FINAL LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

Photo by Mike Chunko (2008)

MARINA CITY

300-340 N. STATE ST.; 301-351 N. DEARBORN ST.

Final Landmark Recommendation adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, November 5, 2015

CITY OF CHICAGO
Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
David Reifman, Commissioner

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.

The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

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MARINA CITY

300 N. State Street

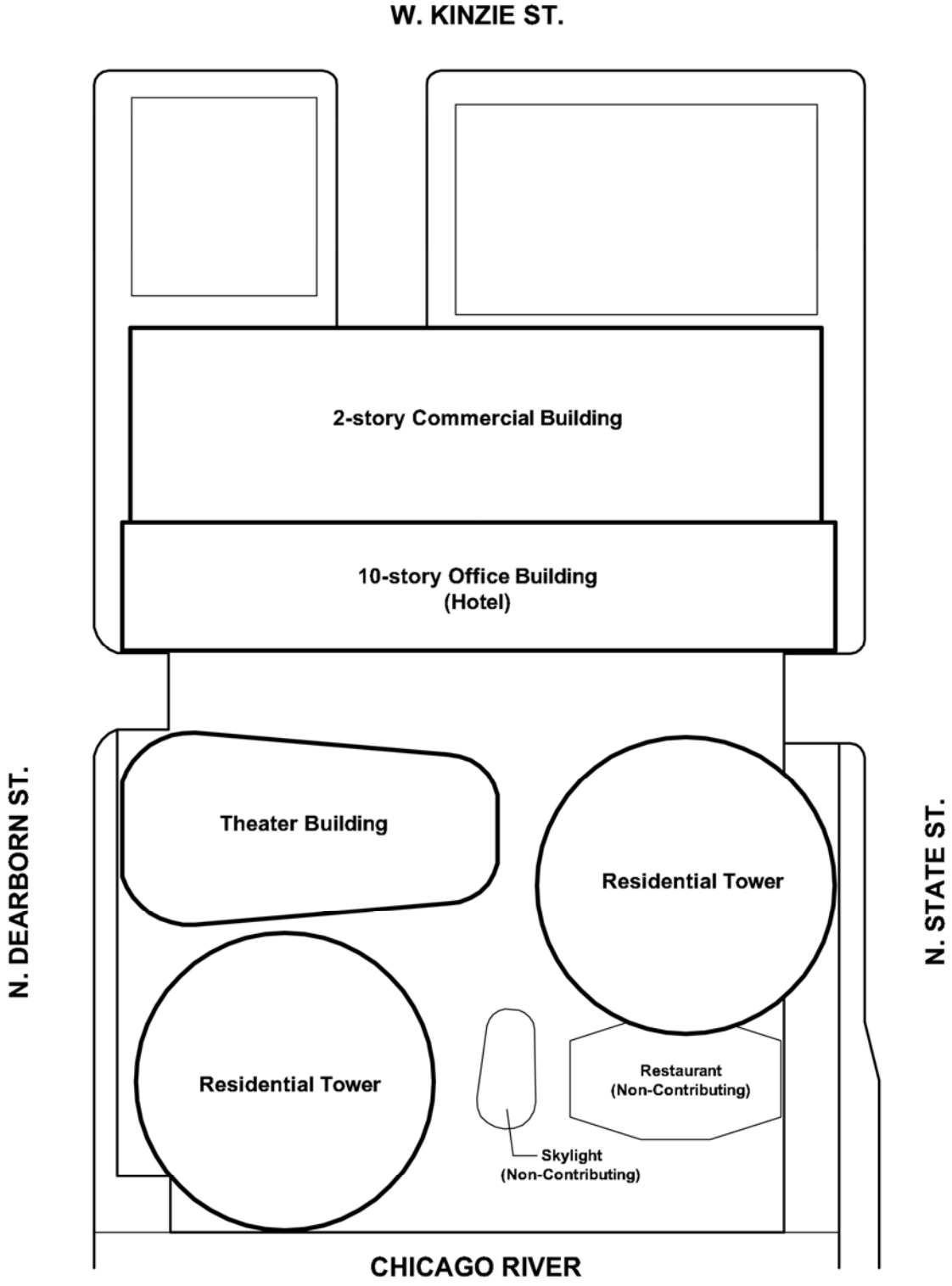
Period of Significance: **1960-1967**
Architect and Engineers: **Bertrand Goldberg Associates**
Severud-Elstad-Krueger

Marina City, designed by architect Bertrand Goldberg and constructed between 1960 and 1967, is an icon of Chicago architecture and urban planning. This "city within a city," the first of its kind to layer residential, commercial, and entertainment uses into a dense high rise complex in the center city, was the most ambitious and forward-thinking post-war urban renewal project in Chicago in an era defined by ambitious urban renewal projects. Commissioned by a janitor's trade union, designed by a visionary architect, blessed by the country's most powerful mayor, and ultimately controlled by one of Chicago's most influential power brokers, Marina City exemplifies the complexity inherent in large-scale urban endeavors in the post-war era.

The scale and scope of the project was unparalleled at the time of its construction. Marina City was the first planned development project in Chicago, and the first and largest federally-insured downtown housing project in the country. When they were completed in 1963, the residential towers were the tallest reinforced concrete structures in the world. Marina City was also Bertrand Goldberg's career-defining commission, catapulting him onto the world stage and solidifying his reputation as one of the most innovative architects of the twentieth century.

Designed to primarily house middle-income singles or childless married couples and as a model for reinvestment and revitalization of Chicago's downtown, Goldberg's comprehensive vision for Marina City introduced new ideas about form and structure and novel solutions for living and working in an urban environment. Although Marina City remained an anomaly for decades, its success as a dense high-rise residential development anticipated the later transformation of downtown Chicago from a nine-to-five business district to a thriving and bustling residential and commercial community. The development's use of the Chicago River as an amenity was also years ahead of its time.

Stylistically, Marina City is an impressive and captivating example of the Expressionist Style within the Modern Movement, and a powerful response to the glass-and-steel International-Style high rises influenced by architect Mies van der Rohe and commissioned by large corpora-



Marina City is a complex that includes two residential towers, a theater building, and an office tower (now hotel), a two-story commercial building all set on a base structure which includes commercial spaces and a marina. The complex occupies 3.1-acre parcel bounded by State Street and Dearborn Street to the east and west, Kinzie Street to the north, and the main branch of the Chicago River to the south.

This map is meant for illustrative purposes only. The final district boundary and description would be defined in a Chicago landmark designation ordinance passed by City Council.

tions and the government from the 1950s through the 1970s. Marina City is also the most fully realized encapsulation of Goldberg's humanistic approach to design.

DEVELOPMENT OF MARINA CITY

Residential Development in Post-War Chicago

The development of Marina City took place during a period of flux in Chicago and other urban centers throughout the country. The city had emerged from the Depression and World War II with an aging building stock and a declining commercial and industrial base in its central business district. The twin specters of decentralization and suburbanization threatened to drain the city of its people and businesses. A report by the Real Estate Research Corporation in 1946 revealed that less than 30% of the city's postwar population lived within five miles of State and Madison streets, and a subsequent report from 1951 showed that newly-built homes were luring families out of the city and into less-populated suburban areas. Downtown, commercial development remained at a standstill through the first ten years after the end of the war, leading many real estate brokers in the city to conclude that the area "might as well be returned to the Indians."

The post-war stagnation of Chicago's downtown created a wave of anxiety in the city's business and civic communities, and led to an increased focus on improving and revitalizing the Loop. In 1956, a group of the city's leading businessmen and industrialists formed the Chicago Central Area Committee (CCAC) as an advocate group for the redevelopment of the central business district. An editorial put forth by the CCAC in the September 11, 1957 edition of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* neatly summarized the concern felt by many business and civic leaders regarding the future of Chicago's downtown:

> *The population of Chicago's metropolitan area has increased 14 per cent since 1950 and the reports of industrial expansion indicate that the rapid area-wide growth will continue . . . it has been puzzling to observe that these spectacular developments have not been paralleled by a downtown building boom. Chicago's central business district has seen few important changes since the 1920s, while office buildings, hotels, and public buildings have been sprouting like weeds in New York and several other cities. Chicago public officials and business leaders are concerned about the lack of downtown growth, not because their vanity has been wounded, but because the downtown district carries a large part of the city's tax burden. When new buildings rise in the Loop, every home owner benefits.*

In response to this uncertainty, newly-elected mayor Richard J. Daley focused on the revitalization of Chicago's downtown as a top priority of his first term, which began in 1955. In August of 1958, Daley and the city's Department of Planning unveiled the *Development Plan for the Central Area of Chicago*, a comprehensive and ambitious plan that focused on the city's central business district and lakefront as the keys to Chicago's future economic stability. In addition to a large civic center stretching from Washington Street to the south bank of the Chicago River, an exposition center along the lake just south of downtown, and a relocated University of Illi-

The development of Marina City took place during a time of enormous flux for urban centers across the country. Leading businessmen and planners in Chicago were concerned about the lack of growth in Chicago's downtown after the Great Depression and World War II, and Mayor Richard J. Daley made downtown revitalization a top priority during his first term. Office construction began to pick up in the late 1950s, but residential construction close to the city center lagged behind, despite market analysis that showed that over 40% of renters in the city who worked downtown wanted to live downtown.

Top: Richard J. Daley and city leaders viewing a model of the 1958 *Development Plan for the Central Area of Chicago*, developed by the City's Department of Planning. Photo from the *Chicago Sun Times*.

Bottom: Aerial phot o from 1950 for the Metropolitan Planning Council shows the parcel of land on which Marina City would be built, which was a rail yard surrounded by warehouses.

nois campus, the plan also targeted large swaths of land just north of the river and south of Roosevelt Road for residential redevelopment. The area along the north bank of the river between Rush Street and Wells—including the future site of Marina City—was reserved in the plan for Fort Dearborn Plaza, a large redevelopment project first conceived in 1949 by real estate developer Arthur Rubloff. The redevelopment, designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill though never built, was to include government and office buildings, a 1.9-acre shopping center, a school, and 27 apartment buildings containing over 4,500 units.

By the time the new plan was released, office construction had finally begun to accelerate in the Loop, but residential construction close to the city center still lagged behind. Most new apartments built in the city in the 1950s were in luxury high-rise buildings that stretched along the lakefront, continuing the boom that had begun in the 1920s and was interrupted by the Depression and World War II. However, these apartments did nothing to satisfy the need for more affordable housing for workers in the Loop. The 1959 *Chicago Market Analysis Report* by the Real Estate Research Corporation revealed a "present and near future" market for 39,000 rental units close to the Loop. Based on a survey of Loop workers, the report also claimed that over 40% of all renters in the city working downtown wanted to live closer to work, and that demand for housing downtown could be as high as 47,000 units.

