

# Breaking New Ground Pharmaceutical Pioneer Lends New Meaning to the Term "Corporate Citizen"

By Fern Tiger and  
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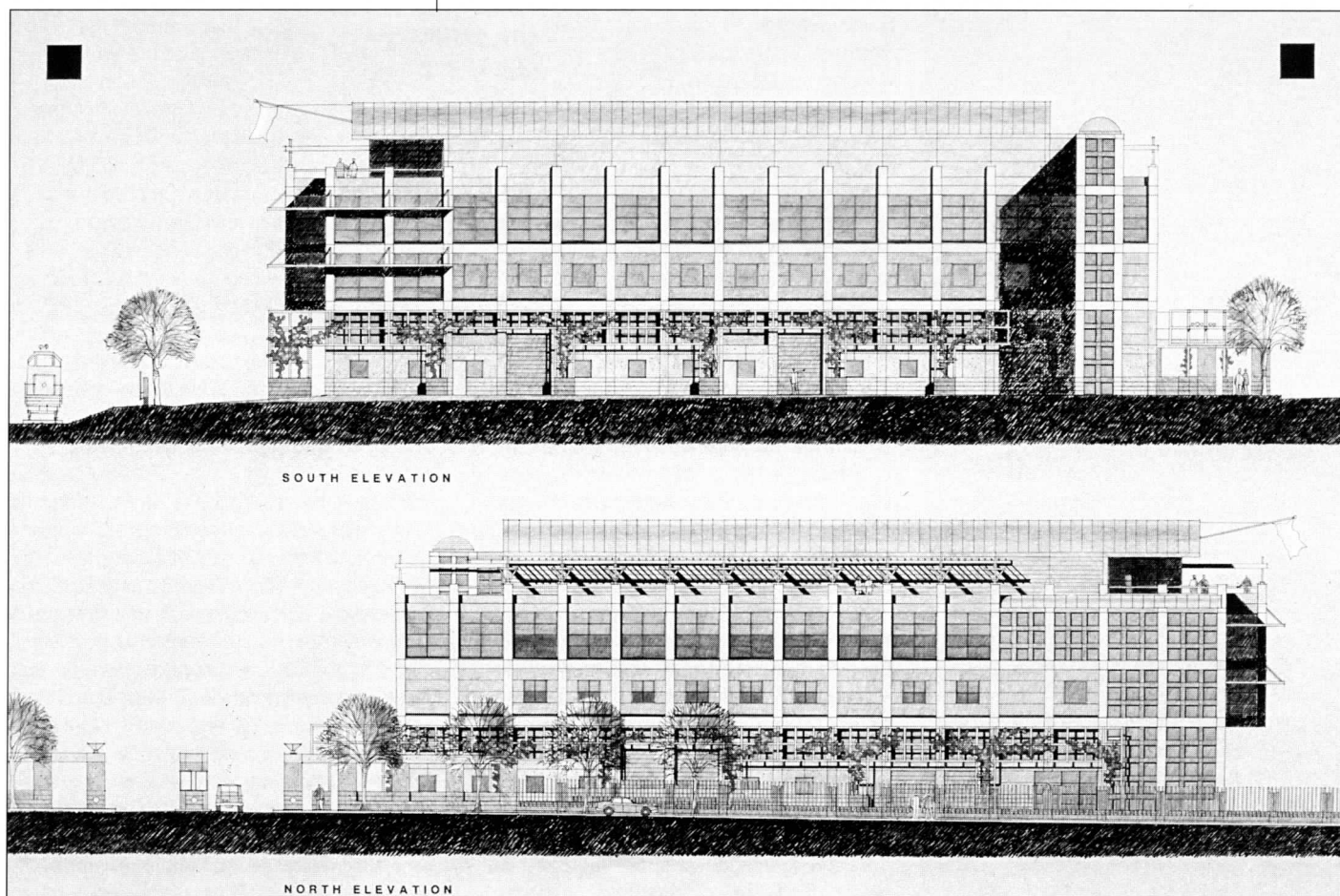
When Miles, Inc. initially picked Berkeley as a site for a major company expansion – a new center for the development and manufacture of pharmaceutical products derived from new cell technology – there was little to indicate that a design competition would play a significant role in their plans. Because Berkeley was the location of Cutter Biological, a Miles subsidiary, and near other research facilities of a similar nature, it was a logical choice for the company's new biotechnology center. The immediate implications of this decision were twofold:

- Miles/Cutter would have to come up with a flexible, long-range facilities development plan allowing for adequate growth.
- A long-term, land-use agreement would have to be negotiated with the City of Berkeley.

Miles/Cutter already began discussing long range plans for its site with the City of Berkeley in 1989. It was finally decided that a Development Agreement between the company and the City would be the

best form of entitlement to achieve the goals of both the City and Miles. While California had the enabling legislation to allow cities to pursue development agreements – many California cities had successfully entered into contracts of this form – Berkeley had never before been interested in this kind of arrangement. Moreover, most development agreements have been used to entice private developers to construct shopping centers, hotels, etc., on vacant land. To the best of anyone's knowledge, the use of this form of entitlement to modernize property already owned and used by a developer – in this case, the company – was unique, but also appropriate. The development agreement will enable Cutter to both modernize its current site and plan for logical growth so that the company can address market demand and changing technologies. According to Dr. Karl Duchardt, Miles' Vice President of Production and Engineering and the key person responsible for launching the company's bid for a longterm agreement, "the

South Elevation/  
North Elevation



Commission

Lyndon/Buchanan Associates  
Berkeley, CA

## Competition Facts

<b>Client/Sponsor</b>	Miles Inc./Cutter Biological, Berkeley, CA
<b>Type</b>	Invitation, one-stage
<b>Closing Date</b>	May 14, 1991
<b>Entries</b>	3 (screened from pool of 10 firms)
<b>Honoraria</b>	\$28,000 for each firm
<b>Winner</b>	<b>Lyndon/Buchanan Associates</b> , Berkeley, CA with Ove Arup Partners
<b>Finalists</b>	<b>MTB Architects</b> San Francisco, CA <b>Ratcliff Architects</b> Emeryville, CA
<b>Competition Consultants</b>	Fern Tiger Associates William Liskamm, FAIA
<b>Jury</b>	Carmen Betancourt Miles/Cutter, Berkeley  Peter Calthorpe, AIA San Francisco, CA  John Curl West Berkeley Area Plan Committee  Karl Duchardt VP, Miles Inc., New Haven, CT  Sanford Hirshen, FAIA Vancouver, BC  Robert Oringdulph, FAIA Portland, OR  Moshe Sternberg Senior VP, Miles/Cutter  Peter Walker, FASLA San Francisco, CA  Allison Williams, AIA San Francisco, CA  Bob Cole, Manfred Pohl, George Traugh Miles/Cutter  Gil Kelley, Planning Director, Berkeley  Fern Tiger, Berkeley

development agreement process is a difficult and cumbersome one that must take many things into consideration. This particular development agreement, which has the distinction of being a first for both Miles and the City of Berkeley, will define the future build-out of this site for the next thirty years."

The agreement will also provide a negotiated set of community benefits which might include programs related to job training, education, childcare, and other gains for Berkeley residents.

### Deciding on a Competition

Because site build-out will occur over a long period of time (30 years), and the exact production requirements are neither known nor designed at present, the company's physical plans, encompassed in their Development Agreement proposal, were necessarily vague. While an abstract concept of "building blocks" and "envelopes of space" was described and proposed, the opportunity to set a standard and a theme for the site was not really considered until it was determined that timing necessitated the early development of a pilot plant building.

Given the importance of this first building, the growing awareness of the concerns of the community, and the unique situation of a biotech company embedded in an urban fabric, the company – not known for prior architectural interest – decided to host a competition in order to select the team with which they would work. Since the Pilot Plant would be the first of numerous buildings yet to come, its significance as the cornerstone for the site became ever more obvious. It would provide the community with the only indication as to what the future site would look like.

