

<b>REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION</b> CITY OF SAN DIEGO	CERTIFICATE NUMBER (FOR COMPTROLLER'S USE ONLY) pending
--	---

TO: CITY COUNCIL	FROM (ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT): Park and Recreation	DATE: 7/13/2016
---------------------	---	--------------------

SUBJECT: Establishment of Balboa Park Plaza de Panama as a CIP project

PRIMARY CONTACT (NAME, PHONE): Andrew Field,(619) 235-1110, M.S. 39	SECONDARY CONTACT (NAME, PHONE): Richard Leja, (619) 533-5112, M.S. 908A
--	---

**COMPLETE FOR ACCOUNTING PURPOSES**

FUND					
FUNCTIONAL AREA					
COST CENTER					
GENERAL LEDGER ACCT					
WBS OR INTERNAL ORDER					
CAPITAL PROJECT No.					
AMOUNT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

FUND					
FUNCTIONAL AREA					
COST CENTER					
GENERAL LEDGER ACCT					
WBS OR INTERNAL ORDER					
CAPITAL PROJECT No.					
AMOUNT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

**COST SUMMARY (IF APPLICABLE):**

**ROUTING AND APPROVALS**

CONTRIBUTORS/REVIEWERS:	APPROVING AUTHORITY	APPROVAL SIGNATURE	DATE SIGNED
Liaison Office	Comptroller	ORIG DEPT. Parker, Herman	07/28/2016
Debt Management		CFO	
Environmental Analysis		DEPUTY CHIEF Graham, David	08/01/2016
Equal Opportunity Contracting		COO	
Financial Management		CITY ATTORNEY Rae, Christina	
		COUNCIL PRESIDENTS OFFICE	

PREPARATION OF:     RESOLUTIONS     ORDINANCE(S)     AGREEMENT(S)     DEED(S)

1. The Chief Financial Officer is authorized to add CIP L-17002, Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project, to the FY 17 Capital Improvements Program; and

2. The Chief Financial Officer is authorized to increase the Capital Improvements Program Budget in CIP L-17002, Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project, and to appropriate and expend up to \$1,000,000 for the purpose of reviewing and finalizing Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project design, of which up to \$602,576.04 from Fund 200215 Unappropriated Reserve Balboa Park CIP and up to \$397,423.96 from Fund 400000 Capital Outlay-Sales Tax, contingent upon the Chief Financial Officer certifying that funds necessary for expenditure are, or will be, on

<p>deposit with the City Treasurer; and</p> <p>3. The Chief Financial Officer is authorized to transfer \$352,214.26, of which \$201,422.94 from Fund 200213 Mission Bay Park/Balboa Park, \$81,765.68 from Fund 200469 Balboa Park Concessionaire, and \$69,025.64 from Fund 200452 Balboa Park Trust, to Fund 200215 Unappropriated Reserve Balboa Park CIP.</p>	
<p><b>STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:</b> Approve Requested Actions</p>	
<p><b>SPECIAL CONDITIONS (REFER TO A.R. 3.20 FOR INFORMATION ON COMPLETING THIS SECTION)</b></p>	
<p><b>COUNCIL DISTRICT(S):</b></p>	<p>3, Councilmember Gloria</p>
<p><b>COMMUNITY AREA(S):</b></p>	<p>Balboa Park</p>
<p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:</b></p>	<p>This activity is covered under the Plaza de Panama EIR, Project No. 233958/SCH No. 2011031074) certified on July 9, 2012. The activity is adequately addressed in the EIR and there are no change in circumstance, additional information, or project changes to warrant additional environmental review under Public Resources Code section 21166 or CEQA Guidelines section 15162. Because the prior environmental document adequately covered this activity as part of the previously approved project, the activity is not a separate project per CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378(c).</p>
<p><b>CITY CLERK INSTRUCTIONS:</b></p>	<p>Upon City Council approval, please send a copy of the resolution to Kris Shackelford at M.S. 908A</p>

**COUNCIL ACTION**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET**  
CITY OF SAN DIEGO

DATE: 7/13/2016

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Park and Recreation

SUBJECT: Establishment of Balboa Park Plaza de Panama as a CIP project

COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): 3, Councilmember Gloria

CONTACT/PHONE NUMBER: Andrew Field/(619) 235-1110, M.S. 39

**DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY OF ITEM:**

Approve necessary actions to review and finalize construction documents for the previously Council-approved Balboa Park Plaza de Panama that will create additional parking, increase open accessible park area, improve traffic circulation, and limit pedestrian-vehicular conflicts. The Project will also include a new parking structure with a 2.2 acre rooftop park and a bypass bridge and road to divert vehicular traffic away from the pedestrian core of the park. Approved actions will allow for construction documents to be finalized consistent with the previously certified EIR and changes in state building regulations. Project costs will be updated once construction documents are finalized.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve Requested Actions

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ITEM BACKGROUND:**

Balboa Park is a cornerstone of City of San Diego's Park system being one of the City's largest developed parks at 1,172 acres and host to a numerous passive and active recreational activities, cultural and educational institutions, and special events. However, with over 12 million visitors per year, Balboa Park has extensive demands on its parking facilities. This and the associated vehicular traffic has created extensive pedestrian conflicts that limits effectiveness of the park amenities including the pedestrian usage of the public areas as well as enjoyment of the historical and cultural nature of the park.

This Project proposes to restore the pedestrian and park uses to the core of Central Mesa and alleviate pedestrian/vehicular conflicts, while providing additional parking and maintaining access for emergency vehicles and ADA needs. To achieve these goals, the Project includes six primary objectives:

- Removing vehicles from the Plaza de Panama, El Prado, Plaza de California, the Mall (also called the Esplanade), and Pan American Road East (also called the Pan American Promenade).
- Restoration of the pedestrian and park uses to El Prado, Plaza de Panama, Plaza de California, and re-create the California Garden behind the Organ Pavilion.
- Improve access to the Central Mesa and other areas of the park through the provision of additional parking, while maintaining convenient drop-off, disabled access, valet parking, and tram service.

- Improve the pedestrian link between Central Mesa's two cultural cores: El Prado and the Palisades.
- Implement a funding plan including bonds that provide for construction of a paid parking structure intended to fund the structure's operation and maintenance, tram operations, and the debt service on the structure only.
- Complete all work prior to January 2015 for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition centennial celebration.

Due to the delay caused by litigation, the last objective can no longer be met, and the tram is currently being operated.

This Project conforms to the requirements of the current versions of the Balboa Park Master Plan (BPMP), Central Mesa Precise Plan (CMPP), and other applicable documents, as amended by the City Council on July 9, 2012 (Resolution R-307555). The Environmental Impact Report for the Project was certified by the City Council (Project No. 233958/SCH No. 2011031074) and associated Site Development Permit No. 837848 was also approved. At that time, the Project was planned to be implemented as part of a privately sponsored improvement agreement.

The requested actions will provide the funding necessary to begin the implementation of this Project as a City Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project. This action would allow city staff to work in collaboration with Plaza de Panama Committee and provide appropriate oversight to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations. The revised cost estimate, and proposed financing plan is anticipated to be brought to the City Council for final approval in Fall of 2016.

Please see attached Report to the City Council No. 16-071 for more detail.

#### CITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S)/OBJECTIVE(S):

Goal 2: Work in Partnership with all of our communities to achieve safe and livable neighborhoods

Objective 3: Invest in Infrastructure

#### FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Up to \$1 million in CIP expenditures are proposed with this City Council action. \$352,214.26 from a variety of funds that have been established over the past 25 years to support Balboa Park will be transferred to Fund 200215 Unap. Res-Balboa Park CIP for the purpose of this project as detailed below:

- \$201,422.94 from Fund 200213 Mission Bay Park/Balboa Park
- \$81,765.68 from Fund 200469 Balboa Park Concessionaire
- \$69,025.64 from Fund 200452 Balboa Park Trust

In addition, \$250,361.78 in fund balance for Fund 200215 Unap. Res-Balboa Park CIP and \$397,423.96 in fund balance from Fund 400000 Capital Outlay-Sales Tax is available to be appropriated for this project.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONTRACTING INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE):**

None are part of this action. Contracts or agreements associated with this action are subject to the City's Equal Employment Opportunity Outreach Program (San Diego Ordinance No. 18173, Section 22.2701 through 22.2708) and Non-Discrimination in Contracting Ordinance (San Diego Municipal Code Sections 22.3501 through 22.3517).

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION (describe any changes made to the item from what was presented at committee):**

On July 9, 2012, the City Council voted to approve amendments of the BPMP and CMPP to incorporate the proposed project (Resolution R-307555) after an extensive public input process, which is outlined in detail in Attachment 1 (Report to City Council, June 19, 2012, No. 12-080). The Environmental Impact Report was certified by the City Council (Project No. 233958/SCH No. 2011031074, R-307554), Site Development Permit No. 837848 was approved, (R-307556), and the Plaza de Panama Implement Agreement was approved, (R-307556).

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS:**

This project received a tremendous amount of community participation and input during the preparation of plan amendments and the Environmental Impact Report. The extent of community participation is further described in Attachment 1 (Report to City Council, June 19, 2012, No. 12-080).

**KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS:**

Balboa Park is one of the largest parks within the City's park system and is considered by many as the "crown jewel" of the system. Due to the park's central location, diverse recreational amenities, and historical significance it is visited by more than 14 million visitors each year and is considered a favorite local destination by city and county residents.

The projected impacts are described extensively throughout the Report to City Council (Attachment 1) and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the project.

Parker, Herman  
Originating Department

Graham, David  
Deputy Chief/Chief Operating Officer



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the City Council

DATE ISSUED: July 29, 2016 REPORT NO.: 16-071  
ATTENTION: Honorable Members of the City Council  
SUBJECT: Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project  
REFERENCE: Fiscal Year 2017 CIP Budget - Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project

### **REQUESTED ACTION:**

Approve necessary actions to review and finalize construction documents for the previously Council-approved Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project (Project) that will enhance pedestrian spaces in the Plaza de Panama, Plaza de California, West El Prado, the Esplanade (between the Plaza de Panama and the Organ Pavilion), and the Pan American Promenade (Pan American Road East). The Project will also include a new parking structure with a 2.2 acre rooftop park, improved accessible parking at the Alcazar Parking Lot, and a bypass bridge and road to divert vehicular traffic away from the pedestrian core of the park. Approved actions will allow for Project construction documents to be prepared consistent with the previously certified Environmental Impact Report and changes in state building regulations. Project costs will be refined to reflect costs associated with any regulatory changes. This effort will be funded through the Plaza de Panama Committee (Committee) as originally contemplated with the previously Council-approved Plaza de Panama Improvement Agreement (Document No. RR - 307558). The approval of City funds will give City staff the ability to work collaboratively with the Committee and provide appropriate oversight to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Amend the Fiscal Year 2017 Capital Improvement Budget (CIP) to create the Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project CIP.
2. Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to transfer \$352,214.26 to Fund 200215 Unap. Res-Balboa Park CIP from the following funds for the purpose of funding City expenditures during the process of reviewing and finalizing construction documents:
  - \$201,422.94 from Fund 200213 Mission Bay Park/Balboa Park
  - \$81,765.68 from Fund 200469 Balboa Park Concessionaire
  - \$69,025.64 from Fund 200452 Balboa Park Trust; and
3. Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to add CIP L-17002, Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project to the Capital Improvements Program; and

4. Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to increase the Capital Improvements Program Budget in CIP L-17002, Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project and to appropriate and expend an amount not to exceed \$1.0 million dollars for the purpose of reviewing and finalizing construction documents and revising Project construction costs, of which up to \$602,576.04 from Fund 200215 Unap. Res-Balboa Park CIP and up to \$397,423.96 from Fund 400000 Capital Outlay-Sales Tax.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ITEM BACKGROUND:**

Balboa Park is located in the heart of San Diego and is one of the City's largest developed parks at 1,172 acres and is host to numerous passive and active recreational activities, cultural institutions, and special events such as December Nights, Earth Fair, San Diego LGBT Pride and countless others. More than 12 million visitors come to Balboa Park each year to enjoy the diversity of activities the park has to offer.

