

**CITY OF OAKLAND**  
**AGENDA REPORT**

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
2006 FEB 15 PM 3:07

TO: Office of the City Administrator  
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly, City Administrator  
FROM: Oakland Public Library  
DATE: February 28, 2006

**RE: STATUS REPORT ON THE OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY'S MASTER FACILITIES PLAN AND MAIN LIBRARY FEASIBILITY STUDY OF THE KAISER ARENA AS THE NEW MAIN LIBRARY FOR OPL**

---

**SUMMARY**

In 2002, the Oakland Public Library embarked on a Master Facilities Plan in response to the community's need for improved services, with the intent to plan for facilities to support these needs. A Draft Master Facilities Plan report (Draft Report) was issued and presented to City Council in September 2004 which articulates a vision for the branch libraries that is based on a highly participatory needs assessment process. The overall service recommendations and improvements respond to a system that needs revitalization to serve the people of Oakland.

During the fall of 2004, after issuing the Draft Report, staff presented the branch recommendations at over 60 community meetings and received enthusiastic and positive feedback that will be incorporated into a final report. As a result of these conversations with the community, several Oakland neighborhoods have begun discussions with staff about expanded or new facilities within their areas (Piedmont Avenue, Laurel District, 23rd Avenue-San Antonio).

As part of the Draft Report, and in later reports to Council (February, June 2005), the Library indicated that it would return with recommendations for a new Main Library and implementation strategies for achieving the goals of the Master Plan. This status report to City Council is an update on the Master Plan and responds to City Council's request during Budget Hearings in June 2005 to return and report on the feasibility of the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center (Kaiser Center) adapted for reuse as a new Main Library.

In summary, the 2004 Draft Report identified the need for a new Main Library ranging in size from 120,000 square feet to 160,000 square feet. At this mid-point in the feasibility study, it appears that the following findings are emerging:

- Adaptive reuse of the Kaiser Arena into a new state-of-the-art Main Library would be an excellent fulfillment of the City's need to revitalize and expand Main Library service.
- Conversion of the Arena into a Main Library would serve to meet the City's need to find a viable function for this space and preserve this landmark facility.
- Preliminary indications are that the adaptive reuse of the Arena is technically and economically feasible.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Life Enrichment Committee  
February 28, 2006

Next steps in the feasibility study are underway to determine approaches to building systems, code compliance strategies, and parking strategies and to establish a cost model. Also at this point, additional input from City staff, community, City Council and other elected officials needs to be gathered on this proposal to determine if this is the desired direction of the City.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Since June 2002, City Council has approved several resolutions authorizing funding for the Library's Master Facilities Plan, and also included funding for preparation of the Proposition 14 application that resulted in a \$6.5 million grant to the City in January 2005 to build a new library in East Oakland. Those resolutions, amounts and funding sources include:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Resolution No.</b>	<b>Amount Approved</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
06/18/02	77202 C.M.S	\$270,000	General Fund, 1010
10/210/03	78130 C.M.S.	\$230,000	Public Library Foundation, 2999
02/08/05	79071 C.M.S.	\$225,000	Measure Q, 2240

As can be seen from the above chart, the City, through the General Fund, provided the seed funding in order to begin this long range planning. It is anticipated that the Final Master Facilities Plan, that incorporates the feedback from the community, Main Library study and funding strategies, will be issued and presented to City Council later in 2006.

### **BACKGROUND** (See Attachment A)

#### **Master Plan - Branches**

Oakland's existing libraries play a significant role in the day-to-day lives of its residents. However, of the 15 branch libraries that the Oakland Public Library operates, only three were designed and constructed after computers began to be a key resource in providing library services. Issues related to the installation and use of computers in older buildings include providing electrical and telecommunications access from walls of certain areas, computer area lighting requirements that differ from reading areas, avoiding glare from outside light, and space requirements that are greater than those for typical seating at tables.

Most of Oakland's libraries are candidates for enhancement or expansion; in some areas, new libraries are recommended as part of the Master Plan. Due to years of deferred maintenance, lack of planning for modern technology and the general inefficient use of floor space, collections, services and space for staff and patrons, Oakland's public libraries need, in some cases, major overhaul, as the Library plans for the next 50 to 75 years. Many of the libraries are stretched beyond their capacity and have little room to grow to accommodate the many needs of patrons. There are also a few under-served areas of the city without good access to any facility, such as the Laurel District and the San Antonio neighborhood. The vision for the Oakland Public Library system is to improve all the libraries in the system, to supplement the system with new branches in the underserved areas, and to revitalize and expand the Main Library.

As part of the Master Plan, several initiatives have begun to be implemented:

1. The **81<sup>st</sup> Avenue Community Library**, for which the City received a \$6.5 million State grant, is currently in schematic design. As a result of a number of factors, including a change in Oakland Unified School District's no longer needing administrative space in the Library, and the continuing rise in construction costs, design changes have been made that result in a reduction of the space requirements to approximately 22,000 square feet. This branch will still be the largest branch library in the system and the first of six Community Libraries envisioned for the City. An amended application to approve these changes has been submitted to the State Office of Library Construction. The anticipated construction start is spring 2007, with an expected opening in fall 2008.
2. The **Martin Luther King, Jr.** Branch will soon undergo a renovation. As a result of the City Council awarding CIP funding through the FY 2005-07 budget process, and with supplemental funds granted from the City's ADA Office and an additional amount through Measure Q, the ML King Branch will soon go through a conceptual design phase based on the needs assessment done for the neighborhood. The current plans call for dedicated space for Children, Teens and Adults, a collection that is targeted to the community with more popular materials, a new computer lab space, comfortable seating, new checkout and reference desk, self checkout for patrons, new lighting, open floor plan and new, ADA-compliant accessible public restrooms. Anticipated completion is fall 2007.
3. The **Piedmont Avenue** Branch Library has seen much interest from its community as a result of the Draft Report and Council Member Jane Brunner's interest in investigating options. The Draft Report called for a much-needed expanded branch facility. Beginning in spring 2005, staff and Group 4 Architecture Research and Planning, Inc. have had some meetings with a neighborhood group researching the expansion of the current facility and options for financing.
4. The **Laurel District** has shown interest in having a library in the area. The Draft Report recommends a new library in this district. Council Member Jean Quan has worked with her constituents in the development of a Master Plan for the District. A potential library in the neighborhood, as part of the plan, has received positive feedback and Council Member Quan has been active in pursuing that option.
5. **San Antonio and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue** community groups have been involved in a comprehensive planning process that addresses several quality-of-life issues in the San Antonio neighborhood. The planning group has identified the establishment of a library as a primary goal and has developed several strategies for its implementation. The Draft Report recommends a Community Library for this neighborhood, similar in size to the 81<sup>st</sup> Avenue Library, and providing collections, seating, computers, Children, Teen and Adult areas of a similar scope to that of 81<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

**Master Plan – Main (See Attachment A)**

The 2004 Draft Report identified a need for a revitalized and expanded Main Library service for the residents of Oakland. The current 82,500 square feet Main Library was designed in the 1930's and, because of the war, was delayed being constructed until the late 1940's. By the time it opened in 1951, its design was outdated and outmoded. The basic problems with the facility include:

- Inadequate capacity for collections, technology and seating;
- Inefficient use of space, inflexible interior concrete walls that deter space reallocation;
- Inappropriate location of spaces (West Auditorium, Children's Room);
- Sight lines that hamper surveillance throughout the building;
- Building design that makes it difficult to install technology;
- Inappropriate lighting levels in many areas;
- Sterile and uninviting interior spaces;
- Inefficient staff work areas;
- Furniture and equipment, which, in many cases, dates from the Library's opening;
- Inconsistent temperature control throughout the building; and
- Deteriorating building systems including plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems.

A preliminary needs assessment and building program identified a need for a 120,000 square feet to 160,000 square feet Main Library. As part of its due diligence, the Library, with its architectural planning consultant – Group 4 – has examined several options regarding a revitalized Main Library. Expansion or new construction at the current site, and relocation to potential sites in Downtown Oakland and the Kaiser Center has been identified as part of the 2004 Draft Report.

With the closing of the Kaiser Convention Center being debated by City Council during the budget hearings in the summer of 2005, and Council aware of the Library's exploration of the site as a new Main, the Library was asked to return to Council with a feasibility study regarding the Kaiser site. Ultimately, Council decided to close the Kaiser complex as of January 1, 2006 after years of unsuccessful attempts at finding an economically sustainable operating model.

This report to Council includes the first findings regarding the feasibility of converting the Kaiser Arena into a new Main Library. Group 4, with Public Works and Library staff, and with historical, structural, and mechanical consultants, have made preliminary recommendations regarding the Kaiser facility. Concurrent with the technical studies, the Library has been engaged in programming and design concept work to envision how a revitalized Main Library could be realized at the Kaiser, including potential partnerships with the Museum and Laney College to create a Cultural District that is enhanced by the reconfiguration of the 12<sup>th</sup> Street corridor with direct connections to Lake Merritt.