Unlike the families fleeing to the suburbs, the potential downtown residents identified in the 1959 report were mostly singles or childless married couples who preferred easy access to work and entertainment over homes with large yards on quiet suburban streets. In fact, the typical downtown dweller had already been identified by the corporation over 13 years before. In a prescient speech to the Metropolitan Housing Council as part of the release of its 1946 report, the corporation's president James Downs, Jr. urged city planners to focus on future population trends, which included "a greater number of unmarried young people starting their careers in the city, more childless married couples, more divorced persons, and an increase in elderly persons living on pensions or savings," and encouraged that planning decisions "be made with the aim of making a place for these persons with the kind of quarters they wish to have. . . apartment houses. . .near the city center, close to their jobs, their entertainment, and the main shopping districts."

Marina City sought to cater to these pioneering downtown dwellers in an ambitious new way, by providing a "city within a city" that could meet their every need. With its promise of affordability for middle-class office workers and its broad support system of commercial, recreational, and office spaces, Marina City was designed to provide an attractive alternative to suburban living and usher in a new wave of residential development that would revitalize the city's flagging urban core.

William Lane McFetridge and the Building Service Employees International Union

Among those impressed by the 1959 *Chicago Market Analysis Report* was William Lane McFetridge (1893-1969), president of the Building Service Employees International Union (BSEIU, often referred to as the Janitors' Union). McFetridge was a close confidante and avid supporter of Mayor Richard J. Daley, and shared his keen interest in revitalizing Chicago's downtown. As head of a union representing the city's janitors, elevator operators, and window

washers, McFetridge had, according to a profile in *Life* magazine, "been brooding for years because Chicago, like many cities, was decaying at the center while people fled their apartments to houses in the suburbs where, naturally, they no longer needed a janitor."

By 1959, William McFetridge had been president of the BSEIU for 19 years. The union began in 1902 as the Flat Janitors' Union. This small organization banded together with several other small unions to form the Building Service Employees International Union in 1921, and changed its name to Local 1. By the 1950s, the BSEIU had grown into a powerful political force in the city, due in no small part to the direction of their president. A native of Chicago and nephew of BSEIU's founding President William Quesse, McFetridge worked for his uncle as an investigator for the union for several years. In 1923, McFetridge officially joined Local 1, and was elected as its vice president three years later.

In 1940, McFetridge replaced George Scalise as international president of the BSEIU after Scalise's conviction for labor racketeering. McFetridge quickly set about distancing the BSEIU from organized crime, while at the same time expanding its membership and political influence. During his 20-year tenure, he increased membership from 40,000 in 1940 to 250,000 in 1960. McFetridge became one of the most influential labor leaders in the Midwest after World War II. He served as vice president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) from 1950-1969. He was instrumental in the merger of the AFL with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1955, and served on its executive council. McFetridge also served as vice president of the Chicago Parks District from 1946-1969 and was a member of the Public Building Commission from its founding in 1956 to 1969.

The initial idea of investing the union's health, welfare, and pension funds in middle-income housing was first given to McFetridge in the late 1950s by his friend and colleague Charles Swibel. At the time, Swibel was president of the real estate firm Marks and Company, and acted as real estate agent for the BSEIU. In 1956, at the age of 29, he was appointed as commissioner and treasurer of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). It was rumored that McFetridge had arranged the appointment. Swibel became chairman of the CHA in 1964; his tenure was a troubled one, and he was forced to resign in 1982 after a controversial federally-commissioned audit of the agency revealed corruption and mismanagement. Although a divisive figure, Swibel proved invaluable in the development of Marina City, and was responsible for most of the financial machinations that made the project possible.

The concept of union-funded housing development was not a new one. Union-sponsored cooperative housing was built in New York City as early as the 1920s and investments continued through the late twentieth century. The United Housing Foundation, set up by garment industry trade unions in 1951, sponsored several large cooperative developments in New York between 1951 and 1973. In Chicago, the largest example of union-sponsored housing was Parkway Garden Homes on the city's south side (listed on the National Register in 2011), a 35-building cooperative apartment complex that was built by the Community Development Trust for the Dining Car Workers Union and completed in 1955. At the same time that Marina City was rising on the river, construction was also underway for Fewkes Tower, a 29-story apartment building on the near north side designed by Chicago architect Harry Weese for the Chicago Teacher's Union. The building was built specifically to provide affordable apartments for retired teachers.

In the late 1950s, the Building Service Employees' International Union, led by president William L. McFetridge, stepped forward to invest its pension funds in middle-class housing in downtown Chicago. BSEIU had begun in Chicago in the early 1920s as the Flat Janitors' Union. Union-sponsored housing was not a new idea, but most housing projects were conceived with the primary goal of providing affordable housing specifically for the union members, not as a business investment. McFetridge's goal was to grow the union's pension funds and retain jobs for its members, who primarily worked in high-rise buildings downtown.

Top: BSEIU banner ca. 1960; Left: BSEIU's Chicago headquarters (demolished); Right: BSEIU president William L. McFetridge ca. 1960. Photos from the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

Real estate developer Charles Swibel partnered with McFetridge to structure the deal for a BSEIU-funded residential development in downtown Chicago.

Swibel, who would later serve as chairman of the Chicago Housing Authority between 1964 and 1982, was responsible for most of the financial strategies that made Marina City possible.

Top: Swibel on a balcony at Marina City, 1965. Photo by Bob Kotalik for the Chicago Sun Times July 23, 1965.

Bottom: Swibel and McFetridge with Mayor Richard J. Daley at the Marina City groundbreaking ceremony on November 22, 1960. Photo by Bertrand Goldberg Associates, Archival Image & Media Collection, Ryerson and Burnham Library

All of these developments were conceived and implemented with the primary goal of providing affordable housing for the union's workers.

McFetridge and Swibel, from the beginning, viewed the union's foray into housing development as a business investment meant not to provide housing for its members but to grow the union's health, welfare, and pension funds while helping to retain jobs in the Loop for its members. The project would, McFetridge hoped, serve as a model for subsequent residential developments funded by the BSEIU in Chicago and across the country. Although the organization was initially supportive of McFetridge's plan for Marina City, many in the union (including BSEIU president David Sullivan) later derided its profit-only model of union-sponsored housing because its members could not afford to live there.

In June 1959, McFetridge selected Chicago architect and engineer Bertrand Goldberg to design the development. Goldberg had worked with McFetridge and the union before, designing their modest offices at 318 West Randolph Street (demolished). Although Goldberg operated a successful architectural practice with several large residential commissions in Chicago—including Astor Tower (1963) and Drexel Home and Gardens (1955)—under his belt, he had designed nothing that came close to the scale of Marina City when McFetridge hired him. Goldberg himself said that McFetridge and Swibel "were amused by my innocence to a great extent," but that "they respected my work." However, Goldberg proved to be more than up for the challenge. His firm's involvement in countless aspects of the development above and beyond the design of the actual structures—from selection of the site to the development and implementation of a multi-faceted (and hugely successful) marketing strategy for the complex—were essential to the project's success. Marina City, in turn, would prove to be the defining project of Goldberg's career.

BERTRAND GOLDBERG, EARLY LIFE AND WORK (1913-1959)

Marina City was the seminal work of Chicago-based architect and engineer Bertrand Goldberg, who possessed an unusual combination of three perspectives that shaped his six-decade long career and which coalesced for the first time in his design for Marina City. First, he was a humanist who firmly believed that architecture could improve human experience, either individually or collectively in urban contexts. Second, he took great interest in the physical aspect of architecture, always exploring new ways of using materials and new building technologies. Third, he was inspired by structures found in nature such as eggs, shells and trees which were strong and efficient. The resulting fusion of these perspectives led Goldberg to create buildings that were structurally innovative, boldly sculptural, and carefully planned for human activity. The enduring legacy of Marina City as an icon of Chicago architecture and a symbol of bold urban planning ideals is in large part due to his unique approach to architecture.

Born in Chicago in 1913, Goldberg first became interested in architecture in 1930 as an undergraduate student at Harvard where he began to audit graduate courses at the Cambridge School of Landscape Architecture at Harvard College (now incorporated into Harvard University). At the recommendation of Harvard's dean, Goldberg travelled to Germany in May 1932 to study at the Bauhaus, an avant-garde school of art and design in Germany. Though he only spent a year

Architect and engineer Bertrand Goldberg, who had handled the renovations of the BSEIU's headquarters on Randolph Street, was hired to design Marina City.

Goldberg had designed several other large housing projects in Chicago – Drexel Home and Gardens on the south side in 1955 and Astor Tower on the Gold Coast, which was completed in 1963.

Top left: Bertrand Goldberg in 1952 by Torkel Korling, Chicago Tribune

Top right: Astor Tower, completed 1963, from bertrandgoldberg.org

Bottom: Drexel Home and Gardens, 1955, from bertrandgoldberg.org

at the Bauhaus, which in 1932 was located in Berlin, Goldberg was influenced by the school's philosophy that art and design could improve human experience and by the school's emphasis on merging design and mass-production. Also while in Berlin, Goldberg spent three months working in the office of architect Mies van der Rohe, one of the most influential architects in the modern movement who would later move to Chicago. The rise of the Nazi Party in January, 1933 led to political instability in Germany, especially for a Jewish-American student, and Goldberg left the country and returned to Chicago.

Back home, Goldberg visited the 1933 Century of Progress World's Fair where he was inspired by Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion Car, and like so many architects in the 1930s, to also design an automobile. He began studying structural engineering under Frank Nydam at the Armour Institute of Technology (now the Illinois Institute of Technology) and earned his degree in 1934. He then began working in the offices of progressive Chicago architects including George Fred Keck (1935) and Paul Schweikher (1935-36).

In 1937 Goldberg established his own practice that later became known as Bertrand Goldberg Associates (BGA). In the beginning he specialized in single-family homes and other small buildings, which, despite their apparent simplicity, were characterized by a high level of structural and material inventiveness. In 1938, with Gilmer Black, Goldberg designed a factory-prefabricated, mobile ice cream store supported on a single mast that could be easily disassembled and moved. A mast-suspended gas station soon followed and was built at Clark and Maple in 1938 (no longer extant). During World War II, Goldberg was active under the Lanham Act designing defense-worker housing and mobile field clinics for the U.S. government. The lightweight clinic structures were designed with stressed plywood skins that could be demounted and easily moved. He also designed industrially-produced bathrooms and kitchen units though these never gained widespread acceptance.

