VerPlanck
HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONSULTING

23 February 2012

Mr. Lance Unverzagt
Recon Environmental, Inc.
1927 5th Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101-2358

Re: Cabrillo Parkway

Dear Lance,

This letter is in response to Caltrans' concerns regarding potential historic impacts of the proposed Plaza de Panama project on the locally and state-listed Cabrillo Parkway (SR 163) that runs through Balboa Park. Cabrillo Historic Parkway was designated a California Scenic Parkway in 1992. In 1996, parts of SR 163 were designated a California Register historic district. The boundaries of this district encompass the Caltrans right-of-way (ROW) through Balboa Park from a point roughly 300 feet south of Cabrillo Bridge to a point just south of the 6th Avenue on-ramp. The ROW is approximately 187' wide, including shoulders on either side of the roadway that are approximately 75' wide. These boundaries extend vertically into the air at a perpendicular angle to encompass the central arched viaduct portion of Cabrillo Bridge. According to the 2011 SR 163 Transportation Concept Summary the California Register historic district includes the following features:

- roadway
- adjoining landscaping flanking the freeway on either side
- Cabrillo (aka Laurel Street) Bridge (1915)
- Quince Street Overcrossing (1947)
- Richmond Street Overcrossing (1947)
- Upas Street Pedestrian Overcrossing (1947)
- Robinson Avenue Overcrossing (1942)
- University Avenue Overcrossing (1947)
- Washington Street Overcrossing (1942)
- Washington Street/6th Avenue Separation, Bridge (1940)

telephone: 415.391.7486
email: chris@verplanckconsulting.com
57 Post St., Suite 512, San Francisco, CA 94104

- Pascoe Street On-ramp (1947)[1]

In 2000, Cabrillo Historic Parkway was designated a local San Diego City Landmark (no. 441).

The significance of Cabrillo Historic Parkway cannot be overstated. Built during the 1940s when San Diego was attracting thousands of new residents to fill defense-related jobs during the Second World War, the freeway was designed to take advantage of, and not detract from the scenic qualities of Balboa Park. It is one of only two designated scenic parkways in California – the other being the Arroyo Seco Parkway/Pasadena Freeway (SR 110) in Los Angeles County.

As described extensively in the Historic Resources Technical Report for Balboa Park prepared by my firm in 2011-12, the proposed Plaza de Panama project would have significant and unavoidable visual and spatial effects on the Cabrillo Bridge/California Quadrangle ensemble, the landforms of the Central Mesa, and to a lesser extent, the Balboa Park Historic District as a whole.

The Plaza de Panama project would not have a significant physical or visual impact on the California Register-designated Cabrillo Historic Parkway historic district. We have broken down our comments into three sections; the first evaluates physical impacts to Cabrillo Bridge, the second visual impacts from SR 163, and the third impacts to the Cabrillo Historic Parkway historic district as a whole.

- The central portion of Cabrillo Bridge lay within the physical boundaries of the Cabrillo Historic Parkway historic district, which corresponds to the Caltrans ROW. It is obvious that the retention of the entire bridge is necessary in order to preserve the integrity of the district. However, the portion of Cabrillo Bridge that would be physically impacted by the project lay well outside the Caltrans ROW and it would affect only a small portion (70') of the bridge's southeast abutment, not the arched viaduct itself, which is the primary character-defining feature of the resource and the section that lay within the Caltrans ROW. It is important to point out here that the only significant direct impact to Cabrillo Bridge identified in the DEIR is spatial and not physical because the section of the south abutment balustrade being removed is so limited. Furthermore, the abutment balustrade on the north side of Cabrillo Bridge is also interrupted by the Administration Building.

- The attached visual mock-ups prepared by Heritage Architecture & Planning and published in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) indicate that the new work proposed as part of the Plaza de Panama project would not be visible from the roadway of SR 163, avoiding any significant visual impacts. Indeed, the photo-simulations in the DEIR show that the proposed Centennial Bridge and, in particular, the intersection of Centennial Bridge and Cabrillo Bridge would not be visible from SR 163.

[1] The description of the boundaries of the Cabrillo Historic Parkway boundaries are taken from the original determination of eligibility conducted by Caltrans architectural historians Frank Lortie and Dorene Clement in 1996.

- Although arguably the most important single architectural/engineering feature of the Cabrillo Historic Parkway historic district, the district is large, stretching from near the southern boundary of Balboa Park to its northern boundary, and contained within the district is a total of seven contributing bridge and overcrossings. The proposed project would impact only a defined and relatively minor portion of one of these seven bridges and overcrossings. Furthermore, the primary direct impact identified to this feature in the Balboa Park Plaza de Panama project is spatial – i.e., the combination of physical and visual impacts on the relationship of Cabrillo Bridge and the California Quadrangle/Museum of Man. As demonstrated in the accompanying visual simulations, there are no visual or spatial impacts to the Cabrillo Historic Parkway Historic District. In addition, there are no direct physical impacts within the boundaries of the Caltrans ROW, only to a portion of a contributing feature that mostly lay outside the district boundaries.

In summary, the proposed project would not have a significant adverse impact on the historical resource (Cabrillo Historic Parkway). It will not physically impact the district and it will not adversely impact the visual character of the district. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Christopher VerPlanck

Source: Heritage Architecture & Planning

Existing Condition, Centennial Bridge not Visible

PHOTO LOCATION 8

RECON

Source: Heritage Architecture & Planning

Existing Condition, Centennial Bridge not Visible

PHOTO LOCATION 9

RECON

Source: Heritage Architecture & Planning

Existing Condition, Centennial Bridge not Visible

PHOTO LOCATION 10

RECON

Source: Heritage Architecture & Planning

Existing Condition, Centennial Bridge not Visible

PHOTO LOCATION 11

RECON

Source: Heritage Architecture & Planning

Existing Condition, Centennial Bridge not Visible

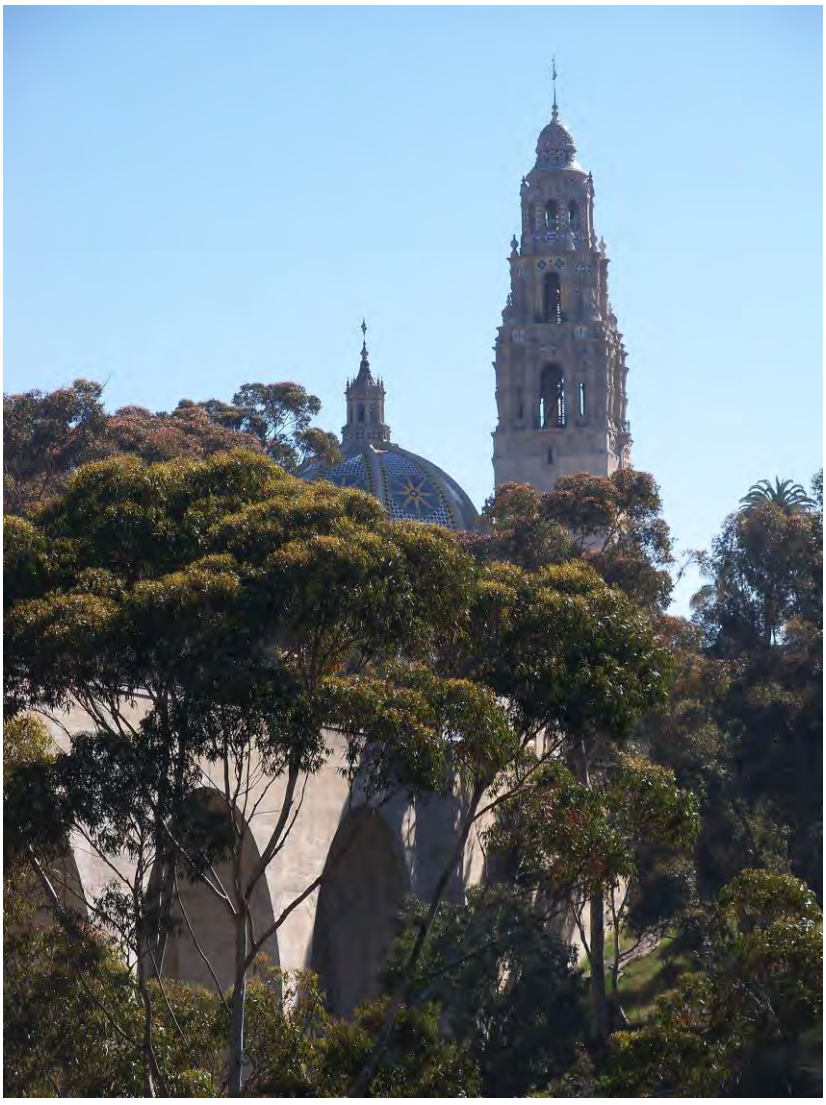
PHOTO LOCATION 12

RECON

HISTORIC RESOURCES TECHNICAL REPORT

BALBOA PARK

PLAZA DE PANAMA (Project No. 233958)



Prepared by

[redacted] VerPlanck
HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONSULTING

San Francisco, California

January 10, 2012

I. Executive Summary

Ranked along with New York's Central Park, Philadelphia's Fairmount Park, and San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, Balboa Park is one of America's foremost urban parks. At the heart of Balboa Park is the Central Mesa. Occupying the majority of the Central Mesa are the El Prado/Plaza de Panama and Palisades districts, the cultural heart of Balboa Park and the centerpiece of the National Historic Landmark (NHL)-listed Balboa Park Historic District. With minor differences, this historic district is also designated as San Diego Historic Landmark No. 1 and it is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) as one of the nation's most important examples of urban park planning and exposition architecture.

Working in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, New York-based architect Bertram Goodhue designed a romantic Spanish/Mexican city to be built atop Balboa Park's then undeveloped Central Mesa for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Only four of the exposition structures were designed as permanent structures – Cabrillo Bridge, the California Quadrangle, the Botanical Building, and the Spreckels Organ Pavilion. Faced with the demolition of the rest of exposition buildings after the fair closed in early 1917, public outcry saved the majority of the "temporary" buildings, structures, and gardens lining El Prado and Plaza de Panama.

Seventeen years later, in 1933, San Diego's business and civic leaders decided to reprise the success of the 1915 Exposition by hosting a new world's fair called the California Pacific International Exposition. They hired well-known local architect Richard S. Requa to rework the 1915 exposition precinct, as well as to build an entirely new zone on the southern prow of the Central Mesa. Known as The Palisades, this area now includes several large exhibition halls and an outdoor theater designed in the then-popular Streamline Moderne and Mayan Deco styles. The Palisades area also includes several Spanish/Mexican-style cottages built to house the cultural delegations of the participating foreign nations. Linked to the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex by Pan American Road, The Palisades area shares both historical and aesthetic links with the older group to the north.

Constructed of lightweight wood-frame and staff construction, most of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama group was not meant to last more than two or three years. Retained for use in 1915-16, and then again in 1935-36, the temporary structures required extensive maintenance to keep them safe throughout the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. Patching and painting could only do so much, and by the early 1960s most of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex was in poor condition. Most were earmarked for demolition and replacement with new structures in the 1960 *Balboa Park Master Plan*. The first two buildings to go were the Science and Education/Medical Arts Building and the Home Economy Building, both of which came down in 1964 to make way for the San Diego Museum of Art's new west wing and the Timken Museum, respectively. The demolition of these two buildings galvanized the preservation-minded residents of San Diego, who formed the "Committee of 100" to lobby the City to designate the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex as San Diego's first City Landmark. The Committee of 100 also worked to ensure that any new buildings constructed in the district would be designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style.

The efforts of the Committee of 100 were successful in ensuring the continuity of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama group as a historical ensemble throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Although most of the other temporary 1915 Exposition buildings were incrementally replaced when repeated patching no longer sufficed, the replacement buildings largely replicated their predecessors, often incorporating salvaged ornament and materials from the original structures.

The proposed project's goal is to remove private automobile traffic and parking from the historic El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex. Following the removal of autos from East El Prado in the 1970s, it has been a longstanding goal of park and city planners to remove private vehicular parking from Plaza de Panama, as well as to install more compatible paving materials in these areas. The 1989 *Balboa Park Master Plan (Master Plan)* recommends making Pershing Drive the primary vehicular access point to Balboa Park. As part of the plan, the Laurel Street/Cabrillo Bridge corridor would be de-emphasized as a vehicular access point in favor of enhanced pedestrian and transit access, including the provision of intra-park tram service, and eventually the construction of a light rail line down Park Boulevard. As part of its recommendations, the plan calls for the "eventual reclamation of the Prado and Pan American plaza areas as

pedestrian plazas…" To accommodate the continued need for parking the *Balboa Park Master Plan* also recommends the construction of a parking structure on the site of the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot.[1]

The 1992 *Central Mesa Precise Plan (Precise Plan)* supersedes the *Balboa Park Master Plan,* although its recommendations are largely the same in regard to vehicular and pedestrian circulation. The *Precise Plan* calls for long-term improvements to pedestrian access by removing parking from Plaza de Panama and by replacing the lost parking spaces in a new parking structure to be built on the site of the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot.[2] The *Precise Plan* also recommends providing tram service while the park is open and restricting private vehicle use in the El Prado area to one lane of eastbound traffic while the tram in operation. Two-way traffic would occur only after hours, when the tram was not in operation.[3]

In contrast to these previous plans, the proposed project would remove vehicular circulation entirely from the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex, while continuing to allow motorists to access the Central Mesa from the west. This would be accomplished by building a new bypass bridge (to be called "Centennial Bridge") from the eastern abutment of Cabrillo Bridge to the existing Alcazar Parking Lot. As part of the project, Alcazar Parking Lot would be converted into a valet/drop-off zone with parking provided only for disabled motorists. From there, a new bypass road (to be called "Centennial Road") would exit Alcazar Parking Lot; follow the northern and eastern rims of Palm Canyon to Pan American Road East, where it would go underground behind the Spreckels Organ Pavilion, to a new underground parking structure that would be built on the site of the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot. Centennial Road would then continue beyond the parking structure to Presidents Way.

The new Organ Pavilion Parking Structure would be below-grade and its roof landscaped, recovering parkland within an area that has been paved for at least 60 years. In addition, Centennial Road would be grade-separated, allowing the removal of vehicular traffic from Pan

[1] City of San Diego, *Balboa Park Master Plan* (San Diego: July 25, 1989; revised December 9, 1997), 67-82.
[2] City of San Diego Planning Department; *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 193.
[3] Ibid., 194.

American Road and The Esplanade (also known as "The Mall") and restoring these thoroughfares to pedestrian use. The proposed work, including Centennial Bridge, Centennial Road, the Organ Pavilion Parking Structure, and other site improvements, would be designed in a modern idiom reflecting their era of construction.

The proposed project would have many beneficial impacts – foremost among them the removal of private vehicles from the heart of the Balboa Park Historic District and the repaving and re-landscaping of these areas in more compatible and historically appropriate materials. It would result in several adverse physical and visual impacts to Cabrillo Bridge and the California Quadrangle, as well as a limited number of impacts to the historic district as a whole. In conclusion, the proposed project appears to comply with Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Rehabilitation Standards) 1, 3-8, and 10. It does not appear to comply with Standards 2 and 9.

II. Introduction

A. Purpose

VerPlanck Historic Preservation Consulting (VHPC) prepared this Historical Resources Technical Report (Technical Report) for Recon Environmental at the request of the San Diego City Development Services Department. This report summarizes the significance of Balboa Park as a historic designed landscape and the Central Mesa as the core of the Balboa Park Historic District. Applying the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Rehabilitation Standards), this report analyzes the potential impacts of the proposed project on the environment. Although it would have several beneficial impacts, the proposed project would also entail several physical and visual changes to the National Register-listed and NHL-designated Balboa Park Historic District.

After summarizing the existing regulatory environment (Chapter IV), the Technical Report provides a detailed historical context for Balboa Park (Chapter V). This chapter analyzes the evolution of the park from its tenuous beginnings in 1868 until the 1915-16 Panama-California Exposition and the later 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition. Chapter V concludes

with an account of the evolution of Balboa Park from 1936 onward, including a discussion of efforts to preserve the temporary exposition buildings for ongoing cultural and civic uses. Chapter VI contains brief descriptions and historical summaries for each building, structure, landscape feature, and major public art piece within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). The Technical Report concludes with an evaluation of the historic status of the Balboa Park Historic District and its individual components (Chapter VII) and a description of the project and an evaluation of its impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15064.5 (a), as well as the City of San Diego's Historic Resources Guidelines (Chapter VIII).

B. Definition of Geographical Area

Set aside for public use in 1868 by Alonzo Horton, José G. Estudillo, and other San Diego pioneers, the boundaries of Balboa Park (originally City Park) have changed over time, achieving their current configuration during the late twentieth century. Today Balboa Park is bounded by Upas Street to the north, 28th Street to the east, Russ Boulevard and Interstate 5 to the south, and 6th Avenue to the west. Although it extends to include a portion of the West Mesa, the APE is centered on the Central Mesa. In the *Precise Plan*, the Central Mesa is defined by Cabrillo Historic Parkway (California State Highway 163) to the west, Park Boulevard to the east, Interstate 5 to the south, and an irregular boundary on the north, which is defined primarily by the southern boundary of the San Diego Zoo. According to the *Precise Plan*, the Central Mesa also includes the Spanish Village, the Carousel, San Diego Zoo's parking lot, and the War Memorial Building.

According to the San Diego Development Services Department's bulletin: *Significance Determination Thresholds: California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)* (November 2011) the assessment of any project that could result in impacts to historical resources must include the delineation of an Area of Potential Effect (APE). The APE should include both areas of direct (physical) and indirect (visual) impacts. Direct impacts include activities such as site grading, road construction, excavation, demolition, new construction, alterations, and all other physical repercussions. Indirect impacts include less tangible results such as visual, audible, or

atmospheric effects that "are out of character with the historic property" or that "alter its setting."[4]

For the purposes of defining the APE, VHPC started with the boundaries of the Balboa Park Historic District, which covers the majority of the Central Mesa. However, a large portion of the historic district will be unaffected by the project, including everything north of Old Globe Way and east of Village Place. As a result, VHPC excluded these areas from the APE. Although the direct physical impacts of the project are limited to several precisely defined areas, the indirect visual and atmospheric impacts may affect a much larger area, which includes any buildings, structures, and landscapes from which the proposed project would be visible. In addition to the rest of the Central Mesa south of Old Globe Way and west of Village Place, there are several points from the West Mesa from which aspects of the proposed project would be visible, resulting in VHPC extending the APE west, across Cabrillo Bridge, to the West Mesa **(Figure 1)**.[5] The area of the West Mesa that is part of the APE is bounded by El Prado and Cabrillo Bridge to the north, 6th Avenue to the west, and Juniper Street to the south. The area of the APE that may be physically impacted by the proposed project is much smaller **(Figure 2)**.

[4] San Diego Development Services Department, *California Environmental Quality Act Significance Determination Thresholds* (San Diego: January 2011), 37-8.

[5] In order to determine the boundaries of the area of potential effect, we have relied on guidance from the Section 106 process outlined in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 800.16(d), which defines the area of potential effect as "the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist."

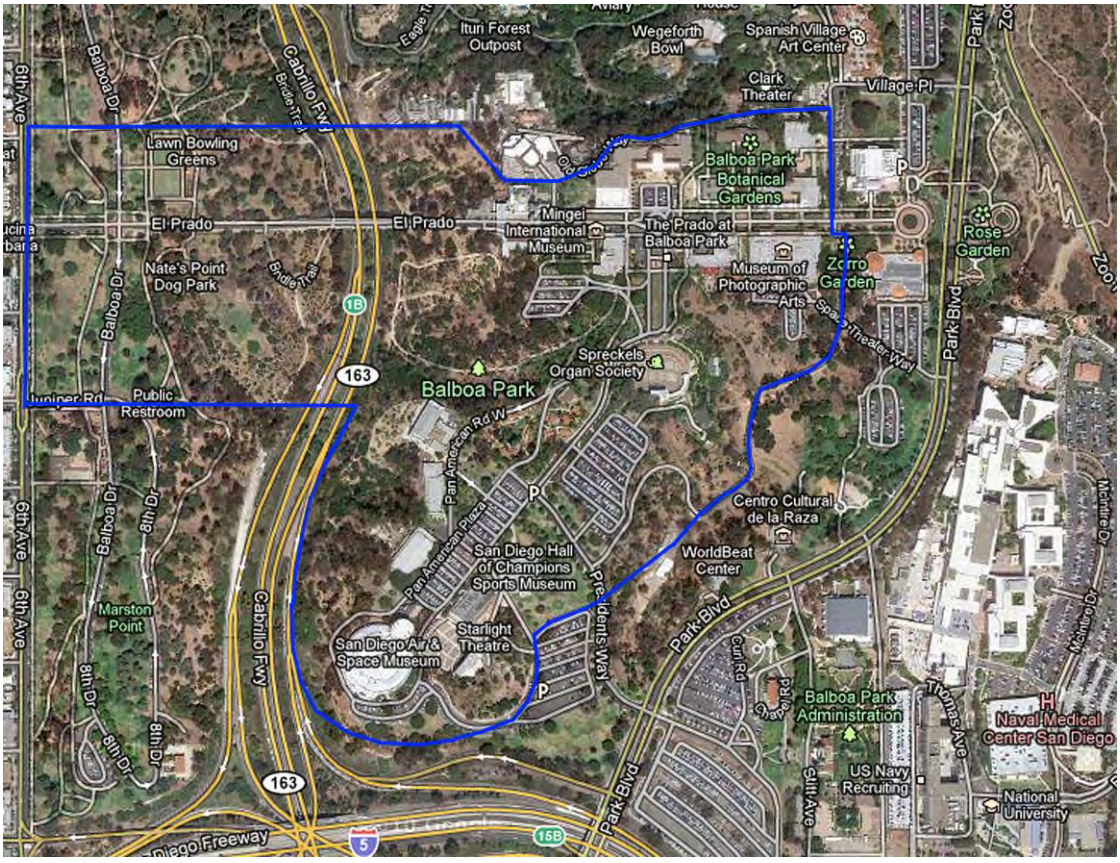


Figure 1. Area of Potential Effects (in blue)
Source: Google Maps; annotated by Christopher VerPlanck

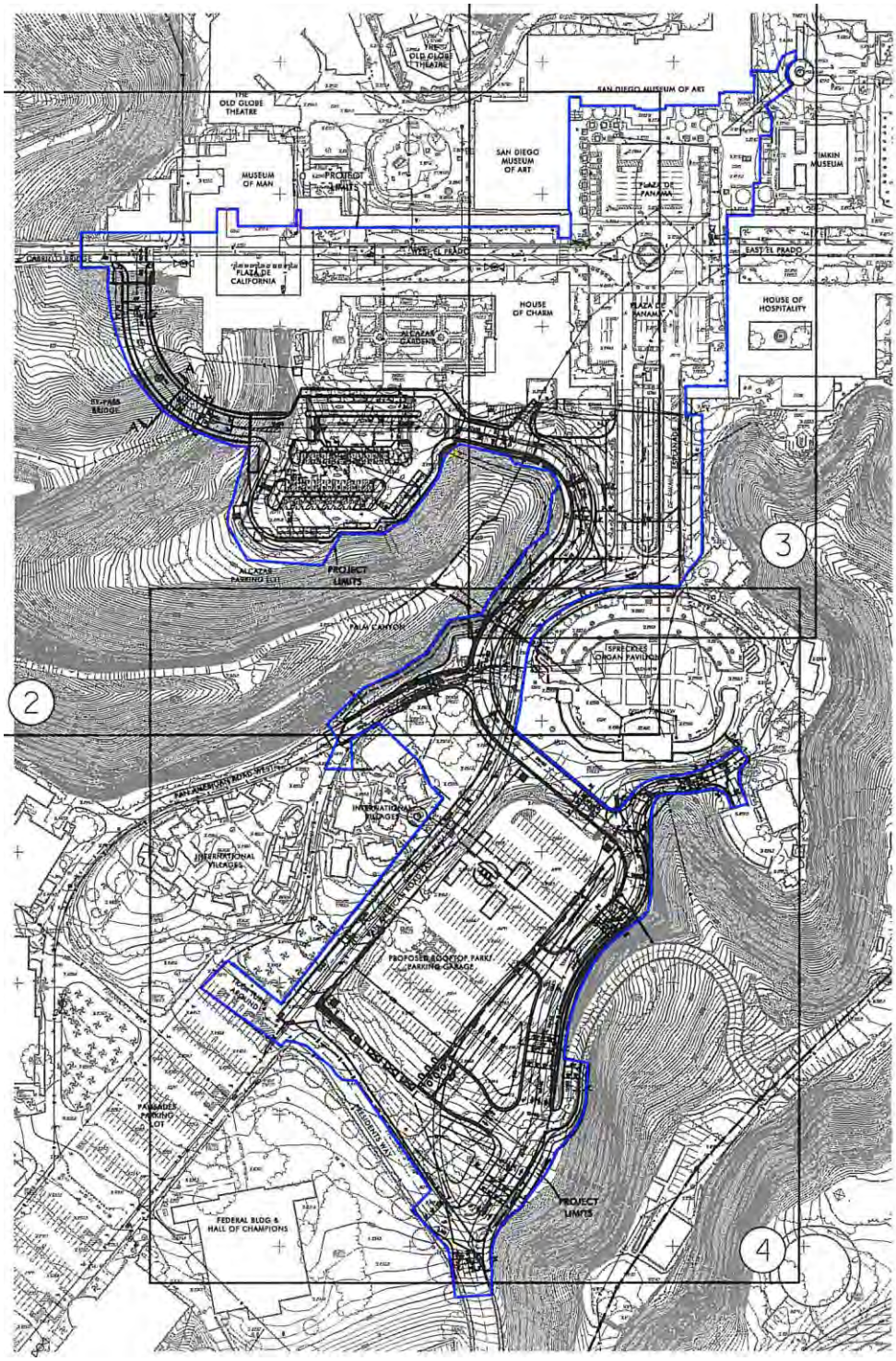


Figure 2. Project Area (in blue)
Source: Rick Engineering; annotated by Christopher VerPlanck

C. Project Personnel

Christopher VerPlanck, principal of VHPC, prepared this report. Mr. VerPlanck meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Architectural History and History, with over 15 years of experience documenting and evaluating historical resources throughout California and Arizona. Mr. VerPlanck has completed several major projects in greater San Diego over the last decade, including the expansion of the Salk Institute for Biological Studies' La Jolla campus in 2005, rehabilitation and expansion of St. Paul's Cathedral in 2008, and the rehabilitation of the John D. Spreckels Mansion in Coronado in 2009.

III. Methods

Christopher VerPlanck traveled to San Diego during the week of March 28-April 1, 2011 to survey Balboa Park's Central Mesa. VerPlanck photographed and filled out an inventory form for each contributing building, structure, landscape feature, and major public artwork within the boundaries of the Balboa Park Historic District. VerPlanck used the resulting field data to prepare the individual resource descriptions in Chapter VI. VerPlanck also took visual observations at various points throughout the Central Mesa and West Mesa to determine the boundaries of the APE.

Christopher VerPlanck visited the offices of the San Diego Development Services Department to copy files on Balboa Park and its individual buildings, structures, and landscapes. VerPlanck also visited the San Diego Public Library and consulted his own extensive in-house library for sources relating to San Diego history, including the author's own collection of *The Journal of San Diego History*. Other important secondary sources included David Marshall's *San Diego's Balboa Park* (2007), Dirk Sutro's *San Diego Architecture* (2002), historic editions of the *San Diego Union* and the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, as well as many articles found on the San Diego Historical Center's excellent website. David Marshall generously shared many postcards, historic photographs, and ephemera from his personal collection for this Technical Report.

The analysis in this Technical Report is based on preservation planning methodology informed by the following documents: *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of*

Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, & Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995); *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (1996); and the *City of San Diego Planning Division's Significance Determination Thresholds: California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)* (January 2011).

IV. Regulatory Environment

This section examines the national, state, and local historical ratings and designations assigned to the APE, as well as Balboa Park Historic District as a whole. They are organized in chronological order, beginning with the earliest designations and working toward the present day.

A. City of San Diego Register of Historic Landmarks (1967; amended 1988)

On September 7, 1967, the San Diego Historical Sites Board voted to designate the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex as Landmark No. 1 in the San Diego Register of Historic Landmarks. Its status as San Diego's first local landmark indicates the importance of Balboa Park to San Diegans. The original local landmark was not given precise boundaries at the time. As amended in 1988 the boundaries of the district were defined as Cabrillo Historic Parkway (California State Highway 163) to the west, the San Diego Zoo and Parking Lot to the north, Park Boulevard to the east, and Interstate 5 to the south **(Figure 3)**. These revised boundaries include The Palisades area which was not part of the original landmark designation, the Spanish Village, the Carousel, and several individual landmarks, including the Ford Building (now the San Diego Air & Space Museum).

Figure 3. Boundaries of San Diego Landmark No. 1 (as amended in 1988)
Source: San Diego Development Services Department

B. National Register of Historic Places (1975)

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation's comprehensive inventory of historic resources. The National Register, administered by the National Park Service, includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Typically, resources over fifty years of age are eligible for listing in the National Register if they meet any one of the four significance criteria and if they retain sufficient historic integrity. Resources under fifty years of age can be determined eligible if it can be demonstrated that they are of "exceptional importance," or if they are contributors to a potential historic district. National Register criteria are defined in depth in *National Register Bulletin Number 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. There are four criteria under which a structure, site, building, district, or object can be considered eligible for listing in the National Register:

> **Criterion A (Event):** Properties associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
>
> **Criterion B (Person):** Properties associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
>
> **Criterion C (Design/Construction):** Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction; and
>
> **Criterion D (Information Potential):** Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

A resource can be considered significant on a national, state, or local level to American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.

The statement of significance in the 1975 National Register nomination for the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex provides some detail on the area's history and its character-defining features. The nomination lists the following areas of significance: art, landscape architecture, science, sculpture, social/humanitarian, park planning, and exposition site architecture. The period of significance spans three separate years: 1915, 1925, and 1933 – coinciding with the completion

dates of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex, the San Diego Museum of Art, and the San Diego Natural History Museum, respectively. The map accompanying the nomination indicates that the nomination encompassed only the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex, beginning on the west side of Cabrillo Canyon at 6th Avenue and extending as far east as Florida Canyon on the east side of Park Boulevard. The northern boundary follows the southern boundary of the San Diego Zoo. Meanwhile, the southern boundary passes just south of the Spreckels Organ Pavilion, encompassing Palm Canyon, the Archery Range, and Gold Gulch to the east.[6] The Palisades complex was not included. The following buildings and structures are specifically called out as contributors to the National Register district:

- Cabrillo Bridge
- House of Charm
- House of Hospitality
- Electrical Building (Casa de Balboa)
- Organ Pavilion
- Alcazar Gardens
- Plaza de Panama
- El Prado Arcade
- Fine Arts Gallery (San Diego Museum of Art)
- Casa del Prado
- Natural History Museum

Although encompassed within these boundaries the California Quadrangle complex was specifically omitted from the nomination; this complex was listed separately in 1974.

C. National Historic Landmark Program (1977)

National Historic Landmarks are properties with the highest level of significance to the history of the United States and its territories. National Historic Landmarks are architecturally or historically significant properties designated by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior for their ability to illustrate and interpret the history and culture of the United States. Managed by the National Park Service, the National Historic Landmarks Survey consists of approximately 2,400 properties (136 in California). In comparison to the National Register of Historic Places, the National Historic Landmark Survey includes only those properties that have direct national significance.

