

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Santa Monica Civic Auditorium

Other names/site number: Belmar Neighborhood Site

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 1855 Main Street

City or town: Santa Monica State: California CA County: Los Angeles 037

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D

<p>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	

<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____  <b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>Title :</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></span></p>	

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

BUILDING: Recreation and Culture: theater, auditorium, music facility, sports facility

SITE: Domestic: single dwellings, hotel

SITE: Commerce/Trade: specialty store, restaurant

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

BUILDING: VACANT/not in use

SITE: Recreation: sports facility: playing field

SITE: Education: school

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

BUILDING: MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

foundation: concrete, walls: concrete, glass, roof: composition

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium was built in the Mid-Century Modern phase of the International Style. It was completed in 1958 as the third part of Santa Monica's Civic Center, aligned on Main Street adjacent to City Hall (1939) and the Los Angeles County Courthouse (1951). The main façade faces northwest, with an imposing visual presence on the street. The T-shaped structure consists of a massive central auditorium with a tall gentle convex curving façade and two one-story rectilinear side wings on the southwest and northeast sides set back from the main volume. It consists of cast-in-place concrete and glass walls. The major architectural features of the façade are a geometric openwork brise-soleil curtain wall, an extended open canopy over the clear glass ground floor entrance, with six slender tapered pylons at the canopy edge rising 69-feet upwards. The side elevations best visible along Main Street are concave with angled parapets. The rear has a loading dock facing Pico Boulevard. Designed by master architect Welton Becket, an innovative modernist active in Los Angeles, this is a unique building in the City of Santa Monica and the only major work by this acclaimed architect in this city. The building is also significant for engineering innovations: a hydraulic floor that moves from flat to sloped, and state-of-the-art acoustical engineering including custom paneling in the auditorium interior. There have been some alterations to the site and setting for this building, but the Civic Auditorium itself retains a very high degree of original architectural integrity both on the exterior and in the interior.

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## **Narrative Description**

The Mid-Century Modern International Style Santa Monica Civic Auditorium is located at the southeast end of Santa Monica's Civic Center on an irregularly shaped, approximately eleven-acre lot at the corner of Main Street and Pico Boulevard. Its architectural period of significance is 1958, the year construction was completed. The Civic Auditorium's massive façade faces City Hall to the northwest and is aligned with the center line of Main Street. The view when approaching the Auditorium from the northwest along Main Street is a straight-ahead presentation of the structure and its signature primary façade, giving it a monumental presence within the Civic Center. This view of the historic façade from the public right of way is a character defining feature. The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium is a cast-in-place concrete building of approximately 70,000 square feet. The exterior concrete surfaces are painted white. The main floor, including the auditorium, lobby, community room and offices contains approximately 50,000 square feet. The Civic Auditorium is 80' tall to the top of the fly tower.

The structure features a massive central auditorium volume. Constructed of smooth-finished reinforced concrete, the auditorium volume is subtly embellished with vertical scoring at 2-foot intervals along its side elevations with scoring at 8-foot intervals at the rear. The concrete fly tower that rises from the auditorium roof near the rear of the structure has a flat finish. The auditorium volume as a whole has a parabolic shape that is most apparent when viewed from the side elevations which are convex with parapets that taper down to a point about midway along their length. The auditorium volume is capped by an arched, built-up bituminous roof. Simple, subordinate, auxiliary wings extend asymmetrically from each of the side elevations. The larger wing (East Wing) extending from the northeast elevation houses a community room and kitchen, and a much smaller wing closer to Main Street (West Wing) extending from the southwest elevation was built for management offices. They are single story, rectangular structures. The West Wing has a flat composition roof; the East Wing has a forward-facing, gently peaked composition roof.

The primary elevation (northwest) is dominated by six 69-foot-tall parabolic pylons spaced 28 feet apart. The tip of each pylon is fitted with six small lights lined up in two opposing rows of three. Originally, these pylons rested in a shallow concrete reflecting pool, which was removed shortly after completion and before 1961, and filled in with concrete, level with the adjacent pavement. The exact date of the removal is unknown. A metal safety railing along the edge of the pool was removed when the pool was filled in. Evidence of where the railing was cut away remains in the concrete today. The pylons rise from a support structure with organic Mid-Century Modern geometries from which a cantilevered canopy appears to hang. The canopy roof, which has a subtle peak over the center of the front walkway, makes contact with the building volume only in the center third of the façade, creating gaps between it and the façade on either end that allow sunlight to reach lush in-ground planters. The pylons, canopy, primary façade, and interior lobby spaces within all follow the same gentle convex curve. The canopy extends beyond the main façade several feet to the northeast, which together with an extension of its supportive structure, forms a welcoming pedestrian entryway from a driveway drop-off zone

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along the side. The cladding on the underside of the canopy, originally flat, painted plaster is non-original, white-painted sheet metal, and the original round recessed lights have been replaced with larger square lights. The façade of the main volume is dominated by a full-width-and-height glazed curtain wall comprised of gravel textured translucent glass panels in rectangular aluminum frames, which switches to an open clear glass window system across the ground floor beneath the canopy. A small number of the textured glass panes have been replaced with similar glass that does not match exactly. The curtain wall is screened by a concrete brise-soleil that terminates at the canopy and is comprised of staggered rectangular shapes that reflect a Mid-Century Modern aesthetic. The rectangular shapes are artistically finessed to be wider in the center and narrower near the edges of the façade, creating an optical illusion that emphasizes its convex curve and monumental scale. Two sets of glazed, metal double doors set into the exposed window system on the ground floor serve as front entries. An enlarged concession stand replaced an original box office between the entry doors during the 1990s. The original box office was flush with the front façade and included six clerk's windows. On the lobby side of the original box office were two recessed telephone booths and an employee entrance to the box office. The remodeled and enlarged concession stand is finished with square ceramic tiles on all sides.

The southwest elevation of the Civic Auditorium features a ground level clear glass window system ten feet in height continuous with the primary elevation, punctuated by two glazed metal entry doors that match those on the front of the building. Above the glass system is a scored concrete upper volume that is entirely solid above the first floor. Originally, the words "Civic Auditorium" appeared on the concrete wall above the side entry doors, but the lettering is no longer extant. Set back from the front of the structure facing a large patio, the small single-story West Wing protrudes from this elevation. The glass façade resumes along the front of this wing, which also features a glazed entry door. The original floor-to-ceiling windows on this volume have been altered to create a ticket office facing northwest with a solid wall on the lower half. The southwest elevation of the office wing features a row of seven metal-framed windows with original metal louvers on the outside to protect the interior from the heat of the afternoon sun. Two more of these windows appear on the southeast elevation. Some of these windows have been altered by the addition of air-conditioning units, which necessitated the removal of some of the louvers. Southeast of the West Wing along the southwest elevation of the auditorium is an emergency exit and a service entrance to the stage fronted by a shallow loading dock. The original loading doors are extant and three new doors have been added between them.

The northeast elevation of the Civic Auditorium consists of two sets of doors punctuating a clear glass window system continuous with the primary façade. Above the glass system is an uninterrupted, scored concrete upper volume. Originally, the words "Civic Auditorium" appeared on the concrete above the entry doors on this side as well. The lettering is no longer extant. Set back from the front of the structure facing a large patio, the single-story East Wing protrudes from this elevation. It is linked to the auditorium by an enclosed vestibule. This wing, which is larger than the West Wing, houses a community room, professional kitchen, and bathroom facilities. The clear glass window system resumes along most of the front (northwest façade) of this wing, punctuated by five single, glazed entry doors, shaded by a full width,

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rectangular canopy. The canopy is attached to the auditorium volume on the southwest end and supported by two narrow posts at the southeast end. A solid section of wall on this elevation is punctuated by double, glazed entry doors leading to the vestibule. The northeast elevation of the East Wing features a ribbon of floor-to-ceiling windows. At the southeast end of the elevation a solid wall is punctuated by a pair of double, glazed entry doors leading to a hallway with access to the kitchen and restroom area at the rear. On the roof of this volume, a metal louvered HVAC enclosure matches original louvers elsewhere on the structure. While these louvers are consistent with other louver treatments on the structure, it is unknown if they are original. The rear, southeast elevation of the East Wing is a solid wall. Just behind the East Wing at the rear of the auditorium volume, there is a single, solid backstage door.

The rear (southeast) elevation of the auditorium volume is dominated by a central, metal, industrial sliding door, providing access to backstage. On the upper portion of this elevation, the concrete structure, which is the only flat, rectangular elevation on the auditorium volume, features wider scoring than the sides that align with a row of windows near the roofline at the third story. The metal-framed hopper windows are covered with original metal louvers similar to those on the windows of the West Wing. The louvers at the northeast end of the elevation screen openings in a parapet wall that conceals HVAC. Below the open louvers on this elevation the words "Civic Auditorium" originally appeared but are no longer extant. Non-original storage buildings added in 1967 and 1972, obscure much of the rest of the ground level of the rear elevation, and a large electrical plant that powers an adjacent sports field built in 2015 intrudes on the landscaping.

The interior of the Civic Auditorium is accessed via a large public lobby consisting on three sides of 10-foot-tall windows that reach the floor, punctuated by several original single light glass entry doors previously described. The fourth wall, which leads deeper into the interior of the structure, follows the same convex curve as the façade and serves as a curved rear wall of the auditorium space beyond. Mounted on the center of this wall is a large bronze dedication plaque that reads, "Santa Monica Civic Auditorium provided by and dedicated to the people of Santa Monica, June 15, 1958," followed by the names of various local dignitaries. Six sets of solid double doors are set in this unpainted wood-paneled wall, providing access to the auditorium from the lobby, as well as restrooms and what was originally a coat check room and spaces for other staff functions. The doors are fitted with original semi-circular push-plates. The main lobby originally featured two circular snack bars, one at each end, which were removed in the 1990s but are documented in historic photographs and original plan documents. As noted, the original box office unit was enlarged to accommodate a single larger snack bar in the center of the north wall. The plaster ceilings fitted with acoustic tile and round recessed light fixtures in both lobbies are original to the structure. Six pendant light fixtures with glass globes originally hung over the circular snack bars in the main lobby but are no longer extant. Original open concrete and steel monumental stairs with unpainted hardwood railings and birch slat balusters are at both the southwest and northeast corners of the lobby. The concrete steps are finished with terrazzo treads. Mid-flight landings are supported by T-shaped structures that visually reference the canopy supports on the exterior of the structure. The stairs lead to an upper lobby lit during the day by natural light from the curtain wall and brise soleil. The upper lobby also follows the curve

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of the façade. A curved wood-paneled interior wall in the upper lobby is punctuated by original recessed swinging doors, providing access to the gallery seating of the auditorium and a stairway leading to projection booths on the third floor. The doors are fitted with semi-circular push-plates and pull-handles composed of spheres and cylinders, that appear to be custom designed. An original concession booth also stood against the interior wall of the upper lobby but has been removed, leaving an empty alcove. The original main and upper lobby flooring was replaced in 1997 by a commissioned terrazzo public art piece by Renee Petropoulos, entitled, *Two Hundred Movements and a View*.

At the rear of the auditorium, a gallery includes five sections of fixed seating separated by six stepped aisles accessed primarily from the upper lobby. Passageways (vomitoria) from the main floor pass underneath the aisles into the main lobby. An open concrete main floor can tilt using eight massive hydraulic pistons underneath to accommodate additional raked theater seating for concerts, or remain flat for exhibitions and other uses. The original hydraulic floor mechanism was still functional in 2013 when the building was mothballed. The floor slope can be adjusted from either the stage level or from the basement. An arched orchestra pit that can hold as many as 94 chairs is adjacent to the stage. It can be lowered below the audience level when needed and was also used as a lift to bring scenery and equipment from the basement storage below the stage. At the time of construction, the venue held a maximum of 2,750 seats. In later years the fixed seating was replaced with new units, increasing the maximum capacity to 3,000. When needed, portable folding chairs were used on the main floor, with heavy metal frames and thick padding. They were bound together in rows for stability.

There are no flat walls facing the stage in the auditorium. The curved rear wall at the back of the auditorium is clad custom-made perforated metal acoustical panels matching those around the side walls. The metal panels have endured many coats of paint that may inhibit their acoustic functionality. Each of the symmetrical metal-paneled side walls of the auditorium support seven original sconce light fixtures. Each fixture consists of a vertical rod with horizontal, cylindrical slotted metal shade attached to the top and to the bottom of the rod. These fixtures have been painted to match the walls. Near the stage, the upper portion of the side walls angle in towards the proscenium. A section of painted hardwood louvers immediately adjacent to the stage separates the proscenium from the metal acoustical panels. The proscenium extends across the full 65.5' of the south end of the auditorium and is 31.5' high. The painted plaster ceiling and the recessed light fixtures extant in the auditorium today are original. A large catwalk runs above most of the auditorium space and is accessed from backstage via a stairway. Backstage, original rigging and signage remain in place. Men's dressing rooms are located to the rear and right of stage right, and women's dressing rooms are on a second floor above them. The room layouts, showers, ceramic tiles (green for men, pink for women), and built-in fixtures are original. The original linoleum floor tiles in the dressing rooms have been replaced. The backstage of stage left is used for storage.

On the northeast wall of the auditorium is a large soundproof sliding door leading to a vestibule and a second soundproof sliding door leading into the East Wing community room. The doors are original to the structure. The community room, used for meetings, banquets, and as a

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pressroom can also be accessed from the exterior through glass doors previously described. By opening both interior sliding doors, the community room was designed to be incorporated into flat floor events taking place in the main structure. The two exterior walls of the community room are dominated by glass window systems. Floor and ceiling finishes are non-original, replaced in the 1990s. Restrooms (remodeled) and a large catering kitchen are located off the south wall via four interior doors. The kitchen retains original ceramic tiles, and certain original steel fixtures.

Internal access to the West Wing containing management offices is through a door backstage left. The West Wing features non-original cubicles. Flooring and lighting are non-original, but original ceiling tiles remain extant.

A basement is excavated under the tilting auditorium floor and underneath the stage area. Below the stage is a large storage area with small rooms at either end for maintenance, electrical, offices, and staff lockers. The orchestra pit, as noted, can be lowered to be flush with the basement floor, allowing it to also serve as a lift to bring set pieces or portable seating up to the main floor of the stage from the storage area. The orchestra lift is separated from the storage area and the area under the tilting floor by heavy locking doors. Below the tilting floor are gigantic hydraulic pistons that move the floor on an axis that is towards the rear of the auditorium allowing an approximately four-foot height differential overall with minimal change at the rear where an audience would enter the space. The floor sections connecting the lobby to the tilting floor are hinged so as the main floor tilts, a step is not created.