In the early 1950s Goldberg continued to design single-family homes like the Ralph Helstein House (1952) in Chicago, as well as Drexel Home and Gardens (1954-55) on Chicago's South Side, an early urban renewal project combining federal and private funds. In 1958, Goldberg was commissioned to design Astor Tower, originally a combined hotel and apartment building, in the Gold Coast neighborhood. The concrete-framed structure was raised five-stories above grade to reduce its visual impact on the surrounding historic residential neighborhood.

At this point in his career, Goldberg had already begun to explore the cylindrical form that he would first use in the residential towers at Marina City. Originally, he conceived Astor Tower as a cylindrical building, but eventually decided against it, because "the environment was a rectilinear environment around Astor Tower, and we couldn't create enough of a message to let it stand on its own." Goldberg also designed a motel for the Phillips Petroleum Company in 1957 that featured twin cylindrical towers set on a two-story rectangular base. The motel was never built.

PLANNING MARINA CITY

With the key members of the project team—McFetridge, Swibel, and Goldberg—on board, the initial planning and design for Marina City proceeded swiftly, with city approval and initial drawings coming rapidly in summer and fall of 1959. Approval of the multiple layers of financing was more complicated; although initial commitments were secured quickly thanks to Charles Swibel, securing the final commitments would take several more months of planning.

The Site

As soon as Goldberg was signed on to the project, he, McFetridge, and Swibel immediately set about finding a suitable site. According to Goldberg, the group quickly narrowed the selection down to nine sites located close to the Loop. According to Goldberg's account in Chicago Architects Oral History Project (complied by the Art Institute of Chicago) the three men were dining at Fritzel's restaurant at 201 North State Street, just south of the river, when Goldberg gave McFetridge his thoughts on which site to choose:

> *I said to Bill McFetridge, "You asked me to find you a piece of property. We have nine pieces of property, eight of which are within the budget you suggested to me, and the ninth of which is too rich for your blood." He said "What one was that?" I said, "We can walk out of Fritzel's here and I'll show it to you." And we did. The three of us stood out there on the sidewalk and I said "There." He looked at it, and he said to Chuck Swibel, "See what you can buy it for."*

Goldberg, McFetridge, and Swibel were drawn to this particular site—a 3.1-acre parcel running along the north side of the Chicago River between State and Dearborn Streets—primarily for its scenic location on the river, which afforded impressive, then-unobstructed views to the Loop and Lake Michigan.

Despite the stunning views, the site did present some challenges. The owner of the property, the Chicago Northwestern Railroad, had to agree to drop its price. Swibel, an adept negotiator, swiftly accomplished both tasks, securing an option to purchase the property for $2.5 million (the railroad had wanted $3.7 million) in August 1959. Of greater concern was the fact that the area around the site was still primarily a warehouse district, with very few attractive amenities for potential residents. Thus, the major challenge presented to Goldberg was to design a development that highlighted all of the attractions of living in a vibrant urban area, in an area of the city that, at the time that Marina City was built, held few of those attractions. Although major cultural institutions, theaters, and large department store still drew people to the Loop outside of office hours in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the city center did not offer a commercial infrastructure for everyday life. In fact, Goldberg had previously approached developer Arthur Rubloff, for whom he designed Drexel Home and Gardens, about the possibility of building an apartment tower nearby, on the site now occupied by Trump Tower, but Rubloff had responded by claiming, "Who wants to live downtown?" By the time Marina City opened to residents in 1962, the answer to Rubloff's question would be clear.

The project team chose a 3.1-acre site along the north side of the Chicago River. The parcel at that time was a rail yard owned by the Chicago Northwestern Railroad, surrounded by turn-of-the-century masonry warehouses.

The $36 million project was initially financed with equity from BSEIU, Local 1 in Chicago, Local 32 B in New York, and BSEIU's pension trust. Construction loans and the commercial mortgage came from Continental Illinois National Bank and Trust company of Chicago, and a consortium of east coast banks provided the residential mortgage for the towers, with mortgage insurance through the Federal Housing Administration. General Electric supplied a $2 million loan to cover the installation of all electric appliances.

Top: Aerial view showing the Marina City Site from an illustration prepared by Bertrand Goldberg Associates.

Bottom: The site for Marina City in 1944, looking east along the Chicago River, from the Charles W. Cushman Photograph Collection, Indiana University Digital Library.

Marina City and the "Total Environment"

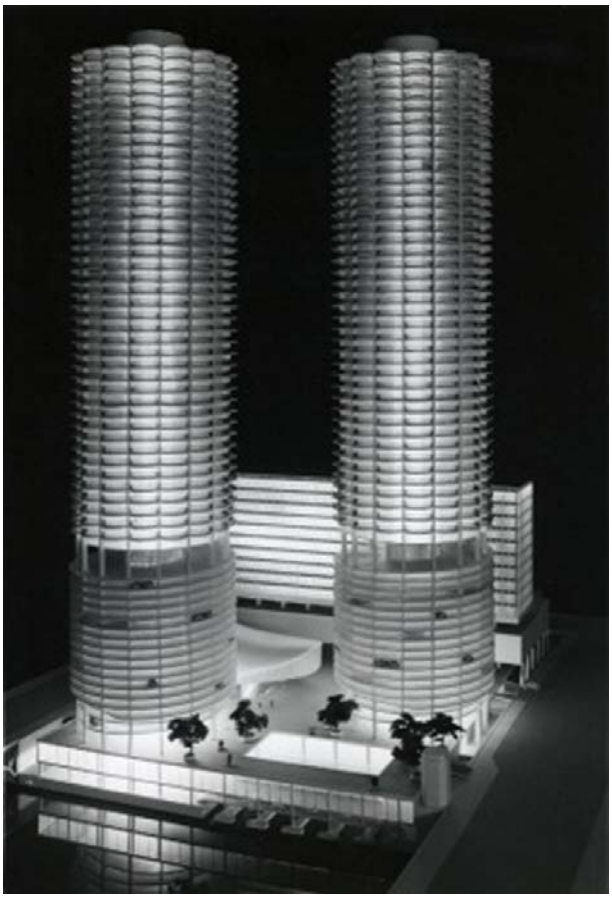
It was this challenge that ultimately led Goldberg to create an ambitious and richly varied design for Marina City that encompassed multiple uses—residential, office, retail, and recreational—in a dense urban microcosm on the river. No other mixed-use development had ever been built in Chicago that matched Marina City in size, density, or variety. As Goldberg recounted on numerous occasions, his ideas regarding the layering of uses was not a new concept in cities. When discussing the planning of Marina City with his mother-in-law, Lillian Florsheim, she summed it by saying "Oh, that's what we used to call living above the store!" However, zoning laws and the development of single-use zoning restrictions beginning in the 1920s had discouraged a free mingling of uses in new construction, particularly for residential projects. But for his high-rise residential development to succeed in the center city, Goldberg knew he had to provide "an exciting environment, a total environment, and also the price for living there had to be a bargain."

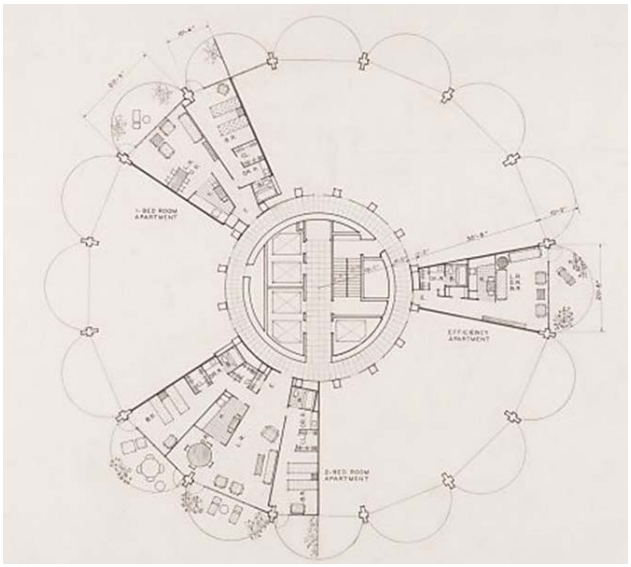
In *The Politics of Place: A History of Zoning in Chicago,* Joseph S. Schwieterman and Dana Caspall outline the difficulties involved in allowing Marina City to move forward as a mixed-use development on the chosen site. At the time of its purchase, the site for Marina City was zoned C-3, which prohibited residential development. The 1957 zoning ordinance, in anticipation of larger, more complex development in the city, allowed for projects of at least four acres to be zoned as a Planned Urban Development (PUD), a new classification that would allow for mixed uses on a single site. Although the Marina City property was only 3.1 acres, Ira Bach, Commissioner of the Chicago Planning Department, designated the property as a PUD district. With that designation in place, Marina City became the first planned urban development in the city of Chicago.

The Design Phase

As the deal for the site was finalized and zoning complications resolved, the design for Marina City continued to expand and evolve over the summer and fall of 1959. From the beginning, Goldberg envisioned the residential component of the complex as a pair of cylindrical high rises; this element was present in all of his schematic designs. Incorporating all of the other necessary functions of the development while maintaining a visually-cohesive whole proved to be more of a challenge.

The first scenario, developed in June 1959 under the name "Labor Center," showed two 40-story residential towers and one 10-story office building, all cylindrical high-rise buildings. By early October, a square theater auditorium had been added to the plans, and all four structures sat on an eight-story base that would house a small marina, commercial spaces, a bowling alley, offices, and parking. In the third plan for the complex, the office building had been redesigned as a rectangular 10-story building, with a circular ramp that led to a parking deck on the roof. Relieved of the need for parking, the base had shrunk from eight stories to two. Although a fourth plan was briefly considered that brought back the eight-story base and eliminated the office building, by December 1959 the overall plan for the development was largely set, and included the two cylindrical residential towers, rectangular office building, theater building, and two-story commercial platform. In addition to the theater space, the project team anticipated leasing a variety of other specialized recreational spaces within the platform and lower levels of





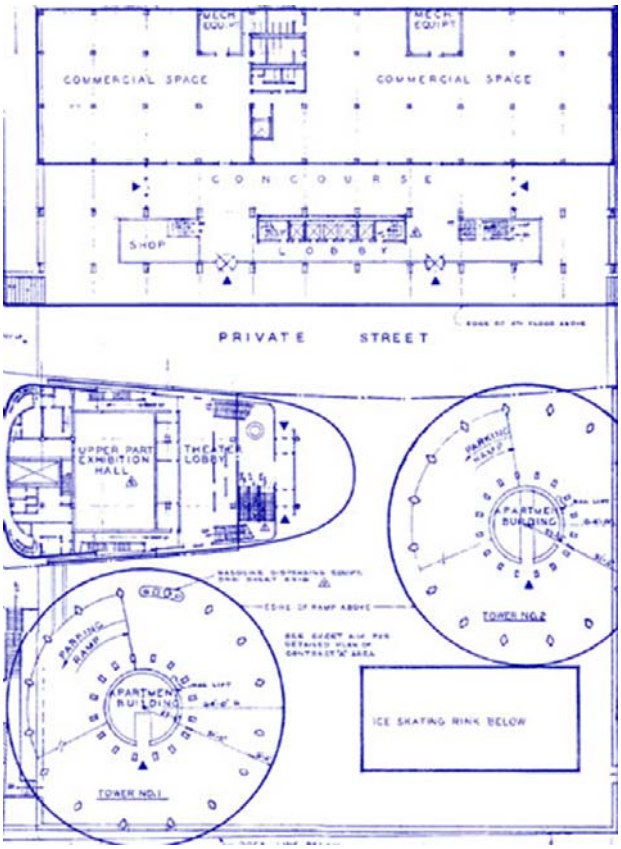
Top left: Model of Marina city, published as a post card by Aero Distributing Co.

