

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE: City Hall Siting Criteria
DEPARTMENT: City Manager's Office
PRESENTED BY: Robert Olander, Deputy City Manager
Eric Swansen, Senior Management Analyst 

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

Staff would like to outline the siting process and present a draft site criteria leading to the construction of a new City Hall with Council.

The big picture problem we are solving here was well defined shortly after incorporation by the first City Council. The City has little control over the costs of leasing and maintaining office space for City Hall. In addition, the City's customer service locations have become de-centralized between two buildings, which creates a barrier to providing quality customer service. Furthermore, the City's image lacks a sense of community while it occupies leased office space in two adjacent buildings.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The financial impact of this project is not fully known at this time. Significant differences between sites, construction delivery methods, market conditions and the City's ability to afford a project are all factors that will determine the cost of this project. While the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) contains \$15.1 million for this project, as Council is aware the more work we do on this project the greater the certainty about costs will be. However, clearly, we have limited resources that we can devote to this project with our current revenue sources. Staff will not propose a City Hall project that we will not be able to afford in terms of both capital and operating expenses.

Funds to complete this process are budgeted in the revised 2002 CIP.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is required. Staff is seeking Council's consensus for proceeding with the site evaluation process and providing direction on the siting criteria.

Approved By: City Manager  City Attorney 

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INTRODUCTION

Staff would like to outline the siting process, and draft site criteria for the construction of a new City Hall with Council.

BACKGROUND

This item was last discussed with Council on August 19th, when staff presented a project plan and introduced Olympic Associates of Seattle as the project and construction management firm assisting with this project. The project plan outlined the need to develop a siting process and criteria.

Staff will be returning with an updated space needs analysis and very preliminary site drafts in the weeks ahead.

DISCUSSION

Finding a suitable site for a City Hall can be one of the most difficult aspects of this project. The process for selecting a site must be open and fair, but at the same time not provide potential sellers or brokers any information greater than necessary to avoid cost escalations for preferred sites. The real estate market is always in a state of change, possibly adding or removing sites from further consideration based on owner preferences and development activity.

In order to have a fair and open process, staff is suggesting we look at sites commonly known as being available for acquisition. In addition, staff also suggests we ask property owners to submit suitable properties for review and analysis in addition to the commonly known sites. This process could take a month for submissions to be received, and another 2 weeks to review and analyze. However, it lowers the risk of having a new site being pitched to the project team at the last minute, delaying or derailing project resources.

Each site would be reviewed and analyzed using consistent criteria. The criteria would be broken down into two sequences, the basic fit and the remainder are qualitative measures that help compare those sites that meet the basic fit criteria.

The criteria will not be initially weighted. If we discover a number of sites that are very similarly valued, staff will consider returning to Council with a weighting exercise to help sort out more specific preferences in relation to the criteria.

Once the sites are reviewed and analyzed, those sites rated most suitable will be reviewed in greater detail. This additional work will place a footprint of the proposed City Hall on the site, determining building height, which is a significant factor in estimating costs. Taller buildings, most likely to be used on smaller sites where space is a premium, will require higher quality construction, increasing costs. These preliminary site plans will be shared with Council, for comment and later consideration.

The siting criterion is very simple. Staff is suggesting a two part criteria, with the first sort seeking sites that have a basic fit to our needs, the second being a more in-depth qualitative review.

Only sites that meet the first sort criterion will be reviewed with the second set of criterion. This will reduce the amount of staff and consultant time used to review sites that are not likely to have a very high probability of meeting our needs.

Staff is suggesting the following criteria be utilized:

Basic Fit - Location – Overall Centrality & “Civic Heart”

In general, Council has expressed interest in having a centrally located City Hall, which fosters convenient access from all areas of the City. This criteria would rate on a qualitative scale the centrality to the central business district and the potential to enhance Shoreline’s “civic heart” or desire to establish a core downtown. The higher the score, the more suitable the site it.

Basic Fit – Location – Economic development catalyst potential

Council has also expressed an interest in getting this project to also be a catalyst for future economic development activities. Sites that lend themselves to being the beginning of future development, either coordinated or as a result of, the City Hall, will rate higher than others.

Basic Fit – Location – Transportation access

The City has an opportunity to use the City Hall project as a model for encouraging transportation accessibility. This includes both traditional (access to major arterials) and alternatives (location on a bus route, proximity to bicycle paths or designated routes, sidewalks that connect to major business areas). Sites with greater transportation accessibility will rate higher in relation to other sites with less accessibility.

