Seattle Opera
Mercer Arena Redevelopment

Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Statement Seattle Center Master Plan

Date of Issue: June 20, 2016

The intent and purpose of this Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact statement is to satisfy the procedural requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21c) and City Ordinance 114057. This document is not an authorization for an action, nor does it constitute a decision or a recommendation for an action; in its final form it will accompany the final decision on the proposal.

Mercer Arena Redevelopment

Addendum to Final Environmental Impact Statement for Seattle Center Master Plan

City of Seattle
Seattle Center

Prepared in Compliance with the
State Environmental Policy Act of 1971
Chapter 43.21c, Revised Code of Washington

SEPA Rules, Effective April 4, 1984
Chapter 191-11, Washington Administrative Code

City of Seattle SEPA Ordinance 114057 Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05

Date of Issue: June 20, 2016

Preface

The purpose of this EIS Addendum is to provide additional information on and analysis of the redevelopment of the Mercer Arena that was previously analyzed in the 2008 Draft and Final EISs for the Seattle Center Master Plan.[1] As described in the 2008 EIS, the Mercer Arena redevelopment project. Seattle Opera proposes to demolish and redevelop the Mercer Arena with a building of similar size in the same location. The proposed building would contain the Opera's administrative offices; storage for props, costumes, and equipment; rooms for rehearsal and community education, lighting, automation, and costume shops; studios; loading bays; a retail/café space along the Mercer Street frontage; and the Opera's box office. Currently, Seattle Opera occupies nearly 77,000 square feet of office, storage, rehearsal, shop/studio, and staging/loading space in the Fred Rogers Building in Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood. These functions would be relocated from the Fred Rogers Building to the proposed new facility at Seattle Center.

This EIS Addendum is not an authorization for an action, nor does it constitute a decision or a recommendation for action. This EIS Addendum will accompany the Master Use Permit application through the City's review processes.

The Seattle Center issued the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Seattle Center Master Plan on January 3, 2008. The issuance of the DEIS was followed by a 30 day agency and public review period which ended on February 4, 2008. During the review period, Seattle Center conducted one public hearing, on January 24, 2008 at 6:30 pm in the Lopez Room of the Seattle Center. Thirty-three written comments were received during the comment period, and eighteen people made oral comments at the January 24 public hearing.

On June 19, 2008, the Seattle Center issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in the form of a Condensed FEIS. The FEIS incorporated the DEIS by reference and avoided repetition of the detailed material provided in the DEIS. It fully incorporated the comments received on the DEIS during the public review period, responses to those comments, and additional information developed in response to comments. The Condensed FEIS served to reduce paperwork and to focus the reader on issues identified by commenters and on the subsequent development of the project plans.

Taken together with the DEIS, the FEIS fulfilled the documentation requirements under the State Environmental Policy Act for the Seattle Center Master Plan.

Elements of the environment that were analyzed in the Draft and Final EISs for Seattle Center's *Master Plan* included the following:

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[1] Seattle Center, 2008 (refer to the *References* section of this EIS Addendum for the complete citation).

- Air Quality
- Conservation and Renewable Energy
- Noise
- Land Use
- Light and Glare
- Recreation
- Historic and Cultural Preservation
- Transportation and Parking
- Public Services and Utilities

The Master Plan EIS was the first part of "phased" environmental review that was the programmatic phase to be followed by the project level phase. To the extent that the environmental effects of individual redevelopment projects were known at the time of preparing the EIS, the EIS document was also intended to serve as a “project level” EIS. As each part of the Master Plan is more fully designed, the impacts of the individual projects will be evaluated by the Seattle Center against the impacts disclosed in this FEIS. Should the impacts significantly vary from those already disclosed, Seattle Center will determine the extent to which additional environmental review is required.

On February 17, 2011, the Seattle Center issued an Addendum to the FEIS. The Addendum included proposed changes to the Center of the Center zone for a glass art exhibition area and reuse of a building north of the Monorail, and changes to the KeyArena zone for reuse of the Northwest Meeting rooms for KEXP Radio.

Now, this second EIS Addendum has been prepared to provide additional information and analysis of the redevelopment of the Mercer Arena. The EIS Addendum is organized as follows:

- The *Fact Sheet* (starting on page i) provides an overview of the proposed project and location, permits required, and points of contact.
- *Section 1* provides a description of the proposed action and a comparison of the development proposed as part of the approved *Seattle Center Master Plan*.
- *Section 2* provides additional information relative to the environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action. Potential impacts include land use, light and glare, historic resources, transportation, and construction.
- *Section 3* is a listing of references used in this document.
- *Section 4* is the Distribution List.

The Draft and Final EISs for Seattle Center’s *Master Plan* are adopted for purposes of this environmental review.

Fact Sheet

Title and Description

The project is called the Mercer Arena Redevelopment. Consistent with the description in both the EIS and the *Seattle Center Master Plan*, Seattle Opera proposes to demolish and replace the Mercer Arena. The project site is located near the northeast corner of Seattle Center, immediately east of McCaw Hall at the intersection of West Mercer Street and 4th Avenue North (Speight Jenkins Way), opposite KCTS. This proposed action would demolish the existing Mercer Arena and replace it with a new 4-story, 105,000 square-foot building to support the Seattle Opera. The proposed building would contain the Opera's administrative offices; storage for props, costumes, and equipment; rooms for rehearsal and community education, lighting, automation, and costume shops; studios; loading bays; a retail/café space along the Mercer Street frontage; and the Opera's box office. Currently, Seattle Opera occupies nearly 77,000 square feet of office, storage, rehearsal, shop/studio, and staging/loading space in the Fred Rogers Building in Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood. These functions would be relocated from the Fred Rogers Building to the proposed new facility at Seattle Center. It would be connected to the adjacent McCaw Hall to allow for the internal movement of costumes, sets and other materials.

Sponsor and Approximate Date of Implementation

Seattle Center, a department of the City of Seattle, is the project sponsor.

Lead Agency Information

The lead agency is the City of Seattle - Seattle Center.

Responsible Official: Robert Nellams
Seattle Center
305 Harrison Street
Seattle, Washington 98109

Contact Person: Jill Crary
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Seattle, WA 98109
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SEPA Documents Adopted

This EIS Addendum adds information to the Draft (January 3, 2008) and Final (June 19, 2008) EISs and Addendum (February 17, 2011) for the Seattle Center's *Master Plan*.

Required Approvals

Seattle Center: EIS Addendum Approval

Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections: master use permit; building permit; grading permit; structural permit; mechanical permits; certification of occupancy; and energy code approval.

Seattle Department of Transportation: Street-use permits; curb-cut permit; and sidewalk approval.

Seattle Public Utilities: Sewer and water connections.

Seattle Fire Department: Fire Code inspections.

Seattle-King County Department of Public Health: Plumbing permits.

Authors and Principal Contributors to EIS Addendum

This EIS Addendum was prepared under the direction of the City of Seattle, Seattle Center. Research, analysis and document preparation were provided by the following firms:

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Seattle WA 98121

Date of Issuance of EIS Addendum

June 20, 2016

Other Related Material

Background materials and support documents, including submittals to the Seattle Design Commission prepared by the project architects (NBBJ), may be found at the Seattle Center in Room 109 of the Center House/Armory.

Purchase of Copies

Copies of the document have been printed and made available for public distribution at the Seattle Center in Room 109 of the Center House/Armory, 305 Harrison Street, Seattle, Washington. Additional copies, if needed, are available from the Seattle Center at the reproduction cost of $0.25 for the first page and $0.10 for each additional page. An electronic copy of the document has also been posted on the Seattle Center website at www.seattlecenter.com.

Table of Contents

Figures

Appendices

1.0 Project Description and Summary

1.1 Proponent and Project Location

1.1.1 Project Proponent

Seattle Center, a department of the City of Seattle, is the project sponsor. Seattle Opera is the project proponent.

1.1.2 Project Location and Access

As shown on Figure 1-1, Existing Development, the Seattle Center is approximately 74-acres located at the north end of downtown Seattle, south of Seattle's Queen Anne Hill. The site is irregularly shaped, and is bounded by Mercer Street on the north, 5th Avenue North on the east, Broad Street on the southeast, Denny Way on the south. On the west side, the boundary runs north from Denny Way along 2nd Avenue North, then west along Thomas Street, south on Warren Avenue North to John Street, west on John Street, north three blocks to Republican Street, east one block to Warren Avenue North, and then north one block to Mercer Street. The Seattle Center also includes the two-block Mercer Garage located between Mercer and Roy Streets west of 4th Avenues North and two parcels north of Mercer Street at 2nd Avenue North. The site includes the vacated rights-of-way for Republican, Harrison, Thomas and John Streets, Warren Avenue North, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Avenues North, and Nob Hill Avenue North.

The Seattle Center, including the project site, is zoned Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3) with a maximum height of eight-five (85) feet. The Seattle Center is located within the Uptown Urban Center as designated by the City's Comprehensive Plan. Urban Centers are areas that are intended to be high density employment and residential areas that are well served by transit.

The Seattle Center is currently developed with a variety of assembly, entertainment, commercial, office and storage buildings, and surface and structured parking. Major buildings include the Armory (previously called the Center House), the Experience Music Project (EMP), the Seattle Children's Theatre, Space Needle, the Memorial Stadium, Mercer Arena, McCaw Hall, Exhibition Hall, Intiman Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and the KeyArena. The redevelopment of the Mercer Arena is the subject of this EIS Addendum.

The Mercer Arena is located in the northeast corner of the Seattle Center Campus on the south side of Mercer Street at the southwest corner of Fourth Avenue North. The project site is approximately 1.7 acres in size and is illustrated in Figure 1-2.

Figure 1-1
Existing Development

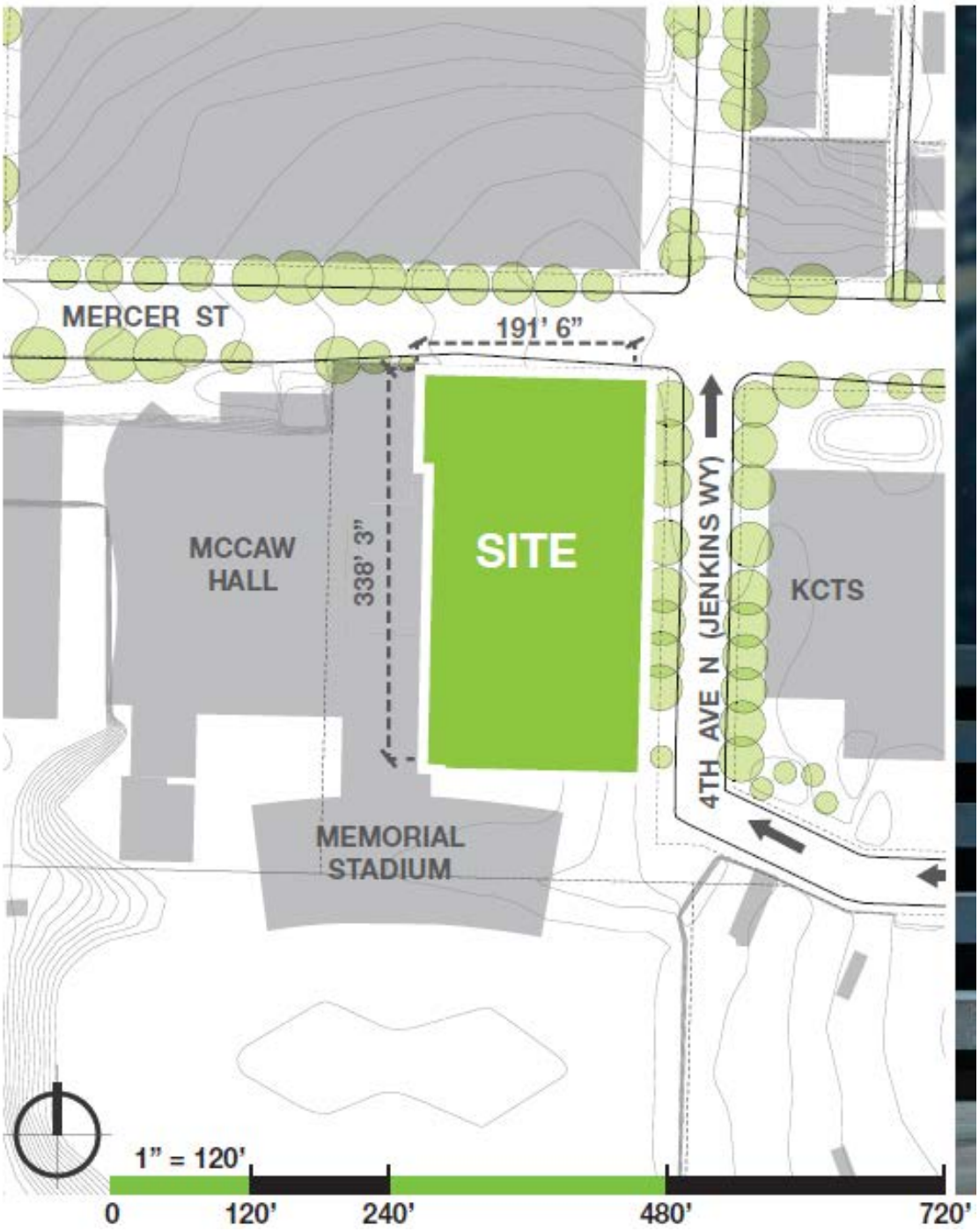

Figure 1-2
Project Site

Mercer Street is a main arterial carrying two-way traffic between I-5 and Elliott Ave West. Fourth Avenue North (also known as Speight Jenkins Way) is a one-way northbound street that intersects with Republican Street near the southeast corner of Mercer Arena, adjacent to the northeast corner of Memorial Stadium. Republican Street

generally functions as an access road from Fifth Avenue North, a major two-way, divided, north-south arterial on the eastern perimeter of the Seattle Center, to the loading and maintenance areas of the arena, stadium, and concert-hall facilities. Memorial Stadium is located directly south of the Mercer Arena and McCaw Hall is directly adjacent to the Mercer Arena on the west. The entire project site and adjacent facilities are located within Seattle Center.