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium structure and its landscaped and pedestrian circulation areas fill about half of the 11-acre parcel. Features include lawn areas, planted beds, curbed sidewalks, and pathways. The centerline of the primary façade of the auditorium is aligned with the centerline of Main Street creating a significant view corridor to the structure from the public right of way. The façade of the Civic Auditorium is visible from the extreme northwestern edge of the Civic Center several blocks away because of its unusual siting relative to the roadway. A sidewalk still wraps around the perimeter of the landscaped area surrounding the structure as depicted in the original drawings, and nearly all of the original pathways remain extant. This perimeter begins on Pico Boulevard just northeast of the structure where a driveway entrance provides access to the lot for service vehicles and rear loading areas. The sidewalk continues southwest towards Main Street and turns north along Main Street following the southwestern edge of the parcel. Along Main Street there are three pedestrian paths onto the Civic Auditorium site that connect the sidewalk to the southwest side of the building. One leads to the stage door and loading dock area, one to the West Wing patio, and one leads to the walkway under the front canopy. These pathways appear on the original landscape plans and on aerial photographs taken soon after the Civic Auditorium was built. The Main Street sidewalk continues to a point about 90 feet beyond the auditorium to where a driveway enters the site. Here the sidewalk turns northeastward following the edge of the grassy lawn immediately in front of the auditorium and passing that, turns southeast to pass under the edge of the extended canopy where it meets a driveway and the East Wing patio. The east patio served as an important circulation hub and gathering place adjacent to parking, drop off and pick up, and the entrances to the

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community/banquet room and the venue. The sidewalk jogs around the patio and continues southeast, terminating just before the service vehicle access to the loading areas at the rear of the structure, where it began. Along the northeast side of the auditorium, two original pathways lead from the main sidewalk, one to an entry to the back corridor of the East Wing and one to a backstage talent entrance. The talent entrance remains extant as does part of the path that leads to it; the other part of the path is blocked by an electrical plant installed in 2015 to power lights on an adjacent City sports field. Vehicles, as noted, enter the site at Main Street and travel adjacent to the pedestrian route to a passenger drop off area at the grand entrance at the east end of the canopy where it reaches to the curb. After dropping off, cars were parked in the 900+ space lot adjoining to the northeast (currently a sports field) or exited onto Pico Boulevard.

A majority of original planted areas surrounding the Civic Auditorium within its pedestrian perimeter remain extant. There are no longer any beds along the rear elevation, in particular the area altered by the 2015 electrical plant, and an area at the rear, adjacent to the talent entrance where a storage addition was installed. Three altered but original square planter boxes are set into the concrete patio in front of the East Wing, remaining from what was a continuous row of planters that has been cut into pieces. A triangular planter area on the edge of the patio that appears in the landscape plans is not extant. On the patio in front of the West Wing, two rectangular planters that separated public lobby activity from the administration building are no longer extant. The original landscape palette for the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium was dominated by exotic plants including palms, carob trees, eucalyptus, and giant bird of paradise. Some original trees remain on the site, including two clusters of pygmy date palms at each end of the front canopy, which are listed as character-defining features in the local landmarks designation. Smaller ornamental understory plants have been replaced. Most lawn areas remain extant with the notable exception of the large garden bed at the corner of Main Street and Pico Boulevard which has been replanted with a low-water-use landscape. The main driveway for passenger drop-off and access to the public parking lot that served auditorium remains in its original location, but the parking lot itself has been replaced with a sports field. (See Figure C)

### Integrity Analysis

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium retains a very high degree of physical historic integrity. It has integrity of location because it has not been moved since the time of its construction leaving its historic association with its site intact. It retains a high degree of integrity of design on the exterior because only a few minor alterations have occurred. The most significant of those include the removal of the ornamental pond (almost immediately after construction), the loss of original signage, and the enlargement of the box office. It retains a high degree of integrity of design on the interior because alterations that have occurred have not impacted the organization of space, proportion, scale, composition, openings, or materials that comprise the original design. And special custom features of the design including the perforated metal acoustical panels and the auditorium light fixtures remain extant. The most significant interior alterations include removal of lobby snack bars and alteration to the original box office, loss of pendant light fixtures in the lobby, replacement of the lobby floor, and replacement of seating in the gallery. The Civic Auditorium retains a moderate degree of integrity of setting. While the overall

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landscape and site plan remain largely extant, including location of lawns, planting beds, circulation routes, and other hardscape, most of the original decorative plant material has been replaced, and what was a large adjacent surface parking lot is now occupied by a sports field and a childcare center. The Civic Auditorium retains a high degree of integrity of materials and workmanship because so few alterations were made to the resource, allowing it to retain nearly all of its original features. And finally, the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium retains a high degree of integrity of feeling and association because all of its extant historic features, when taken together, fully express the original Mid-Century Modern design intention of master architect Welton Becket and landscape architect Ruth Patricia Shellhorn as established during its Period of Significance of 1958.

The Belmar Neighborhood Site, formerly filled with homes and businesses of Santa Monica African Americans, includes the Civic Auditorium, its pathways, driveways, garden beds, and surface parking lot. Remaining areas on the irregular wedge-shaped parcel were used to as parking for the adjacent County Courthouse. The historical context of the site revolves around a narrative of demolition and erasure, which is highly significant to the history of African Americans at the local level and also exemplifies implementation of Urban Renewal projects that took place nationwide. It is important but difficult to recognize stories about the absence of historic fabric, but in this case it can be done by recognizing this history as part of the Civic Auditorium that replaced the neighborhood. Integrity, the ability of a historic resource to convey its significance, typically focuses on extant character-defining features and their expression within their context. In this case, we only have context. The story is told by the discrete site, and the monumental civic recreational facility that replaced the homes and businesses of Belmar and has since attained its own significance both for architectural features and for its notable impact on the reputation of the city. To conscientiously recognize the highly significant Civic Auditorium, acknowledgment of the erasure of the Belmar Neighborhood is critical to telling a complete American story. The integrity of location of the Belmar Neighborhood Site, which is all that remains of it, is intact in that the irregular, wedge-shaped parcel at the southeast end of the city's Civic Center remains visible and discernable and has not been divided and combined with adjacent areas.

### Character-Defining Features

#### *Exterior*

- parabolic massing with irregularly shaped parapet
- scored concrete exterior finish
- curtain wall of textured glass and concrete brise soleil
- parabolic pylons, canopy support, and canopy (underside materials of canopy altered)
- original glass and aluminum doors and floor to ceiling ground floor window systems on auditorium and East Wing.
- smooth concrete fly tower
- louvered window coverings on West Wing and rear of fly tower (some slats missing West Wing)

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- loading dock
- configuration of east and west patios including extant planters, and connections between wings and auditorium lobby
- canopy over entryways to east wing
- bronze dedication plaque listing the names of city officials

*Interior*

- upper and lower lobby volume and configuration with curved north and south walls (shape, height, feeling, rhythm, circulation pattern)
- concrete and steel staircases at either end of lobby with wood handrail and balusters and T-shaped supports
- wood paneling in lobby
- bronze dedication plaque
- swinging doors and hardware leading to auditorium from upper and lower lobbies
- original plaster ceilings with acoustic tile and recessed lighting in lobby
- auditorium volume and configuration including raked fixed seating configuration (excluding non-original seats), vomitoria and angled walls
- proscenium and stage area
- tilting main floor operated by hydraulic pistons and moveable orchestra pit
- original metal acoustical panels, sconce light fixtures, and louvered wood wall sections
- painted plaster ceiling with recessed lighting
- catwalks, backstage rigging, and signage on east wall backstage
- dressing room casework
- backstage oak phone booth with a glazed folding door (telephone removed) installed by Wavell Showcase and Fixture Co., Long Beach California
- pair of soundproof sliding doors providing passage between auditorium and East Wing

*Site*

- viewshed corridor towards civic façade from Main Street
- original pedestrian pathways and pattern of planting beds between and around them
- loading area adjacent to loading dock
- mature trees extant from the period of significance 1958-1960, including but not limited to pygmy date palms (*Phoenix roebelenii*) called out in local landmark designation
- grassy front setback
- automobile drop-off area adjacent to canopy and east patio
- irregular, wedge-shaped Belmar Neighborhood Site

Altered or Removed Features

*Exterior*

- reflecting pool and railing removed
- underside of canopy finishes and light fixtures replaced

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- box office enlarged, altered finishes
- wall signs (x3) removed
- West Wing windows altered by infill or AC units
- selected louvers missing from West Wing windows
- doorways added at loading dock
- storage additions added to rear (southeast) elevation
- selected panes in curtain wall repaired with slightly mismatched textured glass

*Interior*

- pair of round concession stands removed
- lobby pendant lights removed
- upper and lower lobby floors replaced with terrazzo artwork
- gallery seating replaced
- dressing room flooring replaced
- interior West Wing all replaced except for ceiling finishes
- flooring and ceiling finished East Wing replaced
- kitchen fixtures replaced

*Site*

- exotic ornamental plant material replaced
- two rear planting beds rear east corner replaced by a storage unit and an electrical utility
- surface parking reconfigured, most was replaced with a sports field and a childcare center

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

BUILDING: Architecture (Criterion C)

BUILDING: Performing Arts (Criterion A)

BUILDING: Entertainment/Recreation (Criterion A)

SITE: Ethnic Heritage/Black (Criterion A)

SITE: Community Planning and Development (Criterion A)

**Period of Significance**

SITE: Belmar Neighborhood: 1908-1952

BUILDING: Architecture: 1958

BUILDING: Cultural: 1958-1968

**Significant Dates**

1908 – Phillips Chapel, triggered move of first African American residents to Belmar

1952 – Belmar Neighborhood vacated through use of Eminent Domain

1958 – Construction of Santa Monica Civic Auditorium complete

1968 – Last year of Academy Awards at the Civic Auditorium

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

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**Architect/Builder**

Architect: Welton Becket and Associates

Contractor: C.L. Peck Construction & Realty, Millie & Severson

Acoustic Consultant: Vern O. Knudsen

Landscape Architect: Ruth Patricia Shellhorn

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Belmar Neighborhood Site meets National Register Criterion A for its association with Urban Renewal practices that created patterns of racial segregation in cities across the United States and in Santa Monica in particular. The Belmar Neighborhood was a strong, vibrant, and resilient African American community of homes and businesses that endured several decades of failed eviction efforts. It finally succumbed to an Urban Renewal project which cleared the site using eminent domain to make way for the construction of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. Because of past failed efforts, clearing of Belmar became the first use of Urban Renewal eminent domain powers in Santa Monica. The evictions at Belmar were the beginning of a series of eminent domain proceedings in the city targeting areas where non-white and immigrant populations lived. As a result of these events in the City of Santa Monica, extreme racial and economic segregation occurred that still marks the city's landscape today. The period of Significance under this Criterion is 1908-1952.

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium structure also qualifies under National Register Criterion A as an aspirational structure built by well-known master architect Welton Becket in 1958. It was part of an effort to elevate Santa Monica's reputation as a sophisticated cultural center rather than a remote, suburban beach community. Because it was new, elegant, and the largest venue in the region at the time, the Academy Awards were broadcast into millions of homes from there from 1961-1968, during which the Civic Auditorium became a nationally recognized locale. The well-known annual pre-Oscars Red Carpet event began at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium as a result of particular aspects of the building setting that allowed for the introduction of bleachers for thousands of fans and paparazzi and a wide area through which stars could make dramatic entrances. As a result of the Civic Auditorium's established television broadcast capabilities, the first ever Rock and Roll documentary, the *T.A.M.I. Show* was filmed there in 1964. The Hollywood connection at the Civic Auditorium resulted in a number of events related to the Civil Rights Movement, in particular, two *Stars for Freedom* fundraisers hosted by top-drawer performers using their notoriety to draw support and funding for Martin Luther King Jr. and other Civil Rights leaders. Through the 1960s, as surf culture evolved, the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, as a unique, large, multi-purpose venue located in proximity to the beach and surfers, began booking surf conventions, surf-rock performers, and surfing films. It was there that Bruce Brown's iconic film, *Endless Summer* premiered to sold-out audiences, leading to broad popularity that brought surf culture fantasies to land-locked teens all over the United

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States, with far-reaching impact on teen culture. The period of significance under this criterion is 1958-1968.

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium meets National Register Criterion C because it is an exemplary example of the Mid-Century Modern phase of the International Style and retains a very high degree of architectural integrity. Its full façade glass curtain wall and brise soleil, fronted by a dramatic canopy from which six towering hyperbolic pylons soar, manifests Mid-Century Modern architecture. It was designed by master architect Welton David Becket, who created many buildings that stand as unique icons in Los Angeles including the Capitol Records Building and the Los Angeles Music Center and helped form the architectural identity of the City of Los Angeles in the Mid-Century era. The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium is the only major work of Becket in the City of Santa Monica. Welton Becket's iconic Mid-Century Modern architectural design achievement in the Civic Auditorium is matched internally by its unique engineering and landmark use of hydraulic technology that could adapt an assembly space to accommodate a vast variety of stage performances, athletic events, and exhibitions. The pioneering acoustical consultant Vern O. Knudsen was responsible for the design and engineering of the auditorium's state-of-the-art acoustics. Ruth Patricia Shellhorn, creator of "Southern California look" in mid-century landscape design, including the still-extant design of Disneyland in Anaheim, California, was the landscape architect for the Civic Auditorium. The period of significance under this criterion is 1958.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **The Belmar Neighborhood**

The Belmar Neighborhood was located on an 11-acre irregular wedge-shaped parcel on the northeast side of Pico Boulevard in Santa Monica California, between Main and Fourth Streets. In 1908, with fewer than two dozen African American households in Santa Monica, a core group of them purchased a fire-damaged schoolhouse and moved it to a parcel at Fourth and Bay Streets just south of Belmar, to make it their church. The Colored Methodist Episcopal Church they established was named Phillips Chapel, which is a designated Santa Monica Landmark.<sup>1</sup> Santa Monica's African American population immediately began to migrate south from downtown Santa Monica where it had been focused, to be closer to the church, many families finding homes in Belmar.<sup>2</sup> The 1910 United States Census shows 90% of all African Americans in Santa Monica living in Belmar and vicinity. Several of them owned homes. Unlike Santa Monica's residential neighborhoods elsewhere in town, Belmar included commercial and industrial uses among the homes; for example, a lumber planing mill and cabinet shop on Fourth

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<sup>1</sup> *Colored People Want a Church*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, March 2, 1908, *Want to Sell a Little Old School House*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, July 22, 1908, *Colored Bishop to Preach in Little Church Monday*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, August 28, 1908, *Will be Great Day for Negro Church*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, March 2, 1908  
<sup>2</sup> *Santa Monica, California*, United States Census, 1910

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Street.<sup>3</sup> The planing mill lot and two adjacent parcels along Fourth Street were purchased by Manuel Lee Murrell in the 1920s. Murrell was the first African American postal worker in Santa Monica, and a leader in the community.<sup>4</sup> Over the next few decades, Murrell's Belmar tenants included a barber shop, several different beauty parlors, a phonograph record store, an auto repair shop, a clothing store, and several residential renters. In the late 1930s some of his land was leased to the City of Santa Monica for a Police Garage.<sup>5</sup>

In 1912, Helen Warren, a college-educated Black woman living in Los Angeles began purchasing lots in Belmar.<sup>6</sup> Warren's compound called La Bonita Bathhouse and Apartments spanned four parcels with 200 feet of street frontage.<sup>7</sup> La Bonita welcomed day-tripping and vacationing African Americans to its rooms and apartments for long or short stays, and provided bathing suits and showers.<sup>8</sup> There was a great demand for bathhouse facilities and accommodations for surf-bathing African Americans who were not permitted to use the whites-only facilities in the area.<sup>9</sup> A short walk due west of La Bonita led to a strip of Santa Monica beach that was accessible to African Americans near the foot of Pico Boulevard. (This area is listed on the National Register as Bay Street Beach Historic District).

