

# *São Paulo* City Council

Current headquarters of the  
São Paulo Legislative Power

# Anchieta Palace

## HISTORY OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE SÃO PAULO CITY COUNCIL

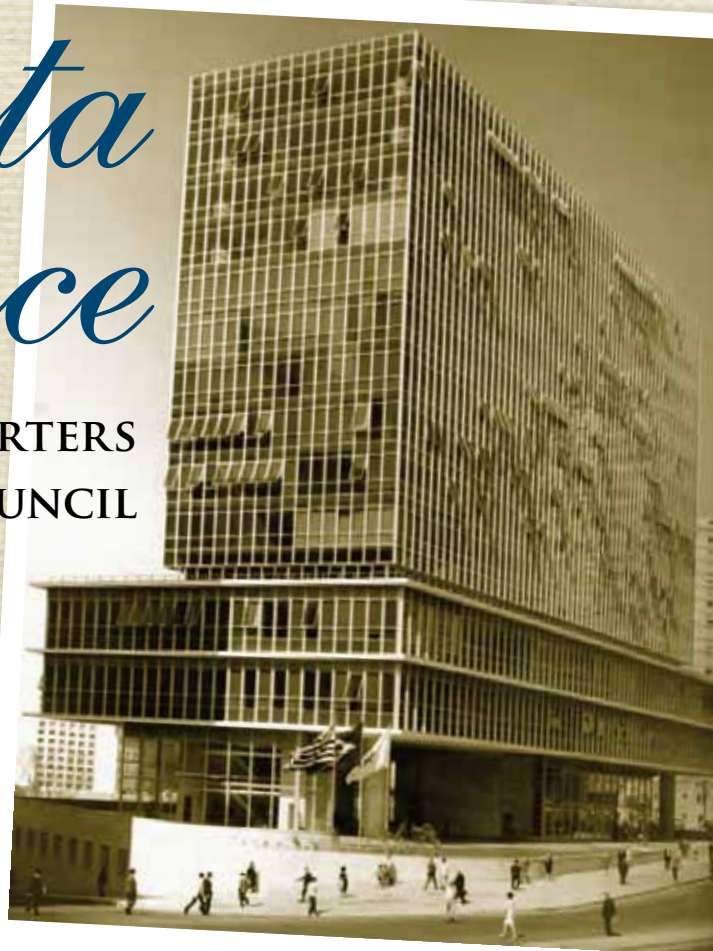
### A HARD-EARNED VICTORY

The strive to build a headquarters that met all needs of the São Paulo Legislative System stems all the way back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1575, construction of the first dedicated headquarters began. It was opened the following year, at Colégio dos Jesuítas (currently known as Pátio do Colégio), in downtown São Paulo.

From that period on until 1969, when Anchieta Palace, current headquarters of the São Paulo City Council, was inaugurated, it is fair to say a great battle was fought to create a building worthy of holding the greatest Council of Brazil.

The land expropriation decree regarding the area encompassed by Riachuelo Square, Santo Amaro and Santo Antônio Streets, and Jacaré Viaduct, where Anchieta Palace is located, was signed by Mayor Francisco Prestes Maia in 1942. The construction project, however, only began to take effect with the end of the “Estado Novo” (New State) period (1937-1945).

In 1952, Construtora Alfredo Mathias (Construction Company) was selected by Mayor Armando de Arruda Pereira to develop a definitive construction project for Anchieta Palace. The company had an unmatched reputation due to



Anchieta Palace, symbol of democracy in São Paulo

its two previous preliminary designs presented in public bids.

Simultaneously, the head-architect of the Municipal Civil Construction Department, Alfredo Giglio, proposed creating a commission to assist the contractor's activities. The team, presided by Civil Construction secretary Pedro França Pinto, was composed by Carlos Alberto Gomes Cardim Filho, director of the Urbanism Department; Alfredo Giglio and Mario Henrique Pucci, directors of the Architecture Department; Júlio César Lacrete and Carlos Brasil Lodi, heads of the Civil Construction division; Eduardo Corona, from the Civil Construction Department; and architect Oscar Niemeyer, who left the commission in August 1952, due to commitments in Rio de Janeiro and the short amount of time available to finish construction activities.

## AT LAST, ANCHIETA PALACE

On January 16, 1969, before it was finished, Anchieta Palace, located on Jacaré Viaduct, 100, with 13 stories and three basement levels, began to operate, holding a session of the São Paulo Audit Court (TCMSP), created by mayor José Vicente Faria Lima in the previous year. The Council had a total of 21 counselors.

The TCMSP occupied the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> floors, and was headquartered in the building until 1976,

when it was transferred to Professor Ascendino Reis Avenue, where it still remains.

In addition to the TCMSP, Anchieta Palace also held the Sports Department, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> basement; the National Renewal Alliance (Are-

na) and Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB) parties, in the 1<sup>st</sup> basement; and Brazilian Literacy Movement (Mobral) project created by the Brazilian government to literate youths and adult, in the 1<sup>st</sup> basement; Banco do Estado de São Paulo (Banespa), on the ground floor; and the Direct Television Network – Lemos Brito Group -, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, destined to operate a closed television circuit.

