The University of Alaska Fairbanks has identified a desire for a campus clock tower. The purpose of this document is for an initial conceptual review, and does not serve as an exhaustive design exercise. Additional efforts will be required to develop a design appropriate for UAF, its branding and visual identity.

Design

Specific design components of the clock tower will relate to its overall character and how it represents UAF. It's size and scale are somewhat independent from these attributes, and are more tied to how it relates to adjacent areas and it's level of importance to the campus. Similar to hierarchies used within campus planning documents, a feature like the clock tower needs to be assessed by whether it is a campus-wide element, relates more to a specific campus-zone, or is tied to be of localized importance. Decisions such as these will guide the desired location and also inform design criteria such as scale and complexity and the accompanying impacts on implementation costs.

Functional Criteria

Initial criteria that have been identified for the clock tower are:

- it shall have a lighted clock face,
- it shall not be climbable,
- it should be located as a focal element, and
- it shall serve a functional purpose for telling time.

Additional recommended criteria include:

- its design and placement shall be consistent with UAF planning documents,
- its design and function should relate to UAF and its unique characteristics, and
- its size and design should relate to its location, and whether it emphasizes campus-wide, campus zone, or localized importance.

Locations

Four potential locations are currently proposed that relate to fulfilling aspects of campus planning.

- Options 1, 2, and 3 are located within the Core area of campus and should be of a large pedestrian-scale and designed to complement surrounding architecture. With architectural styles of the UAF Campus Core being varied, a simple and clean design style is recommended.
- Option 4 is located at the intersection of Geist Road and Thompson Drive and would help to define this as an important campus gateway to and from the community. This option would require a larger clock tower that responds to longer sightlines and being located in a more vehicular-based area. (Thompson Drive has been identified as an important campus gateway in the Campus Master Plan and locating a gateway element at this intersection with Geist Road was identified in the Trails and Greenways Plan as a priority. There are other designated locations on campus that could benefit from a Gateway, such as the Alumni Drive, Tanana Loop, and South Chandalar intersection which was identified in the Campus Master Plan as a priority for gateway development. A clock tower does not necessarily fit in this location as well as at the Thompson Drive/ Geist Road intersection due to higher volumes of vehicular traffic and activities.)

Styles

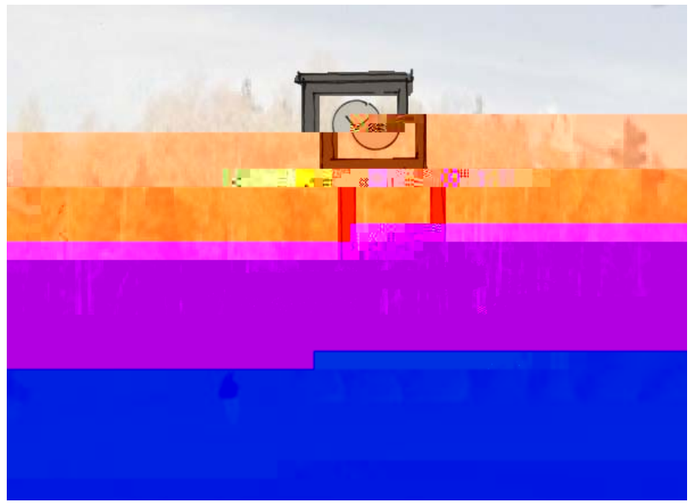
A very large palette of styles is available for a clock tower. Items such as campus importance, scale and location need to be determined prior to examining specific design-elements. A clock tower can take any form and design, with standardized clock elements being able to be installed into custom enclosures. This document illustrates relevant examples of clock towers in other locations, and also presents initial concepts for the location options listed above.

Northwestern University's Rebecca Crown Center Clock Tower is an iconic piece of contemporary architecture that acts as a gateway to the campus.

The Stanford Clock Tower has an attached pergola at the base and has a simple, contemporary style that matches surrounding architecture.

The clock tower at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington is also a good example of simple design that would suit UAF.

The Keynesham Clock Tower in a small town in England provides a focal point for a public plaza and is a good example of simple clock design that is appealing and relates to more modern architecture.



Gateway

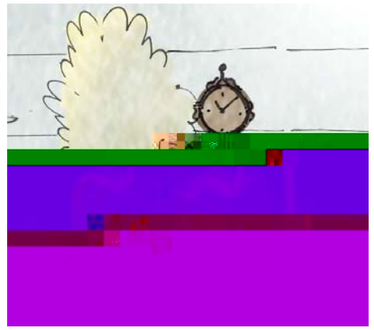
A large clock tower (25-30’ in height) should have the mass and design features to serve as an important element with in a campus gateway area. It needs to be large enough to be seen at longer distances, be visible to people in cars traveling at higher speeds, and provide a high level of campus visual identity and branding.

