

## **Design/Constructability Staff Review Team**

### **Team Members**

**Jill Crary, Seattle Center**

**Jae Lee, Seattle Center**

**Branin Burdette, SDCI**

**David Hudacek, SDCI**

**Quinn Majeski, OPI**

**Lyle Bicknell, OPCD**

**Karl Stickel, OED**

### **Consultants**

**Ken Johnsen, SOJ**

**James Poulson, Architect**

## **Seattle Partners:**

- A. Provide a world-class civic arena (the “Arena”) to attract and present music, entertainment, and sports events, potentially including NBA and NHL events, to Seattle and the region.**

This is an area of weakness for this Proposer in comparison to the other proposal. They have come up with a creative solution to expanding the existing KeyArena to accommodate hockey to the south; however, many of the patron amenities remain hamstrung by the 1995 geometry which is essentially intact.

They have enlarged the building with two main moves: pushing out to the south, from the event floor to the roof addition, and moving the glass curtain walls on three sides – north, east and west – to the outer edge of the existing edge beam. This allows for entry at the suite level, east, west and south (Figure 1).

This enlarges the event floor and concourses and the event floor grows to the south - all enabling necessary program space, but as Figure 2, which shows KeyArena in red overlaid on SP’s floorplan, illustrates the building remains the same size in the other directions.

Loading begins on Thomas St. and a substantial portion of the new south end is taken up with the geometry of the truck ramp descending 35’ below grade.

The existing lower concourse becomes the club areas, but there is no view from the clubs into the seating bowl. The main concourse benefits from the movement of the glass and allows for more program, wider concourses, daylight and a view to the bowl for the premium seating – terrace tables and loge seats – at the back of the lower bowl. The lower is built on 34” deep risers, with 20” seats.

Both the basketball floor and hockey ice sheet will not be centered under the main east/west truss. It’s difficult to anticipate how patrons will experience this since the two main trusses and the sloping roof are such defining features (Figure 3). The seating bowl extends into the new south addition (Figure 4).

Their solution to the hockey/basketball end-zone gap appears to be portable floor seating, which will compromise site lines more in this area than the adjustable raked seating. There are sections of telescoping seating at the south end that retract for the stage location. (Figure 5)

The suite concourse grows with the south expansion and the suite count increases to 66. The movement of the glass adds enclosed entries east and west so patrons can enter at this level and then go up or down. The upper concourse is tight, and the upper bowl is essentially the current upper bowl, with 33" risers and new seats.

Their estimated percentage of reuse of the existing building is:

83% of roof

58% of concourses

**B. Provide for Project design and Arena operations in a manner that integrates with and enhances connections to Uptown and adjoining neighborhoods and aligns with the Urban Design Framework ("UDF").**

This is a definite strength for this proposal in relation to the other proposal. They have a 360-degree focus on the exterior integration of the arena, both into the neighborhood and the Seattle Center campus, using open space, public art and pedestrian activation (Figure 6). However, funding for these elements does not appear to be in their proposal.

Understanding the value of Republican St. as a "Festival Street" and how it can draw the north end neighbors into the excitement of arena events meets an important UDF goal. Closing this block of Republican to vehicle traffic on event nights and using it for food trucks and other pedestrian activity would activate this important Uptown-Seattle Center connection and seamlessly merge the neighborhood with Center campus attractions.

The pedestrian connection from the Seattle Center to First Avenue N along the Arena's south facade supports the UDF's goal of increasing campus permeability. The plaza at the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N and Thomas also furthers this objective. The new ticket office/team store along 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N and the "creative office"/retail building along Thomas St help hold the pedestrian edge. The lengthy curb-cut and truck entrance opening (we estimate over 100') near the Warren Ave intersection does not help the pedestrian environment.

**C. Provide for design, permitting, development, demolition (if applicable), and construction of the Arena (the "Project") with minimal City financial participation.**

**Schedule:**

Both projects will have the challenge of a new zoning code going into effect prior to vesting and should add time to their schedule to accommodate this issue.

The entitlement portion of their schedule shows a period from June 2017 to Nov. 2018, but is not detailed in any way, so we cannot evaluate this. They have a detailed construction schedule starting in November of 2018, and concluding in Jan. 2021. They also include an Operations schedule which shows pre-opening activities running until March 2021. The Operations schedule details help make this schedule more realistic and reflects this Proposer's extensive building commissioning/operations experience.

The imperative with a schedule this aggressive is to ensure that the City is not penalized in any way if or when the private developer is not able to meet the schedule. This will need to be addressed in negotiations with the successful proposer.