Top right: Plan for the apartment towers, 1960, from bertrandgoldberg.org

Bottom right : Site plan of Marina City, 1960, from bertrandgoldberg.org

Goldberg knew he had to create an exciting, "total" environment that would make people want to live downtown. The two 60-story cylindrical concrete towers (resembling a flower in plan and corncobs in elevation) incorporated apartments, parking and other resident services but in a new expressive form that visually served to set the complex apart from other high-rise buildings.

The other elements of the complex—the theater, office building, and 2-story commercial platform—provided commercial, retail, and recreational facilities for residents. Everything a resident could need was all in one place.



the office building, including a bowling alley, a health center with a swimming pool, a skating rink, and marina. Retail tenants would include a bank, grocery store, liquor store, drug store, barber shop, beauty salon, travel agency, flower shop, coffee bar, restaurants, and a copying service.

BUILDING MARINA CITY

Construction of Marina City officially began on November 22, 1960, with an elaborately orchestrated groundbreaking ceremony. Among those in attendance were McFetridge, Swibel, Goldberg, Mayor Richard J. Daley, new president of the BSEIU David Sullivan, Julian H. Zimmerman and John Waner from the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), and Cook County Board President Daniel Ryan. Newly-elected President John F. Kennedy spoke to the assembled crowd by phone from Palm Beach, and Chicago Archbishop Bernard J. Sheil performed a blessing. An oversized brochure given to everyone in attendance contained a message from William McFetridge calling Marina City "the translation of a daring plan into an exciting reality." But behind the excitement of the groundbreaking, there was still much to be done.

The complexity and pace of construction required much of the team of architects, engineers, and contractors tasked with building Marina City. At the head of the team was Bertrand Goldberg Associates (BGA). The core team of architects at the firm consisted of Goldberg, Ben Honda, Richard Ayliffe Binfield, Edward Center, and Albert Goers. Structural engineers at the firm in 1960 included Bert Weinberg, Eugene Yamamoto, and Frank Kornacker. In total, the office in 1960 employed 10-12 architects, eight structural engineers, and six electrical and mechanical engineers. Just one year earlier, before the Marina City commission, the entire staff of the firm had consisted of only eight to ten people.

BGA also consulted with several outside engineers and engineering firms during the design and construction process. First among these engineers were Fred Severud and Hannskarl Bandel of the New York-based Severud-Elstad-Krueger. Goldberg brought in Fred Severud early in the process for assistance on structural aspects of the design. Other firms were also brought in at various stages of the construction to handle specific issues, including Ralph Peck and Moran Proctor, Mueser & Rutledge of New York for foundation investigations and A. A. Fejfer for wind analysis.

General contractors for the project were James McHugh Construction Company and Brighton Construction, Owner Thomas J. Bowler. Marina City would be McHugh's first high-rise project—they were better known for their heavy industrial work. But the company had invaluable experience working with reinforced concrete curvilinear forms. Leigh Bronson was general superintendent for McHugh, Norbert Zapinski was project engineers, Clarence Ekstrom was project manager and Howard Tribble was finishing superintendent.

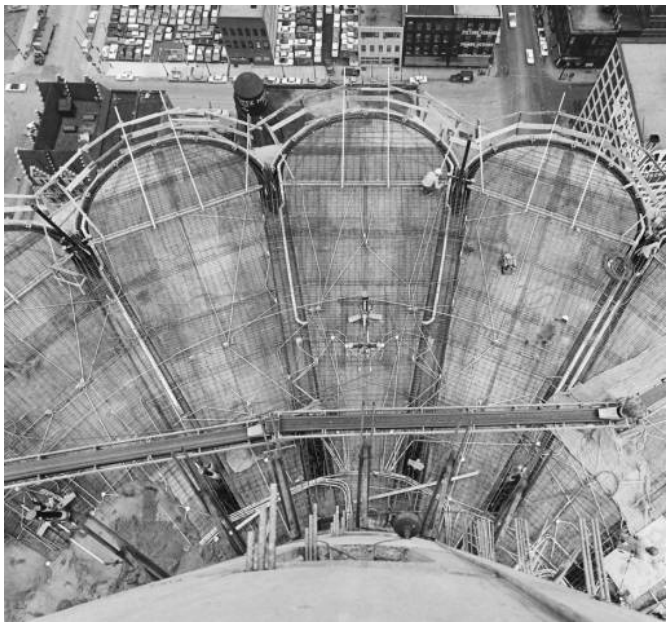
Construction began on the residential towers at the end of 1960, with the goal to begin moving tenants into the buildings by late 1962. The caissons were poured first, then the central cylindrical cores of the towers. The core for each tower acted as its chief load-bearing and wind-resisting element, and also housed the elevators, stairs, and mechanical systems. Finally, the floors, beams, and columns that made up the remaining structure of the building were poured.

Construction began on Marina city on November 22, 1960 with an elaborate groundbreaking ceremony. The residential towers rose at an astonishing rate of one floor per day and drew crowds of spectators.

Top: Mayor Richard J. Daley (center) and Archbishop Bernard Sheil (far right) at the groundbreaking in 1960. From the Chicago Public Library, Special Collections and Preservation Division.

Left: The residential towers under construction, 1961, from bertrandgoldberg.org.

Bottom right: Tower floor plate under construction. Photo by Richard Nickel, Archival Image & Media Collection , Ryerson and Burnham Library.



Construction on the office building (above, photo by Bertrand Goldberg Associates, October 1962) and the theater building (left, ca. 1966, from Ragon's *Goldberg, Dans La Ville / In the City*) continued through the mid-1960s, with the saddle-shaped theater, the last element in the complex, completed in 1967.

The pace at which the towers were erected was breathtaking as workers were able to complete one floor per day, or one floor every other day for each tower. Several innovations helped the workers achieve this pace. The first was the Linden climbing tower crane, which had been developed in Denmark just a few years before, and was designed to be hydraulically raised to follow the construction. One crane was used in the construction of each tower. Less impressive innovations that were nonetheless critical to maintaining speed and efficiency during building were steel reinforcing mesh that was easier to set in place than typical steel reinforcing bars, and fiberglass concrete forms that were lightweight and reusable. These fiberglass molds were also used to create the concrete groin vaults, columns, and load-bearing north and south window walls of the office tower.

Although the towers were not finished until early 1963, the first tenants were able to move into the east tower in October 1962. Construction on the rest of the complex continued. Goldberg applied for the permit to build the office building in October of 1961, and the building was ready for occupancy by late 1964. Among the first and most prestigious tenants to move into the office building was the National Design Center. The National Design Center served as a showcase for the latest trends in interior design, and featured exhibits of home furnishings, appliances, fabrics, and other products. The center leased the first four floors of the building, paying approximately $3 million for a ten-year lease.

While the residential towers, office building, and commercial spaces in the commercial platform were largely complete by the mid-1960s, construction of the theater lagged behind. Initially, Goldberg designed the building as an entertainment center with multiple theater spaces that would attract a wide variety of live theater, while also serving as a presentation space for the office tenants, but finding a tenant for the space proved difficult. Goldberg had hoped that the Goodman Theater would be interested in moving to the building, but local television station WFLD took a lease on the theater and space within the office building. The steeply pitched saddleback roof was altered to accommodate the television studios, but the basic shape of the original design was retained for the version of the building that was built. The exterior sheet lead cladding from the original design was also retained, and helped to insulate the interior from street noise. The station began broadcasting from its studios in the theater in February 1967, but construction was not completed on the building until mid-1967.

FINANCING MARINA CITY

As with the design and construction of the project, securing financing for Marina City was a complex process. In October 1959, two separate companies were formed to manage the construction of the project. The Marina City Building Corporation (MCBC), which handled the residential towers, and the North Marina City Building Corporation (NMCBC), which handled the rest of the complex. Both corporations were headed by McFetridge as president; Chicago Local 1 and Local 25 union leaders Ernest Anderson and Thomas J. Burke served as secretary and treasurer. McFetridge, Swibel, and Goldberg worked tirelessly to sell the project to its initial investors. McFetridge assured the Janitors' Union that the project would generate a seven-percent return on their investment and that they would have full equity once the mortgages were paid off. Even after the union authorized McFetridge to proceed with a feasibility study and

paid the down payment on the land in December of 1959, the project team still had to convince the union membership of the value of the project. It was not until the union's annual convention in May 1960 in New York, when McFetridge was replaced as president by David Sullivan, that the union's membership formally endorsed the project. Goldberg and Swibel traveled with McFetridge to the event, bringing with them a large scale model of Marina City.

Convincing the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to insure Marina City was also a challenge. Federal mortgage insurance, which was critical to the project, was only available for families, which the FHA defined as married couples with children. Since most of Marina City's tenants would not meet this definition, McFetridge, Goldberg, and Swibel worked closely with FHA's offices in Chicago and Washington D.C. to successfully change the agency's definition of "family" to include married couples without children and single individuals. With this groundbreaking policy shift in place, FHA commissioner Julian Zimmerman announced in June 1960 that the FHA would guarantee 90% of Marina City's residential mortgage component. It was the first FHA-insured downtown housing development and also the largest housing mortgage insurance the FHA had ever issued.

Project costs rose quickly between 1959 and 1960, from $21 million in August 1959 to $36 million by February 1960, and additional lenders were brought in. Continental Illinois National Bank and Trust Company of Chicago provided construction loans for both the residential and non-residential phases of the project, as well as the long-term mortgage for the non-residential element, which was not insured by the FHA. A consortium of East Coast banks provided the residential mortgage for the towers. Swibel is said to have been the main orchestrator of these agreements. The remaining equity investment was divided among the BSEIU and some of its local unions, including Chicago's Local 1. To further ease the union's huge financial commitment (which would rise to $12 million by 1964), Swibel arranged a $2 million loan from General Electric for the installation of all electrical appliances throughout Marina City.

