



Agenda Item #1

Applications 2024-28-CA

DETAILS

Location:

401 Civic Center Drive

Summary of Request:

Demolish civic center complex (theater, arena/auditorium, and exposition hall) and related site improvements (landscaping and hardscaping). Prepare property for redevelopment.

Applicant (as applicable):

Sam Matheny/Volkert, Inc.

Property Owner:

City of Mobile

Historic District:

Church Street East

Classification:

Non-Contributing

Summary of Analysis:

- The Civic Center theater and arena buildings were constructed in 1964, and the exposition hall building was constructed in 1973. All three buildings were considered Non-Contributing to the Church Street East district at the time of the last update to the National Register district in 2005.
- The property may be considered historically significant for its association with the Urban Renewal movement, but no official determination has been made by the Alabama Historical Commission or National Park Service.
- The property is not considered architecturally significant.
- The overall condition of the property is good, and the applicant has explored the renovation option.
- The applicant has submitted conceptual plans for a replacement arena.

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PROPERTY AND APPLICATION HISTORY

Church Street East was locally designated as a historic district by the City of Mobile's Board of Commissioners in 1962, and it was initially listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Department of the Interior (National Park Service) in 1971 under Criteria A (historic significance) and C (architectural significance) for its local significance in the areas of architecture, education, and urban planning. The area where the Civic Center complex (theater, arena/auditorium, and exposition hall) is located has been inside the boundaries of the district since at least 1971. The district is significant for its concentration of multiple 19th century architectural styles and because it encompasses the site of Mobile in the early 1700s. The district boundaries were expanded in 1984 and 2005.

The subject property, which recently has been subdivided to accommodate a new U.S. Army Corps of Engineers building and a six-story parking garage, is occupied by the 1964 Civic Center theater and arena and the 1973 exposition hall. The 1876 Hopkins ward map of Mobile showed the area bounded by Church, Lawrence, Canal, and Claiborne streets - the land on which the Civic Center and associated parking now exist - was densely developed with residences. The 1885 Sanborn map illustrates only the far northwest corner of the current Civic Center property, showing an area populated with one-story frame dwellings, "tenements", and "shanties." A two-story brick stable with attached one-story brick barber shop is shown on Lawrence Street just north of the current location of Civic Center Drive. Two grocery stores, one at the northeast corner of Monroe and Lawrence and one at the southwest corner of Monroe and Hamilton, were recorded, and a saloon was placed at the southeast corner of Monroe and Lawrence.

The entire Civic Center area is illustrated on the 1891 Sanborn map, which continues to show a densely developed residential area. Interspersed with the mostly one-story frame houses of varying size were grocery stores, barber shops, an ice cream shop, retail stores, a fire station, a church, a saloon, and a restaurant. By the time the 1904 Sanborn map was prepared, more residences including more two-story dwellings were present, and the variety of businesses appears to have narrowed. A two-story frame residence with apparent bay window on its façade was shown at the northeast corner of Monroe and Franklin streets, and a two-story brick furniture store was at the opposite end of the block at the northwest corner of Monroe and Franklin streets. The neighborhood included a Chinese laundry, a barber, Bethel A.M.E. Church, and a furniture warehouse.

The 1924 Sanborn map, updated in 1955, shows a similar pattern with a few exceptions. A cinder block dwelling had been constructed at the southwest corner of Hamilton and Eslava streets at some point between 1924 and 1955, and a cinder block addition had been made to a frame house on Claiborne Street south of Monroe in the same period. The grocery stores and barbers seem to have disappeared, and the block bounded by Madison, Claiborne, Canal, and Franklin streets had been cleared for use as a "Public Play Ground" complete with public restrooms. The two and one-half story brick Robert E. Lee Public School occupied the block bounded by Madison, Franklin, Hamilton, and Canal streets. Available aerial photographs of the Civic Center area taken in 1938, 1952, 1955, and 1960 show essentially the same development as reflected in the 1924/1955 Sanborn map.

By the time of the next available aerial photograph, 1967, more than seven blocks had been leveled to make way for the Civic Center. The only structure remaining was the public school bounded by Madison, Franklin, Hamilton, and Canal streets. The school disappeared by the time of the next available aerial photograph, taken in 1980.

According to the vertical files of the Historic Development Department, the larger parcel, of which the subject complex was part until recently, has appeared seven (7) times previously before the Architectural Review Board (ARB). In November 1983, the ARB approved placement of a commemorative plaque on a brick base at the corner of Claiborne Street and Auditorium Drive (now Civic Center Drive). The installation of a 100' telecommunications tower and construction of a one-story 10'x16' accessory structure on a small parcel to the immediate north of the current site of a new office building was approved by the ARB in July 1998. The ARB approved the construction of two steel and glass bus shelters located along the Lawrence Street side of the parcel was approved in October 2009. The ARB approved construction of a six-story office building at the southeast corner of the Civic Center site

over three meetings from August 2022 through April 2023. A six-level City parking garage was approved by the ARB in July 2023.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Demolish the Civic Center complex (theater, arena/auditorium, and exposition hall) and associated site improvements (landscaping, drives, walks, parking, etc.).
2. Prepare the area for future development by installing appropriate utilities such as electrical and fiber optics.