### **Budget:**

They are estimating \$366M as the hard costs for the arena site work. They have confirmed that the ticketing/team store to the west of the arena is included in this but the rest of the buildings and broader site improvements are not. Also, they are proposing to retain 58% of the existing concourses but their hard costs for the arena are higher than OVG. We believe this is due to a more conservative cost methodology than OVG's. Their team includes Sellen Construction, who has worked with local sub-contractors to develop pricing. They also have a larger contingency, \$88M vs. OVG's \$25M.

They have 1% for Art in their construction budget but no sales tax, and note that in another section of the RFP they indicate their expectation/hope to not pay this and other taxes, fees, etc

As with the schedule, what is important is that the City not be responsible for any cost overruns. Proposers will need to "own" their budget as well as their schedule and the City will need to guard against risk-shifting language on either of these issues.

### **Landmarks:**

Assuming a Landmarks designation and Controls and Incentives for the exterior of the current facility, this Proposer's design seems very challenging regarding the Landmark process. On three sides, they move the glass towards the outside of the edge beam. This move alone seems a reasonable alteration to take through the Landmarks Certificate of Approval process. But while they say they have left the historic roofline intact, in fact they have removed the south glass, edge beam, buttress, and a portion of the current roof to adjust the slope for the extension of new roof over their enlarged seating bowl. They estimate that they leave 83% of the roof intact. Finding an acceptable way to do this with the Landmarks Board could prove difficult. This is a weakness in their proposal.

Anticipating a possible designation for the "Bressi Garage" on the 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N site, and acknowledging that their proposed development on this site has no programmatic or financial nexus to the arena, our Review Team suggests that any development on south site be deferred to a future phase.

### **Zoning & Other issues:**

The new building along Thomas St. is two blocks long, which will exceed maximum width in the new, Seattle Mixed, zoning.

Without any detail in the entitlement schedule, our Review Team cannot fully assess how or if the zoning and related issues are understood by the Proposer.

### **D. Provide for the continuous, successful, sustainable operation of the Arena as a world-class civic venue with minimal City financial participation.**

From a design perspective, this could be a weakness for this proposal as the building remains constrained in critical levels and in the seating bowl for future flexibility. The premium seating is limited – suites behind the stage at concerts and clubs without views of the bowl were failures in the current building - and yet this Proposer has the highest revenue estimates. They also are

looking for City bonding. We will leave a thorough analysis to the Operations and Financial Team.

**E. Provide for mitigation of transportation impacts due to Project construction and Arena operations.**

They propose to close one block of Thomas St during construction.

During operation, there is concern about truck loading at the Thomas/Warren intersection. Their truck-turning diagram shows access only from Warren but the narrative discusses entry from Warren and Thomas (Figure 7). We suggest they investigate the Barclays Center's solution of using truck elevators and turn-tables before finalizing this design element.

Overall, while their truck loading solution is weaker than OVG's, their freight mobility plan and overall responses are stronger and more detailed than OVG's. We will leave the complete analysis to the Transportation Team.

**F. Provide Project construction and Arena operations in a manner that is equitable for workers and consistent with the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative.**

At the presentation, they verbally committed to the construction related Community Workforce Agreement. That is a small part of an authentic approach to equitable development and we will leave the complete assessment to the Social Equity Team.

**G. Provide for Project design and Arena operational integration with Seattle Center, contributing positively to the vibrancy of Seattle Center.**

The Century 21 Master Plan Goals listed in the RFP are:

- Long term investments should enhance the Center's ability to meet its mission, bringing people together to share our communal artistic, civic and cultural expressions.
- The campus should provide programs, services and attractions for people of every age, background, heritage, culture and ability as well as for neighborhood residents and workers who may visit every day and for those who travel distances to get here.
- Seattle Center should strive to enliven the campus throughout the hours of the day and the days of the year, balancing out the peaks and valleys of programs and activities.
- The International Fountain and open space around it should be preserved as the "heart" of Seattle Center.
- Development should invigorate and update the campus to appeal to the next generation of users, yet changes should honor the campus' historic character.
- Pedestrian friendly planning should unify the campus, enhancing the comfort and safety of people on foot.
- All planning and design work should promote environmental sustainability.
- Pathways and pedestrian connections into and through the campus should be clearly legible.
- Design should emphasize flexibility, vibrancy, legibility and artistic expression.

