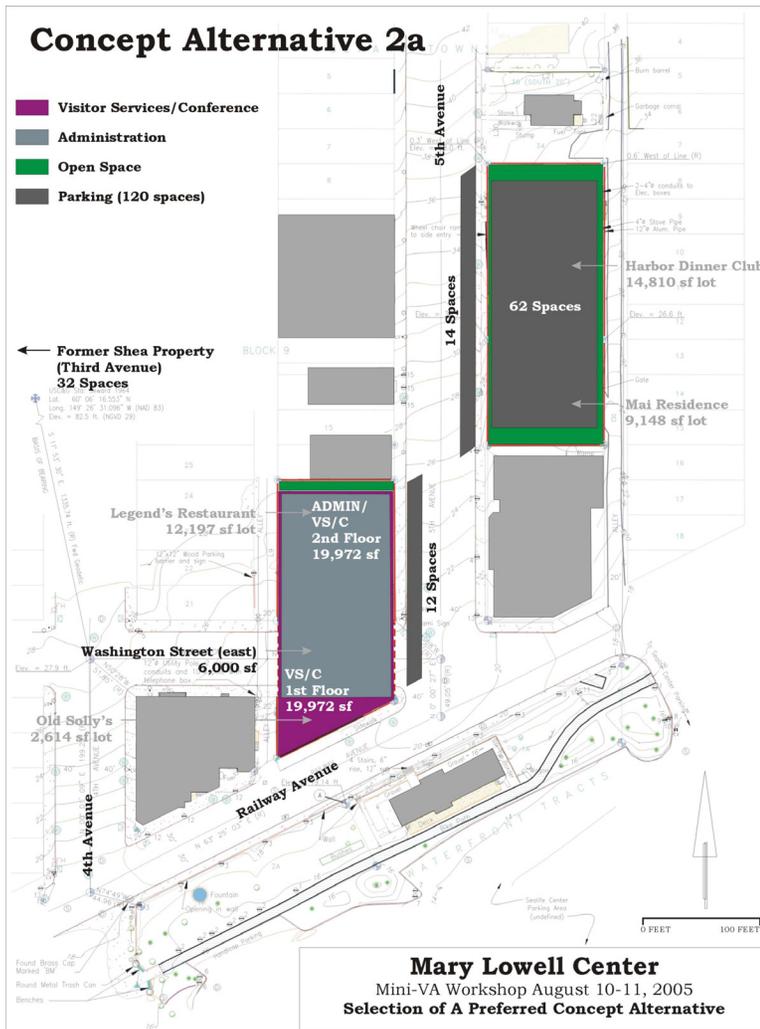




The Mary Lowell Center
Seward, Alaska

Kenai Fjords National Park
Chugach National Forest
City of Seward

Preferred Alternative



Alternative 2a consists of a single multi-story building on parcels currently occupied by Legends and Old Solly's and spanning the east half of a vacated Washington Street. A parking lot would be placed on what is now Harbor Dinner Club and the Mai Residence. **This alternative provides the following advantages:**

•Best year-round service:

A single site provides “one-stop-shopping” making it easier for the public to get the information and permits they need to enjoy Seward’s public lands. Co-locating visitor services and administration make it more feasible to operate the Visitor Center portion of the facility year-round. Integration of a conference center into a single facility will maximize program opportunities for its customers.

•Cost effective and efficient:

A single building costs less to build and maintain and is more efficient for managing operations, personnel and maintaining cooperative relationships.

•Best connection to downtown business district, waterfront and Sea Life Center:

This site development provides the most direct access to 4th Avenue businesses and best proximity to other area attractions. The real and symbolic link to the waterfront will help connect the downtown to Resurrection Bay and provide inspiring views to and from the facility.

•Best opportunities for incorporating local architectural elements:

Design elements from prominent examples of historic downtown architecture could be incorporated into the new building, thus maintaining a representative quality while enhancing the overall composition of the streetscape.

•Improves vehicle and pedestrian safety:

Changing the awkward 4-way intersection at Washington Street, 5th Avenue and Railway Avenue to a simple ‘T’ intersection minimizes pedestrian and vehicle interaction and will facilitate safer crosswalk connections to the waterfront.

Alternate Preferred Alternative

Alternative 4 received the 3rd highest score in the Choosing By Advantages Process. It is the highest ranking alternative that *does not* require the vacation of Washington Street. In this alternative the Visitor Services and Conference Center would be located on the west side of 5th Avenue on what is now Legends Restaurant and the Administrative Offices and a parking lot would be located on the east side of 5th Avenue. The east half of Washington Street between 4th and 5th Avenue could be vacated for use as open space, pedestrian circulation, and vehicular traffic limited to buses/service vehicles or left open to controlled vehicular traffic with treated pavements to visually connect Old Solly's open space. Interpretive open space would be placed on what is now Old Solly's. Combined with a public open space on what is now Old Solly's, a 'town square' would visually link the facility to the waterfront and the downtown infrastructure.

The advantages of this alternative are as follows:



•Good connection to downtown business district, waterfront and Sea Life Center:

This site development provides access to 4th Avenue businesses and good proximity to other area attractions.

•Maintains and possibly enhances views along Washington Street: This alternative would preserve the historic 'triangle block' while maintaining the existing view and provide enhanced pedestrian access (by removing traffic and parked cars) to a new public open space at the core of the downtown.