At this midpoint in the study, several findings have emerged:

- Adaptive reuse of the Kaiser Arena into a new state-of-the-art Main Library would be an excellent fulfillment of the City's need to revitalize and expand Main Library service
- *Conversion of the Kaiser Arena into a Main Library also would serve to meet the needs of the City of Oakland to find a viable function for this space and preserve this landmark*
- Preliminary indications are that the adaptive reuse of the Kaiser Arena is both technically and economically feasible.

The next steps in the feasibility study are underway to determine approaches to building systems, code compliance strategies, parking strategies and establish a project cost model. Also at this point, additional input from City staff, community, City Council and other elected officials needs to be gathered on this proposal to determine if this is the desired direction of the City.

#### **KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS (See Attachment A)**

The Kaiser Convention Center is a beloved landmark in the City of Oakland. Rebirth of the Kaiser Center as a new Main Library would be an added community benefit, serving as a source of comprehensive library and information services and helping to create a revitalized Cultural District in partnership with the Oakland Museum, Lake Merritt and Laney College.

The Kaiser Center is composed of two parts. The Main Library feasibility study is investigating the conversion of the arena portion that occupies the eastern two thirds of the building. The western third houses the ornately detailed Calvin Simmons Theater, the Ball Room, Gold Room and Olympic Room and related support spaces. No work is presently being proposed for these spaces.

The emerging design direction is to construct a new state-of-the-art multi-level library around a sky-lighted central atrium with the interior volume of the arena. The exterior will be preserved and key interior features such as historic windows and roof trusses will be preserved and prominently featured.

This would be accomplished by limited and selective demolition of the arena floor and seating while preserving the exterior and the arena structure. The new library construction, including new framed floor levels within the arena space, would be built atop new foundations and would be designed to support and strengthen the existing arena exterior. Historic records suggest that the arena roof used to have a major skylight that could be recreated to bring light into the library spaces.

The Kaiser Convention Center was constructed in 1915 and was formerly known as the Oakland Municipal Auditorium. It is generally constructed with a steel frame and concrete floors and

walls. The building is founded on wood piles that were not driven to sufficient depth, and consequently, the structure settled significantly over the first 20 years of its existence.

The Kaiser building was rehabilitated in 1982 and seismic improvements included the addition of new lateral bracing at the roof level, installation of new steel braced frames along the north side of the arena, and the infilling of a large opening in the concrete wall that separates the auditorium from the arena. It is expected that further seismic rehabilitation of the arena shell will be required.

Continued work of this study will explore building systems, code compliance strategies, and parking strategies and establish a project cost model. All new work envisioned for this project will be designed to meet current building and life safety codes. A strong technical argument can be made that the west third of the building (Calvin Simmons Theater side) will benefit structurally from the library construction on the Arena side, and that continued use of the Theater be permitted without bringing those highly ornate areas up to current codes. This study will continue to explore the code issues in greater detail. Determining the scope of work, if any, that may be desired for the theater side of the Kaiser facility may be a matter for City policy consideration.

The library project provides an excellent opportunity to realize a highly sustainable building. High performance energy efficient building systems will be proposed to replace current outdated arena building systems. Strategies by which this could be accomplished will be addressed in this feasibility study.

While the Kaiser Arena has excellent transit access and is a convenient walk from the nearby residential, educational and commercial areas and while there will be 200 parking spaces, a new main library may have greater parking needs. The study will explore the capacity of other area parking options as well as options to increase parking on-site or within the building.

Community input will be an essential part of this study. In developing the Draft Master Facilities Plan, a community group was established to guide the work of the project – the Community Action Committee – that provided essential feedback and recommendations during the development of the Draft Report. The Committee, which is made up of community representatives, Friends of Oakland Public Library, Library Advisory Commissioners, City Council representatives, Historic Preservation staff, and Public Works and Library staff, will be meeting in early March to provide input into the recommendations made in the Kaiser Feasibility Study. As well, the Library will be engaging the residents of Oakland through additional community meetings in the coming year.

## **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** The Library is a destination, drawing visitors from throughout the City and beyond. Creation of a Cultural District that includes the Kaiser/Main Library, supports the revitalization efforts of the Lower Lake Merritt/Channel area and its surroundings.

**Environmental:** The Main Library's reuse of the Kaiser Center would demonstrate sustainable goals by preserving and reusing resources. It is also supported by a BART/AC transit hub and a pedestrian corridor along the Lake.

**Social Equity:** The Library is a great equalizer, with resources for all, and welcomes all members of the community. It reflects the rich diversity of Oakland with programs and materials for a wide variety of languages, cultures, lifestyles, and family types.

#### **DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS**

The Library is a pillar of support for educational and recreational needs and provides resources and services to all members of the community. Its libraries are disability accessible and include, in many of its locations, technology enhancements for the vision and hearing challenged.

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S) AND RATIONALE**

It is recommended that this status report on the Library's Master Facilities Plan and progress report on the Feasibility Study of the Kaiser Arena as the new Main Library be accepted.

#### **ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff recommends that the City Council accept the status report and feasibility study.

Respectfully submitted,



**Carmen L. Martínez**  
**Library Director**

Prepared by:  
Gerard G. Garzón  
Deputy Director

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE  
LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE



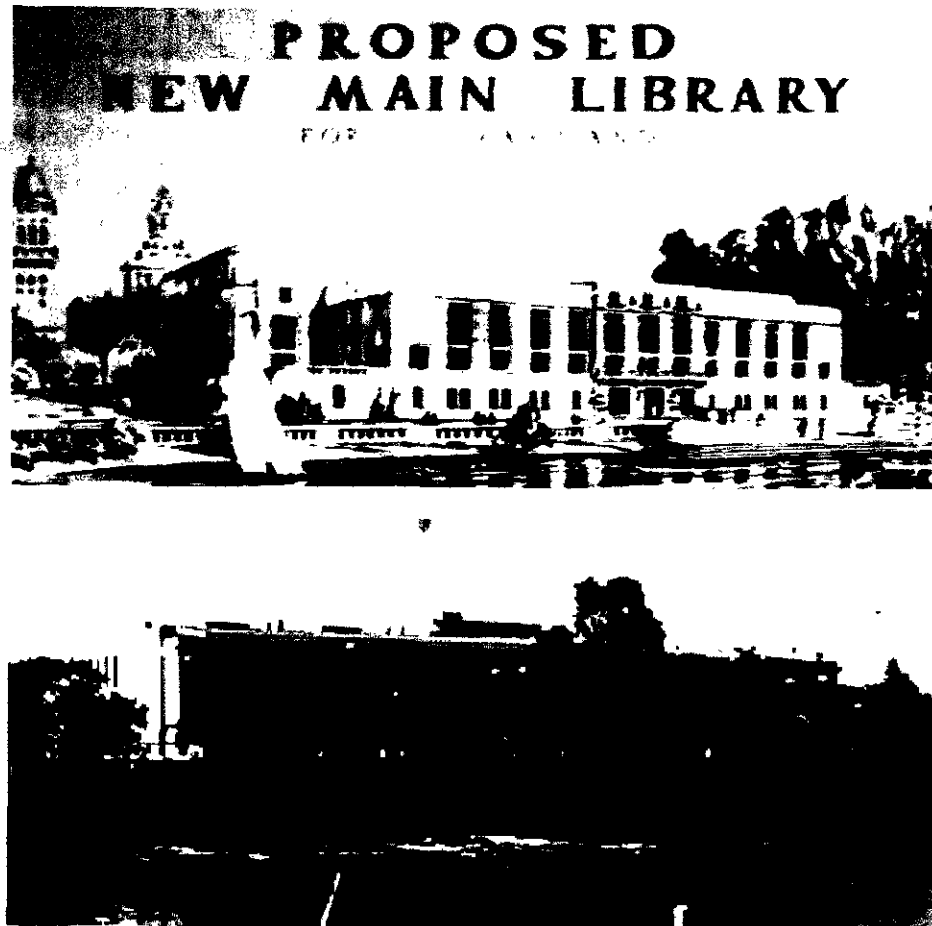
**OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

Attachment A



OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



## Feasibility Study of the adaptive reuse of Kaiser Arena as a new Main Library

Progress Report 28 February 2006

GROUP 4 ARCHITECTURE, RESEARCH + PLANNING, INC.



