

March 16, 2011

To: Natural Resources and Culture Committee
From: Balboa Park 2015 Steering Committee
Re: Informational Presentation on Balboa Park Centennial Celebration

Background

Serious planning has begun for the centennial celebration of the 1915 Panama – California Exposition. In retrospect, the original event in 1915 could be considered a “worlds fair,” due to its scope and lasting heritage. While the primary venue of that event was the fledgling Balboa Park, the overriding theme was a celebration of progress, prosperity and opportunity as represented by the completion and opening of the Panama Canal and the location of San Diego as the first US port-of-call for northbound maritime trade. The scope of the 2015 centennial celebration is still to be determined, but as a milestone event in this city’s history, it represents, once again, an opportunity to focus the eyes of the state, the nation and perhaps the world on San Diego.

Host Committee Concept

In early 2009, community leaders and Balboa park stakeholders met under the auspices of the Office of the Mayor to agree upon the general format and operating model of a Host Committee for the continued planning and ultimate implementation of the Centennial Celebration. The City of San Diego has been a party to this model several times. Three Super Bowls, and the America’s Cup Yacht Races are historic examples. Most recently, golf’s US Open at Torrey Pines operated with a Host Committee management structure. This structure provides for a not-for-profit entity, created for the specific purpose of organizing and managing the celebration. This entity would then have a formal relationship with the City through a Memorandum of Understanding or contract to produce the celebration.

As originally proposed, the Host Committee would be comprised of three primary components:

- A **management team** led by a top notch Executive Director/General Manager with experience in planning and executing major events.
- A **Board of Directors** comprised of recognized, local/regional titans of industry/education/philanthropy who will bring experience, a personal network and credibility to the organization.
- An organizational structure that provides for **stakeholder and community involvement** at several levels including but not limited to:
 - **Community Leadership Team** would serve as strategic committee chairs of the Host Committee. These volunteers would complement the management team and be responsible to support the myriad components necessary to produce a significant, year-long event.

- **2015 Foundation Board** comprised of community leaders and local philanthropists charged with assisting the professional staff with sponsorship development and fundraising.
- **Stakeholder Advisory Board** with membership based primarily on roles and not individuals. This group would grow over time as the areas of emphasis for the celebration become more focused. Following is a preliminary/partial list of organizations that could be represented: Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, Balboa Park Committee, Friends of Balboa Park, Committee of 100, SD Regional Chamber of Commerce, BioCom, Connect, C-3, Clean Tech, representatives from focused interest organizations such as Historic Preservation, Accessible, Military, Education, Land Use, Environmental, and planning groups surrounding the Park, among others.

The Planning Process to Date

The Balboa Park 2015 Steering Committee originally formed in March of 2010 as the TMD Steering Committee for the 2015 Balboa Park Centennial Celebration in order to kick-start the planning process. With a \$50,000 grant from the San Diego Tourism Marketing District, the original purpose of the committee was to search for, identify and hire an Executive Director who would manage the creation of the 2015 Celebration Host Committee, and beyond that serve as the executive manager of the celebration. The immediate reality was that without a widely accepted, comprehensive vision of the celebration and the tools for its implementation, the hiring of an Executive Director would be premature.

The committee immediately modified its mission and circulated an RFP to contract with an individual to perform preliminary research that would result in the development of key guiding documents for the organization of a Host Committee and the articulation of a framing vision for the 2015 Balboa Park Centennial Celebration. As guiding parameters, the Steering Committee identified the following goals for the to-be-formed Host Committee:

- Host a world-class celebration of the Centennial of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition that enhances and expands the current national and international significance of Balboa Park and its institutions.
- Celebrate the resources in Balboa Park through a comprehensive use of its venues and amenities.
- Manage a broad range of activities whose content and pricing reflect the demographic, economic and cultural diversity of the region, including events that are free to the public.
- Work collaboratively with all parties interested in these goals, and especially with the City's cultural, historic and civic organizations.
- Host a celebration that is cost-neutral to the City, while directing any financial returns to Balboa Park.

Our contracted consultant reviewed more than a decade of historical documents and conducted a comprehensive study with recommendations as described in the document, [“Planning Framework, 2010-2015”](#).

The stated intent of the document is to provide a logical and integrated path to achieve the mission of the 2015 Centennial Celebration, and to serve as a blueprint for organizing the 2015 event. The study, conducted over the summer of 2010, attempted to amalgamate nearly a decade of ideas, opinions and documents addressing a long-anticipated centennial event in Balboa Park to celebrate the milestone 1915 Exposition - the event that many say put San Diego on the world map.

The final document is based on over 40, individual interviews with Balboa Park stakeholders that “sought to capture aspirations, perceptions, ideas, concerns, challenges, and products, as well as planning, organizational and institutional histories relevant to 2015,” as defined in methodology outlined in the document. San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders and City Council member Todd Gloria were interviewed along with numerous other stakeholders who provided a broad representation of park organizations, institutions and tenants, as well as individuals involved in local government, the tourism industry, local philanthropic organizations, community groups, and local media.

Synthesis of Planning Framework Recommendations

The study recommends several immediate next steps in order to meet the timeline necessary for a 2015 event:

- identifying an Executive Director;
- establishing a Host Committee;
- forming of a separate nonprofit corporation to create the legal structure for the Host Committee and administrative staff
- securing preliminary funding significant enough to begin serious planning;
- negotiating of an operating agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) with the City;

Additional recommendations including several defining concepts/principles:

- The duration of the event should be one year, from December 31, 2014, through December 31, 2015;
- The financing should be 66% contributed (philanthropic, sponsorship) revenue, and 34% earned income;
- The core programming will be the principal responsibility of the Balboa Park cultural institutions;
- The geographic focus of the event(s) will be Balboa Park with selected other regional venues;
- The development and implementation of a comprehensive circulation, parking, bicycle/pedestrian access plan is essential;
- The visitor experience must be “awesome.”

- **October 2010** - Draft 1 of Silverman’s Strategic Plan / Planning Framework delivered for review.
- **November 2010** - Draft 3.4.1 (final) of Planning Framework 2010-2015 approved and distributed through various channels.
- **November 2010** - BRC (Bob Rogers) conducts Legler-Benbough Foundation funded charrette.
- **November 2010** - SDTMD 2015 Steering Committee is dissolved.
- **November 2010** - 2015 Balboa Park Centennial Celebration Steering Committee is established. The following additions are made to the reconstituted committee:
 - **Pam Slater-Price / Nadia Moshirian** **Joe Terzi**
 - **Michael Hager** **Tom Fetter**
 - Gerry Braun Loring Stewart
 - Peter Ellsworth Mike McDowell
 - Carol Chang Carolyn Wormser
 - Minnie Rzeslawski Victoria Hamilton
 - Stephen Hill
- **November 2010** – 2015 Steering Committee establishes \$1 million start-up budget goal for 2015 Host Committee
- **December 2010** – San Diego Tourism Marketing District allocates \$300,000 in matching, conditional funding for 2015 Host Committee start-up.
- **December 2010** – Consortium of San Diego foundations commit a total of \$300,000 in matching, conditional funding for 2015 Host Committee start-up
- **January 2011** -
 - Initial RFQ for Executive director is published.
 - Nick Winslow presentation discussion with Steering Committee
 - 2015 Programming Vision is articulated by Steering Committee
 - BRC Final Report is Published
- **February 2011** –
 - Civic leaders Nikki and Ben Clay agree to Co-Chair Host Committee

- **March 2011** –
 - Steering Committee vision presentation to San Diego City Council Natural Resources and Culture Committee