The decision to host an invited architectural competition stemmed from both Miles/Cutter's desire to have this building set the standard for other buildings, and the need to present the City and its residents with an exceptional architectural solution which could convince supporter and skeptic alike of Miles' commitment to its appearance within Berkeley.

As an engineering-oriented company, the design of a technical "process" – through which a product can be successfully manufactured – is often the final and

ultimate "creative solution." The building to house the system and the spaces which encompass the numerous buildings on the site are not usually a major consideration. Likewise, most biotech companies develop on virgin land without the burden of neighbors and a pre-existing context. Given the unusual setting – bordering on a growing live-work community recently settled into former industrial buildings, and the Company's recognition that their plans could symbolize a new commitment to industrial development and employment opportunities in Berkeley – Miles/Cutter decided to host an architectural competition as a way to select a firm that could successfully understand both the technical requirements and the unusual urban context. Of the tens of firms selected for an initial interview, three were commissioned to submit designs, with each firm receiving \$28,000 to draw up plans for the project.

### Environmental Considerations

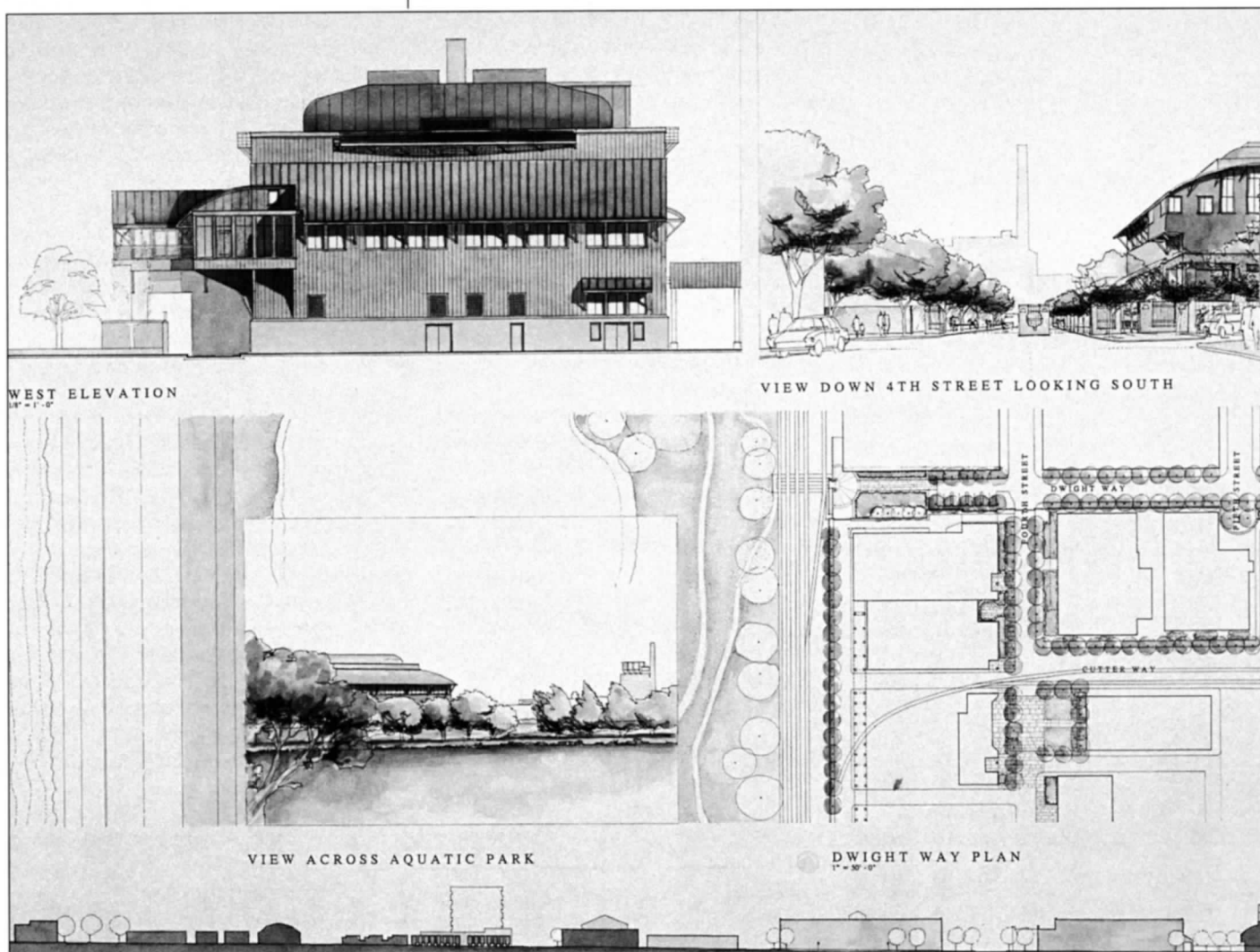
Miles/Cutter is situated at the end of

**"..the projected build-out faces considerable public scrutiny in a city where community participation is high and opinions are easily solicited."**

Dwight Way, a major Berkeley thoroughfare, and on the western edge of the West Berkeley neighborhood. It is bordered on one side by Aquatic Park, a recreational area featuring a small lagoon. Since Aquatic Park's other main border is an eight lane freeway, Miles/Cutter's physical relationship to the park's access points is held as an important consideration by the public, and West Berkeley residents in particular. Both Aquatic Park and West Berkeley were

subjects of City-commissioned plans developed with significant community participation.