1.2 Century 21 Master Plan

In August 2008, the Seattle City Council adopted the Century 21 Master Plan for Seattle Center. As stated in the highlights to the Master Plan, the plan *"sets out a future for Seattle Center that is vibrant with activity, flexible to accommodate change, open and welcoming, and sustainable in construction and design."* The redevelopment of the Mercer Arena would take place within the Theater District Zone. The Center 21 *Master Plan* described the future of Mercer Arena as follows:

- Mercer Arena is redeveloped to house Seattle Opera's operations, including administrative, rehearsal, educational, technical support, costume and scene studio space, and to create patron amenities that activate Mercer Street.

Both the 2008 DEIS and FEIS described the future redevelopment of the Mercer Arena:

- The Mercer Arena would be redeveloped by the Seattle Opera with an 85-foot height limit for rehearsal, shop and administrative uses.

1.3 Description of Proposed Action

Seattle Opera proposes to demolish the existing Mercer Arena and replace it with a new approximately 105,000 square-foot, 4-story building to support the Seattle Opera.

The Mercer Arena is located in the northeast corner of the Seattle Center Campus on the south side of Mercer Street at the southwest corner of Fourth Avenue North. Originally known as the Mercer Arts Arena, it was built in 1927 as part of the City of Seattle's Civic Auditorium Complex, and was known as the Civic Arena until 1995. The original complex consisted of the connected Civic Arena and an adjacent 35,000-seat Civic Ballfield. The entire complex was expanded as part of the Century 21 Seattle World's fair, and the arena served primarily as an ice arena, but was designed and used as a multipurpose sports and entertainment venue. The arena building is a large rectangular reinforced concrete building with a shallow-gabled roof supported by steel trusses, and is predominantly clad in buff-colored brick. It appears as a large, modern horizontal box-like mass. Although originally designed as a flat-floor arena, with stadium seating around the entire perimeter of the open floor, this primary interior space was reconfigured to function as an auditorium/concert hall in 2002. The main feature of the building's overall interior space is the central, large open auditorium area with a ceiling height of almost 80 feet. Today, the building has fallen in to some disrepair, with outdated wiring, multiple leaks in the roof, and interior systems that no longer function

properly. Today, the hallways adjacent to McCaw Hall serve to store some supplies for the Seattle Opera, but the building is generally not used. The building would require substantial repair and renovation in order to be inhabitable.

The building is being designed to step downward from a height of 62.5' along McCaw Hall, to 46.5' on the proposed building's eastern edge along 4th Avenue. The new building would be adjacent to and connected with McCaw Hall, Seattle Opera's performance venue.

The proposed building would contain the Opera's administrative offices; storage for props, costumes, and equipment; rooms for rehearsal and community education, lighting, automation, and costume shops; studios; loading bays; a retail/café space along the Mercer Street frontage; and the Opera's box office. Currently, Seattle Opera occupies nearly 77,000 square feet of office, storage, rehearsal, shop/studio, and staging/loading space in the Fred Rogers Building in Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood. These functions would be relocated from the Fred Rogers Building to the proposed new facility at Seattle Center. The proposed facility's design program is summarized below.

Table 1-1
Summary of Design Program

Activity	Approximate Square Feet	Floor
Office	30,000	2 & 3
Storage	25,000	0 & 2
Rehearsal/Community & Education	20,000	1 & 2
Shops/Studios	17,000	0
Staging/Loading	10,000	0 & 1
Retail	3,000	1
Total Square Footage (Net)	**105,000**	

The new building would be functionally and aesthetically integrated with McCaw Hall, including interior doorways between the buildings, and the use of a sculptural metal exterior treatment (called a scrim) that would integrate with the McCaw Hall metal exterior, designed to visually unite the buildings but provide a distinctive texture to the Opera façade. Unlike the existing Mercer Arena building, Seattle Opera's proposed building is being designed to engage and activate the street with entrances, large windows, lighting, and landscaping.

1.4 Comparison with Master Plan and Alternatives Considered in the 2008 Environmental Impact Statement

The redevelopment of the Mercer Arena is consistent with the description provided in the *Master Plan* and 2008 EIS. For the purposes of identifying potential changes and impacts in comparison to those impacts disclosed in the EIS, the project has been compared to the EIS Alternatives.

The proposed redevelopment of the Mercer Arena by Seattle Opera was evaluated as part of all of the alternatives as described in the 2008 EIS and Seattle Center *Master Plan*.

1.5 Summary of Site Specific Environmental Information

Table 1-2 summarizes potential environmental impacts disclosed in the EIS and additional site-specific information for the current proposed action. It should be noted than no new direct, secondary or cumulative impacts have been identified, nor are any new mitigation measures required.

Alternative 4R-B is most similar to the 2008 Master Plan and is used for a purpose of comparison with the Mercer Arena development where impacts disclosed in the 2008 EIS differed between the Alternatives.

Table 1-2
Summary Comparison of Impacts Disclosed in EIS with Site-Specific Information

Environmental Element	Impacts Previously Disclosed in EIS	Site-Specific Information Provided in this Addendum
Land Use	All of the uses proposed for Build Alternatives (Alternative 2R, 3R, 4R-A and 4R-B) would be consistent with both the current zoning and regulations, as well as compatible with the existing land use. No land use impacts would be expected.	The proposed redevelopment of the Mercer Arena would be consistent and compatible with existing land use. No land use impacts would be expected.
Light and Glare	None of the proposed Alternatives would significantly increase the amount of light in the area during evening hours. Alternatives 1, 2R, 4R-A and 4R-B would have a greater lighting impact than Alternative 3R because Alternative 3R would eliminate the sports field at the Memorial Stadium site.	Additional glazing would allow the building's interior lighting to be visible from the exterior, but the proposed glazing systems would dampen the glare, creating a soft glow, rather than direct glare at night. During the day, the deep overhangs and textured metal scrim would dampen reflectivity of the glazed exterior surfaces. No light and glare impacts would be expected.
Historic and Cultural	No impacts to historic or cultural resources were identified as a result of the redevelopment of the Mercer Arena. Any public building within Seattle that is over fifty years old must go through the landmark status process before it can be removed. If the landmark status nomination is denied, the property owner would not need to re-apply for nomination for another five years.	Although historic evidence suggests that the building may have had historical significance in relation to one or more of the Seattle Landmark Designation Criteria, it currently lacks the physical integrity to convey relevant historical associations, as required by the standards of designation. Thus the conclusion that the building does not meet the Seattle Landmarks Designation Standards. Unless the Department of Neighborhoods or the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board reach a different conclusion than the one described above, no impacts to historical or cultural resources would result from the redevelopment of the Mercer Arena..
Traffic and Transportation – Traffic Volumes	Under Alternative 4R-B, 695 additional trips during the weekday PM peak hour. Impacts would be concentrated to the east of Seattle	The redevelopment of the Mercer Arena is not anticipated to change traffic volumes.

Environmental Element	Impacts Previously Disclosed in EIS	Site-Specific Information Provided in this Addendum
	Center along the 5th Ave N corridor, and would diffuse with progressive distance from the site. The demolition of the Mercer Garage and the construction of a new multi-modal transportation center and parking garage beneath the Memorial Stadium side would modify travel patterns immediately adjacent to Seattle Center.	
Traffic and Transportation – Traffic Operations	Three intersections would continue to operate at LOS F without or with Alternative 4R-B. Six additional intersections would degrade to LOS below that anticipated with Alternative 1, including two to LOS F and one to LOS E. Dexter Ave N/Mercer St, 9th Ave N/Mercer St, Westlake Ave N/Mercer St, Fairview Ave N/Mercer St, and 5th Ave N/Harrison St would remain potentially unavoidable adverse impacts	No new impacts to area intersections have been identified.
Construction Impacts – Air Quality	Impacts would be minor and localized. During construction, dust resulting from excavation and grading would increase concentrations of suspended particulate matter. Heavy trucks and smaller equipment would emit air pollutants that would contribute slightly to the degradation of local air quality, however emissions from existing sources in the project area (primarily from traffic) would likely exceed construction equipment emissions. If asphalt paving is used, hydrocarbon emissions from the hot asphalt would be released during paving.	No new impacts identified.
Construction Impacts – Noise	During each phase of construction, there would be a temporary increase in sound levels near the site due to the use of heavy equipment and the transportation of construction materials. Daytime construction noise generally is exempt. In Seattle, construction noise could be considered a potential nuisance between 10 PM and 7 AM on weekdays and between 10 PM and 9 AM on weekends and legal holidays if not mitigated.	No new impacts identified.
Construction Impacts - Transportation	Construction would generate truck and vehicle traffic associated with earthwork and excavation, delivery of materials to the site and similar types of activities. At this time it is not known how much material would be removed. However, the amount of traffic associated with construction, is expected to be less than the total development related traffic volumes anticipated.	Trucks hauling demolition debris, excavated soil and delivering materials would contribute to traffic volumes in the vicinity of the project during the construction period. Temporary sidewalk closures and re-routes may impact pedestrian circulation and wayfinding. Other temporary transportation impacts would likely include parking displaced by deliveries, staging, and parking by construction workers. Transit does not operate on Mercer Street abutting the project site so no direct impacts to transit service or passenger facilities are anticipated.

2.0 Additional Information About Environmental Impacts & Mitigation Measures

2.1 Land Use

As described in Section 1, the Proposed Action would replace the existing Mercer Arena building with a new facility containing Seattle Opera's administrative offices, storage, rehearsal and community education, shops and studios, staging and loading, a storefront retail/café and the Opera's box office. For the purposes of identifying potential changes and impacts in comparison to those impacts disclosed in the EIS, the projects have been compared to the EIS Alternatives summarized in Table 1-2 in Section 1.

2.1.1 Impacts Previously Disclosed in the EIS

The Land Use impact section in the EIS described the expected land use impacts within the study area for each of the project Alternatives. Impacts associated with the initial phase of each of the project Alternatives are evaluated for a horizon year of 2025 with approximately 420,000 square feet of development. There would be approximately 43 acres of open space. Each EIS action alternative included redevelopment of the Mercer Arena site for support uses proposed by Seattle Opera.

All Build Alternatives

All of the uses proposed for Build Alternatives (Alternative 2R, 3R, 4R-A and 4R-B) would be consistent with both the current zoning and regulations, as well as compatible with the existing land use. No land use impacts would be expected.

Consistency with Current Zoning and Regulations

The land use improvements under all the Build Alternatives would be consistent with current zoning and regulations. Seattle Center would continue to be used in accordance with the current zoning code.

Compatibility with Existing Land Use

The planned improvements would be compatible with the existing land use. The Theatre District Plan and the Theatre Commons would both be compatible with the existing uses in Seattle Center.

Alternative 2R – Center of the Center

Major land use improvements proposed under Alternative 2R includes: demolition of the Fun Forest; redevelopment of the Mural Amphitheatre; removal of the upper seating level at the Memorial Stadium; development of the Theatre District; and redevelopment of the Mercer Arena.

No land use impacts are expected under Alternative 2R. Seattle Center is surrounded by Neighborhood Commercial zoning, and this zoning provides a buffer between Seattle Center and neighborhood residences.

Alternative 3R – The Green Window

Major land use improvements proposed under Alternative 3R includes: demolition of the Fun Forest; demolition and replacement of the Mural Amphitheatre with a private new Children's Museum; redevelopment of the Memorial Stadium, Mercer Arena and upper Northwest Rooms. For a full list of improvements, please see Chapter 2.

No land use impacts are expected under Alternative 3R. Seattle Center is surrounded by Neighborhood Commercial zoning, and this zoning provides a buffer between Seattle Center and neighborhood residences. Refurbishment of KeyArena would have no impact to its surrounding neighbors as it would focus on maintenance and upkeep and the use would remain the same.

Alternatives 4R-A and 4R-B – East-West Axis

Major land use improvements proposed under Alternatives 4R-A and 4R-B includes: demolition of the Fun Forest; redevelopment of the Memorial Stadium; development of the Theatre District; redevelopment of the Mercer Arena and Upper Northwest Rooms; demolition of Pavilions A, B, and the Blue Spruce building and construction of an exhibition hall; and development of a new outdoor activity area in the current Pavilion A site.

No land use impacts are expected under Alternatives 4RA or 4R-B. Seattle Center is surrounded by Neighborhood Commercial zoning, and this zoning provides a buffer between Seattle Center and neighborhood residences. The proposed amphitheatre would face west, towards the inside of the site (and KeyArena) which would help focus noise and gathering to the inside of Seattle Center and not the surrounding area.

