

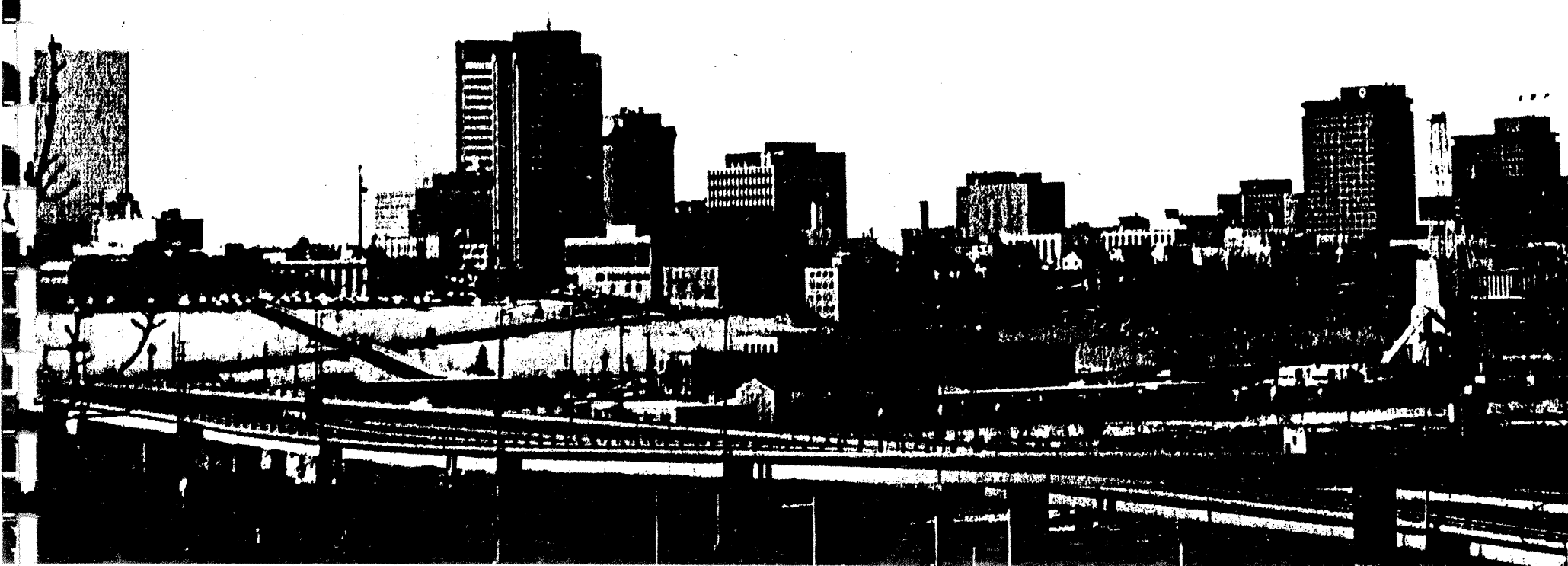
Planning Dept — Public MEETING Supply Kit

# Anchorage CBD

## Comprehensive Development Plan

COMMUNITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
GRUEN ASSOCIATES

In association with Gladstone Associates • CCC • Maynard and Partch



**ANCHORAGE  
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT  
COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

prepared for the Municipality of Anchorage by  
**COMMUNITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

and

**GRUEN ASSOCIATES**  
in association with  
Gladstone Associates  
CCC  
Maynard and Partch

adopted by the  
Anchorage Municipal Assembly  
Fall 1983

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The Anchorage CBD Comprehensive Development Plan has been prepared jointly by the Community Planning Department of the Municipality of Anchorage and a consulting team led by Gruen Associates. The Community Planning Department is responsible for many of the key short-term recommendations pertaining to circulation and transit, open space and the pedestrian environment, the parking management strategy, and the historic preservation program.

The planning process began in late 1981 and a draft plan was prepared in mid-1982. A public review period followed distribution of the draft plan. A final draft was prepared and distributed in spring 1983, reflecting public comments received during the review period. This final draft was approved by the Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission in June 1983 and was adopted unanimously by the Municipal Assembly in fall 1983, pending minor modifications. Those modifications are incorporated in this final Comprehensive Development Plan document.



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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN

Downtown Anchorage has entered the 1980s with a sound economic base and its prospects for the future appear to be equally positive. Increasing employment and high levels of both private and public investment in downtown have reflected dramatic regional economic and population growth. Unlike many American downtown areas that are experiencing physical decay as a result of economic decline, the problems and opportunities facing downtown Anchorage are posed by conditions of change and growth.

Citizens of Anchorage have expressed a desire for the central business district (CBD) to be people-oriented, rich in activities, and the focal point of the region. The overall finding of this report is that a new, coordinated decision-making process, based on a cooperative and interactive relationship between the public and private sectors, is necessary in order to realize the full potential of downtown Anchorage. Within a well-defined planning framework, each new public investment will foster compatible private investment; in response to market conditions and planning guidelines, private development will seek out and reinforce the areas of highest activity potential. At the same time, valuable open space and other resources will be preserved and enhanced.

The goal is a unified downtown development with a strong cultural, institutional, and commercial core; high levels of interaction among employees,



residents, shoppers, and visitors; and preservation of a human scale and the Anchorage heritage. The planning framework within which new development will occur can be considered the glue that binds together and revitalizes all the parts of downtown.

The result will be a thriving, multi-use center -- far more than an assemblage of employment, business, and living places. Downtown Anchorage can offer experiences that cannot be found anywhere else in the region, including the widest range of retail stores, restaurants, cultural events, entertainment facilities, and year-round landscaped gathering places. These experiences, added to the area's established identity as the institutional and corporate headquarters of Alaska, can elevate downtown Anchorage to the ranks of a world-class metropolitan center.

### DOWNTOWN ANCHORAGE TODAY

The Anchorage central business district is the area of most intense development in the greater Anchorage region. The Anchorage CBD, unlike those in many other cities, is not central to the region; instead, it is situated at the northwestern tip of the urbanized area, with the Knik Arm to the west and the port and industry to the north (Figure I.1).

#### Study Area

The Comprehensive Development Plan study area is bounded on the west by the Knik Arm, on the north by 1st Avenue, on the east by Ingra Street, and on the south by 9th Avenue. The study area encompasses approximately 475 acres or about

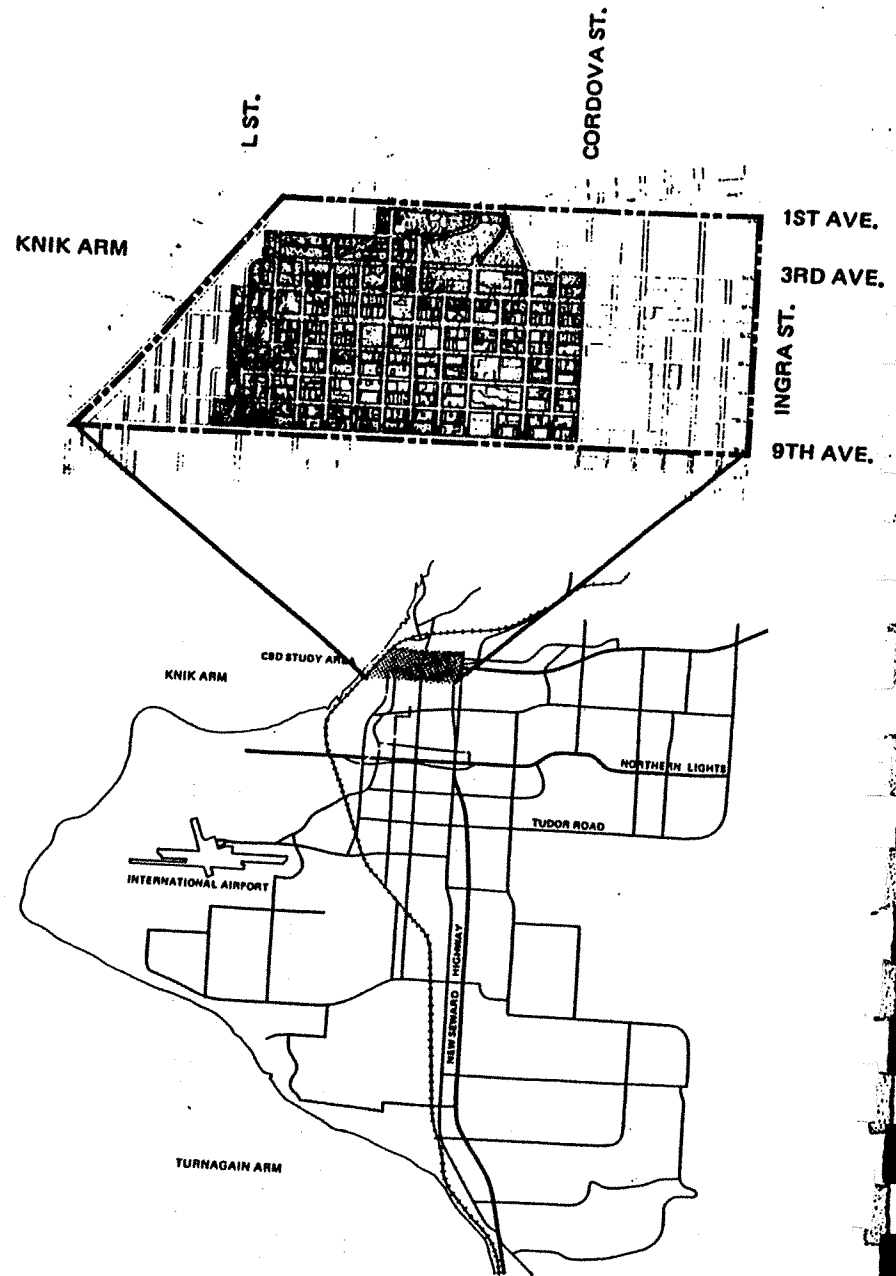


Figure I.1. CBD study area in the Anchorage region. Insert shows study area boundaries; area of primary concentration is shaded.

three fourths of a square mile. The park strip immediately south of 9th Avenue, though not technically within the downtown study area, has nevertheless been considered in many analyses in view of its importance to the CBD open space network. Within this overall study area, the majority of commercial office, governmental, and retail land uses can be found within a smaller area, bounded by L Street on the west, 2nd Avenue on the north, Cordova Street on the east, and 9th Avenue on the south. The primary concentration of the study has been on this area, which encompasses approximately 250 acres.

#### Signs of a Promising Future

The condition of downtown Anchorage is particularly encouraging when compared to patterns of urban decay found in many American downtowns. For example:

- In contrast to stagnation in construction activity, evident in many cities in the last few years, Anchorage has enjoyed a remarkable rate of construction in its downtown area. Over 30 major new projects have been completed since 1975, encompassing over 2.4 million square feet. Another eight projects, encompassing over two million square feet, are either under construction or committed to be developed in downtown Anchorage in the next few years (Table 1.1). It is noteworthy that over half of the square footage incorporated in completed projects and projects under construction is publicly developed.
- Although traffic conditions in downtown Anchorage are worsening with increasing employment and will require remedial action,

TABLE 1.1  
SUMMARY OF ANCHORAGE CBD  
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY, 1975-1982

	Number of Projects	Approximate Area (SF)
<b>COMPLETED PROJECTS</b>		
Public	9	1,084,000
Private	<u>24</u>	<u>1,364,200</u>
Subtotal	33	2,448,200
<b>UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR COMMITTED</b>		
Public	4	1,287,700
Private	<u>4</u>	<u>881,300</u>
Subtotal	8	2,169,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>4,617,200</b>

the area's circulation problems are far from insoluble. Overall, traffic volumes today are well below the capacity of the street network according to Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) data (Table 1.2).

- Few cities are as fortunate as Anchorage in having a wealth of natural beauty to be enjoyed in an urban center. Recent development, extensive as it has been, has still left numerous opportunities to retain dramatic views of the spectacular mountains and bodies of water surrounding downtown Anchorage (Figure 1.2).

TABLE 1.2  
SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC CONDITIONS AT  
SIGNIFICANT SCREENLINES, 1981

	Screenline Location	
	Between D & E Streets	Between 7th & 8th Avenues
Daily Capacity <sup>1</sup>	95,400	123,000
Daily Volume <sup>2</sup>	58,130	80,380
Volume/ Capacity	0.61	0.65

<sup>1</sup>Gruen Associates estimate based on AMATS data

<sup>2</sup>AMATS data

- Since the main part of the CBD is on a plateau, with slopes on the north and west sides, and because of the presence of the cemetery on the east and the 16-block-long park strip on the south, the main part of the CBD is well defined on all four sides. The primary development area of downtown Anchorage is therefore compact, allowing new developments to act as magnets integral to existing development, rather than as appendages that might otherwise siphon off activity and commerce from existing development.

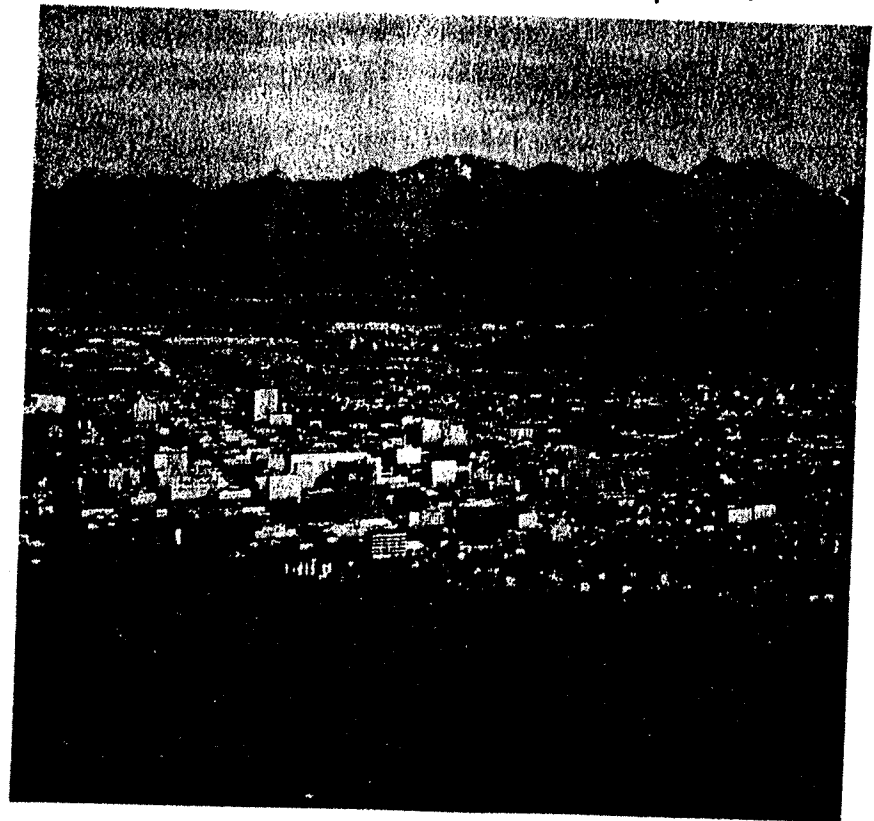


Figure 1.2. Dramatic mountain views surround downtown Anchorage.

- Dramatic growth in population has taken place in the greater Anchorage area since statehood, from 83,000 in 1960 to 174,000 in 1980 (Table 1.3). The proportion of the state population residing in Anchorage has also increased since statehood, from 37% in 1960 to over 43% in 1980. The downtown population represents a relatively small portion of the overall Anchorage population and is generally

TABLE 1.3  
ALASKA AND ANCHORAGE POPULATION  
GROWTH TRENDS<sup>1</sup>

Year	1960 <sup>2</sup>	1970 <sup>2</sup>	1980 <sup>3</sup>
State of Alaska	226,000	303,000	400,000
Metropolitan Anchorage	83,000	126,000	174,000
Percent of State Population in Anchorage	36.7	41.6	43.5

<sup>1</sup>All figures rounded to nearest thousand

<sup>2</sup>Source: State of Alaska Department of Labor Statistics

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Bureau of Census, March 1980

confined to a few sections of the CBD. Still, the entire Anchorage population draws upon facilities, services, and amenities in the CBD. Downtown Anchorage is thus in the unique position to serve as the urban focal point for nearly half the people living in Alaska.

- Finally, economic indicators point to the strong long-term likelihood of continuing construction and commercial activity in downtown Anchorage (Table 1.4). All the major sectors of the downtown economy have shown excellent prospects for expansion in the years ahead, though realizing this expansion may in some cases -- particularly in the retail sector -- require a concerted public and private effort.

#### Problems to Overcome

While the potential of downtown Anchorage to mature into a vital, metropolitan urban center appears to be good, many problems remain to be overcome:

- In spite of extensive recent development, downtown Anchorage is not firmly established in the minds of most residents as the "place to be"; instead, the area faces growing competition from several emerging multi-use activity centers.
- Development downtown has tended to be random and scattered, with independent clusters of retail and office developments, in contrast to a more synergistic arrangement where each entity helps to strengthen its neighbors.

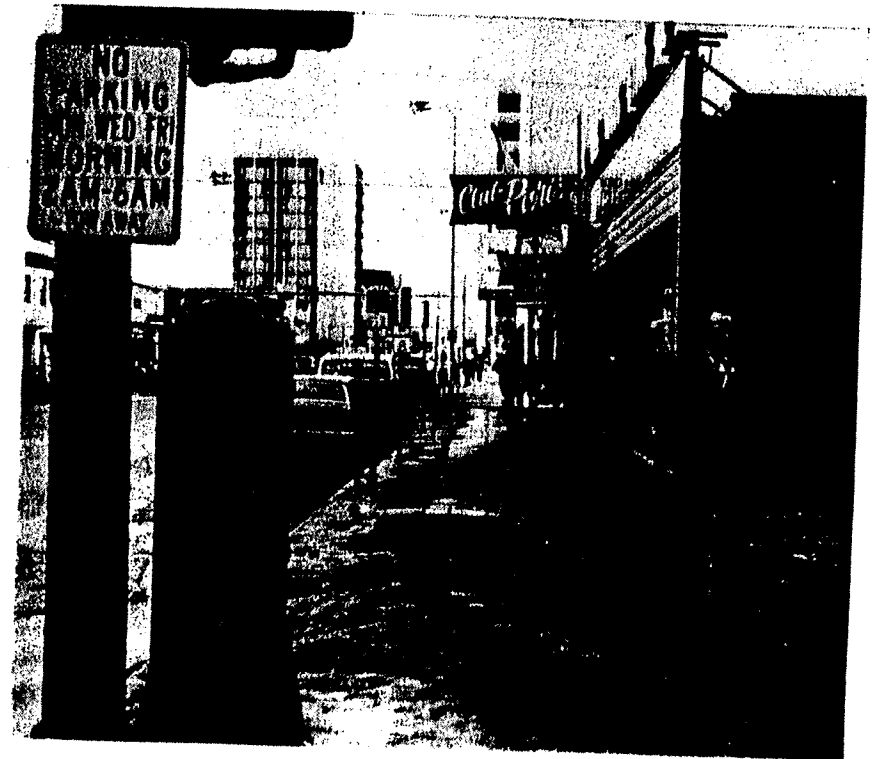
**TABLE 1.4  
POTENTIAL PRIVATE COMPETITIVE DEVELOPMENT  
IN ANCHORAGE CBD, 1981-1990**

	Low Range	High Range
<b>1981-1985 POTENTIAL</b>		
- Office	+770,000 sf	+1,300,000 sf
- Hotel	+700 rooms	+1,100 rooms
- Residential	0 units	+1,000 units
- Retail	-125,000 sf	+ 370,000 sf
<b>1986-1990 POTENTIAL</b>		
- Office	+150,000 sf	+ 250,000 sf
- Hotel	+300 rooms	+ 700 rooms
- Residential	0 units	+ 300 units
- Retail	0 sf	+ 100,000 sf

For more information on specific projections for these development sectors, please refer to Chapter II.

**Figure 1.3. Most sidewalks in downtown Anchorage are devoid of landscaping; signs and parking meters intrude on pedestrian space.**

- A relatively poor streetscape, with most downtown streets devoid of landscaping and amenities, has resulted in a lackluster visual image for downtown (Figure 1.3).
- Increasing vehicular traffic and a lack of adequate parking will become major problems if strategies to cope with these situations are not developed immediately. Projections show some traffic volumes by the Year 2001 to be over existing capacity by up to 45%. And downtown Anchorage faces a near-term shortfall of parking spaces estimated at over 3,000 cars.



## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Since the completion of the last development plan for the Anchorage CBD in 1973, many significant events have occurred, having a tremendous impact on the growth and development of the Municipality of Anchorage and the CBD. Because of this substantial growth, and in view of the development impact associated with current and proposed public and private projects, it was determined that the existing plan should be reevaluated and updated.

Specific objectives of the plan included:

- Establishing an ongoing planning and decision-making process to enable the Municipality to evaluate individual development proposals from a standpoint of changing demands and marketplace dynamics
- Involvement of and close coordination with elected officials, public agencies, and diverse community interest groups in such a way that their views and concerns become an intrinsic part of the study
- An emphasis on phased implementation strategies to achieve both short-range and long-range development objectives
- Consideration of the preservation of existing sound buildings and both natural and man-made assets

In summary, the Comprehensive Development Plan is to function as a guide for coordinated public and private investment decisions. Inherent in this overall goal of the planning effort is a high level of public and private partnership.

## PLANNING APPROACH

Since the time frame allocated to the preparation of the Comprehensive Development Plan was relatively short -- and since important decisions regarding numerous public development projects required the inputs of the CBD planning effort -- the work was divided into two phases (Figure 1.4).

### Phase I Planning Effort

Phase I of the Comprehensive Development Plan, completed in March 1982, focused on the near-term interrelationships between current and proposed public and private projects:

Short-Range Public Sector Development. This aspect of the Phase I plan concentrated on those near-term public development projects or services that are funded and implemented by local, state, and federal agencies. These projects and community service improvements are to be coordinated to provide maximum leverage for near-term private sector investment in the CBD.

Short-Range Private Sector Development. This aspect of the Phase I plan concentrated on those development projects that can be packaged, financed, and implemented by the private sector on a near-term basis through various cooperative mechanisms.

The specific recommendations of this planning effort are documented in the "Phase I Development Plan" and summarized later in Chapter I of this report.

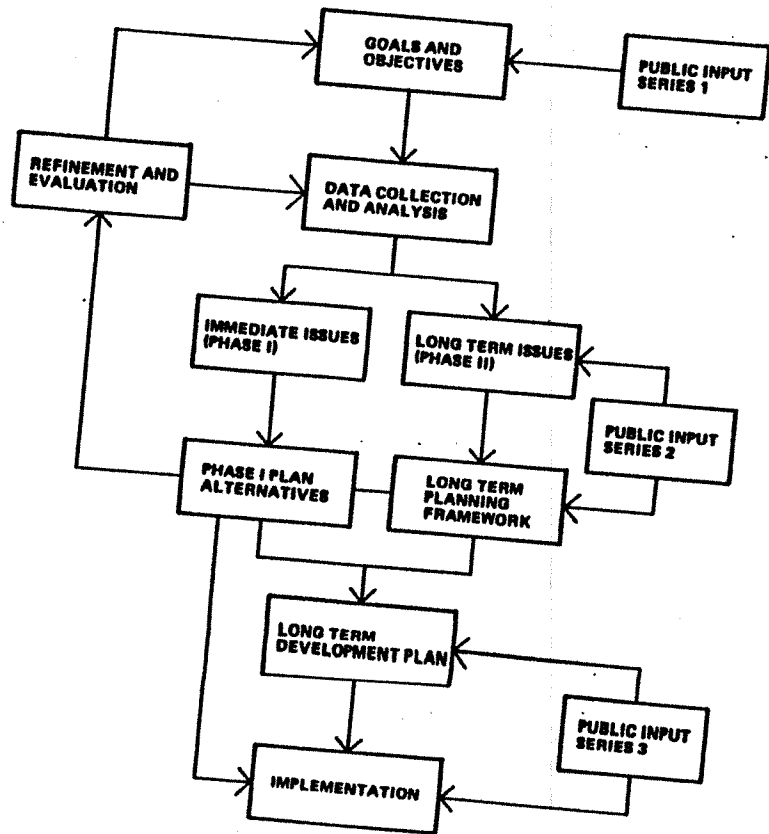


Figure 1.4. Planning process diagram.

### Phase II Planning Effort

Phase II of the Comprehensive Development Plan has focused on long-range policies and implementation guidelines for channeling various future public and private improvements with a programmed consistency to provide maximum community benefits with minimum public costs. The long-term plan provides a framework to assist the Municipality in adopting new planning ordinances, in modifying the Capital Improvement Program, in day-to-day public decision-making, and in generating additional implementation and financing tools. Most importantly, the long-range plan establishes a united course of community action for a strong, dynamic downtown Anchorage.

### Public Participation and Goals

Public input and response guided the Comprehensive Development Plan. During the planning period, three major series of meetings were held, during which members of numerous public and private interest groups and the public at large offered suggestions on planning approaches, informed the consulting team about their individual desires and concerns regarding downtown development, and responded to alternative preliminary planning concepts.

The overall goal established for the development of the Anchorage CBD was "to promote a people-oriented central business district as the focal point of Anchorage with a full range of urban uses and activities." In addition to this major goal were the following objectives:

- A mixture of financial, retail, cultural, recreational, governmental, and service-

oriented development, as well as high-density housing

- Preservation of historical resources in their original context
- Preservation of a human scale and enhancement of the pedestrian environment
- A circulation system providing improved access to and around the CBD while discouraging elimination of through traffic
- A balance of parking and transit facilities in and around the CBD

The public participation program provided specific amplification of these general goals and objectives, for example:

- The desire that downtown Anchorage be people-oriented and the focal point of the community
- Opportunities for a mixture of large and small retail concerns, oriented to the pedestrian network
- A network of small and large open spaces designed for a mixture of activities

Specific results of the public participation program, in conjunction with established goals and objectives, are noted in Chapter II of this report.

#### Need for a Planning Framework

To date, the development of downtown Anchorage has occurred at a rapid rate as noted above, but

has also been random and scattered. Major projects undertaken by the public sector have been approached much as private sector projects are approached: the location for each project has been based on an assessment of the individual merits of alternative sites from the standpoint of that project alone, rather than from a standpoint of the overall downtown development pattern.

Until recently, the consequences of this practice may not have been considered critical. However, now downtown Anchorage is at a threshold, a point at which public investments will help determine the quality of downtown Anchorage in the future. Two alternative futures are possible:

- A continuation of current practices, where decisions about public and private investments alike are made from the standpoint of individual projects alone, will most likely result in a fragmented development pattern with competing, multiple nuclei of activity. Individual project costs may be lower initially, since land availability and cost are the primary site selection determinants under such a system. However, the long-term vitality of downtown, measured by the number of people who will be attracted there, and the consequent revenues passing through downtown would be limited. With this kind of downtown, people would continue their current habit of coming downtown for a single purpose (to work, to attend a cultural event) and leaving immediately afterward.
- If future development is guided by an integrated planning framework, wherein each major public investment is situated to stimulate interaction with other downtown



attractions, overall activity levels will be higher and, as a consequence, private developments will tend to orient themselves around these activity centers. Downtown Anchorage can be molded through this public investment into an integrated, multi-use center that is rich in activity.

The public participation program generated a consensus during the second meeting series in support of the second scenario. In this scenario, new downtown development would be guided by a planning framework within which each new investment would contribute to the diversity and overall activity level within downtown.

#### Elements of the Planning Framework

The planning framework, within which fit the specific Phase I Development Plan recommendations, is intended to continue to guide development into the Phase II planning period. It consists of the following four elements:

- Reinforcement of existing activity areas
- Concentration on the geographical heart of downtown as the nucleus of all downtown activity
- A focus on the public right-of-way for pedestrian linkage and circulation
- Concentration of public investment in development opportunity areas not already experiencing heavy private sector investment

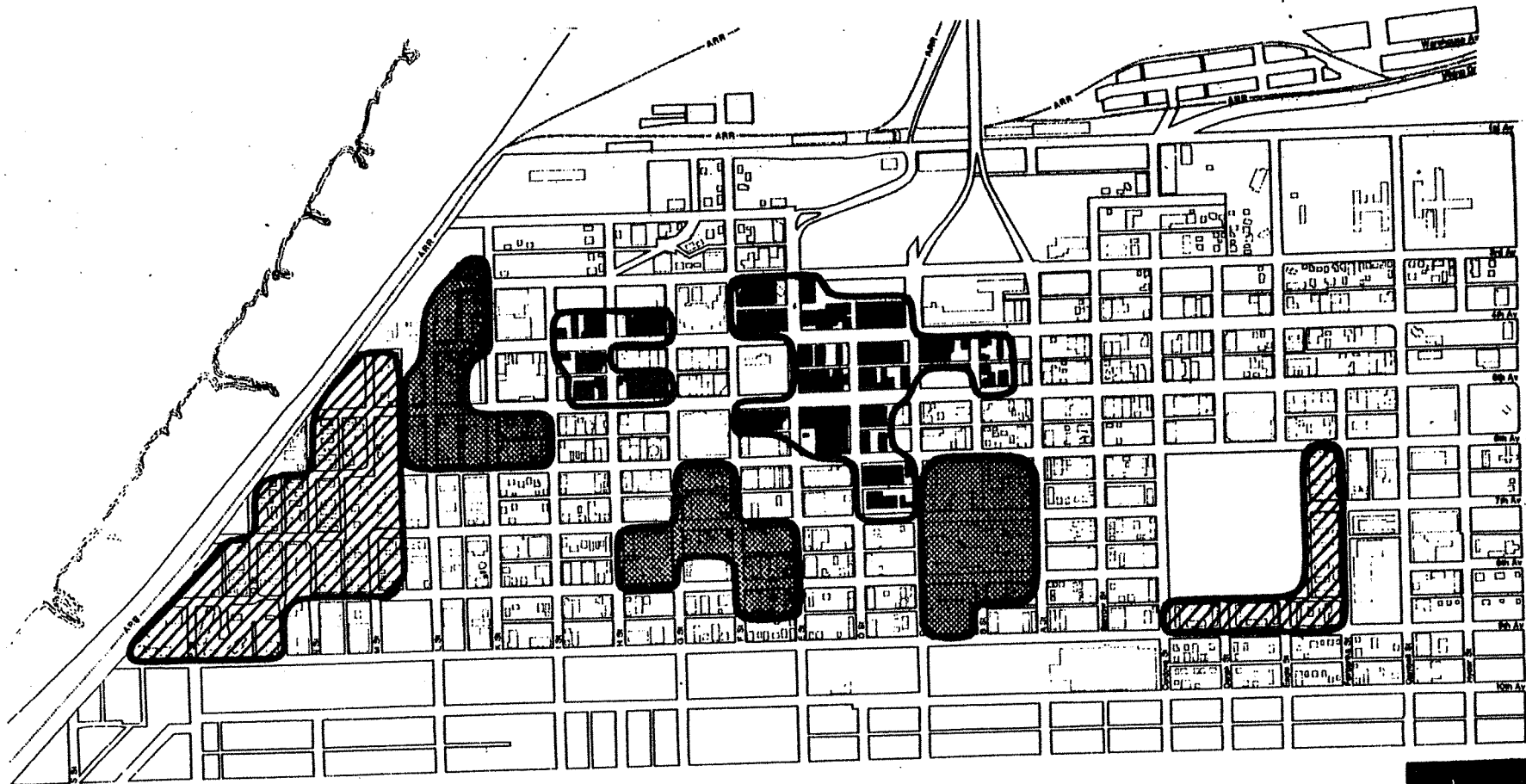
Reinforcement of Existing Activity Areas. Figure 1.5 indicates the generalized existing activity modes in downtown Anchorage, consisting of:

- Independent retail clusters along 4th, 5th, and 6th Avenues that, due to their being distributed over an 8-block length with many intervening non-retail uses, discourage comparison shopping.
- Strong office clusters in three general areas in the western and southern sections of the study area which, as with retail development, tend to have little interaction.
- Hotels distributed along 4th and 5th Avenues over such a length (over 3/4 mile) that nighttime activity is very dissipated.
- A strong residential district west of L Street and pockets of housing around the cemetery, but few significant housing clusters elsewhere in the CBD study area.




The long-term planning framework seeks to reinforce existing development and, at the same time, create identifiable downtown districts as essential parts of a greater whole.

New infill developments, integrated with existing facilities, will strengthen the identity of established districts and simplify the relationships among the various districts. Figure 1.6 indicates this concept.

Concentration on the Heart of Downtown. The core area of downtown Anchorage is the place where the highest activity levels will be generated. As the geographical center of the CBD and as its



**FIGURE I.5**  
**Existing Activity Areas**

-  **RETAIL CLUSTERS**
-  **OFFICE CLUSTERS**
-  **RESIDENTIAL**

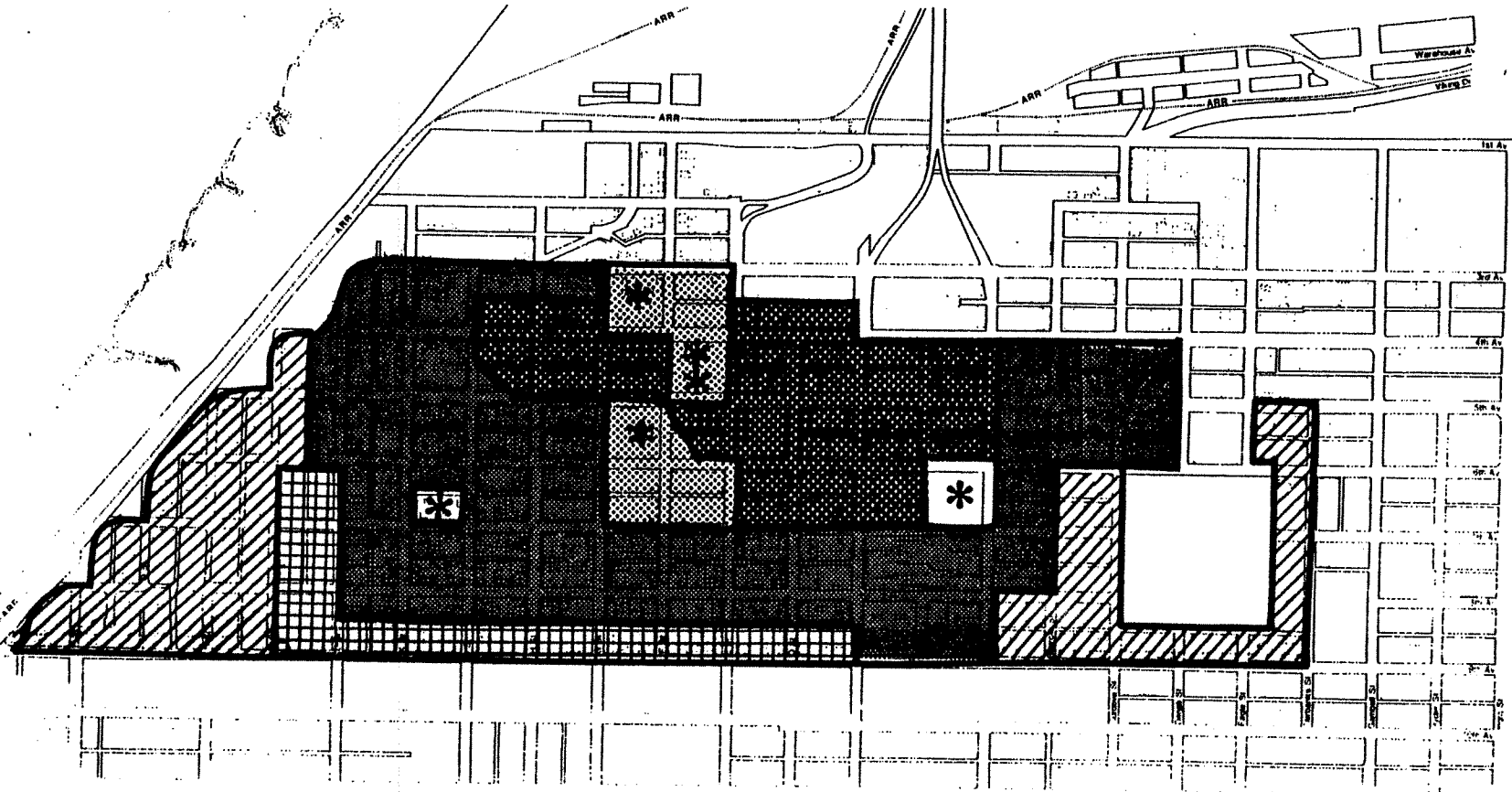
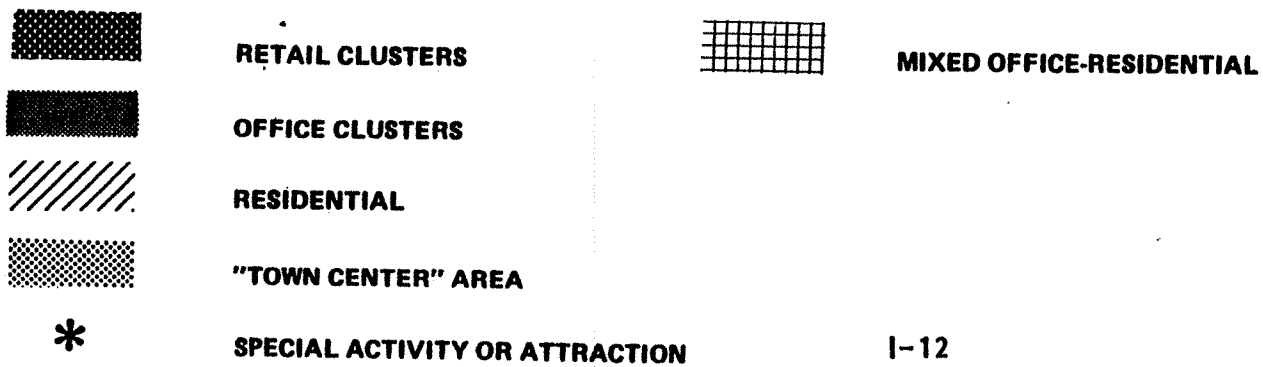


FIGURE I.6

# Proposed Activity Areas



crossroads, the core area or "Town Center" enjoys easy accessibility on foot from all points within downtown, but lacks a visual focus, a place to gather, around which the various activities, employment centers, recreational opportunities, commercial establishments, and institutions are clustered. A central plaza, "Town Center Plaza," is proposed to provide this focus. Its suggested location is in the midst of major new public investments (Figure 1.7) and along streets and avenues slated for landscaping and pedestrian amenities.

Focus on Rights-of-Way. Public streets in downtown Anchorage are now the only means of pedestrian and vehicular circulation (with the exception of the bridge connecting the J. C. Penney store with its parking structure). Given the compact layout of downtown Anchorage, the winter climate, and the desirability of pedestrian-vehicular separation, a skyway system was considered in the planning program. Through public participation, it was determined that the most appropriate initial focus of skyway development is within new development projects, rather than the extensive retrofitting of existing developments. Within new developments, the skyway system would be integrated with street-level pedestrian areas so that both levels would be mutually supportive, rather than isolated and competitive.

The planning framework also calls for a phased program of sidewalk widening and landscaping in conjunction with techniques to extract the greatest vehicular flow in the least space, including eventual conversion of some two-way streets to one-way service (see Chapters III and IV).

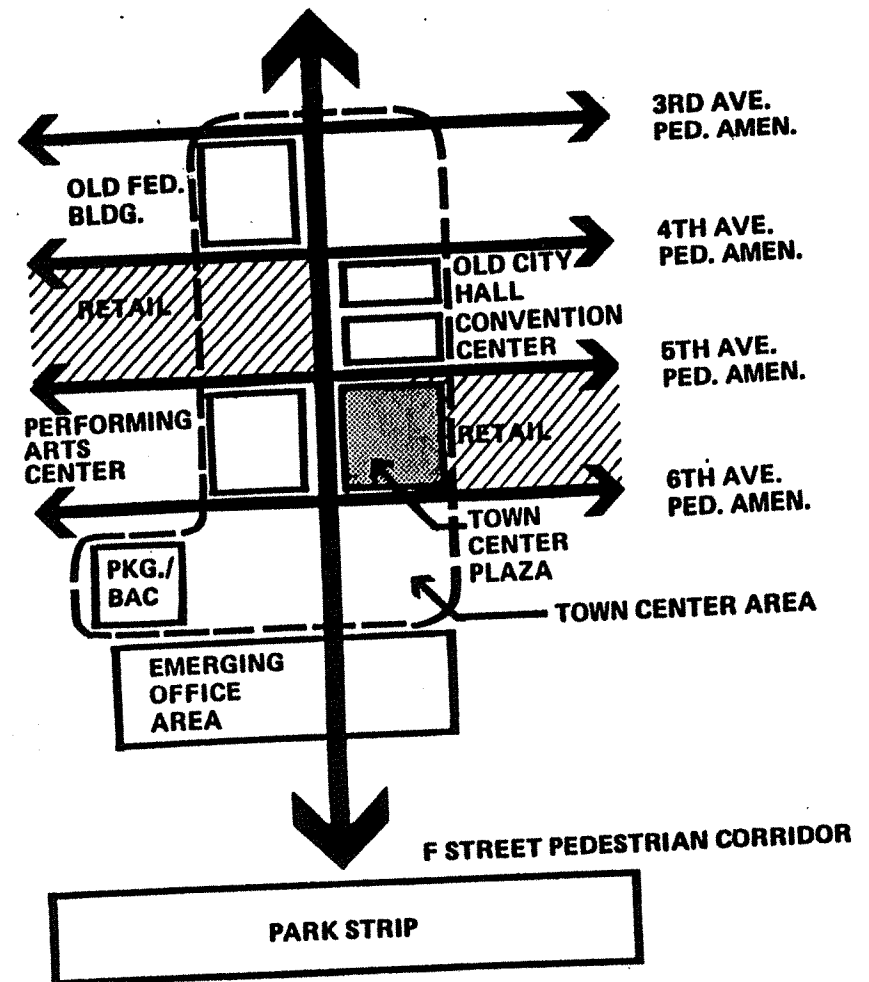


Figure 1.7. Town Center Plaza is recommended for heart of downtown adjoining existing and new retail areas, major public institutions, and proposed F Street Mall.

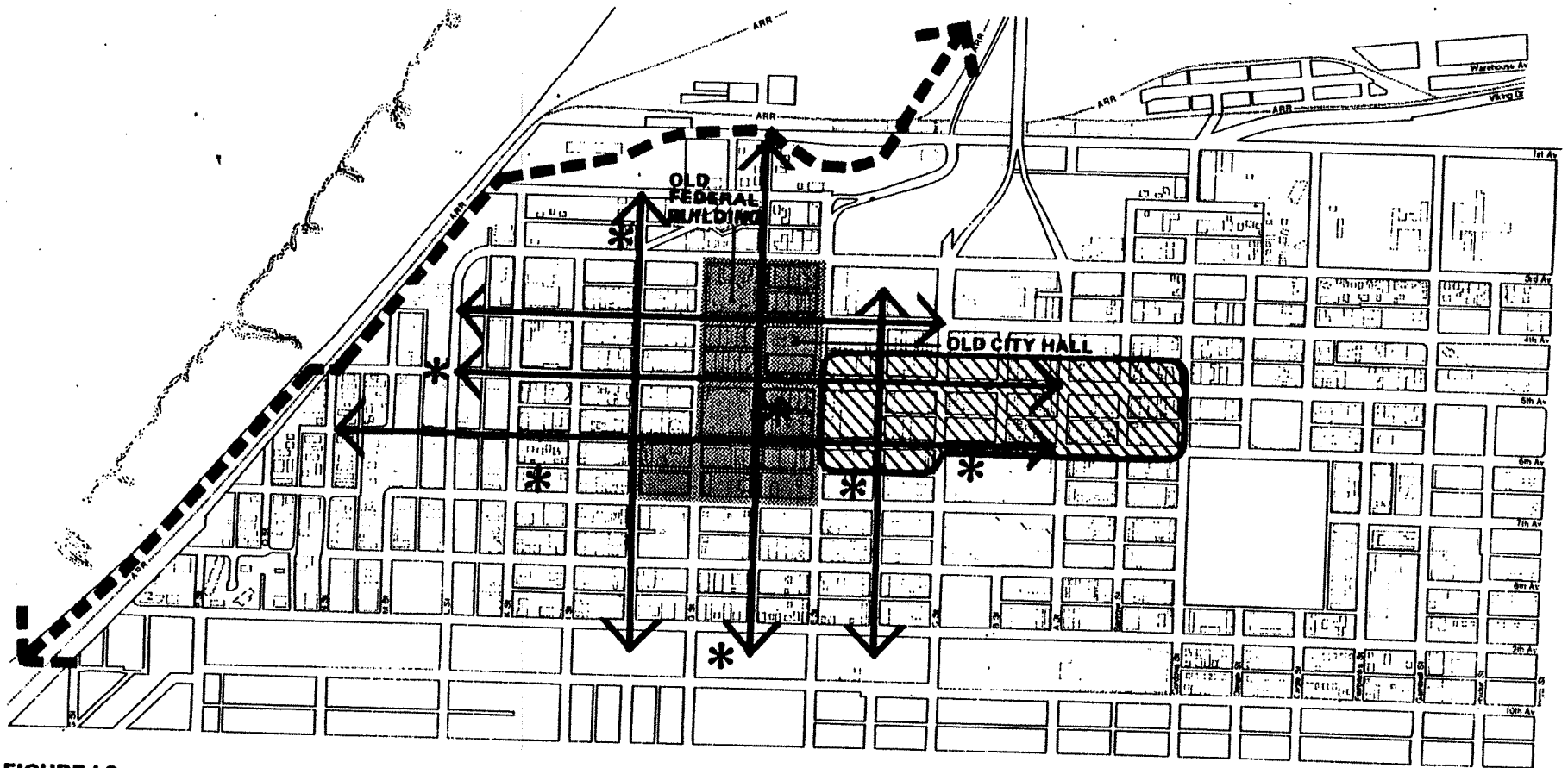


FIGURE I.8

# Open Space Linkage



PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN NETWORK



COASTAL TRAIL



PLAZA OR PARK ACTIVITY AREA



"TOWN CENTER" AREA



PHASE I SKYWAY SYSTEM ZONE

The improved rights-of-way will not only provide visual and functional enhancement of downtown for pedestrians and motorists; it will tie together a network of active open spaces (Figure 1.8), including:

- The park strip
- Town Center Plaza
- Clusters of historic buildings
- View parks and vest-pocket parks
- The Coastal Trail

In establishing this important framework of landscaped open space, the streetscape will be the major element that ties all of downtown Anchorage together, that provides opportunities for people to enjoy strolling or window-shopping, and that promotes the likelihood of the chance encounters and discoveries that contribute to the enjoyment and activity level of the urban center.

Concentration of Public Investment in Development Opportunity Areas. Substantial recent investment has occurred in some downtown areas, while little or none has occurred in others, the two most conspicuous of which are the older commercial district along 4th Avenue east of A Street and the 5th and 6th Avenue corridors east of D Street. Public investment should be channeled to promote revitalization of those areas that appear not to be generating new investment on their own. Conversely, those areas that appear to be thriving with minimal or no public intervention should generally be left to private sector market conditions (Figure 1.9).

## LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The long-term planning framework, described in the preceding section, is more a strategy on which to base decisions than a specific blueprint for development. Within the planning framework are the diverse components that will meet the specific goals and objectives established by the community. Many of these components will be completed and others initiated in the Phase I planning period.

The long-term development plan depicted in Figure 1.10 represents one combination of coordinated public and private investment that might be undertaken within the recommended planning framework.

In reality, a different set of components may be implemented or different locations for some components selected. For example, a street landscaping concept illustrated in Figure 1.10 featuring curving pedestrian plazas and widened north sidewalks was initially endorsed, but subsequently dropped. Downtown development objectives will still be served as long as decisions about projects to be built and their locations are based on the recommended planning framework.

In addition to key developments included in the long-term development plan would be extensive infill development clustered around major downtown anchors. Areas for infill development, described in Chapter VIII, will generally accommodate combinations of land uses to respond to specific market and locational criteria and to provide transitions between major downtown subareas.

Specific projects recommended at this time for development in the Anchorage CBD, in conformance with the planning framework, include:

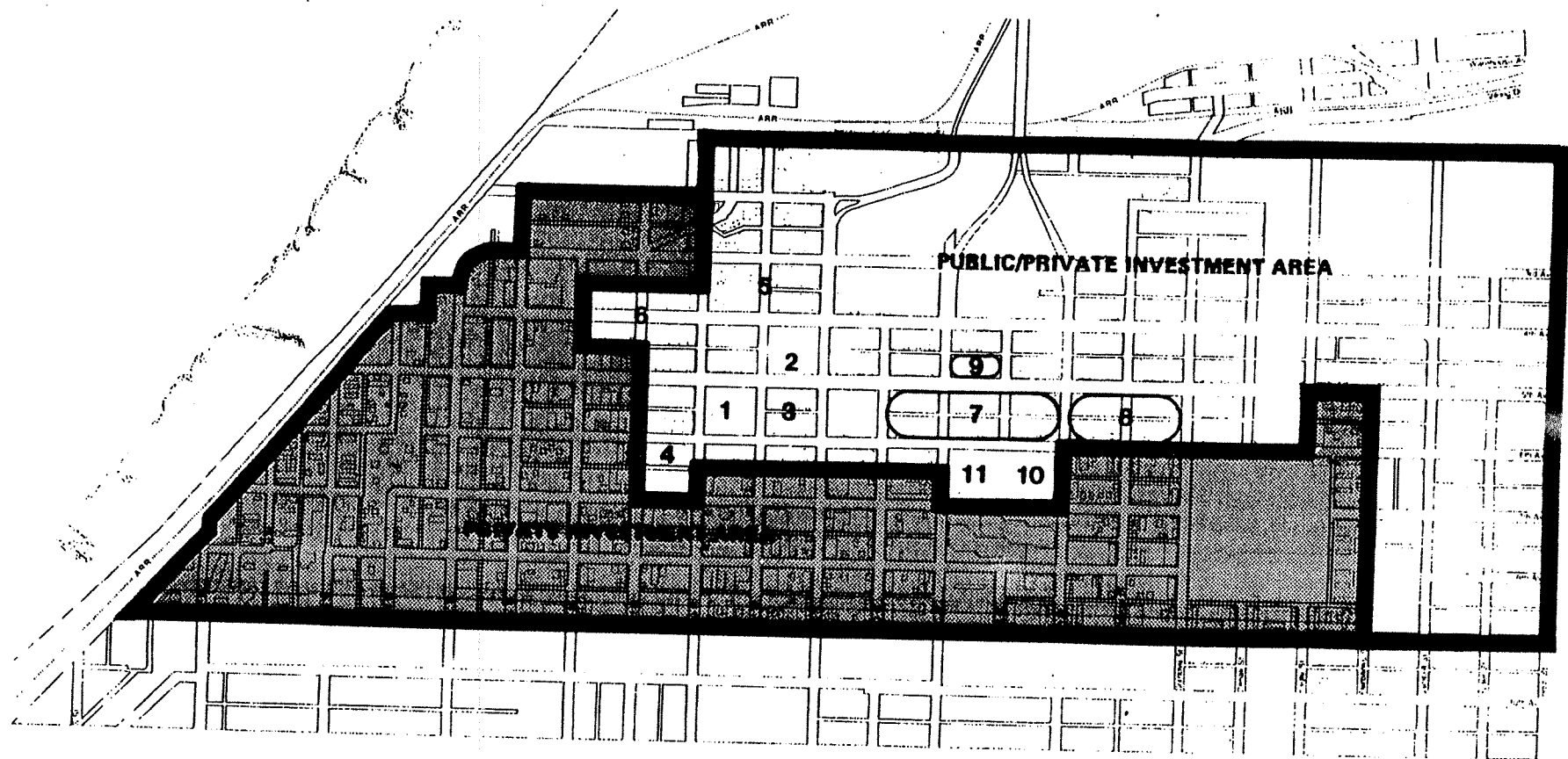


FIGURE 1.9

## Investment Area Strategy

- 1 PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
- 2 CONVENTION CENTER
- 3 TOWN CENTER PLAZA
- 4 PARKING STRUCTURE
- 5 F STREET MALL
- 6 4TH AVENUE PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

- 7 NEW RETAIL COMPLEX
- 8 STATE OFFICE COMPLEX
- 9 PARKING STRUCTURE
- 10 MUSEUM EXPANSION
- 11 PUBLIC AMENITY

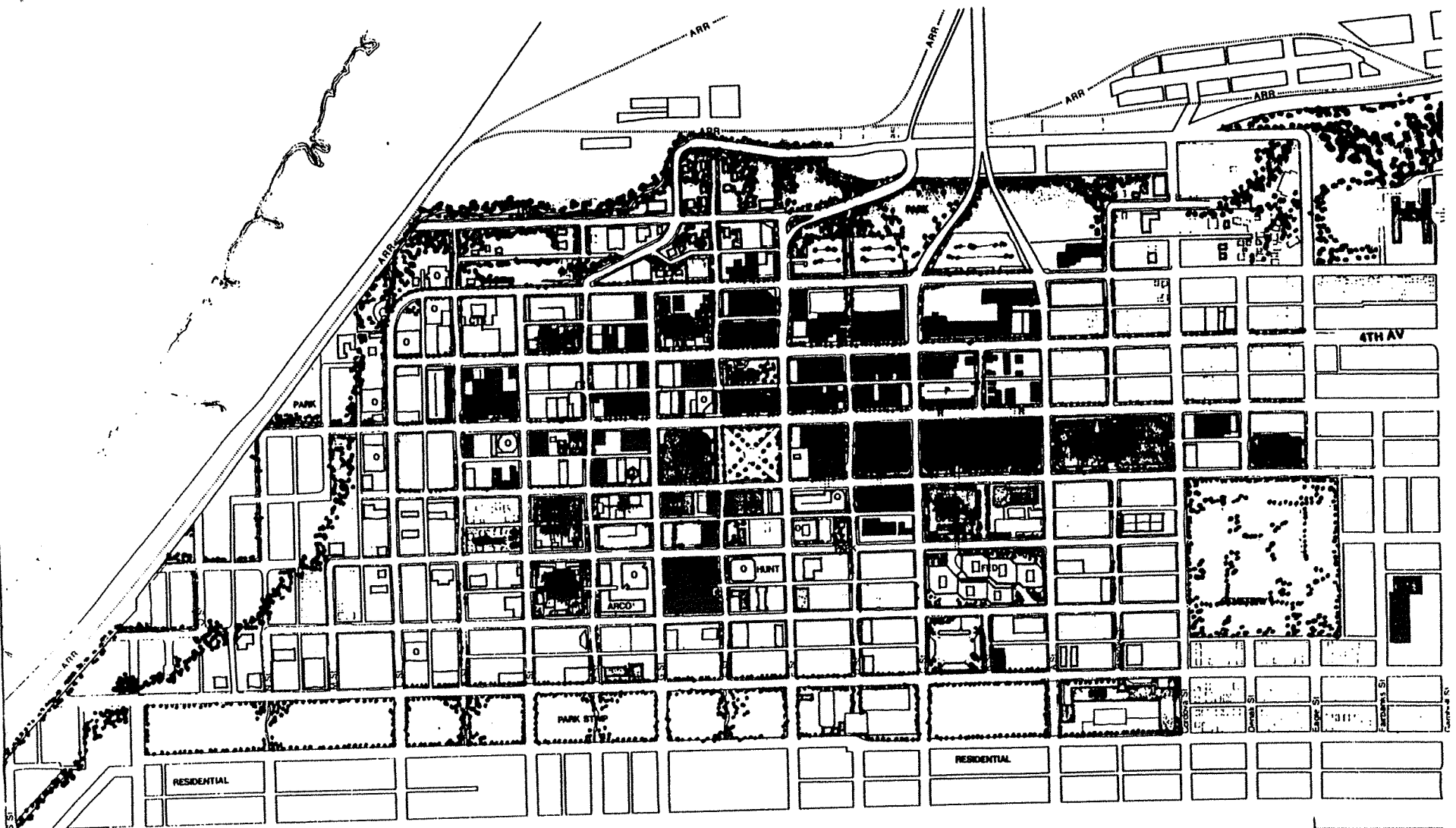
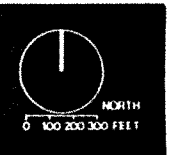


FIGURE I.10

# Long-Term Development Plan





- A new retail complex that should be effective in strengthening existing downtown retail concerns as well as in attracting a broad range of new retail establishments
- Critically needed off-street parking facilities and a means for monitoring and dealing with future parking needs
- A proposed location for new state office facilities that would stimulate development in a stagnant area of the CBD and, at the same time, help to distribute demands on services such as transportation facilities more evenly
- Changes in the downtown circulation system to facilitate the pattern of traffic flow
- The phased reconfiguration of roadway and pedestrian areas within public right-of-way to facilitate smoother traffic flow and an improved, landscaped pedestrian environment
- Public squares and open spaces, capitalizing on activity generators, historic and cultural features, and view opportunities
- Changes in transit routing to a "through" pattern complemented by improved transit information centers

Each of these components independently would contribute to the functioning and image of downtown Anchorage; however, when coordinated under phased implementation within the recommended planning framework, these components will combine to change the character and operation of downtown Anchorage in significant ways. The creation of a strong residential community within and near the

CBD, a major goal of the plan, is fully compatible with the above components. Residential development is considered essential to creating extended hours of downtown activity and avoiding a lifeless after-hours atmosphere typical of American downtown areas lacking a major residential component. The following profiles of some of the major elements stress their interaction with other elements and the contributions they will make to the downtown Anchorage environment.

#### Retail Complex

Downtown Anchorage is at a turning point in terms of its viability as the dominant retail center in the region (see discussion of retail land use in Chapter II). In order to assure long-term viability in the face of increasing competition from suburban developments, an attractive retail development "package" must be developed immediately, or, according to economic analyses, the CBD may actually lose many of its existing retail facilities (see Chapter II).

It is strongly recommended that the package include a retail facility on the blocks northeast of 6th Avenue and D Street (Figure 1.11). This complex, which would be climatized, connected to existing department stores by skyway, and outfitted with parking, would provide an important stimulus not only to retail trade, but also to rejuvenate a part of the CBD that has been lagging in development and is substantially deteriorated.

The new mixed-use facility, oriented toward existing retail facilities, would complement them and strengthen overall downtown retail viability (see Chapter VI). Economic studies have shown that the Anchorage market is strong and will attract

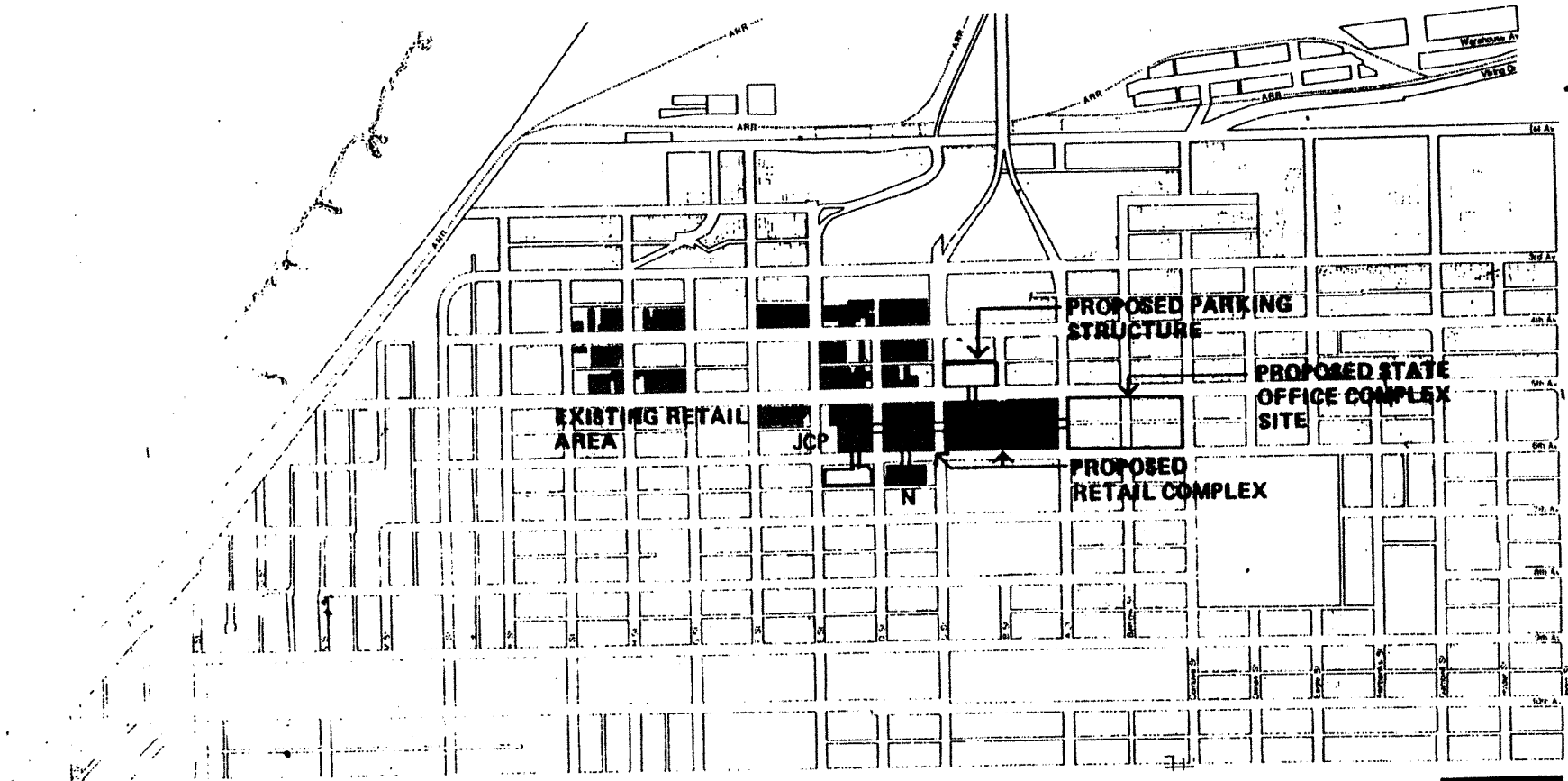






FIGURE I.11

# New Retail Area Components

-  EXISTING RETAIL
-  NEW RETAIL COMPLEX
-  RELATED DEVELOPMENTS
-  SKYWAY CONNECTION

new investment; it is strongly recommended that this occur in the CBD if the area is to maintain its viability as a key multi-use center. Because time is running out -- the new retail investment will occur somewhere in the region -- the retail center project is a first priority for early implementation. To miss this opportunity will significantly limit the potential of downtown Anchorage ever to be the multi-activity center of the region.

### Off-Street Parking Facilities

To offset an imminent and critical parking shortage upon occupancy of several buildings now under construction, three areas have been identified for new parking structures to be developed by the Municipality (Figure I.12): the northwest sector, the south-central area near the new ARCO and Hunt projects, and an area in the center of the study area specifically earmarked by a state bill for a new parking structure. The conceptual plan recommends locations for these three structures, based on the extent of existing development, adjacencies to parking demand generators, the distance from existing off-street parking facilities, and other factors (see Chapter V).

