



# TREATMENT PLAN FOR BALBOA PARK BOTANICAL GARDENS SAN DIEGO, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Prepared for:

Spurlock Landscape Architects  
2122 Hancock Street  
San Diego, California 92110

Prepared by:

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ASM Affiliates  
2034 Corte Del Nogal  
Carlsbad, California 92011

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March 2024  
PN 45150

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## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The Balboa Park Botanical Building and Gardens are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as part of El Prado Complex.<sup>1</sup> The Balboa Park Botanical Building and Gardens Phase Two Design Project in San Diego, San Diego County, California, proposes rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of select Botanical Garden features. Given that El Prado Complex is listed in the NRHP and the proposed project is receiving a federal grant from Save America's Treasures (SAT), it must comply with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This Treatment Plan is intended to provide guidelines for portions of the project that are receiving funding from the National Park Service's (NPS) SAT grant. SAT "funds the preservation, rehabilitation, and conservation of nationally significant historic properties and collections. Eligible properties must be either currently: 1) individually listed as a National Historic Landmark or be a contributing property within a National Historic Landmark district, or 2) individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places for national significance (properties listed at the state or local significance are not eligible) or be a contributing property within a nationally significant National Register Historic District. Properties include buildings, sites, structures, and objects"<sup>2</sup> Individual properties or collections that received an SAT grant in the past are not eligible for additional funding. This portion of the Phase Two Project will repair surface and structural cracks and repaint the historic fountains, balustrades, and urns of Balboa Park's Botanical Gardens. Additionally, two types of missing benches surrounding the fountains and La Laguna will be reconstructed.

Through the NPS, the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) provides standards and guidelines for projects effecting historic buildings and structures; specifically, the *SOI Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Preserving Historic Buildings (Standards)*.<sup>3</sup> NPS guidance was carefully followed in the recommendations provided in this Treatment Plan.

This project intends to repair surface and structural cracks and repaint or restucco the historic fountains, balustrades, and urns, as well as reconstruct missing benches surrounding the fountains and La Laguna. Additionally, because of the structural nature of a large crack on the pedestal of one of the urns (southwest), that pedestal will be reconstructed. Because of the

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<sup>1</sup> National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "El Prado Complex." Available at [https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARAprodstorage/lz/electronic-records/rg-079/NPS\\_CA/76000515.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARAprodstorage/lz/electronic-records/rg-079/NPS_CA/76000515.pdf). Accessed February 28, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> National Park Service, "Save America's Treasures Application Information." Available at <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/sat-grant-info.htm>. Accessed on February 26, 2024.

<sup>3</sup> Anne E. Grimmer (rev.), *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*. National Park Service, Technical Preservation Series, 2017. Available at <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/treatment-guidelines-2017-part1-preservation-rehabilitation.pdf>. Accessed February 28, 2024.



condition of the resources, their place in history, and proposed continued use, rehabilitation is the appropriate treatment option to achieve the project goals. Rehabilitation calls for the retention and repair of historic materials but will allow for replacement in kind of extensively deteriorated or missing features. Character-defining features should be preserved whenever possible.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Balboa Park Botanical Building and Gardens Phase Two project is the continuation of the City of San Diego's Capital Improvement Project (CIP) restoration of the Balboa Park Botanical Building and Gardens Phase One. Phase One was funded with funds from state and city governments. Phase One restores the botanical building structure and interior gardens. Phase One includes recreating the historic arcades that surround the building, updated interior planting and irrigation, and enhanced LED lighting. Phase Two, led by Forever Balboa Park, is funded with private philanthropic funds and a federal grant from the Historic Preservation Fund of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Phase Two includes physical improvements to the exterior gardens, historic pergola, walkways, and exterior fountains, repairs and restoration, and reconstructed benches (Figures 1-3).