In the years following the establishment of Phillips Chapel, the Black community in and around Belmar grew. Barber-by-trade George Caldwell purchased a triangular parcel in Belmar to open a Jazz Club.<sup>10</sup> On June 20, 1920, a front-page headline in the *Santa Monica Outlook* read, *Race Colony Problem Before Santa Monica*. The "problem" was that the racist city council could not come up with a defensible legal reason to deny Caldwell's request for a building permit. Amid a crowd of white protestors, a building permit was approved for a \$3000 structure, but no use permit to operate the requested dance hall was issued. After the hearing, Caldwell remarked on the obvious racial prejudice of the city council and noted the great need for recreation and amusement uses for African Americans who were not allowed in white-owned establishments. And then he added that the lack of a dance hall permit did not preclude private parties.<sup>11</sup> Caldwell produced "private fundraisers" and "club events" featuring popular musical performers, and drew robust crowds, all without technically violating Santa Monica code.<sup>12</sup> But the Ku Klux Klan, newly resurfacing nationwide including in Los Angeles County, began circulating leaflets

<sup>3</sup> *Pacific Planing Mill a Success*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, October 14, 1905, *City of Santa Monica Permit Ledger*, Book 1, 1903-1914, City of Santa Monica Office of the City Clerk, *19 years ago in Santa Monica*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, January 6, 1916

<sup>4</sup> *Richard Murrell*, United States Census, Marion County, Kentucky, 1900, 1910, 1920, www.ancestry.com, (untitled), *Manuel Murrell*, United States Census, Santa Monica, California, 1930, www.ancestry.com, *Manuel Murrell*, Santa Monica City Directories, 1921, 1923, www.ancestry.com, *Reconstruction and Reclamation: The Erased African American Experience in Santa Monica's History*, by Alison Rose Jefferson, City of Santa Monica Department of Cultural Affairs, Belmar + Art, 2020

<sup>5</sup> *1700-1716 (even) Fourth Street*, City of Santa Monica Permit Records, 1926-1994, www.publicdocs.smgov, Santa Monica City Directories, 1927-1960, www.ancestry.com

<sup>6</sup> *The Negro Woman in Los Angeles and Vicinity—Some Notable Characters*, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, February 12, 1909, *Venice Santa Monica*, California Eagle, Los Angeles, California, August 1, 1914

<sup>7</sup> *Index to Register of Voters*, Los Angeles City Precinct No. 164, Los Angeles County, California, 1914, www.ancestry.com

<sup>8</sup> *A General Good Health*, California Eagle, Los Angeles California, June 26, 1915

<sup>9</sup> *Venice – Ocean Park – Santa Monica*, California Eagle, Los Angeles California, May 23, 1914, *Venice – Santa Monica*, California Eagle, Los Angeles California, August 1, 1914, *Living the California Dream, African American Leisure Sites in the Jim Crow Era*, by Alison Rose Jefferson, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska, 2020

<sup>10</sup> *Santa Monica City Directory*, 1921, www.ancestry.com, Santa Monica, California, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1918

<sup>11</sup> *Race Colony Problem Before Santa Monica*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, June 30, 1920

<sup>12</sup> M.T. Laws Honored with Birthday Party Sunday, April 2, At Caldwell's Recreation Garden, Santa Monica, California Eagle, Los Angeles, California, April 15, 1922

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that stated otherwise, and accusing Caldwell's of being a public nuisance.<sup>13</sup> Tensions came to a head when the Santa Monica Protective League was formed. The league of racist Caucasians listed among its members many of the city's most prominent businessmen. They succeeded in shutting down Caldwell's by pushing City Council to pass zoning that forbade dancing altogether in Belmar. The next move of the Protective League – to clear Belmar of African Americans – was going to take several more decades.

In 1911, realtor, landowner, promoter, a soon-to-be president of the Protective League Carl Schader proposed that Santa Monica establish a Civic Center in the area bounded by Ocean Avenue, Pico Boulevard, Fourth Street, and the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, in other words, the Belmar Neighborhood plus a neighboring vacant lot called No Man's Land (see Figure B). He pitched the Civic Center as a place where all the city's public buildings, offices, and services could be centrally located amid public parks. Schader was not a city government decision maker, but as a favorite of the *Santa Monica Outlook* editorial board, his ideas and positions were frequently published affording him wide influence.<sup>14</sup> In 1920, the idea of a Civic Center was advanced again by the brand-new Chamber of Commerce, with Schader an active and founding member.<sup>15</sup> The Civic Center was promoted this time as a way to unify the north and south sides of the city which had always had ideological differences in addition to a geographical divide, but a dismissive reference to the homes in Belmar telegraphed an underlying motive to clear the area of its racially integrated residents.<sup>16</sup> As president of the Planning Commission in 1928, Schader revived the Civic Center idea again with a proposal for a design contest for concepts for a Civic Center Master Plan, but the Great Depression put a stop to expensive planning initiatives.<sup>17</sup> Schader died in 1934, but his Civic Center idea lived on.<sup>18</sup> By 1937, an application for a PWA grant for a new City Hall on ten acres of No Man's Land was filed. A new City Hall built by architects Donald Parkinson and Joseph Estep was dedicated in 1939. (Santa Monica City Hall is a Designated City Landmark.)<sup>19</sup> In 1951, a Los Angeles County Courthouse designed by architects Frederick Barienbrock and Robert Kliegman was added to the Civic Center.<sup>20</sup> By this time, plans were underway for the city to use federal Urban Renewal funding to purchase the Belmar portion of the Bandini Tract through eminent domain.

During the Great Depression, owners of homes in poor condition could be eligible for government grants for repair or replacement through the Federal Housing Authority, but only Caucasian applicants living in Caucasian-only districts qualified. Without access to financing due to the increasingly African American population in Belmar, many cottages fell into

<sup>13</sup> (untitled), California Eagle, Los Angeles, California, June 3, 1922

<sup>14</sup> *Santa Monica's Civic Center Idea Catchy*, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, August 13, 1911

<sup>15</sup> *Recommends Purchase P.E.-S.P. Lands for Big Park*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, October 19, 1920

<sup>16</sup> *Park and Sands Will Unite Us*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, November 6, 1920, *Uncork the Bottle and Let the City Grow*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, October 25, 1922, *Magnificent Stadium Plan for Santa Monica*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, October 26, 1922

<sup>17</sup> *Planning Commissioner Proposes Civic Center, New City Hall, New Police, Fire Station and Parkway*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, January 10, 1928

<sup>18</sup> *Carl F. Schader Dies in Accident*, Arizona Daily Star, Phoenix Arizona, March 9, 1934, *Carl Schader Dies in Crash*, Arizona Republic, Phoenix Arizona, March 9, 1934, *Carl Schader Dies in Crash*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, March 9, 1934

<sup>19</sup> *Civic Center Plan Submitted to Council*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, January 6, 1937, *Santa Monica City Hall, Historic Structure Report, Vol I*, Historic Resources Group, LLC, April 10, 2003

<sup>20</sup> *Site for Proposed County Building*, Inter-Department Memo, R.M. Dorton, City Manager to City Council, Santa Monica City Clerk Archives, October 11, 1948

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disrepair.<sup>21</sup> One Chamber of Commerce committee chairman referred to the section as a “classic example” of Santa Monica’s “foulest eyesores to be met with anywhere at all.” The Chamber promoted the setting up of a Housing Authority in Santa Monica so the city could begin “slum clearance.”<sup>22</sup> When the Federal Housing Act of 1949 was passed, conditions had deteriorated in Belmar and vicinity, making the sections qualify for Urban Renewal. According to the rules for federal grants, areas a city took through condemnation had to be used for a public purpose. Legal precedents did not allow cities to take land from private individuals and give it to other private individuals in the form of new housing. Santa Monica determined that a civic auditorium on the 11-acre Belmar triangle “would be a valuable asset to the community, and that it would attract large events and conventions, and in turn new residents and new housing development.”<sup>23</sup> A required housing assistance program, essentially a phone line where housing advice was offered, directed displaced Belmar residents, including Black and Mexican renters, towards already racially segregated areas in the city. N.A.A.C.P. attorneys, anticipating this deepening of segregation through Urban Renewal, began to campaign for anti-discrimination provisions related to redevelopment but were not successful. Only a small section with Black residents near Belmar that is immediately surrounding Phillips Chapel escaped the Urban Renewal bulldozers.

The site of the former Belmar Neighborhood qualifies for National Register listing under Criterion A as the location of an established African American neighborhood where homes and businesses once thrived but were pushed out using federally sponsored Urban Renewal tools that removed low-income people and people of color from one area to another area that was racially and economically segregated from the rest of the city. In a typical example of this practice, a public recreational facility was built on the site. The boundaries of the Belmar Neighborhood remain visible and apparent. Its Period of Significance is 1908-1952.

### **The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium**

Construction of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium was funded by a 1954 bond that passed with overwhelming support in Santa Monica 20,829 votes in favor to 4,190 against.<sup>24</sup> The City had hired Santa Monica architect Frederic Barienbrock, who had just built the adjacent County Courthouse and an academic building for Santa Monica High School, to draw up schematic plans. When it was time to move forward with design drawings, Santa Monica City Manager Randall M. Dorton recommended that Barienbrock’s contract not be renewed and that the city hire Welton Becket and Associates instead because, “the best interest of the city will be served by the employment of an architectural firm from among the largest and best on the Pacific coast for this undertaking.” He made this recommendation in spite of the \$34,000-premium it would

<sup>21</sup> *Poor Housing Ills Surveyed*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, May 11, 1934, *Housing Plans to be Studied*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, May 17, 1934, *SERA Workers to List Needed Repairs in Housing Program*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, September 24, 1934, *The Color of Law*, by Richard Rothstein, Liverwright Publishing Company, New York, London, 2017

<sup>22</sup> *No Help for Them*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, October 9, 1937, *Chamber Favors Plan to Put Junior College in No Man’s Land*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, May 3, 1938, *Here’s What the Chamber of Commerce Means*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, May 5, 1938, *Keeping Up with the Law*, Santa Monica Outlook, Santa Monica, California, September 20, 1938

<sup>23</sup> *Civic Auditorium Cost Estimate*, Inter-Department Memo, L.S. Storrs, Zoning Administrator to City Council, Santa Monica City Clerk Archives, May 2, 1949

<sup>24</sup> *Ultramodern Auditorium on Santa Monica Ballot*, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, October 18, 1954, *Santa Monica City Auditorium Bond Proposition U*, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles California, November 4, 1954

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cost the city.<sup>25</sup> In December 1955, Welton Beckett and Associates was granted the contract. It was the peak of Beckett's career, just as he was completing the Capitol Records Building and a refurbishment of the Hollywood Bowl. Master sound engineer and scientist Dr. Vern O. Knudsen, who engineered the acoustics at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, also worked on the acoustics for the Hollywood Bowl during the Beckett project and for decades before and afterwards.<sup>26</sup>

Randall M. Dorton was Santa Monica's first City Manager under the 1947 City Charter that established a manager-council form of government to replace the old commissioner form, which had proved to be rampantly corrupt. Dorton was hoping to lead Santa Monica into a new era of post-WWII prosperity, which not only meant clearing "slums," but replacing them with new institutions that would enhance the city's reputation and economic outlook. Dorton oversaw the development of Santa Monica's first Master Plan document, which was developed concurrently with the construction of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. The plan envisioned a modern Santa Monica with new industries, high-rise hotels, and a new freeway through the center of the city. The Civic Center would serve as the "heart of the town" and serve as a "symbol of the city and its people." Dorton began work on a series of Urban Renewal Projects, beginning with the long-controversial Belmar Neighborhood, which would complete the oft-discussed Civic Center. Having secured a County Courthouse, which elevated the city in a regional context, the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium was to be the crowning jewel. It was sited at the southwest end of the Civic Center and aligned with the center of Main Street, which bisected the area, so its monumental façade would be visible all the way to the edge of downtown. And Dorton had hired a premium architectural firm to do the work.<sup>27</sup>

The multi-purpose Civic Auditorium was officially inaugurated on June 15, 1958, with a ceremony featuring the Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra. The first-floor event advertised was a kitchen appliance show called "Parade of Progress." Several conventions were signed up including one for the local chapter of the Society for the Preservation of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, and the Association for American Geographers. There was also a short run of a play starring Tyrone Power, an appearance by the Harlem Globetrotters, and a benefit for Santa Monica High School featuring locals Lawrence Welk and the Lennon Sisters.<sup>28</sup> In 1959, performances by Dave Brubeck and Ella Fitzgerald began a cavalcade of notable artists to make appearances at the Civic. There were also political rallies, theatrical and musical productions, ballets, operas, and symphonic performances.<sup>29</sup> In 1960, the Civic booked acts including Andre Segovia, Mahalia Jackson, Nat King Cole, and Duke Ellington. Andre Previn performed on

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<sup>25</sup> *Inter-departmental Memo: Recommendation for Employment of an Architectural-Engineering Firm in Designing the Proposed Civic Auditorium*, Randall M. Dorton, City Manager to City Council, Archives of the Santa Monica City Clerk, December 9, 1955

<sup>26</sup> *Auditorium Architects Get Contract*, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, December 24, 1955, *Up in Knudsen's Attic: Some Private Papers of Vern O. Knudsen*, by Neil A Shaw, Acoustics Today Magazine, January 2011, *Ella Fitzgerald to Appear at the Santa Monica Civic*, Pasadena Independent, Pasadena, California, December 4, 1959

<sup>27</sup> Dorton First Santa Monica City Manager, Daily News, Los Angeles, California, April 30, 1947, *Inter-departmental Memo: Site for Proposed County Building*, Randall M. Dorton, City Manager to City Council, Archives of the Santa Monica City Clerk, October 11, 1948, *The Master Plan Report*, Archives of the Santa Monica City Clerk, adopted February 11, 1957

