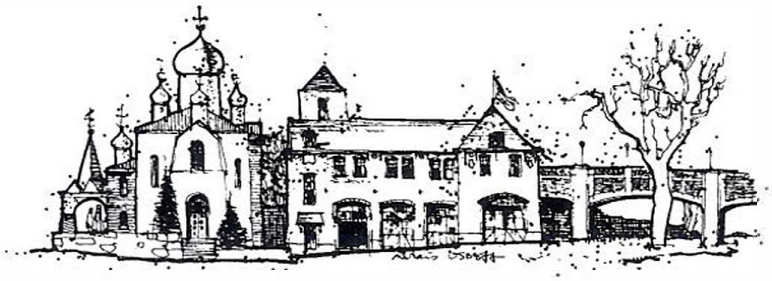

The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

Name KeyArena, Washington State Coliseum Year Built 1962
(Common, present or historic)

Street and Number 305 Harrison Street

Assessor's File No. 1985200003

Legal Description See page 3

Plat Name: Denny's D.T. 3rd Addition Block 31, 32, 35, 36 Lot

Present Owner: Seattle Center / City of Seattle Present Use: Event Space

Address: 305 Harrison Street

Original Owner: City of Seattle (leased to 1962 Seattle World's Fair)

Original Use: Exhibit Space

Architect: Paul Thiry

Builder: Howard S. Wright Construction

Submitted by: Katie Pratt, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

Address: 401 Broadway, Suite 301, Tacoma, WA 98402

Phone: 253-572-4599 Date 3-30-2017

Reviewed: _____ Date _____
Historic Preservation Officer

Washington State Coliseum (KeyArena)
City of Seattle Historic Landmark Nomination

Building Information

Name (Historic): Washington State Coliseum, Century 21 Coliseum

Name (Current): KeyArena

Year Built: 1962

Street & Number: 305 Harrison Street

Assessor's File No.: 1985200003

Plat/Block/Lot: Denny's D.T. 3rd Addition, Blocks 31, 32, 35, 36

Present Owner: Seattle Center / City of Seattle

Present Use: Event Space

Present Owner Address: 305 Harrison Street

Original Owner: City of Seattle (leased to 1962 Seattle World's Fair)

Original Use: Exhibit Space

Original Architect: Paul Thiry

Original Consultants: Peter Hostmark

Original Builder: Howard S. Wright Construction

Legal Description: DENNYS D T 3RD ADD ALL OF BLK 36 & POR VAC STS & ALLEY D T DENNYS 3RD & ALL OF BLKS 32 & 35 & POR VAC STS & ALLEY D T DENNYS HOME ADD & ALL OF BLK 31 & POR VAC STS & ALLEY D T DENNYS NORTH SEATTLE

Description

This nomination addresses the former Washington State Coliseum (also referred to as Century 21 Coliseum), currently known as KeyArena, and the adjacent properties on tax parcel 198920-0003. Due to the broad community interest, the buildings are referred to by their current names for ease of general reference. Exceptions to this are in the Historical Context sections where name use corresponds to the time period being described. The buildings discussed within this nomination include:

- KeyArena (originally known as the Washington State Coliseum or Century 21 Coliseum)
- Northwest Rooms (originally known as the International Commerce and Industry Buildings and already listed as a Seattle Landmark)
- International Fountain Pavilion (originally known as the Sweden Pavilion and later as the Northwest Crafts Center; already listed as a Seattle Landmark)
- International Plaza (an associated open space; already listed as a Seattle Landmark)
- NASA Building
- Seattle Center Pavilion (a relocated portion of the NASA Building)
- West Court Building (originally known as Western Pacific Insurance Company and later the Century 21 Headquarters during the 1962 fair)
- Blue Spruce Building (originally known as the Blue Spruce Apartments and later as the Administration Building during the 1962 fair)

As the guiding architect planning the 1962 Seattle World's Fair design, Paul Thiry utilized the neighborhood street grid as the underlying organizational pattern. He complimented this easily navigable pattern with prominent principal structures, such as KeyArena, to serve as focal points within the campus. Surrounding landscaped courtyards and open space provided relaxing, spacious counterpoints to the buildings.[1] West Harrison Street's connection served as the west gate to the fairgrounds. Main entrances represent a feature specific to the fair. Since entry to the fairground required ticket purchase, planners reduced public access to the fairgrounds to five locations. Today, entrances have all become open spaces to support open connections between Seattle Center and the surrounding neighborhood. Many of the principal structures on the World's Fair campus were the result of collaborations between architects and structural engineers. The Coliseum, now known as KeyArena, was designed by Paul Thiry with structural engineering provided by Peter Hostmark.

Adjacent Neighborhood Context

The nominated build is located at the south edge of the Uptown neighborhood (please see Figure 2). Officially called Uptown but also referred to locally as Lower Queen Anne, the neighborhood is bordered by the Queen Anne neighborhood to the north, South Lake Union to the east, Belltown to the south, and the waterfront to the west. The neighborhood reflects a wide range of construction dates and types with a mix of commercial and residential uses.

The earliest street grid for the neighborhood was established by 1870 with names still in use today, including Warren, Mercer, Republican, Harrison, Thomas, and John.[2] In 1883, the area between McGraw Street and

[1] Public Relations Department, *Official Press Book Seattle World's Fair (*Seattle: Century 21 Exposition, Inc., 1962).
[2] Florence K. Lentz and Mimi Sheridan, *Queen Anne Historic Context Statement*, prepared for the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Historic Preservation Program and the Queen Anne Historical Society (October 2005),

Denny Way, from the top of Queen Anne Hill to Lower Queen Anne, were annexed to the City of Seattle. By the late 19th century, the Uptown neighborhood began to develop. Construction predominately consisted of 1- to 2-story wood frame dwellings—single family and multi-family units—as well as the occasional commercial structure.[3] The neighborhood's density increased over the next couple decades as vacant lots were replaced with single-family dwellings, apartment buildings, and small scale commercial buildings, like drugstores and service stations.[4] The Warren Avenue School (built 1902, demolished 1959), on Warren Avenue between Republican and Harrison, and the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Chapel and School (built 1928) at the corner of Warren Avenue and John Street, served as educational and social anchors for the surrounding neighborhood.

Development (and redevelopment) leading up to the adjacent 1962 Seattle World's Fair further shaped the neighborhood. Commercial and apartment building growth expanded and many single-family residences were demolished and relocated to provide for fair parking.[5] Mid-century development included the 1962 Seattle World's Fair site and its redevelopment following the fair, as well as additional commercial and multi-family construction. The site, now known as Seattle Center, continues to serve as an important amenity to the neighborhood's residents.

Site

The buildings addressed in this nomination include the entirety of an ensemble of structures designed by Paul Thiry as part of the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. They served as the western edge for the fair and now Seattle Center. KeyArena anchors the ensemble, with surrounding buildings and open space arranged in a supporting manner around its perimeter (see Figure 1). The Northwest Rooms are located to the north of KeyArena; the International Pavilion to the northeast; the West Court Building and the NASA Building to the southwest; the Seattle Center Pavilion to the southeast; and the Blue Spruce building to the south.

The buildings are all located in tax parcel 198520-0003 (one of the multiple tax parcels included in the 74-acre Seattle Center). This parcel is zoned NC3-85 (Neighborhood Commercial 3, with an 85-foot height limit) and is within the Uptown Urban Center zoning area. This parcel is bounded by Republican Street to the north, Thomas Street to the south, First Avenue N. to the west, and a vacated portion of Second Avenue N. to the east. The address for these properties is 305 Harrison Street, the same as multiple other buildings at Seattle Center.

Since the 1962 Seattle World's Fair, the roads formerly passing through the site (Warren Avenue, Harrison Street, and Second Avenue N.) have been vacated and converted to pedestrian and service vehicle access only. Street traffic passes along the boundary streets (Republican Street and First Avenue N.).

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http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/HistoricPreservation/HistoricResourcesSurvey/context-queen-anne.pdf, p. 4.

[3] Sanborn Fire Insurance Co., "Seattle, Washington," map, 1904-1905, volume 3, sheets 276 and 253.

[4] Sanborn Fire Insurance Co., "Seattle, Washington," map, 1917 update, volume 4, sheets 438 and 479.

[5] Relevant content was utilized from the previous nomination completed on Thiry-designed World's Fair properties. Artifacts Consulting, Inc., "Northwest Rooms and International Fountain Pavilion," City of Seattle Historic Landmark Nomination (2013), p. 4.

Thiry Ensemble and Adjacent Buildings

The Thiry Ensemble consists of a group of structures and open space designed by Paul Thiry for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. This group integrated two existing buildings and covers four city blocks. The ensemble contains several buildings, points of entry, and landscaping features key to the Seattle Center.

- KeyArena (known originally as the Washington State Coliseum)—anchors the group, with the other buildings and open space arranged in a supporting manner around its perimeter.
- Northwest Rooms (known originally as the International Commerce and Industry buildings)—buildings along the northwest and north edges of the ensemble that are already Seattle landmarks.
- International Fountain Pavilion (known originally as the Sweden Pavilion)—a building along the northeast edge of the ensemble fronting the International Fountain and already a Seattle landmark.
- International Plaza—associated open space providing both extended outdoor space for the International Commerce and Industry buildings and a courtyard between the Washington State Coliseum and International Commerce and Industry buildings. The plaza originally had a counterpart that no longer exists on the south side of the Washington State Coliseum.
- NASA Warehouse and Seattle Center Pavilion (known originally as the NASA Building)—forms the southeast and south edge of the ensemble; the original building was split leaving part along First Avenue North and moving the other portion east over the KeyArena kitchen and commissary space.
- Blue Spruce Building (also previously known as the Administration Building, and originally as the Blue Spruce Apartments)—a 1956 neighborhood apartment building along the south edge of the ensemble that was converted for administrative use as part of the fair.
- West Court Building (known originally as the Century 21 Headquarters) a 1953 commercial building along the west side of the ensemble that was converted for use as the fair headquarters.

KeyArena (Washington State Coliseum, Century 21 Coliesum)

Physical Description

Completed in 1962, KeyArena (Washington State Coliseum, Century 21 Coliseum) occupies a square footprint at the west edge of Seattle Center, taking up portions of four city blocks, interrupting Warren Avenue and Harrison Street. The building is mostly centered on the former intersection of Warren Avenue and Harrison Street. This Modern – Populuxe/Googie style building has a hyperbolic paraboloid form with an overhanging roof.[6] This unique form, although massive, hugs the ground in comparison to the soaring Space Needle, contrasting the two iconic world's fair structures (see Photographs 1, 11, and 12).

KeyArena has been extensively altered on the interior, but these changes have not altered the overall building footprint or detracted from the building's impressive exterior image (see Photographs 12 and 18). A 1995 renovation excavated the arena bowl of the building, lowering the floor by 35 feet and increasing the useable interior space. The concourse around the interior perimeter is open to the ceiling, as is the arena space (see Photograph 48). An underground tunnel (called the jetway) connects the main concourse level with the West Court Building, which houses retail space. Cobblestones are laid around the perimeter of the building, both on the interior and exterior (see Photograph 46); these cobblestones were taken from the original

[6] "An Architect's Guidebook to the Seattle World's Fair," *Architecture West*, April 1962, p. 18.

International Fountain, which in turn took them in 1962 from old streets in Seattle.[7] The arena bowl, seating, and concessions are free-standing (see Photograph 47). Concrete and steel framing members are exposed on the interior of the arena. The arena has a flexible arena floor and seating to allow for a variety of event uses. The arena, when set up for sporting events, is roughly an oval with seating arranged around the arena floor, rising up and away from the floor in tiers. The south end of the arena bowl accommodates a stage for performances and seating on the sound end retracts to create the stage space. A loading area with a large service door for trucks is located behind the stage area at the south end.

Four sets of three-legged, massive concrete abutments support this clear span structure. Each facade has one of these four sets of abutments, centered. The abutments support massive external concrete edge beams at the parabolic roof's perimeter as well as four original triangular section girders. The four original triangular section steel trusses in the roof framing are oriented to the cardinal directions. Four diagonal trusses were added in 1995, replacing the original cable-net portion of the roof structure.[8] Standing-seam aluminum roofing panels replaced the original aluminum panels in 1995. The exterior framing is completed with massive V-shaped concrete piers between the three-legged abutments. The apex of the building's impressive roof is crowned a new monitor top and distinctive signage, a four-sided internally illuminated sign emblazoned with "KeyArena."

A glass curtain wall encloses the building, recessed behind the massive abutments and piers and beneath the overhanging roof. The individual lites within the curtain wall are set in alternating courses, creating a unique rhythm to the building's fenestration. The lites mirror the angle of the exterior V-shaped concrete piers and are each set within the curtain wall structure to angle out at the top and in at the bottom (see Photograph 11). The glass curtain wall is mostly intact, but the glazing and entrances were altered with the 1995 renovation, which lowered the arena bowl 35 feet. The excavation is apparent on the building's exterior, evident through the curtain wall extension with new glazing and entrances to fill in the previous entrances and extend the wall plane to the lower level (see Figure 37 and Photograph 22). Previous entrances and ticket windows were removed and infilled with new glazing. Replacement lites are predominately located around the lower reaches of the curtain wall, with intact lites above. New aluminum louver panels are located in the upper portions of each elevation.

The west elevation of the building faces First Avenue N. to the west. This elevation features a centered series of entrances accessing the lowered main concourse and serves as one of two primary entrances into the arena. A second entrance is located at the south end of the elevation, added during the 1995 renovation, and provides access to the suite level (the former main level). The west elevation is fronted by a large plaza comprised of stainless steel and large, color-stained triangular concrete paving. The plaza is a public art piece entitled "Play Ray Plaza" by Vicki Scuri and an electronic readerboard. Semi-circular concrete stairs with metal pipe handrails, added with the 1995 excavation, lead from the plaza down to the west entrance. Round bollards and metal streetlights ring the stairs at the plaza level. Concrete steps with a concrete handrail hug the southern edge of the Northwest Rooms and lead from the plaza up to the courtyard and around to the north

[7] Michael Houser, "KeyArena," Historic Property Inventory Report, Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (February 2004).
[8] Joseph E. Gandy, "Coliseum 21: Going Up!," *Progress Magazine*, September 1960. Courtesy of the Seattle Public Library's Century 21 Digital Collection.

elevation of KeyArena. The entrance on this elevation is lower than it was originally, reflecting a 1995 renovation to increase the useable interior space.

The north elevation of the building faces the Northwest Rooms and the northern upper portion of the original International Plaza. This elevation features a centered entrance accessing the lowered main concourse. A second set of entrances are located at the west end of the elevation, added during the 1995 renovation, and provide egress from the upper concourse. The International Plaza serves as a two-tiered courtyard between the Northwest Rooms and KeyArena. Stairs provide circulation between the upper and lower levels of the plaza. The upper level contains a large contemporary planter and new stairs leading down to the KeyArena; this level formerly featured the northwest pylon fountain and a wide set of angled stairs from the fountain level to the original entrance level (see Figure 26). The northwest pylon conceals air exhaust vents for the tunnel and offices. The contemporary planter follows the same footprint of the original angled stairs. Two exhaust lines run under the plaza.[9] The lower level features an organically shaped fountain containing three bronze sculptures by Everett DuPen, commissioned as part of the original *Fountain of Creation*. DuPen guided reconfiguration of the original fountain to its current form. Added planters flank the east and south sides of the space with contemporary trees. The retaining wall between the upper and lower plazas features contemporary stone cladding, stepped planters, trees and low plantings.

The east elevation of the building faces the heart of Seattle Center. This view of the KeyArena is visible from several vantage points from within Seattle Center. This elevation features a centered series of entrances accessing the lowered main concourse and serves as one of two primary entrances into the arena. A concrete ticket area, added in 1995, is located along the south end of the elevation. A walkway is centered on the KeyArena's massive abutment on this elevation and extends from the east elevation entrance to the western edge of Harrison Street. Semi-circular concrete stairs with metal pipe handrails, added with the 1995 excavation, lead from the plaza down to the east entrance.

The south elevation of the building faces a large service area and ramp, the catering area underneath the Seattle Center Pavilion, and the north (rear) elevation of the Blue Spruce Building. The lower level of the Seattle Center Pavilion houses the large kitchen for KeyArena and the two buildings are connected at that level. Originally, a southern counterpart to the International Plaza edged the southern elevation of the building. A steep loading ramp leads to the below grade service area at the south end of KeyArena.

An interesting component of KeyArena is a set of two tunnels built in 1962 that terminated in office/support space built directly under the Northwest Rooms to the north and the British Pavilion (later Seattle Art Museum), then Seattle Center Pavilion (now demolished) to the south. The north support space provides offices for Seattle Center's KeyArena staff. The south support space was expanded in 1995 to accommodate the KeyArena food and beverage program by expanding the narrow tunnel to the west to create a loading dock in the south service area directy adjacent to the catering kitchen and concessions commissary. The current Seattle Center Pavilion was constructed above the expanded tunnel and in 2008, the former British Pavilion/Seattle Art Museum was demolished to create a skatepark above the commissary space. At both the north and south, there is no connection between the above ground program space and the below grade KeyArena support spaces.

[9] Its counterpart, the southeast pylon, featured a different design but provided the same function off the south side of the Washington State Coliseum.

Original Design and Construction

Paul Thiry designed, and Howard S. Wright Construction constructed, the Century 21 Coliseum as a massive exhibition space for the world's fair. The post-tensioned edge beams and galvanized wire tensioned cables supporting the hyperbolic paraboloid roof provided column-free exhibit space measuring 400-feet square and 115-feet high.[10] Four massive concrete abutments and V-shaped concrete piers provided further support. The roof was covered in 3,700 aluminum panels, clamped to the wire cables. Reynolds Metals Co. fabricated the aluminum panels to include sound and heat insulation materials and finished them with a diamond-embossed aluminum and two coats of lacquer.[11] A gold-anodized monitor capped the roof form, creating a distinctive crown for the roof apex, and also visually connecting with the gold paint atop the Space Needle.[12]

Thiry designed a glass curtain wall to enclose the building, recessed beneath the overhanging edge of the building's roof. The curtain wall not only allowed natural light to permeate the interior, but allowed passersby to see into the exhibit space, inviting them to visit (see Photograph 17). The building featured entrances on all four elevations, accessible at grade level. Original drawings and historic photographs indicate the doors primarily consisted of aluminum French doors.

The Coliseum interior showcased Washington's own exhibit, the "World of Tomorrow" exhibit, enclosed by a honeycomb of multi-colored aluminum cubes. Some of the cubes even served as projection screens. Visitors traveled through the structure in a transparent glass globe elevator, called the Bubbleator. A journey through the Century 21 Coliseum lasted 21 minutes, 100 visitors at a time. A white-painted spiral staircase also provided access up into the exhibit (see Photograph 44).

Two tunnels connected the Coliseum with the perimeter buildings. The north tunnel extended from northwest corner of the Coliseum's main level north to the lower level of the International Commerce and Industry Buildings. Restrooms were located off the tunnel to the west, outside of the footprint of the Coliseum. The south tunnel extended from the southeast corner of the Coliseum's main level south to the lower level of the British Pavilion. Restrooms were located off the tunnel to the east, outside of the footprint of the Coliseum. There were no internal connections between the above ground program space and the below grade spaces.

Post-World's Fair Conversion and Subsequent Remodels

After the fair ended in October 1962, work began to convert the site to a civic center, coined Seattle Center. Buildings and their functions were reimagined as well as the site's overall permeability and exhibits were removed. The Coliseum's exhibits—the World of Tomorrow and the accompanying Bubbleator—were removed to facilitate arena and convention center use (see Photograph 45). Remodeling began in May 1963, with Thiry at the design helm and Wick Construction Co. serving as general contractor.[13]

[10] "Century 21 Exposition Coliseum—Seattle," *Architectural Record*, April 1961, p. 255.
[11] "Seattle World's Fair: Principal Projects," *Architecture/West*, April 1962, 18.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Stanton H. Patty, "Coliseum to Open in Center Tomorrow," *The Seattle Times*, June 4, 1964: 17.

Workers completed the Coliseum renovation in late spring 1964 and opened to the public for a pageant on June 5th. The building was remodeled to accommodate sporting events as well as live performances and the new layout was designed to be flexible for a variety of uses.

The site became an open campus; where visitors were once funneled through ticketed entrances, they were now able to freely access the campus from numerous points. The 1964 remodel installed a seamless concrete slab, measuring 202-feet long by 87-feet wide, to form an ice floor for hockey. An elevated and permanent seating bowl, consisting of 8,600 red-and-gold seats, surrounded the arena floor. Telescopic risers, containing an additional 3,800 seats, extended from this balcony level down to the arena floor. Ramps extended up to the seating areas on the west and east sides of the arena. A four-sided score board and a cluster of loud speakers were suspended in the middle of the arena. The concourse around the arena bowl features built-in concession stands and restrooms. Portable ticket booths, turnstiles, stages, partitions, backstage dressing rooms, and offices were arranged within the interior space as well.[14]

After nearly 30 years of use as an arena and event space, the Coliseum was once again in need of major renovation work. The City of Seattle and the Seattle SuperSonics, the NBA basketball team which called the Coliseum home, had previously joined together in 1985 to refurbish the building with new seats, playing floor, and scoreboard for $2 million.[15] The two tunnel and below grade support spaces were turned into the Sonics' and visitor's locker rooms. Teams had to walk down the long tunnel and cross the main concourse to reach the basketball floor.

Despite this work, a leaky roof and limited seating continued to hinder the building's success. Additionally, NBA standards for premium seating, food and beverage service, media support, TV broadcast, and team security had changed and could no longer be accommodated in the existing building. This next renovation, completed in 1995, excavated the arena floor down an additional 35 feet to accommodate increased seating and completely replaced the roof with a seven-layer rigid roof. The below grade event floor included sports locker rooms and performer dressing rooms. The new south end service yard included the food and beverage service loading dock and TV production truck parking. The remodeled Coliseum increased the arena's seating for basketball by 3,000 seats, plus included 58 luxury boxes, an 8-sided scoreboard, and new seats, concessions, lights, floor, and restrooms.[16] The $104 million remodel retained the concrete support structure and the glass curtain wall, but completely reworked the building's interior. The Sonics ownership invested $21 million for Sonics locker room spaces, the scoreboard, and the food and beverage build-out for concessions and catering. The remaining $83 million in funds for the renovation were obtained from City of Seattle-issued (LTGO) Limited Tax General Obligation bonds ($73.4 million), interest earnings on bond proceeds ($3.8 million), 1991 Seattle Center Levy Funds ($3.4 million), other City of Seattle funds ($1.9 million), and construction settlements and the Seattle Thunderbirds ($500,000).[17] This renovation also resulted in a name change for the building, as Key Bank agreed to pay $15 million over 15 years for naming

[14] Patty, "Coliseum to Open in Center Tomorrow."
[15] John Peoples, "Coliseum: Sonics' Old Home Has a New Look," *The Seattle Times*, October 30, 1985: F5.
[16] Jack Broom, "Arena Practically Rebuilt from Scratch – More Room, Seats and Eats," *The Seattle Times*, October 23, 1995: B1.
[17] "Key Arena Funding," Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, courtesy Seattle Center.

rights to the building.[18] The Coliseum's new name, KeyArena, was visible to all with the renovation's addition of a new monitor top and a 6 ½-by-41-foot red neon sign at the roof's peak.

Northwest Rooms (International Commerce and Industry Buildings)

Completed in 1962, the Northwest Rooms is a clear span structure at the northeast corner of Thomas Street and 1st Ave N. The west and north facades, facing the surrounding streets, are solid except for two pass-through areas for site access. Concrete columns provide the structural framing, clad with solid tilt-up concrete wall panels on the north and west facades. The west and north facades have never featured windows. In contrast, the east and south facades are oriented inwards to the plaza and KeyArena. The east and south facades, originally at least partially open-air, were enclosed after the fair with sheets of glass or aluminum. The L-shaped footprint rests on a poured concrete foundation. A flat, steel framed roof with wide overhanging eaves caps the building. On all sides of the building, steel joists extend out beyond the walls to support the eaves. Corrugated steel decking comprises the roof structure and the underside of the eaves. An original pre-cast concrete railing borders the concrete stairs at the southeast corner of the west wing. There are two pass-through corridors in the north wing, providing separations between the building segments and circulation for pedestrians between the plaza and Republican Street. The roof is continuous over these corridors, which are open on either end. Added skylights allow increased daylighting to the canopy.

The upper level rooms and courtyard are at the same grade as the NW exit from the upper concourse of the KeyArena, with the north tunnel running under the courtyard. The lower level courtyard is the level of the floor plate of the north tunnel and support space, with an entrance to the north tunnel and support space adjacent to the stairs between the upper and lower levels.

International Fountain Pavilion (Sweden Pavilion and, later, the Northwest Crafts Center)

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

On the interior, the mostly open volume features exposed roof trusses and roof decking. Three public entrances to the building are spaced along the east (front) facade. These feature replacement doors set within original openings. A fourth entrance, at the north end of the east facade, has been converted to display windows. During the Century 21 World's Fair, carpeting covered at least a portion of the floor. After the fair, the carpeting was presumably removed in favor of asbestos floor tiles, which are largely intact. Shallow steps

[18] Broom, "Arena Practically Rebuilt from Scratch."

and ADA ramps navigate slight changes in the floor grade. Freestanding partition walls separate the main exhibit space from service and storage areas along the west side of the floor plan.