GROUP 4

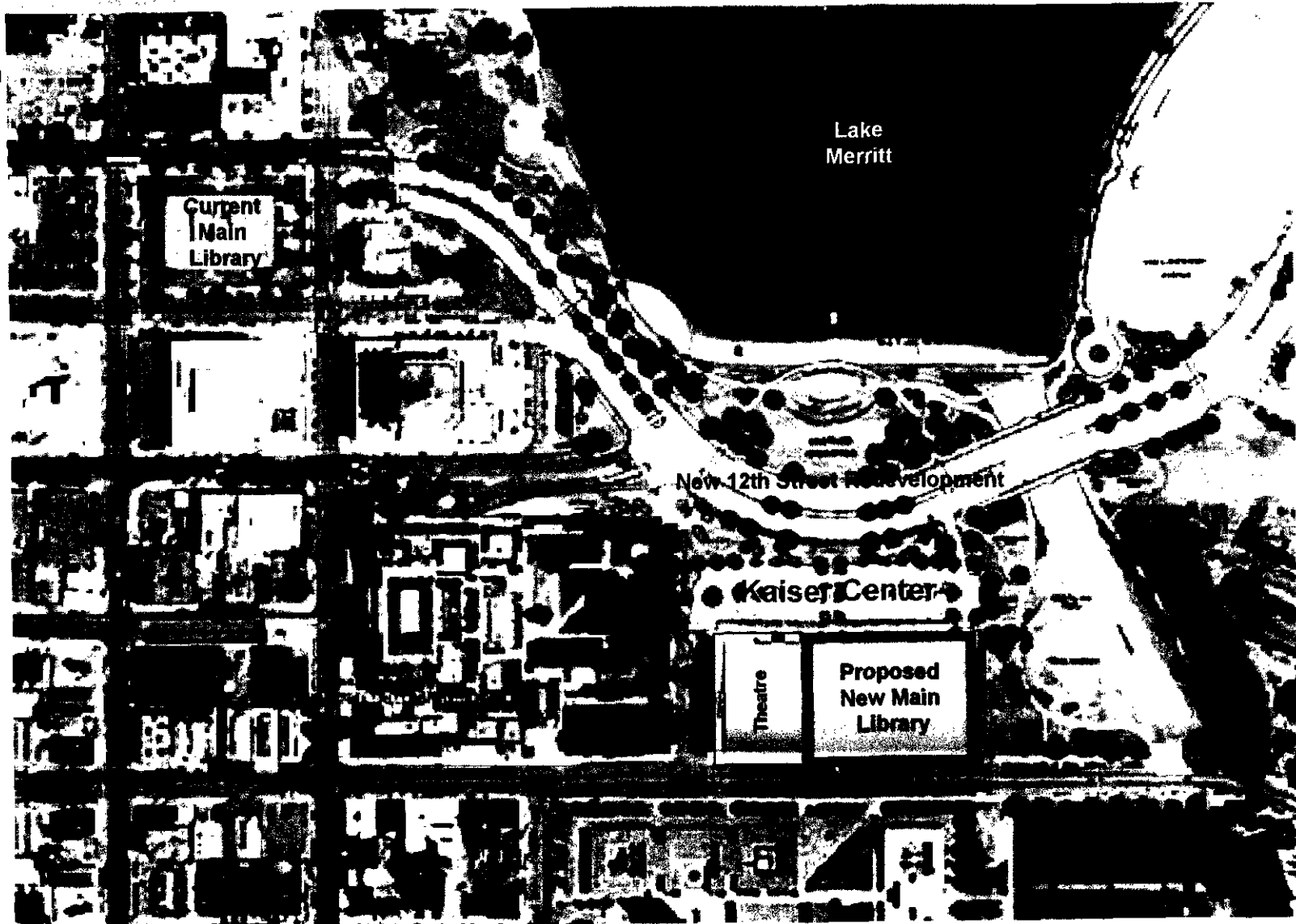




# New Main Library at Kaiser Arena

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



GROUP 4



# NEW MAIN LIBRARY at the Heart of a CULTURAL DISTRICT

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



Oakland  
Public  
Library



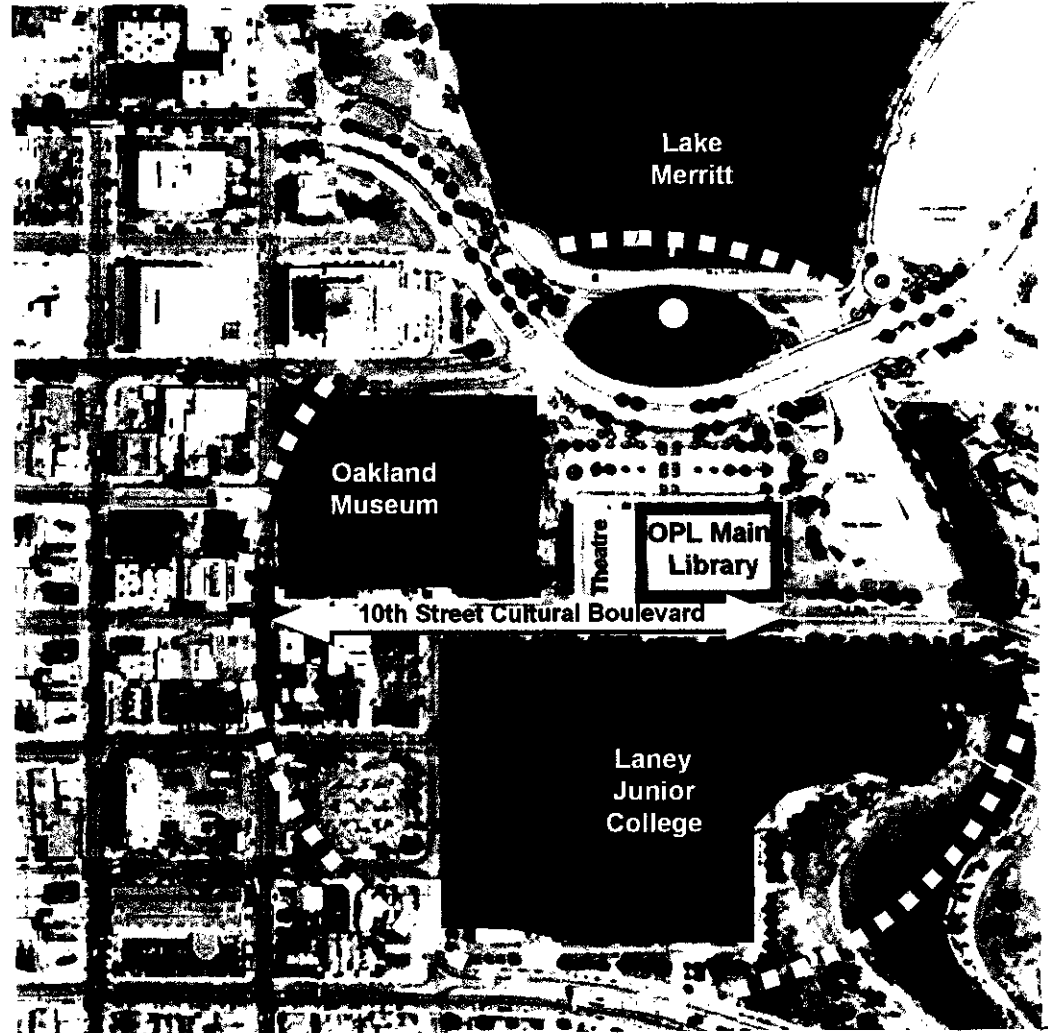
Henry  
Kaiser  
Convention  
Center



Oakland  
Museum



Laney  
Junior  
College



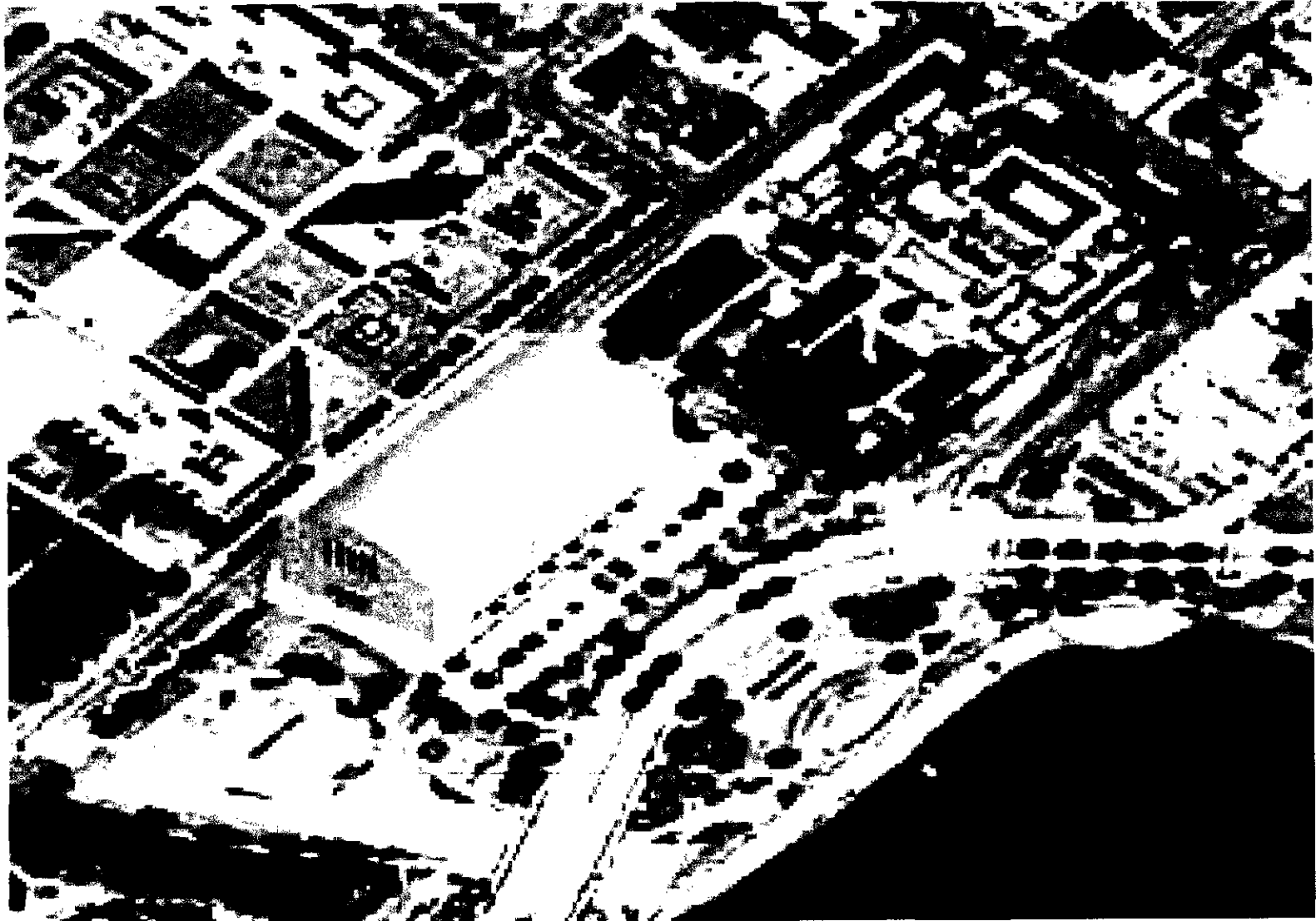
GROUP 4



