

Michael J. Stepner, Park and Recreation Board Member

Mr. Stepner has more than thirty-five years of experience in leading, managing, and participating in comprehensive planning programs and the development of public policy. During his 27-year tenure with the City of San Diego, from 1971 to 1997, he was responsible for myriad projects and programs, including the city's general plan and growth management efforts and the preparation of community plans for both older and newly developing communities. His diverse experience includes advising other cities in addition to the education of people wishing to learn more about cities, city planning, and urban design. He was director of Land Use and Housing for the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation from August 2001 to August 2003 and serves as professor of Architecture and Urban Design at the NewSchool of Architecture & Design and as adjunct faculty at Woodbury University in San Diego and University of California San Diego. In addition, he serves on the faculty of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Cambridge, Massachusetts, as a member of the Advisory Board of the Academy for Neuroscience and Architecture, and as a member of the Advisory Board of the Active Living, Planning, and Environmental Study.

Mr. Stepner's work assignments with the City of San Diego and with academia have included numerous projects, programs, and initiatives. Consequently, his growth management and redevelopment experience is wide-ranging and diverse; e.g., community planning, incorporation of business improvement districts in neighborhood areas, creation of the San Diego Transit-Oriented Design Guidelines, creation of the San Diego Street Design Manual, and the successful revitalization of San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter Historic District. In addition, he has undertaken a number of projects with other jurisdictions and organizations that have resulted in successful outcomes. He is internationally recognized for his leadership and innovation in community planning, public participation, visioning and, particularly, for his reliable follow-through to implementation.

Mr. Stepner has been a chair and a participant on planning teams for the American Institute of Architects, Urban Land Institute, and Partners for Livable Communities, advising the cities of Washington, D.C.; Seattle, Washington; Orlando, Florida; King-man, Arizona; Coronado, California; and Liverpool, England. In 2002, on recommendation of the U. S. General Services Administration Chief Architect, he was appointed by the GSA Public Buildings Service Commissioner to serve a two-year term as a peer professional in the federal government's Design Excellence Program.

In 2004, he received the Distinguished Leadership to Professional Planners Award from the American Planning Association, San Diego Chapter. In 1997, the San Diego Chapter of the American Institute of Architects awarded Mr. Stepner the Community Design Award and officially changed the name of the award to the Michael J. Stepner Community Design Award, which is given annually to a deserving individual within the planning and design professions. He received the Distinguished Leadership Award from the California Chapter of the American Planning Association in 1991 in recognition of his outstanding and sustained contributions to planning.

Mr. Stepner, a registered architect, earned his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Illinois. He is a Fellow of the Institute for Urban Design, a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners, and is listed in Who's Who in America.