

## **Newport Beach City Hall and Park Project History**

For at least two decades, Newport Beach has considered making changes to its City Hall. The current effort began in 2001 with a thorough analysis of the current City Hall site on Newport Boulevard. The study found that the aging facility had several significant problems including insufficient work space, lack of adequate parking, lack of full ADA-accessibility to every aspect of the campus, and inefficient HVAC and electrical systems. A new City Hall building was needed, but funding and location issues needed to be resolved.

The City's Facilities Finance Review Committee determined that Newport Beach has the financial means to build a City Hall along with the ability to finance other key city infrastructure improvements.

The location of City Hall, however, was a matter of much public debate. This was resolved in February 2008 when a special ballot measure, Measure B, was approved by voters. Measure B amended the City Charter to say that City Hall should be on city-owned land on Avocado Avenue. The project area includes the vacant 12-acre site north of the Newport Beach Central Library on Avocado Avenue and the vacant 3.5-acre site north between San Miguel Road and the Orange County Transportation Authority's Transportation Center, also along Avocado Avenue.

With the project location determined, the City Council voted (on February 28) to begin the planning, design and construction process for the new City Hall and community park. The Council established a design process and appointed a City Hall Design Committee (committee) comprised of local architects to conduct an architectural design competition.

The City issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the design of the new city hall and park in April 2008. More than 50 teams comprised of architects and landscape architects submitted qualifications by the May 19 deadline. Members of the design committee individually reviewed each RFQ before collectively evaluating the submittals during a series of public meetings.

The committee narrowed the field to 13 design teams and then agreed upon the top five finalists to recommend to the City Council for approval. The City Council unanimously approved the committee's recommendations at its June 24 meeting.

The five design teams selected were:

- Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, San Francisco
- Gonzalez Goodale Architects, Pasadena
- Johnson Fain, Los Angeles
- LPA, Inc., Irvine
- Rossetti Architects, Newport Beach.

Each team received a \$50,000 stipend and approximately three months to prepare a concept plan for the new city hall and park. The design committee hosted an all-day public meeting on September 27 to review each team's concept plan. The committee hosted additional public meetings as it evaluated and ranked the five plans before forwarding its recommendations to the City Council in November 2008. The Newport Beach City Council approved the Committee's recommendation and selected Bohlin Cywinski Jackson and its concept plan on November 25, 2008.

*Updated December 2008*