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OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON

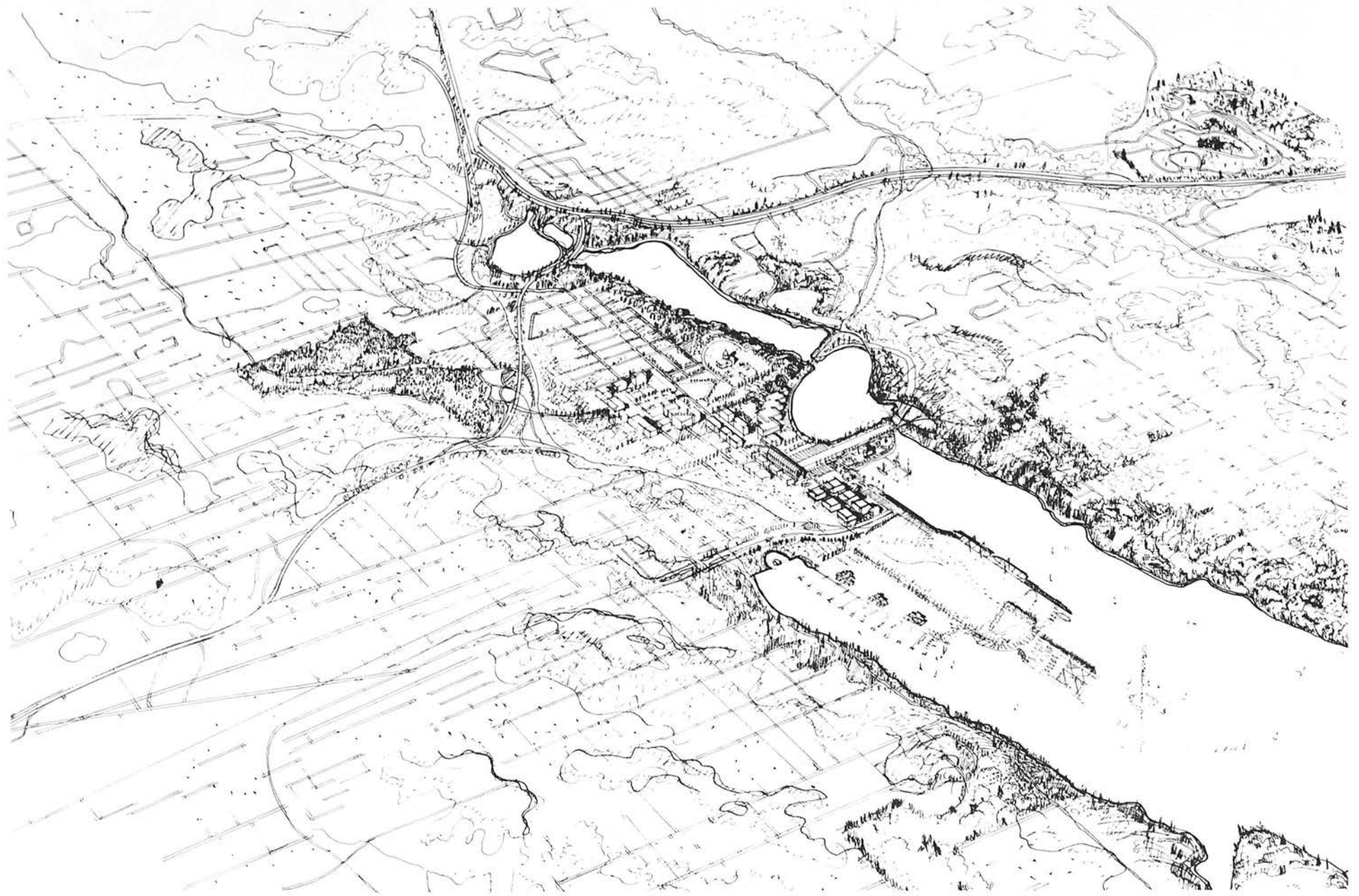
REGIONAL URBAN DESIGN ASSISTANCE TEAM/AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS/APRIL 19-23, 1979

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OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON

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AERIAL VIEW FROM NORTHEAST

PREFACE

Downtown Olympia is the focal point for the surrounding region. Its natural beauty and orientation present an opportunity to provide for the growth of downtown and the waterfront that will enhance activities unique to this area. Our proposal takes advantage of the water, the capital setting and the nearby hills and mountains to transform the downtown and waterfront into an urban resource that will benefit the entire region.

The present moment provides an excellent opportunity to reconsider the future of Olympia. As population in the area has grown it has dispersed both to the east and the west of the central core. Some activities are better dispersed beyond the core but some will serve the region better if concentrated in the core. If dispersion of activities that are better concentrated in the core area continues, the unique natural setting of downtown Olympia will be transformed and it will look no different from hundreds of other similar cities in the United States.

We believe that the people of Olympia do not want this kind of change. The people of the area have expressed a need for a sense of place -- some change in the direction of development that will preserve the natural beauty of the downtown setting that drew so many of them here.

Our proposal provides an opportunity to transform downtown Olympia into the true heart of its region. It can and should become a vital activity center for those who live and work here. This new heart can serve the needs of the area while preserving the magnificent image of Olympia and its natural setting.

Hundreds of residents of the Olympia area - businessmen and women, neighborhood organization members, lenders and developers, students and young people, elected officials from all jurisdictions, city, regional and state agency staffs - have contributed time, money and ideas to the presence of this R/UDAT and the development of these proposals. We hope that Olympia residents will continue to work together in the years to come. They may choose to work to bring about many of the proposals presented here, or they may work on other proposals yet to be developed. The important thing is that the activity and ideas generated through R/UDAT result in activity by residents of Olympia to revitalize downtown Olympia. The revitalized downtown of Olympia will give the people who live in the capital area a magnificent gift when the centennial of the city is celebrated in 1989.



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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS R/UDAT AND WHY ARE THEY HERE?

The Urban Planning and Design Committee of the American Institute of Architects has been sending Urban Design Assistance Teams to various American cities since 1967.

The Olympia Team is the 56th such team to be invited into a specific area to deal with environmental and urban problems which range in scale from a region to a small town, and in type from recreational areas to public policy and implementation methods.

The assistance R/UDAT provides is a community service (project/function/program) of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). The Urban Planning and Design Committee of the AIA receives the community's request for assistance, then selects professionals for their expertise in the specific disciplines which have been deemed necessary to respond to the particular problems of the community. The members of the team receive no compensation for their services. Furthermore, they agree prior to the visit that they will not accept any commissions or consulting work which might result from this effort.

The visit is a four day labor intensive process in which the members must quickly assimilate facts, evaluate the existing situation and arrive at a plan of action. The format of the visit consists of air, automobile and bus tours to determine the visual situation first hand; community meetings and

interviews to generate user input and to build community support; brain-storming sessions to determine a direction and to develop implementable solutions; and finally, the preparation of a written report and presentation to the community. R/UDAT studies characteristically produce implementable solutions. This means a proposal which can be accomplished within a reasonable period of time; which can be reasonably financed; which can be executed legally; and which satisfies the community enough to support it.

HOW IT BEGAN IN OLYMPIA

In late 1977 factions in downtown Olympia failed to find unity in establishing parking facilities, seen as a cure to the downtown area's ills. Concerned citizens, looking for a way to solve their problems and unify the community became aware of R/UDAT through local architects and the R/UDAT study completed in Tacoma in October, 1977.

Original efforts through a downtown business association proved insufficient to accomplish the community's wide goals that R/UDAT studies address. Funding also seemed a major obstacle.

With the establishment of local co-chairmen in the spring of 1978 and the formation of a broad-based steering committee, funds quickly were collected and many issues defined. Olympia's formal request to the Urban Planning and Design Committee of the American Institute of Architects was drafted and sent in January, 1979. Among the expressed problems and goals defined were the unique position of the city as a state capital, physical limit of

the central business district (CBD), housing within the CBD, orderly response to anticipated growth, long range goals, revitalization of downtown, traffic and parking, and a centennial project for 1989. Full committees were formed from local volunteers, and preparations were started in anticipation of approval of the request to hold a R/UDAT study in Olympia.

Jules Gregory, co-chairman of the National AIA R/UDAT Committee, arrived March 9, 1979, for an evaluation visit of the community, and to give formal commitment for a R/UDAT team to study Olympia. Charles Redmon, National Co-chairman for R/UDAT, was named Olympia R/UDAT Chairman. On March 28 he arrived in Olympia to assess local readiness and to coordinate preparations. The remaining eight team members were selected immediately and final plans set for the study from April 19 through 23.

WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE R/UDAT VISIT

The R/UDAT team, a creation of the American Institute of Architects, has been asked to assist the city of Olympia in resolving some very basic issues. The issues relate to the capital city, preserving the downtown area, land use patterns and regional growth, strategies, traffic congestion and parking, and the port and other water front activities. It is our intention to develop a clear, concise approach for addressing these problems.

Action and vision are the most important products of this team's effort. The report to the community is structured to identify a process for reaching the end result. The method of accomplishing this result is defined in economical, physical and implementational terms.

The real implementation of the recommendations contained in this report must be supported by the community at large. They must understand the process outlined here if the goal is ever to be achieved. Business leaders, neighborhood groups and governmental officials, city, county and state, have strongly supported the R/UDAT's study of Olympia, and have expressed a strong willingness to grapple with the issues facing this area with a cooperative community spirit.

The R/UDAT has spoken with many people in the community -- elected officials, merchants, developers, citizens' groups, institutional representatives and others -- and has collected a great deal of information about the Olympia area before making its recommendations. The local AIA Chapter, city and county governments, the business community and many more have provided an impressive amount of useful information about the issues facing Olympia, existing and proposed developments and jurisdictional responsibilities.

During the visit, team members traveled on foot, and by bus and plane to get a feeling of the city of Olympia and its environs, and the problems and opportunities confronting it. They met with downtown business leaders, various city and county officials, in a series of interview sessions on Friday, and spent Saturday morning listening to residents and neighborhood groups discuss their hopes and feelings about their community. All the R/UDAT members agree that discussions with the many people conveyed the community's support for R/UDAT and the hope the study might help resolve issues facing Olympia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTIVITIES FOR DOWNTOWN

- Use downtown's present strengths.
- Create new activities to draw people downtown:
 - Extend usable waterfront for boating, walking and other uses.
 - Develop a small specialty shopping and dining complex on the downtown waterfront to spark commercial revitalization.
 - Link it to downtown's existing retail strongpoints.
 - Create a variety of recreational and cultural attractions.
 - Encourage development of downtown housing for special markets that will accept it: singles, couples and the elderly.
- Work with the State government to strengthen office employment downtown.

PHYSICAL PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN

- First phase: waterfront thematic retail center; imaginative use of landscaping and streetscape features to link it to existing retail; clear views of Capitol dome and Puget Sound; prohibit development on slopes around Budd Inlet.
- Second phase: visual and pedestrian upgrading of Capitol Way as major downtown axis; new performing arts center; completion of major marina on east side

of Port peninsula.

- Final phase: new office buildings between State Campus and heart of downtown; additional marina facilities with housing units along water's edge; landmark fountain; low-rise housing on east side of Capitol Lake.

TRANSPORTATION AND PORT

- In downtown parking policy, favor short-term parkers.
- Concentrate traffic improvements on refining the existing system to eliminate causes of traffic stress.
- Link the State office area with the downtown activities area by shuttle bus.
- Continue present operations of the Port of Olympia. Develop marina and recreational uses nearby which are compatible with Port operations.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DOWNTOWN PROGRAM

- Adopt and implement a design plan for the downtown waterfront area.
- Consider compulsory land acquisition for development of vital projects.
- Encourage public/private participation through a Local Development Corporation in revitalization of the retail core.
- Inventory structures for historic and architectural value and find methods for renovation and reuse.

REGIONAL GROWTH POLICY

- Promote balanced regional growth while retaining downtown as a unique focal point.
- Maintain the quality of the natural and visual environment.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

- Prepare a county-wide growth management plan.
- Adapt existing boundary review and other control techniques to implement the growth management plan.
- Consider using a two-tier system of growth management with regional planning and control authority.

CONTEXT

OLYMPIA, the state capital of Washington, lies at the center of business and governmental activity in the Pacific Northwest. Located at the southern tip of Puget Sound, the Capital City area is a developing three city community consisting of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater. Olympia is the seat of government for Thurston County. Olympia is strategically located as a major transportation crossroads between rail, air, water, and highway services giving the area the forward momentum that characterizes a progressive city.

Several themes in Olympia's history continue into the present. Olympia's relationship today with its neighbors, with its own neighborhoods, and with the State are a result of historic events.

For instance, Olympia's relationship with Tumwater can be traced back to 1847 when a trail was made to link Smithfield (Olympia) with New Market (Tumwater). After the founding of Thurston County (1852) and the arrival of the new territorial governor, Stevens (1853), Olympia became the government seat.

Olympia was incorporated in January 1859 and in 1889 Olympia was named the State Capital. Legislation in 1954 requiring all State offices to locate in Olympia further confirmed Olympia's unique identity as a governmental seat.

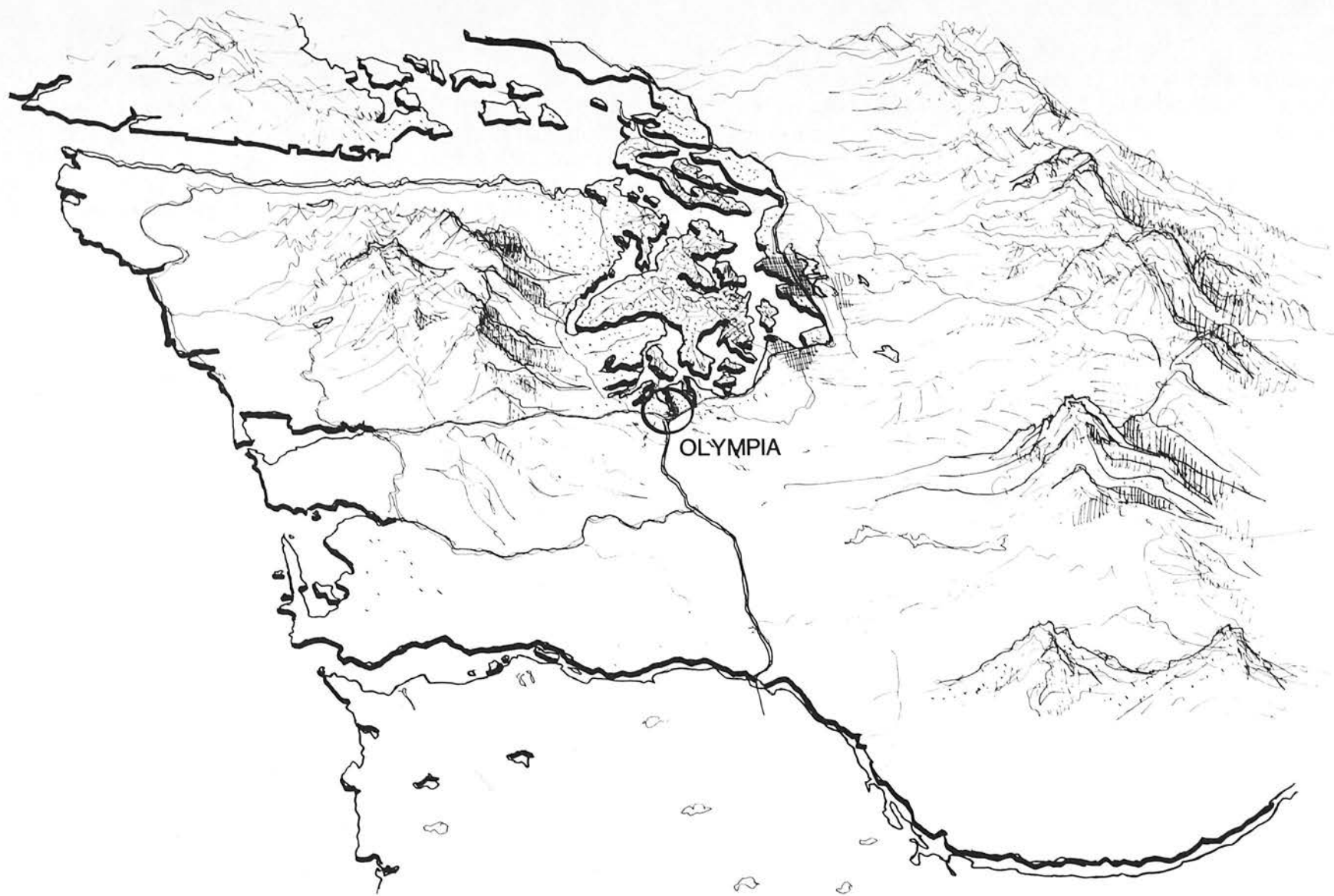
Geography and historic decisions on construction also have played a major role in determining Olympia's present situation.

The decision by Edward Giddings to build a wharf at the foot of Main Street (now Capitol Boulevard) contributed to the location of the east-west corridor. Decisions like these establish the land use pattern which to some degree still determines future land use in the city. Not until 1868 was a bridge to the Westside built and large property ownerships kept the Westside in a relatively undeveloped state until after World War II.

The discrepancy between the reality of Olympia and its idealistic name helps identify the unrealized potential of the city. The slow growth which has been a factor in the region has helped preserve this potential. The discovery of gold in California (1848) and the decision to locate the railroad terminus in Tacoma (1873) are two of the more important historic events which have contributed to a slow rate of growth in Olympia until the present. The centralization of State offices in the town and the creation of The Evergreen State College along with statewide growth have contributed recently to an increase in growth pressures.

The population of Olympia's three city area was 38,400 in 1970 while the population of Thurston County in that year was 76,900. By 1979 the population of the Olympia area had risen by about 13%, while Thurston County showed more than a 30% increase to 101,000.

Statistics for Thurston County and its three principal cities of Lacey, Tumwater and Olympia reveal that growth has already exceeded the growth forecasts made as late as December, 1977. Forecasts indicate that the population of Thurston County may double by the year 2000.



SETTING IN PUGET SOUND

DOWNTOWN ACTIVITIES

THE DOWNTOWN: CONCENTRATING ON THE BEST ACTIVITIES TO SPARK FUTURE GROWTH

The secret to making Downtown Olympia a place where people will want to come and where they can both conduct business and enjoy themselves is twofold:

- 1) Having the right kind of activities in the downtown, and
- 2) Creating an attractive physical framework for these activities.

This section of the R/UDAT report identifies the activities which the team sees as the principal opportunities to make downtown an exciting and useful destination. Recommendations on the physical framework for the downtown that can house these activities and further enhance them are set forth in the succeeding section.

PRESENT DOWNTOWN STRENGTHS

Activities which currently exhibit strength in the downtown and serve to attract people there for purposes other than workday business include the following:

- Two major hotels/motels, one of which is located on the principal square.
- A large number of banks and savings institutions.
- Established specialty retail stores, which remain strong in certain locations, particularly on Capitol Way south of Fourth Street.

- New retail stores and restaurants, several of which have been started by young entrepreneurs. A number of these are concentrated on Fourth Street between Water Street and Columbia Street.

- Three movie houses, one of which has been converted to a multi-cinema with three screens.

- The Yard Birds Sea Mart, a very large discount type store located in two former cannery buildings on the northern edge of downtown. This store draws a wide variety of shoppers into Olympia from considerable distances.

- Marina operations and waterfront parks along the downtown's western waterfront. The parks appear to be under-utilized at present, but offer a major amenity due, in part, to the views across the water and the boating activities nearby.

It is fortunate that these strong existing activities are principally concentrated within the space of a few blocks and can, therefore be supplemented by rather modest projects in the same general area to make the downtown a stronger magnet for visitors.

Over the longer range, a number of new activities should be created in the downtown to make it an exciting place to visit and to provide a wide enough range of activities to keep people pleasantly occupied. These recommended new uses have been selected based on 1) their ability to fit in with the existing strengths of the downtown, 2) provide activities that are not duplicated elsewhere in



the region, and 3) emphasizing activities that are capable of attracting people, particularly for shopping, dining and recreation.

The activities recommended to be added or enhanced are outlined below and described more completely later in this report. They include:

- Continuation of waterfront development for expansion of boating activity and as a setting for adjacent shopping, dining and recreation.
- Commercial revitalization with emphasis on specialty shopping, handicrafts, food and entertainment.
- Recreational attractions, including both free and commercial facilities and possibly additional festivals programming.
- Office space of a type and scale that fits in well with the rest of downtown Olympia and its setting.
- Housing for special target markets including singles and the elderly.
- Historic preservation and adaptive reuse of downtown buildings which are significant aesthetically or historically and which, in themselves, might constitute a minor visitor attraction with proper interpretive programming.

