



## City of Oak Harbor Clean Water Facility Design Workshop: Summary

Thursday, November 13, 2014

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Old Whidbey Island Bank Building

### Background

#### Project status and meeting purpose

The City of Oak Harbor is continuing to make progress on design and planning for the new Clean Water Facility (CWF) planned in the vicinity of Windjammer Park. The City's GC/CM contractor is on schedule to begin mobilizing equipment and construction crews on-site in the spring of 2015 in order to bring this facility on line by the end of 2017.

The City is beginning the process of collecting community input to develop the architectural "look and feel" of a facility that fits within the Windjammer Vicinity. In an effort to include public input in the design processes a focus group consisting of citizens from a variety of backgrounds and organizations was formed. Through a process involving multiple workshops, participants will have a hand in helping to develop the architecture of the facility. The purpose of the first workshop, held on November 13, was to generate ideas and gather input that will help narrow choices for architectural design themes of the Oak Harbor Clean Water Facility, and provide the basis for architectural 30% design and cost estimating. Specifically, participants in the design workshop were invited to:

- Learn about the civil engineering associated with the project – which dictates height and size of buildings.
- Provide insight into Oak Harbor's existing architectural character.
- Help narrow choices for architectural design of the new Clean Water Facility.

To aid this conversation, the project team had readied architectural design images from a variety of similar facilities, including several photos submitted by the public and two design concepts, referred to as "Courtyard" and "Campus."

#### Participation and event invitees

The design workshop was developed to be facilitated, and host approximately 12 people. The City specifically invited approximately ten group members to represent a range of important and related functions, including local businesses, arts community, planning commission, park neighbors and park users. The City also sent emails and issued a press release to invite participants to sit at two additional "at large" seats made available for the general public who may wish to participate. A total of three members of the public asked to be part of the at-large seats; all were invited to participate in the event.

## Summary: Key Take-Aways for Project Team

After conducting the meeting, the team collected several key “take-home” messages that will be considered as architectural design concepts are developed:

1. There is little continuity of architectural design within the City of Oak Harbor. **This facility could set the stage for a community design aesthetic.**
2. On concept preference: Participants were interested in seeing a mix of both campus and courtyard concepts, **leaning more heavily to the campus concept.** This was due to perception that the “Courtyard” would be imposing with too-continuous lines.
3. The effect of the building should be **open and light.** Think about a regional approach to design to address materials, windows and roofing that considers local climate and sun angles.
4. Lots of light and transparency is desired, particularly to **enhance sitelines to the water, park, and windmill that set the stage for Windjammer Park. Varying heights of rooflines** (peaked and flat) will make the overall building structure less imposing.
5. Both **contemporary architecture and traditional northwest architecture** (e.g., longhouses) were favored. Some of the group seemed interested in a blend of these design aesthetics.
6. Most liked the potential of **“camouflaging” the wastewater treatment facility.** The group agreed they did not want this facility to be an obvious “this is a sewer plant” from a distance; it should be inviting in nature, with an element of discovery that indeed, the building serves an essential city function.
7. Having the ability for **community interaction with the facility**, so people do not avoid being around it, should be a goal.
8. Seize the opportunity for the facility to **integrate with the surroundings.**
9. Providing interpretive and **educational features** is highly desired.

## Details: Meeting Proceedings

### Participants

#### **Workgroup makeup:**

Nora O’Connell-Balda

Christine Cribb

Margaret Livermore

Keith Fakkema

Mike Wright

Debbie Skinner

Jes Walker-Wyse

Brian Hunt

Gray Giordan

Karla Freund

Frederick Wilmot

Melissa Riker

#### **Facilitator:**

Erin Taylor, EnviroIssues

#### **Project staff:**

John Piccone, City of Oak Harbor

Brian Matson, Carollo Engineers

Jeff McGraw, MWA Architects

#### **Note taker:**

Sophie Cottle, EnviroIssues

## **Welcome and introductions**

Erin Taylor, EnviroIssues, welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked participants to introduce themselves. She thanked attendees for submitting their design examples before the meeting and explained the workshop agenda. Erin reviewed the purpose of the meeting, to generate ideas and gather input that will help narrow choices for architectural design themes of the Oak Harbor Clean Water Facility. She reminded the group the input from this group will inform the basis for architectural 30% design and cost estimating.

