

Overview of Facilities and Programs

Seattle Center is the fourth-largest visitor destination in the United States, attracting 12 million visitors each year to its 74-acre campus and hosting more than 5,000 arts, sporting, educational, and cultural events. Seattle Center is the home of the Seattle Opera, Pacific Northwest Ballet, five theater companies (Intiman, Seattle Repertory, Seattle Children's Theatre, Book-It, and Seattle Shakespeare Company), the Vera Project, two professional basketball teams (the Seattle Sonics of the National Basketball Association and the Seattle Storm of the Women's National Basketball Association), the Seattle Thunderbirds ice hockey team, the Children's Museum, and the Fun Forest Amusement Park. Seattle Center's Nesholm Family Lecture Hall in McCaw Hall is a year-round venue for the Seattle International Film Festival. The Center House, located in the center of the campus, includes The Center School (a small public high school), a food court, rehearsal rooms operated by Theatre Puget Sound, two theatres, and administrative offices.

The Seattle Center's grounds and buildings are sites for festivals, concerts, conferences, and exhibitions throughout the year. Seattle Center is also a major urban park with lawns, gardens, fountains, and a variety of plazas and open spaces throughout the campus. On the Seattle Center grounds, there are 24 buildings, two parking garages, and one surface parking lot. As one of the conditions of the sale of the 5th Avenue Parking Lot to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for its World Headquarters, the 5th Avenue surface parking lot is replaced by a 1,010 stall parking garage on the southeast corner of the existing lot. The new garage opens in 2008. Also part of the campus, but privately owned and operated, are the Space Needle, the Pacific Science Center, the Experience Music Project (EMP), and the Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame. The Seattle School District operates Memorial Stadium for school athletic events and concerts. The nation's only publicly owned monorail runs between Seattle Center and downtown Seattle. The Monorail is owned by the City and operated by a private contractor.

Seattle Center's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is at the heart of the Center's vision to be the "nation's best gathering place," a place "to delight and inspire the human spirit in each person and bring us together as a rich and varied community." From replacing an underground steam line to creating a new performing arts venue for the region, the Seattle Center CIP repairs, renews and redevelops the facilities and grounds of the Center's campus in the heart of our city, in order to provide a safe and welcoming place for millions of annual visitors. Seattle Center's CIP is funded from a variety of revenue sources including the City's Cumulative Reserve Subfund, voter-approved property tax levies, City-issued Limited Tax General Obligation Bonds (LTGO), State, County and federal funds, proceeds from property sales, and private funds. Since the adoption of the Seattle Center Master Plan in 1990, two voter-approved levies have raised \$62 million for Seattle Center's redevelopment. This amount has, in turn, leveraged \$500 million in non-City funds, including \$440 million from private sources.

Highlights

- ◆ In 2008, Seattle Center continues implementation of its Capital Reserve Plan funded by proceeds from the sale of the 5th Avenue Parking Lot to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Work on the following elements of the Capital Reserve Plan occurs in 2008: continued phase one implementation of a campus lighting plan to improve safety, wayfinding, and energy efficiency; development of an integrated system of electronic signage throughout the campus, including replacement of World's Fair-era, hand-operated exterior readerboards; design of improvements to selected public entries to the campus; renovation of the Broad Street Green, including drainage improvements; installation of a Parking Access and Revenue Control (PARC) system in the Mercer Garage to increase parking revenue and improve customer service; purchase of theatrical and business support equipment to increase the competitiveness of campus facilities; and continued development of a Long Term Investment Plan and new Master Plan for the Seattle Center campus. The 2008-2013 Adopted CIP Budget includes \$1.67 million in appropriations for the above work. Seattle Center anticipates completing the initial \$8.4 million in Capital Reserve Plan project work by 2009.

