

THE NEW LONG BEACH CIVIC CENTER

April Economides

SOUTH COAST
PUBLISHING



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Dedicated to George Economides, who conceptualized this book.

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City Hall and the Civic Chambers (left) and the Port Administration Building (right) from the corner of Ocean Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue. (Fukushima Photography)

Introduction

On July 29, 2019, Long Beach marked a major milestone in its history and a new era in its downtown development by opening to the public a brand new City Hall, Civic Chambers, Port of Long Beach Administration Building, and Civic Plaza – the first phase of the Long Beach Civic Center master plan development.

The new Long Beach Public Library’s Main Branch will open in September 2019, and a completely redesigned Lincoln Park will be unveiled before 2022. By 2024, two residential and retail towers, along with other public spaces and thoroughfares, will debut.

The six-block project garnered two awards before even breaking ground in 2016, one for its financing model and one for its design. The project is the largest municipal public-private partnership (P3) in the nation and North America’s first municipal ‘DBFOM’ – a P3 in which a private development consortium agrees to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain a building for a set number of years – in Long Beach’s case, 40 – while shouldering much of the cost and risk. The project is also the first North American hybrid DBFOM to combine public infrastructure and private development within a single project.

The creative financing approach allowed the City to build a new Civic Center that will be affordable and high-performing over its lifetime, without taxing residents. This was possible largely because the new Civic Center is being built in exchange for land on which the developers will build revenue-generating structures. The privately developed land will include more than 500 new residences atop ground floor shops and restaurants.

Plenary-Edgemoor Civic Partners is the development partner, and its three main consortium contractors are Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP for the design, Clark Construction as the builder, and Johnson Controls International to operate and maintain the buildings.

In this book, we will examine the multi-layered history of how this development came about, the pioneering business model, the transformation of a megablock into a pedestrian-scaled area, the sunsoaked buildings, and all of those ‘little’ things that make a space a place, from attractive signage to public art.

It is our hope this book will help inform Long Beach residents and stakeholders about this development and its history. We also hope this book proves useful to other municipalities and agencies considering DBFOM P3s.

The steps taken to enable the City of Long Beach to arrive at this pivotal milestone should be celebrated and studied. Inventive vision, thoughtful planning, and impressive teamwork combined to produce a “subtly elegant” development, as one city planner described it, that improves the public realm.

The former City Hall, opened in 1977 and designed by Allied Architects, served the City until July 2019. (Photograph courtesy of Long Beach Historical Society)



Replacing the Long Beach Civic Center

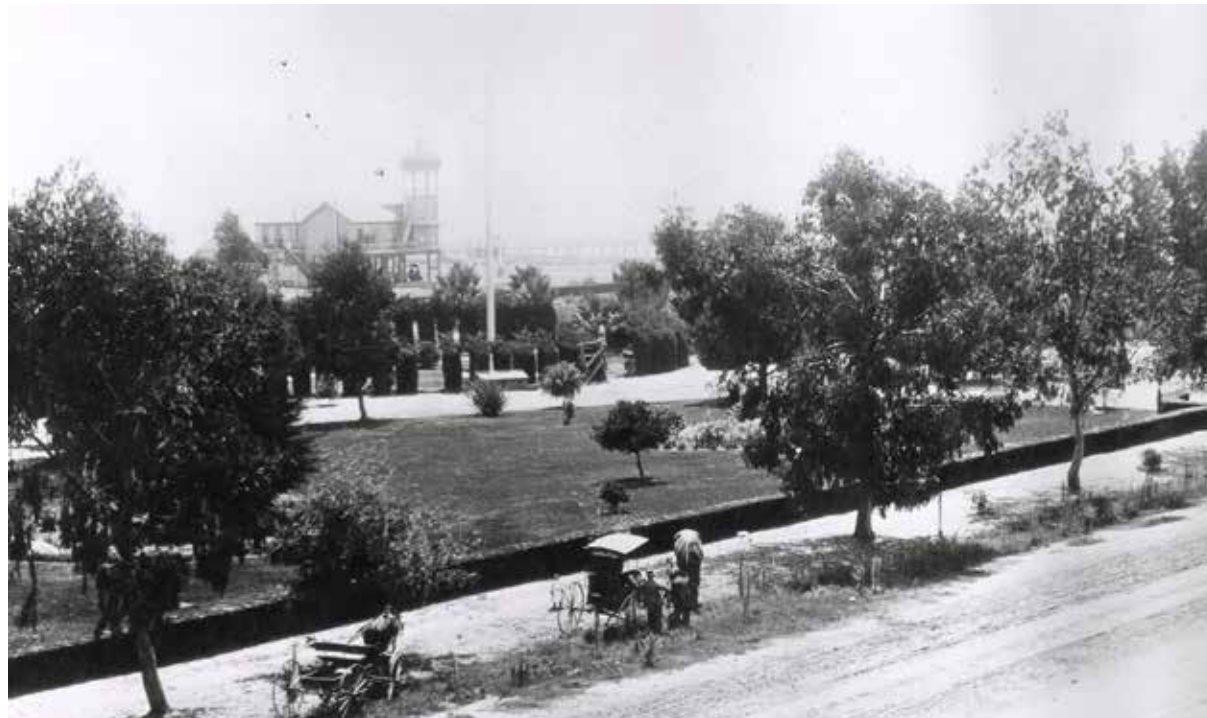
The new Long Beach Civic Center replaced a megablock development comprised of 22 acres spanning six blocks. Opened in 1977, it was designed by Allied Architects, a consortium of prominent local firms, led by Gibbs & Gibbs Architects. The design team also included Homolka & Associates, Killingsworth, Brady & Associates, Kenneth S. Wing and Associates, and Peter Walker.

The intent of the consortium’s design, which included a new City Hall, Main Library, and Lincoln Park, in addition to the already-built Long Beach Courthouse and Long Beach Public Safety Building, was to consolidate city departments onto one site and create a town square atmosphere. The Main Library, which sat mostly below ground, featured rooftop gardens. Site design plans called for shops, stadium seating in the plaza for concerts, and an I.M. Pei-designed Long Beach Museum of Art.

Unfortunately, some aspects of the plan were never built – namely, the museum, shops, or other activities to liven up the public spaces – and those that were constructed didn’t withstand the test of time or bring about the desired results. The Library’s heavy rooftop garden caused structural damage and leaking, City Hall had seismic and maintenance issues, and the Civic Plaza and overall development became a barrier to pedestrian activity and civic engagement.

The City’s hope with the new Civic Center is that by reopening up the closed-off streets, removing the concrete walls within and around the development, building long-lasting and translucent buildings, and adding residential and retail in the center, the streets will become reactivated and the surrounding area more vibrant.

Pacific Park under construction in the 1890s. It was later renamed Lincoln Park. (Photograph courtesy of Long Beach Historical Society)



Long Beach's first City Hall, circa 1900. (Photograph by Charles Daugherty courtesy of Long Beach Historical Society)



A History of Long Beach City Halls

By John Royce, Historical Society of Long Beach

On May 24, 1899, the cornerstone of the first Long Beach City Hall was placed just north of Broadway, right in the middle of Pacific Avenue for a commanding view of the Pacific Ocean. Opening day was in October 1899. The first City Hall served as both city council chambers and a public library until the Carnegie Library opened in Pacific Park (later renamed Lincoln Park) in 1909.

Long Beach grew rapidly in the first decade of the 20th Century, overwhelming the little City Hall, which was moved across the street to the northwest corner of Pacific and Broadway Avenues in May of 1921. The move made way for a new eight-floor City Hall, designed by W. Horace Austin and opened in 1923.

The original City Hall shared the civic stage with its younger and bigger sibling for less than a decade before it was demolished to make way for the stunning Art Moderne style Public Utilities Building by Dedrick & Bobbe in 1931. Like other Long Beach civic buildings, it too fell to the wrecking ball in the 1970s. But first, a disaster would strike that would reset the architectural stage in the seaside city.



Long Beach's second City Hall is pictured beside its predecessor in 1925. The new municipal building was constructed to accommodate a growing community. (Photograph courtesy of Long Beach Historical Society)

On March 10, 1933, with the Great Depression settling in, Long Beach shook with a blow only Mother Nature could deliver. While City Hall survived the '33 quake, as did all the city's iconic skyscrapers, its brick facade and masonry structural supports were significantly damaged.

Rehabilitated with a new reinforced composite concrete structure and sleek gunite exterior, City Hall adopted a Modernistic style like many federally-funded public works projects constructed during that time. Re-designed by Cecil Schilling, this beautiful structure would serve Long Beach until 1977, when the City demolished it and its entire civic structure family in favor of an all new Civic Center intended to resurrect an ailing downtown with a futuristic design for the ages.

Long Beach cleared its civic slate in the mid '70s. The Moderne City Hall, Municipal Utilities Building, Long Beach Veterans Memorial Hall, and the classic Carnegie Library were demolished for an ultra-modern Brutalism-style Civic Center in Lincoln Park. It was designed by a consortium of prominent local architects: Hugh and Donald Gibbs, Frank Homolka & Associates, Killingsworth, Brady & Associates, and Kenneth S. Wing & Associates. In 1976, the Civic Center took shape while the Hubbard Building rested horizontally following its destruction, which took more than one attempt to topple. Its planned demise began less than 40 years after its hopeful debut.

Long Beach's second City Hall is pictured in 1932 beside the Veterans Memorial Building, which replaced the original city hall. (Photograph courtesy of Long Beach Historical Society)



Mayor Robert Garcia Reflects on the New Civic Center

Mayor Robert Garcia has been involved with the Long Beach Civic Center project from its beginnings in 2006 when, as a Downtown Long Beach resident, he served on the Downtown Visioning Team to help create the City's first Downtown Plan. Paving the way for a more vibrant downtown, the document also laid the groundwork that made the new Civic Center possible. Garcia continued to support the development of a new Civic Center while serving as First District Councilmember and also after being elected as mayor in 2014. Now, in his second mayoral term, he shares his thoughts about the new master development.

April Economides: How is the Civic Center important to the future of Long Beach?

Mayor Robert Garcia: There are many exciting opportunities in transitioning to a new Civic Center. First, it allows for a reimagining of the way government interacts with the people. The new City Hall is more open, progressive, and thoughtful in the way it interacts with people. The building's architecture and technology – and the improved public space around it – symbolizes where Long Beach is headed. The Civic Chambers and connected City Hall will be more welcoming and brighter, have better technology, and be more accessible. And to bring the Port into the Civic Center is really important. It's the largest department in the city and the economic engine of the region. . . . I'm very excited about the Main Library. I think it's the centerpiece of the Civic Center. It's the space that will be most used by the public. Anytime a new, large central library opens, it is really exciting, but in addition, this one is beautiful, open, and sun-soaked. It houses the City's largest collection of books and research materials – that's really important. It will serve as a great beacon of truth, education, and history, and all those things that libraries should be. The design of the former downtown library was not conducive to that. It was like a basement. And as we move forward with Lincoln Park and the private, midblock development, it's all going to come together really well.

How do you envision the Civic Center impacting downtown?

This project has already impacted downtown tremendously. It has helped develop additional housing, it has helped us focus our efforts on infrastructure improvements, and it has been the centerpiece of the growth happening around downtown.

It's important City Hall will now be seismically safe for visitors and employees. Those who work for the City will be working in a safe and modern environment that contributes to people's well-being and gives them the ability to be their very best and produce their best work. Natural sunlight reaches into all areas of the building and employee work spaces. The work spaces are also more open and more energy efficient. We created a safe bike storage room for City Hall and Port employees. City Hall is more open and inviting to the public as well as accessible: walk-up windows and services are concentrated on the first and second floors. All of this lends to a more productive city.

The old City Hall was kind of like a fortress, and it was cold and didn't really connect to anything. The actual floors where people work were also not very inviting. The new City Hall is much more open and bright, and this speaks to how government should be: more transparent, more welcoming, more sustainable, more flexible – the workspaces are much more flexible – and more accessible to visitors.



Tell me about the public spaces surrounding the buildings.

The public spaces are going to be beautiful. There will be a great public gathering space in front of the Civic Chambers, which will allow people an opportunity to gather, attend events, speak their minds, peacefully protest if they want, and do all those things that make democracy great. That's important. And I see the Library as a huge public space, accessible to all. Lincoln Park will be a great place to have events, see concerts and hang out. First Street will feel like a promenade and we hope very active with retail and restaurants as part of the private midblock development. The design and the activation of the public spaces will also lead to a safe and welcoming space. We're looking at having coffee carts and other kiosks. We hope it will be a special place for everybody.

Lincoln Park, prior to its closure, was symptomatic of a failure of society and of government to not deal with the realities of homelessness and drug addiction. We just allowed it to take over. A true public space is for everyone. Everyone includes people who are experiencing homelessness, but it also includes families with kids and business people. It includes everyone. And so I expect the new Civic Center, when it's properly activated, will be a space for everyone. That means that a mom and kid should feel completely safe walking to the library and walking through the park. We'll enforce our laws to ensure that. It also means that if somebody experiencing homelessness wants to go into the library and enjoy a book or other resources, that should also be welcomed. But it's gotta be a space for all people.



The old Civic Plaza was essentially inaccessible to the public. It's exciting we're reconnecting the street grid – Cedar and Chestnut will go all the way through. It will be more inviting and welcoming and improve transportation. It will be good for pedestrians and all modes of transport. It will be more walkable, more bikeable, and it will connect with the surrounding street network better. It will also be easier to access from mass transit, like the Blue Line. The way the Civic Center is being designed along First Street from Pacific is as a large public plaza. You'll be able to walk all the way up to the Civic Chambers. It's good design. You'll also be able to access the library from two entrances, both from the park and from Broadway. The Library entrance will be right there on the public sidewalk.

Tell me about the project's public art. I hear the 'Long Beach' piece was your idea?

It was important to me to have spaces that showcase public art. I told the team we need to have a "wow" piece. I suggested the "Long Beach" letters because I want spaces people can interact with, where residents and visitors can take pictures, and for families to take pride in their city. The way that came about is I went to Amsterdam years ago, and as you may know, the city has huge letters that read, 'I Amsterdam.' Kids and tourists take pictures on it all the time. And I did, too! And so that's kind of what we envisioned – an interactive art piece where people can take pictures, Instagram it, and enjoy it.

There will be other art installations throughout the development as well, including one big signature piece in Lincoln Park. I want it to be so eye-catching and so interesting that people obsessively want to go and take a picture with it. Like how people go to Millenium Park in Chicago for "the bean."

How did your involvement in this project begin?

The first official vote to move forward was done within my first couple of months as mayor. But the planning and buy-in began before I was on the City Council. My first inclination about this project was to be very supportive and that it was very exciting. Before I was a councilmember, I was a member of the steering committee for the Long Beach Downtown Plan, which Suja [Lowenthal] created before any of those downtown developments were happening. We talked about this new vision for downtown – about it being more open, progressive, bikeable, and walkable. It was during a kind of stagnant time for Downtown Long Beach. I had just moved to Downtown and, at the time, there wasn't a lot of excitement or things happening. It's almost like it had been stagnant for 10 or 20 years. The Downtown Plan, which a lot of people were involved with, talked about an overarching vision, and brought important zoning changes to allow for these developments to actually be possible in Long Beach. Part of that then led to the creation of the Civic Center plan.

I wonder if people realize no taxes were increased or bonds taken out to pay for this massive development.

How we financed it is a very interesting model, and it's great how the City came together and figured out how to do this. Our finance staff did a great job of building the financial structure that gets the private sector to essentially pay for new public buildings. Because it's a public private partnership, it's a reasonable financial system for the City where we're not putting in tons of money. We never went to the taxpayers for a bond or increased taxes.

How will this project positively impact the city economically?

It is already having a positive economic impact during construction through the construction jobs created. And it's already attracting new businesses and new developments. A lot of the development we're seeing surrounding the project is because of the project. People are excited about it.

Futurewise, we're bringing all of the Port employees who currently sit in a building by the Airport into the center of downtown. We specifically didn't build cafeterias in the Port building or City Hall so people would leave the buildings and activate the streets. This will be great for the local economy, especially small businesses. When the midblock housing goes in – which was part of the land-swap deal – all those folks will activate the downtown economy as well.

The Civic Center project really is a transformational opportunity for the economy of downtown and the entire city. It generates jobs, connects people to resources, encourages more development, and will support local businesses.

The Beginnings of a New Civic Center

A History as Told by City Manager Pat West



Long Beach City Manager Pat West has been with the City of Long Beach since 2005 and has served as City Manager since 2007. A simultaneously thorough and succinct storyteller, West illustrates well the history behind the multi-year project of the new Long Beach Civic Center.

How did this project first come about, and when was the idea of a new Civic Center first considered?

It all started with Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Because of this disaster in New Orleans, the federal government said cities should review all critical needs buildings to find out if they could survive a disaster unique to their territory. We're an earthquake region, so the City commissioned a study to learn the seismic safety of City Hall and the library. And we failed [the safety standards]. So the public works director in 2006 reported this to the City Council, and that started it all.

At that time, Suja [Lowenthal] was the councilmember for District Two. She really embraced that we were going to have to do something about that, and she started a downtown visioning process. She worked on that throughout her entire 10 years on council. The groundwork Suja laid working with development services, community services, and everyone else led to the Downtown Plan.

We've known since 2006 the two buildings could be at risk. Early on, the assessment was that City Hall's concrete pillars were going to separate [from the structure] and potentially bring no real harm – except that if you were above the seventh floor, you'd have to stay in place for a few days before you could be rescued. So we had discussions about porta-potties, water, protein bars and all that in case there was an event while we waited.

That's rather serious. What about the adjacent Main Library?

The Library was different; it was potentially going to pancake. The Library was built with a park on top of it that weighed so heavily on the building, it leaked and caused a lot of damage. Because of this, the walls wouldn't withstand a seismic event.

So, we looked at potentially relocating the Library temporarily while we rebuilt it, but that didn't get any traction. What we ended up doing ultimately, in 2008, is spending approximately \$500,000 taking everything off the roof of the library – the park, the dirt, everything. This allowed us to strengthen the sides to make the building safer. It still had seismic issues, but it wasn't going to pancake.

The visioning process went on for a long time, and during this period [Public Works Director] Craig Beck and I were negotiating with the County about the Courthouse. The County had to demolish it due to seismic issues and, lucky for us, the Redevelopment Agency had nine acres sitting across the street between Broadway and Third Street. They were going to relocate the Courthouse to some city that was going to give them free land. So we activated and realized, "You can't take the Courthouse out of our city – that's a huge economic engine for us, and we need to keep it." We worked with Kimball Wasik of Cushman & Wakefield along with the Redevelopment Agency, and in 2010 cut a deal with the County to give them six acres. They gave us the five acres that the old Courthouse sat on, and some ancillary things that went along with that. But it was basically a land swap.

The County ended up doing a P3 DBFOM – a public-private partnership, a design-build-finance-operate-and-maintain – for the Courthouse, and it was the first social P3 in the country. A social P3 refers to a building that will be occupied, as opposed to, for example, a bridge or utility plant. Then Assistant City Manager Suzanne Frick, Development Services Director Amy Bodek, Economic Development Director Mike Conway, along with Craig Beck and myself were involved in putting that deal together. We were a little bit on the outside, because it was the County and state's deal, but we were watching and learning. We watched the County build that project, and it was a fantastic project.

Meanwhile, it's getting later and later, and no one's excited about building a new City Hall. City managers and elected officials know citizens want to see their dollars go toward infrastructure for streets, sidewalks, cleaning the water, trees, and libraries. So we recognize there's probably no appetite to tax everybody for a new City Hall.

It's hard to imagine that a tax would have gone over well. What happened next?

Some city councilmembers at this stage said, let's cross our fingers and do a peer review and hope it's not as bad as anybody thought. So we did a peer review of the seismic issues in 2012, and the peer review said it was worse than anybody thought. That put us all on notice that City Hall and the Main Library really had an issue.

We talked internally and the City Council said to staff, "Can you find a way to do this so we don't have to tax the citizens?" We then said, oh my gosh, the Courthouse was built without taxes thanks to the P3 DBFOM. So we studied that and decided, why don't we do something like that? The City Council said, 'Alright, if you think you can put together something like that, go ahead and bring it to us after you've explored it.'

The City Council also considered locations outside of downtown to build a new Civic Center, including where land is cheaper, like by the Airport. We took all of those considerations and suggestions we received from various citizens very seriously. At the end of the day, the city council chose that it should stay in downtown. We also considered leasing the World Trade Center. But the City Council was very clear that, as the seat of government, the City should own its building; that we should not lease someone else's building to house our Civic Center.

So in 2013, we went out to see if there was any interest in this. Mike Conway led the charge and we put out an RFI [request for information] to see if there was anyone out there who

was interested in doing a P3 DBFOM. . . . And we had over 80 people show up. That was our "aha moment." That's when we realized, "Okay, so this is real. There are developers who understand this process and really believe they can build a new City Hall and Library for us without taxing our citizens."