Some possible projects that can be carried out within each of these categories are identified below, and further possibilities should be generated by the community.

The priority projects which the R/UDAT team feels should be implemented initially are identified in the section on phasing.

WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

The city has already made significant strides in improving the waterfront so that it can be enjoyed by pedestrians as well as boat users. Downtown projects completed to date include Capitol Lake Park and Percival Landing. A major marina project for the East Bay is expected to be approved soon. Next steps should include:

- Extending the waterfront improvements northwards from Percival Landing.
- Keeping a 'working waterfront' while permitting pedestrian access, good vantage points and protecting sight lines across the water from the west side of downtown.
- Including maritime attractions such as ships which can be visited alongside.
- Integrating waterfront development with themed specialty retail and recreational uses immediately adjacent. This concept is referred to in the discussion of commercial revitalization later in this report.



COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION

The commercial revitalization program should not attempt to create uses which would have to compete head-on with the major suburban shopping centers but should take advantage of the special opportunities offered by the amenities on the west side of downtown, parlay the current strengths exhibited by the downtown, concentrate on a relatively small area at the outset, and concentrate on one or two modest projects which could be successfully completed to demonstrate that action was being achieved by the downtown program. The major activities to be emphasized in the early stages of the commercial revitalization program include the following:

- Development of a waterfront oriented specialty shopping center on the landward side of Percival Landing. This center would have a unifying theme expressed in both its content and architecture. The mix of goods and services would emphasize food and drink, handicrafts, entertainment, and specialty boutiques.
- Physical improvements and attractive pedestrian links connecting the waterfront specialty shopping center with the Yard Birds Sea Mart on the north and the active retail areas on Fourth Street and Capitol Way to the south, along with adjacent waterfront amenities, to create a continuous pedestrian strolling and shopping route connecting the downtown's retail strong points.



- Operating a lunch time shuttle bus between the State Campus office buildings and the new specialty center with stops on Capitol Way to serve the established retail areas.
- Encouraging more establishments in the downtown to stay open in the evening, particularly those offering food and entertainment. The movie theaters, hotels and Yard Birds Sea Mart currently operate in the evening, and the waterfront specialty shopping center will provide a major nucleus of evening activities.
- Improving the cooperation of downtown merchants to take additional actions to improve business, such as joint promotion and advertising programs.

RECREATIONAL ATTRACTIONS IN THE DOWNTOWN

Downtown Olympia can offer a variety of recreation attractions that take advantage of its urban character, the Puget Sound and Capitol Lake, and the beauty of the Capitol and its campus nearby. These attractions can be both activities and facilities. The activities should be festive, happy and unifying locations or facilities, new and existing.

1) Festival Programming:

Olympia already conducts four festivals which bring people into the downtown at certain times of the year. These are summarized on the calendar opposite. To the extent that the energies of its public spirited citizens and businessmen and women can endure, Downtown Olympia needs more festivals, fairs, and events that combine recreation, culture, retail trade, food and drink. They need to bring people into downtown from the colleges, the neighborhoods, and the outlying areas. They will require the cooperation of the merchants by keeping their shops open, the City by permitting temporary street closings and sidewalks blocked, and the transit company by getting people into and out of town. They can include craft exhibits and demonstrations, music, mime, dance and special foods. Schools and churches can be involved. Events can be as simple as a soap box derby down Capitol Way on a Saturday. Goals should be set for four or six new events a year, and the successful ones can become annual events.

CURRENT FESTIVAL PROGRAMS IN OLYMPIA

Jan.	July	Lakefair Festival 40,000 Attend Twilight Parade
Feb.	Aug.	Pet Parade Childrens' Parade
Mar.	Sept.	Tugboat Races
April	Oct.	
May	Nov.	
June	Dec.	Christmas Island



The U.S. Department of Housing and Development expects to provide matching funds for several cities to hold 'City Fairs' or festivals' on a trial basis. Olympia could participate in this program.

2) Fixed Locations or Facilities:

A number of suggestions are made here that can be explored, added to or dropped.

- Sylvester Park is beautiful and well-used. It should be used more. Small activity sections could be created for young children and the elderly, such as two or three pieces of attractive sculpture or timber frame playground equipment, and shuffleboard, chess, checkers and horseshoes. The young parents, and the elderly at the Senior Center and the Olympia Hotel could assist in selecting the equipment. The new equipment would give passive users of the park activities to watch.
- A number of new recreational attractions can be created in the downtown. These can provide recreational activities which are interesting to do and, equally important, are interesting to watch. For example, something a child wants to do will bring his whole family downtown. There can be a number of attractions placed in proximity to each other or to other major 'people generators' so that the effect of a recreational/commercial complex where pedestrians can move about from one interesting feature to another is achieved. The waterfront and its hinterland are a particularly suitable setting. Possible attractions include the following, and there are many more. Some of these would be free, while for others a fee would be charged

to cover operating costs and wear and tear.

- A children's 'adventure playground' such as exists at Toronto's Ontario Place, a city owned park on the Lake Erie waterfront.
- A children's zoo, which need not be expensive.
- Bocce courts for senior citizens (and others) and other types of recreation that are unusual in Western Washington.
- Pedal boats on Capitol Lake.

- Recreational and commercial facilities which would appeal to visiting yachtsmen could be included in the waterfront development. A boatel, or small boat hotel is also a possibility.
- The cargo port is not sufficiently visible. People enjoy looking at ships loading and unloading, docking and embarking. A port observation deck could be constructed that would be attractively designed. It would bring in families, school children and visitors who could view the port.
- The Performing Arts Center would bring hundreds of people downtown on evenings and weekends who would eat and drink, dance and listen to music, walk and shop before and after performances, provided that these activities were available in sufficient quantity and quality to attract them.

- A museum could be located downtown, possibly in an existing historic building. It could be an expanded state history museum or it could be a museum tied to port, shipping, fishing and nautical themes. There are many possibilities to explore.

- A variety of private recreation activities need to be located along the waterfront, adjacent to the core retail area, near the port and along Capitol Way from downtown to the State campus. They should offer places for people to view and purchase art-prints, posters, sculpture, paintings, etc., a variety of places to eat and drink from low cost and informal to high quality and elegant. There could be places to listen to a variety of kinds of music - jazz, folk and rock, and in some cases, dancing.

EXAMPLES OF ATTRACTIONS IN VARIOUS CITIES

Themed specialty shopping centers:

Historic period theme	Larimer Square, Denver
Waterfront theme	Fisherman's Village, Los Angeles
Food as theme	Faneuil Hall, Boston
Previous use (trolley barn) as theme	Trolley Square, Salt Lake City

On-site artists' workshops	Torpedo Factory, Alexandria, Va.
Native crafts sales mall	People's Market, Greenville, S.C.
Weekly Produce Market	Farmer's Market, Syracuse, N.Y.
Restaurant stalls sharing common area tables	The Gallery, Philadelphia
Maritime Museum Park	South Street Seaport, Manhattan
Historic Interpretive Park	Charles Town Landing, S.C.

Adventure playground	Ontario Place, Toronto
Children's zoo	Central Park, New York
Small sailboat rental	Inner Harbor, Baltimore

OFFICE SPACE

The State government is the major employer in the Olympia region, with approximately 12,500 employees in Thurston County. Probably a majority have offices on the State government campus on the southern edge of the downtown. An estimated 1,736 State employees have offices in privately owned buildings in downtown Olympia, occupying roughly half of all privately-owned downtown office space. Since the State's current long-range policy is to locate its employees in permanent State-owned buildings, most of the State offices in downtown Olympia have temporary status, with leases of five years or less.

The presence of large numbers of State employees in and bordering the downtown represents a potential economic benefit (one which has not been fully realized by the downtown to date) due to their spending power. Conversely, outright State ownership of land and buildings in downtown Olympia has a negative effect by removing properties from the tax rolls.

The State is currently reaching the limits of expansion on the present State Campus. It must soon begin to make long-range plans for housing any future growth in State administrative personnel. The State and City need to work together to formulate a plan and policy for future State office expansion which is advantageous to both jurisdictions and which can assist the downtown in strengthening its employment base. This should be done within

a physical framework and scale that is supportive of the existing fabric of the downtown.

Two other items should also be considered by the State. Occupancy of upper floors in buildings tenanted in the heart of the retail district should be encouraged to preserve the street level for retail uses. Window displays about State programs should be provided (rather than leaving the show windows blank) in former retail buildings where State workers occupy the ground floor.

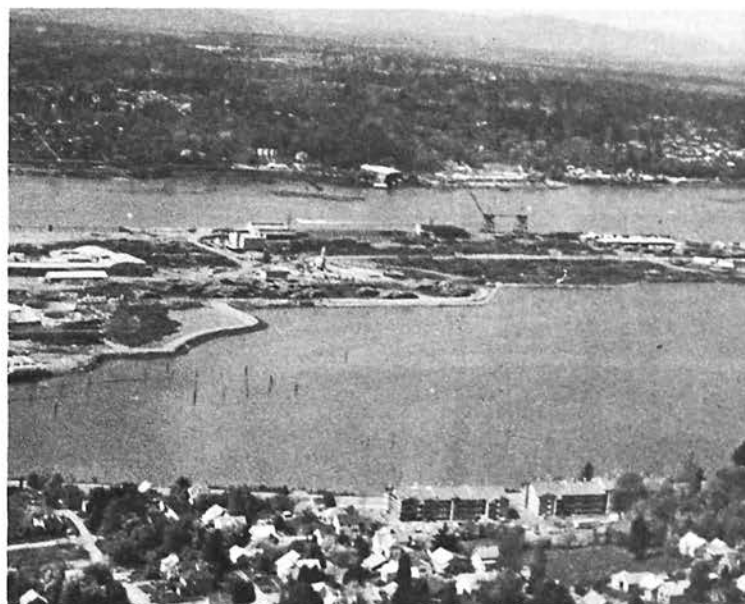
The development of additional office space for private occupancy will be encourage by the improvements to be made in the retail and recreation activities and the downtown physical environment described earlier. However, the amount of new space that can be marketed to private companies must be viewed as relatively modest in the foreseeable future when compared to State office requirements.

HOUSING DOWNTOWN

Although downtown Olympia needs to become a focal point for the region, a permanent resident population is important. It can bring many desired activities into the downtown. Some activities require a seven days-a-week, 24 hours-a-day population. The day-time workers are not enough to sustain them.

There are certain groups within the population that are most likely to be attracted to live in beautiful and soon-to-be lively, exciting downtown Olympia.

- Young singles and couples who live in apartments and enjoy using the water, eating out, meeting one another and enjoying music, culture, the park and other activities.
- Elderly people who no longer wish to care for a home and be burdened with cooking and yardwork. They may use the Senior Center; they enjoy walking, people and boat watching, as well as the activities the young singles enjoy.
- Low income individuals and singles who need to be near public transportation and access to jobs and services.
- Students who do not want to live in dormitories.
- Transients who need short term lodging.



There are approximately 500 housing units now located in downtown. No new housing has been constructed since 1970, and the existing units are slowly decreasing in number. Additional downtown housing can be provided by the private sector in apartments and condominiums; and by public subsidy through Section 8 rent supplements and the Washington State Housing Finance Authority (soon to be created). Some can be provided on the upper floors of existing commercial buildings and through substantial rehabilitation of a few existing structures. New construction can take place on scattered sites. These sites should be located, wherever possible, adjacent to other activity centers such as waterfront, the port, the retail section, public buildings downtown, and the State campus, so that the new and rehabilitated activities can strengthen one another. The City of Olympia should monitor land offered for sale in downtown Olympia and move quickly to use public power if a choice housing site becomes available. It is unlikely that any new housing, even conventional, will be constructed without public involvement.

Four hundred and twenty-seven units of multi-family housing were constructed in all of Olympia in 1978. It would appear that a reasonable goal for downtown would be about 50 units per year or a total of 500 units by the 1989 centennial celebration. This goal can be adjusted up or down as experience shows the strength of the market - and as a new environment is created and other new activities begin.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ADAPTIVE REUSE

Many residents of Olympia have expressed an interest in identifying and preserving historic buildings downtown. It is possible to apply for matching federal funds through the State Historic Preservation Officer to inventory downtown Olympia's buildings and identify those that are of historical significance. Those buildings can then be certified by the Federal Register of Historic Buildings or as local landmarks.

Matching federal funds can be sought to assist in renovating the most important buildings. There are also tax advantages to private developers who renovate these structures.



SPECIAL GROUPS WHO CAN USE DOWNTOWN

Although downtown Olympia can become a focal point for special kinds of shopping, recreational and cultural experiences for the entire county, it will be particularly important to special groups - elderly and retired people, young singles, and couples, college students, and parents with young children. Recognizing this, it is important to make these groups welcome through special facilities, activities and programs, promotions and events, and perhaps most important a general attitude of welcome and warmth.



A TECHNIQUE FOR BRINGING ABOUT REVITALIZATION OF THE COMMERCIAL CORE

The merchants and the public sector need to work together closely to bring about immediate modest improvements and long term larger changes to the retail area.

The merchants should form a Local Development Corporation (LDC) to help them get favorable loans through the Small Business Administration for rehabilitation and improvements. As an LDC they can carry on a number of co-operative activities that will improve the appearance of the area and over time improve business volumes.

- a unified design plan for improving building exteriors and controlling signs.
- preparation of special events such as downtown promotions at certain times, street fairs, sidewalk sales, dinner and restaurant guides, dinner/movie specials, craft demonstrations, walking tours of historic structures and unusual shops.
- a plan for shared parking and ultimately additional parking.
- a search for new businesses to fill vacant spaces or meet special unmet needs.
- assistance to existing businesses requiring space for expansion.
- a series of experiments with evening and

weekend openings in co-operation with the transit authority and the neighborhood organizations.

The public sector needs to continue to offer assistance in the following ways:

- negotiating transit from the state campus, possibly using a fun-type vehicle such as a trolley or closed zoo train, or a regular bus.
- getting free transit for evening and weekend openings and special events.
- preparation of grant applications for Small Business Administration programs.

The revitalization of the downtown business area will benefit the entire region and everyone should participate. Since the area will not be competing with the malls, all levels of government and residents from all parts of the county can be encouraged to visit, enjoy and support the new downtown Olympia. To bring this about the merchants should seriously consider hiring a full time staff person to work with a staff person assigned by the City of Olympia.



PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS ON 4th STREET



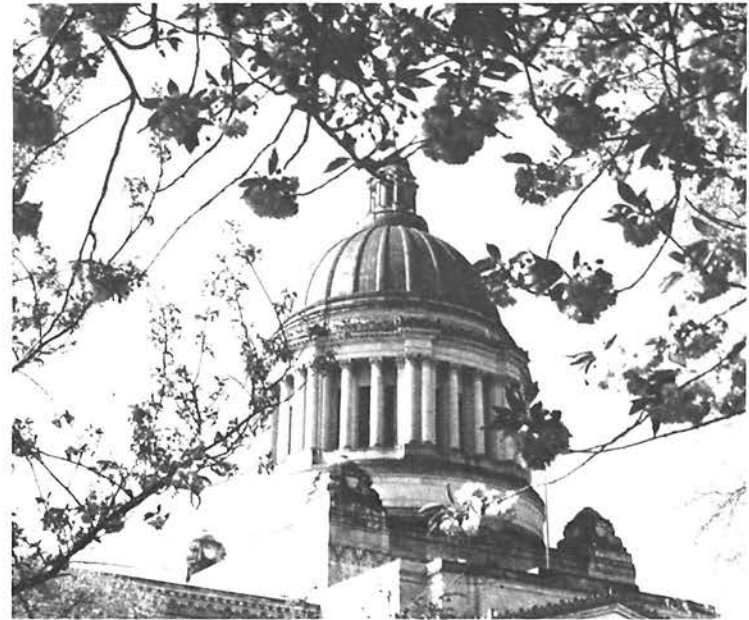
BUILT MASS

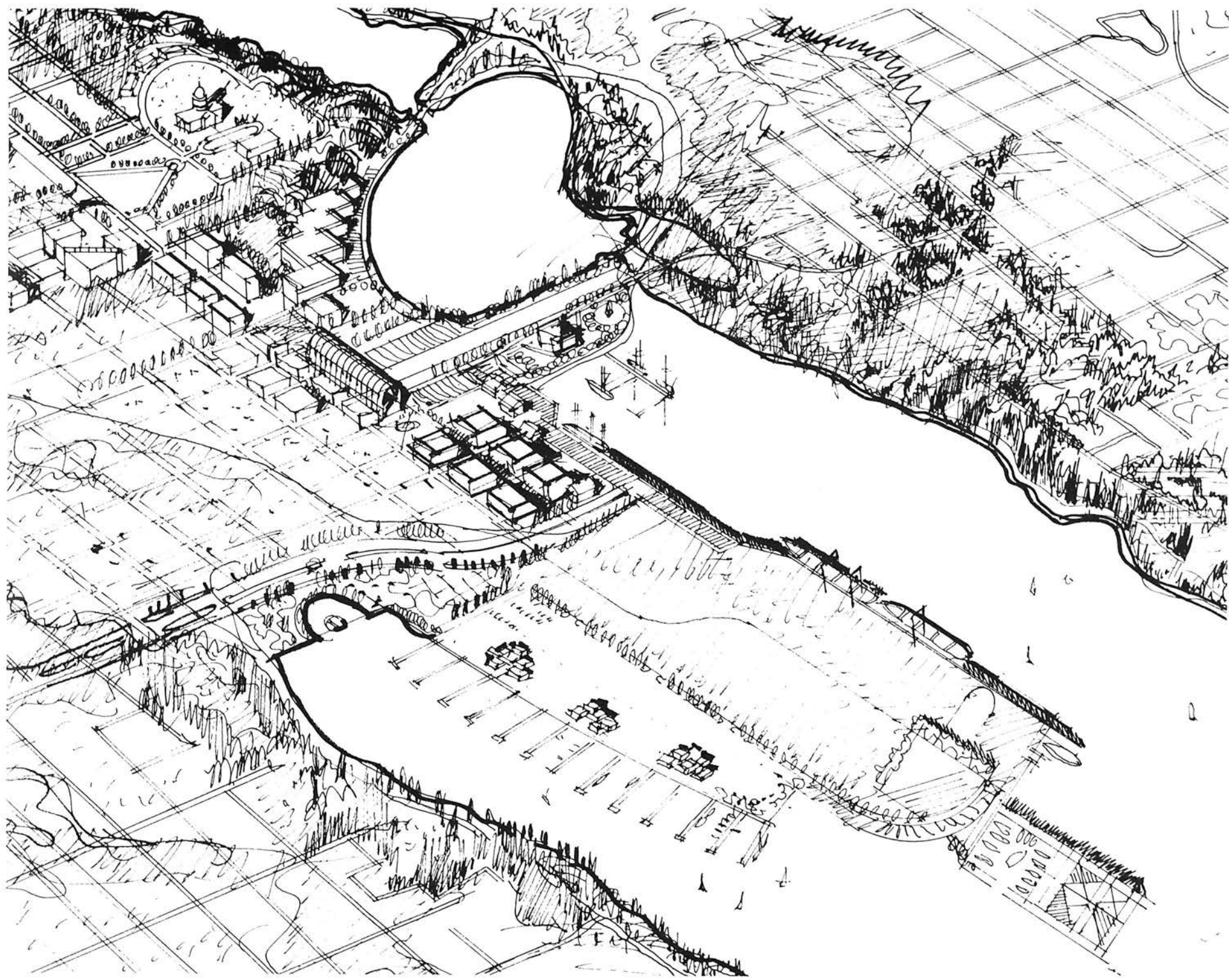




HEART OF PUGET SOUND

DOWNTOWN PLAN





PHASING

The R/UDAT's far reaching recommendations for the transformation of downtown Olympia may take between ten and twenty years to accomplish in full. The overall design concepts were developed with realistic opportunities for phasing in mind. As the population of the region and the State's administrative functions grow over the coming years the economy will grow as well. This should attract a steady stream of investment into the downtown area.

The phases of development shown in the sketches on these pages were conceived in such a way that each increment of investment would produce the maximum impact on the attractiveness and vitality of Olympia's core.