# Kaiser Convention Center

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



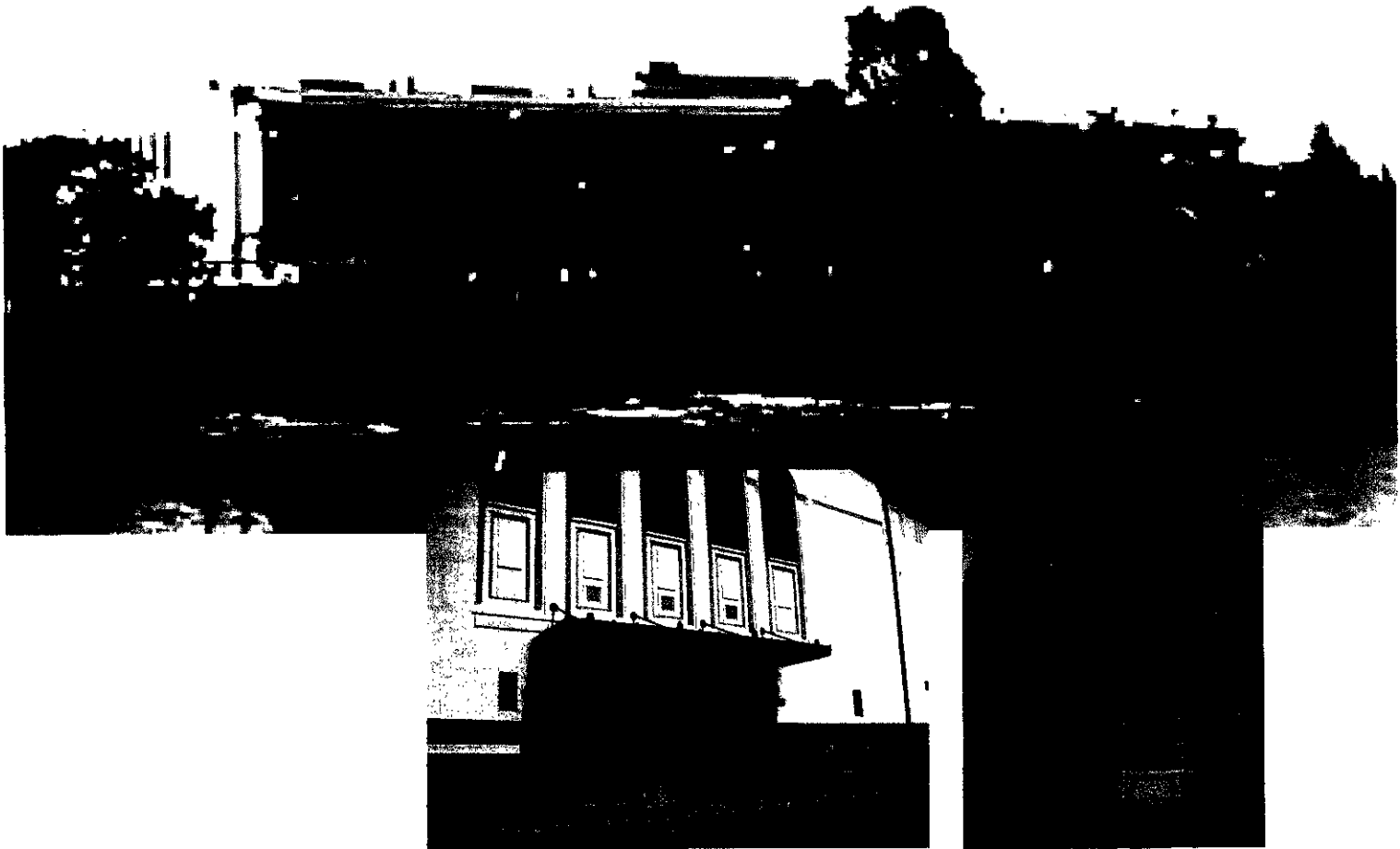
GROUP 4



# Kaiser Convention Center

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



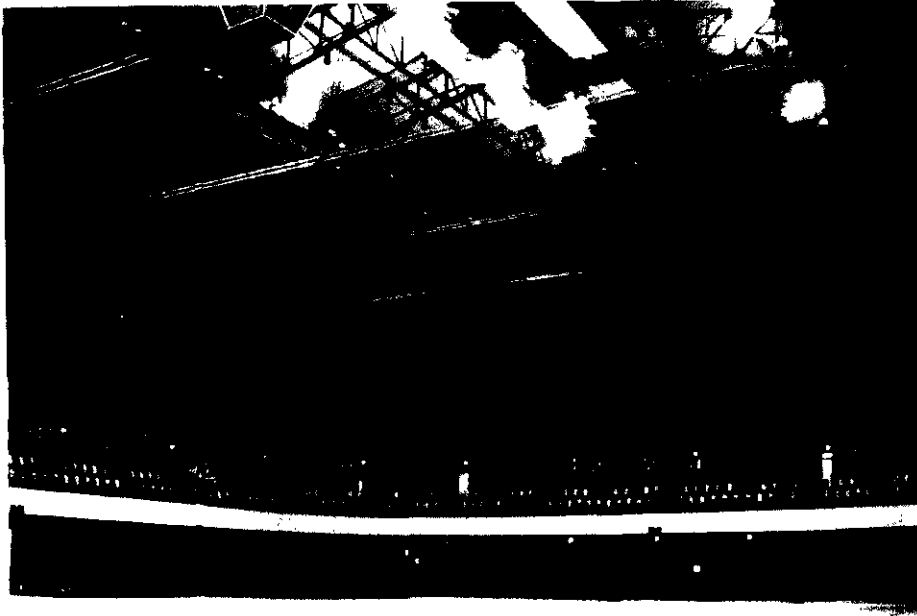
GROUP 4



OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY

# Kaiser Convention Center Arena



GROUP 4

Kaiser Entry



# Kaiser Center - Theater side

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



