

## SECTION 5: LANDSCAPE AND SITE ELEMENTS

### 5.1 Introduction

#### HISTORY AND APPROACH

The *Marin County Civic Center Master Plan 1972 - 1990* and the subsequent *Schematic Planting Master Plan* prepared in December 1974 by the Taliesin Associated Architects of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation provide a framework of ideas for planting and irrigation that are equally appropriate today. Both reports suggest that the Civic Center site be treated as "one continuous informal open space with a natural or 'native' feeling." The 1974 report further states that "a largely 'native' landscape would be most appropriate in order to maintain and reinforce the pastoral character of the Civic Center site, to provide a sympathetic setting for the buildings, and to minimize maintenance and irrigation needs."

Over the last 40 years, the landscapes at the Civic Center have matured and endured. A generally native and indigenous approach to much of the landscape of the Civic Center seems appropriate for the past, present and future of the site. The 1974 report defines plant groupings for specific locations on the site based on the location's environmental conditions and functions. This approach works well for such a large and diverse landscape.

In August 2000, the Board of Supervisors approved a Conceptual Landscape Plan by landscape architect Steve Pettele of the County's Department of Parks and Open Space. The intent of the plan was to renovate the existing landscape of the Civic Center and Marin Center. Although approved by the Board, no working drawings or further documentation were completed. However, the landscape and site elements' guidelines presented below are consistent with the approved Conceptual Landscape Plan.

Many of the plant groupings described below are similar to those defined in Wright's earlier report; others have been modified and amended for current conditions. The guidelines below take into account both the natural and the cultural landscapes of the site; the goal is to respect Frank Lloyd Wright's original vision as well as the natural environment. Other factors include existing conditions; soil fertility; deer damage potential; aspect and sun exposure; location; level of required maintenance; water conservation; native species; and sustainability.

#### SUSTAINABILITY

Using sustainable design practices is a priority for the County of Marin. Planting and irrigation design are key components of



### LANDSCAPE ZONES

- Building entries and courtyards
- Native hillsides
- Streetscapes
- Park areas
- Riparian environments

sustainability. To that end, it is proposed that durable, low water use plants be used wherever possible. Typically plants that are native to the area are more likely to thrive with less supplemental water and fertilization, but non-native ornamental species may also be appropriate for some areas on the Civic Center campus.

### IRRIGATION

State-of-the-art irrigation systems and techniques are also important to sustainable landscapes. The Civic Center landscapes,



California Live Oak tree



Native Hillside

where irrigated, are watered using recycled water. Reclaimed or recycled water impacts the types of plants that can be used. In many cases the irrigation systems operated on site are as old as the landscapes themselves, and require extensive maintenance to remain operational. Updated and improved irrigation systems for the more manicured areas of the site would improve water use efficiency, reduce maintenance costs, and improve plant health and durability. For example, drip irrigation systems should be considered for planting areas with low water needs.

## 5.2 Planting and Irrigation

### LANDSCAPE ZONES

The following plant groupings, or landscape zones, describe different areas of the Civic Center campus based on the type of planting appropriate for that area.

### NATIVE HILLSIDES PLANTING AND IRRIGATION

The hillsides on the campus are currently dotted with mature Oak trees as well as some non-native trees and shrubs.

### GUIDELINES

- **The existing Oak trees are to be augmented with additional Oaks whenever and wherever possible. Oaks will serve as the “signature tree” for this landscape as they thrive on these hills, are long-lived, and are appropriate to the site’s cultural history.**
- **Non-native trees and shrubs – especially those that are invasive, unsightly, and/or unhealthy – should be replaced over time with species appropriate to the Oak woodland landscape.**
- **Both deciduous and evergreen plantings should be selected to enhance the native Oak woodland landscape and be appropriate in size and scale with respect to any adjacent historic structures. For example, new planting should not interfere with views to or from the Civic Center buildings when they reach maturity.**
- **The present grassy ground cover is to be preserved and augmented with additional native seeding when necessary.**

The hillsides adjacent to the Administrative Building and Hall of Justice are now inhabited by a variety of trees. In general, the native Oak species appear to be healthy and thriving. Some of the Pines and Poplars are doing less well; many appear to be diseased and in some cases are obstructing views. The County has indicated that virtually all Monterey Pines on the campus will be removed within the next few years due to disease. There are also several species of ‘volunteers’ in this area such as Cotoneaster that do not add to the beauty or character of the site.

The Native Hillside plant grouping described below is preferred where existing slopes exceed roughly 20% or where heavy foot traffic is not expected or desired. Currently this applies to the hillsides adjacent to the Administration Building and the Hall of Justice as well as the area south of the General Services Building along Highway 101. Frank Lloyd Wright's affinity to the rolling hills of Marin supports the approach of enhancing the Oak woodland ecosystem wherever possible.

It should be noted, however, that Sudden Oak Death syndrome is a serious problem in Marin County. The County must use caution in order to protect existing trees and reduce the potential of introducing the disease to the site.

### STREETSCAPES PLANTING AND IRRIGATION

The guidelines listed below are intended to provide guidance for the improvement of streetscapes on the Civic Center campus.

### GUIDELINES

- **Primary streets, such as Civic Center Drive, Peter Behr Drive and the Avenue of the Flags, should each have a clear and consistent streetscape planting approach and design. Plant palettes, especially street trees, should be devised for each primary street. Formal street tree planting is encouraged where appropriate. Cohesion and clarity in planting and materials will enhance the visitors' experience and improve wayfinding on the site. Special attention should be paid to the protection of view corridors. While unity is desired, some breaks in street tree plantings may be necessary to preserve views.**
- **Secondary streets, such as Judge Haley Drive, Armory Drive, and Vera Schultz Drive, should also have a clear and consistent streetscape planting approach and design. Because these streets have less traffic and importance on the site, the street tree planting can be less formal than those for the primary streets. However, designing a planting palette for each is encouraged in order to guide future improvements.**

Over the last several years improvements have been made to some streetscapes on the Civic Center campus. Median plantings on Civic Center Drive include flowering perennials, small shrubs and trees. The median of Peter Behr Drive is planted with a row of flowering Redbuds and perennials. Most of the streetscapes, however, lack unified or cohesive planting schemes.

For example, the east side of Civic Center Drive beyond Judge Haley Drive is not planted with street trees, presumably to allow a clear view to the adjacent lagoon. The west side of the street is too steep to plant with street trees. Between Civic Center Drive and the Administration Building the median of Peter Behr Drive is attractive, but the south side of the street is considerably less so. It is lined with diagonal parking and a sidewalk that is adjacent to a



Peter Behr Drive



Garden outside cafeteria



Cafeteria courtyard

native hillside area. Currently there is not an adequate transition between the more urban vehicular and pedestrian realm and the natural planting area beyond. The north side of the street is similar, although it has a better feel due to the denser planting of the native hillside area.

**BUILDING ENTRIES, COURTYARDS, PATIO PLANTING AND IRRIGATION**

The guidelines listed below are intended to provide general direction for the maintenance and improvement of building-associated landscapes on the site as well as for any future developments.

**GUIDELINES**

- **As is currently the practice, highly ornamental plantings are appropriate for the building-related landscapes of the Marin County Civic Center buildings including interior courtyards such as the patio adjacent to the cafeteria and the former exercise courtyard of the original jail. These landscapes should reference Wright's historic plans whenever possible and appropriate and should include a balance of deciduous and evergreen plants. Where the exterior of the building meets the natural ground plane, plantings should be mature and appear to be part of the natural landscape.**
- **The entry landscapes of the Veteran's Memorial Auditorium and the Exhibit Hall should be enhanced and improved with additional appropriately scaled plantings. This would also enhance wayfinding for visitors to these venues.**
- **Planting adjacent to any future development – at entries, in courtyards, etc. – should be contemporary in nature and appropriate in scale, color, and texture for the new architecture. It should not attempt to match or mimic existing plantings on the site.**



Courtyard at south end of Administration Building



Lagoon Park

The 1974 plan suggested that landscaping adjacent to buildings be smaller in scale and more detailed than other planting areas. This approach is still appropriate, generally speaking, for the campus now and in the future. Planting at the main entries to the Administrative Building and Hall of Justice appear to be healthy and well-tended. This is also true of the planting beds 'inside' the buildings on the ground floors. The landscaping adjacent to the structures at the Marin Center, however, are not as attractive.