Despite the efforts of the project team to spread the costs around, as early as 1961 there were rumblings of discontent from the union. As the country dipped into a recession, members began to question the wisdom of investing union funds into a project that, if it failed, would leave no provisions for workers' welfare, and whose apartments would not even be within financial reach of most of the union's members. McFetridge was no longer president of the union but controlled all of the union's decision making regarding the Marina City project, an arrangement that deeply rankled the union's President David Sullivan and Jay Raskin, treasurer of the union's Pension Trust. Sullivan and Raskin mounted a campaign to convince the union to sell its interests in Marina City. They questioned not only the financial soundness of the project but also its place in the mission of the union. In June 1962, D. W. Martin of the United Housing Foundation (which was sponsoring the construction of Co-op City in the Bronx for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America at the time), wrote a letter to union stating "from the rent schedule, only the wealthy can afford to enjoy it [the apartments at Marina City]. I hope the day is not far off when your union will sponsor a cooperative within the means of your members and other wage earners." By 1962, when *Fortune* Magazine ran an article on Marina City titled, "The House That Janitors Built," it was becoming increasingly clear that much of the union membership did not really want to be in the real estate business.

The marketing of Marina City was unprecedented in its scale and scope, including full scale mockups of apartments and office suites installed in the BSEIU headquarters in Chicago. Goldberg's office produced dozens of different rendering and collages on different aspects of the project, along with marketing brochures for the towers and the commercial and retail spaces. Goldberg, Swibel, and McFetridge gave countless interviews and speeches to promote the project.

Top left: Marketing brochure published by Marina Management Corporation; Top right: Edison Electric advertisement in *Life* magazine, December 24, 1965; Bottom: Marina City apartment model, 1961, photo by Hedrich Blessing.

At the BSEIU meeting in Los Angeles in May 1964, the issue came to a head and the decision was made for the organization to get out of Marina City. On July 12, 1964, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that the BSEIU, Local 32B, and the BSEIU pension trust had sold their combined two-third interest to Swibel's Marina City Management Corporation (which was in charge of the rentals for the complex) for $2.6 million. As part of the purchase, Marina City Management Corporation assumed the mortgage on the residential towers. McFetridge remained president of the Marina City Building Corporation. Chicago-based Local 1, which remained loyal to McFetridge, retained its one-third interest in the project. The *Tribune* article added that "the dispute in Los Angeles centered on Sullivan's contention that the international union should be involved in low-cost housing for workers," instead of investing in real estate for profit alone.

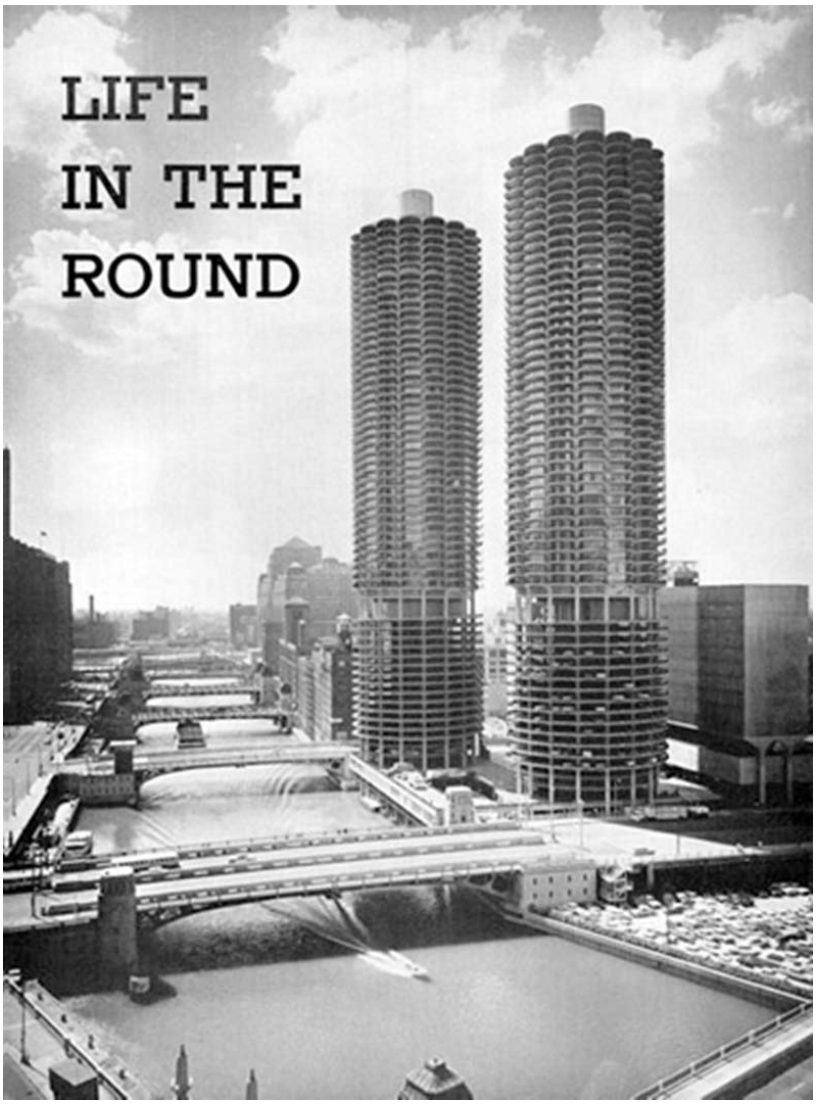
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RECEPTION OF MARINA CITY

Marketing and Publicity

From the moment the design was unveiled in September of 1959, the construction of Marina City garnered an enormous amount of public attention. This attention stemmed from both the marketing and publicity efforts of Bertrand Goldberg Associates, as well as from the novelty of the design and the sheer scope of the project. Bertrand Goldberg Associates was charged with providing most of the marketing materials for the project. The firm had to walk a fine line in selling the Marina City concept to investors and the public—living and working in the complex had to be presented as exciting and different, but familiar enough and a logical housing choice.

Along with the traditional models and architectural drawings presented to convey the design to the public and potential investors, Goldberg's office produced a series of renderings and collages, each focusing on various aspects of the complex and meant to appeal to different uses within it. These images ranged from painterly views from the river and across the plaza to dramatic expressionist renderings of the proposed theater space and drawings of the marina. The firm also produced handsomely designed brochures—one for the residential towers, and one for office space. Goldberg, Swibel, and McFetridge took any opportunity to speak publicly about the project. Goldberg gave countless interviews and speeches, both before and after the buildings were completed, all highlighting the best features of the design.

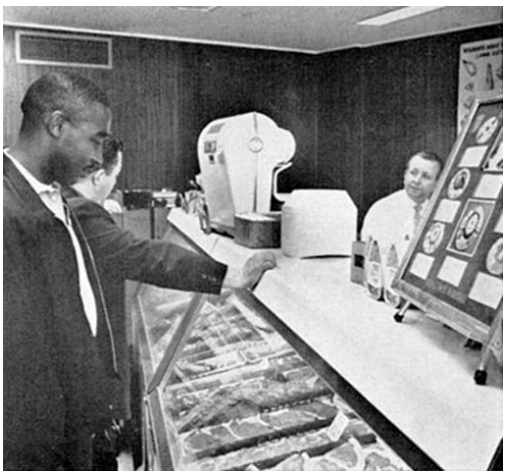
Goldberg in particular was concerned about the public reception of the project. He told McFetridge in 1961, "We've designed this unusual plan and it's been accepted. We are moving on, but I'm scared to death. This has not been done before. I don't know how people will receive it. I don't know how it will be marketed." Goldberg and McFetridge decided to take the unusual step of creating full-size mock-ups of both the apartment and office spaces. The BSEIU spent $50,000 to create the mock-ups, which were installed in the union's offices on Randolph Street. Every detail of the spaces was included. Photographs of the skyline taken from helicopters flying at the level of the residential floors were blown up and installed outside of the mock-ups to show the spectacular views. Instead of furnishing the apartments with specially-designed furniture, Goldberg had Chicago department store Marshall Field & Company decorate the interiors, to show that everyday furnishing could work in the wedge-shaped rooms of the apartments. The mock-ups opened in January, and a special event for union members, bankers, and FHA commissioners was held to give them a first-hand look at the design up-close, and to reas-



Another aspect of the public interest in the project was the perception of Marina City as a socially-progressive model that was not only affordable but also accessible to all races. The union's policy of non-discrimination extended to Marina City, and the project was touted as an integrated complex.

When the BSEIU sold its interest in Marina City to Swibel in 1964, the dual missions of affordability and inclusiveness became victims to the complex's financial success.

Photos on this page are from a 1964 issue of *Ebony* magazine which ran a lengthy pictorial spread entitled "Life in the Round" that profiled two African American tenants in the complex. However, the article pointed out, only six of the 896 units were occupied by black tenants.



sure them of the soundness of the project as an investment. The demonstration garnered a warm reception from both the public and the investors.

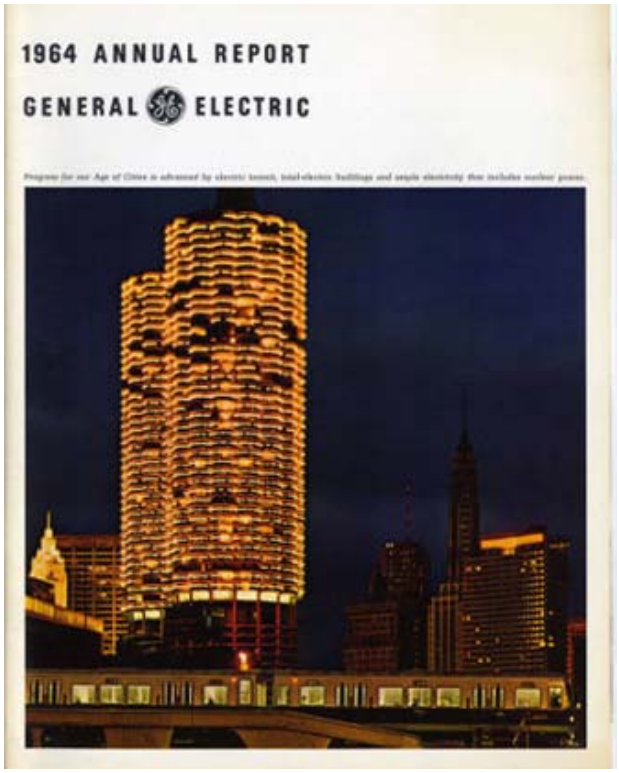
Much of the public interest in the project was also due to the audacity and newness of the design itself. The spectacle of the construction site drew throngs of "sidewalk superintendents" along Dearborn and State Streets. The rising forms of the residential towers were starkly mesmerizing to passersby and were visible from many vantage points in the central business district. Details of the project were rapturously reported in building trade and architectural journals as well as popular magazines and newspapers. *Popular Science* published an article on the complex in April of 1963, complete with a rendering of the site featuring cutouts that gave glimpses into the buildings' interiors and a detailed illustration of the Linden crane. *Life Magazine* included a dramatic nighttime photograph of the towers' concrete cores rising above the river in a 1962 article, calling Marina City "A daring design for living."

