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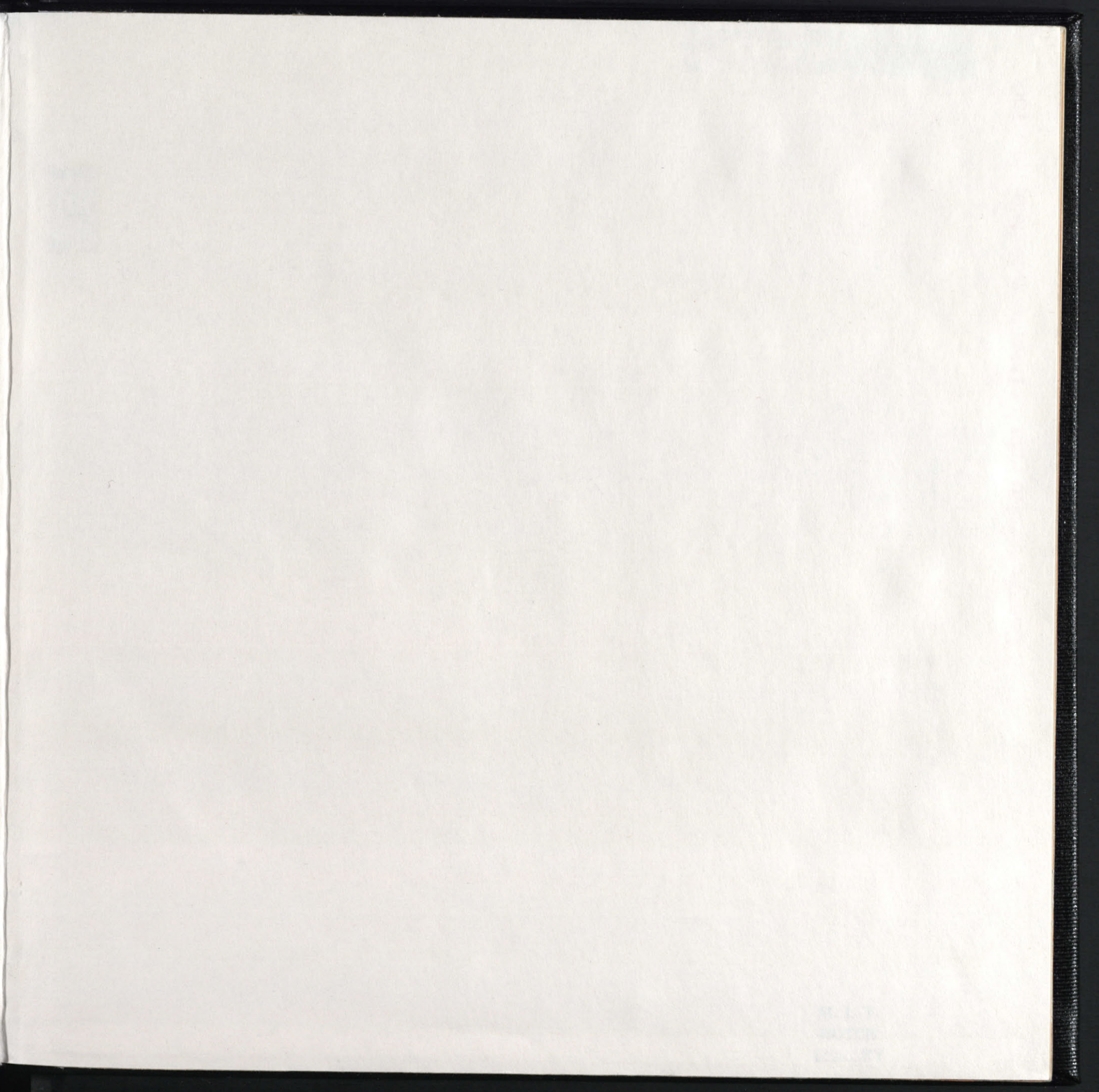
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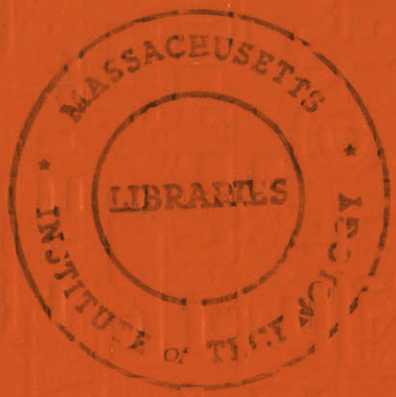
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# the regional center

A Comprehensive Plan for Downtown Buffalo, New York

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THE LEGION OF MERIT



plan: central business districts Buffalo. (Cities and towns - Planning - Buffalo)

Wallace, McHenry, Roberts and Todd



April 1971

# the regional center

A Comprehensive Plan for Downtown Buffalo, New York

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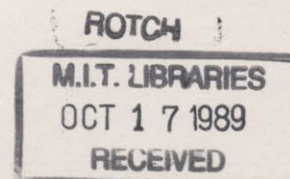
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### Foreword

This is a plan to revitalize Downtown Buffalo. It is a response to the awareness of City Leaders that the future of Buffalo City lies in the health of its center city. If Buffalo City is to remain fiscally solvent, if it is to offer the high level of services necessary to make it an attractive and humane place to live, then a major effort will have to be made to develop Downtown to its full potential. It will have to be maintained not only as a growing marketplace, but as the administrative and cultural center of the Region . . . strong, active, and visually exciting.

The Plan outlines those elements necessary to accomplish these ends. The proposals are interlocking; they are intended to work together in producing an area with a "critical mass" that can bring new activities to Downtown and expand the economic and social life of the City.

Stated specifically, the major goals for Downtown are a seven point program as follows: (1) to increase the number and variety of jobs available Downtown; (2) to increase residential opportunities close to jobs and social activities; (3) to increase city tax revenue; (4) to maintain Downtown's role as the administrative center of the Region; (5) to raise the level and increase the scope of Downtown services for the Buffalo metropolitan area; (6) to attract as diversified a mix of mutually supporting activities, businesses, and people as possible; (7) to seek out and promote programs and projects in the City and Region that are compatible with Downtown goals.

The above goals and objectives will be realized only if they are supported by public policy that is keyed to the future of a dynamic Downtown. It will take a far sighted approach to many public ideas and decisions, from aesthetics to land use to activities, in order to safeguard or enhance the overall Plan. The following policy implications are vital to the entire program:

1. Increase the capacity of public transportation facilities to accommodate maximum expectations for development growth.
2. Plan the arrangement of future land uses judiciously to permit the proper location of new development.
3. Provide and locate sufficient parking space to avoid retarding new private and public development.
4. Locate new public improvements so that space for new private development is not preempted.
5. Pursue vigorously development compatible with Downtown activities that might otherwise locate elsewhere in the Region.
6. Make pedestrian movement throughout Downtown as comfortable as possible, providing all-weather passages wherever possible.
7. Protect and preserve buildings or spaces that have historic or architectural value.
8. Exploit opportunities for creating new and exciting public space and building forms.
9. Promote good design in the creation of new buildings.
10. Encourage the location of new buildings at points that reinforce the interrelationship of activities.
11. Enhance the interest of Downtown by importing complementary functions. For example: a convention and exhibit hall which can be visited at the same time.
12. Locate functions Downtown that generate activity during off-peak hours such as convention facilities and theaters.
13. Promote the development of a central community college accessible by public transit to serve the Regional Center.

The prime move now toward achieving these goals is to implement the Plan. If the Plan is implemented, there is every reason to anticipate a bright future for the regional center and spin-off advantages to the entire Region. These advantages have been substantiated by the inspiring examples of several other regional centers planned and developed in the country. Such action gives the people of a city a sense of belonging, a feeling of pride and concern and involvement. It becomes the life line of a city. Conversely, without it, without action, the City will wither.

# Summary of the Concept Plan for Downtown Buffalo: A Framework for the Continuing Renaissance of Downtown

## 1 The Investment Climate

Establishment of the appropriate investment climate in downtown Buffalo will produce a major change in the downtown area over the next twenty years. The potential for change is startling when viewed against the background of the decline of Downtown in the post World War II years. This change has already begun. It gives every indication of continuing with strong leadership to insure that strong actions are taken in the immediate future.

The Plan projects new total gross investment of approximately \$450,000,000 over the next 20 years. \$285,000,000 of this amount is represented by new office space. New retail space will represent roughly \$25,000,000 of new investment, public office space \$75,000,000 and hotels \$45,000,000.

When put into the context of anticipated regional growth, these are reasonable, even conservative, estimates. Based on anticipated population increases in the Region, office space in the Region is expected to rise at about 4.7% per year. Downtown conservatively could capture about 35% of this growth per year since it is already the administrative headquarters for the Region. In terms of retail growth an increased capture of 33% of regional sales (shopping goods only) is not an unreasonable expectation if Downtown produces an environment competitive with suburban shopping malls. Its variety and many other qualities and advantages cannot be duplicated in suburban shopping malls, whereas Downtown can duplicate the facilities found in suburban malls.

These new investments translated into floor space equal approximately 13,275,000 square feet of new space in the Downtown by 1990. 7,830,000 square feet of this growth is new private office space; 2,500,000 square feet is public office space for Federal, State and local government use. New retail space is about 1,030,000 square feet; new hotel space 1,370,000 square feet. All of this growth

represents additional annual property tax revenues of approximately \$6,900,000 or an increase of roughly 85% over the present \$8,200,000 property tax revenues in Downtown. Additional retail sales will represent \$60 to \$80,000,000 per year over present downtown retail sales or a nearly 50% addition to present gross retail sales. Additional retail sales taxes will be about \$2,700,000.

Three important ingredients are required to trigger this new growth. These include: (1) the Buffalo/Amherst corridor high speed transit line with stations integrated into the Mall system to allow commuters to go from home to shopping or office destinations in a pleasant year-round environment; (2) an ancillary all-weather, air-conditioned Mall on Main Street between Genesee and Church Streets and the removal of all vehicular traffic on Main Street in this area; and (3) increases in parking supply to keep pace with new growth resulting in 20,000 new parking spaces.

## 2 Major Elements of the Plan

- a. A smoothly operating movement system integrating pedestrian, rapid transit and vehicular traffic, for the purpose of increasing the total number of daily trips to Downtown and increasing the ratio of rapid transit trips to auto trips.
- b. The new downtown Mall for the purpose of creating a pleasant all-weather environment to revive downtown retail sales.
- c. An increased parking supply related to the street and expressway system in such a way as to reduce the traffic on the downtown street system.
- d. New office space development induced by the environment created by the first three elements described above, to increase the economic health of the City of Buffalo.

### 3 The Movement System

The proposed Buffalo/Amherst corridor transit line is an important ingredient to the success of the Downtown Plan. The bulk of the cost of the high speed transit line would be assumed by County, City and other adjoining municipalities, Federal funding, and the present mortgage tax already earmarked for public transportation improvements.

Other increases in tax rateables along the line, plus the increases in other tax sources resulting from downtown growth triggered by the Plan, including augmented retail sales taxes, utility taxes, etc., would be net additions to the City's tax position.

Other major benefits of the movement system envisioned by the Plan result from the integration of rapid transit stations and parking structures with the pedestrian mall system, providing a smooth transition from automobile to the pedestrian system and from transit stops to the all-weather pedestrian system.

Based on greatly increased downtown accessibility, the impact of the rapid transit lines on Downtown will result in the following:

- a. Increased retail market potential of between 9% and 13% because of increased numbers of people Downtown.
- b. Reduction of long term parking demand by 3,500 spaces.
- c. A 10% decrease in peak hour traffic on the downtown street system.
- d. Marked increases in service and convenience.

### 4 Parking

The basic concept of the movement system is balance between mass transit and the automobile.

The parking element of the Plan proposes 20,000 new parking spaces in structures over the next 20 years, or 1,000 spaces a year.

This represents a net addition of spaces of only 5,000, an increase of 18% over the present stock.

Almost 750 surface spaces will be eliminated each year. The Plan calls for replacement of these 750 per year plus 250 per year or 1,000 new spaces a year over the next 20 years.

The City now has a workable and successful parking formula: the use of City bonds with special private back-up for any special subsidies necessary because of extra costs for underground or complicated building requirements. Main Place and the new Marine Midland office tower development are examples of such special situations.

Current plans and normal downtown growth will eliminate 6,000 present off-street parking spaces (3,000 from the waterfront and 3,000 from other building sites).

Another 3,000 legal on-street spaces and 6,000 illegal on-street spaces reduce the effectiveness of the present and proposed street system. These are proposed to be eliminated. The total reduction of spaces adds up to 15,000.

Current costs of these spaces at today's prices would be about \$70 million at an average of \$3,500 per space. As costs will go up, rates will necessarily also rise.

The Marine Midland costs per space are higher than \$3,500, and the arrangement is that Marine Midland will absorb all costs over what the user charges support. Therefore, the use of City bonds is a convenience that does not cost the City itself anything.

At the rate of 1,000 spaces a year, the City will put up bonds of \$3 to \$5 million a year on either a revenue or no-down-payment basis.

Actually Marine Midland has already accounted for 560 spaces and when complete will account for 1,500 of the 20,000 spaces. In addition, 1,800 more spaces are under serious consideration (e.g., City Court Ramp) and another 1,000 spaces are in early planning.

It is evident that Downtown's achievement rate is already well ahead of the necessary pace of 1,000 new spaces per year.

Naturally, if new development slows down, the City's commitment rate will also slow.

Parking is essential to the Plan: the community has the mechanism for financing it, and it will happen as development occurs.

A fundamental fact! Local government will not pay the cost. The users, parkers and businesses who buy and benefit from the spaces are those who pay. Anticipated rate structures for Marine Midland reflect this fact: employee parking is 50¢ for the first hour, 30¢ for the second, and 20¢ for each additional hour. Shopper parking rate structures should be lowest in the first hour and rise to discourage all-day parkers, with merchants subsidizing only as they see it individually to their benefit. This would apply only to structures immediately adjacent to the shopping area.

### 5 The Downtown Main Street Mall and Retail Sales

Current retail sales Downtown are at about \$140 million a year. If the merchants, property owners and City take steps envisioned in the Plan, sales will rise to between \$200 to \$220 million as Downtown attracts its share of regional retail sales growth.

The Downtown Main Street Mall and the proposed subway are key elements in making this \$60 to \$80 million growth possible. It is estimated that the Mall alone will increase present sales by 20%, or \$28 million. A new department store is proposed in present Lafayette Square, both to take advantage of this potential and to help generate the environment that will make it possible. The total costs, in current 1970 dollars, of the Mall are \$8.5 million. These total costs can be supported by an increase of only \$1.2 million in retail sales tax, a 0.8% increase over present sales, and only 2.0% of the anticipated increase of \$60 million, in 1970 dollars. It should be noted that these figures do not include increases in either costs or revenues resulting from price escalations or inflation.

Various mechanisms for equitably distributing these costs on property owners and merchants have been worked out in many other cities and the best of them can be adapted in Buffalo. Through City leadership, a quasi-public corporation can proceed to the next step of more detailed planning and design development.

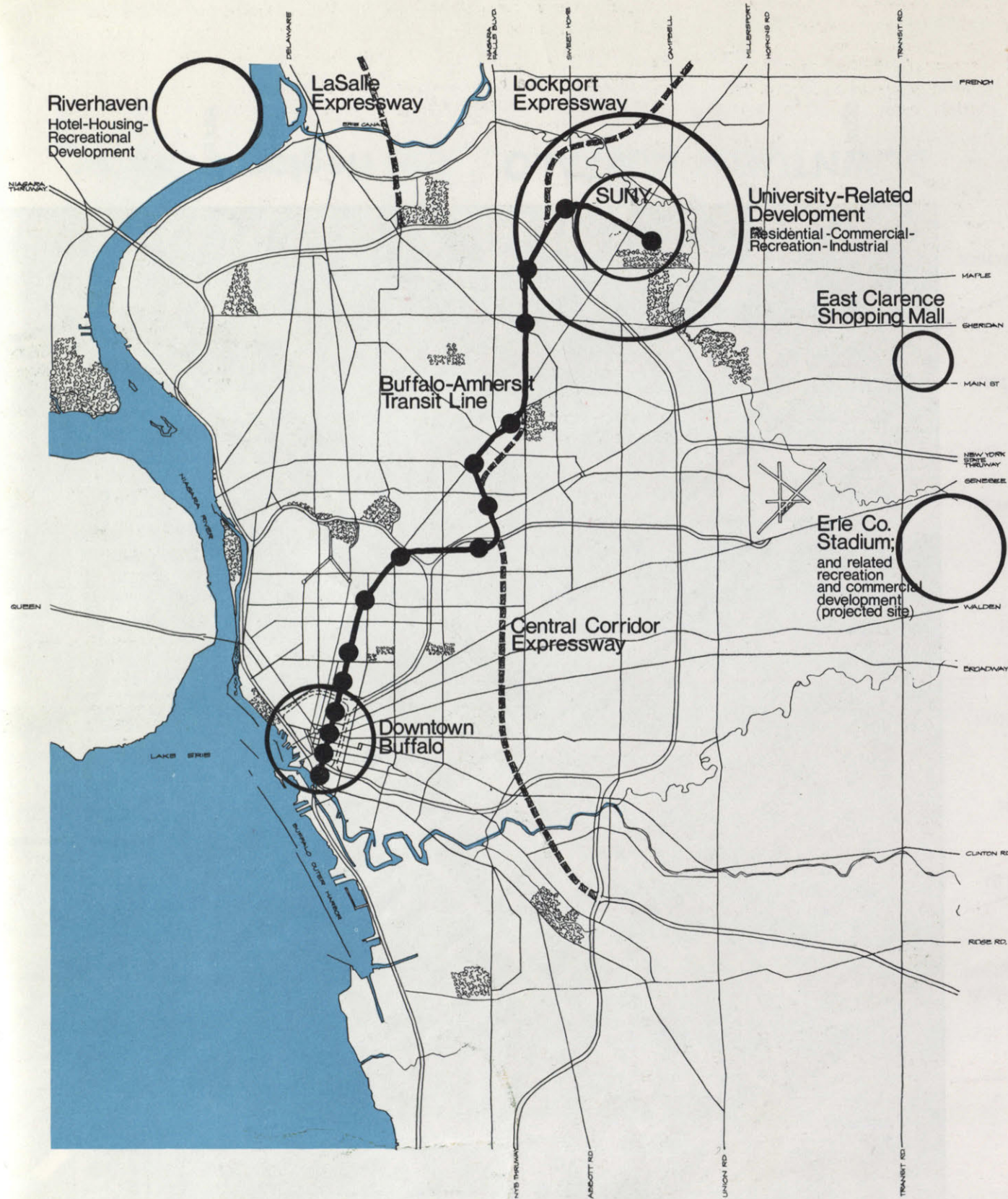
### 6 New Office Space

Private office space is expected to increase by 7.8 million new square feet. About 1.5 million square feet of this is already programmed (Marine Midland and the utility companies). New public office space totaling 2.5 million is expected to be built over the next 20 years. Roughly one million square feet is already programmed.

In terms of income to the City, new private office space development will account for the lion's share. Of the approximately \$6,900,000 total anticipated additional downtown property taxes annually, new private office accounts for a great preponderance, possibly as much as 80% of these taxes. Therefore, again it should be stressed that one of the main purposes of the rapid transit, the Mall and parking actions proposed is to create the environment and investment climate in which this new private office development can take place.

### 7 Conclusion

That the City administration and other leadership groups in the Downtown must supply the impetus in mobilizing Downtown for action is axiomatic. But, if that leadership is supplied, the rewards for Buffalo will be great. Through a concerted program involving relatively little cost to the City, except in terms of leadership, the current image of Downtown can be reversed, a pleasant and exciting physical environment established, a new and favorable climate for investment created and the tax picture radically altered.



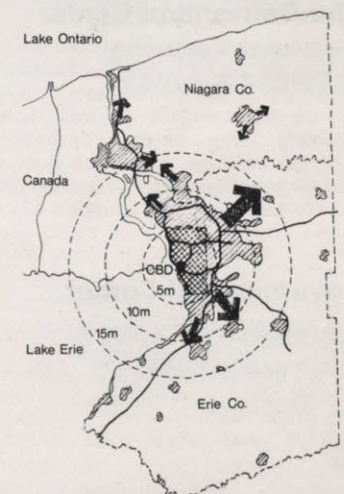
Proposed Major Regional Developments

### The Regional Context

Downtown Buffalo lies at the eastern end of Lake Erie at the entrance to the Niagara River. It was in its early history the major transshipment point to and from the west on the lakes and was the junction first with the Erie Canal and later with the railroads.

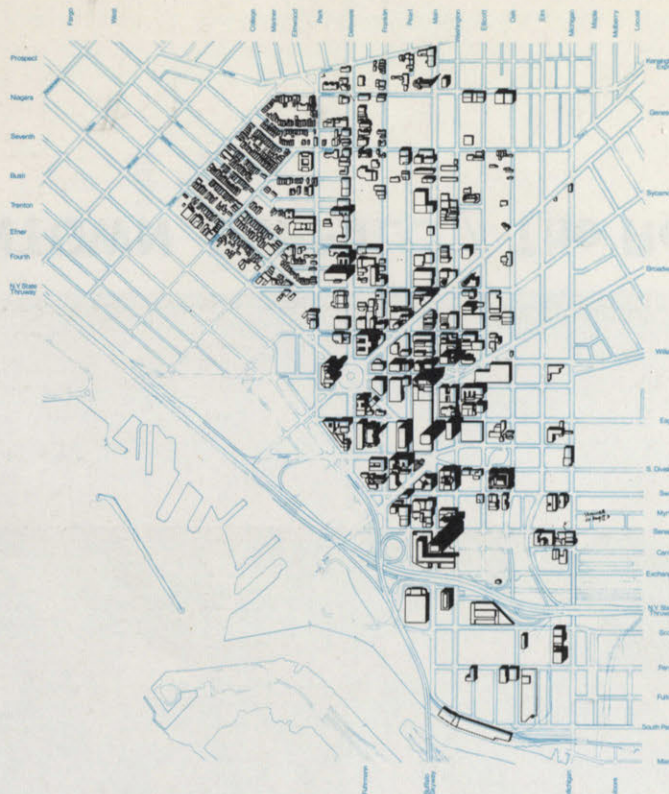
Heavy industry subsequently grew to the north and south of what is now Downtown. Manufacturers used this geographical point to reduce high bulk/low value raw materials shipped from the west into high value/low bulk products to be shipped east. The steel and grain products industries are examples.

As a consequence of this history, Downtown is located asymmetrically to the urbanized area of the Region. This fact has both advantages and disadvantages. The potential amenity of proximity to the Lake is an asset which can be and is being exploited. On the other hand, its position puts it in a somewhat weak position to tap potential retail markets. This disadvantage can be overcome by improving Downtown's accessibility to the Region. Current and proposed transportation facilities will improve its position.

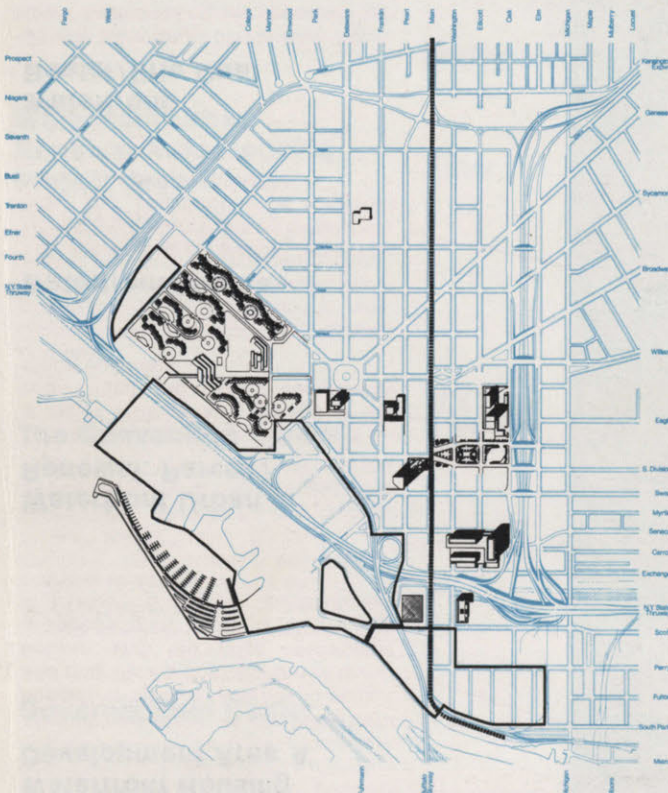




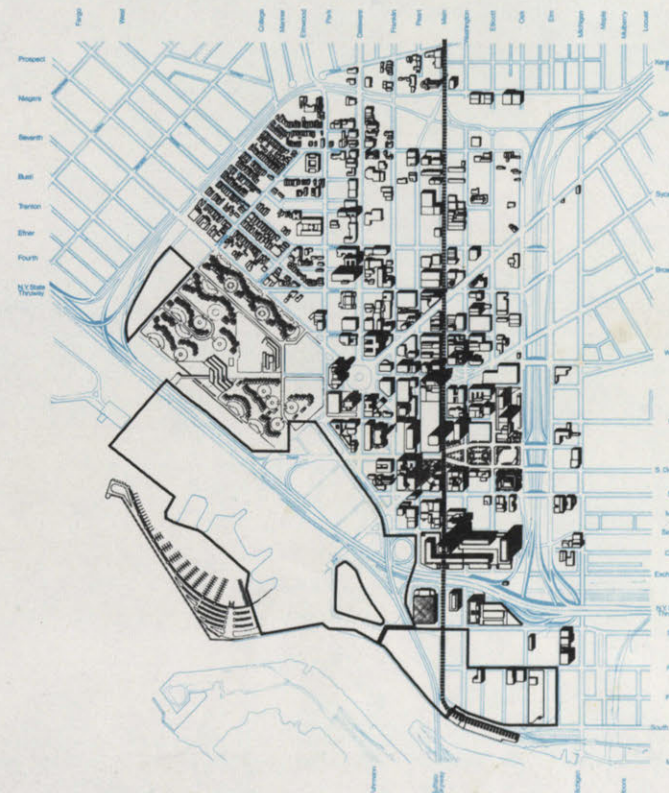
Existing Structures



Existing Givens



Future Developments







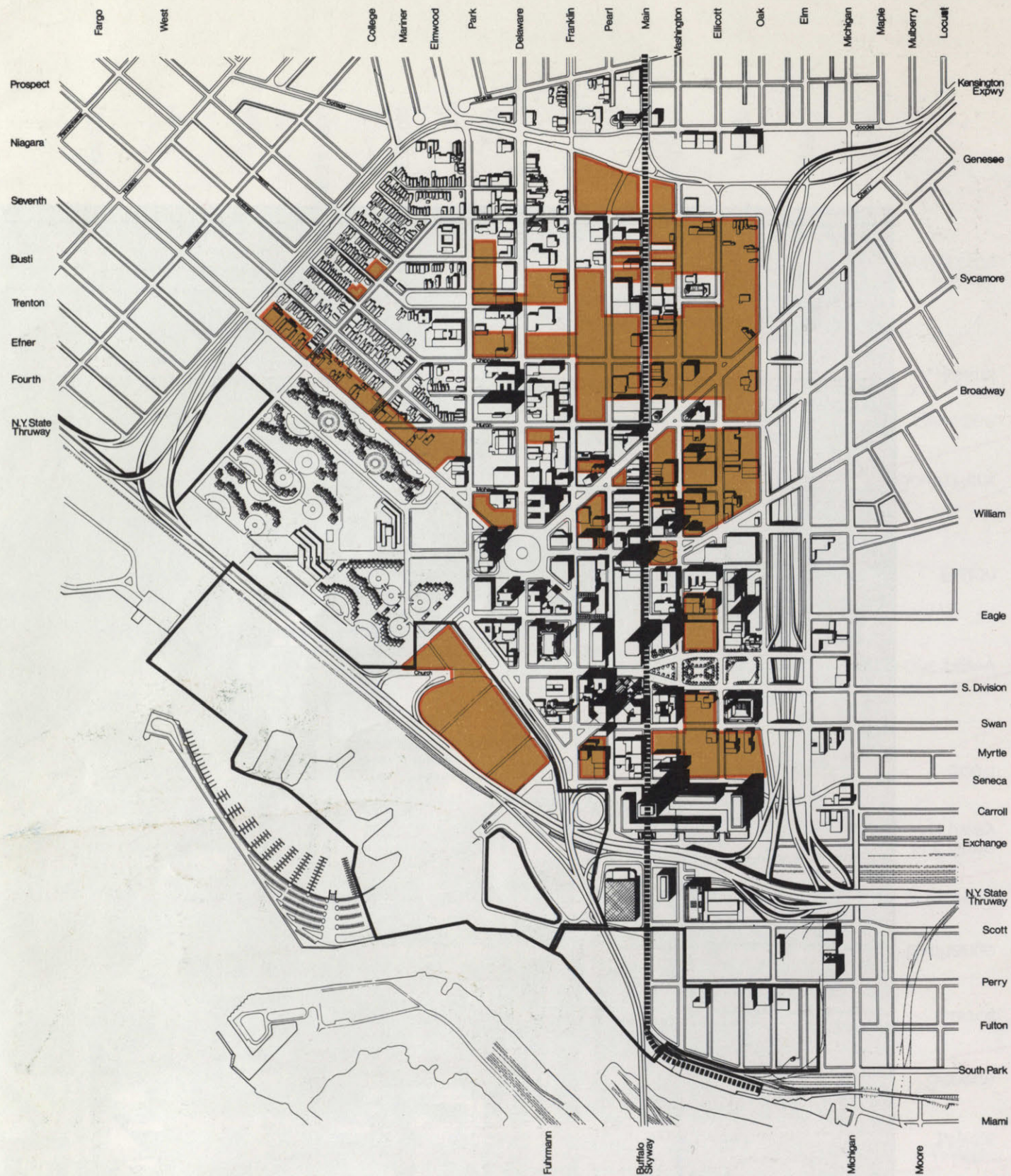
Existing Givens and Future Developments

### Building Life Expectancy

Those areas in Downtown Buffalo where development might occur with the least cost and least disruption of important activities were determined by the investigation of the physical characteristics and functional activities of all buildings. The purpose of this investigation was to describe those areas where new development could occur with least disruption to existing activities and where land could be assembled at relatively low cost.

