

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Forum  
Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 3900 Manchester Boulevard  
City or town: Inglewood State: CA County: Los Angeles  
Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_ statewide      \_\_\_ local  
Applicable National Register Criteria:  
\_\_\_ A      \_\_\_ B      \_\_\_ C      \_\_\_ D

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of certifying official/Title:** **Date**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of commenting official:** **Date**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Title :** **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

Forum \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property \_\_\_\_\_

Los Angeles, CA \_\_\_\_\_  
County and State \_\_\_\_\_

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_ entered in the National Register
- \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_ removed from the National Register
- \_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation and Culture:

Sports Facility

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation and Culture:

Music Facility

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

---

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement:

New Formalism

---

---

---

---

---

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

---

#### Summary Paragraph

The Forum was designed by Charles Luckman and Associates in the New Formalist architectural style. Construction began in 1966, and the first event was held in 1967. It is located in Inglewood, California, approximately 12 miles southwest of downtown Los Angeles. The Forum was originally constructed as the home of three sports franchises: the Lakers (basketball), Kings (hockey), and Wolves (soccer). It exhibits the monumental scale and massing, classical proportions and motifs, and strict symmetry associated with New Formalist buildings, and was described by the *Los Angeles Times* as a “modern and highly stylized version of the Coliseum of ancient Rome.”<sup>1</sup> The Forum stands at the approximate center of its 29 ½-acre parcel. The site is generally open, with the building surrounded by parking, providing unobstructed views from the surrounding streets. The immediately surrounding landscaping is low profile, and includes mature trees, shrubs, and flowering plants. There are scattered low hedges and trees around the perimeter of the site. After being underutilized for over a decade, the Forum underwent a two-year rehabilitation project and reopened as an entertainment venue in 2014. Following the rehabilitation, the Forum retains significant character-defining features on the interior and exterior. It retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Dedication Scheduled for \$16 Million Forum,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 24, 1967.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

---

## Narrative Description

### *Exterior*

The Forum is circular in plan and stands on an elevated concrete pedestal. The exterior has 80 sculptural precast concrete columns; each one is 60 feet high and weighs 57 tons. The columns form an arcade that serves as a continuous covered passage around the circumference of the building at the first level. The concrete columns are clad with a plaster skim coat. Set back from the columns is a continuous exterior metal panel wall. The columns rise above the podium level, and support the reinforced concrete compression ring (four feet by eight feet in cross section) from which a cable roof structure is suspended. The Forum has a slightly sloped roof with a scalloped parapet created by the exterior columns that rise above the podium level; the roof's highest point is at the center, sloping downward toward the parapet. The radially suspended tension cables support the roof deck, eliminating the need for interior columns, and are joined in the center to a structural steel tension ring. The roof is 407 feet in diameter.

Visitors enter the Forum by ascending one of eight gently sloping ramps with painted concrete handrails that lead from the parking lot to the podium level. At the podium level the handrails connect to a low, painted concrete wall that defines the exterior terrace space. The arena floor was placed 26 feet below the podium so that entry to the building is on the mid-level, providing easier access to the seating risers above and below. The four main public entrances are located within the exterior arcade passage, at the southwest-northeast and southeast-northwest axes of the building. There are no windows at the main, circular body of the arena. Sconces line the interior of the corridor, mounted to the inward-facing walls of the columns. The entrances to the administrative offices, the Forum Club, and the Chase Lounge (originally the Parthenon Club, and later the Whistle Stop Café) are located slightly below ground level and accessed by concrete steps. These entrances are located at the north, west, and east sides of the building. The north and west entrances are sheltered by fabric canopies. Original ticket windows are present on the east and west sides.

There are five automobile entrances to the parking lot – two on Kareem Court, one on Pincay Drive, one on Prairie Avenue, and one on Manchester Boulevard. Four of these have concrete entry gates, which do not appear in photographs of the Forum from the late 1960s. There is a truck tunnel providing vehicular access to the lower level of the building on the south side.

### *Exterior Alterations*

There has been little alteration to the exterior of the Forum. In 2014, a two-year, substantial rehabilitation project was completed that addressed deferred maintenance issues, accessibility, and hazardous materials abatement. Alterations include the removal of an incompatible metal parapet that was added in 1989 to accommodate corporate sponsorship, and the addition of new exterior signage. The windows and doors at the north and west below-grade entries have been replaced in-kind in the original openings. To comply with accessibility codes, additional entrance ramps were added to four of the existing concrete ramps. The new ramps are located

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

immediately adjacent to the original ramps, and follow the existing contour along the outer edge. On the north end, immediately to the east of the stairs, a new three-level elevator was installed.

The Forum retains significant character-defining features on the exterior, including:

- Symmetrical façade
- Central location on an open site with high visibility from adjacent streets and properties
- Low profile landscaping
- Raised podium
- Concrete ramps and railings
- Sculptural columnar supports that form an arcade and covered passage at the exterior
- Smooth surfaces of the exterior concrete columns
- Original roof fascia profile
- Flat roof
- Suspension roof system
- Metal panel exterior walls set back from colonnade
- Four main entrances with multiple personnel doors
- Original ticket windows

### ***Interior***

The interior of the Forum is divided into three levels – the main/event level (level one), the club level (level two), and the concourse level (level three). The main/event level includes the main bowl, which consists of the front of house space including the event floor and the upper and lower permanent visitor seating levels. The main bowl is elliptical in shape. It is accessed from the exterior at the podium level, and from the concourse level via vomitoria.<sup>2</sup> The suspended roof system allows for the massive, open interior space free of columnar supports. The ceiling retains the original tension ring at the center with radiating structural cables. Above the center ring is rigging and a series of catwalks that accommodate lighting and other equipment.

There are two levels of permanent seating installed on concrete seating tiers and accessed by concrete stairs. The seats consist of metal backing and side panels with fabric upholstery. Safety rails span the front row of each seating section in the lower bowl and separate the cross aisle from the seating below in the upper bowl. There are metal pipe rails on the stairways within the vomitoria, and metal handrails at the stairs leading from the vomitoria to the upper seating sections in the main bowl. Metal handrails and safety rails with tempered glass barriers are present at the box seating above the vomitoria.

Exit tunnels are centered on both the east and west sides of the lower bowl, and vomitoria at the cross aisles lead to the public concourses. The vomitoria on the north and south ends have sloped

---

<sup>2</sup> The term vomitorium (plural: vomitoria) is used to describe the exit tunnels created by the tiered seats in sports arenas; they are designed to provide rapid egress for large crowds. The term was first used to describe Roman amphitheaters and comes from the Latin *vomitum* which means “to spew forth.”

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

ramps that lead to the exterior. There are four pillars at the exterior wall in the main bowl – two on the west and two on the east. The pillars house mechanical shafts, a storage room, and provide access to the roof. Around the perimeter of the upper bowl at the ceiling is a soffit that functions as a return air plenum. This is partially obscured from view by the ceiling rigging. The walls around the upper level of the main bowl are clad in contoured and perforated metal which has been painted.

The main/event level includes a variety of back of house spaces. These originally included locker rooms for the resident sports teams, and accompanying office, medical, and press facilities. The back of house spaces have been converted for use as additional concession areas, dressing rooms, an artist lounge, and other support services for the new use as an entertainment venue. In addition, the first level includes loading areas, a boiler room, a mechanical and transformer room, carpenter and electrical shops, offices, and storage rooms.

