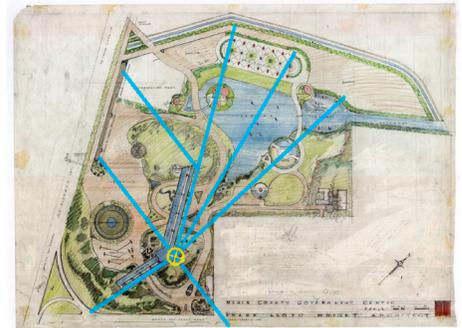


SECTION 4: BUILDINGS & ARCHITECTURE

4.1 Introduction

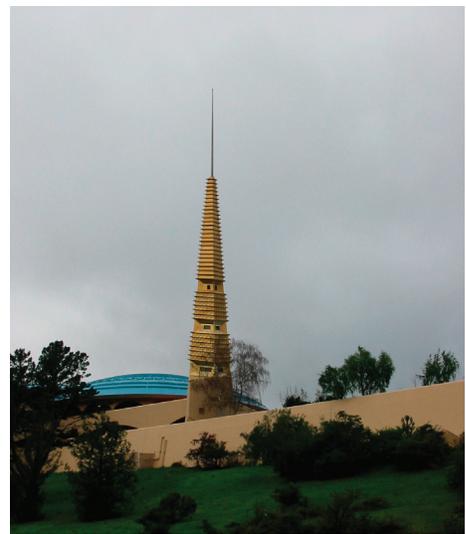
Unique to the Marin County Civic Center site is the sense of open space organized around Frank Lloyd Wright's landmark Civic Center building with its golden spire serving as the symbolic center of the campus. This is consistent with Wright's original plan that stakes out a variety of uses to claim and organize this large continuous space that was once undeveloped land. As shown in his last site plan, each proposed building acknowledges the Civic Center as the focal point of the campus allowing a clear line of sight across the open space from each of the buildings back to the emanating spire.



Last Frank Lloyd Wright Site Plan

The following guidelines provide a framework for future development that recognizes the need to maintain the visual prominence of Frank Lloyd Wright's Civic Center Building within a setting that engenders an overall sense of openness. Important to this discussion are the aspirations of the previous Marin County Civic Center Master Plan and the significance and implications of the Civic Center's status as a National Historic Landmark. Thorough review of these issues as well as an understanding of the underlying design principles of Frank Lloyd Wright will inform the recommendations of these 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.



Civic Center spire

4.2 Frank Lloyd Wright Design Principles

Per item 9 of the *Secretary of the Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, that to be compatible with the architectural character of this site, one needs to be compatible with the tenets of Frank Lloyd Wright's own work.

The following design principles are derived from Frank Lloyd Wright's work, including the landmark Marin Civic Center Administrative Building and Hall of Justice. They follow the intent set out in the Master Plan of 1972 –1990, the Historic Landmark Designation, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties, and the Marin Civic Center Open Space Ordinance.

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 about 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.

Frank Lloyd Wright's work was based in his belief that a building is a unified whole; that form and function are one. This has become associated with the term "organic architecture." For Wright, organic architecture required respecting the site, the nature of the building materials and creating an honest expression of the buildings function.

The following images illustrate these principles with buildings designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. They are intended to show in general terms a range of ways that these design principles may be used in building on the Civic Center site.

Associate the building as a whole with its site by extending and emphasizing the horizontal planes of the building. Programmatic elements should be elevated entirely above the ground to further emphasize the horizontality.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT DESIGNED PROJECTS



Robie House – 1906



Fallingwater - 1935



Marin Civic Center, Hall of Justice - 1970



Hall of Justice Entry Arch - 1970

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.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT DESIGNED PROJECTS



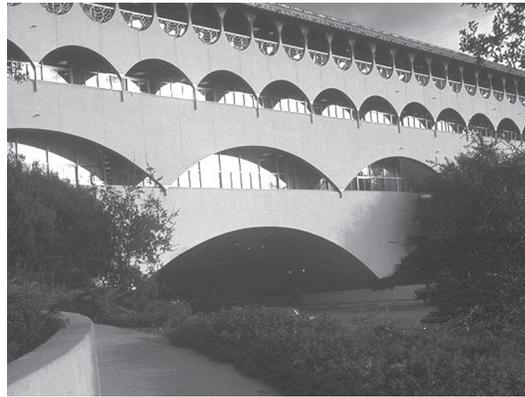
Willits House – 1901



Robie House -1906



Marin Civic Center Roof and Spire - 1970



Exterior Entry Arch, Administration Bldg. - 1970

Reduce the number of building components in order to allow light, air and views to permeate and unify the building.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT DESIGNED PROJECTS