The planting in the courtyard/patio at the south end of the Administration Building is a specialty water-conserving garden. This seems appropriate for this space. The courtyard/patio adjacent to the cafeteria includes an artificial pond and fountain, a lawn area, and many ornamental trees and plants.

**PARK AREAS PLANTING AND IRRIGATION**

The following guidelines are intended to enhance current park

lands and to guide the development of additional parks on the site.

## **GUIDELINES**

- **The irrigation in the Lagoon Park area should be upgraded for efficiency and ease of maintenance.**
- **Perimeter tree planting to define the edge of the site and to screen the park from adjacent neighborhoods should be maintained and enhanced. Replacement trees in the lawn areas must be able to tolerate lawn watering and should provide as much shade as possible. Trees along the site's perimeter, away from the lawn area, may be Oaks or other natives that do not require or tolerate irrigation or understory planting. A balance of deciduous and evergreen species is desired.**
- **The character of Lagoon Park should be extended around the entire lagoon, as was originally intended, to form a complete loop of green space. The planting of this space should be primarily lawn due to its versatility and ease of maintenance.**
- **Planting for park areas to be developed in the future should connect both literally and figuratively with the existing open space at the Civic Center so as to create a cohesive whole.**

The park area immediately southeast of the lagoon has provided visitors to the Civic Center a functional recreational landscape for decades. The open expanse of turf is popular with individuals out for a stroll and families looking for a relaxing place for a picnic. Given the popularity and multi-purpose nature of the space, no changes to the planting are suggested.

## **5.3 Paving and Surfaces**

The following guidelines are intended to outline the preferred approach to paving treatments and surfaces on the Marin County Civic Center campus. Further discussion regarding pedestrian circulation, path widths and preferred routes can be found in Section 3.3, Site Circulation and Parking Capacity.

### **PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS PAVING AND SURFACES**

For the purposes of this study, the pedestrian routes between the buildings on the campus, adjacent to arterial streets, and circling the lagoon are considered "primary pedestrian connections."

## **GUIDELINES**

- **Existing sidewalks should be made as consistent as possible in terms of design, material, color and finish.**
- **The preferred material for primary pedestrian routes is stan-**

**dard gray concrete with a consistent medium broom finish. Where the route is directly adjacent to historic structures and “Taliesin Red” paint color has traditionally been used on the paving, it is recommended that integrally colored or stained concrete be used in lieu of surface paint.**

### **SECONDARY PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS PAVING AND SURFACES**

Pedestrian routes such as trails are considered secondary pedestrian connections. Existing trails should be evaluated by the County for their popularity, usefulness, safety, and overall appropriateness.

#### **GUIDELINES**

- **County-sanctioned pedestrian paths and trails should be formalized where doing so would not conflict with adjacent uses. This will increase access to various site amenities.**
- **For existing trails that are not formalized, the preferred surface material is stabilized decomposed granite. Where conditions require additional stability and durability, concrete or asphalt may be appropriate.**

### **STREET PAVING AND SURFACES**

Streets throughout the campus, as mentioned above are and should continue to be paved in asphalt and adhere to City of San Rafael and Marin County design standards when applicable.

#### **GUIDELINES**

- **Asphalt paving with concrete curbs for primary and secondary streets is preferred.**
- **In particular, the Avenue of the Flags should be repaved with asphalt. (It is understood that the Marin Center Master Plan will address further design issues of the Avenue of the Flags. While certain details on the Avenue of the Flags may change as a result of the Master Plan, it is desired that the overall look and feel of the street be consistent with that of other streets on the Civic Center campus.)**

### **SPECIAL LANDSCAPE FEATURES PAVING AND SURFACES**

There are several existing special landscape features on the site. Additional features such as a plaza and outdoor courtyards may be developed at the Marin Center in the coming years.

#### **GUIDELINES**

- **Paving for outdoor courtyards adjacent to historic structures should be historically appropriate and of the highest quality available. Painted or exposed aggregate concrete surfaces should be replaced over time with integrally colored concrete. Examples include the outdoor area adjacent to the cafeteria and the outdoor area at the south end of the Administration Building.**

- **Paving and surfaces of new special landscape features adjacent to new architecture should match in spirit with the new building and be site appropriate. Paving materials should be generally neutral, of the highest quality and as permeable as possible in any given situation. Paving and surfaces in these cases should support a unified view of the overall campus whenever possible, but may be contemporary materials and treatments as is appropriate for new development.**

Paving materials and site surfaces in any landscape are important as they help to define spaces and connections. Surface treatments also signal the importance of an arrival point or building entry and provide visitors with a sense of orientation.

At the Marin County Civic Center much of the paving for sidewalks and pedestrian paths has varying materials, quality, and levels of maintenance. These include standard gray concrete, "Taliesin Red" painted concrete, exposed aggregate concrete (sometimes tinted) and asphalt. The roads are paved in asphalt and lined with concrete curbs. Special landscape features, such as patios and courtyards adjacent to existing structures, are generally paved with exposed aggregate concrete or painted concrete. The use of "Taliesin Red" at the entries of the Civic Center buildings ties in with the building's interior décor and is historically appropriate.

In general, the quality of paving materials at the Civic Center should be significantly improved and updated. It is preferred, too, that paving treatments and materials be consistent based on function as much as possible and promote permeability to reduce stormwater runoff. For example, primary pedestrian connections throughout the site should be upgraded with the same surface. This will provide clarity for pedestrians finding their way through the site.

## 5.4 Site Furniture

The following guidelines are intended to outline the preferred approach to site furniture on the Marin County Civic Center campus that will be accessible to all users.

### GUIDELINES

#### *Park Areas and Lagoon Perimeter*

- **It is recommended that all site furniture in Lagoon Park and the landscape surrounding the Lagoon be replaced with high quality, easy to maintain, durable pieces consistent throughout the campus. These pieces should become campus standards for park-like settings.**
- **Benches, tables, trash receptacles and any other desired site furniture should be of similar design, color, and materials. Please see recommendations below.**



Existing bench



Existing picnic table



Existing recycling and trash receptacles

- The design of the furniture should be site appropriate and considerate of the historic buildings on the site. The use of the “Taliesin Red” as an accent color should be considered depending on the furniture’s location, but is not required.

**Courtyards & Patios**

- Outdoor furniture for spaces related to the Administration Building and the Hall of Justice should be consistent. Further study on historic information regarding Frank Lloyd Wright’s original intent could be done in order to choose an appropriate standard for these spaces. Otherwise, the campus-wide standard site furniture should be used.
- New buildings on the campus with related outdoor areas such as courtyards or patios should use the Civic Center’s standard furnishings whenever possible. When this approach is not appropriate, the new building should establish site furniture standards specific to the architecture. These pieces should also be respectful of the overall setting and character of the campus.

The pieces shown here - benches, picnic tables, trash and recycling receptacles, bollards, and bicycle racks - are recommended as site standards for the campus. Several factors that



Backless Austin Bench by Landscapeforms



Austin Bench by Landscapeforms



Metal Austin Bench



Timber Form Model 38918-W

influenced these selections are durability, availability, ease of maintenance and comfort. (The County must also decide if additional measures, such as the addition of middle armrests, are necessary or desired in order to discourage sleeping on the benches.)

### **Bench**

The Austin bench by Landscapeforms ([www.landscapeforms.com](http://www.landscapeforms.com)) is available in backed or backless, six feet in length, extruded aluminum or ipe wood slats. Ipe is a durable and extremely dense, tight grained exotic hardwood that is naturally resistant to rot and decay without preservatives. It is available with Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. The design with arms is preferred.

### **Picnic Table**

The Timber Form Picnic Table Model 38918-W has massive wood members and is available in six or eight foot lengths. The Western Red Cedar material is preferred.

