



Architects *Mosher Drew*

Balboa Park/San Diego High School Connections:

Connecting Neighbors, Parks, Schools, Jobs, Culture

Balboa Park/San Diego High School
Connections Working Group

July 2024



Balboa Park/San Diego High School Connections: *Connecting Neighbors, Parks, Schools, Jobs, Culture*

"The people of San Diego will do well if they recognize today that the two great central recreation features of the city, now and always, are the City [Balboa] Park of 1,400 acres and the Bay Front and that the value of both will be increased many-fold if a suitable connecting link, parkway or boulevard, can be developed, bringing them into direct and pleasant relation." — John Nolen, 1908

"From her school Kate [Sessions] could see City Park, but it didn't look like one. It was where people grazed cattle and dumped garbage. Most San Diegans didn't think trees could ever grow there. Kate did."
— H. Joseph Hopkins in *Tree Lady* (

PURPOSE

Propose ways to restore the historic connections between Balboa Park and San Diego High School, both physically and programmatically, and link both to City College, downtown, surrounding neighborhoods and the region as a way to "grow" the park.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When the City Council approved a 99-year lease for San Diego High School in 2021, Council members Joe LaCava and Stephen Whitburn asked that a group of stakeholders be formed to look at the opportunities presented by the lease to grow the park and improve East Village. Parks and Recreation Director Andy Field convened an ad hoc group of multiple stakeholders — the Balboa Park/San Diego High School Connections Working Group — to undertake this task. Included were representatives from the school and community college districts and park and community groups. (*See Appendix 1 for stakeholders and participants who were consulted.*)

Starting in early-2022, members reviewed planned projects and proposals from park stakeholder groups, the city and other interested parties that might complement the high school's whole-campus modernization facility plans. The review immediately expanded to encompass City College's plans as well and to find ways to connect the two campuses and the two of them to other educational and cultural institutions in Balboa Park and beyond.

Besides projects already planned or under way, other proposals contemplate improvements along Park Boulevard; parking and circulation changes; joint use of high school and college facilities; internship and volunteer opportunities; curriculum alignment with park cultural institutions; park management reforms; and diversity, equity and inclusion considerations.

Meanwhile, the Burnham Center for Community Advancement issued a position paper in 2022 calling for reform in the park's governance and finance and has set up an ad hoc committee to hammer out the details to be followed by outreach to the community before issuing a final report. (*See Part 4.*)

For more information, consult our six appendices: A list of stakeholders and other participants (Appendix 1); implementation (Appendix 2); the "story map" developed by the city's Development Services Department Urban Division (Appendix 3); a five-phase plan for immediate action (Appendix 4); references (Appendix 5); and a checklist of area cultural and educational facilities (Appendix 6).

The Working Group commends this report to the mayor and City Council and asks that they accept the report and refer it to city departments for review and recommendations for implementation.

We also ask that the school and college districts, park and community institutions, foundations, organizations and the general public study the report and do their part to carry out programs and launch projects that align with their interests and benefit the public at large.

We recommend the existing Balboa Park Committee serve as the oversight body to carry on our work by periodically asking for a staff update on actions taken by city departments and presentations from park stakeholders, outside groups and civic leaders. We hope these ideas are so compelling that the public will lend its support and urge the respective agencies and organizations to make them happen.

We also ask that our recommendations be incorporated into the Balboa Park Framework for the Future initiative, particularly the Balboa Park prioritization study, and other relevant plans and policies.

The Working Group hopes this report will not be consigned to a shelf but instead will inspire all parties and San Diegans as a whole to improve San Diego's "crown jewel" and its namesake high school and integrate both into their surroundings for the benefit of all.

— *Michael Stepner, chair; René A. Smith, secretary; Roger Showley, editor*

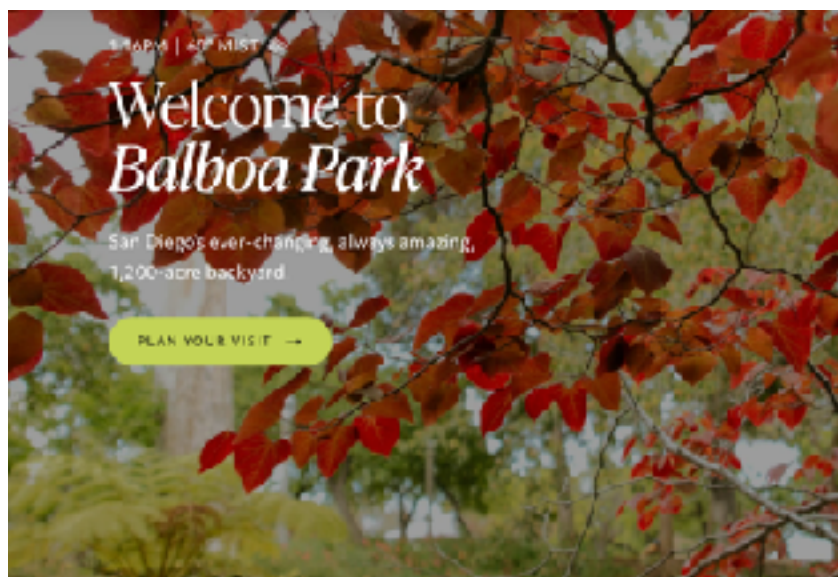


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BACKGROUND

San Diego High School began as Russ School in 1882 in what was then called "City Park." It was rebuilt in 1907 and 1976 and is being modernized a third time over the next few years under the new 99-year lease that replaced the 50-year lease approved in 1974. Meanwhile, San Diego City College, just south of the park's boundaries and adjacent to SDHS, continues to expand into East Village and modernize its existing campus.

While SDHS lies within the park's 1868 boundaries, the construction of the Interstate 5 "S-Curve" in the 1960s severed the school from the rest of the park. Nevertheless, students at both the high school and college could better benefit from closer physical and social ties to the many park institutions, and those institutions could use the energy and enthusiasm of students as volunteers and activists. Similarly, surrounding businesses, other educational institutions and nearby residents could enjoy the park's many attractions if the routes to and from the park were more appealing and welcoming.

Numerous plans have been put forth over the years to better connect Balboa Park to its neighbors. The first came in John Nolen's *San Diego: A Comprehensive Plan for Its Improvement* of 1908. He called the park and bay San Diego's "two great recreation features" and proposed a "paseo" between Date and Elm streets, from the waterfront to Balboa Park, "bringing them into direct and pleasant relationship." Nolen revised his idea in his 1926 followup plan.

In the 1940s, city Planning Director Glenn Rick



Pre-freeway overview, ca 1960, PhotoRozelle



Nolen Plan, Paseo, 1908



Cabrillo Portal/Civic Center Plan, Nolen Plan, 1926

recast this idea as "Cedar Street Mall," starting at the County Administration Center, with a series of public buildings fronting a landscaped mall extending to the park. Voters failed to approve the plan and those buildings were scattered all over downtown and beyond.

During the 2010s, the I.DE.A. District (innovation, design, education and the arts) was unveiled as a way for the upper East Village area to attract companies and institutions. Makers Quarter also was launched at the northern edge of the district as a thematic approach to job creation. The district could be enlarged to include the park and rebranded "IDEA+" to unify this area of San Diego and catalyze joint efforts and thus unify the park and downtown once again.

Balboa Park faces ever-growing pressures to accommodate more visitors and activities. While its 1868 boundaries will likely never change, other means can be taken to "grow" the park and reach out to communities, such as Golden Hill, Sherman Heights, Barrio Logan and Southeastern San Diego, as well as the region at large.

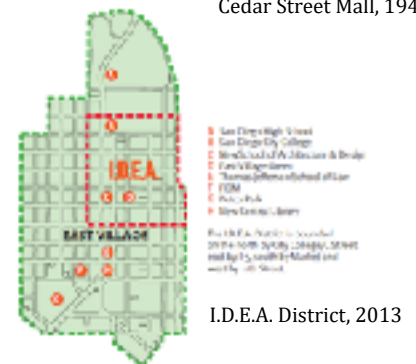
For example, the latest Downtown Community Plan calls for reconnecting the park and downtown by building "lids" over the freeway at various locations. The plan's series of landscaped gateway streets, such as 14th Street, also would strengthen the physical connections to neighborhoods.

The Working Group reviewed planned improvements at SDHS and City College and discussed ways to leverage these upgrades to improve those connections. The Development Services' Urban Division incorporated those plans as well as other public improvements and visionary concepts into a "story map." (See *Appendix 3*.)

Viewing this comprehensive digital display, one can imagine the synergy that could develop among existing, future and visionary components of the public realm. The resulting connections would further the development of an active and healthy urban environment. The story map shows clearly the importance of vibrant public spaces, which are critical to the future development and growth of the city's urban core.



Cedar Street Mall, 1945



I.DE.A. District, 2013



'Lid' over I-5 'S-Curve,' 6th Ave. to Park Blvd., Development Services/ Urban Division story map; San Diego Commons

The Working Group's efforts take place as San Diego and Tijuana serve as the World Design Capital in 2024. This report represents one of the legacy projects that will come out of the year-long effort to elevate the binational region's design aspirations.

WDC2024 also coincides with the 50th anniversary of "Temporary Paradise?" This city-commissioned document looked into the future in 1974 and explored ways for San Diego County to grow in an environmentally responsible manner with improved connections across the U.S.-Mexico border.



In short, this is a moment in time to implement high-level concepts that have been considered for more than a century and leave a legacy for future generations.

This report is divided into three parts — physical infrastructure, social infrastructure and governance/finance — and includes six appendices.

Part 1: PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Campus Planning and Modernization

Two educational institutions— San Diego High School and City College — are undertaking approximately \$2 billion in building and other construction right next to each other. They are each committing to work with the city to provide the best possible “good neighbor” opportunities to residents while still maintaining campus security and other obligations.



San Diego High School and City College campuses in context with the surrounding downtown area. SDUSD Whole-site modernization and long-range facilities plan, 2020

• San Diego High School

Opened as Russ School in 1882, San Diego High School was built in 1907 and 1976. The 34-acre site comprises 11 buildings, 118 classrooms and eight portables for a student capacity of 2,916, and Balboa Stadium. Under the new 99-year lease adopted in 2021, work has begun on remodeling Building 100, the administration center. Other near-term improvements will improve existing open spaces and experiences for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Future phases contemplate a new theater, gymnasium, aquatic center and Balboa Stadium field house, along with upgrades of or replacements to existing buildings, parking lots and circulation patterns.

By building on current plans and proposals the following may be accomplished, so that:

- The athletic fields and future gym and theater are open for public use when school is not in session. The city and the school district have similar joint-use agreements at many of the district's schools.
- Balboa Stadium will be restored, potentially including the historic peristyle and field house, so that it can serve a broad range of events, both school- and park-related.
- Structured parking on or near Inspiration Point will be investigated as a joint-use park and school garage. Parking improvements may include one or more parking garages, usable by the public during off-hours.



CAMPUS PLAN-
FUTURE SCOPE

1. P.B.C.
2. BASKETBALL & HOCKEY
3. PARKING STRUCTURE WITH TENNIS COURT ABOVE
4. NEW CLASSROOM BUILDING WITH CUSTODIAL AND FOOD SERVICES
5. AUXILIARY GYM & FIELD HOUSE
6. AQUATIC CENTER

SDHS Whole Campus and Modernization and Long-range Facilities Master Plan, 2020

Remaining surface

parking lots could be replaced with environmentally minded permeable paving.