Beyond these short-term recommendations, a long-term policy of peripheral parking with internal CBD shuttle is recommended. In addition, policies that encourage ride-sharing and transit use are recommended to temper the demand for downtown parking and encourage energy efficiency.

### State Office Complex

The conceptual long-term development plan indicates a new State Office Complex (see Chapter VI) that would ultimately house 2,800 employees in the

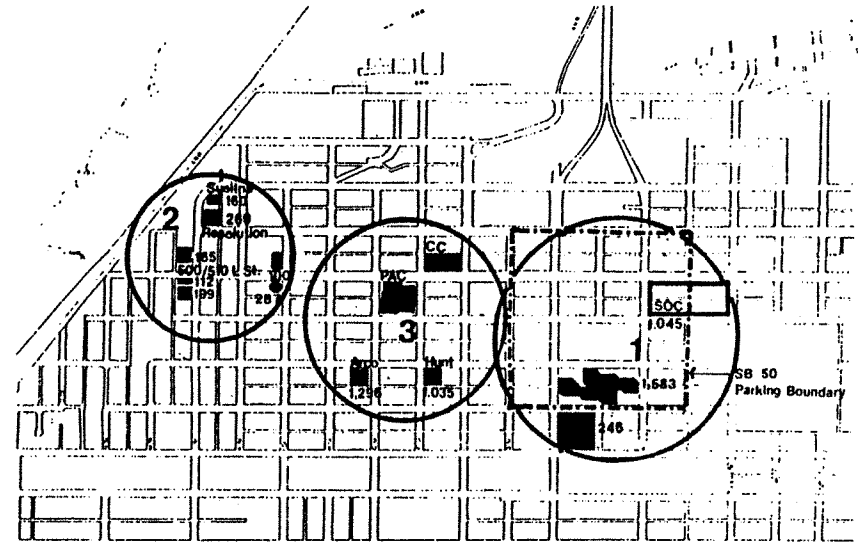


Figure I.12. Three areas identified as having greatest need for new off-street parking facilities. Numbers indicate amount of parking generated by key recent developments not provided on site. More detailed analysis provided in Chapter V.

area adjacent to and east of the proposed retail complex. In this location, the retail area can be anchored on the east and can act as a noon-time destination for state employees. In addition, this area is situated along major arterials that can provide expedited access to the site and to recommended nearby parking facilities. Finally, the project would add vitality to an area that has experienced a significant downturn in the amount and quality of activities. The site is recommended, pending an assessment of its geotechnical conditions.

#### Circulation Improvements

The addition of major new facilities to the downtown core area, coupled with increasing projected employment in the area, will almost certainly mandate the improvement of the downtown circulation system. The long-term development plan includes a strategy for incorporating additional circulation capacity as well as pedestrian area improvements within existing rights-of-way. Routes recommended for the earliest modifications for additional capacity include 5th Avenue (along which peak-hour parking would be restricted to permit an additional travel lane) and E and G Streets (to be converted to a one-way couplet). The roadway section of G Street between 9th and 10th Avenues would be vacated and dedicated for park use. Intersection improvements are also recommended to expedite traffic flow (see Chapter III).

In addition to these physical improvements to the downtown circulation system, it is recommended that remote parking facilities, transit improvements, and programs to promote ride-sharing all be implemented to reduce the need for subsequent circulation system capacity increases.

#### Reconfiguration of Roadway and Pedestrian Areas

The phased incorporation of pedestrian amenities, streetscape design, urban design amenities, and expedited traffic flow will have a profound effect throughout downtown Anchorage. The conceptual plan recommends a method whereby more space can be allocated to pedestrian areas, even while traffic flow is improved, through reconfiguration of travel and parking lanes.

#### Public Squares and Open Spaces

The long-term plan indicates numerous public squares and open spaces (Figure 1.13). Among these are a central plaza at the heart of the downtown core, oriented to foster its image as the nucleus of the city; the F Street Mall that would provide an auto-free pedestrian concourse between 4th and 6th Avenues and an enhanced pedestrian environment, a mixed-use development with integral public activity areas on the site of the present public safety facility; and numerous "sun-catcher" and transit-oriented parks on small opportunity sites throughout the CBD.

#### Historic Preservation and Cultural Heritage

Public input to the planning process indicated preservation of the early Anchorage heritage to be a key concern (see Chapter VII for further discussion). Therefore, the plan for downtown development is fully compatible with and supportive of numerous alternative historic preservation concepts. These include various on-site and relocation plans that have been considered, as well as refurbishment and adaptive use of historic structures throughout the CBD, including the 4th Avenue Theater, the Old City Hall, and others.

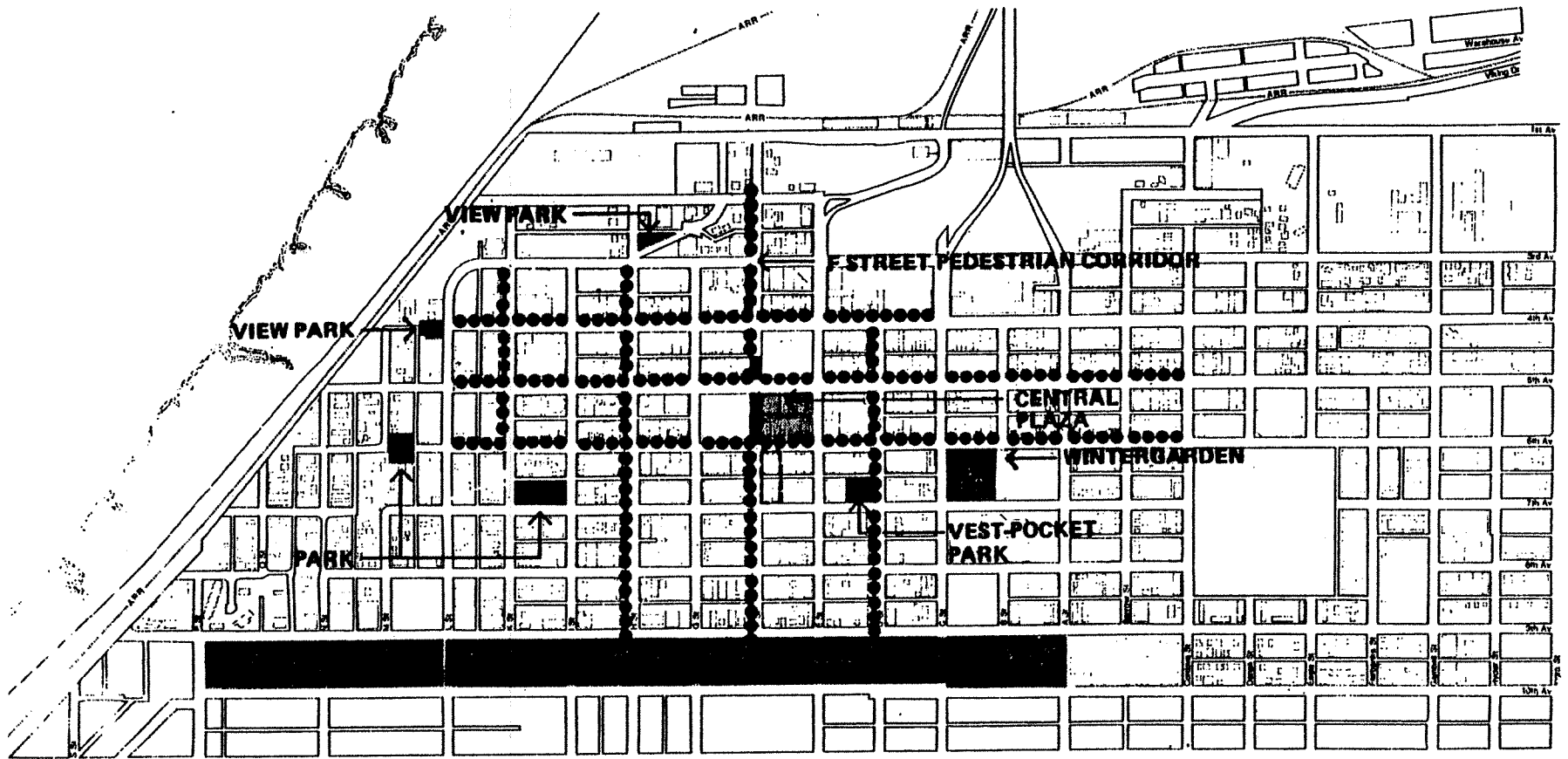


FIGURE I.13

# Recommended Open Space Concept

- PARK OR PLAZA
- PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES
- AUTO-FREE MALL

Also important is preservation of a "small town feel," which must be reconciled with growing development pressure. By instituting a policy that promotes a tighter, more concentrated development at the center of the CBD, opportunities will be preserved for retention of the character in peripheral areas, such as the residential districts that envelop the CBD core to the south and east.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The long-term development plan, presented in the preceding section of this chapter, is based on findings and analyses of emerging trends in several specific areas of study including:

- o Land use, zoning patterns, and land ownership characteristics
- o Circulation
- o Open space and pedestrian environment
- o Parking management
- o New developments
- o Historic preservation

Each of these areas of study corresponds to a subsequent chapter in this Comprehensive Development Plan.

The following section of this chapter is devoted to a summary of the major findings, emerging trends, and recommendations pertaining to the above areas of study.

Several of these findings and recommendations pertain to actions on specific blocks, which are numbered in conformance with the Municipal block numbering system (Figure 1.14).

As noted in an earlier section, the study area encompassed the entire CBD, bounded by 1st Avenue on the north, Ingra Street on the east, 9th Avenue on the south, and the Alaska Railroad right-of-way on the west. The primary focus on the study was on the key control development area generally between L and Cordova Streets.

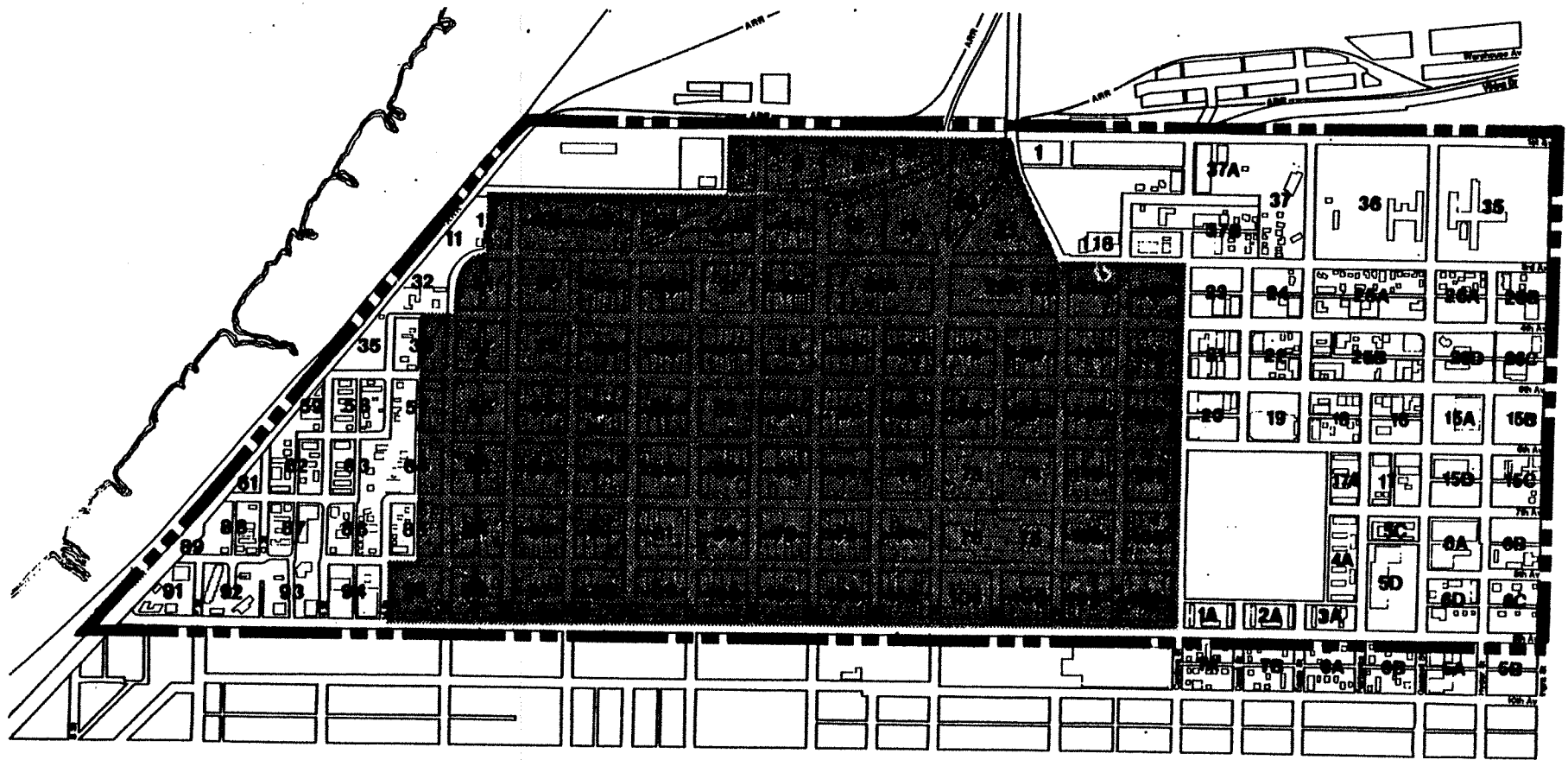


FIGURE I.14

# Study Area and Block Numbers



**CBD STUDY AREA**



**AREA OF PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT FOCUS**

## SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND AND EXISTING CONDITIONS (Chapter II)

### Findings and Emerging Trends

- Land uses in downtown Anchorage are, for the most part, fragmented rather than clustered. The consequence of this land use pattern is that opportunities for the mutual strengthening of many resources, particularly office, hotel, and retail facilities, are not capitalized upon.
- Retail land uses can be found in several clusters throughout the CBD with the most intensive nodes near the two major department stores, J. C. Penney and Nordstrom.
- In the absence of a dramatic "package" of retail space, parking, and associated activities near existing retail facilities, it is possible that downtown Anchorage may lose one or both of its existing department stores, as well as some tenant stores, to a competing area. The loss could be as much as 125,000 square feet, 75,000 square feet of it in department store space. With a development package, under a joint public/private cooperative agreement, downtown Anchorage has the potential of attracting as much as 390,000 square feet of new retail space by 1990 with 120,000 square feet in department store(s).
- Three primary clusters of office buildings exist: the northwest corner of the CBD near Resolution Tower, the south/central part of the CBD where the ARCO and Hunt Towers are under construction, and the area around and including the Federal Office Complex. Little recent office construction has occurred in the designated core area zone.
- Hotel facilities are arranged in a linear pattern along 4th and 5th Avenues between I and Eagle Streets -- a distance of over four fifths of a mile.
- Economic analyses have indicated that projections for the office and hotel sectors of the economy are relatively well assured.

The range of projected new office development through 1990 is 770,000 to 1,300,000 square feet. The range of projected new hotel development is 700 to 1,100 rooms.

- Residential land use is the only major land use that can be seen as an identifiable district within the CBD study area to the west of L Street. Even in this land use category, however, many additional residential buildings can be found scattered throughout downtown Anchorage.
- Economic analyses have indicated a range of zero to 1,000 new dwelling units between now and 1990. The potential for new downtown housing development is limited by numerous factors, including existing zoning restrictions, residential market characteristics, and other factors.
- The intent of the zoning code has been to develop a downtown with the highest buildings at the center, the intensity of development decreasing with distance from the heart of downtown. Recent development patterns have not carried out this intent.
- The Municipal Code includes a bonus point system to encourage the inclusion of urban design amenities in new projects. This, too, has been less than fully effective in providing the type of designs and amenities intended by the Code.

### Recommendations

- Major new developments that will help to tie downtown together should be situated in the midst of existing land use clusters identified in the land use analysis.
- A major mixed-use retail center should be developed in the vicinity of the existing anchor stores (J. C. Penney and Nordstrom). The results of more detailed site investigations are found in Chapter VI and its summary.
- New offices and hotels should be located in existing office clusters rather than in outlying areas of the CBD study area. It

is especially important that employment and other attractions surround the recommended mixed-use retail center area.

- New downtown projects seem to be approved without the necessary coordination that would result in projects mutually supporting each other as well as existing development. One way to overcome this problem would be for the Planning and Zoning Commission to become more involved in the review and approval process, vested with the ability to negotiate with project proponents and to submit recommendations to the Municipal Assembly.



## SUMMARY OF CIRCULATION (Chapter III)

### Findings and Emerging Trends

- The regular street pattern of downtown Anchorage is well suited to numerous traffic flow improvement concepts. However, the small number of through streets providing access to downtown Anchorage and origin/ destination patterns heavily biased to the east and south limit opportunities.
- Rights-of-way along 4th Avenue, along 5th Avenue east of K Street, along 3rd Avenue east of E Street; and along a few other segments are 80 feet wide. Nearly all other right-of-way in downtown Anchorage are 60 feet wide.
- Projections indicate that many downtown streets may experience travel demand that exceeds their capacities by the year 2001.
- The best opportunities to improve traffic flow within existing rights-of-way involve new treatments of on-street parking and extension of the existing network of one-way streets.

### Recommendations

- A monitoring system, taking into account many factors related to downtown circulation, is recommended. Key indicators would trigger the implementation of plans for specific traffic flow improvement programs.
- Expansion of the existing one-way street network is recommended for implementation at such time that the monitoring program indicates traffic volumes approaching 90% of capacity. The sequence of implementation would take into consideration ongoing pedestrian amenities and parking programs. The E/G couplet will probably be necessary within the next two to three years; improvements on 9th Avenue will also be required.

- At some point in the future when expressway implementation might be considered, it is recommended that expressway off-ramps serving the CBD be linked directly with peripheral parking facilities to reduce possible traffic impacts on streets within the CBD core area.

## SUMMARY OF OPEN SPACE AND PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT (Chapter IV)

### Findings and Emerging Trends

- Virtually all significant open spaces today are located on the fringes of the CBD. The only major open spaces near the CBD core are the park strip and the grassy slope of the buttressed area.
- The existing bonus point system in the Municipal Land Use Code has been ineffective in encouraging private developers to provide significant public open spaces within new projects.
- A strong demand was expressed by citizens and public leaders for more open space within the CBD including squares, historic plazas, pedestrian amenities, enclosed landscaped spaces, vest-pocket parks, view parks, park strip improvements, and others.
- Numerous opportunities still exist to provide open space within the CBD core, primarily on land that is underdeveloped and/or currently used for surface parking.

### Recommendations

- A phased program of streetscape improvements within public rights-of-way should include widened, landscaped sidewalks and pedestrian amenities, implemented in concert with circulation improvements. The first such actions should concentrate on the heart of downtown beginning with 4th Avenue between E and G Streets and F Street between 4th and 6th Avenues (F Street Mall).
- A plaza occupying one block is recommended as both a central focus for the CBD and a key event along the proposed F Street Mall between 5th and 6th Avenues. This plaza would adjoin the Performing Arts Center and the Convention Center, and should be planned and implemented in conjunction with the F Street Mall.

## SUMMARY OF PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (Chapter V)

- An additional open space/park, possibly glass-enclosed, is recommended as part of a new mixed-use redevelopment of the public safety block.
- In order to allow the park strip to serve as a true urban park, it is recommended that mounding, landscaping, tree planting, and opportunities for both quiet and active recreational activities be provided along the park strip.
- Several concepts for modified building envelopes have been proposed in order to preserve views in key corridors and to respond to local solar conditions. Some of these would require reevaluation of the existing bonus point system in the Municipal Code Land Use Regulations.
- A skyway system should be begun in downtown Anchorage as a major component of the pedestrian network. The first step is incorporation of second-level pedestrian ways in major projects recommended for Phase I implementation: the State Office Complex, the mixed-use retail complex, and Municipal parking structures. These facilities would be linked, in turn, with existing retail facilities (J. C. Penney and Nordstrom). In all, nine blocks would be linked at the end of Phase I development.
- Future major construction projects downtown should incorporate provisions for skyway connections. In anticipation of this, the Municipality should agree on a range of second-level floor heights, as well as on standards for future skyway bridges. Also, an advisory committee should be established to govern skyway design standards to monitor pedestrian counts and impacts on retail development, and to set operational procedures.

### Findings and Emerging Trends

- The Municipality of Anchorage has not been able to provide sufficient public parking to accompany private sector developments. Since 1975, only about 1,150 such spaces have been provided. However, the completion of over 30 major new buildings in downtown Anchorage since 1975 has resulted in an increase in demand for parking estimated at over 4,800 spaces. Overall, it is estimated that new parking demand will exceed new parking supply by over 3,500 spaces by 1983.
- Under the current zoning code, private developers of new projects in downtown commercial areas need not provide any on-site parking.
- Much of the on-street parking available in downtown Anchorage is being used by downtown employees for all-day parking instead of by short-term shoppers and visitors, whom it is intended to serve.
- Downtown employees are parking in the residential area south of the park strip. Residents in this area object to this practice and have suggested that a residential parking permit system be instituted.
- Demand is expected to exceed supply most critically in three distinct areas of the downtown: the northwest, north-central, and south-central areas.

### Recommendations

- A two-phase approach to the parking problem is recommended. In the first phase, immediate parking needs must be addressed with new parking supply in order to allow further development in the CBD to occur. In the second phase, a long-term, multi-faceted parking strategy can be put into effect once the future of downtown is certain. A program to monitor critical parking- and circulation-related factors is recommended

in order to guide the long-term parking management strategy.

- Parking structures should be built immediately, using a combination of private and public resources, in the following three areas:
  - the area north of the planned retail area east of J. C. Penney and northeast of Nordstrom
  - the northwest sector of the CBD near the State Courts building
  - the south part of the CBD near the 7th and G Municipal Garage
- A parking authority should be established to administer the parking development program, to control rates and policies, to develop and implement methods to reduce the overall demand for parking and to administer income from parking facilities and from meter fees.
- Peak commuting hour parking restrictions and higher meter rates should be implemented to discourage use of on-street parking by employees.
- Peripheral parking should be provided for the long-term future. Parking structures could also serve as transit terminals with transfers between long-haul transit vehicles and intra-downtown minibuses. A preliminary locational analysis has been conducted.
- A long-term policy involving incentives for transit use, ride-sharing, and other programs that help to relieve the need for additional downtown parking should be established.

## SUMMARY OF GUIDELINES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (Chapter VI)

### Findings

- The location of major publicly sponsored projects can have a profound effect on the extent and quality of subsequent private development. Therefore, new public facilities such as the State Office Complex and parking structures should be situated in areas in which private investment is stagnant rather than in areas that are already seeing active private-sector investment.
- The Municipality is in various stages of implementing about 20 capital improvement projects in and around downtown Anchorage.
- Major new projects recommended for development by the Municipality provide an excellent opportunity for designs that are solar-responsive and contribute to the quality of the downtown environment.

### Recommendations

- The State Office Complex should be developed in the vicinity of A Street and 5th Avenue to anchor CBD development on the east pending the results of a geotechnical study now underway.
- The geotechnical study now underway should be supplemented with a similar study covering the entire north-central portion of the CBD in order to determine the development potential of this area.
- The proposed retail complex should be located adjacent to existing retail clusters and anchor stores. The blocks bounded by A and D Streets and 5th and 6th Avenues have been identified as the best location for development as a mixed-use retail complex.
- All new publicly coordinated projects should consider and incorporate techniques to enhance the streetscape such as plazas, landscaping, widened pedestrian areas,

and building shapes that allow more solar access to the public right-of-way.

- Each of the 20 capital improvement projects programmed by the Municipality has been evaluated to the degree that it affects key decisions in downtown planning. Many of the projects are recommended for coordination with other projects and programs.

## SUMMARY OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM (CHAPTER VII)

### Findings

- Historic preservation was found to be a major concern of the Anchorage public.
- The need for a strategy for preservation of key buildings of historic significance has become more urgent because of plans by developers to provide surface parking for occupants of new office projects.

### Recommendations

- The Municipality should develop a preservation plan for the downtown and should continue to proceed with the development of a historic preservation ordinance.
- A revolving fund concept has been suggested to promote historic preservation efforts; the comprehensive historic preservation program will require a specialist in historic preservation methods to coordinate the program.

## Chapter II

### BACKGROUND AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

This chapter is intended to provide a base line of existing conditions from which the planning effort evolved. It begins with a review of the Municipality's goals and objectives and the significant role played by the public participation program in their refinement into specific objectives for future downtown development; and presents significant findings from the data inventory relating to land use patterns, prospects for economic development, and other key features that constitute downtown Anchorage today.

### DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Municipality has established five general goals with which to approach downtown development. These goals include:

- A mixture of financial, retail, cultural, recreational, governmental, and service-oriented development as well as high-density housing
- Preservation of historical resources in original town site area
- Preservation of human scale and enhancement of pedestrian environment
- Improved street and transit access to and around CBD

- Balance of parking facilities in and around the CBD with transit systems to move people within the CBD

Through public participation, the general Municipal goals were translated into specific objectives correlating to the needs of residents in the various areas affected most by CBD development. Input came from meetings held with the following groups:

- The Municipal Assembly
- The Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission
- The Municipal Traffic and Parking Commission
- The Historic Landmark Preservation Commission
- The Downtown Advisory Committee
- The Urban Beautification Commission
- Members of Historic Anchorage, Inc.
- Members of the following business groups:
  - The Downtown Development Corporation
  - The Downtown Businessmen's Association
  - The Greater Anchorage Chamber of Commerce
- Representatives and residents of the following Community Councils:
  - Downtown/Government Hill Community Council

- South Addition Community Council
- Fairview Community Council

Meetings were held in November 1981, January 1982, and April 1982 (Table II.1). Public input from all three meeting series guided the thrust of the Comprehensive Development Plan. Capsule summaries of the three meeting series follow:

November 1981 Meeting Series. The planning process was introduced along with the anticipated schedule of the project. In general, public input stressed two broad areas of concern: (1) environmental quality and design and (2) circulation and parking. In voicing their specific concerns and desires to be addressed in the planning process, it became evident during the first meeting series that numerous concerns and desires were shared by several groups (Table II.2). More specific objectives for the development of downtown, as expressed by the three Community Councils, are noted in relation to the broad Municipal goals for downtown development in Table II.3.

January 1982 Meeting Series. Two conceptual approaches to downtown planning were presented along with the Phase I inventory of findings and supporting data. Input from the community resoundingly favored a coordinate development concept rather than a continuation of the existing, random approach to downtown development.

April 1982 Meeting Series. Alternative concepts were presented in each of the major issue areas. A firm approach to the problem of State Office Building location was established. And a conceptual long-term plan for development (see

**TABLE II.1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>First Series</b>	<b>Second Series</b>	<b>Third Series</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Program Objective &amp; Orientation</li> <li>- Time Schedule</li> <li>- Meeting Dates</li> <li>- Issues, Problems &amp; Opportunities</li> <li>- Suggestions for Plan Alternatives, if any</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initial Inventory &amp; Forecast Findings</li> <li>- Description of Alternatives                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short range</li> <li>- Long range</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Preliminary Evaluation of Alternatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluation of Alternatives</li> <li>- Selection of Alternatives for Refinement</li> <li>- Discussion of Other Pertinent Issues</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal Assembly</b> <b>Planning &amp; Zoning Commission</b> <b>Traffic &amp; Parking Commission</b>	<b>Joint Work Session</b>	<b>Separate Meeting</b>  <b>Separate Meeting</b>  <b>Separate Meeting</b>	<b>Separate Meeting</b>  <b>Separate Meeting</b>  <b>Separate Meeting</b>
<b>Historic Landmark Preservation Commission</b> <b>Urban Beautification Commission</b> <b>Historic Anchorage, Inc.</b>	<b>Joint Meeting</b>	<b>Joint Meeting</b>	<b>Joint Meeting</b>
<b>Downtown Development Corporation</b> <b>Downtown Businessmen's Association</b> <b>Greater Anchorage Chamber of Commerce</b>	<b>Joint Meeting</b>	<b>Joint Meeting</b>	<b>Joint Meeting</b>
<b>Downtown Community Council</b> <b>South Addition Community Council</b> <b>Fairview Community Council</b>	<b>Joint Meeting</b>	<b>Joint Meeting</b>	<b>Joint Meeting</b>

**TABLE II.2. ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST**

	<b>Community Councils</b>	<b>Assembly Planning/ Zoning Commission</b>	<b>Business Groups</b>	<b>Beautification &amp; Heritage Groups</b>	<b>Traffic/ Parking Commission</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY &amp; DESIGN</b>					
Downtown Development Pattern	•	•	•		•
Streetscape	•	•	•	•	
4th Avenue	•		•	•	
Open Space/Town Square	•	•		•	
View Preservation	•			•	
Historic Preservation	•			•	
Downtown Housing	•			•	
Solar Access	•			•	•
<b>CIRCULATION</b>					
Parking Adequacy	•	•	•		•
Traffic	•	•	•		•
A/C Couplet	•	•			
Freeway Proposals	•	•			
Transit	•				

**TABLE II.3  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL AMPLIFICATION OF MUNICIPAL GOALS**

General Goals (Municipality of Anchorage)	Amplification of Goals (Public Participation)	Community Council(s) Affected		
		Downtown	Fairview	South Addition
Mixture of activities and development				
- Financial	- Locate away from Park Strip and existing residential areas		•	•
	- Preserve small-town feel as much as possible	•	•	•
	- Make downtown "active and alive"	•		
- Retail	- Provide accommodation for mixture of large and small business concerns	•		
	- Enhance pedestrian environment	•		
- Cultural	- Encourage designs that enhance pedestrian environment (i.e., no blank walls)	•		
- Recreational	- Provide numerous opportunities for varied active, passive recreation - walking/cycling - ice skating - other amenities - dogsled racing	•		
- Governmental	- Locations to stimulate private investment create greatest overall benefit	•		
- Housing	- Stimulus to extended hours of activity	•		
	- Greater sense of security in CBD	•		



**TABLE II.3 (Cont'd)  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL AMPLIFICATION OF MUNICIPAL GOALS**

General Goals (Municipality of Anchorage)	Amplification of Goals (Public Participation)	Community Council(s) Affected		
		Downtown	Fairview	South Addition
Preservation of Historical Resources	- Preserve original townsite context	•		
	- Combine historic preservation with adaptive use	•		
Preservation of Human Scale and Enhancement of Pedestrian Environment	- Avoid large monolithic structures	•		•
	- Preserve low key character	•		•
	- Preserve views	•		
	- Provide more "people places"	•		
	- Improve image and identity of Anchorage	•		
Improved Access to CBD; Removal of Through Traffic	- Reduce traffic impacts in residential neighborhoods		•	•
Adequate Parking and Transit Facilities	- Make parking convenient to areas of greatest demand	•		
	- Avoid large, monolithic structures	•		•
	- Avoid impacts on neighborhood south of Park Strip		•	•
	- Promote greater transit use	•		
	- Reduce auto dependence	•		

Figure 1.10) was presented for consideration and generally endorsed.

## INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

A "base line" for the comprehensive planning study has been provided by an inventory of existing conditions. These conditions include physical elements such as the land use pattern, dynamic elements such as economic prospects for future development, and institutional elements such as zoning policies. The specific items covered in this section include:

- Physical Conditions and Potential Development Constraints
- Development Pattern and Economic Projections -- covered together since they both deal with the four primary land use and economic sectors that will shape downtown Anchorage: retail, office, hotel, and residential
- Zoning -- along with an analysis of whether the intent of the existing zoning code is being realized
- Transit
- Historical and Cultural Features
- Land Ownership Pattern

The chapter concludes with a summary of established capital improvements slated for implementation in downtown Anchorage.

Certain key inventory elements such as vehicular circulation, open space, and parking are the subjects of entire chapters later in this report and have not been summarized in this chapter.

## Physical Inventory and Analysis<sup>1</sup>

The following section describes the physical characteristics underlying the downtown area. Included in this inventory are descriptions of the following features: surficial geology, slope, foundation conditions, seismically induced ground failure, and landforms. Soils are not described as a spatial features because data on soils in the downtown area have been obtained from soil borings and are therefore site specific. These data, used in conjunction with other data, have allowed an interpolation of soil characteristics and engineering conditions.

Following the section that describes the physical inventory is an analysis of the downtown area in terms of suitability/capability, with emphasis placed on seismic risk, foundation conditions, bearing strength, liquefaction potential, and other data relating to constraints to future development in the downtown area.

Surficial Geology. A majority of the downtown area is composed of coarse-grained surficial deposits of alluvium consisting of gravel and sand, generally well bedded and sorted. The material extends generally from 4th Avenue south to the Park Strip, west to K Street and east to the Seward Highway. Surrounding this on the north and west are extensive areas of landslide deposits. Most of the slides (from 1964 and earlier) involved large blocks consisting of beds of gravel and sand lying on beds of clay and silt. Even the alluvium

is lying on beds of clay which range from stiff, moderate to highly sensitive. The 4th Avenue but-tress is an extensive area of man-made fill consisting chiefly of gravel and sand but including some silt- and clay-type material.

Slope. A majority of the downtown is flat. Slopes ranging from 15 to over 45 percent surround the central business district on the north and west, with the western edge of the area having the steepest slopes. These are generally west of L Street.

Foundation Conditions. Foundation conditions range from good to poor. The area of good to moderate conditions generally coincides with the area of alluvial deposits (see discussion of surficial geology, above). The areas of poorest foundation conditions are west of L Street and north of 4th Avenue. They generally coincide with areas of steep slopes.

Seismically Induced Ground Failure. Downtown Anchorage is subject to large-scale landslides and ground failure due to seismic activity. The area north of 4th Avenue and west of L Street is rated as having very high ground failure susceptibility. This area, in general, is bounded by 3rd/4th and 6th Avenues and K and I Streets. All areas south and east of these areas are rated as having a moderately low ground failure potential.

Landforms. Various soil borings were used in conjunction with surficial geology, foundation conditions, slope, and landform data to identify such factors as bearing strength, liquefaction potential, groundwater table, soil drainage and erosion, settlement potential, and frost heave characteristics. Because of the complexity of illustrating each of

these data, they have been combined and put into a computer model developed to delineate constraints to development in the downtown area. Two landform types dominate the downtown area. The first is outwash, relatively level floodplain deposits laid down by streams that originated from former glaciers. This landform boundary is coincident with the alluvial surficial geology boundary. The other landform, landslide, also is coincident with the boundary describing landslide deposits in the surficial geology section.

Constraints to Development in the Downtown Area. The largest constraint to future development in the downtown area is that posed by the risk of seismically induced ground failure. Several physical factors must be included in the identification of constraints to development. Seventeen criteria were used to develop a constraint model for the downtown area. Table 11.4 identifies a set of 11 criteria used for the study area.

The resulting computer-generated map (Figure 11.1) depicts those areas having various suitability for a variety of uses ranging from "good" to "poor."

Based upon the criteria used, the downtown area contains an area suitable for general development ("good" rating). This area is generally bounded by 6th Avenue on the north, the Park Strip on the south, H Street on the west, and Gambell Street on the east. Surrounding this "good" area is an area rated as moderate. In general, this area extends east and west from K to Gambell Street on the north side of the area rated as "good," and extends north and south between 3rd/4th Avenues and 6th Avenue. To the west end of the area rated "good," the area rated

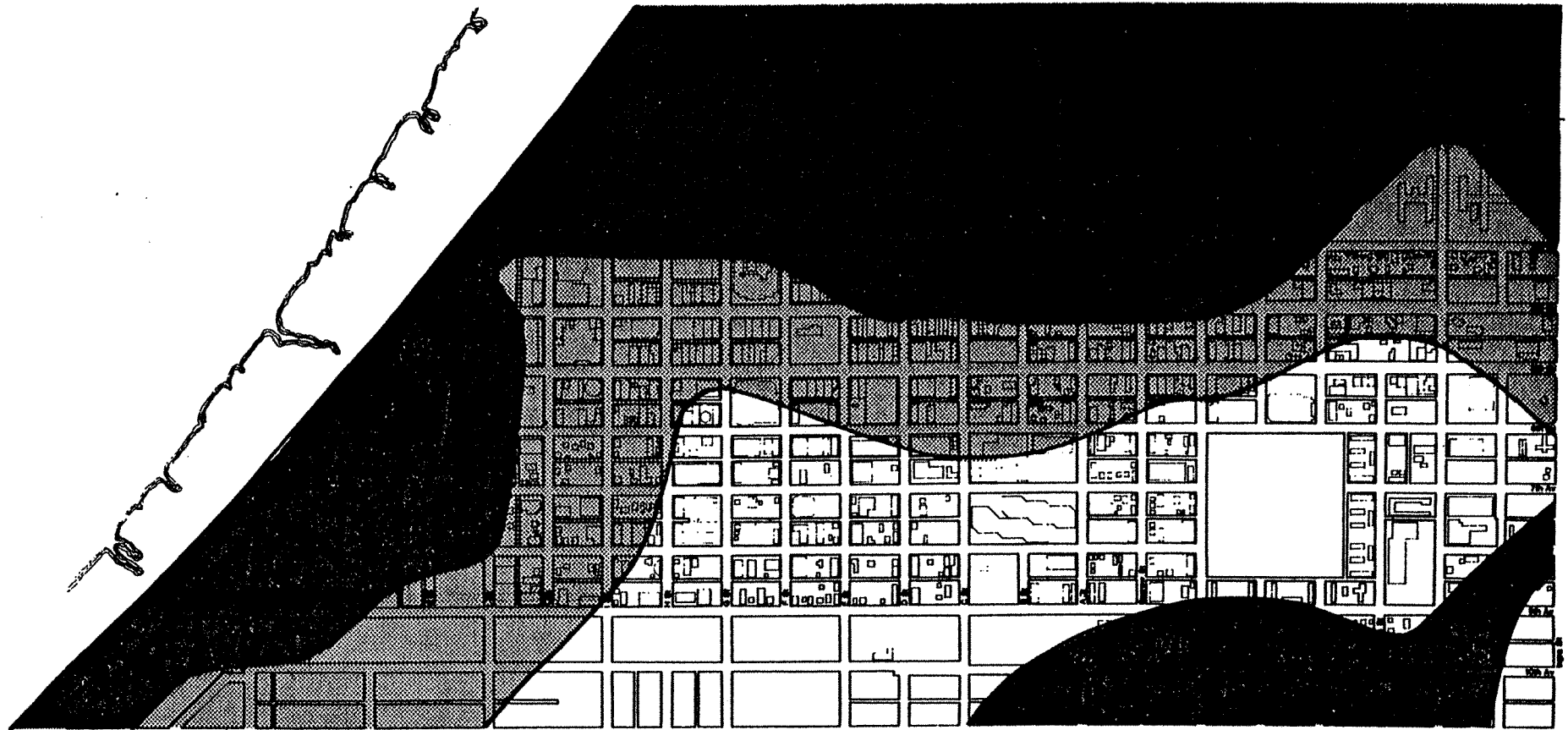


FIGURE II.1

## Environmental Suitability for Development



GOOD



MODERATE



POOR

\* THE AREA KNOWN AS THE "BUTTRISS" IS GENERALLY SUITABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT BECAUSE OF THE GEOMORPHOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THIS AREA AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE OF 1964.

TABLE II.1

LAND USE SUITABILITY-CAPABILITY CRITERIA

Geophysical and Environment Factors	Good (4) (Code/Rating)	Moderate (3) (Code/Rating)	Fair to Poor (2) (Code/Rating)	Poor (1) (Code/Rating)
Slope	1, 2, 3/0-12%	4/12-20%	5/20-30%	6, 7/Over 30%
Slope Stability	1/High	2/Moderate	3/Low	4/Very Low
Mass Wasting	00/No Known Potential	10/Low to Moderate Potential	20/Moderate to High Potential	30, 31, 32, 33/ Known or Highest Potential
Seismic Ground Failure	1, 2/Low	3/Moderately Low	4/Moderate	5/High to Very High
Flooding Potential	00/No Known Hazard	1, 2/100-Year Floodplain	7, 8/Flooding Waterbody	
Coastal Erosion	0/None or not Applicable	1/Slow to Negligible	2/Moderate	3/Rapid
Foundation Conditions	1, 2/Excellent	3/Good	4/Locally Poor; Good to Fair	5/Poor
Permafrost	2, 3, 4/Unfrozen to Sporadic	5/Discontinuous	6/Discontinuous to Continuous	7/Continuous
Soil Drainage in Unfrozen Soil	7/Good	6, 5/Moderate	4, 3/Poor to Moderate	2/Poor

TABLE II.1 (Continued)

LAND USE SUITABILITY-CAPABILITY CRITERIA

Geophysical and Environment Factors	Good (4) (Code/Rating)	Moderate (3) (Code/Rating)	Fair to Poor (2) (Code/Rating)	Poor (1) (Code/Rating)
Permeability	7/High	5, 6/Moderate	3, 4/Low to Moderate	2/Low
Erosion Potential	2, 3/Low	4/Moderately Low	5/Moderate to High	6, 7/High
Frost Heave Potential	2, 3, 4/Low	5/Moderately Low	6, 7/Moderate to High	8/High
Settlement Potential	2, 3, 4, 5/Low	6, 7/Moderately Low	8, 9/Moderate to High	10, 11/High
Liquefaction	2/Low	3/Low to Moderate	4, 5/Moderate to High	6/High
Bearing Strength	12, 11, 10, 9, 8/ High	7, 6/Moderate	5, 4/Fair to Poor	3, 2/Low
Groundwater Table	5/Deep	4/Shallow to Deep	3/Shallow	2/At Surface
Drainage	3/Well	4/Moderately Well	5, 6/Poor	1, 2, 7/ Excessive

SOURCE: Community Planning Department, Summary of 1979 Harding/Lawson and Associates, Inc. Report

"moderate" extends between K and H Streets. All other areas of the downtown were rated "poor." These areas extend westward from K Street and northward from 4th Avenue.

For additional information concerning the modeling process, and for a description of the criteria, readers should contact the Physical Planning Division of the Department of Community Planning. Appendix B provides addenda to the Comprehensive Development Plan based upon more recent geotechnic philosophy and engineering methods.

The model cannot identify an acceptable level of risk that the community and developers are willing to take in building downtown. The hazards identified in the 1979 Harding-Lawson report are based on known historical maximums and extrapolated maximums based on similar ground conditions. Little or no evaluation of the likelihood of the future occurrence of the particular ground failure phenomena identified in the report was provided. That assessment was not within the scope of the Harding-Lawson study. However, one of the critical aspects of establishing land use guidelines in hazard-prone areas is the evaluation of the risks to the community presented by those hazards. That is, the hazards may be real, but the risks to individuals, or to the community in general, may be small and, in many situations, acceptable. It is in this area of the total earthquake engineering scheme -- risk evaluation -- that further work and evaluation should be undertaken.

### Development Pattern and Economic Projections

The Comprehensive Development Planning effort began with an inventory of current conditions in downtown Anchorage. The purpose of this inventory effort was twofold:

- To confirm initial impressions about key development issues facing decision makers in the short term
- To assess the magnitude of certain problems that appeared to be looming in the future

Some important initial impressions were confirmed by the inventory process, among them:

- Development in downtown Anchorage has been taking place in a random and scattered fashion.
- The intent of the zoning code to promote a conical core of development in the heart of the CBD has not been effective.
- Publicly owned land is dispersed throughout the CBD and, at present, is not being used as a catalyst to help shape downtown Anchorage.
- Private investment is occurring at random, rather than within a framework established by the public sector.

An additional goal of the Comprehensive Development Plan has been to assess the economic development prospects for the Anchorage CBD. Knowledge of downtown's development potential is important because:

- It allows local development goals and objectives to be compared with actual market conditions and, if necessary, to be reappraised and adjusted to reflect these conditions.
- It offers an indication of why desirable developments have not taken place and how new investment can be stimulated.

In conjunction with the Comprehensive Development Planning program, surveys were conducted by economists to determine the general market trends for the Municipality as a whole and various scenarios for the CBD share of the market in the following areas:

- Retail
- Office
- Hotel
- Residential

The following discussions summarize the existing pattern of development and the economic projections for further development in the four major land uses. Each of these physical development and economic profiles is keyed to a figure and a table to illustrate the patterns and potentials graphically.

Retail. The two downtown department stores, J. C. Penney and Nordstrom, are in close proximity to each other along D Street between 5th and 7th Avenues. The remainder of the retail land uses can be found in clusters along 4th and 5th Avenues between C and I Streets and singly throughout the CBD (Figure 11.2).

Analysis of Existing Development. There are two main consequences of the retail development pattern that limit its potential:

First, there is no single place one tends to associate with shopping in the Anchorage CBD, as one would with a shopping center or a well-identified and vigorously promoted downtown retail district. A conscious decision to visit a particular store is required in the Anchorage CBD, a situation that is not conducive to impulse shopping.

Second, retail concerns are not generally located so as to encourage high levels of pedestrian movement, such as between office clusters or along major pedestrian routes. (Although 4th Avenue used to be such a route, it no longer serves as a major employment or pedestrian corridor.) This also reduces the potential for spontaneous shopping, on which many types of business rely.

Economic Analysis. Retail establishments downtown must produce higher sales volumes per square foot than similar stores in suburban areas in order to maintain an equivalent profitability due to higher land costs (Table 11.5) and other factors. Economic analysis indicates that downtown department stores do indeed produce more sales volume per square foot than department stores in suburban areas. In 1980, downtown department stores produced an average of \$314 per square foot, while suburban department stores produced an average of \$249 per square foot (Table 11.6). In 1981, the respective figures were \$382 and \$307,





FIGURE II.2

# Existing Retail Development



indicating that sales per square foot are growing slightly more rapidly at suburban locations than in the CBD.

Economic analyses of the Anchorage region also indicate that the region can support a total of over a half million additional square feet of retail development by 1990 in a combination of department and specialty stores (Table II.7). Over 80% of this additional space is supportable in the Phase I planning period, by 1985, based on an inventory of existing retail facilities, retail sales trends, and regional purchasing power. (These data are available in the report "CBD Development Potentials, 1981-1990, A Statistical Summary," Gladstone Associates, January 1982.)

Whether this additional retail space will be located in the CBD or elsewhere in the region is the question. Economic projections show that it is possible for downtown to attract a high proportion of the overall new retail space in the Anchorage region, as much as 370,000 square feet including 120,000 square feet of department store space (Table II.8). To achieve this requires the following at a minimum:

- Public-private cooperation in land acquisition and development packaging
- ~~Availability of a large number of~~  
~~department stores --~~  
~~which is considered essential in order~~  
for downtown Anchorage to compete effectively with suburban retail centers

TABLE II.5  
ANCHORAGE LAND VALUES

Date	Central Business District (\$/sf)	Calais Area (\$/sf)
February 1980	\$35 - \$43	\$ 9 - \$16
April 1981	\$35 - \$50	\$10 - \$17
January 1982	\$40 - \$55	\$15 - \$25
Percent Increase, 2/80-1/82	14 - 28%	56 - 67%

Source: Jack White Co. and Gladstone Associates

**TABLE II.6  
ANCHORAGE DEPARTMENT STORE SALES  
PER SQUARE FOOT  
1980-1981**

District	1980	1981	Percent Increase
CBD <sup>1</sup>	\$314	\$382	21.6%
Suburban <sup>2</sup> Areas	\$249	\$307	23.3%

<sup>1</sup>Based on 180,000 sf selling area

<sup>2</sup>Based on 355,000 sf selling area

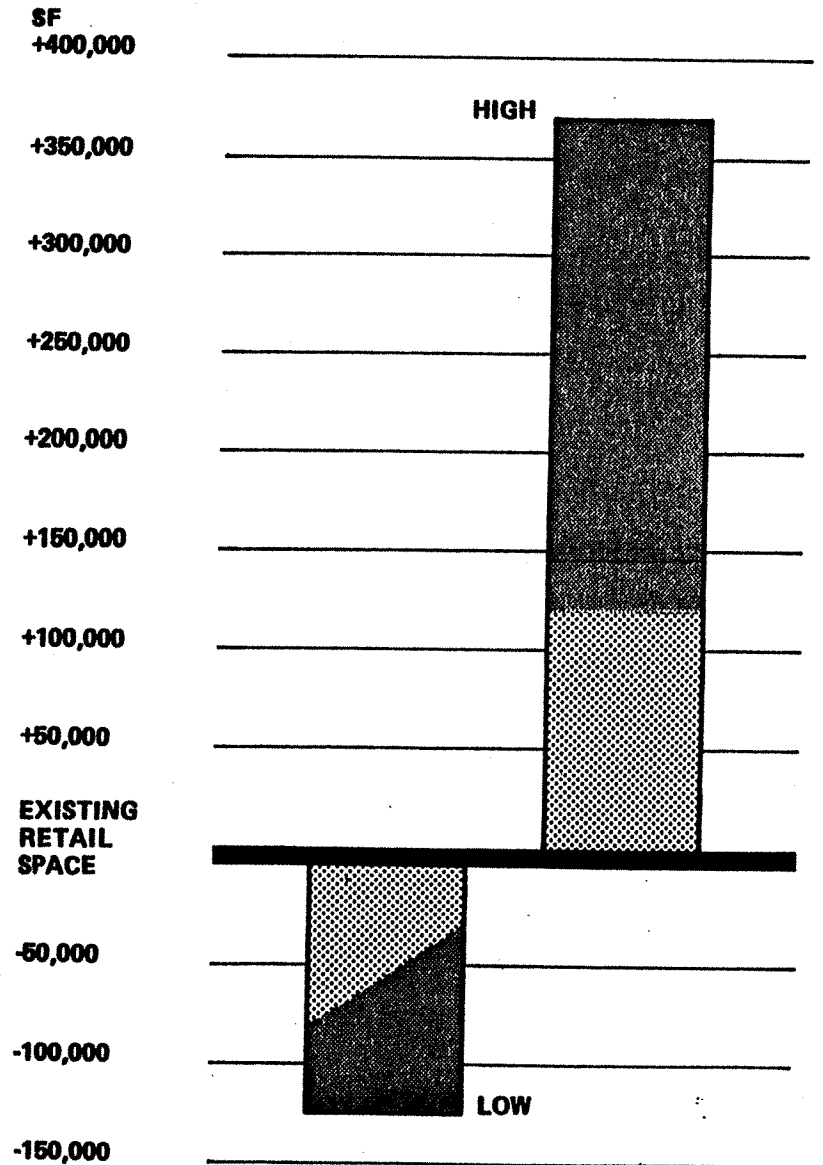
Source: Gladstone Associates interviews with local retailers

**TABLE II.7  
SUMMARY OF  
SUPPORTABLE NEW RETAIL FACILITIES  
1981-1990**

	1981-1985	1986-1990	Total 1981-1990
Department Stores	193,000 sf	64,000 sf	257,000 sf
Other Retail	227,000 sf	46,000 sf	273,000 sf
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>420,000 sf</b>	<b>110,000 sf</b>	<b>530,000 sf</b>

Source: Gladstone Associates

**TABLE II.8  
RETAIL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**



- Parking facilities, developed by both the public and private sectors, with direct linkage to the retail development

In the absence of this integrated retail development package, which would have to be aggressively promoted to developers of national scope, it is possible that the total amount of retail space in downtown Anchorage could actually decline in the Phase I planning period, with downtown retail being replaced by newly developed retail facilities in other locations in Anchorage. This decline could conceivably include the departure of one of the existing downtown department stores if a regional shopping mall is developed elsewhere in the Municipality. Overall, downtown could lose as much as 125,000 square feet of retail space under this condition.

Office. Buildings devoted primarily to office use are also scattered throughout the downtown area (Figure 11.3). Major nodes where a number of substantial office buildings are clustered together can be found in many locations:

- In the northwest corner of the CBD (the resolution area)
- In the zone bounded by 4th and 6th Avenues and F and K Streets
- In the south part of the CBD -- in particular, the new ARCO and Hunt Towers
- In the vicinity of the Federal Office Complex

Analysis of Existing Development. The arrangement of existing office uses in the

CBD suggests a partial crescent of high-density employment around the emerging Town Center area. It is likely that additional office construction will seek locations near and around these existing, successful office clusters, providing infill between them. Completion of the office crescent (see Figure 1.7) will require a major new office node in the underdeveloped area east of the Town Center area, with the additional incentive of retail and open space attractions.

Economic Analysis. An inventory of office sector developments in Anchorage indicated that a total of 2.5 million square feet of new Class A office space has been developed since 1973 at an annual rate of 281,000 square feet. The downtown share of this new office construction amounts to approximately 36% (Table 11.9). During the same period, the absorp-

TABLE 11.9  
CLASS A OFFICE SPACE CONSTRUCTION  
IN DOWNTOWN AND SUBURBAN ANCHORAGE  
1973-1981

Location	Total Constructed	Share of Total	Annual Average
Downtown	902,600 sf	35.7%	100,300 sf
Suburban	1,627,400 sf	64.3%	180,800 sf
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,530,000 sf</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>281,100 s</b>

Source: Gladstone Associates and Jack White Co.

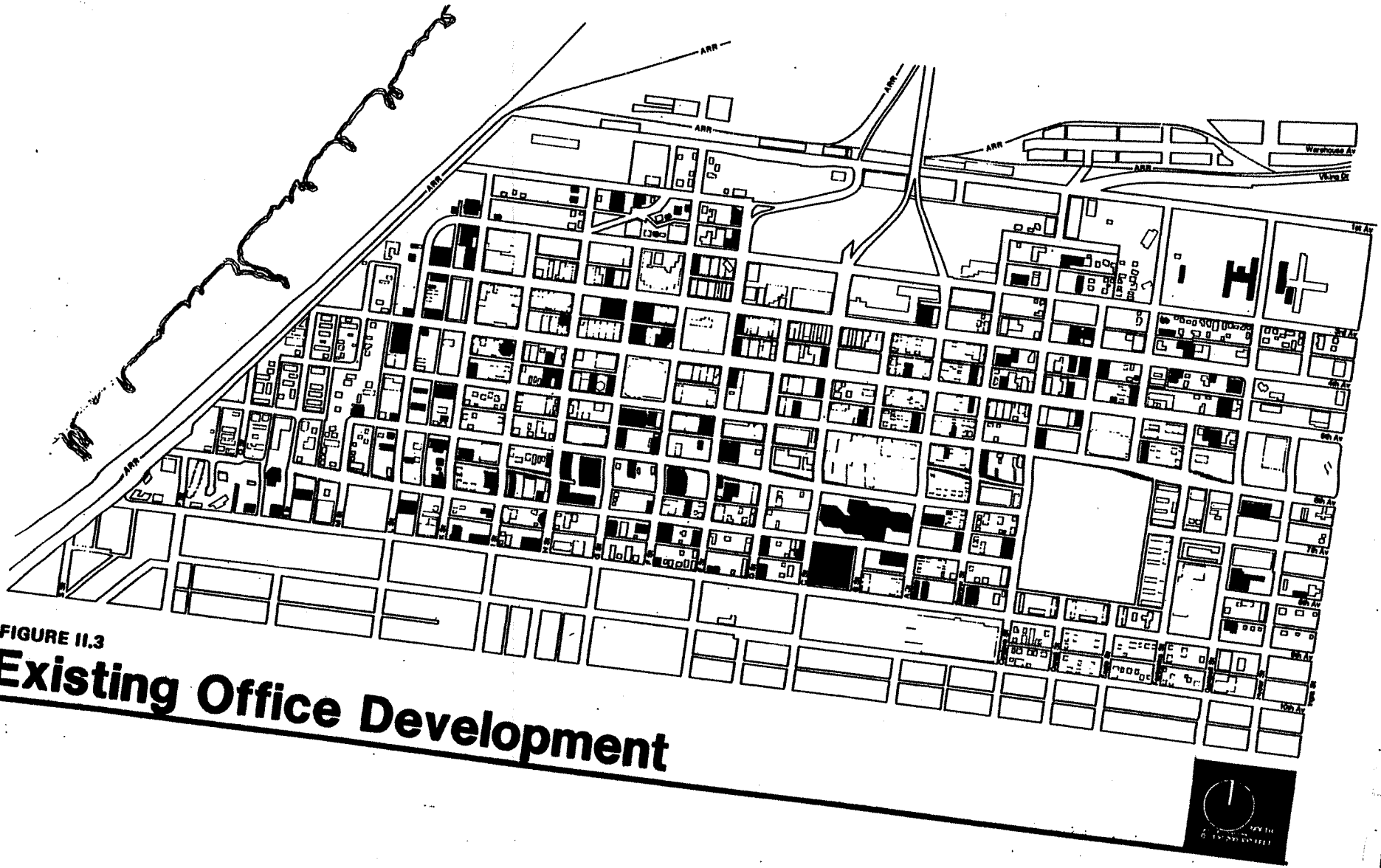


FIGURE II.3  
**Existing Office Development**

**TABLE II.10  
RENT LEVELS IN NEWLY CONSTRUCTED  
OFFICE BUILDINGS  
1974-1982**

Year	Central Business District (\$/sf)	Calais/ Midtown (\$/sf)
1974	\$12 - \$15	\$10 - \$11
1975	\$14 - \$16	\$11 - \$15
1976	\$15 - \$16	\$14 - \$17
1977	\$15	\$16 - \$18
1978	\$19	\$13 - \$19
1979	\$20	\$15 - \$18
1980	N/A	\$15 - \$21
1/81-6/81	\$24 - \$27	\$24
6/81-12/81	\$30	\$30
1982/1983 Delivery	\$30 - \$36 <sup>1</sup>	\$30 - \$36 <sup>2</sup>
Percent Increase 1974-1982	240-250%	300-327%

<sup>1</sup>Pro forma rent levels in Hunt Building

<sup>2</sup>Pro forma rent levels in Frontier Building

Source: Jack White Co. and Gladstone Assoc.

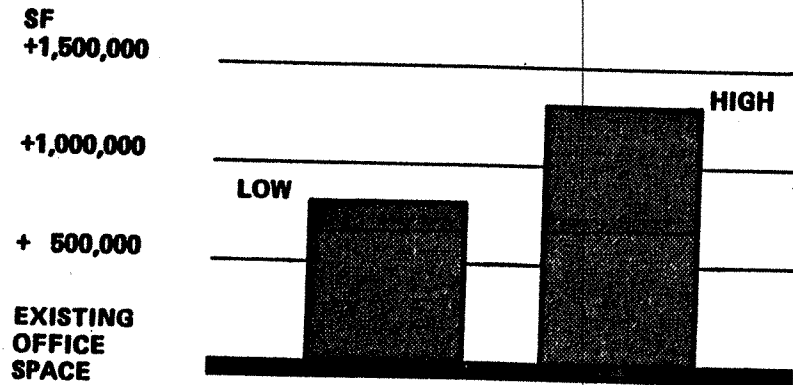
tion of office space has exceeded new construction, with a total estimated absorption of 2.9 million square feet, or annual average rate of absorption of 320,000 square feet.

An investigation of rent levels in newly constructed buildings throughout Anchorage revealed that downtown office buildings and those in suburban locations are commanding virtually the same rates per square foot today, between \$30 and \$36 per square foot (Table II.10). Two factors are significant. First, the rental rate increase in suburban areas has been higher than that downtown. In 1974, downtown office space was renting for 20% to 36% more than suburban office space; this gap has been closed indicating an improving competitive position for suburban office locations. Second, office developments in suburban locations are required by zoning code to provide adequate on-site parking for tenants, while downtown developments have no such requirement; in fact, within the B-2A zone of the CBD, there is no "bonus point" incentive at all for the provision of parking (see discussion of zoning later in this chapter). The fact that on-site parking can be provided at much lower cost in suburban locations than in downtown locations gives suburban office developers an additional competitive edge over developers of downtown office space.

Economic projections show that downtown can still capture between 770,000 and 1,300,000 square feet of new Class A office space by 1985 (Table II.11).<sup>2</sup> However, to realize the higher figure would be contingent on the following:

- The Municipality's assistance in land assembly
- The availability of publicly funded parking
- An additional increase in land cost at competing locations such as Midtown and other areas

TABLE II.11 OFFICE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL



Hotel. Major hotels tend to be situated in the strip between 3rd and 5th Avenues, with smaller guest facilities scattered throughout downtown (Figure 11.4). However, the length of this strip, which spans 13 blocks between K and Eagle Streets, prevents it from functioning as a viable hotel district.

Among the major hotels in the downtown area are:

- The Captain Cook on the north side of 5th Avenue between I and K Streets
- The Sheffield House on the south side of 5th Avenue at G Street
- The Westward Hilton on the south side of 4th Avenue between E and F Streets
- The Holiday Inn and Travel Lodge along 3rd Avenue between C and Barrow Streets
- The Sheraton, the newest and easternmost major hotel in the downtown area, on the north side of 6th Avenue between Denali and Eagle Streets

Analysis of Existing Development. The dispersal of major guest facilities over a 13-block-long area dissipates the potential level of nighttime and weekend activity within the CBD. In addition, the distance between some of the major hotels, such as the Sheraton and the Captain Cook, discourages interaction that would ordinarily take place when, for example, delegates to a conference might be staying at both hotels. In the case of the two hotels mentioned, which are over three fourths of a mile apart, travel between the two facilities requires a taxi and is thus not very spontaneous.

