

REHABILITATION OF THE RIVERSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY (MAIN BRANCH) FOR USE AS  
THE CHEECH MARIN CENTER FOR CHICANO ART, CULTURE, AND INDUSTRY  
RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPENDIX

PREPARED FOR THE CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD



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imagining change in historic environments through design, research, and technology

MARCH 28, 2019

REVISED: AUGUST 20, 2019

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CHEECH MARIN CENTER FOR CHICANO ART, CULTURE, AND INDUSTRY | OVERVIEW

SITE AND BUILDING HISTORY

The Riverside Library at 3581 Mission Inn Avenue was constructed in 1965 in the New Formalist style and currently serves as the main library branch for the City of Riverside. The design is attributed to Bolton C. Moise, Jr. of the Riverside firm of Moise & Harbach, with the assistance of architect Eugene “Gene” Fickes of the Monrovia firm Fickes & Fickes. The Library’s most distinctive features are the symmetrical plan, wide overhanging flat roof, sculptural screens, arched canopy, and original globe light fixtures at the exterior and interior.

The library occupies a city block bounded by 6th Street to the northeast, Lemon Street to the southeast, Mission Inn Avenue to the southwest and Orange Street to the northwest. The main entrance of the building is along Mission Inn Avenue and faces a large plaza. The Chinese Memorial Pavilion, the Imre Kalincsak Sundial and the Unitarian Church of Riverside are also located on the block, towards Mission Inn Avenue at the southwest and southeast corners of the site. The northwest, north and northeast portions of the block consist of parking for the library, immediately adjacent to the building.

The exterior of the Riverside Library is largely unchanged. Alterations include changes to the west ramp to include a landing and the addition of the guardrails.

The plaza, however, has been significantly altered over time and no longer retains integrity of design. The public plaza originally featured an open Mid-Century Modern aesthetic characterized by broad paved walking paths and raised concrete planters. It included concrete patios flanking the main entrance to the library, tiled fountain pools, and seating areas linking the planters. In 1968, the Imre Kalincsak Sundial Clock was installed near the center of the plaza, and in 1987 the Chinese Pavilion was constructed on the southwest corner of the plaza. In 1999, the plaza was redesigned in preparation for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society’s National Convention. At this time, the remaining tiled fountains and concrete planters were removed and a semicircular concrete plaza with radiating pathways was constructed. Deciduous trees, shrubs and other ground cover were planted to soften the edge of the library, and the sundial clock was relocated to the southwest corner of the plaza near the Chinese Pavilion. The original midcentury modern design of the plaza has been extensively altered and on longer retains integrity of design.

HISTORIC STATUS

The Main Library is eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3. Buildings significant under Criterion 3 embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. It is significant at the local level in the context of modern architecture in Riverside as a good and rare example of New Formalism. The Library retains a high level of integrity with only minor alterations.

The library was recommended for City Landmark Designation on February 21, 2018, and subsequently designated by the City Council on April 3, 2018. In addition to the building’s significance as New Formalist civic architecture in Riverside, the landmark designation also noted the building as the work of the significant local architectural firm Moise, Harbach and Hewlett.

While it is located within the locally designated Mission Inn Historic District, the Library is a non-contributor to the district because it was constructed outside the period of significance (1889-1946). The library is also within the Seventh Street Historic District but does not contribute to that district either because it was constructed outside of the period of significance (1871-1946). The Library’s current California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) Status Code is 6Y – determined ineligible for the NR by consensus through Section 106 Process. Note: the CHRIS status code was given in the 1990s before the building was age eligible (50 years).



View of the front facade of the Riverside Main Library ca. 1966.

CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

The New Formalism architecture style emerged in the 1960s largely as a rejection to Modernism. Features common to the style include symmetry in elevations, classical proportion and scale, use of concrete and the use of a raised podium to separate the building from nature. The style was used primarily for institutional and public buildings.

As a building significant for its New Formalism style of architecture, the character-defining features of the building include:

- Symmetrical design composition with square plan
- Monumentality
- Flat roof with deep overhang
- Raised podium at south facade
- Exterior running-bond brick walls
- Centrally located exterior stairs
- Arched concrete canopy with three distinct curves, cantilevered over main entrance
- Square, full-height concrete pilasters across all façades
- Full-height latticework concrete screens with patterning designed to resemble doves on main and side façades

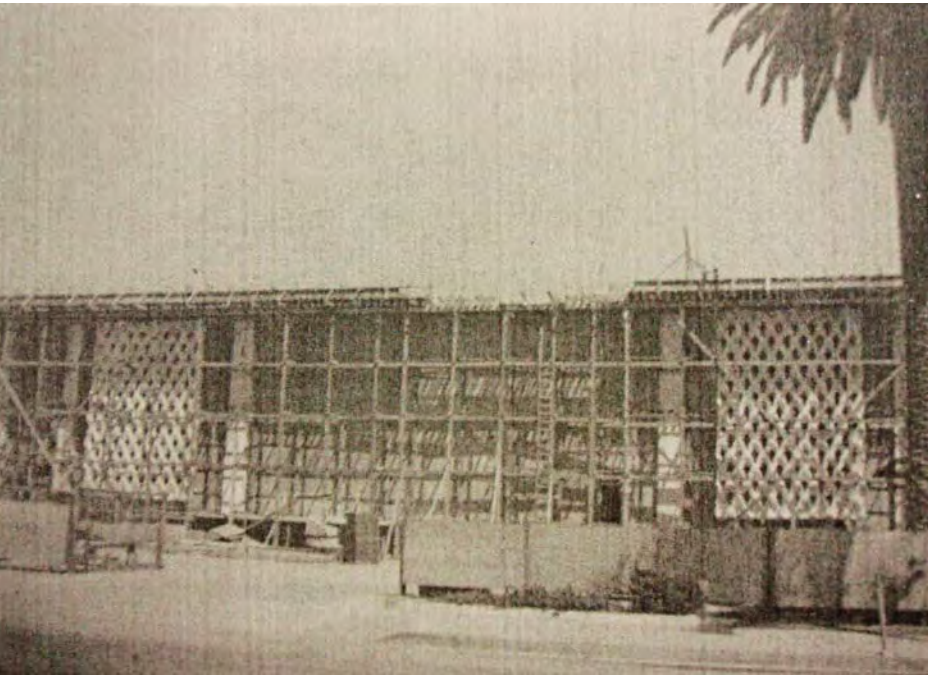


View of front (south) facade and entrance steps.

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HISTORIC IMAGES



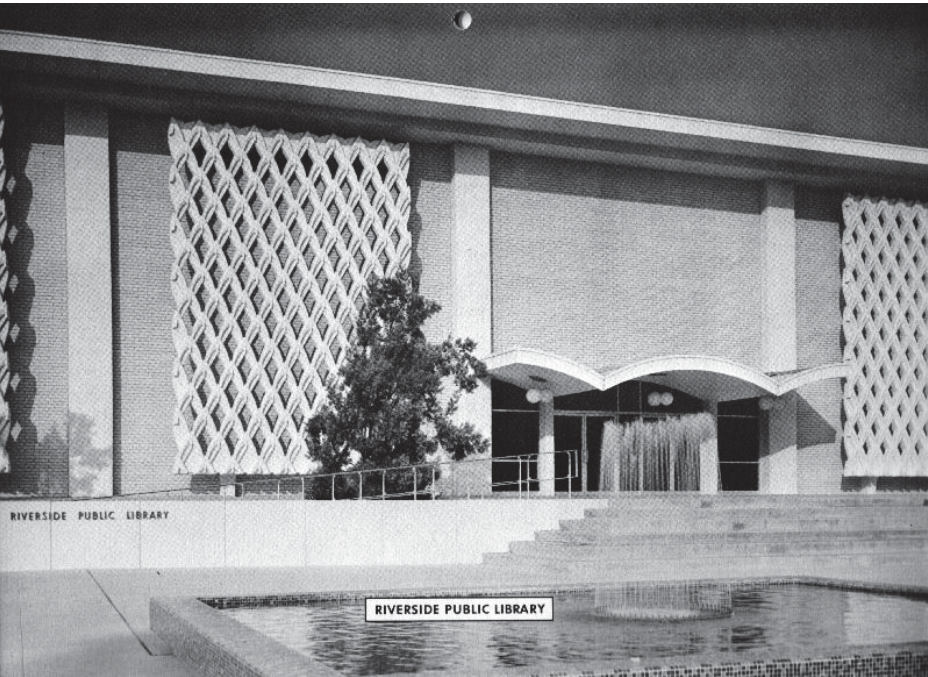
View of the construction of the Riverside Main Library ca. 1964 (Riverside Public Library).



Architect rendering of Riverside Public Library ca. 1965.



View of Riverside Main Library Plaza ca. 1965 (Baker, Ronald J.)



View of Riverside Main Library Plaza and front podium ca. 1967.



View of the Riverside Main Library Plaza ca. 1968.



View of Riverside Main Library Plaza and front podium ca. 1970s.



EXISTING CONDITION IMAGES



View of the south facade and front podium, steps and ramps.



Front entrance with existing storefront, lighting, and canopy.



View of west facade and parking.



View of the north facade, parking and loading dock.



Existing loading dock with bumpers, stairs and canopy.



View of the east facade and parking.



CONTEXT IMAGES



Existing Municipal Museum, across Mission Inn Avenue, looking southwest.



Existing Mission Inn, across Orange Street, looking southwest.



Existing church, at the southeast corner of the block, at Mission Inn Avenue and Lemon Street.



Existing building to the north, across 4th Street, looking northeast.



View of the west facade with brick, concrete columns, and decorative screens.



Existing Sundail and Chinese Pavilion (behind) at the southwest corner of the site.



SITE MAP





PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project consists of the adaptive reuse of the 1965 Riverside Library building for the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art, Culture, and Industry (The Cheech), which will feature an extensive collection of Chicano art.

Alterations at the exterior of the building are minimal and intended to be a “light touch.”

Exterior alterations include:

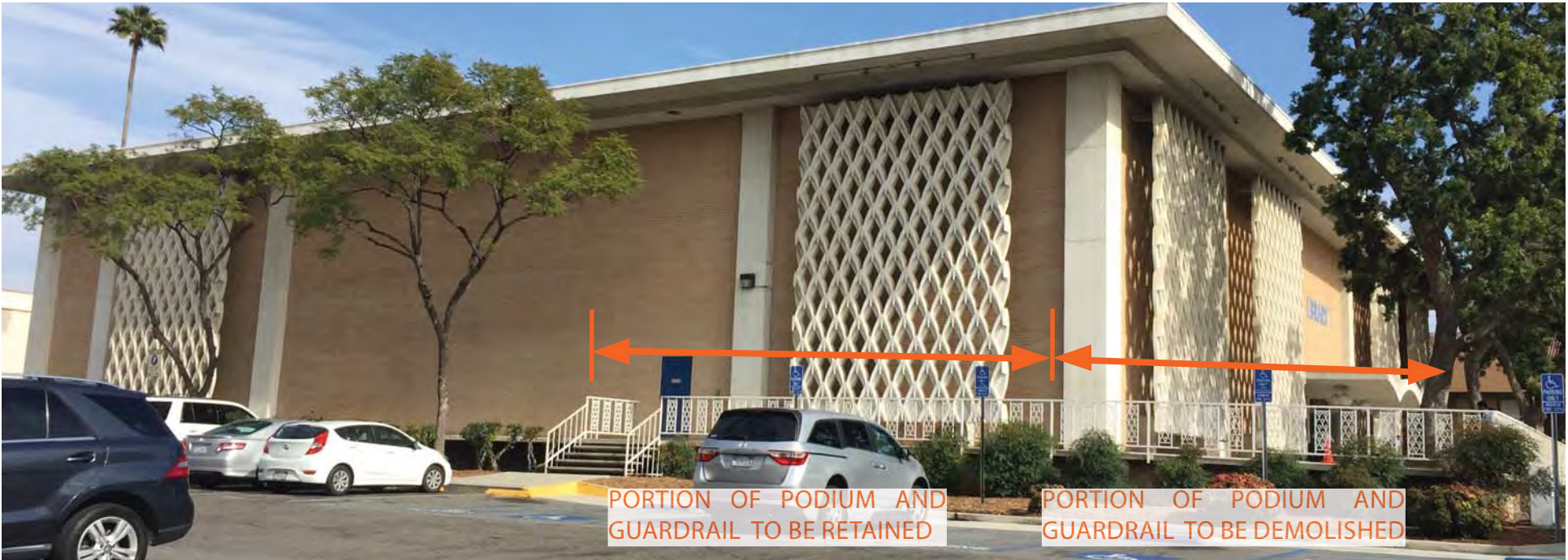
- The existing entry storefronts will be replaced with a new compatible aluminum storefront, which will have a symmetrical configuration. The replacement storefront will have a clear anodized aluminum finish, similar to the existing.
- Due to extensive cracking, the podium will be replaced with a new podium that will match the existing in height, width, depth, and materials. The existing non-historic railing around the podium, south of the building’s edge, will be removed. A 6 inch curb will be added at the perimeter of the east, west, and south edges of the podium, where the railing has been removed. The grade surrounding the podium, where the railing is proposed to be removed, will be raised by approximately 6 inches, thereby reducing the height differential between the grade and podium to less than 30 inches and eliminating the need for railing. This will restore the original look of the podium, without railings.
- Although original to the design of the building, the existing podium trees appear to be the cause of the damage and will be removed.
- The primary entry steps and ramps will also be replaced with new steps and ramps because of extensive cracking. The new steps and ramps will be reconfigured with a curvilinear design that draws influence from the curved canopy at the entrance. The curved configuration will be compatible with the building in terms of material (concrete), texture, and symmetrical design. Planter areas adjacent to the proposed stairs and ramp will be infilled with concrete matching the existing concrete walkways.
- The existing roof is in poor condition and is proposed to be recoated with a new layer of thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO). The new material will have a similar color to the existing.
- The age of the building and new museum programing require upgrades to the existing mechanical systems and addition of new rooftop units. The location of the new proposed equipment is largely centered on the roof. New equipment screens that are compatible with the exiting screens will be constructed to hide the new equipment.
- The utilitarian doors on the north elevation, at the loading docks will be replaced with new compatible utilitarian metal doors. To meet current building codes, new perforated metal panels will be attached to the existing guardrails on the loading dock.

No other changes are proposed for the exterior of the building. No new exterior openings or additions are proposed. Character-defining features of the library such as the concrete screens, brick walls, roof overhang, concrete entrance canopy, and concrete pilasters will be retained and protected.

MARCH 28, 2019

REVISED: AUGUST 20, 2019

P19-0243, Exhibit 4 - Revised Project Description and Site Photos



View of the west side of the library, showin extent of demolition. East side demolition is similar to the west.



Brick retaining wall below podium will be retained and repaired.



Concrete at podium, in poor condition, will be replaced.