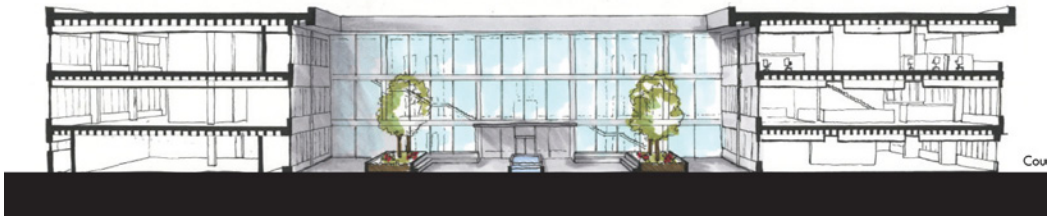

Salem Civic Center - Interior Architecture

Fall 2010 • Interior Architecture

Leah Fuller • Interior Architecture

Linda Zimmer • Associate Professor • Interior Architecture

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

SCI
Sustainable Cities Initiative

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About SCI

The Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) is a cross-disciplinary organization at the University of Oregon that seeks to promote education, service, public outreach, and research on the design and development of sustainable cities. We are redefining higher education for the public good and catalyzing community change toward sustainability. Our work addresses sustainability at multiple scales and emerges from the conviction that creating the sustainable city cannot happen within any single discipline. SCI is grounded in cross-disciplinary engagement as the key strategy for solving community sustainability issues. We serve as a catalyst for expanded research and teaching, and market this expertise to scholars, policymakers, community leaders, and project partners. Our work connects student energy, faculty experience, and community needs to produce innovative, tangible solutions for the creation of a sustainable society.

About SCY

The Sustainable City Year (SCY) program is a year-long partnership between SCI and one city in Oregon, in which students and faculty in courses from across the university collaborate with the partner city on sustainability and livability projects. SCY faculty and students work in collaboration with staff from the partner city through a variety of studio projects and service-learning courses to provide students with real-world projects to investigate. Students bring energy, enthusiasm, and innovative approaches to difficult, persistent problems. SCY's primary value derives from collaborations resulting in on-the-ground impact and forward movement for a community ready to transition to a more sustainable and livable future. SCY 2010-11 includes courses in Architecture; Arts and Administration; Business Management; Interior Architecture; Journalism; Landscape Architecture; Law; Planning, Public Policy, and Management; Product Design; and Civil Engineering (at Portland State University).

About Salem, Oregon

Salem, the capital city of Oregon and its third largest city (population 157,000, with 383,000 residents in the metropolitan area), lies in the center of the lush Willamette River valley, 47 miles from Portland. Salem is located an hour from the Cascade mountains to the east and ocean beaches to the west. Thriving businesses abound in Salem and benefit from economic diversity. The downtown has been recognized as one of the region's most vital retail centers for a community of its size. Salem has retained its vital core and continues to be supported by strong and vibrant historic neighborhoods, the campus-like Capitol Mall, Salem Regional Hospital, and Willamette University. Salem offers a wide array of restaurants, hotels, and tourist attractions, ranging from historic sites and museums to events that appeal to a wide variety of interests. 1,869 acres of park land invite residents and visitors alike to enjoy the outdoors.

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary

As a part of the University of Oregon Sustainable City Year program, sixteen students enrolled in a mid-level interior design studio examined the Salem Civic Center building, generating proposals for renovation and reuse of the building in order to enhance vitality and restore functionality to the Civic Center campus. The students, taught by Associate Professor Linda Zimmer, coordinated their work with the City of Salem staff, Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Architects (ZGF), and CB|Two Architects, and worked in parallel with an architecture studio that generated proposals for new police facilities on the same campus. The focus of the interior design studio was to develop a set of strategies for the redesign of the existing Civic Center in order to reimagine the building in light of the planned relocation of the Police Department, relocation of staff from off-campus locations to the Civic Center, and improved response to current and future needs.

The students determined that in order to redesign the Civic Center as an effective space for public engagement as well as an efficient workspace, the building needed to be analyzed and redesigned at three scales: the building scale, the department scale, and the human scale.

At the building scale, students addressed the atrium, which was originally intended as a setting for civic engagement; weaknesses in the seismic stability of the building as identified in previous studies; and the overall organization of city services and departments in relation to building circulation and one another. At the department scale, the lack of clear internal circulation and organization was identified, as well as the need to arrange open and closed spaces to maximize daylight. A greater array of informal and formal meeting rooms was also needed. At the human scale, students examined support space, workstations, and reception areas.

The following problem statement outlines objectives and strategies identified by students for each scale of their investigation:

The Building Scale

- The Council Chambers building is problematic in terms of both structure and security. It also presents an obstacle in connecting the Civic Center to parking, Mirror Pond, and probable locations for the new police station. Most student proposals recommend relocating the Council Chambers.
- The Civic Center is a prime example of 1970s civic architecture. Student designs seek to maintain its character throughout the renovation of the building. Retaining visible structure, including the “waffle slab,” will help to maintain the integrity of the original design.
- The atrium space is underutilized due in part to its overly large scale. Student proposals suggested that it either be opened entirely, enclosed, or filled with programmatic functions (such as cafes and meeting rooms) and public activities.

- Clear vertical circulation is needed both in the public and staff realms of the building. Most proposals redesigned or added stairs on the atrium side of the building to aid public circulation, and many added stairs on the east, west, south, or multiple sides to address internal staff circulation.
- The existing location of city services, combined with the lack of signage, make it difficult for visitors to navigate the building. Frequently used services should be relocated to the lower floors of the building, if possible.
- The first level now occupied by the Police Department is difficult to renovate as office space. Little daylight reaches the first level, and views to the outside are minimal. Students proposed major renovations, such as light wells, or located program elements such as conference rooms, locker rooms, or storage facilities in this space.

The Department Scale

- Although the C-shaped building is narrow, the north-facing atrium, when combined with interior partitions and other elements, inhibits penetration of daylight into much of the building. Students developed strategies to allow natural light to reach the center of each department.
- The mix of open office and full-height walls has become inconsistent after years of changes, resulting in visual clutter and confusion. Closed spaces should have a clear relationship with the open office as a core, as periphery, or as clusters.
- Internal circulation is unclear and, in some cases, maze-like. Student projects sought to establish clear internal circulation using a circulation loop or a circulation spine.

The Human Scale

- Service or reception areas are often difficult to find and identify. These critical hubs should be clearly differentiated from the rest of the open office workstations.
- City services have required large amounts of physical (paper) records in the past, and some still do. High demands for storage and privacy need to be balanced with the needs for light and views.
- Existing workstations are made of custom cedar partitions. The cedar represents a potential source of raw material as well as an important element in the visual character of the building's interior. Student proposals suggested reusing the wood panels as parts of reception desks, as tackable surfaces on walls, or as a finish material for areas of the ceiling.

Although the Civic Center presents many challenges, it also provides many opportunities for creating a vibrant workplace that maintains its 1970s civic presence. An examination of the building at all three scales reveals that the existing structure has the potential to become an efficient workspace as well as an effective space for public engagement.

Introduction

Introduction to the Project

Studio Introduction

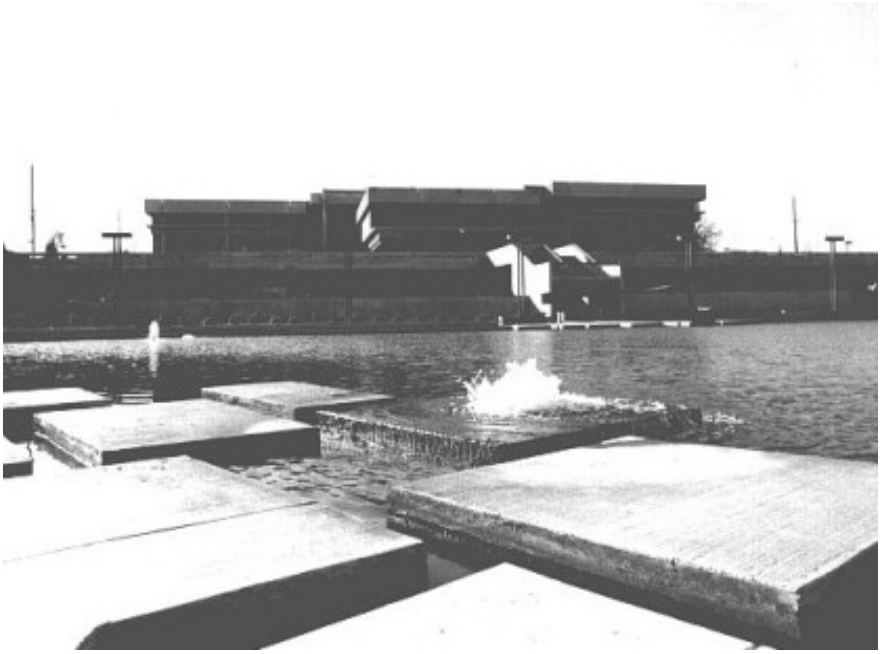
This document details the work of sixteen students enrolled in a mid-level interior design studio taught by Associate Professor Linda Zimmer. Students were drawn from both interior architecture and architecture programs, and there was a mix of undergraduate and graduate students. The goal of the studio was to examine the Salem Civic Center building and generate proposals for renovation and reuse of the building. The students coordinated their work with the University of Oregon Sustainable Cities Initiative, City of Salem staff, ZGF and CB|Two architects, and worked in parallel with an architecture studio that generated proposals for a new police facility on the same campus. The focus of the interior design studio was to develop a set of strategies for the redesign of the existing Civic Center in order to reimagine the building in light of the planned relocation of the Police Department, relocation of staff from off-campus locations to the Civic Center, and improved response to current and future needs.

Prior to Fall Term 2010, the Sustainable Cities Initiative, in conjunction with City of Salem staff, developed a set of objectives for the Fall 2010 interior design studio. The initial focus of the studio was to examine the Civic Center's existing space and to use programming data provided by ZGF and CB|Two Architects to generate proposals for a prototypical office space and a prototypical public space within the Civic Center.

Salem Civic Center Initial Observations

Salem's Civic Center, with its exposed concrete waffle slab construction, heroic scale, and focus on exterior circulation, is a prime example of 1970s architecture. The class began by examining similar buildings of the same period, including the Lane County Services Building and the Erb Memorial Union building in Eugene, Oregon. Students noted that these examples exhibited some of the same problems as the Civic Center. The large defined areas for circulation often separate key functions rather than linking them, and in many cases the large scale of public areas tends to inhibit activity rather than foster it.

The Civic Center consists of three levels, the first of which is partially underground. There is an unconditioned atrium on the north side of the building with outdoor circulation surrounding the interior of the atrium's "C" shape. This circulation is generously scaled but poses several problems. It separates office spaces from views of the atrium and creates a circumstance whereby offices with large windows adjacent to the circulation are exposed to the pedestrian traffic. Railings between the pedestrian area and the atrium make it difficult to



Figures 1 and 2: Salem Civic Center exterior and view through Civic Center Atrium. Source: salemhistory.net.

locate departments' offices from the atrium, and directional signage provides little help with wayfinding.

The intended "front door" of the building faces south and opens to Peace Plaza, but it is rarely used, since most visitors enter from the parking lot on the north side. A semi-detached building housing the Council Chambers is situated to the north of the atrium.

Figure 3: Civic Center interior space.

The existing interior space is cluttered and inefficient. High wood panels define workstations, and little light permeates the building. Internal circulation paths, which are sometimes used by the public to access meeting rooms, are narrow and maze-like.

According to a 2006 assessment provided to the students by city staff, the building also has significant structural problems. Major structural changes need to be made in order for the building to meet seismic requirements. Structurally, the building is divided into three wings: east, west, and central. The east and west wings require additional bracing throughout, but especially on the uppermost floor. The

central wing requires a more extensive retrofit, with the atrium cover and the Council Chambers being the least stable.

The departments most frequently visited by the public – the courts, the city manager's office and the finance department – are located on the second floor, some distance from each of the three sets of stairs. Unfortunately, because the second floor entrance from the Peace Plaza on the south side of the building is rarely used, and there is unclear wayfinding available to visitors arriving from the north, it is difficult for the public to locate these departments within the Civic Center. The Permit Application Center (PAC) is even more difficult to find, since it is located on the third floor.

While improving the Salem Civic Center raises a number of challenges, it also provides many opportunities for creating a vibrant workplace that maintains its 1970s civic presence.

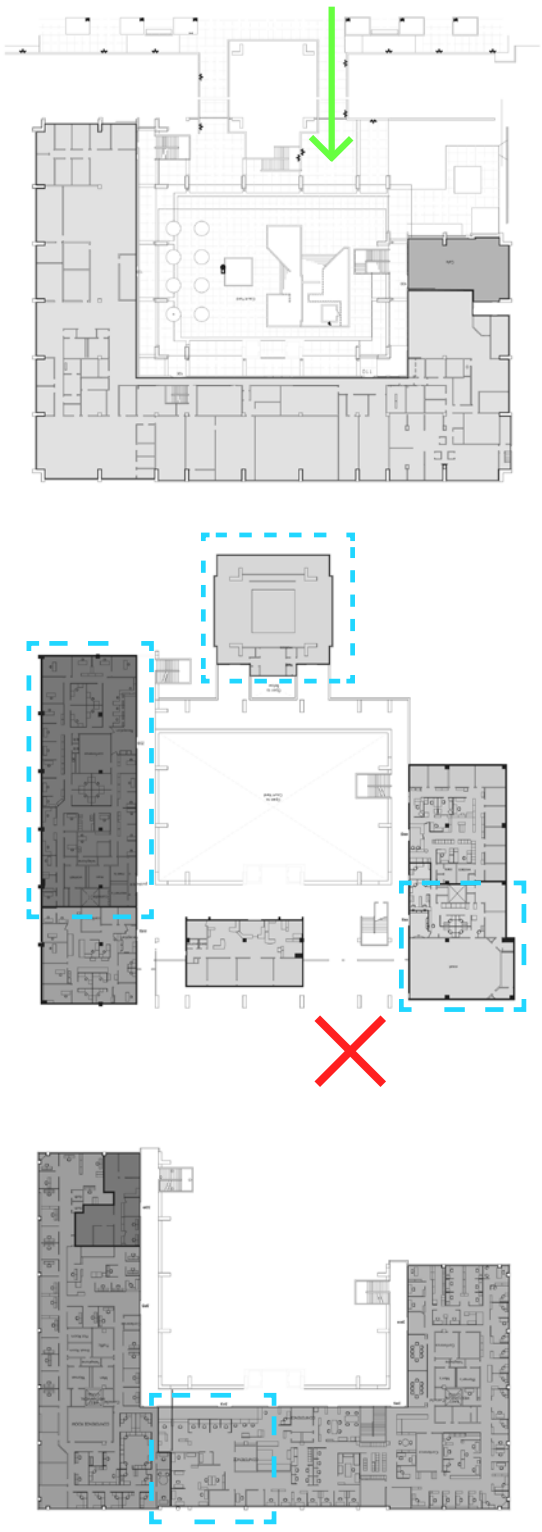


Figure 4: Floor plan showing the most publicly-used departments (blue), the rarely-used south entrance (red), and the north entrance (green).

Studio Goals

After initial analysis and research into the existing space, the studio, in collaboration with Salem staff, ZGF, and CB|Two, refined the original project objectives. It was determined that the studio should not only develop a prototypical department, but should also examine the overall organization of the building. Faced with the systemic organizational problems presented by the building, students spent a portion of the term examining an overall redesign of the building and then developed strategies specific to the Public Works Department and the Permit Application Center. In order to meet these new goals, the studio analyzed and proposed solutions for the redesign of the Civic Center at three different scales: the building scale, the department scale, and the human scale. A set of objectives was developed for each scale:

The Building Scale

- Generate a schematic design proposal that addresses circulation, department placement, and relationship to the larger site.
- Provide a structural solution that is integrated into the overall design concepts.
- Bring vitality to the atrium space.

