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January 22, 1962

Re: Board of Public Works contracts
in Century 21 and Civic Center site

Miss Lucille Fuller
Association of Washington Cities
250 Smith Hall
University of Washington
Seattle 5, Washington

Dear Miss Fuller:

The Board of Public Works' part, in preparing for the first World's Fair in twenty years in the United States which will open April 21, 1962, culminates a period of five years of planning with the main theme in mind of leaving the City of Seattle with a nucleus for an outstanding Civic Center at the expiration of the World Fair, October 21, 1962.

Following the initial phase of plan-approving and specification preparation the first step necessary to commence construction included the removal of some 210 buildings, ranging from apartment houses to one-family dwellings, commercial warehouses and office buildings. The removal of these 210 buildings was achieved under separate contracts, the first starting in September 1958 and the last contract let on December 14, 1960. Much anxiety was caused by the failure of the property owners to vacate their structures at the proper time, wherein court procedures had to be invoked and the inevitable squatters used up a lot of valuable time.

Following the building removals, the preparation of the site was covered under contracts for sewer relocations, constructions of new manholes, water mains, and the widening of certain streets in order to accommodate the traffic pattern plus utilization of the area to its fullest extent by having all of the functional utilities that would be necessary.

In August 1960 the Ice Arena was altered by its mechanical structure in order to be completed prior to the conversion of the Civic Auditorium to a Concert-Convention Hall. At the same time, new heating system was contracted for and built in for the same primary reasons. Another contract was let for the Civic Center central heating plant that would furnish the heating capacity for the entire Civic Center development; this was in September of 1960. It was found, in our study of the area, that the present building for the communication center for the Fire Department was within the perimeter of the Century 21 grounds and it was therefore necessary for a movement of this communication center into new location at 408 Thomas Street, for which a contract was let and the area then made available

for the Space Needle development. The contract then for the conversion of the Civic Auditorium into a Concert-Convention Hall was let in January of 1961 to Brazier Construction Company; this represented one of the primary contracts among those let for the Civic Center development. In February of 1961 another contract was awarded to General Construction Company for the construction of the Exhibition Hall and the Playhouse.

Following an international competition, supervised by a board appointed by the Mayor together with the Municipal Art Commission, the selection for architectural services for the Illuminated Water Display and Piazza was given to two Japanese architects, Kazuyuki Matsushita and Hideki Shimizu from Tokyo, Japan, and shortly thereafter a contract for the construction of this facility was awarded in August of 1961. Later on, in this same month, a contract was awarded for the exterior renovation of the Seattle Ice Arena in order to be compatible with the new exterior construction of the Civic Opera House.

After much study and conference, the City Council authorized the construction of a self-parking facility in Mercer Street across from the new Opera House, to facilitate the parking of 1500 vehicles. This construction, together with the inclusion of a pedestrian overpass over Mercer Street to accommodate the users, was awarded by the Board of Public Works in September of 1961. Another major feature of the aesthetic approach to this Civic Center area was the inclusion of a change in the street lighting system for the Civic Center perimeter and, in November of 1961, a contract was called for and awarded for the ornamental street-lighting program to fit in with the Civic Center development.

The Board of Public Works has, through its several departments, maintained constant surveillance on all of the projects under construction in the Civic Center area; primarily to see that they were finished in time to be utilized by Century 21 together with keeping in mind that the designated buildings would, following this six-month period, become a beautiful Civic Center that Seattle can and should be proud of. All-in-all, in the twenty-seven contracts let for this portion relating to the Civic Center, totaled over \$7 Million; exclusive of architectural costs and preparation of plans and specifications. Needless to say, with a project this size and its unified complex of facilities, has been a real workload for the Board and its departments over and above its normal busy functions.

In cooperating with Century 21 officials the Board of Public Works has studied, viewed and taken action on hundreds of street-use permits for temporary encroachments into street area during the six-month period of the World Fair. These encroachments include "grab shacks," kiosks for concessions, emergency power equipment display, highline ride, extension of buildings for Coliseum, pedestrian view area for Space Needle, restaurants, religious buildings, and many exhibits. Many of these type encroachments were entirely against the Board policies but, due to the importance of the World Fair, many procedures and policies were set aside in order to insure the success of this community enterprise.

In 1959 the Board of Public Works worked closely with Century 21 officials on the Monorail installation. Practically all portions of this facility are involved in street use; the footings of all Monorail supports are in street area, necessitating the moving or removal of utilities. The Monorail Station at the Downtown area covers Pine Street at Westlake and is entirely over the street, including all portions of its approaches and the moving sidewalks, occupying street area. The Board also had many conferences with the Swedish engineers for Alweg International on changes in their design, that would be acceptable according to our standards. The Board also conferred with Seattle Transit System on establishing the liability insurance covering not only the installation but the operation of this system during the World Fair, saving the City harmless from liabilities that might be incurred.

In addition to all of these street-use privileges granted, the Board is also assisting other community groups such as Greater Seattle and the Central Association in supporting the Downtown merchants by issuing permits for new floodlighting, new awnings, marquees, painting and building facings, and other special street-use privileges to prepare and beautify our City for this big function. The Board further has launched into a program of street tree planting, and established a standard street tree planting plan, stipulating certain trees that would be usable both in street tree planting and tub planting on the sidewalk areas, striving to maintain uniformity together with the type trees that will not interfere with our underground utilities. Early in 1958 a program of planting all of the streets connecting Downtown Seattle with the Fairground was initiated by trees being planted on Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenues. Said trees are well-maintained and have had very good growth.

As you can see, the Board of Public Works of our City is vitally interested in the success, and being a part, of this dual venture and in spite of the added capacities caused to the Board Members they still find the time to spend each Monday morning meeting with the architects, contractors and Century 21 officials to insure that all facets of the Board's program in conjunction with the Seattle effort for our World Fair will be ready on schedule.

For those who come to our City for this event it is hoped that some thought will be given to the time and effort of these dedicated City employees who have given so much of their time and effort to Century 21 and the Seattle Civic Center, and for their sincere belief that this effort will pay dividends and be a monument in time to come that they have served their City well.

Respectfully,

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

E. G. Henry
Executive Secretary

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