Basic Fit – Location – Neighborhood / Adjacency to Services

The City wants to be a good neighbor when building a City Hall, so it makes sense to look for siting in locations where neighborhoods have quality development and generally support this type of project. This also includes proximity to services that City employees and visitors might easily access and use (i.e. espresso, sandwich shop, dry cleaners, etc.)

Basic Fit – Location – Citizenry access to city services

The City seeks to ensure that all citizens have easy access to City Hall. The building itself will conform to the state barrier free standards, but location is also an important part of this. Sites located closer to the population center of the City will rate higher, than those further from this center. This is different from overall centrality, as that measure is focused on a commercial, not population, center.

Basic Fit – Parcel size and shape relative to needs

The City Hall building will have a number of options when it comes to height, width and parking. In general, sites that provide for the basic footprint, with suitable ingress/egress will rate high. Those with even greater space will rate higher, while

those will less will rate lower. If possible, staff will be seeking to acquire as much property as our budget allows, to provide for future development on the site.

Basic Fit – Cost

The City Hall site must be within the City's budget overall. Cost will compare the options for building up (and have a more expensive construction type) with building out (and having to buy more land), when looking at the overall cost.

Additional Criteria

Additional Criteria - Site Characteristics – Expansion Potential

As previously mentioned, staff would like to acquire as much property as the site acquisition budget allows, for future expansion. Discussions with other cities that have built City Hall buildings suggest that if they were to do it again, they would want to buy more land. While the City's operating budget will not likely support another building for quite some time, we need to keep all our options open. The more suitable a site is for future expansion, the higher the rating.

Additional Criteria – Site Characteristics – Quality of Site

Sites with higher quality amenities, while not critical, are considered as having a higher value than others. This includes features like condition of the site, views, topography, etc.

Additional Criteria – Site Characteristics – Traffic access and parking

City Hall, while not a large traffic generator, still needs to have adequate parking and traffic access to meet our community's needs.

Additional Criteria – Sustainability/Environmental – Site Impact

Sites where development could require environmental damage would not rate as high as those sites where there is no environmental damage (or perhaps even an environmental benefit). This could be in terms of impervious surfaces which create stormwater runoff to on-site treatment facilities, require the elimination of urban quality trees, or reduce beneficial native vegetation.

Additional Criteria – Sustainability/Environmental – Remediation required

Sites, which require additional environmental remediation, due to prior uses, will rate lower than those sites that require less remediation. These are often sites that have had vehicle or machinery repair functions, and have created a potential liability for the City to own the property.

Additional Criteria – Sustainability/Environmental – Stormwater Management

Sites that have little impact on the natural water flow rate higher than those with greater impact.

Additional Criteria – Sustainability/Environmental – Open Space

Sites which lend themselves to restoring or enhancing natural features will rate higher than those sites which do not.

Additional Criteria – Infrastructure – Street frontage

Sites with more street frontage that enhances the presence and access to the property and future development will rate higher than other sites.

Additional Criteria – Infrastructure – Traffic Mitigation

Sites which require significant off-site improvements to ensure traffic impacts are mitigated, such as traffic signals, calming devices, widening or turn lane construction, will rate lower than those site with less mitigation requirements.

Additional Criteria – Infrastructure – Communications system

The greater the access to a high quality communications system, the better the rating. Access to the County's I-Net, City owned fiber infrastructure and proximity to telephone switching stations will rate higher than sites without these features.

Additional Criteria – Infrastructure – Utilities

The less need for additional investment in utility infrastructure (water line size, sewer extensions, utility transformers, etc.) the higher the rating.

Additional Criteria – Real Estate – Available for acquisition

Sites which are generally available for acquisition are rated higher than those which involve costly and less timely exchanges or relocations. Sites with fewer barriers to acquisition will rate higher then other sites.

Additional Criteria – Real Estate – Condemnation required

Sites that are not available due to unwillingness of the seller will rate lower, than available sites. This will reduce the costly delays needed to use eminent domain proceedings.

Additional Criteria – Real Estate – Potential for partnerships/joint tenancy

In the past Council has expressed interest in sites that have greater potential for partnerships or joint tenancy will rate higher, than sites with little or no opportunity.

Additional Criteria – Real Estate – R/E transaction relationship

Sites that have more cooperative, committed and experienced property owners will result in a better working relationship. Such sites will rank higher than those with less willing owners.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is required. Staff is seeking Council's consensus for proceeding with the site evaluation process and providing direction on the siting criteria.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Siting Memo from Olympic Associates

October 10, 2002

ATTENTION: **Shoreline City Management**

RE: **Site Selection Criteria**
 Shoreline City Hall

FROM: **Steven Paget**
 Olympic Associates Company

Olympic Associates Company has researched site selection criteria appropriate for use in property assessment for a civic project of the nature of the Shoreline City Hall. Our research included review of site selection criteria typically used on public projects and commercial administrative office buildings. We considered the criteria used previously by the Seneca Group in their assessment of potential sites for the City Hall as well as that typically used by the real estate industry. Criteria suggested by City staff and consideration of Shoreline's unique qualities and specific needs also went into the development of a set of proposed selection criteria.