The recently-released West Berkeley Area Plan took five years to complete and called for a mixed use industrial base for the neighborhood. While Miles/Cutter's use for its own land is in accord with that designation, the property is the second-largest parcel in the City and the projected build-out faces considerable public scrutiny in a city where community participation is high and opinions are easily solicited. Although Miles/Cutter has shown itself to be very open to the extensive public scrutiny that this proposed plan has precipitated, its site is not accessible to the general public, except by special permission. Thus, the company must balance the community's desire for openness and disclosure with the highly technological,



often proprietary nature of its own operations.

Similarly, the facilities' architectural elements must be driven by the plants' complex internal processes as well as the many unknowns in terms of buildings and products yet-to-be. As a further step to ensure that the design solution for the first building would demonstrate both excellence and responsiveness to the community, Miles/Cutter placed the competition under the direction of their public and community relations consultant, Fern Tiger. She enlisted the help of competition consultant William Liskamm to ensure that the format met competition standards and facilitate the jury's deliberations. The company agreed that the jury should consist primarily of professional architects, rather than company representatives. A community person was also included on the jury.

### The Challenge

Contestants were charged with finding a design solution that could celebrate life and living systems in a unique city with a long tradition of progressive politics and a sensitivity to its environment. Moreover, in designing this biotech facility, the architects were dealing with a building type which does not necessarily possess the same qualities inherent to other high technology structures. The main evaluation criteria were:

- work successfully in an urban context;
- meet the technical requirements of the operations that take place within the building;
- address community and neighborhood concerns, as well as proximity to a shoreline park with train tracks separating the park from the site;
- create an image that bespeaks the life processes that Miles/Cutter and this build-

