

Rose Quarter District Plan

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Portland Development Commission

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Rose Quarter Location In The Central City

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Introduction

The Portland Development Commission (PDC) initiated a process in 2010 to prepare a District Plan for the Rose Quarter located in northeast Portland, Oregon.

Mayor Sam Adams initiated a planning process in 2009 by engaging the Rose Quarter Stakeholders Advisory Committee, a group that looked at the future of the Veteran's Memorial Coliseum (VMC) and the Rose Quarter. Public input on the VMC project has resulted in strong support for the renovation and retention of the building as a community gathering space and a tribute to our veterans. The committee provided input into this plan and supports integration of this work into the Central City 2035 planning process.

The district has had a history of debates about proposed uses and identity; and it was recognized that the Rose Quarter and its centerpieces, the VMC and the Rose Garden Arena are in need of a long term plan for re-invigoration. There is a strong need and many opportunities to create a strategy for attracting both public and private development. The overall goals of this plan are to describe a vision for the whole district and identify a strategy that is achievable in phases. The plan must address the needs of the on-going businesses, stakeholders and landowners while attracting complimentary new activities and facilities that it serves the needs of the community.

Given its reputation as a sports-focused district, Mayor Sam Adams chaired the Stakeholders Advisory Committee and led it to a larger vision of what a "District of Sport" might be. This vision is an authentic expression of the region's active athletic lifestyle, including all levels of sport from amateur to professional. The district is an opportunity to combine existing sports and entertainment facilities with a mixed-use community which could include indoor and outdoor venues for training and exercise, innovative retail space for marketing sports products, and housing. Housing in adjacent areas is key to activate the area at times other than the current episodic activities. The overall vision paints a picture of a stimulating new urban environment in the central city that showcases and integrates living, working, entertainment and recreation, all emblematic of Portland's livability. This "District of Sport" is active, creative and integrates lifestyle and work, and it is inclusive of all ages, abilities and incomes.

The Rose Quarter currently is undergoing analysis, planning and infrastructure design by nearly every public agency that affects the district. The City's Central City 2035 Plan is currently in progress and has focused on this NE Quadrant of the Central City as the first area to receive detailed attention. In addition, the city is examining ways to support the development of a new Lloyd EcoDistrict that includes the Rose Quarter. Efforts are currently underway to implement a district energy system to serve the VMC and Rose Garden Arena.

Bordered by Interstate-5 and the Willamette River, and adjoined by the Oregon Convention Center and the Lloyd Center shopping mall, the Rose Quarter is generously served by nearly all forms of transportation, namely highway, heavy and light rail, streetcar, bus, bicycle, and pedestrian. This confluence of planning and design will result in an opportunity for the Rose Quarter to be largely developed and transformed within the next decade.

The Rose Quarter District Plan lays out a long term vision to accommodate incremental change with a minimum of back-tracking or redundancy. The following report outlines the challenges and opportunities facing the district in both the near and long terms. It is both propositional and optimistic, while making every effort to be realistic. It anticipates a collaboration of public and private interests and demonstrates some of the potential that could result from such partnerships. The VMC renovation project is a public/private partnership that will renovate a regional community asset and assure the long term viability of the structure.

This is a powerful moment for a district that has received so much scrutiny and faced so many challenges. The goal of this plan is to honor the past investments, celebrate the strong armature of existing facilities and spaces, and to visualize a future of exciting growth as a "District of Sport."

Executive Summary

Portland's Rose Quarter presently feels like an island within the city. Located on the Willamette River between two bridges, it is an important transportation hub and home to two of the city's largest entertainment venues, the Rose Garden Arena and the Veteran's Memorial Coliseum (VMC). It is close to the city's core, yet the area often feels uninhabited except for the episodic activity created by these large facilities. Only then is the Rose Quarter filled with throngs of activity. The nearby Oregon Convention Center poses similar patterns of use. Intermediate and small size commercial venues have difficulty surviving in the district due to the "boom or bust" level of traffic that is directly influenced by the schedule of game days or special events. This island in the city needs more off-hour activity and a 24-hour life.

The Rose Quarter is located at an exceptional transportation nexus with direct connections to the I-5 and I-84 freeways, street car on the north and light rail transit and major bus lines running through the district. Situated on a bluff above the Willamette River, the Rose Quarter remains cut off from the river's edge by busy north-south freight rail lines. The Rose Quarter can be a challenge to approach in a car, on a bicycle, or on foot. Surface parking lots flanked by multi-story normally vacant parking garages on the north and the busy transit center on the south make the area feel unoccupied and questionable to navigate as a pedestrian or a bicyclist. Local automobile traffic circulates around its perimeter.

Presently there are no reasons to go there other than to attend scheduled events.

Given these conditions, bringing life and energy to the district has many challenges. How to attract more activity is linked to the nature of those activities. It raises questions such as the following:

- What should this area become besides a collection of large entertainment arenas? What are its other dimensions and potentials?
- How do we take strategic steps to create the vibrant district that city leaders and residents visualize for the Rose Quarter's future?
- How do we capitalize on the investments that have already been made in the roads, utilities, transit, and facilities to get a district that will succeed at all levels?
- How do we encourage private investment to amplify the effects of public dollars invested?
- How can we create a new identity and ensure that it will be successful?
- How can greater local transportation connectivity further benefit the district?

As we look at the existing conditions of the Rose Quarter its unique characteristics – both positive and negative – need to be taken into account. The 20,000 seat Rose Garden and the 12,000 seat VMC combine as a unique pair of venues for gathering and entertainment. They share nearby parking facilities and balance one another to provide

venues for a variety of civic activities, concerts, and sport events. With strong private franchises occupying both places and coordinated under one management entity, they offer wide appeal to the market. The central control of Portland Arena Management (PAM) coordinates scheduling and programming and minimizes conflict between operations that allows complimentary function and programming. The plaza and the exhibit hall below the plaza between these two venues have the capability to accommodate a variety of activities throughout the year. This "District of Sport" has great potential to be acknowledged and strengthened as a community activity center. It needs an identity consistent with Portland's regional culture.

The revitalization of the VMC is currently underway. Recently listed on the National Historic Landmarks Register and an icon of mid-century modern architecture, this renovation is seen as the turning point for the entire district. It represents the city's commitment to the VMC, which will continue to play a strong role in the Rose Quarter as a community gathering space. Bringing this venue into the 21st century and addressing deferred maintenance, this project is aimed at illuminating the VMC as a prominent beacon on the east riverbank. Its plaza will become an active hub of Portland's east side. With renewed attention, energy and programming, the VMC will be a civic focal point that encourages more private development in the district.

New private investment in this district is essential to making the Rose Quarter a success. In order to have a lively and 24 hour cultural center a mix of uses is both desirable and necessary. Additional housing, live-work offices, retail, light manufacturing, clubs and cafes, and visible street life are needed to create an atmosphere that attracts all segments of the population to spend time there. The current successes of the Winterhawks, Trailblazers, and the Oregon Convention Center need to be supplemented with a greater identity as a neighborhood with more visitors, residents, and confidence for the Rose Quarter to achieve its potential as a vital and robust district.

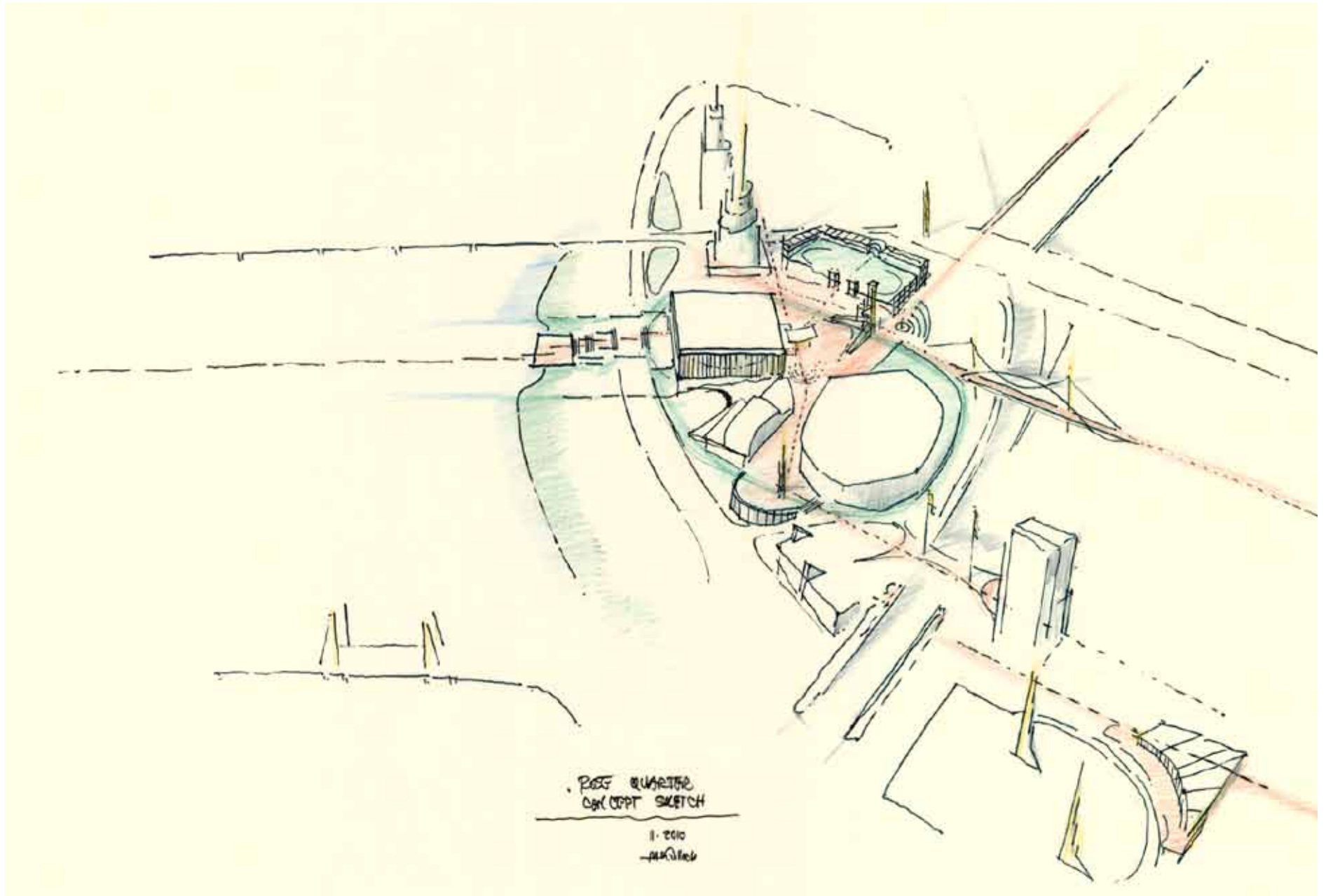
This master plan sets forth a vision for future uses as well as a strategy for a sequence of development that allows the district's potential to build over time. Key points for the Rose Quarter to develop into an authentic example that reflects Portland's vitality and regional culture include:

- Leveraging the success of the current sports franchises;
- Building upon the revitalization of the VMC as a focal point of the district;
- Developing new connections and strengthening existing connections between the river and the Lloyd District;
- Providing improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure making sense of the many transit modes serving the district;
- Catalyzing the initial development and future expansion of district-scale heating and cooling services;

- Establishing planning surety that will serve as a catalyst for continued private investment and development; and
- Demonstrating environmental and planning ingenuity worthy of our region's international reputation.