The Forum was constructed without luxury box seating, but included a private club (the Forum Club) and a public club (the Parthenon or Whistle Stop Café, now known as the Chase Lounge). Both clubs are located on the club (second) level. The interior configuration of both spaces remains intact, but original features and finishes have been replaced. The Forum Club is composed of a bar area and a large carpeted lounge/nightclub space. The Chase Lounge is a large open space with a bar and seating areas. In addition to the club spaces, the second level includes meeting, storage, electrical and mechanical, technology, and office spaces. The executive offices and boardrooms are also on this level. In 1976 and 1988, some interior partition walls were reconfigured in secondary spaces to create additional offices; these office spaces have been further reconfigured. There is a vomitorium centered on both the east and west sides of the main bowl at the club (second) level that provides access to the public concourses.

On the concourse (third) level, there are separate concourses on the east and west sides which each contain ticketing, concessions, mechanical and electrical spaces, two main entrances, and access to the restrooms on the club level below. Small vomitoria on the north and south sides provide access to the exterior. The concourses are formed by an exterior circular wall and an interior elliptical cross aisle. The general configuration of the concourses and the passage from the concourses to the cross aisles (via vomitoria) have been retained. Fixed concession areas line the exterior wall of the concourses and are composed of open bays between columns. The ceiling in the concourses has a distinctive curved shape, and the ceiling has a spray-applied textured (“popcorn”) finish. Original light fixtures in both concourses have been retained.

### ***Interior Alterations***

Interior alterations are consistent with the adaptive re-use of the building from a venue that was constructed primarily to accommodate sporting events, to a high-end theater environment for music and entertainment. The rehabilitation project completed in 2014 retained and rehabilitated the significant character-defining features of the main bowl and the other public spaces. Selective interventions address hazardous materials, safety issues, acoustic issues, and other upgrades. Interior alterations include replacement of the original seats in the main bowl on the existing seating tiers. The replacement seats have the same dimensions as the original seats, and therefore

Forum

Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA

County and State

the overall seating configuration remains intact. Existing handrails, guardrails, and safety rails have been replaced, and new handrails were installed in the stair aisles of the upper bowl to meet safety codes. The original, non-uniform v-shaped stairs in the upper bowl were modified so that all steps in these aisles are consistent in shape and size to meet safety codes. Accessibility upgrades include the installation of a new elevator on the west end to provide access to the club (second) level at the entrance to the Forum Club; a new access stair on the west end; and a new access ramp on the north end.

To address acoustic issues in the main bowl, bass traps (constrained air spaces with an acoustical facing that helps improve low frequency absorption) were installed in the north and south ends of the arena. Flooring throughout the interior has been replaced with carpeting. On the event floor, the existing concrete arena floor has been covered with a colored epoxy. The concession areas on the concourse level have been upgraded with new features and finishes. All back of house spaces have been upgraded and reconfigured to accommodate additional concession and visitor spaces, new office spaces, and the services and facilities, including dressing rooms, needed for performing artists.

The Forum retains significant character-defining interior features in the main public spaces, including:

- The interior bowl spatial volume, including the elliptical seating rows, an elliptical cross aisle at the main concourse level, congruent elliptical wall at the lower event level, and the circular wall enclosure at the top
- Seating tier: risers and treads that form the lower and upper seating bowls
- Perforated metal wall cladding
- Vomitoria, truck tunnel, and other exit passages
- Two public concourses formed by an exterior circular wall and an interior elliptical seating cross aisle
- Passages from concourses to cross aisles
- Ceiling shape, texture, and light fixtures in the public concourses

### **Integrity**

Although there have been alterations to the property over time, the Forum retains all seven aspects of integrity. *Location*: The building is in its original location. *Design*: The Forum retains significant character-defining features of its original New Formalist architecture. *Setting*: Features of the original setting are intact, including the relationship of the arena with existing landscape features and parking on the site. *Materials and Workmanship*: Although there have been some alterations over time, the Forum retains the majority of its historic materials and reflects the physical evidence of period construction techniques. *Feeling*: The Forum retains the significant physical features that convey the building's character as a modern sports arena. *Association*: The property continues to convey its historic association as a sports arena, and retains significant character-defining features of its original New Formalist design.



Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

---

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1967  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1967  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Luckman, Charles  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Forum is a rare, intact example of a post-World War II sports arena. It is significant in the area of Architecture, and it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C as an excellent example of New Formalism in Southern California, and as a prominent example of the work of architect Charles Luckman. The period of significance is 1967, reflecting the date that construction was completed. The Forum exhibits exceptional importance, particularly given the rarity of the type, and therefore meets Criterion Consideration G for properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Forum was designed by Charles Luckman and Associates in the New Formalist architectural style, and was described by the *Los Angeles Times* as a “modern and highly stylized version of the Coliseum of ancient Rome.”<sup>3</sup> New Formalism emerged in the 1950s, and is widely seen as a rejection of the strict glass-and-steel vocabulary of the International Style and Mid-Century Modernism. The style was popular in large scale commercial and civic designs from the late 1950s through the 1970s and eagerly referenced and abstracted the forms and applied ornamentation of classical architecture. The style is characterized by a strict symmetry and formality, smooth wall surfaces, colonnades of stylized full-height columnar supports, repeating arches or rounded openings, heavy projecting roof slabs, projecting cornices, and on-grade open plazas and integral parking. The Forum is an excellent and prominent Southern California example of the style, and retains significant character-defining features of the original design. Its monumentality, strict symmetry and formality, combined with the classical arcade and covered passage created by the sculptural columns around the exterior of the building are significant features of its New Formalist design.

Architect Charles Luckman (1909-1999) is remembered not only as the visionary behind many notable buildings in Los Angeles and across the United States, but also for the extraordinary path he took to become one of Los Angeles’ most prominent architects. Following graduation from Kansas City’s Northeast High School in 1925, Luckman studied briefly at a Kansas City junior college. In 1926, he moved to Chicago and worked as an engineer for the Steam Fitters Association before enrolling in the architecture program at the University of Illinois, Champagne-Urbana in 1927, from which he received a degree in 1931. At Champagne-Urbana, Luckman met his future partner, William Pereira. During architecture school Luckman worked part time as a draftsman in the office of Robert L. Pioso in Chicago. Luckman split his time between Chicago and New York through the 1930s and early 1940s, working part-time as a

<sup>3</sup> “Dedication Scheduled for \$16 Million Forum,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 24, 1967.

Forum

Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA

County and State

designer for Kenneth Lind from 1931-1936, and as his partner from 1936-1943 at the firm Lind and Luckman, Architects.

Due to the lack of architectural commissions during the Great Depression, in 1931 Luckman took a job as a draftsman in the advertising department of the Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Company.<sup>4</sup> In 1935, he became sales manager for the Pepsodent Company, where his marketing techniques were credited with quadrupling profits, and he rapidly ascended the corporate ladder. In 1937, at age 27, Luckman was featured on the cover of *Time Magazine* as the “Boy Wonder of American Business,” and by age 33 he had become the president of Pepsodent Company. When Lever Brothers acquired Pepsodent in 1946, Luckman became Lever’s president. This made Luckman one of the youngest head executives in the country, which earned him a second *Time Magazine* cover in 1946.

As president of Lever Brothers, Luckman relocated the company from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to New York City, and masterminded the construction of their new corporate headquarters on Park Avenue in Manhattan. Known as Lever House, the building was one of the first sealed glass towers that began the curtain wall trend, and one of the first glass skyscrapers in Manhattan.<sup>5</sup> The tower was completed in 1956 and remains a landmark of International Style modernism. This experience reminded Luckman of his passion for architecture, and in 1950 he resigned the Lever presidency and opened his own architectural firm, the Luckman Partnership. Luckman presented a plan for the new Seagram Brothers headquarters on a site across from Lever House. He lost that commission to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Phillip Johnson, and decided that same year to move to Los Angeles in response to an invitation to form a partnership with fellow University of Illinois graduate William Pereira.

