

# EVANSTON ROUNDHOUSE AND RAILYARDS MASTER PLAN



## INTRODUCTION

The Evanston Roundhouse and Railyard complex was instrumental in shaping the history, development, and culture of the community of Evanston. The City now has the opportunity to shape the future development and reuse of the complex for the community's continued benefit. Just as the site, buildings, and inhabitants were a major influence on the City of the past, the decision to redevelop this site will have a major impact on the City's future. This plan establishes the community's vision for the development of the complex based on the desire to preserve the historical significance of the site and buildings, the need to return a once productive area into a community asset, and an obligation to the stewardship of the community's resources for future generations.

Myers/Anderson Architects was retained by the City of Evanston to provide architectural, landscape architectural, and planning services for the complex of 27 acres, three major buildings, and several accessory buildings. Myers/Anderson's first task was the restoration of the "Machine Shop" for use as a multi-purpose event center. When site planning and design (for parking and access related to the Machine Shop) was initiated, it became obvious that a phased design approach to the site design process was not practical. Even though a phased approach to construction may be required for logistics, the site begged to be designed as one entity. The relationship of the buildings, the connection of the site to its surroundings, and the importance of this complex to the community all suggest the need for a coherent, thoughtful and usable plan. To plan for the future of this complex in "stages" would risk fracturing the true essence of the site, disturbing the internal and external relationships that have evolved over the years, and missing opportunities to develop this project properly.



**Completed Machine Shop**

This Master Plan was developed through a "participatory" process which included a pre-planning workshop, a design charrette, and a community open house. This participatory process was designed to allow for maximum input from future users, local experts, special interest groups, and other interested individuals. This open planning process was intended to create a constituency that will safeguard the intentions of the plan long after the planner is gone. The result of this process is a development plan that is more than just the arrangement of structures and adjunct spaces within the project boundaries. This plan will guide the creation of a place that enhances everyday life and gives its inhabitants a sense of the world in which they live.

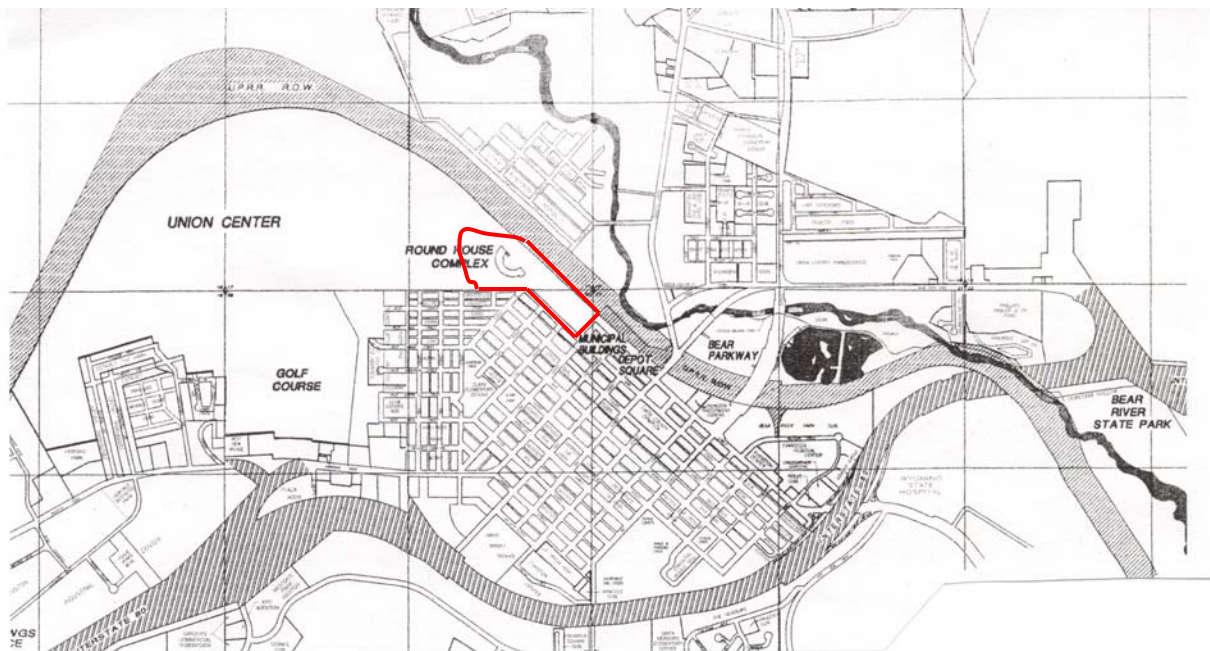


**Design Charrette**

The City acquired the Roundhouse and Railyard Complex from the Union Pacific Railroad in 1972 and leased the facilities to a private user until 1998. In the early nineties, the tenant expressed a desire to demolish the Roundhouse and construct new facilities better suited to its use. The City recognized the value of the historic buildings and decided not to extend the tenants lease. Instead, the City embarked on an effort to preserve the various buildings and plan for eventual reuse. Public input at that time concluded that the buildings and site should be preserved, and that uses found for the buildings should respect their existing strengths and opportunities. More recent public input has only reinforced this previous conclusion, and has emphasized that the importance of the site as a whole should be held paramount.

This plan recognizes and builds upon previous planning efforts, including the UPRR Maintenance Facility Conditions Assessment by Long Hoeft Architects (1994), and the foundational reuse plan by R. Allan Comp and The Action Coalition in 1999. The need for this master plan is driven by three forces; 1) the intended specific uses for the buildings, 2) the need for specific development plans to support nearly completed phases of the complex redevelopment, and 3) to establish a budget and timeline. Previous plans were more general in their conclusions and suggested reuse based primarily on private development. Now, however, the City's long range plan has targeted the Roundhouse as a likely location for a new city service center. Also, the soon-to-be completed Machine Shop Events Center requires site development for access and parking. This plan will direct the development of construction plans for immediate needs within an overall framework and establishes a plan for complete site development and reuse.

This plan also recognizes the historical significance of the site itself, that the site is a critical component of the "ribbon" of public open space, and that the complex is of extreme value in its proximity to downtown. All of these components, the buildings, the site, the surrounding context, the envisioned uses, and ultimately the users have been considered as inextricably linked and dependent on each other.



# EVANSTON ROUNDHOUSE AND RAILYARDS MASTER PLAN



## THE PLANNING PROCESS

This Master Plan was developed through a participatory process designed to include a maximum amount of public input, allow for consideration of alternatives, and to provide direction and support for future decisions. The primary component of this process was a "Design Charrette" in which brainstorming, consensus building, graphic diagrams, and sketches resulted in a public presentation of a "concept" plan. The Charrette was preceded with a "pre-design" workshop to identify the process and plan components such as key players, issues, opportunities, desired outcomes for site development, the buildings, community involvement, and historical interpretation. The entire process was documented by Myers/Anderson Architects and the products of the process were then combined and refined into this Plan.



**Design Charrette**

Participants in the process included: Evanston's Mayor and City Council, elected state leaders, city staff, representatives from other governmental agencies, representative from civic groups, business groups, volunteer organizations, and members of the community. Some of the governmental agencies represented were; Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Wyoming Department of Transportation. Businesses or business groups represented included Union Pacific Railroad and Chamber of Commerce. The fifty-four members of the "steering committee" provided a broad spectrum of valuable input. The steering committee participated in both the Pre-Design Workshop and the Design Charrette, and the public was invited to participate through the Open House / Concept Plan presentation at the culmination of the Charrette.

The Pre-Design Workshop was held January 13, 2004 at the Beeman-Cashin Building in Depot Square. This intense one-day workshop established the course for the remainder of the planning process. Participants were brought up to speed with presentations covering the historical context of the facility, previous planning and study efforts, and the status of the current planning process (see Appendix # 1A). These presentations were followed by discussions of the future opportunities and challenges. The topics discussed were; city services, heritage education, environmental issues, events and venues, maintenance and operations, ownership (legal issues), buildings, utilities, site context, and safety / security (see Appendix # 1B). The workshop participants were then divided into four committees (Buildings, Site Development, Community Development and Historical / Interpretation).