Development, maintenance and management of Balboa Park are governed by the Balboa Park Master Plan (BPMP), the Central Mesa Precise Plan (CMPP), the East Mesa Precise Plan (EMPP) and subsequent amendments to these documents. The BPMP was adopted by City Council on July 25, 1989 (Resolution No: R-274090) and the CMPP was adopted by City Council on October 20, 1992 (Resolution R-280920). The Balboa Park Masterplan speaks to the entirety of Balboa Park. The CMPP provides development guidelines for the central portion of the park.

On July 9, 2012, the City Council voted to approve amendments of the BPMP and CMPP to incorporate the proposed Project (Resolution R-307555) after an extensive public input process. See Attachment 1 (Report to City Council, June 19, 2012, No. 12-080). At the same time the City Council certified the Environmental Impact Report (Project No. 233958/SCH No. 2011031074; R-307554) and approved Site Development Permit No. 837848 for the Project (R-307556).

The Project schedule was delayed by a legal challenge, however, the Court of Appeals ruled that the Project approvals were properly granted and the California Supreme Court declined to hear further appeals.

**Project Objectives**

The underlying purpose of the Project is to restore pedestrian and park uses to the Central Mesa and alleviate pedestrian/vehicular conflicts. To achieve this goal, six primary objectives were envisioned:

- Remove vehicles from the Plaza de Panama, El Prado, Plaza de California, the Mall (also called the Esplanade), and Pan American Road East (also called the Pan American Promenade) while maintaining public and proximate vehicular access to the institutions which are vital to the park's success and longevity.
- Restore pedestrian and park uses to El Prado, Plaza de Panama, Plaza de California, the Mall, and re-create the California Garden behind the Organ Pavilion.
- Improve access to the Central Mesa through the provision of additional parking, while maintaining convenient drop-off, disabled access, valet parking, and a new tram service with the potential for future expansion.
- Improve the pedestrian link between the Central Mesa's two cultural cores: El Prado and the Palisades.
- Implement a funding plan including bonds that provide for construction of a paid parking structure intended to fund the structure's operation and maintenance, tram operations, and the debt service on the structure only.

- Complete all work prior to January 2015 for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition centennial celebration.

Due to the delay caused by litigation, the last objective can no longer be met, and the tram is currently being operated. Once staff has an updated cost estimate, a revised financing plan will be developed and brought to City Council for final approval in the Fall of 2016.

### **Project Overview**

The various components of the project are listed below and a detailed description of each component is included.

1. Plaza de Panama
2. El Prado and Plaza de California
3. Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road
4. Alcazar Parking Lot
5. The Esplanade and Pan American Promenade
6. Parking Structure, Roof-top Park, Tram and Arizona Street Landfill

Presently, vehicles entering the Central Mesa of Balboa Park from the west travel across the Cabrillo Bridge through the Plaza de California. Traffic flows along El Prado and into the Plaza de Panama. Vehicles then turn south on Pan American Road toward the Palisades Area and Presidents Way. Traffic is two-way, and vehicles may exit the park to the west in the same manner.

One of the primary goals of the project is to remove vehicular access from the core of the park. To achieve this goal, a new bypass bridge, "Centennial Bridge," would connect the eastern end of the Cabrillo Bridge to the western side of the Alcazar parking lot. At that point a new bypass road, "Centennial Road," would continue to the south where vehicles can access a new parking structure located beneath the current Organ Pavilion parking lot or continue to Presidents Way. Presidents Way would provide access the Palisades area or exit to Park Boulevard.

### **Description of Project Components**

#### **Plaza de Panama**

Vehicle circulation would be removed from the Plaza de Panama, and the Plaza would be redesigned with enhanced paving, landscaping, movable tables and chairs, 1915 replica light standards, and other amenities, such as the shallow reflecting pools that can be turned off to accommodate large special events. The Plaza would incorporate shade trees along the eastern and western sides, with the central portion of the Plaza remaining mostly open for flexibility. The existing fountain located in the center of the Plaza would be retained. Landscaping around the Plaza would be returned to its original 1915 design.

#### **Plaza de California and El Prado**

The Plaza de California is a small plaza encircled by the California Building (Museum of Man). This Plaza was historically used as a pedestrian square during the Expositions. Vehicle circulation would be removed from the Plaza de California and the Plaza would be redesigned with enhanced paving, accent trees, and movable tables and chairs. El Prado is the primary east-west road that runs through the Central Mesa from Sixth Avenue to the Plaza de Balboa. Vehicular traffic would be removed from El Prado between



the Cabrillo Bridge and the Plaza de Panama. The space would be redesigned with enhanced paving, formal street trees, replica 1915 light standards and benches.

#### Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road

The Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road are proposed to reconfigure vehicular circulation and enable the core of the Park to be returned to pedestrian use. The Centennial Bridge would be approximately 405 feet long, connecting the Cabrillo Bridge to the Alcazar parking lot. Centennial Road would connect the Alcazar parking lot to the new Organ Pavilion parking structure and continue on to Presidents Way. Centennial Road would slope down from the Alcazar parking lot and pass beneath Pan American Promenade. The existing raised wood pedestrian path that connects the Alcazar parking lot with the Organ Pavilion would be realigned and extend to the International Cottages area.

#### Alcazar Parking Lot

The Alcazar parking lot would be reconfigured to provide drop-off, valet, and accessible parking. The parking lot would be reconfigured to include a total of 32 accessible parking spaces as well as a passenger drop-off area adjacent to the Alcazar Garden. Approximately 18 valet staging spaces would be located at the southeastern corner of the parking lot. A small valet booth and pergola structure would be located along the eastern edge of the parking lot. A raised pedestrian bridge and walkway along the south side of the House of Charm/Mingei Museum would be constructed, providing direct access from the Alcazar parking lot to the Plaza de Panama. Access to Palm Canyon and the Cabrillo Canyon archery range would be maintained.

#### The Esplanade and Pan American Promenade

Pan American Road, also known as the Mall or Esplanade, connects the Plaza de Panama to the Organ Pavilion. Pan American Road East, also known as Pan American Promenade, connects the Organ Pavilion to the Palisades area at Presidents Way. With vehicular circulation rerouted to Centennial Road, the Esplanade and Pan American Promenade would be redesigned to provide a tram and pedestrian route with enhanced paving, landscaping, benches and replica 1915 light standards.

#### Organ Pavilion Parking Structure, Roof-top Park, Tram and Arizona Street Landfill

The existing Organ Pavilion surface parking lot located southwest of the Spreckels Organ Pavilion would be removed and a new underground parking structure would be constructed with approximately 797 parking spaces on three levels, with a 2.2-acre roof-top park. This would result in a net gain of approximately 260 parking spaces for the Central Mesa. A deck over Centennial Road would provide pedestrian and tram access to the Organ Pavilion and northward to the Esplanade. Vehicle access to and from the new structure would be provided from two points of entry on the east side of the structure from Centennial Road. Park visitors arriving from both the west (via the Cabrillo Bridge) and the east (via Presidents Way) would be able to access the structure.

A new roof-top park would be constructed atop the parking structure and include the re-created "California Garden" and an open lawn. The roof-top park would have a central elevator courtyard with a large open air trellised pavilion around it. A new public restroom approximately would be located on the northeast corner of the roof-top park to replace the 1990s restroom being removed near the International Cottages. A second small restroom would be provided adjacent to the new visitor center at the southwest corner. Tram stops would be located adjacent to the central elevator core and the visitor center.

### Other Project Components

#### *Pedestrian Circulation*

Pedestrians would still be able to cross the Cabrillo Bridge and enter the Park through the Plaza de California as they do now. The newly pedestrianized El Prado would provide improved access to the Plaza de Panama; from there, pedestrians could proceed south along the Esplanade to the Organ Pavilion and Palisades area. For those visitors being dropped off at the Alcazar parking lot, pedestrian access to El Prado would be either north through the Alcazar Garden or east via a newly constructed raised pedestrian walkway proposed as part of this project.

Pan America Promenade would be for pedestrian and tram-only circulation. A grade-separated pedestrian deck would span Centennial Road and connect to the Esplanade. The project would extend the Palm Canyon raised wood bridge to the International Cottages.

#### *Bicycle Circulation*

Bicycle use would be permitted within the core of the Park; however, no dedicated bicycle routes would be provided pursuant to the circulation objectives and policies of the CMPP. Bicycle circulation would also be allowed along Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road similar to automobiles. Bicycle storage facilities would be located within the Organ Pavilion parking structure and on the roof-top park.

#### *Parking Changes*

Parking has already been removed from the Plaza de Panama; however, drop-off locations still remain. The drop-off function as well as valet service would be relocated to a reconstructed Alcazar Lot. The Alcazar Lot would be reconstructed to accommodate accessible parking only, as well as drop-off and valet. As noted above, the Organ Pavilion surface parking lot would be removed, and a new below-grade parking structure would be located in its place.

### **Project Costs and Next Steps**

The requested actions before the City Council will allow City staff to work collaboratively with the Committee to review and finalize construction documents as well as update Project construction costs. The Committee has agreed to privately finance this initial effort as originally contemplated in the Council-approved Plaza de Panama Improvement Agreement. The \$1 million of City funds will be available for City staff to work collaboratively with the Committee and provide oversight to ensure compliance with all local regulations and guidance on Park and Recreation Department's operational needs. Staff will charge time to the Project and any remaining funds will be applied towards construction after further Council action.

Since the technical work to refine construction costs has not been completed, it is too early to have a reliable Project cost estimate. However, preliminarily, it is anticipated Project costs could be as high as \$70-\$75 million due to prevailing wage requirements, changes in storm water regulations and a different bidding environment from 2012. Additionally, other site conditions have been modified, including the temporary improvements to the Plaza de Panama and the Alcazar parking lot, which will need to be reviewed and incorporated into the final construction documents. Once staff has an updated cost estimate, a revised financing plan will be developed and brought to City Council for final approval in the Fall of

2016. The City's contribution will be primarily funded with parking revenues and will not exceed \$45 million. The remainder will be funded with private philanthropy.

**CITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S)/OBJECTIVE(S):**

Goal 2: Work in Partnership with all of our communities to achieve safe and livable neighborhoods

Objective 3: Invest in Infrastructure

**FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Up to \$1 million in CIP expenditures are proposed with this City Council action - \$352,214.26 from a variety of funds that have been established over the past 25 years to support Balboa Park will be transferred to Fund 200215 Unap. Res-Balboa Park CIP for the purpose of this project as detailed below:

- \$201,422.94 from Fund 200213 Mission Bay Park/Balboa Park
- \$81,765.68 from Fund 200469 Balboa Park Concessionaire
- \$69,025.64 from Fund 200452 Balboa Park Trust

In addition, \$250,361.78 in fund balance for Fund 200215 Unap. Res-Balboa Park CIP and \$397,423.96 in fund balance from Fund 400000 Capital Outlay-Sales Tax is available to be appropriated for this project.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTIONS:**

On July 9, 2012, the City Council voted to approve amendments of the BPMP and CMPP to incorporate the proposed project (Resolution R-307555) after an extensive public input process, which is outlined in detail in Attachment 1 (Report to City Council, June 19, 2012, No. 12-080). The Environmental Impact Report was certified by the City Council (Project No. 233958/SCH No. 2011031074; R-307554) and Site Development Permit No. 837848 was approved (R-307556) and the Plaza de Panama Improvement Agreement (Document No. RR-307558) was approved.

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH EFFORTS:**

This Project received a tremendous amount of community participation and input during the preparation of plan amendments and the Environmental Impact Report. The extent of community participation is further described in Attachment 1 (Report to City Council, June 19, 2012, No. 12-080).