APPLICABLE STANDARDS *(Code of the City of Mobile, Chapter 44, Article IV, Sec. 44-80)*

- (a) Required Findings. The Board shall not grant Certificates of Appropriateness for the demolition...of any Historic Property or property within a local Historic District unless the Board finds that the removal...of such building will not be detrimental to the historic or architectural character of the District. In making this determination, the Board shall consider:
 - (1) The historical or architectural significance of the structure;
 - (2) The importance of the structure to the integrity of the local Historic District, the immediate vicinity or area, or relationship to other structures;
 - (3) The difficulty or the impossibility of reproducing the structure because of its design, texture, material, detail or unique location;
 - (4) Whether the structure is one of the last remaining examples of its kind in the neighborhood, the county, or the region, or is a good example of its type, or is part of an ensemble of historic buildings creating a neighborhood; and
 - (5) Whether there are definite plans for reuse of the property if the proposed demolition is carried out, and what effect such plans will have on the architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological, social, aesthetic, or environmental character of the surrounding area.
- (b) Content of Applications. All applications to demolish or remove a Historic Property or a structure in a local Historic District shall contain the following minimum information:
 - (1) The date the owner acquired the property, purchase price, and condition on date of acquisition;
 - (2) The number and types of adaptive uses of the property considered by the owner;
 - (3) Whether the property has been listed for sale, prices asked and offers received, if any;
 - (4) Description of the options currently held for the purchase of such property, including the price received for such option, the condition placed upon such option and the date of expiration of such option;
 - (5) Replacement construction plans for the property in question, amounts expended upon such plans, and the dates of such expenditures;
 - (6) Financial proof of the ability to complete the replacement project, which may include but not be limited to a performance bond, a letter of credit, a trust for completion of improvements, or a letter of commitment from a financial institution; and
 - (7) Such other information as may reasonably be required by the Board...
- (c) Post Demolition...Plans Required. In no event shall the Board entertain any application for the demolition...of any Historic Property or property in a local Historic District, unless the applicant also presents at the same time the post-demolition...plans for the site.”

STAFF ANALYSIS

The applicant wishes to raze the Civic Center theater, arena/auditorium, exposition hall, and related landscaping and hardscaping in anticipation of constructing a new arena and related development to include retail, dining, and residences.

(a) Required Findings

(1) Historical or Architectural Significance of the Structure

The Civic Center Theater and Arena/Auditorium buildings were constructed in 1964 and are 60 years old. The Expo(sition) Hall building was constructed in 1973 and is 51 years old. At the time of the last update to the Church Street East National Register listing in 2005, none of these buildings was considered contributing to the district because the district's period of significance was defined as 1834 to 1957, and these buildings were not yet 50 years old. In general, the National Park Service begins considering significance of properties in relation to the National Register of Historic Places when they reach 50 years of age.

The *Design Review Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts (Guidelines)* instruct, "An analysis should be undertaken to determine if the historic structure retains its integrity...In some cases, the original designation of a structure as contributing or non-contributing to the historic district in which it is located may no longer be valid either because the structure has lost its historic integrity or because the passage of time or change in appreciation of the structure has resulted in the structure contributing to the character of the district." (12.0)

The existing Civic Center complex was constructed using instruments and funding made available through federal legislation. The United States Housing Act of 1937 (Act) directed the federal government to subsidize local public housing agencies to improve living conditions for low-income families. The 1949 expansion of the Act provided funding for "slum clearance and community development and redevelopment." Title I of the 1949 Act authorized \$1 billion in loans to help cities acquire slums and blighted land for public or private redevelopment. Urban Renewal, as the projects planned and executed under this legislation came to be known, changed the built landscape of cities across the country from the 1940s through the 1970s.

The Mobile Housing Board began acquiring properties in the current Civic Center area in the 1950s with the intention of moving residents to better accommodations and selling the properties to the City of Mobile for redevelopment. In January 1962, the U.S. Urban Renewal Administration approved a \$3,382,925 grant to the City of Mobile for the project in Church Street East to develop a "new civic center, municipal auditorium, park, and parking lots, as well as commercial facilities."¹ *Urban Renewal Plan for Project ALA. R-33* describes the project area as "a slum and blighted area, predominantly residential in character." The plan proposed acquiring, clearing, and redeveloping the area in order to "eliminate the slum and blighting conditions...establish a cultural center related to the Central Business District...provide adequate space for park and permanent open space...provide for restoration and preservation of an area of historical significance...provide for improved traffic flow in accordance with the Major Street Plan and with proposals for Interstate Route 10 adjacent to the Project Area... [and] provide maximum opportunity for development by private enterprise." The existing houses, churches, stores, fire station, and other neighborhood buildings were removed from the current Civic Center, Chamber of Commerce, Spanish Plaza, and Malaga Square Park areas. In addition to the arena/auditorium, theater, and expo hall, Spanish Plaza and Malaga Square were developed as a result of the execution of Project ALA. R-33.