**Pre-Design Workshop**

Each committee was assigned the task of identifying major issues and challenges, defining tasks to be addressed prior to the Design Charrette, and to develop a vision statement for their particular subject. Another outline of these points are charted as follows:

### **SITE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Issues:**

- Environmental Cleanup
- Land Use / Comp. Plan / Zoning
- Phasing / Funding
- Landscaping / Buffer / Natural Setting
- Circulation / Vehicular / Pedestrian / Separations / Services Access

#### **Challenges:**

- Building Uses – Relation to Site
- Acquire Power House Land

#### **Tasks:**

- Environmental – DEQ / City / Consultant
- Develop schedule of tasks – critical path

#### **Vision Statement:**

- Site preserved for re-use
- Re-use to be multi-use
- Surrounding area to serve supporting role
- Western anchor of Central Business District
- Part of "Public Ribbon" – Open space corridor

### **BUILDING COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Issues:**

- Which Buildings stay and go – context to the overall site
- Sensitive restoration
- Building uses and needs
- Site Access / Parking / Building Access

#### **Challenges:**

- Acquire the Power House for commercial use
- Bringing potential commercial development to the site
- Maintaining the historical integrity of the buildings and still provide functional space

#### **Tasks:**

- Coordinate standards of Nomination for National Register Listing
- Evaluate possibility of getting Railyards listed as a National Landmark
- Develop a program for individual buildings

#### **Vision Statement:**

- To maintain the buildings on site and retain the historical context and character of the Railyards

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

### Issues:

- Consensus Building – community buy in
- Convention Facility – revenues generation

### Challenges:

- Funding
- Marketing

### Tasks:

- Selling community internal / external
- Keep historic preservation in all the restoration / urban renewal
- All involved with process – continued community support
- Create government center
- Multi-use / multi-seasonal indoor and outdoor uses

### Vision Statement:

- "To create a multi-purpose facility that will accommodate City Hall while maintaining historical integrity and serve as an attraction to the residents and visitors of Evanston."

## HISTORICAL / INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

### Issues:

- Maintain sense of what the site was used for
- Teach people how the site was used
- Get a visitors center on site as soon as possible to start drawing people to the Railyards / visitor accommodations

### Challenges:

- How to tell the story

### Tasks:

- Get Tracks Across Wyoming and other historical groups involved with the Railyards project

### Vision Statement:

- Preserve and present the history of Railyards

Myers/Anderson collected the information generated at the workshop, researched additional information, and disseminated this to the steering committee for feedback. Additional input was considered and incorporated with the results of the workshop in preparation for the Design Charrette.

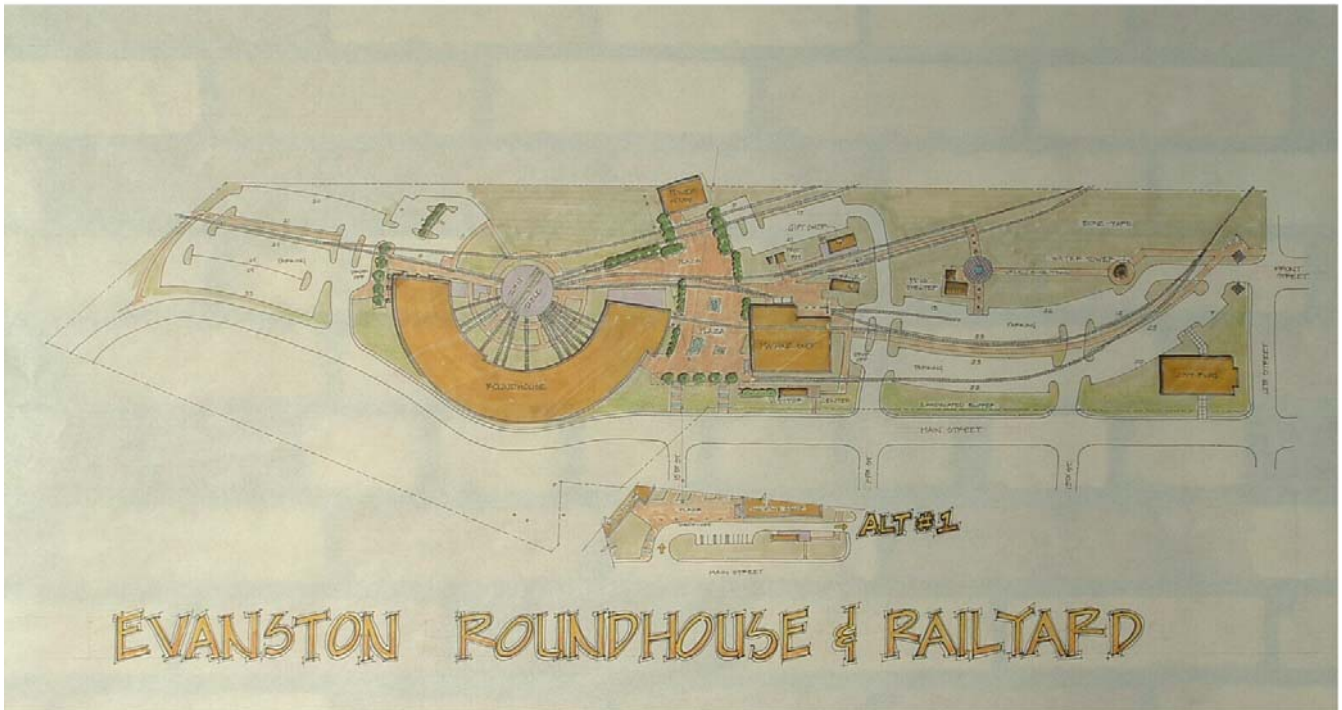
The next step in the planning process, the Design Charrette, was held on February 12-13, 2004. The Charrette included a review of information gathered to date,

validation of program elements, and break-out segments for concept initiation. Those present were divided into two teams, one to develop concepts for the use of the buildings and the other to develop a concept for the site development. These ideas were then refined into a graphic presentation. A Public Open House and Presentation of the concepts resulted in additional discussion and valuable input. The remainder of this document addresses these two major components of the plan, the Buildings and the Site Development. While these two components are intricately connected; they support each other and are dependent on each other, they are presented separately for clarity and ease of use as a planning tool.



**Design Charrette**

This Master Plan for development of the Evanston Roundhouse and Railyard Center is the result of extensive input and idea generation from the steering committee, professional guidance from City Staff and Myers/Anderson, and feedback from the community. This planning process has resulted in the creation of an invaluable tool for guiding the development of the site's purpose, character, and physical layout.



**Final Concept Developed at the Design Charrette**

# EVANSTON ROUNDHOUSE AND RAILYARDS MASTER PLAN



## BUILDINGS AND USES

This section of the Master Plan addresses the development and restoration of the buildings in relationship to the site development and the proposed uses of each building.

During the planning process the primary discussions related to buildings revolved around the significance of each building to the site, and the actions that should be taken with these existing buildings. The initial discussion was that all 13 of the existing buildings should remain on site to help provide a sense of place and context to the Railyards. This idea of maintaining the overall context of the site was determined to be important in helping to make the Railyards a place that can be used for education and interpretation. Another important point of discussion was the potential future uses of these existing buildings. Regarding the primary buildings, it was determined that the Roundhouse should be used as the new City Services Center, the Machine Shop as an events center and the Power House would be used for private development. Additional recommendations were made on the smaller Secondary and Auxiliary Buildings as described hereafter.



**Evanston Railyards  
circa 1956**

Other important issues discussed during the planning process included the need for sensitive restoration of the buildings to maintain their historical integrity, access to and between the buildings, and the need for interpretive space.

To assist in the planning and design, the 13 existing buildings were broken down into three categories; 1) Primary – Roundhouse, Machine Shop, and the Powerhouse; 2) Secondary – Superintendent's Office, Shower House, Mineral Building and the Brick Store House; 3) Auxiliary – Buildings A-F and the Box Car.

