

WORLD'S FAIR ADVISORY COMMITTEE



CITY OF TACOMA
Office of the Mayor

MIKE PARKER
Mayor

Dear Civic Leaders:

As you know, I have proposed that Tacoma host an International Exposition in 1989, to commemorate the centennial of the State of Washington and the bicentennial of the adoption of the U. S. Constitution. You have seen the positive benefits derived by Spokane and Seattle from expositions held in those cities. My objectives in proposing a World's Fair for Tacoma are similar.

We have made an excellent beginning on the project. A site has been recommended and market, engineering, economic and environmental studies are now underway or will commence shortly. We have succeeded in integrating World's Fair plans with the long-standing need of Tacoma for a large, public multi-purpose facility. These two projects, related but independent of each other, will be major steps forward for the revitalization of Tacoma's city center.

To continue the work completed thus far, we need your support. I am asking business and civic leaders to contribute \$25,000 toward the project in 1980. Contributions will be administered by you - as a member of a World's Fair Advisory Committee. The contributions will enable us to convince the State and Federal Governments of the seriousness of our plans and to accelerate the planning needed for a World's Fair.

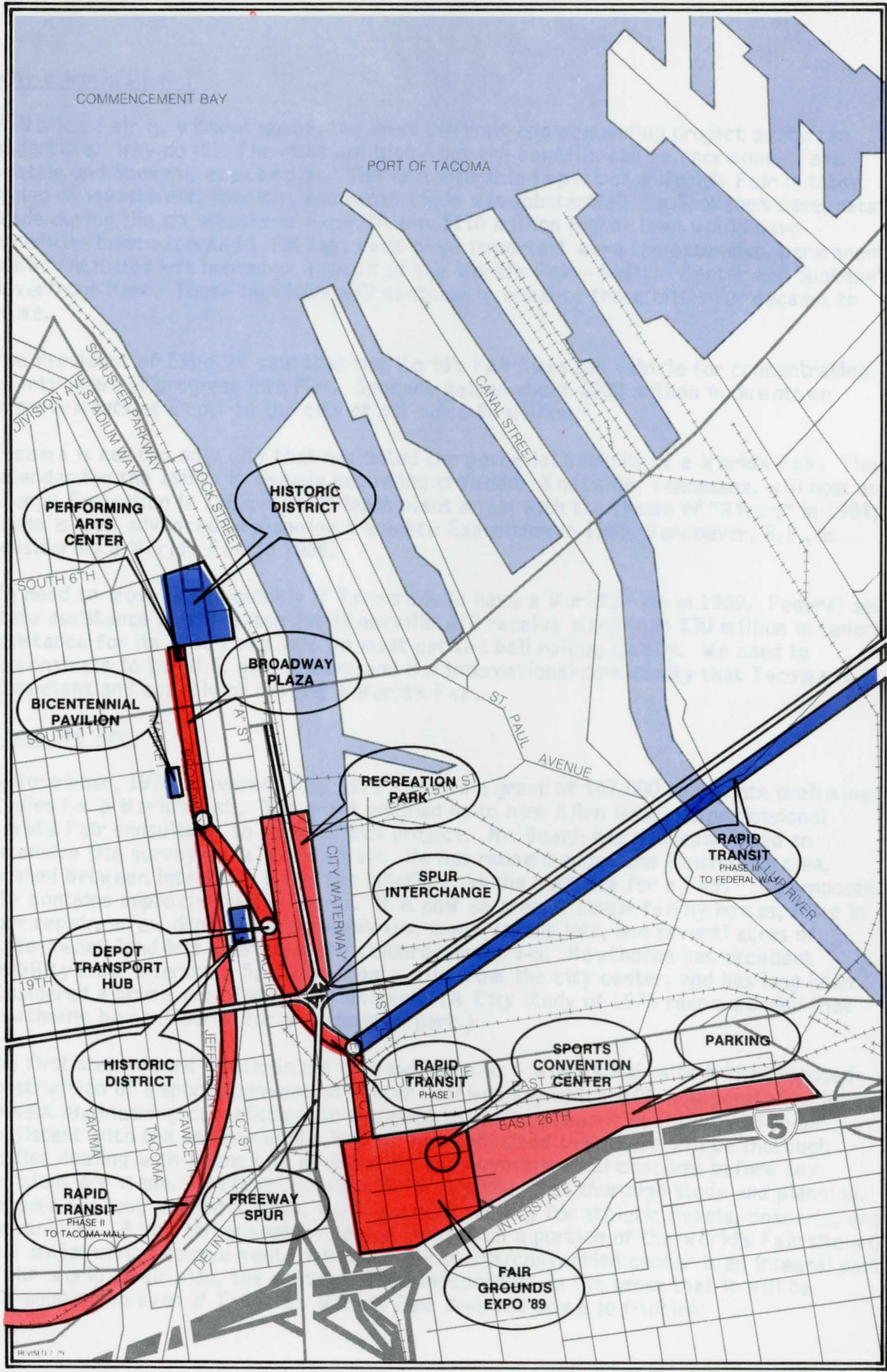
The following narrative and charts explain the project in more detail. I hope you will have time to study them thoroughly. Working together, I believe that we can achieve a World's Fair for Tacoma and all the benefits it will bring to our community.

