

06

Site Selection Process

Introduction

The site selection study for the new Baltimore City Circuit Courthouse focused upon clearly established criteria and systems for analysis. This chapter is organized somewhat chronologically in order to convey the methods and process by which the planning team of the Executive Committee for the project and AECOM reached a decision by consensus, which was then recommended to the City of Baltimore.

Scope of Study

This new study placed into consideration all properties that had been examined initially in 2002. These sites, as illustrated, were mostly located within the central business district of Baltimore City, except for Sites #7 and #8. Three of these sites, Site # 1 (at Fayette Street and Guilford Avenue), Site #3 (at Guilford Avenue and Lexington Street) and Site #6 (at Saint Paul Street between Baltimore and Redwood Streets), originally were ranked as the top considerations. Further analysis, primarily based upon ownership and lack of structures on each site, led the planning team to the conclusion that Sites #1 and #3 were the most favorable for the new court facility.

On November 18, 2009, AECOM, along with the Maryland Stadium Authority and Circuit Court of the City of Baltimore, met with the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) to revisit these initial discussions from seven years earlier. The group reviewed the original eight sites for feedback based on their characteristics, ownership, and availability. Further discussions about three options for Sites #1 and #3 as being the most favorable, primarily based on the sites' proximity to existing courthouses and the availability of land. Both sites afford an opportunity to provide a connecting bridge to Courthouse East (a major goal of the circuit court for connectivity) and proximity to transit and parking. In the case of Site #3, the location offers a majority of ownership by Baltimore City. Though private ownership of both sites (including the southern portion of Site #3) may prolong the process of land acquisition, BDC felt that the opportunities these sites hold for enriching the business environment and spurring further economic development far outweigh their drawbacks. For the purpose of this study, Site #1 will be referred to as the South Site and Site #3 will be referred to as the North Site, thus making intuitive reference to their respective geographic relationship to Courthouse East. The three options described and evaluated below are referred to as Option A, B, and C, regarding these two sites.



Figure 6-1
Proposed Sites for New Circuit Courthouse

The South Site is bounded by Fayette and Baltimore Streets and Guilford Avenue. This site is L-shaped and has in its eastern portion a 31,000 SF parking lot and, in its southeastern portion, a 9,000 SF area that is currently occupied by a vacant three-story brick building. This three-story building is thought to have some historical significance. The site is anchored by the 20-story residential Munsey Building, in the northwestern quadrant, which would remain standing. The site is relatively flat and provides sufficient utility services to handle the capacity of a new court structure. The site is also across Guilford Avenue from a public parking garage. Transit service is located at or near the site, including a subway stop near Saint Paul Street, just two blocks away.

The North Site is bounded by Guilford Avenue and Lexington, Saratoga, and Davis Streets. This site is approximately 60,000 SF and is completely filled in with buildings. In the southern portion, six buildings stand, ranging from two to eight stories in height. The Knickerbocker Building on the eastern edge of the site is considered historic. All existing buildings are occupied by private businesses. The building midblock, bordering Guilford Avenue and Davis Street is five stories and is occupied by the former Baltimore City Health Department]. Further, a three-story parking garage that was constructed in the late 1930s is situated at the north end. This garage is vacant because of structural deficiencies.



Figure 6-2

Aerial Photo of North and South Sites

Site Selection Goals

In order to assess rationally and systematically the two sites, specific goals and objectives were established to guide the planning team. These goals stressed the functional planning implications of each site, while recognizing that the more subjective aesthetic effects are no less profound, but simply harder to quantify. Where appropriate, reference will be made to these design issues in the site reviews and recommendations.

The selection criteria, in particular, documented the goals and objectives that the selected site ultimately should meet. Generally, these goals included the following:

- The site should allow a feasible bridge connection to Courthouse East.
- The site should be of sufficient size to allow an expanded initial structure, provide for a public plaza, and offer limited secure parking.
- The site should be a contiguous parcel that respects existing property ownership lines.
- The site should be easily accessible to vehicles and pedestrians and it should enhance building design flexibility.

The remaining part of the chapter documents the process of study and conclusions reached for the selection of a site for the new Baltimore City Circuit Courthouse. The planning team concluded that, although viable court facilities could be designed and constructed on either of the two sites, the North Site best suits the short- and long-term requirements for a successful project. The members of the team from the Executive Committee and AECOM unanimously recommend its acquisition.

The rationale was as follows:

- The North Site significantly out-performs the South Site in both consistency across criteria and total aggregate rating.

- The site appears to be more available for acquisition within a time frame consistent with a reasonable design schedule for the project.
- The estimated market price of the North Site is lower than that of the South Site.
- The North Site also offers the opportunity to develop a unique justice system master plan with a larger urban design goal in mind.

The following matrix outlines the scoring for the two sites.

Criteria	Criteria Definition
Functional	
Adjacencies to Agencies	Location to judicial agencies not house in courthouse
Compatibility with Adjacent Users	Degree of compatibility of site with prominent properties based on use
Building Footprint Flexibility	Flexibility of planning the building footprints to accommodate functions
Distance to Parking	Distance to parking lots/garages
Distance to Transit	Distance to transit: subway/bus
Zoning Restrictions	Any restrictions on height limitations
Noise	Subject to undue noise levels sufficient to disrupt court operations
Site Configuration	Site configuration that impedes functional planning
Site Assemblage	Time and cost to acquire propoerty affected by number of individual property owners
Utility Capacity	Ability of existing utilities to handle building capacity
Flexible	
Expansion Capability	Ability to expand building on site
Secure	
Standoff Distance	Ability to set building away from street edge
Secure Entry Location	Ability to locate secure vehicular entries off main streets
Sightlines	Ability to observe building during off hours
Dignified	
Court Image Potential	Image of courthouse from distance
Visibility to Public	Public's ability to visually locate the courthouse
Urban Design Opportunities	Ability to enhance outdoor urban design issues
Economics	
Project Cost	Relative cost of entire project including construction
Construction Logistics	Ease of contractor staging construction
Contamination Potential	Potential sources of contamination that will affect cost
Shared Service Potential	Ability to shared adjacent services
Construction Phasing	Impact of phasing project on site during construction
Demolition Feasibility	Ease of demolishing existing structures
Bridge Connection	Ease of connecting to Courthouse East
Energy Impacts	Sites that hinder or enhance energy efficiencies
Land Acquisition	Cost impact of acquisition including potential facility replacement

Table 6 - 1
Site Selection Criteria

Methodology

The design and construction of the new Baltimore City Circuit Courthouse represents a unique opportunity to positively impact the Court, the governmental complex, and the urban fabric and character of the city. Perhaps the most far-reaching effect of this project will be generated by its location and orientation within this larger setting.