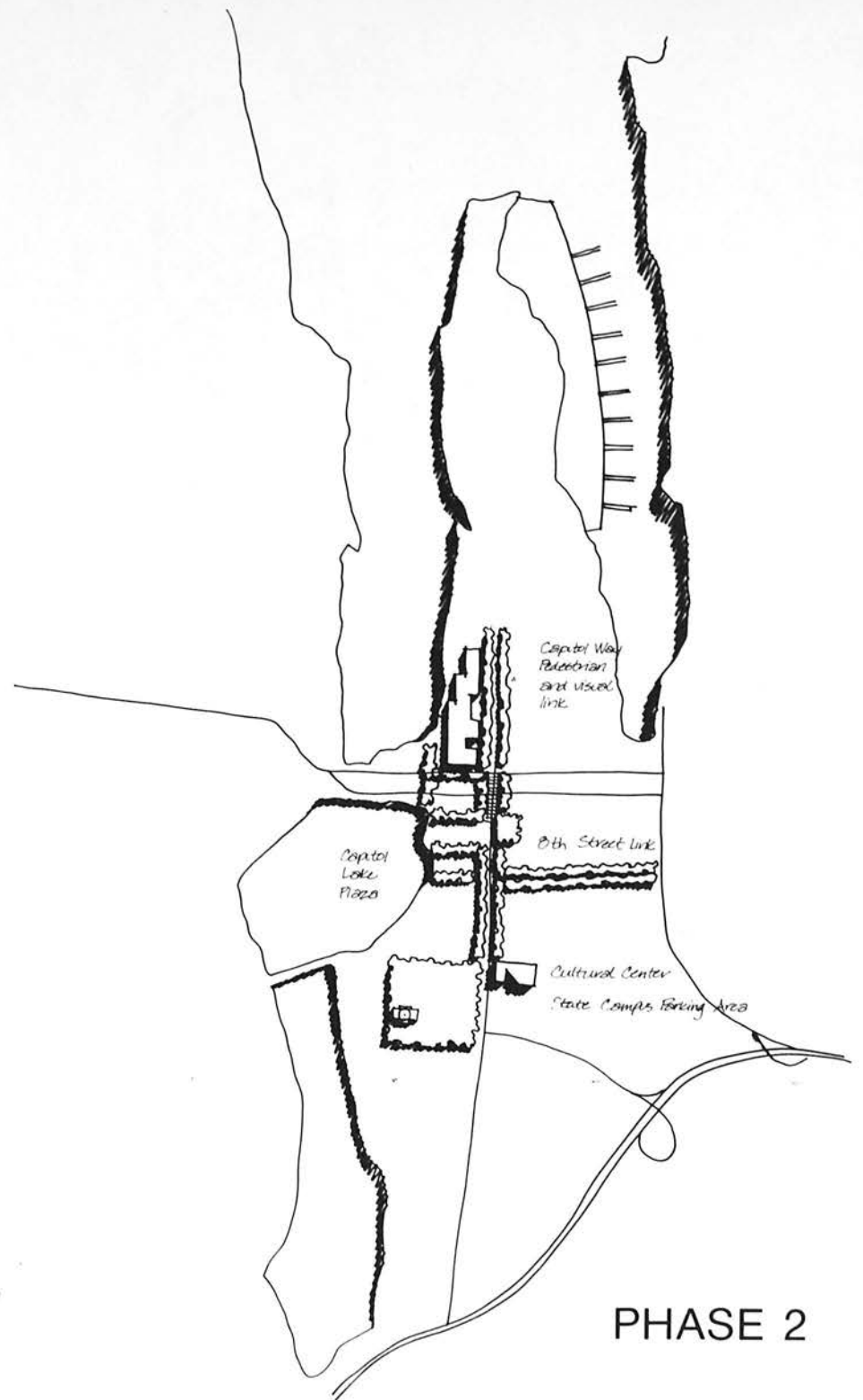
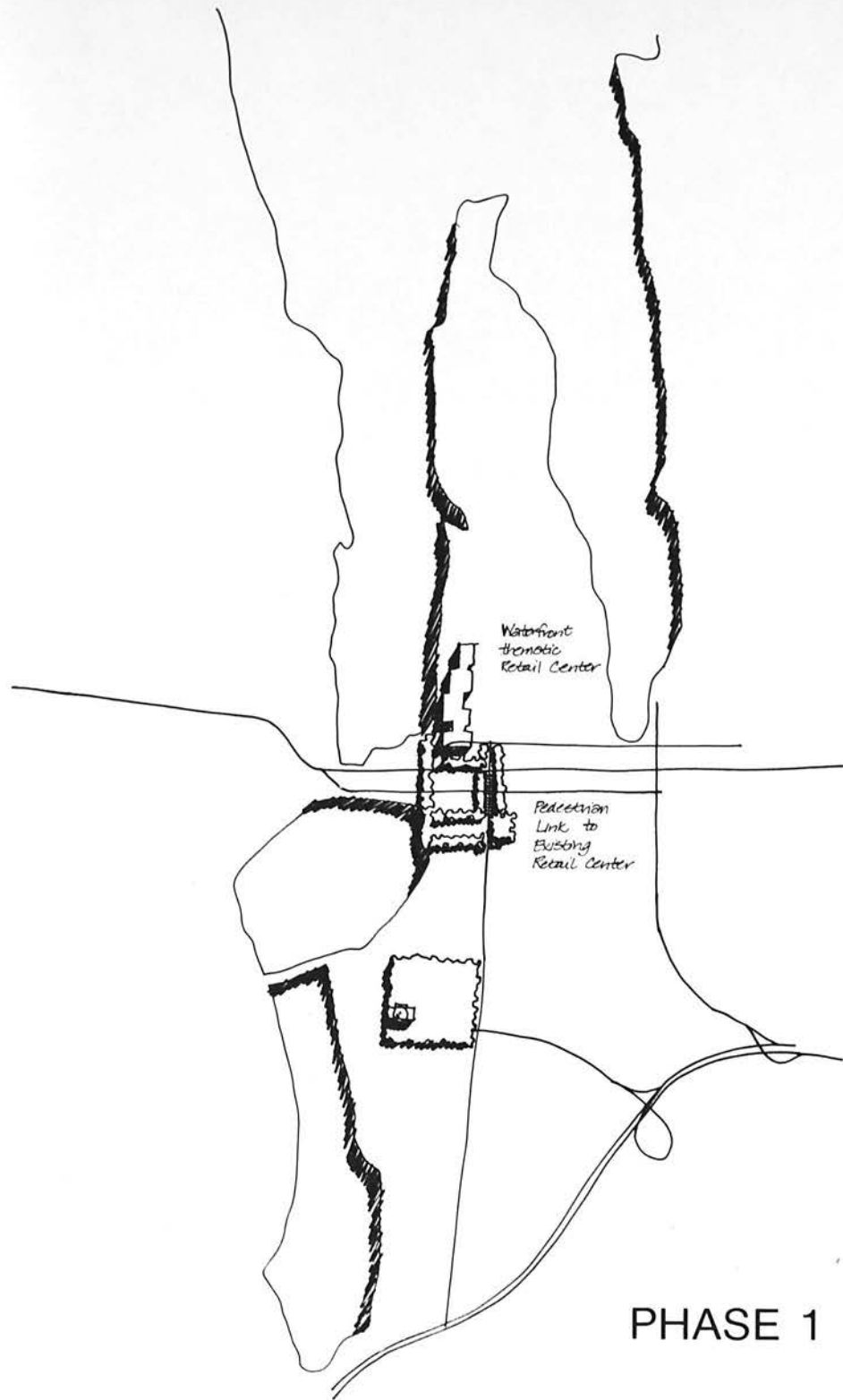
In the first phase, the development of a waterfront thematic retail center is proposed. Along with this new center, a strong pedestrian link to the existing center of retail activity should be created by the imaginative use of landscaping and streetscape features. One result of this first stage development will be to open up clear views of the Capitol dome and the expanse of the Budd Inlet of Puget Sound (reaching northward to the Olympic mountain range) to the major downtown retail areas.

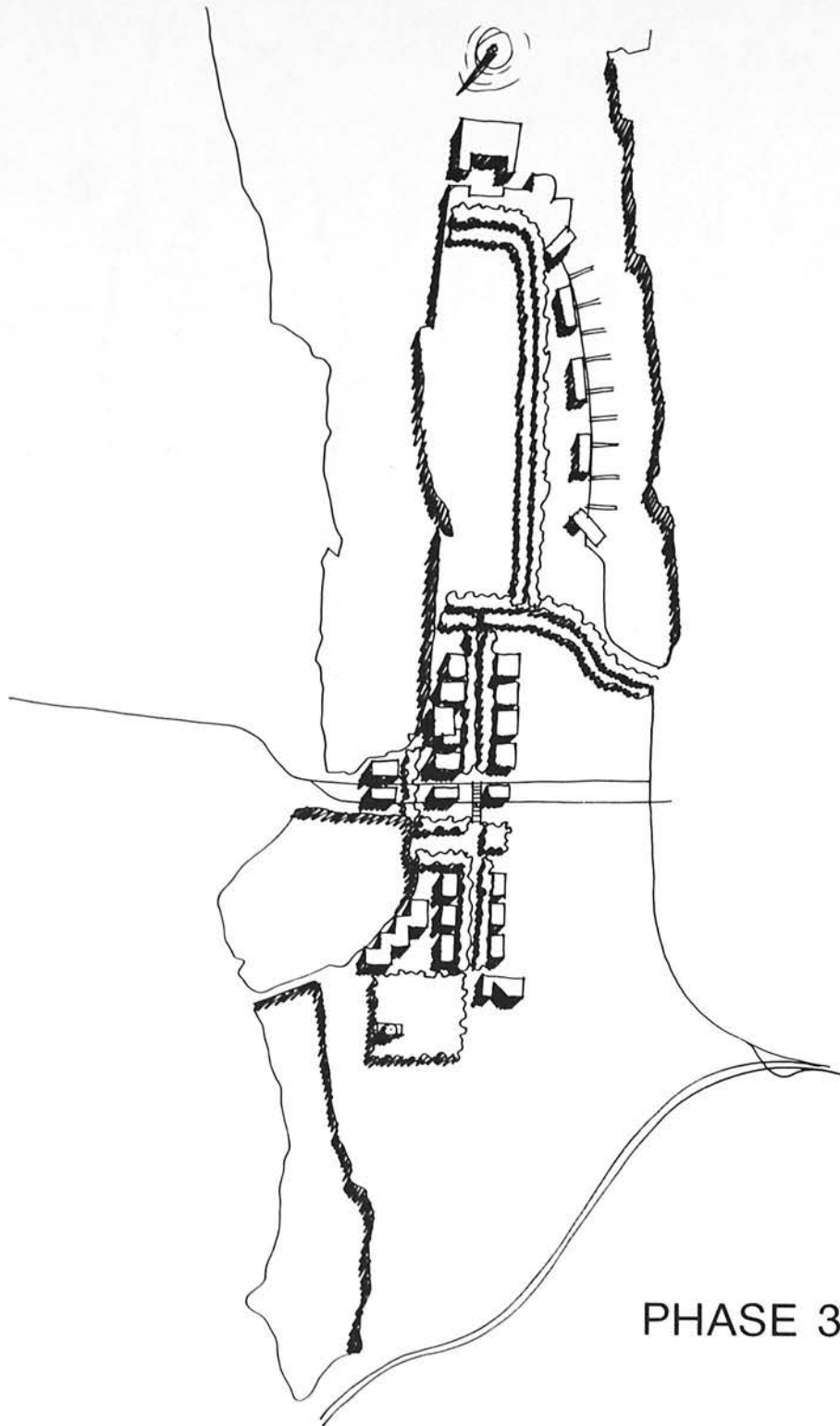
A second phase of the design proposal extends the emphasis on pedestrian and visual connections along Capitol Way from the Port

southward to the State campus. A new performing arts center, which includes exhibition space, incorporates the rehabilitated former County courthouse building. The performing arts center adjoins the State campus so that the large underground garage may be used by the people attending evening events. An additional link is shown along Eighth Street. This will strengthen the connection between the Capitol Way spine and Olympia's City Hall and Library. This connector crosses Capitol Way and continues to a park on the shore of Capitol Lake. At this stage, the proposed marina to the east of the Port peninsula is shown as completed.

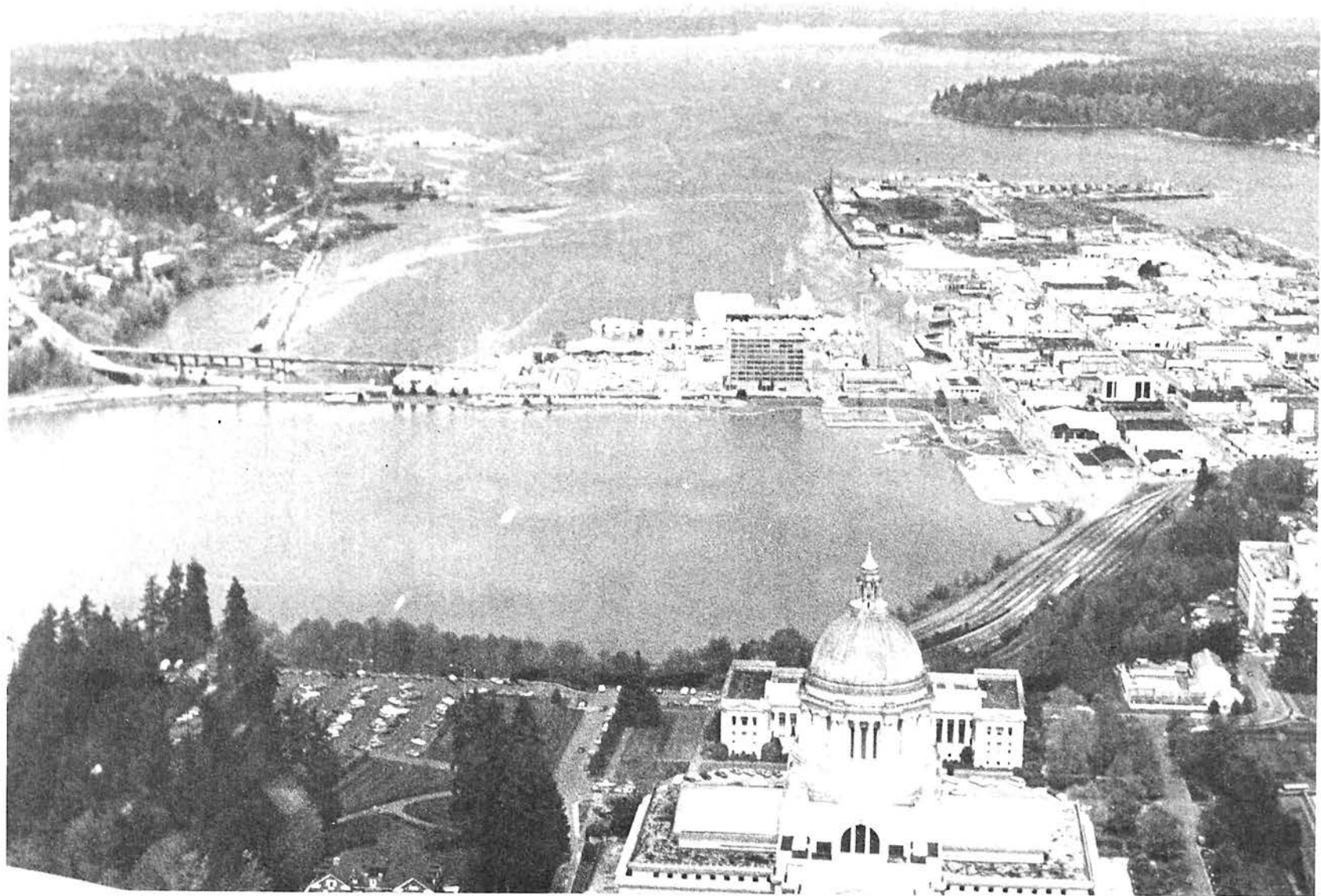
The final phase called for by this design shows the addition of new office buildings, some State owned and some built by private developers, reinforcing the link between the Capitol complex and the downtown area. Additional marina facilities are added to the northern point of the Port peninsula. A towering geyser fountain marks the head of the channel. Housing units are grouped along the water's edge at the new marina. On Capitol Lake over the railroad right-of-way a site is created for expansion of State Campus offices.

Over the years it will take to accomplish this plan, priorities may well change. As this happens, the order of development recommended here should be modified to correspond to newly perceived needs and opportunities.





PHASE 3

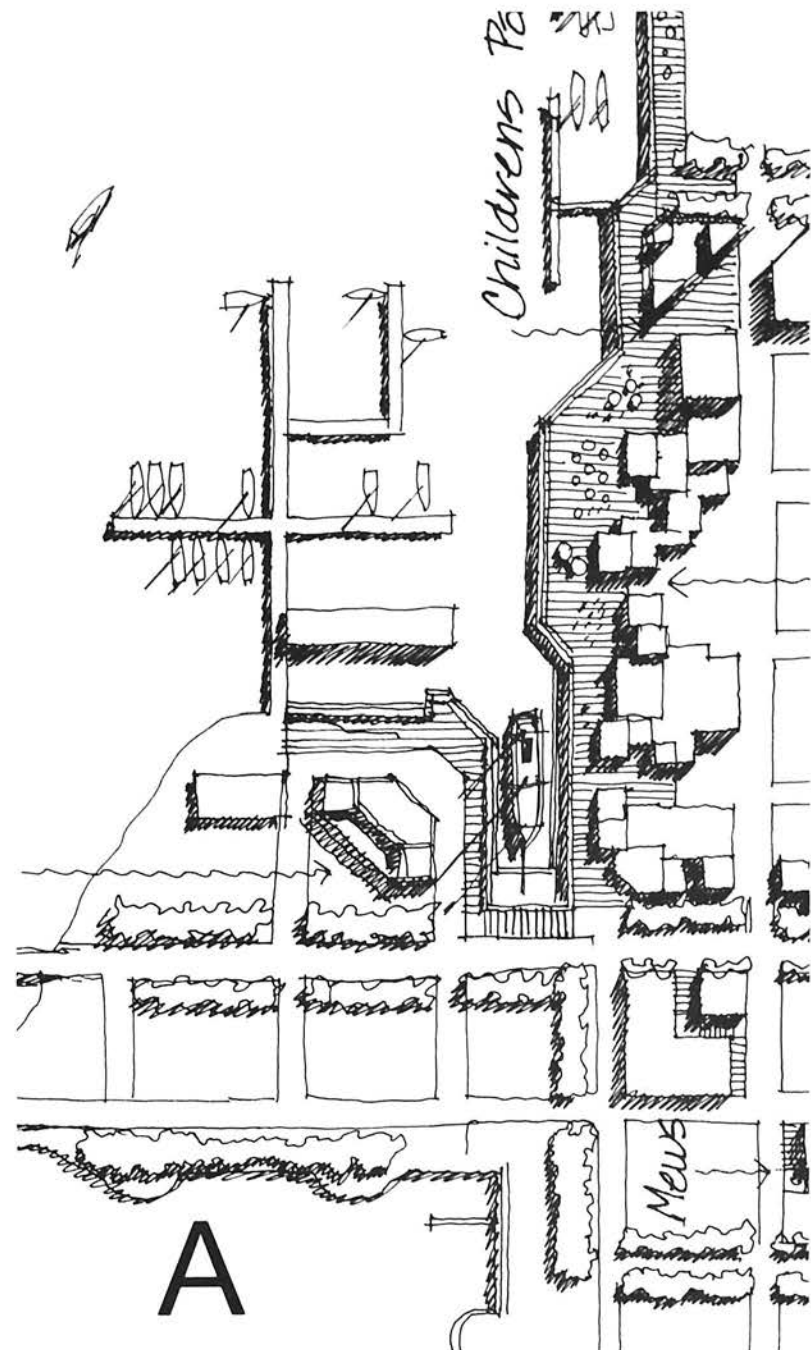


WATER-ORIENTED RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

The new retail center design shown in the facing page takes advantage of the traditions and excitement of the marine activity in Budd Inlet. People of all ages and in all walks of life never seem to tire of watching the movement of boats in the harbor. This shopping area will benefit from the drawing power of the pedestrian walkways and parks along the eastern shore of the Inlet. It should build on marine themes in its restaurants and shops. In this way it can create retailing opportunities which will not compete with regional shopping malls and which can not be achieved in their landlocked suburban setting.