Four hotels, the Captain Cook, the Sheffield House, the Holiday Inn, and the Voyager, are located within three blocks of the Convention and Performing Arts Centers. Their proximity to these visitor and cultural

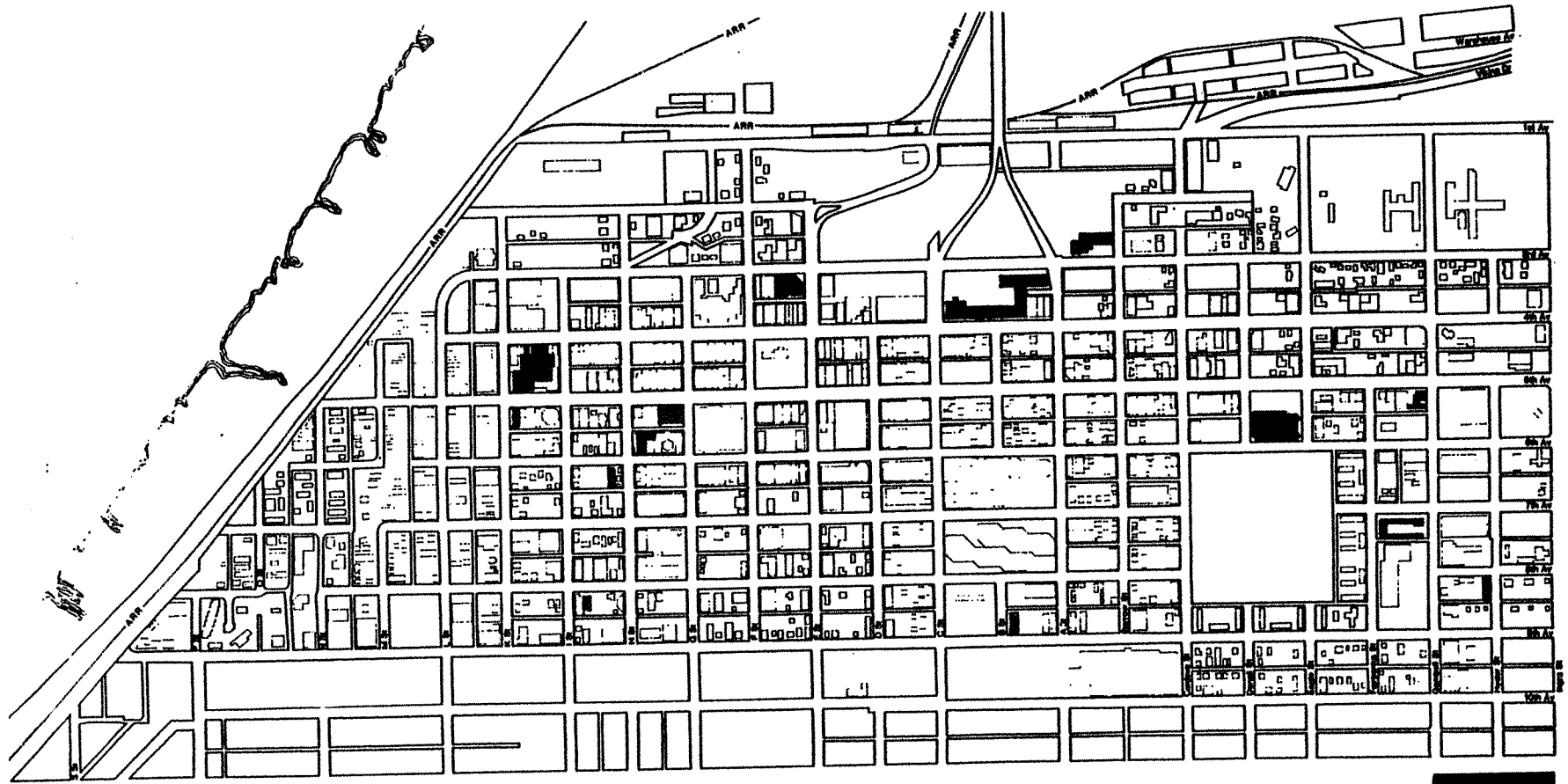


FIGURE II.4

# Existing Hotel Development





facilities encourages nighttime and weekend activity in the Town Center area. Characteristics for downtown hotels such as rates and estimated occupancy factors are noted in Table II.12.

Future hotel development (see economic projection below) would do well to capitalize on the high level of activity anticipated for this area. An excellent potential location for hotel development would be in the emerging ARCO/Hunt area near the south end of the proposed F Street Mall.

**Economic Analysis.** Based on an analysis of projected visitors to Anchorage in the convention, business, and tourism sectors (Table II.13), economic projections indicate that Anchorage can support between 1,090 and 1,540 additional Class A hotel rooms by 1985, and between 2,060 and 2,760 additional Class A hotel rooms by 1990. As the region's activity center, it has been projected that the downtown area can support between 700 and 1,100 of these additional rooms<sup>3</sup> by 1985 -- or between 64% and 71% of all the new hotel rooms that can be supported in greater Anchorage (Table II.14).

TABLE II.12  
DOWNTOWN ANCHORAGE  
HOTEL CHARACTERISTICS

Hotel	Rooms	Winter Rates		Summer Rates		Estimated Occupancy		
		Single	Double	Single	Double	Winter	Summer	Annual
Westward Hilton	502	\$55	\$65	\$65	\$75	50-70%	95%	74%
Sheraton	410	\$74-\$82	\$84-\$92	\$75	\$85	50-90%	90%	78%
Sheffield House	198	\$68-\$72	\$78-\$82	\$72	\$82	50-60%	88-91%	70%
Captain Cook	600	\$76-\$86	\$86-\$96	\$69-\$96	\$79-\$106	50-60%	80+%	67%
Holiday Inn	250	\$46-\$57	\$56-\$57	\$50	\$60	50-75%	90-100%	75%

Source: Gladstone Associates Field Survey, January 1982

**Table II. 13**  
**CLASS A HOTEL DEMAND**  
**1980 - 1990**

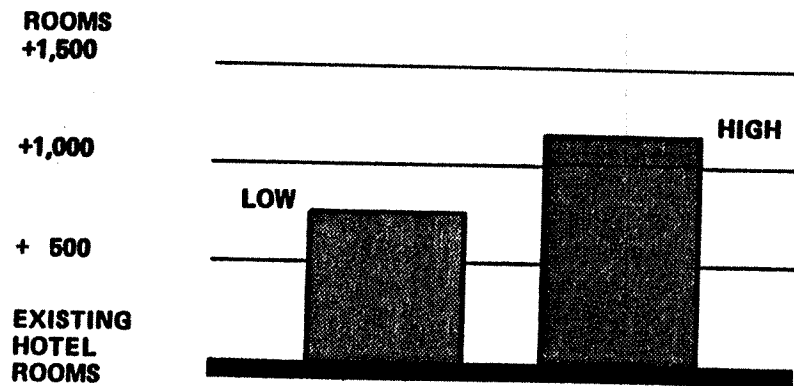
Type of Visitor	1980 Room Nights	1980 Support- able No. of Rooms	1981-1985 Projected Room Nights	1981-1985 Supportable Number of, <sup>1</sup> Rooms	1986-1990 Projected Room Nights	1986-1990 Supportable Number of, <sup>1</sup> Rooms
Convention	52,000	195	136,000-172,000	515- 650	220,000-292,000	830-1,100
Business	337,000	1,275	505,500-580,000	1,910-2,190	631,875-725,000	2,390-2,740
Tourism	130,000	490	166,000-173,700	625- 660	211,900-232,450	800- 880
<b>Total</b>	<b>518,665</b>	<b>1,960</b>	<b>807,500-925,700</b>	<b>3,050-3,500</b>	<b>1,063,775-1,249,450</b>	<b>4,020-4,720</b>
Less existing rooms		1,960		1,960		1,960
Supportable new rooms		0		1,090-1,540		2,060-2,760

<sup>1</sup> Based on the current overall occupancy rate of 72.5 percent.

Source: Gladstone Associates.

Development of a major hotel complex outside the CBD and a lack of downtown parking facilities would make the lower figure the more likely of the two. The development of publicly funded parking facilities, an aggressive and successful marketing program for the Convention Center, and availability of prime development sites through public assistance would increase the number of hotel rooms that could be developed downtown.

**Table II.14  
HOTEL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**



**Residential.** Residential uses are primarily situated in the area, west of L Street and near the cemetery. These clusters of residential development essentially bracket the commercial core area. However, numerous residential buildings can be found in the commercial core in both isolated and clustered configurations (Figure II.5).

**Analysis of Existing Development.** While the area west of L Street appears to be a very sound residential district, it is visually isolated from the CBD. The remaining residential land use in the CBD is scattered, poorly served by such residentially oriented facilities as markets, drug stores, and cleaners, and often has an uncomfortable physical relationship with adjacent commercial land uses. There are one or two samples of mixed office/residential developments in Anchorage. Such projects warrant encouragement, as they promote extended hours of activity. The Resolution area and the South Park areas appear to be excellent areas for this type of in-town living. Reevaluation of the type of residential development currently found around the cemetery, which tends to be of lower quality, may also be appropriate.

**Economic Analysis.** Projections of residential demand throughout the Anchorage region show dramatic increases in the number of households and a total demand for new housing in the range of 4,000 to 5,000 by 1985 (Table II.15). To date, the downtown area has not accounted for a large percentage of housing in the region. Analysis of recent home sales in Anchorage showed the area that includes the CBD to account for only 1.1% of

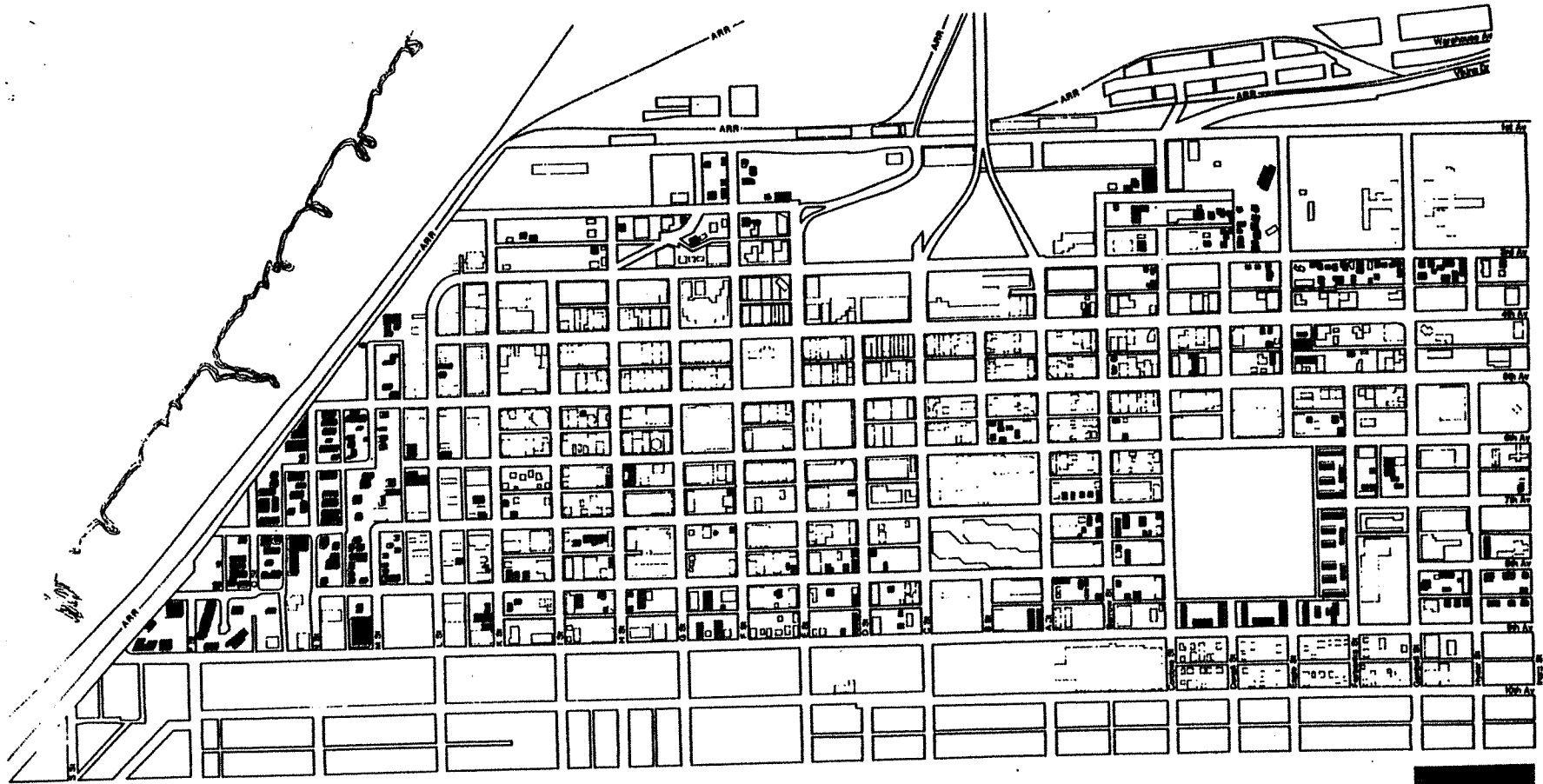


FIGURE II.5

# Existing Residential Development

all home sales in Anchorage between 1976 and 1981 (Table II.16). However, the selling prices for housing in the area that includes downtown have increased at a faster rate than in any other district in Anchorage according to the Anchorage Real Estate Research Report (Table II.17).

TABLE II.15  
PROJECTED HOUSING DEMAND IN  
ANCHORAGE  
1981-1990

	1981-1985	1986-1990
Net Household Increase	3,420-4,420	2,000-3,400
Vacancy Adjustment	0	60- 100
Replacement <sup>1</sup>	650	800
Total Housing Demand	4,070-5,070	2,860-4,300

<sup>1</sup>One percent of existing housing stock. 65,000 in 1980. 80,000 in 1985.

Source: Municipality of Anchorage and Gladstone Associates

TABLE II.16  
HOME SALES BY DISTRICT  
1976-1981

MLS <sup>1</sup> District	Total Sales	Percent of Total Sales
5 (includes CBD)	159	1.1%
10	1,012	7.1
15	2,076	14.6
20	1,774	12.5
25	1,648	11.6
30	660	4.7
35	3,868	27.3
40	764	5.4
Eagle River	1,327	9.4
Mat-Su Borough	891	6.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,180</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Multiple Listing Service

Source: Anchorage Real Estate Research Report, Spring 1980-Fall 1981, Gladstone Associates.

**TABLE II. 17  
AVERAGE HOME SELLING PRICES  
BY DISTRICT  
1976-1981**

MLS District <sup>1</sup>	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	Average Annual Increase		
						1981 <sup>2</sup>	1976-79	1980-81
5 (includes CBD)	\$61,959	\$72,320	\$77,220	\$89,159	\$87,921	\$115,987	11.0%	28.2%
10	65,357	71,328	82,809	84,883	92,294	111,531	7.5	22.8
15	66,180	70,634	79,156	80,651	86,050	98,096	12.1	17.6
20	73,818	77,695	86,864	95,164	99,498	116,660	7.2	20.4
25	79,599	85,083	97,654	104,679	115,356	137,304	7.9	23.1
30	66,651	71,592	79,564	82,276	87,081	91,599	5.9	8.1
35	64,511	73,756	79,150	85,331	93,568	98,796	8.1	9.6
40	54,679	59,843	69,428	72,639	81,020	85,676	8.2	6.8
Eagle River	60,629	69,897	77,980	84,052	89,767	103,625	9.7	21.7
Mat-Su Borough	51,537	60,005	65,599	71,652	72,322	80,463	9.8	17.1
<b>Total Anchorage Area</b>	<b>\$65,609</b>	<b>\$72,573</b>	<b>\$79,869</b>	<b>\$85,281</b>	<b>\$92,938</b>	<b>\$103,793</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>15.1%</b>

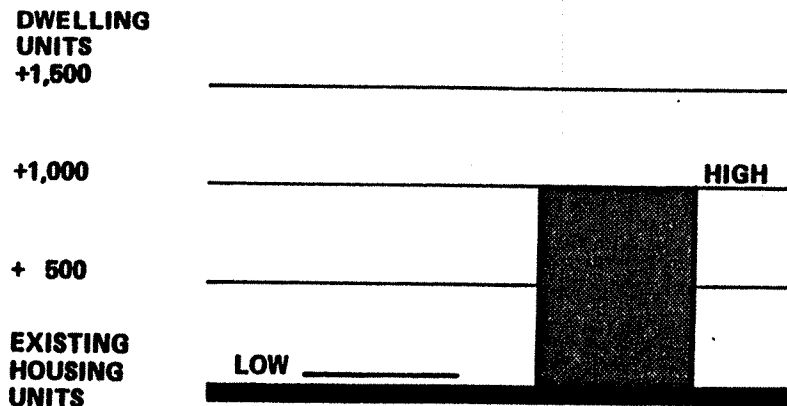
<sup>1</sup>Multiple Listing Service District

<sup>2</sup>January 1 - June 30, 1981

Source: Anchorage Real Estate Research Report, Fall 1981; Gladstone Associates

The supply of new downtown residential units by 1985 is projected to range between 0 and 1,000 units (Table II.18). The attractiveness of the downtown environment as a place to live (particularly for people who work downtown and for those who enjoy an "urban" lifestyle with easy accessibility to cultural, entertainment, and governmental facilities), land assembly assistance, the availability of adequate parking, and state-funded low-interest financing programs would all foster the development of more housing.

**TABLE II.18  
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**



**Summary:** The foregoing analyses of existing development and future development potential contain common themes, among them:

- Existing development in downtown Anchorage tends for the most part to be dispersed in a random and scattered fashion with little opportunity for interaction of land uses.
- Some construction activity in the office and hotel sectors will probably take place even in the absence of an integrated plan.
- In order to achieve the high range of development potential in all major downtown land use sectors will require strong public/private cooperative effort, development of publicly financed parking, and other incentives for new development activity.

A summary of the major implications of the low and high projections, as well as their underlying influences, is provided in Table II.19.

Figure II.6 illustrates the composite of the four major land uses in the Anchorage CBD. The fragmented and unrelated land use distribution is clear in this figure. Figure II.7 illustrates the composite of the service-oriented land uses in the Anchorage CBD, including institutional, parking, and industrial land uses. Although these land uses are less noticed by people as they circulate through the CBD, they are nevertheless important in providing service, employment, and access. As the figure illustrates, industrial land uses are well confined to the northern and eastern fringes of the CBD. The other land uses are located at random throughout the study area.

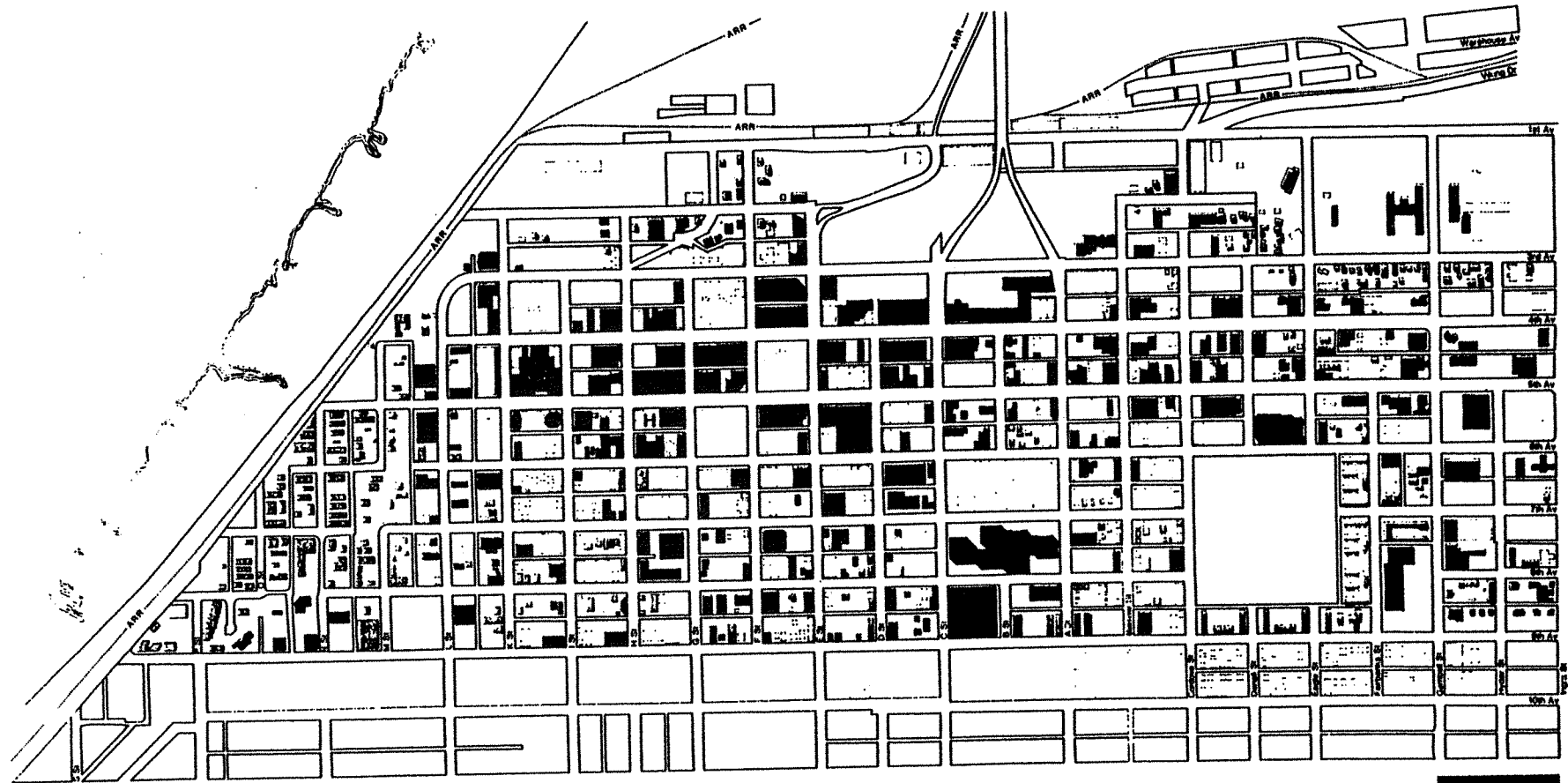




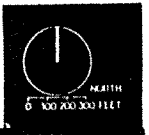


FIGURE II.6

# Primary CBD Land Uses

-  RETAIL
-  OFFICE
-  HOTEL
-  RESIDENTIAL





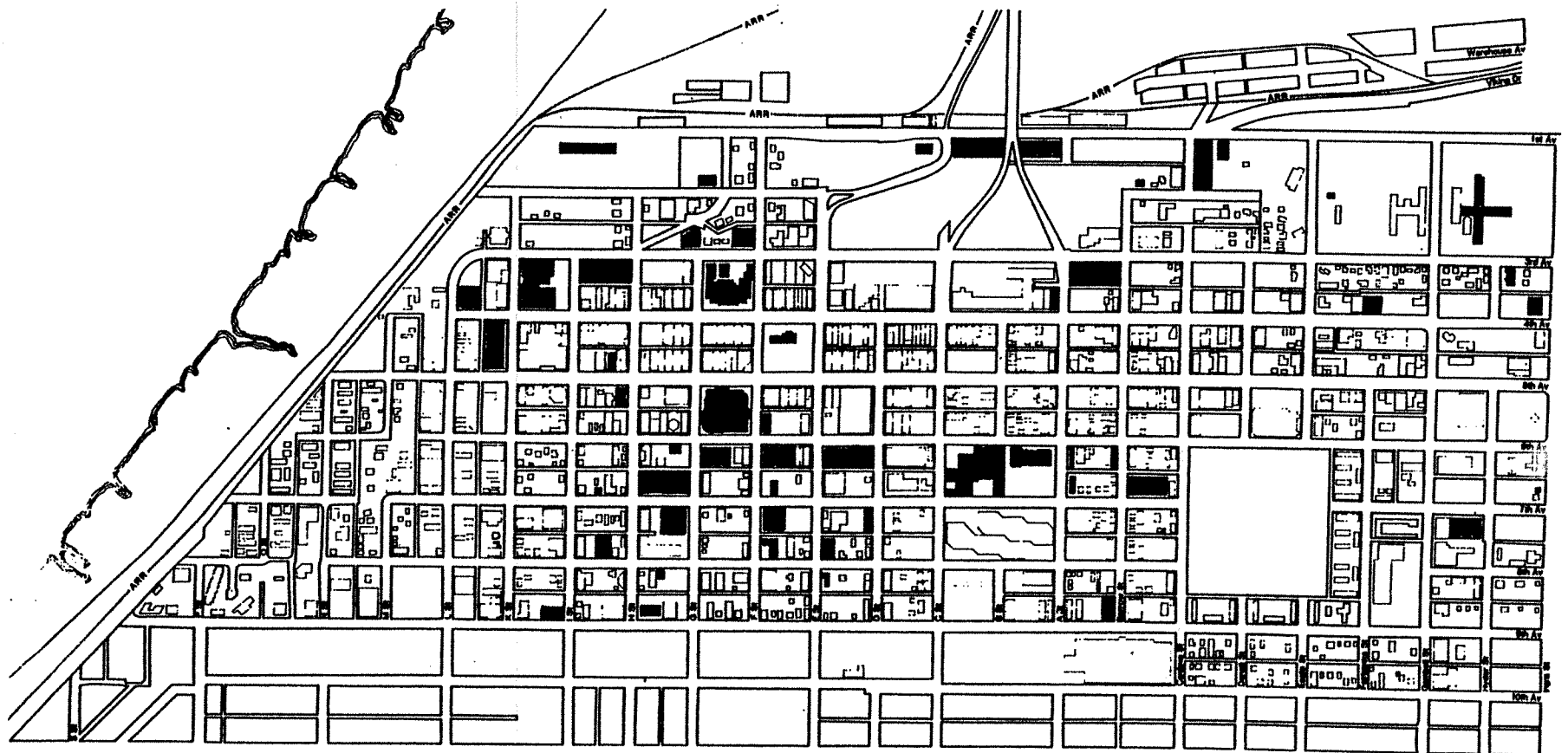





FIGURE II.7

# Service-Oriented Land Uses

-  PARKING
-  INSTITUTIONAL
-  INDUSTRIAL

**TABLE II.19**  
**INFLUENCES ON DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**  
**FOR ANCHORAGE CBD**  
**1981 - 1990**

SECTOR	LOW-RANGE PROJECTION	HIGH-RANGE PROJECTION
Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional shopping center built in the Calais area, including J. C. Penney or Nordstrom and many mall shops to relocate</li> <li>- High cost of land, difficult land assembly, and expensive parking continue to make privately financed CBD retail development infeasible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional shopping center with anchor and 2700,000 square feet of mall shop space developed in downtown, linking J. C. Penney and Nordstrom</li> <li>- Development economics of retailing unlocked by publicly financed structured parking</li> </ul>
Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CBD share of total Anchorage office inventory: 36%</li> <li>- Land assembly in prime CBD areas difficult and expensive</li> <li>- Privately financed structured parking necessary</li> <li>- Other areas (midtown/Calais) favored for office developments due to land costs, park requirements, and attainable rent levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rise in CBD share of new office construction to 60%</li> <li>- City land assembly assistance</li> <li>- Improvement in office development economics in CBD projects vis-a-vis those in midtown locations as a result of publicly funded parking and relatively higher land costs in midtown locations</li> </ul>
Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One Class A hotel of 300 rooms built outside the CBD</li> <li>- Development forced out of CBD by lack of prime sites, difficult land assembly, and expensive parking force</li> <li>- Convention center booking of out-of-state groups modest, i.e., less than 10 conventions a year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All Class A hotel development in downtown</li> <li>- CBD hotel projects financially feasible due to publicly funded parking</li> <li>- Convention center marketed for and attracts significant increase in out-of-state bookings, e.g., 30 or more per year</li> </ul>
Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No development</li> <li>- Sufficient housing supply through close-in, non-CBD developments; comparable projects within the CBD would be more expensive due to higher land costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 to 4 percent of the projected housing demand for Anchorage</li> <li>- CBD a viable place to live</li> <li>- Publicly funded parking; CBD projects competitively priced with close-in developments</li> <li>- State-funded low interest rate financing available for multi-family units</li> </ul>

Source: Gladstone Associates, January 1982.

## Zoning Pattern

Figure II.8 shows the various zones that make up the Anchorage CBD. As indicated, the center of the area is represented by three "B" designations: B-2A (CBD core), B-2B (CBD periphery), and B-2C (CBD). The designations are not sequential; the B-2C designation actually falls between the other two zoning designations in terms of intended development intensity.

Intensity of Development. The intent of the zoning code was to create a pyramid of development intensity, with the tallest buildings located at the heart of downtown (B-2A with a base height of 9 stories) and a stepped transition toward low-rise buildings at the CBD periphery (B-2C and then B-2B with base heights of 5 and 3 stories, respectively).

Land Use Emphasis. All of the B-2 zones were intended to have a strong commercial orientation. Key features of each zone are described below:

- B-2A (Base Height 9 Stories). The heart of downtown was to be "a concentrated area of retail and retail-related facilities in combination with office uses," with "retail uses on the ground floor level of all developments within the district."<sup>5</sup>
- B-2C (Base Height 5 Stories). The intermediate area of the CBD was intended to encourage a mixture of commercial, office and residential uses...surrounding the more heavily concentrated (CBD) Core.<sup>6</sup> Vistas and views were to be preserved; light commercial, professional, office-type, and

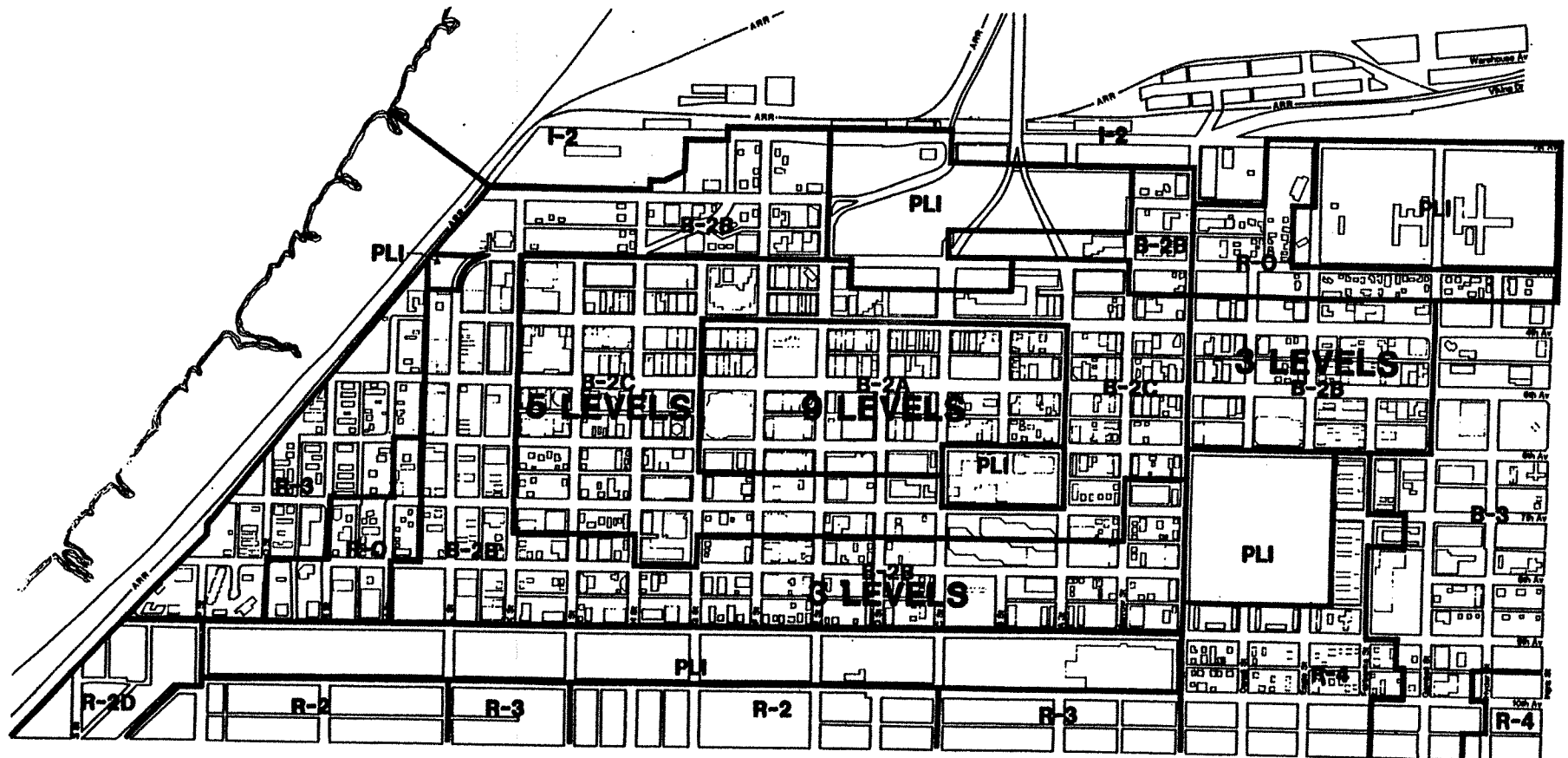


FIGURE II.8  
**Zoning**



high-density residential uses were to be encouraged.

- B-2B (Base Height 3 Stories). The CBD periphery was intended "to encourage a mixture of light commercial, office, and residential uses surrounding the more heavily concentrated commercial activity within the interior portion of the CBD. Height limitations were intended to preserve views and to correspond with geologic characteristics.

Actual Development Pattern. The actual pattern of development in downtown Anchorage does not correspond to the intent of the zoning code. As indicated in Figure 11.9, the height of recent buildings in the intermediate and peripheral zones greatly exceeds the zones' base heights. In fact, buildings under construction in these zones will, upon completion, be the tallest buildings in downtown Anchorage. And, although the core area (B-2A) zone encourages retail and related uses at street level, current development does not show extensive evidence of this. Much of the problem in satisfying this aspect of the zoning code's intent is the type of development that preceded this code and the relatively little private development that has occurred recently in this central zone, compared with the amount that has occurred in the B-2C and B-2B zones.

Bonus Points. A system of bonus points is included in the zoning code. Points are awarded for a new building that provides design amenities. A certain number of design amenities must be included in every project in order to gain approval, based on floor area (larger floor area requiring more bonus points). If a building provides more than the required number of

amenities, bonus points for these amenities can be used to increase floor area above and beyond the "base building height." Each bonus point earns the right to build 400 square feet on a floor above the base building height. Typical amenities earning bonus points are noted in Table 11.20.

The intent of the bonus point system appears to be sound: to encourage the provision of urban design amenities in new structures within the context of the development intensity pyramid. However, the bonus point awards may be too generous; by incorporating a great number of design amenities -- meeting the letter (if not the intent) of the code -- in a large project within the B-2B (peripheral) zone, the height of that structure can be increased from the base height of 3 stories to 18 floors or more. The inclusion of any enclosed parking in the project can raise the height further. Each parking space earns at least 4,000 square feet in this zone; for a typical office development of about 10,000 square feet per floor, this means that three enclosed parking spaces earn more than enough square footage to build another floor.

Certain restrictions on the way bonus points can be amassed are included in the zoning code. However, it is clear that, even without variances, the code's intent may be undermined through the bonus point system.

Parking. Although enclosed parking is awarded a generous number of bonus points in the B-2C and B-2B zones (translating into between 4,000 and 5,600 additional square feet allowed per space), there is no bonus point incentive to provide parking in the core area B-2A zone and there is no minimum parking requirement for new

**TABLE II.20**  
**BONUS POINT COMPARISON FOR CBD ZONES**

Urban Design Amenity	Number of Bonus Points Per Unit						Additional Sq. Ft. Permitted Above Base Height
	B-2A		B-2C		B-2B		
	per unit	max (if any)	per unit	max (if any)	per unit	max (if any)	
Street Tree	1		1		1		400 sq. ft.
Seating Unit	0.5	6	0.5	6	0.5	6	200 - 2,400 total
Sidewalk Texture (per 1,000 sq. ft.)	1/200 SF		1/250 SF		1/300 SF		1,320 - 2,000
Bike Rack	0.2/ bike	4	0.2/ bike		0.2/ bike	4	80 - 1,600 total
Heated Sidewalk Canopy	1/60 SF		1/85 SF		1/150 SF		2,667 - 6,667/ 1,000 s.f.
Unheated Sidewalk Canopy	1/70 SF		1/100 SF		1/170 SF		2,353 - 5,714/ 1,000 s.f.
Heated Arcade	1/40 SF		1/60 SF		1/100 SF		4,000 - 10,000/ 1,000 s.f.
Unheated Arcade	1/60 SF		1/75 SF		1/140 SF		2,857 - 6,667/ 1,000 s.f.
Plaza Park	1/80 SF		1/80 SF		1/115 SF		3,478 - 5,000/ 1,000 s.f.
Ground Floor Public Restrooms	1/70 SF		1/70 SF		1/200 SF		2,000 - 5,714/ 1,000 s.f.
Climate-Controlled Galleria	1/40 SF		1/55 SF		-		0 - 10,000/ 1,000 s.f.
Interior Shopping Mall	1/100 SF		1/200 SF		-		0 - 4,000 1,000 s.f.
Street Facing Ground Level Shops	1/100 SF		1/130 SF		1/200 -		2,000 - 4,000/ 1,000 s.f.

**TABLE II. 20 (cont' d)**  
**BONUS POINT COMPARISON FOR CBD ZONES**

Urban Design Amenity	Number of Bonus Points Per Unit						Range of Additional Sq. Ft. Permitted Above Base Height
	B-2A		B-2C		B-2B		
	per unit	max (if any)	per unit	max (if any)	per unit	max (if any)	
Commercial Theater	1/200 SF		-		-		0 - 2,000/ 1,000 s.f.
Roof Top Deck	1/120 SF		1/150 SF		1/220 SF		1,818 - 3,333/ 1,000 s.f.
Apartment Housing	1/100 SF		1/200 SF		1/133 SF		3,008 - 4,000/ 1,000 s.f.
Hotel Rooms	1/200 SF		1/400 SF		1/267 SF		1,498 - 2,000/ 1,100 s.f.
Enclosed Parking Space at or above grade	0		11		10		0 - 4,400/space
Enclosed Parking Space below grade	0		13		14		0 - 5,600/space

Source: Title 21 of the Anchorage Municipal Code, "Land Use Regulation," January 1, 1981.

Note: Maximum of 1 bonus point per amenity per 200 square feet of site.  
 Minimum of 1 bonus point per 1,400 sq. ft. of site required for approval.

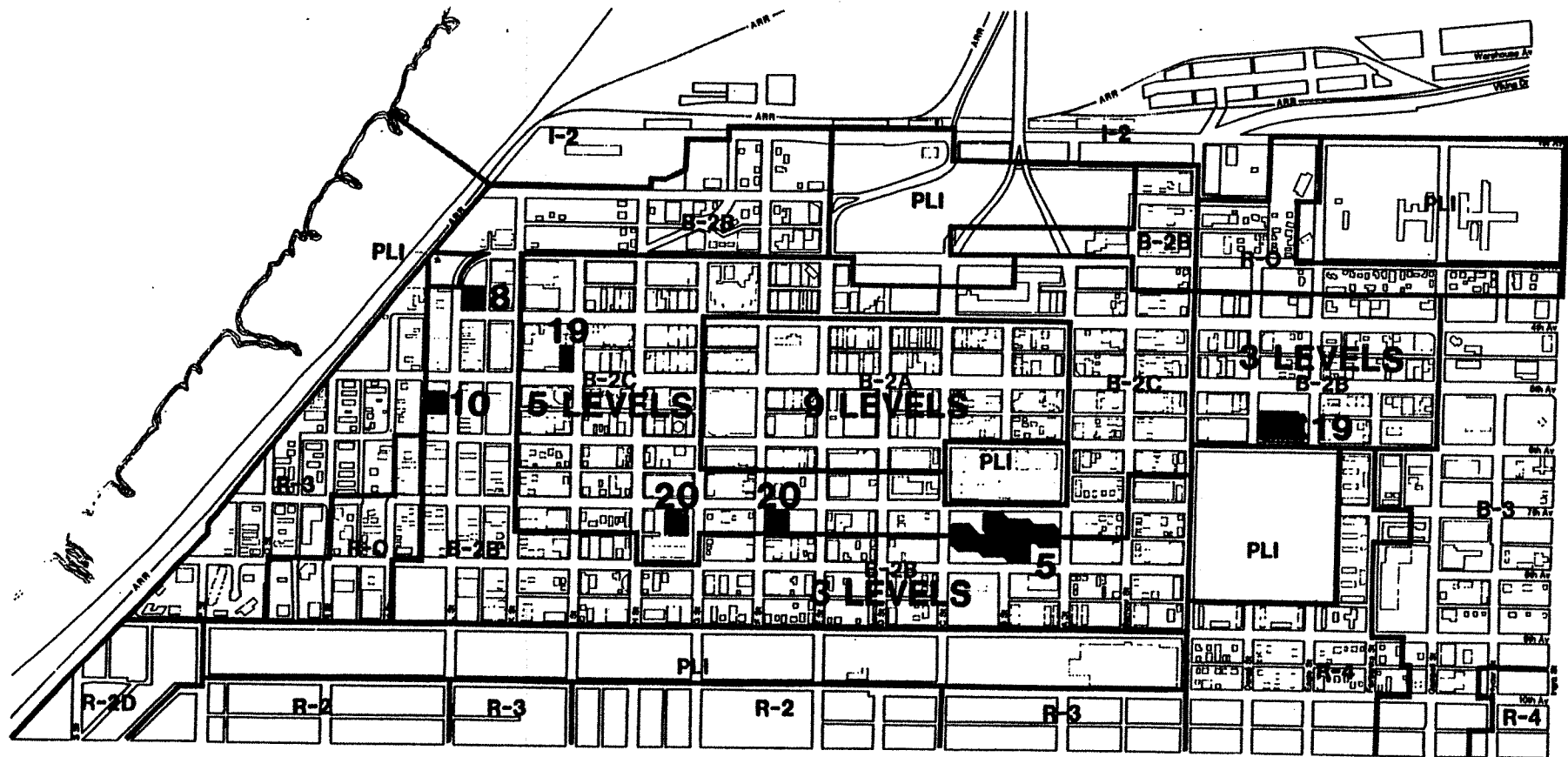


FIGURE 11.9

# Zoning and Recent Projects



■ 00

NEW BUILDINGS—NUMBER OF STORIES

development within any of the CBD zones. This provision, without a corresponding, well-funded parking and transit improvement program, has contributed to a problem that will be discussed at some length in Chapter III.

Conclusion. The intent of the zoning code is clearly not being reflected in the pattern of new development. Either through manipulation of the bonus point system or by variances from the land use code, a strong CBD central core is not emerging from recent private section investment.

### Transit Facilities

The Municipality of Anchorage transit service was making 628 downtown trips (including both inbound and outbound trips) daily in late 1981 on 22 routes. Ridership data provided to the consulting team for the month of October 1981 indicated upwards of 288,000 person-trips on these routes.

An examination of the route schedules shows that approximately 35 percent of the bus trips to downtown originate in the area east of the CBD, while approximately 59 percent originate in the area to the south of the CBD. The remaining 6 percent of the routes originate in the area to the north of the CBD. Daily bus trips and their directions of origin are indicated in Figure II.10.

Most bus routes circulate through the CBD, reverse their direction, and continue out of the CBD, generally using the heavily travelled one-way couplets. Most buses pass the recently completed Bus Accommodation Center, opposite the Municipal Hill building at the corner of G Street and 6th Avenue. A visual survey of this facility in winter 1982 showed it to be heavily used by bus

patrons; however, some overflow of buses into traffic lanes was noted at the afternoon peak hour.

Among Municipal plans for improvements to the Anchorage public transit system are an expansion of the existing bus fleet to 100 vehicles and the development of another transit accommodation center. In addition, the Municipality has been investigating the feasibility of numerous potential fixed-route systems that might be considered for implementation in the long-range future. These potential systems have been documented in a technical memorandum entitled "Fixed-Route Element, Transit Development Program."<sup>9</sup>

### Historical and Cultural Features

Historic buildings and sites have been studied from the perspectives both of on-site preservation and of relocation potential for the Municipality of Anchorage. The results of these studies are documented in "On-Site Preservation Study," prepared by the Conservation Company in September 1981, and "Historic Building Relocation and Adaptive Use Study," prepared by Charles Hall Page & Associates, Inc. and Economics Research Associates in October 1980. Historic buildings within the Comprehensive Development Plan study area are mapped in Figure II.11.

As Figure II.11 indicates, historic buildings tend to be clustered in the area bounded by 2nd and 7th Avenues and C and K Streets. The seven-block length of 4th Avenue between C and K Streets is especially rich in historic structures, with 14 significant structures. Another block worthy of mention is that bounded by 6th and 7th Avenues and I and K Streets, which features four small buildings of historic value in a context that



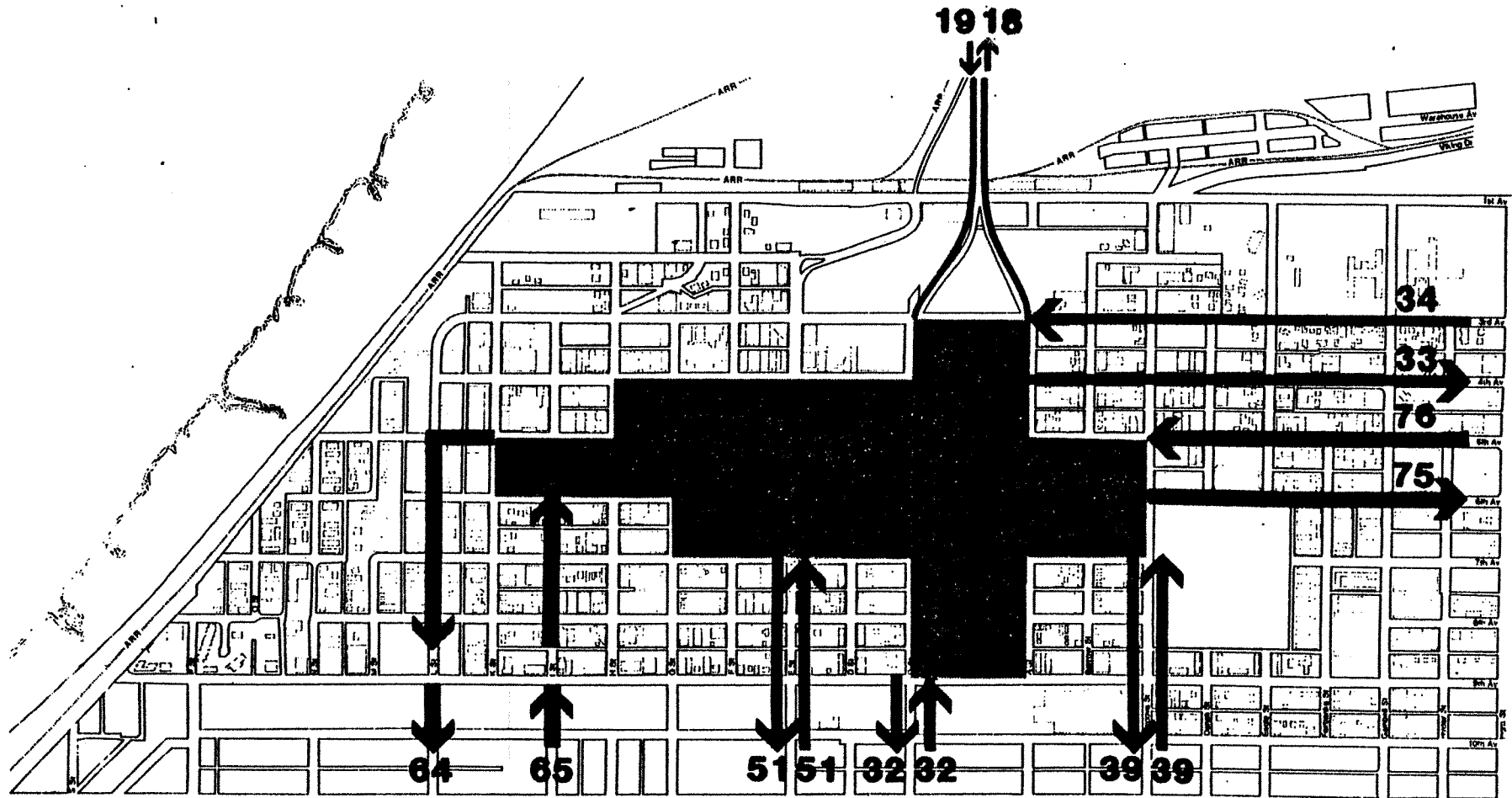


FIGURE II.10

# Daily Bus Passages Through CBD



DIRECTION AND NUMBER OF DAILY BUS PASSAGES



CBD BUS RECIRCULATION AREA

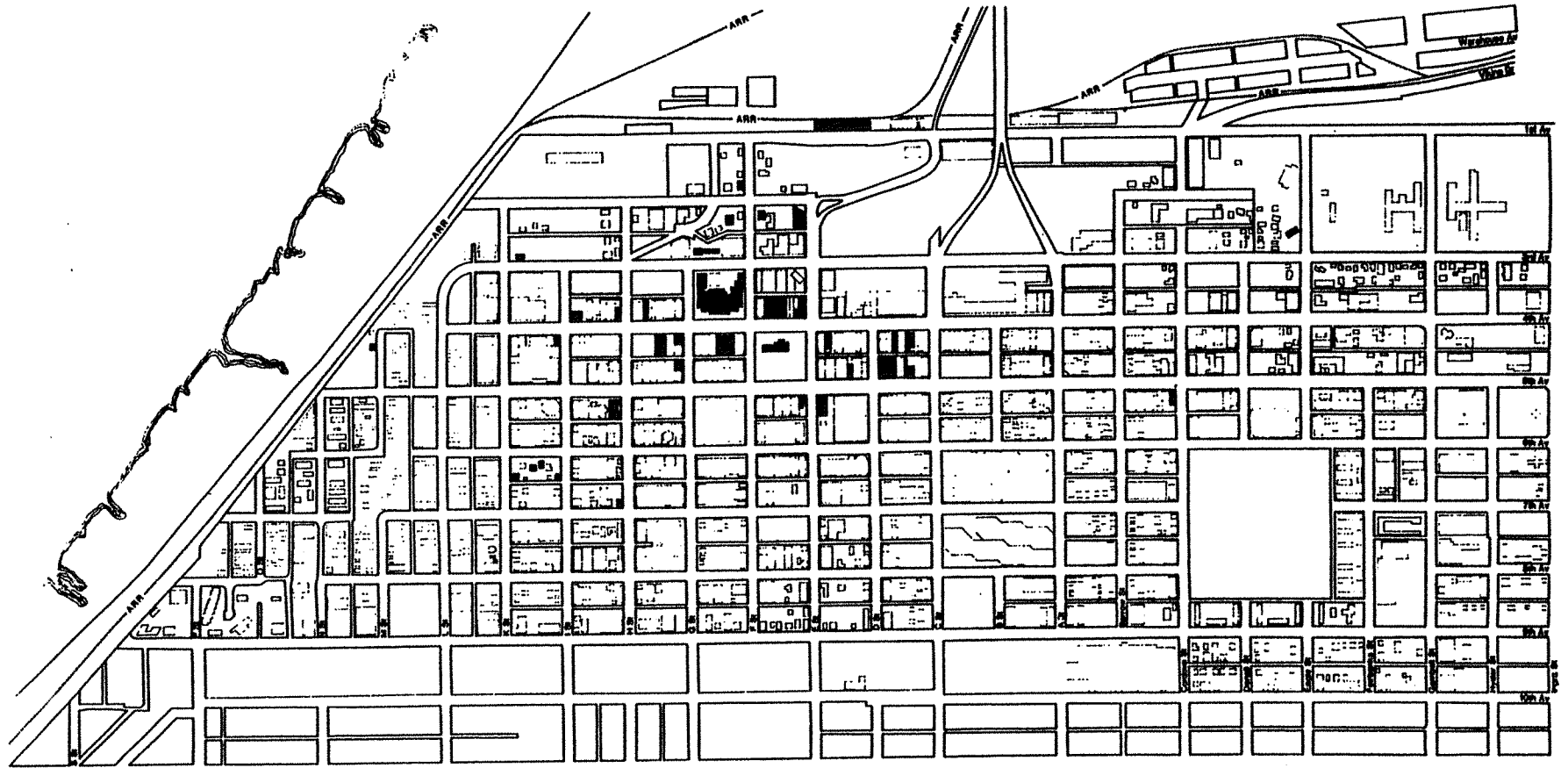


FIGURE II.11

# Historic Buildings



has been relatively unaffected by recent developments. Finally, several historic buildings can be found in isolated contexts including the railroad station along 1st Avenue.

The Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum, at the southwest corner of 6th Avenue and A Street, is currently in the planning stages for substantial expansion to the south. In addition, a Performing Arts Center encompassing the existing Auditorium, is also in a design stage at present. When completed, it will occupy the entire block bounded by 5th and 6th Avenues and F and G Streets.

In addition to these two planned facilities are numerous existing facilities catering to the arts, including movie theaters, live theaters (one of which would be replaced by the Performing Arts Center), and developments at historic sites aimed at enriching the experience of downtown Anchorage both for residents and for visitors.

#### Land Ownership Pattern

Tax assessor's data have been studied by the consulting team to reveal possible patterns of public ownership, the ownership by one entity of adjoining properties, and the relationship of built improvement values to land values. As indicated in Figures 11.12 and 11.13, publicly owned land is scattered throughout downtown Anchorage. There is somewhat of a cluster defined by the Hill Building, the Performing Arts Center, the Convention Center, and the Old Federal Building. Similarly, ownership of contiguous properties by the same entity are found throughout downtown.

If the conical zoning pattern were reflected in existing developments, the ratio of building values to land values would be relatively constant throughout the CBD or would descend from the core area. As indicated in Figure 11.14, which expresses a ratio of values for the assessor's general area designations, there is no such pattern.

#### Capital Improvement Program

The Municipality of Anchorage has made commitments to a battery of at least 20 capital projects in and around the Anchorage CBD. These projects, viewed in the context of the Comprehensive Development Plan, fall into three general categories.

Committed Projects. Several of the projects, such as the Performing Arts Center, the Convention Center, and the Historical and Fine Arts Museum expansion projects, are committed for development on specific sites in the CBD. The long-term development plan regards these and similar committed development projects as "givens."

Reappraised Projects. Other projects, such as the Historic Anchorage Railroad Town, the Downtown Pedestrian Amenities Program, the F Street Mall, and the Town Square Acquisition, are the subjects of specific reappraisals and recommendations in this Comprehensive Development Plan.

Independent Projects. Still other projects, such as the Gateway Drive and Ship Creek Overlook projects, require little coordination with elements of the long-term development plan for the CBD.

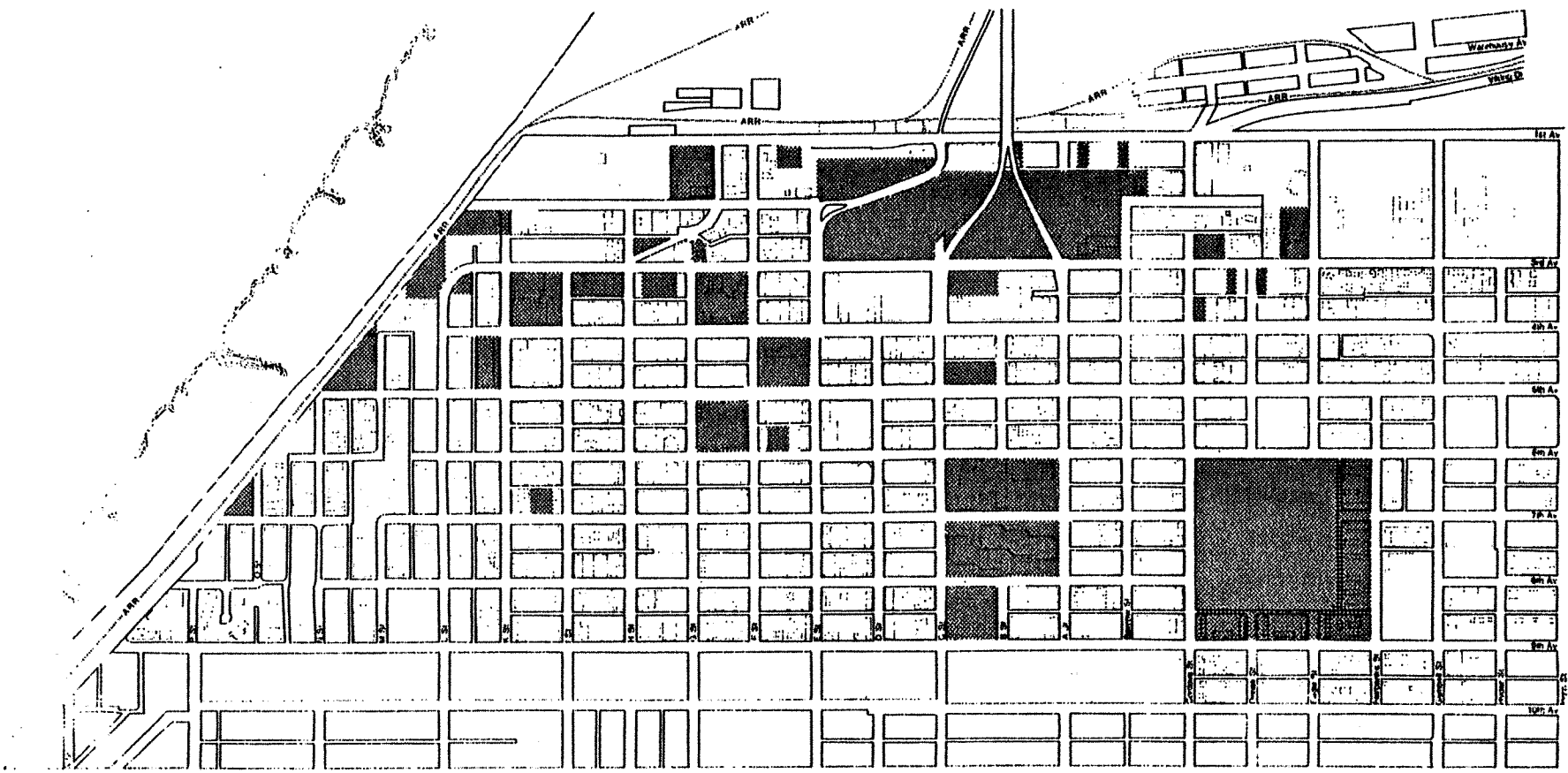


FIGURE II.12

# Public Land Ownership



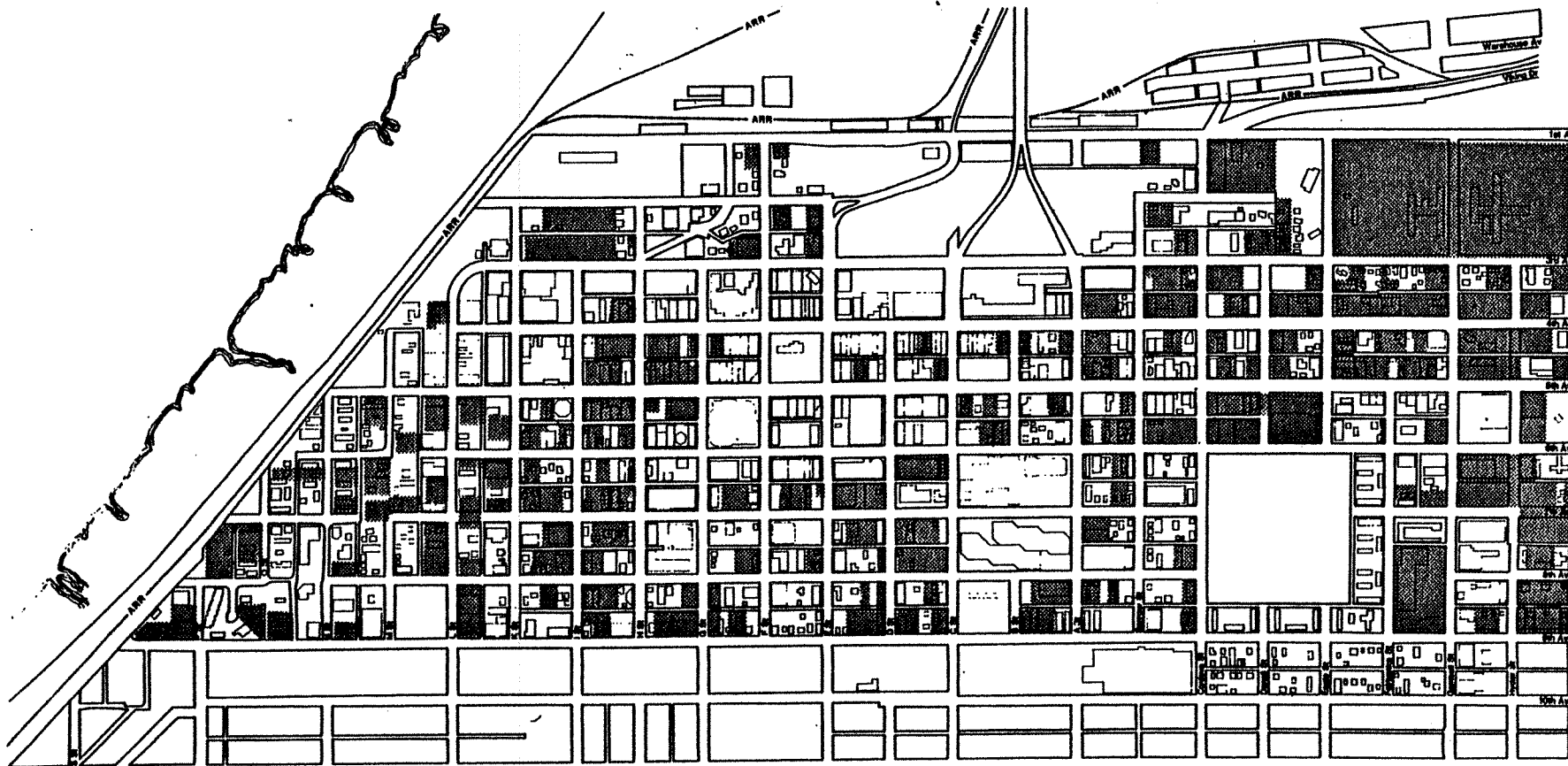


FIGURE II.13

# Contiguous Private Land Ownership



ADJACENT LOTS UNDER IDENTICAL OWNERSHIP



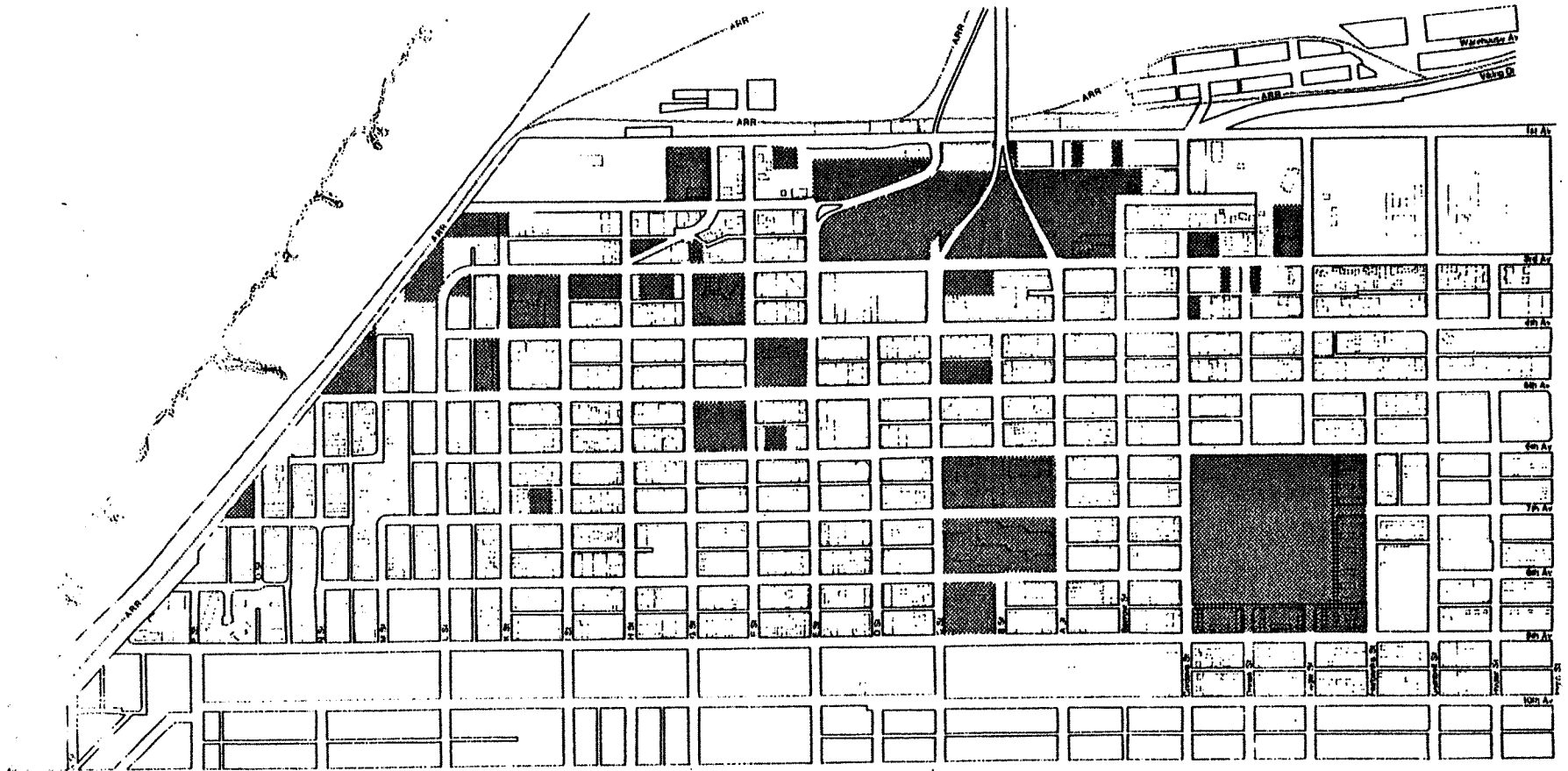


FIGURE II.12

# Public Land Ownership

Projects in all three categories are noted in Table II.21 along with general comments pertaining to their need for planning and coordination and preliminary assumptions and findings.