The proposed site selection criteria are organized into the five categories of Location, Site Characteristics, Sustainability/Environmental, Infrastructure and Real Estate. Within each of these categories, we have incorporated twenty-two specific factors for consideration. These factors capture the essential aspects of the five categories relevant to the City Hall site selection. Each criterion has the potential for differential weighting to reflect the relative value the City places on each aspect.

Olympic has prepared a Site Selection Scoring Matrix for use by the Project Team. The matrix is organized into the five categories noted above and the associated criteria. Each criterion can be weighted between 1 and 10, with 10 carrying the greatest weight or value. The criteria have a scoring between 1 and 5, with 5 being the highest score. The criteria scores are then factored against the weighted values to provide a weighted score. We have prepared a set of qualitative notes for each aspect clarifying how to view and score that criterion.

To simplify the selection process, we recommend that those criteria carrying the greatest weight, e.g. location, cost and suitable parcel size and shape, be used as a first-pass filter for narrowing down the total number of sites evaluated. Those sites that satisfy the essential criteria can then be further evaluated and compared using the balance of the selection criteria.

Olympic Associates Company recommends adoption of the Site Selection Criteria by the Shoreline City Council and use of the Scoring Matrix by Shoreline City Management in the evaluation of potential sites for City Hall. Olympic is available to make any modifications to the criteria and matrix to better suit the needs of the City.

Shoreline City Hall Site Selection Criteria

SELECTION CRITERIA	QUAL NOTES
LOCATION Overall centrality & "civic heart" Economic development catalyst potential Transportation access Neighborhood/Adjacency to services Citizenry access to City services	1 2 3 4 5
SITE CHARACTERISTICS Parcel size & shape relative to needs Expansion potential Quality of site Traffic access and parking	6 7 8 9
SUSTAINABILITY/ENVIRONMENTAL Site Impact Remediation required Stormwater management Open space pres/restoration	10 11 12 13
INFRASTRUCTURE Street frontage Traffic mitigation Communications system Utilities	14 15 16 17
REAL ESTATE Available for acquisition Condemnation required Cost Potential for partnership/joint tenancy R/E transaction relationship	18 19 20 21 22

Qualitative Notes:

1. The overall centrality to Shoreline's central business district, arterials, city gateway, etc. and potential to enhance Shoreline's "civic heart", the higher the rating.
2. The potential for catalyzing economic development and acting as an anchor for attracting future development, the higher the rating.
3. The more convenient the access to public transportation, bike paths, main arterials and I-5, the higher the rating.

Shoreline City Hall

Site Selection Criteria

4. The nature and quality of the neighborhood and the ease of access to amenities and services for City staff, the higher the rating.
5. The ease of access by citizens to the property, the higher the rating.
6. The more suitable the property is for meeting the parcel size, shape and layout requirements of the project, the higher the rating.
7. The more suitable the property is for accommodating future expansion, the higher the rating.
8. The higher the overall quality of the site relative to condition, environment, neighborhood, views, amenities, etc., the higher the rating.
9. The more suitable the property is for meeting the parking requirements and traffic access, the higher the rating.
10. The higher the potential for limiting site environmental damage and limiting the development footprint, the higher the score.
11. The lower the potential for remediation of environmental pollution/contaminants, the higher the rating.
12. The greater the potential for limiting disruption of natural water flows and for on-site, low impact stormwater management, the higher the rating.
13. The greater the potential for preservation and/or restoration of natural features and environmental qualities, the higher the rating.
14. The more that the street frontage enhances the presence and access to the property and future developments, the higher the rating.
15. The less traffic mitigation requirements required to meet the anticipated trip generation, the higher the score.
16. The greater the access to and the higher the quality of the communications infrastructure, the higher the score.
17. The less improvements required to the utilities infrastructure to meet the development needs, the higher the score.
18. The lower the barriers to acquisition, the higher the score.
19. The less likely that condemnation would be required to acquire the property, the higher the score.
20. The lower the cost, the higher the score.
21. The greater the potential for a development partnership and/or joint tenancy that would enhance the project, the higher the score.
22. The more cooperative, committed and experienced the property owner, the higher the score.