### **Trash and Recycling Receptacle**

The Mission Bay Receptacle, Model SLMIS-32R, made by Forms + Surfaces ([www.forms-surfaces.com](http://www.forms-surfaces.com)) is made in cast aluminum. The charcoal gray color is preferred.

### **Bollard**

The Annapolis bollard by Landscapeforms, with a custom powder-coated finish in Taliesin Red is preferred. Where the Taliesin Red color is not appropriate, the brushed stainless steel finish may be substituted.

### **Bicycle Rack**

The stainless steel Bici Linea bike rack by Santa & Cole is preferred, and is available in various sizes.

Site furniture now on the campus of the Marin County Civic Center has been on-site for quite some time. Site furniture is located along the lagoon and in Lagoon Park includes benches, trash



Mission Bay Receptacle by  
Forms + Surfaces



Annapolis bollard by  
Landscapeforms



Bici Linea bike rack by  
Santa & Cole

receptacles, and picnic tables. These items are functional but dated and generally unattractive. Given the attention paid to and the quality of the Civic Center's interior furniture, a new and upgraded approach to site furniture is recommended.

For example, the trash receptacles currently in the Lagoon Park are oil drums and the benches and tables are worn and uninviting. The bollards in front of the exhibit hall are steel pipes painted "Taliesin Red" that are faded and worn. Site furniture in outdoor spaces related specifically to buildings, such as the patio off the cafeteria, differs significantly in character from those found in the park areas.

## 5.5 Fences and Screening

The following guidelines outline the preferred approach to fences on the Marin County Civic Center campus.

### GUIDELINES

- **It is preferred that permanent chain link fencing be used as little as possible in the public park and recreation areas of the campus. When it is necessary, black vinyl coated fences are preferred for durability and aesthetics.**
- **All fences should be planted with shrubs and vines wherever possible.**
- **Planting barriers including trees may be appropriate where Civic Center property abuts residential neighborhoods to provide a visual screen (for example, as currently exists along Madison Ave.). Any possible future development on the campus should consider and address these issues.**

The Marin County Civic Center campus has fencing in only a few areas. There is chain link fencing along the southern edge of Lagoon Park in order to control access to the County Fair; along the southern edge of the east parking lot adjacent to Madison Avenue; around the north end of the Hall of Justice for security; around the southern end of the Administration Building for security; and in various places along the northern edge of the Marin Center. The fences vary in height and materials, but are typically 6' tall galvanized chain link.

Maintaining and ensuring safety on the campus for all users is the County's first priority. In addition, the aesthetics and functionality of fences and screens are important. The County is committed to finding and appropriately addressing fencing, screening and access issues with its neighbors to the north, south and east.

## 5.6 Riparian Environments: The Creek, Wetlands and Lagoon

The following general guidelines underscore the County's commitment to sustainability and natural resources.

## GUIDELINES

- **Enhance, protect and restore riparian habitats on the Civic Center site to the highest degree possible.**
- **Provide as many interpretive and educational opportunities for Marin residents in these riparian areas as is feasible.**
- **Improve water quality of the lagoon; explore sustainable solutions for water filtration.**

Gallinas Creek runs along the northern edge of the campus, adjacent to the Avenue of the Flags, and empties into the wetlands in the northeast corner of the site. These wetlands are linked with the bay just beyond. Any changes, additions or improvements to the Civic Center campus must take into account these unique ecosystems. To that end, the use of sustainable design practices will be required of any future development that may impact the creek and wetland areas.

The Marin Countywide Plan's section on Biological Resources highlights the County's commitment to the protection and restoration of riparian systems. In particular, the plan designates setbacks called Stream Conservation Areas (SCAs) to protect the active channel, water quality, flood control functions, and associated fish and wildlife habitat values along streams. The setback width is to be 50 - 100 feet on each side from the top of the bank depending on the size of the adjacent development. Although the Marin County Civic Center campus is technically in the jurisdiction of the City of San Rafael, it is recommended that the County consider implementing this policy along Gallinas Creek.

Unlike Gallinas Creek, the lagoon is a man-made water feature originally designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in the late 1950s. Today the lagoon is fed by natural springs and rainwater run-off from the Civic Center campus. It is included in the "historic district" defined in the Civic Center's National Historic Landmark application of 1991 and as such must be retained as a character defining feature. The lagoon is aerated by pumps and hosts wildlife such as ducks, geese and fish. The water quality and relative "health" of the lagoon is unknown.

In addition to Federal and State laws, the Marin Countywide Plan makes clear the County's commitment to the protection of water resources such as wetlands and riparian areas. However, given that relatively little is known about the creek, wetland, and lagoon it is recommended that further study be performed to assess their current condition. Recommendations for the preservation, maintenance and enhancement of these unique amenities can be made after more is known.



View of Gallinas Creek



View of wetland area



Gallinas Creek leading out to the bay

## 5.7 Park and Recreation Areas

The following are general guidelines for both new and existing park lands on the site.

### GUIDELINES



Island in the lagoon



Lagoon Park

- **The preferred approach is to complete the loop around the entire lagoon with parkland as originally envisioned. The path along the lagoon should be considered a primary pedestrian route and enhanced accordingly. Site furnishings should be upgraded per the guidelines above. Lighting should be improved for safety and nighttime ambiance. Signage and wayfinding should be clear and encourage visitors.**
- **New park areas may be developed on-site in the future. Such development should connect seamlessly with the existing park lands per Wright's original design. While the new park areas may differ in character from Lagoon Park, it is desired that new parks have adequate transitional space between landscape types in order to enhance the cohesive quality of the campus. For example, the open space in the northeast corner of the site may be enhanced with improved access to the public. The access points to this more natural landscape should be clearly connected to the existing park areas, but they do not need to match the pastoral design character of Lagoon Park.**

The *Marin County Civic Center Master Plan 1972 - 1990* placed a strong emphasis on protecting and enhancing the open space of the site. The Master Plan states that the open space on the site "links the entire project and connects and enfolds the various elements. As much as is possible they have endeavored to make the open space areas contiguous and continuous; one area flowing into another, the whole making an apparently uninterrupted environmental pattern into which the buildings fit and naturally merge. A practically continuous and uninterrupted open space area surrounds the entire lagoon extending into the park lands on the southeast and into the spacious planted and grassed terraces along the Fairgrounds to the north."

In reality, an uninterrupted open space surrounding the entire lagoon does not currently exist. The Lagoon Park is an open, multi-functional lawn in the southeast. A green space does follow the lagoon along Civic Center Drive, but the open space connection on the northern edge of the lagoon was never completed, thereby isolating Lagoon Park from visitors to the Marin Center and vice versa.

## 5.8 Streetscapes

The guidelines below outline the preferred approach to streetscape design on the Civic Center campus.

## GUIDELINES

- **Concrete sidewalks adjacent to primary and secondary streets are preferred. In particular, Civic Center Drive between Armory Drive and the Avenue of the Flags should have a concrete sidewalk along its eastern edge of no less than 6' in width. See section 5.3 on paving above for further details.**
- **Streets should have adequate night lighting for vehicles and pedestrians to enhance safety and in order to improve the site's accessibility during evening events. Civic Center Drive, the Avenue of the Flags and Armory Drive are of particular concern. Lighting fixtures and design for streets should be consistent site-wide. See section 5.10 on lighting for further details.**
- **Site signage should be easy to see and understand in order to enhance wayfinding and improve accessibility. See section 5.11 on signage and wayfinding below for further details.**
- **All intersections should be appropriately striped for pedestrian crossings; curb-cuts and other appropriate measures should be taken to ensure disabled access.**
- **The County should consider striped bike lanes on primary streets, particularly Civic Center Drive, in order to encourage cycling. See section 3.3 for further information on bicycle circulation.**
- **Street trees are encouraged as they define edges and beautify the site. Highlighting the same tree on a single street is also preferred in order to add order and clarity to the campus. Special attention should be paid, however, not to obstruct view corridors with new street tree planting. See section 5.2 on planting for further details.**



Civic Center Drive



Civic Center Drive

The streets on the Civic Center campus are varied in appearance. Although all of the primary and secondary streets are paved with asphalt, not all have sidewalks, bike lanes, parking spaces or street trees. Some of the differences in the site's streets have been described above in the sections on paving and planting. Generally speaking, the preferred approach to streetscape design at the Civic Center is to provide a consistent experience and clear wayfinding for visitors.