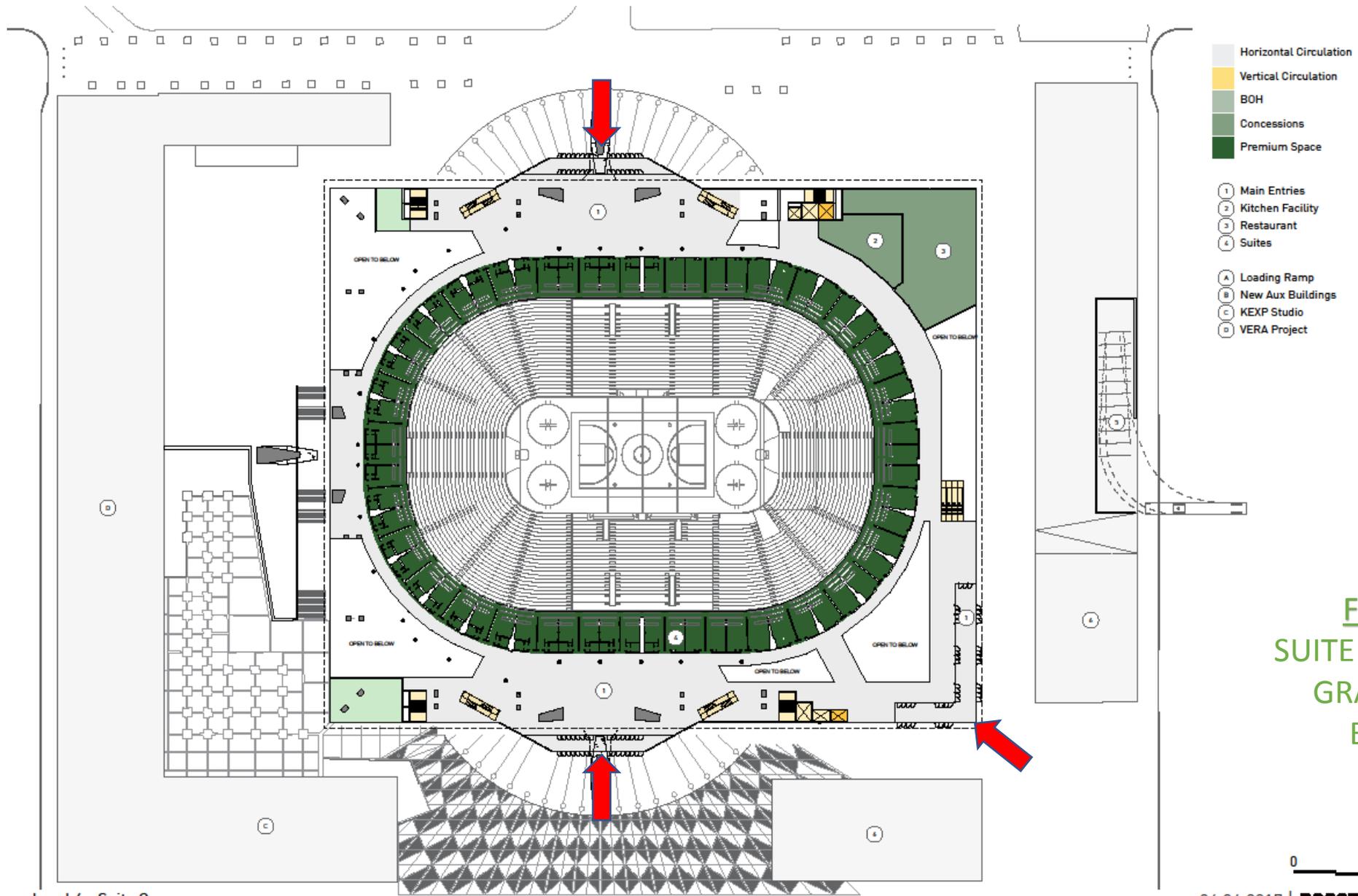
- Campus edges should open to the community and entries should be inviting and festive.
- Future Seattle Center development should build on the tradition of being a good neighbor to surrounding residents and businesses.
- Transportation planning must be a central element of any development.

Clearly the Seattle Partners proposal meets many of these objectives with their proposed long-term investment in a renovated arena and their focus on the campus connections and porous edges, both physical and programmatic. Their focus on the pedestrian connection to and around the arena improves the campus entry experience for the community and their attention to public art enhances the campus for all who come, with or without a ticket.

Much of their programmatic connection rests with their proposal to relocate displaced tenants in their new “creative office” building; however, it is not funded in their construction budget so their commitment to this needs to be assessed. As well, we have noted concern about their Landmark designation strategy.

Overall, their awareness of the need for comprehensive site integration is encouraging, even if it remains unfunded. This external perspective on the neighborhood and campus surrounding the arena is the real strength of their proposal and could contribute to the vibrancy of Seattle Center, provided the weaknesses in the arena design are addressable.

There are unrealized opportunities to integrate a vista to the east with both projects as a reknitted Harrison St. will make this building visible and accessible from South Lake Union. To fully meet the Master Plan Design Guidelines, both of these proposals would benefit from the early engagement of a Landscape Architect with experience with public open space.

