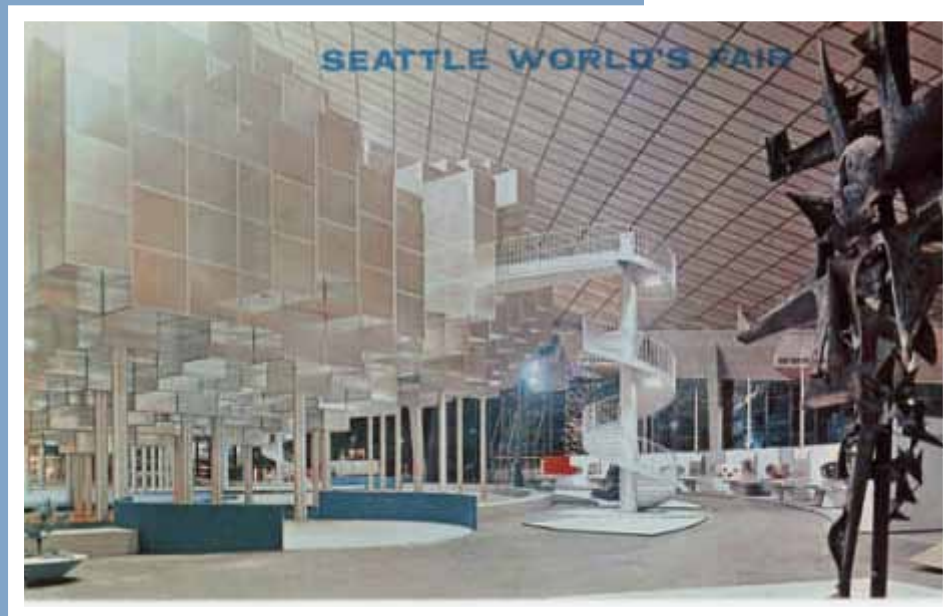


# SEATTLE CENTER

## HISTORIC LANDMARK STUDY



MARCH 2013

## ***Publishing Data***

Roster Program Category #41

This report Commissioned by the City of Seattle,  
Seattle Center Redevelopment Department

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HistoryLink.org



## **Project Team**

Artifacts Consulting, Inc. and HistoryLink.org undertook as partners preparation of this report. Michael Sullivan served as principal-in-charge with Marie McCaffrey providing project visioning. Historians Paula Becker and Alan Stein developed the site context and property specific histories and document review. Paula Becker conducted archival research and assisted with site visits assessing the site and buildings to understand significance and changes over time. Architectural historians Katie Chase and Susan Johnson developed property specific physical descriptions, character-defining feature identification, and chronologies of alterations, as well as participating in field work and archival research. Katie Chase developed the report layout and production. Spencer Howard served as project manager providing project coordination, assisting in archival research, project meetings, field work, mapping, and report development.



1962 image of the Playhouse lobby. Source: University of Washington Special Collections.

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2013 view of the Exhibition Hall which houses the Pacific Northwest Ballet. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

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2013 view of James Fitzgerald Fountain of the Northwest. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

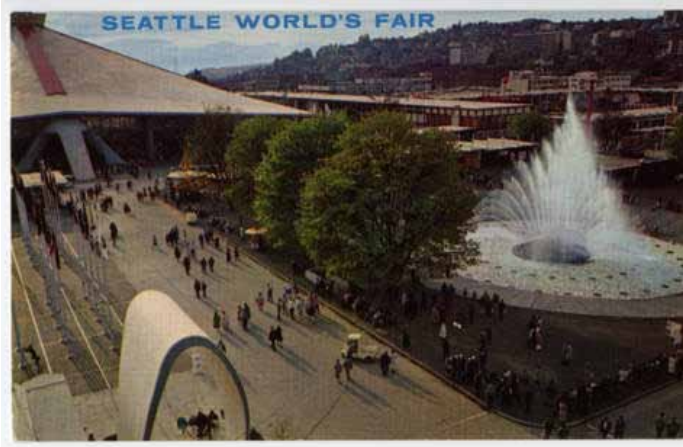


## Glossary of Current vs Historic Building Names

ID	CURRENT NAME	HISTORIC NAME(S)	SURVEYED
1	KeyArena	Washington State Pavilion, Washington State Coliseum	Yes
2	International Fountain (including associated open space)		Yes
3	1st Avenue North Parking Garage		No, less than 25 years
4	Blue Spruce Building	Blue Spruce Apartments, Administration Building	Yes
5	Armory	Washington State National Guard Armory, Food Circus, Center House	No, listed
6	Central Utility Plant		No, less than 25 years
7	Exhibition Hall/Phelps Center	Fine Arts Pavilion, Exhibition Hall	Yes
8	Playhouse	Intiman, Playhouse Theater	Yes
9	Fisher Pavilion	Flag Pavilion	No, less than 25 years
10	Seattle Repertory Theatre	Bagley Wright Theatre	Yes
13	Marion Oliver McCaw Hall	Civic Auditorium, Opera House	No, extensive alterations
14	Mercer Arts Arena	Arena, Civic Ice Arena, Display Hall	Yes
15	Mercer Street Parking Garage		Yes
16	NASA Building	NASA Building, NASA Pavilion	Yes
17	Northwest Rooms	International Commerce and Industry Buildings	Yes
18	International Fountain Pavilion	Sweden Pavilion, Northwest Craft Center	No, less than 25 years
19	Pottery Northwest/Gardener's Facility	Bressi Garage	Yes
20	Seattle Center Pavilion		Yes
21	Seattle Children's Theatre	Nile Shrine Temple, Club 21	Yes, Nile Shrine only, rest less than 25 years
23	West Court Building	Fair Headquarters, Century 21 Exposition Headquarters	Yes
24	Founders Court	Presidential Court	Yes
26	Kobe Bell		No, listed
27	Horiuchi Mural		No, listed
35	Memorial Stadium		No, previously documented
37	Pacific Science Center	Federal Science Pavilion	No, listed
39	Space Needle		No, listed
40	Skatepark		No, less than 25 years
42	Chihuly Garden and Glass		No, less than 25 years
43	KCTS 9 Building		Yes
44	Experience Music Project		No, less than 25 years
45	Seattle Center Monorail	Monorail Terminals, Seattle Center Station	No, previously documented
46	Next 50 Pavilion		No, less than 25 years
47	Gift Shop	Monorail Office Building, Quick Draw Theater, Seattle Center Administrative Offices/Alweg Building	No, previously documented
48	Kiosk		No, less than 25 years
49	Restroom Pavilion		No, less than 25 years
50	International Plaza		Yes
51	Courtyard, Playhouse	Grand Court	Yes
52	Fisher Green	Plaza of the States, Fisher Green Open Space, South Fountain Lawn	Yes
53	Mural Amphitheatre	Friendship Mall	Yes



1962 view inside of the former Canadian Pavilion, located within the Northwest Rooms. Source: Seattle Public Library



1962 postcard of the Seattle World's Fair. Source: Seattle Public Library.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The recommended approach for grouping properties to present them to the Landmarks Preservation Board is two small concentration areas, each having an assembly of properties associated with a single architectural firm, and then considering remaining properties on an individual basis.

### Concentration Areas

#### Thiry concentration area properties:

- International Fountain Pavilion
- KeyArena
- NASA Building
- Northwest Rooms
- Seattle Center Pavilion
- International Plaza

#### Kirk concentration area properties:

- Exhibition Hall
- Mercer Street Parking Garage
- Playhouse (including courtyard)
- Founders Court
- North Gate
- Colonnades

### Individual

- Pottery Northwest, Gardener's Complex

### Lesser examples that would not be individually eligible for nomination :

- West Court Building
- Blue Spruce Building
- Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

### Community Properties

These are properties that rely nearly exclusively on their open space quality to convey their historical associations. These properties merit further discussion relative to their eligibility as Landmarks and their community role.

- International Fountain
- Mural Amphitheatre
- Fisher Green
- Street Grid

### Artifacts

Properties and residual property parts that continue to serve an important contextual role within Seattle Center, but do not fit within the Landmark designation process are artifacts. As buildings are adaptively reused, the potential to salvage and reuse elements from the buildings to the benefit of Seattle Center's overall visual character should be considered.



**Project Area Map**





Historic view of the Exhibition Hall. Source: Mike and Carolyn Nore.

## METHODOLOGY

### Study Area

The study area encompasses only land owned by the City of Seattle. This includes instances where a building not owned by the City of Seattle stands on land owned by the City of Seattle, such as the KCTS 9 Building at the corner of Mercer Street and Fifth Avenue North.

Property in this study means any site, building, structure, vegetation, open space, or object.

The area is roughly bounded on the north by Mercer Street, south by Broad Street and Thomas Street, the east by Fifth Avenue North, excluding the 9 acres Memorial Stadium site, and Second and First Avenues North on the west. (Refer to Project Area Map)

### Planning

Seattle Center initiated this study in 2013 as the majority of properties reached 50 years of age, where by the City has elected to consider their eligibility for Landmark designation.

Planning studies for Seattle Center providing a relevant management overlay follow below.

**Seattle Center Century 21 Master Plan**, 2008 and 2011 update as an addendum to the *Final Environmental Impact Statement*, Seattle Center Master Plan establish planning zones for the campus. Page 1.11 of the plan introduces the four zones: the Center of the Center, Memorial Stadi-

um, Theatre District, and KeyArena. Recommendations follow this zone organization.

**Landscape Management Plan**, 2009, addresses vegetation, hardscape and water feature management for the site. Of particular relevance is chapter 1 on trees. Page 11 starts the discussion of Canopy Trees and tree replacement plan. Legacy and Dedicated Trees are identified on page 24 of the plan by zone. Chapter six addresses landscape features, including water features and hardscape.

**Century 21 Design Guidelines**, 2009, provide planning and guidelines for architectural design, landscape management, public art, signage, and lighting.

### Process

Preparation of this study addressed three key steps: research, field work, and production. The study follows standards set forth by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation in the *Washington State Standards for Cultural Resource Reporting*, 2011.

Research built upon the extensive background and archival research undertaken by Paula Becker and Alan J. Stein in writing *The Future Remembered: The 1962 Seattle World's Fair and Its Legacy*. Previous Landmark nominations and surveys for the site provided additional context and details on the individual buildings. Conversations with Seattle Center staff and the extensive on-site collection of drawings maintained by Seattle Center provided a wealth of detailed information on the properties and changes over time. Our team reviewed Department of Planning and Development permit records, collections at the Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Regional Branch, Seattle Public Library, Seattle Municipal Archives, University of Washington, and King County Archives.

Field work entailed an exterior survey of the properties followed by access to select building interiors. The properties were digitally photographed and notes recorded as to character-defining features, spaces, and alterations.

Production involved writing, editing and assembling the study. As part of this process Artifacts set up a GIS database for the study area to record building, tree, circulation network, and landscape data recorded during the survey and archival research.



Historic image of the International Fountain Pavilion and the east end of the Northwest Rooms. Source: Seattle Public Library.



Postcard of the Space Needle and Plaza of States. Source: Seattle Public Library.

## CONTEXT SYNOPSIS

### *The Site's Early History*

The land that became the 74-acre (13 square block) site for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair/Seattle Center was part of David and Louisa Boren Denny's 1853 donation land claim. (Mercer Garage occupies land that was part of Thomas Mercer's donation land claim.) By the late 19th century, the area had been platted and had developed into an urban neighborhood comprised of wood-frame homes, some small businesses, and a few boarding houses. Many of the earliest settlers in the developing neighborhood were employees at Western Mill – the city's largest sawmill – located nearby. The Warren Avenue School (built 1902) and adjoining Mercer Playground (built 1910) served neighborhood families, who were predominantly working class.

The idea of creating a civic center to serve as Seattle's preeminent cultural gathering place was broached in Virgil Bogue's elaborate 1911 "Plan of Seattle" that – had the voters approved it – would have reshaped the area in and around the Denny Regrade neighborhood. Although rejected, the Bogue Plan is significant in that it was the first time the notion of building a civic center in or near

lower Queen Anne – where Seattle Center stands – was part of the civic discussion.

Seattle's Chamber of Commerce announced plans for a civic auditorium in April 1926, under banner headlines in local newspapers. They had already purchased a four-block site on lower Queen Anne, using mainly a bequest from pioneer James Osborne, who stipulated that his gift should fund "a public hall." The site was adjacent to Warren Avenue School and Mercer Playground. Along with the auditorium, a civic field and display hall were initially planned. In 1927-1928, the city constructed a cluster of buildings to meet many of the growing city's civic needs: a Civic Auditorium/Exposition Hall (with two distinct spaces: an auditorium for symphony and other performances; and what was referred to as an exposition or display hall, designed to hold conventions and sporting and athletic events, including horse shows); a Civic Ice Arena (used for public skating sessions and for hockey); a Civic Field (used for outdoor sporting events, particularly high school football and professional baseball); and a small Veterans of Foreign Wars facility that also served as a field house. The Seattle City Council appropriated \$50,000 to fund construction of the VFW hall. These structures occupied the four-block area bordered by Mercer and Harrison Streets and Third and Fourth Avenues North, while Warren Avenue School and Mercer Playground occupied the two blocks bordered by Warren Av-



Above: 1962 view of Everett DuPen's Fountain of Creation outside the Northwest Rooms (Canada Pavilion within International Commerce and Industry Buildings). Source: Mike and Carolyn Nore.



Right: Historic view of southeast corner of KeyArena. Source: Seattle Public Library.

enue North, Third Avenue North, Harrison Street, and Republican Street. This meant that six full blocks of the ultimate 13-block Seattle World's Fair site were already in public use before 1930. Major contributors to the creation of these civic facilities included the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Central Labor Council, Seattle Public Schools, the Rainier Post of the American Legion, Seattle mayor Bertha Knight Landes, the City Council, and Seattle voters, who approved a \$900,000 bond measure to fund construction. While school and playground served primarily nearby residents, the new civic buildings drew people from throughout the city and beyond to what rapidly became a core of civic activity.

In 1939, the Washington National Guard built a massive field armory on the block bordered by Harrison Street, Thomas Street, Nob Hill Avenue, and Third Avenue North, bringing the total number of future fair site blocks in public use to seven. The Armory was used for military purposes, but also as a large public gathering place, serving – for example – as the site of the notorious Canwell Committee hearings on un-American activities in Washington state. The Armory also hosted large scale scouting events, dances, and other similar activities.

In 1947, Seattle Public Schools replaced Civic Field with a stadium. The city condemned the property in the block bordered by Republican and Mercer Streets and 4th and

5th Avenues N to create a parking lot for the stadium. In 1951, the school district added to the stadium a wall memorializing former students who had lost their lives in World War II. By this time, the character of the neighborhood had begun to shift increasingly toward small commercial enterprises. Housing stock, while still plentiful, was aging and frequently not owner-occupied.

## The Need

With these core buildings, Seattle had a starter civic center, of sorts, but many residents – especially music lovers who attended Seattle Symphony recitals – felt the 1920s facilities were far from adequate. One problem was the mixed-use Civic Auditorium/Exposition Hall, which served neither function perfectly. The auditorium was built with a flat rather than a raked seating area, meaning that the venue was not suitable for any visual performances such as opera or theater – and acoustics in the barn-like interior were dreadful.

The Seattle Civic Arts Committee, formed by community leaders in 1944, recommended the creation of a civic center to Seattle Mayor William F. Devin in 1946. This committee suggested that the city acquire land adjacent to the existing Washington National Guard Armory, Civic Field, and Civic Auditorium near the Denny Regrade. In late





1947, members of the Civic Arts Committee formally incorporated as the Seattle Civic Center Association. The group – chaired by University of Washington drama professor Glenn Hughes – worked steadily to build support for a civic center and pushed the city to acquire land, succeeding somewhat in the former effort, but not the latter.

The late 1940s and early 1950s were a period of great growth and change in Seattle and elsewhere in the country as the economy and society in general transitioned from the time of war to peacetime. Seattle, so crucial to the war effort, could finally look beyond the demands of the war-intensified moment to the promise of peacetime leisure, comfort, and relaxation. For a far-thinking core of dedicated civic boosters who loved their city and supported the arts, a real civic center was a steadily increasing desire – a new necessity. In 1954, Seattle Mayor Allen Pomeroy appointed a committee to work toward facilitating the creation of a civic center to meet the city's art, music, theater, and other cultural and community needs.

Historic image of the International Fountain Pavilion. Source: Museum of History And Industry.

## The Dream

By brilliant happenstance the following year, a group of dedicated Seattle boosters floated the idea of creating a world's fair commensurate with the city's wildly successfully Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition of 1909. They quickly gained the support of the Seattle City Council, Washington Governor Arthur Langlie, and a growing number of state legislators. Seattleite Edward Carlson led the world's fair charge, chairing the Washington World's Fair Commission.

Both the fair and the civic center groups knew their projects would require substantial funding and property acquisition, and both groups examined sites around the region. A major study concluded that the best place for a civic center would be a site near the Denny Regrade area that was already occupied by several buildings serving the community in various ways: performance venue, sports field, skating rink. At Carlson's urging, the World's Fair Commission also examined this promising site.

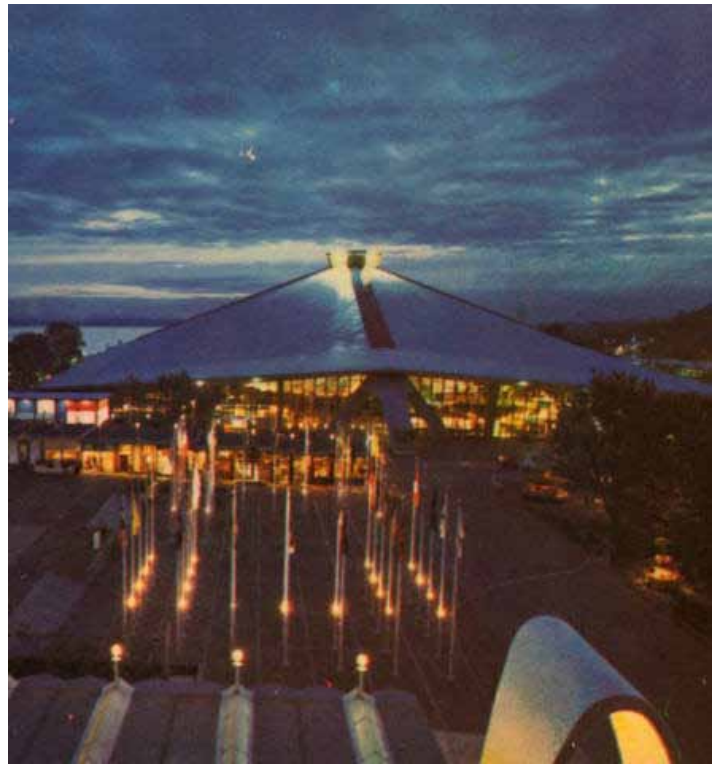
## The Goal

World's Fair boosters knew that creating, funding, promoting, and producing an event of magnitude would consume countless resources, both human and financial. Why raise the money, do the work, transform the site, for just a few months' benefit? Their real goal, they realized, meshed perfectly with the aims of the civic center advocates: to create a permanent home for Seattle's arts and culture, a gathering place for the community, a real and lasting legacy that would be the most enduring souvenir of their great World's Fair. On November 6, 1956, Seattle voters approved a \$7.5 million bond issue to acquire land and build a civic center.

## Site Development

Once the site was chosen, both the World's Fair Commission and the Civic Center Advisory Commission began the complex process of developing it. All of the existing civic buildings, Memorial Stadium, the Armory, and several newer structures were retained and repurposed for the project. The school, the playground, and more than 200 other structures were demolished. Memorial Stadium was leased from Seattle Public Schools for the duration of the fair, the Armory was leased from the Washington National Guard, and the Nile Shrine Temple was leased from the Nile Temple Holding Company. Although the neighborhood's built environment was altering drastically, the street grid that organized it mostly remained, becoming broad avenues used by pedestrians to navigate the fairground.

The fair's first employee, Ewen Dingwall, was hired jointly by Edward Carlson and Civic Center Commission leader Harold Shefelman as project director for the development of the civic center and the World's Fair. Dingwall's first major hire was architect Clayton Young, who oversaw every aspect of the site's transformation for the World's Fair with an eye to its post-fair use as civic center. A volunteer Design Standards Advisory Board was comprised of a group of Washington architects (Perry Johanson, John Detlie, Robert Deitz, and Paul Thiry); Seattle's Planning Commission Director John Spaeth; Seattle-born but Detroit-based architect Minoru Yamasaki; and San Francisco landscape architect Lawrence Halprin.



Above: Image of KeyArena at night, looking west. Source: Seattle Public Library.

In August 1958, Paul Thiry was appointed primary architect for the joint civic center/world's fair project. Thiry worked with Clayton Young to ensure that pre-fair decisions would dovetail with post-fair use. Numerous architects created buildings for the site, and all of their designs had to pass muster with Thiry.

Funding for the more substantial buildings came from the city, King County, the state, and the federal government. Corporate and private exhibitors funded smaller structures. While the fair had benefitted from the voter-approved bond issue that purchased 28 acres of the site and paid for some construction, the civic center (and thus the city and region) benefitted from land and construction financed by these other entities. On February 28, 1961, the civic center was officially named Seattle Center. Century 21 Exposition – the Seattle World's Fair – opened April 21, 1962 and welcomed nearly 10 million visitors before concluding on October 21, 1962. During the fair the site was busy, crowded, its venues heavily programmed. As the fair's end drew near, the question of which structures would be retained became pressing.



Aerial view of Playhouse and Exhibition Hall in the last stages of construction. Source: Seattle Public Library.

## Redevelopment for Seattle Center

After the fair, some buildings that were clearly intended to be temporary were demolished, or sold for salvage. Memorial Stadium, owned by Seattle Public Schools, reverted to that body's control. The Armory lease was continued by Seattle Center, and the building was purchased by the city. The Coliseum, the Playhouse, and the Opera House were planned to last post-fair, while the Science Pavilion and the privately-owned Space Needle had very clear architectural and practical significance and had to stay. The Coliseum and the surrounding International Commerce and Industry buildings were altered, as planned, for post-fair use. Many other buildings proved that the fair's built environment provided great post-fair potential. Many small structures that might have been temporary were instead retained after the fair, pressed into service when the need arose, or even inspired Seattle Center staff to dream up creative programming to make them useful. Many of these structures served multiple uses in the decades after

the fair, especially during the early years as Seattle Center leaders groped their way toward understanding what they had in all that construction, what they could program into it, who they would partner with, and – especially – how they would fund it.

## Changing Needs and Uses

The fair's layout utilized buildings to channel the flow of visitors to four main entrances. Today, the focus is creating a more permeable site resulting in less channeling of the flow of visitors and the use of open space as internal and external connectors. Over subsequent decades, Seattle Center's built environment was periodically pruned and edited to continue this process of opening the campus to its surroundings. This happened most substantially in late 1989 when the fair's massive, 500-foot long Domestic Commerce And Industry Building (also called Building 55), that closed the campus off along Broad Street, was demolished, allowing the creation of the Broad Street Green. It is an example of the complex dance of historical significance and usefulness that is inherent in what all of the fair planners wanted: a civic





Historic image of skybridge crossing over Mercer Street from the Mercer Street Parking Garage to the fair site. Source: Seattle Public Library.

center that serves the citizens of Seattle admirably, a place of cultural and community usefulness that is allowed to transform.

Newer construction has opened Seattle Center to an expanded audience in terms of age (Seattle Children's Theatre, the Skate Park, Vera Project), accessibility (compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act has helped everyone from stroller-users to wheelchair-users), and cultural taste (Experience Music Project, Chihuly Garden and Glass). As Seattle's population grew and changed over the years, what Seattle's citizens asked of their Seattle Center also changed and evolved. Seattle's built environment gained density, and Seattle Center visitors increasingly appreciated the respite the site's views and open spaces could provide. The city in general grappled with encouraging historic preservation while stimulating new growth, and Seattle Center struggled to respect and celebrate the fair's legacy while responding to deterioration in virtually all of the fair-era buildings. Long-awaited infusions of funding via several bond issues gave Seattle Center the chance to patch and repair the most egregious deterioration on the campus, but never to fix all of it. In recent years, increasingly sophisticated methods of public/private partnerships continue to impact and influence Seattle Center's physical development, exemplified

most fully so far by McCaw Hall and Chihuly Garden and Glass. This has been an ongoing struggle, challenge, and opportunity. Seattle Center's Century 21 Master Plan, adopted in August 2008, freshly envisions the center's built environment and open spaces as they connect with each other and with the greater Seattle Center neighborhood. Built to inspire during the fair and to be useful after, Century 21 Exposition's buildings – some architecturally stunning, some utilitarian – have served Seattle Center now for over half a century. Like the campus, they are all workhorses, responding to our evolving community's choices, dreams, and needs.

## POST WORLD'S FAIR HISTORY

Seattle Center has served its community for half a century, amply meeting – exceeding – the goals, hopes, and dreams of fair founders and of those who shaped and fought for the Center during its earliest years. Many fledgling arts organizations have found steady footing within Seattle Center buildings. The millions of hours of skill and dedication exercised by performers, designers, and technical staff within the Playhouse, McCaw Hall, Armory/Center Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Seattle Children's Theatre have brought Seattle

Center audiences transformative artistic moments that continue to resonate. Seattle Opera and Pacific Northwest Ballet – both gestated, born, and nurtured in the Opera House/ McCaw Hall – flourish and enjoy deep community support.

Seattle Center has hosted some events that instantly became benchmarks in our civic history: The Beatles performance in the Coliseum (now KeyArena) in 1964 brought the white-hot Fab Four together with thousands of screaming Seattle fans. Seattle Art Museum’s landmark King Tut Exhibition in 1978 drew thousands of visitors to Seattle Center to marvel at these globally important artifacts. The International Fountain spontaneously became a gathering place for shell-shocked grieving mourners in the days following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, demonstrating Seattle Center’s deep worth as a touchstone of community solace. His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama’s appearance at KeyArena in 2008 brought children and young people from throughout the region to focus together on the transformative power of compassion. Seattle’s SuperSonics were KeyArena’s main tenant, galvanizing and delighting basketball fans – especially after winning the NBA championship in 1979 – until their deeply mourned departure in 2008. And when then-presidential candidate Barak Obama appeared at KeyArena on the chilly morning of February 8, 2008, even that massive venue could not contain the crowds that surged in to shout out, “Yes, We Can.”

Countless children – Seattle’s future electorate – learn to know and care about Seattle Center on school or family visits to Pacific Science Center, Seattle Children’s Theatre, or Seattle Children’s Museum. Festivals – especially the annual campus-wide Folklife Festival and Bumber-shoot – pack Seattle Center with a huge array of visitors whose backgrounds and culture reflect our ever-diversifying city. Cloudy days find parents treating children to pizza in the Armory, lifting them to peer at the Winterfest model train display, or keeping track of shoes as sock-footed youngsters scramble through giant inflatable rides during Whirligig. When the sun shines, people of all ages and walks of life pause to bask, play, or contemplate around the center of the Center – the glistening International Fountain.



Everett DuPen's Fountain of Creation. Source: Seattle Public Library.



Left: Aerial view of the fair grounds, from brochure. Source: Seattle Public Library.

Above: Aerial view of Pacific Science Center. Source: photo by Werner Leggenhager, courtesy Washington State Archives.

## ASSESSMENT

This assessment addresses properties within the Seattle Center campus that are 50 years or older and not previously listed as a City of Seattle Landmark.

The status section provides an overview for the study area of currently listed properties and previous inventory forms.

The building and landscape sections include a brief historical synopsis, physical description, list of character-defining features and spaces, and chronology of alterations. Character-defining features and spaces distinguish the property’s visual character and their identification follows methods set forth in the National Park Service Preservation *Brief 17, Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character*. The Chronology of Alterations lists changes for each property, organized by date (when known).

### Status

To focus survey efforts, existing City of Seattle Landmarks and previously documented properties were iden-

tified. Refer to Listed Properties Table and Listed Properties Map for the listing.

### Listed Properties Table

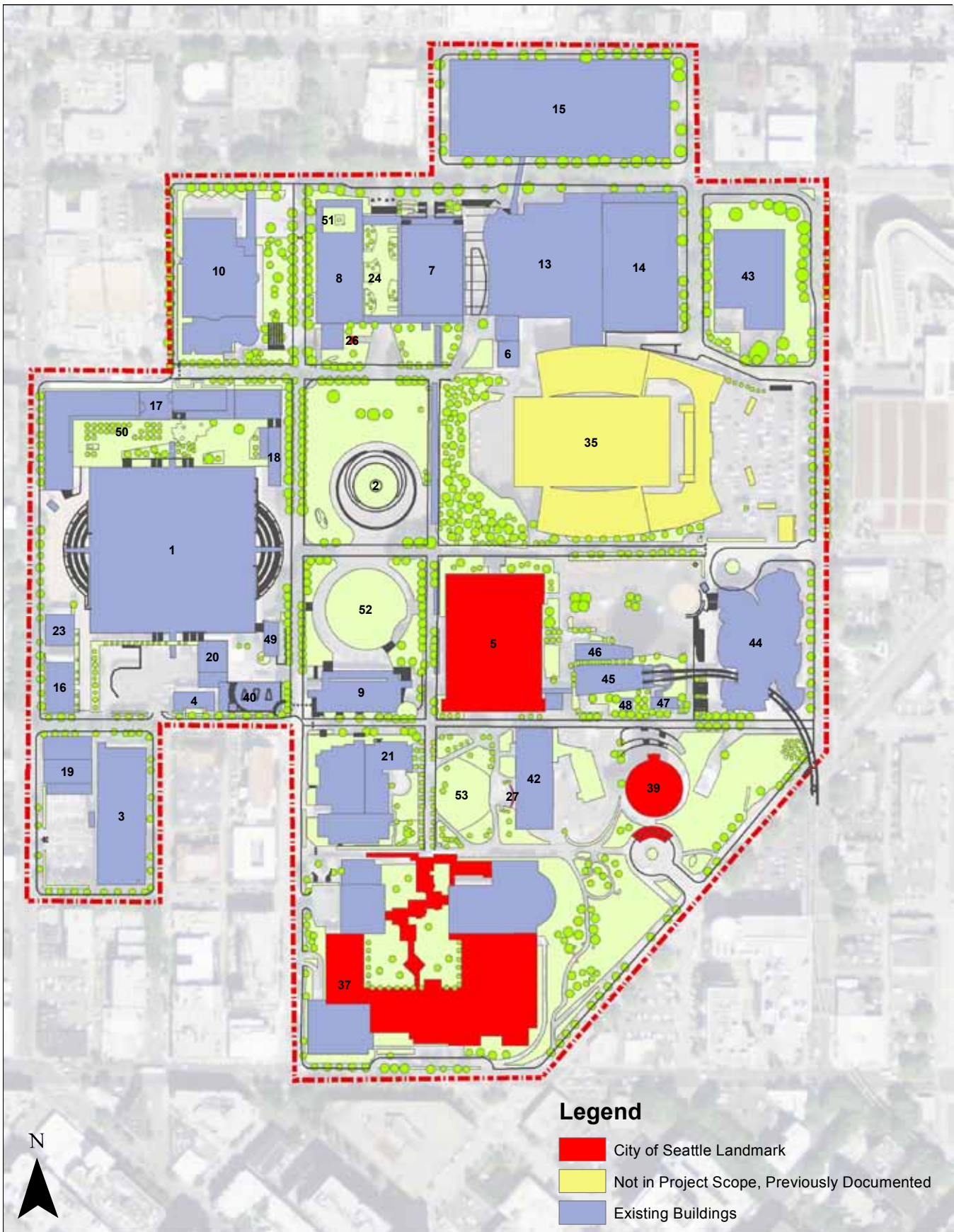
PROPERTY NAME	LISTING DATE	LANDMARK ORDINANCE NUMBER
Space Needle	4/19/1999	119428
Seattle Center House (Armory)	5/10/2010	123298
Pacific Science Center	7/21/2010	Pending
Seattle Monorail	8/4/2003	121240
Kobe Bell	5/10/2010	123297
Horiuchi Mural	5/10/2010	123292

The following list identifies properties within the survey area having unique conditions. The summaries state the reasons for their inclusion or exclusion.

- **Memorial Stadium and Memorial Wall.** Both are owned by Seattle Public Schools ownership and have draft nomination applications prepared which are currently on hold. Consequently, they are not included within this survey of city properties.



# Listed Properties Map





- **Monorail, Monorail Historic Review and Landmark Nomination** prepared in 2000 addressed the integrity of the monorail and associated facilities. The 2003 ordinance (121240) listed the monorail and identified parts of the Monorail for which a Certificate of Approval is not required. The following lists only those parts at Seattle Center. For this reason, these Monorail-related properties at Seattle Center were not included in the survey:

- 1962 elements of Seattle Center Station site
- Skybridge to the Center House
- Seattle Center Administrative Offices/Alweg Building (exterior and interior) (note the lower portion of the building was enlarged in 1991 to plans by YCK Architecture & Planning)
- Paving, ramp and stairs at Seattle Center Station
- Electrical vault building
- Two ticket booths

- **Mercer Arts Arena**, for which Seattle Center has a long term lease with the Seattle Opera. The responsibility falls to the Seattle Opera, as the long term lessee, to undertake a study, but they have not chosen to at this date. Due to consideration of the associated Mercer Garage, Exhibit Hall/ Phelps Center, and Playhouse an assessment of this building is included to address only the exterior 1961 conversion as part of the fair.
- **McCaw Hall** is included in the survey as a matter of documentation; although McCaw Hall continues its historic function as a performing arts venue, the building exterior, interior, and west plaza have been extensively altered.
- **Contemporary properties** for the purpose of this study are those built in 1989 or later based on study publication in 2013. Contemporary properties are not addressed in this study.

The following Inventoried Properties Table provided a starting point for research and field work by identifying background on properties built in or before 1989 that have been surveyed and recorded in the City of Seattle, Department of Neighborhoods online [Survey Database](#) or the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation’s online [WISAARD](#) database.

## Inventoried Properties Table

PROPERTY NAME	ID	IN CITY DATABASE	IN WISAARD
KeyArena	1	yes	yes, 1979; 2000; 2004
Blue Spruce Building	4	yes	yes, 2000
Exhibition Hall	7	yes	yes, 2000
Playhouse	8	yes	yes, 2000
Mercer Arts Arena	14	yes	yes, 2000
Mercer Street Parking Garage	15	yes	yes, 2000
NASA Building	16	yes	yes, 2000
Northwest Rooms	17	yes	yes, 2000
International Fountain Pavilion	18	yes	yes, 2000
West Court Building	23	yes	yes, 2000
Pottery Northwest / Gardener’s Facility	19	yes	yes, 2000
Monorail Terminal	46	yes	yes, 2000
Gift Shop	47	yes	yes, 2000
KCTS 9 Building	43	no	no
Seattle Repertory Theatre	10	no	no
Seattle Children’s Theatre	21	yes	yes, 2000



1962 aerial watercolor print of Century 21 Exposition. Source: Seattle Public Library.

## Buildings

This section is organized thematically. The two main concentration areas are the Paul Thiry (Thiry) grouping and Kirk, Wallace and McKinley (Kirk) grouping. These correspond with the KeyArena and Theatre District Master Plan zones, respectively. Buildings are listed by the current name followed by historic name(s) in parenthesis (name) and Seattle Center drawing index identification number in brackets [##].

### Thiry Concentration

Buildings included in this concentration area:

- International Fountain Pavilion
- KeyArena
- NASA Building
- Seattle Center Pavilion
- Northwest Rooms
- West Court Building

Open spaces included in this concentration area:

- International Plaza

Open spaces are covered in more depth in the Open Space section, but are described briefly in conjunction with each building.



Above: 2013 view of the International Fountain Pavilion.  
Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



Left: Historic image, looking north, of the International Fountain Pavilion and the east end of the Northwest Rooms. Source: Puget Sound Regional Branch, Washington State Archives.

## International Fountain Pavilion [18]

### Significance:

This structure was part of Paul Thiry's International Commerce and Industry complex surrounding the Coliseum/KeyArena. Designed by Paul Thiry, the building was funded by King County. During the fair, the Boulevards of the World complex – the fair's main shopping area – separated the Sweden Pavilion from the International Fountain. Boulevards of the World was demolished immediately following the fair.

The building was leased to Northwest Craft Center from 1963 until 2012. Both exterior and interior remain largely unchanged from their appearance during the fair, probably as a result of the building's use by one organization. This building, more than any other built for the fair, retains the most interior and exterior physical integrity. From April 21 to October 21, 2012, it was the site of the Museum of History and Industry's commemorative exhibit on the Seattle World's Fair, a traveling exhibit fea-

turing world's fairs through history, and a photography exhibit depicting young people whose innovative ideas might make them future leaders.

### Physical Description:

Completed in 1962, the International Fountain Pavilion is located at the northeast corner of the Coliseum. It formed part of the International Plaza, yet it faces east, away from the other buildings in its group and towards the heart of Seattle Center campus. This Modern style, single-story building had a rectangular footprint on a poured concrete foundation; a contemporary rear (west) utilitarian addition has altered the footprint to a T-shape. The clear span structure has steel columns as a framing system, clad with tilt-up concrete panels and glass. A flat, steel framed roof with wide overhanging eaves caps the building. On all sides of the building, steel joists extend out beyond the walls to support the eaves. Corrugated steel decking comprises the roof structure and the underside of the eaves. The roof extends over the adjoining, mostly intact open-air stairwell to the north. The original cladding and windows are mostly intact. The original plan and interior have been slightly modified.

On the interior, the mostly open volume features exposed roof trusses and roof decking. Three public entrances to the building are spaced along the east (front) facade. These feature replacement doors set within original openings. A fourth entrance, at the north end of the east facade, has been converted to display windows. During the Century 21 World's Fair, carpeting covered at least a portion of the floor. After the fair, the carpeting was presumably changed quickly to asbestos floor tiles, which are largely intact. Shallow steps and ADA ramps navigate slight changes in the floor grade. Freestanding partition walls separate the main exhibit space from service and storage areas along the west side of the floor plan.

### Character-Defining Features:

- Footprint and massing
- Flat roof with overhanging, corrugated steel decking eaves
- Steel roof framing



- Painted concrete tilt-up walls with abstract round relief ornament
- Large expanses of glazing, including glass doors and wood framed fixed windows
- Square white light fixtures attached to undersides of eaves

*Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1964: Adapted to post-fair use as Northwest Craft Center
- 1976: Removed wood stops at window exteriors, temporarily removed glazing to clean and repair existing settings, reinstalled glass panes; bathroom added
- 1976: Electrical upgrade, including new exit lights
- 1996: New exterior doors (three sets); removed northernmost pair of east doors in favor of display windows; existing panels along upper portion of east wall repainted; added roof insulation
- 1990s: ADA work
- Undated: Rear (west) addition



Eave detail on International Fountain Pavilion. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



1962 view of KeyArena and Plaza of Flags. Source: Photo by Art Hupy, courtesy University of Washington Special Collections.

## KeyArena [1]

### Significance:

Heralded for its hyperbolic paraboloid roof suspended from a framework of concrete beams, the Washington State Coliseum housed Century 21's theme exhibit, *The World of Tomorrow*, a honey-comb shaped "cloud" of 3250 aluminum cubes 200-feet across and 60-feet high (as tall as a six-story building). Visitors accessed the cube structure in groups of 100 via Plexiglas Bubbleator elevator. As they ascended, the Bubbleator operator gave the first speech of a 21-minute multi-sensory performance complete with imagery, taped dialogue, odors, dramatic music, and sound and lighting effects that the visitors would navigate. The show's official title was "The Threshold And The Threat" – the threat being nuclear annihilation, and the threshold being the present time. In addition to the iconic roof, the Coliseum's huge size – it covers the majority of four city blocks – and clear span construction placed it among the fair's most noted architecture.

In addition to the theme exhibit, the Coliseum also housed:

- The American Library Association Exhibit
- General Motors Corporation Exhibit
- Pan American Airways Exhibit
- Washington Tourist Information Center
- Government of France Exhibit
- Cancer Research Exhibit
- Radio Corporation of America Exhibit

After the fair, the city of Seattle purchased the Coliseum from the state and converted it into an all-purpose convention and sports facility, to plans by Paul Thiry. This conversion was mainly a reconfiguration of interior spaces and the addition of ramps and partition walls. The Bubbleator was relocated to the Food Circus/Center House/Armory, where it remained until 1980. In 1967, the Coliseum became home to the Seattle Supersonics, the city's first major league sports franchise. The venue has also been used for circuses, rock concerts, ice skating shows, and many other events over the years. Between 1994 and 1995 the building was completely reconstructed, including lowering the court 35 feet below street level. The architectural integrity of Thiry's roofline was maintained by using the existing steel trusses in combination with four new main diagonal trusses. As much of the wood, steel and concrete as could be salvaged were used to construct the new structure. It reopened in 1995 as KeyArena.

### Physical Description:

Completed in 1962, KeyArena occupies a square footprint at the west edge of Seattle Center, interrupting Warren Avenue and Harrison Street. This Modern – Populuxe/Googie style building has a hyperbolic paraboloid form.<sup>1</sup> Four sets of three-legged, massive concrete abutments support this clear span structure. Each facade has one of these four sets of abutments, centered. The abutments support massive external concrete edge beams at the parabolic roof's perimeter as well as four original triangular section girders. The four original triangular section steel trusses in the roof framing are oriented to the cardinal directions. Four diagonal trusses were added in 1995, replacing the original cable-net portion of the roof structure.<sup>2</sup> Replacement aluminum, standing-seam aluminum roofing panels replaced the original aluminum panels. The exterior framing is completed with massive V-shaped concrete piers between the three-legged abutments. The

<sup>1</sup> "An Architect's Guidebook to the Seattle World's Fair," *Architecture West*, April 1962, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph E. Gandy, "Coliseum 21: Going Up!," *Progress Magazine*, September 1960. Courtesy of the Seattle Public Library's Century 21 Digital Collection.



Historic image of KeyArena, looking west. Source: photo by Ken Prichard, Courtesy Ken Prichard.

glass curtain wall is largely intact, with minor alterations such as relocation of entrances due to the grade excavation around the building. Replacement lites are located around the lower reaches of the curtain wall, with intact lites above.

KeyArena has been extensively altered on the interior, with no changes to the overall building footprint. The main entrances at the west and east plazas had to be lowered after the site was excavated to increase the usable interior space. The concourse around the interior perimeter is open to the ceiling, as is the arena space. The arena bowl, seating and concessions are free-standing. Concrete and steel framing members are exposed on the interior of the arena. The cobblestones laid around the exterior and interior perimeter of the curtain walls came from the

original International Fountain, which in turn took them in 1962 from old streets in Seattle.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Character-Defining Features:*

- Footprint and massing
- Roof form
- Exposed concrete framing on interior and exterior
- Exterior wall glazing (curtain wall) and slanted orientation of lites
- Glass doors at principal entrances
- Exterior wall fan unit on north facade
- Cobblestones, interior and exterior

#### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- By 1979: Interior bowl seating increased from about 12,000 to 15,000 seat capacity. (Later removed and replaced with current seating.)

<sup>3</sup> KeyArena, Historic Property Inventory Report, prepared by Michael Houser, Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, February 2004.



- 1994-1995: Roofing removed, along with the cable-net suspended roof. The four original trusses left in place, four additional (diagonal) trusses added to replace the cable-net system. Existing bowl seating removed, exhibition floor excavated 35 feet down, new bowl and seating (17,000 seat capacity) constructed. Truss covers replaced.
- 1996: South suite improvements
- 1999: Renovate existing storage area into new food and beverage space and modernization of existing concessions adjacent –east and south concourses
- 2003: New steel canopies and improvements at two entrances (courtside and suite entries)
- 2004: Conversion of south suite space into a club area by removing two walls, opening up the entries, and creating two serving counters and two bars (one at each end)
- Circa 2005: North suite improvements
- Undated: Large downspouts added to exterior; southeast ticket sales addition; conversion of multiple secondary entrances at main level to windows
- Undated: Upper portions plus other select panes of glazing painted black to obscure mechanical systems



2013 view of KeyArena. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



Left: Historic view of NASA Building. Source: University of Washington Special Collections.

Above: 2013 image of NASA Building. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

## NASA Building [16]

### Significance:

NASA's \$2 million exhibit was the organization's first large-scale attempt to tell the story of the United States space program. Designed by Paul Thiry, construction of the building was funded by King County. For many fairgoers, exhibits in the NASA Building would have been their first exposure to space exploration outside the realm of science fiction. After the federal government's science exhibit, NASA's was the largest exhibit at the fair. Fairgoers saw models of satellites launched by the United States, including Explorer, Vanguard, Pioneer, Ranger, Mariner, and Topside Sounder. Actual rockets and scaled-down models were also featured. These were joined by John Glenn's Friendship 7 midway through the fair. The spacecraft, in which Glenn had only recently made America's first orbital space flight, was displayed in the NASA Building as the concluding – and only American – stop on a 24-nation global tour during which it was viewed by more than 8-million people. The craft went directly from the fair to the Smithsonian, where it is now the first artifact encountered by visitors to the Smithsonian Museum of Air And Space.

Post-fair, the NASA Building was mainly used as storage space. Part of the building was relocated to Pavilion

"B" in 1995 during construction of the loading dock during the Coliseum's renovation into KeyArena, and is now called Seattle Center Pavilion. The portion that remains on the original site is designated "NASA" and used for Seattle Center facilities maintenance equipment.

### Physical Description:

Built in 1962, the NASA Building is a single-story, clear span structure at the northeast corner of Thomas Street and 1st Ave N. It is of similar construction and design as the Northwest Rooms and International Fountain Pavilion. Steel columns provide the structural framing. The rectangular footprint rests on a poured concrete foundation. A flat, steel framed roof with wide overhanging eaves caps the building. On all sides of the building, steel joists extend out beyond the walls to support the eaves. Corrugated metal decking comprises the roof structure and the underside of the eaves. Although original designs for the NASA Building called for open sides facing KeyArena, historic photos from the Century 21 World's Fair show the building was always enclosed. The north and east facades had corrugated metal cladding, with tilt-up concrete panels on the west and south facades. There have been moderate changes to the original cladding. The few original windows from the fair were removed at an unknown time.





1962 Werner Leggenhager photograph of east entrance to the NASA Building. Source: Seattle Public Library.

- Steel roof framing
- Painted concrete tilt-up walls, either plain or with abstract round relief ornament

#### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1964: Adapted to storage use
- 1980: Previously added roll-up door relocated (on former east wing, now Seattle Center Pavilion); metal louvers added to upper wall reaches
- 1981: Storage facility improvements
- 1995: Removed east wing, relocated to current site of Seattle Center Pavilion; select south and east bays clad with relocated concrete tilt-up panels (both decorative and plain)

There have been extensive changes to the original plan, notably the removal of the east wing. That wing accounted for more than half of the original footprint. A portion of the removed wing was repurposed and relocated as Seattle Center Pavilion. The southern half of the current NASA Building's east facade was once inside the original NASA Building. A tall freight/loading entryway with a contemporary metal roll-up door has been cut into the east facade's 6th and 7th bays (with 1st at the south end) of the east facade, accessible via a short concrete ramp. To the north on the east facade, a set of double metal security doors provides service access to the building. In the north facade, a single metal door atop a short flight of steps behind a concrete half-wall at the far west end accesses the building. The only other openings in the north facade are two added ventilation louvers high in the wall. The west facade has three similar louvers, also high in the wall. There are no openings in the south facade. Planting strips surround the building on the west, south, and east sides. Surface parking directly abuts the north facade.

Interior access to this building was not necessary, due to the level of alterations and the utilitarian nature of the building.

#### *Character-Defining Features:*

- Footprint and massing
- Flat roof with overhanging, corrugated steel decking eaves



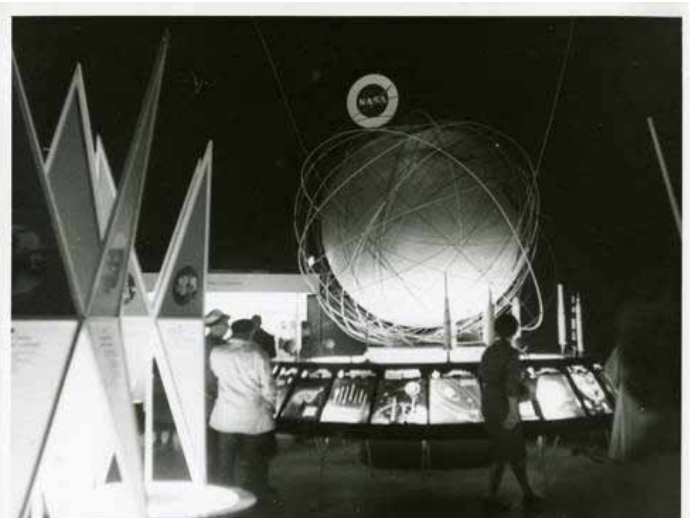
### Seattle Center Pavilion [20]

#### Significance:

Refer to the significance statement for NASA Building [16].

#### Physical Description:

Built in 1962, this building (20) is the relocated east wing from the Century 21 Fair's NASA Building. This Modern style building is a single-story, tall volume structure on the south side of the Coliseum, between Warren and 2<sup>nd</sup> avenues. It is of similar construction as the NASA Building, the Northwest Rooms, and International Fountain Pavilion. The rectangular footprint rests on a poured concrete foundation. This clear span structure is framed with steel columns and originally clad with tilt-up concrete panels and corrugated metal sheets. A flat roof with wide overhanging eaves caps the building. On all sides of the building, steel joists extend out beyond the original building's walls to support the eaves. Corrugated metal decking comprises the roof structure and the underside of the eaves. The cladding has been extensively altered. Decorative tilt-up concrete panels remain on the west and north facades; on the east and south facades, contemporary metal panels and concrete block replace the original cladding. The original plan has been extensively altered, from a relocation of the core as well as an addition to the south. The addition is distinguishable by its lower height and east facade curtain wall. During the fair, the Seattle Center Pavilion (as part of the NASA Building) originally had few or no windows, and it has none today. Doorways are not historic.



Left: 2013 image of relocated portion of the NASA Building. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

Right: 1962 interior photograph of the NASA Building, taken by Werner Leggenhager. Source: Seattle Public Library.

Interior access to the Seattle Center Pavilion was not necessary, due to the extensive alterations made to this building.

#### Character-Defining Features:

- Footprint and massing
- Flat roof with overhanging, corrugated steel decking eaves
- Steel roof framing
- Painted concrete tilt-up walls with abstract round relief ornament

#### Chronology of Alterations:

- 1995: Relocated to current site (formerly the east wing of the NASA Building; replacement cladding; new roof likely added)
- 1996: South storefront addition with canopy, new concrete masonry unit wall added to south facade of main building



## Northwest Rooms [17]

### Significance:

The Bureau of International Expositions – the governing body that granted Century 21 Exposition true World's Fair status – stipulated that participating nations be provided free space, protected from the elements. Designed by Paul Thiry, these spaces were funded by King County. Thiry's buildings were an overarching protective structure for the various free-standing pavilions within, and were fully enclosed after the fair to enable their use as a conference and meeting facility. The Northwest Rooms form an L-shaped complex arranged around a two-level interior courtyard. The International Fountain Building [18] adjoins the Northwest Rooms to create a larger U-shaped edge opening to the International Plaza and KeyArena.

The following national exhibits used these facilities during the fair:

- The United Arab Republic Pavilion
- The Government of Brazil Pavilion
- The European Economic Communities Pavilion
- The Government of Japan Pavilion
- The Government of Denmark Pavilion
- The Government of Mexico Pavilion
- The Government of Canada Pavilion

Historic view of the southwestern end of the Northwest Rooms, showing the former United Arab Republic Pavilion. Source: Photo by Ken Prichard, Courtesy Ken Prichard.

The city took possession of KeyArena in early 1963, and Paul Thiry's contract overseeing the site was extended through late 1964. Thiry converted these structures to serve as support areas – meeting rooms, lecture halls, banquet halls – for large conventions utilizing KeyArena after the fair. Locker rooms were added beneath the buildings on the north and south sides of KeyArena. Extensive renovations to the interiors of these buildings have occurred over the years.

### Physical Description:

Completed in 1962, the Northwest Rooms building is a clear span structure at the northeast corner of Thomas Street and 1st Ave N. It is of similar construction and design as the NASA Building, Seattle Center Pavilion, and the International Fountain Pavilion. The west and north facades, facing the surrounding streets, are solid except for two pass-through areas for site access. Concrete columns provide the structural framing, clad with solid tilt-up concrete wall panels on the north and west facades. The west and north facades have never featured windows. In contrast, the east and south facades are oriented inwards





2013 image of Northwest Rooms, looking north. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

- Steel roof framing
- Painted concrete tilt-up walls with abstract round relief ornament
- Large expanses of glazing, including glass doors and fixed windows facing inward to the campus
- Square white light fixtures attached to undersides of eaves
- Lower level restrooms at easternmost end of building
- Aluminum louver panels
- Floating second floor in Alki Room, set back from windows
- Exterior Solex glass sunscreens on Alki Room

to the International Plaza and KeyArena. The east and south facades, originally at least partially open-air, were enclosed after the fair with sheets of glass or aluminum. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation. A flat, steel framed roof with wide overhanging eaves caps the building. On all sides of the building, steel joists extend out beyond the walls to support the eaves. Corrugated steel decking comprises the roof structure and the underside of the eaves. An original pre-cast concrete railing borders the concrete stairs at the southeast corner of the west wing. There are two pass-through corridors in the north wing, providing separations between the building segments and circulation for pedestrians between the plaza and Republican Street. The roof is continuous over these corridors, which are open on either end. Added skylights allow increased daylighting to the building.

The interior contains a single main story with a basement below the west and northwest portions, and a mezzanine in the eastern portion. A tunnel, excavated as part of the building's original construction, connects these basement spaces with the KeyArena. Interior spaces and finishes have been highly altered throughout the Northwest Rooms. Originally, the entire building's main floor was designed with an open volume for exhibits. The only exception was the far eastern at grade portion of the Alki Room, which features public restrooms.

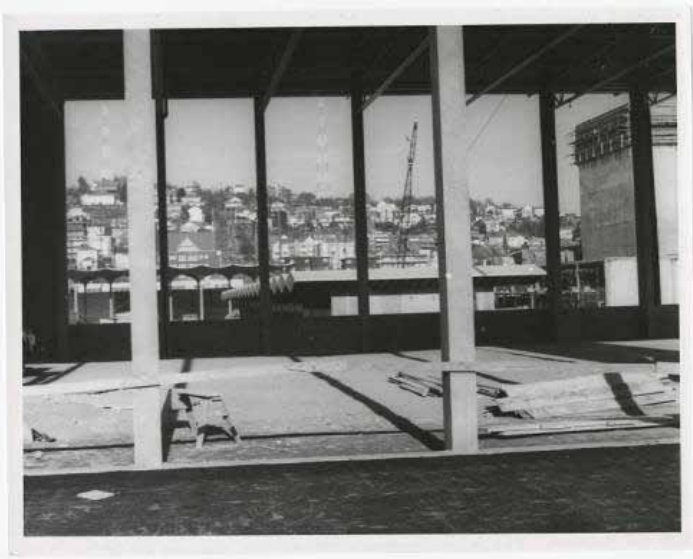
**Character-Defining Features:**

- Footprint and massing
- Flat roof with overhanging, corrugated steel decking eaves
- Concrete columns, exposed on interior and exterior

**Chronology of Alterations:**

- 1964: Adaptation of existing, partially open exhibit spaces to permanent, enclosed buildings with meeting and exhibit rooms, storage, restrooms, etc.; partition walls added, along with mechanical systems, suspended ceilings, interior floor divisions (mezzanines), etc. Aluminum louvers and glass sunscreens designed by Paul Thiry, 1964.
- 1980: Alki Room renovations (main and upper floors) - new rails, light fixtures, finishes, systems, etc.
- 1981: Northwest Rooms electrical upgrades
- 1983: General Northwest Rooms improvements. New finishes (e.g., replace existing ceiling and floor tiles), door openings, interior walls. Enclose portion of exterior colonnade with storefront system. Hollow metal doors added along Republican Street. Double tempered glass doors in aluminum frames added to other select locations.
- 1988: Rainier Room sewer replacement
- 1991: Added aluminum cladding panels to south and east facades, also in pass-through corridors and north facade of Alki Room; stripped, repainted mullions; new interior finishes, light fixtures and wall alignments for Northwest Rooms; exterior wavy canopies added to north facade; skylights added
- 1993: General Northwest Rooms improvements. New cladding, interior finishes, plan changes

1961 Werner Leggenhager photograph of Northwest Rooms under construction. Source: Seattle Public Library.



- 1995 remodel of basement spaces for staff use in conjunction with the KeyArena conversion
- 2007: Vera Project, with interior room reorganizations and new partition walls added; select south facade glazing painted
- 2010: SIFF alterations with film added over glass
- 2011-12: Remodel of upper level of Alki Room to accommodate SIFF
- Undated: Exterior sunscreens on Alki Room added (before 1991)



Historic view of the West Court Building. Source: Forde Photographers, Courtesy Seattle Center Foundation.

## West Court Building [23]

### *Significance:*

This modest two-story reinforced concrete office building housing Western Pacific Insurance Company was sited within the footprint of the fairgrounds. Designed by Alfors V. Peterson and John W. Adams in 1953, the building was purchased by the State of Washington. Instead of demolishing it, fair planners repurposed it to serve as exposition headquarters before and during the fair. Architects Tucker & Shields prepared the designs for remodeling the building for fair use in 1960. All of the fair's top brass, including fair president Joseph Gandy, Washington Governor Al Rosellini, and World's Fair Commission Executive Director Alfred Rochester, had offices here.

After the fair, the building reverted to the state of Washington. It housed the Research Division of the Department of Commerce and Economic Development and the State Military Specifications Library, and then a variety of state offices before being acquired by the city in the mid-1980s. Since then, it has served a variety of utilitarian purposes for Seattle Center. It currently serves as the box office for KeyArena.

### *Physical Description:*

Completed in 1953, the West Court Building is a two-story concrete and steel frame, Modern style building at the southeast corner of KeyArena. The square footprint

rises from a poured concrete foundation. A flat roof and parapet cap the building. Exposed concrete piers and concrete spandrels comprise the exterior frame, with steel columns spaced evenly throughout the floor plan to support the second floor and ceiling. Painted stucco clads the exterior of the building. The northwest corner of the ground floor has been cut away under an elliptical canopy. Large contemporary display windows at that corner highlight the new retail space on the interior. Original window openings remain on the second floor in the west, south and east walls, but all window sashes have been replaced. These second floor windows fill the width of the recessed bays between piers. Second floor windows mimic the original fenestration pattern, but consist of replacement aluminum sashes. Select windows have been removed and infilled or converted to other openings (doors, box office windows, ventilation panels) on all facades. There is a single contemporary horizontal, fixed, aluminum framed rectangular sash at the ground floor of the east facade. A solid metal security door accesses the building at the north end of the east facade. A planting strip extends halfway along the east facade. Surface parking directly abuts the south facade. Lighting fixtures extend from the south and east parapets. Concrete pavement directly abuts the west and north facades. A contemporary box office, with multiple ticket windows sheltered by an added shed roof canopy, occupies half of the north facade. A contemporary decorative fin wall

projects midway from the north facade, between the box office and the retail space.

Interior spaces were not accessed. From architectural drawings, this building has been extensively altered on the interior to accommodate shifting uses over time. The footprint has had slight alterations, and the original windows have been extensively altered. The original cladding is intact under added layers of paint; in-kind cladding has been added where windows have been removed.

**Character-Defining Features:**

- Footprint and massing (except for the cut-away northwest corner and canopy at the ground floor)
- Roof form and parapet
- Expressed concrete piers and recessed bays
- Concrete spandrels
- Fenestration pattern on the upper floor of the west, south and east facades

**Chronology of Alterations:**

- 1991: Converted second floor to offices for Seattle Arts Commission
- 1994: Inserted box office windows and added metal shed roof canopy over them on north wall exterior; filled existing window openings at ground floor in east wall with new concrete to match existing; created new door opening in the north facade; created new door opening in east wall at north end
- 1995: Created retail space for Sonics at northwest corner of ground floor from former office spaces; cut away northwest corner bays to make a diagonal wall at the first floor with tempered glass display windows and double doors; added elliptical canopy over that corner, supported by added column; added north fin wall; removed an existing window in south wall, replaced with intake louver; removed remaining ground floor south windows and infilled with cast in place concrete to match existing exterior; cut new ground floor window opening in east wall, near north end. An underground tunnel (called the jetway ) was constructed connecting the building to the main concourse level of KeyArena.
- 1997: Non-display windows replaced
- Undated: Parapet along north wall extended upward and later reduced again; removed historic



2013 view of the West Court Building. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

canopy over southwest entrance (after 1993); light fixtures added to parapet (since at least 1995)





2013 view of the Exhibition Hall. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

## Kirk Concentration

Buildings included in this concentration area:

- Exhibition Hall
- Playhouse
- Colonnade
- Mercer Street Parking Garage
- Marion Oliver McCaw Hall
- Mercer Arts Arena

Open spaces included in this concentration area:

- Founders Court

Open spaces are covered in more depth in the Open Space section, but are described briefly in conjunction with each building.

### Exhibition Hall [7]

#### Significance:

The Fine Arts Pavilion contained five main galleries housed in a one-story space with a mezzanine balcony

around all four sides. Art exhibits held here during the fair are considered to have been major turning points in Seattle's visual arts history, particularly the groundbreaking "Art Since 1950" exhibit. Almost 1.5 million visitors toured the Fine Arts Pavilion during the fair. During the fair, the building's only exterior illumination came through very narrow slit windows along the east and west sides. The cavernous interior was designed for flexible use to suit conventions and exhibitions post-fair, and the building was planned to be used as a major convention center. It was leased for a wide variety of uses after the fair.

In 1993, the upper level of the Exhibition Hall – the formerly unused air space between the ground floor and the roof – was remodeled to house Pacific Northwest Ballet's studios, offices, and ballet school, and reopened as the Phelps Center. Part of the renovation involved the creation of much larger light bay windows, allowing exterior light to penetrate the studios. The lower level houses the Exhibition Hall, a heavily utilized rental venue.

#### Physical Description:

Constructed in 1961, the Modern – Neo Formalist building, designed by Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates, features a rectangular plan and stands on a poured con-



crete foundation. The three story reinforced concrete building has a concrete folded plate roof. The concrete walls are clad in brick veneer. Cutouts in the brick and tall narrow windows flanking each bay originally provided a visual interruption along the brick walls. Numerous contemporary oriel window additions now provide daylighting to the building's interior. A full-height colonnade runs along the building's north and south elevations, connecting it to McCaw Hall (the former Opera House) and the Playhouse. The building's original cladding appears to be intact. Exterior alterations to the building include an elevator addition on the south elevation with suspended walkways bisecting the colonnade, a contemporary one-story height colonnade along the west elevation, and a re-tooling of the circulation and stairways to the main entrance on the north elevation. New windows punctuate the building's facade.

In addition to the original large open volume for exhibit space, the building had spaces for offices, utilities, and a kitchen. Uninterrupted vertical bands of wall, flanked by narrow windows and capped by the visible underside of the folded plate roof, accentuated the interior's vertical emphasis. Alterations to accommodate the new use divided the original open space into two levels; the new upper level holds the ballet facilities including rehearsal spaces, locker rooms, and offices, while the lower level remains an open space. The lower level retains the original stairs leading from the entrances off of the east and west courtyards down into the space, but numerous structural columns added to support the new floor above visually break up the once open hall.

#### *Character-Defining Features:*

- Colonnade
- Folded plate roof
- Cladding
- Brick piercing and tall windows

#### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1963, Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates, kitchen alterations
- 1967, office alterations and additions
- 1991, William Bain Jr. of NBBJ, new ballet facilities, elevator addition on south elevation, oriel windows added, new lighting



1962 Werner Leggenhager photograph of the Exhibition Hall entrance. Source: Seattle Public Library.

- 1994, Van Horne & Van Horne, Exhibition Hall walkways updated
- 1995, Van Horne & Van Horne, improved ballet facilities, lighting, acoustics, updated restrooms



## Playhouse [8]

### Significance:

The 800-seat Playhouse was constructed in just 34 days. During the fair, this venue hosted performers from around the globe. Its peaceful courtyard – including James Fitzgerald's four piece abstract bronze fountain in a center pool – was an oasis of calm nestled against the northern border of the fairgrounds. With a colonnade running along its Mercer Street façade and linking the building with the Exhibition Center, Opera House, and Arena, the Playhouse formed the western anchor to the fair's performing and visual arts corridor. A contemporary architectural reviewer stated, "For me, the element of the fair likely to emerge as the most admirable after all the tumult and hosannas for the more 'spectacular' structures have died down, is the complex designed by Kirk, Wallace & McKinley to house the playhouse, exhibition center, and remodeled opera house and arena. In beautifully restrained style, using no elaborate methods of construction, the Kirk firm has provided a delightful series of exterior and interior spaces which may be said to be

Historic view of south and east elevations of the Playhouse.  
Source: University of Washington Special Collections.

socially significant in a large sense ... The series of buildings...is tied together by a roof-high colonnade."<sup>4</sup>

In 1963, the Playhouse became home to the newly-formed Seattle Repertory Theatre, an organization that came into being specifically to provide programming and a permanent tenant for the Playhouse. Seattle Rep moved to the newly-constructed Bagley Wright Theatre in 1982, and in 1987 the heavily renovated Playhouse reopened as home to the Intiman Theatre. The 1987 renovation did not significantly alter the building's exterior or lobby, but completely reworked the actual theater space, reducing seating capacity to 446, steeply racking the seating area, and converting the stage from a proscenium arch to a semi-thrust proscenium configuration. This renovation also included construction of a two-story rehearsal studio in addition at the building's south side.

In 1989, the Playhouse courtyard was dedicated to World's Fair Vice President/General Manager and long-time Seattle Center Director Ewen Dingwall in apprecia-

<sup>4</sup> James T. Burnes, Jr., "The Architecture of Century 21," *Progressive Architecture*, June 1962, 51.

tion for his vision and enthusiasm for Seattle Center from 1957 to 1988. In 2011, Intiman ceased regular operation (while still occasionally mounting productions). In 2013, Cornish School for the Arts began leasing the building.

**Physical Description:**

Constructed in 1961, the building originally served as the Playhouse Theater for the Century 21 Exposition. The Modern – Neo Formalist building, designed by Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates, features a rectangular plan and stands on a poured concrete foundation. The two story reinforced concrete building has a flat roof. A fly loft rises from the roof at the southern end of the building. The concrete walls are clad in brick veneer. A colonnade the full height of the building runs along the building's south elevation, connecting it to the former Fine Arts Exhibit building to the east. The western end of the colonnade is bricked in, partially screening the stage door from view. Slim concrete posts and a recessed rounded rectangular detailing of the passage's ceiling characterize the colonnade. Colonnades with the same detailing encircle a courtyard to the north of the building. Brick, matching the building's cladding, fills the spaces between the outer colonnade supports on the north, east, and west, and shelters the courtyard. Access to the courtyard and the building's main entrance is provided through open entranceways on the east and west. A wide flight of stairs leads from the west entrance to an intermediate landing and branches into two side flights to the floor (and main entrance) below. There appear to be moderate changes to the original plan and extensive changes to the original windows. The original cladding appears to be intact. Other alterations include new railings on the stairway, an elevator addition on the south elevation with suspended walkways bisecting the colonnade, and a re-working of the landscaping in the courtyard.

Constructed as the Playhouse, the building continues as a theater. In addition to the auditorium space the building features a main entrance lobby and associated mezzanine with a two-story wall of windows looking north out towards the courtyard. While the building maintains the view out to the courtyard through the wall of windows, the lobby space has been altered with the relocation of the main stairs, which lead from the main level up to the upper level access to the auditorium. Furthermore, the



2013 view looking of the Playhouse courtyard. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

auditorium has been extensively altered to create a more intimate theater and accommodate newer equipment.

**Character-Defining Features:**

- Courtyard and 1961 James Fitzgerald Fountain of the Northwest, illuminated bronze sculpture.
- 1964 carved river rock sculpture, Barbet, created by James Washington Jr.
- Stairs down into courtyard
- Colonnades
- Cladding
- Massing

**Chronology of Alterations:**

- 1976, Paul Hayden Kirk of Kirk, Wallace and McKinley, balcony additions, landscaping alterations and new pavers
- 1986, Albert D. Bumgardner, added mechanical spaces and additional stairs from side lobbies to theater
- 1989, Sajan Inc. Consulting Engineers, roof repairs
- 1996, Schreiber & Lane Architects, general improvements
- 1997, Robert E. Wallis, interior lobby stairs relocated, north entrances relocated, new elevator added on south wall with new balcony and concrete beam





## Colonnade

### Significance:

Colonnades built as part of the Century 21 Exposition were constructed as integral parts of adjoining buildings. The Exhibition Hall and Playhouse feature prominent colonnades connecting the buildings along their north and south sides. The north colonnade also functioned as the north gate opening to the Presidential Plaza (known today as Founders Court), and they connected the north end of the Playhouse with the Grand Court containing the Fitzgerald's sculpture and fountain. Colonnades were also constructed as extensions of the 1961 renovations of the McCaw Hall building and the Mercer Arts Arena.

### Physical Description:

Colonnades run along both the north and south elevations of the Exhibition Hall and continue west across the Founders Court to the Playhouse, visually and physically connecting the two buildings. The colonnade running along the Mercer Arts Arena is intact, but the colonnade which fronted McCaw Hall on the north was removed with the building's 2001 renovation.

Slim concrete posts and a recessed rounded rectangular detailing on the ceiling characterize the colonnade. Colonnades with the same detailing also encircle the Playhouse courtyard.

### Character-Defining Features:

- Slim concrete posts
- Pressed rounded rectangular ceiling detailing
- Cylindrical light fixtures



Left: 2013 detail of colonnade concrete post base in the Playhouse courtyard. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

Above: 2013 view looking east along Exhibition Hall's north colonnade. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

### Chronology of Alterations

- 2001 and 2003, LMN Architects, removal of colonnade along north facade of McCaw Hall to accommodate exterior remodel





Above: Historic view of Mercer Street Parking Garage. Source: Bryce Seidl Collection.

Right: 2013 view of concrete detailing on Mercer Garage. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



## Mercer Street Parking Garage [15]

### Significance:

Early estimates predicted that 80% of the hoped-for 7.5 to 10 million visitors would drive to the fair. Parking was a high priority, and fair planners worried constantly that a lack of available spaces would hurt ticket sales. The four-level Mercer Garage includes 1,337 parking spaces, covers two city blocks, and was the only parking facility constructed near the fairgrounds, with the exception of surface lots. The city built and owns the Mercer Garage, but the Century 21 Exposition Company leased it during the fair. Despite a nod to decoration – sculptured precast panels designed by Charles Smith – the garage is largely utilitarian. Conveniently located and connected to the campus by an overhead walkway, the Mercer Garage has changed little since serving fairgoers.

### Physical Description:

Built in 1961 as a parking garage, the Modern structure designed by Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates with structural engineering by Norman G. Jacobson & Associates features a rectangular plan and stands on a poured concrete foundation. The structure is two blocks long and one block wide. The four-level reinforced concrete parking structure has a flat roof with parapet which serves as the upper parking level. Exposed aggregate concrete panels clad the exterior walls. Precast concrete panels highlight the building's corners, beneath the skybridge, and the entrances on the west and east elevations. The panels at the east and west entrances featured cast bronze elements within the recesses. These bronze elements re-

main only at the east entrance. Charles Smith designed these sculptural panels. Open stairwells are located in the center of the parking garage's south elevation and at all four corners. An open sky bridge extends from the south elevation across Mercer Street to McCaw Hall. The structure's original plan and cladding appear intact. Alterations to the structure are quite minimal and include added signage and metal panels inserted in an open bay on the west elevation.

The garage features one-way traffic and angle parking on ramps and level sections organized within a four helix interlocking ramp parking system. Cars primarily enter the structure from 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue N through a double entrance located on the west elevation. Cars can also exit through the east elevation out onto 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue N. A secondary entrance is located on the north elevation, off of Roy Street. In addition to the structure's stairwell systems, an elevator provides access to each parking level.

### Character-Defining Features:

- Cladding (exposed aggregate concrete panels)
- Fenestration
- Pressed concrete detailing on structure's outer corners (at stairwells)

### Chronology of Alterations:

- 1991, K. Michael Nickerson of Church Nickerson Jensen Jonas Architects, office added within southwest corner of the parking structure, included plywood siding and aluminum frame windows
- 2003, Northwest Architectural Company, reconstructed canopy over existing stair



## McCaw Hall [39]

### *Significance:*

Constructed in 1928, the building now known as McCaw Hall originally served as Seattle’s Civic Auditorium. In preparation for the Century 21 Exposition, the building was drastically altered in 1961 to function as the fair’s Opera House and aesthetically align it with the Mercer Arts Arena, Exhibition Hall, and Playhouse. Priteca and Chiarelli designed the new facade for the Civic Auditorium building in the same Modern – New Formalist style, transforming it into the Opera House. A continuation of the colonnade on the Playhouse Theater and the Exhibition Hall ran across the north elevation of the 1961 building’s facade. Sepia colored brick cladded the building’s exterior, highlighting it in comparison to the lighter colored brick present on adjacent buildings. A second, large-scale remodel between 2001 and 2003 further altered the appearance of the building and associated plaza along its west side to its current look as McCaw Hall.

### *Physical Description:*

The building now features an irregular-shaped footprint. The two story structural steel building has varied rooflines. A curved curtain wall comprises the entire west elevation. Nine metal mesh scrims form a promenade along the building’s west elevation. Metal siding clads the building’s other facades. The cladding, plan, and windows of the 1928 and 1961 versions of the building have all been extensively altered.

1962 view of McCaw Hall, looking along Mercer Street.  
Source: Seattle Public Library.

Below: 2013 image of McCaw Hall looking south along the promenade. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

The building’s interior has been extensively modified since its 1928 construction. The building features four levels of lobbies along its western portion and the curved curtain wall provides a view out to the courtyard separating the building from the Exhibition Hall. The building currently features a large 2,891 seat auditorium, a smaller 381 seat lecture hall, and other reception spaces. The building’s current interior configuration is vastly different from previous versions.

### *Character-Defining Features:*

- None

### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1961, Priteca & Chiarelli, conversion and exterior cladding for the World’s Fair
- 1999, Central Utility Plant constructed as a first step in the larger 2001 and 2003 remodel project
- 2001 and 2003, LMN Architects, exterior and interior remodel, including redesign of the courtyard along the building’s west facade

## Mercer Arts Arena [14]

### *Significance:*

Complete with Wurlitzer pipe organ, the 1928 Civic Ice Arena, designed by Schack, Young & Myers, had served Seattle skaters and hockey fans for decades before its refurbishment for the fair. In 1961, Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates redesigned the exterior for the Century 21 Exposition. Following this redesign, the exterior of the Mercer Arts Arena, McCaw Hall, and the Exhibition Hall shared brick cladding and colonnades, creating visual harmony among the fair's Mercer Street edge. Bassetti & Morse's renovation of the trusty Civic Ice Arena in 2001 converted some restrooms into dressing rooms, added an insulation cover over the ice surface, improved heating and ventilation systems, and added a portable stage platform – all relatively minor changes. The venue hosted a wide variety of family-oriented performers during the fair, including the Roy Rogers and Dale Evans western show, the Ringling Brothers and Shrine circuses, the Benny Goodman and Count Basie orchestras, Ella Fitzgerald, and many others.

After the fair, the Arena was a popular venue for rock concerts, hockey games, and other events. Renamed Mercer Arena in 1995 and Mercer Arts Arena in 2001, the facility hosted Seattle Opera and Pacific Northwest Ballet performances during construction of Marion Oliver McCaw Hall. In 2008 the Seattle Opera signed a long term lease option for Mercer Arts Arena, enabling the company to bring together all its operational departments.

### *Physical Description:*

Originally constructed between 1927 and 1928, renovations on the former Ice Arena in preparation for the Century 21 Exposition drastically altered the building's appearance in 1961. These 1961 alterations served to aesthetically align the arena with other fair buildings designed in the Modern – New Formalist style, including the Playhouse and Exhibition Hall. The architects, Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates, retained the original footprint of the building choosing to encapsulate it within a new exterior facade. The building features a rectangular footprint. The one story poured concrete building has a front gable roof with eight small cupolas projecting up from the ridge; the roof system is a remnant of the building's original appearance. Tan colored bricks



2013 image of the Mercer Arts Arena. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

clad the building. A colonnade runs along the building's north elevation, visually connecting it to the Exhibition Hall and Playhouse Theater. Slim concrete posts and a recessed rounded rectangular detailing of the passage's ceiling characterize the colonnade. Three sets of segmental arch doorways provide access to the building's interior on the north facade. A trio of tall doorways punctuates the center of the elevation; shorter paired doorways are located on either side of the trio. Two bronze lanterns, likely dating from the original building's facade, are present between each set of doorways. While the building's original plan has been obscured and the original cladding extensively altered, the 1961 plan and cladding largely retain their integrity.

The building maintains its original use as an arena, and while it retains a large, open interior volume, the materials and configurations within the space have been altered over the years. The building interior was not accessed.





Above: 1962 view of the Mercer Arts Arena interior. Source: Puget Sound Regional Branch, Washington State Archives.

Right: 2013 view of bronze lantern on Mercer Arts Arena exterior facade. Source Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



#### *Character-Defining Features:*

- Colonnade
- Brick
- Bronze lanterns

#### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1961, Kirk, Wallace, McKinley, & Associates, conversion in anticipation of Century 21 Exposition, increasing lobby spaces and improving arena area
- 1964, James J. Chiarelli of Priteca & Chiarelli, AIA, remodel for use after fair, remodeling of north and east foyers, reworking of arena
- 1979, Rigg Nelson Walker Cavage, arena improvement project
- 2001, arena temporary venue improvements, altered arena seating, exterior box office relocated inside building, interior reconfigured by LMN (Loschky Marquardt & Nesholm)



## Individual Buildings and Structures

Buildings included in this section:

- Blue Spruce Building
- Seattle Repertory Theatre
- KCTS 9 Building
- Covered Breezeways
- Pottery Northwest/Gardener's Facility
- Seattle Children's Theatre

### Blue Spruce Building [4]

#### Significance:

Designed by George Bolotin in 1956, the unassuming Blue Spruce apartment building consisted of five one-room and 21 two-room apartments, and served as much-needed office space for fair staffers before and during the exposition. The building was acquired by the City of Seattle and used by the Century 21 Exposition, Inc. for fair departments including Site Development, Purchasing, Personnel, Concessions, Operations and Services, Advance Ticket Sales, and Lodging. Post-fair, the Blue Spruce was leased to tenants including Greater Seattle, and over the years has served as office space for many Seattle Center tenants and producing organizations. The building's origin as an apartment house is clearly visible – no modifications other than signage have been made to its exterior – and while this references the neighborhood that once occupied the fair/Seattle Center footprint, it has been perhaps the most utilitarian structure of all those used during the fair, with the possible exception of the Mercer Garage.

#### Physical Description:

Completed in 1956, the Blue Spruce Building occupies a U-shaped footprint on the north side of Thomas Street, just south of the KeyArena. This building has a Modern, multi-family residential form. The three-story, concrete block structure stands on a poured concrete foundation. Exterior walls are clad with concrete block. On the south walls of the east and west stairwells, the concrete blocks are laid in a decorative relief pattern, with alternating quads of blocks recessed or protruding, producing a zigzag effect. A flat roof and surrounding parapet cap the building. Bands of stepped out sheet metal form the parapet. The footprint's U-shape opens to the south, with



1957 image of the Blue Spruce Building (Blue Spruce Apartments, Administration Building). Source: Puget Sound Regional Branch, Washington State Archives.

poured concrete balconies above the ground floor wrapping the courtyard and overlooking Thomas Street. Metal wrought-iron railings line the balconies. Exterior doors at all floors in the south facade access the former apartment spaces, now offices. On the south, east and west facades, large window units allow daylight into the interior. Most windows appear to be original, aluminum-framed, single pane fixed and casement types. Smaller versions of these same window units are regularly spaced across all bays on the north facade and at the ground floor in the east wall. Select windows are replacements, with matte (silver) aluminum frames. Stairwells are located at the east and west ends of the building, featuring poured concrete steps and metal pipe handrails. A single, partially glazed metal door accesses the west stairwell at the ground floor from the east side; the same kind of door accesses the east stairwell from the west side. The west stairwell also has an open eastside doorway protected by a contemporary metal gate. Replacement fiberglass and plywood panels cover the stacked window openings in the south walls of the end stairwells. Original mailboxes are located at the west and east ends of the ground floor, next to the stairwell doors. An aluminum framed, wall mounted building directory is adjacent to the east mailboxes.

The original cladding appears to be intact, along with the footprint and overall plan. There appear to have been moderate changes to the original windows.

#### Character-Defining Features:

- Footprint and massing
- Roof form
- Floor plan and spatial arrangement
- Balconies (but not railings)

- Mailboxes
- Building directory
- End stairwells
- Aluminum-framed windows and fenestration pattern
- Patterned concrete work in cladding
- Exterior doors
- Finished concrete floor surface along balconies and in stairwells



Below: 2013 image of the Blue Spruce Building. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

*Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1960: Converted to offices for the Century 21 World's Fair
- 1993: Reroofing, alterations to third floor plan
- Undated: Replaced balcony railings and select windows; replaced and/or infilled windows in south walls of stairwells (plywood and fiberglass panels now); rearranged roof drainage system changed (scuppers added, downspouts relocated); added contemporary metal gate to exterior of southwest stairwell entrance

## Seattle Repertory Theatre [10]

### *Significance:*

Designed by NBBJ in 1981, construction removed all landscaping and existing former fair buildings and structures from the site was formerly occupied by the International Commerce and Industries Buildings surrounding the International Mall.

The International Commerce And Industry Buildings, designed by the firm of Walker & McGough, housed the pavilions of India, Republic of Korea, United Nations, African Nations, Thailand, Philippines, San Marino, City of Berlin, and the Peace Corps. The pavilions were demolished immediately after the fair, and the International Commerce and Industry Buildings were demolished in 1981. The north terminal for the 76 Skyride, located on the International Mall, was dismantled in 1981.

Seattle Repertory Theatre (founded in 1963 and housed in the World's Fair Playhouse) broke ground for their own venue, the future Bagley Wright Theatre, named for the Rep's founding board member, in 1981, mounting their first season there in 1983. The Bagley Wright Theatre was the first major new construction on Seattle Center's campus since the fair. Neon tubing on the front facade done by Stephen Antonakos in 1983. In 1996, the Rep undertook a major addition adding a second stage, the Leo Kreielsheimer Theatre.

### *Physical Description:*

Completed in 1983, the Seattle Repertory Theatre is located in the northwest corner of the Seattle Center campus, occupying most of the city block bordered by Mercer and Republican streets and 2nd and Warren avenues. The building is executed in the Modern style. A poured concrete foundation supports reinforced concrete walls and an irregular footprint. Painted stucco clads the exterior walls. Metal framed, multi-lite, fixed windows are the predominant window type. A varied height (stepped) flat roof caps the structure's irregular internal volume. This building dates to the post-World's Fair period, although the zigzag footprint of the west and north retaining walls are a relic of the fair. A series of entrances is contained within a ribbon of glazing at the southeast corner. The original cladding and windows appear to be intact. There appear to be moderate changes to the original plan, with addition(s) to at least the south end.



2013 image of the Seattle Repertory Theatre. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

The interior of the theater was not accessed.

### *Character Defining Features:*

- Footprint and massing
- Exterior neon lights
- Curvilinear and stepped walls
- Asymmetrical composition
- Horizontal banding

### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1995: Fire protection, mechanical, electrical, technical, site (grading, paving), and structural updates
- 1996: Wall and door system; addition adding a second stage off the south side of the building and a covered walkway off the northeast corner
- 2002: Addition and reroofing
- 2010: the landscaping added as part of the theater construction was redone to form the Theater Commons



2013 view of KCTS 9 Building. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

### KCTS 9 Building [43]

#### Significance:

Built by KCTS 9 on city-owned Seattle Center property. During the fair, the current KCTS 9 site and open space around it was occupied by the Show Street complex – Century 21’s adult entertainment area. Structures designed by Paul Thiry housed diverse attractions including Peep Backstage USA, Bavarian Tavern, Girls of the Galaxy, Gay Nineties Review, Antique Car Show, Diamond Horseshoe, Flor de Mexico, Indian Village/TeePee Salmon Barbeque, Cellier de Pigalle, and Stella. A theater building by Roland Terry contained Les Poupees de Paris nude marionette show, a magic show, and Paris Spectacular wax museum. Howard Dong and Associates designed Gracie Hansen’s Paradise International – the pride of Show Street. All of these buildings were funded by Century 21 Exposition, and all were moved or demolished following the fair. Some – most notably the Gracie Hansen building – were given to King County in exchange for funding buildings elsewhere on the fairgrounds. In 1984, KCTS 9 public television constructed a home for all of their operations, which had been scattered across the University of Washington campus. McKinley Architects designed the new building. KCTS sought to build its home at Seattle Center in order to be near the cultural institutions housed there, and planned to broadcast their performances. The site on which KCTS built had been unused since the fair. Although the public television station is much less actively engaged with the live public than most of its neighbors, the cultural programming it

produces and broadcasts is consistent with Seattle Center’s focus on arts and culture.

#### Physical Description:

Constructed in 1984 as a broadcast studio, the Modern building features an L-shaped plan and stands on a poured concrete foundation. The two story reinforced concrete building has a flat roof with parapet. Rounded arch shaped parapet walls highlight the north and south elevations. Barrel roofs clad in standing seam metal extend from the parapets. The building’s walls are clad in a tan colored brick. Long wall expanses of patterned brick on the west and east elevations are capped by ribbon of windows. Tall narrow windows flank patterned brick expanses on these elevations. Triangular-shaped covered areas, formed by a heavy pillar and a diagonally run wall of windows, are located at both the northwest and northeast corners of the building. The main entrance is located along the northwest diagonal window wall. Two loading bays are present on the building’s south elevation. The building’s plan, cladding, and windows appear to be intact.

#### Character-Defining Features:

- Brick cladding and patterned brickwork
- Tall narrow windows

#### Chronology of Alterations:

- Slight modifications to the rear loading bay



## Covered Breezeways

### *Significance:*

Free standing covered breezeways respond to our Pacific Northwest maritime climate, providing shelter from the rain for pedestrians along the main circulation corridors. These represent a 1970s addition to the site.

### *Physical Description:*

Covered breezeways facilitate north-south circulation within the Seattle Center campus. Constructed in 1973, these utilitarian structures feature a rectangular plan. The steel structure of the breezeways rises from poured concrete piers. Steel posts support the pyramidal hipped roof of the breezeway structure. Panes of wire glass fill in between the ribs of the roof, providing shelter from the elements. The structure's materials and plan appear largely intact.

### *Character-Defining Features:*

- Narrow footprint
- Roof glazing

### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1984 additional covered walkways added



Above and right: 2013 images of covered breezeways. Source Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



Above: 2013 view of Pottery Northwest /Gardener's Facility building. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

Right: Detail of original door on east elevation of Pottery Northwest /Gardener's Facility building. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



## Pottery Northwest /Gardener's Facility [19]

### Significance:

The brick structure was constructed by contractor Vincent Bressi in 1923 as an automobile repair garage, operated in that function through the 1940s by Dominick Bressi (likely his brother). Architect M. C. Heinemann designed the building. By 1950, it was occupied by the City Transfer & Stage Company. During the fair, World Wide Distributors, Inc., a wholesale general merchandise firm, occupied the building. Its size, condition, and proximity to Seattle Center made it attractive to the city, and in April 1966, Seattle purchased it for \$132,000.

Pottery Northwest, founded in 1966 and originally housed on the second floor of the Seattle Center Armory (then called the Food Circus), moved to this site in 1973. Van Horne Architects were hired to design the remodel. They performed seismic upgrades, re-pointed the brick, built out the interior to facilitate meeting and classroom space, clay mixing areas, electric kilns, and made other improvements. The building's adjoining courtyard houses gas-fired kilns. The courtyard's south side now abuts Seattle Center's open parking lots and the entry drive to the First Avenue North garage. When built, the open parking lot site was occupied by a former commercial laundry building that was used as a to-go food concession during

the fair. An addition to the building was constructed in 1976, also to plans by Van Horne Architects.

### Physical Description:

Constructed in 1923 (according to the county assessor), the one story vernacular commercial-style building built by M.C. Heinemann features a rectangular plan. The poured concrete foundation supports the common bond brick walls. The building has a hip roof set on a flat roof and enclosed by stepped parapet walls on the west and south ends. Situated on a corner lot at the southeast corner of Thomas Street and 1st Ave N, the garage has two prominent facades, the north and west elevations. The west elevation is divided into five bays by wide brick piers. Brick corbels highlight the window openings which feature multi-paned windows below multi-paned transoms. All the windows on the west elevation have been replaced. Brick piers continue on the north elevation, dividing the facade into six bays. The north elevation bays have similar detailing as those on the west. The north elevation retains most of its original multi-paned windows. One bay now features a large overhead door while another has been partially bricked in and now has a contemporary entrance door. The east elevation, accessed via an alley, retains the outline and header for the original auto bays, but



2013 view of southeast corner of Pottery Northwest /Gardener's Facility building. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

the openings have been filled in with concrete block. The south wall is a shared party wall with an adjacent building, also a part of the former Bressi Garage operations.

The central bay of the south portion has been modified and now features a contemporary entrance door with surrounding mosaic. A wood frame addition, covered by a corrugated metal clad shed roof, projects from the south elevation along almost its entire length. The east elevation, accessed via an alley, appears to retain its original fenestration, with a central entrance bay flanked on either side by two multi-paned wood windows. The alley entrance door is a sliding wood double door; a mullion separates twelve panes of glass on either side of the door. The north wall is a shared party wall with an adjacent building, also a part of the former Bressi Garage operations.

Historically, the interior of the building was most likely a relatively open volume to facilitate the garage business. A 1973 renovation remodeled the garage for use as pottery studio, which kept much of the interior open, but added a locker area, office, display room, and a mezzanine level for a lounge space. A 1986 renovation remodeled the garage for use as a gardener's facility to support Seattle Center maintenance staff.

**Character-Defining Features:**

- Brick walls and brick detailing
- Bays
- Multi-paned wood windows
- Stepped parapet walls

**Chronology of Alterations:**

- 1973, Audrey L. Van Horne of Van Horne & Van Horne Architects, garage remodeled into artist studio, shed addition along south elevation to house external kilns
- 1976, south addition
- 1986, Ing & Associates, north facade roll-up door added, original west elevation double door removed, original brick reused to fill door opening, single door added to north elevation, hanging planters added to building exterior, original windows removed on east elevation





1962 Werner Leggenhager photograph of the Seattle Children's Theatre east entrance. Source: Seattle Public Library.

## Seattle Children's Theatre [21]

### Significance:

This addresses only the pre Century 21 Exposition Nile Shrine Temple within the larger complex of contemporary buildings and additions known today as the Seattle Children's Theatre.

Built as the Nile Shrine Temple, Club 21 was a private club for top fair brass, Seattle businessmen and their wives, and high-ranking visitors and exhibitors. The building was leased from the Shriners by the Century 21 Exposition, Inc. Members enjoyed dining facilities, meeting rooms, showers and barbershop, switchboard, paging, stenographic services, and nightly entertainment. Club 21's \$250 membership fee included a permanent gate pass to the fair and use of all Club 21 facilities for member and wife. With the exception of one female fair staffer from the Public Relations department, all Club 21 members were male. Designed by Samuel Morrison in 1956 and funded by the Nile Temple Holding Corporation. As constructed for the Nile Temple, the L-shaped building included offices, storerooms, lounge and card rooms, and a 700-seat auditorium which could double as a banquet facility.

Although originally planned to revert to its owners after the fair, within a year of the Exposition's conclusion the city entered a lease agreement for the continued use

of the property. The Nile Temple was used as the gift shop for the 1978 King Tut exhibit. The city purchased the building in 1979. Beginning in 1983, it housed the Pacific Arts Center and, beginning in 1987, some operations of the Seattle Children's Theatre (then performing at the PONCHO Theatre at Woodland Park Zoo). In 1993 it was renovated and became part of the Seattle Children's Theatre complex (built 1993, expanded 1995). The complex includes the Charlotte Martin Theatre, the Allen Family Pavilion, the Eve Alvord Theatre and the Drama School. The latter two facilities incorporate the former Club 21. Exterior design elements on the entire theater complex are referential to the Nile Temple wavy roofline design.

### Physical Description:

The former Nile Shrine Temple is currently part of the Seattle Children's Theatre complex. The complex was constructed in three phases, with the 1991 and 1993 sections comprising the majority of the floor plan. The original building in the complex was built as the Nile Shrine Temple in 1956. It occupies the northeast portion of the current Seattle Children's Theatre complex. The former Nile Temple is located in the southern end of Seattle Center, at the southwest corner of 3rd Avenue North and Thomas Street. This Modern style building originally had an L-shaped floor plan. Rising from a poured concrete foundation, the reinforced concrete framing supports a barrel vaulted roof. Concrete blocks in-fill the walls between the poured concrete piers. Painted stucco and concrete block comprise the cladding. At the northeast entrance, two sets of original double doors are extant but hardware has been removed and the doors are currently locked shut. One set of replacement double doors is operable but no longer used as a public entry. A tall canopy over this entryway, plus lower canopies to either side, is all original. Original window units are arched, multi-lite, metal framed sashes on the upper wall reaches. A ribbon of square and rectangular, multi-lite, metal framed sashes stretch along the east wall's lower level. Select windows have been removed/infilled as part of the current theater use. All original windows on the south and west elevations were lost to new additions. There have been extensive alterations to the original plan and the original windows.



On the interior, the original building has a varied volume, ranging from one to two stories. The main entrance was once through the northeast vestibule, which is now defunct. The current main entrance to the original building is through the set back east entryway, under an extended hard canopy. The Eve Alford Theatre space occupies what was once a general purpose gathering space for the Nile Temple. Behind and above the Alford stage, a mezzanine space reveals a portion of a former proscenium opening. The south wing of the original building features a two-story volume, with a north-south central corridor at each floor. Rooms opening off these corridors serve administrative and classroom purposes. The lower corridor retains more integrity with regard to openings, door surrounds, and spatial arrangement than the upper floor corridor. Rooms on the east side of the corridors retain original window openings and sashes.

**Character-Defining Features:**

- Massing of original building portion
- Cladding (stucco, concrete block)
- Window openings
- Window sashes
- Canopies
- Roof form
- Northeast entry and vestibule (including double doors)

**Chronology of Alterations:**

- 1991: Southwest addition(s)
- 1993: Charlotte Martin Theatre addition
- 1995: Eve Alford Theatre renovation and build out
- Undated: ADA ramp on north side, removal and infill of windows in north and south walls of original building, addition of ventilation louvers in northeast vestibule wall, replacement of one set of double doors at northeast entry, removal of hardware from two sets of double doors at northeast entry, replaced doors and extended a hard canopy at the secondary east entrance (set back from street)



Above: Historic view of the Seattle Children's Theatre, showing the former Nile Shrine Temple and Club 21. Source: Puget Sound Regional Branch, Washington State Archives.

Below: 2013 image of the Seattle Children's Theatre, showing the former Nile Shrine Temple and Club 21. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

Historic aerial view of the Century 21 Exposition grounds. Source: Photo by Ken Prichard, Courtesy Ken Prichard.



## Open Space

### Main Entrances

Main entrances represent a feature specific to the fair. Since entry to the fairground required ticket purchase, planners reduced public access to the fair grounds to five locations. Today, entrances have all become open spaces to support open connections between the Seattle Center and surrounding neighborhood. Entrance locations:

**East Entrance** (Fifth Avenue North) defined by multi-colored totem poles designed by Bassetti & Morse. This entrance was located on the block just north of the street right-of-way. Today this is the open area near KCTS 9.

**South Entrance** (Broad Street) defined by multicolored totem poles designed by Bassetti & Morse. Today this area is defined by the Broad Street Green landscape redesign of the green space created by the removal of former pavilions along Broad Street.

**West Entrance** (West Harrison Street) defined by the direct entry to the KeyArena (Washington State Coliseum), book ended between the Northwest Buildings and Fair Headquarters and groves of trees. Although the axial alignment of West Harrison Street remains and this

continues to function as the main public access point to KeyArena, the 1990s redesign of the west plaza, coupled with interior changes to the arena significantly altered this entrance.

**Monorail Arrival Entrance** via the City of Seattle Landmark designated monorail provided a key connection with downtown Seattle.

**North Entrance**, also known as the Presidential Gate (today known as Founders Court), was designed by Kirk, Wallace, & McKinley and funded by the City of Seattle. This served as the most formal of the five established entrances. Entering off Mercer Street, this entrance in conjunction with the Presidential Court served as the formal arrival point and sequence for dignitaries. The location and sequence of spaces allowed dignitaries to proceed through directly to the International Fountain at the core of the fairgrounds. With the exception of the Monorail arrival point, this is the only fair-era site entrance still serving as a visually defined entrance to Seattle Center.

#### Character-Defining Features:

- North Entrance
- Monorail Arrival Entrance

### Chronology of Alterations:

- 1964, entrance turnstiles and ticket sales gates were removed at the fair's conclusion from each of the four gates.
- 1984 construction of the KCTS 9 Building completed the slow transition of this block following the fair and its former role as the east gate.
- 2000s Broad Street Green redesign of the landscaping along Broad Street including the former south gate location
- 1995 conversion of the KeyArena and surrounding plazas, including the former west gate location.

## Trees

The 2009 *Landscape Management Plan* identifies candidates for Legacy Trees and officially Dedicated Trees having a plaque or documentation within the site by zone and provides the following definitions on page 23 of the plan. Following review of identified trees, no additional trees were identified during our research and field work.

*“The definition of Legacy Tree is based on guidelines for determining heritage, historic, legacy, and landmark trees, as provided by the International Society of Arboriculture. One or more of the following characteristics are used to define a tree with special Legacy Tree status:*

*Size: Some component of tree size, most frequently trunk diameter, is used, but other components of tree size, such as height or canopy spread, may also be used.*

*Species: Certain species may be special locally, rare, or important to the community.*

*Age: Older trees are especially valued (age of living trees is difficult to determine).*

*Historic significance: A tree that is associated with an historical event, person, structure or landscape.*

*Ecological value: Examples of trees that have special status are ones that provide a roosting or nesting site for certain wildlife species, play a critical role in slope stabilization, or provide critical cover for another plant or animal species.*

*Aesthetics: Special form, site, and/or function in the landscape is identified.*

*Location: There is an important contribution to the site such as near a street or building.*

*Required plantings and retained trees: If trees have been preserved or planted as a requirement of development, the community has a vested interest in ensuring that the trees are protected.*

*Other unique characteristics: This is a catchall term that may be used when a special tree does not fall neatly into another category.*

*A Dedicated Tree has a plaque, marker or documentation on file to commemorate its significance. Dedicated Trees by nature memorialize an event, group of people or individual and are presumed to be a long-term addition to the campus.”*

## Landscape

Assessment of the landscape includes site features, sculpture, and open spaces within the campus.

Open spaces within the campus consist of key spaces, courts, plazas, and open areas creating defined areas for public gathering with key views of the associated buildings. The following identify key remaining spaces having high integrity or significant community value:

### Street Grid

#### Significance:

When the site was transformed from a city neighborhood to fairgrounds/civic center, the open space along the former street grid was partially retained within the core of the site. Buildings and landscape elements constructed around the perimeter of the site, prior to, as part of, and following the Century 21 Exposition erased many of the former street alignments. These constructed elements include Memorial Stadium, McCaw Hall, Mercer Street Parking Garage, Exhibition Hall, Chihuly Garden and Glass, Broad Street Green, the Pacific Science Center, and KeyArena. Although the city vacated the streets running through the site, they were unchanged until just prior to the fair, when they were paved with asphalt to bring them level to the abutting ground, eliminating curbs that might cause fairgoers to stumble. During the fair, and during the site's decades as Seattle Center, the open space



of the street grid around the core campus spaces remains. This continuity of open space within the site is, along with several legacy trees near the International Fountain that predate the fair, the site's oldest artifact.

#### *Physical Description:*

The former 66-foot wide street grid establishes the underlying organizational pattern. This pattern conveys historical street front orientation and block level relationships of pre-fair buildings. Paul Thiry utilized this grid in the layout and organization of the fairgrounds with many of the new buildings receiving addresses based on the street they fronted. Although access to the campus reduced to four main gates during the fair, within the campus the street grid provide important means of circulation around the core open space bounded by West Republican Street to the north, West Thomas Street and Broad Street to the south, and Second Avenue North on the west and Third Avenue North on the east. As part of the post-fair transition back to a civic center reuse of the open space alignments of the former streets as primarily pedestrian access points renewed their importance connecting with the surrounding neighborhood to create a more permeable campus and further strengthened their internal circulation role.

*Key former streets (their right-of-ways have been vacated and are no longer considered city streets or avenues):*

**West Republican Street** serves as part of the north edge along one block behind Northwest Buildings, alignment continues through campus as an important circulation route (now August Wilson Way) along the north side of the International Fountain open space, through to Fifth Ave N and the Memorial Stadium.

**West Harrison Street** runs to the center of KeyArena, and is the only original street to serve as a main gate entry to the fair (west gate). West Harrison Street also serves as the main central east/west axis (United Nations Way) through the campus with views of KeyArena and over the two central open spaces.

**West Thomas Street** runs east/west and serves as the main promenade (American Way) passes under the Monorail and along the base of the Space Needle.

**Warren Ave North** runs north/south through the central axis of the KeyArena. Although not a main gate entry, an

opening left in Northwest Buildings provided for continuation of this circulation pattern and has become an important neighborhood entry point following the fair.

**Second Avenue North** is the main north/south promenade (Boulevard West) through fairgrounds along the west side of the central open spaces. This street passes along the front of the Sweden Pavilion and east side of KeyArena.

**Third Avenue North** is the main north/south promenade (Boulevard East) through the campus along the east side of the central open spaces. This street leads directly to the Pacific Science Center with views of the Horiuchi Mural and Amphitheater.

#### *Character-Defining Features:*

- Open space alignments along former streets and avenues

#### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- During the fair, construction of the Federal Science Pavilion (now Pacific Science Center) and the former pavilion along Broad Street cut off the east/west connection of John Street. The right of way was pushed to the north, but no longer maintains a connection with the external street grid.
- Construction of the Mercer Arena and Stadium significantly altered the connections of Fourth Avenue North. During the fair the southern portion provided an important north/south circulation route (Boulevard 21). Changes at the base of the Space Needle and the Chihuly Garden and Glass building have significantly changed this street.

## **Fisher Green [52]**

#### *Significance:*

Designed by Richard Bouillon, the Plaza of the States served as a formal venue for ceremonies honoring visiting United States governors, and highlighting their states. Each state was represented by its flag, flying atop a 33-foot pole, and by a plaque. Many civic groups, high school and college bands, and other boosters participated in celebrations and entertainments at the Plaza of the States.

When the nearby Domestic Commerce And Industry Building/Flag Pavilion Building was demolished in 2001





to make way for Fisher Pavilion, the Plaza was demolished to make way for the Fisher Pavilion Green/South Fountain Lawn, retaining its historic role as a public gathering space and enjoying a respite from encroachment by the site's built environment.

**Physical Description:**

The 2001 redesign of the Fisher Green ties in with original 1961 drawings looking at the connection of this open space to the International Fountain and Open Space to the north with a pavilion at the south end offering views to the north out over the open space. The Fisher Green consists of the Fisher Pavilion along the south edge with an upper level overlooking the Green and a lower level opening to an exterior plaza. The rest of the Green consists of a main circular lawn ringed by a paved walkway with stairs and ramps leading out to the east/west and north connecting with adjoining streets.

**Character-Defining Features:**

- Open space with views of the surrounding buildings

**Chronology of Alterations:**

- 2001 construction of the Fisher Pavilion, reworking of the State Flag Plaza, and construction of the Pavilion restrooms to the west. The project removed remaining flag poles and place. Added with a round plaza surrounded by a perimeter seat

Historic view of the Plaza of the States. Source: Photo by Art Hupy, Courtesy University of Washington Special Collections.

wall, lawn at the outer corners with a new east ramp, stairways, and pavers along the north side.

**Mural Amphitheatre [53]**

**Significance:**

Century 21 Exposition, Incorporated commissioned the glass tile mural as a gift to the city. Heralded at its April 21, 1962 unveiling as "the largest work of art in the Pacific Northwest," it was Horiuchi's first (and only) work of public art. The Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board granted the Seattle Mural landmark status in September 2004.

Cradled within the Armory, Space Needle, Pacific Science Center, and Seattle Children's Theatre – and within the sight lines of all of these – the Mural Amphitheatre is a central survivor of Seattle World's Fair. It serves as a steady backdrop to every event that occurs on the southern portion of Seattle Center's campus.

**Physical Description:**

Designed by Paul Thiry as part of the fair to be an open amphitheater space with an east/west orientation, pavilions lined the north and south sides framing the view east to the Horiuchi Mural and the Space Needle.



Historic view of Horiuchi Mural.  
Source: Photo by Ken Prichard, Courtesy Ken Prichard.

The space features a central sloped lawn forming the theater seating facing east towards the City of Seattle Landmarked Horiuchi Mural and Space Needle.

Removal of the pavilions to the north and south following the fair expanded the space. 1964 landscaping introduced groves of trees along the north and south sides to maintain the mall character.

**Character-Defining Features:**

- Central sloped, open lawn space
- Views of the Space Needle, Armory (Center House), Horiuchi Mural (Seattle Mural), and Pacific Science Center, all City of Seattle Landmarks
- Seattle Mural designed by Paul Horiuchi, mounted on parabolic support structure by Paul Thiry

**Chronology of Alterations:**

- 1964, landscape design by Richard Haag realigned the circulation routes at the north and south sides and expanded tree plantings along the north and south sides

**International Fountain [2]**

**Significance:**

Tokyo architects Shimuzu and Matsushita won Seattle's international competition to design the fountain that would serve as a focal point for the fair and, after, Seattle

Center. Designed to shoot water into sculptural forms as much as 150-feet high, the central portion of the fountain was compared to a sunflower, with "seed" nozzles. Machinery deep underground facilitated changes in colored lighting patterns and spray shapes. Taped carillon music accompanied the sprays.

A 1995 renovation replaced the central fountain apparatus while retaining the spray pattern, raised the bowl floor, replaced sharp rocks with aggregate concrete paving, and added a gently sloping spiral ramp that provides wheelchair access and enables water play. The surrounding plaza was redesigned at the same time.

The fountain is constructed on the former site of Mercer Playfield, from 1910 to 1958 the playground for the adjacent Warren Avenue School and for the neighborhood. The fountain's iconic joyful spray patterns and its potential for both active and contemplative appreciation make it a magnet for Seattle Center visitors, retaining its historic World's Fair function as the figurative "heart" of the campus and echoing its playful pre-fair function.

**Physical Description:**

Built in 1961, the International Fountain space includes the main fountain and the block of surrounding open space. Designed by Tokyo architects Kazuyuki Matsushita, and Hideki Shimizu architects, with assistance by Seattle architects John Phillips and Harry Rich. The fountain served as the center piece for the fair.





Left: Historic view of International Fountain and surrounding open space. Source: Mike and Carolyn Nore.

Above: View of International Fountain at night. Source: Museum of History And Industry.

## International Plaza [50]

### Significance:

Designed by Paul Thiry and Otto E. Holmdahl and Associates, L. J. Janzen and V. L. Nichols the space was created as part of the larger coliseum compound. This focused on the central KeyArena with supporting buildings and open spaces arranged around the perimeter. Early landscape plans for the upper level plaza had an irregular tree spacing, with later revisions changing this to a more rigid L shaped alignment along the Northwest Rooms. Original trees specified included *Crataegus Carrierei* and at the lower level kept an existing Atlas Cedar as a dominant planting with the DuPen fountain, as well as a loose grouping of trees (*Picea Excelsa*, *Quercus Pilustris*) behind the Swedish Pavilion to soften the windowless rear facade of that building. Two trees (*Betula Alba*) off the south end of the Sweden Pavilion blocked sight lines from the main International Fountain open space, reinforcing the intimate character of the north space.

### Physical Description:

Originally this plaza encompassed the two open areas north and south of the KeyArena. The fair buildings along West Republican Street (north) and Thomas Street (south) defined the outer edges of these spaces.

Original 1961 drawings envisioned a long rectangular mall extending from Thomas to Republican streets between Second and Third Avenues North. The exhibit pavilion at the south end would look out to the north over the mall and the International Fountain.

### Character-Defining Features:

- Open space with views of the surrounding buildings

### Chronology of Alterations:

- 1969-1971, rewire water lighting display
- 1995 fountain rebuild, removed all rocks, the fountain, perimeter walk and curbing, inner mote, light trough, and cobbles in area. The project added precast concrete planters, a perimeter seat wall, pavers, an orca sculptures off the southwest corner, and installed stainless steel dome fountain. A new sloped concrete slab was installed and a spiral ramp down to the fountain. The project retained below grade tunnels, equipment room, and reservoirs.
- 2001 modification to piping and service platform



2013 view of the remaining three bronze sculptures from the Fountain of Creation. Fountain of Creation. Source: Artifacts Consulting.

The north space represented the more important of the two, having a greater diversity of international pavilions and integrated design with the Northwest Rooms bounding its outer north edge. The north space's original design served primarily as an intimate exterior extension of the Northwest Rooms and a transition space between them and the KeyArena.

The south space featured only two pavilions (Republic of China and Great Britain) with the rest of the buildings consisting of administrative offices and the windowless NASA Building.

The north space consists of an upper and lower level, as well as Everett DuPen's Fountain of Creation. A series of small openings around the perimeter allow through access to the rest of the fairgrounds. A broad stairway off the southeast corner of the Northwest Rooms wraps around the building corner to provide access between the upper level and West Entrance of the former fair grounds. A smaller stairway between the Sweden Pavilion and Northwest Rooms provides access from the plaza down to the International Fountain area. The open colonnade along the Northwest Rooms open to the space. The upper level features a former fountain with decorative inset mosaic tiles designed by Paul Thiry (since converted to a planter), which doubles as a mechanical vent for the KeyArena. Contemporary trees planted in a grid occupy the north and west portions of the level. A new concrete railing

runs along the east side overlooking the lower level. Large planters and two direct flights along the side of the arena replace the original broad flight of concrete stairs that led down into the KeyArena. A single decorative concrete panel remains at the top of the railing for the new stairs. The lower level prominently features an entirely redone fountain replacing clean lines of the original Fountain of Creation with a contemporary organic form dominated by large rocks. Added planters and contemporary trees

Designed by Everett DuPen in 1961 and funded by the Century 21, Inc., the Fountain of Creation (40 x 120-foot basin) occupied a prominent location within the north space of the International Plaza.

As originally constructed, University of Washington professor Everett DuPen's fountain in the International Plaza near the Canada Pavilion consisted of a large shallow pool from which rose three abstract bronze sculptures depicting the evolution of human life from a single cell to the conquest of space. In spite of its cool formality, the DuPen Fountain's shallow depth, wide expanse, and ease of access tempted fairgoers to wade or revive weary feet – still a common response among 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seattle Center visitors.

#### *Character-Defining Features:*

- Decorative concrete panel off added stairway to arena, as the last remaining example of this work along the former stairs
- Atlas Cedar retained on the lower level
- Stairway off the southeast corner of the Northwest Building
- Stairway off the north end of the Sweden Pavilion
- Enclosed open space between the KeyArena, Northwest Rooms, and International Fountain Pavilion creating a public gathering area
- Atlas cedar
- Concrete vent with inset mosaic tiles, and former pool basin
- Fountain of Creation cast bronze sculptures, Evolution of Man, Flight of Gulls, and Seaweed

#### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1987, all of north space's upper level redone, while converting the vent pool to a planter and replacing all trees added during and immediately after the fair, as well as replacing all pavement





2013 view looking west within the north space of the International Plaza. Source: Artifacts Consulting.

- 1991, redid the north space's lower level, including replacing Everett DuPen's Fountain of Creation, and replacing the stairs and paving in the breezeway. The project redesigned the Fountain of Creation removing all of the original pool, west wall, curb and concrete pool edges, as well as paving around the pool. The project retained the three original sculptures, but utilized them in new locations within a new organically shaped pool. The project added boulders, and tree grove and new west wall.
- 1994, reworking of the south space, moving a portion of the NASA Building to its current location, removing the south vent and planter, installation of below grade access to the KeyArena and adding a wall of reused concrete panels along the south edge
- 1999, Northwest Future Forests Grove, trees planted as part of the Millennium Celebration in conjunction with American Forests planted in dedication of northwest environmentalism on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Eddie Bauer and his wife Christine. A time capsule resides beneath the stone and plaque to be opened on October 19, 2099.

## Founders Court [24]

### Significance:

Designed by Kirk Wallace McKinley & Associates, this court served as the Presidential Court, part of the formal entrance sequence in conjunction with the North Entrance. Dignitaries entering through the North Entrance passed directly through the court into the heart of the fairgrounds at the north end of the International Fountain.

The Presidential Plaza continued through the south colonnade, extending to Republic Street at the north end of the International Fountain. The Kobe Friendship Bell, as an important post-World War II effort in international relations, occupied a prominent location on the west side of the Presidential Plaza (off the south end of the Playhouse). The bell was a gift to Seattle in 1962 from Seattle's sister city, Kobe and is housed in a small building built from Japanese cypress. After the Century 21 Exposition, Richard Haag's 1964 landscape designs called for 60 flowering cherries to be planted in a grid pattern around the north, south and west sides of the Kobe Bell Pavilion.

### *Physical Description:*

The overall volume of the space is defined by the original colonnades at the north and south ends, and the east and west facades of the adjacent buildings. Also designed by Kirk Wallace McKinley & Associates, the colonnades and associated buildings work to create a larger version of the Grand Court at the north end of the Playhouse. The views from the Founders Court through the colonnades create a welcoming reception drawing visitors into the fairgrounds. Contemporary paving, curved planters and granite pylons replaced the lighted stone and concrete basins of the 1961 Julius C. Lang Memorial Fountain designed by Kirk Wallace McKinley & Associates and featuring the carved abstract stone column sculpture by Francois Stahly. A contemporary canopy extends along the west facade of the Exhibition Hall.

### *Character-Defining Features:*

- Open space creating a public gathering area
- Original colonnades defining the north and south edges
- East facade of the Playhouse
- West facade of the Exhibition Hall
- Kobe Bell

### *Chronology of Alterations:*

- 1964, Richard Haag landscape revisions around the Kobe Bell Pavilion
- 1996, Founders Court redevelopment replacing the Julius C. Lang Memorial Fountain with the existing concrete planters, granite pylons, and new canopies. Granite pylons by artists Ned Kahn and Horace Washington



Historic view of north entrance; Presidential Court just beyond gates. Source: Seattle Public Library.



2013 view of former north entrance; Founders Court visible beyond the colonnade. Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.





View from the Space Needle towards KeyArena.  
Source Seattle Public Library.



# FINDINGS

## Eligibility

The first step in nominating properties for City of Seattle Landmark designation is to assess the full campus to understand what exists and determine which properties are eligible for nomination. There are three parts to considering eligibility: age thresholds, historic associations, and integrity. Each step helps to refine the list of eligible properties. To be eligible for nomination a property must be within the age threshold, meet at least one of six criteria, and possess integrity.

As City of Seattle properties, Seattle Center buildings, structures and landscape are subject to the following age thresholds with regards to City of Seattle Landmark eligibility consideration. This study addresses eligibility for Seattle Center properties for each of these three age thresholds. The majority of the properties are over 50 years of age.

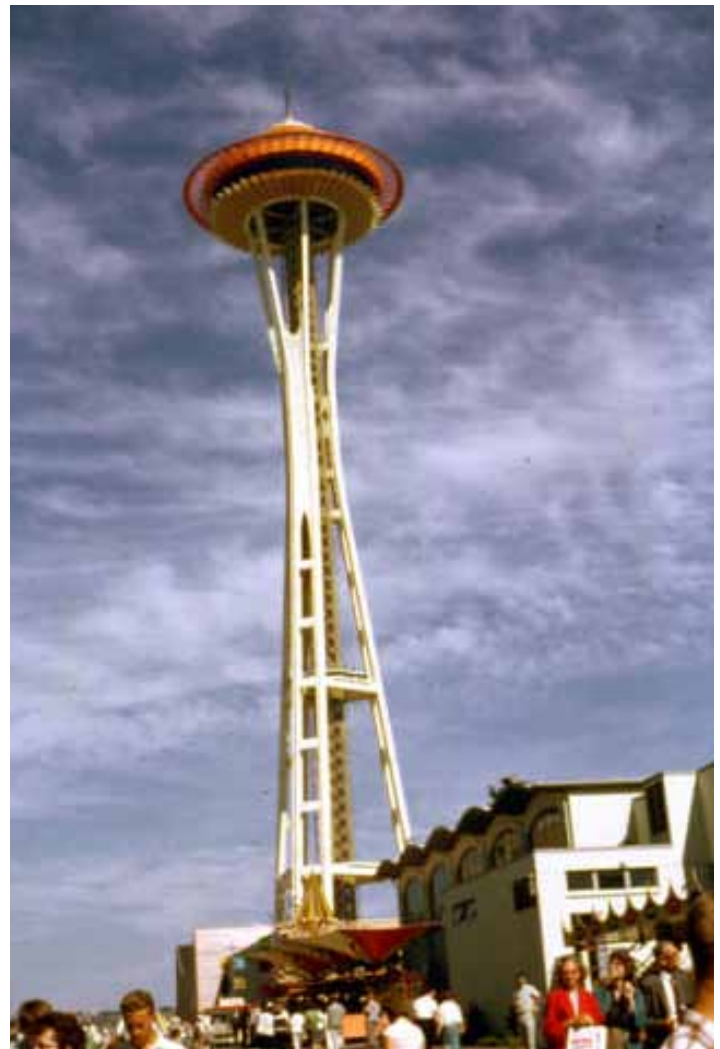
### **Eligible at 25 years**

### **Nomination voluntary at 25-50 years**

### **Nomination mandatory at 50+ years**

Historical associations are the qualities of historic and architectural significance that make the property important to the community. The Seattle Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (SMC 25.12.350) defines the six criteria for designation. This is addressed for each of the properties meeting the age thresholds.

- a) It is the location of, or is associated in a significant way with, a historic event with a significant effect upon the community, City, state, or nation; or
- b) It is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the history of the City, state, or nation; or
- c) It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state or nation; or
- d) It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or a method of construction; or



1962 view of Space Needle. Source: Seattle Public Library.

- e) It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder; or
- f) Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the City.

Integrity is a measure of how much of the property's original design, materials, spaces and features remain to convey the historic associations for which it is significant.

The **Landmark Criteria Table** identifies applicable landmark designation criteria for Seattle Center properties meeting both the age thresholds and having sufficient integrity to convey their historic associations.

## Landmark Criteria Table

PROPERTY NAME	ID	DOC	CRITERIA A	CRITERIA B	CRITERIA C	CRITERIA D	CRITERIA E	CRITERIA F
<b>Thiry Concentration</b>								
International Fountain Pavilion	18	1962	X		X	X		X
KeyArena	1	1962	X	X	X	X	X	X
NASA Building	16	1962	X		X	X		
Northwest Rooms	17	1962	X		X	X		X
Seattle Center Pavilion	20	1962	X		X	X		
International Plaza	50	1962	X		X			
<b>Kirk Concentration</b>								
Exhibition Hall	7	1961	X		X	X		X
Mercer Street Parking Garage	15	1961	X		X	X		X
Playhouse	8	1961	X	X	X	X		X
North Gate	N/A	1961	X		X			
Colonnade	N/A	1961	X			X	X	
Founders Court	24	1961	X		X			
<b>Other</b>								
Seattle Children's Theatre	21	1956	X		X	X		
West Court Building	21	1953						
Covered Breezeways	N/A	1973						
Pottery Northwest / Gardener's Facility	19	1923	X		X	X		
Blue Spruce Building	4	1956						
Fisher Green	52	1962	X		X			
Mural Amphitheatre	53	1962	X		X			
International Fountain	2	1961	X		X			X

## Recommendations

Eligible properties can be nominated for City of Seattle Landmark designation individually and as districts. The following provides recommendations based on our assessment.

### District

Districts encompass multiple properties. They can be large and small in terms of geographic area. Typically there is a core historic context and development period with which most if not all of the district's properties derive their significance. Properties are identified as contributing/non-contributing to the historical and architectural significance of the district. Evaluation as a collective group places a lower burden on integrity for individual properties since their integrity is measured collectively.

A single historic district encompassing the majority of the site would be strengthened by the inclusion of existing Seattle Landmark properties. Open spaces, views, trees, and smaller artifacts and artwork could be included. Potential impacts due to tenant driven changes to buildings could be measured against the district as a whole, rather than just the building being rehabilitated, allowing greater flexibility in adaptive reuse. However, the process for moving a large district through the designation process can be long. KEXP as the future tenant for the Northwest Rooms will be bringing context level design work to the design commission in February. Planning related to the possible return of a basketball team to Seattle is moving quickly and could potentially impact the KeyArena.

Small historic concentration areas encompassing a concentration of properties designed by a single architecture firm would provide some of the benefits of a large historic district and could move through the designation process at a faster pace. The Paul Thiry (Thiry) concentration area around KeyArena and the Kirk, Wallace, & McKinley (Kirk) concentration area around the Playhouse and the Exhibition Hall present the most uniform groupings of properties. These align with the KeyArena and Theatre District zones identified in the Master Plan, which would help for planning and stewardship purposes.



Postcard view of the Alweg Monorail and the Space Needle.  
Source: Seattle Public Library.

### Thiry concentration area properties:

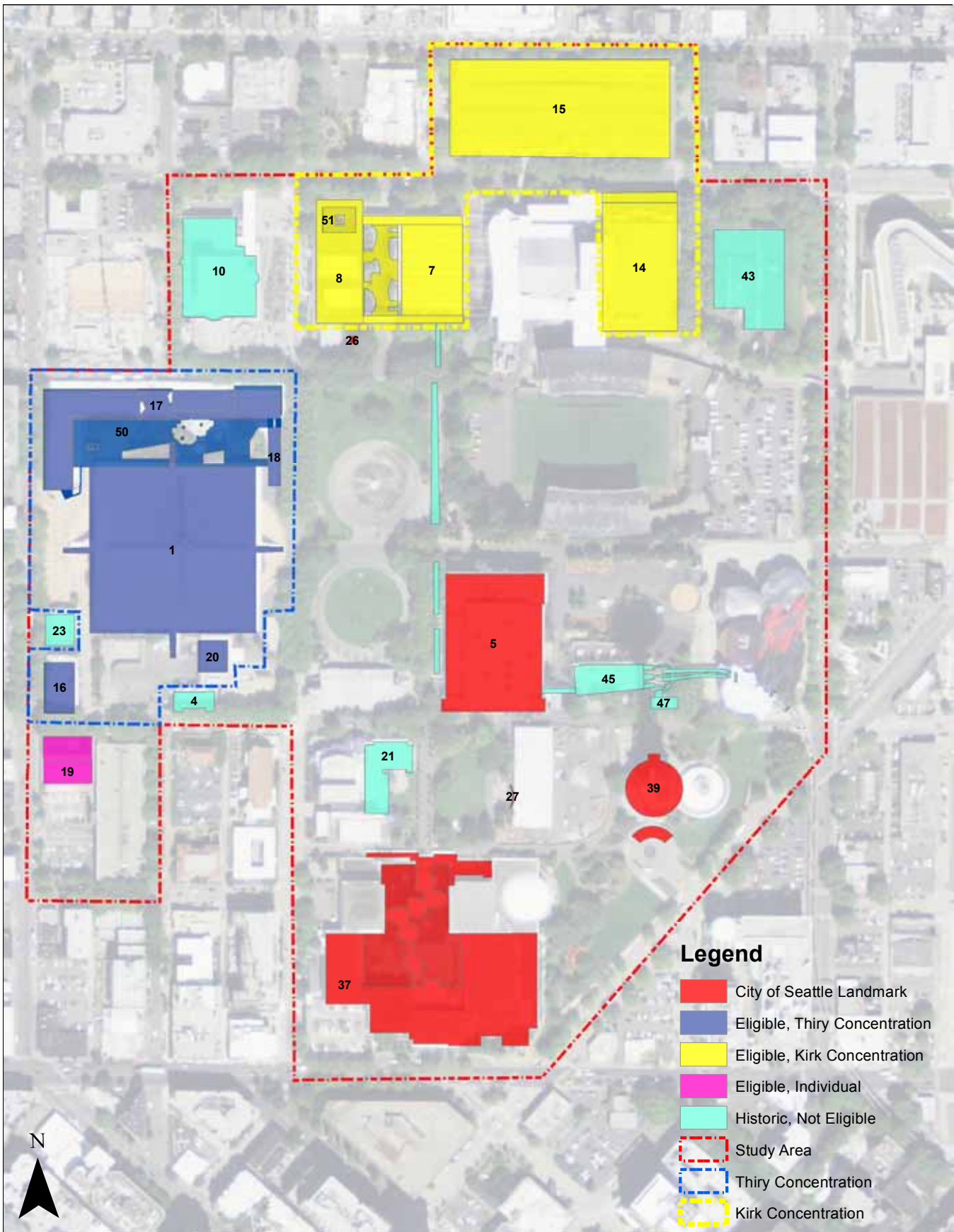
- International Fountain Pavilion
- KeyArena
- NASA Building
- Northwest Rooms
- Seattle Center Pavilion
- International Plaza

### Kirk concentration area properties:

- Exhibition Hall
- Mercer Street Parking Garage
- Playhouse
- Founders Court
- North Gate
- Colonnades
- Mercer Arts Arena



# Landmarks Eligibility Map





Historic view of KeyArena Source: Seattle Public Library.

Both concentration areas retain a substantially intact collection of properties. They were constructed for the Century 21 Exposition and held key roles as pavilions and exhibit halls in the fair. As part of the 1964 post fair transition to a civic center the majority of these buildings continued to serve anchor roles. Their exterior visual character communicates the past role of the site as the Century 21 Exposition and significance community impact this event exerted. The cohesion of mid-century design elements within each concentration area embody the distinctive characteristics of this architectural style, engineering technology, and period of construction. They represent outstanding works of the architects and engineers involved in their design. Their visual prominence and cohesiveness provide an easily identifiable feature of the neighborhood and a supporting context to the city-wide identifiable features of the Seattle Landmark Space Needle and Pacific Science Center.

## Individual

Individual nominations address a single property. These properties convey the neighborhood transition to Century 21 Exposition and then to Civic Center.

The best example of these is the **Pottery Northwest/Gardener's Complex**. The building's exterior remains largely intact. The building's character-defining features convey its architectural style, period and method of construction. The contrast between this building and those of the Thiry concentration area provides a stark example of the neighborhood's transition.

## Lesser examples that would not be individually eligible:

- West Court Building
- Blue Spruce Building
- McCaw Hall
- Seattle Children's Theatre
- Gift Shop

The West Court Building experienced extensive exterior and interior alterations. Built just prior to the fair, the building's architectural style can be discerned; however the extent of previous changes has removed the majority of exterior and interior features.

The Blue Spruce Building retains slightly more integrity than the West Court Building; however the building did not have a significant association with the Century 21 Exposition or fair ground's ongoing role as a civic center.

McCaw Hall experienced extensive interior and exterior alterations removing all visible character-defining features of the building's original and 1961 construction.

The former Nile Temple has been incorporated into the Seattle Children's Theatre complex of buildings. While the original architectural style of the former Nile Temple is still discernible, the surrounding Seattle Children's Theatre additions have diminished the integrity of the original building.

## Community Properties

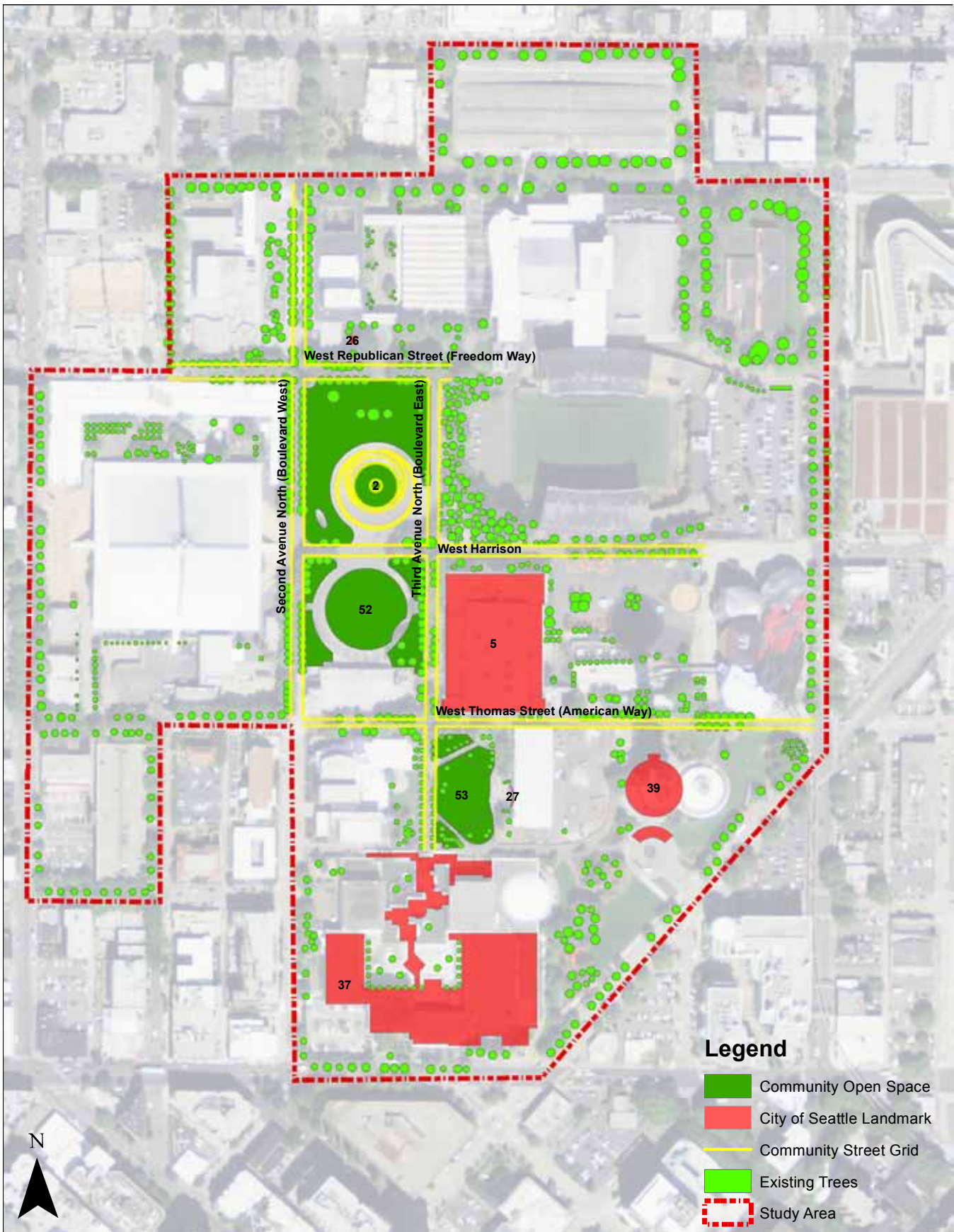
These are properties that rely nearly exclusively on their open space quality to convey their historical associations.

- International Fountain
- Mural Amphitheatre
- Fisher Green
- Former Street Grid

Each served an important role in the Century 21 Exposition and the site's transition to a civic center. Part of the International Fountain pre-dated the fair, serving as an athletic field. The former Street Grid provided an underlying organizational structure for the residential neighborhood, fair, and subsequent civic center. Their prominent locations, contrast with the built-up spaces, and views of



# Community Open Space Map





the surrounding properties provide an easily identifiable visual feature of the neighborhood. Their loss would detract substantially from the qualities of the campus at large and setting for the Thiry and Kirk concentration areas. These spaces benefit from views of adjacent Seattle Landmarks.

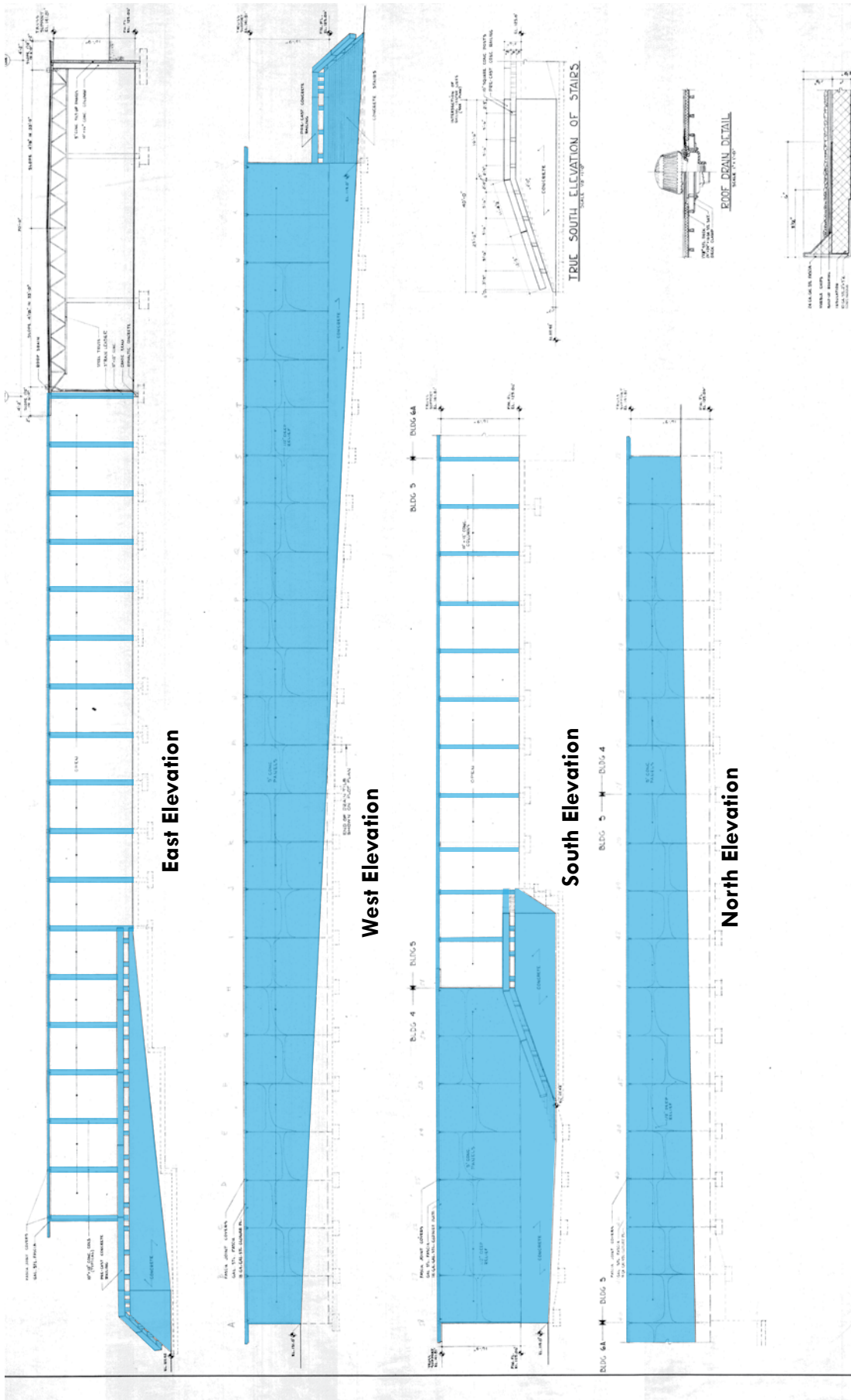
These properties merit further discussion relative to their eligibility as Landmarks and their community role. From the neighborhood perspective these are essential to the public experience, neighborhood connectivity to, and visual qualities of Seattle Center.

## Artifacts

Properties and residual property parts that continue to serve an important contextual role within Seattle Center, but do not fit within the Landmark designation process are artifacts. The key to value and reuse is being able to reuse them within their context. Without this context they have minimal to no value. Examples of this category are the cast concrete panels with decorative patterning reused along the south side of the KeyArena site as a fence, as well as the remnant original concrete panel fence off the northwest corner of the NASA Building. As buildings are adaptively reused, the potential to salvage and reuse elements from the buildings to the benefit of Seattle Center's overall visual character should be considered.

## Analysis

The following analysis maps were prepared for buildings with high integrity within the Kirk and Thiry concentration areas. Color coding identifies existing original, and 1964 fair to civic center conversion features on the building exteriors. These are intended to inform integrity discussions, and should the buildings be designated, the controls and incentives process. All areas left white represent alterations. Original drawings provide the base drawings for the analysis maps. Feature identification stemmed from archival research, review of original and alteration drawings, and site visit to verify conditions. Blue indicates existing original features and yellow indicates alterations made in 1964.



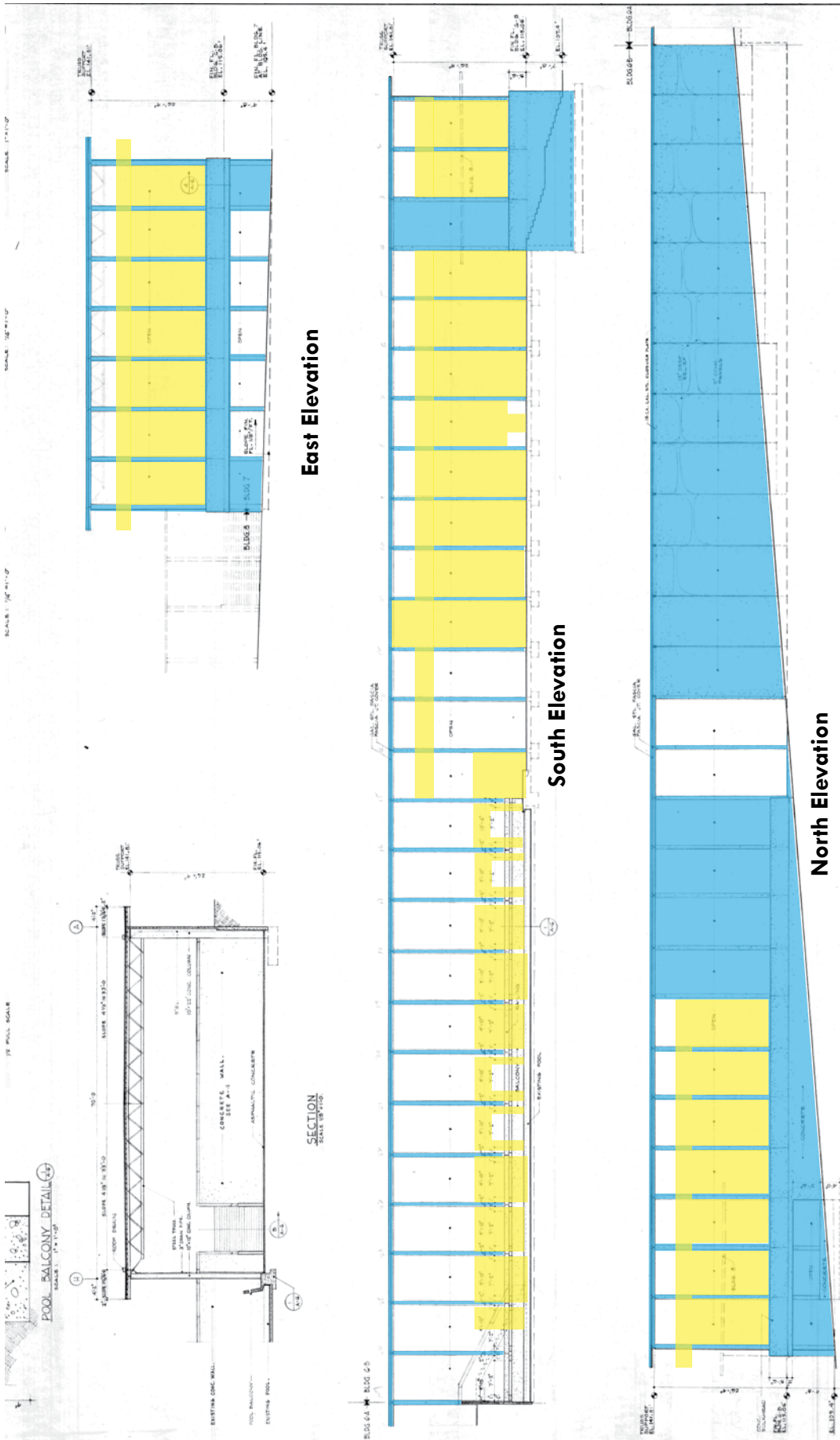
## Upper Northwest Rooms

Blue identifies original features

Yellow identifies 1964 fair to civic center changes

Features left white are contemporary alterations

Original drawings provided courtesy of Seattle Center. Shading by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



## Lower Northwest Rooms

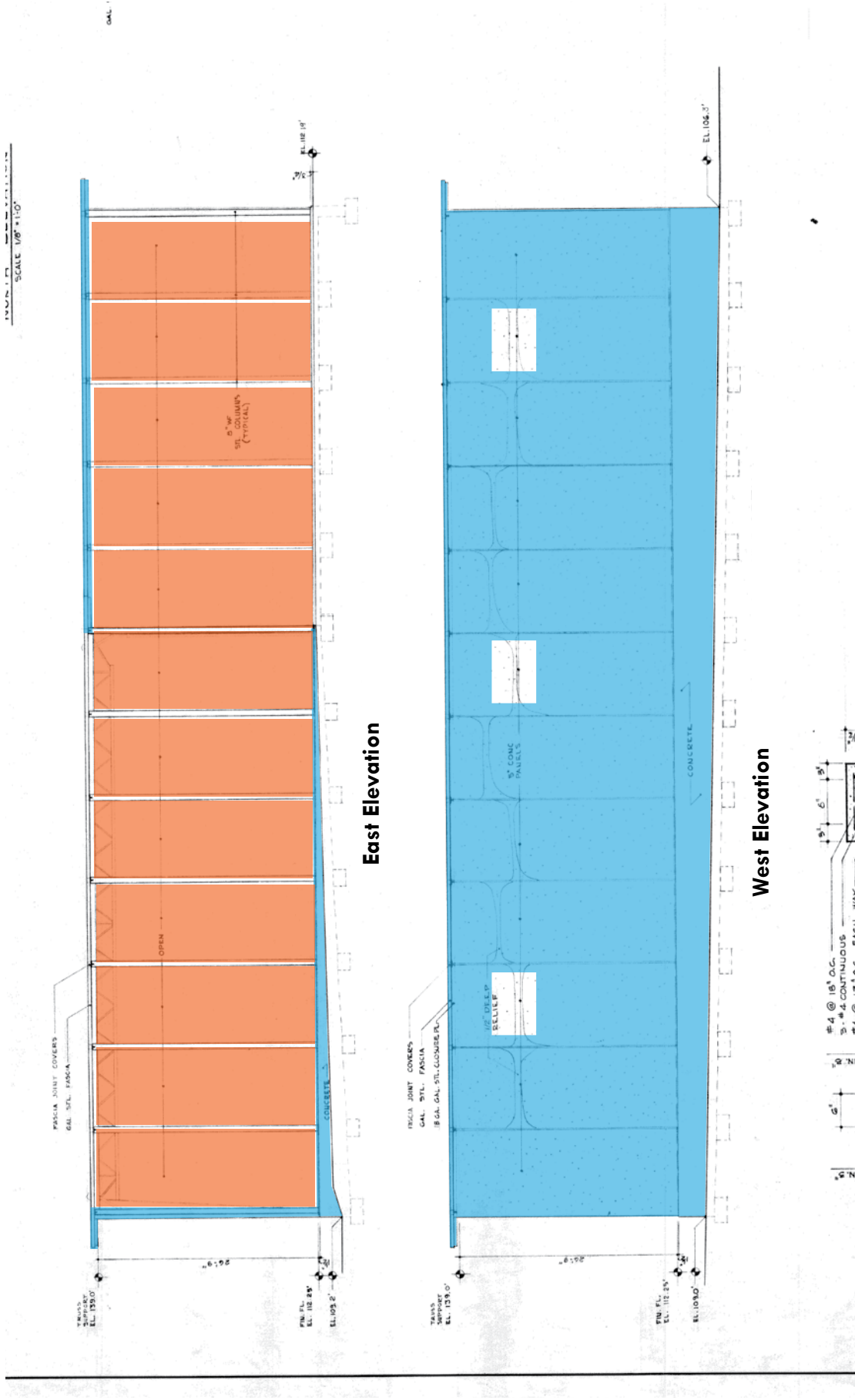
Blue identifies original features

Yellow identifies 1964 fair to civic center changes

Features left white are contemporary alterations

Original drawings provided courtesy of Seattle Center. Shading by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.





