

Plaza de Panama

Reclaiming a Civic Treasure

Planning Commission

May 3, 2012



Schedule

- EIR Finalized
- **Advisory votes May-July 2012:**
 - Balboa Park Committee
 - Park & Recreation Advisory Board
 - Historical Resources Board
 - Planning Commission
- **City Council vote July 2012**
 - Certify Final EIR
 - Approve amendments to BPMP and CMPP
 - Approve Site Development Permit





Proposed Project

Plaza de California, El Prado west,
Plaza de Panama

Centennial Bridge
Alcazar Parking Lot

The Esplanade
Centennial Road

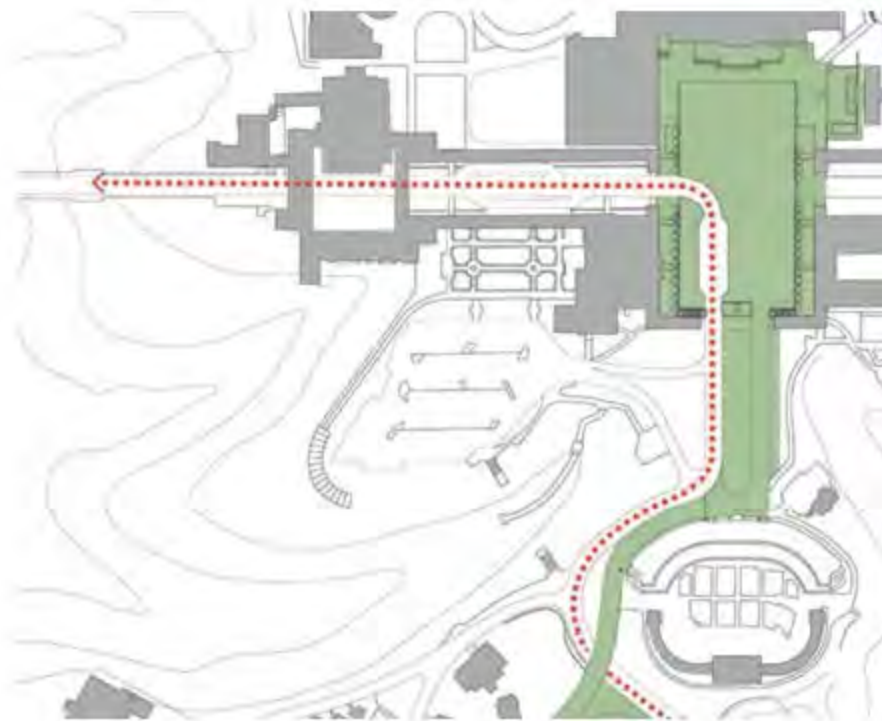
Pedestrian promenade & tramway

Park on top of garage

Centennial Road

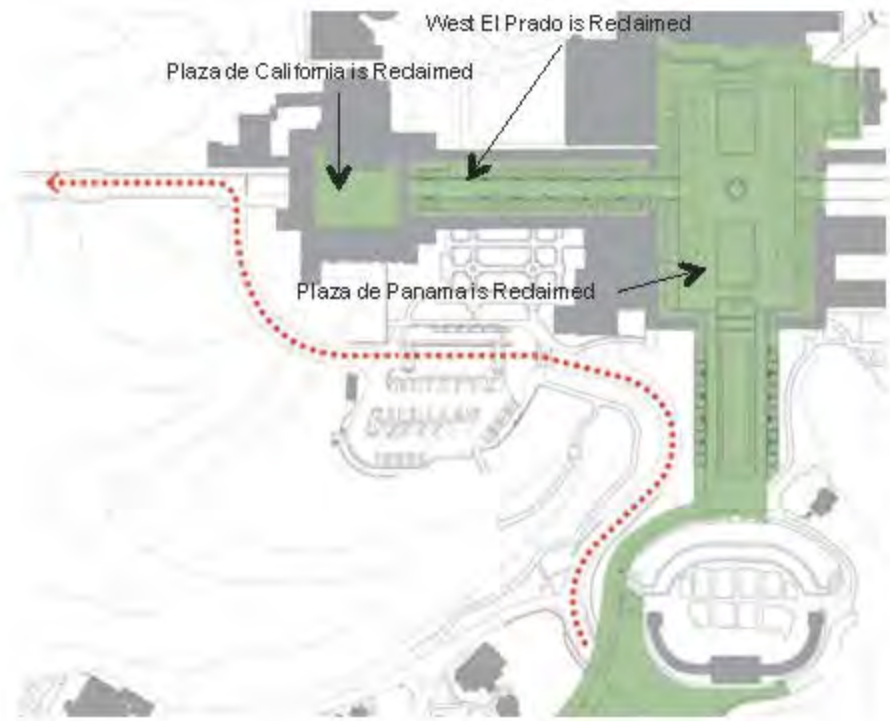
New intersection at President's Way

1992 Precise Plan



Precise Plan
Routes traffic through Plaza de California, West El Prado, Plaza de Panama, and Esplanade.

2012 Plaza de Panama Project



Proposed Plaza de Panama Committee Plan
Route s traffic completely away from pedestrian areas, reclaiming 30% more parkland.

1992 Precise Plan



Precise Plan

1. Proposed Pedestrian Overpass connection (approximately 20' wide) over roadway. (this is the only proposed connection)

5

2012 Plaza de Panama Project



Proposed Plaza de Panama Committee Plan

1. Proposed connection approximately 150' wide with a variety of walkways and planted areas.
2. Minimum 40' wide pedestrian/tram promenade.
3. Provides direct connections between rooftop park and Organ Pavilion

1992 Precise Plan



Precise Plan

1. Proposes 1,000 to 1,500 space garage
2. Re-routes Pan American road around garage.
3. Enhances connections between International Cottages and Rooftop Park.
4. Creates pedestrian promenade along northwest edge of rooftop park.

2012 Plaza de Panama Project



Proposed Plaza de Panama Committee Plan

1. Proposed 785 space garage
2. Re-routes Pan American road around garage.
3. Enhances connections between International Cottages and Rooftop Park.
4. Creates pedestrian promenade along northwest edge of rooftop park.