Another aspect of the public interest in the project revolved around the perception of Marina City as a socially-progressive model that was not only affordable but also accessible. The Janitors' union was integrated, and twenty-five per cent of the union's 275,000 members were African American. From the beginning, Marina City was touted as an integrated complex. When the Chicago *Defender* covered the groundbreaking in November 1960, the paper quoted William McFetridge enthusiastically declaring that the rental policies at Marina City would be "wide open." Other union leaders, including David Sullivan, confirmed that the union's policy of non-discrimination would extend to Marina City. "You know our union's policy," Sullivan said, "We don't have any discrimination anywhere in the union."

Public Reception

Public excitement only increased as construction on the towers drew to a close in 1963. By the time the east tower opened, the management company had received over 2,500 applications for apartments—more than twice the number of available units. Commercial leasing was also exceeding expectations, with high-profile early tenants including the National Design Center, Bertrand Goldberg Associates, and WCFL, a Top-40 radio station owned by the Chicago Federation of Labor, which occupied the top floor of the office building and the theater building. Hilton Hotels opened its first restaurant, café, and bar in the base of the building, and oil company Phillips 66 leased the marina.

Marina City, and the residential towers in particular, became a tourist attraction rivaling the city's great museums and cultural destinations. 12,000 people per month came through the model units after they opened. The management company began charging 25 cents per person for the tours, perhaps in an effort to stem the tide. So many tourists photographed the building that *Holiday* magazine quipped, "In most parts of the world, you have to be talented, beautiful, or notorious to be pursued by 'paparazzi.' At Marina City, all you have to do is live there." By 1964, the marketing *of* Marina City had become marketing *with* Marina City, as the complex became a symbol for Chicago as a thoroughly modern city. Images of the towers began appearing in advertisements for everything from cars to cigarettes. A December 1964 article in the *Chicago Tribune* called it, "Marina City Syndrome:"



By the mid-1960s, Marina City was appearing on magazine covers and in advertisements to symbolize Chicago as a thoroughly modern city.

Clockwise from top left: American Airlines advertisement, ca. 1965; *L'industria Italiana del Cemento* vol. 39, Feb. 1969; General Electric 1964 *Annual Report*.

Clockwise from top left: Fleischmann's Whiskey ad, ca. 1966; Chicago *Sunday American Magazine* May 1, 1966; Pan Am advertisement ca. 1966.

> *More and more organizations are using the photographic twin towers when they require a symbol that says 'Chicago.' Others use the towers for promotional settings because it is modern and exciting.*

This image of the buildings still resonates with artists and designers and the general public.

After Marina City opened, the unbridled excitement for the project was somewhat tempered by issues of race and social mobility. When the union sold its stake in Marina City and Swibel took over as the majority owner of the project, the twin ideals of affordability and accessibility that had been a large part of Marina City's story became victims of the financial success for the project. Although the rents never rose to the level of the luxury high rises along the Gold Coast, rents for all units in Marina City were raised substantially almost immediately after opening, even though union workers had complained that the first rent schedules were beyond the reach of working class people. The median income of Marina City residents in 1967 was between $12,000 and $13,000 a year. The national mean was $8,801.

The other major social mandate of Marina City, its accessibility to all races, also failed to live up to the expectations given at the beginning of the project. Even positive articles from the black press could not hide the fact that Marina City was far from fully integrated. In November 1964, *Ebony* magazine ran a lengthy, glossy pictorial spread entitled "Life in the Round." The article included beautiful, evocative images of every aspect of project, following two African American tenants through their days in the complex. However, the article pointed out, of the 896 units, only six were occupied by black tenants, who were often mistaken for maintenance workers by white residents. Albert Gaskin, a real estate broker who moved to Marina City when he could not find integrated housing in Evanston or on the north side of Chicago, recounted an incident with one of his neighbors in the laundry room: "Spotting him, the lady said: 'Oh, you have a lot of machines to take care of, don't you?' 'I don't work here,' Gaskin replied. 'I live here."

Replicating the Model and the Legacy of Marina City

From the beginning, McFetridge, Swibel, and Goldberg envisioned Chicago's Marina City as a model development that would be replicated in cities across the country by the BSEIU. In 1960, New York Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller invited the union to build a development like Marina City in New York. That plan was never realized. In 1962, the trio partnered with Park City Corporation Denver, a consortium of banks, to draw up plans for Marina City Denver. The mixed-use development, which was never built, proposed 600 apartments, a 350-room hotel, and 200,000 square feet of office space. Marina City Detroit, which also never made it past the planning stages, was contemplated for over four years. Renderings for this complex, dated March 1967, bear a striking resemblance to Goldberg's design for the Raymond Hilliard Homes in Chicago.

Goldberg attempted to expand on the ideas of Marina City in his subsequent ambitious plans for River City, located just south of the Loop in Chicago. Planning for the project began in the early 1970s and centered on a sea of 72-story apartment towers grouped in triads (groups of three). Unlike Marina City, which had focused on single and childless married couples, River City was to include all families. In addition to commercial and office spaces, the development was to in-

clude schools and support spaces for the children living in the complex. The plan was considerably downsized and modified over a ten year period, and was finally constructed as River City II, an S-shaped mid-rise housing complex hugging the river between Harrison Street and Roosevelt Road. In addition to housing, the complex offered 250,000 square feet of office space, shopping and dining, a conference center, a health club, educational facilities, a private park, and a 70-boat marina. The project was Goldberg's last mixed-use design that utilized the "city in a city" concept.

Following Marina City, other architects designed mixed-use residential developments in Chicago through the 1960s and 1970s, but none utilized Goldberg's concept of a dense cluster of interrelated but separate structures working together. Instead, these subsequent developments fell into one of two categories—multiple uses contained within a single "mega-structure" such as Lake Point Tower (Schipporeit-Heinrich; Graham, Anderson, Probst & White, associate architects, 1965-1968), John Hancock Center (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1965-1970), and Water Tower Place (Loebl, Schlossman & Hackl,1976); or urban renewal projects developed over large, landscaped lots, most notably seen on the Near North Side in Carl Sandburg Village (Louis R. Solomon and John D. Cordwell & Associates, 1960-1975).

In 1977, Marina City Management Corporation converted the residential towers from rental apartments to condominiums, separating the residential and commercial elements of the complex. Charles Swibel retained control of the commercial properties on the site until the early 1980s, selling the holdings to out-of-state investors who allowed the buildings to slide into disrepair. The commercial owners defaulted on the mortgage and filed for bankruptcy in the early 1990s. In 1994, the complex's commercial properties—including the theater, office building, retail spaces, and parking garages within the residential towers—were sold to John Marks for $3.35 million. Soon after, Marks began a renovation of the commercial spaces that included the conversion of the office tower into a hotel and the theater to a live entertainment venue. A restaurant space was also built over the original skating rink in the plaza to house the Smith & Wollensky steak house.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF MARINA CITY

Physical Description

The Marina City complex consists of five interconnected but distinct structures—two identical 60-story cylindrical residential towers, a saddle-shaped theater, and a 10-story office building. All of these rest on a two-story commercial platform covering the entire site and topped with an open plaza. With the exception of the theater, which was built with a steel truss structure and covered completely with lead shingles, all of the structures in the complex are cast-in-place reinforced concrete construction.

Commercial Platform

The commercial platform, or base building, houses a complex program of commercial amenities, a health club, mechanical systems, a railroad right of way and the marina with large areas set aside for out-of-water boat storage. The commercial platform is topped with a plaza which originally included a recessed skating rink though this feature was built over in 1998 with the

The vertical section drawing above, published in the April 1965 issue of *Architectural Forum*, provides the best illustration of the two-story commercial platform covering the entire site. The second floor of the structure, referred to as the bridge level in the original design drawings, houses restaurants, shops, a health club and a tube-like passage above the railroad right-of-way. The first floor, known as the marina level, includes the boat slips, large areas set aside for boat storage and a swimming pool.

construction of a restaurant building. The plaza is raised above street level and is accessed by ramps up from State and Dearborn Streets bounding the east and west sides of the complex. It should be noted that both of these streets are substantially elevated above grade and the surface of the Chicago River to follow the height of their respective bridges spanning the river. Therefore there are two levels below the plaza, referred to as the bridge and marina levels in the original design drawings.

Bridge Level
The bridge level of the commercial platform is functionally and programmatically the most intricate part of the complex as it houses the lobbies of the residential towers, restaurants facing the river, retail and commercial spaces, a health club, and a tube-like passage passing over a railroad right-of-way. While it is below the plaza, the exterior of the bridge level is partially visible from two locations. At the south end of the complex the bridge level faces the river and the exterior is a glazed curtain wall to provide views for the restaurants housed in that portion of the complex. Portions of the bridge level are also visible at the north end of the complex as State and Dearborn Streets descend from the bridge level. These areas are also enclosed with curtain walls.

Marina Level
The marina level of the commercial platform was originally set aside for dry-dock boat storage and a railroad right-of-way running east and west and this part of the complex is largely not visible from the exterior. The south side of the marina level houses the complex's namesake marina which is visible from the public right of way and the Chicago River. The marina includes boat slips and exposed structural columns.

Residential Towers
The residential towers, with their distinctive shape and rhythmic pattern of curved concrete balconies, are the focal points and the most iconic elements of the complex. When completed, Marina City's apartment towers were the tallest reinforced concrete structures in the world and the tallest apartment buildings in the world. The west tower sits at the southwest corner of the lot, and the east tower is set slightly back along the eastern edge of the lot near State Street. This staggered placement maximized views of the river and the lake. The base of each tower consists of a sweeping helical parking ramp, which occupies the first 19 floors. The twentieth floor, which separates the parking and apartments (both architecturally and functionally) features floor-to-ceiling windows that clearly show the building's central core, and houses laundry and storage facilities. The top 40 floors of both buildings originally contained a combined 896 apartments (now condominium units) around the central core in a radiating pattern of sixteen outwardly flaring "petals." Although the towers are often referred to as "corncobs," Goldberg never embraced that comparison. He always referred to the plan for the towers as emulating the form of a tree, with the apartments extending like branches, or, more accurately perhaps, as a sunflower. Although Goldberg initially planned for the floors in the tower to be cantilevered from the core, with no supporting structure at the perimeter walls, the time and budget constraints of the project led engineer Fred Severud to veto the idea. As Goldberg recounted later, Severud told him "It might work, but you're doing so many things that are for the first time, save that for the second go-round." Goldberg relented, and concrete columns were added at the perimeter, so that only the semi-circular balconies are cantilevered. Floor-to-ceiling glass walls

Marina City, view to the northwest, 2012. Photo credit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marina_City

separate the apartment interiors and the outdoor balconies, so that the glass is deeply recessed from the undulating concrete exterior. The roofs of the towers are flat, with a central circular penthouse. Residents access the apartment towers from bridge level entrances on Dearborn and State Streets.

