

# FAQs

**Q Why do we need a new Civic Center?**

A The Civic Center, including City Hall and Main Library, have significant seismic deficiencies which could result in both facilities being permanently unusable, or potentially, collapsing, in a significant seismic event. This is a risk to the employees and the visiting public. The City is aware of these seismic deficiencies and needs to address this issue as soon as possible.

**Q Why can't we just retrofit City Hall?**

A The cost to seismically retrofit City Hall was estimated at \$119 million in 2006 and \$194 million in 2014. This cost includes mandatory code and ADA upgrades, the cost to rent temporary office space, architectural and engineering costs, and relocation costs. There is no identified source of funding for such a large expenditure. Retrofitting City Hall would likely require a tax increase, which is not a desirable approach to solving the seismic problems. Additionally, even if retrofitted, City Hall would still be functionally inferior, inadequately sized, and costly to maintain, with no assurance that it could be occupied soon after a significant seismic event. This has the potential of exposing the City and the residents to yet another large financing issue to again repair or replace City Hall, potentially before the first retrofit financing is even paid off.

**Q Why does City Hall need more space?**

A The City currently leases space in private facilities in order to provide all the services the residents expect and deserve. For greater efficiency and convenience to the public, City services should be consolidated to a single location, so that residents will not need to travel to a number of locations in order to conduct their business.

**Q Why does City Hall need to be Downtown?**

A Downtown is the economic center of the City. The Civic Center has long been located in Downtown on land owned by the City. Relocating City Hall out of the Downtown may serve to undermine the economic framework of the Downtown and erode the identity of Downtown as the economic center of the City.

**Q How will the new Civic Center "reconnect" with Downtown?**

A Vehicular and pedestrian recirculation through the Civic Center is vital to its success as an urban core and a public gathering place. Extending streets and sidewalks through the site will serve to activate those corridors both for physical access and view corridors. Encouraging high pedestrian volumes through the site will serve to support mixed uses, enliven the Civic Center and enhance public safety.



**Q How much will the Civic Center project cost?**

A It currently costs the City \$12.6 million per year to operate and occupy the Civic Center along with off-site leased space that would be consolidated into a new building. A requirement of the project is that it will cost the City no more than the current \$12.6 million on an annual basis, including an annual inflation index. So there will be no additional expense beyond the currently budgeted expense. As a result, there should be no additional financial burden on the residents of Long Beach.

**Q What's the rush to proceed so quickly?**

A The City has been aware of seismic deficiencies since 2006. There is an obligation to address these deficiencies in order to protect public safety. Failure to proceed in a prudent manner to address this risk exposes the City to potentially serious litigation and liability. We cannot ignore the risk, nor delay our response.

**Q What will be the size of the new Main Library?**

A The size of the new Main Library has not yet been determined. Instead, the City has identified the programs, services and amenities reflective of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century, state of the art, Main Library and intends to allow the expertise of developer teams to suggest how those needs will translate into the size of the new Main Library.

**Q What is the schedule for the Civic Center project?**

A A Request for Qualifications was released in April 2013, and a short list of bidders was identified in October 2013. We are now preparing a Request for Proposals to issue to the short list of bidders. The responses to this Request for Proposals will establish whether the Civic Center project is financially feasible and, if so, staff will recommend to City Council to select one of the short list bidders as the City's development partner. This is expected to occur in early July 2013. After selection of a development partner, the Civic Center project will begin its public process to seek public input, propose certain land uses, identify proposed facilities, identify environmental impacts and mitigation measures, and seek Planning Commission and City Council approval. This process is expected to be completed in early 2015. If all approvals are received, construction could begin in mid-to late-2015.

**Q Shouldn't this project be delayed until the elections are completed and a new City Council and Mayor are seated?**

A The project's approval timeline extends into 2015. After selection of a development partner, the Civic Center project will begin in earnest. Public outreach will continue, to help guide design, land use, amenities, circulation and open space. This process is expected to take 9 – 12 months and will be finalized by the incoming Mayor and City Council.

**Q Will the Port of Long Beach locate its new headquarters at the Civic Center?**

A The Port of Long Beach has agreed to participate in the process to determine if a viable and cost effective proposal is submitted. Upon review of the submittals for the short list bidders, the Port of Long Beach will decide whether to proceed or not.



Q **What will happen to Lincoln Park?**

A The 4.8 acre Lincoln Park is required to remain at its current location and at its current size. The Civic Center project seeks to revitalize Lincoln Park into an active, regional asset. A Library facility is an allowed use in a park, but subject to a Conditional Use Permit, which requires approval by the Planning Commission.

Q **What will happen to the property that is not needed for the Civic Center project?**

A In order to create a more vibrant and active Civic Center, private development on excess land is encouraged. These private uses may include residential, retail, office or hotel. Private development will serve to create the critical density necessary to ensure a high level of pedestrian activity to enliven the space and enhance safety.