The official inauguration of Anchieta Palace took place on September 7, 1969, at 10:00 am, in a solemn session. The chairman was José Maria Marin; Paulo Salim Maluf was the mayor; and Roberto Costa de Abreu Sodré was the governor of the state of São Paulo. The Legislative Steering Committee was headed by Vice-president José Antônio de Oliveira Laet; Secretary-general Naylor de Oliveira; 1<sup>st</sup> deputy-secretary Luiz Gonzaga Pereira; and 2<sup>nd</sup> deputy-secretary David Roysen. On the following day, during the new headquarters' first plenary session, the Cardinal of São Paulo, Agnelo Rossi, blessed the premises and crowned the Crucified Christ in the plenary sitting room. On January 25, 1970, President Emílio Garrastazu Médici was visiting São Paulo when he received, in a solemn session held by the São Paulo City Council, the gold Anchieta Palace Medal, symbolizing the inauguration of the new headquarters.

## CHOOSING THE CONTRACTOR

On March 30, 1953, the Civil Construction Department of São Paulo signed a contract with Construtora Alfredo Mathias (Construction Company).

In 1957, Mayor Wladimir de Toledo Piza revoked the contract. In the same year, recently-elected mayor Adhemar de Barros requested urgent measures to resume the project. A public tender was launched to resume



construction activities. Only two companies presented projects, one of which was eliminated for not complying with bidding guidelines. A new contract was celebrated with CIT Construções e Instalações Técnicas Ltda.

Adhemar de Barros launched the **Cornerstone** of the new construction activities on February 24, 1961. Meanwhile, the Council was about to be evicted from Palacete Conde Prates, located on Libero Badaró Street. The count had recently sold the building to Banco Mercantil de São Paulo.

On December 29, 1961, re-elected mayor Prestes Maia, concerned with this predicament, decided to reinstate the contract with Construtora Alfredo Mathias, signed in 1953. Along with the City Hall, the company was in charge of architectural details. Expenses with designers, materials and other costs associated to the project were incurred by the City's Civil Construction Department.

On February 16, 1962, Construtora Alfredo Mathias submitted to the Civil Construction Department a final service program to construct the building. On February 26, the latter approved the beginning of all preliminary activities for commissioning the construction works, such as the installation of jobsites and enclosures.

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## BUILDING STRUCTURE

Anchieta Palace contains elements of modern architecture, reflecting an image of progress sought by the representatives. The land has 9,351 m<sup>2</sup> and total built area of 38,500 m<sup>2</sup>. The building has 13 stories, three basement levels, a ground level, and a helicopter touchdown area in the 14<sup>th</sup> floor.

The main entrance is located on Jacaréí Viaduct, and the overall layout allowed the construction of a slab that outlines the terrace and provides a partial view of Anhangabaú Valley. Other distinguished architectural elements are the helical stairways, one of the building's trademarks.

The building is supported by six circular pillars and all floors are equally paved, with internal and external granite floors. Sealing walls were built with glass and aluminum joinery, one of the most sought-after architectural elements with

the goal of enhancing the interaction between internal and external areas.

The entrance hall, with a two-story ceiling, conveys a majestic feeling to the area. In some parts of the building, such as the Plenary Sitting Room, walls are made of masonry encased with marble.

1<sup>o</sup> de Maio (May 1<sup>st</sup>, International Labor Day) Plenary room, where sessions are held, is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, with 210 seats, open

to the general public. For events and ceremonies, there is the Salão Nobre (Noble Hall) João Brasil Vita, on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor, with capacity for 350 people. The Council also has other auditoriums and rooms for meetings and events.

Freitas Nobre Auditorium is located on the terrace, with 150 seats and total capacity for up to 1,500 people.

With a project developed based on a free-plant concept, with no structural walls, the building may be altered while maintaining its basic infrastructure.

Due to this enhanced mobility, the building's structure may be modified based on specific needs. In 1969, it held 21 town counselors (and therefore, the same amount of offices).

After the 1982 Constitutional Amendment, its capacity increased to 33. With the 1988 Constitution, this number reached 53. In 1993, after exceeding the mark of 5 million residents, São Paulo reached the maximum amount of counselors allowed by the Federal Constitution, totaling 55.

Oil paintings of former chairmen, since 1948, are displayed on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor.





VIADUTO JACARÉI, IN THE 1940S,  
BEFORE ANCHIETA PALACE WAS BUILT

## SOME HISTORICAL IMAGES OF ANCHIETA PALACE

EVENTS AND CEREMONIES ARE HELD  
IN THE SALÃO NOBRE



THE CARDINAL OF SÃO PAULO BLESSED THE  
FACILITY DURING THE FIRST SESSION  
IN THE NEW HEADQUARTERS



HELICAL STAIRS, ONE OF THE  
BUILDING'S TRADEMARKS



PRAÇA DA BANDEIRA AND ANCHIETA PALACE  
IN THE BACKGROUND, 1969

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