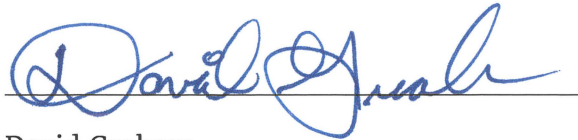
**KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS:**

Balboa Park is one of the largest parks within the City's park system and is considered by many as the "crown jewel" of the system. Due to the park's central location, diverse recreational amenities, and historical significance it is visited by more than 14 million visitors each year and is considered a favorite local destination by city and county residents.

The projected impacts are described extensively throughout the Report to City Council (Attachment 1) and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the Project.



Herman D. Parker  
Park and Recreation Director



David Graham  
Deputy Chief/Chief Operating Officer

Attachment(s):        1. Report to City Council, June 19, 2012, No. 12-080

# BALBOA PARK PLAZA DE PANAMA PROJECT

## **Attachment 1**

Report to the City Council

June 19, 2012



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

DATE ISSUED: June 19, 2012 REPORT NO: 12-080

ATTENTION: Honorable Chair and Members of the City Council  
Docket of July 9, 2012

SUBJECT: Balboa Park Plaza de Panama, Circulation and Parking Structure Project

REFERENCE: None

REQUESTED ACTION: Approve the Balboa Park – Plaza de Panama, Circulation and Parking Structure project (Project) located in the Central Mesa area of Balboa Park.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. **Certify** the Environmental Impact Report for the Plaza de Panama Project, Project No. 233958, and **Adopt** the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program, and the Applicant's Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations; and
2. **Approve** Balboa Park Master Plan and Central Mesa Precise Plan Amendments No. 837847 and Site Development Permit No. 837848.

SUMMARY:

Balboa Park is located in the heart of San Diego, immediately north of the downtown area. The Park is surrounded by the communities of Golden Hill, North Park, Uptown and Centre City. Balboa Park is one of the City's largest developed parks at 1,172 acres and is host to numerous passive and active recreational activities, cultural and educational institutions, and special events. Over 12 million visitors come to Balboa Park each year to enjoy the diversity the park has to offer.

Development, maintenance and management of Balboa Park are governed by the Balboa Park Master Plan (BPMP), the Central Mesa Precise Plan (CMPP), the East Mesa Precise Plan (EMPP) and subsequent amendments to these documents. The BPMP is a part of the City's Progress Guide and General Plan (General Plan), and implements land use policies for Balboa Park. Therefore, amendments to the Master Plan and its Precise Plans must follow the Land Use and Community Planning Element of the General Plan.

The BPMP was adopted by City Council on July 25, 1989 (Resolution No. R-274090). The BPMP addresses the entirety of Balboa Park and provides general guidelines for development.

The CMPP was adopted by City Council on October 20, 1992 (Resolution R-280920) and addresses the central portion of the Park in greater detail.

In his January 2010 State of the City Address, Mayor Jerry Sanders identified the restoration of the Plaza de Panama as a signature project for the City to complete in advance of the centennial celebration of Balboa Park beginning in December 2014. In an effort to achieve this goal, Mayor Sanders has solicited the guidance and support of the community under the leadership of Dr. Irwin Jacobs. The Plaza de Panama Committee, a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity, has been established to raise funds and coordinate efforts necessary to meet the December 2014 deadline. The Plaza de Panama Committee has retained a consultant team to work with community groups and Park stakeholders, and prepare designs and documentation required to implement the project.

On October 21, 2010 the City of San Diego Planning Commission voted unanimously to initiate amendments to the BPMP and CMPP to further evaluate the project proposal (Planning Commission Resolution 4640-PC).

Since plan amendment initiation, the Plaza de Panama Committee and its consultant team have attended numerous meetings with Park and Recreation and community planning advisory bodies. As the officially recognized planning group for Balboa Park, the Balboa Park Committee has conducted workshops at most of its meetings in the past 18 months. Some of these meetings include the following:

• Balboa Park Committee	18 Meetings
• Park and Recreation Board (P&R Board)	3 Meetings
• P&R Board's Design Review Committee	2 Meeting
• Historical Resources Board (HRB)	7 Meetings
• HRB's Design Assistance Subcommittee	1 Meeting
• North Park Planning Committee	4 Meetings
• Uptown Planners	5 Meetings
• Greater Golden Hill Planning Committee	3 Meetings
• Centre City Advisory Committee	3 Meetings
• Mayor's Committee on Disabilities	2 Meetings

In addition to meetings with recognized advisory bodies, the Plaza de Panama Committee and its consultant team have met with numerous Balboa Park stakeholders. There have been approximately 57 meetings with Balboa Park institutions and organizations such as House of Hospitality, House of Pacific Relations, Museum of Man, the Spreckels Organ Society and The Old Globe Theatre. There have been approximately 50 outreach meetings to other community groups, City Council members, and City committees.

1. An amendment to the Balboa Park Master Plan is requested for proposed changes required to implement the Circulation and Parking Structure components of the project.
2. An amendment to the Central Mesa Precise Plan is requested for proposed changes required to implement the Circulation and Parking Structure components of the project.

3. A Site Development Permit (SDP) is requested due to the presence of Environmentally Sensitive Lands in the form of steep hillsides, and for modifications to designated historical resources located in a Historic District that are not consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Amendments to the BPMP and CMPP are required to implement several components of the Project.

- The BPMP and CMPP route traffic along El Prado through the Plaza de Panama, along the west side of the Mall and to a new roadway that would be routed south of the Organ Pavilion and connect with Presidents Way. The Project removes traffic from El Prado, the Plaza de Panama and the Mall, and instead re-routes traffic around the core of the park on the proposed Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road.
- The Project proposes changes to the design of the Plaza de California, El Prado, the Plaza de Panama, the Mall and Pan American Road East (also called the Pan American Promenade).
- The Project proposes a design for the Organ Pavilion parking structure and roof-top park, which are not included in the current BPMP and CMPP.
- The Project proposes a more specific design for the Alcazar parking lot; Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road that are not included in the current BPMP and CMPP.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Project Objectives

The underlying purpose of the Balboa Park Plaza de Panama, Circulation and Parking Structure Project is to restore pedestrian and park uses to the Central Mesa and alleviate pedestrian/vehicular conflicts (defined as vehicles and pedestrians crossing the same area at potentially the same time). To achieve this underlying purpose, six primary objectives are envisioned:

- Remove vehicles from the Plaza de Panama, El Prado, Plaza de California, the Mall (also called "the Esplanade"), and Pan American Road East while maintaining public and proximate vehicular access to the institutions which are vital to the park's success and longevity.
- Restore pedestrian and park uses to El Prado, Plaza de Panama, Plaza de California, the Mall, and re-create the California Garden behind the Organ Pavilion.
- Improve access to the Central Mesa through the provision of additional parking, while maintaining convenient drop-off, disabled access, valet parking, and a new tram system with the potential for future expansion.
- Improve the pedestrian link between the Central Mesa's two cultural cores: El Prado and the Palisades.
- Implement a funding plan including bonds that provides for construction of a self-sustaining paid parking structure intended to fund the structure's operation and maintenance, the planned tram operations, and the debt service on the structure only.



- Complete all work prior to January 2015 for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition centennial celebration.

### Project Overview

The various components of the project are listed below and a detailed description of each component is included.

1. Plaza de Panama
2. El Prado and Plaza de California
3. Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road
4. Alcazar Parking Lot
5. The Mall and Pan American Promenade
6. Parking Structure, Roof-top Park, Tram and Arizona Street Landfill

Presently, vehicles entering the Park from the west proceed across the Cabrillo Bridge/El Prado and enter the core through Plaza de California. Traffic flows along El Prado and then into Plaza de Panama, where limited parking is available. Cars may then continue south toward the Alcazar parking lot or the Organ Pavilion parking lot via Pan American Road.

The basic concept of the project is to remove vehicular access and parking from the Plaza de Panama, El Prado, Plaza de California, the Mall, and Pan American Road East. This would allow these areas to be pedestrian only, as well as reclaim additional park acreage for visitor usage. Traffic would be routed via a two-way circulation pattern. A new two-way bridge, "Centennial Bridge," would connect the eastern end of Cabrillo Bridge to the western side of the Alcazar parking lot. At that point the new two-way "Centennial Road" would flow through the Alcazar parking lot, exiting to the east; then continuing to the south where vehicles can access the new Organ Pavilion parking structure via two entry ramps, also connecting into Presidents Way. A tram would provide service from the parking structure to the Plaza de Panama. Existing one-way access along Pan American Road West and Pan American Place would continue to be restricted to authorized and emergency vehicles only.

### Description of Project Components

#### *Plaza de Panama*

The historic use of the Plaza de Panama during both the 1915–16 and 1935–36 Expositions was pedestrian open space. During these two periods the Plaza was completely open for pedestrian circulation, marching bands, exhibits, and special events. Parking was initially introduced in the Plaza after the first exposition. It is believed that the Plaza surface was decomposed granite impregnated in an asphaltic base. Originally, the Plaza was defined by five temporary buildings designed by renowned architect Bertram G. Goodhue in the Spanish Colonial Revival style.

Of the five "temporary" buildings constructed for the expositions, only the two southernmost buildings survive (as reconstructions): the House of Charm (1996) and the House of Hospitality (1997). The building on the north end is the 1926 San Diego Museum of Art, which replaced the 1915 Sacramento Valley Building. The other two buildings on the northern portion on the Plaza

are non-historic: the Timken Museum of Art (1964) and the San Diego Museum of Art Auditorium and Sculpture Garden (1965). These later two buildings were built in Modernist styles.

During the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition, two large reflecting pools and a ceremonial arch were added in the Plaza, parking was eliminated, and the Plaza (at least at the edges) was once again returned to pedestrian use. After 1936, the reflecting pools and arch were removed, and parking and vehicular circulation again returned to the Plaza. In the existing condition, the majority of the Plaza is used for parking (54 cars) with vehicle traffic in the south and central areas. Currently, pedestrian access across the Plaza conflicts with vehicular traffic and the center of the Plaza is cut off from pedestrian use by a traffic circle and parking aisles. Under the proposed project, parking and vehicle circulation would be removed from the Plaza de Panama and the Plaza would be redesigned with enhanced paving, shade trees, movable tables and chairs, 1915 replica lighting, and other amenities, such as the shallow reflecting pools, that can be turned off to accommodate large events and festivals. The Plaza would incorporate shade trees along the eastern and western sides of the Plaza, with the central portion of the Plaza remaining mostly open for flexibility. The fountain located in the center of the Plaza would be retained and is incorporated into the project. The landscaping, site furniture, water features, lighting, and signage are described further in the Landscaping section.

#### *El Prado and Plaza de California*

##### *El Prado*

The Plaza de California is a small plaza encircled by the California Building. El Prado is the primary east-west circulation element that runs through the Central Mesa, from Sixth Avenue to the Plaza de Balboa. Historic photographs show visitors strolling along El Prado, framed by long arcades, decorative street lights, and neatly manicured Black Acacia trees.

Immediately after the 1915–16 Exposition, vehicular traffic took over El Prado, and traffic has continued to flow from the Cabrillo Bridge east through the Plaza de California and along El Prado ever since. The only exception to this was during the 1935-36 Exposition when only pedestrians and shuttle buses were allowed.

In the existing condition, Cabrillo Bridge/El Prado is the only access to the Park from the west, and the heavy use of the roadway by vehicular traffic influences both the form and function of this axis. The project would allow only pedestrian use in the El Prado. Note that automobiles were removed from El Prado east of the Plaza de Panama in the 1970s. The Prado west of Plaza de Panama still carries automobile traffic.

##### *Plaza de California*

The Plaza de California was historically used as a pedestrian square during the 1915-16 Exposition, and later during the 1935-36 Exposition. Vehicular use of El Prado currently limits this use. Vehicle traffic would be removed from El Prado to allow pedestrians to access the main axis of the Park.

## Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road

### *Centennial Bridge*

The Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road are proposed to reconfigure vehicular traffic flow and enable the Plaza de California, west El Prado, Plaza de Panama, and the Mall to be dedicated to pedestrians. The Centennial Bridge would be 44 feet wide (edge-to-edge), with two 14-foot-wide vehicular travel lanes for two-way traffic. There would also be an 8-foot wide walkway on the outer radius for pedestrians, separated from vehicles by a traffic barrier. The Centennial Bridge, as proposed, is 405 feet long from Cabrillo Bridge to the Alcazar parking lot, would span 345 feet between the abutments, and would be supported by six rectangular shaped columns, with approximately 50 feet spacing between columns.

The Centennial Bridge would require removal of approximately 70 linear feet of the existing railing and sidewalk at the east end of the Cabrillo Bridge and would have an expansion joint where it connects to the Cabrillo Bridge making the two structures independent from one another; meaning that no forces would be transferred from one bridge to the other, ensuring the Centennial Bridge would have no direct structural effect on the Cabrillo Bridge. The Centennial Bridge would continue eastward across Cabrillo Canyon around the southwest corner of the Museum of Man. The bridge would be curved, would span the existing canyon (60 feet in height at the deepest point of the canyon), and then connect to the Alcazar parking lot. At this point, it would be at a slightly higher elevation than the Cabrillo Bridge. The bridge would be separated from the southwest corner of the California Building by 55 feet.

The Centennial Bridge would be constructed of concrete and designed to minimize its overall depth/size and the visibility. The bridge, abutments, and columns are designed to be simple and thin.

### *Centennial Road*

The Centennial Road would consist of two lanes measuring 28 feet (14 feet each) in width, and would connect the Alcazar parking lot to the new Organ Pavilion parking structure and continue on to Presidents Way. The proposed alignment would follow the existing drive that connects Pan American Road with the Alcazar parking lot for a portion of its length. The Centennial Road is proposed to drop down and become grade separated in order to allow vehicles to pass below the pedestrianized Pan American Road to access the east side of the new underground parking structure.

To accomplish this, the Centennial Road would traverse the edge of Palm Canyon and the southerly portion of the proposed Centennial Road would encroach upon the ornamental plantings within Palm Canyon. Accordingly, the proposed project would realign and extend the 1970s Palm Canyon Walkway which is an existing raised wood pedestrian path that connects the Alcazar parking lot with the Mall. The project would extend the existing walkway from its current terminus to the International Cottages. The new addition would intersect with the existing walkway and would curve through and around the existing palms.

### Alcazar Parking Lot

The Alcazar parking lot currently contains 136 total parking spaces including 5 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) spaces. This parking lot would be reconfigured to provide drop-off, loading, valet stacking, and disabled access parking. The lot would be reconfigured to accommodate the relocated ADA spaces from the Plaza de Panama and would include a total of 32 ADA spaces as well as a passenger drop-off area adjacent to Alcazar Garden.

In addition, approximately 18 valet stacking spaces would be located along the southern and eastern edges of the parking lot, which would approximately double the current capacity for valet services. A small valet booth and linear wood log pergola structure associated with the valet services would be located along the eastern edge of the parking lot.

For those visitors utilizing the drop-off, valet and/or disabled parking spaces, the reconfigured Alcazar parking lot would serve as the entry point into the Central Mesa; either through the adjacent Alcazar Garden or via a new ADA compliant pedestrian walkway behind the House of Charm. The drop-off area would allow cars to pull out of the flow of traffic and stop without blocking traffic. The existing sidewalk adjacent to the Alcazar Garden would be widened to provide a more generous entry plaza. Disabled visitors and those using the valet service or being dropped off would be able to access El Prado through the Alcazar Garden as they do today.

In the southwest corner of the parking lot, a new set of stairs would be added to provide access into the archery range, and a small single fixture restroom would replace the existing restroom/storage building which is to be demolished. A small trash enclosure would be provided adjacent to the restroom.

In addition, the project would include a raised pedestrian bridge and walkway along the rear (south) side of the House of Charm/Mingei Museum. The House of Charm pedestrian bridge/walkway would be a concrete structure with a stucco or light sand finish, in order to be compatible with the House of Charm. The bridge railing would be steel, powder-coated dark olive green similar to the existing arcade railing adjacent to the House of Charm. The new walkway would provide direct ADA compatible pedestrian access from the Alcazar parking lot to the Plaza de Panama through the arcade adjacent to the House of Charm; but would be designed such that it would span the Museum loading area.

### The Mall and Pan American Promenade

Pan American Road/Pan American Road East (as it is denoted in the *Thomas Guide*) is the segment of street that connects the Plaza de Panama to Presidents Way. The portion of Pan American Road consisting of the roadway and landscaped median between the Plaza de Panama and the Spreckels Organ Pavilion is referred to as "The Mall." The Mall and Pan American Road East are currently used to provide vehicular connection around the Organ Pavilion to Presidents Way and Park Boulevard.

The project would reroute vehicle traffic to the Centennial Road west of the Mall. This would enable the Mall to be re-proportioned to recall the historic design by widening the median lawn, removing non-historic walkways, and re-establishing the historic tree and street light pattern, while accommodating managed vehicle use (tram and emergency or special event vehicles only).

Pan American Road East would be converted to a promenade that would provide a tram and pedestrian route connecting the Mall to the Organ Pavilion, the Palisades, and the park atop the underground parking structure. This tram and pedestrian route is identified in the CMPP as the "Pan American Promenade" and will be referred to as such throughout this report. As previously discussed, the Centennial Road would allow vehicles to pass below Pan American Promenade to access the east side of the new underground parking structure discussed below. The Promenade would be shared with a new tram system, which would shuttle visitors from the new parking structure to the Plaza de Panama.

### *Organ Pavilion Parking Structure, Roof-top Park, Tram, and Arizona Street Landfill*

#### *Parking Structure*

The existing Organ Pavilion surface parking lot is southwest of the Spreckels Organ Pavilion. The project would construct a new underground parking structure with approximately 797 parking spaces on three levels with a 2.2-acre roof-top park. This proposal would result in a net gain of approximately 260 parking spaces for the Central Mesa.

Making use of the sloped site, the southeast elevation of the structure would be open to allow for natural light and ventilation, thereby reducing the need for mechanical ventilation equipment. During construction of the parking structure, three of the four large Torrey Pine trees behind the Organ Pavilion would be protected. The fourth would be evaluated by a certified arborist for structural integrity, as it is currently leaning toward the Organ Pavilion. This tree would not be impacted by the project, but may need to be removed to protect the historic Organ Pavilion and to alleviate safety concerns.

Vehicle access would be grade separated from the pedestrian and tram traffic running along the reconfigured Pan American Promenade. The vehicle road (Centennial Road) would continue below grade along the northeast side of the structure, and at grade but below the top level of the parking structure along the southeast side, to Presidents Way and Park Boulevard. A proposed 150-foot-long deck over Centennial Road would provide pedestrian and tram access to the Organ Pavilion and northward to the Mall. Vehicle access to and from the new structure would be provided from two points of entry on the east side of the structure from the new Centennial Road.

Users arriving from both the west (via the Cabrillo Bridge) and the east (via Presidents Way) could both access the facility. The parking structure would have entrance, exit, internal circulation, and revenue control equipment.

#### *Roof-top Park*

Where the existing surface parking lot exists, a new roof-top park would include the re-created "California Garden" and an open lawn. The roof-top park would contain a central elevator courtyard with a large open air trellised pavilion around it. On the northeast corner of the roof-top park would be a new public restroom approximately 1,385 square feet in size, to replace the 1990s restroom being removed near the International Cottages. A second small restroom would be provided adjacent to the new visitor center (1,400 square feet) which would be located on the

southwest corner. Tram stops would be located adjacent to the central elevator core and the visitor center. Each stop would include seating for waiting tram users.

### *Tram*

Trams were introduced in conjunction with both expositions. The 1915 trams consisted of a small tractor pulling trailers with back-to-back benches. The tram system used in 1935 was motorized, hinged buses. In the existing condition, the Balboa Park tram system, the “red trolleys,” is a free intra-park tram system operated by Old Town Trolley Tours of San Diego contracted to the City of San Diego. Passengers board at designated tram stops within the Central Mesa and West Mesa with targeted stops every 5–10 minutes. The current tram route primarily runs along Presidents Way and Pan American Road/Pan American Road East with tram stops at Inspiration Point, The Palisades (two stops), the Organ Pavilion and the Plaza de Panama. Every half hour the tram visits the West Mesa, traveling along El Prado, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Balboa Drive with stops at Sefton Plaza and the intersection of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Upas Street. The actual tram schedule varies by the time of year and day of the week.

The project would link parking in the new structure with popular destinations by operating an accessible tram. The new trams would be low-floor, low-speed vehicles that can share the road with pedestrians and provide access to all park visitors, including disabled visitors. The proposed tram vehicles would carry between 16 and 100 passengers. User-friendly features would include a very low floor for easy loading and unloading for passengers of all ages and abilities. It would provide several options for wheelchair accessibility using on-board ramps and tie downs.

The new tram service would be introduced during the construction phase of the proposed project. Upon completion of the project, the tram route would be modified to run from the Organ Pavilion parking structure along the Mall to the Plaza de Panama. The proposed new tram, which would also be free, service is intended to supplement rather than replace the existing system and would be designed such that both integration with existing tram system and future expansion would be possible.

### *Arizona Street Landfill*

As discussed above, the Organ Pavilion parking structure would be three levels below ground and would result in 142,000 cubic yards of excess soil requiring disposal. The project proposes to export the soil to the nearby Arizona Street Landfill. The proposed haul route to the Arizona Street Landfill would be from the current Organ Pavilion parking lot to Presidents Way, east on Presidents Way to Park Boulevard, north on Park Boulevard to Zoo Place, south on Zoo Place to Florida Drive, south on Florida Drive to Pershing Drive, and north on Pershing Drive to the Arizona Street Landfill. This route would be the most direct and least impactful route (in terms of traffic, residential noise, and emissions) for the haul operation.

The fill hauled to the Arizona Street Landfill would be utilized for grade contouring on top of the existing soil cap (previously placed to prevent rainwater infiltration). Fill and grade contouring is anticipated in three areas of the Arizona Street Landfill. Site 1, southwest of the Park and Recreation Operations Yard, is anticipated to take approximately 116,000 cy of export, with fills

ranging from 2 feet to 11 feet in height, 2:1 and 4:1 manufactured slope gradients are anticipated. Site 2, the existing East Mesa archery range, is anticipated to take approximately 11,000 cy of export with fills ranging from 2 to 4 feet in height, 2:1 maximum slope gradients are anticipated. Site 3, the former "casting ponds," is anticipated to take approximately 15,000 cy of export with fills ranging from 2 to 8 feet, 2:1 maximum slope gradients are anticipated. Fill areas would be hydroseeded with a mix of native non-invasive species that would not require irrigation and are consistent with "passive" park uses and Park and Recreation land use goals for the Arizona Street Landfill.

### Other Project Components

#### *Pedestrian Circulation*

Pedestrians would still be able to cross the Cabrillo Bridge and enter the Park through the California Building archway as they do in the existing condition. As proposed, the newly pedestrianized El Prado would provide improved access to the Plaza de Panama; from there, pedestrians could proceed south along the Mall to the Organ Pavilion and Palisades area. For those visitors being dropped off at the Alcazar parking lot, pedestrian access to El Prado would be either north through the Alcazar Garden or east via a newly constructed raised pedestrian walkway proposed as part of this project.

Pan America Promenade would be for pedestrian/tram-only circulation. A grade-separated pedestrian walkway, at the intersection of Pan American Road and the new Centennial Road, would be constructed from the new park atop the Organ Pavilion parking structure over the new Centennial Road to avoid pedestrian/vehicular conflicts at this intersection. Finally, the project would incorporate an extension to the Palm Canyon walkway, a raised wood pedestrian path that connects the Alcazar parking lot with the International Cottages.

#### *Bicycle Circulation*

Bicycle use would be permitted within the core of the Park; however, no dedicated bicycle routes would be provided pursuant to the circulation objectives and policies of the CMPP. Bicycle circulation would also be allowed along Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road similar to automobiles. Bicycle storage facilities would be located within the Organ Pavilion parking structure and on the roof-top park.

