



## Overview: Balboa Park Cultural Partnership & Balboa Park Study

February 2008

### **Balboa Park Cultural Partnership (BPCP)**

The Balboa Park Cultural Partnership is the organizing body and collective voice for the cultural institutions in Balboa Park. Organized in 2001, the Partnership enriches the cultural life of San Diego by facilitating collaboration among a diverse group of 24 member institutions located in historic Balboa Park, ranging from the world famous San Diego Zoo to the bi-national Centro Cultural de la Raza. Through collaboration in areas such as communication, group purchasing, education, government relations, and marketing, Partnership members seek to achieve their full individual and collective potential and preserve and enhance the cultural assets of Balboa Park for future generations.

Today the Partnership has 22 full members and 2 associate members and is the convening body of leadership from cultural institutions in the Park (the Executive Directors/CEOs of full BPCP member institutions comprise the BPCP Board of Directors). Collectively the Partnership represents the service of 500 Trustees, 7,000 volunteers, and 2,500 staff to more than 6.5 million Balboa Park members and visitors, annually. By augmenting the cultural asset of San Diego that is Balboa Park, the Partnership also serves the entire San Diego region.

### **Balboa Park Study – *The Soul of San Diego: Keeping Balboa Park Magnificent In its Second Century***

The “Soul of San Diego” report was released on January 30, 2008. Commissioned by the Legler Benbough Foundation, the Parker Foundation and the San Diego Foundation, it was produced by the Center for City Park Excellence of the Trust for Public Land. Supporting documentation was provided by the Keston Institute for Public Finance and Infrastructure Policy at the University of Southern California and by the Morey Group. Findings reflect input from 2,800 visitors to Balboa Park and telephone survey respondents, an examination of the park’s financial support, and a study of the Park’s present and future needs.

These studies were commissioned for the purpose of providing the factual basis on which a public discussion could be held and appropriate decisions made for the future of the park. Mayor Sanders and Councilmember Toni Atkins have agreed to refer the studies and questions that may arise to the Balboa Park Committee for public discussion.

(To download a copy of the report, go to: [www.sdfoundation.org](http://www.sdfoundation.org))

### **BPCP Positions on the Balboa Park Study**

1. The issue of future, sustainable governance for Balboa Park is a priority for the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership.
2. We support the public process of discussion and evaluation of the Balboa Park Study findings that raised the following three questions:
  - a. Can the city of San Diego provide the necessary financial support for Balboa Park in the future?

- b. Even if it can, should it do so?
  - c. If it wishes to expand management and governance of the park, what are the alternatives?
3. We believe the backlog of deferred maintenance (estimated at a minimum of \$238 million) poses a serious threat to the present and future health of Balboa Park and the many cultural institutions and other organizations located in and around Balboa Park.

**Upcoming meetings/Advocacy opportunities**

- The Balboa Park Committee will serve as the forum for public comment on the Balboa Park Study. The Committee meets the **first Thursday of the month** beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Santa Fe Room of the Balboa Park Club located in Balboa Park.
- The Balboa Park Committee will hold a special meeting from 8:30 a.m. to noon on **Saturday, March 8, 2008**, at the Balboa Park Recital Hall (west of Park Boulevard and Presidents Way).

*[NOTE: The Balboa Park Committee is comprised of 12 members whose duty it is to advise the Park and Recreation Board, Mayor, City Council, and City Manager on policy issues relating to Balboa Park. Members are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council and include one member representing a large institution in Balboa Park (currently Mick Hager, San Diego Natural History Museum) and one member representing a small or mid-sized institution in Balboa Park (currently David Kinney, House of Hospitality).]*

- If you are interested in participating on a special **BPCP Trustees' Taskforce** regarding the Balboa Park Study, please contact [bpcp@bpcp.org](mailto:bpcp@bpcp.org).
- Please communicate your support for this process to ensure a viable future for Balboa Park.