During his partnership with Pereira, Luckman professed to be the businessman while Pereira was the architect. His pragmatic approach to projects may not have endeared him to fellow architects, but it was a driving force behind the success of the firm and their involvement in large scale projects in Los Angeles and across the country. One of the firm’s early high profile projects was CBS’ Television City in Los Angeles in 1953, which won an American Institute of Architecture Honor Award. The firm became known for solving big architectural problems and addressing a series of unprecedented programmatic challenges. Pereira and Luckman carried out the planning and design for the modernization of the Los Angeles International Airport and a series of large military projects for air and naval bases, including NASA’s manned-spacecraft center in Houston, Texas.

---

<sup>4</sup> Luckman apparently retained a partnership with Lind while working simultaneously in New York, only resigning that post when he became president of Pepsodent. Loyola Marymount University, *Charles Luckman Papers*.

Website:

[http://library.lmu.edu/Collections/specialcollections/CSLA\\_Research\\_Collection/Charles\\_Luckman\\_Papers/Charles\\_Luckman\\_Biography.htm](http://library.lmu.edu/Collections/specialcollections/CSLA_Research_Collection/Charles_Luckman_Papers/Charles_Luckman_Biography.htm). Accessed July 20, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Skidmore, Owings and Merrill were the architects of Lever House, but it was Luckman’s pet project and he was involved in its conception.

Forum

Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA

County and State

Pereira and Luckman ended their partnership in 1958 over disputes about architectural and marketing practices, and Luckman formed his own firm, Charles Luckman Associates. The firm soon had offices in Boston, Chicago, and Phoenix, in addition to Los Angeles, and by 1968 was one of the country's five largest architectural practices.<sup>6</sup> While Luckman asserted that his buildings did not conform to a single architectural style, architects credit Luckman for adhering closely to the functionalist creed of modern design. Luckman was known for his unique approach to designing projects to suit the client's taste and needs, rather than obeying a singular architectural vision. He is responsible for the design of several iconic buildings in Los Angeles and around the country. Prominent Los Angeles projects include the LAX Theme Building (with William Pereira, Paul R. Williams, and Welton Becket), 1961; Luckman Plaza at 9200 Sunset Boulevard, 1964; Century Park East Condominiums, 1966; the Federal Building, West Los Angeles, 1969; and the Los Angeles Convention Center (now the West Hall), 1971. In 1973, Luckman designed the Civic Center in Inglewood, located at the corner of Manchester and Grevillea Avenues. Luckman projects outside of the Los Angeles area include the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas, 1961; Prudential Center, Boston, Massachusetts, 1964; the Phoenix Civic Plaza, Phoenix, Arizona, 1972; and the First Interstate Bank Tower, Portland, Oregon, 1972. A 1971 *Los Angeles Times* profile remarked that "Luckman can look down and reflect that he, as much as anyone, has had a marked influence on this city's skyline."<sup>7</sup>

Luckman also became known for his innovative use of steel. The 1962 Standard Oil Service Station at the Los Angeles International Airport (designed with Welton Becket Associates and Paul R. Williams and now demolished), received an architectural award of excellence from the American Institute of Steel Construction for the "imaginative use of steel beyond its function as a basic supporting frame."<sup>8</sup> Luckman designed the U.S. Pavilion for the 1964 New York World's Fair, for which he received a jury award for the simple and bold structure that utilized a dramatic engineering approach through the use of steel.

In addition to the Forum, Luckman is responsible for the design of two other prominent sports arenas: Madison Square Garden in New York (1968), and Aloha Stadium in Honolulu (1975). Although Madison Square Garden didn't open to the public until 1968, Luckman began its design prior to receiving the commission for the Forum. At Madison Square Garden Luckman also employed a suspended roof system, which was first reported by the *New York Times* in 1966.<sup>9</sup> Following the completion of Madison Square Garden, Luckman began conceptualizing an "all-purpose convertible stadium" that would be suitable for viewing any sport, which he saw as the future of stadium design based on the economic advantages.<sup>10</sup> With the commission for Aloha Stadium he tested the idea of a two-in-one stadium, which called for two sections of seating that could be switched on railroad tracks to provide areas that are "absolutely right for baseball and absolutely right for football."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Loyola Marymount University, *Charles Luckman Papers*.

<sup>7</sup> "About the Architect," *Los Angeles Times*, July 11, 1971.

<sup>8</sup> Glenn Fowler, "Fourteen Buildings Win Accolade of Institute," *New York Times*, June 3, 1962.

<sup>9</sup> "A Suspended Roof to be First Here." *New York Times*. May 8, 1966.

<sup>10</sup> "All-purpose Convertible Stadium is Close to Reality," *New York Times*, March 31, 1968.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Forum

Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA

County and State

In 1968, Luckman sold his architectural practice to the Ogden Corporation, which was a prominent Southern California real estate developer, and became president of its subsidiary, Ogden Development. In addition to his architectural practice and business pursuits, Luckman has a notable record of public service and was the director of Freedom Train – part of President Truman’s program for rebuilding Europe after World War II. In recognition of his work, Luckman was awarded France’s Legion of Honor, England’s Order of St. John, and Italy’s Star of Solidarity. An active supporter of public service, Luckman served on the California State Board of Trustees from 1960-1982, and chaired the board twice. In Los Angeles, Luckman was the chairman of the board of councilors at the Brain Research Institute at UCLA and president of the Los Angeles Ballet. In 1994, Luckman dedicated the Charles and Harriet Luckman Fine Arts Complex at California State University in East Los Angeles, established with a donation of \$2.1 million. Luckman also penned a detailed autobiography of his life and accomplishments at the age of 79: *Twice in a Lifetime -- From Soap to Skyscrapers*. Luckman passed away in Los Angeles in 1999.

### ***Additional Historic Context***

The Forum was built by nationally prominent businessman Jack Kent Cooke (1912-1997) as a venue for his three professional sports franchises in Los Angeles – the Lakers (basketball), Kings (hockey), and Wolves (soccer). Jack Kent Cooke was the son of Ralph Ercil Cooke, a native of Australia who moved with his wife, Nancy Marion Jacobs, to Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, where Jack Kent was born in 1912.<sup>12</sup> Three years later the family moved to Toronto, where Cooke grew up. He left school during the Depression to help support his family and began work as a salesman. In 1934, Cooke married Barbara Jean Carnegie and set out on his honeymoon across Canada selling encyclopedias door-to-door. After a few years selling encyclopedias he took a job selling soap for Colgate-Palmolive. In 1937, Cooke went to work for Ray Thompson at CJCS in Stratford, Ontario, with whom he would form a partnership. The two operated radio stations and newspapers throughout Canada, where Cooke earned his first fortune. They later expanded into publishing and plastics, and when their partnership dissolved in 1952 Cooke’s net worth was an estimated \$10 million.<sup>13</sup>

Cooke entered the world of sports in 1951 when he acquired the Toronto Maple Leafs of the AAA International Baseball League. To boost sagging ticket sales Cooke employed a series of gimmicks, resulting in the highest ticket sales in minor league baseball during the 1952 season. Cooke continued his interest in professional sports with an unsuccessful bid to purchase the Detroit Tigers in 1955, and in 1958 he became a founding member and vice-president of the Continental Baseball League. The league never staged a game and lasted only one year, but it was a major catalyst for the expansion of Major League Baseball in 1961. In 1960, Cooke bought a twenty-five per cent share of the National Football League (NFL) Washington Redskins. That same year he lost a bid to obtain a license for the first privately owned television station in

<sup>12</sup> Biographical information largely derived from Adrian Kinnane, *Jack Kent Cooke: A Biography*, Lansdowne, VA: Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Patrick McNulty, “Goodness Gracious! It’s Jack Kent Cooke,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 11, 1968.