[6] Mr. Jean Stern, "El Prado Complex," *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form* (Washington, D.C.: 1967), 8-1.

National Historic Landmark eligibility applies to any property that satisfies one or more of the following criteria and that retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association:

> (1) That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to, and are identified with, or that outstandingly represent, the broad national patterns of United States history and from which an understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained; or
>
> (2) That are associated importantly with the lives of persons nationally significant in the history of the United States; or
>
> (3) That represent some great idea or ideal of the American people; or
>
> (4) That embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style or method of construction, or that represent a significant, distinctive and exceptional entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
>
> (5) That are composed of integral parts of the environment not sufficiently significant by reason of historical association or artistic merit to warrant individual recognition but collectively compose an entity of exceptional historical or artistic significance, or outstandingly commemorate or illustrate a way of life or culture; or
>
> (6) That have yielded or may be likely to yield information of major scientific importance by revealing new cultures, or by shedding light upon periods of occupation over large areas of the United States. Such sites are those which have yielded, or which may reasonably be expected to yield, data affecting theories, concepts and ideas to a major degree.

Balboa Park's Central Mesa area was designated a National Historic Landmark on December 22, 1977. The nomination provides a brief and very general assessment of Balboa Park in the statement of significance:

> Balboa Park is the cultural center of San Diego as well as being a beautifully designed urban area—one of the best planned and landscaped in America. The buildings are some of the finest Spanish Baroque revival architecture extant.[7]

The statement of significance does not include any other detail, omitting discussion about which National Historic Landmark criteria Balboa Park fulfills. The nomination form is also ambiguous concerning the boundaries of the National Historic Landmark District. Although the title of the nomination implies that Balboa Park is designated in its entirety, the only buildings and

[7] Carolyn Pitts, "Balboa Park," *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form* (Washington, D.C.: July 19, 1977), 8-1.

landscapes discussed in the nomination form (with the exception of the Ford Building) are located within the El Prado/Plaza de Panama area. The specific buildings and structures listed as contributors appear to have been taken from the 1975 National Register nomination:

- Cabrillo Bridge
- House of Charm
- House of Hospitality
- Electrical Building (Casa de Balboa)
- Botanical Building
- Organ Pavilion
- Alcazar Gardens
- Plaza de Panama
- El Prado Arcade
- Fine Arts Gallery (San Diego Museum of Art)
- Casa del Prado
- Natural History Museum

The verbal boundary description indicates that the boundaries of the National Historic Landmark District encompass the majority of the Central Mesa – basically everything south of the San Diego Zoo – including both the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex and The Palisades.

D. State Route 163, Cabrillo Historic Parkway (1992)

State Route 163 (Cabrillo Historic Parkway) passes through the APE. It was designated a San Diego Historic Landmark (No. 441) in 2000. Cabrillo Parkway was designated a California Scenic Byway in 1992. In 1996, it was designated a California Register Historic District, which encompasses the 1947 project limits, including a portion of Cabrillo Bridge. In March 2002, the roadway from A Street to the 6th Avenue on-ramp was designated a Historic Parkway by the California Legislature (AB 3025). It is one of only two designated scenic parkways in California – the other being the Arroyo Seco Parkway/Pasadena Freeway in Los Angeles County.

E. Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan (1992)

The *Central Mesa Precise Plan (Precise Plan)* is an outgrowth of the *Balboa Park Master Plan* of 1989. Adopted by the San Diego City Council on October 20, 1992, the *Precise Plan* contains sets of objectives and policies guiding decisions affecting land use within the Central Mesa – an area bounded by Cabrillo Historic Parkway to the west, San Diego Zoo and the War Memorial Building

to the north, Park Boulevard to the east, and Interstate 5 to the south.[8] The *Precise Plan* contains an extensive history of the development of Balboa Park's Central Mesa, as well as analyses of its land use patterns, circulation, architecture, landscape, management, and maintenance standards.

The *Precise Plan* contains specific recommendations for treating the Central Mesa's historic buildings, circulation, and landscape features. The plan calls for rehabilitating existing historic features "in a manner which preserves its historic and aesthetic significance while providing for functional needs."[9] The *Precise Plan* also emphasizes the important interrelationship "between the built and the outdoor environment" and recommends restoring not just individual buildings, but instead that an "entire ensemble in its original composition should be preserved and restored wherever possible."[10]

The *Precise Plan* contains extensive recommendations on landscape and circulation elements, recommending among other things the return of Plaza de Panama to pedestrian use and the modification of West El Prado to create more opportunities for pedestrian activity. One of the central recommendations of the *Precise Plan* entails the construction of a multi-level parking structure on the site of the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot. The *Precise Plan* also contains design guidelines and general recommendations for the treatment of all character-defining buildings, structures, landscapes, circulation networks, public art, and infrastructure.

F. San Diego Historic Preservation Element (2008)

The *San Diego General Plan (General Plan)* is San Diego's blueprint for guiding development and resource protection. As required by the State of California, the *General Plan* is composed of seven mandatory chapters, or "elements." These include Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise and Safety. In addition to these San Diego City Council has adopted several optional elements that address other issues important to San Diegans.

[8] San Diego City Council, "Resolution Number R – 268789" (San Diego: San Diego City Council, adopted July 7, 1987).
[9] Estrada Land Planning, Inc., The City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department, and San Diego Development Services Department; *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 205.
[10] Ibid.

The *Historic Preservation Element* is one of these optional elements. The purpose of the *San Diego Historic Preservation Element* is stated in its Introduction: "No city can hope to understand its present or forecast its future if it fails to recognize its past. By tracing and preserving its past, a city can gain a clear sense of the process by which it achieved its present form and substance."[11] Cultural resources are defined as "elements from the built environment such as buildings, structures, objects, and districts, landscape features, including significant trees and plantings, hardscape, fountains, lighting, sculptures, signs and other natural or designed features, interior elements and fixtures designated in conjunction with a property, significant archaeological sites, and traditional cultural properties." [12]

The *Historic Preservation Element* discusses archaeological and historic site preservation in San Diego, including the roles and responsibilities of the Historical Resources Board, the status of cultural resource surveys, the California State Historical Building Code, historic preservation overlay districts, the Mills Act, conservation easements, and other preservation incentives and strategies. The *Historic Preservation Element* also includes a discussion of criteria used by the Historical Resources Board to designate landmarks and a list of recommended steps to strengthen historic preservation in San Diego. By necessity the *Historic Preservation Element* does not provide specifics on individual resources, although it does mention that Balboa Park was San Diego's first designated City Landmark.[13]

G. California Historical Resources Information System (2011)

VHPC requested the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at San Diego State University to search the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) for recorded historical and archaeological resources known to be present in Balboa Park's Central Mesa. According to the search results, the California Quadrangle and the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex, as well as the Ford Building, are listed in the National Register with a status code of 1D, meaning that they are "Contributor(s) to a district or multiple resource property listed in the National Register

[11] San Diego Development Services Department, *San Diego General Plan – Historic Preservation Element* (San Diego: San Diego Planning Department, 2007), HP-3.
[12] Ibid.
[13] San Diego Development Services Department, *San Diego General Plan – Historic Preservation Element* (San Diego: San Diego Planning Department, 2007), HP-7.

by the Keeper; listed in the California Register."[14] The record search also yielded report references and Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms for five historic-era archaeological sites in Balboa Park.

V. Historic Context

A. Early Historic Era: Spanish, Mexican and Early American Periods

The Early Historic Era in San Diego County begins with the establishment of Mission San Diego de Alcalá in 1769 and continues to the first major land boom in the 1880s. This era is divided into three periods that coincide with changes in sovereignty. They include the Spanish Period: 1769-1822, the Mexican Period: 1822-46, and the Early American Period: 1846 to 1888.

Spanish Period

In 1542, the Portuguese explorer Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo became the first European known to have visited the area when he sailed into San Diego Bay on September 28, 1542. Cabrillo was not looking for gold or a place to settle, so he soon moved on northward in search of the fabled Northwest Passage. Cabrillo did stay just long enough to name the fine natural bay *San Miguel* (after one of his ships). He also claimed California for Spain. Sixty years later, Sebastián Vizcaíno sailed northward along the coastline of Alta California. Like Cabrillo, he sailed into what is now San Diego Bay, renaming it after his flagship the *San Diego de Alcalá*.

Without apparent natural wealth or resources, there was little to attract Spanish settlers to Alta California. By the late 1700s, however, Spanish authorities had become increasingly alarmed over the incursions of Russian fur traders moving down from the Aleutian Islands. In response, the Spanish made plans to settle and garrison Alta California. Their strategy involved the establishment of military outposts (*presidios*) along the coast of California to establish a military presence. At the same time, the Spanish government requested the Franciscan Order to build a chain of missions at regular intervals (within a day's ride) throughout the coastal plains and valleys of California. From these missions Spanish monks would try to convert the native

[14] California Historical Resource Status Codes (12.8.2003).

inhabitants to Catholicism, teach them Spanish, and ideally create a group of Hispanicized citizens loyal to the Crown.

The initial colonization of San Diego consisted both of an advance military force under the command of Don Gaspar de Portolá and a religious contingent under the leadership of Junípero Serra. Serra's work resulted in the establishment of the first mission in Alta California – *Misíon San Diego de Alcalá* – in 1769 **(Figure 4)**. San Diego was the first link in a chain of 21 missions that would eventually span the 500+ miles from San Diego to Sonoma. With its large navigable bay and geographical position midway between the main supply base at Loreto, Baja California, and Monterey Bay, San Diego was an ideal location for launching the colonization of Alta California.[15]

Figure 4. *Mission San Diego de Alcalá*, ca. 1900
Source: San Diego History Center

The mission system was a disaster for the native Kumeeyaay people of San Diego. Finding themselves confined to the mission, where they were in effect enslaved by their Spanish masters, baptized Kumeeyaay (or *Diegueños* as they were called by the Spanish) were compelled to relinquish their language, culture, and religion. Finding the situation intolerable, on November 4-5 1775, the Kumeeyaay attacked the mission and burned it to the ground,

[15] San Diego History Center, *Timeline of San Diego History,* (http://www.sandiegohistory.org/timeline/timeline1.htm), accessed August 24, 2005.

forcing the Spanish to seek refuge at the Presídio, six miles west of the mission. The event was only a temporary setback; the mission was rebuilt and within two years the first group of settlers from México had arrived and began constructing a permanent settlement near the Presídio.

Following its reconstruction, the San Diego Mission prospered during the latter part of the eighteenth century, trading cattle hides, grain, wine, and leatherwork for manufactured goods from American and European traders. The first American ship, the *Betsy*, arrived in 1800. By 1797, the number of Indian neophytes (converts) at the mission reached 1,405, the largest population of any mission in Alta California. This state of affairs continued largely uninterrupted throughout the first quarter of the nineteenth century.[16]

Mexican Period

In 1821, the Spanish colony of New Spain revolted and became the independent nation of México. The new republic accelerated the Spanish policy of settling the sparsely populated frontier region of Alta California, and soon many settlers from México began arriving in San Diego. Between 1820 and 1834, when San Diego was designated a Pueblo, the town's population had grown to more than 600 residents. In 1833, the Mexican government decided to secularize the missions of Alta California. Although the avowed aim of this action was to free the Indians from peonage, secularization devolved into a land grab as Spanish and Mexican settlers took the land originally reserved for the Kumeeyaay. Unusually, the lands belonging to the San Diego Mission were not confiscated for more than a decade following secularization. Not until 1846 did Pío Pico, the last Mexican governor, grant the mission and its 58,000 acres to a colonist named Don Santiago Arguello.[17]

Early American Period

The era of Mexican sovereignty in San Diego came to a rather abrupt end in 1846 with the Mexican-American War and the subsequent signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo on

[16] Ibid. San Diego History Center, *Timeline of San Diego History,* (http://www.sandiegohistory.org/timeline/timeline1.htm), accessed August 24, 2005.
[17] Ibid.

February 2, 1848. The boundary between the two nations was established a year later by the American-Mexican Boundary Commission, which gave San Diego to the United States. In 1850, the same year California was admitted to the Union, San Diego County (which then also included present-day Imperial County and parts of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties) was established as one of California's original 27 counties. San Diego was also incorporated as a city in 1850, although its population stood at only 650.[18]

San Diego changed very little between statehood and the Civil War. Although Northern California's population exploded during the Gold Rush, Southern California saw little in-migration. In fact, San Diego's population actually declined after 1850. The handful of Americans that did trickle into the remote settlement assimilated into the dominant Californio culture by learning to speak Spanish, converting to Catholicism, and marrying local women.

Pueblo Lands

Designated as a Pueblo in 1834, San Diego had attained self-governing status as a civilian settlement under Mexican law. Pueblo status came with an endowment of public land, later called the "Pueblo Lands." San Diego's Pueblo Lands were formally surveyed in 1845 by sub-prefect Santiago Arguello and recorded by Governor Pío Pico in May 1846.[19] After California became a state in 1850, San Diego's leaders argued that the city should inherit all of the Pueblo Lands assigned to it under Mexican law: 48,556 acres (eleven square leagues) of land stretching from what is now downtown San Diego north to the Sorrento Valley, including all of what is now Balboa Park **(Figure 5)**. San Diego made out very well, gaining control of nearly three times the average amount of land awarded to the other Pueblos, including Los Angeles, San José, Sonoma, and Santa Barbara.[20]

[18] San Diego History Center, *Timeline of San Diego History* (http://www.sandiegohistory.org/timeline/timeline1.htm), accessed August 24, 2005).
[19] Neal Harlow, *Maps of the Pueblo Lands of San Diego: 1602-1874* (Los Angeles: Dawson's Bookshop, 1987), pp. 21-22.
[20] 1,233 acres were eventually subtracted from San Diego's pueblo lands in order to create the Military Reservation on Point Loma, reducing the total acreage to 47,323 acres. Claire B. Crane, "The Pueblo Lands: San Diego's Hispanic Heritage," *The Journal of San Diego History* (Spring 1991), p. 6.

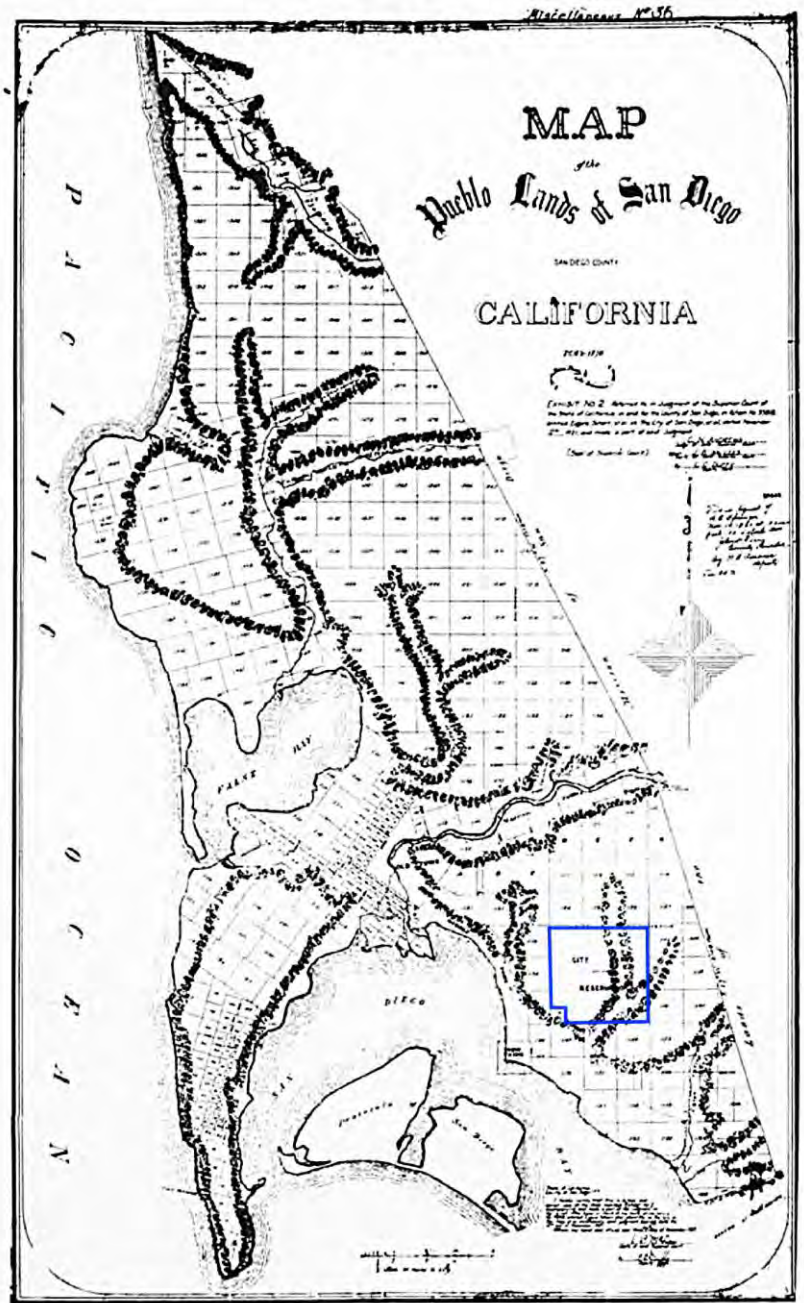


Figure 5. Map showing San Diego's Pueblo Lands, ca. 1874
Note City Park outlined in blue
Source: San Diego History Center
Annotated by Christopher VerPlanck

Early attempts at developing San Diego along American lines mostly failed. Following an aborted attempt by William Heath Davis, the first person to envision San Diego as a future metropolis was Alonzo E. Horton **(Figure 6)**. An American trader and speculator who had been living in San Francisco, Horton arrived at San Diego on the paddle-wheel steamer *Pacific* in 1867. Purposely avoiding the original Pueblo, which he felt did not "lie right," Horton purchased 960 acres of land on San Diego Bay. After surveying and laying out "New Town" San Diego, Horton built a hotel (Horton House) **(Figure 7)** and returned to San Francisco, where he set up a land office with the purpose of selling San Diego as the "city of the future."[21]

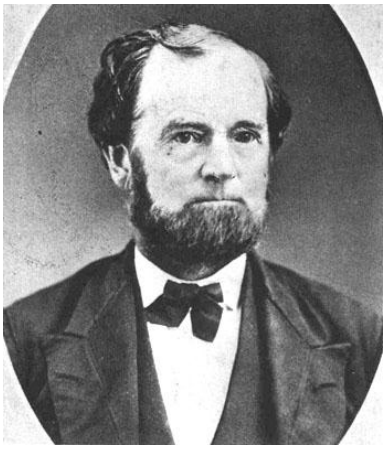


Figure 6. Alonzo E. Horton
Source: San Diego History Center

Figure 7. Horton House, ca. 1870
Source: San Diego History Center

Horton's activities unleashed a series of "boom and bust" cycles fueled by feverish real estate speculation. San Diego's biggest early real estate boom began in 1884 after the California Southern Railroad built a spur line from Los Angeles to San Diego. San Diego's population exploded, reaching more than 40,000 in 1887. Many prominent civic landmarks, such as the Hotel del Coronado, took shape during this period.[22] The real estate boom ended with a severe crash in 1888. Many speculators were ruined overnight and San Diego's population dropped by more than half. San Diego did not recover as quickly as Los Angeles, which resumed growing in the 1890s. Despite its large, natural harbor San Diego remained at a disadvantage to its neighbor to the north, because unlike Los Angeles, San Diego lacked its own direct rail connection to the East. This condition lasted until 1919, when the San Diego & Arizona Eastern

[21] Kevin Starr, *The Dream Endures: California Enters the 1940s* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press), p. 95.
[22] Ibid., p. 96.

Railroad constructed a precarious alignment through the Cuyamaca Mountains east to Phoenix.[23]

San Diego gradually recovered during the early years of the twentieth century. One of its principal boosters was John D. Spreckels, scion of San Francisco sugar king Claus Spreckels. The younger Spreckels bought up much of San Diego's civic infrastructure, including the transit system and two of the city's newspapers. He also purchased North Island and most of Coronado, including the Hotel del Coronado.

Unlike the boom years of the 1880s, San Diego grew at a moderate pace during the early twentieth century. In 1910, the city's population had only just surpassed its pre-1888 population of 40,000. With ample room to grow, San Diego began to sprawl out onto the mesas bounding New Town to the east. In 1908, San Diego hired prominent city planner John Nolen to draw up the city's first General Plan. Broad in outline, the plan set up the guiding principles for which San Diego would distinguish itself. Nolen's City Beautiful-inspired plan, which was not formally implemented until 1926, encouraged the young city to "forsake the smokestack" and instead capitalize on its subtropical climate and spectacular scenery.[24]

B. Origins of Balboa Park

City Park Set Aside

From its earliest days, San Diego's civic leaders demonstrated a commitment to providing public open space for its citizens. This was remarkable given the small size of the city and the dominant role of laissez faire capitalism in nineteenth-century America. On February 15, 1868, only one year after Alonzo Horton founded "New Town," three Trustees of the City of San Diego - Ephraim W. Morse, Thomas Bush, and M.S. Manasse – voted to set aside two 160-acre "Pueblo Lots" "for the purpose of securing to the inhabitants of the City of San Diego a suitable park."[25] Initially few saw the need for a 320-acre park for a city of only 2,310 people, but Morse enlisted Alonzo Horton, taking him to the site of the proposed park. After visiting the site, Horton

[23] Ibid.
[24] Lynne Carrier, *San Diego: Looking to the Future – General Plan: City of Villages* (San Diego Planning Department: 2005), p. 1.
[25] Gregory E. Montes, "San Diego's City Park: 1868-1902," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly*, Volume 23, Number 2 (Spring 1977), 1.

suggested enlarging it from two to nine Pueblo Lots, expanding the size of the proposed park from 320 to 1,440 acres.[26] A third man who played a significant role in setting aside the large park reservation was Board of Trustees President José Estudillo. In 1915, he said: "I suggested that 1,400 acres be set aside as a public park. I really didn't have in mind that the land should be used for a public park, but merely as a means of saving it for the city. And that is the story of the origin of the park."[27]

Horton and Estudillo's decision to endorse the expanded park resulted not only from an enlightened sense of public spirit. Both were confident that San Diego would someday become an important city and they wanted to make certain that the future metropolis would have a park of commensurate importance.

American Park Movement

The decision to set aside a large tract for public parkland was a groundbreaking achievement for San Diego. Prior to this era, both Anglo-American and Hispanic settlers had set aside tracts of land for public use in various parts of North America; New England had its town greens and Spanish and Mexican pueblos had their plazas. Although they had slightly different functions, both were used for military drills and public assemblies. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, several New England communities began beautifying their public grounds. In 1787, New Haven used public subscriptions to beautify its Green, and in the 1830s, Boston converted part of its Common (formerly used for livestock grazing and military drills) into the Boston Public Garden.[28]

Another important strand in the development of American parks in the nineteenth century was the Cemetery Movement. Embodied in the landscaped grounds of Mt. Auburn Cemetery (1831) in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Laurel Hill Cemetery (1836) in Philadelphia, landscaped cemeteries were created as non-denominational business ventures that substituted winding paths, water features, and lush greenswards for the tightly regimented church graveyards.[29]

[26] Ibid., 2.
[27] *San Diego Union and Daily Bee* (May 27, 1915), 1.
[28] Christopher Pollock, *San Francisco's Golden Gate Park* (Portland, OR: Westwinds Press, 2001), 15.
[29] Ibid., 16.

These cemeteries quickly became attractions in their own right, luring weekend picnickers and strollers with their landscaped grounds and footpaths.

The establishment of large wilderness parks – beginning with the designation of Yosemite Valley as California's first state park (later made a national park) in 1864 – provided yet another precedent in the development of urban parks. To park supporters the conservation of open space highlighted that living in (or at least visiting) nature could convey moral and societal benefits. Taken for granted by many today, this notion of nature as a refuge for human regeneration was a new concept during the mid-nineteenth century – an era better known for the despoliation of natural landscapes for private financial gain.

The American Park Movement, as it became known, took off during the 1850s with the design and construction of New York's Central Park by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux. Olmsted, a man known to many as the "father of American landscape architecture," and the English-born architect Calvert Vaux, were both devotees of Andrew Jackson Downing, the originator of American landscape design theory. Inculcated with his ideas, the two men laid out America's first fully realized urban park. Completed in 1876, the 843-acre Central Park remained the template for a generation of scenic urban parks, including San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, Brooklyn's Prospect Park, and Philadelphia's Fairmount Park.

C. City Park: 1868-1910

Park Boundaries Confirmed

Although San Diego's City Park was set aside as early as 1868, it took many years before any real landscaping occurred there. Park advocates faced many challenges, including land speculators, the site's rough terrain, scarcity of water, and remoteness from the developed portions of San Diego. Feeling pressure from property developers, in October 1869, the San Diego Board of Trustees asked the California Legislature to confirm the May 1868 dedication of the 1,400-acre (40 acres had already been sold off) City Park.[30] This bill was apparently unsuccessful because in 1870 another bill was introduced in the Legislature to accomplish the same goal. Both bills were

[30] H.C. Hopkins, *History of San Diego: Its Pueblo Lands and Water* (San Diego: 1929), 322.

opposed by San Diego's real estate men, or "land sharks," who initially tried to reduce the size of the park by 480 acres along its eastern side. The park advocates were successful, and on February 4, 1870 City Park was confirmed by the California Legislature, which declared that the land "be held in trust forever by the municipal authorities of said city for the use and purpose of a public park, and for no other or different purpose."[31]

Early Challenges

Although San Diego's real estate men attempted to dismantle City Park a few more times, by 1872 its integrity was largely assured. Nonetheless, during the remainder of the nineteenth century there were no real attempts to develop a master plan for the park. Nearly all of it remained in its natural state – several mesas covered in coastal sage scrub that were bisected by deep canyons. The natural conditions of San Diego's City Park were apparently not appreciated by some of the city's residents, many of whom were from more verdant regions on the East Coast or the Midwest. Indeed, many residents dumped their garbage in the canyons and local contractors used its mesas as a source for fill material.[32] The City was hardly better, granting concessions to businessmen to drill wells in Cabrillo Canyon and build reservoirs on the adjoining mesas.[33] The City also began allowing local government agencies to build facilities in the park, beginning in 1881 with the allotment of five acres along its south-central edge to the Russ School (now San Diego High School).[34]

Although the construction of the Russ School provided a precedent for building non-park-related structures in City Park, it did provide the first recorded impetus for park improvements. In 1882, the *San Diego Union* reported that some plants, flowers, and trees had been set out in the park around the school and irrigated with water from the reservoirs built in the park.[35] Two years later, in December 1884, several San Diego businessmen (including George W. Marston – the "father of Balboa Park") petitioned the San Diego Board of Trustees to plant eucalyptus

[31] As quoted in Gregory E. Montes, "San Diego's City Park: 1868-1902," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly*, Volume 23, Number 2 (Spring 1977), 2.
[32] Robert L. Horn, "A History of Balboa Park," (Part 2) *California Garden* (Fall 1959), 17.
[33] Gregory E. Montes, "San Diego's City Park: 1868-1902," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly*, Volume 23, Number 2 (Spring 1977), 3.
[34] Robert L. Horn, "A History of Balboa Park," (Part 1) *California Garden* (Fall 1959), 10.
[35] "Public Park and Experimental Garden," *San Diego Union* (March 29, 1882), 3.

trees along a road in the park, as well as to make other unspecified improvements. The Trustees granted the request and also authorized a partial survey of City Park.[36]

By the late 1880s, electrified streetcar lines began to link downtown with City Park, increasing the interest and involvement of local residents in its development. Controversy over non-park-related intrusions erupted again in 1887 when the U.S. Army proposed building barracks in City Park. The proposal unleashed a series of conflicting proposals, including one that would have sold off all but 640 acres of the park, using the proceeds from land sales to fund park improvements.[37] Even park boosters such as George Marston believed that the cost of developing City Park was beyond the means of a small city like San Diego.

Howard Tract

Soon other park improvement projects got underway – nearly all undertaken by charitable and neighborhood organizations. In November 1887, Bryant Howard and E.W. Morse petitioned the San Diego Board of Trustees for 100 acres of parkland between Florida Canyon and the Central Mesa (the site of today's Naval Hospital). On this tract they planned to build a boy's and girl's home, a kindergarten, an industrial school, and a school of technology. On December 2, 1887, the Board of Trustees granted the 100 acres to Howard and Company, as well as five adjoining acres to build a home for indigent women.[38]

Although opposed by George Marston and other park boosters, the "Howard" or "Charities Tract" project went forward. The project sponsors reportedly planted over ten thousand trees, including blue gum eucalyptus, pepper trees, acacias, fan palms, and other species that remain common in the park today. They also laid irrigation pipes and built several picturesque winding drives linking the new buildings and landscaped areas. The project went under financially in 1893 and the Howard Tract reverted to the City.[39]

[36] "The City Trustees," *San Diego Union* (January 4, 1885).
[37] *San Diego Union* (December 29, 1896), 3.
[38] *San Diego Union* (December 3, 1997), 5.
[39] H.C. Hopkins, *History of San Diego: Its Pueblo Lands and Water* (San Diego: 1929), 327.

Although the Howard Tract project was never fully realized, the landscaping undertaken by its proponents lit the imagination of San Diegans, many of whom lived in newly built residential neighborhoods abutting City Park. During the last decade of the nineteenth century, several independent landscaping projects were undertaken by various professional, charitable, and neighborhood organizations, including the Ladies Annex of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce, which planted 14 acres on the west side of the park between Juniper and Palm Streets (Ladies Annex Park – 1889-90); residents of the Golden Hill neighborhood, who planted several acres at the southeast corner of City Park (Golden Hill Park – 1889-90); and Kate Sessions, a horticulturalist who obtained a 10-year lease on a 32-acre tract in the northwest corner of City Park (Kate Sessions Lease – 1892-1902) to build her world-famous nursery.[40]

Kate Sessions' Nursery

The Sessions concession was the most important step in the development of City Park during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries **(Figure 8)**. In exchange for the land and free water, Sessions agreed to plant and maintain 100 "choice and varied sorts of trees" throughout the park, as well as supplying 300 ornamental trees in boxes for city streets, plazas, and playgrounds.[41] Sessions discovered that with irrigation San Diego's climate was ideal for growing any number of native and exotic trees, ornamentals, and other plantings. At its peak, Sessions' nursery contained 20,000 plants, including varieties of eucalyptus, acacia, bamboo, Spanish cork oak, banyan, Monterey cypress, native California oaks, and many others.[42] Indeed,

Figure 8. Kate Sessions
Source: San Diego Historical Center

[40] Gregory E. Montes, "San Diego's City Park: 1868-1902," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly*, Volume 23, Number 2 (Spring 1977), 5.
[41] Ibid.
[42] "Flower Culture: San Diego Woman who is a Winner," *Los Angeles Times* (April 28, 1895), n.p.

many of the trees in the Balboa Park were planted by Sessions or are descended from specimens that were. Sessions' nursery was open to the public and remained a popular attraction for natives and tourists alike.