#### *Parking*

##### a. Proposed Parking Changes

The project would remove parking and valet drop-off from the Plaza de Panama. This would involve relocating the standard parking spaces to the new parking structure to be located at the existing Organ Pavilion surface parking lot. The ADA spaces would be relocated to the reconfigured Alcazar parking lot. The valet drop-off zone would also be relocated to the Alcazar parking lot. As proposed, the Alcazar parking lot would have 18 valet loading/unloading stalls and a valet station. Valet parking would also utilize a portion (up to 70 spaces) of the first (lowest) floor of the parking structure for stacked parking. Overall, the project would result in a net gain of 260 parking spaces within the Central Mesa. These changes are outlined below.

**PROJECT PARKING SPACE SUMMARY BY TYPE**

Parking Facility	Existing Configuration			Proposed Project Configuration			Net Change +(-)
	Std.	ADA	Total	Std.	ADA	Total	
Plaza de Panama <sup>1</sup>	33	21	54	0	0	0	(54)
Alcazar Parking Lot	131	5	136	0	32	32	(104)
Organ Pavilion Lot	357	10	367	0	0	0	(367)
Organ Pavilion Parking Structure	0	0	0	781	16	797 <sup>2</sup>	797
Presidents Way	22	0	22	10	0	10	(12)
<b>Total Project</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>260</b>

<sup>1</sup> "Existing Configuration" stall counts do not include six "loading" stalls, one "taxi" stall, or six "motorcycle" stalls.

<sup>2</sup> The proposed parking structure would be able to accommodate up to 25 motorcycle spaces and racks for up to 15 bicycles in addition to the 797 spaces for automobiles.

**b. Paid Parking**

Paid parking would be implemented for the new parking structure to offset the costs associated with the construction of the underground parking facility. Parking revenue would also be used to support the expanded tram system and the management, operating, and maintenance expenses of the parking garage.

It is anticipated that the parking garage would be managed by a private operator, as would the new tram service.

Paid parking would be handled through central "pay-on-foot" machines. The pay-on-foot system would provide flexibility for payment and enforcement efforts. There would be no need for entrance or exit gates and parkers would locate any available parking stall. Once they park their vehicle, the visitor would pay the parking fee at one of the twelve pay-on-foot machines. Vehicles would exit the parking structure without having to stop at a cashier booth or exit gate. The parking fee would be a "flat rate" fee of \$5 for up to 5 hours. This rate structure was chosen for the following reasons:

- The average stay for Balboa Park visitors is 3.1 hours (Land Use, Circulation & Parking Plan [Jones & Jones 2004]).
- The proposed five-hour period allows the typical Park guest to complete their visit within the designated five-hour period.



- The proposed rate structure was designed to provide the maximum amount of visitor parking availability by discouraging general employee parking demand that averages 8+ hours per parked vehicle, which displaces two+ Park visitors.
- Parking violation enforcement efforts are much more efficient with a flat rate structure versus an hourly rate structure. This reduces parking structure operating expenses.

A violation notice or fine could be incurred if a vehicle remains in the parking structure beyond the initial five-hour period. Extending the stay would require an additional fee of \$5 for an additional five hours.

c. Staff and Employee Parking

Currently, staff and employees utilize over 550 of the most centrally located parking spaces. Employees would no longer have access to spaces in the Plaza de Panama or Alcazar parking lots, with the exception of employees with handicapped placards. Employees would be able to use the paid parking in the new Organ Pavilion structure or the unpaid spaces in parking lots such as the Pan American lot, Federal Building lot, or the Inspiration Point lot. Because of the costs associated with the parking structure, it is expected that many employees would avoid the new structure and instead park in the more remote lots.

*Emergency and Service Vehicle Access*

The Plaza de California and El Prado design would allow full-sized fire engines and any other emergency or service vehicles to access the interior of the West Prado area in the event of an emergency. Retractable bollards would be in place west of the California Building's archway to allow emergency and service vehicles to access El Prado; but all other vehicular traffic would be routed south and east via the proposed Centennial Road.

Landscaping Plan

*Plaza de Panama*

The landscape plan for the Plaza de Panama calls for a double row of shade trees along the outer edges of the Plaza. Trees that currently screen adjacent historic buildings would be removed. The new trees would be located further away from the historic façades to shade the edges of the Plaza. The foundation plantings adjacent to the Houses of Charm and Hospitality would be thinned to eliminate historically inappropriate species and supplemented to include low ornamental plantings and bougainvillea in order to provide better views of the architecture. The existing asphalt surface would be replaced with specialty paving with a monolithic appearance, to provide a smooth, unbroken backdrop for Plaza activities. Historically accurate reproduction light fixtures, and movable tables and chairs would be added.

Lawn panels would be implemented around the perimeter of the Plaza in order to match the historic design, and the small plaza in front of the Timken Museum would be incorporated to make it part of the overall plaza composition. The Museum of Art steps, located along the northern edge of the Plaza, would be re-created using the 1926 layout. The central fountain, which would remain, would be flanked to the north and south by two shallow reflecting pools.

### *El Prado*

The proposed landscaping design would recall the formal 1915–16 appearance. New trees and landscaping would be installed in their historic locations and the existing asphalt surface would be replaced with specialty paving with a monolithic appearance. The original roadway width would be restored and reinforced with a formal organization of ornamental trees and historic lighting. Foundation plantings along the arcades would be thinned to remove historically inappropriate species and be supplemented to include low ornamental plantings and Bougainvillea. Ornamental “El Prado Trees” would be evenly spaced along both sides of El Prado, interspersed with pedestrian benches and formal lighting fixtures (historic replicas reproduced in a more durable material) located in their approximate historic locations.

### *Plaza de California*

The proposed design for the Plaza de California would reuse the historically accurate tree planters recently added by the City in their historic locations. The existing non-historic interlocking pavers would be replaced with specialty paving with a monolithic appearance in order to provide a smooth, unbroken backdrop for Plaza activities.

### *Centennial Bridge*

Upon completion of the bridge, the disturbed areas would be revegetated with natural and native vegetation consistent with the Balboa Park Master Plan and Park and Recreation Department forest management policies. Where possible, existing Eucalyptus trees would be preserved in place and additional plantings would be added along the entire length of the Bridge.

### *Centennial Road*

The portion of the Centennial Road from the eastern side of the Alcazar parking lot to the new Organ Pavilion parking structure would receive the “Palm Canyon” landscaping treatment where revegetation is required. During construction of the Centennial Road and the Palm Canyon Walkway extension, care would be taken to minimize impacts to the existing trees and vegetation. The “City Christmas Tree” near Palm Canyon would be relocated or replaced.

### *Alcazar Parking Lot*

Landscaping includes new tree plantings along the western, eastern, and southern periphery of the Alcazar parking lot. Where possible, existing trees would be relocated or replanted subsequent to the completion of grading activities at the Alcazar parking lot. The tree types and understory species would be consistent with either the “Cabrillo Canyon” and/or the “Palm Canyon” plant palette. The parking lot would include rows of shade trees set within landscape islands exceeding the City requirement that a shade tree would be within 30 feet of each parking stall. The outer edges of the parking and portions of the interior would include specialty pedestrian paving, but of a different type than in the historic core areas (e.g., Plaza de Panama, El Prado) in order to provide differentiation. A sidewalk (with paving complementary to the Plazas and El Prado) would encompass the perimeter of the lot to provide views of the adjacent canyons, accommodate valet users movement, and access into the archery range.

### *The Mall*

The landscaping plan for the Mall would include widening the central landscaped median to more closely resemble its original 1915 design (fire lane width requirements make exact replication infeasible). Consistent with the plan for El Prado, the landscaping plan also includes specialty paving and a formal organization of trees, pedestrian benches, and historic replica lighting fixtures located in their 1915 locations. The east and west edges would be defined by concrete mow bands, beyond the mow bands the grade and vegetation would reflect the existing landscape themes of Palm Canyon to the west and the Japanese Friendship Garden to the east.

### *Roof-top Park/Pan American Promenade/Arizona Landfill*

The landscaping would provide a continuous pedestrian/tram promenade, the Pan American Promenade, along the western edge that would unify the International Cottages, the Organ Pavilion, and the new roof-top park and gardens. The promenade would be accentuated by a colonnade of shade trees, and specialty paving would unify the new roof-top park and gardens with the Organ Pavilion, the Mall, Plaza de Panama, and El Prado.

The landscape design shows the northern area as the re-created "California Garden" and a central courtyard containing the stairwell and elevator core structures with a large open air pavilion around it. This central courtyard would also contain fixed tables and chairs and small planted areas. The stairwell/elevator core would include two glass elevators clad in water-cut steel panels that utilize a traditional grille pattern, creating a backlit Moorish lantern effect. The trellis structures along Pan American Promenade, as well as the visitor center, would include photovoltaic solar panels on the roofs (concealed behind parapets in the case of the visitor center). The southern half of the roof-top park would consist of a large open lawn intended to be a flexible and adaptable open space area suitable for many uses, edged by small informal gardens and ornamental trees to the east. A nine-foot-wide walkway and decorative railing would form the eastern edge of the roof-top park. A "green living wall" system is proposed along this entire east façade. The design would utilize a separate pre-manufactured steel mesh or grate product to provide a trellis-like structure that would accommodate the growth of vines and other plant materials along vertical surfaces. The trellis system would be attached to the exterior façade of the parking structure and over time the vegetation would fill in the entire trellis system, resulting in a living "green" wall. The area between the southeastern edge of the parking structure and the Centennial Road would be landscaped with "native garden" plantings. This area would also contain evergreen trees to shield views of the parking structure's open eastern face. The landscaping east of the Centennial Road would be "Australian Canyon Landscape" plantings.

As described above, the project would export soil excavated from the construction of the parking structure to the Arizona Street Landfill on the East Mesa. Upon completion of the hauling and grading activities, hydroseeding would be required in order to re-vegetate the site for erosion control. Pursuant to the East Mesa Precise Plan (EMPP), the Arizona Street Landfill is intended ultimately to be "reclaimed" as passive use parkland. In accordance with this goal, revegetation of the site would include low-growing, non-invasive, non-irrigated species that would be compatible with passive recreational uses such as kite flying, picnicking, and pick-up ball games. Grading and revegetation of the site, through hydroseeding, would be done in a manner that would not preclude further restoration of the site in the future according to EMPP goals.

### *Tree Removal and Relocation*

Balboa Park contains numerous trees that are important because of their size, location, or history (e.g., person who donated or planted them). Accordingly, a tree survey was conducted in and around the project area and dictated the design of the project.

Trees within the project footprint which cannot feasibly be relocated or were found to be infested or diseased will be removed. Of the 753 trees surveyed within or adjacent to the project area; 372 would remain, approximately 216 trees would be relocated within the Park, and approximately 165 trees would be removed. The project design includes the planting of over 400 new trees.

### ANALYSIS

The following provides an analysis of the project objectives and components as compared to the City of San Diego General Plan, available historical documents, existing policy documents (BPMP and CMPP) and existing Park conditions. This analysis is not intended to supersede the EIR prepared for this Project, nor is it intended to be as comprehensive as the EIR. The EIR should be consulted in association with this report for more detailed analysis of the environmental impacts of the Project.

#### General Plan

The project proposes the elimination of automobile traffic and parking from the Plaza de Panama and adjacent promenades; construction of a new two-way bypass bridge and road (Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road); the re-routing of traffic to the bypass road and bridge from the Plaza de California, El Prado, the Plaza de Panama, the Mall and Pan American Road East; redesign of the Alcazar parking lot for additional accessible parking, drop-off, loading, and valet; and construction of a new multi-level underground parking structure with roof-top park and garden within the Central Mesa Subarea of Balboa Park. The land use designation is Park, Open Space, and Recreation in the General Plan.