This Treatment Plan is intended to provide guidelines for portions of the Project that are receiving funding from the NPS' Save America's Treasures (SAT) grant. This portion of the Phase Two Project will repair surface and structural cracks and repaint the historic fountains, balustrades, and urns of Balboa Park's Botanical Gardens. Additionally, two types of missing benches surrounding the fountains and La Laguna will be reconstructed. More specifically, the proposed Project will:

- Rehabilitate: Two fountains on the eastern and western sides of the Botanical Garden promenade.
- Rehabilitate: Balustrades that provide passage across and separation between La Laguna and La Lagunita.
- Rehabilitate: Seven decorative urns and pedestals; four on the northern side of the balustrade and three on the southern side of the balustrade.
- Reconstruct and rehabilitate: Reconstruction of one urn pedestal on the southwestern end of the southern balustrade and restoration of the associated urn.
- Reconstruct: Eight curved benches (four circumventing the east fountain and four circumventing the west fountain) and 40 rectangular benches.

The above listed features of the Botanical Garden will be appropriately repaired in accordance with the *SOI's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Preserving Historic Buildings (Standards)*, following the Rehabilitation approach.

The scope of this Treatment Plan is limited to:

- the on-site survey of the two fountains, two balustrades and eight urns of the La Laguna bridge;

- documentation through field notes and digital photography of the resource's character-defining features (CDFs), their current conditions, and any existing maintenance issues;
- collaboration with the Phase Two Project's architect, engineer, and landscape and aquatic design team;
- the preparation of this Plan in conformance with the *Standards* and
- Recommendations to be followed by the construction team including a Historic Architect that meet the SOI's Professional Qualification Standards (*SOI Qualifications*).

## PROJECT PERSONNEL

ASM's team of historic preservation professionals (Table 1) included Ms. Shannon Davis, M.A., who has 25 years of experience in historic preservation, eight of which were spent as a Historian with the NRHP. Ms. Davis meets the *SOI Qualifications* for Architectural Historian and Historian. Ms. Sarah Stringer-Bowsher, M.A., has 17 years of experience in cultural resources and historic preservation planning, evaluation, and documentation. Ms. Stringer-Bowsher meets the *SOI Qualifications* for Historian. Both Ms. Davis and Ms. Stringer-Bowsher are well-versed in all aspects of evaluating buildings and structures for listing in federal and state registers, applying the aspects of integrity to a given property, conducting archival research like that necessary for this project, assessing effects and impacts on historic resources, and providing recommendations that follow the *Standards*. Ms. Davis and Ms. Stringer-Bowsher conducted two site visits for the Treatment Plan with the Phase Two team on January 31, 2024, and February 6, 2024.

Table 1. ASM Project Personnel

Role	Individual
Senior Historian	Sarah Stringer-Bowsher, M.A., RPH
Senior Architectural Historian	Shannon Davis, M.A., RPH





