

Suburban Office Building

Austin, Texas

Taft Architects

Site

Located west of downtown Austin, Texas, at the edge of a rapidly developing suburban neighborhood, the 6.8-acre site is near the intersection of the high speed artery Mo Pac Boulevard and Texas Highway 2222.

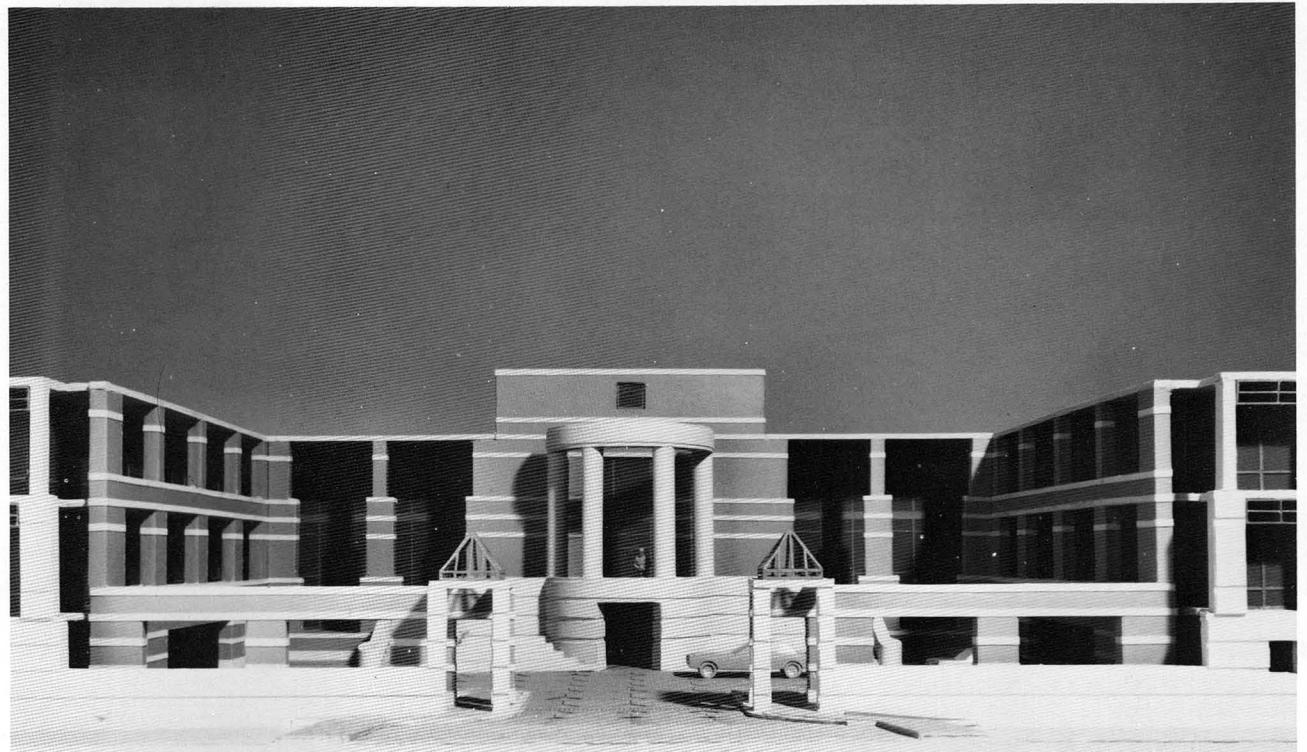
The elongated site, 1,500-feet by 240-feet is accessed only by the neighborhood edge, Balcones Drive, and slopes down toward the eastern edge, overlooking Mo Pac Boulevard. Forest preserves are located along the north and east edges of the site.

Problem

To design a distinctive speculative office building, of approximately 220,000 square feet conforming to two sets of specific requirements. The first set came from the client's desire to maximize leasable square footage, while achieving architectural excellence through a sensitivity to the general character of Austin's climate, culture and construction, as well as the particular site considerations.

The second set of requirements were zoning restrictions as follows:

- 35-foot height limit
- 70 percent maximum impervious coverage
- one parking space required for every 300 square feet of lease space
- 25-foot set backs from property lines
- forest preserves to remain
- compatibility with residential neighborhood



Entry Court Model

Materials

The structure is cast in place flat concrete post-tensioned slabs, which maximizes interior floor-to-ceiling height within the 35 foot height restriction.

Precast concrete, colored with indigenous Austin limestone aggregate, forms the base of the building, and steps up in front of the solex glass skin, to become the frame for a system of infill metal sun-screening devices. The entrance and interior courts are made richer through the introduction of banded brick.