Guggenheim Museum - 1959



Florida Southern College - 1938



Marin Civic Center Interior, Upper Floor - 1970



South End of the Administration Building - 1970

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

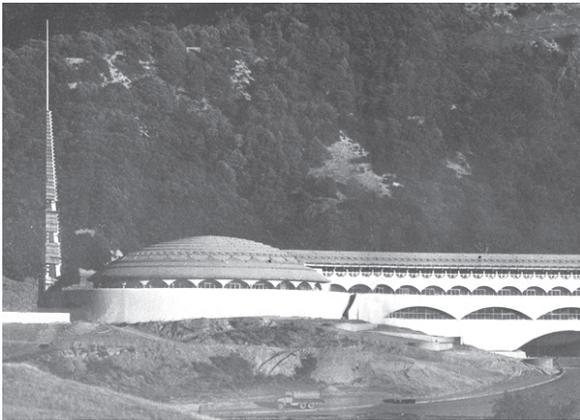
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT DESIGNED PROJECTS



V.C. Morris Building - 1948



Guggenheim Museum - 1959



Marin Civic Center -1970



Administration Building -1970

4.3 Building Guidelines

These building guidelines are intended to provide a standard for future development related to the character of the building in terms of its context, function and visual impact. They follow the intent set out in the Master Plan of 1972 –1990, the Historic Landmark Designation, the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties, and the Marin Civic Center Open Space Ordinance. They further build on the design principles set out by Frank Lloyd Wright.

These guidelines also suggest that all future development be designed sustainably. 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. Specific areas of interest are identified within the guidelines but do not represent the full extent of possible environmentally sensitive design practices.

CONTEXT

The distinguishing character of the Administration Building and Hall of Justice in bridging the hills, serve as a powerful reminder of Frank Lloyd Wright’s genius in relating building to site. The following guidelines attempt to capture this sensitivity in relating a building to its context. More specifically, they outline an approach toward development on the Civic Center campus in terms of siting, orientation, scale and height.

GUIDELINES

Siting

- **Integrate the building with the site by working with the topography to create an environment that allows the campus to be seen as a composite whole.**
- **Site the building to maintain a sense of open space throughout the campus while preserving as much contiguous outdoor space as possible.**
- **Where parking is necessary, it should be sited with sensitivity so as not to obscure the sense of open space or diminish the presence of the buildings.**

Orientation

- **Orient buildings, wherever possible, to create a clear line of sight toward the Civic Center spire - acknowledging it as the focal point for the Civic Center campus.**
- **Where it may be difficult to create a line of sight to the Civic Center spire, the building should nevertheless acknowledge the Civic Center as the center of the campus.**

- **Orient buildings, wherever possible, to conform to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards to maximize ecological design efficiency and minimize energy use.**

Scale

- **Scale buildings so as not to diminish the prominence of the Administration Building and Hall of Justice on the site.**
- **With respect to neighboring structures, scale buildings to avoid large-scale discrepancies.**

Building height

- **A new building should not be so tall as to overwhelm the Administration Building and Hall of Justice. The height of a new building (or portion of a building) will be determined by programmatic needs with the utmost care and sensitivity to its surroundings.**

FUNCTION

The principle aim of the Marin County Civic Center complex is to provide a place for governmental, cultural and recreational activities. To this end the buildings and site must function together to allow for ease of public use. The following guidelines provide recommendations toward organizing building functions. More specifically, it addresses issues concerning entry orientation, program placement and parking approach.

GUIDELINES

Entry orientation

- **Where possible, orient main building entries toward the arterial roadways of the site to promote circulation efficiency throughout the campus.**
- **The siting of the building takes precedence and should be carefully considered per the 'context' guidelines before undertaking the placement of entries.**
- **Main building entries should be clearly distinguished from the rest of the structure to ensure recognition and ease of access.**
- **Organize building entries to promote pedestrian circulation between buildings.**

Building usage

- **Buildings should promote public activity throughout the site.**
- **Public uses should be maintained on the ground level, wherever possible, to promote accessibility and street level activity.**
- **Less active functions such as administrative, educational,**

non-profit, or similar uses should be placed on the upper level wherever possible.

