

Overview of Facilities and Programs

Seattle Center is the fourth-largest visitor destination in the United States, attracting 12 million visitors each year to its 74-acre campus and hosting more than 5,000 arts, sporting, educational, and cultural events. Seattle Center is the home of the Seattle Opera, Pacific Northwest Ballet, three major theater companies (Intiman, Seattle Repertory, and Seattle Children's Theatre), two small theater companies (Book-It and Seattle Shakespeare Company), two professional basketball teams (the Seattle Sonics of the National Basketball Association and the Seattle Storm of the Women's National Basketball Association), the Seattle Thunderbirds ice hockey team, the Children's Museum, the Fun Forest Amusement Park, and The Center School, a small public high school. The Seattle Center's grounds and buildings are sites for festivals, concerts, conferences, and exhibitions throughout the year. Seattle Center is also a major urban park with lawns, gardens, fountains, and a variety of plazas and open spaces throughout the campus. On the Seattle Center grounds, there are 24 buildings, two parking garages, and one surface parking lot. As one of the conditions of the sale of the 5th Avenue Parking Lot to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for its World Headquarters, the 5th Avenue surface parking lot will be replaced by a 1,010 stall parking garage on the southeast corner of the existing lot. The new garage will open in 2008. Also part of the campus, but privately owned and operated, are the Space Needle, the Pacific Science Center, the Experience Music Project (EMP), and the Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame. The Seattle School District operates High School Memorial Stadium for school athletic events and concerts. The nation's only publicly owned monorail runs between Seattle Center and downtown Seattle; the Monorail is owned by the City and operated by a private contractor.

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

Highlights

- ◆ In 2007-2008, Seattle Center requests appropriations of \$8.1 million in proceeds from the sale of the 5th Avenue Parking Lot to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, including \$0.8 million for phase one implementation of a campus lighting plan to improve safety, wayfinding, and energy efficiency; \$1.9 million for an integrated system of electronic signage throughout the campus, including replacement of World's Fair-era, hand-operated exterior readerboards; \$1.0 million for improvements to two major public entries to the campus; \$1.1 million to refurbish and add to green space on the campus; \$0.8 million for a Parking Access and Revenue Control (PARC) system in the Mercer Garage to increase parking revenue and improve customer service; and \$1.3 million for theatrical and business support equipment to increase the competitiveness of campus facilities, increase recycling on the campus, and improve employee safety. Seattle Center anticipates completing this spending by 2009. In addition \$1.2 million is reserved for acquisition of a replacement site for the skateboard park located in the 5th Avenue Parking Lot. If these funds are not needed for site acquisition, they will be directed towards implementation of the Center's Capital Reserve Plan.
- ◆ In 2007, Seattle Center requests appropriations of \$4.5 million in LTGO bond proceeds for accumulated deferred major maintenance work on the Seattle Center Monorail that resulted from the expectation that the existing monorail was going to be demolished, and for improvements to the Seattle Center monorail station. Debt service on the bonds is funded in Seattle Center's CIP beginning with a partial year payment in 2007, with full-year annual debt service estimated at \$586,000 per year for ten years. Seattle Center expects to complete this work by 2009.

- ◆ Seattle Center requests \$0.2 million in 2007-2008 to replace 71 trees on the Seattle Center campus as part of the City's Urban Forestry Management program
- ◆ Seattle Center requests \$0.8 million in 2007 for the development of a phased, long-term plan for future redevelopment of the Seattle Center campus.
- ◆ Seattle Center requests \$0.9 million in 2007-2008 to complete the replacement of World's Fair-era underground steam and chilled water lines and to increase the efficiency of the Central Utility Plant in providing cooling to campus buildings.

Project Selection Process

Project Identification: The redevelopment and renewal of Seattle Center is guided by the principles of the Seattle Center Master Plan. The Seattle Center Master Plan is reviewed on a regular basis with surrounding neighborhoods, the general public, Seattle Center resident organizations, Seattle's Design Commission and Design Review boards, and other key stakeholders. The Master Plan is the foundation for the annual development and evaluation of Seattle Center's capital investment proposals and serves as the adopted policy basis for Seattle Center's participation in land use, urban design, and public and private transportation planning in the vicinity of Seattle Center. For the 2007-2012 period, Seattle Center's CIP is further guided by the May 2006 report and recommendations of the Mayor's Task Force on Seattle Center Sustainability.

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

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

- ◆ Addresses a facility/system that is a life/safety issue of urgent or emerging concern, is aimed at increasing the security of public facilities, or addresses a facility/system that has failed, or is failing and unreliable;
- ◆ Addresses code or regulatory requirements for ADA, seismic/other safety, energy efficiency, etc.;
- ◆ Helps meet Sustainable ("Green") Building goals and objectives, and/or enhances resource conservation and recycling;
- ◆ Increases the efficiency of building operations, extends the life of existing building systems, increases revenue generating potential, and/or demonstrably enhances the maintainability of the building/facility;
- ◆ Leverages other resources to contribute to improvements; and/or,
- ◆ Represents an improvement requested by City officials or departments, community organizations, and/or tenants.

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

Anticipated Operating Expenses Associated with Capital Facilities Projects

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