As such, the planning team sought to employ a fair and reasoned methodology, considering the broadest range of relevant issues. It was also deemed crucial to generate consensus for conclusions with the Executive Committee in a logical sequence of decision-making. To this end, the following methodology was adopted:

1. Define site requirements. These requirements include, but are not limited to, site size, minimum dimensions, and goals.
2. Establish selection criteria.

3. Research pertinent site data.
4. Screen options for the best sites. This step was accomplished by evaluating site performances on preliminary screening criteria and meetings with the BDC.
5. Develop site concepts. These concepts presented site utilization diagrams, access points, bridge connections, and massing sketches in order to more fully understand each site's potential for design.
6. Weigh the evaluation criteria, since not all criteria are equal. Once the implications of using each site were understood, a final hierarchy of criteria was established.
7. Evaluate site performance.
8. Recommend site selection.

The core of the study's methodology is the criteria evaluation. This planning system is widely applied by planners because of its ability to address a wide range of issues or criteria, and because its process of analysis allows for a comprehensive recommendation.

Methodology Options

The fundamental purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the relevant issues that will bear on the final site selection for the new Baltimore City Circuit Courthouse.

These issues have largely been identified as "Site Selection Criteria" including issues relative to the following descriptors:

- Functionality
- Flexibility
- Security
- Dignity
- Economics

These criteria provided the "road map" for the project team's analysis. In order to fully understand the impact of these issues on the ultimate viability of the court, AECOM prepared site concept studies, researched legal restrictions and infrastructure, analyzed operational impacts, and estimated cost. In general terms, the results of the evaluation of the options presented above can be presented in two essential ways:

- Numerical Analysis
- Critical Process Narrative

Numerical Analysis

This methodology mathematically quantifies each site's performance within each criterion. Two key figures are utilized. A weight factor (WF) is assigned to each criterion in order to create a mathematical hierarchy of relative importance. For example, "construction cost" would typically be viewed as more important than, say, "proximity to delicatessens." The second number assigned to each criterion for each site option is the performance score (PS). To assure consistency, a range of performance is established and assigned scores, and then applied to each site's performance. For example, under "construction cost," one might see the following range:

<u>Score</u>	<u>Performance</u>
5	\$200M - \$225M
4	\$225M - \$250M
3	\$250M - \$275M
2	\$275M - \$300M
1	≥ \$300M

The final number is computed as $WF \times PS =$ Criteria based Performance Rating.

This method has the advantage of delivering a clear result, with a numerical winner, loser, and those in between. **Note, however, that this method's results are only as good or as bad as the assumptions upon which the numbers are based.**

Evaluation of Methodologies

An objective, experienced analyst can derive real value from this methodology, but those acting on the results must understand deeply the basis for all ratings. This requires more time and, ideally, true collaboration between parties. Further, the danger exists that data might be skewed to reflect a subjective point of view or orientation. It is certainly due to these potential limitations that analysts and planners are sometimes asked to present their data in narrative form. In order to address all relevant issues, this methodology relied on the identification and analysis of criteria. The differences lay in how the results of analysis are presented.

Step One – Identify Criteria Issues demand relevance to the ultimate site selection and they need to be identified and reviewed.

Step Two – Supporting Data

Raw information is compiled and documented for each site relative to each criterion. The data appendix serves as a detailed basis for analysis. Depending on the nature of the criterion, information is presented in written and/or graphic form.

Step Three – Hierarchy of Criteria

The final hierarchy among the criteria, approved by the Executive Committee, is listed. The purpose of this step is to focus attention on those issues deemed most critical to ultimate site selection. It is recommended that there be a three-tier hierarchy including “Most Important,” “Average,” and “Least Important.”

Step Four – Comparison Using Criteria

Each site's performance within the various criteria is compared in an advantage/disadvantage format. Brief explanations are included where appropriate.

Step Five – Summary Matrix

To facilitate review of the “big picture,” the results of Step Three are graphically summarized in a matrix. The most important criteria are expressed graphically. Site performance is reflected by text and/or symbols representing “good,” “fair,” and “poor.”

Step Six – Site Performance Summary

The overall performance of each target site is summarized in brief narratives. Emphasis is placed on significant advantages of the most important criteria.

Step Seven – Site Selection Recommendation

The planning team is under contract to make a final site recommendation to the Executive Committee. This recommendation includes a ranking of the remaining sites to assist the Committee in alternate site selection should the top-ranked site prove to be unacceptable.

Summary Comments on Use of Methods

A brief narrative rationale accompanies the final ranking summarizing the findings of the planning team.

The team decided to use a method that is a hybrid of these two approaches. Step Four--Comparison Using Criteria was waived in favor of using a series of site-specific narratives that reviewed the site’s narratives and performance according to each criterion and rating of good, fair, or poor. Also, although the team used an essentially narrative approach, the ratings from this method were numerically added together in the final matrix to act as a guide in final recommendations.

Site Area Requirements

The first aspect of site selection is to define its optimal size as well as its minimum dimensions in order to allow for efficient facility design.

The key to this endeavor is to base area and dimensional requirements on a functional understanding of project parameters. Sufficient preliminary programmatic information was available from the earlier space programming study of 2002, which determined the needs of the basic footprint of the building, configuration in stacking, and placement of courtrooms and support areas. This data was available to be applied to the specific sites in question. The remaining site area projections were based on more generic planning guidelines and technical expertise in the field.