Office (Hotel) Building

The north end of the lot is occupied by a ten-story concrete and glass office building (now used as a hotel), constructed between 1962 and 1964, that rises high above the plaza level on concrete groin vaults supported by slender columns and extends east-west along the entire width of the complex. In addition to its obvious function, Goldberg designed the office building as a screen, a "backstop to the residential towers" that would "shelter the project from the undeveloped area lying to the north." The load-bearing screen walls that form the textured exterior skin of the office building feature narrow concrete mullions that were cast in place to serve as the frames for the building's windows.

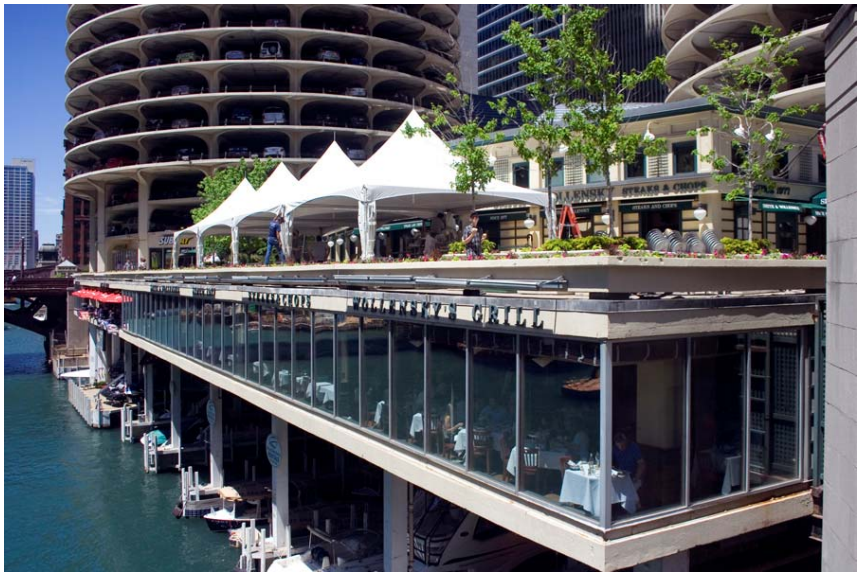
Beneath the groin vaults of the office tower, Goldberg placed a two-story multi-use structure which included a bowling alley on the second floor. The exterior walls of the second floor are flat stucco panels without windows. The first floor of the structure at the plaza level of the complex housed the office lobby and commercial spaces enclosed within glazed curtain walls.

Theater Building

The theater building, located between the west residential tower and the office building, is perhaps the most visually unusual element of the complex. It was also the last structure to be constructed (completed in 1967), and Bertrand Goldberg Associates explored several iterations for the roof design before settling on the final design (largely the work of Hannskarl Bandel of Severud Associates) in 1965. The theater building as constructed is a large saddle-shaped structure with a glazed lobby below. Two wing-shaped concrete side walls connected by a system of steel trusses support the concrete shell roof, which rises to 114 feet on the east side and 74 feet on the west side. The entire surface of the structure is comprised of curved or rounded forms, and the roof and walls (with the exception of the three glazed walls of the lobby) are covered in lead panels, which were installed to deaden the sound of rain, hail, and street-traffic. A rounded cast concrete eave line highlights the sweeping shape of the roof.

MARINA CITY AND EXPRESSIONIST MODERN ARCHITECTURE

Stylistically, Marina City—in particular the designs of the residential towers and theater building—is an impressive and captivating example of the Expressionist Style within the Modern Movement in architecture, and a powerful response to the glass-and-steel International-Style high rises influenced by architect Mies van der Rohe and commissioned by large corporations and the government from the 1950s through the 1970s. Goldberg, along with other Expressionist architects of the period, rejected the "modular uniformity" of these Miesian designs, and instead sought to design "humanistic spaces—spaces that attract the eye, spaces that have a message to people for usage or for physical experience."



Current images of the complex, clockwise from top left: the north elevation of the office (hotel) building; the west elevation of the theater building; the curtain wall of the bridge level above the marina; the east elevation of the theater building. Photos by Steven Dahlman.

Expressionists clung to the idea that architecture was a powerful art form with the capacity to express its human function, elicit emotion, or to be symbol. Typical features of Expressionism in modern architecture are sweeping, curved wall surfaces. Because of the emphasis on curved forms, Expressionist buildings were frequently built with concrete because of its ability to take on a curvilinear shape. And in comparison to steel framed structures, Expressionist concrete buildings fused the structure and exterior form of the building into a single element, creating an economy of means that appealed to modernists.

Given the emotive quality of Expressionism, churches were frequent patrons of the style. An early example is Le Corbusier's Notre-Dame-du-Haut (1950-54). This small chapel in Ronchamp, France features a concrete roof with dramatically upturned edges, an oval shaped belfry, and concave walls all executed in concrete. In Mexico, Felix Candela designed the Hotel Casino de la Selva, Cuernavaca, Mexico (1956) which employed hyperbolic paraboloids, or warped planar surfaces. These same surfaces were employed in the design of the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption (1967-71) in San Francisco which was designed by a team which included the Italian engineer Pier Luigi Nervi, a master of concrete structures who also designed the domed *Palazzo dello Sport* (1957) in Rome using pre-cast concrete ribs and buttresses.

In America, Frank Lloyd Wright was an early pioneer of cast-concrete architecture in his 1904 design of Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois. However, he truly exploited the expressive potential of concrete in his design for the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (designed in 1945, built 1956-59) in New York. Eero Saarinen is regarded as the leader in manipulating the expressive possibilities of concrete. His TWA Terminal (1952-62) at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York is perhaps the most aesthetically and technologically advanced example of Expressionism. He followed this with the Dulles International Airport Terminal in Washington, D.C., which has a concrete roof shape resembling a wing. At MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he designed the Kresge Auditorium with a thin-shell concrete roof shaped as section of a sphere that appears to rest on two points.

Marina City's twin residential towers are among the most well-known Expressionist structures in the country. The helical parking garages at the base of the buildings recall the interior galleries in Wright's Guggenheim Museum, while the rhythmic, organic undulation of the rounded balconies mimic patterns found in nature. Although not as exaggerated as the extreme forms of other Expressionist designs, the towers exhibit a unique sculptural quality.

Marina City's theater building, described by Carl Condit as "a grotesque lead-sheathed enclosure, looking very much like an inflated whale carcass" that was nonetheless "as novel as that of the towers themselves," is in league with many of the more daring and sculptural examples of Expressionism built during the post-war period. The theater, with its sweeping saddleback roof and sculptural form, calls to mind the bold, plastic shapes of the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption (1967-71), designed by Nervi and architect Pietro Belleschi, and the Church of the Miraculous Virgin in Mexico City (1954) designed by Felix Candela.

The complex's office building, with its rectangular massing and severely attenuated concrete columns along the north and south elevations, is not as stylistically daring as the designs for the

www.fondationlecorbusier.fr

wikipedia.org/wiki/Félix_Candela

Stylistically, Marina City is an impressive example of the Expressionist Style within the Modern Movement in Architecture. Architects who designed in this style rejected the "modular uniformity" of glass and steel International Style buildings and instead sought to design "humanistic spaces that would elicit an emotional response. "

Clockwise from top left: Le Corbusier's Notre-Dame-du Haut (1950-54) in Ronchamp, France; Felix Candela's Hotel Casino de la Selva, Cuernavaca, Mexico (1956); Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum in New York (1956-59); and Eero Saarinen's TWA Terminal (1952-62)

www.guggenheim.org

http://www.mas.org/

towers and theater. However, the concrete groin vaults over the plaza level exhibit a sculptural quality that is in keeping with Expressionist tenets, and also recalls Neo-Formalist designs.

Although Marina City did exhibit many of the hallmarks of the Expressionist Style, Goldberg saw the use of concrete and non-rectilinear forms as a way to address most efficiently and economically the requirements of each building project. Goldberg was not designing to suit a particular style—rather, the forms of his buildings grew out of the distinct and individual needs and constraints of each component of the development. Architectural critic Marcus Whiffen noted that "however outwardly rhapsodic" Goldberg's' designs, including Marina City, may seem on the outside, they are "in essence rigorously controlled by engineering and cost factors."

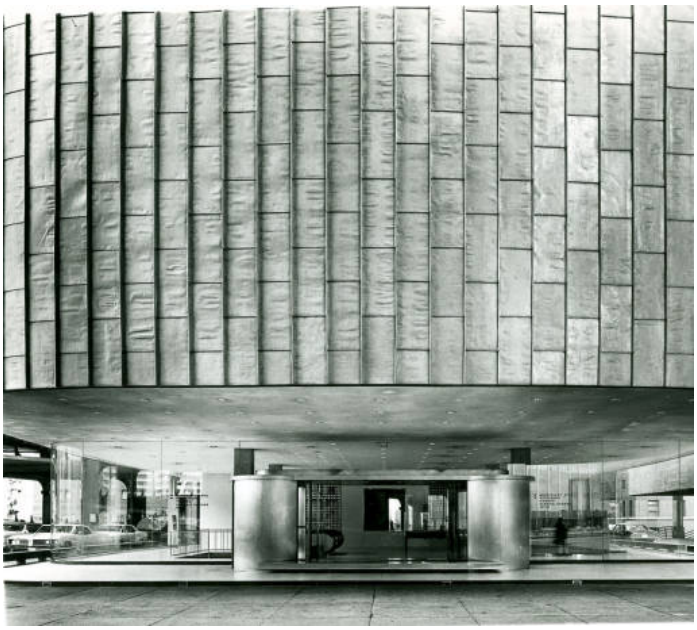
In the design of the towers, Goldberg's use of the cylindrical form undoubtedly made for buildings that looked like no other high-rise apartments in the city—but just as important were the economic and structural advantages it afforded. The form allowed for the highest ratio of floor area to exterior skin, reduced wind loads and stresses on the building, and shortened the length of supply and return runs for the utilities. The central core of the building supplied a compact space to house elevators and stairs, and utilities, becoming "vertical streets" within the building. The petal-shaped plans of the apartments were designed to maximize a feeling of expanding space within very modest square footage.