All non-residential buildings were evaluated on the basis of the following criteria.

-  Long-Range Givens
-  Middle-Range Givens
-  Committed Development
-  Proposed Development



General Areas of New Development Opportunities

## 1 Physical Characteristics

The physical characteristics considered in evaluating the life expectancy of all buildings in the downtown project area were:

### a. Major Criteria

Building Height (number of stories)  
Building Size (gross square feet)  
Historic Value

Other considerations being equal, high buildings and large buildings are more resistant to change than low buildings and small buildings and, therefore, have greater life expectancy. Historic buildings are considered valuable to the City and thus judged resistant to change.

### b. Minor Criteria

Fireproof Construction  
Enclosed Elevators  
Building Age  
Visual Importance  
Architectural Significance

The evaluation of each building by these criteria provided the basis for determining the expected life of each building and its susceptibility to change.

## 2 Functional Characteristics

The activity function of each structure was evaluated on the basis of its importance to the Downtown Buffalo area, and on its expected life in the particular structure. This was done on the basis of a detailed survey of downtown activities.

Factors used in this evaluation were as follows:

### a. Evaluation of Functions and Uses by City Officials

### b. Numbers of People Employed

c. Activities Important to the Economic Base  
Unique Activities  
Specialty Shops  
Institutional Uses  
Parking Facilities

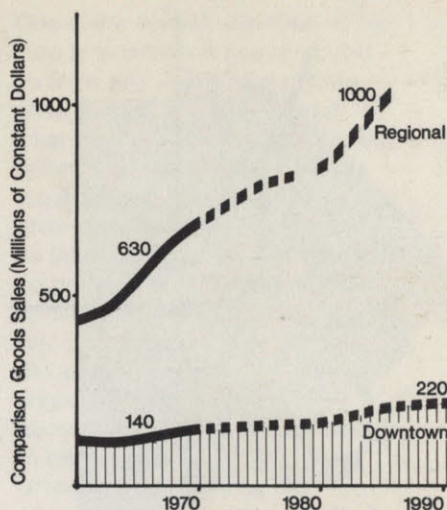
### d. Suitability of a Building for the Use Occupying It

## Downtown Development Opportunities

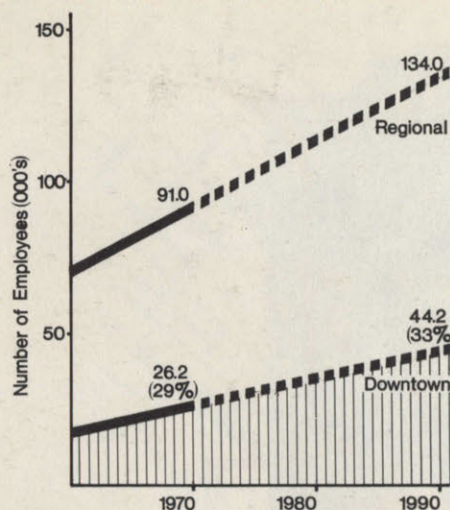
The Buffalo Region has a relatively low growth rate compared to many other regions in the country.

Nevertheless, when translated into a somewhat conservative possible capture rate for Downtown, the result is a considerable expansion potential for Downtown. This potential could easily result in a doubling of the present floor area in Downtown between 1970 and 1990.

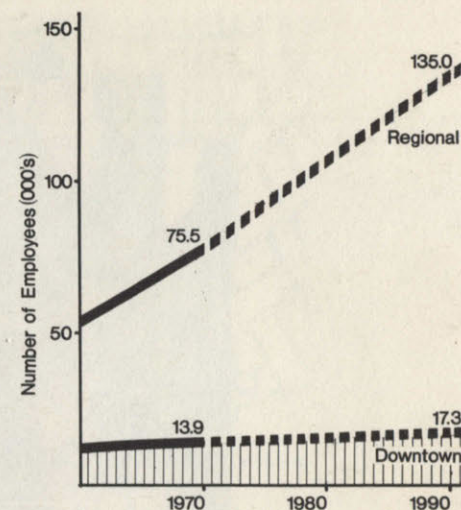
The illustrations on this page demonstrate graphically the great potential for growth that exists for Downtown. The problem is not whether Downtown will grow, but how the Downtown can be designed to produce an environment which will maximize its growth.



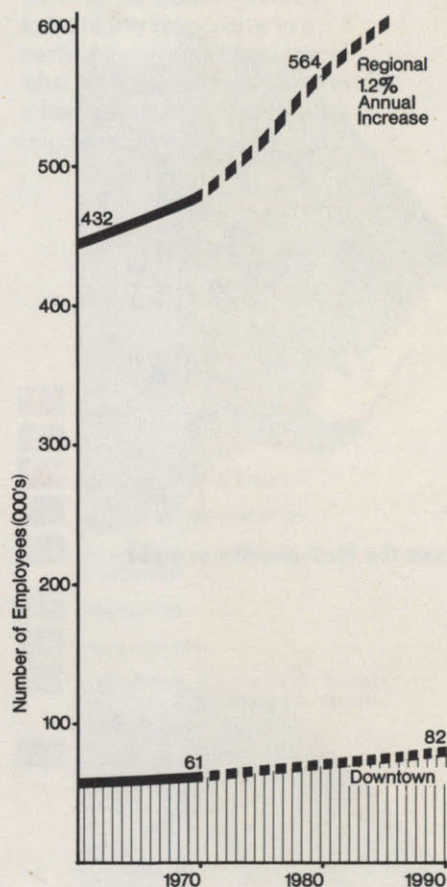
PROJECTED RETAIL SALES 1970-90



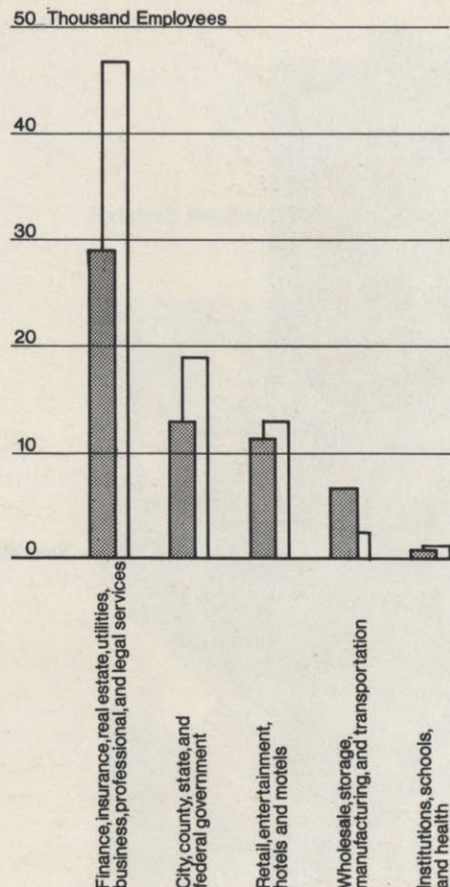
PROJECTED OFFICE and CLERICAL EMPLOYMENT 1970-90



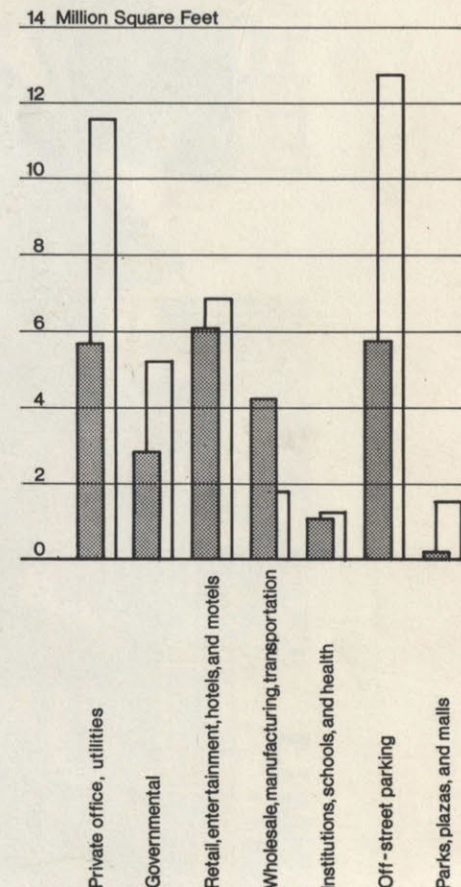
PROJECTED GOVERNMENTAL EMPLOYMENT 1970-90



PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT 1970-90



PROJECTED DOWNTOWN EMPLOYMENT 1970-90



PROJECTED DOWNTOWN SPACE 1970-90

## Downtown Development Opportunities

Fargo West College Mariner Elmwood Park Delaware Franklin Pearl Main Washington Ellicott Oak Elm Michigan Maple Mulberry Locust

**West Side Arterial**

The West Side Arterial is planned as a boulevard to serve Downtown and to accommodate traffic going around Downtown. The neighborhoods on either side are protected from through traffic by looping internal streets.

**Residential Area**

Residential rehabilitation is expected primarily in the area west of Elmwood, north of Niagara and south of Carolina. This area is to be connected by a landscaped pedestrian walkway system to the Main Street Mall area.

**Delaware Avenue Area**

Delaware Avenue is symbolically one of Buffalo's most important streets. The adjacent land will continue to provide the opportunity for the development of small private offices, corporate headquarters, specialty shops, new high rise apartments and a new media/TV center. Its visual significance as a boulevard will be strengthened by a street tree planting program.

**Waterfront Urban Renewal Area Housing Project Area B**

The first stage of this low and moderate income, racially mixed, housing project is under construction, sponsored by the New York State Urban Development Corporation. It will include new shopping and school facilities.

**The Convention Center**

A new centrally located convention facility will radically increase Buffalo's convention trade and act as a catalyst to the development of new hotel facilities and other convention-oriented activities. It will be built in two stages and ultimately have 155,000 square feet of exhibition space.

**Governmental Center**

The area around Niagara Square has developed into the region's governmental center, including Federal, County and City functions. The new City Court Building will soon be constructed immediately south of City Hall. The area provides the opportunity for additional governmental development as the need arises.

**Downtown Urban Renewal: Phase 2**

This project will renew a substandard area by the development of new retail and office building space immediately across from Main Place.

**Waterfront Housing Development Area A**

The second stage of the waterfront housing project is currently in design and may have a combination of townhouses and high rise apartments grouped around a marina. Stages One and Two will ultimately have 2,800 new housing units.

**Waterfront Urban Renewal: Parcel 7**

This area provides the opportunity for a major civic parking garage, a 400 room hotel and several commercial office buildings.

**Waterfront Marina**

The existing breakwaters remaining from the old harbor will be extensively filled and converted to a sheltered marina for pleasure boating.

**Waterfront Boatel/Erie Quai**

Taking advantage of the new downtown environment, an important opportunity exists for a unique kind of waterfront development having its only counterpart in the United States in the Fisherman's Wharf/Cannery/Ghirardelli Square development in San Francisco. Its European counterpart is Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens.

**The Buffalo/Amherst Mass Transit Line**

The first part of a two line rail mass transit system will run in subway down Main Street and emerge under the Thruway with an elevated station at the Community College. Ultimately the system will include a line from Kenmore-Tonawanda to the airport.

Prospect  
Niagara  
Seventh  
Busti  
Trenton  
Ether  
Fourth  
N.Y. State Thruway



**Downtown Housing**

The creation of a special environment in Downtown will make in-town living attractive for the first time in a generation. Many close-in sites for high rise apartment buildings are envisioned in the plan.

**North Main Street - Theaters**

The north end of the Mall presents a unique opportunity for a combination of office and retail development including theaters and entertainment. The Chippewa stop on the mass transit line, high accessibility, and good parking mark it as a special opportunity area.

**Retail Shopping**

The Main Street Mall will provide an environment competitive with suburban all-weather shopping malls and will offer the additional advantages of variety and convenience to work place available only in a downtown area. New retail development opportunities in the Mall area could double the present floor area devoted to retail activities.

**The Main Street Mall**

The Mall is the central feature of the Plan, providing an all-weather environment for Downtown and interconnecting a major portion of Downtown with the retail shopping area, parking accommodations, mass transit stops, special uses such as the Convention Center, and hotels.

**Central Main Street Area**

This area is a major new office development opportunity area with a large potential parking supply and direct connections with the Mall and retail shopping.

**The Elm-Oak Arterial**

The Elm-Oak Arterial will connect the Kensington Expressway and the New York Thruway and give great accessibility to Downtown and parking garages.

**Metropolitan Transportation Center**

The Transportation Center, to be developed by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, will accommodate the operation of a number of inter-city bus companies and local express bus operations. It will have direct access to the Elm-Oak Arterial which ties into both the Kensington Expressway and New York State Thruway.

**Office Development**

The area north of Marine Midland is a prime development area for new office space with high accessibility to both mass transit and parking supply.

**The Marine Midland Project**

This major pioneering project is currently under construction and will add 900,000 square feet of office space. Later stages will include a hotel, retail space, and another 500,000 square feet of space.

**The Auditorium Project**

The auditorium is being enlarged and rebuilt to seat 15,000. It is the arena for the Buffalo Sabres Hockey Team and Buffalo Braves Basketball Team. This facility is available for other types of indoor sports events and will be, upon completion, a major addition to the sports facilities of the Buffalo region.

**The Community College**

A new Community College should be established in the South Main Street area of the Downtown. It will be served by the mass transit system with accessibility to Downtown for work-study courses and the Downtown work force.

Kensington Expwy  
Genesee  
Sycamore  
Broadway  
William  
Eagle  
S. Division  
Swan  
Myrtle  
Seneca  
Carroll  
Exchange  
N.Y. State Thruway  
Scott  
Perry  
Fulton  
South Park  
Miami

Fuhrmann Buffalo Skyway Michigan Moore

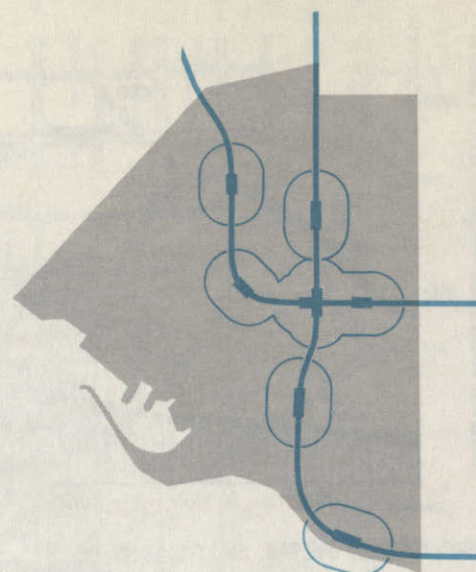


**DOWNTOWN BUFFALO / The Regional Center**

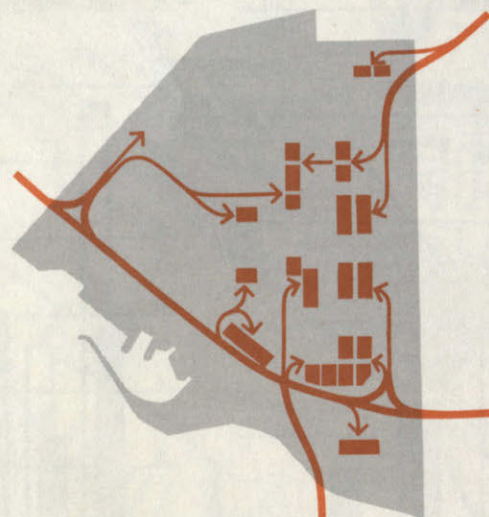




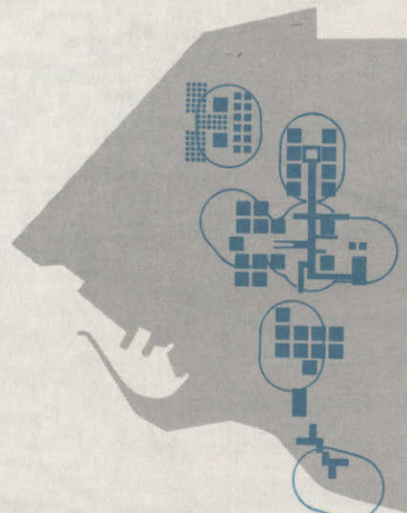
**Expressways Serve Downtown**



**Mass Transit Serves Downtown**



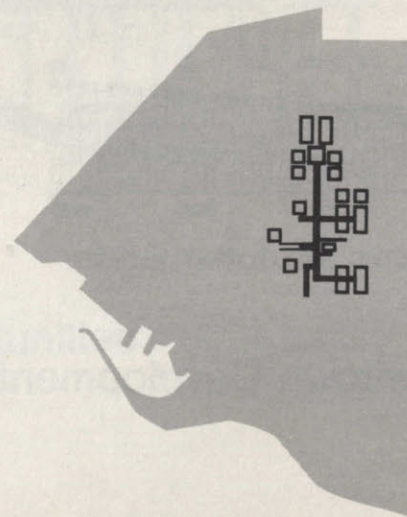
**Expressways Feed into Parking Structures**



**Mass Transit Serves the Mall and Major Uses**



**Parking Structures Feed into the Mall**



**The Mall Connects New Private Development**

### **Design Principles and Dynamics of the Plan**

The basic principle of the Plan is to use public investments in public facilities in a connected, mutually supportive way to produce an environment and investment climate conducive to large scale private investment in the Downtown and, thus, improve the City's tax base.

Public investment will be primarily in the area of transportation and movement systems. These are to be designed and located to produce a continuous and sequential chain of events and facilities which will allow people to go to and from their destinations in a convenient, pleasant, safe, visually coherent way.

The basic elements of the movement system are:

#### **1 Rapid Transit**

A rail, subway rapid transit line is a major feature of the Downtown Plan. It is intended to reduce automobile traffic to Downtown; provide at transit stops an exciting entrance into Downtown. The first installation of the system is the Buffalo/Amherst line. Ultimately the system is proposed to be completed by the addition of the Kenmore/Airport line.

#### **2 Highways**

The highway and expressway system maximizes access to Downtown and allows the relatively small number of drivers wishing to by-pass Downtown to do so easily. A depressed expressway between Elm and Oak Streets, originally proposed in the Niagara Frontier Transportation Study, is being re-examined. The Consultants recommend a surface facility.

#### **3 Parking**

New parking structures, built to keep pace with demand for space, are to be located to intercept Downtown-bound traffic before it penetrates the Downtown street network.

#### 4 The Pedestrian Movement System and the Main Street Mall

The key organizational feature of the Downtown movement system is the Mall. It is the main connective element between rapid transit, parking, shopping, and offices as well as forming the major civic "place" for pedestrians in the City.

New private buildings would tie into the pedestrian movement system in order to preserve continuity in the Downtown pedestrian system.

#### Existing Functional Areas and Future Predominant Land Use Patterns

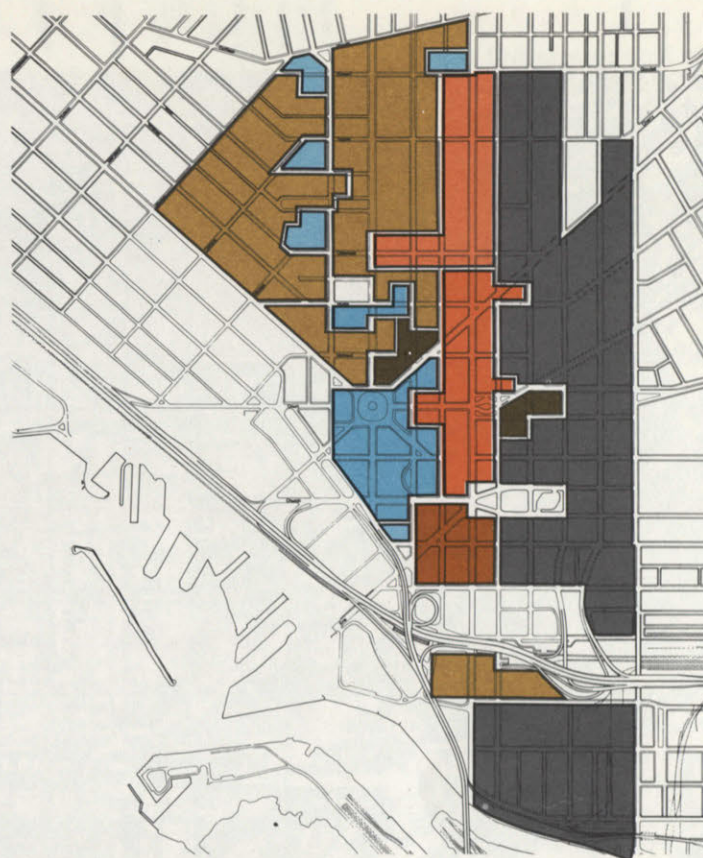
Downtown is presently characterized by a somewhat disconnected and discontinuous pattern of uses. This applies particularly to the Main Street shopping core. Lafayette Square, Genesee Street and the Division Streets introduce wide breaks in the continuity of the shopping frontage in Main Street. Downtown frame uses, such as department store warehouses and other service activities preempt important and valuable sites and additionally reduce the potential for an inviting street quality, thus, inhibiting development.

Public investment in the movement system will, however, produce a realignment of values so that sites which at present seem undesirable for development will become highly attractive in the future.

The future pattern of land uses will be much more compact and will tend to realign itself along more rational lines as a result of an integrated approach to public investment in elements of the movement system.

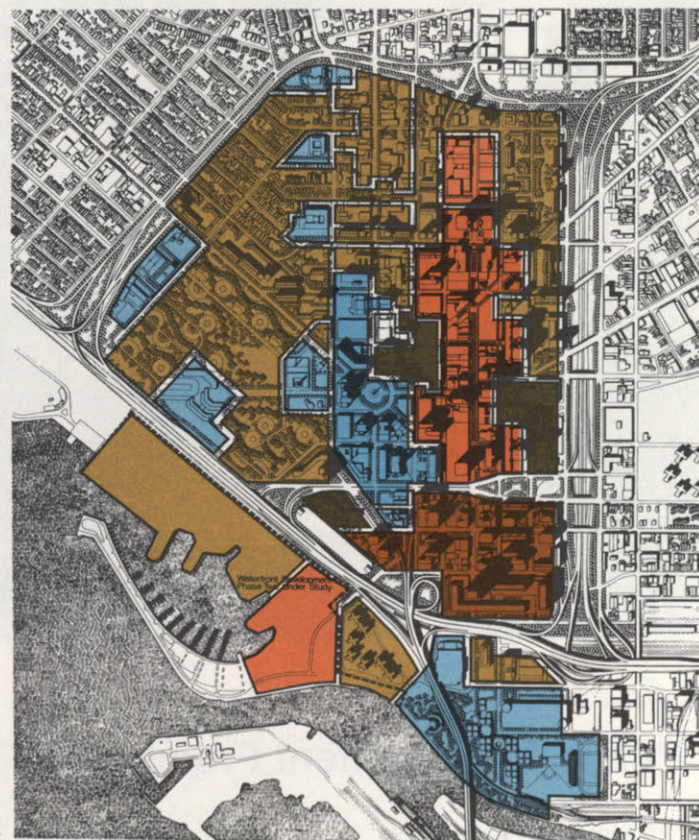
One of the central objectives of the Plan is to establish new land use patterns and strengthen existing ones, not through specification of what uses will go on what sites, but rather by guidance of the market mechanism by prudent public investment. There is, for example, no intention in the Plan of setting up prohibition or specification of certain uses on certain sites, but to rely on the market to determine the appropriate uses. The uses shown on various sites in the succeeding pages are not intended to restrict developers from proposing and carrying out alternate uses but rather to reflect what would appear to be marketable uses for those sites.

The Plan is intended to be highly flexible, to allow many activities to occur in the Downtown area, to be highly responsive to a particular developer's sense of what is marketable, and to provide a framework within which many opportunities are possible.

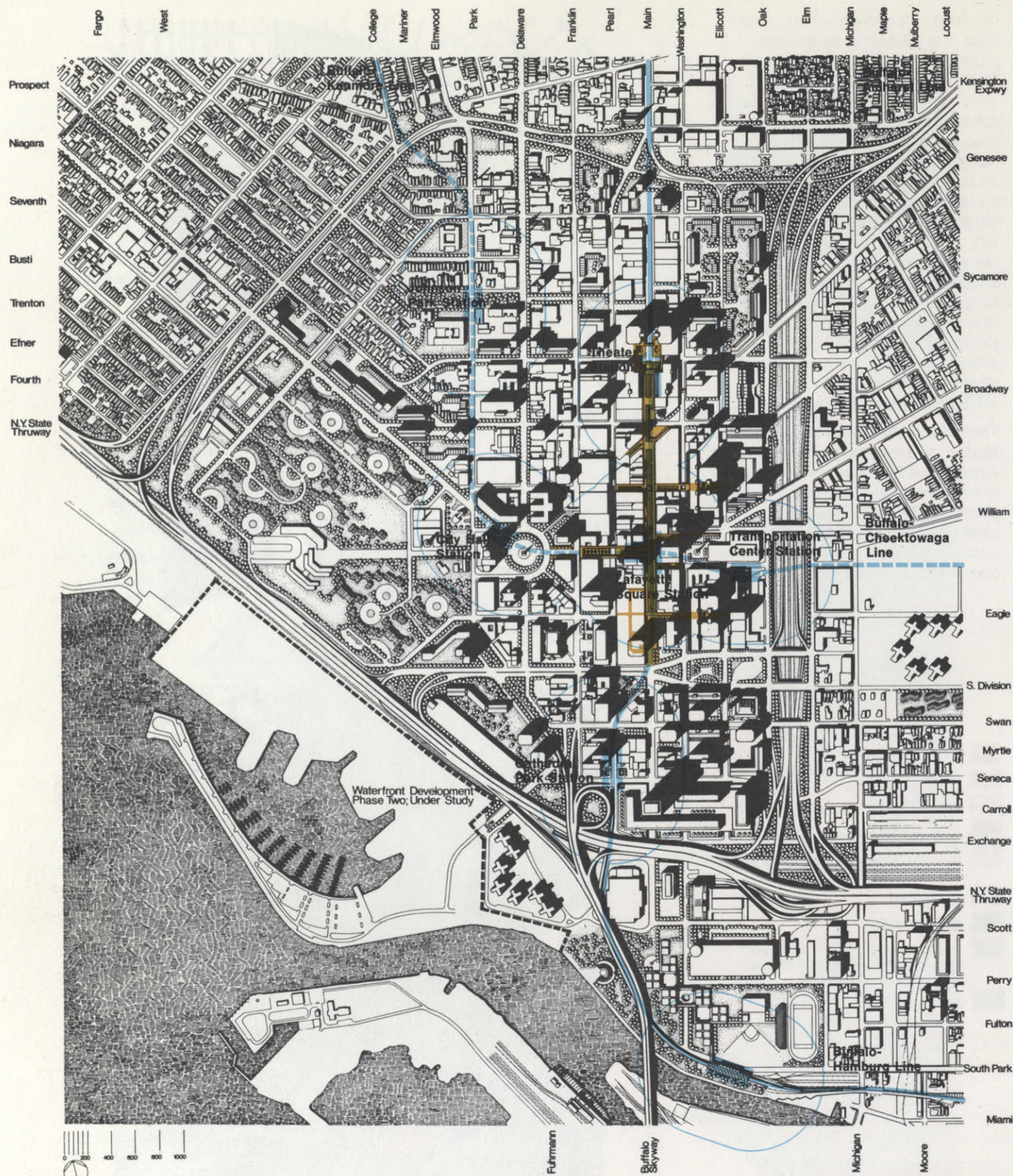


Existing Predominant Land Use

- Retail and Office Core
- Offices
- Entertainment & Retail
- Hotel & Visitor Facilities
- Mixed Uses; Offices, Services, Residential
- Residential
- Governmental
- Institutional, Educational, Health, Religious & Residentially Related Commercial
- Warehousing, Distribution, Wholesaling & Services



Predominant Land Use Concept Plan



## The Public Development Framework: Transit and the Mall

- NFTA Proposed Rapid Transit Line
- - - Potential Future Rapid Transit Line
- Bus Routes with Full Rapid Transit System
- = Transit Station & 600' Walking Radius
- Main Street Mall

### Rapid Transit and the Mall

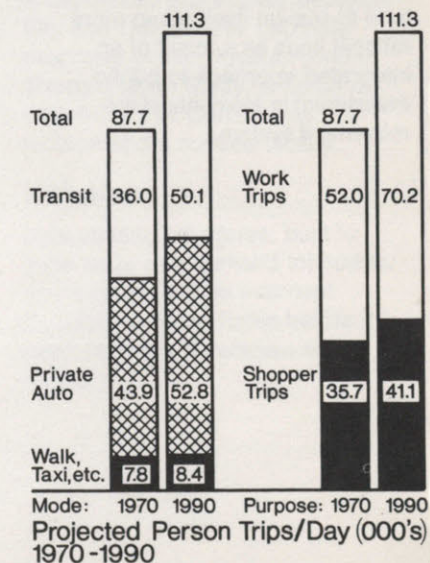
Two lines are proposed for a regional public rail rapid transit system. A rail system has the advantages of minimizing air pollution and maximizing peak hour capacity in the Downtown. It can be in subway in the downtown area, which allows the possibility of designing maximum amenity into the Main Street Mall. Further, it allows the line to be designed as *part of the Mall*.

