



# REPORT

## THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO TO THE PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

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DATE ISSUED: March 10, 2015

REPORT NO. 102

ATTENTION: Park and Recreation Board  
Agenda of March 19, 2015

SUBJECT: UT Pocket Park General Development Plan

### SUMMARY

Issue- Should the Park and Recreation Board approve of the proposed General Development Plan [GDP] for UT Pocket Park in the Mission Valley community?

Directors Recommendation- Approve the GDP for the UT Pocket Park in the Mission Valley community.

Other Recommendations- The following groups have reviewed and considered the proposed project. Actions taken and recommendations made by these groups are listed under Discussion below.

August 7, 2013 the Mission Valley Planning Group voted to recommend approval of the GDP for the UT Pocket Park (15-1-2).

September 11, 2013 the Design Review Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the GDP for the UT Pocket Park (10-0-0).

March 4, 2015, 2015 the Community Parks I Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the GDP for the UT Pocket Park (12-0-0).

Fiscal Impact- The cost of design and construction is being paid for by the owner/applicant for the UT Mixed Use Development. The park will remain in private ownership with a 'Recreation Easement' recorded on the final map for public use. The park will be maintained by the private owner.

Environmental- The City of San Diego as Lead Agency under CEQA is preparing an Environmental Impact Report covering the UT Mixed Use Project and Pocket Park.

## BACKGROUND

The proposed UT Pocket Park is part of the UT Mixed Use Development project currently being processed through the Development Services Department for a Vesting Tentative Map, a Site Development Permit for developing on environmentally sensitive lands and a Planned Development Permit for Multiple Use option of the Mission Valley Community Plan. The owner/applicant is proposing to provide the population-based public park on site as part of the proposed development. The pocket park and a portion of the San Diego River Park will remain in private ownership with a 'recreation easement' recorded on the final map for public use. This type of park is defined in the City's General Plan as a park equivalency and will count towards the Mission Valley public park inventory.

## DISCUSSION

This project provides for the design and construction of a pocket park in the northeast corner of the existing Union Tribune site and a portion of the San Diego River Park, located on Camino de la Reina Street in the Mission Valley Community, within Council District 7. Proposed park improvements include:

Pocket Park (approx. 0.27 acres):

- Incorporates a three tiered design (~3' foot difference between the levels):
  1. The upper area/terrace adjacent to the new residential building features an urban plaza with seating, tables, overlooks, landscaping and enhanced paving. This area will be adjacent to the future residential amenity space and will provide an area for residents and visitors to use for eating, drinking, and small group meetings. Flowering deciduous trees would be located in the terrace area. Classical music will be piped into this area to add to the enjoyment of the upper terrace.
  2. Steps and a ramp will lead down to the middle area/terrace that features a relocated mature focal Sycamore tree, from on-site or boxed, and an artistic element that provides interpretation of the Union Tribune newspaper's history on the site. This area will also include seating areas, landscaping and enhanced paving.
  3. The lower area provides a naturalized grass area for passive recreation and storm water detention/treatment. This area features boulders for passive play, seating, landscaping and interpretive panels about storm water and the relationship to the San Diego River.
- Lighting will be provided throughout the park for security.
- Bike racks.
- An accessible drinking fountain with pet fountain will be provided.
- A pet waste station will be provided near the storm water detention basin.
- A park sign will be provided at the park entrance on Camino de la Reina Street.

The San Diego River Park (approx. 0.54 acres):

- Three river overlook areas with decorative railing, benches, and interpretive signs.
- Information kiosk at River Park entry.
- Interpretive panel depicting San Diego River flora and fauna.
- Enhanced decorative paving with a plaza theme.

- Enhanced decorative paving with a river theme, including elements like leaf or animal imprints.
- Multi-use pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Pole and bollard lighting along the pathway for security.
- Native landscaping.

The Mission Valley community does not have a Recreation Council and therefore public workshops were held with the Mission Valley Planning Group's Park Subcommittee and the community at large. During the public workshops the public requested that the pocket park be treated as an urban park with areas for individuals and groups to enjoy the space and to view the river area. Passive activities were selected to provide a respite from the density of Mission Valley. The workshop members also asked for multi-use areas with multiple levels, public art, seating areas with views, lighting, and reduced vegetation to open the space up. From this public input the proposed plan was developed and presented to the Mission Valley Planning Group on August 7, 2013. The planning group discussed the project and voted to recommend approval of the proposed General Development Plan for the UT Pocket Park as presented.

On September 11, 2013, the Design Review Committee voted unanimously to recommended approval of the GDP with the following recommendations. Design Review Committee recommendations are numbered below, with current park design responses directly below.

