

## LONG BEACH CIVIC CENTER

The Long Beach Civic Center has undergone numerous changes since the first city hall was established in 1899. Today, the civic center is composed of Lincoln Park, Long Beach City Hall, the Main Library, Long Beach County Courthouse, and the Long Beach Public Safety Building and Police Station. In 1973, the city commissioned a consortium of local firms called the Allied Architects, headed by Hugh and Donald Gibbs, to address the need for expanded and updated municipal facilities. The consortium recommended a new civic center, which would comprise a six-block redevelopment project, consolidate all city departments on a single site, and create a town square and center for community activity. Completed in 1977, the design of the civic center, and in particular the city hall tower, was innovative for its time. Current plans to redevelop the civic center are forcing a reexamination of the existing buildings and discussions about preservation of the recent past.

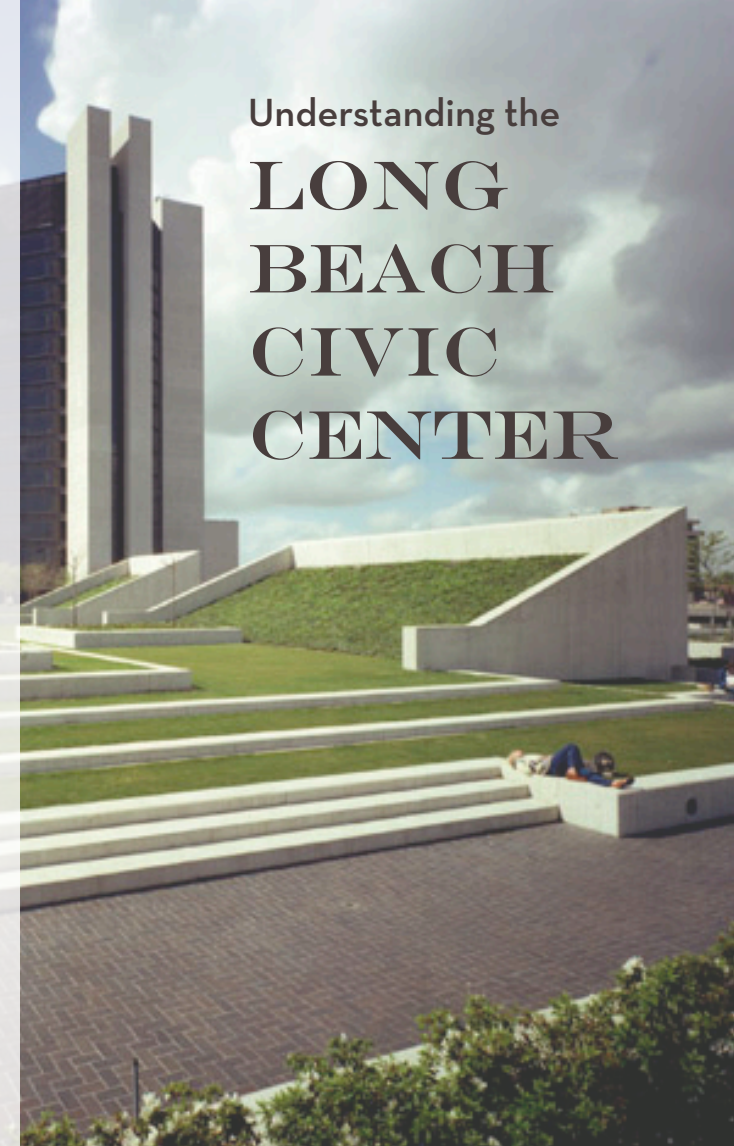
The Southern California Chapter of Docomomo/US invites you to take a self-guided tour of the civic center and other nearby sites designed by members of Allied Architects and explore these important examples of Late Modernism in Long Beach. Please note that the only interior space that will be accessible during the tour is the library, which is open to the public on Saturdays from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

About Docomomo\_US, Southern California Chapter (Docomomo/socal):

Docomomo/socal's mission is to increase awareness of, and celebrate the unique legacy of, Southern California's Modern Movement and its influences, through education, documentation, and advocacy. We partner with other local, regional, and statewide organizations and agencies to enhance understanding and appreciation of the area's diverse Modern resources.