## **Project status and update**

John Piccone, City of Oak Harbor, explained the project status, starting with the need for the project. The City of Oak Harbor previously identified that the existing facility was aging, capacity quickly diminishing, and water quality regulations were increasing, thereby needing to create a new facility by 2017. The City selected Carollo Engineers to assist with the facility planning. To help aid specific site selection, the first public charrette was held in 2011 to determine the site of the new facility. Through 2011 and part of 2012, the project team carefully considered the options that came out of the charrette, narrowing the selections down to the two best potential sites. City Council subsequently approved the Windjammer Park vicinity.

In 2013, following additional analysis of possibilities specific to the Windjammer vicinity, the general area around the existing treatment plant was selected. In spring 2014, the team hosted a charrette to discuss the general site selection and to refine the configuration of the facility around the existing treatment plant. Following that charrette site alternatives were refined based on public input and a final site was selected approved by the City Council in July of 2014.

John noted that since the site selection and orientation of the buildings had already been determined the group's goal at this meeting was to discuss the look and feel of the design along with the massing of buildings. John explained that the design team is working to complete the 30% design by the end of 2014. In addition, the City has selected a contractor, Hoffman Construction, to come on board early and inform design and construction decisions. The contractor will start early earthwork as soon as summer 2015 while the design team is finalizing the design. Construction of the buildings will begin in late 2015 or early 2016.

## **Design inspiration**

Prior to the workshop, the group was asked to submit images of architecture and design they liked as part of a "homework" assignment. Each image was presented for initial conversation and reasons why the images had been submitted (Attachment B). Participants made the following comments on the images submitted:

- **Likes**
  - The look of the wastewater treatment facility in South Korea was interesting because it has a public fitness facility and it very colorful and attractive
  - Vegetated roofs, they are environmentally friendly

- Brick material and low roof line of the KeyBank building, reminiscent of a prairie building
- Cupolas, which are reminiscent of light house elements, barns and outbuildings
- Harbor Station shopping center
  - One of the most contemporary buildings in oak harbor
  - Variation of material and building heights
- Lighthouse-like North Whidbey Middle School, it is very welcoming
- Vertical windows that are open and inviting
- Lots of glass that creates transparency
- **Additional comments**
  - There is something intriguing about having the buildings all be different heights
  - I want the Oak Harbor facility to have something for the community
  - I think we should honor the Dutch heritage of Oak harbor. The architecture of the Auld Holland Inn can be adapted to construction of the facility.

Jeff McGraw, MWA Architects, then presented several images of facilities with similar program components and explained how they could relate to the design of the new facility.

- **LOTT Treatment Plant**
  - Administrative facilities and treatment facilities on a fairly tight site requiring several stories
  - Variation of materials and heights of buildings
  - Water feature and wood dock element as public entrance
- **Tri-City Treatment Plant**
  - Interpretive walkway for the public
  - Vertical circulation emphasized
  - Quality, long lasting materials
  - Contemporary approach
- **Brightwater Treatment Plant**
  - Separated administrative and interpretive features
  - Site surrounded by wonderful landscaping
  - Interpretive facilities, artwork
  - Larger scale than our project
- **Lighthouse Point Treatment Plant**
  - Like a campus with separate buildings
  - The boardwalk goes through the facility and provides access to the waterfront
  - Non-process elements are placed in front and over process elements
- **Picnic Point Treatment Plant**
  - Separated non-process administrative buildings from the process facilities, although a similar family of materials