## 5.9 Parking Lots

The following are guidelines for parking lot improvements and for any new lots to be added on the site.

### GUIDELINES

- **All existing parking lots on the Civic Center campus should be redesigned to incorporate bioswales to capture and treat**



Existing Exhibit Hall parking lot



Existing Exhibit Hall parking lot



Example of a Parking Lot with Permeable Paving



Example of a Parking Lot with Bioswales

**run-off on-site wherever possible. These swales should run in between rows of parked cars and be planted with species specifically chosen for their water filtration abilities.**

- **Existing parking lots should also be densely planted with shade trees. Soil fertility and irrigation strategies must be devised in order to promote sustained health and growth of trees in such harsh environments.**
- **The terraced parking areas west of the Administration Building should be improved by planting vines to cover the large expanses of the concrete walls.**
- **Planting for lots that may host the farmer’s market should be controlled so that the market would not be negatively impacted.**
- **Where possible, existing lots should be repaved with permeable surfaces to reduce stormwater run-off.**
- **Parking lot lighting should be enhanced for safety. See section 5.10 on lighting for further details.**
- **All new lots on the site should strictly adhere to the sustainable design practices listed above. The feasibility of underground parking, covered by landscaped park-like areas or new buildings, should be explored.**
- **The feasibility of installing solar panels in shade structures over parking areas should be explored.**

The parking lots on the Civic Center campus would value from aesthetic and functional improvements. Vast expanses of asphalt with few trees are not what Frank Lloyd Wright and his associates envisioned for the Civic Center campus. In the revised 1972 plan they defined the problem as follows: “The critical problem in planning and developing the parking areas in the Marin County Civic Center complex is to provide the maximum possible number of spaces and at the same time preserve the unique natural beauty of the site.” The architects go on to say that “grade level parking areas should be heavily planted” and that “trees and shrubbery [should] be thickly planted around all parking areas and between the rows of all parking spaces.” They envisioned a “canopy of greenery over the rows of vehicles (in maintenance parking areas as well as in public parking spaces) to form an apparent garden of vegetation to the viewer.”

The preferred approach today, over thirty years later, is to return to this idea of highly vegetated parking fields. In addition to beautifying the campus, the County has an opportunity to demonstrate cutting-edge sustainable design strategies in the Civic Center’s parking lots. Using bioswales to filter run-off from the lots, dense tree planting for shade, and permeable paving to reduce run-off, these sustainable parking gardens could be models for development county-wide and beyond.

## 5.10 Lighting

The lighting system for the Civic Center campus should appropriately address historic areas separate from new areas and act as a unifying element that is coordinated and integrated with signage, landscaping, and architectural elements. In addition, care must be taken to ensure that excessive light pollution into adjacent neighborhoods is avoided. By utilizing lighting fixtures and effects to reinforce a sense of safety and security, establish a strong nighttime identity, facilitate wayfinding, and simplify maintenance, the lighting design for the Marin County Civic Center campus will contribute to the safety and enjoyment of all night-time users and visitors.

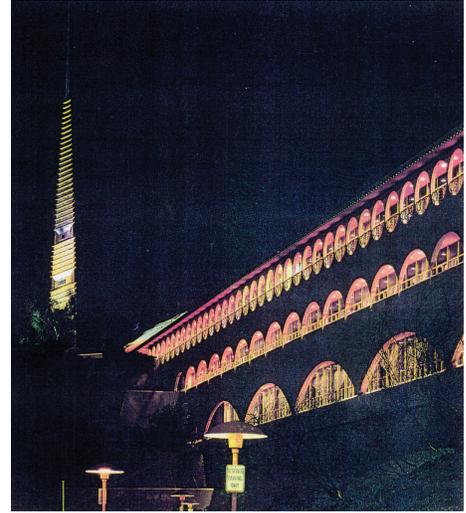
### GUIDELINES

#### *Functional Criteria*

- **Provide adequate light for safety and security. Two main lighting factors that reinforce a sense of safety and security are adequate horizontal illuminance at the ground for navigation of pathways, and adequate vertical luminance at surfaces such as building forms, building entries, people, signage and planting to provide visual context.**
- **Create a strong nighttime identity. Establish a hierarchy of illuminated site features, such as the spire on the Administration Building, where brightness, color, and coverage can indicate degree of significance and focus.**
- **Use lighting to promote wayfinding. Illuminate gateways and vertical surfaces to provide context for pedestrians and drivers. Integrate lighting systems with signage.**
- **Address maintenance issues such as standardizing lamp types as much as possible, maximizing accessibility of fixtures for easier repair and re-lamping, optimizing lamp life, cost, and energy efficiency, and minimizing opportunities for vandalism.**

#### *Design Criteria and Approach*

- **The scale, form, color, and spacing of lighting elements should be cohesive campus-wide and compatible with the historic design precedents and with the simple, and timeless designs of other site elements such as planting, architecture, and signage.**
- **Site lighting fixtures located near historic structures must be respectful of the historic styled designs and site lighting fixtures used elsewhere should be simple, timeless, and cohesive throughout possible future development areas. This concept of a “family of fixtures” should be applied to the major open spaces.**



Original nighttime lighting scheme

- The color of light throughout the Marin County Civic Center should be consistent with only slight variations in the color of the light source, which may be considered appropriate for distinguishing adjacent areas of different functions. To maintain this historic color variation, we recommend using warm colored 3000 Kelvin compact fluorescent light sources. All light sources should have the highest color rendering properties available to enhance the quality of the nighttime experience.
- The Area Brightness Lighting Diagram contained in this section summarizes the overall design approach. Each possible future project should provide smooth transitions between zones of different light intensities. Zones of varying levels of brightness based on the diagram should be implemented. The lighting solution should provide an appropriate balance of light and level of comfort, with the actual quantity of light (i.e. number of footcandles) as a guideline. Special attention should be paid to providing a visually comfortable transition from one area to the next.
- To facilitate seasonal lighting and special events, the infrastructure of each possible future development should include power for the installation of temporary lighting.
- The existing historic hat-shaped fixtures, placed 60' on center, do not provide a uniform coverage of the pathways, where vertical illumination on pedestrians falls off in between light fixtures. It is recommended that a higher light pole with the same fixture head style and profile be considered for greater vertical and horizontal illumination coverage along pedestrian pathways.
- A reconstructed custom hybrid fixture design that represents the original historic fixture concept and overall profile yet with modernized fixture optics and lamp technology is recommended. The use of ceramic metal halide technology is preferred for roadway and street lighting.

#### **Technical Criteria**

This section discusses how the above goals are quantified and achieved from a technical standpoint. Standard practice performance criteria is defined for major areas and issues such as source color, light levels, and uniformity is addressed. The major areas of the site can be broken down into the following categories for lighting: Parking Areas, Pathways, Recreation Areas, Roadways, Loading Docks, Building Entries, Signage, and Site Features. The

#### **LIGHTING GUIDELINES BACKGROUND**

Vision is the primary means by which we gather information about our surroundings. The variations in color, texture, and brightness that make up our visual world inform our perception of our environment. Light is the medium that renders our visual environment and shades our perceptions, and as such it is an important design element.

To develop a design that is inspiring yet practical and economical, these lighting design guidelines build upon and maintain historic lighting concepts while addressing concepts of connectivity and cohesiveness where appropriate with new and future developments. This section will describe how these concept goals can be realized by following some design guidelines that are responsive to the historic character and functional requirements of the Marin County Civic Center campus. The lighting design guidelines presented are intended to establish and define the design goals and criteria initially in the context of a master plan, and ultimately to guide realizable design solutions.