Encroachment

The success of Sessions' nursery set off a tidal wave of requests by private individuals and groups anxious for bits of City Park. In addition to granting leases to the Pastime and Silver Gate gun clubs and the San Diego County Agricultural Society, the City approved a Navy rifle range and a 200+-acre private nursery operated by a Mr. Timothy Ryan. In December 1893, the *San Diego Union* editorialized against these and further concessions:

> The park, if preserved intact, will make a magnificent pleasure ground in future years when this city has expanded as it must in obedience to nature's laws…San Diego stands today on the threshold of a new era. While extending all reasonable encouragement to legitimate enterprise, the people should guard with jealousy the city park…against the greedy assault of land-hunters.[43]

With pressures on City Park intensifying, Park Commissioner W.R. Maize accused the City Council of ignoring its responsibility to keep the park free of interlopers. In January 1897, Commissioner Maize informed the Council that he had sent an inquiry to Central Park's designer, Frederick Law Olmsted, asking him to submit a proposal to develop a comprehensive park plan for City Park. Maize observed that while "many persons of the mossback species" objected to spending a dime on City Park, "a progressive gentleman and capitalist" (later revealed to be George Marston) had announced his willingness to pay for the master plan, but only if "we keep out intruders."[44]

Momentum Builds for a Master Plan

By the turn-of-the-century, a group of influential pro-park leaders, including George Marston, W.R. Maize, and Kate Sessions began making headway in convincing San Diego's leaders that City Park was not to be a junk heap or a private fiefdom for capitalists, but rather a place of

[43] *San Diego Union* (December 31, 1893), 4.
[44] *San Diego Union* (January 23, 1897), 2. A mossback is defined by Merriam-Webster as "an extremely old-fashioned or reactionary person."

profound beauty.[45] Continued dithering on the part of the City Council – including yet another scheme to sell off part of the park to developers – resulted in the formation of the Park Improvement Committee by park booster Julius Wangenheim on August 12, 1902. A subcommittee of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce, the Park Improvement Committee also included Kate Sessions and George Marston.[46]

In October 1902, Marston announced his intention to spend $10,000 of his own money to hire Samuel Parsons, Jr. to devise a plan for City Park. Parsons, who had served as Superintendent of New York's Central Park for 15 years, was a disciple and close friend of the ailing Frederick Law Olmsted, who was no longer fit enough to take on the job. By July 30, 1903, Parsons (with assistance from Kate Sessions) completed his first draft plan for City Park. Soon work began in the southwest corner of the park, the most level and easy-to-grade section, as well as being the closest part of the park to downtown San Diego.

Samuel Parsons Begins Work

Samuel Parsons understood that he had been given the opportunity of a lifetime. Parsons appreciated, even if he did not fully understand, the natural beauty of San Diego's native environment. Upon seeing City Park for the first time he wrote: "The keynote of the treatment of the park is to preserve the natural beauty that exists, by simple treatment, and to avoid marring grand and impressive scenery by introducing sensational and startling effects."[47] Parsons also understood that unlike Central Park or Golden Gate Park, the purpose of San Diego's City Park should not exclude the outside world but rather embrace it. His strategy involved enhancing the site's own natural features, including plantings that emphasized its dramatic canyons, level mesa tops, and spectacular views – west toward Pt. Loma, the Silver Strand, and the Pacific and east toward the Cuyamaca Mountains.

[45] *San Diego Union* (July 29, 1901), 8.
[46] Gregory E. Montes, "San Diego's City Park: 1868-1902," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly*, Volume 23, Number 2 (Spring 1977), 12.
[47] *San Diego Union* (January 1, 1903), 25.

Controversy over Parsons' Selection

From 1903 until 1907, Parsons continued to live in New York. He relied on his business partner George Cooke, as well as locals like Kate Sessions, George Marston, and horticulturalist Mary B. Coulston, to implement the plan. The selection of Parsons stirred up a lot of controversy in San Diego; many argued that the job ought to have gone to a local, or at least someone better acquainted with San Diego's climate, soils, and topography.[48] Nevertheless, San Diegans were more committed to building the park than they ever had been and the City Council even voted to amend the City Charter to assess property owners eight cents per each $100 of property to fund improvements.[49]

Summary of Parsons' Plan for City Park

Parsons completed his comprehensive plan for City Park in 1905. In it he suggested placing formally landscaped lawns and gardens along the west side and around the entrances where irrigation was plentiful enough to create a traditional Eastern-style greensward. Parsons proposed keeping the mesas free of tall trees – instead planting eucalyptus in the canyons. By doing this he hoped to emphasize the site's topography **(Figure 9)**. Away from the entrances and the West Mesa, Parsons recommended against planting large lawn panels, formal flower beds, or other plantings that would use lots of water; instead he suggested using native species wherever possible, as well as other drought-tolerant species that would thrive in a semi-arid, subtropical climate. Parsons suggested building roads and paths that followed the natural contours of the land and placing primary circulation routes in the more level areas surrounding the edges of the park. Cutting and filling would be kept to a minimum. Views of the mountains, ocean, and other surrounding scenery would be opened up by leaving gaps in the tall trees he planned to plant along the perimeter of the park.[50]

[48] *San Diego Union* (May 29, 1905), 5.
[49] *San Diego Union* (April 18, 1905), 3.
[50] Richard Amero, "Samuel Parsons Finds Xanadu in San Diego," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly,* Volume 44, Number 1 (Winter 1998).

George Cooke Takes Over

Figure 9. Arbor Day, City Park, 1905
Source: San Diego Historical Society

As mentioned above, all were not happy with Parsons and in 1907, the San Diego Park Commission convinced his partner George Cooke to take over as City Park's Superintendent. Making its case that Cooke was more pragmatic than Parsons, the Commission ended its relationship with Parsons. Cooke does not seem to have been as talented a designer as Parsons; during his tenure as Superintendent he mostly built roads, many of which did not conform to Parsons' 1905 plan. Eventually Cooke angered Kate Sessions, George Marston, and E.W. Morse and he was consequently exiled to building county roads. He died in an accident in Alpine in 1908.[51]

Samuel Parsons Returns

All apparently forgiven, Samuel Parsons returned to San Diego in June 1910, this time as a consultant in charge of preparing a master plan for all of San Diego's parks – a project operating parallel to John Nolen's 1908 Plan for San Diego. In the five years since he had published his first plan, Parsons seems to have had an about-face. Instead of keeping the mesa tops free of tall trees, he now advocated planting eucalyptus and other taller trees in these locations.[52]

[51] *San Diego Union* (August 7, 1908), 8.
[52] *San Diego Sun* (July 4, 1910), 1.

City Park Renamed Balboa Park

Parsons continued to meet with local resistance and about the only change that Parsons suggested in his 1910 plan that the City actually adopted was a proposal to replace the generic name of City Park with one that honored San Diego's past. In his 1910 report, Parsons suggested naming the park after Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo. Instead, selecting the winning name from a public contest, the Board of Park Commissioners decided to rename the park after Vasco Nuñez de Balboa. Balboa was a Spanish explorer who was the first European known to have spotted the Pacific Ocean, when on September 29, 1513 he sighted it from atop a hill on the Isthmus of Panama. As San Diego was in the running to host a world's fair commemorating the completion of the Panama Canal, naming the park for a historical figure associated with Panama probably seemed like a shrewd decision. City Park was consequently renamed Balboa Park on November 1, 1910.[53]

D. Planning the Panama-California Exposition: 1909-1911

An offhand comment made at a Chamber of Commerce meeting on July 9, 1909 by its president G. Aubrey Davidson set in motion a chain of events that led to the design and construction of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park. In his remarks, Aubrey stated that San Diego should host an international exposition celebrating the opening of the Panama Canal in January 1915.[54] Davidson noted how an exposition could help San Diego stimulate tourism and boost its stagnating population of 39,000. He also pointed out that an exposition would help to finance improvements to the park, whose adornment seemed permanently out of reach.[55]

San Diego Proposes an Exposition

Davidson's fellow members of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce immediately embraced his suggestion, understanding that an exposition of this magnitude would call attention to San Diego's large natural harbor and strategic location as the first American port north of the

[53] Richard Amero, "Samuel Parsons Finds Xanadu in San Diego," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly,* Volume 44, Number 1 (Winter 1998).
[54] G. Aubrey Davidson, "History of the Panama-California Exposition of 1915…," in *History of San Diego County,* by Carl Heilbron, ed. (San Diego: San Diego Press Club, 1936), 401-2.
[55] *Panama-California Exposition News,* Volume 1, Number 1 (December 1911), 13.

Panama Canal.[56] Long dependent on a spur line from Los Angeles, San Diego was also about to acquire its own transcontinental railhead once the San Diego & Arizona Railway – begun in 1907 – was finished. As good businessmen, the members of the Chamber of Commerce wanted to get the word out about San Diego's future, not only as the future port for the entire Southwest, but also as a tourist destination blessed by a year-round balmy climate and splendid scenery. What better way than to invite the world to come see for itself what San Diego had to offer?

San Diego's business and civic leaders decided to go ahead with plans for a major exposition in their city. On September 4, 1909, 21 members of San Diego's business establishment signed and filed Articles of Incorporation forming the Panama-California Exposition Company. The Chairman of the Board was Ulysses S. Grant, Jr. – owner of the Grant Hotel and son of the American Civil War general and 18th president. The vice-presidents of the Panama-California Exposition Company included both G. Aubrey Davidson and John D. Spreckels, the latter being San Diego's richest and most powerful businessman. The Director-General of the of the company was Colonel D.C. Collier, a close ally of Davidson's in the Chamber of Commerce and a successful real estate man in his own right.[57]

Among its first actions, the Panama-California Exposition Company issued $1 million in stocks to fund construction of the exposition grounds in City Park (soon to be renamed Balboa Park). Within a few weeks $300,000 had been raised, mostly contributed by ordinary San Diegans apparently anxious to host the world in their city.[58]

San Francisco Steps in the Way

There were several obstacles to putting on a major international exposition in San Diego. First, there was the question of San Francisco. As early as 1904, San Francisco's business leaders had begun initial planning for a celebration to commemorate the anticipated completion of the Panama Canal. The idea had been put on hold after the 1906 Earthquake but it was quickly

[56] D.C. Collier, "What an Exposition is For," *Sunset Magazine*, Volume 31, Number 1 (July 1913). It is also worth noting that Los Angeles had not yet built its large artificial harbor at San Pedro/Wilmington, making San Diego the only large and fully protected natural harbor between the Mexican border and San Francisco.
[57] *San Diego Union* (September 11, 1909), 1.
[58] *San Diego Union* (December 4, 1909), 4.

revived when it became known that San Diego had begun planning an exposition of its own. On December 7, 1909, San Francisco's business leaders met to organize the Panama Pacific International Exposition in their city in 1915.[59]

Even though it was 455 nautical miles closer to Panama than San Francisco, at first it seemed that San Diego had little chance of rescuing its bid. With a population of fewer than 40,000 people, San Diego was only one-tenth the size of San Francisco. Although Los Angeles was quickly catching up, San Francisco still controlled the banking, manufacturing, shipping, and most of the commerce of the western United States. Still, San Francisco was not guaranteed the right to host the exposition. New Orleanians were also trying to convince Congress to award the fair to their city. In April 1910, San Diego's exposition boosters struck a bargain with their counterparts in San Francisco.[60] In exchange for supporting San Francisco's bid, San Diego would gain the right to host a smaller fair of its own. In 1911, President Taft granted San Francisco the exclusive right to stage America's "official" exposition commemorating the opening of the Panama Canal.

San Diego Retunes its Exposition

As agreed upon with San Francisco, San Diego would put on a smaller, regional fair that would complement San Francisco's exposition.[61] Indeed, many believed that two world's fairs in California would attract more visitors to the state than if just one city was involved. San Diego's preparations continued accordingly. On March 15, 1910, just four months after the fundraising campaign was launched, stock subscription pledges reached $1 million.[62] Further contributions raised the total to almost $5 million dollars. Meanwhile, city residents voted to issue several bonds to fund new roads, municipal water and sewer systems, as well as several public docks. They even agreed to bail out Exposition Company President U.S. Grant, Jr., who had run out of money to finish his $1.5 million hotel in downtown San Diego.[63] In May 1911, Company Director-

[59] *San Diego Union* (December 8, 1911), 1.
[60] Richard W. Amero, "The Making of the Panama-California Exposition: 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Volume 36, Number 1 (Winter 1990), 2.
[61] Gregory Montes, "Balboa Park, 1909-1911: The Rise and Fall of the Olmsted Plan," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly,* Volume 28, Number 1 (Winter 1982).
[62] *San Diego Union* (December 16, 1910), 1.
[63] Gregory Montes, "Balboa Park, 1909-1911: The Rise and Fall of the Olmsted Plan," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly,* Volume 28, Number 1 (Winter 1982).

General Colonel Collier described his fellow San Diegans as "the pluckiest, nerviest and gamest city in the United States of America and probably the world."[64]

A Site is Selected

On May 25, 1910, Exposition Company directors voted provisionally to place the fair in the southwest corner of Balboa Park. [65] Afterward, the directors appointed a seven-person Committee of Buildings and Grounds (chaired by George Marston) to select an architecture firm to develop a plan for the exposition. The committee initially favored famed architect and urban planner Daniel Burnham (designer of the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago), but Burnham was too busy.[66] The committee then decided to hire the Olmsted Brothers, a partnership consisting of Frederick Law Olmsted's two sons – Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and John C. Olmsted – as well as their father's former business partner, Calvert Vaux. Hired at a fee of $15,000, the firm would be in charge of laying out the exposition grounds. The committee also hired Frank P. Allen as Director of Works. Allen had been in charge of the recent Alaska-Yukon Exposition in Seattle of 1910, ensuring that it was completed in time for opening day. [67]

Choosing an Architect

With a landscape architect lined up, the Building and Grounds Committee needed to select an architect to design the exposition buildings. In early 1910, the Board of Directors had chosen the "Spanish-Mission" style as the official theme for the exposition. In part an acknowledgement of the region's Spanish and Mexican heritage, the style was also chosen to distinguish San Diego's plans from San Francisco's Beaux-Arts exposition.[68] Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. suggested that the Building and Grounds Committee contact his friend, New York architect Bertram Goodhue. Olmsted knew that Goodhue was well-versed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style and when Olmsted mentioned the job to Goodhue, he immediately leapt at the opportunity. There was just one problem; the Building and Grounds Committee had already hired local San Diego

[64] Ibid.
[65] *San Diego Union* (June 19, 1910), 25.
[66] Gregory Montes, "Balboa Park, 1909-1911: The Rise and Fall of the Olmsted Plan," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly,* Volume 28, Number 1 (Winter 1982).
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.

architect Irving Gill to fill the position of Chief Architect. Upon hearing of this Goodhue was incensed, writing to Olmsted:

> I suppose it means that they have got some incapable local talent for the job, which was, I suppose, no more than could be expected, since human nature in California is very much like human nature every where, only perhaps more so. I am sorry too for the San Diegans because I consider myself quite a shark on the sort of stuff (Spanish Colonial architecture) they ought to have and am pretty familiar with California conditions.[69]

Goodhue lived up to his shark boast. Over the course of 1910, he steadily insinuated himself into the project. On January 30, 1911, he got himself appointed "Advisory and Consulting Architect" by the Committee of Buildings and Grounds. In this position he would be in charge of preparing general designs for all the buildings on the site, as well as the final design drawings of several permanent buildings that would remain after the exposition closed. Irving Gill would retain his title as Chief Architect but he would only be in charge of detailing the temporary buildings and those drawings would have to be approved by Goodhue. Understandably, Gill quit in the fall of 1911, leaving Goodhue in complete charge of designing all the buildings for the Panama-California Exposition.[70]

The Olmsted Brothers' Plan

According to the Olmsted Brothers' original site plan, the main part of the exposition grounds would have been laid out north of San Diego High School, with parts extending uphill toward the Central Mesa. The main part of the grounds was to have been centered on a 250'-wide avenue called "Plaza Larga." Running north-south, it would have intersected a subsidiary east-west avenue at a three-acre plaza called "Plaza de Musical." The plazas were to be lined by arcades and flanking these would have been the Mission Revival-style exhibition halls. Located uphill from the main part of the exposition, and connected to it by picturesque paths hugging the natural contours of the Central Mesa, would have been the foreign and state pavilions, as well as a large artificial lake called "Laguna Alta." Running down through the center of this area was to have been a Hispano-Moorish-flavored garden modeled on the Generalife Garden in Alhambra, Spain **(Figure 10)**.

[69] As quoted in: Gregory Montes, "Balboa Park, 1909-1911: The Rise and Fall of the Olmsted Plan," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly,* Volume 28, Number 1 (Winter 1982).
[70] Esther McCoy, *Five California Architects* (New York: Praeger Inc., 1975), 87-8.

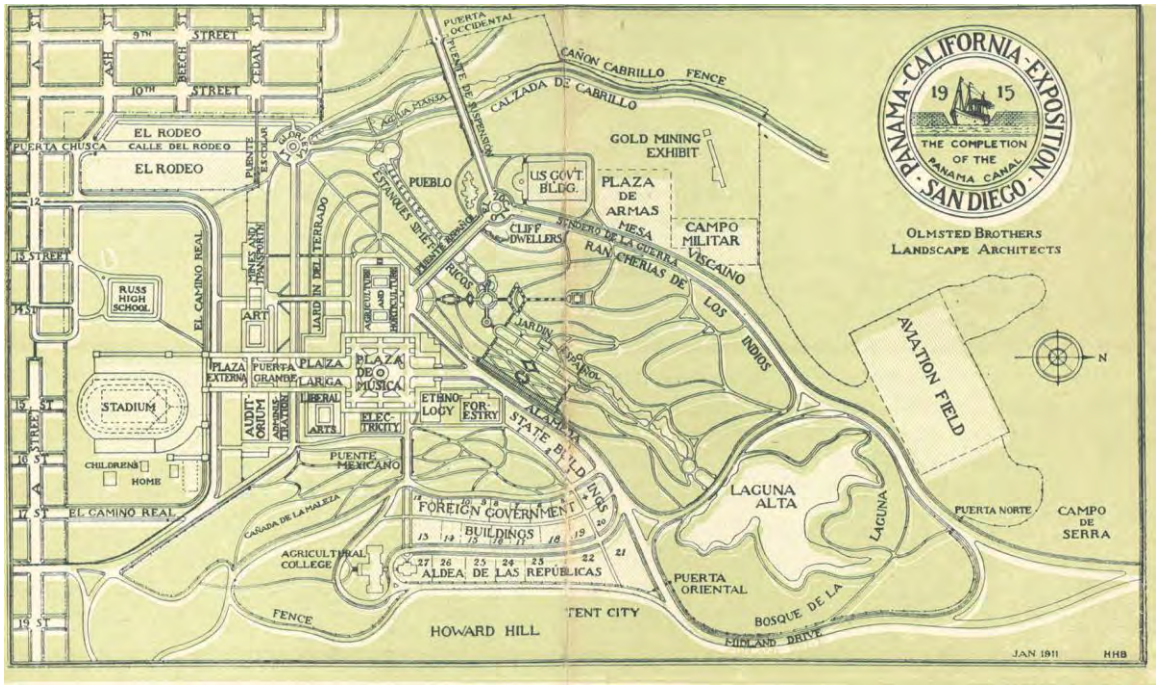


Figure 10. Olmsted Brothers Plan
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Origins of the Central Mesa Plan

Claiming that additional space was needed to accommodate pavilions for the Southern American states and the nations of South America, Exposition Director Collier proposed in early 1911 to relocate the exposition grounds to the top of the Central Mesa (known then as Vizcaino Mesa). Although initially opposed to this alternate site, Goodhue grew to appreciate that the mesa's great height in relation to Cabrillo Canyon would allow for dramatic architectural effects, especially if the grounds were accessed from the west by a bridge over Cabrillo Canyon. The Olmsted Brothers were completely opposed to the idea, believing that putting the exposition on the arid and undeveloped Central Mesa would hamper their intent to create a sylvan, Eastern-style landscape.[71]

H.C. Collier had another reason for relocating the exposition grounds; he and his real estate cronies had a longstanding interest in the newly developing suburbs of North Park, University Heights, and Normal Heights. These tracts were worthless without mass transit. But because a

[71] Gregory Montes, "Balboa Park, 1909-1911: The Rise and Fall of the Olmsted Plan," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly,* Volume 28, Number 1 (Winter 1982).

streetcar line would be needed to carry visitors from downtown to the new Central Mesa site, Collier hoped to get approval to build one along Park Boulevard, terminating at what is now Balboa Plaza. Collier realized that once the exposition was over it would not be difficult to get official approval to extend the line north, along Park Boulevard through the park, to their real estate holdings north of Balboa Park. Another figure who would benefit from the streetcar line was Panama-California Exposition Company Vice-president John D. Spreckels, owner of the San Diego Electric Railway Company. In fact, Spreckels – the single-largest contributor to the Exposition Company – refused to pay his stock subscription until the plan to relocate the exposition to the Central Mesa was approved.[72]

Resignation of the Olmsted Brothers

Throughout the spring and summer of 1911, the controversy over the exposition site continued to brew, with the Olmsted Brothers and their allies George Marston and Julius Wangenheim favoring the original site and John D. Spreckels, H.C. Collier, Frank Allen, and Bertram Goodhue in support of the Central Mesa site. Ultimately the Buildings and Grounds Committee voted to relocate the exposition to the 167-acre Central Mesa site on August 29, 1911. The Parks Commission voted in favor of the new site two days later. Upon being notified of the decision, the Olmsted Brothers tendered their resignation, accompanied by the terse statement: "Our professional responsibility as park designers will not permit us to assist in ruining Balboa Park."[73]

Central Mesa Plan Approved

After the resignation of the Olmsted Brothers, Bertram Goodhue and Frank Allen pushed forward with the Central Mesa site plan, finishing it in the fall of 1911. Although the plan they developed was modified several times, it became the basis of what was actually constructed between 1912 and 1914. The plan was approved by the Exposition Board of Directors on October 27, 1911 and subsequently by the Park Commission. Construction began nine days later, on November 6, with grading for the first Exposition structure – the two-story

[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.

Administration Building.[74] This building was built first because it was needed to house the offices of Goodhue, Allen, and others who would remain on-site to supervise construction.

E. Design of the Panama-California Exposition: 1911-13

Bertram Goodhue and his employees Clarence Stein and Carleton M. Winslow took charge of designing the individual buildings. Meanwhile, Frank Allen took over as landscape designer from the Olmsted Brothers. As Goodhue had boasted in his letter to Olmsted, he was quite adept at the Churrigueresque and Plateresque styles of Spain and Colonial Latin America, particularly the silver towns of central México. Goodhue had traveled widely in Spain, Persia, and North Africa, where he had become familiar with the Hispano-Moorish architecture of southern Spain, as well as Persian and Moorish gardens. Goodhue had also traveled extensively in México, where he developed a great appreciation for the masterful Spanish Colonial Revival cathedrals, palaces, and convents of the silver towns of Puebla, San Luis Potosí, and Guanajuato.

Selection of a Style

The decision to employ the Spanish Colonial Revival style for the Panama-California Exposition was not a given at the outset of the project. Initially the Board of Directors of the Exposition Company had selected the Mission Revival style, a regional mode based on California's missions. Located on the fringes of México, California's Hispanic architecture was a simplified version of what could be found in the metropolitan areas of central México. California's indigenous architecture made use of simplified Spanish and Mexican architectural forms, typically using adobe construction. Missions were not the only architectural legacy of Spanish and Mexican California. Pueblos, ranchos, and other Hispanic settlements contained adobe ranch houses, stables, military barracks, and other structures – nearly all built of adobe and featuring very little ornament. By the early twentieth century, California's Hispanic-era architectural legacy was quickly disappearing – much of it swept away as Anglo-American transplants remade the state's towns into versions of their hometowns on the East Coast or in the Midwest.

[74] *San Diego Union* (November 7, 1911), 7.

By 1900, some Californians sought to leverage the state's Hispanic origins to create an "authentic" history for a place inhabited largely by migrants from other states. Others, such as Los Angeles resident Charles Fletcher Lummis, were genuinely appreciative of California's native architectural and cultural traditions, and they worked to preserve what was left of the state's early history. Around the same time, architects such as San Francisco's Julia Morgan, began designing new buildings that took their cue from California's early missions and presidios.

Spanish Colonial Revival/Churrigueresque Style

Bertram Goodhue decided against the Mission Revival style, in part because he thought that it was too unassuming for a world's fair. Instead, Goodhue decided to employ the most ornamental variety of Hispanic architecture – the Spanish and Mexican Churrigueresque and Plateresque styles. A subset of the Spanish Baroque style of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, both styles can be identified by their use of expressive detailing – predominantly sculptural frontispieces of churches and cathedrals – as well as twisted columns, soaring towers, domed sanctuaries, and the use of Mudéjar (Moorish)-style tiles. Derived in part from Mudéjar traditions of southern Spain, the name of the Churrigueresque style derives from the surname of José Benito Churriguera (1665-1725), a Madrileño architect who specialized in ornate sculptural frontispieces and reredos. The style became especially popular in México, with good examples including include the Catedral in México City (1718), San Martín in San Luis Potosí (1764), and Santa Prisca in Taxco (1758) **(Figure 11)**.

Early renderings of the Panama-California Exposition prepared by Goodhue, Stein, and Winslow depict a fantastic dream city of "cloud-capped towers, gorgeous palaces, and solemn temples." The centerpiece of the group was the California Quadrangle (now the Museum of Man). Based on México's Santa Prisca and San Martín churches, the California Quadrangle was one of four buildings and structures designed to remain after the exposition (the others being Cabrillo Bridge, the Botanical Building, and the Spreckels Organ Pavilion). Personally designed by Goodhue, the concrete structure with cast stone, tile, and stucco finishes, punctuated the Central Mesa at the eastern end of the aqueduct-like Cabrillo Bridge **(Figure-12)**. Goodhue, clearly taking advantage of the canyon-side site, allowed the form of the California Quadrangle to cascade down the slopes of the canyon as a series of geometric volumes.

Figure 11. Santa Prisca, Taxco, México
www.mexicanarchitecture.org

Figure 12. Rendering of Cabrillo Bridge and the California Quadrangle
Source: San Diego Historical Society

Goodhue also designed the Home Economy Building (demolished in 1964) and the Southern California Counties Building (destroyed by fire in 1925). The other temporary buildings were given to Winslow, Allen, and Stein. Goodhue gave his assistants photographs of Churrigueresque monuments in México and Spain for inspiration. The completed designs, which were all quite different from one another, were all tied together by continuous arcades and cornice lines.[75]

The layout of the exposition site went through many different iterations, mostly in response to the fluctuating number of states (and for a time, foreign nations) anticipated to participate. Director-General D.C. Collier hoped to get Congressional authorization to invite México and other Latin American nations, reserving the southern portion of the site for their pavilions. This was indeed the primary public justification for relocating the exposition site to the Central Mesa. Throughout the summer of 1911 Collier remained in Washington, D.C. lobbying Congress to get the necessary authorization. Unfortunately for San Diego, San Francisco's powerful congressional delegation got the preliminary House approval overturned in Senate Committee, and in February 1912, President Taft invited foreign nations to participate in San Francisco's exposition alone.[76]

Final Exposition Layout

With the foreign nations out of the picture, the design of the exposition grounds began to take a more definite form by early 1913. Primarily laid out by Clarence S. Stein, an architect trained in Classical planning principles at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, the exposition plan was axial in nature.[77] The centerpiece of the design was El Prado, a pedestrian street running east-west across the center of the Central Mesa. El Prado was to begin at the eastern end of Cabrillo Bridge (itself aligned with Laurel Street) and continue east to Park Boulevard. El Prado was split into two sections, with West El Prado bracketed by Plaza de California on the west and Plaza de Panama on the east. East El Prado began at the eastern edge of Plaza de Panama and terminated at Plaza de Balboa, near Park Boulevard and the streetcar station. Plaza de Panama was to be the fulcrum of the entire composition, linking El Prado to the Plaza de los Estados and

[75] Carleton M. Winslow, *The Architecture and Gardens of the San Diego Exposition* (San Francisco: 1916).
[76] *San Diego Union* (February 5, 1912).
[77] Estrada Land Planning, *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 20.

the Spreckels Organ Pavilion via a subordinate north-south axis called La Esplanada, or simply, "The Esplanade." A secondary north-south axis would extend from the Botanical Building and the Lily Pond across East El Prado to a canyon overlook between the Foreign Arts Building (now the House of Hospitality) and the Commerce and Industries Building (now Casa de Balboa) **(Figure 13)**.

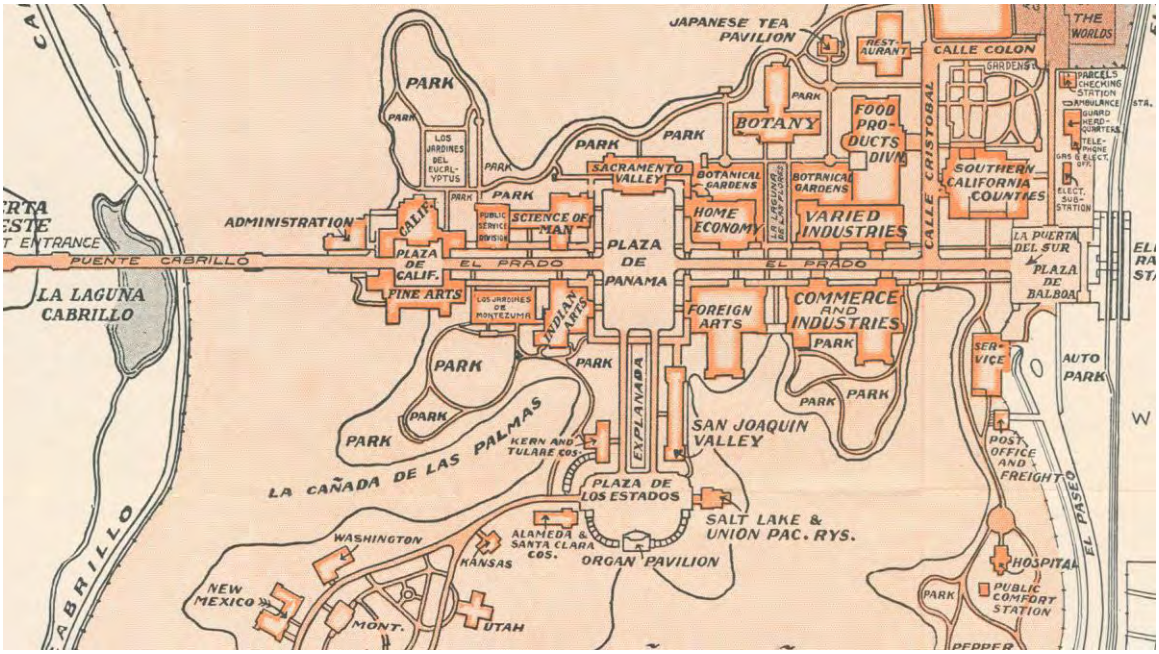


Figure 13. Map showing the principal part of the Panama-California Exposition, ca. 1914
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Lined by arcaded walkways, El Prado was to be the location of most of the important exposition buildings and gardens, including the Administration Building, California Quadrangle, Museum of Fine Arts, the Science and Education/Medical Arts Building, Los Jardines de Montezuma, the Indian Arts Building, the Home Economy Building, the Varied Industries Building, the Foreign Arts Building, the Commerce and Industries Building, and the Southern California Counties Building.