## PRIMARY BUILDINGS

**The Roundhouse** - The existing Evanston Roundhouse was built in 1912-1913 by the Union Pacific Railroad to replace the original Roundhouse that was built in 1871. The “new” Roundhouse is a 64,936 square foot, 28 bay circular building. The building is constructed of brick and steel perimeter walls, concrete floors and internal wood columns, beams, trusses and a wood roof deck. It is subdivided by two brick firewalls into four sections of 7 bays each. Twenty-five of the bays



**The Turn Table at the  
Roundhouse**

measure to an approximate depth of 99'-0” and three of the bays to a depth of 117'-0”. Along the inside of the arc, large wood engine doors were located at each bay. Twenty-five of the original twenty-eight doors

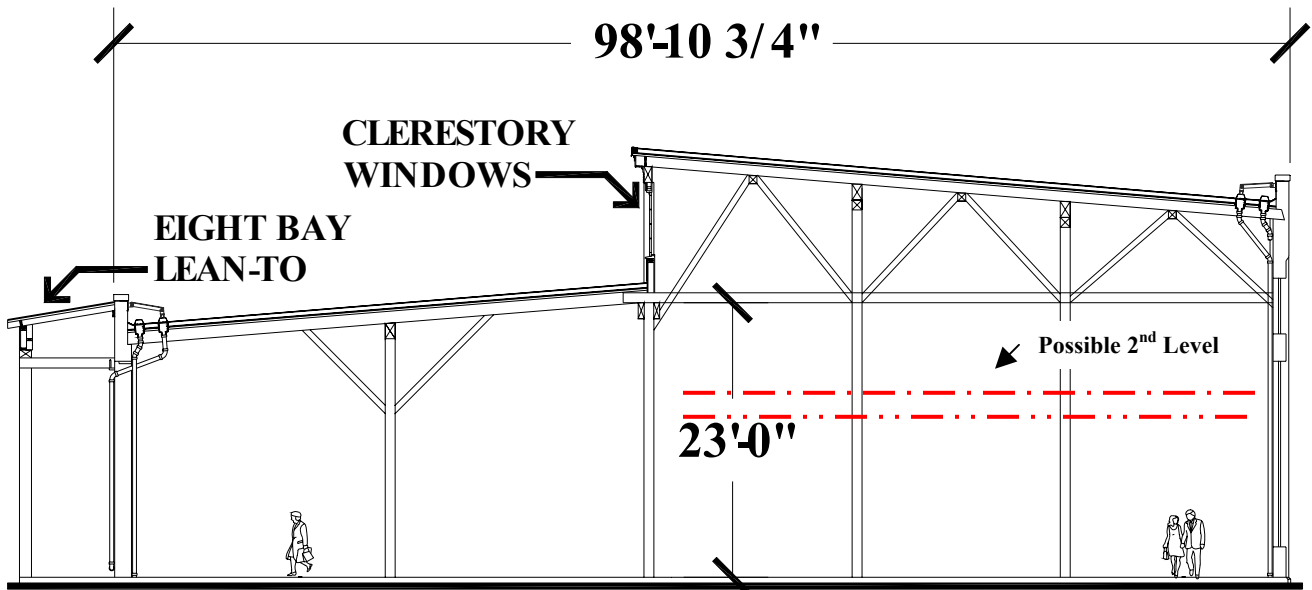
remain. The outside arc wall has large windows at each bay, with a set of large engine doors at the first bay. A clerestory window wall is located at gridline C and faces to the inside arc. In 1926, at the ten northern most bays an 8'-0" deep wood timber lean-to was added onto the inside of the arc. At some time after the original building was built a larger metal addition, two small wood additions, and an end of a boxcar were added to the building. In addition a large wood dock was added that runs the depth of the building along the end wall of the first bay to the south. At some point after the City acquired the site and while it was under lease to a private company, a larger contemporary metal building was attached to the outside of the arc. The Roundhouse was served by a 100'-2" diameter turntable that is still operational.



**Eight bay lean-to addition**

The restoration of the Roundhouse will include the ten bay extension. The larger metal addition along the inside of the arc and the wood loading dock will be removed based on the specific layout and needs of the building. All other additions will be removed.

The proposed new use for the Roundhouse is a new City Services Center. The new City Services Center would house all of the city departments including the Police Department. The Fire Station, Parks and Recreation and the Maintenance Shop would remain at their existing locations. The buildings footprint is 64,936 square feet, with the option of more than 30,000 square feet on a new second level. The new City Service Center will be approximately 66,000 square feet, leaving the remainder of the building for public use for interpretation and education as well as the opportunity to provide leaseable commercial, professional or governmental office space.



**ROUNDHOUSE SECTION**  
NO SCALE

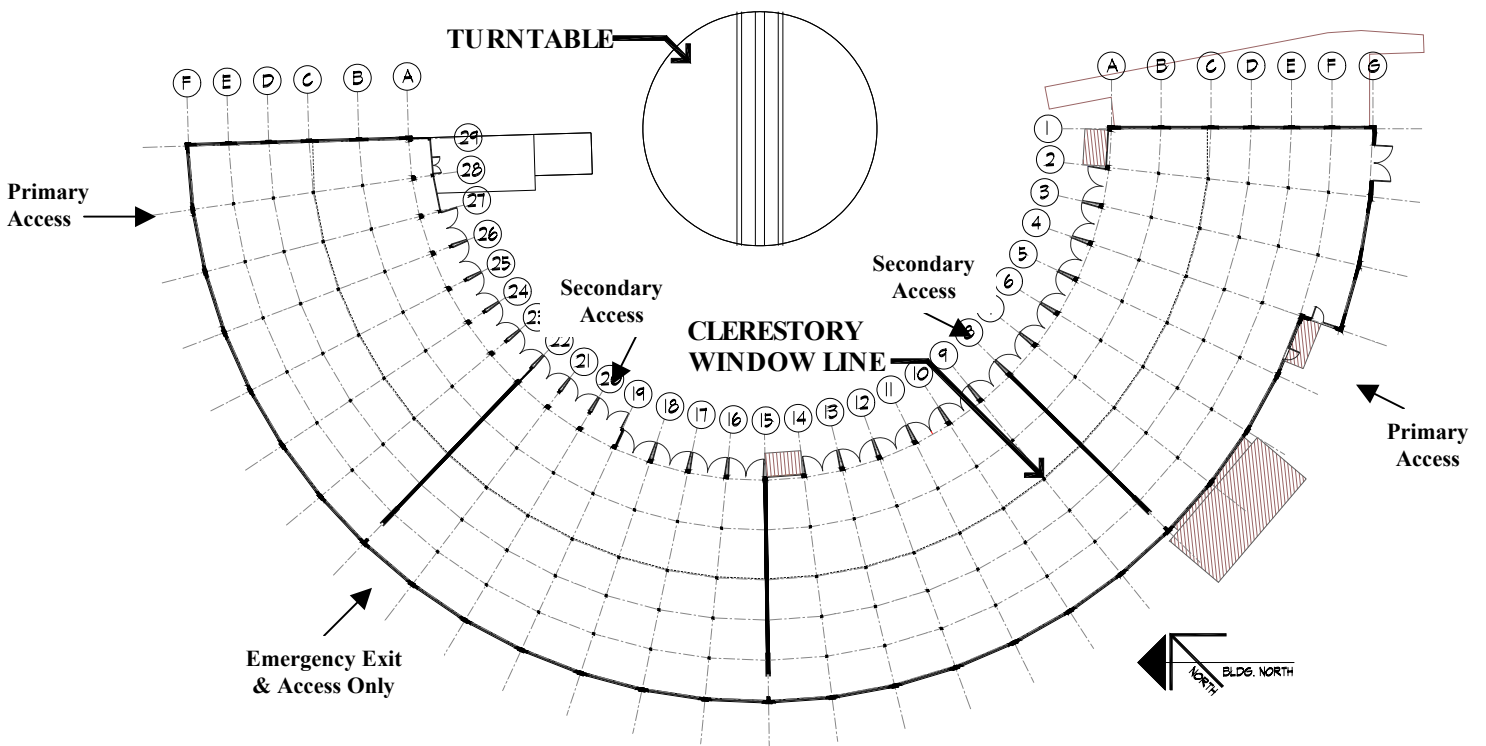
A new City Services Center is needed to bring all of the city services together in one location. The current City facilities are too small to meet the needs of the community. The Roundhouse, which is owned by the City, will provide a building in which the

departments can be located together while allowing for future growth. Additional safety and security requirements will have to be addressed for the Police Department. Some of these requirements include separate, secure entrances for the public and employees; additional structural upgrades above those required for the City Services Center, and additional secure storage. Additional programming for the City Services Center will be required to establish a more detailed plan for how the Roundhouse will be used for the City Services Center. Using the Roundhouse for a new City Services Center and turning the Railyards into public space, ensures that the historical integrity of the building and site remains intact.