The proposed project is intended to restore pedestrian and park uses to the core of the Central Mesa area of Balboa Park and alleviate pedestrian/vehicular conflicts. The General Plan provides a citywide framework to guide the creation of a more walkable, accessible, and pedestrian-friendly city; to protect and enhance city parks; and to preserve, protect, and enrich natural, cultural and historic resources. The Balboa Park Master Plan and Central Mesa Precise Plan, which provide more detailed goals and policies for these areas than is possible at the General Plan level, call for creating a more pedestrian-oriented environment within the park, reducing automobile and pedestrian conflicts, improving public access, increasing free and open parkland, restoring landscape areas and restoring the Prado and Palisades to centers for cultural activities and special events. The proposed development would implement these goals and policies by removing parking and through traffic within the Prado and restoring the area to pedestrian use, which would open up opportunities for cultural activities, special events and general public enjoyment of the park without interfacing with vehicles. Asphalt paving would be removed from the Plaza de California, El Prado, Plaza de Panama, the Mall and Pan American Road East, and replaced by enhanced paving that compliments the surrounding landscape and

architecture. Other proposed features include movable chairs and tables, shade trees, benches, replica antique light standards and two shallow reflecting pools in the Plaza de Panama that would help activate these areas and enhance the visitor experience.

Additionally, the improved circulation system would put an emphasis on safe pedestrian travel through the park that would also be accessible to people with all abilities. Vehicles entering the park from the west would be re-routed to a bypass road that would lead visitors through the Alcazar parking lot for possible drop off, valet service or disabled parking, or on to the Organ Pavilion parking structure or other existing parking facilities (Palisades lot, Inspiration Point lot, e.g.), where they could park and take the tram or walk to nearby cultural and recreational uses within the Central Mesa. A roof-top park, at grade with the Organ Pavilion and International Cottages, would incorporate formal gardens similar to what was present in 1935, and would provide additional free and open parkland for visitors. Removing vehicles from the Mall and Pan American Road East, combined with a grade separated crossing of Centennial Road, would provide a pedestrian and tram link between the Prado and Palisades areas, free of vehicle conflicts.

Although the proposed Centennial Bridge component would not implement some goals of the General Plan Urban Design, Recreation and Historic Preservations elements related to maintaining the visual and historic context of the surrounding area, the overall development would further the implementation of other goals and policies of General Plan. The project's proposal to remove cars from the Plaza de California, El Prado, Plaza de Panama, the Mall, and Pan American Road East to create a more pedestrian oriented environment would implement goals in the Mobility Element of the General Plan for creating a safe and comfortable environment, and a complete, functional, and an interconnected pedestrian network that is accessible to pedestrians of all abilities. The development would also implement the policies in the Urban Design Element for designing and retrofitting streets to improve walkability, bicycling, and transit integration; to strengthen connectivity; to provide distinctive public open spaces, greens and plazas; and to enhance community identity. Despite the impacts introduced by the Centennial Bridge component, the overall project would not adversely impact the goals and recommendations in the General Plan.

The proposed project would also implement the Conservation Element goal for the protection and expansion of a sustainable urban forest by transplanting or replacing trees that would be impacted by construction and adding a total of over 400 new trees, consisting of a variety of palm, deciduous, and evergreen trees.

Additionally, the proposed project would implement Conservation Element policies for implementing sustainable landscape design and reducing the urban heat island, and meet the Urban Design Element goal of creating a built environment that respects the City's natural environment and climate. This would be achieved through the project's selection of plant species consistent with the palettes and themes of adjacent landscapes which would also include a variety of native, non-native and drought tolerant plant species. Additionally, irrigation systems would be included in the project that would incorporate water saving technology, lawn areas within the roof-top park would be minimized, and deciduous and evergreen trees would be planted within the restored open park areas to reduce the heat island effects.

The project's proposal for the removal of cars from the Plaza de California, El Prado, the Plaza de Panama, the Mall, and Pan American Road East would restore the historic condition of these areas and meet the Historic Preservation Element goal of preserving the City's important historical resources by returning these areas to pedestrian only use consistent with the 1915 and 1935 Expositions. Further, reactivating these areas for pedestrian use is consistent with specific recommendations of the Central Mesa Precise Plan (as amended by the proposed Amendment thereto) and would reclaim approximately 6.3 acres of free and open parkland that would enhance the cultural and recreational uses within the core of the park while preserving the historic character of the Central Mesa.

The proposed project would meet the goal in the Recreation Element for having park and recreation facilities that are sited to optimize access by foot, bicycle, public transit, automobile, and alternative modes of travel by proposing to restore pedestrian uses in locations presently dominated by vehicular traffic with the Central Mesa of Balboa Park and the implementation of an expanded tram system through the Central Mesa that would connect parking facilities and institutions, and enhance overall access and circulation.

The General Plan (p. SF-28) states that projects and actions "are to be deemed consistent with the General Plan if, considering all its aspects, it will further the goals and policies of the plan and not obstruct their attainment." Despite the issues related to the Centennial Bridge component, the proposed development would be consistent with the overall goals and policies of the General Plan, Balboa Park Master Plan and Central Mesa Precise Plan as the development would restore pedestrian and park uses to the core of the Central Mesa area of Balboa Park and alleviate pedestrian/vehicular conflicts. Therefore, the proposed development would not adversely affect the applicable land use plans.

### Project Objectives

The Project Objectives previously listed can best be compared to the goals identified in the BPMP and reiterated in the CMPP. The goals are as follows:

1. Create within the Park a more pedestrian oriented environment. Reduce automobile and pedestrian conflicts. Minimize through traffic.
2. Improve public access to the Park through an improved integrated circulation system, convenient drop-off points, better parking management, improved signage and increased security. The improved circulation system shall de-emphasize the automobile while increasing public access to the Park and Park facilities.
3. Preserve, enhance and increase free and open parkland and establish a program of ongoing landscape design, maintenance and replacement.
4. Restore or improve existing building and landscaped areas within the Park.
5. Preserve and enhance the mix of cultural, and active and passive recreational uses within Balboa Park that serve national, regional, community and neighborhood populations.
6. Preserve Balboa Park as an affordable park experience for all citizens of San Diego.

The project objective to remove vehicles from the Plaza de Panama, El Prado, Plaza de California, the Mall and Pan American Road East is generally consistent with BPMP goal number 1 of creating a more pedestrian environment and reducing automobile and pedestrian

conflicts. However, the BPMP does not address maintaining proximate vehicular access to the institutions.

The project objective to restore pedestrian and park uses to the Plaza de Panama, El Prado, Plaza de Panama, the Mall and Pan American Road East appears to be consistent with BPMP goals number 1 and number 5. Removal of vehicles will create a more pedestrian friendly park environment and will enhance recreational uses in these areas.

The project objective to improve access to the Central Mesa through the provision of additional parking, while maintaining convenient drop-off, disabled access, valet parking, and a new tram system with the potential for future expansion appears to be partially consistent with CMPP goal number 2. The project objective appears to place emphasis on vehicular access while the CMPP goal is to "de-emphasize the automobile."

The project objective to improve the pedestrian link between the El Prado complex and Palisades complex appears to be consistent with BPMP goals number 1 and number 5. This project objective is complimentary to the first project objective of removing vehicles from the Plaza de Panama, El Prado, Plaza de California, the Mall and Pan American Road East. Removal of vehicles will enhance the recreational uses while providing a better pedestrian link between these two cultural cores.

The project objective of implementing a funding plan for the proposed project does not directly compare to the goals of the BPMP. This project objective identifies the concept of paid parking for the parking structure, which is most appropriately related to BPMP goal number 6 of preserving Balboa Park as an affordable park experience for all citizens of San Diego. While the project proposes paid parking for the parking structure, the remaining parking in Balboa Park would remain free of charge. However, the amount of free parking spaces would be reduced with the removal of the Organ Pavilion surface parking lot.

### Project Components

#### *Plaza de Panama*

The Plaza de Panama is the core element of the proposed Project. During the 1915-16 Exposition the Plaza de Panama was a large open space suitable for large gatherings. For the 1935-36 Exposition a large arch and reflecting pools were added, making the space more intimate. The Plaza was surrounded by formal trees and decorative light standards, and the paving surface was likely decomposed granite atop asphalt. Since the expositions the Plaza has become an asphalt paved parking lot. A fountain was added to the center, which is not historic but is a part of the CMPP.

The CMPP calls for rows of Palm trees in tree grates surrounding the Plaza, and two colors of concrete paving; one color in the center and another color band around the perimeter. This treatment is somewhat more decorative than the historic paving. The CMPP also provides for tram circulation and a tram stop in the southwest corner of the Plaza, with bollards defining vehicular circulation. Other elements include light standards, benches, tables and chairs, an information kiosk and a seat wall around the statue of El Cid.

The proposed Project intends to return the Plaza more closely to its historic configuration. The surface would be concrete pavers with a simple pattern to read as a monolithic field similar to the original decomposed granite surfacing. The Plaza would be lined with formal canopy trees instead of Palm trees. The North fountain at the center of the Plaza would remain, but would be complemented with two reflecting pools on either side, reminiscent of the reflecting pools installed for the 1935-36 Exposition. Light standards would remain, but would use replicas of the original lights instead of those identified in the CMPP Appendix. Tram circulation would remain in the Plaza but private vehicle circulation would be eliminated; circulation would not be defined by bollards. There would be no seat wall around the El Cid statue.

The Plaza de Panama component of the proposed Project appears to be consistent with the goals of the BPMP and CMPP. Pedestrian conflicts in the Plaza de Panama would be eliminated, and the entire space would be open to pedestrian uses. The addition of shade trees, tables and chairs and water features would ensure the Plaza is well used.

#### *El Prado and Plaza de California*

El Prado and the Plaza de California remain in a similar configuration as they were for the 1915-16 Exposition and 1935-36 Exposition. The primary differences are in paving surface, landscaping and street lights. Both had the same paving treatment as the Plaza de Panama; asphalt with a decomposed granite surfacing. The Plaza de California has since been re-paved with red interlocking pavers, and El Prado has been re-paved with plain asphalt. Original street trees along El Prado have been removed. Original lights have been replaced with a combination of non-historic concrete light standards and metal light standards.

The CMPP calls for street trees along El Prado similar to original plantings. However, the pattern of trees is interrupted by vehicular drop-offs (non-historic additions) located on either side of El Prado between the Plaza de California and Plaza de Panama. The asphalt road paving is to be replaced with concrete paving similar to the paving along the East Prado area. The CMPP proposed few changes to the Plaza de California; only the additions of benches for a tram stop and trees in planters at the perimeter of the Plaza.

The proposed Project restores street trees and light standards along El Prado to their original configuration, and replaces the asphalt paving with pavers to match the Plaza de Panama. The drop-offs on either side of El Prado are eliminated and benches are added. For the Plaza de California, the red interlocking pavers are replaced with pavers to match El Prado and the Plaza de Panama, and the paving treatment is extended to the west toward the Cabrillo Bridge. Bollards are added west of the Plaza de California for traffic control.

The El Prado and Plaza de California component of the proposed Project appears to be consistent with the goals of the BPMP and CMPP. Pedestrian conflicts along El Prado and in the Plaza de California would be eliminated, and both spaces would be open to pedestrian uses.

#### *Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road*

The Centennial Bridge is a new addition to the Park; there is no historic precedent for its inclusion and no element of the CMPP for comparison. The Centennial Bridge would span a portion of the Cabrillo Canyon, connecting the eastern abutment of the Cabrillo Bridge/El Prado



to the Alcazar parking lot. Centennial Road provides a connection between the Alcazar parking lot, the Organ Pavilion parking structure and Presidents Way.

The northwestern portion of Centennial Road partially follows the alignment of the existing exit road from the Alcazar lot. A new section of road roughly paralleling Pan American Road would be constructed; the Alcazar lot exit would no longer connect to Pan American Road/the Mall. The southeastern portion of Centennial Road (between the Pan American Road West and Presidents Way) approximately follows the alignment shown in the CMPP. The Centennial Bridge, in conjunction with Centennial Road, provides the means to separate pedestrian and vehicular circulation throughout the central core of the Park while maintaining convenient access and circulation.

