

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Marin County Civic Center is located on approximately one hundred and sixty acres in the City of San Rafael, twenty miles north of San Francisco. The Civic Center complex consists of three principal elements which include County government buildings, the fairgrounds and other culturally related facilities, and a park area. The entire site was master planned by renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright who, at the age of 90 years old, received the commission from the Marin County Board of Supervisors in 1957.

The government complex was Wright's last major work and his largest constructed project. It is composed of two buildings, the 580-foot long Administration Building and the 880-foot long Hall of Justice, which are set at a slight angle to each other and joined together by a central rotunda. The rounded ends of the two buildings are built into the side of the hills, where they are not merely placed on parcels of land, but the buildings are integrally connected to the landscape. In 1991, the buildings and surrounding area were granted status as a National Historic Landmark.

In August 2004, the County of Marin retained the services of Royston Hanamoto Alley & Abey (RHAA), landscape architects and environmental planners, to lead the process of creating Master Design Guidelines for the Civic Center campus. RHAA's project team included architects Mark Cavagnero Associates; traffic and parking engineers Whitlock & Weinberger Transportation Inc.; lighting designers Horton Lees Brogden Lighting Design; and signage designer Kate Keating Associates.

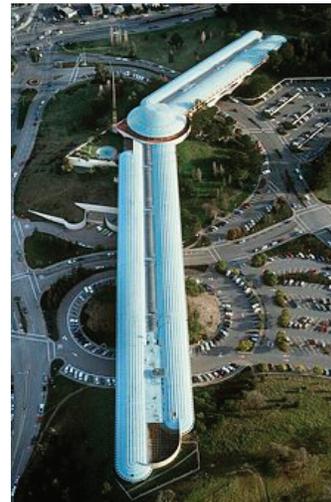
These Master Design Guidelines were created to provide a framework for future development that recognizes the need to maintain the visual prominence of Frank Lloyd Wright's Civic Center buildings within a setting that engenders an overall sense of openness.

REPORT ORGANIZATION

The Master Design Guidelines report begins with a Project Overview and follows with design guidelines for Site Organization, Buildings and Architecture, and Landscape and Site Elements. Each chapter is divided into detailed sections which begin with design guidelines that are followed by related background information including any laws and ordinances that would apply to new building on the site. Part of the Civic Center campus, including the Administration Building, the Hall of Justice, and Lagoon Park, was named a National Historic Landmark in 1991. Issues relating to this status are discussed in detail. In a similar vein, the Marin Civic Center Open Space Ordinance approved in 1992 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are also described. Finally, the report reviews



Portrait of Frank Lloyd Wright. Reproduced from the Administration Building Dedication Brochure, 1962. Anne T. Kent California Room, Marin County Free Library



The Hall of Justice (foreground) and the Administration Building (background)



Frank Lloyd Wright's concept for the Civic Center. Reproduced from the cover of the Administration Building Dedication brochure, 1962.

Potential Future Development Sites that have been identified in studies conducted prior to this one.

PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES

Several over-arching principles apply to all of the recommendations in the Master Design Guidelines.

- *Sustainability.* The County of Marin has set forth a policy to honor sustainable design principles, as described in the Draft Marin Countywide Plan, February 2004. New development at the Civic Center should strive to meet or exceed an environmental performance level based on the LEED™ Gold standard (from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System), subject to fiscal and programming constraints. These Guidelines identify and encourage green design concepts and practices.
- *Access.* The County of Marin is committed to ensuring that no person with a disability is discriminated against in any program, service or activity. Any altered, remodeled or newly constructed facility on the Civic Center campus will be accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. To achieve these practices, the County requires compliance with all federal, state and local laws, regulations and ordinances.
- *Historical Consideration.* In 1991 eighty-one acres of the Marin County Civic Center site were designated as a National Historic Landmark. These guidelines will address the County's responsibility with regard to the site's unique status, and will provide the County with guidance regarding potential future developments and site improvements.
- *Strategies for the Future.* The Marin County Civic Center has amply served County residents for 30+ years and will continue to do so for decades to come. These Guidelines will help the County plan for the future while maintaining the Civic Center's integrity and central role in Marin County culture and government.
- *Commitment to Children, Families and Seniors.* The County is committed to providing community, recreation, and cultural resources for all Marin County residents. These guidelines help to ensure that current facilities and any possible future development will be of the highest quality and accessible to all.