This innovative cylindrical form was made possible only through the use of concrete as the main building material. Goldberg had attempted to create a circular design using steel framing before Marina City, and was disappointed in the limitations of the material. Using concrete allowed for a more efficient and cost-effective construction of the desired form. Goldberg estimated that the use of concrete over steel frame cut construction costs for the project as much as 10-15%.

Function also influenced design in other elements of complex. The shape and materials of the theater building and the unusual allover lead cladding maximized sound quality on its interior. The rectangular shape and monolithic base of the office tower was meant to serve as a shield against an older industrial and warehouse district originally located north of the site. The relationship among the buildings also informed design decisions. For example, the height of the office building was determined not only by the amount of space needed for its financing, but also to ensure that the office did not rise above the garage levels of the adjacent residential towers, thus preventing residents and office workers from having to look directly out onto each other. The result of such considered design decisions is a complex that effectively differentiates from its varying functions, while allowing them to work together effectively as a whole.

BERTRAND GOLDBERG AFTER MARINA CITY

Marina City thrust Goldberg onto the international stage. The scope of the project led to an expansion of Goldberg's practice known as Bertrand Goldberg Associates. The firm's next major project was the Raymond M. Hilliard Center (1966, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007) built for the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) to provide public housing for seniors and families with children. It is regarded as the CHA's most socially successful public



Goldberg's design for Marina City, particularly the rhythmic and organic undulating forms of the apartment towers and the theater building, are among the best known Expressionist structures in the country.

Clockwise from top left: Garages of the two towers under construction, ca 1961; base of office building; detail of balconies on towers; east elevation of theater building . Photos from bertrandgoldberg.org.

housing, for which much is credited to Goldberg's design. Families were housed in a pair of twenty-two-story buildings which are curved slabs while the apartments for seniors were located in a pair of round towers with oval window openings. The round towers and curving slab high-rises at the Hilliard Center are supported by their exterior walls, which form rippling concrete load-bearing shells.

Goldberg was an intellectual who championed cities in general and Chicago in particular. He was preoccupied with ideas that would revitalize urban centers, something that he did so successfully at Marina City. He published articles in magazines and lectured on urbanism, arguing for dense, mixed-use projects that would combine commercial, residential, educational, recreational, and health uses. Goldberg's last built project is Wright College (1986-92) on Chicago's Northwest Side.

Throughout his career Goldberg's work was profiled in architectural publications domestically and internationally. His work has been the subject of exhibitions in the United States and Europe. More recently, he has been the subject of a major exhibition and publication produced by the Art Institute of Chicago, which was also the beneficiary of his collection of papers and drawings. Goldberg was elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects in 1966, and was awarded the *Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* from the French government in 1985. Goldberg died in Chicago in 1997.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sections 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art, or other object within the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for designation," as well as possesses sufficient historic design integrity to convey its significance.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that Marina City be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Value as an Example of City, State or National Heritage

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- Marina City is an icon of Chicago urban planning. This "city within a city," the first of its kind to layer residential, commercial, and entertainment uses into a dense high rise complex in the center city, was the most ambitious and forward-thinking post-war urban renewal project in Chicago in an era defined by ambitious urban renewal projects.

Marina City was the defining project of Goldberg's long career in architecture. After Marina City, Goldberg continued to design buildings across the country with his signature rounded forms. From bertrandgoldberg.org, photo by Orlando R. Cabanban.

In Chicago, notable examples of his work include the Raymond Hilliard Center, a CHA housing complex (top) completed in 1966, and River City II (bottom), a multi-use complex completed in 1986. From bertrandgoldberg.org.

- Designed to primarily house middle-income singles or childless married couples and as a model for reinvestment and revitalization of Chicago's downtown, Bertrand Goldberg's comprehensive vision for Marina City introduced new ideas about form and structure and novel solutions for living and working in an urban environment. Although Marina City remained an anomaly for decades, its success as a dense high-rise residential development anticipated the later transformation of downtown Chicago from a nine-to-five business district to a thriving and bustling residential and commercial community. The development's use of the Chicago River as an amenity was also years ahead of its time.

- At the time of its construction, Marina City was the most ambitious and innovative real estate development in the city. The project was the first planned development project in Chicago, and the first and largest federally-insured downtown housing project in the country.

- Marina City was the brainchild of William Lane McFetridge, president of the Building Service Employees International Union, and real estate developer Charles Swibel. McFetridge was one of the most influential labor leaders in the Midwest after World War II, and Swibel later rose to become head of the Chicago Housing Authority. Their idea to invest union funds into middle-income housing as a way to revitalize urban centers and create more jobs for members was a significant departure from other union-funded housing projects in the country, which were built to provide low-cost housing for members.

Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The residential towers and theater building at Marina City complex are excellent and varied examples of the Expressionist style, a stylistic reaction against the rigidities of the International Style within the context of the modern movement in architecture during the second half of the twentieth century.

- Marina City marks the first built example of Bertrand Goldberg's use of the cylindrical form, which would become a hallmark of many of his subsequent designs. Goldberg's design for the residential towers, which featured the repeated use of curving, petal-like shapes around a central cylindrical core, was unlike any design ever built in Chicago, and the buildings remain among the most distinctive structures in the city.

- In his design for Marina City, Bertrand Goldberg pioneered the use of concrete in high-rise construction. Goldberg had attempted to create a cylindrical design using steel framing before Marina City, and was disappointed in the limitations of the material. Using concrete allowed for a more efficient and cost-effective construction of the desired form. When they were completed, the residential towers at Marina City were the tallest reinforced concrete structures in the world.

Humorous comparison photograph taken by a photographer at the Chicago Daily News, circa 1961

- Marina City showcases Goldberg's ability to create evocative large-scale architecture that also addressed the constraints of the site and budget, the functions of each component of the development, and the needs of the people who would live and work in the complex. The cylindrical shape of the residential towers were visually striking, but also allowed for the highest ratio of floor area to exterior skin, reduced wind loads and stresses on the building, and shortened the length of supply and return runs for the utilities. The petal-shaped plans of the apartments were designed to maximize a feeling of expanding space within very modest square footage. The rounded shape and lead sheathing of the theater building were used to improve the acoustics of the interior, all while creating a "form that is novel as that of the towers."

- The form, materials and siting of the individual buildings at Marina City were carefully designed so that the office, residential, entertainment and parking functions work together effectively as a whole.

Criterion 5: Work of Significant Architect or Designer

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.

- Bertrand Goldberg, the designer of Marina City, is a significant architect in the history of Chicago architecture, combining both technical brilliance and humanistic values in ways exemplified by his architectural designs. Marina City was Goldberg's first large-scale commission, and brought international attention to his firm.

- Goldberg possessed an exceptional understanding of materials and new building and design technologies, but also believed that these physical aspects of architecture must serve humanity; he was also an urbanist, but one who often found inspiration from structures found in nature. The fusion of these qualities led to Goldberg's highly individual buildings found in Chicago and across the nation, and is most completely exemplified in the Marina City complex.

- Goldberg was one of the few Americans who studied at the Bauhaus, an influential avant-garde art and design school in Weimar-era Germany that flourished between the two world wars. Goldberg credited his time at the Bauhaus for his interest in the human and social aspects of design and his interest in mass-produced and prefabricated structures.

- In 1966, Bertrand Goldberg designed the Raymond M. Hilliard Center for the Chicago Housing Authority. This complex is regarded as one of the most socially successful public housing projects in the nation, attributed largely to Goldberg's design, which successfully balanced community amenities and the individual needs of residents.

Criterion 6: Distinctive Theme as a District

Its representation of an architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social or other theme expressed through distinctive areas, districts, places, buildings, structures, works of art, or other objects that may or may not be contiguous.

- Marina City was a bold response to the threat of suburbanization and disinvestment in Chicago's downtown in the decades following World War II. The complex served as a microcosm of urban life within five interconnected yet distinct structures, all contained within a single 3-acre lot within the city's center.

- The structures within the Marina City complex were designed to sustain one another to create what Goldberg called the "24-hour city." The residential towers provided the captive population needed to support the retail, office, and entertainment buildings, while these same spaces made living downtown feasible for the complex's residents.

Criterion 7: Unique Visual Feature

Its unique location or distinctive visual appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the City of Chicago.

- Nearly 50 years after its completion, Marina City remains an iconic presence in downtown Chicago. The residential towers, with their distinctive shape and rhythmic pattern of curved concrete balconies, are the focal points of the complex. The complex's location along the Chicago River only serves to heighten the visual impact of the towers

- Marina City—and the residential towers, in particular—has been featured in television shows, films, advertisements, and album covers. As early as 1964, a *Chicago* Tribune article noted that Marina City had become a symbol for Chicago as a modern city, citing the use of its image in advertisement for everything from cars to cigarettes. This image of the buildings still resonates with many artists and designers, as well as the general public.

Integrity Criterion

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architecture or aesthetic value.

Marina City retains its historic location and setting along the north side of the Chicago River in in Chicago's Near North Side. The relation of the buildings in the complex to each other has remained essentially unaltered since its completion. The complex has benefited from good stewardship over both the residential and commercial structures, and largely retains its overall historic design, use of materials and workmanship.

Most of the exterior alterations to Marina City have occurred to the commercial elements of the

complex, and date from the 1990s remodeling. The most significant changes have taken place at the plaza topping the commercial platform. The original skating rink at the southeast corner of the plaza was covered with a two-story restaurant building in 1998. A series of concrete ramps along State Street were also added access to the new building. The glass-enclosed parking attendant structure at the south end of the plaza is also not original. In both the office building and the commercial platform most exterior alterations are limited to the storefronts, and are common and reversible. Alterations to the theater building include the addition of two square towers to the north and south ends of the west façade, and the enclosure of the recessed, glazed, first-floor lobby. However, the overall historic exterior design of the buildings within the complex, as well as the relationship among these buildings, remains visible, legible and understandable, and the architect's original design intent remains clear. Marina City continues to express its historic architectural value.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based upon its evaluation of Marina City, the Commission recommends that the significant features be identified as follows:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of Marina City's buildings including the exterior of the bridge level and marina level visible from public rights-of-way and the Chicago River.

- The driveways and open plaza areas between Marina City's buildings.

The one-story restaurant building located at the southeast portion of Marina City and built in 1998 is not considered a significant feature for the purpose of this proposed landmark designation. The glass-enclosed parking attendant structure at the south end of Marina City is not original to the plaza and is also not considered a significant feature for the purpose of this proposed landmark designation.

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