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University of Oregon – Student Recreation Center  
Workshop #8 – Design Development

**PATTERNS**

*Throughout our Programming, Conceptual Design and Schematic Design Process we worked with key patterns in mind. The following patterns, with which you are no doubt familiar, are those that specifically apply to design issues we will collaborate on and verify again next week. In preparation for Workshop 8, please review these as you peruse the design documents sent to you with the Agenda packet. We look forward to sharing with you the latest design developments, and continuing our work with you to create a truly special place.*

**Workshop 8 Patterns**

**WHOLENESS OF PROJECT**

*Funding limitations often lead user groups or designers to create phased projects (in the hope of obtaining more funding for later phases) or to use the funds to create more new space without solving the existing facility's problems. These approaches can result in a complicated facility with functional problems, an awkward feel, and a lack of wholeness and integrity.*

THEREFORE: Approach the project as a single-phased whole, creating a usable facility with options for future development. Address existing building problems directly, for example through renovations, rather than assuming they will be solved simply by adding new space. This approach may result in compromises, but it gives project users confidence that the built project will suit their needs.

- *Being excessive (in space, or bling, or volume) can make a University look like a poor steward of resources.*
- *UO wants intelligent, well thought-out design, not excess!*

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLE**

[See "Policy 7: Architectural Style and Historic Preservation"]

*The continuity of the university's campus environment is materially affected by the character and architectural styles of the buildings that are constructed.*

THEREFORE: Make the design of new buildings compatible and harmonious with the design of adjacent buildings (on and off campus), though they need not (and in some cases should not) mimic them.

**Excerpt from the Project Description:**

**Architectural Style**

The character and architectural style of campus buildings are important in maintaining the quality of the campus environment. The cohesiveness of the campus is to be maintained by creating new buildings that are compatible and harmonious with the design, orientation, and scale of adjacent buildings, though they need not (and in some cases should not) mimic them. In order to accomplish this, buildings are to follow the general principles grounded in the designs of the Ellis Lawrence buildings on campus. Emphasis is to be placed on materials (generally brick) and compositions (clear main entrances, the scale and rhythm of openings) of the Lawrence era buildings in order to create buildings that are human-scaled. Designs must

relate to the overall campus character and, as a general rule, should avoid large, blank facades; large areas of glazing; or unbroken, horizontally oriented windows (ribbon windows). The current Student Recreation Center facility is a successful example of blending with the existing building (Esslinger Hall) but still appearing as a distinct building. Interacting with multiple buildings, this expansion project presents the same challenge and is held to the same expectation of being harmonious with the existing adjacent buildings but with its own dynamic appeal.

## **DYNAMIC BUILDING**

*The Student Recreation Center should reflect the nature of the activity contained within. Individuals develop an impression of the building immediately upon seeing it and their initial experience within it, and these impressions affect their perception of the building's quality and atmosphere.*

Therefore, ensure that the character of the building attracts campus constituents and encourages them to use the resources and services offered. The building should communicate the unique nature of the facility and create a "continuing buzz" through design qualities that are energizing, inspiring, and spirited.

- ***Bold is not necessarily beautiful or "right."***
  - ***Bold interior spaces are very desirable.***
  - ***Powerful visual excitement and interest is highly desirable.***
  - ***Don't let form run roughshod over function. Make sure the two can well marry in your facility.***
  - ***Being excessive (in space, or bling) can make a University look like a poor steward of resources.***
  - ***UO wants intelligent, well thought-out design, not excess!***
  - ***Be aware of creating spaces that are "too open." They may be unacceptably noisy, negatively impact audibility of the human voice, and or filled with too much reverberation.***
  - ***A dynamic, high-flying jogging track can be beautiful for some, and scary for others!***
  - ***Wayfinding should as intuitive as possible for patrons.***
  - ***Good wayfinding (with signage, if necessary) is critical.***
  - ***Environmental Graphics are a powerful story telling medium. This is desirable.***
  - ***Using bold colors or school colors in a "heavy handed" way can easily create an undesirable result. Be intentional about application of bold and primary colors.***
- DT Student Spirit - Is this another academic building or one that has a distinct character that reflects the enthusiasm, spirit and creativity of the students in its shape form and statement?**
- DT Northwest/UO Character - The climate offers the opportunity for more use of the out of doors for program support. Distinct natural light and wind/rain patterns, technology, and craft. Views from and to the site and the need for identity.**

## **CLEAR ORGANIZATION, SIGHTLINES, AND ADJACENCY**

*The current layout of the SRC isn't so straightforward. The facility has been altered several times, resulting in a maze of spaces and corridors in certain areas, particularly in the older parts. The difficulty of way-finding can be frustrating for users and does not contribute to a welcoming environment.*

Therefore, organize space so that way-finding is easy and intuitive. Create easy circulation patterns with a system of corridors, stairways, ramps, and elevators that provide clear sightlines and common-sense adjacencies. Where appropriate and helpful, provide sightlines between activities so that users can see through one activity area to another. Organize the entrance and lobby area with consideration for showcasing all the SRC has to offer, so that users know what opportunities exist and feel welcome and encouraged. Layouts, particularly with respect to spaces filled with exercise equipment, should be efficient and allow users to easily see who else is there.