NASA Building, Seattle Center Pavilion, and former British Pavilion

Built in 1962, the NASA Building is a single-story, clear span structure at the northeast corner of Thomas Street and 1st Ave N. Steel columns provide the structural framing (see Photographs 26-30). The rectangular footprint rests on a poured concrete foundation. A flat, steel framed roof with wide overhanging eaves caps the building. On all sides of the building, steel joists extend out beyond the walls to support the eaves. Corrugated metal decking comprises the roof structure and the underside of the eaves. Although original designs for the building called for open sides facing the Coliseum (KeyArena), historic photos from the Century 21 World's Fair show the building was always enclosed (see Photographs 14-16). The north and east facades had corrugated metal cladding, with tilt-up concrete panels on the west and south facades. There have been moderate changes to the original cladding. The few original windows from the fair were removed at an unknown time.

There have been extensive changes to the original plan, notably the removal of the east wing. That wing accounted for more than half of the original footprint. A portion of the removed wing's tilt-up concrete panels were repurposed on the new Seattle Center Pavilion. The southern half of the current NASA Building's east facade was once inside the original NASA Building. A tall freight/loading entryway with a contemporary metal roll-up door has been cut into the east facade's 6th and 7th bays (with 1st at the south end) of the east facade, accessible via a short concrete ramp. To the north on the east facade, a set of double metal security doors provides service access to the building. In the north facade, a single metal door atop a short flight of steps behind a concrete half-wall at the far west end accesses the building. The only other openings in the north facade are two added ventilation louvers high in the wall. The west facade has three similar louvers, also high in the wall. There are no openings in the south facade. Planting strips surround the building on the west, south, and east sides. Surface parking directly abuts the north facade. The interior of the current NASA Building is an open volume, providing storage space for Seattle Center. Eighteen concrete panels removed as part of 1995 alteration were reused in create the Seattle Center Pavilion, seven on the north elevation and 11 on the west elevation. Additional panels were removed during this renovation and used to create a wall along the north edge of Thomas Street.

The Seattle Center Pavilion is a new building, adjacent to the southeast corner of KeyArena between Warren and 2nd avenues (see Photographs 41-43), and constructed above the KeyArena catering kitchen. When built in 1995, the entry vestibule and restrooms were shared with the former British Pavilion/Seattle Art Museum and they were known as Seattle Center Pavilion A, (the larger British Pavilion) and Seattle Center Pavilion B (the smaller new structure). In 2008, the Seattle City Council directed Seattle Center, via Ordinance 122456, to build a new skatepark on the site of the British Pavilion to replace the skatepark being demolished as part of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation campus construction on the former Lot 2 site.[19] Since then, the newer structure has been known simple as Seattle Center Pavilion. It is a single-story, tall volume structure with a rectangular footprint resting on poured concrete foundation. This clear span structure is framed with steel columns and is clad with metal panels, concrete panels, and concrete block. The decorative tilt-up

[19] City of Seattle, Ordinance No. 122456,

concrete panels, relocated from the NASA Building, clad the west and north elevations. The east and south elevations were constructed of new materials—metal panels and concrete block. A flat roof with wide overhanging eaves caps the building. On all sides of the building, steel joists extend out beyond the original building's walls to support the eaves. Corrugated metal decking comprises the roof structure and the underside of the eaves. Eighteen decorative tilt-up concrete panels from the NASA building were reused on the north and west facades. The Seattle Center Pavilion is built on top of the KeyArena catering kitchen, adjacent to the skatepark that sits on the site where the British Pavilion stood during the World's Fair.

West Court Building

Completed in 1953, the former Century 21 Headquarters (Building 23, West Court Building) is a two-story concrete and steel frame, Modern style building at the southeast corner of the KeyArena (see Photographs 31-34). The square footprint rises from a poured concrete foundation. A flat roof and parapet cap the building. Expressed concrete piers and concrete spandrels comprise the exterior frame, with steel columns spaced evenly throughout the floor plan to support the second floor and ceiling. Painted stucco clads the exterior of the building. The northwest corner of the ground floor has been cut away under an elliptical canopy. Large contemporary display windows at that corner highlight the new retail space on the interior. Original window openings remain on the second floor in the west, south and east walls, but all window sashes have been replaced. These second floor windows fill the width of the recessed bays between piers. Second floor windows mimic the original fenestration pattern but consist of replacement aluminum sashes. Select windows have been removed and infilled or converted to other openings (doors, box office windows, ventilation panels) on all facades. There is a single contemporary horizontal, fixed, aluminum framed rectangular sash at the ground floor of the east facade. A solid metal security door accesses the building at the north end of the east facade. A planting strip extends halfway along the east facade. Surface parking directly abuts the south facade. Lighting fixtures extend from the south and east parapets. Concrete pavement directly abuts the west and north facades. A contemporary box office, with multiple ticket windows sheltered by an added shed roof canopy, occupies half of the north facade. A contemporary decorative fin wall projects midway from the north facade, between the box office and the retail space.

This building has been extensively altered on the interior to accommodate shifting uses over time. Offices exist on the second floor and the first floor was remodeled in 1995 to accommodate a ticket office and team store for the SuperSonics. A jetway was constructed in 1995 to connect this building to KeyArena at its southwest corner on the main concourse level. The footprint has had slight alterations, and the original windows have been extensively altered. The original cladding is intact under added layers of paint; in-kind cladding has been added where windows have been removed.

Blue Spruce Building

Completed in 1956, the former Blue Spruce Apartments building occupies a U-shaped footprint on the north side of Thomas Street, just south of the Coliseum on the Seattle Center campus (see Photographs 35-40). This building has a typical Modern, multi-family residential form. The three-story, concrete block structure stands on a poured concrete foundation. Exterior walls are clad with concrete block. On the south walls of the east and west stairwells, the concrete blocks are laid in a decorative relief pattern, with alternating quads of blocks recessed or protruding, producing a zigzag effect. A flat roof and surrounding parapet cap the building. Bands of stepped out sheet metal form the parapet. The footprint's U-shape opens to the south, with poured

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

Summary of Alterations

Major contemporary additions to the Thiry ensemble affecting properties within the nominated boundaries:

Coliseum/KeyArena

- 1963-1964: Renovation to accommodate sports arena use; complete interior remodel
- By 1979: Interior bowl seating increased from about 12,000 to 15,000 capacity
- 1985: Refurbishment replacing the seats, playing floor, and scoreboard for $2 million
- 1994-1995: Renovation and rebranding as KeyArena
    - Lowering of the main concourse level with new entrances
    - Original roofing removed, along with the cable suspended roof. Four additional diagonal trusses added to replace cable system. New monitor added to roof apex with KeyArena signage
    - Southeast ticket sales addition
    - Conversion of multiple secondary entrances at main level to windows; select glazing panels painted black to obscure mechanical systems
    - Existing arena bowl seating removed and exhibition floor excavated down an additional 35 feet. Upper and lower seating bowl expanded. Five interior levels created; event floor, lower concourse, main concourse, suite concourse and upper concourse.
    - Mechanical addition to the west side of the International Fountain Pavilion containing mechanical equipment supporting KeyArena functions
    - Angled stairs in north plaza transformed into planter
    - New exterior stairs added along north and south elevations, leading from new entrances at main concourse level up to grade level
    - Semi-circular stairs added along east and west elevations, leading from new entrances at main concourse level up to grade level
    - Service yard with steep loading ramp to the event floor added at southwest end; food and beverage service loading dock added at southeast end; service yard used for bus and truck parking, trash compacting and electrical service

    - Electronic readerboard and 1% for art patterned concrete design added to west courtyard
- 1996: South suite improvements
- 1999: Concession renovations to extend existing concessions adjacent to east and south concourses
- 2003: Steel canopies added at two entries (courtside and suite entries)
- 2004: Conversion of 5 south suites into a club area by removing internal walls, opening up the entries, and creating two serving counters and bars
- Circa 2005: North suite improvements similar to south end
- Undated: Large downspouts added to exterior

NASA Building

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

Seattle Center Pavilion/Skatepark/British Pavilion Site

- 1995: Building constructed with some panels from the former east wing of the NASA Building used as cladding; south storefront added with canopy; concrete masonry unit wall added to south facade of main building to create common entry and restrooms with existing
- British Pavilion demolished in 2008 to build Skatepark, 1995 structure reworked as stand-alone building.

Century 21 Headquarters (West Court Building)

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

Blue Spruce Building

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

Significance Statement

Seattle and Uptown (Queen Anne) Neighborhood

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

Civic Center (pre-1962 Seattle World's Fair)[20]

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

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

[20] This section was written by HistoryLink.org staff historians Alan J. Stein and Paula Becker for the 2013 Historic Landmark Study prepared for Seattle Center by Artifacts Consulting, Inc. Stein and Becker co-authored *The Future Remembered: The 1962 Seattle World's Fair And Its Legacy* (Seattle Center Foundation in association with HistoryLink, 2011).

meant that six full blocks of the ultimate 13-block 1962 Seattle World's Fair site were already in public use before 1930. Major contributors to the creation of these civic facilities included the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Central Labor Council, Seattle Public Schools, the Rainier Post of the American Legion, Seattle mayor Bertha Knight Landes, the City Council, and Seattle voters. While the school and playground served primarily nearby residents, the new civic buildings drew people from throughout the city and beyond to what rapidly became a core of civic activity.

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

In 1947, Seattle Public Schools replaced Civic Field with a stadium. The city condemned the property in the block bordered by Republican and Mercer Streets and 4th and 5th Avenues North to create a parking lot for the stadium. In 1951, the school district added a wall memorializing former students who had lost their lives in World War II. By the mid-1950s, the character of the neighborhood had begun to shift increasingly toward small commercial enterprises. Housing stock, while still plentiful, was aging and frequently not owner-occupied.

The Need

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

The Seattle Civic Arts Committee, formed by community leaders in 1944, recommended the creation of a civic center to Seattle Mayor William F. Devin in 1946. This committee suggested that the City acquire land adjacent to the existing Washington National Guard Armory, Civic Field, and Civic Auditorium near the Denny Regrade. In late 1947, members of the Civic Arts Committee formally incorporated as the Seattle Civic Center Association. The group, chaired by University of Washington drama professor Glenn Hughes, worked steadily to build support for a civic center and pushed the City to acquire land, succeeding somewhat in the former effort, but not the latter.

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

The Dream

By brilliant happenstance the following year, a group of dedicated Seattle boosters floated the idea of creating a world's fair commensurate with the City's wildly successfully Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition of 1909.

They quickly gained the support of the Seattle City Council, Washington Governor Arthur Langlie, and a growing number of state legislators. Seattleite Edward Carlson led the world's fair charge, chairing the Washington World's Fair Commission.

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

The Goal

1962 Seattle World's Fair boosters knew that creating, funding, promoting, and producing an event of magnitude would consume countless resources, both human and financial. Why raise the money, do the work, transform the site, for just a few months' benefit? Their real goal, they realized, meshed perfectly with the aims of the civic center advocates: to create a permanent home for Seattle's arts and culture, a gathering place for the community, a real and lasting legacy that would be the most enduring souvenir of their great 1962 Seattle World's Fair. On November 6, 1956, Seattle voters approved a $7.5 million bond issue to acquire land and build a civic center.

Century 21 Exposition

Overview

Once the site was chosen, both the 1962 Seattle World's Fair Commission and the Civic Center Advisory Commission began the complex process of developing it. All of the existing civic buildings, Memorial Stadium, the Armory, and several newer structures were retained and repurposed for the project. The school, the playground, and more than 200 other structures were demolished. Memorial Stadium was leased from Seattle Public Schools for the duration of the fair, the Armory was leased from the Washington National Guard, and the Nile Shrine Temple was leased from the Nile Temple Holding Company. Although the neighborhood's built environment was altering, the street grid that organized it mostly remained, becoming broad avenues used by pedestrians to navigate the fairground.

The fair's first employee, Ewen Dingwall, was hired jointly by Edward Carlson and Civic Center Commission leader Harold Shefelman as project director for the development of the civic center and the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. Dingwall's first major hire was architect Clayton Young, who oversaw every aspect of the site's transformation for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair with an eye to its post-fair use as civic center. A volunteer Design Standards Advisory Board was comprised of a group of Washington architects (Perry Johanson, John Detlie, Robert Deitz, and Paul Thiry); Seattle's Planning Commission Director John Spaeth; Seattle-born but Detroit-based architect Minoru Yamasaki; and San Francisco landscape architect Lawrence Halprin. In August 1958, Paul Thiry was appointed primary architect for the joint civic center/1962 Seattle World's Fair project. Thiry worked with Clayton Young to ensure that pre-fair decisions would dovetail with post-fair use. Numerous architects created buildings for the site, and all of their designs had to pass muster with Thiry.

Funding for the more substantial buildings came from the City of Seattle, King County, the State of Washington, and the federal government. Corporate and private exhibitors funded smaller structures. While the fair had benefitted from the voter-approved bond issue that purchased 28 acres of the site and paid for some construction, the civic center (and thus the city and region) benefitted from land and construction

financed by these other entities. On February 28, 1961, the civic center was officially named Seattle Center. Century 21 Exposition, the 1962 Seattle World's Fair, opened April 21, 1962, opened via remote control by President John F. Kennedy from Palm Beach, Florida.[21] During its six-month tenure, the fair nearly 10 million visitors before concluding on October 21, 1962. During the fair the site was busy, crowded, its venues heavily programmed. As the fair's end drew near, the question of which structures would be retained became pressing.

Washington State Coliseum, the Thiry Ensemble, and Adjacent Buildings

Fairgoers enjoyed vibrant interactions with the exhibits contained within the complex of buildings by Paul Thiry. In the Washington State Coliseum, visitors were greeted by the "World of Tomorrow" exhibit, a honeycomb cloud of 3250 aluminum cubes 200-feet across and 60-feet high. In groups of 100, visitors accessed the cube structure in a Plexiglass Bubbleator elevator. As they ascended, the Bubbleator operator gave the first speech of a 21-minute multi-sensory performance complete with imagery, taped dialogue, odors, dramatic music, and sound and lighting effects. This show was titled "The Threshold and The Threat," the threat being nuclear annihilation and the threshold being the present, and encouraged visitors to ponder the threat and promise of a modern future.

In addition to the theme exhibit, the Washington State Coliseum housed the American Library Association Exhibit, General Motors Corporation Exhibit, Pan American Airways Exhibit, Washington Tourist Information center, Government of France Exhibit, Cancer Research Exhibit, and Radio Corporation of America Exhibit. While touring the Coliseum, visitors spoke with French exhibit staffers about the importance of art, rather than brute technology, in building a civilized tomorrow. They were pitched products offered by the industrial exhibitors lucky enough to have won space in the Coliseum, where nearly all fairgoers were bound to come. In the International Commerce and Industry buildings, including the Sweden Pavilion, which surrounded the Coliseum, fairgoers confronted and explored much that was new, unfamiliar, challenging and exotic. A visit to Thiry's NASA Pavilion gave fairgoers information about how their tax dollars were being used to bridge the gap between earth and space. Century 21 was NASA's first public exhibition of how quickly American science and technology was overtaking science fiction, and virtually everyone who entered the NASA Pavilion saw cutting edge exhibits and heard brand new information about the program. The Thiry buildings framing his signature Coliseum (KeyArena)—and the Coliseum itself—encouraged interaction and promoted intellectual challenge, new ideas and fresh perspectives.

The nearby former Western Pacific Insurance Company building and Blue Sprue apartment building housed administrative functions for the fair. Designed by Alfors V. Peterson and John W. Adams in 1953, the State of Washington purchased the building for fair use. Architects Tucker & Shields designed the remodel for fair use in 1960. All of the fair's top brass, including fair president Joseph Gandy, Washington Governor Al Rosellini, and World's Fair Commission Executive Director Alfred Rochester, had offices here. Designed by George Bolotin in 1956, the unassuming Blue Spruce apartment building consisted of five one-room and 21 two-room apartments, and served as much-needed office space for fair staffers before and during the exposition. The building was acquired by the City of Seattle and used by the Century 21 Exposition, Inc. for fair departments including Site Development, Purchasing, Personnel, Concessions, Operations and Services, Advance Ticket Sales, and Lodging.

[21] Lawrence E. Davis, "World Fair Ends Today in Seattle," *New York Times*, October 21, 1962: 54.

Post-World's Fair

After the fair ended in October 1962, work began to convert the site to a civic center. The intention to convert the world's fair site into a civic center is evident in the durable construction used on many of the buildings. While some buildings were intended for temporary use, many were designed with forethought to the site's long term use. In fact, Paul Thiry stated that the design for the site was,

> *[N]ot only for the excitement of the moment, but many of its structures and facilities are planned as a permanent adjunct to a projected Seattle Center of lasting significance. The termination of Century 21 Exposition will mark a beginning. Seattle World's Fair is a phoenix among fairs, for from it will emerge a new phenomenon of plazas and buildings destined to provide pleasure for present and future generations.*[22]

Paul Thiry's contract was extended after the Fair so that he could oversee the Washington State Coliseum's conversion for post-fair use, including conversion of the associated International Commerce and Industry buildings and Sweden Pavilion. The City of Seattle purchased and took possession of the Coliseum in early 1963 and Thiry designed the renovation of the Coliseum for use as an indoor sports arena and convention hall. Thirty also designed the renovation of the surrounding International Commerce and Industry buildings and Sweden Pavilion to house support areas for the Coliseum, providing meeting rooms, lecture halls, and banquet halls. and the surrounding buildings as support areas. Wick Construction served as general contractor for the remodeling, which began in May 1963.

The Coliseum reopened to the public on June 5, 1964, hosting the Shrine Pageant.[23] The first large-scale event hosted in the renovated space was the Northwest Vacation and Travel Show, in mid-June.[24] Later that year, The Beatles performed in the Coliseum for thousands of screaming Seattle fans. The Coliseum began hosting an NBA basketball team, Seattle's SuperSonics, after the franchise's formation in 1967. The SuperSonics played their first home game in the Coliseum against the San Diego Rockets on October 20, 1967.

Subsequent renovations to the Coliseum supported the SuperSonics' use of the building, most notably the 1995 renovation excavating the arena bowl to increase seating and changing the building's name to KeyArena. Seattle's SuperSonics were KeyArena's main tenant, galvanizing and delighting basketball fans—especially after winning the NBA finals n 1996—until their deeply mourned departure in 2008. The same year, KeyArena hosted His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and then-presidential candidate Barack Obama. Since the SuperSonics' departure, KeyArena has hosted numerous concerts and events and, as of 2017, is home to the WNBA's Seattle Storm and Seattle University Men's Basketball.

The other buildings adjacent to the Coliseum were also reused and adapted following the conclusion of the fair. The Blue Spruce building was leased to tenants including Greater Seattle, and over the years has served as office space for many Seattle Center tenants and production organizations, such as Folklife. The Century 21 Headquarters, which got its start as the Western Pacific Insurance Company, reverted to state control. The Research Division of the Department of Commerce and Economic Development, the State Military

[22] Paul Thiry, "Seattle World's Fair: A message from the Primary Architect," *Architecture/West*, April 1962, 13.
[23] Patty, "Coliseum to Open in Center Tomorrow."
[24] "Travel Show to Open Coliseum," *The Seattle Times*, February 18, 1964: 1.

Specifications Library, and a variety of state offices all utilized the building over the years. The City of Seattle acquired the building in the mid-1980s and began to use it. In 1995, the building became the box office for KeyArena with a team store connected via the newly constructed jetway; it continues to operate in that capacity.

Modern Architecture and Googie Style

Many of the buildings on the 1962 World's Fair campus were designed in bold, cutting-edge architectural styles, embracing the future-forward perspective of the fair. One of the styles, now known as Googie architecture, was employed on two of the campus's icons (the Space Needle and the Coliseum). Googie architecture, also known as Populuxe or Exaggerated Modern, developed after WWII and represented the American retro-futurism of the 1950s and 1960s. The attention-grabbing style appealed to the average American and was applied on buildings like coffee shops, restaurants, bowling alleys, and motels. The term "Googie" has its origins in a Los Angeles coffee shop called Googie's (designed in 1949). Architecture critic Douglas Haskell saw the building and referred to it as "Googie" architecture, writing a satirical piece in the February 1952 issue of *House & Home*.[25] Although the term was initially used in a derogatory manner, "Googie" has stuck around.

Recognized for their "visual wildness," Googie buildings embrace the futuristic philosophy of the mid-century era, utilizing exaggerated forms, dramatic angles, and bright colors to showcase plastic, steel, and neon.[26] Large, prominent signs were often a hallmark of the style. While occasionally used on institutional and residential buildings, the Googie style is more associated with commercial development. Common elements of Googie architecture include concrete shell vaults, hyperbolic paraboloids, free forms, cantilevered roofs, glass walls, and folded eaves. Prominent roofs and exaggerated structures beckoned customers, grabbing their attention, and allowed businesses to stand out from their customers. Contrast was emphasized over harmony, as Googie buildings were never intended to blend in with their surrounding environment. The style often took its inspiration from the space/atomic age and even the Polynesian Islands (resulting in buildings with "Tiki" elements).

Paul Thiry, Architect[27]

Paul Thiry (1904-1993) was an American architect working in the Pacific Northwest during the 20th Century. His work came to define the genre now known as Northwest Regionalism, and while much of his architectural practice centered on residential clients, his projects include significant public works. Chief among these is Seattle Center. As coordinating architect for Century 21 Exposition (1962 Seattle World's Fair), Thiry left a deliberate legacy of buildings that would accommodate Seattle Center after the fair's October 21, 1962 conclusion. Seattle Center boasts the preeminent example of Thiry's trademark reinforced concrete construction: KeyArena, built as the fair's Washington State Pavilion and adapted under Thiry's

[25] Olympia Heritage Commission, *Mid-Twentieth Century Olympia*, 74; Philp Langdon, *Orange Roads, Golden Arches: The Architecture of American Chain Restaurants* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), 114.
[26] Langden, 15; "Googie: Architecture of the Space Age," *Smithsonian.com* (June 15, 2012), http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/googie-architecture-of-the-space-age-122837470/ (accessed February 15, 2017).
[27] This section was written by Artifacts Consulting, Inc. and HistoryLink.org staff for the Northwest Rooms Seattle Landmark nomination.

direction immediately after the fair as the Coliseum. Thiry oversaw all architecture created for the fairground, and designed numerous structures to serve as exhibit buildings during the fair. These included the International Commerce and Industry buildings surrounding the Washington State Pavilion, the NASA Pavilion, and the stand-alone Sweden, Great Britain, and Republic of China/Taiwan pavilions. The International Commerce and Industry buildings illustrate his ability to connect interiors with outdoor spaces. The expansive views out through a colonnade overlooking a pool with bronze sculpture echoes his notable design of the Washington State Library. The slender columns supporting roof framing were a design feature Thiry had previously employed on the Northeast Branch of the Seattle Public Library and the Washington State Library. This design allowed large bays of windows to run from floor to the underside of the roof, opening the interior to the exterior.

Thiry also designed other fairground structures which no longer exist. These featured diverse designs that contrast from the buildings Thiry intended to be permanent. They include:

- Nalley Pavilion, which was fabricated of concrete pneumatically applied on a frame of reinforcing rods and metal. The building featured an undulating roofline, courtyard, and what was billed as a "space age theater."
- Seattle-First National Bank made of canvas over a steel frame, which provided height and prominence without great expense. The building's front facade consisted of a giant world map.
- Ford Pavilion, a geodesic dome
- Thiry also designed the parabolic support structure on which Paul Horiuchi created his Seattle Mural.

Thiry received enormous national attention as a result of his work as architect of so many buildings and as the fair's coordinating architect. Major architectural publications of the day featured the fair's buildings, including *Architectural Record, Progressive Architecture,* and *Architectural and Engineering News*.

Paul Thiry was born in Nome, Alaska on September 11, 1904, to French parents Hippolette and Louise Schwaebel Thiry. His father was a mining engineer and his mother designed and sold couture-grade women's apparel, first in Nome and then in Seattle. His mother's business interests took the Thiry family to Paris for yearly trips, and young Paul absorbed an international design aesthetic that was far more refined than what he was exposed to as a Seattle schoolboy. When World War I erupted, Thiry's father returned to France to serve in the French military, while Paul and his mother remained in Seattle.

Thiry spent the war years and immediate aftermath attending high school at St. Martin's Preparatory School in Lacey. He matriculated to the University of Washington, where his innate interest in drawing was channeled into the University's School of Architecture. During his student days, Thiry worked in the offices of Seattle architects John Graham and Henry Bittman. A summer course at the American School of Fine Arts in Fontainebleau, France, in 1927 yielded Thiry a diploma from the Government of France. The following year, Thiry completed his University of Washington degree and attained a student medal of excellence from the American Institute of Architects. In 1929 Thiry opened his architectural practice, operating from an office in the Skinner Building in downtown Seattle.

Prefiguring his eventual work on Century 21 Exposition, Paul Thiry traveled to Chicago to experience that city's Century of Progress Exposition in 1933. As a rule, all World's Fairs held in America during the 1930s

postulated a hopeful, progressive, streamlined future. Century of Progress was no exception, and that exhibit paid particular attention to architecture design and construction: new materials, new construction techniques, newly available standardized components, and buildings economically produced to meet the needs of the country's vastly constrained economy. This Exposition influenced Thiry greatly, opening his eyes to considerations of zoning issues and long range planning that had not been part of his classical Beaux Arts tradition architectural education at the University of Washington. These revelations would serve Thiry well when he worked on America's first post-World War II world's fair, Century 21 Exposition.

In 1934, Thiry accepted an offer from former University of Washington classmate Takahashi Matsumoto to work in Japan. The offer was a welcome reason to escape Seattle's gloomy economic environment, and Thiry jumped at the chance. He soon realized, however, that without the ability to speak Japanese he had little chance of employment. His sojourn to Japan was therefore brief, but exposed him to the simplicity and spare elegance of Japanese design, as well as to the living example of American master Frank Lloyd Wright's design, since he stayed in Wright's much heralded Imperial Hotel. After leaving Japan, Thiry traveled around the world. This experience would stand him in good stead when his work on Century 21 Exposition called for him to envision structures that would house the international commerce and industry exhibits of nations from around the world. In late 1935, a more cosmopolitan well-traveled Paul Thiry returned to Seattle, where he briefly entered practice with fellow architect Alban Shay.