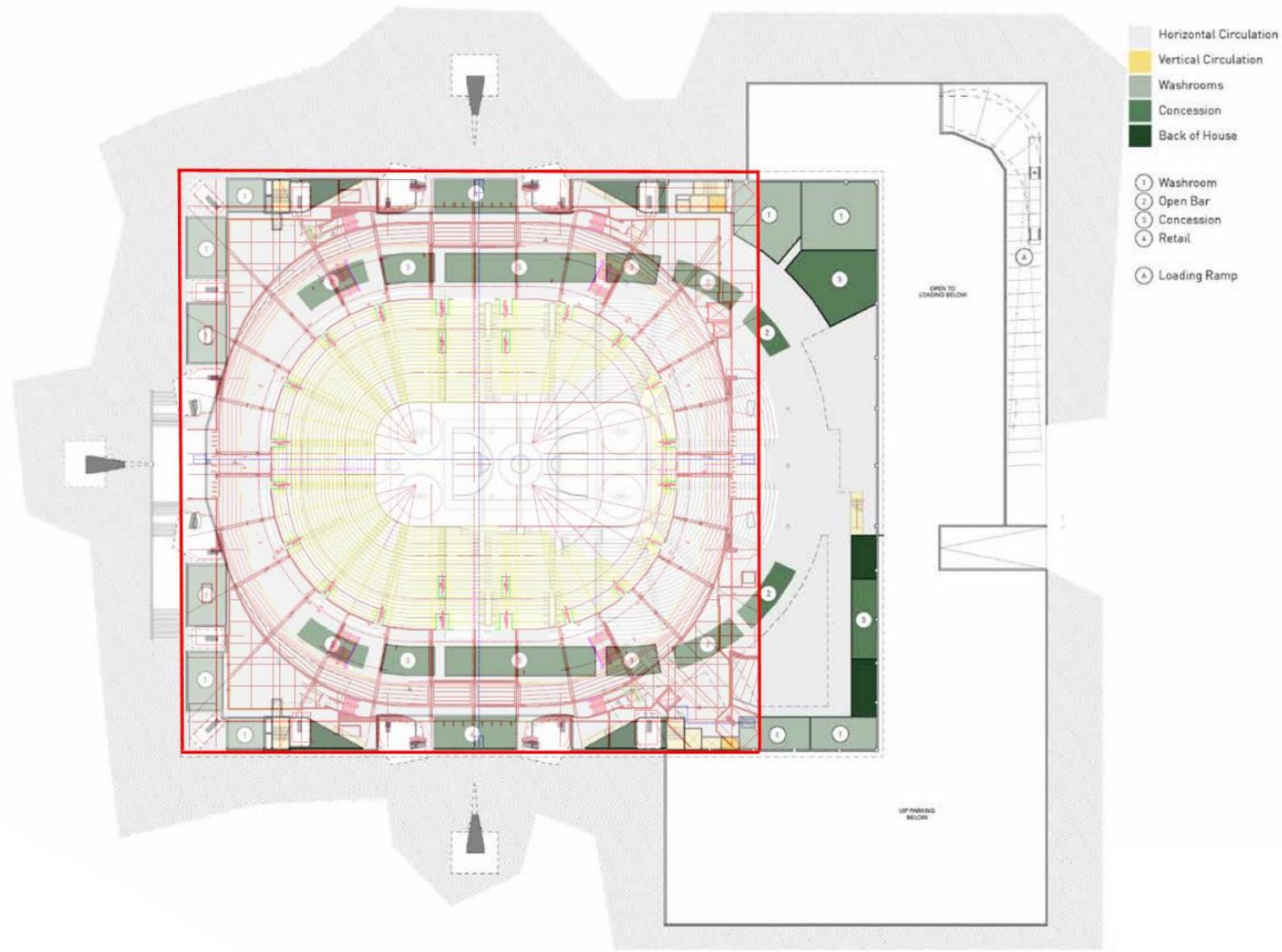


**FIGURE 1**  
**SUITE CONCOURSE**  
**GRADE LEVEL**  
**ENTRIES**

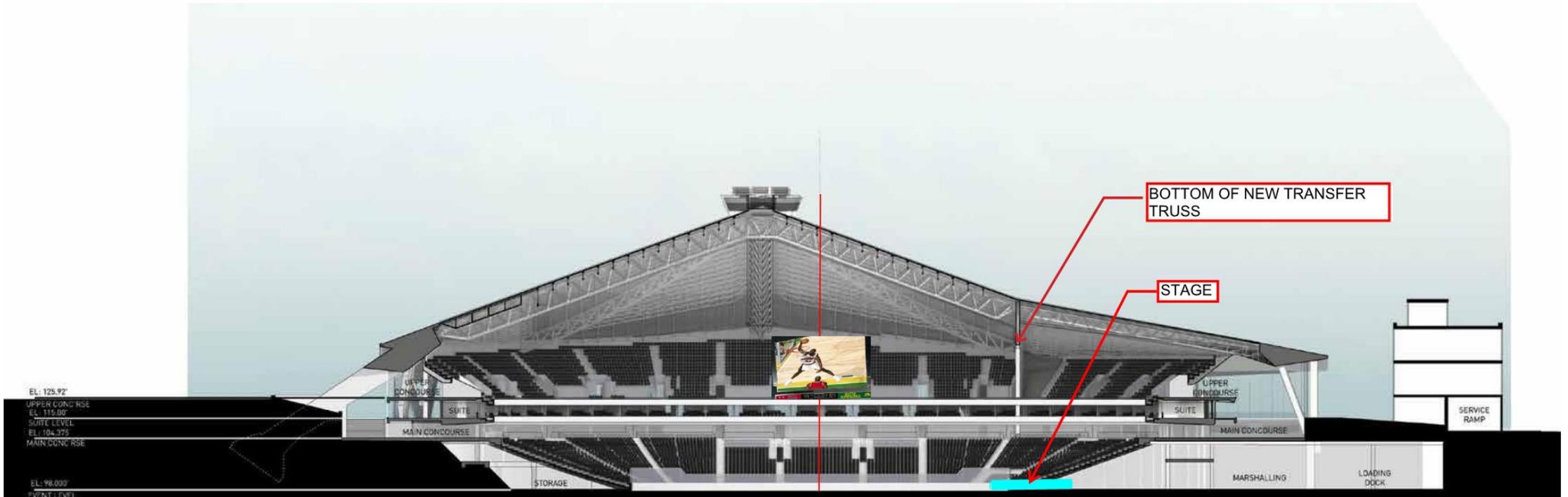