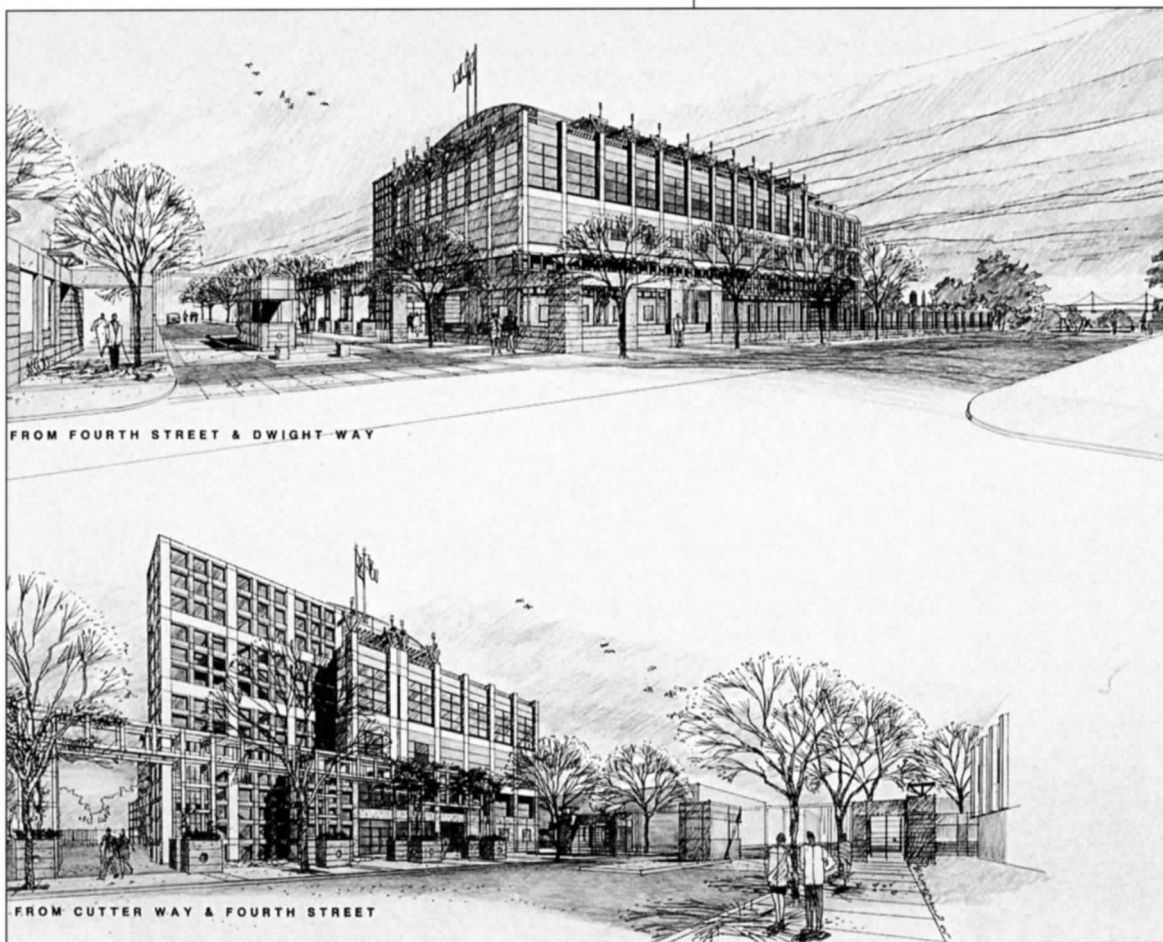
ing are enhancing;

- set the standards as well as the character and theme for future development on the total site;
- enable an enhancement of the skeletal design guidelines to be produced;
- meet all guidelines set forth in the regulations of the City of Berkeley.

### Jury Procedures

Prior to its review, the Jury visited the site and met with Miles/Cutter representatives to confirm their understanding of the project's objectives. The three invited architectural teams were each allotted one hour to make their presentations and answer questions from the jury. In addition, the jury was provided with a full complement of technical advisers to assist them throughout their deliberations, including engineering and science staff from Miles/Cutter, community relations consultants, Berkeley's Planning





**"How the project faced the City and the neighborhood around it was of significant concern."**

Director, and other city staff people.