Materials and delivery - varies based on design

Feature

The pedestrian-scale sized clock tower (20-25’ in height) could serve as a feature element to reinforce designed areas on campus by serving as a focal point. It would likely be shorter than a Gateway clock tower in order to fit in with surrounding architecture and the pedestrian environment.

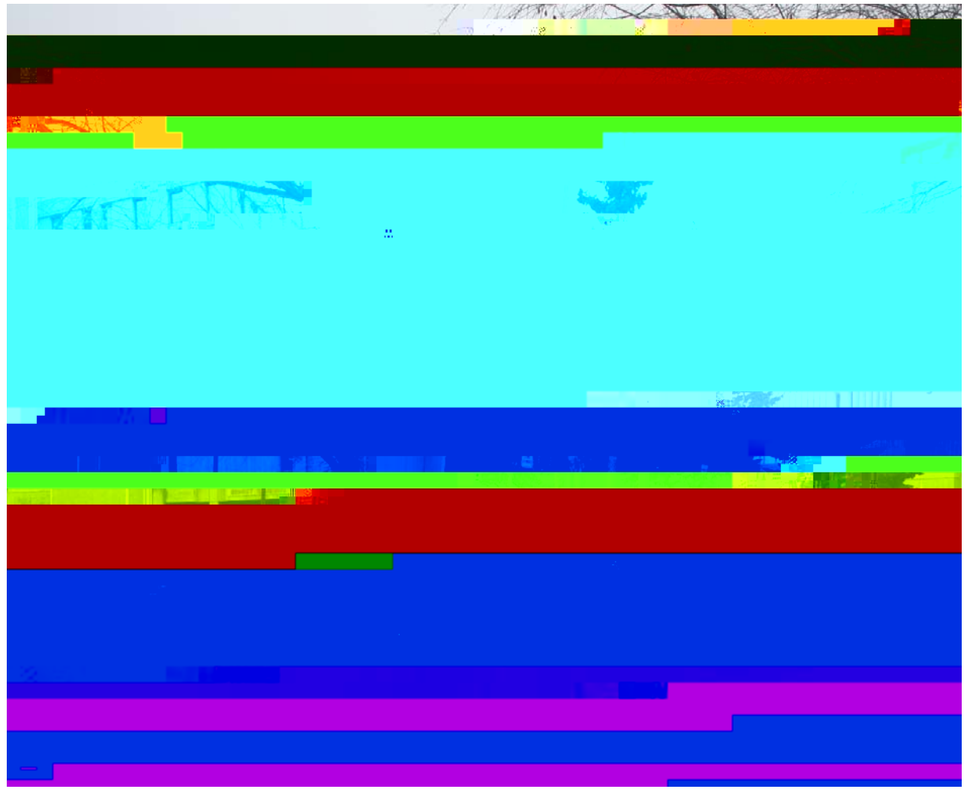
Materials and delivery - in the range of $100,000. This does not include design, foundation, power supply, site preparations, related landscaping and project management.



Element

A post clock in (10-15’ in height) could serve as an accent element within a localized campus pedestrian area or node. Generally they are a 2-4 sided large clock face on a post. These post clock are mostly functional in that they tell the time and can be placed to accent an area with high pedestrian use, or serve as a small focal element.

Materials and delivery - in the range of $38,000. This does not include design, foundation, power supply, site preparations, related landscaping and project management.



Long-term Possibilities

The west facade of Gruening faces onto the proposed South Chandalar Pedestrian Corridor (currently in planning phases per the Campus Wide Core Access Plan of 2014). It has been noted that this facade currently displays many ‘back of house’ functions. This building will be the visual terminus of a very strong pedestrian corridor once the improvements have been built, so opportunities for Gruening shoudl be investigated.

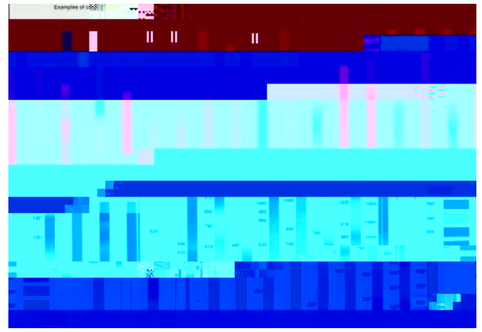
For example, the stair tower on Gruening’s west facade is in an ideal location to be re-envisioned as a new stair and clock tower with possible illuminated element. This would create a very iconic focal point for this proposed pedestrian corridor as well as the Campus Core.