2.1.2 EIS Addendum Information

Theater District Zone

The existing Mercer Arena would be demolished and replaced with a new facility. The proposed 105,000 square-foot building is being designed to contain the Opera's administrative offices; storage for props, costumes, and equipment; rooms for rehearsal and community education, lighting, automation, and costume shops; studios; loading bays; a retail/café space along the Mercer Street frontage; and the Opera's box office.

Consistency with Current Zoning and Regulations

Seattle Center is located within the area designated as "Uptown Urban Center" on the City's *Future Land Use* Map and the project site is zoned NC3. The proposed land uses would be consistent with current zoning and regulations as listed in the following table.

Seattle Center would continue to be used in accordance with the current Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) zoning regulations.

Table 2-1
Summary Comparison of Proposed Uses with SMC Permitted Uses

Proposed Activity	Square Feet	Permitted Use per SMC 23.47A.004 Table A
Office	29,993	Yes
Storage	24,552	Yes (**warehouse* limited to 25K s.f.)
Rehearsal/Community & Education	19,221	Yes
Shops/Studios	16,937	Yes (**light manufacturing* limited to 25K s.f.)
Staging/loading	9,266	Ancilliary use not explicitly addressed
Retail	2,326	Yes (restaurants and retail)

*Permitted maximum square footage per SMC 23.47A.004 Table A.

Consistency with Seattle Center Master Plan

The project site is located within the Theater District Zone as designated in the 2008 Seattle Center Master Plan. The Master Plan explicitly included redevelopment of the Mercer Arena as currently proposed by Seattle Opera: *Mercer Arena is redeveloped to house Seattle Opera's operations, including administrative, rehearsal, educational, technical support, costume and scene studio space and to create patron amenities that activate Mercer Street*. (p. 32) This action would address one of the Plan's central goals, to: *Provide capacity for existing and future arts, cultural and recreational programs, to be nurtured, grown and developed*. (p.1)

Compatibility with Existing Land Use

The planned improvements would be compatible with the existing land use. By providing the previously described functions to support Seattle Opera's performances in adjacent McCaw Hall, proposed redevelopment of Mercer Arena would be compatible with the existing uses in Seattle Center.

2.1.3 Mitigation Measures

No impacts to land use have been identified and no mitigation measures are required.

2.1.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

No significant unavoidable adverse impacts from the proposed updates to the Master Plan to existing land uses have been identified.

2.1.5 Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

Redevelopment of the Mercer Arena for use by Seattle Opera would result in no adverse secondary or cumulative land use impact. Proposed uses of the project site would be consistent with local zoning, the Seattle Center Master Plan and compatible with those at Seattle Center and in the surrounding neighborhood.

2.2 Light and Glare

There is extensive outdoor illumination throughout the Seattle Center, including the floodlights at Memorial Stadium, exterior floodlights on buildings, floodlights on parking lot lighting poles, street lights, area\security lights, parking lot lights, and internal building lighting systems. In general, these lighting features are noticeable from all directions throughout the area, and are most visible from the south slope of Queen Anne Hill that faces the Seattle Center.

The most prominent existing source of lighting within Seattle Center is the existing lighting at Memorial Stadium. Annual use of the stadium as reported by the Seattle School District is (1) Community Use - 2,512 hours per year, 99 percent of which is adult private sports league usage; and (2) School Use - 1,250 hours per year, athletic practices, high school/middle school games, and band practice. These high wattage luminaires are the brightest source of light within Seattle Center. These floodlights have no internal or external shielding so they highly visible in unscreened views from the surrounding area.

Other highly visible sources of lighting are the numerous building, area and parking lot lights throughout the site. Less intense but just as visible and prominent is the reflected light from the lighting of the Space Needle and Pacific Science Center arches. The size and bulk of these features make them stand out compared to all the other lighting systems visible in the area. The multi- storied buildings located within Seattle Center have visible internal lighting systems, with McCaw Hall lighting being the most prominent.

During daylight hours, there are existing sources of reflection from the existing buildings on site. Windows and other highly reflective surfaces on buildings can generate glare. Given the prevailing architectural style of the buildings, the most visible buildings are McCaw Hall and EMP.

Surrounding Vicinity

Lighting in the vicinity of Seattle Center comes from a variety of sources and displays a range of intensity. Commercial developments in the area surrounding Seattle Center have high intensity lighting within buildings, parking lots and security lights that contribute to light levels throughout this area. The existing Mercer Street parking garage to the north of Seattle Center has exposed parking lot luminaires that are highly visible. The extensive street lighting systems on surrounding roadways are also major contributors to the amount of visible lighting in the vicinity of Seattle Center.

From Seattle Center and the south face of Queen Anne Hill, there are many highly visible lights. These include internal and external lighting at high rise residential and commercial structures throughout downtown, high mast poles providing lighting along the waterfront and Harbor Island, and the lighted athletic fields at Hiawatha Playfield located in West Seattle.

Lighting levels in the residential neighborhoods on Queen Anne and Capitol Hill are lower, consisting primarily of residential yard and house lighting, and street lights. Street lights and exterior residential lighting in these uphill areas are visible from areas of the Seattle Center and elsewhere in area.

During daylight hours, glare in the vicinity of Seattle Center is generated by commercial buildings throughout the area, vehicles on local roadways, windows, and various other reflective surfaces. The amount of glare varies by building, ranging from structures that do not have extensive reflective surfaces to structures with considerable amounts of glass or other reflective surfaces.

2.2.1 Impacts Previously Disclosed in the EIS

The redevelopment of the Mercer Arena was included in each of the Build Alternatives analyzed in the Draft and Final EIS. As identified in the EIS, none of the proposed Alternatives would significantly increase the amount of light in the area during evening hours. Alternatives 1, 2R, 4R-A and 4R-B would have a greater lighting impact than Alternative 3R because Alternative 3R would eliminate the sports field at the Memorial Stadium site. The athletic field lighting represents the largest concentration of light but is still a small portion of the total light that is generated at the site. The redevelopment of the Mercer Arena would not affect or change the sport field component of the Alternatives.

2.2.2 EIS Addendum Information

As described in the EIS, there is extensive outdoor illumination throughout the Seattle Center, including the most prominent source of the floodlights at Memorial Stadium adjacent to the Mercer Arena project site. Other highly visible sources of lighting near the Mercer Arena include the lighting of McCaw Hall immediately west of the Mercer Arena.

The existing Mercer Arena's north façade has ceiling-mounted lamps downlighting the entrance collonade. Exterior wall sconces flank all three building entrance portals and additional luminaires are mounted on the columns. Lighting along the eastern side of the building is limited to small lights immediately above the three exit porticoes visible from 4th Avenue. There are also two City of Seattle street lights at the intersection of 4th Avenue and Mercer Street as well as two street lights on the west side of 4th Avenue. All of these lights are visible from the north along Mercer Street or east from 4th Avenue, though as previously described, are not as bright as adjacent structures. All exterior walls are blank preventing window glare but the light colored exterior surfaces creates some glare though this is reduced somewhat by a row of mature street trees.

The exterior of Seattle Opera's proposed building is being designed to conform to Seattle Center's Century 21 Architectural Guidelines that seek to "provide physical and visual connections between ground level interior uses and adjacent exterior routes and

spaces." As a result, it would have a very different character than the existing Mercer Arena. Replacing the existing expansive blank masonry walls, the proposed exterior would be broken into a variety of forms with varying setbacks and overhangs of different heights. Much of the exterior surface would be glazed, especially along the Mercer Street level and a two-story window wall at the intersection of 4th Avenue would provide two-way transparency. A sculptural metal exterior treatment (called a scrim) penetrated with micro perforations and variously sized larger openings would unite the building with McCaw Hall and provide a distinctive texture to the façade. All this additional glazing would allow the building's interior lighting to be visible from the exterior, but the proposed glazing systems would dampen the glare, creating a soft glow, rather than direct glare at night. During the day, the deep overhangs and textured metal scrim would dampen reflectivity of the glazed exterior surfaces.

2.2.3 Mitigation Measures

No light and glare impacts are anticipated therefore mitigation measures for light and glare are not required.

2.2.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

No significant unavoidable adverse impacts from new lighting or changes to existing lighting levels have been identified.

2.2.5 Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

The proposed building design would likely increase ambient lighting levels however the lighting would filter through windows and a perforated metal scrim to prevent direct glare. As a result the northeast corner of Seattle Center would be brighter potentially contributing to a slight overall cumulative increase in sky glow in the vicinity of the Seattle Center.

2.3 Historic and Cultural

There are four sites within Seattle Center that were designated as Seattle Landmarks at the time of preparation of the 2008 EIS:

- The Center House – built in 1938.
- Horiuchi Mural – built in 1962 by Paul Horiuchi.
- Kobe Bell – given to Seattle in 1962.
- The Space Needle – built in 1961.
- The Seattle Center Monorail (trains only)

2.3.1 Impacts Previously Disclosed in the EIS

Any public building within Seattle that is over fifty years old must go through the landmark status process before it can be removed. If the landmark status nomination is denied, the property owner would not need to re-apply for nomination for another five years.

No impacts to historical or cultural resources were identified to result from the demolition of the Mercer Arena.

2.3.2 EIS Addendum Information

Seattle Center Landmarks

The following three additional sites within Seattle Center have been designated as Seattle Landmaprks by the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board subsequent to the information provided in the 2008 EIS.

- Northwest Rooms and International Fountain Pavilion – built in 1962
- Pacific Science Center – built in 1962

Northwest Rooms and International Fountain Pavilion

The Northwest Rooms and International Fountain Pavilion were designated as a historic Landmark by the City's Landmark Preservation Board in 2013 due to their association with the 1962 World's Fair and distinctive architecture symbolic of its historic heritage. The landmarked buildings form an integral part of what is known as the Thiry Ensemble, a complex of buildings designed by Seattle architect Paul Thiry for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. In addition to the Northwest Rooms and the International Fountain Pavilion, these include the KeyArena (formerly the Washington State Coliseum) and several international pavilions which no longer exist. The landmarked area also includes a surrounding corridor known as the International Plaza, with its fountains, stairways, planters, railings, and benches. However, the KeyArena has not yet (as of 2016) been designated as a City Landmark. (Source: Queen Anne Historical Society)

Pacific Science Center

The Pacific Science Center was designated as a historic Landmark by the City's Landmark Preservation Board in 2010 for reasons similar to the Northwest Rooms and International Fountain Pavilion. The Pacific Science Center was originally built in 1962 as the United States Science Pavilion at the Century 21 Exposition in Seattle, also known as the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. Designed by Minoru Yamasaki and Jack Christiansen to serve as exhibition space to house the largest science exhibit ever assembled by the federal government at that time. It consisted originally of six rectangular, connected, brilliant white, nearly windowless building masses of varying

heights and sizes, clustered in a north-facing U-shape around an open courtyard and a minimalist water garden filling the courtyard. Subsequent additions and alterations include the Seattle Rotary Discovery Labs (1996, Callison Architects) attached on the northwest part of the original complex, and the Boeing IMAX Theater and Ackerley Family Exhibit Gallery (1998, Callison Architects) attached to the east side of the original complex. Both of these additions displaced walled garden spaces located at the northeast and northwest portions of the site which were original 1962 design elements. (Source: Seattle Department of Neighborhoods)

Analysis on Mercer Arena

In December, 2008, Beth Dodrill, Project Architectural Historian, Historical Research Associates, Inc., prepared the "Mercer Arts Arena Historic Report" (see Appendix A). This report and accompanying technical memo provide a preliminary evaluation of the building's historical significance, per the Seattle Landmarks Designation Criteria, based on information in the report. The conclusion, as described below, is physical alterations to the Mercer Arts Arena, and/or the building's context, have compromised the building's architectural integrity and ability to convey potential historical significance.

Seattle Landmark Designation Criteria

> *In order to be designated, the building, object, or site must be at least 25 years old and must meet at least one of the six criteria for designation outlined in the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (SMC 25.12.350):*
>
> *In addition to meeting at least one of the standards, outlined below, the object, site, or improvement must also possess integrity or the ability to convey its significance.*

The building was constructed in 1928 and is more than 25 years old; however in relation to the following six Seattle landmark designation criteria, the building does not have the architectural integrity to convey potentially significant associations under criteria "c," "d," or "e,", the only criteria that appear to be relevant.

> *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:*

Although the building served as a multipurpose venue and hosted countless political, arts, sports, and entertainment events, there is no evidence to suggest that any of the events were of historical significance or had a significant effect on any level of the community.

> *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*

There is no evidence to suggest that there are significant associations with any persons important in the history of any level of the community. Although the building is loosely

associated with James Osborne, who left estate funds for the development of a Civic Auditorium, his gift provided only a small foundation upon which substantial amounts were added by the community. The efforts to build the Civic Auditorium Complex were carried out through numerous community and public agencies and groups. Furthermore, Osborne is not considered a significant person in the city's history, and the building was not constructed until 40 years after his death.