Bridge Connection

The existing length of bridge plus approaches is 1588 feet.
The bridge alone is 556 feet long



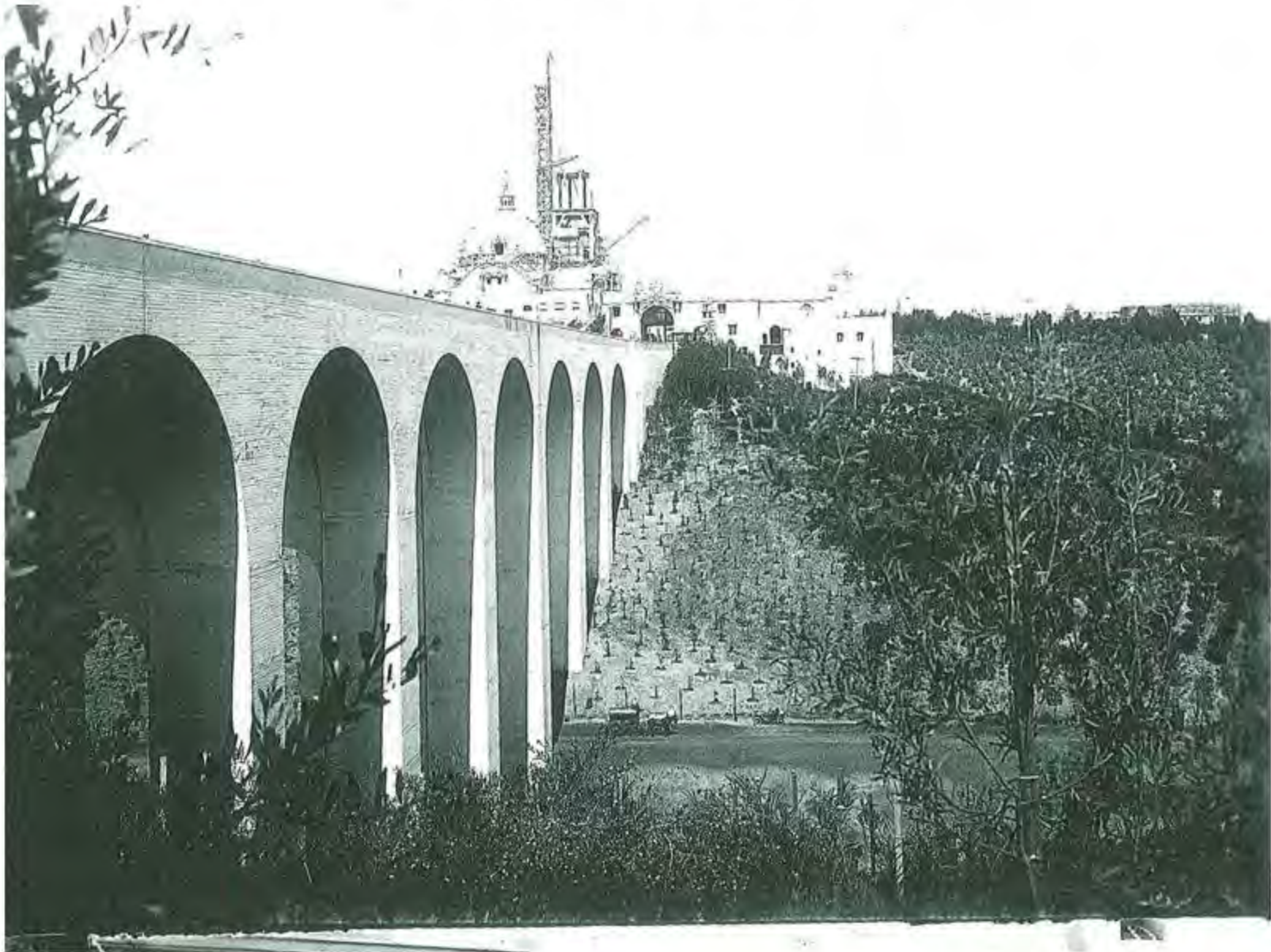
centennial bridge

Bridge Connection to Cabrillo Bridge Abutment



centennial bridge

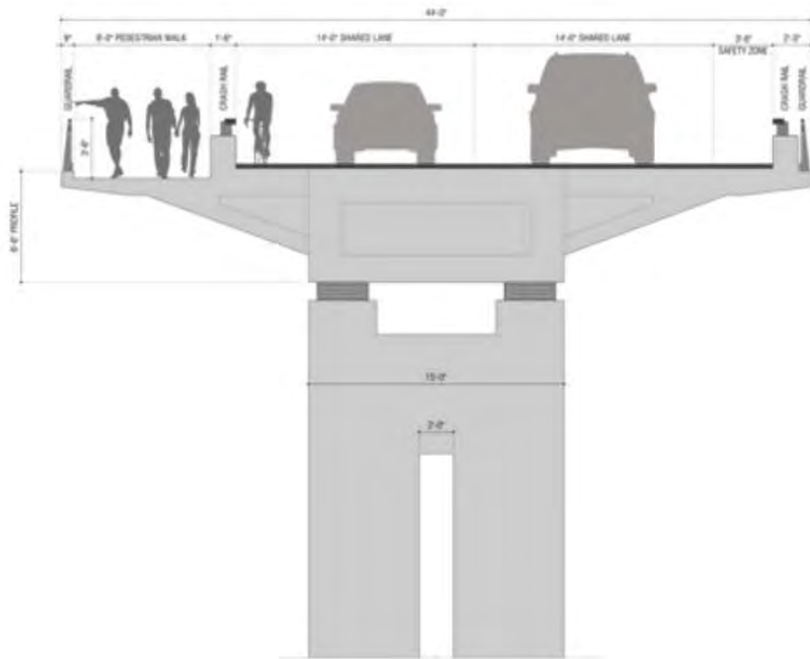
June, 1914 -Planted Eucalyptus Trees
Bertram Goodhue Supervision