TABLE II-21  
PUBLICLY FUNDED CAPITAL PROJECTS  
OF DOWNTOWN ANCHORAGE

REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Findings relating to the physical inventory and analysis have been summarized by the Community Planning Department, based on a 1979 Harding-Lawson report.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Gladstone Associates, January 1982.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Includes projects now under construction.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Assumes operation of completed Convention Center and other committed projects.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Anchorage Municipal Code, Title 21, pp. 21-88.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 21-93.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 21-91.

<sup>9</sup> One downtown service route, #76, was not represented in the ridership data.

<sup>10</sup> Prepared by SP Group Northwest, January 1982.

PROJECT NAME	STATUS			SITE				PROGRAM		DESIGN	
	COMMITTED	REAPPRIASED	INDEPENDENT	LOCATED SELECTED	BOUNDARIES NOT SELECTED	FIXED	NOT FIXED	DEFINED	NOT DEFINED ALTERNATIVES AVAILABLE	COMPLETED	UNDERWAY YET TO BE INITIATED
Performing Arts Center (PAC)	•			•	•			•		•	
Convention Center (CC)	•			•	•			•		•	
Historical and Fine Arts Museum Expansion	•			•	•			•		•	
Historic Anchorage Railroad Town		•				•		•			•
Downtown Library			•	•				•			•
Downtown Pedestrian Amenities		•		•			•	•			•
F Street Mall		•		•	•			•	•		•
Town Square Acquisition		•			•			•	•		•
Park Strip Enhancements		•					•	•	•		•
Coastal Trail Development--Phase I	•		•	•	•			•			•
Ice Skating Rink		•			•		•	•	•		•
Gymnasium		•			•		•	•	•		•
Downtown Parking Garage		•			•		•	•	•		•
Downtown Streets and Projects		•			•		•	•	•		•
Downtown Buses and Shelters		•			•		•	•	•		•
State Office Complex		•		•	•			•			•
Muni. Bldg. Acquisition			•	•			•	•			•
Ship Creek Overlook	•			•	•			•		•	
Cemetery Upgrading			•	•	•			•			•
Gateway Drive			•	•	•			•			•

## Chapter III

### CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT

Circulation is a key factor in the development of a downtown area. Convenient access and egress tend to encourage trips -- and thus stimulate higher levels of activity and a stronger economic base; conversely, inconvenient or inadequate circulation tends to inhibit trips, with a consequential reduction in activity levels and economic strength. The Municipality of Anchorage has identified a balanced circulation system, enabling transit riders, pedestrians, and automobile occupants full access to downtown resources, as a major objective.

This chapter examines the existing circulation pattern in downtown Anchorage, analyzes ways in which future circulation demands can be met and some of the major implications of alternative actions, and gives consideration to numerous factors that have bearing on the overall downtown circulation network.

Analysis in this chapter is focused on vehicular circulation and transit. Pedestrian movement, an essential element to downtown vitality, is the subject of a separate chapter on the pedestrian environment and open space (Chapter IV).



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Grid Layout

The layout of downtown Anchorage is a regular grid pattern that can lend itself well to numerous methods for expediting traffic flow.

### Limited Number of Access Routes

A limited number of streets provide access to the Anchorage CBD (Figure III.1). Both north-south and east-west access routes are discussed:

North-South Routes. North-south access is limited by the presence of the park strip, which interrupts half the potential north-south routes. The primary north south access routes are Gambell and Ingra Streets along the east boundary of the CBD study area and -- west of the cemetery -- A, C, E, G, I, and L Streets. At present, A Street is interrupted by the park strip; however, its continuation through the park strip has received final environmental clearance and is scheduled for implementation in the mid-1980s. All analysis in this chapter assumes the extension of A Street to be in place.

East-West Routes. The cemetery interrupts the continuity of 7th and 8th Avenues, leaving only 3rd through 6th Avenues and 9th Avenue available for continuous east-west service.

One-Way Streets. In the north-south directions, there are three one-way "pairs" or "couplets": the Gambell/Ingra couplet on the east side of the CBD, the A/C couplet in the middle of the CBD (which will be continued south of the park strip upon completion of the A Street extension; see previous

discussion), and the I/L Street couplet toward the west side of the CBD.

In the east-west direction, there are two one-way couplets. The 3rd/4th Avenue couplet operates only east of C Street; west of C Street, both avenues offer two-way service. The 5th/6th Avenue couplet continues westward to L Street.

## DEMAND/STREET CAPACITY ANALYSIS

As a result of the CBD being situated at the tip of the region, travel demand is disproportionate, with demand to and from the east and south far exceeding that to and from the north and west. This condition places an added burden on the limited access routes available.

As travel demand increases, additional circulation capacity must be provided. One opportunity to supplement existing primary travel routes would involve extending currently discontinuous north-south routes, such as D, F, H, and I Streets, through the park strip and extending currently discontinuous east-west routes, 7th and 8th Avenues, through the cemetery. This was considered an unrealistic option, since the park strip and the cemetery are considered extremely valuable open space resources. A far more feasible opportunity would be to meet growing travel demand by increasing the capacity of existing primary travel routes.

### Capacity Problems Today

Today, points of greatest traffic congestion in the Anchorage CBD include the 5th/6th Avenue couplet near Gambell and Ingra Streets; this corridor approaches level of service E or F during peak

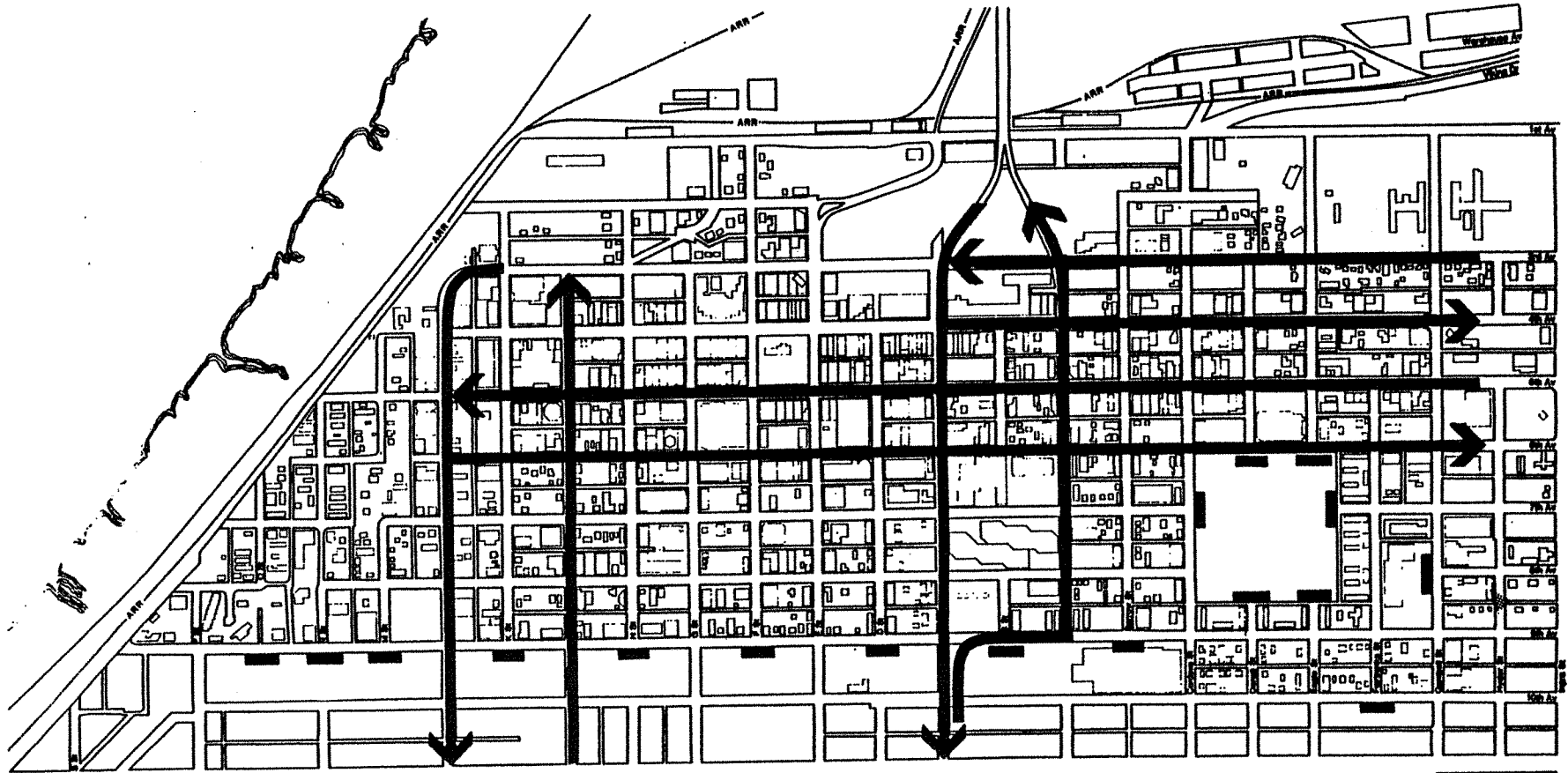


FIGURE III.1

# Limited Access To CBD



INTERRUPTION IN STREET CONTINUITY

hours and at midday, according to Municipal studies. (Generally, level of service C or D is considered to be tolerable at peak hours.)

### Intersection Problems Today

Circulation on E Street encounters problems associated with left turning movements, which are exacerbated by demand for access to the J. C. Penney parking facility. Traffic flow along 9th Avenue is also hampered by turning movements at major intersections. Consideration has been given to placing restrictions on left turning movements within the CBD to rectify these intersection problems, but this practice would generate additional need for recirculation, as well as motorist confusion.

### Rising CBD Employment

The amount of new construction taking place in the CBD and the number of new employees this construction will generate indicate that traffic conditions will deteriorate significantly unless appropriate improvements are made. Downtown employment is expected to increase by 82 percent between 1980 and 2001, from 11,705 employees in 1980 to 21,322 employees in 2001. Data from the U.S. Department of Transportation UTPS model indicate that this is expected to be reflected by an 85 percent increase in the number of trips ending in the Anchorage CBD, from 52,763 in 1980 to 97,353 in 2001 (not including trips from the CBD to outlying areas or trips passing through the CBD).

### Impact on Future Circulation

Under auspices of the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) program, traffic volumes for the year 1981 were recorded (Figure III.2). Estimates of future CBD traffic for the year 2001 have been developed, based on AMATS projected origins and destinations, and an analysis of overall traffic volumes and capacities in downtown Anchorage was carried out to assess circulation requirements.

Two screenlines were drawn across the CBD for the purpose of comparing total east-west and north-south traffic volumes and capacities. Screenline "A" was drawn in a north-south direction between D and E Streets, while Screenline "B" was drawn in an east-west direction between 7th and 8th Avenues. Traffic volumes were taken from AMATS projections. Traffic capacities were estimated, based on AMATS data, type of street, and number of lanes.

A volume-capacity ratio of 0.90 is considered to be the maximum acceptable ratio for urban transportation planning; higher ratios indicate unacceptable levels of traffic delay and congestion. The 1981 traffic ratios demonstrate that, on an overall basis, adequate traffic capacity was available in downtown Anchorage. However, certain heavily loaded individual streets such as 5th and 6th Avenues currently experience volumes approaching capacity during peak hours.

In 1981, the overall east-west traffic crossing Screenline "A" was operating at a volume-capacity ratio of 0.61, with 3rd through 6th Avenues carrying 60 percent of the east-west traffic -- more than 50 percent more than 7th through 9th

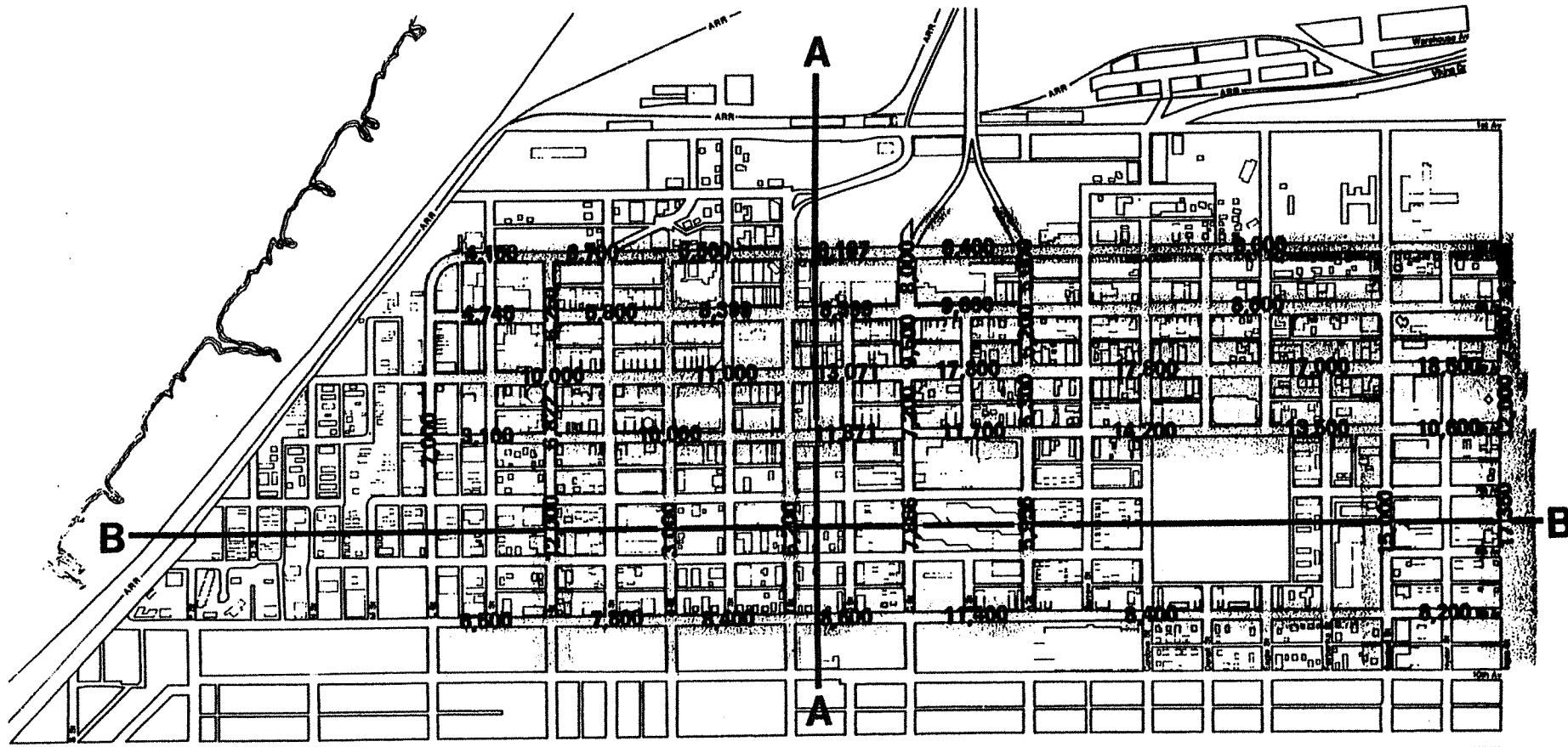


FIGURE III.2  
**1981 Traffic Volumes**

1,000 DAILY VEHICULAR VOLUMES



Avenues. Overall north-south traffic crossing Screenline "B" was operating at a volume-capacity ratio of 0.65, with the volume-capacity ratios on various groups of streets ranging from 0.56 to 0.77 (Table III.1).

The year 2001 traffic volume-capacity ratios were computed for combined groups of streets rather than for individual streets, since the AMATS model is regional in nature and its projections cannot be readily used for individual CBD street analysis.

The year 2001 "base system" assumed the continuation of existing street capacities (including implementation of the A/C Couplet). Under these conditions, volume-capacity ratios ranging from 0.83 to 1.45 were projected. The 3rd - 4th - 5th - 6th Avenue area, the E - G - I - L Street area, and the Ingra - Gambell - Cordova area were projected for moderate to severe overloads unless improvements are made.

This analysis indicates that east-west capacity could be increased substantially with the conversion of 3rd and 4th Avenues to a continuous one-way pair. In the absence of this action, the volume-capacity ratio remains at 1.03 in the year 2001 -- as with the Base System. However, some concern has been expressed regarding the conversion of 3rd and 4th Avenues to one-way operation west of C Street; these concerns are discussed in a later section of this chapter.

#### WAYS TO ADDRESS INCREASING TRAVEL DEMAND

Under ideal circumstances, trip patterns to and from the CBD would be distributed among numerous travel modes, including pedestrian trips,

transit trips, carpooling, and personal use of private automobiles, each mode functioning at or below its capacity. The recommendations and transit analysis sections of this chapter deal with some of the means by which people can be encouraged to use alternative modes to private automobiles. However, for the foreseeable future, the majority of trips to and from downtown Anchorage will continue to be made by private automobiles. Therefore, it is essential that the capacity of downtown streets not lag behind rising demand in the near future, as such a situation could have negative implications on downtown economic growth, especially in the retail and office sectors.

Numerous options exist to increase the capacity of existing travel routes, assuming that future travel demand cannot be diverted to supplementary routes (see previous discussion). The options considered have included:

- The addition of lanes to existing travel routes
- Conversion of two-way streets to one-way travel

These options are discussed in terms of their advantages and disadvantages, as well as in terms of where each might best be considered for implementation.

#### Addition of Lanes to Existing Travel Routes

The addition of more travel lanes to existing routes was considered as one possible means of meeting future travel demand. Adding more lanes would require either of the following:

**TABLE III.1  
TRAFFIC CAPACITY ANALYSIS,  
ANCHORAGE CBD**

Screenline "A" Between D & E Sts. on	No. of Lanes	YEAR 1981		Vol/Cap. Ratio
		Daily Capacity	Daily Volume <sup>1</sup>	
3rd Ave.	4 lanes 2-way	15,000	8,190	
4th Ave.	4 lanes 2-way	15,000	8,400	
5th Ave.	3 lanes 1-way	13,700	13,070	
6th Ave.	3 lanes 1-way	13,700	11,870	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>57,400</b>	<b>41,530</b>	<b>0.72</b>
7th Ave.	2 lanes 2-way	10,000	4,000	
8th Ave.	2 lanes 2-way	10,000	4,000	
9th Ave.	4 lanes 2-way	18,000	8,600	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>38,000</b>	<b>16,600</b>	<b>0.44</b>
<b>TOTAL, SCREENLINE "A"</b>		<b>95,400</b>	<b>58,130</b>	<b>0.61</b>
<b>Screenline "B"</b>				
<b>Between</b>				
<b>7th &amp; 8th Ave. on</b>				
Ingra St.	4 lanes 1-way	20,000	17,350	
Gambell St.	4 lanes 1-way	20,000	15,000	
Cordova St.	2 lanes 2-way	10,000	6,000	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>50,000</b>	<b>38,350</b>	<b>0.77</b>
"A" St.	2 lanes 1-way	11,600	5,960	
"C" St.	2 lanes 1-way	11,600	7,870	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>23,200</b>	<b>13,830</b>	<b>0.60</b>
"E" St.	2 lanes 2-way	10,000	6,200	
"G" St.	2 lanes 2-way	10,000	3,000	
"I" St.	3 lanes 1-way	15,000	12,000	
"L" St.	3 lanes 1-way	15,000	7,000	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>50,000</b>	<b>28,200</b>	<b>0.56</b>
<b>TOTAL, SCREENLINE "B"</b>		<b>123,000</b>	<b>80,380</b>	<b>0.65</b>

<sup>1</sup>Source: Gruen Associates estimates based on AMATS data.

<sup>2</sup>Source: AMATS data

- Widening of the public right-of-way
- Removal or restriction of on-street parking

Since many existing private and public buildings have no setback from the street right-of-way, expansion of the right-of-way would necessitate the removal or extensive reconfiguration of existing buildings, both of which are unrealistic propositions.

However, within the public right-of-way, lanes can be reconfigured to allow greater vehicular flow. Without taking away existing pedestrian area, existing curb parking can be removed to allow greater room for vehicular circulation. Two options were considered:

Removal of On-Street Parking. On most downtown streets, on-street parking occurs on both sides of the street. The removal of both of these parking lanes would allow more than enough added width to accommodate one additional travel lane. (Because parking lanes are generally only eight to nine feet wide, in contrast to curb travel lanes, which must be 13 feet wide, it is impossible to gain two additional travel lanes unless existing pedestrian area width is reduced.) The most likely streets on which to consider the removal of on-street parking would be the key downtown access routes: 3rd through 6th Avenues, and the continuous north-south streets.

The key drawback to this option is that many downtown merchants consider on-street parking essential in order to attract customers. The removal of on-street parking could be a concern to existing businesses.

Restriction of Peak-Hour On-Street Parking. The disadvantage of removing on-street parking entirely can be mitigated by allowing on-street parking at all hours except peak commuting hours, when demand is highest. Many cities have had success with this kind of parking policy. Most stores open at the end of the peak morning commuting hour and would be relatively unaffected at that time. In the afternoon peak hour, people are more likely to want to shop than in the morning; a lack of convenient on-street parking might affect businesses slightly at that time. However, for the majority of the daytime and evening hours, some on-street parking would remain.

One advantage to this concept is that the present practice of employees using on-street parking spaces would be reduced substantially, assuming a strict parking enforcement program. It is likely that, under this condition, shoppers would constitute a greater proportion of people using on-street parking spaces than they do today.

#### Conversion to One-Way Streets

A one-way street grid allows greatly expedited traffic flow. In general, a one-way street can carry up to 30 percent more traffic than a two-way street with the same number of travel lanes due to expedited travel flow; this expedited travel flow is brought about through a reduced number of turning conflicts and the ability to program traffic signals for continuous progressive traffic flow. Smoother travel flow can enhance safety and eliminate needless automobile idling, with beneficial impacts on air quality. And, to the extent that travel flow is enhanced by one-way travel, the need for additional lanes that might be required

for two-way streets can often be postponed or eliminated.

Conversion to one-way travel would most likely be considered in situations where pairs of primary travel routes would allow creation of a couplet, such as E and G Streets or 3rd and 4th Avenues west of C Street.

One disadvantage to a one-way street grid is the need for minor recirculation to arrive at certain destinations -- for example, approaching a location on an eastbound street from the east. Another disadvantage is strictly perceptual: the notion that a one-way street is less amenable to pedestrians. In fact, well-designed one-way streets can be just as attractive as two-way streets.

Nevertheless, there has been some concern expressed about the possible effects of conversion of 4th Avenue to one-way travel. Concerns focus on possible detracting from the quality of the pedestrian environment, which is considered very important along this historic street, as well as the concern that the couplet might attract "through" traffic--traffic not stopping in the CBD.

## OTHER CIRCULATION ISSUES

### Expressway Proposals

In the recent past, several expressway proposals have been considered in the Anchorage region. Two proposals are currently under consideration:

- The Northside Corridor east of the CBD intersecting the existing Seward and Glenn Highways
- A crossing of Knik Arm, which has been proposed, in one of its design alternatives, to divert around the Alaska Native Hospital and connect with Hyder and Ingra Streets

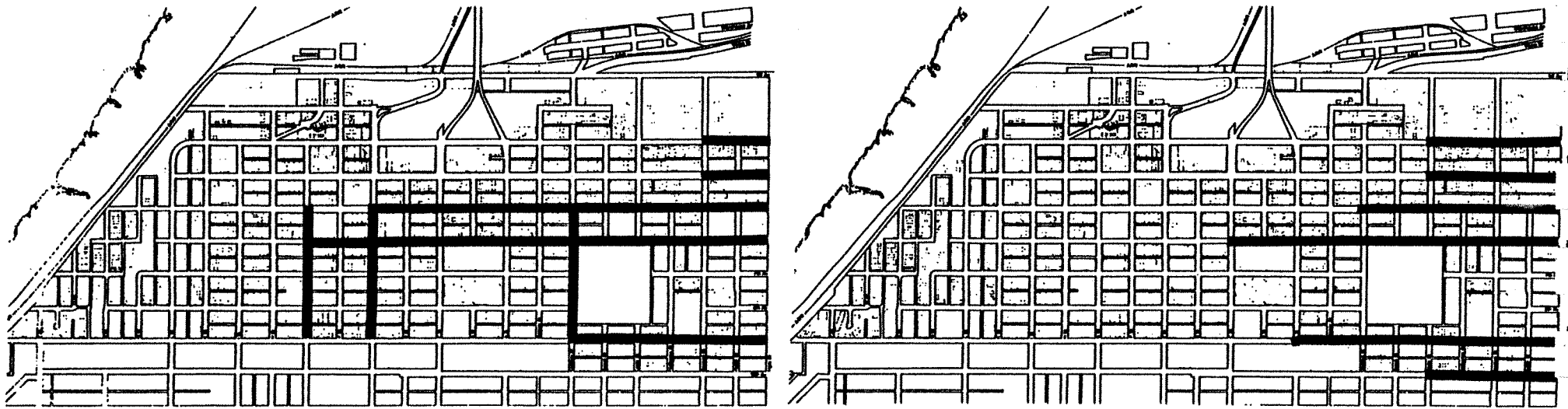
Major considerations regarding the various expressway routings have been potential environmental impacts on the areas through which the routings would pass, a desire to avoid the encouragement of through traffic being routed through downtown, and other factors.

### Need for Coordination

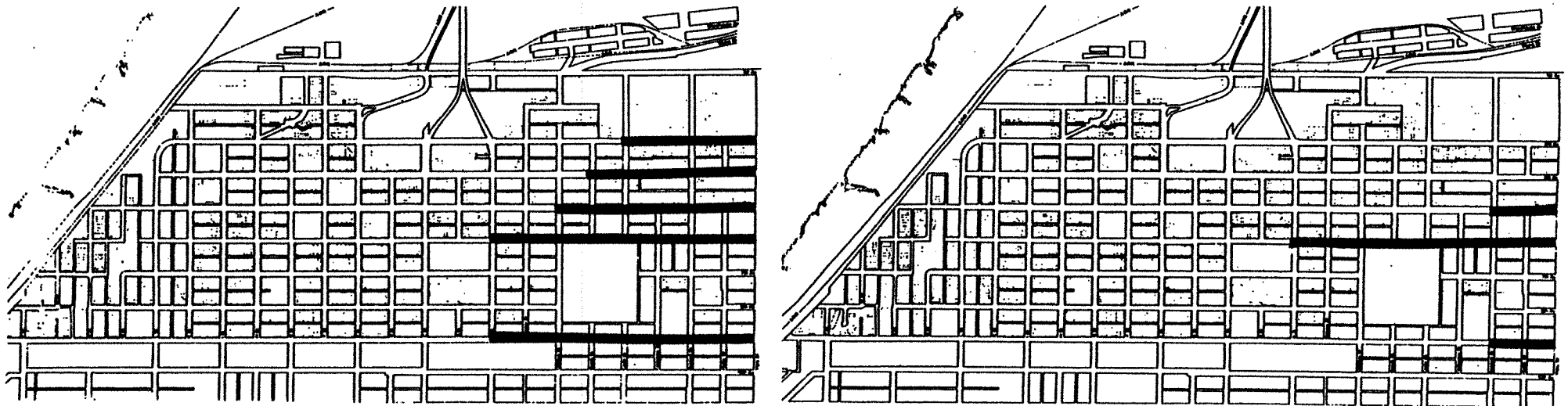
It is important that improvements to the circulation system be scheduled in conjunction with need and that they be coordinated with other important downtown improvement programs. Among the most directly affected is the pedestrian amenities program. A pedestrian amenities program designed from the outset to be compatible with possible future circulation improvements would avoid the future expense that might be incurred if pedestrian areas would have to be reconfigured in the future as circulation system modifications are implemented.

Similarly, the removal of any on-street parking, whether at commuting hours only or at all hours, must be coordinated with the provision of convenient off-street parking. In the course of performing any aspect of the phased circulation improvement program, continual monitoring would help to identify opportunities for the fine-tuning of actions taken in subsequent phases.





Figures III.3 through III.6. Links in the Anchorage CBD circulation network that would experience traffic volumes in excess of capacity. Upper left diagram indicates conditions under Alternative 1; upper right diagram the conditions under Alternative 2; lower left diagram the conditions under Alternative 3; lower right diagram the conditions under Alternative 4. Source of data: Municipality of Anchorage; for additional description of analysis, reader is referred to Appendix A.



## Municipality Circulation Analysis

The Municipal Transportation Planning Section has analyzed the year 2001 impacts of four possible combinations of circulation system improvements, as well as impacts associated with connections with the Seward Highway. Most of the circulation improvement components considered in the analysis, such as removal of on-street parking and limited conversion of two-way street to one-way travel, have been introduced in the previous section of this chapter. A brief profile of each of the alternatives, keyed to Figures III.3 through III.6, follows.

Alternative 1. The first alternative assumed no circulation system improvements (including no A/C Couplet) and a transit mode split of 12 percent. The assignment of projected trips under these circumstances produced the following results:

- The 5th/6th Avenue couplet would carry more than 35,000 vehicles daily, greater than 25 percent over its capacity.
- Problems would be encountered on 9th Avenue east of Cordova Street.
- Severe congestion would occur on north-south streets, including E, G, and Cordova Streets.

Links in the downtown circulation system that would experience demand in excess of capacity under Alternative 1 in 2001 are indicated in Figure III.3.

Alternative 2. This alternative assumed implementation of two important one-way couplets: the A/C and E/G couplets. It also assumed an

improvement in traffic flow on 5th and 6th Avenues by the transfer of vehicles to avenues further south, including 9th and 15 Avenues (the latter assumed to be grade-separated at the Seward Highway).

The study determined that there would be significant deterioration of conditions along 9th Avenue, as well as further south at 15th Avenue. The combination of actions entailed in Alternative 2 would merely move problems from one place to another without enhancing the overall downtown circulation system.

Links in the downtown circulation network that would experience demand in excess of capacity under Alternative 2 in 2001 are indicated in Figure III.4.

Alternative 3. Alternative 3 added to the actions in Alternative 2 a one-way couplet on 7th and 8th Avenues. While this couplet would, to an extent, relieve pressure on 5th, 6th, 9th, and 15th Avenues, its effect was not found to be significant due to the discontinuous pattern of 7th and 8th Avenues. Serious impairment to the traffic flow along 5th and 6th Avenues near the approaches of the Seward Highway would still remain.

Links in the downtown circulation system that would experience demand in excess of capacity under Alternative 3 in 2001 are indicated in Figure III.5.

Alternative 4. Alternative 4 included the following actions:

- Implementation of the A/C Couplet

- Implementation of a one-way couplet on E and G Streets
- The addition of one peak-hour travel lane on 5th Avenue through the restriction of on-street parking to non-commuting hours
- Intersection improvements on 9th and 15th Avenues, including left-turn bays or a left-turn lane

This alternative also assumed implementation of pedestrian amenities on 4th Avenue. Although this alternative did not improve afternoon peak-hour congestion on 6th Avenue nor did it rectify all intersection problems within the CBD, it was found to be effective in resolving the most serious projected volume-to-capacity conditions along 5th and 6th Avenues.

Linkages in the downtown circulation network that would experience demand in excess of capacity in 2001 under Alternative 4 are indicated in Figure III.6.

Seward Highway Connections. It was found that proposed improvements to the Seward Highway and connections to the Glenn Highway would have some impact on downtown circulation. Specifically, there is consideration of:

- Grade separation of the Seward Highway intersections south of 13th Avenue
- Connection of the Seward and Glenn Highways near the Gambell/Ingra couplet between 3rd and 6th Avenues (Northside Corridor project)

The latter project is the subject of a study now under way. It is likely that the Seward/Glenn highway connection would entail some property acquisition associated with construction of ramps; therefore, plans for new construction in this corridor should be reviewed for compatibility with this project.

## CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on analysis of CBD growth and development and on review of the Municipality circulation study, the planning team has developed recommendations for downtown-wide circulation improvements that would be triggered incrementally by specific conditions, to be monitored in an ongoing program. Specific recommended improvements are keyed to Figure III.7. The A/C couplet is included as a major component of the overall downtown circulation improvement program.

### Periodic Monitoring of Circulation Conditions

The rate of new construction in downtown Anchorage will bring about increasing levels of vehicular congestion. Therefore, there is a need to monitor the downtown circulation system frequently in conjunction with construction, employment, and other trends in order to make timely decisions on the implementation of circulation improvements. The factors to be monitored include:

- Traffic volumes and capacities
- Bus patronage
- Off-street parking supply

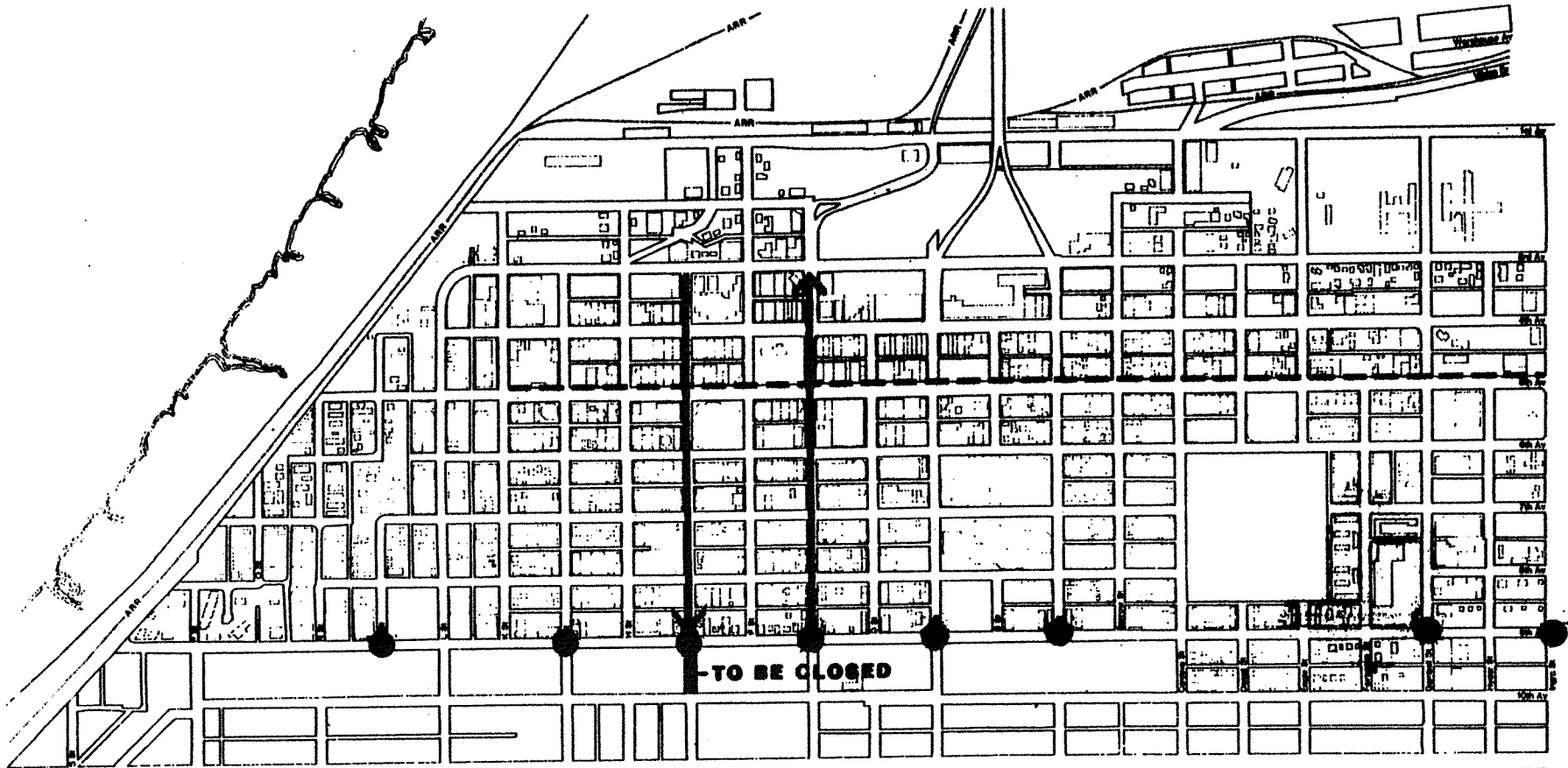


Figure III.7

# Recommended Circulation Improvements



**CONVERSION TO ONE-WAY TRAVEL**



**PEAK HOUR PARKING RESTRICTIONS**



**INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS**

- Trip origins and destinations
- Changes in downtown office and retail square footage
- Employee and shopper perceptions about downtown's accessibility.

Within the recommended downtown area monitoring program, it is recommended that the Municipality adopt a simple level-of-service standard. Based on this standard, when the level of service approaches "D" on a particular two-way street or on a combination of two-way streets, measures can be taken to increase capacity through conversion to one-way travel or restriction of on-street parking.

#### E/G Couplet

It is most probable that the E/G couplet will be required with the completion of the major private and public development projects in the central part of downtown Anchorage.

The A/C couplet, when completed, should improve north-south traffic flow for the short term. If and when traffic conditions on north-south streets become congested, additional north-south capacity will have to be provided. A one-way couplet on E and G Streets is one means of providing additional capacity -- and is the only opportunity for an additional north-south one-way couplet remaining in downtown Anchorage. Because this couplet serves the major development area in downtown Anchorage and because it reduces trips on the 5th/6th Avenue couplet, this couplet should probably be developed within the next three years. The installation of the E/G Couplet should

reduce the incidence of through trips within the residential area south of 9th Avenue known as the South Addition, as compared to the existing two-way design. However, to ensure that this incidence does not occur, installation of the couplet, which is designed to improve downtown traffic circulation, should be accompanied by the closure of G Street between 9th and 10th Avenues with reversion of this land to park use.

#### Intersection Improvements

In order to accommodate projected east-west trips, intersection widening is recommended along 9th Avenue. This could be accomplished by creating left-turn bays at major intersections on 9th Avenue.

#### Peak Hour Transit Lanes

During peak hours, the curb lane could be restricted to high-occupancy vehicles, available to transit buses exclusively -- or alternately available to all vehicles with a minimum number of occupants. The Municipality has endorsed the concept of implementing such a lane on the north side of 5th Avenue between Cordova and I Streets. The reduced travel times for commuters using these lanes may have some effect in encouraging a greater degree of transit use and ride-sharing. During non-commuting hours, the curb lane could be made available to downtown shoppers for limited-time free parking.

### Enforcement of Parking Regulations

Since peak hour travel demands exceed those during the rest of the day, additional traffic capacity is needed in the peak hours. This can be provided by numerous means of controlling on-street parking during morning and evening commuting hours; some of the techniques available were described in the preceding discussions. A strong enforcement program, including heavier fines than those now in effect, will be necessary.

### Coordination with Pedestrian Amenities

The improvements to the existing one-way street system should be undertaken in concert with recommended pedestrian amenities programs (see Chapter IV). This coordination will assure that modifications of curbs and sidewalk areas for improved traffic flow will also enhance the pedestrian environment. Undertaking one of these programs without considering the other may result in the need for future retrofitting and its associated cost.

### Recommended Right-of-Way Configurations

Rights-of-way in downtown Anchorage allow numerous street and sidewalk arrangements to be considered, depending on the number of lanes required, whether on-street parking will be retained on one or both sides of the street, and the amount of pedestrian space desired. Alternative concepts have been developed for both 60-foot and 80-foot wide rights-of-way, assuming one-way travel. These include:

### 60-Foot Rights-of-Way (Figure III.8)

- Three traffic lanes with one lane available for parking at non-commuting hours
- Two traffic lanes plus a parking lane at selected locations within the widened sidewalk area on one side

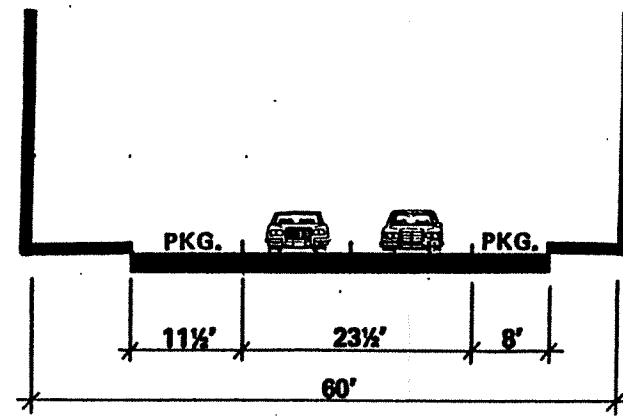
### 80-Foot Rights-of-Way (Figure III.9)

- Four traffic lanes with one lane available for parking at non-commuting hours
- Three traffic lanes plus parking lane at selected locations within the widened sidewalk area on one side

In general, the former concept for both right-of-way widths is preferred from a circulation point of view since peak-hour capacity would be significantly increased over present capacity (assuming a one-way configuration), while available space for pedestrian amenities would also be increased.

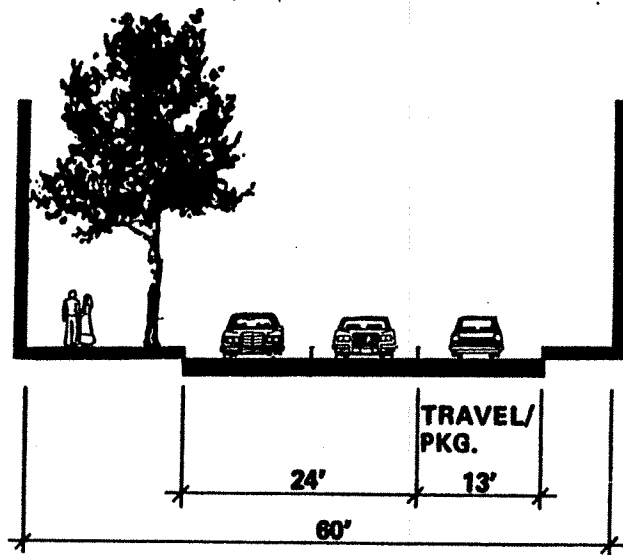
### Coordination with Parking Program

Some of the recommended circulation improvements involve modifications to the existing on-street parking supply, either by its restriction during commuting hours to increase traffic flow at the times of greatest demand or by replacing it with convenient off-street parking. In either case, the amount of on-street parking available to downtown employees, who seem undeterred by the present need to "feed the meter," will be reduced, assuming that cars parked on the street at peak hours would be stiffly fined or towed. Therefore,

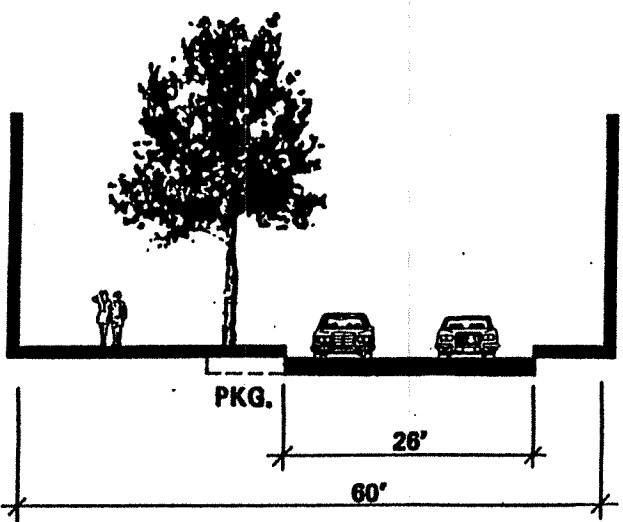


**Figure III.8. 60-Foot Right-of-Way Options**

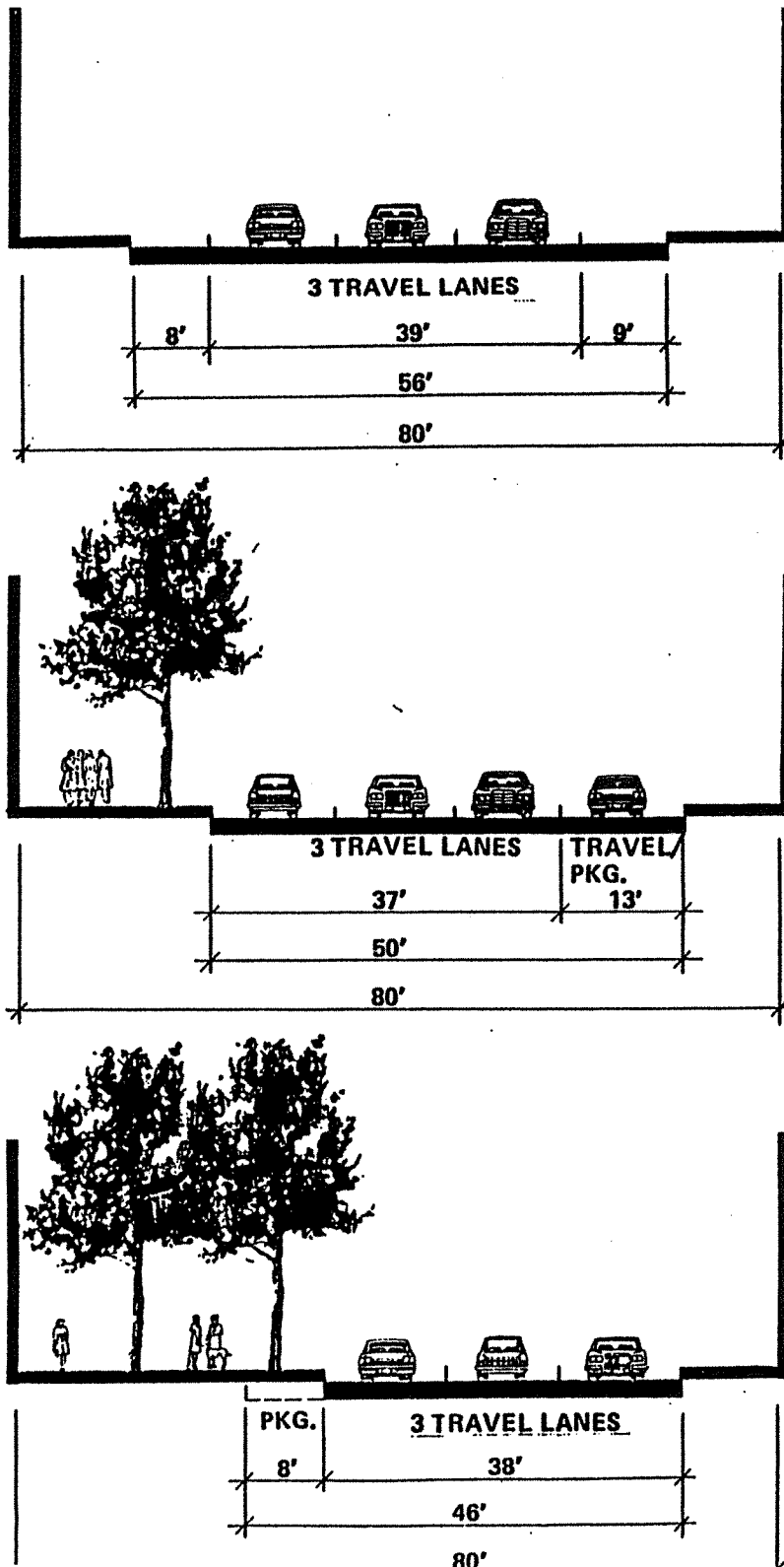
**Upper Section: Typical existing condition on 6th Avenue: two travel lanes in one direction with two parallel parking lanes**



**Middle Section: Optional reconfiguration of right-of-way for three one-way travel lanes during peak hours; parallel parking permitted one side only at non-peak hours**



**Lower Section: Optional reconfiguration of right-of-way for two one-way travel lanes; parallel parking one side only at midblock locations; flared curbs at intersections**



**Figure III.9. 80-Foot Right-of-Way Options**

**Upper Section:** Typical existing condition on 5th Avenue: three travel lanes in one direction with two parallel parking lanes

**Middle Section:** Optional reconfiguration of right-of-way for four one-way travel lanes during peak hours; parallel parking permitted one side only at non-peak hours

**Lower Section:** Optional reconfiguration of right-of-way for three one-way travel lanes; parallel parking one side only at midblock locations; glazed curbs at intersections



whatever amount of on-street parking is removed from availability to commuters must be replaced by at least as much convenient off-street parking or by equivalent increases in transit system capacity or ride-sharing.

### Future Potential of Expressways

The potential impact of expressway developments on close-in neighborhoods, their impact on distributor arterials within the downtown area, and the potential for direct connection with recommended future peripheral parking facilities are all major considerations when evaluating expressway proposals. In this last regard, it will be especially important to coordinate decisions pertaining to long-term expressway proposals with the parking management strategy.

Preliminary plans for both the Northside Corridor expressway and a crossing of the Knik Arm indicate relatively little direct impact on the key downtown development area. However, peripheral parking and potential impacts on residential development areas should be considered.

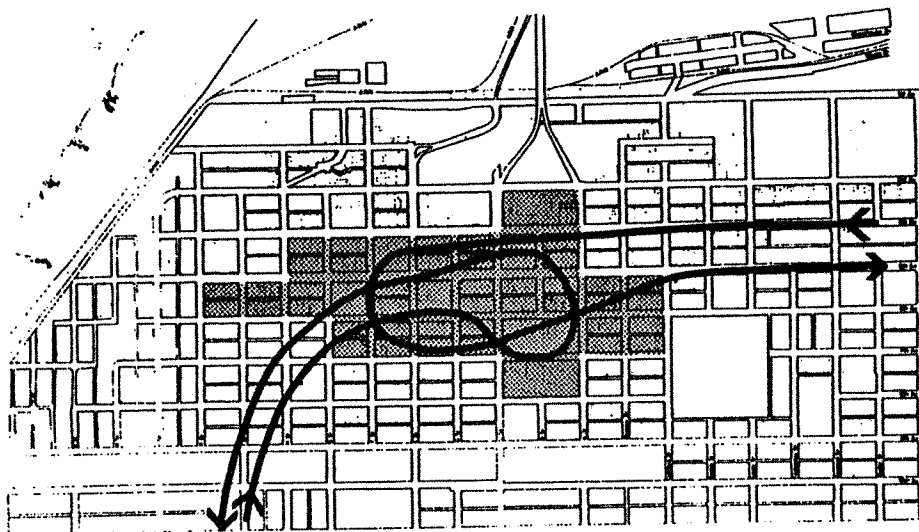
Linkage with Peripheral Parking. Although route location studies for a Knik Arm Crossing are very preliminary, a terminus of the route in the general vicinity of Hyder and Ingra Streets could allow a direct linkage to future peripheral parking facilities. Coordination with the recommended long-term parking management strategy (see Chapter V) is recommended.

Environmental Impacts. The key development area of the CBD west of Cordova Street would experience little environmental impact except possible traffic impacts. The disposition of the

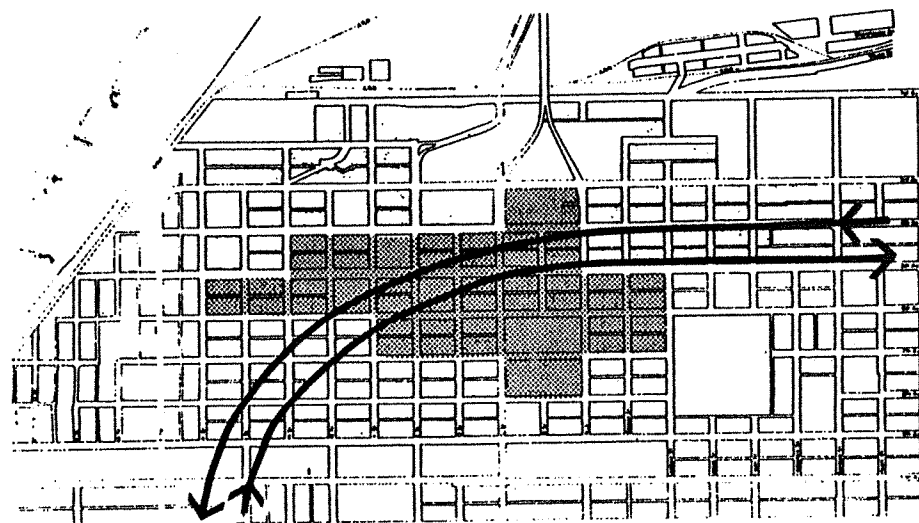
long-range development plan for the area east of Cordova Street would, however, be affected by possible routes leading to and from a Knik Arm Crossing. It would be desirable for residential developments in particular to be located away from these routes. Also, as noted in the Municipality circulation study, new developments near the proposed Northside Corridor project, in the vicinity of the Gambell/Ingra couplet between 3rd and 6th Avenues, should be reviewed for compatibility with possible ramps that would have to be developed in implementing grade-separated connections between the Seward and Glenn Highways.

### Summary of Recommended Action Program

- (1) Establish program to monitor important factors with bearing on circulation.
- (2) Define the threshold at which action must be taken, based on an acceptable level of traffic service.
- (3) Determine the optimum combination of modification of travel lanes, on-street parking, and pedestrian amenities within available right-of-way and establish detailed physical plans in anticipation of eventual implementation.
- (4) The most likely first action for implementation is the conversion of E and G Streets to one-way couplet and intersection improvements along 9th Avenue, followed by implementation of a peak-hour travel lane on 5th Avenue.



Figures III.10 and III.11. Upper view indicates current bus routing system where buses circulate through the CBD on inbound trips, then recirculate on outbound trips. Lower view indicates expedited service potential with "through" bus routing system where routes on opposite sides of CBD are combined.



## TRANSIT ANALYSIS

### Existing Transit Service

At present, transit buses serving the Anchorage CBD travel in a loop pattern through the CBD (Figure III.10). According to the Municipality of Anchorage Transit Subcommittee, buses currently make nearly 700 east-west passages through the CBD each day; this is twice the number of bus revenue trips to the CBD, which now total 347. The reason for the disparity in numbers is the need for buses to pass through the entire CBD on approach and then to recirculate through the CBD on the outbound leg of the next trip. The consequence of this loop routing is impeded traffic flow, inefficient use of transit equipment, and some inconvenience to passengers.

### Transit System Recommendations

The following recommendations have been proposed to improve the service provided by the Municipal transit system and to preserve circulation capacity on streets within the Anchorage CBD:

- "Through" transit routing
- Augmented transit accommodation facilities
- Downtown shuttle service
- Bus lanes on key downtown streets

"Through" Transit Routing. The combination of two routes serving areas on opposite sides of downtown Anchorage (Figure III.11) can eliminate many of the inefficiencies inherent in the existing loop routing system. Bus layovers within

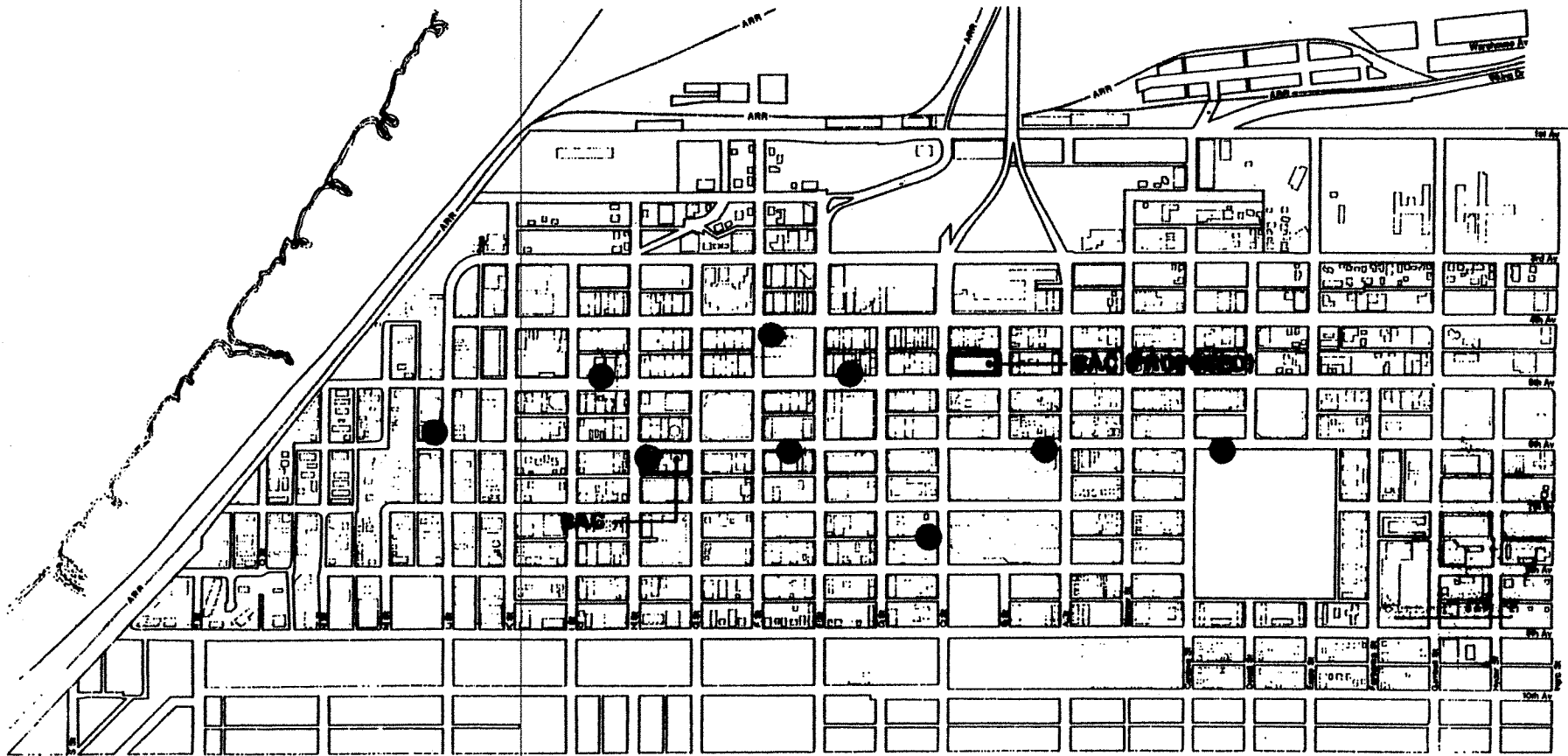


FIGURE III.12

## Proposed Bus Shelter Locations

BAC: BUS ACCOMMODATION CENTER

SOURCE: MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE TRAFFIC ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

downtown can be shortened; and the efficiency derived from each vehicle can be improved with the elimination of the need for vehicles to recirculate through the CBD, resulting in shorter headways.

Augmented Transit Accommodation Facilities. The existing Bus Accommodation Center was developed recently in the block immediately west of the Hill Building, at the southwest corner of 6th Avenue and C Street. The facility incorporates an enclosed passenger waiting area, token purchase counter, and restrooms. Plans call for an expanded Bus Accommodation Center to be incorporated into a parking garage proposed for this site (see Chapter V).

It has also been proposed that a second Bus Accommodation Center be built near proposed new developments in the north-central part of the Anchorage CBD. In particular, it seemed desirable to incorporate such a facility into the first floor of a proposed parking garage between 4th and 5th Avenues and B and C Streets (see Chapter V).

In addition to a second Bus Accommodation Center to supplement the existing one, major bus shelters throughout the CBD have been proposed. These shelters would be enclosed on three sides, lighted (but not heated), and would provide transit information such as bus routings and schedules. A preliminary analysis by the Municipal Planning Department has indicated proposed locations for eight shelters that could serve most existing downtown transit users (Figure III.12); more could be added in response to future downtown development. The exact number and location of the transit facilities depicted on this figure will be

determined during the routing and scheduling analyses associated with conversion to the through-routing system.

Downtown Shuttle Service. A downtown shuttle transit service, which would operate free of charge, has been proposed by the Municipality to link park-and-ride lots with employment centers and promote easy circulation throughout the CBD for shoppers.

Bus Lanes on Key Downtown Streets. As discussed in the earlier section on vehicular circulation, there may be some potential to assign one lane at peak hours to high-occupancy vehicles, such as transit buses or carpool vehicles; many possibilities exist for the precise policies that might be considered.

A review of this potential by the Municipality of Anchorage has resulted in its conclusion that such action would not be justified by current bus volumes or by bus volumes projected for the next five years. Nevertheless, in conjunction with recommended peak-hour parking restriction policies (see earlier section of this chapter), the option for bus lanes on key downtown streets should be maintained.

## Chapter IV

### OPEN SPACE AND PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Among the issues of greatest concern to the people of downtown Anchorage are the amount and quality of open spaces in the area. The Downtown Community Council, in particular, emphasized the need for more parks, both large and small, and an attractive pedestrian environment (see Chapter II summary of public participation program) that is conducive to a healthy and diverse retail environment.

This chapter begins with a summary of existing open spaces within downtown Anchorage and a summary of policies and open space plan components, followed by descriptions of:

- Recommended open spaces
- A program for improvement of the pedestrian environment improvement of the downtown pedestrian environment
- A strategy for the initiation of a weather-protected downtown skyway system in major redevelopment areas

#### EXISTING OPEN SPACE AMENITIES

The natural setting of downtown Anchorage, with mountains on four sides and water to the north and west, is spectacular and well recognized (see Figure 1.2). However, downtown Anchorage has no real open space focus that capitalizes on these

assets. Of the two major open space resources, the park strip (just outside the CBD area) and the cemetery, the former is currently used only for active recreation (i.e., sports and athletics) and the latter, as a burial ground, only provides visual openness to nearby high-rise buildings. Existing open space within and adjacent to the study area is indicated in Figure IV.1.

