

Dear Mr. Frye and Mr. Myers:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter regarding the Plaza de Panama project. I note with interest the long list of those cc'd on your very first such communication with me re this project and I include them as well.

I appreciate your offer of assistance "with a comprehensive review of all potential issues and ideas to help ensure the final solution is the best possible for the entire park." (Please excuse me for now substituting "complete solution" for "final solution" which has a tragic connotation.) I must note that our project is not proposed as a complete solution for the entire park, if such a solution exists for a dynamic entity such as this great public park with much available park space on the east side of Park Boulevard, but rather is a plan specifically to eliminate cars from all of the Plaza de Panama during normal park hours, to more than offset the loss of parking spaces, and to provide additional car-free park land and palisade areas in the heart of the park. Although we do not claim to cover all potential issues and ideas, past and future, we do strive for a solution that is supportive of future changes to the park that are affected by our project, most notably the possibility of future improvements to Pan American Plaza. Our plan does include an improved pedestrian path to the Pan American Plaza.

The Park Boulevard Promenade appears to have potential as a positive addition to the park, and I do wish you success in raising the needed \$106 million dollars, although the increase of 1850 parking spaces does not by itself provide a complete solution. I assume that you are not proposing completion by the beginning of this centennial anniversary.

Further, The Park Boulevard Promenade, in the absence of our bypass bridge, does not eliminate cars from the Plaza de Panama. To do so would require either closing Cabrillo Bridge, which we do not advocate, or allowing cars to continue to circulate on Plaza de Panama with, I assume as part of your alternative plan, valet parking drop off and pickup on the plaza. Car traffic would then continue on West El Prado by the Museum of Man as well as the landscaped promenade south of the Plaza de Panama - no improvement from today's traffic.

We thus have competing visions for the restoration of the Plaza de Panama and its surrounding promenades to a car-free state by the beginning of the centennial year. In our many public and private meetings thus far, we have encountered an overwhelming majority of participants, including the directors of many of the institutions you have cited, in support of this great improvement to Balboa Park. We continue to hold meetings and we remain open to further helpful suggestions.

We do note that under our plan the daily valet service near the Prado Restaurant is moved to the Alcazar Garden Parking lot, which is a longer walk for those valet parking for the restaurant during regular park hours. We do plan to provide a level car-free pedestrian walk from the new valet-parking location in addition to additional spaces for valets to park cars, improving service. Many, of course, may choose to park in the garage and take the tram. I suspect, although I cannot prove it, that the increased number of people on the plaza and the possibility of additional food services will result in an increase in business for the restaurant and a much more enjoyable experience in general. For

Globe theater-goers, the valet parking is now closer and a safe passenger drop-off is provided in the Alcazar Gardens area, closest to the Globe. Most theater-goers will continue to park in the Organ Pavilion spaces, as they do now, but their path to the Globe will be more level (as well as more beautiful) than now, with no need to dodge cars. They also would be able to take advantage of frequent tram service - frequent since the tram has a short, car-free direct route to the plaza.

There will likely be a parking charge for the use of the garage. Free parking will be provided on the East side of Park Boulevard, hopefully with a separate tram service, but in any case closer to the core of the park than much of the existing zoo lot. I believe most employees will take advantage of the free lot, leaving additional space in the garage for visitors. I do not believe a garage parking charge will result in any substantial increase in park-goers parking in the zoo lot when not going to the zoo, but I am interested in the estimates of your experts once they have carefully examined our plan.

Finally, with respect to your observation that "Finite parking in Balboa Park has placed a de facto cap on attendance that threatens the financial health and wellbeing of all park institutions", it remains a fact that convenient parking will always be finite.

Regards,

Irwin