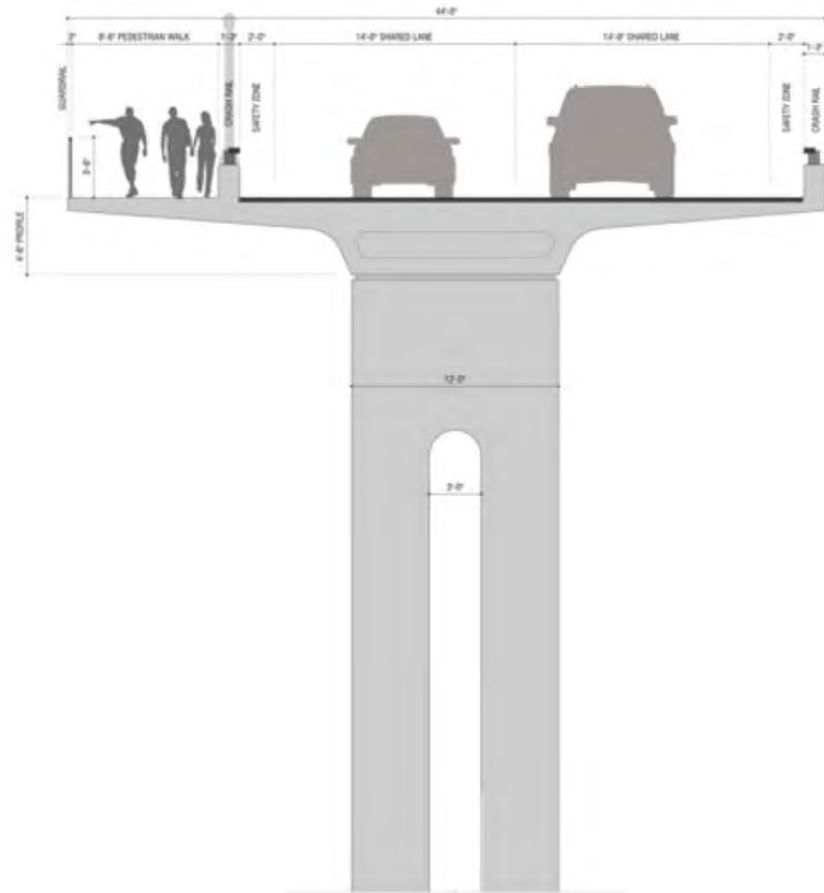


Centennial Bridge and Road Overview

April 2011



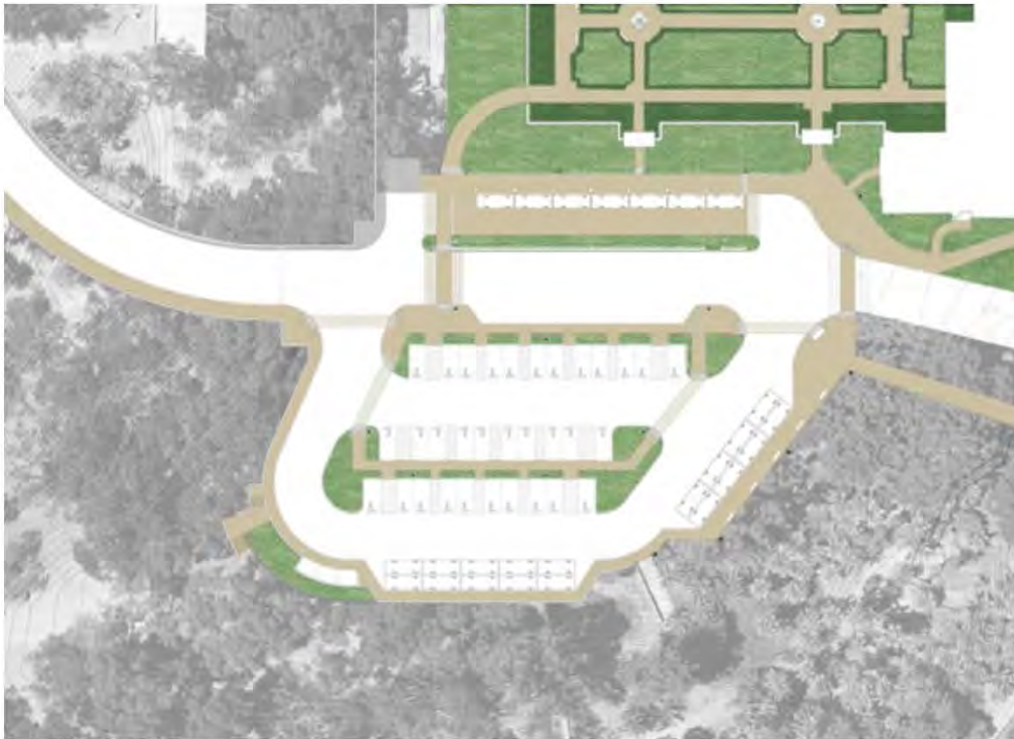
January 2012



Centennial Bridge - Design Evolution

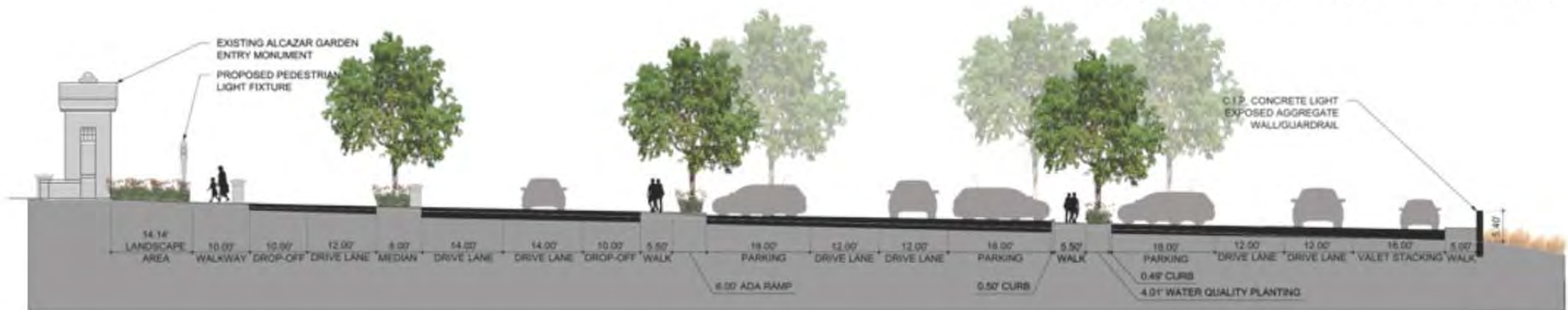
Alcazar Parking Lot - Design Evolution 2010 Design