South of Plaza de Panama was to be a secondary plaza called Plaza de los Estados, a semi-circular plaza encompassed within the peristyle of the Spreckels Organ Pavilion. The two plazas would be connected via La Esplanada, a landscaped promenade bounded by two California county pavilions. Bounding La Esplanada to the west would be a road connecting the Spreckels

Organ Pavilion to a landscaped area surrounded by county and state pavilions. South of this area, at the southern tip of the Central Mesa, was to be a Marine training camp.

North and east of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama group would be "The Isthmus," a huge entertainment zone/midway bounded to the west by several model farms designed to demonstrate the growing importance of agriculture (particularly citriculture) in Southern California.

Exposition organizers were very happy with Goodhue's work. Many believed that San Diego would steal the show from San Francisco, whose own Panama Pacific International Exposition largely hewed to the formal Neoclassical architectural tradition embraced by most worlds' fairs since the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago.[78] Indeed, Exposition directors hoped that the joyful Spanish Colonial style they had introduced to the United States would call attention to the Southern California lifestyle, and by doing so lure thousands of visitors and new residents to San Diego.

F. Groundbreaking and Construction of the Panama-California Exposition: 1911-1914

Even though the final design of the exposition grounds was not yet complete (it was still supposedly going to occupy the site north of San Diego High School), initial groundbreaking occurred on July 19, 1911. The ceremonial groundbreaking, which took place where the San Diego/Balboa Park Stadium is now located, was accompanied by three days of festivities, including a High Mass, military parades, and a pageant culminating with the crowning of "King Cabrillo" and "Queen Ramona." A section of downtown San Diego was closed to traffic and turned into a raucous fun zone where people took part in a street party that lasted for days.[79]

With groundbreaking completed, it still took several months for things to begin moving on the Central Mesa site. As discussed above, there were many changes in the design team and among the directors of the Exposition Company. Following the resignation of John D. Spreckels as

[78] *San Diego Union* (January 3, 1911).
[79] Richard Amero, "The Making of the Pacific-California Exposition: 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History,* Volume 36, Number 1 (Winter 1990), 11-12.

president in November 1911, his place was taken by Colonel D.C. Collier. When Frank B. Allen moved on to direct the construction of the exposition landscape, his position as director-general was assumed by Collier's right-hand man Joseph W. Sefton. By January 1913, when construction was well underway, the management of the Exposition Company consisted of D.C. Collier (president), John D. Spreckels (first vice-president), G. A. Davidson (second vice-president), L.S. McLure (third vice-president), George Burnham (fourth vice president), and Frank P. Allen (director-general).[80]

Landscaping

Fewer than 100 acres of Balboa Park were formally planted by the time construction began in 1911. An aerial photograph taken ca. 1915 just after the opening of the Panama-California Exposition illustrates how most of the park remained in its close-to-natural condition **(Figure 14)**. Existing plantings included the hundreds of eucalyptus trees Samuel Parsons had planted on the floor of Cabrillo Canyon and on the slopes of the West and Central Mesas between 1905 and 1909. Parsons also constructed several footpaths and trails throughout these areas.[81] In the 1915 photograph one can see a formally landscaped greensward at the main entrance at 8th Avenue and Date Street, and another formal garden at the entrance at 6th Avenue and Laurel Street. Although they are not visible in the photograph, in 1912, Kate Sessions had convinced the San Diego Board of Public Works to plant a double row of *Cocos plumosa* (Queen) palms along 6th Avenue.[82] More trees are visible near the northern end of the park; these were probably planted by Kate Sessions as part of her agreement with the City.

[80] *San Diego Union* (January 1, 1913), 3.
[81] Richard Amero, "The Making of the Pacific-California Exposition: 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History,* Volume 36, Number 1 (Winter 1990), 18.
[82] Richard Amero, "Samuel Parsons Finds Xanadu in San Diego," *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly,* Volume 44, Number 1 (Winter 1998).

Figure 14. Aerial photograph of Balboa Park taken ca. 1915
Note formally planted landscape in foreground and eucalyptus in Cabrillo Canyon
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Although these pre-exposition improvements had helped to beautify Balboa Park's western and southern approaches, the exposition site proper was mostly undeveloped land on the Central Mesa. In order to successfully plant trees in this area, thousands of holes would have to be drilled or blasted through the hardpan.[83] To build Cabrillo Bridge, many of the immature eucalyptus planted by Parsons on the western slope of the Central Mesa between 1904 and 1909 would also have to be uprooted. In preparation for landscaping, nearly all of the structures built in Balboa Park during the late nineteenth century were removed, including the gunpowder factory, several Water Department buildings, the City Pound, and others. New trees were supplied by a 23-acre nursery built in 1910 on the former Howard Tract and lumber for planter boxes was milled in a lumber mill also located in the park.[84]

Landscaping crews erected a wire fence around the perimeter of the exposition grounds and planted vines to conceal it, seeded lawns, and planted around 50,000 trees, including 700

[83] Walter V. Woehlke, "Staging the Big Show," *Sunset* (August 1914), 336-46.
[84] Richard Amero, "The Making of the Pacific-California Exposition: 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History,* Volume 36, Number 1 (Winter 1990), 18.

orange, lemon, and grapefruit trees in the demonstration citrus grove. To irrigate the site, workmen laid 20 miles of iron water pipe, as well as 10 miles of storm drains, and about 10 miles of sewer lines.[85] Frank Allen oversaw the planting of Cabrillo, Palm, and Spanish Canyons with eucalyptus and various species of palms.

The exposition grounds also featured hundreds of street trees, foundation plantings, as well as dozens of lawns – denoted as "parks" on the original plans. Frank Allen chose Blackwood acacias to line El Prado and Plaza de Panama. He also selected several species of fast-growing flowering vines (in particular Bougainvillea) that were trained to grow up along the faces of the arcades along El Prado **(Figure 15)**.[86] Allen also designed and built several ornamental gardens. One of the first was a rose garden set out near the western approach to Cabrillo Bridge. Surrounded by lawns, pergolas, palms, and poinsettias, this garden served as the principal vantage point from which to view Cabrillo Bridge and the California Quadrangle.[87] This was followed by Jardines de Montezuma (now Alcazar Gardens), Los Jardines de los Eucalyptus (now the site of the Old Globe Theater), La Esplanada (The Esplanade), and the four major hardscaped plazas: Plaza de California, Plaza de Panama, Plaza de Balboa, and Plaza de los Estados.

In total it has been reported that the Panama-California Exposition featured over two million plants representing 1,200 varieties. Primarily chosen to impart a lush, fantastical atmosphere of color, light, and smell, many of the varieties chosen subsequently became popular landscaping materials in Southern California's temperate climate, such as Bougainvillea. Another purpose of the plantings was to demonstrate San Diego's (and Southern California's) ideal climate for growing nearly anything. Unlike many fairs, where delicate tropical and subtropical plants had to be sequestered within hothouses, in San Diego they could thrive anywhere. Indeed, the Botanical Building, which outwardly resembles a traditional glazed greenhouse, was actually designed to provide shade for species that preferred a wetter and cooler environment![88]

[85] San Diego Union (January 1, 1913), 3.
[86] Arthur Z. Bradley, "Exposition Gardens," *Sunset* (April 1915), 665-79.
[87] *San Diego Union* (January 1, 1915).
[88] Estrada Land Planning, *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 23.

Figure 15. View of El Prado, looking west, ca. 1915
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

The hardscaped plazas, including the Plaza de California, Plaza de Panama, Plaza de Balboa, and Plaza de los Estados, were just as important as the lawns, trees, hedges, and other plantings. The most important of these plazas was the Plaza de Panama – the centerpiece of the El Prado group and the fulcrum of the entire exposition's axial layout. Based on Spanish, Italian, and Mexican prototypes, Plaza de Panama was intended to function like a "city in miniature," much like its precedents in Latin America and the Mediterranean. Here visitors could congregate, promenade, or simply take in the sights. All of the plazas were paved with a combination of asphalt and decomposed granite.[89] The other three plazas were also important, serving as vestibules for the El Prado/Plaza de Panama group's east, west, and south entrances.[90]

Construction

Originally the Panama-California Exposition was to consist solely of temporary buildings constructed of wood and staff (a mixture of hemp fiber and plaster). Designed to last only a year

[89] Conversation with David Marshall, AIA, March 29, 2011.
[90] Estrada Land Planning, *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 23.

or two, they would have been demolished when the exposition was over. Following the decision to relocate the exposition to the Central Mesa, the Exposition Company, with encouragement from Goodhue, decided to build several buildings and structures that would outlast the fair, including Cabrillo Bridge, the Botanical Building, Spreckels Organ Pavilion, and the California Quadrangle. Over the course of late 1912, 1913, and well into 1914, the various pavilions went up along El Prado, including the California, Fine Arts, Science and Education, Indian Arts, Sacramento Valley, Home Economy, Food Products, Commerce and Industries, Botanical, Varied Industries, Foreign Arts, and Southern California Counties buildings.

Administration Building

The Administration Building was the first building to go up. It was begun in November 1911 and completed March 1912 **(Figure 16)**. Surviving blueprints list the names of Bertram Goodhue and Carleton Winslow as the designers. There have been some questions over the building's authorship over the years, with some claiming that Irving Gill designed it before he resigned. This contention has been largely debunked by historian Richard Amero.[91] Completion of the Administration Building was crucial because it allowed Goodhue and his staff, as well as Department of Buildings and Grounds staff, to work on site and supervise all construction work. Shortly thereafter, crews began grading building sites and paths and constructing the other buildings' foundations. They also built a camp of temporary bunkhouses to house the laborers hired to work on the exposition. [92]

[91] Richard Amero, "The Question of Irving Gill's Role in the Design of the Administration Building in Balboa Park," San Diego History Center: http://www.sandiegohistory.org/bpbuildings/admin2.htm
[92] San Diego Union (November 7, 1911).

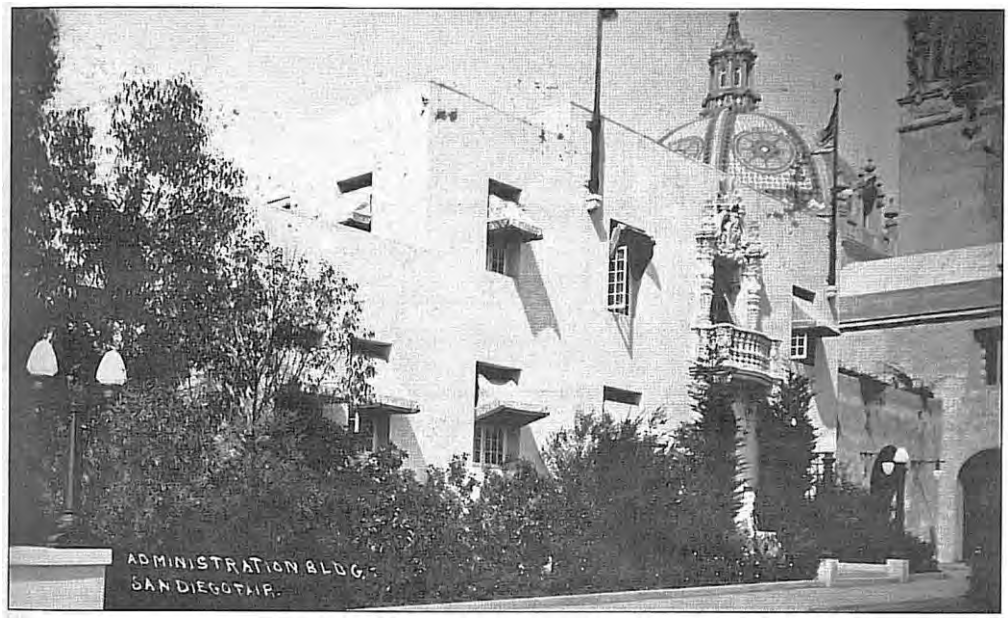


Figure 16. Administration Building, ca. 1915
Note ornamental frontispiece (no longer extant)
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Cabrillo Bridge

Cabrillo Bridge was the next major structure begun **(Figure 17)**. The exposition's single-largest structure was designed by Frank Allen and construction began in September 1912. Goodhue had originally designed a three-arch bridge, based on the Alcántara Bridge in Toledo, Spain, to span Cabrillo Canyon. Judging this design to be too costly, the exposition directors selected Allen's alternate seven-arch design. Upon its completion on April 12, 1914, the 40'-wide, 1,500'-long, and 120'-high concrete bridge ended up costing $225,154.89, $75,000 over the original $150,000 estimate.[93]

[93] *San Diego Union* (January 1, 1913), 3.

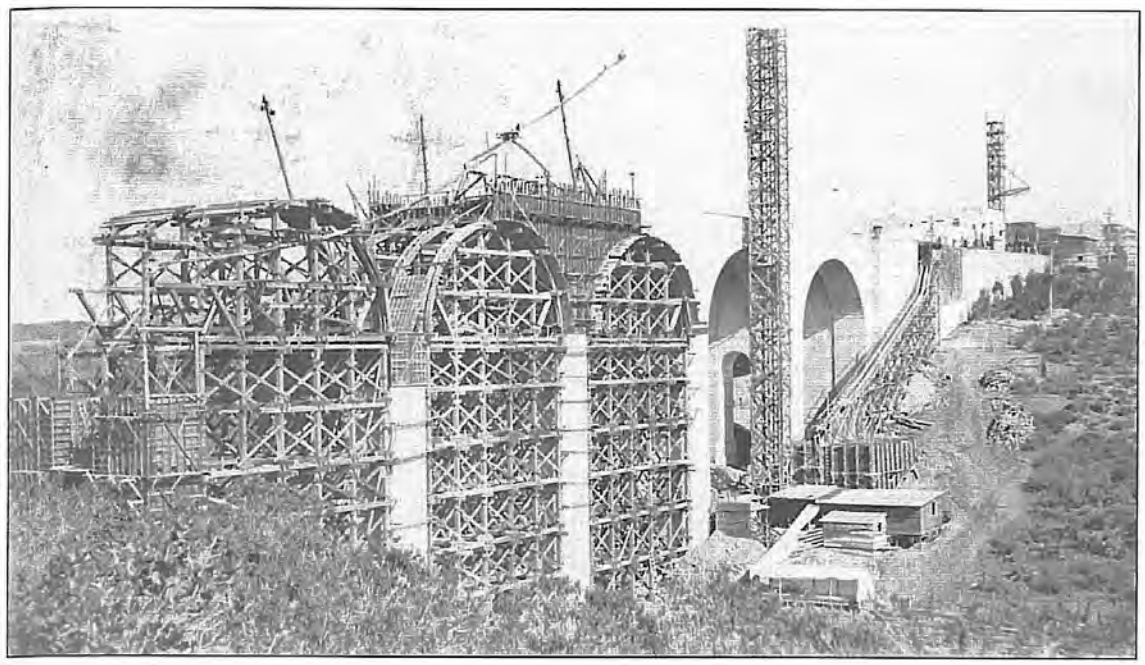


Figure 17. Cabrillo Bridge under construction, 1913
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

California Quadrangle

Paid for by a $250,000 appropriation to construct a permanent state building for the Panama-California Exposition, the cornerstone of the California Quadrangle was laid on September 12, 1913.[94] It was completed nearly a year later, with construction carried out by the F. Wurster Company (concrete and hollow tile construction), Walter Nordhoff (tiles on the dome and tower), and Piccirilli Brothers and Tracy Art and Brick Stone Company (cast stone ornament). With the exception of Piccirilli Brothers all the firms were locally based.[95]

Of all the permanent buildings, the California Quadrangle was the most important due to its elaborate exterior and its prominent presence on San Diego's skyline. The tiled dome and soaring tower of the California Building lured visitors across Cabrillo Bridge **(Figure 18)**. A triumphal arch at the eastern end of Cabrillo Bridge greeted visitors, directing them in from the sunlight into the partially shaded Plaza de California – the foyer for the entire El Prado complex. Together, the California Quadrangle and the adjoining Cabrillo Bridge form the "iconic" image of

[94] *San Diego Union* (September 12, 1913), 23.
[95] *San Diego Union* (January 11, 1914), 3.

Balboa Park, and indeed, San Diego. Over time the eucalyptus forest replanted on the slopes of Cabrillo Canyon obscured much of the lower portion of the California Quadrangle complex, partially obscuring views of the lower portion of the south wing.

Figure 18. California Quadrangle from Cabrillo Bridge, looking east
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

The California Building (the northern part of the California Quadrangle complex) is designed on a Greek-cross plan, with the tile-clad dome and rotunda sitting directly above the crossing and with half-domes at the side. The tower at the southeast corner of the building rises 208 feet. The tower's belfry and the frontispiece are both clad in cast stone molded in the Churrigueresque manner. The frontispiece depicts a host of important figures in the history of California's exploration and settlement, including Father Junípero Serra, Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, Sebastían Vizcaíno, Gaspar de Portolá, Kings Charles V and Philip III of Spain, and others.

The southern half of the California Quadrangle was originally the Fine Arts Museum. It was built by the Brown & De Cew Construction Company and cost the City of San Diego $104,243.95. In

contrast to the California Building, the Fine Arts Museum was designed in a plain, slab-like manner with molded buttresses based on the church of El Carmen in Celaya, México and Mission San Gabriel, near Los Angeles.[96] Goodhue's Fine Arts Building displays his interest in the decorative possibilities and engineering challenges inherent in the canyon site.

Spreckels Organ Pavilion

Spreckels Organ Pavilion was the third of the four "permanent" Exposition buildings completed **(Figure 19)**. Originally Goodhue had wanted to build a music pavilion on the north side of the Plaza de Panama. When Brazil pulled out of the Exposition in 1912, John D. Spreckels offered $100,000 to build an ornate music pavilion, outfitted with an electric pneumatic Austin organ, in its place. Spreckels Organ Pavilion, only slightly less impressive than the California Quadrangle, formed the southern edge of the Plaza de los Estados/La Esplanada group, an area dedicated to county pavilions shoehorned onto the narrow isthmus between Palm Canyon and Gold Gulch. A handful of state pavilions were built to the southwest of the Spreckels Organ Pavilion, including Kansas, Utah, Washington, Montana, and New Mexico.

[96] Richard Amero, "The Making of the Pacific-California Exposition: 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History,* Volume 36, Number 1 (Winter 1990), 25.

Figure 19. Spreckels Organ Pavilion, ca. 1915
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Botanical Building

The Botanical Building was the fourth permanent structure completed on the grounds of the Panama-California Exposition. Located at the north end of a secondary north-south axis, the Botanical Building forms the backdrop to the Lily Pond **(Figure 20)**. As initially planned by Alfred D. Robinson, president of the San Diego Floral Society, the Botanical Building was to be a gigantic open-air structure clad in wood lath to allow in sun and air. Carleton Winslow of Goodhue's office did not like this idea, so he designed a Spanish Colonial Revival structure resembling its neighbors. When Robinson objected, Winslow and Frank B. Allen redesigned the building as it was originally but with Spanish Colonial Revival arcades. As constructed, the Botanical Building consisted of a central domed space flanked by barrel vaults on either side. The building incorporated steel framing salvaged from a defunct railroad project. The interior was planted with palms, bamboo, banana trees, and other species, while the surrounding landscaping and reflecting pools were based on Persian prototypes. The cost of the building was $53,386.23.[97]

[97] Richard Amero, "The Making of the Pacific-California Exposition: 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History,* Volume 36, Number 1 (Winter 1990), 25.

Figure 20. Botanical Building, ca. 1915
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Temporary Exhibition Buildings

Going up concurrently with the permanent buildings in 1913 were several of the temporary exhibition halls and other structures lining both sides of El Prado and bounding Plaza de Panama, including the Home Economy, Indian Arts, Science and Education, Varied Industries, Foreign Arts, and Southern California Counties buildings.[98]

Other Buildings

Also under construction during 1913 and 1914 were the attractions of The Isthmus, the adjoining agricultural exhibits to the west, the International Harvester, Lipton Tea, Nevada, and Standard Oil pavilions; an Indian village called The Painted Desert at the northern end of The Isthmus; a Japanese Tea Garden and Pavilion to the east of the Botanical Building; and at the southern end of the grounds, a tent city and parade grounds for the Second Battalion of the Fourth Regiment of the U.S. Marines.[99] In 1914, John D. Spreckels' San Diego Electric Railway finished its double-track line to the East Gate at Plaza de Balboa.

[98] *San Diego Union* (varied).
[99] Richard Amero, "The Making of the Pacific-California Exposition: 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History,* Volume 36, Number 1 (Winter 1990), 25.

G. The Panama-California Exposition: 1915-1916

Even while construction was underway, curious onlookers were allowed to tour the site upon payment of a 25 cent admission fee.[100] Under the able management of Frank B. Allen, the entire physical plant was completed one full month before the exposition opened. Although the Exposition Company went over budget on some individual buildings, in total the company just squeaked in under the estimated total construction budget of $2,000,000. The Panama-California Exposition was dedicated to the people of San Diego in a ceremony held at the Spreckels Organ Pavilion on December 31, 1914. Another ceremony took place in the Plaza de Panama at 11:00 PM, accompanied by a rendition of the National Anthem by the exposition bandsmen and the unfurling of the flags of the United States and Spain. Afterward, at the conclusion of the ceremony, Colonel H.C. Collier addressed those assembled in the Plaza de Panama:

> Our hopes never wavered, our efforts did not lessen. We have stood together like one people should. We encountered all the trials and tribulations ever before those who attempt to blaze a new trail or attempt what seems impossible. That which five years ago was a hazy dream is today a reality, and San Diego keeps her promise to the world.[101]

This address was followed by several other speeches by Carl D. Ferris of the Park Commission, Mayor Charles F. O'Neall, George W. Marston, Governor Hiram Johnson, and G. Aubrey Davidson. At the stroke of midnight, President Woodrow Wilson pressed a telegraph button in Washington, D.C. that turned on the lights to the exposition. Fireworks and searchlights beamed from the *USS San Diego* in San Diego Bay illuminated the tower of the California Building. Meanwhile people lit bonfires on the summits of nearby hills and as far away as the Cuyamacas.[102] The display was capped off by a fireworks display above the Organ Pavilion that depicted the opening of the Panama Canal, accompanied by the words: "The land divided – the world united – San Diego – the first port of call."[103]

[100] *San Diego Union* (April 18, 1914), 3.
[101] *San Diego Union* (January 1, 1915), 1.
[102] Good thing it was winter!
[103] *San Diego Union* (January 1, 1915), 1.

The Panama-California Exposition was such a success that it ran an additional year. Because the second year hosted several foreign nations, it was renamed the Panama-California International Exposition. All told the exposition attracted 3.8 million visitors over the 24 months it was open **(Figure 21)**. The exposition appeared to have done its job – attracting visitors and many new residents to San Diego. A *San Diego Union* editorial stated in 1916 that the fair "proclaims to the world that a great future awaits San Diego and that its progressiveness may at any time be looked of to make history."[104] In addition to introducing thousands of people to the charms of the city, the exposition greatly popularized the Spanish Colonial Revival style in California, and also further afield.

Figure 21. Plaza de Panama, ca. 1915
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

[104] As quoted in David Marshall, AIA, *San Diego's Balboa Park* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 8.

H. Interlude: 1917-1932

U.S. Navy Training Center

As discussed above, everything but Cabrillo Bridge, the California Quadrangle, the Botanical Building, and the Spreckels Organ Pavilion was supposed to be demolished and returned to parkland after the exposition closed. The site gained a reprieve on April 6, 1917, when the United States declared war on Germany. The Navy, which had been increasing its presence in San Diego for at least a decade, needed a new local training facility. San Diego offered the Navy the use of the exposition property as a place to train new recruits. Although the exposition buildings were still supposed to be removed after the war, hints were already surfacing that San Diegans were envisioning their retention. On May 13, 1917, an editorial in the *San Diego Union* stated: "The changes which have been made in the various buildings will not impair either the utility or beauty of the structures inside or out."[105]

After taking control of the exposition site, the Navy repurposed the buildings for new uses, as well as building temporary accommodations for over 6,000 "bluejackets." Among other changes, the Navy converted the San Joaquin County Building into a naval aviation training school and repurposed the plazas for drilling and marching, for teaching recruits how to swab decks, and for dances on Saturday nights **(Figure 22)**. The Lily Pond was used to train recruits how to row and to swim. Meanwhile, the Navy converted various exhibition halls into barracks, classrooms, libraries, recreation rooms, and various other functions.[106] After 90 days of training in such idyllic circumstances, the newly minted sailors would then ship out on active duty.

[105] *San Diego Union* (May 13, 1917).
[106] David Marshall, AIA, *San Diego's Balboa Park* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 61-70.

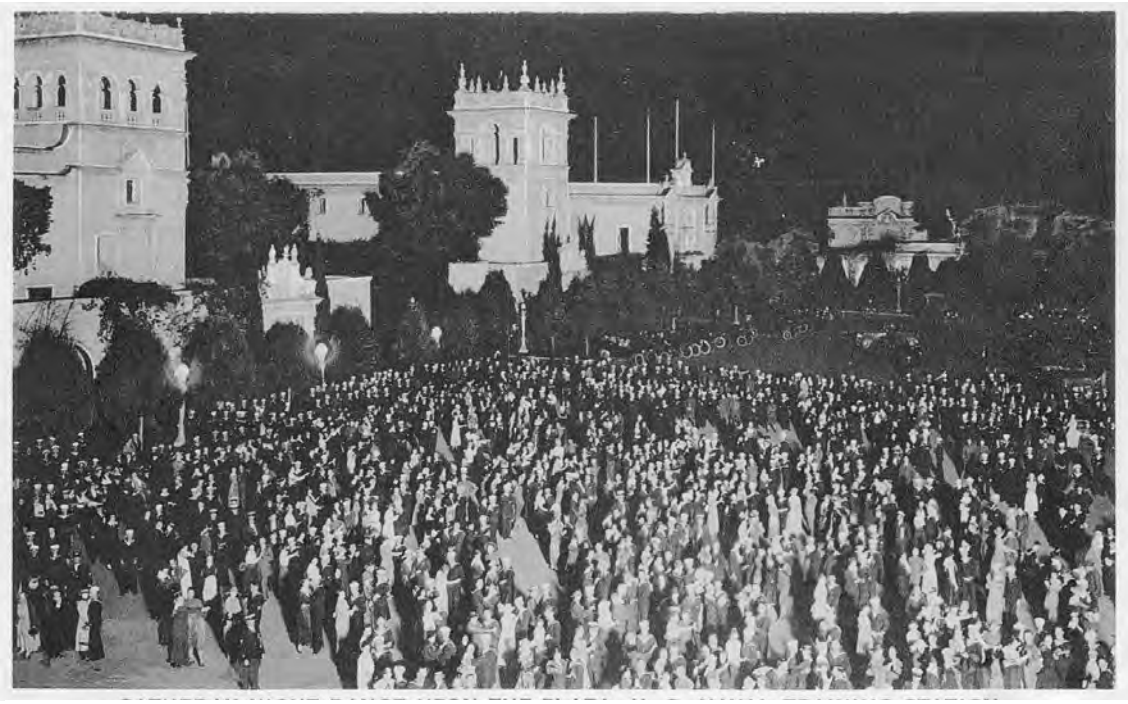


Figure 22. Plaza de Panama during a Navy dance, ca. 1917
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Peacetime

The Navy continued to occupy the exposition grounds for several months following Allied victory in 1917, remaining there into 1919. Although the Navy did not make many physical changes to the exposition site, the temporary buildings had taken a beating. San Diego resumed its plans to demolish the temporary buildings and landscape their sites according to the original plan. San Diegans had a different plan, rallying to save the exposition buildings, or at least the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex. Led by George Marston, the group's tagline was: "Cross the bridge and find yourself in another world." The City eventually relented and in 1922, most of the buildings along El Prado were repaired using both private and public funds prior to reopening to the public.[107] Automobiles were also fully introduced to Balboa Park, appearing in early photographs parked on Plaza de Panama, Plaza de California, and all along El Prado **(Figure 23)**.

[107] Estrada Land Planning, *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 24.

Figure 23. Cars parked on Plaza de California, 1923
Source: San Diego History Center

Balboa Park Becomes a Cultural Center

In search of uses for the former exposition buildings, the City began letting local museums and other cultural organizations lease space in them. The Museum of Man was first, opening in the California Building. The San Diego Fine Arts Museum was the next to arrive, going into a new building constructed on the site of the Sacramento Valley Building. The new building, constructed in 1926 of concrete, and designed by architect William Templeton Johnson in the Spanish Renaissance style, became the new northern terminus of the Plaza de Panama.[108] A photograph taken of the façade of the building in the late 1920s shows that the Plaza de Panama was definitely in use as a parking lot; the surface is paved in asphalt and parking stripes have been painted on the surface **(Figure 24)**. The year 1925 also witnessed the destruction by fire of the Southern California Counties Building on the north side of East El Prado. The site of this temporary exhibition hall remained vacant until 1933 when it became the new home of the San Diego Natural History Museum, also designed by William Templeton Johnson.

[108] Estrada Land Planning, *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 24.

Figure 24. San Diego Museum of Art (originally the Fine Arts Gallery)
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Despite the fact that Plaza de Panama had become an ordinary parking lot by the 1920s, the City found ways to beautify it around its edges. One of the most significant interventions was the installation of an equestrian statue (by Anna Hyatt Huntington, with the base by William Templeton Johnson) of the Spanish national hero El Cid in 1930 at the southern end of the plaza, near the northern end of The Esplanade. Because the plaza was used for parking is probably why it was not placed at the center where one might expect to find a grand equestrian statue.[109]

The onset of The Depression in 1929 slowed development in Balboa Park significantly, although by 1933 the growing number of cornices and parapets falling from the temporary exhibition halls again compelled the City to consider demolition. Once again the buildings were saved by citizen action, this time led by a Mrs. Gertrude Gilbert. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Reconstruction Finance Corporation provided the funds by which the buildings were repaired.[110]

[109] Ibid.
[110] Estrada Land Planning, *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 25.