Solution

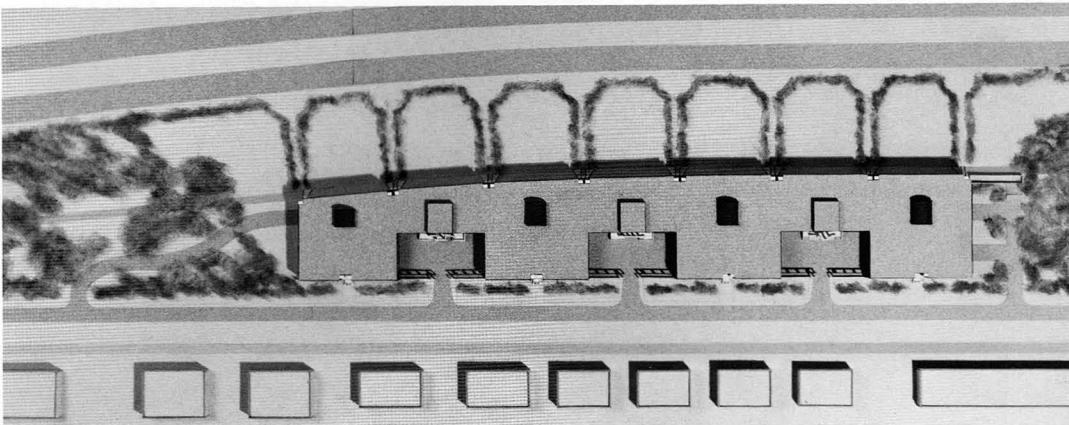
The building is organized as a 1,050-foot by 150-foot slab with two levels of lease space above two levels of parking.

Two distinct edges are established in response to the site context. On the west, toward the residential neighborhood, a series of vehicular and pedestrian entrance courts modulates the scale of the structure into more individualized units, in contrast to the large scale, continuous edge overlooking the freeway. Each entry court has its own distinct

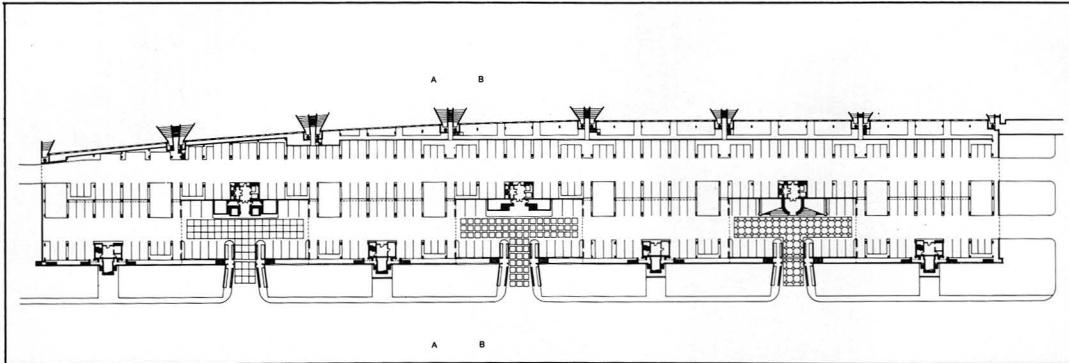
character and provides a sense of intimate scale to the development.

Within the building, interior courts provide light and punctuation to the corridors.

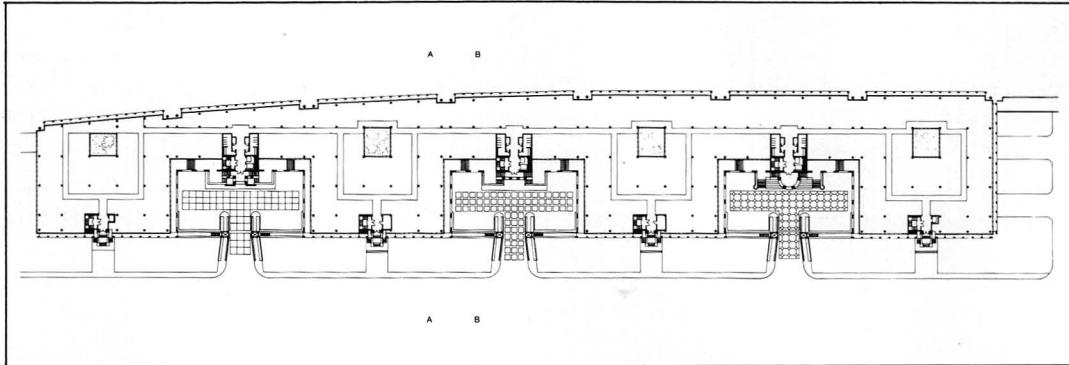
A double exterior skin of glass and precast concrete, provides both maximum views and sun protection.