Thank you for your attention and support.

Sincerely,

MIKE PARKER
Mayor

MP:mew



Why a World's Fair?

A World's Fair is, without doubt, the most difficult and demanding project a city can undertake. Why do it? The risks are high - but the benefits can be enormous. Take Seattle and Spokane as examples. The demonstrable impact of a World's Fair in those cities on investment, tourism, and retail trade was substantial. (In Spokane's case, retail trade during the six months of Expo '74 was \$116 million higher than would have otherwise been expected.) Perhaps even more important were the extensive, permanent public facilities left behind as a result of the World's Fair - Seattle Center and Spokane's Riverfront Park. These facilities will continue to enhance those cities for decades to come.

The President of Expo '74 said that the World's Fair "was the vehicle for concentrating twenty years of progress into five. Spokane gained about \$500 million in downtown improvements at a cost to the city of not quite \$6 million."

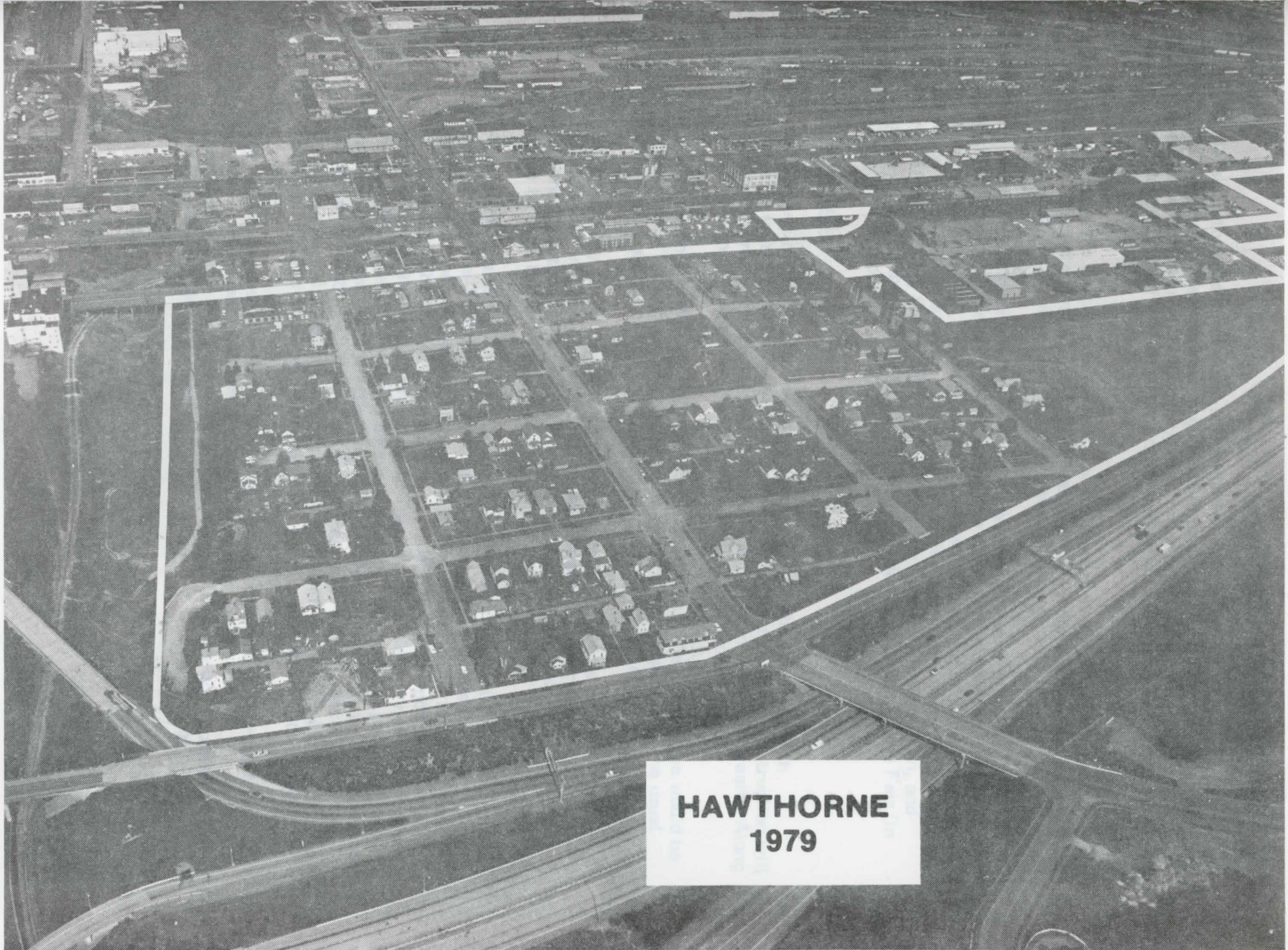
Tacoma is not the only city that has noted the potential benefits of a World's Fair. The calendar for the 1980's is already becoming crowded. Knoxville, Tennessee, will host an Energy Exposition in 1982; New Orleans plans a fair with the theme of "Rivers" in 1984; Japan is well advanced in planning a Science Exposition in 1985; Vancouver, B.C., is considering a World's Fair in 1986.

We need to move ahead quickly if Tacoma is to have a World's Fair in 1989. Federal and State assistance can be extensive (Knoxville will receive more than \$30 million in federal assistance for its 1982 Fair), but we must get the ball rolling locally. We need to demonstrate to the U.S. government and the international community that Tacoma is competent and capable of hosting a World's Fair.