I. California Pacific International Exposition: 1933-1936

Opportunity for a New Exposition

The substantial community effort that went into rescuing the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex again in 1933-34 served as a catalyst for another world's fair. The suggestion came in 1933 from Frank Drugan, a former field representative of the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain. Impressed with the results of the restoration work, he took on the role that Colonel Collier had played in the 1915 Exposition, pitching to San Diego's business establishment the idea that the restored buildings could be used as the nucleus for a reprise of the city's wildly successful 1915 Exposition. Chicago, then in the second year of its Century of Progress Exposition, had done quite well even in the midst of The Depression, and Drugan saw no reason why San Diego could not follow suit with an exposition of its own that could reuse many of the exhibits from Chicago.[111]

Exposition Corporation Formed

On July 27, 1934, the Exposition Corporation was formed and fundraising begun, reaching 100 percent of its goal by September 19, 1934. San Diego architect Richard S. Requa, who had overseen the restoration of the original exposition buildings in 1933, was appointed director of architecture for the new fair. In September, the San Diego City Council agreed to let the Exposition Corporation use Balboa Park in exchange for the corporation agreeing to spend $50,000 on park improvements, as well as sharing some of the ticket sales and concession proceeds with the City. Remodeling of the existing 1915 buildings began in December 1934 and construction of the new exhibit halls began in January 1935. Work progressed throughout the winter and spring of 1935, with 2,700 workers employed in three eight-hour shifts rushing it to completion by the opening on May 29, 1935.[112]

The key to planning and building a world's fair in less than a year was to reuse as much of the original 1915 complex as possible. The 1915 Administration Building remained in use as the

[111] Richard W. Amero, "San Diego Invites the World to Balboa Park a Second Time," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Volume 31, Number 4 (Fall 1985), 261.
[112] Ibid.

headquarters of the Park Board while the adjoining California Quadrangle became the San Diego Museum. Continuing east, the former Science and Education/Medical Arts Building became the Science and Photography Building. Opposite, on the south side of El Prado, Requa added tiled benches, fountains, and a pergola to Jardines de Montezuma and renamed it Alcazar Gardens. To the east of the gardens, the former Indian Arts Building became the House of Charm. Bordering the north side of the Plaza del Panama (renamed Plaza del Pacifico for the duration of the fair) was the Fine Arts Gallery (renamed the Palace of Fine Arts for the duration of the fair). Bordering the plaza to the east was the Café of the World (formerly the Home Economy Building) to the north and the House of Hospitality (formerly the Foreign Arts Building) to the south. Continuing east, the former Varied Industries Building on the north side of El Prado became the Foods and Beverages Building and the Commerce and Industries Building on the south side became the Better Housing Building. The Botanical Building remained in its original use with its original name, as did Spreckels Organ Pavilion.[113]

Requa did make some changes to the 1915 exposition buildings and landscapes, chief among them the construction of reflecting pools and a 50'-high tower at the center of Plaza del Pacifico, the latter called the Arco del Porvenir (Arch of the Future) **(Figure 25)**. Requa also carved a large Mexican-style patio out of the center of the House of Hospitality. In the middle of the patio, Requa placed a circular fountain containing a sculpture called "Woman of Tehuantepec," by renowned sculptor Donal Hord. Landscape features were also renewed by Requa. In addition to Alcazar Gardens, Requa installed a new garden called Casa del Rey Moro behind the House of Hospitality.[114] Physical changes to the buildings were otherwise kept to a minimum in order to save time and money. Requa relied in large part on decorative lighting effects, painted scenery, and changes to landscape features to achieve the look and feel of an entirely new exposition.

[113] Ibid.
[114] David Marshall, AIA, *San Diego's Balboa Park* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 78-84.

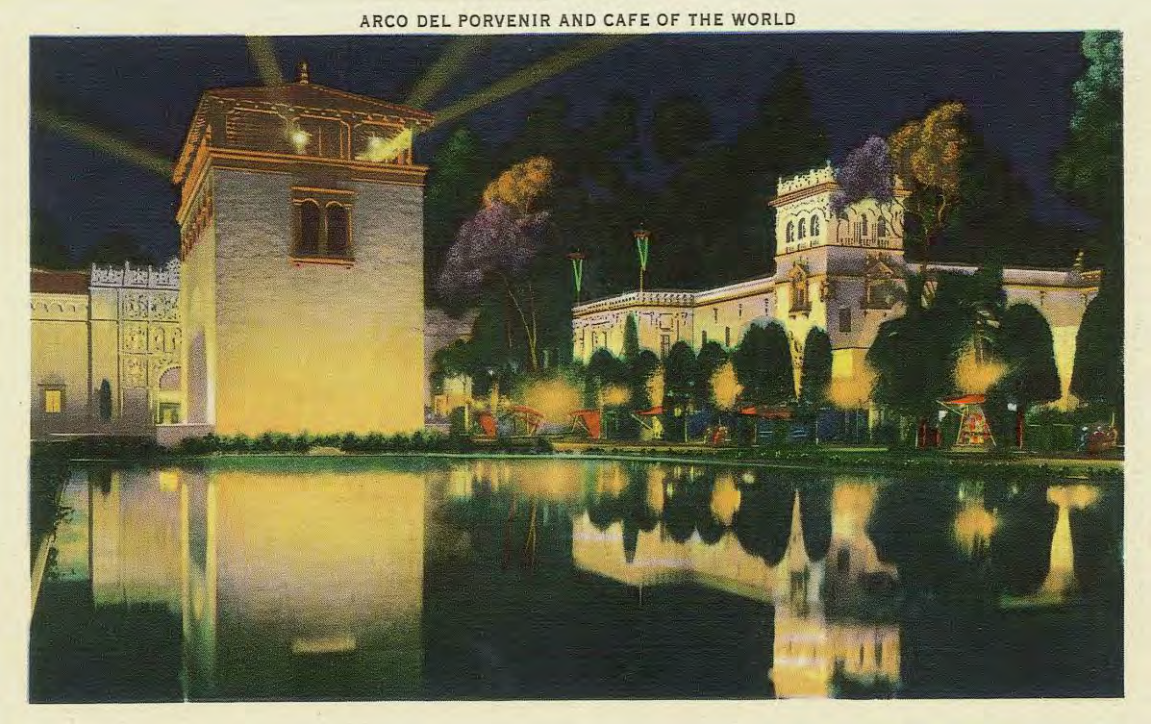


Figure 25. *Arco del Porvenir* in the *Plaza de Panama*, ca. 1935
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

The Palisades Group

Much like his predecessor Bertram Goodhue, Requa was well-versed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Nonetheless, Requa largely avoided using the style on the newer exhibition halls and attractions built to the south of the El Prado complex, an area that Requa named The Palisades **(Figure 26)**. Seeking to provide more representative examples of Southwestern architecture, Requa employed examples of Pueblo and Mexican vernacular styles, particularly for the International Cottages. He also used "modernistic" styles such as Art Deco and Streamline Moderne. However, even the version of the Art Deco style used in The Palisades area had a regional focus. Most of the large exhibition halls in The Palisades were designed in the so-called "Mayan Deco" style. Mayan Deco took its name from the Pre-Columbian architecture of México and Central America, which provided the design principals and ornament. Examples of Mayan Deco in The Palisades group include the Federal Building (now the Hall of Champions), Electricity and Varied Industries Palace (now the San Diego Municipal Gymnasium), the California State Building (now the San Diego Automotive Museum), and the Standard Oil Company Building (demolished). The machine-like Streamline Moderne style, so popular at

Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition, was also used to great effect with the Ford Building and the adjoining Starlight Music Bowl.

Figure 26. The Palisades, 1935
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Requa particularly embraced the design of vernacular Mexican residential architecture, a style he perfected in his local residential work. Good examples of Requa's skills in this area include the House of Pacific Relations/International Cottages complex in The Palisades area, as well as the inaptly named "Spanish Village" complex located north of the San Diego Natural History Museum. The House of Pacific Relations was originally a complex of 15 small Mexican vernacular-style cottages housing cultural delegations from participating foreign nations. The Spanish Village (really more of a Mexican village) was one of several international villages that were to have been built. In actuality it was the only one constructed.[115]

Requa also oversaw the construction of several non-Hispanic-themed attractions within the Exposition grounds, including a reproduction of the Old Globe Theater in London (located

[115] Richard W. Amero, "San Diego Invites the World to Balboa Park a Second Time," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Volume 31, Number 4 (Fall 1985), 262-3.

behind the California Quadrangle), the Gold Gulch Western Town (where the Japanese Friendship Garden expansion is now underway), a nudist colony called Zoro Gardens, as well as a huge midway area called El Zocalo located in a strip of land between Park Boulevard and Avenida de España.

Within The Palisades area, Requa oversaw the construction or enhancement of several new landscape features, the most notable of which was Plaza de America, a landscaped park containing as its centerpiece the Firestone Company's "Singing Fountains." Requa also placed a rustic log bridge (no longer extant) over Palm Canyon, an older landscape feature dating to 1915. The House of Pacific Relations complex featured a landscaped courtyard and pool at its center. Another garden built by Requa was the California Gardens, a lush flower bed located southwest of the Spreckels Organ Pavilion (now the site of the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot). All of the new roads and paths connecting the El Prado/Plaza de Panama group to The Palisades were landscaped with lawns, light standards, and trees, some of which still exist.[116] Lastly, Kate Sessions oversaw the creation of the (Old) Cactus Garden on the west slope of the Central Mesa.

The California Pacific International Exposition opened on the morning of May 29, 1935 with a parade across Cabrillo Bridge and a ceremony in which two orphan girls flipped the switch to power the lights. In comparison with the 1915 fair, the 1935 exposition was more decentralized, with attractions covering a large area spanning from one end of the Central Mesa to the other, although the Plaza del Pacifico (Plaza de Panama) and Plaza del Organo (Spreckels Organ Pavilion Plaza) remained the principal venues for public events. Private autos were excluded from the exposition grounds for the duration of the fair, as evidenced by a photograph taken from the Arco del Porvenir, looking south toward The Esplanade and the Spreckels Organ Pavilion **(Figure 27)**. The first season of the exposition closed on Armistice Day, November 11, 1935.[117]

[116] Estrada Land Planning, *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 26-30.
[117] Richard W. Amero, "San Diego Invites the World to Balboa Park a Second Time," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Volume 31, Number 4 (Fall 1985), 270.

Figure 27. The Esplanade, 1935
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Around 4.8 million people attended the 1935 Exposition, a bit lower than initial projections, so the decision was made to keep it open through 1936. The second season opened in a torrent of rain on February 12, 1936, with the lights turned on by President Franklin D. Roosevelt depressing a golden telegraph key in the White House. In the intervening months between the two seasons, several changes had been made. Several of the racier exhibits were removed, such as Zoro Gardens. Some exhibitors had moved on to the Texas Centennial being held in Dallas that year but many of the vacated spaces were taken over by international exhibitors. In total, the second season attracted a little over two million visitors. Total visitation over the two years was 7,220,000, only a fraction of the attendance at the Century of Progress Exposition. Nonetheless, the California Pacific International Exposition could be judged a success because it made a modest amount of money and more important, it provided employment to thousands of unemployed San Diegans.[118]

[118] Richard W. Amero, "San Diego Invites the World to Balboa Park a Second Time," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Volume 31, Number 4 (Fall 1985), 275.

J. Exposition to the Present: 1936-2011

Aside from the Zocalo area, very little of the 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition was demolished after it closed in 1936. Most of Requa's exhibition halls were permanent structures and like the El Prado buildings they were gradually put to various civic uses. A ca. 1940 Balboa Park guide shows the layout and uses of the 1935 Exposition site in some detail. Some useful information that can be derived from this map includes the fact that vehicles were once again allowed throughout the exposition grounds and that several new areas had been converted into parking lots. In addition to the plazas of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama group, most of Pan American Plaza and the former site of the California Gardens behind the Spreckels Organ Pavilion (now the Spreckels Organ Pavilion Parking Lot) had been converted into surface parking lots **(Figure 28)**.

During the Second World War, Balboa Park was again commandeered by the military, with the Navy using the exposition buildings as an extension of the Navy Hospital – a major non-park related encroachment built in the southeastern part of Balboa Park in 1922. Meanwhile, the Army took over the Spanish Village. During the postwar period, the San Diego Zoo – a remnant of the 1915 Exposition – continued to grow within the area north of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex.[119]

[119] David Marshall, AIA, *San Diego's Balboa Park* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 107-8.

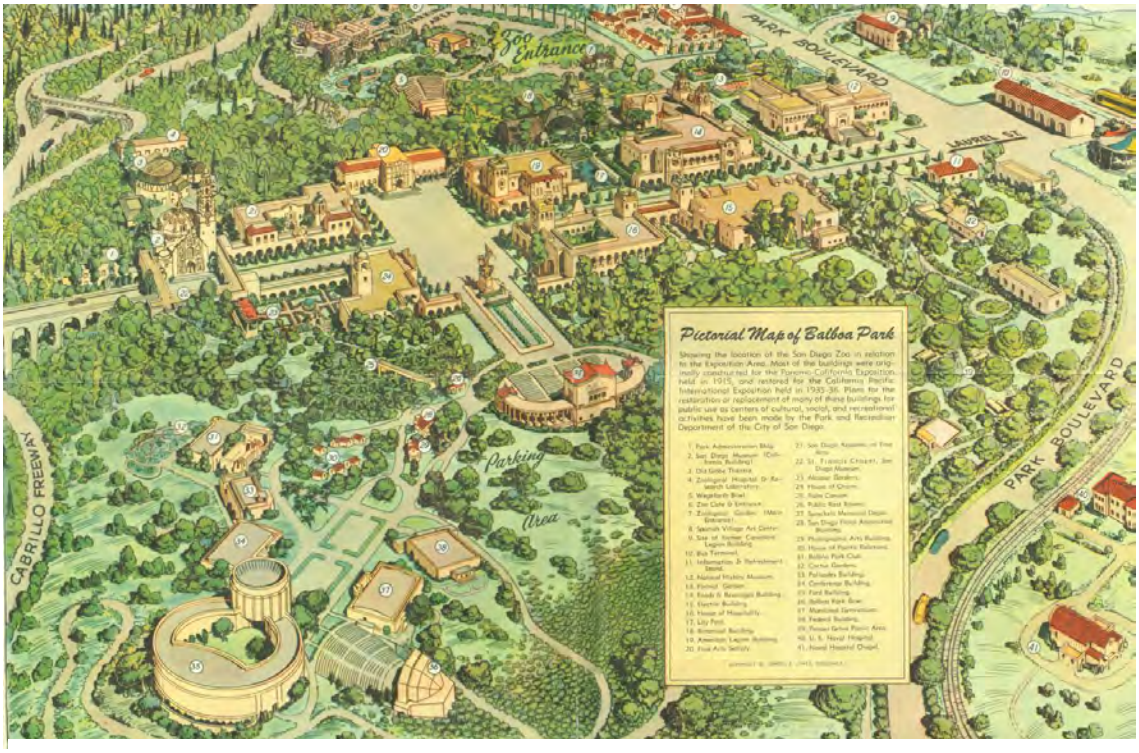


Figure 28. "Pictorial Map of Balboa Park," ca. 1940
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

1960 Master Plan

The historic exposition buildings, which had already been spared twice in their history, were not exempt from change. By the early 1960s, the original exhibition halls from 1915 were nearly 50 years old. As early as 1959, the directors of the San Diego Museum of Art began eyeing the nearby Science and Education Building as possible room for expansion. Around the same time, the City commissioned a new Balboa Park Master Plan. The resulting plan, adopted in 1960, was known as the Bartholomew Plan because it was prepared by Harland Bartholomew & Associates. The plan called for the demolition of nearly all the 1915 temporary buildings and their replacement with entirely new facilities – not reproductions of the original buildings. Among its recommendations were proposals to demolish six buildings right off the bat, including the Administration Building, the Food and Beverage Building (which was to be replaced with a nursery), the Science and Education Building (which would be replaced with a new wing for the San Diego Museum of Art), the Home Economy Building (which would be replaced by the new Timken Museum), the House of Charm (which was to make way for a new sports museum), and

the Electric Building (which would be cleared to make room for a new and expanded Museum of Man).[120]

Science and Education and Home Economy Buildings Replaced

In 1960, following recommendations of the Bartholomew Plan, San Diego City Council approved the construction of a new west wing for the San Diego Museum of Art on the west side of Plaza de Panama. They also approved the new Timken Museum on the east side of the plaza. The Science and Education Building would make way for the former and the Home Economy Building would be demolished to build the latter.[121] Although approved in 1960, it took several years for anything to happen. Bitterly opposed by fans of Balboa Park, the two 1915 structures were eventually demolished in 1964. The travertine-clad Modernist Timken Museum, by San Diego architect Frank L. Hope, was the first to take root in 1965, with the Moorish-Modernist west wing of the Diego Museum of Art by Mosher & Drew following in 1966.[122] A postcard printed ca. 1968 shows what the north side of Plaza de Panama looked like after these two buildings were completed **(Figure 29)**.

Figure 29. Ca. 1968 postcard showing *Plaza de Panama*
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

[120] Edwin G. Martin, "Council OKs Art Gallery, Park Plan," *San Diego Union-Tribune* (1960, n.d.).
[121] Ibid.
[122] Dirk Sutro, *San Diego Architecture* (San Diego: San Diego Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, 2002), 104.

Historic Preservation Efforts in Balboa Park

The demolition of the two Goodhue-designed buildings in 1964 (as well as their replacement with modernist structures) unleashed howls of protest in San Diego's nascent historic preservation community. The controversy gave birth to the Committee of 100 in 1967. The group's initial focus was opposition to the replacement of the deteriorating Foods and Beverages Building with either a nursery or another modern building.[123] The Committee of 100 went before the San Diego City Council and convinced it to pass the following resolution:

> No buildings would be built along El Prado which did not incorporate 1915 decorations and design of the existing Spanish Colonial buildings.[124]

The Committee of 100 also successfully lobbied for the designation of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama group as San Diego City Landmark No. 1 in 1967.[125] Subsequent designations include the listing of the complex in the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 and the subsequent designation of much of the Central Mesa (including The Palisades area) as a National Historic Landmark in 1977.

Casa del Prado

Although the Committee of 100 was ultimately unsuccessful in convincing the City to save and restore the Foods and Beverages Building (which the City condemned in 1968), the group made sure that the replacement building – the Casa del Prado – featured an appropriate façade that incorporated salvaged sculptural work from the demolished building. The groundbreaking for the new reinforced-concrete Casa del Prado took place on November 9, 1969. Throughout the construction, the Committee of 100 made sure that the plans to replicate the historic façade and arcade of the Foods and Beverages Building were carried out, raising $75,000 themselves in the summer of 1970 when value engineering threatened to derail the project.[126] Although the replacement building was much larger than the original, the primary façades faithfully reproduced the appearance of the original 1915 building.[127]

[123] Committee of 100, *Committee of 100: Objectives and Accomplishments to the Spring of 1975* (San Diego: 1975), 1.
[124] Ibid.
[125] San Diego Planning Division Files.
[126] Committee of 100, *Committee of 100: Objectives and Accomplishments to the Spring of 1975* (San Diego: 1975), 5.
[127] Estrada Land Planning, *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (San Diego: 1992), 31.

The next few years saw further change to the East El Prado area. In 1971, the alignment of Park Boulevard was changed, leaving room to construct a new Plaza de Balboa. As part of this project, vehicular traffic was excluded from East El Prado. In 1973, the Reuben H. Fleet Space Theater was completed on the south side of East El Prado, just east of Casa de Balboa.[128]

On March 8, 1978, the Old Globe Theater was destroyed in a fire caused by arsonists. To accommodate stage productions while the Old Globe was rebuilt, a new Festival Stage was constructed next door. When the Old Globe was rebuilt in 1982, the Festival Stage was retained. Arsonists also destroyed the Electric Building. Similar to the Casa del Prado, the ruins were replaced by a larger building (called Casa de Balboa) whose primary façades faithfully recreated the appearance of the 1915 Electric Building.[129]

1992 Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan

The growing influence of historic and cultural landscape preservation resulted in a gradual shift in planning in Balboa Park. Whereas the 1960 Bartholomew Plan had called for the destruction of nearly all the 1915 Exposition buildings, the 1992 *Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan* (still in effect) calls for planning in the Central Mesa that "preserves its historic and aesthetic significance while providing for functional needs."[130] Adopted by the San Diego City Council on October 20, 1992, the *Precise Plan* contains sets of objectives and policies to guide decisions affecting land use within the central portion of the park.[131]

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, most of the rest of the temporary 1915 buildings were reconstructed, beginning in 1981 with the Electric Building, which became known as Casa de Balboa. The House of Charm was replaced in 1995, but it was rebuilt using fiberglass-reinforced resin, resulting in a slightly less durable rendition of the building's original ornament. Following the House of Charm reconstruction, the City hired architect Milford Wayne Donaldson to oversee the reconstruction of the House of Hospitality, which was completed in 1997.

[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid., 205.
[131] San Diego City Council, "Resolution Number R – 268789" (San Diego: San Diego City Council, adopted July 7, 1987).

Donaldson designed a steel-frame structure (instead of the original wood) that recreated the building as it would have appeared in 1935. The ornament was faithfully duplicated in fiberglass reinforced-concrete. Many other changes have taken place over the last decade, the most recent of which is the construction (and ongoing expansion) of the Japanese Friendship Garden. In addition, in recent years, the California Building and the San Diego Museum of Art have been rehabilitated.

VI. Project Setting

The buildings, structures, landscapes, and public artworks described in this chapter are all located within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) as described in Chapters I and II and depicted in **Figure 1**. To summarize, the APE encompasses a portion of the West Mesa, Cabrillo Bridge, and most of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex, from Cabrillo Bridge to Village Place. Areas located south of Plaza de Panama that would be physically and/or visually affected include The Esplanade, Palm Canyon, Alcazar Parking Lot, Archery Range, Spreckels Organ Pavilion, the wooded area behind the Spreckels Organ Pavilion, and the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot. The APE also includes the entire Palisades area, which although it will undergo few physical changes as part of the project, is within sight of several of the proposed changes.

A. General Site Description

The Central Mesa is a large elevated tract of land located at the center of Balboa Park. Sandwiched between Cabrillo and Florida canyons, the Central Mesa is the location of Balboa Park's best-known cultural attractions, including the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex, the Spreckels Organ Pavilion, and The Palisades area. At its highest point the mesa is elevated approximately 300 feet above sea level. In contrast to other urban parks in its league, like Golden Gate Park in San Francisco or New York's Central Park, Balboa Park is largely programmed space, with only some of the West Mesa and several canyons in other parts of the park remaining unprogrammed. Indeed, the Central Mesa is the most heavily built-up portion of the park, with the majority of it occupied by buildings, formal gardens, surface parking lots and roads. In contrast, the edges of the mesa, which blend in with the adjoining canyons, tend to be undeveloped, consisting primarily of planted forests composed of eucalyptus, Blackwood acacia, palms, and various other planted and volunteer species. The land slopes downhill to the south from its highest point along El Prado to its lowest point behind the San Diego Air and Space Museum. In the following section VHPC describes and summarizes the history of each building, structure, and landscape feature within the APE. They are presented in geographical order, beginning at the northwest and working toward the southeast.

B. Individual Buildings, Structures, Landscapes, and Objects

Cabrillo Bridge (1912-14)

Figure 31. Cabrillo Bridge, looking northeast from West Mesa
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Cabrillo Bridge is, along with the California Quadrangle, the foremost symbol of Balboa Park **(Figure 31)**. The reinforced-concrete bridge hovers 120' above Cabrillo Canyon. It is a seven-arched bridge with solid concrete abutments at either end. The bridge carries two lanes of vehicular traffic and two sidewalks for pedestrians. The quarter-mile long bridge has hollow piers and a solid balustrade and it is illuminated by decorative light standards. The south side of the bridge has two sets of pedestrian stairs that access the ground near the abutments on both ends of the bridge. The bridge currently has metal fencing along its center portion. At its west end is a pair of historic guard shacks associated with the bridge.

Designed by Director of Works Frank P. Allen, Jr., Cabrillo Bridge was constructed in 1912-14 to link the Panama-California Exposition with San Diego's Bankers Hill neighborhood, downtown, and other neighborhoods west of the park. Goodhue had originally designed a three-arch bridge based on the Alcántara Bridge in Toledo, Spain. Believing this design to be too costly, Exposition Company directors selected Allen's alternate seven-arch design. Nonetheless, the 40'-wide, 1,000'-long, and 120'-high concrete bridge ended up costing $225,154.89 when it was completed in April 12, 1914, $75,000 over the original $150,000 estimate.[1] At some point after the 1915 exposition closed, the bridge began to carry private motor vehicles.

[1] *San Diego Union* (January 1, 1913), 3.

Administration Building (1911)

Figure 32. Administration Building
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The Administration Building is a two-story, wood-frame building with a concrete foundation and a flat roof with a stepped parapet **(Figure 32)**. The façade is articulated by a semi-regular grid of deeply recessed window and door openings containing multi-light wood casements and paneled wood doors. In contrast to the rest of the El Prado complex, the Administration Building no longer has any exterior ornament. As originally designed, it had a Spanish Colonial Revival-style frontispiece and balcony, but these features were removed prior to the 1960s and not replaced when the building was restored ca. 1990. The Administration Building is linked to the California Quadrangle by a one-story hyphen penetrated by an arched vehicular entrance.

The Administration Building is the oldest known structure in the Balboa Park Historic District and one of the last "temporary" buildings remaining from the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. It was designed by Bertram Goodhue and Carleton M. Winslow and constructed in 1911 as the administrative offices of the exposition, with offices for architects and drafters on the second floor.[2] Until the early 1970s, the Administration Building was the headquarters of San Diego's Department of Parks and Recreation. Earmarked for demolition in the 1960 Bartholomew Plan, the badly deteriorated structure remained vacant for much of the 1970s, when it was again threatened with demolition. As a contributor to the Balboa Park Historic District, the building was spared. It was restored (minus the elaborate frontispiece) ca. 1990.

[2] Many sources claim that Irving Gill – the first architect of the Exposition – designed the Administration Building, or at least started designing it before he resigned his post in 1911. The original architectural plans list Bertram Goodhue and Carleton Winslow as architects, with Irving Gill as Associate Architect.

California Quadrangle (1914-15)

Figure 33. Entrance to California Quadrangle, looking east
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The California Quadrangle is a large complex consisting of the San Diego Museum of Man, the former Fine Arts Building, and the two linking wings that connect them. The linking wings both have arched portals that provide pedestrian and vehicular passage through the complex from Cabrillo Bridge to El Prado **(Figure 33)**. The area enclosed within the California Quadrangle is called Plaza de California. One of the principal hardscaped plazas of the complex, it is paved in contemporary interlocking pavers.

Figure 34. California Building
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Designed by Bertram Goodhue and built as one of the four buildings and structures that were to outlast the 1915 exposition, the California Quadrangle is constructed of reinforced-concrete with cast stone and tile detailing and a stucco finish. Designed as the primary focal point of the exposition, the California Building section (the northerly half of the complex presently occupied by the Museum of Man) features a Greek-cross plan with a tile-clad dome and a soaring 208' tower at its southeast corner **(Figure 34)**. The design of the building is based on two notable Mexican churches: Santa Prisca in Taxco (1758)

and San Martín in San Luis Potosí (1764). The tower's belfry and the frontispiece are both clad in cast stone molded in Churrigueresque ornament. The frontispiece depicts a host of important figures in the history of California exploration and settlement, including Father Junípero Serra, Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, Sebastían Vizcaíno, Gaspar de Portolá, Kings Charles V and Philip III of Spain, and others.

The southern half of the California Quadrangle was originally called the Fine Arts Museum at the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. It was built by the Brown & De Cew Construction Company and it cost the City of San Diego $104,243.95 to build. In contrast to the California Building on the north side of the plaza, the former Fine Arts Museum building was designed in a simple, undecorated manner with its slab-like molded buttresses based on the church of El Carmen in Celaya, México and Mission San Gabriel in Los Angeles County.[3]

Archery Range

The Archery Range is located on the eastern slope of Cabrillo Canyon, with targets to the north and south of Cabrillo Bridge. This area is principally accessed from Alcazar Parking Lot, although there is also a concrete stair that leads down from the eastern abutment of Cabrillo Bridge. Another entrance is located at the terminus of the Palm Canyon Trail. The northeast corner of the Archery Range area abuts the southwest corner of the California Quadrangle **(Figure 35)**. The Archery Range consists of 40 targets placed throughout the canyon and a level section south of the Cabrillo Bridge abutment. An unnamed arroyo that bisects the archery range is planted with hundreds of palms. This area also contains an unidentified brick culvert **(Figure 36)**. The culvert's origins are unknown. Remnants of a stone path, retaining walls, and water pipes are also located throughout this area.

[3] Richard Amero, "The Making of the Pacific-California Exposition: 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History,* Volume 36, Number 1 (Winter 1990), 25.

Figure 35. Archery Range, looking northeast toward California Quadrangle
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Figure 36. Unidentified masonry structure in Archery Range area
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The Archery Range is used by the San Diego Archers. The organization formed in 1938 but it is not known when the range was established in this area of Balboa Park.

Alcazar Gardens (1914-15; 1935)

Alcazar Gardens is located between the California Quadrangle and the House of Charm, along the south side of West El Prado **(Figure 37)**. Masonry walls demarcate the garden along its western and southern boundaries. Raised masonry pillars capped by concrete pinnacles mark the entrance to the garden on the west. Wood-frame, stucco-clad triumphal arches capped by broken pediments mark the entrances along the south. There is a reconstructed pergola at the western end of the garden. Wood-frame, stucco-clad arcades line the northern end of the gardens. The gardens themselves are laid out in a formal three-aisle plan with paved walkways, two tiled fountains at the crossings of the aisles, tiled benches, and level planting beds demarcated by trimmed parterres.

Designed by Director of Works, Frank P. Allen, for the 1915 exposition, the Moorish-inspired gardens were originally known as "Los Jardines de Montezuma (Montezuma's Gardens)." The gardens were rehabilitated by Richard S. Requa for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition. He added the fountains and several tiled benches and renamed them Alcazar Gardens. In 1962, the gardens were restored by the Rotary Club of San Diego. The pergola, which had been removed at some point, was restored (along with the rest of the gardens) in the mid-1990s.

Figure 37. Alcazar Gardens, looking north
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Alcazar Parking Lot (ca. 1960)

Figure 38. Alcazar Parking Lot, looking north
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Alcazar Parking Lot is located immediately south of Alcazar Gardens. The paved surface lot holds 136 automobiles; it is only accessible from the east via a drive connecting it to Plaza de Panama Drive. Alcazar Parking Lot is landscaped with perimeter plantings that merge with Palm Canyon to the south and east and the Archery Range to the west. The parking lot has two large Moreton bay fig trees near its northeast corner **(Figure 38)**, a footpath that wraps around its southern side, and an early 1960s-era toilet room structure on the west side.

It is not known when Alcazar Parking Lot was constructed. Before it was built ca. 1960, the area was occupied by gardens with footpaths and a pergola that connected with the Palm Canyon Bridge. These gardens had been built in 1915 and they appear as late as 1953 on aerial photographs. The existing parking lot first appears on 1964 aerial photographs, suggesting that it may have built in response to recommendations contained within the 1960 Bartholomew Plan.

El Prado Arcades (1914-15; 2005)

As envisioned by Bertram Goodhue, covered arcades originally extended the length of El Prado from Plaza de California to Calle Cristobal (now Village Place). Plaza de Panama was also surrounded on all four sides by arcades that were part of the adjoining buildings. In addition to conveying the impression of a Spanish or Mexican city, the arcades provided shelter from the sun and rain. Some were freestanding (such as the one adjoining Alcazar Gardens), but most were attached to the buildings that bordered El Prado. The arcades are of different character depending on their location and date of construction. Nearly all have been rebuilt in recent years, either as freestanding structures or as part of adjoining buildings. All feature paved walkways, arcaded elevations facing El Prado and the plazas, and various ceiling types illuminated by hanging light fixtures **(Figure 39)**.

Figure 39. West Arcade
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The arcades fell into disrepair and most were demolished by the 1960s along with their adjoining buildings. The arcades along West El Prado and a portion of East El Prado were rebuilt in 1992 and 2005, respectively, according to the designs of Wheeler, Wimer, & Blackman. Where 1915 buildings have been rebuilt, they have included arcades so that arcades presently

exist in nearly every place that they did in 1915, with the notable exception of the north side of Plaza de Panama, where the San Diego Museum of Art and the Timken Art Museum stand.