Building Footprint 45,000 SF

AECOM’s experience in courthouse design indicates that the ideal floor-stacking plan is to place courtroom floors above large court-support floors for the divisions that experience the highest volume of traffic. In this project, such floors would include, but not be limited to, the Clerk of the Court and Court Administration. The footprint of 45,000 SF would allow all of these components to be accommodated on three floors according to current space projections.

Courtroom Floors 25,000 SF

Again, based on preliminary information, it is anticipated that the new judicial center will house 32 courtrooms. Optimal sets of courtrooms are composed of linked pairs of courtrooms that share inmate delivery and holding areas, and are served by designated public and private corridors. This court zoning plan, coupled with centralized judicial chambers on a separate floor(s), was applied to this analysis. Two variations on a 4- courtroom floor diagram were designed and are included later in this chapter.

This study served three purposes: (a) it identified the floor area requirements, (b) it established a minimum site dimension of 120 feet, and (c) it clarified the range of options suitable for future expansion.

The courtroom area of 25,000 SF is included in the building footprint of 45,000 SF.

Public Plaza 8,000 SF

In acknowledgment of a courthouse’s significance as civic architecture, it was deemed appropriate to allow for an open space to establish a formal entry se-

quence and to provide for outdoor areas for public use. This cited space allowance is not particularly large and should be considered a minimum figure.

Service Delivery 1,000 SF

This space allowance provides for a loading dock area. It does not include driveways, turn-around space, and other features required for service deliveries.

Circulation, Setbacks, & Other Elements 5,000 SF

This figure is 15% of the subtotal of 34,000 SF or the above components. It is an allowance to allow for driveways, setbacks, or other contingencies of site planning.

Total Minimum Site Area Requirement 40,000 SF

The planning team is confident that it can accommodate the current scope of this project within the stated figure of site components. However, it should be stressed that this is a minimum figure and not representative of an optimum site size. The City is advised to surpass this figure, by acquiring almost an entire city block. Sites shown in this study reflect the minimum size which can be assembled without splitting existing private properties.