Where We Are

In November, 1978, Governor Ray gave Tacoma a grant of \$47,000 to initiate preliminary studies for a World's Fair. The grant enabled us to hire Allen Beach, a professional World's Fair consultant, to work on this project. Mr. Beach has now completed an extensive site survey for a World's Fair. He has recommended the Hawthorne area, located between Interstate 5 and the tidflats, as the best site for a Fair. The proposed site contains approximately 67 acres. It is now an area of single family homes, some in poor repair, a few duplexes and fourplexes, many vacant lots, and several acres of State-owned land left over from the construction of I-5. Hawthorne has excellent visibility from Interstate 5, is less than a mile from the city center, and has long been considered a prime area for redevelopment. (A City study of 1976 recommended that Hawthorne be considered for an industrial park.)

The first step toward development of Hawthorne as a World's Fair site is the proposed construction of a sports/convention center (mini-dome) which will incorporate the best of present engineering capabilities, be designed to meet economic realities, and to be consistent with the environment. It is to be emphasized that there will be thorough studies dealing with economic, engineering and environmental concerns before any decisions are made. These proposals will involve the most thorough study and planning. Tacoma has long needed a large, multi-purpose facility for athletic events, concerts, and conventions. A sports/convention center located on a portion of the World's Fair site will be a major civic improvement. Although the sports/convention center is an integral part of the World's Fair plan, the center will be independent in the sense that it will be self-supporting even if Tacoma's World's Fair does not come to fruition.