South back wall of the Roundhouse

With the change of the Roundhouse from an industrial use to a public/commercial use, establishing easy vehicular and pedestrian access to the building is critical. Due to the nature of the building, vehicular access is difficult to establish without vehicular infringement upon the designated public spaces. Pedestrian access and linkages to the Roundhouse are easier to accommodate without disturbing the context of the Railyards.



**ROUNDHOUSE PLAN**  
NO SCALE

Due to the unique layout of the Roundhouse and its orientation on the site, access to the building will be from along the inside of the arch, the end walls, and to the south along the back wall at the center plaza between the Roundhouse and Machine Shop. The primary entrances will be at the north end wall and the south back wall, with all other

entrances being secondary. Primary parking for the Roundhouse will be to the north of the building with additional parking along Main Street.

**The Machine Shop** - The 17,072 square foot Machine Shop was built in 1918-1919. It is approximately 100'-0" by 150'-0" with a 24'-0" by 84'-0" lean-to on the east side of the building. The building is constructed of a brick and steel perimeter wall with steel columns and trusses and a wood roof deck. The lean-to is segmented into four sections with one original section and three additions. The last of these additions was completed during the last phase of restoration work that was completed February 2004. This new addition provides space for a catering kitchen. The three existing bays of the lean-to were converted restrooms and mechanical spaces.



**The Machine Shop prior to Phase 1 construction in 2001**

With its large, wide-open space, the Machine Shop will serve well as a multi-use conference and events center. The Machine Shop restoration work was completed in February 2004, and is available for use.

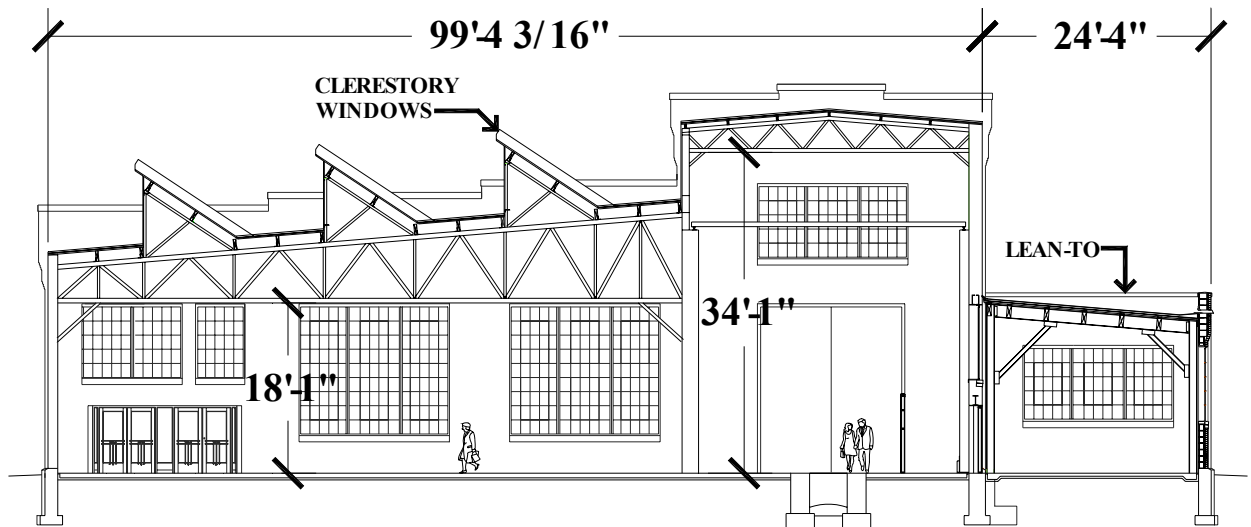
Even though the Machine Shop is currently being used, there are still issues that are to be resolved. A primary issue is the need for parking and access to the building. Originally the main entrance to the building was a man door at the northwest corner of the building. During the first phase of restoration this man door was removed and a larger and more formal entrance was installed. This entrance is in close proximity to the Roundhouse, the Superintendent's Office and the original vehicular access between these buildings. An additional new entrance was installed on the east wall of the building, south of the lean-to. The proposed new primary vehicular entrances to the Machine Shop will be the Front Street extension and the two major ingress/egress points on Main Street at Fourteenth and Thirteenth Streets. The east entrance of the Machine Shop would become the prominent entrance from the new parking area south of the building. The north entrance would serve the plaza between the Roundhouse and the Machine Shop.

The lack of storage space within the building is another issue which must be addressed. There is currently not enough storage in the building for the tables, chairs and other items that will be needed for large events. These items may be stored in the new expanded Building E east of the Machine Shop.



**The Machine Shop north elevation after Phase 1 of construction in 2003**

A final issue is a need for smaller breakout space in the Machine Shop. These breakout spaces or meeting rooms will be needed to facilitate conferences and events. These breakout spaces could be provided in the Roundhouse and could also be used by the City for conference and meeting spaces.



**MACHINE SHOP SECTION**  
NO SCALE

**The Power House** - The 4,100 square foot Power House was completed in the early 1900's. It measures approximately 50'-0" by 81'-11". It is a more detailed and decorated building than the other buildings on site. It is constructed of a brick and steel perimeter, steel trusses, and wood roof deck.



**The Power House**

The Power House has been identified as one of the three primary buildings on the site. The building is one of the key buildings that defines the center plaza area between the Roundhouse and Machine Shop. The Power House is the third largest building on site and is one of the more architecturally significant of the buildings.

The intended use for the Power House is for a private developer to lease this space for commercial purposes. This is anticipated to be a restaurant or brew pub, but could be any commercial development.

The Union Pacific Railroad currently owns the Power House. The southeast corner of the building is within the railroads 400' right-of-way. It is recommended that the City of Evanston work with the Union Pacific Railroad to acquire the building in either one of two ways: First is for the City to pursue out right ownership of the building and the land it sits on with a minimum 10' clearance around it. This course of pursuing ownership is a longer, more difficult process which involves the federal government, but would be the solution which is in the best interests of the City. The second option is for the Railroad to donate or sell the building and the land that is not within the 400' right-of-way to the City, and then lease that portion of the land around the building that will be required to service and maintain the building. This is currently being done at the Depot. This option could be used while out-right ownership of the building is being pursued with the

Railroad. Though the building super structure is in fairly good shape, it is important that the City acquires the Power House so that stabilization planning and work can begin.

The Power House is located on the eastern border of the site and can only be accessed through the site. Do to this location, all vehicular traffic, including service and delivery vehicles will need to access the building from the parking area to the south of the Machine Shop. A designated parking area for the Power House patrons will be provided.

## SECONDARY BUILDINGS

**Superintendent's Office and Shower House** - Located between the Roundhouse and the Machine Shop, the Superintendent's Office is approximately 24'-6" by 50'-8" for a total of 1,240 square feet. It is a wood frame building with a heavy timber sill plate on a concrete foundation. The date of construction of the building is unknown, but due to some of the detailing in the construction, it is thought that the building dates to the late nineteenth century. In addition, an original Union Pacific drawing of the site dating September 21, 1917, indicates that the Superintendent's Office (referred to as the District Forman Office) was moved to its current location from another site. Some time after the building was moved to its current location an 800 square foot addition was added. This addition was removed and interior demolition of the building began in 2001 to facilitate restoration and remodeling of the building.



**The Superintendent's Office (left) and Shower House**

The Shower House, located directly to the north of the Superintendent's Office, is approximately 20'-4" by 40'-5" for a total of 822 square feet. It is a wood framed building with a concrete slab floor. Unlike the Superintendent's Office, the Shower House appears to be original to the site and is of newer construction. A date of construction is unknown. The building is primarily two rooms, a shower area and a restroom divided by a wood plank wall. At some time after the building was no longer being used as a shower house, an opening was cut into the plank wall.

Though categorized as Secondary Buildings, the Superintendent's Office and the Shower House have been previously addressed as key buildings to the site due to their close proximity to the Roundhouse, Machine Shop and Main Street, and their prominence to the site, both historically and physically. Because of their central location, the Superintendent's Office had been identified as an excellent space for a visitor's center, and the Shower House a meeting room. Despite the fact that these buildings have been identified as key buildings, through the Charrette process it was determined that these two buildings should be removed. This decision was based on a number of factors. The first factor is that if the Superintendent's Office were to be used as a visitor's center easy accessible access would be required. Because of the buildings location this access will be difficult to achieve while maintaining the pedestrian plaza between the Roundhouse and Machine Shop. Even though the buildings are close to Main Street, there is a nine-foot elevation difference from Main Street to the plaza/building level. A long ramp system and stairs would be required to get from Main Street to the buildings. On site parking for the building would be to the south of the Machine Shop requiring an over 300' walk.