The Department Scale

- Create clear circulation and wayfinding both within and between departments.
- Clearly define open and closed spaces.
- Provide ample small and large meeting spaces.
- Create a welcoming and efficient Permit Application Center.

The Human Scale

- Create efficient and effective workstations.
- Develop welcoming reception areas.
- Recycle wood panels in a compelling way.

Methodology

The methodology used throughout the term was to develop each design in a series of phases relating to each of the above design scales. Models, diagrams, and technical drawings were all required at each scale of the design process. At the end of each phase, studio reviews allowed City of Salem staff and members of the architecture firms ZGF and CB|Two to view and provide feedback on student work.

The Building Scale

Seismic Issues

The Salem Civic Center, in its current condition, is seismically unsound. After reviewing the 2006 structural analysis and recommendations with University of Oregon Architecture Department Head and structural engineer Christine Theodoropoulos, it was determined that the building is structurally divided into three portions: the east wing, west wing, and the south wing/atrium canopy/Council Chambers.

The south wing, along with the atrium canopy and Council Chambers, are the most seismically unsound. Column sizes decrease significantly on the third floor, which creates further seismic instability.

Each student was asked to address structural issues as an integral part of their overall schematic design. Common design strategies included removing and replacing the south wing, adding shear walls, or using new construction (including new stairwells) to brace the building.

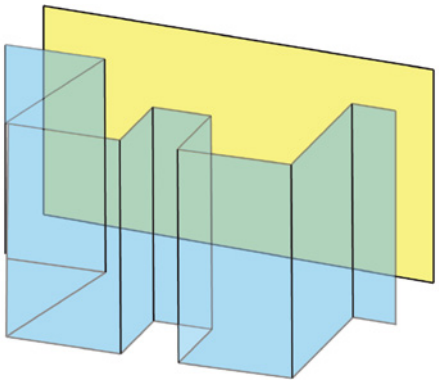


Figure 5: A structural wrap surrounds the existing building to provide added support. This structure is also intended to improve the building facade. (Marta Lilly)

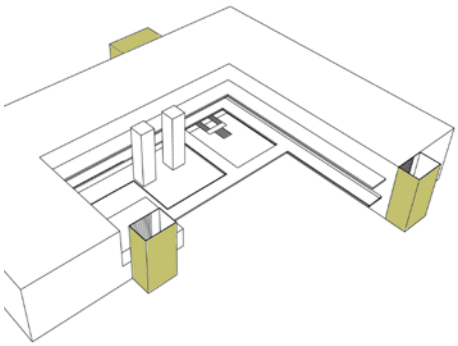


Figure 6: Stairwells are added to help create additional shear capacity. The stairwells also provide internal staff circulation between departments. (Alison Dahlson)

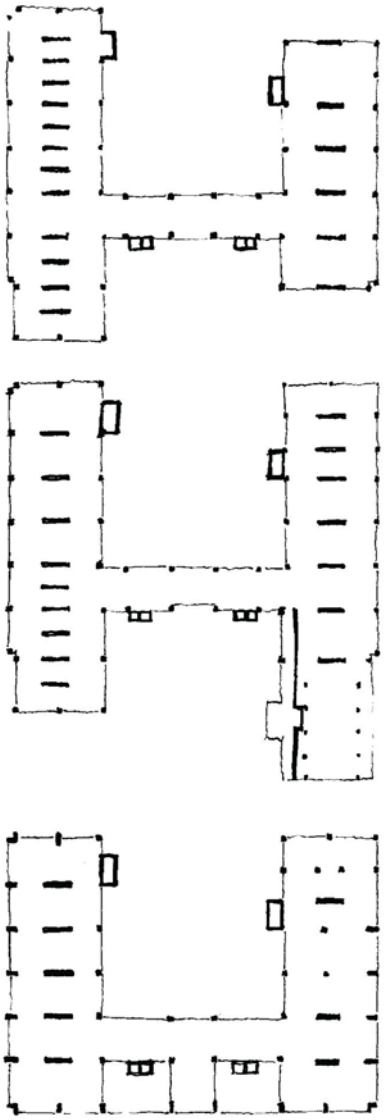
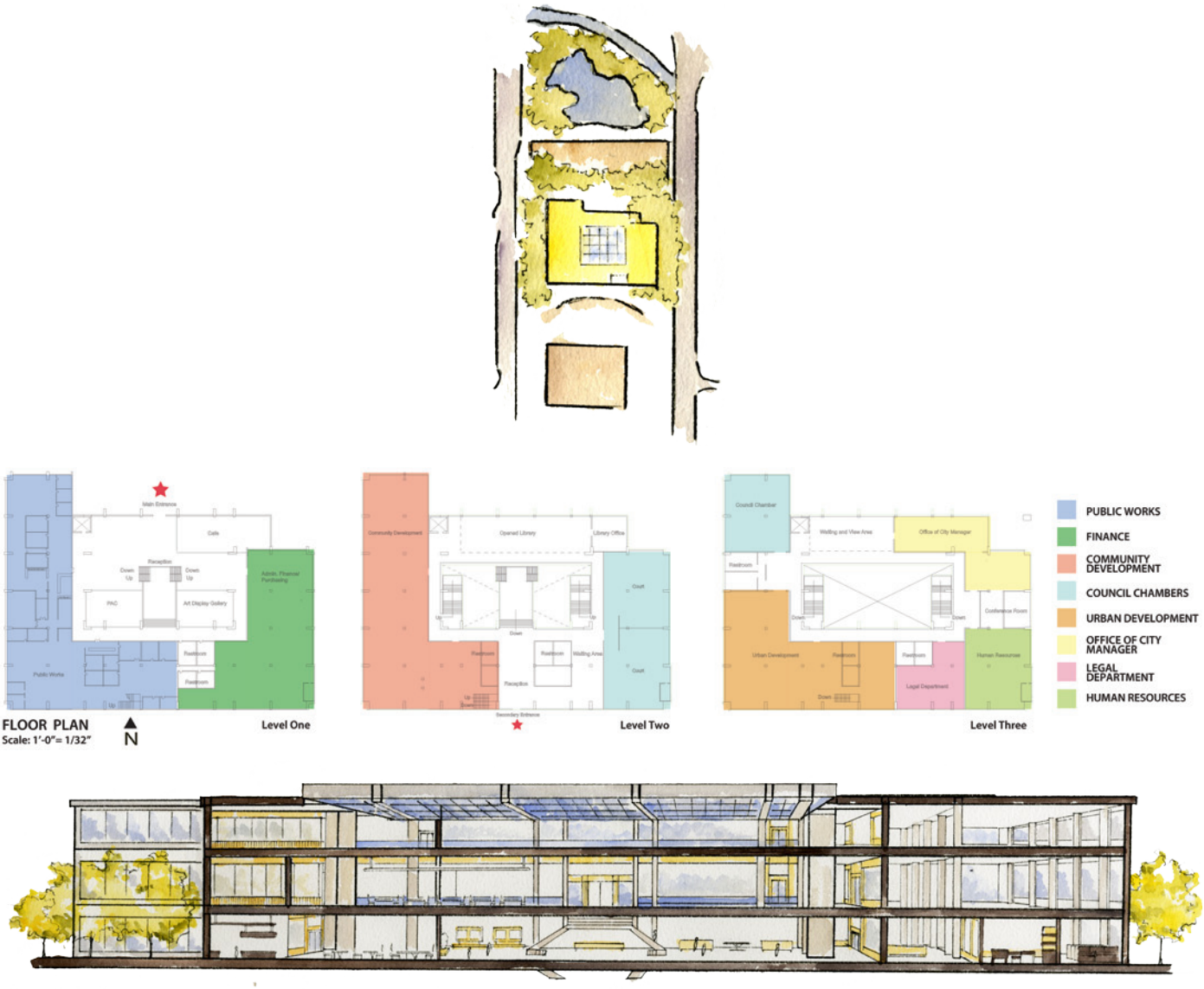


Figure 7: Shear walls are added to the structure to provide lateral stability. These shear walls also help organize enclosed spaces within the departments. (Marisa Baker)

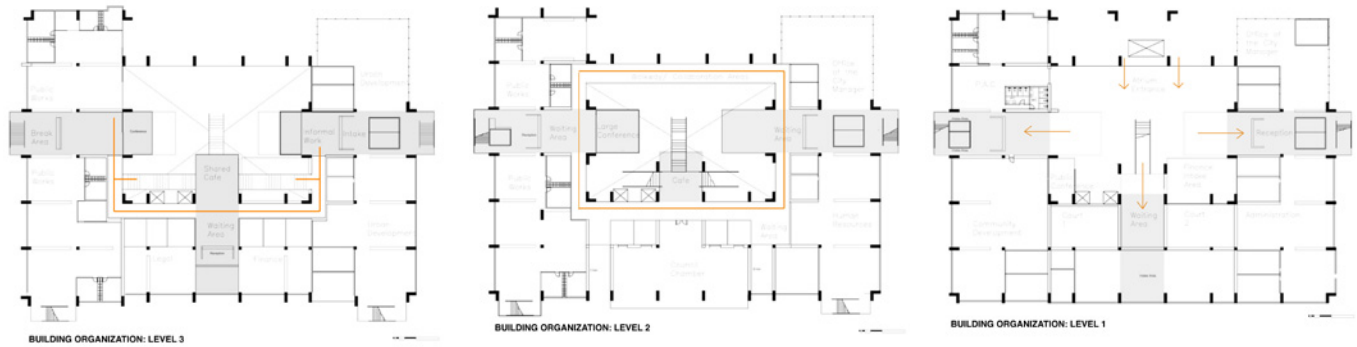
Bringing Vitality to the Atrium

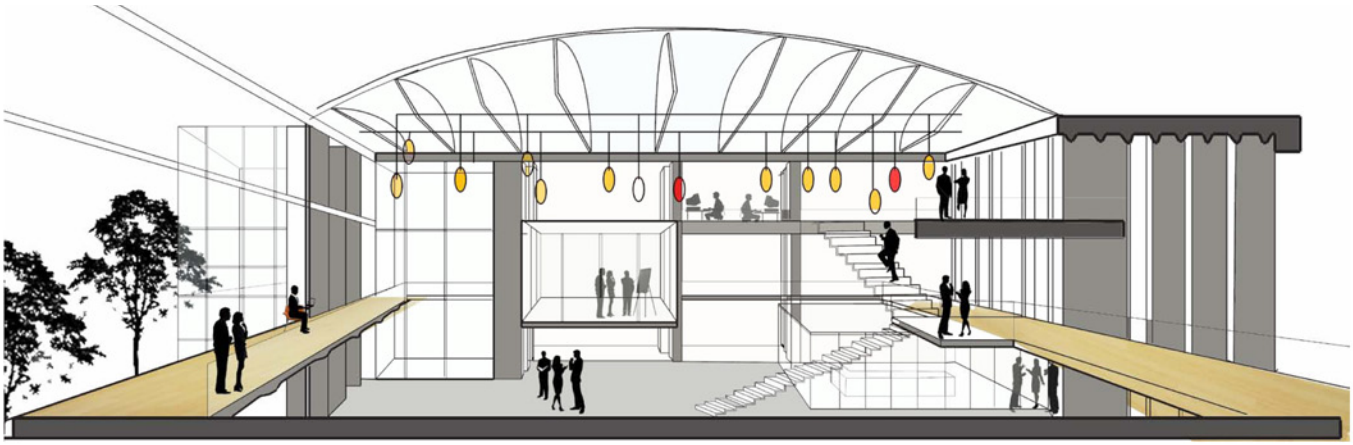
Salem Civic Center's atrium is an open-to-the-air space that is currently underutilized. This is primarily because of the atrium's large scale and lack of definition. Each student was asked to look closely at the atrium and develop a scheme that revitalizes this area of the building.

In order to create a more usable atrium space, three general strategies were implemented: enclosing the atrium, filling the atrium, and opening the atrium completely.



Figures 8 -10: Enclosing the space and adding new construction and functions to the north side of the building helps to scale the space. This also allows functions like the Permit Application Center and an art gallery to occupy the atrium space on the ground level. (Meng Shan Lin)

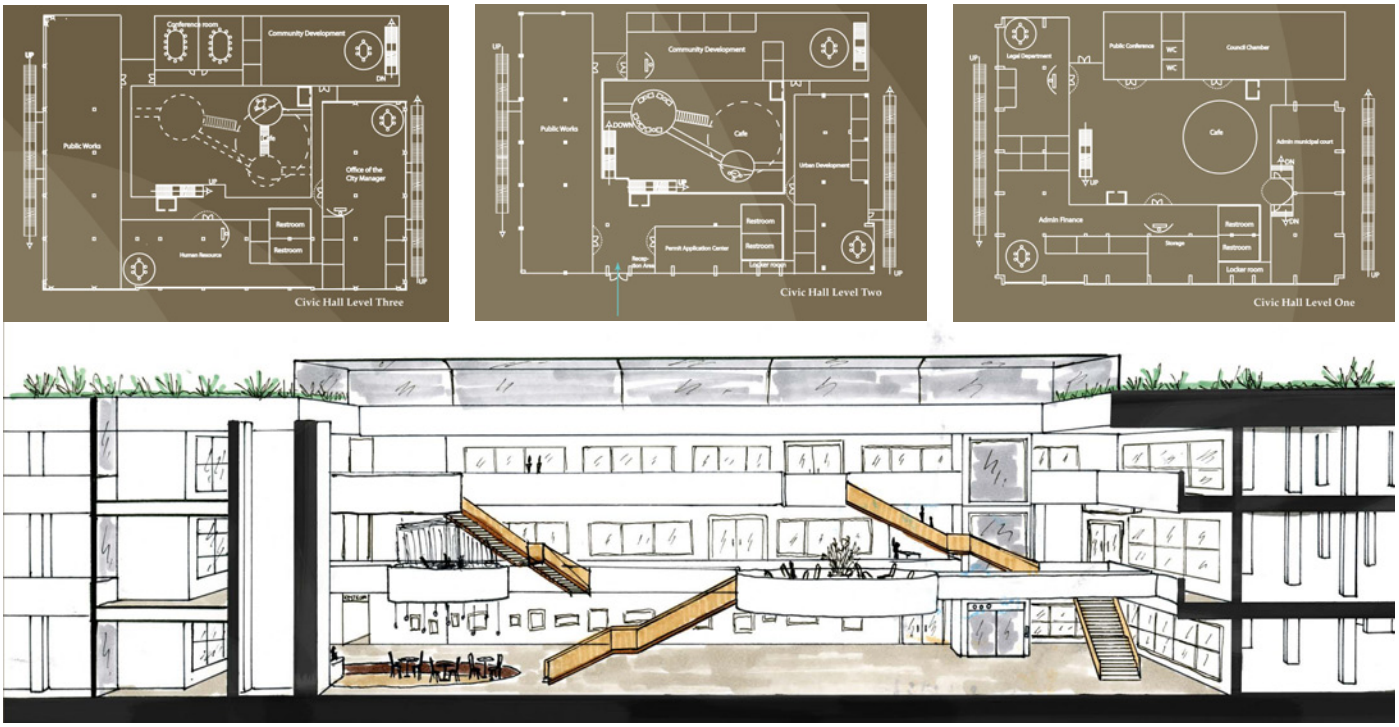




Figures 11 and 12: The atrium is enclosed and given a new structure. The north side is left open but receives a glass facade. This creates a clear entrance to the building on the north side. Conditioning the space makes it more viable for both formal and informal meetings. (Celia Beauchamp)

Enclosing the Atrium

Currently the atrium is open to the air. It has a canopy to shield the atrium space from rain, but it is not a climate-controlled space. Many students felt that the atrium would be a more usable space if it were climate-controlled. By enclosing the atrium (see Figures 8-14 on these pages and the following page), some building functions, such as cafe seating or open meeting and lounge areas, could be moved into the atrium space.