We knew we needed to learn more about this, we hired the firm Arup to help guide us through this process. After getting the City Council's okay and the Harbor Commission's okay, we put out an RFP to get a short list of developers who could do this for us. We initially had five, it dropped down to three, and then finally there were two that stuck. We ended up hiring Plenary Edgemoor. Plenary Edgemoor hired Clark Construction to do the construction, SOM [Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP] to do the architecture, and Johnson Controls to do the maintenance. Mayor Bob Foster helped to guide this politically through the City Council. Later, in 2014, when Mayor Robert Garcia took the helm, he guided the project politically, with five brand new City Council members, to a point where it was approved unanimously by the Council.

How do you feel about this project?

We are excited about, first of all, exiting a building that has seismic issues – which isn't just a safety risk for us but also the public who is visiting all the time. We're excited about getting the Library to a safe place where children and others will be safe. But also, we're excited to take an underground library and make it above-ground and a centerpiece for the Civic Center. The Library is probably the most beautiful thing about the entire development. It's also wonderful to have our Port – one of the largest ports in the world – in our plaza sharing that with us. We'll have a critical mass. The Port has so many visitors from Southeast Asia and other continents, and it will be wonderful to have them right here in the middle of downtown. These visitors will now be able to enjoy lunch, dinner, and breakfast in downtown and stay at our hotels. It ties into why we wanted the Courthouse here as well. So many jobs and so many pieces in our economy will be supported.

There are an incredible number of people who have been involved in this, including two city councils in addition to then-new Assistant City Manager Tom Modica, Finance Director John Gross, and the invaluable guidance of City Attorney Charles Parkin and Deputy City Attorney Rich Anthony. So this really reflects the efforts of two distinct city councils as well as mayors and city staff. It's a labor of love, and we're just so happy we are able to pull this off for the community without doing a parcel tax.

A Planner’s Vision of a ‘Spectacular Gem’

To understand how the Long Beach Civic Center master plan came about, it’s necessary to dig into the history of the Downtown Plan, which laid the groundwork for the new Civic Center and other developments.

Amy Bodek, former City of Long Beach director of development services, who played a key role as part of the core Civic Center team, said the project would not have been possible without the vision and work of former Vice Mayor

Suja Lowenthal. Lowenthal was the city councilmember for the Second District for 10 years, from 2006–16, and vice mayor for four of those years.

“It started with Suja asking for a vision and working with the Downtown Visioning Committee to establish the Downtown Plan, adopted in 2012,” Bodek recalled. “Getting a Downtown Plan approved was a huge deal and really set the stage for us to do the Civic Center project. It set the framework for all of the development that is occurring right now in Downtown.

“Suja was trying to create an ‘aspirational’ Downtown. She used those words. I remember them, because they were so appropriate. For so many years, Long Beach had a chip on its shoulder about living in the shadows of L.A. or never quite realizing its economic potential. The Downtown Plan was truly aspirational for creating a solid Downtown core on the waterfront in California. And there are few Downtowns that can boast that – just San Francisco, San Diego, and Long Beach. The strengths of her commitment over a decade truly allowed us to be creative and present this Civic Center proposal.”

Bodek’s successor as director of development services, Linda Tatum, echoed this sentiment. “The Downtown Plan laid a vision for the redevelopment of Downtown. It had always been envisioned that the Civic Center would be the crown jewel, the rebirth, the anchor of Downtown,” she said.

Lowenthal is an urban planner by trade, and she said she knew from her first day on the council where she wanted to focus. “As a planner, I saw where I wanted to go, and that was the redevelopment of the Downtown into a spectacular gem. Yet, there were many pieces that needed to come together first,” she reflected. Bodek and Public Works Director Craig Beck told her the planning codes were very outdated, she noted. “I saw that height was not written into our code, and density was a bad word. . . . I had a book in mind, but I backed up and saw what the chapters needed to be. And one of them was updating the planning code.”

Suja Lowenthal, former vice mayor and second district councilmember, is pictured in July 2016 at the site where the new Civic Center would eventually be built. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)



Lowenthal’s strategy involved revisiting the City’s use of variances and reducing the number of parking spaces required for new Downtown developments. Within her first few months of office, She put the wheels in motion to form a Downtown Visioning Team. The 14 members, a diverse group of Downtown stakeholders and planning professionals, held monthly meetings for one year.

The team ultimately recommended zoning to allow for increased height and density, fewer parking requirements, and streamlined infill projects, among other improvements. Lowenthal took elements of their recommendations and worked with City staff to create the Downtown Plan, a comprehensive update of the planning codes for Downtown. This was a multi-year process that involved an environmental impact report and many charrettes. It was adopted in January 2012.

Lowenthal said the plan’s impact on Downtown Long Beach cannot be underestimated. “Without the Downtown Plan,” Lowenthal explained, “none of the projects that have come online since 2014 would have come online; they would have all been out of compliance with the codes.”

As the Downtown began reaping the benefits of this new plan, the City was faced with another challenge for the area: state-required earthquake studies found it would cost \$180 million to retrofit City Hall. “So I was pretty motivated,” Lowenthal said. “I felt that is not how we should spend that amount of money. I told my fellow councilmembers we could probably build a brand new City Hall and Civic Center for the same cost to maintain our old one. . . . However, no one



Linda Tatum is the director of Long Beach Development Services. Behind her at left is the Ocean Center Building, which is being converted to 80 modern apartments; the upscale Oceanaire apartments, which are set to open soon; and the Ocean View Tower, a former office building being converted to apartments. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)

wanted to touch the project with a ten-foot pole. We just kept fixing our roof leaks, glad the building didn’t fall on us. But Amy [Bodek], Craig [Beck], Pat [West] and Suzanne [Frick] were all up for it. They just wanted someone to say, ‘take your foot off the brake.’ So working together was somewhat magical.”

Lowenthal was well-aware that, although the planned Civic Center was in her district, it would affect the entire city, and so would its financing. “If you don’t know how to finance things, you’re just a dreamer,” she said. “Part of planning is being able to dream the public space, but if you can’t put it into the context of what works and is financeable, then you don’t get a lot of people that want to help you build something.”

Lowenthal was also aware she would get significant pushback, so she started working closely with City staff on the necessary groundwork for a new Civic Center to be feasible and accepted by the community. This included inviting the Port of Long Beach to join the Civic Center campus, as well as continuing to lead and support several other planning and transportation-related efforts in and around the Downtown. “The new Civic Center was 10 years in the making, starting in 2006 and through all of the pushback we got until it broke ground,” Lowenthal said.

Mayor Robert Garcia and the Civic Center project team held the groundbreaking on July 8, 2016, the Friday before Lowenthal’s last council meeting, so that she could be included in the occasion.

“Long Beach has finally turned the corner from being a weak planning city that lets developers design our city to one that has taken charge of its own destiny,” Lowenthal said. “We should all be really proud of that. It didn’t happen by doing business as usual.”

Lowenthal showed her urban planning colors when describing what she most looks forward to with the completed project. “I’m most excited about the restoration of public space to a useable form. Just the layout of the property will scream, ‘Welcome, this is the people’s place!’” she said. “All of the residents who we made huge promises to about a vibrant Downtown, who we encouraged to move into Downtown, will now have a public place for their kids to walk through. It’s a way to give the public back its own space, and also get residents used to interacting with that space.

“Not a lot of people are used to coming to the Downtown and just hanging out. Soon, they can all experience musical performances and other things to enjoy without having to pull out their wallets. That is what a vibrant Civic Center is supposed to be – a place where a diversity of people come together, the rich and the poor, the young and the old – those distinctions shouldn’t matter. Good public spaces really connect people.”

From Concept to Reality

The Downtown Plan laid the groundwork to make a new Civic Center possible from a planning perspective, while the business model of a design-build-finance-operate-maintain (DBFOM) public-private partnership (P3) created financial feasibility. However, this is just half of the story. The ensuing process to actualize this vision required additional hard work, creativity, and strong teamwork by multiple parties.

Testing the Waters

Former City of Long Beach Economic Development Director Mike Conway is credited as the architect of the deal. “My role started years earlier when [City Manager] Pat West and [Development Services Director] Amy Bodek and I chatted about ways to get a new City Hall to address earthquake deficiencies,” Conway said. “At the same time, the Main Library was leaking like a sieve and was a negative architectural influence on an active, pedestrian Downtown.” The P3 financing structure of the County’s Gov. George Deukmejian Courthouse caught his and Bodek’s interest, and they set out to learn more. “We expected no success, but we had to explore. As the process progressed, I became the ‘lead’ negotiator, though the City team members were all equally involved.”

The core City team members were Conway, West, Bodek, and Public Works Director Craig Beck. Together, they helped write the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Request for Proposal (RFP), select the developer, and negotiate the deal. As the process progressed, Bodek oversaw the design review and entitlements. After Conway retired and Bodek accepted a new position at the County of Los Angeles, Beck became director of the project. “I find myself finishing up this project that so many people were involved with in the beginning,” Beck said. Financial Management Director John Gross, the City Attorney’s office, and many others were also instrumental in the project.

The County Courthouse, located catty corner from the Civic Center, was the main inspiration behind the City of Long Beach’s consideration of a P3. Jeffrey Fullerton, senior vice president of Real Estate Development for The Plenary Group, who helped develop the Courthouse when he was with Edgemoor Infrastructure & Real Estate, explained, “DBFOM P3s are done a lot in Commonwealth countries. They started in the UK, and they’re done in India, Australia, Canada, and now the U.S. Some of them are trains, rail lines, and courthouses, and a lot of the Canadian projects are hospitals. The story gets to Long Beach with the new Courthouse.”



The Governor George Deukmejian Courthouse, a Los Angeles County facility, was built in Downtown Long Beach via one of the nation’s first public-private partnership agreements. This unique funding structure paved the way for the new Long Beach Civic Center to be built using a similar strategy. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)

The City supported the Courthouse project through land swap agreements in order to prevent it from being moved to another city. “The City then got to watch and learn as a participant in that project, and saw the speed at which the court system was able to get that project done and the quality achieved with that project,” Orion Fulton, associate director at Arup, said. “Amy Bodek and Mike Conway should be credited in coming up with the idea for the Civic Center. They really drove the project, the concept, forward.” Fulton was the City’s primary advisor for the Civic Center project.

In approaching how to finance a new City Hall and Main Library, the City knew it was spending approximately \$14.71 million a year to maintain the two buildings, which still left them leaking and seismically unsafe. Since the City couldn’t afford to pay much more annually for new buildings, it set about trying to figure out a forward-thinking financing plan. That’s when Conway realized the City had an asset that might be valuable to development partners: land.



Elected officials and stakeholders dug in their shovels at the groundbreaking celebration for the new Long Beach Civic Center in July 2016. Pictured from left: Long Beach Public Works Director Craig Beck; then-Long Beach Development Services Director Amy Bodek; then-Port of Long Beach Chief Executive Jon Slingerup; City Manager Pat West; former Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster; then-Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe; Mayor Robert Garcia; then-State Senator Ricardo Lara; then-Councilmember Suja Lowenthal; then-Councilmember Lena Gonzalez; Long Beach Harbor Commissioner Lori Ann Guzmán; The Plenary Group Executive Chairman Dale Bonner; and Harbor Commissioner Lou Anne Bynum. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)

John Keisler, the City’s current economic development director, commented, “Mike Conway was extremely creative and said, ‘Look, we’ve got these buildings that have problems and are very expensive. But if we look at more than just the buildings and look at the land around them and maybe even some other pieces of property the City owns – if we put it all together – that’s a pretty valuable real estate development opportunity for someone in the market.”

The City owned the land on which the old Courthouse sat, the Civic Center complex, and a parcel on Third Street and Pacific Avenue. City leadership decided to incentivize a developer to build a new Civic Center for no more than the cost to operate the current one and, in exchange, offer the developer five acres of land on which to build residential and retail.

“In order to make this deal happen without going to a parcel tax, without doing a property assessment, without taxing anybody in the city, we had to incentivize the developer to build this huge campus for us; and one of the things to incentivize that was to allow the development of excess property,” City Manager Pat West said. He added that this strategy allowed the City to meet the need for additional residences in downtown, something that had been discussed for more than a decade.

“The community has been telling us over and over again, ‘If you’re going to put density in the city – because we need housing – it should be in the downtown,” West said. “The land swap facilitates our ability to meet our housing needs required by the State and also to increase the density and critical mass that will happen downtown. Without that incentive, this project could have probably never happened. And we’d be facing a potential lawsuit from our employees that we’ve got to fix that building and the only alternative would be to tax our citizens to do it. This was all possible from a land swap. If we didn’t own the land that the Courthouse was on, we probably couldn’t have done this project.”

With the idea that those five acres would generate revenue and pay for the rest of the master plan, in February 2013, the City released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a development partner to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain a new Civic Center.

“The RFQ was a way for us to test the market,” Beck said. “We weren’t sure if anyone was going to take us up on what we were proposing, which is, ‘We have roughly \$15 million to spend annually, we need a new building, a new park, and a new library, and gee, why don’t you come build it for us.”

The ‘Aha’ Moment

To City management’s surprise, several firms showed strong interest. West calls this their ‘aha’ moment – when the City learned there was appetite in the market for this type of development. And that’s precisely when the City hired an expert to guide it through the relatively unknown concept of DBFOM P3s.

The City hired Arup as its technical, commercial, and financial advisor during the procurement phase. Arup helped write the RFP, evaluate the responses, and select the preferred partner. Arup’s team of subcontractors included p3point, HOK, BAE Urban Economics, and MBI, and other City advisors included Sheppard Mullins, Kutak Rock, and KNN.

“Nobody knew us in Long Beach when they awarded this to us,” Fulton said. “They judged us on face value and our proposal and interview. I think what we’ve been able to show Long Beach is we’re an advisor team that can help a city through many different facets of a major project. There have been no major hiccups in the process. . . . An RFP is a big undertaking, and we helped the City put together an effective RFP quickly – in about three months. We did the heavy lifting to get that prepared, and we released it on-time, which gave a lot of confidence to the bidders. We ran that process according to the schedule and got it done when we said we would.”

Fulton said the Arup team functioned as an extension of the City and Port to manage the process and details. “We were sort of like the quarterback for the project,” he said, “coordinating the city attorney, planning department, finance department, public works, city manager’s office, and making sure everyone was driving the process forward.”

In October 2013, the City Council selected three potential development partners for the short list of RFQ Respondents: Plenary-Edgemoor Civic Partners (PECP), Related California, and Long Beach CiviCore Alliance. In February 2014, the City issued an RFP to the three teams. Related California dropped out of the running in May 2014.

To help ensure strong proposals, the City awarded design money to the teams, whereby the winning bidder would pay the losing bidder approximately \$300,000. “The losing team was still going to get a stipend for the work they put in,” Beck explained, “The City felt strongly that would get us better proposals, and it did.”

The bid process was involved and included responding to both the RFQ and RFP, a series of interviews, and the development of drawings, models, videos, and presentations. The teams had to show all costs related to design, construction, and development.



Construction workers lay the foundations for the new Long Beach City Hall and Port Administration Building in March 2017. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)



The Main Library under construction. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)

Making it Official

In December 2015, after months of proposal evaluations and interviews, as well as more than 100 City-sponsored public outreach events whereby the two teams discussed their proposals with the community, the City Council voted to award the contract to PECP. The project obligates PECP to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain the new Civic Center for the next 40 years. The Port financed its new headquarters separately using revenue bonds.

Plenary Group is the lead developer, sole equity provider, and financial arranger. Other consortium members include: co-developer Edgemoor Infrastructure and Real Estate, operating service provider Johnson Controls International, general contractor Clark Construction, and lead designer Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM). The \$513 million contract with Plenary was finalized in April 2016.

“We finalized the actual agreement within just four months,” Beck said. “To accomplish this, we had several all-day meetings each week to discuss the legal aspects, financing, programming, design, the 40-year operations and maintenance contract, and other aspects of the deal. It was a frenetic pace. But we got it all done and the contract finalized, delivered, and moved forward.” As the team moved into the terms and conditions of a partnership agreement, the all-day meetings grew to five days a week.

Conway emphasized the role Arup played during this time. “Hiring Arup as the City rep was, I believe, the determining factor in project success,” he said. “Orion [Fulton], in particular, organized every meeting, kept both sides on track with current issues, tracked countless versions of the agreement, orchestrated endless iterations of economic and financial variations, and commanded a strong position regarding performance management thresholds, guidelines, and financial clawbacks. He created and iterated many presentations for public use, held conference calls concurrent with daily meetings, argued coherently about a vast array of commercial issues, and kept us on track for artificially established

timelines. He was astounding. The City team could not have achieved what we did in the timeframe established without his skill and experience.”

The City was able to select a winning bidder in less than a year and conclude financial and design negotiations within two years. In contrast, traditional planning, entitlement, and procurement processes for a project of this scale typically take three to five years. Fulton said that leveraging the DBFOM structure enabled the City to “bundle a significant private real estate transaction to provide funding and economic benefits to the City while also addressing a core public need for new facilities and revitalizing the downtown core all in one contract.”

When the agreement with PECP was signed, the City extended Arup’s contract to represent its interests and manage the project contract. “That’s what we’re still doing today,” Fulton said. “That involves ensuring the City and the Port meet their obligations in the contract as well as tracking project company performance.”

In regard to the land swap, the City gave PECP a total of five acres consisting of two parcels: the two center blocks in the Civic Center site and the southwest corner of Third Street and Pacific Avenue, which PECP sold to developer Saris-Regis Group. Both sites are being developed as residential buildings above ground floor retail.

Initially proposing tax-exempt lease revenue bonds to finance the project, Fullerton said Plenary moved to a private placement solution because it offered lower financing costs and better risk allocation for the City. Plenary raised short-term construction financing to fund the new Port headquarters.

Breaking Ground

After closing the deal in April 2016, the team hit the ground running to prepare for construction. “Now we had to take what was really just a thirty percent conceptual design to full design drawings and then to full construction drawings,” Beck explained. “We held the groundbreaking in July, and between April and December, we brought the design drawings to near completion, pulled the excavation permits, and started to dig out and construct the City Hall and Port garage.”

Exemplifying the dedication of City staff to the project, Beck said the planning department’s plan-checker was on Christmas holiday in Hong Kong visiting family, and allowed the department to FedEx him plans there to help Clark Construction stay on schedule with its excavation. “This really shows there were a lot of team members that touched this project at different points in time,” said Beck. “Everyone was really dedicated to helping it succeed. There was a lot of collaboration in moving the project forward.”

Speaking of collaboration, Fullerton estimated that in 2016 alone, the team spent roughly 4,000 hours in meetings, on top of community outreach. “We presented at 126 meetings between January 2015 and June 2016 that reached over 4,000 residents. That was in addition to the City Council meetings and City-sponsored outreach events during 2013 and 2014,” he said.

Construction necessitated the demolition of the old Courthouse, the location where the Port headquarters would be built. The demolition cost was unknown due to unquantifiable amounts of asbestos and potential soil contamination at the site. With assistance from the Long Beach Police Department, which provided an underground tunnel, parking access, and temporary staging areas, the Courthouse was demolished on time and under budget.

Clark Construction’s director for the Civic Center project, Erin Young, said, “The fact we were building three structures at once and transforming a city block was fairly unique.” She said part of the design decision about where to place each of the buildings took into account how many times City Hall and Library employees would have to be moved. For example, if the new City Hall had been built where the current one stands, employees would have had to temporarily relocate elsewhere during both demolition of the old facility and construction of its replacement. Locating the new buildings in different places meant staff only had to move once.

During construction, Clark poured 52,000 cubic yards of concrete at the City Hall and Port Administration sites and installed 12.6 million pounds of steel, 11 million of which was reinforcing steel (“rebar”) and 1.6 million pounds of structural steel.

Making it Legal

The planning team worked closely with the City Attorney’s office to ensure that the innovative project was legal. Prior to this development, California law had a 35-year limit on lease agreements. “For the Civic Center, we needed that extension to go to 40,” West said.

So, the City helped pass new state legislation. On August 11, 2015, then-Governor Jerry Brown signed new legislation authorizing a private partner to lease or own all or part of the project for up to 50 years. The new law also reduced the risk of the procurement method being legally challenged since, until then, it had only been used to develop transportation and utility infrastructure projects, not occupied buildings, such as city halls.

Another significant behind-the-scenes undertaking was the entitlement process. Entitlements are project approvals from a city’s planning department that ensure a project meets city regulations, including building codes, the General Plan, and, in the case of the Civic Center, also the Downtown Plan. Entitlements give someone the right to build, and are the first stage in any project. The next stage is permitting, which authorizes the start of construction.

“We were able to entitle this entire project in one year, which is a bureaucratic feat, and we were able to do it with unanimous votes,” Bodek said. “We did this by relying on the Downtown Plan and its environmental impact report (EIR). We didn’t have to do a separate EIR, which saved tens of thousands of dollars and jump-started the process. Remember, the impetus for this project was to get us out of that building as fast as possible, so reducing bureaucratic delays was critical. However, it’s important to note that we treated ourselves like we treat other development clients, in that we still had to go through the process, make changes, and go to the Planning Commission and City Council, just like every other project. The City didn’t exempt itself from the process.”

Linda Tatum, who joined the City as planning bureau manager in March 2015 before taking over as the director of development services in 2018, said the approval process for the Civic Center project was extremely extensive. “It was a massive effort to review the plans, complete the entitlements, do all of the permitting and plan-checking, and then all of the inspections. Signing off on the certificate of occupancy is the very last stage. We pretty much have staff on the project full-time.”