The criteria for evaluation for listing in the National Register of Historic Places are (A) *Event* (properties associated with an important event in American history or a pattern of events or historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or the nation), (B) *Person* (properties associated with

the lives of persons significant in our past), (C) *Design/Construction* (properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that

¹ Telegram from U.S. Senators Lister Hill and John Sparkman to Mayor George McNally, January 5, 1962

possess high artistic values), and (D) *Information Potential* (properties that have yielded or may yield information important in prehistory or history; these are predominantly archaeological sites).² The structures that are the subject of this application may be considered significant under Criterion A for their association with the nationwide Urban Renewal program, which had a powerful impact on public and low-income housing in the United States and the redevelopment of large swaths of American cities.

The Civic Center arena/auditorium and theater were designed by local architectural firm Slater & Slater, and the expo hall was designed by architects Frederick C. Woods and Thomas P. Steber. When considered against Criterion C, none of the buildings that are the subject of this application would seem to qualify as architecturally significant. While the buildings do embody distinctive characteristics of their type and period, those characteristics are not outstanding when compared against theaters, arenas/auditoriums, and exposition halls constructed in the same period in other cities. Other designs by Mr. Woods include the Greek Orthodox church in Malbis, Alabama; Christ the King Catholic Church in Daphne, Alabama; Central Plaza Towers and the Strickland Youth Center in Mobile, as well as a consulting role in the design of Government Plaza.³ However, none of the three subject buildings would be considered as representing “the work of a master.” Although the buildings were thoughtfully designed in terms of materials and massing, none possesses high artistic values.

It is doubtful the buildings that are the subject of this application would be considered eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion B, as the property is not known to be associated with any historically significant person. Whether the property would be considered eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion D is unknown at this time. The construction of the subject buildings in the 1960s and 1970s likely destroyed any archaeological features or foundational remains of the neighborhood formerly existing there. Areas that have been used as surface parking lots have a higher probability of containing artifacts and features, but the historic significance of any such below-ground properties would require evaluation by a qualified archaeologist, and no such studies are known to exist.

Listing in the National Register is contingent upon a property or district being considered significant under one of the four criteria outlined above as well as retaining historic integrity. The National Park Service (NPS) defines “integrity” as the ability of a property or district to convey its significance.⁴ Of the seven (7) aspects of integrity identified by NPS (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association), the subject complex has retained all seven aspects of integrity. It should be noted, however, that neither the Alabama Historical Commission nor the National Park Service has made a determination on the Civic Center’s eligibility for either individual listing in the National Register or being reclassified as contributing to the Church Street East district.

(2) Importance of the Structure to the Integrity of the Local Historic District, the Immediate Vicinity or Area, or Relationship to Other Structures

The Church Street East Historic District is listed in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A (historic significance) and C (architectural significance) for its local significance in the areas of architecture, education, and urban planning. The district is significant for its concentration of multiple 19th century architectural styles and because it encompasses the site of Mobile in the early 1700s. The period of significance for the district, as defined in the 2005 revision to the National Register nomination, is 1834 to 1957. The subject buildings were constructed outside the period of significance. The theater, arena/auditorium, and expo hall may be considered significant in the area of urban planning, but their importance to the integrity of the district is debatable.

² National Park Service. *National Register Bulletin: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, 1997.

³ <https://obits.al.com/us/obitusries/mobile/name/frederick-woods-obituary?id=13740453>. Accessed May 2024

⁴ National Park Service. *National Register Bulletin 15 – How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 1997.

The area known as the Civic Center site – consisting of the three subject buildings, surface parking, areas of construction for a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers facility and a parking garage, and all related landscaping and hardscaping - was occupied by residential and commercial development from the early nineteenth century through the early 1960s. Approximately seven blocks of a dense urban neighborhood similar to the extant Church Street East Historic District existed on the Civic Center site prior to its clearance for construction of Interstate 10 and the civic center. Those structures were similar in character to the rest of Church Street East, but the existing Civic Center complex relates poorly to the rest of Church Street East. When compared to the rest of Church Street East, the Civic Center complex detracts from the district’s integrity of design, setting, workmanship, and feeling. As noted above, the massing and materials of the three subject buildings were designed with some thought to their visual relationships to nearby historic structures, but the complex as a whole does not contribute to the historic integrity of the district, the immediate vicinity, or other structures.

The *Guidelines* instruct us to, “Consider the impact that demolition will have on surrounding structures, including neighboring properties, properties on the same block or across the street.” (12.0) If demolition of the subject buildings is approved, the visual context of surrounding contributing properties would briefly return to the period in the early 1960s when the area was cleared but not yet redeveloped. The removal of the three subject buildings and their related landscaping and hardscaping would result in open space that has not existed there since the early 1960s. Therefore, the space has historically been occupied by these buildings. The applicant anticipates filling the created space with a new arena on the approximate east half of the space and with mixed use and residential structures on the approximate west half. Therefore, the space is not proposed to remain open, thus avoiding a large, incongruously open area in an urban landscape.