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## Balboa Park Cultural Partnership: Talking Points

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### Balboa Park

- Balboa Park is one of the most notable urban, cultural parks in the nation, with 15 major museums and 8 performing arts organizations, lush gardens, and myriad recreational activities situated on 1,200 acres in the heart of San Diego.
- Balboa Park was the site of the 1915-16 Panama-California Exposition and 1935-36 California-Pacific International Exposition. Today the Park is renowned for the beautiful Spanish Colonial Revival architecture of its buildings, which was introduced during the Expositions.
- In 2003, Balboa Park was selected as #13 on the list of Best Parks in the World by New York-based nonprofit *Project for Public Spaces*. (Balboa Park edged out #14, San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, the only other California park to be nominated.) Also in 2003, The World Federation of Rose Societies (WFRS) voted Balboa Park's Inez Grant Parker Memorial Rose Garden as one of the top 12 rose gardens in the world.
- An estimated 10 million people visit Balboa Park annually, with 6.5 million visiting the cultural institutions.
- Balboa Park attracts a diverse audience. In a survey conducted by the Morey Group for the report, *The Soul of San Diego: Keeping Balboa Park Magnificent In its Second Century*, of those interviewed in Balboa Park in September 2007, 42 % were Caucasian, 38 % Hispanic, 10 % African American, 9 % Asian, and 4 % Native American.
- In a 2007 survey of 2,800 people conducted by the Morey Group for the report, *The Soul of San Diego: Keeping Balboa Park Magnificent In its Second Century*, 69% of visitors said they visit the Park because of a museum, a theatre, or the zoo.

### Balboa Park Cultural Institutions

- Balboa Park cultural institutions are a great asset to Balboa Park and hold many accolades, including:
  - ▶ The Old Globe and its Tony Award-winning productions make it one of the most esteemed regional theatres in the country. In April 2008, it transferred its 20<sup>th</sup> show to Broadway.
  - ▶ The San Diego Junior Theatre, founded in 1948, it is the oldest youth theatre program in the United States.
  - ▶ The San Diego Natural History Museum is the oldest scientific institution in Southern California (1874) and oldest nonprofit in San Diego (1925). Its 2007 *Dead Sea Scrolls* exhibition was the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of Dead Sea Scrolls ever assembled.
  - ▶ The San Diego Museum of Art is the region's oldest and largest art museum (1926) and the third oldest nonprofit in San Diego (1935).
  - ▶ The Reuben H. Fleet Science Center opened in 1973 featuring the world's first (and San Diego's only) IMAX Dome Theater. In January 2008, the Science Center reached a historic

milestone of 100,000 hours of films shown in its IMAX Dome Theater, making the Fleet's IMAX projector the longest-operating system of its kind in the world.

- ▶ The Museum of Photographic Arts is one of the few museum facilities in the United States dedicated to collecting and presenting the world's finest examples of photographic art.
  - ▶ The San Diego Air & Space Museum has the only International Aerospace Hall of Fame.
  - ▶ The San Diego Hall of Champions Sports Museum is the nation's largest multi-sport museum.
  - ▶ The House of Hospitality and the San Diego Historical Society's Marston House are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
  - ▶ The Spreckels Organ Pavilion hosts one the world's largest outdoor pipe organs.
  - ▶ The San Diego Zoo houses more than 4,000 rare and endangered animals, representing more than 800 species and subspecies, and supports global conservation efforts.
- In 2001, the Executive Directors and CEOs of 22 cultural institutions in Balboa Park chose to create the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership (BPCP) as a commitment to collaboration and collective voice in Balboa Park.
    - ▶ BPCP is governed by a 22 member Board of Directors, composed of the executive director/CEO of each of the member cultural institutions. The 2008 Board President is Dr. Derrick Cartwright, Executive Director of the San Diego Museum of Art.
    - ▶ BPCP has three full-time employees; David Lang is the Executive Director. The Partnership's annual operating budget is \$300,000. Member dues provide nearly 50% of income.
    - ▶ The Partnership's collective business operations initiative has saved thousands of dollars for the cultural institutions through negotiated agreements with Office Depot, Chase Paymentech (merchant account services), the facilitation of shared services among institutions and other business services.
    - ▶ Other exciting Partnership initiatives include: 1) launch of the Balboa Park 2015 Committee, composed of Park leaders and community volunteers to prepare for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition and 2) creation of the Balboa Park Learning Institute, a professional development program based in the Park.
    - ▶ The Partnership has been featured as a model program for collaboration for national and international communities in various conferences and publications.
  - The BPCP member cultural institutions bring tremendous community and economic value to Balboa Park and the San Diego region with:
    - ▶ Combined annual operating budgets totaling greater than \$300 million
    - ▶ Combined capital improvements of BPCP member institutions during the past ten years totaling greater than \$200 million
    - ▶ Employment of more than 2,500 citizens from the San Diego region
    - ▶ Complimentary admissions through "Free Tuesdays" and the Zoo's free "Founders Day" that total more than 300,000 annually, valued at \$2 million annually

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