This document is aimed at proposing a vision that can be achieved. As the Central City 2035 Plan proceeds, it is anticipated that this vision of the Rose Quarter and its environs will be seen as a bold step towards a re-invigorated Portland.





Initial Concept Sketch

Rose Quarter District Plan

The overall concept plan for the district envisions a vital sector of the central city dedicated to sports at all levels. This “District of Sport” is seen as an expression of the culture in the Portland region, including aspects of education, the arts, health and fitness, food, industry, and entertainment. It is a new, authentic vision that contributes to a strong urban identity and sense of place, unique to Portland.

Key to the revitalization of the Rose Quarter, the VMC project of 2012- 2014 is a first step in taking the district into the 21st century. The VMC will be the beacon of this district as seen from the west hills, downtown and the surrounding bridges and roadways. This project will signal a new generation of life in sports culture. This first project, managed as a public/private collaboration, will return the VMC to its former status as a memorable venue. It will give Portland a strong collection of facilities that can accommodate a myriad of activities from amateur to professional, from team sports to individual artistic events, including local, regional and international events. By saving the VMC, Portland will continue to offer a unique combination of venues for sports and entertainment in its downtown.

The VMC will also renew itself as a memorial to war veterans with improved gardens. Inside the VMC, improved seating, lighting, electronics, and enhanced acoustics will better accommodate the Portland Winterhawks and all other users. This public/private commitment to the VMC

represents an action that is crucial to neighboring development plans and strategies. With the VMC firmly re-establishing its role as an important venue for all types of performances, projects adjacent to this facility can be planned with greater confidence. This district plan envisions a sector of the city that attracts visitors and locals alike while it evolves into a rich mix of housing, office, commercial and retail spaces, exhibition and performance halls, sport courts and tracks.

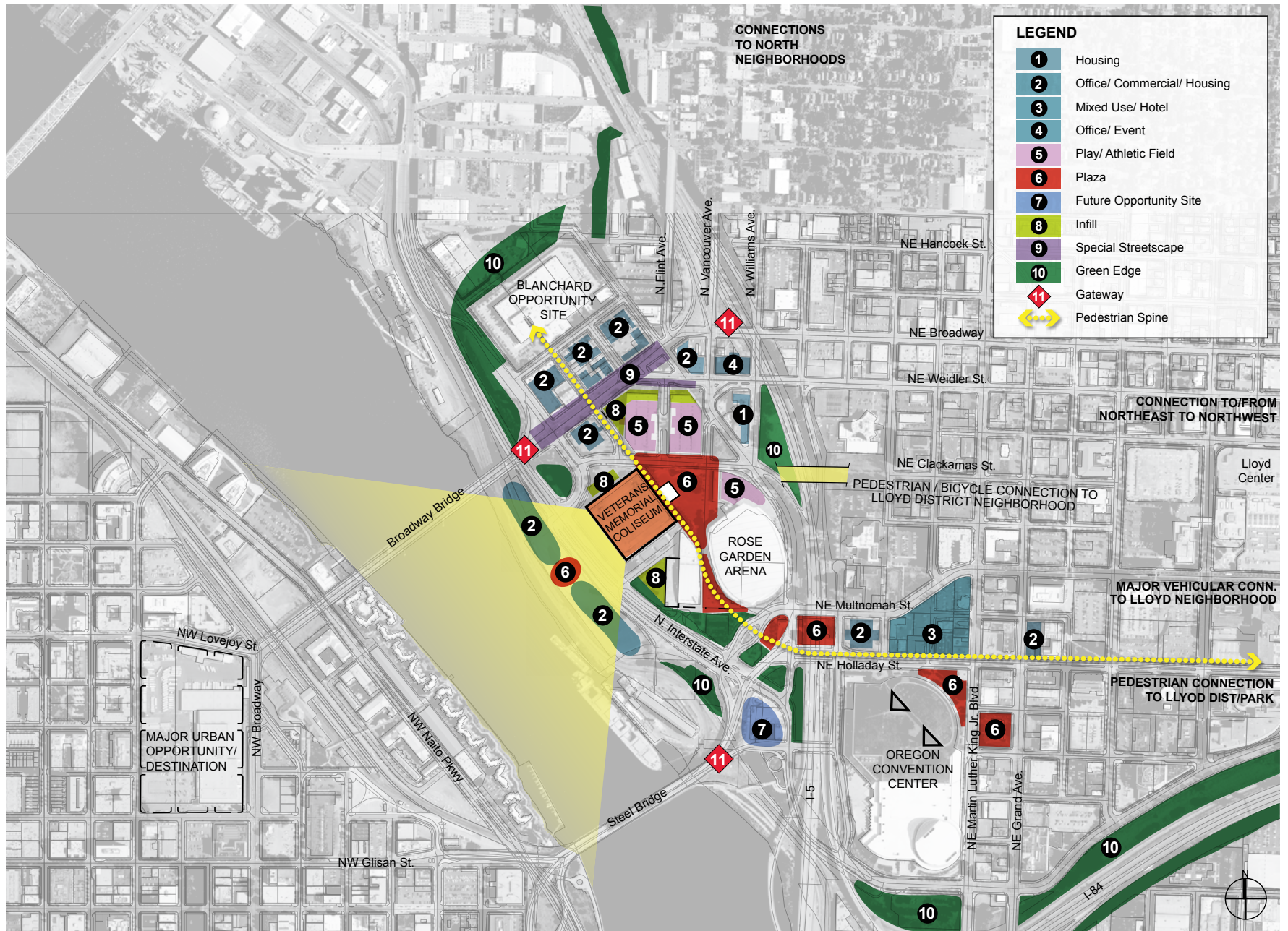
The Rose Quarter District Plan diagram is an assembly of patterns intended to show what the district might become as it addresses the urban planning principles discussed among the PDC, Rose Quarter, Stakeholders Advisory Committee, the city, and its planners. Looking ahead several decades, the plan includes the improvement of roadways, railroads, and other infrastructure as well as infilling the district with desired land uses. The district plan is a collective aspiration; but is aimed at an achievable result, understanding the trend that public financial contribution will diminish and private development will increase. This district, laden with an abundance of public investments in streets and transit, will need to reach a critical threshold of development pressure in order to succeed.

Centering on the VMC, the Rose Quarter shows dramatic potential for internal and external connections to the city. The central plaza; outdoor lobby to both the VMC and the Rose Garden; forms the heart of the district. Connecting into this space the N. Benton Street alignment forms a new pedestrian route that links sites to the north

of the Broadway-Weidler couplet to the central plaza through the Rose Quarter and the TriMet transit center to the south. From the central plaza, it connects to the east on NE Holladay Street linking to the Oregon Convention Center, Lloyd Center and Holladay Park. This pedestrian spine is considered the “yellow brick road” of the district, connecting major facilities, transit and a series of distinctive places along the way.

On the west flanking the VMC, future pedestrian connections link to the Willamette River across Interstate Avenue. A pedestrian bridge over Interstate-5 at NE Clackamas Street links the Lloyd District to the Rose Quarter, enabling a linear parkway to bisect this area. At the junction of the main transit paths is an expanded plaza at the Rose Quarter Transit Center. This plaza is an important bus and light rail transit hub, and it must improve the environment for pedestrians. This plaza connects the Rose Garden to the Oregon Convention Center with a curbsless urban plaza. The plaza is flanked with the LRT tracks with bollards and signals providing for safe operations of the trains, buses, and cars. This continuous plaza extends east along Holladay under the freeway providing well-lit places for food vendors to be located out of the sun and rain.

The focal point of the transit plaza vicinity is a new public interpretive center located at the east end of the Steel Bridge. This site offers extraordinary views of the city. The topics of the interpretive center include the history of the Portland, the river and city's water resources and infrastructure. It includes stories about Portland's natural resources,



Rose Quarter District Plan

hydrologic cycles and its commitment to water quality treatment and conveyance through the city. The interpretive center is located adjacent to the portal of the Big Pipe, a recently completed infrastructure project that now conducts all of the city's eastside wastewater to a treatment plant on the Columbia River.

Imagine the Interstate-5 corridor being improved to make a better local street interchange between NE Weidler and Hancock Streets and Flint across to Williams Street. The local cross streets are redesigned to be more bike and pedestrian friendly. Along the re-sculpted banks of the freeway are vegetated bio-swales, improving the visual quality and practical in their water treatment functions. For more information see the discussion under transportation and infrastructure.

In addition, this vision for the new Rose Quarter embraces the Willamette River. An improved edge along the river has hotels, offices and institutions located adjacent to a continuous public greenway. The river edge could provide public access and views of the river, in addition to links to the existing Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade and the future North Portland Greenway and Sullivan's Gulch multi-use trail. The Rose Quarter's revitalized VMC also has river overlooks and is connected over the freight rail (placed in a tunnel) and Interstate Avenue.

Within the VMC is a 200-meter track capable of hosting international competitions. The parking structure attached to the Rose Garden and the central plaza support temporary tent-like structures

that extend the use of these facilities from spring through fall.

The individual sites have great potential as described below. Zoning, height limitations, and density requirements will need to be adjusted to accommodate these new uses:

Blanchard Opportunity Site

This 6+ acre site is currently home to the Portland School District headquarters. Relocation of the school district headquarters is contemplated due to outdated facilities; and development of the site is proposed to upgrade this key and under-utilized urban property. As the new interchange at I-5 is reconfigured, the Blanchard's super-block will have improved access and therefore increased redevelopment potential. It is envisioned to be a part of a mixed-use development that anchors a new revitalized neighborhood.

Storage Warehouse Site

This storage facility and adjacent property can become an urban gateway in concert with the Benton Block site. Envisioned as a tall residential complex, this tower and base could be re-purposed for apartments and live-work units above community or retail functions.

Benton Block

Adjacent to both the VMC and the existing parking garages, this block is part of an urban gateway marking the entrance to the NE quadrant of the city. It could act as a new icon of offices and activities that are associated with the new "District of Sport." This parcel is available for development

through city ownership and can be integrally linked to the existing facilities and activities of the Rose Quarter.

Parking Structure Sites

These parking structures were designed to accommodate building additions as the demand for development proceeds in the Rose Quarter. They are setback from the public right of way to allow expansion at the property lines tight to the streets. In addition, they are structured to accommodate additional floors atop the existing levels. These structures could accommodate housing or office over retail within the setbacks and could host athletic fields or courts atop the parking decks. These parking structures, which are full during evening events, can support daily parking for office and retail uses. The potential for a 400 meter track atop these structures is also envisioned.

