25	6	
Duplex units	2,750		27	25	30	6	
Townhouses	1,800	3,500****	18	25	30	10*****	
Multi-family dwelling units	12,000	4,000*****	50	25	25	10	
All others				40	50	20	

REFERENCES

Brunswick Information + History + Codes

Brunswick City Website

<http://www.brunswickmd.gov/touraboutbrunswick.htm>

Brunswick Crossing Website

<http://brunswickcrossing.com/>

Brunswick Town Planning

<http://www.brunswickmd.gov/PlanningHome.htm>

Precedents + Inspiration

Precedents

Fentress, Curtis W. Civic Builders. Chichester, England: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2002.

Inspired by Erick Van Egeraat Projects – Pubic Buildings

<http://www.erickvanegeraat.com/>

Civic Space + Buildings

Fentress, Curtis W. *Civic Builders*. Chichester, England: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2002.

Goodsell, Charles T. *The Social Meaning of Civic Space: Studying Political Authority Through Architecture*. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1998.

Lebovich, William L. *America's City Halls*. Washington, DC: The Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1984.

Tittler, Robert. *Architecture and Power: The Town Hall and the English Urban Community c. 1500-1640*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