Level 4 - Suite Concourse

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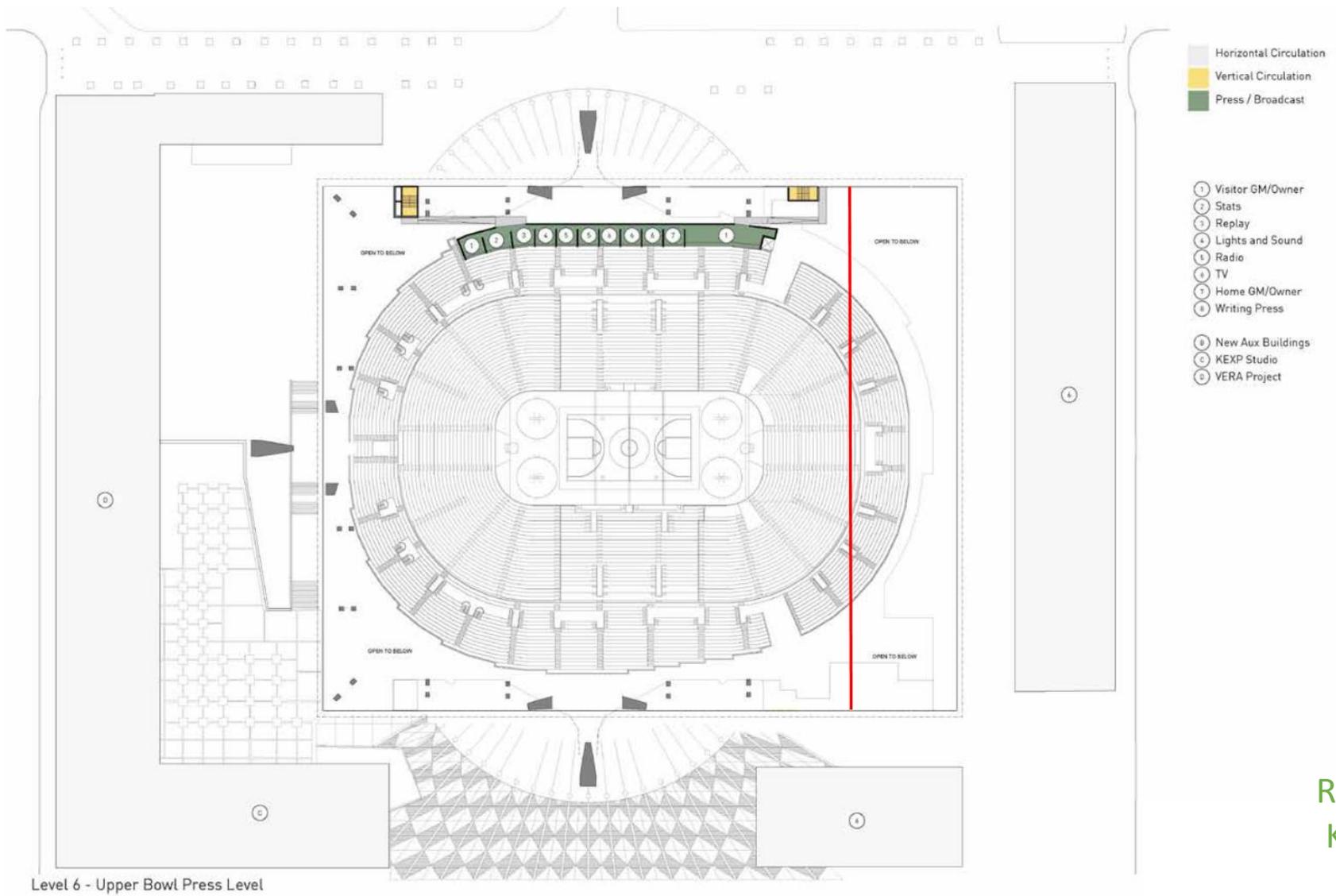