Figures 13 and 14: The atrium is enclosed and filled in with meeting rooms and interior walkways. This strategy creates opportunity for chance interactions on the breezeways as well as providing space for both formal and informal meeting areas. (Hieu Tran)

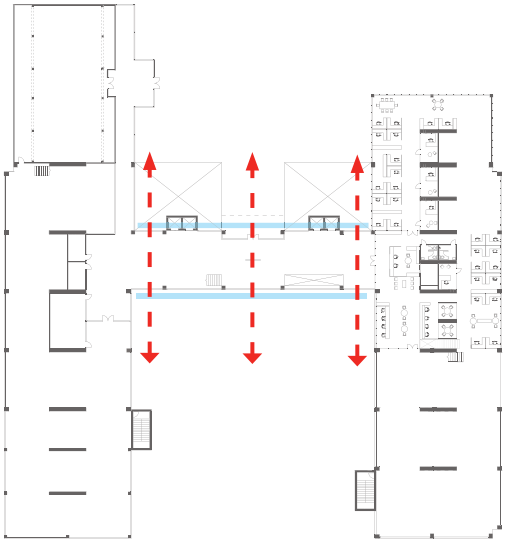
Figures 15 and 16: The atrium is not enclosed, but an additional structure provides large and small conference spaces as well as a space for the Council Chambers. This strategy creates a ceremonial space and scales the atrium while maintaining its original open character. (Madeline Brilliant)

Filling The Atrium

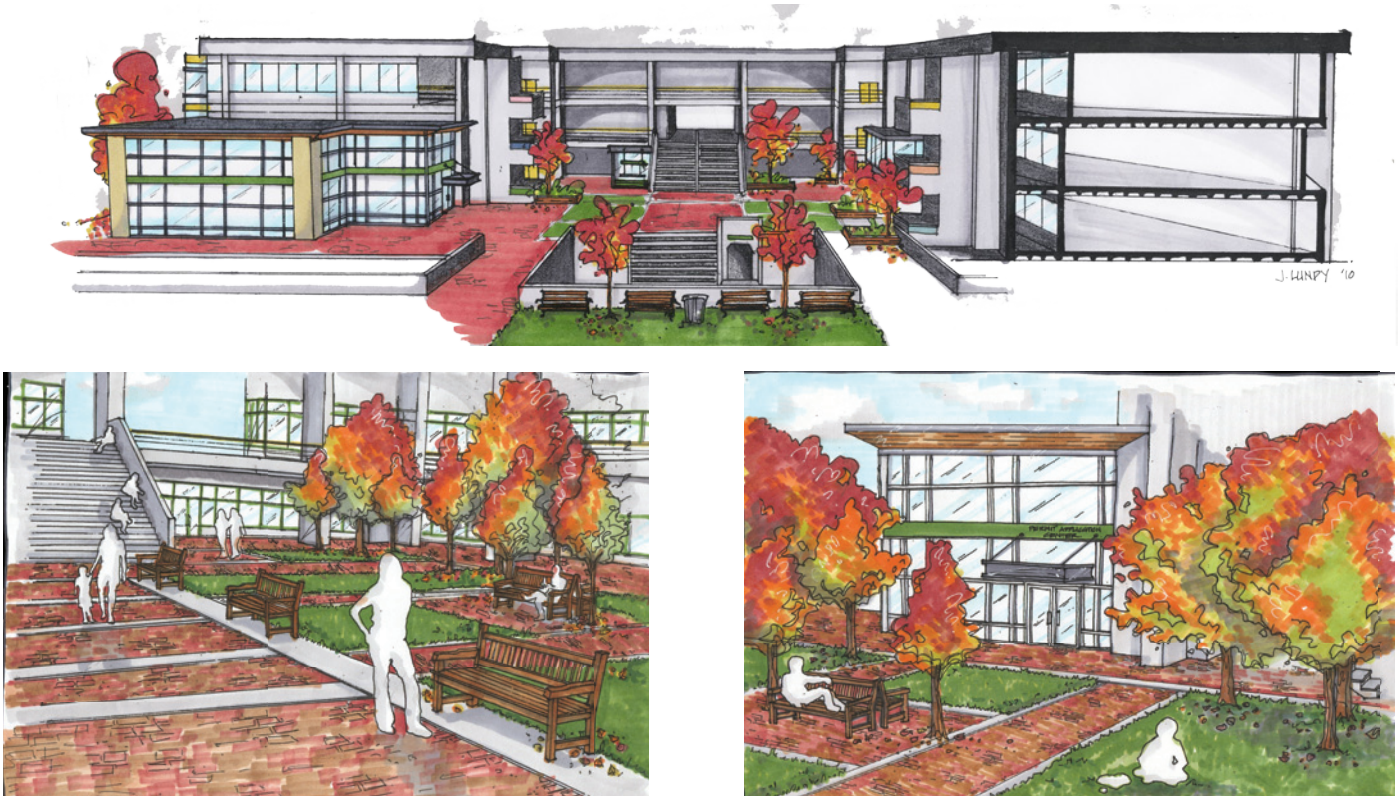
To mitigate the large scale of the atrium, many students moved activities into the space without necessarily enclosing the atrium (see Figures 15 and 16). Mostly public or ceremonial functions were moved to this area, including the Council Chambers, meeting rooms, lounges, and a cafe.

Opening the Atrium / Creating a Campus

Another strategy used was to completely remove the atrium canopy and open the south side of the building in order to create a compelling link between the Civic Center, library, and new police station (see Figures 17-19). The goal of this strategy was to open up the entire site in order to create a campus.



Figures 17 - 19: The atrium cover is removed and a large amount of glazing is added to the south wing to create a visual connection across the entire site. (Marisa Baker)



Figures 20 - 22: The atrium cover is completely removed, the atrium space is landscaped, and the stairs are widened to create a stronger connection between the atrium space and the Peace Plaza. (Jamie Lundy)

Schematic Design

With the police station moving out of the Salem Civic Center, additional space is created for new program elements as well as schematic rearrangement of the entire building.

Currently, wayfinding is a major problem within the Civic Center. The departments most often visited by the public are difficult to find, as they are located on the second and third floors, and there is no centralized information desk or clear signage to aid in wayfinding. The location of the Council Chambers also presents security issues: vehicles can currently drive underneath the building with few access restrictions.

The major goal of the schematic design was to address the location of the Council Chambers and to create more accessible departments through better wayfinding.

Most students achieved these goals by either moving the most public departments to the first and second level, creating highly visible vertical circulation, establishing information desks, or some combination of the three.

Because the first level is partially underground, moving offices to this area becomes problematic in terms of daylight. Some students proposed cutting light wells in the south wing in order to make the first level a more viable workspace. Others placed programmatic elements that do not need daylight, such as shared conference rooms, lockers, and storage facilities, in this area.

Almost all of the students proposed the relocation of the Council Chambers to a newly-constructed building addition. Proposals for this new construction focused on the Peace Plaza, an attachment to the east wing, or an addition to the new police facility.

Departmental Arrangements

Moving functions like the Council Chambers, courts, and Permit Application Center to the first floor of the Civic Center gives the public easy access to several departments. Some students opted to locate only the most public portions of departments on the first level, while creating additional internal vertical circulation.

Figure 23: Satellite offices exist for each department that interacts with the public on the first floor. This way, quick questions and services can be accommodated easily, with internal vertical circulation connecting the satellite offices to the main departments. (Jamie Lundy)

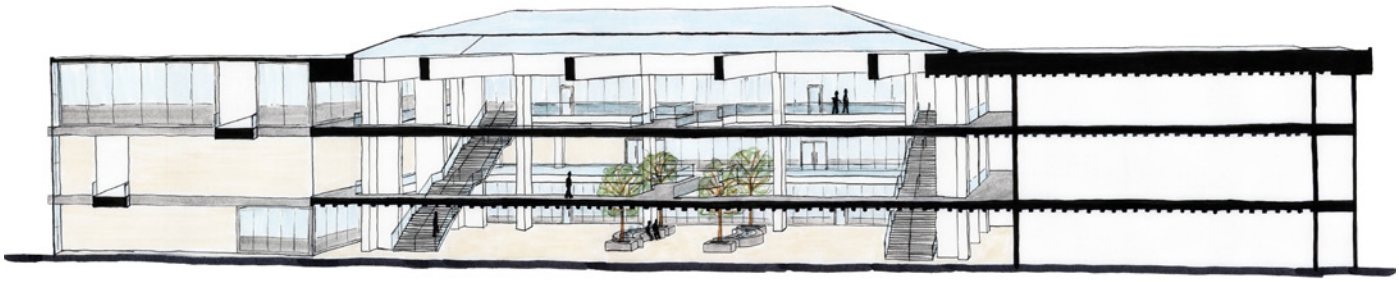


Figure 24: Two large staircases frame the atrium and invite visitors to the upper levels of the building. (Lauren Cartmell)

The Department Scale

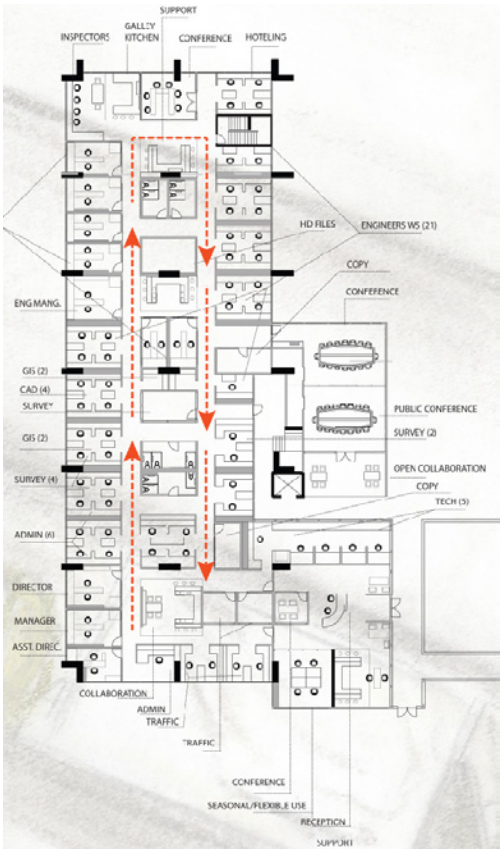
Public Works

The Public Works Department was chosen for detailed development as a representative department with reception and public access areas as well as typical Civic Center office uses. The goals when designing the Public Works Department were to create effective circulation, develop the relationship between open and closed spaces, and provide sufficient and effective informal and formal meeting spaces.

Circulation

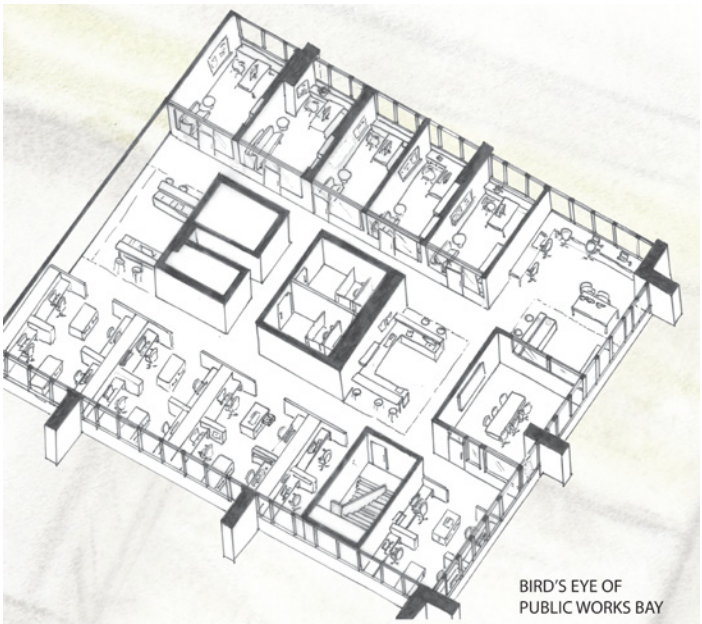
Because the Civic Center serves the public but also requires a large degree of individual workspace within each department, wayfinding and circulation are extremely important. Clear public circulation is a critical issue that was addressed in the schematic design, but circulation within the department also needed to be developed in detail.

The two most common strategies employed to create clear and efficient circulation were a looped circulation route and a circulation spine.



Looped Circulation

Looped circulation occurs when circulation exists as a loop around a core. Due to the depth of the building, a looped circulation route was useful for creating efficient open office work groups, particularly



Figures 25 and 26: Circulation revolves around a core of activities. This allows for a clearly defined central space that serves the surrounding open offices. (Sonia Nesse)

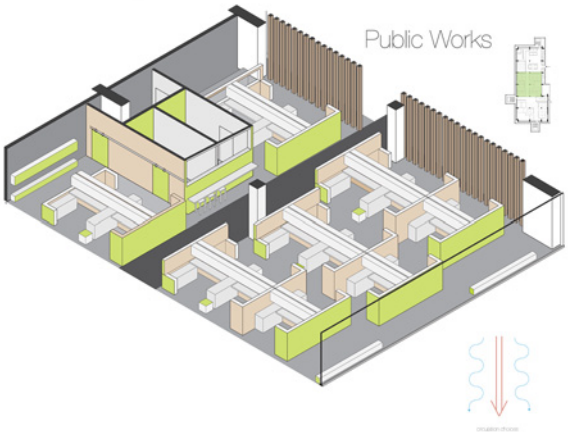
when dealing with the relationship between the open workspaces and individual rooms within Public Works.

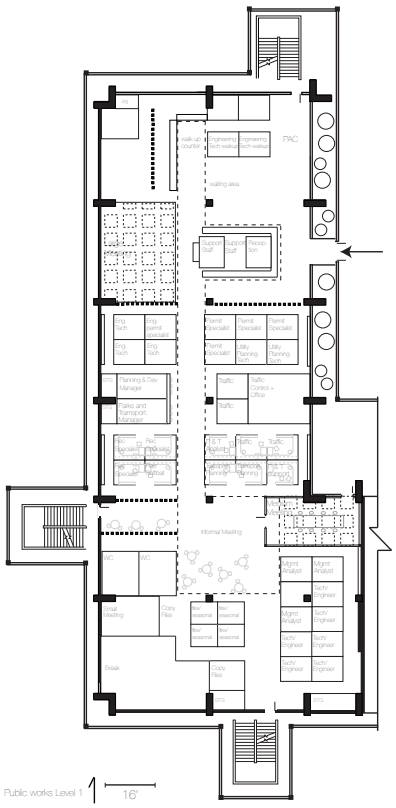
Because public circulation already exists in the atrium just outside of each department, looped circulation is somewhat redundant. Although it has many advantages, it may not be as efficient as a circulation spine.

Circulation Spine

A circulation spine consists of a single corridor running the length of the department. A circulation spine is an effective strategy for efficiency of circulation. It also has the potential to divide the department into two clear zones.

Since a circulation spine is essentially a corridor running the length of the building, it has the potential to become monotonous. It was important when dealing with the circulation spine to make sure the circulation space did not become tedious.