House of Charm (1914-15; 1995)

The House of Charm is located at the southwest corner of El Prado and Plaza de Panama. Built in 1914-15 as the Indian Arts Building, the original building was a wood-frame structure built without foundations **(Figure 40)**. In contrast to the Churrigueresque styling of most of the other 1915 exposition buildings, the House of Charm was designed in an austere style reminiscent of the early sixteenth-century fortress churches of northern México. The existing building was reconstructed in 1995-96. It is now a two-story, steel-frame office building and museum with a basement, stucco walls, and fiberglass-reinforced plastic ornamental trim.

Figure 40. House of Charm (east entrance)
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The original Indian Arts Building/House of Charm was designed by Carleton Winslow and built in 1914-15 for the Panama-California Exposition. During the second season of the exposition, the building became the Russia and Brazil Building. The building was remodeled and re-designated as the House of Charm for the 1935 Exposition. In 1955, the west tower was removed and in 1960 plans were made to demolish the deteriorating structure, but this did not happen until 1995-96 when it was rebuilt from the ground up. The rebuilt House of Charm was designed by Carrier Johnson Architects. In addition to rebuilding the long-missing tower, the building reuses historic windows, doors, and trim from the original building. The building now houses the Mingei Museum and the Museum of the Living Artist.

San Diego Museum of Art (1926, 1966, 1970)

Figure 41. Frontispiece of San Diego Museum of Art
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The San Diego Museum of Art wraps around the north and west sides of Plaza de Panama. It consists of the original 1926 museum designed by William Templeton Johnson, as well as two additions by Mosher & Drew – one built in 1966 and the other in 1970. Anchoring the north end of Plaza de Panama, the 1926 building occupies one of the most prominent sites within the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex. Built as a permanent building of reinforced-concrete and hollow clay tile, the façade is designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style.

Concealing windowless gallery space within, the primary façade does not feature many openings, although it does have ornate cast stone ornament around the windows at the first floor level, as well as the elaborate frontispiece **(Figure 41)**. The frontispiece depicts famous Spanish painters, including busts and statues of Ribera, El Greco, Murillo, Zurbaran, and Velazquez; reliefs of Spanish crests and galleons; and various other historically themed decorative details. The hipped roof is clad in red clay tiles. The 1966 west wing addition is made of tinted reinforced-concrete. Although it presents a blank façade to El Prado (now concealed behind an arcade), the east façade facing Plaza de Panama features an open-air entry hall containing a forest of columns and Moorish-inspired arches reminiscent of the Court of the Lions at The Alhambra in Spain **(Figure 42)**. The 1970 addition on the north and east sides is windowless and non-descript.

Figure 42. Plaza de Panama façade of 1966 West Wing
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Originally known as the Fine Arts Gallery, the Museum of Art was built on the site of the Sacramento Valley Building from the 1915 exposition. The 1966 west wing and adjoining Sculpture Garden took the place of the old Science and Education/Medical Arts Building, which was demolished in 1964. The modernist addition was very controversial and its construction (as well as that of the nearby Timken Museum) indirectly led to the designation of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex as San Diego's first City Landmark in 1966. In 2005, the City of San Diego built a Spanish Colonial Revival-style arcade along the north side of West El Prado to replicate a portion of the Science and Education/Medical Arts Building removed in 1964.

Timken Museum of Art (1965)

The 1965 Timken Museum of Art (Timken Museum) is located on the east side of Plaza de Panama, opposite the west wing of the San Diego Museum of Art. The two-story, steel-frame, travertine-clad museum building – designed in a

Figure 43. Timken Museum, looking southwest
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

spare modernist style by San Diego architect Frank L. Hope – is an good example of Southern California modernism, albeit out-of-step with the rest of the Spanish Colonial Revival El Prado group. The building, which houses the art collections of the Timken and Putnam families, features a lush, subtropical landscaping program, including towering palms, birds of paradise, and tree ferns **(Figure 43)**.

Originally housed in a private residence, the Timken family sought a home for their collection in Balboa Park. The City originally favored a more traditional design, but afraid the collections might go elsewhere, approved the modernist design. It was built on the former site of the Home Economy Building, demolished in 1964 in keeping with the recommendations of the 1960 Bartholomew Plan. In the 1990s, the Committee of 100 constructed an arcade along the north side of East El Prado, concealing the south wall of the Timken Museum from view.

Botanical Building (1914-15)

Figure 44. Botanical Building, looking northeast
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The Botanical Building is located at the northern end of the secondary north-south axis located between the San Diego Museum of Art and Casa del Prado **(Figure 44)**. It sits at the rear of a lush greensward and faces the Lily Pond, a shallow, rectangular, two-part body of water that occupies much of this secondary axis. The Botanical Building measures 250' long, by 75' wide, by 60' tall. The otherwise utilitarian wood lath exterior features a Moorish-flavored, stucco-finished arcade along its south side. The dome also features an elaborate Spanish Colonial Revival cupola. The interior structure is supported by

a riveted steel frame salvaged from an abandoned rail project. The Botanical Building houses ferns, fan palms, and other plants that do not require abundant direct sunlight. Like the nearby Timken Museum, the Botanical Building is surrounded by palms and other subtropical plantings.

The Botanical Building was designed as a collaborative effort of Carleton Winslow and Frank B. Allen and built 1914-15. It was one of four exhibition buildings that were to survive after the end of the 1915 exposition. The Botanical Building was initially conceived as a gigantic "lath plant palace" by Alfred D. Robinson, president of the San Diego Floral Society. When it opened, it was the largest lath structure in the world. Unlike most of the other exposition buildings, which were remodeled and periodically renamed, the Botanical Building has remained in use for the same purpose and has not had its name changed in nearly a century. It has undergone some alterations, including the demolition of stuccoed arcades on its east and west sides, as well as its north (conservatory) wing in the 1940s or 1950s. The structure was rehabilitated ca. 2000.

House of Hospitality (1914-15; 1935; 1993-97)

Figure 45. House of Hospitality, looking east
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The House of Hospitality anchors the southeast corner of Plaza de Panama **(Figure 45)**. Designed by Carleton Winslow in a particularly florid version of the Spanish Colonial style, the building was originally constructed 1914-15 as the Foreign Arts Building. One of the more elaborate buildings in the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex, the House of Hospitality occupies a prime spot on the east side of the plaza. It once faced a largely identical counterpart (the Home Economy/Food and Beverage Building) on the

north side of El Prado. The building's façades are based on the Hospital de Santa Cruz in Toledo, Spain. Significant features of the building's design include its ornate frontispiece facing the plaza, as well as its large square tower and arcade portal, both located at the building's northwest corner. The arcade continues along the north wall of the building and is continuous with Casa de Balboa next door. The House of Hospitality contains an open-air courtyard at its center, as well as the Casa del Rey Moro Garden to its rear.

Like most of the other El Prado buildings, the original 1915 Foreign Arts Building was constructed without a foundation, out of wood and staff, and was only intended to last a year or two. In 1935, Richard S. Requa repurposed the exhibition hall as the House of Hospitality. As part of this work he carved a rectangular courtyard out of its center to install a fountain and a sculpture by Donal Hord called "An Aztec Woman of Tehuantepec." Requa also demolished the building's south wing to build the Casa del Rey Moro Garden. The House of Hospitality was spared in the 1960 Bartholomew Plan, which would have demolished the rest of the El Prado complex. The severely deteriorated building was dismantled in the mid-1990s and reconstructed in steel, plaster, and fiberglass reinforced-concrete in 1995-97 by San Diego preservation architect Milford Wayne Donaldson.

Casa del Rey Moro Garden (1935; 1997)

The Casa del Rey Moro Garden is located behind (south) the House of Hospitality. Meaning the "House of the Moorish King," the garden is mostly hardscaped and used as a special event area. The garden itself, which contains a replica of the wishing well in the Guadalajara Museum of Gardens, is based on the design of the Moorish gardens at Ronda, Spain. It was designed by Richard Requa and built for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition. The garden was restored and rededicated in 1997 in conjunction with the reconstruction of the adjoining House of Hospitality.

Plaza de Panama (1914-15; 1935)

Figure 46. Plaza de Panama, looking south
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The Plaza de Panama is located at the intersection of El Prado and The Esplanade/Pan American Road **(Figure 46)**. Originally a hardscaped plaza covered in bitumen and decomposed granite, it is today an asphalt-paved parking lot. Its northern half retains little integrity as it is bounded by three buildings that did not exist in 1915 and no landscaping survives. The southern half retains a higher level of integrity. Although the House of Hospitality and the House of Charm are both reproductions, they replicate the historic 1915 buildings that once stood in their respective locations. In addition, areas of landscaping, as well as two arcades on the south side, provide some hints of the plaza's original design. The plaza itself is paved in asphalt and features painted parking spaces as well as traffic lanes. At its center is a fountain donated to Balboa Park ca. 1996 by Mrs. Elizabeth North.

Plaza de Panama was the responsibility of Director of Works Frank P. Allen. Designed to resemble a town square of an idealized Spanish or Mexican city, Plaza de Panama was hardscaped with decomposed granite over asphalt. Early photographs show one row of Blackwood acacias lining the perimeter of the plaza. Some of the more prominent exposition buildings surrounded the plaza, including the Science and Education, Sacramento Valley, Home Economy, Foreign Arts, and Indian Arts buildings.

After the Navy returned Balboa Park to the City in 1919, Plaza de Panama was repurposed as a parking lot. By the late 1920s, it had been paved in asphalt and striped for its new use. In 1930,

the Hispanic Society of New York donated a mounted equine sculpture to Balboa Park. Mounted on a stone pedestal designed by William Templeton Johnson, the bronze equestrian figure depicts the Spanish hero El Cid. It is mounted at the south end of the plaza.

In 1935, Richard Requa retained the Plaza de Panama as a central gathering place (renaming it "Plaza del Pacifico") for the California Pacific International Exposition. He redesigned the plaza, adding two reflecting pools on either side of a temporary 50'-foot high tower called the Arco de Porvenir, meaning "Arch of the Future." The tower, used to address speakers and host colored light shows, was demolished after the 1935 exposition. Not long after, Plaza de Panama was returned to its use as a parking lot. Over the years there have been multiple proposals to remove the cars from Plaza de Panama and restore it for use as a pedestrian plaza. In 1996, as part of a traffic-calming project, the City installed a quatrefoil fountain with an adjoining planting bed at the center of Plaza de Panama. The Plaza de Panama Fountain was donated by Mrs. Elizabeth North.

Casa del Prado (1914-15; 1971)

Figure 47. Casa del Prado, view toward northwest
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Casa del Prado is located on the north side of East El Prado, wrapping around to the north along the west side of Village Place. It is a large, two-story, multi-purpose building, and L-shaped in plan **(Figure 47)**. Casa del Prado consists of two sections: Casa del Prado proper and a secondary component – designed in the form of a Mexican church – known as the Casa del Prado Theater **(Figure 48)**. The façade of the principal

part of the building along El Prado features molded ornament depicting seeds, fruits, and vegetables, and series of balconies atop the arcade that run the length of its façade. The façade of the theater has an elaborate frontispiece designed in the Plateresque style, with bas-relief figures of Junípero Serra.

Originally designed by Carleton Winslow in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, and built in 1914-15 as the Varied Industries Building, the exhibition hall was the largest of the temporary buildings built for the 1915 exposition, with two sections facing El Prado and a third section facing Calle Cristobál (now Village Way), which housed the Food Products section. In 1916, it became the Foreign and Domestic Industries Building, and for a time it housed exhibits from The Netherlands that had been on display at the Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco but that could not return home for the duration of the First World War.[4]

During the First World War, most of the building was converted into barracks for Navy personnel training in Balboa Park. For a 12-year period, from 1919 until 1930, Casa del Prado housed the San Diego County Fair. The severely deteriorated building was renovated in 1933. In 1935, Richard Requa remodeled the building as the Foods and Beverages Building for the California Pacific International Exposition. For a short time during the early 1950s, the building was the main branch of the San Diego Public Library. By the late 1950s, the building had again become severely deteriorated. The 1960 Bartholomew Plan called for its replacement with a nursery.[5] When the Foods and Beverages Building was demolished in

Figure 48. Casa del Prado Theater
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

[4] Richard Amero, "History of the Casa del Prado Building in Balboa Park," San Diego History Center: http://www.sandiegohistory.org/bpbuildings/casaprad.htm
[5] Ibid.

1971, its replacement – the Casa del Prado – was designed with a new façade that replicated the 1915 building. The new Casa del Prado, designed by Wheeler & Wimer, was dedicated on November 14, 1971.[6] Today Casa del Prado houses several cultural institutions, including the San Diego Youth Symphony, the San Diego Junior Theater, the San Diego Botanical Gardens Foundation, and others.

Casa de Balboa (1914-15; 1981)

Casa de Balboa is the counterpart to Casa del Prado on the south side of East El Prado. Originally designed by Frank B. Allen, and built 1914-15 as the Commerce and Industries Building, and rebuilt in 1981 as Casa de Balboa, its design bears some Italian Renaissance influence, although its two end pavilions are based on the Marques de la Villar del Aguilla mansion in Queretaro, México **(Figure 49)**. The cornice and eave treatment is derived from the Casa Consistorial in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. It has freestanding arcades that connect the pavilions with the recessed central portion of the building. The façade of Casa de Balboa is a faithful reproduction of the 1915 Commerce and Industries Building. In a district known for its fanciful architecture, the Casa de Balboa is one of the most extreme, with its richly detailed arcades, balconies, and its infamous nude female caryatid-style brackets known as "hermes."

Figure 49. Casa de Balboa, view toward southeast
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

One of the largest temporary exhibition halls, Casa de Balboa has been known by several names. Initially called the Commerce and Industries Building, it housed American industrial arts exhibits. During the exposition's second season in 1916, it became the Canadian

Building. During the First World War, the Navy housed recruits in the giant building. In 1922, it served as the interim home of the San Diego Natural History Museum, remaining there until its new home was completed on Plaza de Balboa in 1933. That same year, the termite-eaten Commerce and Industries Building was patched up in time for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition.[7]

In 1935, Richard Requa remodeled the Commerce and Industries Building and renamed it the Palace of Better Housing. The building housed the administration offices of the exposition, as well as several exhibits located behind the building sponsored by the Federal Housing Administration. This exhibit included a steel house by famed architect Richard Neutra. In 1936, the building housed a series of displays related to electricity, resulting in another name change, this time to the Electric Building.[8]

Designated for demolition and replacement by a new Museum of Man in the 1960 Bartholomew Plan, the Electric Building survived after it became the home of the new San Diego Aerospace (now Air and Space) Museum in 1965. In 1971, the Committee of 100 took molds of the building's ornament in preparation for its eventual reconstruction. In 1978, the badly deteriorated building was destroyed by arsonists' fire. The building was reconstructed according to designs by architect Richard Wheeler in 1979 and renamed Casa de Balboa in 1981. Today the building houses the San Diego History Center, the Museum of Photographic Arts, and the Model Railroad Museum.[9]

The Esplanade (1914-15)

Located on a narrow isthmus between Palm Canyon and Gold Gulch, The Esplanade (or La Esplanada as it was originally called) is a landscaped lawn bounded by flower beds, and roadways located between Plaza de Panama and the Spreckels Organ Pavilion **(Figure 50)**. The Esplanade, which forms the central portion of the north-south axis of the El Prado/Plaza de

[7] Richard Amero, "History of the Casa de Balboa Building in Balboa Park," San Diego History Center: http://www.sandiegohistory.org/bpbuildings/casabalb.htm
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.

Panama complex, is bounded to the north by a pair of large wood balustrades that define a pedestrian walkway linking the arcades of the House of Charm and the House of Hospitality. Just north of this feature is the statue of El Cid Campeador (described above under the Plaza de Panama). The Esplanade consists of two paved single-lane roadways (one southbound and one northbound) enclosing a roughly rectangular lawn panel that tapers to a rounded-off point at its south end. The lawn panel is bounded by flower beds oriented parallel to the roadways.

The Esplanade appears on the earliest depictions of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Contemporary photographs and postcards indicate that its design has not changed appreciably since then, although its surroundings have changed. Originally bounded to the east by the San Joaquin Counties Building and to the west by the Kern/Tulare Counties Building (the buildings were both demolished prior to the 1935 exposition), The Esplanade is now bordered to the west by Palm Canyon and to the east by the Japanese Friendship Garden and Gold Gulch. The Esplanade was originally lined by what appeared to be fluted light standards (no longer extant). The wood balustrades at its northern end appear in early images, suggesting that they are historic structures.

Figure 50. The Esplanade, view toward south
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Palm Canyon (1914-15; 1935-36)

Palm Canyon is a steep natural declivity located between the Alcazar Parking Lot and The Esplanade **(Figure 51)**. The canyon is primarily accessed via a 1976 wood stair that leads down

into the canyon from a wood bridge linking Alcazar Parking Lot to a paved path that follows the eastern rim of Palm Canyon. It is also accessed by a stone stair leading down into the canyon from the southern edge of Alcazar Parking Lot. An informal foot trail connects Palm Canyon to the Old Cactus Garden behind the Balboa Park Club. The trail at the bottom of the canyon also connects to the Archery Range, where gated access is provided to Archery Club members. Palm Canyon, which is a little over two acres in extent, contains around 450 individual palms representing 58 different species, as well as several large Moreton bay figs and other plantings that thrive in a damp, subtropical environment.

What is now Palm Canyon was originally the location of several deep wells, as well as San Diego's animal pound, hence its early name of "Pound Canyon." The earliest plantings in Palm Canyon were Mexican fan palms planted in 1912, likely by Kate Sessions. Palm Canyon was fully planted in time for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Richard Requa made a few changes in 1935, including building a footbridge over the canyon. This bridge was removed many years later. The existing bridge and stair were both built in 1976. Stone abutments and steps from the original remain.

Figure 51. Palm Canyon
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Palm Canyon Toilet Room (ca. 1990)

There is a one-story, reinforced-concrete toilet room structure located near the top of Palm Canyon, to the west of Spreckels Organ Pavilion. It appears to have been constructed in the early 1990s to replace an earlier but also non-historic toilet room.

Community Christmas Tree (1981)

The San Diego Community Christmas Tree is located near the intersection of Alcazar Parking Lot Drive and Pan American Road East. It is a cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) planted in 1981. Each holiday season it is decorated and lit.

Japanese Friendship Garden and Tea Pavilion (1981)

The Japanese Friendship Garden occupies approximately 11.5 acres on the western edge of Gold Gulch, wrapping around the east side of the Spreckels Organ Pavilion. The picturesque landscape feature, which is currently being expanded into Spanish Canyon to the south, contains several buildings, including the Tea Pavilion, Exhibit House, and Garden Office/Activity Center. All are located within a traditional Japanese garden setting consisting of multiple landscape, hardscape, and water features linked together by meandering footpaths.

Established by the Japanese Friendship Garden Society of San Diego in the early 1980s, the Japanese Friendship Garden was intended to serve as an educational and aesthetic enhancement to Balboa Park, replacing a small Japanese garden built in 1914 behind the Botanical Building. This earlier garden, which also originally included a tea pavilion, was removed in 1955.

Spreckels Organ Pavilion (1914-15)

Spreckels Organ Pavilion is located at the southern end of The Esplanade, where the roadway swings west to become Pan American Road East **(Figure 52)**. It is a two-story, reinforced-concrete building with a semi-circular peristyle partially enclosing a 2,000-seat plaza originally called Plaza de los Estados **(Figure 53)**. In contrast to the 1915 exposition buildings designed by Goodhue and his associates, Spreckels Organ Pavilion is designed in a Greco-Roman style. The central pavilion houses a colossal pipe organ enclosed within the arched opening. A bronze plaque on the west side of the central arch of the Organ Pavilion reads:

> To the people of San Diego this pavilion and organ are presented and to them and the people of the world this pavilion and organ are dedicated by John D.

> Spreckels and Adolph B. Spreckels, January First A.D. Nineteen Hundred and Fifteen. Harrison Albright Architect.[10]

The Corinthian Order peristyle continues across the face of the pavilion and the pierced tracery of the arch springs from large Corinthian pilasters. The entablature of the peristyle is embellished with clam shells, rosettes, urns, closely spaced light bulbs, and other ornamental detailing.

Figure 52. Spreckels Organ Pavilion
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Spreckels Organ Pavilion was the third of the four "permanent" exposition buildings completed as part of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Originally Goodhue had wanted to build a music pavilion on the north side of the Plaza de Panama, where the Sacramento Valley Building ended up being built. When Brazil pulled out of the Exposition in 1912, San Diego business tycoon John D. Spreckels offered to spend $100,000 to build an ornate music pavilion, outfitted with an electric pneumatic Austin organ. Designed by Harrison Albright, Spreckels' favorite architect, and built out of reinforced-concrete, Spreckels Organ Pavilion formed the southern edge of the Plaza de los Estados/La Esplanada group, an area otherwise dedicated to county pavilions shoehorned into the narrow isthmus separating Palm Canyon and Gold Gulch. During the 1915 California-Pacific Exposition, the Organ Pavilion complex was used as a venue for speakers and choral ensembles.

[10] Carolyn Pitts, *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form: "Balboa Park National Historic Landmark Nomination,"* (Washington, D.C.: 1977), 7-5.

Spreckels Organ Pavilion has been operated as a civic amenity ever since the end of the 1915 exposition, with organists playing for music fans for nearly a century. The original organ console was replaced for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition. Other changes in 1935 included expansion of the plaza (renamed Plaza del Organo). During the Second World War, Spreckels Organ Pavilion was used to screen films for the servicemen stationed in Balboa Park. By the early 1970s, the facility had fallen on hard times, with some advocating for its replacement with a parking lot. With assistance and fundraising by the Committee of 100, Spreckels Organ Pavilion was restored between 1979 and 1981 by architects Szabo & Matteson. Some of the original cast-concrete ornament was replaced in fiber-reinforced plastic.[11] In 1995, the facility received an ADA upgrade, allowing unimpeded access to the stage for wheelchair users. In 1998, San Diego architect Milford Wayne Donaldson was hired to restore the pavilion's original exterior lighting.[12]

Figure 53. Spreckels Organ Pavilion Peristyle
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Spreckels Organ Pavilion Plaza (1914-15; 1935; 1995)

The Spreckels Organ Pavilion is part of a larger precinct that also includes a landscaped plaza that serves as a forecourt to the pavilion, as well as a seating area for concert audiences. The oval plaza is designed as a shallow amphitheater paved in interlocking "Type C" masonry units **(Figure 54)**. It is bounded to the north by a semi-circular masonry retaining wall lined with

[11] Richard Amero, "The Spreckels Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park," *San Diego History Center:* http://www.sandiegohistory.org/bpbuildings/organ.htm
[12] Drawings on file at the City of San Diego Development Services Department.

foundation plantings and street trees. The highlight of the ensemble is the so-called "Clamshell Fountain," which is located directly on axis with The Esplanade and Plaza de Panama. There is also an ADA ramp located on the east side of the plaza that allows wheelchair users to access the plaza.

Figure 54. Spreckels Organ Pavilion Plaza
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Depicted on maps of the 1915 Exposition as "Plaza de los Estados," Spreckels Organ Pavilion Plaza was originally constructed in 1914-15 as the seating area for audiences attending concerts and other events at Spreckels Organ Pavilion. In 1935, Richard Requa enlarged the plaza and added a fountain, renaming it "Plaza del Organo." The design of the fountain, known popularly as the "Clamshell Fountain," was based on a fountain in Chapultepec Park in México City. The existing plaza was significantly enlarged in 1988. As part of the work, the asphalt surface was replaced with interlocking pavers. The existing retaining wall and ADA ramp that bound the plaza to the south appear to date to the late 1980s as well.[13]

Organ Pavilion Parking Lot (ca. 1940)

Immediately to the south of Spreckels Organ Pavilion is a large surface parking lot commonly known as the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot. Containing approximately 350 spaces, the parking lot is irregularly shaped, conforming to its canyon-side location **(Figure 55)**. The lot is bounded by Spreckels Organ Pavilion to the north, Spanish Canyon to the east, Presidents Way to the south,

[13] Richard Amero, "The Spreckels Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park," *San Diego History Center:* http://www.sandiegohistory.org/bpbuildings/organ.htm

and Pan American Road East to the west. A narrow belt of eucalyptus and Torrey pines screens views of the parking lot from Spreckels Organ Pavilion **(Figure 56)**. To the west of the lot is a narrow planting strip and street trees along Pan American Road East. To the south is a more formally landscaped area consisting of irregularly shaped lawn panels with street trees and planting beds. To the east, the land steps down into Spanish Canyon. Spanish Canyon, which is accessed by a paved service road that loops up the west wall of the canyon, contains several maintenance buildings, staging areas, and other utilitarian, back-of-house functions.

Figure 55. Organ Pavilion Parking Lot
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Figure 56. Trees between Spreckels Organ Pavilion and the adjoining Parking Lot
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

On early maps and aerial photographs of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, the area behind the Spreckels Organ Pavilion appears undeveloped apart from some saplings. With the focus of the 1935 exposition shifted toward the south, Richard Requa decided to landscape the area with a formal flower garden he called "California Gardens." Sometime between 1936 and 1940, California Gardens and a portion of Spanish Canyon were graded and filled, creating space for a large surface parking lot, which is identified on early post-World War II maps of Balboa Park. The

parking lot also appears on a 1953 aerial photograph in its existing configuration. The 1953 aerial indicates that trees had been planted in the area between the Spreckels Organ Pavilion and the lot, presumably to block views of the parking lot from Spreckels Organ Pavilion.

House of Pacific Relations/International Cottages (1915; 1935; 1990s)

The House of Pacific Relations/International Cottages is a sprawling complex of 18 cottages and two larger exhibit halls designed to recall the vernacular domestic architecture of México. The complex consists of two clusters, the older of which is bounded by Pan American Road West to the west, Pan American Plaza to the east, and Presidents Way to the south. This older area contains 15 one-story, wood-frame cottages built for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition **(Figure 57)**. Nations presently represented include Ukraine, United States, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, China, Scotland, Czech and Slovak Republics, England, France, The Philippines, Israel, Germany, Ireland, and Poland. The cottages are arrayed around a tear-drop shaped lawn, with a seating area and flagpole located at the northern end, where Pan American Road West and Pan American Plaza meet.

Figure 57. International Cottages (west group)
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The newer section is located to the east; its boundaries include Pan American Plaza to the west, Pan American Road West to the north, Pan American Road East to the east, and Presidents Way to the south. This area contains a pair of two-story, wood-frame, Spanish Colonial Revival-style pavilions – the Hall of Nations/House of Italy (1914-15) **(Figure 58)**

and the United Nations Building (1935) **(Figure 59)**. This site also contains four newer International Houses dating to the 1990s and 2000s, including Iran (1992), Hungary (1995), Spain (1999), and Puerto Rico (2006). Although somewhat larger than the earlier 1935 cottages, all four share the same Spanish/Mexican vernacular aesthetic.

Figure 58. Hall of Nations
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Figure 59. United Nations Building
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The area where the House of Pacific Relations/International Cottages is located was originally developed during the 1915 Panama-California Exposition as an area of individual state pavilions. Arrayed around a landscaped garden, the area originally featured state pavilions for New Mexico, Washington, Montana, Utah, and Kansas. In anticipation of the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition, Richard Requa removed its dome and repurposed the former Kansas Pavilion (designed by Carleton Winslow) as the Press Building. Requa then designed and built the Christian Science Monitor Building (now the United Nations Building). The Washington, Utah, and Montana buildings were removed sometime before 1935.

Richard Requa had originally planned to develop a series of "villages" representing the host countries participating in the exposition. This area was to be called "Villages of the World" and it would have included Chinese, Russian, German, Italian, French, and Mexican villages. There was to have been no Spanish Village because Requa felt that El Prado was representative of Spain.[14] In October 1934, Frank Drugan took over as "Director of Foreign Participation," and he decided

[14] Richard W. Amero, "San Diego Invites the World to Balboa Park a Second Tim," *The Journal of San Diego History,* Volume XXXI, Number 4 (Fall 1985), 262.

to follow a different approach. As a cost and time-saving measure, Drugan changed the name of the foreign section to the "House of Pacific Relations (Pacific meaning "peaceful," not a reference to the ocean) and relocated it to the area west of Calle Prensa (now Pan American Road East) and laid out a complex of 15 cottages designed in a mixture of Spanish and Mexican influences. Known as the "International Cottages," the picturesque structures were to hold the consular officials of the 21 participating foreign nations.[15] A separate "Spanish Village" ended up being built northeast of El Prado.

At some point after the close of the 1935 exposition, the former press zone east of Pan American Plaza was incorporated into the House of Pacific Relations group, and during the 1990s and 2000s, four new cottages were built for Iran, Spain, Hungary, and Puerto Rico.

The Palisades Group (1914-15; 1935)

The Palisades is a cluster of exhibition buildings constructed in 1935 for the California Pacific International Exposition. This large precinct is treated together in one section because of its common historic context as well as its greater distance from the project site.

Figure 60. Pan American Plaza
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Occupying the southern tip of the Central Mesa, The Palisades group consists of six exhibition halls and an outdoor theater built in 1935, as well as two major landscape features. The buildings are loosely arrayed around Pan American Plaza, a historically landscaped mall (now an asphalt-paved parking lot) that slopes gently downhill from northeast to southwest **(Figure 60)**.

[15] Ibid.

Beginning at the northwest corner of the group is the Balboa Park Club. Originally designed by the Rapp Brothers as the New Mexico Pavilion for the 1915 exposition, it was converted into the Hall of Education in 1935, acquiring a major addition in the process **(Figure 61)**. The building was remodeled in 1986 and upgraded again in 1992. It is presently used as event space.

Heading in counterclockwise direction from the Balboa Park Club are the Palisades Building/Recital Hall/Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater (1935 – originally the Hollywood Motion Picture Hall of Fame) **(Figure 62)**, the San Diego Automotive Museum (1935 – originally the California State Building) **(Figure 63)**, the San Diego Air and Space Museum (1935 – originally the Ford Building) **(Figure 64)**, Starlight Bowl (1935 – originally the Ford Bowl) **(Figure 65)**, the San Diego Municipal Gymnasium (1935 – originally the Palace of Electricity and Varied Industry) **(Figure 66)**, and the San Diego Hall of Champions (1935 – originally the Federal Building) **(Figure 67)**. There is also a small, one-story toilet room structure located to the south of the San Diego Automotive Museum, built in 1935.

Figure 61. Balboa Park Club
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Figure 62. Palisades Building
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Figure 63. San Diego Automotive Museum
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

With the exception of the Balboa Park Club, the San Diego Air and Space Museum, and the Starlight Bowl (which were designed by the Rapp Brothers, Walter Teague, and Vern D. Knudson, respectively) The Palisades buildings were all designed by Richard Requa. Teague and Knudsen's buildings are designed in the Streamline Moderne style, whereas Requa's contributions are all in the Mayan Deco style, with the exception of the Palisades Building, which is designed in the Pueblo Revival style to match the Balboa Park Club next door. In terms of their materials, The Palisades buildings run the gamut. Most are wood-frame, with the exception of the Air and Space Museum (steel-frame) and Starlight Bowl and the Federal Building (reinforced-concrete).