Thiry designed his first modernist dwelling as a model home for Seattle real estate agent John L. Scott, followed by a modernist home for himself in 1936. During World War II, Thiry worked on several large scale housing developments and on military projects. These projects utilized reinforced concrete, plywood, and pre-fabricated building components, all of which would play into Thiry's work on Century 21.

From 1952 until 1961 Paul Thiry served on the Seattle Planning Commission. He resigned from the commission in 1961 in protest of the large-scale destruction of housing stock and neighborhoods through Seattle's urban core enacted to enable the construction of the Seattle Freeway (later Interstate 5) through the heart of the City. He was also a member of the Puget Sound Regional Planning Council's executive committee and advisor to the Washington State Committee on urban area government. Thus, when the time came to identify a qualified architect with extensive regional expertise to serve as Century 21 Exposition's coordinating architect, Paul Thiry's name topped the list of candidates.

Thiry's major buildings during the 1950s include the Museum of History and Industry (1950, altered); Charles and Emma Frye Art Museum (1952); the Northeast Branch of The Seattle Public Library (1956, enlarged); and the Washington State Library in Olympia (1959).

In 1957, Thiry was appointed principal architect/coordinating architect for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. Thiry was at the time serving on the joint fair/civic center's volunteer Design Standards Commission, a group of prominent local AIA members who were charged with making important design decisions and recommendations for the developing fair/civic center. This commission also included Seattle-born but Detroit-based architect Minoru Yamasaki and San Francisco landscape architect Lawrence Halprin. Thiry's duties as principal architect included preparing the site plan which incorporated reuse of some existing buildings, planned for construction that would leave a permanent cultural center to serve the civic good—which was the principal desire of fair planners—and coordinate all aspects of the fairground's built environment. This included liaising with all of the architects whose work was incorporated in the fair plan,

coordinating with public and privates entities who were stakeholders in the fair's success, working closely with architect Clayton Young, who was charged with site coordination for the joint project, as well as designing some of the fair's most significant buildings. For his extensive commitment and exemplary work, Paul Thiry was named Man of the Year for 1962 by both the Seattle City Council and the Seattle Chamber of Commerce. The same year, President John F. Kennedy appointed Thiry to the National Capitol Planning Commission. Along with other luminaries in his field, Thiry served on the Kennedy Library Design Advisory Committee, at the appointment of Jacqueline Kennedy.

Without a doubt, Thiry's life and experience in architecture and as a student of the world led to his appointment as Century 21 Exposition's principal architect. Also doubtless is the fact that Thiry's impressive work on the fair catapulted him onto the national—even international—stage, where his skill and expertise were well utilized in creating and maintaining major civic environments that belong to all citizens of the United States of America.

Peter Hostmark, Engineer

Structural engineer Peter Hostmark was born in Molde, Norway. Hostmark paid for his schooling by manning Arctic meteorological stations in Spitzbergen and Jan Mayen in the 1920s.[28] He graduated from the Norwegian Institute of Technology in 1927 before immigrating to Seattle. He served as a captain in the Army during World War II and was the head of Army Air Force rescue operations in Greenland.[29] After the war he returned to Seattle and continued his work as an engineer.

Peter Hostmark and his firm, Peter Hostmark & Associates, provided structural engineering for the Washington State Coliseum (KeyArena) and surrounding buildings. According to B. Richal Smith (b. 1932), a Hostmark employee from 1961-63, the Hostmark firm did the structural engineering on all the fair buildings designed by Paul Thiry, in the Coliseum vicinity (Marga Rose Hancock, www.HistoryLink.org). These would include the International Commerce and Industry buildings surrounding the International Plaza (now Northwest Rooms), and the Sweden Pavilion (now International Fountain Pavilion). In addition to his work for the fair, Hostmark served as structural engineer for the Southgate Elementary School in 1950 and South Central Junior-Senior High School in 1952;[30] and The Tropic Motor Hotel in 1958,[31] among other projects.

Hostmark was a distinguished engineer in Seattle, receiving numerous awards for his career achievements. His recognitions include being named engineer of the year by the Consulting Engineers Association of Washington in 1962, a Design in Steel award from the American Iron & Steel Institute in 1965 for the design of the Washington State Coliseum, and a Housing and Urban Development award for suburban-renewal design in 1968.[32] Hostmark even wrote the earthquake section of Seattle's building code, patterned from the Pacific Coast Uniform Building Code.[33]

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[28] Svein Gilje, "Scandinavian Heritage: Brother Calls Peter Hostmark 'Special,'" *The Seattle Times,* October 18, 1966: 6.
[29] "Peter H. Hostmark, 65, Engineer, Dies," *The Seattle Times*, June 20, 1969: 65.
[30] "Schools of the Future," The Seattle Times, September 7, 1952: 85
[31] $1,000,000 Motel," The Seattle Times, August 24, 1958: 24
[32] "Peter H. Hostmark, 65, Engineer, Dies," *The Seattle Times*, June 20, 1969: 65.
[33] Dick Moody, "Alaska-Size Quake Would Hurt Buildings Here, Says Engineer," *The Seattle Times*, April 12, 1964: 16.

Hostmark also served as president of the Seattle Chapter of the Washington Society of Professional Engineers in 1959 and the president of the Consulting Engineers Association of Washington in 1964.[34] In addition to his professional successes, Hostmark was an accomplished skier—skiing and jumping competitively and later judging skiing competitions—as well as a founding member of the Pacific Northwest Ski Association. Hostmark died from a heart attack on June 18, 1969.

Other examples of Hostmark's designs:

- South Central High School, Seattle, 1952
- Towne House, Seattle
- Panorama House, Seattle
- Mercer Island Presbyterian Church, Mercer Island, 1962. Hostmark collaborated with architect Paul Thiry on the design of this building, which incorporated a hovering thin shell concrete roof and tilt-up concrete walls.[35]
- Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Seattle, 1963. Hostmark worked with his Century 21 colleagues Paul Thiry and Richard Haag on this design. The building features steel frame construction, an arched concrete roof, and a multi-colored glass cupola.[36]

Howard S. Wright Construction, General Contractor

Howard S. Wright Construction is a long-standing Seattle general contracting firm. First established in Port Townsend in 1885, the firm moved to Everett in 1893 before settling in 1929 in Seattle, where it continues to provide construction services. Howard S. Wright founded the business; his son, Howard H. Wright took over the business in the 1920s. Howard H. Wright, along with his brother-in-law George Schuchart, helped the company become a prominent Seattle firm.

In addition to the Century 21 Coliseum, prominent examples of Howard S. Wright Construction projects include:

- Space Needle (1962), the other icon of the World's Fair, designed by John Graham and Company with Victor Steinbrueck and John Ridley
- Logan Building (1959) in Seattle, designed by Mandeville & Berge, engineered by TheAntero Company
- Stimson Industrial Park (1959) in Seattle, designed by Lamont & Fey
- Seattle First Tower (1966–1970) in Seattle, designed by Naramore, Bain, Brady, & Johanson
- Washington Mutual Savings Bank (1969) in Seattle, designed by Paul Thiry
- Norton Building (1958) in Seattle, designed by Myron Goldsmith
- Northwestern Life Insurance Co. (1952) in Seattle, designed by John W. Maloney

[34] "Engineers' Petition Drive Backed; More Names Needed," *The Seattle Times,* May 24, 1959: 16.
[35] Mercer Island Presbyterian Church, Mercer Island, WA, *Pacific Coast Architecture Database (PCAD),* https://digital.lib.washington.edu/architect/ (accessed April 3, 2013).
[36] Christopher Hetzel, "Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church," Historic Property Inventory Report.

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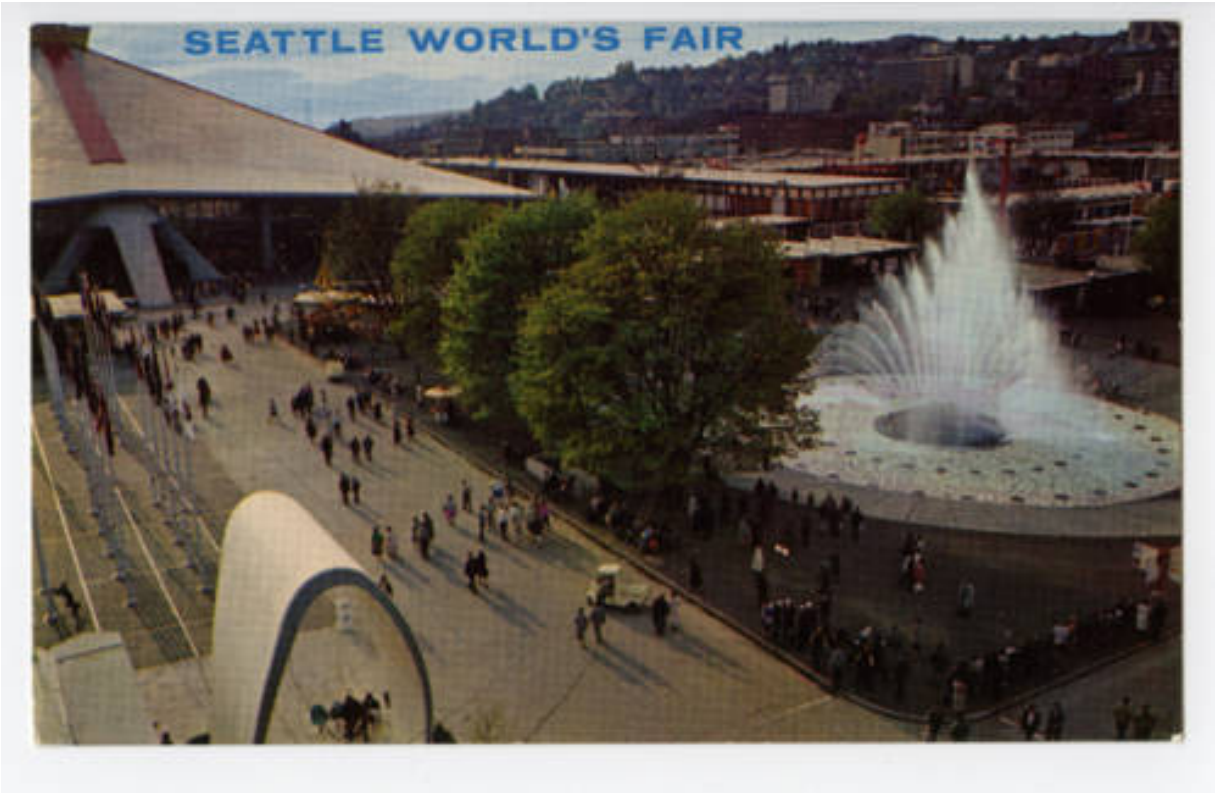

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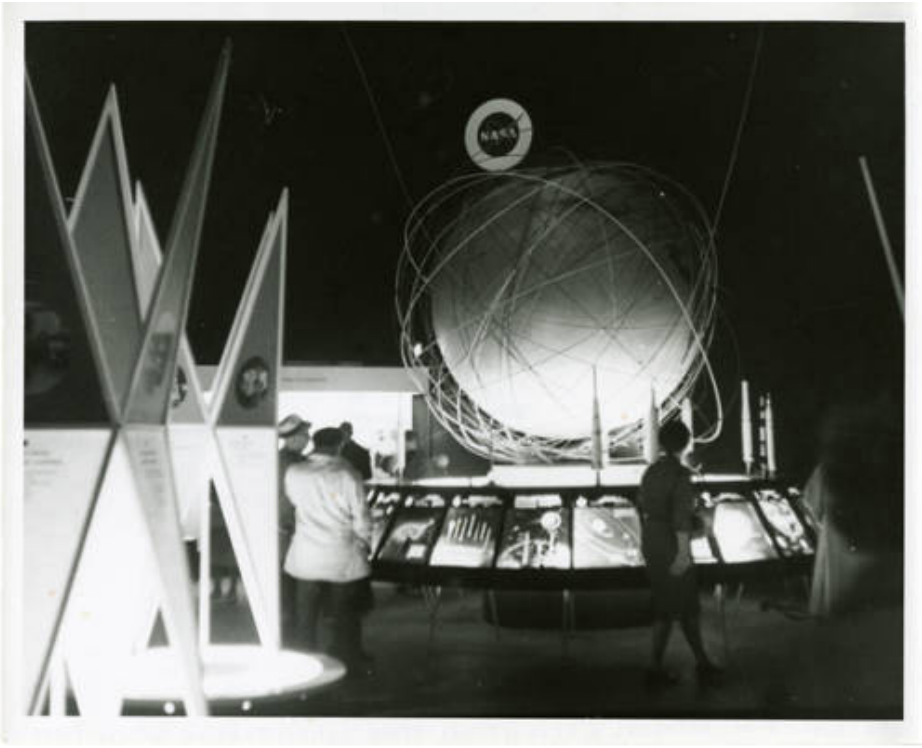

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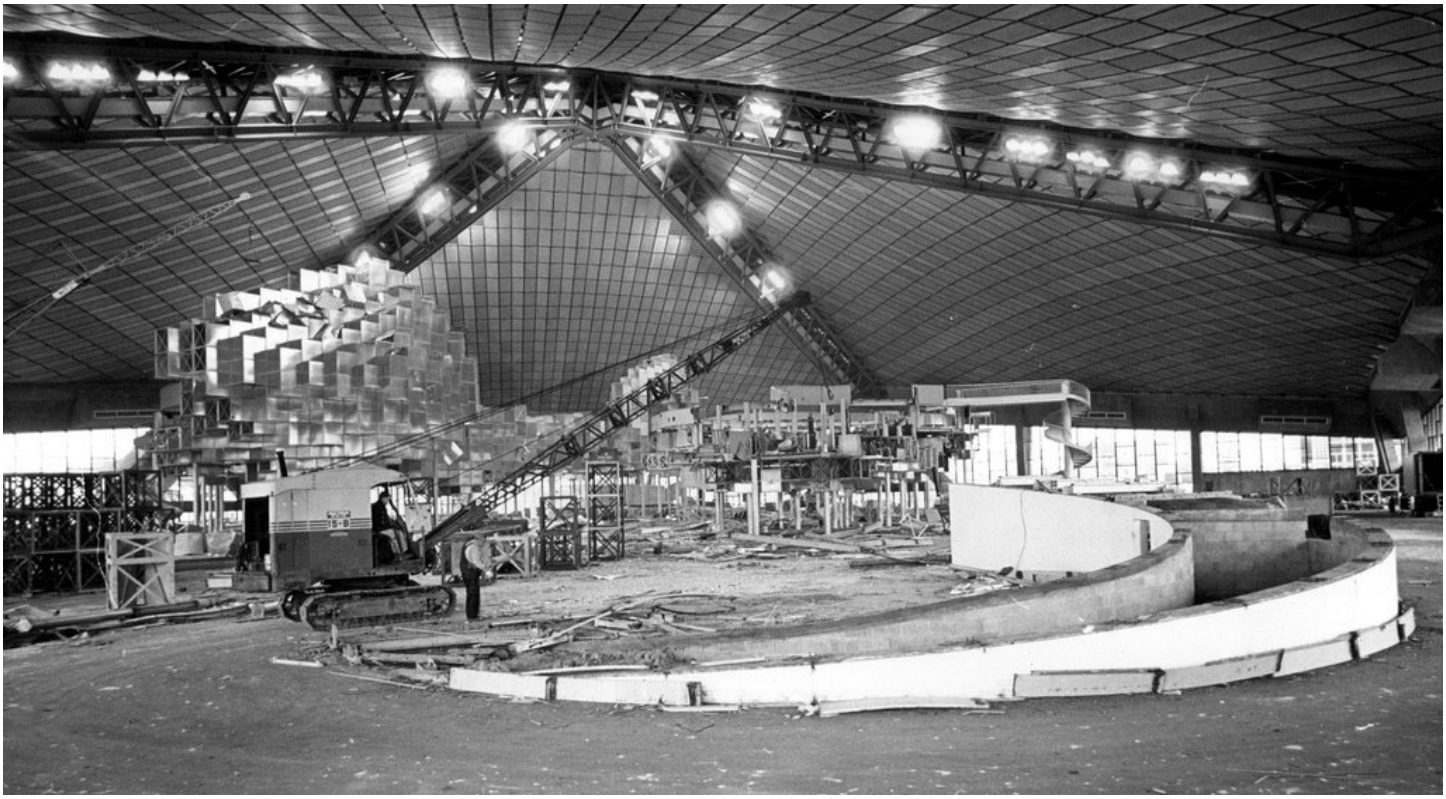

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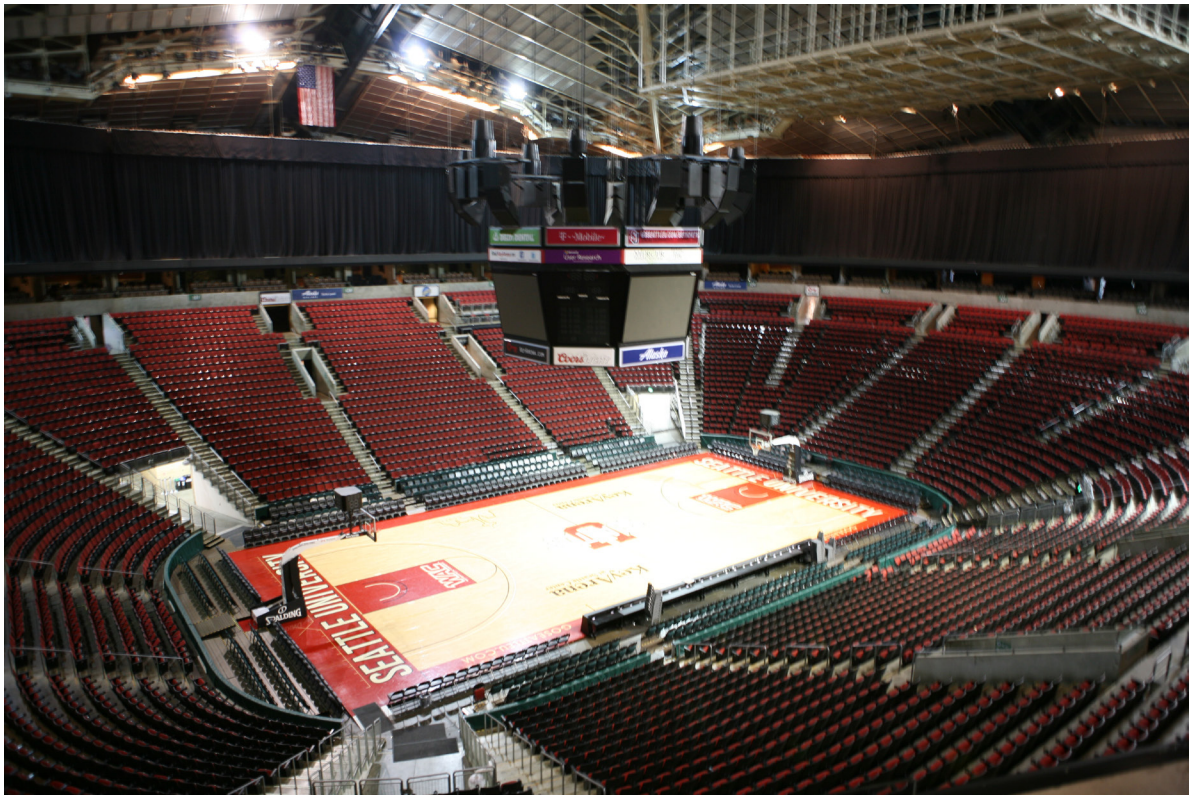

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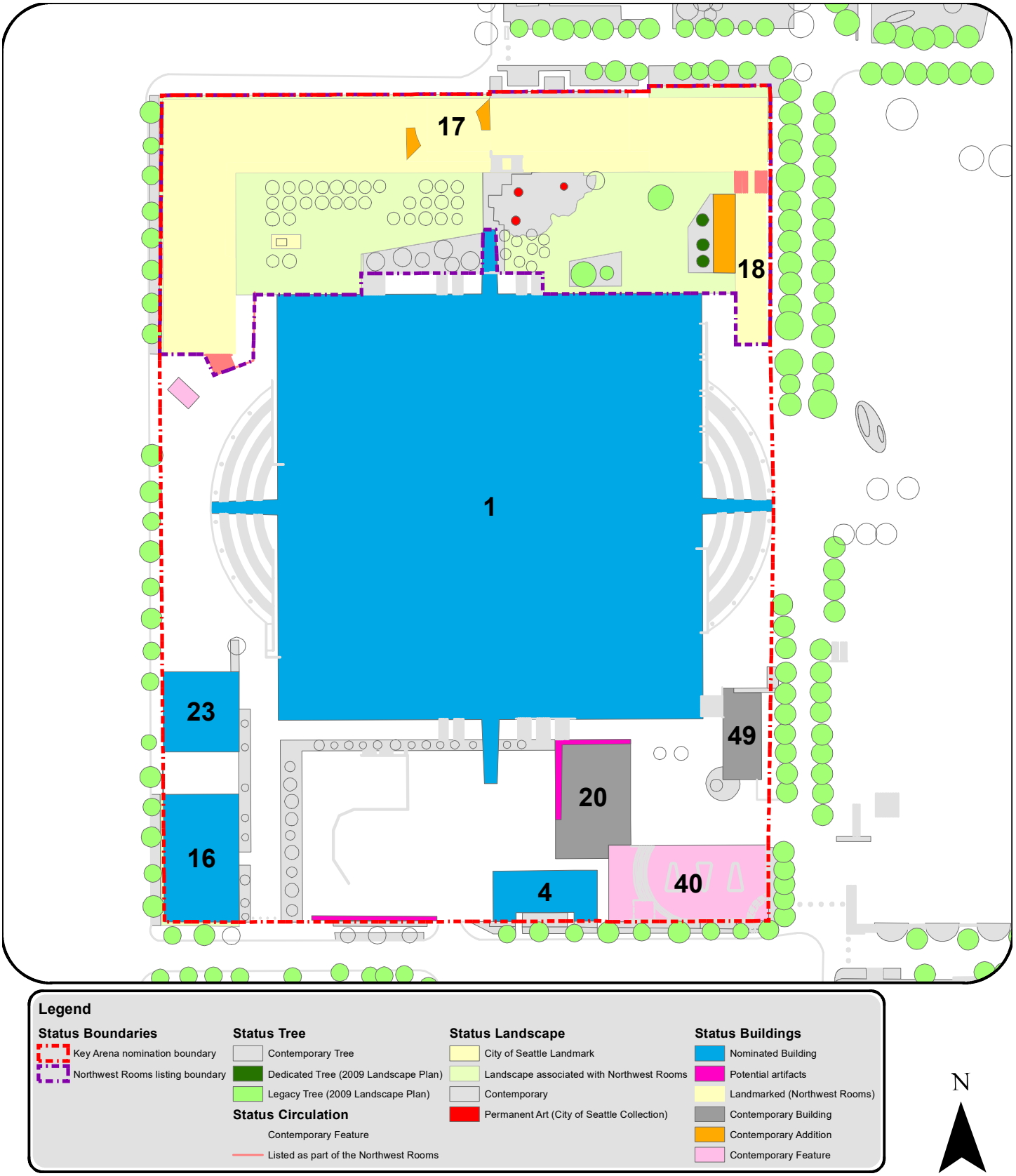

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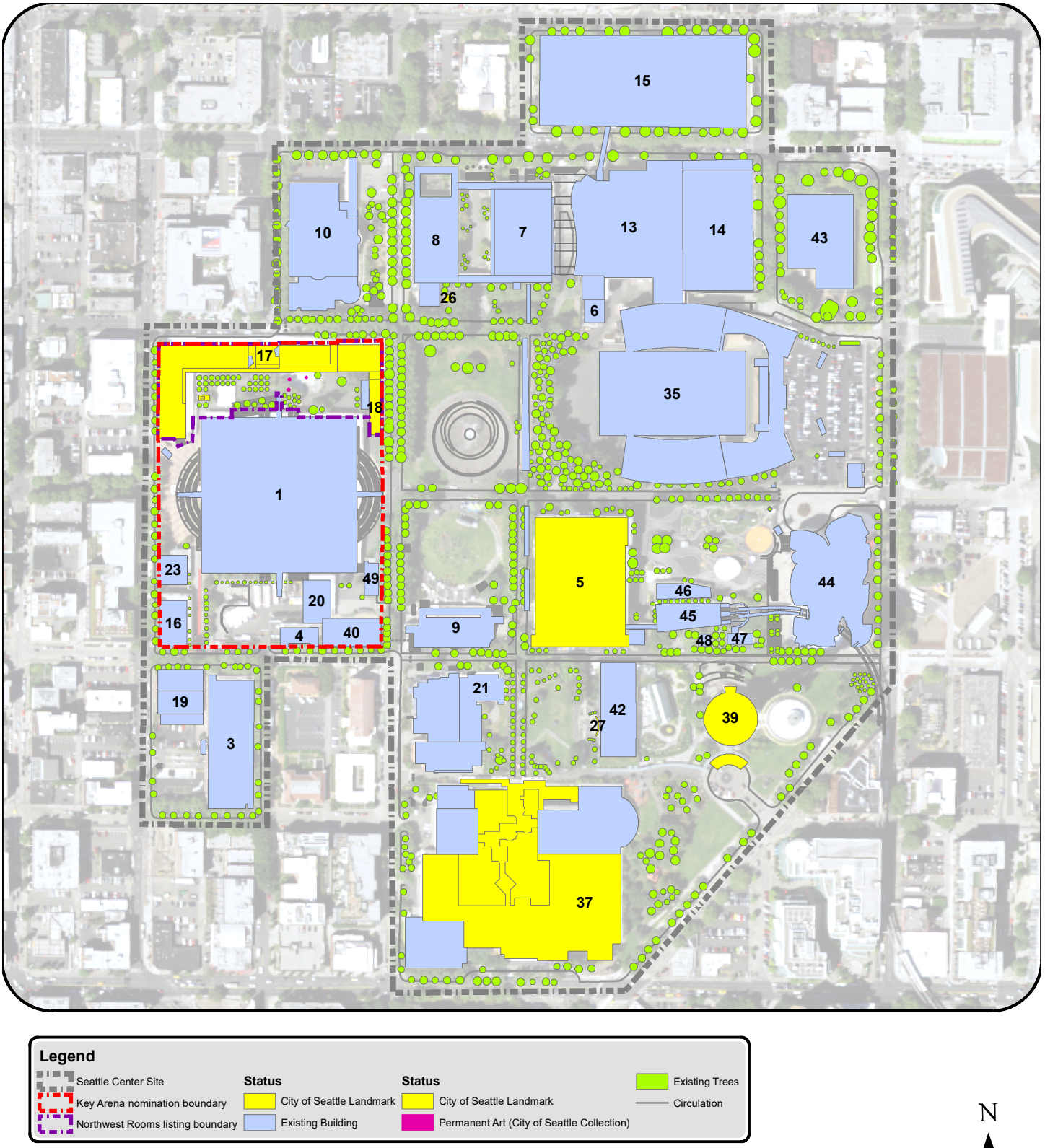