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- ◆ In 2008, Seattle Center continues to carry out deferred major maintenance work on the Seattle Center Monorail funded by \$4.5 million in LTGO bond proceeds. Work planned for 2008 includes pneumatic system modifications and replacement of the low voltage electrical system on both trains. Seattle Center expects to complete the \$4.5 million deferred maintenance program by 2009. Additional major maintenance work from 2008-13 is funded from Federal Transit Administration grant funds and local matching funds from Seattle Monorail Services, the private operator of the Seattle Center Monorail on behalf of the City.
- ◆ In 2008, Seattle Center completes the replacement of 71 trees on the Seattle Center campus as part of the City's Urban Forestry Management program.
- ◆ In 2008, \$800,000 is added to complete the replacement of World's Fair-era underground steam and chilled water lines and to increase the efficiency of the Central Utility Plant in providing cooling to campus buildings.
- ◆ In 2008, \$500,000 is added to match the Challenge Grants awarded by the Kreielsheimer Foundation to further the goals of Seattle Center's Theatre District Plan.
- ◆ In 2008, Council added \$800,000 to complete design and construction of a replacement skatepark on the Seattle Center campus.

Project Selection Process

Project Identification: The redevelopment and renewal of Seattle Center is guided by the principles of the Seattle Center Master Plan. The Seattle Center Master Plan is reviewed on a regular basis with surrounding neighborhoods, the general public, Seattle Center resident organizations, Seattle's Design Commission and Design Review boards, and other key stakeholders. The Master Plan is the foundation for the annual development and evaluation of Seattle Center's capital investment proposals and serves as the adopted policy basis for Seattle Center's participation in land use, urban design, and public and private transportation planning in the vicinity of Seattle Center. For the 2008-2013 period, Seattle Center's CIP is further guided by the May 2006 report and recommendations of the Mayor's Task Force on Seattle Center Sustainability and by the June 2007 Final Report of the Century 21 (citizens) Committee: Alternatives Plans for Seattle Center's Future. The Century 21 report is the first phase in a capital planning process that will result in a new Seattle Center Master Plan in 2008.

A broad cross-section of Center staff also work to update the Department's Asset Preservation Plan, which includes current and future capital demands of Seattle Center facilities and grounds. Such staff include: project management staff who manage CIP projects; event servicing staff who work directly with clients in booking and servicing events in facilities throughout the campus; event production staff who provide stage, sound, and other event support; and technical facilities maintenance staff who maintain Seattle Center facilities and grounds. Another important group in the CIP budget development process is the Center's resident organizations that use the Center's facilities on a regular and, in some cases, exclusive basis. The Seattle Center tenants help identify priority capital projects in the buildings and grounds they use.

Project Selection: Seattle Center management decides which projects are of the highest priority in the context of the Master Plan, major maintenance requirements, and client demands. Projects are reviewed according to whether the Adopted project:

- ◆ Addresses a facility/system that is a life/safety issue of urgent or emerging concern, is aimed at increasing the security of public facilities, or addresses a facility/system that has failed, or is failing and unreliable;
- ◆ Addresses code or regulatory requirements for ADA, seismic/other safety, energy efficiency, etc.;

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- ◆ Helps meet Sustainable (“Green”) Building goals and objectives, and/or enhances resource conservation and recycling;
- ◆ Increases the efficiency of building operations, extends the life of existing building systems, increases revenue generating potential, and/or demonstrably enhances the maintainability of the building/facility;
- ◆ Leverages other resources to contribute to improvements; and/or,
- ◆ Represents an improvement requested by City officials or departments, community organizations, and/or tenants.

Project Budget and Scheduling: Rough estimates of project scope and cost are prepared for a project list based on the priorities described above. Projects are carefully scheduled around the 5,000 annual events on the campus in order to minimize disruption to the public and to protect event revenues.

Anticipated Operating Expenses Associated with Capital Facilities Projects

In most projects, the Department has identified operations and maintenance costs of zero, or has not calculated a number (N/C). In these cases, the cost impacts of the project are either insignificant or are offset by cost savings realized by other projects.

City Council Provisos to the CIP

There are no Council provisos