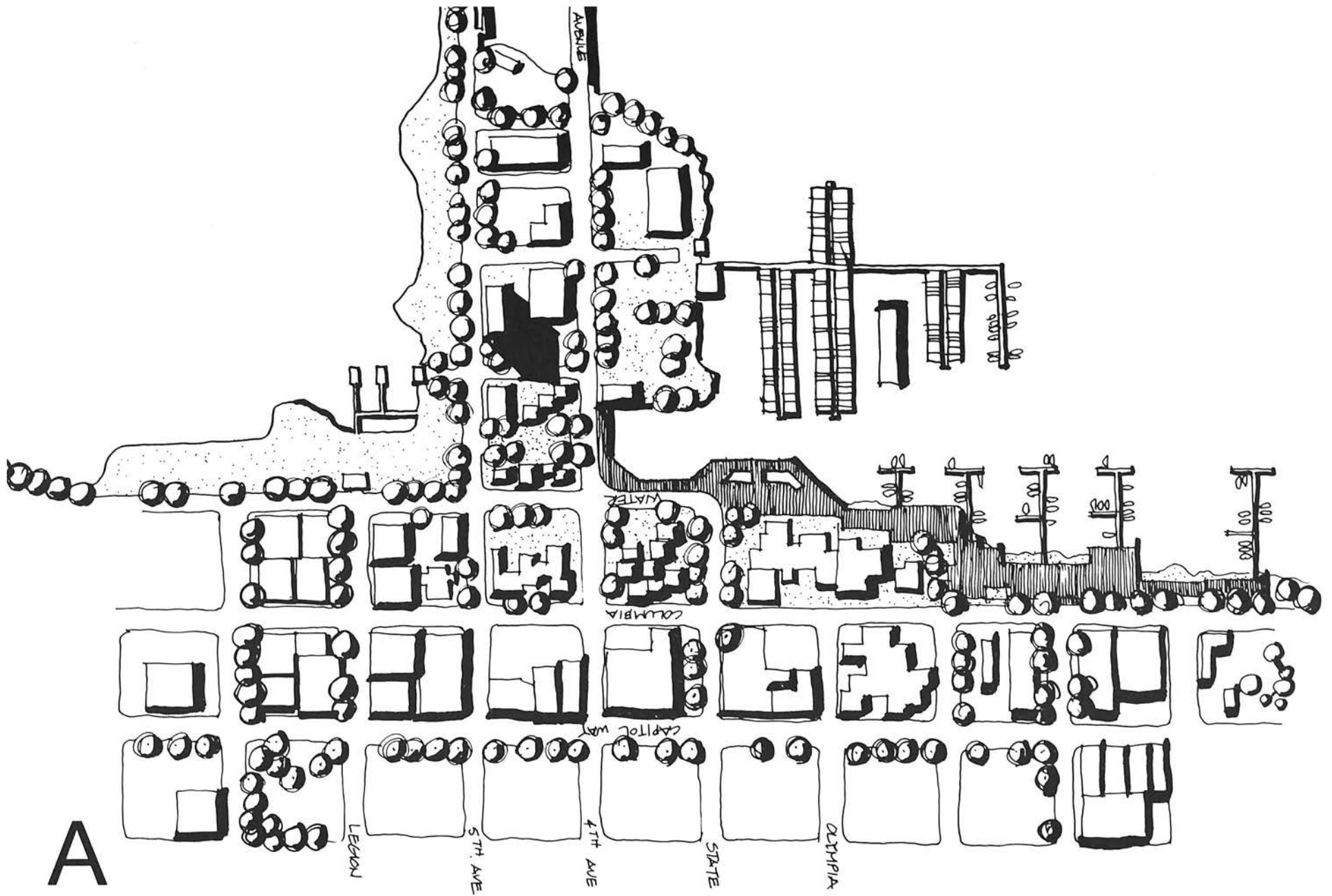
The water oriented retail center will have a strong pedestrian link to the existing retail area which centers on Fourth and Fifth Streets and Capitol Way. This will be created by the use of plantings, special pavements and street amenities such as awnings, benches and the like.

The "sense of place" that so many people say is lacking in downtown Olympia will be restored by this development. The visual images which are unique to this city--the Capitol dome and the view northward across the water to the Olympic Mountain range--are clearly visible from the proposed water oriented retail area.





WATERFRONT RETAIL

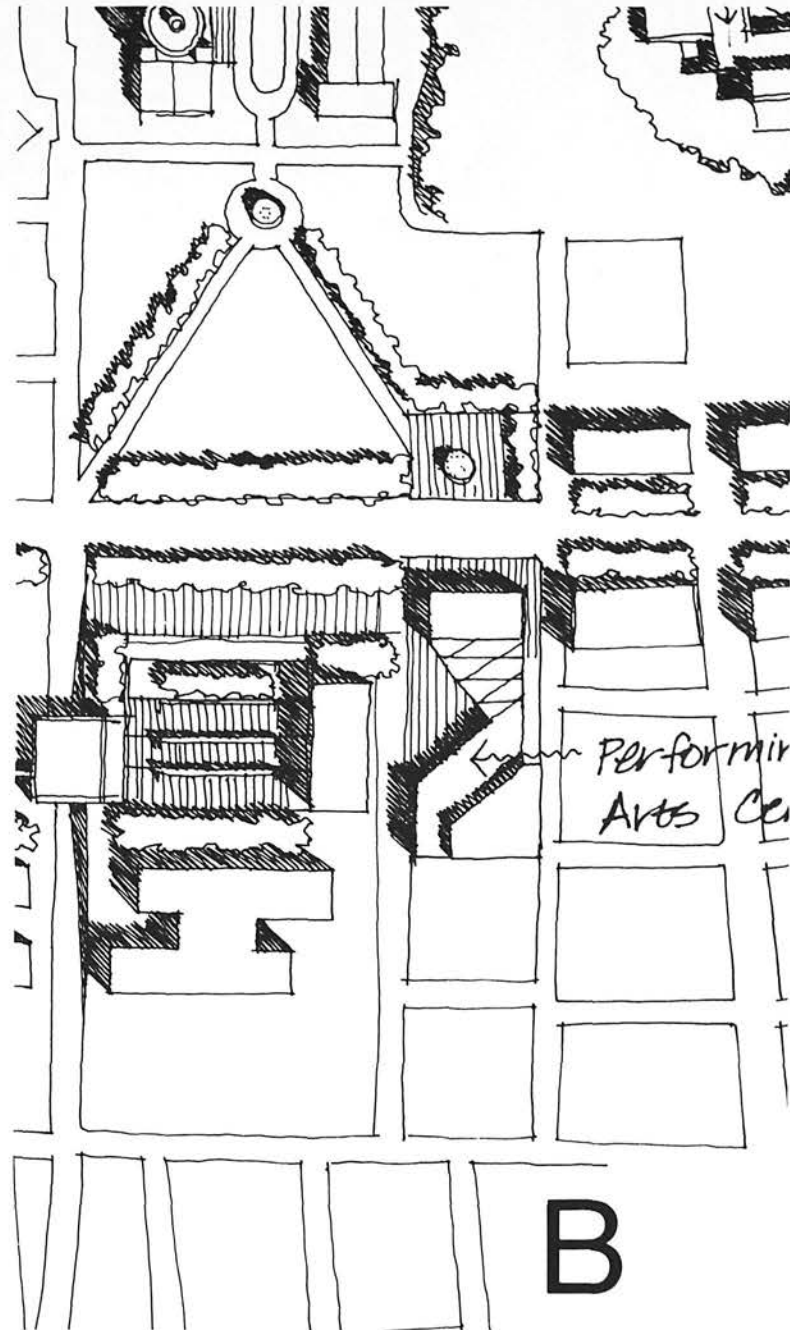


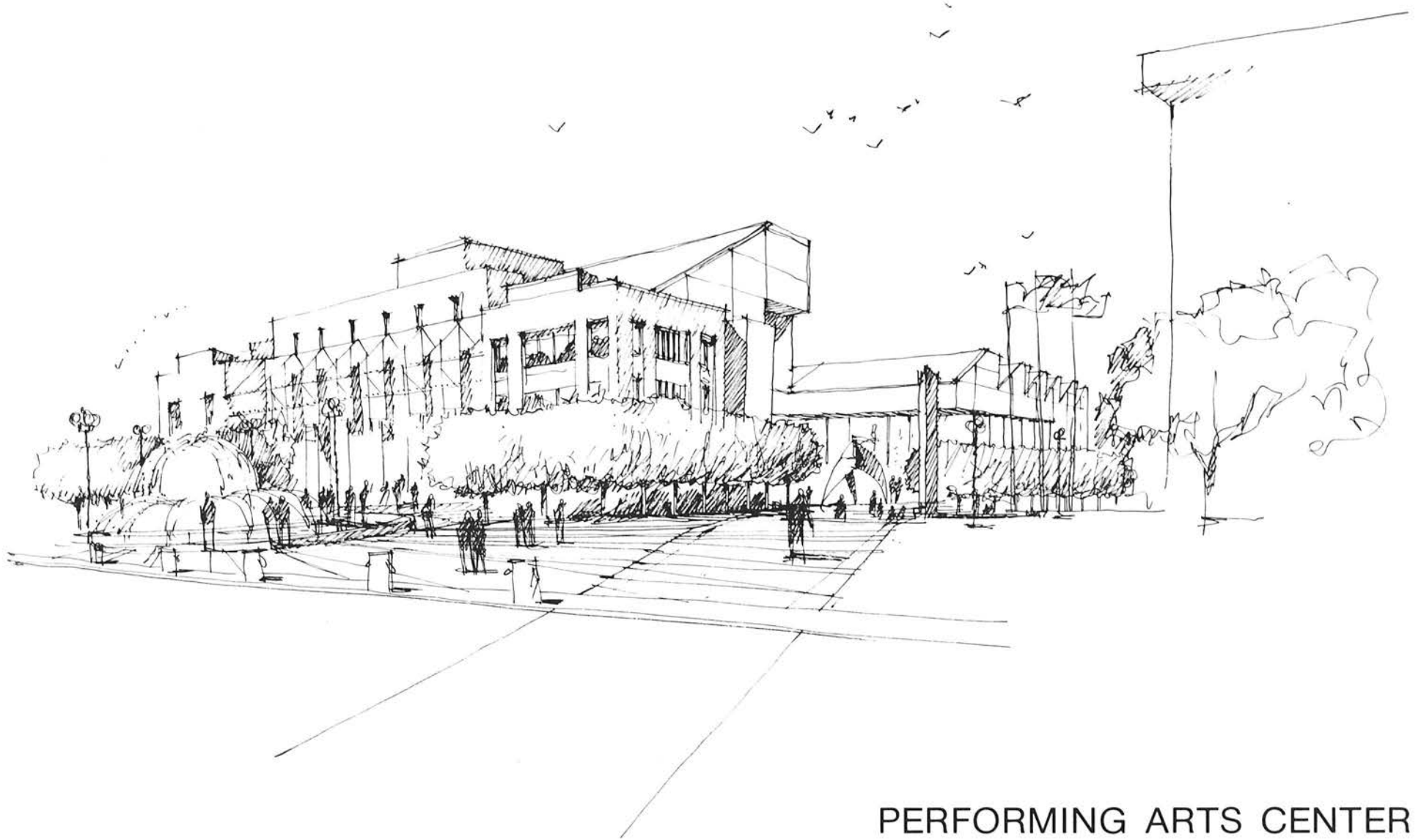
WATERFRONT RETAIL AREA

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The Capital Area Association for the Performing Arts (CAAPA) has been considering a site at the Black Lake highway interchange, some three miles southwest of downtown Olympia, for its proposed facility. The team strongly recommends that the CAAPA Center be located in the real center of the region -- in downtown Olympia. The substantial area required for a parking lot was one reason that a site on the outskirts has been considered, but in Olympia the enormous parking garage which is sheltered beneath the State office campus grounds lies vacant every evening during the hours when performances will take place.

R/UDAT's proposal places the Performing Arts Center on a landscaped plaza adjoining the State campus over a large area presently used as surface parking lots. The auditorium building is connected to the former County courthouse which will be rehabilitated to create modern exhibition facilities. This recycled space could house traveling art shows. It could also provide the larger quarters desperately needed by the State Museum. This new location for the State Museum would certainly be more logical and convenient than its present headquarters in a large, converted home in a fine residential district seven blocks south of the Capitol complex.





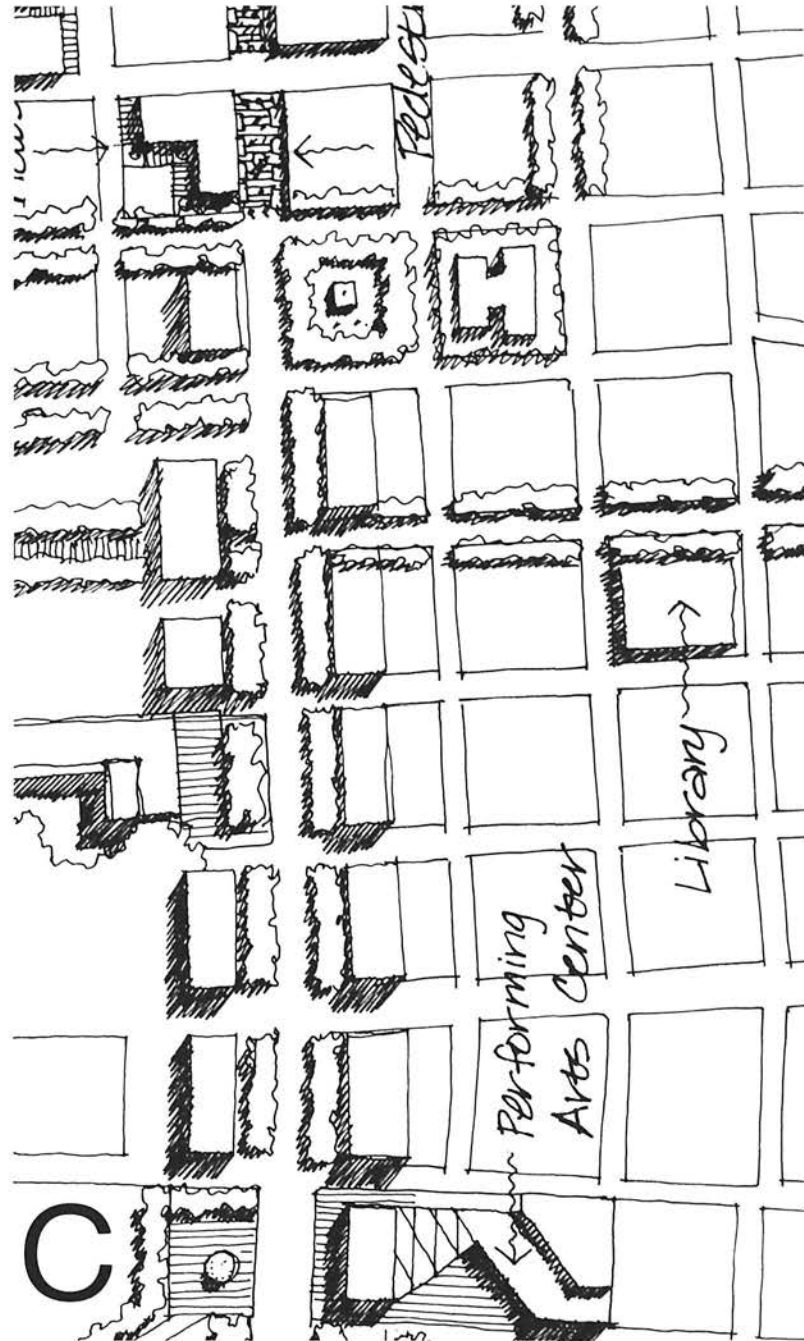
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

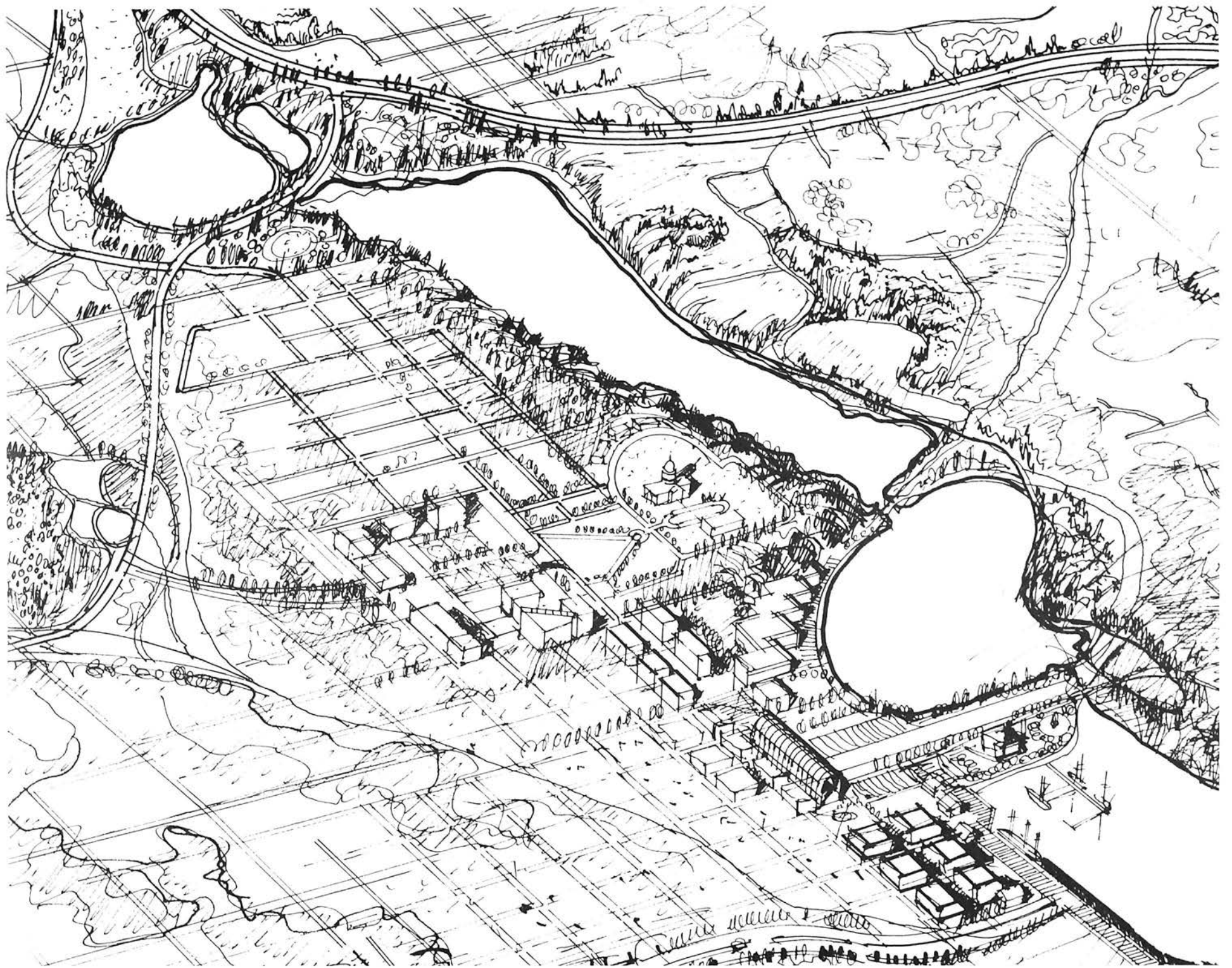
CAPITOL WAY- EIGHTH STREET DEVELOPMENT

When there is no sense of visual connection between the principal civic activities, the City itself will "fall apart" in the mind's eye. Many people in the area have complained that downtown Olympia lacks the sense of cohesion that is a characteristic of the cities that are known for their enjoyable qualities.

An easy way to begin to build visual and pleasant pedestrian connections in Olympia would be to create the bold, large scale landscaping plan presented in the drawing on the opposite page. Continuous lines of trees and shrubs would border Capitol Way starting at the Port and running southward until they join the landscaping of the Capitol grounds.

A far less apparent, but equally important linkage should be made between the City Hall and the City Library which lie to the east along Eighth Street, and the principal north-south corridor on Capitol Way. This landscaping plan connects Eighth Street past Capitol Way to the delightful park area proposed on the eastern shore of Capitol Lake. In this way the special civic importance of the street and the significant buildings it serves will be given a visual importance as well.