- The school site could be reconnected to the rest of the park and downtown. (See further discussion of the 14th Street Promenade and Interstate 5 lids below.)
- Additional landscaping can be planted along Park and Russ boulevards, in the parkways and on the medians.

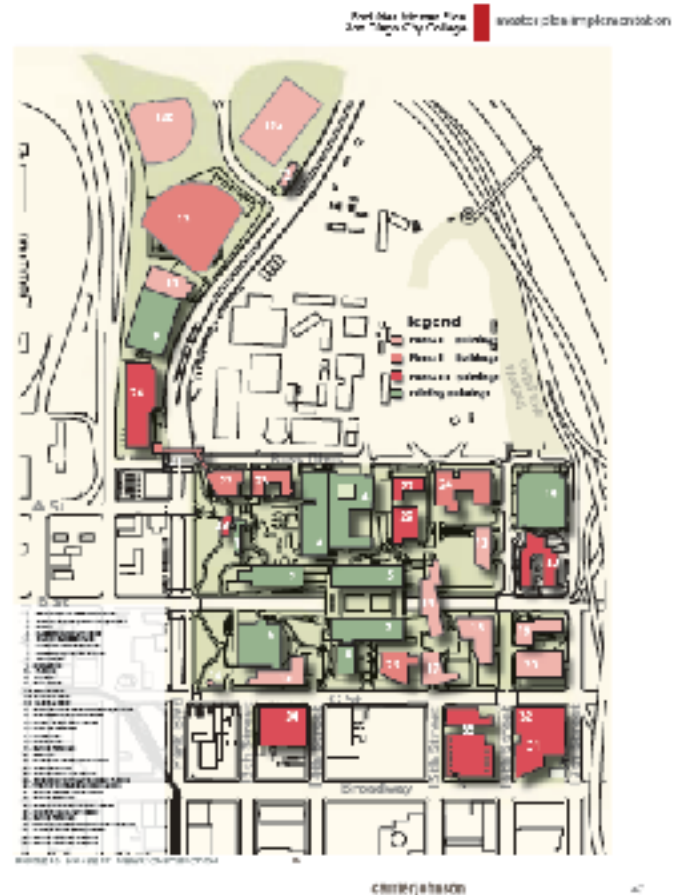
• City College

Established in 1914, the college was first part of the high school. From 1921 to 1946, it was part of what is now San Diego State University at its University Heights campus and then its Montezuma Mesa location. It returned to SDHS in 1946 before gaining its present site in 1953. City College occupies 60 acres and 40 buildings immediately south of SDHS and serves 16,000 students with the potential to grow to 25,000 in the next 50 years. From 2002 to 2019, 16 projects totaling \$459 million and funded by voter-approved bonds have modernized and enlarged the campus.

The latest master plan anticipates continued growth and construction as obsolete buildings are replaced and open spaces and athletic facilities are reconfigured. Much thought is going into the public face of the college and connecting it to its surroundings, particularly East Village and Balboa Park.

Some proposed projects offer potential joint-use with the high school and after-hours use by the public, such as an aquatic center and new performing arts theater. They include:

- A reinterpreted Park Boulevard to emphasize a college or academic environment through signage, pedestrian bridges and landscaping on the sidewalks and in the medians northward across the bridge over Interstate 5, onramps to I-5 and State Route 163 and key entrances at B, C and 16th streets and Russ Boulevard. Some elements may require non-college funding.
- Placemaking concepts campus-wide at entrances in plazas and lawns and on Russ Boulevard, which would be landscaped to replace its current "fire lane personality."
- Demolishing eight buildings and six parking lots with 14 replacements totaling 700,000 square feet and 600 parking spaces on site or elsewhere on campus.
- The 282-seat Saville Theater would be rebuilt with greater capacity.
- An aquatic center and/or basketball facility on the site leased by Urban Discovery Academy's Ideate High School on the west side of Park at Russ. Also suggested are rooftop tennis courts on a new parking garage and a better and higher profile access to athletic fields.
- A student housing building of about 600 beds at 16th and B streets.
- Increased reliance on ride sharing, biking, transit use and autonomous vehicles as a way to reduce parking demand even as the campus population increases. The Working Group suggests that the college lots and garages be open to the public on weekends and holidays with shuttles to and from Balboa Park.
- New garages with flat floors and sufficient ceiling heights to facilitate reuse for office or housing. Existing or new parking lots would incorporate porous permeable pavement and stormwater management.
- Pedestrian access enhanced through more visible and generous crosswalks and better signalization.
- Enhancement of the space beneath the Curran Plaza viaduct over B Street between 14th and 15th streets with better lighting and wider sidewalks.



City College facilities master plan, 2022

Transportation, Parking, Circulation

Everything needs to be connected. Roads, bridges, sidewalks and pathways are more than simple transportation tools. To view them otherwise is to cheapen our city. Since cars and buses will remain a necessity, they must be provided for, but somehow subsumed into a pedestrian-oriented experience. Landscaping and urban design improvements leading to and from the park should take inspiration from the park to accentuate these connections and signal to visitors that they are entering a special place. The first phase of the 14th Street Promenade illustrates the potential.

Over the past several decades, numerous studies were initiated to address parking and circulation issues in Balboa Park, with the most recent being the Friends of Balboa Park's 2021 Parking and



Circulation Study. The park's "Framework for the Future" program provides the appropriate next step to consolidate these studies and implement many of their recommendations. The city's Sustainability and Mobility Department is already considering various parking and circulation options. The same thinking can be applied to areas and neighborhoods around the park. But there is much that can be done now while awaiting this future.

For example, the park's shuttle system should be reimagined to include routes to and from existing parking garages and lots, such as City College's garage at 16th and B streets. They could be open on holidays and weekends and after hours as an alternative to building more garages in the and near the park.

Here are some other ideas, some already in the conceptual phase, to consider:

Russ Boulevard: Currently, Russ Boulevard separates the high school from the college. But it can be so much more with landscaping enhancements and redirection of vehicular traffic. This upgrade would create a significantly safer student-pedestrian connection between institutions and activate an otherwise dead zone. There is a current effort to change this "edge" into a "seam." Led by SDHS and City College in concert with the city, initial design sketches illustrate what is possible at a reasonably low cost. (See Appendix 4.)



Park Boulevard Beautification: SDHS plans anticipate additional landscaping along Park Boulevard that could be complemented by city-initiated right-of-way improvements, such as widened sidewalks and additional plantings and signage. Together they would present a more welcoming entrance at the Interstate 5 offramp to Park Boulevard that serves SDHS, City College and Balboa Park. An early and easy improvement could be the placement of boxed trees on the Park Boulevard freeway bridge, followed by permanent landscaping and public art. City College has improvements in mind for its frontage on Park Boulevard. The city also is investigating pedestrian sidewalk improvements with Caltrans on the I-5 bridge. Other ideas are under consideration to beautify the boulevard and extend bike lanes north to Adams Avenue in University Heights and south to San Diego Bay.



Park, Russ boulevards, Architects Mosher Drew

14th Street Promenade: A volunteer group of citizens, aided by city staff among others, developed a comprehensive plan for the upper and lower sections of what is now called the 14th Street Promenade. The 11-block project would reconnect the school sites to the rest of Balboa Park, downtown, and Barrio Logan. Civic Communities, a successor to the city's Civic San Diego/ Centre City Development Corp. agency, completed a demonstration block in 2021.



14th Street Promenade, Civic Communities, 2022

Pedestrian bridges: To promote walking and biking, several opportunities come to mind. A new bridge could be built from Tweet Street Park on Eighth Avenue to Marston Point, as called for in the Downtown Community Plan. The existing caged "cattle chute" pedestrian bridge from Balboa Stadium to Inspiration Point could be replaced with something grander and welcoming.



I-880 Innovation Bridge, Fremont, Calif.

John Nolen Parkway: One symbolic but meaningful change would be "John Nolen Parkway" as an honorary name for Park Boulevard in tribute to this national pioneer of city planning whose work in the early years of the 20th century improved communities all over America, including San Diego in his reports of 1908 and 1926. In 1937, shortly after Nolen's death, the San Diego Planning Commission voted



Ashby Pedestrian Bridge, Fremont, Calif.



Nolen Paseo, 1908

to name Harbor Drive for him, but no further action was taken. This parkway designation could be extended to a grand circuit along North Harbor Drive, Laurel Street, El Prado and Presidents Way where it links up to Park Boulevard.

Bay to Park Paseo: It is not necessary to await millions of dollars and years of planning to elevate the experience of walking, biking and motoring along Park Boulevard. Urban Interventions, a local nonprofit that specializes in “tactical urbanism,” and co-producer E. Chloe Lauer gathered 13 design teams and organizations to install temporary art pieces from the Hilton Bayfront Hotel to the Park Boulevard freeway bridge. The concept is to quickly and at a low cost make improvements that spark imagination and lead to permanent improvements. If successful, the nonprofit says, this “Bay to Park Paseo” could inaugurate a series of biannual installations all over the region. Planners and artists in Tijuana are already inspired by this idea and are considering a paseo there. In the current project, a key installation will be five vinyl screens temporarily hung on the fence just south of the Park Boulevard bridge over I-5. The images depict some of the park’s iconic trees — an improvement that could become permanent with the widening of the sidewalks and installation of boxed trees on or near the bridge.



Bay-Park Paseo, Urban Interventions, 2023

Balboa Park entry signs and monuments: There is only one celebratory entrance to the park — Sefton Plaza at the west entrance to the Cabrillo Bridge and El Prado. The Centre City Development Corp. (now the city's Development Services' Urban Division) studied replacing parking on the Sixth Avenue bridge over I-5 with extensive landscaping that would have enhanced the pedestrian, biking and driving experience and signaled the transition from downtown to the park. That concept is included in the downtown community plan. The 2013 Centennial Gateway design competition, sponsored by the American Institute of Architects San Diego chapter drew many imaginative proposals. The Friends of Balboa Park (now Forever Balboa Park) studied the construction of four domed pavilions at Presidents Way several years later, but the idea foundered on the projected cost of \$500,000 each. Some versions of all these ideas would lend a sense of arrival to the park at various key points, such as Upas Street and Park Boulevard (north), Park Boulevard and I-5 ramps (southwest), Upas and 28th Street (east) and Pershing Drive at Florida Drive (southeast).