> *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*

As part of Seattle's original Civic Auditorium Complex, the development of which was the culmination of many years of civic discussion and planning efforts, it is significantly associated with the city's cultural and economic development during the 1920s. This is the era when Seattle achieved national prominence as a major metropolitan city of the West. However, this association is diminished by later changes in the building's architectural character and changes in the physical campus plan of the original Civic Auditorium Complex. The Auditorium, Arena, Ball Field and Field House/Veteran's Hall were designed and planned as a connected complex of buildings and facilities. All of the buildings were executed in a Romanesque Revival architectural style, a style associated with the 1920s and particularly suited to the design of public buildings. Romanesque Revival was additionally associated with the Seattle Chamber of Commerce Building (1924), another civic building designed by Schack, Young and Meyers during the same era. The Mercer Arena has been altered from its original design and no longer has the architectural integrity to convey these associations.

The Arena was later renovated as part of an ensemble of buildings that were renovated and/or newly constructed as part of the Civic Center Complex, which played a role in both the Century 21 World's Fair, and the subsequent development of Seattle Civic Center Complex campus of the 1960s. However, as part of the Century 21 Exposition, the Civic Arena's role was conceived as utilitarian, and it served as a venue for events programming without playing a distinctive role in the larger thematic concerns of the exposition. In contrast, the Space Needle and Science Pavilion were purposely built for, and distinctively associated with, the exposition's thematic focus on science and technology. Additionally, the Arena no longer retains the shared design vocabulary and architectural elements that physically and visually integrated the complex of buildings, and characterized the ensemble during that era. The buildings were all clad in the same buff-colored brick and displayed a modern, although not distinctive, character. All of the buildings were originally connected by a tall colonnade that extended across the north façade of the Arena and the Opera House, and further west to the Exhibition Hall and Playhouse. Additionally, this colonnade extended across the eastern and southern facades of the Exhibition and Playhouse, creating interior courtyards between buildings. Contemporary renovations to the Auditorium/Opera House/McCaw Hall have altered these physical and visual connections

Mercer Arena no longer shares a design vocabulary with the newly renovated Civic Auditorium/Opera House/McCaw Hall. The Field House/Veteran's Hall has been

demolished, and the physical relationship with the adjacent Memorial Stadium has been compromised by the addition of a large ramp on the south side of the building.

> *d) It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or a method of construction; or*

The building no longer retains any of the architectural character of its original design as a Romanesque Revival-style civic building of the 1920s. The original method of construction was not distinctive or unique, and the building no longer reflects the visible characteristics of its construction. Considered as an example of a "modern," architectural style building and part of an ensemble of buildings that were renovated and/or newly constructed as the Civic Center Complex of the 1960s era, the building does retain its individual character of that era; however, its integrity is compromised by the loss of its original visual and physical design integration with the other buildings in the complex. Additionally, the "modern" design of the 1960s-era renovation of the complex did not embody distinctive visible characteristics of the Modern style; rather, the new renovations drew from a Modern design vocabulary to alter the building's exterior with applied materials, but were not a distinctive expression of this design vocabulary.

> *e) It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder; or*

The Civic Arena, as part of the larger Civic Auditorium Complex, may have once been an outstanding and prominent work of the architectural firm of Schack, Young & Meyers; however, the building has been extensively altered and the original design is no longer evident.

The 1960s era design renovations to the building were not an outstanding example of work by the architectural firm of Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates, and the design integrity has been compromised by later renovations of related buildings. Subsequent interior renovations by the architects Priteca & Chiarelli were primarily functional and utilitarian and many features have been altered.

> *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.*

Located at the northeastern edge of the Seattle Center Campus, facing Mercer Street, and difficult to access from the campus interior, the building is not a prominent feature of the Seattle Center Campus. As part of a complex of buildings along the south side of Mercer Street, it is not visually distinctive as part of the streetscape. Of the buildings along the streetscape, the larger and more contemporary McCaw Hall, on the west side of the Mercer Arena, is somewhat more distinctive. The Mercer Arena is similar in scale to most buildings along the street, and the parking garage, located across Mercer Street to the north, is similar in both style and scale.

Conclusions

Although historic evidence suggests that the building may have had historical significance in relation to one or more of the Seattle Landmark Designation Criteria, it currently lacks the physical integrity to convey relevant historical associations, as required by the standards of designation. Thus, information about the building's architecture and history, as described in the "Mercer Arts Arena Historic Report", supports the conclusion that the building does not meet the Seattle Landmarks Designation Standards.

2.3.3 Mitigation Measures

Unless the Department of Neighborhoods or the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board reach a different conclusion than the one described above, no impacts to historical or cultural resources would result from the redevelopment of the Mercer Arena and no mitigation measures are required.

2.3.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

No significant and unavoidable adverse impacts to historical and cultural resources would occur from the redevelopment of the Mercer Arena.

2.3.5 Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

The demolition and replacement of the Mercer Arena would contribute cumulatively to the replacement and updating of the 1962 World's Fair-era design.

2.4 Traffic and Transportation

The Seattle Center project site is generally bounded by Mercer Street on the north, Denny Way on the south, 5th Ave. North on the east, Broad Street on the southeast, and 1st Ave. North on the east. The site vicinity is shown in Figure 1-1 in Section 1.

Seattle Center is home to numerous venues, including Pacific Science Center, EMP, and KeyArena. Entertainment is provided year-round, with an annual attendance of more than 10 million visitors to community festivals, sporting events, concerts, cultural programs, theater performances, conventions and trade shows, and other events. Events range in size from small groups holding meetings and private parties to large events such as sporting and music events at KeyArena, and summer festivals. Typically, events are scheduled during the weekends or weekday evenings, with some occurring concurrently. The KeyArena has a maximum capacity of 17,000. In addition to events at the KeyArena, large Center-wide festivals occur several times during the summer, typically during holiday weekends. These events occur over several days and utilize the entire Center rather than individual facilities, and include Bumbershoot, Folklife, Bite of Seattle and others. Attendance at these festivals reaches over 100,000 spread out over several days.

2.4.1 Impacts Previously Disclosed in the EIS

The 2008 EIS contains a detailed traffic and parking analysis for each of the Action Alternatives (2R, 3R, 4R-A and 4R-B) and for the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1. Alternative 4R-B is most similar to the 2008 Master Plan and was considered for the 2011 Addendum. Traffic and parking was analyzed for Alternative 4R-B based on including the following components:

- Expanded Mural Amphitheatre – the existing Mural Amphitheatre would be expanded to provide 1,000 additional seats, increasing the capacity of the facility to 3,000 seats,

- Center House/Armory Renovation – portions of the existing Center House/Armory would be renovated. In general a reduction in office space and public assembly space are programmed. These spaces would be replaced by an increase in theatre space and restaurant space. In addition, a new rooftop destination restaurant and bar is proposed.

- Fun Forest Replacement– the existing Fun Forest would be replaced by the expanded Mural Amphitheatre

- Mercer Arena Renovation– the existing Mercer Arena building, which is currently vacant, would be converted into a mix of office/storage/warehouse and shop space for use by Seattle Opera

- Demolition of the Memorial Stadium – the existing Memorial Stadium would be demolished. The site would be acquired from the Seattle School District and redeveloped with 1300 underground parking spaces with a grass lid, sports field, and amphitheatre above. A new underground multimodal transportation center with bus and truck parking, bike corral and support spaces, deliveries and materials handling and Seattle Center support facilities would also be built.The turf sports field would be oriented in a north-south direction at the east end of the lid with seating for up to 5,000, half as tiered seating west of the field, and the other half as covered seating east of the field.

- Parking at the Mercer Garage would be replaced at the Stadium site.

- A new building, containing a mix of office and meeting space would be constructed to the south of McCaw Hall and Mercer Arena.

- Demolition of the San Juan, Olympic, and Rainier Rooms and Pavilions A and B – located adjacent to KeyArena, the buildings, used for meeting and conference space, would be demolished.[2]

[2] In the 2011 Addenda, these buildings were retained and redeveloped.

- The existing Phelps Center exhibition hall would be converted to a mix of shop and warehouse space. A new exhibition hall would be constructed adjacent to KeyArena.

In addition to the land-use changes identified above, Alternative 4R-B would also include the reconfiguration of the existing Seattle Center parking. As part of Alternative 4R-B, in addition to the changes to parking identified as part of Alternative 1, a new underground multi-modal transportation center and parking garage (650 stalls) would be constructed beneath the Memorial Stadium site. Vehicle access to the new transportation center/parking garage would be provided via 5th Avenue North and Mercer Street.

Traffic Volumes

Based on the identified mix of land-uses, Alternative 4R-B, at full build-out, was anticipated to generate approximately 670 new trips during the Weekday PM peak hour, an increase of 670 trips relative to Alternative 1 No Action. The demolition of the Mercer Garage and the construction of a new multi-modal transportation center and parking garage beneath the Memorial Stadium side would modify travel patterns immediately adjacent to Seattle Center.

The intersections immediately adjacent to Seattle Center would experience the greatest traffic impact, ranging up to approximately 15 percent. The following intersections would experience a project traffic impact greater than 10 percent:

- 5th Avenue North/Harrison Street (12.3%)

- 5th Avenue North/Broad Street (11.5%)

During the weekday PM peak hour, the project impact at the most congested intersections ranges from 30 trips (1.78 percent) at the 5th Avenue North/Roy Street intersection, to 302 trips (12.3 percent) at the intersection of 5th Avenue North/Harrison Street. The demolition of the existing Mercer Garage as part of *Alternative 4R-B* would result in the reassignment of the traffic currently using the Mercer Garage to other Seattle Center parking garages.

Intersection Level of Service

Three of the signalized study intersections were predicted continue to operate at LOS F with or without Alternative 4R-B. Project impacts to these locations are summarized below in terms of traffic volume impacts. When an intersection reaches LOS F, vehicle delay calculations are sensitive and may not provide a reliable measure of project impacts.

- **9th Avenue North/Mercer Street.** This intersection would continue to operate at LOS F during the weekday PM peak hour. Project traffic would account for approximately 2.4 percent of the weekday PM peak hour entering volumes at this

intersection, and would increase average vehicle delays by approximately ten seconds.

- **Westlake Avenue North/Mercer Street.** This intersection would continue to operate at LOS F during the weekday PM peak hour. Project traffic would account for approximately 2.1 percent of the weekday PM peak hour entering volumes at this intersection, and would increase average vehicle delays by approximately ten seconds.

- **Fairview Avenue North/Mercer Street.** This intersection would continue to operate at LOS F during the weekday PM peak hour. Project traffic would account for approximately 1.8 percent of the weekday PM peak hour entering volumes at this intersection, and would increase average vehicle delays by approximately six seconds.

In addition to the intersections which are anticipated to operate at LOS F without or with Alternative 4R-B, two of the signalized study intersections would continue to operate at LOS E without or with Alternative 4R-B.

- **2nd Avenue North/Denny Way.** This intersection would continue to operate at LOS E during the weekday PM peak hour. Project traffic would account for approximately 2.6 percent of the weekday PM peak hour entering volumes at this intersection, and would increase average vehicle delays by approximately five seconds.

- **Aurora Avenue North/Denny Way/Battery Street.** This intersection would continue to operate at LOS E during the weekday PM peak hour. Project traffic would account for approximately 1.4 percent of the weekday PM peak hour entering volumes at this intersection, and would increase average vehicle delays by approximately four seconds.

During the weekday PM peak hour, the addition of traffic generated by Alternative 4R-B was predicted to cause the level of service at the following intersections to degrade:

- 5th Avenue North/Roy Street (LOS D to LOS E)

- Dexter Avenue North/Mercer Street (LOS E to LOS F)

- 5th Avenue North/Republican Street (LOS B to LOS C)

- 5th Avenue North/Harrison Street (LOS D to LOS F)

- 5th Avenue North/Broad Street (LOS C to LOS D)

- 5th Avenue North/Denny Way (LOS A to LOS C)

The remaining study intersections would operate at the same level of service as with Alternative 1 during the weekday PM peak hour.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and City of Seattle, as part of the larger Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement solution, are currently evaluating changes to SR 99 through the South Lake Union Neighborhood. The current proposal would lower SR 99 between Roy Street and Denny Way, and would reconnect several streets across SR 99, including Republican Street, Harrison Street, and Thomas Street.

In addition, the connections between SR 99 and the surface street network would be modified to provide additional access points at Roy Street and Republican Street. The Alaskan Way Viaduct project was not funded at the time of preparing the traffic analysis for the 2008 EIS, so was not included in the evaluation of project impacts for Alternative 4R-B. However, when complete, the Alaskan Way Viaduct project could relieve congestion along the Mercer Street and Denny Way corridors, through the re-connection of the grid, and the provision of the additional access ramps to SR 99.

The LOS analysis performed for the 2008 EIS assumed design day conditions with typically attended events occurring simultaneously in each of the proposed Alternative 4R-B event facilities. It is assumed that the general traffic characteristics associated with future events would be similar to those associated with currently scheduled events.

Anticipated attendance levels associated with events in the proposed facilities would fall within the range of event attendance associated with existing events occurring at Seattle Center. As such, it is anticipated that pre- and post-event traffic operations for Alternative 4R-A design day conditions would be consistent with existing pre- and post-event traffic operations. Although the new event facilities included in Alternative 4R-B represent an overall increase in the event capacity of Seattle Center it is not expected that design day conditions would exceed Alternative 1 conditions due to the continuation of current scheduling practices, which consider the concurrent use of event facilities and staggered event times. However, it is anticipated that the provision of additional event facilities would likely result in design day conditions occurring more frequently than for Alternative 1.

