

For nearly 50 years, Peorians have dreamed and talked about a Civic Center . . . without having one.

That dream will soon come true. Within two years, Peoria will have its Civic Center. Designed by the world-renowned architect Philip Johnson, this magnificent complex will feature:

- A superb arena for 11,000 sports fans to enjoy Bradley basketball, Peoria's own professional hockey team, bowling tournaments and ice shows.
- An incomparable 2,200 seat theatre for Peoria's performing arts companies and to attract the world's greatest artists and theatrical groups.
- The largest convention center in Illinois outside of Chicago . . . with unexcelled exhibition facilities and meeting rooms.

Twenty-five years ago, the noted American architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, said, "I doubt if there is anything in the world uglier than a midwestern city."

His two-word solution for Pittsburgh was "abandon it." And he described New York skyscrapers as "prison towers and modern posters for soap and whiskey."

This sorry description of the American city comes close to describing Peoria's downtown . . . as it was just a few years ago. For despite a resurgence in the early 1960s - spurred by the new Court House, the Central Park Plaza, Washington Square . . . and the headquarters building of Caterpillar, First Federal Savings and Security Savings - Peoria, by 1970, was showing signs of decay.

Abandoned stores and offices were replaced by second-rate magazine shops, massage parlors, or just plain emptiness. Crime rates in downtown Peoria increased. It was rapidly becoming an unattractive, unsafe, and inconvenient place to be.

A group of concerned community leaders decided to do something about it. They commissioned the distinguished architect and urban planner, Angelos C. Demetriou, to prepare a comprehensive redevelopment plan for downtown Peoria. Mr. Demetriou completed his unique redevelopment plan in 1974, and it was approved unanimously by Peoria's City Council and its Planning Commission.

The focal point of that revitalization concept is the new Civic Center located on a 20-acre site next to Peoria's historic City Hall - within close range of parking, hotels and with excellent highway and road access.

Truly, the Civic Center will be Peoria's chief magnet - the "people place" that draws people and activities back into downtown for concerts, conventions, fairs, exhibitions, ice shows, rodeos, graduations, revival meetings. Peoria's Civic Center is where the ACTION will be.

THIS IS WHERE WE CAN HELP!

The building costs of the Civic Center are being paid from two main sources:

\$20 million - from the receipts of race-track betting in Illinois.

\$36 million - from local user taxes (2% restaurant-bar, 2% amusement, and 3% hotel-motel).

\$56 million

This amount, however, will not cover the entire cost of the Civic Center complex. After vigorous cost reduction efforts by the Commission the total cost is \$58,500,000. This still does not include the glass arcades which add beauty to the complex.

Inflation and skyrocketing construction costs, occurring during the final planning and bidding phases, are the greatest contributors to the \$2,500,000 cost increase.

The \$56 million is sufficient to cover all construction costs with the exception of essential items necessary to make the complex operational. These are described as movable equipment - chairs, tables, arena and theatre seats, microphones, basketball scoreboards, hockey dashers, ice-making equipment, orchestra shells, theatre lighting equipment, and an assortment of other items that make a Civic Center "work."

These will cost **\$2.5 million** - and this is what we citizens can buy as an investment in our own future.

We and the Civic Center are one - and here's our opportunity to ensure its success.

This is an exciting time for Peorians. Major projects that signal growth and progress have already happened . . . the new State School of Medicine, the Continental Regency Hotel, the new Cohen Furniture Store, the new home of Illinois Mutual, the Jefferson Bank Building (formerly Carson's), the First National Bank Parking Plaza, Liberty Plaza Building, B'Nai B'Rith's Covenant House for senior citizens . . . to mention just a few.

Other major projects are under construction or in the advanced planning stages . . . including the Peoria Savings Plaza (formerly Jefferson Building), the new Twin Towers Hotel across Fulton Street from the Civic Center, the new Post Office, regional shopping mall, the new restaurant in the Rock Island Depot, and Southtown which will include Caterpillar's new Training Center.

In less than two years, Peoria's Civic Center doors will open.

And with it, a range of high quality activities that will make life worthwhile and generate revenues to stabilize our local economy.

The Civic Center will touch all life patterns in Central Illinois. It will leave an imprint on every aspect of our lives.

PEORIA CIVIC CENTER