Forum

Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA

County and State

Canada, and decided to move to the United States. He obtained United States citizenship and moved his family to Pebble Beach, California.

After moving to California, Cooke formed Jack Kent Cooke Incorporated and purchased the television company American Cablevision. Within a year American Cablevision was one of the world's largest cable companies. He continued to diversify his holdings in the United States, acquiring additional television stations and newspapers, as well as the Chrysler Building in New York City. In 1985, Cooke bought the *Los Angeles Daily News* for \$176 million.

In 1965, Cooke purchased the Los Angeles Lakers for \$5 million. The Lakers franchise was originally founded in 1947 when Ben Berger and Morris Chalfen of Minnesota purchased the National Basketball League's Detroit Gems and moved the team to Minneapolis. When attendance began to fall in the 1950s, owner Bob Short, inspired by the success of the Brooklyn Dodgers' relocation to Los Angeles in 1958, decided to move the Lakers west before the 1960 season. In 1966, Cooke was involved in the formation of the United State Soccer Association. That same year, Cooke purchased a National Hockey League (NHL) expansion franchise that would become the Los Angeles Kings. As a native of Canada, hockey was important to Cooke, and he was heavily invested in ensuring that one of the six proposed expansion franchises came to Los Angeles.

The Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum Commission supported a competing bid for an NHL franchise, and told Cooke that if he were to win his team would not be allowed to play in the Sports Arena, which was managed by the group. The Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena was constructed in 1959 and located on South Figueroa Boulevard in the University Park neighborhood. Despite the Coliseum Commission's declaration that they would not lease the Sports Arena to Cooke, the two sides did try to work out a deal to bring Cooke's teams to the facility. After famously protracted and adversarial negotiations with the Coliseum Commission, Cooke announced that unfair treatment from the group forced him to abandon his pursuit of the Sports Arena and that instead he would build his own facility.<sup>14</sup> At that point, Cooke began looking for a potential site. Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty supported a plan for a new \$7 million basketball and hockey arena in the Sepulveda Dam Basin near Balboa and Victory Boulevards. That plan was ultimately abandoned, based in part on neighborhood resistance and potential access issues across the railroad tracks. Instead, Cooke chose to build in Inglewood.<sup>15</sup>

In 1965, Cooke purchased 29 ½ acres of land at the corner of Manchester Boulevard and Prairie Avenue in Inglewood for the construction of his new arena. He hired Charles Luckman Associates to design the building, and the construction cost was just over \$12 million. The project was privately funded by Cooke, although the City of Inglewood did consider contributing public funds.<sup>16</sup> The City commissioned a feasibility study to determine whether the City should participate in funding through a lease-back to Cooke. The results of the study indicated that the

<sup>14</sup> "Pierson Raps Coliseum Commission – Resigns," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1966.

<sup>15</sup> "Funds Seen for Sepulveda Park Project," *Los Angeles Times*, October 28, 1966.

<sup>16</sup> "Richfield Buys Forum; Building Plans on Schedule," *Los Angeles Times*, October 23, 1966.

Forum

Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA

County and State

project could necessitate future subsidies from the City, which ultimately convinced the City Council not to participate in funding the Forum.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, the Forum became the first major indoor sports arena in the United States to be built with private funds.<sup>18</sup>

As early as 1969, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Cooke was considering selling his sports empire, including the Lakers, Kings, and the Forum for a reported price of \$40 million.<sup>19</sup> This prompted speculation as to whether the Los Angeles area could support both the Forum and the Sports Arena. The Forum was seen as the most prominent – and popular – of the two arenas, filling 216 dates in 1969, which was more than the Sports Arena ever hosted in a calendar year.<sup>20</sup>

Jack Kent Cooke quickly created a formidable power base in the burgeoning world of Southern California sporting life. He was a “onetime door-to-door encyclopedia salesman who created a multi-million-dollar television and sports empire.”<sup>21</sup> In the early 1970s Cooke continued to expand his empire. He became involved in professional boxing, and funded and promoted the first fight between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier, which was held at Madison Square Garden in New York. In 1974, he became the majority owner of the Washington Redskins. During his tenure as owner, the team won three Super Bowls and successfully built a new stadium in Landover, Maryland.

While Cooke was owner of the Lakers, he signed numerous legendary players, including Wilt Chamberlain, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, and Magic Johnson. The team reached the National Basketball Association (NBA) finals seven times, winning the championship in 1972. In 1979 Cooke sold his West Coast sports empire, including the Lakers, Kings, and the Forum to Santa Monica real estate developer Jerry Buss for \$67.5 million.<sup>22</sup> At the time, the purchase price was the highest single transaction in sports history. After Cooke sold his West Coast sports empire, the “Showtime” Lakers of the 1980s won another five NBA titles at the Forum.

In 1969 the *Los Angeles Times* reported that:

In terms of history, [Cooke] has already made a mark on Southern California, in only four years, that defies comparison with anything made by any but a handful of the millions who have ever lived here. To Cooke and to few others has it been given to change the recreational patterns of a community so large.

<sup>17</sup> “Cooke Blasts Report on Forum Financing,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 12, 1967. According to Cooke, he had not solicited the leaseback option with the City and already had funding in place.

<sup>18</sup> “Jack Kent Cooke,” *American Biography Online*. Website: <http://www.anb.org/articles/19/19-00976.html>. Accessed: November 1, 2011.

<sup>19</sup> “Cooke’s Dilemma: The Burden of His Forum Empire,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 10, 1969.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> “Goodness Gracious! It’s Jack Kent Cooke.”

<sup>22</sup> “Los Angeles Lakers History.” Website: [http://www.nba.com/lakers/history/lakers\\_history\\_new.html](http://www.nba.com/lakers/history/lakers_history_new.html). Accessed: November 1, 2011.



Forum

Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA

County and State

The Sports Arena was the glittering athletic meeting house of the West when he arrived. To construct the Sports Arena in the first place had been an ordeal of years for Los Angeles, which agonized interminably over how to pay for it and where to build it – and then stood back and admired it for practically no time at all. Completed in 1960, the handsome Sports Arena had been destroyed as a sports center by 1968, in the winter of the Forum’s unveiling.<sup>23</sup>

The Forum remained home to the Lakers and the Kings from 1967 to 1999, when both teams relocated to the newly constructed Staples Center in downtown Los Angeles. The Forum became a landmark in the greater Los Angeles area, in large measure from the success of the Lakers. It is inextricably tied to the identity of the City of Inglewood, which became known as the “City of Champions.”

In addition to serving as the permanent home of the Lakers and Kings, the Forum hosted a wide variety of other events including tennis matches, rock concerts, boxing matches, ice shows, rodeos, and political events. On September 10, 1973 the largest live boxing gate on the West Coast was recorded when Muhammad Ali defeated Ken Norton. During the 1984 Olympics, the Forum served as the venue for men’s and women’s basketball. It was influential in the birth of “arena rock,” and all of the biggest names in music played there, including Elvis Presley, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, and Led Zeppelin.