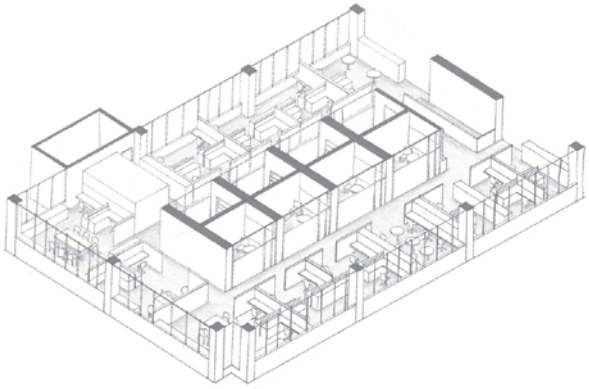
Figures 27 and 28: A single corridor with a lowered ceiling height defines circulation. (Marta Lilly)

Open and Closed Office Spaces

The relationship between open workspaces and closed spaces (individual rooms with doors) was extremely important in the development of Public Works. Three basic strategies were used to express this relationship: closed spaces as a core, closed spaces as periphery, and clustered spaces.

Closed Spaces in the Center

Many projects created a core of enclosed spaces within Public Works. This makes the offices and other service rooms easy to access from the open office space. Removing closed spaces from the periphery also allows light to penetrate the building more easily.

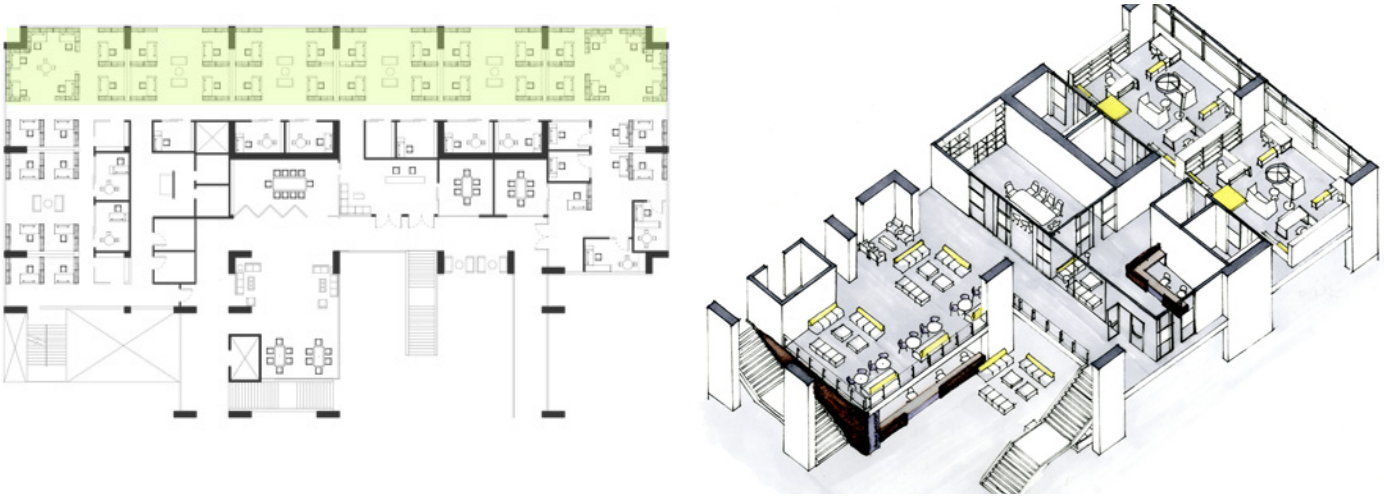


Figures 29: Closed offices, break rooms, and services create a core in the center of the department that serves the surrounding open office. This allows light to permeate through both sides of the department and reach the enclosed spaces in the center. (Marisa Baker)

Figures 29 and 30: Closed offices, break rooms, and services create a core in the center of the department that serves the surrounding open office. This allows light to permeate through both sides of the department and reach the enclosed spaces in the center. (Marisa Baker)

Closed Spaces at the Edge

Another strategy commonly employed was to locate the closed offices and service spaces along one edge of the building. This allowed for a clear gradient of public and staff space and was also more conducive to the circulation spine layout.



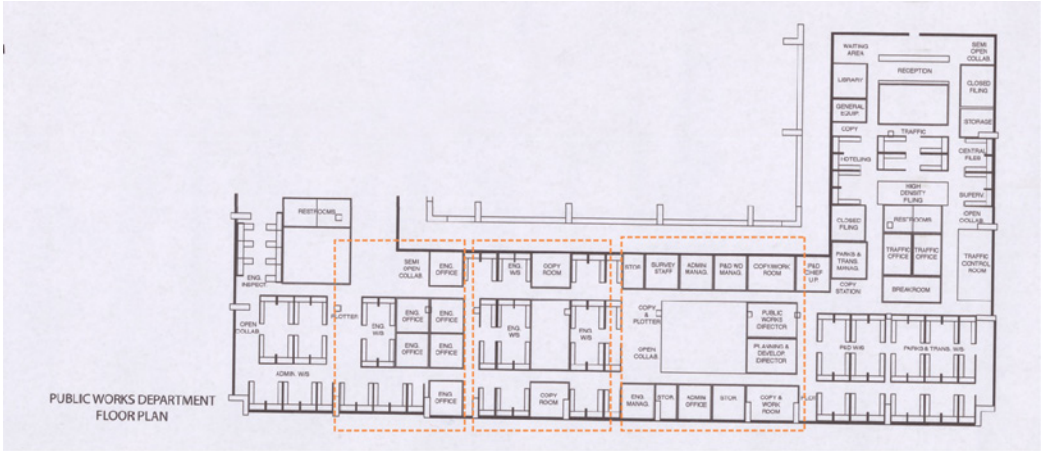
Figures 31 and 32: Meeting rooms are located on the most public side of the building (the atrium side), and open offices are located toward the exterior to allow for maximum daylight. Closed offices and services share a wall with the meeting room. This allows for a circulation spine and for light to permeate through the open office area. (Leah Fuller)

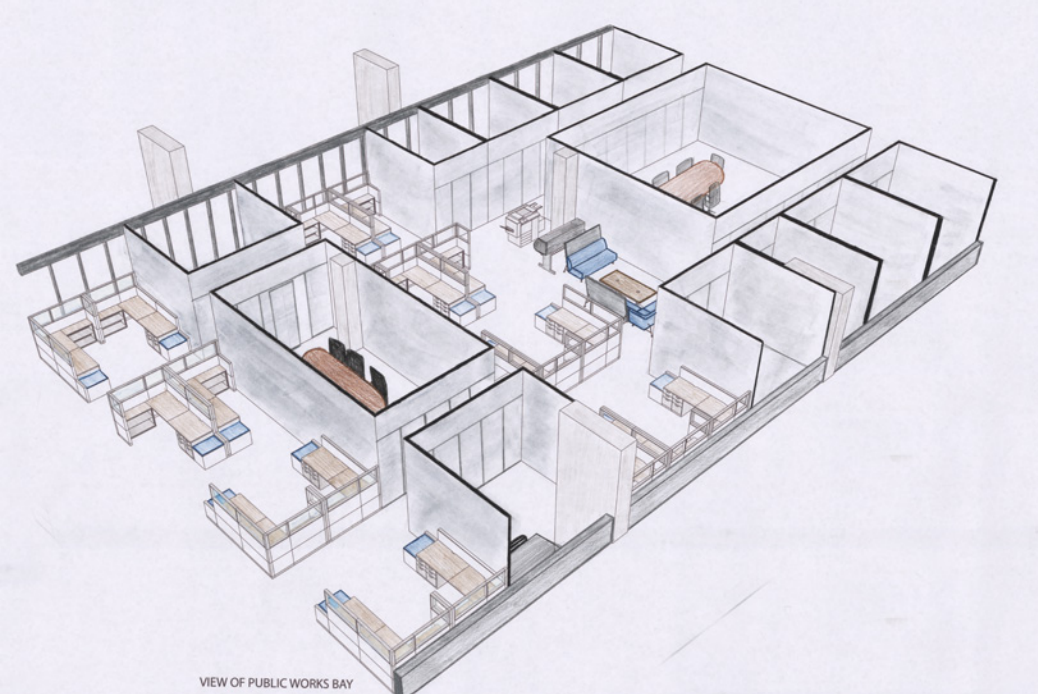
Clustered Spaces

A third strategy used was to create groups of open and closed offices. This is a highly effective way to cluster work groups with their management staff as well as any service rooms each department within Public Works might need.

Meeting Rooms and Shared Spaces

Currently, the Civic Center lacks sufficient informal and formal meeting space. Students were asked to develop strategies to create large and small conference rooms as well as less formal gathering spaces.





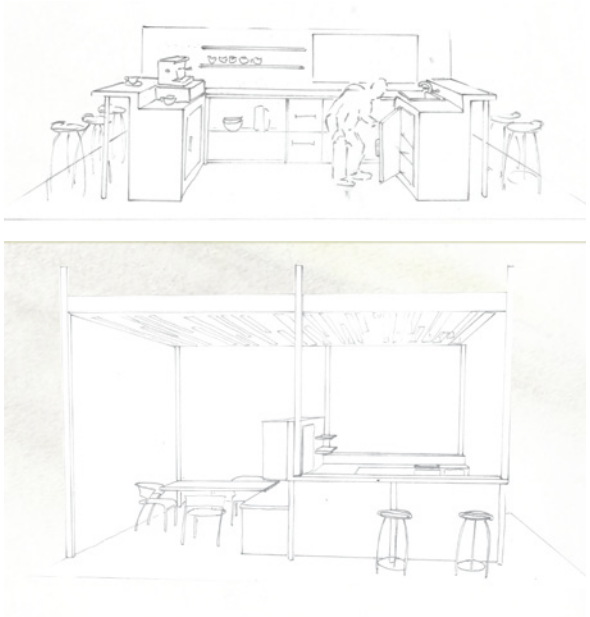
Figures 33 and 34: The open and closed spaces are clustered so each work group relates to a set of enclosed offices and services. This creates an efficient layout for individual units within Public Works. (Ashley Thomas-Pate)

Informal Meeting Areas

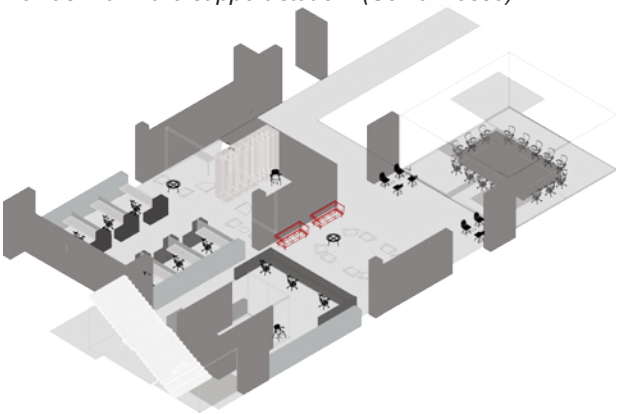
Informal or chance meeting areas were located either along the circulation route, or within open office work groups in many student designs. These meeting spaces provide a small amount of privacy without being completely enclosed.

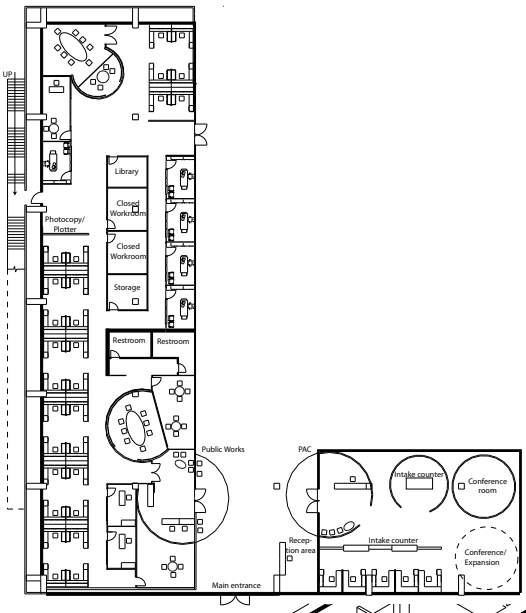
Formal Meeting Areas

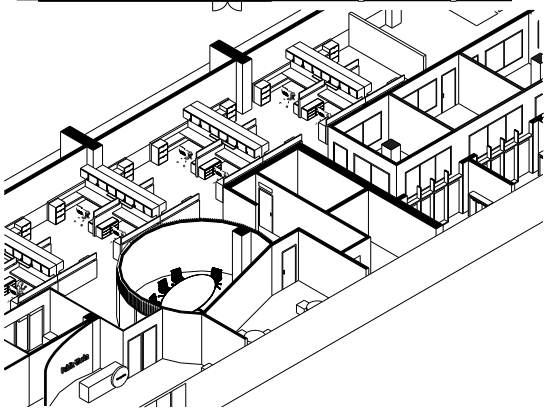
Large public and formal meeting spaces were often located in or near the atrium, allowing both employees and the public to use these spaces. It was also important to allow these spaces to have a separate public entrance so they could be used for after-hours meetings.



Figures 35 and 36: Support stations scattered throughout Public Works offer an informal area for chance meetings to occur. These stations can also contain functions like copy machines and break rooms. Centralizing these functions allows more chance meetings to occur on the way to or from as well as within the support station. (Sonia Nesse)







Figures 37 and 38: Major attention is drawn to the meeting space through the use of curved walls and partitions. (Hieu Tran)

Figure 39: Left: Formal meeting spaces are given large reception areas so groups can gather before and after meetings. (Celia Beauchamp)

Permit Application Center

The Permit Application Center (PAC) is one of the departments most actively used by the public in the Salem Civic Center. It was therefore important to develop this space in a way that creates a welcoming and efficient environment.

A Welcoming Atmosphere

Currently, the PAC is a small space with little room for people to gather while waiting to have their plans reviewed. One of the major goals in the design of the PAC was to create a more welcoming public space. Many students did this by either opening up the PAC to the atrium space, or by creating a generous waiting area with service counters and an information desk.