In his remarks at the awards reception hosted by Miles/Cutter, Jury Chairperson Sandy Hirshen, FAIA, characterized the jury's deliberations as follows:

"The jury deliberations and discussions were excellent and really quite deep. We agreed that, in some way, we were trying to discover what form new industrial plants will and can take...and how to interpret the new technology." In describing some of the specific guidelines, both external and internal, considered by the jury, he noted, "How the project 'faced' the City and the neighborhood around it was of significant concern. And then there was the notion of trying to build one million square feet and having one thousand employees occupy these buildings over a thirty year period. We worried about what you can do to make that environment humane and satisfying for employees when they have all this technology buzzing and humming around them." Hirshen prefaced his comments by cheerfully referring to architects as 'an unruly lot' and complimenting the competitors because each in their own way had gone "beyond" the

competition in their solution as they "maintained the integrity of the industrial processes by used intelligence and sensitivity to make the buildings and even the site more humane."

The winning design by Lyndon/Buchanan Associates of Berkeley (with Ove Arup Partners) demonstrated not just an "intelligent sensitivity" to the Berkeley neighborhood on which the site borders but a sense of detail and caring about the merging of large scale industry in a neighborhood framework. The unpretentious nature of Lyndon/Buchanan's solution was also appropriate for a company which had been on this very site for 90 years...without fanfare and without controversy. Particularly outstanding was the firm's handling of the Dwight Way terminus, which they transformed into Dwight Gardens, a pleasant public garden with an ongrade pedestrian crossing into Aquatic Park. Juror Peter Calthorpe, AIA, found this responsiveness to the community a primary feature of their design solution:

"Lyndon/Buchanan's concept showed that they really understood Berkeley. For

example, extending Dwight Way and making a connection into Aquatic Park created an unexpected public benefit. Also, the building was handled in a straightforward manner, appropriate to the mixed use industrial site on which it sits and to the neighborhood's edges."

In recognizing the role of the Pilot Plant to "integrate the life of the work force into the surrounding community," Donlyn Lyndon noted that, "...this will require a delicacy and attentiveness to nuance that is comparable in architecture and urban design, to that which is required to bring biology and technology together in the symbiotic relationship that is the foundation of the life saving products of Miles/Cutter - where biological well-being sets the limits for technical invention." To accomplish this, the Pilot Plant design locates the more intensively occupied peopled areas, i.e., non production spaces, on the lower levels where the building meets its surroundings. These areas which have more windows can support and draw benefit from the creation of a friendly pleasant campus and neighborhood spaces. Activities in the building are evident on the street and employees can enjoy and watch over Dwight Gardens.

The production processes themselves are housed in simple modules with occasional projecting bays and sun-shaped windows that provide outlook. The areas housing mechanical services at the top have soft contours to diminish their impact as a silhouette. Expanded to envision a 30-year build-out, the buildings are planned to be arranged so that heights, massing and covered rooftop equipment compose a cohesive, orderly skyline, which ensuring the retention of public view corridors.

Despite the site's relatively low worker-density, Lyndon Buchanan's design highlights a "campus structure" which encourages pedestrian activity. Pedestrian passages, areas of visible activity, recreation and gathering spots are concentrated within a continuous band of visually controlled and landscaped open spaces. These open spaces are bordered by building forms of compatible heights and character.

#### Post-Competition Reality

Since the announcement of the competition winner and the subsequent contracting of Lyndon/Buchanan as the company's architect for both the pilot plant building and its master plan/design guidelines, the firm has shown both the community and the

company how good design and planning can impact community opinion, and simultaneously produce a site that is appropriate for technical uses and stimulating for those who work at the facility. The project still faces numerous hurdles on its way to approval, not the least of which is a much needed variance for heights required by the technical processes which go beyond the current zoning for the area.

The decision to host the competition enabled Miles/Cutter to view the work of several firms, in a way not possible by the traditional interview process. As a company, unfamiliar, and perhaps uncomfortable, with making this very important selection, they were helped and educated in the process of choosing an architect, by the able guidance of a professional team...the jury. The jury was also instrumental in helping key corporate officials recognize the many facets of their project and to see the development of both the first building and the plans for the site as an opportunity to create something unique and special - for Berkeley, for the company and its employees, and for the field of biotechnology.



Finalist

**Ratcliff Architects**  
Emeryville, CA