**FIGURE 2**  
CURRENT KEY ARENA,  
OUTLINE IN RED

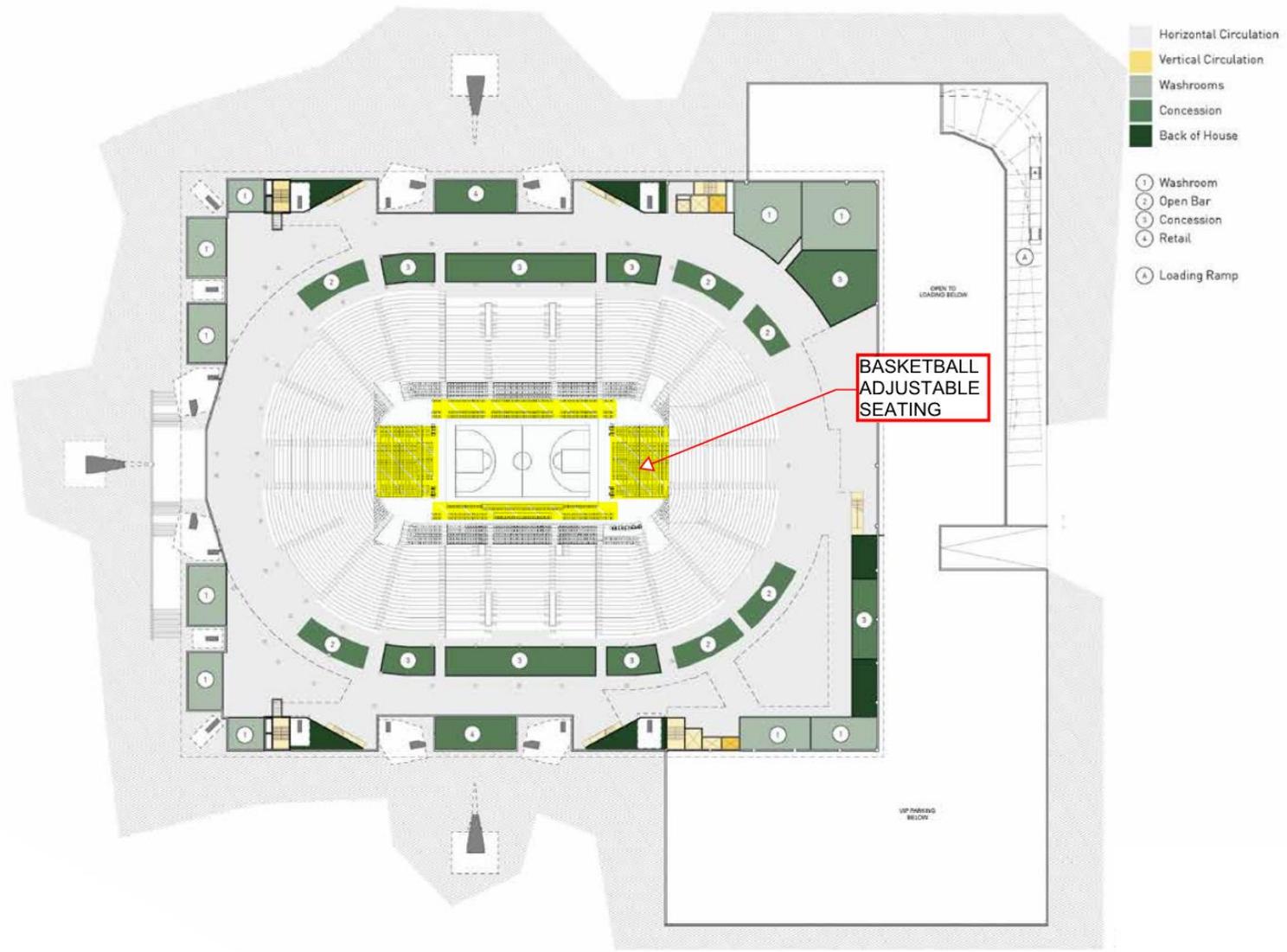


**FIGURE 3**