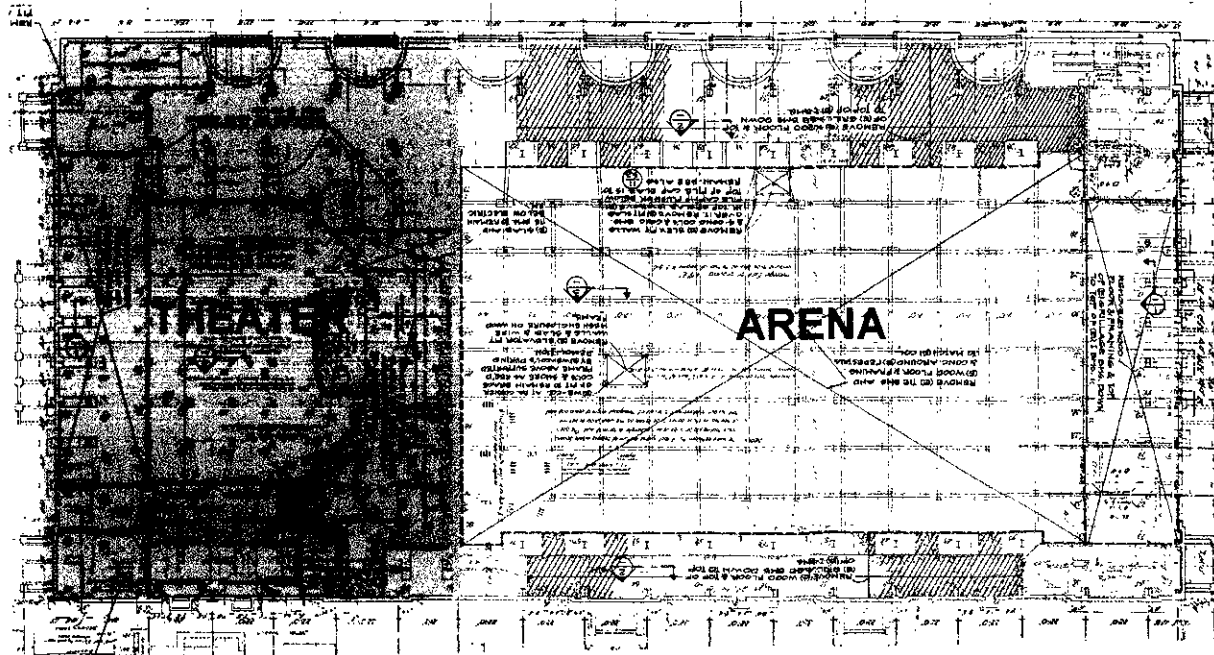
GROUP 4



# Kaiser Center - Existing Plans

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



## Lower Level

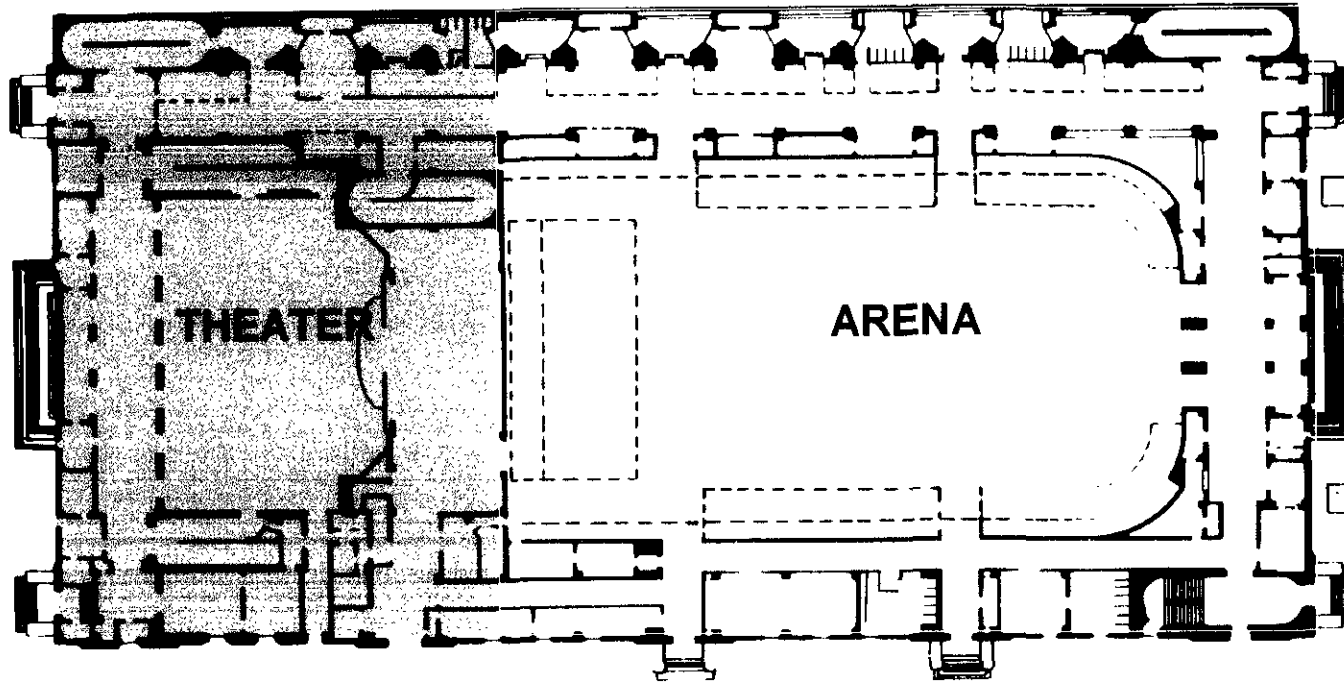
GROUP 4



# Kaiser Center - Existing Plans

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



**First Floor**



GROUP 4

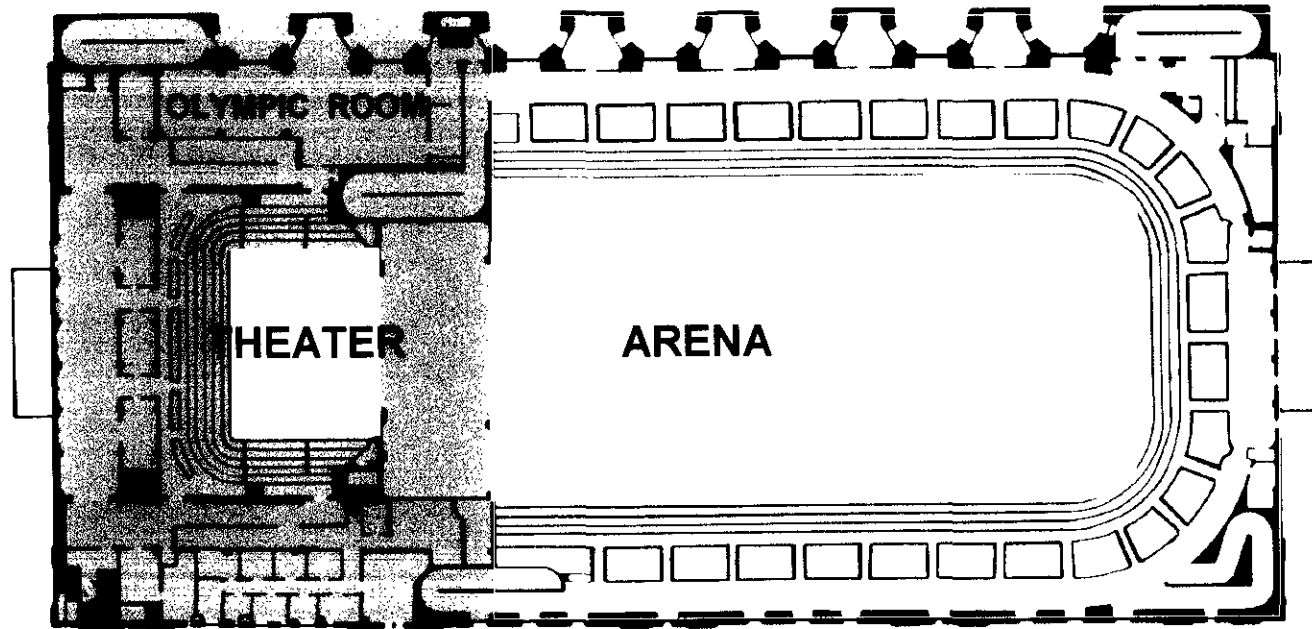




# Kaiser Center - Existing Plans

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



