

2014 GOVERNOR'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

MA Center LA



The façade of the renovated MA Center LA in Los Angeles

The significance of the MA Center LA Building is one of architectural and community rebirth. Constructed in 1948 and situated on the corner of Catalina Avenue and Garnet Street in the City of Redondo Beach, the building housed the Fraternal Order of Eagles AERIE 935 since its initial construction. Designed in the Streamline Moderne style by architect George Morlan, it is an outstanding example of its style and beloved by the local beach community. It is one of only a few non-residential buildings listed on the City's historic inventory and the only such Moderne designed building in the city.

Beginning in the 1970s, the Eagles' membership had steadily declined, and they could no longer both continue their philanthropic activities and maintain their aging 16,413-square-foot building. Recognizing its vulnerability to demolition, the Eagles' members desperately sought a new owner that would continue using the building for the public's benefit as they had done since the building's construction. In 2012, the Eagles received an offer from the international charitable organization, MA Center, who wanted to use the building to carry out educational and community programs throughout the south bay and greater Los Angeles area.

Because the building is listed on the City's historic inventory, the project was reviewed by the City's Preservation Commission for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The MA Center embraced the architectural style of the building and contracted historic preservation experts. Using the original architectural drawings, the project architect prepared plans to restore the architectural appearance of the exterior while balancing the MA Center's programmatic needs and the City's safety and access code requirements. Historically, the building had been used as

a meeting hall, making it well-suited for its new use as a humanitarian center with its large meeting spaces and catering kitchen. Project components included making the building accessible, and creating a floor plan that maximized the utility and practicality of the many uses for the building without compromising architectural quality. The rough textured stucco exterior was removed and the smooth coat finish restored, the missing Streamline Moderne bands across the windows were reintroduced, the glazed doors and horizontal fluted windows were reintroduced, the dropped interior ceiling was removed to expose the original bow trusses, and skylights and operable windows were introduced to increase the building's light and efficiency.

With the rehabilitation completed, volunteers use the building to carry out community service projects such as "Mama's Kitchen" where volunteers prepare meals and distribute them to shelters in the Los Angeles area. The Center also provides cooking, music, art, health, and yoga classes in the building.

Learn more about the MA Center LA: <http://amma.org/groups/north-america/ma-center-la/about>