Tatum said that the entitlement process was thoughtful in how it considered the residents’ experience and the pride they would hopefully feel in the project. “We were very mindful in making sure we got a significant level of input. We had study sessions to check in with the community about their thoughts about the project. By the time we got to the entitlements, there was broad support. I’ve never seen such a complex involved project generate so much support from the community.”

Making it Pencil

According to Keisler, the City expects the total financing for the project to be around \$1 billion by the time it is done, including about \$531 million for the civic facilities and \$400 to \$500 million for the private buildings. The City will pay approximately \$15.8 million a year to Plenary Edgemoor, creating no net impact on the City’s budget.

One central financial benefit of the project is that in 40 years, the City won’t be looking to rebuild new civic buildings again. “The City will pay less money for this beautiful new development than they would have spent to stay in the unsafe facility and fix some of the maintenance issues,” Fullerton said. “And, they’ll be left with newer, better buildings in the end.”

Michael Palmieri, president of p3point, the City’s primary financial consultant for the project, said the new Civic Center will cost about the same as the old one not only because the City contributed land but also because the Port joined in the project and there were economies of scale. “You’re building with the same materials and with the same engineers and architects and so on, so there’s a lot of savings there. And, of course, the new buildings are a lot more energy efficient. So there are a lot of factors related to construction, risk, and design that translate into financial benefit for the City.”

Setting the City’s annual payment cap at about \$15 million a year drove ingenuity and innovation on the part of the private sector. “The most simple example is that the consortium will pay for more expensive LED lights to drive life cycle costs down, whereas the City would have looked at the lowest costs and put in incandescents,” Palmieri said. “The creation of a central utility plant also added a lot of efficiency to the project.”

Palmieri said p3point helped the City find additional savings within the contract’s structure. “We were able to save the City another \$2–3 million dollars to help make the project more affordable. One simple example was changing the timing of the City’s cash contributions to save interest over the three-year construction period. Ordinarily, that would’ve come later, but by the City pushing those contributions earlier, it saved the interest costs because the private party put in its money earlier. We structured about three or four of those, and all together that’s well over \$1 million.”

The Master Plan: Connectivity and Scale

The original \$513 million financing arranged by Plenary and its bankers, HSBC and Barclays, consisted of approximately:

- \$239 million over a 43-year term private placement with Allianz
- \$213 million over a three-year term construction loan from Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation
- \$21 million equity investment by Plenary, and
- Contributions of cash and land from the City of Long Beach totaling approximately \$40 million in value.

The Port paid for its building upon completion in July and owns it out-right. The City will lease its building from PECP for 40 years with the monthly payments of roughly \$15.8 million. At the end of 40 years, the lease will expire and the City will gain ownership of the building and be responsible for maintaining it, assuming the lease or maintenance agreement is not extended.

Teamwork Made the Dream Work

Because the DBFOM P3 model is a fairly groundbreaking delivery method, other cities are looking to Long Beach as an example. “Everyone’s looking toward Long Beach, including the City of Los Angeles and Sonoma,” SOM’s project architect for the Civic Center, Jed Zimmerman, said.

Fullerton said he applauds the City for having the courage to do the project when other cities have not. “I’ve heard administrators from other cities say, ‘I don’t have the playbook for this, I don’t have the rules.’ And, you know, you have to craft them. You have to follow the lead of other agencies, like the City did with the County Courthouse, and you have to have the stamina to get through it. It’s not the way people are used to doing things, so there are going to be bumps along the way. You need to have a good partner to work through it, and the City of Long Beach was a great partner with us. They provided great resources, great leadership, they had the tenacity to stick through the deal, and they’re going to get a great result out of it.”

Fulton agrees. “The can-do spirit we found in Long Beach is pretty rare. I really credit Pat West and his staff, even with some of the turnover they had. They believed in the project and they made it happen. The amount of effort it takes to sustain that, with all the other stuff that’s going on . . . to sustain that focus and positive outlook on the project to make it happen, it’s quite rare and it should be celebrated and recognized.”

When asked about the process, consultants and City staff consistently bring up their gratitude for the excellent teamwork that went into it. Bodek said the City and its partners took a very specific team approach and that West delegated authority to the team. “Once in a lifetime, you meet consultants and architects and other professionals where you all have the same vision and the same positive goals and you just mesh,” she said. “With this project, and the consultants, architects, and politicians – everything came together to make this project happen at the right time. There were small bumps along the way but nothing significant. It was almost like it was meant to happen. It was a wonderful opportunity to be part of this bigger thing. Just to be a part of it was something spectacular.”

Conway, now retired, brought it back full circle. “With the final partnership agreement approved by the City Council and Harbor Commission, the City of Long Beach broke into a new financing arena that limited risk exposure, guaranteed timing, capped costs and payments, and addressed earthquake risk exposure. This project will transform downtown into a more walkable destination, invest more than \$900 million into our City, increase the number of employees supporting downtown businesses, and provide a catalyst for quality housing. The project was impossible without the vision, unwavering support and clear direction from City Council, the City Manager, and the amazing City team, of which I was very lucky to play a role.”

placemaking: the urban planning process of turning space into a *place* and, in doing so, giving it life



Master plan rendering. (Courtesy of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill)

The stakeholders who envisioned and planned for a new Civic Center saw the future development as a way to help invigorate Downtown Long Beach. Regarded for years by many residents as an area to avoid, there was a desire by the City to reimagine this six-block area as a thriving, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use area that attracts people of all ages.

Former City of Long Beach Director of Development Services Amy Bodek, who oversaw the master plan design, explained, “The selection of the developer partially hinged upon the achievement of design and urban planning goals that included breaking up the superblock of the old Civic Plaza, putting two new streets through, keeping Lincoln Park

along Pacific Avenue, and really opening up the entire center so it is much more accessible to the public.” She said the City also required that First Street extend to Magnolia Avenue, expanding its role as an open corridor for pedestrians.

Using these as guiding principles, the design lead for the project, Paul Danna of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), said SOM didn’t approach the layout of the Civic Center as a collection of buildings surrounded by public spaces, but rather the other way around. “The project is a desire to reinstate the area’s street grids, transit connections, and the opportunities to tie those together for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers,” the architect said. “It supports that



Aerial view of the six-block, 22-acre master site in July 2019. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)

with a framework of blocks, parcels, and open spaces that really define the buildings. In other words, it's a design of public spaces and connections that the buildings support and serve."

Danna considers the new design as a return to "tried-and-true urban principals" of smaller, pedestrian-scale blocks. "The architecture of the buildings is absolutely important, however, what's more important are the spaces we've created. The main themes are connectivity and scale."

Bodek said SOM thoroughly understood and delivered on what the Civic Center team was looking for. "Paul Danna is incredibly talented," she said. "He is a reserved and humble man, and this master plan is not flashy. But his vision of democracy translated into a subtly elegant design, and I think that is what is appropriate for Long Beach. The team had many conversations about the intent of the design, and he did an amazing job of understanding the more esoteric goals."

Streets and Movement

The design team's first task was considering how to best reincorporate Cedar and Chestnut Avenues – which run through the complex from Ocean Boulevard to Broadway – and intersect them with a thriving pedestrian thoroughfare along First Street from the Blue Line station on Pacific Avenue to the Civic Chambers near Magnolia Avenue. Prior to the construction of the former Civic Center in the 1970s, Cedar and Chestnut extended through the site. Their closure effectively made the expanse of the site impermeable to traffic and choked off pedestrian thoroughfares.

Now, Chestnut is once again open to vehicular and pedestrian traffic, with Cedar soon to follow. First Street is a pedestrian thoroughfare but allows occasional light car use, like the Santa Monica Third Street Promenade.

"The first design moves were not really with a pencil but with an eraser – taking the streets that were no longer there and erasing them back into the site to create that connectivity

that once did exist," Danna said. "This turns the Civic Center into a heart, a connecting place within the City of Long Beach."

Long Beach Public Works Director Craig Beck said that breaking up the blocks will help the area feel like more of a neighborhood. "It makes it more permeable for residents, bicyclists, and anybody getting around. Instead of having to go around City Hall, people will go through this space. Connectivity, walkability, and bikeability are all very important."

At the core of the development's transportation planning is pedestrian-friendliness. Regardless of how someone arrives to the Civic Center – whether by foot, wheelchair, bike, transit, or car – everyone is a pedestrian for the last stretch of their journey. Toward that end, the periphery of the development is marked by wide sidewalks, ramps, and stairways that lead into the buildings. The future mixed-use

development will feature ground floor retail to add life to the neighborhood.

Transit options surround the development and have two main existing hubs: the Blue Line station on First Street at Pacific Avenue and the Bus Depot on First Street at Pine Avenue.

New separated bicycle lanes accent Broadway and run all the way east to Coronado Avenue. Bike lanes will also connect the Civic Center to the soon-to-be-complete Gerald Desmond Bridge. Supporting this are attractive bike racks surrounding the development and new bike storage rooms for employees at City Hall, the Port building, and the Library.

"On a personal note, I'm really looking forward to the new City Hall bike room," Beck said. "I can't wait to ride my bike into work and actually have a place I would want to shower instead of the humid dungeon we used before."

Chestnut Avenue, between Broadway and Ocean Boulevard, is now open to all modes of transport for the first time in more than 40 years. Soon, Cedar Avenue will be open as well. (Fukushima Photography)



Out with the Old

The new Civic Center’s design was created as a response to that of its predecessor and the social conditions that resulted from it. “It was a bit of a walled precinct – not friendly, not pedestrian-scaled, a real barrier, especially on Ocean Boulevard,” Danna said. “Instead of becoming a connector, the Civic Center became, unintentionally, a blockade, a deterrent to a connected downtown business district and neighborhood.”

Beck said the new center’s design flips the old one on its head. “The Brutalist design turned its back on the public and literally put up concrete walls. The new design invites people into its spaces and buildings through translucent walls, open terraces, open spaces, and excellent sight lines that allow one to see far ahead into the development. Glass walls meet open space, whereas before, concrete walls met more concrete walls,” Beck described. “The new development is setting a new standard for architectural style by demonstrating that a Civic Center should be a good neighbor. The new center will make people think, ‘I want to walk towards that space, not avoid it.’

David Malda, design principal for Gustafson Guthrie Nichol (GGN), the project’s landscape architecture firm, said, “It’s really re-envisioning what ‘civic’ means. It isn’t just a symbolic or congregating space. It’s the everyday life of the city where all different kinds of people will move through and use this space in a lot of different ways. That’s really important.”

Malda said that in addition to the large public spaces, GGN also designed smaller-scale elements around the edge of the master site. “For example, the porch around the Library, the clear site lines through the edges into the Civic Center, and very intentionally placed paths that get you from the corners of a street into the center of the site. People tend to like to be in big groups but not stand right in the middle, so what we tried to do there is balance the collective central spaces with lots of activity around the edges.”

Piecing the Puzzle

According to Jed Zimmerman, SOM’s production architect for the project, the design team only considered where to place the buildings after the streets and public thoroughfares were planned. “This project isn’t about any one building, it’s a master plan. In addition to looking at how to break up the megablock by bringing the streets through, we looked at how each element will correspond with the adjacent communities, how it will interface with the existing conditions, and how we address mass transit. Once all of that was established, we looked at where we should locate each building.”

Careful thought was given to each building’s placement. The Port of Long Beach’s headquarters occupies the part of the site closest to the Port itself, and its terrace overlooks

the harbor. “Similarly, City Hall overlooks the city and its residents in three directions,” Zimmerman said. “City Hall and the Civic Chambers are located near the Public Safety Building and also acknowledge the Courthouse. That’s what led to the westernmost third of the Master Plan.” The Civic Chambers, connected to City Hall, are situated at the western end of the Civic Plaza in between City Hall and the Port building.

The Public Safety Building is one of two structures on the 22-acre site that won’t be replaced. Located in the northwest corner of the site on Broadway between Magnolia and Chestnut Avenues, it houses the Long Beach Police Department headquarters, its South Division Station, and a fire station.

The other structure being retained is the Civic Center Parking Garage on Broadway in between Chestnut and Cedar. This sits just north of the two future residential towers with groundfloor retail. Dubbed ‘the midblock,’ these two buildings will provide coffee, food, and other amenities to park patrons as well as the occupants and visitors of the surrounding buildings. This central activity hub will bring 18-hour activity to the surrounding blocks.

Lincoln Park was kept along Pacific Avenue due to requirements in the City’s land deed, but instead of abutting Broadway it will now extend to Ocean Boulevard. “Lincoln Park corresponded well with the Library, and the Library is along Broadway instead of Ocean Boulevard since Broadway is a little more pedestrian-friendly and near more residents,” Zimmerman explained. “The Library overlooks Lincoln Park, and the two spaces are connected via the Library’s outdoor terrace.”

The Civic Plaza

The Civic Plaza, the first outdoor public space in the development to open, is comprised of what feels like two distinct, yet connected, spaces. The main space is the 49,000-square-foot area along First Street between the Port building and City Hall. The second is the 26,000-square-foot entry plaza off the corner of Ocean Boulevard and Magnolia Street that features a large “LONGBEACH” public art installation and, come September, will also include a new Police and Fire Memorial.

At the eastern edge of the plaza on Chestnut Avenue looking west toward the Civic Chambers, a wide promenade is flanked by the contemporary colonnades of City Hall to the right and the Port Headquarters to the left. The columns are not round but, in keeping with the buildings’ contemporary architecture, rectangular and slim. Toward the entrance of the Civic Chambers, etched into the concrete paving, is a map of Long Beach.



The Civic Plaza. (Fukushima Photography)

The plaza is undeniably “civic in its presence, with the colonnade giving homage to what it is – government,” Zimmerman said.

Making the space a little less formal are bright blue cafe tables and moveable chairs surrounding raised planters in the promenade. The planters house low plants, shade trees, and tall palm trees. As the plants and shade trees grow in, their organic shapes will help soften the straight lines of the buildings.

“The Civic Plaza functions as a congregational space that connects the two buildings,” Grant Steward, managing principal for GGN, said. “We tried hard to create a tree canopy that provides space for sitting and areas for visitors and employees to sit and have lunch.”

In addition to the larger-scale spaces in the plaza, Danna said there are also “little nooks and crannies” where people can sit or work outside.

Perhaps the most important area in the plaza is the large open space at the entrances of City Hall and the Civic Chambers, a design element insisted upon by the City. “A guiding principle in the RFQ and RFP was having a Civic Plaza where people

can demonstrate their right to participate in democracy,” Bodek said. “It was critically important to us to retain a space for the community to have protests, gatherings, and events directly outside of City Hall and the Civic Chambers. We were going back to these very early Roman ideas of what a Civic Center is supposed to be. Some of the designs that did not get accepted did not celebrate that gathering space. They would have had protesters or community members closing down streets and creating security nightmares for the City, costing the City money. If you don’t have a place for people to gather, they’re going to gather anyway. So it’s better to plan for it and integrate it than to ignore that concept.”

West also emphasized this point and added, “People who are demonstrating don’t like to get permits. And if you don’t get a permit, then our police have to ask you where your permit is, and that leads to conflict and putting officers in a situation where they could have negative situations with the public. So this developer proposed an open plaza, similar to what we have today, where no permit is needed.”



Getting Urban Parks Right

An urban park's vitality is typically determined by the number and diversity of people who use the space. There is safety in numbers, and diversity signals inclusion and safety. Age diversity, particularly the presence of children and seniors, is especially telling of this. In contrast, a park's failure is often marked by the dominance of a few groups to the exclusion of others.

The test of time has shown there to be at least three key components to a successful urban park: good design, plentiful activities, and experienced management. Building all three into the bones of a park from the beginning is much easier than remedying a struggling one.

Clear sight lines from a park's borders into its center are a key design element to ensure both the reality and feeling of safety. Flexible spaces that accommodate a variety of uses, such as open grass areas or moveable chairs, are also desirable to users. However, a park's design can only do so much. Activities are needed to program it.

There are two primary ways to activate a park to ensure success: built-in activation and special events. Built-in features may include concession stands – such as a coffee cart, shake shack, or magazine stand accompanied by seating – or a playground or cluster of chess tables. Ideally open from at least sunrise to sundown, activities attract people into the park and, in doing so, bring added safety and vibrancy. Special events, such as morning yoga, lunchtime jazz concerts, evening salsa lessons, and weekend puppet shows, welcome even more people into the space.

In terms of management, the most successful urban parks are usually overseen by a public-private partnership, such as a business improvement district (BID) or specially-created park entity. Management should include 18-hour security, such as unarmed safety ambassadors, a clean team, programming, and marketing.

Midblock Vitality

The residential towers with groundfloor retail will be built adjacent to the Civic Plaza, along First Street between Chestnut and Cedar. Locating these components in the center of the master site was intentional for two reasons. First, transferring these city-owned parcels to the developer made the deal pencil. Second, residences and retail inject additional safety and vitality into the area by adding more 'eyes and ears' to everything around them. This will be especially beneficial to the adjacent Lincoln Park.

PECP will know and make public the specific details about this privately developed component in 2020, including the building designs, number of residences, and architect.

"The midblock will create more active use of Lincoln Park and general ownership of the space," Beck said. "Residents will feel, 'This is where I live – I am part of this block.'"

Zimmerman said the hope is this component will energize the entire area. "Instead of the Civic Center being a 9-to-5 area that goes desolate evenings and weekends, the midblock will help it become more of a 24/7 area. This is another way to activate Lincoln Park. That was a problem with the old park – it didn't have enough to keep it active, so it was just sitting there fallow."

Creating the New Lincoln Park

Indeed, Long Beach residents had a failed civic park for many years. Lincoln Park became a haven for drug users and the homeless. Drug paraphernalia was a common sight for parents as they walked their kids to the adjacent Library. The plans underway for the newly designed park seek to incorporate good design, activation, and management in order to remedy this.

Whereas the old Library was a predominantly subterranean structure with concrete walls that turned its back on the park, the new Library proudly announces itself and opens up to park visitors. Above-ground and elevated by a few feet, the Library features a large terrace and wooden roof overhang, as well as plentiful windows that blur the distinction between outside and inside public space.

"We thought the idea of the Library and park supporting each other would bring the life of the people," Danna said. "We thought there'd be a real synergy that would occur. The Library is the backdrop of the park and an activator for the space. We also tried to create a good urban edge along Broadway to complete that city street. We were looking to support the development of good streets as well as the internal spaces within the Civic Center."

Beck said that SOM's terrace design exemplifies their desire to create as many public spaces as possible. "The huge terrace off the Library is a public space," he said. "Coming from

Paul [Danna], the visionary, it shows that's what was on their minds when they were doing their design: 'How are we creating public spaces in this project?'"

All of this will make the park more welcoming for children who visit the Library with their teachers or parents. "Before construction, a lot of classrooms visited the Library, and many times their trip included lunch," Beck said. "But there was no place for the kids to play, other than the small green hill by City Hall they'd sometimes roll down. Part of the Library's core mission is to provide a place of learning for our city's youth. The fact that the new Library and park will function together as an indoor-outdoor experience, connected by a welcoming terrace, and the new playground that will be in the park next to the Library – that's going to be fantastic for children, teachers, and parents."

The first phase of Lincoln Park construction begins in early 2020, if not earlier, when the demoed concrete from the old City Hall will be poured as the park's foundation. The elevation of the park needs to be a few feet higher, and the construction team realized it could achieve this by recycling the concrete on-site, bringing both sustainability and cost savings.

Designed partially to be a destination park for Long Beach, the four-acre public space will feature a large grass area for flexible use, additional landscaping areas, well-lit walkways, a children's playground, an outdoor performance stage, a cultural loop and history walk, and the existing statue of Abraham Lincoln. Other elements being considered include a concession stand, water feature, large public art piece, dog park, and games such as life-size chess and Jenga. Private events might also be allowed in the park and on the Library terrace.

The original RFP prohibited concessions in the park, Danna said. "I think everybody – all of the teams – came into the first meeting asking, 'What about a café?' But at the time, the answer was 'no,' because of the stipulations of the deed. But over the course of the project, somehow, somewhere, that shifted. There became a willingness and openness to it, and it has taken on a lot of support."

According to Grant Steward, managing principal for GGN, a key driver of the park design was flexibility. "We wanted to make sure we designed a civic park that included the expectations of the residents," he said. "There's the ability to come and play frisbee, have lunch under a shaded tree, or sit and enjoy the Long Beach Symphony in the evening. It was designed to be used hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, and year-round for a variety of uses."

In terms of landscaping, Steward said the GGN team focused in on sustainable design practices with regards to the plant palette, irrigation, and soil design. "The majority of the plants will be native, and all are water-wise. We've designed specific microzones for different apertures and relationships



City Hall and the Civic Chambers (left) and the Port Administration Building (right) from the corner of Ocean Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue. (Fukushima Photography)



Rendering of the Library and the original Lincoln Park design. The finalized park design will be revealed by 2020.
(Courtesy of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill)

to sun and shade,” he said. “There’s also an educational aspect in regards to being water-wise and about things like pollinators and different types of habitats for insects and birds. The intent is for classrooms to visit the Library and then come into the park and have an outdoor classroom and experience a native plant palette.”