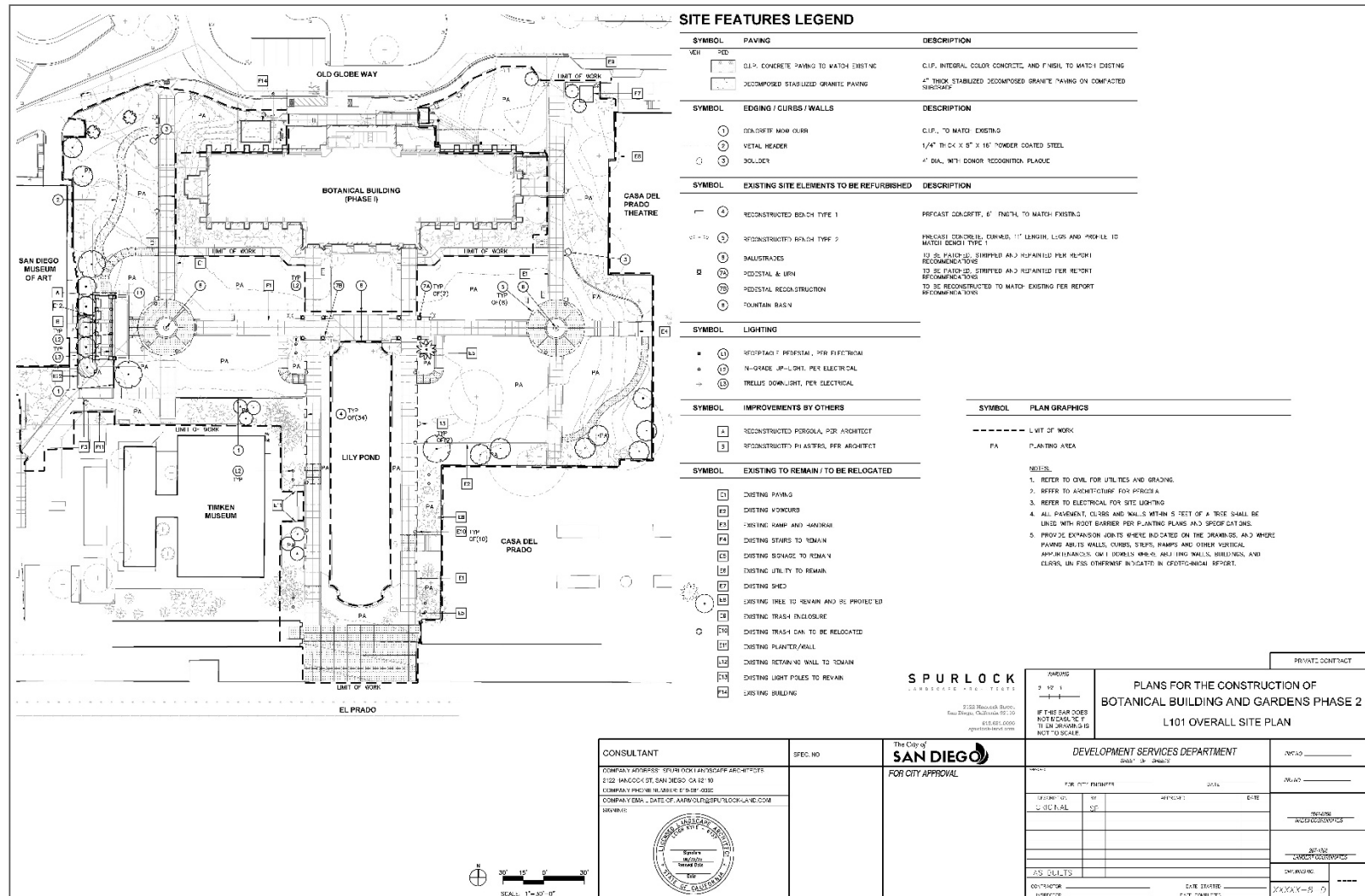


Figure 1. Proposed Site Plan. Courtesy of Spurlock Landscape Architects.