## Second Floor

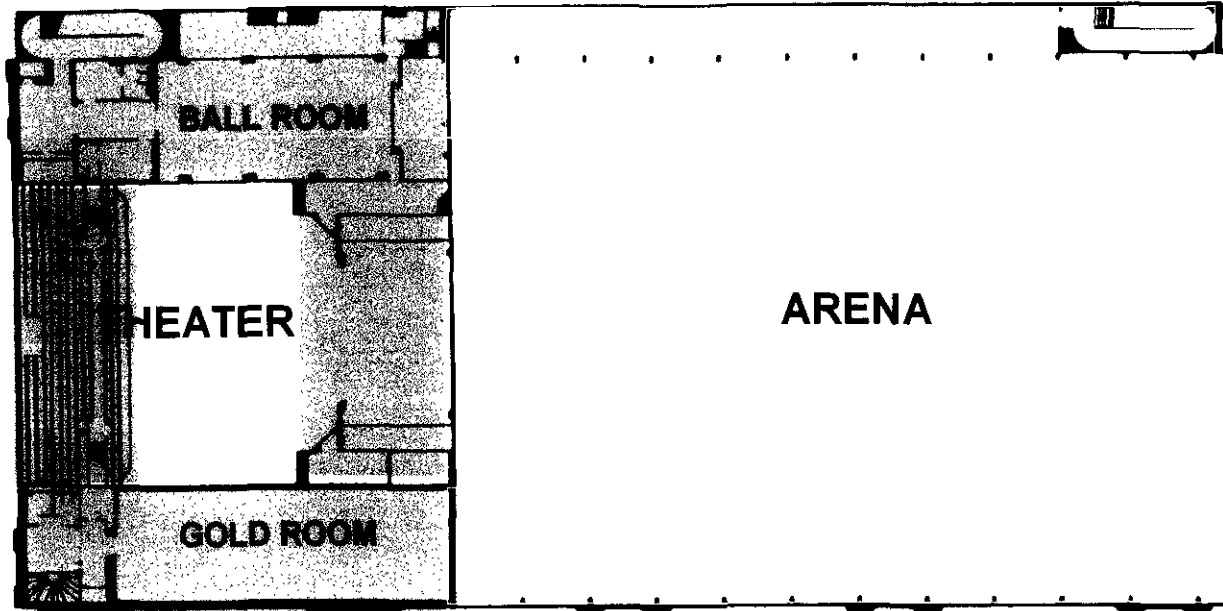
GROUP 4



# Kaiser Center - Existing Plans

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



**Third Floor**



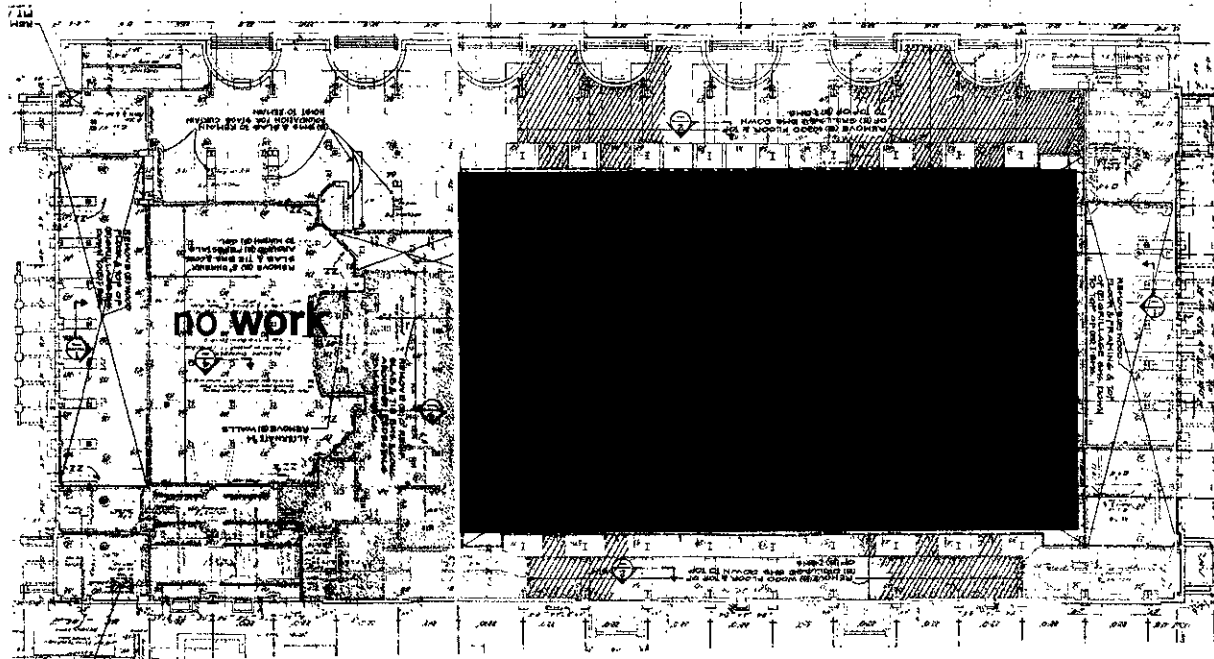
GROUP 4



# Kaiser Center - Demolition

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



## Lower Level

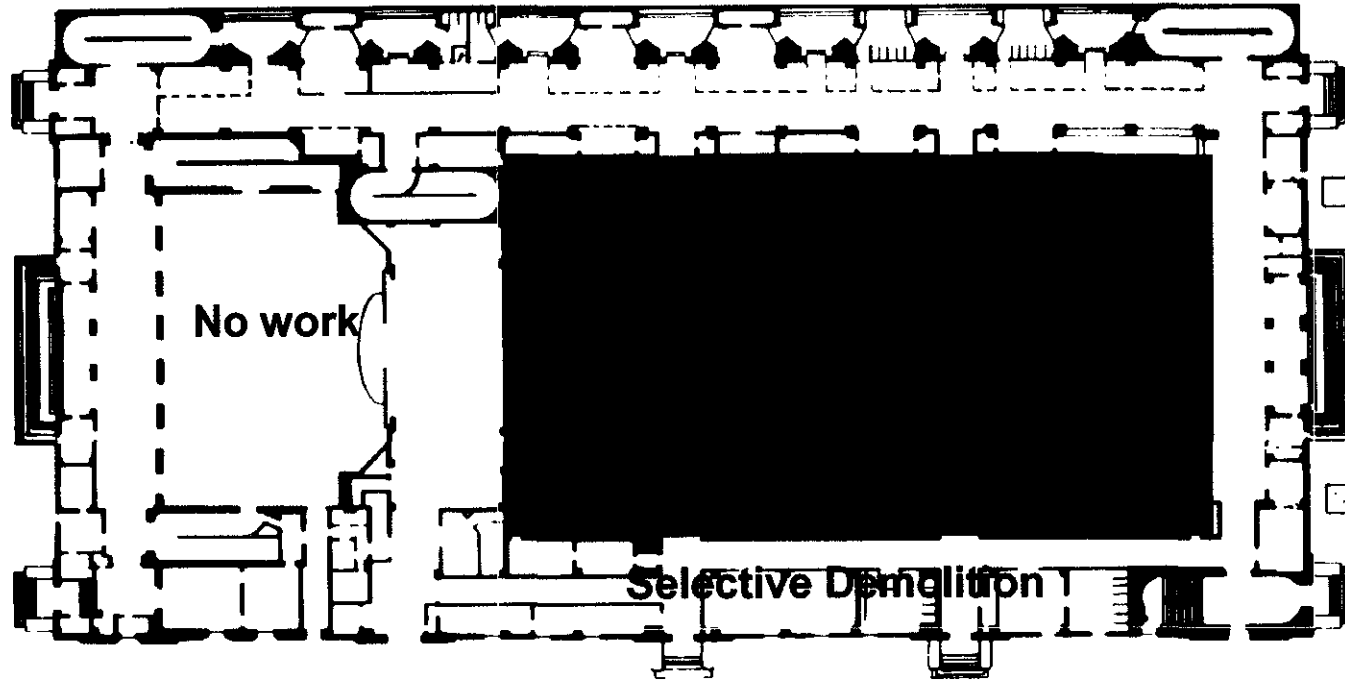
GROUP 4



# Kaiser Center - Demolition

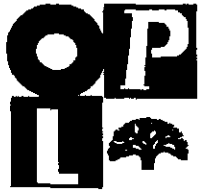
OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