- ***Creating a circulation path that passes through a rec center provides an opportunity for users and non-users to "shop the activities" within.***

- *Views into activity spaces from the main lobby are desirable, which aids the process of attracting users into these spaces.*
- *Seeing activity spaces is a good thing, and highly desirable to this Committee.*
- *Proper organization of spaces is important.*
- Design visual corridors that allow patrons to see and be seen in a rec center.

### **ENOUGH SPACE AND CAPACITY**

*With as many as 6,500 users on some days, space is so limited that the facility gets overly crowded, and classes and open recreation cannot occur in the same space simultaneously. The SRC's goal is to be able to fully meet all the varied needs of its users. In the short and long term, the SRC should have the ability to react to trends and create more (and a diverse selection of) programs.*

Therefore, organize layouts and provide enough space and capacity to allow users to drop in and do anything they wish. Pay particular attention to areas in which both drop-in activities and classes occur, such as cardio areas, weight room, natatorium. Consider long-term growth, and provide enough capacity and flexibility to allow the SRC to respond to trends and fully meet the needs of its users. Consider the capability for vertical expansion in the future.

### **ROOMS THAT FIT AND ARE FLEXIBLE**

*The current recreation facility contains rooms of many sizes. Spaces should be the right size for the activities they support and should be adaptable as the activities change.*

Therefore, the recreation and fitness center should contain spaces that are a good fit for the activities within them, that are adaptable to multiple activities, and that may be changed to meet future needs.

- *Multiple sizes of Group Ex rooms provides for great flexibility (each room is right-sized for the needs).*
  - *Make sure you design enough space in an around activity areas (like Jogging, Weights, etc.). This improves safety, function, and the user's experience.*
  - *If you have a Spin Studio, make it a dedicated (or at least mostly dedicated) space.*
  - *Creating a special events entry (even if is the main front door for a facility) is a good strategic idea.*
  - *Creating a separate building zone for rentals and other special events is a nice feature.*
  - *Must well consider desired features in a Leisure Pool - Focus on intended audience (family vs. student)*
  - *Creating a Leisure Pool with a zero depth entry and spaces for volleyball and basketball is desirable.*
  - *Consider benefits of having two spas*
  - *Creating a three-part (or similar) spa, like this facility enjoys, is highly desirable for a large capacity spa.*
- DT Programs and program focus change over time. Describe elements and priority uses that are likely or unlikely to change.*
- DT Many of the spaces provided, will be unique from those found throughout the campus. Consider other uses that can be available, shared and made part of the inventory of spaces for the campus and Community.*

### **EASY ACCESS, YET APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF ACCESS CONTROL**

*The SRC has a variety of functions and many different types of activities take place in the building. These activities range from academic physical education courses to drop-in exercise, meetings, events, casual gatherings, and administration all with varying levels of need for access control.*

Therefore, consider the range of activities that will happen in the building. Design the spatial layout with consideration for the particular access control needs for the variety of activities in the building, associated outdoor areas, and adjacent Esslinger Hall.

## **EASILY SUPERVISED**

*Supervision required to ensure safe and effective use of facilities and equipment varies considerably from activity to activity. Labor costs associated with activity supervision account for a major portion of operational expenses in recreational facilities and can result in reduced facility-access hours.*

Therefore, the design of the facility should consider the unique supervision needs of each activity, including specialized design of supervisory stations, as appropriate, maximizing spatial control with minimal personnel. Sight lines, electronic communication systems, and video cameras, for example, may help facilitate supervision.

## **SUPPORTIVE OF SOCIAL INTERACTION**

*The Student Recreation Center is not just for recreation. It's also a place where students, faculty, and staff can socialize. Social interaction can play an important part in academic and professional success. Research shows that students who have developed peer support groups and feel a sense of belonging and identity with their college or university have higher grades and are more likely to graduate (from 2004 YGH Study). Social interaction helps strengthen relationships among fellow students and colleagues, and can lead to an open exchange of ideas and new understandings that benefit academic and professional pursuits. The current facility lacks social gathering spaces and interaction nodes and has no identifiable "hearth" or building "heart."*

Therefore, the recreation center's open areas, activity spaces, and service areas should showcase activity and facilitate social interaction through locating informal activity spaces off circulation paths, establishing social nodes and levels of transparency through spaces based on activities. These informal spaces should be suitable for various levels of interaction as well as informal group study. Consider the right size, location and quality of space to encourage frequent use of these areas. An identifiable building "hearth" should be created and should be designed with consideration for beverage and light food service.