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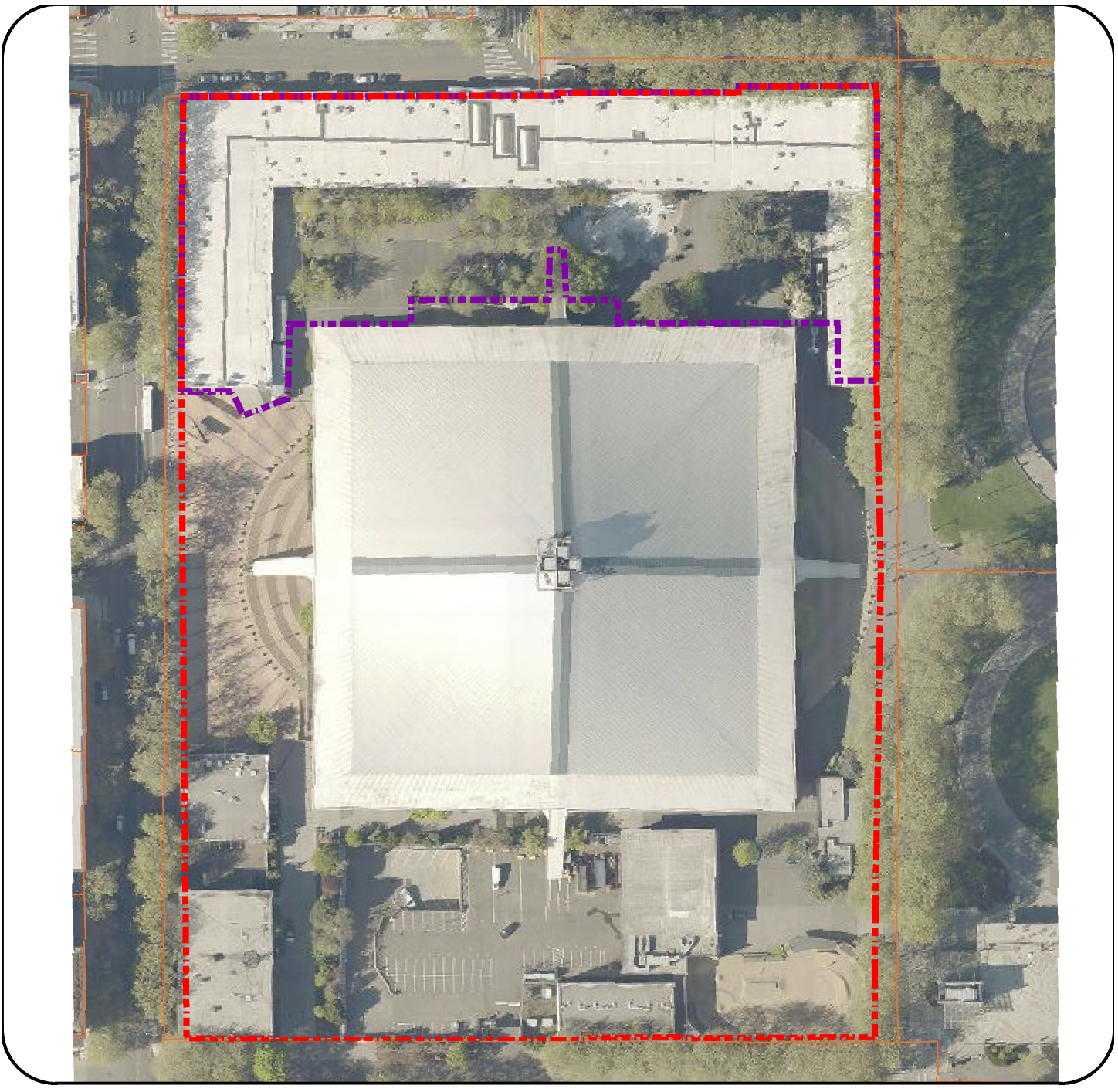

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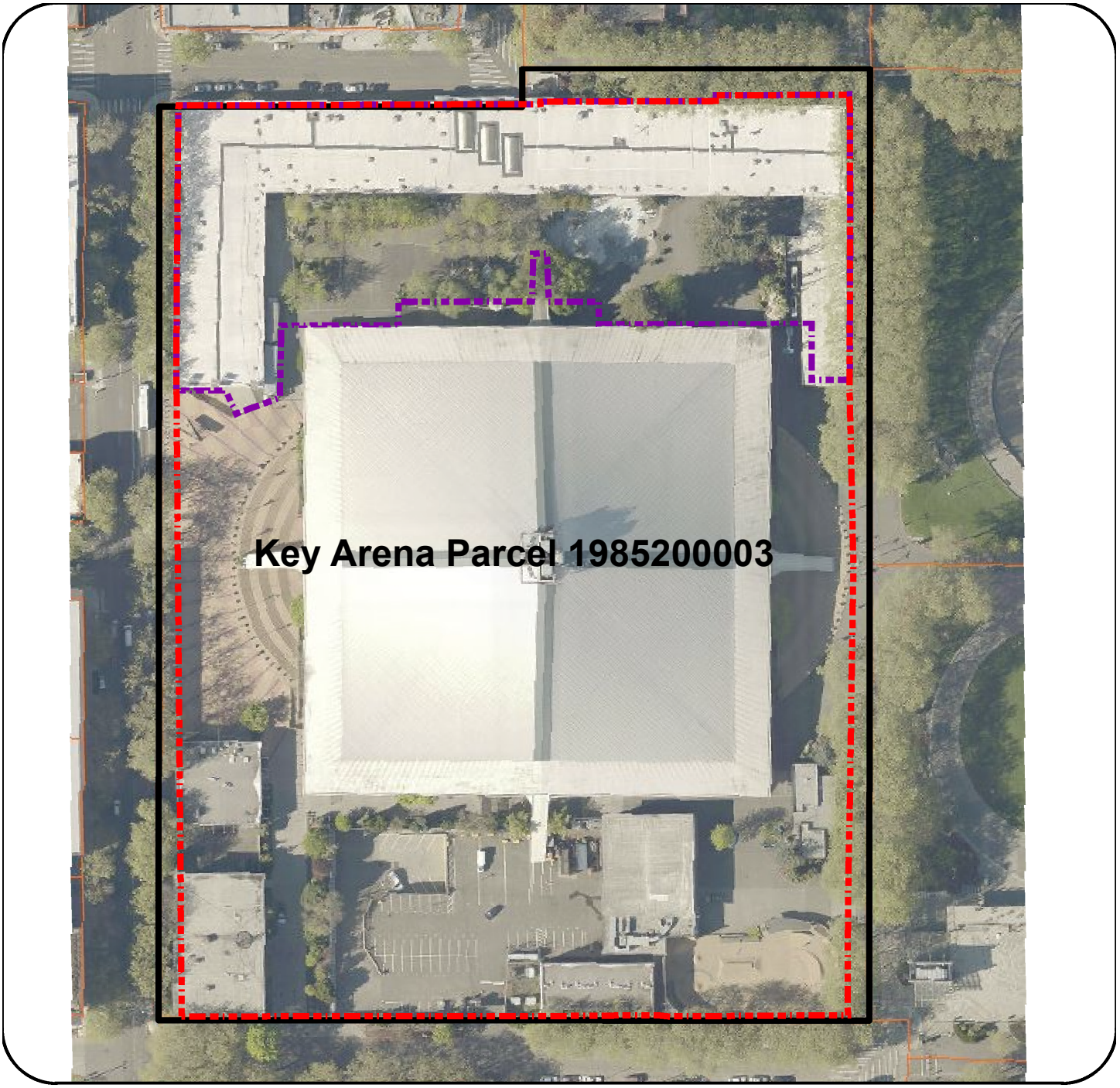

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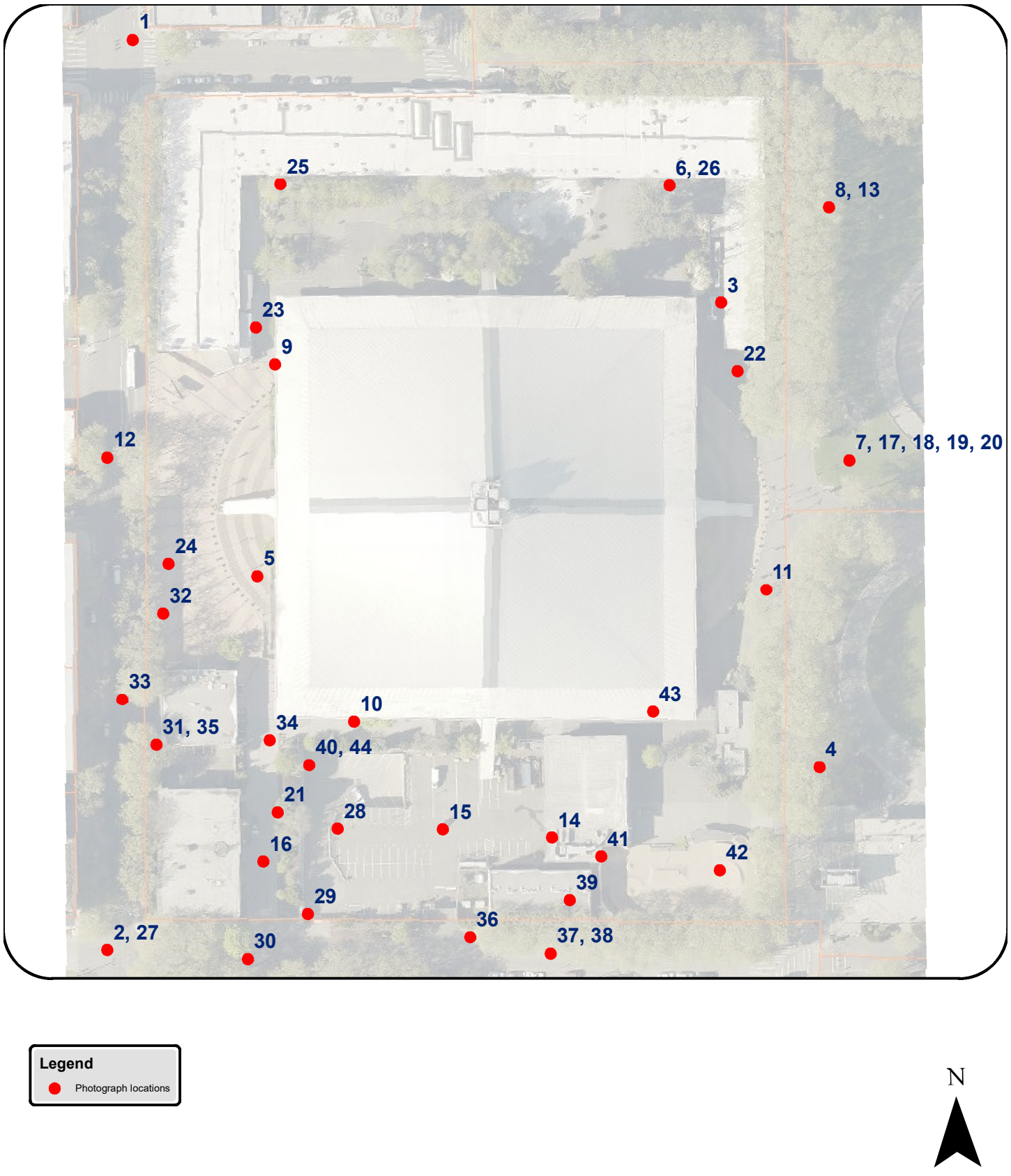

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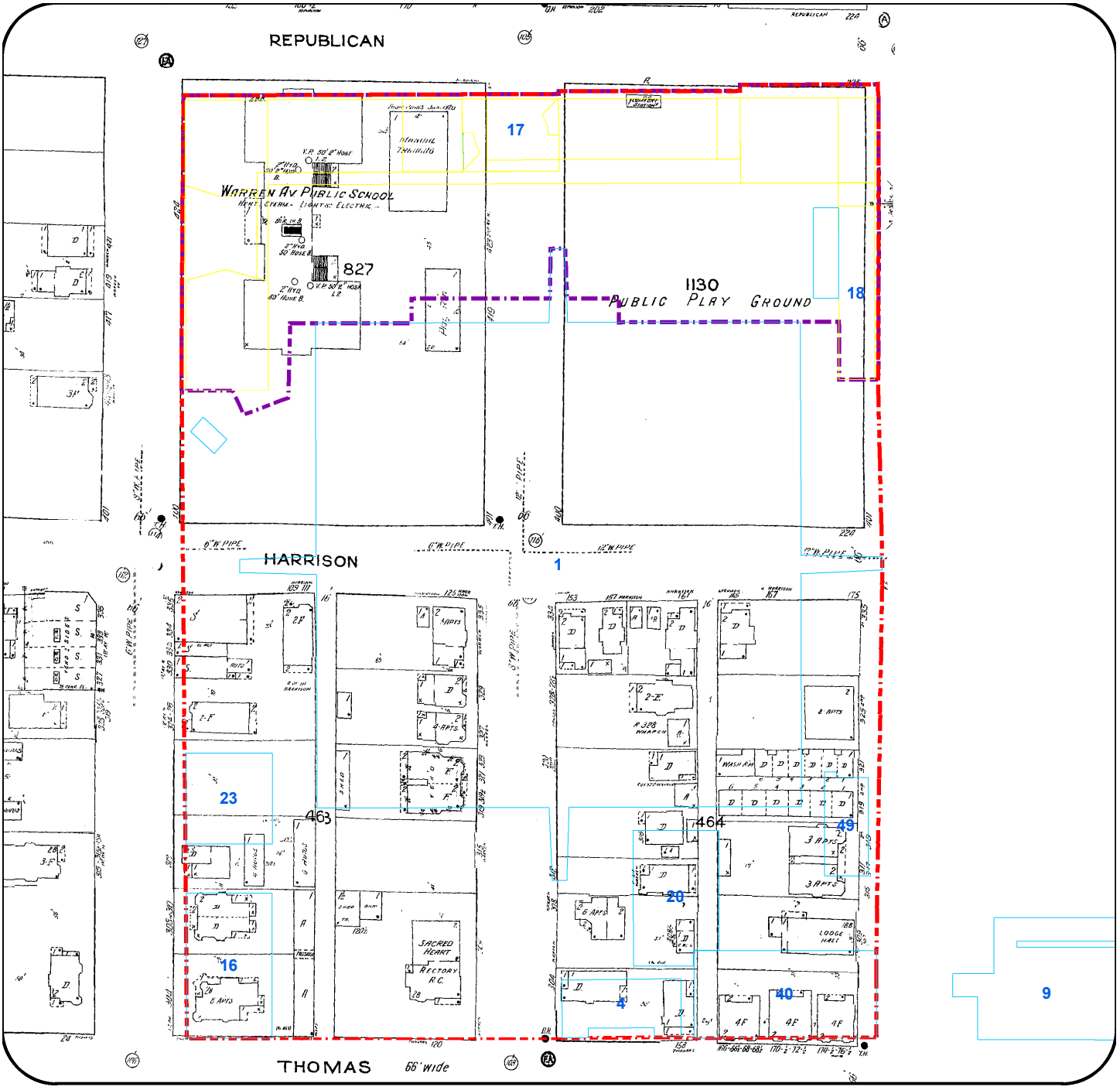

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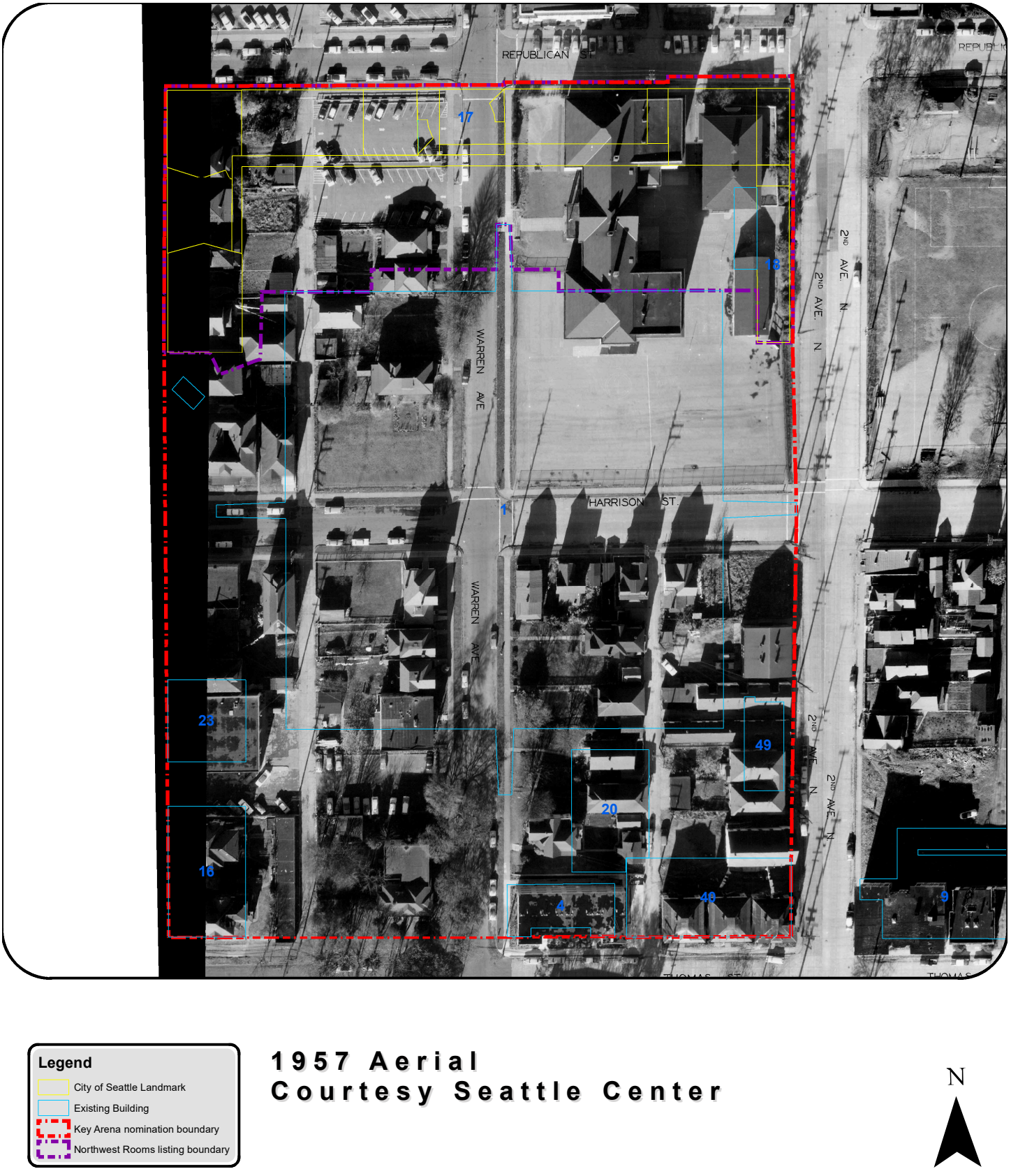

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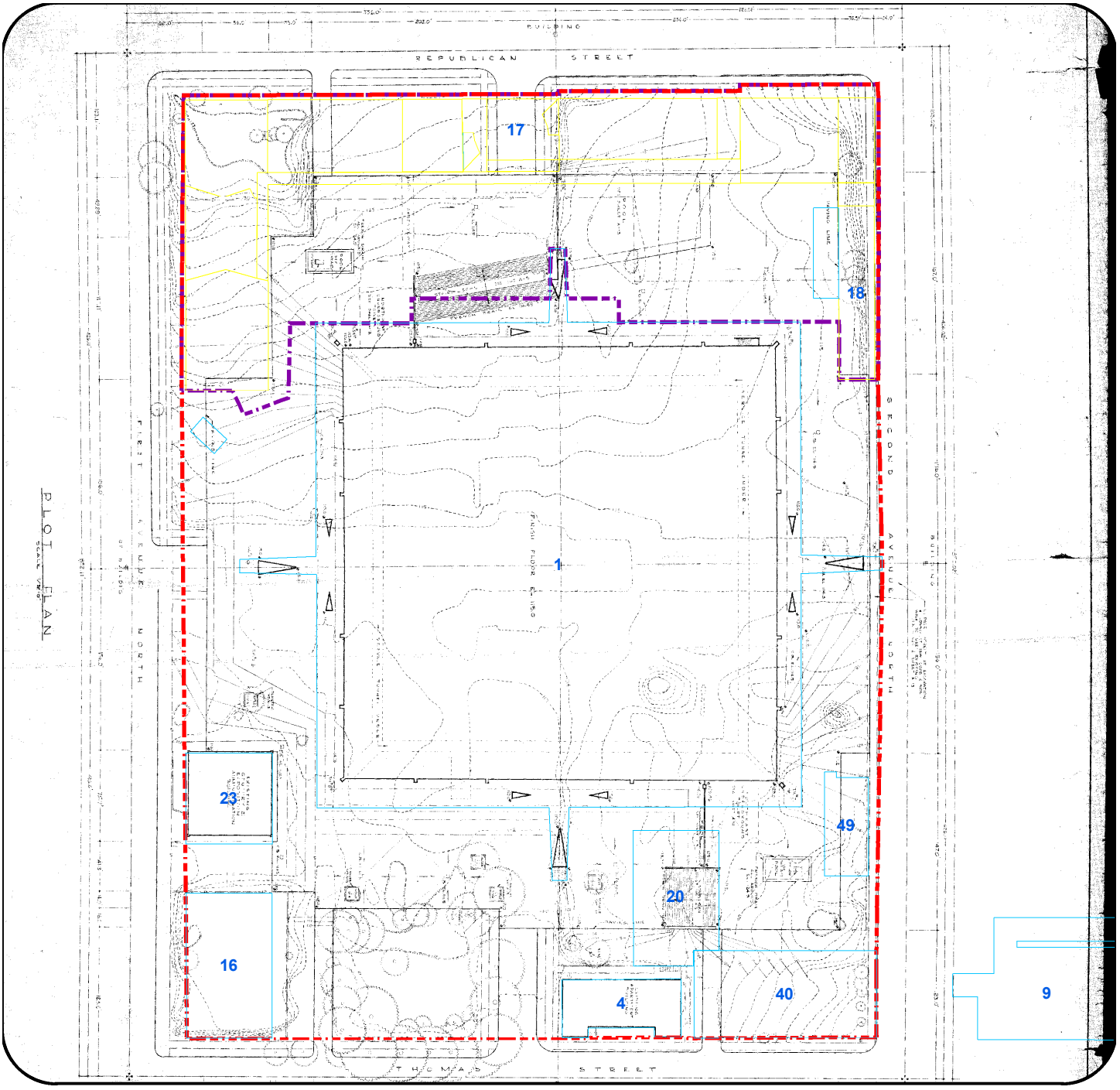


Figure 9: 1959 World's Fair Coliseum and Perimeter Buildings site plan with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