**First Floor**

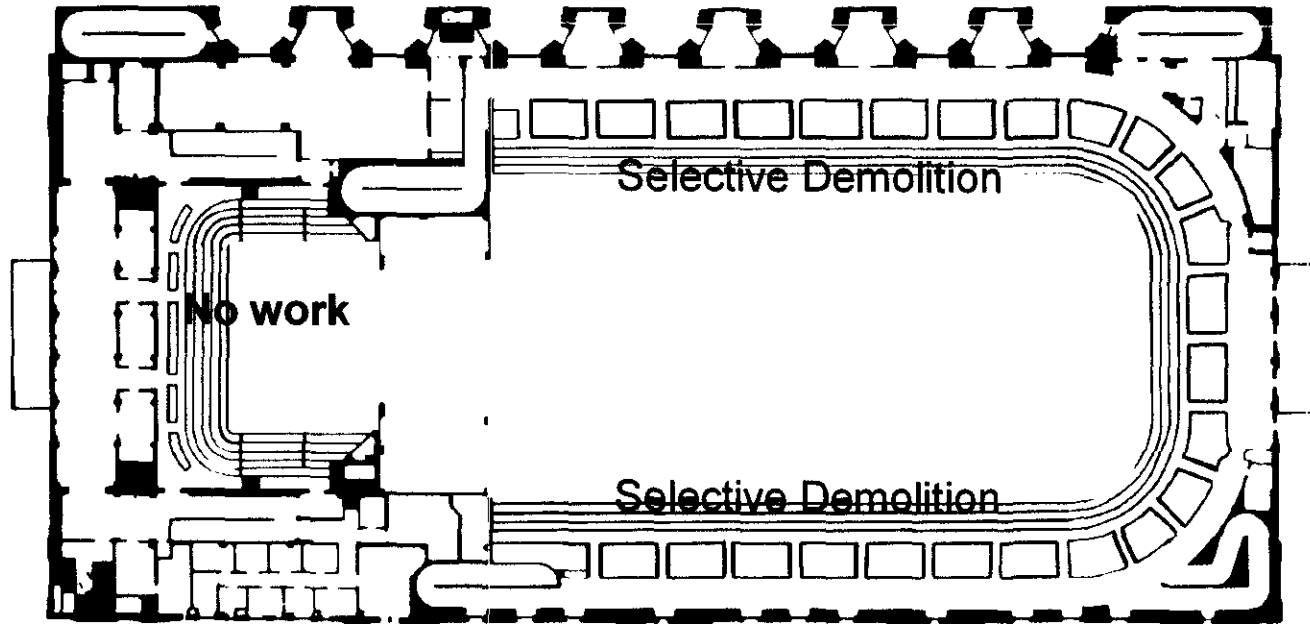




# Kaiser Center - Demolition

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



## Second Floor



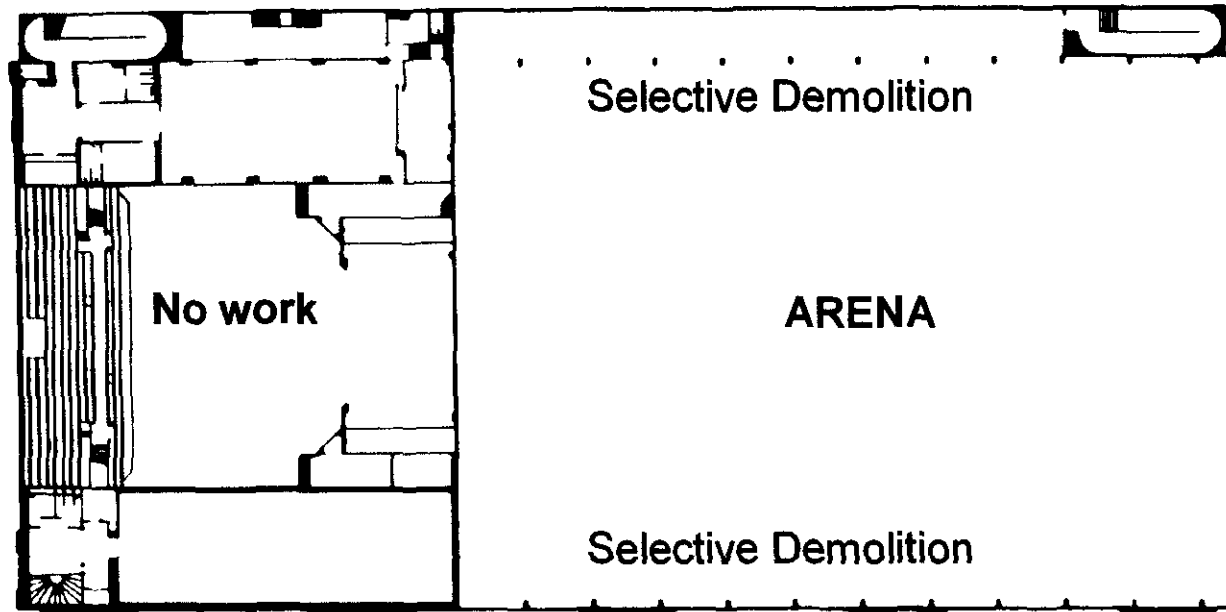
GROUP 4



# Kaiser Center - Demolition

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



**Third Floor**



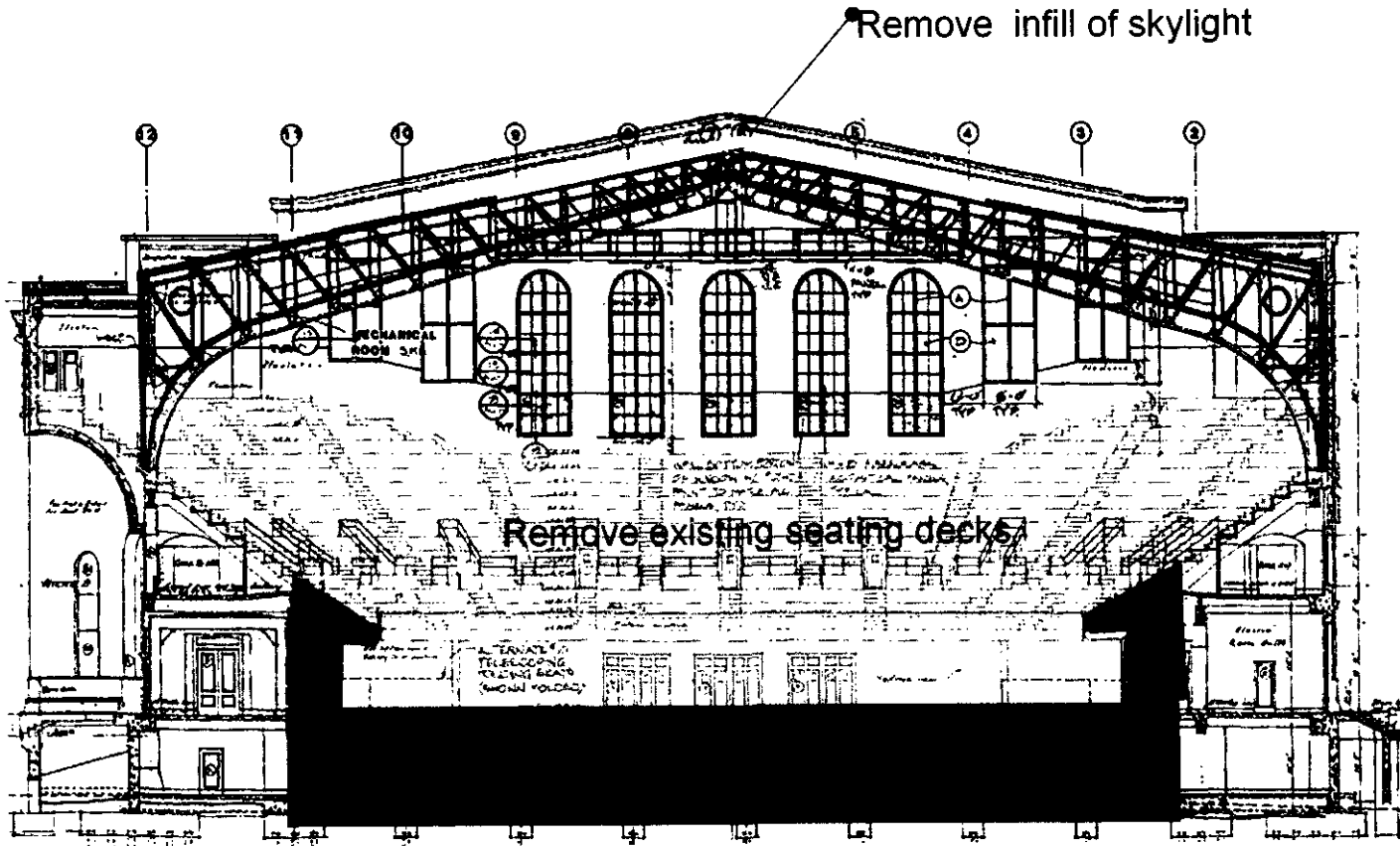
GROUP 4



# Kaiser Center - Demolition

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



Demolish arena and basement floor to  
existing piles



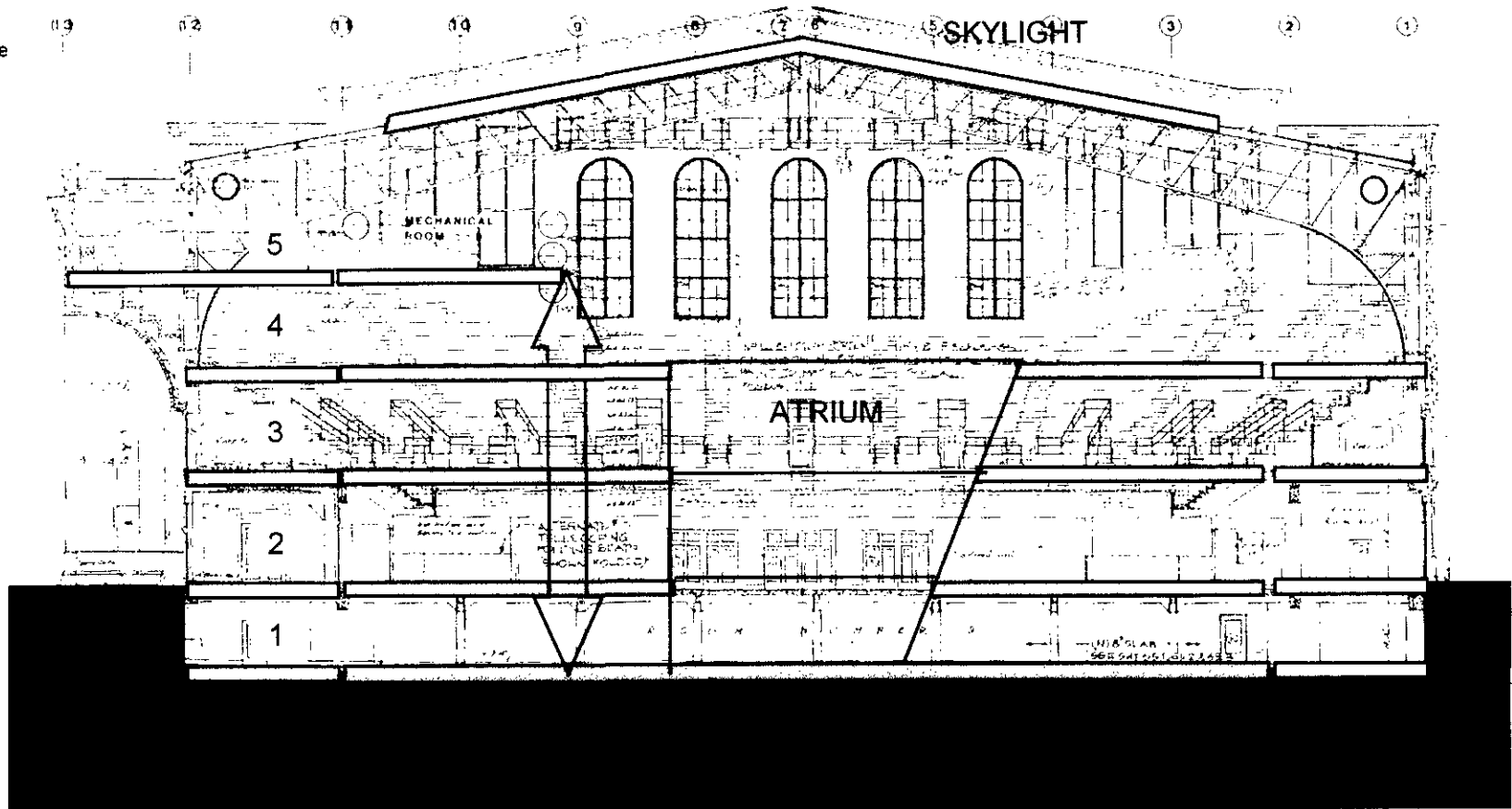
GROUP 4



# New Library Construction

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



120,000-160,000 square feet  
provided on 3-5 levels and possible new exterior pavilion



GROUP 4