*Photo: Wayne Thom, 1977*



## Understanding the LONG BEACH CIVIC CENTER

Lecture and  
Self-Guided Tour

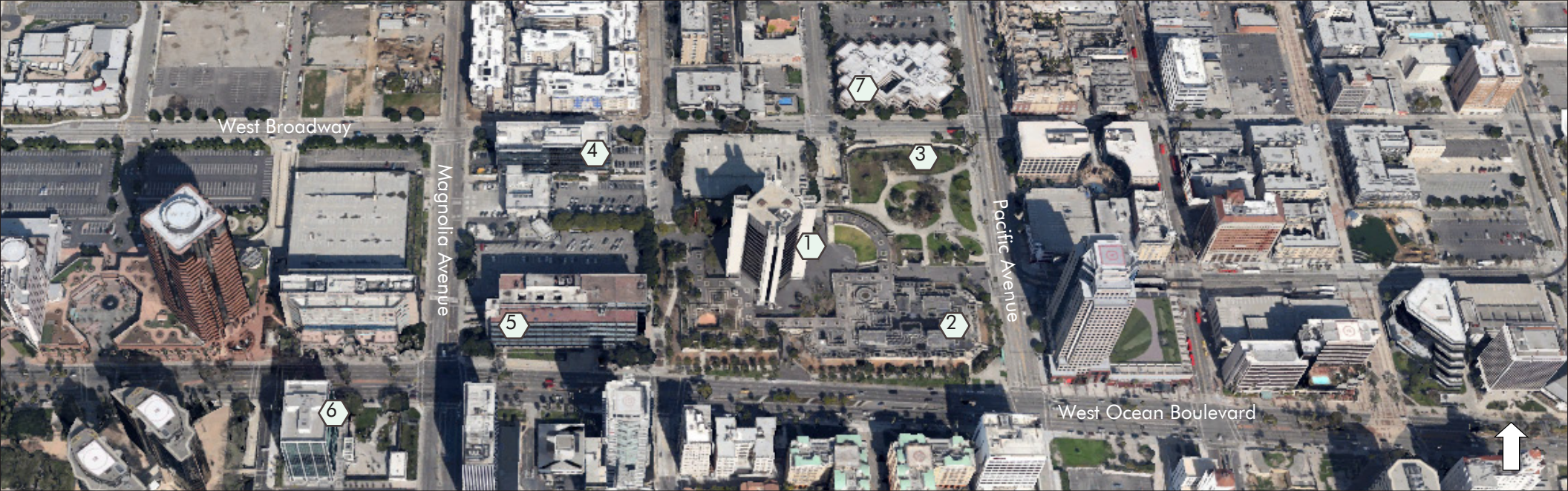
May 31, 2014

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AIA Long Beach/South Bay



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southern california chapter



**LONG BEACH CIVIC CENTER**

**1. City Hall**

333 West Ocean Boulevard

*Allied Architects (Gibbs & Gibbs, Architects; Homolka & Associates; Killingsworth, Brady & Associates; Kenneth S. Wing and Associates); Peter Walker, Landscape Architect*

The centerpiece of the civic center is the 15-story city hall, which is set into a landscaped plaza and consolidates all of the city departments into a central tower. The building is wrapped in glass and aluminum and supported by paired concrete piers at the corners. More public departments such as the city treasurer, city clerk, and utilities are accessed from the plaza level, while city offices for the city manager, mayor, and councilmembers are housed on the upper floors. The council chambers are on the plaza level, and are inverted with a glass viewing area visible to the public, a forward-thinking nod to transparency in local government.

**2. Main Library**

101 Pacific Avenue

*Allied Architects (Gibbs & Gibbs, Architects; Homolka & Associates; Killingsworth, Brady & Associates; Kenneth S. Wing and Associates); Peter Walker, Landscape Architect*

The main library was designed by Allied Architects as an integral component to the new civic center. In 1974, the city's Carnegie Library, completed in 1909 and located in Pacific Park (now Lincoln Park), was severely damaged

by fire. As part of the new civic center, a larger library replaced it in 1977. The new library was built with one story below grade and one story at grade level. The new library occupied most of the southern portion of Lincoln Park, and was originally designed with rooftop planters and grass berms above reinforced concrete walls in order to retain the park environment.

**3. Lincoln Park**

The 4.9 acre Lincoln Park is the oldest park in Long Beach. Originally known as Pacific Park, the park was dedicated in 1888 as part of the original town site of Long Beach on land donated by the Long Beach Land and Water Company. In 1907, a portion of the park was devoted to the construction of the city's main library, using funds donated by Andrew Carnegie. In 1915, the park was dedicated to the veterans of the Civil War, and a Civil War cannon and a statue of Abraham Lincoln were installed. In 1920, the park's name was officially changed to Lincoln Park. In 1964, a Japanese garden was added to the park as a tribute to the sister city of Long Beach, Yokkaichi, Japan. Lincoln Park is now part of the civic center.

**OTHER CIVIC CENTER BUILDINGS**

**4. Long Beach Public Safety Building and Police Station**  
400 West Broadway

Francis Heusel; Killingsworth, Brady & Smith; and Wing & Wing.  
1958-1960  
*Recently rehabilitated*

**5. Long Beach County Courthouse**

415 West Ocean Boulevard  
Francis Heusel and Kenneth S. Wing, Sr.  
1957-1960  
*Pending demolition*

**OTHER LATE MODERN BUILDINGS IN THE VICINITY OF THE CIVIC CENTER**

**6. Current home of Environ Architecture, Inc.**

100 Oceangate  
Killingsworth, Brady & Associates  
1969  
*Lecture site*

**7. California Veterans Memorial State Office Building**

254 W. Broadway  
Gibbs & Gibbs, with Kenneth Wing, Sr. & Jr.  
1983  
*Threatened with demolition*

Long Beach Convention Center (not on map)  
300 East Ocean Boulevard  
Architects Associated (Gibbs & Gibbs; Homolka & Associates; Killingsworth, Brady and Associates; Wing & Wing; Stanley V. Goldin; and Dwight E. Bennett.  
1976-78  
*Renovated in 1994*