The proposed demolition likely would cause impacts to the visual setting of contributing properties located across the street to the east at 203 S. Claiborne Street (Phoenix Fire Museum, formerly located within the Civic Center site), to the north at 359 (Malaga Inn), 401, and 407 Church Street, and to the west at 210, 212, and 214 South Lawrence Street, as the viewsheds from those properties would be altered. The setting of the contributing property 501 Eslava Street, located to the west across South Lawrence Street, would be impacted to a lesser degree due to its location southwest of Expo Hall. There are no historic buildings on the same superblock as the existing Civic Center.

(3) Difficulty or Impossibility of Reproducing the Structure Because of its Design, Texture, Material, Detail or Unique Location

The three subject structures would not be prohibitively difficult or expensive to reproduce. The architectural and construction plans for the buildings are at hand, and the building materials are all easily accessible, contemporary products. The sole unique feature of the complex is the inclusion of two mosaic murals in the structure of the arena/auditorium building. The original murals by noted artist Conrad Albrizio cannot be reproduced, but the applicant has stated that the murals would be carefully removed by a company with expertise in such operations, and the murals would be placed prominently within the new arena. The applicant also has stated that reproducing the buildings in their current form would result in continued loss of utility as the buildings are obsolete as designed.

(4) Whether the Structure is One of the Last Remaining Examples of its Kind in the Neighborhood, the County, or the Region, or is a Good Example of its Type, or is Part of an Ensemble of Historic Buildings Creating a Neighborhood

The Civic Center theater, arena/auditorium, and exposition hall are not the only remaining structures of their type and era in the region. The 1962 domed Nashville Municipal Auditorium is another Urban Renewal project. Though not part of the Urban Renewal movement, the Bojangles Coliseum (1955) in Charlotte, North Carolina; Dome Civic and Convention Center (1957) in Borger, Texas; Mid-South Coliseum (1964) in Memphis, Tennessee, and the 1965

Houston Astrodome are contemporary examples of domed entertainment venues. The Mid-South Coliseum and Astrodome are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Because the subject buildings have retained all aspects of historic integrity as defined by the National Park Service (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association), they would be considered good examples of their types. However, when compared to contemporary developments of the same type, the Mobile Civic Center would not be considered outstanding. The theater building presents a façade with curved corners suggesting the Art Moderne style of the 1930s. The doors on its east and west elevations are sheltered by flat concrete canopies evocative of the building's mid-century construction.

The domed arena/auditorium building hints at New Formalism with the repetition of concrete uprights circling the exterior. As noted above, the arena/auditorium was designed with a modicum of responsiveness to its historic environment, as the seven-story tall dome is stepped back from the street to the degree that it is not visible from the sidewalk at the south end of Malaga Square across the street. The flat concrete canopies at the side and rear entries, covered walkways at the southeast and southwest sets of doors, and the breeze block enclosed mechanical areas along the south elevation complete the vernacular mid-century appearance of the building.

Expo Hall attempts to recreate the pilastered appearance of revival styles on its west and south elevations. The three buildings are connected by lower, non-descript concourses, but the use of these concourses helped to break up the massive scale of the new construction in relation to the historic buildings across the street to the north. The nearby historic properties were further buffered from the complex by landscaping installed at the northeast and northwest corners of the superblock.

The overall effect of the complex is that of a vernacular set of public buildings. The Civic Center complex is reflective of its era, but it is not high style.

(5) Whether There are Definite Plans for Reuse of the Property if the Proposed Demolition is Carried Out, and What Effect Such Plans Will Have on the Architectural, Cultural, Historical, Archaeological, Social, Aesthetic, or Environmental Character of the Surrounding Area

The applicant has submitted conceptual renderings and a site plan for the proposed new arena. The site plan depicts a larger, basically rectangular arena located in the northeast quadrant of the superblock and a "redevelopment pad" at the northwest quadrant designated by zoning for mixed use and residential development. If executed, the proposed plans would have visual effects upon the architectural and aesthetic environment of the surrounding area, but specific effects cannot be determined until more detailed plans are submitted. Construction of a new arena would have little to no effect on the cultural, historic, social, and environmental character of the surrounding area. The effect on archaeological resources, as discussed above, is unknown.

Building Condition:

In addition to the five considerations outlined in the City of Mobile Code, the *Guidelines* direct that the condition of the structure in question should be considered. "Demolition may be appropriate when a building is deteriorated or in poor condition." (12.0) The applicant submitted a Condition Evaluation Report for the building envelopes (exteriors) of the Civic Center theater and arena/auditorium buildings, prepared by Williamson & Associates. No evaluation of the exposition hall has been submitted. The Condition Evaluation Report, completed in October 2023, concluded that two areas of brick veneer on the theater building were in imminent danger of collapse and should be removed without delay. A Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for the emergency work, and the work was completed. Less critical but still concerning was the finding that "the cladding exterior

was found to be in poor condition with significant distress at shelf angles on each elevation of the building.”⁵ The consultant (Williamson & Associates) recommended recladding the entire theater building due to corroding steel shelf angles and corroded masonry wall ties. The consultant recommended further evaluation of the theater roof to determine if the roof needs replacement.