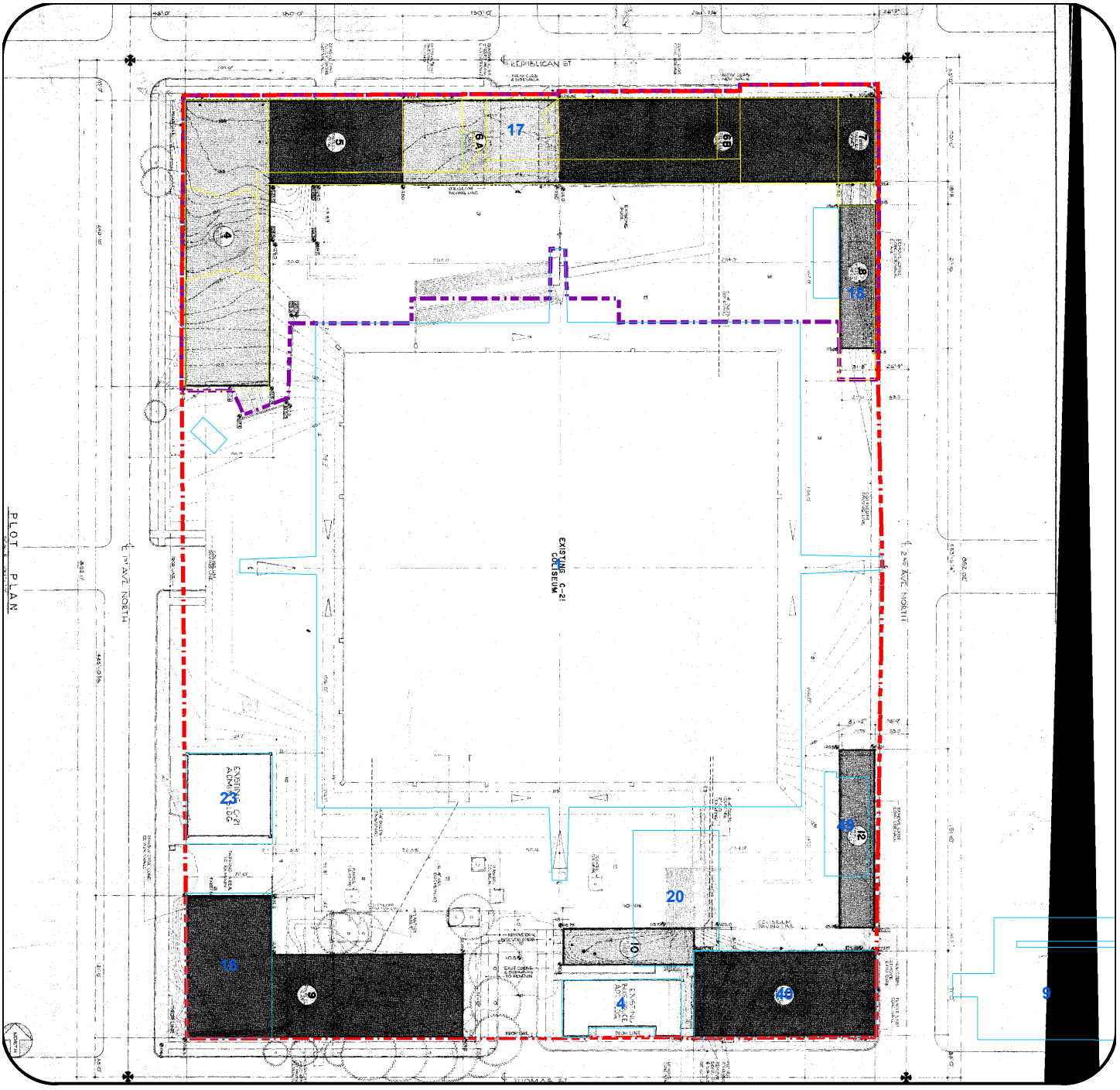


Figure 10: 1961 World's Fair Coliseum and Perimeter Buildings site plan with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

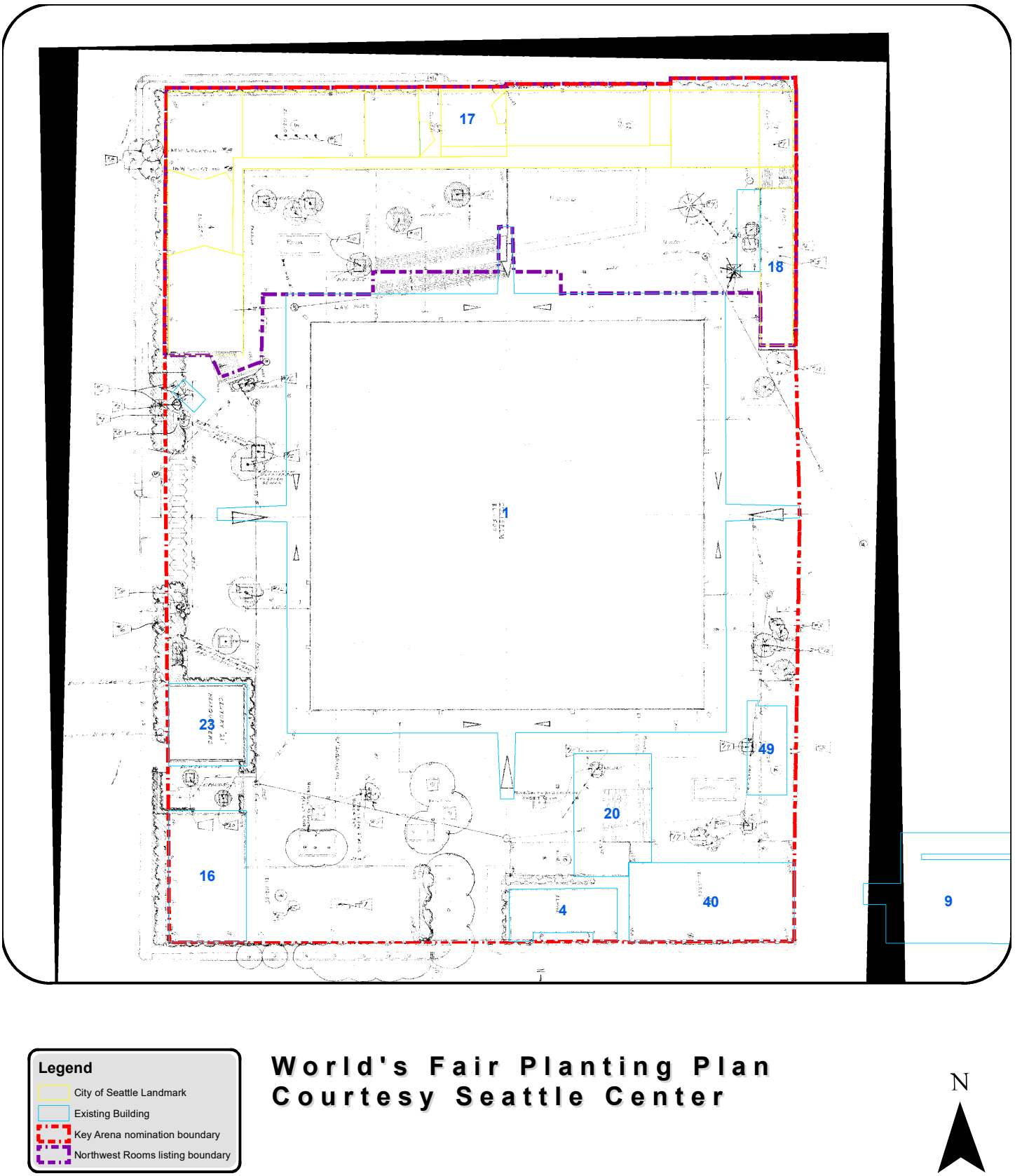


Figure 11: 1962 World's Fair Coliseum and Perimeter Buildings site plan with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

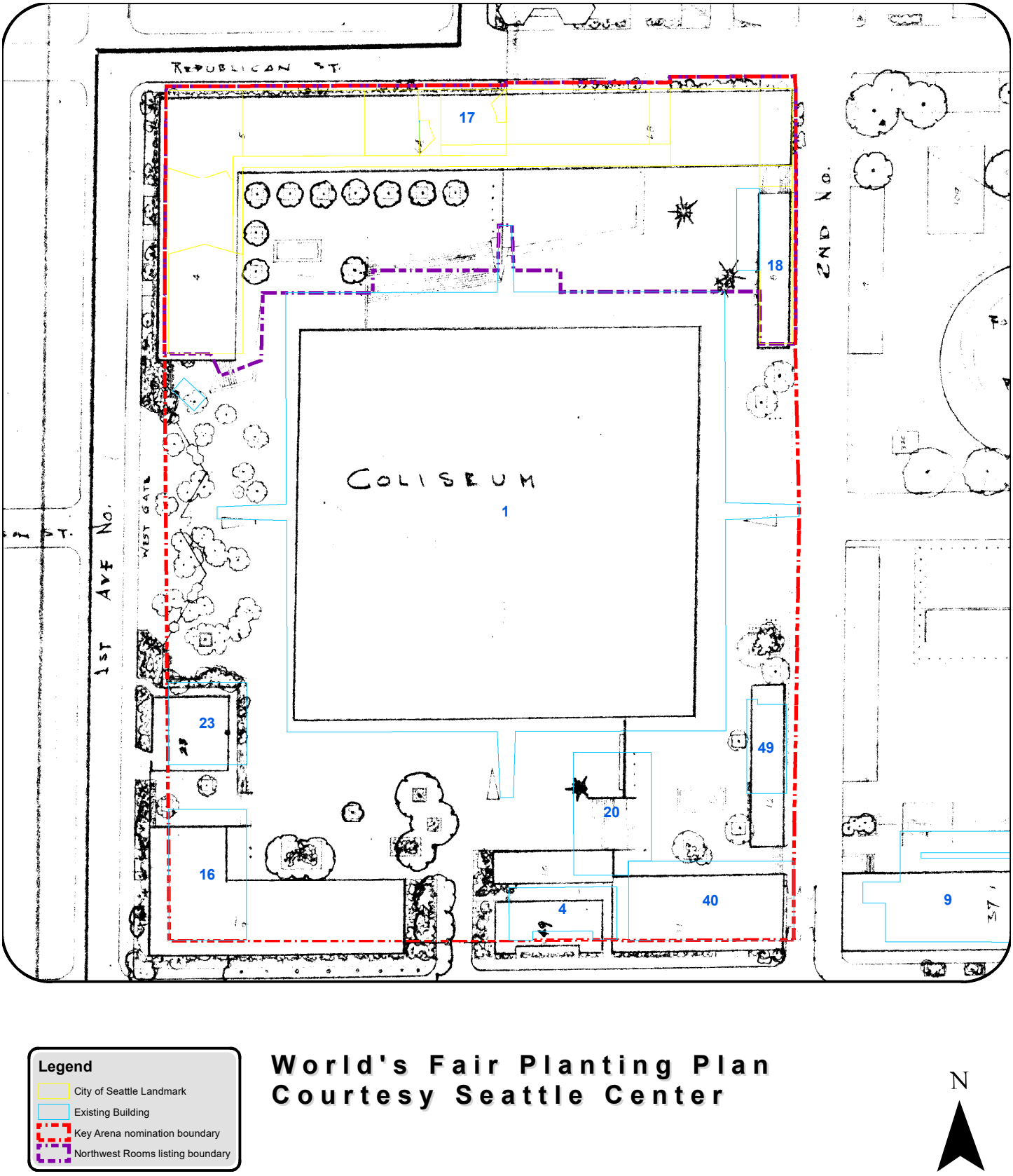


Figure 12: 1962 World's Fair Coliseum and Perimeter Buildings site planting plan with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

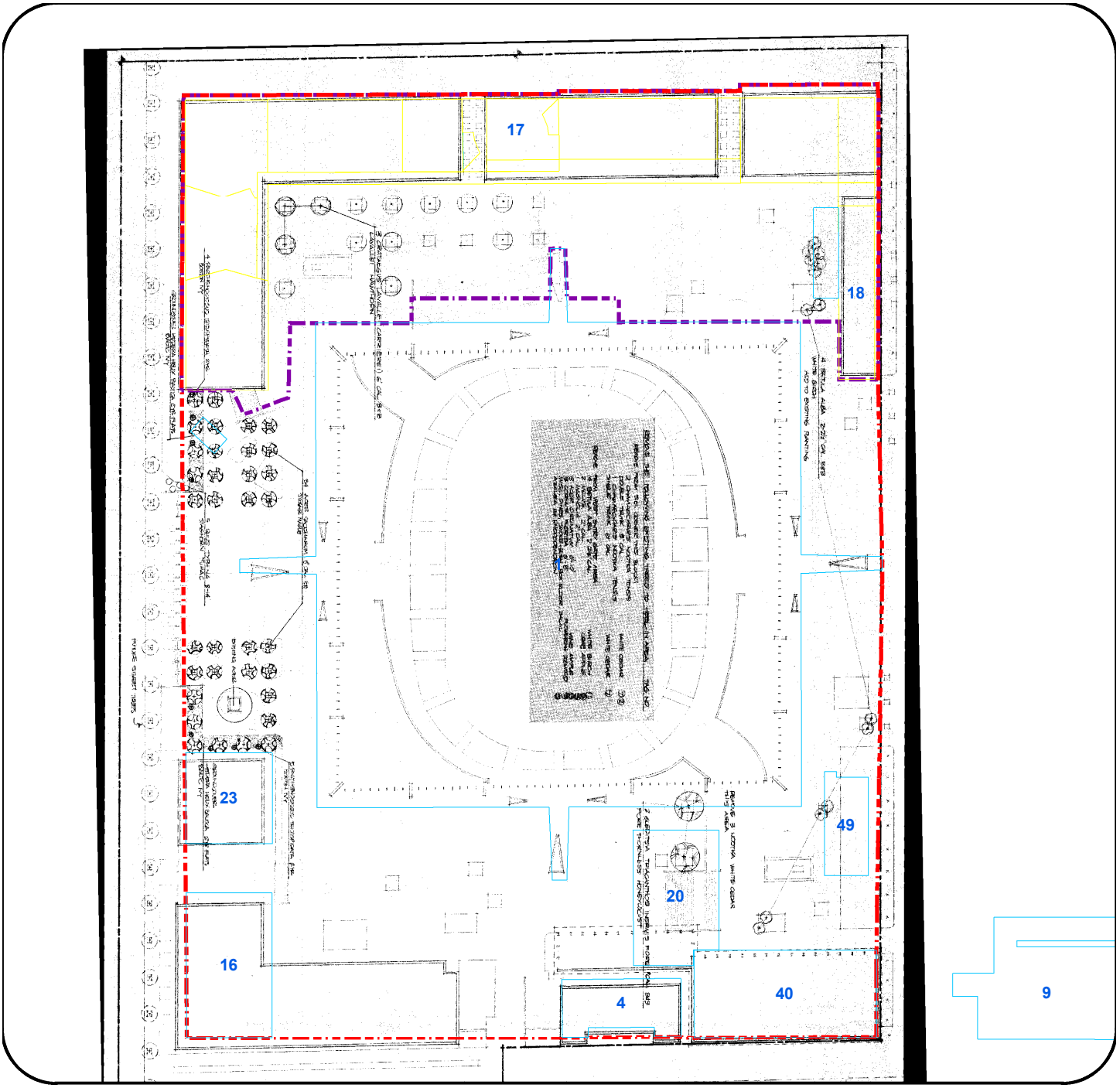


Figure 13: 1964 World's Fair Coliseum and Perimeter Buildings landscape site development plan with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

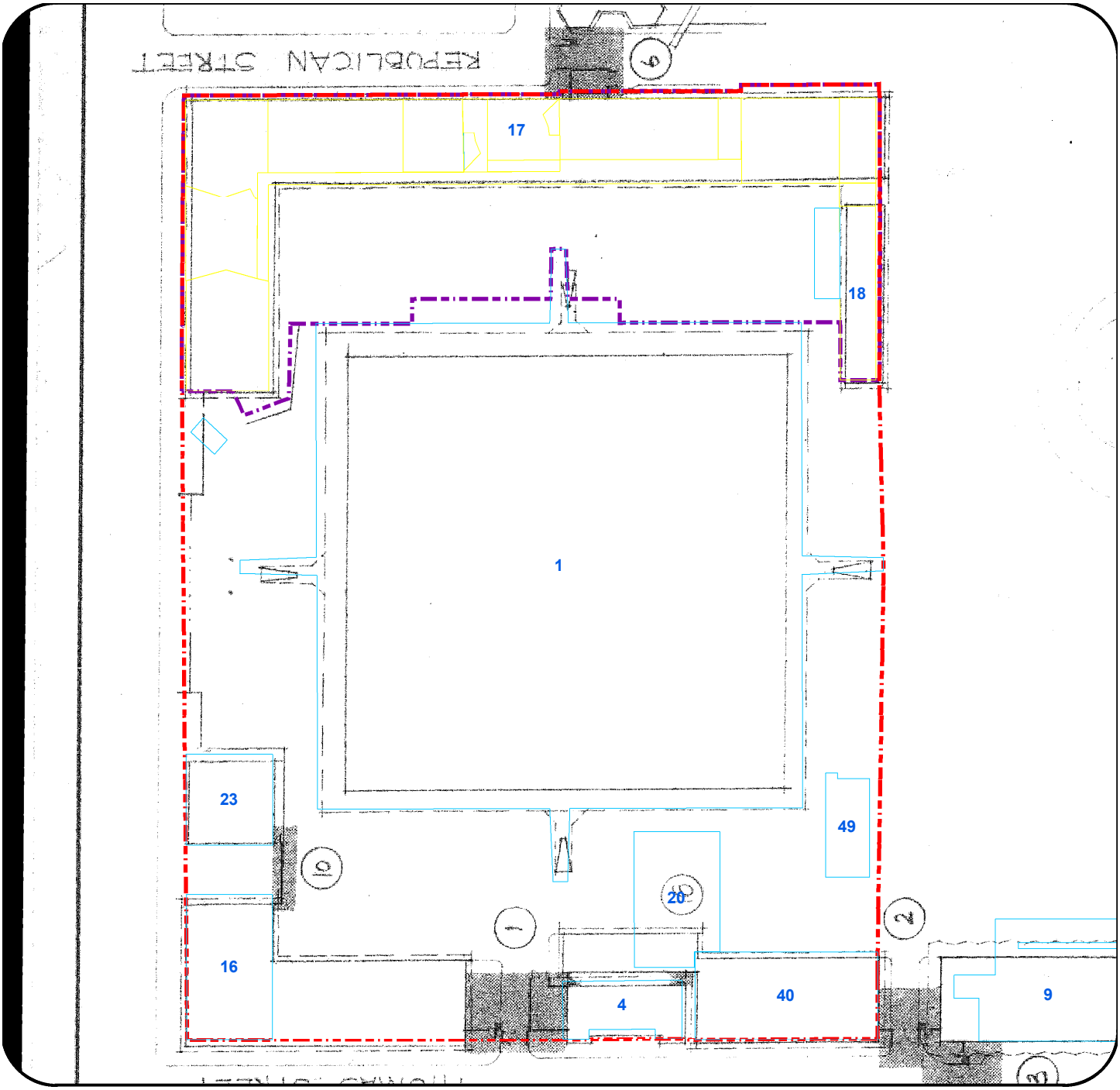
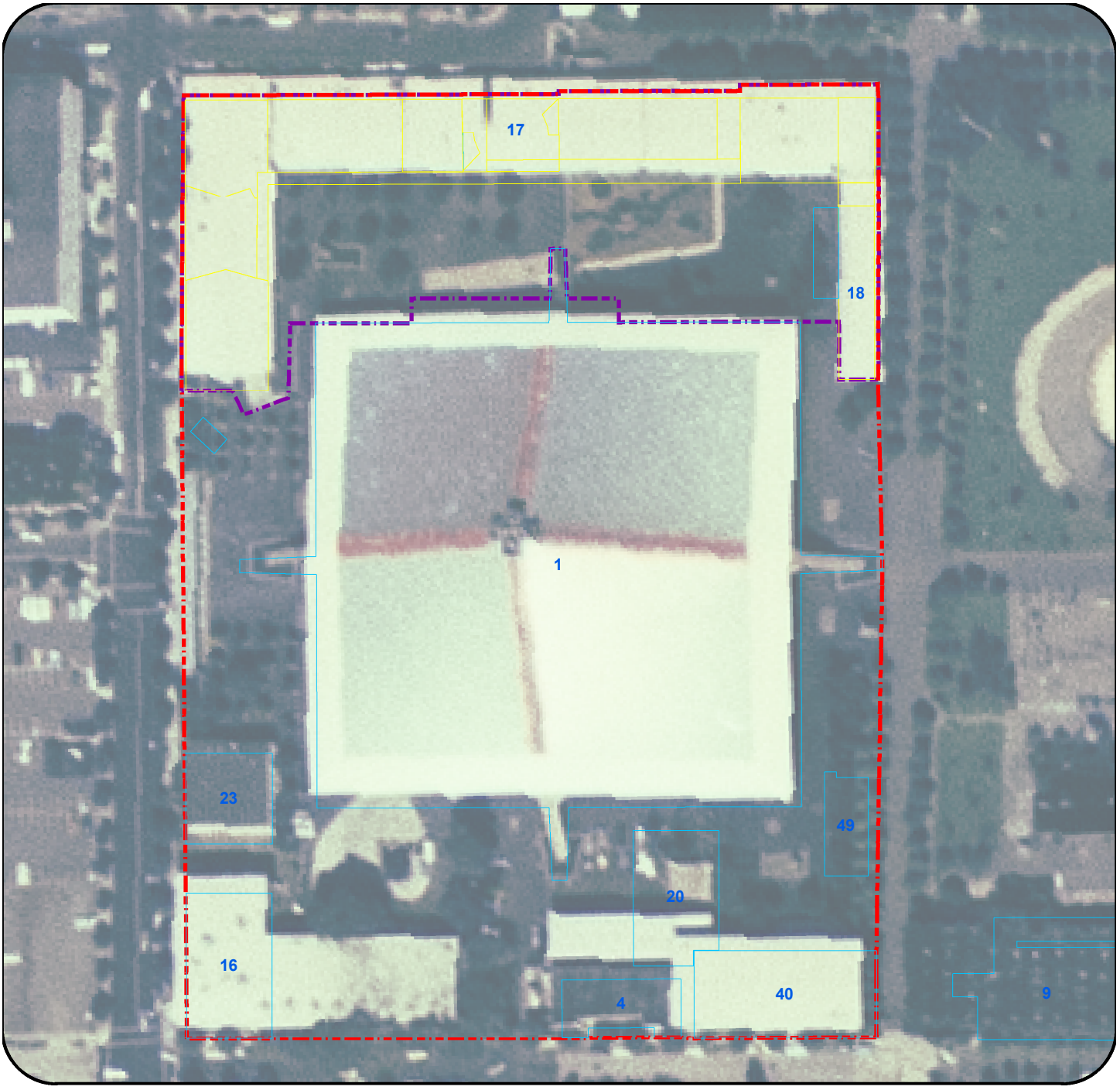


Figure 14: 1964 World's Fair Coliseum and Perimeter Buildings site enclosure plan with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

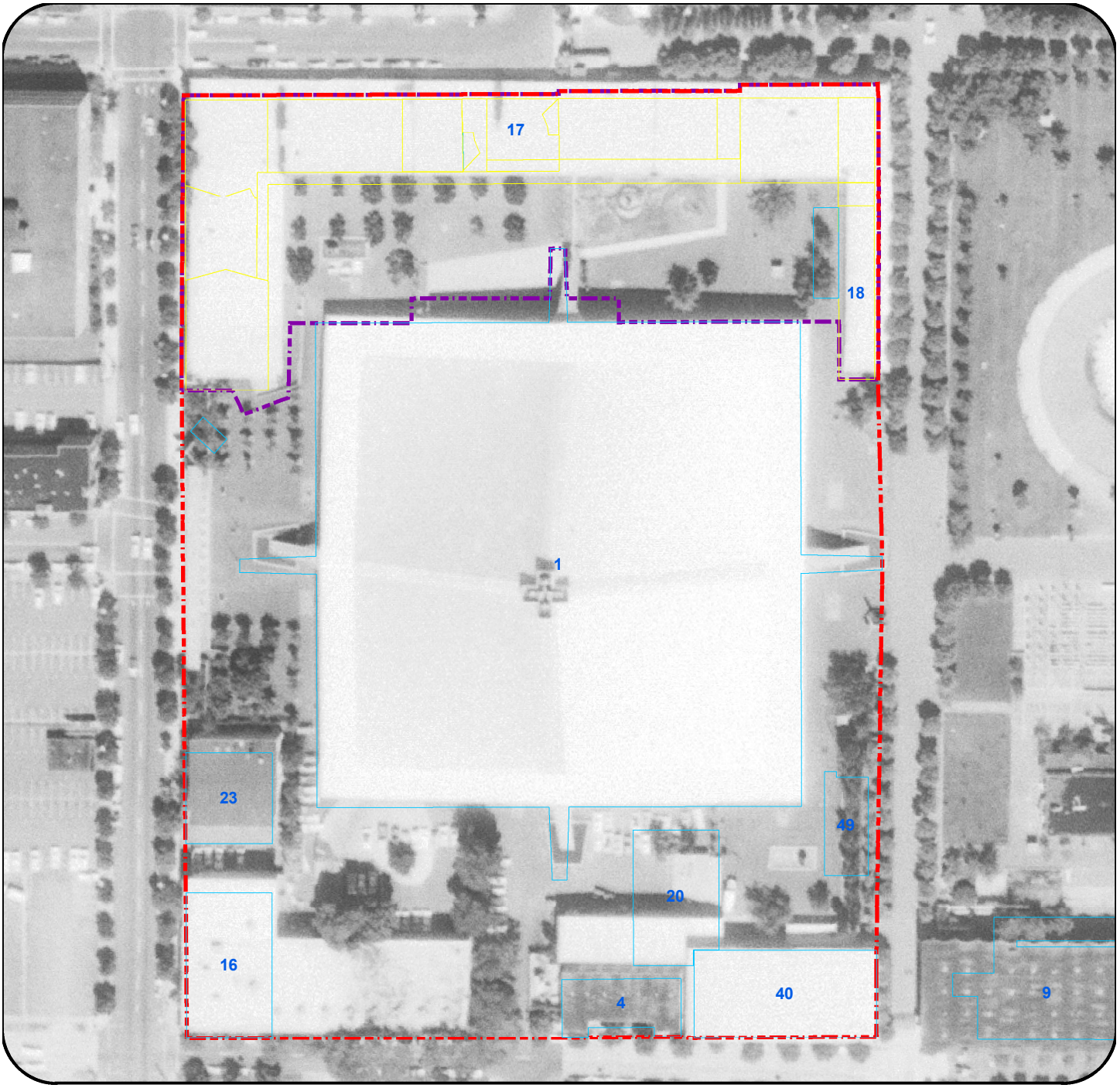


Legend
City of Seattle Landmark
Existing Building
Key Arena nomination boundary
Northwest Rooms listing boundary

1968 Aerial
Courtesy USGS

N

Figure 15: 1968 aerial photograph with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy USGS.