More Detailed Design Ideas

A custom clock tower could be designed as a sculptural element that highlights UAF culture and identity. There are many benefits to be gained through collaboration with the UAF Art Department and the UAF Engineering Department by using such a feature as a way to exhibit design and structural capabilities. Such integration strengthens campus connections and relationships.

A clock tower also presents an opportunity to showcase the unique subarctic climate of Fairbanks and UAF. There may be opportunities to use materials and techniques that tie the sculpture to the local environment by making natural phenomenon visible. This may include materials that change with temperature fluctuations, or designs that are tied to daylight levels. These environmental visualizations could be highly unique, and act as teaching tools in addition tot he aesthetic opportunities that they offer.

An example shown above is a solar-powered art piece that interacts with users during periods of low-light, and charged during the day. While feasibility and design of an element like this would need to be studied, it presents just one creative example of how to tie local conditions into design. The sundial shown above shows a simpler option than could be customized to our arctic conditions to show the large variations in solar patterns in Fairbanks.



As an example of the potential to illustrate climate, thermochromatic paint is a fairly simple material that changes color with temperature. Shown above is an example palette that illustrates temperature ranges and color effects.

UAF Clock Tower

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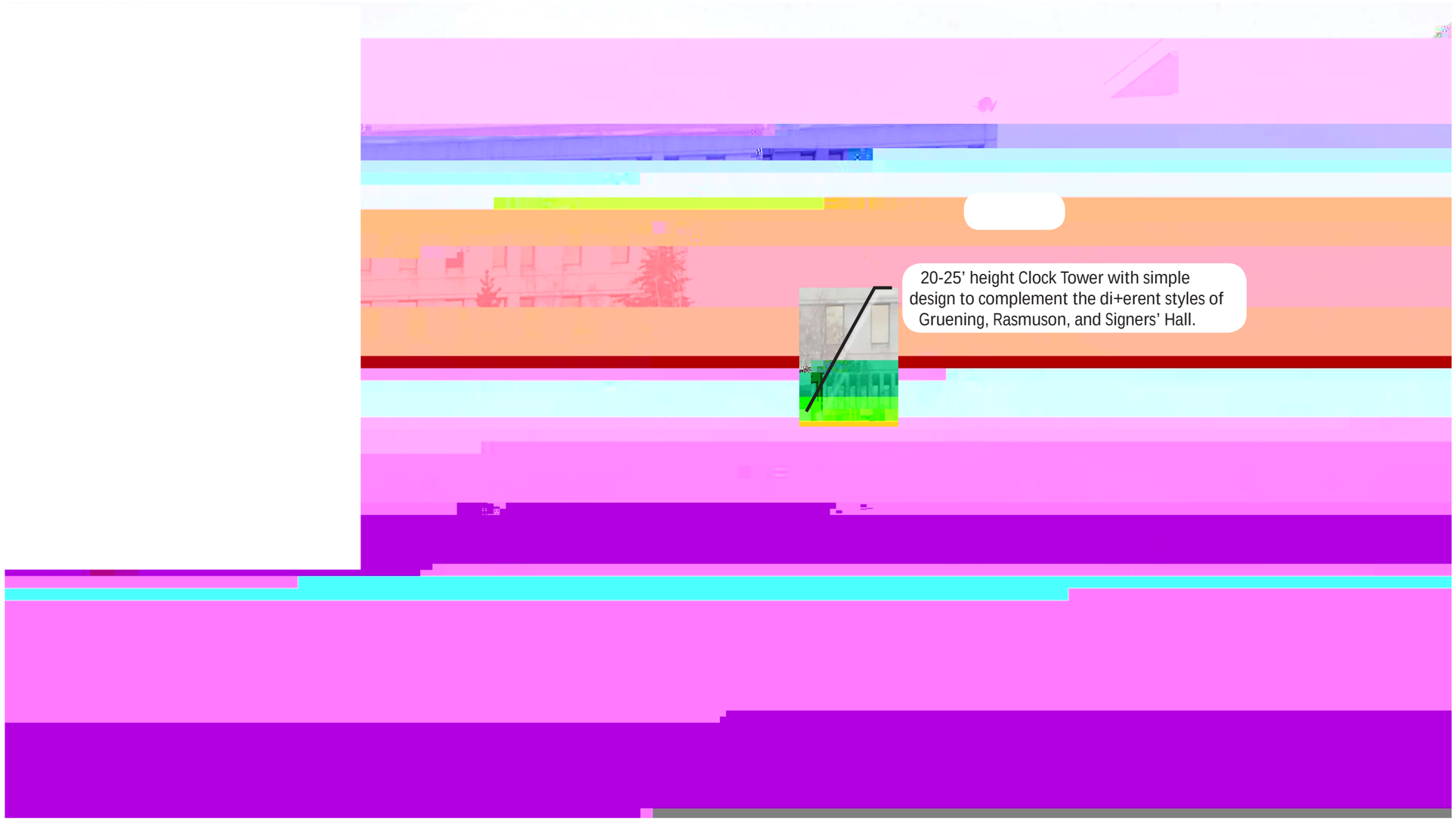