This section is comprised of five parts. The first part will discuss the existing conditions and the second part, Functional Criteria, will discuss general exterior lighting issues. The third part, Design Criteria and Approach, addresses lighting design guidelines for the site by discussing the intended "quality of light" for each area. A fourth section, Technical Criteria, will present quantifiable design metrics specific to the Marin County Civic Center campus. The fifth part summarizes the important lighting design guidelines from this section in a summary table for both existing and new areas.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

An illustrative summary of the existing lighting conditions observed during a site visit on August 25, 2004 is provided in this section.



Historic (retrofitted) pedestrian light pole adjacent to Administration Building and Hall of Justice



Historic light column pole at Lagoon, Veterans' Memorial Auditorium, and Exhibit Hall and Showcase Theater



Accent light fixtures for historic spire



Historic globe fixtures of varying size and pattern underneath Administration Building and Hall of Justice



Non-historic parking lot light fixtures located away from historic structure



Non-historic parking lot light fixtures located adjacent to historic and non-historic structures. Note that fixtures match the painted finish of the historic fixtures



Non-historic parking lot light fixture with additional pole mounted floodlight for security lighting purposes at county jail facility



Original loading dock with concealed light fixture (left) and newer loading dock with exposed light fixture (middle and right) at Hall of Justice

Nighttime identity of the Administration Building and Hall of Justice incorporates accent lighting for the spire and internal arcade downlighting. No façade lighting was present or identified.

### **Pedestrian Pathways:**

The historic styled pedestrian light pole fixtures have been refitted and slightly modified from the original historic design. It is assumed that the retrofit may have been done in an effort to meet current light level requirements. Additional light fixtures have been added in some instances where increased light levels may have been required due to changing needs (i.e. floodlights near county jail facility).

Most light fixtures have been moderately maintained. One style of historic light fixture with adjustable fixture heads shown on the original historic design plans could not be found on-site.

### **FUNCTIONAL CRITERIA**

The primary goals of most exterior lighting systems are functional: to provide adequate light for safety and security. Another important consideration is the nighttime identity of the project. Understanding that a nighttime identity has already been established through the historic design, a comprehensive lighting design for Marin County Civic Center must seek to adapt and improve the current lighting system to meet current expectations of lighting performance for vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding, and a simplified maintenance program.

### **Safety and Security**

The Marin County Civic Center campus is comprised of several different types of pedestrian paths and vehicular roadways, public open spaces, park areas, various gathering spaces, recreation areas, and historic landmark and transitional buildings. Given this

level of complexity and scale, it is imperative that a primary layer of the site lighting system be dedicated to creating a sense of safety and security with special attention paid to the transition areas between different uses.

Two main lighting factors that reinforce a sense of safety and security are adequate horizontal illuminance at the ground for navigation of pathways, and adequate vertical luminance at surfaces such as building forms, building entries, people, signage and planting to provide visual context. The technical criteria associated with these goals are discussed further in Section 3.



Original nighttime lighting scheme

It is important to note that due to the historic landmark status of the Administration Building, Hall of Justice and the U.S. Post Office, careful consideration is required when adapting the existing lighting system to meet modern criteria. Improvements may be made, but done such that the appearance and design intent of the historic fixtures are maintained.

### **Nighttime Identity**

With the variety of buildings and site features that make up the Marin County Civic Center campus, one important function of the lighting system will be to provide historic consistency throughout the Center, much in the same way that hardscape, paving and planting will. While each new development will have its own set of lighting criteria, the use of consistent lighting effects, sources, and equipment among non-historic areas will strengthen the visual identity of the historic landmark areas and ultimately the overall campus. The historic “hat” styled area light is an example of how visual consistency has developed a strong design identity for the project.

One method for creating a strong nighttime identity is to establish a hierarchy of illuminated site features such as the tall spire on the Administration Building, where brightness, color, and coverage can indicate degree of significance and focus. The silhouetted arcade forms along the Hall of Justice and Administration Building create a secondary layer of lighting. The use of medium scaled lighting/architectural/signage elements at key site locations such as the gathering spaces, Exhibit Hall and Showcase Theatre, Veterans' Memorial Auditorium and U.S. Post Office can help to unify distinct areas of the site; these elements also act as lighthouse-type markers that facilitate wayfinding.

### **Wayfinding**

At night many of the visual cues that help direct daytime visitors are less visible, and site lighting must be utilized to compensate for this deficiency. Effective illumination of gateways, such as at the main entrance to the site off North San Pedro Road, signage, gathering spaces, and “landmarks” facilitates wayfinding and reinforces a sense of safety and security as well.

Illumination of vertical surfaces against darker backgrounds is an effective way to create a visual context at night. A wonder-

ful feature of The Marin County Civic Center campus is the tall spire at the top of the Administration Building that can be seen from a distance, as well as the long undulating building facade. In addition, the organic styled light posts surrounding the lagoon acts as a wayfinding element as well. At night, these elements provide the visual context for pedestrians and drivers alike. New and future developments that address the illumination of facades and historic building features will be an important factor in the success of the Marin County Civic Center campus.

Lastly, lighting systems that enhance or are integrated with signage are especially important for wayfinding.

### **Maintenance**

The scale of The Marin County Civic Center campus and its variety of open spaces can translate into a lighting system with many fixtures. Maintenance issues that must be addressed include standardizing lamp types as much as possible, maximizing accessibility of fixtures for easier repair and re-lamping, optimizing lamp life, cost, and energy efficiency, and minimizing opportunities for vandalism.

The key to minimizing the maintenance costs for lighting is to keep the lighting design as simple as possible. By carefully selecting fixtures that serve dual purposes, providing light for safety as well as night-time identity for example, fixture quantities can be reduced resulting in reduced maintenance as well as reduced first costs and some energy savings.



The Spire

### **DESIGN CRITERIA AND APPROACH**

The Marin County Civic Center will be a series of inter-connected exterior venues each with its own unique design character to be enhanced by the lighting. In this section, the use of a family of fixtures and overall design goals including hierarchies of brightness and quality of light that are responsive to each space will be described. The approaches will be discussed in terms of the functional criteria of safety and security, nighttime identity, wayfinding, and maintenance.

For each open space, light levels at the ground, vertical surface luminances, spill light from building interiors, and facade lighting all contribute to our perception of brightness at night. Zones of varying brightness, informed by the technical criteria noted in part four, need to be defined with special attention to providing a visually comfortable transition from one area to the next. In the case of lighting site features and planting, a perceptible difference in brightness between the illuminated object and its context is desired. Within the open spaces such as the Lagoon, this contrast will be used to create visual interest, establish night-time identity, and facilitate wayfinding by highlighting "landmarks," building entries, and transitions. However, excessive contrast is to be avoided.

Like brightness, color and color rendition of light are important

design factors for site lighting. The color of light can act as a visual cue to delineate areas of different function. However, it can be disorienting when a variety of sources are juxtaposed or layered in a small area. A broad range of source color should be avoided.

One aspect of the site lighting system that is as important during the day as it is at night is the lighting equipment itself. The scale, form, color, and spacing of these elements should be cohesive and compatible with the historic design precedents and with the simple, and timeless designs of other site elements such as planting, architecture, and signage. Site lighting fixtures located near historic structures must be respectful of the historic styled designs and site lighting fixtures used elsewhere should be simple, timeless, and cohesive throughout the new development areas of the site for connectivity while being versatile enough to be responsive and appropriate to the character of each space. This concept of a "family of fixtures" should be applied to the major open spaces.

### **Color and Color Rendering Properties of Light Source**

At the beginning of the design process for each proposed new or future development, careful consideration should be given to the color of light used. Consistency is very important and the use of metal halide sources, preferably 4100 Kelvin color temperature to best match the originally designed 5700 Kelvin color temperature mercury vapor lighting system, is recommended throughout the Marin County Civic Center campus. While mercury vapor lamps are still available, they are a lamp technology that has been surpassed by the energy efficient, high lumen maintenance and high quality color rendering capabilities of compact metal halide. In general, all sources should have the highest color rendering properties available to enhance the quality of the nighttime experience.

