

November 5, 2025

The Honorable Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair
The Honorable Supervisor Hilda Solis
The Honorable Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
The Honorable Supervisor Lindsay P. Horvath
The Honorable Supervisor Janice Hahn
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Via Electronic Mail

RE: Gas Company Tower and Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration Retrofits

Dear Supervisors Barger, Solis, Mitchell, Horvath, and Hahn,

As California’s largest general contractor and a proud builder in Los Angeles County since 1934, Swinerton has closely tracked the County’s proposed renovation of the recently purchased Gas Company Tower, as well as the discussion about the cost and approach to renovating the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration. The County’s decision in August to suspend efforts around the Request for Proposals (BRC 0000591) for the seismic strengthening of the Gas Company Tower has shed light on questions which warrant further investigation by the County before a decision is made on next steps for either building. It is our understanding that the cost of the County’s investment in either building are a key factor for consideration notwithstanding other less tangible aspects of either project such as cultural and historical impacts to the civic center, impact or improvement to County operations with a consolidation of departments, or alternative uses for either building all of which may be prudent for further additional study.

Baseline Performance Considerations for the Buildings

The stated goal within the Gas Company Tower RFP was “Damage Control level of structural seismic performance for a BSE-1E and a Limited Safety level of structural seismic performance for a BSE-2E.” Given the County’s concern over the cost of the proposed retrofit in both buildings it would seem prudent to question whether this is the most appropriate performance goal for either building. Furthermore, our understanding is that the retrofit scheme considered for the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration is base isolation, which tends to be one of the most expensive approaches to retrofit existing buildings and is found mostly in hospitals and other buildings with the expected highest levels of performance in an earthquake – and is not aligned with the stated performance requirements for

the Gas Company Tower. We would encourage the County to consider investigation into the reduction in cost associated with retrofit strategies that, while preserving life safety performance, may better align to the County's budget realities and the proposed usage of either building.

Cost Comparisons to Alternative Retrofit Approaches

The County's purported price tag of \$700 Million for the base isolation retrofit of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration equates to roughly \$730/SF. Alternatively, the County's stated budget for the Gas Company Tower of roughly \$235 Million equates to \$168/SF. We strongly believe the disparity between the two projects suggests they were not approached with the same assumptions and performance parameters. Swinerton has completed numerous structural retrofit projects at all scales from basic collapse protection up to immediate occupancy, the cost contemplated for the Gas Company Tower aligning more closely with what we have seen for life safety/collapse protection and the cost for the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration with that of higher standards.

While retrofit costs may vary due to a variety of factors, in our experience typical structural steel retrofit costs can be in the \$50-150/SF range, non-ductile concrete building costs have a larger variance in the \$50-300/SF range. In either scenario, the cost associated with the retrofit of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration seems well beyond the anticipated cost from similar building renovations. Has the County explored alternatives to base isolation for the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration that may be more aligned to the cost/SF that is contemplated for the Gas Company Tower? In our experience there are also significant benefits to several alternative approaches that may allow for simpler phasing of the retrofit to maintain the County's operations within the building, further reducing potential costs that may have been contemplated for temporary relocation of the County's current functions within the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration.

Recommended Next Steps

Swinerton believes there are several key questions the County should seek to address before considering any next steps for either the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration or the Gas Company Tower:

1. Has the County considered which is the right base level of seismic performance desired for County administration spaces?
2. Have both buildings been evaluated for the same base level of seismic performance?
3. Have less expensive alternative retrofit approaches been considered than base isolation that may warrant further continued study for the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration?
4. Has the impact of relocating County operations from the current Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration been reviewed for impact on public access and engagement with the County in comparison to the new location at the Gas Company Tower?

Given the magnitude of the County's investment in either project we believe addressing these questions may ultimately help guide the County to the right decision of how best to approach its investment in both buildings.

About Swinerton

Swinerton has been a trusted leader in Los Angeles construction for over 90 years, with a legacy defined by innovation, flexibility, and a deep commitment to the local community. As a 100% employee-owned company, Swinerton's Los Angeles team brings a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to every project, leveraging extensive local expertise and long-standing relationships to deliver industry leading results.

Swinerton's portfolio in Los Angeles County features a robust track record of structural renovations and complex upgrades across a range of sectors. Notable projects include: the multi-phase historic renovation and modernization of Los Angeles Union Station, a National Historic Site and one of Southern California's largest transit hubs; extensive renovations and structural improvements across multiple projects at Los Angeles International Airport; and surgical seismic renovations in occupied hospitals such as Huntington Memorial.

Swinerton's enduring presence in Los Angeles is marked by a culture of ownership, integrity, and excellence. The team's ability to respond to any project challenge—regardless of size, location, or complexity—continues to shape the city's landscape and deliver award-winning projects across the county.

Sincerely,



Kyle Burnham, P.E.
Director of Preconstruction and Estimating
OCLA Special Projects Division

Cc: Lia Tatevosian, SVP, Southern California Regional Manager
Daniel Camin, VP, OCLA Division Manager