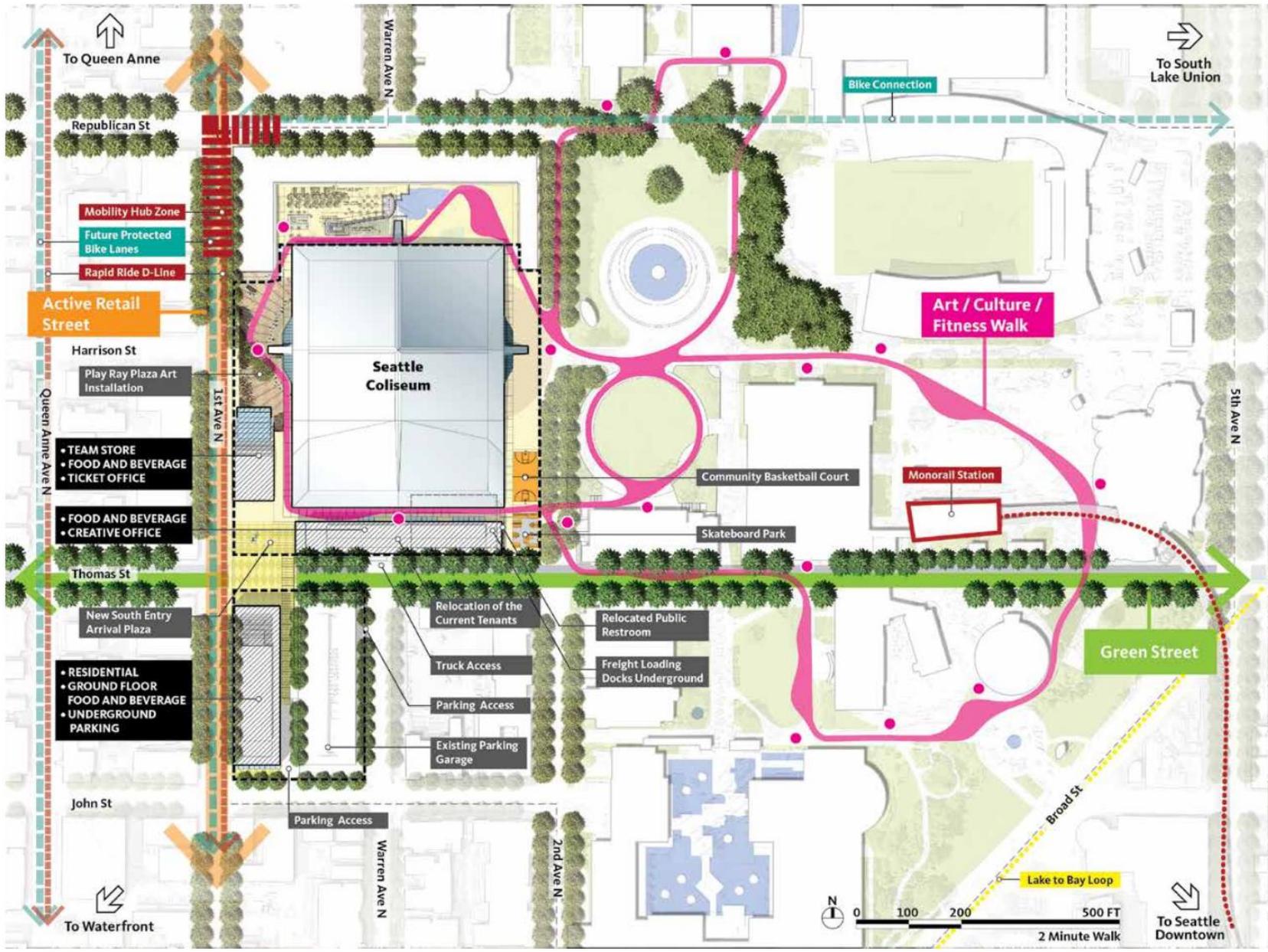
**NOTE:**  
SCOREBOARD OFF CENTER  
LOCATION AND TRANSFER  
TRUSS/STAGE RELATIONSHIP



