

BALBOA PARK MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

March, 1998

Prepared by:

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PURPOSE OF THE AMENDMENT

The purpose of this Master Plan Amendment is to amend the 1989 Balboa Park Master Plan to reflect the proposed expansion of the Natural History Museum within the Park. Because some aspects of the proposed expansion are not consistent with the 1989 Balboa Park Master Plan, the Park and Recreation Department has directed that the Master Plan be amended. **This amendment specifically addresses the expansion of the Natural History Museum. Goals, policies, guidelines and recommendations that were inconsistent with the expansion of the Natural History Museum have been amended. This amendment will be processed with a simultaneous amendment of the goals, policies, guidelines and recommendations of the Central Mesa Precise Plan, as needed.**

In conjunction with the approved 1989 Balboa Park Master Plan, this document gives definition and guidance to the future development of Balboa Park. It will function as a working document which will guide the development and restoration of Balboa Park until the year 2009. The 1989 Master Plan was intended as a twenty year plan. The Balboa Park Master Plan and this Amendment will contribute to the cultural, educational, recreational, and social life of the entire San Diego region.

The Master Plan Amendment is structured to aid the City Council, City Manager, City staff, Park institutions and citizens in their efforts to successfully implement improvements to the Park. It will serve as a guide and organizational aid for citizen's groups and individuals to plan, develop, maintain and protect legitimate uses for Balboa Park. To aid the reader, this Amendment is organized in the same order as the approved 1989 Balboa Park Master Plan. This Amendment contains text and graphics that have been revised from the approved 1989 Balboa Park Master Plan due to the proposed Natural History Museum Expansion. To assist in the flow of this document, certain *unrevised* sections of the approved 1989 Balboa Park Master Plan were also included. Beginning on page 2, all text which has been added to the original 1989 Master Plan is shown underlined; all text which has been deleted from the original 1989 Master Plan is shown struck-out. Italics are used where an explanation of formatting or other information is necessary. In addition, to help orient to the Master Plan, the 1989 Master Plan page numbers for that section are placed adjacent to the section heading.

Design Principles

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES (Page 7)

GOALS (Page 7)

The following major goals will serve as the foundation for the Balboa Park Master Plan.

1. Create within the park a more pedestrian oriented environment. Reduce automobile and pedestrian conflicts. Minimize through traffic.
2. Improve public access to the Park through an improved integrated circulation system, convenient drop-off points, better parking management, improved signage and increased security. The improved circulation system shall de-emphasize the automobile while increasing public access to the Park and Park facilities.
3. Preserve, enhance and increase free and open parkland and establish a program of ongoing landscape design, maintenance and replacement. The area included within leaseholds is not considered free and open parkland.
4. Restore or improve existing building and landscaped areas within the Park.
5. Preserve and enhance the mix of cultural, and active and passive recreational uses within Balboa Park that serve national, regional, community and neighborhood populations.
6. Preserve Balboa Park as an affordable Park experience for all citizens of San Diego.

POLICIES (Page 7)

The following policies will help achieve the Master Plan Goals. *Only those areas that are applicable to the proposed Natural History Museum Expansion are included.*

LAND USE

EXPANSION (Page 8)

Expansion of all Park uses, activities, and buildings will be guided by the adopted Balboa Park Master Plan and:

Expansion will not encroach on open park land, landscaped areas or plazas, except where necessary to establish definitive leasehold boundaries for the Natural History Museum Project.

Access will be provided consistent with adopted circulation policies; and

Expansion will not be approved until adoption of a final Master Plan, Financing Plan and Precise Plans which will determine allowable building envelopes and architectural design guidelines for all Park facilities.

CIRCULATION (Page 8)

HANDICAPPED DISABLED ACCESS (Page 9)

~~Handicapped~~ Disabled and elderly access to the Park shall be ensured.

ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN (Page 9)

PRECISE PLANS/GENERAL DEVELOPMENT (Page 11)

Based upon the approved Master Plan, Precise Plans (General Development Plans) should be developed and implemented to guide the nature and extent of future projects for the following areas:

- The Prado
- The Palisades
- Inspiration Point (Former Naval Hospital site)
- The Central Operations Station (20th and "B" Street)
- The Arizona Landfill

- The East Mesa area
- The Zoo parking lot

The Central Mesa Precise Plan, which included the Prado area, was adopted in 1992 in accordance with this directive. The Precise Plan will be the subject of a simultaneous Amendment process to address the proposed expansion of the Natural History Museum.

RESOLUTION NUMBER R-290038

ADOPTED ON MAY 4, 1998

WHEREAS, on June 6, 1997, the San Diego Society of Natural History submitted an application to the Development Services for a Resource Protection Ordinance Permit and amendments to the Balboa park Master Plan and the Central Mesa Precise Plan for the expansion of the Natural History Museum; and

WHEREAS, the matter was set for a public hearing to be conducted by the Council of The City of San Diego; and

WHEREAS, the issue was heard by the Council on May 4, 1998; and

WHEREAS, the Council of The City of San Diego considered the issues discussed in Environmental Impact Report No. 96-7562; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of The City of San Diego, that it is certified that Environmental Impact Report No. 96-7562, on file in the office of the City Clerk, has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (California Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq.), as amended, and the State guidelines thereto (California Code of Regulations section 15000 et seq.), that the report reflects the independent judgment of The City of San Diego as Lead Agency and that the information contained in said report, together with any comments received during the public review process, has been reviewed and considered by this Council in connection with the approval of a Resource Protection Ordinance Permit and amendments to the Balboa Park Master Plan and Central Mesa Precise Plan for the expansion of the Natural History Museum.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to California Public Resources Code section 21081 and California Code of Regulations section 15091, the City Council adopts the findings made with respect to the project, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to California Code of Regulations section 15093, the City Council adopts the Statement of Overriding Considerations, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, with respect to the project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to California Public Resources Code section 21081.6, the City Council adopts the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, or alterations to implement the changes to the project as required by this body in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

APPROVED: CASEY GWINN, City Attorney

By _____
Richard A. Duvernay
Deputy City Attorney

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RESOLUTION NUMBER R-290039

ADOPTED ON MAY 4, 1998

WHEREAS, the San Diego Society of Natural History [Applicant] submitted an application to The City of San Diego to amend the Balboa Park Master Plan to allow encroachment into open space for the proposed expansion of the Natural History Museum [Museum]; and

WHEREAS, Applicant also desires to amend the Central Mesa Precise Plan [Precise Plan] to permit an increase in the building footprint, overall square footage, and a deviation from the east facade configuration as identified in the Precise Plan; in addition, the amendment would allow an expansion beyond the perceived leasehold boundary; and

WHEREAS, on April 23, 1998, the Planning Commission of The City of San Diego conducted a public hearing for the purpose of providing a recommendation to the City Council on the application; and

WHEREAS, on May 4, 1998, the Council of The City of San Diego conducted a public hearing and considered all maps, exhibits, and written documents contained in the file for the project on record with The City of San Diego, and considered the oral presentations given at the public hearing; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of The City of San Diego, that it approves the amendments to the Balboa Park Master Plan and the Central Mesa Precise Plan, copies of which are on file in the office of the City Clerk as Document Nos. RR-290039-1 and RR-290039-2.

APPROVED: CASEY GWINN, City Attorney

By _____
Douglas K. Humphreys
Deputy City Attorney

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RESOLUTION NUMBER R-290040

ADOPTED ON MAY 4, 1998

WHEREAS, the San Diego Society of Natural History, Permittee, filed an application with The City of San Diego for a permit to expand the Natural History Museum, a significant historic resource, by 89,435 square feet on portions a 0.96-acre leasehold bounded site located at 1788 El Prado, Balboa Park, in the Balboa Park Master Plan and the Central Mesa Precise Plan area; and

WHEREAS, on April 23, 1998, the Planning Commission of The City of San Diego (the "Planning Commission") recommended approval of Resource Protection Ordinance Permit No. 96-7562; and

WHEREAS, the matter was set for public hearing on May 4, 1998, testimony having been heard, evidence having been submitted, and the City Council having fully considered the matter and being fully advised concerning the same; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of The City of San Diego, that this Council adopts the following findings with respect to Resource Protection Ordinance Permit No. 96-7562:

a. The proposed development will not adversely affect the City of San Diego's Progress Guide and General Plan.