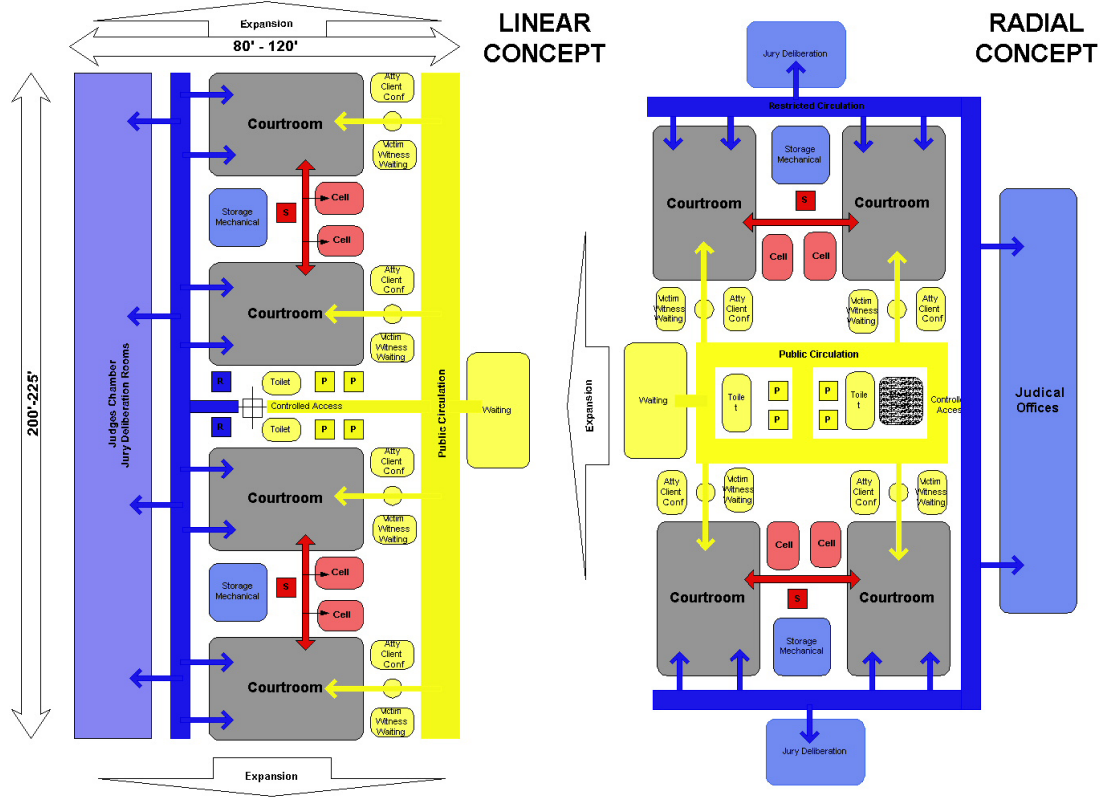


Figure 6-3
Court Floor Configuration

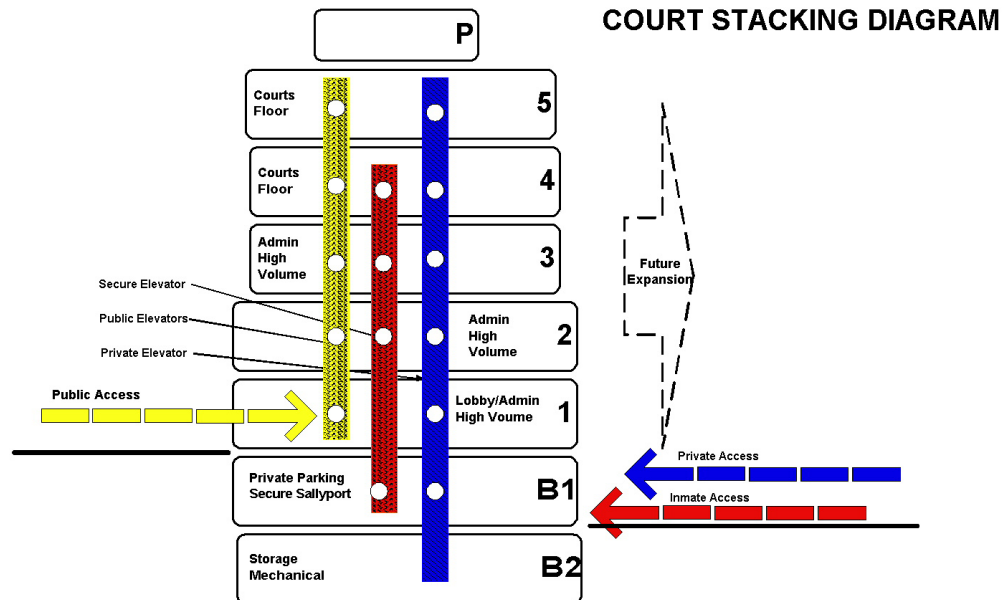


Figure 6-4
Court Stacking Diagram

Final Site Evaluation

Final site evaluations are presented below for Options A, B, and C. Option A at the South Site presents an opportunity for a proposal with 4 courtrooms per floor. By contrast, the North Site presents an opportunity for two concepts, Option B, which is a proposal for 4 courtrooms per floor, and, Option C, which is a proposal for 8 courtrooms per floor. This first section defines the criteria and establishes their level of importance or weight factor. Subsequent discussion addresses the merits of each individual proposal.

Note that the three respective site concepts are not building designs. The level of study shown is only sufficient to understand the relative constraints and opportunities each site would present to the designers once actual schematic design is initiated. Selected diagrams and sketches illustrate only one potential approach. Others were considered in the assessment process. If necessary, still others can be considered in the future.

Each of the site concepts strove to realize certain basic planning requirements for the new Judicial Center. Specifically, these requirements included the need to:

- Illustrate overall site area comparisons and their impacts on the site.
- Explore the implications of a bridge connection between Courthouse East and the new court facility.
- Indicate primary vehicular and pedestrian access points.
- Analyze the potential of each site to accommodate future expansion which could link directly to the initial court floors.
- Illustrate the anticipated scale of the new Judicial Center in the existing context.

These concepts then served as the basic for criteria-based performance evaluations.

The following is a list of criteria upon which to base the ultimate selection of a site of the new Baltimore City Circuit Courthouse.

Since all criteria are not equally important, a hierarchy or weighing of these criteria was established before making final recommendations. Where possible, preliminary suggested weight factor (WF) has been indicated by “Low,” “Medium,” or “High” ratings.

Criteria have been grouped into six general categories of concern. These are:

- Functionality
- Flexibility
- Security
- Dignity
- Economics

Functionality Criteria

1. *Adjacencies to Agencies* WF: **Medium**

Evaluates the location of judicial agencies that would not be housed in the courthouse complex.

2. *Compatibility with Uses* WF: **Low**

Compares the degree of compatibility of a site’s use with adjacent neighborhood properties.

3. *Building Floor Flexibility* WF: **High**

Evaluates the flexibility of planning a building's footprint to accommodate a variety of functions.

4. *Distance to Parking* WF: **Low**

Considers a site's proximity to parking facilities.

5. *Distance to Transit* WF: **Low**

Looks at a site's proximity to subway and bus stops.

6. *Zoning Restrictions* WF: **Low**

Identifies and evaluates any zoning restriction such as height limits, FARs, set backs, and other relevant restrictions.

7. *Noise* WF: **Low**

Examines noise levels that might be sufficient enough to disrupt court proceedings. Such conditions will be brought to the attention of decision makers.

Flexibility Criteria8. *Site Configuration* WF: **High**

Address addresses the effect of geometric configuration on ultimate planning flexibility since complex site configurations are an impediment to functional planning.

9. *Site Assemblage* WF: **High**

Considers the time and cost to acquire property from individual property owners on a given site.

10. *Utility Capacity* WF: **Medium**

Evaluates the capacity of existing infrastructure at a site to handle a new court building's utility needs.

11. *Expansion Capability* WF: **Medium**

Evaluates site area for initial expansion potential and functional efficiency. In addition, this criterion anticipates the likelihood of ultimate expansion beyond this area and the site's ability to absorb future growth.

Security Criteria12. *Standoff Distance* WF: **Low**

Evaluates the ability to set the building back from the street edge for security purposes without reducing site area or affecting the functional planning of the building.

13. *Secure Entry Locations* WF: **Medium**

Evaluates the ability of the site to provide secure judicial vehicular access to the building without visibility from major city streets.

14. *Sightlines* WF: **Medium**

Responds to CPTED requirements by providing a high level of visibility from the streets for law enforcement to monitor the building after hours.

Dignity Criteria15. *Court Image Potential* WF: **Medium**

Identifies sites that provide opportunities to design a courthouse with appropriate and suitable dignity.

16. *Public Visibility* WF: **Medium**

Addresses the public's visual ability to locate the courthouse. Sites with dominant locations are awarded higher ratings.

17. *Urban Design Opportunities* WF: **Medium**

Evaluates the site's ability to provide an opportunity for contributing a high level of urban design to the urban core.

Economics Criteria18. *Project Cost* WF: **High**

Compares the relative cost of the entire project with construction and soft costs.

19. *Construction Logistics* WF: **Medium**

Evaluates the cost impact relative to the contractor's ability to stage construction on the site.

20. *Degree of Contamination* WF: **Medium**

Researches each site's history to identify potential sources of soil contaminations, although soil testing technically is not within the purview of this study.

21. *Shared Services Potential* WF: **Low**

Evaluates the potential efficiency of centralized service and support functions with existing city facilities.