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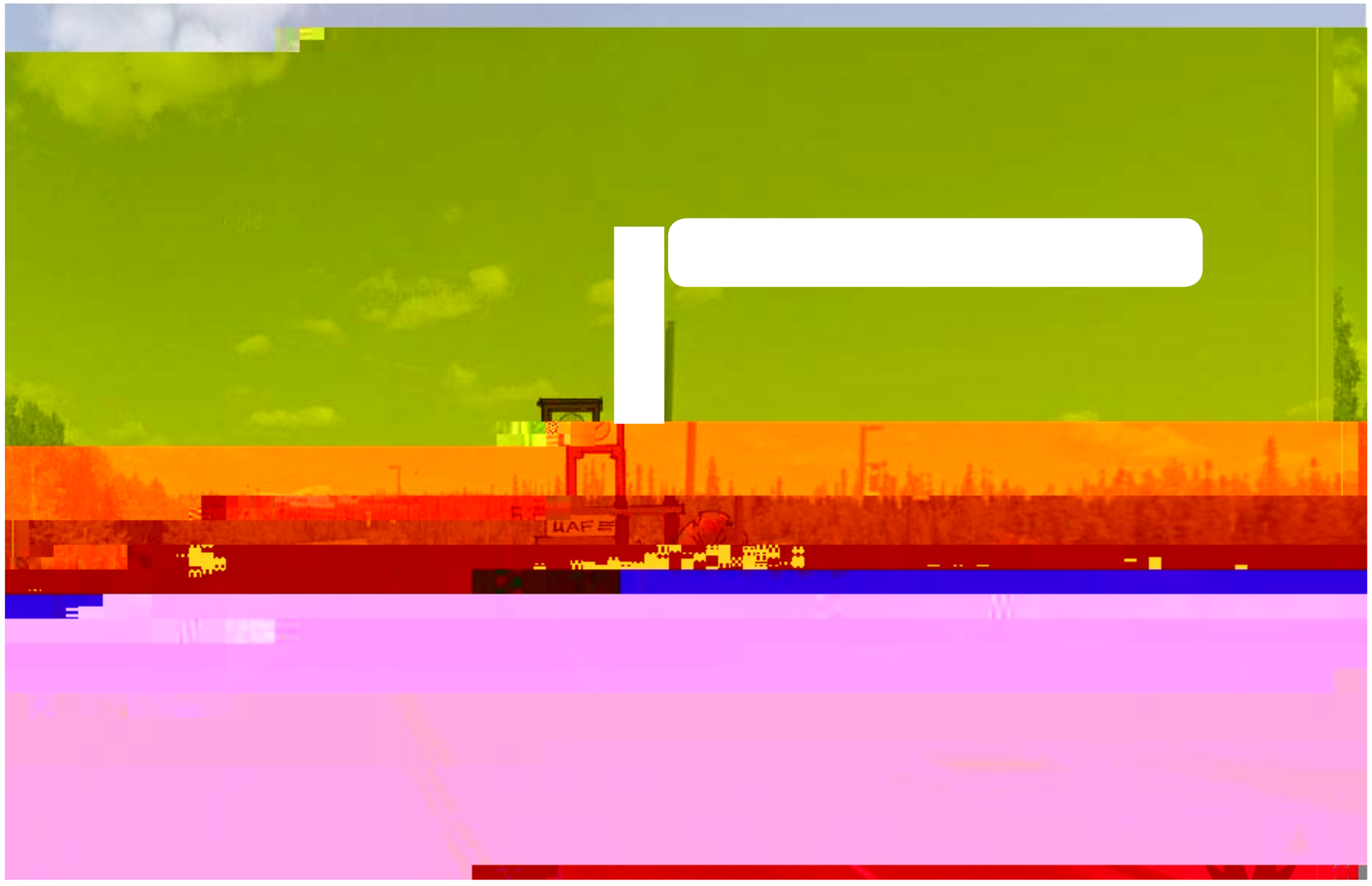

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