The new section of Centennial Road will encroach into Palm Canyon along the eastern edge, and require re-alignment of a portion of the wooden Palm Canyon walkway. The walkway will be re-aligned and extended south to the International Cottages area, maintaining a pedestrian link between the Alcazar lot and the cottages. There will be minor impact to Palm Canyon; please see the EIR for more detail regarding impacts.

#### Alcazar Parking Lot

The Alcazar parking lot was open park land during the Expositions. The parking lot was constructed in 1956, including the entrance and exit drives connecting it to Pan American Road. Modifications to the parking lot were done in 1979, and the restroom facilities were added around the same time.

The CMPP does not provide detailed recommendations for the Alcazar parking lot. However, the lot is shown graphically for specific improvements in the West Prado sub-area. The CMPP also states the parking lot should be used to accommodate a majority of accessible parking spaces for the Prado area (page 199).

In the proposed Project, the Alcazar lot would be reconstructed to accommodate accessible parking, valet service, drop-off and access via Centennial Road. However, the overall footprint does not significantly change. Per the CMPP, this lot would accommodate a majority of the accessible parking for the Prado area. Drop-off zones eliminated from El Prado would be relocated to the Alcazar lot. The CMPP does not specifically address valet parking for the Alcazar lot but does recommend valet parking in general as a means of increasing available parking. Other functions currently staged in the Alcazar lot would remain (restroom facilities, maintenance facilities, trash), and access to adjacent areas (Palm Canyon, Cabrillo Canyon, Alcazar Garden) would be maintained or improved.

While the proposed Alcazar lot configuration is substantially consistent with the CMPP, a recommendation in the BPMP states; *"When off-site parking, transit, tram and shuttle systems provide adequate access to the Prado and palisades areas, consider closing Cabrillo bridge to automobiles and consider recovering the parking facilities at Alcazar garden and Inspiration Point as productive parkland, provided, however, that sufficient close-in parking is retained to accommodate the disabled (page 8)."* While feasible, it seems unlikely the Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road would be closed, allowing reclamation of the Alcazar lot as parkland.

## The Mall and Pan American Promenade

### *The Mall*

The Mall is a short section of Pan American Road connecting the Plaza de Panama to the Organ Pavilion. During the expositions the Mall was lined with buildings; the San Joaquin Valley Building on the east and the Kern & Tulare Counties Building on the west. The statue of El Cid, which sits on the south edge of the Plaza de Panama, was installed in 1930. With the exception of the two buildings, which were demolished due to deteriorated condition, the historic configuration of the Mall is similar to what is present today; roadways on either side with a landscaped median.

The CMPP proposes few physical changes to the Mall. Site furniture is added, a walkway is added to the median, and the asphalt is replaced with enhanced concrete paving. Bollards are added to the west side of the Mall to define vehicular circulation, and traffic is confined to the western lane, freeing the eastern lane for pedestrian use only.

The proposed Project would return the Mall to approximately its historic configuration. The lanes on either side of the median would be narrowed, and benches and light standards would be added at the edges. The southern end of the median would be truncated and squared more approximately to its original shape. Asphalt paving would be replaced with pavers to match the Plaza de Panama and El Prado. Lawn panels would be retained at the edges, and shrubs would be planted behind. A tram stop would be added at the north end, immediately south of El Cid.

### *Pan American Promenade*

Pan American Promenade is the section of Pan American Road and Pan American Road East between Presidents Way and the Organ Pavilion. This section of road served as the primary connection between the Prado complex and Palisades complex. It was likely originally paved in asphalt with a decomposed granite surfacing.

The CMPP indicates an alignment for Pan American Promenade that is substantially different from what exists today. While the alignment remains essentially the same on its northern portion, the Promenade bridges over a roadway leading to a parking structure. The alignment of the southern section of the Promenade curves westward and centers on the Palisades plaza; this alignment appears to differ from the historic alignment.

The proposed Project would keep Pan American Promenade in its current alignment, following Pan American Road and Pan American Road East between the Organ Pavilion and Presidents Way. The Promenade would bridge over Centennial Road as indicated in the CMPP; however, the bridge spanning Centennial Road would be substantially wider and cover more of the roadway, providing a better connection to the Organ Pavilion. This change would be an improvement over the CMPP in that there would be less of a physical separation, both physically and visually, between the roof-top park and the Organ Pavilion. Landscaping along Pan American Promenade would be more formal than indicated in the CMPP, providing a uniform double row of canopy shade trees lining the promenade.

## Organ Pavilion Parking Structure, Roof-top Park, Tram, and Arizona Street Landfill

### *Organ Pavilion Parking Structure*

The BPMP and CMPP do not provide specific designs or details for the Organ Pavilion parking structure. It states to provide a 1,000-1,500 space parking structure with a plaza on top that is at the same elevation as the Organ Pavilion plaza.

The proposed parking structure provides a roof-top plaza at approximately the same elevation as the Organ Pavilion plaza. The structure provides approximately 797 parking spaces versus the 1,000-1,500 called for in the CMPP. However, the parking structure has been designed to take advantage of natural ventilation and light, reducing construction, maintenance and operating costs as compared to a completely underground parking structure that would require mechanical ventilation and additional lighting. The parking structure has been designed to meet existing topography to the largest extent possible. Negative views of the structure from the interior of the Park have been minimized or eliminated. The parking structure will blend in as viewed from the south and west, and will be most visible from the east entering on Presidents Way.

### *Roof-top Park*

The roof-top park and parking structure are located southwest of the Organ Pavilion. During the 1915 Exposition this area was likely undeveloped park land. During the 1935 Exposition the site was home to the Water and Transportation Building and the California Gardens. The area was converted to surface parking in the 1950s, which included substantial grading to create the relatively level parking lot.

The CMPP identifies the Organ Pavilion Lot being removed and replaced with an underground parking structure and roof-top park. The space is left blank and states a competition should be held for the design of the parking structure and roof-top park. The CMPP identifies perimeter viewing areas, an open staging area for events, special event staging/storage and lighting as some of the elements to be included.

The proposed roof-top park contains a perimeter walkway and view points to take advantage of views to the Japanese Friendship Garden and Australian Canyon/Gold Gulch. A large open turf area is provided for recreation, and is suitable for staging special events. A picnic pavilion is provided north of the open turf area, and will have shade structures and picnic tables/benches. A formal garden reminiscent of the California Gardens is located at the north end of the park and provides a transition to the pathways leading to the Spreckels Organ Pavilion. The roof-top park will also contain restroom facilities and a visitor center as well as park maintenance facilities.

### *Tram*

The proposed tram associated with the Project will be a supplement to the existing park tram service contracted by the Park and Recreation Department. The tram will utilize low entry vehicles that can be expanded as necessary to meet demand. The Park and Recreation department is participating in the selection of the tram models to ensure the tram service can be expanded. The tram service will run between the north end of the Palisades area to the Plaza de Panama.

### *Arizona Street Landfill*

The excavation required for the parking structure will result in a significant amount of export soil. The Project proposes to place the soil at the Arizona Street Landfill as additional capping material. The Arizona Street Landfill is an inactive landfill site and maintained by the City's Environmental Services Department with oversight by the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA).

The landfill experiences differential settling and generates methane gas, which limits the development and use of the site. The use of irrigation on the landfill is highly discouraged by Environmental Services and the LEA. Current uses include an archery range, a portion of the City College baseball field, the Park and Recreation maintenance yard, unpaved parking and undeveloped areas used for hiking and biking. The old casting ponds, concrete pathways and a parking lot that sat on the landfill are gone, victims of excessive settlement.

The East Mesa Precise Plan (EMPP) identifies the site for minimal development, including open un-irrigated meadow grassland, trails, picnicking, demonstration gardens and minimal parking. The fill for the site will impact three areas; the former casting pond area which is currently undeveloped, the archery range and a portion of the main landfill site south of the park and Recreation maintenance yard.

- The former casting pond area has experienced settlement and would be able to receive additional capping soil. Surrounding grades should gently blend the fill material into the surrounding topography. A non-irrigated hydroseed mix will be used to re-vegetate and stabilize the site.
- The archery range would benefit from additional fill material. The site currently slopes too steeply to the southeast and does not meet accessibility standards. The safety berm designed to stop arrows has deteriorated and would benefit from re-construction. Additional fill material would bring the site up to the approximate level of the adjacent parking lot and provide a more appropriate slope from east to west, improving archery conditions. Side slopes and the safety berm will be re-vegetated with a non-irrigated hydroseed mix and the archery field will be treated with a permeable surfacing material such as decomposed granite or mulch.
- The main fill site south of the Park and Recreation maintenance yard will have fill up to 11 feet high. This amount of fill will be visible from the Central Mesa and should be treated accordingly. Grades should be designed to emulate the topography of the Florida Canyon, and all disturbed areas will be re-vegetated with a non-irrigated hydroseed mix.

### *Other Project Components*

#### *Pedestrian Circulation*

Pedestrian circulation throughout the West Prado and Palisades areas of the Park would be significantly enhanced. With the removal of vehicles (with the exception of the tram and occasional service vehicles), pedestrians will be able to roam more freely and safely along El Prado, the Mall and Pan American Promenade. The Plaza de California and Plaza de Panama will be free of traffic as well, allowing those spaces to be used for other activities.

New pedestrian circulation routes will be added as well. The pedestrian walkway along the Centennial Bridge will give pedestrians another way of entering the core of the Park and provide a unique vantage point of the southeast side of the California Building and of Cabrillo Canyon. The extension of the Palm Canyon boardwalk will allow pedestrians to walk among the trees without having to make the trek down the stairs leading to the canyon floor. This component will also improve the accessibility of Palm Canyon. The roof-top park also provides additional pedestrian connections in the Palisades area. Pedestrians coming in from Park Boulevard will be able to walk through the new roof-top park instead of continuing on Presidents Way and Pan American Road East to get to the Organ Pavilion and El Prado.

### *Bicycle Circulation*

Similarly to pedestrian circulation, bicycle circulation will also be enhanced. With the removal of vehicles on El Prado, the Mall and Pan American Road East, bicycles will be able to navigate the core of the park more safely. Bicycles will also have the option of using the shared lanes of Centennial Road, allowing more expedient passage through the core if desired.

### *Parking*

Parking changes proposed by this Project largely reflect the intent of the CMPP. Parking from the Plaza de Panama is eliminated, and the Alcazar Lot is used primarily for accessible parking in the El Prado area. The Organ Pavilion surface parking lot is removed, and replaced with a new subterranean parking structure.

The proposed parking structure will accommodate approximately 797 vehicles, which is approximately 200 spaces less than the minimum called for in the CMPP; the CMPP calls for a 1,000-1,500 car parking structure. The Organ Pavilion parking structure is linked with the reclamation of the Organ Pavilion parking lot and Palisades parking lot in the CMPP. While the proposed parking structure increases the current parking levels by approximately 260 spaces, it does not offset the loss of approximately 280 parking spaces that would be lost should the Palisades area be reclaimed as parkland. While the difference is negligible, the result would be no net gain over current parking conditions; however, the amount of reclaimed parkland would be over five acres.

### *Paid Parking*

The proposed Project introduces paid parking to pay the bonds needed for construction of the parking structure, and for maintenance and operations of the parking structure and supplemental tram service. While some may be willing to pay for parking, others will choose to park for free in one of the other nearby lots. These lots include the Palisades lot, the Federal lot and Inspiration Point lot. Employee parking management after construction may be required to assure free, close-in parking is available for park visitors.

The proposed Project will result in a net increase of 260 parking spaces. However, the net amount of free and close-in parking will be reduced by 537 spaces. Overall, approximately 80 percent of parking spaces on the Balboa Park Central Mesa will remain free. When the Zoo lot is included, 88 percent of parking spaces remain free.

### *Staff and Employee Parking*

As noted above, the introduction of paid parking in the Organ Pavilion parking structure will likely cause people to seek nearby free parking. This may be especially true for employees that use the parking lots on a daily basis. As a result, we anticipate that visitors will be the most likely users of the new parking structure, and thus the number of close-in parking spaces for visitors will be increased, although not free. Employees will likely seek free parking that is closest to their work place, as they currently do. Employee parking management after construction may be required to assure free, close-in parking is available for park visitors.