1
2

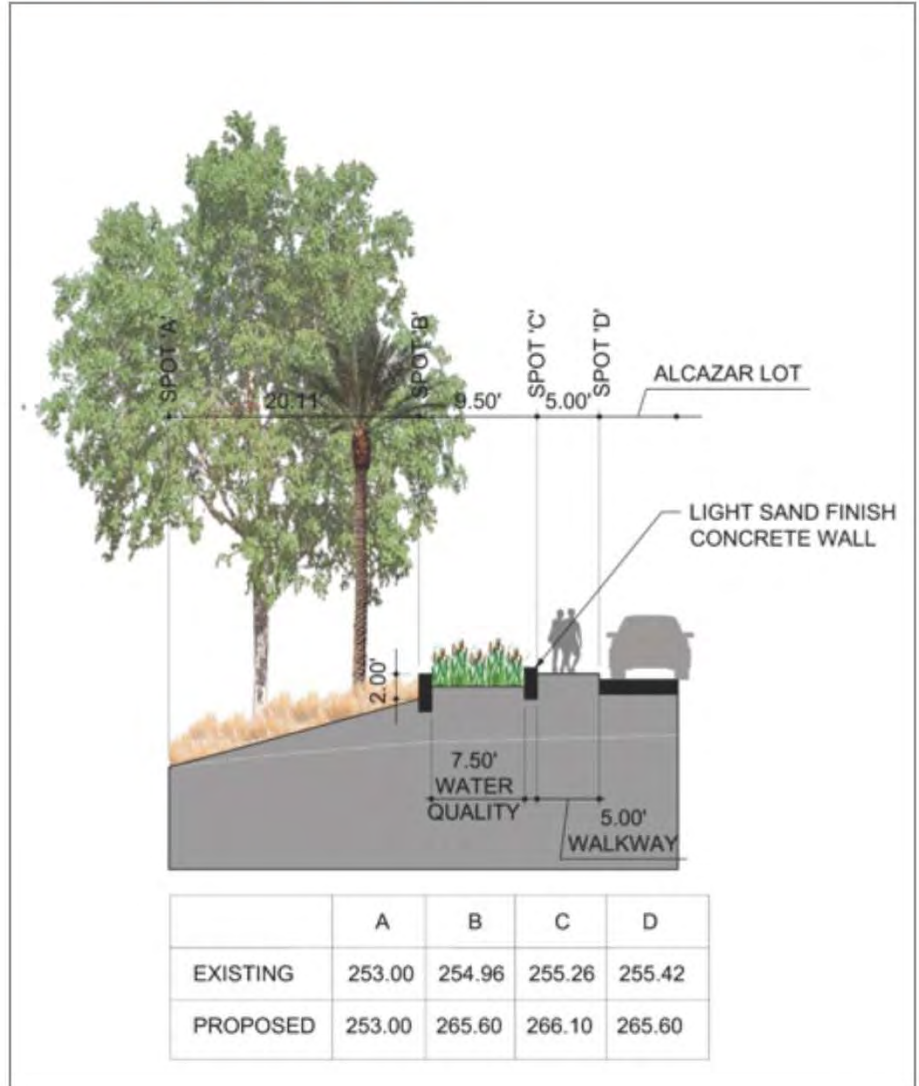
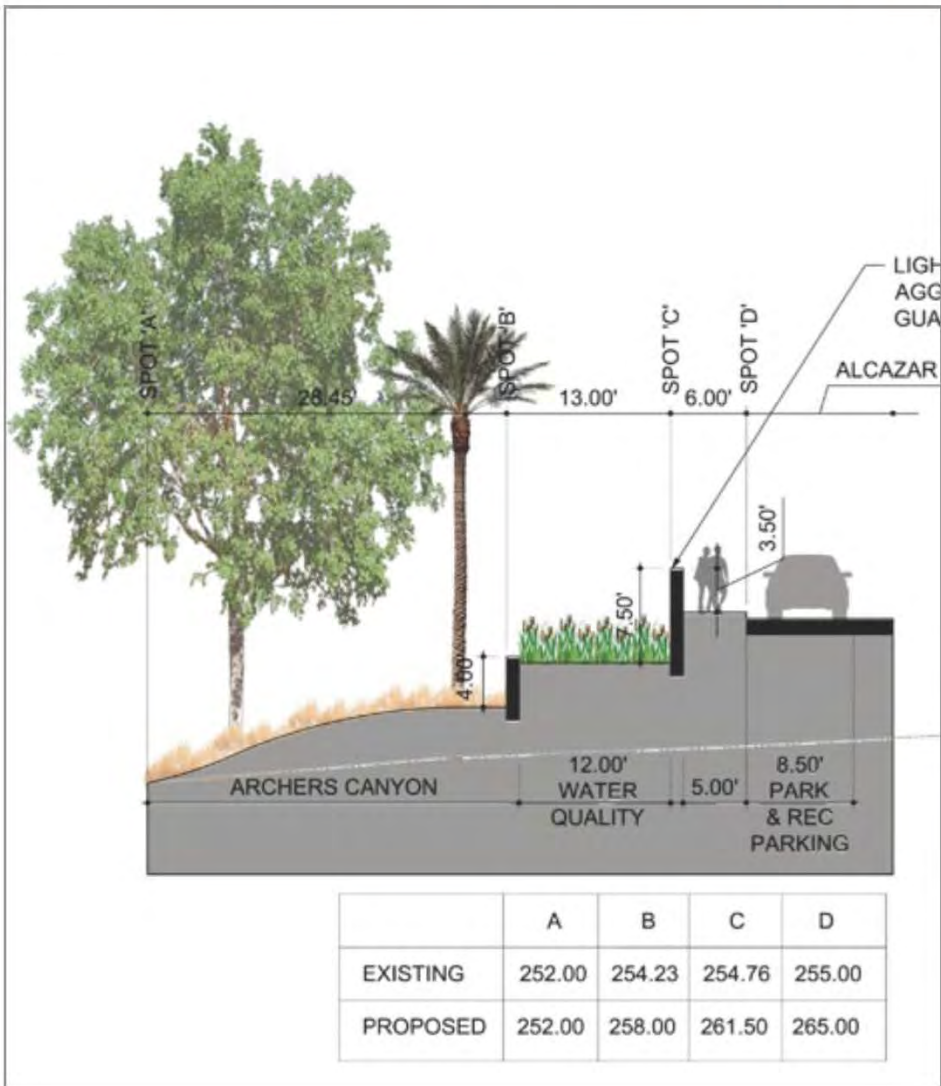


Design Features

1. Re-graded entire lot to create a maximum cross slope of <math><2\%</math> in all directions
2. 12 Van Accessible Spaces
20 Accessible Spaces
32 Spaces
3. Isolated drop-off area just south of Alcazar Gardens
4. 48" tall wall with a row of trees to reduce noise impacts on Alcazar Gardens
5. Raised pedestrian crossings with pedestrian activated warning signals.
6. No Center Turn Lane – reduces lot size and wall heights (2' tall along southern edge)



Alcazar Parking Lot - Design Evolution 2012 Design





Alcazar Parking Lot – Drop Off, Raised Crosswalks, ADA Parking

Plaza De Panama: Historic Conditions





1934

Plaza de Panama – Existing Conditions



Plaza De Panama: Historic Compliance

1. Change of Use: Active Plaza

The rehabilitation of the plaza will deviate from the 1915-16 open scheme because the uses will differ. The space will be activated so that it becomes a destination. This will require shade, seating and other amenities.