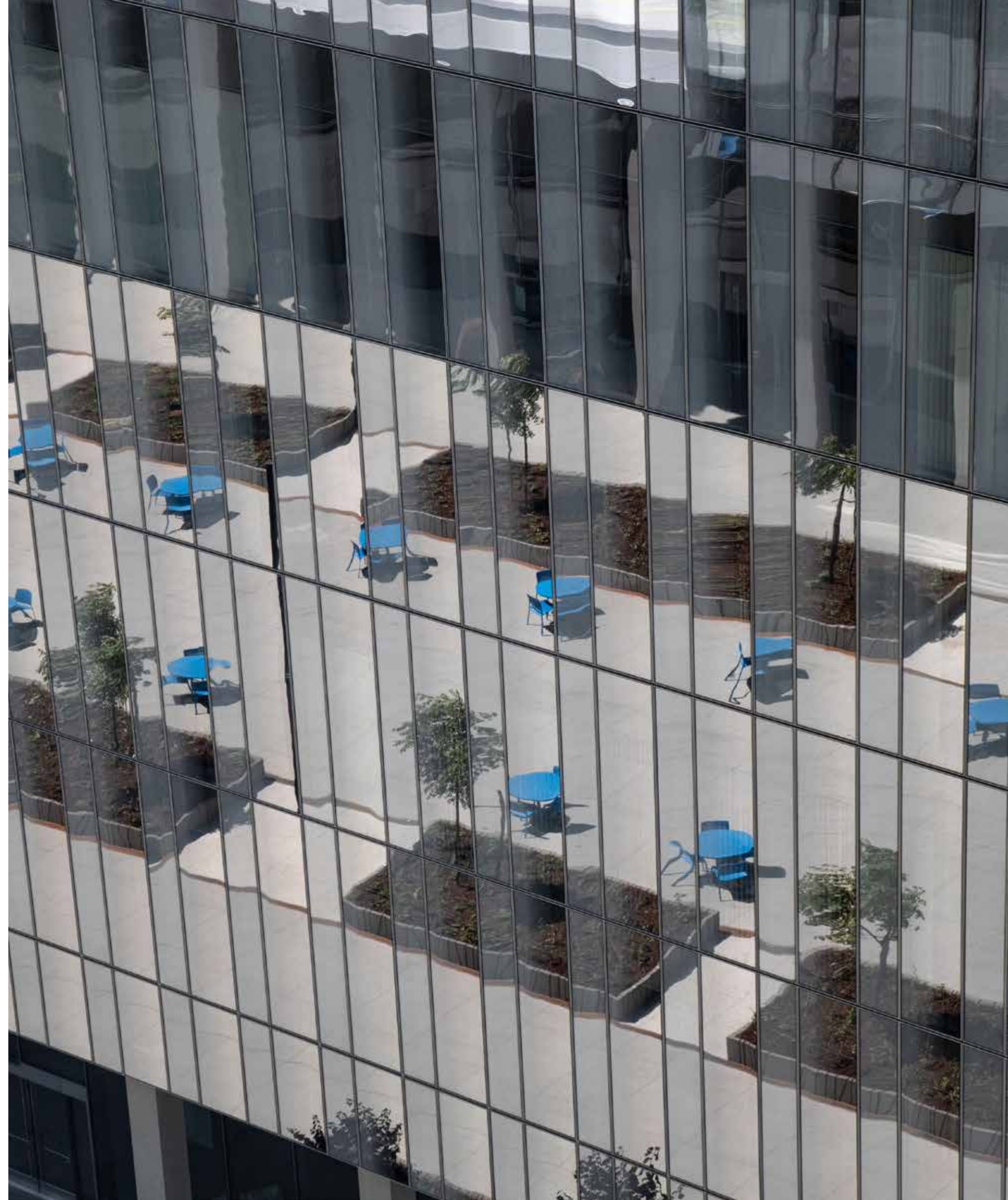
GGN enlisted Long Beach-based landscape architect Todd Bennitt of Bennitt Design to advise on these park elements and other public spaces in the site. Bennitt also helped GGN understand the City’s construction environment to ensure the project met local and state zoning requirements. “Todd was a strong voice in the project and brought a lot to the table with his local knowledge,” Steward said.

The design team is considering a stormwater cistern on the roof of the Library to capture rainwater and irrigate Lincoln Park. “The goal is for the park to not require much irrigation, but the establishment period over the first few years will require additional water than what we’re able to store and treat,” Steward explained.

The City’s future Municipal Urban Stormwater Treatment (MUST) facility might also help with park irrigation. The facility will be located near the L.A. River at the intersection of Chester Place and De Forest Avenue and treat polluted urban stormwater runoff before it enters into the Los Angeles River. According to Beck, the treated water might also be conveyed back to the Civic Center to use for landscaping. The City’s recently completed Broadway streetscape project included laying down a pipe for this transfer of water.

In terms of properly managing the park, Kraig Kojian, President and CEO of the Downtown Long Beach Alliance (DLBA), which manages downtown’s two business improvement districts, said they have had preliminary discussions with the City. “We’ve discussed the idea of the DLBA managing, activating, and promoting Lincoln Park or creating a specific nonprofit to do that,” Kojian said. “It would be a natural extension of the services we already provide for downtown, which include a clean and safe program, producing events, and activating public space – all which elevates the experience one should expect from a great urban center.”

Bringing it full circle, Zimmerman sums up what the Civic Center team hopes to accomplish through the master plan. “This development is really about the placemaking. It’s taking a megablock that was dead, with hardly any cross circulation or pedestrian activity that became a haven for the homeless, and transforming it into something that will be a center for activity and opened back up to the broader community,” he said. “The original design – to create a park-like megablock – in concept, was somewhat cool. But it really created a barrier. And it didn’t allow the permeability for vehicular or pedestrian flow. That’s what we’ve helped turn this master plan into now: a pedestrian, vehicular, and activity extension of the community. Turning the civic core into an epicenter will continue the growth and expansion along its perimeter. That’s the part that can be really transformative for the downtown core.”





LONG BEACH

Public Art & Culture

Art installations, memorials, and other cultural elements are being interwoven throughout the public plazas, thoroughfares, and building interiors of the Long Beach Civic Center. These artistic and historic additions will add color, texture, meaning, and vibrancy to each space and the site as a whole.

City Hall Video Wall

Blurring the distinction between indoor and outdoor public space, and blending the spheres of government and art, the Civic Center’s most dynamic and contemporary installation might be the massive video wall located in the lobby of City Hall, easily viewable from outside of the glass atrium.

Measuring an impressive 60 feet wide and 10 feet tall, the projection screen will soon rotate videos from the Long Beach Museum of Art’s massive video collection, one of the largest in the country.

The Plenary Group’s Jeffery Fullerton said the idea came from Long Beach Museum of Art (LBMA) Executive Director Ron Nelson. “I originally asked Ron if he had some artwork he could hang on the lobby’s wall, and he ended up suggesting an expensive video wall,” he chuckled, explaining that he loved the idea. “The Museum has an entire archive of films, but nowhere to display them.”

The LBMA last exhibited historic video works as part of the Getty Center’s Pacific Standard Time initiative in 2011. Entitled “Exchange and Evolution: Worldwide Video Long Beach,” the exhibition included works from the collection’s inception in 1974 to 1999 when the video program was silently brought to an end.

“With over 4,000 individual artistic works to curate from, I’m very excited to showcase the City’s collection and share it with everyone in Long Beach and beyond,” Nelson said. He also plans to engage guest curators who know the body of work in the collection as well as emerging artists to give them a platform to reach a larger audience.

Nelson is also working with contemporary artists to create specific works that celebrate Long Beach. “I want a large whale to breach and crash down, dolphins swimming along a boat en route to Catalina Island, swimmers in Alamitos Bay, artistically shot videos of planes from Long Beach Airport taking off and landing in the lobby, historic structures and Long Beach residents,” Nelson said of his vision. One of the videos currently in production is by noted contemporary video artist Bill Viola and his wife Kira Perov who are Long Beach residents.

Because the display can be programmed and timed, Nelson explained that relevant art works may be scheduled to coincide with special events and meetings, such as Persian New Year or “artfully shot freight ships slowly moving across the lobby” as the Harbor Commissioners and public gather for meetings in the Civic Chambers. “We have the opportunity to bring the community together, and this is such a wonderful medium to customize and celebrate,” he said.

In speaking about I.M. Pei’s unrealized 1970’s Civic Center design for LBMA and its growing video collection, Nelson said, “Obviously those plans were never executed, and the irony of videos being shown in our new Civic Plaza is a wonderful circle to bring together after four decades.”

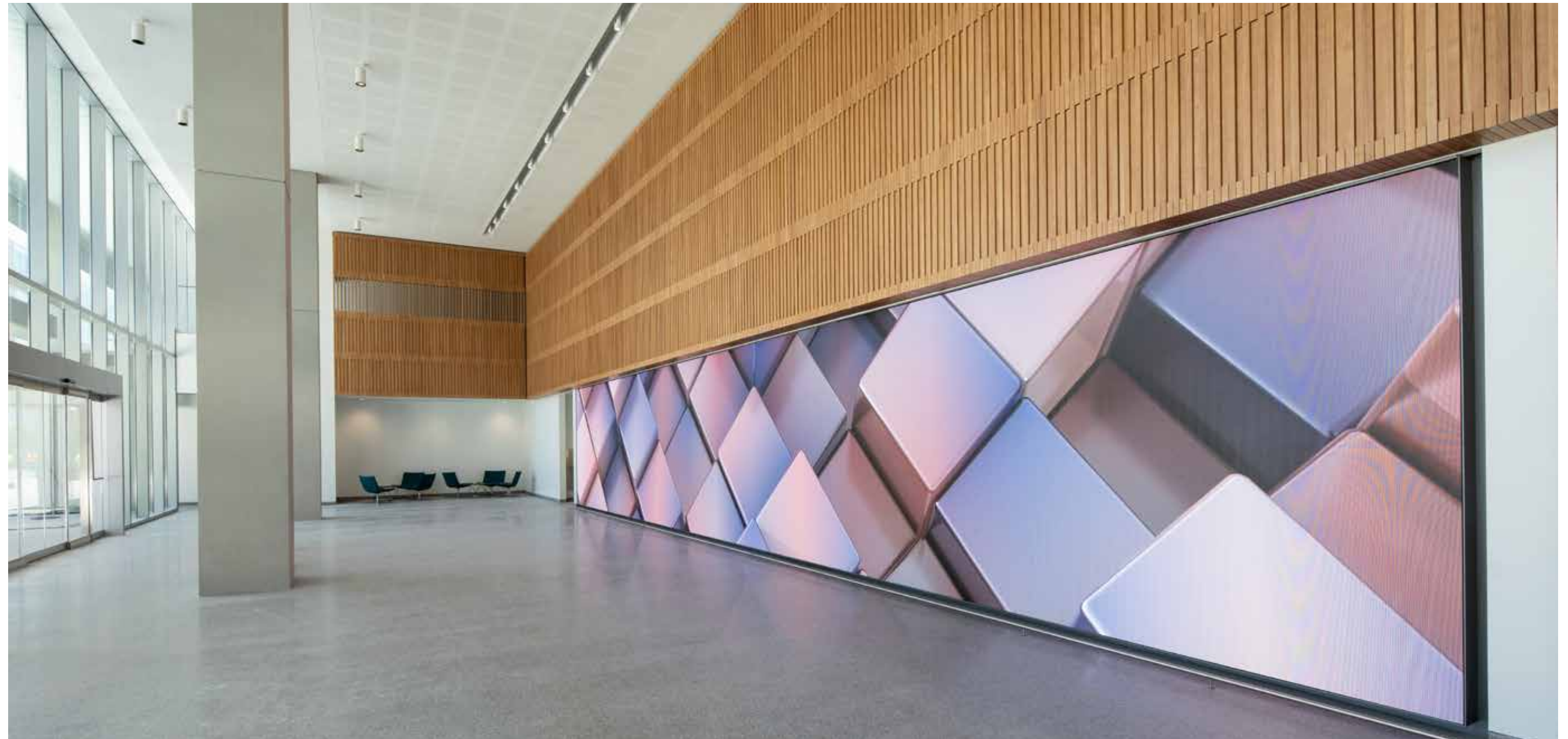
LONGBEACH Installation

Installed in the Civic Plaza on Ocean Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue – a gateway route into the city from San Pedro or the 710 Freeway – is a prominent public art piece boldly welcoming visitors to the city. Approximately seven feet high and comprised of large white and silver block letters, the piece spells out “LONGBEACH” and lights up at night.

Mayor Robert Garcia helped conceive of the idea after visiting Amsterdam’s ‘I AMsterdam’ public art installation, a major tourist and selfie magnet. Unlike the city of Amsterdam, however, which removed the famous tourist

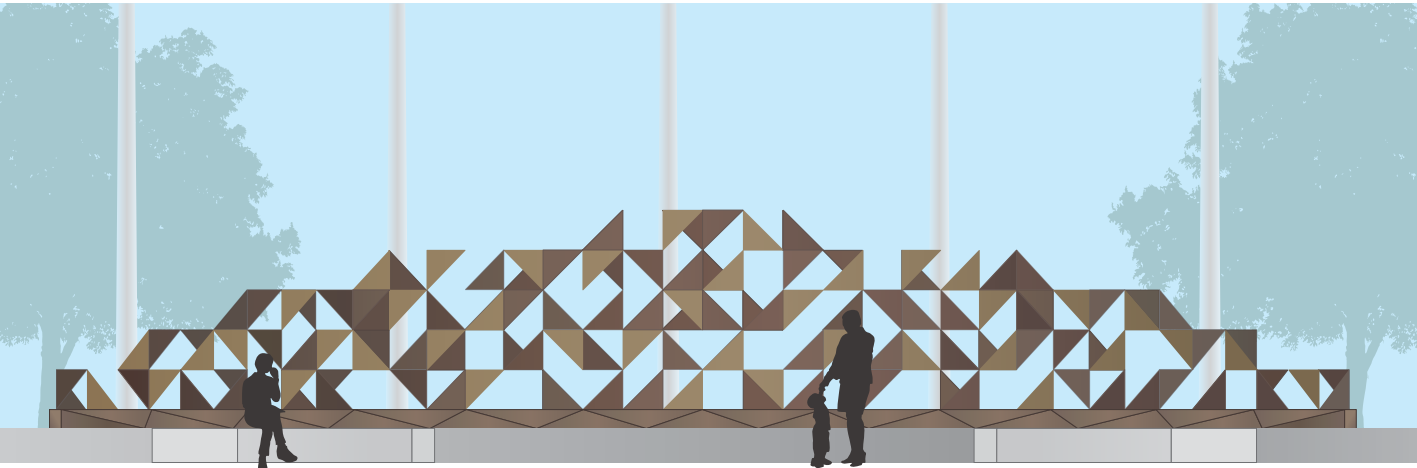
destination in December 2018 due to concerns about the more than 6,000 selfies taken each day by visitors, Garcia is excited about this addition to Long Beach.

“It was important to me to have spaces that showcase public art,” he said. “I told the team we need to have one or two ‘wow’ pieces. I love the ‘LONGBEACH’ letters, because I want spaces people can interact with, where residents and visitors can take pictures, and for families to take pride in their city. It will be a fun spot for that.”



City Hall video wall. (Fukushima Photography)

Police and Fire Memorial. (Courtesy of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill)



Flag designs for the Police and Fire Memorial. (Courtesy of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill)

Police & Fire Memorial

On September 11, 2019, a second and much different type of installation will be unveiled in the plaza at Ocean Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue: a new Long Beach Police and Fire Memorial. The former memorial, situated in between the north entrance of the old City Hall and the Public Safety Building, was decommissioned and removed just before construction began on the new Civic Center.

The Graphic & Branding Studio of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP (SOM), the Civic Center’s architectural firm, was hired to design a new memorial. SOM also designed the Los Angeles Police Department headquarters in Downtown Los Angeles as well as its memorial, comprised of wall-mounted plaques for fallen officers.

SOM Studio Director Lonny Israel said the previous Police and Fire Memorial, which was a traditional bronze piece depicting three servicemen, “was perfect for its time.” He continued, “When it was removed, it was a moment for both departments to step back and realize it wouldn’t speak to the diversity within their departments now. This opened up the possibility that instead of moving it, there was an opportunity to rethink what the memorial could be.”

The SOM studio team facilitated a series of workshops for the two departments to arrive at a new design. A task force of employees was formed, including participation of the police and fire chiefs. “Their fallen comrades are people they spent a great deal of time with,” Israel said. “They’re like family. So for them to be involved in the design process was close to their hearts. They were very engaged.”

Israel said what became very clear is both departments wanted to honor those who had fallen as well as those left behind, including both their colleagues and their family members and friends. After thoughtful consideration, the task force and design team felt the folding of the flag was the best symbol of this. Israel explained, “It’s a nod to the connection that happens during the service, where a flag is draped over the casket, then folded, and then passed from the department to the family left behind.”

The memorial is comprised bronze triangles, one for each fallen serviceperson, inscribed with their name, year of passing, and department shield. Two different tones of metal are used to differentiate between fire fighters and police officers. “Because they’re engraved, people will be able to take a rubbing of their loved one’s memorial piece,”

Israel explained, who said the memorial will also explain the methodology of how the flag is folded.

Shielded from Ocean Boulevard by a porous screen, the memorial will offer privacy for people who are there for a service or to grieve, while not completely blocking off sightlines from the street. At the same time, it will be more visible and prominent in its new location in the Civic Plaza than it was at its old location.

The City Manager’s Office, Mayor’s Office, Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, and the police and fire unions raised and contributed the funding to pay for the new piece.

“We appreciate the support from the Mayor and City Council in helping us commemorate our fallen officers with this new memorial,” Long Beach Police Chief Robert Luna said. “We also want to thank the Long Beach Police Foundation and Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce for their fundraising efforts towards this project. The memorial will feature an innovative flag design that will be inscribed with the names of . . . men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting the City of Long Beach.”

Long Beach Fire Chief Xavier Espino expressed similar gratitude for the memorial as well as for his fallen comrades. “The Memorial provides us a venue to honor and remember the bravery and sacrifice made by firefighters and police officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in fulfillment of their duties. It is important that we pay tribute to them as well as learn the lessons that come out of those tragedies to ensure firefighter and police officer safety in the future . . . I am humbled by these individuals for their service above self. The men and women of the Long Beach Fire Department will always honor your memory.”

History Walk & Cultural Loop

Soon, the Civic Plaza will receive the first installments of what will eventually become a three-block History Walk along First Street, stretching from the Civic Plaza’s western terminus to Lincoln Park’s Pacific Avenue border. This interactive experience will include a series of historic markers, either marked by plaques or inset within pavers, as well as colorful installations, rotating exhibits, and public performances.

Interrelated to this and still in development, a Cultural Loop is planned as a series of cultural experiences through Lincoln Park and the Library’s interior, including rotating exhibits, the Library’s special collections, the park’s landscaping and structure, and special presentations. The Library’s Carnegie Cornerstone – the first stone laid in Long Beach’s second library, built in 1909 and funded largely by tycoon Andrew Carnegie – will be part of this path and placed near Broadway and Pacific.

Long Beach architect and historic preservationist Kelly Sutherlin McLeod was brought onto the project team early on to develop these two elements.

“Throughout the years since the Plenary team assembled for this project, KSMA [Kelly Sutherlin McLeod Architecture, Inc.] has developed an expansive file of research and ideas for possible story themes for the History Walk and possible framework and components for the Cultural Loop,” McLeod said. “These files include input from community outreach during the initial project phase, where Plenary described the cultural elements for the project would be developed through an inclusive process.”

The Walk and Loop seek to add context to the Civic Center’s public spaces by weaving a continuous story throughout the site and utilizing its many public spaces as places for interactive art.

Lincoln Park & The Library

The Abraham Lincoln statue in Lincoln Park will receive company when the park is complete. According to Mayor Garcia, “There also will be one big signature art piece. I want it to be so eye-catching and interesting that people obsessively want to go and take a picture with it. Like how people go to Millennium Park in Chicago for ‘the bean.’”

In addition to what is permanently installed in the park, regular programming of musical performances and other arts and cultural events both in the park and on the Library’s terrace are also planned, including concerts by the Long Beach Symphony.

Building Interiors

The Library’s interior is expected to house a significant amount of art, not unlike at its former location. Fullerton said the Library has already received several calls from artists wanting to donate specific pieces for display. The Library’s leadership has put together an art committee to help vet the various offers and institute a plan that will both highlight the new interior architecture and feature a diversity of art from its existing collection and local artists.

The Port is showcasing art and artifacts in its lobby and on various floors of its building. However, City Hall staff has yet to determine whether to leave the building’s clean new walls bare to celebrate the interior architecture or to adorn them with art works.

One thing is certain: the fluidity of the spaces and buildings graciously allow for artistic and cultural installations to unfold over time and respond to the new environments.

Graphic Theory

Like many things in life, with urban planning and architecture, the delight is often in the details. In the case of the Long Beach Civic Center, the development’s wayfinding signage, identification graphics, and interior building graphics gave designers an opportunity to innovate. The designers were Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP’s (SOM) Graphic & Branding Studio, led by SOM Associate Principal Lonny Israel.