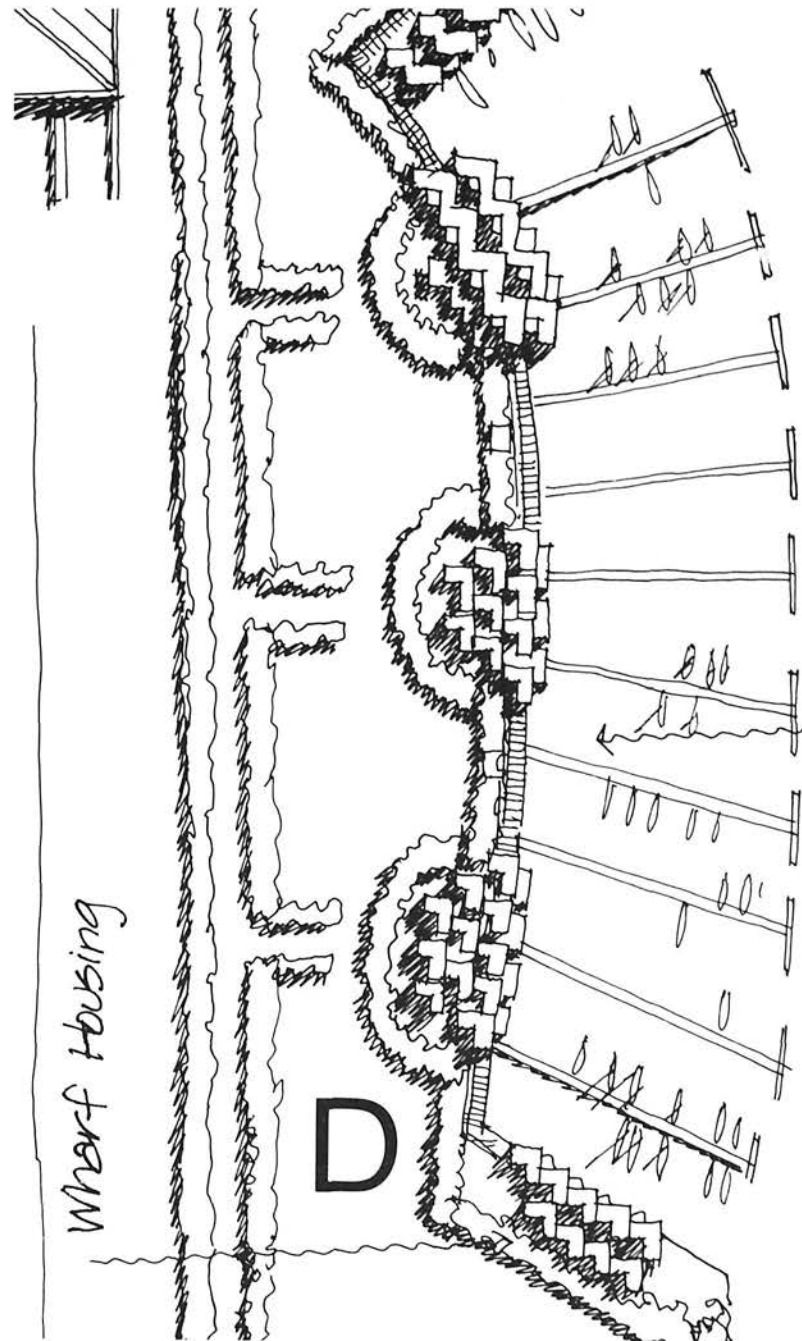
MARINA AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

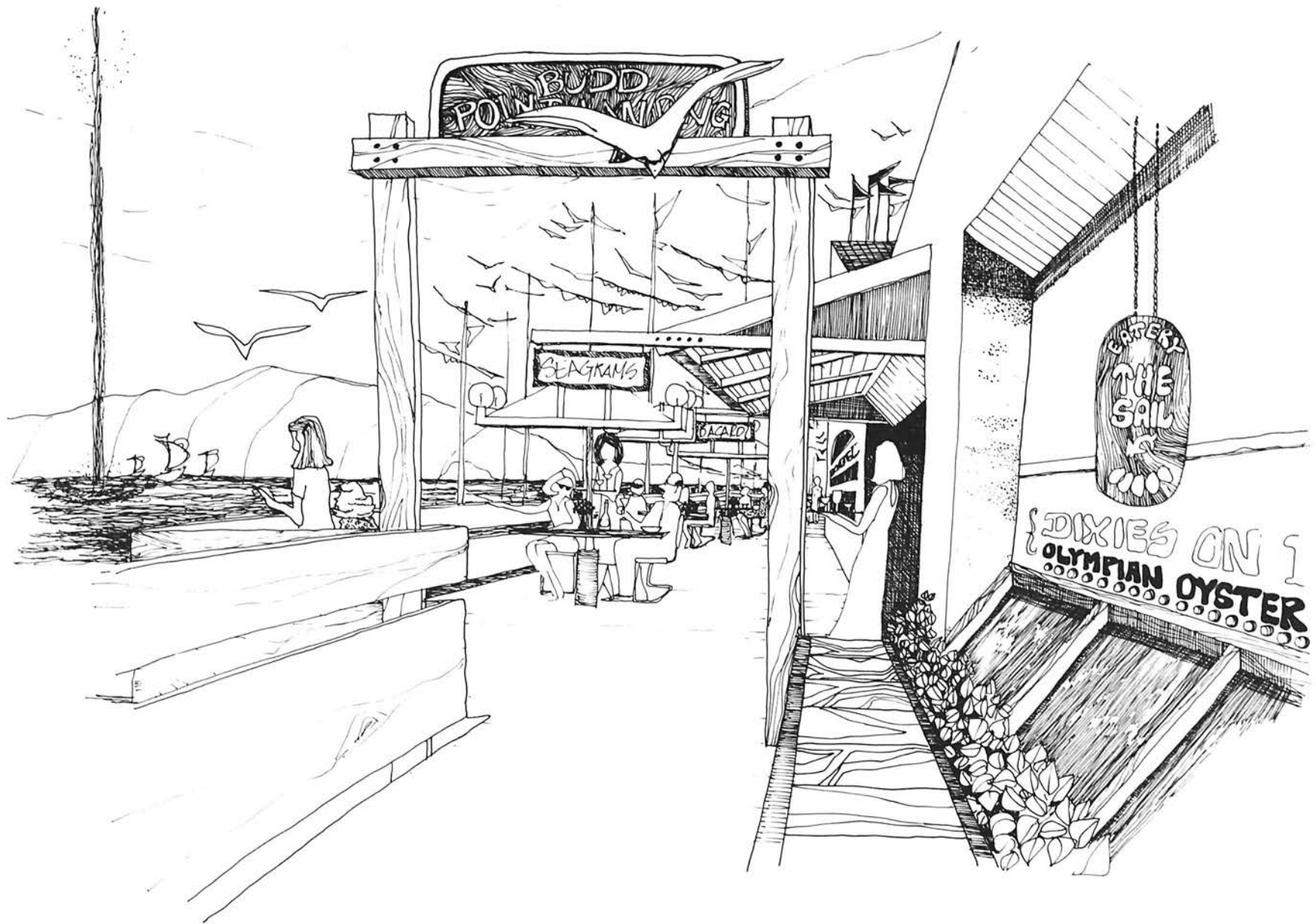
The proposed marina on the eastern shore of the Port peninsula can be enhanced so that it serves to further strengthen the downtown area. The design proposal on the opposite page also indicates how an attractive and popular pedestrian pathway can be extended to the northern tip of the peninsula which has breathtaking views.

To mark this terminus in a way that will be visible from almost any part of the city, a towering waterjet fountain will be created 400 yards offshore from the new marina restaurant. While the waters of the inlet cannot be seen from most streets downtown, the vertical jet of water will be visible and will remind people that Olympia's center is surrounded by water.

Clusters of new housing units are proposed at the water's edge, bordering the marina. These will provide homes for people who want to live downtown (for reasons cited in an earlier section of this report).

A "boatel" is also included in the marina development to accommodate the large number of boating enthusiasts in the Puget Sound area. They will surely want to experience the lively and varied attractions which will make downtown Olympia a frequent port of call.



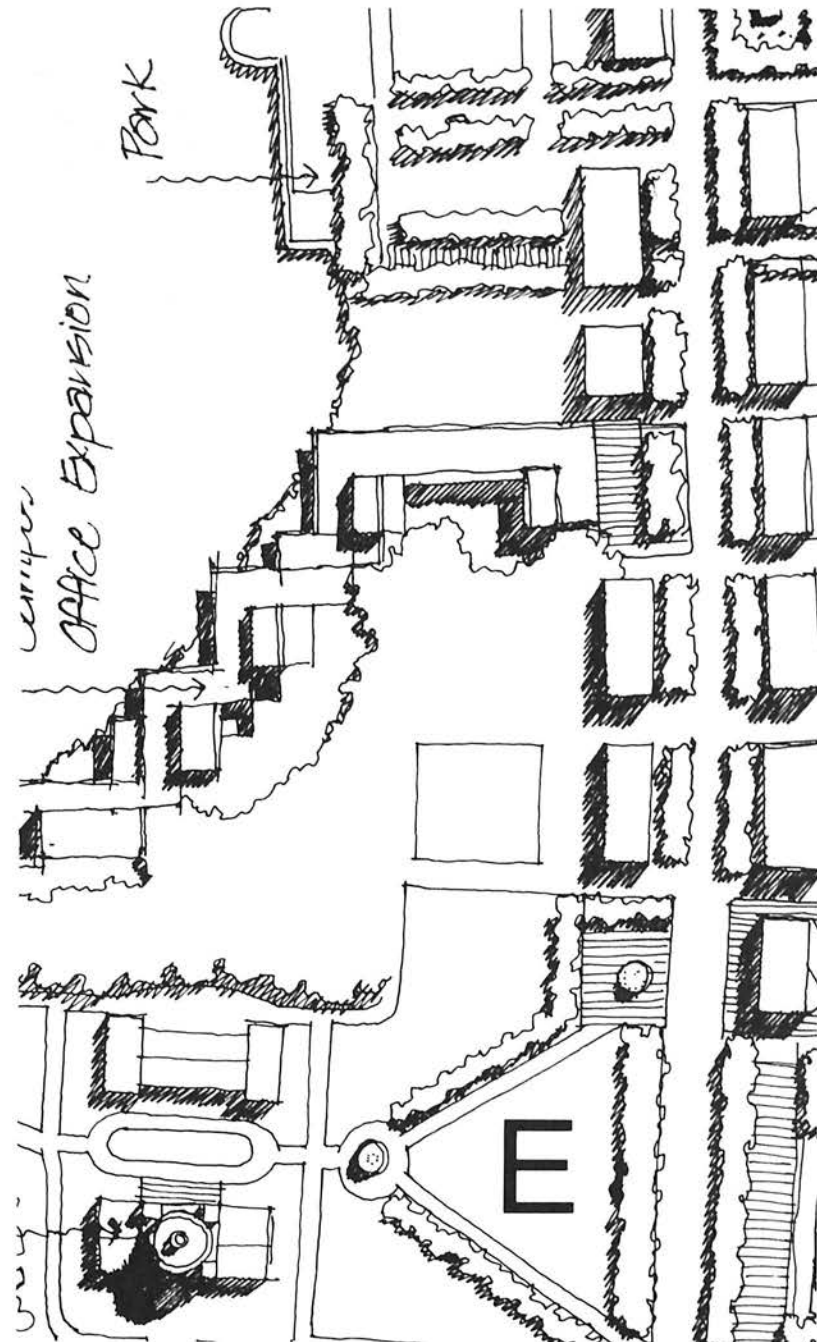


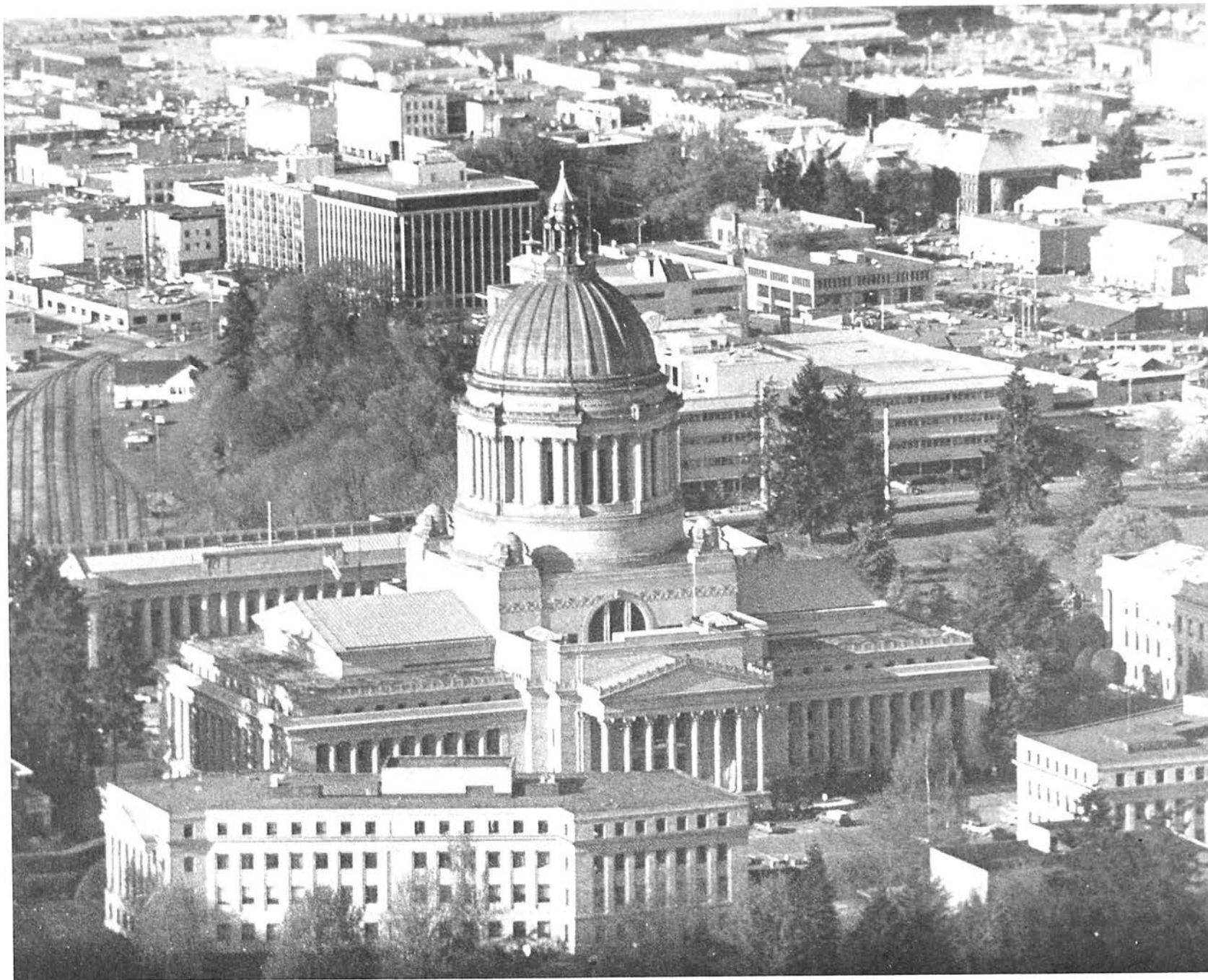
MARINA

OFFICE EXPANSION

As the population and economy of the Olympia region expands, more office space will be needed. The professional community, banking, finance and other service organizations, already a substantial part of downtown activities, will increase and create an excellent market opportunity for private real estate developers. In addition, it is most probable that the administrative staff serving the State government will increase in size. To accommodate the need for office space the plan shown in the drawing (right) proposes a row of the office buildings on either side of Capitol Way. This development will further reinforce the link, now so obviously lacking, between the Capitol complex and downtown Olympia. And, the increased office population will improve sales in retail stores so that the retail sector will grow and prosper as well.

Only future decisions can determine how much of the space in this row of office buildings will be an expansion of the State campus and how much will be developed by the private sector. The linear configuration of "office row" along Capitol Way will allow for any combination of public and private office space called for in the future.



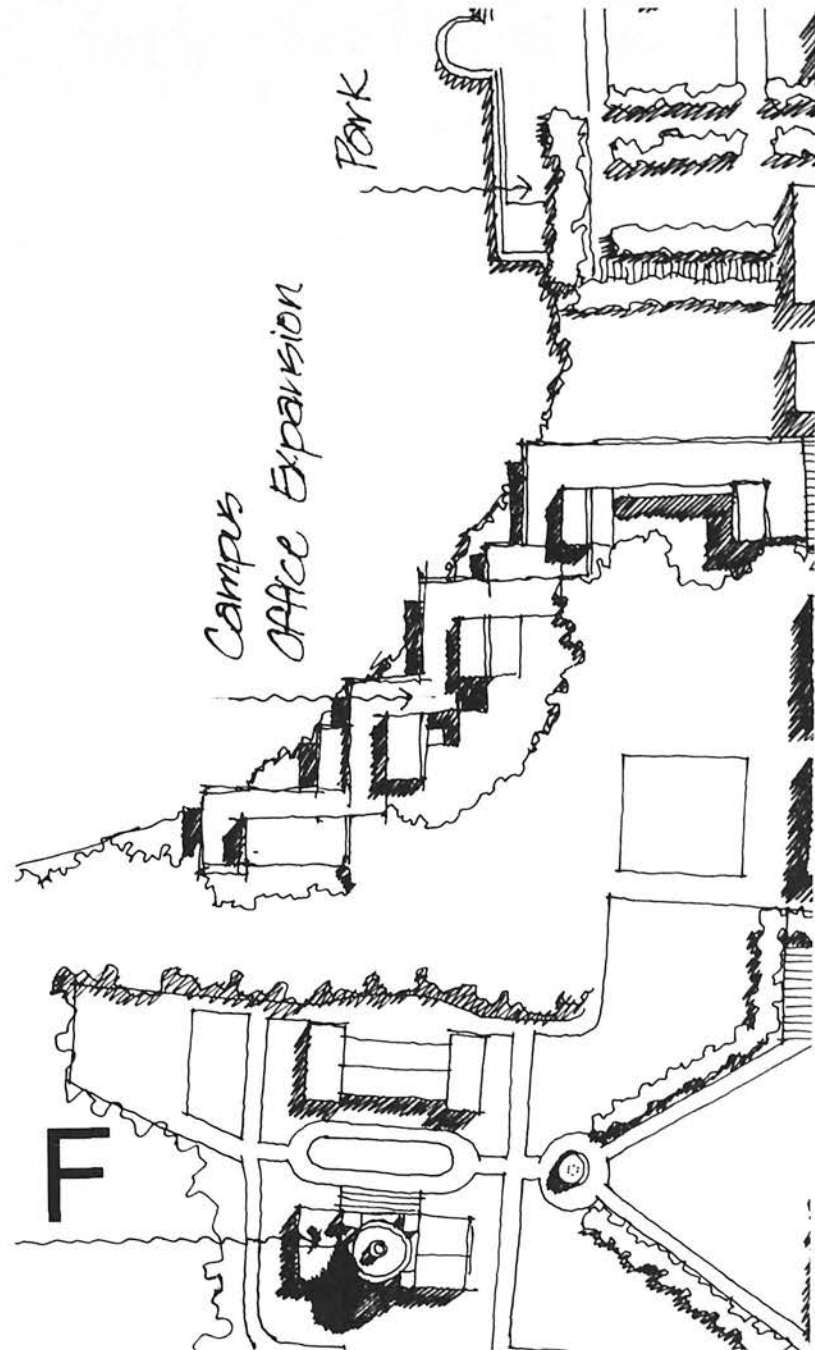


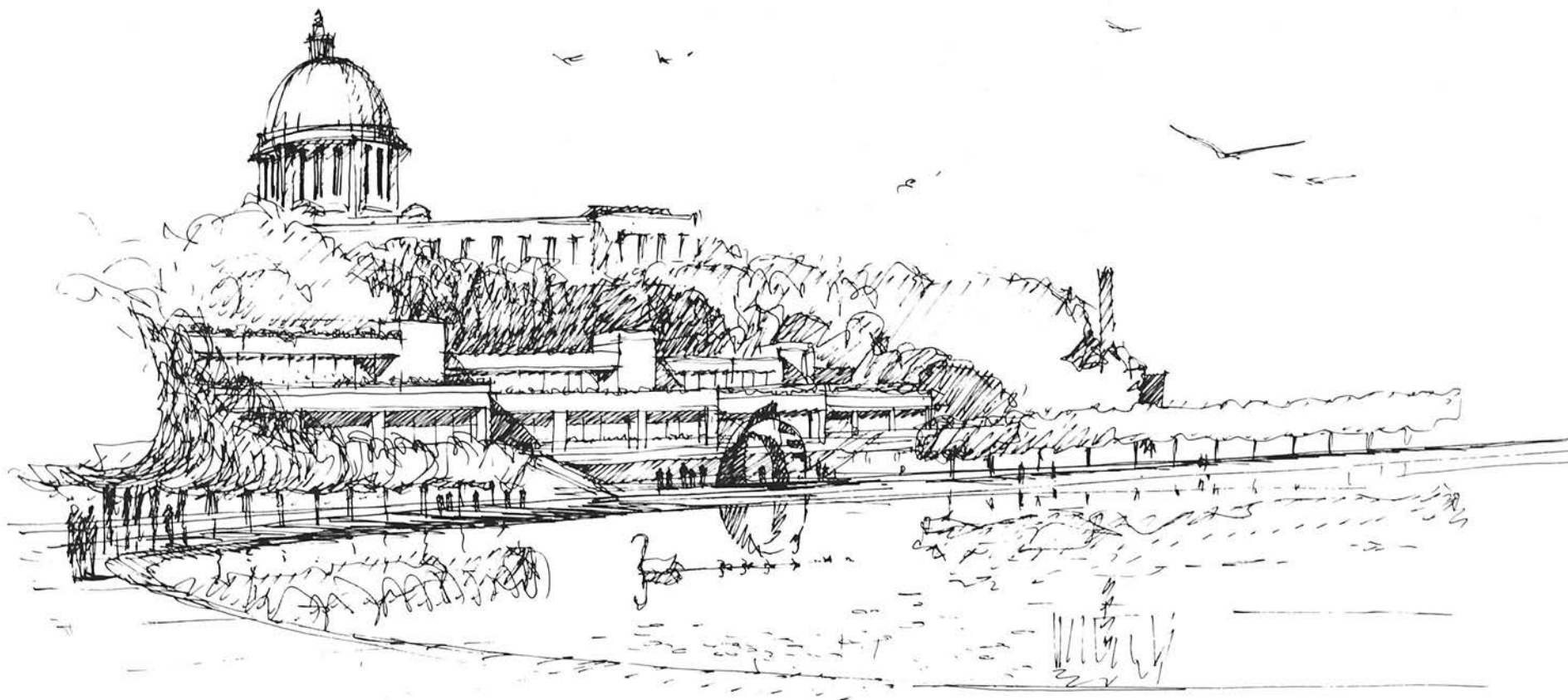
CAPITOL LAKE DEVELOPMENT

The railroad tracks which now dominate the southwest shoreline of Capitol Lake are not compatible with the symbolic importance (the visual base of the Capitol building itself) and the natural beauty of the lakeshore. The R/UDAT proposal in the drawing on the opposite page calls for State related buildings -- offices and/or housing -- to be built on a platform over these tracks. This group of buildings would be terraced to fit into the natural slope of the site and blend with the landscape.