- Process and odor control equipment is not visible sticking out of the building
- ***Carnation Wastewater Treatment Plant***
  - More of an agrarian setting responding to local historic barns
  - Layered administrative and facility buildings to screen process elements
  - Located within a residential community
- ***University of Victoria Longhouse, Hawks Prairie, and Bainbridge City Hall***
  - Shed, standing seam roof forms
  - Lots of windows
  - Contemporary Pacific Northwest designs

Erin then invited attendees to take four dots, and place them/choose the image or images they like most. After that process, she discussed the designs that received the most dots and asked for comments from participants. Comments on the most liked designs included:

- ***LOTT Treatment Plant***
  - Like that this building was lit very well from underneath
  - Like the wooden dock that led you to the entrance and think it matches the boardwalk downtown
  - Like the water fountain and the smaller retention ponds
  - Like the modern glass and contemporary shapes
- ***Tri-City Treatment Plant***
  - Like the different shapes of the buildings
  - The artistic look of the building gives you a lot to think about
- ***Brightwater Treatment Plant***
  - Like the interpretive education center
  - An education piece would be very important to school districts and allow students to go to the plant for field trips
- ***Picnic Point Treatment Plant***
  - Like that this building was “disguised” and doesn’t look like a typical treatment plant
- ***Lighthouse Point Treatment Plant***
  - Impressed with the exterior of the building when and liked that there were picnic tables on the waterfront for the public
  - Like that they used the water that came out of the plant to water a golf course; that seems environmentally friendly
- ***Wastewater treatment facility in South Korea***
  - Like having the fitness element for the community to enjoy
  - The public interaction aspect is very important

Jeff commented on ideas related to “community interaction features.”

- Outdoor stage or amphitheater
- Splash park or water feature to fit in with the park

One participant was hesitant about having a splash park that uses the treated water from the plant. Brian Matson, Carollo Engineers, explained that it would be possible to chlorinate the water to create a pool-like splash park, which was done at the LOTT Treatment Plant. He emphasized that a community element such a splash park would be outside the fence of the facility itself, but could be designed to look like it is an extension of the building.

- Educational component

One participant asked the project team if educational portions are typical features of water treatment plants. Jeff explained that they are not typical of all treatment plants, but there are many ways to integrate public access points in the design with a focus on education.

Erin summarized and confirmed with the group that the following had emerged in terms of design themes and attributes:

- Modern
- Northwest traditional
- Interactive
- Differing/mix of building heights
- Use of glass and transparency; light-filled
- Camouflaged from being blatantly “a wastewater treatment facility”
- Educational tie-in
- Textural
- Tie in to other amenities and developments happening in the Windjammer vicinity (thematic/not contrarian in nature)
- Maintained visual aesthetic and site lines of the existing park, e.g., City Beach and of windmill

### **Building massing**

Erin explained that “building massing” was only the beginning of heights and total building mass that could contain assumed components of the clean water facility functions, and asked Jeff to walk through the two massing concepts. Jeff explained that the project team has come up with two different ways to think about massing:

1. Campus
  - Buildings are designed to be separate structures
  - Architecturally integrated low walls and gates connect each building
2. Courtyard
  - Buildings are designed to appear as an integrated structure
  - Long walls and roof forms connect each building

Jeff emphasized that the campus and courtyard concepts can stand alone or can be combined. The project team wants to know what concept participants prefer, or if they prefer a combined solution. Brian explained that the project team has determined the minimum volumes and which buildings need to be taller than others. Jeff presented both concepts and then welcomed questions and comments from the group.