Regarding the arena/auditorium building, Williamson & Associates found the brick veneer cladding to be in good condition, but concrete repairs are needed at the exposed concrete columns. The consultant further recommended full replacement of the low-sloped roof system with built-in gutter. Photographs included in the report illustrated localized areas of deterioration to the roof structure, but the report did not indicate that the underlying structure of the arena walls had sustained damage due to water infiltration that would compromise the building’s continued structural stability.

Historic Development (HD) staff conducted an interior investigation of the Civic Center complex (theater, arena/auditorium, and expo hall) in May 2024 and found the buildings to be in overall good condition. HD Staff observed localized ceiling damage caused by water intrusion through the roof in the arena/auditorium. In addition, damaged floor tiles and bubbling or peeling wall paint indicative of plumbing leaks were noted in a relatively small number of places in the theater and arena/auditorium buildings. The applicant’s statement that the renovation of the property was considered and the submitted building envelope evaluation report suggest that the property is in reparable condition, and HD staff concurs with that assessment.

(b) Content of Applications

- (1) The date the owner acquired the property, purchase price, and condition on date of acquisition

Information provided by the applicant indicates that the individual parcels making up the superblock on which the Civic Center complex is located were purchased by the City between 1919 and 1974 for a total price of \$535,479 and that at the time of each acquisition, the properties were vacant.

- (2) The number and types of adaptive uses of the property considered by the owner

Per a submitted statement from the applicant, “The City of Mobile originally intended to renovate the existing Civic Center/ During early concept engineering building condition assessment was conducted which revealed that the current condition of the existing Civic Center was far worse than anticipated. Based upon the current conditions a renovation estimate was prepared. This estimate determined that the cost to renovate was only 20-25% lower than the cost to replace the Civic Center. Renovation would extend the serviceable life of the Civic Center approximately 10-15 years, whereas a newly constructed Civic Center would have a serviceable life of 50+ years. The City determined that renovation would be fiscally irresponsible and made the decision to demolish and replace the Civic Center.”

- (3) Whether the property has been listed for sale, prices asked and offers received, if any

The property is not listed for sale; thus, there is no asking price, and no offers have been received.

- (4) Description of the options currently held for the purchase of such property, including the price received for such option, the condition placed upon such option and the date of expiration of such option

No options have been granted on this property.

- (5) Replacement construction plans for the property in question, amounts expended upon such plans, and the dates of such expenditures

⁵ Williamson & Associates. “Condition Evaluation Report: Mobile Civic Center & Theater”, October 27, 2023.

The City of Mobile contracted with Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC) in June 2023 to provide design services for the proposed new Civic Center. Replacement plans currently are approximately 30% complete. To date, the City has spent \$2,928,667 on design plans.

- (6) Financial proof of the ability to complete the replacement project, which may include but not be limited to a performance bond, a letter of credit, a trust for completion of improvements, or a letter of commitment from a financial institution