Among the most significant of these open spaces are:

- The grassy slope north of 3rd Avenue between E and Barrow Streets
- Resolution Park at the northwest corner of the CBD
- The park strip (formerly the Anchorage airfield) running from P to A Streets between 9th and 10th Avenues, a distance of nearly a mile
- The cemetery within the area bounded by 6th and 9th Avenues and Cordova and Fairbanks Streets
- A number of approximately triangular parks adjoining the Alaska Railroad rights-of-way along the waterfront on the western side of the CBD

In addition to significant open spaces are a number of landscaped areas within downtown Anchorage, including:

- The park in front of the Old City Hall

- The landscaped area along the 4th Avenue frontage of the Old Federal Building
- The landscaped areas around the new Federal Office Complex and on the roof of the underground portion between 8th and 9th Avenues
- The plaza in front of the financial building at the northwest corner of 5th Avenue and F Streets

Anchorage is fortunate that its downtown has not yet developed to the intensity that precludes any possibility for providing additional open space amenities. Although certain areas -- particularly the sensitive area near Resolution Park -- have been developed to high intensity, much of the land in downtown Anchorage is still underdeveloped and/or used for surface parking. Many excellent possibilities exist to satisfy the public need for open space within downtown.

#### APPROACH TO OPEN SPACE PROGRAM

The program for improvements in the open space/pedestrian environment network was based on input from the Downtown Community Council as well as policy recommendations developed by the Physical Planning Division of the Municipal Planning Department. Specific recommended actions respond to the need for:

- A focal center for downtown Anchorage
- A public space system that responds to the unique character of Anchorage

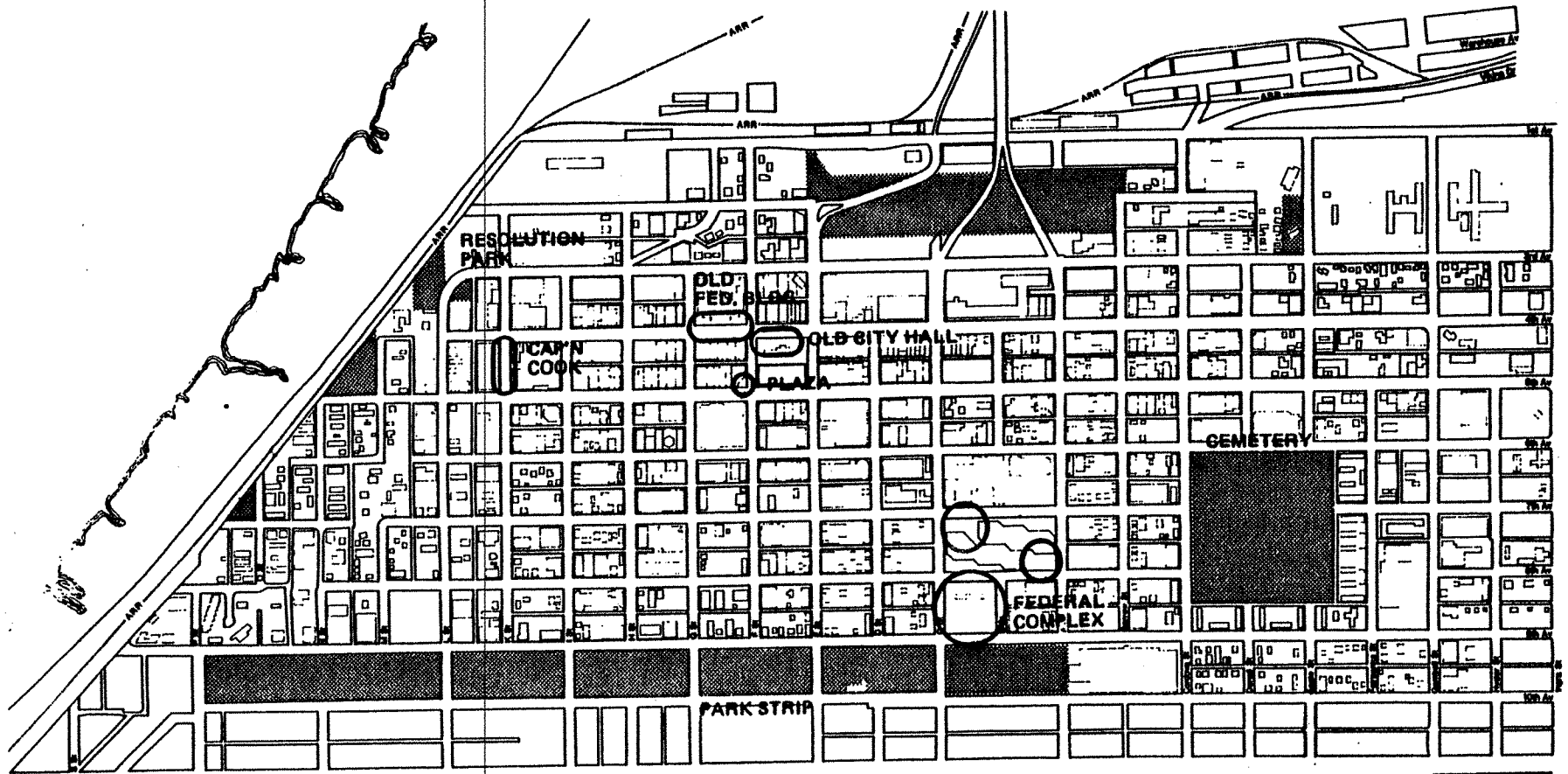


FIGURE IV.1

# Existing Open Space Amenities



EXISTING OPEN SPACE



MAJOR BUILDING-RELATED LANDSCAPED AREAS OR PLAZAS

- Urban design standards
- Priorities for the expenditure of capital improvement funds for pedestrian amenities
- Revision of the CBD zoning and bonus point system
- Pedestrian-oriented retail opportunities

#### Focal Center for Downtown

The Anchorage CBD now lacks an identifiable "heart" that can serve as the focal point for the area in which capital improvements may be made and linkages with adjacent areas established. Based on the quality of existing development and the amount of new public investment occurring, an area called the Town Center (Figure IV.2) has been designated as the civic core of the CBD.

The Town Center area is defined as the area bounded by 3rd and 6th Avenues and E and G Streets, with an additional block attached that now accommodates the Bus Accommodation Center and the 7th Avenue/G Street garage. Within this area are numerous important institutions and facilities, both existing and programmed for completion in the near future, including:

- A mall along F Street (see discussion later in this section)
- The Performing Arts Center
- The Convention Center
- The Municipal Offices in the Hill Building

- Other buildings that are predominantly public in orientation, such as the old Federal Building and the old City Hall

These buildings are generators of pedestrian activity, in addition to the retail streets in and near the Town Center. A citizen report on the area noted that the selected theme for the area, "Downtown is for People," should emphasize the area's sense of place, its meaning to the people of Anchorage, and that both daytime and nighttime activity are essential to downtown economic health and social vitality.

#### Public Space System that Responds to Unique Character of Anchorage

The Municipal Planning Department has established a guideline that public spaces in the heavily developed office and commercial centers should contrast the large suburban and wilderness parks in Anchorage by being smaller and vibrant, with many activities. Surrounding buildings and streets should provide spatial definition.

The policy calls for urban parks to offer opportunities to meet and watch people and engage in a variety of activities, as at the front of the old City Hall, the Alaska Mutual Bank Plaza, and the old Federal Building lawn. A Town Center plaza, two other major downtown parks, and a system of vest pocket parks associated with viewpoints, transit stops, and historic buildings are proposed to augment existing public spaces in downtown Anchorage (see discussions in a later section of this chapter).



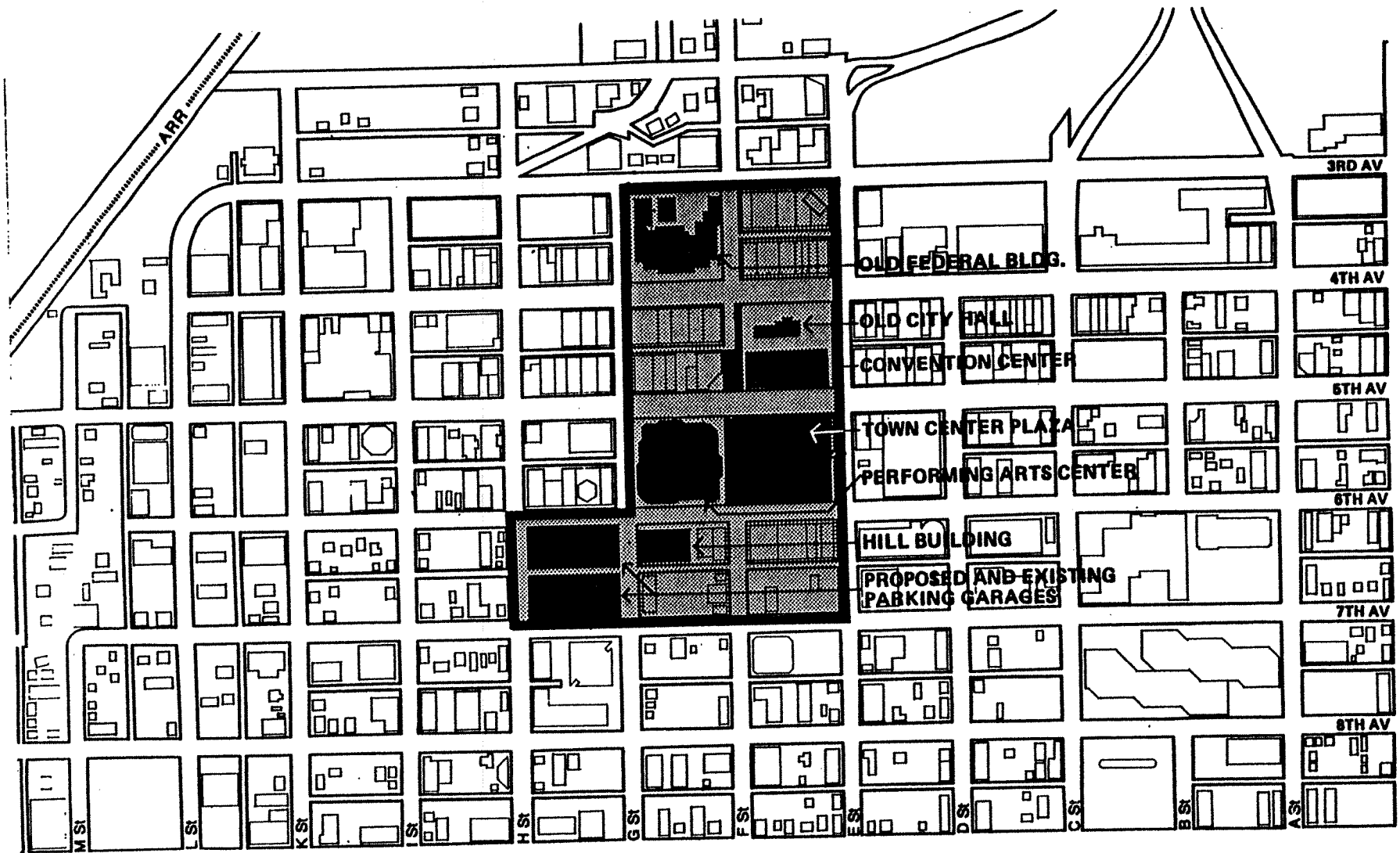


FIGURE IV.2

# Town Center Concept

## Urban Design Standards

In order to assure a consistent, attractive image for the downtown Anchorage streetscape, urban design standards have been proposed. These standards have three components:

- Uniform sidewalk, crosswalk, parking bay, and curb cut construction standards
- A consistent design vocabulary for Municipal sidewalk paving and fixtures, such as light poles, traffic control fixtures and signs, transit shelters, trash receptacles, and benches
- Flexible guidelines for commercial signs, street-level facades, planting, screening devices, and plazas, intended to allow variety within a general design framework for private development

## Priorities for the Expenditure of Capital Improvement Funds for Pedestrian Amenities

The Municipal capital improvement program, Project 80s, includes funds for improvements in the pedestrian environment. It will be important to apply these limited funds to the areas where the investment will derive the greatest benefit, in terms both of visibility and of new private-sector investment that may be generated.

Therefore, a policy has been recommended that allocates funds initially to improve sidewalks on retail streets and in other areas with heavy pedestrian traffic. Sidewalks second in priority will be those linking the core area with existing, well-developed sidewalks and plazas such as the

Carr-Gottstein Plaza, the Captain Cook Arcade, the Federal Building, and others. Private projects in the blocks on the periphery of the core area are likely to include new sidewalks as part of overall construction plans; it is recommended that these privately financed pedestrian environment improvements be consistent with the Municipal Pedestrian Urban Design Standards.

## Revision of CBD Zoning and Bonus Point System

The existing CBD zoning and bonus point system was intended to encourage the inclusion of urban design amenities to promote an attractive environment. However, as noted in the review of the existing zoning and bonus point systems (see Chapter II), existing policies have been ineffective in promoting active street-level retail development and pedestrian-oriented urban design amenities.

Therefore, it is recommended that existing ordinances be reevaluated and amended. These include:

- Height and bulk restrictions
- Incentives for various uses and amenities
- Distribution of conditional and permitted uses

The thrust of revisions should be to allow greater land use and architectural design flexibility in return for mandatory pedestrian improvements and "people-intensive" ground floor uses consistent with Municipal Urban Design Standards. Revisions of the downtown zoning and bonus point systems must consider the above factors, as well as changes related to parking and the economic impacts of such changes, to effect a proper balance between community and private needs.

## Pedestrian-Oriented Retail Opportunities

As discussed earlier, the public participation program produced a strong expression of support for a healthy, diverse retail development in downtown Anchorage. Because retail is a key component of downtown vitality, and because of existing market conditions in Anchorage (see Chapter II analysis), the objective must be addressed on two levels:

- A strong magnet must be created through development of a major retail center in the CBD, including an anchor store and specialty stores, that must be tied into the existing pedestrian network and integrated with existing retail areas.
- The existing retail environment must be revitalized through the enhancement of the pedestrian environment.

The first element, the retail center, is discussed at some length in Chapter VI. To address the second element requires both physical improvements to the pedestrian environment and an economic development program to foster reinvestment in the existing retail areas. It is very important that both programs -- the new retail center and the revitalization of existing retail areas -- be coordinated and complementary.

## RECOMMENDED OPEN SPACE NETWORK

It is recommended that existing open spaces in the Anchorage CBD (see previous discussion) be complemented with numerous additional open spaces, in response to needs expressed in the

public participation program. In order to gain the greatest benefit from investments in open spaces, it was felt that investments should be made in areas adjacent to pedestrian activity generators. These nodes of activity would be linked, in turn, by refurbished sidewalks developed as part of the capital improvements program (Figure IV.3).

Both large and small open spaces are recommended, each with a unique purpose and identity. The following discussions note the key major parks and "vest pocket" parks that constitute the recommended open space network.

## Major Parks

Among the major parks recommended for the Anchorage CBD are the Municipal Town Center Plaza and F Street Mall, an historic village on Block 66, and a winter garden at the existing public safety site. In addition, thoughts are provided for methods by which additional activities and greater attractiveness could be provided within the existing park strip.

Town Center Plaza and F Street Mall. The public has expressed a desire for a "central place" that will capture the image of Anchorage and serve as a focal point. Criteria for such a space include:

- Location in the heart of the CBD near activity generators
- Visibility of and from many civic functions and buildings
- Spatial arrangement of existing buildings conducive to providing enclosure for plaza

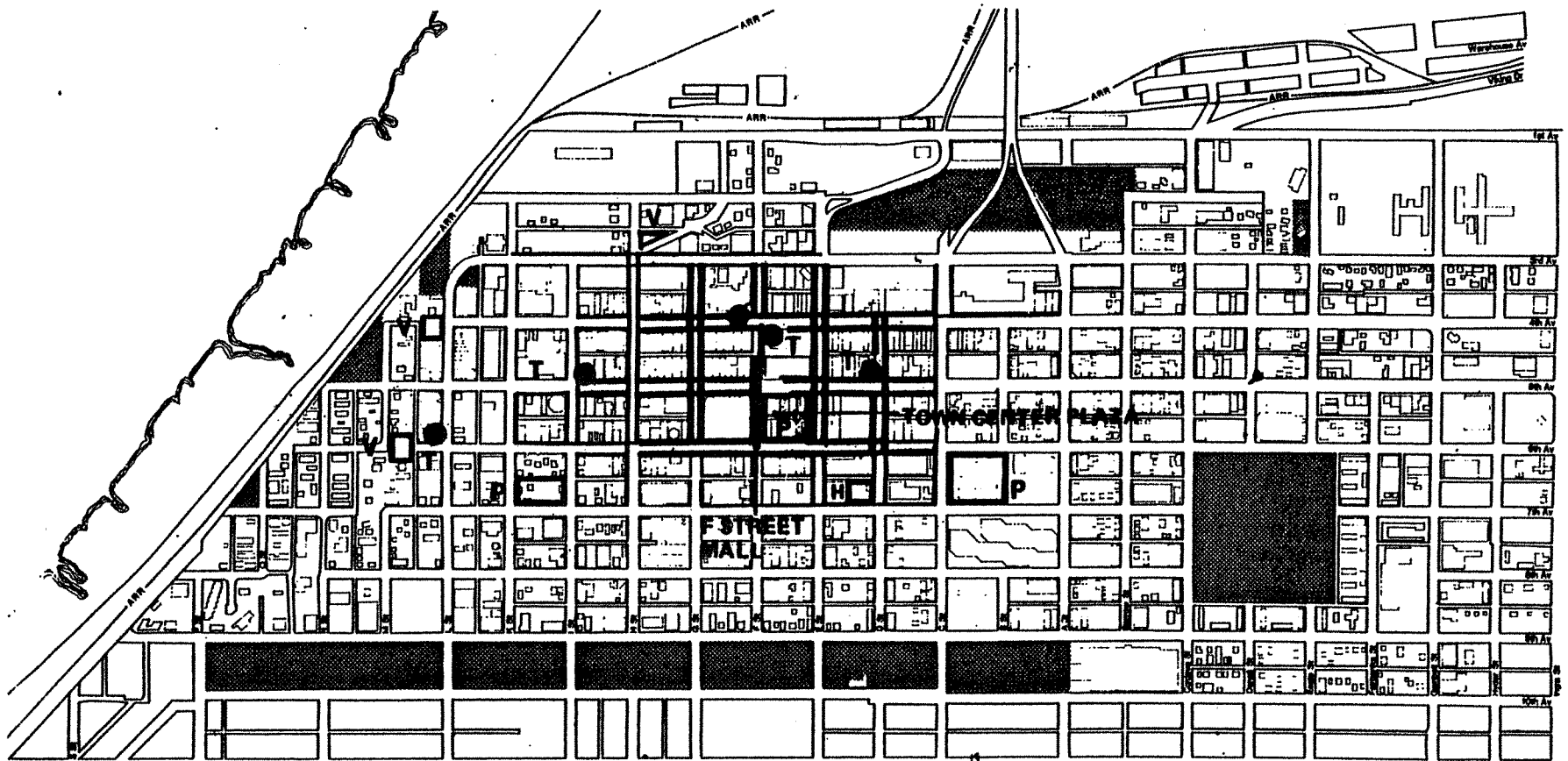
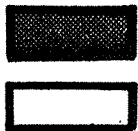


FIGURE IV.3

# Recommended Park and Open Space Amenities



**EXISTING OPEN SPACE**

**AREA RECOMMENDED FOR OPEN SPACE AMENITIES**

**P**  
**V**  
**T**

**PARK OR PLAZA**  
**VIEW OR VEST-POCKET PARK SITE**  
**TRANSIT PARK**



**1ST PRIORITY PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT\***

**2ND PRIORITY PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT\***

**\*SEQUENCE RECOMMENDED BY  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

- Land area of at least one-third of a block to permit a significant landscaped area
- Solar access and protection from wind
- Minimal relocation impacts with particular sensitivity to existing retail establishments

In view of the amount of public support for an improved pedestrian environment, consideration was given to the concept of removing vehicles altogether from selected segments of streets to offer an even more generous and versatile pedestrian environment. The downtown Anchorage circulation system (see Chapter III) is heavily reliant on the existing east-west avenues between 3rd and 6th Avenues, precluding their closure. Among the north-south streets, those that provide access to points south of the CBD -- A (upon completion of the A/C Couplet), C, E, G, I, and L Streets -- are all fundamental to circulation. However, the intermediate streets -- D, F, H, and K Streets -- could be considered candidates for pedestrian malls, assuming that access to building service areas was retained.

The best candidate for a pedestrian mall was found to be F Street between 4th and 6th Avenues. Its advantages include:

- A central location in the CBD
- Proximity to numerous civic projects and historic features
- Alternative means of access to most nearby buildings' service areas

- The potential of strong anchors at both ends of the mall: the Park Strip and the 2nd and F Street historic area

The Municipal Town Center Plaza, an urban plaza composed of F Street Mall and Block 51, will be the focal public space of the CBD. It is bounded by the Convention Center, the Performing Arts Center, and the Alaska Mutual Bank Plaza. It will draw upon the Hill Building, old City Hall, the Federal Building, and the 4th, 5th, and 6th Avenue retail stores for pedestrian activity.

The F Street Mall urban plaza creates use relationships with the public spaces within the Performing Arts Center and the Convention Center. Protection from inclement weather should be provided, as well as outdoor spaces for art shows, concerts, rallies, recreation, and informal gatherings. A carousel, ice rink, and provision for vendors of food, arts, and other items have been suggested for consideration in the design. Reuse of the church on the southeast corner should be considered.

A great deal of public controversy has centered over the location and shape of the "Town Center Plaza." Initially proposed for Block 42, and then for Block 51, a full square block has long been seen as the ideal Downtown Park. The conflict is caused by the need to relocate several stores on Block 51 in order to accommodate the "Town Square." As noted earlier, street-level retail development is a key component of downtown vitality; the potential loss of a block of contiguous shops must be weighed against the benefit to be gained by a larger public park. One major consideration is that, if downtown Anchorage

develops as densely as some projections indicate, a park/open space area in the center of the business/retail district may be considered a better, more functional design, particularly in a context that includes the Performing Arts Center and Convention Center.

A phased approach to park acquisition and design is suggested. Properties should only be acquired after a thorough review of their ability to contribute significantly to the function of the Town Center Plaza and an evaluation of economic impact. The Municipality should first assess the need to acquire development rights in order to preclude unwanted development. Until these conditions are met, the retail activities contribute to pedestrian and economic activity, upon which the success of the park will depend. Steps should also be taken to ensure that the Kimball Building remains at its present location.

Westend Park. Because of the intensive retail and office development in the western part of downtown, consideration must be given to providing open space there. An open space area is proposed for the southern portion of Block 66. The Municipality now owns three of the lots in this half-block; consideration should be given to the expansion of the municipally-owned section to the west and east. The functions of this area would include park and open space and, potentially, the relocation of several historic structures.

Winter Garden. A greenhouse-like structure enclosing major public spaces is proposed for the site of the present Public Safety Facilities Building. The relocation of the Police and Fire

Departments is scheduled to take place by 1985. The site is bounded on the east by the Anchorage Historic and Fine Arts Museum, on the south by the Federal Building, on the north by three blocks designated for retail redevelopment, and on the west by the Nordstrom store. The timing of winter garden development should be determined when commitments to develop recommended nearby projects, such as the State Office Complex and the retail complex, are assured.

The winter garden concept is that of a major complex of indoor public spaces with an emphasis on horticultural displays, planting, and spaces for civic activities and informal gatherings. It should be integrated with Museum expansion proposals and the proposed retail complex; and it should also provide limited retail space. An existing winter garden development in a similar climate is illustrated in Figure IV.4.

Solar Access. The quality of all of these proposed major open spaces will be greatly enhanced with the preservation of direct solar access. Therefore, it is recommended that consideration be given to the mechanisms by which the shapes of buildings immediately to the south of these open spaces will not block the sun. Among the possible mechanisms to be considered include terraced building facades (described in a later section of this chapter) or a limitation of permitted building height. The latter mechanisms might require some compensation to existing property owners, possibly in the form of transfer of development rights.

#### Vest Pocket Parks

A series of vest pocket parks is proposed for bluff-top viewpoints, well-used transit stops, and



Figure IV. 4. Wintergarden concept features year-round landscaping within glass enclosure. Photo is recently completed wintergarden in CBD of Niagara Falls, New York (architects: Gruen Associates).

areas adjacent to historic buildings, following the philosophy of integrating parks with pedestrian-generating functions (see Figure IV.3).

Viewpoint Parks. A "view walk" on 3rd Avenue and L Street is proposed to link three new viewpoint parks with the existing Captain Cook Resolution Park. This sequence of vest pocket parks will offer views of Mount Susitna, the Alaska Range, the Port of Anchorage, Ship Creek, and Cook Inlet. Each vest pocket park will be developed within unused right-of-way or land already in Municipal ownership at the top of the bluff. Each should be designed with steps for access up and down the bluff. Each of these viewpoints should incorporate the following facilities: observation platforms with visitor information signs, planting, shelter, seating, garbage cans, and other park furniture. The locations for these viewpoints include (see Figure IV.3):

- Terminus of 6th Avenue at L Street: Presently this right-of-way is a drive between two apartment buildings. Its terminus overlooks Bootlegger Cove. A well-worn path exists where people climb up and down the bluff. Stairs at this point would offer safe pedestrian access to Nulbay Park.
- Terminus of 4th Avenue at L Street: This right-of-way is adjacent to 330 L Street, a historic building built in 1938 now housing law offices, and the parking lot for the 420 L Street office building. The potentially outstanding view is now obscured by trees and brush. The right-of-way of 4th Avenue and an existing utility easement may be used

to develop view platforms and stair access to Ederberry Park.

- **Terminus of H Street on 3rd Avenue:** A triangular parcel now owned by the Municipality is available for planting and viewpoint development in addition to the H Street right-of-way. A stair access down the bluff has already been developed by an adjacent office building. This viewpoint provides views of the port, Ship Creek, Government Hill, the Alaska Railroad yards, and the cannery and warehouse district.
- **7th Avenue and M Street:** Access to the Coastal Trail via existing sewer easement that would be acquired by Municipality.

Transit Mini-Parks. Transit mini-parks are proposed to link transit shelters at well-used bus stops with landscaped vest pocket parks. In addition to park planting and benches, each transit mini-park should include a well-designed, spacious transit shelter, public information (maps, transit schedules, and routes), telephone, and waste paper receptacles. Locations for the transit mini-parks (see Figure IV.3) are on primary transit corridors. They include:

- **Northwest corner of 5th Avenue and I Street:** This site is near the Captain Cook Hotel, the State Court and office building, and Holy Family Cathedral.
- **Northwest corner of 5th Avenue and D Street:** This site is adjacent to the Rexall drug store, across from J.C. Penney and the Loussac-Sogn Building.

- **Intersection of 4th Avenue and F Street Mall:** This intersection is adjacent to the old City Hall, the old Federal Building, and the 4th Avenue retail stores.
- **Terminus of 6th Avenue at L Street:** A transit mini-park is proposed in combination with the viewpoint vest pocket park, strengthening the attractiveness of each. The transit mini-park will serve workers in new office buildings in the northwest sector of downtown Anchorage. These include Resolution Tower, Peterson Tower, and 420 L Street.

In addition to transit mini-parks, the developments proposed for Transit Rider Accommodation Centers (TRACs) should include outdoor park areas to complement indoor waiting rooms. These centers are recommended for incorporation in the first level of two parking garages proposed for 6th Avenue and G Street and the block bounded by 4th and 5th Avenues and B and C Streets. Additional shelters should be located at offices and other potential high transit use corridors. Cooperative agreements for shelter location should be sought in plazas adjacent to the Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum, the Federal Building, the Hunt Building, the ARCO Building, and Loussac Library.

Historic Vest Pocket Parks. The concept of historic vest pocket parks calls for small parks to be established in locations adjacent to older structures that may be preserved on-site. It may be necessary to purchase development rights to preserve these grounds. Mature trees and gardens can offer spots of landscaping and textural detail in contrast with new urban



development. Park development and design should reinforce the historic quality of the park context, possibly through the use of traditional planting, walkways, and seating area design. Proposed locations (see Figure IV.3) include:

- "Mrs. Martin's Garden" at the northwest corner of the intersection of 7th Avenue and D Street. This garden is the object of great affection among many residents of downtown Anchorage. It appears to have good potential of being preserved as an example of the residential scale that used to epitomize the central area of downtown Anchorage. The site also enjoys excellent solar access, one of the probable reasons that flowers in the garden are thriving. The site has many advantages. It is located in a transitional zone between areas recommended for expanded retail and office use, respectively. Thus, it is accessible both to occupants of office building (the Hunt Tower one block to the west) and to shoppers at nearby retail facilities (J.C. Penney and Nordstrom both less than a block away to the north). Finally, the site is along a key view corridor on D Street, for which pedestrian amenities are proposed. While the site is in private ownership, provisions could be made for its eventual transfer to public ownership; alternately, transfer of development rights could be considered for application to this site.
- The backyard of Kimball's Store features a garden that may offer the opportunity to create a special entry to the Town Center Plaza.

- The front entry area of the old Federal Building on 4th Avenue is a south-facing, grassy area that enjoys excellent solar access. The facility is an important element in pedestrian activity patterns along 4th Avenue. It is proposed that the front entry area be refurbished with additional lawn planting, paving, and benches. Care should be taken to preserve its open lawn quality.

#### Park Strip Improvements

The park strip, between 9th and 10th Avenues spanning the distance between P and A Streets, is the most significant swath of open space serving downtown Anchorage. It is not technically within the CBD Comprehensive Development Plan study area, but it nevertheless warrants comment because of its potential impact on downtown,

With the exception of a few pathways and a small garden, the park strip is used exclusively for sports. Soccer fields, baseball diamonds, swimming facilities, and tennis courts are the dominant features.

The park strip can function as a true "central park," as well as both an active and passive recreational area. It plays an important role in defining the southern boundary of the central business district and in providing recreational opportunities to the South Addition residential community, daytime CBD workers, and the entire Anchorage public. Because of its strategic location, it further fulfills an important land use role by delimiting the southern boundary of core business expansion. The maintenance of residential uses south of the park strip is an important, related goal of this plan.

The following landscaping and both active and passive recreational facilities should be considered for the park strip:

- Trees and bushes, although the open character of the park should remain and the view of the mountains should remain unchanged
- Mounds, berms, and undulations at the I-L Street couplet
- Active sports areas shielded from adjacent travel ways

In order to preserve the open space quality of the park strip, it is further recommended that building heights in the half-block immediately adjacent to the park strip be limited to five stories. Most of this property is currently zoned to allow a "base height" of three stories; however, through the existing bonus point system, buildings can greatly exceed this base height (see Chapter II). Therefore, it is recommended that, for this half-block strip, the zoning code be modified to set an upper limit of five stories for new buildings.

#### **DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

A sense of place in the downtown area is greatly affected by the character of its sidewalks and streetscapes. A pedestrian improvement program has been proposed by the Municipality of Anchorage, based on alternative concepts for streetscape improvements that have been reviewed by local citizens and interest groups through the public participation program.

The program has two parts: first, the development of Pedestrian Urban Design Standards

and, second, the pedestrian amenities Capital Improvement Program. Their combined effects should provide powerful visual evidence of the commitment of the Municipal government to downtown Anchorage.

The presence of major improvements in pedestrian amenities throughout downtown Anchorage would improve the appearance of the city to drivers as well as to pedestrians. Retailers on these streets may initially be concerned about the potential removal of curb parking; however, they would be expected to benefit from the compensations of an improved pedestrian environment as well as from the availability of convenient off-street parking.

#### **Need for Coordinated Physical Design**

The pedestrian environment in downtown Anchorage was recently investigated as a part of a "Pedestrian Amenities Design Study" (Maynard and Partch, 1981). Many recommendations in this study are reflected in the Comprehensive Development Plan recommendations that follow in this chapter.

Decisions regarding specific designs for right-of-way pedestrian enhancements should be made only after thorough study of and coordination with possible longer-range circulation improvement programs (described in Chapter III). Changes in the physical design of sidewalks have implications on the travel-lane configuration. Therefore, so as to avoid any need for subsequent retrofit -- along with its attendant cost -- designs for pedestrian way improvements are most appropriate if they allow some flexibility in the roadway design in terms of such factors as on-street parking (if any), possible future changes in the direction of

travel (such as potential conversion to one-way service), and other factors.

Where major new public or private projects are proposed, opportunities are present for further coordination of urban design amenities both within the development parcel and within the public right-of-way. These are discussed in a later section of this chapter.

### Urban Design Opportunities

The modification of street and sidewalk configurations within the public right-of-way offers an excellent opportunity to correct existing deficiencies in the pedestrian environment that detract from the image of downtown as a pleasant place to walk. Some of these opportunities include:

- Replacement of existing traffic light standards with well designed and less bulky ones
- Delineation of crosswalks by distinctive pavement texture and color
- Introduction of coordinated graphics in street signs, waste receptacles, kiosks, and other "street furniture"
- Replacement of existing parking meters with models whose designs would blend more successfully with other streetscape elements
- Bus shelters integrated into overall design pattern
- Awnings and other design features that provide a sense of area and design continuity

The climate of Anchorage demands that some of these amenities incorporate special, climate-responsive features, including:

- Heating of bus shelters
- Minimal deviation from straight curb facings to allow easier snow removal
- Clustering of amenities in places near major building court entrances to allow features to be enjoyed visually by people inside these structures

### Pedestrian Urban Design Policies and Standards

The "Town Center Report" specified several policies applicable to pedestrian improvements within the CBD, including:

- Means of clearing ice and snow to make sidewalks passable and to encourage their use
- Reflection of the "Downtown is for People" theme in sidewalk and street elements, such as plantings, benches, traffic signals, and public signs
- Overall unified design theme able to be extended throughout the downtown area

In addition to the "Town Center Report" findings, it is recommended that standards be developed by the Municipality to govern the physical design of the downtown pedestrian environment. These standards should not only pertain to Municipality-sponsored improvements, for which administrative adoption of the standards will be necessary, but

also to the street-level design of private-sector development projects.

Standards should pertain to three areas of concern; the first two apply to public rights-of-way and the third to private properties adjacent to public rights-of-way, as follows:

- Uniform sidewalk cross-sections, intersection crosswalk markings, parking bays, and curb cut designs -- to apply throughout downtown Anchorage. Although sidewalk width may vary, a minimum barrier-free passage zone should be maintained. These areas should be explicitly accessible to handicapped persons.
- Consistent design vocabulary for Municipal Capital Improvement projects -- the choice of paving type, transit shelters, street furniture, public sign designs, and light and traffic control fixtures should be made in the context of site-specific design of the first phases of the Pedestrian Amenities Capital Improvement Program.
- Urban Design Guidelines -- to be implemented through the CBD zoning system, in Title 21, for the spatial delineation of the sidewalk, at-grade parking lot screening, street-level building facades, planting design, commercial signs, and solar orientation of public spaces. These guidelines, when adopted, will assure the compliance of private development with Pedestrian Urban Design Standards, without stifling the design flexibility desired by the private sector.

### Location for Capital Improvements

The first priority for application of capital funds for pedestrian area improvements should be upgrading of major streets in the core area and in existing retail areas. Sidewalk improvements in the blocks west, south, and east of the core area are included in existing and anticipated private sector and state building projects, and thus will not require Municipal capital funds. Second priority locations for capital expenditures are those linking privately developed sidewalks with the core area.

### Funding Priorities

The Municipality has established criteria to determine location priorities for capital improvement expenditures for sidewalk amenities, based on the objective of enhancing the quality of the downtown environment along existing retail streets and adjacent to public gathering places.

A single block length of sidewalk was chosen as the appropriate unit for evaluation. The criteria included the block face's proximity to pedestrian activity generators and the potential of establishing linkage between activity generators. First-priority ratings were given to sidewalks adjacent to public facilities, storefront retail blocks, transit facilities, public buildings, and existing blocks with well-developed pedestrian amenities. Sidewalks linking these first-priority areas were considered equally important to establish a coherent design scheme. It was considered important that sidewalks on both sides of a street be improved at the same time.

Generally, first priority blocks occur along east-west retail streets and the Town Center area (Table IV.1, referenced to Figure IV.3; the recommendations contained in this table are meant to be general guidelines to the development of future pedestrian improvement projects. The actual design, locations, and features of pedestrian improvements will be determined by more detailed pedestrian design analyses). Second-priority areas for improvement extend the core area improvements to peripheral areas. In the southern and western peripheral areas presently undergoing new development, it is anticipated that sidewalk improvements will be included in private-sector development plans, in accordance with the Municipal Pedestrian Urban Design Standards. Future developments further east in the CBD study area, such as the proposed retail complex and the State Office Complex, may be anticipated to do so as well. The mechanism for enforcement will be the revised CBD zoning and Bonus Point System (see earlier discussion).

### Intersection Design

Special design treatment of intersections throughout the CBD core area is an effective way to establish a strong identity for the area. Special district banners and kiosks could be considered, particularly within the Town Center area. The intersection design treatment may involve some combination of the following actions:

- Replacement of overhead traffic light fixtures with differently designed fixtures that coordinate well with surrounding development and other urban design components

- Establishment of a coordinated signage program, considering both design and locational standards
- Reconstruction of sidewalks, curb cuts, and crosswalks to comply with handicapped-access standards
- Delineation of crosswalks with unique surface treatment, possibly incorporating masonry and/or other color and textural elements, to reinforce the pedestrian orientation of the core area

### Coordination of Proposed Improvements

Recommended pedestrian environment improvements must be coordinated with other recommended or committed actions. For example, transportation requirements may have bearing on available sidewalk width; and often the available right-of-way limits the extent of planting and other sidewalk amenities that may be incorporated into the streetscape.

With this in mind, it may be helpful to classify recommended improvements in either of two categories:

- Standard improvements, those that can be accommodated within limited space, such as planting, paving, lighting, signage, and intersection crosswalk improvements
- Special improvements, such as planting masses, benches, and other design developments, that consume more space and may require additional review to assure coordination with other programs

**TABLE IV.1  
PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES**

<u>Street</u>	<u>Transportation Pattern</u>	<u>Pedestrian Improvements (1st and 2nd Priority)</u>
3rd Avenue	Retain present 2-way lane traffic and 2 parking lanes.	<p><u>Area:</u> E St. to L St.</p> <p><u>Sidewalk width:</u> Same, with parking bays for trees, etc.</p> <p><u>1st Priority:</u> None</p> <p><u>2nd Priority:</u> E to H</p> <p><u>Private:</u> H to L</p> <p><u>Standard Improvements:</u> Paving, lighting, planting, public signage, intersection crosswalk improvements.</p> <p><u>Special Improvements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Railing and raised sidewalk between H and K Streets on the north side.</li> <li>-Planting in buffer strip along parking lot on the south side of the street between H and G.</li> <li>-Viewpoint Park at 3rd and H.</li> </ul>
4th Avenue	Retain present 4-lane, 2-way traffic pattern with 2 parking lanes.	<p><u>Area:</u> C St. to L St.</p> <p><u>1st Priority:</u> C to H</p> <p><u>2nd Priority:</u> A to C, north side; I to H south side.</p> <p><u>Private:</u> H to L, north side; I to L south side.</p> <p><u>Sidewalk Width:</u> Same, with parking bays for trees and street furniture.</p> <p><u>Standard Improvements:</u> Paving, planting, lighting, signage and intersection crosswalk improvements.</p> <p><u>Special Improvements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Extend sidewalks at intersections and mid-block to create parking bays for planting, benches, etc.</li> <li>-Design integration with Old City Hall, Federal Building and F St. Mall.</li> <li>-Historic facade restoration between E and F Streets on the north side of 4th Avenue.</li> <li>-Banners and special district kiosks on corners of D, E, F and G Streets.</li> </ul>

TABLE IV.1 (Continued)

Street	Transportation Pattern	Pedestrian Improvements (1st and 2nd Priority)
5th Avenue	Retain present 3-lane, 1-way traffic pattern with 2 parking lanes.	<p><u>Area:</u> C to K Streets</p> <p><u>Sidewalk Width:</u> Same.</p> <p><u>1st Priority:</u> C to H St.</p> <p><u>2nd Priority:</u> H to K south side; H to I north side.</p> <p><u>Private:</u> I to L north side; K to L south side.</p> <p><u>Standard Improvements:</u> Paving, planting, lighting, signage, crosswalks and intersection improvements.</p> <p><u>Special Improvements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Design integration with F St. Mall, Convention Center and Performing Arts Center.</li> <li>-Special district banners and kiosks at D, E, F and G Streets.</li> </ul>
6th Avenue	Retain present 3-lane, 1-way traffic pattern.	<p><u>Area:</u> C St. to K St.</p> <p><u>Sidewalk Width:</u> Same.</p> <p><u>1st Priority:</u> D to H St., north side; C to G St., south side.</p> <p><u>2nd Priority:</u> H to K and D to C north side; H to I south side.</p> <p><u>Standard Improvements:</u> Paving, lighting, planting, signage, crosswalk improvements.</p> <p><u>Special Improvements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Planting in masses to buffer parking lots of drive-in bank at E and 6th, and at the YMCA.</li> <li>-Design integration with F St. Mall, Performing Arts Center, and Hill-Side Cafe.</li> <li>-Transit Rider Accommodations Center landscaped areas and pedestrian amenities.</li> <li>-Special district banners and kiosks at corners of D, E, F and G. Streets.</li> </ul>

TABLE IV.1 (Continued)

Street	Transportation Pattern	Pedestrian Improvements (1st and 2nd Priority)
7th Avenue	Retain present 2-lane, 2-way traffic pattern with 2 parking lanes.	<p><u>Area:</u> C St. to H St.</p> <p><u>Sidewalk Width:</u> Same.</p> <p><u>1st Priority:</u> None</p> <p><u>2nd Priority:</u> C St. to G St., north side.</p> <p><u>Private:</u> C to G St., south side.</p> <p><u>Standard Improvements:</u> Paving, lighting, signage, planting and crosswalk improvements.</p>
D Street	Retain present 2-lane, 2-way traffic pattern with 2 parking lanes	<p><u>Area:</u> 4th Ave. to 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Sidewalk width:</u> Same.</p> <p><u>1st Priority:</u> 3rd to 5th Ave.</p> <p><u>2nd Priority:</u> 5th to 6th Ave.</p> <p><u>Standard Improvements:</u> Paving, lighting, signage, planting, and crosswalk improvements.</p> <p><u>Special Improvements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Create parking bays for planting masses, benches, etc. at corners and mid-block areas, between 7th and 3rd Ave.</li> <li>-Special district banners and kiosks at 6th, 5th, and 4th Aves.</li> <li>-Design arcade to shelter or otherwise improve Penney's wall.</li> </ul>
E Street	Change to 2-lane, 1-way traffic pattern with 2 parking lanes.	<p><u>Area:</u> 3rd Ave. to 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Sidewalk Width:</u> Same.</p> <p><u>1st Priority:</u> 3rd to 6th Ave.</p> <p><u>2nd Priority:</u> 6th to 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Private:</u> South of 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Standard Improvements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Planting, paving, lighting, signage, crosswalk improvements.</li> </ul>



TABLE IV.1 (Continued)

Street	Transportation Pattern	Pedestrian Improvements (1st and 2nd Priority)
F Street	Retain present 2-lane, 2-way traffic pattern with 2 parking lanes.	<p><u>Special Improvements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Planting in masses along bank parking lot at 6th and E.</li> <li>-Planting, benches, etc. at Kimball's Store historic vest pocket park.</li> <li>-Design integration with Convention Center and Old City Hall Park.</li> <li>-Special district banners and kiosks at 6th, 5th &amp; 4th Aves.</li> </ul> <p><u>Area:</u> 3rd Ave. to 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Sidewalk Width:</u> Same.</p> <p><u>1st Priority:</u> 3rd to 6th Ave.</p> <p><u>2nd Priority:</u> 6th to 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Private:</u> South of 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Standard Improvements:</u> Paving, planting, lighting, signage and crosswalk improvements.</p> <p><u>Special Improvements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Design integration with F St. Mall.</li> <li>-Creation of parking bays for tree masses and benches at intersections and mid-block, from 7th to 3rd Aves.</li> <li>-Special district banners and kiosks at 4th, 5th &amp; 6th Aves.</li> </ul>
G Street	Change to 2-lane, 1-way pattern with 2 parking lanes.	<p><u>Area:</u> 3rd Ave. to 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Sidewalk Width:</u> Same.</p> <p><u>1st Priority:</u> 3rd to 6th Ave.</p> <p><u>2nd Priority:</u> 6th to 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Private:</u> South of 7th Ave.</p> <p><u>Standard Improvements:</u> Paving, lighting, planting, signage and crosswalk improvements.</p> <p><u>Special Improvements:</u> Design integration with vest pocket park on Performing Arts Center at 6th &amp; G, the Old Federal Building Historic Mini-Park and new Transit Rider Accommodations Center.</p>

As with all recommended actions, development plans should be made on a site-specific design basis.

## RECOMMENDED INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

The existing zoning and bonus point system, as noted in several earlier discussions, is less than effective in achieving a high-quality pedestrian environment, in addition to other shortcomings. Two alternatives have been explored:

- Revision of the systems
- Strengthening of the systems

Each alternative is summarized in the following discussions.

### Revision of CBD Zoning and Bonus Point System

The revision of the CBD zoning and bonus point System may increase the system's effectiveness in establishing objective urban design standards. A number of potential standards have been explored, all of which could possibly be incorporated within the existing system, pending their discussion within, and endorsement by, the community:

- Adoption of mandatory Urban Design Standards as described in the Pedestrian Improvement Program section of this report; this might include additional requirements pertaining to mandatory ground-floor retail space in large projects
- Amendment of the CBD zone boundaries to enlarge the CBD core area

- Revision of the permitted and conditional use designations to allow residential uses by right
- Simplification of the height and bulk restrictions to allow greater design flexibility in the CBD, and to restrict height on those blocks south of major parks
- Change of the relative number of incentive bonus points provided for optional amenities; amenities that might continue to be optional, but reinforced through additional height bonuses, include residential space, plaza areas, transit facilities and indoor waiting areas, enclosed parking, and enclosed public spaces

### Strengthening of Bonus Point System

The existing bonus point system offers incentives for private developers to include public plazas in new structures. However, as indicated by the type of development that has taken place since institution of the bonus point incentives, it is clear that the incentives alone are not shaping downtown Anchorage according to their primary intent. Observation of recent downtown development indicates that:

- Bonuses for public plazas have not often been sought. One possible reason may be that the current incentives are not attractive enough to offset the loss of building interior areas.
- There has been little urban design coordination between developments on adjacent blocks, with the result that those plazas that have

been provided are less attractive than they might be if equipped with landscaping, seating, etc.

Although other recommended programs and policies should have a major effect in improving the pedestrian environment in downtown Anchorage and in providing much-needed public plazas, the potential contributions of privately developed open space is considerable in complementing public open spaces and in establishing a precedent for development to come.

Within this context, a number of preliminary concepts have been explored with the objective of providing more specific information on the types and qualities of urban spaces that might qualify for bonuses. While the following specific types of open space amenities all entail public access to areas contiguous to public pedestrian ways, each responds to a unique situation:

- Stepped setbacks for buildings in key view corridor locations
- Solar-oriented plazas at the corners of major new projects
- Terraced facades for new high-rise projects in certain locations
- Reciprocal easements for major new projects spanning entire block faces

Setbacks in View Corridors. In order to assure that the continuing development of downtown Anchorage will be responsive to the unique views available, it is recommended that certain key parcels be subject to height, bulk, and site

coverage standards that are somewhat different from those that now pertain. New buildings in key locations along major view corridors would be granted additional "base height" in exchange for stepped setbacks at ground level that will significantly expand views toward the water and mountains. The overall building "envelope" -- or development volume -- would remain the same or even be increased over what is now permitted in exchange for the view-oriented plazas that would be created. Figure IV.5 provides a conceptual example of the effect of stepped setbacks, which would result in attractive widened sidewalks and plazas oriented toward views. Figure IV.6 provides a preliminary indication of some of the key view corridors that have been identified in downtown Anchorage, as well as the key parcels that would be affected by these new standards.

The preliminary investigation has shown the possible development or redevelopment of the following blocks to have significant implication on view corridors:

- Blocks 32, 36, and 37 along the 4th Avenue corridor
- Blocks 36 and 37 along the 6th Avenue view corridor
- Blocks 13, 14, 29, and 30 along the I Street view corridor
- Blocks 14, 15, 28, and 29 along the H Street view corridor

Several other blocks within key view corridors may be affected by future development, particularly within the part of the CBD west of A Street and

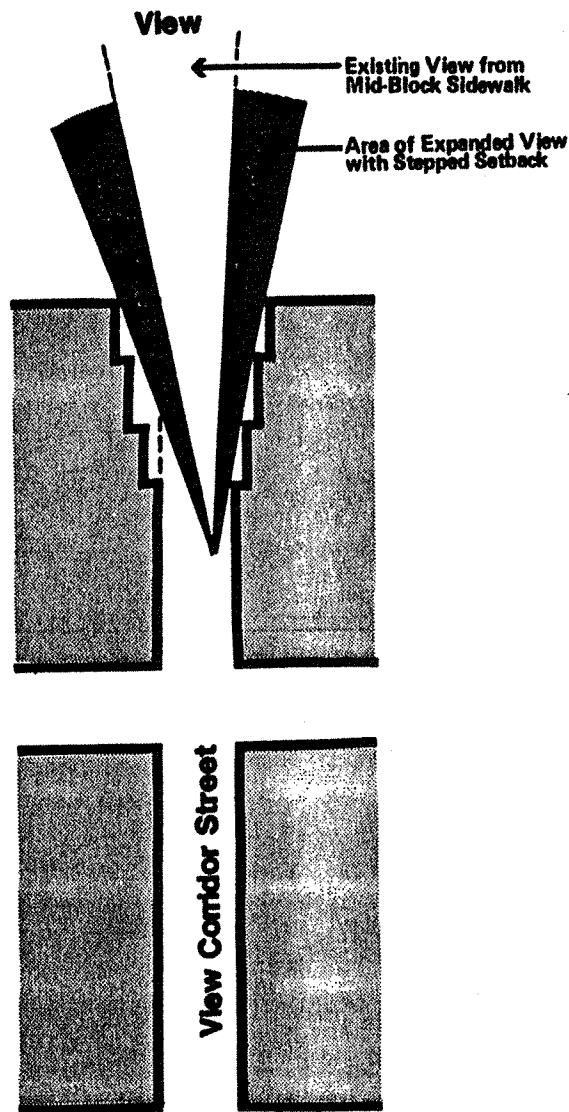


Figure IV.5. Concept for stepped building setback for sites at end block of key view corridors

south of 8th Avenue, particularly along those north-south streets slated for eventual pedestrian amenities. It may be prudent to apply the same standards to these areas in anticipation of possible future redevelopment.

The effective implementation of this recommendation would require a more in-depth study of significant view sites and the implications of proposed building envelope standards on potential developments and consideration of alternatives.

Therefore, it is recommended that one of two options be considered:

- Through amendment of the municipal code, a publicly accessible, landscaped, and usable plaza could be required in major new developments along the primary building facade -- with special emphasis on solar access, depending on configuration of site and building. Bonuses in terms of allowable additional building area would remain as they now are.
- The bonus provided for open plazas be increased substantially as means of "priming the pump" in establishing a tradition of publicly accessible plazas in the downtown core, with a reciprocal reduction in bonuses for other amenities that contribute less to the quality of the downtown pedestrian environment.

Solar-Oriented Corner Plazas. In locations throughout downtown where major private sector developments are proposed, there may be merit in considering the strengthening of current bonus point incentives for ground-level plazas at the

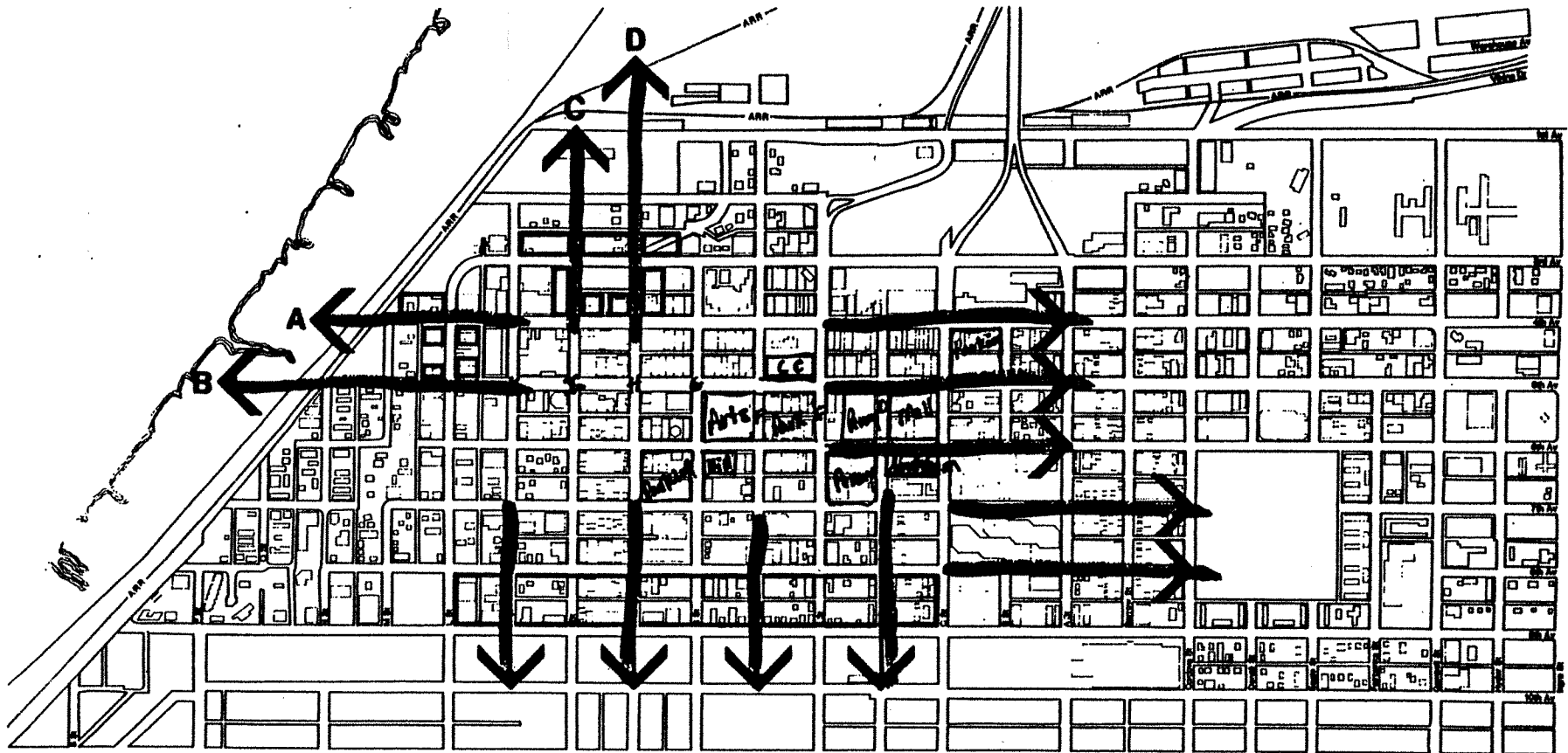


FIGURE IV.6

# View Corridor Analysis



**PRIMARY VIEW CORRIDOR**

**BLOCKS FOR POTENTIAL VIEW PRESERVATION TECHNIQUES**

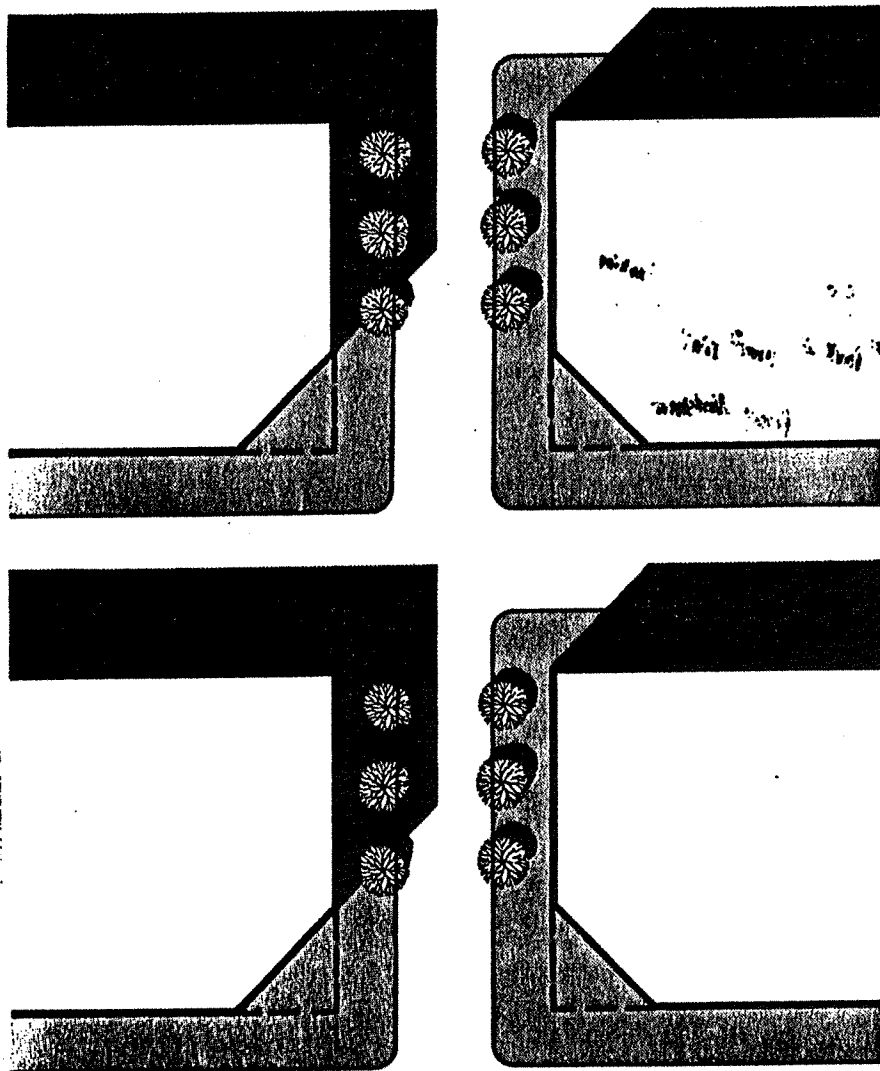


Figure IV.7. Corner plaza concepts to provide sun-catcher spaces with mini-park amenities

southwest and southeast corners of buildings that take advantage of solar access and that are readily accessible and visible to pedestrians. An existing example of such a plaza is the financial development at the northwest corner of 5th Avenue and F Street. Generalized alternative concepts are presented in Figure IV.7. It would be desirable for the plaza area to be a minimum of 1,000 square feet and for the plazas to include landscaping, seating, and other amenities. In addition, it would be desirable for plazas on adjoining corners to have similar physical proportions so as to convey a uniform spaciousness at each corner.

Terraced Building Facades. The existing bonus point system now encourages a building configuration featuring a base and towers. An example of this kind of configuration is the Captain Cook Hotel Complex, which features three towers of varying height and a base consisting of two floors plus an underground level. For the south street frontage along east-west streets (i.e., the north sides of buildings that occupy the northern half of most blocks), consideration might be given to incentives that would encourage a terraced vertical profile for new construction, rather than the base/tower configuration that is currently encouraged. With the stepped profile, significantly more light would be available to pedestrians within the public right-of-way. Trees and other landscaping would experience a corresponding benefit from the additional light and solar exposure. Figure IV.8 illustrates one possible terraced facade configuration that could be feasible for large projects spanning at least one-half of a block face.

Reciprocal Easements. For the north streetface, a concept of reciprocal easements would encourage

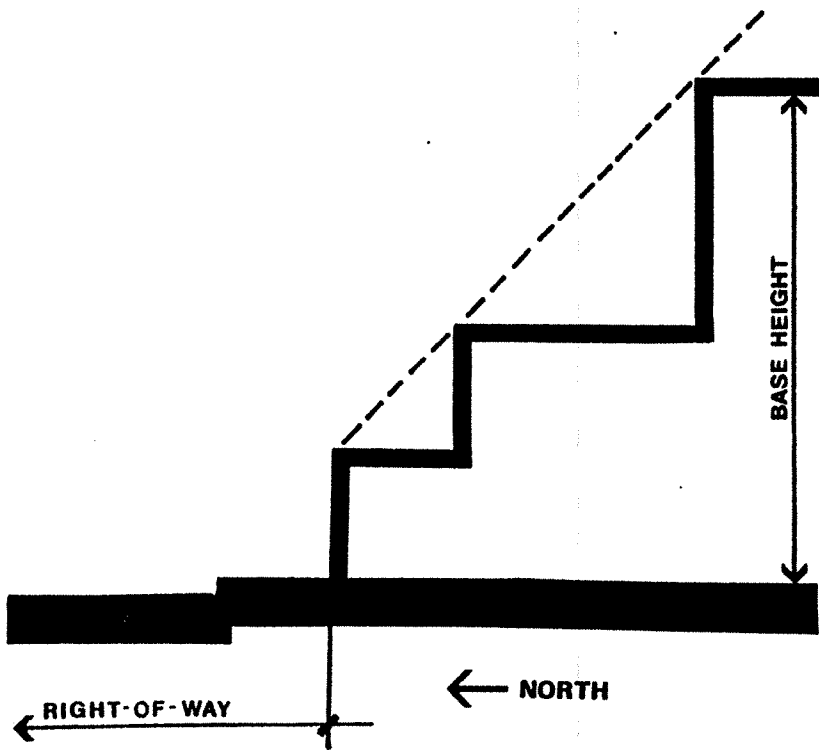


Figure IV.8. Terraced facade concept to admit more sun and light to pedestrian areas

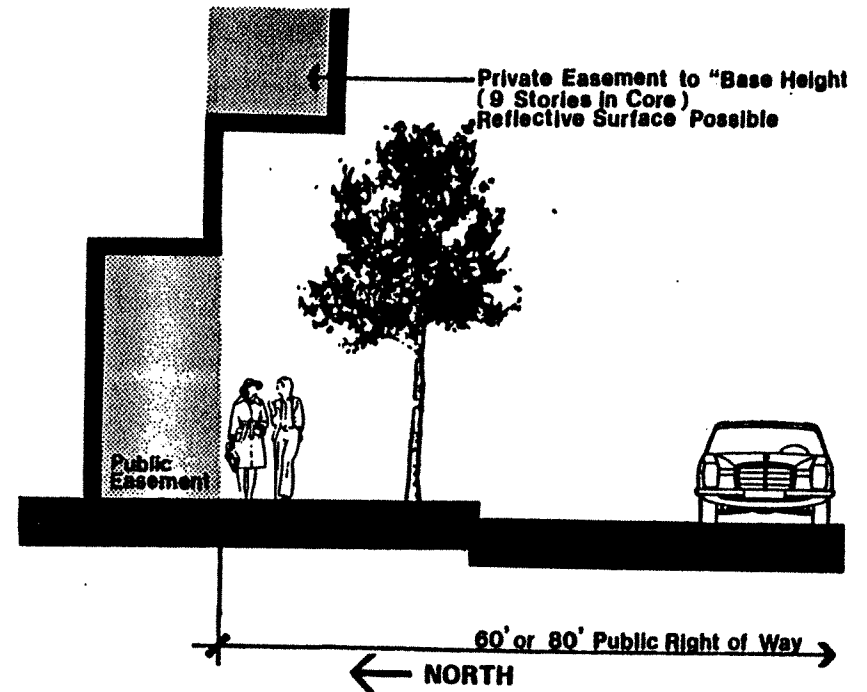


Figure IV.9. Reciprocal easement concept offering bonus space at upper levels in exchange for wider pedestrian areas with solar access

the provision of additional pedestrian areas in locations that receive the most light and sun. Figure IV.9 illustrates one concept that might be considered. In this concept, a property owner would grant the Municipality an easement along the property's southern boundary (north side of the street).

