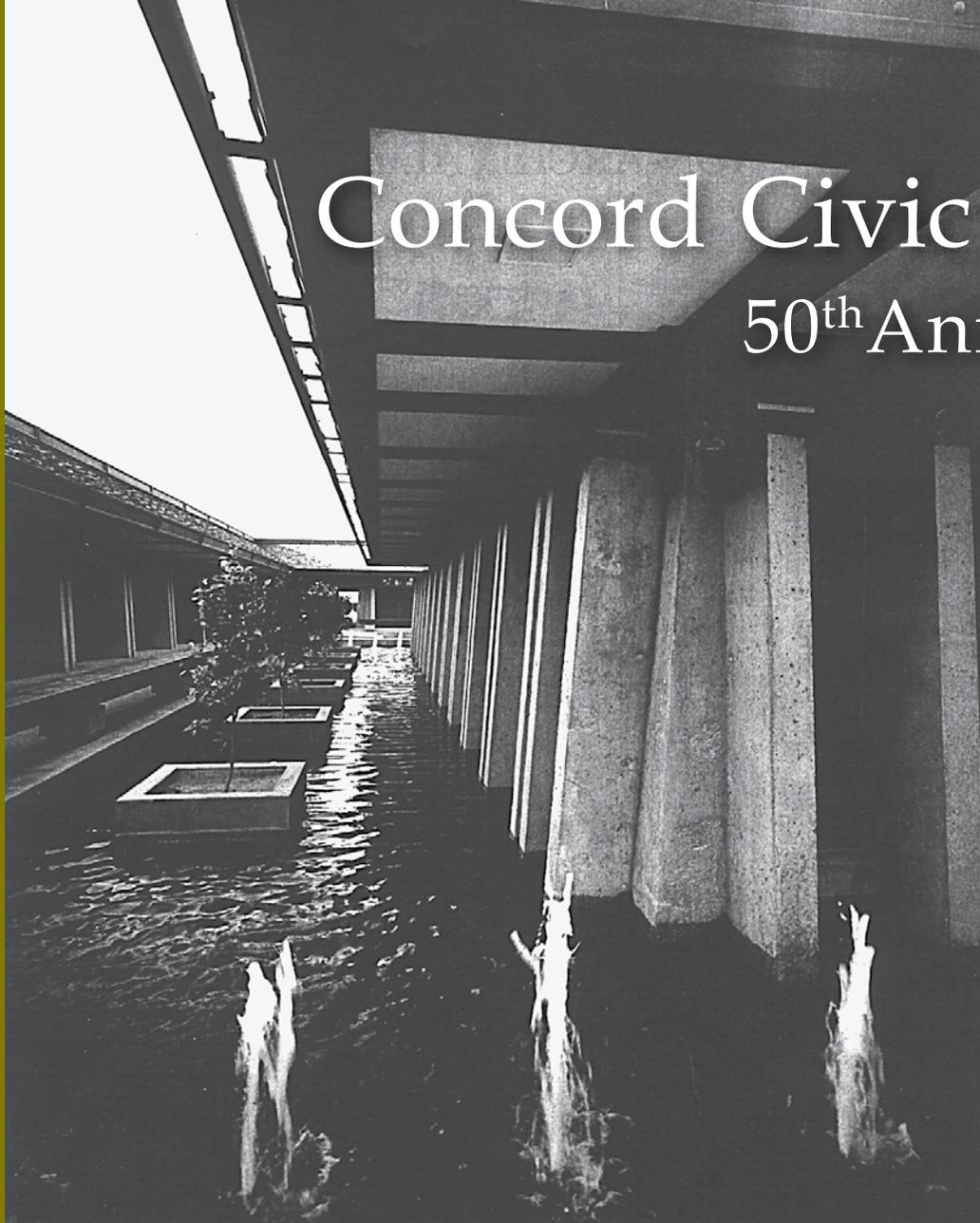


Concord Civic Center

50th Anniversary