### **Recommended Lamping**

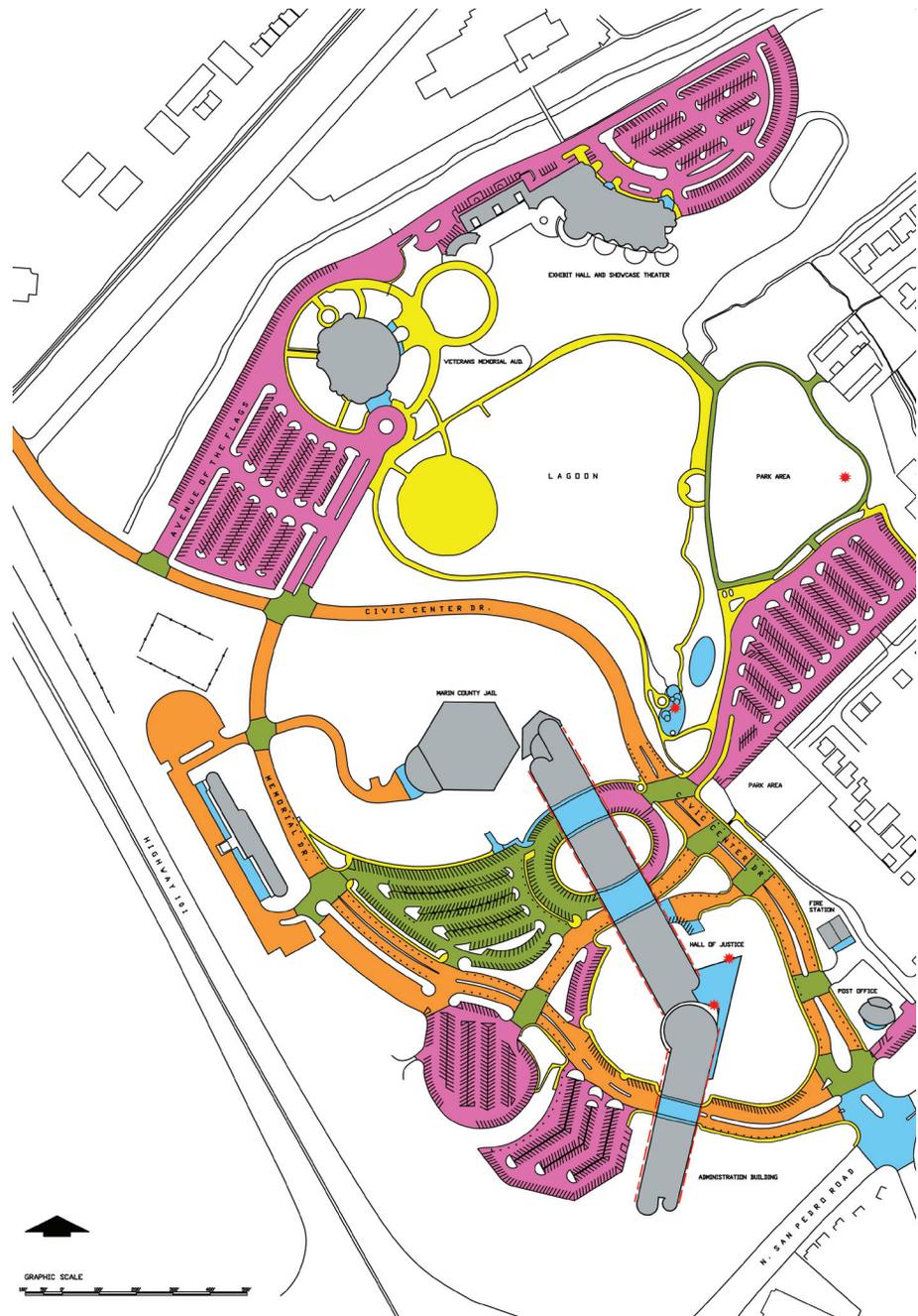
The use of metal halide technology in the nighttime environment is becoming much more prevalent due to the awareness of the importance of good color rendering in the nighttime environment and re-evaluation of how human vision is optimized at low light levels. Metal halide is becoming the preferred choice for urban roadway lighting. Some design standards for new or future site lighting within the state of California already encourage the use of metal halide sources in order to meet the demands of California Energy Codes. The application of metal halide technology for street lighting represents a progressive approach to emerging technologies and results in a high quality urban environment within the Marin County Civic Center campus.

High color rendering sources including metal halide lamps provide a more realistic rendering of illuminated surfaces and objects - tree leaves appear green, car colors can be distinguished, and pedestrians and surrounding building materials are easily recognized. Poor color rendering sources such as the high pressure sodium lamps currently used for some areas within the Marin County Civic Center campus are a limited spectrum source

that turn most surfaces and objects to a dull gray. Color and color rendition of light are important design factors since the color of light can either improve or distort the nighttime environment.

Light is measured in foot-candles, which is a measure of the amount of light (lumens) incident over a surface area. This measurement was first defined under photopic (daylight) lighting conditions. The following list describes some of the reasons why metal halide is a preferable technology to high pressure sodium for roadway lighting.

- The primary wavelengths of light produced by metal halide sources coincide with the most sensitive nighttime vision receptors of the human eye resulting in improved visual response at low light levels.
- Several studies indicate better visual acuity resulting in quicker reaction times for off-axis detection of hazards when metal halide lighting is used in low-light level situations. This in turn increases safety for approaching pedestrians and vehicles especially at roadway intersections.
- High color rendering sources such as metal halide with a color rendering index (CRI) of 70 or better (on a scale of 0 to 100) realistically renders the color of illuminated surfaces and objects while sources such as high pressure sodium with a CRI of 22 distorts colors and renders most surfaces a dull gray. This distinction is critical in recognizing pedestrians, planting, car color, and surrounding building materials.
- Areas illuminated with white light are typically described as 'brighter' and 'active' in comparison to spaces illuminated with high pressure sodium sources. This distinction has already been attributed to the revitalization of parks and retail spaces in many installations.
- The use of metal halide and other white light source more closely resembles the original historic mercury vapor light sources designed for the campus, thereby revitalizing the historic nighttime visual environment. More importantly, this also results in a comfortable, active and friendly environment for pedestrians and adjacent business owners.
- To promote sustainable lighting, lamps with low mercury content and lamps with high efficacy (lumens per watt ratio) are recommended where possible. Exterior lighting controls such as a photocell/timeclock device that limits unnecessary energy use when areas well illuminated with daylight are recommended for efficient use of our energy resources. Lighting solutions should also be designed to minimize light pollution as much as possible and restrict light trespass into adjacent residential and commercial properties.



**AREA LIGHTING BRIGHTNESS DIAGRAM**  
 Light levels are shown in average horizontal footcandles

### **Color Contrast within Area and from One Area to the Next**

The color of light throughout the Marin County Civic Center should be consistent with only slight variations in the color of the light source, which may be considered appropriate for distinguishing adjacent areas of different functions. For instance, the decorative globes mounted in the pass thru archways at the Hall of Justice and Administration Building originally utilized incandescent warm colored sources in contrast to the mercury vapor light sources used along pathways and roadways. To maintain this historic color variation, we recommend using warm colored 3000 Kelvin compact fluorescent light sources. These sources provide an energy efficient and sustainable lamping solution. Variations in lighting level to signal changes is a more common technique, with the color of the general lighting sources remaining relatively consistent.

### **Uniformity/Contrast of Light Distribution**

The brightness diagram contained in this section summarizes the overall design approach. Each project should provide smooth transitions between zones of different light intensities.

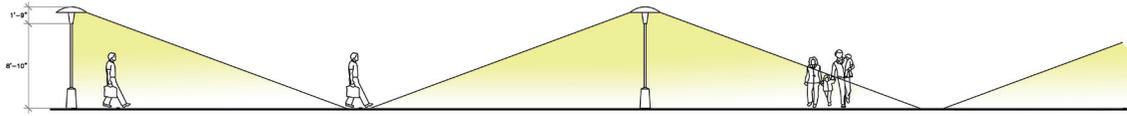
### **Hierarchy of Brightness**

Light levels at the ground, vertical surface luminances, spill light from building interiors, and even light fixture "glare" all contribute to our perception of brightness at night. When adjacent areas of the streetscape have perceptibly different brightness levels, our eyes require time for adaptation. These varying brightness levels when kept at appropriate contrast ratios work effectively as wayfinding, while excessive contrast ratios are undesirable from a design standpoint and can compromise a sense of safety and security. Therefore zones of varying levels of brightness based on the diagram below should be implemented. Then the brightness of the border areas between these zones can be graded to ensure a visually comfortable transition from one area of the site to the next.