Legend
City of Seattle Landmark
Existing Building
Key Arena nomination boundary
Northwest Rooms listing boundary

1969 Aerial
Courtesy USGS

N

Figure 16: 1969 aerial photograph with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

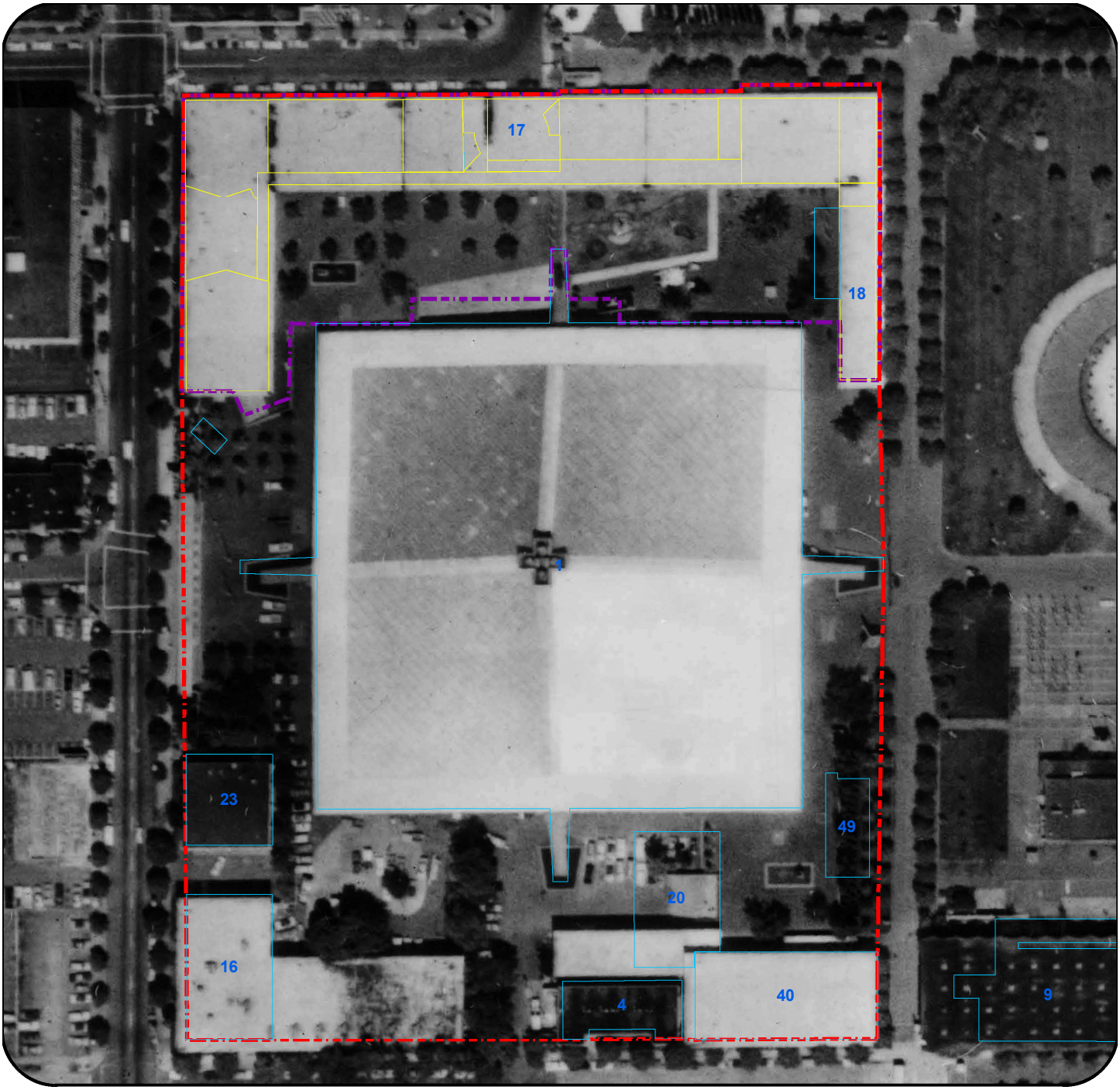
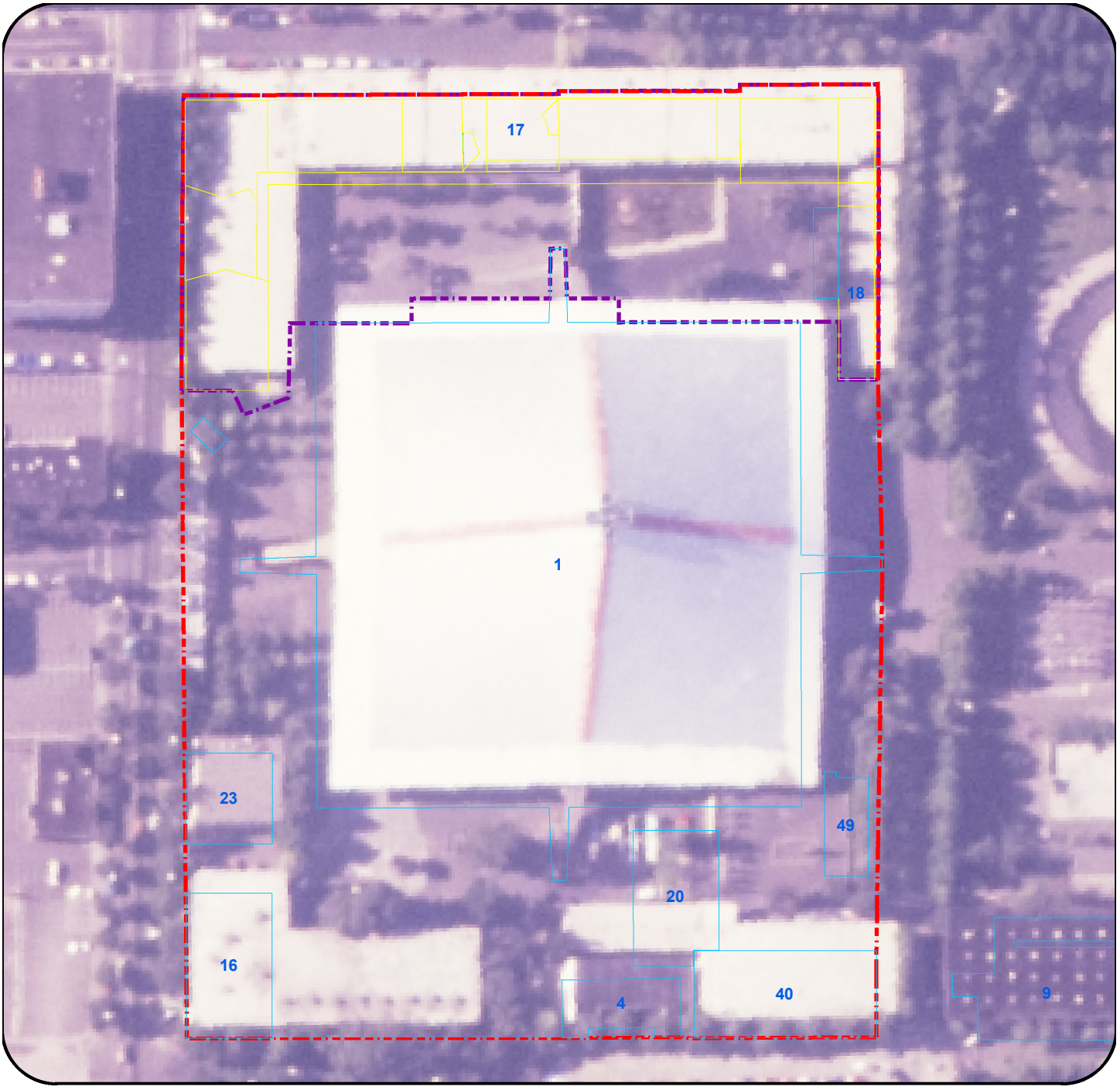


Figure 17: 1970 aerial photograph with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

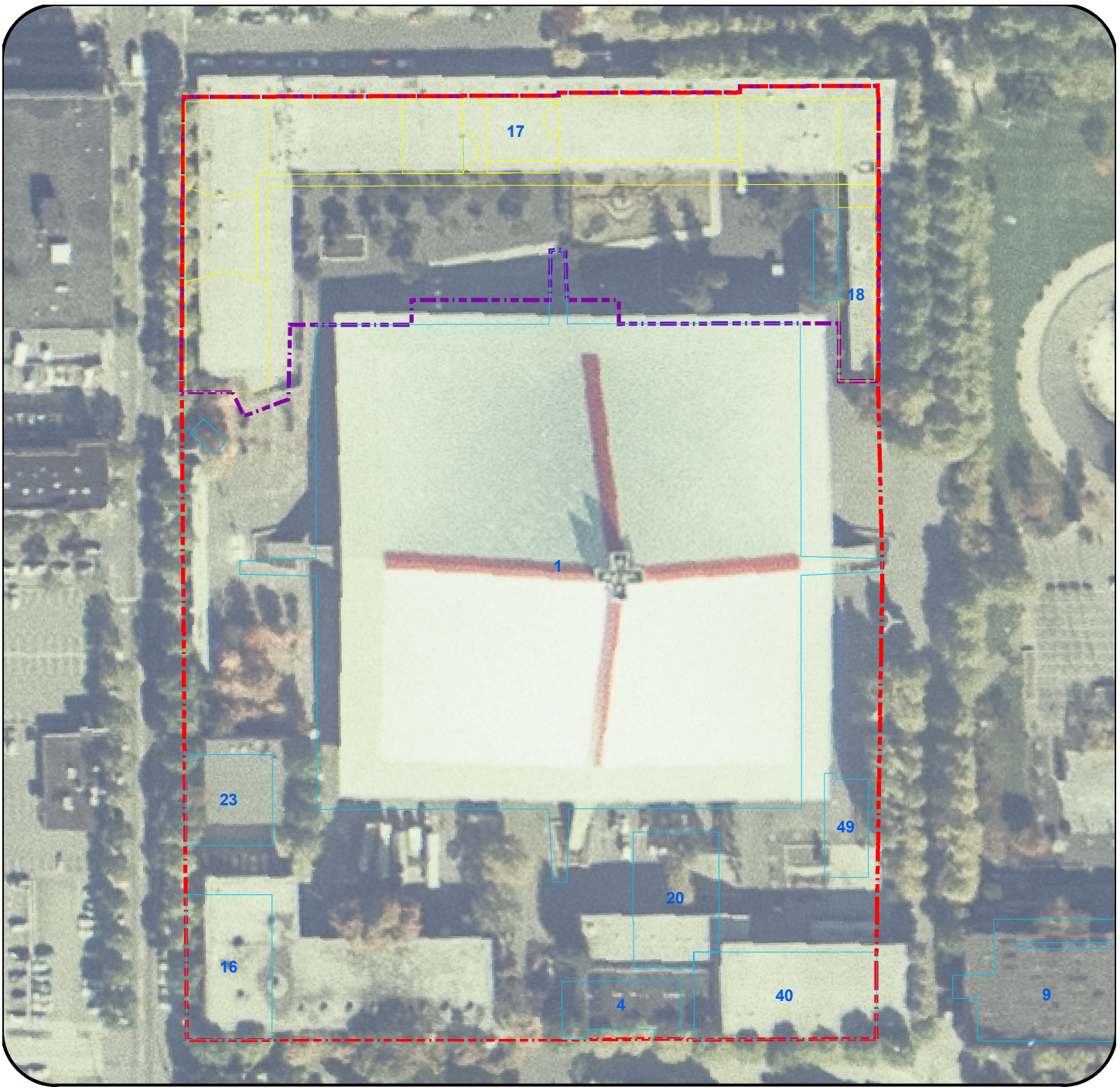


Legend
City of Seattle Landmark
Existing Building
Key Arena nomination boundary
Northwest Rooms listing boundary

1974 Aerial
Courtesy USGS

N

Figure 18: 1974 aerial photograph with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy USGS.

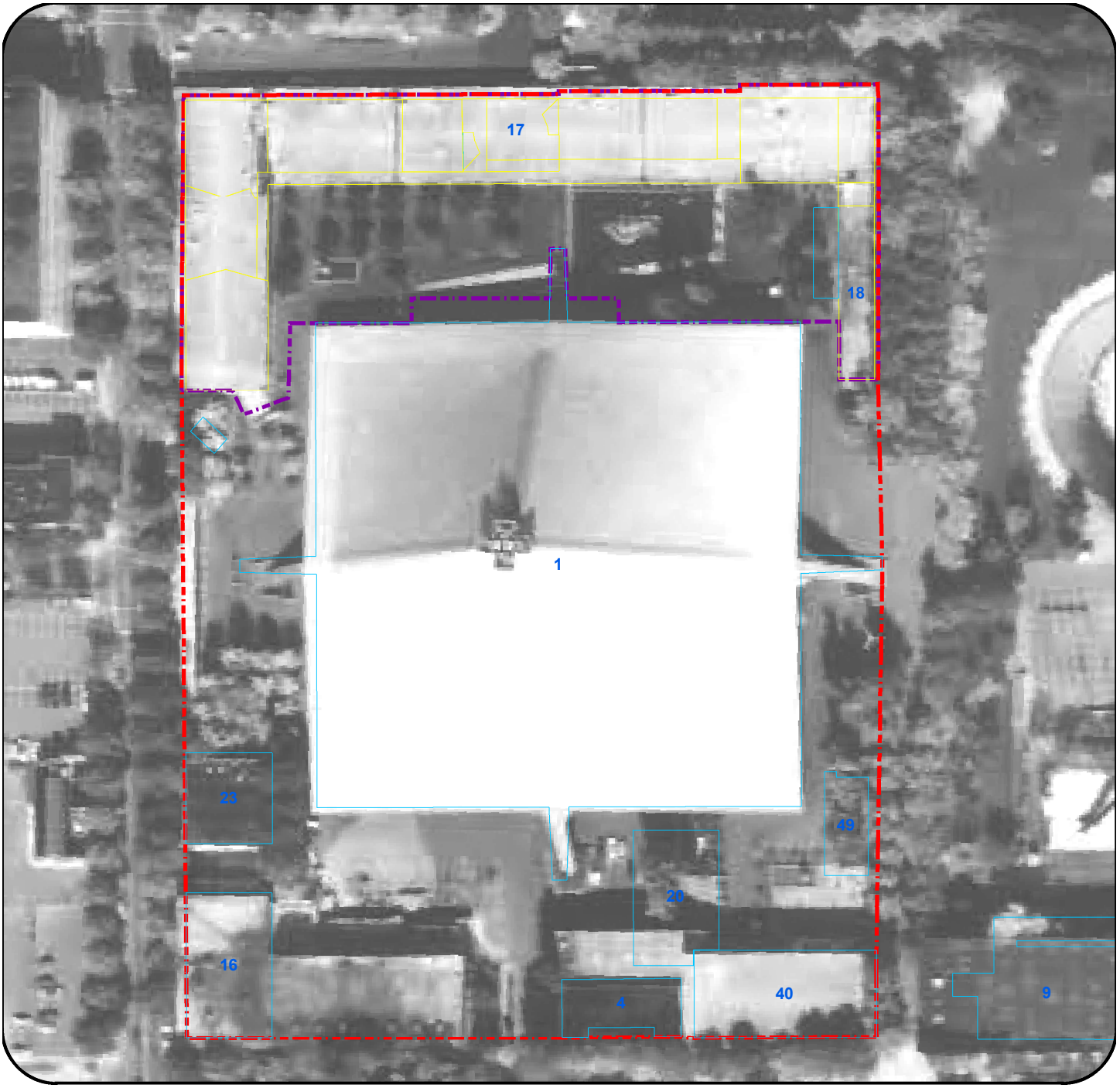


Legend
City of Seattle Landmark
Existing Building
Key Arena nomination boundary
Northwest Rooms listing boundary

1977 Aerial
Courtesy USGS

N

Figure 19: 1977 aerial photograph with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy USGS.



Legend
City of Seattle Landmark
Existing Building
Key Arena nomination boundary
Northwest Rooms listing boundary

1981 Aerial
Courtesy Seattle Center

N

Figure 20: 1981 aerial photograph with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

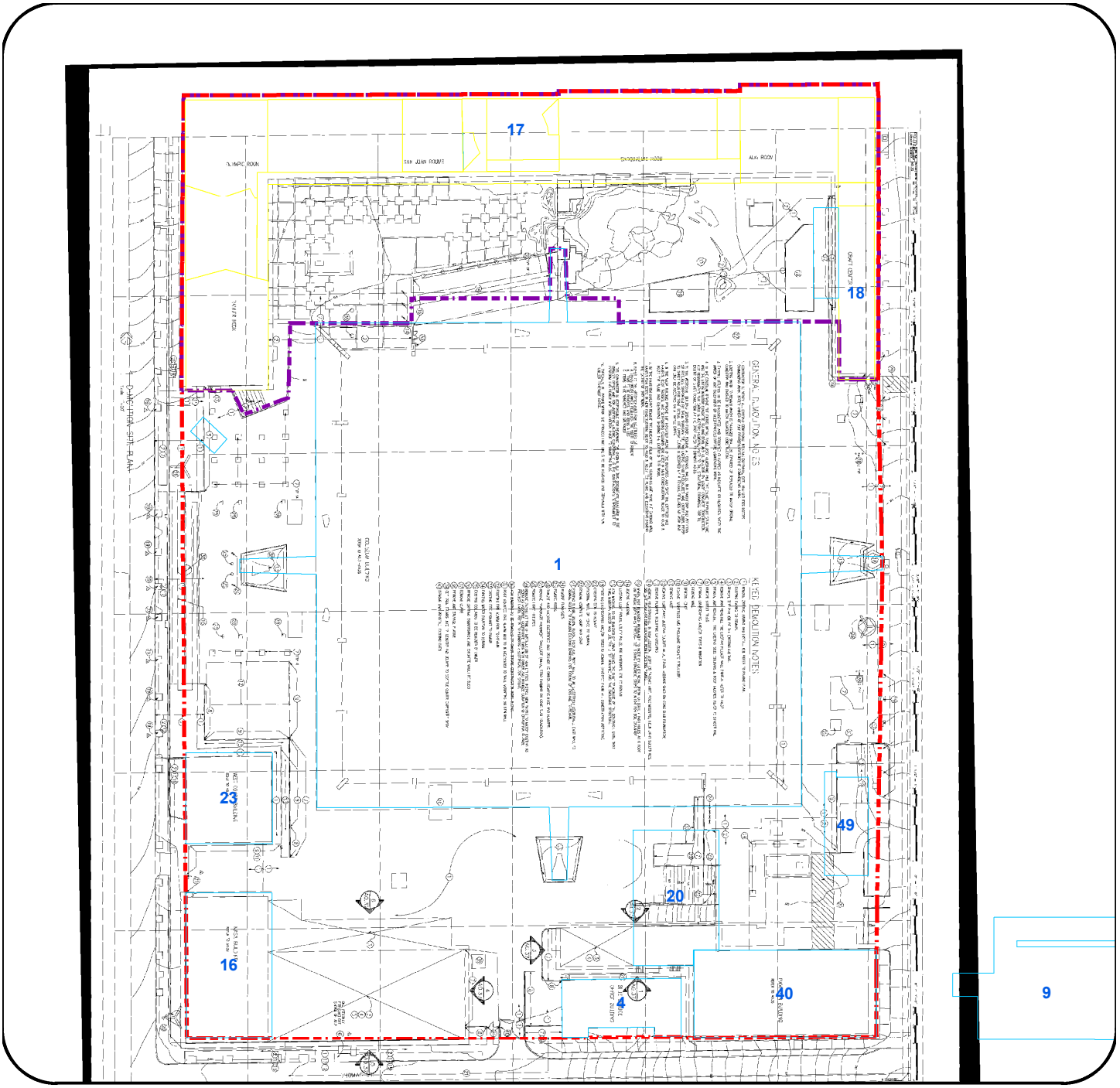


Figure 21: 1994 demolition site plan with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

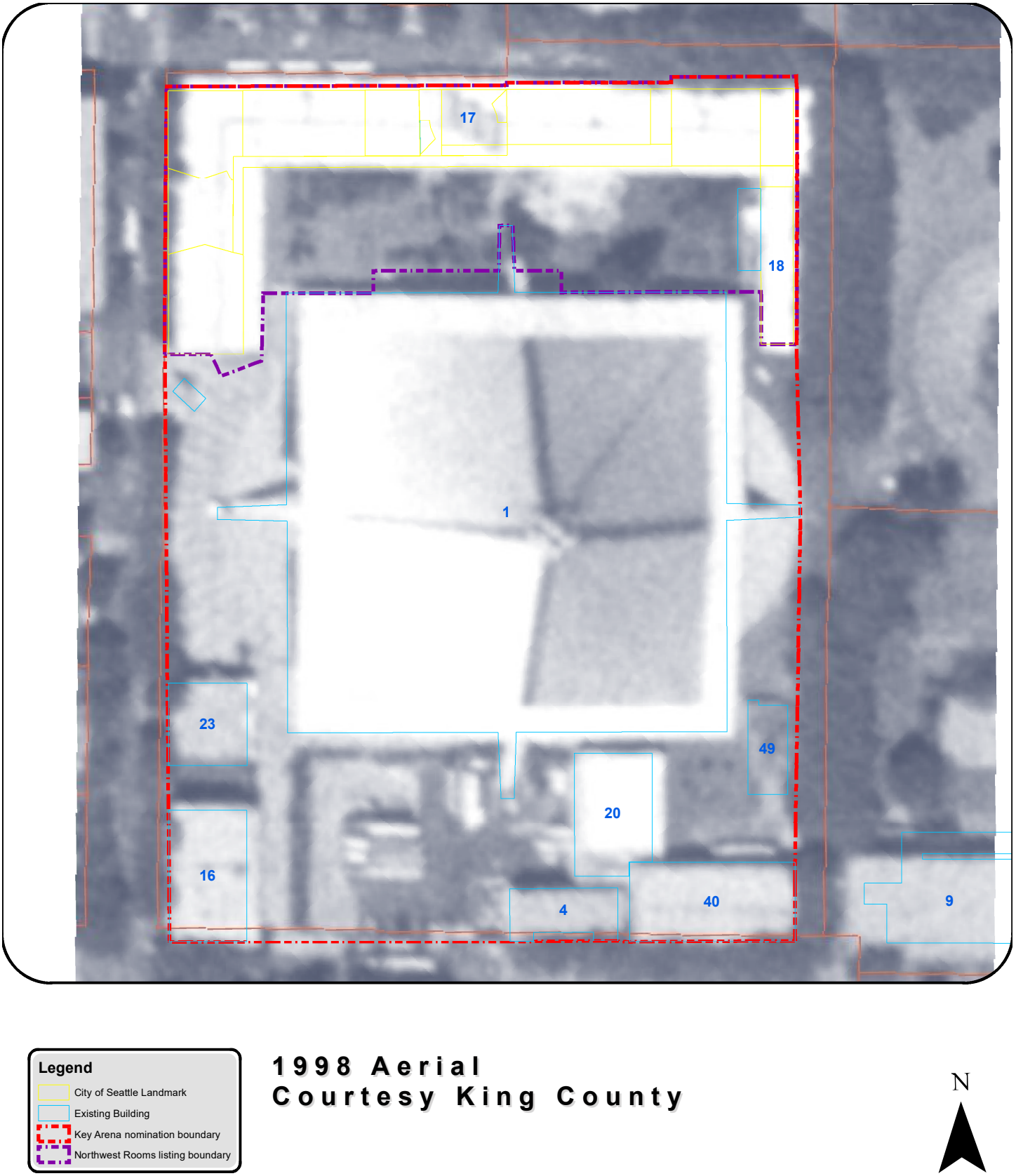


Figure 22: 1998 aerial photograph with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy King County.