2. Protect Views

The final design of the Plaza will protect views down El Prado, the Esplanade and the adjacent historic buildings.

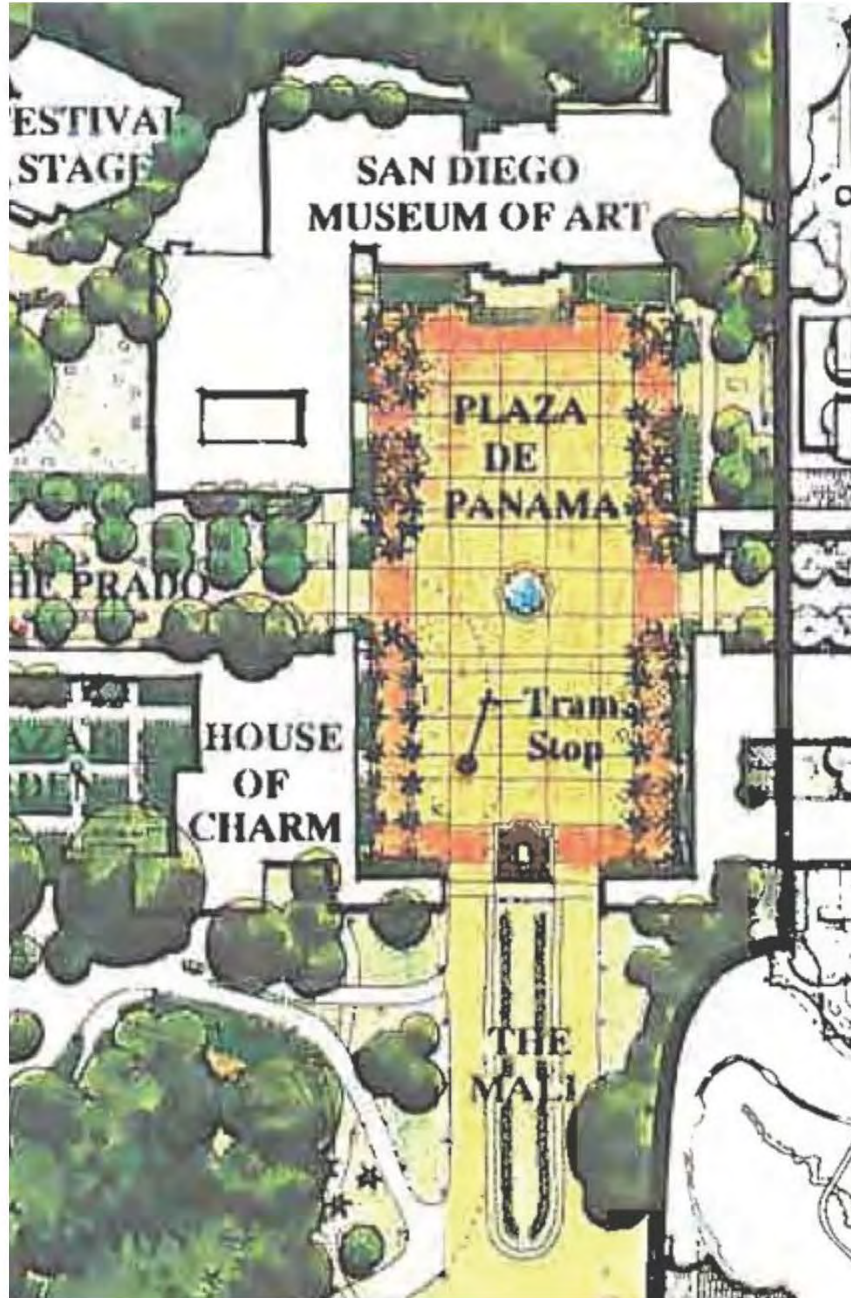
3. Remove Improper Landscaping

The overgrown trees that currently screen historic buildings will be thinned or removed. New trees will be located further away from the historic facades, shading the edges of the Plaza.

4. Secretary of Interior's Standards (National Landmark District)

The final design of the Plaza will help comply with the Secretary's Standards for historic restoration and rehabilitation for the Period of Significance, the 1915-16 Panama-California Exposition and its Spanish Colonial architecture and landscape composition.

Precise Plan
1992



Plaza de Panama - Design Principles

1. Historic 1915 Condition as Baseline

Develop the design to respect the key elements of the 1915 condition while deviating for the purpose of supporting the change of use.

2. Active Public Space

Design to provide comfort, beauty and activity for day-to-day visitors to the park and the institutions.

3. Daily and Special Event Use

Design to support a range of potential temporary events.

4. Fixed Elements Acceptable to HRB

All fixed elements shall support an historic rehabilitation without triggering un-mitigable impacts.

5. Fixed Elements Manageable by Parks

All fixed elements shall be designed to allow maintenance by normal parks maintenance staff and methods.

6. Moveable/Temporary Furnishings

A range of furnishings should be provided that are moveable or temporary so that the plaza can be configured for varied uses.