HAWTHORNE
1979

Current plans are to put a sports/convention center before the voters on a bond issue in Spring, 1980. A committee has been organized to promote the center and an extensive public awareness campaign will be developed to encourage the adoption of the bond issue. The construction of a sports/convention center will be a very important step forward for Tacoma and a World's Fair.

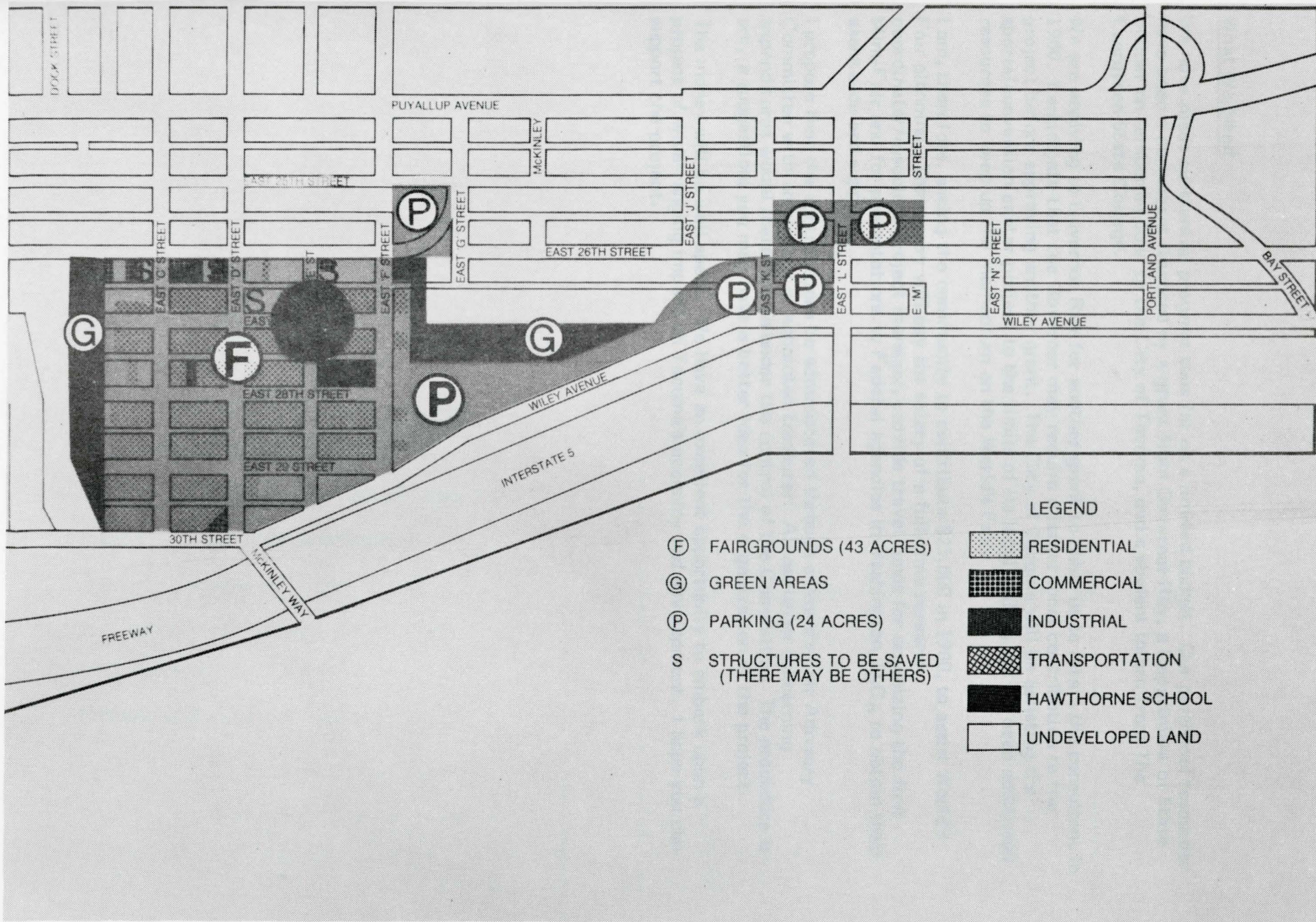
The City of Tacoma is contracting an independent market study of the proposed sports/convention center and will undertake the necessary engineering, technical and environmental studies to assure that the Hawthorne site is suitable for construction.