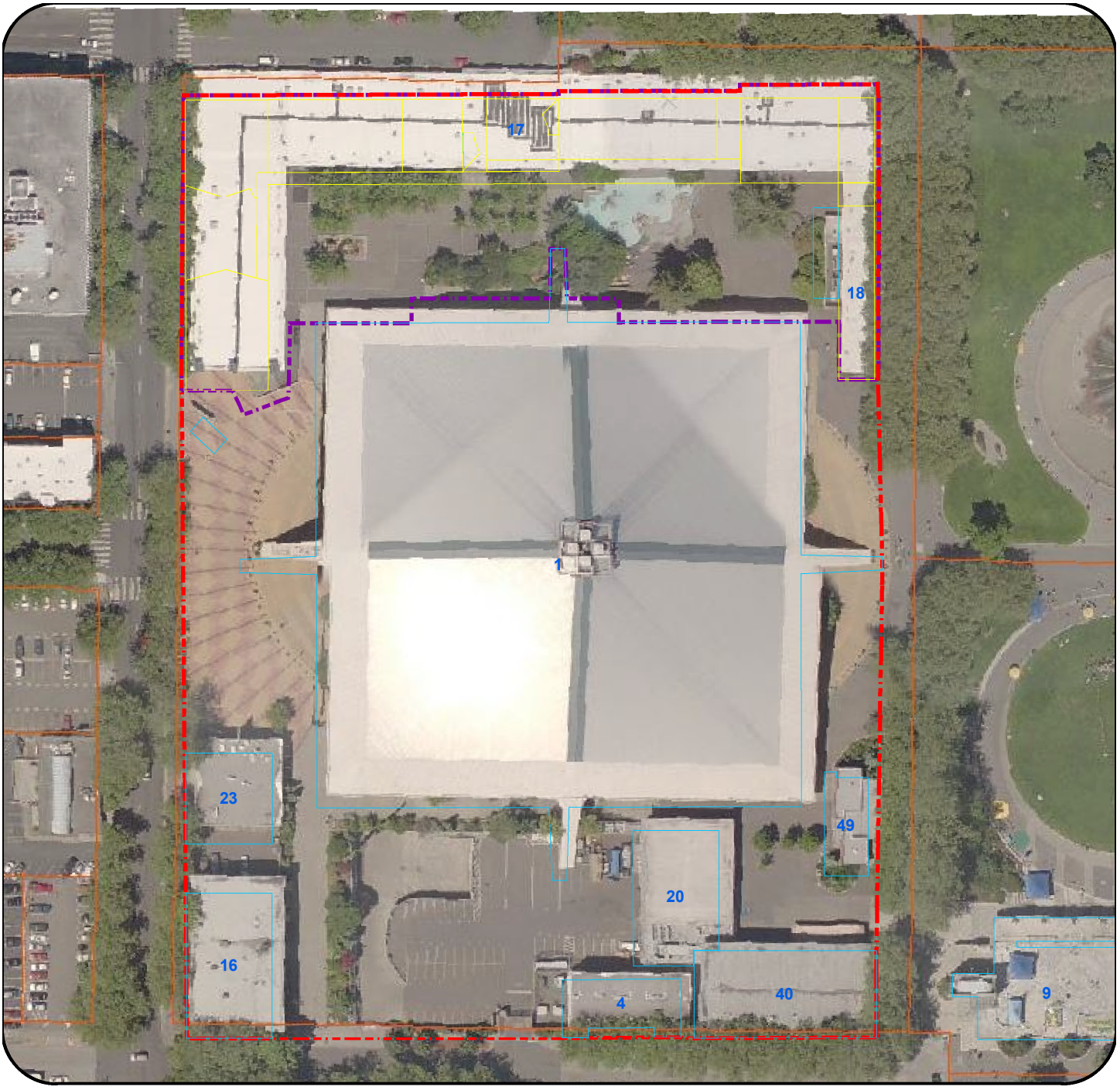


Figure 23: 2007 aerial photograph with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy King County.

Figure 24: 2015 aerial photograph with an overlay of the current buildings. Courtesy King County.

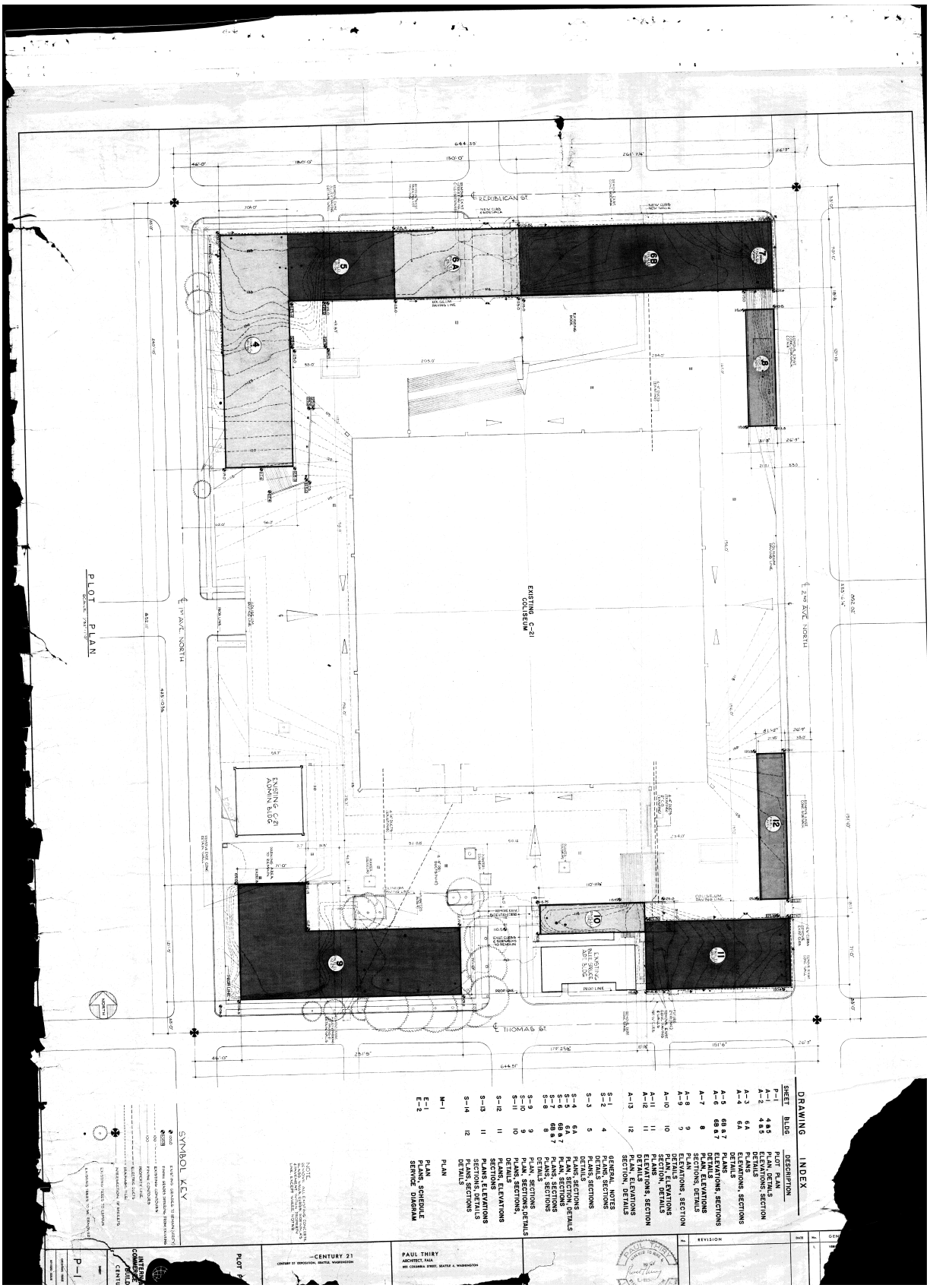


Figure 25: Century 21 Coliseum and Perimeter Buildings. The Coliseum is at the center, Building 9 is the NASA Building, and the International and Commerce Buildings are along the top edge. Courtesy Seattle Center.

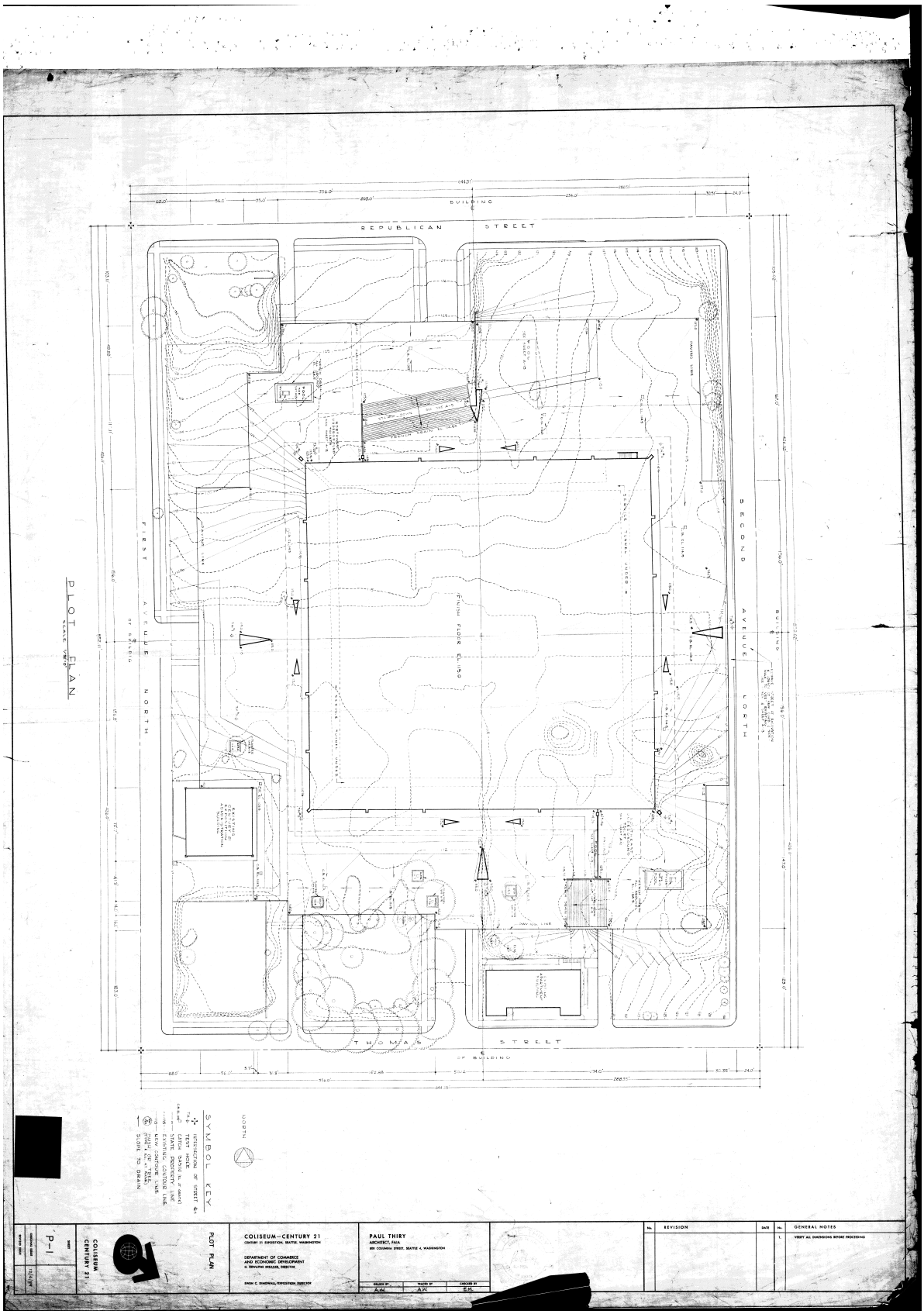


Figure 26: Coliseum Plot Plan, 1959. Courtesy Seattle Center.

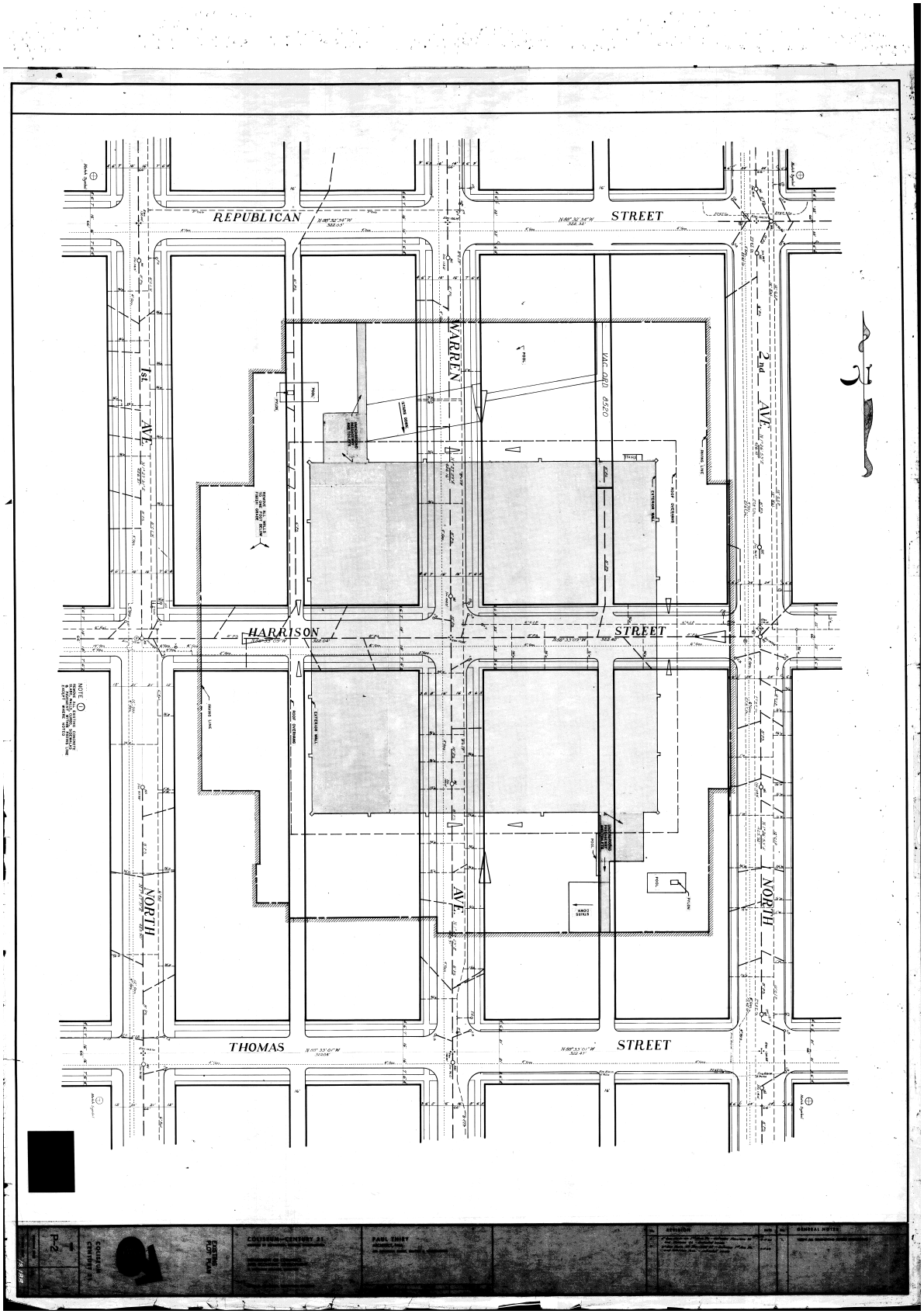


Figure 27: Coliseum Site Plan overlaid over street grid, 1959. Courtesy Seattle Center.

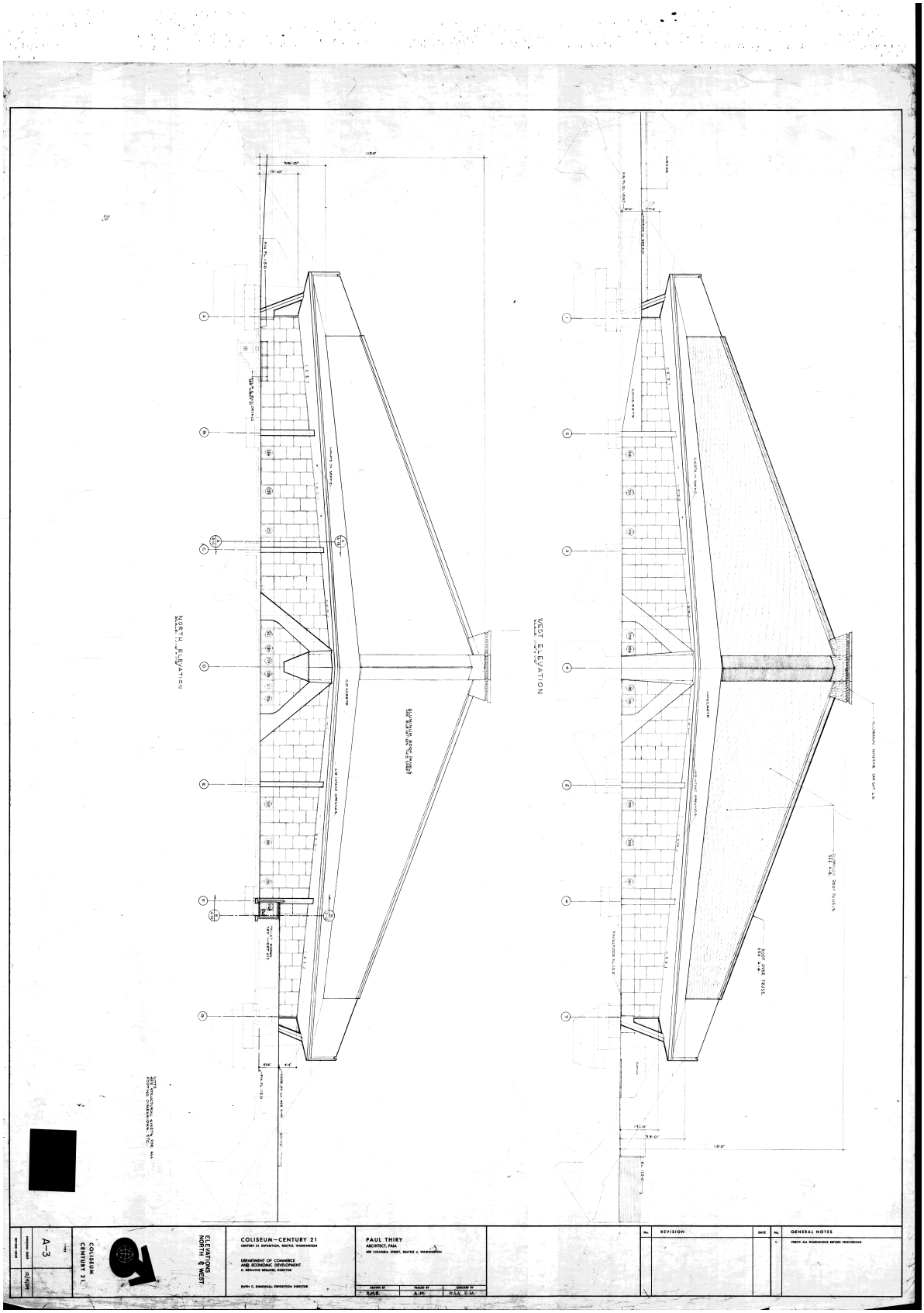


Figure 28: Coliseum, North and West Elevations, 1959. Courtesy Seattle Center.

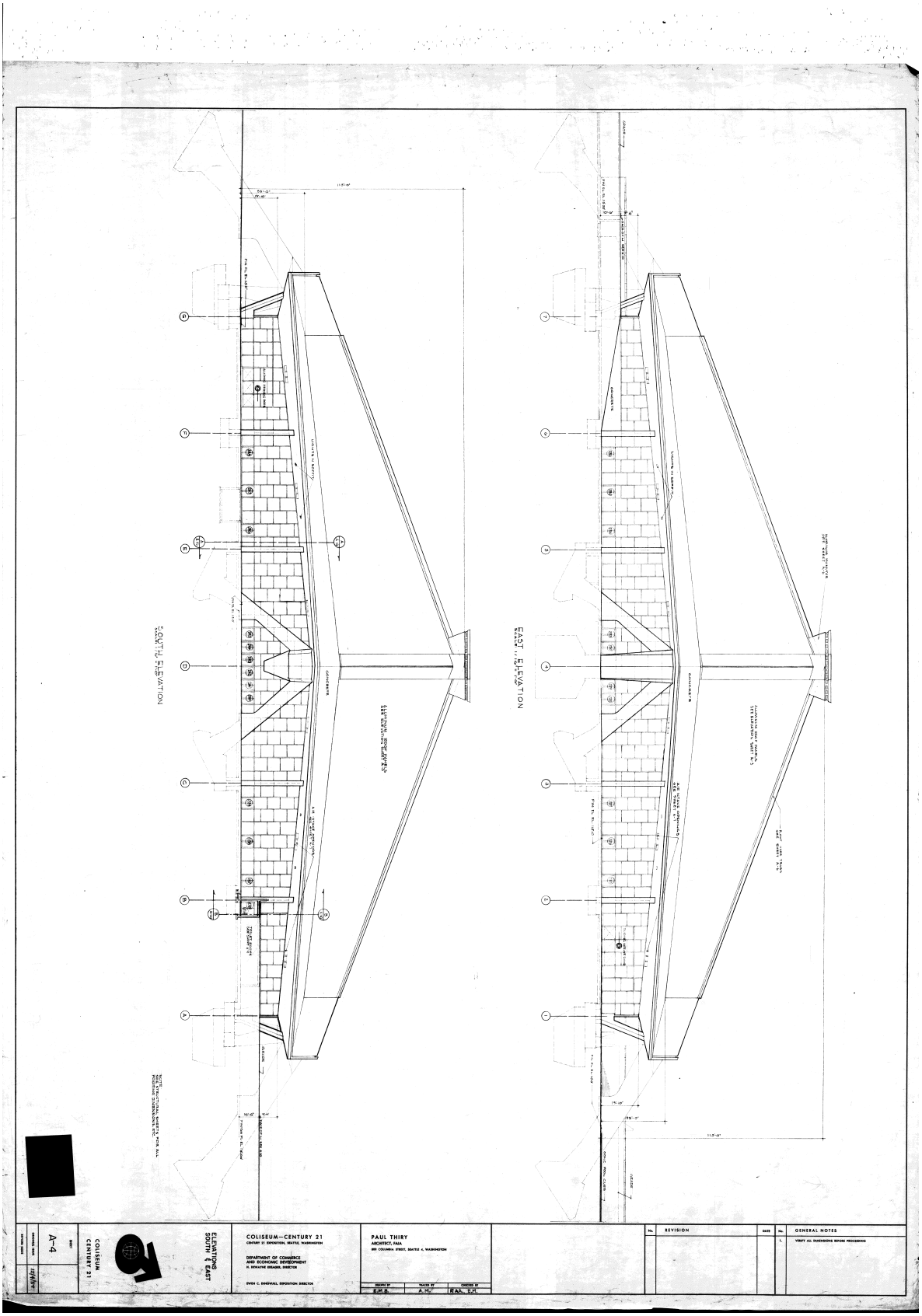


Figure 29: Coliseum, South and East Elevations, 1959. Courtesy Seattle Center.

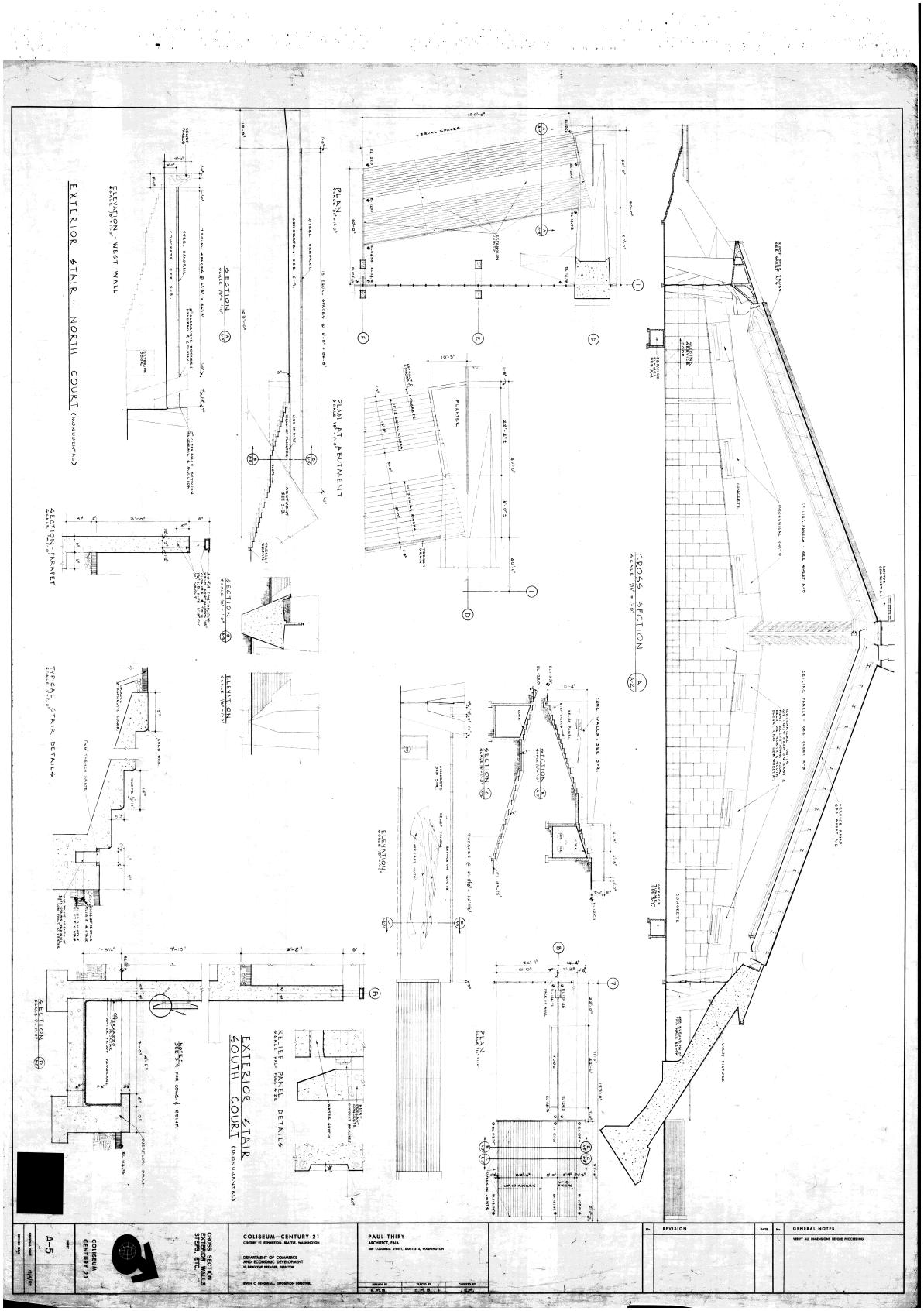


Figure 30: Coliseum, Cross Section, 1959. Courtesy Seattle Center.