Upon stepping into the Civic Center, visitors are greeted with wayfinding signage guiding them to on-site locations and nearby transportation. “There are a series of totem signs providing directional information and maps,” Israel said. “Their shape was derived from the same metal panel system on the buildings – they’re tall and thin.” Israel said his team looked for something to unify the signage, so the sides of the larger directional signs have a corrugated appearance, inspired by Port cargo containers. “It’s a subtle reference,” he said. “Just one vertical stripe of a piece of corrugation that encloses the large, thin, free-standing totems.” The signs are painted in a hue of blue that references the City’s logo.

Israel’s team felt the Library should feature prominent signage to showcase the development’s most publicly frequented building. So, on the large second floor window above the Library’s Broadway entrance, they incorporated signage directly onto the window glazing. Large white letters that read “Long Beach Public Library” appear solid, but upon closer examination reveal a small wave pattern. “They’re comprised of a pattern that relates back to the corrugation of the containers and the leaf of a book,” Israel explained.

At the opposite corner of the Civic Center site, on the corner of Ocean and Magnolia, a few different graphic elements stand out. The first is the large “LONGBEACH” public art piece. Locals might recognize the font as that used in



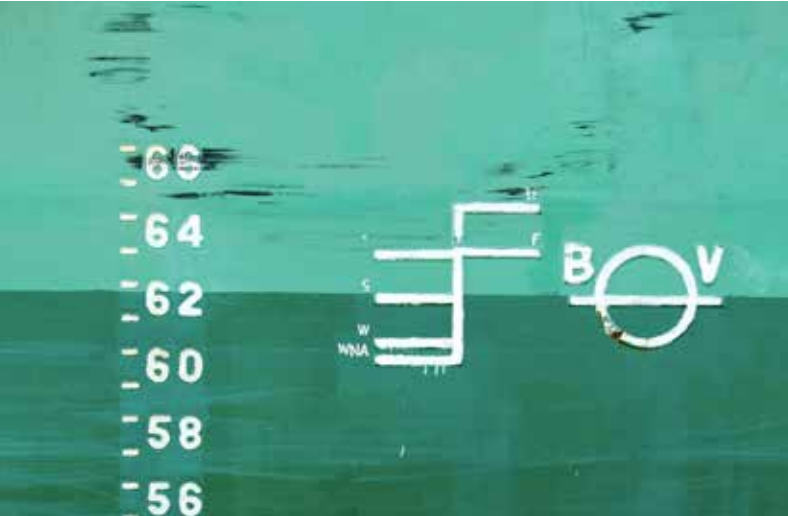
Neuzeit Grotesk was the font chosen for the exterior building signage for City Hall and the Port’s headquarters. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)

the City’s official logo. The typeface is Century Gothic, and the Studio only made minor refinements to better scale the letters.

Also noteworthy is the attractive and uniform font of the exterior building signage on the canopies of the Port building and City Hall that read, “Port of Long Beach” and “Long Beach City Hall.” SOM Studio designer Dan Maxfield explained how SOM chose the font: “When we began the project we were given the typefaces for the interiors of the Port building and City Hall – Fedra for the Port and Century Gothic at City Hall, both fairly idiosyncratic. Since the site needed to house both entities without either being dominant, we introduced a third neutral typeface that would be able to live alongside both of those. We chose Neuzeit Grotesk, as it is clean and simple to make it a good neighbor but not so pared down as to be devoid of personality.” Neuzeit Grotesk is a contemporary of Century Gothic and the typeface used across all site signage.

Continuing inside to the Port’s elevator lobby, meaningful but subtle graphic applications continue. On each floor, directional signage is inspired by the Plimsoll markings on cargo ships. First introduced by Lloyd’s Register of British and Foreign Shipping in 1835, Plimsoll markings visually show the maximum depth a ship can be safely immersed in water when loaded with cargo. The SOM Studio translated these markings into elevator signage to describe one’s vertical movement in the Port building – in other words, what floor one is on. The original Plimsoll mark – a circle with a line through and an ‘L’ and ‘R’ on either side of the circle, which stands for Lloyd’s Register, the original classification society – was cleverly repurposed as directional signage upon exiting an elevator, showing if a destination is to the left or to the right.

Maxfield said each floor was given a different signage color, derived from the Port’s logo. The colors are within a green-to-blue spectrum as you rise in the building. “The color changes floor-to-floor are not extreme, and the goal is less that of color coding – the floor numbers will do a better job of identifying what floor you are on – than giving visitors a sense of their progression up through the building,” Maxfield said, who added that the shift in colors is best observed at the stairwell, where all of the colors can be seen at once.



The Plimsoll line is a reference mark located on a ship’s hull that indicates the maximum depth to which the vessel may be safely immersed when loaded with cargo. Letters may appear to the sides of the mark indicating the classification society that has surveyed the vessel’s load line, such as LR for Lloyd’s Register or, in this case, BV for Bureau Veritas. (Image from Skidmore, Owings & Merrill)



The Plimsoll line was the inspiration for the directional signage inside of the Port building, including the elevator lobbies. (Fukushima Photography)



The fritting on the Library’s large Broadway Avenue window sign is designed like the turning pages of a book. (Fukushima Photography)

The sides of the wayfinding ‘totems’ have a blue corrugated look, a nod to shipping containers. (Fukushima Photography)



The ‘OM’ of the New Civic Center

For a governmental agency, one of the main benefits of a DBFOM (design-build-finance-operate-maintain) contract is the transfer of some of the risk to the private sector. In the case of the Long Beach Civic Center, the operations and maintenance for City Hall, its Civic Chambers, the Main Library, and to some extent, the Port headquarters have been delegated to Johnson Controls International (JCI). These two aspects, the ‘O’ and the ‘M,’ are behind-the-scenes necessities that keep buildings running harmoniously.

“All governments are really bad at maintaining their properties,” Amy Bodek, former development services director for the City, said. “When push comes to shove in a budget cut situation, a city council will cut building maintenance before cutting public safety. They’ll reduce elevator repairs instead of library hours. This means a city will have to repair things as they break down instead of doing proactive maintenance. This leads to issues with buildings over their lifetime.”

Bodek continued, “City Hall was not just a seismic issue, it was a maintenance issue. Roofs leaked, lights didn’t work, there were mold issues – and the old Library and Courthouse were examples of that as well. The beauty of this project is the majority of the maintenance requirements are no longer the City’s. And this project requires a high level of maintenance to be sustained throughout the entire life of the project.”

While the City didn’t have the financial resources to build a new Civic Center on its own, it did have enough money to pay for the lease and maintenance at about the same amount it had allocated for its old facilities. The DBFOM contract made this arrangement possible.

JCI will operate and maintain the buildings for 40 years, and at the end of the 40-year lease, when the City takes ownership of the facilities, the buildings must have a Facilities Conditions Index (FCI) ranking of 80% of their original condition. This ‘hand-back’ provision ensures that after 40 years, the buildings will have only 20% wear and tear. In contrast, the old City Hall had an FCI of less than 50% after only 30 years.

Life Cycle Design

JCI is incentivized to integrate operational systems into the building that are long-lasting and cost-effective over time, which translates into smarter building design. In a DBFOM, operations and maintenance decisions become central and transformative to each building’s architecture and longevity, including their environmental and economic performance.

Unlike the traditional design-build contract model, this type of public-private partnership (P3) brings the client and contractors – the architect, builder, operator, and developer/financier – to the table from the initial design phase throughout the process. This team approach allows potential problems to be caught early on and solutions to be collaboratively hashed out, translating into buildings with more durable design that incur lower costs over time.

“A DBFOM delivers a better product because it forces the developer to look at the whole life of the asset instead of just the initial first cost,” Developer Jeffrey Fullerton of The Plenary Group and Plenary-Edgemoor Civic Partners said. “Developers are incentivized to incorporate innovations upfront.”



In addition to the Port lobby’s security desk and other security measures, card access is needed for access beyond the first floor. (Fukushima Photography)

Fullerton, who was part of the Long Beach Courthouse development team, used that building’s terrazzo floor as an example. He said they originally planned to install industrial carpet in the hallways, which would have required replacement every five to seven years, or about six times during the 35-year maintenance contract. “When we’re looking to get the lowest cost throughout a long-term deal structure, that replacement cycle becomes very important. Suddenly, the cost of a terrazzo floor looks much cheaper, because I can clean and wax it and I’ll never have to replace it.” The result? A higher quality, longer lasting, more environmentally sustainable, and more affordable floor.

According to Erin Young, the Civic Center project lead for Clark Construction who also worked on the Courthouse, the lobbies of both City Hall and the Port headquarters will feature terrazzo flooring as well. She emphasized the importance of also having the client at the table early on. “Because the City was at the table as the consortium progressed through the Civic Center design packages, the City was fully involved with design reviews, providing comments and feedback and making sure its needs were known as the design evolved. This made for a more streamlined process,” she said.

Jed Zimmerman, the production architect for Skidmore, Owings Merrill (SOM), the Civic Center’s design firm, said the DBFOM model ensures the architect isn’t designing in a vacuum. “SOM received information in real-time from the builder who has to build it, the entity who has to price it, and the people who will operate and maintain it. So we’re always looking holistically at everything. You end up with a smarter design, and we’re internally vetting things before

we present them to the client.” Working collaboratively also allows room for the evolution of the design, he said.

Claudio Andreetta, JCI’s director of business development, said JCI’s main role at the table was to guarantee the outcomes for the buildings being designed. “Someone needs to be at the table who can substantiate the claims for energy and operational efficiency,” he said. “We see ourselves as the glue that holds the P3 together over the long-term.”

Complex Building Management

This is not JCI’s first experience with a DBFOM. In addition to being in charge of the operations and maintenance (O&M) of the Long Beach Courthouse, the company has approximately 35 similar project contracts around North America, of which 22 are in operation and 13 are under construction. JCI Customer Business Director Mike Davis said what he’s most excited about is that other cities are starting to understand the benefits that DBFOMs provide. “Something that was fairly new when we did the Long Beach Courthouse is now more commonplace,” he said. “Public-private partnerships make the most sense.”

Sean Maher, JCI business development lead, added, “Long Beach is the first local entity that has actually done this. And it was a very forward-thinking and aggressive project – they didn’t just do one building, they did four. This is a great bellwether project for cities.”

JCI is responsible for operating and maintaining practically everything in the Civic Center buildings, from the technological systems to the wall paint. The company

oversees the elevators, HVAC (heating, ventilation, and cooling), security, information technology, fire systems, energy and utilities, audio visual equipment, cleaning services, pest control, roads and grounds maintenance, the roof, all building finishes such as the flooring and walls, the general maintenance and help desk, and more. Essentially, if anything isn’t working or maintaining perfectly in the buildings, it is JCI’s job to fix it.

Building systems are multilayered and complex, so this is no small feat. The security system alone encompasses closed-circuit television cameras, recording devices, card access, metal detectors, and on-site personnel. “Visitors to City Hall and the Civic Chambers will go through magnetometers, and there will also be security wandering for council meetings,” Maher explained. “Floors above the second floor will be card-access controlled, and only people with card authorization will be allowed up there. We are in charge of all the equipment and performance of these systems.”

While security presence will be provided by the Long Beach Police Department (LBPD), JCI will supplement additional security staff. For example, the City Hall information desk will be manned by the LBPD as well as a JCI security subcontractor.

Financial Incentives

How can the City rest assured JCI will take its O&M obligations seriously? Financial penalties are built into the performance regime. Andreetta explained, “This is a performance-based contract, and if we don’t deliver on the outcomes, the City either doesn’t have to pay for that space or there are other financial consequences for us. If a system goes down, or the building is too hot or too cold, our payment is abated. That means we have designed the systems with more redundancy. P3s have a great track record of having very productive and reliable buildings.”

Andreetta said this applies to every room in a building, whether it’s an office or a storage space. However, the more important the room, the steeper the fine. “For example, if the Civic Chambers aren’t fully available for a City Council meeting, we would get a pretty significant deduction from our service payment,” Andreetta said. “So you can imagine we’re doing everything we can to make sure the lights are on, the building is comfortable, the electricity is there for them to plug in their computers. . . . No other public space that we’re aware of, other than the Long Beach Courthouse, is under the same model.”

Craig Beck, public works director for the City and the project’s lead, said the team spent considerable hours thinking through the maintenance contract and what the

financial penalties would be for poor performance. “We had to develop expectations and numbers of what it means if an elevator, HVAC, you name it goes down and how long JCI will have without penalty to get it up and running again. There are entire sections in our contract on KPIs articulating the City’s expectations of operations and maintenance and a whole point system of demerits, for lack of a better term, through which we get rent credits.” If JCI doesn’t meet a certain standard of operation, the City gets a credit off its rent the following month, Beck said.

At the end of the 40-year lease, if JCI doesn’t return the buildings to the City at the agreed-upon level of condition, Andreetta said JCI will have to replace the low-performing building systems or write the City a check for the difference in value. “That’s a very important aspect of the P3 – the hand-back provision. That was a big deal for the City, given that the old City Hall wasn’t even 40 years old and had so much deferred maintenance.”

Fullerton said that when The Plenary Group debuts a new building, the firm also wants to ensure it’s going to be taken care of for the long term. “In the old model, when things fail, that’s life. In the new model, if you can’t open the doors to a courtroom for some reason, it’s a \$250,000 a day penalty,” he said. “There’s a penalty if the city manager can’t get to his office and a bigger penalty if a council meeting has to be cancelled. Putting a performance deduction against a lease really amplifies quality of service . . . At the end of the day, any building owner’s costs are holistic. Maintenance costs, service costs, upfront capital costs – all of those things marry together. So throwing them all into the mix makes a lot of sense, because you’re allowing the private sector to be creative in how they solve the problem.”

Also no stranger to the P3 world, Orion Fulton of Arup, the City’s private advisor for the project, articulated what he sees as a central benefit of this contract to Long Beach. “The last City Hall was built to great fanfare – it was the really cool design of its day – and then the building didn’t live up to its life potential,” he said. “Its useful life should’ve been more like 70 to 80 years, but after about 30, it was not sustainable or safe to stay in. The City wanted to learn from that and say, ‘We’re not going to do that again. We’re going to build a new Civic Center, but the goal this time is to have a contract where, when we get that building back in 40 years, it will have a lot of useful life left and be in good condition.’ And that’s really the purpose of this contract – to not just get new construction built but to make sure the assets are well-preserved and managed.”

Green is Gold

Environmentally-conscious design is interwoven throughout the Long Beach Civic Center site and its individual buildings and public spaces. This includes making the six-block area more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly, upcycling construction materials, incorporating sustainable landscaping, thoughtfully situating and designing buildings, and creating efficient building systems, especially in regard to energy use.

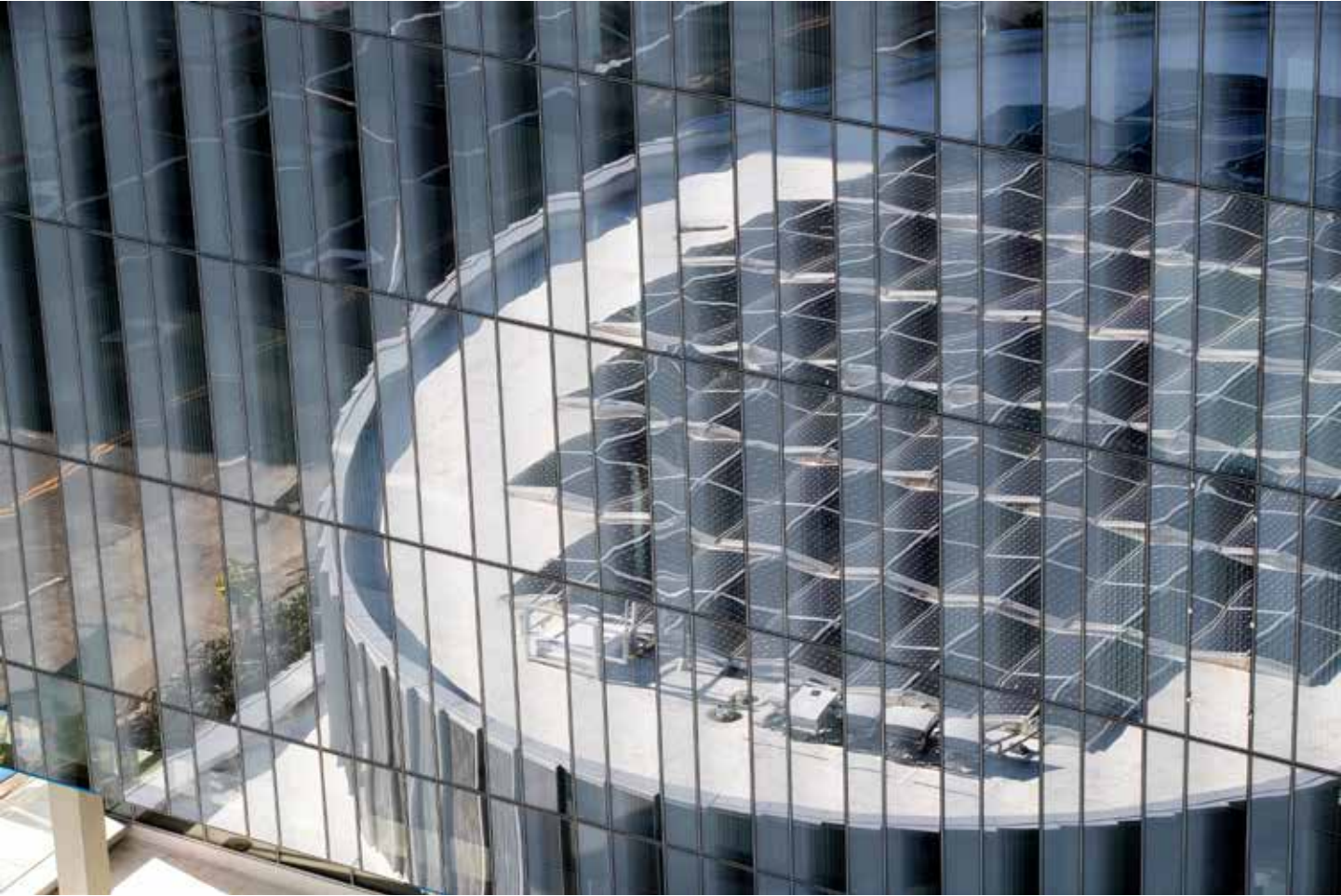
“There are sustainability gestures and measures throughout the project, from the very simple initial planning to intricate building systems and strategies,” Paul Danna, the lead design architect and principal at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP (SOM), said. Sustainability, he said, was baked into the project from the beginning, not as an afterthought.

All three buildings – City Hall and its Civic Chambers, the Port’s headquarters, and the Main Library – meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold for New Construction rating. “But we never look at

getting a LEED stamp as the reason to do something,” Jeffrey Fullerton of Plenary-Edgemoor Civic Partners, noted. “LEED achievement is a result of doing the right things.”

Doing the right thing started with how to best utilize the very ground on which the new buildings stand. The excavated land that was dug up for the basement of the Port’s headquarters, measuring 135,000 cubic yards, was shipped to the Port to use as backfill rather than trucking it to the nearest landfill in San Bernardino. Not only did this decision promote sustainability through reuse, it also prevented emissions from diesel truck transport. The concrete from the demolition of the old City Hall will also avoid the landfill and instead be used as the infill for Lincoln Park.

The new buildings use significantly less water than their predecessors and the LEED baseline – City Hall and the Civic Chambers 41% below the baseline, the Port Headquarters 37% below, and the Library 43% less – and approximately 890



The Civic Chambers’ solar panel array will produce approximately 88 kilowatts of power. (Fukushima Photography)

kilowatts of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels are installed on the roofs of the four buildings, which will provide up to 25% of their combined energy needs.

Offering a good example of how green measures are often less expensive, Fullerton said PECP incorporated solar PV panels and energy efficiency measures because they are more cost-effective. “The energy program is a big component of the site, and the reason we have low energy is because the City said to us, ‘We want a new City Hall for no more than it cost us to maintain the old one.’ That was a big challenge,” he explained. “Part of their maintenance cost was spending \$4 million a year on electricity. Now, we’re going to spend \$1 million a year. That’s \$3 million a year that can help the payment structure. We put solar PV on the roofs because it made financial sense.”

Perhaps the most subtle but important sustainability element of the master plan is the orientation of the buildings toward the sun, a common building technique practiced by indigenous people around the globe for centuries that is often employed by contemporary architects. “The buildings are oriented to capture sunlight,” Danna said. “That’s why the buildings have long south and north facades. The library’s basic configuration is south-facing and brings in a lot of sunlight, but also has a large roof structure to shade the south face of the porch so readers and everybody can hang out and enjoy the park.”

The notion that energy efficiency is always the ‘low-hanging fruit’ of green building is challenged by this project’s use of efficient new building systems. While efficient light bulbs are very important and present throughout all four buildings – the structures utilize high-performing LED lights that consume less energy, need less frequent replacement than fluorescents or incandescents, and will bring considerable cost savings to the project – the HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) systems in City Hall and the Port headquarters are especially unique.

HVAC systems are typically located on a building’s roof. In addition to being unsightly and taking up space where solar panels, rainwater capture systems, or food-producing gardens could be installed, rooftop HVAC systems experience significant wear and tear from being exposed to the elements. Most problematic from an energy perspective is that they are also inefficient.