<sup>28</sup> *Musical, Dramatic Events to Open Santa Monica Civic Auditorium*, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, April 27, 1958, *Prizes Readied for 'Parade'*, The Roberts News, Pacific Palisades, California, June 19, 1958, *Housewives Compete in Homemaker Contest*, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, September 14, 1958, *Sisters to Appear at Benefit*, Evening Vanguard, Venice California, November 15, 1958

<sup>29</sup> *Telephone Firm Celebrates Millionth Mark* Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, May 8, 1959

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piano and comedian Mort Sahl was also on the schedule. In November the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium finally lived up to its potential when it was announced that the 33rd Academy Awards Ceremony would be produced there.<sup>30</sup>

The growing Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences membership had outgrown the Pantages Theater in Hollywood which had been hosting the awards ceremony. According to their quarterly newsletter, "[a]n Academy committee investigated all possible locations in the Los Angeles area in which to stage the Awards Program. It decided that the Civic Auditorium was the only location which offered adequate seating capacity and press, parking and staging facilities." A five-year contract was drawn up that year for broadcast rights with the ABC television network, and a robust marketing campaign reaching 22 million homes was devised to promote the event.<sup>31</sup> The controversial decision to move the program from glittering Hollywood to the sleepy, unknown suburb of Santa Monica, brought peals of complaints down on the Academy, but "reporters were almost unanimous in their praise the night of the affair," which enjoyed 100 million viewers.<sup>32</sup> In addition to more seating, the Civic Auditorium provided state-of-the-art electrical equipment, excellent acoustics, ample parking, and a press room in the East Wing where the winners could be photographed with their trophies. But particular to Shellhorn's park-like design for the Civic Center setting was its front lawn that set the front canopy back from the driveway some 90 feet, providing a long approach into the venue. By this time the ornamental pond from which the soaring pylons out front originally arose had been cemented in. The exact date of the removal of the pond cannot be confirmed, but it is conceivable that the ambitious booking team chose to make that alteration in order to close the deal with the Academy. Without the pond and its associated railing, streams of glittering stars could exit their vehicles and parade into the venue under the watchful eyes of fans, paparazzi, and television cameras. Bleachers that sat more than 1000 fans lined the route, with many hundreds more crowding the ropes to glimpse their favorite actors. Seats were filling up as early as 5:00 am the day of the event. In order to dress up the plywood flooring laid out over the grassy lawn, the event director installed 300 feet of red carpeting that began at the curb out in front of the venue, crossed the lawn in front of the bleachers, passed through the lobby and was carried down the aisles to the stage. Thanks to the approval of the cheering crowds on site and the rapt viewers at home, the pre-Oscars red carpet event became an institution.<sup>33</sup> The morning after the 33rd Academy Awards in 1961, *the Los Angeles Citizen News* published a 32-page illustrated insert about the award show, one page of which was dedicated to the novel tilting floor and the man who operated it, who boasted of its magnificent pistons and their 150,000-pound capacity.<sup>34</sup> Dorton succeeded in making the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium a widely known and admired venue, and a symbol of a vibrant, modern Santa Monica, inspiring copycat venues to spring up. For example, the 2500-seat Bibletown Ministries Auditorium in Boca Raton, Florida, mimicked

<sup>30</sup> *Beach City Hall Gets Oscar Show*, Los Angeles Mirror, Los Angeles, California, November 7, 1960

<sup>31</sup> *Academy Report to the Members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences*, Vol 5, No 3, Hollywood, California, November 1960, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

<sup>32</sup> *Academy Report to the Members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences*, Vol 6, No 2, Hollywood, California, June 1961, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

<sup>33</sup> *Will Oscar Come Home*, by Nadine M. Edwards, Los Angeles Evening Citizen News, Hollywood, California, April 6, 1965, *Oscars 'Great but Drab' Spot*, Variety, Hollywood California, March 29, 1961

<sup>34</sup> *Starry Fete Staged on Tilted Floor*, Academy Awards Section, Los Angeles Citizen News, Hollywood, California, April 18, 1961

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the full front brise soleil and curtain wall, pylons, canopy, and even some of the circulation patterns.<sup>35</sup>

On October 28th and 29th, 1964, the *T.A.M.I. Show (Teenage Awards Music International)* was filmed at the Civic Auditorium. Teenage Music International was a fledgling nonprofit organization that planned to provide music scholarships to teens, but never got off the ground.<sup>36</sup> The *T.A.M.I. Show* was an early, game-changing Rock and Roll concert documentary that set a precedent for how Rock and Roll would be depicted on screen. There was minimal narrative, no “fictional interludes,” and an emphasis on the “spectacle of live performance.”<sup>37</sup> It was recorded using a system called Electronovision, which had just been used to wide acclaim to film Richard Burton in *Hamlet*. It was produced by Bill Sargent, and directed, edited, and choreographed by Steve Binder. The *T.A.M.I. Show* was promoted by teen exploitation film distributor American International Pictures. Electronovision technology allowed resolution of the video recording to be electronically enhanced so it could be transferred to film and enlarged for the big screen. Binder, whose experience was on the *Steve Allen Show*, which was recorded live using a multi-camera set-up. He employed similar techniques and many of the same crew for the *T.A.M.I. Show*. Binder had cameras behind the performers as well as in front of them, allowing him to capture the energy and enthusiasm of the audience as it reacted to the charismatic performers. Cutting rhythmically between close-ups, wide shots, and reverse angles, “Binder *played* the performers and the entire television apparatus as if it were a musical instrument.”<sup>38</sup> Recorded just months after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was signed into law, its lineup of both American and British performers, and Black and white performers before an integrated audience brought a new image of youth, culture, and music into American homes.<sup>39</sup> The Civic Auditorium seats were filled with a live audience of teenagers from adjacent Santa Monica High School, who were given free tickets to the event. The lineup featured the Rolling Stones, James Brown, the Barbarians, the Supremes, Billy J. Kramer & the Dakotas, the Beach Boys, Jan and Dean, Lesley Gore, Marvin Gaye, Smokey Robinson & The Miracles, Gerry & the Pacemakers, and Chuck Berry. Many of the acts, now enshrined in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, were at the height of their popularity at the time of the *T.A.M.I. Show* recording.<sup>40</sup> In 2006, the *T.A.M.I. Show* was deemed “culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant” by the United States Library of Congress and was selected for preservation in the National Film Registry.<sup>41</sup>

The connection between the Civic Auditorium and Hollywood established by the Academy Awards brought Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the Civic Auditorium on December 6, 1963, when he attended a *Stars for Freedom* event. This was Dr. King’s second visit to the Civic Auditorium;

<sup>35</sup> *Bibletown, Serving the Community*, Boca Raton News, Boca Raton Florida, September 3, 1964

<sup>36</sup> *T.A.M.I. Show, The - "T.A.M.I." stands for "Teenage Awards Music International". The idea of the film was to combine top American and British Invasion groups in one show. - 1965*, Blog, Learnmedia, April 17, 2011

<sup>37</sup> *Rock 'N' Film, Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, by David E. James, Oxford University Press, New York, New York, 2016

<sup>38</sup> *Rock 'N' Film, Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, by David E. James, Oxford University Press, New York, New York, 2016

<sup>39</sup> *The T.A.M.I. Show – Still a Groundbreaking Music Event*, Blog, Event Coup, March 15, 2015

<sup>40</sup> *'The T.A.M.I. Show': A Groundbreaking '60s Concert*, by Milo Miles, Fresh Air, National Public Radio, April 13, 2010, <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125599928>, *The T.A.M.I. Show Excerpt from Rock N' Roll Film: Cinema's Dance With Popular Music*, by David E. James, Oxford University Press, New York, 2016, *The T.A.M.I. Show Tape 2 of 2, American Archive of Public Broadcasting*, [https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip\\_293-16c2fsr9](https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip_293-16c2fsr9)

<sup>41</sup> *Librarian Adds 25 Titles to Film Preservation List*, Library of Congress January/February Information Bulletin 2007, <https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/07012/film.html>

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the first was two years earlier on invitation of the Calvary Baptist Church and the Santa Monica Business and Professional Men's Council to be the keynote speaker at a civil rights rally and news conference hosted at the Civic Auditorium.<sup>42</sup> Addressing a crowd of 1,500 people at the 1961 event, Rev. Dr. King delivered a version of his *The Future of Integration* speech. The 1963 *Stars for Freedom* concert, so named by Dr. King acknowledging the notable support of many well-known actors led by Harry Belafonte, Sidney Poitier, Sammy Davis Jr., and others at the recent March on Washington where he delivered his *I Have a Dream* speech, was a direct result of those events. Beloved Black stars along with white performers who were civil rights allies, used their notoriety to bring positive attention to the movement and raise funds urgently needed to continue the work. One scholar observed, "[w]ithout the involvement of the *Stars for Freedom*, the civil rights movement would have been far more isolated, insolvent, and persecuted, and the struggle to achieve its political, economic, and cultural goals would have been far more protracted."<sup>43</sup> The program was organized by Sammy Davis Jr., who explained his commitment at a press conference at Warner Brothers, "it's easy to praise the accomplishments of the courageous workers in the great civil rights organizations, but in the face of police dogs, houses, and jails, the one kind of support that has real, practical meaning is money to keep going." Davis enlisted his famous friends Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Count Basie, and Nelson Riddle to perform with him, promising "a gang of unprogrammed surprises" for the finale. King, Davis, Sinatra, Martin, and Basie stayed on to host a backstage gala after the concert. The event grossed \$45,675.60 for the N.A.A.C.P, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).<sup>44</sup> A second *Stars for Freedom* event took place at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium on December 4, 1964. Event co-chairs were June Allyson and Carolyn Jones. Featured artists were Steve Allen, Bill Dana, Oscar Brown, Jr., Bennie Carter, and Carmen McRae. Burt Lancaster, Charlton Heston, Tony Curtis, Anthony Francisco, James Garner, and many others endorsed the event. Wendell Franklin, the first African American to be hired as an assist director on a major Hollywood film, directed the *Stars for Freedom* show, breaking yet another barrier by directing a major Hollywood event.<sup>45</sup>

The Academy Awards ceremonies themselves at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium frequently reflected national themes of civil rights because of those same *Stars for Freedom* who were at the height of their fame and popularity and used the award show broadcast to continue to rally support for the cause. At the 36th Academy Awards at the Civic Auditorium in 1964, acclaimed actor and civil rights activist Sidney Poitier made history as the first African American to receive the Oscar for *Best Actor* for his role as Homer Smith in the film *Lilies of the Field*. Poitier portrayed a heroic African American character with depth and dignity, a dramatic departure from

<sup>42</sup> *Santa Monica to Hear Dr. King At Dec. 8 Rally*, California Eagle, Los Angeles, California, November 9, 1961

<sup>43</sup> *Stars for Freedom, Hollywood, Black Celebrities, and the Civil Rights Movement*, by Emilie Raymond, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, 2015

<sup>44</sup> *Cities Split on Honoring Kennedy*, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, December 5, 1963, #blackhistory: *On December 6, 1963, Sammy Davis Jr. Organizes Stars for Freedom*, California African American Museum, Los Angeles, California, December 6, 2019, *One Night Stand Artists at Hand*, California Eagle, Los Angeles, California, November 7, 1963, *Sammy Davis, Jr. Tops Friday Show for Worth Cause*, California Eagle, Los Angeles, California, December 5, 1963, *Lamplighter*, by Dave Sheehan, The Independent, Los Angeles, California, December 5, 1963, *Stars' Show for Freedom Gains \$25,790 Profit*, California Eagle, Los Angeles, California, March 26, 1964

<sup>45</sup> *Steve Allen, Benny Carter to Share Freedom Star Spotlight*, California Eagle, Los Angeles, California, November 26, 1964, *Top Stars to Appear at Civic*, Citizen News, Hollywood, California, November 28, 1964, *Civil Rights Group Plans Stars Show*, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, November 29, 1964, *Stars for Freedom Benefit Set for Friday*, Valley News, Los Angeles, California, December 3, 1964, *This is Show Biz*, by Stanley Robertson, California Eagle, Los Angeles, California, December 3, 1964

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the racist Black stereotypes Hollywood typically portrayed.<sup>46</sup> The 40th Academy Awards, held in 1968 at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, were postponed due to the assassination of Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. four days before the ceremony's original airdate so a full complement of *Stars for Freedom* could attend both events.<sup>47</sup> Actor Gregory Peck, president of the Academy, gave a moving tribute to Dr. King, recognizing his broad influence and calling attention to the "increasing awareness of all men that we must unite in compassion in order to survive."<sup>48</sup> Sidney Poitier, whose films *In the Heat of the Night* and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* were both nominated for awards that year, received a robust standing ovation upon stepping behind the podium to announce the Best Actress nominees.<sup>49</sup> In 1969, the Academy Awards returned to Los Angeles, to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, another Welton Becket designed venue.<sup>50</sup>

In the 1950s and 1960s, surf culture was depicted in popular films and documentaries accompanied by surf pop soundtracks. Screenings of films, such as *Spinning Boards*, *Going My Wave*, and *Slippery When Wet*, took place at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, as a large regionally-serving venue in proximity to beach culture and the local surfers. The iconic Beach Boys among other of the surf pop genre made appearances at the Civic Auditorium, sometimes as part of surfing fairs, which were a combination marketplace, music, and film event designed to take advantage of the multipurpose venue. A new generation of independent surfboard innovators emerged in the 1960s along with the hippie era. They transformed the clean-cut image of surfers and surfing, which became associated with Southern California youth counterculture, attracting artist-athletes and rebel-athletes that elevated surfing from an activity to a lifestyle. In garages up and down the California coast, surfboard innovation by a number of talented, independent surfboard artisans began to emerge in Santa Monica, the South Bay and in the Santa Cruz area, in parallel universes. So, in 1964, when Bruce Brown's highly influential surf documentary *Endless Summer* premiered at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, a new generation of surfers found their voice. In December 1963, "[w]ith tons of professional camera equipment, two ten-foot surfboards and a bare minimum of clothes, three young men were embarking on a two-month, round-the-world surfing and filming expedition."<sup>51</sup> *Endless Summer* is a documentary they made about two surfers backpacking around the world in search of the perfect wave, untouched beaches, and year-round surfing. At a time when surf culture was local to coastal beach communities, unmonetized, and largely unfamiliar to most in the United States, *Endless Summer* brought an idealization of nomadic surf culture to the mainstream. It is often referred to as the best surfing film ever made, influencing a generation. After some difficulty securing bookings for the film, Brown landed it at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium where it was screened as part of a surfing fair and from there landed an agent and nationwide bookings. When the film returned to the Civic Auditorium in 1966, it sold out seven nights in a row,

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<sup>46</sup> *Sidney Poitier Wins Best Actor Oscar*, Alabama Tribune, Montgomery, Alabama, April 17, 1964, *Sidney Poitier - Hollywood's First Black Leading Man Reflected the Civil Rights Movement on Screen*, by Aram Goudsouzian, University of Memphis, The Conversation Blog, theconversation.com

<sup>47</sup> *Academy Awards Show Delayed for 48 Hours*, by Dave Smith, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, April 7, 1968.