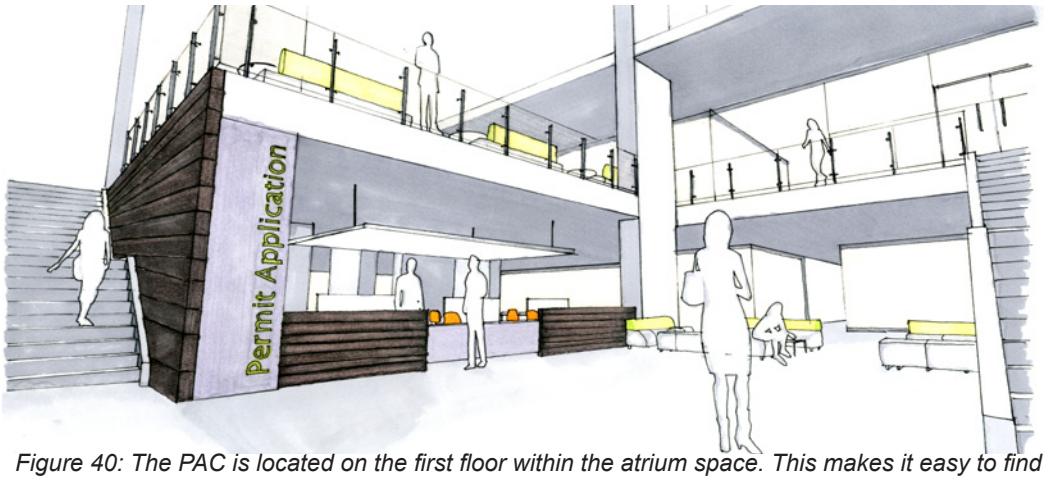
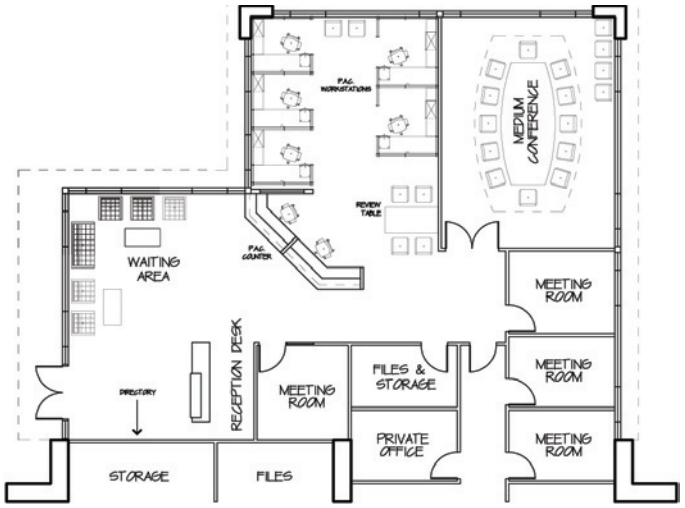
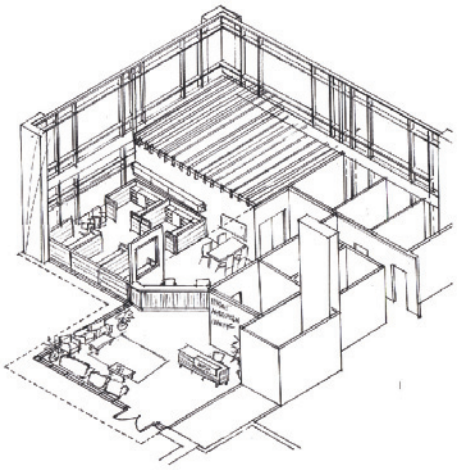


Figure 40: The PAC is located on the first floor within the atrium space. This makes it easy to find and a part of a welcoming public atmosphere. Small meeting rooms are close by, and an area to sit and wait makes an efficient and comfortable atmosphere. (Leah Fuller)

Figure 41: The PAC is located in a new structure and has a large public waiting area. A reception desk in addition to intake desks makes it easy to ask questions and submit plans efficiently. (Jamie Lundy)





Figures 42 and 43: The PAC is located in a new structure and has a large public waiting area. A reception desk in addition to intake desks makes it easy to ask questions and submit plans efficiently. (Jamie Lundy)

Location

Because of the PAC's need to be publicly located, as well as its need to be in close proximity to both the Community Development and Public Works Departments, the location of the PAC became extremely important. The most successful projects were able to maintain this proximity while placing the PAC in a highly visible area.

Counter Design

The information desk and counter for the PAC serves many functions. It is a place for quick questions to be answered as well as a place to lay out plans. In order to provide these services, the counter must have both high and low sections. The most successful counter designs clearly defined the spaces where each of these functions would take place.

The Human Scale

Workstation and Open Office Layout

Currently, high partitions and inefficient workstations characterize the Salem Civic Center. When looking at workstation and open office layouts, students implemented two strategies: systems furniture, and a desking or custom system.

Systems Furniture

Systems furniture provides a clear layout and flexibility within the system. Mostly low or clear partitions were chosen to allow light to permeate through the building. Fixed and movable storage was also an important aspect of the proposed systems.

Modular systems furniture also makes it easy to add and subtract workstations as the Civic Center changes over time. Often, low filing or storage units with a cushion top were recommended so that a two-person conversation can occur without much extra space or furniture.

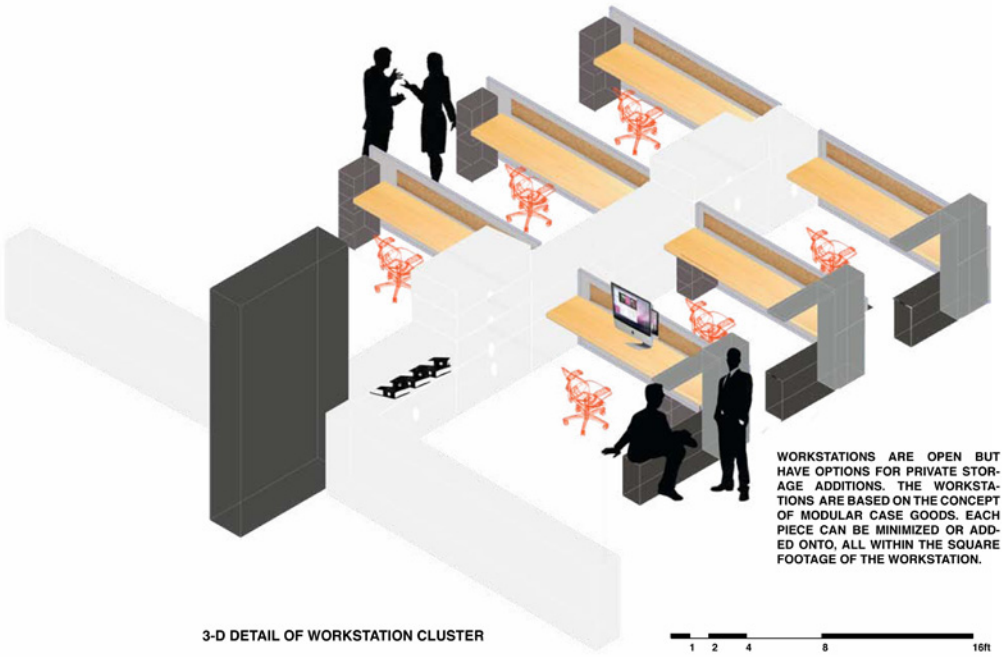


Figure 44: This system is open to allow for daylight to reach all stations, while continuing to accommodate the storage and privacy needs of the staff. (Celia Beauchamp)

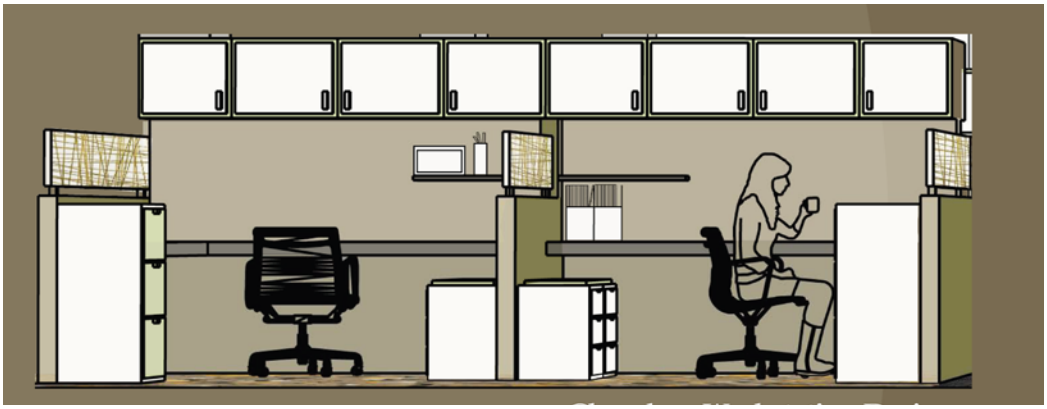


Figure 45: A closed system allows for a high level of privacy and storage within each workstation. (Hieu Tran)

Desking / Custom Systems

Desking systems or custom furniture were used to create flexible space within a more permanent framework. In this case, semi-permanent walls or storage units define work groups, while desks and small storage units are free to move within the space.

This type of system allows for increased flexibility, an openness of workspace, as well as the ability for each group to grow over time. Some custom workstations were also chosen because of sustainability factors.

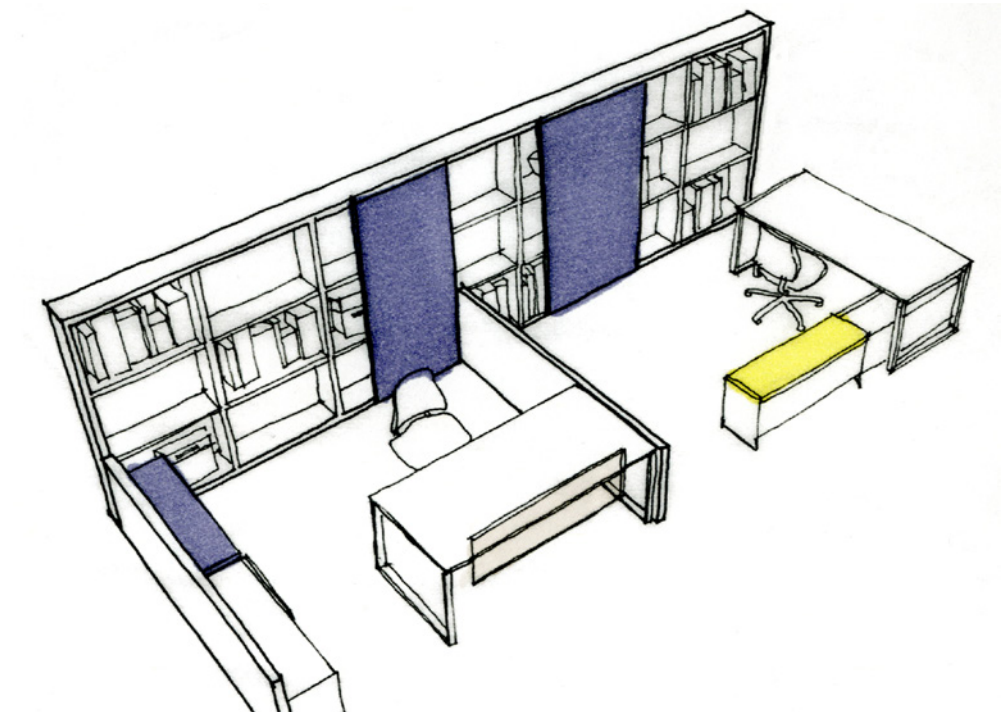


Figure 46: The open offices are defined by semi-permanent storage with movable desks and storage within the space. This allows for highly flexible workstations that have the ability to change with the Civic Center. (Leah Fuller)

Reception Areas

It is important for the reception area for each department to be clearly defined. There should be ample waiting room as well as a reception desk that is clearly differentiated from the open office workstations.

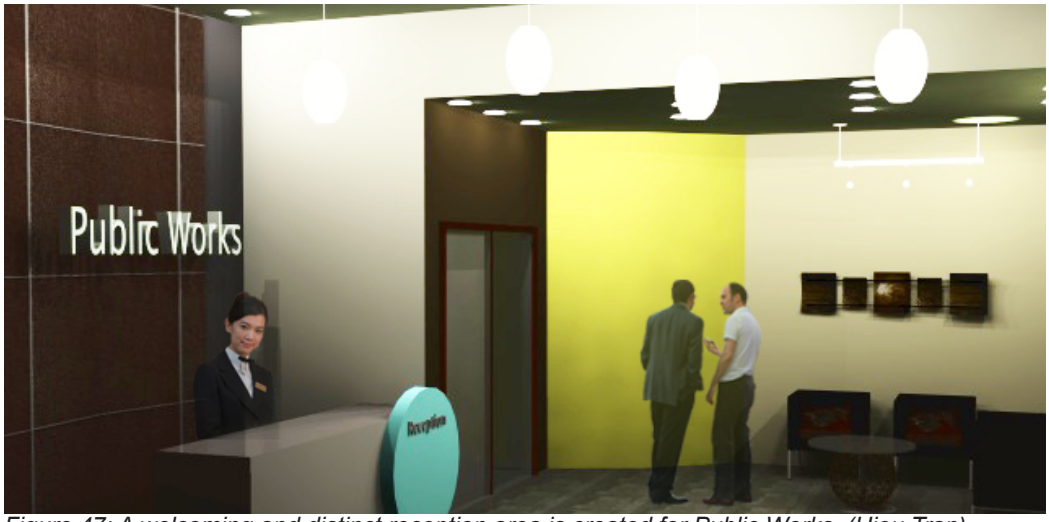


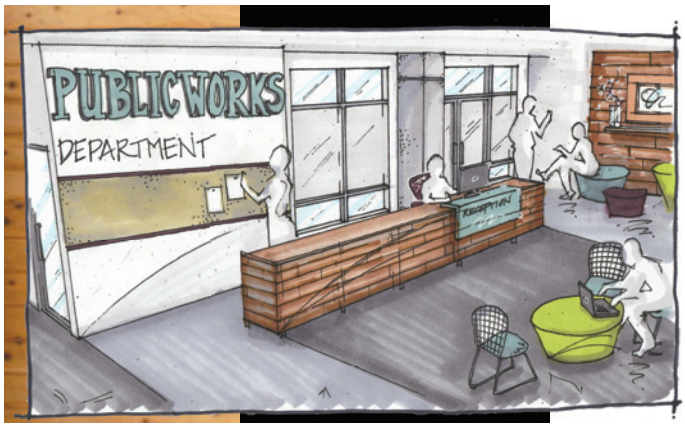
Figure 47: A welcoming and distinct reception area is created for Public Works. (Hieu Tran)

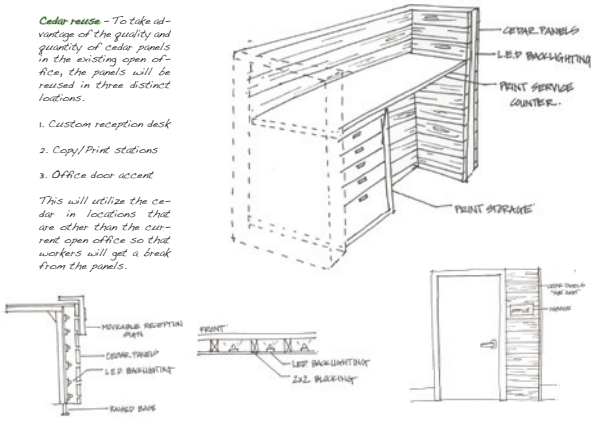
Wood Panel Reuse

In order to incorporate some of the history of the Salem Civic Center and to promote sustainable design, students explored reusing the wood panels that currently act as workstation partitions.

Vertical Plane

There is an opportunity for the wood panels to create some interest throughout the Civic Center as part of a vertical plane. This can highlight a wall to define a space, or the panels can be used as a tackable surface outside of offices.





Figures 48 and 49: The cedar panels make an excellent tacking surface because of the softness of the wood. Here, the cedar panels are used as a wall surface outside of conference rooms and staff offices as a tackable surface. (Jamie Lundy)

Ceiling Plane

Some students used the panels in the ceiling plane. This use helps define space or creates a vehicle for lighting. Often, the wood was used in the ceiling plane to define the circulation space.