Figure 64. San Diego Air and Space Museum
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Figure 65. Starlight Bowl
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Figure 66. San Diego Municipal Gymnasium
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

Figure 67. San Diego Hall of Champions
Source: Christopher VerPlanck

The Palisades buildings were all built very quickly and inexpensively in 1934 with simple molded or applied detailing rendered in either the Streamline Moderne or Mayan Deco styles. The stage-set-like exteriors conceal what are essentially utilitarian interiors whose main purpose is to accommodate exhibit space unencumbered by vertical supports. In contrast to the 1915 exhibition halls, The Palisades buildings were built to be permanent.

1935 exposition planner Richard Requa depended on being able to reuse the recently rehabilitated El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex. In order to accommodate industrial exhibitors, as well as the Federal government and the State of California, exposition planners requisitioned the southern end of the Central Mesa to build a half-dozen modern exhibit halls modeled on the very successful Century of Progress International Exposition in Chicago of 1933-34, albeit with a California twist. Designed as "long, horizontal packing crates," these new halls were inexpensively "ornamented with frescoes, colored lights, hanging gardens and flowering vines."[16]

As originally designed, the exhibition halls of The Palisades complex surrounded a centrally landscaped garden/plaza called "Plaza de America." The southern part of the plaza featured a large lawn containing the "Singing Colored Fountains" by Firestone Tires. North of this was

[16] Richard W. Amero, "San Diego Invites the World to Balboa Park a Second Tim," *The Journal of San Diego History,* Volume XXXI, Number 4 (Fall 1985), 265.

another lawn divided into sections by radial walkways. West of Pan American Plaza West is a lawn panel in front of the Palisades Building that is a remnant of Pan American Plaza. At the southern end of the plaza is the Ford Building, a colossal exhibit hall designed to resemble an automotive gear when viewed from the air. At the other end of the plaza was the Standard Oil Company's "Tower of the Sun," a nod to pre-Columbian architecture of México (no longer extant).

After the 1935 exposition closed, the buildings of The Palisades group were incrementally appropriated by various City departments, recreational facilities, and public and private non-profit museums. Most remain in use today for various public recreation and museum functions.

VII. Evaluation of Historic Status

A. Summary of Historic Status of Resources within Area of Potential Effect

The APE is located within the Balboa Park Historic District, a National Historic Landmark and National Register-designated historic district. The APE is also located within San Diego Landmark No. 1 – Balboa Park. The period of significance for the 1975 National Register nomination includes the years 1915, 1925, and 1933. These dates mark the completion of the contributing resources, including the entire El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex (1915), the San Diego Museum of Art (1926), and the San Diego Museum of Natural History (1933). The nomination does not include the California Quadrangle, which was separately designated in 1974. Also excluded are the Timken Museum and the West Wing of the San Diego Museum of Art, which are non-contributors. Two years later, in 1977, when much of the Central Mesa was designated a National Historic Landmark District, the buildings and landscapes constructed in 1934-35 for the California Pacific International Exposition, mostly within The Palisades and the Spanish Village area, were designated. The period of significance for this nomination is 1915 and 1935.

Unfortunately, there is no definitive list of contributors and non-contributors for either the National Register or the National Historic Landmark districts, and in many cases the verbal boundary descriptions in the nominations bear little relation to the maps that accompany them. Based on the periods of significance listed in the nominations, it is apparent that all buildings,

structures, landscapes, and objects constructed for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition and the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition that retain integrity ought to be considered contributors to the historic district. The San Diego Museum of Art (built 1926) and the San Diego Natural History Museum (built 1933) are also listed as contributors in both nominations. Based on these criteria VHPC has assembled a list of district contributors located within the APE. They are listed in geographical sequence beginning at the northwest corner of the APE and working south toward The Palisades area. The list includes reconstructions that have replaced historic buildings.

1. Cabrillo Bridge (including guard shacks at west end -1912-14)
2. Administration Building (1911)
3. California Quadrangle (1914-15)
4. Alcazar Gardens (1914-15; 1935; 1992)
5. El Prado and El Prado Arcades (1914-15; 1992; 2005)
6. House of Charm (1914-15; 1995)
7. San Diego Museum of Art (1926 section only)
8. Botanical Building and Lily Pond (1914-15)
9. House of Hospitality (1914-15; 1997)
10. Casa del Rey Moro Garden (1935; 1997)
11. Plaza de Panama (1914-15)
12. El Cid Campeador (1930)
13. Casa del Prado (1914-15; 1971)
14. Casa de Balboa (1914-15; 1981)
15. The Esplanade, including wood balustrade (1914-15)
16. Palm Canyon (1914-15; 1935)
17. Spreckels Organ Pavilion (1914-15)
18. Spreckels Organ Pavilion Plaza (1914-15; 1935; 1988)
19. International Cottages (only the 15 original cottages -1935)
20. Hall of Nations (1914-15; 1935)
21. UN Building (1935)

22. San Diego Hall of Champions (1935)
23. Pan American Plaza (1935)
24. Balboa Park Club (1915; 1935)
25. Palisades Building/Recital Hall/Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater (1935)
26. San Diego Automotive Museum (California Building – 1935)

The following resources appear to be non-contributors to the Balboa Park National Historic Landmark District because they were not original design features of either the 1915 or the 1935 expositions.

1. Archery Range (after 1936)
2. Alcazar Parking Lot (ca. 1960)
3. West Wing of the San Diego Museum of Art (1966)
4. Timken Museum of Art (1965)
5. Plaza de Panama Fountain (1996)
6. Japanese Friendship Garden (ca. 1981-)
7. San Diego Community Christmas Tree (1981)
8. Palm Canyon Toilet Room Structure (ca. 1990)
9. House of Iran (1992)
10. House of Hungary (1995)
11. House of Spain (1999)
12. House of Puerto Rico (2006)

B. Integrity of Resources within Area of Potential Effect

The concept of integrity is essential to identifying the important physical characteristics of historical resources and hence, in evaluating adverse changes to them. Integrity is defined as "the authenticity of an historical resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance."[17] The process of

[17] California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistant Series No. 7, How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historic Resources* (Sacramento, CA: California Office of State Publishing, September 2001), 11.

determining integrity is similar for both the California Register and the National Register. The same seven variables or aspects that define integrity – location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association - are used. According to the *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,* these seven characteristics are defined as:

- *Location* is the place where the historic property was constructed.
- *Design* is the combination of elements that create the form, plans, space, structure and style of the property.
- *Setting* addresses the physical environment of the historic property inclusive of the landscape and spatial relationships of the building(s).
- *Materials* refer to the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern of configuration to form the historic property.
- *Workmanship* is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history.
- *Feeling* is the property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
- *Association* is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

In general, most of the contributors to the Balboa Park National Register/National Historic Landmark District retain high integrity.[18] However, not all do. Although it is beyond the scope to comprehensively review the integrity of each contributor to the district, VHPC has identified several individual resources that have compromised integrity:

1. Administration Building (1911) – decorative frontispiece and balcony removed.

2. El Prado and El Prado Arcades (1914-15; 2005) – Portion of West El Prado paved in asphalt; light standards removed and landscape and street trees changed.

3. Plaza de Panama (1914-15) – Plaza de Panama paved in asphalt; light standards removed and landscape and street trees changed, and fountain added 1996.

4. Pan American Plaza (1935) – original lawn and fountains removed and space paved in asphalt.

[18] We are treating replacements of 1915 buildings as reconstructions and as long as the reconstruction closely resembles the original we treat the resource as having a high level of integrity.

5. California Gardens (1935) – former gardens located behind Spreckels Organ Pavilion; graded, paved and turned into a parking lot, ca. 1940.

As indicated above, incompatible alterations within the Balboa Park National Historic Landmark primarily fall into one class: historic landscapes that have been converted into parking lots. Otherwise, the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex, and most of The Palisades complex, have excellent integrity.

The introduction of automobiles into Balboa Park, and the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex in particular, occurred as early as 1917. By the late 1920s, both El Prado and Plaza de Panama were paved in an incompatible asphaltic material and Plaza de Panama had parking stripes painted on its surface – hardly an appropriate treatment for a plaza based on historic Hispanic and Mediterranean prototypes. Equally important, the introduction of vehicles and their attendant side-effects – including conflicts with pedestrians, emissions, and congestion – detract from Plaza de Panama as a public open space and gathering place for San Diegans. The near continual stream of traffic and the incongruent visual impact of dozens of cars parked in the plaza also interfere with Goodhue's original vision of a "dream city."

The usurpation of public gardens and plazas for parking has been an ongoing problem in Balboa Park for decades. Indeed, at least five other former public gardens and plazas within the Area of Potential Effect have succumbed to the auto, including the former California Gardens, which made way for the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot by 1940; Pan-American Plaza, which was resurfaced in asphalt to provide hundreds of parking spaces within The Palisades area; the replacement of the garden south of Alcazar Gardens with the Alcazar Parking Lot ca. 1960; and the construction of the Botanical Building and Casa de Balboa lots on the sites of what had been gardens.

Parking is a fact of life in a heavily auto-dependent culture like ours, but the unquestioning accommodation of motorists at the expense of pedestrians, not to mention historic aesthetic values, has taken its toll on the Balboa Park Historic District. Fortunately though, unlike an incompatible building, a parking lot does not irreparably harm historic spatial relationships or

visual connections between contributing resources. Furthermore, a parking lot is easy to remove. In the next chapter, VHPC explores the potential effects – both physical and visual – of the proposed project, whose chief goal is to remove the automobile and restore the hardscaped plazas of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex to pedestrian use.

VIII. Evaluation of Project-specific Impacts

A. Project Description

Project Overview

The proposed project would rehabilitate the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex and adjoining areas for enhanced pedestrian access by removing vehicular circulation and parking from the Plaza de California, West El Prado, Plaza de Panama, The Esplanade, and Pan American Road. To accomplish this, the proposed project would construct a new circulation route and a new underground parking structure to remove automobiles from these public plazas. Lost parking spaces would be provided outside the historic core in the proposed parking structure that would be built behind Spreckels Organ Pavilion. The project includes six major components which are discussed in depth below: (1) Plaza de Panama, (2) El Prado and Plaza de California, (3) Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road, (4) Alcazar Parking Lot and Walkway, (5) The Esplanade and Pan American Road, and (6) Parking Structure, Rooftop Park and Tram. The project description is prepared by VHPC and based on the review of drawings by Civitas, Rick Engineering, and Heritage Architecture.

Plaza de Panama

The proposed project would remove vehicular circulation and parking from Plaza de Panama **(Figure 68)**. The plaza would be rehabilitated for pedestrian use by removing the existing asphalt and resurfacing it in a more compatible material, such as small square masonry pavers. Paved areas adjoining the plaza, including the front steps of the San Diego Museum of Art, the forecourt of the Timken Museum of Art, and the area around the statue of El Cid Campeador would be repaved to match the plaza and to facilitate ADA-accessibility. Occasional managed vehicle access would be allowed in the plaza for special events. A tram stop would be located on the plaza and emergency vehicle access would also be provided.

Non-hardscaped portions of the plaza would include lawn panels placed at regular intervals around the perimeter of the plaza as it was in both 1915 and 1935. Some of these panels already exist, including those in front of the House of Hospitality and the House of Charm. New lawn panels would be reinstalled in front of the west wing of the San Diego Museum of Art and the Timken Museum of Art, where the originals were removed ca. 1964. In addition, paired rows of street trees would be planted along the east and west sides of the plaza. Potential species include golden medallions, Mexican redbuds, Savannah hollies, golden raindrop crabapples, or privets.

Wheelchair-accessible ramps would be provided at the entrances of the San Diego Museum of Art and the Timken Museum of Art. A pair of shallow reflecting pools (which were features of the plaza in 1935-36) may be created at the center of the plaza. These pools would flank the existing 1996 fountain that is now at the center of the plaza. In addition, chairs and tables and plantings would be used to create flexible outdoor seating areas.

Figure 68. Aerial view and rendering of proposed project from north; note proposed reflecting pools in the Plaza de Panama to the left.
Source: Civitas

El Prado and Plaza de California

The proposed project would return both El Prado and Plaza de California to pedestrian use. Asphalt from West El Prado and the existing non-historic interlocking pavers from Plaza de California would be removed and both plazas would be repaved using the same small square pavers used in Plaza de Panama. Otherwise, Plaza de California would not change.

West El Prado would undergo some additional changes aside from new paving, including the planting of new street trees in the existing lawn panels that run parallel to the arcades. Potential species used include crape myrtle, pink trumpet trees, Drake's Chinese elm, Chinese flame trees, or St. Mary's magnolia. The original documented tree species used in 1915 – Blackwood acacia – would not be used because this species grows very fast and would quickly conceal the façades of the historic buildings. Bougainvillea, which was also used as a decorative accent in 1915, would be restored within the foundation planting strip adjacent to the arcades.

Some new fixtures and street furniture would be reintroduced, including light fixtures replicating those originally installed along El Prado for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, as well as park benches. In addition, chairs and tables would be used to create flexible outdoor seating areas.

Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road

As discussed above, the primary goal of the proposed project is to divert vehicular traffic away from the heart of the Balboa Park Historic District to facilitate the restoration of pedestrian activity in the historic El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex. A major component of the plan is the construction of Centennial Bridge, a concrete bridge that would divert vehicular traffic from the eastern end of Cabrillo Bridge, around the south and west sides of the California Quadrangle, to the existing Alcazar Parking Lot **(Figure 69)**.

The bridge would be constructed of reinforced-concrete finished in a smooth texture. It would not be painted but rather left the natural light gray color of its materials. It would have six concrete piers that would step down into Cabrillo Canyon from both Cabrillo Bridge and Alcazar Parking Lot. The new bridge would be 44' wide and it would arc around the southwest corner of the California Quadrangle. The bridge would carry two traffic lanes and a pedestrian sidewalk. The bridge would slope slightly uphill from west to east because Alcazar Parking Lot is slightly higher than Cabrillo Bridge. Centennial Bridge would have a slender and low profile; it would not imitate the historic Cabrillo Bridge or incorporate any historicist detailing, per The Standards.

Figure 69. Aerial view/rendering of the proposed project from the west; note the proposed bridge at center-left.
Source: Civitas

The construction of Centennial Bridge would result in the removal of a 70'-long section of the south balustrade of Cabrillo Bridge. The landscape design involves siting the bridge supports to minimize disturbance to the existing canyon landscaping. Areas that must be disturbed to grade for, and build, the bridge supports would be re-landscaped using native and naturalized species. It is proposed that the palms that would be disturbed in this area would be harvested and relocated nearby and new eucalyptus trees added to screen the bridge. Vegetation adjoining the disturbed areas would be protected during the course of construction.

Alcazar Parking Lot and Walkway

The existing Alcazar Parking Lot would be redesigned as part of the proposed project. A new abutment would be constructed where the Centennial Bridge meets the parking lot. The existing 1960s-era toilet room structure in the western portion of the lot would be demolished to make way for this connection. The lot would be redesigned to provide 32 stalls of ADA-accessible parking. Other uses in this lot would include 18 stalls of valet staging along the south, east, and north sides of the lot; passenger drop-off; and museum loading along the north side of the lot. A new concrete island with a low noise wall would separate the valet/drop-off area from the rest of the parking lot.

Other new structures in the parking lot would include a valet booth on the east side of the lot, a trash enclosure at the south end of the lot, a single toilet room at the southwest corner of the lot, curbing, and a paved walkway/promenade that would allow pedestrians to walk from Cabrillo Bridge directly to Palm Canyon, around the south side of the lot. New *Precise Plan*-approved light fixtures would be installed at regular intervals throughout the parking lot and benches would be installed along the walkway and near the valet/drop-off area.

Alcazar Parking Lot contains at least one Heritage Tree, a Moreton Bay Fig (No. 65), which would be retained and protected during construction. New shade trees would be planted along the median between the parking stalls and in the valet/drop-off area.

Some new grading would occur along the north rim of Palm Canyon to provide minimum ADA cross-slopes in the parking lot and the pedestrian walkway along its southern end. Existing palms and small trees in these areas would be harvested and relocated and the slopes would be replanted to match existing conditions. Sections of the western and southern edges of Alcazar Parking Lot would require the construction of retaining walls. Retaining walls constructed on the west side of the parking lot (facing Cabrillo Canyon) would range from 20’ to 28’ high. These retaining walls would replace existing retaining walls that are about the same size. The new retaining walls would be made of concrete and finished in light-sand colored stucco. Upon the

completion of construction, these retaining walls would be screened behind replanted Cabrillo Canyon shrub mix and existing and newly planted eucalyptus trees.

A new landscape feature, called Alcazar Wetland, would be built along the southern and western edges of Alcazar Parking Lot. This feature, which serves as a device to filter and clean run off from the parking lot before it enters Palm Canyon, would simply consist of a pair of low, parallel concrete walls that contain a man-made wetland.

New retaining walls would also be built along the south side of Alcazar Parking Lot where grading is required to create ADA-accessible slopes as well as a new pedestrian path around the edge of the parking lot. The retaining walls in these areas would match existing retaining walls in these areas, ranging from 1' to 4' high, and they would be constructed of stacked stone.

Parking for non-disabled motorists would not be permitted in this lot but most motorists would continue along Centennial Road, exiting the lot at the northeast corner. From Alcazar Parking Lot, pedestrian access to El Prado would be as it is now – through Alcazar Garden. Alcazar Garden would not be physically impacted as part of the proposed project.

Pedestrian circulation to the east would be on a newly constructed pedestrian pathway and bridge. The path/bridge would be located to the south of the House of Charm and would intersect with the sidewalk on the east side of the House of Charm. The bridge is needed to preserve the existing loading area for the Mingei Museum. The pedestrian bridge, which would be 7'-2" wide, would be made of reinforced-concrete with chamfered concrete consoles. The consoles would be finished in light-colored, sand-finished white stucco. The balustrade would be made of wrought-iron with 3" x 3" wrought-iron posts and ¾" square individual balusters.

Centennial Road

The proposed project would also reclaim The Esplanade and Pan American Road for pedestrian access. From Alcazar Parking Lot, Centennial Road would follow the alignment of the existing

Alcazar Parking Lot driveway located south of the House of Charm. However, instead of continuing east to The Esplanade, the new Centennial Road would take a sharp turn to the south, along the eastern rim of Palm Canyon. Near the intersection of Pan American Road West and Pan American Road East, Centennial Road would descend beneath Pan American Road East to ensure grade-separation and avoid conflicts between pedestrians and motorists. Centennial Road would then continue below-grade, in a southeasterly direction, between Spreckels Organ Pavilion and the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot. Here it would take another sharp turn to the south to access the Organ Pavilion Parking Structure. Centennial Road would then continue south to Presidents Way.

Centennial Road would displace the existing ca. 1960 Alcazar Parking Lot Drive and the ca. 1950 pedestrian walkway that currently runs along the east rim of Palm Canyon. Centennial Road would also require the relocation or replacement of the 1981 Community Christmas Tree and the demolition of the 1990s-era toilet room near the intersection of Pan American Road West and Pan American Road East. The existing paved pedestrian walkway that runs along the east rim of Palm Canyon would be replaced by a boardwalk that would run inside the eastern rim of Palm Canyon, from the existing 1976-era boardwalk to a new "Palm Canyon Overlook" that would be constructed near the site of the existing toilet room.

The construction of Centennial Road and the new boardwalk would necessitate re-grading portions of the eastern rim of Palm Canyon. The construction of the road would also require the construction of several stacked-stone and concrete and stucco retaining walls. A 2'-6"-high concrete retaining wall would be built along the north rim of Palm Canyon and a 6'-high wall would be built along a section of the east rim of Palm Canyon. Upon completion of the work, disturbed portions of the existing landscaping would be restored and palms harvested before construction would be replanted in adjacent areas. The restoration of understory species would match existing conditions.

Centennial Road would be depressed below-grade to pass beneath Pan American Road East. In these areas two retaining walls (both 12' high) would be built. Both would be concrete and finished in sand-colored stucco. This retaining wall would be capped by a metal guardrail. This guardrail would make use of thin-profile ¼" x 2" wide plates. When seen from the side they would essentially disappear from view.

The construction of Centennial Road would also require the removal of some of the existing vegetation south of Spreckels Organ Pavilion. This landscaping presently consists of several mature eucalyptus trees, Torrey pines, small lawn panels, and two asphalt pedestrian pathways. The trees were evidently planted in the 1950s to conceal the existing Organ Pavilion Parking Lot from view of Spreckels Organ Pavilion. Although Centennial Road would be below-grade in this area, it would be constructed using the cut-and-cover method, resulting in the removal of several of these existing trees and lawn panels. The Torrey pines and the four large eucalyptus trees behind Spreckels Organ Pavilion would be retained. Otherwise, the area behind the pavilion would be replanted with evergreen trees after construction.

Where Centennial Road emerges from underground behind Spreckels Organ Pavilion, an additional concrete retaining wall would be required behind the organ pavilion to facilitate the return of the road to above-grade conditions. This wall would be 14' high and finished in sand-colored stucco.

Parking Structure, Rooftop Park and Tram

The proposed 790-space, three-level underground Organ Pavilion Parking Structure and rooftop park would be constructed on the site of the existing Organ Pavilion Parking Lot **(Figure 70)**. Its underground location would allow for the reclamation of the more than two-acre area on the top of the parking structure for park use. Vehicular access to the new parking structure would be provided at two points along its east side from Centennial Road.

The majority of the Organ Pavilion Parking Structure would be below-grade, except for its east side, which would partially daylight toward Spanish Canyon. Aside from the vehicular entry points, the eastern façade of the parking structure would be concealed behind a landscaped earthen berm. The berm would range in height from approximately 8' high at the north end to about 24' high at the southern end. The berm would be planted with "Australian Canyon" trees and unspecified evergreens. The berm would be cut in two places to access the garage. In these areas small concrete retaining walls would be built; these would range from 3' to 24' high and would be finished in sand-colored stucco.

The landscaped garden proposed for the top of the Organ Pavilion Parking Structure would have as its centerpiece a plaza paved with small square pavers. This area, which would be called "Pavilion Plaza," would contain the stairs and elevator pavilions serving the subterranean parking structure. The rest of the plaza would be left open to facilitate its usage for café seating.

To the north of Pavilion Plaza would be a feature called "California Gardens." Its name is a tribute to the gardens that were planted on this site in 1935 and removed after the Second World War. The gardens would be bisected by a paved walkway connecting Pan American Road East and Presidents Way.

To the north and west of California Gardens would be a one-story, wood-frame restroom structure. This structure would contain both men's and women's toilets, and would be designed in a Mexican/Spanish style featuring textured stucco walls, exposed wood rafter tails, and windows containing cast-concrete grilles with frosted glass. The hipped roof would be clad in Spanish clay tiles.

To the south of Pavilion Plaza would be a large trapezoidal-shaped lawn area bounded by a paved walkway to the east and terraced planters to the west. Palms would be planted next to the planters.

South of the lawn would be two structures: a one-story "Visitors' Center" and two "Family Restrooms." The two wood-frame structures would be linked by a pergola. Both would be designed in the Pueblo Style, finished in textured stucco, and detailed with wood French doors, wood-framed windows, and the walkways sheltered beneath wood pergolas.

Located to the east of the two structures and the lawn would be a landscaped knoll planted in "Australian Canyon" plantings. This area would nave narrow footpaths and would contain two children's play areas.

Due to the change in grade between the north and south sides of the Organ Pavilion Parking Structure, the landscaping at the south side of the structure would be terraced, with stairs providing pedestrian access to Presidents Way. A metal guardrail would be installed along the eastern edge of the structure. This guardrail would make use of ¼" x 2"-wide plates.

West of the new Organ Pavilion Parking Structure, Pan American Road East would be repaved using new paving materials. New palms would be planted along its margins and a new fountain would be built near the entrance to the International Cottages.

Figure 70. Aerial/rendering of proposed project from the south; note the proposed Organ Pavilion Parking Structure and public gardens in the foreground
Source: Civitas

B. Status of Balboa Park as a Historical Resource

Balboa Park is a historical resource under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As San Diego City Landmark No. 1, as a property that is also a National Historical Landmark (the highest level of significance afforded a property under U.S. law), *and* as a property that is listed in the National Register, Balboa Park is automatically eligible for listing in the California Register. Under these definitions, Balboa Park Historic District unquestionably qualifies as a historical resource under Categories 1 and 2 of CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

According to the City of San Diego's Significance Determination Thresholds: California Environmental Quality Act (November 2011), historical or cultural resources "include all properties (historic, archaeological, landscapes, traditional, etc.) eligible or potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, as well as those that may be significant pursuant to

state and local laws and registration programs such as the California Register of Historical Resources or the City of San Diego Historical Resources Register."[19] As a property that is a City Landmark, as well as one that is listed in the National Register, and a National Historic Landmark, Balboa Park Historic District is also a historical resource under San Diego guidelines.[20]

C. Determination of Significant Adverse Change under CEQA

According to CEQA, a "project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historic resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment."[21] Substantial adverse change is defined as: "physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historic resource would be materially impaired."[22] The significance of a historic resource is materially impaired when a project "demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance" and that justify or account for its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the California Register.[23] Thus, a project may alter a structure that is considered a historical resource but still not have a significant adverse effect on the environment as defined by CEQA as long as the alterations would not materially impair or undermine those physical characteristics the lead agency determines make the structure a historical resource to begin with.

Although most aspects of the project would actually have a *beneficial* impact on the resource (Balboa Park Historic District) – in particular the removal of private motor vehicles from the Plaza de California, West El Prado, and the Plaza de Panama – the construction of Centennial Bridge from the eastern abutment of Cabrillo Bridge to Alcazar Parking Lot would have limited adverse physical impacts on Cabrillo Bridge. Centennial Bridge would also have some adverse visual impacts on the California Quadrangle/Cabrillo Bridge ensemble. Together, these two structures form the signature "iconic" centerpiece of the Balboa Park Historic District, not only

[19] San Diego Development Services – Land Development Review Division, *California Environmental Quality Act: Significance Determination Thresholds* (San Diego: rev. January 2011).
[20] Pub. Res. Code SS5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4850 et seq.
[21] CEQA Guidelines subsection 15064.5(b)
[22] CEQA Guidelines subsection 15064.5(b) (1)
[23] CEQA Guidelines subsection 15064.5(b) (2).

because of their architectural and engineering significance, but also because of their prominent place on Balboa Park's Central Mesa, where they remain visible to much of the city.[24] Centennial Road would also have some physical impacts on Palm Canyon, although the majority of these impacts would disappear as soon as the replanted landscaping matures. It would also result in extensive changes to the area between the El Prado/Plaza de Panama group and the Palisades complex. Although this area is not, for the most part, that significant to the Balboa Park Historic District, it is located within the boundaries of the historic district and its overall appearance will be greatly changed by the proposed project.

D. Evaluation of the Project Pursuant to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (the Rehabilitation Standards and the Guidelines, respectively) provide guidance for reviewing work to historic properties.[25] Developed by the National Park Service for reviewing certified rehabilitation tax credit projects, the Standards have been adopted by local government bodies across the country for reviewing proposed work to historic properties under local preservation ordinances, including the City of San Diego. The Rehabilitation Standards are a useful analytic tool for understanding and describing the potential impacts of changes to historical resources.

[24] The Cabrillo Bridge/California Quadrangle ensemble was the most widely reproduced view of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, appearing on dozens of different postcard designs, exposition publicity, and other ephemera sold at the fair. This grouping is also where architect Bertram Goodhue believed that he could make a bold architectural statement, using Cabrillo Bridge to lure visitors across Cabrillo Canyon to a "dream city" on a hill. The counterpart to the bridge is of course the California Building, whose tile-clad tower was (and remains) visible from much of downtown San Diego. Other elements of the 1915 exposition can be said to have "iconic" significance, including the Botanical Building and the Spreckels Organ Pavilion, but these structures were never as widely known outside San Diego, mainly because they were not reproduced on postcards and other ephemera to the degree that the Cabrillo Bridge/California Quadrangle group were. They are also not generally visible from outside the Central Mesa area.

[25] U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service Cultural Resources, Preservation Assistance Division, *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, 1992*. The *Standards*, revised in 1992, were codified as 36 CFR Part 68.3 in the July 12, 1995 Federal Register (Vol. 60, No. 133). The revision replaces the 1978 and 1983 versions of 36 CFR 68 entitled *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects.* The 36 CFR 68.3 *Standards* are applied to all grant-in-aid development projects assisted through the National Historic Preservation Fund. Another set of *Standards*, 36 CFR 67.7, focuses on "certified historic structures" as defined by the IRS Code of 1986. *The Standards* in 36 CFR 67.7 are used primarily when property owners are seeking certification for federal tax benefits. The two sets of *Standards* vary slightly, but the differences are primarily technical and non-substantive in nature. The *Guidelines*, however, are *not* codified in the Federal Register.

Conformance with the Rehabilitation Standards does not determine whether a project would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource under CEQA. Rather, projects that comply with the Standards benefit from a regulatory presumption that they would have a less-than-significant adverse impact on a historical resource.[26] Projects that do not comply with the Rehabilitation Standards may or may not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource and would require further analysis to determine whether the historical resource would be "materially impaired" by the project under *CEQA Guidelines* 15064.5(b).

Rehabilitation is the *only* one of the four treatments (the others are Preservation, Restoration, and Reconstruction) that allows for the construction of an addition or other alteration to accommodate a change in use or program.[27] The first step in analyzing a project's compliance with the Rehabilitation Standards is to identify the resource's character-defining features, including characteristics such as design, materials, detailing, and spatial relationships. Once the property's character-defining features have been identified, it is essential to devise a project approach that protects and maintains these important materials and features – meaning that the work involves the "least degree of intervention" and that important features and materials are safeguarded throughout the duration of construction.[28] It is critical to ensure that new work does not result in the permanent removal, destruction, or radical alteration of any significant character-defining features.

It is important to note that the Rehabilitation Standards do not prevent modifications or limited alteration of historic structures or landscape features. The Rehabilitation Standards do allow for the modification of historic structures and landscapes where necessary, so long as the material integrity of the property is not permanently impaired.

[26] CEQA Guidelines subsection 15064.5(b) (3).
[27] Ibid., 63.
[28] Ibid.

The following paragraphs evaluate each of the six major components of the project for compliance with each of the ten Rehabilitation Standards. For aspects of the project that may impact landscape features, we apply the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.* Where the proposed project complies with the Standard in question, we summarize the beneficial or neutral impacts for the project as a whole. Where the proposed project does not comply, we have broken down the analysis into subsections corresponding to each component of the project because in many cases only one of the components of the proposed project may fail to comply with a given Rehabilitation Standard.

Rehabilitation Standard 1: A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.

Discussion:

The proposed project would not change the use of Balboa Park. Various aspects of the proposed project would change how certain parts of Balboa Park are used, particularly the plazas of the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex, which would be restored to their original pedestrian use – a beneficial change. The Organ Pavilion Parking Lot would also undergo a partial change in use with the reclamation of the roof of the proposed parking structure in the area for parkland – another potentially beneficial change, albeit to a non-contributing feature of the Balboa Park Historic District.

In summary, the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 1.

Rehabilitation Standard 2: The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize the property will be avoided.

Discussion:

The proposed project, particularly Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road, would adversely impact important visual and spatial relationships within a relatively small area of the Balboa

Park Historic District. Other aspects of the proposed project would retain, preserve, and enhance important character-defining features of Balboa Park.

