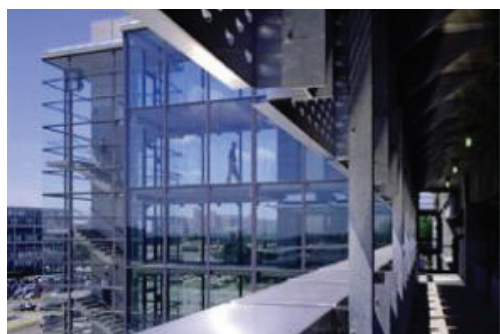
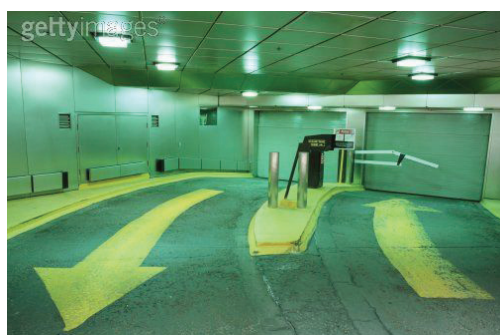
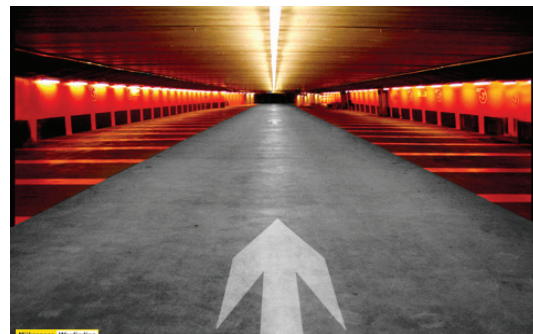
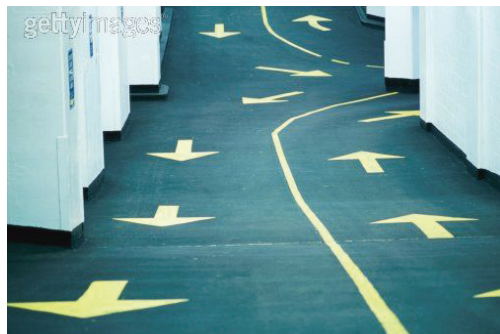




DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS



The immediate concerns for occasional and daily users of parking structures are often way finding and safety. Both of are interrelated and may be addressed in a similar manner during design.

Way Finding

The main components to successful wayfinding are the simplicity of the structure, understandable vehicular circulation, separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and visual cues to help orient the user. As an example, a simple structural system with minimal opaque sheer walls and open views allows for an unfamiliar user to quickly understand the circulation pattern and orient themselves.

Some common visual cues for way finding are views to the outside, points of egress and signage to prevent confusion. All of which depend upon the parking structure being as open as possible, maximizing the views throughout the structure and providing light.

Safety

The selection of the proper structural system will help minimize the amount blind/hidden views and dark corners while maximizing the amount of openness, visibility and light. The greatest deterrent to security issues is visibility. A secure facility is dependent on proper lighting levels inside and outside of the structure. This is accomplished with open structures that allow extensive day lighting with careful attention to the locations of efficient artificial lighting that must occur during evening hours.

Circulation in a parking structure is also a safety issue. The safest option is to separate the vehicular and pedestrian traffic is to provide paths or walkways at the edges of the structure that connect directly to the main points of egress. This separates the pedestrians from the vehicles and pulls the pedestrians outside of the ramp into a safer and more visible environment but is often not economical. The alternative is a common solution that allows shared circulation with its success dependant on clear visibility.

Aesthetics

The functionality and the aesthetics of this parking structure were identified as priorities early in discussions with the City of Ames. The design of this facility must consider the site and the existing qualities of the Main Street district. A parking structure should complement the community and the neighborhood it serves, while respecting the historic character of the adjacent Main Street buildings.

These are consideration for the next steps during the design of the structure. Methods to address this may include complimentary building materials, landscaping, lighting, and potentially screening of a portion of the structure at key locations. Screening may be integrated in a variety of applications and can include applied materials such as terra cotta, fabric banners, or vertical landscaping. The use of vegetation for landscaping and screening would help soften the parking structure and provide a cohesive connection to the landscaping on Main Street.

An additional goal identified for the parking structure was to acknowledge the presence of Tom Evans Park and offer the possible expansion of community use space in this area of the site. This was option was accommodated with an open space provided in the structure immediately south of the park. Included in each concept is a paved open area free of structure that may receive further improvements in the future. A continued use of screening to partially conceal parked vehicles and the addition of landscaping in this area will assist in making this open space an extension of the park during special events.