

Project: UIUC Design Center
UI Project Number: U16015
BCJ Project Number: 15110A
Date: 3 November 2015

Project Update

Program

Using the Initial July 6 Design Facility Ideas Summary developed by UIUC as the starting point for the building program, the Design Team started to develop a more detailed space needs summary that breaks the building program into more finite building elements. The Program Worksheet included in this package shows the initial draft of that program summary, which is based in part on assumptions by the Design Team that will be jointly reviewed by UIUC and the Design Team as the program continues to be refined. Overall, this summary shows a building with 40,200 square feet of program space (referred to as Net Square Feet) and a total square footage that includes all non-program areas of 59,300 square feet (called Gross Square Feet).

Preliminary Concept

As the program summary was being developed, the Design Team created “test fit” plans to evaluate how the program areas might be arranged, looking at their size, proportion and adjacencies to other program spaces. This methodology not only begins to inform the building design, but also is proven to be a valuable tool to test the building program.

The plans and three-dimensional diagrams included in this package represent an initial arrangement of program spaces that meets the program summary and provides an overall building arrangement that fits the site and suggests an architectural direction that feels appropriate for this building type. While quite preliminary, these plans suggest that the program can be accommodated in a building of approximately 60,000 gross square feet and have an architectural character that allows for flexibility, a high degree of transparency and “connected-ness”, encourages collaboration and can become a showcase for this innovation. A few key discoveries provided by these plans include:

- The overall stacking diagram, showing a building that is organized on two floors, feels appropriate based on the arrangement of program, building footprint and overall massing on the site
- The building organization, where large open public spaces are arranged in an open central core flanked by flexible group collaboration and meeting spaces has the potential to work well for day-to-day use as well as larger functions.
- Entering the building on the upper level from 4th Street could provide a strong entrance sequence for first time and regular users, allowing them to clearly understand the building arrangement and see directly into the major program areas
- Placing maker spaces with heavier material and equipment needs on the lower floor may be appropriate since these functions can sit “on grade” rather than on an elevated floor deck. This stacking may allow views down into certain maker spaces to help integrate the two floors
- Allowing public functions to look onto the Military Axis (and be viewed from the Military Axis) can create strong visual ties between the building and the campus.

While preliminary in nature, these diagrams suggest an architectural response to the building program and site that is quite encouraging. As the programming and design process advances we hope to continue to collaboratively develop an overall design concept with UIUC that meets the building program and budget while also creating a facility that inspires excellence.