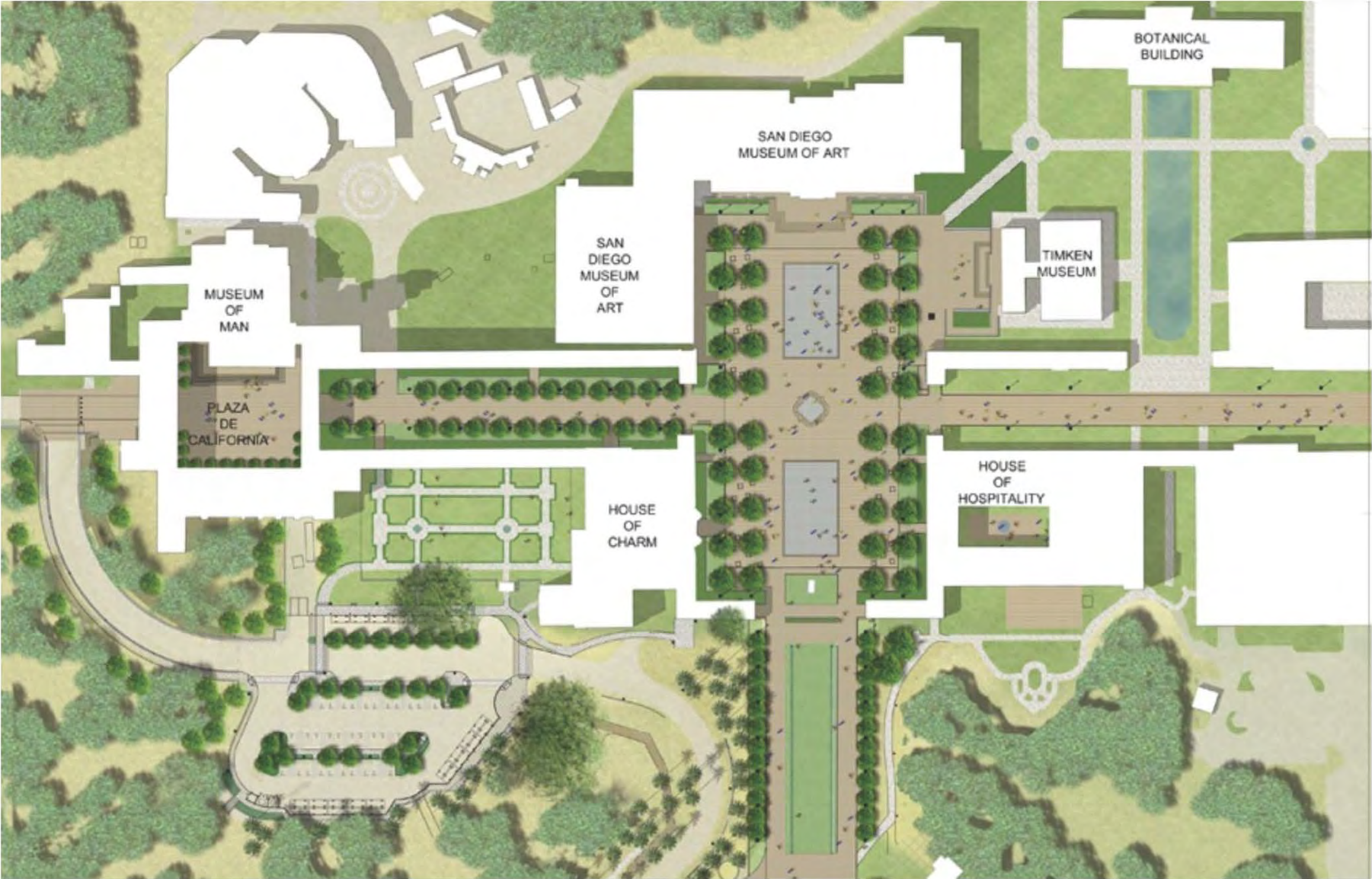
7. Programming

The plaza should be active and successful with or without active programming of uses and events.

8. Support Occasional Access

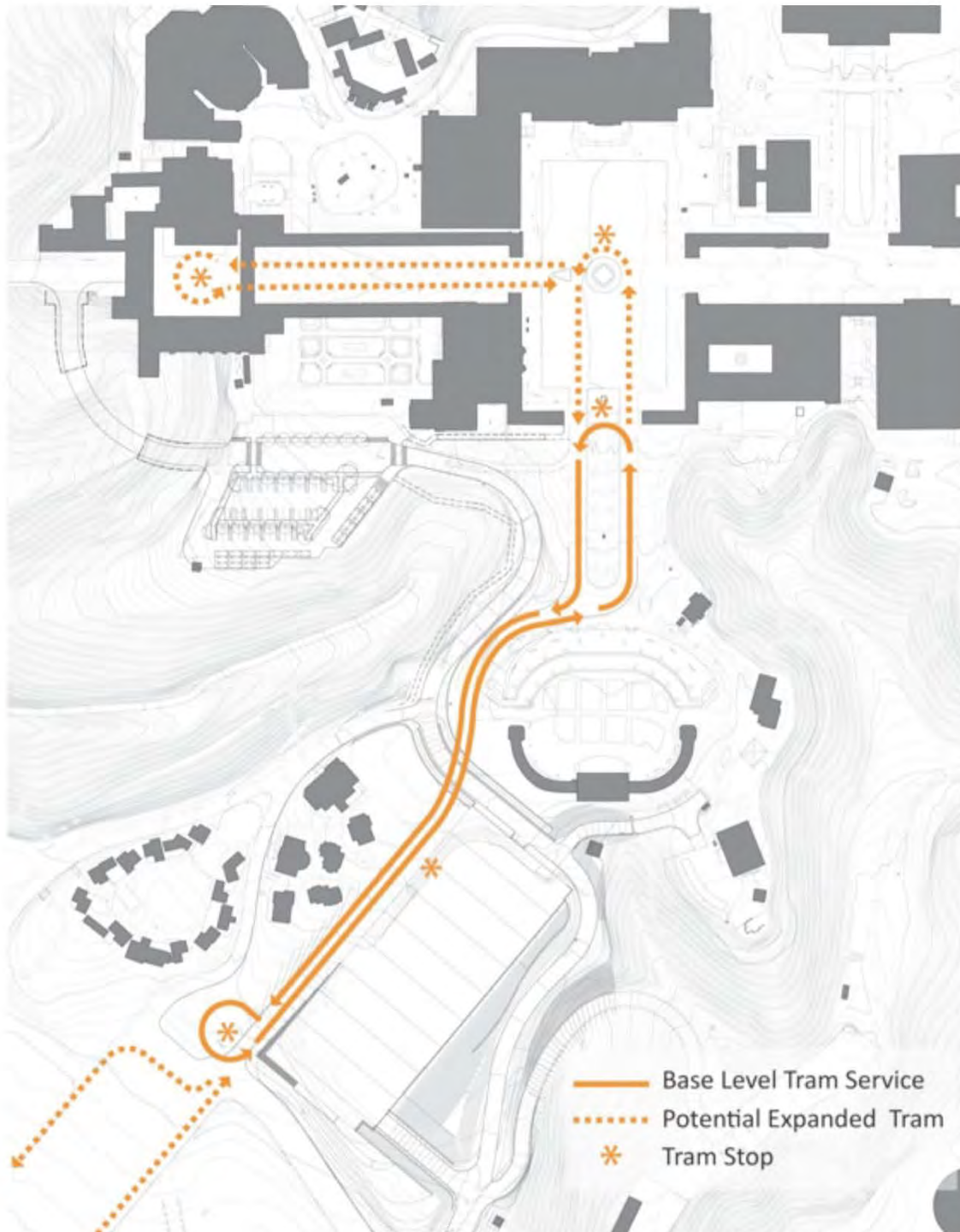
Service, Emergency and Maintenance access must be accommodated.