Another factor in the decision to remove the Superintendent's Office and Shower House is the visual access to the site from Main Street. The buildings sit close to Main Street and block visual access to the plaza and south end of the Roundhouse. While in the plaza area, the buildings help define the space and provide a visual break to the residential area to the west. However, it was determined during the Charrette that the view from Main Street to the site and concern for vehicular intrusion were more important.

While it was decided, through the Charrette process, that the Superintendent's Office and Shower House should be removed, it is recommended that they not be removed until the phase of work directly affected by their presence is started and that review be made by the State Historic Preservation Office and landmark assessment is complete.

**Mineral Building** – The Mineral Building is approximately 13'-10" by 53'-0" for a total of 730 square feet. It was built some time after the Roundhouse and Machine Shop, but an exact date is unknown. The building is located between the Machine Shop and Main Street. It is the only building on site with yellow exterior brick. The building is divided into three rooms. The room to the north is at ground level with the other two rooms raised to loading dock height. There is an existing loading dock along the east and south sides of the building.



**The Mineral Building**

The use of the Mineral Building will be primarily used for interpretive space showing how the site was used for industrial purposes.

**Brick Store House** – The Brick Store House (referred to as the Oil House from a 1917 site drawing) is approximately 25'-0" by 51'-8" for a total of 1,292 square feet on the raised main level and a partial 800 square foot basement that is accessed both from interior and exterior stairs. It is the only building on site with a basement. There is an existing concrete loading dock with wood access ramps on the north and west sides of the building. The building has brick bearing walls with steel joist and clay tile roof deck. The exterior brick has been removed from the building and was used in the first restoration work that was done on the Machine Shop. The building is located to the south east of the Machine Shop and is approximately in the middle of the site.



**The Brick Store House (also referred to as the Oil House)**

The size and location of the Brick Store House allows for different types of use. It is recommended at this time that the Brick Store House be used as a visitor's center and gift shop. The building is centrally located and has good access from both parking areas and pedestrian pathways. From the existing loading dock, the building has wonderful visual access to the site and primary buildings.

Work on the Brick Store House should start after the Roundhouse has been stabilized and the first phase of the site work is completed. Getting a visitor's center on the site is an important first step in the redevelopment process.

## AUXILIARY BUILDINGS

**Buildings A & B** – Auxiliary Buildings A and B are located to the east of the Machine Shop and north of the Brick Store House, and are very close together. Building A is a 10’-7” by 14’-3” light wood-framed building with no floor. It has sheet metal siding and roofing. Building B is a 14’-0” by 14’-0” brick building with a single metal door and no windows.



**Buildings A and B**

The use of these buildings will be public restrooms. Building B is in good shape and is large enough to be converted to a restroom. Building A will need to be rebuilt to accommodate a new restroom use. One option would be to leave Building A as is for interpretation purposes and to build a new building adjacent to it as the new restroom. Another option would be to leave Building A as is for interpretation and to convert Building B into a single occupant unisex restroom.

**Buildings C, D & Box Car** – Auxiliary Buildings C, D and the Box Car are grouped together and are located to the south of the Machine Shop. Building C measures approximately 14’-5” by 16’-0” and is wood framed with wood siding, a wood floor and a shingle roof. Building C was formally the supply office for the mill and carpentry shop that was located directly to the north of these buildings. The mill and carpentry shop was torn down in 1991, but the concrete slab floor remains. Building D measures approximately 20’-0” by 40’-3” and is wood framed with sheet metal siding and roofing and a dirt floor.



**Buildings C (left) and D**

Building D, the largest of these three buildings grouped together, could be repaired or rebuilt into an open walled picnic shelter with a new concrete slab floor. Building C will be used as an auxiliary building to the picnic shelter for storage and possibly running water and power. The Box Car will be used for storage of site maintenance equipment. This building can be relocated or removed from the site as needed.



**Buildings E (front) C (left) and D**

**Building E** – Building E is located between the Machine Shop and Brick Store House. It measures approximately 20’-6” by 24’-4” and is wood framed and metal sided with a dirt floor.

Due to its close proximity to the Machine Shop, and its size, Building E could be used as the primary storage building for the Machine Shop. Due to the quality of the building at this time it will need to be rebuilt. It is recommended to enlarge the building to better serve the needs of the Machine Shop. The rebuilt building will be built similar to the original and have the same look and feel as the original so as to be appropriate to the context of the site.



**The Brick Store House (left) and Building E**

**Building F** - Building F is located directly to the south of the Machine Shop and was used with the incinerator that is currently located next to the building. The small brick building measures approximately 6’-6” by 6’-6”.

Building F and the incinerator are to be removed because of their conflict with the new vehicular access to the site from Main Street at the Fourteenth Street intersection.

**City Services Center / Garage / Storage Building** – A new ancillary building is required for the City Services Center. This new building will primarily serve the Police Station. It will provide secure evidence and vehicular storage. The building would also serve as a garage for city owned

vehicles required to be at the city office building. This new building will be approximately 120' x 30' and will be built in the Railroad vernacular so it will be appropriate to the context of the site. It will be located north of the Roundhouse along the east property line with access from the new north parking lot.

Though all of these auxiliary buildings are small and in need of repair they provide important context as to how the site was used by the Union Pacific Railroad.



**Building F and the incinerator**

# EVANSTON ROUNDHOUSE AND RAILYARDS MASTER PLAN



## SITE DEVELOPMENT

The original impetus for this Master Plan was issues raised at the initiation of planning for site development and construction relative to the Machine Shop. It quickly became evident that the site needed to be addressed as a whole and in concert with building uses. This section of the Master Plan addresses the overall site development in relationship to the buildings and their proposed uses.

**Site Context** – The 27-acre Roundhouse and Railyard complex can be considered a critical part of the community's ribbon of public open space because of its location. It is a natural extension of public lands that reach almost unbroken through Evanston, from the municipal golf course to the Bear River State Park. The site is also a natural extension of the downtown historic district and Depot Square. This site, with its open space between the downtown core and its own cluster of magnificent buildings, can serve as both a focal point and the western anchor of Evanston's central business district. This site is further defined by a residential area to its south and the Union Pacific Railroad mainline right-of-way to its north. This plan addresses the opportunities and limitations related to its immediate surroundings by:

1. Emphasis of connection to downtown and Depot Square with a major entry feature.
2. A landscaped buffer between the developed portion of the site and residential uses.
3. A broken visual screen between the site open areas and the railroad mainline created with a linear display of railroad cars.
4. Allowing for a free flow pattern through the site for extension of walking and bike paths.

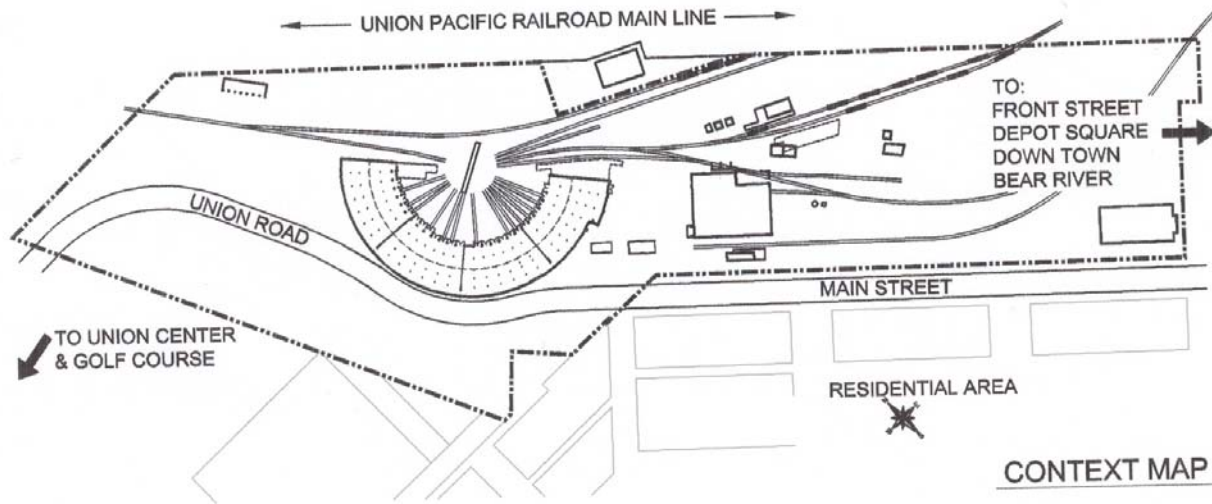
The interface of the site at Front Street is a logical location for a major entrance feature emphasizing the entrance as well as creating a visual and physical link with the business district. A direct line-of-site exists from Front Street through the site clear to the far end of the Roundhouse.