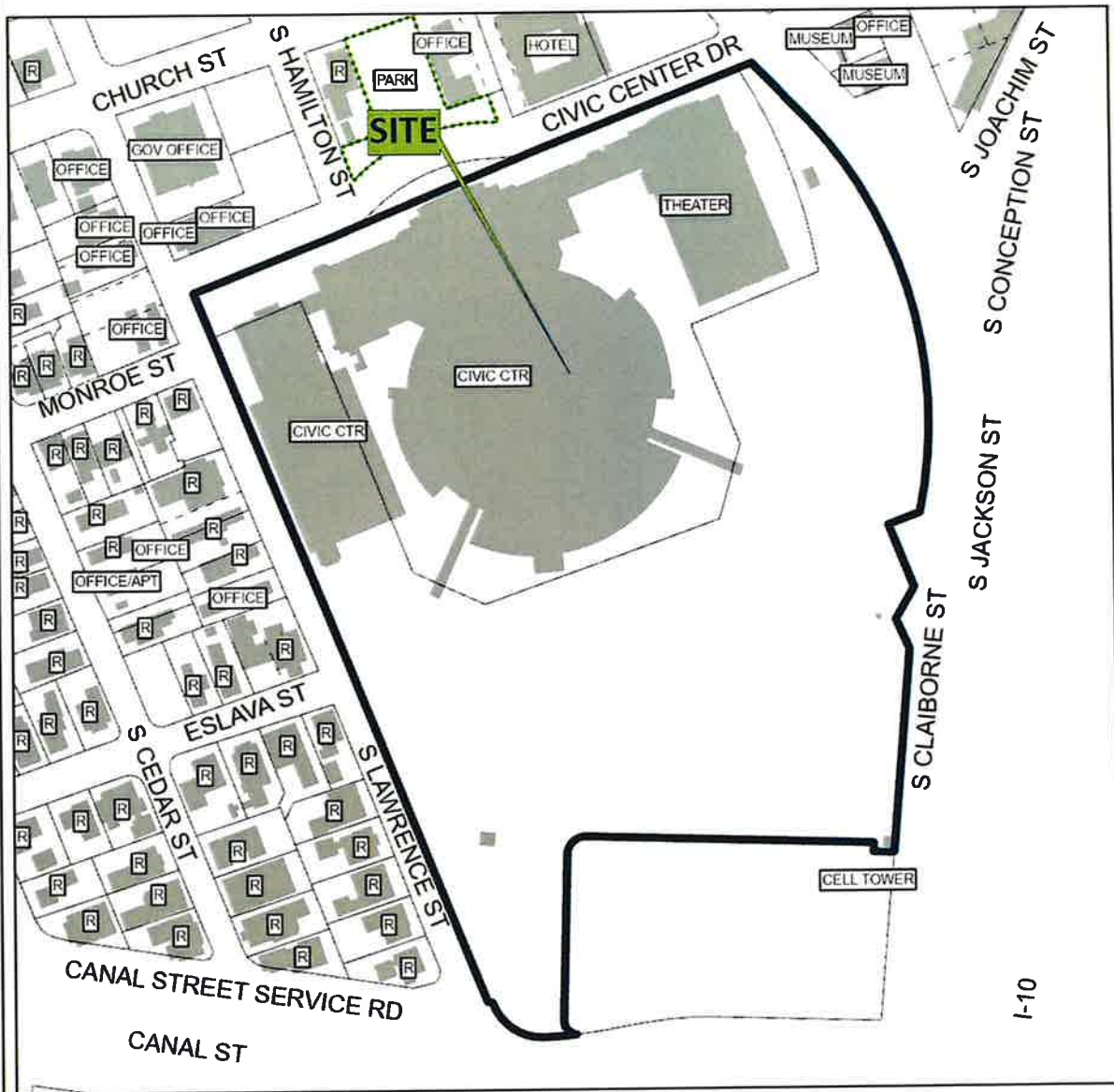
Per the submitted application, the project will be paid for through a combination of the following financing methods. (1) Approximately \$30 million will be provided by the arena operating partner. (2) Approximately \$40 million will be provided through naming rights and other sponsorships. (3) Approximately \$2 million will be provided through donations for the preservation of the Conrad Albrizio murals. (4) Approximately \$50 million will come from City deposits. (5) Approximately \$50 million will come from the City's unassigned funds. (6) Approximately \$128 million will come from bonds.

(c) Post Demolition Plans

The application states, "Replacement plans are approximately 30% complete. Exterior renderings (subject to ongoing revisions as design develops) are attached..."

Site Location – 401 Civic Center Drive – Civic Center Complex

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD VICINITY MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER <u>1</u> DATE <u>6/5/2024</u>
APPLICANT <u>Sam Matheny/Volkert, Inc. on behalf of the City of Mobile</u>
PROJECT <u>Demolish the Civic Center complex (theater, arena, and exposition hall buildings)</u>



Site Photos – 401 Civic Center Drive - Theater



1. View south-southwest to the north elevation (façade) of the Civic Center theater



2. View west to the east elevation of the Civic Center theater



3. Detail: stage doors under metal canopy toward south end of east elevation of Civic Center theater



4. View north to south elevation of Civic Center theater



5. View southeast to west elevation of Civic Center theater



6. Lobby of Civic Center theater, renovated in c. 1990

Site Photos – 401 Civic Center Drive – Arena/Auditorium



7. View south to north elevation (façade) of Civic Center arena/auditorium from Malaga Square



8. View southwest to concourse between Civic Center arena/auditorium and expo hall



9. view southeast to concourse between Civic Center arena/auditorium and theater



10. view north to concourse between Civic Center arena/auditorium and theater (at right)



11. view southwest to northeast side of Civic Center arena/auditorium



12. view north to southeast side of Civic Center arena/auditorium; theater at right

Site Photos – 401 Civic Center Drive – Arena/Auditorium



13. View west-northwest to typical covered walkway at southeast side of Civic Center arena/auditorium



14. View north to south side of Civic Center arena/auditorium



15. Detail: breeze block enclosure on south side of Civic Center arena/auditorium



16. partially enclosed vehicle opening on south side of Civic Center arena/auditorium



17. Circus mural in Civic Center arena/auditorium lobby



18. Carnival mural in Civic Center arena/auditorium lobby

Site Photos – 401 Civic Center Drive – Expo Hall



19. View south to north elevation (façade) of Civic Center expo hall



20. View southeast to landscaping at northwest corner of Civic Center expo hall (at S. Lawrence Street)



21. View southeast to west elevation of Civic Center expo hall



22. View north-northeast to west elevation of Civic Center expo hall



23. View north to south (rear) elevation of Civic Center expo hall



24. View northwest to c. 1990 addition to south (rear) elevation of Civic Center expo hall

Clear Form



City of Mobile · Historic Development Demolition Application

City Ordinance requires that all applications for proposed work in historic districts include the following information:

May 8, 2024

Date of Application

401 Civic Center Drive, Mobile, AL 36602

Property Address

Demolition \$10,000,000, Total Project \$300,000,000

Job Cost

August 1, 2024

Construction Date

<u>City of Mobile</u>	<u>251-208-7536</u>	<u>carleen.stout@cityofmobile.org</u>
Owner Name	Phone	Email
<u>205 Government St, Mobile, AL</u>		<u>36602</u>
Address		Zip Code
<i>If Owner is a legal entity such as a corporation, limited liability company, limited liability, partnership or similar, you should attach a copy of the formation documents for the Owner, showing the date of formation and that such have been filed and accepted by the Secretary of State.</i>		

<u>Sam Matheny</u>	<u>864-245-1917</u>	<u>sam.matheny@volkert.com</u>
Owner's Representative Name	Phone	Email
<u>11 N Water St, Suite 18290, Mobile, AL 36602</u>		<u>Owner's Agent</u>
Representative's Address		Relationship to Owner

Property was acquired as various parcels between 1919 and 1974

Purchase Date

Collective purchase price of \$535,479.00

Purchase Price

The property was appraised in June 2023. Appraised Land Value - \$9,997,000. Appraised Land and Structure Value - \$24,777,000

Current Appraised Value of Property (N/A if Not Available)

Was the property occupied at the time of purchase? Yes No

What was the property's condition?

Property was vacant at time of purchase

What alternatives to demolition have you considered for this property?

The City of Mobile originally intended to renovate the existing Civic Center. During early concept engineering a building condition investigation was conducted which revealed that the current condition of the existing Civic Center was far worse than anticipated. Based upon the current conditions a renovation estimate was prepared. This estimate determined that the cost to renovate was only 20-25% lower than the cost to replace the Civic Center. Renovation would extend the serviceable life of the Civic Center approximately 10-15 years, whereas a newly constructed Civic Center would have a serviceable life of 50+ years. The City determined that renovation would be fiscally irresponsible and made the decision to demolish and replace the Civic Center.

Have you listed the property for sale or lease since your purchase? Yes No

If "Yes", what was your asking price? _____ How many offers did you receive? _____

List any options currently held for the purchase of the property, including the price received for such option, the conditions placed on such option and the date of expiration of such option:

No options have been granted on the Property. _____

Do you have construction plans ready to complete the replacement project? Yes No

If so, how much have you expended on the plans?

The City contracted with Goodwyn Mills Cawood to provide design services for the new Civic Center. Replacement plans are approximately 30% complete. The City has expended \$8,226,470 to date.

What are the dates of these expenditures? The expenditures range from June 23, 2022 to present

In order to determine your ability to complete the replacement project, do you have the following:

Performance Bond Yes No

Letter of Credit Yes No

Trust for completion of improvements Yes No

Other evidence of financial ability Yes No

(See attached financing summary)

Letter of commitment from a financial institution Yes No

"In no event shall the Board entertain any application for the demolition or relocation of any Historic Property unless the applicant also presents at the same time the post-demolition or post-relocation plans for the site." Ordinance #44-084

City of Mobile staff will place a sign in the front yard of the property prior to the Review Board meeting to notify surrounding property owners of a pending application. Attendance at the meeting is strongly advised in order for the applicant to respond to any questions.

A \$15 application fee is due upon filing.

Build Mobile, PO Box 1827, Mobile, Alabama 36633

For more information: www.BuildMobile.org | historicdevelopment@cityofmobile.org | 251.208.7281
Visit our help window: Mobile Government Plaza, 205 Government Street, Third Floor South Tower