Athletic Office Spaces and Terraces

These buildings could accommodate more diverse uses as the Rose Quarter evolves. Presently home to the Blazers offices, the ground floors could become hospitality venues such as a collection of NW beverage producers of wine, beer, spirits or tea in order to build the populations of visitors to the Rose Quarter, VMC, and Oregon Convention Center. Additional terrace spaces overlooking the river to the west could enhance the Rose Quarter experience and create stronger connections of the Rose Quarter to the Willamette River.



Development Blocks in the Vicinity

In the Rose Quarter and its immediate vicinity, there are a number of blocks with unique qualities that are potential sites for future development. Nearly all these sites are well served by transit, utilities, and roadways that favor development. These blocks are identified by major land uses but could be multi-use parcels as well. Given that the VMC is the first project to proceed, it is anticipated that collateral development will begin as markets recover from the current economic recession.

The following paragraphs provide more information regarding the development blocks. Numbered paragraphs relate to the Legend on the plan.

1. These blocks, including the Blanchard site north of the Rose Quarter, are seen as largely mixed-use. The intent is to create a unique neighborhood over time as vacant or under utilized parcels fill in around existing uses. These urban sites have potential to become a new village with retail and services at the ground floors and housing or live/work spaces above. It is desirable to seek a mix of incomes and housing types from ownership to rental. At the blocks closest to the Broadway Bridge, taller towers should be encouraged to create an urban gateway along N. Broadway. Height limits should step down quickly to the east.

2. These parcels align along N. Broadway Street opposite the mixed-use neighborhood to the north on the Blanchard site. The Benton block is

designated for a signature tower structure to act in tandem with the tower to the north, contributing to the gateway effect at the head of the Broadway Bridge. The set-back from N. Weidler on the Block 8 parcel to the east allows for new retail at ground level to wrap the parking structures with housing or live/work above. These may be five or six story structures, while allowing the N. Flint Avenue right-of-way to pass between the parking structures for a direct connection of the streetcar station and bus stops to the Rose Quarter Commons on the south.

3. This block is seen as office or institution. It is situated between the high traffic couplet of Broadway and Weidler Streets and has excellent I-5 freeway access. It is part of the gateway to and from Elliot/Irvington Neighborhoods and the Rose Quarter.

4. This site at the entrance to the Rose Garden has potential for enhanced arrival and reception functions for the Rose Quarter. Abutting the light rail transit and bus lines, this parcel could also accommodate a hospitality venue, retail, or offices associated with the Rose Quarter.

5. Across the river and outside the Rose Quarter in the Pearl District, this unique 12 block site is presently occupied by the US Post Office. In the future, it will be linked with streetcar and is a walkable connection to the Rose Quarter via the Broadway Bridge. Development on this site will certainly complement the Rose Quarter whether it becomes housing or office, a sports venue or other civic amenity.

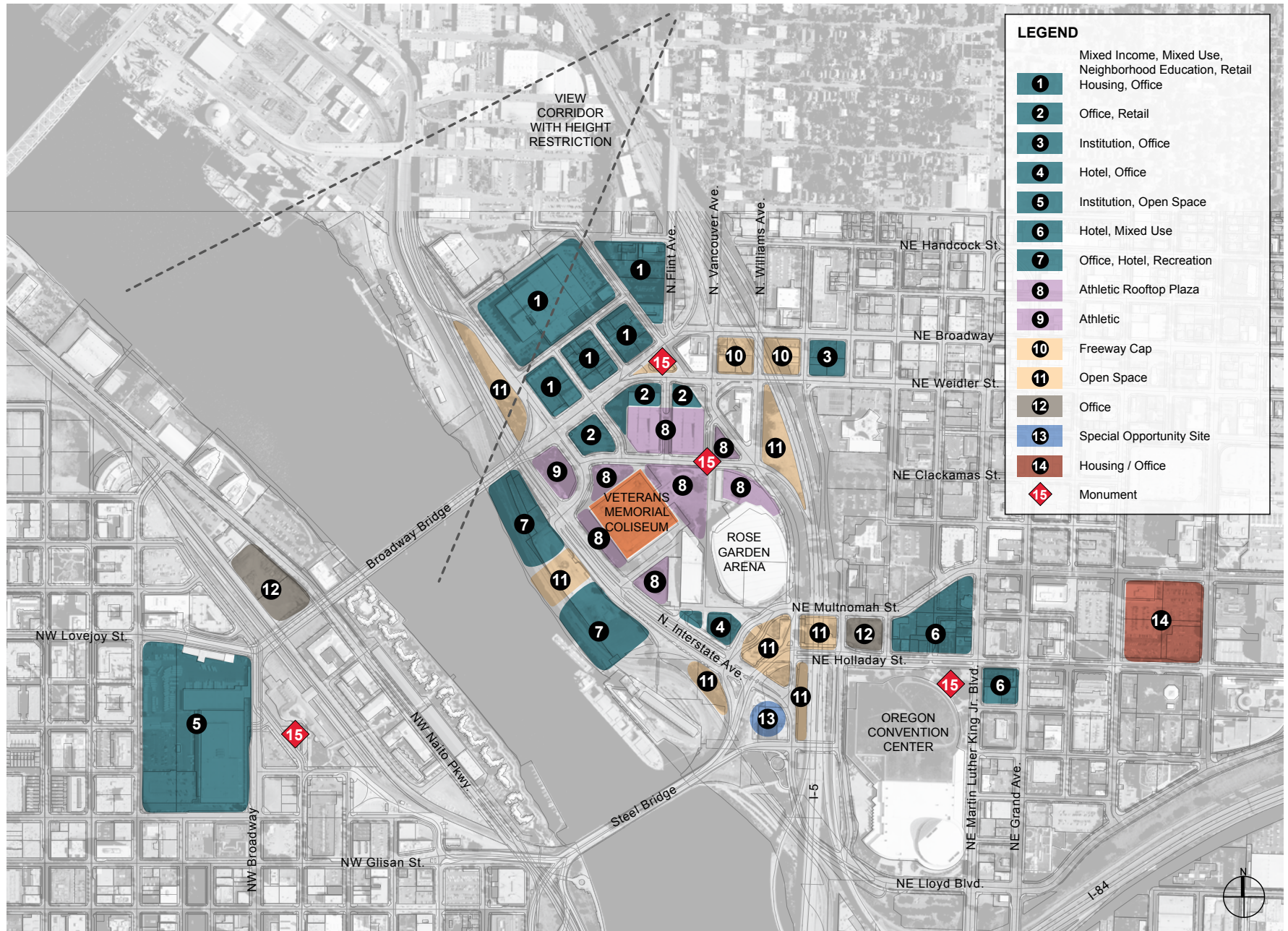
6. This three-block parcel would ideally

accommodate a hotel, office, housing, retail, or entertainment facilities that complement the Oregon Convention Center. This parcel could take advantage of the proximity of light rail, streetcar, and roadway access. Originally the preferred location for a major convention hotel, this site is pivotal in establishing a link between the Rose Quarter and the Lloyd District to the east. With opportunity for tall towers, this site offers river and downtown views and prominence unequalled in either district.

7. These riverside sites have great potential for water access. Extending between the Steel and Broadway Bridges, this multi-acre parcel could host civic facilities, office, hotel, and recreational facilities associated with the "District of Sport", the river, or the broader city beyond. With the rail lines re-located in a tunnel along Interstate Avenue, this parcel offers a powerful opportunity for the Rose Quarter to engage the river.

8. These sites adjacent to the VMC have the best opportunity to be developed with athletic or entertainment facilities that support the broader vision of the Rose Quarter. The roofs of the adjacent parking structures could be activated with sport courts. At ground level, the block perimeters across from the VMC should encourage as many active retail and commercial uses as possible.

9. This small site at the southeast corner of the Broadway Bridge head is seen as a potential skateboard park, possibly linked to the signature tower to the east. In public ownership and laced



Development Blocks

with a complex underground utility infrastructure, the site is not designated for multi-level private development or structures. However, it is a suitable site for stormwater treatment; and its surface development may include active uses. The site would be an important point of access if and when TriMet adds a light rail transit station beneath the Broadway Bridge in the future.

10. Depending on the final configuration of the I-5 interchange from Broadway/Weidler Streets, there may be opportunity to cover the freeway with a cap. It is critical to connect the pedestrian realm of the Rose Quarter across the freeway. Development of these blocks will be constrained by the fact that they sit atop a federal transportation facility, making private development a challenge. If the blocks can't be developed with buildings, certainly an urban plaza or civic green space over the cap would help pedestrian connectivity and give greater identity to the transition between the Rose Quarter and the Lloyd District to the east and marking the arrival into the district.

11. Open spaces to the south of the Rose Garden could be re-designed to form an improved pedestrian oriented transit plaza similar to the Urban Plaza at Portland State. The adjacent open spaces at the margins have potential to become a combination of stormwater treatment and rose gardens that reinforce the identity of the Rose Quarter and Portland as the Rose City. These spaces that are now fragmented must be coordinated into a complete design that is safe, accepts the pulses of event activation and encourages people to be there

on a daily basis. The design of the spaces must take advantage of the multiple modes of transit that will continue to converge here.

12. These office sites have been considered for design for some time and are ready for mixed-use development. Included because of their potential to share in the reinvigoration of the area, their development will give additional strength as major east-west links in Portland's downtown.

13. Prominently centered on the Steel Bridge axis and adjacent to light rail, bus, auto, and bike paths this is a special opportunity site. It sits directly adjacent to the Big Pipe facility and has spectacular views of the river. A public interpretive center focused on the river, water management and city planning would be well-suited to this central location.

14. New high density housing towers combined with an existing office tower in a super block development is currently in design and development by a private developer. This project, currently called the Lloyd Blocks is seen as a new prototype for development within the Lloyd District and eco-district, it will bring approximately 750 new housing units to the district.

15. These sites are ideal for civic gestures such as urban monuments, points of focus that reinforce identity of the district. Already underway is a work of public art at the streetcar station at the fork of Broadway and Weidler Streets. This sculpture will mark an important portal to the Rose Quarter.

The site along Clackamas Street also marks a key focal point that has great potential to celebrate the confluence of the major axial of the shift in the urban block grid that intersects in the District.



Urban Design Opportunities

Focal Points

The Rose Quarter District Plan describes a place that is rich with a series of interesting focal points. These focal points give clues as to where the key elements of the area are located. Most can be readily seen from public rights-of-way and from distances that allow them to be recognized as distinctive parts of the city fabric. Along a visual and pedestrian spine a series of urban markers such as sculpture, transit shelters, towers, fountains, bridges, and main building entries attract and help orient both visitors and residents alike. They reinforce the distinctive identity of the Rose Quarter. They are recognized by the public and mark specific places for people to meet and gather.