**1. The consultant team should carefully evaluate whether the existing Sycamore trees should be transplanted, as proposed, or if new specimen nursery trees should be used in lieu of transplanting, to determine the best approach to ensure long-term healthy trees within and adjacent to the park.**

*Response: The plan has been adjusted to note "Focal Tree: Large boxed specimen or relocated from on-site".*

**2. The monument sign and entry bollards should be of similar materials to provide continuity.**

*Response: The monument sign has been modified to match the entry bollards.*

**3. If possible, the parking lot along the edge of the park should be redesigned to provide a greater distance between the park and parking lot. If the parking lot cannot be reconfigured, the screening between the parking lot and the park should be enhanced to ensure the parking lot does not subjugate the goal of the park to offer a place of respite for park users.**

*Response: The head in parking along the park edge has been eliminated and the distance from the parking lot edge to the park has increased.*

**4. The accessible walks between park levels are too linear and should be designed to appear more natural. This may also help eliminate the need for an extensive handrail system within the park.**

*Response: The two accessible walks are both only 30ft long. The primary accessible walk is aligned to minimize out of direction movement for the primary direction of travel.*

**5. The river overlook indicated along the fire lane should be more oriented with the park and less so with the site architecture. Adding a tree to the overlook will also help tie it into the park.**

*Response: The overlook was repositioned to align better with the main park plaza area. Trees are provided on either side of the overlook.*

**6. The linear aspect of the fire lane should appear to integrate with the park to blur the property line between the park and fire lane.**

*Response: The paving pattern integrates the park plaza and the fire lane. The fire lane is also functioning as a linear promenade for the San Diego River Park per the adopted Master Plan.*

**7. The site furnishings should be less eclectic and should be used to help tie the levels within the park together.**

*Response: The final set of site furnishings will be selected during the 'Construction Documentation' phase of the project and will be chosen to help tie together the pocket park and 'River Promenade'.*

**8. The bollards at the fire lane entry should be moved back into the site another 10 feet or so to make them less imposing on the approach to the park.**

*Response: The bollards have been moved to the edge of the ROW for Camino de la Reina.*

**9. Look for ways to simplify the park's design. There appears to be too much variation in this small space.**

*Response: The paving pattern has been simplified to reduce the visual busyness of the park.*

**10. Radius the end of the fire lane where it intersects with the walkway along the street.**

*Response: The fire lane (River Promenade) intersection with Camino de la Reina has been designed to be consistent with direction from City LDR – Transportation.*

On March 4, 2015, the Community Parks I Committee voted unanimously to recommended approval of the GDP.

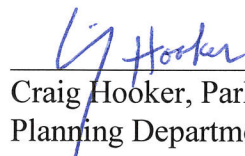
#### ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the proposed General Development Plan for the UT Pocket Park.
2. Approve the proposed General Development Plan for the UT Pocket Park with modifications.
2. Do not approve the proposed General Development Plan for the UT Pocket Park.

Respectfully submitted,



Tom Tomlinson, Interim Director  
Planning Department



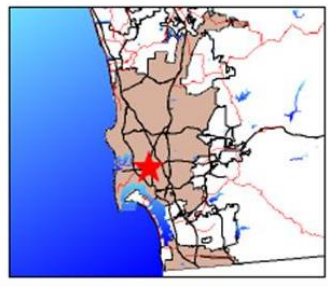
Craig Hooker, Park Designer  
Planning Department

CH/ch

Attachments: 1. Location Map  
2. General Development Plan



# UT Pocket Park



### Legend

- Highways
- Freeway Ramps
- Freeways
- Roads**
- Arterial
- Local
- Unpaved
- Private
- Alley
- Humped
- Parcel Ownership



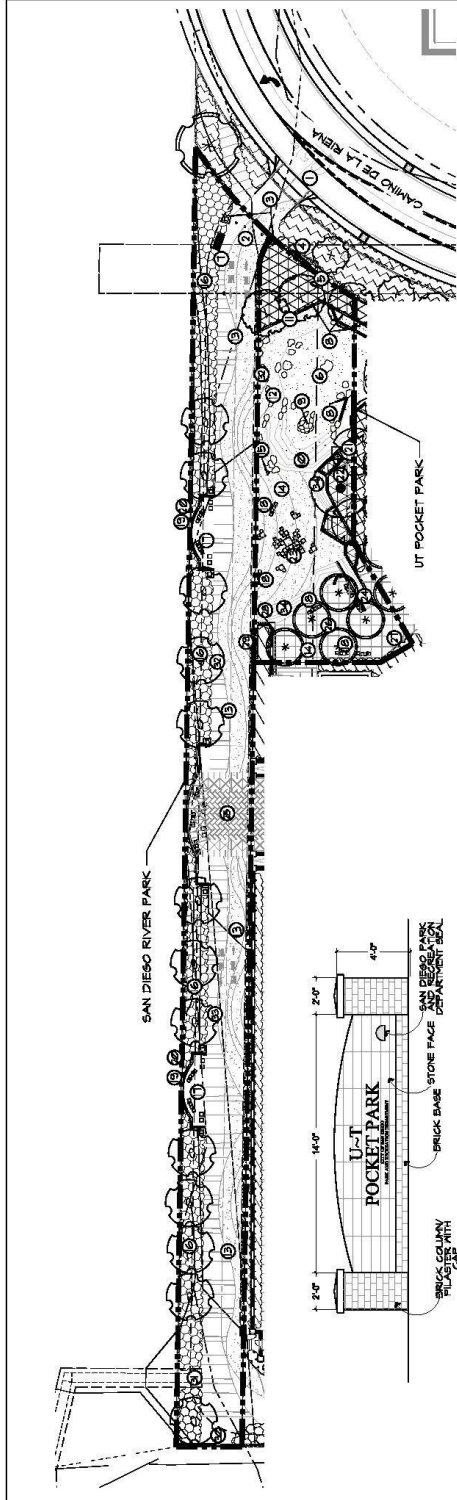
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Scale: 1:3,060