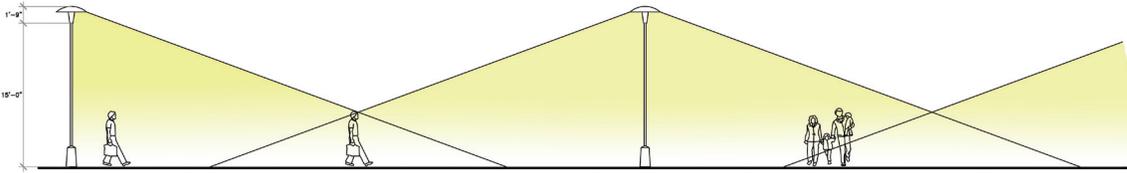
Actual lighting levels may be used as a guideline for establishing the lighting design, but should by no means be the only criteria. The human eye is very adaptive, and may not detect large variances in lighting levels. Illumination levels can be quite deceiving; an object or surface can have high lighting levels but appear very dull and inappropriately lit due to finish reflectances or distribution of light. The lighting solution should provide an appropriate balance of light and level of comfort, with the actual quantity of light (i.e. number of footcandles) as a guideline.

In general, the impression that a person has of the amount of light (dim, adequate, bright) is a much more important consideration than the actual illumination levels. The amount of light that a surface or object appears to have is a function of finishes, contrasts, brightness of surrounding surfaces, and brightness of adjacent interior spaces. In areas where certain quantitative levels are required for performance of tasks the qualitative aspects of lighting must also be considered as having equal impact.

## Conceptual Fixture Diagrams



8'-10" tall existing historic pole height



15'-0" tall adapted historic pole height for greater illumination coverage and improved vertical coverage between fixtures

### Special Event Lighting

To facilitate seasonal lighting and special events, the infrastructure of each development should include power for the installation of temporary lighting. Especially in gathering areas such as the Lagoon, the easy access to such infrastructure would reduce set-up time and cost for special public and private events or performances.

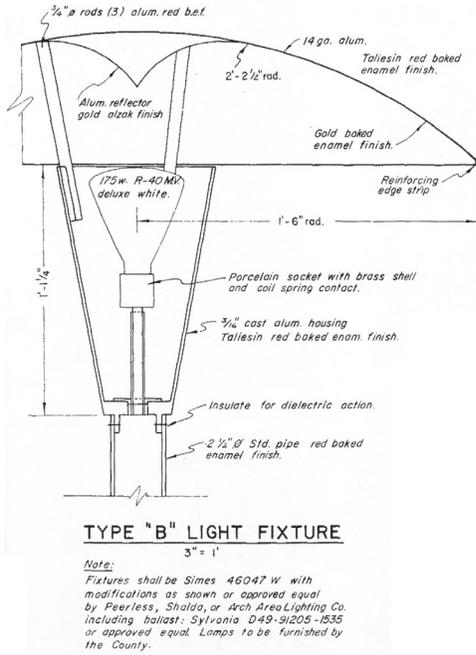
As illustrated by the above diagram, the existing historic fixtures, placed 60' on center, do not provide a uniform coverage of the pathways, where vertical illumination on pedestrians falls off in between light fixtures. It is recommended that a higher light pole with the same fixture head style and profile be considered for greater vertical and horizontal illumination coverage along pedestrian pathways.

The light source could be concealed within the bottom housing as originally designed and illustrated in Drawing A. Drawing B illustrates a modern light fixture with a very different fixture profile, but one that utilizes a similar "reflected light" design concept. A reconstructed custom hybrid fixture design that represents the original historic fixture concept and overall profile yet with modernized fixture optics and lamp technology is recommended.

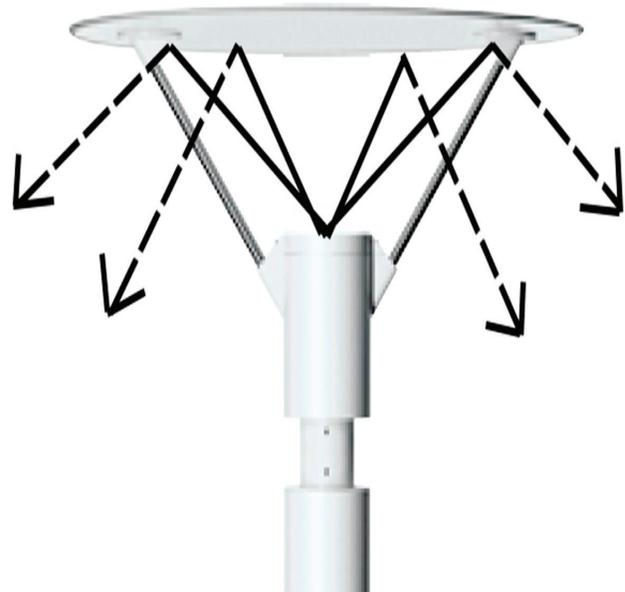
It is important for reasons of visual comfort that the light source be concealed from direct view while maximizing the efficiency of the reflector system.

### TECHNICAL CRITERIA

In the previous section, general goals for the Marin County Civic Center campus lighting system were described. The appendix contains a section that discusses how those goals are quantified and achieved from a technical standpoint. Standard practice performance criteria (from *The Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) Handbook, 9th Edition*) is defined for major areas and issues such as source color, light levels, and uniformity will be addressed. The major areas of the site are broken down into the following

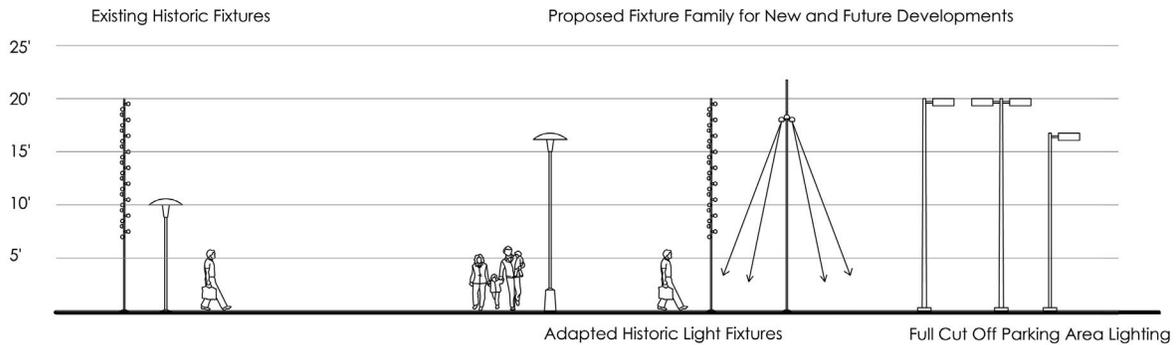


Drawing A



Drawing B

### Light Fixture Families



categories for lighting: Parking Areas, Pathways, Recreation Areas, Roadways, Loading Docks, Building Entries, Signage, and Site Features. Please refer to the appendix for detailed information on technical criteria as well as a summary table.

## 5.11 Signage and Wayfinding

This section addresses existing site signage, a concept for overall site signage and wayfinding, and signage design guidelines and concepts. An updated, comprehensive site wayfinding system would substantially improve visitor orientation and enhance the special character of the Marin County Civic Center campus.

### GUIDELINES

#### Gateway Feature

- The blue roof and gold-leafed spire are so distinctive and

well-known that gateway enhancements are not functionally necessary at the intersections of Civic Center Drive with San Pedro Road and the Avenue of the Flags.

- Gateway features would nevertheless add richness to the site and “announce” the design character of the landscape improvements and signage that visitors will encounter.
- Gateway features would likely combine signage with landscape enhancements.

