

**City of Blaine  
Council Study Session Submission**

These are some attributes of a Civic complex in Blaine:

Invigorate downtown Blaine – control Blaine’s destiny – give Blaine a center from which to build. A centralized and coordinated public/private commons from which to anchor civic life. A five in one gain for the community: a new City Hall and Council chambers with a new Police station and court room and a new Library and a new combined civic center and senior center. Two or three buildings that are now unhappily facing away from each other can be transformed into a soulful cluster of structures enclosing an open square and oriented to the seaport in an environment that sustains and emphasizes the message emanating from Blaine’s G and H street Plazas.

Integrate design in to the scheme for the City – an anchor to the community’s growth. This Council can bestow on the community a legacy of a town hall and a central common – a tribute -- a center that the citizenry will love and for which this council will be remembered. An indoor and outdoor civic space – a local square in which future cultural, civic and sporting events can transpire. Demonstrate public/private cooperation in constructing a municipal center that allows private elements.

Spur infill in the city’s core and manage growth toward the center while controlling density. With 90 to 120 private residences the new structures would create a center from which residents can radiate out to work, to school and to leisure and other activities. The center would have visible ties to the existing waterfront plazas – with the emblem of the anchor to give definition to the downtown. It would anchor Blaine’s outlying development pattern (giving a focus to Semiahmoo and east Blaine) and would help to counteract sprawl. It would serve as a proactive control of the civic growth process in a dedicated parcel that cannot, in future, be interfered with.

A tax base can be created from an area of the town that does not now generate independent revenues, while producing indoor and outdoor public space with little need to burden the citizens with plebiscite or tax increase. This can be a use of resources to create a central space that would be unavailable with the City’s existing capital stream. Land that is not producing revenue will be doing so after completion. Allow for the allocation of public resources to other opportunities – a cost neutral impetus to Blaine’s ongoing facelift.

Anticipate public and private needs for the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver BC. Blaine City center will be a focus for Whatcom County – a big picture precedent and example to other municipalities.

## Project Overview

The principals have offered to build a City Hall and related facilities for a northwest municipality on property the city owns. The proposal includes the removal of two existing buildings and the erection of three new ones. There is room on the parcel to accommodate three 15,000 square foot buildings, together with needed parking.

The new buildings, when complete, will be mixed-use structures, consisting of municipal offices, chambers and common areas on the main public floor and residential condominiums on the three private floors above. The City will take title to the public spaces while the builders will have title to the condominiums. The task will be accomplished in three phases. There will be no disturbance to the day to day functioning of the municipal enterprise. Because of the location of this parcel, the project's success is assured.

There is no demolition component needed for the first phase. Once it is completed, the City Hall and staff will move in. The police and auxiliary will take residence. Phase two includes the removal or demolition of the existing City Hall and its annex. The new construction will be the same in its general parameters as the first building. The library will move in to the public portion of this building.

Phase three involves the demolition or removal of a small (6,000 square foot, single story) structure which has housed the library. When the third phase – having the same dimensions and uses as the first two phases -- is complete it is contemplated that a “center” may form part of this building's public need.

The three structures will enclose a green space and parking will be accommodated on all sides. Points of access will be oriented to the public for the municipal functions. Construction is proposed to be complete 26 months after an agreement is reached.