Instead of trying to blow cold air and heat down eleven stories of building space, the HVAC units in City Hall and the Port headquarters utilize an underfloor air distribution system incorporated onto every third floor. The system uses less energy by bringing air in through the floor, not through the ceiling, taking advantage of how heat naturally rises.

Every HVAC cluster system feeds the floor below, the floor it’s on, and the floor above. Craig Beck, the City’s director for the



The underfloor HVAC system includes controllable dials for every workspace grouping so employees can set the temperature around their desks. (Fukushima Photography)

Civic Center project explained, “When you look at the exterior of the building, you’ll notice there are vertical serrations of louvers every third floor. That’s where the mechanical rooms are.”

Considering the City spent the majority of its maintenance costs for the old City Hall on HVAC, the new efficient and cost-effective system is important. “The DBFOM [design-build-finance-operate-maintain contract] process allowed us to value engineer as we designed this new project. It may be a little more expensive up front – these are not the cheapest HVAC systems – but in the long run, they’ll save a lot of money.”

The new HVAC system also brings enhanced indoor air quality, comfort, and flexibility to building inhabitants. Instead of one system that serves the entire building with centralized control, the new system is comprised of smaller zones whereby employees are able to adjust the temperature in their office area.

Danna described the floor and ceiling architecture that goes hand-in-hand with the system: “City Hall and the Port Headquarters have a raised floor concrete structural system that is set on pedestals. This allowed us to maintain a certain



City Hall’s solar array will produce approximately 140 kilowatts of power. (Fukushima Photography)

floor-to-ceiling height while reducing the floor-to-floor height, which means we used fewer materials in construction and reduced material expense.” Furthermore, the underfloor system eliminates the need for air ducts and mechanical equipment in the ceiling, which allows for higher finished ceiling heights and increased natural light.

The underfloor system requires much less energy to run, which also means less wear-and-tear on the equipment. Fullerton explained, “The fans are all running at a slower speed. The chillers are not producing water at the same temperature; they’re running at a slightly higher temperature and still producing the same cooling environment. For example, when it comes out of the chiller, it can be 68 degrees instead of 62 – that’s a big difference – and still produce a comfortable environment because it’s coming in underneath and naturally rising. All those things add up. And when you’re looking at 40 years, it makes sense to spend the money upfront because you’re going to recover it in a multiple over time.”

Claudio Andreetta, business development director for Johnson Controls International (JCI), the company in charge of operations and maintenance, explained another key component behind the energy savings in all of the buildings. “The energy for City Hall and the Civic Chambers, the Port building, and the Library are all fed from one central utility plant. So from an HVAC standpoint, instead of each of the buildings having their own chillers and boilers, we developed one central plant that feeds all three,” he said. “There’s an economy of scale. It’s much more efficient when each of the buildings doesn’t have to duplicate all of that equipment.” The central utility plant is located in a shared basement between City Hall and the Port.

Energy savings is also built into the windows. Linda Tatum, the City’s director of development services, said the new buildings have dual- or triple-glazed windows to reduce heat loss. In addition, window fritting (patterned surface treatments) on City Hall’s south-facing windows and the Port headquarters north-facing ones reduce summertime heat, yet help maintain

The window fritting on City Hall’s south side is placed close together on the right sides of the windows to block out heat while still letting in daylight. (Fukushima Photography)



heat in the winter. Significant work and modeling went into the makeup of the high-performing glass to also ensure high visibility. Whereas a lot of older buildings are tinted light blue or green to help shield the hot afternoon sun, the Port and City Hall buildings have clear windows to preserve an authentic view.

The architecture of the skin of City Hall and the Port building also balances the ratio of metal to window glass to help minimize solar impact and glare, Danna explained. “It also brings in a lot of natural daylight so we don’t need to bring in as much artificial lighting into the space, creating a healthier environment,” he said. “The hats [roof canopies] of the buildings provide some solar protection, and the metal shadow boxes on the Port building block some of the afternoon sun while still letting in ample daylight.”

The energy costs of all three buildings are estimated to be about 50% less than standard office buildings based on Energy Star data, and the estimated energy cost for City Hall is less than half of what the City paid for its old building.

All of these systems and features must be maintained to ensure high performance for building occupants, for JCI, and for the City. JCI is incentivized to implement preventative maintenance measures to avoid financial penalties. “Typically, a preventative maintenance measure might be an annual inspection,” JCI’s Business Development Lead Sean Maher said. “But JCI may do a quarterly inspection, because we want to keep tabs on that piece of equipment at all times so we can

be proactive in repairing or replacing that component to make sure that we’re still getting the output we need at the end of the day.”

According to Andreetta, JCI has modeled how many units of electricity and gas will be used by each building, and is required to ensure they consume no more than that amount. The energy use intensity (EUI) – the industry standard to measure the efficiency of a building – for City Hall, Civic Chambers, and the Library amounts to 35.4 kBtu per square foot, he explained. In comparison, the national median EUI for office buildings is 52.9 kBtu/sq. ft. “This is an improvement of 33% and speaks to the design effort and equipment selection centered around a more efficient ‘whole life’ model,” he said.

The project contract requires JCI to guarantee the energy consumption of the buildings throughout the 40-year contract. “Things wear and tear, but we have to keep the building energy efficiency as high in day one as in the 40th year of operations,” Andreetta said. “It’s incumbent upon us to make sure we maintain the equipment very effectively, so it delivers that performance we’re looking for.”

Port & City

Located in the westernmost portion of the Civic Center, in between Magnolia and Chestnut Avenues, Long Beach City Hall and the Port of Long Beach Administration Building are nearly identical in size, shape, and design. The 11-story rectangular structures are narrow at their east and west ends and have wide south faces to pull sunlight into the center of the buildings. The plentiful windows make them relatively translucent, an intentional symbol of open and transparent government. The buildings open onto the shared Civic Plaza where their rectangular columns amplify the space's contemporary Romanesque feel.

The lobbies in both buildings flood with natural light and are clad in Ash – the same wood as the Civic Chambers. However, the Port building features two main entrances, a northern entrance from the Civic Plaza and a southern entrance from Ocean Boulevard.

The main difference between the two buildings is their exterior coloring. While both buildings mostly reflect the blue sky, City's Hall's cladding includes white metal stripes – especially visible on the building's north, west, and east sides, while the Port's cladding is blue, with accents of red and aqua, especially visible on its south, west, and east sides. City Hall also has a two-story wing on its east end, and is situated a bit more to the west to allow for better views from each building. Inside, the structures also have slightly different floor plans due to different departmental needs. The Port has more individual offices, and City Hall has more open office space.

Paul Danna, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) principal and lead designer of the Civic Center project, said SOM wanted to make the two buildings different yet complementary, while also capitalizing on joint amenities such as an underground utility plant, shared loading dock, and similar building systems and materials.



The Port building (left) and City Hall (right), viewed from the east end of the Civic Plaza. (Fukushima Photography)



City Hall's north, east, and west exterior features white 'pin-stripes,' whereas the Port's cladding is colorful. (Fukushima Photography)



"City Hall and the Port: no secret, an interesting relationship," Danna said. "The Port is an important component of the life of the city, functionally and economically. We think the familial composition of the buildings make a lot of sense. They're almost identical in their plans. They're a bit of a set, the ying and the yang. They're the Roman God Janus, the two-faced figure, the god of doors and passageways. . . . That brother-sisterhood they have, being Port and City, is taken even further if you see the elevation of these buildings – they both have these planes which turn into large canopies, roof forms that jut out – the Port's looks to the water and City Hall's looks over the city."

City of Long Beach Public Works Director Craig Beck, also the Civic Center project director, appropriately calls these canopies or cornices "hats," and said they weren't part of the original design. "We wanted the plain towers to stand out more, be more statement buildings, more iconic in design. The SOM team came back with the idea of these hats, which add nice articulation," he said. At night, the hats are underlit with white LED lights and can be programmed to change color for special holidays or celebrations, like green and blue for Earth Day.

The buildings' most defining characteristic is their high energy-performing curtain walls, the non-structural outer walls. The curtain walls for both buildings are made of alternating strips of vertical floor-to-ceiling windows and solid metal panels. This pattern allows for daylight to penetrate into the building cores through the glass while the solid panels limit solar heat gain.

The design and build team created full-scale mock-ups of the curtain wall at an Inland Empire site known for the testing of window wall systems. "We tested different iterations, glass types, and colors of the metal, with [representatives from] the City and the Port there to observe, give input, and make decisions," Danna said. "We built it two stories tall, about

15 feet by 25 feet, so you could see what both the inside and outside would look like at different times of day – see it in shade and see it in shadow. And it was tested for performance as well."

The curtain wall is where the main color – and textural – differentiation exists between the two buildings. City Hall's metal panels are composed of white-formed aluminum, a reference to the tradition of civic buildings often being made of stone. Danna refers to the resulting effect as the "pin-stripe suit of City Hall – very civic." In contrast, the Port's panels are colorful blues and reds, and are formed as shadow boxes made from extruded aluminum – giving the skin added depth – with insulating clear glass at the face. This was inspired by the colors of shipping containers as well as the textures and landscape of the Port itself.

The south-facing windows of City Hall feature another performance design element to assist in reducing solar heat gain: window fritting. Small vertical white patterns on the glass are spaced out at the middle of each window and are placed closer together on the western side to help block afternoon heat. The fritting absorbs some of the heat – and lowers the energy bill – but still allows natural daylight in. Fritting was added to the north face of the Port building for consistency in design, just as the two buildings' hats mirror each other.

Aside from the building lobbies, the most dramatic location in each building is the 11th floor terrace. The Port director's terrace overlooks the Port to the south, and the mayor's terrace at City Hall overlooks the city to the north and east.

When taking in the elevated, vast views of the city and harbor, one is hard-pressed to not think about movie filming. Beck agreed. "A lot of filming happens in Long Beach, and the City has a great relationship with the film industry. These new buildings will likely increase that interest."

A Civic-Minded City Hall

Sporting a new address of 411 W. Ocean Blvd., the new 11-story Long Beach City Hall features an entrance that opens to the Civic Plaza, like its predecessor. The plaza is accessed from the west at the corner of Ocean Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue and from the east at First Street and the newly-opened Chestnut Avenue.

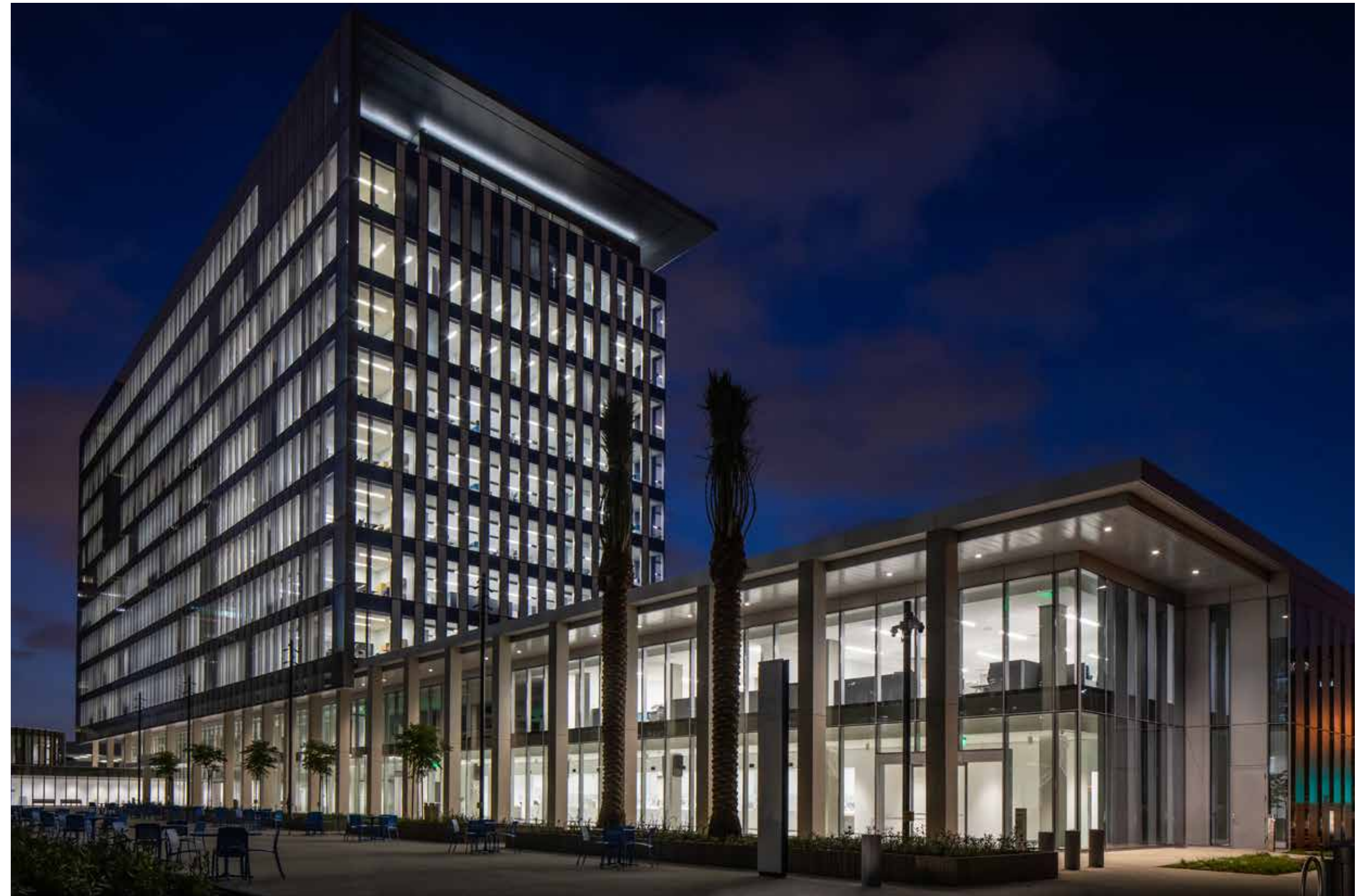
Upon entering the building, visitors are greeted by a massive 60-foot-long, 10-foot-tall video wall in the entrance lobby, a dynamic art installation of rotating videos. The colorful moving images pop against the predominantly white architecture. The idea was conceived by Long Beach Museum of Art (LBMA) Executive Director Ron Nelson, and future installations will include video art from LBMA's vast collection as well as new ones by local artists.

The former City Hall was a Brutalist-style building defined by stark concrete and long rows of black windows (technically, dark bronze curtain walls). In sharp contrast, the new building is mostly translucent glass and white metal. The lobby, like the rest of the building, feels open and bright and is flooded with natural light. It also features the same vertical slat pattern of Ash wood that is in the Port's lobby and that defines the interior of the Civic Chambers.

Linda Tatum, the director of development services for the City of Long Beach, said the new building was designed to be friendly and welcoming. Great thought was given to the building's customer experience, including how it appears from the sidewalk and how to reach it via different forms of transportation. Newly-branded wayfinding signage directs visitors to the building as well as other Civic Center destinations.

"Once you're inside City Hall, it's really a further expansion of the wayfinding," Tatum said. "We have a directory, but more importantly, all of the key face-to-face services where staff interact directly with the public are on the first and second floors."

This is a significant improvement for the public: easier access to often-used services. Pneumatic ticket-pulling systems now direct customers to the correct counters. First floor payment



City Hall at night, as seen from the Civic Plaza. (Fukushima Photography)



The ‘tail’ or bustle of City Hall is where the payment center and permitting center are located. (Fukushima Photography)

windows, like in the old City Hall, allow residents to pay utility bills and parking tickets, ask general questions, and request records from the city clerk. As a sign of the changing times, the first floor now also has a secure payment room for marijuana tax payments. However, it’s the second floor that brings the biggest change.

The City has consolidated all code enforcement and permitting services onto the second floor, including everything needed for construction and building permits. “The second floor will have what was on the fourth floor of the old City Hall,” Tatum explained. “The new space is more comfortable and has every department in the City represented. With the old City Hall, you’d have to leave the fourth floor and go up to the ninth floor to public works to get engineering approval,

and then leave City Hall completely to get health department and other approvals. Now, you can get all City permits and approvals in one place. It’s a one-stop permitting center.”

The project’s lead architect, Paul Danna of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), described how the building’s architecture supports this user-friendliness. “The public-serving components of City Hall are treated like retail and placed on the first two floors so people can access them easily. Filled with natural light, they comprise the two-story tail, or bustle, of the building that sticks out to the east,” he said. Viewed from the outside, this change in building level adds dimension and permeability to the Civic Plaza block. It also gives Port employees better north-facing views.

The wing was designed with security in mind. Craig Beck, the City’s director of public works and the Civic Center project, explained, “Instead of moving the public up and down the tower, the building is designed to engage the majority of the public on the first two levels, which also improves security. We live in an environment where government buildings need to be a little more precautionous, so we designed the new building to be more secure.”

The first floor’s public counters incorporate ballistic glass between staff and the public, while visitors to floors two and above go through metal detectors. Other building security measures include on-site security personnel, closed-circuit

television cameras, and recording devices. To access floors three through eleven, card access is now needed. Visitors without access are screened and escorted to the floor they’re visiting.

Since fewer people will now visit the upper floors of City Hall, fewer elevators are needed, resulting in reduced energy and maintenance costs. Whereas the old building had six lobby elevators, the new City Hall has four. The new elevators utilize a smart control system, which allow the same volume of passengers with fewer cabs.



Public Works Director Craig Beck is the director of the Civic Center project. (Fukushima Photography)



City Hall’s video wall. (Fukushima Photography)



First floor payment windows. (Fukushima Photography)

The consolidation of most public services onto the first two floors also negated the need for lobbies above floor two. The first two floors each feature a communal area and conference room, and the first floor also features a media room for press conferences.

The building measures 247,000 gross square feet (GSF) – and the adjoining Civic Chambers 4,800 GSF – slightly smaller than the old City Hall. However, improved space utilization and layout allows for more services to be housed in the building, including three previously offsite departments: Code Enforcement, Neighborhood Services, and Special Events.

Flexibility is integrated into the building design to accommodate future potential changes, such as departments moving floors. Raised access flooring allows walls to be moved

without necessitating involved construction. An advanced heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system allows each office space to set its own temperature. Floors three through eleven are comprised mostly of open office layouts, and employee desks are adjustable sit-stand desks.

The natural light throughout the building brings additional comfort to employees and visitors. SOM achieved this effect in part by designing a long, narrow building rather than a square one that is dark at its center. “We broke the core apart and reduced the width of the building, so there’s the opportunity for views and light all the way through the building,” Danna said. “You can stand in one space and have views to both sides.”

Resource efficiencies extend not only to energy and other building systems but also to material finishes. For example,



Second floor permitting center. (Fukushima Photography)

the council offices, located on the eleventh floor, are outfitted with new, matching furniture that is designed to be long-lasting and won’t need to be replaced for many years.

Several small meeting rooms and break areas are located on each floor for staff to congregate, which Beck hopes will help increase communication between departments so things aren’t operating in silos.

“As someone who has worked in multiple locations, having new floor layouts is exciting,” Beck said, “as is being able to walk the floor and have that much natural light, and having ample conference facilities, whereas in the old building we were constantly jockeying to reserve a conference room.”

Beck is most excited about how the building better serves the public. “City Hall is where we conduct the people’s business. I think residents will find that their new building is more functional. When they have to conduct business here or want to engage in dialogue in the Civic Chambers, I think they’ll find it better sets the tone of who we are as a community and as a city.”



The interior of the new Civic Chambers. (City of Long Beach photograph)

The New Civic Chambers

Named after former Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster, the Bob Foster Civic Chambers is the primary public space in Long Beach where residents and stakeholders interact with their elected officials and city commissioners. It is the meeting place for the Long Beach City Council and most city commissions, including the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners, which oversees the Port of Long Beach. It is where ordinances are crafted, land use is designated, taxes are sent to the ballot, and Port terminals are improved.

The elliptical-shaped space is clad in clear glass to symbolize civic transparency and public access to government. Connected to the southwest corner of City Hall and part of that building, the chambers anchor the west end of the Civic Plaza, at Magnolia Avenue near Ocean Boulevard, viewable all the way east from First Street and Pacific Avenue.

The lead design architect, Paul Danna of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), said the Civic Chambers’ protruding position from City Hall and its location at the end of the Civic Plaza are representative of the process of public governance.

“It is where the work of government is done, and its visibility as the focal point at the end of the First Street corridor symbolizes government transparency,” Danna explained. “It’s also a focal point from the corner of Ocean Boulevard and Magnolia Avenue at both the pedestrian and vehicular scale. It’s kind of a hot corner for the project.”

The chambers were originally designed by SOM to be circular, however, the builder, Clark Construction, suggested a square. The result: an oval. SOM’s Jed Zimmerman, the project’s production architect explained, “Both City Hall and the Port building are very rectilinear and very ‘civic’ in their presence. We looked at the pedestrian flow that will go from Magnolia Avenue through the plaza and up to City Hall, and this circulation flow made an ellipse. So that’s how we carved that shape.”