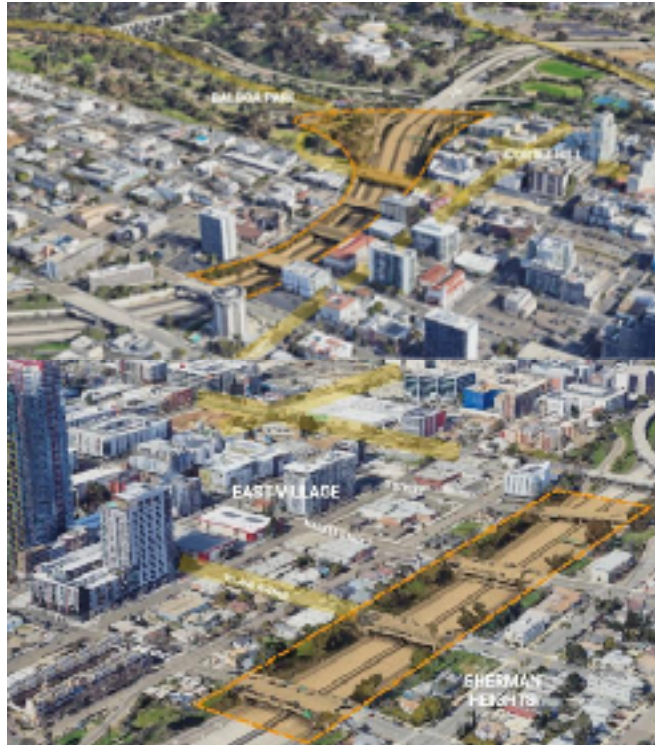


"Reflections," Jeffrey Taitano, AIA Centennial Gateway entry, 2013



Presidents Way entrance monuments, Friends of Balboa Park, 2018, Estrada Land Planning

Freeway lids: The construction of Interstate 5 in the 1950s and '60s split numerous neighborhoods, as well as Balboa Park, in the pursuit of rapid transportation by car, transit, and truck. Some cities have healed such ruptures in their communities by constructing lids over freeways and creating new parkland and building sites. The improvements also helped reduce pollution to the adjacent properties and increased their property value. San Diego installed two such lids when Interstate 15 was extended south of I-8 in the 1990s. The San Diego Commons nonprofit proposes to install lids over I-5 at Sixth Avenue, Park Boulevard, G Street/State Route 94 and Island Avenue. The Biden administration encouraged this concept in its "connecting communities" program and California lawmakers aim to encourage Caltrans and localities to do the same. For Balboa Park, two of these lids would reconnect the park back to downtown, as called for in the Downtown Community Plan. The growing downtown residential and working population could then access the park more directly on foot or bike.



I-5 lid locations:: top, 6th Ave.-Park Blvd., bottom, G-J streets., San Diego Commons and Urban Division Story Map, 2023

Design Review

When it comes to park maintenance and construction projects, it sometimes takes many years to complete even the most utilitarian item, like a restroom or road realignment. Delay often occurs because not enough thought was given at the beginning to a project's architectural appearance or its connection to other potential improvements around it. A recent example: El Prado was torn up to repair sewer and water lines but upgraded gas, electric and communications lines were not included. On other occasions, objections have led to delayed approval, changed blueprints and rebidding. Costs exceed the budget and the project has to be pared back. This happens so repeatedly that it is accepted as a fact of life.

The answer is to identify issues at the beginning, resolve differences and then proceed to bidding and construction. The first step is "design review," so that experts can peruse projects, seek public input, identify issues and resolve differences. Such a process previously was handled by the Parks & Recreation Board via a panel of industry experts. For the sake of "efficiency," the city eliminated this step in 2016. The result — cost overruns, canceled projects, and disillusioned citizens. A prime example: the Sixth Avenue comfort station that took years and more money to build than initially expected, clearly an inefficient result of this "reform."

The 2022 Balboa Park Design Review Exploratory Committee, in collaboration with Parks & Recreation and park stakeholder groups, prepared a proposal for reinstituting design review along the lines of the now disbanded technical advisory committee. But the city attorney's office advised that only Balboa Park Committee members could serve on such a subcommittee. If adopted, this new review group would include BPC members expert in design, construction or financing, who could then welcome testimony from the public and recommend changes and improvements to project sponsors. BPC should implement this proposal without further delay.



The purpose of design review remains the same: Early review of project design can identify and resolve problems, speed up approval and reduce cost. The likelihood of success is not debatable – there are countless examples globally to prove this point. What we have in San Diego is precisely the opposite — projects that cost much more than originally estimated, take too long to be completed and, ultimately, are less successful and in some cases counterproductive.

Part 2: SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

As important physical infrastructure is to Balboa Park's success, social infrastructure — by which we mean the programs and activities that take place in the park's buildings and spaces — is also equally needed. As one definition puts it, "Social infrastructure is the network of physical and social structures that build relationships and foster thriving communities."

Generations of San Diegans have founded and maintained these activities, including many alumni of San Diego High School. Think of businessman Philip Klauber, state Senator Jim Mills, Old Globe director Craig Noel, physician Homer Peabody and architect Lloyd Ruocco.

The school/park connection may best be symbolized by Kate Sessions (1857-1940). This "mother" of Balboa Park devoted her life to park planning and planting, a career begun after she briefly served as principal of the Russ School before it was renamed San Diego High.

Among her many writings over more than 50 years were these classic statements by this very determined and single-minded horticulturist, nurserywoman and civic leader:

"I'm going to boss every bit of that planting myself" (ca. 1931), and "How wisely these early settlers located for safety first and then for beauty, and having once lived here for a generation or two, no other location was ever found more beautiful. They planted for posterity." (1925)

Besides education, the social infrastructure along Park Boulevard encompasses cultural resources available from the museums and performing arts, and sports and recreation programs and facilities, both formal and informal. World-class performances at the Old Globe, cutting-edge 3-D printing at Comic-Con Museum and everything in between is available within walking distance of Park Boulevard.

In each realm, research into the existing program offerings, both in the park and at educational institutions, is a natural starting point. To develop this potential, the Working Group believes an inventory is needed to catalog all that is available in educational programs and outreach efforts, cultural offerings and recreation activities that are organized or casual.



E3 High School, Central Library, LPA Design Studios

Similarly, a regularly updated listing of internships, job-readiness programs, together with contact information, would represent a wealth of opportunities for all San Diegans to explore. Perhaps agencies such as the San Diego Foundation, the San Diego Workforce Partnership or UCSD Park & Market researchers could compile a starting inventory. The effort would benefit if each entity taps one person to serve as its social infrastructure coordinator to supply data and details to the research team.

Virtually every institution in Balboa Park offers some form of social infrastructure in its strategic plan, from Forever Balboa Park's "tree stewards" to the San Diego Automotive Museum's Vocational Education Academy.



Park & Market amphitheater, UCSD

Undoubtedly this research would uncover more chances to create new linkages and spark stakeholders to create even more points of engagement. As an example, education directors at the museums and principals at nearby schools could meet regularly to reinforce each other's programs.

(See Appendix 6 for list of Social Infrastructure venues and institutions.)

Education

The great opportunity presented by the SDHS reconstruction and City College expansion is to leverage the educational, cultural and recreational assets of Balboa Park to enhance the student experience at the two institutions. Students' enthusiasm and energy, in turn, could contribute to the park in so many ways.

This opportunity reaches up and down the entire length of Park Boulevard. From Birney Elementary to the far north in University Heights to the Charter School of San Diego campus to the south in the Ballpark District, from preschool to post-graduate work and life-long learning thereafter, this "educational armature" serves as an urban laboratory for students and the general public who can tap vast resources and community programming to plan their futures.



Storm trooper, Comic-Con Museum, 2019

The proximity of so many community stakeholders is virtually untapped and presents an opportunity for collaboration, employment, mentorship, internship, volunteerism, business startups and performative expression.

So many schools close to Balboa Park point to the huge educational benefits of sharing the park's resources more comprehensively with students, their families, and lifelong learners in the community. Here is a starting list of academic institutions comprising the Educational Armature:

Altus Charter School of SD
 Birney Elementary
 Charter School of San Diego
 e3 Civic High School
 Garfield High School
 IDEATE High Academy
 Kipp Adelante Prep Academy
 Museum School
 NewSchool of Architecture & Design
 Theodore Roosevelt Middle School
 San Diego City College
 San Diego High School
 School in the Park
 UC San Diego Park & Market
 Urban Corps San Diego
 Urban Discovery Academy (Russ Blvd)
 Urban Discovery Academy (Village Green)



NewSchool of Architecture students and Portland, Ore., Ford District project team, 2016

Currently, only a few of the institutions have programs directly tied to the park. At the same time, park institutions have a limited number of programs designed to serve area students. Every student in the educational armature should be introduced to the life-long learning opportunities that exist in the park. It's worth noting that virtually every ZIP code in San Diego County is represented in these educational and cultural institutions as a whole.

For many students, the benefits of hands-on experiential learning outside of the classroom can make a real difference in their readiness to learn. Whole new modes of learning can be found through



Education Corridor logo, Regan Decker, NSAD, 2022

the unique connections to the park's multi-faceted cultural environment -- additional learning sources beyond those at home or in school. Students and families can benefit from these experiences, and faculty engaged in park-based learning may also find inspiration and ideas from this approach.

Known programs include the following and further research would undoubtedly identify many more:

- Summer camp programs offered by park institutions
- School in the Park visits by elementary and middle school students
- Field trip programming offered by park institutions
- Internship and volunteer opportunities in the park
- The "Level Up" program at the San Diego Unified School District
- The House of Pacific Relations' school and youth programs liaison committee



Auto Museum Vocational Education Academy, sautomuseum.org

Cultural Resources

Not only students but the general public can benefit from greater awareness of the remarkable cultural assets of Balboa Park. In the interest of improving diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly for those with limited means to access and enjoy the park, new programs could be created along with the planned physical improvements that are coming in the years ahead.

In addition to new performing arts venues planned for SDHS and City College, the development of joint-use agreements and resource-sharing can aid park groups in their operations and outreach. Institutions inside and outside the park offer programs that cultivate life-long learning and entertainment, such as summer and holiday events, arts and horticultural classes and programs complementing city staff and volunteers.

To these could be added further collaborative projects, such as the digitization of historic archives retained by park institutions; a periodical publication highlighting volunteer opportunities as well as ongoing programs and



Fleet Science Center STEM Camp



West African drumming class, World Beat Center, 2014

events; and a recurring forum that would bring together park leaders and volunteers with members of the surrounding communities.

Virtually every park institution offers cultural resources beyond their exhibitions and performances. Examples include:

- Centro Cultural de la Raza's La Tiendita
- Fleet Science Center's Be Wise
- Forever Balboa Park's Tree Stewards
- Natural History Museum's Canyoneers
- Mingei Museum's Mini Mingei and Lifelong Makers
- Old Globe Theatre's Summer Shakespeare and Summer Conservatory
- San Diego Automotive Museum's Vocational Education Academy
- San Diego Casa del Prado's plant and horticulture classes
- San Diego Comic-Con Museum's Cox Innovation Lab and Conrad Prebys Foundation Art Studio
- San Diego History Center's Oral History Project
- San Diego Junior Theater
- San Diego Museum of Art's Art for All
- San Diego Youth Symphony and Conservatory
- San Diego Zoo Corps and Conservation Career Quest
- World Beat Center's Outdoor Classroom and Noise Project Research



Balboa Park custom tour with Visitor Center guide, balboapark.org

Outside the park exists a variety of cultural and historic districts whose leaders could collaborate with park institutions. They include:

- The Barrio Logan state cultural district linked to the park via the San Diego Trolley at Smart Corner, Broadway at Park Boulevard.
- The Black Arts and Culture District in Encanto located along the Imperial Avenue trolley line that connects the neighborhood to the park also at Smart Corner.
- The Convoy District in Kearny Mesa's Pan-Asian restaurants and businesses that could link to art collections and programs at the San Diego Museum of Art, Mingei Museum and Japanese Friendship



San Diego Youth Symphony, balboapark.org



San Diego Night Market, Convoy District, sdnightmarket.com

Garden. Its annual Night Market is an example of creating a fun gathering place for all San Diegans.