22. *Construction Phasing* WF: **Medium**

Looks at the relative ease of constructing the building in phases.

23. *Demolition Feasibility* WF: **Medium**

Compares the relative cost impacts of demolishing existing buildings and structures and preparing the site for development.

24. *Bridge Connection* WF: **Medium**

Compares the ease of designing a bridge connection to Courthouse East.

25. *Energy Impacts* WF: **Low**

Addresses any clear and identifiable differences among the target sites to enhance or hinder energy efficiency.

26. *Land Acquisition* WF: **High**

Compares the relative cost impacts of acquisition, including any potential facility replacement that may be necessary.

Site Criteria Evaluation

The following analysis shows how the two sites respond to the criteria and their numerical rating. Site diagrams illustrate placement of a typical courts floor.

OPTION A

AECOM analyzed a four-courtrooms per floor layout, because the site would only accommodate this number of courtrooms per floor. Several variations were studied and presented to the executive committee. The following figure illustrates the concept that best responds to the urban setting.

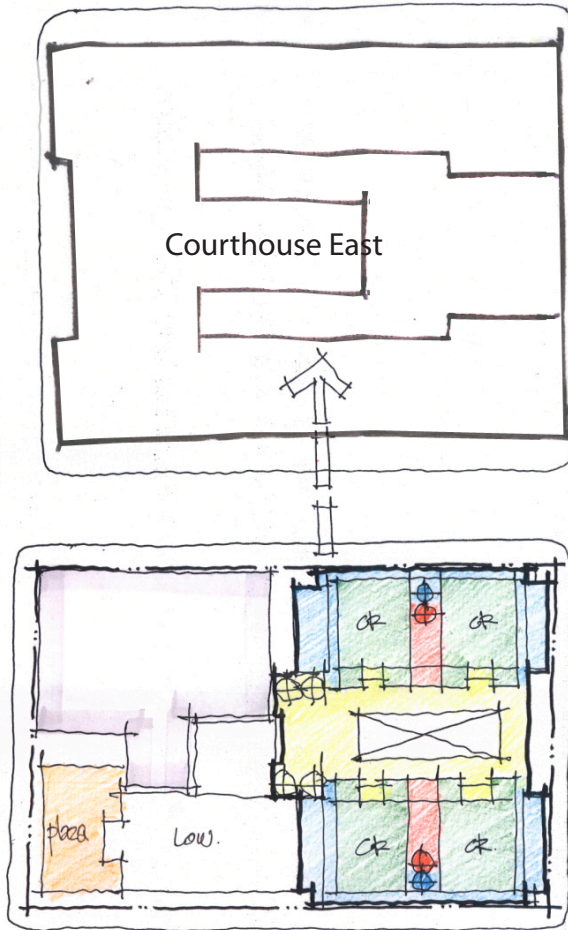


Figure 6-5
South Site - Four Courtroom Floor Layout

Functionality Criteria

1. *Adjacencies to Agencies* WF: **Good**

The site's location in the Central Business District (CBD) makes it convenient to all related courts and city agencies.

2. *Compatibility with Uses* WF: **Poor**

Due to the tight site footprint, the new courthouse would need to be approximately 20 stories. Higher courtroom floors would take it to a height of 400 feet.

3. *Building Floor Flexibility* WF: **Poor**

The tight site makes it extremely difficult to provide room for future expansion.

4. *Distance to Parking* WF: **Good**

The site is within easy walking distance of public parking facilities.

5. *Distance to Transit* WF: **Good**

The site is within easy walking distance of Metro bus and subway stops.

6. *Zoning Restrictions* WF: **Poor**

The building tight site results in a structure approximately 400 feet tall which may be problematic with city zoning ordinances and working with the Baltimore City Planning Department.

7. *Noise* WF: **Fair**

The South Site is subject to typical patterns of city noise.

Flexibility Criteria8. *Site Configuration* WF: **Poor**

The tight site would make it extremely difficult to planning major court components, such as the Clerk of Court and States Attorney on a minimum number of floors.

9. *Site Assemblage* WF: **Poor**

The south site is owned by several different businesses, therefore posing a possible risk in assembling the site.

10. *Utility Capacity* WF: **Good**

The site's utilities can easily serve the capacity of a new courthouse.

11. *Expansion Capability* WF: **Poor**

The tight site makes it extremely difficult to expand the building horizontally.

Security Criteria12. *Standoff Distance* WF: **Poor**

The site would not be able to provide room easily for setbacks from the property line.

13. *Secure Entry Locations* WF: **Poor**

All access for secure and judicial vehicular entries would occur off the main and heavily-travelled streets surrounding the site.

14. *Sightlines* WF: **Good**

Placement of the structure would provide excellent visibility from the streets surrounding the structure.

Dignity Criteria15. *Court Image Potential* WF: **Fair**

Due to the tight site, its irregular shape and the location of the Munsey Building on the northwest quadrant, image and visibility of the new facility would

be limited. Potentially, the best perception of the building would occur only at the southwest corner of the block.

16. *Public Visibility* WF: **Fair**

Similar to Criteria #15, the placement of the entry next to the Munsey Building would diminish the buildings prominence to the general public.

17. *Urban Design Opportunities* WF: **Fair**

Limited expansion of urban design opportunities would occur, generally confined to the proposed site.

Economics Criteria

18. *Project Cost* WF: **Poor**

The South Site with 4 courtrooms per floor option has the highest project cost of the three options.

19. *Construction Logistics* WF: **Poor**

The tight site would limit the contractor's ability to stage construction, thereby, affecting the overall construction cost.

20. *Degree of Contamination* WF: **Medium**

Location has limited previous uses regarding contaminated materials.

21. *Shared Services Potential* WF: **Good**

Location is near numerous city-owned facilities that may be able to share services.

22. *Construction Phasing* WF: **Medium**

The tight site limits the opportunity to build the project in phases. Essentially, construction in only the eastern portion could occur separately from similar activity in the southwest quadrant.

23. *Demolition Feasibility* WF: **Good**

This site has the fewest number of buildings that would have to be razed.