- Which buildings have the most volume?  
*A: In the site plan (Attachment B), buildings number 6, 3, 10, and 12 are the largest by volume.*
- Is the training building locked in to the design?  
*A: Nothing is locked in. The training building fits in with the concept of education. The hope is that the education center and the training center go hand in hand to meet the City's requirement for education.*
- I'm concerned about the height of the building next to the iconic windmill. If they have a lot of glass or windows like we have seen, that might make it less imposing, but we are still concerned about maintaining the view corridor. Do the buildings have to be in the footprint you are presenting? Can they be shifted so the taller building is away from the windmill and the building closest to the windmill is shorter?  
*A: It is not possible to move the functional aspects of the buildings at this stage. There are many architectural options that might not be obvious when looking at the simple layout that can help with this concern. We are also concerned with building volumes and the windmill and view corridor.*
- Can you break up the buildings in the courtyard so they are not so monolithic?  
*A: Yes, absolutely.*
- Does this layout reflect the raised platform due to the floodplain? I don't see any stairs?  
*A: Yes, the way the buildings are configured, the elevation gain acts as its own retaining wall. Only in areas that we need to access do we have to provide the slope up.*
- Does the courtyard approach result in lower elevation throughout the building?  
*A: No, it will be the same due to the floodplain.*
- There appears to be unused square footage inside the courtyard layout. Could one wall be moved in to allow a courtyard inside Beach Street? Could you move that wall to the left and then allow a public space along the edge?  
*A: What appears to be large open space is actually necessary space for treatment plant operations.*
- Could the courtyard be less expensive because it doesn't require facing three sides of the building?  
*A: It could potentially be less expensive because only one side of the building is treated, but it is not necessarily less expensive. It is also possible that the campus layout would cost less due to less overall wall and roof structure; at this stage of design we are not able to accurately compare the two concepts on a cost basis. A cost comparison will certainly be looked at as design progresses in order to find the best balance between cost and aesthetic.*
- The courtyard looks like all the walls are the same height. The campus seems to have more open space. I don't like the fortress look of the courtyard.  
*A: The actual building would have transparency and non-transparency. You have to imagine the buildings with windows and openings.*

- It doesn't seem like there will be any landscaping at all. Will there?  
*A: Yes, there will be landscaping and aspects of stormwater design.*
- Has anyone looked outside of the footprint and into the ball fields?  
*A: We have looked into that. We had several different ideas, but as we moved towards the ball fields we interrupted the view corridor. The design charrette was very protective of the view corridor.*
- The courtyard concept makes it look like an even larger presence in our park because of the continuous nature of it. How long is one side of the site along City Beach?  
*A: About 300 feet.*
- Are there any other 300-foot buildings in Oak Harbor?  
*A: I'm not sure, but the middle school and other big-box stores are probably similar in size.*
- Is there parking inside the courtyard? Is there an opening for vehicles to go in?  
*A: there is an entrance for facility vehicles to enter, but no public entrance or parking inside.*
- After seeing the layout of the buildings and the height, I think the camouflage idea is sort of out of the question, since the buildings will be so hard to hide.  
*A: The concept of camouflage is not to hide the buildings, but rather to provide a building edge that fits into and improves and promotes development on all building sides. Since a waste water treatment facility has no real architectural typology (like a bank or school), the development can look like anything.*
- I like the design at Light House Point, but it seems a lot smaller than our site. Is it?  
*A: It is smaller, but it is comparable to our plant because of the operational facilities in the tight space.*

### **Massing and design discussion**

Erin then invited participants to comment on their preferences for building massing and design using the matrix identified in Attachment B. The intent was to apply design attributes to Courtyard, Campus and hybrid concepts. She read individual comments and then welcomed questions and dialogue to see where themes emerged.

- Would a peaked roofline increase the building height?  
*A: There is a height limit in the city. The basic limit is 35 feet, but the number can vary depending on the type of roof. For a pitched roof, the limit is 35 feet to the mid-point of the roof. For a flat roof it is 35 feet to the base of the roof. There are some exceptions to the height limit that might give more flexibility.*
- Would it be possible to see through the building using glass and windows?  
*A: Yes. There are parts of the treatment process that are aesthetically pleasing that we can showcase using glass to increase transparency.*
- Is mirrored glass possible?  
*A: Mirrored glass is not used very much anymore. There are many different types of glass, and we can select different colors, transparency, etc. to suit the design.*