- Oceanside's state cultural district can call on the San Diego History Center for research resources and Oceanside residents can travel on public transit via the North County Transit District's Coaster and transfer to bus routes serving the park.
- Old Town State Historic Park is served by the major transportation center and has ties to the collections at the San Diego History Center in the park as well as the center's Serra Museum in Presidio Park.
- The San Diego Tourism Authority markets the region's cultural landmarks and events, many of which are located in the park.



Mario Torero tour of Chicano Park murals, mariotorero.art

And of course, all of San Diego can attend games, concerts and special events at Petco Park, just down the street from Balboa Park.

Sports and Recreation

Pickup games of volleyball, touch football, basketball and disc golf, lawn bowling, tennis, archery, golf and swimming, mountain biking, velodrome competition, 10k's and marathons, trail hikes and a full calendar of Parks & Recreation programs — it's mind boggling how many activities take place daily within Balboa Park's 1,172 acres. Many are offered at low or no cost and are available to all. There are numerous clubs and special interest groups active in the park, especially at Spanish Village and the House of Pacific Relations. The programs of the Parks & Recreation Department are excellent vehicles for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. The community as a whole would benefit from additional marketing and promotion of these programs and opportunities.



San Diego Archery Range, sandiegoarchers.com

The park serves the entire region as well as its immediate neighborhoods with offerings not available anywhere else. But the Working Group believes many San Diegans don't realize how vast the

opportunities are and how accessible they are to every income group and demographic. It's time to boast about all that's available and find ways to communicate to residents and workers near and far. Perhaps a "Balboa Park" magazine should be published both in print and online to spread the word. Given the attraction Balboa Park has for tourists as well locals, the Tourism Marketing District and San Diego Tourism Authority might consider launching such an effort.

As with cultural resources, a concerted effort is needed to catalog all that is available for sports and recreation. The San Diego Sports Association, Sierra Club and other community organizations could be enlisted to take this on. And there are other sports that could be accommodated, such as skate boarding. Olympic champions have been crowned from innumerable skateboard parks, including San Diego County's own Shaun White.



San Diego Velodrome, sdvelodrome.com

Closer ties between the park and surrounding neighborhoods would strengthen both and create new models for learning, equity sharing and long-term community development. Enhancing the value of what the park is contributing to the community and how the community is supporting the park will pay future dividends, ensuring the survival of the park as a cultural center of excellence and enriching the neighborhoods through experiences in the park.

Other ideas to consider

- An Educational Passport Program offering free or low-cost admittance for students through the college level.
- A speakers bureau to go on the road and make presentations to schools, companies and even those struggling to right their lives.
- Independent study opportunities.
- A youth advisory board based in Balboa Park could add a new perspective from the next generation of San Diegans on programs, projects, facilities and other policies. An annual summit of park, business, education and youth leaders could highlight successes and explore new initiatives. The city's Youth Commission could take on these responsibilities.
- Test marketing of new educational programs could occur in cooperation with nearby educational establishments. A parallel research effort could quantify the

benefits of existing and proposed programs, both to the park institutions and residents, visitors and businesses.

- Many park institutions already operate programs that reach beyond the park. A checklist of such efforts could be maintained to acquaint residents and businesses with details on how to participate.



Old Globe Theatre's "Globe for All"

- School work can often include assignments that relate to the programs and collections in the park. A survey of curricula at all grade levels could reveal opportunities for classroom-park collaboration.
- To justify a focus on Balboa Park, more data should be collected to track where park visitors and park-area students come from, how long they stay and how much they spend. The San Diego Taxpayers Association often conducts such revenue and expense studies.
- How to pay for all this research? Area foundations, such as the San Diego Foundation, are eager to promote education and connect institutions with each other.



"Put a Little Love in Your Park" video, 2023

Part 3: Governance and Finance

The Burnham Center for Community Advancement in 2022 issued a white paper, “Preparing Balboa Park for the Next 100 years,” and launched a region-wide effort to generate more money for the park and reform its management and oversight.

Meanwhile, state and local grants have augmented city budget actions to address long-delayed attention to deferred maintenance and infrastructure shortfalls. Notable examples over the past 10 years include the \$23 million restoration of the Cabrillo Bridge in 2014, \$6 million seismic retrofitting of the California Tower in 2020 and nearly completed \$28 million Botanical Building rebuilding project.

And thousands of donors, big and small, continue to support park institutions as they improve their facilities, build and manage their collections, develop exhibitions and schedule performances and sports events.

Recent examples include:

- The Balboa Park Committee of 100's restoration of the 1935 murals, bear statues, flagpoles and ornamentation on the 1935 California State Building (Automotive Museum) and similar treatment on the 1935 Palace of Electricity and Varied Industries (Municipal Gymnasium).
- The Friends of Balboa Park's Moreton Bay Fig viewing platform north of the Natural History Museum and acquisition and restoration of the Balboa Park Carousel.
- The Balboa Park Conservancy's restoration of Kate Sessions' Cactus Garden behind the Balboa Park Club.
- Forever Balboa Park's urban forestry, signage and garden maintenance programs.
- Balboa Park Cultural Partnership's efforts to enhance visitor experience.
- Mingei Museum's interior and exterior remodeling at the House of Charm.
- The Timken Museum of Art's restored and remodeled interior and exterior spaces.
- The addition of a performance and presentation venue between the Centro Cultural de la Raza and World Beat Center.
- The San Diego Zoo's replacement of its Children's Zoo with the Denny Sanford Wildlife Explorers Basecamp.
- The planned replacement of the San Diego Museum of Art's West Wing.



But the truth of the matter is that Balboa Park, unlike Mission Bay Park and Liberty Station, has no guaranteed revenue sources to underwrite park activities and maintain its buildings and grounds. A cursory look at projects listed in the park's 1989 master plan and subsequent specific plans could easily top \$1 billion to build. And perhaps surprisingly, there is no "budget" for the park; its upkeep is spread across many departments. Income from the state sales tax plus modest lease payments inside the park flow into the city general fund with no promise to return them back to the park.

As for park management, Balboa Park was originally overseen by an independent Park Commission, answerable to the City Council. But responsibility shifted to the city manager in the 1930s. With the approval of a strong-mayor form of government in the 2000s, the mayor took over the city manager role. The Parks & Recreation Board serves in a strictly advisory capacity with no management responsibility. Within the Parks & Recreation Department, Balboa Park is just one of several developed regional parks, along with Mission Bay, Presidio and shoreline parks. In 2024 the park was split off as a separate departmental unit. But other P&R department divisions and city departments handle the park's recreation, maintenance, design and construction, leases, streets, utilities and other day-to-day matters.

The upshot is that there is no central authority responsible for the park. Decision making is dispersed and accountability is hard to pin down. This leaves scores of cultural institutions and recreational interests to compete for annual appropriations, grants, memberships and visitors with the hope that at budget time, they might receive city support. Capital improvements to park buildings also need to be planned and funded more systematically and comprehensively.

As part of the ongoing preparation of the "Framework for the Future" initiative, a prioritization study is expected from a New York consulting firm that will list existing and proposed capital improvement projects and deferred maintenance items and offer a way to rank their importance. The framework effort also anticipates other detailed studies built on earlier citizen-led investigations, such as improved parking, access and circulation in and around the park.

Numerous alternatives have been considered over the years, but however the management structure is arranged, the biggest impediment to progress in the park is money — how much does it need, where will more come from and who will spend it?

This Working Group can't make the necessary changes happen. What's needed is something akin to "coordinated genius and muscle of society to pull possibilities from the far future into the near present" that made the World Wide Web possible, as *New York Times* columnist Ezra Klein put it in a 2023 opinion piece about Marc Andreessen, godfather of the web browser.

Part 4: Final Thoughts

The rebuilding of San Diego High School presents a once-in-a-century opportunity to achieve several longstanding goals all at once.

The school can become more beautiful, as it was in earlier iterations. Its proximity to City College can smooth the way for high school kids to pursue successful careers and college students to mentor their younger buddies. The two institutions together can partner with other educational establishments up and down Park Boulevard to act as an academic powerhouse that thrives on collaboration, encourages internship opportunities, promotes youthful volunteerism and boosts civic involvement.

Then comes the obvious linkages between schools and Balboa Park's cultural institutions. This collection of museums, performance spaces and the San Diego Zoo represent a unique, out-of-classroom opportunity to augment standard curriculum with hands-on access to art, science, history and nature. Some programs already exist but many more could be offered with a little bit of nudging. And don't forget the dozens of sports, recreation and groups from all over the region that gravitate to the park's many playgrounds, ball fields, open spaces — let alone thousands who walk, jog, bike, swim, golf and stretch in their carefree time.



Now take that park-school connection and pair it with area businesses, agencies, nonprofits and the thousands of residents downtown and in surrounding ZIP codes. A decade ago the inventors of the "I.D.E.A. District" had it right: This area of San Diego should be the nexus of innovation, design, education and the arts. It's the only place in San Diego County and perhaps in

the state or nation where so many brains, entrepreneurs, energetic urban dwellers and creatives live, work and play within steps of each other.

In the immediate future, the Burnham Center for Community Advancement plans to finalize its proposal for governance and finance reforms and then present it in various public forums. Those reforms could help speed implementation of our set of recommendations.

This report — really a planning framework — is based on one simple, self-evident observation: Everything is connected. Instead of focusing on one-and-done projects, San Diego has a chance to tackle everything all at once and make a difference in countless lives. This isn't dependent solely on money or political will. It will take continued effort from all San Diegans, individually and collectively, to keep this crown jewel polished.

As John Nolen said in his 1908 city plan for San Diego:

"The present is a most propitious time to consider in a frank, clear-headed and comprehensive manner the future of San Diego."



"Put a Little Love in Your Park" video, 2023

Appendices

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John Nolen's proposed bay-to-park Paseo, left, in his 1908 city plan. The two-towered structure, right, depicts his concept for a new train station. The current Santa Fe Depot opened in 1914 in time to serve visitors to the Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park.

Appendix 1

Stakeholders, Participants, Organizations

Balboa Park

- Balboa Park Committee of 100: Ross Porter, Roger Showley, René Smith, Mike Stepner
- Balboa Park Cultural Partnership: Peter Comiskey
- Forever Balboa Park: Elizabeth Babcock

San Diego Community College District/City College

- Lance Lareau, SDCCD architect
- Rob Quigley, Rob Wellington Quigley Architects
- RNT Architects

San Diego Unified School District/San Diego High School

- Lee Dulgeroff, Samer Naji, SDUSD Facilities
- David McCullough, McCullough Landscape Architects
- Victor Navarro, Mosher Drew Architects

City of San Diego

- Councilmembers Joe LaCava, Stephen Whitburn
- Steve Hill, mayor's office
- Andy Field, director, Parks and Recreation Department
- Brian Schoenfisch, Development Services Urban Division -
- Balboa Park Committee

Community

- Betsy Brennan, Downtown San Diego Partnership
- Bob Link, East Village Association

Note: Some of these individuals participated in the regular meetings of the Working Group.

Appendix 2: Implementation

To carry out nearly 60 recommendations, public agencies, organizations, institutions and individual residents all will have a role to play in turning ideas into action. Funding is always a necessary ingredient but advocacy and political support are also necessary to succeed.

