



LOS ANGELES  
CONSERVANCY

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November 5, 2025

**Submitted Electronically**

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500 W. Temple Street  
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**RE: Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration Building**

Dear Honorable L.A. County Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of the Los Angeles Conservancy, I am writing to share our strong concerns about plans underway to both vacate and demolish the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration Building. Prompting this direction has been the County's acquisition of the Gas Tower Company.

Based on our understanding of the issues and information that has been provided, the Conservancy believes the decision to relocate to the Gas Tower Company was based on a severely flawed premise and analysis that was intended to present the most costly outcome as the only option. For instance, a proposed base isolation retrofit approach was studied as the only option for structural seismic strengthening of the historic building. This is a highly-intensive, costly, and rarely used approach that likely is not needed for this type of building and its structural system. The estimated cost for this approach is projected at \$700 million.

Not only are other types of structural interventions warranting study and consideration in this case, but experience also shows cost expenditures that



are significantly less than what was provided to the County. Inflated cost estimates and a disregard for other seismic solutions should not be the basis for any plans underway that call for the demolition of the Hall of Administration Building. As the center of County government and integral to this function, it is too important not to consider options other than demolition.

### **Historic Significance**

The Los Angeles County Hall of Administration is an iconic example of Late Moderne architecture, designed by a distinguished team of local architects and artists, including Paul Revere Williams, who also created the adjacent County Courthouse as cornerstones of the visionary 1947 Civic Center Master Plan. This plan transformed Bunker Hill, expanding the Civic Center west and establishing the east-west axis of government buildings that define today's Grand Park.

Completed in 1960, the Hall of Administration became the heart of Los Angeles County government, superseding the 1911 Hall of Records as the administrative center. Throughout its history, it has served as the seat of county governance and pivotal place and landmark within the larger Civic Center.

The Hall of Administration has achieved eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places and already secured listing in the California Register, affirming its importance in the Los Angeles Civic Center Historic District. This building is recognized not just as an architectural landmark, but also for its critical role in the county's governmental life and urban development.

Spanning two city blocks, the Hall of Administration is distinguished by entrances on Temple Street and Grand Park, clad in ceramic veneer and polished red granite. Its Late Moderne style is evident in the building's clean forms, horizontal emphasis, and smooth surfaces. Prominent porticos and colonnades, set back by landscaped forecourts, welcome visitors on both grand facades. Inside, the Hall boasts walls of Italian marble and polished metal fixtures, signifying mid-century luxury that was celebrated, notably by former Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, for whom the building was later renamed. The design is further enriched by integrated sculpture panels depicting the Mosaic Law and Declaration of Independence by Albert Stewart, presented in gold-glazed terra cotta at the south entrance facing Grand Park, continuing above the Grand Avenue entrance of the neighboring Courthouse.

### **Next Steps:**

The immediate priority is to halt any demolition plans for the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration Building and prevent the irreversible loss of this vital civic landmark. No further



actions, including demolition, should proceed until qualified professionals conduct an independent and transparent reassessment of the building's true needs, seismic safety, and rehabilitation costs. The County Board of Supervisors must ensure that decision-making is grounded in factual, expert analysis rather than assumptions about cost or feasibility. Above all, the Hall of Administration should be retained as a public-serving government building—continuing its longstanding role as a cornerstone of civic life and community access within the Los Angeles Civic Center.

The Conservancy welcomes the opportunity to bring its resources and expertise to support the County in planning for the future of the Hall of Administration Building. As a landmark at the heart of Los Angeles County government—and a defining feature of the Civic Center—this building is far too significant to move forward without fully exploring all available options.

**About the Los Angeles Conservancy:**

The Los Angeles Conservancy is the largest local historic preservation organization in the United States, with nearly 5,000 members throughout the Los Angeles area. Established in 1978, the Conservancy works to preserve and revitalize the significant architectural and cultural heritage of Los Angeles County through advocacy and education.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (213) 430-4203 or [afine@laconservancy.org](mailto:afine@laconservancy.org) should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Adrian Scott Fine  
President/ CEO  
Los Angeles Conservancy