The proposed expansion of the Natural History Museum will not adversely affect the City of San Diego's Progress Guide and General Plan because the project is consistent with the Balboa Park Master Plan and Central Mesa Precise Plan as amended. The Progress Guide and General Plan calls for the preservation of historic sites and the Natural History Museum is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The project is preserving the historic site by

applying the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties to the design of the project as much as is feasible.

b. The proposed development will conform to the community plan for the area and any other applicable plans, policies and ordinances.

The proposed expansion of the Natural History Museum conforms with the Balboa Park Master Plan and the Central Mesa Precise Plan as amended, which allows for the expansion of the Museum and an addition to the existing building and to the established leasehold area. The proposed addition conforms to the size and design recommendations contained in the Central Mesa Precise Plan as amended.

c. The proposed development will be sited, designed, constructed and maintained to minimize, if not preclude, adverse impacts on environmentally sensitive lands.

The proposed addition to the Natural History Museum, except for the north entry, has been designed to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Application of these Standards will minimize adverse impacts to property identified on the National Register of Historic Places.

d. The proposed development will be sited and designed to prevent adverse impacts on any environmentally sensitive lands and resources located in adjacent parks and public open-space areas and will provide adequate buffer areas to protect such resources.

The Natural History Museum is located within the Prado area of Balboa Park and is within a National Landmark Historic District. The project has been designed to have a minimal adverse impact to the park and historic district by complying, as much as feasible, with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The proposed addition, except for the new north entry, will avoid adverse impacts to the other buildings within the historic district by incorporating a similar scale, style and stucco building material as the other buildings in the area. It would not be feasible to incorporate a similar scale or reduce the amount of incongruous building materials being used on the new north entry because the project would not be funded by the project's backers if this was accomplished. The general public would thereby be deprived of the extraordinary benefit of having an expanded educational and scientific program at the Natural History Museum.

e. The proposed development will minimize the alterations of natural landforms and will not result in undue risks from geological and erosional forces and/or flood and fire hazards.

The expansion of the Natural History Museum is proposed to be constructed in an area that has been previously graded and so will not be altering natural landforms. The project will incorporate a drainage system and is not located near any severe slopes or areas subject to flooding. The project site is not located near geologically sensitive areas or naturally vegetated areas and so will not result in any undue risks from geological and erosional forces and/or flood and fire hazards.

f. Feasible measures, as defined in this section, to protect and preserve the special character or the special historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural value of the affected significant prehistoric or historic site or resource have been provided by the applicant.

The existing Natural History Museum building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. By following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, the special character or historical value of the historic resource will be preserved. Except for the design of the new north entry, the proposed addition conforms with these standards.

All feasible measures have been incorporated into the design of the project to conform, as much as possible, to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and thereby protect the historic resource. It is not feasible to design the new north entry to strictly adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards because the financial backers of the project would not fund the project with any design other than the one proposed (see Attachment A, incorporated herein by reference). The four-year design development process coincided with an extensive fund raising campaign, led by the San Diego Society of Natural History Board of Trustees, to develop private financial support for the Museum expansion. This campaign resulted in \$13 million in pledges contingent upon City Council approval of the proposed design.

The expansion of the Natural History Museum will provide an extraordinary benefit to the general public by providing increased educational and scientific research opportunities. This extraordinary benefit to the general public outweighs the benefit to the public of completely preserving the character of the historic resource by strictly adhering to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation on the design of the north entry.

The above findings are supported by the minutes, maps and exhibits, all of which are herein incorporated by reference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the recommendation of the Planning Commission is sustained, and Resource Protection Ordinance Permit No. 96-7562 is hereby granted to the San

Diego Society of Natural History, under the terms and conditions set forth in the permit attached hereto and made a part hereof.

APPROVED: CASEY GWINN, City Attorney

By _____
Richard A. Duvernay
Deputy City Attorney

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