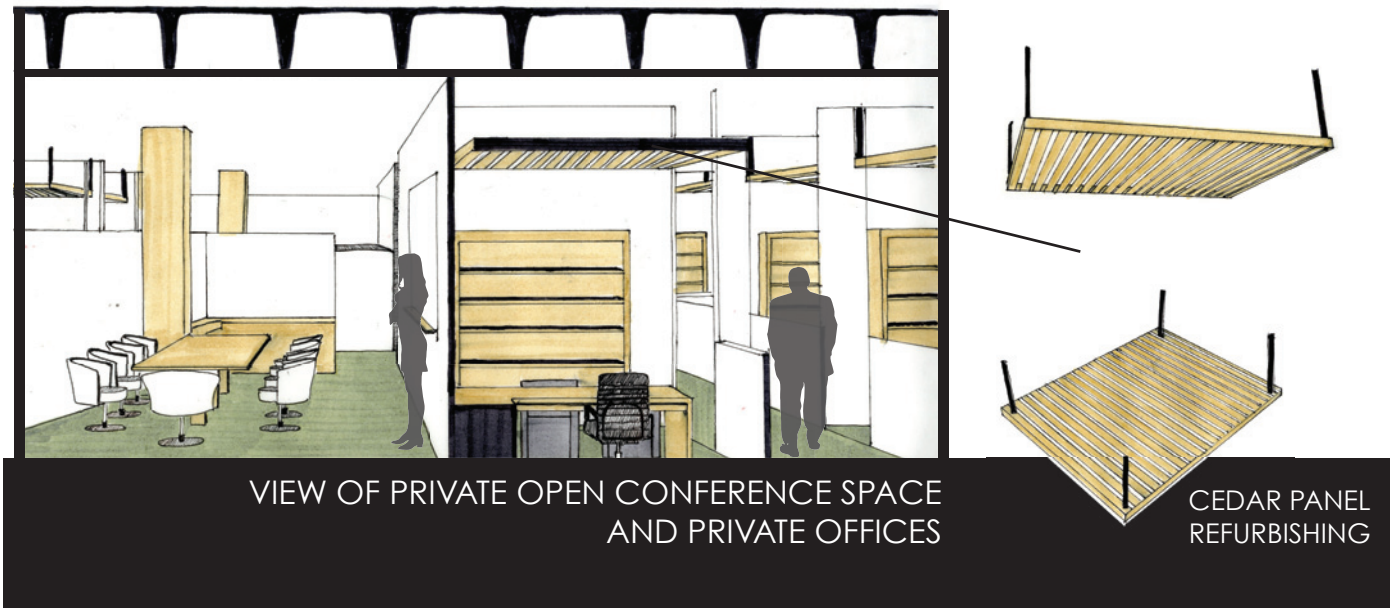
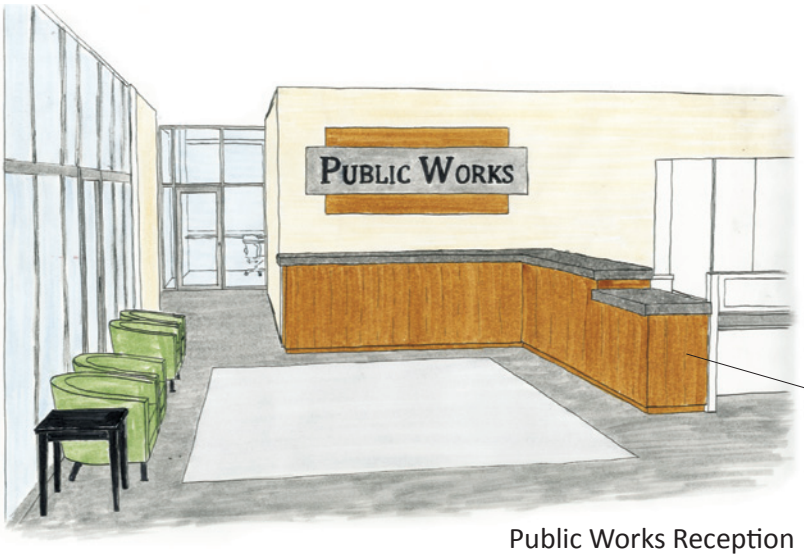


Figure 50: The cedar panels are used in the ceiling plane to define the staff offices. (Ali Dahlson)

Furniture

Many students incorporated the wood panels into the design of information desks. Since the wood is unsuitable for tabletops or seating due to its softness, it was often used as a decorative element for reception and information desks.



Public Works Reception

Figure 51: The cedar panels are re-used as the base of the reception desks, as well as in signage throughout the building. (Lauren Cartmell)

Conclusions

Throughout the studio process, it became clear that the Salem Civic Center faces several critical issues, such as the overall building organization, the department organization, wayfinding, and maximizing daylight and views. Each student addressed these issues by implementing a wide range of strategies. Although no strategy stood out as most effective, students developed a list of issues and a series of recommendations on how to closely examine the existing Civic Center in order to redesign the space effectively.

First, students recommend that the overall organization of the building be addressed, rather than simply renovating each department. Three issues led to this conclusion: seismic instability, the underutilized atrium, and unclear wayfinding and building entries.

Because of the seismic instability of the central wing, Council Chambers, and atrium canopy, many students suggested these be removed or rebuilt. The Council Chambers, because it is raised, presents both security and structural issues. In order to allow more flexibility and enhanced functionality, students recommend that the Council Chambers be relocated to a different location on the Civic Center campus. Many students recommended that a new Council Chambers facility on the first level of the Civic Center, in the Peace Plaza, or within the proposed police station.

Another issue that the current building organization presents is the large, underutilized atrium space. Modifying the atrium is likely to help the Civic Center to fulfill its potential. This is important not only in terms of public use but also in terms of daily staff use. Students suggested various solutions, each with potential advantages and disadvantages. However, there was agreement that the atrium could become a place of activity that provides services to the rest of the building, connects the Civic Center to the rest of the campus, or both.

The building, as it is currently organized, lacks clear wayfinding. The most publicly used departments are often in remote places, and the perimeter circulation impedes visual access to upper floors. It became clear to the studio that signage alone will not solve the problem, and that improved access and visibility to frequently-visited places is crucial. Most students relocated departments or moved services including the Council Chambers, Permit Application Center, Finance Department, and shared meeting rooms to areas of the building that are both easily accessible and highly visible.

Although many students wanted to relocate these functions to the first floor, providing light and views to staff members became an issue. In order to use the first floor for staff office spaces, the city could consider building renovations that bring daylight into the first floor (such as adding light wells to the Peace Plaza side of the building). Another option is to reallocate the first floor space so that shared program elements that do not necessarily need access to daylight can be placed in the first floor level. These elements include shared meeting

rooms and conference spaces, break rooms, storage, and services. Additional elements, such as locker rooms and bike storage, could also be accommodated in this area. However, this may limit the number of city staff that can be relocated from remote offices.

Secondly, the students recommend that City of Salem staff examine the needs of the departments within the Civic Center and create a clear set of goals for the redesign of the space. The city staff need to carefully consider how to create and maintain clear organization and circulation, and how to maximize daylight and views for the public and staff who use the Civic Center's spaces.

Students were charged with designing a prototypical office space (Public Works) for the Civic Center. Through this exercise, they were able to identify many of the typical planning dilemmas in the building. The perimeter circulation poses challenges. Rooms and workstations located along this circulation zone are subject to inspection by passersby, and it can be distracting to work there. At the same time, visitors have trouble identifying and negotiating department entrances. It is important to carefully consider this edge to increase clarity and perhaps to create distinct working and entry zones. This edge provides a good location for shared services such as conference rooms, especially those in use after hours.

Navigating the internal circulation is challenging, even for staff. The ideal design solution would create a clear internal circulation system. The major paths in this system should be strategically defined with architectural elements so that subsequent reorganization of workstations does not erode the system. Student projects used a variety of strategies to mark the path including ceiling changes, screen walls and location of shared services. All of these are viable options.

Students found that organizational clarity and maximizing light and views were often strategically linked. Organizing the office more effectively made it easier to maximize light and views. All students experimented with ways to organize closed and open spaces so as to minimize confusion and maximize light. In many cases, staff offices were moved away from the windows so that daylight could penetrate the space more effectively. It will be important for the city to consider whether it is more important for the closed offices to have access to views or for the entire office space to have access to natural light.

The initial building program did an excellent job of detailing current and future square footage requirements for the numerous and varied departments in the Civic Center. However, as the students began developing their proposals, lively conversations with staff and design consultants revealed that there are several issues that will be important to reconcile before proceeding with redesign of the office spaces. In the program, each workstation and most of the staff offices have the same square footage. However, Civic Center staff indicated that hierarchical distinctions can be important to the function of some departments. Workstations with similar square footages create a flexible and easily maintained workspace, but this strategy does not create a clear hierarchy within

the open office. It is therefore important for city staff to weigh priorities and to understand the ramifications of standard workstations and offices versus more differentiated individual spaces as they move toward a new office space.

In one circumstance, it was clear that more differentiation is required. Service counters and reception desks are difficult to identify in a visual sea of open office partitions. It would create a more welcoming experience for visitors if reception and service stations were visually distinct. Visual distinction was also identified as an important issue to consider in developing the design of the interior spaces as a whole. Large expanses of open office workstations benefit from being punctuated with some variety. Students identified the ceiling as a specific area that could enliven the space through some variety, and many wished to expose the characteristic waffle slab in key areas.

Access to natural light also has implications for the workstation design. Currently, the high cedar panels create a lot of storage space but block much of the natural light. It is important for Civic Center staff to carefully examine how much storage space individual workstations will need in the future and to create clear strategies for managing work-related materials. Creating more shared storage spaces, eliminating the need for unnecessary individual storage space, and creating more efficient storage within the open office system may allow for workstations with lower panel heights, which would allow more light to reach the center of each department.

Overall, the Civic Center has the potential to become an engaging and efficient space. This can only be accomplished by examining the building at every scale. Through the analysis and redesign of the overall organization, the departmental organization, and the workstation and staff office organization, the Salem Civic Center can become both a more efficient workspace and a space of better public engagement. But this can be accomplished only after further examination of the goals and needs of Civic Center staff. The character of the space should reflect both the way in which the Civic Center currently operates and the way in which it may operate in the future.

Appendix: Complete Student Proposals

The following pages contain five examples of complete student design proposals that exemplify the concepts presented throughout this report.

Figure 52: Celia Beauchamp, final poster 1 of 3.

Figure 53: Celia Beauchamp, final poster 2 of 3.

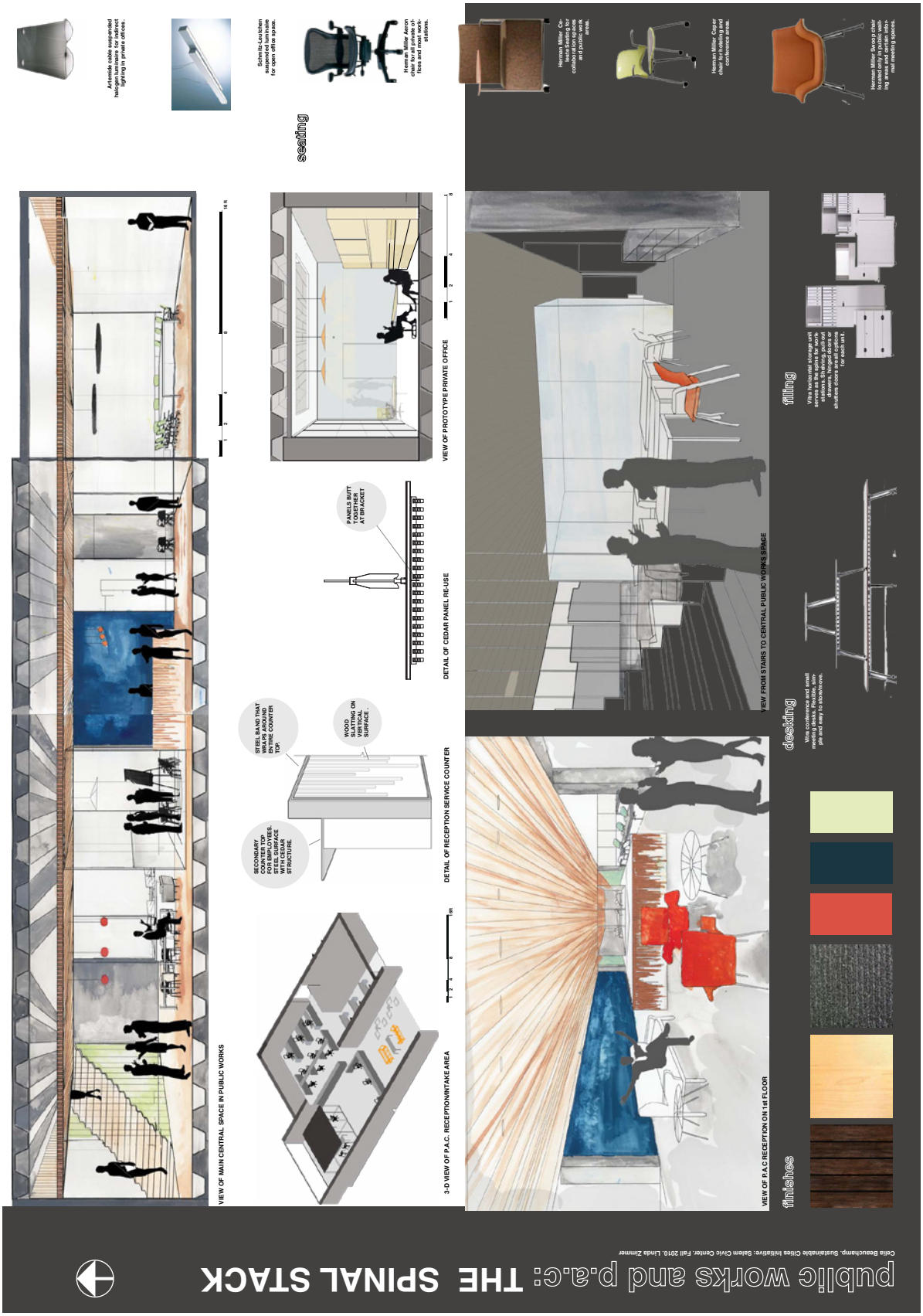
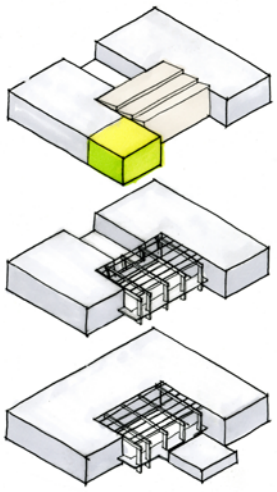


Figure 54: Celia Beauchamp, final poster 3 of 3.

Salem Civic Center: Defining the Atrium



+ Council Chambers/Atrium Cover

The council chamber is added back to the building and evens out the two wings. The atrium is enclosed and scaled down. By clearly defining, scaling and enclosing the atrium it becomes a more usable space. Functions like the permit application center and finance counters can now be located within the atrium.

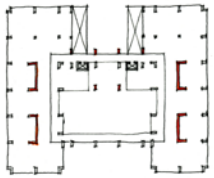
- Council Chambers/South Wing

The council chamber and part of the south wing is removed in order to create clear access across the entire site. By opening up the south side of the civic center more light reaches the atrium allowing for a clear visual access between the library, peace plaza, police station, and park.

Existing Condition

Currently the open atrium is under used largely because of its scale and lack of definition.

Building Interventions

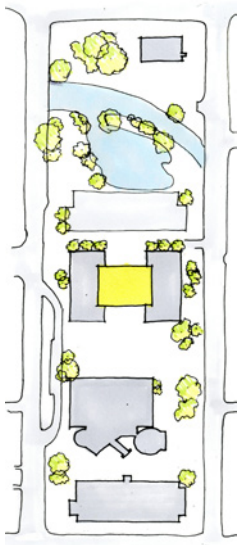


In order to meet the building's seismic needs two sets of shear walls are added to each wing. These shear walls not only provide stability, but are also used to define conference rooms and private offices within each department.

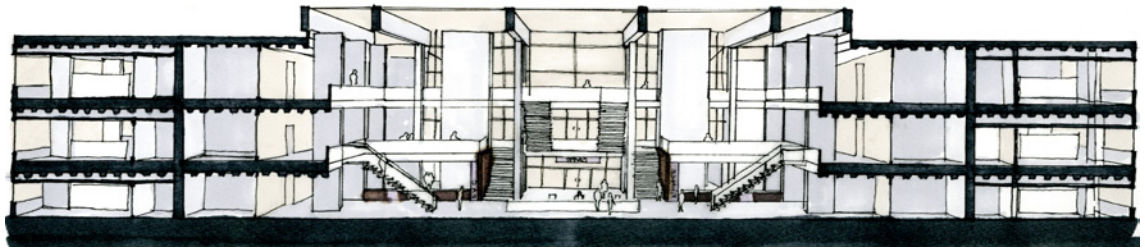
Concrete is also added to the third floor in order to even out the column sizes. Extra piers as well as materials are added to the atrium structure in order to stabilize that portion of the building.