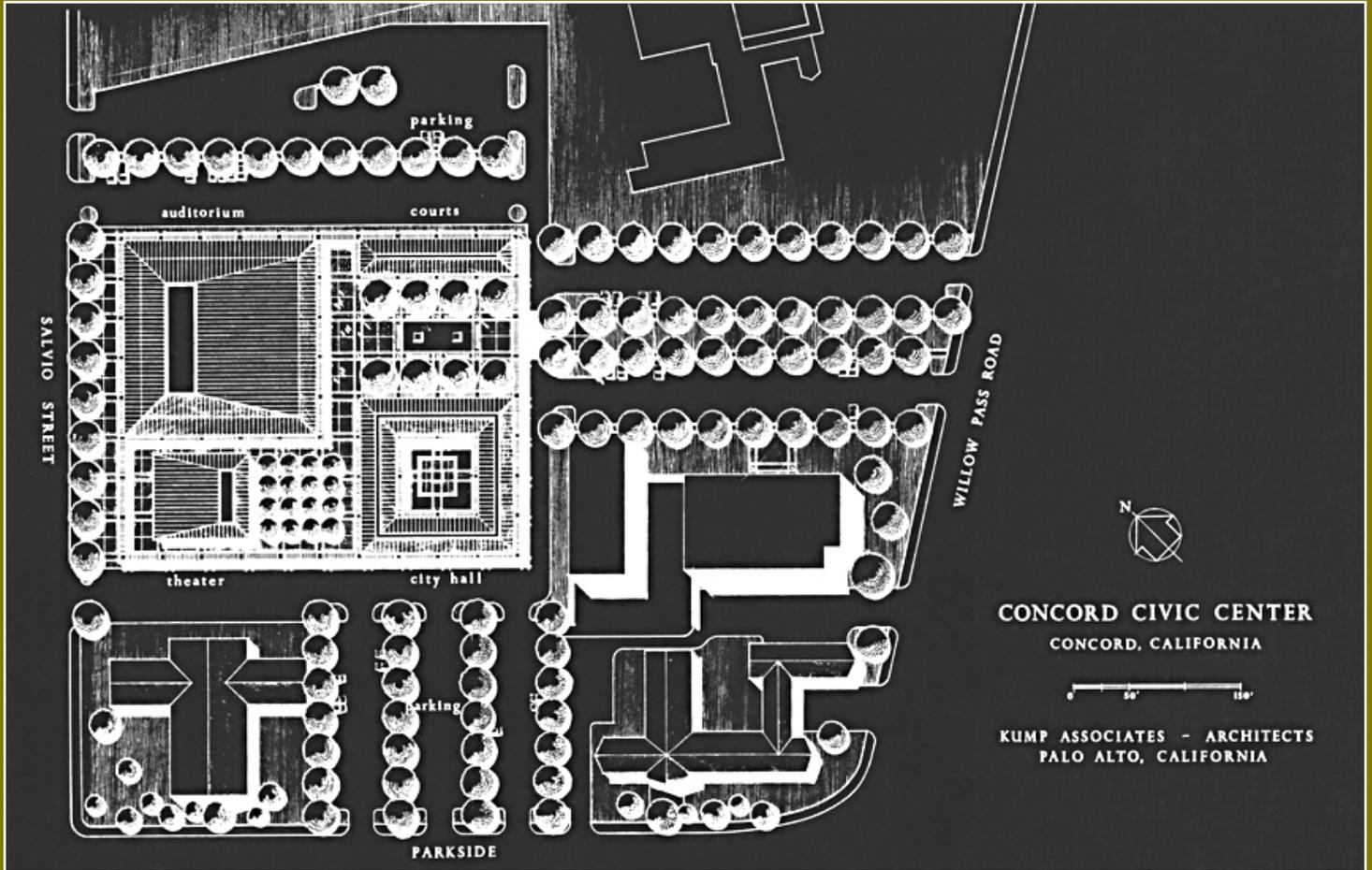
Courtyard, circa late 1960s.