#### *Primary Vehicle Directional*

- These should be sized for readability at the nominal 25 mph speed limit along Civic Center Drive. They would typically be placed at the intersections with all public roadways, and, in some instances, at advance locations as well.
- Upgrades to existing directional signs to the Marin Veterans’ Auditorium and Exhibit Hall complex would essentially replicate existing sign copy.
- New directional signs at the roadways to the Administration Building and Hall of Justice “overpasses” would identify each building entrance and the principal public destinations it serves most directly.

#### *Secondary Vehicle Directionals*

- Secondary directionals are used where slower speeds permit readability of smaller copy. Generally, they also display fewer destinations.
- Existing secondary signs at the Marin Veterans’ Memorial Auditorium and Exhibit Hall complex should be upgraded.
- New signs should be placed along Peter Behr Drive, Judge Haley Drive and Vera Schultz Drive to direct visitors to the parking zone nearest the building entrance that leads most directly to their destination.

#### *Pedestrian Directionals*

- Pedestrian-scale wayfinding should be provided along the paths of travel from the Administration Building and Hall of Justice and east parking lot to appropriate building entries, and throughout the Marin Center.

#### *Pedestrian Orientation Maps*

- A few strategically placed maps will give many visitors a helpful overview of the site. (Some people cannot make the association between a scaled representation and the physical world. Wayfinding should therefore not rely exclusively on orientation maps.)
- Potential map locations include the transit stop on Civic Center Drive, the Administration Building and Hall of Justice park-

ing lots, and key pedestrian nodes at the Marin Center. These maps should include only the destinations and information necessary to guide most visitors. The more complex a map, the more intimidating and confusing it can be.

#### ***Building Entry Identification***

- It will be critical to “label” each public entrance to the Administration Building and Hall of Justice conspicuously (i.e. - A/B/C or North/Central/South). Each label should be augmented by a directory of primary public destinations (Courts, Jury Assembly Room, Traffic Citations et al).
- Public transit systems typically have their own, distinct signage and graphics, together with standards for their use, and this may be the case for SMART. However, because of the Civic Center’s unique, historic character, SMART signage should, if possible, have site-specific structural supports and/or “framing.”

#### ***Typeface***

- The typeface Futura is currently used throughout the Administration Building, Hall of Justice and Marin Veterans’ Memorial Auditorium. Futura’s circular (or apparently circular) letterforms are uniquely appropriate to complement Wright’s use of circles and circular arcs as design motifs. Futura is therefore the recommended typeface for future signage.

#### ***Copy Size***

- The cap height (the size of a capital letter measured vertically) for primary directional signs along Civic Center Drive should be 4” to 4.5.”
- The cap height for directional signs along secondary roadways and entry drives should be 2.5” to 3.5.” Because Futura has unusually extended (wide) letterforms, signs will be correspondingly wider to accommodate the typeface without reducing cap heights or digitally condensing the copy.

#### ***Amount of Copy***

- Wherever possible, directional signs should have a maximum of three listed destinations. Drivers don’t typically have time to process more information than that, and the more destinations displayed on a sign, the less attention each will get.

#### ***Overall Size***

- Size as necessary to display the copy at the indicated cap height and to provide an adequate border zone all around.
- Sign panels should generally be wider than they are high to minimize multiline messages. 4’6” is an optimal overall height. The lowest copy on a sign panel should be 1’0” to 1’6” above finish grade to keep the copy within a driver’s line of vision and to prevent being blocked by ground cover.

### *Materials*

- Aluminum is the industry standard for most sign fabrication. It is lighter and easier to work than steel, doesn't rust, and is only moderately more expensive.
- A spray applied paint finish is also standard; powder coating and baked enamel are more durable and more costly. Porcelain enamel is most expensive, but non fading and essentially impervious to graffiti.
- A primary sign can be a monolith or a sign panel on a base structure like precast concrete.
- Secondary signs are usually post and panel signs.

### *Changeability*

- Most destinations at the Marin County Civic Center campus are unlikely to change over time. Where change is a possibility, the use of modular directional signs which simplify copy updates should be considered.

### *Placement*

- Vehicular directionals should be placed as close to the street as possible without disrupting sightlines or interfering with underground utilities.
- Placement should also take into account adjacent trees, shrubs and ground cover.
- Irrigation heads should be directed away from sign panels to avoid the buildup of alkaloids from repeated spraying.

### *Lighting*

- All principal wayfinding features should have dedicated external illumination unless ambient light levels are high enough to provide the necessary visibility.

### *Design Considerations*

- All components of the hierarchy should employ the Futura typeface and utilize the Civic Center color palette – sandstone beige, blue and Taliesin Red – and all components should reflect a common design vocabulary.
- That design vocabulary, however, should not mimic the Civic Center architecture. Instead, it should be compatible in a general way, using curved forms to soften massing, and horizontal rather than vertical proportions whenever possible.
- If design motifs or details are incorporated into the signage, they should be placed on the edges of a sign panel and/or the support structure so that they don't obtrude on the "live area" reserved for copy.
- Borders between colors or materials should be articulated

**by a reveal, a trim piece, a change in plane or some similar device.**

The features which make the Marin County Civic Center campus so distinctive will impact a functional system of site signage and wayfinding. The long blue roof and gold-leafed spire serve as unmistakable landmarks at large scale, but the integration of the Administration Building and Hall of Justice into the hilly topography restricts view corridors from adjacent roadways, requiring wayfinding elements to guide visitors to the building entries.

Civic Center Drive divides the site into two distinct sections: hilly and partially treed to the southwest, and flat and more open to the northeast. There are existing directional signs along Civic Center Drive at the entry drives into the northeast section. These signs direct visitors to the Marin Veterans' Memorial Auditorium, Exhibit Hall and related functions along straight, level roadways with essentially unimpeded sightlines. Most are generic "off the shelf" signs with white copy on blue backgrounds; the copy is generally smaller than it should be. These signs do not reflect the Marin County Civic Center design palette in any way. They are mounted haphazardly on posts, walls and fencing.

There are also three original sign armatures on Civic Center Drive between the Post Office and the Marin Veterans' Memorial Auditorium, and one of them has attached directional signage. The armatures should be preserved for their historic significance, but relocated and used as pedestrian directionals, as their scale is more appropriate to this use.

There are essentially no existing wayfinding components on the southwest side of Civic Center Drive, or on Peter Behr Drive, Judge Haley Drive or Vera Schultz Drive.

The Marin Veterans' Memorial Auditorium and Exhibit Hall complex is formally designated "Marin Center". This term is easily confused with "Marin County Civic Center", which complicates wayfinding. Improvements and the expansion of the Lagoon Park/Auditorium area present an opportunity to replace "Marin Center" with a distinctive and unambiguous term.

An updated, comprehensive site wayfinding system would substantially improve visitor orientation and enhance the special character of the Marin County Civic Center campus.

Although these guidelines do not specifically include multilingual signage, it is important to note that signage in multiple languages at the Civic Center should be considered if warranted to fulfill some public service or is consistent with some other standard.

**PRELIMINARY OVERALL SITE SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING CONCEPT**

As described above, existing wayfinding to the northeast of Civic Center Drive is functionally adequate, but should be upgraded (and expanded as necessary to include destinations set forth in



Existing Directional



Existing Directional



Original Armature/Sign



Sightline to Building Entry

these guidelines). The chief wayfinding task will be to identify clear paths of travel from Civic Center Drive, and, to a lesser extent, from secondary roadways, to the Administration Building and Hall of Justice public entrances. (It is assumed that wayfinding to the County Jail is unnecessary and/or undesirable.)

Along the Civic Center Drive approach, two principal issues come into play. First, each public entrance is tucked into a vehicular “underpass,” and is therefore difficult to see from Civic Center Drive. Second, wayfinding within the Administration Building and Hall of Justice is difficult because of the relationship to grade, inconsistencies in the room numbering sequences, and limited wall space for directional signs at major decision points. For these reasons, it is important to direct visitors to the public entrance closest (or most directly linked) to their destination. Similar issues come into play at the “back” of the Administration Building and Hall of Justice, but the scale is smaller and visitors will generally be walking rather than driving.