The new chambers encompass 4,801 gross square feet (GSF) comprised of an 1,806 GSF dias and 2,995 GSF of public space. This is smaller than the former chambers but accommodates a few more seats – 254 as opposed to the



The Civic Chambers is named after Bob Foster, Long Beach mayor from 2006–14. Prior to that, Foster served as the president of Southern California Edison (SCE) where he worked for more than 20 years. During his tenure as president, SCE developed the largest renewable energy programs (solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass) in the nation. Beginning his career as a staffer in the California State Senate and California Energy Commission, he established statewide energy efficiency standards still enforced today. (Fukushima Photography)

former’s 250. The former chambers didn’t have spillover space when public attendance exceeded capacity, so dedicated spaces for this purpose were built into the new building.

The main difference between the old and new chambers is the former one had stadium seating. The aisles were stairways, the gradient was much steeper, and the ceiling was high partially to accommodate this. This gave the public and councilmembers very good sight lines – the views were unobstructed in both directions. However, this design didn’t provide American Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant seating for people in wheelchairs or with other mobility limitations. The stairs were a barrier for accessibility and, therefore, equal access to government.

The new chambers feature fully ADA-accessible seating, with aisles in place of stairways and a floor gradient of less than two percent. Whereas the audience seating was elevated in the old chambers, in the new space the dias is elevated by three feet. In designing this layout, the design team spent a considerable amount of time testing sight lines. The seats are offset row to row to allow for the best views possible to and from the dias.

Craig Beck, director of public works and the Civic Center project, said that ensuring the chambers were fully accessible was the City’s priority. “People in wheelchairs no longer need to enter through a separate door. Now, everyone enters

together,” he said. Councilmembers and Commissioners in wheelchairs also have a more dignified entrance to the dias. In the former chambers, they had to use the service entrance and its maze of hidden hallways. Now, they approach the dias with their colleagues. The new chambers also better accommodates people with hearing or visual impairments.

The interior of the space is defined by vertical Ash wood slats that are functional as well as decorative: the small spaces in between each slat create better acoustics, as do the double platform floors. Enhanced security includes metal detectors in addition to security wands.

Technological improvements feature more easily visible video screens for the audience and a laptop at each dias seat so Councilmembers and Commissioners do not have to turn their backs to the audience in order to view a presentation on screen. Power outlets are available in the public seating.

Linda Tatum, director of development services for the City, said that designing a more equitable and comfortable Civic Chambers is essential in being able to properly serve the public. “In addition to City Hall, the Civic Chambers is one of the most important reasons people visit the Civic Center. They really are the heart and soul of the public access to the City.”

Back on the Waterfront

Occupying the area of the Long Beach Civic Center closest to the Port of Long Beach is, fittingly, the new Port of Long Beach Administration Building. Slightly smaller than City Hall, the Port's headquarters has moved back downtown after five years near Long Beach Airport, and now dons an address related to its purpose: 415 W. Ocean Blvd.

"We are essentially back on the waterfront, which is where we should be," Port of Long Beach Executive Director Mario Cordero said. Before its temporary location near the Airport, Port administration was located in the harbor, in a historic building designed by architect Paul Williams as part of the former Roosevelt Naval Base. The structure was ultimately deemed seismically unsafe, necessitating a new headquarters location.

The Port is part of the City of Long Beach and operated by the City's Harbor Department. However, because of the immensity of its operations, it has its own budget and appointed governing body. As the second largest port in the nation after its neighbor, the Port of Los Angeles, it

supports more than 51,000 jobs in Long Beach and 2.6 million nationwide. Its economic output is \$9 billion in Long Beach alone.

The City approached Port leadership about moving into a shared Civic Center campus soon after the Downtown Plan was completed in 2012. At the time, the Port was considering investing \$255 million into constructing a new headquarters at the Port or buying downtown's World Trade Center. Councilmember Suja Lowenthal, with the support of then-Mayor Bob Foster and Councilmembers Robert Garcia and Gary DeLong, appealed to the Port to locate downtown next to City Hall. "We said to them, if you spend it in downtown, it will be an economic generator and send positive reverberations throughout the area," Lowenthal explained. "Businesses will do better. Your visitors and 400 employees will be eating down here."

Paul Danna, principal at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) and design architect for the Civic Center project, said that as part of the original procurement competition,



Port of Long Beach Executive Director Mario Cordero on the Port Administration Building's eleventh floor terrace. (Fukushima Photography)

ving teams had to come up with designs that included and did not include the Port. "We had to deliver two solutions. It was rather clear there was some question about which way this might go – otherwise, why would we be asked to submit both options? Of course, the decision was made the Port would be part of the master plan."

Former City of Long Beach Economic Development Director Mike Conway, also the former Civic Center project lead, said that working with the Port was important and also added a considerable level of complexity to the deal structure, including "more meetings and public presentations about restrictive funding sources, security, logistics, design, and separating the shared spaces by ownership to protect tidelands funds." The Port financed its new headquarters separately, using revenue bonds, and bought its land for the building with a direct financial contribution. The project's total cost to the Port was \$235.2 million.

Developer Jeffrey Fullerton of Plenary-Edgemoor Civic Partners echoed that including the Port was an important addition for the Civic Center and was also complicated from a financial standpoint because, under the Tidelands Trust, the Port has to have a fair and reasonable allocation of all costs. "It has to be able to go back to the State and not be subsidizing the City in any way. This made for some interesting deal structuring," he said. "The Port has completely different financing from the City's financing, and there are very defined payment structures for how they deal with the central plant and other shared facilities and shared uses, so it was fairly involved."

While much of the financial structure between the buildings is independent from one another, their shared campus demonstrates a strong working relationship. The Port Administration's home next to City Hall symbolically demonstrates that Long Beach is a Port city with a long history in international trade.

Their proximity also has practical value. "We will be just a walk across a courtyard to talk with City leaders," Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners President Tracy Egoscue said. "We're literally connected, and we share meeting space with the city now. It will be nice for Harbor Commissioners and staff to be able to connect on a much more efficient level." The Harbor Commission will hold its meetings in the new Bob Foster Civic Chambers, connected to City Hall and located in between City Hall and the Port building.

Egoscue is looking forward to hosting important visitors at the new headquarters and feels the Port administration's new location signals to others that the City and Port are committed to working seamlessly with one another. "When we have meetings with visiting dignitaries, shipping lines, marine terminal operators, beneficial cargo owners, the unions, truckers – to be able to look out over the port while discussing the port-related business will be invaluable," Egoscue said. "It becomes a part of how you express your commitment to your city, to your port. It's more than just an inspiration and a connection. It's the commitment that the Port has to being part of the City."



The colorful exterior of the Port Administration Building. (Fukushima Photography)



Port Administration Building lobby. (Fukushima Photography)

The crown jewel of the building is the top floor's Trade Winds reception room and connected south-facing terrace, both offering stellar views of the Port, its sprawling advanced infrastructure, and its colorful shipping containers. Dignitaries regularly visit the Port from around the world, and this will be where they are entertained and conduct business.

The Trade Winds room is the primary difference between the interior of the Port building and City Hall. Other distinguishing elements include beautiful wood trim around the Port's interior windows and a slightly different office layout – more offices with doors and less of an open office plan. The main operational difference is the Port has its own security personnel and systems. Neither building houses an employee cafeteria, an intentional decision so employees and visitors will frequent downtown's businesses.

On its exterior, a rooftop rainwater capture system comprised of multiple cisterns is capable of holding 56,000 gallons of stormwater. Rooftop solar panels will supply between 20–25% of the building's energy needs.

Like City Hall, the building interior is defined by excellent natural light, which reduces electricity use by allowing

lights to be off for most of the day, and walls partially clad in a vertical pattern of Ash wood. Its underfloor heating and cooling distribution system is the same as City Hall's, as are the reduced-flow water fixtures.

Cordero said part of the Port's green purchasing efforts include no longer buying plastic water bottles for its new building, and instead utilizing a water filtration system and non-disposable cups.

The Port's location in downtown will also result in a lighter environmental footprint than its previous locations, since the Civic Center is located in a walkable neighborhood adjacent to light rail, the bus depot, and several bicycling routes. "You can get here on the Blue Line from Downtown Los Angeles, and there are a number of Port employees who live in or near Downtown Long Beach who can now walk or bike to work," Egoscue said.

Cordero and Egoscue feel proud the Port was able to create a more environmentally responsible building – LEED Gold equivalent – for the public to access. "We call ourselves the Green Port," Egoscue said, "and we believe we have built a home to match our moniker."

The Tradewinds Room on the top floor. (Fukushima Photography)



Interior daylighting windows accented with Ash wood. (Fukushima Photography)





Skidmore, Owing & Merrill's original rendering of the master site and midblock buildings. Plenary Edgemoor Civic Partners will unveil the final design in 2020.

The Midblocks: A Vibrant Center

The “midblock,” as its nickname suggests, is comprised of the two central blocks of the Long Beach Civic Center master development. Located in between Chestnut and Cedar Avenues, to its west is City Hall, the Port’s headquarters, and the Civic Plaza. To its east are the Library and the future Lincoln Park. First Street intersects the midblock and will serve as the focal point of the future developments.

Projected to open in 2024, these two parcels will be privately developed into two residential towers with more than 500 units, including some affordable ones. The residences will be located above ground floor retail and restaurants. Initial design renderings envision cafe and restaurant patios, shade trees, and a lively pedestrian scene.

Reinjecting residences and commerce into these blocks is expected to add significant life and vibrancy to the Civic Center development and surrounding neighborhood. With residents atop new cafes, eateries, gyms, and other businesses, the blocks will turn the Civic Center into a lively 18-hour district instead of a business area that shuts down at 5 p.m. The residents and visitors that populate the midblock will add ‘eyes and ears’ to Lincoln Park and the Civic Plaza, thereby also making it safer.

These two blocks comprise former City-owned land that was transferred to the Civic Center developer, Plenary Edgemoor Civic Partners (PECP), in order to make the Civic Center development financially possible for the City. PECP’s initial design proposal included a 40-story building and adjacent six-story building, and PECP expects to announce finalized plans, including the buildings’ heights, number of residential units, and selected architectural firm, by 2020.

The midblock development will generate property taxes, retail sales taxes, and possibly transient occupancy taxes for the City. According to PECP, the estimated annual total of new taxes generated for the General Fund would be \$940,000 per year in 2013 dollars.



The Library from Broadway. (Fukushima Photography)

The New Main

The new Long Beach Main Library opens to the public on September 21, 2019 and is named after Long Beach tennis legend Billie Jean King, who is known as a pioneer and advocate for the equality of women, the LGBTQ+ community, and the underserved.

As one of the primary places in Long Beach that welcomes all people, including the underserved, the Main Library serves approximately one million people each year, and supports the city's 12 neighborhood libraries through central administration, training, technology, programs, and services.

The largest of the city's libraries, the Main Branch houses the most books, periodicals, videos, and other media, as well as an immense Long Beach history collection of old newspapers, yearbooks, and other resources, and other special collections. It also serves as a government depository of state and federal documents.

On top of its vast collections, the Main Library offers a wide range of services for people of all ages and abilities, including accessible computers, social service assistance, a makerspace, children's programming, and much more. In the downtown area, where more than 40% of children live in poverty, these mostly free services are a needed and cherished community asset.

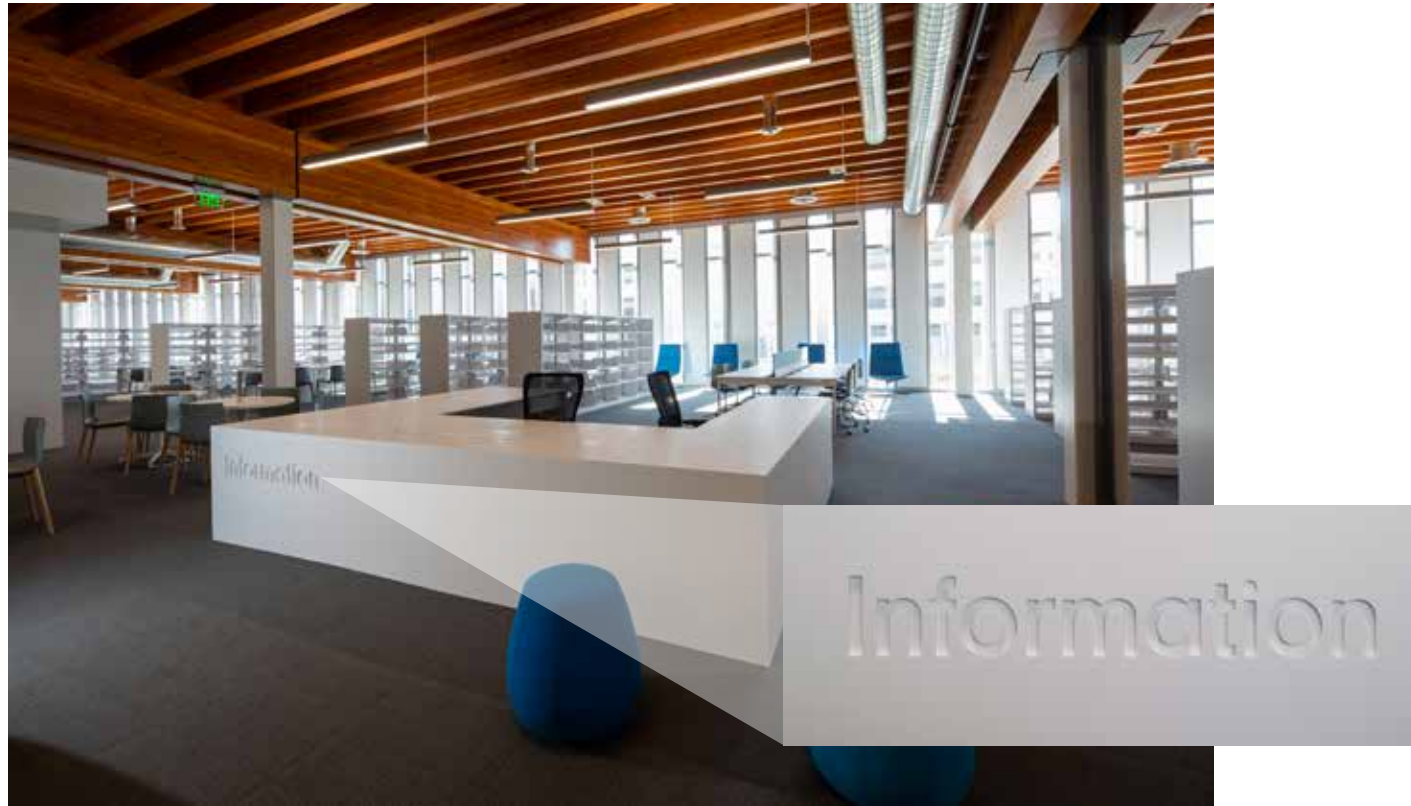
Symbolizing its importance to the community, the new Library building is elevated. "Let's celebrate libraries, not hide them," Craig Beck, the City's director of public works and of the Civic Center project, said. "The former Library was a subterranean bunker. It would have been interesting to survey the thousands of drivers who drove down Ocean Boulevard daily and see how many of them knew that was a library. Now, people will see the spectacular new building and think, 'That's a place I want to visit.'"

City of Long Beach Director of Library Services Glenda Williams said she felt ecstatic when she first learned about the plans for a new building, namely because the old building was seismically unsafe and structurally damaged. "Leaking from the roof was so bad we were on the evening news. We had buckets everywhere and had to put up so many tarps over our books and computers that people called us 'the circus,'" she said. "It was pretty bad. We needed to move into a building that was safe for people and where our materials wouldn't be damaged."

Located at 200 W. Broadway with Pacific Avenue to its east and Lincoln Park to the south, the new Library anchors the northeast corner of the Civic Center. The two-story, 93,000-square-foot building was designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) as an open and welcoming place for visitors. It achieved that end through several features, including: dual entries from the park and Broadway; wide sidewalks, ramps, and steps into the building; a huge wrap-around porch; large, translucent windows; and a protruding roofline made of Douglas Fir to create an atmosphere of warmth.



Director of Library Services Glenda Williams and the Library's sun-soaked interior. (Fukushima Photography)



One of the Library's information desks. (Fukushima Photography)

The wooden overhang is similar to that of the Los Angeles County Gov. George Deukmejian Courthouse down the street, and the two buildings complement each other well. SOM's lead designer for the Civic Center, Paul Danna, said the main idea for the Library's roof structure was to create a porch environment so readers, park visitors, and others could hang out while enjoying the shade. The top of the roof is covered with solar panels.

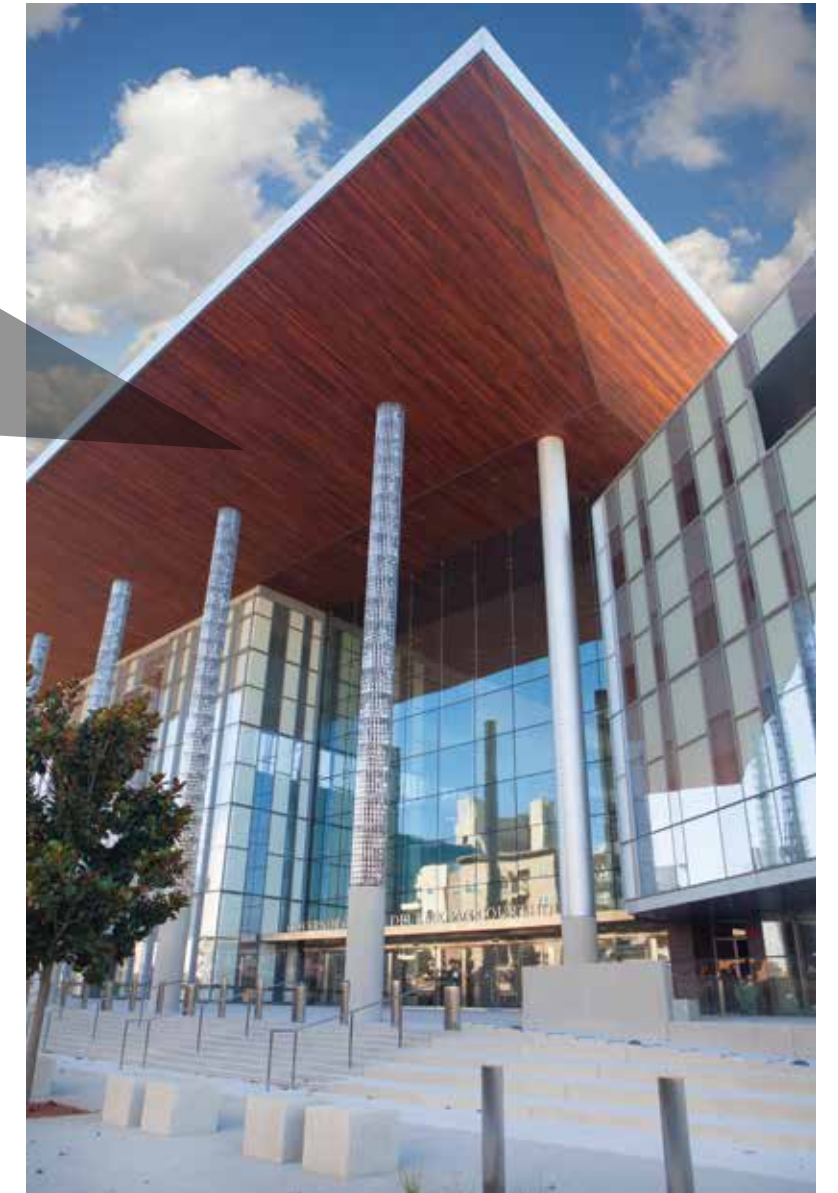
The Library was designed intentionally as an extension of Lincoln Park. With its huge terrace and plentiful windows, the Library's architecture melds the two public spaces. The facility's children's area and the future Lincoln Park playground will be located at the south entrance. Library programs and visiting classrooms will support this interplay through indoor-outdoor kids' programming.

The interior of the building is defined by the same warm and lightweight Douglas Fir used for the porch overhang – found inside on the exposed ceiling beams, atrium staircase, and window trims – as well as an open layout and significant natural light pouring in from the mostly windowed walls and a large, central atrium. “Because the old Library was mostly underground, most of the public areas and the administrative offices didn't receive natural light,” Williams explained. “In all of the spaces in the new building, there will be light coming in for just about everybody, no matter where you're sitting.”

Another defining feature of the Library's open interior is its exposed systems and ceilings, which showcase the building's structural elements. Erin Young, Clark Construction's project director for the Civic Center, said this is one of her favorite aspects of the master site. “The Library is beautiful, and the wood elements and steel elements – those mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems – are all meticulously aligned and sized in a way that works with the building alignment and relates to the architecture of the timber structure.”

Young said the most challenging part of constructing the new Library was doing so on top of an underground 1960s parking garage. The team had to ascertain where the top of the parking structure fit in relation to the desired elevation of the Library. “Reconfiguring Lincoln Garage seismically to provide the structure needed to support the Library was a unique challenge,” Young said. “And

The roof overhang of the Main Library compliments the roof overhang of the Courthouse, a few blocks away. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)



because the Library is elevated – you're walking up steps to get in – we had to create a space from the top of the parking garage to the new entry point of the Library to give it a grander presence to sit above street level, and to also sit a little higher than the park.”

Because weight was a concern for the support system of Lincoln Garage, using concrete for the Library was not an option. In searching for a lightweight material that would also provide a sense of warmth, SOM landed on Douglas Fir. “We wanted to give a sense of living room quality to the Library,” SOM's production architect, Jed Zimmerman, said, who explained the girders and beams supporting the structure are wood.