Parking approach

- **Parking should be on site and easily accessible, but should not obscure the site's sense of open space or diminish the presence of the buildings. Further discussion on parking lots is in Section 5, Landscape and Site Elements.**
- **All methods of sharing existing parking through parking management programs should be explored before pursuing the construction of parking structures.**
- **If required, parking structures should be lined with program space, dense landscaping, or a designed series of earth berms with plantings to conceal their appearance and use as a non-occupied building. The feasibility of underground parking structures, covered by landscaped park-like areas or new buildings, should be explored.**
- **Parking fields and parking structures should be designed to be environmentally sensitive, minimizing hardscape and built structures while maximizing open space.**

VISUAL IMPACT

Central to the Marin County Civic Center complex are the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Administration Building and Hall of Justice, which span three hills with their graceful arches. In overlooking the site from the top of these hills, these buildings evoke a civic presence across the landscape. The following recommendations prescribe an overall approach to the visual impact of buildings that respect Civic Center's preeminence. More specifically, it addresses issues concerning form, roof treatment, walls and openings, exterior walkways, materials, color and lighting.

GUIDELINES

Form

- **Use fewer forms to present a simpler and “quieter” effect to enhance the beauty of the surroundings.**
- **Long, low forms are preferred in accordance with Frank Lloyd Wright's design principles and the visual quality of the Administration Building and Hall of Justice.**
- **Do not use forms that visually challenge the topography but rather allow the building forms to be complementary to the landscape.**
- **Emphasize formal clarity of the building by maintaining a simple palette of materials.**

Roof treatment

- **Roof types that are larger, simpler, visually quiet, and formally cohesive are preferred.**

- Avoid roof types that appear smaller and visually busy, and might be interpreted as residential in scale.
- Roof types should be differentiated from the existing landmark buildings to avoid mimicry and to protect the historic integrity of the landmark buildings. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- Roof treatments should be visually integrated into the overall architectural concept.
- Incorporate the need for mechanical and electrical equipment into the building design to avoid placing such items onto the roof.
- Sustainability issues such as use of renewable energy and daylighting should be considered and incorporated into the design of the roof.

Walls and openings

- Treat exterior walls as light screens, wherever possible, to take advantage of natural daylight and views to provide building occupants a connection between the indoor spaces and the outdoors.
- Harmonize all necessary openings – doors, passages and windows – with good human-scaled proportions.
- Organize exterior wall openings to act singly or in a series, typically as light screens instead of solid walls.
- Exterior walls should not mimic the Administration Building and Hall of Justice, but may be sympathetic in its intent as a screen to modulate daylight. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- Buildings must respect any privacy issues with regard to nearby residential structures.
- Sustainability issues such as optimizing energy efficiency and use of daylighting should be considered and incorporated into the design of the exterior envelope.

Exterior walkways/arcades

- Exterior walkways and arcades should be of good human-scaled proportions and integrated with the buildings.
- If exterior walkways/arcades serve no functional and program purpose, as the Civic Center arcades do, do not integrate them so as to mimic, copy or degrade the landmark structure.
- An arcade does not require arch forms, which in itself may

be seen as mimicking. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Materials

- Eliminate the combination of different materials in favor of uniform materials as much as possible to emphasize hierarchy and clarity.
- Choose a simple material palette to express building continuity.
- Materials should convey a sense of substance and evoke a civic quality.
- Use natural, non-reflective materials where possible to complement the landscape.
- Sustainability issues such as recycled content and material origination should be considered in making material choices.

Color

- Building colors should not compete with or otherwise diminish the visual character of the Frank Lloyd Wright Administrative Building and Hall of Justice.
- Building colors should follow Frank Lloyd Wright's intent of relating the building to the landscape.
- Avoid bright colors so as not to clash with, compete with or otherwise diminish the existing landmark structures.

Lighting

- The overall feel of the open space, as a natural setting should be respected, with security and wayfinding/orientation lighting given precedence. Further information is included in Section 6, Landscape and Site Elements.
- Buildings should have visually restrained and elegant lighting, and should be designed to be compatible and complementary with the landmark structures.
- Exterior building lighting should be designed and shielded as necessary to avoid off-site lighting and night sky pollution.