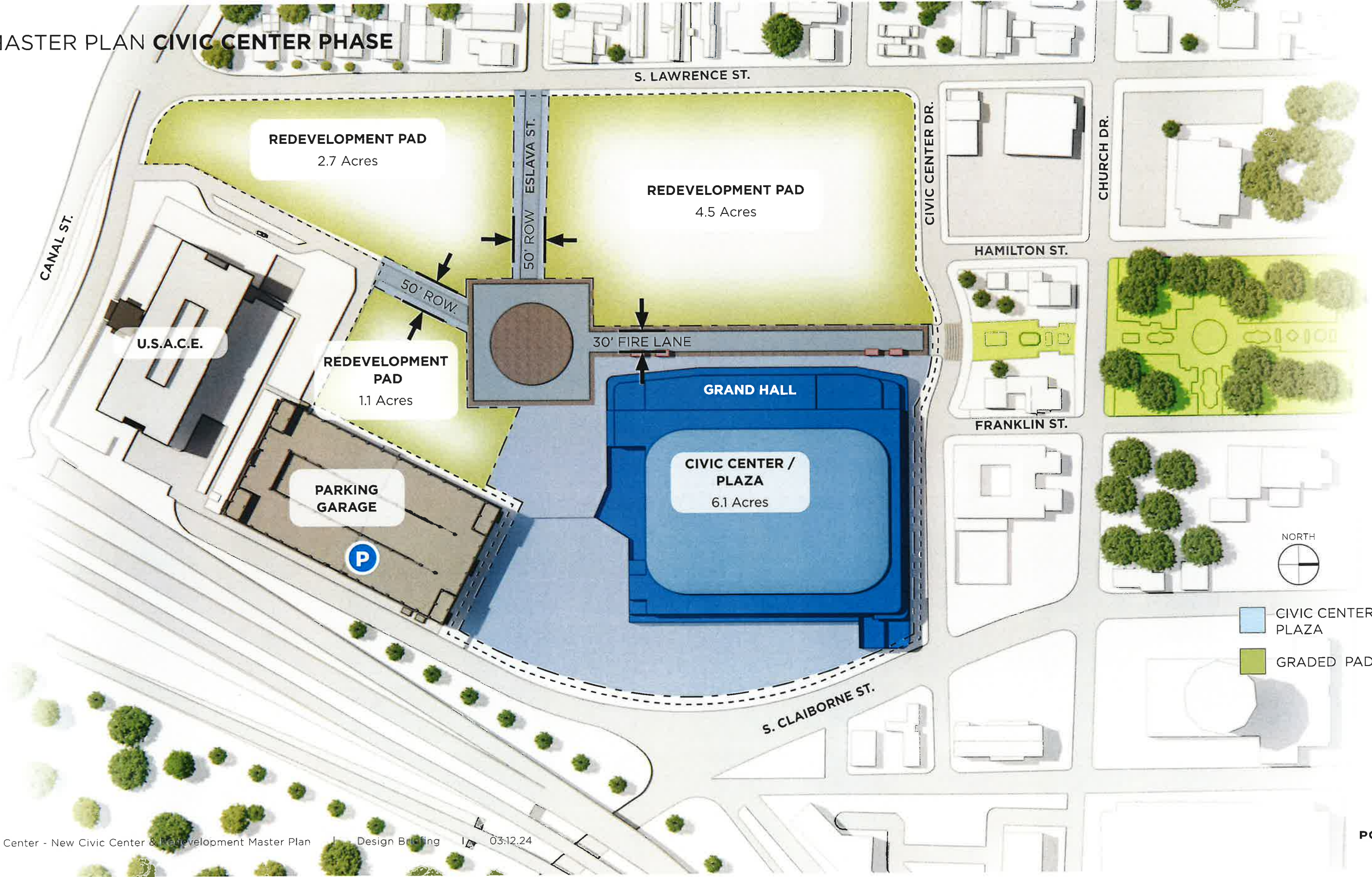
Revised April 2024

Financial Ability to Pay for The Project

The project will be paid for through a combination of the following financing methods.

1. Approximately \$30M from arena operating partner
2. Approximately \$40M from naming rights and other sponsorships.
3. Approximately \$2M in donations for preservation of the Conrad Albrizio mosaics.
4. Approximately \$50M from city deposits.
5. Approximately \$50M from the City's unassigned funds.
6. Approximately \$128M from bonds.

SITE MASTER PLAN CIVIC CENTER PHASE



Conceptual Exterior Rendering Civic Center Drive



Conceptual Exterior Renderings **Looking North on Plaza**



**Condition Evaluation Report
Mobile Civic Center & Theater
401 Civic Center Drive
Mobile, AL 36602
(W&A-23-00727)**

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Williamson & Associates (W&A) visited the referenced project between October 2nd – 13th, 2023, to conduct a condition evaluation of the building exterior in reference to the Civic Center and Theatre located in Mobile, AL in response to the request from GMC as it relates to the revitalization of the property.

Mr. Michael Allen, Field Services Manager, conducted the field services. We were supported in these efforts by J.J. Morely Enterprises, retained by W&A, providing exterior access and exploratory openings through the brick veneer to gather and access the back-up wall detailing. In addition, reviewed drawings provided, and spoke with representatives onsite as it relates to the history and known areas of active leakage.

During our evaluation, we identified 2 locations as imminent danger, the result of significant rust jacking of steel shelf angles, failing brick ties, discontinuous steel shelf angles at building corners, and the lack of needed masonry control joints on the Theatre. The locations were located on the south and east elevation of the tower. GMC, Populus, Mobile City, and Volkert, Inc. were notified on October 3, 2023, and W&A recommended immediate make safe repair to stabilize or remove the masonry via email communication.

In reviewing the building exterior, W&A recommends a full re clad of the Theatre based on the conditions of corroded steel shelf angles, discontinuous shelf angles, improper masonry bearing support at steel shelf angles, poor detailing at roof to wall transitions, and corroding masonry wall ties. Roof replacement may be required based on the flashing arrangements. In determining if replacement is needed, W&A recommends the roofs be scanned via infrared, checked with moisture meters, and possible roof core cuts.

In reviewing the building exterior on the Civic Center, W&A recommends isolated throughwall flashings repairs at steel shelf angles and at new connections between roof to wall transitions. Additionally, soft joints should be provided between masonry and exposed CIP columns. The steel soffit needs repair and or replacement. The built-in gutter (low sloped roofing) at the perimeter of the metal dome roof needs complete replacement. The dome roof needs repair or replacement.

The primary leakage reported occurs from improperly detailed roof to rising walls on both structures and on the Civic Center from impact damage of the dome roof, a result of lead slugs.

This evaluation report includes a photographic log at the back of this document. Please reference this additional information while reviewing this report.