- Do the physical and programmatic aspects of different structures dictate their spacing on the site plan? It seems like there isn't much space for other features based on the drawing.  
*A: The engineers have worked to minimize the footprint through the design process to be as efficient as possible. Every edge of the facility fronts something, such as the ball fields and commercial plaza. There are still some decisions to be made on the spacing, but for the most part, the efficiency of the footprint dictates the spacing.*
- What will the dimensions of the road adjacent to the park be?  
*A: The dimensions have not been determined yet.*
- Oak Harbor doesn't have a city aesthetic. This could be a chance for us to define our theme. We are on the forefront of establishing that, with the Main Street program, marina improvements, and work in the Windjammer Park. We have to determine what direction we want to go in.  
*A: focusing on a regional style could be more successful here than trying to fit in to the city style. Regional materials, styles, window and building treatments, etc. can all be incorporated into the design so the facility fits within its environment rather than sticking to a city theme.*
- I don't like the modern structures with flat roofs. I can't think of a modern structure in Oak Harbor that looks good. I prefer the prairie style with roof overhangs, especially considering the climate here.
- I think camouflage is changing what you think the building is. It will still be a treatment plant, but it should look architecturally dynamic and draw people in.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

Jeff explained that the design team will continue working towards 30% design incorporating the group's discussion. Erin thanked everyone for their participation, and asked if it had been a good use of time. The group agreed that they would be interested in coming together again to see design concepts based on the November workshop, and to provide feedback and final thoughts on how the workshop ideas had been incorporated into the design. She then adjourned the meeting.

### **Attachments**

- Attachment A: Design themes and concepts group exercise
- Attachment B: Design inspiration images
- Attachment C: Preliminary Site Map

Attachment A: Design themes and site concepts group exercise

	<i>Design theme 1: Modern</i>	<i>Design theme 2: Northwest traditional</i>	<i>Design theme 3: Interactive</i>	<i>Design theme 4: Different building heights</i>	<i>Design theme 5: Glass/transparency</i>	<i>Design theme 6: Camouflage</i>	<i>OTHER Educational tie-in Texture Visual aesthetic/ sitelines</i>
<i>Campus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'm afraid that modern will fight with the rest of the city-scale</li> <li>• City aesthetic isn't clearly defined currently; this is an opportunity to define it</li> <li>• Include lots of windows, lights, industrial materials (metals, concrete), vary texture between buildings</li> <li>• Mix of modern shapes with northwest textures</li> <li>• Vary roof lines and sides</li> <li>• Open concept gives better visual flow</li> <li>• Modern or Northwest contemporary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peaked roofline</li> <li>• Large windows</li> <li>• Vertical windows instead of square</li> <li>• Peak roof with protective overhangs</li> <li>• Northwest style with glass, wood, and metal</li> <li>• Campus allows pleasing visuals in texture and landscape</li> <li>• Need peaked roofs, not flat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put interactive aspect on bottom floor and admin on top floor</li> <li>• Community and education are very important</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Campus is best for education, visual, and interaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotate design so that lower profile buildings face waterfront</li> <li>• Different heights work well here and certainly add interest</li> <li>• Make design options with campus design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glass with different textures and transparencies</li> <li>• Love the glass, transparency and openness</li> <li>• Glass in "pattern language" [repeat shapes and dimensions; don't put a triangle window next to a square window]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camouflage will come from architectural detail</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed textures: wood, brick, glass</li> <li>• Celebrate pacific northwest cedar [highlight it as a part of overhangs or decorative features]</li> <li>• Don't feel it's necessary to have access to inside area</li> </ul>
<i>Hybrid</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could set an aesthetic for Oak Harbor</li> <li>• All of these features work with either campus or courtyard</li> <li>• Could be a much needed change in direction for Oak Harbor</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixture of peaked and flat roofs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See through and over the treatment plant to the other streets</li> <li>• Don't block view corridor</li> <li>• Regional treatment of windows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be inviting, camouflage what the building is</li> <li>• Like the marina look; ties in well with waterfront. Dock walkways</li> <li>• Choose what is camouflage vs. what is not</li> </ul>	
<i>Courtyard</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vertical windows</li> <li>• Nice tie in to other buildings, but still not sure what theme we need to continue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open, public, and inviting are not the feelings that come with a courtyard concept</li> <li>• Courtyard concept is too formidable; not conducive to interaction and public elements</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't need to be able to see inside the courtyard, but want transparency</li> <li>• Glass will help with courtyard to break up the visual block building</li> <li>• Feel that this would cost less</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camouflage would work best in courtyard</li> </ul>	