The existing event traffic management plan, developed to accommodate the post event outbound traffic peak, is anticipated to continue to be used. However, the plan would likely need to be modified to account for the changes to the street system proposed for the South Lake Union Neighborhood, to the east of SR 99, and the construction of a new Memorial Stadium multi-modal transportation center and parking garage to the west of 5th Avenue North.

The transportation concurrency analysis indicates that with traffic generated by Alternative 4R-B, the screenlines would have traffic volume to roadway capacity (v/c) ratios that are less than the City level of service threshold and would meet concurrency requirements.

Transit Impacts

Alternative 4R-B was anticipated to generate approximately 265 new transit trips during the weekday PM peak hour. Existing transit routes serving the site vicinity provide regular service, with all of the routes with stops adjacent to Seattle Center providing service during the afternoon commuter peak. In addition, it is anticipated that some of the increase in transit trips would be accommodated by the existing Seattle Center Monorail to travel between Seattle Center and downtown Seattle. However, no noticeable numbers of Seattle Center patrons were assumed to use the proposed South Lake Union Streetcar, due to its distance from Seattle Center, and the need to cross Aurora Avenue North. Existing transit service is expected to accommodate the additional demand generated by Alternative 4R-B. No significant adverse impacts to transit operations are expected to occur.

Non-Motorized Travel Impacts

Alternative 4R-B would provide a bike corral in the vicinity of the Center House/Armory. It is anticipated that both Seattle Center employees and visitors would be able to use the bike corral. Existing non-motorized facilities within the study area are expected to accommodate the portion of Alternative 4R-B trip generation that is expected to walk or bike to the project site. Alternative 4R-B would not degrade any existing facilities, but would provide enhanced non-motorized facilities. No significant adverse impacts to non-motorized facilities or operations are expected to occur as a result of Alternative 4R-B.

Safety Impacts

Adding Alternative 4R-B traffic volumes to study intersections and roadways would likely cause a proportionate change in the probability of traffic collisions. It is possible that the proportionate increase in traffic at the intersections of 5th Avenue North/Mercer Street, 9th Avenue North/Mercer Street, and Dexter Avenue North/Denny Way may impact the existing safety hazard at these HAL locations.

Parking Impacts

The analysis of parking impacts associated with Alternative 4R-B is based on the mix of land-uses described in previous sections, and is measured relative to Alternative 1.

Parking Supply. The parking supply provided by Seattle Center would decrease with Alternative 4R-B relative to Alternative 1. With Alternative 4R-B, the existing Mercer Garage would be demolished (1,439 stalls), the Seattle School District surface lot would be removed (247 stalls) and a new below-ground transportation center/parking garage would be constructed beneath the site of the existing Memorial Stadium (1,300 stalls). In total the Seattle Center parking supply would provide approximately 3,105 parking stalls, a reduction of 386 stalls from Alternative 1.

Parking Demand. Based on the variation in parking demand during the day, it is anticipated that design day peak parking demand would occur during the evening hours

while scheduled events are in progress. Alternative 4R-B would result in an increase in parking demand of approximately 3,040 vehicles relative to Alternative 1.

The change in peak parking demand for Alternative 4R-B, relative to Alternative 1, was then added to existing peak parking levels to provide an estimate of peak design day parking demand. This results in a peak parking demand of approximately 3,390 vehicles (including the approximately 30 vehicles currently parking in the existing Memorial Stadium surface parking lot). Assuming a total Seattle Center parking supply of approximately 3,105 parking spaces for Alternative 4R-B, the peak design day parking demand would not be able to be accommodated by the available Seattle Center parking supply.

However, as documented in the Affected Environment section of the EIS, for typical design day conditions, the available off-site off-street parking supply (approximately 1,648 stalls) is underutilized. The portion of parking demand not able to be accommodated by the available Seattle Center parking supply would be able to be able to be accommodated by the available off-site parking supply within walking distance of Seattle Center.

In addition, the redevelopment of the existing Memorial Stadium surface park lot would eliminate 247 spaces, displacing approximately 30 vehicles parked in the lot during the period of peak design day parking demand. These 30 displaced vehicles would be able to be accommodated by the Seattle Center parking supply, or by the available off-site off-street parking supply within walking distance of Seattle Center.

At times when major events are scheduled at Seattle Center, the entire parking supply is anticipated to continue to achieve close to 100 percent utilization. However, consistent with existing conditions, this is expected to continue to occur infrequently during the year. On a more typical weekday, the available Seattle Center parking is anticipated to continue to be utilized at an approximately 60 percent level. Weekday evening events would continue to have a scheduled start and end time resulting in the majority of vehicles entering the parking lot during a short time period in advance of the event, and leaving the parking lot during the period immediately following the end of the event.

The occurrence of major weekend events is expected to remain consistent with existing conditions, and would continue to result in 100 percent utilization of available Seattle Center parking during a limited number of weekend days throughout the year. Weekend events, which occur throughout the day, although having higher attendances typically, experience less pronounced peaks in arrivals or departures. The reduced Seattle Center parking supply (139 fewer stalls) combined with the redevelopment of the existing Memorial Stadium surface parking lot (a decrease of 247 stalls) would likely result in higher utilization of the remaining off-site parking within walking distance of Seattle Center, or the utilization of available parking located further away from Seattle Center.

2.4.2 EIS Addendum Information

Table 2-2 provides a summary of the components that were assumed for the purposes of preparing the traffic and parking analysis for Alternative 4R-B in the 2008 EIS with the proposed redevelopment of the Mercer Arena.

Table 2-2
Comparison of Development Assumed for 2008 Adopted Master Plan with Mercer Arena Redevelopment

	2008 Adopted Master Plan	Proposed Mercer Arena Redevelopment
Theater District Zone	Enhancing the Theatre Commons; keeping or extending August Wilson Way; constructing a new building; Mercer Arena redevelopment; retaining or demolishing Mercer Garage	Same as 2008 Adopted Master Plan

As summarized on Table 2-2, the redevelopment of the Mercer Arena is consistent with the 2008 Adopted Master Plan. Appendix B to the 2008 EIS includes estimates of trip generation for Alternative 4R-B for the PM peak hours. This information assumed the information provided in Table 2-3 below.

The redevelopment of the Mercer Arena is not anticipated to increase PM peak traffic volumes. In the EIS, Mercer Arena was assumed to be a non-event generator and any increased traffic generated by that proposal is included in the numbers for the uses included in that proposal, such as office, warehouse (includes storage space) and meeting space or rooms. The proposed retail/café' space along the Mercer frontage would be similar in size to Seattle-area coffee shops such as the Starbucks in the Armory building. It is assumed that the space would not generate new traffic and would be primarily frequented by people coming to Seattle Center for other events.

No new impacts are projected beyond those projected for Alternative 4R-B in the 2008 FEIS.

Table 2-3
PM Trip Generation Calculated for Alternative 4R-B in 2008 EIS

	Capacity	Assumed Occupancy	PM Peak Hour Trips		
			Inbound	Outbound	Total
Event Generator					
Expanded Outdoor Mural Amphitheatre	1,000 seats	800	50	5	55
Memorial Stadium Amphitheatre	10,000 seats	5,850	375	20	395
Event Total	**11,000 seats**	**6,850**	**425**	**25**	**450**

Non-Event Generator					
Destination Restaurant	22,600 gsf		60	30	90
Fun Forest	650,000 persons per year		-30	-70	-100
Office	84,750 gsf		10	75	85
Warehouse	169,250 gsf		10	45	55
Theatre	100 seats		15	5	20
Public Assembly	-33,200 gsf		-15	-70	-85
Meeting Space	39,300		10	185	105
Exhibition	-7,800		-5	-15	-20
Non-Event Total			**55**	**185**	**240**
Grand Total			**480**	**210**	**690**

gsf = gross square feet

2.4.3 Mitigation Measures

No new impacts are anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

2.4.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

The 2008 EIS identified potentially significant unavoidable adverse impacts that may occur at area intersections with the 2008 Adopted Master Plan. Those impacts would not be changed by redevelopment of the Mercer Arena. No new significant unavoidable impacts have been identified.

2.4.5 Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

Secondary and cumulative impacts to traffic and parking were included in the analysis performed for the 2008 EIS. No new secondary and cumulative impacts have been identified.

2.5 Construction Impacts

2.5.1 Impacts Previously Disclosed in the EIS

The Construction Impact section in the EIS described the temporary impacts on air quality, noise, and transportation expected to result from construction of each of the project Alternatives, each of which included redevelopment of the Mercer Arena site for support uses proposed by Seattle Opera.

Air Quality

The EIS addressed several sources of construction-related air emissions including suspended particulate matter (dust) and engine exhaust from construction equipment

and vehicles and hydrocarbon emissions from paving. It also proposed best management practices to mitigate these impacts.

Noise

The EIS listed minimum and maximum noise levels typical at construction sites and as generated by typical construction equipment by range at 50 feet. It also referenced applicable State Department of Ecology and City of Seattle noise regulations. Noise impact mitigation measures included work hours and equipment operational procedures.

Transportation

Transportation impacts related to construction addressed by the EIS focused on truck trips associated with material delivery and excavation activities. Measures to mitigate these impacts listed in the EIS included construction phase transportation and pedestrian circulation plans for approval by the City of Seattle.

2.5.2 EIS Addendum Information

Project construction activities including demolition of Mercer Arena, site excavation and shoring, construction of Seattle Opera's proposed building, and frontage improvements on Mercer St. and 4th Ave. is planned to commence in early 2017 and conclude approximately 21 months later in late 2018. The specific time frame for each construction activity and associated impacts are summarized in the following table.

Table 2-4
Construction Impacts Summary

Timeframe	Construction Activity	Construction Impact
1st Quarter 2017	Abatement & Demolition of the existing structure	Frequent noise and dust, partial closures of 4th Ave., temporary daily closures Mercer St. sidewalk during demolition
2nd Quarter 2017	Shoring and Excavation	Frequent noise and dust, partial closures of 4th Ave.
3rd & 4th Quarters 2017	Foundations and Structure	Occasional noise, temporary daily closures Mercer St. during steel erection, closure of 4th Ave sidewalk for material hoist use.
4th Quarter 2017 through 2nd Quarter 2018	Building Enclosure and Interior Finishes	Partial closures of 4th Ave., gradual noise reduction
3rd Quarter 2018	Site Improvements	Temporary daily sidewalk closures on 4th Av. and Mercer street during landscaping and sidewalk replacement.

Construction activities that generate the most noise and air quality impacts typically consist of exterior activities, especially demolition, shoring, excavation and other

mechanized site work that occur relatively early in the project, in this case during the winter and spring months.

The City of Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (formerly the Department of Construction and Land Use) enforces the construction noise provisions of the Seattle Noise Ordinance (SMC 25.08). For construction projects such as this that are greater than 100' feet from residential zones, noise-generating construction activities are allowable between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. weekdays and between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays. Construction activities that generate high impact noise is limited to between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. weekdays and between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays.

Trucks hauling demolition debris, excavated soil and delivering materials would contribute to traffic volumes in the vicinity of the project during the construction period. Temporary sidewalk closures and re-routes may impact pedestrian circulation and wayfinding. Other temporary transportation impacts would likely include parking displaced by deliveries, staging, and parking by construction workers. Fortunately transit does not operate on streets abutting the project site so no direct impacts to transit service or passenger facilities are anticipated.

2.5.3 Mitigation Measures

As noted in section 2.5.1 above, numerous mitigation measures were included in the EIS to address short-term construction impacts. These should be consolidated into a Construction Management Plan (CMP) to be submitted by the proponent as a permit condition. At a minimum, the CMP should address the following elements to be performed by the general contractor:

- **Communications and relations with the surrounding community**
  Designate official points of contact for non-emergency communications and information sharing with general public, using a telephone hotline, online social media, bulletin boards with regular project updates and participation in meetings.

- **Seattle Center Coordination**
  Maintain ongoing coordination of construction activities with Seattle Center staff to prevent and/or mitigate conflicts with events at Seattle Center to minimize public safety hazards, vehicular and pedestrian traffic delays, noise and related impacts.

- **Work Hours by activity**
  Stipulate time windows for activity types by noise impact to minimize impacts of noise and vibration.

- **Noise and vibration management**
  Address timing restrictions and measures to mitigate off-site noise trespass including but not limited to alarms, construction equipment selection and maintenance, communications, noise barriers, and off-site prefabrication.

- **Construction parking management**
  Provide incentives for ridesharing and transit use by construction workers and identification of convenient off-site, off-street parking.

- **Construction traffic management**
  Designate specific routes and times for site access by delivery trucks to minimize local traffic and truck-related noise impacts and conflicts with Seattle Center events, subject to coordination with Seattle Center and approval by Seattle Department of Transportation. Truck deliveries should be scheduled to avoid peak traffic periods (6:00-9:00 a.m. & 3:00-6:00 p.m.)

- **Street, sidewalk & bike lane closures and detours**
  Identify anticipated temporary street and/or sidewalk and/or bike lane closures including the timing of any closures and detour routes and route signage for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles subject to coordination with Seattle Center and approval by Seattle Department of Transportation.