Since the south wing is the most problematic part of the building, it is removed in order to allow light wells to reach the first level.

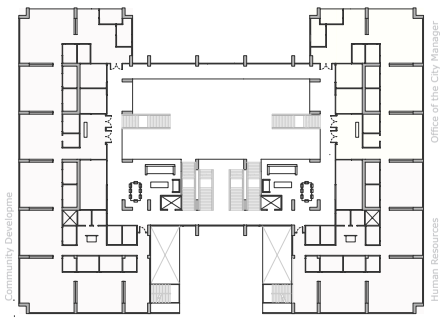
Structural Interventions



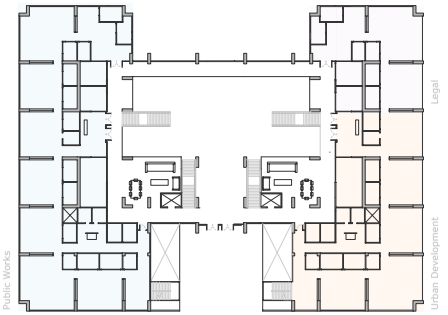
Site Plan



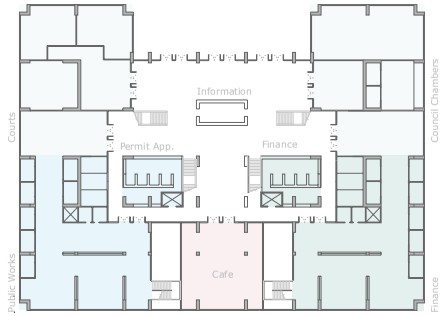
View Through Atrium



Level Three



Level Two

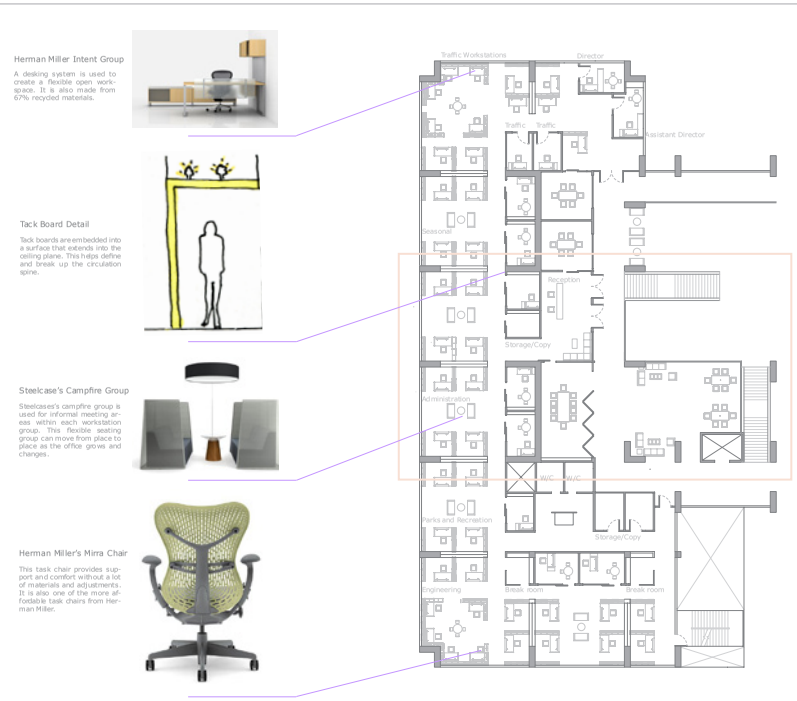


Level One

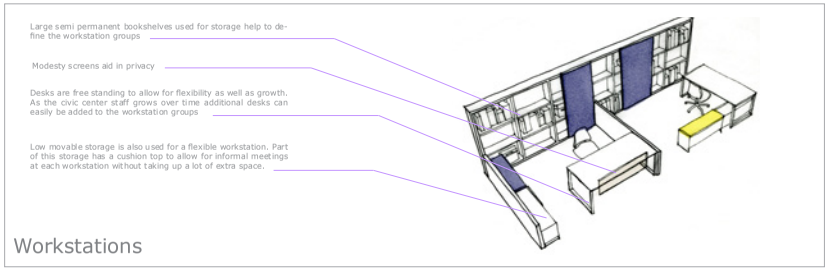
Figure 55: Leah Fuller, final poster 1 of 3.

Figure 56: Leah Fuller, final poster 2 of 3.

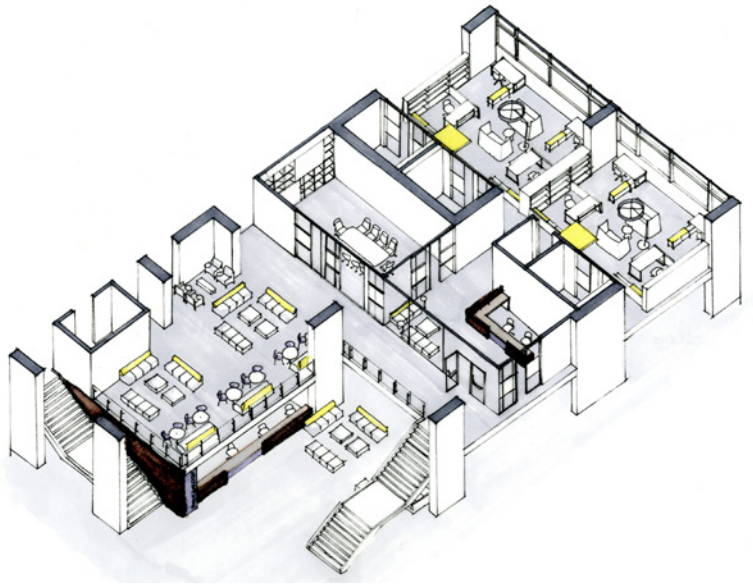
Public Works: Collaboration Groups



Public Works Level One



Workstations

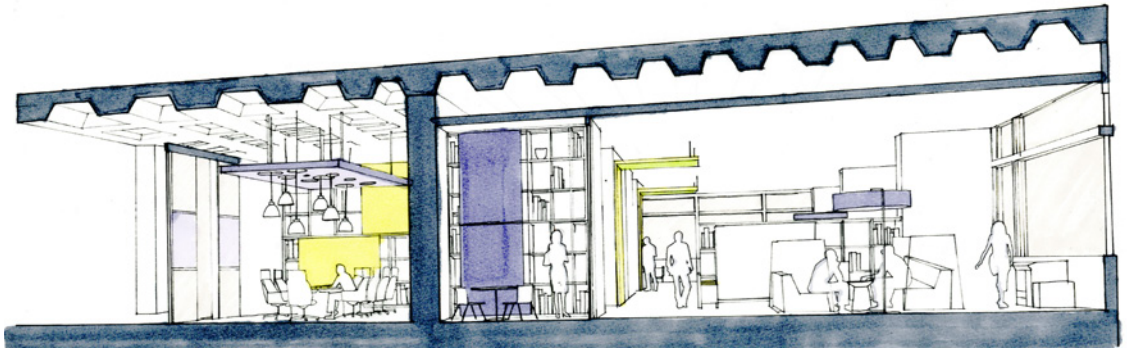


Public Works Isometric

Public Works Reception

Figure 57: Leah Fuller, final poster 3 of 3.

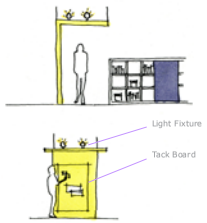
Permit Application Center/Public Works



View Through Public Works

In the hallway tack boards are used to create chance meeting places, as well as for communal information sharing. These tack boards are embedded into a feature that extends to the ceiling. These tack boards are not only a functional space but also help to define the corridor.

The surface is pulled away from the ceiling, and back lit. This helps to give interest to the circulation spine.



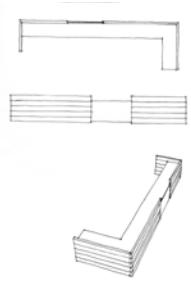
Tack Board Detail

The proportions of the desk along with the height variations allow for a few people to sit while performing varying tasks.

A steel inlay creates a lower place where people can be helped while seated.

The higher cedar areas can be used for privacy.

The cedar panels are reused to create the reception desks throughout the building.



Reception Detail

Urban Office Modular Seating

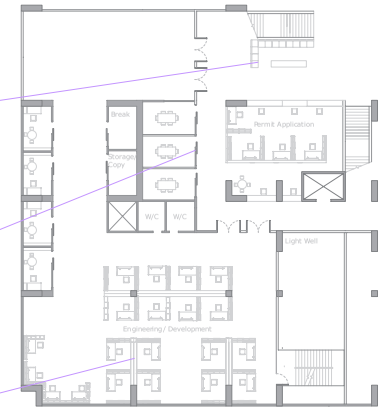
Modular seating is used to create flexible seating arrangements in reception and lounge areas

NanaWalls

Sliding and folding doors are used in conference rooms to allow them to open up into more public areas.

Basic S by Urban Office

Large storage units are used as semi-permanent fixtures in workgroups and private offices.



PAC/Public Works Level One

Permit Application Center/ Wood Panel Re-use

Figure 58: Jamie Lundy, final poster 1 of 3.

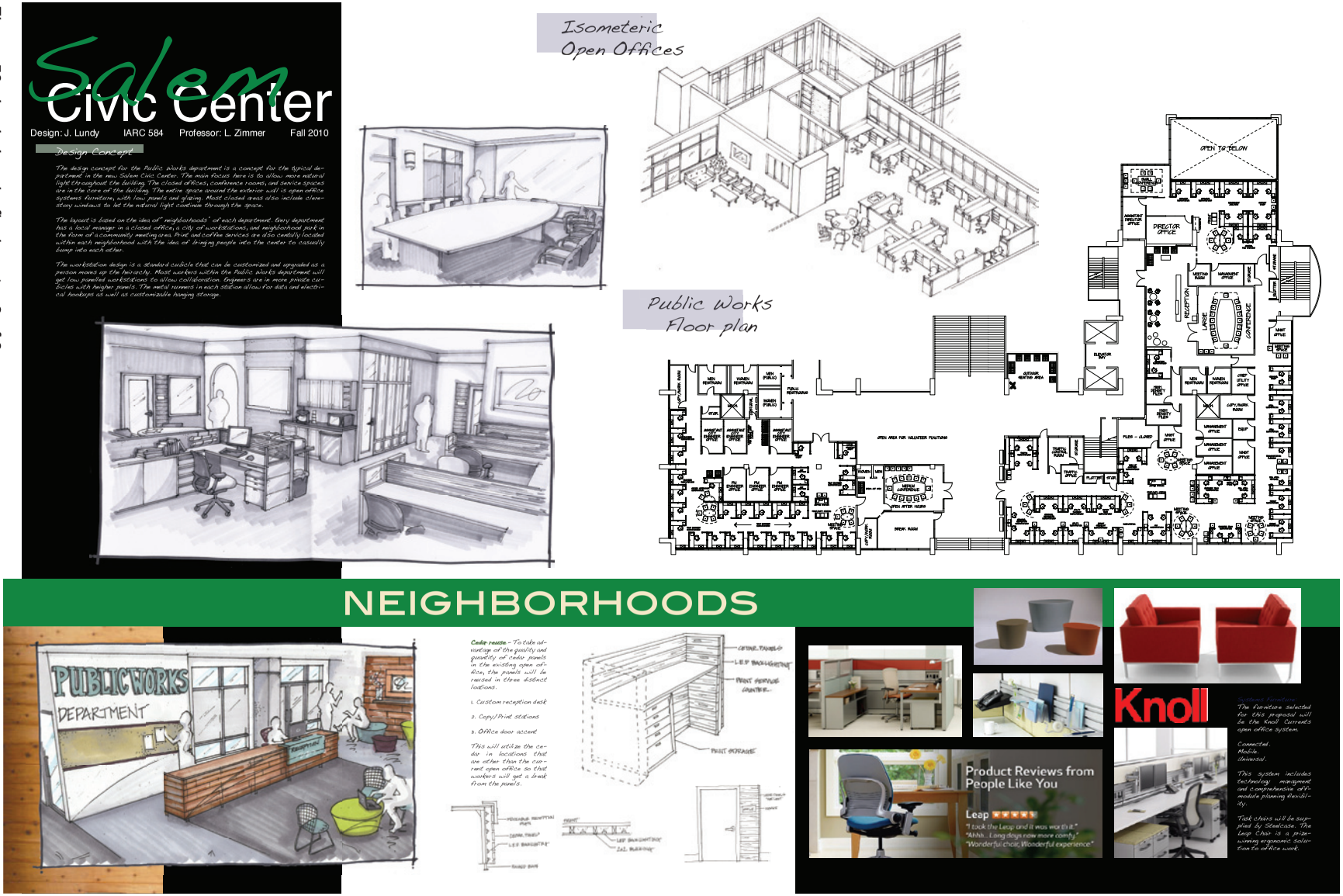


Figure 59: Jamie Lundy, final poster 2 of 3.

Figure 60: Jamie Lundy, final poster 3 of 3.

Figure 61: Marisa Baker, final poster 1 of 3.

SALEM CIVIC CENTER

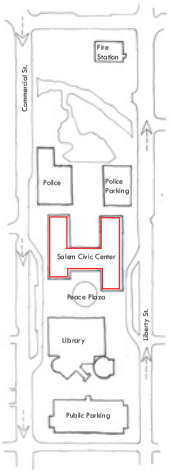
OPENING UP TO THE SITE: Building Intervention

Front Entrance

DESIGN STRATEGY

The overall building scheme was based on the goal to involve the building in its existing context and allow for natural light to reach the interior spaces of the building. To obtain this goal the overhead atrium structure was removed, along with its supports, and the building wings were lengthened on both the north and south sides. Excavation into the parking garage below allows for natural light to be brought to a previously dark 1st floor, while also acting as a circulation device for the elevators which allow access to the entire building. The central wing of the building has been decreased in width, yet it has gained purpose and beauty. It now acts as the main circulation hall and orients users with the exterior context with its extensive views on the north and south sides through large windows. The original atrium courtyard has been changed to involve the natural light with plants and trees, seating built into planters, a reflecting pool, and the opportunity to add tables or hold events at a more scaled and comfortable setting than the existing building provides.

Site Plan

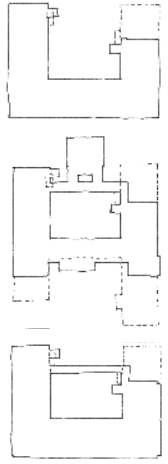


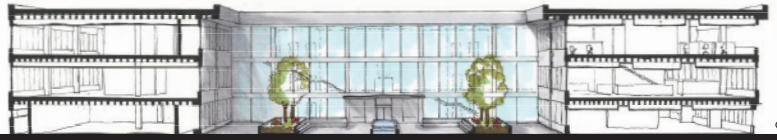
Seismic Solution

Create shear walls that run through all levels to create strength- these are built around the existing structure so it adds additional support to the columns.