The VMC is the centerpiece of this urban collage, acting as a beacon or lantern above the river bank. When revitalized this unique structure will re-establish its prominence internally to the Rose Garden and externally to the river, Lloyd EcoDistrict and city beyond. With complimentary outdoor terraces and open spaces to its west, the VMC will become a jewel on the green necklace formed by the natural bluff and its greenway described the Plazas, Greenway Connections and Open Space sections of this plan.

Significant towers creating a gateway on N. Broadway form a strong marker and focal point of the district, announcing the main center of activity and marking the cross-axis to Broadway at

Benton Street. A spine of open spaces originating from this place connects all the major facilities along this central pedestrian spine to the south and east through the Rose Quarter. The N. Benton Street alignment runs from the Blanchard building southeast through the central plaza, past the VMC and Rose Garden to the TriMet plaza. Then it runs east along Holladay Street connecting to the Lloyd District and Oregon Convention Center under the I-5 freeway.

Connecting over the I-5 freeway, a new pedestrian/bicycle bridge at N. Clackamas St, creates a focal point of the Rose Quarter as seen from the I-5 freeway. It connects the neighborhood immediately west of the Lloyd Center to the Rose Quarter and the Willamette River greenway.

It is intended that the Rose Quarter have a series of pedestrian scaled urban markers with maps and artwork or displays that call attention to local activities as well as big events. The streetcar station at N. Weidler and Flint is designed as a work of public art that will be seen by thousands daily. It will give identity to the Rose Quarter, and announce the many sports and retail offerings that will be easily accessed by pedestrians.



Focal Points / Urban Armature

Urban Gateways and Markers

The Rose Quarter will have a stronger presence with several strategically placed gateways that mark entries into and out of the area. Bordered or bisected by multiple roadways and visual axes, the Rose Quarter has many opportunities to celebrate and call attention to these points that help orient visitors, direct large crowds, and mitigate the impacts of the large buildings and plazas that characterize the district.

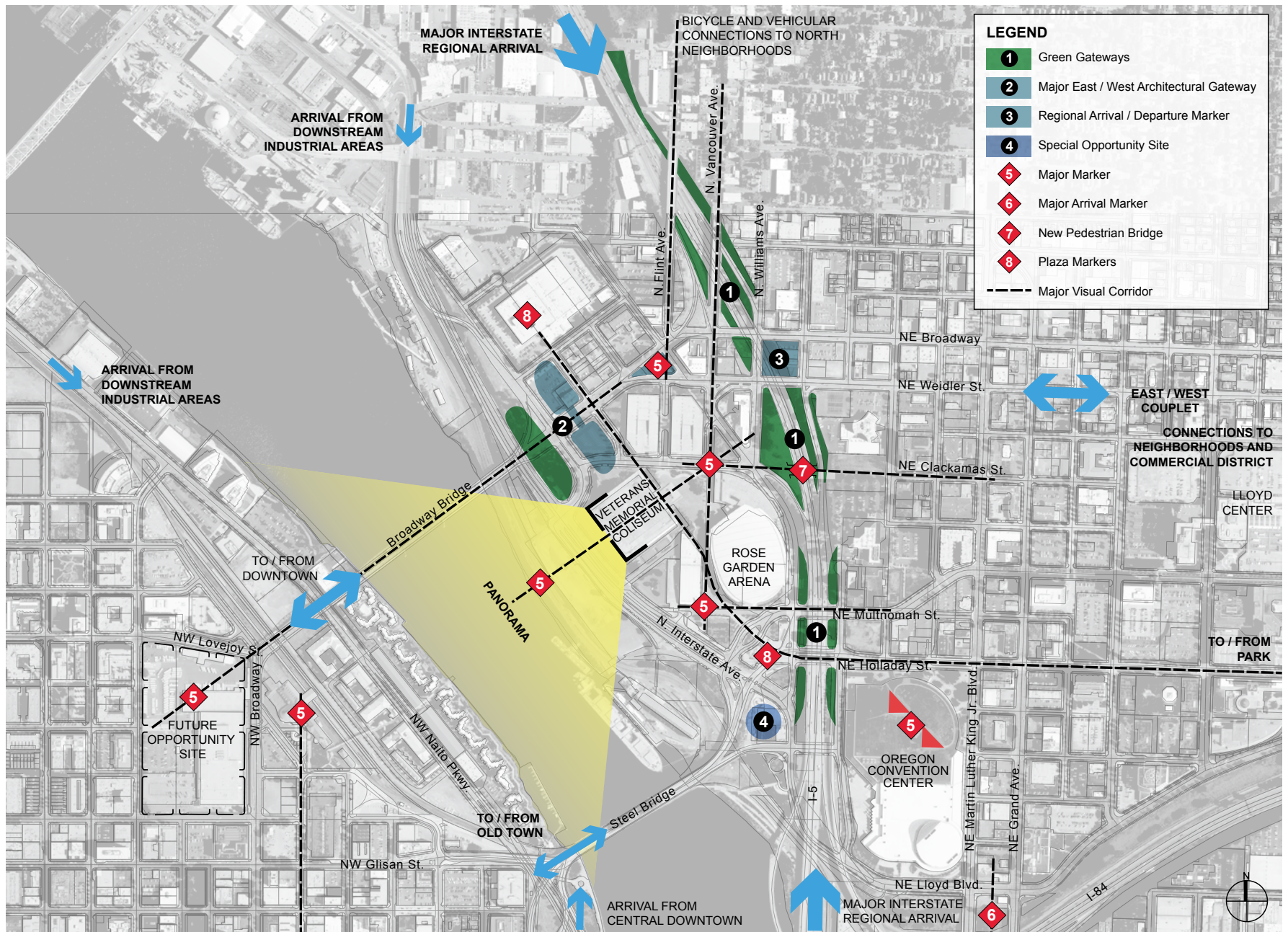
First is the gateway to and from the I-5 freeway to the east. This important interchange is undergoing redesign to improve safety and operations. The project, if built, offers numerous opportunities to improve multi-modal access and development conditions in the vicinity.

Secondly, the Broadway and Steel Bridges act as gateways into and out of the Rose Quarter. The Broadway Bridge is envisioned to be flanked at N. Benton Street by two tall, multi-story mixed-use private development towers. As architectural markers and gateways, the towers announce the district and underscore the importance of Broadway as the main connector between northeast and northwest Portland.

At the east end of the Steel Bridge, a unique district energy plant and/or interpretive center for the city's accomplishments in renewing the river becomes a distinctive architectural marker.

The third major gateway is recognized in the reach of river between the Broadway and Steel Bridges.

This area currently contains the Dreyfus Grain elevators and a deep water dock that serves ocean-going vessels from many international destinations around the Pacific Rim. In the future, this stretch of the Willamette River may be developed with facilities that host water-related events, naval ceremonies, or competitive sport activities.



Urban Gateways and Markers

Plazas, Greenway Connections and Open Space

The Rose Quarter is located on a distinct topographic bluff left by a meander in the Willamette River as it flows through downtown Portland. There is an average of 50 feet of grade change from this bluff edge to the river level, giving it a prominent location in the city. The edge of the bluff continues south and east into Sullivan's Gulch, the ravine that now contains the I-84 freeway. An opportunity exists to create a continuous greenway along these bluff edges parallel to Lloyd Boulevard on the south around to Interstate Avenue on the west. In conjunction with the river's edge, this greenway has potential to become a pedestrian and bike promenade within the Willamette Greenway that would border both the upper and lower boundaries of the Rose Quarter.

The proposed greenway along the river's edge is difficult to envision at this time due to several existing conditions: the various modes of transportation coming together at the Rose Quarter Transit Center; the industrial grain terminal; and the Union Pacific freight rail lines that presently hug the river's edge. A northward extension of the Eastbank Esplanade is facilitated by moving the rail lines closer to the western edge of Interstate Avenue. This alignment seems to be favored by the railroad because it eliminates a tight S- curve that slows train traffic significantly. In order to maintain the existing grades above, the relocated tracks are placed in a tunnel. This tunnel's cover, in turn, allows on-grade access between the Rose Quarter proper and the river.

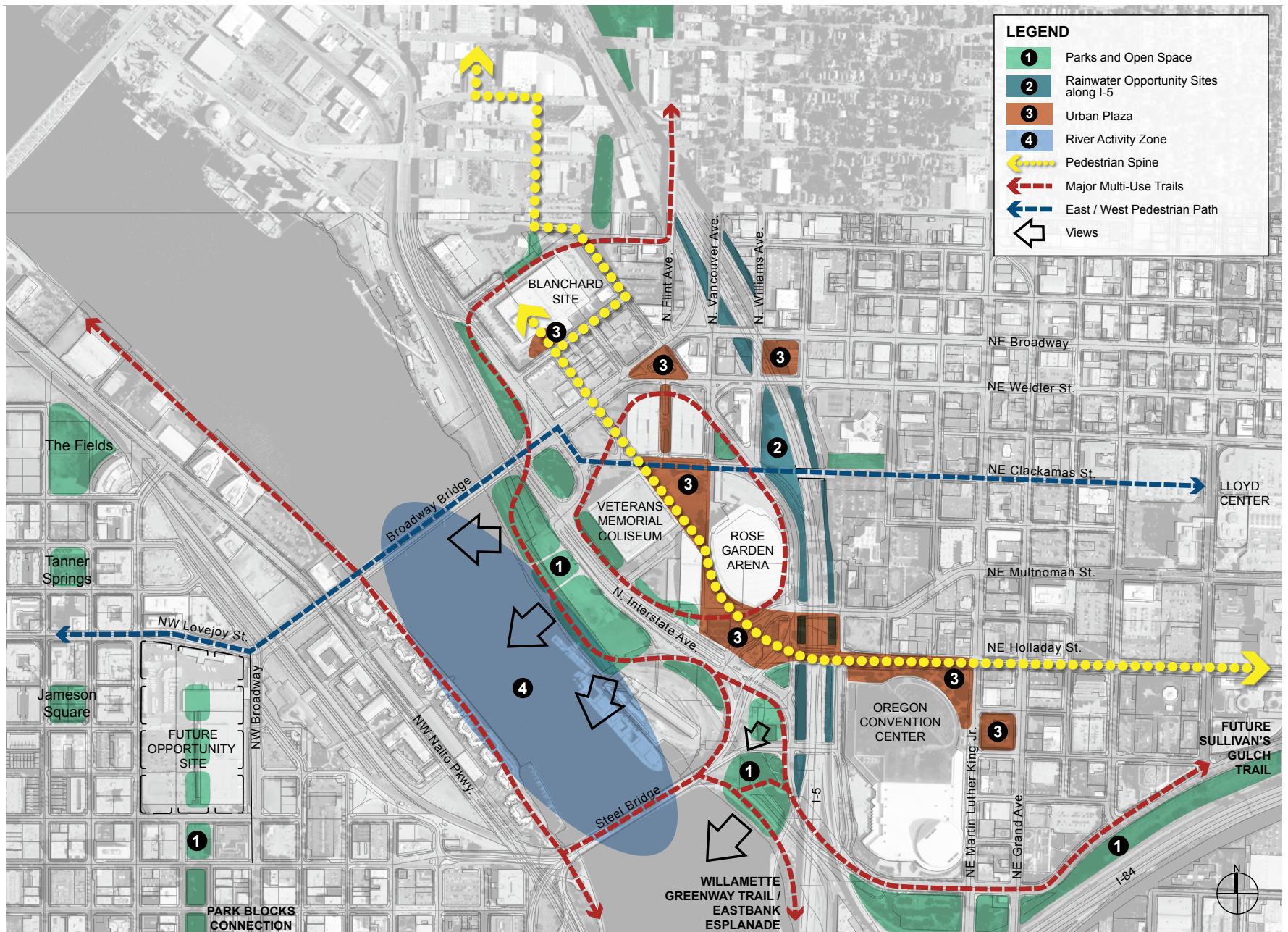
This direct connection to the river's edge and its spectacular views of downtown and the West Hills, makes the riverfront parcel a unique property for private development and public access to the river in Portland. Without a sea wall or a freeway as a barrier this waterfront land has potential to make a remarkable urban connection between the Rose Quarter and the Willamette River.

This zone of the river shown with the blue ellipse is a distinct "room" bounded on all sides by river development. Water related activities are centered here with the VMC being the central focal point.

The open spaces that occur along the south and west edges of the district occupy the topographic transitions. The bluff edge must be reinforced and highlighted with trails, open spaces and overlooks that clarify the position of the Rose Quarter within the central city.

The Rose Quarter Commons is shared by the VMC and the Rose Garden will become a more active and programmed space in the future. This space is envisioned to be similar to Pioneer Square on the east side; with potential to offer wide variety of programmed sports and community events throughout the year, in addition to every day use.

The Rose Quarter Commons has potential to link both northward to the Broadway/Weilder couplet and east to the convention center. For more information about pedestrian plazas, see discussions under Transportation and Infrastructure.



Plazas, Greenway Connections and Open Space

Transportation and Infrastructure

Bike Routes

The Rose Quarter is a confluence of the growing bicycle commuter and recreational rider population in Northeast Portland. With important connections to the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade at the south, and the Broadway Bridge and future North Portland Greenway multi-use trail at the north end, bicycle traffic moving through the district should be simple, safe and clear, with minimal interaction with vehicular traffic. Instead, bikers presently moving through the district encounter the east side's busiest transit hub where two light rail lines, numerous bus routes and presently cross multiple lanes with periodic traffic snarls.

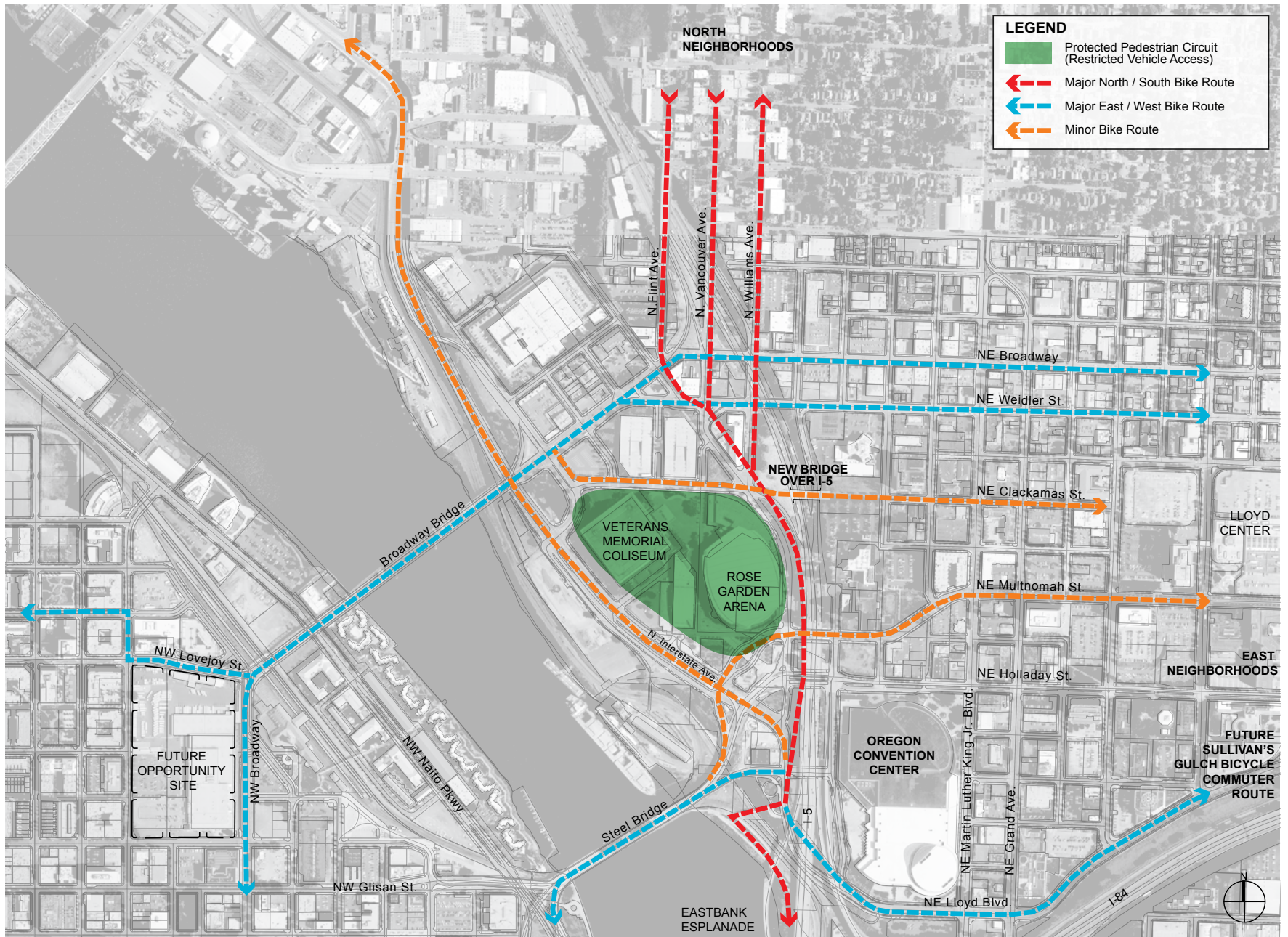
The north-south bike route shown in red parallels the I-5 freeway then crosses at N. Williams, Vancouver or Flint. Dedicated bicycle lanes are maintained along this route. The east-west connection shown in blue brings bicycle traffic across the highway on Broadway and continues over the Broadway Bridge into northwest Portland. These two routes intersect at the fork in the Flint/Broadway-Weidler couplet. Bicyclists are not encouraged to ride in the proposed protected pedestrian circuit for the safety of pedestrians. Urban markers are placed at key intersections as wayfinding aids will help to direct traffic and simplify navigation.

The orange route designations show the supporting bicycle routes that feed into the major routes

shown in red and blue. Connections on surface streets as well as a new pedestrian/bicycle bridge over I-5 at N. Clackamas Street link the district to the east and improve the anticipated circulation through the district when the future Sullivan's Gulch trail on the east side of the Rose Quarter is completed. Connections to the north along N. Interstate will continue to carry increased bicycle traffic.

As this "District of Sport" gets developed it is intended to be a model of bicycle safety and navigational clarity.





Bike Routes

Transit Systems

Served well with transit options, the Rose Quarter District is located at the intersection of major lines for light and heavy rail, two interstate highways, bus lines and streetcar. The area is challenged with ways to maximize the effectiveness of its many transit options rather than adding more. Private auto traffic is a significant challenge throughout the Rose Quarter. With the addition of increased bicycle usage and more pedestrian traffic, the district will continue to need careful planning and urban design to allow these various modes to coexist in a safe and convenient manner.

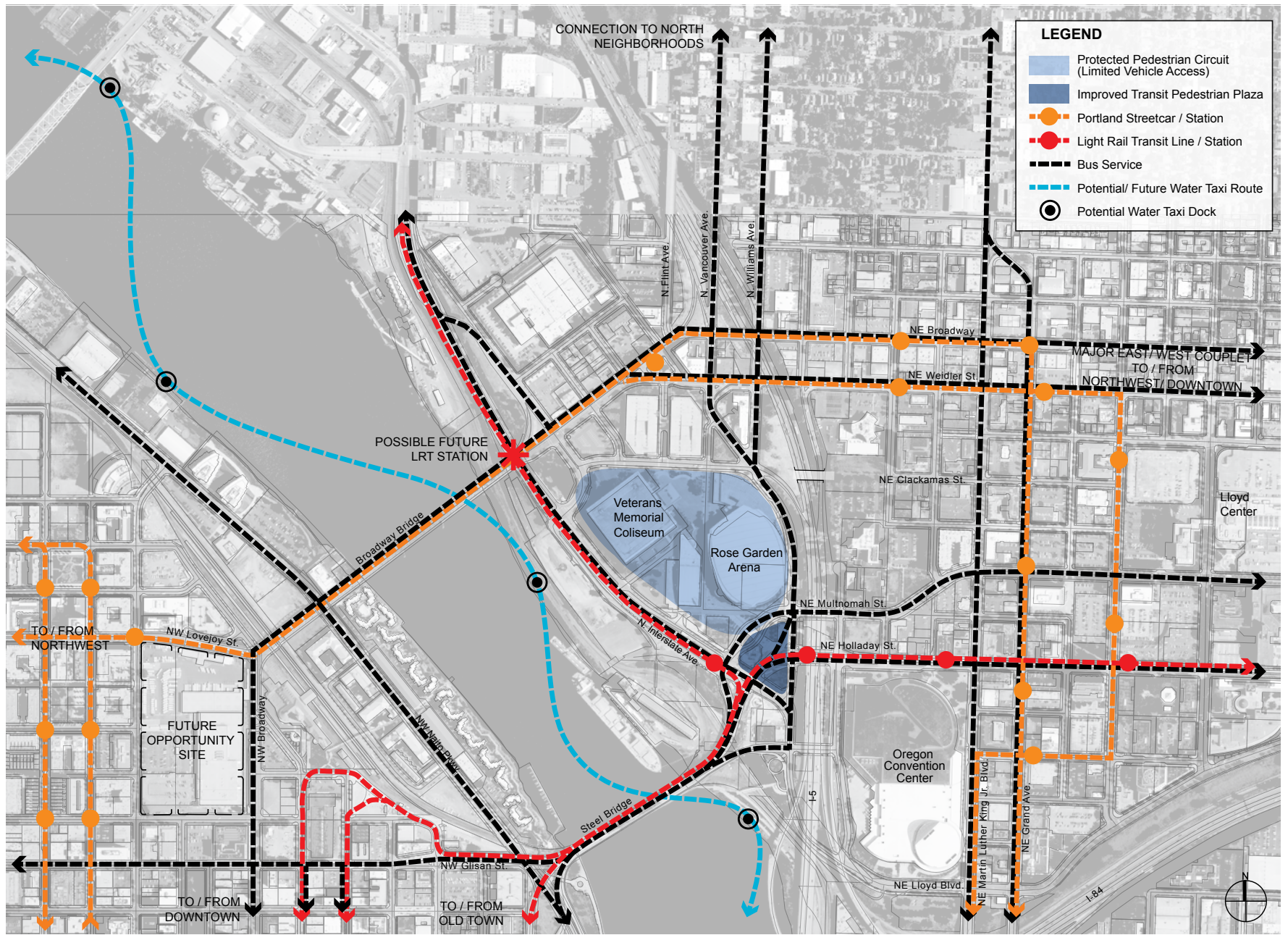
In 2012 the streetcar arrives using the alignment shown in orange. With a new “station as art” arrival at the fork in the couplet of Broadway and Weidler Streets, the northern section of the district is further connected with northwest and northeast Portland. The Broadway/Weidler couplet is currently the main auto and bus east-west connection, and it will increase in prominence as the central transit connection of the district.

Light rail transit lines on the Steel Bridge, Holladay and Interstate Avenue do a great job connecting the Rose Quarter regionally. The Steel and Broadway Bridges form “transit bookends” within the district and are heavily used on a daily basis as well as during Rose Quarter events. A new light rail station may one day be contemplated near the Broadway Bridge. Feasibility of a station in this location, as well as cost and funding strategies have not been ascertained. However a new station

in this vicinity would facilitate transfers to other modes, increase access to events, and support significant walk-able mixed-use redevelopment north off of Broadway. This potential station also provide a connection with the streetcar station just two blocks to the east between Broadway and Weidler.

The potential for a water taxi on the Willamette River is envisioned at some time in the future as riverfront development increases. This presents a further reason for the Rose Quarter and the VMC to focus on the river.

As the overall transit system connects the west and east sides of the city, the Rose Quarter will increasingly be in the center of the city, rather than at downtown’s eastern edge across the river.



Transit Systems

District Energy Plan

As part of the Lloyd District and Rose Quarter master planning, a district energy plan is under consideration. As new buildings are considered and planned, and current facilities being re-modeled, ideas about coordination and energy sharing have emerged. Area-wide policies would reduce energy consumption, maximize sharing of heating and cooling resources and offer future capacity to proposed facilities.

PDC offered an opportunity for a private entity to analyze and address the energy needs of the facilities within the Rose Quarter and Lloyd Districts. A private firm was selected to provide the engineering and planning services for this district utility. The VMC is the first project within the district the group focused on.

Due to its aging mechanical system and current need to re-build its refrigeration ice system for the hockey rink, the VMC renovation project must either build or find capacity to address these needs. By looking area-wide it was determined that the nearby Rose Garden arena had excess capacity and could become the source for some or all of the mechanical needs.

In addition this excess Rose Garden capacity could be combined with the systems of the Oregon Convention Center two blocks away to strengthen the area-wide system even further. As of 2012 this set of considerations is being actively pursued. The potential of creating a District Energy Plan could encourage additional development by lowering

both the initial and on-going costs of heating and cooling systems. Eventually connections could stretch to the Lloyd Center and beyond.

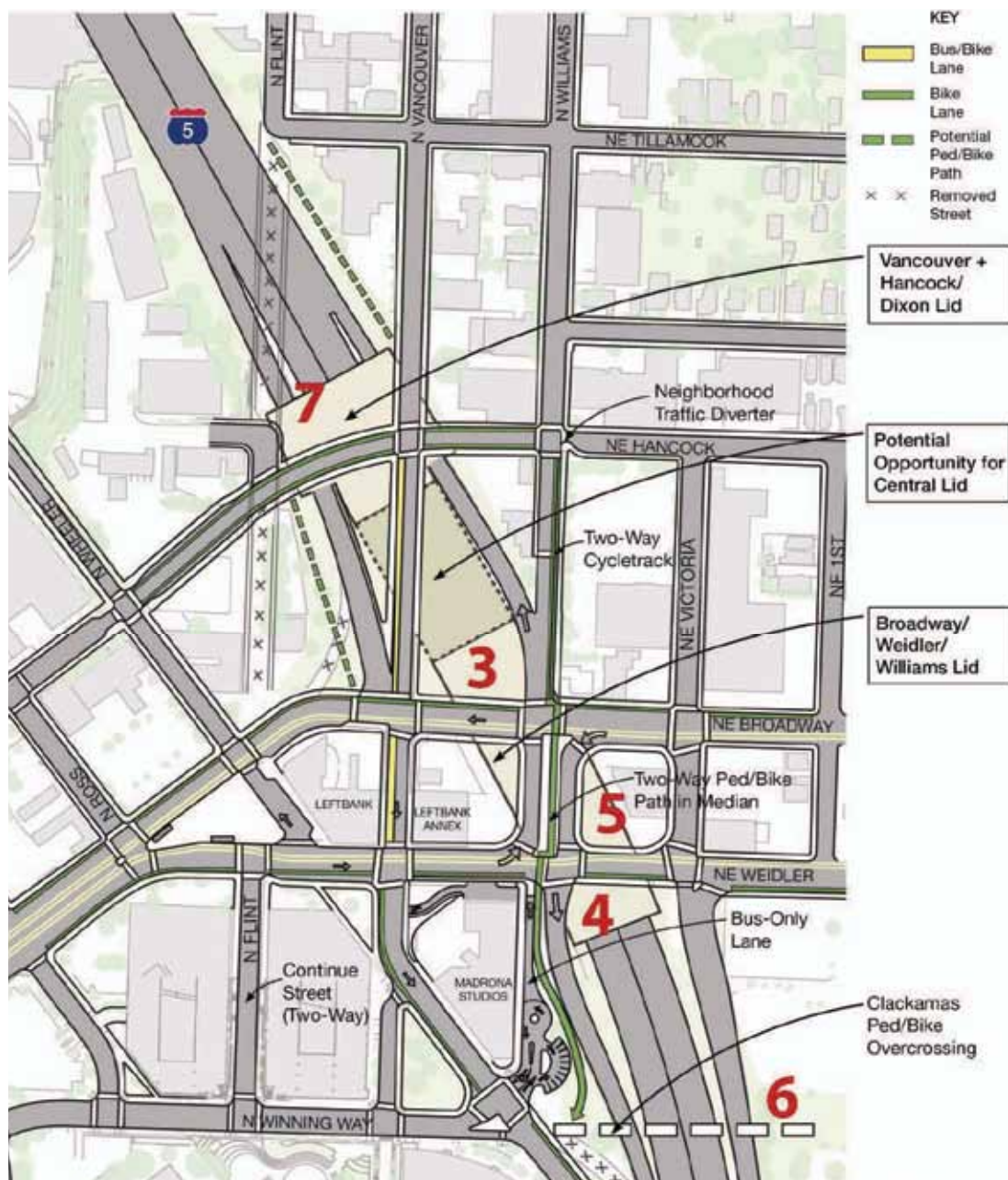
I-5 Broadway-Weidler Interchange Improvements

I-5 and I-84 form important boundaries to the Rose Quarter and Lloyd District. Under consideration are safety, capacity, ease of navigation, and various environmental impacts. The crossings over and below these highways affect the connectivity between the adjacent districts. The character and scale of these connections affect pedestrians, bicyclists, auto and truck circulation, and ultimately the aesthetic feeling of the areas.

In that the Rose Quarter is something of an “island” due to its boundary conditions of river and highways, connecting to adjacent areas is crucial to creating better access and improved safety. Proposed improvements include new or rebuilt bridges and have the potential to greatly improve safety and access to the Rose Quarter and Blanchard site.

A pedestrian and bicycle bridge over I-5 at Clackamas Street is proposed to connect the Rose Quarter to the Lloyd District and encourage additional development between I-5 and MLK Boulevard, an area that has great potential for a mixture of uses including housing. This bridge is mid-way between bridges at Weidler and Multnomah, connecting the Rose Quarter and Lloyd Districts and allowing east to west linkage to the river.

The underpasses at Multnomah and Holladay Streets also need improvement. This plan envisions a continuous plaza from the Oregon Convention Center to the Rose Garden. This “plaza” must serve many purposes and host many modes of transportation. In their current form these underpasses inhibit rather than encourage east-west movement by pedestrians. As the I-5 bridges and ramps get re-designed attention must be paid to this important link between the Rose Quarter and Lloyd Districts. The plan proposes a pedestrian spine that encourages pedestrian movement along its length, stretching from Lloyd Center and the Park to the east to the re-developed Blanchard site at the north-west. In the center of this spine are the Oregon Convention Center and the Rose Garden/ VMC which will form the heart of the district.



I-5 Broadway-Weidler Interchange Improvements

Rose Quarter District Plan Images

The three aerial sketches labeled A, B and C show possible site development and massing of buildings. No specific architecture or style is intended. An attempt has been made to preserve as many existing structures as is practical. The overall strategy is one of additive and supplementary design and construction, taking advantage of the history and existing structures as the “armature” for the district.

Planning Process

The Rose Quarter began in the mid-1960s with clearing the neighborhoods to build the VMC. Methods of urban renewal during that era cleared a canvas for mid-century modern development while erasing the neighborhoods, context and history of the sites.

Initially centered around the VMC the area was designed to maximize its connections to the transportation networks, namely the interstate highways and the Broadway and Steel Bridges to facilitate connections to downtown. Standing alone in a sea of parking the VMC as a modernist monument was designed to be visible from the west hills of Portland and appreciated from a distance, as well as functioning as a state-of-the-art venue for regional sports and entertainment. Surrounded by convenient parking and easy delivery access the VMC was host to many of the significant

cultural and sports events of the 1960s through the '90s.

The VMC's role began to change and its prominence, both physically and culturally, began to diminish when the larger Rose Garden Arena was built. Additional facilities to support these two venues were added, and the Rose Quarter became an assembly of structures more focused on serving the events inside the buildings rather than creating activity and “life” around these big boxes. While the area retained its connections to major arterials and remained visible to the city, the Rose Quarter became the venue entertainment sector of the city. But similar to other large civic sport and entertainment venues, it hosts big events yet remains dark and vacant at all other times.

In this context, the area stakeholders convened to analyze what was happening and discuss what could be done. There has long been a desire to have the Rose Quarter engage the city more meaningfully and a desire to expand the singular-use effects of the current facilities. There has also been a desire to make the Rose Quarter into a more true expression of the regional culture. Discussions and proposals regarding major changes to achieve these desires have lead, over the years, to an atmosphere of uncertainty as to the future of the area. And that uncertainty has minimized development – both public and private – that could re-invigorate the Rose Quarter.