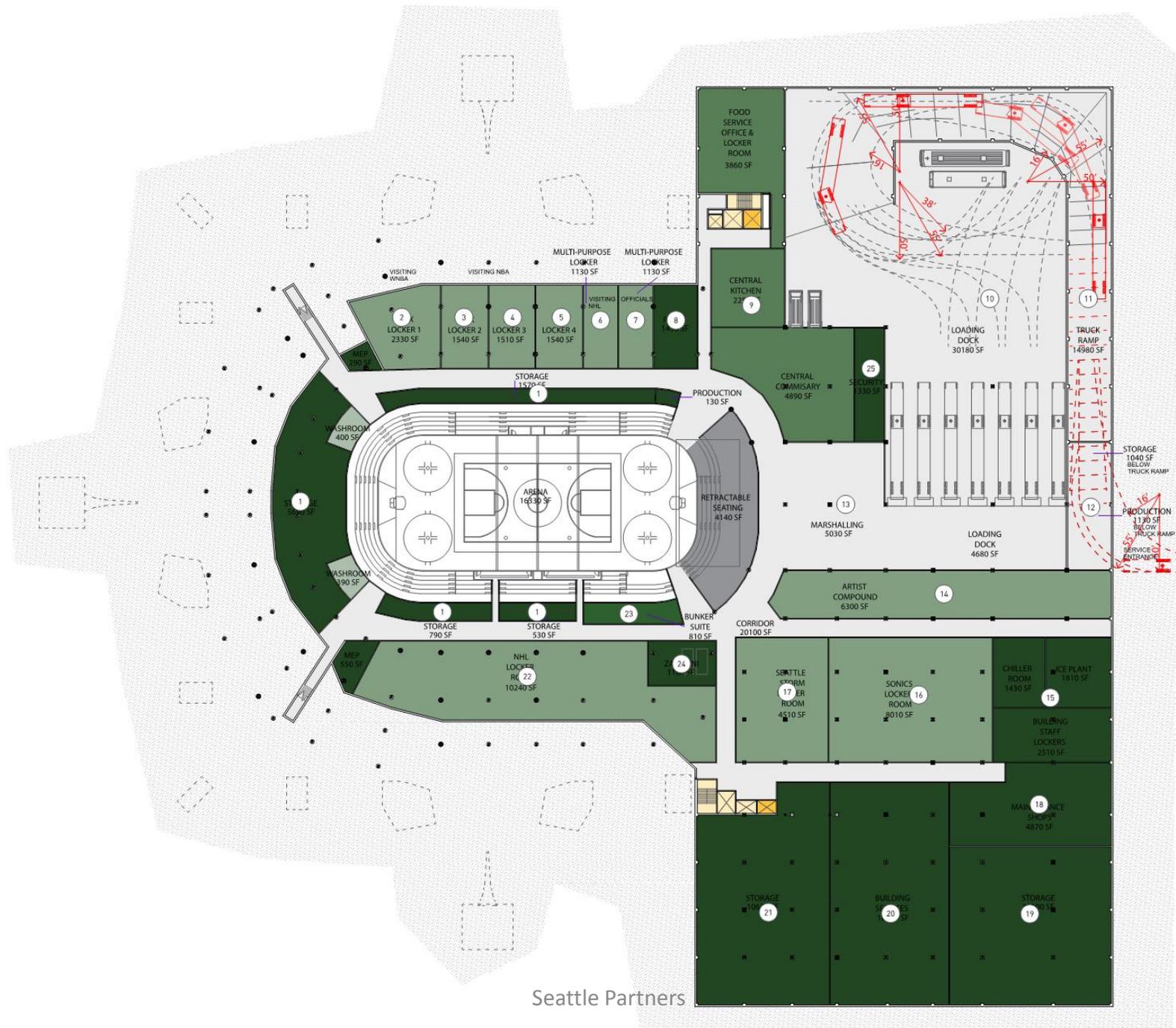
**FIGURE 4**  
 RED LINE INDICATES  
 KEY ARENA SOUTH  
 EDGE



**FIGURE 5**



**FIGURE 6**  
 PROPOSER ATTENTION  
 TO SITE INTEGRATION



- Horizontal Circulation
- Vertical Circulation
- Performer Space
- Back of House
- Stage location

- ① Storage
- ② Aux/Visitor WNBA Locker
- ③ Aux/Visitor NHL/NBA Locker
- ④ Aux/Visitor NHL/NBA Locker
- ⑤ Aux Locker Room
- ⑥ AUX Locker Room
- ⑦ Official Locker Room
- ⑧ Press Room
- ⑨ Kitchen/Commissary/Storage
- ⑩ Loading Dock
- ⑪ Loading Ramp
- ⑫ Production Compound
- ⑬ Marshalling Zone
- ⑭ Artist Compound
- ⑮ Building Services
- ⑯ Sonics Locker Room
- ⑰ Storm Locker Room
- ⑱ Maintenance Shop
- ⑲ Storage
- ⑳ Building Services
- ㉑ Storage
- ㉒ NHL Locker Room
- ㉓ Bunker Suite
- ㉔ Zamboni
- ㉕ Security

**FIGURE 7**  
**TRUCK TURNING**  
**DIAGRAM**