The City should plan for the residential area facing the site to transition into a business area as the site development matures. This would be a tremendous opportunity for local businesses and entrepreneurs to take advantage of the increased traffic along Main Street and provide complimentary services to the on-site uses. The appropriate development regulations for this strip will further enhance a buffer zone between the site and remaining residential uses.



"axis" from Front Street

The railroad main line bordering the site to the north poses a safety concern. Previous plans have called for a fence along the entire border. A preferable solution is to design use areas away from this edge. The limit of this edge can be defined by a static display of railroad cars on an existing track. Maintaining a somewhat open visual link to the working railroad will enhance the meaning and historical connection of this site to the railroad.



Integration of walking and biking paths will allow those users to experience the site. These paths should link to existing and planned trails at the site perimeter and allow the user to experience the environment without causing interference with vehicular traffic or high use pedestrian areas. This trail can be further enhanced with benches and bike racks at strategic locations.

Other primary site context considerations include the current zoning and comprehensive plan land use designations for this site. These designations are currently not in conformance with each other. As soon as a decision is reached regarding the ultimate use of this site, the City should initiate the process to resolve the conflicts.

**Utilities** – The Roundhouse and Railyards Complex is currently served with both public and private utilities. The adequacy of the capacity of the current utilities is dependent of the eventual uses that will occupy the site. A new sanitary sewer main line was recently installed serving the site with adequate capacity. However, its depth may not allow serving the Roundhouse without a lift station.



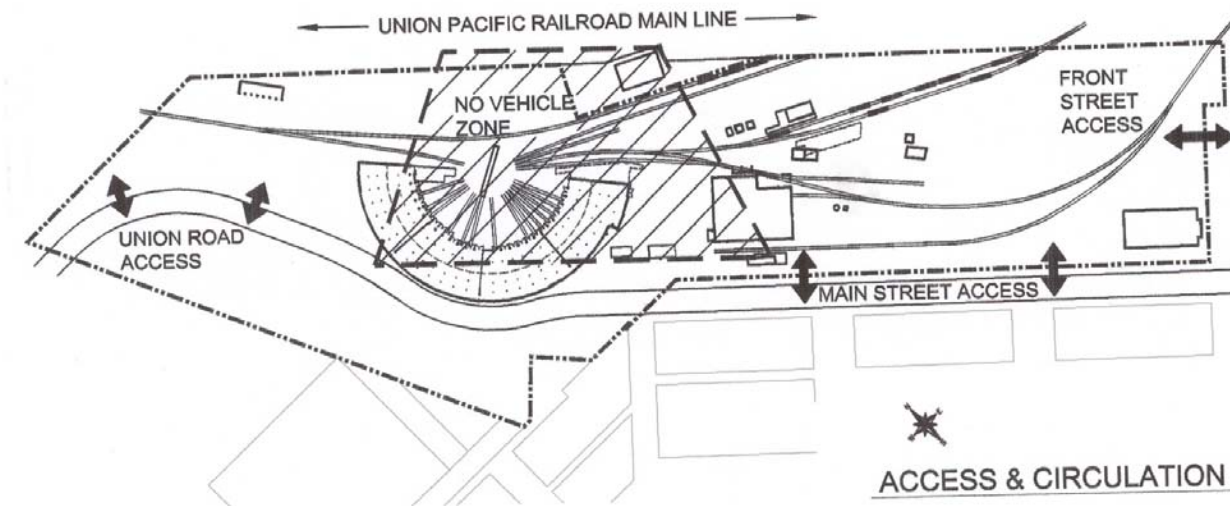
The site is not currently served with a workable means for storm water disposal off-site. It has been proposed that the former sanitary sewer line may be useable for storm water. However, due to the uncertainty of its condition and the certain lack of capacity, this plan suggests that all storm water run-off be treated and disposed of on-site. Guidelines for this will be developed from appropriate best-management-practices as approved by authorized agencies.

Electric and gas utilities are provided by private companies. These utilities will be upgraded as required. An electric utility main overhead feeder line currently crosses the

site. The numerous poles, wires, and other structures contribute to the historical look of a busy and congested Railyard: The presence of this line is considered as an asset that will enhance historical interpretation. Other utility poles and wires will be considered for preservation as appropriate.

**Access and Circulation** – In addition to the main access at the Front Street interface, four other vehicular access points are planned. Two major ingress / egress points are provided on Main Street at the intersection of Thirteenth and Fourteenth Streets. These, along with the Front Street entrance, are intended to serve the main parking area for the Machine Shop Events Center. These three egress points will allow control of mass exiting onto city streets after scheduled events.

The current access at the Machine Shop from Main Street will be closed to vehicles. This area will be developed as a focal point as viewed from Main Street and as a major pedestrian access point. Included will be an enhanced on street parking and drop-off area. Another major access drive is provided west of the Roundhouse to serve the west end of the site and the Roundhouse parking lot. One egress point is deemed adequate



Interior site circulation of vehicles will be limited to accessing parking lots and drop-off sites. Only required service vehicles and security patrols will have access into the site beyond the limits of parking areas. This will limit the amount of road construction, limit the impact of roads and vehicles on the site, and limit vehicular and pedestrian conflict points. The core of the site defined by the Roundhouse, Machine Shop, and Powerhouse will remain a vehicle free zone.

Pedestrian circulation through the site follows the lines of the railroad tracks. This will lend to both the experience and interpretation of the site. Pedestrian amenities such as benches and drinking fountains will be strategically located along these paths.

**Environmental Issues** – Current environmental issues are significant and are being addressed by the City and other agencies. Environmental contamination of the soil from former land uses has been identified and the City has initiated a clean up plan. It is

expected that the site can be brought to a status allowing for unrestricted use. Efforts are underway to determine remediation costs and a timeline.

**Heritage Education / Interpretation** – Even if nothing else is done with this site, it must be preserved for its historical value. This value has been documented in previous studies and has only been reinforced through this planning process.

"It is fair and necessary to say that Evanston bears a responsibility to the nation to preserve this site, for it is truly a national historic landmark, and a national treasure."

- Long Hoefft Architects, 1994



This plan has attempted to look at the site in its own right, to preserve its character and significance. An interpretive method is envisioned that will allow a visitor to enter the site at any point and experience it at her own pace, without having to follow a dictated route. This will require a sign system for specific information. This will also require that the site be developed in a fashion that allows a visitor to experience both the intimate and the entirety at the same time. This should allow them to see and experience the details and the linkages. One must be able to understand the relationships of all the parts without having to carry a map. This is accomplished by preserving existing external vistas and internal sight lines, by preserving the paths and patterns created by the railroad tracks, and preserving the emphasis of buildings and landmarks.

This emphasis on preservation of the site's character is intended for both the community and the visitor. The character of the complex is preserved to give the community a connection with its past and its heritage. The character of the site is preserved also as a tourist attraction. The restored Roundhouse and Railyard has the potential to attract thousands of out-of-town visitors. This site is a monument to both its community and the nation.

## PHASING

Development of this site has been divided into three major sections; 1) Machine Shop access and parking, 2) Central pedestrian plaza, and 3) Roundhouse access and parking. Each of these major sections will be divided into phases for construction. The scope of work for each phase will be determined based on budget, immediate needs, and final determination of building uses. Each portion of work will allow for logical sequencing and preparation for future work.