Introduction

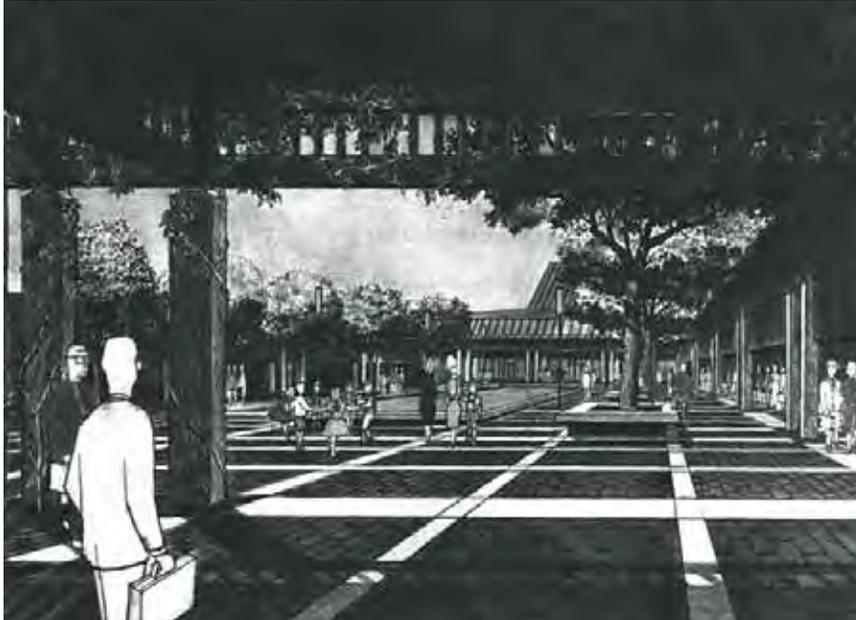
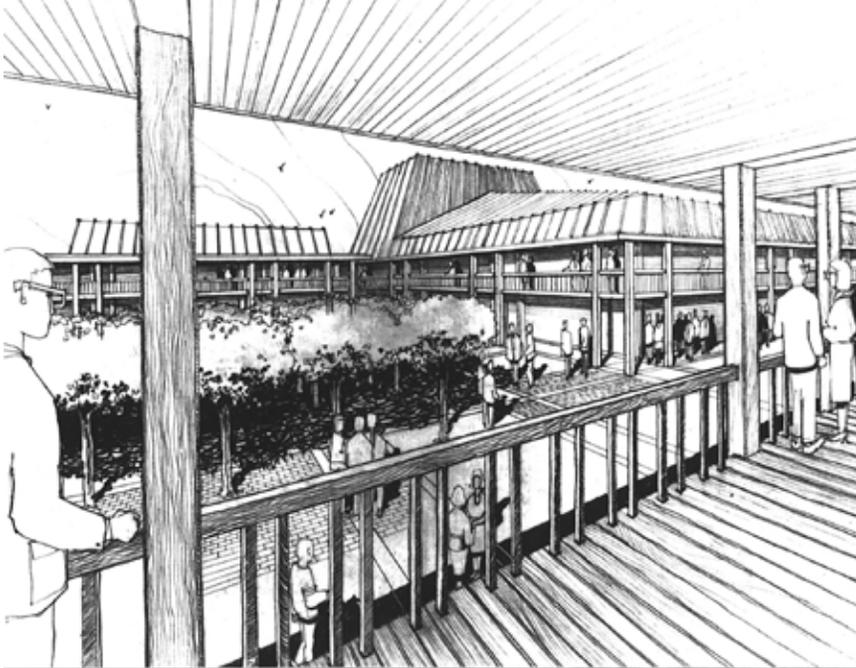
Fifty years ago, in December of 1966, dignitaries, residents and employees gathered to celebrate the completion of the new Concord Civic Center at 1950 Parkside Drive, between Willow Pass Road and Salvio Street.

Previously, City business had been conducted in a former firehouse (1905-1953), in Concord's Veteran's Hall (1953-1956) and in City Hall (1956-1966). City Hall was located on the same property where the new Civic Center was constructed. Concord's swift growth from 40,000 residents in 1960 to 85,000 residents by 1970 required additional employees and space to conduct City business.

The Concord Civic Center was designed by the internationally acclaimed architect Ernest Kump, and was designated the Farrell A. Stewart Civic Center in 1994, upon the retirement of City Manager Farrell (Bud) Stewart, who held the position from 1960 to 1986, and again from 1992 to 1994.



Conceptual site plan.