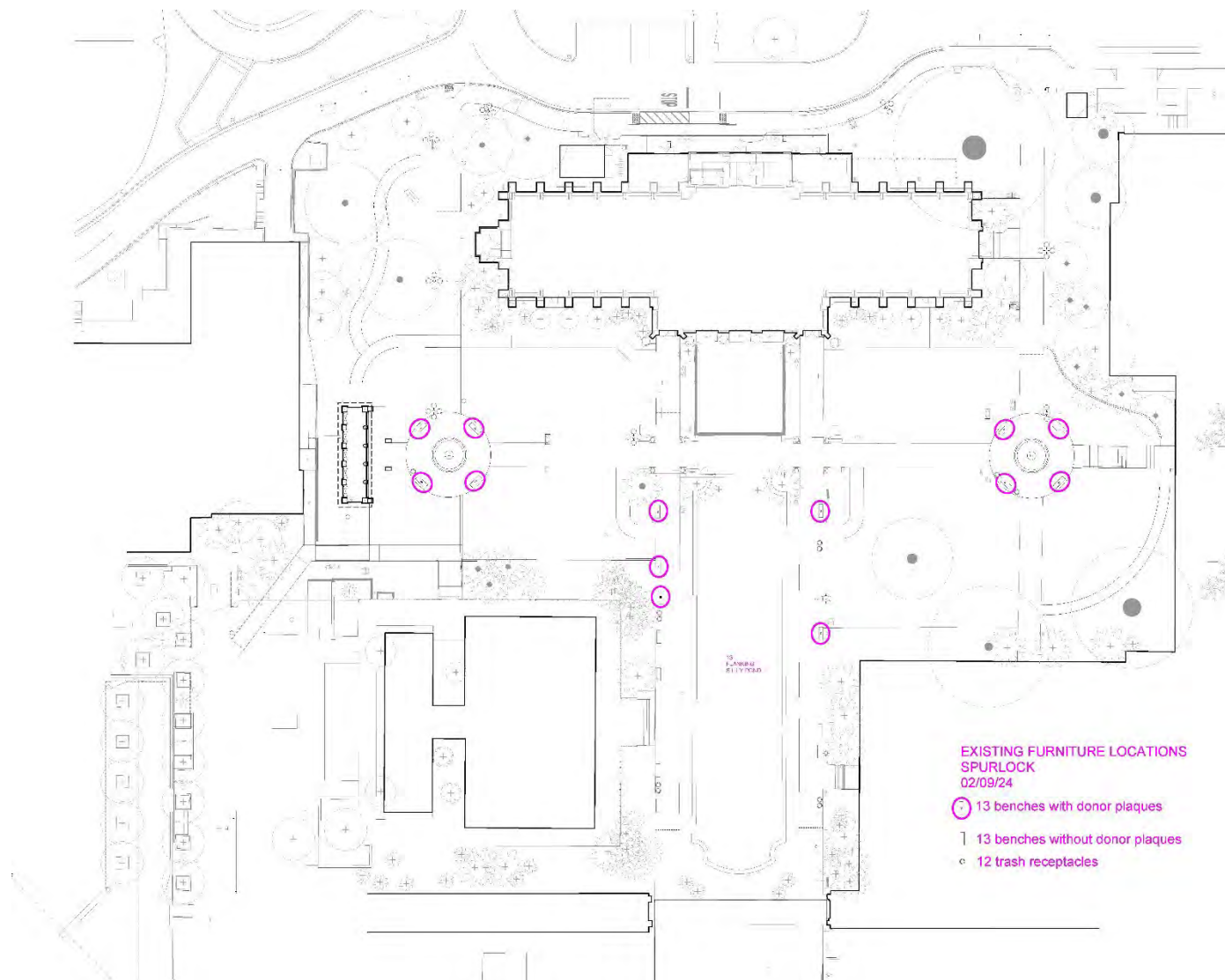


Figure 2. Existing Furniture Locations. Courtesy of Spurlock Landscape Architects.