In the accompanying chart, we assign responsibility to specific entities for each recommendation, attach a priority ranking — short-, medium- and long-term timing (2025-2029, 2025-35 and 2025-, respectively) — and include opportunities and suggestions for how to proceed.

The 58 recommendations are then grouped together as if they were hanging on a fruit tree — low-, medium- and high-hanging fruit. Acted on one at a time, it would take decades to complete this to-do list, if ever. Instead San Diego can do several things at once. Initiate some easy actions immediately to show progress and tackle some medium-hanging pieces of fruit via capital improvement budgeting. The most difficult and expensive ideas will require a great deal of attention over as many years, not to mention the challenge of gathering public support and finding funds as necessary. But let's get on with it.

If our leaders need some prodding, we offer a deadline of 2035 to pick some of that low and mid-hanging "fruit" off the tree. That year will be the 100th anniversary of the 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition. It was one of several regional and world's fairs in the 1930s that focused on the future, even as the nation was recovering from the Great Depression and preparing for the immense task of winning World War II.

It's been Balboa Park's fate to witness endless efforts to plan the future only to watch little come to fruition. The 1989 master plan and followup specific plans and subsequent amendments did yield some welcomed changes and improvements in reconstructed and rehabilitated buildings, gardens and recreation facilities. The park has rightfully won praise from national organizations as one of America's great urban parks. But there is still so much yet to be done to "grow" the park and connect it to its surroundings and the region and world beyond.

Here is one path forward.

BP/SDHS Connections Working Group: Implementation Recommendations				
Physical Infrastructure	Participants	Output	Timeframe	Notes
SDHS				Ref: Campus Modernization Plan
Public use of social facilities	SDHS, City [P&R]	Formal Agreement	Near Term	
Balboa Stadium	SDHS, City [P&R]	Formal Agreement	Mid/Long	Mid term-Engagement in design alternatives. Long term-formal agreement
Parking Structures, including Inspiration Point	SDHS, City [P&R]	Formal Agreement	Near/Mid	Near term-use of current structures. Mid term-coordinated planning
Athletic facilities and future gym	SDHS, City [P&R]	Formal Agreement	Near/Mid	Near term-use of current structures. Mid term-coordinated planning
Physical Connections – Develop a joint implementation model	SDHS, City [P&R, Mobility, DSD], SDCC	Informal Agreement	Near/Mid	Park Boulevard, Russ Boulevard, 14 th Street
Landscaping	SDHS, City [DSD], Downtown Partnership	Informal Agreement	Near	In process
City College				See Transportation, Parking, Circulation
City College Parking, nights/weekends as available	SDCC, SDHS, City [P&R]	Formal Agreement	Near/Mid	Including expansion of shuttle service. Ref: City College Master Plan – in process
Public use of social facilities	SDCC, SDHS, City [P&R]	Formal Agreement	Mid/Long	Mid term-Engagement in design alternatives. Long term-formal agreement
B Street enhancements	SDCC, City [DSD]	Informal Agreement	Mid/Long	Consider opportunities

Transportation, Parking, Circulation				
Framework for the Future – Initiative #3	City [P&R, Mobility]	Award contracts as indicated for the five studies	Mid term	Complete Initiative 3-Mobility
Develop an Implementation Plan linked to Governance and Funding [below]	City [Mayor, Council]	Formal commitment	Mid term	Coordinate with BCCA
Shuttle	City [P&R, Mobility, DSD], SDCC, Downtown Partnership [DWNTTP]	Informal agreement to identify constraints, options	Near term	Consider all options, e.g., FRED
Russ Boulevard Improvements	City [DSD], SDCC	Informal agreement	Near term	Ref: Dwgs McCullough/Quigley
Park Boulevard Beautification	City [DSD], SDCC, DWNTTP	Informal agreement	Near term	Including trees in median- SDHS area
14 th Street Promenade Improvements	City [DSD, Mobility, P&R], SDHS, SDCC, DWNTTP	Informal agreement	Near/Mid	Ref: 14 th Street Working Group report
Formal naming of John Nolen Parkway	City [Council]	Formal commitment	Near	Ref: Council Policy on street naming
Bay to Park Paseo	All involved parties	World Design Capital initiative	Near	Ref: Urban Interventions project brief
Balboa Park Entry signs	TBD	TBD	Medium	Ref: AIA report on design competition, Friends of Balboa Park proposals for gatehouses
Freeway Lids	TBD	TBD	Long	Ref: San Diego Commons website; Friends of BP Parking & Circulation study

Design Review	City [P&R]	BPC or P&R Board	Near	Ref: P&R report to Balboa Park Committee & final report of the Design Review Exploratory Committee
Social Infrastructure	Participants	Output	Timeframe	Notes
Identify agencies to lead initiatives	BPCP, Downtown Partnership, UCSD, etc.	List of initiatives and lead agencies	Near term	Identify coordinating agents, develop joint-use agreements, including resource-sharing
Convene educators' meetups	Park institutions, educational armature entities	Contact lists; inventory of educational programs	Near term	E.g. research existing program offerings, listing of internships, job-readiness programs
Youth Advisory Board	BPCP; FBP	Meeting schedule; work agenda	Medium term	
Research: curriculum-based programs	Park institutions, educational armature entities	Online, updatable inventory	Medium term	
Research: enrichment programs for general public	Park institutions, cultural armature entities	Online, updatable inventory	Medium term	
Research: sports/recreation programs	Park institutions, sports/recreation armature entities	Online, updatable inventory	Medium term	

Develop Collaborative Projects	Park institutions and armature entities	Online, updatable inventory	Medium term	E.g.: digitization of historic archives, using visitor demographics to enhance community-park linkages
Include these recommendations in all other park planning efforts	City [P&R, Youth Services, etc.], Park and Armature institutions	Informal agreements	Medium term	E.g. Framework for the Future, One Park One Experience, BCCA funding/governance work
Explore potential funding sources to support social infrastructure development	Develop an implementation plan	Formal commitment	Near term	Coordinate with BCCA
Governance and Funding	Participants	Output	Timeframe	Notes
Completion of the Burnham Center for Community Advancement work	BCCA	Final report	Near term	
Acceptance of the reports recommendations by appropriate government agencies.	City [Mayor, Council], County [Supervisors],	Formal acceptance	Medium term	Potentially other involved governmental agencies. Establishment of an implementation process
Implementation of the final report	Above plus multiple affiliated organizations	Tangible results	Medium to Long term	

Projects Ranked by Priority

With nearly 60 recommendations in the Working Group report, it's not possible to tackle everything all at once. It may take years, decades, to complete this to-do list. But some ideas are easier and quicker to implement than others. Imagine a tree with low-, medium- and high-hanging fruit as an analogy for short-, medium- and long-term actions. Short is 1-5 years, medium is 5-10 years and long is 10+ years. An ambitious goal is to accomplish all this by 2035, the 100th anniversary of the California Pacific International Exposition.

Low-hanging fruit, 2025-2029

Physical Infrastructure

1. Joint public use of athletic fields, gyms and theaters at San Diego High School (SDHS) and San Diego City College (SDCC)
2. Enhanced landscaping along Park and Russ boulevards
3. Wider crosswalks and signalization on Park Boulevard
4. City College parking garages operated on holidays and weekends for park visitors
5. Honorary naming of Park Boulevard as "John Nolen Parkway."
6. Design Review system adopted by Parks & Recreation Board
7. Maintenance and security by Downtown San Diego Partnership's Urban Strategies group (similar to the DSDP/SDSU Mission Valley agreement)

Social Infrastructure

8. Life-long learning opportunities at park institutions
9. New learning modes partnered between park and educational institutions
10. Faculty-led research projects for higher education students
11. Internships and volunteer opportunities
12. Recurring forums of park leaders, business leaders and volunteers from surrounding communities
13. Checklist of park exhibitions and performances offered outside Balboa Park
14. Checklist of cultural and historic districts with collaboration opportunities with park counterparts
15. San Diego Tourism Authority marketing of Balboa Park
16. New marketing and promotion of sports and recreation events.
17. Checklist of sports and recreation programs
18. Speakers bureau
19. Independent study opportunities
20. Youth Advisory Board (or expansion of San Diego Youth Commission)
21. Checklist of park institutions' outreach programs
22. Survey of primary and secondary school curricula with potential for classroom-park collaboration
23. Data collection on park visitors
24. Solicitation to local foundations for research grants

Governance and Finance

25. Create comprehensive Balboa Park budget
26. Analyze potential revenues from transient occupancy tax, equivalent expenditure to San Diego Zoo's property tax income for park-wide benefit (e.g. Promenade parking project);

dedicated revenue sources from new developments (e.g. hotels, restaurants, retail and entertainment, special events, farmers and craft markets), parking fees.

27. Shift park management to a new agency or entity (JPA, district, city department)

28. Task Balboa Park Committee to monitor implementation of this report and report annually to the public on progress made.

Medium-hanging fruit, 2025-35

Physical Infrastructure

1. Structured parking at Inspiration Point for SDHS/SDCC joint use
2. Existing lots repaved with permeable pavement
3. Signage, landscaping on sidewalks and medians in Park Boulevard
4. Added placemaking at SDHS and SDCC
5. Increased emphasis on alternatives to car transportation to the schools
6. Enhanced tunnel below Curran Plaza at SDCC
7. Recommendations in the Friends of Balboa Park Parking & Circulation Study (2021), implemented by the city's Sustainability and Mobility Department
8. Expanded and more robust park shuttle network
9. Redesigned Russ Boulevard as an attractive connection between SDHS and SDCC
10. Park Boulevard beautification
11. 14th Street Promenade beautification extended to and through SDCC and SDHS
12. John Nolen Parkway honorary designation to Harbor Drive and Laurel Street, completing a loop that becomes a scenic highway
13. Bay to Park Paseo temporary art installations replaced by permanent installations
14. New major monument entry signs to Balboa Park at Presidents Way and Upas Street with major directional sign at Park Boulevard/Interstate 5 ramps
15. Enhanced landscaping on Sixth Avenue bridge over I-5

Social Infrastructure

16. Joint-use and resource-sharing agreements among park, non-park business, educational, nonprofit and business institutions in addition to those with the city and SDHS and SDCC
17. Digitization of historic archives
18. Periodical highlighting volunteer opportunities
19. "Balboa Park Magazine," printed and online
20. Educational Passport offering free or low-cost admission to students through college level
21. Test marketing of new programs with accompanying research quantifying benefits
22. Coordinated internship, volunteer and employment efforts

High-hanging fruit, 2025-

1. Rebuilding of eight SDCC buildings and 14 replacements
2. Rebuilding of SDCC Saville Theater
3. New SDHS performing arts center
4. New SDHS/SDCC Aquatic Center
5. New SDCC student housing at 16th & B streets
6. New SDCC flat-floor garages
7. Pedestrian bridges: Replacement for "cattle chute" bridge from Inspiration Point to Balboa Stadium; new bridge connecting Marston Point over I-5 to Tweet Street Park in Cortez Hill; new bridge over SR163 from roughly Ivy Street to the Palisades at Auto Museum or Balboa Park Club; new bridge over Florida Canyon from El Prado to East Mesa
8. Freeway lids over Interstate 5 - Sixth Avenue-Park Boulevard, G Street-Island Avenue

Appendix 3

Story Map

Development Services Department-Urban Division



John Nolen, left, discussing his 1926 plans for Balboa Park and other areas of San Diego.
Development Services/Urban Division

<https://webmaps.sandiego.gov/portal/apps/storymaps/stories/1f7ce2bbacce4f4287b0cc563a0755db> or <http://tinyurl.com/ymvu595v>

(Note: Best viewed with Chrome browser. For more information, contact Development Services' Urban Division, DSDUrbanDivision@sandiego.gov)

The Urban Division developed this interactive "story map" of downtown San Diego to show how improvements there and around Balboa Park will serve the public and continue revitalization of the region's urban center. Check it out.