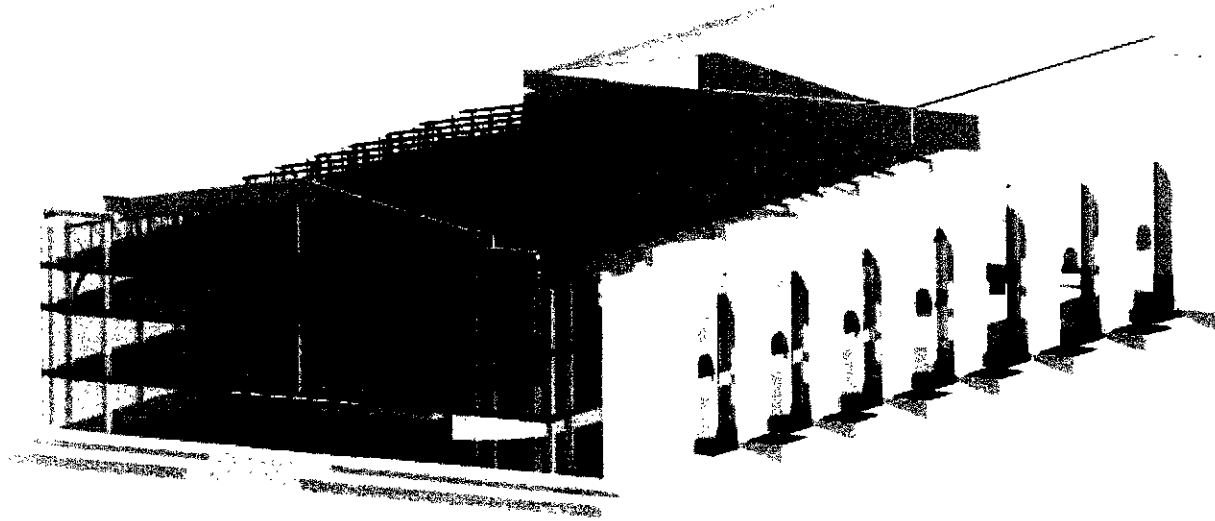




# New Library Construction

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



GROUP 4



# Contemporary Interior

OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



Old Post Office,  
Washington, DC



San Francisco Main  
Library



Asian Art Museum,  
San Francisco

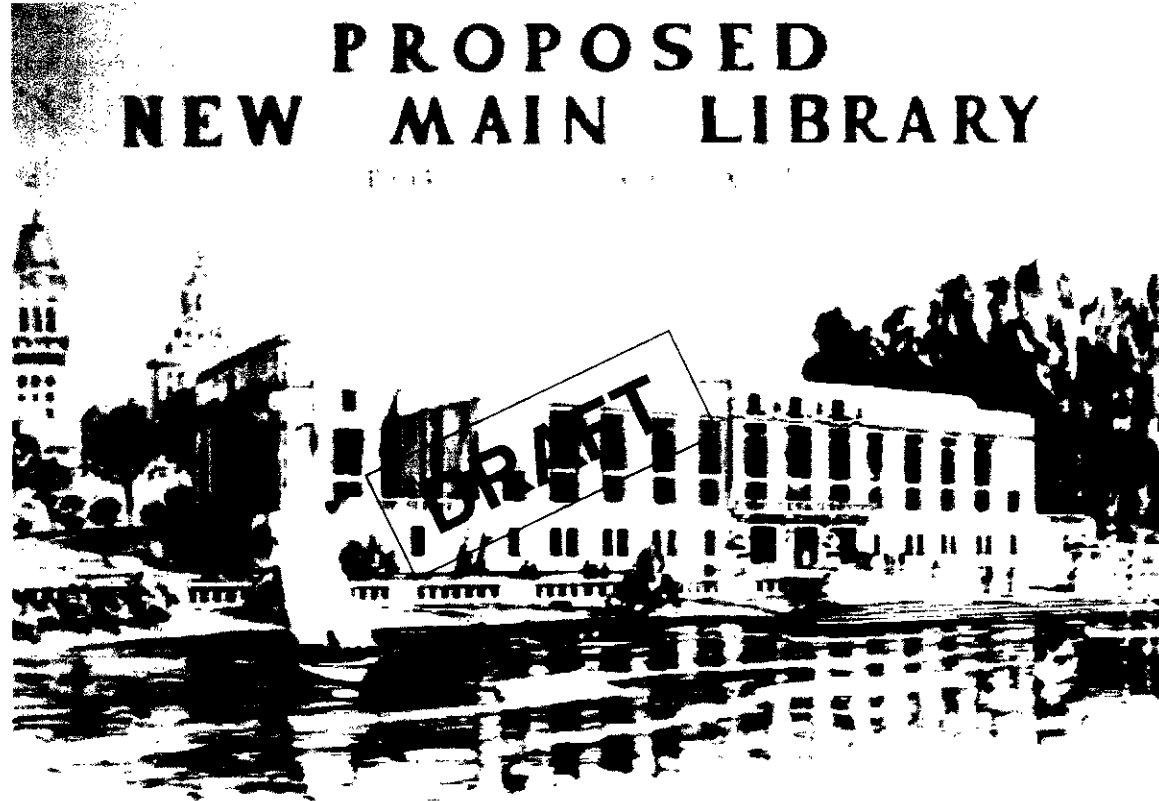


GROUP 4



OAKLAND  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

FEASIBILITY STUDY  
of the adaptive reuse of the  
KAISER ARENA  
as a  
NEW MAIN LIBRARY



OAKLAND LIBRARY  
MASTER FACILITIES PLAN  
Main Library Strategies  
Draft 01.14.03



GROUP 4

GROUP 4 ARCHITECTURE, RESEARCH + PLANNING, INC.  
g:\02320 oakland public library\d-documents\powerpoint \03.01.14 ceda.ppt