In exchange for granting a public easement at the sidewalk level, the developer would be allowed to cantilever the structure over the public right-of-way a similar width as the easement, up to the "base height" stipulated in the Anchorage Municipal Code Land Use Regulation. In order for this concept to be effective and beneficial, it could only be applied to projects encompassing at least one full block face. This problem and potential structural limitations may have to be overcome prior to widespread implementation of this concept.

#### Economic Development Program for Retail Service Business

Large new concentrations of office workers downtown will create an increased demand for retail services and commercial businesses. At the same time, the new construction in the downtown area is eliminating much of the moderately-priced retail space. Competition is therefore keen for the existing retail space and many businesses that may choose to locate downtown are unable to do so. The purpose of the Economic Development Program is to encourage the provision of retail space at street level, particularly storefront retail, throughout downtown Anchorage. Its goal should be the generation of a more diverse and economically healthy downtown. Increased numbers of businesses downtown will tend to increase

activity levels in the downtown core. The functions of this program would be to:

- Conduct market analyses and identify particularly good business opportunities.
- Match appropriate businesses to available retail space and to retail space provided in new development.
- Pursue the creation of increased retail space in Municipally-owned facilities, or in joint public/private projects. These projects already include the Block 66 Historic Village proposals (see Chapter VII), the 4th/5th Avenue garage proposal (see Chapter V), and potential use of the Convention Center Galleria.
- Offer business assistance programs that would include marketing, advertising, and design assistance.

#### GUIDELINES FOR SKYWAY SYSTEM INITIATION

Major new redevelopment projects offer significant opportunities to provide a new level of service to pedestrians. In particular, an opportunity is seen within redevelopment areas to initiate a carefully conceived skyway system that is fully integrated with, and supportive of, existing ground-level retail establishments. Advantages of a second-level skyway system include:

- Climate protection
- Convenience with grade separations removing pedestrian/vehicular conflicts



- The ability to tie activities together

Overall, a skyway system in Anchorage would make downtown more attractive for employees, for shoppers, and for visitors, even beyond its considerable functional attributes.

Downtown Anchorage is well suited to a skyway system for the following reasons:

- The compact size of the intensely developed portion of the CBD
- The cold temperatures experienced for three seasons
- The amount of new construction taking place

#### Compact Size

For a skyway system to be effective, destinations along it have to be within easy walking distance or else other modes of travel will be chosen. In downtown Anchorage, the distance between major activity generators in the CBD, such as between L and A Streets, is up to 12 blocks. While a continuous skyway linkage between such generators may not be realistic today in Anchorage, this is a feasible distance to be spanned by a skyway network, judging by the experience of other cities such as Minneapolis.

#### Cold Temperatures

In order for the skyway system to be used, its attractiveness over sidewalks must be demonstrated. The single most effective tool in this regard is climate control, which would be especially welcome from fall through spring in the

Anchorage climate. Cities with the most extensive and successful skyway systems all are known for cold winter temperatures. Experiences in other cities are covered in a later subsection.

#### Amount of New Construction

It is far easier to incorporate skyways in new construction than to retrofit them into existing buildings. New superblock-type developments proposed for the Anchorage include the State Office Complex, the mixed-use retail complex, several proposed office projects, and three new parking structures. All of these new facilities can be planned to incorporate skyway connections among themselves and bridging to adjacent existing structures where possible.

#### Experience in Other Cities

Other cities with extensive skyway systems include Minneapolis, St. Paul, Calgary, Spokane, and others. The Minneapolis system is the most mature skyway system among these and is also the most extensive. The system in Spokane is newer and is instructive primarily because of the similarities between Spokane and Anchorage in terms of population and other factors. Both the Minneapolis and Spokane systems have been studied in some depth in order to establish guidelines for such a system in Anchorage.

The Minneapolis Skyway System. The first leg of the Minneapolis skyway system was completed in 1962. In 1981, the Minneapolis skyway system encompassed 12 city blocks and totaled approximately 6,200 linear feet, including passageways through buildings. By the end of 1982, the system will have an additional 1,800 feet as it

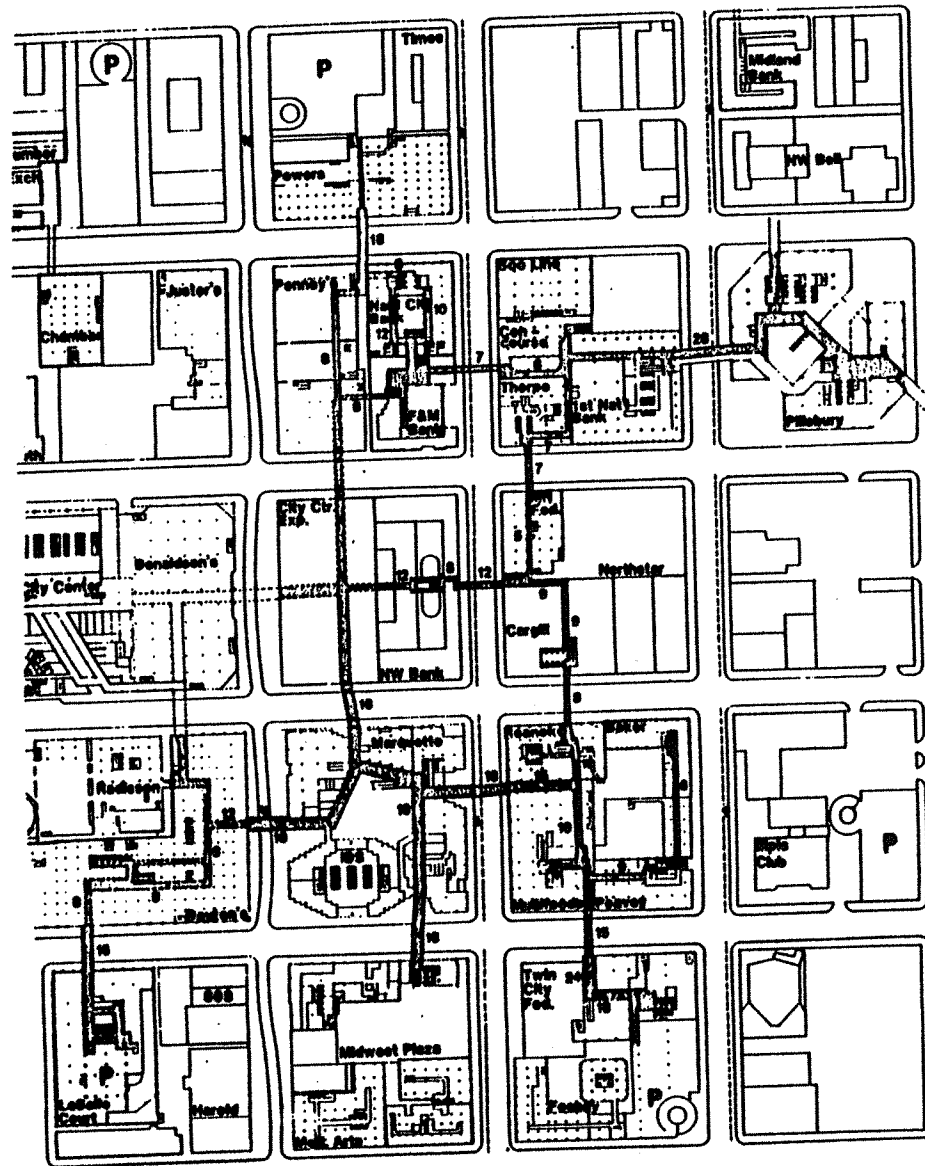


Figure IV.10. Minneapolis skyway system, 1981

expands into a new mixed-use center, to the recently completed Government Center, and to both new and refurbished office buildings at the edge of the CBD core. Pedestrian counts have indicated that the busiest sections of the skyway system have carried up to 4,100 people per hour and as many as 20,000 people per day.

About 42,000 square feet of retail space could be found in the skyway system in 1981, most of it catering to convenience services such as branch banking, photo developing, photocopying, and fast food. Little detraction from street-level business has been noted, though there is some negative sentiment among street-level merchants in blocks not served by skyways.

A plan of the Minneapolis skyways system is provided in Figure IV.10, which notes the widths in feet of the various skyway corridors and bridges.

The Spokane Skywalk System. The Spokane skywalk system was initiated in the early 1970s. By early 1982, it had expanded to encompass nine blocks and about 2,700 linear feet.

Since the system was developed in conjunction with a multi-faceted downtown revitalization program, the focal point of the skywalk system is a mixed-use retail mall linking three existing department stores. The quality of retail space in the Spokane skywalk system is broader than that of Minneapolis, with both convenience-type and high-fashion stores well represented along the skywalk corridors. As with the Minneapolis system, retailers at ground level praised the system if their stores were in blocks served by skywalk and were ambivalent in other locations.

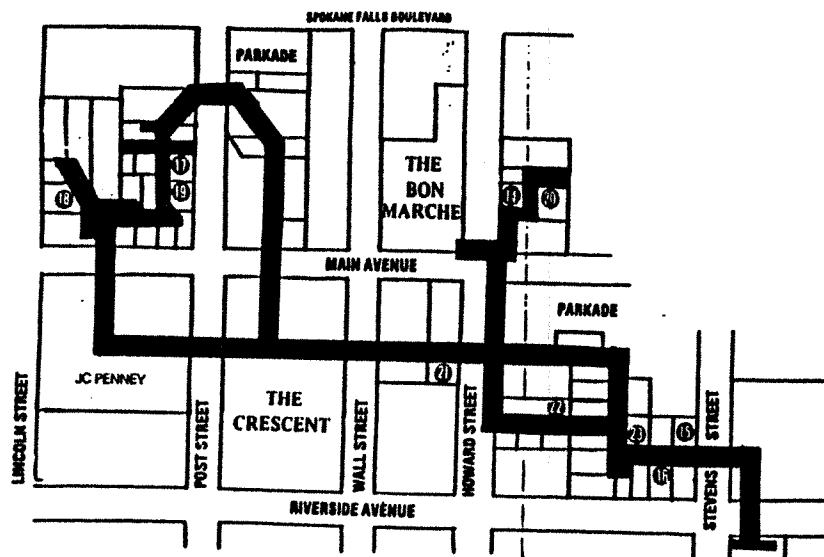


Figure IV. 11. Spokane skywalk system, 1981

A locally drawn plan of the Spokane skywalk system is provided in Figure IV.11. Table IV.2 offers a comparison of the systems in Spokane and Anchorage in tabular form.

#### Guidelines for Skyway Development in Anchorage

Based on study of existing skyway systems and on knowledge of conditions present in downtown Anchorage, guidelines for an embryonic skyway system have been developed. They include the following factors:

- Where skyways should be built first
- Linkage with the street level
- Design factors such as width, architectural treatment, etc.
- Implementation mechanisms

Where Skyways Should Be Built. The first skyways in downtown Anchorage should be incorporated into projects that are recommended for construction during the near-term planning period. These structures include the State Office Complex, the mixed-use retail complex, and the three parking structures proposed for immediate implementation in the CBD. Once this embryonic system is in place, additional linkages can be established between buildings already served by skyways and adjacent activity centers. For example, once the skyway corridors are established in the State Office Complex and the mixed-use retail center, bridges can be built to the existing J. C. Penney and Nordstrom anchor stores. The J. C. Penney store is already connected by skyway to the parking structure immediately to the

TABLE IV.2  
SKYWAY SYSTEM COMPARISON

Characteristic	Minneapolis, Minnesota	Spokane, Washington
Year of Initiation	1962	1971
Total length, 1982 (linear feet)	±8,000	±2,700
Number of blocks served, 1982	17	9
Corridor location	Internal (climatized)	Internal/external (climatized)
Type of retail development	convenience	convenience & fashion
Summer/winter use ratio	60% <sup>1</sup>	N/A
Architectural treatment of bridges	somewhat varied	varied
Visibility/accessibility from street	varies	good
Width of corridors	6-18 ft. (18 ft. current standard)	8-12 ft.
Population served <sup>2</sup>	370,951	171,300

<sup>1</sup> Pedestrian counts in summer indicate about 60% of winter pedestrian counts at comparable hours.

<sup>2</sup> 1980 census for City (not SMSA); comparable figure for Anchorage is 174,431.

south. In this revitalized section of the CBD alone, nine blocks would be interconnected by skyway by the end of the Phase I planning period (Figure IV.12).

Linkage with the Street Level. A comparison of the Minneapolis and Spokane skyways has indicated that a skyway system is much easier to negotiate -- and more conducive to both first- and second-level retail business -- if there are obvious linkages between the two levels. This is best achieved at major courts, where stairs and/or escalators may be provided in a context that attracts people. The IDS Crystal Court in Minneapolis (Figure IV.13) provides this kind of focus and functions as the crossroads of the skyway system in that city. In addition, the effectiveness of the skyway system will be greatly enhanced with uniform graphics, a minimum of signage within corridors, and ~~no signage~~ ~~in corridors~~ ~~level~~ ~~into~~ ~~the~~ ~~skyway~~ ~~system~~ ~~if~~ ~~possible~~ ~~for~~ ~~handicapped~~ ~~access~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~second~~ ~~level~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~skyway~~ ~~system~~ ~~with~~ ~~centrally~~ ~~located~~ ~~card-key-operated~~ ~~elevators~~.

Corridor Width. ~~In Minneapolis, skyway corridors~~ ~~are~~ ~~based~~ ~~on~~ ~~projected~~ ~~pedestrian~~ ~~volumes~~. In Minneapolis, a de facto standard width of 18 feet has been in use for the past several years and appears to be more than adequate for current pedestrian demands. Though they were not subjected to the same level of analysis, the narrower 12-foot corridors in Spokane also appear to be adequately sized, given pedestrian loads in that system. Probably the ~~12-foot~~ ~~width~~ ~~would~~ ~~be~~ ~~adequate~~ ~~in~~ ~~some~~ ~~places~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~Anchorage~~ ~~skyway~~ ~~system~~; however, this finding should be confirmed through a circulation modeling process that allows for future increases in projected demand.

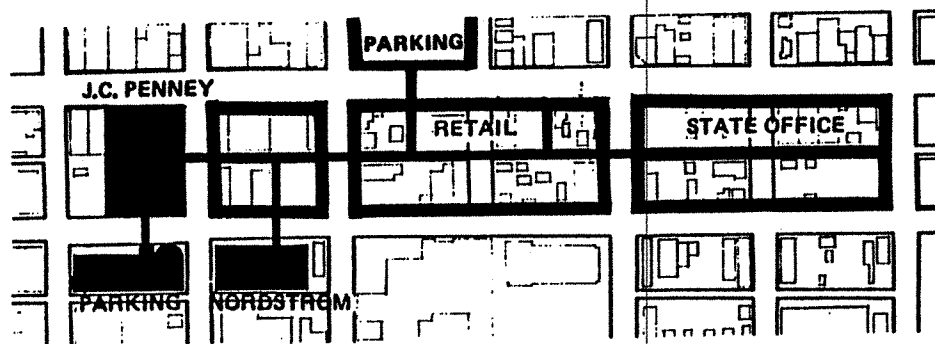


Figure IV.12. Blocks interconnected by proposed skyway system on completion of Phase I projects



Figure IV.13. IDS Crystal Court in Minneapolis functions as hub of skyway system, the focal point of CBD, with clear interchange between levels.

Architectural treatment is a matter of local taste; however, some uniformity should be sought in the design of skyway bridges. Bridges should have an open feeling to allow views to be enjoyed, in spite of possible costs in energy consumption.

~~The amount of glass area also aids in orientation and in relieving the enclosed feeling that might be engendered while walking through internal corridors. Windows overlooking from street level are enhanced by glass doors permitted as the skyway bridge spans from one building to another; any changes in floor level are better accommodated by an internal ramping system that would be invisible from outside the bridge.~~

Implementation Mechanisms. The Municipality should establish a special Skyway Advisory committee to review all proposals for skyways in the CBD and to oversee the design, construction, and monitoring of new skyways. Easements over public rights-of-way have been granted for free in other cities, in exchange for the public rights-of-way through privately owned buildings.

Experience in other cities indicates that skyway bridges can be constructed by the private sector, by the public sector, or by a combination of both. Maintenance is generally paid for by the adjacent building owners linked by skyway bridges; liability insurance is handled in different ways in different cities.

It is recommended that the Municipality establish Skyway Districts within the downtown area. Proposed boundaries for the first skyway district are suggested to be 4th and 7th Avenues and Cordova and E Streets. Essentially, the establishment of a district would require that new construction incorporate skyway facilities, in view

of the skyway's future role as a public thoroughfare. The bonus point system in the Municipal Code could be revised to require such provisions.

#### REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup>Informal survey by Gruen Associates, January 1982.

## Chapter V

### PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Downtown Anchorage needs an overall parking policy. This is one of the overriding findings of the Comprehensive Development Plan program. The future of the downtown area appears to be very positive in terms of its development potential in the retail, office, and hotel sectors. However, this forecast is contingent, in all cases, on the supply of convenient parking to serve existing and new developments. Very little of this parking has been provided, for a number of reasons that are discussed in this chapter.

Adopted goals for downtown envision a healthy, mixed-use urban center. If downtown Anchorage is to reach its full potential, its development over the next five to ten years will be critical, according to economic studies. The failure to close an ever-increasing gap between parking demand and supply could adversely affect the prospects for these developments in the near term.

It is clear that coming to grips with the parking problem will require a two-phase approach. The initial phase would address downtown's short-term needs to assure the best possible position for downtown to achieve its critical immediate development goals and establish itself as the dominant urban center in the region. Once this is achieved, a longer-range policy -- which can and should be developed now -- can be put into effect.

This chapter examines the inventory of existing parking facilities throughout the central part of downtown, points out emerging conditions that

must be addressed, and suggests a parking management strategy to meet both short- and long-term concerns.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing parking facilities in the Anchorage CBD were surveyed by the consulting team in November 1981. The area covered in this survey includes the primary commercial district, bounded by L and Cordova Streets and 3rd and 9th Avenues. The results of this survey have been mapped in Figures V.1 and V.2, which indicate publicly owned and privately owned parking facilities, respectively.

### Public Parking Facilities

Figure V.1 indicates the presence of three major public parking structures: the State Courts parking structure on 3rd Avenue between H and I Streets, the 7th Avenue/G Street garage, and the Captain Cook garage between 4th and 5th Avenues along the west side of K Street. All public parking structures and open lots are operated by private concessionaires, and all parking revenues go to the general fund. The combined capacity of these three structures is 1,343 cars (Table V.1).

The Captain Cook garage was developed by the Municipality and the land is still under Municipal ownership. However, the garage has subsequently come under the control of a private entity under an agreement with the Municipality. In establishing this arrangement, the Municipality agreed not to develop public parking facilities within three blocks in any direction of the garage. In spite of the public/private status of the Captain

Cook garage, it -- as with the other parking structures mentioned above -- is available to the general public.

TABLE V.1  
INVENTORY OF  
PUBLIC PARKING SPACES IN STRUCTURES  
(GENERAL ACCESS)

Name of Structure	Year Developed	Number of Spaces
State Courts	1977	178
Captain Cook	1979	640
7th and G	1975	525
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,343</b>



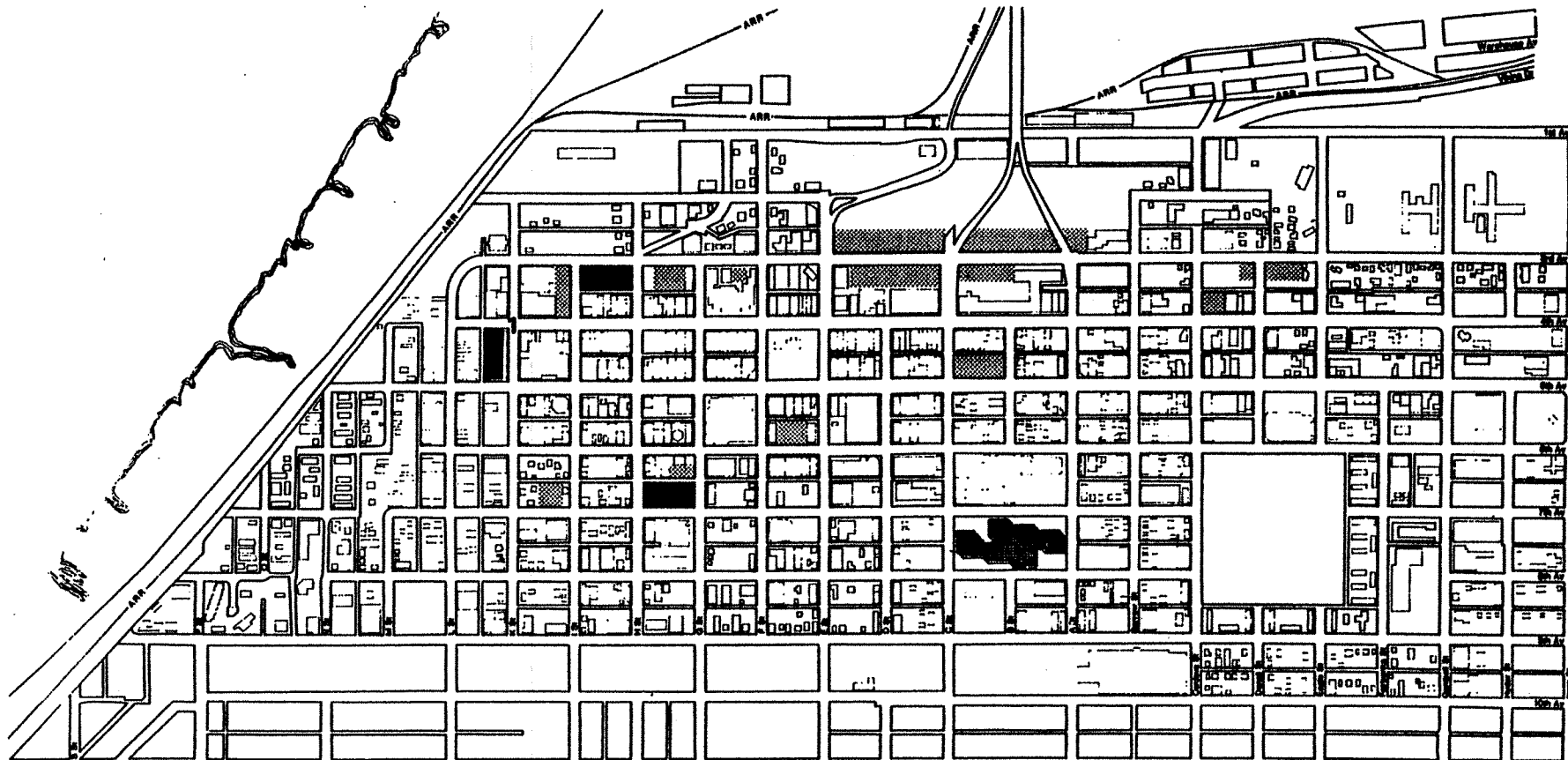
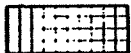


FIGURE V.1

# Publicly Developed Parking



**STRUCTURE – GENERAL PURPOSE**

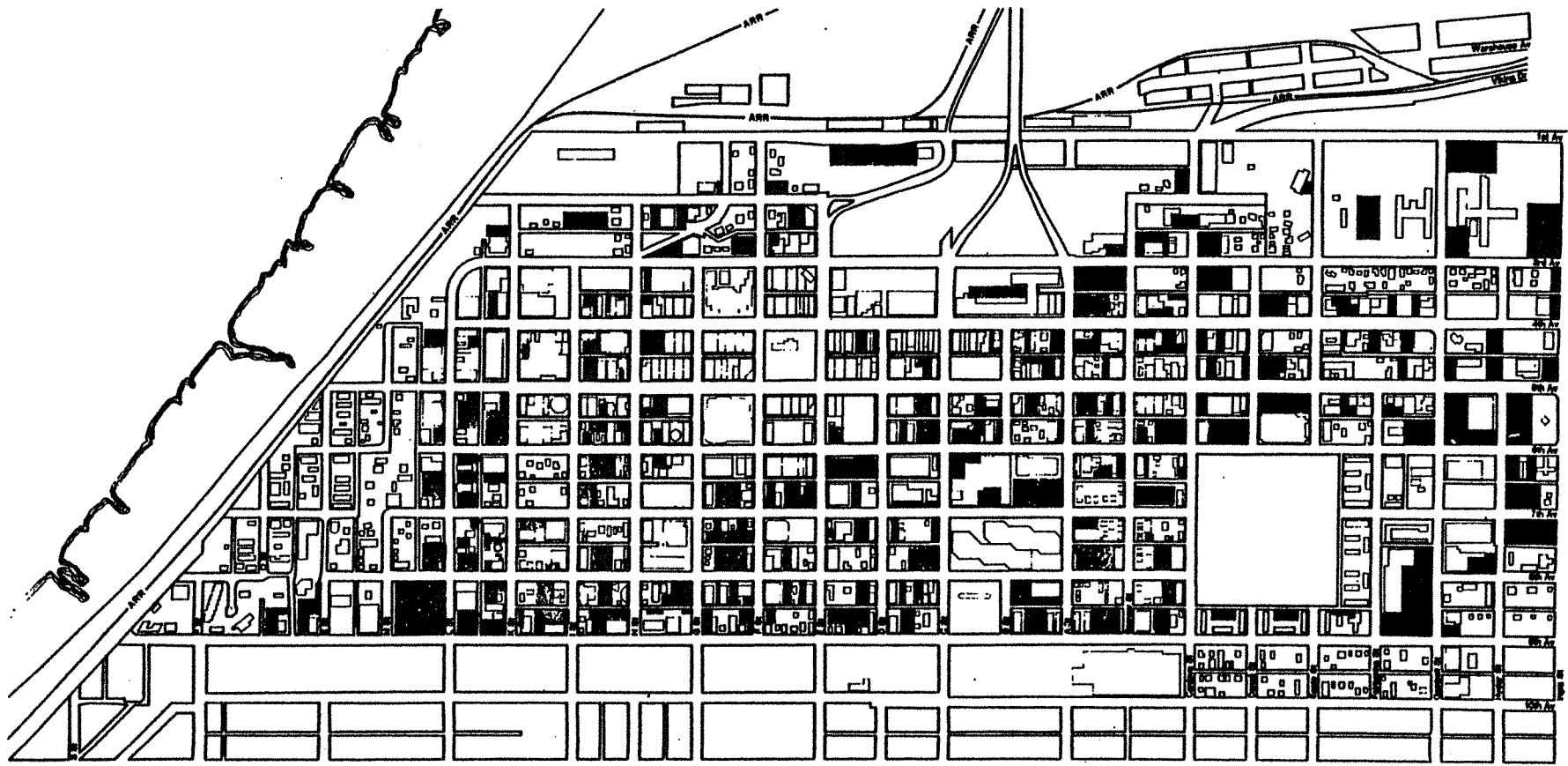


**STRUCTURE – SPECIALIZED PURPOSE**

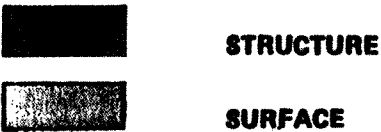


**SURFACE**

**1 CAPTAIN COOK GARAGE PUBLICLY DEVELOPED,  
BUT NOW UNDER PRIVATE MANAGEMENT**



**FIGURE V.2**  
**Privately Developed Parking**



The new Federal Office Complex contains an underground garage with a capacity of 465 spaces. However, this garage is intended specifically for federal employees and for those with business at the complex and is thus not available to the general public.

In addition to structured parking, surface public parking can be found at approximately ten locations throughout the Anchorage CBD on land owned by various governmental entities.

#### Private Parking Facilities

Figure V.2 shows the locations of the various parking structures and surface parking lots under private ownership. Included are some enclosed parking facilities within buildings that are available to visitors.

The most significant parking structure under private ownership in the Anchorage CBD is the ramp immediately south of J. C. Penney, with a capacity of approximately 600 cars. The majority of privately owned parking facilities can be found in surface parking lots, most of which appear to operate on a monthly contract basis. Relatively few of these surface lots still remain in the central core area of downtown; most are in the fringe areas south of 6th Avenue and east of C Street.

#### On-Street Parking

Most streets in the Anchorage CBD feature curb parking on both sides of the street; a few major arterials have parking on only one side of the street; and in rare instances on-street parking is not permitted at all. Fees for on-street parking in metered areas was \$.25 per hour in winter 1982.

Parking is also currently permitted in the area south of the park strip. Although this area is not within the CBD, it is used extensively for all-day parking because of its easy accessibility to downtown employment centers and the fact that it is free. It is estimated that at least 270 downtown employees currently park on the streets in this area. Residents in the Fairview and South Addition communities have expressed concern over this situation. A concept that would involve residential parking permits -- effectively prohibiting all non-residents from long-term parking in the area -- has been under discussion in the community.

#### PARKING DEMAND/SUPPLY ANALYSIS

Parking demand is directly influenced by the amount of new construction occurring downtown. The years since 1975 have produced a significant amount of new building square footage in over 30 new developments in the CBD. Only three of these developments add a substantial amount of new parking to the CBD: the Captain Cook garage, the 7th Avenue/G Street garage, and the State Courts garage. The remainder provide relatively little or no on-site parking in comparison to the amount of parking demand they generate.

Figures V.3 and V.4 indicate the locations of this substantial new construction in the downtown area, Figure V.3 showing projects completed or under construction since 1975 and Figure V.4 showing projects committed or proposed to be built within the next five years. The identification numbers in these figures are keyed to the names of the projects, provided in Tables V.2 and V.3.

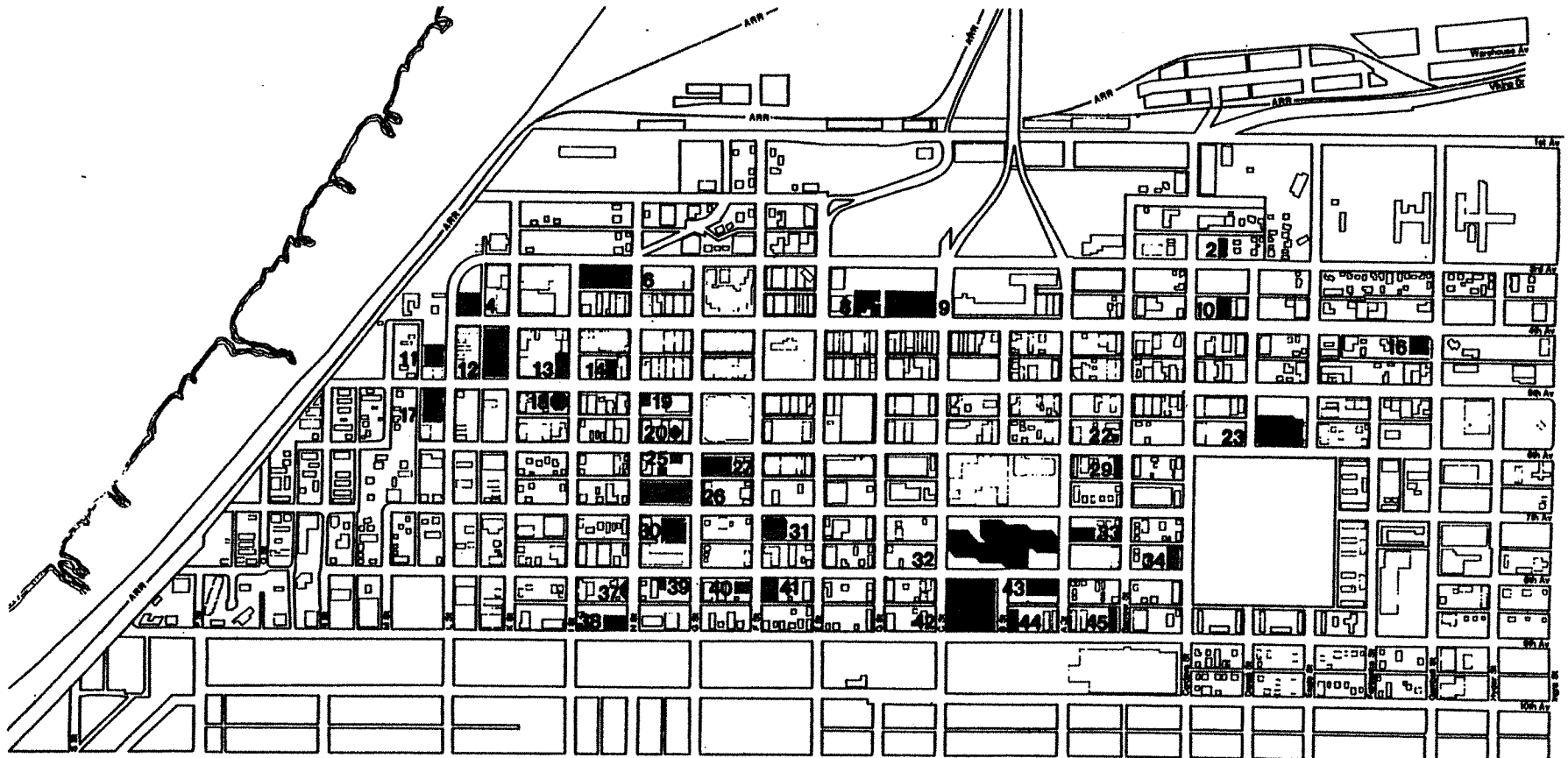


FIGURE V.3

# Development Projects Since 1975



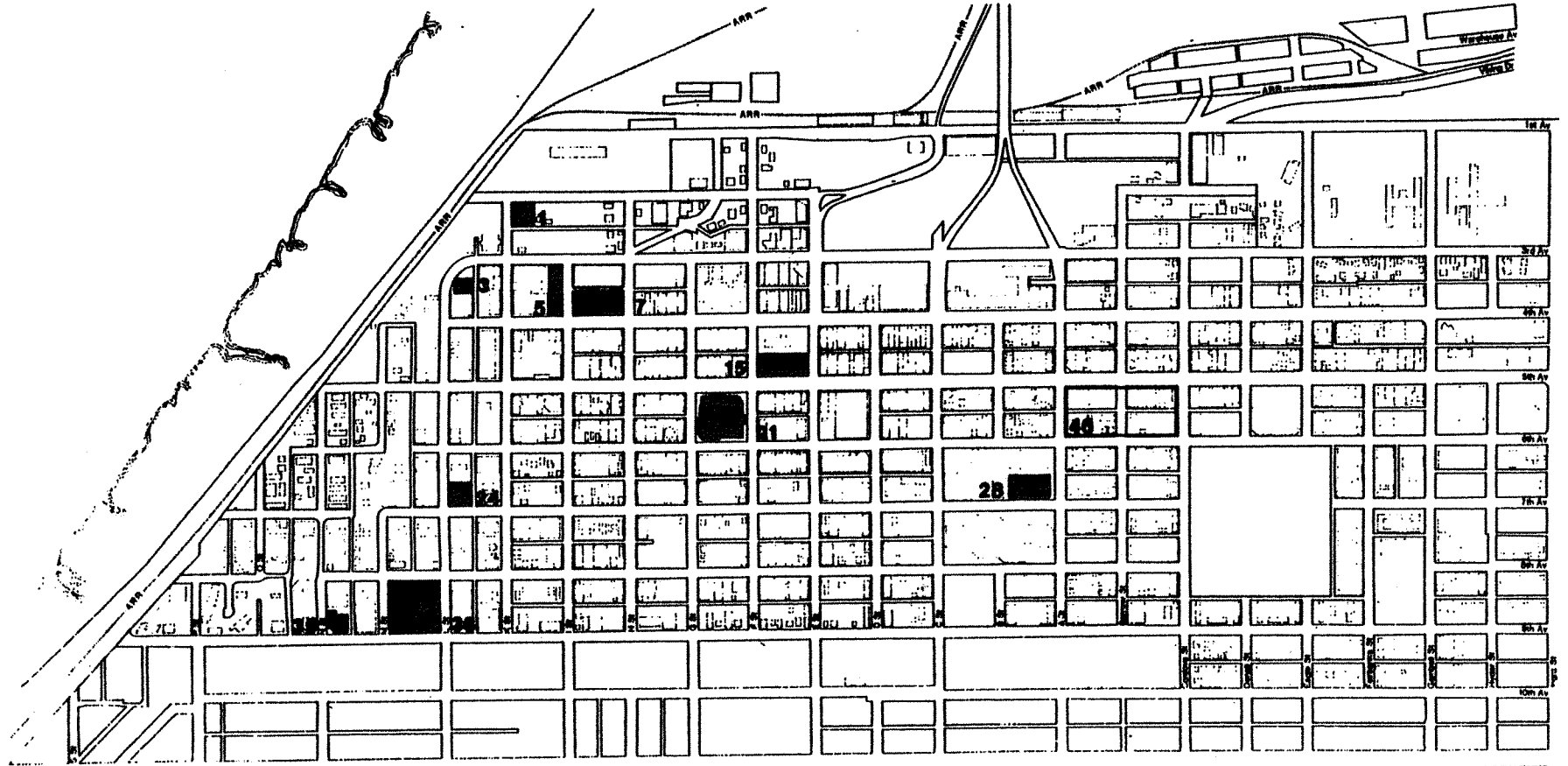
**BUILDINGS COMPLETED AND UNDER CONSTRUCTION REFERENCED TO TABLE**

**TABLE V.2  
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN ANCHORAGE CBD  
SINCE 1975  
COMPLETED AND UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

		Public	Private			Public	Private
2	Community	•		41	Office		•
4	Resolution Tower		•	42	Federal Office	•	
6	State Parking Garage	•		43	Office		•
8	Sunshine Mall		•	46	Hotel		•
9	Post Office Shopping Mall		•	45	Office		•
10	McKay State Office		•				
11	420 L Street		•				
12	Captain Cook Garage	•					
13	Captain Cook Tower 3		•				
14	Daily News Extension		•				
16	Fisher Blaunfeld Office		•				
17	500 & 510 L Street Buildings		•				
18	Octagon Tower		•				
19	Sisters of Charity		•				
20	Alaska Experiment Theater		•				
22	Alaska Body Shop		•				
23	Sheraton Hotel		•				
25	Bus Accommodation Center	•					
26	8th & G Garage	•					
27	Municipal Office	•	•				
29	Residence		•				
30	Arco Building		•				
31	Hunt Building		•				
32	Federal Building	•					
33	Office		•				
34	Office		•				
37	Drive-In Bank		•				
38	Security Bank		•				
40	M & P		•				

**TABLE V.3  
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN ANCHORAGE CBD  
COMMITTED AND PROPOSED**

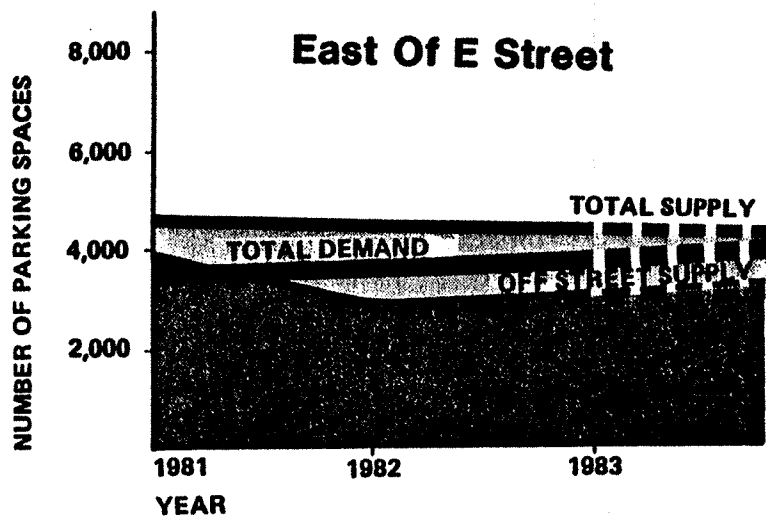
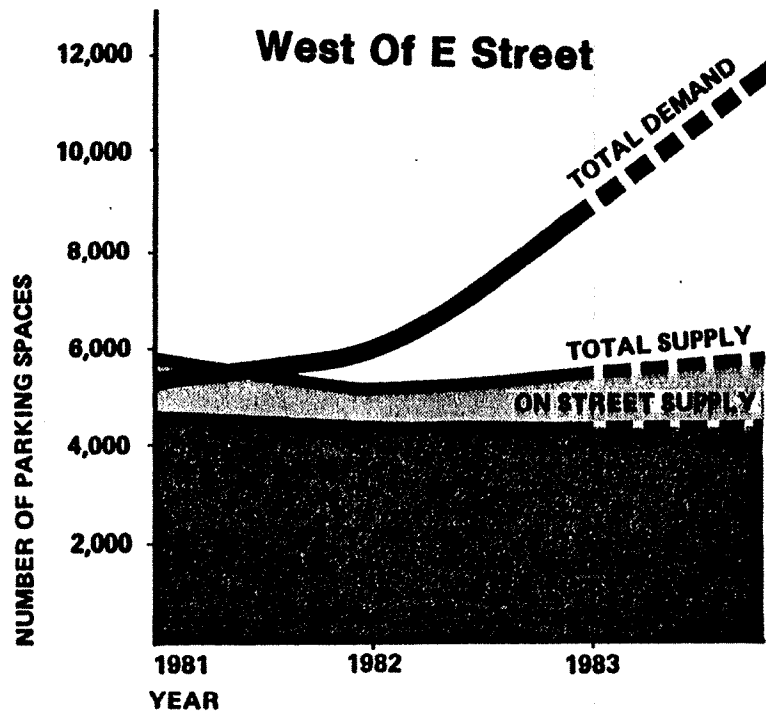
		Public	Private
15	Convention Center	•	
21	Performing Arts Center	•	
28	Museum Expansion	•	
35	Kuskolwin Office		•
46	A/B/C Alternative State Office Complex Sites	•	
<u>Proposed</u>			
1	Spec. Office		•
3	Susitna Building		•
5	State Courthouse Addition	•	
7	State Parking Garage Addition	•	
24	Office		•
36	Office		•



**FIGURE V.A**

# **Committed And Proposed Development Projects**

**TABLE V.4. CBD PARKING DEMAND/SUPPLY ANALYSIS - AREA BREAKDOWN**



Impact of New Construction

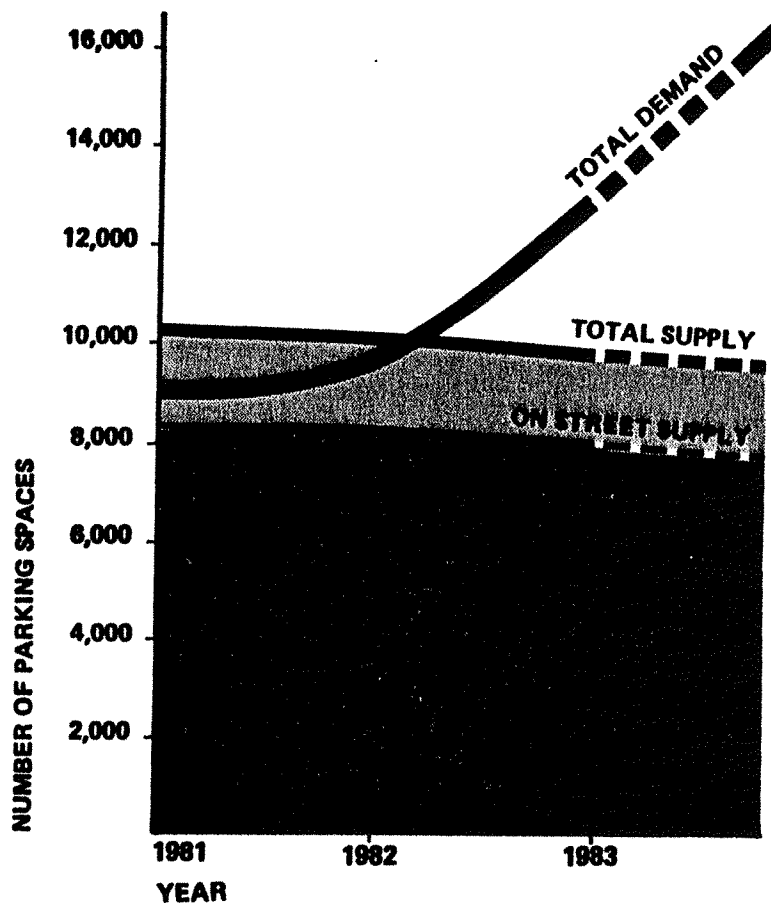
New construction in downtown Anchorage will generate a parking demand which greatly exceeds the existing parking supply provided either on site or off site. The problem is generally most acute in the sector of the CBD west of E Street. Four factors are associated with the increasing parking shortage:

- The additional demand for parking generated by new building construction
- The removal of existing surface parking spaces to make way for new construction
- The inadequacy of on-site or off-site public parking to meet additional demand
- The lack of a program for public parking to meet needs generated by both public and private development, coupled with the fact that parking spaces are not required in the CBD by zoning, but rather are left to the discretion of the private sector

Tables V.4 and V.5 summarize the disparity between parking demand, which is accelerating, and parking supply, which has not risen significantly, for the sections of the CBD on either side of E Street and for the entire CBD.

Additional Demand Generated by New Construction. The extent of new parking demand generated by development between 1975 and 1981 is shown in Table V.6 along with the amount of parking provided within the building "footprint" of each project (the area displaced by actual construction, excluding associated surface parking areas).

**TABLE V.5. CBD PARKING DEMAND/SUPPLY ANALYSIS - ENTIRE CBD**



Tables V.7 and V.8 show in a similar manner the estimated parking supply and demand factors associated with projects under construction or committed for construction and those that are proposed.

Estimates are derived from developers' data when available, from the parking survey (for parking structures), and -- where the aforementioned data sources were not available, from parking factors by building use suggested by Wilbur Smith & Associates for the Anchorage area.<sup>2</sup>

These factors are:

Retail	1.0 cars/1,000 square feet <sup>3</sup>
Office	3.2 cars/1,000 square feet
Hotel	0.7 cars/1,000 square feet

It should be noted that, especially for retail, the parking factor used in previous analyses is very low. According to the Urban Land Institute,<sup>4</sup> the prevailing standard for shopping center parking capacity has been 5.5 cars per 1,000 square feet of retail area. In recent years, for urban locations, the parking index has tended to be lower, in the range of 3.5 to 4.0. The suggested factors, however, have been used to provide a very conservative estimate of current parking demand. For future retail parking demand, a factor of 3.5 is recommended.

During the period between 1975 and 1981, the three public structures at 7th Avenue and G Street, in the block west of the Captain Cook Hotel, and at the State Courts complex, represent the only significant additions to the downtown parking supply, as noted earlier.



**TABLE V.6  
PARKING DEMAND/SUPPLY ANALYSIS  
RECENT COMPLETED PROJECTS**

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION				AREA ANALYSIS				PARKING ADEQUACY ANALYSIS				
Project Name	Block Number	Year of Completion	Private	Public	Approximate Footprint Area	Approximate Total Square Footage	Predominant Use/ Number of Floors	Total Number of Levels	Estimated Occupancy (When Available)	Estimated Parking Demand (Number of Spaces)	On-Site Parking Provided Within Footprint Area (Number of Spaces)	Surplus (Deficit) Of Parking Spaces
Post Office Shopping Mall	24A	1975	●		36,955 <sup>1</sup>	110,865 <sup>1</sup>	Retail <sup>5</sup> /2 Office/1	3	NA	74 118 192 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup> 0 <sup>2</sup>	(192)
Sunshine Mall	24A	1978	●		15,002 <sup>1</sup>	45,006 <sup>1</sup>	Retail <sup>5</sup> /2 Office/1	3	NA	30 48 78 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(78)
State Courts Parking Garage	29	1977		●	34,375 <sup>1</sup>	68,750 <sup>1</sup>	Parking/2	2	0	0	178 <sup>1</sup>	178
420 "L" St. Building	36	1978	●		11,984 <sup>1</sup>	59,920 <sup>1</sup>	Retail <sup>5</sup> /1 Office/4	5	NA	12 153 165 <sup>3</sup>	28 <sup>2</sup>	(137)
Capt. Cook Garage	37	1979		●	38,425 <sup>2</sup>	115,275 <sup>2</sup>	Retail/1 Parking	3	0	0 <sup>3</sup>	640	640
Capt. Cook Tower 3	38	1978	●		8,060 <sup>1</sup>	161,200 <sup>1</sup>	Storage/1 Retail/1 Hotel/18	20	NA	8 20 110 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(110)
Anchorage Times Expansion	39	1976	●		5,000 <sup>1</sup>	5,000 <sup>1</sup>	Warehouse Industrial/1	1	NA	NA <sup>6</sup>	NA <sup>6</sup>	NA <sup>6</sup>
Sheraton Hotel	20	1979	●		49,959 <sup>2</sup> (16,720 Hotel, 28,995 <sup>1</sup> Retail & Storage 13,954 <sup>1</sup> Parking)	325,515 <sup>1</sup>	Hotel/16 Retail/1 Parking/2 Storage/1	18	NA	187 29 216 <sup>1</sup>	65 <sup>4</sup>	(151)
Fisher Blaunfeld Office	25B	Recent	●		10,800 <sup>2</sup>	32,400 <sup>2</sup>	Office/3	3	NA	103 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(103)
Anchorage Beauty Shop	47	1981	●		3,250 <sup>2</sup>	3,250 <sup>2</sup>	Retail/1	1	NA	3 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(3)

**TABLE V.6  
PARKING DEMAND/SUPPLY ANALYSIS  
RECENT COMPLETED PROJECTS**

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION			AREA ANALYSIS					PARKING ADEQUACY ANALYSIS				
Project Name	Block Number	Year of Completion	Private	Public	Approximate Footprint Area	Approximate Total Square Footage	Predominant Use/ Number of Floors	Total Number of Levels	Estimated Occupancy (When Available)	Estimated Parking Demand (Number of Spaces)	On-Site Parking Provided Within Footprint Area (Number of Spaces)	Surplus (Deficit) Of Parking Spaces
Sisters of Charity	54	Recent	●		3,500 <sup>2</sup>	10,500 <sup>2</sup>	Retail/1 Office/2	3	NA	4 22 26 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(26)
Octagon Tower	56	1980	●		11,200 <sup>2</sup>	89,600 <sup>2</sup>	Office/8	8	NA	287 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(287)
500 "L" St. Building	57	1981	●		6,009 <sup>1</sup>	35,000 <sup>1</sup>	Office/4	4	175 <sup>1</sup>	112 <sup>2</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(112)
510 "L" St. Building	57	1976	●		13,702 <sup>1</sup>	137,020 <sup>2</sup>	Parking/2 Office/6 Residential/2	10	NA	263 <sup>3</sup> (Office only)	64 <sup>4</sup>	(199)
Bus Accommodation Center	68	1978		●	2,118 <sup>1</sup>	2,118 <sup>2</sup>	Institutional/1	1	NA	0 <sup>2</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	0
7th & G. St. Residential	68 110	1975 1981		●	36,400 <sup>2</sup> 4,625 <sup>1</sup>	145,600 9,350 <sup>2</sup>	Parking/5 Parking/1 Residential/5	5 6	0 NA	0 <sup>2</sup> NA <sup>6</sup>	525 <sup>1</sup> NA	525 NA <sup>6</sup>
Office	108	Recent	●		11,050 <sup>2</sup>	33,150 <sup>2</sup>	Office/3	3	NA	106 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(106)
Office	109	Recent	●		11,200 <sup>2</sup>	22,400 <sup>2</sup>	Office/2	2	NA	73 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(72)
Federal Building	75, 76	1980		●	128,000 <sup>1</sup>	640,000 <sup>1</sup>	Office/5	5	1,500	2,048 <sup>3</sup>	465 <sup>1</sup>	(1,583)
Drive-In Bank	98	1981	●		2,775 <sup>2</sup>	2,775 <sup>2</sup>	Office/1	1	NA	9 <sup>2</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(9)
Security Bank	98	1981	●		2,775 <sup>1</sup>	2,775 <sup>1</sup>	Office/1	1	NA	9 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(9)
Office	101	1975	●		6,840 <sup>1</sup>	20,520 <sup>2</sup>	Office/3	3	NA	66 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(66)
Federal Office	104	1981		●	80,000 <sup>2</sup>	80,000 <sup>2</sup>	Office/1	1	NA	256 <sup>3</sup>	10	(246)
Office	105	Recent	●		14,400 <sup>2</sup>	28,800 <sup>2</sup>	Office/2	2	NA	92 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(92)

**TABLE V.6  
PARKING DEMAND/SUPPLY ANALYSIS  
RECENT COMPLETED PROJECTS**

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION			AREA ANALYSIS						PARKING ADEQUACY ANALYSIS			
Project Name	Block Number	Year of Completion	Private	Public	Approximate Footprint Area	Approximate Total Square Footage	Predominant Use/ Number of Floors	Total Number of Levels	Estimated Occupancy (When Available)	Estimated Parking Demand (Number of Spaces)	On-Site Parking Provided Within Footprint Area (Number of Spaces)	Surplus (Deficit) Of Parking Spaces
Hotel	105	Recent	•		6,000 <sup>2</sup>	30,000 <sup>2</sup>	Hotel/5	5	NA	21 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(21)
Alaska Experimental Theater	53	1981	•		2,500 <sup>1</sup>	2,500 <sup>1</sup>	Retail/1	1	NA	NA <sup>6</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	NA <sup>6</sup>
Office	106	1981	•		6,250 <sup>1</sup>	12,500 <sup>2</sup>	Parking/1 Office/2	2	NA	40 <sup>3</sup>	20 <sup>1</sup>	(20)
Maynard and Partch	100	1979	•		5,508 <sup>1</sup>	11,016 <sup>2</sup>	Office/2	2	30 <sup>1</sup>	35 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	(35)
McKay State Office (Remodeled)	23	1969		•	10,671 <sup>1</sup>	32,013 <sup>2</sup>	Office/3	3	NA	102 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(102)
Municipal Hill Building (Remodeled)	69	1979		•	18,000 <sup>1</sup>	144,000 <sup>2</sup>	Office/8	8	NA	461 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(461)
Community Building	37B	Recent		•	3,600 <sup>2</sup>	14,400 <sup>2</sup>	Institutional/4	4	NA	NA	0 <sup>2</sup>	NA
Office	119	Recent	•		5,000 <sup>2</sup>	15,000 <sup>2</sup>	Office/3	3	NA	48 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	(48)
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>					<b>605,933</b>	<b>2,448,218</b>				<b>4,805</b>	<b>2,493</b>	<b>(3,399)</b>

<sup>1</sup>From plans, developer's data, or municipality data

<sup>2</sup>From arterial photo and site reconnaissance

<sup>3</sup>Using factor of 1.0/1,000 s.f. for retail  
3.2/1,000 s.f. for office  
0.7/1,000 s.f. for hotels

<sup>4</sup>Footprint area divided by 430 s.f./car (including circulation)

<sup>5</sup>Includes restaurants

<sup>6</sup>Highest demand assumed to occur at off-peak hours

**TABLE V.7  
PARKING DEMAND/SUPPLY ANALYSIS PROJECTS  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR COMMITTED**

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION			AREA ANALYSIS					PARKING ADEQUACY ANALYSIS				
Project Name	Block Number	Year of Completion	Private	Public	Approximate Footprint Area	Approximate Total Square Footage	Predominant Use/ Number of Floors	Total Number of Levels	Estimated Occupancy (When Available)	Estimated Parking Demand (Number of Spaces)	On-Site Parking Provided Within Footprint Area (Number of Spaces)	Surplus (Deficit) of Parking Spaces
Resolution Tower	31	1982	•		15,600 <sup>1</sup>	92,000 <sup>1</sup>	Office/6	6	500 <sup>1</sup>	294 <sup>3</sup>	34 <sup>1</sup>	(260)
Convention Center	42	1983		•	45,105 <sup>1</sup>	100,000	Institutional/2	2	NA	NA <sup>6</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>6</sup>
Performing Arts Center	53	1983+		•	82,944 <sup>1</sup>	414,720 <sup>1</sup>	Institutional/5	5	NA	NA <sup>6</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>6</sup>
Museum Expansion	74	1983+		•	61,000 <sup>2</sup>	134,000 <sup>2</sup> (includes parking & storage)	Institutional	(in design)	NA	NA <sup>6</sup>	100 <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>6</sup>
State Office Building	77,103	1983+		•	127,800	639,000 <sup>1</sup> (Phases I and II)	Office	5 (assumed)	2,800 <sup>1</sup>	2,045 <sup>3</sup>	1,000 <sup>1</sup>	(1,045)
Hunt Building	79	1982	•		37,700 <sup>1</sup>	350,000 <sup>1</sup>	Office/19 Parking/1	20	1,500 <sup>1</sup>	1,120 <sup>3</sup>	85 <sup>1</sup>	(1,035)
ARCO Building	81	1982	•		19,600 <sup>1</sup>	429,900	Office/19 Parking/2	21	2,000 <sup>1</sup>	1,376 <sup>3</sup>	80 <sup>1</sup>	(1,296)
Kuskokwin Office	94	1983	•		5,099 <sup>1</sup>	10,308 <sup>1</sup>	Office/2	2	NA	33 <sup>3</sup>	16 <sup>1</sup>	(17)
<b>TOTAL</b>						2,169,928			6,800	4,868	1,315	(3,553)

<sup>1</sup>From plans, developers data, or municipality data

<sup>2</sup>From arterial photo and site reconnaissance

<sup>3</sup>Using factor of 1.0/1,000 s.f. for retail  
3.2/1,000 s.f. for office  
0.7/1,000 s.f. for hotels

<sup>4</sup>Footprint area divided by 430 s.f./car  
(including circulation)

<sup>5</sup>Includes restaurants

<sup>6</sup>Highest demand assumed to occur at off-peak hours

**TABLE V.8  
PARKING DEMAND/SUPPLY ANALYSIS  
PROPOSED PROJECTS**

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION				AREA ANALYSIS				PARKING ADEQUACY ANALYSIS				
Project Name	Block Number	Year of Completion	Private	Public	Approximate Footprint Area	Approximate Total Square Footage	Predominant Use/ Number of Floors	Total Number of Levels	Estimated Occupancy (When Available)	Estimated Parking Demand (Number of Spaces)	On-Site Parking Provided Within Footprint Area (Number of Spaces)	Surplus (Deficit) Of Parking Spaces
Spec. Office	13	1983	•		NA	NA	Office	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Susitna Building	31	1983	•		5,000	50,000	Office	10	NA	160 <sup>3</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	(160)
Office	65	1983	•		NA	NA	Office	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Office	95	1983	•		NA	NA	Office	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

<sup>1</sup>From plans, developer's data, or municipality data

<sup>2</sup>From arterial photo and site reconnaissance

<sup>3</sup>Using factor of 1.0/1,000 s.f. for retail  
3.2/1,000 s.f. for office  
0.7/1,000 s.f. for hotels

<sup>4</sup>Footprint area divided by 430 s.f./car (including circulation)

<sup>5</sup>Includes restaurants

<sup>6</sup>Highest demand assumed to occur at off-peak hours

Tables V.6 through V.8 intentionally do not take into consideration any surface parking that may be provided by developers on land adjoining new projects, since nearly all such surface lots (and, thus, parking supply) existed prior to building construction. For that reason, such parking provisions cannot be considered additions to the existing parking supply. One of the key messages of the table is to point out that what once was a significant parking supply surplus in downtown Anchorage, as measured by available surface area not used for buildings, has vanished within the last several years of extensive building construction, thus further aggravating the parking situation.

#### Removal of Existing Surface Parking Spaces.

Projects that have been completed in downtown Anchorage since 1975 often occupy space that was previously used for surface parking. Assuming that only half of this land was previously available for parking, it can be estimated that this new construction contributed to the loss of over 700 spaces. If structures now under construction or committed for development by 1985 are included, this figure would increase to over 1,160 spaces, still under the same assumption.

#### Inadequacy of On-Site Parking to Meet Demand.

Title 21 of the Anchorage Municipal Code, the Land Use Regulation, requires no parking structures in the CBD. Parking for new construction is provided solely at the discretion of building developers and owners. Generous incentives in the code to encourage developers to provide parking in new structures (see Chapter II) may be partly responsible for the parking that has been provided.

As indicated in Table V.6, the demand for new parking spaces generated by all new construction in downtown Anchorage between 1975 and 1981 is estimated to be about 4,800, using factors for building use developed by Wilbur Smith and Associates in previous municipal studies. In the same period, the number of new parking spaces provided in downtown Anchorage totalled only 1,493, including space in three public parking structures. Thus, since 1975 there has developed a gap between parking demand and supply of about 3,300 spaces.

An example of how this can occur is illustrated by taking just four representative development projects that are now under construction or committed for development in the CBD: Resolution Tower (in final phases of construction), the Hunt and ARCO Towers (under construction), and the State Office Complex (committed for development). These four projects alone only provide about 2,000 parking spaces while they will generate a demand of over 4,800 parking spaces. Therefore, these four projects alone create a deficiency of over 2,800 parking spaces, not even taking into account the loss of existing surface spaces in building footprints.

Lack of Public Parking Program. Since the Municipal Land Use Code requires no parking to be provided for developments within the three B-2 zones that encompass the major portion of the CBD, the implication is that such parking would be provided by some other means. Such parking clearly has not been provided, since the 1,343 public parking spaces in the three structures built since 1975 falls far short of meeting the demand associated with all new downtown construction.

## Magnitude of the Problem

Short Term. As indicated in Tables V.4 and V.5, a separate analysis of parking demand and supply conducted by the staff of the Municipality found the parking supply in the CBD to be falling behind demand in early 1982. The Municipal analysis determined that, by 1983, the gap between demand and supply of parking spaces would increase to approximately 4,000 spaces.

The consulting team analysis did not assess overall parking supply and demand from "ground zero." (Such an analysis would have required a total survey of all buildings in the CBD, their sizes, and the intensity of the parking demand each building generates.) However, the analysis concurs with the Municipal analysis in projecting a serious parking space shortage that will be experienced by 1983, taking into account only projects now under construction or committed to be built and based on very conservative parking factors (for example, the assumption that cultural and visitor facilities will generate little or no demand at peak hours). The conclusion of the consulting team analysis is that new parking demand will outstrip new parking supply by over 3,500 spaces by 1983.

