

Quake-damaged City Hall back in action

By **DAN WHITE**

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The 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake damaged City Hall so badly that parts of it were sealed off for a decade.

But the mothballed portions of the building have been refurbished and are being used again.

On Monday, outgoing Mayor Tim Fitzmaurice dedicated newly reopened sections that now house the finance department, City Council offices, city manager, city clerk and human resources departments.

The work was done for about \$1.8 million, funded in part with earthquake recovery funds.

The original complex was built in 1938 and designed by the architect Charles J. Ryland.

Fitzmaurice, in one of his final acts as mayor Monday, told a crowd of about 50 that there was some talk

"about tearing this whole thing down after the earthquake. Somehow we kept faith with history."

City staffers gave tours of the reopened rooms.

Work will continue into December. The fountain is also being restored.

Natalie Duarte, an administrative assistant in the finance department, remembers what the west wing used to look like. "Picture a destroyed building, as if a bomb had hit it," she said. "It had beams holding it up on the outside and was completely trashed inside."

Walking through the maze-like interior, with new carpets and cubicles,

she said the building is now "as modern as you can get for a building built so long ago."

She said there are still a few kinks to work out.

"My office is cold," Duarte said. "Eventually we'll get the thermostat right, but that's a typical moving-in kind of thing."

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