- *Furniture is an important part of how we all experience a building environment.*
- *Creating a circulation path that passes through a rec center provides an opportunity for users and non-users to "shop the activities" within.*
- *Views into activity spaces from the main lobby are desirable, which aids the process of attracting users into these spaces.*
- *Seeing activity spaces is a good thing, and highly desirable to this Committee.*
- *Design visual corridors that allow patrons to see and be seen in a rec center.*
- *Having small pockets of social space throughout a facility is desirable for the Committee.*

*DT Oneness of the Place - This place could be a "center" for the students and other users. Is this an important consideration in the stacking, connections and makeup of the place?*

## **INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING TO ALL**

*The SRC is open to the UO community and serves a wide range of students and UO community members, who are from different backgrounds, cultures, and countries, of different races, religions, ages, genders, and sizes, have different abilities, and have varying comfort levels with using recreation facilities.*

Therefore, design the building with consideration for the potential to integrate diverse groups of people and create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for all. Design fitness areas in a way that welcomes all experience levels and abilities, and with consideration for those who want to be seen and those who may not. Provide a variety of comfortable social spaces that meet the varying needs of users, such as places to be alone, meet in small to large groups, places that are more open or more enclosed. Take advantage of opportunities to facilitate social interaction (such as a café and other "common denominator" amenities). Consider the varying needs and desires for privacy, particularly with respect to changing and using the

## QUALITY OF LIGHT

*Daylight, the use of which results in energy savings, is an important aspect to wellness and psychological comfort for building users; it is also beneficial to many of the tasks performed by building occupants. However, glare from daylighting may cause eye-strain for employees who use computer monitors.*

THEREFORE: Provide ample opportunities for daylight throughout the building in both private and public areas. When possible and appropriate, opportunities to bring natural light into areas further from the perimeter of the building such as clerestory windows, interior windows, or windowed doors should be considered. Provide appropriate shading and defusing devices and furniture arrangement to eliminate glare on computer screens. **Daylight and quality of light is highly valued and desirable. However, glare can be a dangerous problem for some activities. In swimming, glare affects the lifeguard's ability to see the bottom of the pool. Consider other situations where glare may have negative impacts on the user's experience.**

## ENGAGE IN SUSTAINABILITY

*The UO has been in the forefront of environmental sustainability, and the campus community takes pride in this. Over the years students have consistently expressed that environmental sustainability is highly important to them. The SRC Expansion and Renovation Project provides opportunities to push the envelope of environmentally sustainable and energy-efficient design, and to tell the building's sustainability story. Individuals like to know they are contributing to a greater purpose, and what better place to learn about and engage in sustainability than the place in which they play and go to be healthy?*

Therefore, strive to make sustainable features of the building design and systems visible and interactive so that users can learn through exposure to them and understand their environmental impacts. For sustainable features not readily visible, signage and interactive information monitors are simple and effective ways to tell the SRC's story when located appropriately and designed to catch one's notice. Pursue sustainable, energy-efficient and budget-conscious solutions with the greatest value and benefit, and consider low and passive technology solutions, such as sunscreens, natural ventilation, daylight harvesting, reduction of potable water use, rainwater collection, etc.

- *A transformational building should be cutting edge. Net zero, per Oregon Model for Sustainable Development, is tough to achieve but it is a target.*
- *Don't want to lose program space to achieve LEED levels.*
- *The priority is program space considering the space requirements.*
- *Should strive for sustainability.*
- *"We are looking for a highly sustainable building".*
- *LEED certification is not a priority but upholding high sustainability standards will be. At some point the group will want to add up the LEED points and decide then if they will go for certification.*
- *Filling a recreation building with natural light is a great feature!*
- *Natural light is a very good thing when well harvested!*
- *Use good and smart lighting, but make sure it is well controlled with proper systems for operation.*
- *Make certain to properly balance glass so as to avoid glare.*
- *Terrazzo flooring is visually desirable, and it always appears to be a good long investment.*
- *Be careful about using "natural" concrete.*

## **BRING NATURE IN/PROGRAM OUT**

*In the Northwest we are blessed with a temperate climate, and beautiful scenery year-round. In part of the existing recreation center – Esslinger – this connection is largely ignored, especially in comparison to the 1999 Recreation Center addition. Many spaces in a recreation center are ideally suited to make both visual and physical connections to the outdoors.*

Therefore...

- *Filling a recreation building with natural light is a great feature!*
- *Natural light is a very good thing when well harvested!*
- *Physical access to the out-of-doors for a Leisure Pool is very important*

**DT** *The visited facilities reside in places that the climate is not outdoor friendly. How much of the program can be relegated to the outdoors year round and not replicated with built structures. Example the covered tennis courts or basketball court*

## **MEATHEADS TO THE BACK**

*The free-weight area in a recreation center is often the focus of very fit and muscular individuals. This can be intimidating to beginners, and users of lighter free-weights whose intent does not center on bodybuilding.*

Therefore, create zones within the fitness area that provide a variety of cardio and free-weight opportunities. These might include lighter free-weights and circuit equipment, and less visible cardio areas to work out in. Put the meatheads in the “back” so that users do not have to go through that area to get to their preferred locations.

- *Placing the free weights (aka the Meathead’s area) at the “front door” of your Weights & Fitness area is a very bad idea. The Committee much prefers to locate that space away from the primary entry to this area, thus improving a patron’s willingness to come in and explore the space.*
- *Locating the Meathead’s and their free weight equipment in the “back” of the Weights & Fitness area is much wiser than putting them on display at the front door!*
- *Providing a “Women’s Zone” (or similar, with a better name!) in the main Weights & Fitness area is a great idea.*