Design

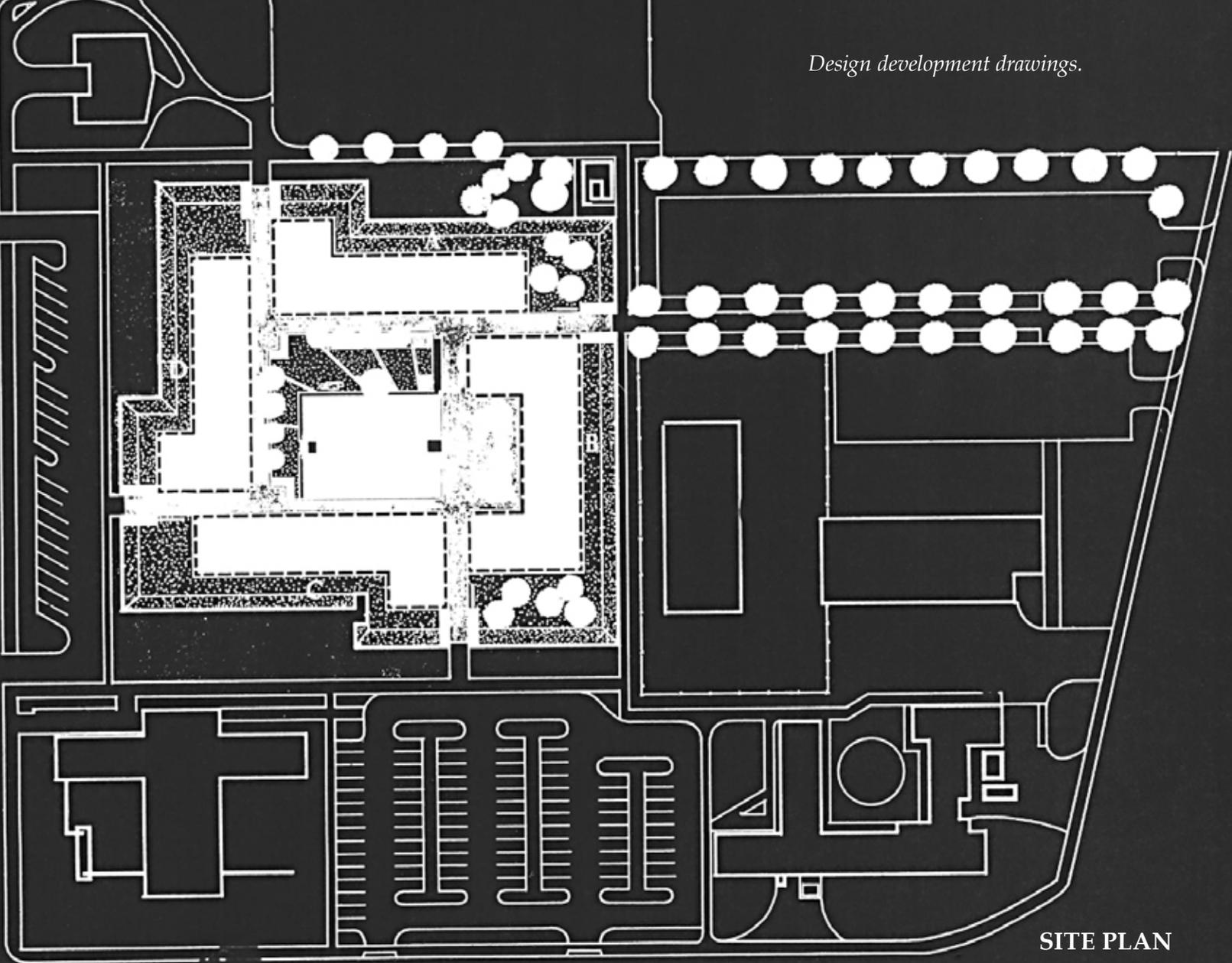
In the early 1960s, the City conducted an extensive search throughout Northern California to find an architectural firm to design the Concord Civic Center. In 1964, the architectural firm of Ernest J. Kump and Associates was selected for the project.