Appendix 4

Russ/Park Boulevard, Balboa Stadium, bridge improvements

*McCullough Landscape Architects
Rob Wellington Quigley Architects
Michael Singleton, landscape architect*



Architects Mosher Drew

Working with the San Diego Unified School District and San Diego College District and architect Rob Quigley and landscape architect David McCullough, mapped out a five-phase set of public improvements on the two school sites and adjacent public rights-of-way.

Landscape architect Michael Singleton, former Balboa Park Committee member, also offered some suggestions for bridges that could bridge the Interstate 5 gap between downtown, the schools and the park. Together their suggestions would improve access and safety and extend the park's pleasurable landscapes beyond its borders.



Phase 1

Reduce Russ Boulevard drive aisle to one-way traveling east to west to 12-foot wide with enhanced concrete pavers.

- Enhance pedestrian north/south walkways for improved high school, community college pedestrian access.
- Convert new demolished roadway area into landscape and potential stormwater treatment areas.
- Convert north side of the drive aisle (east of campus entry steps and ADA ramp) to bus loading and unloading zone.



Phase 2

- Continue a seamless multicampus connection between SDHS and City College
- Continue the Russ Boulevard improvements. Restrict traffic to service vehicles only with one-way westbound movement from 16th Street to Park Blvd.
- Expand the use of enhanced paver materials and add curbless transitions for • pedestrian circulation, promenade-like prominence
- Add landscape and tree coverInclude stormwater permeability and treatment
- Address south-facing and north-facing levels that overlook Russ Boulevard from City College and SDHS, respectively.



Phase 3

- Provide Park Boulevard landscape improvements including; medians, general public right-of-way, SDHS frontage, and the Interstate 5 off-ramp.
- Provide enhanced wayfinding and welcome signage.
- Create an improved pedestrian experience with wider sidewalks throughout.
- Enhance security fencing for SDHS and adjacent athletic fields.
- Increase stormwater permeability and treatment opportunities where feasible.
- Improve Caltrans bridge crossing at Interstate 5.
- Enhance the welcome experience at the I-5/Park Boulevard on- and offramp intersection.
- Narrow the roadway or build “bulb-outs” on Russ Blvd. and A Street sidewalks for improved pedestrian experience.
- Improve bike lane, buffered by a row of shade trees in raised planters.





Phase 4

- Reconstruct Balboa Stadium, including its historic 1915 peristyle, for joint use by SDHS and community at large.



Phase 5

- Reconstruct the pedestrian bridge between Balboa Stadium and Inspiration Point as an enhanced and celebratory gateway to Balboa Park
- Treat this new bridge as an object of civic pride and an art project in lieu of a common engineering project.

The Complete Vision



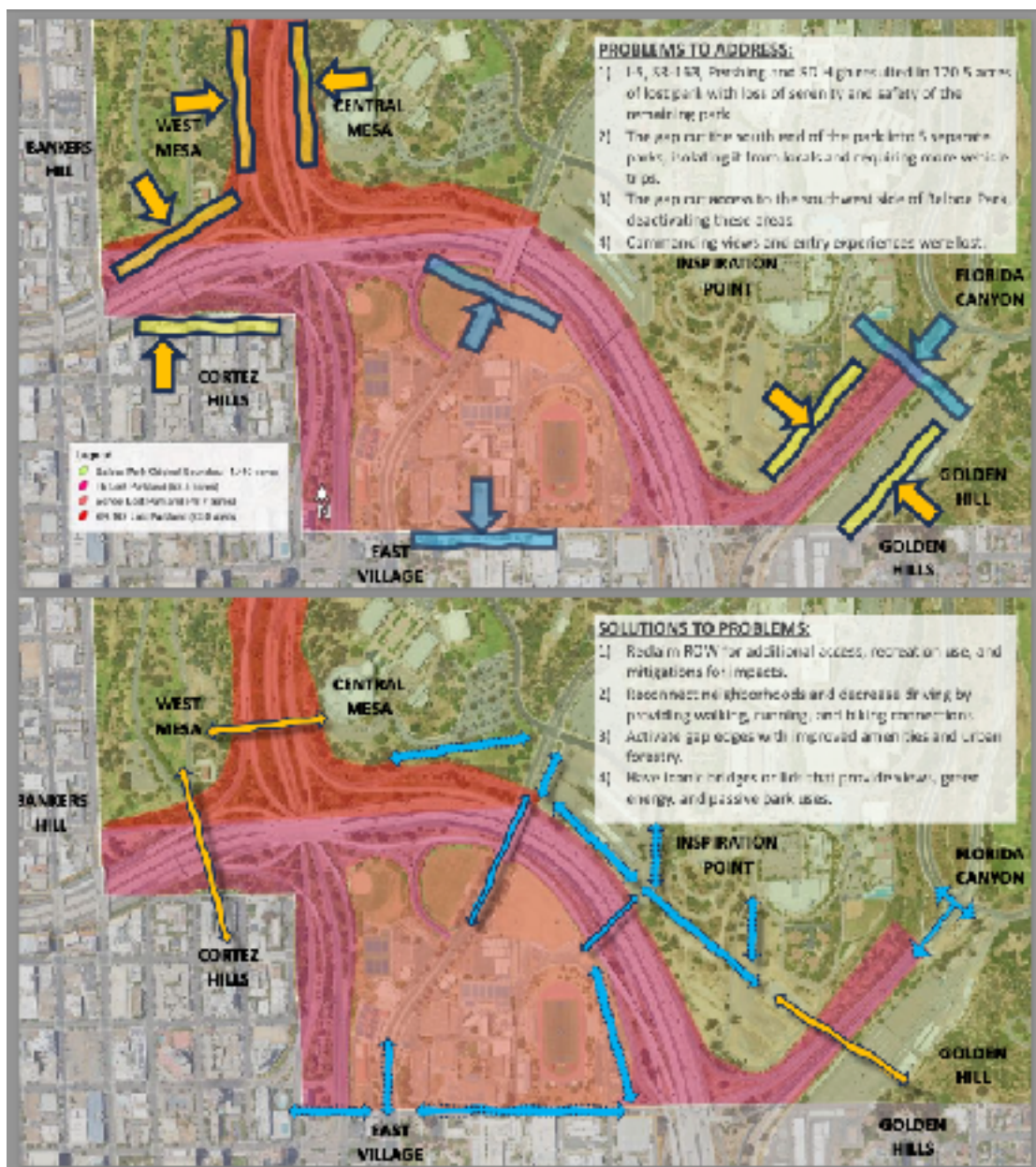


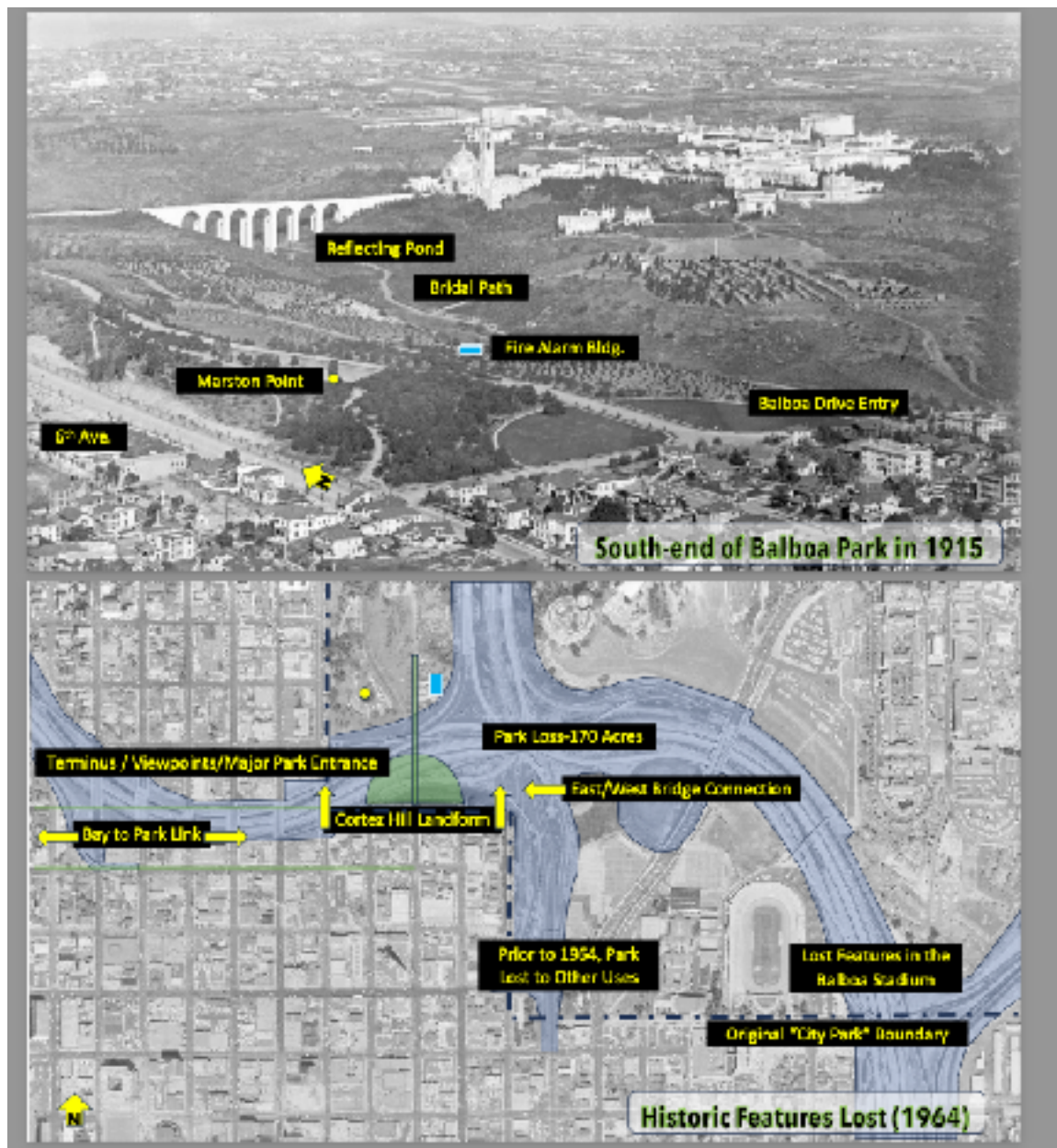
This large painting by artist Birch Burdette Long was commissioned by architect Bertram Goodhue for the Panama-California Exposition. During the exposition the painting was on display in the Governor's Room in the California Building (Museum of Us), where the California State Building Commission met. Its whereabouts are unknown.