The first section of development, Machine Shop access and parking, covers the area from roughly the middle of the Machine Shop south to Twelfth Street. Included in this section are three major access points, parking for approximately 220 automobiles, drop-

off/loading area for the Machine Shop, access and parking for the proposed visitor center/gift shop, focal point and entrance feature at Front Street, and portions of the pedestrian/bicycle through-trail. The immediate phase of construction will concentrate on access and parking for the Machine Shop. Future phases will be address development of the Oil Building into a visitor's center and gift shop, the redevelopment of the current City Hall, and creation of the focal point and connection at Front Street.

The second major section of site development is the Central Plaza. This area is defined primarily by the three major buildings, the Roundhouse, the Machine Shop, and the Power House. This area will serve as a major gathering and activity space. Vehicular access will be limited to necessary service and emergency vehicles, creating a safe, pedestrian friendly area. Major components of this section will include:

- One of two primary entrances to the Roundhouse.
- Visual links between buildings.
- Seating and other pedestrian amenities.
- A central water feature, possibly recreating the "fish ponds" once located near the Superintendent's Office.
- Shade trees to provide quiet resting areas.
- "Amphitheater" area around the Turntable.
- Paving patterns that suggest original location of tracks.
- Interpretive areas and signage.

Due to its importance and multi-functional nature, detailed plans for this area need to be developed through another participatory event or charrette.

The third major section of site development is the Roundhouse access and parking. The design of this area is dependent on the final use and programming of the Roundhouse. As envisioned by this Master Plan, this area will serve as the second primary entrance to the Roundhouse / City Service Center. As such, the design of this area must address and be sensitive to:

- Ease of identification as a major building entrance when approaching from either north or south on Main Street
- Logical and convenient separation of public and restricted areas (police access)
- Friendliness of access for public
- Convenience for short term parking and quick building access
- Continuation of design theme of entire site – integration with the "whole".

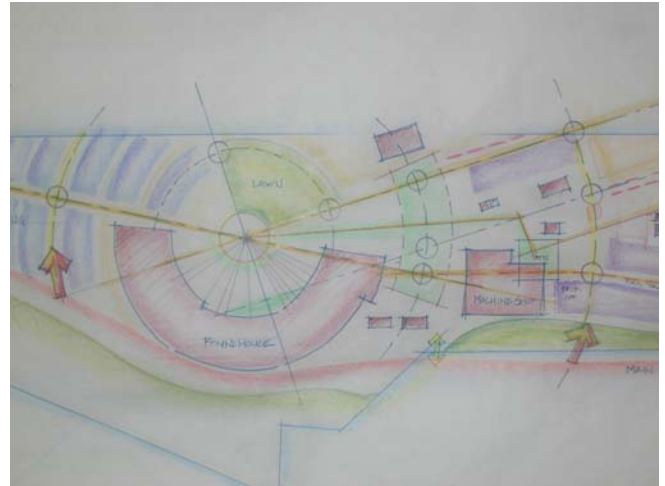
## DESIGN BASICS

One major overriding issue tackled during the Design Charrette was the complex issue of preserving the former "character" of the site while introducing entirely new uses for the buildings and surrounding areas. In its heyday, this site was filled with a variety of building types and sizes, railroad equipment, both rolling stock and sores of parts, overhead power and communication lines, and the motion, sounds, and smells of an active industrial complex. It did not have expanses of paved parking, driveways with curbs and gutters, pedestrian friendly areas, shade trees (or any other desirable

vegetation), bike paths, drinking fountains, and social gatherings such as weddings and concerts. Many of the structures that once helped define the site's character are gone; buildings, the elevated water tank, and the coal dispensing structure. The Master Plan calls for removing or relocating additional buildings and constructing new structures.

The committee developed a list of alternatives and considerations as a means to retain some essence of the former character within the requirements of proposed uses:

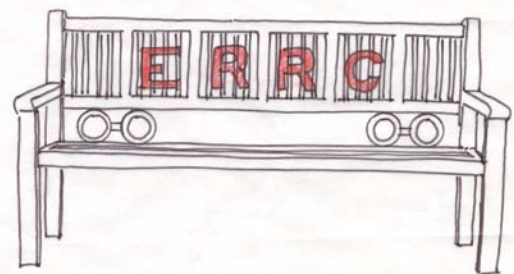
- Preserve all buildings!
- Replace the steam whistle that announced noon and end of workday.
- Preserve all existing tracks to indicated original "patterns" of the complex. If preservation of the actual track is not practical for pedestrian walking surfaces, imitate the track in the pavement pattern.
- When a building or structure has to be removed, identify its location in the ground plane.
- Repeat former patterns and rhythms of built items in the fabric of new construction.
- Indicate former patterns in parking lot layout and layout of paved pedestrian areas.
- Use lines of tracks to align elements north and south.
- Use radial pattern originating from the Turntable to align elements east and west.
- Use large vegetation (trees and shrubs) only as necessary to help define space, provide strategically located shade, and for limited buffering from Main Street.
- All other vegetation to be low growing native (or adapted) such as grasses and ground covers.
- Limit maintained lawn (use only for grassed amphitheater seating area).
- Place artifacts throughout site to help indicate former activities.
- Place cut-out silhouettes of workers posed throughout the site.



**Patterns and Rhythms**

Some of the ideas generated by the committee are reflected in the Master Plan. Others, due to their scale, will be incorporated into specific designs as they are generated. All future planning and design should respect and incorporate the general patterns established by the former uses and as reflected in the Master Plan.

Yet to be established are some of the detail design criteria that will be very influential with respect to introduction of new uses and preservation of the original character. For example, many products are available, such as benches and light fixtures, that replicate those used at passenger railroad



**Custom Designed Site Amenities**

stations. But these may not, due to their aesthetic nature, be appropriate for an "industrial complex" character. This project may call for a custom design of theme of product look that will resemble a more period industrial look while providing the amenities needed today. The direction for this theme, or even some specific alternatives, would be developed during the design of the Pedestrian Plaza.

# EVANSTON ROUNDHOUSE AND RAILYARDS MASTER PLAN



## APPENDIX # 1A

### SUMMARY OF PRE-DESIGN WORKSHOP

#### INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATIONS

##### 1. **INTRODUCTION (Mayor Mark Harris)**

Mayor Harris pointed out that when the Railyards were acquired for potential economical development the focus was on industrial type development. Now, that focus has changed and has lead to this master planning opportunity.

##### 2. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND & PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS (Jim Davis)**

- 1817 – Original Roundhouse and Railyards were completed.
- 1912 – Union Pacific (UP) built the existing Railyards as a stopping and maintenance point along their main line.
- 1926 – Roundhouse and Railyard function obsolete – closed by U.P.
- 1927 – At the urging of the City, UP re-opened the Railyards as a reclamation plant, bolstering the community's economic base.
- 1942 – Peek activity, over 300 people were employed by the UP at the reclamation plant during WWII.
- December 31, 1971 – UP permanently closed the reclamation plant. At the time of closing, 125 people were employed at the site.
- 1972 – UP gave the Railyards to the City of Evanston.
- 1985 – The Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office nominated to site to the National Register of Historic Places.
- 1993 – The City received a Preservation Grant to assess the site and all its buildings. UPRR Maintenance Facility Conditions Assessment – Long Hoeft

Architects. Shortly after the Long Hoeft Report, the City received another grant to produce the video Evanston's Railroad Complex.

- 1997 – Hired Martin & Martin to do a Structural Evaluation Report on the Machine Shop.
- 1998 – The City received a \$33,000 planning grant and a \$150,000 work grant to start restoration on the Machine Shop and Roundhouse.
- 2000 – Montana State University Architecture students did a project showing how potential spaces in the Roundhouse could look.
- 2002 – Terracon completes their Environmental Assessment of the site for the Brownsfield Pilot Project.
- 2002 - Myers/Anderson Architects advises the City on some preliminary work on the Superintendent's Office and Bath House.
- 2002 - Phase I construction on the Machine Shop begins. This work includes completion of the masonry restoration that was started in the 1998 stabilization, new glazing in the restored steel slash windows.
- The Structural Evaluation Report is completed on the Roundhouse.
- Philip M. Haderlie completes his Architecture Masters Thesis Project for the University of Utah. This project looked at the development of the Railyards and a contemporary design study for the Roundhouse.
- 2003 – Phase II construction on the machine Shop is started. This work includes completion of interior restoration work. This work to be completed January 2004.
- 2004 - Roundhouse stabilization design work begins with a construction date to be determined.
- Site Utility upgrades needed for the Machine Shop are completed. This includes new water, sewer, and storm water utilities.
- 2004 – Site development design work begins with a construction date to be determined.