MASTER DESIGN GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended to provide a standard for future development and the criteria necessary to protect the architectural character of the site, preserve historic structures and reduce adverse visual effects while relating any new development to the historic context.

The guidelines ensure that future projects will meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, comply with the Civic Center Open Space Ordinance, and build on the design principles set out by Frank Lloyd Wright. These guidelines also suggest that all future development be designed sustainably in accordance with green building practices.

The Master Design Guidelines define design parameters for the following elements:

- Site organization to include views, parking locations and capacities, and traffic
- Buildings and architecture
- Landscape and site elements to include planting, irrigation, paving, site furniture, riparian environments, lagoon, park areas, streetscapes, parking lot design, lighting, and signage

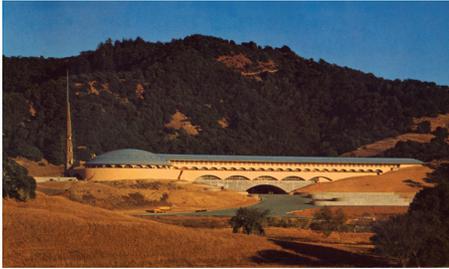
Architectural guidelines are provided for possible future development that relate to the character of any new building in terms of context, function, visual impact, massing, and materials. These architectural guidelines attempt to capture Wright's definition of "organic architecture" which required respecting the site, the nature of the building materials and creating an honest expression of buildings function. They also relay his sensitivity in relating a building to its context through orientation, scale, and building height. They also recommend an overall approach to the visual impact of new buildings that respect the Civic Center's pre-eminence. These include guidelines relevant to new facilities such as building form, roof treatment, materials, colors, and lighting, to more generic guidelines for the Civic Center landscape, streetscape, park areas, paving, and parking.

The following are the general architectural design principles, which support Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture:

- Associate the building as a whole with its site by extending and emphasizing the horizontal planes of the building. Where possible, programmatic elements should be elevated entirely above the ground to further emphasize the horizontality.
- Reduce the box-like nature of the building by making walls transparent and screen-like. Where program needs reduce the transparency of the exterior walls, walls should be designed to emphasize the lightness of the building through detail, rhythm and scale. Openings should be human-scaled and should act singly or in a series, typically as light screens instead of walls.
- Reduce the number of building components in order to allow light, air and views to permeate and unify the building.

- Use uniform materials as much as possible to emphasize the form of the building, making it clearer and more expressive.

Finally, the Master Design Guidelines provide direction in the areas of signage, wayfinding, and lighting in the Civic Center.



The Administration Building upon completion in 1962

The attached Summary Table outlines the Master Design Guidelines, with more details in the accompanying full report and technical appendices.

POTENTIAL FUTURE DEVELOPMENT SITES

A key component in the Master Design Guidelines creation process was to reevaluate and analyze previously studied development site recommendations and site capacities to identify additional land use criteria that should be considered in subsequent designs. Issues discussed for site development include the following:

- County facility needs
- Traffic impacts
- Parking capacities
- Visual impacts
- Possible development sites
- Site utilities



Potential Future Development Sites

- Site 1 - Civic Center Parking "Pit"
- Site 2 - Temporary Dog Park
- Site 3 - East Parking Lot and Armory
- Site 4 - Overflow Parking Lot
- Site 5 - North San Pedro Road
- Site 6 - General Services Building
- Site 7 - Marin Center

Based on the above, the Master Design Guidelines outline site selection criteria that the County can use for projects in the future. This document does not propose new development or authorize any new construction, but provides general guidelines for project proposals formulated elsewhere. The document discusses previous site analysis reports that identify potential sites for new development on the campus. The sites for possible future development include the following:

- Site 1 - Civic Center Parking "Pit"
- Site 2 - Temporary Dog Park
- Site 3 - East Parking Lot and Armory
- Site 4 - Overflow Parking Lot
- Site 5 - North San Pedro Road
- Site 6 - General Services Building
- Site 7 - Marin Center

This report recommends that Sites 1-4 and 6 remain in consideration as locations for possible future development and for further evaluation. Site 5 is outside the scope for analysis in this report. Site 7, the Marin Center, is currently undergoing a separate master planning effort. It is understood that future development in this area will be to enhance the County fairgrounds and other cultural amenities of the campus. Note that any development on Site 1, Site 4, and Site 6 is covered under the Marin Civic Center Open Space Ordinance approved in 1992 and would require a majority approval of the voters in Marin County.