**Wastewater Treatment  
Facility – South Korea**



**Wastewater Treatment  
Facility – South Korea**





# Keybank on Pioneer Way





Oak Harbor  
Transit Station on  
Bayshore Drive







Harbor Station on 7<sup>th</sup> Ave and Highway 20



Auld Holland Inn Motel on Highway 20



North Whidbey Middle  
School











Oak Harbor High School – NAC Inc.

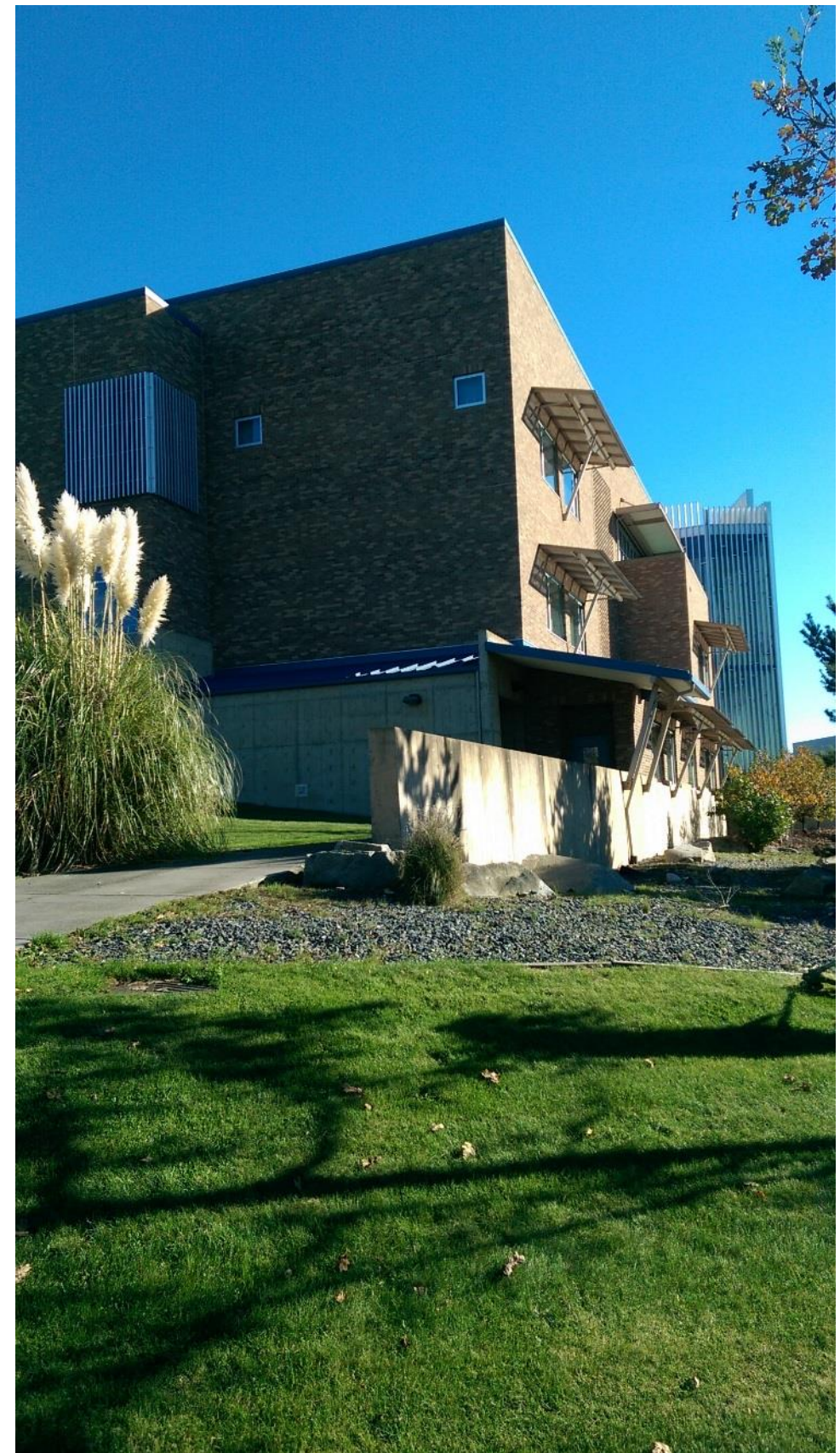


Downtown Oak Harbor - Photo by Arnie Peterschmidt





Oak Harbor Beach Park Windmill – Photo by MWA Architects



Skagit Valley College Whidbey Island Campus



Oak Harbor  
Elementary School



Maylor's Wharf



Maylor's Store



LOTT Treatment Plant  
(Olympia, WA)