Jim Jenkins and Jerry Myers of Myers/Anderson Architects, discussed the current preliminary schematic master plan with the committee. This preliminary work included meetings between Myers/Anderson Architects, Amy Nelson, Jim Davis, Paul Knopf and Brian Honey of the City to develop a basic concept for the site and to begin to address some of the issues and concerns related to the master plan. Through these first meetings it was recommended to hold a design charrett to bring more of the community together to decide on some of the issues relative to the proper development of the site. These issues

included the desired level of site development, uses and/or need for the smaller out buildings, and what level of restoration vs. preservation should be accomplished. Jim Jenkins stated that it was critical to the success of the project for the community to feel a part of the planning process

# EVANSTON ROUNDHOUSE AND RAILYARDS MASTER PLAN



## APPENDIX # 1B

### SUMMARY OF PRE-DESIGN WORKSHOP

#### FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES DISCUSSION

##### **1. TOURISM (Erika Pina, Evanston Chamber of Commerce)**

- Evanston is a destination > within destination area
- Large group meeting needs
- Be aware of competition with existing private sector
- Railyards site adds to history tours and exposure
- Historic byway signage
- SLC daytrip schedule
- Evanston is a tourism and development model
- Tourist safety
- Existing businesses do not want competitive but rather complimentary uses
- Railroad Nuts!
- Evanston is the hub to the surrounding area's tourism and recreational opportunities
- Focus tourism effort on history of railroad buffs
- Can this development attract people on its own? It can with good support and marketing
- The Machine Shop can help bring in larger conferences and conventions and be a supplement to the hotels

##### **2. CITY SERVICES CENTER (Mayor Mark Harris)**

- ? Roundhouse – City Hall relocation ?
- Events and use venues
- Impact on private sector
  - Offices, conference motel, etc.
- Perception
  - Priorities, uses and cost?
- Financial impact of City Hall relocation, what to do with the old City Hall Building
- Effective use of T-21 (transportation funding)
- Compliment City services vs. compete with private sector

- What is consensus?
- Definite needs at City Hall facilities expansion potential
- Remainder of use of Roundhouse ?
- Creating "dark buildings" is a concern
- Perception on how much to spend on Rehabilitation
- Use the site as an economic development tool

### 3. **HERITAGE EDUCATION (Amy Nelson and Evanston HPC)**

- Interpretive area and education
- Maintain historic context of Roundhouse and Machine Shop
- Historic tours and brochure
- Turntable restoration
- Visitor information center – guide tours
- Site historical context vs. contemporary development
- Respect the setting
- Landmark status
- Youth involvement
- Tap RR history buffs
- Tracks across Wyoming – Evanston – Jewel in the chain
- Ghosts of activity and landscape
- Review Sheridan & Cheyenne
- RR sights and sounds 12:00 whistle etc.
- Classroom
- Relics
- HO Scale model of site
- Landscaping must maintain the industrial character – new life, new use without destroying the original character
- Consistent design for interpretive kiosks with what has recently been completed
- The Roundhouse is the last know on UP line
- Let people know that the history of the site ties directly to the history of Evanston

### 4. **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (Amy Nelson, Director of Urban Planning)**

- Identify all environmental issues / finish assessments! - before final plans are made
- Input on landscape
- DEQ finding for site cleanup and reuse
  - Incentives project
  - Contractors for targeted Brownfield sites
- Focus / schedule for site total
- Cleanup is related to use . . . ? unrestricted clean-up currently in "volunteer remediation program"
- Verify level of cleanup – unrestricted or institutionalized
- Current use of Machine Shop acceptable
- 1998 Brownfield Pilot Assessment Study – 2000 Supplemental Study
- Due to limitations (money) – study completed primarily around Machine Shop
- EPA / DEQ voluntary remediation program. DEQ has drafted agreement review

- More than ½ the site needs assessment State DEQ has some money – targeted
- Hot spots around Machine Shop – NEED TO BE CLEANED UP NOW!
- Phase III needs to be started
- The environmental studies and plan will affect the site work
- Decide what future uses of the site may be to help dictate the remediation plan

**5. EVENTS & VENUES – M & O (Mike Lake, City Venues Coordinator)**

- Events scheduled for February and March 2004
- Parking is highest concern / issue (immediate)
- Light control (natural daylight) for presentation
- \*\* Storage – box car storage (portable)
- Stage / lighting / preso / performance equipment
- Tent – meeting / outdoor space – plaza
- Schedules – protocol
- Identify regular and "go after" events
- Prom and musical events – promotion of sites
- Control standards and use
- Snow removal
- 2 full time / 1 part time current maintenance staff, more staff will be needed as they are used
- \$200 rental / \$200 cleaning fee (deposit)
- Targeted convenience
- Guideline for material brought in
- Non-smoking facility
- Landscaping Maintenance
- Conferences are scheduled for March, April, and throughout the summer
- Storage – not enough for tables and chairs or any future equipment

**6. OWNERSHIP (Dennis Boal, City Attorney)**

- City ownership – Deed restrictions – Mining – Acquired 1972, 26.6 acres
- City has indemnified UPRR
- City owns Roundhouse, Machine Shop, and miscellaneous buildings
- City does not own the Power House
- 400 foot corridor – ROW – Power House sits in this area
- Power House will be very difficult to acquire (own) based on land transfer, will need to be a lease
- Identify tracks used by union track & UPRR
- Develop long term ownership plan / scenario
- City kept RR tracks and utilities, disposition? Historical or functional?
- UP did not reserve mineral rights
- 1974 – tracks donated to City – except one track in and out to turntable
- 1978 – UP released easement to the last track
- Utilities have been upgraded for the Machine Shop but additional work will be required for the Roundhouse and site
- The power poles along main street on the site are to be removed as part of the road work scheduled

- POWER HOUSE
  - Partially within the UP 400 foot R.O.W, may be acquired by lease
  - It can be acquired – it is a process

**7. BUILDINGS (Amy Nelson, Director Urban Planning)**

- Building conditions vary
- Building disposition – keep – discard
- Prioritization of buildings – Power House is priority of HPC
- Roundhouse, Machine Shop, Power House Buildings are essential
  - Other buildings may be important regarding landmark status
- Data site – "historic period" ? 30's – 50's
- Superintendent Office and Bath House and Mineral Building are important
- Secondary / ancillary buildings keep or not – context of site
- Rebuild ghost buildings ? Context ? true or false
- Replicas?
- What buildings do we want to invest in – Storage
- Effect on Landmark Status – Nationally Significant!
- Debate over which buildings on site are to stay and which can be removed
- Urban Renewal Agency and the Historic Preservation Committee should look into acquiring the Power House building.
- The paper work for listing the Railyards on the National Register needs to be reviewed to determined if some, or all of the building need to be retained on the site.

**8. UTILITIES (Brian Honey, City Engineer)**

- Utilities are essential start – infrastructure
  - Water, sewer are to site . . . storm sewer is problematic
- Domestic and irrigation water is available and onsite
- ? Storm sewer capability at Roundhouse – Pump station or re-route
- Locate intersections at cross streets on Main Street
- Overhead power poles ? – old power poles historical significance?
- Roundhouse may need lift stations for sewer.

**9. CONTEXT OF SITE (Paul Knopf, City Planning Director)**

- Zoning – Community Space ?
- Adjustment of land use ordinance and standards
- Mixed use site ? review master plan and Land Use Ordinance
- Zoning designation appropriate to use!
- Do zoning definitions fit future uses?
- Transition of adjacent property / areas
- Sense of entry to site
- Extension of central business district
- Impact on community and neighborhoods
- Big P & Z implications – what is involved and what is the schedule

- Various existing public facilities
  - Need to provide links
- RR is a barrier
- Ribbon of Public Space
- Comp Plan Land Use Map – Public land use
- Main Street, opposite of site should become a transitional business space between 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets
- The interface of Front Street and the site needs to be addressed

**10. SAFETY (John Harris, Police Chief)**

- Crime prevention – environmental design
- Safety – user and occupant
- Parking and site access and safety, traffic, safety and crime prevention, (well lit and visible) ability to patrol
- High visibility in landscaping and features
- Alcohol related issues
- Lighting / Shadows / Hiding Places
- Buildings / Landscaping