- **Best Management Practices to prevent erosion, sedimentation and pollution**
  Prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that complies with the current City of Seattle.

- **Construction and demolition debris management**
  Procedures governing the clean and safe storage, disposal and hauling of demolition and construction debris need to be addressed in the CMP. This would include material separation in order to maximize waste diversion and material recycling, along with waste disposal/recycling tracking consistent with 3rd party green building certification.

- **Temporary lighting**
  Temporary lighting would be needed to provide safe working and site conditions. Methods to provide this while avoiding light trespass and excessive offsite glare need to be documented in the CMP.

- **Construction Transportation Plan**

Submit a transportation plan addressing haul routes, staging, loading, flagging, sidewalk closures, and signage for approval by the Seattle Department of Transportation.

2.5.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Due to the limited duration of project construction and the measures identified to mitigate impacts, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts from demolition and construction activities are anticipated.

2.5.5 Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

Should other major construction projects within the vicinity of the project site occur during the planned construction period, secondary or cumulative impacts could occur from noise, construction traffic, or potential need to reroute pedestrians or non-motorized users adjacent to the site.

3.0 References

Dodrill, Beth. Historical Research Associates. Mercer Arts Arena Historic Report. December 2008

Dodrill, Beth. Project Architectural Historian, Historical Research Associates. Mercer Arts Arena Historic Report Preliminary Evaluation of Historical Significance memo. December 3, 2008

NBBJ. Seattle Design Commission Concept Design Phase Review. February 18, 2016

Lease Crutcher Lewis. Construction Management Plan. February 2016

Seattle Center. 2008a. Draft EIS – Seattle Center Master Plan. January 3.

_____. 2008b. Final EIS – Seattle Center Master Plan. June 19,

_____. 2011. Addendum to the Final EIS – Seattle Center Master Plan. February 17.

_____. Century 21 Architectural Guidelines

Seattle Municipal Code, Section 23.84A.006 Definitions.

City of Seattle Stormwater Manual, Volume 2: Construction Stormwater Control. January, 2016

4.0 Distribution List

Federal Agencies:
Economic Development Administration
Environmental Protection Agency, Region X
Housing and Urban Development, Region X
National Marine Fisheries Service
United Indians of All Tribes

State of Washington:
Office of Archeology & Historic Preservation – State Historic Preservation Officer
Department of Ecology – Environmental Review Section
Department of Social and Health Services
Department of Natural Resources
Department of Transportation
Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development

Regional Agencies:
Metro/King County Department of Natural Resources/Wastewater
Puget Sound Clean Air Agency
Puget Sound Regional Council of Governments

City of Seattle:
City Councilmembers and Central Staff
Seattle City Light
Design Commission
Chief, Fire Department
Office of Housing
Law Department
Department of Neighborhoods
Department of Parks and Recreation
Planning Commission
Police Department
SEPA Public Information Center
Seattle Department of Transportation

Libraries:
Seattle Library – Government Publications
Seattle Public Library – Queen Anne Branch

Newspapers:
Seattle Times
Seattle Post Intelligencer
Daily Journal of Commerce
Seattle Weekly
The Stranger

Seattle Center Resident Tenants and Organizations:

Seattle Center Advisory Commission
Book-It Repertory Theatre
Chihuly Garden and Glass
Cornish Playhouse at Seattle Center
Experience Music Project
Festivals Incorporated – Bite of Seattle
International Children's Festival
Intiman Theatre
KCTS Television
KEXP Radio
Northwest Craft Center
Northwest Folklife Festival
One Reel – Bumbershoot Arts Festival
Pacific Northwest Ballet
Pacific Science Center
Pottery Northwest
Seattle Center High School
Seattle Children's Museum
Seattle Children's Theatre
Seattle Monorail Services
Seattle Opera
Seattle Repertory Theatre
Seattle Shakespeare Company
SIFF Film Center
Space Needle Corporation
The Vera Project
Theatre Puget Sound

Other Groups:

Allied Arts of Seattle
League of Women Voters, Land Use Chair
Uptown Alliance
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Queen Anne Chamber of Commerce
Queen Anne/Magnolia Neighborhood Service Center
Queen Anne/Magnolia District Council

Appendix A

Final Report

Mercer Arts Arena Historic Report

Prepared for

Seattle Opera

Prepared by

Beth Dodrill
Seattle, Washington

December 2008

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Property Data

Historic Name:	Civic Arena
Current Name:	Mercer Arts Arena
Address:	301 Mercer Street, Seattle, WA 98109
Tax Parcel:	1988200700
Plat, Block, Lot:	D.T. Denny's Home Addition, Block 53, lots all
Year Built:	1928
Building Area:	60,696 square feet
Original Architect:	Schack, Young & Meyers
Later Architects:	Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Assoc.
	Priteca & Chiarelli
Original Owner:	City of Seattle
Current Owner:	City of Seattle
Original Use:	Multipurpose sports and entertainment arena
Current Use:	Temporary storage and production shop

1.2 Background

The Mercer Arts Arena was built in 1927-1928 as part of the City of Seattle's Civic Auditorium Complex, and was known as the Civic Arena until 1995. The original complex, designed by the architectural firm of Schack, Young and Meyers, consisted of the connected Civic Arena and Auditorium and an adjacent 35,000-seat Civic Ballfield, as well as a combined Field House/Veteran's Hall building. The original complex was bound by Mercer Street to the north, Harrison Street to the south, Third Avenue North to the west, and Fourth Avenue North to the east.

The entire complex was expanded and redeveloped as part of the Century 21 Seattle World's Fair in 1961-1962. Although Paul Thiry served as architect in charge of the overall planning for the Century 21 Exposition, the architectural firm of Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates designed renovations to the Mercer Arena prior to the exposition. Following the exposition, the fairgrounds were redeveloped as the Seattle Center campus and the Civic Arena was renovated by the collaboration of project architect James Chiarelli and consulting architect B. Marcus Priteca. Chiarelli and Priteca were also responsible for renovation of the Civic Auditorium in

preparation for the Century 21 Seattle World's Fair into the Opera House. As part of the Seattle Center campus, the City of Seattle owns the building and the Seattle Center manages it.

The arena served primarily as an ice arena, but was designed and used as a multipurpose sports and entertainment venue. In addition to ice skating and hockey events, the facility hosted boxing, basketball, theater, musical concerts, conferences, trade shows, commencement ceremonies, and other arts, sports, business and community events.

Historical Research Associates, Inc. (HRA) was hired by the Seattle Opera to conduct this study, which provides historical background and context information in order to evaluate the building's potential historical significance and to assess whether it meets the City of Seattle's Landmark designation criteria. HRA project historian Beth Dodrill prepared this report for review by Seattle Department of Neighborhood's Preservation Office Landmarks Preservation Board staff. If Preservation staff determines that the building meets the Seattle Landmarks Designation Criteria, they may refer the property for review by the Landmarks Preservation Board. Only the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board can make a final determination for designation of a building as a local landmark. The Seattle Landmarks Designation Criteria are outlined below:

1.3 Designation Standards

In order to be designated a City Landmark, the building, object, or site must be at least 25 years old and must meet at least one of six criteria for designation outlined in the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (SMC 25.12.350):

> 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
>
> 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.

In addition to meeting at least one of the above standards, the object, site, or improvement must also possess integrity or the ability to convey its significance.

1.4 Methodology

Preparation of this report included a site visit and photographic documentation of the building's interior, exterior, and physical context setting, and review of archived building plans held by the Seattle Center Redevelopment Office. Additional research included review of materials held at the Seattle Collection, Seattle Public Library Hugh and Jane Ferguson Seattle Room; historical tax records at the Puget Sound Regional Archives (Washington State Archives); online resources including but not limited to HistoryLink.org; and digital collections held by the Seattle Municipal Archives, University of Washington Special Collections, and the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI). Existing studies reviewed included the Seattle Center Master Plan DEIS and FEIS (City of Seattle 2008a, 2008b), and BOLA Architecture + Planning's historical evaluation of the Civic Auditorium/Opera House (BOLA 2000). Field investigations and research were conducted in November 2008 by Beth Dodrill, Project Architectural Historian, HRA.

2.0 Historic Context

2.1 Statement of Significance/Building History

In 1881, seafarer, lumberman, and religious freethinker James Osborne bequeathed $20,000 to the City of Seattle for construction of a civic hall. Unable to provide additional funds for construction, the city deposited the amount to a bank account where it would earn interest over the next 40 years as the city continued contemplating construction of a civic auditorium.

In April 1924, the Arena building (c. 1915), a privately owned venue located at Fifth Avenue and University Street in the Metropolitan Tract, closed its doors to make way for the construction of a parking garage. Although it had been constructed primarily as an ice arena, and hosted both amateur and professional hockey leagues, the building had also served as an auditorium venue for concerts, performances, conventions, and other events requiring a large hall and seating capacity. The closing of the Arena strengthened business leaders' calls for the construction of a public auditorium so that Seattle could compete with other metropolitan cities to host large national conventions. The campaign for a large civic auditorium had been undertaken by the Chamber of Commerce by at least 1923, when the chamber's Auditorium Committee commissioned architect John Graham to draw up preliminary plans for such a building, based on an indeterminate site.

A civic auditorium proposition with a $750,000 bond initiative failed to pass in 1924, perhaps in part due to its proposed location in the Denny Park area, which linked it to additional funding for a regrade project. Nonetheless, the commission to design an auditorium complex was granted to Schack, Young & Meyers in 1925 for a fee of $1,200,000. Subsequently, a bond grant of $900,000 passed in 1926 to fund the project.

Since Osborne's bequest in 1881, the City had also been given land, including David and Louisa Denny's "Prairie." In 1927, with the Osborne legacy gift, the donation land from the Denny family and the $900,000 voter-approved bond, Seattle began construction on the Civic

Auditorium Complex. A plaque honoring "Seattle citizen and philanthropist" Osborne hung over the door of the Auditorium until renovation was completed in 1962 for the World's Fair.

The design for the Civic Auditorium Complex was conceived as a Beaux Arts style complex of two integrated civic buildings, the auditorium and the ice arena, as well as a recreational field with a field house/club house (Veteran's Hall), on an eleven-acre campus covering four city blocks. The design of individual buildings was executed in a Romanesque Revival style, the same style employed in the Chamber of Commerce Building.

The construction contract for the Civic Auditorium Complex was awarded on November 1, 1927, in the amount of $872,000, based on a bid by the firm of Bartleson & Ness, general contractors. Completion by June 17, 1928, was stipulated so that the complex would be available to host the 1928 national Kiwanis Convention. The contractors met the requirements, and the Kiwanis Club held their 1928 convention in the new complex.

Although it was already in use by summer 1928, the facility's formal opening ceremony coincided with Armistice Day and took place on November 12, 1928, in the centerpiece of the complex--the Auditorium—which local media described as "one of the finest auditoriums in the west" (*Seattle Times,* Nov 13, 1928). As a memorial to the 63rd Coast Artillery Regiment's service in France during World War I, the regimental flag, and flags of both France and the United States, were encased in glass in the auditorium, rather than in the Veteran's Hall, as part of the ceremony.

In 1950, the city took over management of the arena from the Seattle Ice Skating & Hockey Association, which had operated the arena since its opening in 1928. A study by the City Building Superintendent recommended the decision to deny the firm's petition for renewal of their leasing contract and transfer operations to the city building department. The recommendation was supported by a public petition to the City Council stating complaints that the facility had not been managed in a manner beneficial to the public interests. Among other complaints, skating enthusiasts sought additional opportunities to promote public skating. The initiative to turn the management of the facility back to the city was accompanied by $150,000 in planned upgrades.

In the mid-1950s, the Civic Center Committee, appointed by the City Council, was formulating plans to create a civic center complex with a variety of cultural, educational, and sports facilities. Civic leaders claimed Seattle was the only large city on the West Coast lacking such a facility (or plans underway for one), which they believed was necessary if the city was to remain competitive in drawing convention business. In 1956, the committee proposed a site to be developed on First Hill. At the same time, plans to construct an Opera House that would seat at least 3,000 and showcase opera, symphony, and ballet, as well as community concerts, were under discussion. Although less than 30 years old, the existing Civic Auditorium complex was considered outdated and inadequate.

Between 1955 and 1956, these ideas coalesced into a plan to expand and redevelop the existing Civic Auditorium Complex site. The plan included renovating existing facilities, constructing a new concert hall, and acquiring property nearby for additional cultural and recreational facilities, as well as parking, to create a permanent Civic Center. The idea had evolved also to include hosting an international exposition at the new complex, inspired by the 50-year anniversary of the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition (AYPE). Tentatively scheduling the

event for 1959, the fair was to showcase Seattle's significance as a center for Pacific trade, as the AYPE had done. The timing was eventually pushed back and the theme of the fair later evolved into the celebration of science. The existing Civic Auditorium Complex was finally chosen as the site for a new civic center and international exposition due to a variety of factors, including the fact that the Washington State Armory building (1939) was located in the vicinity, and acquiring additional property from both the state and private landowners would be possible.