Kump's progressive architectural ideas were used in the design of the new complex. A group of one-story, free-standing buildings arranged in a pin-wheel configuration are surrounded by a minimally landscaped central courtyard. The buildings are constructed of pre-cast concrete components contrasted with natural materials, such as dark stained redwood siding and shingled roofs with generous overhangs.

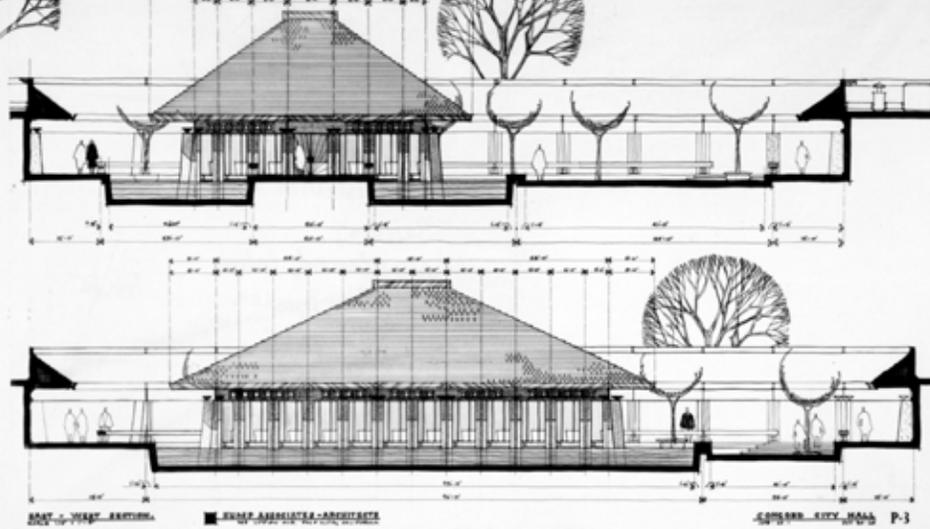
The early schematic designs show a Civic Center complex that incorporates a theater, civic auditorium and court hall.

Schematic perspectives of conceptual design.

Design development drawings.

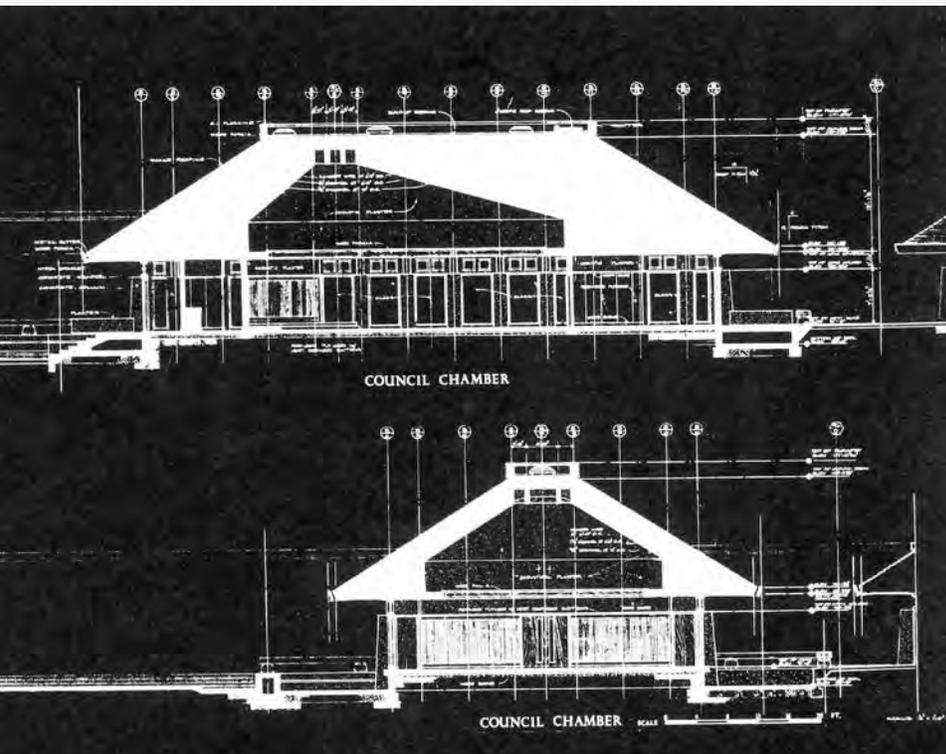


SITE PLAN



The final design selected by the City Council included only the municipal office buildings, but still had a \$1.2 million price tag, which was not an insignificant amount of money in 1966. A comparable campus today might cost \$50 million or more.