### *Emergency and Service Vehicle Access*

Emergency and service vehicle access should not be impacted by the proposed Project. Retractable bollards at El Prado and at Pan American Road East will control vehicle access while allowing authorized vehicles to enter. Special event vehicle access would need to be monitored and controlled by Park and Recreation staff.

### *Landscaping Plan*

The landscaping plans for the Project are generally consistent with the CMPP. The planting themes of trees, shrubs and groundcovers are consistent with adjacent established plantings. The most notable deviation from the CMPP is the substitution of canopy shade trees in the Plaza de Panama in lieu of Queen Palms, with the canopy shade trees being more historically accurate. Tree planting along the Pan American Promenade also includes formal plantings of canopy shade trees whereas the CMPP indicated more informal plantings.

Tree removal within the Project area will be required. While many trees can and will be relocated, other trees cannot be retained or relocated. The project team has consulted with Kathy Puplava, former Balboa Park Horticulturalist, to identify all species within the project area and make recommendations as to their disposition. For additional information please see the EIR.

### Sustainability

The Project will incorporate several sustainability features, including stormwater treatment, water conservation, solar power, alternative fuel vehicles and recycling of demolition/construction materials.

The project includes storm water features including bio-filtration areas and mechanical means of filtration.

The Project will minimize water use through the use of native and naturalized plant species. Re-vegetated slopes along Cabrillo Canyon and along the Gold Gulch canyon will utilize drought resistant plant materials. A water-wise garden will also be incorporated into the roof-top park. The irrigation system for all areas will be connected to Balboa Park's central control irrigation system, which monitors and automatically adjusts watering schedules based on input from the park's own weather station.

The trellis structures on the roof-top park will have photovoltaic panels on top to collect energy for use in the parking structure. The clean energy will be used to power the parking structures elevators and lighting.

The new trams that move park visitors between the Palisades area and the Plaza de Panama will be powered by propane, a clean alternative fuel. The trams will be housed in the park to minimize unnecessary travel and energy waste.

A waste management plan has been prepared for the project to meet City guidelines. The plan includes source separation for demolition and construction materials, recycling and contractor education. The project will divert 94% of construction and demolition debris away from the landfill for recycling.

The parking structure is designed to use natural ventilation and lighting. As a result, no mechanical ventilation will be required. Lighting will be incorporated for night time use of the structure. The use of natural ventilation and lighting will reduce energy consumption and maintenance requirements. As noted above, solar energy will be used to supplement the energy requirements of the parking structure.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

### Environmental Impact Report

Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Project No. 233958, has been prepared for the Project in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. A Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program has been prepared which will reduce, to below a level of significance, some potential impacts identified in the environmental review process. The applicant has also provided their proposed Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations for significant and unmitigable impacts.

As more fully described in the EIR, the proposed project would result in direct project-level significant unmitigable impacts to the following issue areas: Land Use (Consistency with the City's General/Community Plan), Historical Resources (Built Environment), Visual Effects (Neighborhood Character/Architecture), and Noise (Temporary Construction). Significant but mitigable impacts to Land Use (MSCP), Historical Resources (Archeological Resources), Transportation/Circulation and Parking, Biological Resources (Raptor/MSCP), and Paleontological Resources would result from implementation of the proposed project.

### Environmental Impact Report Alternatives

The EIR analyzed 13 alternatives for the project. Alternatives can be grouped into four categories: No Project alternatives, Pedestrianize Cabrillo Bridge alternatives, Open Cabrillo Bridge alternatives and Phased alternative. In addition to those alternatives analyzed in the EIR, eight alternatives were considered but rejected. The alternatives are as follows:

### *No Project Alternatives*

- No Project (No Development/Existing Conditions) Alternative (Alt 1)
- No Project/Central Mesa Precise Plan Alternative (Alt 2)

### *Pedestrianize Cabrillo Bridge Alternatives*

- No New Parking Structure Alternative (Alt 3A)
- Organ Pavilion Parking Structure Alternative (Alt 3B)
- West Mesa Parking Structure Alternative (Alt 3C)
- Inspiration Point Parking Structure Alternative (Alt 3D)

### *Open Cabrillo Bridge Alternatives*

- Gold Gulch Parking Structure Alternative (Alt 4Ai)
- No Paid Parking Alternative (Alt 4Aii)
- Tunnel Alternative (Alt 4Bi)
- Stop Light (One-Way) Alternative (Alt 4Bii)
- Modified Precise Plan without Parking Structure Alternative (Alt 4Biii)
- Half-Plaza Alternative (Alt 4Biv)

### *Phased Alternative*

- This alternative would phase the construction and allow for monitoring before moving to the next phase of construction. Phase 1 would include landscape and hardscape improvements for a majority of the Plaza de Panama and east side of the Mall. Phase 2 would include the Organ Pavilion parking structure and a portion of Centennial Road. Phase 3 would include closure of the Cabrillo Bridge to vehicular traffic, reclamation of the West Prado, the remainder of the Plaza de Panama and the west side of the Mall. Phase 4 would include construction of Centennial Bridge.

### *Alternatives Considered But Rejected*

- 2004 Jones and Jones Land Use, Circulation and Parking Study Alternative
- Increased Surface Parking on West Side Alternative
- Zoo Parking Alternative
- Managed Cabrillo Bridge Closure Alternative
- Quince Street Access Alternative
- Old Globe Way Access Alternative
- Green Entry/Periphery Parking Alternative
- Sixth Avenue Bridge Extension

Further discussion in greater detail is provided in the EIR.



### FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The entire Project is anticipated to cost approximately \$40 million. If implemented, the Plaza de Panama Committee, a recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, would fund a majority of the proposed Project. The parking structure portion of the project would be funded by a self-supporting revenue bond in the amount of \$14 million. A portion of the revenue generated from the parking structure would be applied toward payment of the bond.

The remaining portion of the revenue generated by the proposed parking structure would be applied toward maintenance and operation of the parking structure and a tram that would run between the parking structure and the Plaza de Panama.

The City's Park and Recreation Department would be responsible for maintaining other improvements proposed for the Project. A majority of these improvements would be improvements to existing park facilities such as enhanced paving, enhanced landscaping and new light fixtures. However there are new improvements that would add to the long-term maintenance costs of Balboa Park. These elements include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road
- Plaza de Panama water features
- Pedestrian bridge south of the House of Charm
- Extended Palm Canyon boardwalk
- Additional site furniture (benches, trash receptacles, light standards, etc.)
- Visitor Center and restroom at Organ Pavilion parking structure
- Organ Pavilion parking structure roof-top park (2.2 acres)

Annual costs are anticipated to be \$350,000 with a one-time equipment cost of \$27,000. These costs would include staff, supplies, additional irrigation water and electricity.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION:

The Balboa Park Master Plan was adopted by City Council on July 25, 1989 (Resolution No. R-274090). The Central Mesa Precise Plan was adopted by City Council on October 20, 1992 (Resolution R-280920).

### COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS:

On October 21, 2010 the City of San Diego Planning Commission voted unanimously to initiate amendments to the BPMP and CMPP to further evaluate the project proposal (Planning Commission Resolution 4640-PC).

Since plan amendment initiation, the Plaza de Panama Committee and its consultant team have attended numerous meetings with Park and Recreation and community planning advisory bodies. As the officially recognized planning group for Balboa Park, the Balboa Park Committee has conducted workshops at most of its meetings in the past 18 months. Some of these meetings include the following:

• Balboa Park Committee	18 Meetings
• Park and Recreation Board (P&R Board)	3 Meetings
• P&R Board's Design Review Committee	2 Meeting
• Historical Resources Board (HRB)	7 Meetings
• HRB's Design Assistance Subcommittee	1 Meeting
• North Park Planning Committee	4 Meetings
• Uptown Planners	5 Meetings
• Greater Golden Hill Planning Committee	3 Meetings
• Centre City Advisory Committee	3 Meetings
• Mayor's Committee on Disabilities	2 Meetings

In addition to meetings with recognized advisory bodies, the Plaza de Panama Committee and its consultant team have met with numerous Balboa Park stakeholders. There have been approximately 57 meetings with Balboa Park institutions and organizations such as House of Hospitality, House of Pacific Relations, Museum of Man, the Spreckels Organ Society and The Old Globe Theatre. There have been approximately 50 outreach meetings to other community groups, City Council members, and City committees.

On November 9, 2011 the Centre City Advisory Committee voted (12-7-3) to recommend approval of the Project as proposed by the Plaza de Panama Committee with conditions.

On February 16, 2012 the Uptown Planners voted (9-5-1) to recommend approval of the Project as proposed by the Plaza de Panama Committee without conditions.

On July 13, 2011 the Greater Golden Hill Planning Committee voted (10-3-0) to oppose the proposed "bypass bridge" proposed by the Project. On March 14, 2012 the Greater Golden Hill Planning Committee voted (8-5-2) to recommend denial of the Project with conditions.

On April 12, 2012 the Mayor's Committee on Disability voted (7-0-0) to recommend approval of the Project without conditions.

On April 17, 2012 the North Park Planning Committee voted (11-1-0) to recommend denial of the Project without conditions.

On May 3, 2012 the Balboa Park Committee voted (7-4-1) to recommend approval of the proposed amendments to the Balboa Park Master Plan and Central Mesa Precise Plan, and recommend approval of the Site Development Permit without conditions.

On May 9, 2012 the Design Review Committee of the Park and Recreation Board voted (5-4-1) to recommend approval of the proposed amendments to the Balboa Park Master Plan and Central Mesa Precise Plan, and recommend approval of the Site Development Permit without conditions.

On May 17, 2012 the Park and Recreation Board voted (5-4-1) to not recommend approval of the project.

On May 18, 2012 the Historic Resources Board voted (8-0-0) to not recommend approval of the Site Development Permit as proposed to the Planning Commission.

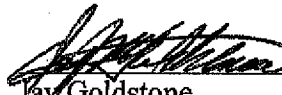
On June 7, 2012 the City Planning Commission voted (7-0-0) to recommend to City Council to Certify the EIR, Adopt the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program, Adoption of the Findings and Statement of Overriding Consideration, and Adoption of amendments to the Balboa Park Master Plan and Central Mesa Precise Plan.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS:

Balboa Park is one of the largest parks within the City's park system and is considered by many as the "crown jewel" of the system. Due to the park's central location, diverse recreational amenities, and historical significance it is visited by more than 12 million visitors each year and is considered a favorite local destination by city and county residents.

The projected impacts are described extensively throughout the report and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Stacey LoMedico  
Park and Recreation Director

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jay Goldstone  
Chief Operating Officer

Attachment: 1. Report to the Planning Commission

DOCKET SUPPORTING INFORMATION  
CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONTRACTING PROGRAM EVALUATION**

DATE:  
July 29, 2016

SUBJECT: Establishment of Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project as a CIP Project

**GENERAL CONTRACT INFORMATION**

Recommended Contractor: TBD  
Amount of this Action: N/A  
Funding Source: City of San Diego  
Goal: TBD

**SUBCONTRACTOR PARTICIPATION**

There is no subcontractor associated with this action; however, subsequent actions must adhere to funding agency requirements.

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMPLIANCE**

Equal Opportunity: Not Applicable

Contracts or agreements associated with this action are subject to the City's Equal Employment Opportunity Outreach Program (San Diego Ordinance No. 18173, Section 22.2701 through 22.2708) and Non-Discrimination in Contracting Ordinance (San Diego Municipal Code Sections 22.3501 through 22.3517).

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

This action authorizes the Mayor and/or his designee to add Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project to the FY 17 Capital Improvements Program; the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is authorized to transfer \$352,214.26 to Fund 200215 Unappropriated Reserve Balboa Park CIP; and the CFO is authorized to appropriate and expend up to \$1,000,000 for the purpose of updating and completing Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project design.

Anticipated project cost is \$70-75 million.

CCA