

# Peninsula Community Planning Board

<http://www.pcpb.net/>

May 17, 2012

Mayor Jerry Sanders  
City of San Diego  
202 C Street, MS 11A  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mayor Sanders:

The purpose of this letter today is to inform the City that the Peninsula Community Planning Board (PCPB) voted in opposition to the Plaza de Panama Parking Structure and Circulation Plan, particularly in opposition to the bypass bridge, at the PCPB's January 19, 2012 monthly meeting. The following was recorded in the meeting minutes:

J. Ross moved (and it was seconded) that the PCPB, consistent with its advisory land use oversight and fiscal responsibility, join with, among other public entities, the North Park, the Old Town, the City Heights, and the Golden Hill planning groups and oppose the proposed bypass bridge at Balboa Park. During the discussion of this motion, J. Gott proposed a friendly amendment to the motion to add that, additionally, the PCPB supports the removal of parking from the Plaza de Panama in Balboa Park. Mr. Ross accepted the friendly amendment to his motion. The PCPB then voted upon the friendly amendment and it was approved MSP (12 JR, JG, NG, BC, CV, PC, GP, JS, NA, AJ, PN, MR) – (0) – (0). With no further amendments or modifications to the original motion by Mr. Ross, the PCPB then voted and approved the original motion MSP (9 JR, JG, BC, PC, GP, JS, NA, PN, MR) – (3 NG, CV, AJ) – (0).

Recently, a copy of a letter dated May 2, 2012, from the United States Department of Interior National Park Service, supports the complete opposition to the Plaza de Panama Committee Project. We are given to understand, by District 2 Councilmember Kevin Faulconer, that the letter was circulated to you and all the council members. The third paragraph, on page one of the letter, sums up why this project should be rejected at once. It reads as follows:

“The NPS finds that the Project will have permanent, major and adverse effect upon the integrity of the Balboa Park National Historic Landmark. The Project is not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior *Standards for the Treatment of Historic properties (Standards)* and applicable guidelines. The Project will physically destroy a part of the NHL property, and the Project will introduce visual elements and spatial changes that will diminish the integrity of the property's historic features. In addition to the above concerns, we believe that some elements of the proposed rehabilitation have the potential to create a false sense of history.”

A few of the numerous other concerns:

- The Balboa Park Master Plan (BPMP) and Central Mesa Precise Plan (CMPC) were a total of nine years in the making and both rejected the concept of a bypass bridge.

- The Plaza de Panama Project has no provision for maintenance of the bypass bridge and connecting road, which would add to the \$240 million park maintenance deficit. The proposed bond issue financing of the garage is speculative in terms of parking fees and ability to support the bond.
- Inadequate emphasis given to alternate transit systems, such as restoring the trolley line up Park Blvd.
- At the MOU hearings, the City Council directed the Plaza de Panama Committee to study all alternative plans. To date, the committee has only studied permanently closing the Cabrillo Bridge and variations of the Alcazar parking lot. The committee has not studied temporary closures such as what occurred in 1915 and currently happens for special events.
- Spending \$40 million for this plan is fiscally unwise when alternate plans BPMP, CMPC and SOHO's would clear cars from 75 percent of the Plaza de Panama at one fortieth of the Plaza de Panama Project's cost.
- Rather than reducing pedestrian and auto conflicts, the Project would actually create two dangerous conflicts. The first of these two conflicts would be at the juncture of the bypass bridge with the entryway the second conflict would be in the Alcazar parking lot.

Sincerely,



Geoff Page, Chair  
Peninsula Community Planning Board

CC: San Diego City Council  
Planning Commission board members