Plaza de Panama

The proposed project would have a beneficial impact on Plaza de Panama by removing vehicular parking and circulation, substituting pavers in place of the non-historic asphalt paving, restoring sod and lawn panels that were historically located around the perimeter of the plaza, and reintroducing shade trees along the east and west sides of the plaza. The existing non-historic fountain at the center of Plaza de Panama, donated by Elizabeth North in 1996, would remain. To either side of the fountain two new shallow reflecting pools are proposed. These features would resemble similar features installed for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition. The non-historic steps to the San Diego Museum of Art would also be rebuilt to facilitate ADA access and to integrate them into the repaved plaza.

This component of the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 2 by removing non-character-defining features and materials as well as enhancing the historic appearance of this important public plaza while differentiating new work from old.

El Prado and Plaza de California

El Prado and Plaza de California would be treated similarly to Plaza de Panama. New compatible paving types would replace the non-historic pavers in Plaza de California and the non-historic asphalt in El Prado. New street light standards that replicate the originals used in 1915, as well as new street trees, would be introduced along El Prado, partially restoring the area's 1915 appearance. Although the original Blackwood acacia street trees would not be used, a compatible counterpart would be used in the place of the original species.

This component of the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 2. It would remove non-historic features and materials and it would enhance the historic appearance of this important pedestrian circulation route by restoring missing features and materials.

Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road

The proposed Centennial Road and Centennial Bridge component of the proposed project would require the demolition of a portion of the south balustrade of Cabrillo Bridge, the construction of a new abutment, and the construction of a curvilinear concrete bypass bridge over the arm of Cabrillo Canyon located southwest of the California Quadrangle. The work would require re-grading a portion of the site to build the bridge supports and the removal of some of the existing trees within the path of the proposed bridge. Centennial Road will also result in changes to the existing circulation pattern in the area between the El Prado/Plaza de Panama group and The Palisades. Though not as important as either of these two areas, the impacted area is part of the Balboa Park Historic District and the proposed project would change its existing conditions by installing new roadways, retaining walls, and guardrails.

Centennial Bridge would connect to the western end of Alcazar Parking Lot, where it would become Centennial Road. Centennial Road would exit Alcazar Parking Lot through the northeastern corner of the parking lot and would curve around the northern and eastern rim of Palm Canyon. It would then be grade-separated beneath Pan American Road, between Spreckels Organ Pavilion and the proposed Organ Pavilion Parking Structure. Centennial Road would turn south to access the proposed parking structure at two points along its east side, before terminating at Presidents Way.

Centennial Bridge would have a limited physical impact on Cabrillo Bridge, resulting in the removal of about 70’ of the south balustrade at its eastern end. This intervention would remove historic fabric, but it would impact only a small portion of the balustrade (about 2%).

The visual impacts of Centennial Bridge would be greater than the physical impacts, impacting views of Cabrillo Bridge, the California Quadrangle, and to a lesser degree the Balboa Park Historic District as a whole. The most substantial of these impacts would be the partial obstruction of the “iconic” view of the two structures from portions of the West Mesa. A study

carried out by Heritage Architecture indicates that visual impacts would be limited, but that they would be apparent from the West Mesa, including Nate's Point Dog Park and from other vantage points within an area bounded by Balboa Drive to the west, Laurel Street/El Prado to the north, and Cabrillo Historic Parkway to the east **(Figure 71)**. From some of these areas Centennial Bridge would be visible, partially obscuring the longstanding relationship of Cabrillo Bridge and the California Quadrangle. Centennial Bridge would also be visible from parts of the Central Mesa, especially from within the Archery Range and Alcazar Parking Lot. Centennial Bridge would not be visible from El Prado and it would not be visible from Palm Canyon or Pan American Road. The bridge would be slightly visible from the northwestern corner of The Palisades area, in particular the Old Cactus Garden.

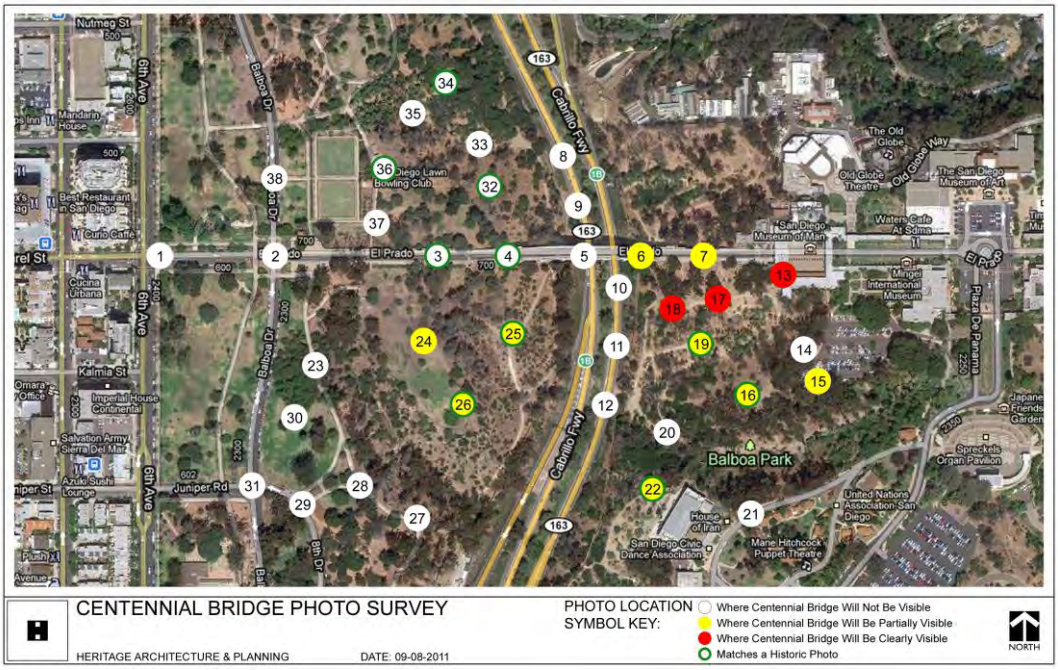


Figure 71. Locations from which the proposed Centennial Bridge would be visible are shown with red and yellow circles
Source: Google Maps; annotated by Heritage Architecture & Planning

One of the primary reasons that Bertram Goodhue embraced the Central Mesa site was that he knew that he could achieve a dramatic architectural effect by allowing the California Quadrangle complex to visually "cascade" down the eastern slope of Cabrillo Canyon. Indeed, the composition embodies a dramatic sense of tension. At first glance the building appears to perch

dangerously on the edge of the canyon but continued study reveals the strength and solidity of the largely windowless south and west walls, with their massive buttresses bracing the entire composition into place. Probably because of this architectural drama, the view from the West Mesa, looking northeast and uphill toward the California Quadrangle, became the most important view of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. This "iconic view" was reproduced on hundreds of postcards, publicity materials, and all sorts of souvenirs **(Figure 72)**.

Figure 72. "Iconic" view of Cabrillo Bridge and California Quadrangle, ca. 1916
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

This iconic view did not last very long; indeed, by 1920 it had largely disappeared due to the rapid growth of the eucalyptus forest planted on the slopes of Cabrillo Canyon between 1909 and 1914. Most of this forest dated back to around 1909 when Samuel Parsons began his work in Balboa Park. Some of these trees were removed under the direction of Frank B. Allen a scant two or three years later to build Cabrillo Bridge. Although Allen's long-term intentions are not known, he replanted fast-growing eucalyptus trees on the eastern slope of Cabrillo Canyon to replace those lost during construction. For several years (between 1915 and 1920) the iconic view remained visible. By around 1920 the eucalyptus had begun to grow up on either side of Cabrillo Bridge, eventually reaching the top of the arched portal to the California Quadrangle complex **(Figure 73)**.

A historic photograph taken during the 1920s indicates what the view was like from Cabrillo Bridge and Nate's Point **(Figure 74)**. This photograph indicates that the view was not dissimilar from today, although the trees had clearly not reached their full height. Whether this obstruction of the iconic view from the West Mesa and Cabrillo Bridge was the intention of either Bertram Goodhue or Frank B. Allen is unknown, but this condition has apparently characterized the complex for around 90 years.

Figure 73. Undated view east on Cabrillo Bridge, ca. 1925
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Figure 74. Undated view from West Mesa, ca. 1925
Source: Collection of David Marshall, AIA

Even though it is no longer clearly visible from most vantage points, the relationship of Cabrillo Bridge to the California Quadrangle complex remains the most important (and intact) designed relationship in the Balboa Park Historic District. Despite being partially obscured by the eucalyptus forest, Cabrillo Bridge continues to have a direct visual connection to the California Quadrangle complex, resembling a Roman aqueduct approaching a mediaeval fortified city in Southern Spain. Although separate structures, Cabrillo Bridge and the California Quadrangle "read" in many ways as a unitary ensemble, mostly because they are made of the same material and are painted the same color; they are seamlessly joined too, where the bridge meets the portal to the Plaza de California. Centennial Bridge would disrupt this relationship by removing a portion of the southern balustrade of the bridge (which now forms a seamless connection with the California Quadrangle) and further obscuring this connection by building a contemporary concrete viaduct around the west and south side of the California Quadrangle.

In regard to district impacts, Centennial Bridge introduces a sizable new element into the Balboa Park Historic District. No matter how much the area surrounding it is re-forested following completion of the proposed bridge, it would remain visible from several important vantage points, both on the West Mesa and from nearby portions of the Central Mesa. This change to historic character-defining spatial relationships is not entirely offset by the fact that historic views are presently obscured, or would in the future be concealed by mature trees, mainly because, a) the condition still physically exists whether it is visible or not, and b) the construction of the bridge would require the removal of some of the existing trees, exposing the proposed new bridge to view from various vantage points until the trees mature.

Centennial Road would also have physical effects, including re-grading portions of the northern and eastern rims of Palm Canyon and the construction of concrete retaining walls of various heights along portions of the alignment. Physical and visual impacts on the upper rim of Palm Canyon would be partially offset by the restoration of historic understory plantings along the canyon edges, but until those plantings have matured, it would be apparent that a portion of

the canyon had been disturbed. However, once the vegetation recovers within a few years, it would be difficult for a casual visitor to realize that any work had occurred there.

The construction of Centennial Road would also add a new circulation feature to the Balboa Park Historic District. It would displace an existing pedestrian footpath that now runs along the east rim of Palm Canyon and alter or remove several existing vehicular circulation routes. The physical impacts on this portion of the Balboa Park Historic District are somewhat lessened by the fact that much of the area through which Centennial Road would pass is not intact from the period of significance (1915 or 1935). The pedestrian circulation network changed following the demolition of the old "Honeymoon" Bridge over Palm Canyon after 1950, requiring the construction of the paved footpath along the eastern edge of Palm Canyon. The irregularly shaped lawn panel bounded by Palm Canyon to the west and Pan American Road East to the east has also been altered, especially after 1960 when driveways were built across it to access the new Alcazar Parking Lot.

The extension of the boardwalk in Palm Canyon would have both physical and visual impacts on a limited portion of Palm Canyon, a contributing feature of the Balboa Park Historic District. According to the *Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, alterations and additions to historic landscapes are allowed, provided that the alterations "do not radically change, obscure, or destroy character-defining spatial organization and land patterns or features and materials. If it is determined that a new addition to a cultural landscape is essential for its new use, "it should be planned, designed, and installed to be clearly differentiated from the character-defining features." [29]

In general, the Palm Canyon boardwalk extension would be a beneficial addition to this landscape by allowing people to access more of the inner canyon. Although the removal of existing plantings to build it would have a temporary physical impact, the boardwalk itself would be compatible with similar features that have been built in Palm Canyon in the past. The existing

[29] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (Washington, D.C.: 1996), 53.

boardwalk and stair were built in 1976 and are not historic features of Palm Canyon or Balboa Park, so it does not matter if the extension is designed to match it.

In summary, neither Centennial Bridge nor Centennial Road components of the proposed project would comply with Rehabilitation Standard 2. Centennial Bridge would have a permanent perceptible physical impact on the Balboa Park Historic District, including significant visual and spatial effects on Cabrillo Bridge, the California Quadrangle complex, as well as limited impacts on the historic district as a whole. In addition, Centennial Road fails to comply with Rehabilitation Standard 2. In addition to removing the 1981 Community Christmas Tree, Centennial Road would necessitate extensive regrading to create the new grade-separated road. This would alter existing (if not historic) pedestrian and automobile circulation routes and result in the introduction of several concrete and stacked stone retaining walls (some as high as 24') within the Balboa Park Historic District.

Alcazar Parking Lot and Walkway

The proposed project would involve limited re-grading around the perimeter of Alcazar Parking Lot. One area that would be physically impacted includes sections of the northern rim of Palm Canyon, which would be re-graded to provide ADA-accessible slopes along the footpath that would be built around the southern and eastern edges of the parking lot. In addition, a small portion of the western edge of the parking lot would be physically impacted by the construction of an abutment in this area. Retaining walls would be built along the edges of the parking lot to prevent slippage. These retaining walls would mostly be built where there are currently retaining walls. Areas that are disturbed would be restored to their original condition by harvesting and relocating existing trees and planting new understory plantings to match the existing conditions. The replanted areas would consist of species already located within Cabrillo and Palm Canyons, making use of relocated plants and trees.

Another physical and visual impact of this component of the proposed project includes the construction of a small, 7'-wide pedestrian bridge and walkway connecting Alcazar Parking Lot

with The Esplanade. This feature would pass behind the House of Charm, introducing a new feature into the historic district. The impact of this proposed feature is reduced by its relatively small size and inconspicuous location. This feature will face the rear, utilitarian elevation of the House of Charm, where there is presently an asphalt-paved driveway and staging area used by the Mingei Museum.

This aspect of the project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 2. Aside for a small portion of the northern rim of Palm Canyon this work would not permanently physically impact historic district contributors or the district as a whole.

The Esplanade and Pan American Road

As part of the proposed project The Esplanade and Pan American Road would be converted from vehicular to pedestrian use, as well as for the use of trams. The existing asphalt-paved roadway would be resurfaced in a compatible paving. The existing sidewalk along Pan American Road would be converted to sod with street lights and trees installed to resemble conditions that existed in both 1915 and 1935. The landscaped median would be widened but otherwise it would be left much as it is, with sod panels at the center and flower beds lining the outer edges. Pan American Road would retain its existing alignment; the only change to this feature would be the replacement of the existing asphalt surface with a new paving system more appropriate to a pedestrian environment.

This aspect of the project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 2. The work would have beneficial impacts, including restoring pedestrian access to The Esplanade and Pan American Road and restoring conditions to something compatible with their historic appearance.

Parking Structure, Rooftop Park and Tram

The proposed project would construct a 790-space, multi-level, subterranean parking structure, with a roof-top park, on the site of the existing Organ Pavilion Parking Lot. The parking structure would be accessed from the east by Presidents Way and from the west by Centennial Road. The

parking structure would be fully below-grade except for a portion of its east side, which would daylight toward Spanish Canyon. This elevation would be concealed behind a landscaped berm, concealing it from view from Park Boulevard and points east. Retaining walls would be built along the eastern side of the parking structure to prevent soil slippage. In certain areas (described above) thin guardrails would be used to protect park visitors from falling down steep slopes.

Physical impacts to the area would include removing a portion of the existing mature vegetation from behind Spreckels Organ Pavilion to build the parking structure and Centennial Road. The existing Torrey pines and the four largest eucalyptus trees would remain in place. These trees were planted ca. 1940, presumably to conceal the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot from view from Spreckels Organ Pavilion. Because Centennial Road would be grade-separated from Pan American Road, the portion behind the Organ Pavilion would be excavated, roofed over, and landscaped with shrubs and evergreen trees. The trees removed to make way for the parking structure and Centennial Road would be replaced with new evergreen trees and shrubs.

The proposed project would add a landscaped garden atop the Organ Pavilion Parking Structure. This feature would be at grade with Pan American Road toward its northern end but would gently step down toward Presidents Way to the south. The public garden would feature lawn panels, flower beds, children's play areas, seating areas, palm trees, and several small structures, including a toilet room, open-air *ramadas*, a visitors' center, and a smaller toilet room facing Presidents Way.

This aspect of the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 2. First, the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot is not a contributor to the Balboa Park Historic District. What exists presently is incompatible with the historic district. Although the proposed project would remove some of these trees (the Torrey pines and the largest eucalyptus trees located closest to the Organ Pavilion would be retained), the eucalyptus trees identified for removal are not identified

as "Significant Trees" in the *Central Mesa Precise Plan*. The rest were planted after the period of significance.

The Organ Pavilion Parking Lot is identified in the *Central Mesa Precise Plan* as the best location for a parking structure within the Central Mesa. The location does seem ideal because while it is located within the Balboa Park Historic District, it is not visible from the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex. Another benefit of this site is that because of the existing landforms in the area it would be possible to place the parking structure underground. This aspect of the project would result in visual and physical change to the area, but it would be almost entirely beneficial because it would remove a non-historic intrusion from the district, replacing it with landscaped parkland where the California Gardens were once located.

The only part of the parking structure that would be visible would be its eastern side. This part of the parking structure would daylight toward Spanish Canyon, a largely utilitarian area of maintenance sheds and other back-of-house uses. The berm that would be built east of the parking structure to conceal it from view from Park Boulevard would range in height from around 8' at the northern end to around 24' at the southern end. It would be landscaped to resemble the existing western slope of Gold Gulch so that from a distance it would be virtually indistinguishable from existing conditions.

In summary, the proposed project does not fully comply with Rehabilitation Standard 2, because of the visual and physical impacts of Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road.

Rehabilitation Standard 3: Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

Discussion:

The proposed project would avoid adding any conjectural features or elements from other historic properties to any building, structure, landscape, or object within the Balboa Park Historic District. The proposed project is envisioned as a rehabilitation project and not a literal restoration of conditions existing in either 1915 or 1935. While the project would rehabilitate many of the missing historic elements of the area, including replacing missing light standards, street trees, and some plantings, much of the new work would be designed in a contemporary yet compatible design vocabulary in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Centennial Bridge, Centennial Road, and Organ Pavilion Parking Structure would be designed in a contemporary idiom that does not imitate the aesthetic of Cabrillo Bridge or any other historic buildings, structures, or roadways in the area. The several new structures built as part of the project (toilet rooms, visitors' center, etc.) would be designed in the compatible Spanish/Mexican and Pueblo styles, in keeping with the *Precise Plan.* The paving materials used for non-historic areas of the Balboa Park Historic District, such as the proposed plaza atop the Organ Pavilion Parking Structure, should not match those used within historic areas such as El Prado and Plaza de Panama.

In summary, the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 3.

Rehabilitation Standard 4: Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Discussion:

The proposed project would physically impact several features that were added to Balboa Park after 1936, including the Archery Range (after 1940), Alcazar Parking Lot (ca. 1960), the Community Christmas Tree (1981), the toilet room structure near Palm Canyon (ca. 1990), and the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot (ca. 1940). None of these features are contributors to the Balboa Park Historic District and none are identified in the *Precise Plan* as having any cultural or

aesthetic value. None of these features appear to have gained significance in their own right because all were constructed or installed after the end of the period of significance and none have architectural or historical significance.

In summary, the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 4.

Rehabilitation Standard 5: Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Discussion:

The proposed project would have limited physical impacts on historic structures and landscapes. As mentioned above, the construction of Centennial Bridge would result in the removal of about 70' of the south balustrade of Cabrillo Bridge, near its eastern end. This balustrade is made of hollow clay tile and covered in stucco. It has a molded handrail at the top - its only decorative detail. The balustrade is part of the historic bridge and is therefore "historic fabric." Nevertheless, the balustrade is built of common and easily reproduced materials; it does not embody "distinctive materials, features, finishes, or craftsmanship."

In regard to hardscaped areas, the proposed project would impact the paving materials in the Plaza de California, El Prado, Plaza de California, Esplanade, and Pan American Road areas; and the stairs in front of the San Diego Museum of Art. None of these areas feature historic materials, features, finishes, construction techniques, or examples of craftsmanship that characterize Balboa Park.

In summary, the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 5.

Rehabilitation Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Discussion:

No deteriorated historic features or materials are proposed to be replaced; the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 6.

Rehabilitation Standard 7: Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Discussion

The proposed project would not use chemical or physical treatments on any historic materials or features; the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 7.

Rehabilitation Standard 8: Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Discussion:

A freestanding archaeological evaluation report is being prepared by Recon Environmental under separate cover. This report, titled: *Results of Historical Resources Survey of the Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Project, San Diego, California*, reports the existence of various historic-era trash deposits and shell scatters of unknown origin throughout the Balboa Park Historic District.

Anticipating that standard monitoring and data recovery procedures would be followed with any grading conducted as part of the proposed project, it is likely that the proposed project would comply with Rehabilitation Standard 8.

Rehabilitation Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Discussion:

In order to avoid unnecessary repetition with Standard 2, we have addressed only aspects of the project that pertain to additions or related new construction in historic districts – particularly

new circulation and parking. We have relied on the "Setting/Additions" guidelines in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* for analyzing impacts to structures. For impacts on landscape features we consulted the "Alterations/Additions" guidelines in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*.

According to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (Rehabilitation Guidelines), the character of a historic district's setting "…include roads and streets, furnishings such as lights or benches, vegetation, gardens and yards, adjacent open space such as fields, parks, commons or woodlands, and important views or visual relationships."[30] The Rehabilitation Guidelines recommend preserving these features and their historic interrelationships, although limited replacement of building features or elements of a landscape may be permitted if they are missing or if they are too deteriorated to repair.[31] In regard to new alterations and additions to create a new use, the Rehabilitation Guidelines recommend siting new work "so that it is as unobtrusive as possible, thus minimizing the effect on the historic character of the setting." Other new work is supposed to "be compatible with the historic character of the setting in terms of size, scale, design, material, color, and texture.[32]

According to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, new features are permissible "when required by the new compatible use to assure the preservation of the historic spatial organization and land patterns." It is not recommended to add a "new feature that detracts

[30] Kay D. Weeks and Anne Grimmer, *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 1995), p. 106.
[31] Ibid., 107.
[32] Ibid., 108.

from or alters the spatial organization and land patterns," such as a new structure that "blocks or alters a historic view or vista."[33]

Similar to Standard 2, we have analyzed each of the major six components of the project for compliance with Standard 9.

Plaza de Panama

As discussed above, the proposed project would replace the existing asphalt paving with contemporary yet compatible pavers to facilitate the return of pedestrian uses to Plaza de Panama. New light standards that replicate those originally used would be installed where they were located in 1915. New street trees and lawn panels would also be added where they were removed from the northern half of the plaza in the 1960s. New shallow reflecting pools would be added at the center of the plaza; these features would be similar in concept to what existed between 1935 and 1936 before Plaza de Panama was converted back to parking after the exposition. The non-historic fountain would likely remain in its current location.

This aspect of the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 9 because existing spatial relationships of the plaza would not be changed, as the historic size, scale, and proportions of the plaza would be retained. The new work would be differentiated from the old by using a contemporary yet compatible paving material (probably some type of small square pavers) in place of the original decomposed granite over asphalt. The proposed reflecting pools would provide focus to the large level plaza, recalling similar features that existed in this area during the 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition.

This aspect of the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 9.

[33] Charles Birnbaum, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 1996), 59.

El Prado and Plaza de California

Similar to Plaza de Panama, Plaza de California would be resurfaced in a compatible new paving material likely consisting of small, square pavers. New light standards that replicate those that existed in 1915 would be added where they existed historically, and new street trees would be planted where they existed in both 1915 and 1935. The possible species are listed in the project description above but those planted would not be the original Blackwood acacia because they grow too quickly and too large, potentially obscuring the façades of the historic buildings along El Prado.

This component of the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 9.

Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road

Centennial Bridge is the least consistent aspect of the proposed project under Standard 9. The Rehabilitation Guidelines recommend against new construction that obscures or alters important spatial characteristics of a historic property. It would be difficult to argue that the proposed Centennial Bridge does not both obscure *and* alter historic spatial characteristics and views of Cabrillo Bridge and the California Quadrangle. Centennial Bridge would partially obscure the "iconic" view of the Cabrillo Bridge/California Quadrangle ensemble from several points within the West Mesa and from the western part of the Central Mesa.

Centennial Road is less inconsistent from the perspective of the Rehabilitation Guidelines, although it too would have physical and visual impacts to a section of the Balboa Park Historic District. By building the new road right along the northern and eastern rim of Palm Canyon, some of the existing vegetation would be temporarily removed in order to re-grade this area. Existing palms would be harvested and replanted after the construction is completed. The proposed project would also restore disturbed areas of understory in the canyon, but it would likely take 1-3 years for the impacted area to achieve its existing appearance.

Although the vehicular and pedestrian routes impacted by Centennial Road post-date the period of significance and are therefore not contributors to the Balboa Park Historic District, Centennial Road would significantly alter existing spatial relationships that characterize this part of the Balboa Park Historic District. The existing pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns would be reconfigured and grading to achieve grade-separation between man and automobile would change the feel of this part of the park.

Neither the Centennial Bridge nor the Centennial Road components of the proposed project comply with Rehabilitation Standard 9. Centennial Bridge would have permanent physical and visual impacts on the historic district. Although Centennial Road would have both physical and visual effects on Palm Canyon, the impacts to this landscape feature and its vegetation would be, in large part, temporary. The affected areas would be largely indistinguishable from nearby unaffected areas after a few years of re-grown vegetation, offsetting its potential impacts to this feature. The roadway itself will have more lasting physical impacts on spatial relationships for the reasons discussed above.

Alcazar Parking Lot and Walkway

As described above, the proposed project would reconfigure Alcazar Parking Lot as an ADA-accessible lot and valet/drop-off area. Built ca. 1960, Alcazar Parking Lot is a non-contributing feature of the Balboa Park Historic District and the proposed changes would not, for the most part, affect adjoining historic resources. The most significant impact of this component of the project would be the need to re-grade limited portions of the north slope of Palm Canyon nearest the parking lot. As in areas impacted by Centennial Road, existing palms and other plantings would be harvested and replanted nearby after the work is completed. The understory would also be replanted in impacted areas. Once these impacted areas fully recover they would be visually indistinguishable from adjoining non-impacted areas.

This part of the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 9.

The Esplanade and Pan American Road

This aspect of the proposed project would make limited alterations to The Esplanade and Pan American Road as part of their conversion back to pedestrian use. The most notable alteration would be the creation of grade-separation beneath Pan American Road to allow Centennial Road to access the proposed Organ Pavilion Parking Structure without interfering with pedestrian circulation. The proposed project would also result in the removal of non-historic asphalt, replacing it with contemporary yet compatible paving materials.

The Esplanade itself would also undergo several minor alterations, including the installation of missing historic light standards where they existed historically and the addition of street trees where they were located during the period of significance. The landscaped area would be slightly widened as well. The historic wooden balustrade at the northern end of The Esplanade would be retained and preserved.

This component of the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 9.

Parking Structure, Rooftop Park and Tram

The proposed Organ Pavilion Parking Structure would be built in a location recommended for a parking structure in the *Precise Plan*. Although located within the Balboa Park Historic District, the existing Organ Pavilion Parking Lot is a non-contributing feature of the district because it was built after the period of significance. Complying with the Rehabilitation Guidelines, the parking structure would be sited within a relatively inconspicuous area "so that it is as unobtrusive as possible, thus minimizing the effect on the historic character of the setting." It would be constructed below-grade, allowing for the reclamation of more than two acres of asphalt for parkland. The only façade of the parking structure that would be partially exposed would be along its eastern edge, where it would daylight toward Spanish Canyon. In this area a

landscaped berm would be built to obscure views of the structure from Park Boulevard and points east.

This component of the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 9.

In summary, the proposed project does not fully comply with Rehabilitation Standard 9. All components of the proposed project would comply except for Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road.

Rehabilitation Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Although unlikely, it would be possible to remove each of the elements of the proposed project and restore the existing conditions. The most notable physical effect from the perspective of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards – the proposed Centennial Bridge – could be removed and the balustrade and sidewalk of Cabrillo Bridge repaired. Centennial Bridge would be structurally and seismically separated from Cabrillo Bridge by an expansion joint and will rest on minimal abutments and piers that don't significantly alter the canyon's topography. Its removal would be possible without damaging Cabrillo Bridge, the California Quadrangle, or Cabrillo Canyon.

Likewise, Centennial Road could also be removed and re-landscaped. Rehabilitation Standard 10 is primarily focused on minimizing harm to historic fabric and making it possible to return a building or landscape to its original condition. While Centennial Road requires significant grading, it would be possible to return it to its present topography through new fill. Because no historic fabric is being permanently impacted by the road, no special craftsmanship would be required to return it to its current condition.

The removal of the proposed Organ Pavilion Parking Structure would be expensive, impractical, and would require extensive fill, but nevertheless if it were removed it would not affect any

historic resources because it is a non-contributing feature of the Balboa Park Historic District and does not physically touch any other historic district contributors.

In summary, the proposed project complies with Rehabilitation Standard 10.

E. *Analysis of Project-specific Impacts under CEQA*

As discussed above, the proposed project substantially complies with the Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation, with the exception of the proposed Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road, which fail to comply with Rehabilitation Standards 2 and 9. As a project that does not comply with the Standards, the proposed project would not benefit from a regulatory presumption that it would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment. Based on the analysis in this report, it is our judgment that the project, although it has mainly beneficial impacts, would have a significant and unavoidable impact on Cabrillo Bridge and the California Quadrangle, and to a lesser extent, on the Balboa Park Historic District. On the other hand, it is the opinion of the author that the proposed project would not result in the delisting of Balboa Park as an NHL, National Register, and locally landmarked historic district because the beneficial aspects of the project would, in balance, outweigh the negative aspects.

IX. Conclusion

Designated as San Diego Historic Landmark No. 1 in 1967, listed in the National Register in 1975, and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1977, Balboa Park is among the top historical resources in San Diego. It is also one of the most important designed landscapes in the United States, joining the ranks of Golden Gate Park, Central Park, and Fairmount Park. Retaining many buildings and landscapes from two separate international expositions, Balboa Park is also the birthplace of the Spanish Colonial Revival style in the United States and a significant repository of Art Deco and Streamline Moderne architecture.

The proposed project would remove private auto circulation and parking from the El Prado/Plaza de Panama complex to restore a large section of the Balboa Park Historic District to pedestrian use, as it was in 1915 and 1935. To preserve vehicular access from the west, the proposed project would construct Centennial Bridge from Cabrillo Bridge to Alcazar Parking Lot and Centennial Road from Alcazar Parking Lot to a new subterranean parking structure on the site of the Organ Pavilion Parking Lot. While many aspects of the proposed project would have a beneficial impact on the Balboa Park Historic District – indeed, most aspects of the proposed project would comply with all ten of the Rehabilitation Standards, the construction of Centennial Bridge and Centennial Road does not comply with Rehabilitation Standards 2 and 9 because they would have significant visual and spatial effects on the Cabrillo Bridge/California Quadrangle ensemble, the landforms of the area between the El Prado/Plaza de Panama area and The Palisades, and to a lesser extent on the Balboa Park Historic District as a whole. The adverse impacts of the project would be offset by the project's beneficial aspects, including the removal of vehicular circulation and parking from most of the historic district; the rehabilitation of Plaza de California, West El Prado, Plaza de Panama, and The Esplanade; and the recovery of over two acres of land for parkland.

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