# Tri-City Treatment Plant (Oregon City, OR)



# Brightwater Treatment Plant (Maltby, WA)



# Lighthouse Point Treatment Plant (Blaine, WA)





# Picnic Point Treatment Plant (Alderwood, WA)



# Carnation Wastewater Treatment Plant (Carnation, WA)





*U of Victoria Longhouse – Alfred Waugh*





*Hawks Prairie - MWA*



*Bainbridge City Hall - MillerHull*

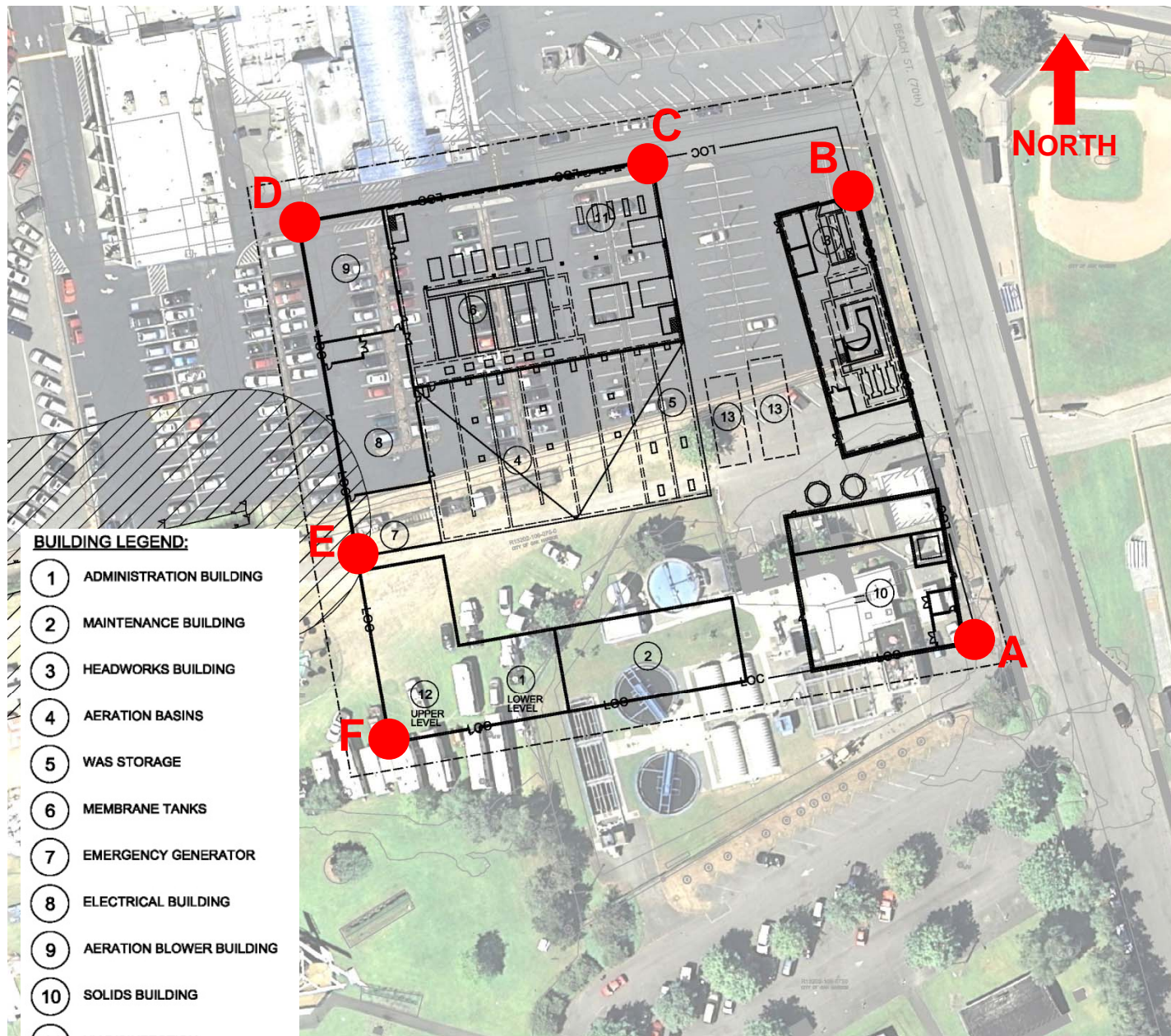








Attachment C: Preliminary Site Map



GENERAL NOTES

1. THE GROUND SURFACE (FINISHED GRADE) AROUND THE SITE WILL BE RAISED APPROXIMATELY 3 FEET TO PROTECT AGAINST FLOODING.
2. BUILDINGS WILL RANGE IN HEIGHT BETWEEN 20 FEET AND 32 FEET FROM FINISHED GRADE.
3. FOR REFERENCE, APPROXIMATE BUILDING HEIGHTS ARE MARKED ON THE WHIDBEY ISLAND BANK BUILDING. THE LOWER LINE IS APPROXIMATELY 20 FEET HIGH, AND THE UPPER LINE IS APPROXIMATELY 30 FEET HIGH.

POINT DESCRIPTIONS

- A. APPROXIMATE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SOLIDS BUILDING ( $\pm$  32 FEET TALL).
- B. APPROXIMATE NORTHEAST CORNER OF HEADWORKS BUILDING ( $\pm$  32 FEET TALL).
- C. APPROXIMATE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SECONDARY BUILDING ( $\pm$  20 FEET TALL).
- D. APPROXIMATE NORTHWEST CORNER OF BLOWER BUILDING ( $\pm$  20 FEET TALL).
- E. APPROXIMATE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF ELECTRICAL BUILDING ( $\pm$  20 FEET TALL).
- F. APPROXIMATE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF ADMINISTRATION/TRAINING BUILDING ( $\pm$  32 FEET TALL).

**BUILDING LEGEND:**

- 1 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
- 2 MAINTENANCE BUILDING
- 3 HEADWORKS BUILDING
- 4 AERATION BASINS
- 5 WAS STORAGE
- 6 MEMBRANE TANKS
- 7 EMERGENCY GENERATOR
- 8 ELECTRICAL BUILDING
- 9 AERATION BLOWER BUILDING
- 10 SOLIDS BUILDING
- 11 UV DISINFECTION
- 12 COMMUNITY BUILDING
- 13 ODOR TREATMENT SYSTEMS

**PRELIMINARY SITE MAP  
(NOT TO SCALE)**