At the northern end of the Capitol Lake development, the new structure will bend around, to form a physical and visual link to the Capitol Way office development, the proposed Eighth Street "civic corridor" and the newly developed lake-front park area.

The construction of the Capitol Lake development will create the last piece of the urban design composition and planned development of a healthy, prosperous, and memorably beautiful downtown Olympia.





CAPITOL LAKE DEVELOPMENT

PORT OF OLYMPIA

PORT HISTORY

The Port of Olympia has a rich cultural history anchored in the waterfront and the early development of trade through the Washington Territory. The first settlers to the region arrived in Tumwater in 1849. Due to the existence of natural mudflats in the Deschutes River delta, ships were required to anchor in deep water and transfer their cargo to lighter vessels for transit to the wharves. Then as now, the primary export through the port was lumber and lumber products. The brig, Orbit, was the first American vessel owned by Washington Territory residents. It loaded spars at Olympia for shipment to San Francisco.

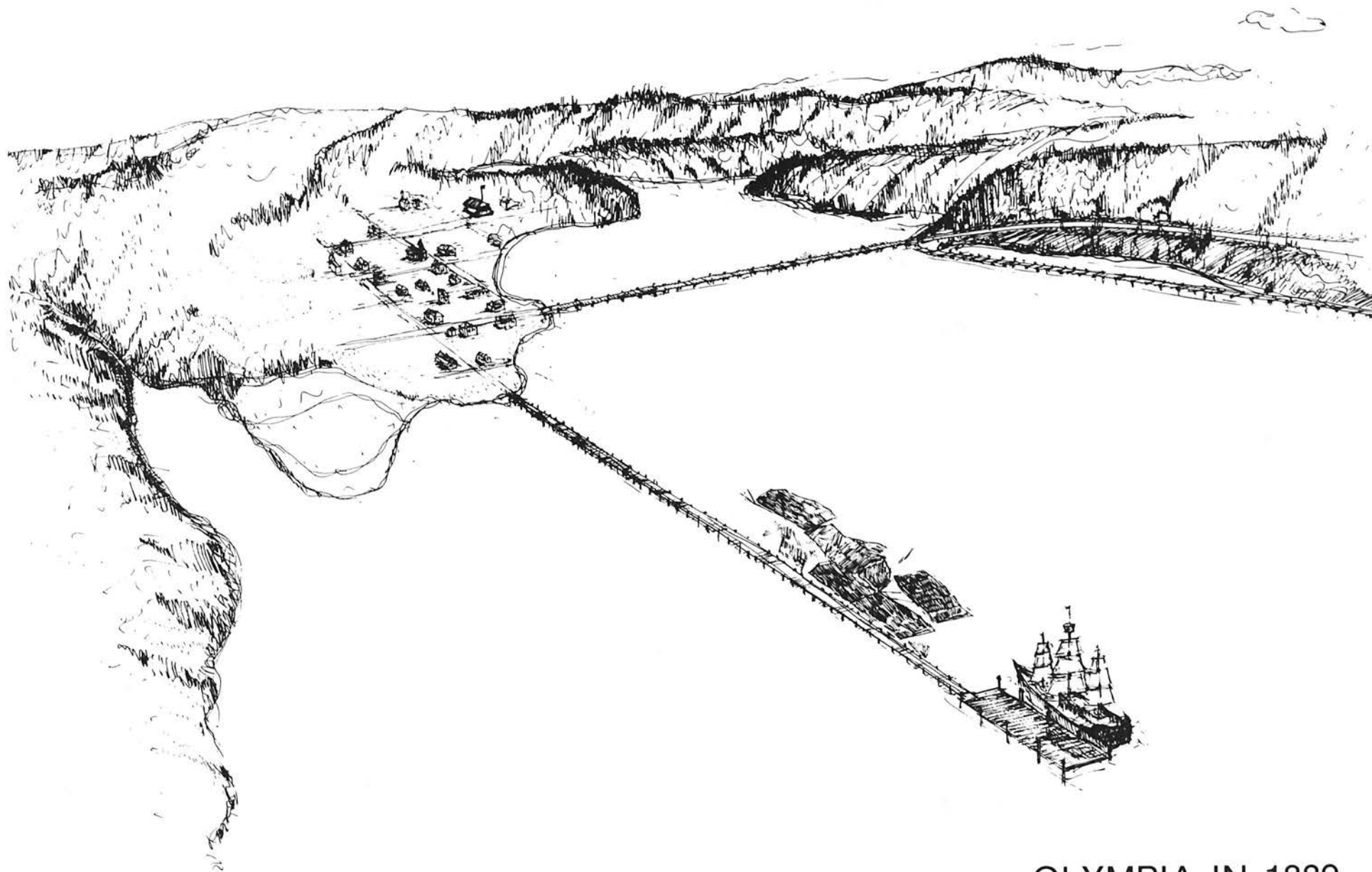
In 1854, Edward Giddings built a major pier extending into Budd Inlet. This structure extended three hundred feet into the inlet from the foot of Capitol Way which then extended only to the tip of the delta at First Avenue.

As port demand increased during the early years a second wharf was constructed along the west-side, on the old Brown's claim. This was the "Old Port", and a present residential development on the site uses that name.

In 1888, the "long wharf" was completed. This was an impressive structure extending nearly a mile into the inlet to the one fathom contour. This early waterfront configuration has since evolved and expanded in response to port traffic and population growth demands. A series of dredging and filling operations have permitted the expansion of the Port into the peninsula-

like configuration, which is now familiar to Olympians.

Today recreational water uses and the development of high volume materials handling equipment have changed the demands and limitations on the port in relationship to the community. These changes are likely to continue for the foreseeable future and long term flexibility in port development is an important consideration that must be maintained in the planning process.



OLYMPIA IN 1889

INTEGRATION OF WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT WITH ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ecological considerations in the development of the Olympia waterfront are critical to the planning process. Two major water bodies are important in relationship to this study area. These are the Deschutes River and Budd Inlet.

The Deschutes River flows northerly and empties into Capitol Lake. The river is extremely valuable as an anadromous fish spawning grounds. This limitation is perceived as the single most significant ecological constraint on waterfront development. Expansion further into the west bay from the existing shore masses is necessarily limited by this consideration. All future planning activities in the west bay must therefore be carefully coordinated with considerations for the spawning activities, and encroachments that will impede spawning should be avoided.

The most important features of Budd Inlet as an ecological system are the tidal areas. These wetland areas are valuable beds for feeding, spawning and nursery areas for shellfish, crabs, and other forms of aquatic wildlife. These areas also serve as a draw for waterfowl into the inlet. Unfortunately, the water quality in the lower Budd Inlet (that portion of the inlet south of Priest Point) has deteriorated to the point that the inlet was forced to close to all commercial shellfish harvesting. In fact, Budd Inlet has been classified as a water quality limited area. This is significant since it means that in spite of application of best prac-

tical treatment technology on point source discharges, Budd Inlet still may not meet state water quality standards. Recent studies indicate that non point source discharges and discharges from the present combined sewer overflow system are causing some of the water quality problems. This means that future planning should consider the impact of non point source discharges of pollutants. These will be addressed under the areawide section 208 planning. Completion of this planning study is encouraged so that developmental concepts that may evolve in the region can be consistent with the water quality needs of the waterfront area.

A shoreline master program has been developed for Thurston County designed to control all development along the shoreline areas. This study encompasses 111 miles of shoreline throughout the county. Of this total shoreline area 103.3 miles or 93 percent have been designated as rural, conservancy or natural in nature. Nearly all of the remaining 7.7 miles, designated for urban development, is in the Olympia harbor. The urban development designation permits most water dependent and water oriented uses including uses that allow people to enjoy the shoreline, such as motels, hotels, restaurants, apartments above the first floor, etc. The objective of the comprehensive shoreline planning is to encourage human usage of the shoreline area in a manner that is consistent with the overall ecological considerations of the Sound. The restrictions recognized in this planning reveal the logical consistency of encouraging the use of the City of Olympia shoreline as the major water access oriented devel-

opment in Budd Inlet. These type of land uses in the harbor area will help alleviate some of the pressures for development placed upon areas that are more naturally pristine.

The City and the State should prohibit development on the slopes around Budd Inlet to preserve the natural beauty that is the heritage of all Olympians and a magnificent setting for the State Capitol. Development should be limited to the foot of the slope and the plateau above.



WATERFRONT USE INTEGRATION

Waterfront commercial and recreational opportunities are important elements in the development of this community. Future developments of the waterfront areas will be characterized by varied and multiple uses covering closely adjoining land and water areas. This fact makes it essential to vigorously pursue interaction between the recreational, retail and industrial components of the waterfront. These uses must be integrated to provide a viable and self sustaining waterfront area.

The major waterfront components in the Olympia harbor can be broken down roughly as follows: the Percival Landing area, the commercial industrial port, the Capitol Lake, the point of the peninsula and the east bay area. Each of these components is discussed below.

CAPITOL LAKE

Capitol Lake is recognized as one of the most naturally beautiful settings in Olympia. Serving as a scenic park, water playground and fish spawning area, it enhances the value of the adjoining land usage and provides significant aesthetic pleasures to both the downtown area and to the Capitol Campus. Strong emphasis should continue to be placed on maintaining this shoreline in a predominately green state.

The Capitol Lake shoreline is currently classified as a conservancy area under the Shoreline Master Program. This means that development in this area is prohibited except for low intensity activities such as some forms of recreation. The extreme

northeast corner of Capitol Lake is classified as urban. We recommend one major reconsideration in this shoreline classification scheme. Capitol Lake is bridged at the approximate midpoint for a railroad crossing. This bridge empties into a small marshalling yard on the east shore of the lake. We recommend that this yard be reclassified to accomodate urban shoreline development. Such a reclassification will be more consistent with the existing land usage and will permit the construction of second and third tier structures that would cover the existing railroad tracks. While such construction must be carefully controlled so that it blends with the natural setting and view, it can actually enhance the natural beauty of the shoreline and blend functionally and aesthetically with the development of the Capitol Campus and the downtown area.

PERCIVAL LANDING

The southernmost portion of the west bay area has in the past served the needs of a conglomerate of recreational, light industry, warehousing, and commercial interests. The light industry and warehousing operations have gradually been eliminated from parts of this waterfront area. These areas are currently being enhanced as recreational focal points.

Existing plans to extend the Percival Landing boardwalk to the limits of the port are helpful and can contribute to the growth of pedestrian traffic in this waterfront area. The end of this boardwalk can serve as a point for viewing harbor activities and the operations of the commercial port. Additional emphasis should be placed on maintaining Percival Landing as a docking area for short term visitors.

This docking should be coordinated with the leasing of moorage at docks further north along the boardwalk to assure that a balance is maintained providing adequate short term docking.

In terms of waterfront development two major problems exist within this area. First the land uses between the end of the west bay and Capitol Lake do not emphasize waterfront related uses. Further efforts need to be taken in this area to assure that this land mass is used in a manner that is consistent with the overall development of the community and the waterfront. The second observable problem in this area is one of visual aesthetics rather than uses. The current appearance of the Olympia Yacht Club facilities is in harsh contrast to the natural beauty of the setting. All development in this area should be encouraged in a manner that forms a consistent visual theme with the Percival Landing boardwalk and the natural setting.

THE PORT

The commercial Olympia port facility is located on the east coast of the west bay area and covers a majority of the peninsula. A channel entrance and turning basin dredged to a depth of thirty feet at low tide provides water access to the facility. The port is also served by rail and highway transportation. Land access is somewhat limited because of some interference with traffic through the downtown commercial business district.

Past cargo shipments through the port have been composed principally of export logs, breaking down roughly as follows: 76 percent export timber and timber products, 13 percent petroleum products, and

11 percent general commodities, both import and export. The timber industry has over the past 50 years shifted its interests away from the full utilization of the port of Olympia. This makes it imperative that the port maintain its flexibility in being able to meet the demands of a variety of potential port users.

Recent developments in materials handling equipment design have brought changes in the manner that most modern ports operate. Ships of increasing size are being loaded faster with total cargo volumes increasing proportionately. These developments in port operation necessitate an increased storage area and cargo storage space to accommodate the port operation. Depending upon the cargo to be handled, space in the order of 20 to 30 acres per berth is required to service most ocean going vessels. The port commission has already taken steps to accommodate this type of expansion and improvement in the storage capacity at the port of Olympia.

The type of materials handling equipment that will be required and commodities that will be shipped through the Port of Olympia in the future are not totally foreseeable at this time. Special attention will naturally continue to be given to export timber and wood products and to specialized imports for domestic distribution. Meeting these shifting markets will be a continuing planning and marketing responsibility of the port commission. One potential short term improvement in port capabilities lies in an increase in dockside warehousing capabilities of the port to encourage the export of finished forest products through Olympia. This would enhance the port's current capability of handling the needs of the timber industry.

Continued operation of the port is not inconsistent or competing with the recreational and other commercial activities in Olympia and on the peninsula. Opportunities for promoting the compatibility between the port activities and recreational activities exist and need to be continually pursued as design of individual waterfront facilities are completed. Plant tours and mini-learning sessions with regard to port operations are strongly recommended to provide a continual phasing point between the citizens, the tourists and the port operation. The port itself should be considered an asset in terms of tourism and recreational involvement for visitors and citizens of Olympia. As such it should be supported by the city and the region.

POINT OF THE PENINSULA

The point of the peninsula currently serves two primary functions. One side serves as a recreational marina and restaurant and the other side serves as a working yard for a pole plant and radio station. Existing development of the peninsula point is in some ways inconsistent with the overall development plans for the east bay waterfront and partially inconsistent with the port operations. Consideration should be given to extending the operations of the proposed east bay marina around the point of the peninsula to facilitate public access to the area and to reinforce the waterfront activities. Flexibility should be maintained at the point of the peninsula to permit the construction of a roll-on roll-off dock at the end of the existing port wharf if such a dock becomes necessary based on port market projections and availabilities.

We recommend that, with the construction of the marina facility and the expiration of the lease

for the pole plant, the lease be reconsidered so that the point can be reserved for waterfront related activities. Further development of restaurant and entertainment facilities at this location can improve the marina development and permit a substantial number of people to enjoy the waterfront.

EAST BAY

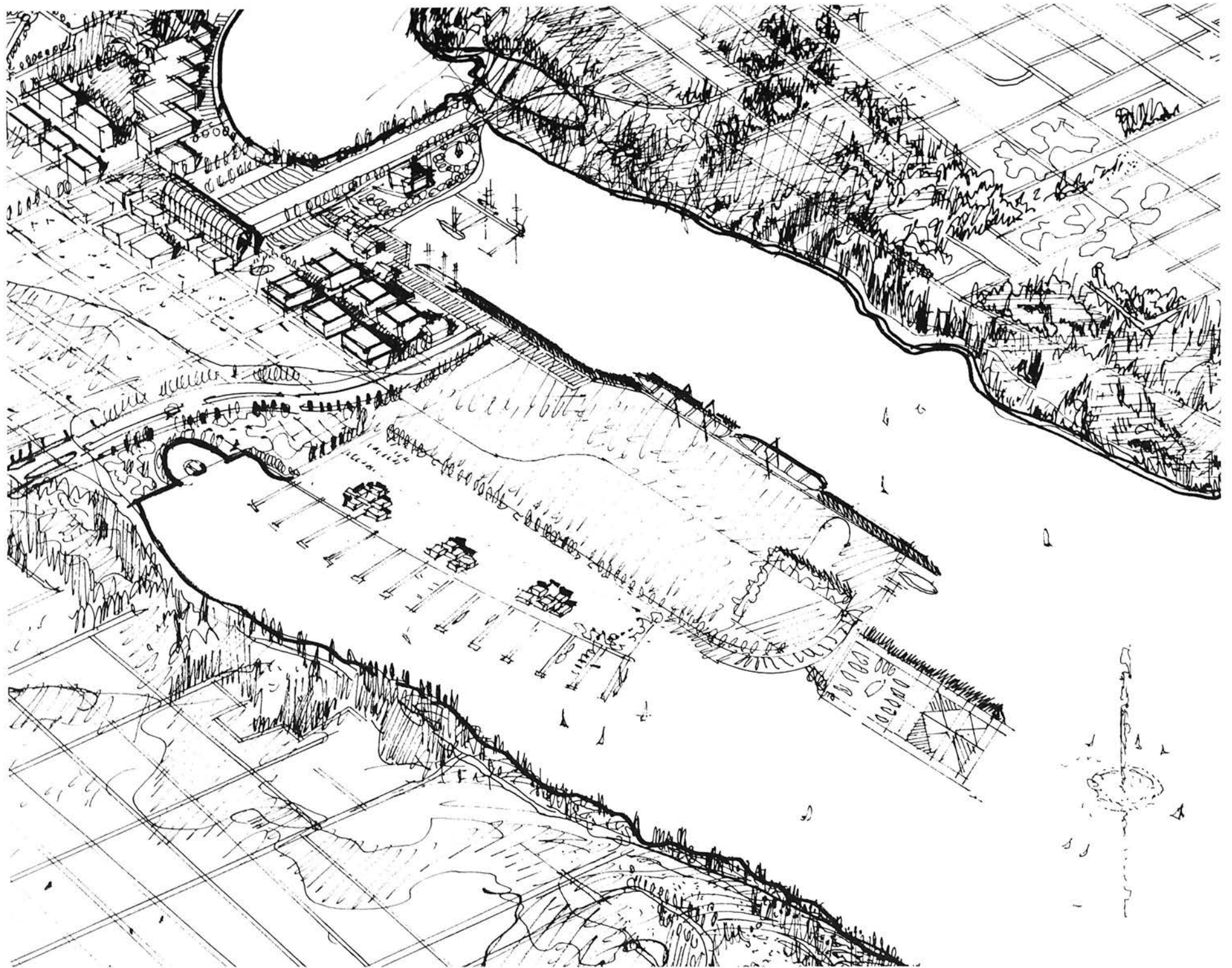
The east bay area currently presents one of the most significant opportunities in terms of overall development of waterfront activities in the Olympia area. Existing plans for utilization of some of the water areas and for the creation of an enlarged land mass on the peninsula to serve the recreational needs of the community appear to be well founded and will provide a good foundation for community-wide boating activities. The opportunities in this area should be carefully coordinated and integrated with other activities on the peninsula

In addition to the existing proposed marina development in the east bay area, the area also contains significant opportunities for other long term uses that are compatible with the proposed recreational use. These uses may include such traditional marina related activities as fishing and boating supply stores, restaurants, etc., but they also can extend to the development of additional housing convenient to the Capitol Campus and downtown Olympia. Depending on the needs of the land areas required for use of the port, the structures can be located either on the newly claimed land mass or on pile-supported structures over the water and the marina berthing.