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**LEGEND:**

- ① ENTRANCE TO SAN DIEGO RIVER PARK PROMENADE AND U-T POCKET PARKS ENERGY AND MAINTENANCE ACCESS
- ② REMOVABLE BOLLARDS (4 TOTAL)
- ③ ARCHITECTURAL FILASTER WITH LIGHT
- ④ PARK SIGN
- ⑤ VEGETATIVE SCREEN BETWEEN CANINO DE LA REINA AND U-T POCKET PARK
- ⑥ STORM WATER MANAGEMENT BASIN, INFORMAL PLAY AREA (TURF AND BOULDERS)
- ⑦ INFORMATION KIOSK AT RIVER PARK ENTRY
- ⑧ DECORATIVE STONE/STONE-LIKE RETAINING WALLS AROUND BASIN
- ⑨ BOULDER PODIUM/ PLAY FEATURE

- ⑩ INFORMAL AMPHITHEATER
- ⑪ ACCESSIBLE RAMP/MAINTENANCE ACCESS TO BASIN
- ⑫ INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE: "STORM WATER MANAGEMENT"
- ⑬ RIVER THEMED ENHANCED DECORATIVE PAVING
- ⑭ ENHANCED DECORATIVE PAVING
- ⑮ DRINKING FOUNTAIN SUCH AS: HAWK, MODEL# 8902D
- ⑯ TRANSITIONAL NATIVE SLOPE PLANTINGS
- ⑰ RIVER OVERLOOK (2 TOTAL)
- ⑱ CUSTOM ANTI-LOITERING BENCH (TYP.)

- ⑲ OVERLOOK MALL WITH ORNAMENTAL PROWREST IRON RAILING
- ⑳ INTERPRETIVE PANEL, SAN DIEGO RIVER FLORA AND FAUNA
- ㉑ VEGETATIVE SCREEN BETWEEN PARKING AND RIVER
- ㉒ ONE 24-INCH BOX TREE FOR EVERY 30 FEET OF PARKING LOT FRONTAGE AND 50-INCH HIGH MAX. SHRUBS
- ㉓ FOCAL TREE, LARGE BOXED SPECIMEN OR RELOCATED FROM ON-SITE
- ㉔ SCULPTURAL ELEMENT, HISTORY OF UNION-TRIBUNE
- ㉕ ACCESSIBLE RAMP
- ㉖ ENHANCED PLAZA PAVING
- ㉗ CAFE STYLE TABLES
- ㉘ DECORATIVE FLOWERING ACCENT TREES SUCH AS: LILAC, LORNAIRNE, MODEL# 8902LED

- ㉙ CUSTOM BAR-STOOL STYLE SEATING
- ㉚ BICYCLE RACKS SUCH AS: FORMS AND SURFACES TRIO BIKE RACK
- ㉛ FUTURE RIVER PATHWAY CONNECTION
- ㉜ 10-FOOT RECREATION EASEMENT WITH A 5-FOOT-WIDE PAVED TRAIL
- ㉝ POLE LIGHTS: BEGA MODEL# 8142M4
- ㉞ BOLLARD LIGHTS: BEGA MODEL# 8919M4
- ㉟ RECESSED LIGHTS IN STAIRS: BEGA MODEL# 8902LED

- NOTES:**
- A. PAVING MATERIALS #5, 14 AND 25 ARE TO BE USED IN THE AREAS THAT BLEND WITH THE SURROUNDING NATIVE SOIL. 2-3 DIFFERENT TEXTURES AND COLORS CAN BE USED TOGETHER AND ONE CAN BE USED AS AN ACCENT APPROPRIATE TO THIS PORTION OF THE SAN DIEGO RIVER.
  - B. VISUAL OPENINGS ARE PROVIDED ALONG AT LEAST 50% OF THE RIVER FRONTAGE.
  - C. PLANT MATERIAL WITHIN 15 FEET OF NATIVE NON-INVASIVE LOW WATER USE SPECIES AND SELECTED TO MATCH IN THE RIVER CORRIDOR. PLANT MATERIAL IN THE RIVER INFLUENCE AREA WILL FRAME AND ENHANCE VIEWS TO THE RIVER CORRIDOR.

COUNCIL DISTRICT:		CITY OF SAN DIEGO PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT		PROJECT NAME:		PROJECT NUMBER:		PROJECT DATE:		PROJECT STATUS:		PROJECT LOCATION:		PROJECT DRAWING:		PROJECT SCALE:		PROJECT SHEET:	
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**U-T POCKET PARK/ SAN DIEGO RIVER PARK**

PSD (PSD #)