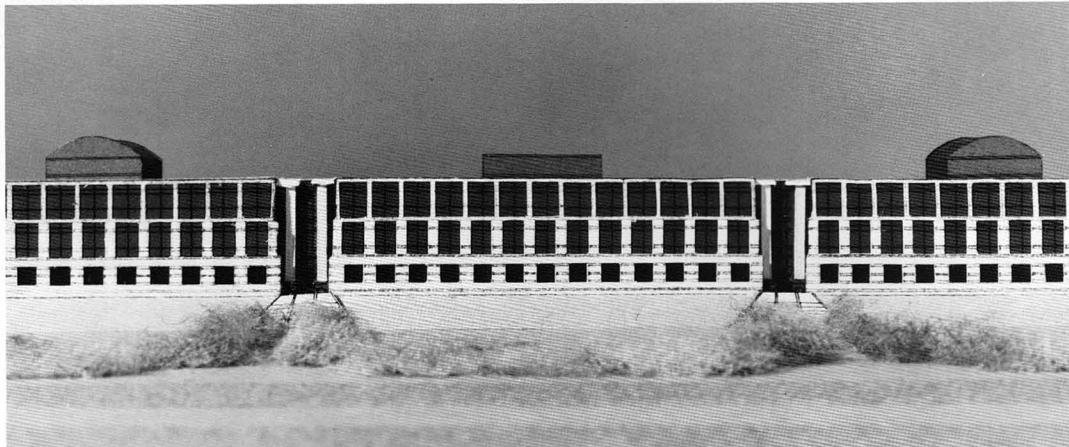
Aerial View of Model



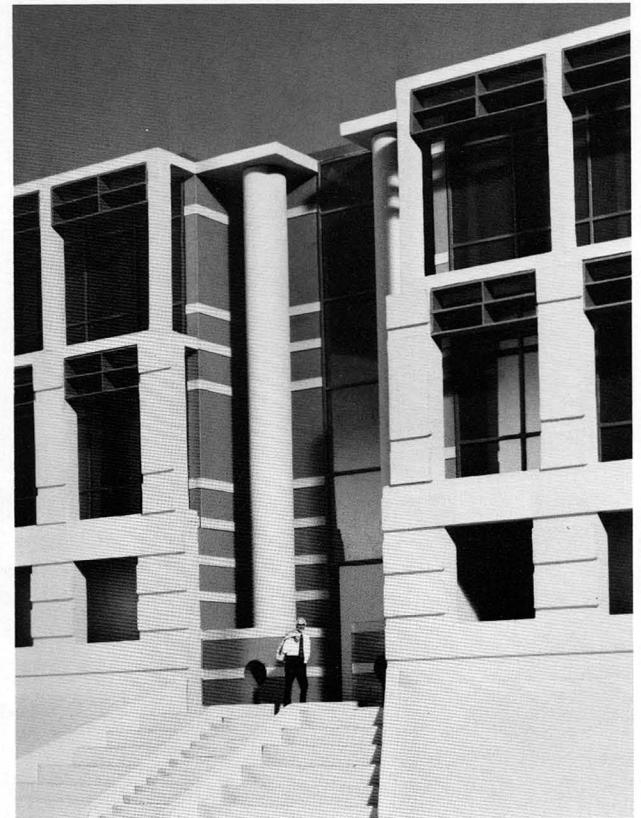
Entry Court/Parking Level



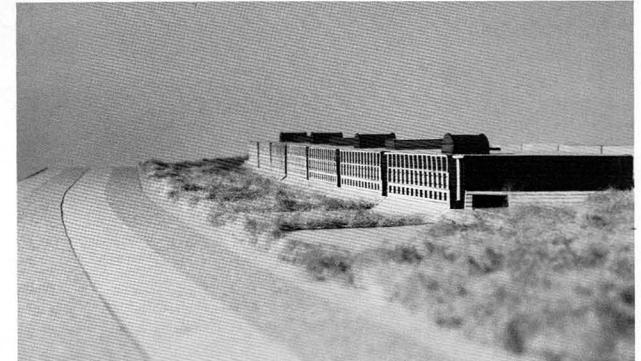
Office Level



East View of Model



East Entry Way



View from Northeast



View of Model