### **Conclusion**

The Forum is significant as an excellent example of New Formalist architecture in Southern California, and as a prominent example of the work of architect Charles Luckman, whose work had a profound influence in Los Angeles. At the time of its construction the Forum was met with wide critical acclaim, and is often cited as one of Luckman’s most successful designs. The Forum exhibits quality of design, distinctive design details, and high-quality workmanship unusual in a sports arena from this period. Known throughout his career for an innovative approach to programmatic challenges, at the Forum Luckman employed a tension ring suspended roof system in order to improve the viewer experience, a pioneering technology that was not yet widely used. The Forum is a rare, intact example of a post-World War II sports venue, which is an increasingly threatened resource type. Of the numerous sports arenas constructed in the decades following World War II, many have either been demolished or substantially altered such that they no longer convey their historic significance. The Forum retains significant character-defining features on the interior and exterior. Despite reaching significance within the last fifty years, the Forum is exceptionally important and therefore meets Criterion Consideration G.

---

<sup>23</sup> “Cooke’s Dilemma: The Burden of His Forum Empire.”

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“\$16 Million Inglewood Arena Nearly Finished,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 8, 1967.

“A Suspended Roof to be First Here,” *New York Times*. May 8, 1966.

“About the Architect,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 11, 1971.

“All-purpose Convertible Stadium is Close to Reality,” *New York Times*, March 31, 1968.

“Arena Change Viewed with Mixed Feelings,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 4, 1966.

“Cooke Blasts Report on Forum Financing,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 12, 1967.

“Cooke’s Dilemma: The Burden of His Forum Empire,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 10, 1969.

“Corporations: The Second Time Around,” *Time*, March 30, 1962.

“Dedication Scheduled for \$16 Million Forum,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 24, 1967.

Fowler, Glenn. “Fourteen Buildings Win Accolade of Institute,” *New York Times*, June 3, 1962.

“Funds Seen for Sepulveda Park Project,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 28, 1966.

“Ground Broken for New Inglewood Sports Arena Near Hollywood Park,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1966.

Hawthorne, Christopher. “Encore Performances for Two L.A. Architectural Landmarks,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2014.

“He Sells Architecture the Way he Sold Soap,” *Business Week*, October 28, 1967.

“Hearing Set on Forum’s Use Permit,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 31, 1966.

“Jack Kent Cooke,” *American Biography Online*. Website:  
<http://www.anb.org/articles/19/19-00976.html>

Kinnane, Adrian. *Jack Kent Cooke: A Biography*. Lansdowne, VA: Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, 2004.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

Lewis, Randy. "The Forum's Legacy: A Key Force in the Birth of Arena Rock," *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 2014.

"Los Angeles Lakers History." Website:  
[http://www.nba.com/lakers/history/lakers\\_history\\_new.html](http://www.nba.com/lakers/history/lakers_history_new.html).

Loyola Marymount University, Charles Luckman Papers.

McNulty, Patrick. "Goodness Gracious! It's Jack Kent Cooke," *Los Angeles Times*, February 11, 1968.

"Pierson Raps Coliseum Commission – Resigns," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1966.

"Richfield Buys Forum; Building Plans on Schedule," *Los Angeles Times*, October 23, 1966.

---

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Los Angeles Public Library, Inglewood Public Library, Charles Luckman Papers, University of Loyola Marymount

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

---

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 29.5 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Northeast Corner	Latitude: 33.959917	Longitude: -118.340281
2. Southeast Corner	Latitude: 33.956544	Longitude: -118.340018
3. Southwest Corner	Latitude: 33.956793	Longitude: -118.343891
4. Northwest Corner	Latitude: 33.959805	Longitude: -118.343918

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is bound by West Manchester Boulevard on the north, Pincay Drive on the south, Prairie Avenue on the west, and Kareem Court on the east.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries represent the historic and current boundaries of the Forum property.

Forum \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA \_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

---

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Christine Lazzaretto, Principal  
organization: Historic Resources Group  
street & number: 12 South Fair Oaks Avenue  
city or town: Pasadena state: CA zip code: 91105  
e-mail christine@historicla.com  
telephone: 626-793-2400 x112  
date: April 29, 2014

---

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Forum  
City or Vicinity: Inglewood  
County: Los Angeles  
State: CA  
Photographer: Stephen Schafer  
Date Photographed: January 12, 2014

PHOTO #	DESCRIPTION/VIEW
0001	Exterior overview of west façade, facing southeast.
0002	Exterior overview of north façade, facing south.
0003	Exterior overview of east façade, facing west.
0004	Exterior overview of west façade, facing east.
0005	Exterior podium, facing southeast. Detail of columns, arcade, and metal panel wall.
0006	Exterior, facing north. Detail of scalloped parapet.
0007	Exterior view of ramp, facing west. Detail of pedestrian ramp retaining its original configuration.
0008	Exterior view of ramp, facing south. Detail of pedestrian ramp altered to meet accessibility codes.
0009	Exterior view of ramp, facing northeast. Detail looking down pedestrian ramp altered to meet accessibility codes.
0010	Exterior view of west façade, facing east. Detail of entrance to Forum Club.
0011	Exterior view facing south. Detail of below-grade entrance on north facade.
0012	Exterior podium facing north. Detail of ticket booths on west façade.
0013	Exterior podium facing north. Detail of ticket booths on east façade.
0014	Exterior overview facing northeast. Detail of automobile entrance from Pincay Drive.
0015	Exterior facing north. Detail of truck tunnel on south façade.
0016	Exterior facing southwest. Detail of new exterior elevator on north façade.
0017	Interior of main bowl, facing south.
0018	Interior of main bowl, facing north.
0019	Interior of main bowl, facing west.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

<b>PHOTO #</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION/VIEW</b>
0020	Interior of main bowl, facing east.
0021	Interior of main bowl. Detail of ceiling.
0022	Interior of main bowl, facing north. Detail of seating levels and main bowl interior concourse.
0023	Interior of main bowl, facing east. Detail of metal handrails on the aisle stairways.
0024	Interior of main bowl, facing northwest. Detail of metal handrails on the aisle stairways, and new seats.
0025	Interior of main bowl, facing north. Detail of interior concourse showing safety rails with tempered glass barriers in the upper bowl.
0026	Interior of main bowl, facing southwest. Detail showing pillars.
0027	Interior of main bowl, facing northwest. Detail of air plenum and perforated metal panels.
0028	Interior of back of house space on level one, facing northwest. Detail of new concession area on north end.
0029	Interior of back of house space on level one, facing northwest. Detail of new dressing room.
0030	Interior of back of house space on level one, facing southeast. Detail of new artist's lounge.
0031	Interior of club level (level two), facing west. Detail of hallway outside Forum Club.
0032	Interior of club level (level two), facing southeast. Detail of interior of Forum Club.
0033	Interior of club level (level two), facing west. Detail of concourse.
0034	Interior of concourse level (level three), facing south. Detail of west concourse.
0035	Interior of concourse level (level three), facing north. Detail of west concourse.
0036	Interior of concourse level (level three), facing west. Detail of vomitorium leading from the east concourse to the main bowl.
0037	Interior of concourse level (level three), facing west. Detail of new concessions on west concourse.
0038	Interior of concourse level (level three), facing south. Ceiling detail on west concourse.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State


### Additional Documentation: Location Map

Figure 1.