Existing vs. New

Solid- Existing
Dashed- New





Courtyard View

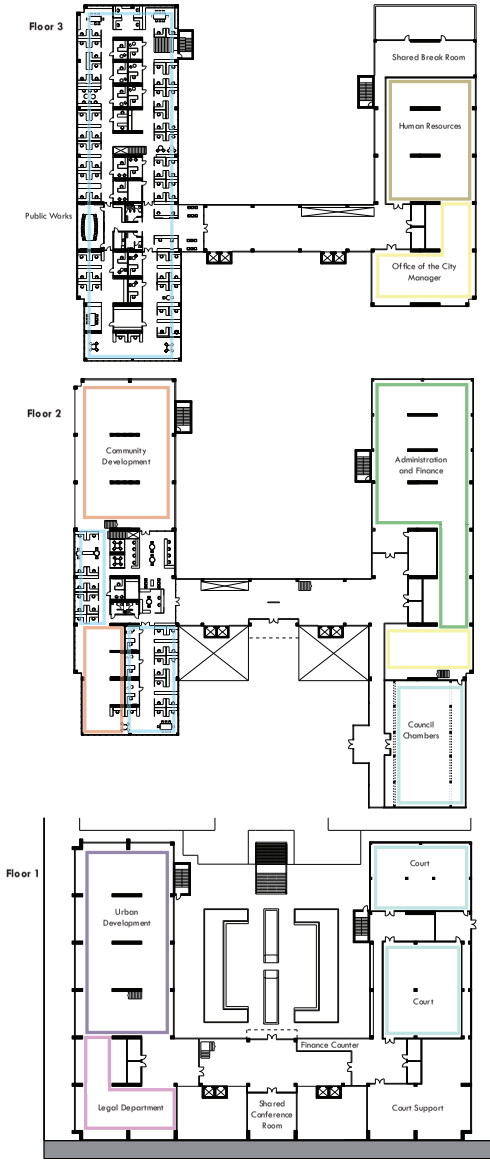


Figure 62: Marisa Baker, final poster 2 of 3.

Figure 63: Marisa Baker, final poster 3 of 3.

Public Works/ Permit Application Center

Viva Interiors
Herman Miller Systems Furniture

-Thin profile and clean lines
-Frame and tile style
-Tile options: tackable, marker, glass
-Greenguard Certified
-Typical WS 36% Recycled Content
-100% Recycleable Steel Frames

Aeron Chair
Herman Miller Seating

-Innovative ergonomics
-adaptable to all shapes and sizes
-accomodate daily motions with easily adjustable controls

Caper Chair
Herman Miller Seating

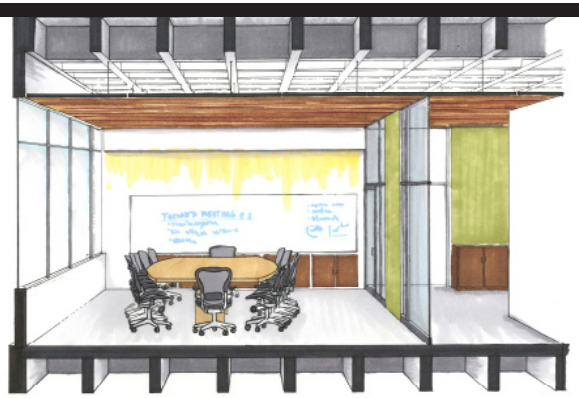
-Light weight, easy to move
-Use in collaborative work spaces, conference rooms, as a side chair, or as any additional seating needed

Privacy Glass

-For use in conference rooms, private offices, and separation walls
-Offers privacy while allowing natural light to pass through
-Offers some visibility without being intrusive

Cedar Panel Reuse

-Used as a ceiling plane to hide waffle slab, HVAC and electrical systems
-Consistently used in all reception areas at the ends of the central wing
-Marks these spaces as different and can be used as directional devices

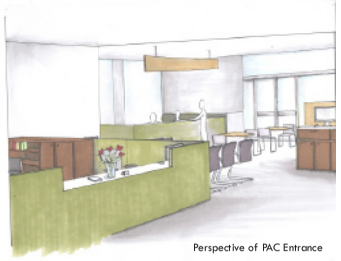


Large Conference Room Section Perspective

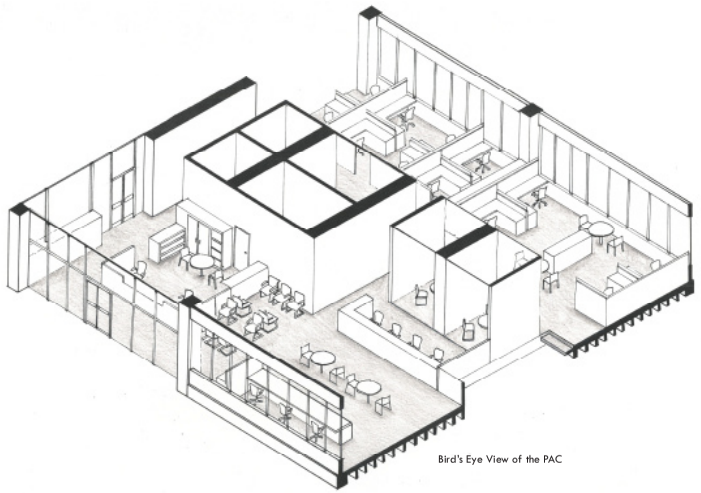
Private Office Section Perspective

DESIGN STRATEGY

The design strategy for the PAC was to create an open, light, and inviting space that was user friendly and welcoming. The initial reception desk acts as a directory of sorts and can lead people to the appropriate person or counter. A waiting area provides additional seating during busy times, and tables offer places to set plans or papers while meeting with, or waiting to meet with someone. Two separate counters accommodate the many people that are involved within the PAC and work with the public. One desk is primarily for employees who work short, temporary shifts, and the other offers a more permanent workstation with additional storage and privacy. Behind one of the service counters are two small conference rooms where the public can meet with specialists in a quiet and private setting. Employees from the Public Works department that are particularly involved with the PAC are located adjacent to these small conference rooms and are close to all of the PAC activities. Overall the new layout offers a much more open and accommodating location for people within the Permit Application Center to work with the public and create an enjoyable and trouble-free experience.



Perspective of PAC Entrance



Bird's Eye View of the PAC

Marisa Baker - IARC 484 - Fall 2010 - Linda Zimmer

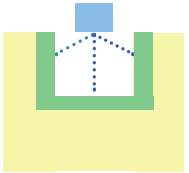
Figure 64: Marta Lilly, final poster 1 of 3.

Salem Civic Center

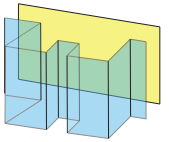
Marta Lilly IARC 584 Fall 2010 Professor Linda Zimmer

Salem Civic Center site plan

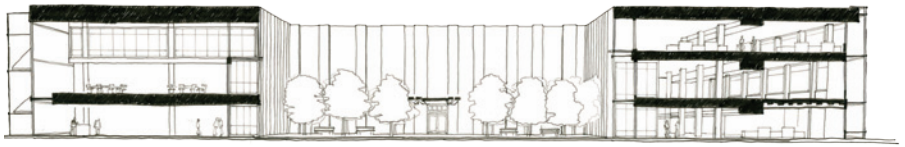
This intervention for the Salem Civic Center features a glass and steel skin around the existing structure, creating new spaces within the interstitial space, and allowing for the building to have fewer entranvvces. Using the site of the existing council chambers as a visitors center and cafe, Salem citizens can quickly orient themselves with the building and find more information about the Civic Center's services.

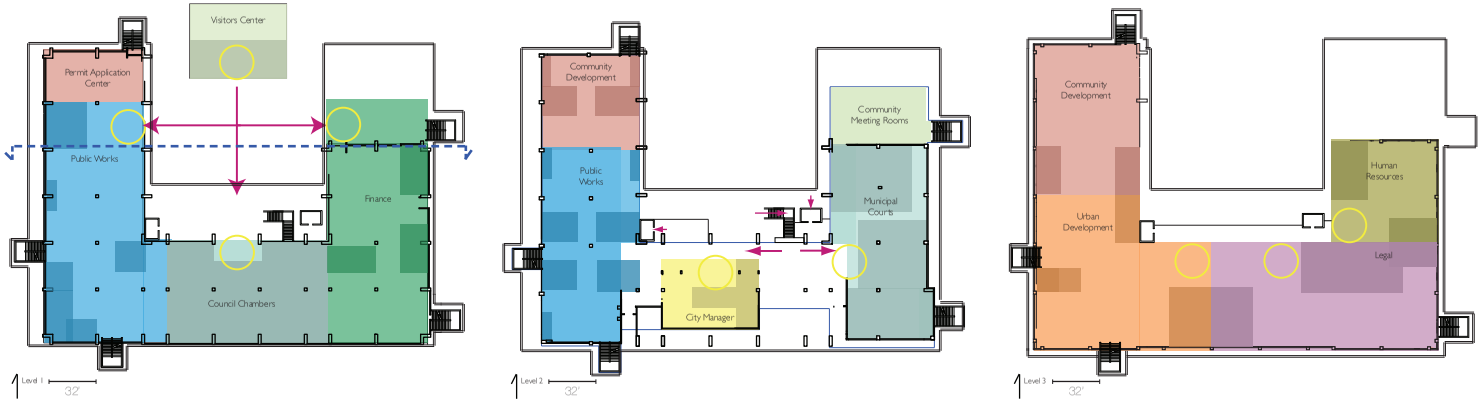


Access and Orientaton



Custom Spaces between existing structure and wrap



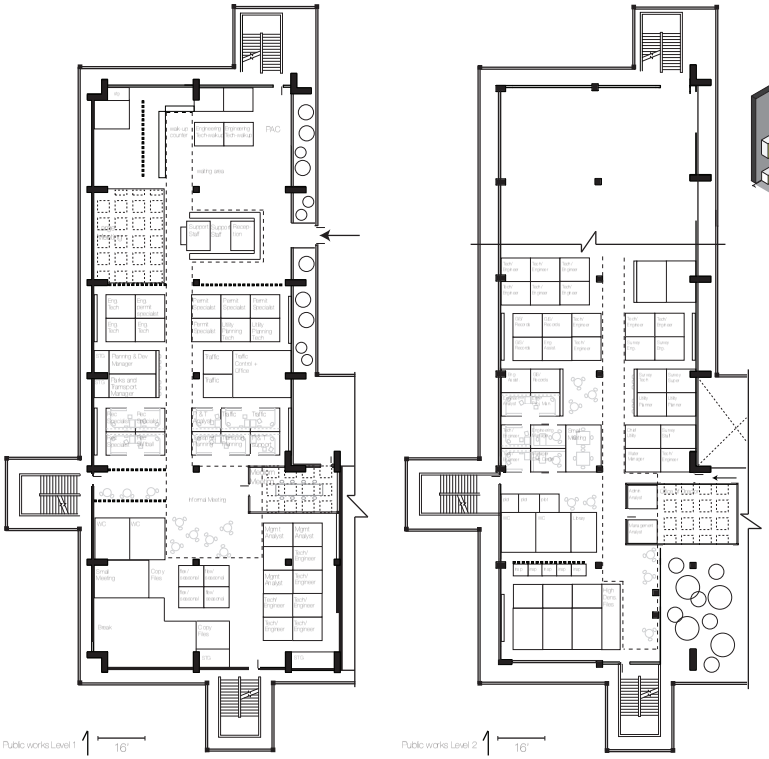


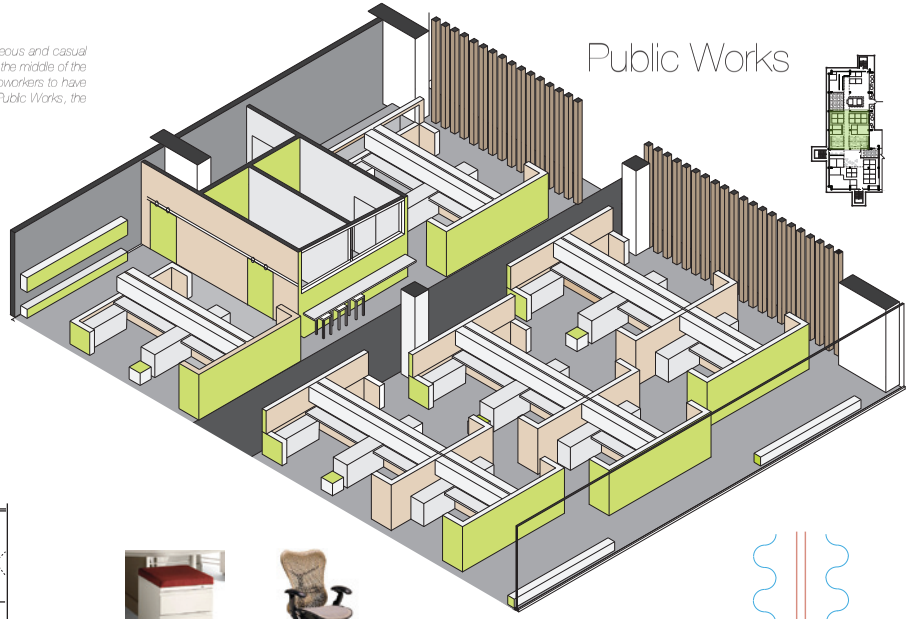
Salem Civic Center

Marta Lilly IARC 584 Fall 2010 Professor Linda Zimmer

Social Circulation

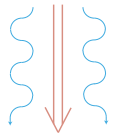
This scheme stems from the concept that where there is a lowered ceiling, people will gather and talk. Providing an opportunity for spontaneous and casual conversation within the department could foster a more creative and productive environment. The main circulation in Public Works cuts through the middle of the structure with blocks of workstations, meeting rooms, offices and copy rooms on either side. The central circulation is wide enough for two coworkers to have a conversation while other colleagues pass by or join in. While the central circulation promotes communication between the different teams of Public Works, the smaller, meandering circulation between the blocks of workspaces provides a more intimate setting for communication between teammates.






portable seating/storage


Mirra Chair for each workstation


circulation choices


small private office


large private office


open offices

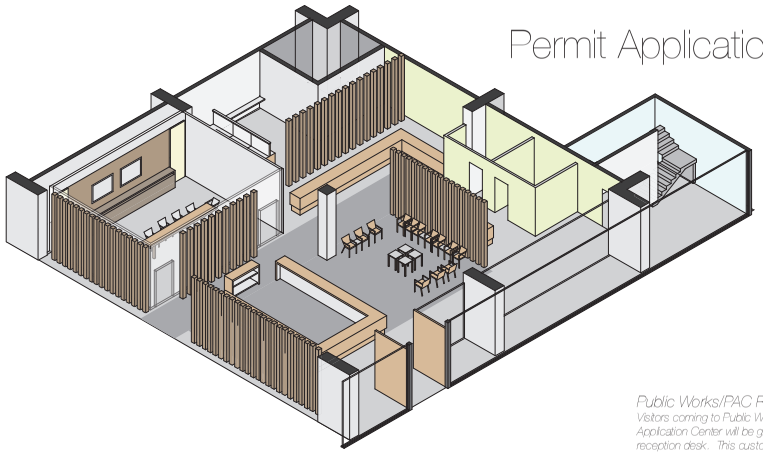
Figure 65: Marta Lilly, final poster 2 of 3.

Figure 66: Marta Lilly, final poster 3 of 3.

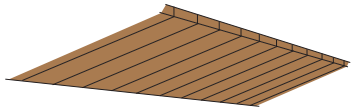
Salem Civic Center

Marta Lilly IARC 584 Fall 2010 Professor Linda Zimmer

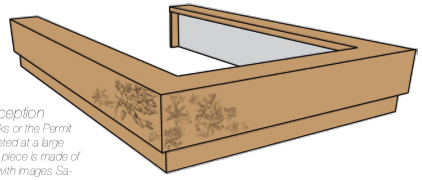
Permit Application Center



flush-mounted warm lighting in main circulation



The Maple space dividers that currently dominate the interior landscape of Public works along with the other departments in the Civic Center can be re-used by acting as the drop ceiling above the main circulation.



Public Works/PAC Reception
Visitors coming to Public Works or the Permit Application Center will be greeted at a large reception desk. This custom piece is made of reclaimed wood and etched with images Salem's flora: the Camus Flower

resilient cork flooring tiles

dark striped industrial carpet tiles

Gigi swivel chair for large meeting rooms

lightweight rolling chair for small meeting rooms and informal meeting areas