24. *Bridge Connection* WF: **Poor**

Due to the grade elevation on the southern edge of Courthouse East, a double-height bridge would occur at the 3rd and 4th floors of Courthouse East and not at the more preferable 2nd floor level.

25. *Energy Impacts* WF: **Good**

This site would be served by central chilled water and steam services. However, courtroom floor orientation may result in extra solar heat gain through extensive east/west facades.

26. *Land Acquisition* WF: **Poor**

Although there are only two separate property owners on the site to deal with, past experience with one of them indicates that he might demand a high asking price for his property.

Site Criteria Evaluation

For the north site, AECOM studied several different court floor arrangements and presented them to the executive committee. They consisted of four-, six- and eight-courtrooms per floor layouts. To simplify site analysis, only the four- and eight-courtrooms per floor arrangement were evaluated against the site criteria. This approach would provide a low and high benchmark analysis for this site. The criteria analysis is comprehensive for the two floor schemes with exceptions noted where applicable. The two exceptions are building expansion capability and project cost.

OPTION B

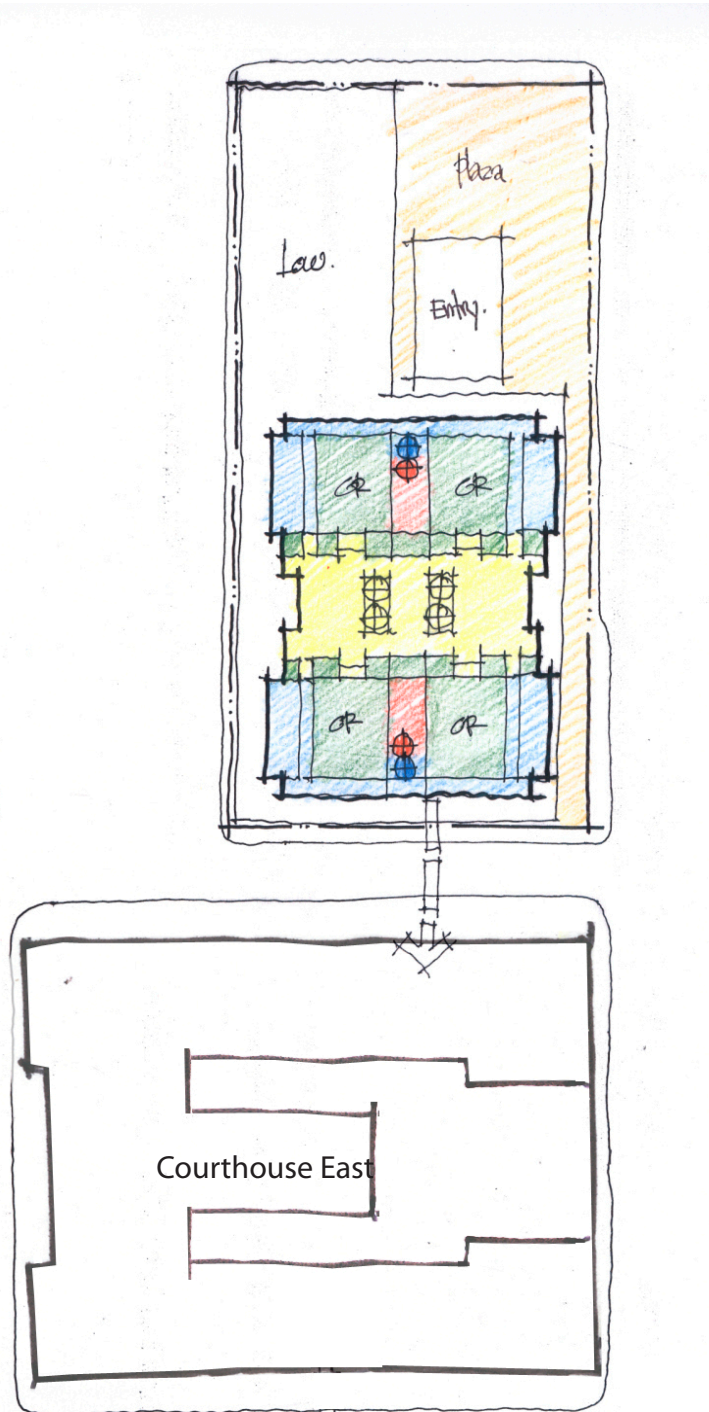


Figure 6-6
North Site - Four-Courtroom Floor Layout

Functionality Criteria

1. *Adjacencies to Agencies* WF: **Good**

The site's location in the CBD makes it convenient to all related court and city agencies. It also allows better access for the Department of Corrections and the Sheriff's Office to deliver prisoners from the Correctional Complex.

2. *Compatibility with Uses* WF: **Good**

The site's large footprint allows a reasonably high structure that is compatible with the neighboring buildings.

3. *Building Floor Flexibility* WF: **Good**

The larger site allows for great flexibility in the placement and configuration of the building's footprint.

4. *Distance to Parking* WF: **Good**

The site is within easy walking distance of public parking facilities.

5. *Distance to Transit* WF: **Good**

The site is within easy walking distance of the Metrobus and subway stops.

6. *Zoning Restrictions* WF: **Good**

The larger site allows for easy conformance with various city zoning requirements, including that regarding building height.

7. *Noise* WF: **Fair**

The south site is subject to typical patterns of city noise.

Flexibility Criteria

8. *Site Configuration* WF: **Good**

The rectangular site presents the fewest restrictions on planning flexibility as compared to the south site.

9. *Site Assemblage* WF: **Fair**

Most of the site is owned by the City. The southern portion along Lexington Street may pose a challenge because that area has multiple lots with buildings on them. Even without the acquisition of these lots, the site would still be sufficiently large enough for a new court facility.

10. *Utility Capacity* WF: **Good**

The site's utilities can easily serve the capacity of a new courthouse.

