



BALBOA PARK CONSERVANCY

Keeping the Park Magnificent

May 27, 2016

City Council, City Administration Building

202 C St.

San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Council President Sherri Lightner, Councilmember Lorie Zapf, Councilmember Todd Gloria, Councilmember Myrtle Cole, Councilmember Mark Kersey, Councilmember Chris Cate, Councilmember Scott Sherman, Councilmember David Alvarez, Council President Pro Tem Marti Emerald and Andrea Tevlin, Independent Budget Analyst,

Few structures in our region are more emblematic and iconic of San Diego and our beloved Balboa Park than the historic Botanical Building. Part of the National Historic Register District in Balboa Park and one of the few cultural amenities in the park that is free to all, this beautiful structure dates to 1915 and the Panama California Exhibition. It was once the largest shade structure of its kind, always intended to serve as a permanent feature in Balboa Park, it remains a popular visitor experience in the park.

The Balboa Park Conservancy was formed in 2011 to serve as the City of San Diego's main private partner in sustaining all that is special about this park, enhancing the visitor experience and envisioning the best future possible. The Conservancy selected the restoration of the Botanical Building as its first major project and raised the necessary funds to complete the planning and design, the first phase of the project. We have selected a noted design team and they have begun an extensive consultative design process with input from a wide range of park support groups and stakeholders. In 2014 the City of San Diego's Building Condition Assessment listed the building in Fair condition and estimated capital repair costs at \$2.3 million. In 2015 the Conservancy commissioned KCM Group to prepare a cost estimate that yielded a \$2.7 million cost. The Conservancy has raised \$500,000 and commits to securing the additional funds needed to complete this project.

We feel strongly that the city's support of this project will resonate with many in our region who rely on Balboa Park for recreation and as an important economic engine for our region. Beginning to address the notorious backlog of deferred maintenance is good business as it will enhance a vital component of our cultural tourism market. The project will restore one of our city's most iconic structures and enhance the visual character and quality of life in our community.

We hope you will support the full allocation of \$2 million in surplus equity to this project and help to spark an exciting new era of public/private cooperation and partnership in Balboa Park. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you require further information.

Sincerely yours,

Tomas Herrera-Mishler

CEO and President

Balboa Park Conservancy

cc Rick Gulley, Pam Hamilton Lester

Carol Chang

Board Chair

Balboa Park Conservancy