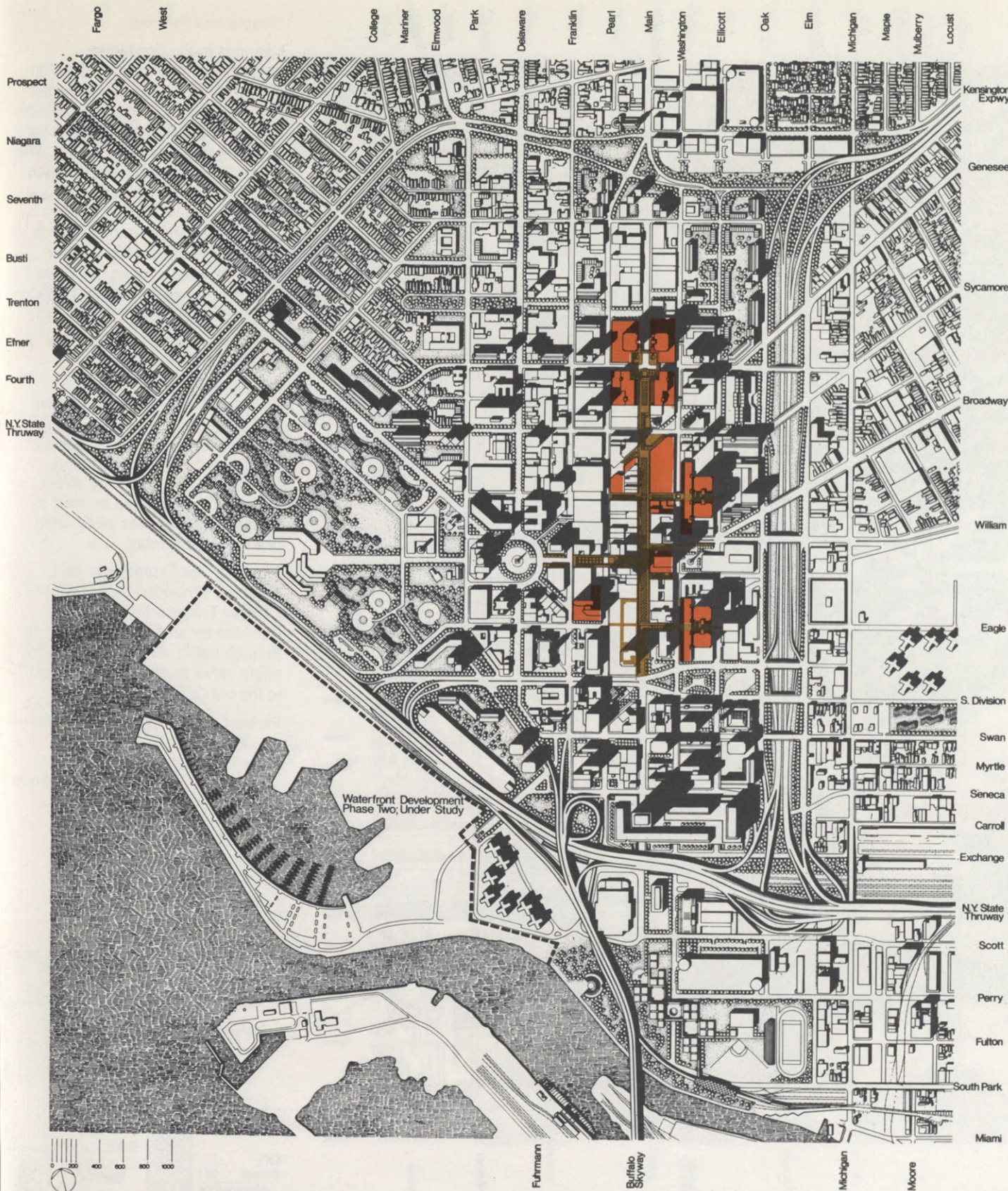
The future second line, the Kenmore/Airport line, would cross the Buffalo/Amherst line in what is now Lafayette Square.

The stops on both lines serve the five major clusters of activities in the Downtown: North Main Street, Lafayette Square, South Main Street/Cathedral, the Community College and the Government Center.

The Mall will stretch from just north of Chippewa Street to Main Place Mall on the south. It will have extensions east and west on Huron Street, Court Street, Lafayette Square, and Eagle Street. The extensions will connect to the Convention Center, major off-street parking facilities, the transportation center, building lobbies, and stores. The Mall will be a covered all-weather facility, heated and air-conditioned.

Three subway stops will be within the Mall itself, two on the Buffalo/Amherst line: theater (between Chippewa and Huron Streets) and Lafayette Square, which also will be a stop on the Kenmore/Airport line.





## Private Investment Opportunities: Retail

- Retail Investment Opportunity Area
- Main Street Mall

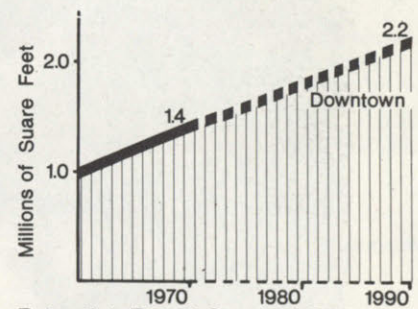
## Retail Space

The Mall represents a major investment opportunity for retail investors in Downtown Buffalo. It provides a facility which ties together the downtown retailing function, overcoming the disabilities of discontinuity and vulnerability to weather presently characterizing Downtown as a shopping environment.

Mass transit consolidates the environment produced by the Mall by providing fast, easy access to Downtown from distant parts of the Region as well as the close-in areas of the City.

The qualities and amenities produced by these features will vastly improve the competitive position of Downtown with respect to other investment opportunities in the Region.

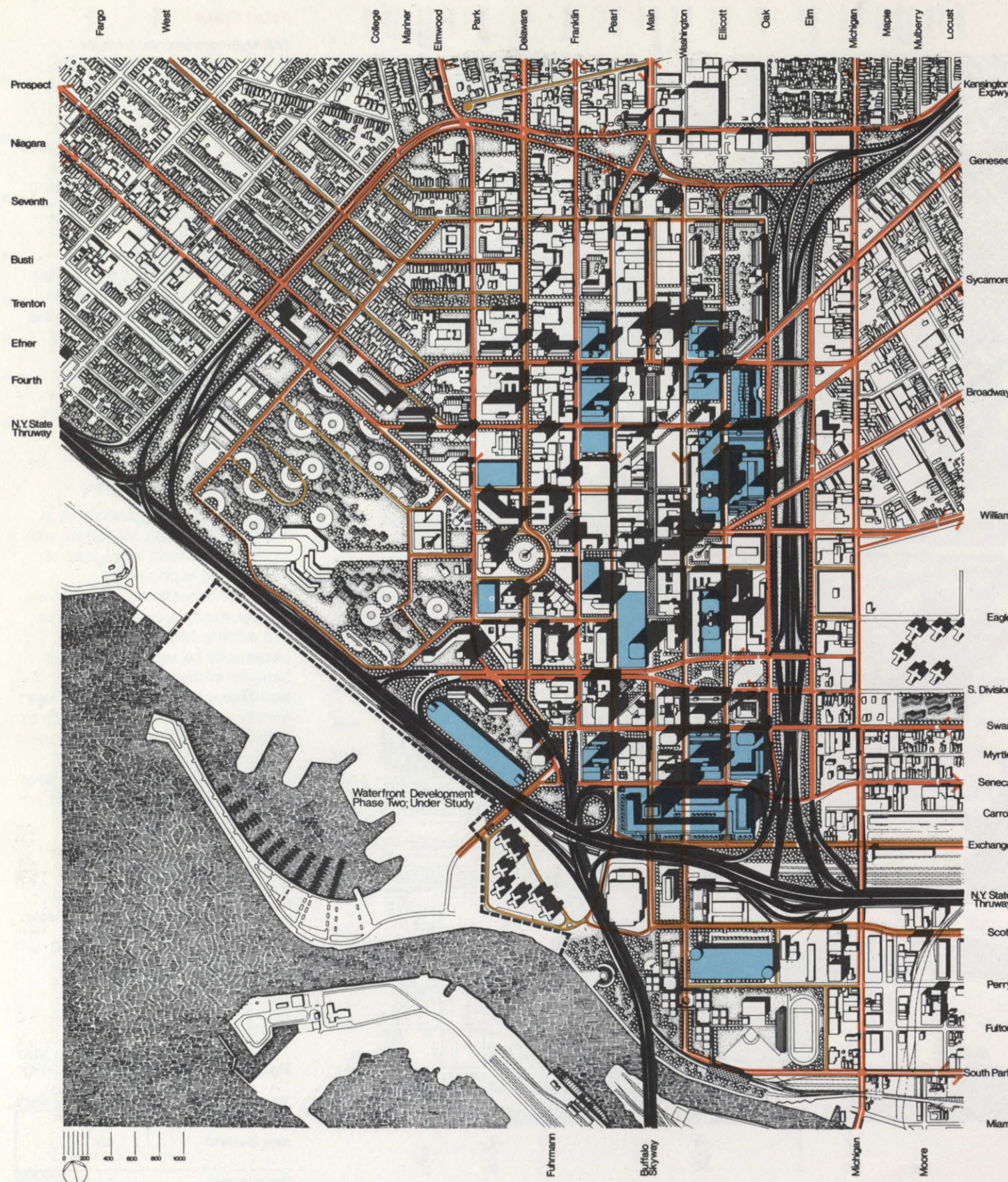
Retail investment opportunities in the Downtown area associated with the Mall are shown in the map at the left. It is important to understand that those areas shown as opportunity areas do not mean that existing facilities would necessarily be replaced, but that because of the improved environment, increased retail sales activity will induce improvements to occur primarily in the areas designated. These changes will happen mainly as a result of market action rather than governmental action.



Potential Retail Space 1970-90

Total Space 1990	2.2 Million Sq.Ft.
New Demand	0.8
Replacement	0.3
Existing to Remain	1.1

Retail Space Development Program 1970-90



## Public Development Framework: Streets and Parking

- Limited Access Expressways
- Major Arterials
- Collector/Distributor Streets
- Local Streets
- Off-Street Parking Facilities

### Streets and Parking

Changes in the downtown environment brought about by the construction of the Mall and mass transit will be reinforced by changes in the street pattern and additions to the off-street parking supply. The primary purpose of these facilities is to serve downtown activities. The intention is to avoid the tendency for traffic improvements to obliterate the very uses they are meant to serve. It does not make it easy and convenient for *all* possible movement to occur in Downtown.

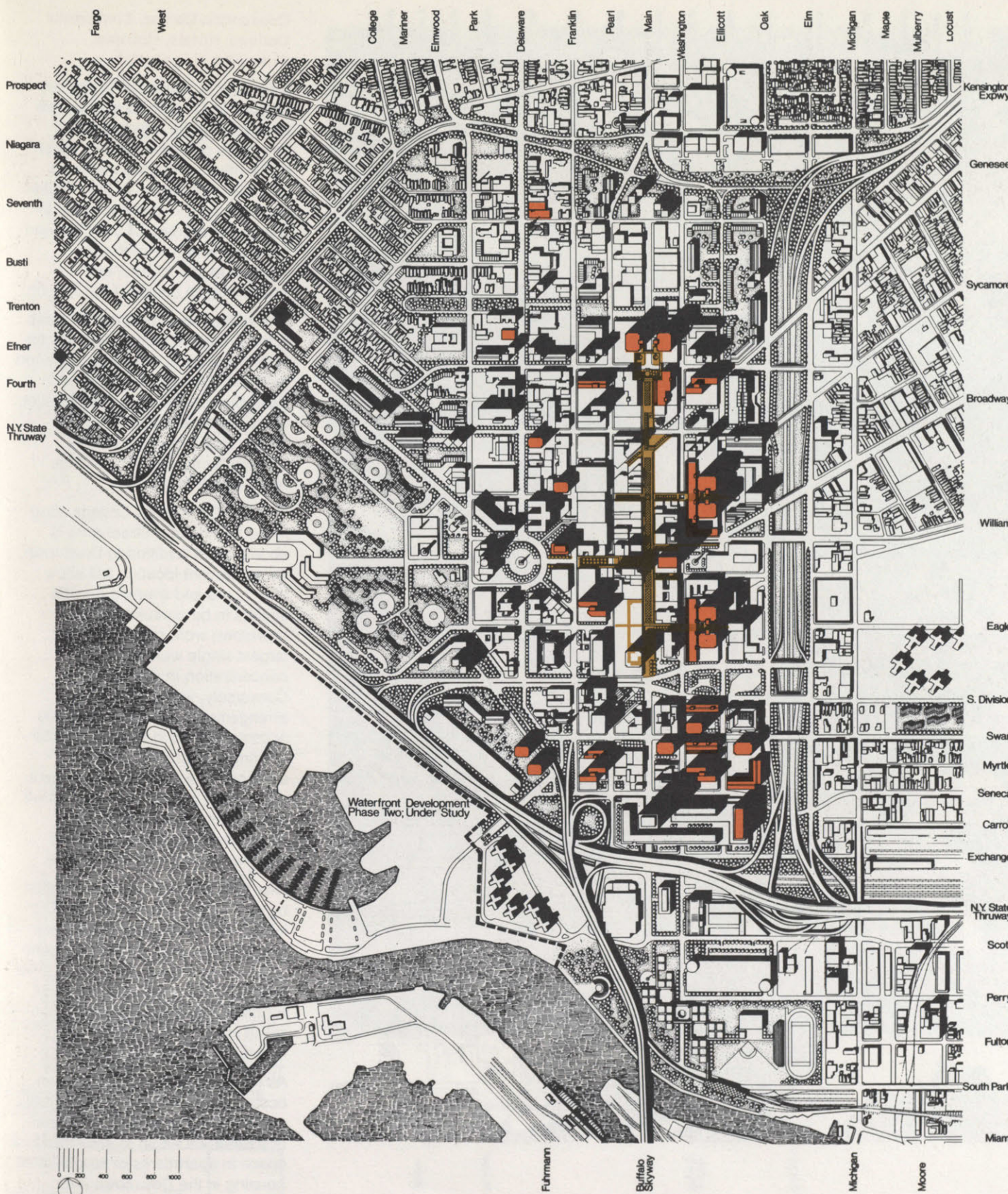
Crosstown through traffic is confined to two channels. It is expected that the through trip drivers will go *around* Downtown and those bound *to* Downtown will be siphoned off into parking structures prior to penetrating deeply into the core area street system. This principle is used to produce a traffic-free pedestrian precinct in the retail core.

The Elm-Oak Expressway as originally proposed in the Niagara Frontier Transportation Study provides for an excess capacity for through traffic. An at-grade facility might serve as well with less cost to the public.

Parking structures have been shown on locations peripheral to high value CBD sites. These are suggested locations to demonstrate the locational principle for future parking supply.

		Total	325 Spaces
Total	28.0 Spaces	New Demand	4.5
Ramps	5.0	Ramps	19.5
Off-Street Lots	13.1	Replacement	15.0
Off-Street Metered St.	18.1	Ramps	5.0
Private Lots, Illegal, etc.	1.2	Off-Street Lots	8.0
On-Street	9.9	Existing Retained	13.0
		1970	1990

Projected Parking Spaces (000's)  
1970 - 90



## Public and Private Investment Opportunities: Offices

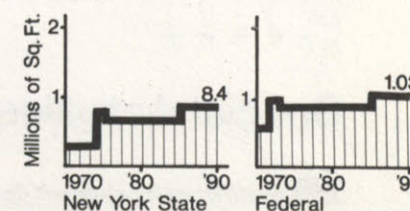
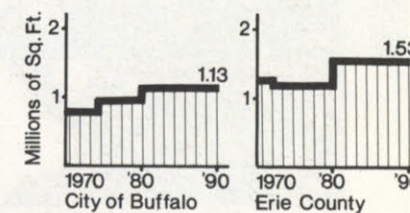
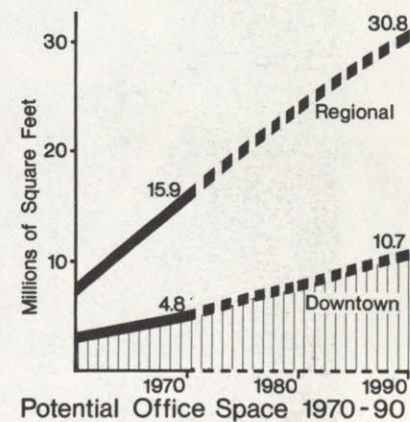
- Private or Public Office Investment Opportunity
- Main Street Mall

### New Office Space

Sites for new office buildings in the Downtown are shown clustering in four major areas: north Main Street; Central Main Street; south Main Street and around City Hall. In this area new office building development is expected to be predominantly governmental.

It is expected that the market will govern the location of specific sites. The reason for showing locations is to demonstrate that a visually coherent design for Downtown is possible. Developers may find it expedient to do something else under the dictates of a specific situation, but the Plan shows that the opportunity exists. A site can be enhanced by relating the building to the downtown pedestrian system.





The location of new governmental office space follows the trend set by recent new buildings. This trend has begun to establish a major regional government center in Downtown including Federal, County and City functions.



Projected Governmental Office Space 1970-90



## Special Activities in the Regional Center

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Hotel/Motel Development Opportunity              |  Public Facilities                   |
|  Commercial/Entertainment Development Opportunity |  Residential Development Opportunity |

### Convention Center, Community College, Hotels, Housing, Transportation Center

A number of special activities are planned in Downtown appropriate to its role as the regional center. The basic objective, as with most of the other downtown elements capable of response to the initiative of public policy, is to assemble in Downtown a group of activities and functions which reinforce its strength as the cultural and administrative center of the Region.

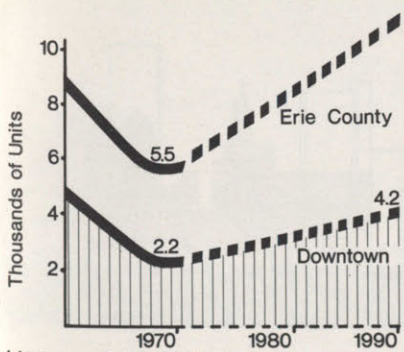
One of the most important of these is the proposed Convention Center to be located in the block bounded by Court, Franklin, Mohawk and Pearl Streets. This strategic location offers immediate access to the Statler Hotel, the Court Street Parking Ramp, the Mall and the mass transit system.

The new Community College sited in the South Main Street area is an important addition to Downtown. Its convenient location will allow after hours and evening course studies to be pursued by the downtown work population, the largest single work force concentration in the Region. Conversely, work-study course arrangements can be most easily accommodated in this location for full-time Community College students. The convenient adjacent stop on the mass transit system will significantly reduce parking demand and help reduce traffic volumes on the highway system.

New hotel demand will be generated by the Convention Center. The inventory of available hotel rooms has declined significantly in recent years in Downtown because of strict code enforcement. This demand for hotel space is expected to result in two or three first-rate hotels in Downtown by 1980.

As the revitalization of Downtown occurs, it will become an attractive place to live. Increasing numbers of people will begin to seek living space in apartments or rehabilitated housing in the Downtown area.

A new transportation center is to be built between the Elm-Oak Expressway and the Mall on the block bounded by Ellicott, North Division, Oak and Clinton Streets.



Hotel and Motel Unit Projections  
1970-90

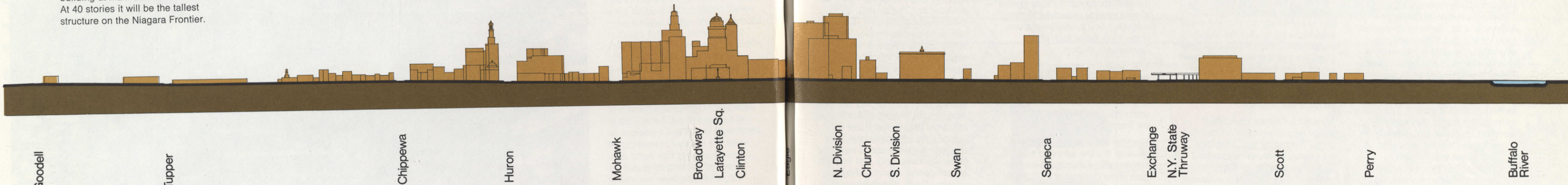
Total 1990		4.2 Thousand Units
New Demand	2.2	
Replacement	0.8	
Existing to Remain	1.2	

Hotel and Motel Development  
Program 1970-90



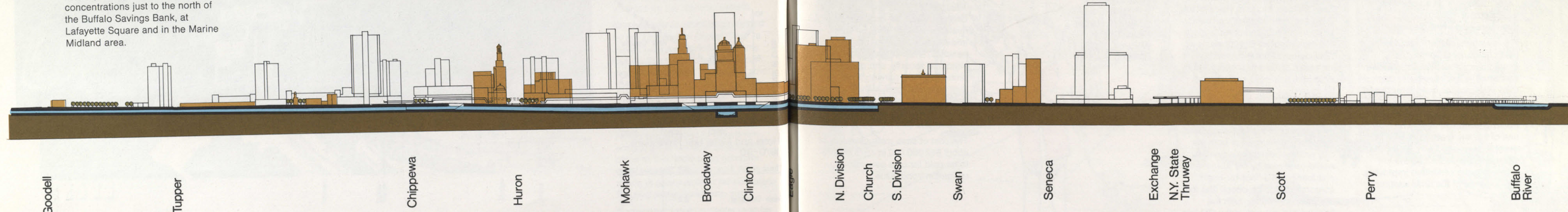
**Present Skyline**

The profile of the Downtown taken through Main Street looking east is being transformed by the rising structure of the Marine Midland building at Main and Swan Streets. At 40 stories it will be the tallest structure on the Niagara Frontier.



**Future Skyline**

The future skyline will see clusters of high rise office buildings develop along Main Street with concentrations just to the north of the Buffalo Savings Bank, at Lafayette Square and in the Marine Midland area.



## 2 Main Street Mall

### A Policy Statement by the Mall Committee

There is only one realistic alternative for retailing activities in Downtown Buffalo. That is: to continue to be successful, Downtown must be prepared to offer to shoppers an environment which not only affords the amenities and features available to suburban shopping center patrons of convenience, ease of parking and access, and comfortable all-weather environment, but it must and can offer more. Downtown inherently is able to offer all of the one-of-a-kind variety that suburban malls are not in a position to give to their users. This feature of Downtown in its role as the center of a great metropolitan region can easily be exploited to restore Downtown to its rightful place. It is the firm belief of this Committee that through concerted action by the City and its downtown leadership a center promising a level of physical amenity infinitely superior to that found elsewhere in the Region can be produced in the next ten years.

The Mall will be its central feature. It will provide the setting for a variety of stores, shops, restaurants, hotels, and other facilities such as the projected new Convention Center available on a scale and concentration not possible anywhere else in the Region.

The members of the Main Street Mall and Parking Committee unanimously accepted the premise contained in the Interim Report CBD Plan that the Main Street Mall was a key element in the Downtown Concept Plan. Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd designate it as one of the key features in overall development, and Larry Smith and Company, Inc. label it as the key element in the continued improving performance of the retail section.

The Committee studied carefully the plans for the physical structure of the Mall as prepared by the Consultants. The relationship of the Mall to existing buildings, to proposed new construction within and outside of the Mall, and, particularly, to the proposed rapid transit system are matters of prime importance. The preliminary plans have flexibility to attach the roof of the Mall to existing buildings, and to permit erection of new ones before, during or after the Mall construction. Most importantly, final plans for the Mall would go forward together with final planning of the subway section in the same area so that construction and use may be properly tied together.

Through a Finance Committee jointly appointed with the Chairman of the Transportation Committee, the various methods suggested by the Consultants for the financing of Mall construction were examined as to the feasibility and practicality of their use in this particular case. For the many reasons set forth in the Finance Committee's memorandum of November 4, 1970, this Mall and Parking Committee determined that it must recommend that the Mall be constructed with City funds, to be repaid from future tax revenues. Both Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd and their economic advisors, Larry Smith and Company, project that the proposed Downtown Development Plan will provide increased sales and property taxes to pay the financing cost several times over.

The Committee's study of the problems of management and maintenance of the Mall suggested that the best interests of both the City and the business community would be served by the formation and funding of a "not-for-profit" corporation. It is proposed that the business community, with the backing and support of the Greater Buffalo Development Foundation, finance such a corporation to assist the City in implementing the

planning and building of the Mall and to manage it after completion under a contract with the City. It is also suggested that the management of the Convention Center and dual promotion of both the Convention Center and the Mall be undertaken by this corporation.

An outstanding retail Mall and a fine convention facility together with the anticipated rapid transit system should provide incentives for the projected new private investment in the CBD as set forth in the Consultant's Report.

The parking to meet the projected requirements in the overall CBD and should be carried out by the City through its Board of Parking under the "Buffalo Plan of Parking", the finest in the Country.

The Mall and Parking Committee believes that the adoption and carrying out of the objectives set forth in the Consultant's CBD Plan are essential to the continued improvement of the downtown area which is the life blood of the City. The environment must be further enhanced and the tax base greatly increased or the City faces a dismal future.

Charles Diebold, III; Chairman  
Robert B. Adam  
Louis L. Berger  
William E. Goechll  
William H. Harder  
David J. Laub  
William L. Smith  
Harlan J. Swift

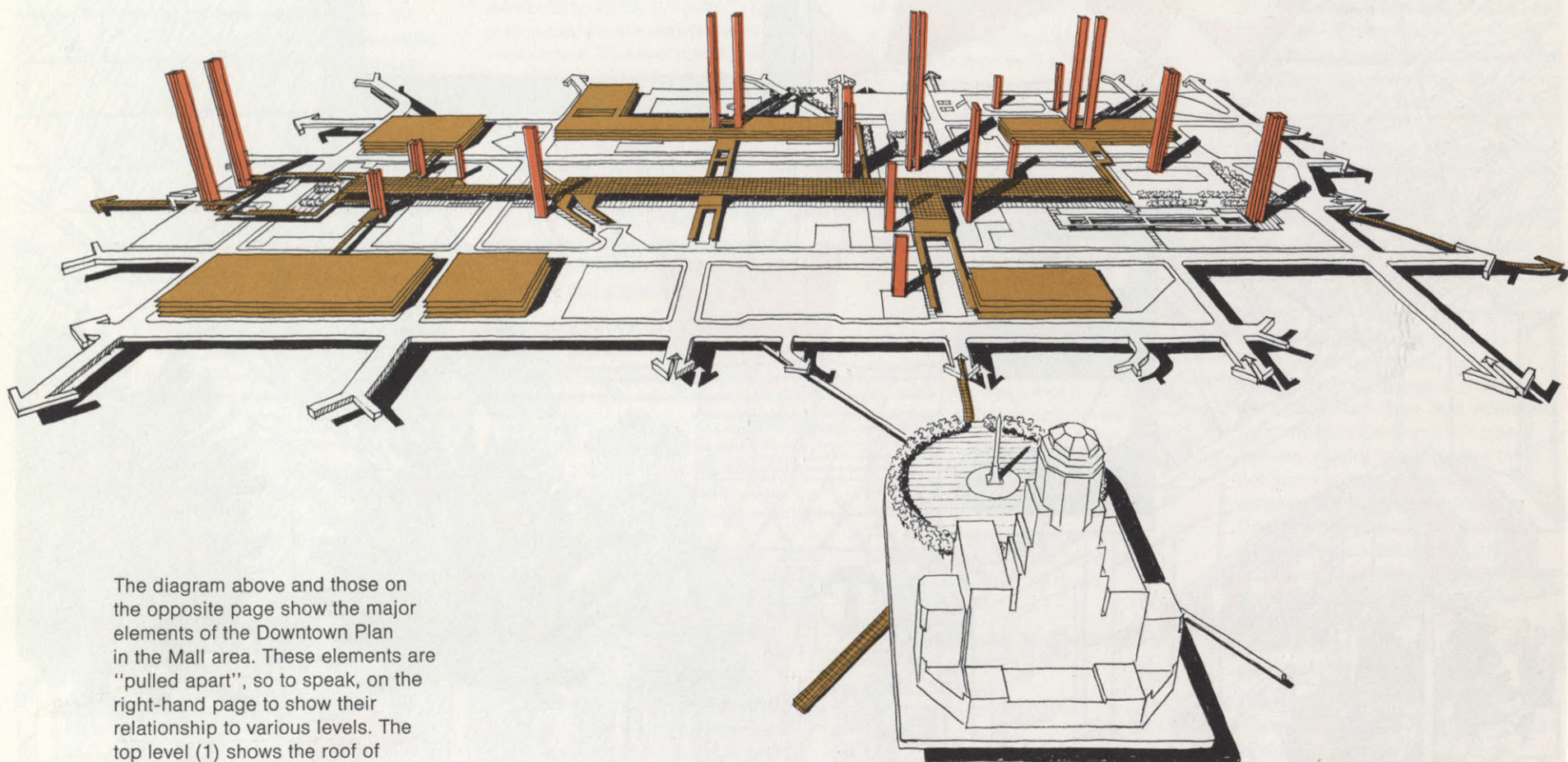
### Principles and Objectives

The Mall design is based on the principle that, if an entirely new environment is created Downtown, the retail growth now being siphoned off to regional shopping centers can be recaptured Downtown. The first question is, of course, whether Downtown can support the necessary investment required to produce such an environment. The answer, after exhaustive investigation, is that it can be supported by allocation of a portion of the increased tax revenues gained if Downtown captures only the present proportion it now represents of total regional retail and office space of expected new regional growth. This is a very modest goal, indeed. There is every reason to believe that it can do significantly better than this if the environment produced is markedly more attractive than that managed by competitive regional shopping centers. Again, this objective does not seem unduly difficult to accomplish. Further, if access to Downtown is maximized, the competitive advantage would be maintained easily, particularly since the variety of goods and services offered downtown is bound to be more extensive than that offered elsewhere.

The type of facility envisioned is a covered, skylit, air-conditioned and heated structure. It will be light and airy with planting, paving, benches, small convenience shops, adequate security, and police protection from parking space to destination or from transit car to destination (a service not possible in the present physical arrangement of Downtown).

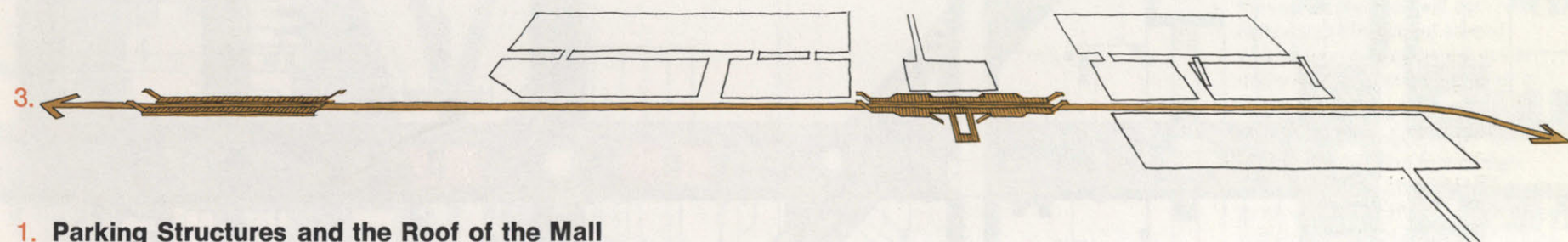
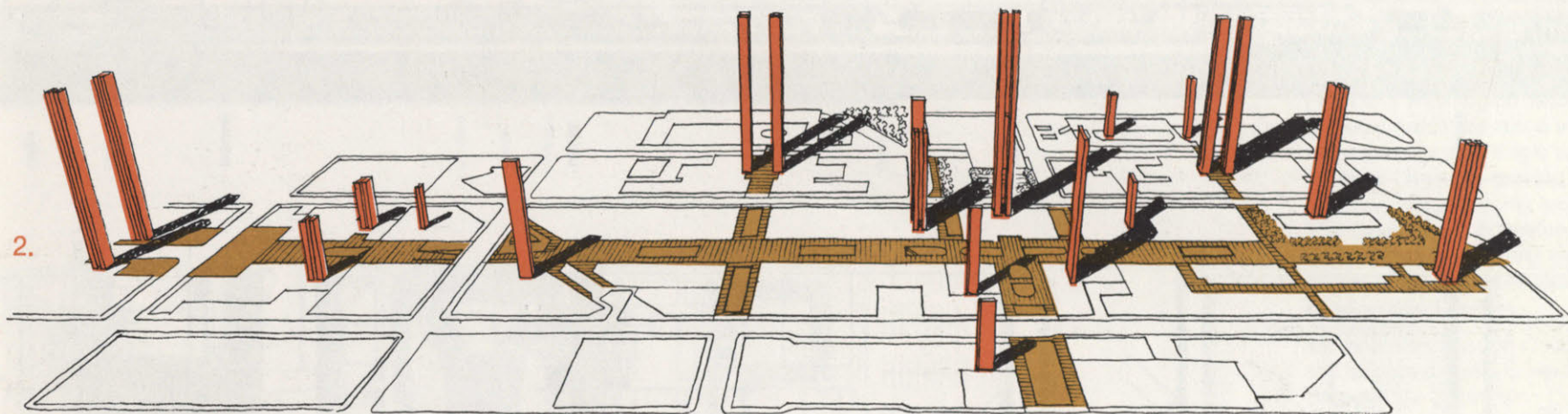
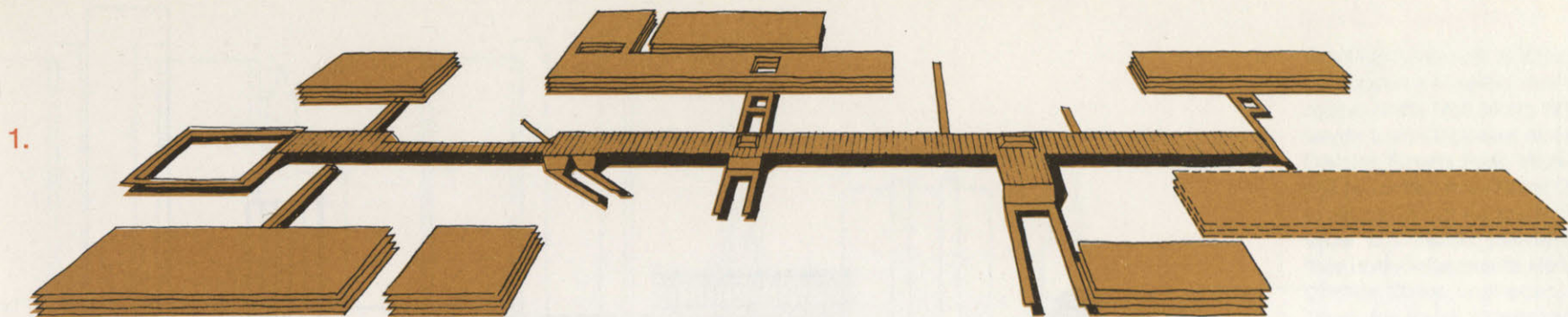
The cost of such a structure will be about \$12,000,000 in 1975 dollars to be paid for by a general obligation bond issue.





The diagram above and those on the opposite page show the major elements of the Downtown Plan in the Mall area. These elements are "pulled apart", so to speak, on the right-hand page to show their relationship to various levels. The top level (1) shows the roof of the Mall and its connection to peripheral parking structures. The second level (2) shows the Mall level which is presently the ground and street level and the connections with office lobbies and stores. The third level (3) shows the Buffalo/Amherst subway line lying immediately below the street surface. The bottom level (4) shows the Kenmore/Airport line passing under the Buffalo/Amherst line and its stations at Lafayette Square and the transportation center.

The diagram above puts all these levels together as a composite to show the interlocking nature of the various elements of the Plan.

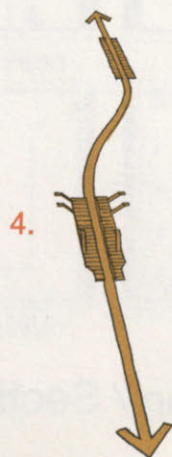


1. Parking Structures and the Roof of the Mall

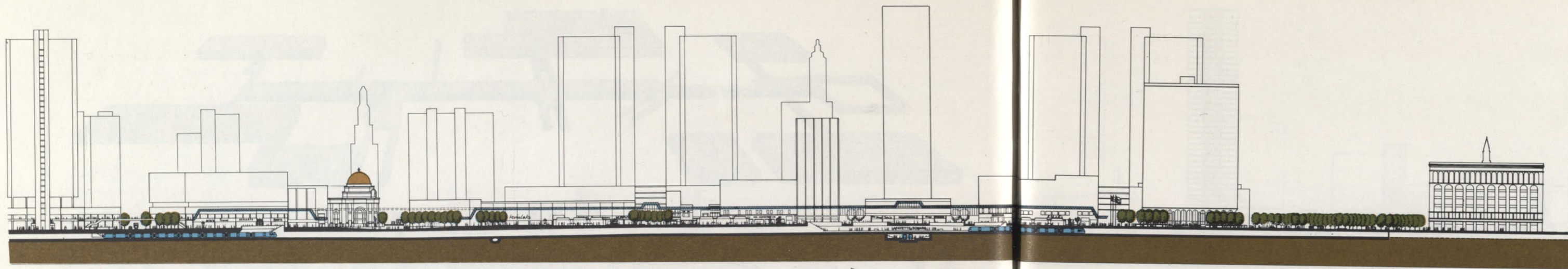
2. The Mall Level Showing Vertical Elevator Towers, Lobbies and Stores

3. Buffalo/Amherst Subway Line Under the Main Street Mall

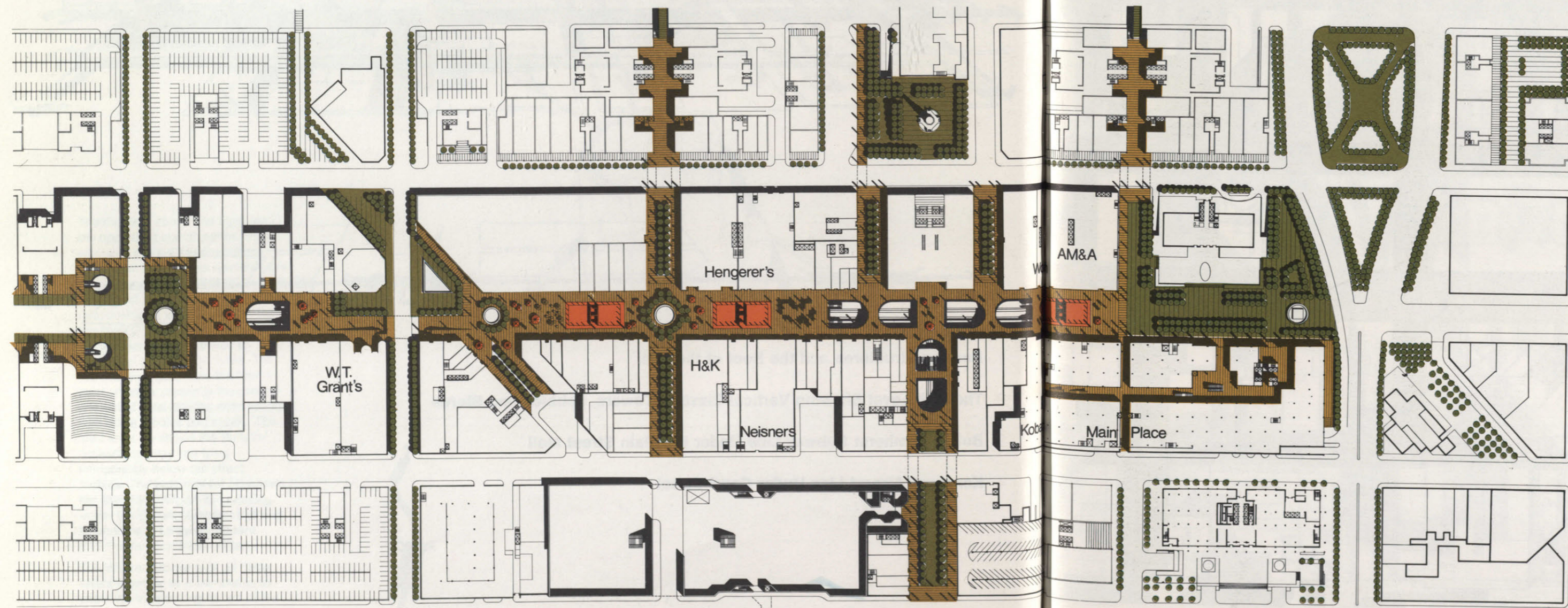
4. Kenmore/Airport Line Under Court Street



Composite Diagram of All Major Levels  
in the Main Street Mall Area



Chippewa Huron Mohawk Broadway Clinton Eagle N. Division Church S. Division Swan



Ellicott  
Washington  
Main  
Pearl  
Franklin

- Enclosed Mall and Arcades
- Outdoor Plazas and Pedestrian Ways
- Mall Retail
- Rapid Transit Line

22 Main Street Mall Street Level Plan / Section Through Main Street

**The Main Street Mall**

The Plan at the left and the section above give a detailed view of the nature of the Mall along its entire length from Chippewa Street to the Division Streets Park. Main Street will be closed from North Division to Huron Street. An underpass will allow unimpeded pedestrian traffic flow from Chippewa to North Division Street. Mall extensions on Court and Eagle Streets will extend the pedestrian precinct one block on either side of Main Street to Pearl and Washington Streets. Main entrances to the Mall will be from Pearl and Washington Streets. Covered grade crossings will attach extensions east on Eagle and Mohawk Streets to parking facilities and new office building lobbies. The Eagle Street extension will cross over Ellicott Street on a bridge to the proposed new transportation center.

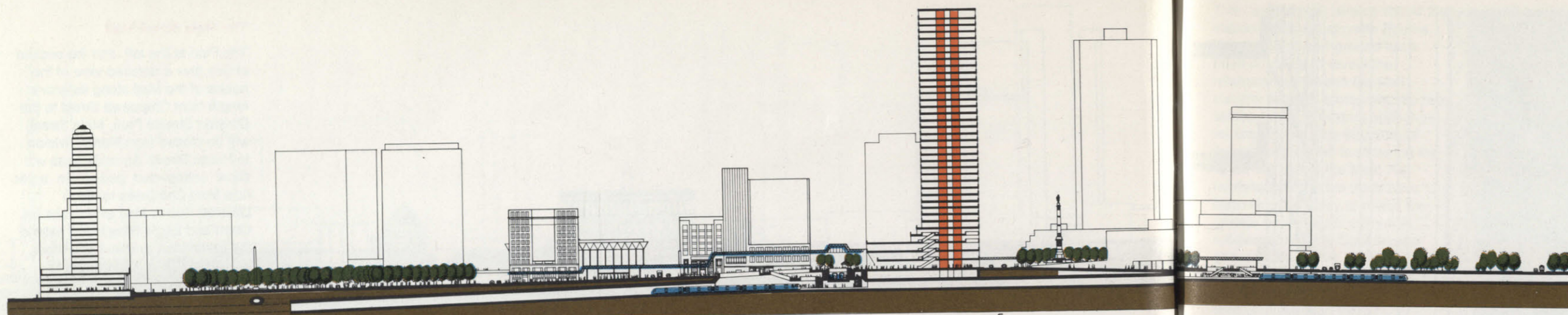
An extension west on Court Street will provide a direct connection between the Convention Center and the Mall.

The roof structure will cross the intervening streets where the Mall continues from one side of the street to the other. At Eagle and Washington Streets, for instance, the roof of the Mall will continue right across the street so that pedestrians can cross the street under cover even in bad weather.

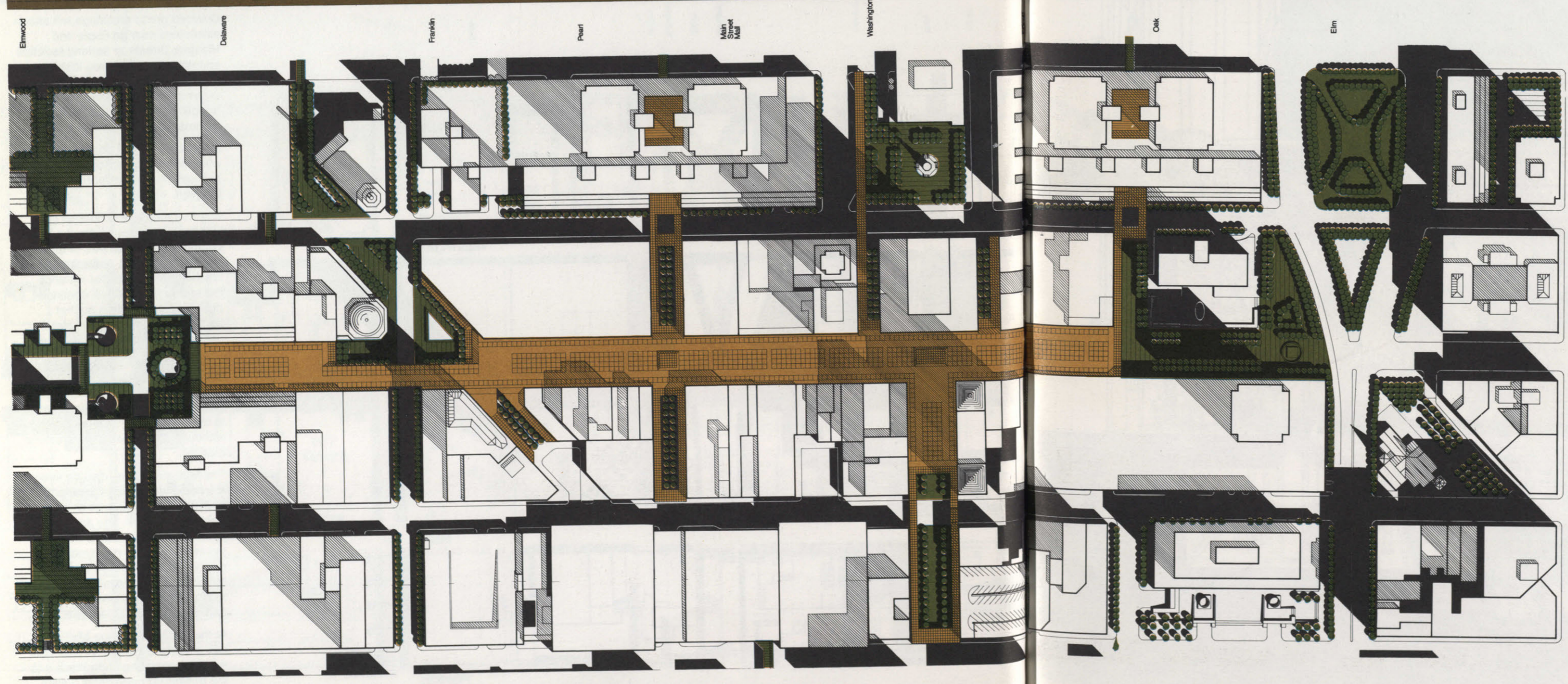
The structure will be made as a space frame supported by columns spaced on fifty-five foot centers. This device will allow the structure to be extended in several directions without altering the basic structural module.

The Mall extensions on side streets are designed as skylit arcades on both sides of the former street and open on one side. The arcades will open toward what was previously the cartway of the old street. The paving will be removed and the street filled with trees and planting, thus adding badly needed relief of park space in the Downtown Core.

At the southern end the Mall will join directly to the Main Place Mall, thus incorporating Main Place into the downtown pedestrian system.

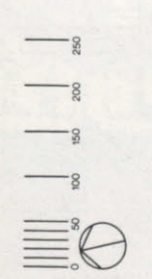


■ Transit  
■ Elevators



■ Enclosed Mall and Arcades  
■ Outdoor Plazas and Pedestrian Ways

Ellicott  
 Washington  
 Main  
 Pearl  
 Franklin

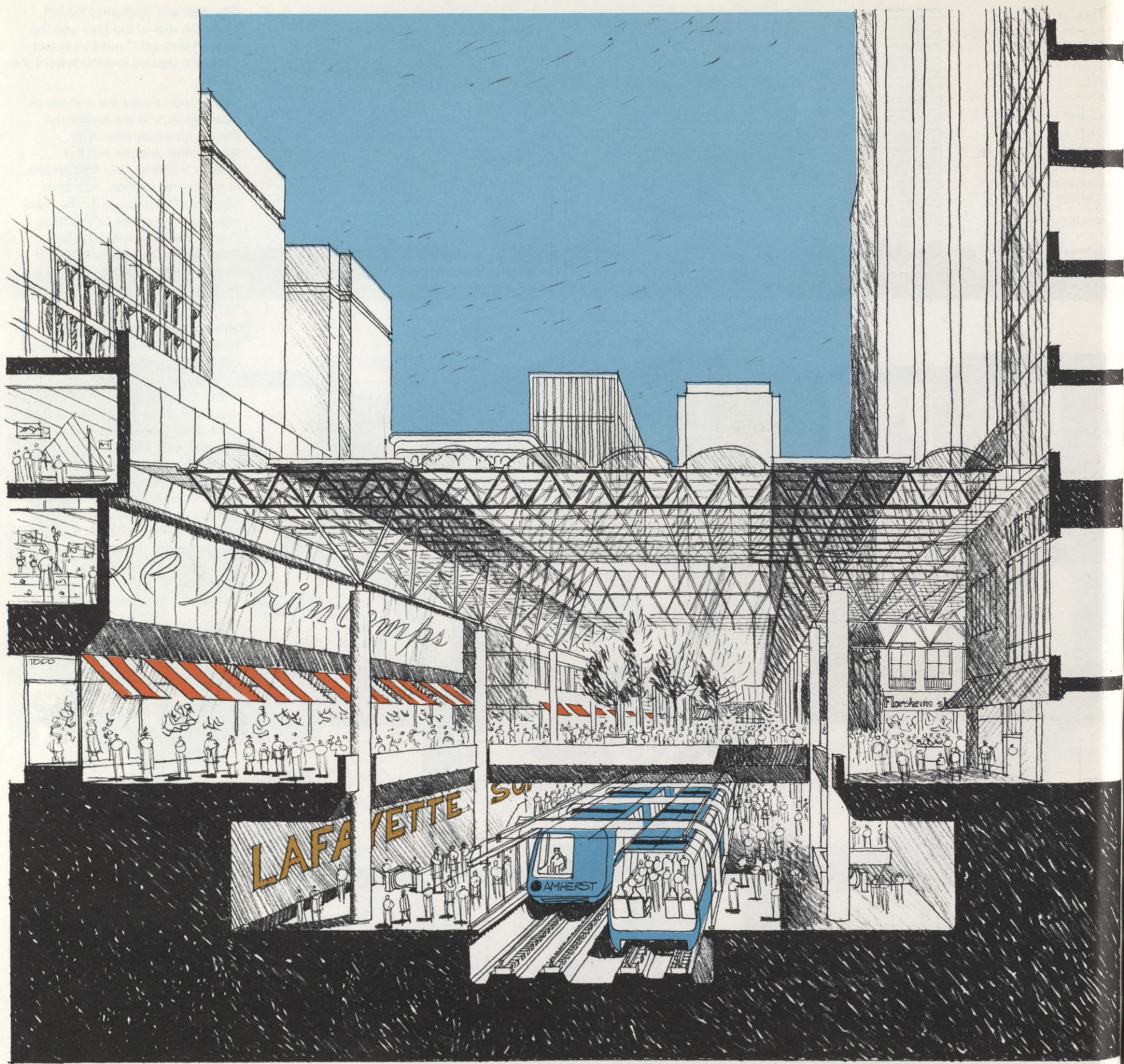


The plan and section at the left show the roof of the Mall and the section through Court Street and Lafayette Square looking toward the north.

The section shows the stations at Main Street with the Kenmore/Airport Line tube shown in longitudinal section and the Buffalo/Amherst Line tube shown in transverse section, with Main Street Mall just above it. The main entrance of the new Convention Center shows just to the left of Pearl Street. This section clearly shows the direct connection of the Convention Center with the Mall and the mass transit lines.

Working with Commissioner Howard, a concept was developed using two concrete roadways over each line of columns on either side of the street at the roof level. These roadways support a fire fighting apparatus permanently housed on the roof of the Mall. The purpose of the permanent apparatus is to be available to fight any fires which would normally be fought by hook and ladder apparatus from the street. Fires occurring in buildings below the roof line of the Mall would be fought by regular street equipment which would come directly into the Mall at street level.

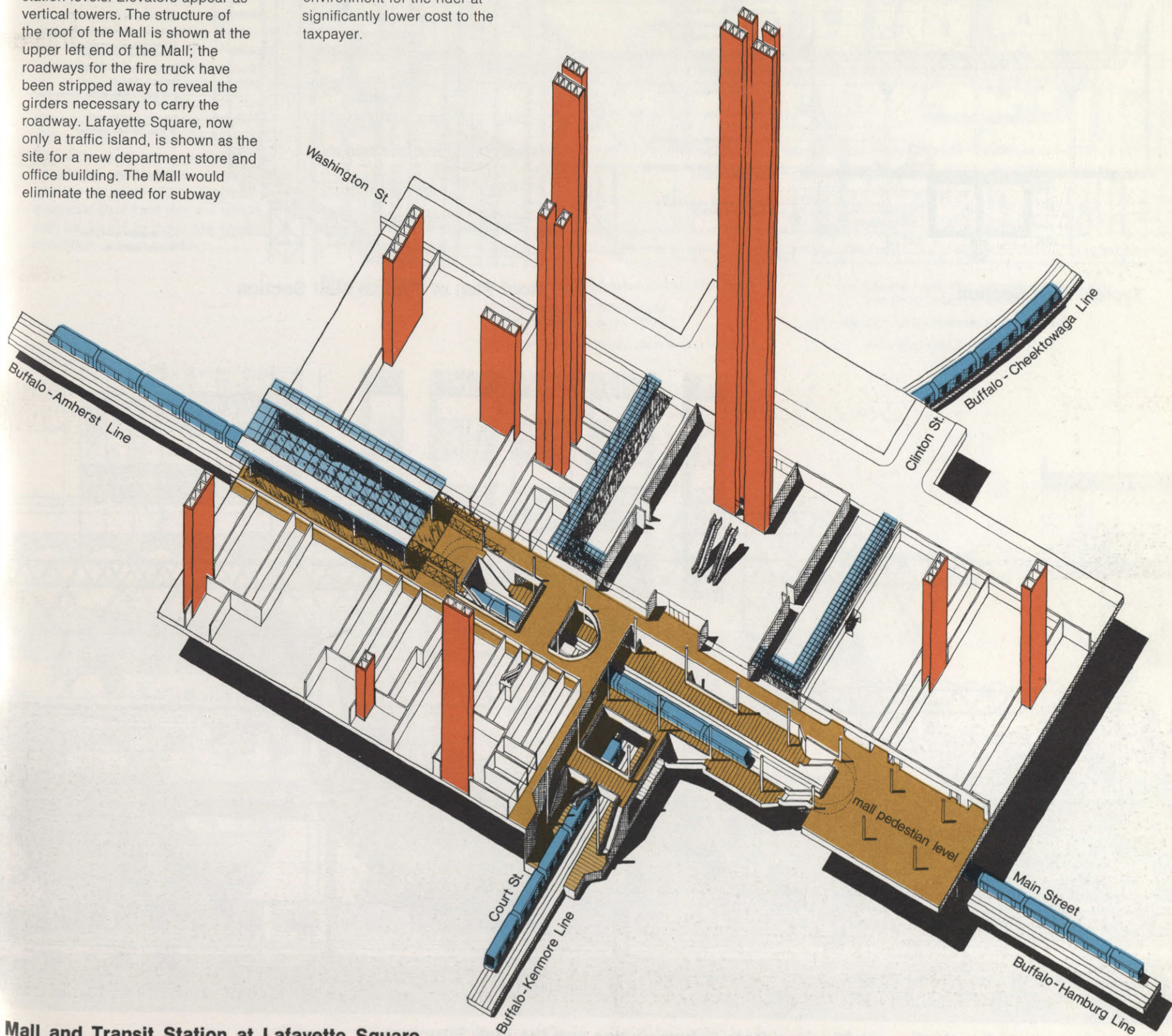
The roof plan also shows the roof of the extensions of the Mall continuing across Pearl Street at Court Street and across Washington at Eagle Street, Lafayette Square and Mohawk Street.



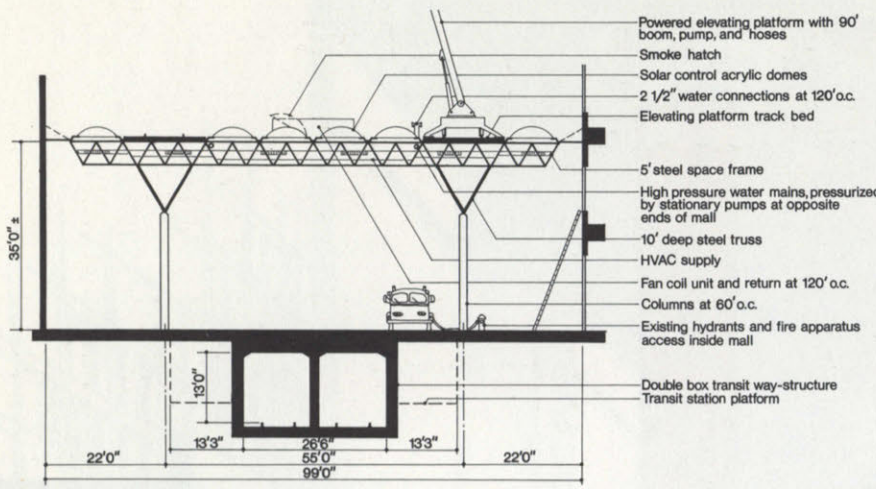


This "anatomical" sketch shows the station levels at Lafayette Square. The buildings and ground have been cut away to reveal the relationship between the Mall, elevator lobbies, stores and the two station levels. Elevators appear as vertical towers. The structure of the roof of the Mall is shown at the upper left end of the Mall; the roadways for the fire truck have been stripped away to reveal the girders necessary to carry the roadway. Lafayette Square, now only a traffic island, is shown as the site for a new department store and office building. The Mall would eliminate the need for subway

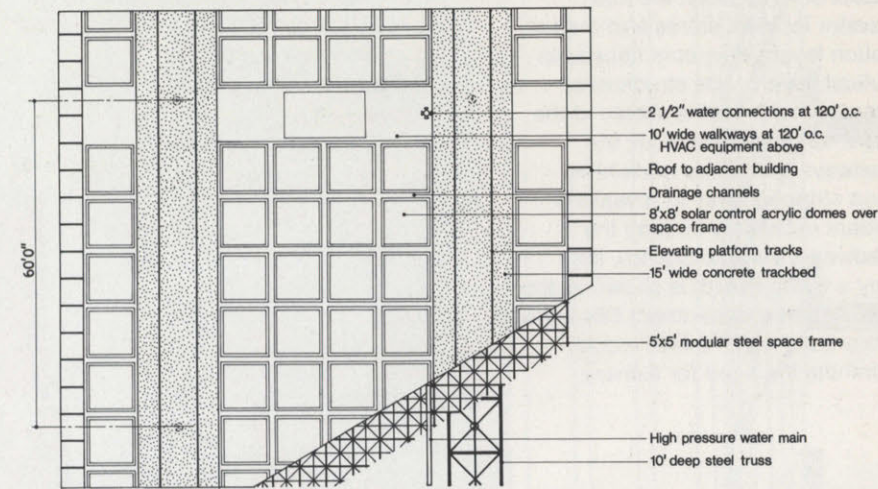
mezzanines and permit the station platforms to be at minimum depth below the ground. This will reduce the length of stairs and allow a closer, more open relationship to the Mall. It also provides a safer environment for the rider at significantly lower cost to the taxpayer.



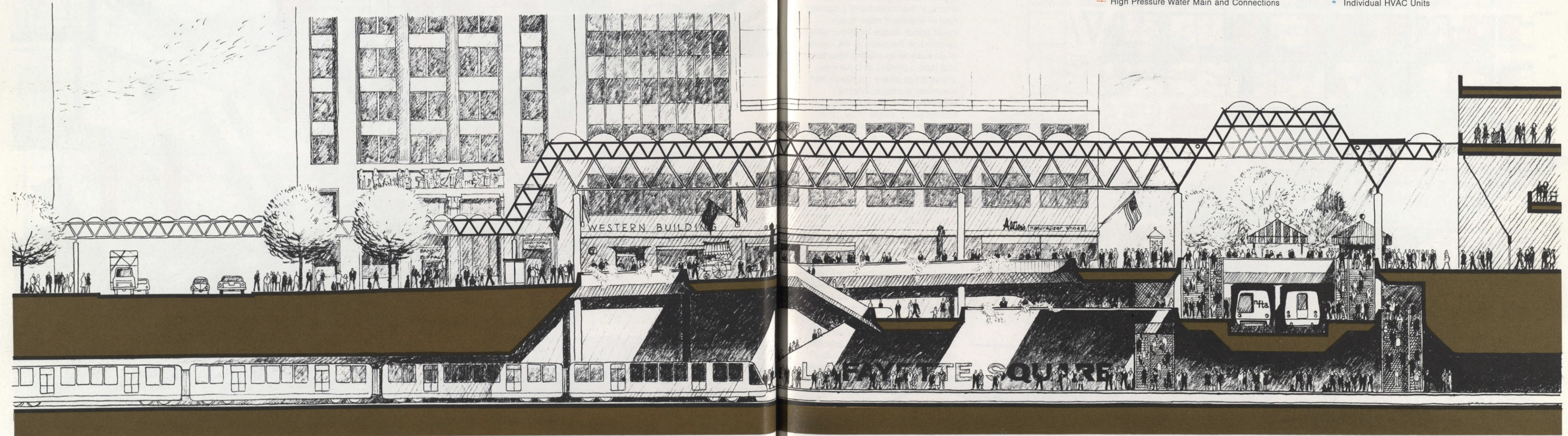
**Mall and Transit Station at Lafayette Square**



Typical Mall Section

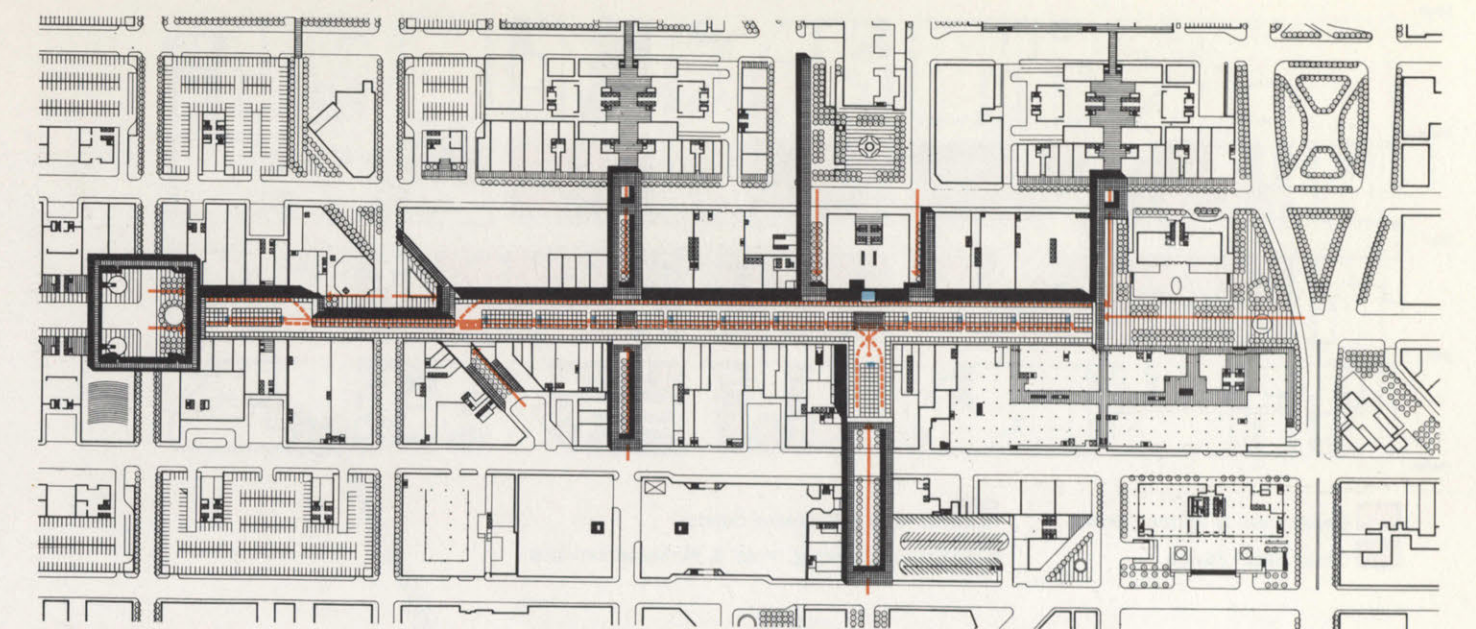


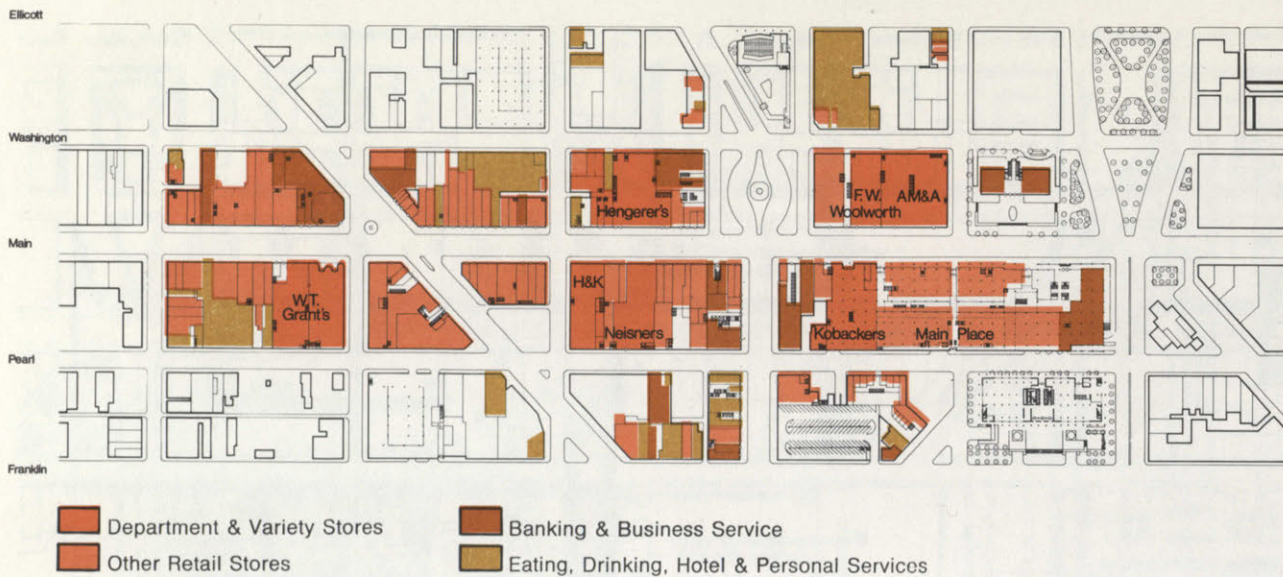
Roof Plan of Typical Mall Section



28 Section through Lafayette Square Showing Both Subway Lines and the Mall Structure

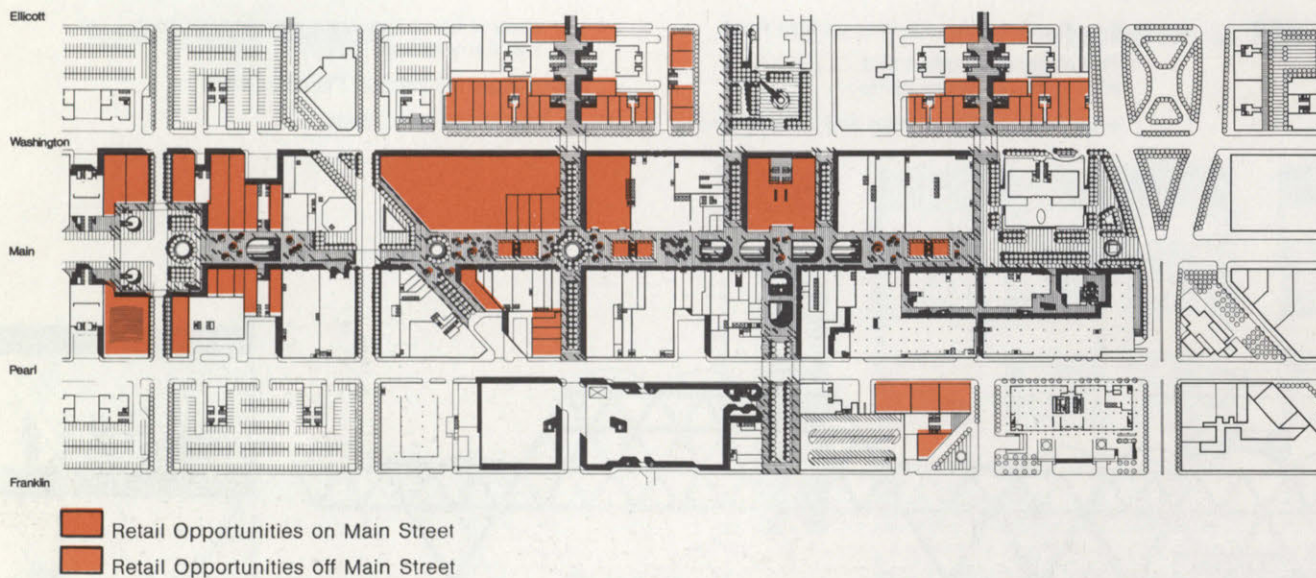
The open, skylit quality of the Mall is shown below. The light, airy "space frame" structure is shown covered with double domes of acrylic plastic. The outer dome is reflective to cut down on summer glare and heat. The inner dome supplies an insulating air space to reduce heat loss in winter. Snow and rainwater will be carried away in two foot wide scuppers between the skylights and drained down the supporting columns. Snow on the roadway and ice in the scuppers will be melted by radiant heating elements used only as needed. The joint between the faces of buildings and the structure will be made by a special structural element which can be varied to meet the special condition at each building.





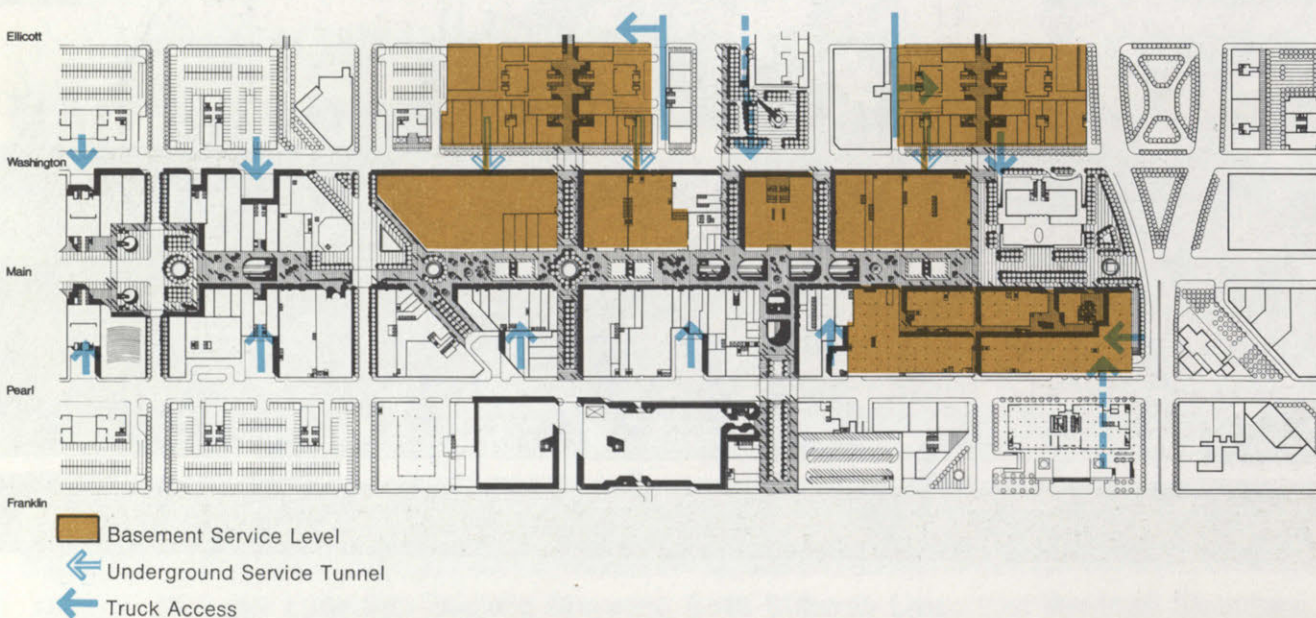
### Existing Ground Floor Activities

The plan at the left shows the uses which exist now along Main Street in the area of the proposed Mall. These have been evaluated to determine where the most likely opportunities exist for future investment in retail activities in the Mall. In no sense does the plan indicate that those areas shown as opportunities are necessarily to be changed by public action. Rather, they indicate where private action is most likely to occur as the effect of the Mall begins to be felt on the pattern of retail sales in Downtown. Minimum use of public powers is expected to be used in the assembly of sites.



### Retail Space Opportunities in the Mall

The diagram at the left shows areas in and adjacent to the Mall where, in the consultants judgment new or improved retail space could occur. These locations were selected on the basis of the results of an analysis of existing structures and retail activities in Downtown. Those areas where structures had a number of characteristics indicating easy replaceability (i.e. non-fireproof, single story, poor conditions, etc.) or were low taxpayers were those designated as areas which would be ripe for replacement or radical improvement if the Mall were constructed.

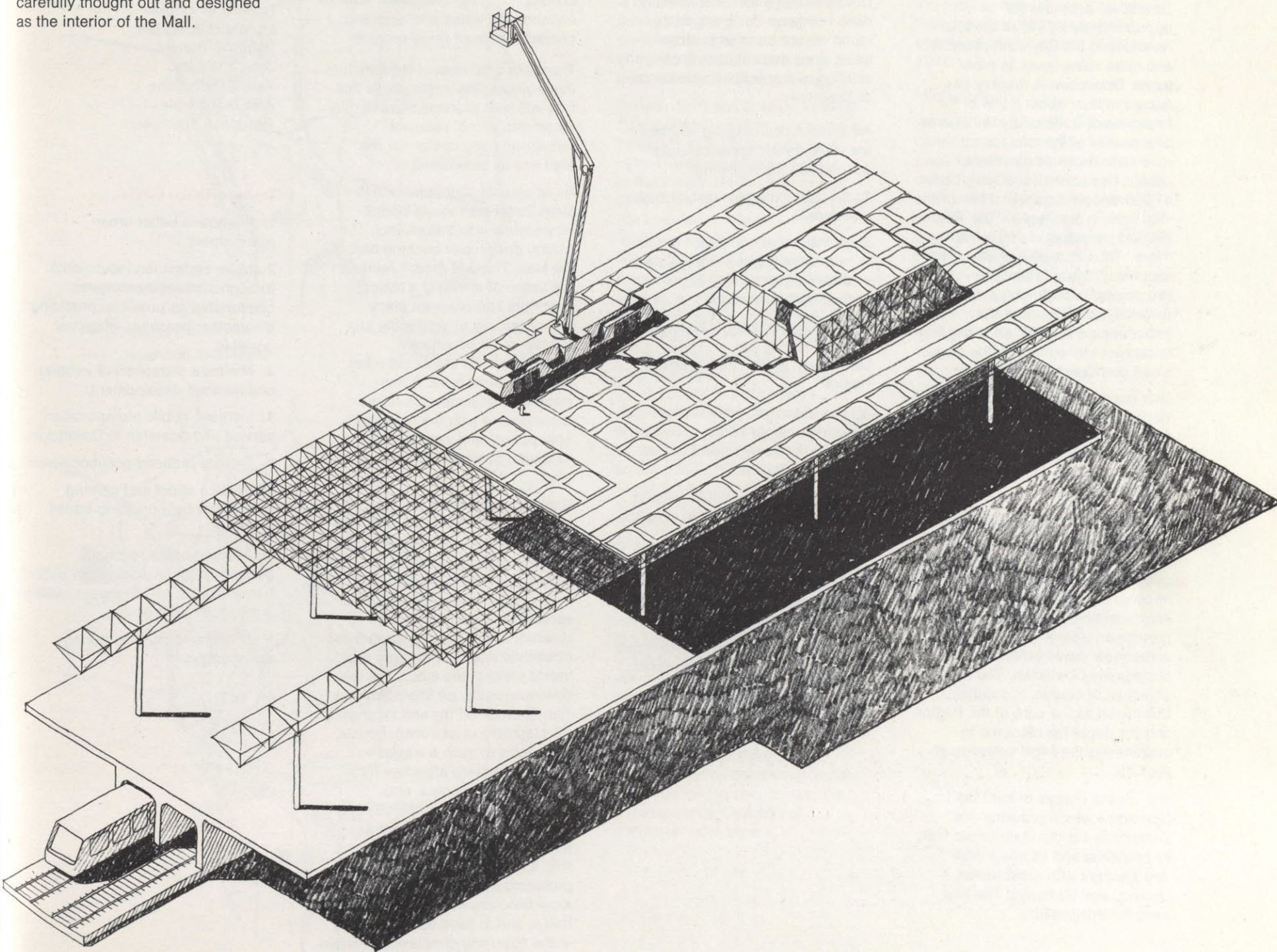


### Servicing the Mall

Relatively few stores on Main Street are served directly from Main Street. When Main Street is closed to vehicular traffic, trucks will be prohibited from the Mall. In order to continue to serve the few stores requiring service from the Mall, truck loading areas are proposed in each block where materials can be transferred to special carts for delivery of goods and removal of wastes. The service areas proposed will be designed to handle most of the service needs of the Mall area.

The view of the roof of the Mall from the surrounding buildings is as important as the view the pedestrian has when in the Mall. The Mall structure is shown with various pieces of the structure "peeled" away to show how various elements relate to each other. The fire fighting equipment is shown on the roadway on the roof of the Mall.

Air-conditioning equipment will be housed in penthouses on every other bay. The roofscape will be as carefully thought out and designed as the interior of the Mall.



# 3 Transportation and Transit

## Statement of the Committee

The importance of the proposed mass transit system to the success of the Plan for Downtown cannot be underestimated. To establish the economic context for mass transit proposals the following facts should be borne in mind.

Downtown accounts for approximately 24.5% of the total revenues to the City from property and retail sales taxes. In other terms, Downtown is roughly one square mile or about 2.5% of the total area of Buffalo City but returns one quarter of the total tax revenues. As an employment center, Downtown supplies jobs for 61,000 people or about 15% of the total jobs in the Region. The Region (SMSA) is about 1,600 square miles. Thus 1/1,600 of the area supplies 15% of the jobs. These two points illustrate about as forcefully as is possible the importance of Downtown to the City in terms of taxes and to the Region as an employment center.

This importance to the City and Region is reinforced when it is considered that the City's tax base in areas other than Downtown has been steadily declining and its costs steadily rising.

Consequently the aim of the Plan for Downtown has been to propose that the City do everything humanly possible (and within its ability to finance) to maintain the concentration of Downtown and to provide an environment which will attract new development and new businesses Downtown. The ultimate object is, of course, to maintain Downtown as the core of the Region and the major tax resource in maintaining the fiscal solvency of the City.

The central feature of the Plan for Downtown which provides this environment is the Main Street Mall, its branches and its integrated arrangement with rapid transit, parking, and highways. The key word is "integrated".

Each of these elements *except rapid transit* exists today in some unintegrated and insufficient form. For instance, there are successful parking ramps but they are related only to the street system. There is the successful mall in Main Place but it is internalized and does not relate to anything else. The object, therefore, is to create a "critical mass" of elements which work together in such a way as to create an entirely new environment Downtown. In a sense, this really does not mean doing anything much other than what is already being done, *except coordinating* the existing and new public elements of Downtown.

As a major coordinating element the rapid transit system should accomplish the following:

1. It ought to be pleasant, fast and convenient.
2. In the downtown area it ought to relate directly in a highly visible and well designed way to the pedestrian mall system.
3. A passenger should be aware, visually, that he has arrived Downtown, at the "hub" of the Region.
4. The alignment, both vertical and horizontal, ought to be arranged to promote the development of new tax ratables for the City.
5. The transit way should traverse the Downtown so as not to produce a blighting influence on the surrounding areas.
6. It should not preempt any more valuable Downtown real estate than is absolutely necessary.
7. It should promote the design and environment quality of Downtown.
8. It should be capable of being expanded and extended in the future.

It should be clear from the above statements that the Committee endorses the view that one of the major purposes, if not the major purpose, of rapid transit is to preserve Downtown. In view of this, the Committee endorses the view that the character of the rapid transit lines should feature a mode that would provide fast, safe, reliable and efficient service as well as an alignment that is not only compatible with downtown development, but one which will enhance the visual and aesthetic characteristics of these projects.

There are a number of reasons for these views. The major one is that they will best promote the potential for an integrated, pleasant, people-oriented design for the Mall and its extensions.

An integrated alignment with the Main Street Mall would permit interactions with that project. The station design can become part of the Mall. This will greatly reinforce the sense of arrival at a major, important and pleasant place. The possibility of producing this quality would be virtually non-existent on any of the other locations Downtown. A non-integrated alignment would be incompatible with the proposed Mall project and would lessen the aesthetic qualities of the downtown area.

Rapid transit service will be provided first north-eastward from Downtown in the Buffalo/Amherst Corridor and subsequently in other directions: due north, east, and south. In the interim until this fast service is available in these directions, and long range in those directions that will not enjoy rapid transit service, the motor bus will continue to play an important role. The Downtown Plan and its phased development must accommodate bus routes in such a way as to make the service attractive for commuters, shoppers, and recreation seekers, while still being as economical and efficient as possible to operate. To achieve this, it may be necessary to give preferential attention to the expeditious movement of buses in traffic, and to have bus-only lanes in the opposing direction on certain one-way streets.

The highway plan is also extremely important to the success of the Plan. The Committee endorses the proposed surface street plan but withholds judgement on the Elm/Oak arterial until the technical issues are resolved. In principle, the purpose of the expressway system is to supply maximum access to Downtown at an adequate level of service as well as providing a facility for through traffic.

Claude F. Shuchter, Chairman  
Edward W. Umiker  
Donald H. Ketchum  
Ralph M. Barnes  
John J. Nasca  
Paul G. Rohrdanz  
Alex D. Trumble  
Gordon J. Thompson

## Transportation Goals

1. Promote a better urban environment.
2. Make pedestrian movements throughout the Downtown as comfortable as possible, providing all-weather passages wherever possible.
3. Minimize disruption of existing and planned development.
4. Increase public transportation service and ridership to Downtown.
5. Provide reduced pollution levels.
6. Reduce street and parking congestion by increasing transit ridership.
7. Accommodate required transportation facilities, both public transportation and highways, within a minimum right-of-way.
8. Minimize disruption during construction.

## The Transportation System in Regional Context

### Public Transportation

Buffalo's urban area population density of 6,600 persons per square mile is the second highest in the United States. Despite this high population density, transit ridership in Buffalo Metropolitan Area is relatively low among large cities, although it is high among those dependent upon buses alone. There is potential for a comprehensive public transportation system involving several rapid transit corridors complemented by an extensive feeder bus system.

Early in 1970, the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority initiated a feasibility study for an exclusive right-of-way transit line in the Buffalo/Amherst Corridor as part of its Mass Transit Study. The Study has resulted in a firm recommendation for a rail rapid transit line from Downtown to Amherst. In considering possible later expansion of the Buffalo/Amherst Rapid Transit Line to other high potential corridors designated by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Study, the Mass Transit Study has delineated alignments for five corridors having potential for exclusive right-of-way transit facilities. These include, in addition to the Buffalo/Amherst Corridor line, rapid transit corridors connecting the Buffalo Central Business District with Hamburg, Cheektowaga, the Tonawandas and Village of Kenmore/Grand Island (Kenmore/Airport line). The regional rapid transit network will increase mobility in the Region and provide an attractive alternative mode of transportation for those who do not own a car or those who find the use of cars inconvenient. An efficient and reliable public transportation system will reduce the magnitude of street and highway improvements that would otherwise be needed to meet the growing traffic demands of commuter work trips.

Implementation of a rapid transit system in the Buffalo Metropolitan Area will result in increased densities and a more structured regional growth pattern. Existing plans call for construction of the Buffalo/Amherst Corridor line, connecting the CBD and the new campus of the State University at Buffalo (SUNYAB), between 1973 and 1977. Preliminary estimates by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority's consultants call for the subway through the Central Business District to be under construction throughout 1973 and 1974.

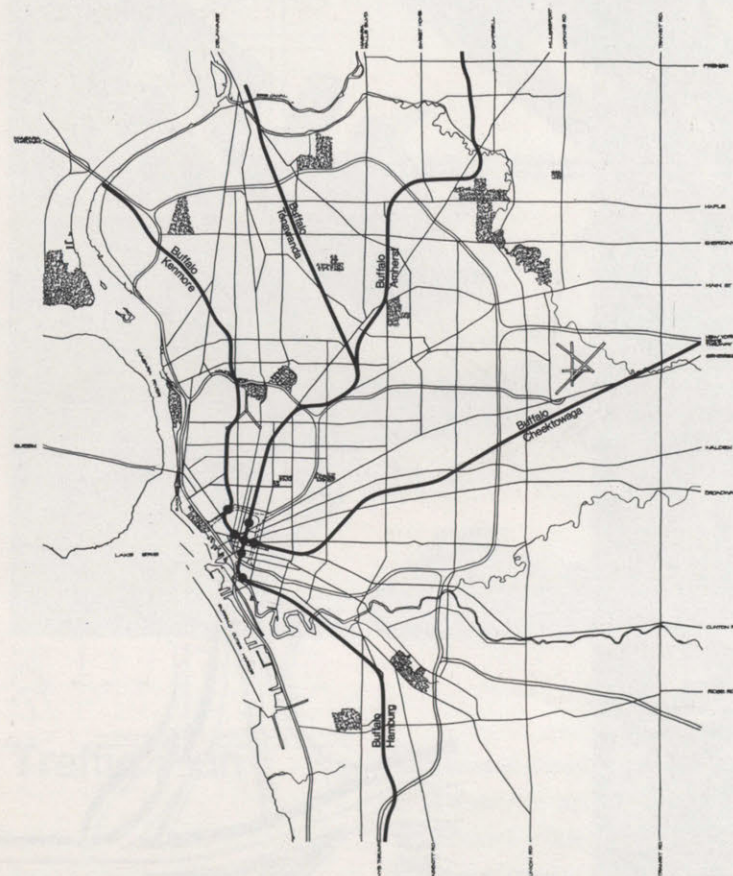
### Highways

An extensive network of freeways connects major employment and retail locations with residential developments in the Region. Latest additions to the regional network include the Youngmann Expressway, the Kensington Expressway, the Aurora Expressway and a part of the LaSalle Expressway. Proposed future extensions of this network designated as "expressways" include the University Expressway, the Southern Expressway and the Belt Expressway.

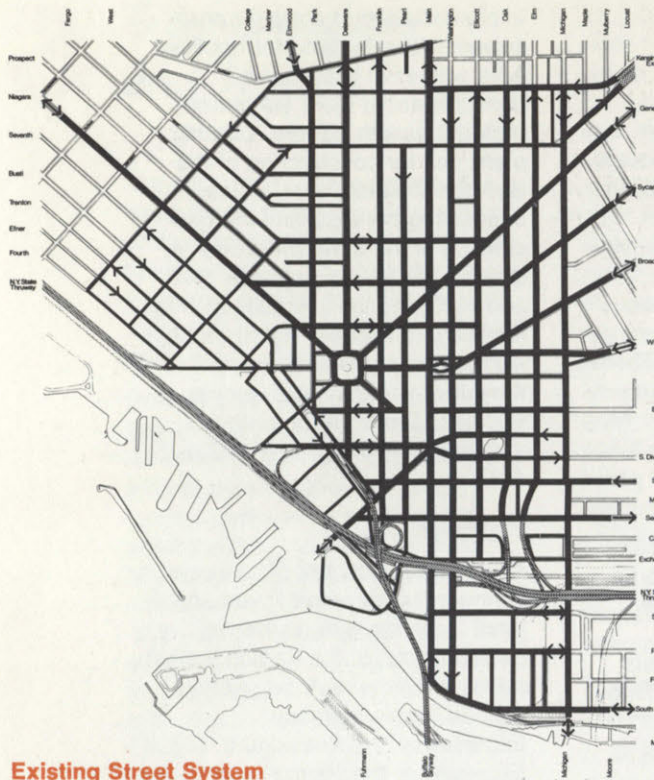


### Highway System

- Existing Expressway
- Designated Expressway
- ..... Expressway Corridor
- Highways and Arterials

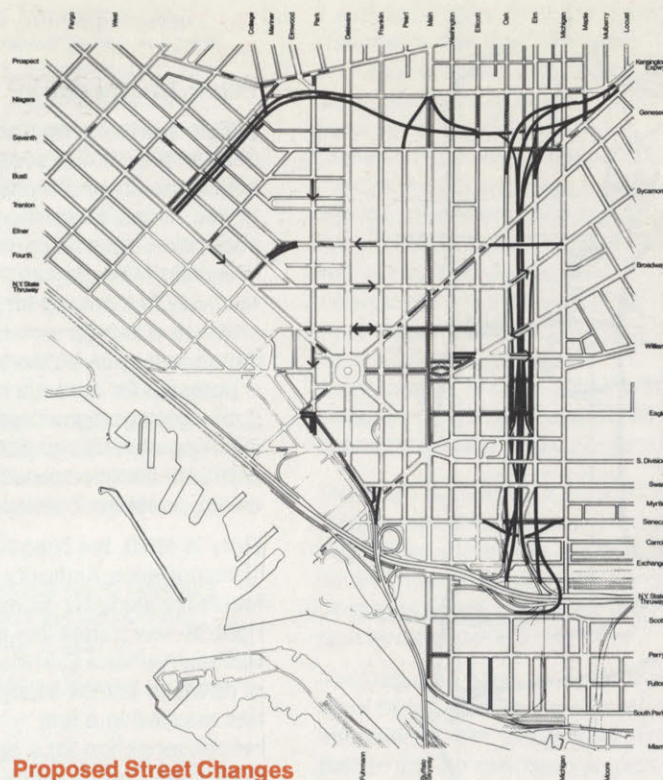


### Proposed Public Transportation System



### Existing Street System

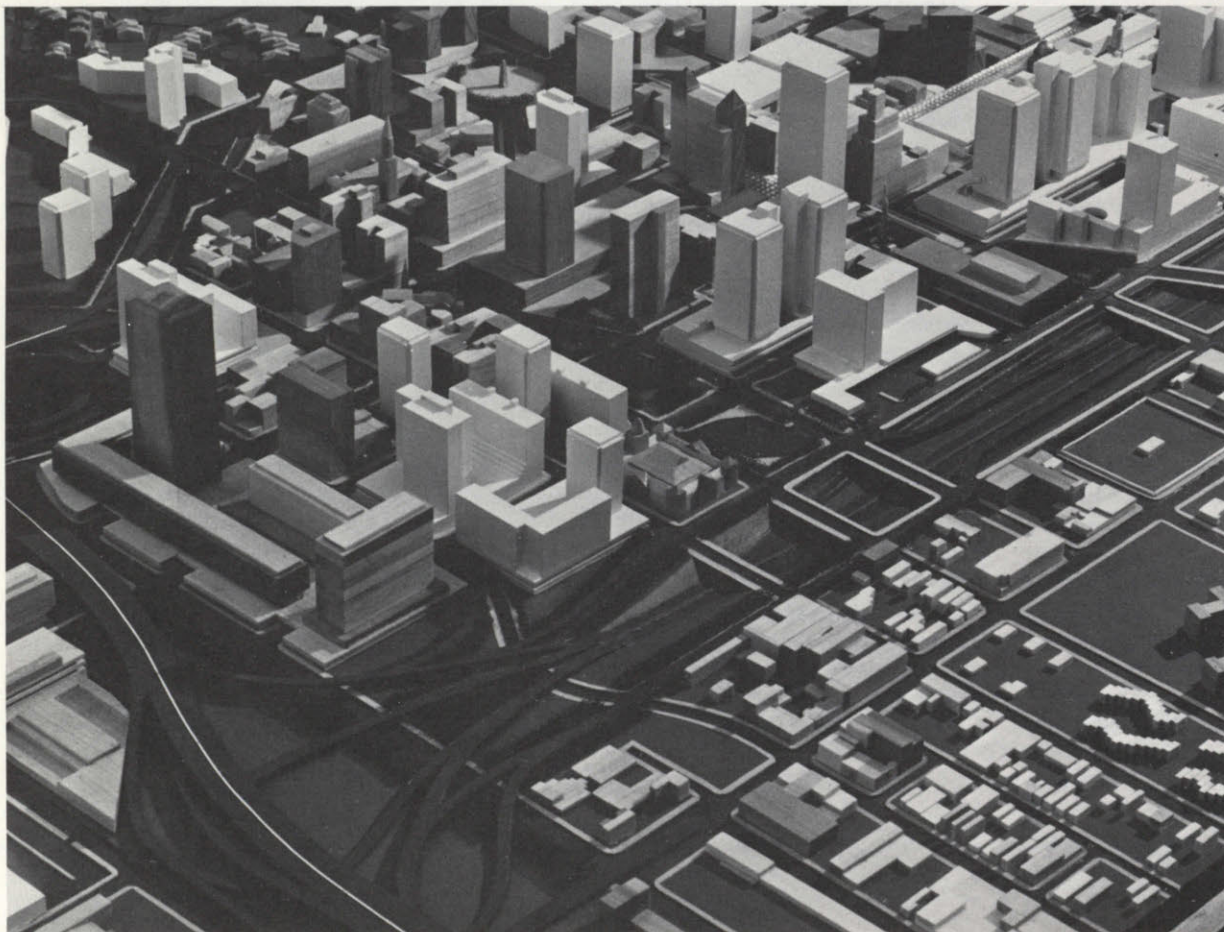
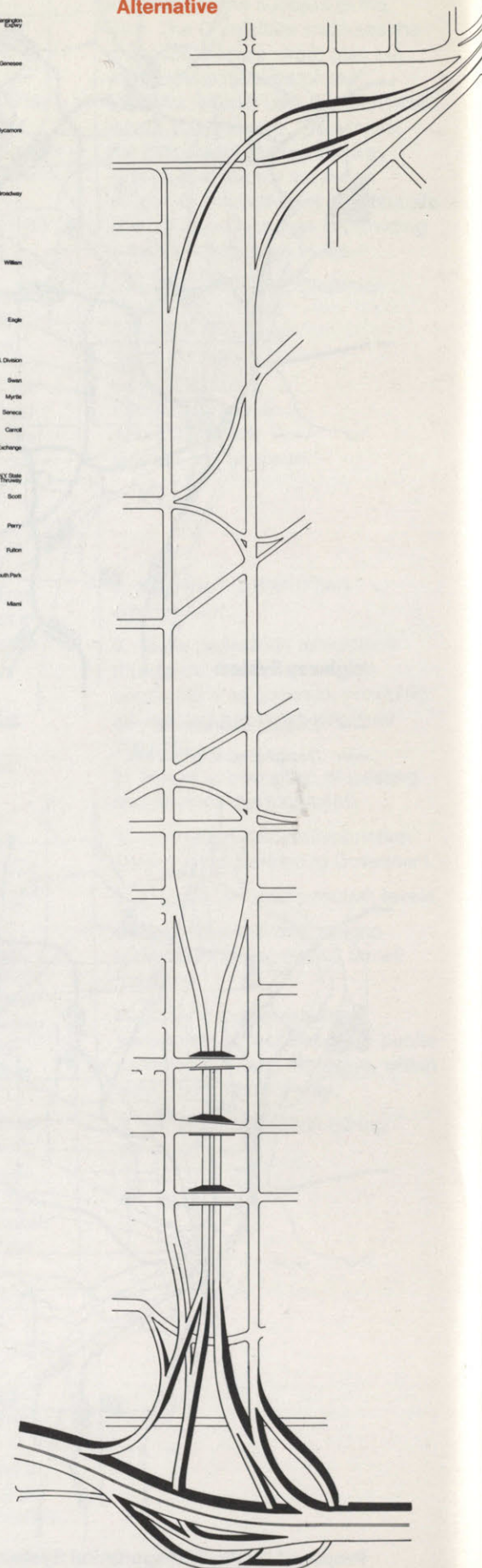
- Expressway
- Arterial, Collector or Distributor
- Local, Street

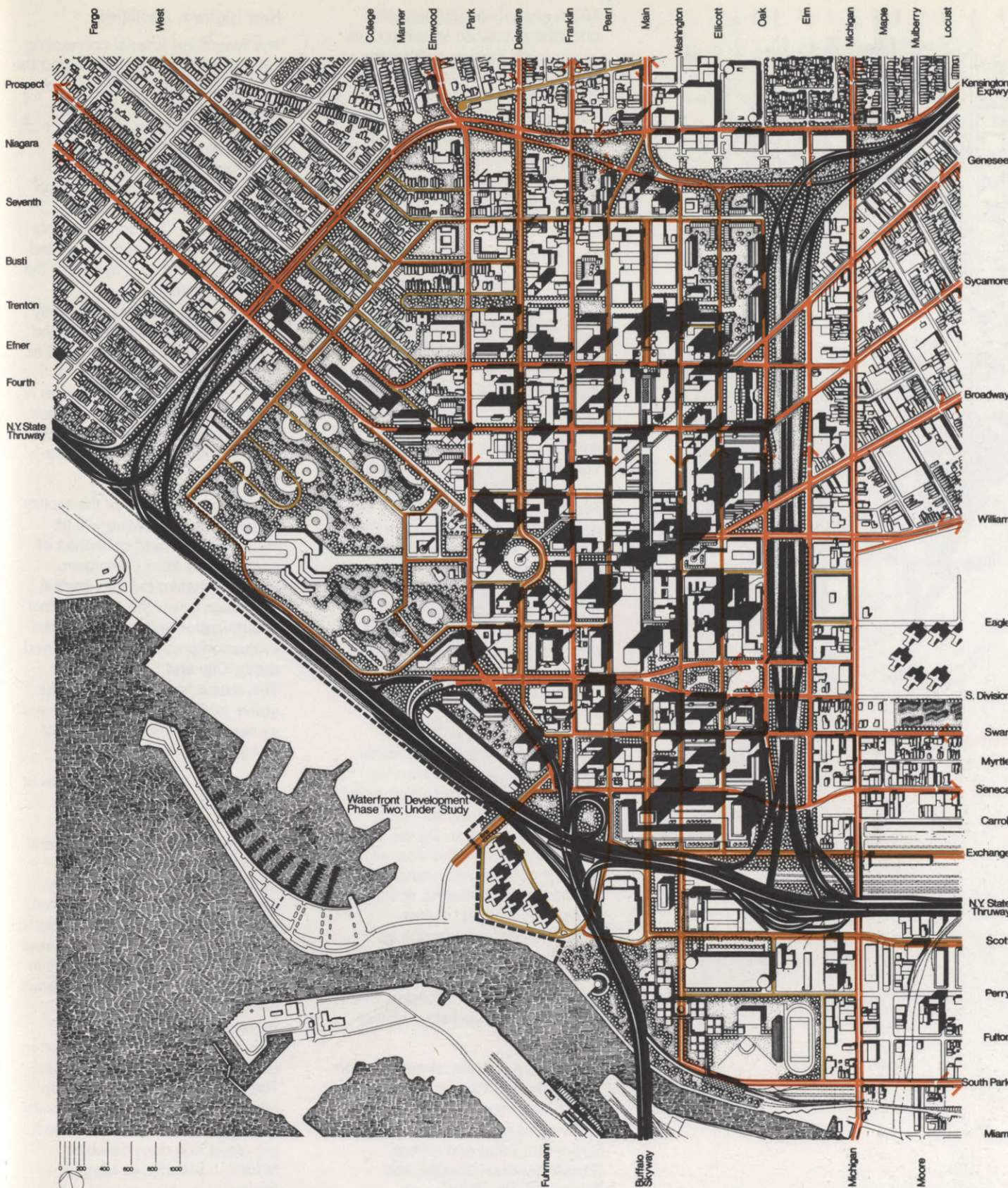


### Proposed Street Changes

- Closed Street
- New Street
- ← Change in Traffic Direction

### Elm Oak Arterial Alternative





## Traffic Plan

- Limited Access Expressways
- Major Arterials
- Collector/Distributor Streets
- Local Streets

## The Street System

### Existing Streets

Ellicott's layout of Downtown Buffalo creates a great number of problems for today's vehicular and pedestrian movements. Five and six legged intersections along Genesee and Niagara Streets are difficult to operate and in some cases, confusing to drivers and hazardous for pedestrians. The combination of the grid and radial street pattern coupled with the combined use of one and two-way streets is difficult to understand for people not completely familiar with the area.

To make efficient use of the available street capacity, modern traffic signal equipment, new pavement markings, new signing and elimination of on-street parking and loading wherever possible, will be required.

The proposed downtown street plan seeks to overcome many of today's traffic problems.

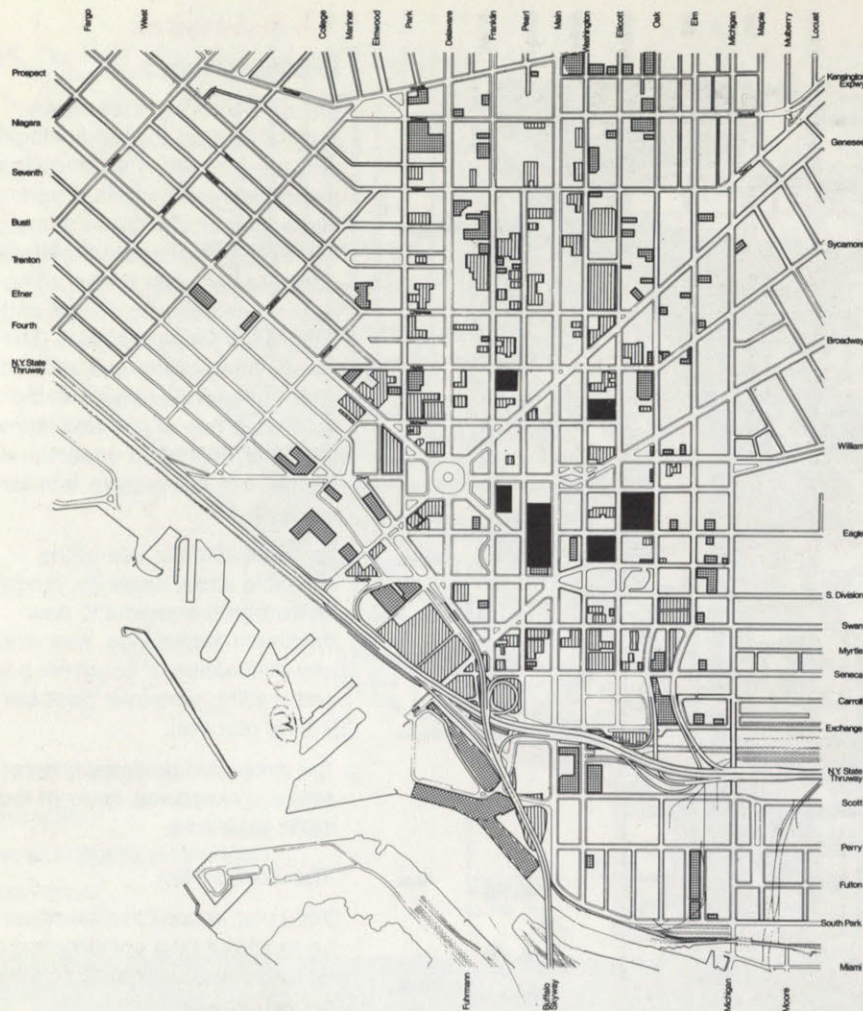
### The Traffic Plan

Vehicular access to Downtown will be provided by a combination of freeways and arterial streets. Four radial freeways will serve to accommodate almost 70 percent of the total vehicular travel to and from the CBD. These are:




- the Niagara Section of the New York State Thruway from the northwest,
- the Niagara Section of the New York State Thruway from the southeast,
- the Kensington Expressway from the northeast, and
- the Buffalo Skyway from the south.

The existing radial freeways can continue to provide excellent freeway access to the downtown area throughout the 20 year planning period if improvements are made at other points along these freeways. Spot improvements, reconstruction, ramp metering and some ramp closures should be examined and are among the possibilities of optimizing the existing freeway corridors providing access to Downtown.





#### Existing Off-Street Parking Facilities

-  Civic
-  Commercial
-  Private

Major arterial streets that will continue to play an important role in providing ingress and egress to Downtown include Niagara Street, Elmwood Avenue, Delaware Avenue, Franklin Street, Linwood Avenue, Main Street, Genesee Street, Sycamore Street, Broadway, William Street, Swan Street, Seneca Street and South Park Avenue.

#### The Main Street Mall

The Plan shows the creation of a total pedestrian environment in a ten Block area bounded by Chippewa, Pearl, Washington and Church Streets which will significantly change the Downtown street pattern. Closing Court and Mohawk Streets across Main Street will directly affect the traffic volumes on the streets immediately north and south of the closures. South of the Main Street Mall, the new six-lane divided Church Street Arterial as well as a pair of one-way streets composed of Seneca and Swan Streets, will provide ample capacity to serve the projected east-west movements across Main Street. North of the closures at Main Street, a new one-way pair utilizing Huron and Chippewa Streets is proposed to accommodate the projected east-west traffic volumes. Huron Street will be reversed from its present westbound direction and Chippewa Street will be made one-way westbound. On the west side of Downtown, this one-way pair will connect into another one-way pair consisting of Niagara Street and Prospect Street. Niagara Street will operate as one-way inbound for all vehicles with the provision for an exclusive bus lane outbound. Prospect Street will continue to operate one-way outbound.

The closure of Main Street between Chippewa and Church Streets necessitates the construction of a one-way couple to connect Main Street with Pearl and Ellicott Streets between Goodell and Tupper Streets. These new connections are shown on the Illustrative Site Plan.

#### New Highway Facilities

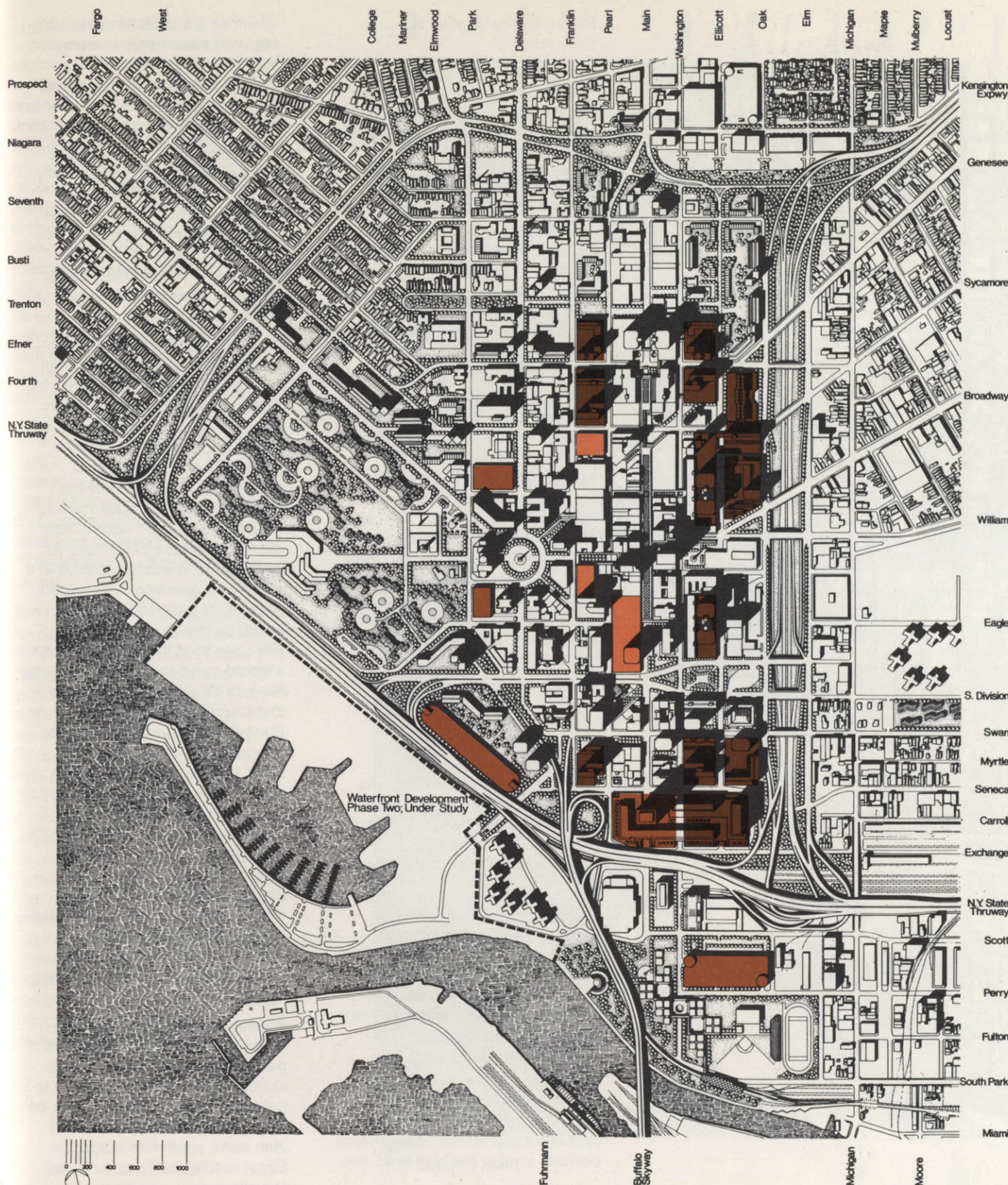
The West Side Arterial connecting the Kensington Expressway and the Virginia-Carolina Interchange of the Niagara Section of the New York State Thruway will function as a distributor of traffic to the downtown area and also accommodate east-west through movements between the two expressways. The location of this at grade facility as recommended by the Consultants is shown of the Illustrative Site Plan.

The Elm/Oak Arterial is currently being examined as both a limited access depressed freeway and as an at-grade junior expressway. The depressed freeway scheme is shown on the illustrative site plan. The at-grade scheme favored by the Consultants is shown in the inset plan.

The primary function of the facility under either alternative will be the distribution and collection of traffic to and from Downtown. Each alternative exhibits certain advantages over the other. A final determination will result from the evaluation presently being carried out by City and State agencies. This evaluation will consider the above points as well as others such as benefits to the public related to costs.

To improve the access function of the Skyway to Downtown, it is proposed to make Elmwood Avenue one-way southbound and to improve its connection with Lower Terrace and the Skyway on-ramp. It is also proposed that the Skyway off-ramp be connected into Franklin Street at Swan Street to decrease the traffic volumes in Niagara Square. Delaware Avenue below Niagara Square would be reduced in importance. Upper Terrace would remain open only to serve abutting properties. The modification of the Skyway off-ramp together with the closure of the radial streets in Downtown, will result in a considerable reduction of traffic in Niagara Square.

The creation of a grid pattern in combination with a system of one-way streets will greatly improve the ease of traffic and pedestrian movement in the Central Business District.



## Parking Plan

- Proposed Parking Facility
- Current Parking Facility Project
- Existing Parking Facility

## Parking

### Present Parking

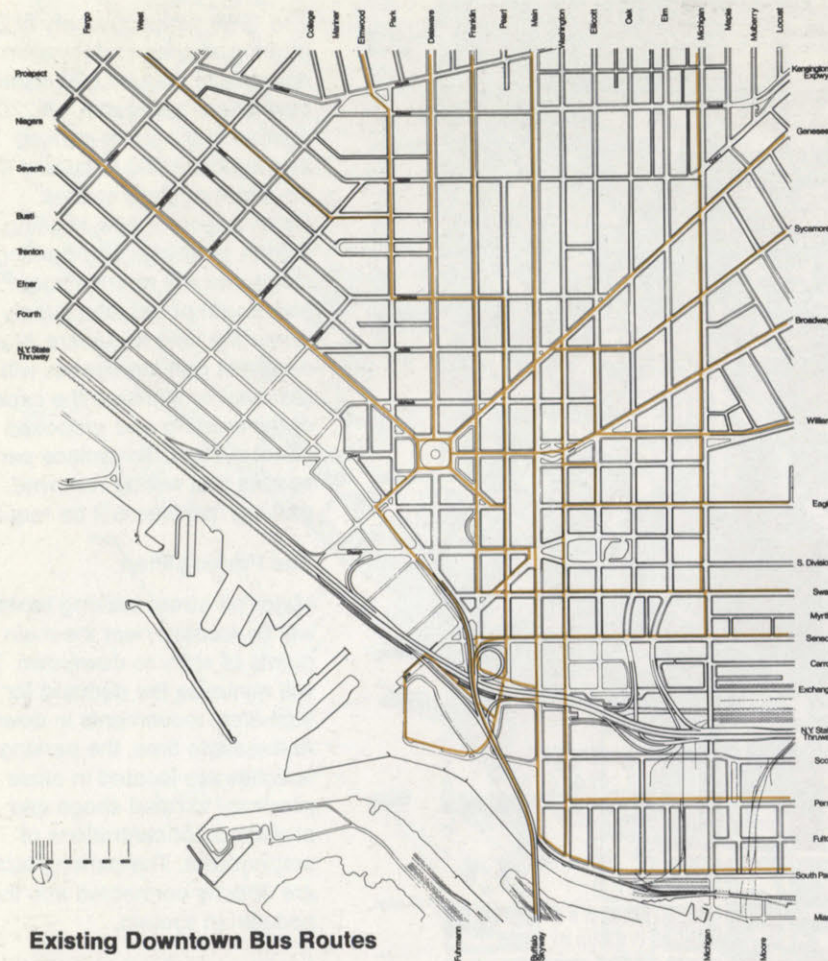
The 1969 parking supply of 28,000 parking spaces in downtown consists of about 4,000 spaces in permanent structures, 14,270 spaces in off-street parking and almost 9,000 legal and illegal on-street parking spaces. Construction of new housing, offices, buildings and parking structures will remove about one-fourth of the total supply within the next few years. Many on-street parking spaces will be removed to increase the capacity of the existing and proposed street system. To replace parking spaces that will be removed, new parking facilities will be required.

### The Parking Plan

Major off-street parking facilities will be located near the main points of entry to downtown. This will minimize the demand for east-west movements in downtown. At the same time, the parking facilities are located in close proximity to retail shops and projected concentrations of employment. The parking facilities are directly connected into the pedestrian system.

A total of 20,200 new parking spaces will be needed over the next 20 years if the plan is fully developed. Of the 1,000 new parking spaces per year, almost 750 spaces will account for replacement of existing on and off-street parking while 250 additional spaces will be required to meet the additional 20 year demand. Gradual removal of the 6,000 on-street parking spaces that exist today will improve the effectiveness of the present and proposed street system. The City of Buffalo's parking program is well ahead of the necessary pace of 1,000 new spaces per year.

The Marine Midland Center, the County Office Building and the Federal Office Building will add about 1,700 new parking spaces to the existing off-street supply. The City Court Ramp and a proposed new parking facility in the block bounded by Elmwood, Huron, Delaware and Mohawk will add another 2,000 spaces.



Existing Downtown Bus Routes

## Public Transportation in Downtown

### Present Transit

The 24 basic bus routes providing local transit service to Downtown are of major importance to all residents seeking access to this vital area of the Region. Today, about one-third of all trips and half of all shopping trips to downtown Buffalo are made by bus. Main Street, carrying about 60 buses in the peak direction in the peak hour, is by far the heaviest travelled transit artery to Downtown.

### The Transit Plan

The rapid transit network in Downtown as shown in the Plan consists of two lines intersecting at Court and Main Streets. The Buffalo/Amherst line now under study by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority will come down Main Street to Church Street in a shallow subway. At that point, it will go to Erie Street, over to Swan Street and continue south along an alignment just west of Pearl Street. At Seneca Street, the line will start to come out of the ground, go under the Seneca off-ramp from the Skyway and be approximately at-grade at Exchange Street. It will then continue south, past Memorial Auditorium on the west side and curve west of the Skyway, then to the east where it will connect with the old tracks of the Erie-Lackawana Railroad at the foot of Main Street.

Stations along this line are planned at Chippewa Street ("Theater"), Court Street ("Lafayette Square"), between Swan and Seneca Streets ("Cathedral Park"), and at the foot of Main Street ("Community College"). The "Theater" and "Lafayette Square" stations are planned as integral parts of the Main Street Mall. Direct connections, from the underground platform level to the Mall level, will

minimize the station construction cost and maximize the inter-relationship between public transportation on one hand and the commercial retail and other land uses to be served on the other hand.

The consultants to the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority have recommended that the Buffalo/Amherst line be a steel wheel on steel rail system. This type of system would be compatible with the Main Street Mall, and is endorsed by the Consultants.