The extreme south end of the east bay should be

developed in a manner that is consistent with the aesthetic consideration of people traveling to and from the marina. Development of this area into a small park could act as a continuation of the overall recreational facility.





TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION

Parking and traffic problems are more important than the economic loss and personal stress they cause; in any urban area they are symptomatic of underlying problems of land use and city life. These underlying problems are addressed by the land use and activity suggestions made in other sections of this report. However, since R/UDAT's invitation to visit Olympia was precipitated by an unresolved parking problem, we feel that parking issues deserve to be dealt with separately.

Similarly, traffic issues deserve to be dealt with separately. At various public meetings held with citizen's groups, we learned that many people in Olympia feel strongly that the current traffic situation contributes to their discomfort and stress.

In the following section we give no "cook book" solutions to Olympia's parking and traffic problems. We feel that the technical people at hand are entirely competent to handle the problems we see. We do, however, offer a perspective into which their solutions should fit.

PARKING IN PERSPECTIVE

Speaking of the unresolved parking problem, one of Olympia's business people expressed the hope that R/UDAT would "look over the situation and tell us what to do, not as individuals, but as a community." His request was particularly appropriate to Olympia's parking problems; at

current levels of downtown activity, Olympia's parking problem arises largely because individuals are not acting in the best interest of the community as a whole.

Specifically, in the downtown, long-term parkers are preempting space that should be available to short-term parkers. This hardly is a situation unique to Olympia. In most cities where parking space is reasonably scarce there is an inherent conflict between short and long-term parkers. And yet it is an illogical conflict; long-term parkers - business people and their employees - earn their livelihoods by providing goods and services to short-term parkers -- customers and clients.

Ideally, Olympia's downtown business people would realize the damage they are doing to themselves and park someplace more distant from their work places. In our judgment there is enough parking space in the downtown to accommodate them. And there will be even more space when the automobile businesses move out of the downtown area to their own mall.

Granted this is so, it is impractical to expect business people to use more distant parking spaces in favor of customers and clients. Each individual feels he is not hurting the system enough to out-weigh his personal inconvenience. This attitude, of course, means the city must continue to enforce regulations that make available short-term space for the customers and clients who are vital to the economy of the area.

At the current level of downtown activity and

attractiveness, Olympia's free parking and enforcement strategy seems to make good sense. Without question, paid parking tends to discourage people from frequenting an area they feel "is not attractive enough to be worth paying for." It is a sad commentary on the current quality and character of Olympia's heart that this should be so. But the hooded parking meters give mute testimony to the fact it is, indeed, so.

The first clear signs of a downtown turnaround will come when the parking meters are back in operation. We expect that the developments and activities suggested in other sections of this report will make the downtown well worth paying to visit. Using Pioneer Square in Seattle as an example, one insightful lady put it very well: "If you have something to draw people into an area they come...What's more, they spend enough money so that the parking problem solves itself."

PARKING AT THE STATE CAPITOL

Parking at the state capitol can be divided into two related problems, (1) shortage of parking for visitors and (2) complaints from the surrounding community about visitors parking in driveways, on lawns, etc. Needs of visitors to the state capitol have to be met. The capitol is here to serve the entire state and it is unreasonable to expect state citizens to travel long distances and not have a convenient place to park near the capitol, their destination.

Perhaps some visitors' spaces might be made available by more efficient utilization of existing spaces now leased to state employees on an assigned basis. Aerial photos taken at different times of the day show that about 20 to 30 percent of leased spaces are empty, particularly in lots near the capitol building. Apparently many state officials travel about during the day and do not require the use of their parking spaces all of the time.

This indicates that some space can be released to other uses by more efficient utilization. One way to do this might be to provide designated areas for state parking rather than individually assigned spaces. These areas would be comprised of fewer spaces than are now required for individual spaces, thus freeing up some of them for visitor parking.

TRAFFIC IN PERSPECTIVE

Olympia's traffic situation presents a seeming paradox: at present, Olympia's streets and highways are a long way from being congested by traffic. Yet, many of Olympia's citizens feel stressed by existing traffic conditions. This, alone, tells us that there is a traffic problem that needs solving.

The problem is not that Olympia's streets and highways are congested, at least not by urban standards! Granted, with growth there are more cars on them. And in the future there will be still more cars. But Olympia's highways have yet to approach the threshold of congestion

shown in the following figure taken from the Highway Capacity Manual. At that threshold, slight perturbations in the traffic stream will cause serious and time consuming jam-ups.

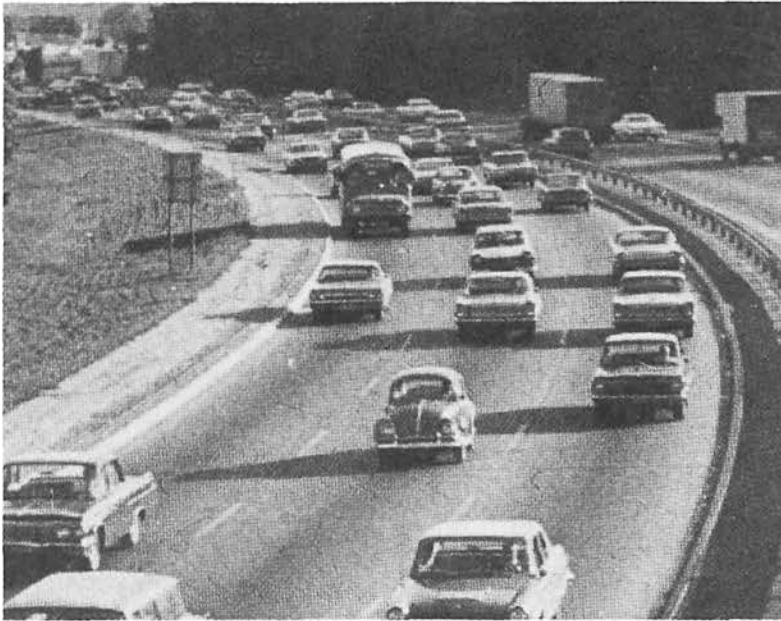
Olympia's traffic conditions shown in the accompanying aerial photographs should be compared with the Manual's standard of traffic congestion. It should be noted that the Olympia photos were taken at about 5:00 p.m. on a sunny Friday - conditions which virtually guarantee traffic congestion for most urban areas in the country. Granted, the photos may be less than "truly representative" of the usual traffic situation here in Olympia. Even so, they do indicate that Olympia is far from suffering the kind of traffic congestion shown in the Highway Capacity Manual.

This is important to understand because it is natural to think that with more cars on the highways, more highway capacity is needed - especially if one is feeling stressed by traffic conditions generally. In fact, the history of highway construction has shown that, where there is congestion, additional highway capacity may relieve it only temporarily. More capacity seems to induce more traffic, which means a return to congestion. Where there is no congestion to begin with the whole exercise is, of course, a waste. Worse, the exercise diverts attention from the kinds of traffic problem which create undue stress. In Olympia, traffic problems that create undue stress are not necessarily those that create

time-consuming traffic slow-downs. They do, however, make people feel that their trips take longer than actually is the case. For example, at one of our public meetings a lady estimated that her five mile trip to work took "almost a half an hour". As a matter of fact, a five mile journey to work in Detroit, the automobile capital of the world (and hometown of one R/UDAT member) takes no more than 15 or 20 minutes. A five mile trip in Olympia would surely take less.

Traffic conditions that stress people enough to make them feel their trip is longer than it is can be overcome by "fine tuning" the existing street and highway system. Signals, striping, and signs can be made more logical and clearer than they probably are. And, in general, the elements of the traffic system can be redesigned to interface with each other in a more coherent way. This can and should be done in Olympia - and as soon as possible.

But the job of relieving traffic stress should be recognized as more than a strictly technical one to be solved "by the book". Each solution should be checked for "consumer acceptability" before it becomes a fixed part of the transportation system. Only by insisting on that last step can the City of Olympia ensure that it is, in fact, relieving the traffic stress that troubles its citizens.



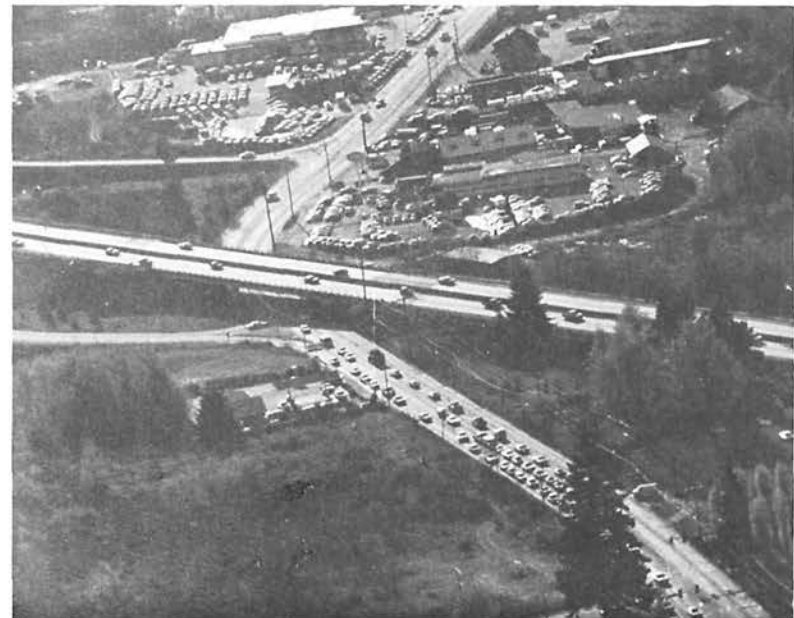
Level of Service D as viewed looking upstream on a typical freeway; indicating approaching unstable flow, little freedom to maneuver, and conditions tolerable for short periods.

Sources: Illinois Dept. of Transportation as published in Transportation and Traffic Engineering Handbook, Institute of Traffic Engineers.

Photo from Highway Capacity Manual 1965, Highway Research Board Special Report 87.



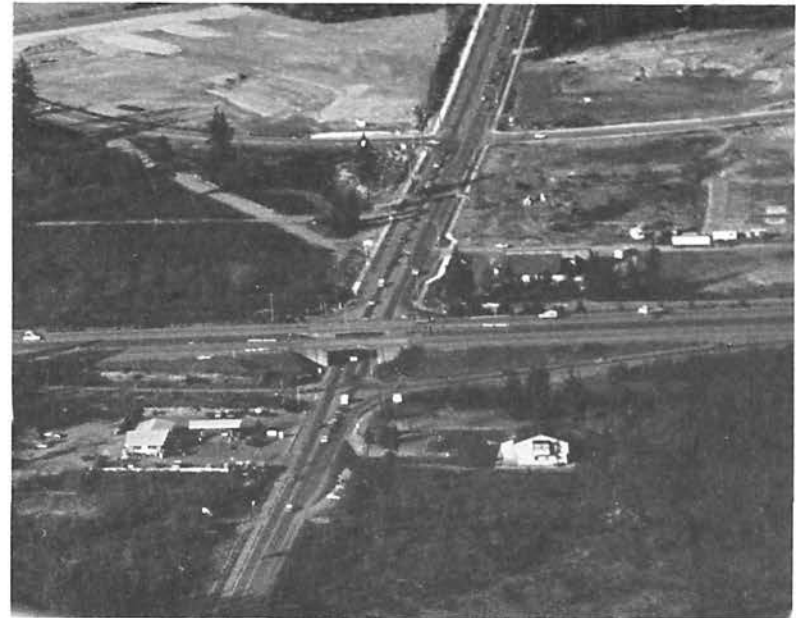
4th & 5th Avenue Bridges



I-5/Pacific Avenue Underpass



I-5 Olympia Exit South Bound



Black Lake Boulevard and Highway 101



I-5 Highway 101 Interchange



Plum & Union Intersection

TRANSIT

The Olympia Transit System is unusual in that ridership is increasing rather than decreasing, which is prima facie evidence that the system is doing better than "just a good job." However, it might do more. A shuttle bus might be run to join Capitol Hill area with the activity area downtown. Perhaps this could be run at first during lunch hours, and later, as demand increases, at other times depending upon traffic.

If the city and state can get together to build the proposed cultural and performing arts center where it is suggested by R/UDAT, the bus might be run before and after performance hours, linking the performance center around the Capitol with restaurants and the activity area downtown. This would mean that state people using the underground parking near the Capitol could visit the downtown activity area without the inconvenience of driving and parking.

REGION

REGIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

In reviewing Thurston County's official policy and planning documents, as well as listening to residents, business persons and elected officials, it is clear that this region has the goal of encouraging orderly growth in areas where public facilities can be provided most efficiently at the lowest cost. The region wisely appears to have rejected the extremes of rapid growth at any cost or no growth. A number of objectives were expressed within the concept of that goal:

- Maintain Olympia's downtown as an important and unique regional focal point.
- Maintain the region as a balanced area with land uses devoted to housing, employment, services and recreation.
- Support the three retail activity centers of the region: the Capitol Mall, serving the westside, the South Sound Shopping Center serving the southern and eastern portions of the region; and recreated downtown Olympia with its waterfront orientation, diverse quality shops and recreational/cultural areas.
- Provide new multi-family housing so as to protect the identity and character of existing single family neighborhoods.
- Reduce stress in driving, and at the same time, avoid tearing up residential neighborhoods with new arterials.

- Guide new development so as to protect and retain areas of natural beauty, with sensitivity to the environment.
- Continue to develop cooperative service districts, which provide specific types of utilities and services on an areawide basis.
- Exercise caution so as to protect isolated or outlying land parcels from premature development, and do not approve leapfrogging over undeveloped parcels adjacent to existing development.

There appears to be some fear that the active concern of residents about the quality of development will lead to the deterioration of existing areas. Citizen participation activities bringing together residents, builders and planners (e.g. the Westside Task Force and the Multi-Family Housing Olympia Citizens Task Force) are extremely useful in fostering a balanced approach to growth and development. The following section of this report explores some legal mechanisms that should be useful in achieving sound regional development in line with regional goals.





AERIAL VIEW FROM NORTHWEST

IMPLEMENTATION

HOW THE PLAN FOR OLYMPIA CAN BE CARRIED OUT

The plan proposed for Olympia requires a fresh look at the planning and legal techniques presently used to guide development in the area. These techniques have been based on the conventional planning and land use controls common to most American cities. They have served the area well, but new design concepts and a different perspective on regional growth demand a new approach. Some suggestions for new techniques will be outlined in this part of the report. They should be accepted as tentative and as ideas for possible change. Whether and how they can be implemented in detail will require additional study and a careful analysis of the legal basis for planning and land use control in the state and region.

DOWNTOWN AND WATERFRONT: PLANNING AND CONTROL

Downtown and the waterfront area have been selected for an imaginative and intensive development program that will substantially change and enhance their present character. This program requires highly detailed and site-specific design controls. Uses, structures and facilities must be carefully related to each other, and care taken that the objectives of downtown and waterfront development are observed at each stage of the development process.

Fine-grained and sensitive development programs of this type cannot rely on conventional planning and zoning techniques to make them possible. Presently, for example, the downtown core is covered by a retail zoning

district that only indicates permissible uses and development in the most general way. That ordinance does not provide for the detailed review of site planning and development that is an essential feature of the downtown and waterfront program.

An alternative must be found to existing zoning in the downtown area that will enable the city to monitor and review the development process as the downtown and waterfront plan is carried out. That review can best be carried out through a two-step procedure in which the design plan for downtown and the waterfront is first given official status, and is then implemented directly through the zoning ordinance. A comparable design planning and zoning system has been adopted elsewhere in cities where special environmental and historic settings demand special attention to the development process. Design plan adoption and direct implementation has the advantage that the elements of the plan are given official status; they control development directly in accord with the principles of the plan. The indirect use and other controls of the zoning ordinance are dropped in favor of a direct process in which the city reviews development within the downtown and waterfront area for consistency with the adopted design plan.

In summary, the technique proposed to carry out the development plan for downtown and the waterfront can be outlined as follows:

1. The design plan is prepared to include one or more maps indicating proposals for development and redevelopment. The plan should include more than just a map of land uses, and should contain supporting elements indicating circulation systems, building elevations and other elements essential to the development program. Sign requirements should also be included. These might be modeled on the sign ordinance contained in W. Ewald and D. Mandelker, Street Graphics (1971).

2. The design plan is adopted by the city as an element of its comprehensive plan. It becomes a detailed area plan superseding the comprehensive plan for the area of the city it covers. There appears to be no major legal obstacle to the official adoption of an area subplan in Washington, although it might be well to do additional research on this point.

3. The zones presently applicable to the downtown and waterfront area are repealed and the city enacts a Downtown/Waterfront Development District that covers the area included in the adopted design plan. No development is then allowed within this area unless it is consistent with the design plan; this requirement is enforced at the building permit stage. There appears to be no legal objection to this control technique. It is similar to many planned unit development ordinances, under which the development plan becomes the official set of controls to which development conforms once the plan is adopted.

DOWNTOWN AND WATERFRONT: LAND ASSEMBLY

The recommended planning and development control process assumes that the private sector can acquire and develop land without public intervention. Such public intervention may be necessary, however. There are always difficulties in land assembly in areas undergoing change, and Olympia may need to consider a program under which land for development can be acquired if necessary through the power of eminent domain.

There are two alternatives for a program of this type. One possibility is to give the power of eminent domain directly to private developers. They would be authorized to acquire land for development as needed, provided the city has designated the area as appropriate for development and has approved the developer's plans. This private urban redevelopment technique has been used quite successfully in St. Louis, Missouri, where private developers also receive property tax abatement. An objection to this technique is that the power of land acquisition should not be 'loaned' to the private sector because it is subject to abuse unless private land acquisition is carefully monitored. There are also possible legal objections, which are noted below.

A second alternative is to provide for city acquisition of land available for development or redevelopment and its subsequent resale or leasing to a private developer. This alternative has the advantage that control over the land acquisition process remains with the city. It may also require the official adoption and implementation of an urban renewal program.

Both of these alternatives for land assembly have possible legal drawbacks. Compulsory land assembly for redevelopment has generally been approved by the courts only when the land acquired is in an area officially designated as 'blighted'. The Washington courts have accepted this use of the public land assembly power. The difficulty is that downtown Olympia and the waterfront will have to be officially 'blighted' before land assembly for redevelopment will be accepted by the courts. A blighting designation may be difficult in this state because a Supreme Court opinion has disapproved the use of eminent domain to acquire land for port redevelopment in Seattle. This issue requires additional research.

STEPS IN "DESIGN PLAN" PROCESS

1. PREPARE DESIGN PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN/
WATERFRONT AREA
2. CITY ADOPTS DESIGN PLAN
3. ADOPT DOWNTOWN/WATERFRONT DEVELOP-
MENT ZONE
4. REVIEW NEW/RECONSTRUCTED DEVELOP-
MENT FOR PLAN COMPLIANCE

GROWTH MANAGEMENT: NEW TECHNIQUES

This Report has also proposed a growth management program for the Olympia region. Designing a legal technique to implement this program presents problems because control over new development is shared by four jurisdictions--the county and the three cities. The three cities are contiguous and each shares in the control over new development at the growing edge of the region. Cases of "shopping" by developers for the most favorable annexation and zoning "deal" illustrate this problem.

An effective growth management plan thus requires regionally based legal controls if it is to be effective. This point is underlined by a recent Washington Supreme Court decision indicating that the court intends to review local land use control programs within a regional framework. To receive judicial approval, a growth management plan also needs appropriate regional implementation measures that can take regional growth needs into account. Plans like the Ramapo plan, which are not based on a regional setting, are not acceptable in Washington.

There are at least two possible alternatives for a legal framework for growth management in the Olympia area. One would require some realignment of planning and land use control powers within the county. The other would not require any realignment of power but would use presently existing planning and land use controls to help implement the growth management plan.