<sup>48</sup> *Martin Luther King Jr. Was Assassinated Four Days Before the 1968 Oscars: The Show Did Not Go On*, Billboard, New York, New York, January 18, 2021, www.billboard.com.

<sup>49</sup> *Sidney Poitier - Hollywood's First Black Leading Man Reflected the Civil Rights Movement on Screen*, by Aram Goudsouzian, The Conversation, Melbourne, Australia, theconversation.com.

<sup>50</sup> *Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.Org*, Dolby Theatre.com

<sup>51</sup> *Surfers Begin South Pacific Expedition 'Loaded.'* News-Pilot, Los Angeles, California, December 26, 1963

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breaking theater attendance records there as well as all over the United States.<sup>52</sup> In 2002, *Endless Summer* was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant."

In conclusion, the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium structure qualifies under National Register Criterion A because as an aspirational civic structure built by well-known master architect Welton Becket in 1958, it was part of an effort to elevate Santa Monica's reputation as a sophisticated cultural center rather than a remote, suburban beach community. Because it was new, elegant, and the largest venue in the region at the time, the Academy Awards was broadcast into millions of homes from there from 1961-1968, during which the Civic Auditorium became a nationally recognized locale. The annual pre-Oscars Red Carpet event began at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium as a result of particular aspects of the building setting that allowed for the introduction of bleachers for thousands of fans and paparazzi and a wide area through which stars could make dramatic entrances. As a result of the Civic Auditorium's familiarity and now established television broadcast capabilities, the first ever Rock and Roll documentary, the *T.A.M.I. Show* was filmed there in 1964. The Hollywood connection at the Civic Auditorium resulted in a number of events related to the Civil Rights Movement, in particular, two *Stars for Freedom* fundraisers hosted by top-drawer performers using their notoriety to draw support and funding for Martin Luther King Jr. and other leaders. Through the 1960s, as surf culture became mainstream, the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, as a unique, large, multi-purpose venue located in proximity to the beach and surfers, began booking surf conventions, surf-rock performers, and surfing films. It was there that Bruce Brown's iconic film, *Endless Summer* premiered to sold-out audiences, leading to broad popularity that brought surf culture fantasies to land-locked teens all over the United States, with far-reaching impact on teen culture. The period of significance under this criterion is 1958-1968.

### **Santa Monica Civic Auditorium Architectural Significance**

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium meets National Register Criterion C as an excellent and innovative example of Mid-Century Modern phase of the International Style. Mid-Century Modernism emerged from the earlier and more severe, doctrinaire International Style that was launched in the 1920s, which rejected historical architectural precedents in favor of a simple structural approach using modern materials and new ideas of spatial design. Common character-defining features of this style include, flat roofs, brise soleil, glass curtain walls, solid rectilinear wall expanses devoid of ornamentation, rectilinear ribbon windows, and merging of interior and exterior spaces. By the 1950s, new trends based on the International Style began expressing more dynamic and energized forms and spaces. While the Civic Auditorium has many commonalities with the International Style, we see more curves and angles added to the geometric vocabulary. The façade has a slight convex curve, the sides are concave, and the roof has an angled concave form. The broad open entrance canopy is not fully attached to the façade and appears to float. The dramatic soaring pylons at the canopy's edge, with their elegant, carved profile, are a unique

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<sup>52</sup> *An Interview with the Late Pioneer of Adventure Filmmaking Bruce Brown*, by Josh Rakic, The Red Bulletin, December 13, 2017, <https://www.redbull.com/us-en/theredbulletin/Tribute%20to%20The%20Endless%20Summer's%20Bruce%20Brown>, Santa Monica Civic Lists December Events, Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles, California, December 3, 1964

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and distinctive feature with allusions to the Space Age. The tall façade brise soleil with abstract geometric forms floats over a glass curtain wall. Inside the lobby are two floating staircases. Original concession stands and light fixtures in the lobby are no longer extant, but the auditorium interior, designed for multi-purpose uses, is intact except for the fixed gallery seats, which have been replaced. The metal wall panels are both decorative and functional, featuring state-of-the-art acoustic technology designed by renowned physicist and sound researcher Vern O. Knudsen. The landscape architectural plan surrounding the Civic Auditorium, was designed by Ruth Patricia Shellhorn, whose trendsetting use of exotic ornamentals led the “Southern California look” in landscape design. The hardscape and circulation features provided by Shellhorn remain extant with few alterations, and two prominent tree beds she created that bookend the main canopy remain extant.

Welton David Becket was born in 1902, in Seattle, Washington. He studied architecture at the University of Washington from 1923 to 1927 and at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1928. He began his practice in 1929 as chief designer for Los Angeles architect, C. Waldo Powers. Three years later, Becket started an architectural firm with Walter Wurdeman and Charles Plummer in Seattle, forming the firm Plummer, Wurdeman, and Becket. The firm relocated to Los Angeles in 1933, and in 1934, they won an international competition for their Art Moderne design of the Pan Pacific Auditorium in Hollywood, California, completed in 1935. The Pan Pacific Auditorium became famous as a re-interpretation of the Streamline Moderne style that would become emblematic of Los Angeles in the mid-twentieth century. The firm used an approach they called, "Total Design," in which the architects oversaw all phases of a project, from planning to construction, and all aspects of the design including interior features, signage, and landscaping. Plummer died in 1939, and the firm reorganized as Wurdeman and Becket and was awarded a large contract by the military for the design and construction of 1,400 housing units for military families and war workers. The firm grew to be highly innovative in the fields of design, planning, and construction, introducing novel lightweight construction and modular office design methods. Projects included the Bullocks Pasadena Department Store (1946) and the General Petroleum Building (1949) in Los Angeles. Wurdeman died in 1949. In 1950, Becket formed a solo practice under the name Welton Becket and Associates. The firm's early commissions included a Master Plan for UCLA, which they oversaw for two decades. Becket's UCLA designs include Pauley Pavilion, UCLA Medical Center, and others. Individual projects in the Los Angeles area include California Federal Savings Bank (1954), Parker Center Police Headquarters (1955), and the Beverly Hilton Hotel (1955). Becket is responsible for the iconic Capitol Records Tower (1956) in Hollywood, which he was just completing when the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium job came in. He also built the Texaco Building (1957), the Federal Building, Century City (1959), the Prudential Western Building, and the Memorial Sports Arena (1959), all in Los Angeles. In a collaboration with William Pereira, Charles Luckman and Paul R. Williams, Becket designed the Los Angeles International Airport (1959). Towards the end of his career, he built the Cinerama Dome (1963) in Hollywood, and the Los Angeles Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (1964) and Mark Taper Forum (1967). Many buildings Becket designed are considered landmarks in Southern California and around the world, having a significant impact on the architectural landscape of postwar Los Angeles. Welton Becket was the recipient of many awards throughout his career, including induction as a Fellow of the American

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Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1952. His design for the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium was recognized by the AIA with an Honor Award in 1960. Becket died in 1969 at the age of 66.<sup>53</sup>

Welton Becket and Associates' iconic architectural design achievement in the Civic Auditorium is matched internally by its unique engineering and landmark use of hydraulic technology that could adapt an assembly space to accommodate a vast variety of stage performances, athletic events, and exhibitions. Giant pistons under the main floor allow it to be converted from a raked seating area for stage performances, into a flat surface suitable for trade shows and conferences with the flip of a switch. It is also possible to raise or lower the orchestra pit floor to create a sunken pit or flat surface level with the main floor or the stage above. The Civic Auditorium's tilting floor has been cited as a forerunner to the retractable domes and flexible seating of contemporary stadiums. The hydraulic floor, designed by Murray Erick Associates, was the largest in the nation at the time of its completion. The drawings for the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium were created by associate Louis Naidorf, who also created the iconic Capital Records Building immediately before working on the Civic Auditorium and the Los Angeles Sports Arena immediately afterwards.

Vern Oliver Knudsen (1893-1974), a University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) physics professor and renowned acoustics expert, designed the building acoustics for the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, likely including the design of the metal acoustical panels flanking the auditorium and soundproof doors between the auditorium and East Wing. Knudsen, a professor and chancellor at UCLA, was the world's leading authority on architectural acoustics, and a master designer of acoustically significant facilities. Knudsen wrote two seminal books and over 100 articles which appeared in scientific and technical journals. As a consultant he was responsible for the acoustical design of over 500 structures. His principles in architectural acoustics became the foundation for the design of contemporary soundstages. Knudsen was born in Provo, Utah in 1893. He earned a bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University in 1915. In 1918 Knudsen joined Bell Telephone Laboratories, where he collaborated in the development of the emerging vacuum-tube technology. Following World War I, he entered the University of Chicago where he earned a Ph.D. in physics, graduating magna cum laude in 1922 and accepted a position as an instructor at newly established UCLA. Knudsen's early research at UCLA focused on sound dispersion and dynamics. During World War II, he played a key role in antisubmarine efforts, served as the first director of the Naval Undersea Research and Development Center in San Diego, and was a member of the National Research Council. Vern Knudsen was one of the founders of the Acoustical Society of America, serving as president from 1933 to 1935. At UCLA, Knudsen was instrumental in establishing the Graduate Division in physics and became its first dean, serving from 1934 to 1958. In 1956 he was appointed vice chancellor, and then chancellor in 1959. Upon retirement in 1960, Vern Knudsen devoted his full attention to acoustics, its theory, and applications, including architectural acoustics. He was a member of the Los Angeles Building and Safety Commission, president of the California

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<sup>53</sup> *Santa Monica Civic Auditorium Feasibility Study*, by NAC for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, August 11, 2023, *Santa Monica Civic Auditorium Evaluation Report*, by PCR Services Corporation for the City of Santa Monica, September 28, 2001, *Built by Becket, Centennial Celebration*, by Chris Nichols, Bruce Emerton, Alan Hess, presented by the Modern Committee of the Los Angeles Conservancy, 2003, <https://www.laconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Built-By-Becket-Full-Brochure-lowres.pdf>, *Googie Redux*, by Alan Hess, Chronicle Books, San Francisco, California, 2004

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Institute for Cancer Research and president of the Hollywood Bowl Association. Knudsen was awarded honors and prizes including the Sabine Medal (1958), a Gold Medal (1967) from the Acoustical Society of America, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science Prize (1934). Additionally, the physics building at UCLA bears his name, and two Vern Knudsen Graduate Fellowships in Physics are supported by the Hope for Hearing Foundation. Knudsen died in 1974, at the age of eighty.<sup>54</sup>

The landscape design for the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium was by renowned landscape architect Ruth Shellhorn. Ruth Patricia Shellhorn (1909-2006) was raised in Pasadena, California. She attended Oregon State Agricultural College from 1927-1930 and transferred to Cornell University to work towards degrees in architecture and landscape. The Great Depression forced her to return to Pasadena in 1933 just shy of the credits needed to earn her degree. However, in 2005, after reviewing her records, the university discovered she, in fact, had completed the requirements and granted both degrees. Back in Pasadena in 1933, Shellhorn established a landscape architecture practice. Her most important projects were the *Shoreline Development Study for the Greater Los Angeles Citizens Committee*, which was a coastal protection plan that became a precedent for the California Coastal Act. Her work on the design for Bullocks Pasadena Department Store established a long professional association with Welton Becket who was the architect. In 1955, Shellhorn was the landscape architect for Disneyland in Anaheim, California, establishing not only the plantings but the circulation plans which remain extant. She also notably created a master plan for University of California Riverside. Over the course of her sixty-year career, she worked on over 400 projects, often partnering with Becket. Her trendsetting use of lush exotics, texture, and color became known as the “Southern California look,” making her instrumental in defining modernist landscape design in mid-century Los Angeles.<sup>55</sup>

The Civic Auditorium was designated as a Santa Monica Landmark in 2002. Over twenty years later, it remains the only Santa Monica Landmark that meets all six of the City’s criteria for local designation.

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium meets National Register Criterion C because it is an exemplary example of the Mid-Century Modern phase of the International Style and retains a very high degree of architectural integrity. Its full façade glass curtain wall and brise soleil, fronted by a dramatic canopy from which six towering hyperbolic pylons soar, manifests the Mid-Century Modern Style. It was designed by master architect Welton David Becket, who created many buildings that stand as unique icons in Los Angeles including the Capitol Records Building and the Los Angeles Music Center and helped form the architectural identity of the City

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<sup>54</sup> *Santa Monica Civic Auditorium Feasibility Study*, by NAC for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, August 11, 2023, *Santa Monica Civic Auditorium Evaluation Report*, by PCR Services Corporation for the City of Santa Monica, September 28, 2001, *Up in Knudsen’s Attic: Some Private Papers of Vern O. Knudsen*, by Neil A Shaw, *Acoustics Today Magazine*, January 2011, *Vern O. Knudsen, Obituary*, by Isadore Rudnick, *Physics Today Magazine*, July 1974

<sup>55</sup> *Santa Monica Civic Auditorium Feasibility Study*, by NAC for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, August 11, 2023, *Ruth Shellhorn, Kappa Kappa Gamma, #NotableSororityWomen, #WHM2022*, by Fran Becque, Ph.D., *Fraternity History & More*, blog: <https://www.franbecque.com/ruth-p-shellhorn-kappa-kappa-gamma-notablesororitywomen-whm2022/>, Ruth Shellhorn, *Pioneer Information*, The Cultural Landscape Foundation, 2023, <https://www.tclf.org/pioneer/ruth-shellhorn>, *Ruth Shellhorn: Midcentury Landscape Architecture in Sothern California*, presented by Kelly Comras FASLA, *Southern California Horticultural Society Newsletter*, August 2018, [socalhort.org](https://www.socalhort.org)

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of Los Angeles in the Mid-Century era. The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium is the only major work of Becket in the City of Santa Monica. Welton Becket's iconic Mid-Century Modern architectural design achievement in the Civic Auditorium is matched internally by its unique engineering and landmark use of hydraulic technology that could adapt an assembly space to accommodate a vast variety of stage performances, athletic events, and exhibitions. The pioneering acoustical consultant Vern O. Knudsen was responsible for the design and engineering of the auditorium's state-of-the-art acoustics. Ruth Patricia Shellhorn, creator of "Southern California look" in mid-century landscape design, was the landscape architect for the Civic Auditorium. The period of significance under this criterion is 1958.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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*Built by Becket, Centennial Celebration*, by Chris Nichols, Bruce Emerton, Alan Hess, presented by the Modern Committee of the Los Angeles Conservancy, 2003,  
<https://www.laconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Built-By-Becket-Full-Brochure-lowres.pdf>

*Googie Redux*, by Alan Hess, Chronicle Books, San Francisco, California, 2004

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 11 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 34.011440 | Longitude: -118.489463 |
| 2. Latitude: 34.009649 | Longitude: -118.487436 |
| 3. Latitude: 34.008157 | Longitude: -118.489670 |
| 4. Latitude: 34.009242 | Longitude: -118.490027 |

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beginning at the southernmost point of the Jepson Tract (LA County Tract Map TR0007-119), southeast 884.36 feet to the most easterly point in lot 24 of block 3 of the Bandini Tract (LA County Recorder Tract Map MR055-57), northwest 912 feet to the most northerly point lot 1 in block 3 of the Bandini Tract, south 893 feet to a point at the westerly most corner of lot 15 in block 3 of the Bandini Tract, continuing south 798 feet to the point of beginning.