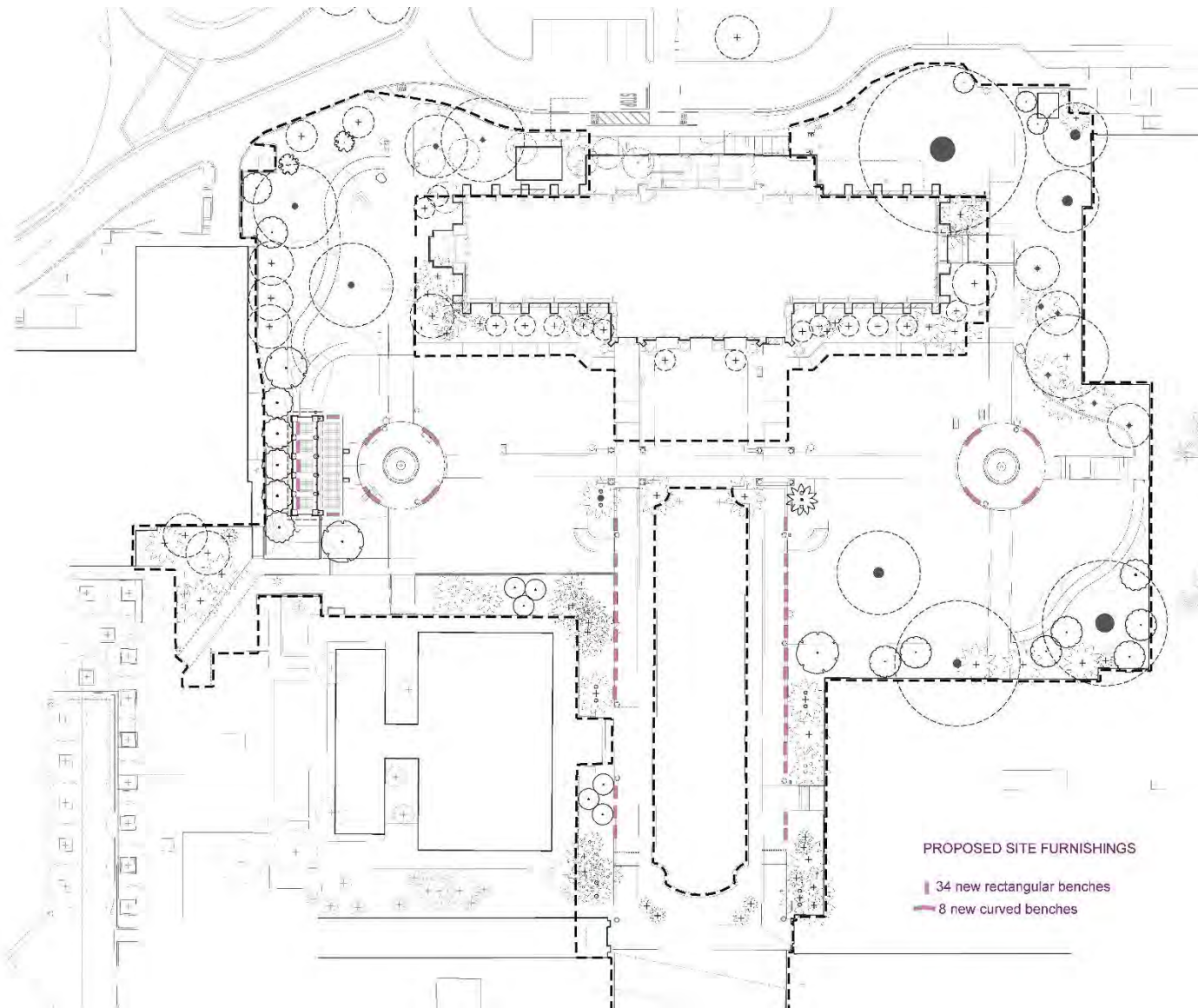


Figure 3. Proposed Site Furnishings. Courtesy of Spurlock Landscape Architects.





## 2. OVERVIEW OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

### BALBOA PARK

Balboa Park is a cultural icon within the City of San Diego. It began as a plot of 1,400 acres set aside in 1868 as a “City Park.” While the land had been set aside, it had not been developed as the “City Park” until local leaders and respected architects developed plans to build a park to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal with an exposition. New York’s Central Park had already been designed and offered a practical example of how a city park would benefit locals and draw visitors from around the United States.<sup>4</sup> The 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition was followed by a second exposition – the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition – for which additional buildings were constructed. However, the permanent buildings constructed as the part of the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition were identified as “El Prado Complex” in the NRHP nomination. A brief history of the complex is as follows:

The El Prado Complex was built for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. As Early [sic] as 1909, San Diego was planning to hold a gala celebration in honor of the opening of the Panama Canal. The site selected for this fair was a barren tract of 1,400 acres outside of the city’s central area. This land had been set aside in 1871 for eventual use as a city park but it was not until 1909 that any permanent improvements were made. The tract was named Balboa Park in honor of the Spanish explorer [Vasco Núñez de Balboa] who first crossed the Isthmus of Panama.

From the start, the planners of the Panama-California Exposition were looking to the future. The fair included several temporary buildings, but more important, several permanent buildings which would remain in the park long after the close of the exposition.

The chief architect for the project was Bertram G. Goodhue, with assistance from Carleton M. Winslow. Goodhue designed the California Building and Tower, now the San Diego Museum of Man<sup>5</sup>. Winslow designed most of the temporary buildings, which were never demolished and are still in use. In addition, Frank P. Allen, Jr. designed the Cabrillo Bridge, the Arcade and other features of the park. Harrison Albright designed the Spreckels Organ Pavilion and William T. Johnson and Robert W. Snyder designed the Fine Arts Gallery (1925) and Johnson designed the Natural History Museum (1933).

<sup>4</sup> San Diego History Center, “Balboa Park History Pre-1900.” Available at <https://sandiegohistory.org/archives/amero/balboapark/pre1900/>. Accessed February 28, 2024. Richard W. Amero, “The Making of the Panama-California Exposition, 1909-1915,” *The Journal of San Diego History*, Winter 1990, (36)1. Available at <https://sandiegohistory.org/journal/1990/january/expo/>. Accessed February 28, 2024.

<sup>5</sup> The Museum of Man was renamed the Museum of Us in 2020.