LOCATION COORDINATES: Northwest Corner: 33.959805, -118.343918  
Southwest Corner: 33.956793, -118.343891

Northeast Corner: 33.959917, -118.340281  
Southeast Corner: 33.956544, -118.340018



 PROPERTY LOCATION





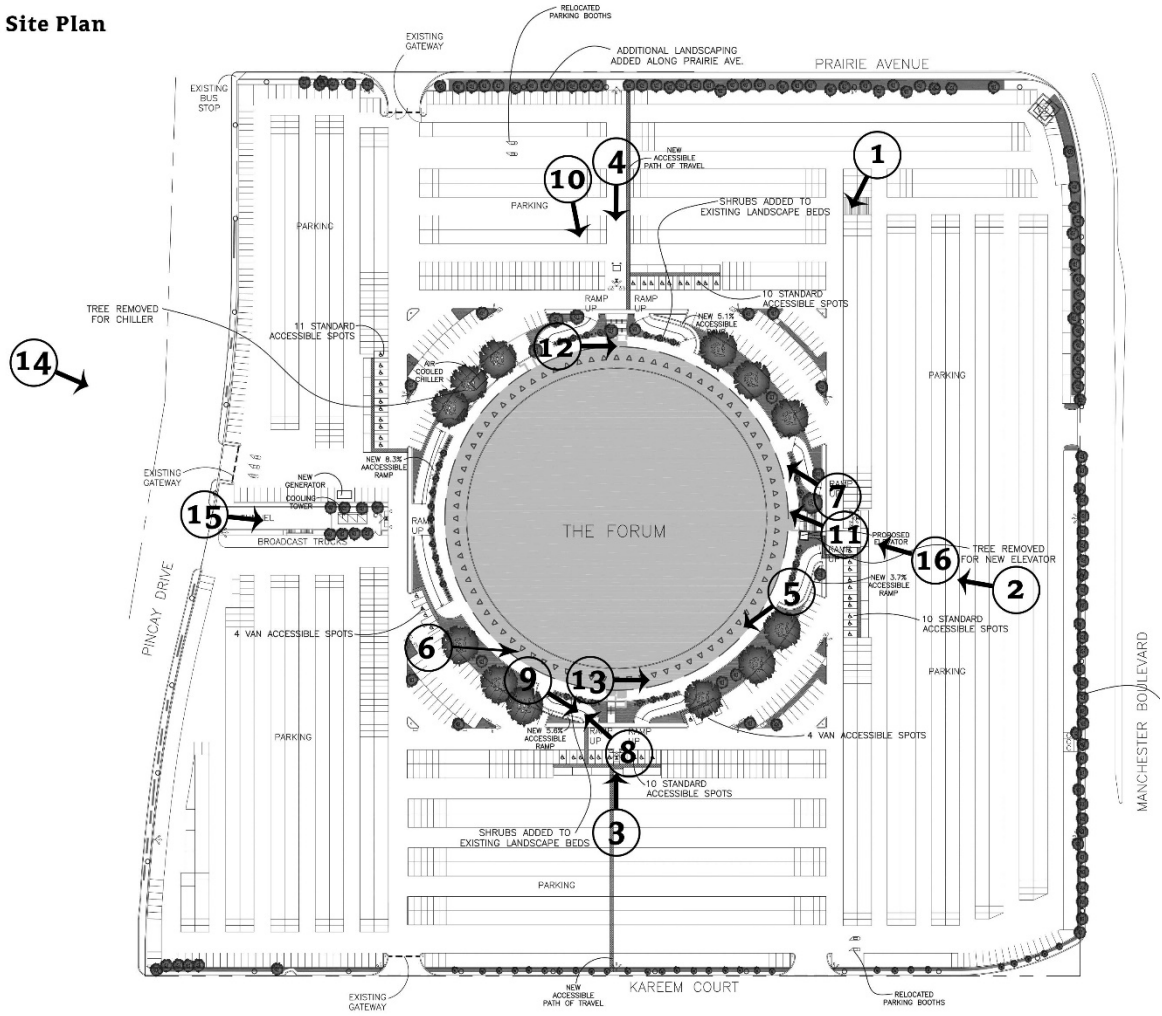
Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Additional Documentation: Sketch Map/Photo Keys**

**Figure 2.**

**The Forum - Site Plan  
Photo Key**

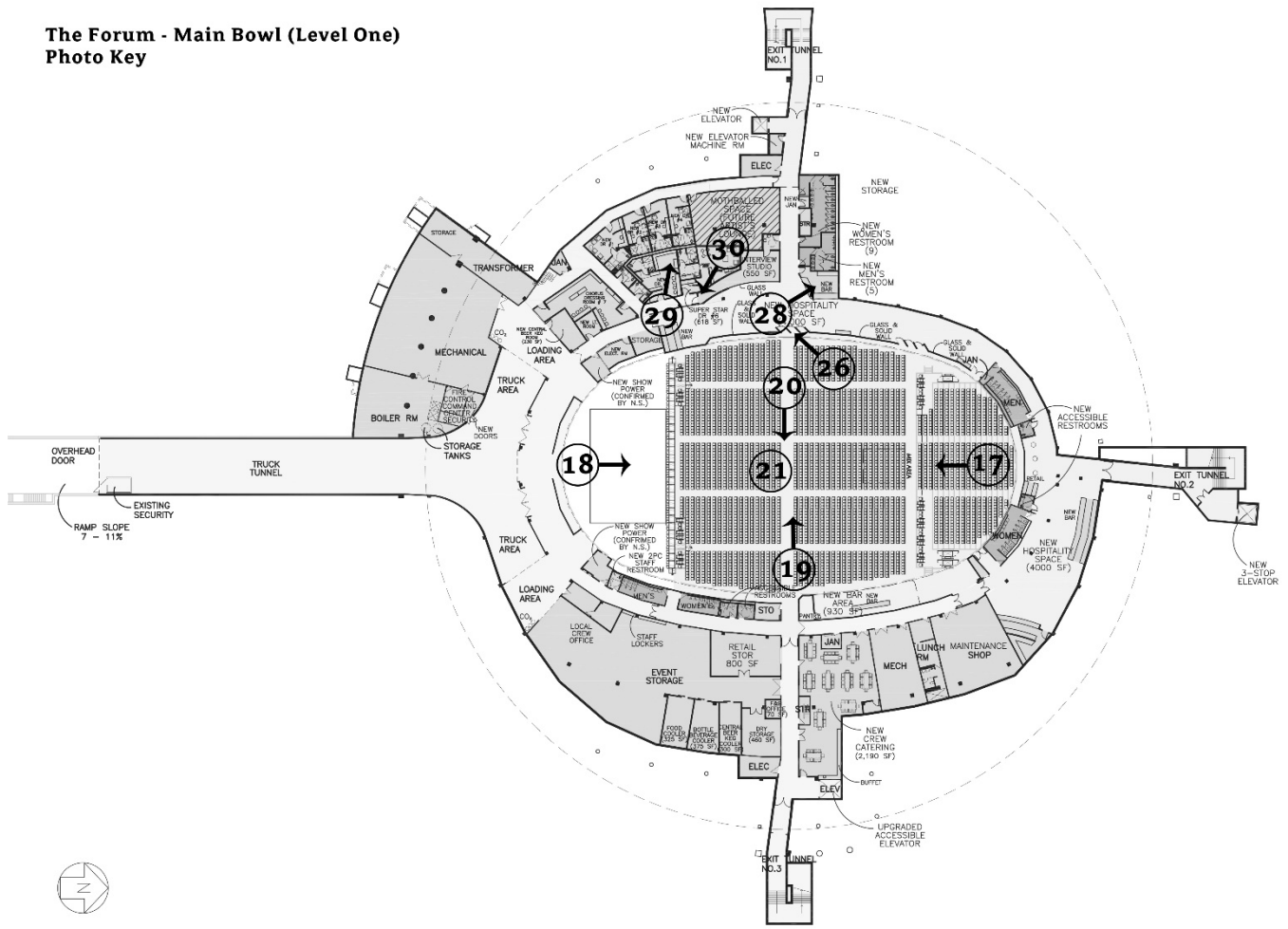


Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

Figure 3.