Long Term. An analysis of long-term parking demand conducted by the Municipal Physical Planning Division has indicated a probable acceleration in parking deficit over the next 15 years. Based on a projected employment growth of nearly 100 percent in the period from 1980 to 2000 -- from 11,705 to 22,185 employees -- there would be a parking deficit of nearly 6,600 spaces in 1992 or of nearly 11,000 spaces by 2001.

Other factors that must be considered in conjunction with these projections of long-term parking needs include:

- The loss of existing parking spaces through new construction and through possible elimination of on-street parking in the CBD
- The role that might be played by transit, ride-sharing, and nearby residential development in tempering the demand for close-in employee parking

## SUMMARY OF EMERGING TRENDS

The foregoing analysis of downtown parking demand and supply points to a trend where, simultaneously, parking demand is increasing and parking supply is decreasing. The impact of this trend is expected to be felt acutely by 1983, when the shortfall of new parking supply in meeting new parking demand will be in the neighborhood of 3,500 to 4,000 parking spaces.

## Parking Shortfall and Proposed Programs

The analysis in the preceding section generally considered only projects that were specifically proposed or committed for development. Not included in some tabulations were recommended projects that are cornerstones of downtown revitalization such as:

- A State Office Complex -- included in the consulting team analysis but not in the Municipal investigation

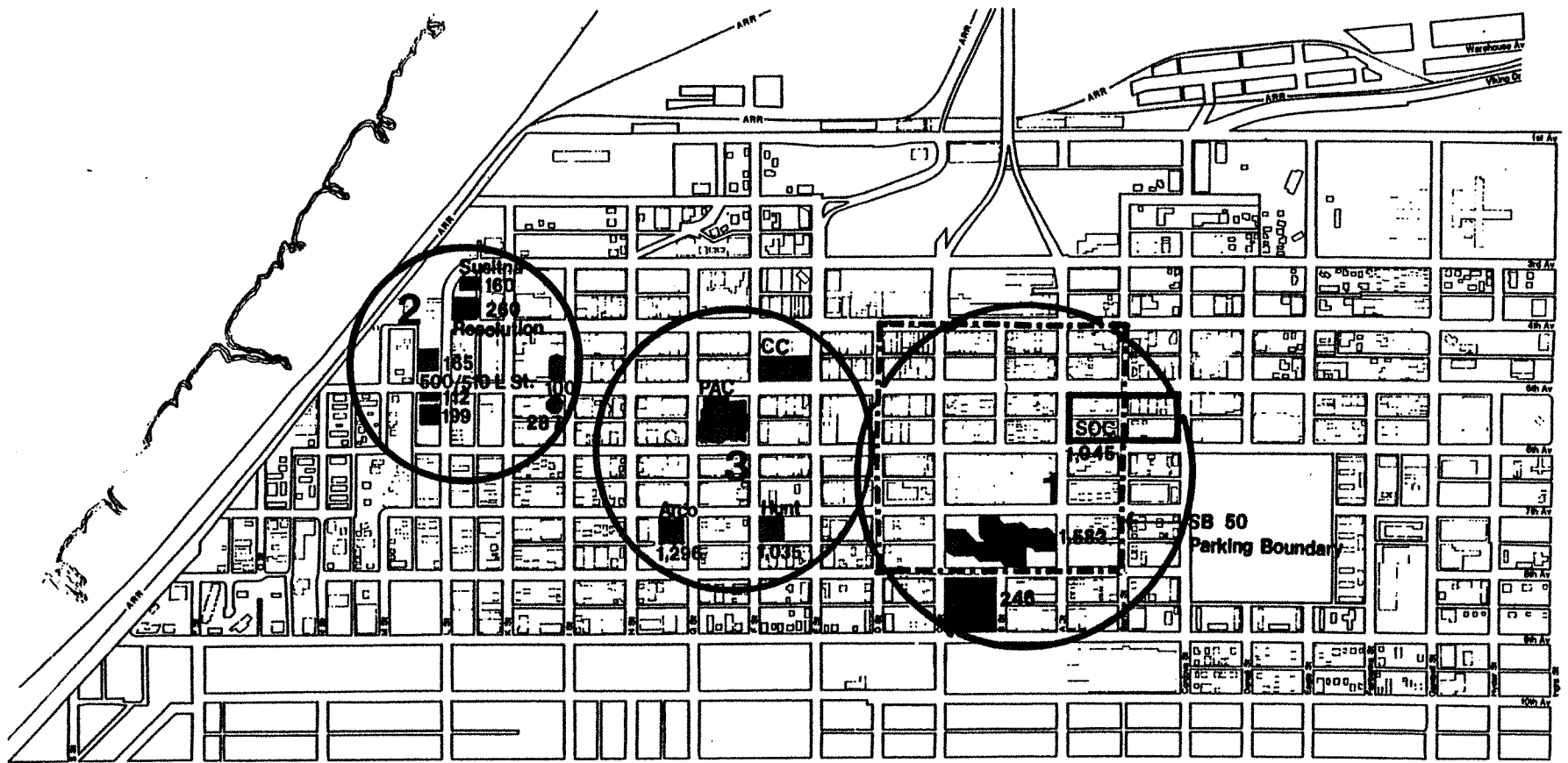


FIGURE V.5

# Zones Of Greatest Parking Deficiency, 1982-85



**NUMBERS REPRESENT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
ESTIMATED INCREASED PARKING DEMAND  
AND NEWLY CREATED ON-SITE PARKING SUPPLY**



- A mixed-use retail complex that is expected to invigorate and diversify existing downtown retail trade and firmly establish downtown as the key retailing center in the Anchorage region
- Other private developments that will round out key publicly coordinated "turnkey" projects

### Summary of Parking Demand/Supply Analysis

The parking demand/supply analysis has concluded that convenient, off-street parking must be immediately added to downtown Anchorage if Municipal goals and objectives for long-term development are to be met. Three areas have been identified as now experiencing or due to experience significant parking deficiencies (Figure V.5).

Area 1. Area 1 will be influenced by several proposed projects, including the retail complex, the State Office Complex, the Museum expansion, and others. The projected parking deficit upon completion of all committed projects in the area is estimated at over 2,800 spaces.

Although the retail complex may have as much as a full level of below-grade parking, that alone will be inadequate to meet its peak demand; similarly, the State Office Complex is to have only 1,000 on-site parking spaces, which would fall short of meeting even half of its estimated parking demand. In addition to new projects, Area 1 is influenced by the potential displacement of surface parking spaces currently utilized by employees at the Federal Office Complex.

Many employees also park their cars on adjacent residential streets. These on-street parking opportunities would be lost by a residential parking permit program being proposed by neighborhoods to the south of the park strip.

Area 2. The northwest corner of the CBD has experienced extensive new construction since 1975. Projects that will account for much of the area's parking deficit include Revolution Tower; the Susitna Building; 420, 500, and 510 L Street Buildings; and Tower 3 of the Captain Cook Hotel. The total parking deficit from these projects is estimated to be over 1,200 spaces (Table V.6). The fact that Area 2 is fairly densely developed, coupled with the fact that construction of a number of projects has been completed or is nearing completion, adds to the urgency that parking be provided in this area.

Area 3. Area 3 will be influenced most heavily by construction of the ARCO and Hunt Towers. These two projects alone will generate a demand for nearly 2,500 new parking places, only 165 of which will be accommodated within new on-site structures. Each project has its own strategy for accommodating new parking demand. ARCO will encourage employees to participate in numerous ride-sharing programs and will have park/ride shuttle services from outlying areas. The Hunt project could accommodate all of its projected parking demand on Hunt-owned parcels within a few blocks of the new tower site. However, the Municipal parking survey indicated that this land is already actively used for surface parking at an average occupancy rate of over 80 percent (Figure V.6). Therefore, while the Hunt strategy accommodates employees at the Hunt building, it

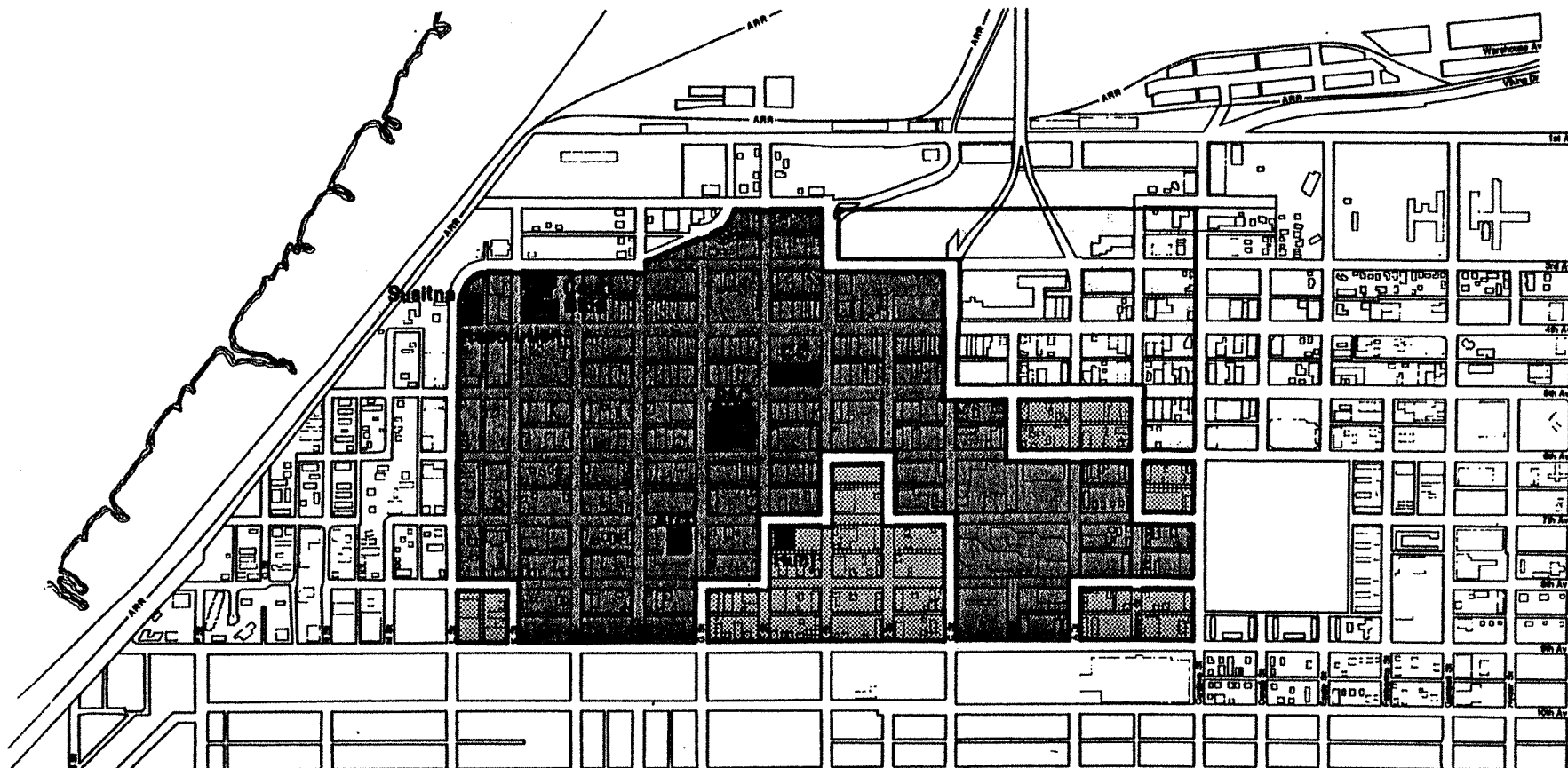


FIGURE V.6

# Parking Utilization Factor



OVER 90%



80%-90%



UNDER 80%

SOURCE: MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE SURVEY, FALL 1981

would displace an equal number of parking spaces currently utilized by other downtown employees.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Provision of adequate and convenient off-street parking spaces is an essential component for downtown revitalization and development. It is recommended that a parking improvement program be developed and a strong commitment be made to utilize available funding for the immediate construction of new parking structures in key areas of downtown. This should help to alleviate at least in part some of the parking deficit that faces downtown Anchorage in the short term.

Once this is accomplished, attention can be focused more clearly on a preferred long-term parking management concept that would establish a mechanism for new parking to be developed in conjunction with development trends and ongoing monitoring of parking-related factors.

### Phase I Parking Structures

In the near term, it is recommended that three new parking facilities (Figure V.7) be constructed to serve the three general areas identified in the preceding discussion. Each area entails unique considerations relating either to locational factors or to funding availability.

Area 1. A parking structure for 500 to 1,000 cars is recommended for Area 1. Area 1 is roughly equivalent to the area specified in State Bill 50, which allocated \$10 million in state revenues for construction of a parking facility. The SB 50 area is bounded by 3rd and 8th Avenues and D and

Barrow Streets. Considering accessibility, urban design, and the nature and scope of committed and proposed developments, it is recommended that a parking structure be built at or near Block 45, which is bounded by 4th and 5th Avenues and B and C Streets. This structure should have the potential of expanding to the east at such time that nearby development (e.g., the State Office Complex at Site 3 or other development) would warrant it. Alternatively, this facility could be constructed in association with the retail redevelopment in the blocks between 5th and 6th Avenues, J.C. Penney facility, and the Sheraton Hotel. The exact location will be determined by detailed parking-retail analyses now underway.

It is recommended that this structure incorporate retail at the ground level as well as certain public uses. Parking would occur on the upper floors. It should be noted that the recommended structure should be coordinated with joint revitalization of the three-block area immediately to the south of this site.

Area 2. A parking structure of approximately 500 to 750 cars is recommended for Area 2. Prior to undertaking the construction of any parking facilities in Area 2, negotiation must be initiated with the current operators of the Captain Cook garage to modify the existing three-block moratorium on new public parking development. Once this is accomplished, site acquisition can begin for a parking structure of approximately half a block at the general location shown in Figure V.7.

The State, as part of the court system expansion, intends to develop a parking garage on Block 29, bounded by 3rd and 4th Avenues and H and I Streets. This facility would be used in part by

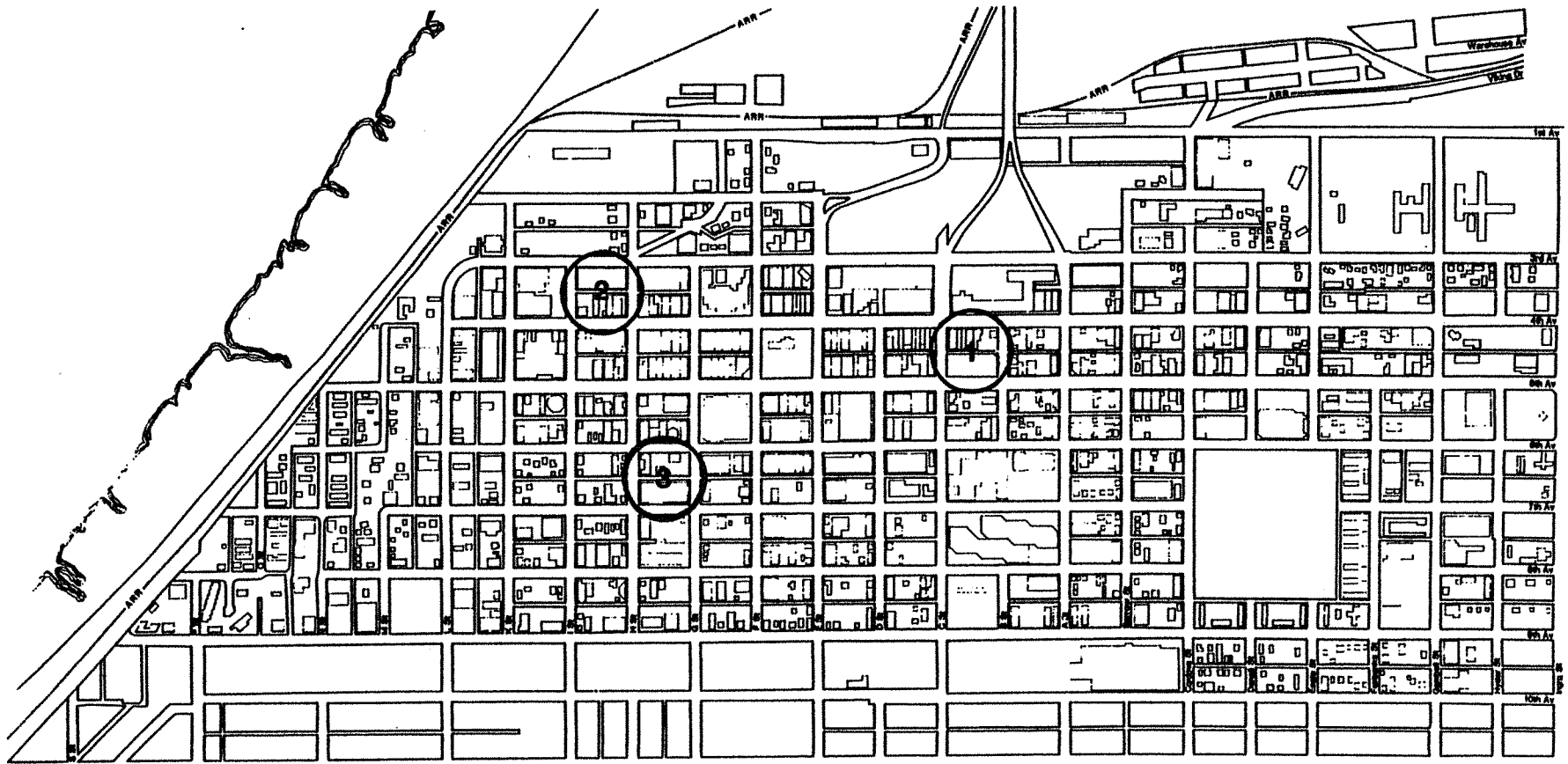


FIGURE V.7

# Proposed Parking Structure Sites



the proposed State Courthouse occupants; however, additional floors could be incorporated for use by the general public. Alternatively, parking spaces used by the State could be used by the public during off-peak hours.

Should the development of this facility for general public purposes be infeasible, an alternative location for a parking garage must be considered because of the actual and potential office construction in this section of the downtown. Development of this garage should occur within the next five years; the Planning Department report on parking garage locations within the northwestern part of the CBD should be used to establish the criteria and actual location of this facility.

Area 3. A parking structure of approximately 500 cars is recommended for Area 3. Area 3 stands to have the most immediate impact on the downtown parking supply when the ARCO and Hunt Towers are completed. It is recommended that a half-block parking structure be developed near these two projects, in a location that will also serve people using the Convention Center and the Performing Arts Center, which are under construction and committed for development, respectively.

It has been recommended by the Municipality of Anchorage that a half-block garage of at least 500 spaces be constructed on the north half of Block 68, adjacent to the existing 7th Avenue/G Street garage (the site of the existing Bus Accommodation Center and a Municipal Light and Power electrical substation) or on an adjacent site. The design of the recommended parking structure, if built on Block 68, would be expected to incorporate a larger replacement bus waiting and queuing facility as well as necessary public utility equipment. The

adjacency of the existing Municipal garage may offer the opportunity for interconnection with the recommended new structure, which could possibly allow reduced construction cost, greater parking efficiency, and more controlled ingress and egress. It is intended that this recommended parking facility serve the new Performing Arts and Convention Centers, as well as the private ARCO and Hunt buildings.

#### Other Aspects of Parking Management Strategy

In addition to the construction of new parking facilities, it is recommended that a system be developed to oversee policies affecting parking demand and supply. The most appropriate mechanism for managing parking policy may be a parking authority with jurisdiction over:

- Enforcement of on-street parking policy, including parking meter fees, permitted parking hours, fines, etc.
- Establishment of a revolving parking fund
- Coordination with transit and ride-sharing programs
- Key input to Municipal Assembly regarding possible need to modify off-street parking requirements for new construction

On-Street Parking Policy. On-street parking is desirable in downtown Anchorage if used by shoppers and other short-term parkers. The use of on-street parking by employees can be discouraged through higher meter rates (that would make it less expensive to use long-term, off-street parking facilities instead of on-street

parking); by new enforcement techniques to limit allowable parking time (by tire marking, for example); and by higher fines for violations. However, the most effective way to reduce employees' use of on-street parking is restriction of on-street parking to non-commuting hours. Such a policy, in conjunction with circulation improvements and necessary adjustments in parking rates at off-street facilities, could effectively eliminate most incidence of employee parking on streets. The reader is referred to Chapter III for additional discussion of options relating to the removal of on-street parking for additional lanes of circulation for both general traffic and for transit and other high-occupancy vehicles.

It should be noted that the Municipality has developed a detailed approach to on-street parking. The general aspects of this program include the removal of parking meters and the establishment of a two-hour free parking area in the Town Center area, conversion of the A-C Couplet parking lot to a free-cost facility, and conversion of the parking enforcement program penalties from criminal to civil status. Establishment of peak-hour transit lanes is also part of this program.

Revolving Parking Fund. At present, revenues from parking facilities go to the general Municipal fund, rather than to a fund specifically designated to cover parking costs. It is recommended that a special, revolving fund be established by the parking authority. This fund would cover the following:

- Construction of new parking facilities

- Enforcement of on-street parking policy, including the level of parking meter rates, fines, etc.
- Rates in Municipality-owned off-street parking facilities
- Other parking-related operations

Transit and Ride-Sharing. To the extent that downtown commuters and residents can avail themselves of alternatives to private automobiles, the demand of downtown parking spaces can be reduced. The Municipality of Anchorage presently has a transit fleet of 39 vehicles operating on 15 routes at peak hour. Plans call for expansion of the bus fleet to 100 buses operating on 25 routes; these changes are expected to be implemented in a five- to seven-year time frame. The Municipality has projected that these system improvements will temper demand for additional parking by 200 to 300 spaces per year over the next eight-year period, and by an additional 300 to 400 spaces per year over the subsequent seven-year period. Therefore, transit can be used as an effective tool in an overall downtown parking management strategy. In order to be effective, there will be a need to provide both park-and-ride facilities at outlying locations and express bus routes; these services should be considered mandatory in order to attract riders with convenient and frequent service.

Carpooling and other methods of ride-sharing can be considered adjuncts to the transit program. As part of the adoption of the Anchorage Air Quality Plan, a strong commitment was made to increasing the utilization of carpools from a present level of 1.25 passengers per vehicle to 1.34 passengers per

vehicle. This would represent an increase of over 8,000 carpools over the next five years and would remove the need for 1,300 additional parking spaces that would otherwise be required in this time frame (based on downtown representing 30 percent of overall metropolitan employment). Although this supply equivalent increase may appear to be nominal, such a program should nevertheless be encouraged due to its dual importance to both the parking management strategy and the Air Quality Plan.

Off-Street Parking Requirements. It is apparent that the current zoning ordinance and its accompanying bonus point system are not satisfactory in terms of their ability to provide sufficient off-street parking. Their intent (see Chapter II) was to provide an incentive to private investors to locate in downtown Anchorage, with adequate parking supply to be made available by the Municipality. Given the expected demand, the Municipality cannot provide all of the required supply, even taking into account the possible reduction of parking demand through such publicly managed programs as transit services and a phased program of off-street parking facility construction.

For this reason, and because the majority of the impact is expected to be created by large, single-purpose office investments, it makes sense to amend the bonus point system at this time to provide an additional incentive for these office facilities to construct parking facilities over and above those now required.

Implementation. The near-term parking management strategy addresses immediate problems by applying all available funding sources to the construction of parking facilities in three locations.

It is understood that \$10 million provided by the State for new parking facilities within a specific area constitute the total available Municipal resources for this purpose. At current construction rates, \$10 million could supply in the neighborhood of 750-1,000 new spaces, not including land cost. This number of new spaces will not completely offset projected parking deficiencies; therefore, either additional public monies must be allocated or, preferably, joint public-private garage construction ventures should be initiated for the immediate construction of new parking garages.

#### Long-Term Parking Management Policy

The long-term parking management policy buildings on the short-term parking management plan, which is intended to address immediate parking needs with new parking structures and to promote policies that will reduce the need for additional new parking structures. Once this has been accomplished -- even acknowledging that it will not be possible in the short term to equalize parking supply and demand -- the Municipality will be able to pursue a longer-range policy. Components of a mid- and long-range parking management policy should take into account the following:

- Continuing monitoring program
- Peripheral parking
- Parking structure financing techniques
- Ride-sharing incentives
- Transit improvements and incentives
- Long-term transportation terminal concept

Continuing Monitoring Program. Even with implementation of all the recommended near-term programs and policies, there will most likely continue to be a deficit of off-street parking spaces in downtown Anchorage, expected to be particularly acute in the late 1980s. The deficit is anticipated to shift toward the southwestern and south-central parts of the CBD. In order to track conditions that may point to the need for additional parking facilities, a system for the continuous monitoring of critical circulation- and parking-related factors is recommended to be put into effect.

Among the most important issues to be covered by this monitoring program, in order to determine the overall demand-supply relationship on a downtown-wide scale, will be the amount, type, and location of new construction. The monitoring program should also take into account the rate of parking utilization. In order to have accurate guidelines with which to make decisions regarding a long-term parking management strategy, it is recommended that this monitoring program continue and be refined through the short-term period and into the long-term planning period.

Responsibility for the monitoring program should be assumed by the Municipal Traffic Engineering and Physical Planning Divisions, with periodic reports to the Municipal Assembly regarding the magnitude of the parking problem and the steps being taken to resolve it.

The monitoring program could also be expanded to cover such factors as:

- Parking rates and policy for setting parking charges, turnover rates, occupancy rates,

peak loading, short-term vs long-term parking, and other factors

- On-street parking usage and occupancy rates, parking hour restrictions, and enforcement policy effectiveness
- Response to various transit improvement programs
- Success of ride-sharing incentive programs among private-sector entities, along with an appraisal of their value to the Municipality in terms of reduced need for parking facilities
- Possible seasonal variations in parking demand that can be met with specialized services, reducing need for permanent parking structures
- Public response to alternative designs of parking structures, so as to assure compatibility of future structures with their surroundings

Peripheral Parking. Many well-established downtown areas nationwide have enjoyed success with the concept of automobile interception at the periphery of downtown, with internal downtown circulation accomplished on foot or with a minibus-type system. Attributes of this concept are reduced traffic within the downtown area, elimination of the lowest-speed portion of commuting trips for resultant improvement in downtown air quality, and the ability to accommodate cars in larger structures than would be possible within the pedestrian-oriented context of the downtown core.

A preliminary investigation of this concept commissioned by the Municipality has indicated that



the peripheral parking concept would probably not be feasible in downtown Anchorage at this time. However, as a long-term policy, the concept has merit, particularly when underdeveloped portions of the downtown area now providing close-in surface parking are redeveloped.

The success of a peripheral parking program is contingent on a very high level on development intensity and a convenient means of conveyance from the parking facilities to downtown destinations, either on foot along pleasant pedestrian routes or by frequent and comfortable shuttle service, depending on the distance of peripheral parking facilities from the downtown core area.

Other criteria to be considered in development of a peripheral parking program would include:

- Parking locations away from residential neighborhoods to lessen traffic and environmental effects
- Access to facilities from primary commuting routes

One location that might be considered for peripheral parking is the area adjoining the Chester Creek Greenbelt. Nearly 1,000 to 2,000 cars could be accommodated in the area between the George M. Sullivan Sports Arena and Mulcahy Stadium. This area adjoins the New Seward Highway and the A/C Couplet, scheduled for implementation in the next few years, and is therefore at an effective location for the interception of vehicles entering downtown Anchorage from origins further south.

Parking Structure Financing Techniques. Developers of property in the CBD zones are currently under no obligation to provide parking for occupants of their buildings. There has been an understanding that the location and amount of parking could be better controlled for environmental and other reasons by the Municipality.

In the long-term future, there may be merit in considering a policy whereby private developers contribute in some form to the parking supply as their buildings generate new parking demand. This could assume a number of forms, including:

- A zoning requirement that new buildings meet a portion -- perhaps one-fourth -- of the parking demand they would generate
- Contribution to a special parking fund (in lieu of providing parking on site) to which other revenues from parking operations, meters, etc. would flow instead to the general fund of the Municipality

Ride-Sharing Incentives. The concentration of development in downtown areas makes them ideal areas for such ride-sharing, since destinations are clustered in a small area. To the extent that such practices promote interaction and reduce energy dependence, they are highly desirable and should be encouraged. Incentives that have met with some success include computerized matching of commuters with similar origin-destination-time patterns; preferential parking facilities; tax credits; and employer-sponsored programs that sometimes involve a free vehicle for organizers of established car pooling programs, or close-in parking spaces.

Transit Improvements and Incentives. Public transit is gaining in popularity in many United States cities, as it is in Anchorage. The implementation in the Phase I planning period of the proposed 100-bus program in downtown Anchorage will indicate the degree to which improved service will generate more ridership.

Transit service can also be enhanced through improved facilities in the downtown area, including:

- A number of clearly defined routes within downtown, along with a through routing pattern
- An additional transit accommodation center as the central and eastern parts of downtown are redeveloped
- Provision of comfortable transit shelters along all major routes within downtown (see Chapter III)

Long-Term Transportation Terminal Concept. Once a peripheral parking policy is adopted for the long-term future, the peripheral parking facilities could ideally be designed to serve even further in the future as multi-modal transportation terminals, incorporating such features as bus waiting lounges, transfer connections from line-haul routes to internal downtown minibus routes, and convenient interchange from automobile parking facilities to local distribution modes. Implementation of this concept would, of course, be contingent on an overall downtown development intensity and transit usage factor far greater than those today.

As the Municipality considers the long-term potential of a fixed-route regional public transportation network, it should also consider the value of terminating line-haul routes at peripheral transportation terminals as opposed to the value of having line-haul routes penetrate the downtown core. In exchange for the need to transfer from one mode to another, the interception of large transit vehicles at the CBD periphery can be effective in maintaining and enhancing the environmental quality within the downtown core.

## SUMMARY

In the foregoing discussion of the short-term and long-term parking management strategies, two major points should be clear:

### Short-Term Strategy

In order to preserve the options for continued development downtown in accordance with adopted Municipal goals and objectives, an immediate need for convenient, off-street parking must be addressed. In particular, there is a need to reverse the existing trend of increasing parking demand (as a consequence of new development) and decreasing parking supply. Recommended new parking structures within the three identified areas will effectively reverse this trend, although they alone will not eliminate the overall parking deficit in downtown Anchorage.

### Long-Term Strategy

Implementation of a long-term parking management strategy should take into account the entire downtown circulation and development pattern so that components of the program can be tailored to

actual conditions and so that potential problems can be anticipated and corrected. Concepts such as peripheral parking and multi-modal transportation/parking terminals should be discussed now. However, their implementation should wait until downtown development options are secured, which will be signalled when the State Office Complex, the proposed retail/mixed-use complex, other developments, and -- most importantly -- short-term parking facilities are committed for development.

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup>Based on visual reconnaissance, January 1982.

<sup>2</sup>Anchorage CBD Parking and Traffic Circulation Study, January 1980, and Project 80's Final Report, Program and Design, March 1980.

<sup>3</sup>Actually ranges from 1.0 ("other retail") to 1.8 ("comparison goods"). Most conservative figure is used for purpose of this table. More realistic factor for downtown retail is 3.5-4.0.

<sup>4</sup>Urban Land Institute, Shopping Center Development Handbook, 1977, p. 95.

<sup>5</sup>Using a factor of 430 square feet per car, including circulation space, for the area encompassed in all building footprints for projects completed between 1975 and 1981, divided by two.

## Chapter VI

### GUIDELINES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Projections of development potential for downtown Anchorage indicate a very strong market for further development in the office, hotel, retail, and residential sectors (see Chapter II). Previous chapters have dealt with the opportunities to channel this new development into areas that will promote the efficiency and urban potential of the city, as well as opportunities to enhance the image and pedestrian environment of the city through innovative urban design.

In most cases, these opportunities were described in general language, since they pertained to a wide range of projects that would be developed. However, opportunities do exist for the Municipality to take the lead in demonstrating many of the site orientation and design guidelines techniques recommended for major new developments in the CBD. Among the recommended design guidelines are:

- Orientation along an east-west axis whenever possible
- Mixed uses where possible, with retail at ground level
- Stepped profiles along north building facades to improve solar access to sidewalks and streets
- Plazas at southwest and southeast corners

- Setbacks along the north streetface providing open spaces and landscaping
- Interior suncourts
- Skyway connections to neighboring buildings and to parking facilities

The projects that present the earliest opportunities to apply these design features are the proposed State Office Complex, the recommended retail complex, and off-street parking facilities recommended for three locations.

All of these projects share the following characteristics:

- Scale. The buildings all would encompass at least half a block and, in the case of the State Office and retail facilities, two or more blocks. For this reason, all the projects are of a scale that demands innovative and sensitive siting and design.
- Public Involvement. All of these projects, due to their magnitude and land assembly considerations, would require public participation and coordination. In all cases, the role of the government in the projects could range from complete ownership to participation in joint public-private investment.
- Importance to CBD Development. Unlike some speculative projects, whose locations are often determined by investment feasibility considerations alone, all of these projects can have profound effect on the future development of the CBD. Therefore, they

warrant careful attention to where activities will be taking place and linkages with other downtown functions.

Each of the projects is described in the following discussions in terms of its program, locational factors, recommended site(s), and key design features.

### STATE OFFICE COMPLEX

State employees currently occupy tenant space in numerous office buildings in the CBD, as well as space in government-owned facilities in outlying areas. The consolidation of these employees was found to be desirable from many standpoints in a study conducted for the State of Alaska in 1981. The study recommended a complex that would ultimately encompass 639,000 square feet and house 2,800 employees.

#### Site Analysis

The 1981 report examined numerous locations in the CBD, as well as locations outside of the CBD for the State Office Complex, and recommended a site adjacent to and west of the existing Federal Office Complex (Site 1 in Figure VI.1). More recently, a site north of the Federal Complex bounded by 4th and 5th Avenues and A and C Streets (Site 2) was recommended for reevaluation. In the course of analyzing these two sites, a third site, bounded by A and Cordova Streets and 5th and 6th Avenues (Site 3), surfaced as another site warranting reevaluation. The Municipal Planning Department analyzed these three sites in January 1982 in "Site Analysis of the State Office Complex Alternatives."

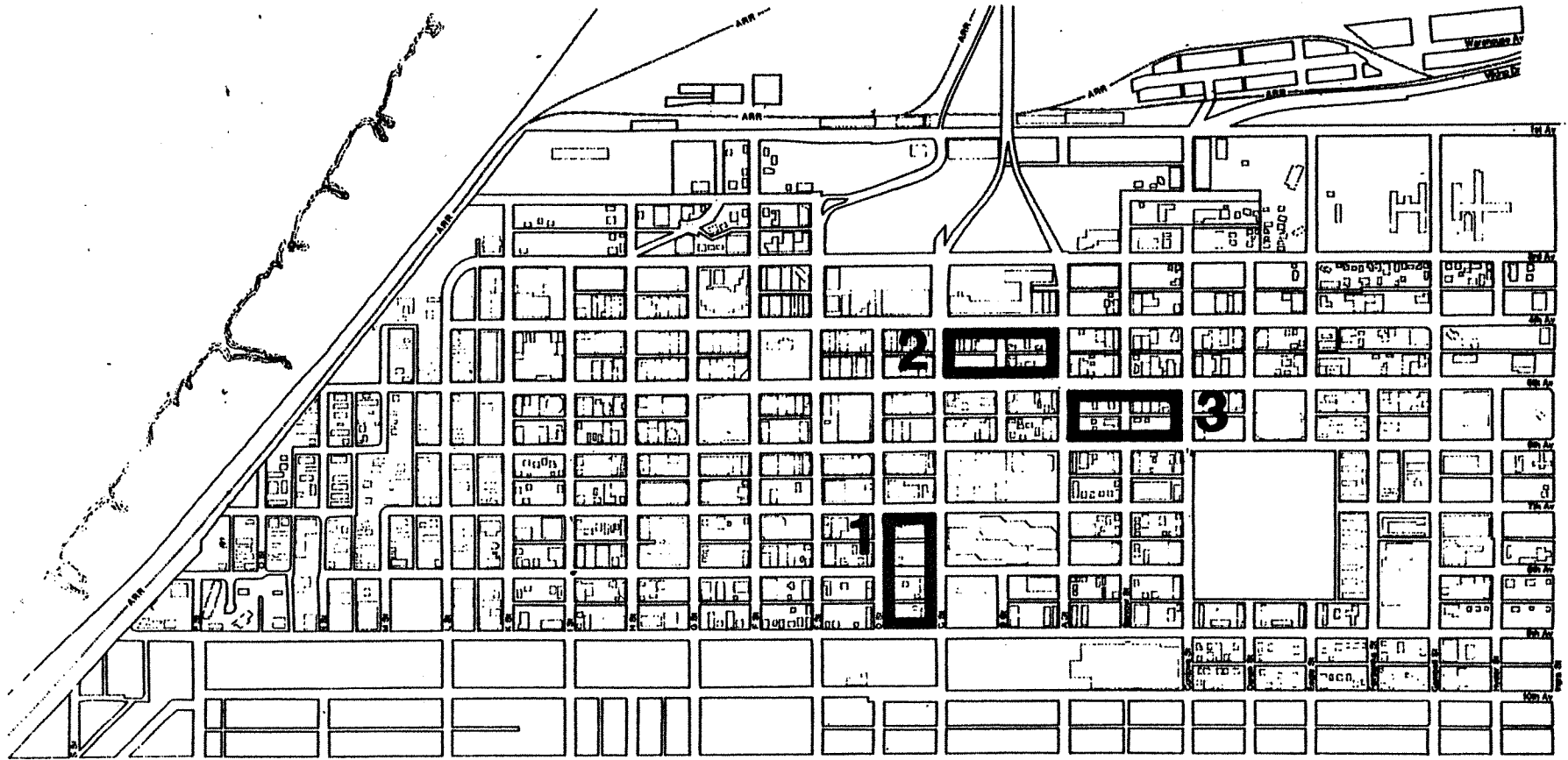


FIGURE VI.1

# State Office Complex Site Alternatives

**TABLE VI.1  
STATE OFFICE COMPLEX  
SITE COMPARISON**

	Site 1 (Blocks 77 & 103)	Site 2 (Blocks 45 & 46)	Site 3 (Blocks 112 & 113)
<b>PROJECT PERSPECTIVE</b>			
<b>Site Area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 198,000 s.f.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 198,000 s.f.</li> <li>1/4 site city-owned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 198,000 s.f.</li> </ul>
<b>Displacement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Block 77</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parking and old homes (6)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <u>Block 103</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 multi-story offices</li> <li>- 1 small hotel</li> <li>- Salvation Army</li> <li>- 1 gas station</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Block 45</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Several bars</li> <li>- 1 gas station</li> <li>- 1 cafe and small hotel</li> <li>- City parking</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <u>Block 46</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pawn shops</li> <li>- 2 residential parcels</li> <li>- Several offices</li> <li>- 1 retail &amp; 1 auto supply store</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Block 112</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Few retail/office buildings</li> <li>- Few residential parcels</li> <li>- Parking</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <u>Block 113</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 retail buildings</li> <li>- Auto body shop</li> <li>- 2 office parcels</li> <li>- Parking</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Elevation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 103.0 ft.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 105.5 f.t.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 109.0 ft.</li> </ul>
<b>Seismic Zone</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Moderate ground failure susceptibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● High ground failure susceptibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Moderate ground failure susceptibility</li> </ul>
<b>Adequacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Next to Federal Office complex</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 blocks from Federal office complex</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 blk. from Federal office complex</li> </ul>
<b>Street Closure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 8th Ave. between C &amp; D Sts.</li> <li>● 8th Ave. potentially more important E-W street.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 8th St. between 4th &amp; 5th Aves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Barrow St. between 5th &amp; 6th Aves.</li> <li>● Barrow St. not essential to CBD circulation</li> </ul>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Concentrated traffic loading (State and Federal)</li> <li>● Served by C. St.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Distributed traffic loading</li> <li>● Served by A &amp; C Sts. &amp; 4th &amp; 5th Aves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Distributed traffic loading</li> <li>● Served by A &amp; Cordova Sts. and 5th &amp; 6th Aves.</li> </ul>
<b>Expansion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Would require acquisition of major adjacent private development (Hunt) to west</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Would further constrict retail expansion if to south; geo-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Excellent potential to north; little major development</li> </ul>

TABLE VI.1 (continued)

DOWNTOWN CONTEXT			
<p><b>Land Use</b></p> <p><b>Pedestrian Flow</b></p> <p><b>Retail Revitalization</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Too much concentration at one location               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State office 626,000 s.f. 2,800 employees</li> <li>- Fed. office 64,000 s.f. 1,500 employees</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Development pressure toward park &amp; neighborhoods to south</li> <li>● Employee concentration to southern parts</li> <li>● Would not affect Retail Revitalization Plan alternatives</li> <li>● State office can be developed with close plan coordination and integration</li> <li>● Public evaluation and decision must be carefully made (effect on downtown's future)</li> <li>● Would require acquisition of major adjacent private development (Hunt) to west; none to south or east</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development stimulated to currently blighted area</li> <li>● Growth in easterly direction encouraged</li> <li>● Employee distribution more balanced</li> <li>● Places employees on both sides of retail</li> <li>● Unless well-coordinated, may impose major development constraints, limiting options for new climate-controlled shopping environment</li> <li>● However, above could be remedied by joint State office/retail/parking development approach</li> <li>● Retail, one of the most important ingredients: Once lost, recovery remote.</li> <li>● Would further constrict retail expansion if to south; geo-technical problems to north</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development stimulated to overlooked area between retail &amp; Sheraton</li> <li>● Growth in easterly direction encouraged</li> <li>● Employees at eastern anchor of retail</li> <li>● Opens up retail development options - few constraints</li> <li>● Could be developed independently of other programs</li> <li>● However, quality of development could be augmented by joint State office/retail/parking development approach</li> <li>● Excellent potential to north; little major development</li> </ul>



Each of the sites was also examined by the consulting team from the standpoints of site characteristics (viewed independently from the rest of downtown) and of urban context (taking into account downtown development patterns, adjacent uses, traffic, stimulation of retail trade, etc.). Table VI.1 provides this comparison.

### Findings and Recommendations

**Siting.** Site 3 was found to be preferable to Sites 1 and 2 for the proposed State Office Complex, assuming that its geotechnical qualities are found to be favorable, because of its good accessibility, its potential integration with other activity generators on the east side of the CBD core (such as the recommended retail complex discussed below), and its expansion potential to the north.

Because the geotechnical characteristics of Site 3 have not been appraised in detail, it was recommended that such an appraisal take place immediately to aid in the site selection process. Since the area around Site 3 is considered pivotal to the overall growth of the CBD, and since the geotechnical investigation of Site 3 would be enhanced through knowledge of conditions on adjoining sites, it was further recommended that the investigation encompass all intervening areas between Site 3 and the buttressed area.

Based on the Comprehensive Development Plan preliminary site analysis, the Municipal Assembly indicated a preference for Site 3 and has authorized a geotechnical investigation of the site. While the scope of this investigation falls somewhat short of the recommended areawide analysis, it should nevertheless indicate conclusively whether

the intense development of Site 3 for a State Office Complex is appropriate.

**Design.** It is anticipated that the State Office Complex will ultimately require two or three entire blocks, including some on-site parking for 1,000 cars -- meeting about half the parking demand the facility will generate. Given the size of this facility, and the probable need for additional nearby parking structures, all the design features cited in the introduction to this chapter would appear to be desirable.

If the complex is developed on Site 1, which adjoins the park strip between C and D Streets, an overriding consideration is that the bulk of the building along the park strip be minimized. To address this concern, a modification of the recommended stepped building profile might be considered, with the building increasing in bulk from south to north. It would also be possible, given the north-south orientation of the site, to incorporate a stepped building profile of greater slope along the north face of the building to provide a greater amount of light and air within the public right-of-way on 7th Avenue.

### RETAIL COMPLEX

A mixed-use retail complex has been recommended by economic consultants (see Chapter II) as a crucial element of the Phase I implementation plan. With joint public and private support for the complex and a comprehensive "package" that includes parking, new adjoining office space, infrastructural improvements, improved traffic management, and other provisions, downtown

Anchorage can establish itself as the most diverse and strongest retail center in the region.

### Coordination with Existing Retail

In an effort to strengthen existing retail facilities and make them more attractive, proposals have been considered for sidewalk amenities, additional landscaping, more off-street parking, and coordinated appearance improvement programs. All of these appear to be sound proposals and are discussed elsewhere in this document.

However, economic projections show that, notwithstanding these improvements, downtown Anchorage might possibly lose one of the two existing department stores as well as a portion of the existing retail tenant stores in the absence of a new, attractive, climate-controlled retail complex. The public participation program yielded support for the concept of such a retail complex, provided that it enhances the strength of existing retail facilities. The success of such a complex is contingent on the following factors:

- Direct tie with existing anchor stores (J. C. Penney and Nordstrom) and key existing tenant stores
- Public assistance in land assembly
- Participation in the development by affected property owners
- Adequate and convenient public parking
- Easy auto and transit access

- A location central to major activity generators, (employment centers, attractions, cultural facilities, etc.)
- Incorporation of recreational and after-hours features in the complex
- Immediate implementation so as not to risk a loss of existing downtown retail facilities

Retail development can be viewed as a "glue" binding downtown together. In a climate such as that of Anchorage, a successful retail complex requires not only a lively and varied street scene, but also climate control to encourage impulse buying in comfortable surroundings year-round. Cities that have achieved this include Minneapolis, Toronto, Spokane, and others.

### Site Analysis

Based on the criteria for a successful downtown retail complex set forth above, new retail development must relate directly to existing retail facilities. Therefore, the two existing anchor stores, J. C. Penney and Nordstrom, should be viewed as anchors for the new retail complex and strong connection to existing retail areas on 4th, 5th, and 6th Avenues should be established. Several options were explored (Figure VI.2).

Expansion to the West. The substantial amount of new construction west of J. C. Penney would prevent any new retail development beyond the one block immediately adjacent to the existing store (Block 51).

Expansion to the South. The blocks immediately south of the Nordstrom store appear upon first



Figure VI.2. Alternative Options for Retail Complex

look to be good candidates for retail development, being oriented toward employee concentrations at the soon-to-be-completed ARCO and Hunt Towers and the existing federal complex. However, retail expansion in this direction would isolate the J. C. Penney store to the northwest. The presence of the J. C. Penney garage to the south of the store precludes the store's linkage with the complex, unless the garage were to be demolished (creating a major loss in downtown parking).

Other drawbacks to this option are the isolation of the existing retail facilities along 4th and 5th Avenues, including the relatively new Sunshine and Post Office Mall developments; its isolation from major civic and tourist facilities, such as the new Performing Arts Center, Convention Center, and all major downtown hotels; and its potential traffic and related impacts on the park strip and the area to the south.

Expansion to the East. Expansion of retail to the east of the J. C. Penney store and immediately north of the Nordstrom store can continue up to three blocks, engaging the proposed State Office Complex (and, beyond that, the Sheraton Hotel) on the east side. Thus, in addition to anchor stores, the complex would be further anchored by major concentrations of people to both the east and the west -- a necessity to a successful retail development. In addition, adequate land appears to be available in the vicinity of A and C Streets north of the site for possible conversion to parking that could "feed" the complex from the north.

Expansion to the North. The blocks north of the Nordstrom store also appear to be a good candidates for retail expansion, using the Sunshine

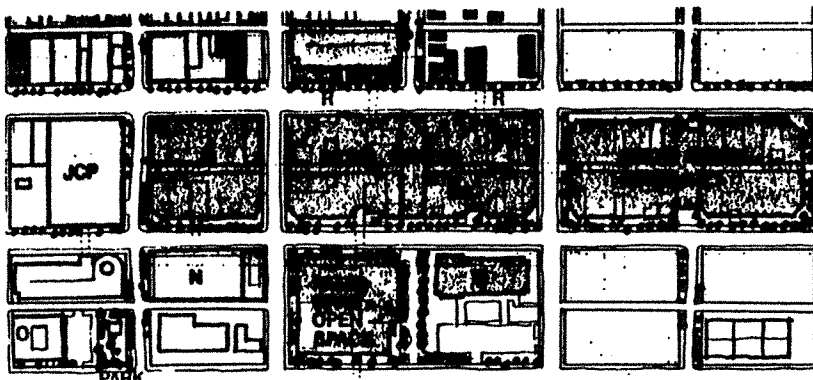


Figure VI.3. Integration of Proposed Retail Complex with Existing Retail and Other Functions and Facilities

and Post Office Mall buildings as anchors on the north. However, since expansion would be limited to the two intervening blocks, this option appears to have better potential as a later phase adjunct to the eastward expansion concept (discussed immediately above), which offers the best combination of employee adjacency, accessibility, visibility and available area.

### Findings and Recommendations

Siting. The final configuration of the downtown retail complex should be determined in conjunction with other factors, such as the location of the State Office Complex, the location of the public parking structures, and others. It would seem most prudent to view expansion first in an easterly direction and later in a northerly direction as the ultimate goal.

A first step in the land assembly process, on the assumption that State Office Complex Site 3 is adopted, would be the acquisition of the three blocks bounded by D and A Streets and 5th and 6th Avenues (Figure VI.3). This would allow tie-in with the existing J. C. Penney and Nordstrom stores and would establish the State Office Complex as a major people-generating anchor at the east side of the project.

Design. Given the importance of retail to a thriving downtown core area, ~~it is important that its design incorporate features that promote its visibility, accessibility, and consistency of attractions.~~ In the context of downtown Anchorage, this implies:

- That the structure be visible from the street to encourage interaction between existing retail facilities and those within the complex
- That convenient off-street parking be provided as close as possible to the shopping areas -- ideally below the entire complex and beside it, with direct connections from adjacent parking structures to all retail levels
- That there be eating, entertainment, and "people watching" opportunities within the complex that will attract people to and through the facility as well as offer opportunities for interaction and special programs

The program for the recommended mixed-use retail complex (see Chapter II) indicates a total retail area of up to 370,000 square feet (120,000 square feet in a department store and up to 250,000 square feet in specialty stores), translating into an appropriate footprint of up to two square blocks, assuming ~~an elevated retail~~ ~~concourse~~. Some parking for the complex could be provided below grade, allowing the retail concourse to have full access at street level. Additional parking that would be required for a viable retail operation could be provided in a multi-level structure on the blocks directly north of the complex; ~~enclosed, climateed skyway connections to each retail level could be provided to equalize the distribution of shoppers throughout the complex as much as possible.~~

Additional features that could be incorporated in the complex include:

- ~~A glass enclosed winter garden~~ with year-round landscaping as the central focus
- ~~A food court to cater~~ both to shoppers and to employees from throughout downtown Anchorage
- Display kiosks to acquaint shoppers with other downtown activities, including significant cultural, recreational, and governmental programs

As with the Site Office Complex, it is recommended that the mixed-use retail complex incorporate features that contribute to the pedestrian environment, such as:

- ~~A stepped profile along the northern facade of the structure to allow more light and air into the public right of way along 9th Avenue~~
- ~~Generous setbacks along the south (6th Avenue) facade with landscaping, seating, and other pedestrian amenities~~
- ~~Plaza at the southwest and southeast corners of the project as sunny, open spaces integrated into the downtown sidewalk network~~

## PARKING STRUCTURES

Three parking structures are recommended for the Phase I implementation plan. Locational factors have been discussed in Chapter V. The guidelines in this section provide an indication of how the design of new parking structures can enhance the pedestrian environment while, at the same time,

significantly narrowing the gap between parking demand and supply.

### Site Analysis

A preliminary locational analysis for recommended parking structures in the Anchorage CBD is provided in Chapter V. This analysis places emphasis on how parking structures would fit into the overall CBD development pattern, on compatibility with surrounding development, and on minimizing necessary relocation.

In highly developed parts of downtown -- in general, the area west of C Street -- parking structures that occupy half a block are probably the maximum size that could be considered compatible with surrounding development, which tends to be developed on a parcel-by-parcel basis. In redevelopment areas, such as those recommended for the State Office and mixed-use/retail complexes, new development is likely to be in the form of intensely developed "superblocks," within which spaces would be designed to provide more of a human scale. In these areas, parking structures occupying an entire block or combinations of half-blocks (allowing people to "feed" directly into adjoining development) would be possible.

### Findings and Recommendations

Siting. The configuration of parking structures, as mentioned above, should be contingent on:

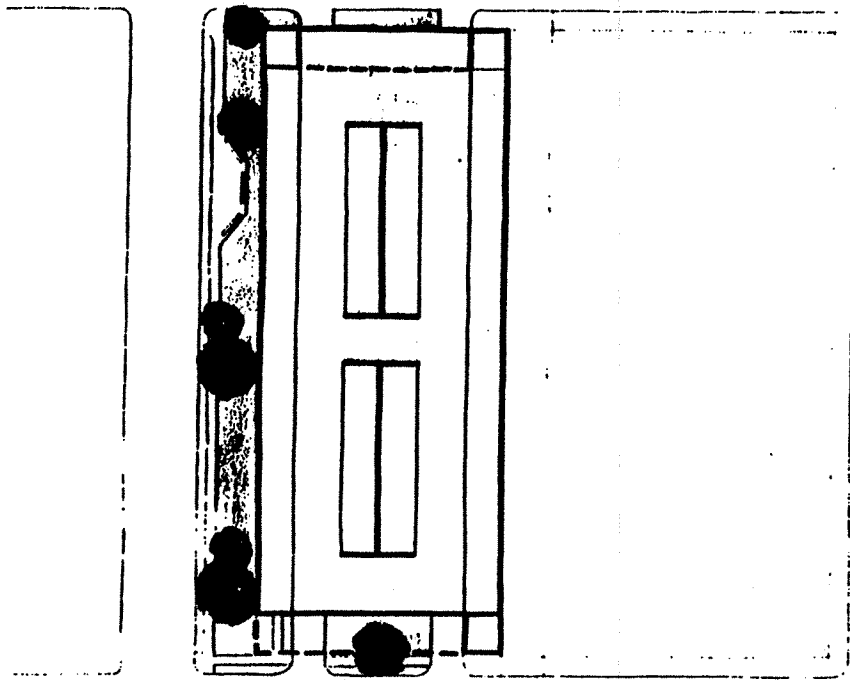
- Proximity to major generators of parking demand

- Access to and from major downtown distributor routes
- Compatibility with adjacent development
- Minimal relocation impact
- Ease of land assembly
- Geotechnical conditions

Design. Design factors that have been considered include:

- The bulk of structures -- generally, the height and footprint of a parking structure should be compatible with those of buildings around it
- Orientation -- structures can be responsive to the unique solar conditions affecting the quality of space on all sides
- Pedestrian environment -- retail space at ground level can be incorporated into parking structures, as can widened sidewalk areas and other pedestrian amenities
- Traffic flow -- adequate means ingress and egress and locations on high-capacity arterials can reduce the impact of parking structures and increase their effectiveness

The nature of parking structures results in designs that can be classified into a few distinct categories. Among these are continuous ramps; flat-deck structures with speed ramps, and others. Decisions as to which type of structure is appropriate is based on site conditions, capacity of



**Figure VI.4. Conceptual plan of north-south, half-block parking structure featuring expanded pedestrian area**

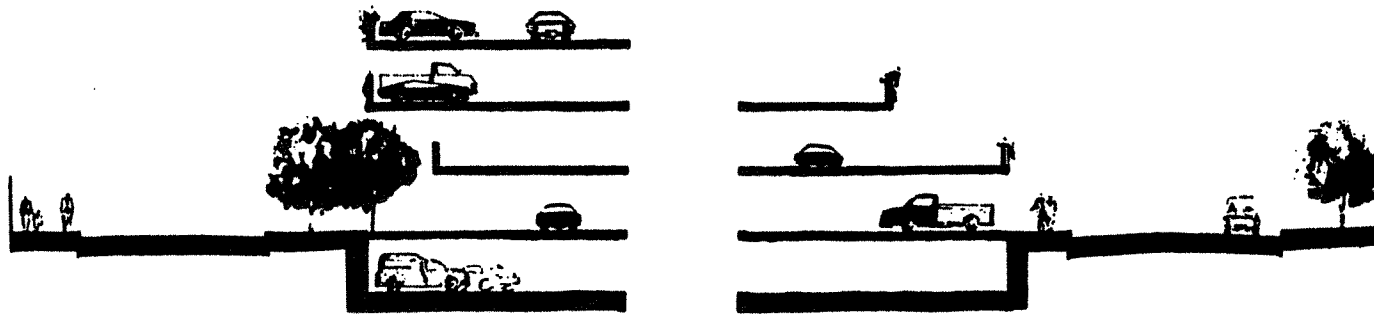
the parking structure, and traffic conditions around the structure.

The minimum dimension of most half-block sites in downtown Anchorage is 140 feet. (Most blocks are bisected by a 20-foot alley, leaving 140 feet for construction on either side of the alley.) This allows ample room for parking structures with two parking aisles in varying configurations.

Figures VI.4 through VI.7 show possible design concepts for half-block parking structures that might be oriented on a north-south axis or on an east-west axis respectively.

As with other recommended development projects, parking structures can be designed to incorporate features that make them attractive assets to the downtown pedestrian environment. Among the design features to be considered are:

- Widened pedestrian areas adjacent to the right-of-way
- Ground-level retail with possible arcade concept (can produce a terraced effect)
- Placement of half-block parking structures adjacent to alley to allow more light within right-of-way and additional pedestrian space or retail area along the street
- Landscaping to soften the appearance of the structures and blend with recommended landscaping improvements within public right-of-way



**Figure VI.5. Conceptual longitudinal cross-section of north-south, half-block parking structure showing terraced north facade to admit more light to expanded pedestrian area**



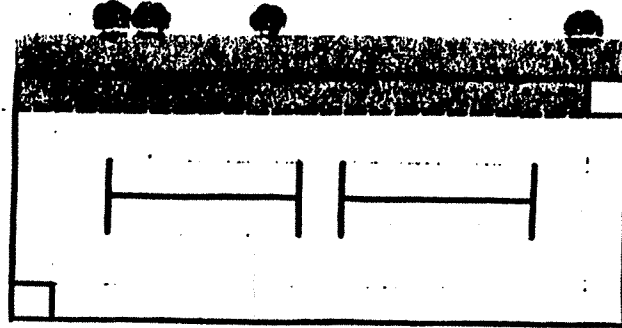


Figure VI.6. Conceptual plan of east-west, half-block parking structure featuring retail area at first level

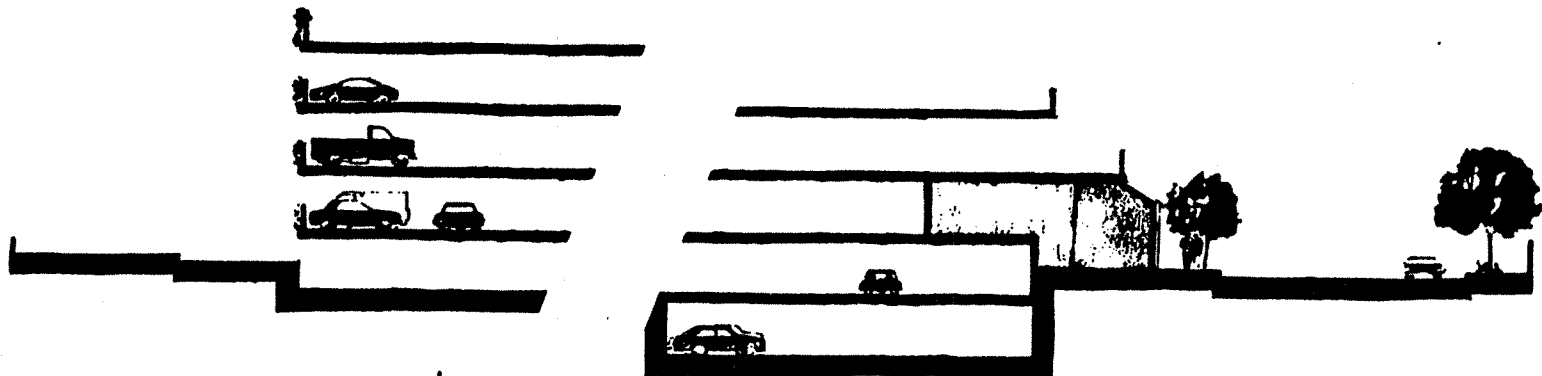


Figure VI.7. Conceptual transverse cross-section of east-west, half-block parking structure showing left retail area

## Chapter VII

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION

#### BACKGROUND

During these times of extremely rapid growth, Anchorage has seen drastic changes in the physical environment in which people live. As the wholesale transformation of our familiar landscape accelerates, there is a real danger that all meaningful evidence of past deeds and ways of life -- those which provide the context for our present and future accomplishments -- will be obliterated.

Faced with this threat, more and more residents recognize the urgent need for retaining, within a framework of change, those places and neighborhoods which testify to the historical processes that produced us and our contemporary situation. Only decisive action by local government and citizens can insure that Anchorage's historic character will not be destroyed by unregulated change.

During the public participation meeting series, historic preservation was among the major concerns of the citizens of downtown Anchorage (see Chapter II). Previous chapters have dealt extensively with ways in which historic preservation can be incorporated into downtown planning. For example:

- In Chapter I, discussions pertaining to the disposition of future development plans in various downtown development districts indicated a recommended emphasis on historic

preservation and compatible infill development in the historic 4th Avenue retail area.

- In discussion of the need for additional open space and parks in downtown Anchorage, it was recommended that historic preservation be used as a major theme in publicly accessible spaces in downtown Anchorage.

### HISTORIC USE COMPLEMENTS HISTORIC PRESERVATION

From a historic perspective, three patterns of land use stand out in the Original Townsite: commercial, government and residential uses. These are important in maintaining a varied and lively district where shoppers, employees and residents support the vitality of downtown. To a substantial degree, the preservation of historic buildings serves in realizing such functional objectives, especially the reuse of buildings for commercial purposes. The scale of many historic buildings is small, yet their use and relationship to the fabric of downtown architecture is intriguing and offers pedestrians ground level shopping, office, eating and entertainment functions which are significant in the CBD's vitality. Beyond historic buildings, new development should reflect these ingredients of balanced city life -- commerce, government and housing. These objectives should be incorporated in preserving the old and building the new. Expanses of vacant land and parking lots undermine the liveliness of downtown. Multiuse in development and preservation should be sought in complementing the traditional balance of downtown land use. Specific areas within the downtown commercial core, especially along 4th Avenue and at the edges of the CBD, have much to offer in

integrating the old and new and in preserving traditional land use patterns.

### AVAILABLE RESOURCES

The Municipality of Anchorage has appropriated \$4.65 million to be applied to the "Railroad Town" historic preservation program, one of the Project 80's capital improvement programs. Of this amount, approximately \$3.65 million remains.

Other financial means through which preservation can be carried out include: federal income tax credits and deductions, the State's Historic District Revolving Loan Fund, and various federal grant programs. The funding level of the grant and loan programs can vary considerably from year to year.

### CURRENT DIRECTION

Preservation success in the past few years has been on a building-by-building basis. These include such public rehabilitation and reuse projects as Old City Hall, Pioneer School, the Oscar Anderson House, and the Old Federal Building.