In 2008 discussions began between the city and new ownership of the local baseball and soccer

franchises. These sports organizations needed dedicated facilities for their teams to compete in their leagues and to function effectively as business entities. As the existing baseball stadium, Civic Stadium in NW Portland evolved into a soccer and football only venue, the city looked for sites for a minor league stadium to house the baseball team displaced by soccer. The Rose Quarter was viewed as capable of absorbing and servicing another major facility if the VMC was removed.

In 2009 Portland's mayor proposed its demolition and unveiled conceptual plans for a new baseball stadium. This proposal then galvanized a local group of citizens to defend the VMC on its architectural merits, and war veterans on its memorial merits, all maintaining that the building has unique and extraordinary qualities that should be preserved. Eventually the VMC building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, ensuring its future and contribution to Portland's collection of distinguished buildings.

Given the community outpouring of support for saving the building the city leaders changed course and asked for ideas about potential future uses of the VMC. In an open call for ideas over a hundred proposals were reviewed. The three finalists assembled teams to present schemes with varied elements and approaches to the building and the area. However, in the end none of the proposals were accepted.

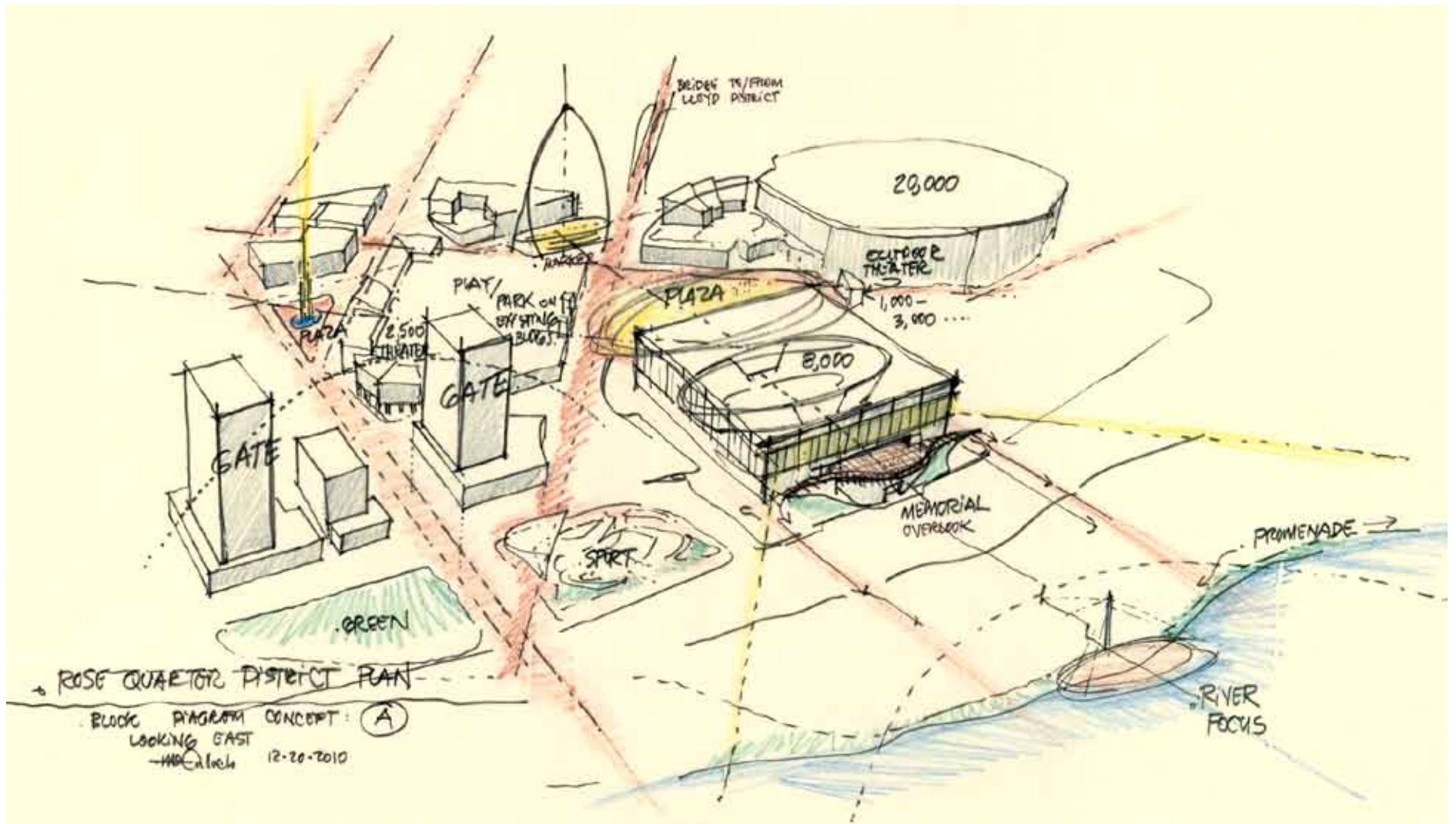
In 2009 the Portland Development Commission worked with the mayor to undertake a process to

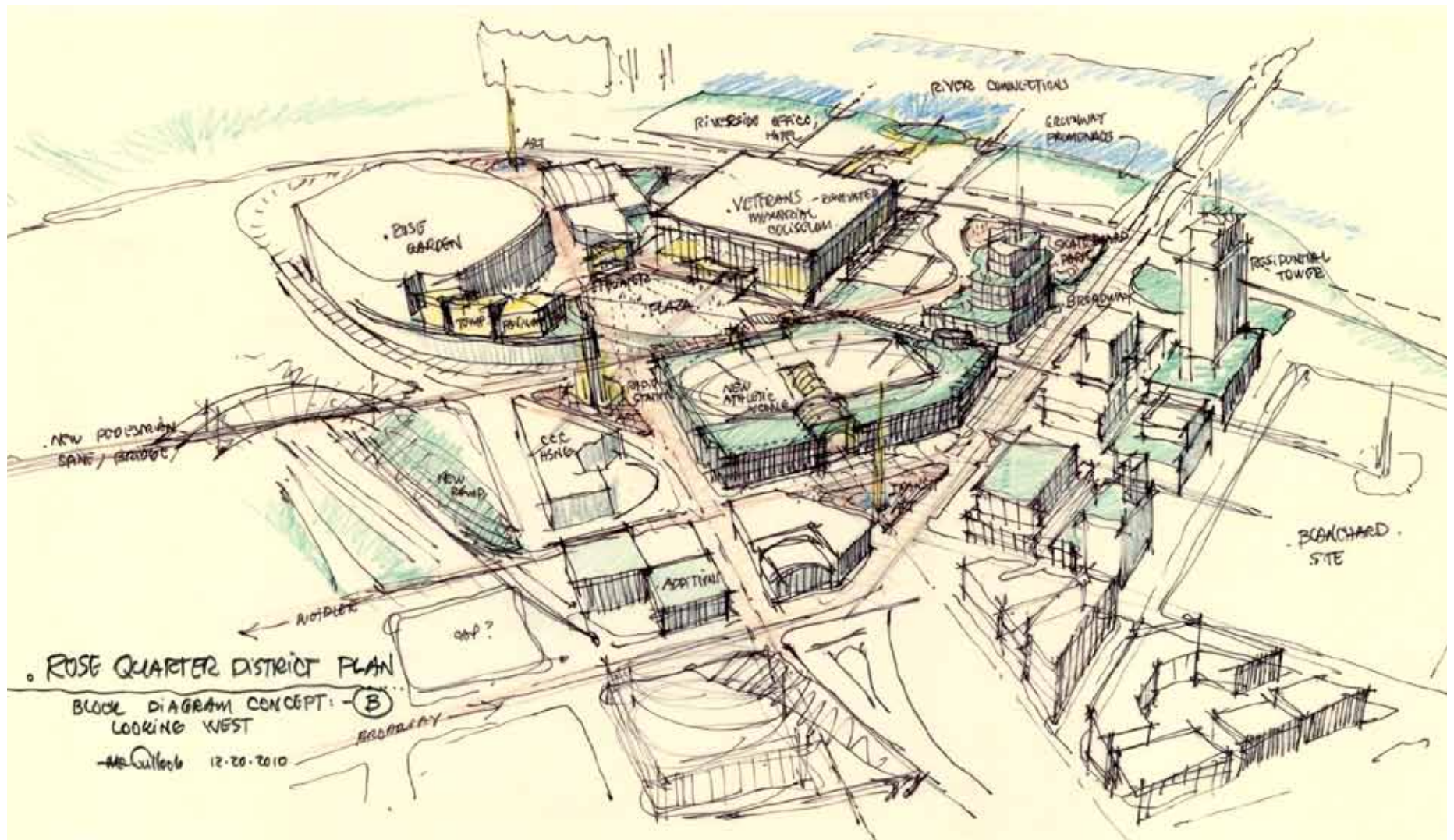
address these questions regarding the future of the area. This planning process was intended to look forward 50 years and envision an improved Rose Quarter. It should highlight its links to the city, leverage the major infrastructure investments already in place, be respectful of the evolving market fluctuations, and address needed highway and transportation infrastructure improvements. The charge of this master planning effort was to work with the solid existing urban armature while proposing improvements that would lead to a desirable Rose Quarter without backtracking.