The Forum - Main Bowl (Level One)  
Photo Key

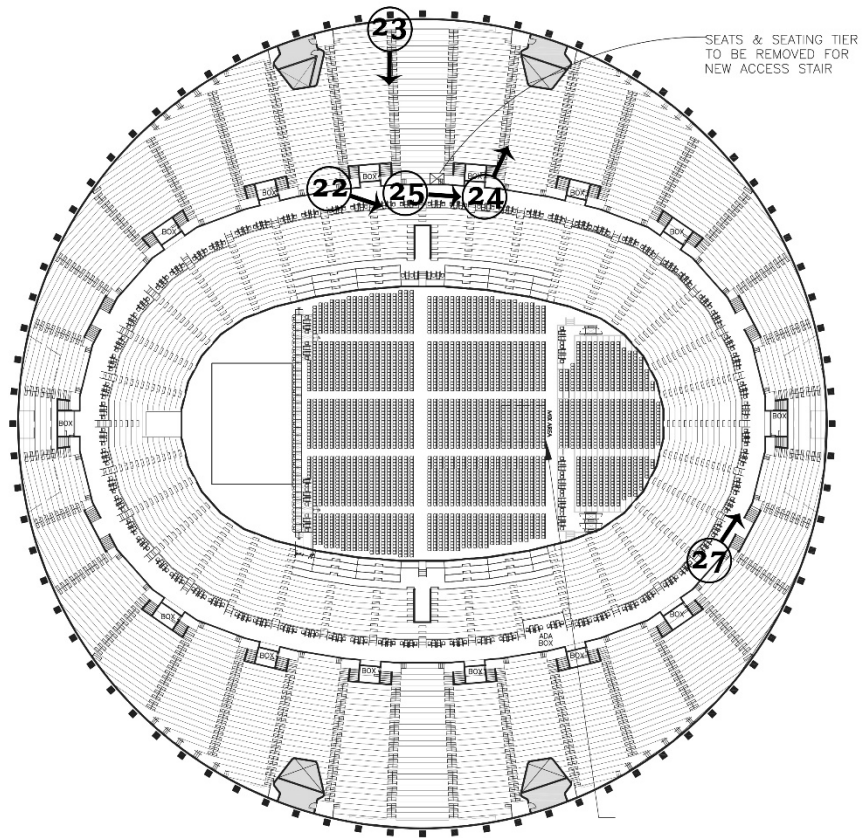


Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Figure 4.**

**The Forum - Main Bowl (Level One)  
Photo Key**

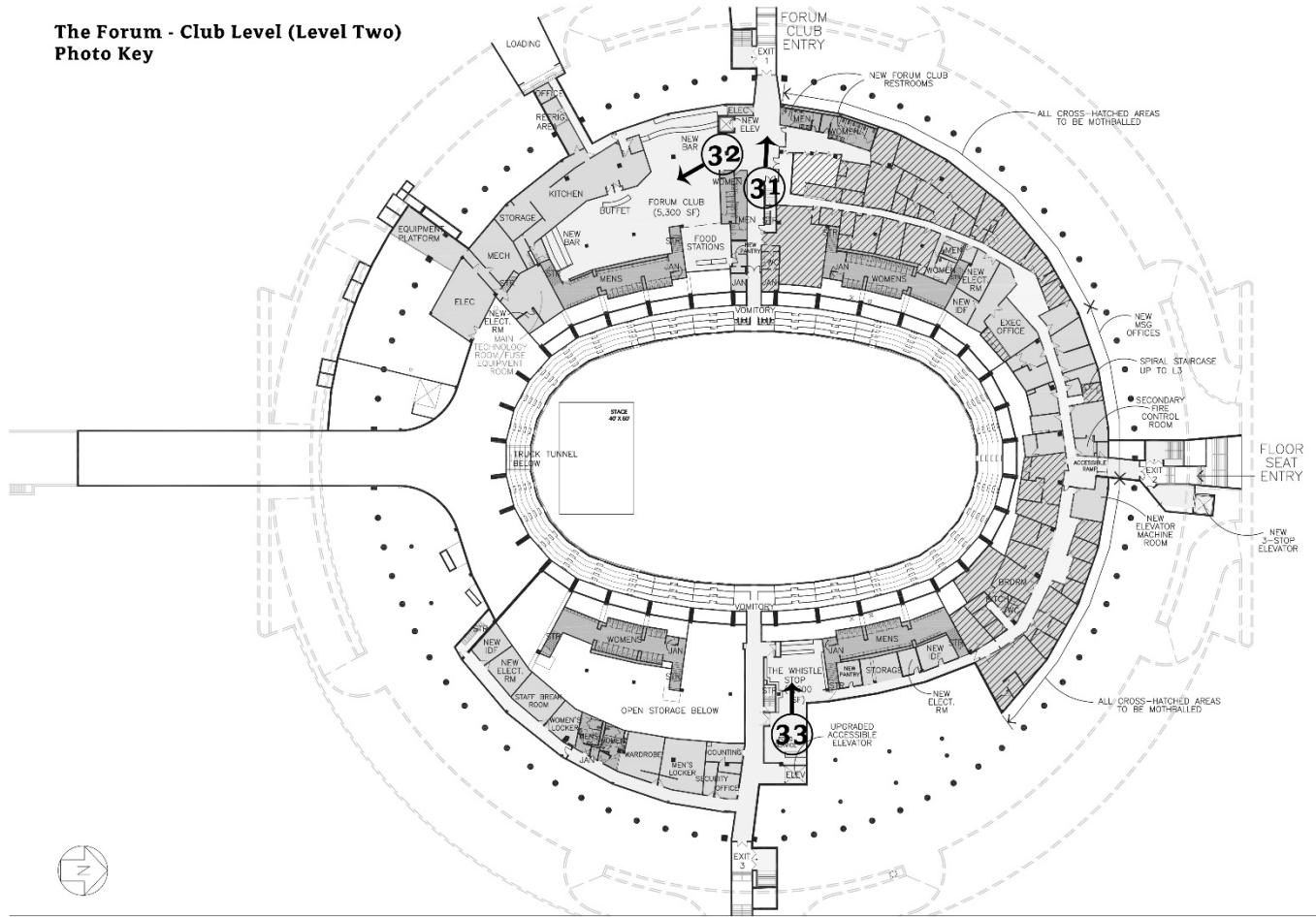


Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

Figure 5.