A proposition for a $7.5 million bond for the construction of the Civic Center Complex was approved by Seattle voters in the November 1956 election and plans moved forward. The original voter-approved proposition had stipulated construction of an entirely new concert hall/Opera House. When a new plan was formulated to convert the existing Civic Auditorium into a concert-convention hall instead, use of the bond funds were legally challenged. As a result, the State Supreme Court required that the use of bond funds for the new plan to be approved by voters as a new proposition. The new plan was approved on the September 29, 1959, ballot.

The new proposition primarily emphasized the funding for the construction of the new concert and convention hall, within the existing shell of the Civic Auditorium, but also included construction of the Exhibition Hall and a separate 800-seat multipurpose auditorium (the Playhouse, now Intiman Theater) and the renovation of the Civic Ice Arena. These buildings were to be designed as an integrated Civic Center Complex to serve the community as a permanent sports, arts and entertainment facility.

Conversion of the Auditorium building would shift events programming to the Arena. The Arena was to be renovated with heating and ventilation upgrades and new portable, insulated laminate flooring that could be placed over the ice for basketball and other events during the winter season to create more flexibility in scheduling various events. An addition of press-box facilities, new showers and dressing rooms, and acoustical improvements were necessary to meet new demands. Basketball, boxing, and wrestling, previously accommodated at the auditorium, would be added to arena programming. The 1959 Special Election information pamphlet described proposed renovations to the Ice Arena as:

> "Renovations to the Ice Arena will be immediately improved as a more ideal sports arena to accommodate hockey, basketball, ice shoes, public skating events. The capacity will vary from 4,500 to 5,000 seats and will provide 20,000 square feet of exhibit area."

In 1960, the Bureau of International Expositions officially sanctioned the World's Fair in Seattle. The fair also received federal status as a science exhibition and a $9 million appropriation of funds from Congress. Although the Century 21 Seattle World's Fair emphasized science and technology, the fair programming included five "Worlds of Century 21." The Arena primarily served as a venue for the "World of Entertainment," which featured international performing arts, sports, and spectacular events, including the latest innovations in recreation and amusement. The fair ran for six months, from April 21 to October 21, 1962, and was attended by 10 million visitors. During the fair, the Arena hosted a variety of special entertainment events, including shows by the Count Basie Orchestra, the Benny Goodman Orchestra, Lawrence Welk, Nat King Cole, and Ella Fitzgerald. The Ringling Brothers Circus and the Shrine Circus also performed there, as well as the Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Western Show.

After the fair, many Seattle Center buildings, including the Civic Center Complex buildings, were renovated. Acoustical improvements were a key component of the renovations to the Civic

Center Complex buildings. Conversion to the Arena was scheduled to occur after renovations to the Coliseum, which had been constructed by Washington State for the World's Fair, were complete. The Arena was expected to continue as a significant venue, despite the addition of the larger, more modern Coliseum venue to the campus, and improvements to the Opera House. This was due to the fact that the Arena was considered an appropriate size for a wide range of events. The Arena could seat upward of 5,000 and was suited to events requiring a space larger than the Opera House, which seated only about 3,000. Additionally, the larger Coliseum was considered too large for some events. The 1964 renovations to the Arena were designed by architects James Chiarelli and B. Marcus Priteca.

Mercer Arena continued to host concerts, circuses, ice shows, and hockey and basketball games. It has been home to the Thunderbirds hockey team and the Seattle Reign women's professional basketball team, as well as graduations and concerts. In 1995, the Coliseum was renovated and modernized and renamed Key Arena. This prompted the renaming of the Arena to Mercer Arts Arena, in an effort to avoid confusion.

In 2002, during reconstruction of the Opera House, now Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, the Mercer Arena underwent major renovations to become the temporary home of the Seattle Opera and Pacific Northwest Ballet. Since the opening of McCaw Hall in June 2003, Mercer Arena has not been used for programmed events.

For many years, the Civic Ice Arena hosted both amateur and professional hockey teams. Among these were the amateur City Hockey League, which included a small group of company-sponsored teams, and the professional Pacific Coast Hockey League (PCHL), which was revived after a hiatus during World War II. The postwar PCHL local team was the Seattle Ironmen. In 1952, the PCHL became the Western Hockey League (WHL) and the local team became the Seattle Bombers; subsequent years saw additional evolutions of the local professional franchise team's moniker and/or league reorganizations. Seattle's professional ice-hockey home games continued to be played at the Civic Ice Arena until 1995, when the tenant Seattle Thunderbirds moved to the larger Key Arena on a full-time basis.

During the winter season, the Ice Arena hosted ice shows, such as the Follies and the Shrine Ice Carnival, as well as recreational and amateur skating activities like the Seattle Skating Club. Additionally, the facility served as a venue for boxing, wrestling, basketball, and other non-ice sports, and as an assembly space for a variety of other events. Before it was renovated into a sports/concert arena following the World's Fair, Seattle University sports used the Ice Arena as its home facility.

2.2 Architects

2.2.1 Schack, Young & Meyers, Architects (1928 Original Construction)

The interdisciplinary firm of Schack, Young & Meyers was one of the most prominent firms in Seattle in the 1920s. The principals included architects James H. Schack (1871-1933) and David J. Meyers (1872-1936), and engineer Arrigo M. Young (1884-1954). Schack and Meyers shared an office and began collaborating on design projects in 1917, producing such works as the Sunset Motor Car Dealership Building (1917-1918). The partnership with Young was formed in 1920 and lasted until Myers left the firm in 1929 to form a private practice. The partnership of

Schack and Young continued until Schack's death in 1933. The Civic Auditorium Complex was one of the firm's late projects, and its largest commissioned project. They were engaged in this notable project from 1925-1928.

James H. Schack arrived in Seattle in 1901. A native of Germany, he received his architectural training in vocational schools in Chicago and through work in architectural offices. He had a brief partnership with Daniel R. Huntington in Seattle (1907-1909), which resulted in at least two notable building designs in Seattle: the First United Episcopal Church/First United Methodist Church (1907-1910; Seattle Landmark and National Register of Historic Places) and the Arctic Club Building/Morrison Hotel (1908-1909; Seattle Landmark and Pioneer Square Seattle/National Register of Historic Places District).

Arrigo M. Young was born in London in 1884, moved to Chicago at an early age, and received his B.S. degree in engineering from the University of Michigan. He worked for architectural and construction firms in Chicago and St. Louis before relocating to Seattle as the head of the structural department of the Moran Steel Company in 1910. By 1913, he had begun practicing as an independent structural engineer, primarily designing industrial buildings, but also consulting on other projects, including notable work with architect B. Marcus Priteca for the Tacoma Pantages Theater (1916-1918). After Schack's death, Young formed a partnership as Young, Richardson, Carleton & Detlie, which later evolved to become TRA. TRA became part of Black & Veatch, a multidisciplinary firm based in Kansas City, Missouri, in the late 1990s, which remains active in the Pacific Northwest.

David J. Meyers was a native of Scotland and arrived in Seattle shortly after the 1889 fire. Prior to beginning his architectural studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology around 1894, he worked for Seattle architectural firms Parkinson & Evers, John Parkison, and Evers & Keith. He worked for firms in Boston and Pittsburgh before returning to Seattle to become a junior partner in the firm of John Graham, Sr., in 1905. He remained with Graham until about 1910, when he formed an independent practice. He was primarily known for his residential designs, but his work included religious, civic, and commercial projects. Meyers also gained civic planning experience while consulting with Virgil Bogue in the development of the Bogue Plan, an early civic plan developed for the Seattle Municipal Plans Commission, which failed to gain voter approval in 1911.

In addition to Meyers's work with the Seattle Civic Planning Commission, the firm gained significant civic experience in one of their earliest commissions as a partnership—the building development for the model city of Longview, Washington, in association with architect John R. Nevins and under the direction of the planning firm of Hare & Hare of Kansas City. The breadth of experience they gained in the firm positioned them well for large projects requiring their range of expertise. According to architectural historian David Rash, "While the firm's Academic Eclectic output was typical of its time, its background in design, engineering, and planning made it almost uniquely suited locally for work like the initial building development of Longview and the civic Auditorium complex" (Rash 1994, p. 159).

During the time in which developing a civic auditorium in Seattle was a prominent subject of public discourse, the firm was also engaged in planning another important civic project: construction of the Chamber of Commerce Building (1924, with Harlan Thomas & Associates). The Chamber of Commerce Building was designed in a Romanesque Revival style, the style employed in the design of the later Civic Auditorium Complex buildings.

Throughout the 1920s, Schack, Young & Meyers produced a wide variety of project designs executed in eclectic styles, including commercial, civic, religious, and residential buildings. A notable commercial building designed by the firm is the Elridge Buick Dealership (1925-1926, now University Center, altered). A significant religious building designed by the firm is the Chinese Baptist Church/Chinese Southern Baptist Mission (1922-1923), a traditional Gothic Revival building. A notable late work is the Baroness Apartments building (1930-1931), executed in a restrained Art Deco style. The firm was responsible for the design of at least nine buildings as part of the development of Longview, Washington, including warehouses and garages, commercial buildings, apartments, and hotels.

2.2.2 Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates (1961 Renovation for the Century 21 Seattle World's Fair)

Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates collaborated with structural engineering firm Worthington, Skilling, Helle & Jackson in constructing the Playhouse (Intiman Theater) and adjacent Exhibition Hall as part of the reimagined Civic Complex buildings in anticipation of hosting the World's Fair. At the same time, they designed some interior renovations to the Civic Arena and major exterior alterations to the Arena, which succeeded in both physically and aesthetically integrating the Arena and Auditorium buildings with the two new adjacent buildings to create a single, permanent, and modern Civic Complex, including a garage connected by sky bridges. The firm designed the parking garage, located on the north side of Mercer Street, in association with N.G. Jacobson & Associates, consulting structural engineers.

Paul Hayden Kirk (1914-1995) was a native of Salt Lake City, Utah, and came to Seattle in 1922. He received his architectural degree from the University of Washington in 1937. Prior to opening his own practice in 1939, he worked in the Seattle architectural offices of Floyd A. Naramore, A. M. Young, B. Dudley Stuart, and Henry Bittman.

Kirk practiced in partnership with Bertram Dudley Stuart and Robert Durham as Stuart, Kirk & Durham, Associated Architects, during World War II. Kirk then worked in partnership with James J. Chiarelli for five years. Chiarelli & Kirk produced such works as the Crown Hill Medical-Dental Clinic in Seattle (1947) and the Lakewood Community Church (1949), both in a modern design idiom influenced by the International Style. From 1950 to 1957, Kirk worked as a sole practitioner, designing many notable and award-winning residences, medical clinics, and churches. In designing these projects, Kirk helped to develop and define the regional variant of modernism in architecture, a design idiom that most architectural scholars recognize today as Northwest Contemporary Modernism, incorporating elements of the International Style and traditional Japanese forms with vernacular traditions and materials. From 1957 to 1960, Kirk's firm grew and was organized as Paul Kirk & Associates. In 1960, the firm was reorganized as Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates, with Donald S. Wallace and David A. McKinley as partners.

The development of the Civic Center Complex was one of the firm's larger scale and earliest projects. The firm also produced such notable and award-winning works as the Magnolia Branch of the Seattle Public Library (1962-1964), the Japanese Presbyterian Church in Seattle (1963), and the French Administration Building at Washington State University (1967), and later works, such as Edmond Meany Hall at the University of Washington (1974), before Kirk retired from practice in 1979.

2.2.3 Priteca & Chiarelli (1964 Renovations for the Seattle Center)

B. Marcus Priteca

B. Marcus Priteca (1889-1971) was a native of Scotland, and studied at Edinburgh University and the Royal College of Arts, receiving his associate's degree at an early age. He arrived in Seattle in 1909, initially working in the firm of E. W. Houghton. He began a prolific career as the architect for the Pantages Theater circuit in 1910. He worked in this capacity for the next nineteen years. With branch offices in Oakland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, Priteca designed over 150 movie theaters, including many considered of historical significance, such as the Tacoma Pantages Theater (1916-1918), a project that also involved Arrigo M. Young as consulting engineer. Priteca also designed numerous synagogues in the Seattle area, including Congregation Bikur Cholim (1912-1915; altered, now the Langston Hughes Cultural Center). He also designed warehouses, wartime public housing, government buildings, and several residences. He consulted on the design of Temple de Hirsch Sinai (1959-1960, demolished) with Detlie & Peck just prior to acting as consulting architect on the Opera House (1962) and renovations to the Civic Arena (1964). His expertise in the design of theaters and auditoriums made him a likely choice to act as a consultant on the Civic Center Complex projects.

James Joseph Chiarelli

James Joseph Chiarelli (1908- 1990) was born in Spokane and graduated from the University of Washington architecture program in 1934. Before partnering with Paul Hayden Kirk in 1944, he worked in numerous firms in Seattle; Missoula, Montana; and Portland, Oregon. Firms in Seattle included Andrew Willatsen (1935), Naramore, Grainger & Thomas (1935-1937); R. Ellis (1938); John Graham (1939), and Smith, Carroll & Johanson (1939). During World War II, he worked as an architect for the Vancouver Housing Authority. His partnership with Kirk lasted approximately six years, dissolving in 1950.

Chiarelli's later works, as a sole practitioner, include many residential, commercial, and institutional buildings, such as the Pierce County Blood Bank (1951) in Tacoma and the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture (1962) at the University of Washington. His work on the Civic Opera House with consulting architect B. Marcus Priteca was the only project on which the two architects collaborated.