THE TWO-TIER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SYSTEM

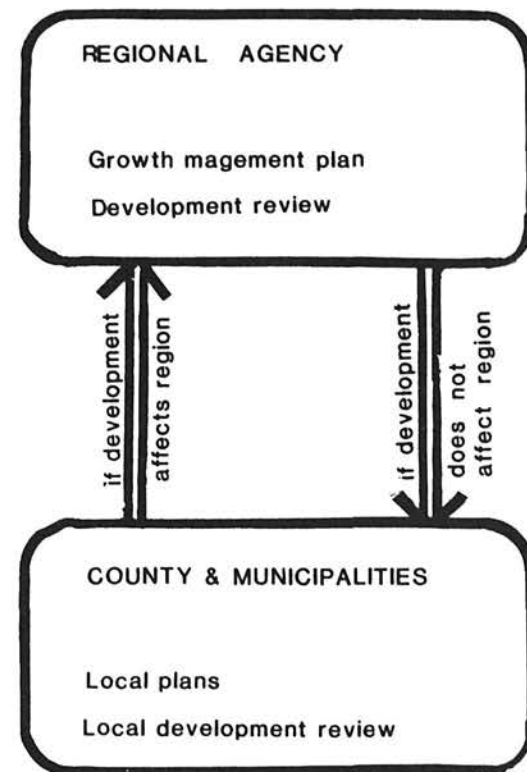
Many urban areas in this country are characterized by fragmented local government patterns in which planning and development control powers are divided among many jurisdictions. Effective growth management is not possible when these conditions are present. One of the most effective growth management programs in the country has been carried out in the suburban Maryland counties adjacent to Washington, D.C. In these counties, the municipalities have no zoning power and all development control is a county responsibility.

Olympia and Thurston County are still in an early developing stage in which the local government pattern has not become fixed. Planning and development control responsibilities can be realigned within this governmental framework, and regional planning and development control decisions essential to growth management assigned to a regional agency. This agency would have the responsibility to prepare a regional growth management plan. It would also be responsible for development decisions affecting the growth management plan. These decisions would include decisions on the construction and financing of major development which approval or disapproval would affect the implementation of the growth management plan. All other planning and zoning responsibilities would remain with the county and the municipalities. A "constitution" or basic agreement on the division of responsibilities under this two-tier system could be

established by agreement among the county and the municipalities or by state legislation.

Admittedly, there are few precedents for this kind of regional, two-tier planning and development control system. The best example is the planning and development control program authorized in the Twin Cities area in Minnesota, although the Adirondack Park Legislation in New York State has enacted a similar system. The environmental beauty of the Northwest demands an equally imaginative legal response.

Concept of Two-Tier Regional Growth Management Controls



ADAPTING EXISTING LEGAL TECHNIQUES TO GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Perhaps the major decision to be made in a growth management program is the decision on which areas are to be developed in what order and at what time. This growth boundary decision will also affect the annexation plans of existing municipalities, since development in areas adjacent to the municipalities has often been accompanied by annexation to the municipality nearest at hand. Annexation patterns are quite important as a determinant in growth management.

A boundary review commission has recently been established in Thurston County. Under Washington law, this commission has the authority to approve all annexations to existing municipalities as well as all incorporations of new municipalities. The Thurston County boundary review commission can become an important cornerstone in a regional growth management program by using its authority to approve municipal annexations as the basis for establishing an urbanization and urban limits policy. Boundary review commissions in neighboring Oregon and California already exercise these powers. They can provide a model for a similar program here.

Under this proposal, the regional planning staff would prepare a growth management policy covering the entire county. This policy would guide the boundary review commission, which would in turn designate "areas of urbanization" for each of the municipalities and for areas to be urbanized and to remain unincor-

porated within the county. These urban area designations would reflect the policies of the growth management plan, would guide the provision of additional facilities and services, and would be binding on the county and the municipalities. New development would be approved only within the designated urbanization areas, which would be periodically revised. Some revision of state legislation may be necessary before this program could be implemented.

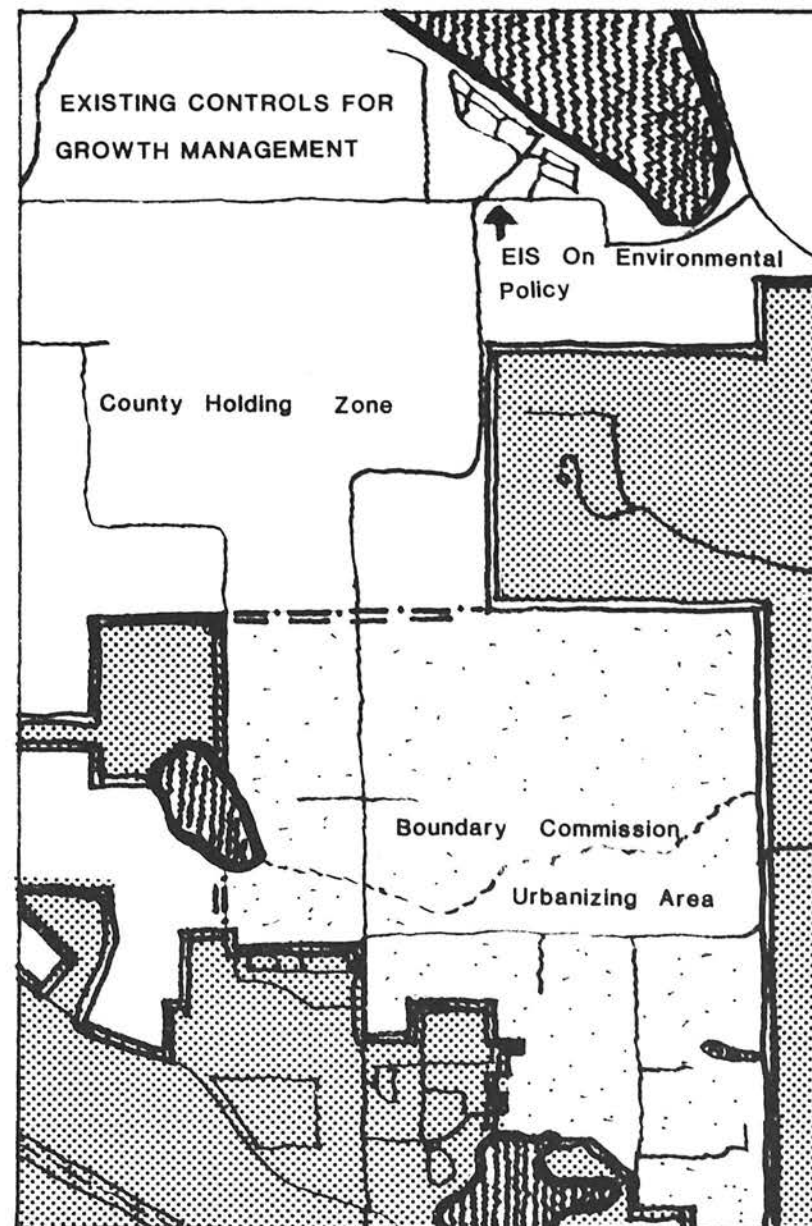
A growth management policy also requires some measure to restrict development in areas not yet designated for urbanization. Within these areas, no new development should be allowed until the growth management policy is revised to allow growth to occur. Legislation presently exists in Washington which allows counties to establish holding zones in areas of the county in which it is not presently possible to provide zoning that implements the comprehensive plan. This legislation has been approved by the Washington Supreme Court, and adoption of a holding zone for Thurston County should be considered by the county planning commission. The use of this zone should be encouraged as an important element in the growth management program.

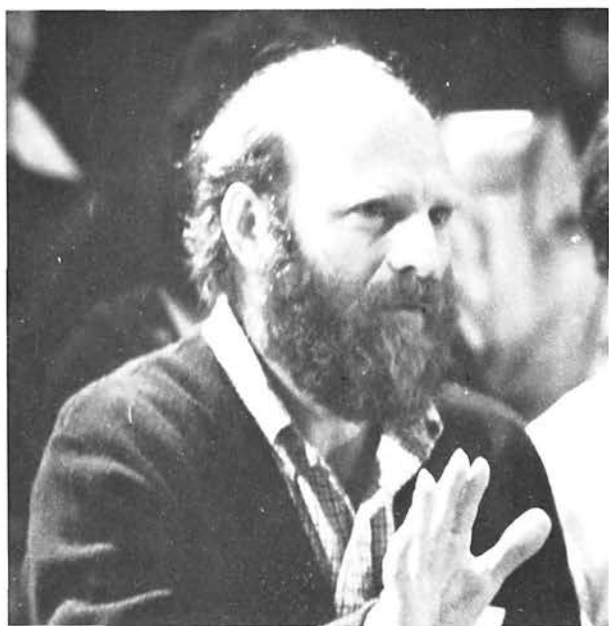
In Washington State, an environmental impact statement required by state law must accompany all major development. The environmental impact statement can provide an important control to implement growth management policies that are environmentally based. This possibility arises out of a recent Washington Su-

preme Court case holding that the environmental impact statement can provide a basis for disapproving a development otherwise allowable under a zoning ordinance.

The legal potential of that decision can be implemented by including within the growth management plan a series of environmental policies to be addressed in the environmental impact statement that accompanies all major development. The environmental impact statement can then be reviewed to determine whether the proposed development is consistent with the environmental policies contained in the plan. Development can be disallowed if not consistent with those policies, or changes made to mitigate adverse environmental effects inconsistent with the environmental policies of the plan.

The environmental impact statement thus becomes a method for directly implementing the environmental policies contained in the growth management plan. It can complement the holding zone and urbanization policy developed by the boundary review commission to provide some of the necessary legal measures for growth management.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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The chairman of the Olympia R/UDAT is an architect and urban designer from Cambridge, Massachusetts. Presently he is co-chairman of the R/UDAT Subcommittee of the National AIA, Urban Planning and Design Committee, and has participated in R/UDAT studies in Long Branch, New Jersey, and Dalton, Georgia. He is a principal of the Cambridge Seven Associates. Recent projects include the conversion of the Lone Star Brewery into museum space in San Antonio, Texas, the design of a joint museum facility on a downtown Boston wharf, and a major transportation complex for Boston's Transportation Authority. A graduate of Rice University School of Architecture, he has taught at the Boston Architectural Center and at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.



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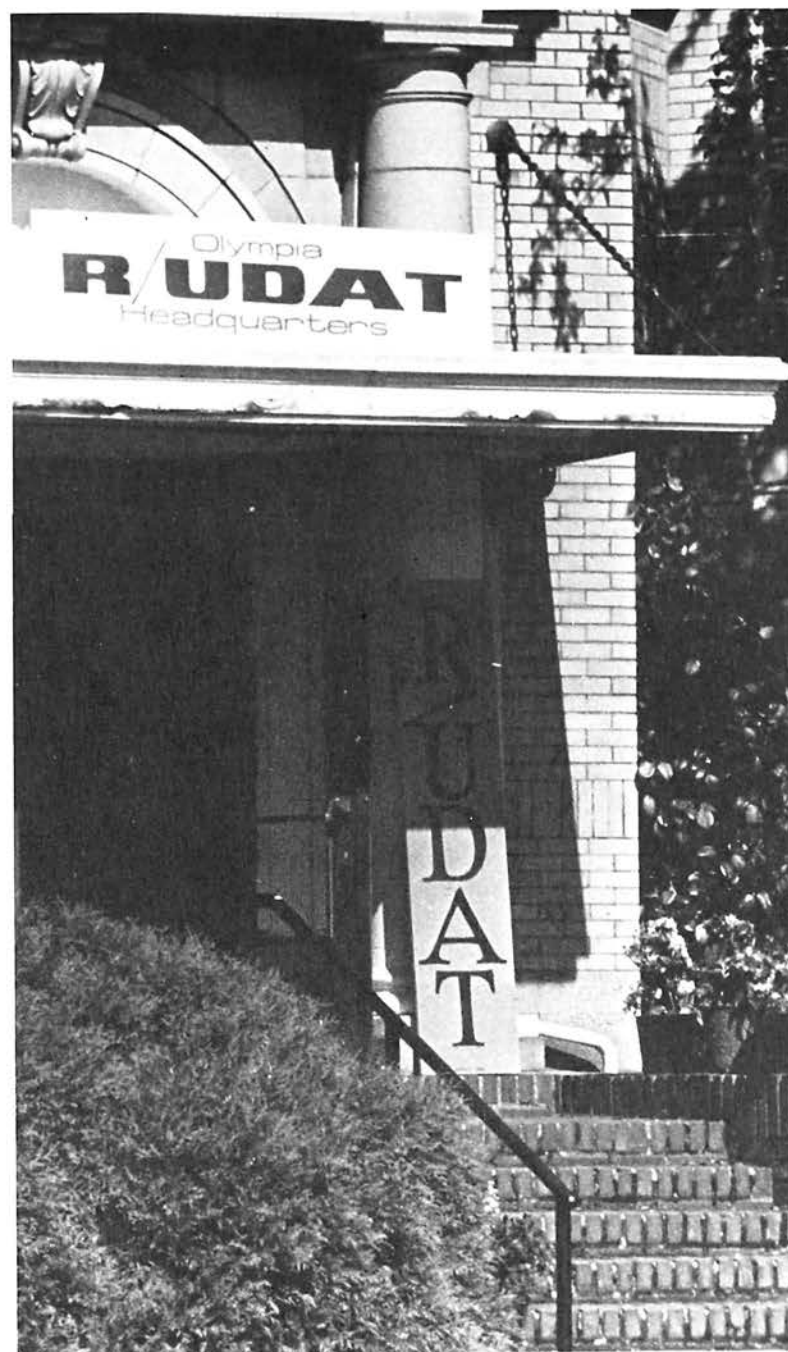
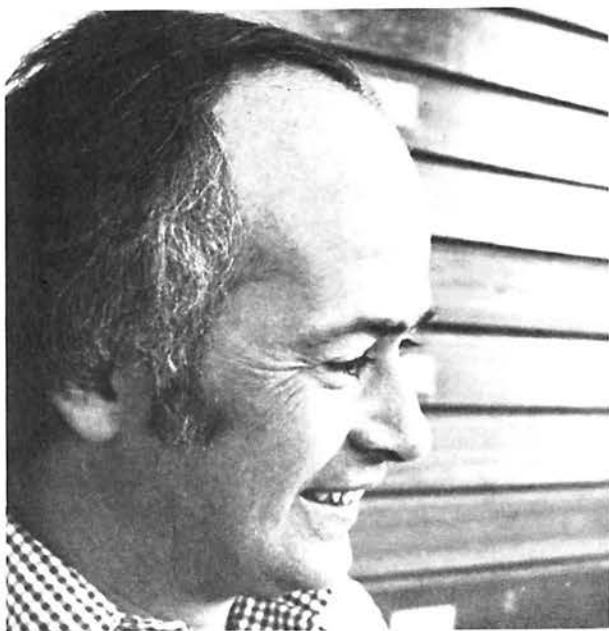
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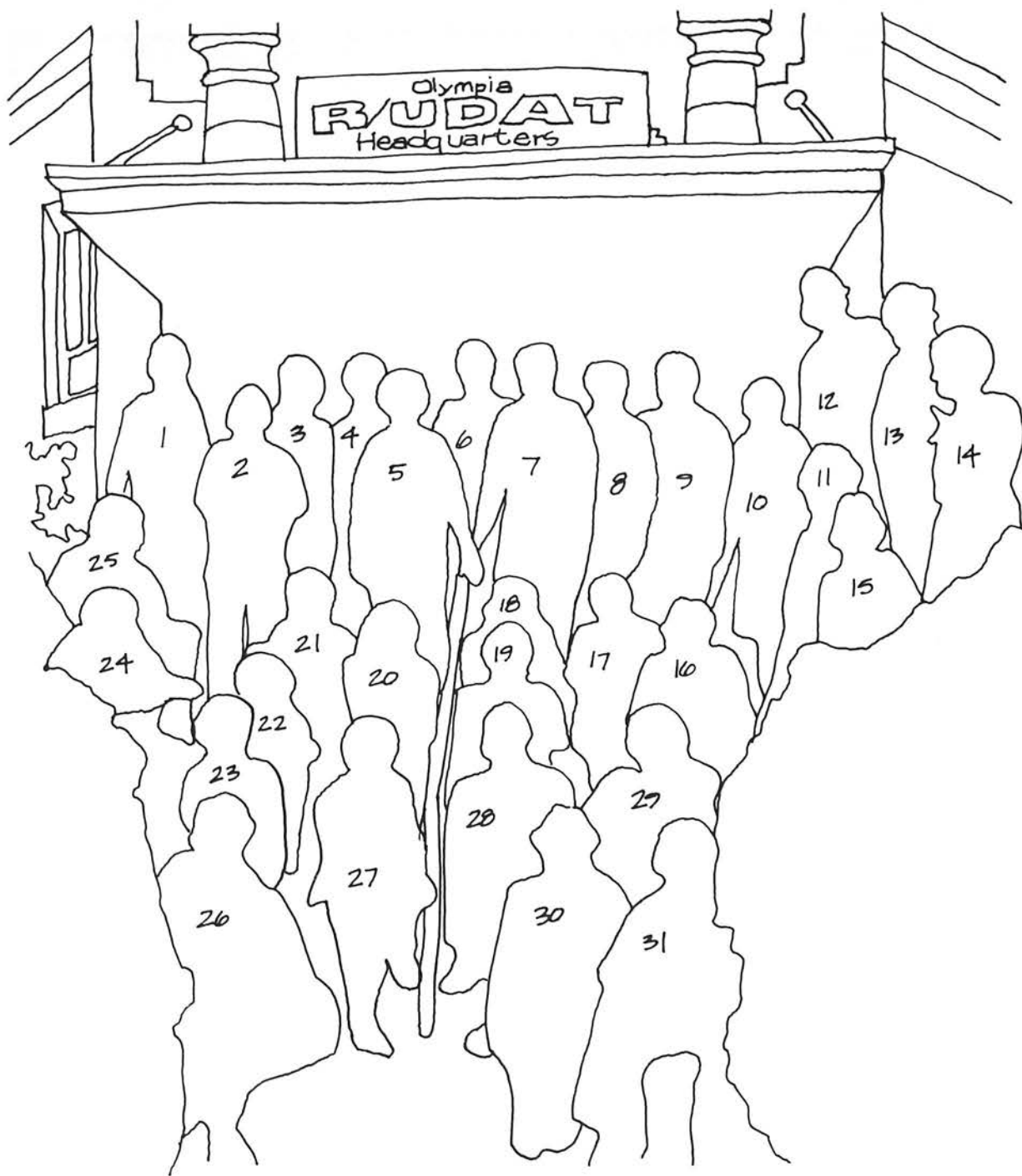
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Valerie Sammons	National Organization of Women
Marsha Holand	Olympia Child Care Center
J.M. Peterson	V.P., S. Capitol Neighborhood Association
Phyllis Borland	S. Capitol Neighborhood Assoc.
Barbara Soule	S. Capitol Neighborhood Assoc.
Cort Skinner	S.E. Olympia Neighborhood Assoc.
Bob Zellner	N.E. Neighborhood Assoc.
Bruce Coombs	Ken Lake
Mike Diebold	Holiday Hills
Tom Sanford	Goldcrest Neighborhood Assoc.
Tricia Hamilton	Goldcrest Neighborhood Assoc.
Dick Hemstad	Westside Neighborhood Assoc.
Derek Valley	Westside Neighborhood Assoc.
Terry Cooper	Westside Neighborhood Assoc.
John S. Robinson	Westside Neighborhood Assoc.
Tom Murfin	Westside Neighborhood Assoc.
Susan Koplow	Citizen
Bartlett & Gladys	
Burns	Citizens
Margaret Knudson	Citizen
Wendell Allen	Citizen
Ina Williamson	Citizen
Joanne Lind	Citizen
Sue Deuter	Citizen
Rob Fellows	Citizen
Mark T. Gaffney	Citizen
Jon D. Collier	Citizen
Dave Nicandri	Citizen
Stan Provus	Citizen
Eleanor Aspinwall	Citizen
Julee L. Murfin	Citizen
Carol Wolfe	Citizen





- 1 Bernie Spring
- 2 Dean Hunt
- 3 Daniel Mandelker
- 4 Sumner Myers
- 5 Frank Moffett
- 6 Peter Hasselman
- 7 Charles Blessing
- 8 Frank Kirkbride
- 9 Sandy Rogers
- 10 Judy Provencal
- 11 Helen Timm
- 12 Chuck Redmon
- 13 Frank Densmore
- 14 Billie Bramhall
- 15 Betty Esteb
- 16 Russ Thornton
- 17 Jay Wickman
- 18 Catherine Brigiden
- 19 Vicki Caparoon
- 20 Val Wheelehan
- 21 Peggy Jamerson
- 22 Ethel Saucier
- 23 Rich Miller
- 24 John Haeseler
- 25 John Lindstrom
- 26 Dave Jirovec
- 27 Randy Salisbury
- 28 Steve Masini
- 29 Paul Waters
- 30 Janet Eldridge
- 31 Dean Willows



"It's the Water..."