The Forum - Club Level (Level Two)  
Photo Key



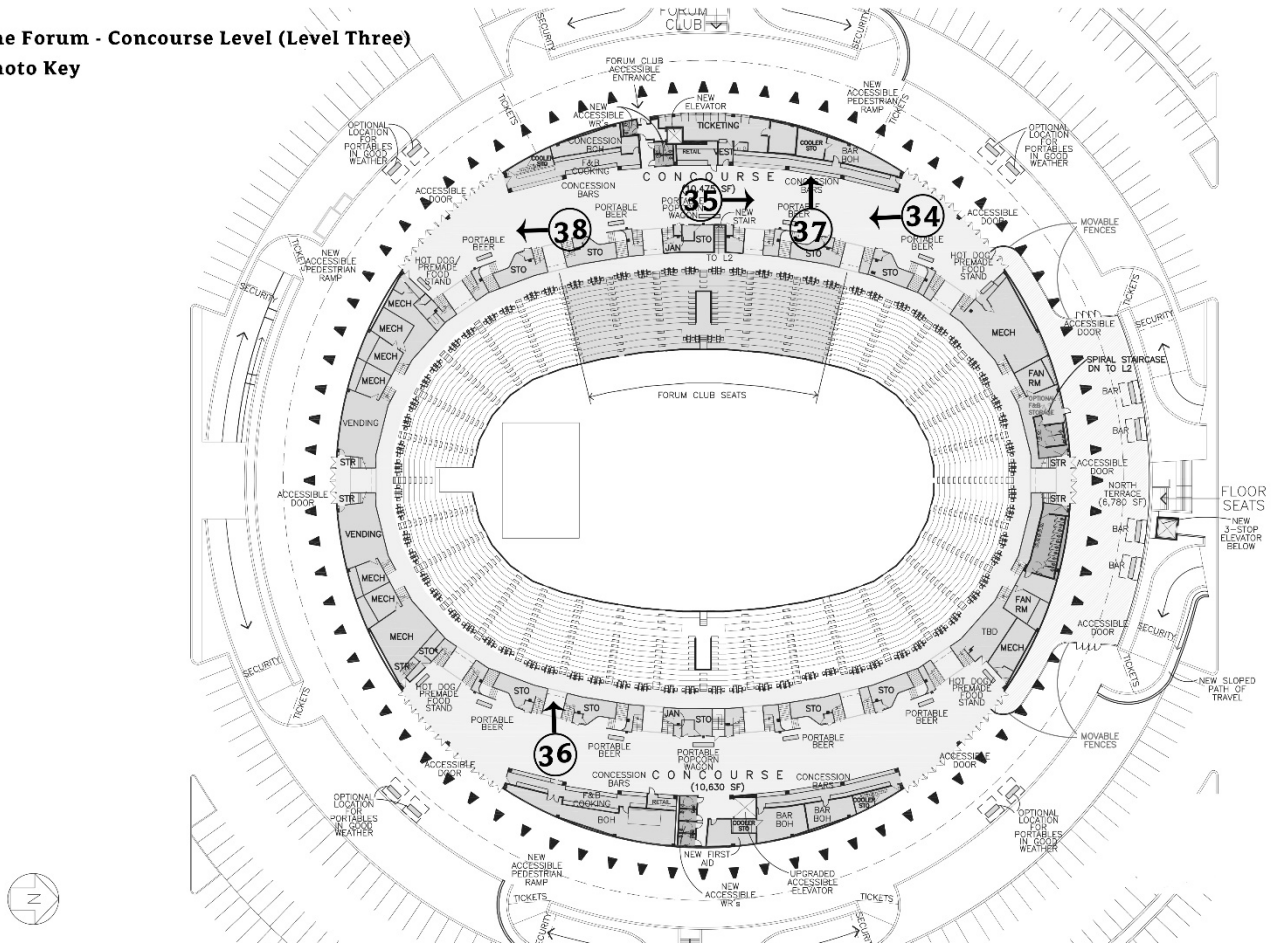
Forum

Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Figure 6.**

**The Forum - Concourse Level (Level Three)**  
**Photo Key**



Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Additional Documentation: Historic Photographs**

**Figure 7.**



Groundbreaking ceremony at the Forum, July 1, 1966. Shown: Inglewood Mayor William Goedike, left, Jack Kent Cooke, Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty, and architect Charles Luckman.  
Source: Los Angeles Public Library.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Figure 8.**



Aerial view of construction site, 1967. Source: Forum archive.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Figure 9.**



Forum under construction, 1967. Source: Forum archive.



Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Figure 10.**



Jack Kent Cooke and Charles Luckman during construction of the Forum, 1967.  
Source: Los Angeles Public Library.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Figure 11.**



Aerial view of the Forum, 1967. Source: Inglewood Public Library.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Figure 12.**

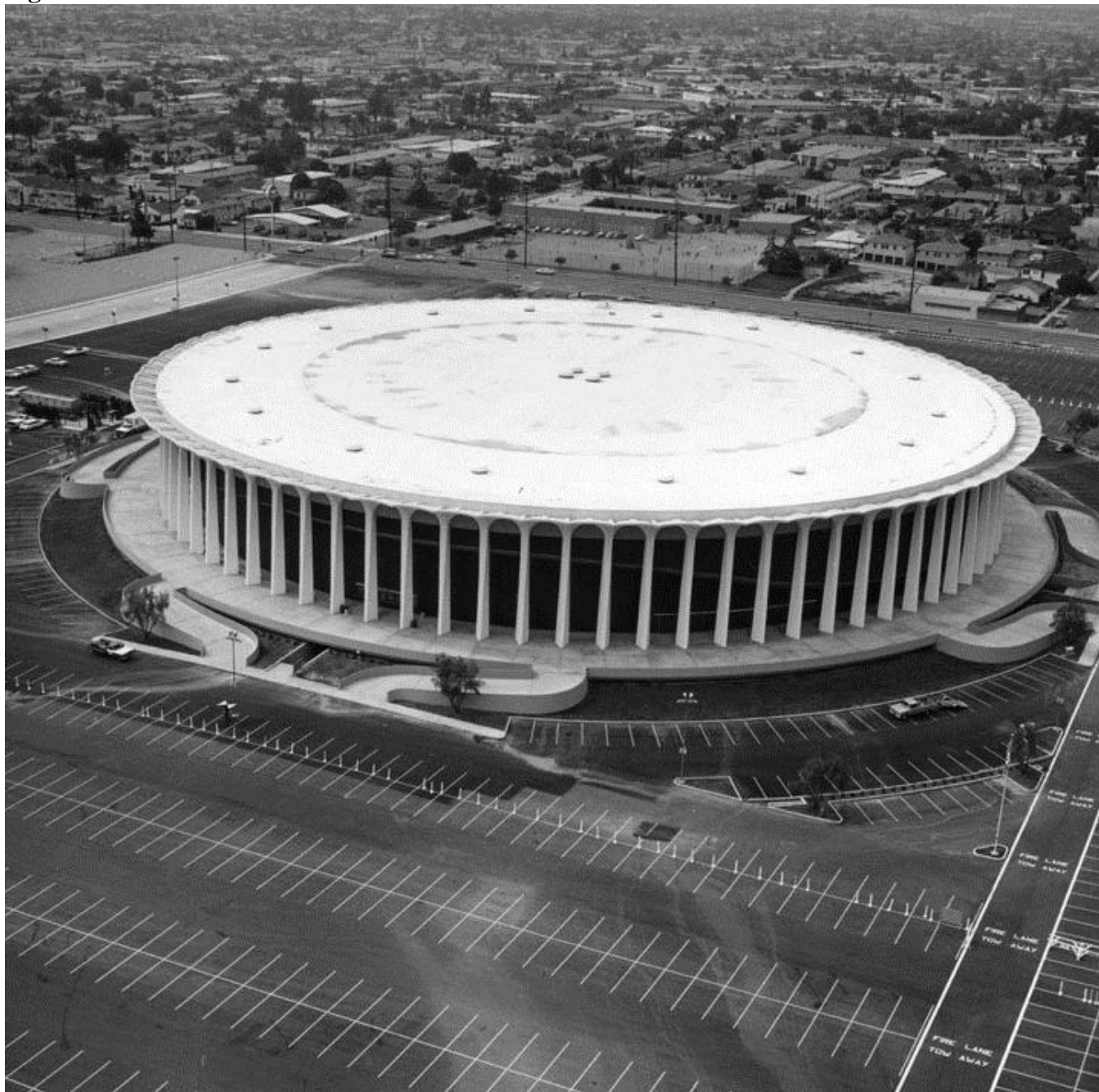


Forum at night, 1969. Source: Los Angeles Public Library.

Forum  
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA  
County and State

**Figure 13.**



Forum, n.d. Source: Los Angeles Public Library.