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**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries define the Belmar neighborhood, an African American residential district, that was vacated through eminent domain so the area could be added to the Santa Monica Civic Center and the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium could be constructed there.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Nina Fresco  
organization: Santa Monica Conservancy  
street & number: 2520 Second Street  
city or town: Santa Monica state: CA zip code: 90405  
e-mail: advocacy@smconservancy.org  
telephone: 310-496-3146  
date: September 30, 2023

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5- or 15-minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered, and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

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## Photo Log

Name of Property: Santa Monica Civic Auditorium / Belmar Neighborhood Site

City or Vicinity: Santa Monica

County: Los Angeles State: California

Photographer: Stephen Schafer, Schaf Photo Studios

Date Photographed: September 14, 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

25 images:

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0001.tif  
Northwest/primary façade, camera facing east.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0002.tif  
Northwest/primary façade (right), East Wing (left), camera facing south.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0003.tif  
Canopy entrance (center), East Wing (left), camera facing south.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0004.tif  
East Wing northwest elevation, camera facing south.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0005.tif  
Southeast/rear elevation (left), rear of East Wing (right), camera facing west.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0006.tif  
Southeast/rear elevation (right), southwest elevation and West Wing (left), camera facing south.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0007.tif  
Southeast/rear elevation (right), south boundary Belmar Neighborhood (foreground), camera facing north.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0008.tif  
Southwest/rear elevation and West Wing (right), façade canopy and pylons (left), camera facing northeast.

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CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0009.tif  
Northwest/primary façade (left), southwest elevation and West Wing (right), camera facing east.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0010.tif  
Northwest/primary façade, detail, camera facing southeast.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0011.tif  
Northwest/primary façade, canopy and brise soleil detail, camera facing south.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0012.tif  
Interior main lobby: stair and northwest/primary façade (left), camera facing west.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0013.tif  
Interior main lobby: vomitorium and hinged floor (left), curved lobby volume (right), camera facing south.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0014.tif  
Interior upper lobby: northwest/primary façade (left), camera facing west.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0015.tif  
Interior auditorium: gallery seating (left), stage (right), camera facing east.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0016.tif  
Interior auditorium: tilting floor (left and foreground), gallery seating (right), camera facing north.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0017.tif  
Interior auditorium: stage and slightly depressed orchestra pit (center), camera facing southeast.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0018.tif  
Interior auditorium: view from center stage, camera facing northwest.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0019.tif  
Interior auditorium: view from stage left, fly rigging (right), camera facing north.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0020.tif  
Interior auditorium, detail: metal acoustic panels and custom sconces, camera facing north.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0021.tif  
Interior dressing room, camera facing northeast.

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CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0022.tif  
Interior basement: tilting floor (above), hydraulic pistons (right), camera facing north.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0023.tif  
Interior East Wing: sound-proof sliding door (right), camera facing northeast.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0024.tif  
Interior East Wing: northwest/primary elevation (left), camera facing north.

CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0025.tif  
Belmar Neighborhood Site from north boundary, Civic Auditorium (right of center), camera facing south.

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- Figure 2. Architectural Details - Site
- Figure 3. Architectural Details - Interior Public Spaces
- Figure 4. Architectural Details – Backstage Spaces
- Figure 5. Historic Images
- Figure 6. Historic Images

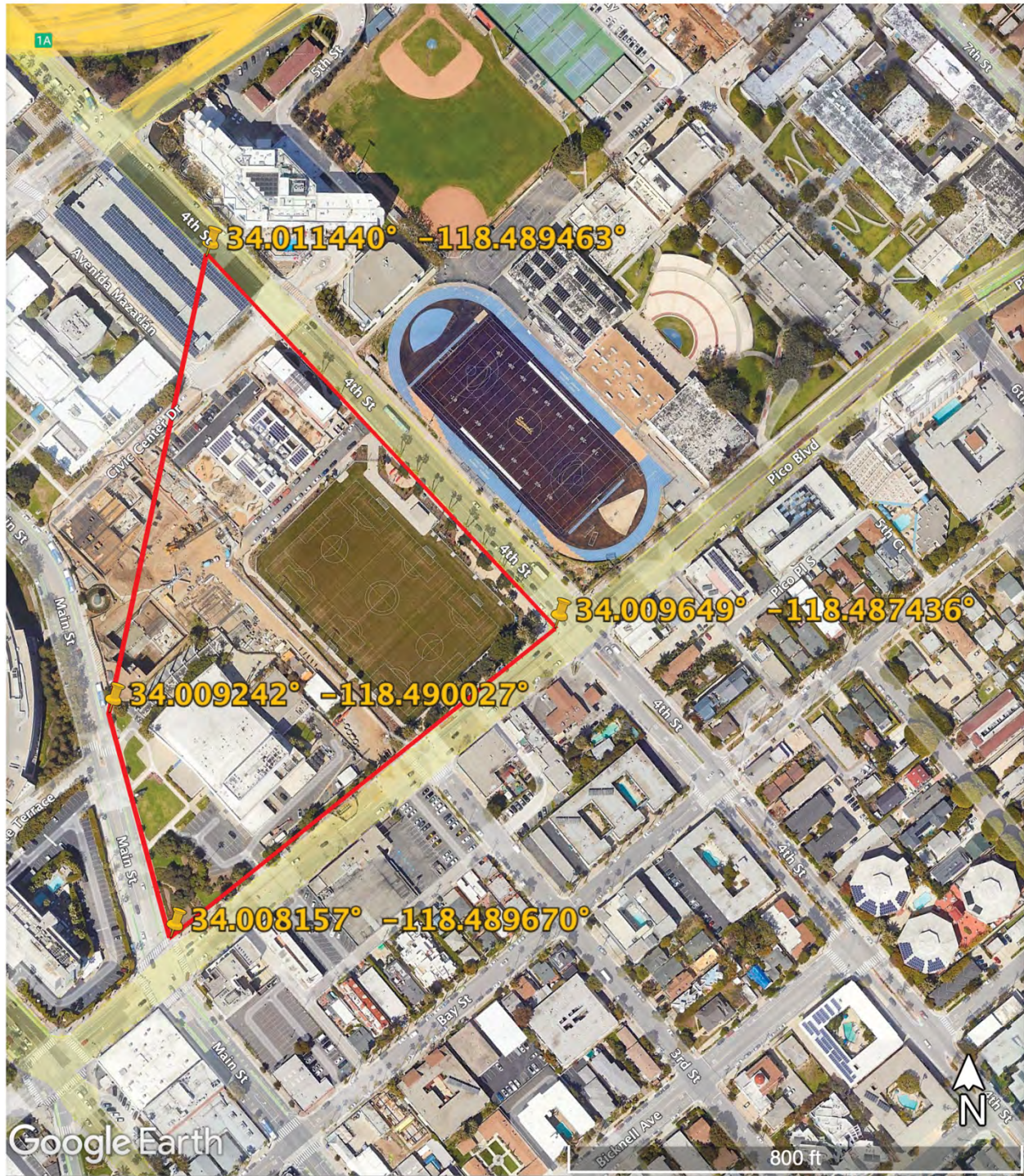
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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**FIGURE A: GIS MAP**



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FIGURE B: USGS LOCATION MAP



Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
 North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)  
 World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84) Projection and  
 1:250,000 scale. Contour Interval: 20 Feet. Data is provided for the National Map Accuracy Standard (NMAS) and includes data content from supporting sources of elevation, hydrography, and other geographic information. Refer to associated Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) metadata for additional source data information.  
 This map is not a legal document. Boundaries may be generalized for this map scale. Please check with your local government authorities for the most current information. Changes may have occurred since these data were collected and your data may no longer represent actual surface conditions.  
 Learn about The National Map: <https://nationalmap.gov>

USGS (UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY)  
 THE NATIONAL MAP  
 ON DEMAND TOPO

SCALE 1:24 000

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 METERS

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 FEET

CONTOUR INTERVAL: 20 FEET  
 NORTH AMERICAN VERTICAL DATUM OF 1988  
 CONTOUR SMOOTHNESS: Medium

USER DEFINED CONTENT

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Expressway	Local Collector
Secondary Hwy	Local Road
Highway	Local Road
Interstate Route	US Route
	State Route

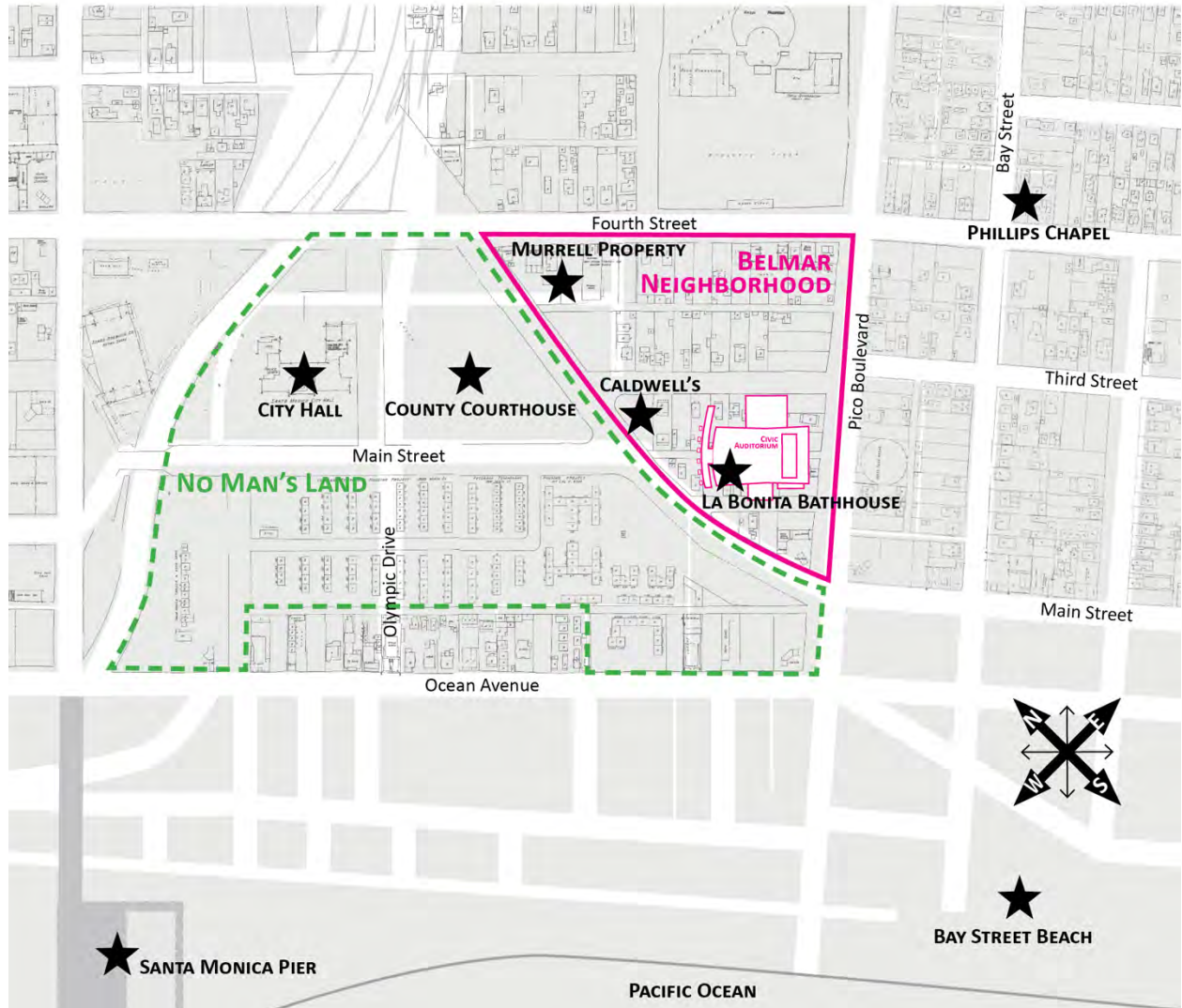
BEVERLY HILLS, CA  
 2023

ALONGSIDE QUADRANGLES

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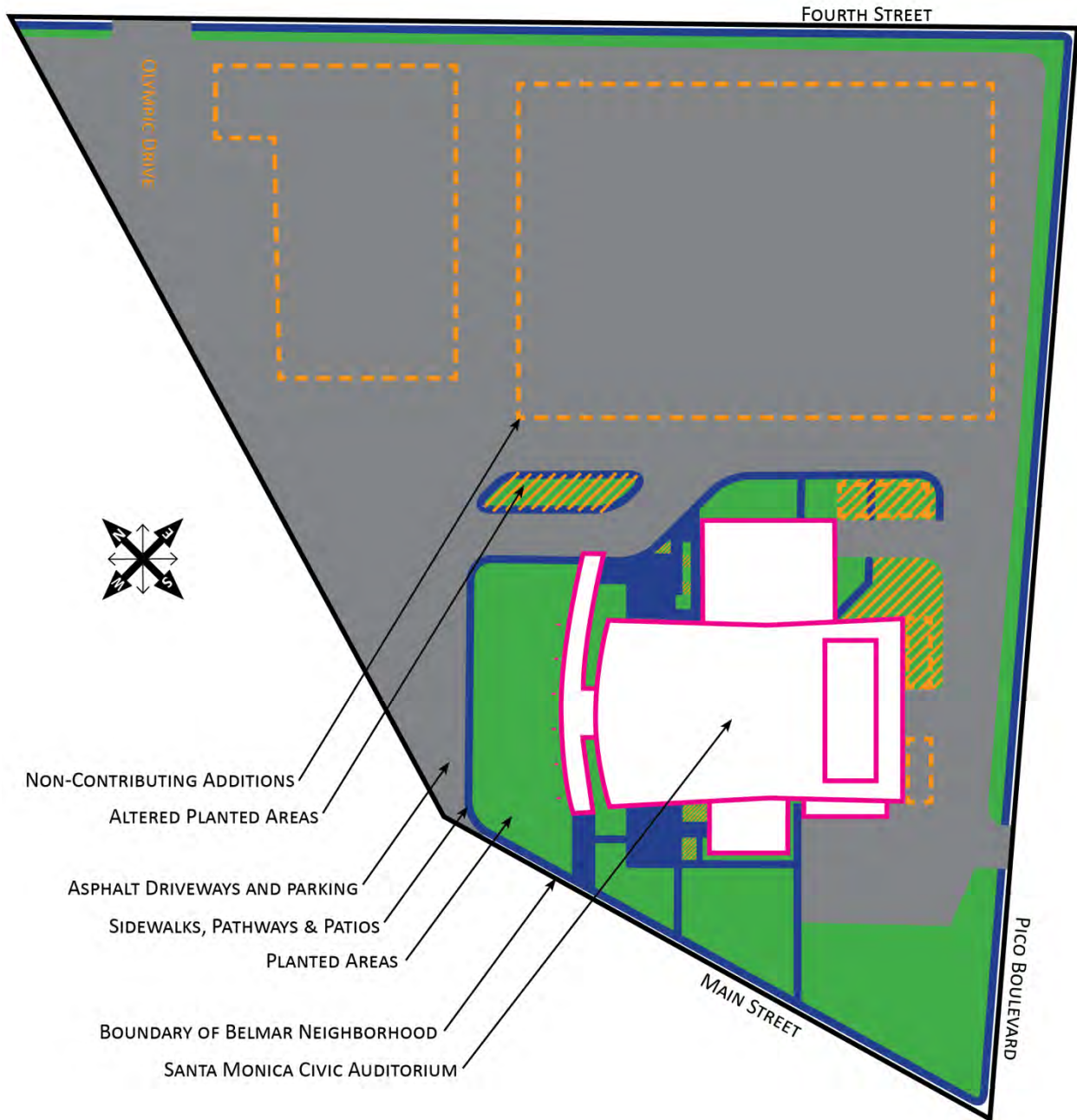
**FIGURE C: VICINITY MAP**