Additionally, more than ten houses have been donated to the Municipality which would otherwise have been demolished. The private sector has also been instrumental in preservation efforts; prominent examples include the restoration of the Leopold David House and the reuse of A.E.C. Cottages. As this document moves toward adoption, two significant buildings -- the Wendler and

Lathrop Buildings -- are being addressed as major preservation projects.

Although there has been some success in historic preservation, there is a grave need for an overall preservation program and plan. In order to address this need, the following are being done.

- The Heritage Resources Corporation -- a tax exempt, nonprofit entity -- has been created to administer preservation monies and implement specific preservation projects.
- A historic preservation ordinance to provide a process for nominating, designating, and regulating landmark sites, structures, and districts has been drafted. Integral to the ordinance are economic incentives for owners of historic properties.
- A downtown historic preservation plan is being prepared. It will include an updated inventory of historic resources, priorities, alternatives to carry out preservation in the downtown area and recommendations, including the use of Railroad Town funds, to implement the plan.

Following review and adoption of the historic preservation master plan, that document will become part of this CBD Comprehensive Development Plan.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PHASING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation brings the Comprehensive Development Plan to realization. The overall implementation concept is based on two expectations:

- As a first step toward action, the CBD Comprehensive Development Plan should be adopted by the Municipal Assembly as an illustration of the Municipality's intent regarding downtown development.
- As conditions change in the future, certain adjustments in recommended programs will inevitably be necessary; the comprehensive and interactive nature of the plan should assure that each specific project or program will be reviewed prior to implementation to assure its compatibility with current conditions.

#### PHASING CONCEPT

Projects, programs, and institutional changes recommended for consideration and implementation address the long-term needs of downtown Anchorage. Some of these have a more immediate priority than others in order to:

- Solve critical problems of today facing downtown Anchorage

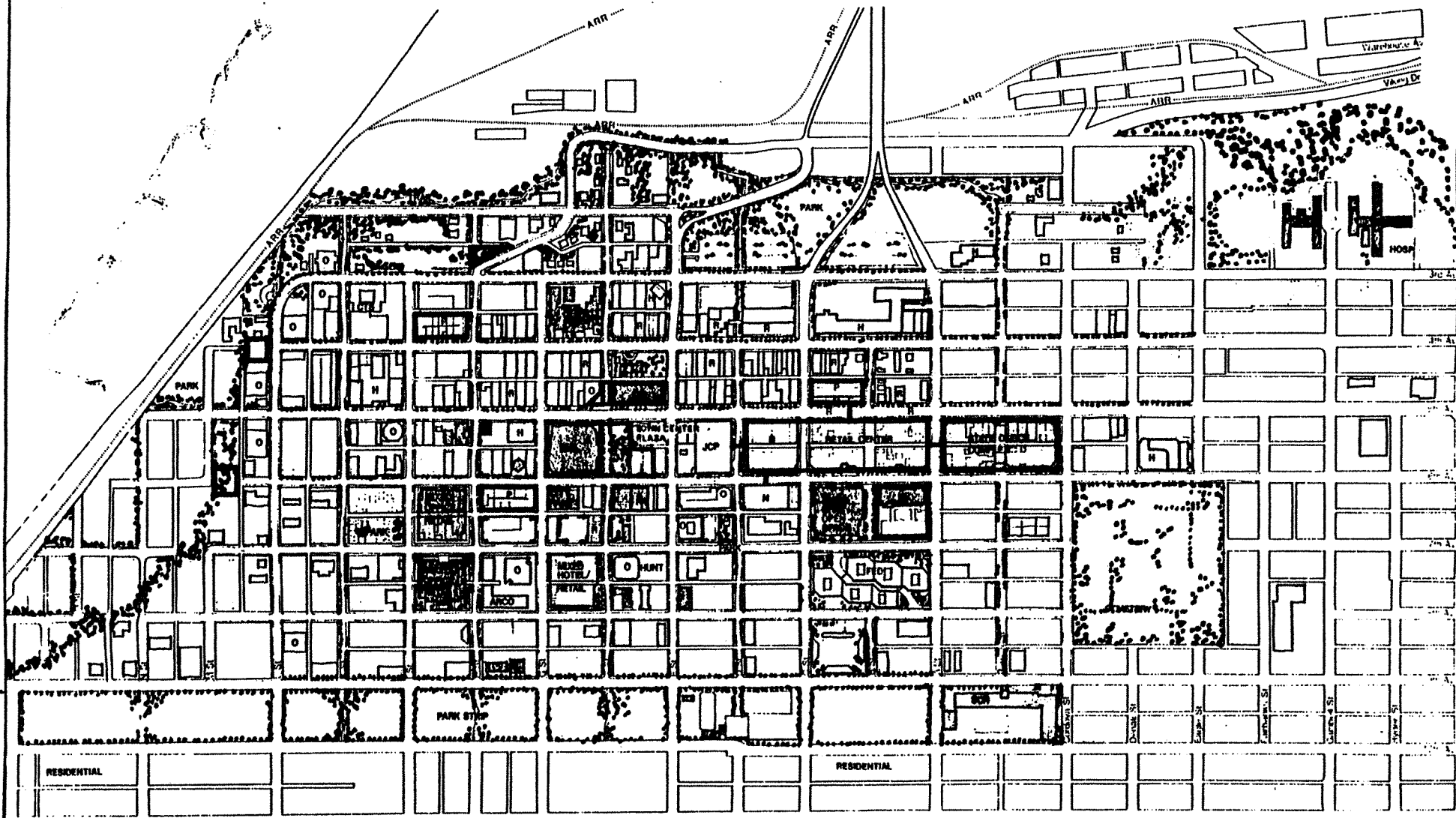


FIGURE VIII.1

# Phase I Action Plan



- Meet head on those critical problems that may arise in the near future and that can be anticipated with a reasonable level of certainty
- Encourage development of certain types in key areas through public guidance and assistance
- Encourage clustering of public and private development as a leverage for creating maximum beneficial effects

Based on the above criteria, implementation priorities have been preliminarily assigned to recommended public programs and projects for downtown Anchorage. These are summarized in Table VIII.1, and keyed to the Municipality's long-term downtown development objectives.

#### Phase I

Phase I Action Plan components, highlighted as part of the long-term development concept illustrated in Figure VIII.1, are specifically intended to retain options for the future of downtown Anchorage and "buy time" so that subsequent elements of the long-term development plan can be approached under the most favorable conditions. Projects depicted schematically in Figure VIII.1 include specific public and private developments considered to be essential "anchors" of the long-term development concept (see Figure I.10 and associated text). Additional infill projects would be expected to accompany these major developments. The pattern of this infill development is described in terms of generic land use designations in Figure VIII.2.

The specific recommended components of the Phase I Action Plan include:

- Land assembly and development of a retail complex integrally connected with two existing anchor stores
- Land acquisition and development of parking structures in three downtown locations
- Land assembly and development of a State Office Complex
- Completion of the Performing Arts and Convention Centers
- Implementation of the Historical and Fine Arts Museum expansion program
- Development of pedestrian amenities along downtown avenues and streets, including an auto-free pedestrian plaza along F Street
- Implementation of a traffic and parking monitoring program to trigger circulation system improvements and development of additional off-street parking facilities

#### Subsequent Phases

Projects and programs recommended for subsequent phases are, in general, less dependent on the immediate expenditure of public funds than Phase I Action Plan components and are built upon development patterns that will be established in Phase I.

In order to guide actions in subsequent phases and to establish the context within which private

**TABLE VIII.1  
ACTION PRIORITIES**

Development Objective	Plan Action	Priority		
		Immediate (Phase I)	Near-Term	Long-Term
<b>Mixture of Activities and Development</b>				
● Financial/Office	● State Office Complex to proceed (Blocks 112, 112), linked by skyway with Retail Complex	●	●	●
	● Opportunities for office reuse of historic buildings			
● Retail	● Mixed Use Retail Complex at Blocks 47-49 (linked by skyway to State Office, parking, J.C. Penney, Nordstrom, Wintergarden at Block 73)			
	- Design/feasibility study	●		
	- Land assembly	●		
	- Construction		●	
	● Revitalization of existing retail areas			
	- Feasibility study		●	
	- Facade restoration		●	
	- Assistance to businesses		●	
	● Visitor-oriented retail in historic clusters		●	●
	● Zoning code amendment to encourage ground-level retail	●		
● Cultural	● Convention Center construction to proceed	●		
	● Performing Arts Center construction to proceed	●		
	● Historical and Fine Arts Museum			
	- Design to provide connection with mixed-use Wintergarden	●		
	- Construction to proceed		●	
	● Library -- site evaluation study to be initiated		●	
● Recreational	● Coastal Trail to proceed as planned	●		
	● Town Center Plaza, Block 51			
	- Land acquisition	●		
	- Construction		●	
	● Park strip landscaping and enhancement		●	
	● Westend Park			
	- Site evaluation study		●	
	- Land acquisition			●
	- Implementation			●



**TABLE VIII.1  
ACTION PRIORITIES  
(Continued)**

Development Objective	Plan Action	Priority		
		Immediate (Phase I)	Near-Term	Long-Term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vest pocket park development               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- View parks at blocks 64/85, 57/64, 15                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Design Studies</li> <li>● Easements (sewer at 64/65) to be acquired and/or streets vacated</li> <li>● Implementation</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Transit parks                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● publicly owned land</li> <li>● private sites with cooperative agreements</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● Public Amenity/Wintergarden at Block 73 (existing police facility site)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design/feasibility study</li> <li>- Construction</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Dogsled easement to be included in 4th Avenue improvements</li> </ul>	●	● ●	
● Governmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● State Office Complex to proceed (see Financial/Office above)</li> <li>● Hill Building (or equivalent structure) acquisition to proceed following detailed financial evaluation</li> </ul>	● ●		●
● Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Following thorough review of CBD zoning system, consider possible zoning code amendments, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change residential from conditional to permitted use in all B-2 zones</li> <li>- Require minimum percentage of residential development in areas designated residential/office (such as in area north of park strip)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		● ●	
● Establish Land Use and Urban Design Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As part of zoning code review, consider:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Urban design standards</li> <li>- Height and bulk standards:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Throughout CBD</li> <li>● Special treatment on blocks south of parks/open spaces</li> <li>● 4-5 stories adjacent to park strip (north side)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Flexible guidelines for commercial development</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Solar design analysis for proposed new buildings to be reviewed by Municipality</li> <li>● Skyway system:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- District for mandatory skyway to be established (Blocks 45, 47-50, 71-74, 112-113)</li> <li>- Skyway advisory panel to be formed</li> <li>- Standards to be adopted for:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New construction in skyway district</li> <li>● Accommodation of skyways in retrofitted existing buildings</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	● ●	● ●	●

**TABLE VIII.1  
ACTION PRIORITIES  
(Continued)**

Development Objective	Plan Action	Priority		
		Immediate (Phase I)	Near-Term	Long-Term
Preservation of Historical Resources	● Relocate Wendler Building	●		
	● Preserve/conservate Lathrop Building	●		
	● Prepare Downtown Preservation Plan	●		
	● Establish revolving historic preservation fund		●	
	● Establish historic preservation ordinance		●	
	● Amend State Historical District Loan Act to include individual sites in addition to districts		●	
	● Initiate public information program on: - Tax incentives for historical preservation - Adaptive use concepts			●
Preservation of Human Scale and Enhancement of Pedestrian Environment	● Sidewalk widening and pedestrian amenities			
	- 4th Avenue	●		
	- F Street	●		
	- 3rd Avenue		●	
	- 5th Avenue		●	
	- 6th Avenue		●	
	- D Street			●
	- H Street			●
	- K Street			●
	- 7th Street			●
- 8th Street			●	
● Revise Municipal Code to govern new project design for view corridor treatments, plazas, solar-responsive design treatments				
- policy revisions	●			
- implementation		●		
Improved Access to CBD	● Construct A/C Couplet	●		
	● Implement E/G Couplet (coordinated with pedestrian amenities and vacation of G Street between 9th and 10th Avenues)	●		
	● 9th Avenue intersection improvements	●		
	● Peak-hour travel lane on 5th Avenue open to all vehicles or reserved for buses/carpools		●	
	● Institute traffic monitoring program		●	
	● Adopt level-of-service standard with which to schedule implementation of circulation improvement		●	



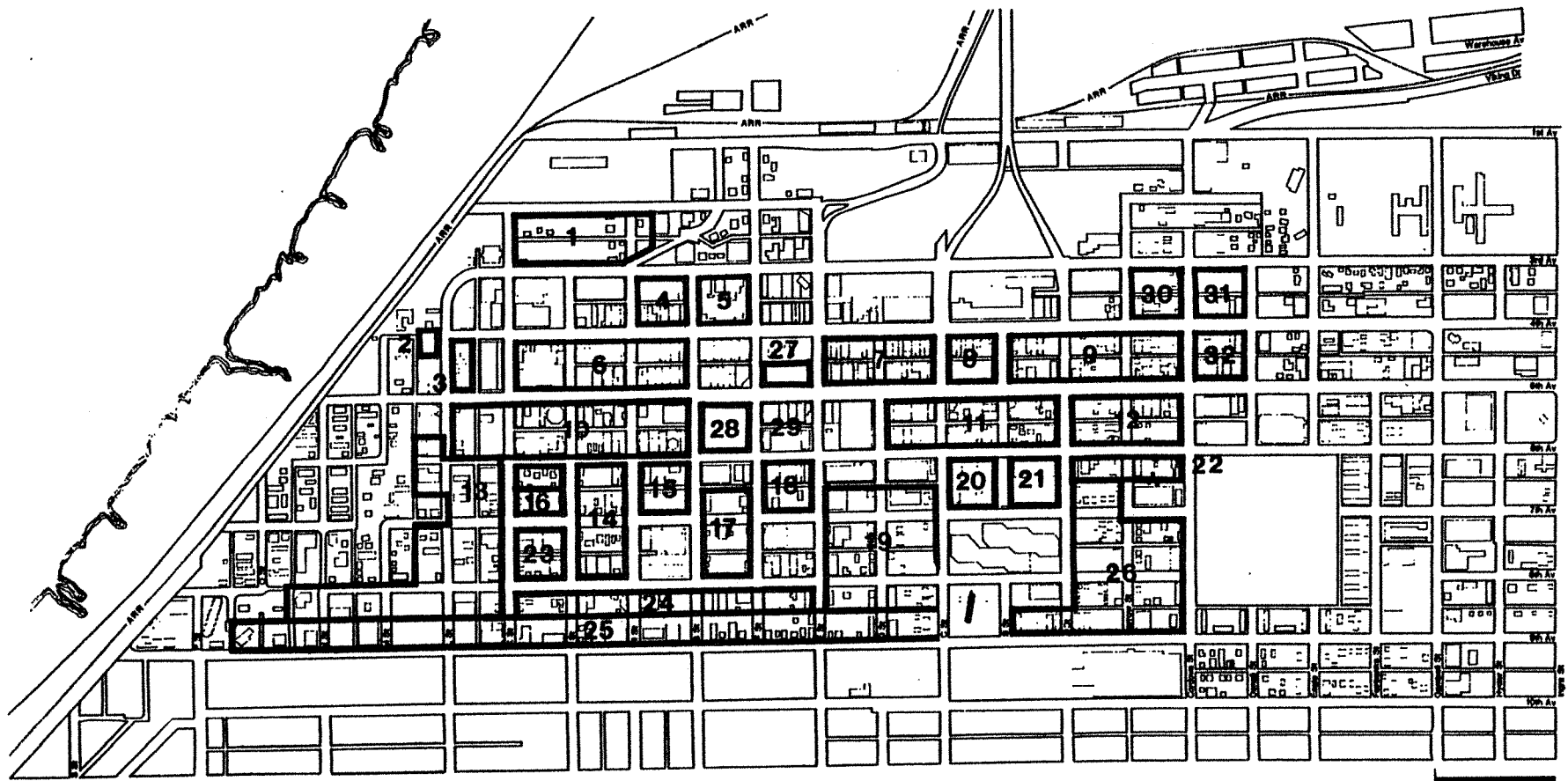


FIGURE VIII.2

# Development Area Land Use Concept

- |    |  |    |                                |    |  |
|----|--|----|--------------------------------|----|--|
| 1  | RETAIL/OFFICE WITH UNDERGROUND PARKING | 12 | STATE OFFICE COMPLEX SITE      | 23 | RESIDENTIAL/OFFICE                                     |
| 2  | OFFICE                                 | 13 | RESIDENTIAL/OFFICE             | 24 | OFFICE WITH INTEGRATED PARKING                         |
| 3  | OFFICE                                 | 14 | RETAIL/OFFICE                  | 25 | RESIDENTIAL/OFFICE WITH HEIGHT LIMITS (4 TO 6 STORIES) |
| 4  | PARKING                                | 15 | PARKING/BAC                    | 26 | RESIDENTIAL/OFFICE WITH HEIGHT LIMITS                  |
| 5  | OLD FEDERAL BUILDING                   | 16 | PARK                           | 27 | CONVENTION CENTER                                      |
| 6  | RETAIL/OFFICE/HOTEL                    | 17 | RETAIL/OFFICE                  | 28 | PERFORMING ARTS CENTER                                 |
| 7  | RETAIL                                 | 18 | RETAIL/OFFICE                  | 29 | TOWN CENTER PLAZA                                      |
| 8  | PARKING (SOUTH HALF)/RETAIL            | 19 | MIXED UNIT DEVELOPMENT/PARKING | 30 | RETAIL   |
| 9  | RETAIL/OFFICE                          | 20 | PUBLIC AMENITY                 | 31 | RETAIL/OFFICE  |
| 10 | RETAIL/OFFICE                          | 21 | MUSEUM                         | 32 | RETAIL/OFFICE  |
| 11 | RETAIL/OFFICE                          | 22 | RETAIL/OFFICE                  |    |  |

development programs can be evaluated, development areas within downtown Anchorage have been identified (Figure VIII.2), based on the long-term planning framework (see discussion in Chapter I). Since the Comprehensive Development Plan is intended to be a living plan, able to respond to changing economic conditions and funding realities, it is not expected that each area must cater to a single purpose; instead, the areas respond to the anticipated direction of free-market investment, based both on economic projections and on the expected stimulation of key Phase I public investments.

### Clusters of Activities

New development in the downtown area is envisioned as being built in coordinated clusters of compatible land uses. In this manner, extended hours of activity can be encouraged and retail development, vital to the well-being of the CBD, can be assured exposure to a steady stream of pedestrians. It should be stressed that, increasingly, major development projects include the vertical mixing of uses, generally with retail at the ground floor and office and/or residential uses occupying the remaining stories. This vertical mixing of uses is highly desirable, especially since downtown residential development may otherwise be difficult to attract.

Retail and Office Clusters. As illustrated in Figure VIII.2, retail and office uses constitute the primary planned land uses adjoining the Town Center area. Retail uses are shown on five blocks east of the Town Center area that include the recommended Phase I retail complex. Retail/office developments are proposed in six blocks west of the Town Center area, as well as north of

3rd Avenue at G Street. As noted earlier, the development patterns indicated in Figure VIII.2 are not in all cases included in the long-term development concept since they can adopt a variety of configurations in response to specific market and locational criteria.

Residential and Office Clusters. Residential/office clusters are proposed throughout the southern part of the CBD, particularly in the following three areas;

- The area west of K Street and south of 6th Avenue
- The area immediately north of the park strip
- The area between the Federal Office Complex and the cemetery

Planned Unit Developments. In response to the locations of key existing activity generators, planned unit office-retail developments have been recommended for three sites:

- The block-and-a-half area between the ARCO and Hunt Towers
- The four-square-block area west of the Federal Office Complex
- The mixed-use Winter Garden site west of the Historical and Fine Arts Museum

Proposed developments on these key parcels may be subject to review and discussion with the Municipal Planning Department and other agencies due to their importance to overall CBD development and their activity linkage potential.

## Building Height

In response to the low solar angle in Anchorage and the need for additional open space resources in the main part of the CBD, it is recommended that the Municipality consider the adoption of height limits on certain key parcels, indicated in the long-term development concept plan. These limits might be expressed in the form of a maximum number of bonus points that would be allowed for urban design amenities -- which might have the disadvantage of tending to discourage developers from providing needed pedestrian amenities -- or in the form of transferred development rights -- whereby a developer would be granted allowances on property elsewhere.

Height limits are proposed in the following situations:

- Where development adjoins the park strip, a recommended height limit of four to five stories should be considered.
- Where development occurs immediately to the south of key open space resources such as the recommended park on Block 66 and the recommended Town Center Plaza, height limits can assure greater solar access on these important open spaces.

Analysis of solar access, including consideration of height limits, building shapes, and other factors, should be made a necessary element of proposals for new developments in the CBD. This would improve the position of the Municipality to negotiate with developers in early design stages for architecture that both serves the developer's interests and enhances the downtown environment.

## Coordination of Interrelated Programs and Policies

Since a number of mechanisms and agencies may be employed in bringing recommended programs to reality, there must be a means of coordinating programs on several levels, including:

- Type of project - particularly when limited funding from one source must be allocated among numerous worthy projects of the same nature; example: allocation of limited funds for pedestrian improvements throughout the CBD
- Location - projects recommended for early implementation that must take into consideration actions planned for subsequent phases; example: early implementation of pedestrian environment improvements while allowing for anticipated future circulation system modifications
- Degree of urgency - those projects that must be coordinated by virtue of having to be undertaken in concert with each other; example: implementation of the recommended retail complex with simultaneous implementation of parking structure construction program on an adjacent block
- District - when planning goals for a particular area must be reconciled with the more specialized requirements of a particular project; example: the design of pedestrian environment improvements in the 4th Avenue Historic District
- Institutional framework - when implementation of a program or project requires an

institutional or policy change in order to be carried out; example: the probable need for enabling legislation prior to undertaking the recommended redevelopment of the area slated for a retail complex

- Downtown goal to which programs respond - including means of achieving desired balance of land use, more attractive environment, better access (including circulation and parking), etc.

Effective coordination can be instrumental in avoiding the possible pre-emption of later options, as when a non-essential structure is developed on a key hinge parcel in the CBD. The need for extensive coordination is probably greatest for projects and programs requiring interaction with private-sector interests.

#### PRELIMINARY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

As an aid to the Municipality in initiating a Comprehensive Development Plan implementation policy, preliminary strategies for the implementation of selected programs and projects have been prepared. The intent of these preliminary strategies is to propose a possible sequencing of actions, subject to review by the Planning Department, the Mayor's Office, and the Municipal Assembly. It is further intended that the preliminary strategies be modified as conditions warrant.

Among the programs selected for preliminary implementation strategies are:

- Funded capital projects

- Strengthening of pedestrian activities, including development of the recommended retail complex and establishment of skyway system guidelines and controls
- Implementation of parking and circulation improvements, including establishment of both a parking authority, a traffic/parking monitoring program and construction of new parking structures at three selected sites
- Town Center improvements, including Town Center Plaza and F Street Mall
- Land use and urban design controls, including zoning changes for more effective urban design controls and to provide incentives for downtown housing in selected locations without merely diverting uncontrolled development elsewhere
- Historic preservation program
- Downtown environment quality

The implementation strategy for each selected program notes the program objective; location; output; lead public agency; source of funding; anticipated start date; and proposed activity sequence.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. FUNDED CAPITAL PROJECTS**

**Program Objective:** To infuse the CBD with needed facilities and improvements to accommodate and encourage a new generation of development.

**Location:** Throughout the CBD study area (see Chapter II)

**Program Output:**

- New cultural and civic institutions, including Performing Arts Center, Convention Center, etc.
- Upgraded pedestrian network, including landscaping, sidewalk improvements, etc.
- Improved outdoor space resources, including park strip and cemetery enhancements.
- Upgraded access and parking facilities, including new parking structure(s).

**Lead Public Agency:** Mayor's Office - Project 80s Administration

**Program Costs:** Total of \$234 million appropriated for 20 projects

**Source of Funds:** Projects 80s

**Start Year:** Initiated in 1981



Activity Sequence:

Projects to Proceed as Planned

Funding Appropriated for Project

Performing Arts Center	\$ 40.5 million
Convention Center	20.0 million
Historical and Fine Arts Museum Expansion	22.9 million
Hill Building (or equivalent) Acquisition	8.7 million
Coastal Trail Development - Phase I	3.0 million
Ship Creek Overlook	0.2 million
Cemetery Upgrading	0.4 million
Gateway Drive (Int. Airport to Minnesota Dr.)	5.2 million
State Office Complex at Site 3 (pending findings of geotechnical investigation now under way)	90.0 million*
<b>SUBTOTAL - Funds for Projects to Proceed:</b>	<b>\$190.9 million</b>

Refer to Specific Program Descriptions for Following Related Projects

- Downtown Streets and Projects - see Town Center Improvements
- Downtown Parking Garage - see Parking and Circulation Management Program
- Historic Anchorage Railroad Town - see Historic Preservation Program
- Downtown Pedestrian Amenities - see Town Center Improvements
- F Street Mall - see Town Center Improvements
- Town Center Plaza - see Town Center Improvements

\* A substantial portion of this development cost to be borne by a private developer to be selected by the State of Alaska.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. STRENGTHENING OF PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITIES**

**Program Title:** Retail Complex With Parking

**Program Objective:** To retain downtown position as key retail center in Anchorage region; to accommodate a more metropolitan range of retail concerns; to provide activity focus for currently depressed portion of CBD. This project is considered extremely critical for the overall public welfare of downtown Anchorage and the Municipality.

**Location:** Phase I: Blocks 47, 40, and 49 have been economically stagnant in recent years; combination of older commercial, warehousing, scattered older residential.

**Program Output:** Accommodations for:

- A third anchor store (±120,000 square feet)
- ±250,000 square feet of specialty stores linking with two existing anchor stores (J.C. Penney and Nordstrom) by skyways
- Climate-controlled environment on two levels including street level
- Additional office development above retail levels
- Underground parking for between 750 to 1,500 cars
- Linkage with parking structure proposed for Block 45

**Lead Public Agency:** Mayor's Office and Municipal Attorney in coordination with Planning Department and business community (DDC\* or new entity)

**Program Cost:** To be determined based on final program

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\* Downtown Development Corporation

**Source of Funds:**

SB-50 fund (\$10 million), joint funding through Municipal General Fund and business community contributions for feasibility/design/development study. Anticipated Municipality participation in land assembly and public parking development; private developer responsibility for financing, construction, leasing, management, operation, maintenance, etc.

**Start Year:**

1982. Note: it has been projected that, based on market conditions in the Anchorage region, a major retail development is likely to take place within two years. It is, therefore, critically important that a developer commitment be obtained within this period. If a competing suburban shopping center is developed south of the CBD, it is likely that downtown Anchorage may lose up to 125,000 square feet of existing retail space including one existing anchor store, and its retail predominance in the region will significantly decline with serious implications on viability of remaining downtown businesses.

**Activity Sequence:**

1. For this development is to be implemented, Mayor, Municipal Assembly, retail community, and public-at-large must endorse the concept of a strong downtown retail center. Securing a City commitment (formal or informal) for provision of parking and assistance in land assembly of certain land parcels (which cannot be acquired through private negotiations) is of critical importance.
2. The Municipality, through the Mayor's Office or through establishment of a special coordinating entity, authorizes Municipality participation in Phase II feasibility/design/development study. Special liaison appointed.
3. Retail Task Force is formed. The group may include:
  - Representative(s) of downtown business groups (DDC and others)
  - Mayor's special liaison
  - Municipal Attorney
  - Planning Department representative

**Retail Task Force establishes specific responsibilities, including:**

- Refining objectives for mixed use retail/office center project
  - Retaining feasibility/design/development consultants
  - Working with existing business concerns and property owners in CBD
  - Bringing J.C. Penney, Nordstrom, and possibly a third anchor store to the table for preliminary commitments to the retail center development
  - Coordinating solicitation of developer interest (formal, informal, or pre-selection)
4. Present property owners participation in the project should be greatly encouraged to help facilitate private land assembly. A program for just relocation and compensation must be prepared for implementation.
  5. Municipal Attorney reviews various legal vehicles such as land assembly for public parking purposes or enabling legislation by the State Legislature in connection with redevelopment (laws and regulations available in many states such as California and Oregon), and make specific recommendations for appropriate legal vehicles to be utilized.
  6. Feasibility/design/development consultants review a variety of financing vehicles and make specific recommendations for consideration. Such vehicles would include, but not be limited to:
    - General obligation debt
    - Tax increment financing
    - Lease revenue bonds
    - Grants from the State of Alaska

Several sub-options for minimizing the cost exposure include:

- City lease of acquired property (air right)
- Joint participation by property owners
- Infusion of direct capital costs for parking and unrecoverable project improvements

7. Based on above findings, Retail Task Force reviews and makes recommendation to Mayor and Municipal Assembly.
8. Mayor and Municipal Assembly approve the project, along with specific definition of Municipality's responsibility and obligations.
9. Developer is selected and Municipality, in coordination with Retail Task Force, enters negotiations.
10. Planning, design, financing, and construction activities will follow after the selection of the developer.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. STRENGTHENING OF PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITIES**

- Program Title:** Establishment of Skyway Guidelines and Controls
- Program Objective:** To establish a mechanism to implement and operate a downtown skyway system that will enhance the quality and convenience of the downtown pedestrian network.
- Location:** Initial area of attention would be major multi-block construction areas planned for mixed use retail complex, State Office Complex, parking structure, etc. Eventual area of attention would be entire CBD study area.
- Program Output:** A blue-ribbon committee made up of both public and private sector representatives that would be in charge of granting preliminary approval to skyway concepts and that would be vested to draft standards pertaining to skyway requirements and operational policies.
- Lead Public Agency:** Mayor's Office in coordination with business community
- Program Costs:** Nominal administration cost
- Start Year:** 1983
- Activity Sequence:**
1. Following public hearing, skyway system concept is formally adopted by Municipal Assembly.
  2. Mayor appoints individuals to serve on Provisional Skyway Advisory Panel (see above for recommended panel constituency)
  3. Panel drafts preliminary guidelines for:
    - Skyway system location
    - Guidelines for width, height, structural system, etc.
    - Projects required to be linked by skyway to adjacent facilities (i.e., public parking structures, new office, retail, governmental, recreational, and transit facilities)

- Guidelines for financial participation by Municipality in skyway planning and development
  - Guidelines for uniform graphic treatment to expedite pedestrian flow
  - Guidelines for public policy regarding retrofitting of existing buildings to integrate with emerging skyway system
  - Insurance, maintenance, and other operational policies
  - Permit process
4. Mayor and Municipal Assembly review preliminary guidelines and propose modifications.
  5. Following approval, members of Skyway Advisory Committee are officially appointed.
  6. All issues pertaining to skyway development are subject to review of Skyway Advisory Committee.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. STRENGTHENING OF PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITIES**

**Program Title:** Mixed Use Wintergarden

**Program Objective:** To complement recommended downtown open space network with climatized, garden under glass in conjunction with revitalization of CBD area.

**Location:** Site of existing public safety facilities on Block 48.

**Program Output:** Limited mixed-use development around glass-enclosed public garden court; functions to be included in development include:

- Plants, flowers, trees, waterfalls, etc.
- Sitting areas
- Public assembly area for cultural events
- Cultural, art, and historic exhibits
- Tourist-oriented retail
- Travel agencies
- Visitors bureau
- Parking (below grade)

Linkage with expanded Historical and Fine Arts Museum to the east, with recommended new mixed-use retail complex to the north, and with existing Federal Office Complex to the south.

**Lead Public Agency:** Mayor's Office in coordination with Cultural & Recreational Service, Planning and Public Works Departments.



- Program Costs:** To be determined based on ultimate programmatic and design concepts.
- Source of Funds:** Anticipated as public (some private) development venture (financing options similar to those for mixed-use retail complex).
- Start Year:** When mixed-use retail complex commitments are secured and upon completion of new parking facility (including provisions for relocated Police Department) at Block 45.
- Activity Sequence:**
1. Once commitments for retail complex development is secured, Municipal Assembly reviews concept of mixed-use wintergarden and formally adopts its development concept for implementation.
  2. Financial and design consultants are retained to prepare preliminary program for mixed-use wintergarden.
  3. Architectural/engineering consultant is retained to prepare preliminary design concepts for facility. Design concepts to include:
    - Multiple-use public garden court, glass enclosed
    - Solar access
    - Generous south facade setback to increase pedestrian area adjacent to right-of-way
    - Skyway connection to all adjacent blocks, with clear interchange between skyway and street levels.
  4. Municipal Assembly approves selected financing plan and design concept alternative and issues formal authorization to proceed with development and construction.
  5. Final design and construction documents are prepared and construction commences.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. PARKING AND CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENT**

- Program Title:** Establishment of Parking Authority
- Program Objective:** To establish an institutional framework within which parking policies and programs can be developed and implemented in conjunction with ongoing changes in demand/supply conditions.
- Location:** Municipality
- Program Output:** Creation of an Anchorage Parking Authority to allow:
- Centralized planning for on-street and off-street parking.
  - Setting of rates and charges for on-street and off-street parking.
  - Construction, acquisition, and operation of off-street parking facilities.
  - Financing of off-street parking facilities.
- Lead Public Agency:** Mayor's Office in conjunction with Parking and Traffic Commission, assisted by interdepartmental task force.
- Program Costs:** Nominal administrative and management cost anticipated, but may be offset through streamlined operation and relieving other departments of existing responsibilities.
- Source of Funds:** Parking revenues, revenue bonds.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. PARKING AND CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS**

- Program Title:** Monitoring Program
- Program Objective:** To facilitate coordination of interrelated programs affecting circulation, parking, and treatment of public rights-of-way and to assure expenditure of public funds for downtown improvements in timely and coordinated manner.
- Location:** Monitoring program would cover entire CBD study area and key points outside study area influencing CBD.
- Program Output:** Reports to be distributed to Mayor's Office and Municipal Assembly on a six-month basis covering:
- Level of new construction activity taking place within CBD and its impact on circulation and parking
  - Parking data, including prevailing occupancy levels for public and private facilities, parking rates, on-street parking utilization factors, and additions to and reductions in total CBD parking supply
  - Circulation data concerning volume-to-capacity relationships on key downtown access routes
  - Transit data
  - Recommendations for specific actions
- In addition, detailed reports on key locations and/or developments may be required on an interim basis to aid Mayor and Municipal Assembly in decision-making.
- Lead Public Agency:** A Municipal Department (Transportation, Planning, or Public Works), or Parking Authority to be designated by Mayor.

**Program Costs:**

**Depends on staffing requirements**

**Source of Funds:**

**Municipal General Fund**

**Start Year:**

**1983**

**Activity Sequence:**

1. Mayor and Municipal Assembly officially endorse need for monitoring program through adoption of Comprehensive Development Plan.
2. Staff to be assigned to monitoring program to interact with Planning, Transportation, Public Works, and Cultural and Recreational Service Departments, AMATS, and other ongoing monitoring programs to eliminate duplication of activity and to aid in coordination with other governmental monitoring programs.
3. Ongoing survey of existing parking and circulation facilities is required.
4. Survey findings serve as "base line" from which to measure impacts on new programs and developments affecting CBD parking and circulation.
5. Reports are prepared on a semi-annual basis giving a "state-of-the-city" summary and highlighting special areas that may require remedial action. Conditions that would "trigger" major capital improvement programs, such as construction of new parking facilities, will also be highlighted; interim reports will be prepared in the event of such "triggering" conditions.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. PARKING AND CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS**

**Program Title:** Parking Facilities

**Program Objective:** To offset critical parking shortfall in CBD due to new development with inadequate on-site parking facilities.

**Location:** Phase I Plan recommended facilities at or near following blocks:

- Block 45
- Block 29
- Block 68

Later phase parking facilities recommended for peripheral and other CBD locations to be selected.

**Program Output:** Phase I output: Addition of 1,750 to 2,250 public parking spaces in CBD. Retail development recommended at street level. Bus accommodation facilities to be provided at Block 45 and Block 68 locations.

**Lead Public Agency:** Parking Authority

**Costs:** To be determined during preliminary programming and design stage.

**Source of Funds:** Block 45 Facility: SB-50 Allocation and General Fund Supplement  
Block 29 Facility: State of Alaska (in coordination with State Courts parking structure development) and General Fund  
Block 68 Facility: Projects 80s Appropriation with General Fund Supplement, private revenue sources, or revenue bonds

**Start Year:** 1983 (programming and design): 1984 (Initiation of construction)

**Activity Sequence:**

- 1. Parking Authority is formed (see separate program description).**
- 2. Liaison is established with State Courts parking structure development representative regarding proposed joint participation in development of parking structure on Block 29.**
- 3. Agreement with operators of Captain Cook garage is renegotiated to permit construction of new public parking facility at Block 29, or nearby location.**
- 4. Architectural/engineering consultant is selected to perform preliminary feasibility/design/cost study for three structures, including feasibility of connecting with existing parking garage at 7th Avenue and G Street.**
- 5. Based on findings of feasibility/design/cost study. Parking Authority makes recommendations for approval by Mayor and Municipal Assembly regarding phasing and financing of parking structure development program.**
- 6. Design RFP is issued and architectural/engineering consultant retained to prepare design and construction documents.**
- 7. Contractor is selected and construction proceeds.**

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION, PARKING AND CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS**

<b>Program Title:</b>	<b><u>Circulation Improvements</u></b>
<b>Program Objective:</b>	<b>To respond to increasing demands for vehicular circulation capacity with phased policy that can be coordinated with necessary improvements in pedestrian environment.</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Throughout CBD study area</b>
<b>Program Output:</b>	<b>Anticipated actions include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>One-way couplet on E and G Streets</b></li><li>● <b>Selective removal of on-street parking along specially-designated streets in conjunction with development of new off-street parking facilities</b></li><li>● <b>Provision for high-occupancy vehicle lanes at peak hours on key arterials</b></li><li>● <b>Intersection improvements at key locations</b></li></ul>
<b>Lead Public Agency:</b>	<b>Public Works and Planning Departments in coordination with Mayor's Office.</b>
<b>Program Costs:</b>	<b>To be determined based on final design and implementation sequence.</b>
<b>Source of Funds:</b>	<b>Projects 80s allocations for roadway improvements and General Fund supplements.</b>
<b>Start Year:</b>	<b>1983</b>

**Activity Sequence:**

1. **Monitoring system to indicate areas in greatest need of remedial action.**
2. **As volume/capacity ratio on corridors reaches 0.90, the following actions are considered and one is selected:**
  - **Conversion of traffic from two-way to one-way flow**
  - **Prohibition of on-street parking during peak-hours--or permanent removal of on-street parking for an additional travel lane or widened sidewalk.**
  - **Improvement of intersection(s) to expedite flow**
3. **By time of Performing Arts Center and Convention Center completion, E/G Street couplet should be implemented, along with pedestrian improvements, between 3rd and 6th Avenues.**
4. **Other circulation improvements are implemented in conjunction with monitoring program recommendations, pedestrian environmental improvement programs.**
5. **Ongoing plans for expressway development serving downtown Anchorage are monitored on a continuous basis for potential impacts on CBD circulation and actions needed for implementation.**



**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. TOWN CENTER IMPROVEMENTS**

**Program Title:** Town Center Plaza

**Program Objective:** To provide central open space focus and gathering place in nucleus of CBD governmental, institutional, cultural, retail, and office facilities.

**Location:** Block 51

**Program Output:** Landscaped plaza, possibly incorporating active recreational feature such as outdoor ice rink, to be focal point of CBD core area.

**Lead Public Agency:** Capital Projects Office in coordination with Parks, Planning, and Public Works Departments.

**Program Costs:** Initially estimated at \$5.5 million developmental cost for full-block acquisition and improvement as Projects 80s capital improvement program; actual cost may change subject to final design, extent of development, and phasing.

**Source of Funds:** Projects 80s allocation for Town Square project.

**Start Year:** 1982

**Activity Sequence:**

1. Town Center Plaza concept is adopted by Mayor and Municipal Assembly.
2. Immediately upon approval of concept, property owners and tenants are notified of Municipality intent to acquire property; programs for acquisition, compensation and relocation assistance are prepared.
3. Design RFP is issued and landscape architecture/urban design consultant is selected to prepare design and construction documents.
4. Plans are approved.
5. Contractor is selected for construction.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. TOWN CENTER IMPROVEMENTS**

- Program Title:** F Street Mall
- Program Objective:** To provide generous pedestrian linkage among important open space, institutional, and historically significant downtown resources, as well as many downtown business activities.
- Location:** F Street right-of-way between 2nd and 9th Avenues (first phase: between 4th and 6th Avenues).
- Program Output:** A pedestrian-oriented avenue with minimal vehicular traffic along most of its length and an auto-free zone in the core of the Town Center.
- Lead Public Agency:** Capital Projects Office in coordination with Parks Department
- Program Costs:** \$5.15 million appropriated for F Street Mall as part of Projects 80s capital improvements program; actual cost might change depending on final design, extent of development, and phasing.
- Source of Funds:** Projects 80s allocation with possible supplement from General Fund.
- Start Year:** 1982
- Activity Sequence:**
1. Schematic designs prepared to date for F Street Mall are reviewed by Planning Department for consistency with Comprehensive Development Plan programs, including Town Center, streetscape improvements, etc.
  2. Based on results of Activity 1, schematic designs are modified by Planning Department.
  3. Previously selected architectural/engineering and landscape architecture consultant is requested to modify design plans to reflect the latest concept for F Street Mall.
  4. Preliminary design plans are approved, construction documents are prepared leading to construction.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. TOWN CENTER IMPROVEMENTS**

- Program Title:** Pedestrian Environment Improvements
- Program Objective:** To provide landscaped linkages among major downtown activity generators within existing public rights-of-way.
- Location:** Avenues and streets throughout the CBD study area, with early emphasis on Town Center area.
- Program Output:** Improved pedestrian environment through landscaping, street furniture, potential reallocation of right-of-way area assigned to vehicles and pedestrians, guidelines for solar access within public rights-of-way--all coordinated with circulation improvements.
- Lead Public Agency:** Capital Projects Office, in coordination with Planning and Public Works Departments and other affected agencies.
- Program Cost:** To be determined based on final design and phasing sequence.
- Source of Funds:** Projects 80s allocation for Downtown Streets and Projects, supplemented with General Fund revenues and private contributions.
- Start Year:** 1983
- Activity Sequence:**
1. Landscape architecture/urban design consultant is retained to develop alternative coordinated treatments for:
    - East-west avenues -- both north and south sidewalk treatments
    - North-south streets -- treatments to favor one side of vehicular right-of-way or another based on adjacent development
    - Configurations for varying street widths -- from 60 to 80 feet.
- All alternatives are to be coordinated with programmed circulation improvements per monitoring program.

2. Preferred design concept is selected by Planning Department and forwarded to Mayor and Municipal Assembly for formal approval.
3. Selected plans are confirmed with Transportation Department to assure coordination with programs to increase capacity on downtown streets and avenues.
4. Planning Department identifies major development projects that would entail commitment on part of private sector to provide streetscape improvements. Affected street and avenue segments include (see Chapter IV):
  - 3rd Avenue between H and L Streets
  - 4th Avenue between H and L Streets (north side) and between I and L Streets (south side)
  - 5th Avenue between I and L Streets (north side) and between K and L Streets (south side)
  - 7th Avenue between C and G Streets, south side
  - E, F, and G Streets south of 7th Avenue
5. Developers submit plans for streetscape improvements along affected segments to Planning Department.
6. Planning Department approves plans per modifications and implements improvement projects with developer bearing portion or all of cost.
7. As circulation modifications are being implemented, streetscape modifications are implemented.
8. Along segments not anticipated to receive circulation-related modifications (e.g., discontinuous north-south streets), improvements are implemented as funds are made available.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN CONTROLS**

- Program Title:** Zoning Code Review and Selective Modification
- Program Objective:** To encourage development quality that emphasizes enhanced public benefit in private investments.
- Location:** Major development sites within CBD zones B-2A through B-2C.
- Program Output:** Partially revised zoning code and bonus point system.
- Lead Public Agency:** Planning Department (Physical Planning and Zoning and Platting Divisions).
- Program Costs:** Nominal administrative cost.
- Source of Funds:** On-line departmental allocation.
- Start Year:** 1983
- Activity Sequence:**
1. Planning Department administration assigns personnel to determine:
    - Intent of existing zoning and bonus point systems
    - Performance evaluation by reviewing what has been accomplished by recently constructed projects
    - The utility and feasibility of the height, performance, and other regulatory recommendations contained in this report.
  2. Based on Activity 1, Planning Department personnel determine which aspects of code are ineffective and which warrant modification.
  3. Planning Department personnel draft alternative zoning code language pertaining to:
    - Permitted and conditional land uses (residential uses permitted rather than conditional)

- Bonus point incentives for urban design amenities and possible removal of and/or substitution for existing incentives
  - Limits on building height in the half-block area north of the park strip (4-5 stories in height)
  - Requirement that development in the one-block strip immediately north of the park strip include a minimum percentage of residential development on either a square-footage or a number-of-units per-lot-coverage basis.
  - Limit on building height in blocks located immediately south of major public plazas and open spaces in order to assure appropriate solar access.
  - A minimum level of parking requirements (or monies in lieu of) for future downtown development projects for which parking is not required under the present code.
  - Avoidance of recommended regulatory systems that would have the effect of diverting development to other areas of the community.
4. Alternative draft revisions are submitted to Municipal Attorney for review and modifications are made in consultation with Planning Department personnel, downtown business community, property owners, developers, etc.
  5. Proposed amendments to the code are submitted to Mayor and Municipal Assembly for consideration and formal adoption.
  6. Planning Department personnel continue to monitor future development projects to assure effectiveness of modifications and to identify possible additional areas for modification.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

- Program Title:** Various Historic Preservation and Adaptive Use Projects that May Be Identified in the Course of Recommended Historic Preservation Studies
- Program Objective:** To preserve historic buildings representing typical development during historic period in Anchorage through means of on-site preservation, relocation preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration.
- Location:** To be determined by Downtown Preservation Plan
- Program Output:**
- Preservation of existing buildings in downtown Anchorage both on site and from other locations in CBD
  - Development of infill improvements to tie together buildings of compatible historical quality as viable, historically-oriented commercial and/or residential developments
- Lead Public Agency:** Heritage Resources Corporation in coordination with:
- Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission
  - Historic Anchorage, Inc.
  - Alaska Association for Historic Preservation
  - Planning Department (Physical Planning Division)
- Program Costs:** To be determined based on final design and implementation techniques.
- Source of Funds:** Projects 80s allocation for Railroad Town. Remaining funds estimated at between \$3.65 and \$4.65 million. Other funding assistance programs available through National Register of Historic Places and from IRS Investment Tax Credit for preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures.

**Start Year:**

**1983**

**Activity Sequence:**

1. Construction and demolition activities proposed for properties of historic significance are immediately identified.
2. The Municipal Assembly formally adopts the recommended Downtown Historic Preservation Plan, after receiving public input.
3. The Heritage Resources Corporation is created.
4. A Historic Preservation Ordinance is prepared and adopted.
5. The Corporation establishes an Historic Preservation Revolving Fund to supplement capital funds for operation and maintenance of historic facilities and to allow continuing historic preservation activities. The revolving fund could be supplemented by Municipal contributions and private contributions on a yearly basis. In addition, portions of hotel/motel tax could be allocated in view of contribution of historic preservation to local tourism.
6. The Heritage Corporation administers historic preservation monies and implements specific preservation projects. Subsequent to the Assembly's adoption of the Downtown Preservation Plan, and its identification of specific preservation projects and program areas, the Corporation should proceed with the following activities:
  - Active financial participation in preservation projects, with tax and other incentives, and including modification of deed covenants to assure compatible maintenance of historic property; transfer of development rights could be considered as compensatory measure



7. **Commission retains historical architect(s) /landscape architect(s) under consulting contract to generate construction documents for various historic projects, including provision for near-term and future relocation options.**
8. **RFP is prepared for implementation of each project, based on plans prepared by consultant(s).**
9. **Contractor is selected, negotiations are undertaken, and contract is entered.**
10. **Maintenance is accomplished through lease revenues and other income to revolving fund.**

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. DOWNTOWN ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

**Program Title:** Vest Pocket Parks

**Program Objective:** To supplement major open spaces with series of smaller open spaces in key location with view potential, at heavily used transit waiting areas, and in locations of historic significance.

**Location:** Various locations throughout CBD study area

**Program Output:** Viewpoint Parks

- 3rd Avenue at H Street
- 4th Avenue at L Street
- 6th Avenue at L Street
- 7th Avenue at M Street

Transit Mini-Parks

- 4th Avenue at F Street
- 5th Avenue at D Street
- 5th Avenue at I Street

Historic Vest Pocket Parks

- "Mrs. Martin's Garden"
- Kimball's store back yard
- Old Federal Building entryway

**Lead Public Agency:**

Mayor's Office in coordination with Planning Department (Physical Planning Division), Parks & Recreational Department, and Heritage Resources Corporation.

**Program Costs:**

To be determined based on final design and implementation schedule.

**Source of Funds:**

Projects 80s allocation for appropriate beautification programs (including Downtown Street and Projects - estimated to have approximately \$3.2 million remaining) with supplement from General Fund.

**Start Year:**

1983

**Activity Sequence:**

1. Municipal Assembly formally approves of vest pocket park plan, upon recommendation of Planning Department, through adoption of Comprehensive Development Plan.
2. RFPs are prepared for landscape architect(s) and urban design consultant(s) for vest pocket park programs on land currently under public ownership.
3. In coordination with property owners, preferred concepts are selected (including deed modifications, transfer of development rights, and public acquisition alternatives). Where necessary, property is acquired and/or public easement is retained.
4. Consultants are selected; negotiations take place, and construction documents are prepared.
5. Contractor(s) is (are) retained for construction and vest pocket parks on land currently under public ownership leading to actual construction.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION. DOWNTOWN ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

**Program Title:** Guidelines for New Development Projects

**Program Objective:** To modify site development standards for major new construction projects to promote improved pedestrian environment, greater solar access to public rights-of-way, and preservation of views along major view corridors.

**Location:** Key locations along view corridors and major avenues in the CBD study area.

**Program Output:** Guidelines for new development projects, based on location and size, specifying:

- Standards for building setbacks in locations at the end of key view corridors
- Standards for terraced north building facades for projects encompassing entire block faces to allow greater solar access
- Standards for optional reciprocal easement concepts for projects encompassing an entire block face exchanging increased pedestrian area at street level for greater allowable building area at higher levels face.

**Lead Public Agency:** Planning Department in coordination with Mayor's Office

**Program Costs:** Nominal administrative cost

**Source of Funds:** On-line departmental allocation

**Start Year:** 1983

**Activity Sequence:**

1. **Planning Department personnel refine concepts and document recommendations in urban design report.**
2. **Based on findings and recommendations, Planning Department identifies applicable portions of Municipal Code and draft alternative language to incorporate recommended guidelines.**
3. **Draft modifications are submitted to Municipal Attorney for review and comments.**
4. **Comments are incorporated and recommended modifications to Municipal Code are submitted to Municipal Assembly for hearing and approval.**

## APPENDIX A

### MUNICIPALITY CIRCULATION ANALYSIS

Appendix A contains the circulation analysis conducted by the Municipality of Anchorage Planning Department. A synopsis of the analysis findings is provided in Chapter III, along with recommendations for circulation system improvements that reflect these findings.

# Municipality of Anchorage

## MEMORANDUM

Bruce Phelps  
August 12, 1982  
Page 2

DATE: August 12, 1982  
TO: Bruce Phelps, Physical Planning Manager  
FROM: Steven Fisher, Transit Planner *SF*  
SUBJECT: Recommendations on Downtown Circulation

future growth in trips. Prohibition of left turns and removal of parking on E Street could resolve the present problem but also would be confusing to motorists.

### B. Future Trip Volumes

Downtown traffic will grow as employment increases. The growth of employment in Downtown was estimated and used in the UTPS model package developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The table below shows how growth in downtown vehicle trips-ends relate to growth in employment.

	<u>1980</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>% Growth</u>
Downtown Employment:	11,705	21,322	82
Downtown Trip Ends:	52,763	97,353	85

It should be noted that these estimates do not include outbound trips or trips passing through the Downtown area.

### C. 2001 - No-Build Alternative

The first option tested was to try and accommodate predicted year 2001 trip volumes within the present Downtown street system. The process of assigning trips to streets was carried out by hand assignment and using the UTPS model.

The results were similar with the hand assignment showing slightly more severe results. For the sake of this analysis we will use the UTPS assignment because of the programs greater capacity to optimize trip patterns. The transit mode split is assumed at 12%. Map 1 highlights problem areas under the No-Build scenario. The 5th-6th couplet will carry in excess of 35,000 vehicles daily. Ninth Avenue run into problems east of Cordova. North-South streets with severe congestion problems include, E, G, and Cordova. There is good reason to believe the model is optimistic

### A. Existing Circulation Pattern

The consultant report presented some information on the present downtown street pattern. This pattern is characterized by a 5th-6th couplet and a 3rd-4th couplet east of 'C' Street as the primary east-west traffic streets. The A-C, I-L, Ingra-Gambell couplets carry the heaviest volumes of north-south traffic. Other streets perform a local distribution function within the Core area. Ninth Avenue which marks the southern boundary of the Downtown Core carries a large volume of traffic as well. The present street system works under a volume to capacity basis, but is plagued by intersection problems both during peak hours and at midday. The 5th-6th couplet approaches service level E-F during the peak hour at the Gambell-Ingra intersection. E Street has a severe problem at 6th Avenue caused by left turning movements compounded by demand for access to the Penney's Garage. Ninth Avenue also has intersection problems caused by turning movements at major intersections. Traffic Engineering in the past has advocated an E-G couplet to Ninth to reduce the E Street problem and to accommodate

at some intersections because it does not account for turning movement delays.

The no-build scenario is probably unacceptable for two reasons: 1) Streets cannot operate over capacity. In reality trips on links over capacity would appear on other local streets that are going to be emphasized for pedestrian orientation or possibly the trips would not be made which will hurt downtown economically. 2) Limiting circulation options will limit the effectiveness of what can be done for pedestrians. Despite improvements in transit most downtown trips will still continue to use the automobile. Portland found that its downtown ridership growth stabilized when it achieved a 30% mode split. The diffuse nature of residential patterns made improvement above this mode split a huge investment. However, the growth in transit ridership, implementation of a downtown couplet system with computerized signals and the construction of a downtown bypass actually allowed the conversion of downtown automobile space into pedestrian space. Downtown employment increased by over 60% during that time period.

D. Alternative 2

This alternative eliminates problems on north-south streets by assuming the A-C couplet and E-G couplet. It improves conditions on 5th-6th by starting to assume trips will use streets further south. Thus, congestion on 9th Avenue becomes worse and there is a considerable increase to traffic on 10th Avenue. Map 2 highlights this alternative. Not shown on the map is 15th Avenue which now has a traffic problem. This is also assuming a grade separated 15th Avenue. Another run of this alternative which eliminates 10th Avenue (simply meaning no increase in traffic will be tolerated on 10th) puts more pressure on both 9th and 15th.

This alternative should be viewed cautiously. The A-C couplet is going ahead, an E-G couplet is easy to implement in the technical sense,

but grade separation of 15th Avenue at Seward may be difficult. As stated before the model may be understating the problem on 9th Avenue at intersections. In other words, the problems on 9th and 15th seen in this alternative may actually be worse than depicted in the model.

There is still a problem on 5th and 6th but it is somewhat alleviated by pushing the traffic into the residential neighborhood south of downtown. This also allows a high degree of pedestrian improvements on 4th Avenue and F Street. More pedestrian improvements, if desired, can be accommodated on D Street.

The reason Alternative 2 is not successful in alleviating traffic congestion is because downtown streets work as a system. The E-G couplet and pedestrian improvements on 4th Avenue have increased traffic on 9th Avenue and to some extent on 15th, yet this alternative provides no means of addressing this increase in traffic.

E. Alternative 3

This alternative adds a 7th-8th couplet to the improvements in Alternative 2. As Map 3 shows the addition of the 7th-8th couplet to the street system does not provide much relief to the network. It takes some pressure off 5th, 6th, 9th and 15th Avenues but not enough to appreciably balance the downtown street system. In fact, the model only assigns enough vehicles to 7th and 8th to reach less than 45% of the streets capacity. The traffic congestion found in Alternative 2 particularly on 9th and 15th Avenues as they approach the Seward Highway still persist in this alternative.

H. Alternative 4

This option includes the 4th Avenue pedestrian improvements, the A-C and E-G Couplets, and addition of a peak hour travel lane on 5th, 9th and 15th Avenue intersection improvements.



This option would still leave an afternoon peak hour congestion problem on 6th Avenue and intersection problems at major streets crossing the Seward Highway. This is based on manual traffic assignments and model runs of earlier alternatives.

The 9th and 15th Avenue improvements would consist of left turn bays or a left turn lane. These improvements would address the problems of future traffic volumes far more effectively than a 7th and 8th Couplet because both 9th and 15th are through streets that are more attractive to automobile traffic.

I. Seward Highway Connections

The impact of improvements to the Seward Highway and connections to the Glenn Highway will also affect downtown circulation. Long range plans for Seward Highway call for grade separation of intersections south of 13th Avenue. The Gambell-Ingra Couplet as an extension of the Seward Highway mark the eastern boundary of Downtown. The connection of the Seward Highway to the Glenn Highway at the intersections of Gambell-Ingra, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Avenues is the subject of a separate study. It is likely that the radii of these intersections will require additional taking of right-of-way. It is advisable to prepare for this eventuality by requiring setback standards for new construction in this area to minimize the taking of structures. The Downtown Plan cannot address the issue of setbacks in this area further until decisions on the Northside Corridor Study are made, but it can point out the need for plan review and strict enforcement of existing codes for new projects in this area.

J. Recommendations

The analysis of alternative downtown circulation options leads to the following recommendations. The impacts of these recommendations are also listed below.

It should be recognized that these improvements work as a package. If only some of the recommendations are implemented the result will be to move traffic congestion to another location rather than to address the entire downtown street system. The purpose of these recommendations are to maximize access to downtown for pedestrians, transit and automobiles. What the traffic circulation recommendations accomplish are to allow pedestrian improvements on 4th Avenue and F Street while addressing a traffic problem that will occur on 5th and 6th Avenues. This has been accomplished without simply moving the problem to another location.

- 1) Implement pedestrian improvements on 4th Avenue.

Impacts

- Encourages street activity that is conducive for small retail business activity
- Enhances appearance of downtown streetscape
- Reinforces Town Square concept
- Discourages through traffic on 4th Avenue
- Increases pressure on 5th-6th Avenues

- 2) Implement E-G Couplet to the 9th Avenue initially to two lanes with parking on both sides but retaining space to expand to a three lane facility.

Impacts

- Eliminates north-south traffic flow problems in the downtown core especially on E Street thereby increasing effectiveness of pedestrian amenities program

- Relieves pressure on east-west streets by performing a distribution function
  - Slight (less than 1000 ADT) increase of traffic on E and G Streets between 9th and 15th
  - Puts more pressure on 9th Avenue compounding intersection problem
- 3) Intersection improvements on 9th and 15th Avenues by adding a left turn lane or left turn bays.

Impacts

- Relieves pressure for both through and local trips from 5th-6th and traffic displaced from 4th Avenue
  - Relieves pressure on 10th Avenue and residential streets between 9th and 15th
  - Requires taking of land from the Park Strip or private land on the northside of 9th Avenue
  - Right-of-way impacts on 15th Avenue
- 4) Preserve street space on 5th and 6th and create a peak hour traffic lane on 5th Avenue by restricting parking during peak hours.

Impacts

- Allows 5th and 6th Avenues to perform the function of being the major east-west traffic streets in downtown
  - Creates short term parking supply on 5th Avenue for midday shopping
  - Does not allow for sidewalk extensions on opposing street sides
- 5) Review of new construction in areas around Gambell and Ingra Streets and

adoption of setback standards when Northside Corridor Alternative is selected.

Impacts

- Mitigate right-of-way impacts of the Northside Corridor Project
- Gives property owners and developers warning of the likelihood of a transportation project in this area
- Difficult to give developers a time frame for project development and construction

K. Timing of Improvements

The recommendations listed in Section J should be timed in a manner that coincides with major downtown developments and to recognize the systematic nature of the improvements.

The implementation of a peak hour traffic lane on 5th Avenue should coincide with the completion of the Convention Center, Performing Arts Center, and the Town Square. These projects are scheduled for completion in 1984-85. The E-G couplet should also be implemented at this point, while intersection improvements on 9th Avenue between L and A Streets are going to be needed when this occurs. This also coincides with completion of the A-C couplet project. Other improvements further east on 9th and on 15th will depend on decisions made in the Seward Highway Corridor.

In summary the improvements should begin in 1984 with the following actions:

- Peak hour lane on 5th Avenue
- Implementation of the E-G couplet
- Intersection improvements on 9th Avenue between A and L

## APPENDIX B

### PROPOSED ADDENDA TO THE CBD COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOWNTOWN NUMBER 1 PROJECT ALASKA R-20 ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

#### Seismic Risk Siting Evaluation

The hazards identified in the 1979 Harding Lawson report are based on known historical maximums, and extrapolated maximums based on similar ground conditions. Little or no evaluation of the likelihood of the future occurrence of the particular ground failure phenomena identified in the report was provided. However, one of the critical aspects of establishing land use guidelines in hazard-prone areas is the evaluation of the risks to the community presented by those hazards. That is, the hazards may be real, but the risks to individuals, or to the community in general, may be small - and in many situations, acceptable. It is in this area of the total earthquake engineering scheme - risk evaluation - that further work and evaluation should be undertaken, and required in the downtown area.

The following procedure generally is used for the complete seismic evaluation of a site and structure:

- 1) Evaluation of the regional and local seismicity of the area surrounding a site (i.e., how many earthquakes and of what size occur, and how often?);
- 2) Identification of the seismically induced geological and geotechnical hazards at the site

(i.e., faulting, slope failure, ground cracking, liquefaction);

- 3) Evaluation of the risk associated with development of the site in light of the local seismicity and geo-hazards (i.e., what is the likelihood that slope failure or liquefaction will occur at the site during the life of the structure?);
- 4) Determination of the level of acceptable risk to the community, the Municipality, and developers (i.e., what is an acceptable annualized cost in lives and dollars for exposure to those hazards?);
- 5) Establishment of design criteria for structures considered for the site based on the acceptable risk or exposure; and
- 6) Design and construction of the structure to satisfy the acceptable criteria.

This procedure should be required for all buildings over 2 stories in height. This procedure was used as part of the siting process for the planned State Office Complex. Although the process was used for a specific building and a specific site, it is generally a more cost effective procedure when performed on an area-wide basis. This analysis should be conducted for the entire downtown area.

Portions of a seismic risk evaluation process that would be applicable to the Municipality as a whole, already have been partially completed through the siting study for the State Office Complex and the 1979 Geotechnical Hazards Study. The recommended next step for the Municipality in dealing with land use guidelines, siting criteria, and seismic loading

criteria for structures within the Municipality, is to have a seismic risk analysis performed for the area. An analysis of this nature would quantify the exposure to life and property due to earthquakes, and establish acceptable levels of seismic risk within the community. Rational decisions based on current techniques, rather than speculation, could then be made to mitigate the potential for loss of life and property damage to levels of risk acceptable to the community.

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