•Still recommends vacation of Washington Street: This alternative recommends but does not require the vacation of Washington Street. In this alternative, Washington Street would emphasize use for pedestrian access and buses/service vehicles through broad application of textural paving patterns and streetscape elements. The street would remain open to certain vehicular traffic, including emergency access, but the 'curb-to-curb' appearance would change to visually and physically link the new visitor services building to the 'town square' and the waterfront beyond.

•Provides better proximity between parking and administrative facility: Parking would be located directly adjacent to administrative facility, thereby improving access (especially winter) for staff.

Attributes that had fewer advantages or were disadvantaged when compared to Alternative 2a included:

•Less cost effective and efficient: Managing staffing and sharing operations between two building is more costly and less efficient.

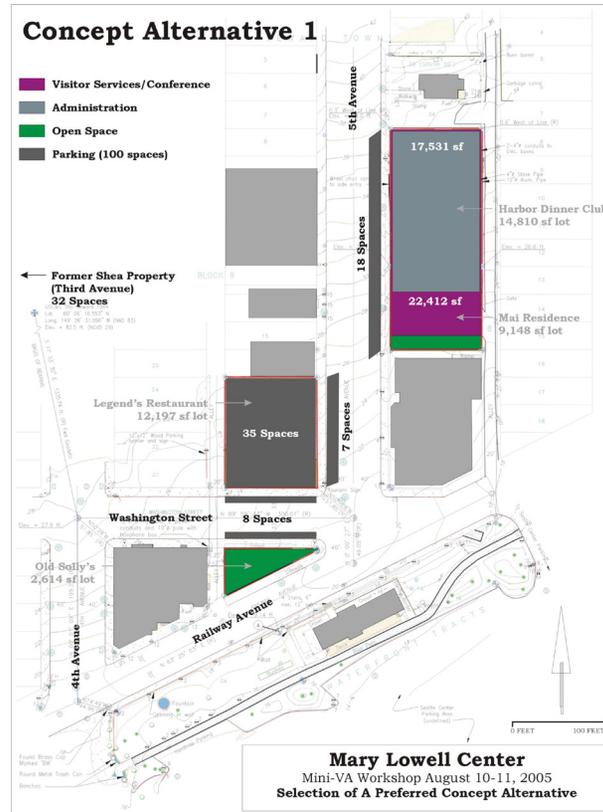
•Reduced service: More difficult for public who need access to both traditional 'visitor services' and administrative services such as permitting. Separate buildings also result in greater challenges for agencies to operate the visitor services and conference center year-round.

•Eliminates opportunity to replace existing traditional infrastructure on the triangular block: Although design elements from the more prominent examples of historic downtown architecture could still be incorporated into the building, this alternative would transform Old Solly's into open space, changing the traditional architectural appearance at this intersection.

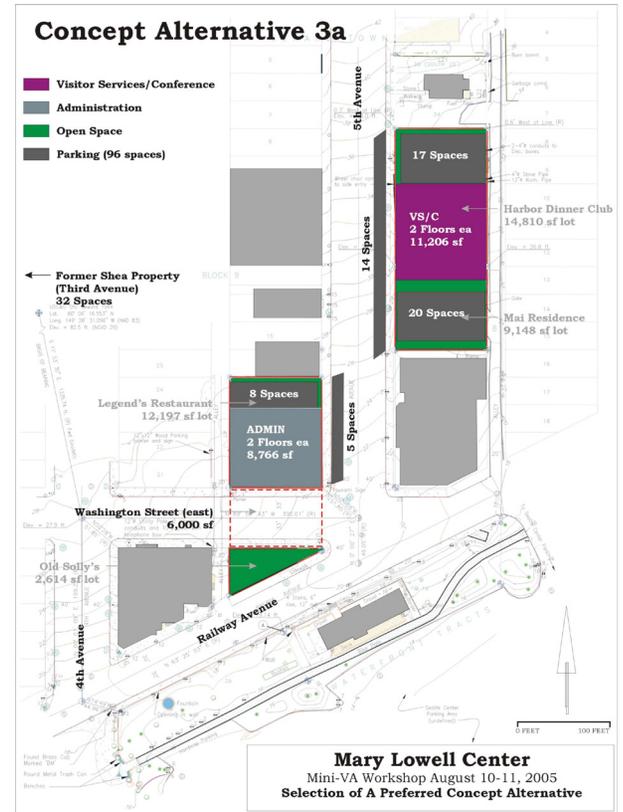
Other Alternatives Considered



Alternative 4a places the Visitor Services and Conference Center and a small parking lot on the west side of 5th Avenue on what is now Legends Restaurant, the east half of a vacated Washington Street and Old Solly's. The Administrative Offices and a parking lot would be located on the east side of 5th Avenue. This alternative that like the preferred alternative required the vacation of Washington Street had the second highest score in the Choosing by Advantages process, but lacked the efficiency of a single site.



Alternative 1 consists of a single, multi-storied building on the east side of 5th Avenue. A parking lot would be placed on what is now Legends Restaurant. A parking lot or interpretive open space would be placed on what is now Old Solly's and Washington Street would remain unchanged. This alternative did not score as highly as the other single-site alternative as it is more removed from the 4th Avenue business district, the waterfront and the Sea Life Center.



Alternative #3a places the Visitor Services, Conference Center and a parking lot on the east side of 5th Avenue and the Administrative Offices on what is now Legends Restaurant. A parking lot or interpretive open space would be placed on what is now Old Solly's and Washington Street would remain unchanged. This alternative lacks the efficiency of a single site and puts the Visitor Services and Conference Center farther away from the 4th avenue business district, the waterfront and the Sea Life Center.