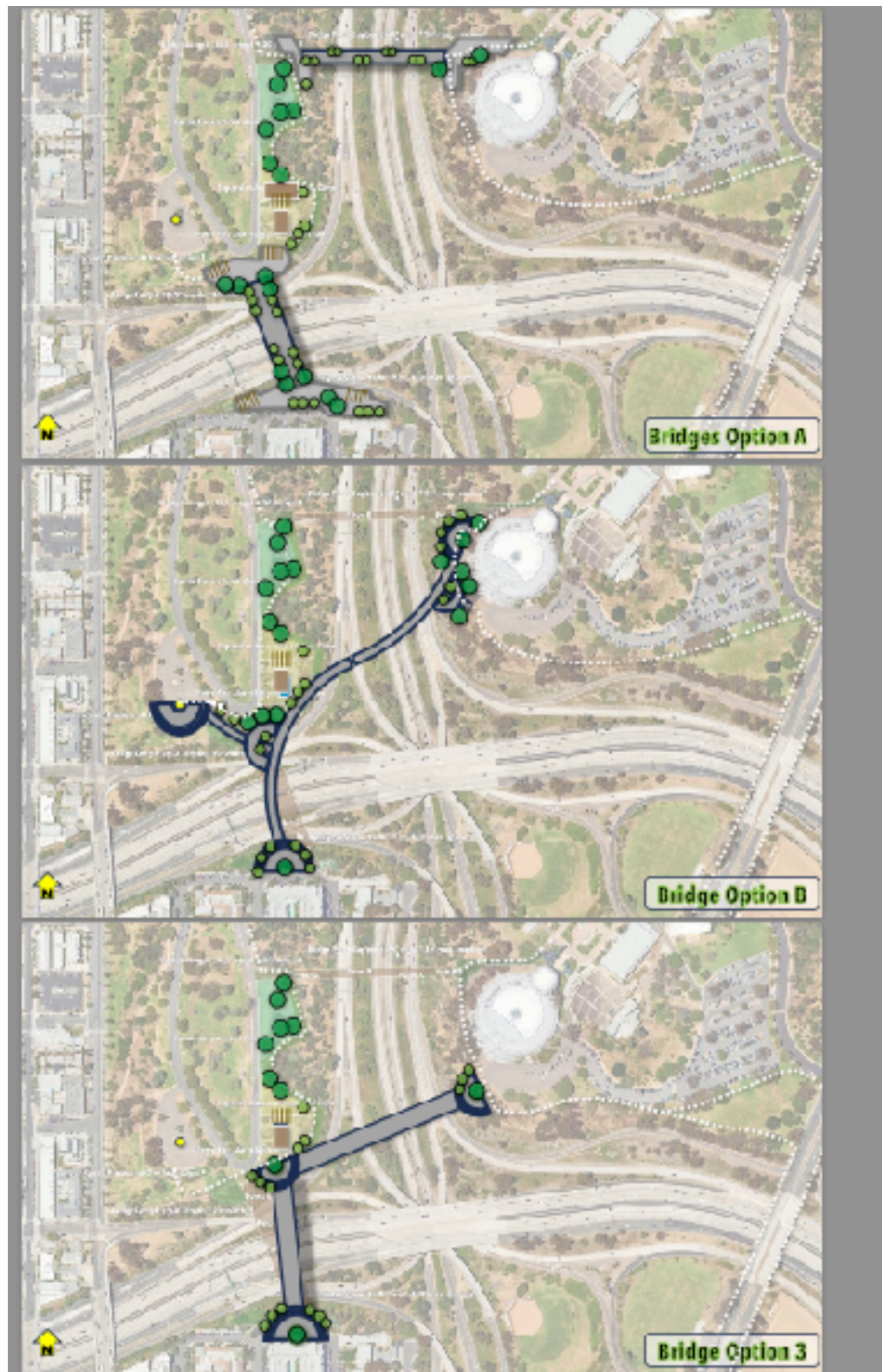
"The Bridges of Balboa Park"

Mike Singleton, retired landscape architect and former member of the Balboa Park Committee, created a series of maps and photos to illustrate new ways to reconnect the park to its surroundings. Some originated in John Nolen's 1927 master plan for the park and others appear in city documents.

Here is a selection of his suggestions that could be considered to "grow" the park through new access points.

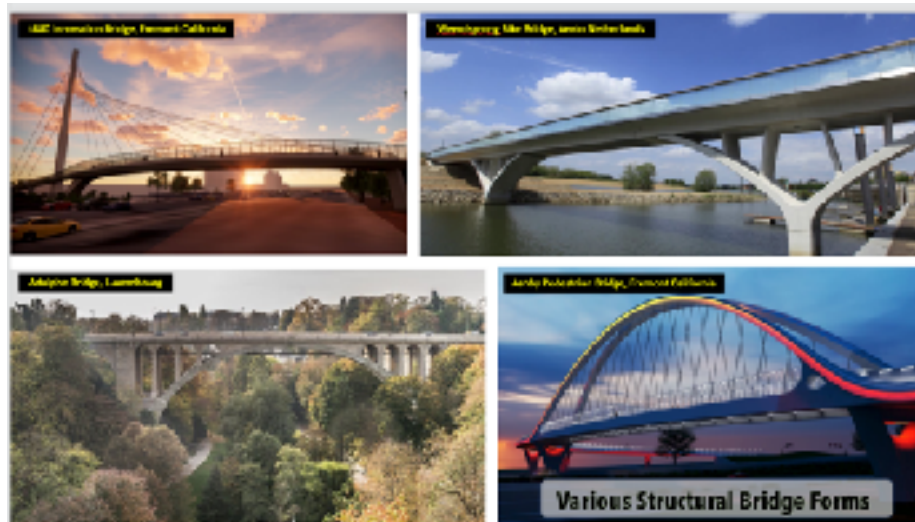


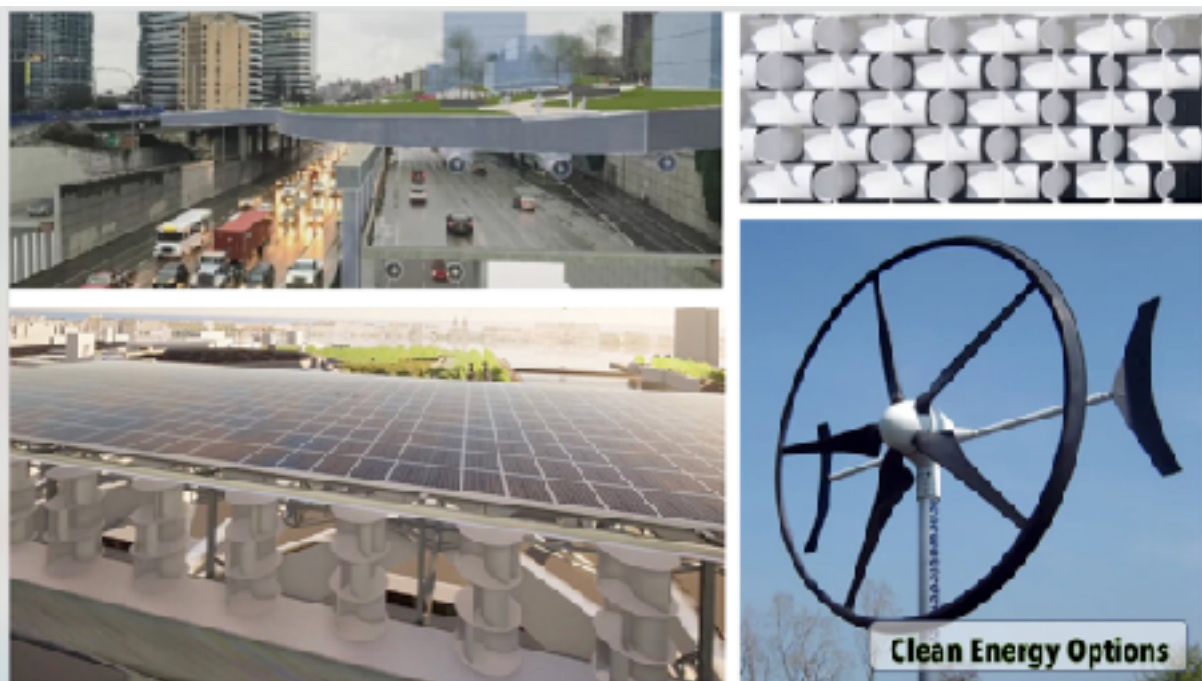












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Interstate 5 freeway lids: San Diego Commons, <https://greenthegap.org/>

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Part 1: Physical Infrastructure

Balboa Park Gateway Competition, American Institute of Architects San Diego, 2013, <https://aiasandiego.org/blog/winning-gateways-bridge-balboa-parks-canyon> or <https://tinyurl.com/yr464xnw> and <https://aiasandiego.org/blog/balboa-park-centennial-gateway-competition> or <https://tinyurl.com/5ex2jauf>
 Balboa Park Parking & Circulation task force report presentation, Friends of Balboa Park: Balboa Park Committee meeting, March 4, 2021, Item 502, <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/boards/bpc/bpc2021> or <https://tinyurl.com/yc7y5ff6>
 Balboa Stadium, "Bay to Park Paseo <https://www.baytoparkpaseo.org/>
 Balboa Park Bridges: Rob Wellington Quigley Architects and Michael Singleton, <https://www.quigleyarchitects.com/>
 Design review: Balboa Park Committee meeting, March 3, 2022, agenda items 501a, b, c, <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/boards/bpc/bpc2022> or <https://tinyurl.com/mrybjewb>
 14th Street Promenade, <https://civiccommunities.com/portfolio/14th-street-promenade/> or <https://tinyurl.com/42jzbnrx>
 Interstate 5 freeway lids, San Diego Commons, <https://greenthegap.org/>
 Nolen Parkway: "Planners Favor Nolen Drive on Bay Front," March 19, 1937, San Diego Union page 2, [https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&t=city:San+Diego+\(CA\)!San+Diego+\(CA\)&sort=YMD_date:A&maxresults=20&f=advanced&val-base-0="john nolen"or](https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&t=city:San+Diego+(CA)!San+Diego+(CA)&sort=YMD_date:A&maxresults=20&f=advanced&val-base-0=) <http://tinyurl.com/2eundbuh>
 Parking & Circulation Study, Friends of Balboa Park, 2021, <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/boards/bpc/bpc2021> or <https://tinyurl.com/yc7y5ff6>
 "San Diego City College Facilities Master Plan," 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/f3mdambn>
 San Diego High School Modernization and Long-Range Master Plan," <http://tinyurl.com/343b8wku>

Part 2: Social Infrastructure

Education:

E3 Civic High School: www.e3civichigh.com

Fleet Science Center STEM Camps: fleetscience.org/events/camps
 Kate Session quotes, San Diego Floral Association, sdfloral.org/kos-book.htm
 "Level Up," San Diego Unified School District: or www.sandiegounified.org/departments/extended_learning_opportunities_elo/level_up or tinyurl.com/392pjc4t
 UC San Diego Park & Market Building: parkandmarket.ucsd.edu
 Urban Corps, San Diego County: urbancorpssd.org

Cultural Resources:

Barrio Logan State Cultural District: <https://www.caculturaldistricts.org/barrio-logan>
 Convoy District Night Market: <https://www.sdnightmarket.com/>
 Oceanside State Cultural District: <https://www.caculturaldistricts.org/oceanside>
 Old Town San Diego State Historic Park: https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=663
 San Diego Automotive Museum Vocational Education Academy: <https://sdautomuseum.org/pages/vocational-education-academy> or <http://tinyurl.com/7mj3ksnu>
 San Diego Black Arts and Culture District: <https://www.sdblackacd.org/>
 San Diego History Center: <https://sandiegohistory.org/>
 San Diego Tourism Authority: <https://www.sandiego.org/about.aspx>
 San Diego Youth Symphony: <https://sdys.org/>
 World Beat Center: <https://www.worldbeatcenter.org/classes/>

Sports and Recreation:

Balboa Park: <https://balboapark.org/parks-trails-gardens/balboa-park-recreation-activities/> or <http://tinyurl.com/5n7rmcf7>
 San Diego Parks & Recreation Department: <https://www.sandiego.gov/parks-and-recreation>
 San Diego Sports Association: <https://sandiegosportsassociation.com/>
 Sierra Club, San Diego chapter: <https://sandiegosierraclub.org/>

Other ideas:

Internships and jobs: <https://www.workforce.org/>
 San Diego Foundation: <https://www.sdfoundation.org/>
 San Diego Tourism Marketing District: <https://sdtmd.org/>
 San Diego Youth Services, Youth Action Board, Youth Commission: <https://sdyouthservices.org/youth-action-board/>, <https://www.sandiego.gov/youth-commission>

Governance and Finance

Burnham Center for Community Advancement, "Preparing Balboa Park for Its Next 100 Years": https://assets-global.website-files.com/640a24a263c976dc17dbbd18/640a24a263c9760573dbbd93_BCCA-White Paper Final Nov 2022.pdf or <http://tinyurl.com/bdhymfmw>; status report [add link]

Appendix 6

Checklist of cultural arts venues, gardens, parks, plazas, open spaces, recreational venues

Performing Arts Venues and Movie Theaters

Downtown and Environs

Alderaan Memorial Theatre (movies)
1944 Commercial St.
SD 9211

American Comedy Company
818 B Sixth Ave.

Antoinette's Anime Theater (movies)
1050 B St.

Balboa Theatre
868 Fourth Ave

Copley Symphony Hall
750 B St.

Digital Gym Cinema
1100 Market St.

The Double Deuce
528 F Street

Frauds and Swindlers and Two Fingers
820 Fifth Ave.

Horton Grand Theater
444 Fourth Ave.

Landmark Theaters/Hillcrest Cinemas
3965 Fifth Ave.
SD 92103

Lyceum Theaters (two stages)
Broadway Circle at Third Avenue

Mooby's (movies)
401 G St.

Music Box San Diego
1337 India St.

Mystique Dining (dinner theater)
827 Fourth Ave.

Onyx Room
852 5th Avenue
San Diego CA 92101

Rooftop Cinema Club
Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego
1 Market Place

Quartyard
1301 Market St.
San Diego CA 92101

Queen Bee's Culture Center
3925 Ohio St
SD 92104

Rady Shell at Jacobs Park
222 Marina Park Wa

San Diego Civic Theatre
3666 Fourth Ave.
San Diego CA

Saville Theater/City College
1345 C St.

Spreckels Theatre
121 Broadway

Stage Bar & Grill
762 Fifth Ave.
San Diego CA 92101

Tenth Avenue Arts Center
930 10th Ave.

Western Metal Theater
Petco Park
100 Park Blvd.

Balboa Park

La Atalaya Foundation Theater
Mingei Museum
1439 El Prado

Casa del Prado Theater
1600 Village Place

Comic-Con Museum Theater
2131 Pan American Plaza

James S. Copley Auditorium
San Diego Museum of Art
1450 El Prado

Heikoff Giant Dome Theater
Fleet Science Center
1875 El Prado

Joan and Irwin Jacobs Theater
Museum of Photographic Arts
1649 El Prado

Natural History Museum auditorium
(movies, lectures)
1788 El Prado

Old Globe Theatre (3 stages)
1363 Old Globe Way

San Diego High School (auditorium)
1405 Park Blvd.

Spreckels Organ Pavilion
Pan-American Road East at Plaza de
Panama

Starlight Bowl Amphitheater
2005 Pan American Plaza

Thornton Theater (movies, lectures)
San Diego History Center
1649 El Prado

Wegeforth Bowl
San Diego Zoo
2920 Zoo Drive

Zable Theater (3D/4D)
San Diego Air & Space Museum
2001 Pan American Plaza

Museums, Art Galleries and Botanical Gardens

Downtown and Environs

Central Library Art Gallery
330 Park Blvd.

Chicano Park Museum and Cultural
Center
1960 National Ave.

Crosby Park and Observation Pier/Cesar
Chavez Park
1440 Cesar E. Chavez Parkway

J.A. Cooley Museum (vintage
automobiles)
4233 Park Blvd.

Gaslamp Museum/Davis-Horton House
410 Island Ave.

iN Gallery
1878 Main St.

Maritime Museum of San Diego
1492 N. Harbor Drive

Museum of Contemporary Art Downtown
1100 Kettner Blvd.

New Children's Museum
200 W. Island Ave.

Relics of the Hypnotist War
340 16th St.

San Diego Aircraft Carrier (USS Midway)
Museum
937 N. Harbor Drive

San Diego Chinese Historical Museum
404 Third Ave.

San Diego Firehouse Museum
1572 Columbia St.

Villa Montezuma Museum
1925 K St.

WNDR Museum
422 Market St.

Women's Hall of Fame
2323 Broadway
SD 92102

Balboa Park

Botanical Building
1550 El Prado

Centro Cultural de la Raza
2004 Park Blvd.

Comic-Con Museum
2131 Pan American Plaza

Fleet Science Center
1875 El Prado

House of Pacific Relations International
Cottages
2294 Pan American Plaza

Institute of Contemporary Art
1439 El Prado

Japanese Friendship Garden
2215 Pan American Road East

Marston House Museum
3525 Seventh Ave.

Mingei International Museum (folk art)
1439 El Prado

Museum of Photographic Arts
1649 El Prado

Museum of Us
1350 El Prado

San Diego Air & Space Museum
2001 Pan American Plaza

San Diego Automotive Museum
2080 Pan American Plaza

San Diego History Center
1649 El Prado

San Diego Mineral & Gem Society
1770 Village Place

San Diego Miniature Railroad Museum
1649 El Prado

San Diego Museum of Art
1450 El Prado

San Diego Museum of Art Artists Guild
1770 Village Place

San Diego Natural History Museum
1788 El Prado

San Diego Zoo
2920 Zoo Drive

Spanish Village Art Center
1770 Village Way

Timken Museum of Art
1500 El Prado

Veterans Museum and Memorial Center
2115 Park Blvd.

World Beat Center
2100 Park Blvd.

Parks, Gardens, Plazas, Parks, Canyons, Open Space

Downtown and Environs

Amici Park
250 W. Date St.

Barkyard
100 Park Blvd. (J at 9th Ave.)

Chicano Park
1986 Logan Ave.

Children's Park
326 W. Harbor Drive

Embarcadero Marina Park North and
South
400 Kettner Blvd., 200 Marina Park Way

Gallagher Square
J St. at 9th Ave.

Gaslamp Quarter Pocket Park
410 Island Ave.

Grant Hill Park
2600 J St.

Horton Plaza Park
900 Fourth Ave.

Lane Field Park
1009 N. Harbor Drive

Maple Street Canyon
3rd Ave. and Quince St.

Martin Luther King Promenade
326 W. Harbor Drive

Olive Park
3rd at Quince

Pantoja Park
512 W. G St

Piazza de la Famiglia
India at West Date Street

Ruocco Park
585 Harbor Lane

Tweet Street Park
9th & Date

Waterfront Park
1600 Pacific Hwy.

BALBOA PARK

Alcazar Garden/House of Charm
1439 El Prado

Botanical Building
1550 El Prado

Casa del Rey Moro Gardens/House of
Hospitality
1549 El Prado

Coast Live-Oak Grove
26th Street, north of Golden Hill Park

Craig Noel Garden/ Old Globe Theatre
1363 Old Globe Way

Desert Garden
North of footbridge over Park Blvd at El
Prado

EthnoBotany Children's Peace Garden
World Beat Center
2100 Park Blvd.

Florida Canyon
Florida Drive

Golden Hill Park
2532 Golden Hill Drive

Inez Grant Memorial Rose Garden
Park Blvd at El Prado

Japanese Friendship Garden
2215 Pan American Road East

Juniper Canyon Open Space
3300 Juniper St.

Kate Sessions Cactus Garden
2144 W. Pan American Road

Marston House Garden
3525 7th Ave.

Palm Canyon
South of House of Charm parking lot

Pound Canyon
State Route 163 at B St.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Grove
Balboa Drive, south of Upas.

Switzer Canyon
2800 Maple St.

Trees for Health Garden
Balboa Drive at Quince St.

Zoro Garden/Casa de Balboa
1649 El Prado

Recreational Venues

Downtown and Environs

Firehouse Swing Dance Club
2557 Third Ave.

Embarcadero Marina Park South
Basketball courts
200 Marina Park Way

Petco Park
100 Park Blvd.

Assorted private gyms

Balboa Park

Balboa Chess Club
2225 6th Ave.

Bird Park
28th St. at Thorn St.

Birds Nest/Tiny Tots Lot
Pershing Drive at Pershing Ave.

Balboa Park Club
2150 W. Pan American Road

Balboa Park Golf Course
2600 Golf Course Drive

Balboa Park Activity Center
2145 Park Blvd.

Blind Community Center
1805 Upas St.

Boys Scouts
1207 Upas St.
Camp Fire Girls Camp
3101 Balboa Drive

Cypress Grove picnic area
Quince Street at Balboa Drive

War Memorial Bldg.
3325 Zoo Drive

Girl Scouts
1231 Upas St.

Golden Hill Recreation Center
2600 Golf Course Drive

Grape Street Dog Park and picnic area
28th at Grape st.

Morley Field Sports Complex
2221 Morley Field Drive

- Archery Target Range (north of golf course)
- Balboa Tennis Club, Jacaranda Place at Alabama Street
- Maureen Connolly (tennis) Stadium at tennis club
- City College Baseball field (southwest of archery range)
- Bocce Courts, Pershing Ave. at Upas St.
- Petanquedrome (east of Kearns Pool)
- Bocce Courts (Upas at Jacaranda Place)
- Disc Golf course (north of archery range)
- Lease-free dog area (southwest of tennis courts)
- Fitness Course (two miles, 18 exercise stations) across parking north of tennis courts)
- Morley Field Fliers miniature airport (Pershing Drive at Florida Canyon Drive near velodrome)

- Morley Field athletic fields (softball, baseball, soccer, rugby) (south of tennis and pool)
- Sandieson Seniors Center (east of pool, north of ballfields) clubs building
- Tiny Tot play area (between pool and ballfields)
- Velodrome racing bike track (west of ballfields)

Municipal Gymnasium
2111 Pan American Plaza

Nate's Point Dog Park
El Prado at Balboa Drive

Pepper Grove playground
Park Blvd. at Wieber Ave. (east of Centro Cultural de la Raza)

Redwood Bridge Club
3111 6th Ave.

San Diego Lawn Bowling
El Prado at Balboa Drive

Sixth Avenue playground
6th at Thorn St.

Southern California Association of
Camera Clubs
1780 Village Place