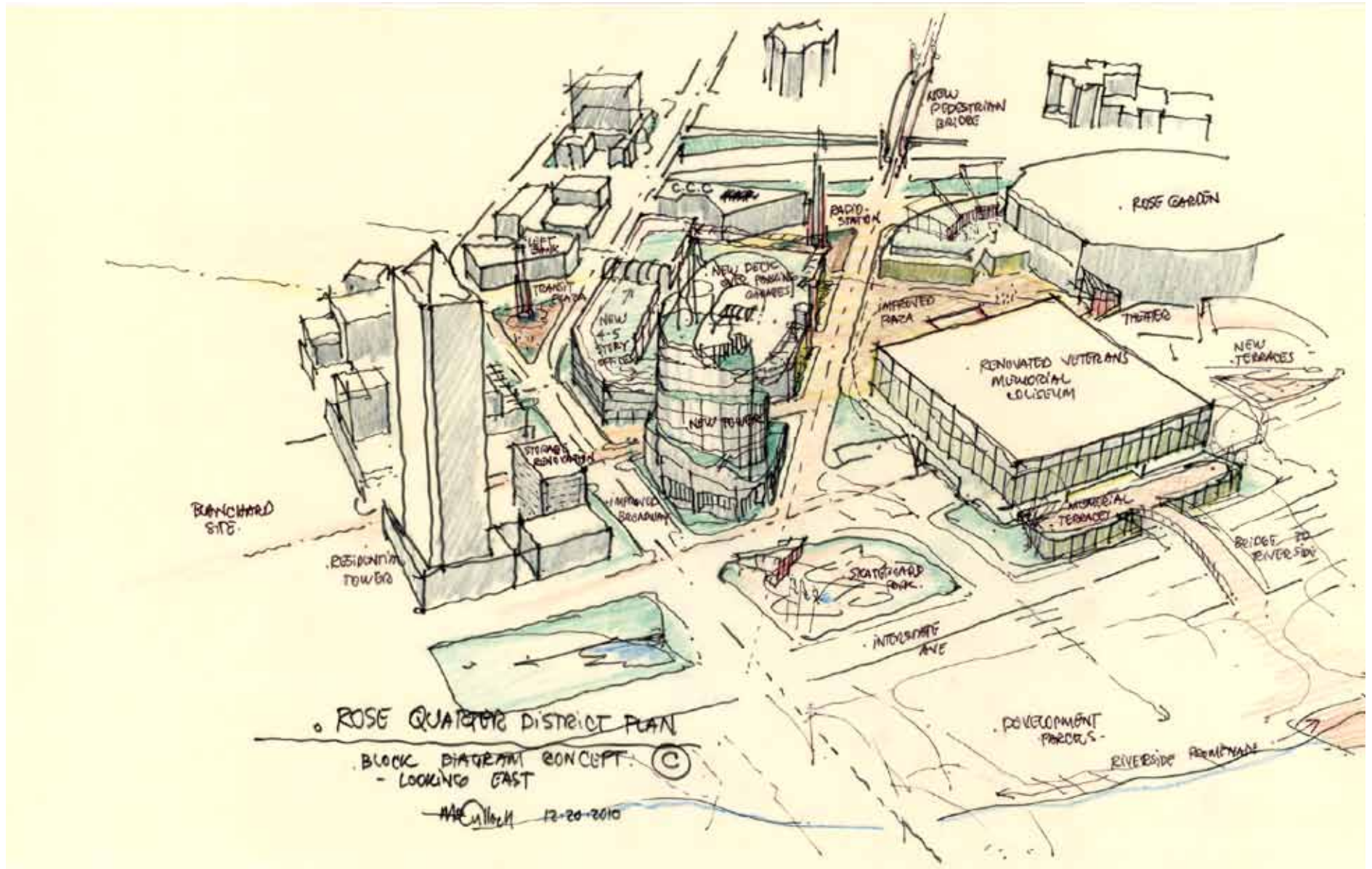
There would be every effort to honor the strengths of the existing franchises and their buildings, look to exploit the unique contributions of VMC and Rose Garden Arena, and to begin a strategy to add more investors to grow the district organically and with authenticity to the regional culture.

Mayor Sam Adams chaired the meetings of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee from 2009 through 2011. This committee assembled a series of goals and aspirations to lead the process. This document is a result of a myriad of players collaborating to set forth a new vision for the Rose Quarter. It is designed to be propositional and flexible.









Summary and Recommendations

The Rose Quarter's future is ready to be realized through public and private initiatives. With the determination to save and renovate the VMC the direction towards the "District of Sport" was established. By using this crucial centerpiece as a beginning, the Rose Quarter is poised to accept the subsequent developments summarized below. This master plan concept attempts to capitalize on the cumulative investments made over several decades and to focus those into the creation of a vibrant and growing segment of the city. This new Rose Quarter – "The District of Sport" – can represent the region by reflecting its cultural and economic values in its buildings and activities.

Key Steps

- Discuss and review the "District of Sport" plan with stakeholders and the City to establish a consensus about the current and future direction for development and investment.
- Continue to refine the plans to re-vitalize the VMC and bring it up to 21st century standards using both public and private initiatives.
- Focus the efforts of the area's veterans to re-create a strong and vibrant memorial at the VMC that honors its past and invites a new future of both sport and cultural gathering.
- Continue to improve the considerable infrastructure investments in the district such

as highway improvements, heavy and light rail, streetcar, bicycle pathways, pedestrian plazas, and open spaces to attract activity at all hours and all seasons.

- Create parkways along the bluff edge and along the river to connect to Sullivan's Gulch and the East Bank Esplanade.
- Improve the I-5 interchange from Hancock to Weidler to simplify arrival and departure from the Rose Quarter and Lloyd District by re-building the bridges and ramps. Open and improve the connections to the Blanchard site area to increase access to these blocks.
- Continue to develop a district energy plan that connects new and older development in a network of services that minimizes energy consumption by sharing utilities. By capitalizing on the variety of facilities the districts will be able to lower the thresholds to development and become exemplary of our region's concerns regarding energy.
- Encourage the railroads to re-locate the tracks in a tunnel along the river to align more closely with Interstate Avenue to allow development and encourage connection between the Rose Quarter and the river.
- Improve the transit confluence at the intersection of I-5 and Holladay Street to better accommodate pedestrians and strengthen the connection between the Rose Quarter and the Oregon Convention Center.
- Develop a convention hotel close to the intersection of MLK and Holladay Streets.
- Create an iconic pedestrian and bicycle bridge over I-5 at Clackamas Street to further connect the Rose Quarter and Lloyd District. This bridge should become a marker for travelers on the interstate highway as well as encouraging visitors to move through both areas while connecting to improved facilities along the river.
- Surround the existing parking structures along Broadway with structures that hold offices, retail, and possibly housing. Create better access into the heart of the Rose Quarter with an open walk between the structures that could be lined with small cafes to serve the district.
- Encourage re-development of the blocks between Broadway and the Blanchard site to become a new mixed-use neighborhood. This area could serve as the residential center serving both commercial and recreational activities of the district.
- Extend a pedestrian spine from the Blanchard site to Holladay Park that connects Benton Street to Holladay Street. Improvements such as paving, lighting, and furnishings should be consistent along the length of this spine to encourage visitors and residents to use it at all hours and all seasons.

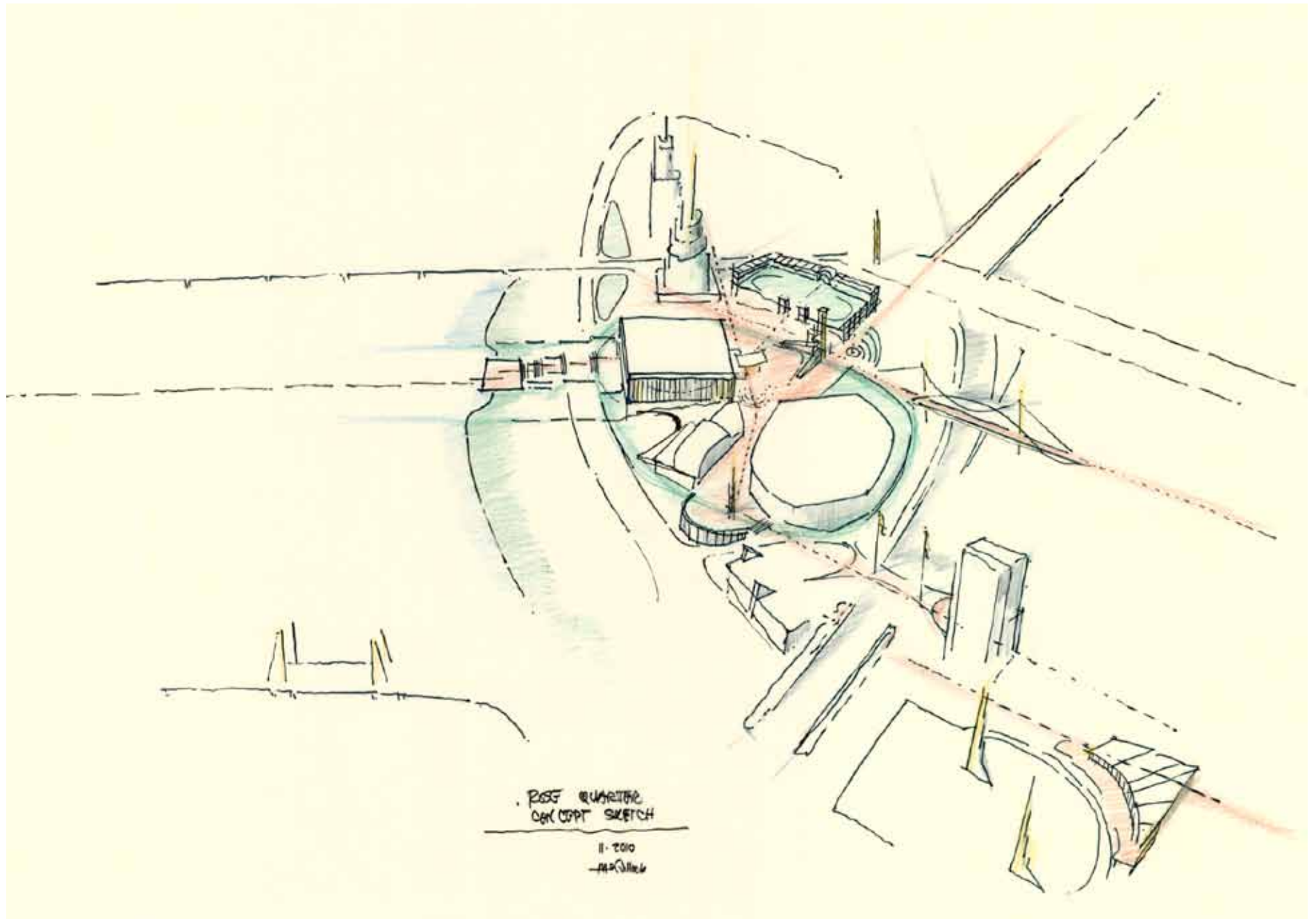
- Explore visitor center possibilities for the site at the east end of the Steel Bridge considering its unique and prominent position with views both up and down river.
- Encourage riverfront development on the old Thunderbird Hotel site. This development should allow river access along its length and create a center on axis with the VMC. This development should allow views of the VMC to and from downtown with taller structures at the north and south ends. This parcel has great potential for civic and water-related facilities that could capitalize on the transit and parking facilities already in place in the Rose Quarter.
- Encourage private development on the vacant block at Benton Street and Broadway. In combination with planned development to the north, a tower would be part of a gateway into the “District of Sport”.
- Enliven the central plaza adjacent to the VMC and Rose Garden with a new plaza level entry to the exhibition hall below this plaza. This structure could be a marker for the center of the district.

Summary

This planning and visualization effort is intended to create an overall vision for the Rose Quarter. It is also intended as a strategy for development that allows a variety of initiatives to support one another as the area evolves and grows. Care has been taken to honor the investments made over the recent decades and to attempt to capitalize on those investments.

This “District of Sport,” centered on the VMC can become a beacon of activity for the region, due to its functions and unique location on the river and along the interstate highways. By encouraging incremental development and carefully coordinated infrastructure improvements the “District of Sport” will become the center of activity for Portland’s east side.

This plan tries to capture the essence of the work done by the Mayor’s Office, PDC and City staff with the Rose Quarter Stakeholder Advisory Committee between 2009 and 2011. However, it has not been adopted, reviewed or formally endorsed by any City committee or commission.



Appendix

Planning Processes
Development Sketches



DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS

ROSE QUARTER DISTRICT PLAN

—MS Gilson 12-20-2010