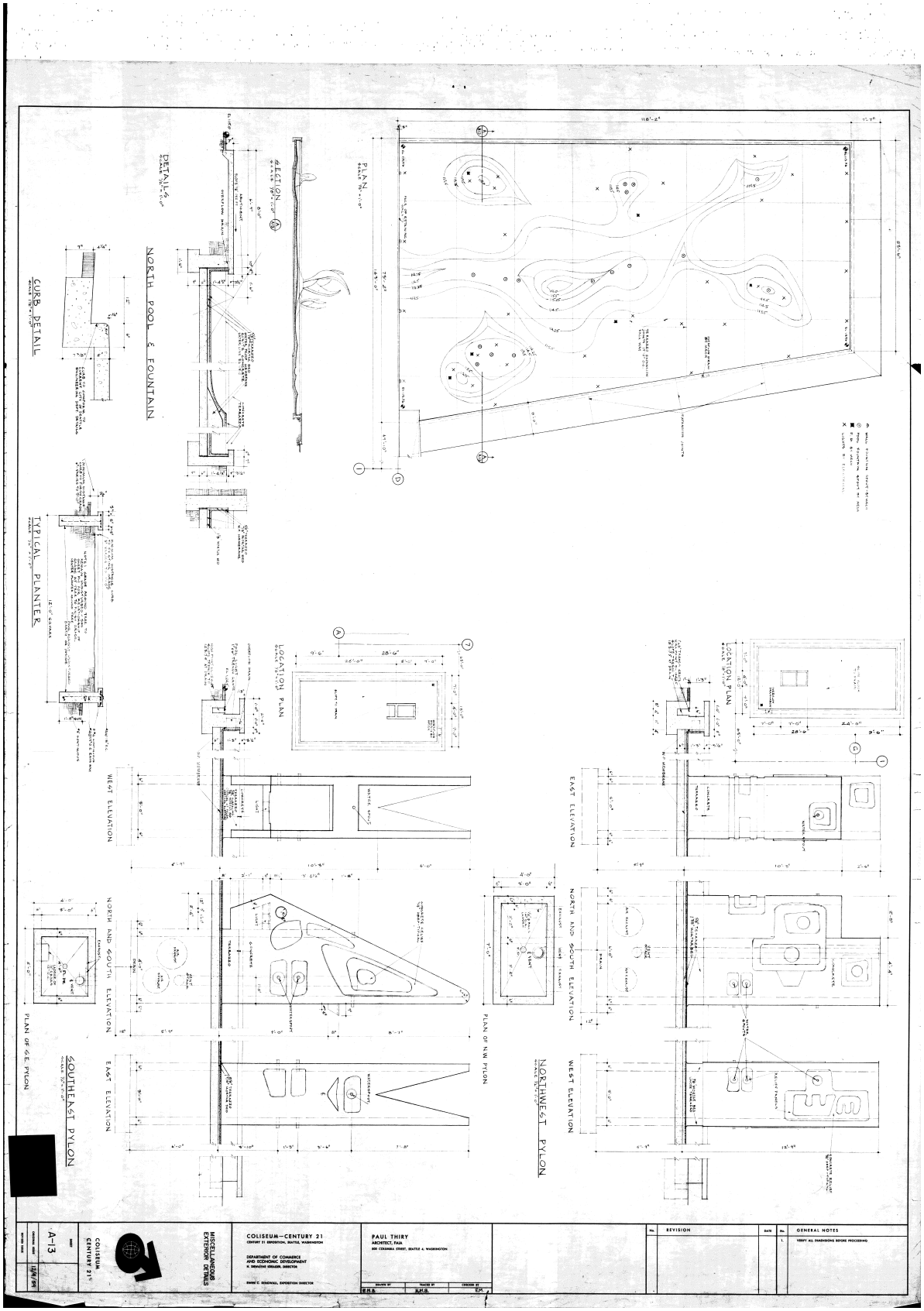


Figure 31: Coliseum, Miscellaneous, 1959. Courtesy Seattle Center.

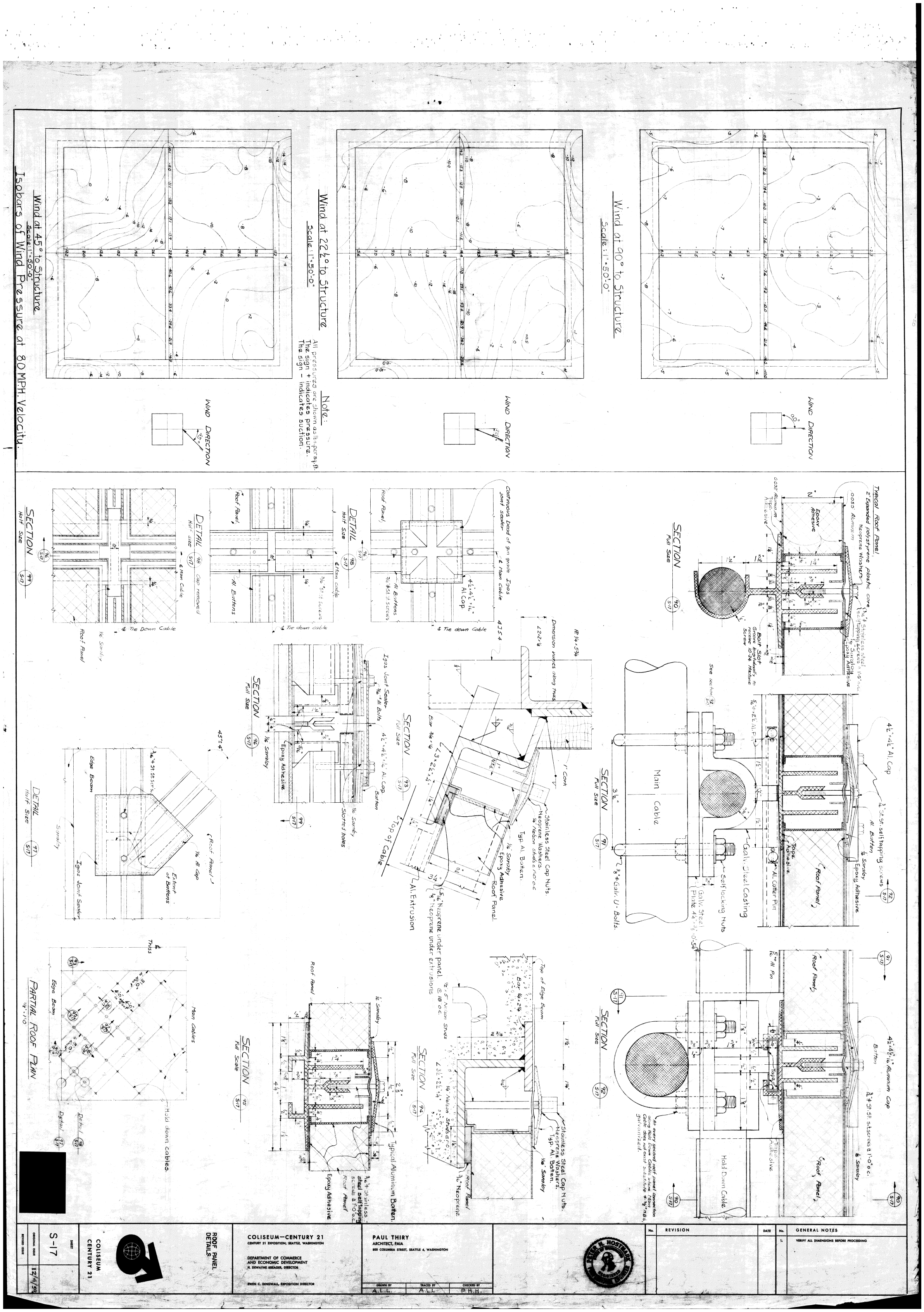


Figure 32: Coliseum, Roof Panel Detail, 1959. Courtesy Seattle Center.

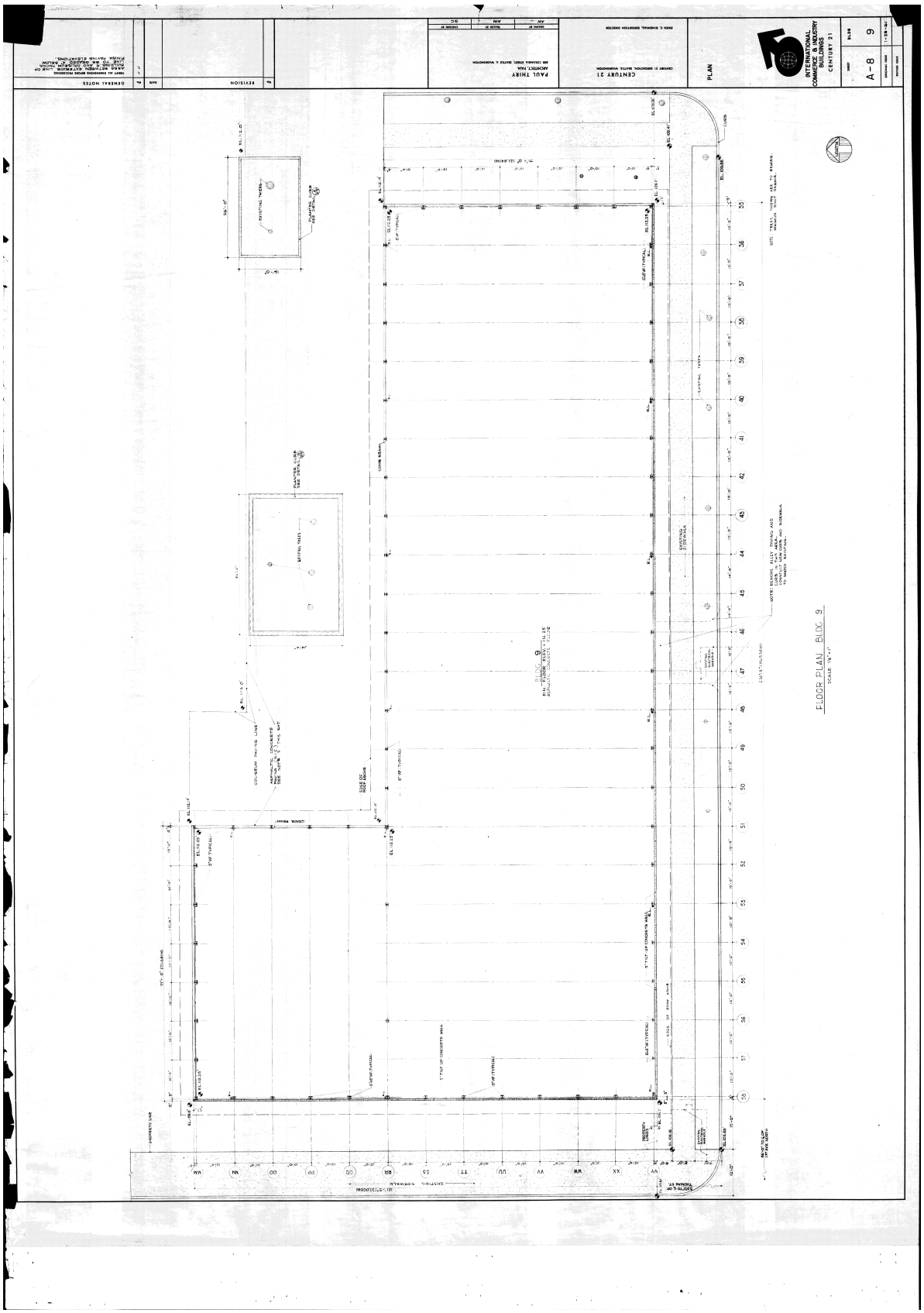


Figure 33: NASA Pavilion (Building 9) Floor Plan, 1961. Courtesy Seattle Center.

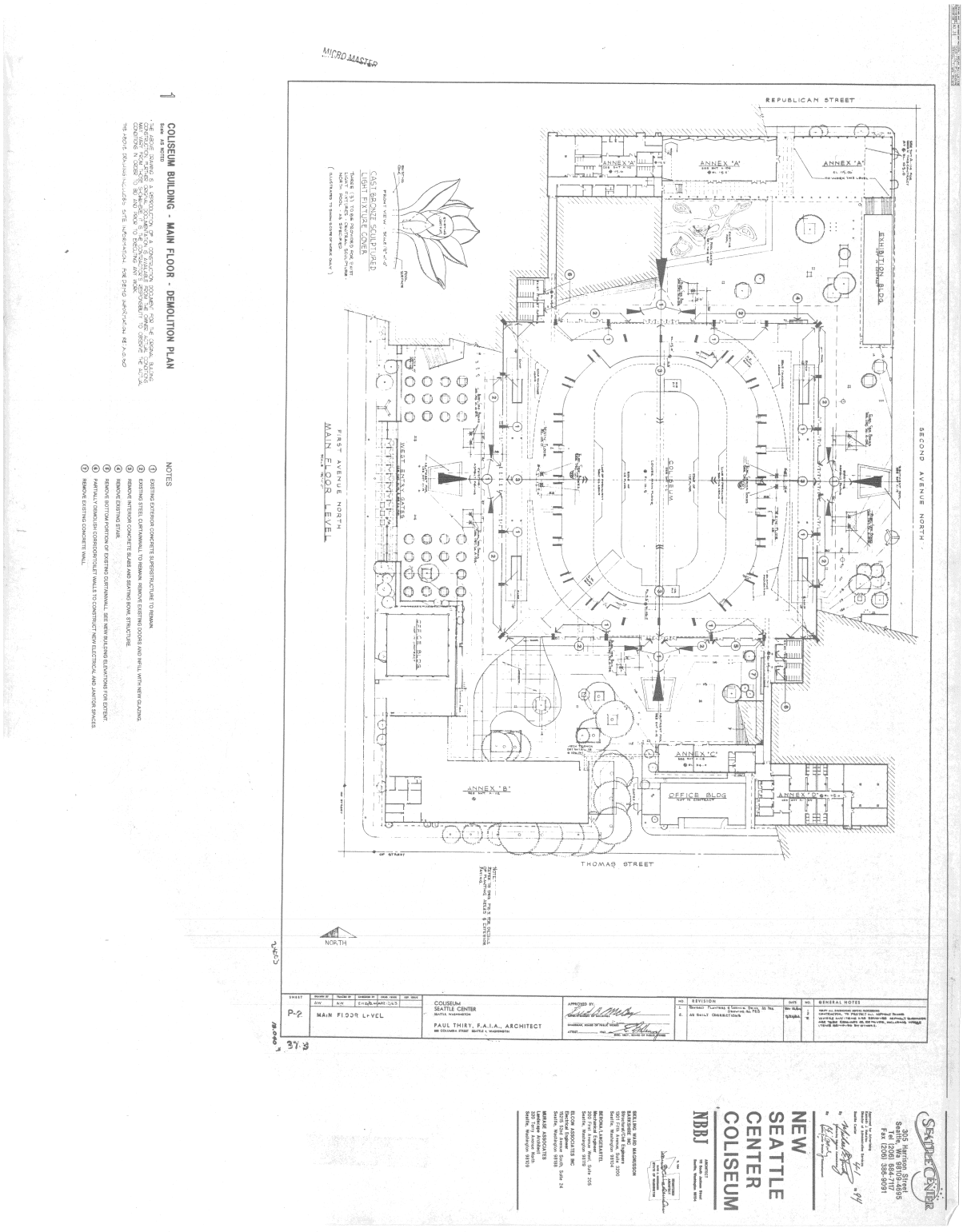


Figure 34: Original drawings of Coliseum contained within 1964 renovation drawings. Courtesy Seattle Center.

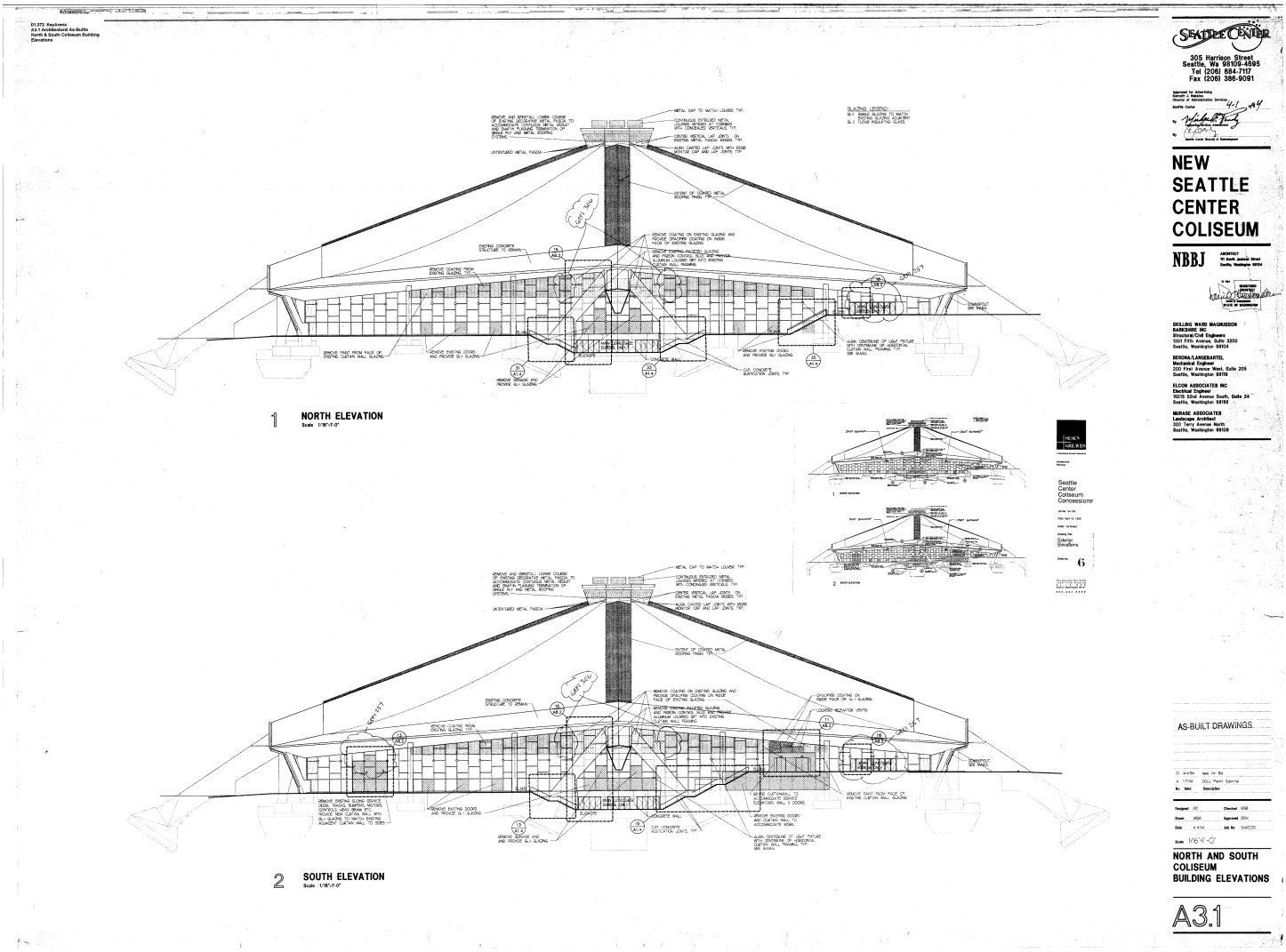


Figure 35: North and south elevations of KeyArena following 1995 renovation. Courtesy Seattle Center.

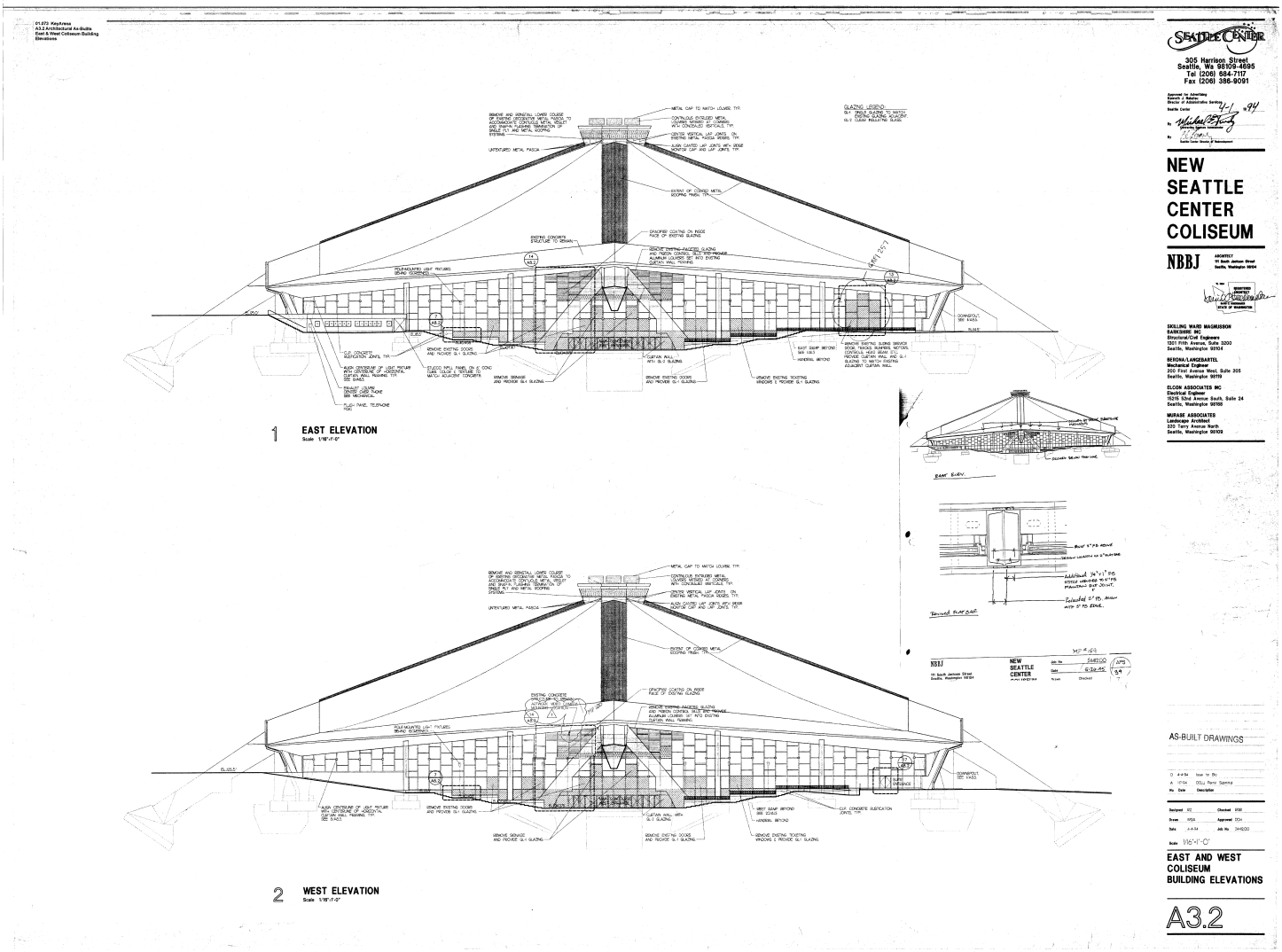


Figure 36: East and west elevations of KeyArena following 1995 renovation. Courtesy Seattle Center.

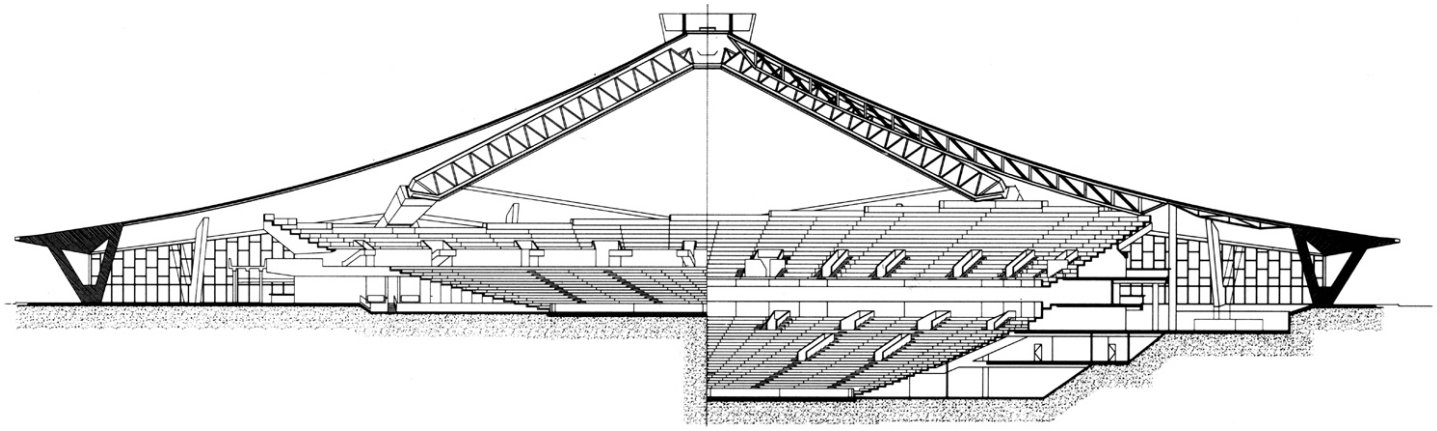


Figure 37: Section showing changes to Coliseum following 1995 renovation. Pre-1995 section is on the left; post-1995 section is on the right. Courtesy Seattle Center.