**NASA Building**

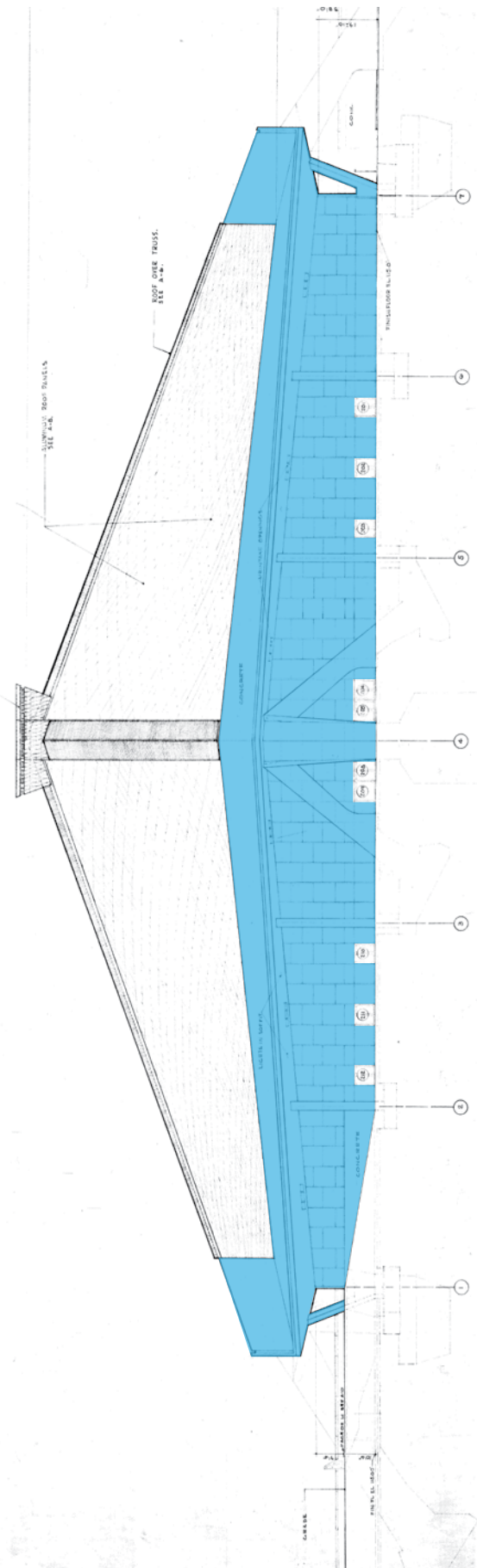
Blue identifies original features

Yellow identifies 1964 fair to civic center changes

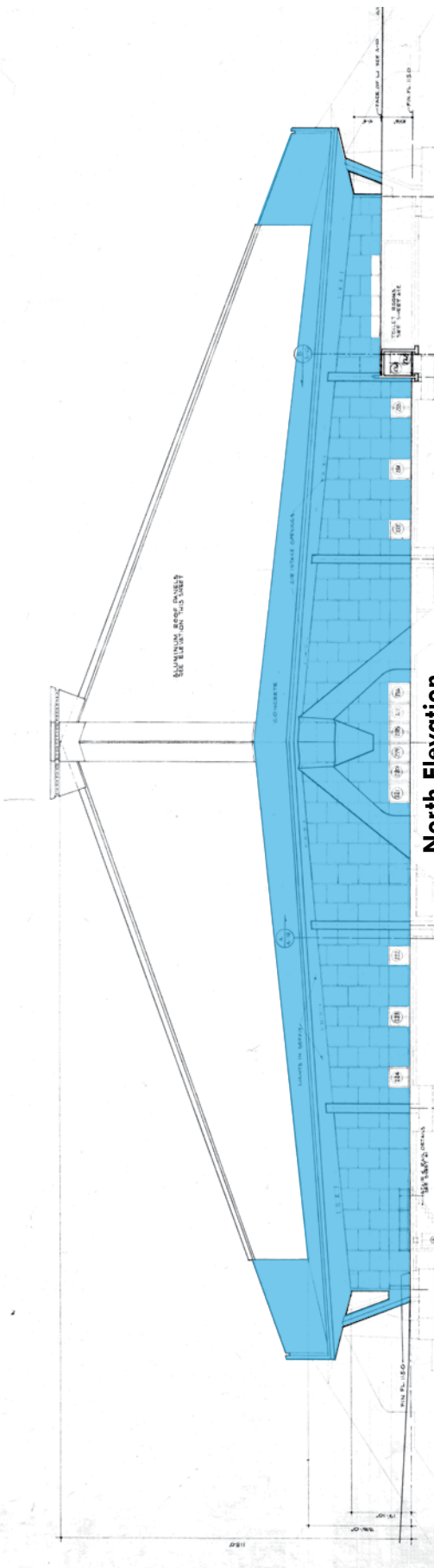
Orange identifies relocated features

Features left white are contemporary alterations

Original drawings provided courtesy of Seattle Center. Shading by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



**West Elevation**



**North Elevation**

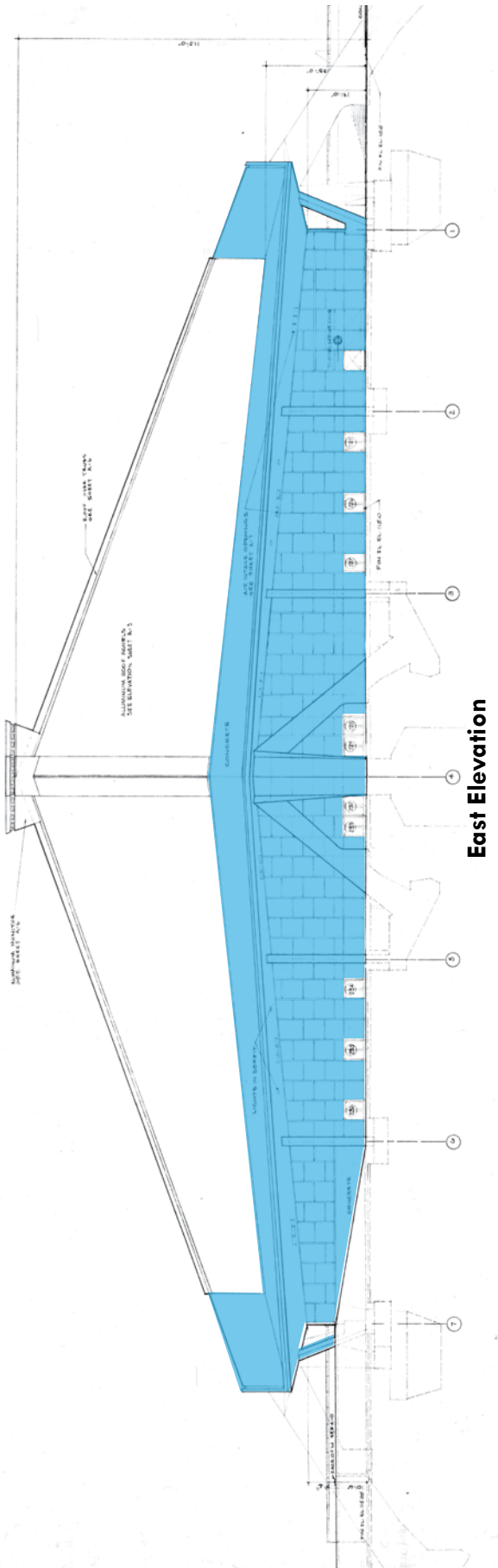
**KeyArena**

Blue identifies original features

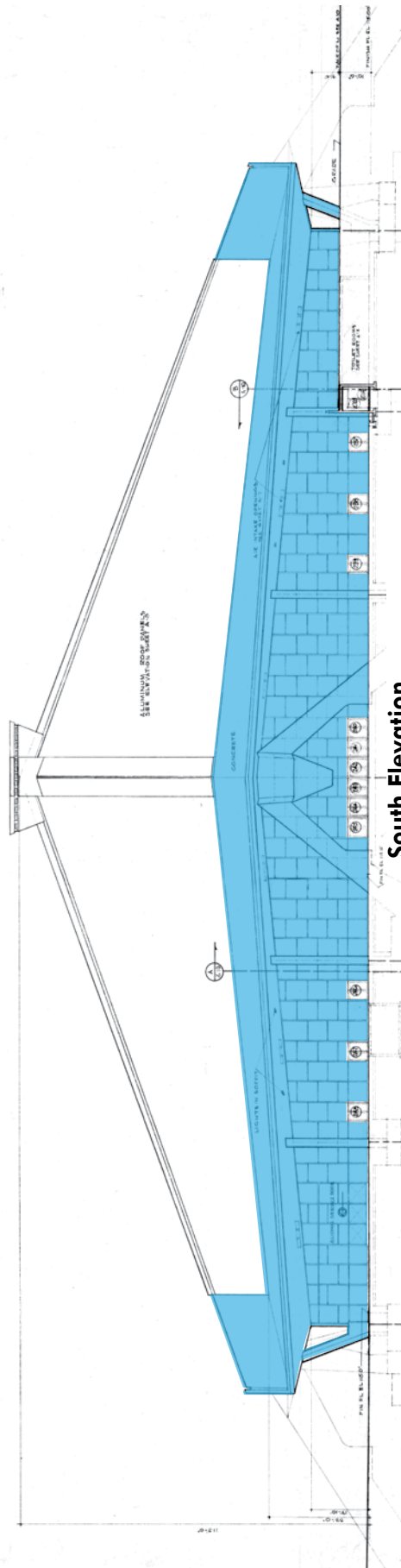
Yellow identifies 1964 fair to civic center changes

Features left white are contemporary alterations

Original drawings provided courtesy of Seattle Center. Shading by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



**East Elevation**



**South Elevation**

**KeyArena**

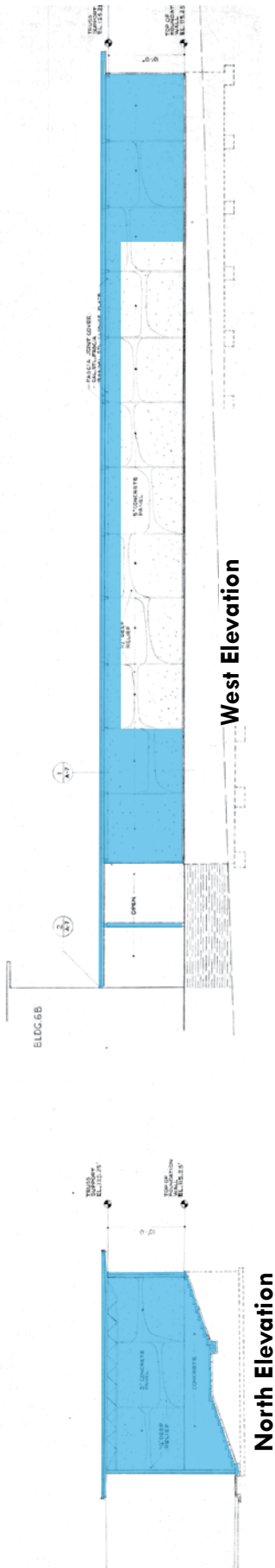
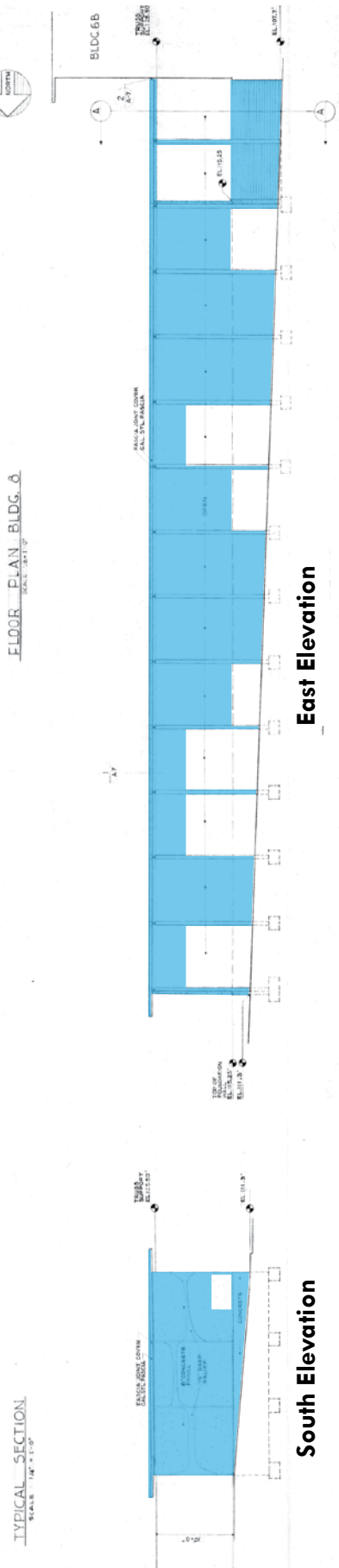
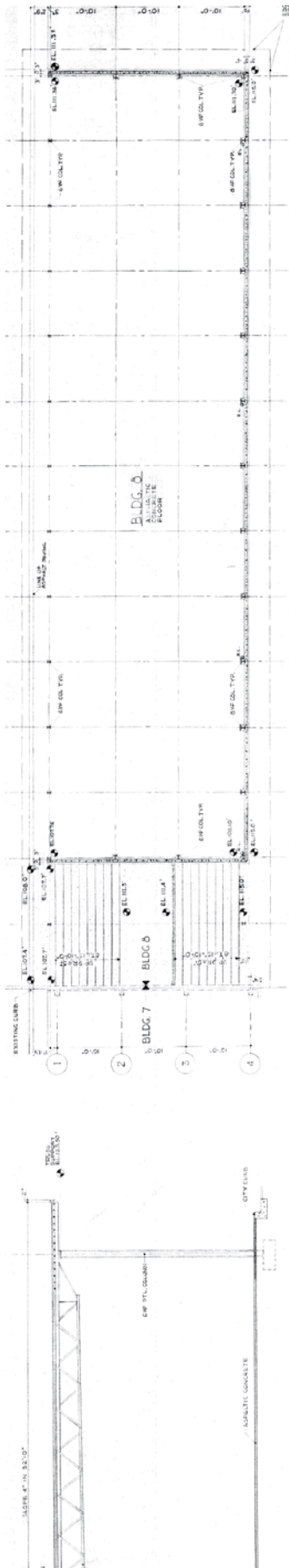
Blue identifies original features

Yellow identifies 1964 fair to civic center changes

Features left white are contemporary alterations

Original drawings provided courtesy of Seattle Center. Shading by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.





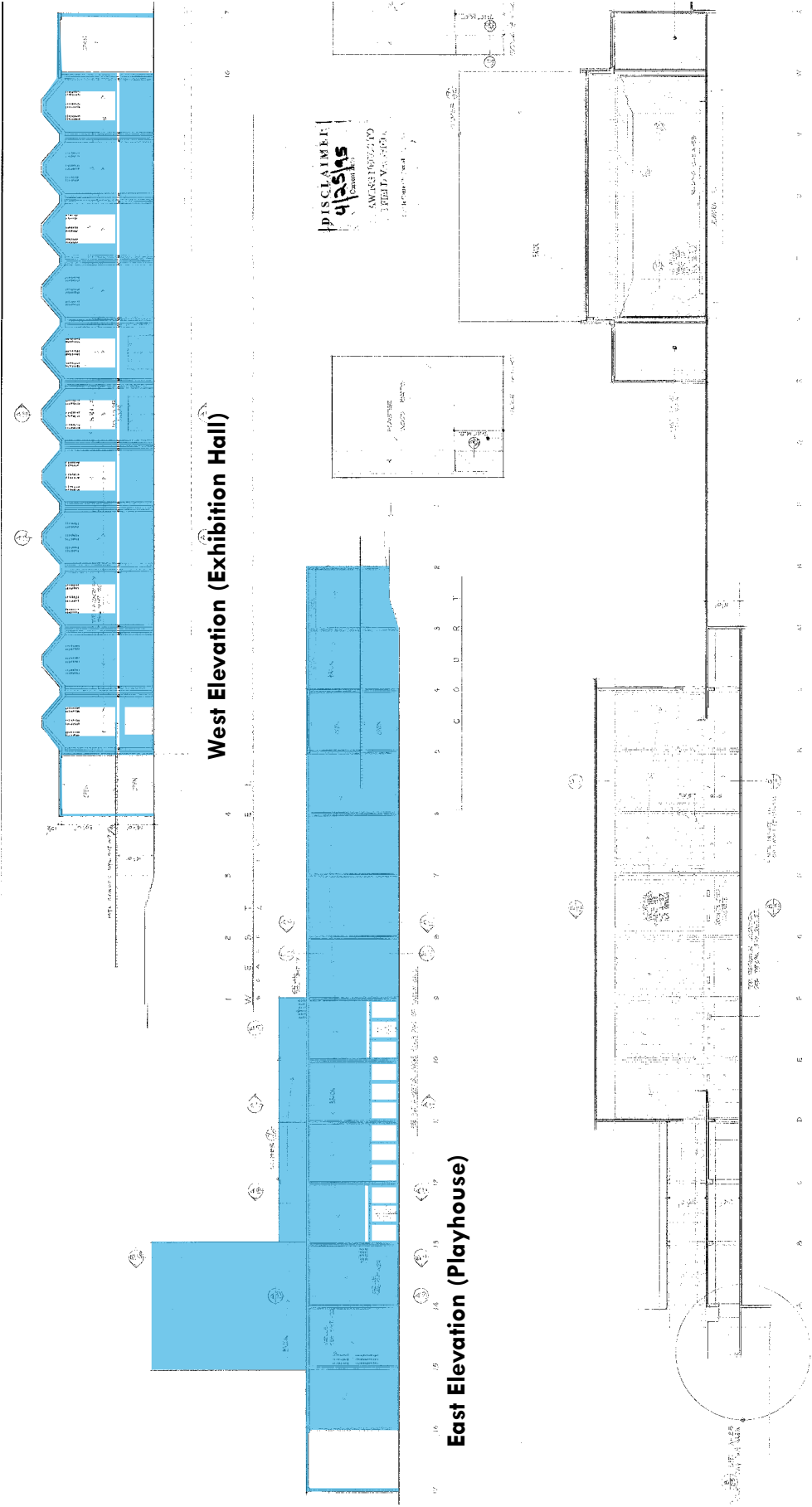
## International Fountain Pavilion

Blue identifies original features

Yellow identifies 1964 fair to civic center changes

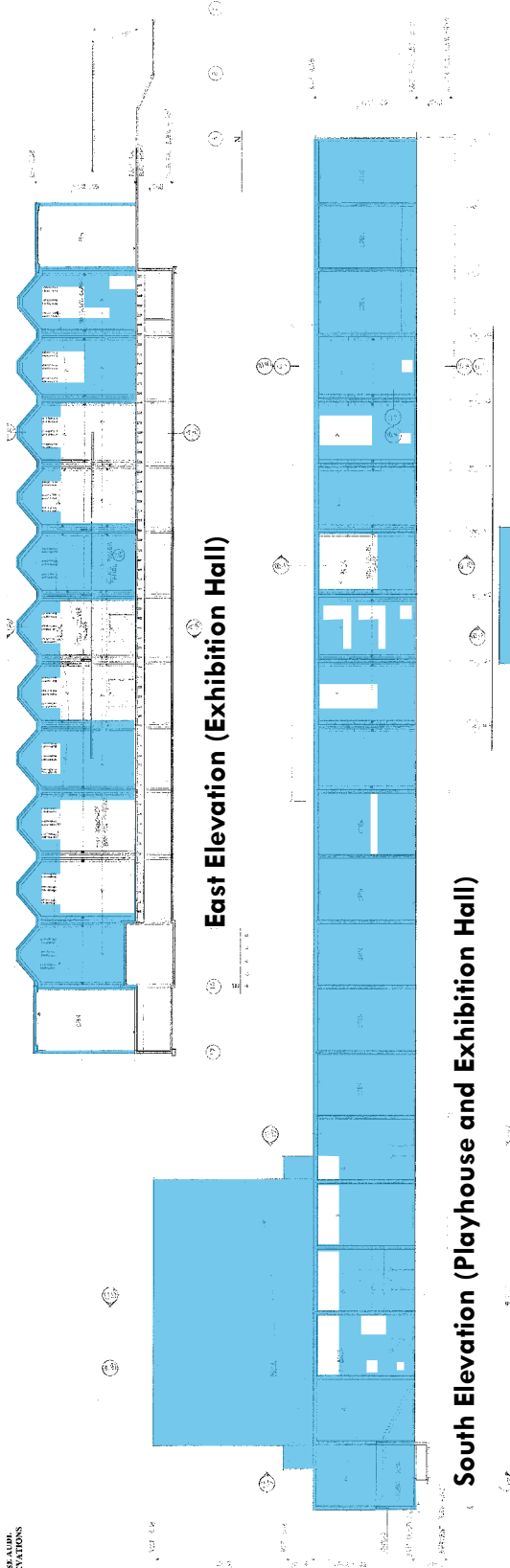
Features left white are contemporary alterations

Original drawings provided courtesy of Seattle Center. Shading by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



## Playhouse and Exhibition Hall

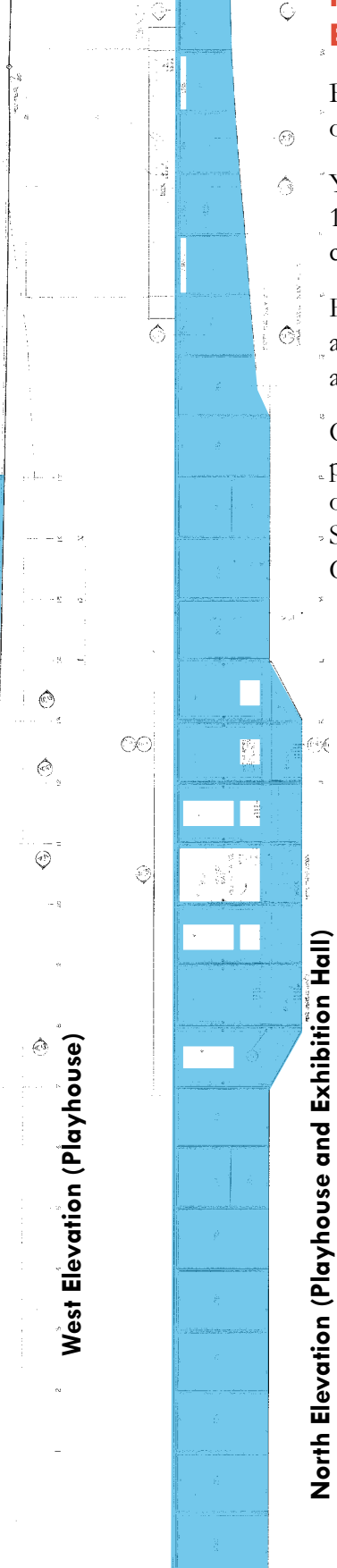
- Blue identifies original features
- Yellow identifies 1964 fair to civic center changes
- Features left white are contemporary alterations
- Original drawings provided courtesy of Seattle Center. Shading by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



**East Elevation (Exhibition Hall)**

**South Elevation (Playhouse and Exhibition Hall)**

PROJECT  
435  
DRAWING  
BFFIELD  
DATE  
1/11/11



**West Elevation (Playhouse)**

**North Elevation (Playhouse and Exhibition Hall)**

**Playhouse and Exhibition Hall**

- Blue identifies original features
- Yellow identifies 1964 fair to civic center changes
- Features left white are contemporary alterations
- Original drawings provided courtesy of Seattle Center.
- Shading by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



## Mercer Street Parking Garage

Blue identifies original features

Yellow identifies 1964 fair to civic center changes

Features left white are contemporary alterations

Original drawings provided courtesy of Seattle Center. Shading by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