Zimmerman added, “We also wanted to counter what the old Library was: really dark. We wanted to allow as much natural daylight in as possible and give the same feel of the City Hall and Port curtain wall.” All three buildings incorporate vertical metal serrations in between their windows as a common design element. From the outside, the Library's walls are striped, with alternating window glass and white metal panels.

While the architecture of the Library is something to celebrate, that is only half the story. The other half is everything that will take place inside the beautiful building. This is why Danna refers to the Library as a “jewel box,” where inside you find “gems,” such as children learning through books and others delighting in the Library experience.

To make these gems possible, the Long Beach Library Foundation (LBLF) raised more than \$2 million through its “New Main Campaign” for programs, technology, furniture, and enhancement. The Civic Center contract paid for the building, but the LBLF raised the money for the bells and whistles. “These donations will ensure that the Library is an advanced learning facility that has an array of services that meet the needs of community members of all ages,” LBLF Executive Director Kate Azar said.

Donations funded new computers, laptop checkout kiosks and projection mapping technology. They also funded most features in the Children’s Area, including interactive installations and new books, furniture in the Teen Lounge, and additional technology in The Studio Learning Lab, a makerspace. Also supported by donations are portions of the salaries for experienced learning guides who hold one-on-one tutoring, homework, resume, and job search sessions, as well as studio guides who facilitate STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and job skills workshops.

Most Library seating is located on the second floor, facing the park. Patrons can also take advantage of the second floor’s private study and work cubicles, which feature white boards and glass walls, as well as a magazine reading room. The new Friends Bookstore shop will be similar to the one in Seattle’s main library – an artful box that opens during the day and then folds back into a box when closed for business. The second-floor administrative offices are a welcome change from their previously windowless underground digs.

Most technology will be on the second floor as well, including the Computer Lab, Center for Adaptive Technology, and The Studio Learning Lab. Helping bridge the digital divide in Long Beach, the Computer Lab will feature 86 public computers, compared to just 60 in the old branch. It will have a new Chromebook checkout kiosk to allow patrons to check out the technology they need to do homework assignments, apply for jobs, or just browse the web. The Library will also power sources at nearly all reader seats and work tables, as well as free WiFi throughout the building.

The expanded Center for Adaptive Technology is a center for people of different abilities, including those related to vision, hearing, and mobility. Its ten computers feature teletype technology, oversize track balls, large keyboards, software that can magnify type, and other assistance for people with special needs.

The Studio is a makerspace with technology and software for 3D printing, graphic design, robotics, stop-motion animation classes, coding, virtual reality, and video recording. Popular in the old Library, the new space will feature expanded services and equipment. Its recording studio includes video and audio recording equipment, a green screen, and computers to edit videos. Members of Public Access Digital Network (PADNET), a local streaming and television service, will also be allowed to check out equipment, download and edit what they record on one of two Mac computers, and upload it to the PADNET site.

Because most teens are heavy technology users, the Library located the Teen Lounge on the second floor as well. “It’s important to have a designated space for teens,” Williams said. “Teens will have their own space with its own vibe, furniture, books, and other materials, separate from the downstairs Children’s Area.”

The needs of children are prioritized at the Library, where the children’s area takes up about one-third of the first floor. Azar said, “Thanks to generous donors like Long Beach Rotary, the W.M. Keck Foundation, and the friends and family who gave in memory of children’s librarian and storyteller Dee Navari, the children’s section is going to be one of



the most exciting departments. It’s decked out in nautical theme with interactive murals, shelves of new books, a reading boat, a submarine, and a lighthouse.” The kids’ area includes an early childhood section to promote literacy and accommodate family activities.

Located on the first floor’s south-facing side are two community rooms with an acoustic divider that allows them to combine into one, large room for a room capacity of approximately 150 people. These rooms, which will be used for events like lectures, book readings, and movies, have a separate entrance so they can be used after-hours without necessitating the Library to stay open.

Nearby on the ground floor, the Community Living Room encompasses three main services, all expanded from the old location. The Veterans Resources Center, which is run by veteran volunteers, is a referral service that connects vets to services like housing and free legal help. Citizenship Corner assists new immigrants with forms, tests, practicing English, and connecting with legal experts. The Family Learning Center, now three times larger, provides help with homework, resumes, and work applications, and even awards high school graduation diplomas. A recent \$575,000 gift from the Rudolph J. and Daphne A. Munzer Foundation – the largest gift to the LBLF’s New Main Campaign – will fund one-on-one homework help and job search support sessions for three years. The Library is also expanding its adult literacy tutoring after having recently won a state grant.

Patrons familiar with the old Library will wonder what’s in store for the Loraine and Earl Burns Miller Special Collections Room, which, in the old building, featured dark wood paneling and ornate English furniture, modeled after the Millers’ Long Beach home. The room shared rare books, manuscripts, and artwork collected by the Millers throughout their travels.

Thankfully, the new Library will still have a Miller Room, which will continue to provide “a quiet, beautiful, comfortable space for research and reflection, surrounded by many of the same art objects and books,” Earl B. and Loraine H. Miller Foundation Trustee Margaret Smith said. The new Room will do so “with a different, more modern design, perfectly in keeping with the bright, open feeling of the new Main Library.” The room is clad in the same wood – Ash – found in the Civic Chambers and the lobbies of City Hall and the Port headquarters. Smith said there will also be a new and robust series of programs related to the collection.

The first floor will continue to house the Special Collections area, with the Library’s rare and historical books and materials, in a climate-controlled room.

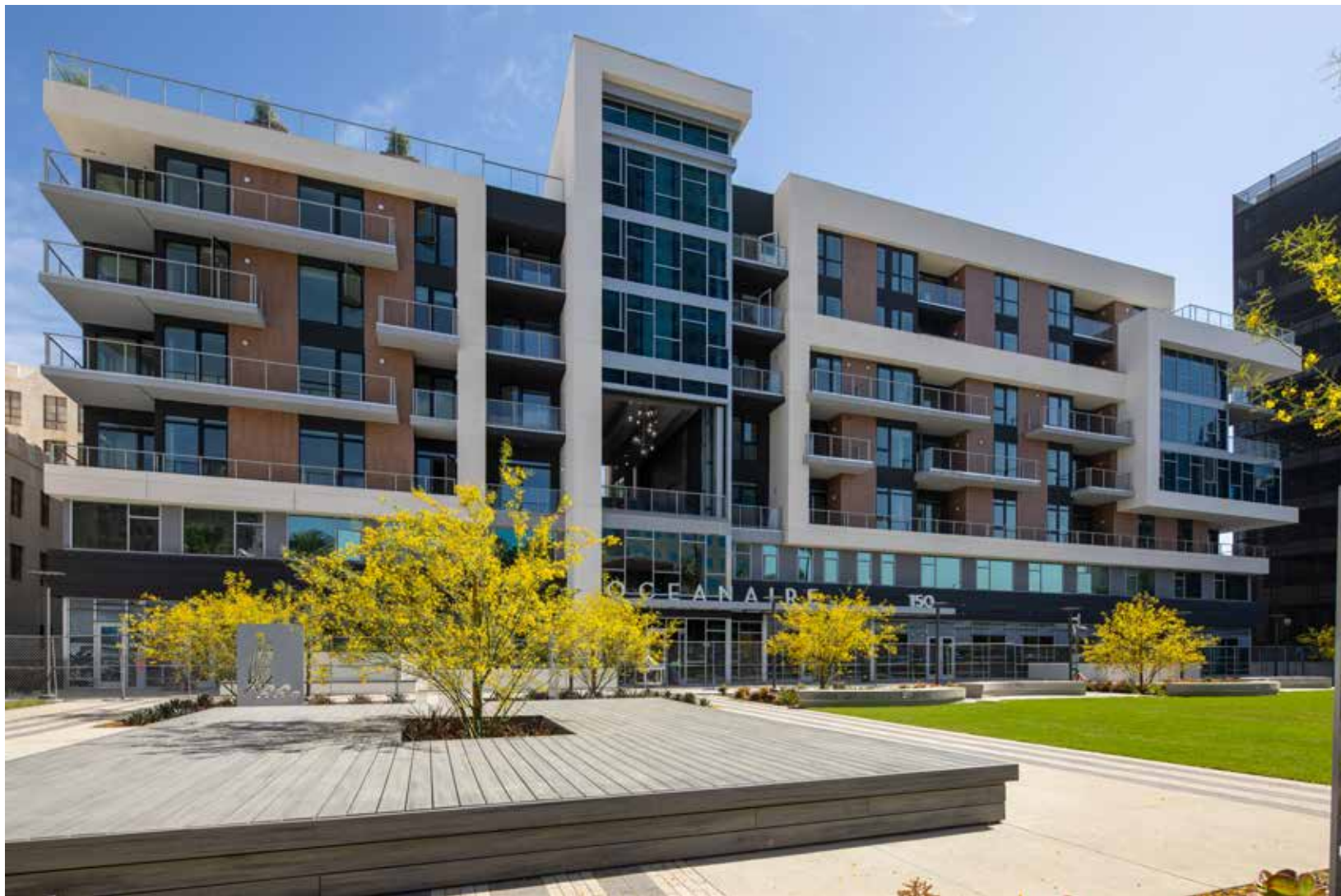
At least four new Library amenities will help save people time: The Marketplace, where new best sellers are stocked for people to quickly browse and check out books; a hold shelf for people who request books ahead of pick-up via phone or the Library’s website; three self-checkout machines; and an automated handling system for book returns.

“I cannot wait to showcase the new Library and the resources we’ll have for the community,” Williams said. “We’re not only a resource for the Downtown neighborhoods but also the entire city. This new building is definitely worth the wait.”

A City that Invests in Itself

The creation of the new Long Beach Civic Center is conferring to the public improved municipal buildings, welcoming community spaces, and a reconnected street grid. It is also ushering in a big wave of economic development.

Since the City announced its investment in developing a new Civic Center, several new residential and commercial developments have come online in the downtown area. Soon, new businesses, jobs, residents, and visitors will follow. The new Civic Center area will undoubtedly be a much different place in 2025 than it would have been if the project was never built.



Developed by Lennar Multifamily Communities, Oceanaire is catty corner from the Civic Center on the southeast corner of Ocean Boulevard and Pacific Avenue. The seven-story, 216-unit building was designed by Togawa Smith Martin and consists of studio, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments. (Fukushima Photography)

“The private sector saw that we took the first bite out of the market and invested ourselves, and this set off what is now more than \$3.5 billion in construction of private investment in the City,” Long Beach Director of Economic Development John Keisler said. “The City was so confident about its future, it was willing to invest a half-billion dollars in its Civic Center, as well as put its own properties in play for the private sector to invest another half-billion. At the same time, we sold 150 Redevelopment Agency parcels, and that set off an incredible series of investments from the private sector in building around the Civic Center. Developers and investors saw the City was willing to bet on itself and take on some of the risk-sharing. We now see more than 5,000 new residential units going in. We’re in an unprecedented period in the city’s history.”

According to the Long Beach Development Services Department, as of July 2019, in downtown alone there were: 5,236 units under construction or planned, with 188 of those designated as affordable (below market-rate for income-qualified households); more than 1,100 hotel rooms planned; and 580,000 square feet of office space and 83,000 square feet of retail space approved or under construction. The City estimates the Civic Center project has created a total of 6,000 direct, indirect, and induced construction jobs.

City Manager Pat West agreed the City’s move to invest in a major development was central to attracting additional projects. “Until a city invests in itself, it’s hard to get the private sector to invest,” he said. “For example, in code enforcement, if you’re going to talk with a building owner about improving their landscaping, putting in more windows, and things like that – if you’re not doing that with your properties, parks, and public spaces, the owner just says, ‘Why should I do that when you’re not?’

“When you invest in your city, it’s so much easier to talk with the private sector and say, ‘Can you just match us?’ and they do that. For us, building the Courthouse and now the Civic Center pretty much said ‘We’re open for business.’ These decisions put us on the map and preceded the billions in private investment that is happening right now throughout the entire city. You can see all of the crazy construction right now. The City Council’s decision to build a new Civic Center was the focal point of that.”

One of these new developments is AMLI Park Broadway, a six-story project consisting of 222 luxury apartments above 8,500 square feet of ground-floor retail and basement parking. Located across from the new Main Library on Broadway, it was developed by Chicago-based AMLI Residential on the site of a former government office building and designed by Long Beach-based architecture firm Studio One Eleven. AMLI’s Vice President of Development Nick Moffa said the Civic Center project was influential in the firm’s decision to invest.

“AMLI Residential saw the Civic Center project as an important growth catalyst for the City, and this played a significant role in our decision to invest and build our AMLI Park Broadway apartment community,” he said. “We are thrilled with the growth and maturation we’ve already seen in the downtown area and are excited to be a part of the City’s future growth.”

The Civic Center project also helped entice Raintree Partners to develop two nearby mixed-use buildings on former parking lots. Raintree’s ‘Aster’ and ‘Inkwell’ properties will provide a total of 407 market-rate apartments and 17,300 square feet of retail space.

“The City’s proactive approach to rebuild the Civic Center and bring the Port of Long Beach to downtown was the first major step in kicking off the transformation of downtown and was something that first attracted us to the submarket,” Rick Price, Raintree’s Director of Development, stated. “The execution of this massive project provided Raintree Partners with real evidence that the City had the political will and means to bring high-quality development to Downtown Long Beach. Now, with over \$8 billion worth of investment either completed or on the boards, the quality of life in downtown is becoming very attractive and should continue to improve with each new project.”

The Civic Center project itself has brought the addition of 400 Port of Long Beach employees, as well as Port visitors, into Downtown. It will also attract hundreds of new residents to the future midblock residential towers atop ground floor eateries and retail. Together these new elements will bring thousands of new people into this six-block area every day, seven days a week – and with them, new tax revenues.

This is what former Vice Mayor Suja Lowenthal envisioned as she led the creation of the new Downtown Plan and later approached the Port of Long Beach about moving into a shared campus. With the support of then-Mayor Bob Foster and Councilmembers Robert Garcia and Gary DeLong, Lowenthal's appeal to the Port was that relocating its headquarters downtown would be an economic generator for the city. "The Port's 400 employees will be eating down here and visiting shops, businesses will do better, and it will create jobs," she said. "And regarding the project as a whole, when you invest like this, it's a forced multiplier. It will multiply many times over throughout the lifetime of those buildings."



The Linden, a residential apartment development by Sares-Regis Group at 434 E. 4th Street, opened in June 2019. Sares-Regis Vice President of Residential Development David Powers is pictured at the building, which was designed by Long Beach architecture firm Studio One Eleven. The ground floor will feature a brewery as well as a fitness center and lounge for residents. (Long Beach Business Journal photograph)

The City's private advisor for the project, Orion Fulton, Associate Principal for global firm Arup, sees this in the work Arup does around the globe. "High-rise developments and densely-developed downtowns help support more transit, more retail, and create overall value and vibrancy," he said. "There is so much to say about the new Long Beach Civic Center. But I think the big story is really around economic development. People in L.A. see Long Beach completely differently than they did 10 years ago. And I think that positive view will continue to evolve."

Reflecting on the first discussions around a new Civic Center, Keisler brought it full circle. "It's impressive how the original project team used city property to leverage new construction to address an outstanding seismic liability – and then turned it into economic growth. In the end, that's what economic development is all about: leveraging publicly owned assets to create economic opportunity for the city and, with the money generated, turn around and provide new services and amenities, like the new Main Library and the new Lincoln Park, as well as civic spaces that previously didn't exist and new private spaces that can hold new businesses and jobs."



Developed by AMLI Residential and designed by Studio One Eleven, AMLI Park Broadway is located across from the Main Library on Broadway and features 222 luxury apartments above 8,500 square feet of retail. (Fukushima Photography)

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Libraries are the best investment we can make in Long Beach. Every donation to the New Main Campaign, no matter what the size, helps transform lives and our community. Your gift will support educational and economic development opportunities at the new Main Library by investing in technology and programs for children, students, job-seekers, seniors, veterans and more.

Thank you to our Founding Donors!

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Cami Olson
Peggy C. O'Neil-Rosales
Abha and Anil Pandya
Kathy and Russ Parsons
Dee Patberg in memory of John K. Patberg
Ebony Pearson
Mary Perez
Sergio Piña
Kristiana Placencio
Luigi and Vanessa Porco
Ryan Quigley

Carol Quinlan
Susan T. Redfield
Adela Redzic
Marie Reidy
Sean M. Reilly and Jeffrey Toelsin
Oscar Reyes in honor of
Gloria and Gregorio Reyes
Rotary Club of Long Beach
Frances Rozner
Elisabeth Sandberg
Kendra Miller and Jeffrey Schimsky
Peter and Eleanore Schmidt
Susan Carlile and Norbert Schürer
Barbara and Rick Schwerin
Byron Scott
Elizabeth Potter Scully
Leon S. and Barbara Shoag
J.P. and Kimberly Shotwell
Ami Silverman
Renee B. Simon
Nancy Slusher
Margaret Farwell Smith
and Rob Bellevue
Carmen D. Snuggs
Doris Soriano
Barbara and Edward Sosa
In memory of Erik J. Spargo
Sandra Spargo
Rebecca V. Stackhouse
Michael Andrew Stugrin
Dr. Beverly Stunden
Avinash Suntosh
Thao Ton and Jason Burcombe
Kay and Tony Tortorice
Robert and Johanna Tramazzo
Trillium Transportation Fuels, LLC
Karen Gustafson and Ray Valenzuela
Lance and Marilyn Valt
Astrid E. Virding
Casondra Kelly Wada
Sharon L. Weissman
Suzanne Wenke in memory of
Judge Robert A. Wenke
In honor of Ramona Wilson
Khin Khin Win
The World Trade Center

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW CIVIC CENTER



The new Long Beach Civic Center brings a state-of-the-art revitalized civic core to the downtown. Designed to serve residents and businesses, attract visitors, and provide safe and efficient city operations to serve the citizens of Long Beach.



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Founding Donor levels start at \$25. Plaque recognition opportunities start at \$5,000.

LBPLfoundation.org/newmain

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CITY OF
**LONG
BEACH**



The Port has Moved Home

The Port of Long Beach has returned to the waterfront. We're excited to be part of the new Long Beach Civic Center!

Thank you to Clark Construction and the men and women who worked to complete our Port Administration Building on time and within budget.



Port of
LONG BEACH
The Green Port

Congratulations Long Beach on your new Civic Center!

Great projects come from a commitment to quality, creativity, and collaboration. As the lead technical, financial, and commercial advisor on the Civic Center, supporting its procurement and delivery, we are so proud of this transformative project.

www.arup.com

From the beginning we have shared your values and vision for the Civic Center, to shape a better Long Beach for your citizens, staff, and partners.

**At Arup, we aim to make a real difference in the world, stretch the boundaries of what is possible, delight our clients, and achieve socially valuable outcomes.
We shape a better world.**

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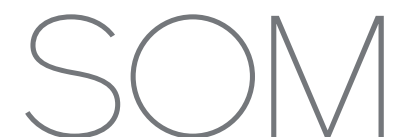
A DOWNTOWN RE-IMAGINED



Congratulations to the City of Long Beach and Port of Long Beach on the completion of a new Civic Center!

This re-imagined civic hub, including a new City Hall and council chambers, Port of Long Beach Headquarters, main library, and civic plaza, creates a welcoming community space and a more connected, inclusive, and vibrant downtown.

Clark, Edgemoor, and SOM are proud to work alongside the City, the Port, Plenary, and our dozens of highly-skilled local project partners to deliver these facilities and enhance the Long beach landscape.





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*PCMA and Marriott International's year-long research project: The Future Trends of Meetings & Events

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TOGETHER WE POWER LONG BEACH

As California's largest oil and natural gas producer, California Resources Corporation (CRC) is honored to partner with the City of Long Beach and the State Lands Commission to provide affordable, secure and reliable energy for California by Californians. CRC is proud to serve as an active and supportive community partner. We look forward to continuing to work with many local community organizations to ensure Long Beach continues to lead in innovative energy solutions to help build vibrant communities.

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Finance Highlights

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\$19,871,000 - Refinance Debt	10 Years Interest-Only
\$8,343,500 - Acquisition Debt	Assisted Living
\$7,330,900 - Refinance Debt	Credit Issues
\$6,600,000 - Refinance Debt	Mobile Home Park
\$5,655,000 - Acquisition Debt	Studio Units
\$5,495,000 - Acquisition Debt	No Tax Returns
\$3,000,000 - Refinance Debt	No Prepayment Penalty



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As Long Beach Airport celebrates 95 years of service, we recognize this historic milestone and our partnership with the community that made this legacy possible. The Long Beach Airport Area Complex supports more than 45,000 jobs, with an annual economic impact of nearly \$9 billion. LGB is committed to continue being a community partner and a major driver of the local economy, providing excellent services in an eco-friendly and safe manner.

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Ensemble Real Estate Investments is a proud partner in supporting and advancing Downtown Long Beach. We congratulate the city for their outstanding efforts in developing the Long Beach Civic Center.



CONGRATULATIONS TO
THE CITY OF LONG BEACH
ON THE REDEVELOPMENT OF OUR CIVIC CENTER



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