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**FIGURE D: SITE MAP**



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**Figure E. Aerial View Belmar Neighborhood, 1937**



Aerial view, February 20, 1937. (Image Courtesy: University of California Santa Barbara Library Geospatial Collection, flights c-4354\_2 [below Ocean Ave.] and c-4354\_3 [above Ocean Ave.])

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**Figure F. Aerial View Santa Monica Civic Center, 1981**



Aerial view, January 24, 1981. (Image Courtesy: University of California Santa Barbara Library Geospacial Collection, flight ami-la-81\_10910b)

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**Figure G. Aerial View Santa Monica Civic Center, 2022**

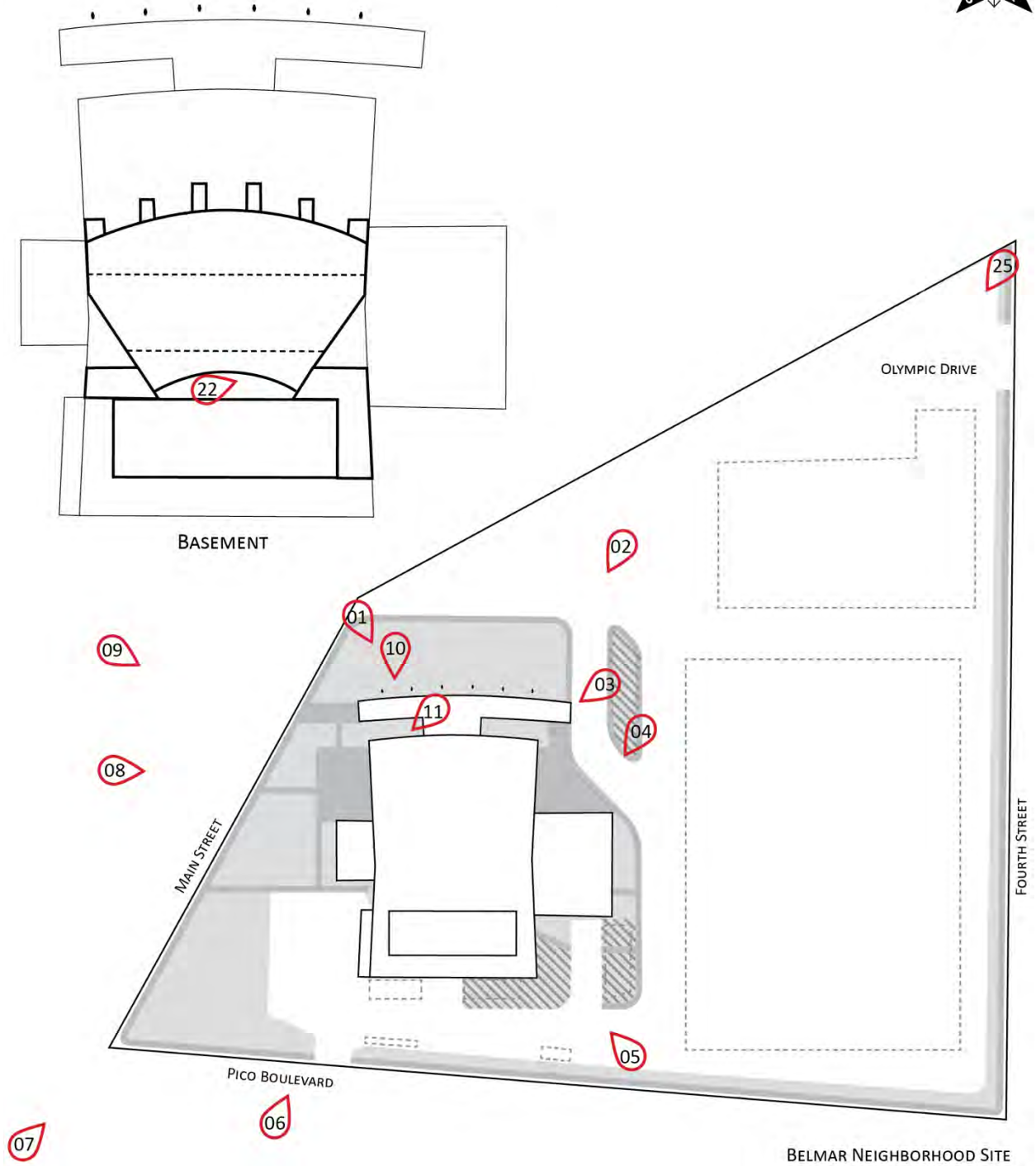


Aerial view, May 8, 2022. (Image: Google Earth Pro)

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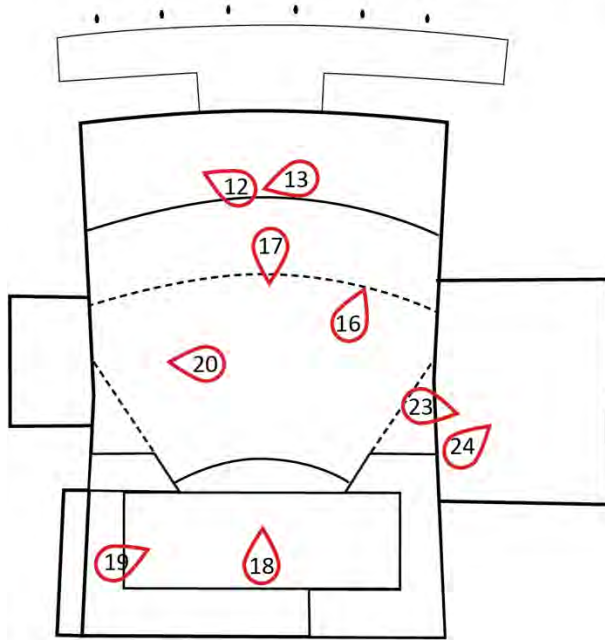
**FIGURE H: PHOTO KEY: FULL SITE AND BASEMENT**



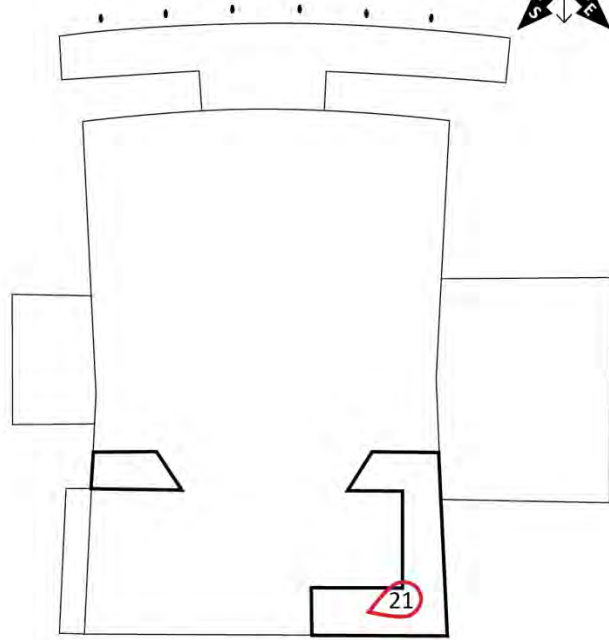
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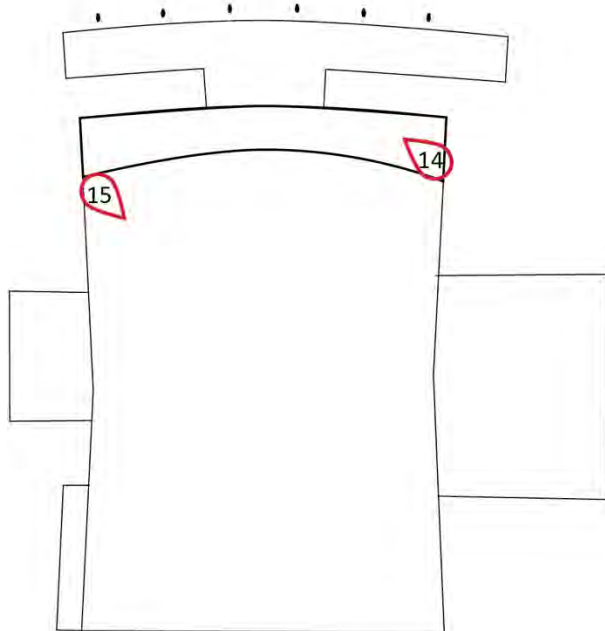
**FIGURE I: PHOTO KEY: INTERIOR, FLOORS 1 THROUGH 4**



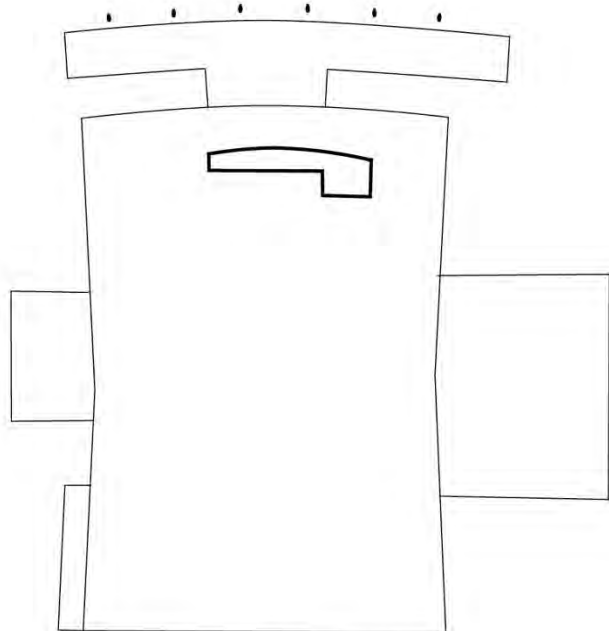
FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



FOURTH FLOOR

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**FIGURE 1: ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS - EXTERIOR**



Clockwise from top left: 1. geometric pylon, floating canopy, brise soleil (view east, 2023); 2. West Patio, scored concrete volume over glass-enclosed lobby (view north, 2014); 3. East Wing & patio (view south, 2014); 4. East Wing, typical entry door (view northeast, 2023); 5. East Wing canopy finish and lighting - front canopy was built using these finishes (view southwest, 2023). Images: Nina Fresco

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**FIGURE 2: ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS - SITE**

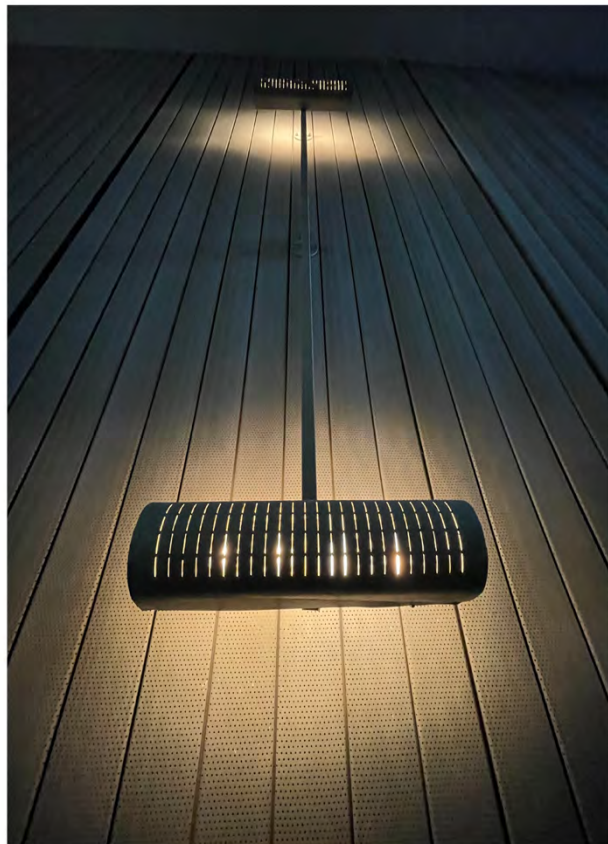


Clockwise from top left: 1. East Wing, canopy, main entrance to site (view west, 2014); 2. East Wing viewed through landscaping (view southeast, 2014); 3. Stage door behind East Wing (view west, 2023); 4. West Wing louvered windows (view east, 2014); 5. Clusters of pygmy date palms flank primary facade (view southeast, 2023). Images: Nina Fresco

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**FIGURE 3: ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS - INTERIOR PUBLIC SPACES**