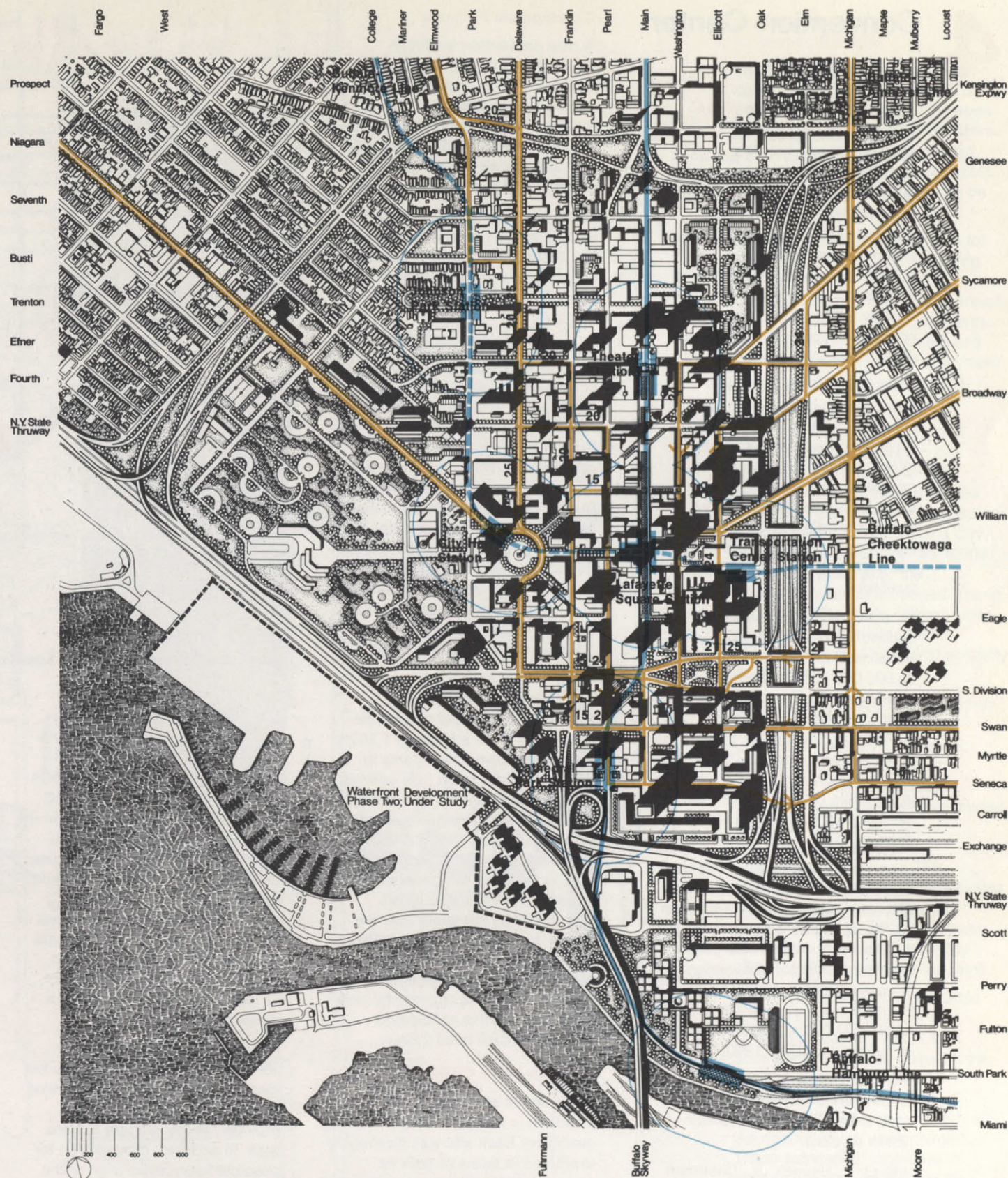
The Plan envisions that the east-west line (Kenmore/Airport) will complement the Buffalo/Amherst line at a later date. Although no detailed feasibility study has been made, the following possible alignment within the CBD is suggested. The east-west line coming down Richmond Avenue would follow public right-of-way alongside Wadsworth Street. At Allen Street, it would continue in a south-east direction to Elmwood Avenue. At this point, the line would be in subway and follow Elmwood to Mohawk Street where it would curve to the east following Niagara Street, Niagara Square and Court Street to Lafayette Square. At Lafayette Square, the line would bend slightly to the south to continue down Clinton Street to the east. Proposed station locations in the CBD are along Elmwood Avenue at Johnson Park, at City Hall/Niagara Square and at Court and Main Streets (intersecting with the Buffalo-Amherst Line). It is recommended that this line be in subway between Elmwood Avenue and Trinity Street and Oak and Clinton Streets.

Another alternative alignment which should be investigated as part of a feasibility study for the Kenmore/Airport line would be to curve west from College Street, be briefly on the West Side Arterial, then curve south into Niagara Street to Niagara Square. These two alternatives should be evaluated in terms of patronage, construction cost and impact on the neighborhood.

The rapid transit lines will be supplemented by a number of bus routes serving those areas that do not have easy access to the stations along the rapid transit lines. Implementation of the Buffalo/Amherst rapid transit line will reduce the number of bus routes entering the Downtown via Main Street. It is anticipated that almost all other routes would continue to serve Downtown essentially as they do today.

The problem of disruption of Main Street must be minimized by simultaneous construction of the Mall structure and the subway. Each block must be entirely completed before the next begins. During the actual construction period at least two lanes of traffic must be maintained and pedestrian access must be possible at all times. During peak sales periods, particularly at Christmas time, disruption must be minimized with no major construction during that period.

The design of the Mall and rapid transit systems should allow the future accommodation of a "people-mover" system. The technology of this type of system is nearing the point of becoming economically feasible for use in areas in which there are high concentrations of people. The recent University of West Virginia campus pilot project sponsored by the Federal Government is the prelude to the installation of such systems commonly. Such a system is being seriously considered in Downtown Los Angeles. The detailed design of the Downtown should not preclude the future integration of a people-mover system with other major elements of the transportation system.



## Proposed Downtown Transit Systems

- NFTA Proposed Rapid Transit Line
- - - Potential Future Rapid Transit Line
- Bus Routes with Full Rapid Transit System
- Transit Station & 600' Walking Radius

# 4 Convention Center

## Statement of the Committee

Buffalo badly needs a new convention facility. It is suffering from increasing competition from other better equipped cities. The weak competitive position of Buffalo is merely a matter of the lack of proper equipment. This position can be radically altered by a combination of the provision on new facilities and the implementation of other features of the Downtown Plan.

If the City were to provide a new convention facility in its Central Business District (CBD), complemented by new nearby hotels, then Buffalo's present convention trade would be expected to double within five years after opening the new facility and quadruple within 15 years after the facility becomes available.

Present convention delegate expenditures within the City of Buffalo will amount to a little over \$6,000,000 in 1970. A new convention facility is expected to increase the flow of outside convention dollars brought into the community to over \$12,000,000 by 1980 (assuming a new facility is available by 1975), and over \$25,000,000 by 1990 (in 1970 dollars).

Up to 3,000 new hotel rooms can be built in the CBD over the next 20 years, with the new convention facility acting as a catalyst for this development. These new hotels, together with other convention-oriented facilities (restaurants, entertainment, etc.) would amount to \$80,000,000 in new construction in Buffalo's CBD by 1990.

The Committee, therefore, recommends strongly that Buffalo build a competitive convention hall in its CBD.

William D. Hassett, Jr., Chairman  
 Albert L. Cooper  
 Avery H. Fonda  
 William F. King  
 Robert A. Zegger  
 George L. Burns  
 Henry H. Harper  
 Leonard J. Levin

## Development Program

A new convention facility in downtown Buffalo should contain between 90,000 and 125,000 square feet of exhibition space, 15 to 25 meeting rooms with a total seating capacity of 5,000 to 6,000, and appropriate lobby, office, storage, and food service space.

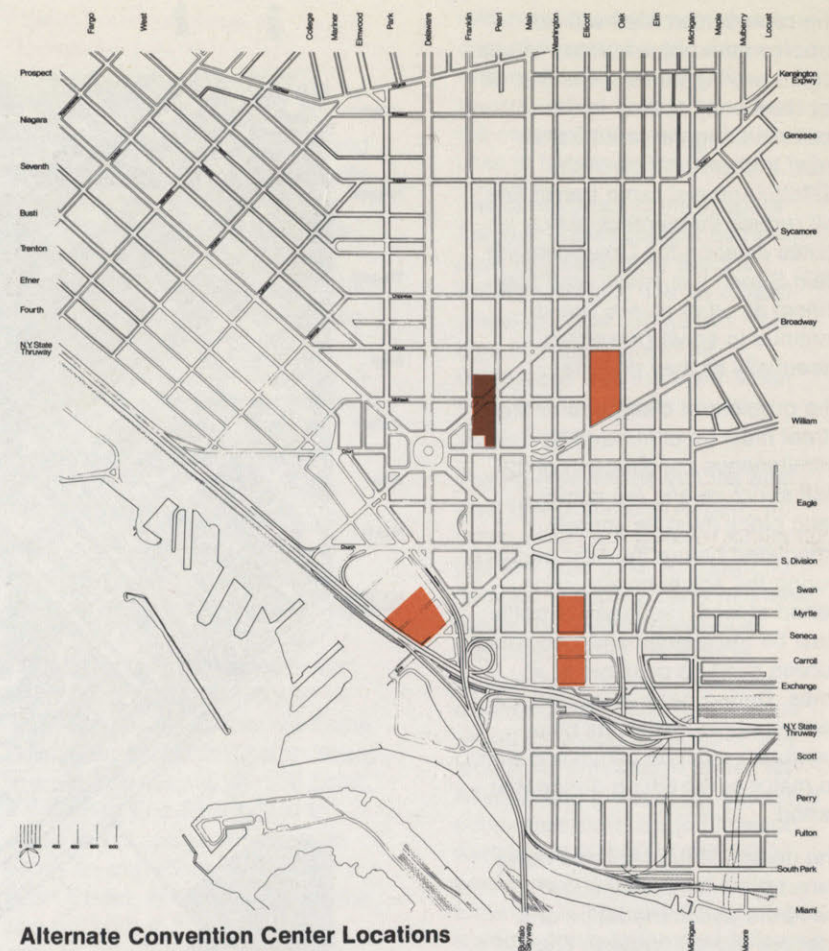
In addition, the new convention facility should be serviced by 1,000 to 1,500 nearby parking spaces and have expansion room available for a possible second-stage addition in future years.

These size specifications have been determined by an analysis of convention facilities recently constructed in cities across the nation which will be competing with Buffalo for large national conventions (which are the primary market potentials for expansion of Buffalo's convention trade in the future). Smaller scale facilities than recommended above would place Buffalo in a less competitive position, while larger scale facilities in an initial construction program would be superfluous due to Buffalo's present lack of hotel space.

A convention hall of the size recommended would require the availability of an additional 1,500 to 2,000 downtown hotel rooms in Buffalo in order to be fully utilized. It is expected that the convention facility itself, together with vigorous efforts on the part of City officials, and the availability of good hotel sites in the CBD, will generate the required hotel facilities within approximately five years after the convention hall becomes available. Forecasts of convention center utilization and associated revenues and benefits to the community have been keyed to this anticipated increase in CBD hotel rooms.

## Location in the CBD

Six potential convention hall locations in the CBD were evaluated. Each site was thoroughly examined in terms of both its appropriateness as a convention center location and its overall conformance with the dynamics of CBD development and acceptance within the community as a convention center location.

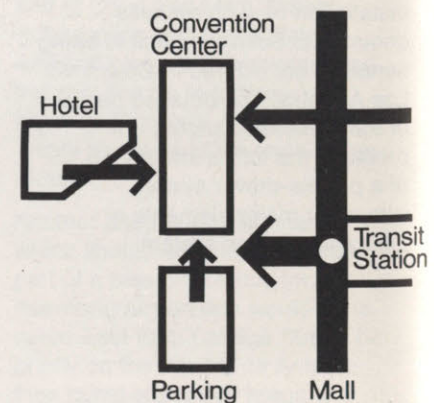


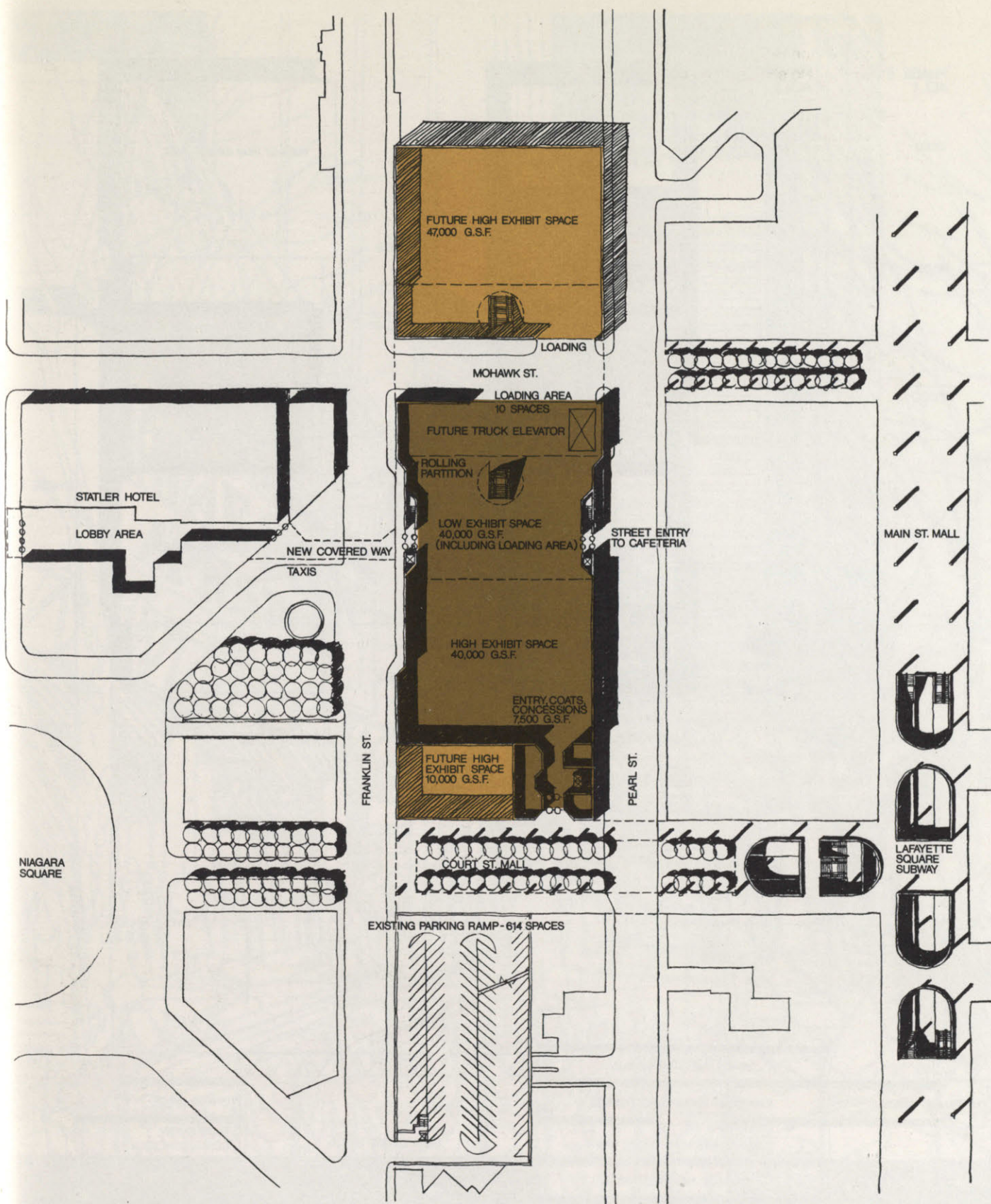
Alternate Convention Center Locations

The site recommended for this facility, on the basis of the above evaluation, is the so called "IRS block" bounded by Pearl, Franklin and Court Streets and spanning Mohawk Street on the north into the adjoining block. This site is the most centrally located of all those examined, a primary consideration for convention facilities, will complement the present renewal of the east side of the CBD, and aid in completion of the Downtown Urban Renewal Phase II Project, as well as the Waterfront Urban Renewal Project.

In order for this site to be fully serviceable as a convention center location, adequate nearby parking for the facility will have to be provided in the Niagara Square area. In addition, ground area for possible future expansion of the convention facilities should be available. City officials have advised that parking and expansion solutions are available at the present time. These are a necessary prerequisite to convention center development at this site.

Proposed Location  
 Alternate Locations





## Illustrative Plan

- First Phase
- Second Phase

## Development Costs and Economic Benefits

Land acquisition and construction costs for the proposed facility are preliminarily estimated at between \$9,000,000 and \$11,000,000. More detailed site studies and design analysis will have to be conducted before development costs can be more precisely identified.

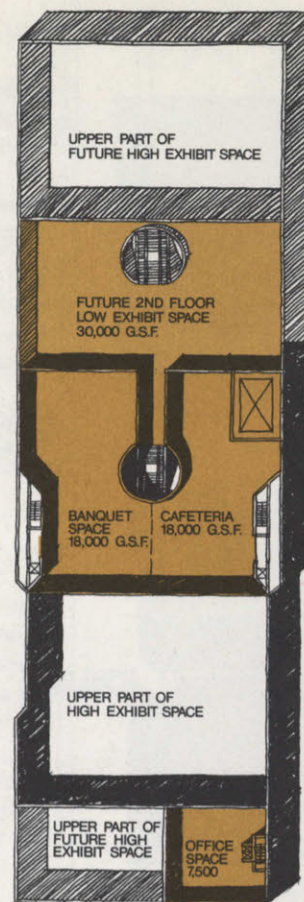
Annual debt service payments for the convention facility, assuming \$9,000,000 to \$11,000,000 of general obligation bonds are issued by Buffalo to pay for capital costs, will range between \$650,000 and \$800,000 annually (level repayment on six percent, 30-year bonds).

Operating revenues from the facility are expected to exceed operating costs, except in the earliest years of occupancy. Buffalo's share of State sales tax revenues resulting from convention delegate expenditures in the City is projected to rise over \$556,500 within five years after the convention center is opened. These convention delegate-related sales tax revenues are expected to increase to over \$1,130,000 annually by 1990.

Construction of \$80,000,000 worth of new privately sponsored convention-related facilities in Buffalo's CBD over the next 20 years is also anticipated, including approximately 3,000 hotel rooms as well as additional retailing, restaurant, and entertainment facilities. This increase of high value, low services cost property is expected to generate over \$3,000,000 of new real estate taxes for the City by 1990 (at 1970's property tax rate).

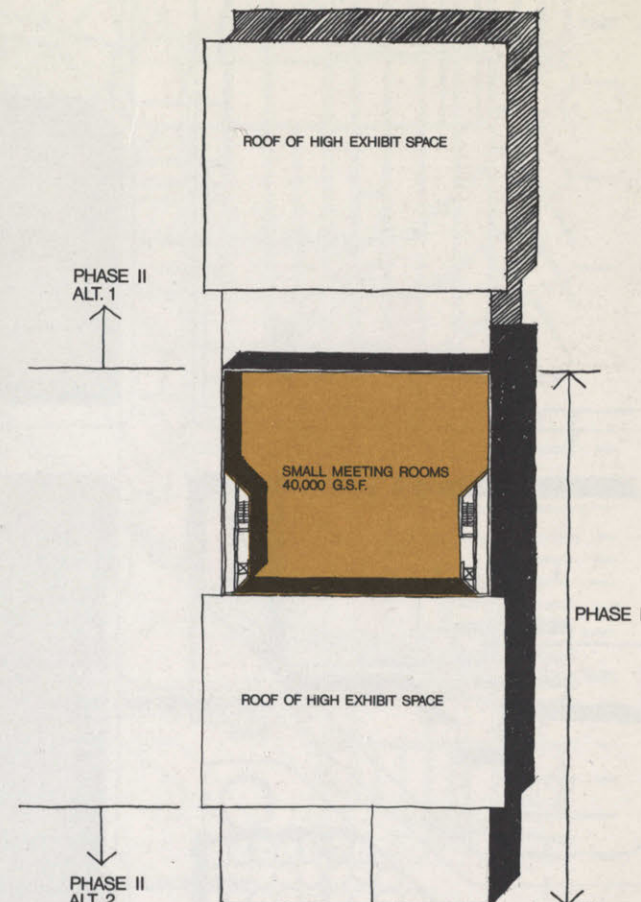
In overall terms, it is anticipated that the City's investment in a convention hall will result in substantial economic gains for the City by as early as 1980, and have increasing beneficial impact on the economic health of the community in years thereafter. These substantial increases in outside dollars brought into the community, new construction, and associated new jobs and economic vitality in Buffalo's CBD certainly justify a public investment of the scale required to provide the City with a first-class competitive convention facility.

AREA	GROSS SQUARE FEET	PHASE I	PHASE II ALT. 1	PHASE II ALT. 2
<b>FIRST FLOOR</b>				
ENTRY, COATS, CONCESSIONS	7,500			
HIGH EXHIBIT AREA	40,000		47,000	10,000
LOW EXHIBIT AREA (INCLUDING LOADING AREA)	40,000			
<b>SECOND FLOOR</b>				
BANQUET AREA	18,000			
CAFETERIA	18,000			
CORRIDOR	4,000			
EXHIBIT AREA			30,000	
OFFICES	7,500			
<b>THIRD FLOOR</b>				
MEETING ROOMS	40,000			
<b>BASEMENT</b>				
MECHANICAL AND STORAGE	40,000			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>214,000</b>	<b>77,000</b>	<b>77,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>

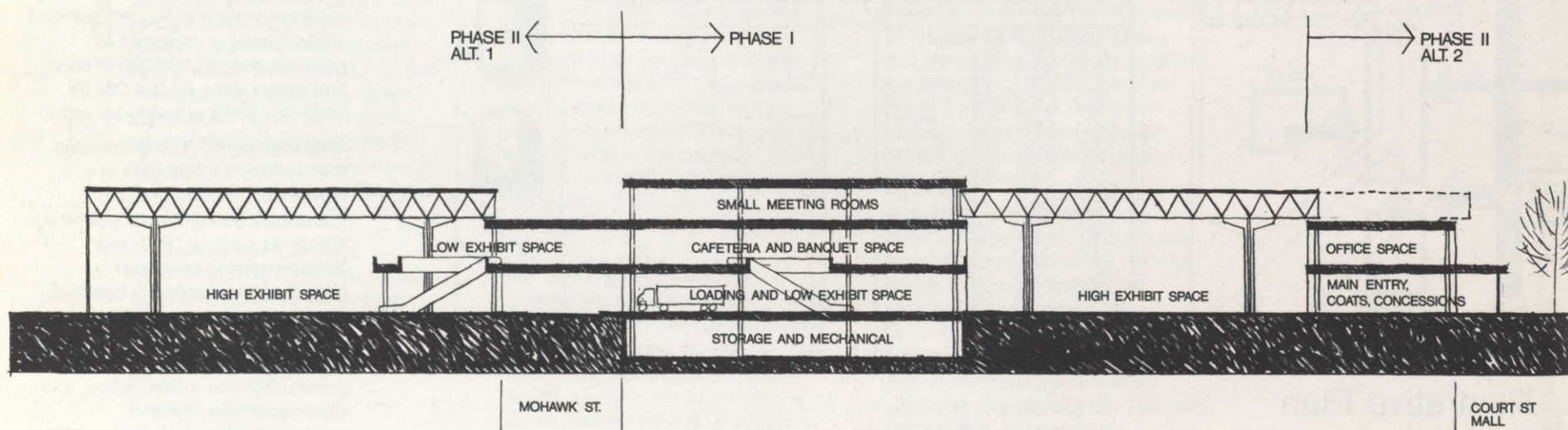


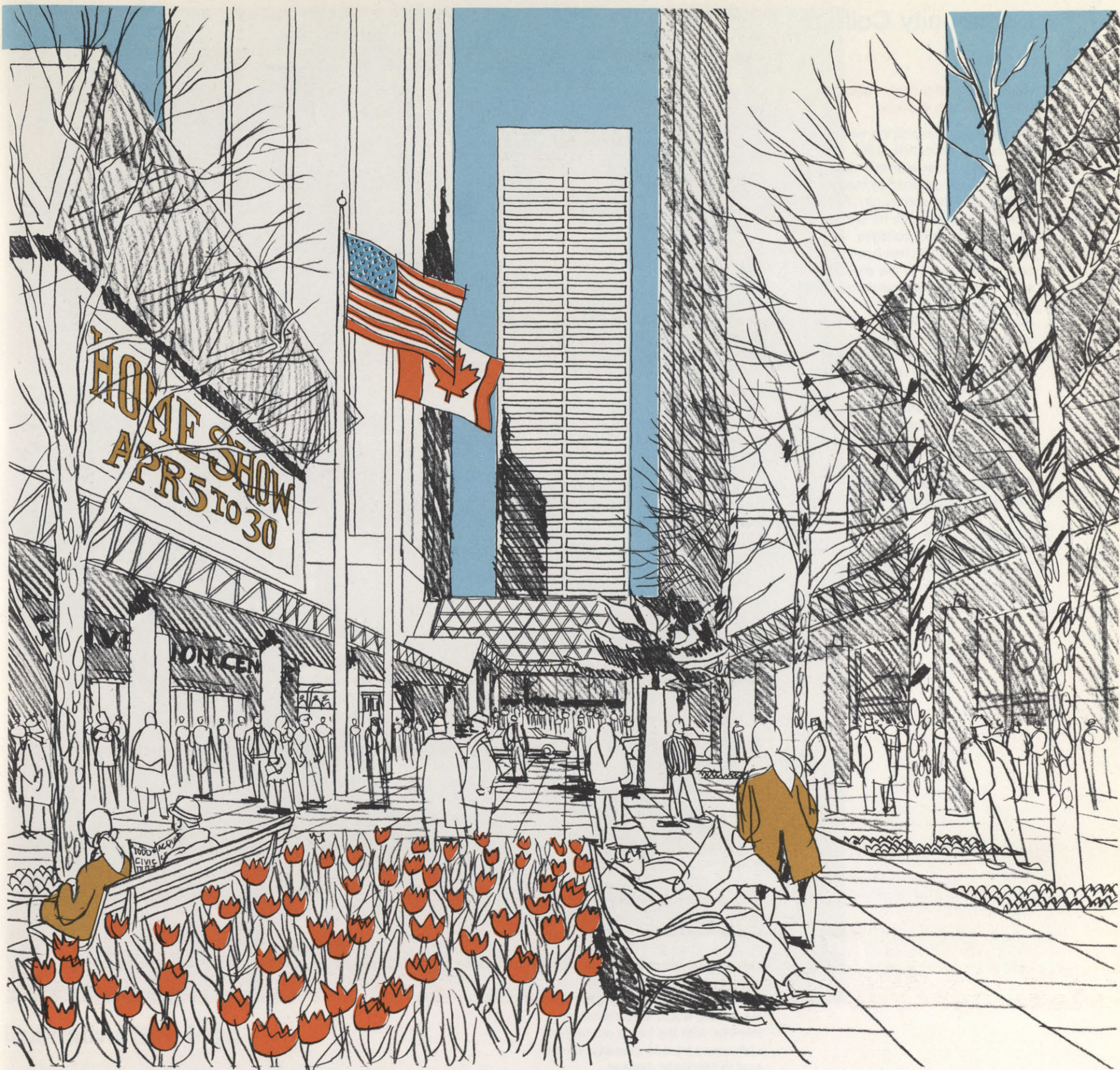
**2nd Floor**

- First Phase
- Second Phase



**3rd Floor**





Court Street Entrance to Convention Center with View of Main Street Mall



# 5 Community College

## Statement of the Committee on the Community College

The problem of supplying adequate facilities for education at the Community College level is one being actively pursued by many segments of the community. For a number of years a site for one of several community colleges planned for Buffalo has been sought in or close to the downtown area. The charge of members of the Community College Central Business District Study Committee is to address this question and to propose such a site. In response to the urgent need for facilities to fulfill existing demand for a downtown Community College the Committee submits the recommendation contained in the following pages.

Dr. Joseph Manch, Chairman  
Max B. E. Clarkson  
John L. Hettrick  
George L. Wessel  
The Honorable Joseph A. Tauriello  
The Honorable Albert N. Abgott  
The Honorable Frank C. Ludera

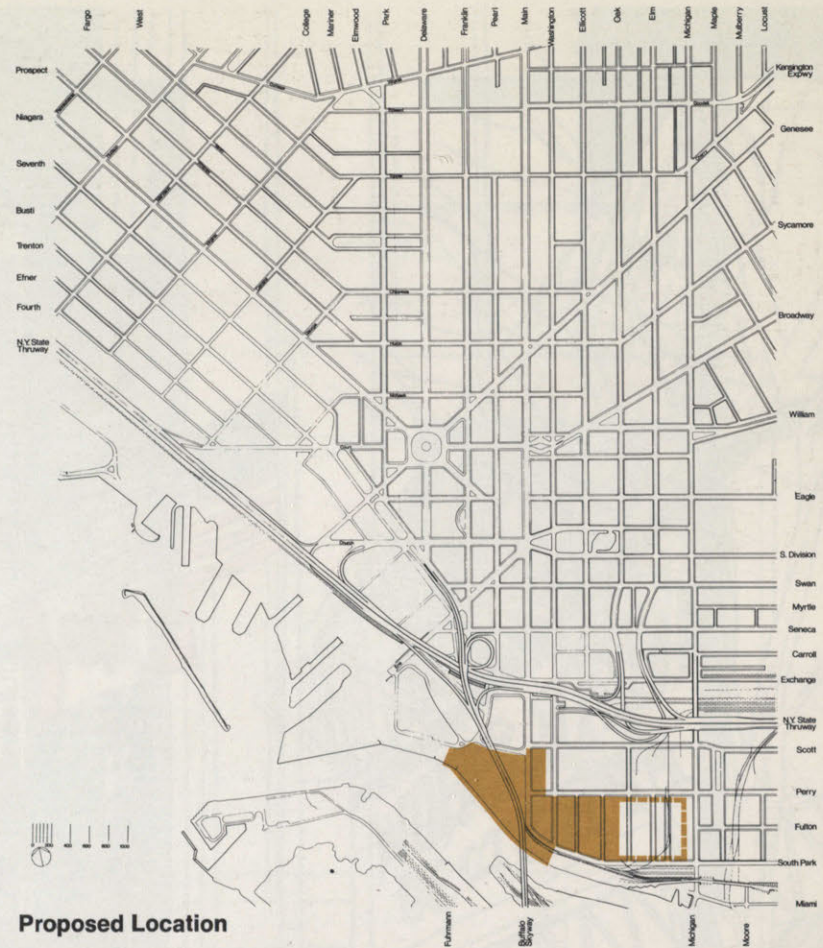
## Program and Location

The new Community College is expected ultimately to serve approximately 4,000 students. While proximity to Downtown and mass transit are primary goals, the college's space requirements demand a site of approximately 50 acres. Athletic facilities and the spread out nature of classroom buildings impose this requirement for a large site. Sites answering this criterion are difficult to find in the downtown area.

