



**San Diego Chapter**  
**8304 Clairemont Mesa Blvd, Ste 101**  
**San Diego, CA 92111**  
**<http://www.sandiego.sierraclub.org>**  
**858-569-6005**

July 6, 2012

Mayor Sanders and Council Members  
City of San Diego  
202 C St., 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Diego, CA 92101

E-mails: [jerrysanders@sandiego.gov](mailto:jerrysanders@sandiego.gov); [sherrilightner@sandiego.gov](mailto:sherrilightner@sandiego.gov);  
[kevinfaulconer@sandiego.gov](mailto:kevinfaulconer@sandiego.gov); [toddgloria@sandiego.gov](mailto:toddgloria@sandiego.gov); [anthonyyoung@sandiego.gov](mailto:anthonyyoung@sandiego.gov);  
[carldemaio@sandiego.gov](mailto:carldemaio@sandiego.gov); [loriezapf@sandiego.gov](mailto:loriezapf@sandiego.gov); [martiemerald@sandiego.gov](mailto:martiemerald@sandiego.gov);  
[davidalvarez@sandiego.gov](mailto:davidalvarez@sandiego.gov)

### **Via E-mail**

**Re:** July 9, 2012 City Council Meeting's ITEM-200: Balboa Park Plaza de Panama, Circulation and Parking Structure Project, Project No. 233958; and the Parking Structure Financing Plan

Mayor Sanders and City Council Members:

The Transportation Committee of the San Diego Chapter of the Sierra Club (SDSC) appreciates the opportunity to communicate with you concerning this important topic. We also appreciate the generous offer of private support to reduce the parking and intrusion of cars within the beautiful and historic Balboa Park Plaza de Panama.

However, we feel that important, overriding considerations argue against the solution that has been proposed.

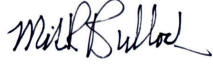
We agree with the following words, from an email signed by Jeanne Brown, of the League of Women Voters of San Diego, "The exquisite Spanish Colonial architecture and especially the iconic California Quadrangle entrance to the park will be compromised forever by the introduction of the destructive by-pass "Centennial" bridge, off the Cabrillo Bridge, and our National Historic Landmark designation threatened. The tranquility and serenity of the Alcazar Garden and Palm Canyon, the ambiance that makes this park so dear to our hearts, will be gone forever due to the adjacent by-pass and new road to the parking garage."

We also have studied our climate destabilization crisis and the trajectory of greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions needed to avoid global catastrophe. Using the best predictions of how fast our fleet of cars and their fuel will become cleaner and how fast our population will increase, we compute that, to do our part, we will need a 35% per capita reduction in driving, compared to 2005 levels, by year 2035. We have identified strategies to achieve this reduction. Primarily, we need to improve transit, support walking and bicycle transportation, and unbundle the costs of driving, roads, and car parking. Good technology exists to support these strategies. However, to achieve the needed reductions, we need to start implementing the needed changes soon. Given all this, it is too late to think in terms of old solutions, such as adding massive and expensive infrastructure to increase road and parking capacity.

Government's first responsibility is the immediate and life-long health and safety of its constituents. This includes the just-born, who will be exposed to significant risk from climate destabilization, if we don't change in time.

Thank you for your leadership.

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Bullock  
1800 Bayberry Drive  
Oceanside, Ca 92054  
760-754-8025  
Chair of the Sierra Club San Diego Transportation Committee

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**The San Diego Chapter of the Sierra Club is San Diego's oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization, founded in 1948. Encompassing San Diego and Imperial Counties, the San Diego Chapter seeks to preserve the special nature of the San Diego and Imperial Valley area through education, activism, and advocacy. The Chapter has over 14,000 members. The National Sierra Club has over 700,000 members in 65 Chapters in all 50 states, and Puerto Rico.**