Mr. Beach and his associates are now working on an economic and financial study of a World's Fair for Tacoma. We anticipate having this study finished by January, 1980. A preliminary estimate is that Tacoma can anticipate an attendance of 8 million persons at a 1989 World's Fair with a duration of six months. (This estimate compares to Seattle's attendance of 9.6 million, Spokane's of 5.6 million, San Antonio with 6 million, and Knoxville's anticipated attendance of 12 million.) The direct revenues of the Fair (in 1979 dollars) will be approximately \$120 million.

Where We Are Going







If economic and environmental studies are positive, we will then proceed with construction of a sports/convention center in the Hawthorne area. This construction will be the major development effort toward a World's Fair for the next several years. Along with this construction we see several additional steps we can take.

1. Organization of a World's Fair Advisory Committee. The Committee would be the stimulus for creation of a non-profit World's Fair corporation, the usual means of organizing, managing, and financing a World's Fair.
2. Legislation by the State of Washington authorizing Tacoma as a site for a World's Fair in 1989, commemorating the centennial celebration of the State and the bicentennial of the signing of the U.S. Constitution. All effort will be made to have this legislation adopted at the next session of the legislature.
3. Promotion of a series of annual international events or "Mini-Fairs" in Tacoma. We see the Mini-Fair concept as a means of bringing high quality art, culture, sports, trade, or educational exhibitions to Tacoma for a 30- to 60-day period in the summer. The Mini-Fairs would be self-sustaining (proceeds would equal or exceed costs), and would contribute to Tacoma's experience and international reputation as well as providing an event of significance to the people of this region. In connection with the Mini-Fair concept, I plan to travel to Japan and Korea in November, 1979, to discuss this idea with authorities of those two governments. I hope that we can hold the first of the Mini-Fairs in 1981, and, after completion of the sports/convention center, a summer festival each year.
4. We will be discussing with the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, and Transportation, assistance for both the sports/convention center and the World's Fair. There is a good possibility that we can secure federal assistance for the project at this early stage.



- Ⓕ FAIRGROUNDS (43 ACRES)
- Ⓖ GREEN AREAS
- ⒫ PARKING (24 ACRES)
- S STRUCTURES TO BE SAVED (THERE MAY BE OTHERS)

LEGEND

-  RESIDENTIAL
-  COMMERCIAL
-  INDUSTRIAL
-  TRANSPORTATION
-  HAWTHORNE SCHOOL
-  UNDEVELOPED LAND

What We Need

We have made substantial progress thus far on a limited budget. Our personnel resources have been a consultant financed by a grant from Governor Ray, a Department of State officer on temporary loan to the City of Tacoma, and a student intern from The Evergreen State College.

We are applying to Governor Ray for another grant to enable us to retain the consultant in 1980. I anticipate that the Governor may require a larger local contribution to the project before approving another grant. The City of Tacoma will be assisting the sports/convention center project to the limits of its legal ability, but we need additional resources to keep up the momentum on the World's Fair.

I am, therefore, asking the community to contribute \$25,000 in 1980, to assist World's Fair planning. The money will pay the salary of a full-time research coordinator/associate project manager, provide travel funds for organizing the first Mini-Fair and for presentations to Federal agencies in Washington, D.C., to obtain their assistance and support.

I propose that the contributions be administered through a World's Fair Advisory Committee with an elected or appointed treasurer. All decisions concerning expenditures would therefore be under the control of the Committee. The procedure is only a suggestion; you may have a better idea for the organization of the project.

The money will be well spent. We have an excellent opportunity to embark upon a project of wide-ranging impact on Tacoma's economy and development. I hope you can support the project.