11. *Expansion Capability* WF: **Good**

The larger site, based on a developed concept, would allow the potential for lateral expansion.

Security Criteria

12. *Standoff Distance* WF: **Good**

The size of the site allows for the potential to set the building back from the property line.

13. *Secure Entry Locations* WF: **Good**

Davis Street can be closed to limit traffic .only to judicial vehicles and the delivery of prisoners.

14. *Sightlines* WF: **Good**

Placement of the building on this site would provide excellent visibility from surrounding streets.

Dignity Criteria15. *Court Image Potential* WF: **Good**

No apparent site limitations appear to exist in achieving an appropriate and suitable court image. The site's overall visibility, particularly from the east, should be viewed as one of the site's positive features.

16. *Public Visibility* WF: **Good**

This site provides visual prominence from I-83 and would be a dominant image on the city's skyline from this vantage point. It also would provide the opportunity for a highly visible public façade on Guilford Avenue.

17. *Urban Design Opportunities* WF: **Good**

Development of the south side would provide for a more extensive urban design opportunity along Guilford Avenue and help to revitalize this section of downtown.

Economics Criteria18. *Project Cost* WF: **Fair**

This option falls in the middle of the price range of the three schemes and sites.

19. *Construction Logistics* WF: **Good**

The larger site provides a good opportunity for the contractor to stage construction and store materials onsite.

20. *Degree of Contamination* WF: **Medium**

Location has limited previous uses regarding contaminated materials.

21. *Shared Services Potential* WF: **Good**

Location is near numerous city-owned facilities that may be able to share services.

22. *Construction Phasing* WF: **Good**

This larger site allows for various construction phases, if needed.

23. *Demolition Feasibility* WF: **Poor**

This site contains the most buildings that would require demolition. Further, the Knickerbocker Building demolition may be resisted by historic preservation advocates.

24. *Bridge Connection* WF: **Good**

The north side of Courthouse East would offer the best location to create a public connection from its 2nd story to the new facility. This design strategy would also offer height clearance for the street.

25. *Energy Impacts* WF: **Good**

This site would be served by central chilled water and steam services. The courtroom floor orientation, potentially facing east, would result in a better energy design because of solar control.

26. *Land Acquisition* WF: **Fair**

The majority of the site is owned by the city. Acquisition of the five buildings in the southern portion of the site may prove to be difficult and/or time consuming.

OPTION C

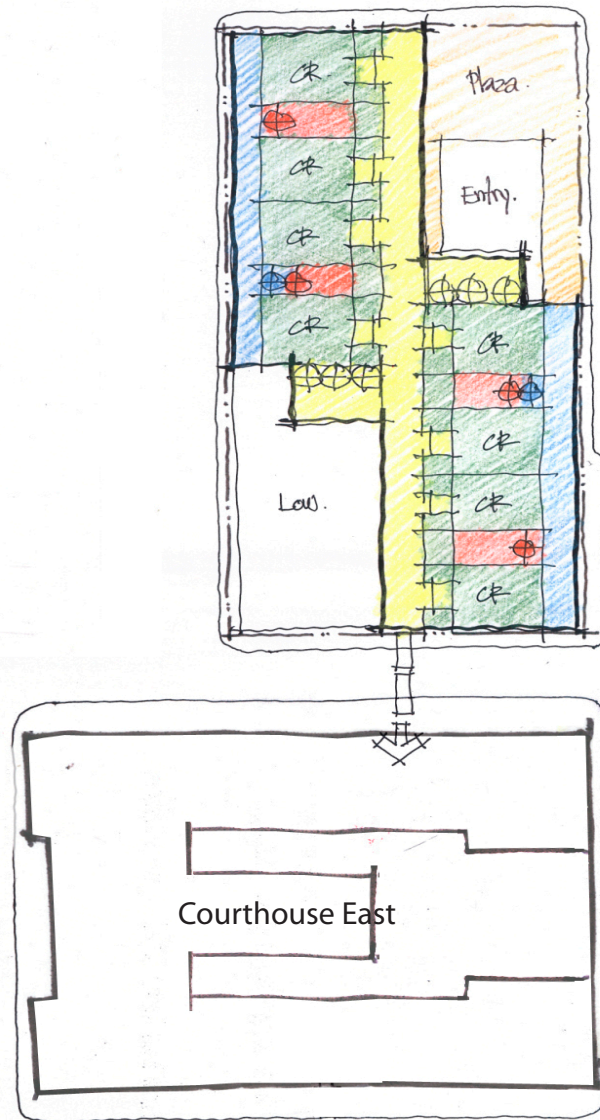


Figure 6-7
North Site - Eight - Courtroom Floor Layout

Functionality Criteria

1. *Adjacencies to Agencies* WF: **Good**

The site's location in the CBD makes it convenient to all related court and city agencies. It also allows better access for the Department of Corrections and the Sheriff's Office to deliver prisoners from the Correctional Complex.
2. *Compatibility with Uses* WF: **Good**

The site's large footprint allows a reasonably high building that is compatible with the neighborhood.
3. *Building Floor Flexibility* WF: **Good**

The larger site allows for great flexibility in the placement and configuration of the building's footprint.
4. *Distance to Parking* WF: **Good**

The site is within easy walking distance of public parking facilities.
5. *Distance to Transit* WF: **Good**

The site is within easy walking distance of the Metro bus and subway stops.
6. *Zoning Restrictions* WF: **Good**

The larger site allows for easy conformance with various city zoning requirements, including that regarding building height.
7. *Noise* WF: **Fair**

The south site is subject to typical patterns of city noise.

Flexibility Criteria

8. *Site Configuration* WF: **Good**

The rectangular site presents the fewest restrictions on planning flexibility in contrast to those of the South Site.
9. *Site Assemblage* WF: **Fair**

Most of the site is owned by the City. The southern portion along Lexington Street may pose a challenge because that area has multiple lots with buildings on them. Even without the acquisition of these lots, the site would still be sufficiently large enough for a new court facility.
10. *Utility Capacity* WF: **Good**

The site's utilities can easily serve the capacity of a new courthouse.
11. *Expansion Capability* WF: **Fair**

Although the North Site is larger than its south counterpart, the proposal for 8 courtrooms per floor spreads the footprint across the entire site, which would limit for the potential for future expansion.

