EUGENE PARK BLOCKS – FARMER’S MARKET – CITY HALL

The City of Eugene has undertaken the design of a new set of public spaces at the Park Blocks, centered at 8th and Oak. This opportunity has been created through the acquisition of the “butterfly” parking structure in the northwest quadrant, formerly owned by Lane County. The general scope and vision for the project can be seen in a video available online at www.eugenetownsquare.org, although the process has moved forward since this video was made. Members of the professional consultant teams will brief us on the evolving design parameters for the project.

In this coordinated, double studio we will take the current city plans as a point of beginning. There will be an opportunity to develop unique interpretations of the major components: (1) civic open space, (2) a permanent, all-season home for the Eugene Farmer's Market, (3) the public rooms of a new Eugene City Hall, and (4) the potential connection of city functions to and from Willamette Street. A variety of approaches will be encouraged, with respect to urban form, building development and technical detail. At present, work on the Farmer’s Market is moving ahead as a free-standing first phase, with the city hall to follow. In the studio, there will be an option to reconsider the placement of the market functions with respect to the rest of the park and to the most important ceremonial rooms of the City Hall. Large meeting rooms above market stalls constitute an historical archetype that is found all over the world.

The current program for the city hall calls for 30,000 sq. ft. in gross area. Of this approximately 10,000 sq. ft. is allocated to the council room, work rooms and major meeting spaces. The remainder of the building will be assigned to a selected set of city departments that must be easily accessible, but will not be the primary emphasis in the work. Priority will be given to the making of public space, the role of civic buildings in forming that space, and their role supporting community activities both indoors and out. Project development will include clear spatial structures at a variety of scales, realized with materials and details that bring appropriate character to the center of the city.