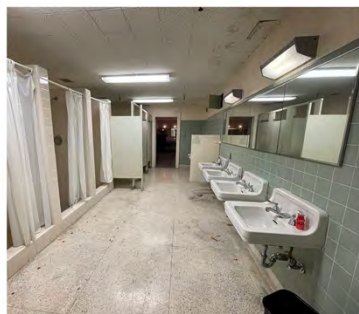
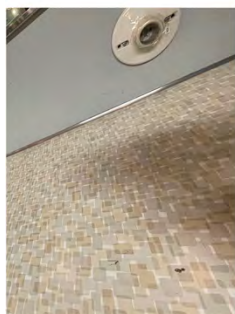
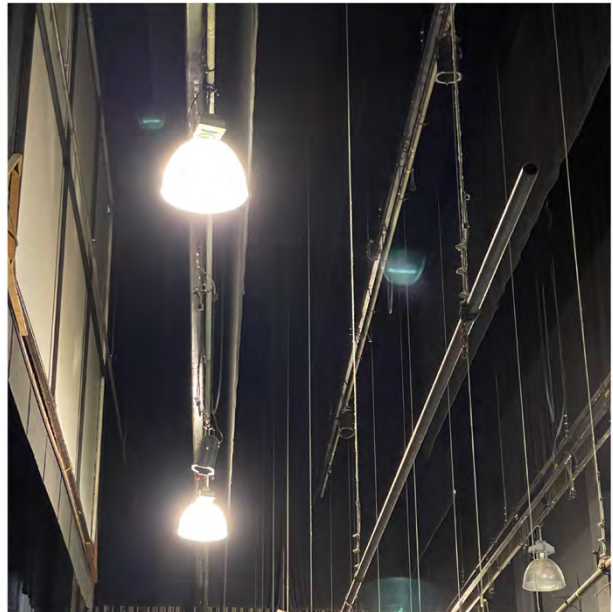


Clockwise from top left: 1. Lobby, glass curtain wall, staircase to upper lobby (view west, 2013); 2. Lobby, wood paneled wall with bronze dedication plaque dated June 15, 1958 (view southeast, 2023); 3. Auditorium, custom wall sconce and perforated metal acoustic panels (view southwest, 2023); 4. Upper lobby, view of auditorium through doorway (view northwest, 2013); 5. Auditorium set up for firefighters exam (view northwest, 2013). Images: Nina Fresco

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**FIGURE 4: ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS - BACKSTAGE SPACES**



Clockwise from top left: 1. Backstage rigging and signage (view northeast, 2013); 2. Backstage lighting and rigging (view northeast, 2023); 3. Oak phonebooth adjacent to stage door (view north, 2013), and original spotlight inside 4th floor projection booth (view north, 2023); 4. Dressingroom, original countertops, bathroom tile and fixtures (view northwest, 2023); 5. Custom heavy-duty folding chair (reupholstered), showing eyelets for connecting chairs in rows for stability. (2023). Images: Nina Fresco

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**FIGURE 5: HISTORIC IMAGES**



Clockwise from top left: 1. Belmar Neighborhood, abandoned cottage (view north, 1953); 2. Civic Auditorium facade (view east, 1958); 3. 34th Academy Awards, red carpet (view southwest, 1962); 4. 37th Academy Awards, setting up red carpet (view southeast, 1965); 5. Belmar Neighborhood owners were given an extra \$200 for parcels if transferred as vacant lots - cottages left behind were used for firefighter training (view north, 1953). Images courtesy of Santa Monica Public Library Imagine Santa Monica Collection (all images donated to the library from city collections)



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0001.TIF  
NORTHWEST/PRIMARY FAÇADE, CAMERA FACING EAST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0002.TIF  
NORTHWEST/PRIMARY FAÇADE (RIGHT), EAST WING (LEFT), CAMERA FACING SOUTH.



CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0003.tif  
CANOPY ENTRANCE (CENTER), EAST WING (LEFT), CAMERA FACING SOUTH.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0004.TIF  
EAST WING NORTHWEST ELEVATION, CAMERA FACING SOUTH.



CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0005.tif  
SOUTHEAST/REAR ELEVATION (LEFT), REAR OF EAST WING (RIGHT), CAMERA FACING WEST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0006.TIF  
SOUTHEAST/REAR ELEVATION (RIGHT), SOUTHWEST ELEVATION AND WEST WING (LEFT), CAMERA FACING SOUTH.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0007.TIF  
SOUTHEAST/REAR ELEVATION (RIGHT), SOUTH BOUNDARY BELMAR NEIGHBORHOOD (FOREGROUND), CAMERA FACING NORTH.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0008.TIF  
SOUTHWEST/REAR ELEVATION AND WEST WING (RIGHT), FAÇADE CANOPY AND PYLONS (LEFT), CAMERA FACING NORTHEAST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0009.TIF  
NORTHWEST/PRIMARY FAÇADE (LEFT), SOUTHWEST ELEVATION AND WEST WING (RIGHT), CAMERA FACING EAST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0010.TIF  
NORTHWEST/PRIMARY FAÇADE, DETAIL, CAMERA FACING SOUTHEAST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0011.TIF  
NORTHWEST/PRIMARY FAÇADE, CANOPY AND BRISE SOLEIL DETAIL, CAMERA FACING SOUTH.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0012.TIF  
INTERIOR MAIN LOBBY: STAIR AND NORTHWEST/PRIMARY FAÇADE (LEFT), CAMERA FACING WEST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0013.TIF  
INTERIOR MAIN LOBBY: VOMITORIUM AND HINGED FLOOR (LEFT), CURVED LOBBY VOLUME (RIGHT), CAMERA FACING SOUTH.



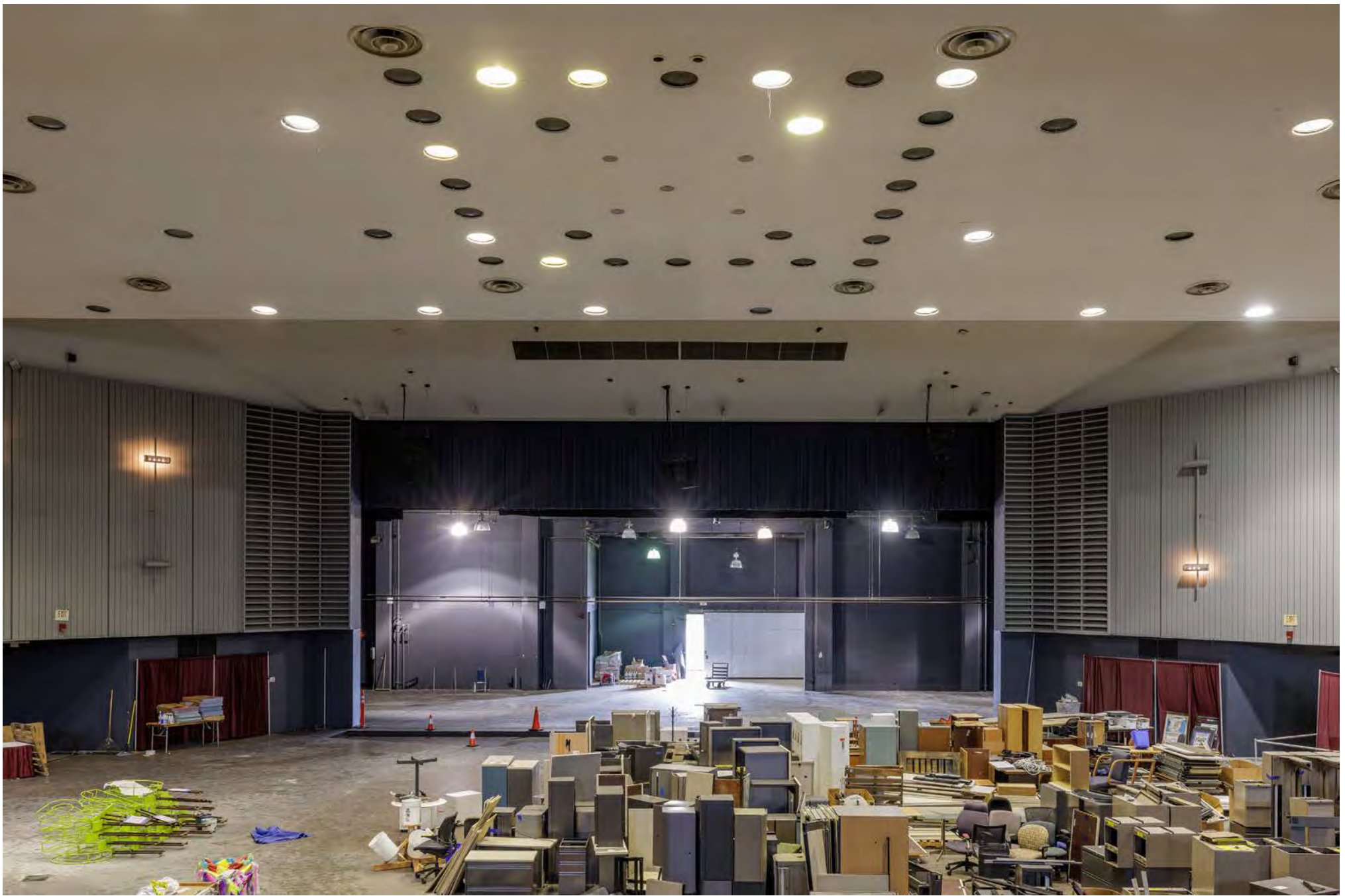
CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0014.tif  
INTERIOR UPPER LOBBY: NORTHWEST/PRIMARY ELEVATION (LEFT), CAMERA FACING WEST.



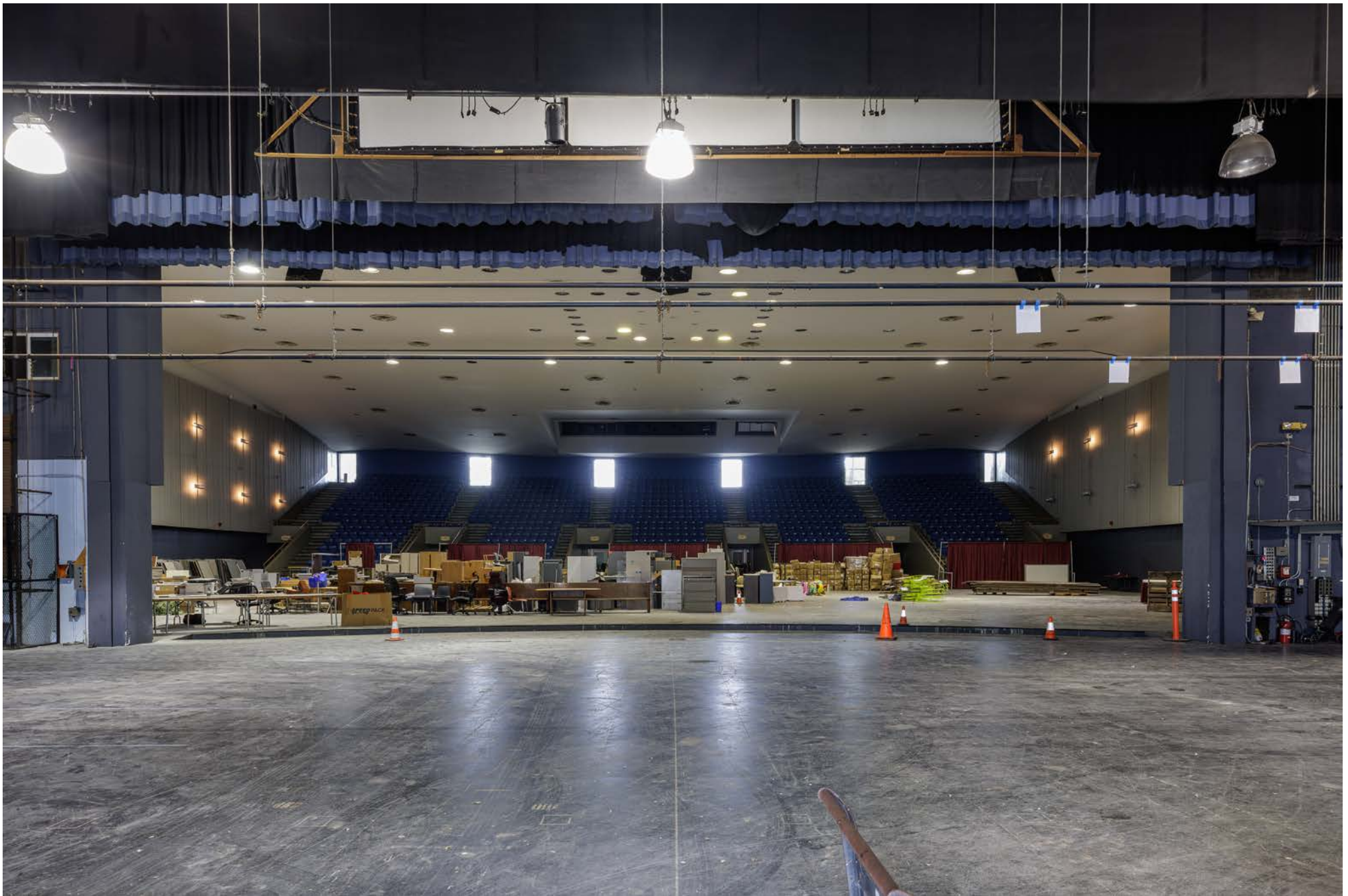
CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0015.TIF  
INTERIOR AUDITORIUM: GALLERY SEATING (LEFT), STAGE (RIGHT), CAMERA FACING EAST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0016.TIF  
INTERIOR AUDITORIUM: TILTING FLOOR (LEFT AND FOREGROUND), GALLERY SEATING (RIGHT), CAMERA FACING NORTH.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0017.TIF  
INTERIOR AUDITORIUM: STAGE AND SLIGHTLY DEPRESSED ORCHESTRA PIT (CENTER), CAMERA FACING SOUTHEAST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0018.TIF  
INTERIOR AUDITORIUM: VIEW FROM CENTER STAGE, CAMERA FACING NORTHWEST.



CA\_Los Angeles County\_Santa Monica Civic Auditorium\_0019.tif  
INTERIOR AUDITORIUM: VIEW FROM STAGE LEFT, FLY RIGGING (RIGHT), CAMERA FACING NORTH.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0020.TIF  
INTERIOR AUDITORIUM, DETAIL: METAL ACOUSTIC PANELS AND CUSTOM SCONCES, CAMERA FACING NORTH.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0021.TIF  
INTERIOR DRESSING ROOM, CAMERA FACING NORTHEAST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0022.TIF  
INTERIOR BASEMENT: TILTING FLOOR (ABOVE), HYDRAULIC PISTONS (RIGHT), CAMERA FACING NORTH.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0023.TIF  
INTERIOR EAST WING: SOUND-PROOF SLIDING DOOR (RIGHT), CAMERA FACING NORTHEAST.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0024.TIF  
INTERIOR EAST WING: NORTHWEST/PRIMARY ELEVATION (LEFT), CAMERA FACING NORTH.



CA\_LOS ANGELES COUNTY\_SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM\_0025.TIF  
BELMAR NEIGHBORHOOD SITE FROM NORTH BOUNDARY, CIVIC AUDITORIUM (RIGHT OF CENTER), CAMERA FACING SOUTH.