

# MINGEI

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM

BALBOA PARK 1439 EL PRADO  
SAN DIEGO CA 92101-1617  
(619)239-0003 www.mingei.org

March 7, 2012

E. Shearer-Nguyen, Environmental Planner  
City of San Diego Development Services Center  
1222 First Avenue, MS 501  
San Diego CA 92101

RE: Plaza de Panama Project Draft EIR

Dear Ms. Shearer-Nguyen:

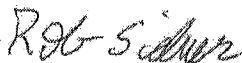
Mingei International Museum is located on the Plaza de Panama in Balboa Park. As such, our Board of Trustees, Staff and members are very interested in any proposed changes in the park as we approach the 2015 Centennial Celebration.

We have reviewed alternatives to the Jacobs' plan studied in the Draft EIR and find significant problems with them. A number of alternatives propose to close the Cabrillo Bridge to vehicles. While this would allow for reclamation of the park's public spaces, it would negatively affect the institutions in Balboa Park. Those on the west would have no proximate public access, and those on the east would be burdened by increased traffic and parking demand.

We also are strongly opposed to alternatives that propose to continue to allow traffic to move through the Plaza de Panama. Our location in the southwest corner of the plaza makes these alternatives particularly troublesome for us. The traffic studies for the project show that there would be unmitigable traffic impacts inside the Plaza de Panama, falling right in front of this museum. We think that this would be a negative condition that would affect visitors trying to access our front door. More important, however, such alternative proposals negate one of the two most important positive effects of the Jacobs' plan.

We fully and strongly support the Jacobs' plan for restoring the Plaza de Panama and think that it does a good job of improving traffic circulation, reducing pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and reclaiming park space while maintaining access from both sides of the park. From the perspective of our institution, removing cars and opening the plaza for full pedestrian use will positively affect this museum by removing traffic from our front door and increasing our visibility. Again, more importantly, it will also greatly benefit the park as a whole and vastly improve the park experience for the millions of people that visit Balboa Park each year.

Sincerely,



Rob Sidner  
Director

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