County and City officials have proposed and analyzed seven possible sites in Downtown for the location of the college. Short and long term criteria were used to evaluate each site. Site analysis has been predicated on the need for supplying both temporary and permanent facilities within close proximity to one another. The purpose of this approach was that, since the college would have to begin its activities in temporary facilities, the permanent site should be close enough to minimize the disruption of moving.

The criteria used in site evaluation were access to rapid transit, availability of parking, access to the expressway system, parking costs, land acquisition cost, availability, disturbance potential, expandability, availability to Downtown for work-study courses, and availability of convenience shopping. These criteria are not necessarily ranked in order of importance.

Analysis of the seven sites by the criteria listed on the opposite page indicates that the South Main Street site offers the greatest number of advantages and the fewest disadvantages. Mutual reinforcement of the goals of the college and goals for Downtown are best accomplished on this site. Access, parking availability, future plans for a City-owned parking structure and service by rapid transit all favor this site. Future expansion of the college facilities, an important factor in this era of increasing demand for higher education, would be possible on this site, with the future acquisition of the land from Mississippi Street east to Michigan Avenue.



Proposed Location

Acquisition costs are high, since the greater portion of the site would have to be acquired on the open market, but these additional costs can be more than offset by the fact that the Municipal Parking Authority can absorb the cost of the parking structure to serve the needs of the college. In other sites, this cost would have to be borne by the college. Parking demand would also be higher on other sites not having convenient access to high speed rapid transit.



Illustrative Site Plan

## 6 CBD Housing and the Downtown Periphery: An Investment Opportunity

### Statement of the CBD Housing Committee

One of the benefits of the resurgence of Downtown as the cultural, retail, administrative and sports center of the Region is that it will become increasingly attractive as a place to live. No other area in the Region has the potential for variety and interest as the Downtown. As Downtown is increasingly found to be an attractive area in which to live, the present closed-after-5pm quality will disappear. After 5pm night life activity is extremely important to the future success of the resurgence of Downtown. Fortunately, there is a self generating feature in the nurturing of evening activities. After the first slow pioneering efforts, it becomes easier and easier to foster new activities. Again, fortunately for Downtown, the burden of being the "first one" is being taken off the private developer by the development now taking place in the Waterfront Urban Renewal Project Area. The Marina development and the Waterfront Areas A&B will begin to generate the around-the-clock population necessary to establish Downtown as an after 5pm environment.

These projects will open-up new inter-racial housing development in Downtown in the next 10 years. These opportunities will be of two types. The area between Prospect, Elmwood and Carolina Streets presents a fine opportunity for creation of an intown "village". The rearrangement of the street pattern will eliminate through traffic. Johnson Park makes a small, pleasant central park. The second type of opportunity lies in high rise apartment buildings in the heart of Downtown, producing a completely urban residential environment not found anywhere in the Region.

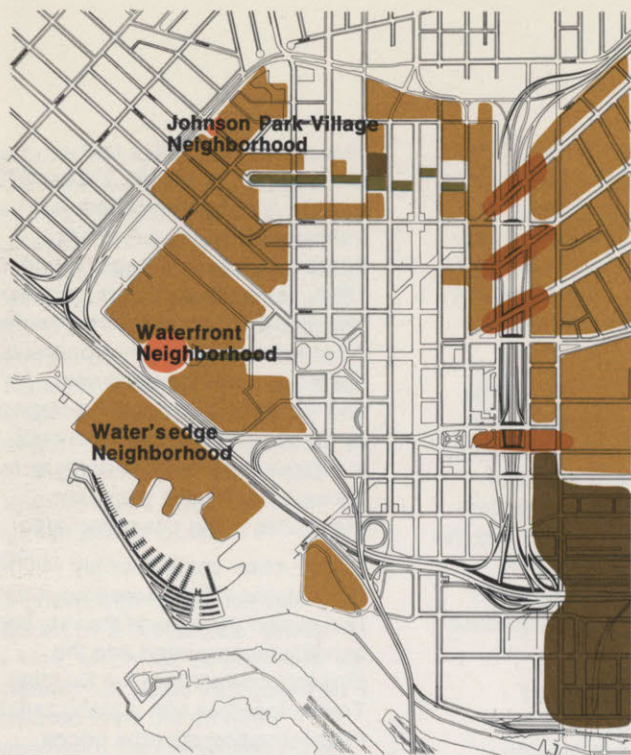
In short, Downtown will increasingly offer very attractive housing investment opportunities as implementation of the Downtown Plan proceeds.

John C. Donovan, Chairman  
James L. Ammon  
Donald J. Blair  
Reverend G. Grant Crumpley  
Don McCarthy  
William P. Ackendorf  
Arthur E. Lewin  
Nelson H. Nichols, Jr.  
Robert W. Ramsey  
George F. Rand, III

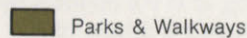
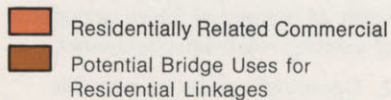
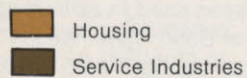
### Important "Non-Core" Downtown Investment Opportunities

One type of investment opportunity possible in the downtown area and which has not been exploited anywhere else in the region is that which combines the unique qualities found in the recent leisure time retail and entertainment development of Ghirardelli Square and the Cannery, in San Francisco in the area around Fisherman's Wharf, and the older, equally successful Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen. The development of a new image for Downtown by development of the Main Street Mall, the new convention center, the waterfront housing, the marina, the rebuilt auditorium and the Community College will produce a kind of glamor which will make Downtown an excellent place for this type of development. A possible site is in the Waterfront Project area straddling Erie Street between the marina apartments and the marina. It is called "Erie Quai". It has high visibility, a potentially glamorous location, accessibility from the expressway system, good access from Downtown at Erie Street and an excellent parking supply.

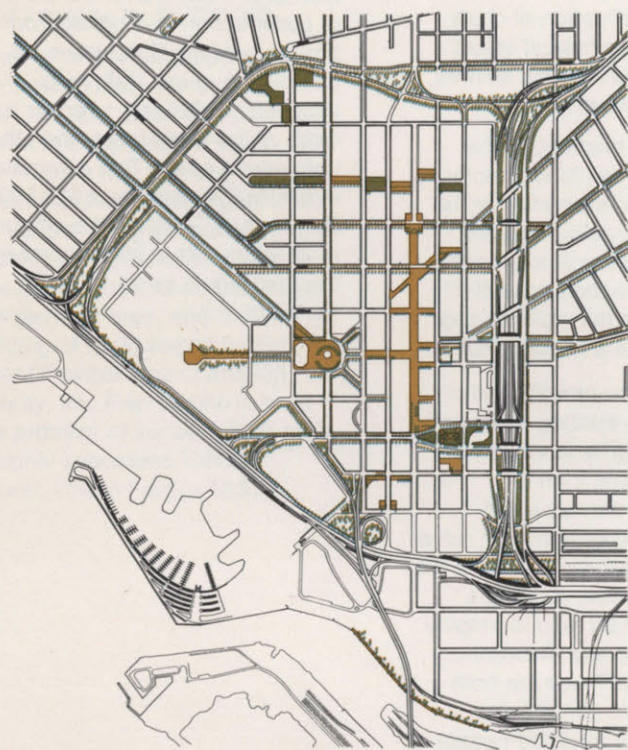
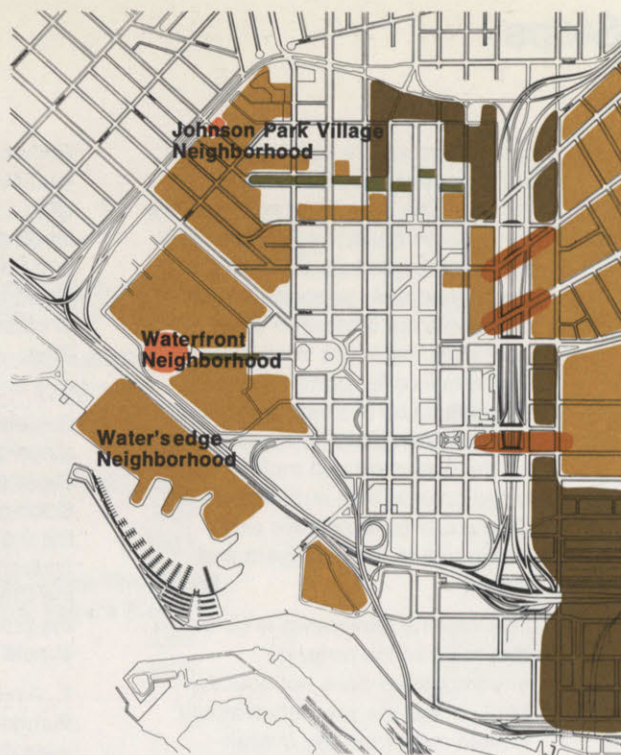




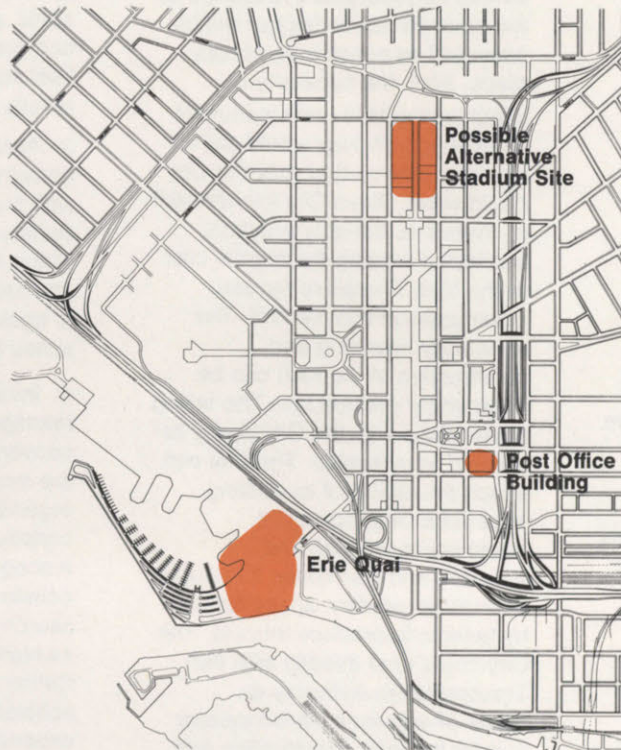
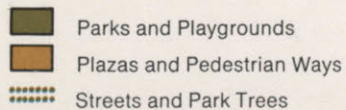
#### Housing



#### Housing and Service Industries



#### Landscape Plan



#### Other "Non-Core" Investment Opportunities

#### Service Activities

As the Downtown core expands, many activities which occupy inexpensive space in the peripheral areas of Downtown will tend to be displaced by activities which can pay higher rents. Many of the activities likely to be displaced are important and valuable to the continued smooth functioning of Downtown. They will tend to compete for areas adjacent to the present downtown area, farther from the center than areas they presently occupy, but still within the proposed highway ring. Two basically different types of activity will compete for these areas. The first will continue to be such downtown service activities as various types of printing, some types of wholesaling, special products, etc. The other type will be housing and its attendant convenience services. Early in the period, demand will be low, but, as the implementation of the Plan proceeds, demand for housing will tend to drive out service activities. The market will prevail in this competition, but, in order to promote housing in the Downtown, zoning controls should be applied in certain areas gradually to separate downtown service activities from housing. Three possible patterns are suggested in the accompanying maps.

# 7 Timing and Next Steps

There are five major elements of the Plan which are in the public domain. Each of these is essential to success in implementation of the Plan. They are: (1) the convention center, (2) the high-speed rapid transit system, (3) the Main Street Mall, (4) parking, and (5) the highway system.

The implementation of each poses different organizational and financing problems. For some, such as parking and highways, smoothly working and successful mechanisms already exist and can be extended to handle the requirements of the Plan. For others, particularly the Mall, new devices are being established to carry out implementation. There are two facets to implementation of the Mall: sources of funds and organization for planning and operation after construction. Consideration of each facet is given below:

- 1 Funding** Several possible funding sources have been examined:
1. The City,
  2. A voluntary association of property owners, and
  3. A local improvement district.

The voluntary association private corporation is unlikely to be successful, because it would require 100% acceptance of the Plan before it could be implemented. This leaves either direct City involvement or the formation of a quasi-public organization. The local improvement district as it is used in California is one possibility. The local improvement district has worked in some places, where permitted by law, and where the benefited property owners front on the Mall so that special tax levies can be made on a front foot or square foot of area basis.

It would require a corporation with both borrowing power and taxing powers. The borrowing power would have to be based on the City faith and credit, because the Mall could not immediately generate enough additional tax income to cover operating expenses in addition to that required for bond retirement. The setting up of a separate and parallel taxing structure not limited by the operation and maintenance constitutional limit imposed on the City would be expensive and repugnant to the taxpayers and voters.

The Plan for Downtown is so broad that most of the property encompassed does not abut the Mall. In fact the property that will benefit most from the overall development, and where most of the real property tax increase will be generated, is in the off Main Street areas where the private office buildings, the hotels and other profit opportunity structures will be erected following rapid transit and Mall construction. These benefits cannot be predicted in advance as the basis for tax levies but will be assessed as construction takes place. Also, the necessity of attaching the Mall roof structure to all existing buildings would call for coercive powers that only the City could wield. Direct City involvement is, therefore, the only practical method of funding the *capital* cost of the Mall. There are several advantages in this method. The direct City financing and construction of the Mall can be done under present law. The taxing power stays with the City under its present organization. The City can attach the Mall roof to existing structures. The City would retain title to the land and structure and can lease, directly or through an agency, space for use by tenants to produce income. The City could deal directly with the Transportation Authority re: rights-of-way for a transit system and for the joint construction and operation of station areas, etc. The City could apply for any State or

Federal assistance that might be available through such agencies as UDC or HUD. UDC is already involved deeply in the Waterfront and Ellicott Projects and certainly could be available for involvement in other aspects of the Downtown Plan.

**2 Planning and Operation** The Business Community should form a non-profit corporation to promote the implementation of the Final Concept Plan and to contract for the management of the Mall and the convention center on behalf of the City, if the City so desires. In the planning stage the Corporation should:

1. Assist the Architects and Planners to project and provide uses of Mall space to provide maximum income from the space without unduly infringing on the rights of present or future occupants of existing retail establishments;
2. Coordinate as far as possible the joint planning of the Mall structure and the rapid transit system to minimize construction costs, avoid duplication of costs, and produce the physical layout best suited to achieve the desired results of both ventures;
3. Assist in the planning of the convention and exhibition center, with the added cooperation of the Buffalo Convention Bureau, the Hilton Hotels convention experts and any other needed consultants, to again provide the facilities best suited for Buffalo's needs; and
4. Investigate the operation and management of existing malls and convention facilities to determine the most desirable form of organization to provide when construction is complete and actual management necessary. During the construction period, conduct a search for the right men to employ as Mall Manager and Convention Center Manager. There are both specialized fields and require experienced and qualified people.

The cost of the Mall is now estimated to be \$8,493,000 in 1970 dollars, and the time schedule indicates, at worst, a 5-year construction period beginning in 1974. The subway construction and Mall construction should be carried on simultaneously over a period of not much more than one year, and that even this could be staged by areas of Main Street so as not to interrupt business nor create undue hardships to the many merchants in the downtown area.

Construction costs possibly will be more stable in the future than in the recent past because of the very fine benefits incorporated into the present contract with the Building Trades together with a stabilization in construction material prices. However, a figure of \$10,000,000 for construction and allied costs has been used in estimating the size of Bond Issue needed to finance the Mall. Also included is the cost of carrying a construction loan for \$10,000,000, which is estimated to be \$1,575,000 with the loan drawn down over the period of construction and repaid from the proceeds of the Bond Issue on completion of the Mall. Also included is \$925,000 to cover the costs of the Bond Issue and other unforeseen costs. This computation indicates the need for a \$12,500,000 Bond Issue. To retire this amount in 20 years with a 6% interest rate, the cost would be \$1,075,000 per year.

The funds to pay this amount would come from the General Funds of the City of Buffalo. The Downtown Concept Plan shows a projected CBD sales level increase over 1967 sales of between \$60,000,000 and \$84,000,000. As sales in Downtown increased during the construction of Main Place, we suggest the base year for comparison be the year in which the decision to build the Mall is announced. It seems safe to assume a \$60 million increase from that year, probably 1971 to 1990.

The convention center will be financed by a bond issue. Unlike the Mall, which will be amortized by increased tax yields (not based on increased rates but on new investment), the convention center will be amortized by revenues earned by the center.

That would produce increased sales taxes at the 1970 rate of \$1,800,000 annually. The estimated increase in annual Property Tax Revenue is \$6,900,000 by 1990 in the CBD. The total tax revenue would increase by \$8,700,000.

In view of what has happened in Downtown Buffalo since the Arthur D. Little report and the Architects Collaborative report, we must assume that this study can be implemented and successful, also. With the on-going construction of the University, the housing program of the UDC in the Ellicott District and the Waterfront area, and the providing of rapid transit by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, this Plan seems to have more promise of success than even the highly successful Urban Renewal, Phase I did in 1963.

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**Buffalo Central Business District  
Comparison Goods Sales Alternatives**

	1967	1975	1980	1985
<b>SMSA Comparison Goods Sales Level Forecast</b>	\$630	\$790	\$830	\$1,000
<b>CBD Forecasts under Alternative Programs</b>				
Low	\$140	\$158	\$166	\$ 200
High	\$140	\$177	\$200	\$ 224
<b>Increase over 1963 Level</b>				
Low	—	\$ 18	\$ 26	\$ 60
High	—	\$ 37	\$ 60	\$ 84
<b>Additional Space Warranted @ \$100 per square foot</b>				
Low	—	180,000SF	260,000SF	600,000SF
High	—	370,000SF	600,000SF	840,000SF

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# Mall and Subway Construction Phasing

Mall Structure and Subway in Three Phases Between 1973 and 1976  
 Mall Landscaping Spring and Summer 1976  
 Entire Project Complete in October 1976 Ready for the Bicentennial Christmas Shopping Season

## First Phase Construction 1973-1975

Theatre Station 1973-1975  
 Mall 1974-1975

## Third Phase Construction 1975-1976

Mall 1975-1976

## Second Phase Construction 1974-1976

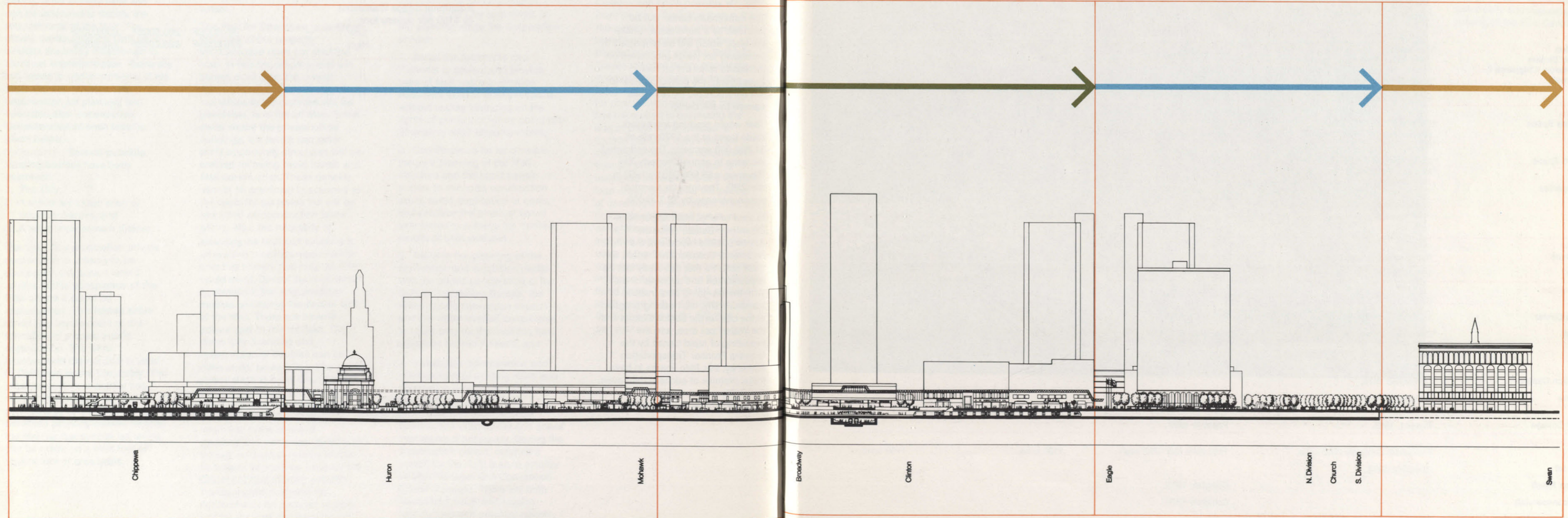
Lafayette Station 1974-1976  
 Mall 1975-1976

## Third Phase Construction 1975-1976

Mall 1975-1976

## First Phase Construction 1973-1974

Subway 1973-1974  
 Cathedral Park 1973-1974



	1970-1975	1976-1980	1981-1985	1986-1990
<b>Mall and Open Space</b>				
Main Street Mall	Construction 1973-1976 along with transit subway.	Complete 1976.		
Downtown Landscape Plan including: *Pedestrian Ways *Street Trees,* Parks	Begin program.	Complete program.		
<b>Rapid Transit</b>				
Buffalo/Amherst Transit Line	*Construction of Downtown portion: section from Church to Goodell under Main Street. *Section from Church to Michigan via Pearl and South Park.	Complete remainder. Operation begun in 1976.		
Kenmore/Airport Line	Construct Lafayette Square Station.	Begin construction.	Complete construction. Operation begun in 1985.	
Bus System	Temporary route revisions during construction.	Reduction in number of downtown bus routes after completion of Buffalo/Amherst Line.	Further reduction in number of bus routes.	
<b>Traffic and Parking</b>				
Expressway System	Kensington Interchange, 1974-1975.	*Elm/Oak Arterial, 1977-1979. *Begin West Side Arterial, 1980.	Complete West Side Arterial, 1982.	
Street System *Mall Related Streets *Elmwood, Huron, Chippewa & Niagara Streets	*Permanently close portions of Main, Genessee, Mohawk, Court, & Eagle Streets for Mall & subway construction. *Make direction changes.			
Parking	City Court Building Ramp complete by 1975.	Development continues at the rate of 1000 spaces per year .....		
<b>Office Space</b>				
Private Office Space	*Complete 1st phase Marine Midland Center. *0.95 million sq. ft.	*1.6 million sq. ft. *Including Marine Midland Phase II.	2.1 million sq. ft.	1.5 million sq. ft.
Government Space	*Complete New Federal Office Building *New City Court Building			
Utility Companies		*New Telephone Co. Building (20 stories). *Additions to & re-modeling of existing Telephone Co. Building.		
<b>Retail Space</b>				
Existing Space	Improvements	Improvements		
New Space	250,000 sq. ft.	300,000 sq. ft.	300,000 sq. ft.	250,000 sq. ft.
<b>Special Facilities</b>				
Marina	Complete 1972 Boating Season.			
Convention Center	1st Stage Completed 1975.	2nd Stage 1978.		
Hotel/Motel	*Continued renovation of Statler-Hilton. *Waterfront Boatel 200 rooms, Phase I. New hotel 200 rooms.	*New hotel 400 rooms. *Marine Midland Hotel 400 rooms. *Boatel 200 rooms, Phase II.	New hotel 700 rooms.	New hotel 600 rooms.
Transportation Center	Completed 1974.			
Sports Arena	Completed 1973.			
<b>Education</b>				
Community College	Phase I, 1975.	Phase II, 1980.		
<b>Waterfront Development</b>				
Housing	Areas A&B Complete 2800 units.	1100 units (200-250/year).	1100 units.	1100 units.
Public School	Complete 1973.			
Convenience Retail		Complete 1976.		
Erie Quai (commercial)		Complete 1976.		
Existing Downtown Housing Rehabilitation	Continuing over 20 year period.			
New Downtown Housing		1100 units.	1100 units.	1100 units.





To the new generation of leadership emerging in Buffalo falls the task and the unique opportunity of maintaining and generating additional momentum in carrying out the Plan for the Regional Center. A strong partnership has been established between Mayor Sedita and his City Administration, the business community through the Buffalo Development Foundation, and the State through the New York State Urban Development Corporation. The opportunities and mechanisms for carrying them out are there. It remains to do the job. As Mayor Sedita has said, the opportunities offered in 1971 are in Buffalo historically equaled only by the coming of the Erie Canal.

## Credits

This Plan is a report to the Mayor of Buffalo, Frank A. Sedita, and carried out at his request.

Co-participants with the Mayor are the New York State Urban Development Corporation, Edward Logue, President and Chief Executive Officer, and the Greater Buffalo Development Foundation, Claude Schucter, President, and David Laub, Chairman of the Board.

The members of the Mayor's CBD Steering Committee are:

### **CBD Steering Committee**

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The contents of the Plan are composed of the reports of the following special committees appointed by the Mayor.

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#### **Chairman:**

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#### **CBD Main Street Mall— Parking Committee**

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#### **CBD Erie County Community College**

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Board of Education  
712 City Hall  
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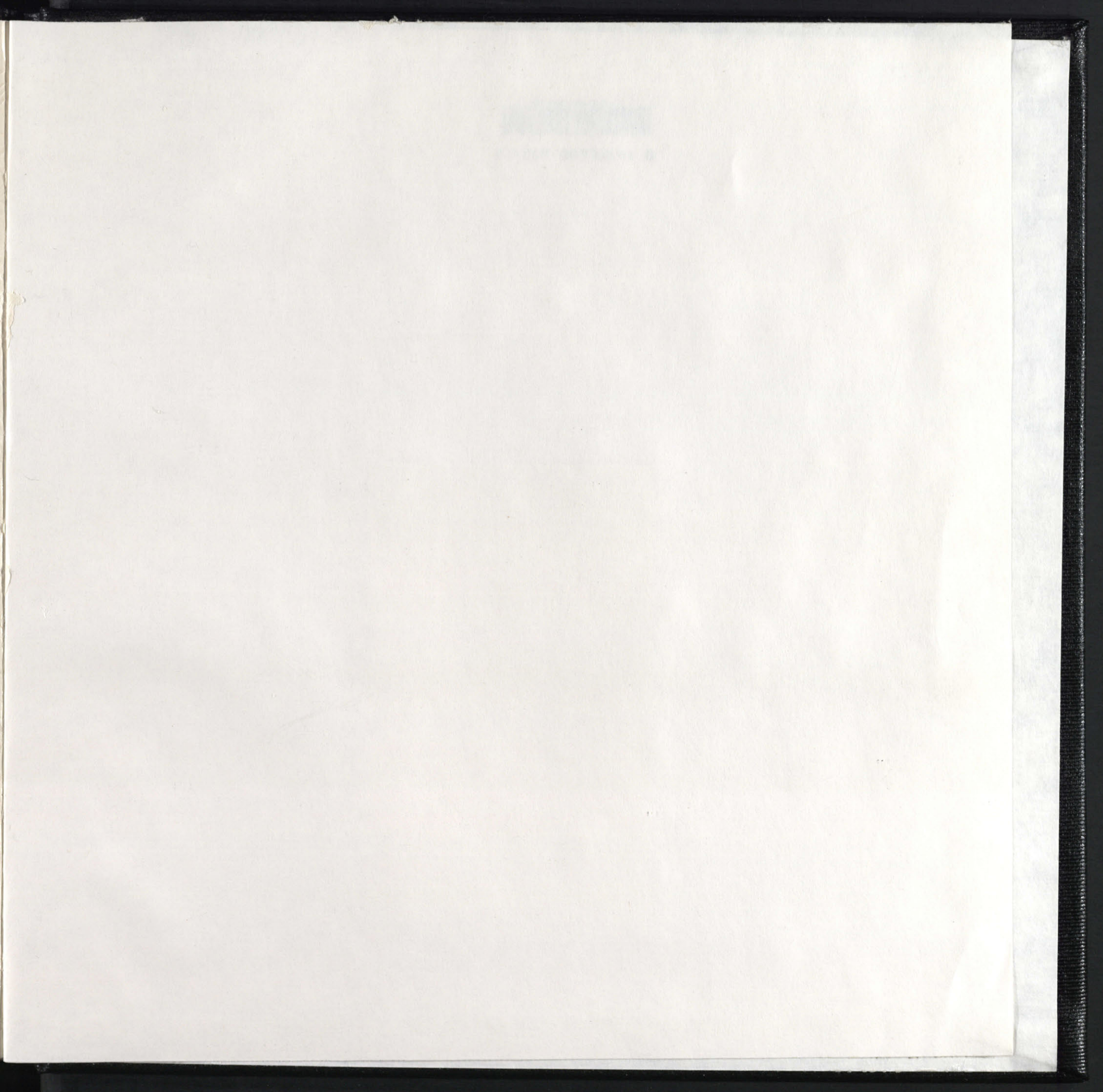
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