Three wings of the complex were designed as City offices, with the fourth leased to Contra Costa County as a courthouse. In 1995, an early morning fire in the courthouse destroyed that wing and caused extensive damage to the adjacent wings. Eighty-eight firefighters valiantly fought the blaze and prevented it from completely destroying the Civic Center. Replacement of the fourth wing is a future project.



In 2000, work began on a project to expand a portion of one wing to serve as the One Stop Permit Center. The building houses staff from the Planning, Engineering and Building divisions. Applicants seeking a development or home improvement permit are able to consult with appropriate staff at one location instead of having to visit multiple offices. The new Permit Center opened in fall 2001.





Aerial view of the site with Salvio Street in the foreground, Willow Pass Road at the top of the photo and Parkside Drive connecting the two streets. Civic Center was constructed on the old baseball field. Note the Concord Library at Salvio Street and Parkside Drive, and the 1956 City Hall building at Willow Pass Road and Parkside Drive.

Site

The Civic Center is built on what previously had been a baseball field. It was constructed between the former City Hall building, built in 1956 at the corner of Willow Pass Road and Parkside Drive, and the Concord Library, completed in 1959 at the corner of Parkside Drive and Salvio Street.

The former City Hall building was converted to serve as Concord's Police Station when the Civic Center was completed. In 1996, the new Police Headquarters Building opened at 1350 Galindo Street and the former City Hall was torn down. The Concord Library is still in operation at the same location.



Construction of Civic Center complex and City Council Chamber.



Construction

Construction techniques employed to build the complex included a pre-cast concrete pylon and spandrel system. In the 1960s, this was recognized as a new and innovative approach. The structural system for each of the buildings is located on the exterior of the walls, which allows for more interior space and a flexible floor plan. A pneumatic tube system was installed to send paper documents from one building to another. Water from the fountain surrounding the Council Chamber was recirculated and used in the buildings' cooling system.



MAYOR
CITY MANAGER
CITY PLANNING
CITY ATTORNEY



City Hall Reception Area

Interior Design

The City hired the firm of Carl James to design the interior of the Civic Center. The interior design concept incorporated office furnishings from Knoll, a company well known for innovative modern furniture design. The furniture collection included noted designer pieces from Mies van der Rohe and Florence Knoll.

In addition to the interior furnishings, the City acquired a large collection of Ansel Adams photographs. In the 1960s, Adams was not as well known as he is today. His work still hangs in Civic Center hallways and offices.



Civic Center photographs circa 1960s.



Architect

The Civic Center was designed by Ernest J. Kump and Associates. Kump (1911-1999) was a highly regarded architect who combined modern design philosophy with California wood-frame architecture in site and space planning.

Kump and his partner C. H. Franklin gained national prominence when their design for the Fresno City Hall (1941) was selected by the Museum of Modern Art in New York as "one of the most significant American Structures built between 1932 and 1944." Among his notable projects are Foothill Community College in Los Altos Hills, and DeAnza Community College in Cupertino. Locally, he designed buildings for Acalanes High School in Lafayette, Miramonte High School in Orinda and Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek.

Mr. Kump was an American Institute of Architects Fellow. After a successful career in the United States, he retired to Switzerland, where he died in 1999.



Elected officials and staff at ground breaking ceremony circa 1965.

Acknowledgements

The '60s-era drawings and photographs used in this brochure are part of the architect's personal collection and were acquired by the University of California. They most recently made their journey from the Kump family castle in the Tyrolean Alps of Austria to the University's archives. Photographs by Karl Riek.

Elected Officials

Laura M. Hoffmeister ... Mayor
Edi E. Birsan Vice Mayor
Ronald Leone Councilmember
Carlyn Obringer Councilmember
Tim McGallian City Treasurer