



## OFFICE OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT TODD GLORIA COUNCIL DISTRICT THREE

### M E M O R A N D U M

**DATE:** May 9, 2013

**TO:** Mayor Bob Filner

**FROM:** Council President Todd Gloria

**SUBJECT:** Implementation of Balboa Park Traffic Management Plan

---

I have consistently favored the removal of cars from Balboa Park's Plaza de Panama, and look forward to partnering with you to achieve this long-held vision. Implementation of the Traffic Management Plan must be done thoughtfully, however, to preserve the overall park-user experience, minimize disruption to the surrounding neighborhoods, and for the well-being of the park institutions, which are the City's partner in creating a vibrant cultural experience to San Diego.

As the City Council considered the appropriation request for the Balboa Park Traffic Management Plan on May 6, I made my support contingent on two factors. First, I asked that you and City staff seriously consider the input of Balboa Park stakeholders. The Balboa Park Cultural Partnership has indicated the intent of the institutions to help ensure this plan is successfully implemented. With that, however, come concerns about the phasing of the bridge closure as it relates to the implementation of the shuttle plan and the Plaza reclamation. I would like those concerns to be resolved.

Before the managed closure of the Cabrillo Bridge begins, it would make sense for the shuttle operation to be fully in place and for way-finding signage to be updated and installed. Further, I see no reason to implement this major change during the busiest time of the year in the park. Additional time should be allotted to educate and prepare the public. For these reasons, I am requesting that the bridge closure phase of the plan not be implemented on May 25 as is reportedly planned, but be delayed until the end of the year to correspond more closely to the planned closure of the bridge by Caltrans. This will allow adequate time to put other elements of the plan in place and minimize disruption.

The Balboa Park Cultural Partnership has also expressed strong concern about the relocation of the valet operation to the lot south of the Casa de Balboa. They have expressed concern that many elderly park visitors may find it too difficult to walk from the back side of the Casa de Balboa building and will be discouraged from attending events in the park. Additionally, I believe that a dramatic increase in the use of this lot may result in serious traffic implications. I recommend giving serious consideration to other alternatives for the valet service, including leaving it where it is currently located.

Finally, as I noted in my comments at the Budget Committee hearing, I would like to have an agreement establishing thresholds that will serve as a guide to determine when acceptable impacts have been exceeded. The Environmental Impact Report for the Plaza de Panama Project noted that traffic levels would potentially fail on a number of important streets in and around the park if some of the proposed changes are implemented. Other concerns about the impacts to the park visitor experience and the health of the cultural institutions have been raised. I am working to identify these thresholds, and believe a commitment should be in place to reverse the temporary changes to the park if the impacts exceed expected levels.

I ask for your support in resolving these issues, which I anticipate can be resolved through an earnest dialogue with Balboa Park stakeholders.

CC: Members of the City Council  
Allen Jones, Deputy Chief of Staff to Mayor Filner  
Stacey LoMedico, Park and Recreation Department Director