Security Criteria

12. *Standoff Distance* WF: **Good**

The size of the site allows for the potential to set the building back from the property line.

13. *Secure Entry Locations* WF: **Good**
- Davis Street can be closed to limit traffic as a means only to deliver prisoners and provide access for judicial vehicles.
14. *Sightlines* WF: **Good**
- Placement of the building on this site would provide excellent visibility from surrounding streets.
- Dignity Criteria**
15. *Court Image Potential* WF: **Good**
- No apparent site limitations appear to exist in achieving an appropriately dignified and suitable court image. The site's overall visibility, particularly from the east, should be viewed as one of the site's positive features.
16. *Public Visibility* WF: **Good**
- This site would provide visual prominence from I-83 and would be a dominant image on the city's skyline from this vantage point. It also would provide the opportunity for a highly visible public façade on Guilford Avenue.
17. *Urban Design Opportunities* WF: **Good**
- Development of the North Site would provide for a more extensive urban design opportunity along Guilford Avenue and help to revitalize this section of the downtown area.
- Economics Criteria**
18. *Project Cost* WF: **Good**
- This North Site proposal for 8 courtrooms per floor is ranked lowest in cost of the three schemes.
19. *Construction Logistics* WF: **Good**
- The larger site provides a good opportunity for the contractor to stage construction and store materials onsite.
20. *Degree of Contamination* WF: **Medium**
- Location has limited previous uses regarding contaminated materials.
21. *Shared Services Potential* WF: **Good**
- Location is near numerous city-owned facilities that may be able to share services.
22. *Construction Phasing* WF: **Good**
- This larger site allows for various construction phases, if needed.
23. *Demolition Feasibility* WF: **Poor**
- This site contains the most buildings that would require demolition. Further, the Knickerbocker Building demolition may be resisted by historic preservation advocates.
24. *Bridge Connection* WF: **Good**
- The north side of Courthouse East would offer the best location to create a public bridge connecting its 2nd story with the new facility. This design strategy

would also offer height clearance for the street.

25. *Energy Impacts* **WF: Good**

This site would be served by central chilled water and steam services. The courtroom floor orientation, potentially facing east, would result in a better energy design because of solar control.

26. *Land Acquisition* **WF: Fair**

The majority of the site is owned by the city. Acquisition of the five buildings in the southern portion of the site may prove to be difficult and/or time consuming.

Final Recommendation

The planning team was unanimous in recommending the North Site, as evaluated in Options B and C, for consideration in the development of a new Circuit Courthouse for the City of Baltimore. The scoring margins are narrow, however, between the two proposals for either 4 courtrooms per floor or 8 courtrooms per floor.

Criteria	Weight Factor	OPTIONS						Site Development Criteria
		Option 1 South		Option 2 North 4 Courts		Option 3 North 8 Courts		
		Rating	Score	Rating	Score	Rating	Score	
Functional								
Adjacencies to Agencies	2	3	6	3	6	3	6	Location to judicial agencies not house in courthouse
Compatibility with Adjacent Users	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	Degree of compatibility of site with prominent properties based on use
Building Footprint Flexibility	3	1	3	3	9	3	9	Flexibility of planning the building footprints to accommodate functions
Distance to Parking	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	Distance to parking lots/garages
Distance to Transit	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	Distance to transit: subway/bus
Zoning Restrictions	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	Any restrictions on height limitations
Noise	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	Subject to undue noise levels sufficient to disrupt court operations
Site Configuration	3	1	3	3	9	3	9	Site configuration that impedes functional planning
Site Assemblage	3	1	3	2	6	2	6	Time and cost to acquire propoerty affected by number of individual property owners
Utility Capacity	2	3	6	3	6	3	6	Ability of existing utilities to handle building capacity
Flexible								
Expansion Capability	2	1	2	3	6	2	4	Ability to expand building on site
Secure								
Standoff Distance	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	Ability to set building away from street edge
Secure Entry Location	2	1	2	3	6	3	6	Ability to locate secure vehicular entries off main streets
Sightlines	2	3	6	3	6	3	6	Ability to observe building during off hours
Dignified								
Court Image Potential	2	2	4	3	6	3	6	Image of courthouse from distance
Visibility to Public	2	2	4	3	6	3	6	Public's ability to visually locate the courthouse
Urban Design Opportunities	2	2	4	3	6	3	6	Ability to enhance outdoor urban design issues
Economics								
Project Cost	3	1	3	2	6	3	9	Relative cost of entire project including construction
Construction Logistics	2	1	2	3	6	3	6	Ease of contractor staging construction
Contamination Potential	2	2	4	2	4	2	4	Potential sources of contamination that will affect cost
Shared Service Potential	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	Ability to shared adjacent services
Construction Phasing	2	2	4	3	6	3	6	Impact of phasing project on site during construction
Demolition Feasibility	2	3	6	1	2	1	2	Ease of demolishing existing structures
Bridge Connection	2	1	2	3	6	3	6	Ease of connecting to Courthouse East
Energy Impacts	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	Sites that hinder or enhance energy efficiencies
Land Acquisition	3	1	3	2	6	2	6	Cost impact of acquisition including potential facility replacement
Total			84		131		132	

Table 6-2
Site Comparison Matrix

The essential rationale was as follows:

- The North Site outperforms the South Site in critical evaluation in both consistency across criteria and total aggregate rating.
- Though acquisition of the buildings along the southern edge of the North Site may be time consuming, the remainder of the site is city-owned and is of sufficient size for a functional courthouse.
- The North Site offers the opportunity to develop a distinctive justice system master plan, with the two existing courthouses and the new courthouse each anchoring parts of the complex.

The North Site offers a better urban design opportunity for future development along Guilford Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood.