

CRA'S HELFELD ON APRIL 12



"Urban Revitalization in Los Angeles — and Beyond" will be the theme of an address by Edward N. Helfeld, Administrator of the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency, at the SCC/AIA Chapter meeting on Tuesday, April 12, 1977. Helfeld's presentation, which is open to the public without charge, will begin at 8:00 p.m. in the Bing Theater of the L.A. County Museum of Art.

Helfeld, who joined the CRA last July, will discuss the controversial history of urban redevelopment around the United States and offer an update on the challenges faced by the CRA in Los Angeles.

A member of the American Institute of Planners, the American Society of Landscape Architects, and the Board of Governors of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, Helfeld brings a rich and varied background to his new post in Los Angeles. Prior to his appointment to the CRA, he served for 10 years as Executive Director of the St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority in St. Paul, Minnesota, where the urban renewal program has built or preserved through rehabilitation more than 10 percent of the city's housing stock.

He has also held positions with Pennsylvania's Redevelopment Authority of Alleghany County and the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. A graduate of Queens College, New York City, Helfeld received degrees in city planning and landscape architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

A reception sponsored by the SCC/AIA will precede Helfeld's address. Details on the cost and location of the reception can be found in the enclosed special announcement. For reservations and further information, please call the Chapter office at 624-6561.

PEOPLE MOVER: A NEW LOOK DOWNTOWN

Editor's Note: As part of L.A. ARCHITECT's continuing coverage of urban design in Southern California, we present three points of view on the proposed Automated Guideway Transit system — better known as the People Mover. Michael Franklin Ross, AIA, introduces the People Mover with the following article.

Last November, the people of Los Angeles once again voted down a sales tax hike to help pay for a Regional Rapid Transit System. It looked like cars and buses were going to be the only vehicles moving people around the Southland for many years to come. Then UMTA (Urban Mass Transportation Administration) surprised most of us by awarding our City and the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) \$126 million dollars in federal funds to implement a downtown people mover system.

It was the result of four years' hard work by the CRA and Mayor Bradley's office. L.A. won the big money over four finalists and a total of 38 other cities who were competing. (According to CRA's dynamic Project Manager Dan Townsend, St. Paul, Minnesota received \$45 million, Cleveland, Ohio, \$41 million and Houston, Texas, \$35 million. Townsend perceives L.A.'s larger share of federal money as a unique opportunity to create an operable People Mover using existing technology that will be a prototype for large urban centers throughout the country.) The Federal Government will provide 80 percent of the total needed for the system with the State of California providing 10 percent and the City and County of Los Angeles each providing an additional 5 percent. When Uncle Sam agrees to give you four bucks for each dollar bill in your pocket, who's about to argue? Obviously no one wants to

send the money back to Washington — but not everybody agrees on exactly how or where or what to spend it on.

About two years ago, the architecture and urban design firm of Kahn Kappe Lotery Boccato (KKLB) was asked by the CRA to examine alternative modes and routes for a downtown transportation system. Their study recommended the implementation of a multimodal approach which would provide major bus and auto intercept garages at the periphery of downtown to be connected by an automated guideway transit (AGT) also known as "the downtown People Mover." The initial segment is designed to operate from Union Station, winding its way past City Hall, up Bunker Hill, between the new Bonaventure Hotel and the Arco Towers, then traveling along Figueroa to the Convention Center.

The proposal is clouded and confused by political issues like who should control all those federal dollars, who is benefiting and who is left out. It shall not be the purpose of this article to shed any light on these issues, but rather to address itself to the question: If CRA builds an AGT in the Central Business District, how does that help L.A.; and, secondly, how can this new technology — whatever it is — assist us in generating a more viable, pleasant, healthy place for people?

The degeneration of America's central cities has plagued us for several decades. The increased cost of fuel and the development of housing increasingly farther from employment centers, combined with the refreshing signs of growing residential neighborhoods near downtown, are beginning to offer new hope for our urban centers. Reverberations of the success of San Francisco's Embarcadero Center may already be felt in Los Angeles with the opening of John Portman's Bonaventure Hotel (L.A. ARCHITECT March 1975). Booked for months in advance, the Bonaventure has helped boost hotel reservations at the grand old Biltmore and the shiny Hyatt Regency.

The potential of the People Mover to aid in downtown mobility, to generate commercial growth and to help unify the urban structure of our city could be rather sizable. According to Kurt Meyer, FAIA, Chairman of the CRA, interested developers are already asking where transit stops will be located. Meyer is enthusiastic about creating a dynamic urban fabric weaving together the pedestrian bridge system (L.A. ARCHITECT, October 1975) and the People Mover technology with the hotels, the Arco Plaza and the major employment centers. He cautions, however, that while the People Mover "will support development, it will not reverse urban decline." Economic consultant Jerry Keyser adds that the People Mover can be a "big shot in the arm which would increase hotel occupancies, increase retail sales, and increase development, but it cannot turn around land patterns that are caused by other powerful reasons." Both men are agreed on the choice of location for the initial segment of the AGT. Certain factions of the Citizens Advisory Panel (CAP) believe the initial route should have been located to the east side of downtown, but the CRA and its consultants chose to run the initial segment through the west side where growth has begun and where a great deal of investment has already been made. Since the east side will continue to be served by increased bus service, and since locating the People Mover there would have a greater negative impact on residential neighborhoods, it seems to this author that the logic of the CRA decision is sound in trying to be successful with the initial segment and then expanding it, rather than ignoring the Bonaventure Hotel and trying to serve a transit-dependent population that probably could not develop the ridership to support an automated guideway transit.

The KKLb urban design studies focus on the impact of imposing an elevated AGT on the existing urban fabric. Their deftly drawn one-point perspectives provide us with some idea of how one kind of guideway might look passing through our city. These are edifying sketches that begin to examine the aesthetic challenge of interfacing a new transit element with various building types, but the study did not fully investigate the potential of using the People Mover system to generate urban form and new architectural prototypes. This will be the challenge of the next phase of urban design study. Where the route passes through parcels presently being planned for senior citizen housing, a unique design model fusing the transit technology with enclosed public space could be evolved. The interpenetration of

the pedestrian bridge system that links the Arco Plaza with the Bonaventure Hotel and the AGT station could form another prototype that may generate an entire vocabulary of urban design elements. Perhaps this was outside the KKLb contract or maybe they simply left something for the rest of us to do.

In either case, the urban design elements of the downtown People Mover deserve considerably more attention than they have been given to date. Land use criteria and physical design criteria such as joint development potential, higher land use stimulation, edge reinforcement and form generation are all key issues to be studied in greater depth as implementation of the system moves forward.

Michael Franklin Ross, AIA

KKLB STUDY OF PEOPLE MOVER

INTRODUCTION

Traffic congestion and an inadequate downtown circulation transportation system have been deterrents in implementing the adopted Central City Community Plan. The concept of the Bunker Hill People Mover, connecting two remote parking structures to Bunker Hill, was developed by the Community Redevelopment Agency to ease congestion on Bunker Hill access streets.

In 1975, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and transportation agencies serving downtown realized it was necessary to develop a broader circulation/distribution system (C/DS) to solve Bunker Hill and the downtown mobility problems. This led to the adoption of the current program that encompasses the entire Central Business District (CBD).

The purpose of the program was twofold: Assess the need for future transportation improvements in downtown; and evaluate options and highlight the trade-offs in providing improved downtown transportation services.

The program addresses these issues in a broad context that integrates transportation planning with urban design, and responds to the physical, social, and economic needs of downtown in development of transportation service options.

An integral part of the planning process was an extensive community participation program. The Citizens' Advisory Panel (CAP) contributed significantly to the development of goals and objectives, the definition of transportation alternatives, and the evaluation of the alternatives. CAP was provided supplemental technical assistance by the Los Angeles Community Design Center and the Barrio Planners.

The alternative transit improvement options for Bunker Hill and the CBD that emerged from this study included an all-bus improvement, the introduction of an elevated automated guideway (AGT) with supporting bus system, and the null or in-place 1976 system. (Personal rapid transit (PRT) does not meet the UMTA criterion for availability of technology.)

The total AGT network consists of three segments, which were analyzed to determine the most appropriate initial segments. Each segment of the total network emphasizes different development potentials. The west side segment emphasizes coordination of metropolitan plans and the reinforcement of new development trends. The other two segments emphasize the possibility of using capital intensive transportation services to promote development in deteriorating sections of downtown — a major concern of CAP.

The findings of the program, including system usage, costs, connectivity opportunities, social, economic, and environmental impacts, were evaluated against the three AGT segments and the three alternatives on an ordinal ranking basis.

It was determined by the CRA and the consultants that the west side alignment and the AGT/Bus alternative offered the greatest benefits and were the most viable.

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS

The Pedestrian Circulation System is designed to interface with the existing and projected Central City pedestrian systems. They include the Bunker Hill Pedway System, the Department of City Planning Central City Elevated Pedway System, Little Tokyo Commercial Mall, and the Civic Center Mall.

The objectives of the proposed system are to integrate with the above pedestrian systems and to provide circulation linkages with primary activity centers within Bunker Hill and the CBD. The

resultant system optimizes the linkage of nodes, plazas, special interest and landmark elements, and retail shopping areas.

As a socio-commercial entity, Broadway is unique. The half-mile shopping district extending from Third to Seventh Streets has been the largest in the CBD for years, serving various communities in the Los Angeles basin. At present, the Latin-Mexican community has established a definable cultural mark on Broadway which permeates the commercial and social patterns. A concept put forth for reinforcing this cultural phenomenon is to create a center mall rather than increasing the width of the existing sidewalks. Within the center mall could be vending stands, outdoor eating areas, social seating, restrooms, and bus waiting areas, all incorporated as part of a promenade. Only bus service to the shopping area and emergency vehicles will continue to run adjacent to the center mall.

As a contrast to Broadway, Seventh Street is a retail shopping street which contains major department stores, banks, financial institutions, and a variety of quality commercial enterprises. The plan projects the closure of the street to auto traffic, providing exclusive use for buses and emergency vehicles. The sidewalks are widened on both sides to provide a distinctive difference from the treatment on Broadway and are enhanced through extensive tree planting, bus

(Continued inside)

ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

That an architecture firm — and a small one at that — was chosen to coordinate the first phase of the C/DS (circulation/distribution system) program is unique. Engineering firms or mega-A/E agencies are usually awarded such contracts. The CRA is to be credited for its faith in the architecture profession to handle this tall order.

And a tall order it was. As if contract management, data collection, identification of urban design criteria, preliminary design studies, and coordination of several consultants weren't enough, federal interest in the project's "demonstration" attributes (always suspicious) and recent threats to the CRA's administrative independence kept all involved on their toes — hardly a setting conducive to pleasing everyone.

In spite of these adversities, Kahn Kappe Lotery Boccato has emerged intact. All of those interviewed regard the architects as sensitive, responsive people. And the \$126 million federal commitment to the project makes the CRA happy. How KKLb approached this multi-faceted program and its implications on the future of Los Angeles are of undisputed interest to local architects.

Unfortunately, space limitations and the fact that KKLb was not supposed to invent a "product" preclude anything more than a broad-brush description of the KKLb philosophy and approach. As coordinators of a diverse team of consultants, KKLb provided the CRA with incremental components; the CRA in turn is preparing final documents.

Identification of the criteria to be satisfied later by architectural pieces is the meat of urban design, a thesis lucidly presented by Jonathan Barnett in *Urban Design as Public Policy* (1974, Architectural Record Books). Thus renderings — superimposing guideways and companion elements on a downtown backdrop — intend to show lay people how the system *might* look, not how it will look, and are only a small part of the process KKLb went through. That process dealt with issues such as alternative futures of the Central Business District, the role of CBD transit (any system) as a distinct but integral part of a regional system, and the dynamic political, social, economic, and physical contexts into which the system must fit.

A more complete description of this process, including the research supporting the CRA's application for federal funds, will be available this spring with publication of *Moving People in Los Angeles: Summary Report of the Los Angeles C/DS Program*.

A. Jeffrey Skorneck

APRIL 1977

Inside:

Richard Martin: An architect in the Southern California tradition

Calendar:

April 12: Edward N. Helfeld addresses SCC/AIA Chapter meeting, L.A. County Art Museum's Bing Theater, 8 p.m.

PEOPLE MOVER

(Continued from front page)
shelters, street furniture, and graphics.

The *Civic Center Mall* is a large linear landscaped open space which forms an extended courtyard for many of the government buildings. It is projected within this study to serve as a primary pedestrian link. A concept for a focal point of this area is "the circus" intended to become a place where people will gather to hear a variety of planned and spontaneous entertainment programs. The facilities will include viewing-stands, whose undersides will contain food concessionaires and audio-visual facilities.

The elevated pedway connecting the transit station with *Pershing Square*, and the introduction of a pedestrian access directly to Broadway, visually and functionally links the station, Pershing Square, the Broadway shopping street, and eventually Bunker Hill with its activity centers.

The concept of the *East Side In-Town Rehab Plan* demonstrates, in a nine-block area, how a building rehabilitation program, as projected by the LA/CDC, can be combined with an improved transit and pedestrian system, open space, landscaping, and other elements to revitalize a deteriorating area. The project would also serve as an activity area linking Bunker Hill, Little Tokyo, and Pershing Square. Ultimately, if supported by public policy, it could act as a catalyst in the imperative revitalization of the Skid Row Area.

INTERCEPTS

Of the many sites reviewed for bus and auto intercepts, two of the potential ten sites were considered most favorable. These two sites have good access to freeways, there would be no negative impact on residential communities, and the street capacity can be made to accommodate the traffic volume resulting from operation of the intercepts.

One projected AGT station and bus/auto intercept facility is located on the vacant land due east of the *Union Station*. In addition to the AGT station, the facility includes terminal parking facilities for two thousand carpool autos. The projected facility located adjacent to the *Convention Center* is on an empty site at the intersection of

Eleventh Street and Figueroa Street. One hundred seventeen buses, in a given peak hour, and one thousand carpool autos are accommodated within this facility.

GUIDEWAY EVALUATION

Many configurations of an elevated guideway are possible, dependent upon a final choice of technology which was not within the scope of this study. The double roadway guideway configuration was examined because it represents the maximum visual impact.

As a result of the examination of potentially negative impact, a set of criteria was developed to be utilized in any further development of an elevated guideway form of transportation.

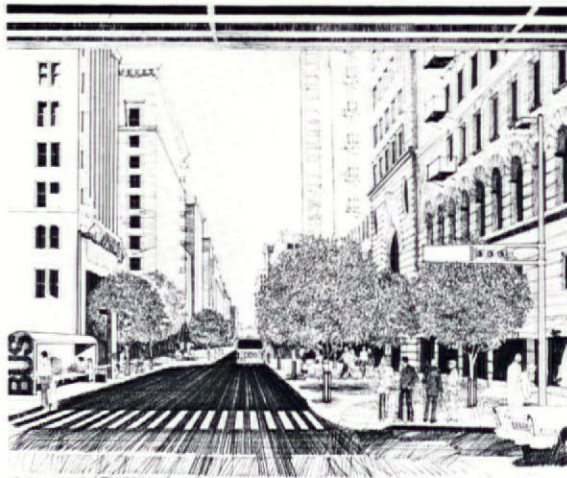
The station locations were to be used to create and enhance open space, relate to the proposed and existing pedway and pedestrian system, and integrate with existing and proposed buildings where feasible. The consultants established design consistency throughout the system and among all of the stations in order to strengthen visual identity.

CONCLUSION

With available Federal and State AGT funds, the greater potential for maintaining economic viability of the CBD, the projected increases in annual sales and tax revenues, potential patronage, and net operating cost, it was the judgment of the consultants and the CRA that the automated guideway with supporting bus service and the initial increment shown in the aerial, represent the best solution for the Circulation/Distribution Program for Los Angeles. The report now being completed by the CRA will soon be available for all who are interested in further studying the in-depth back-up data, the evaluation process, and the conclusions presented in this article.

CONSULTANTS

The primary consultants to the CRA were: **Kahn Kappe Lotery Bocato**, Lead Consultant, Urban Planning and Urban Design; **Barton-Aschman Associates**, Transportation Planning; **Kaiser Engineers**, Engineering; **Keyser Marston Associates**, Socio-Economics; and **Centers for Study, Bus Planning**.



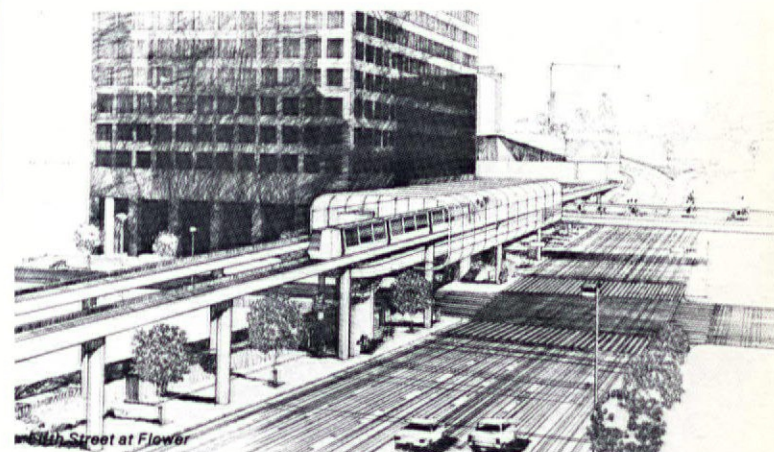
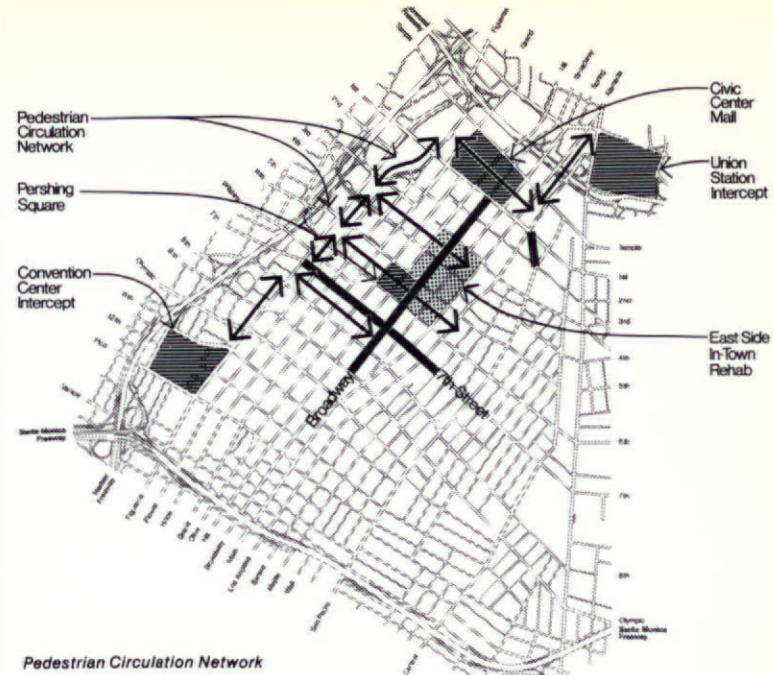
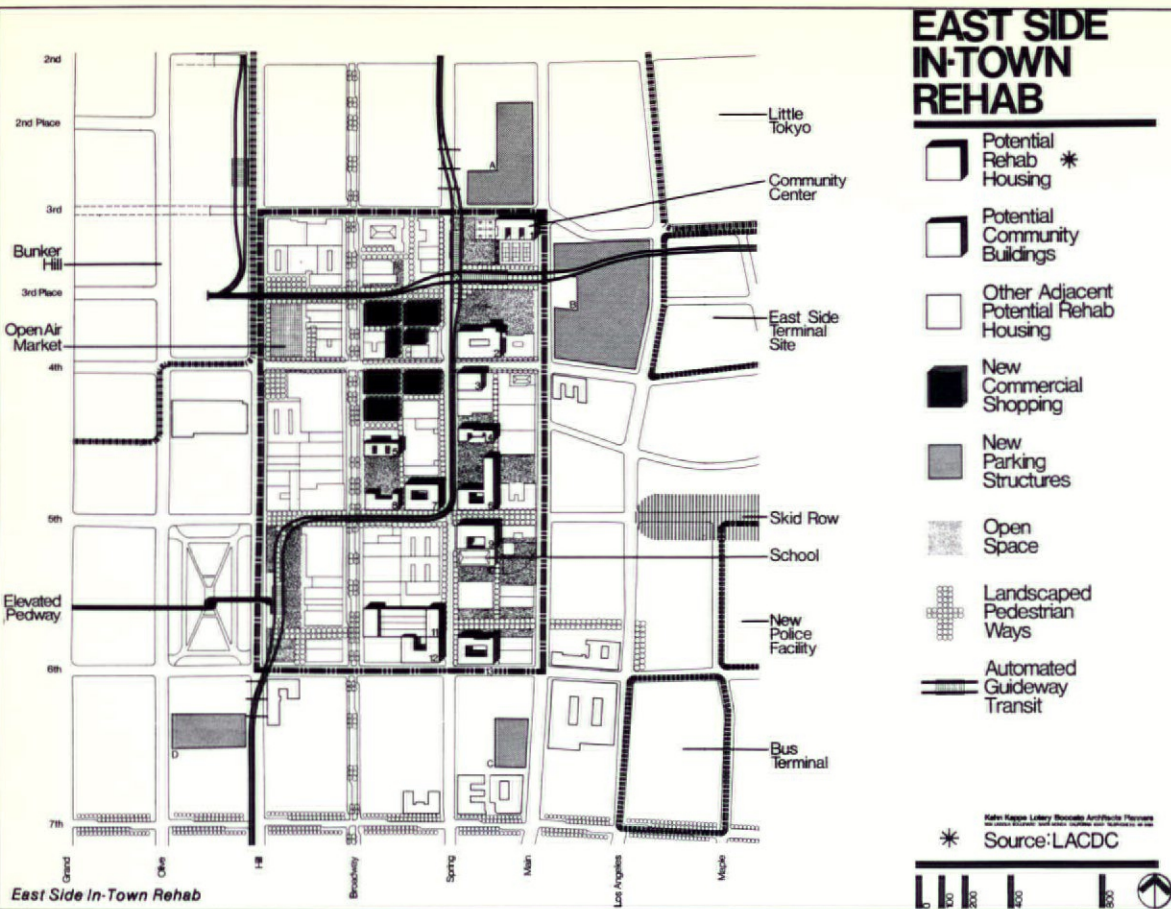
Seventh Street at Figueroa



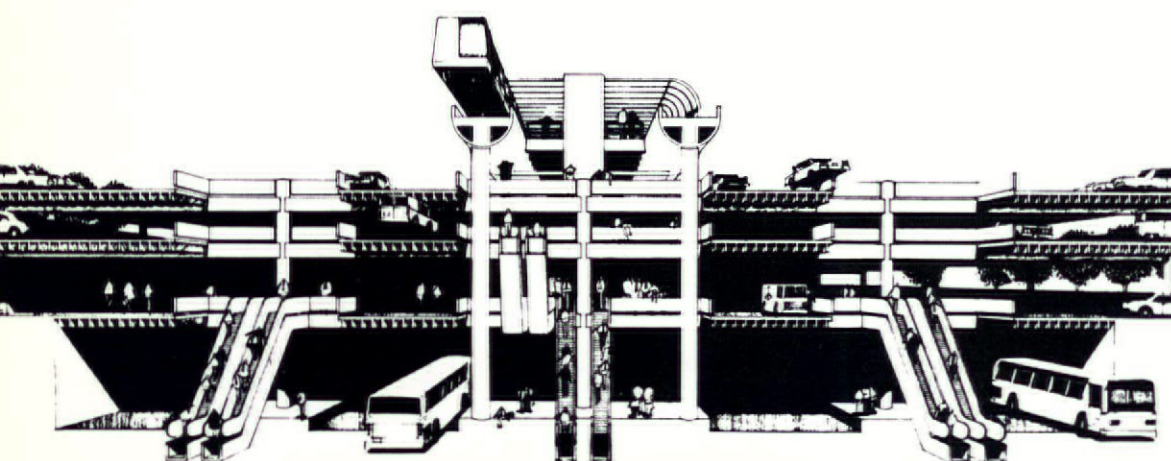
City Hall People Mover Station



The People Mover System (initial and subsequent segments)

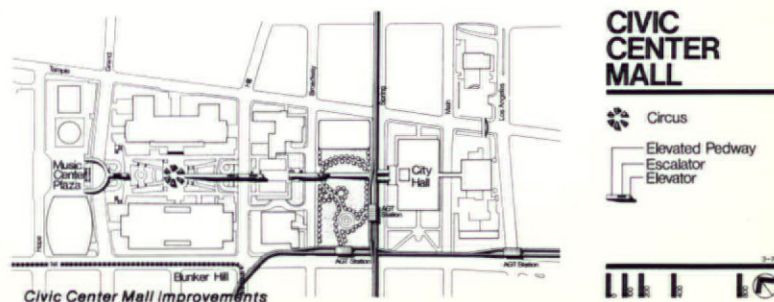


6th Street at Flower

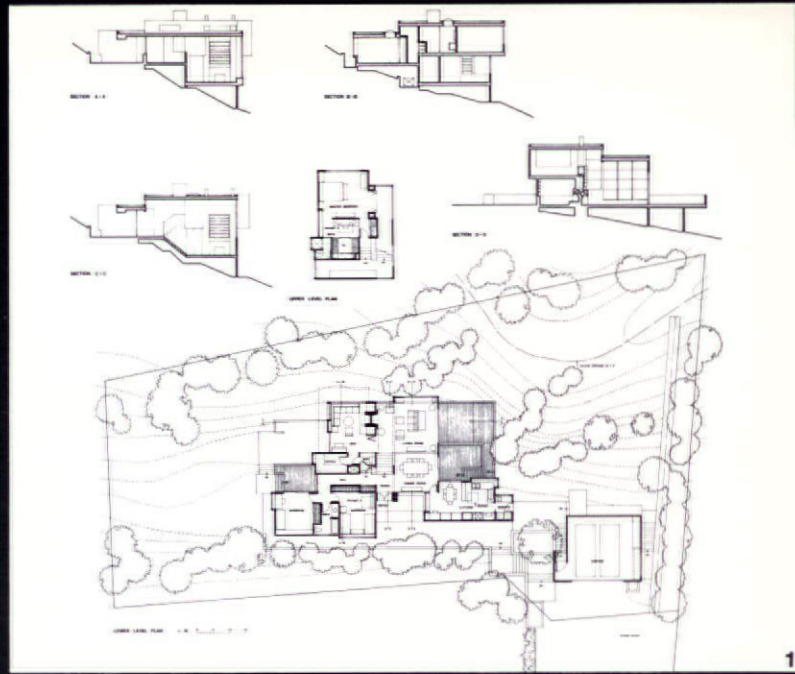


Union Station Bus and Carpool Auto Intercept

L.A. ARCHITECT April 1977



Civic Center Mall Improvements

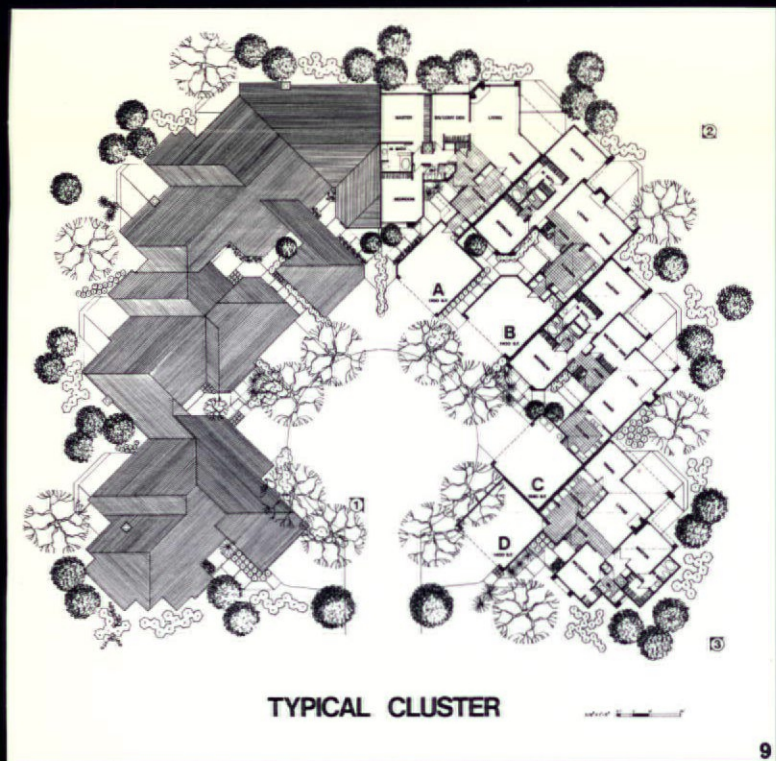
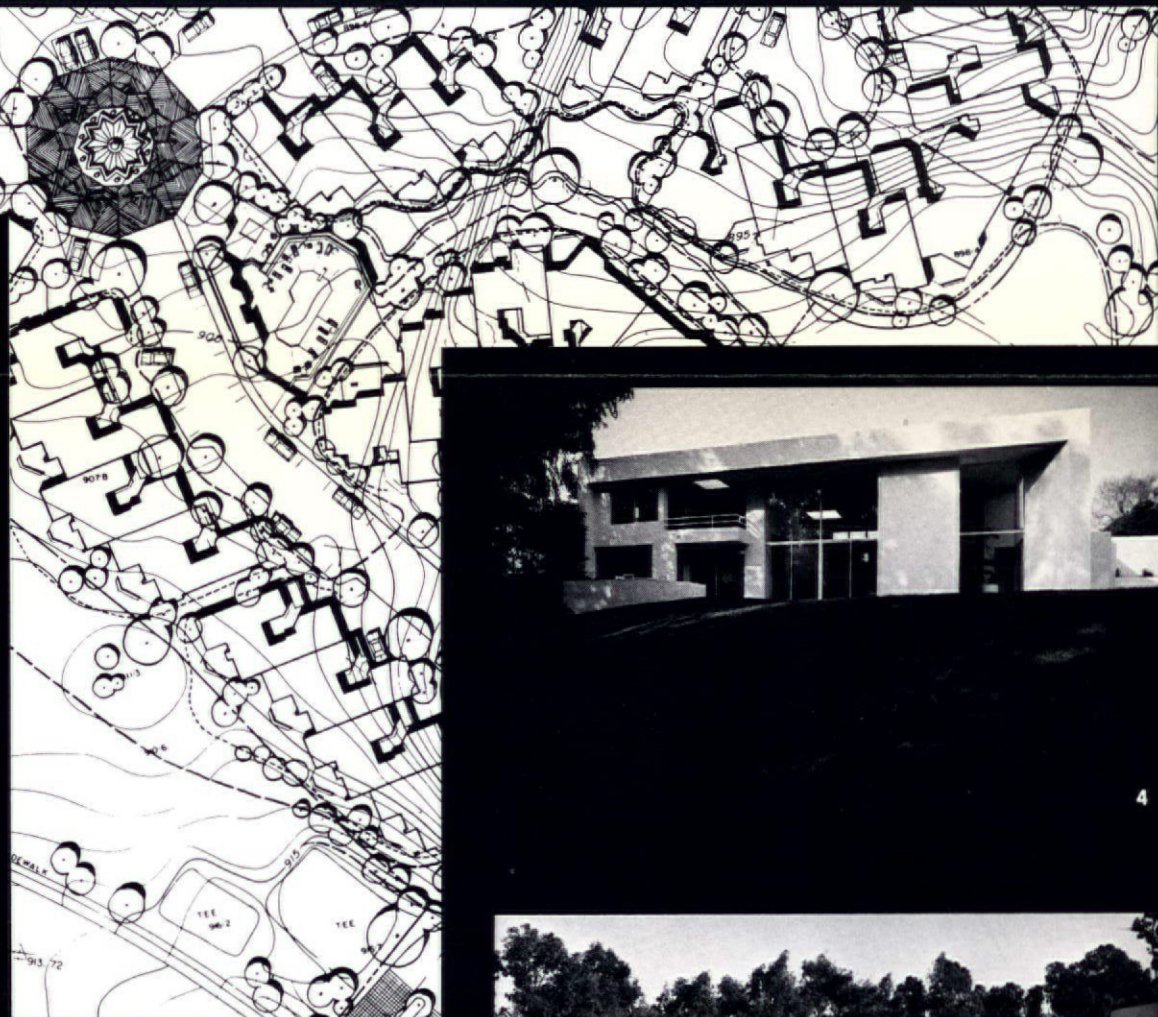
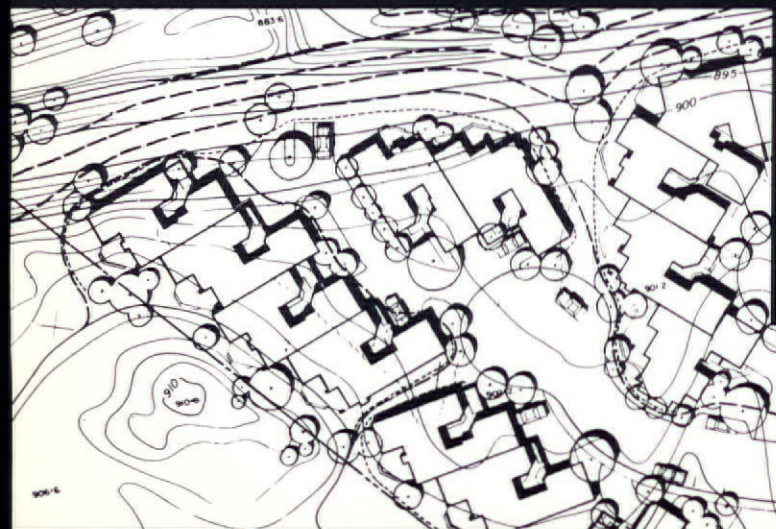


RICHARD MARTIN

Richard Martin practices with a small office consisting of secretary, two assistant architects and a draftsman. A native of Southern California, he is a graduate of USC, has a master's degree from M.I.T. and started practice in 1962. The major portion of his work is residential, ranging from custom single family residences to subdivisions and planned developments. The single family house permits a greater freedom of expression, with more design latitude, while the multi-family projects provide the financial basis for the office and an opportunity for expression on a larger scale — notably in the areas

of site planning. Martin works in the Southern California building tradition of wood frame and plaster — a simple, economical, seismic-resistive, and durable method of construction that readily accommodates structural and mechanical requirements, and most important, permits an easy and rapid response to program needs. The approach is one in which interaction between architect and client becomes a vital part of the design process. Problems are solved without the rigidity of a formal system, letting the forms be a result of the program requirements, the site constraints and the insights

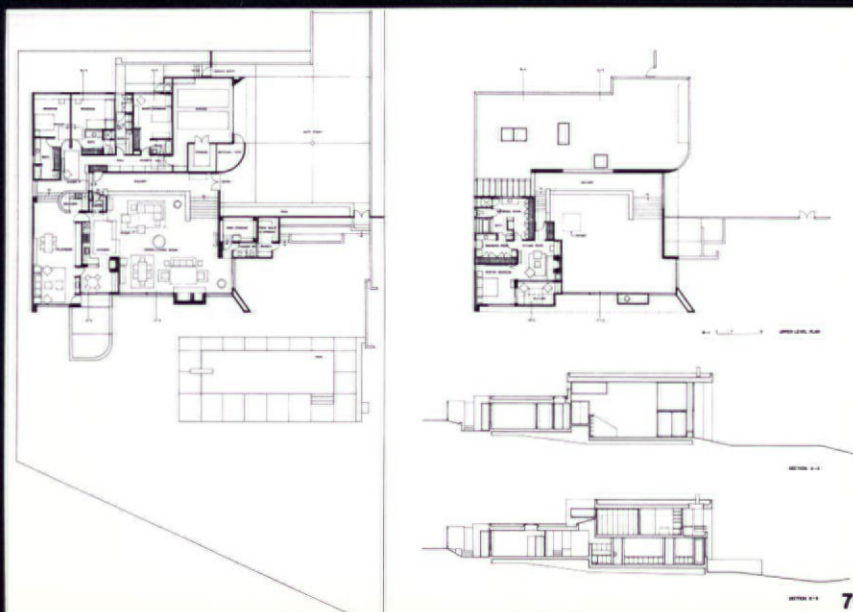
of the architect and his client. This most often manifests itself in the non-modular, non-symmetrical use of a series of boxes which are moved back and forth, up and down, and otherwise manipulated to respond to plan and spatial requirements and organically grow to their own image — typically, in hard edge, clearly defined crisp articulations with a strong expression of mass. The use of plaster throughout provides a continuity between interior and exterior that seems particularly appropriate in Southern California where the division can be blurred.



1. Martin Residence, Plan and Sections
2. Martin Residence, Exterior
3. Martin Residence, Interior
4, 5. Della Valle Residence, Exteriors
6. Della Valle Residence, Interior
7. Della Valle Residence, Plans and Sections
8. Green Shore, Thousand Oaks, Elevation
9. Green Shore, Typical Cluster
10. Green Shore, Site Plan
Photography - Marvin Rand



The problems and possibilities Martin encounters working with subdivisions and planned developments differ from those of the single residence, and are sometimes accompanied by the developer's limited view of what constitutes marketable design. Though he has less opportunity to interchange directly with his client, and is often left with faceless buyer profiles, he is nonetheless in the position of being able to create a sizable, positive environment. His basic design approach is applied with equal adaptability to the single or multiple unit structure and to groups of buildings. It permits easy changes of scale and a flexibility in site planning — even with standardization of units. User needs are met by building configurations and circulation systems which grow out of the requirements of the program and the physical characteristics unique to the site.



CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

An SRO crowd marked the first **Associates**-sponsored, three-ring Chapter meeting March 8. A special **Associates** pre-meeting with Harlan Hogue and Ron Filson, caterer Robin Heaney's sumptuous spread, and Stanley Tigerman's acerbic wit joined to make a stimulating, diversified evening.

Members and guests of the Southern California Chapter,

Architectural Secretaries Association, Inc. will tour the tallest building west of Chicago, which also has the distinction of being the tallest building located in an earthquake zone, designed by architect Charles Luckman Associates. The 707 Wilshire Building entrance of the 62-story United California Bank Building will be the meeting place on Tuesday, April 19th at 7:30 p.m.

The late **Richard J. Neutra, FAIA**, will be posthumously awarded the 1977 Gold Medal of the American Institute of Architects at its upcoming national convention in San Diego, June 5 through 8.

WAL's theater party, March 27th at the Mayfair Music Hall, was a real fun event. A goodly crowd was present and declared the evening a rousing success. **Kathy Brent** and **Anni Szanto** represented WAL at the "Skills Olympics" sponsored by the Vocational Club of America.

Mark your calendars for May: **Paul Rudolph, FAIA**, will address the SCC/AIA Chapter meeting on **May 17th**. Details will be announced in next month's issue of **L.A. ARCHITECT**. The June meeting will feature **William Bluestein**, attorney and behaviorist, on "Architectural Responsibility and Behavior" at the L.A. County Art Museum's Bing Theater on Tuesday, June 14th.

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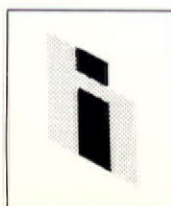
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The School of Architecture and Urban Planning at UCLA is seeking candidates for a full time position at the Assistant Professor level to teach architectural design courses as well as courses in environmental control, including architectural physics (heat, light, sound), building climatology, or architectural systems. Candidates should be able to assume responsibility for teaching at the graduate level, and administering and conducting research programs. Previous research work, or professional practice achievement is essential. Applicants should have a general background in architecture with specialized experience in some area of environmental controls.

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