2.3 Physical Description

2.3.1 Context Setting

The Mercer Arena is located in the northeast corner of the Seattle Center Campus on the south side of Mercer Street at the southwest corner of Fourth Avenue North. Mercer Street is a main arterial carrying one-way traffic traveling east. Fourth Avenue North is a one-way street traveling north that intersects with Republican Street near the southeast corner of the Arena, adjacent to the northeast corner of Memorial High School Stadium. Republican Street generally functions as an access road from Fifth Avenue North, a major two-way, divided, north-south arterial on the eastern perimeter of the Seattle Center, to the loading and maintenance areas of the arena, stadium, and concert-hall facilities. The Memorial High School Stadium is located directly south of the arena and Marion Oliver McCaw Hall is directly adjacent to the arena on the

west. To the west of McCaw Hall is a courtyard and the Exhibition Hall; further west is Intiman Theater (formerly the Playhouse). Across Mercer Street directly north of the arena is the Mercer Garage, constructed for the Century 21 Exposition in 1962, which takes up the entire block between Fourth Avenue North and Third Avenue North and extends north to Roy Street. All of these facilities are part of the Seattle Center Campus.

Across Fourth Avenue North, to the east of the arena, is the KCTS television station, housed in a large, contemporary brick building. The KCTS site occupies the entire block, extending east to Fifth Avenue North. The building is set back on the lot, which features landscaping with earth berms and large trees. Two large buildings are located across Mercer Street to the north of KCTS. On the west side of the block is a contemporary, six-story commercial office building and on the east side of the block is a four-story apartment building that dates to 1926.

2.3.2 Current Appearance

Exterior

The arena building is a large rectangular reinforced-concrete building with a shallow-gabled roof supported by steel trusses, and is predominantly clad in buff-colored brick. It appears as a large, modern horizontal box-like mass. It is oriented north-south, and measures approximately 191 feet wide at the primary, north elevation, facing Mercer Street, and 316 feet deep. The arena building provides 60,696 square feet of interior space.

The primary, north elevation, clad in buff-colored brick veneer, is dominated by a 190-foot-long canopy extending the full length of the exterior from east to west. The 23-foot-wide and 30-foot-high canopy is flat-roofed and supported by tall, narrow pilotis, arranged in nine 21-foot-wide bays, creating a colonnade effect. Three large shallow arched openings at the center lead to entrances set in the original recessed arched openings. Entries are modern aluminum and plate-glass double doors. Similar but smaller arched openings, grouped as two and three openings, provide access to interior staircases and ramps on the eastern and western ends of this elevation. All of the entries have been fenced and gated. Incongruously, four large lantern-style light fixtures attached to the exterior wall flanking the entry bays appear to be original to the 1928 building. Their style is in character with the Romanesque design of the original building, rather than the modern character that the building has had since its 1962 renovations for the World's Fair.

The east elevation presents a mostly blank wall of buff-colored brick, interrupted by nine small openings for double-door entry/exits. Five of these are at the first floor, located in small arched recessed entry bays accessed by floating concrete stairs leading to cantilevered platform porches. Four entries are located at the basement level, spaced alternately between the first-floor entries and accessed by stairwells. All of the entries are currently fenced and gated.

The south elevation is the only one that reveals a portion of the building's original stucco exterior and overhanging gable roof. It is partially clad in buff brick veneer and partially clad in stucco. Most of this elevation is obscured by the large concrete truck loading access ramp that was constructed directly adjacent to the southern side of the building, as part of the 2001 renovation of the Opera House, now McCaw Hall. The ramp allows access to stage loading bays at the upper level, rear southeastern corner of McCaw Hall. Extensive alterations have been made to all of the original openings on this elevation. Currently there are four large openings.

Two are loading bays with roll-up doors on the eastern end of this elevation, while the other two are smaller and shorter and have paired, vertical metal-hinged, single and double doors on the western end.

Only a small portion of the western elevation does not abut the McCaw Hall. On the northwestern exterior corner of the arena building is a loading bay platform at grade with the alley. On the western elevation of the arena building is a wide bay opening that is original to the building, but has newer wide double metal doors. It currently functions as a loading bay served by a crane, and/or winch, located above the loading platform area that is at grade with the alley. Newer metal stairs adjacent to the southwestern corner of the building lead to a large metal platform for pedestrian access to the upper loading bay. The northern end of this elevation abuts the south elevation of McCaw Hall.

Interior

Although originally designed as a flat-floor arena, with stadium seating around the entire perimeter of the open arena floor, this primary interior space was reconfigured to function as an auditorium/concert hall in 2002, and the present character of this primary interior space is that of an auditorium with a proscenium style stage, rather than an arena.

The main feature of the building's overall interior space is the central, large open auditorium area, with a ceiling height of almost 80 feet. Wide corridors are configured around the perimeter of the auditorium at the main floor, balcony, and upper mezzanine levels, which provide circulation as well as access to the auditorium area and accessory spaces along corridors. Accessory rooms along the eastern and western corridors on the main-floor level include areas used for storage, dressing rooms, locker rooms, mechanical rooms, and similar facilities. The northern end of the building provides space for the entry foyer, and stairs leading down to the main-floor lobby and northern corridor, both oriented east-west. Areas for offices, storage, a press room, concessions, ticket sales, and similar uses flank the open lobby and corridor areas. The configuration and interior finishes and equipment of many of these accessory rooms have been altered over the years, as they were changed in response to various programmatic requirements. Public restroom facilities are located in northeastern and northwestern corners at all levels. Large wide ramps, which allow for circulation of large crowds to the upper balcony and mezzanine levels, take up considerable area in the northeastern and northwestern corners of the building. Upper-level corridors at the balcony and mezzanine levels include some lobby areas, and additional public restrooms as accessory spaces.

Currently, the auditorium space is configured with the original stadium-seating arrangement at the balcony and mezzanine levels in a "U" shape at the northern end and partially extending along the eastern and western sides. This arrangement is interrupted at the southern end by the proscenium that divides the seating areas from the stage area, which takes up the southern end of the arena. The lower arena floor seating level is configured in a "U"–shaped, sloped bowl, with seating oriented toward the south toward the proscenium stage. Many seats near the southwestern corner of the floor-level seating area have been removed. Before their removal, seating totaled 2,900. A large enclosed orchestra pit, with room for a 100-piece orchestra, is set below floor grade and takes up a large area in front of the stage.

The entire southern end of the building, approximately half of the overall building interior space, is dominated by functional and programmatic theater spaces, including the proscenium

stage, adjacent wings, mechanical areas, and private rooms. The original balcony and mezzanine seating areas, now part of this "backstage" area, are primarily occupied by mechanical ventilation equipment. Contemporary dressing room suites are located at the southeastern and southwestern corners in the basement level, with direct stair access to the stage wings.

Alterations

As part of the larger Civic Auditorium Complex, constructed in 1928, the original Civic Arena building was aligned north-south facing Mercer Street, and attached to the rear eastern elevation of the larger Civic Auditorium, which was aligned east-west facing Third Avenue. Both buildings were designed in a Romanesque Revival style, featuring stucco cladding, low gabled roofs, projecting two-story height arcaded entrance foyers and vestibules, arched head windows, and ornamental details, such as cast stone medallions and corbels. Structural bays were articulated by piers on the exterior façades, and openings were arranged symmetrically within this framework, featuring wood doors and multilight steel sash industrial windows. The complex's original Veteran's Hall building was similar in design. The complex's Civic Stadium was reconstructed as Memorial High School Stadium in 1948 and the Veteran's Hall was demolished some time after 1999.

1950s Renovations

When the city took over management of the Civic Arena in 1950, upgrades were primarily interior changes to modernize facilities, improve programming capabilities, and increase functional efficiency. These included new, more technologically advanced ice-making machinery and general mechanical upgrades, including a new concrete floor and refrigerator piping system to allow the ice to be removed and/or regenerated more quickly. Improvements also included a new portable wood basketball flooring system, as well as more versatile portable seating, to reconfigure the interior more efficiently for various events. Increased programming for public skating was added, and in 1956, an existing entry/exit doors on the eastern elevation was designated as a new public skating entrance. On the interior, a skate rental shop was added on the eastern side near the entry. Other minor interior upgrades were made during the 1950s. The only significant exterior alteration in the 1950s occurred in 1953, when the roof was replaced and large skylights above the main arena were removed. Plan drawings for these renovations indicate designs were undertaken by the City Building Department staff.

1961 Renovation for the Century 21 Seattle World's Fair

The redevelopment of the site for the exposition not only altered the overall site arrangement, including the addition of other accessory buildings, but the Civic Auditorium and Arena also underwent extreme exterior alterations, completely transforming their character.

The architectural firm of Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates transformed the exterior of the Civic Arena into a modern, unadorned horizontal mass with a smooth brick veneer. All window openings were infilled or covered. A six-inch-thick buff colored monolithic brick wall was constructed along the north and east elevations of the Arena building. The Opera House was similarly transformed. The same brick was used to clad the Exhibition Hall and Playhouse buildings, which were constructed west of the original Civic Auditorium and designed by the same firm. The brick wall extended beyond the roof height of the entry vestibule at the Arena's north elevation, but corresponded to the height of the roof-wall juncture and top of the piers

along the east elevation. Aluminum siding and fascia were applied to some areas of the gable exterior.

On the primary north elevation, facing Mercer Street, the central group of three entrance openings, as well as the symmetrically grouped entries at the eastern and western ends of the elevation, were retained; however, two other double-door entrances flanking the central group were covered over by the brick wall. The entrances were altered in character by the elimination of the arched windows above, and the replacement of wood doors with aluminum-frame and plate-glass doors. The entire primary elevation was altered by the brick wall, which covered all of the articulated piers and all of the windows, and extended the original height of the façade and by the addition of a large colonnade. All other exterior ornamental features were eliminated, except some wall-mounted light fixtures.

Entrances located on the eastern and western elevations in the northeastern and northwestern corners, which originally served as direct access to the entry ramps, were also covered by the brick wall. Other entries along the eastern elevation were retained, but stairs were replaced with new floating stairs and cantilevered platforms were added. The original stairs were oriented east-west directly into the entries, whereas the new stairs are oriented north-south leading onto platforms. The brick wall was extended around the southeastern corner to cover only the eastern third of the south elevation.

The flat-roofed colonnade 30 feet high, 23 feet wide, and 190 feet long which was added along the principal north elevation of the newly renamed Arena also extended past the Opera House and Exhibition Hall and terminated at the Playhouse on the west. The covered walkway tied the structures together visually with a continuity of design. It was a key feature of the design for the Civic Center complex of buildings. This feature, and the common brick cladding, helped integrate the existing Arena and Opera House buildings with the new Playhouse and Exhibition Hall buildings.

It appears that interior upgrades to the Arena were minor prior to the exposition, and that the majority of proposed upgrades that had been included in the bond issue were carried out after the Century 21 Exposition closed, as part of renovations for development of Seattle Center.

1964 Renovations for the Seattle Center

Renovations to the Arena after the exposition were primarily interior alterations to upgrade capabilities as a concert and multipurpose venue. A professional sound engineer consulted on facility upgrades and architects Priteca and Chiarelli designed interior upgrades for acoustical improvements, including installation of reflected ceiling panels and acoustical wall-board panels. Some public areas were modernized with the application of marblecrete to walls. Other general improvements, such as application of new paint and/or other finishes, were made to restrooms and other public areas. Dressing rooms were remodeled and sound engineering and equipment rooms were added. The wood bench stadium seats were removed and replaced with individual seats, and various seating plans for arrangement of the portable seating were prepared in order to accommodate basketball, in-the-round center-stage seating, boxing, and wrestling, and included an ice show seating plan. There were no major exterior renovations to the building.

Recent Renovations

In 2001, the Mercer Arts Arena was transformed into an auditorium venue as the temporary home of the Seattle Opera and Pacific Northwest Ballet during renovation of the Opera House, now McCaw Hall. Because the renovations were intended to create a temporary venue, only minor interior upgrades, such as adding carpeting to lobbies and corridors, were applied to public spaces. Renovations primarily focused on transforming the main arena area into an auditorium with seating for almost 3,000, and a large proscenium stage with wings was added to the southern end. New dressing room suites were added to the basement level in the southeastern and southwestern corners of the building, below the stage area. The area in front of the stage was excavated to the depth of nine feet to create an orchestra pit. An 8,000-pound reflector was installed in the ceiling, floating above the proscenium arch. All of the old mechanical ice machinery was removed, including the floor piping. The flat arena floor was built up to create a "U"–shaped, sloped bowl for the seating area on the main floor, with box seats arranged at the top back of the bowl. Seats were removed from the Opera House and installed in the box seating area. Banners were hung on the sidewalls for acoustical effects. Mechanical ventilation equipment was installed in the balcony and mezzanine on either side of the wings in the backstage area. Most of the usual, necessary theater equipment, and mechanical and electrical infrastructure, was installed.

No major exterior renovations were made to the building; however, renovations to the Opera House to create McCaw Hall, including the demolition of the colonnade along the Opera House's north elevation, affected the visual relationship and physical integration of exterior space that the Arena once had to the Opera House and the rest of the Civic Center Complex buildings.

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