Proposed Plaza Design

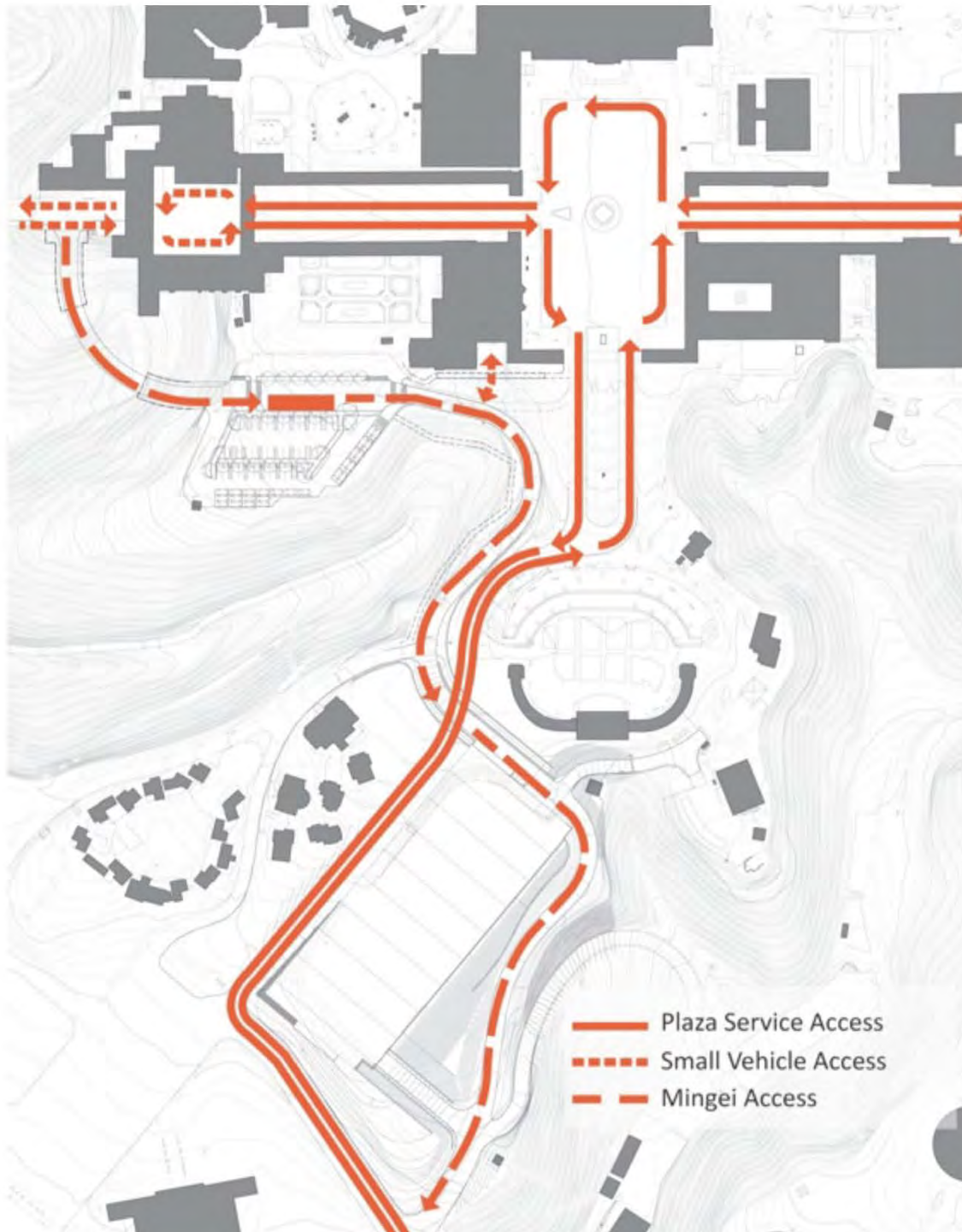


Tram Operations

- minimize or eliminate ped. interactions with cars
- basic service to be from proposed garage to plaza
- flexible enough to accommodate expanded services now or in the future



Service Access



- restricted access during peak visitation hours
- larger vehicle loading for Mingei can be accommodated within alcazar lot during peak hours



Plaza de California



Esplanade



Pan American Promenade

March 2012

2
8



Pan American Promenade





March 2012

3
1

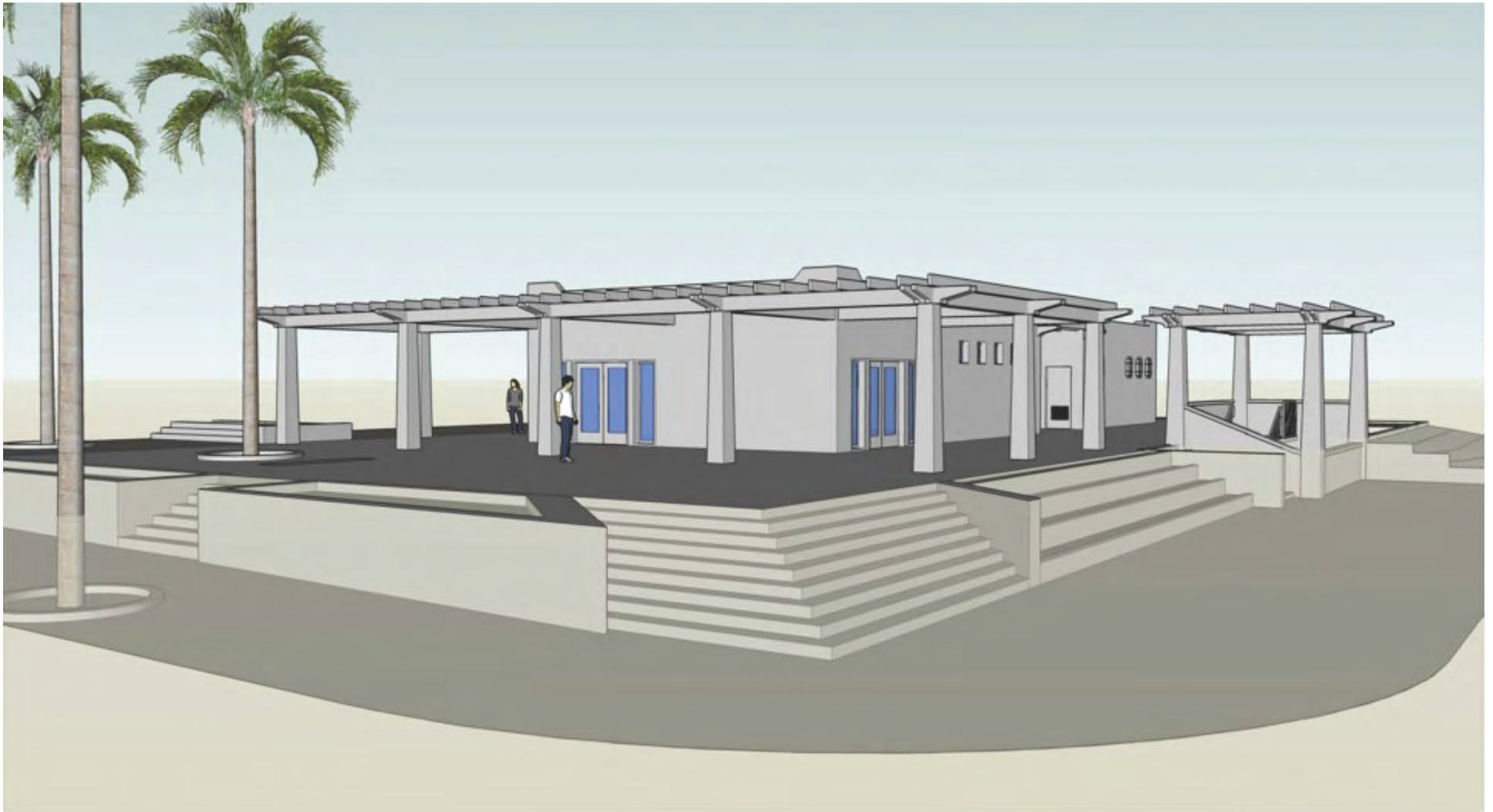


SEVEN

rooftop park







EIR Overview

- Discloses potential environmental impacts of Plaza de Panama project and 13 proposed alternatives
- Thorough analysis of potential impacts in the following issue areas:
 - Land Use
 - Historical Resources
 - Visual Effects & Neighborhood Character
 - Transportation/Circulation & Parking
 - Air Quality
 - Biological Resources
 - Energy Conservation
 - Geological Conditions
 - Greenhouse Gas Emissions
 - Health & Safety/Hazardous Materials
 - Hydrology
 - Noise
 - Paleontological Resources
 - Public Services & Facilities
 - Public Utilities
 - Water Quality



Alternative Analysis

- **Three categories of Alternatives:**
 - Build bypass bridge
 - Close Cabrillo Bridge
 - Keep traffic through Plaza de Panama
- All alternatives and the proposed project have significant unmitigable impacts, as well as benefits
- All alternatives – except the No Build Alternative – have temporary, impacts resulting from construction



Environmental Impacts & Benefits

PLAZA DE PANAMA PROJECT (AND OTHER ALTS WITH BYPASS BRIDGE)	
IMPACTS/NEGATIVE EFFECTS	BENEFITS
<p>Three unmitigable impacts, all as a result of Centennial Bridge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Historical Resources</i> – alters spatial relationships of CA Quadrangle • <i>Land Use</i> – inconsistency with preservation goals of Master Plan • <i>Visual Effects</i> – introduction of new architectural element in historic district 	<p>Restores historical/visual fabric of Plaza de Panama, Plaza de California, West El Prado, Esplanade and Pan American Road</p>
	<p>Maintains public/proximate vehicle access from both east and west</p>
	<p>Resolves 14 of 20 ped/vehicle conflicts</p>
	<p>Provides a net gain of 270 parking spaces</p>
	<p>Reclaims 6.3 acres of parkland</p>
	<p>No unmitigable traffic impacts as result of project</p>

Environmental Impacts & Benefits

<i>CLOSE CABRILLO BRIDGE TO VEHICLE TRAFFIC</i>	
IMPACTS/NEGATIVE EFFECTS	BENEFITS
Significant unmitigable traffic impacts external to Balboa Park result	Avoids impacts of Centennial Bridge
Eliminates public/proximate access from west	Restores historical/visual fabric of Plaza de Panama, Plaza de California, West El Prado, Esplanade and Pan American Road
	Resolves between 9 and 16 of 20 ped/vehicle conflicts
	Some alternatives result in net gain of parking
	Reclaims between 4.01 and 7.29 acres of parkland

Environmental Impacts & Benefits

<i>ALLOW TRAFFIC TO CONTINUE THROUGH PLAZA DE PANAMA</i>	
IMPACTS/NEGATIVE EFFECTS	BENEFITS
Significant unmitigable traffic impacts inside park result	Avoids impacts of Centennial Bridge
Maintains degraded condition of vehicle traffic in Plaza de California, West El Prado, Esplanade and a portion of Plaza de Panama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified Precise Plan (SOHO alternative) also maintains degraded condition on Pan American Road 	Some alternatives result in net gain of parking
Some alternatives do not provide adequate ADA access	Resolves between 0 and 14 of 20 ped/vehicle conflicts
Half-Plaza Alternative has unmitigable impacts to Historical Resources	Reclaims between 0.5 and 6.41 acres of parkland
Substantial pedestrian/vehicle conflicts remain in many alternatives	

Discussion