In 1935, Balboa Park was the site of the California Pacific International Exposition, with most of the 1915 buildings being used again. Permanent buildings from the fair are to be found in other parts of Balboa Park.

The 1915 portion of Balboa Park (The El Prado Complex) still stands today, in testimony to the history and heritage of San Diego. It is not only San Diego's most famous landmark, it is also the part of San Diego most beloved by its citizens."<sup>6</sup>

As a complex that is historically significant on a national level, Balboa Park was listed in the NRHP as a historic district in 1976 and became a National Historic Landmark in 1977.<sup>7</sup> The NRHP nomination identified the Botanical Building and associated Botanical Gardens as a contributing building and outdoor space in the Balboa Park Historic District. The NRHP nomination described it as follows:

The whole structure [Botanical Building] is enhanced by two reflecting pools in front of the building. Immediately next to the building is a smaller rectangular pool, called the Lagunita de Las Flores (Little Lake of the Flowers). Next to it is the larger oblong pool stretching all the way to El Prado, called the Laguna de Las Flores (Lake of the Flowers). These two pools are separated by a bridge-like balustraded walk. On each side of the walk are four ornate concrete planter urns (eight total), in addition to the two large plain concrete planter urns on each side of the entrance (four total).<sup>8</sup>

## BOTANICAL BUILDING AND GARDENS

### Construction Overview of the Botanical Gardens

The Botanical Gardens is associated with the Botanical Building that was briefly first known as the Horticultural Building and then popularly known as the Lath House. The Botanical Gardens are classified as a Historic Designed Landscape, defined by the NPS as "a landscape that was consciously designed or laid out by a landscape architect, master gardener, architect, or horticulturist according to design principles."<sup>9</sup> Excavations began in August 1913 with the arrival

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<sup>6</sup> National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "El Prado Complex." Available at [https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARAprdstorage/lz/electronic-records/rg-079/NPS\\_CA/76000515.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARAprdstorage/lz/electronic-records/rg-079/NPS_CA/76000515.pdf). Accessed February 28, 2024.

<sup>7</sup> National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "El Prado Complex." Available at [https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARAprdstorage/lz/electronic-records/rg-079/NPS\\_CA/76000515.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARAprdstorage/lz/electronic-records/rg-079/NPS_CA/76000515.pdf). Accessed February 28, 2024; National Park Service, "National Historic Landmarks: List of NHLs by State." Available at <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/list-of-nhls-by-state.htm>. Accessed February 28, 2024.

<sup>8</sup> National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, "El Prado Complex." Available at [https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARAprdstorage/lz/electronic-records/rg-079/NPS\\_CA/76000515.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARAprdstorage/lz/electronic-records/rg-079/NPS_CA/76000515.pdf). Accessed February 28, 2024.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Birnbaum, *Preservation Brief 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes*, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1994.

of steel three months later. By July 1914, the building had been finished, nearly six months before the opening on January 1, 1915. For additional information on the development of the Botanical Building, see the Forever Balboa Park website.<sup>10</sup>

The Botanical Garden was constructed in conjunction with the Botanical Building during 1914. Figure 4 shows the Botanical Gardens as it was originally designed and built.<sup>11</sup> Two reflecting pools were constructed as part of the Botanical Gardens promenade: the larger “La Laguna de Las Flores” reflecting pond (43 ft. wide and 195 ft. long) and the smaller “La Lagunita de Las Flores” (43 ft. wide and 50 ft. long). Two concrete fountains on the east and west side of the courts drew visitors from the pools at the balustrades across the promenade.<sup>12</sup> Seats allowed visitors to sit at the fountains and listen to the moving water or interact with the goldfish that swam in the fountains during the 1915-1916 Exposition.

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<sup>10</sup> Forever Balboa Park, “Revitalizing Balboa Parks Botanical Building & Gardens.” Available at <https://balboaparkbotanical.org/>. Accessed February 28, 2024.

<sup>11</sup> Botanical Gardens, Drawing AD 1058-020.1, San Diego History Center.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Amero, “The Highs and Lows of the Botanical Building in Balboa Park,” San Diego History Center. Available at <https://sandiegohistory.org/archives/amero/botanical/>. Accessed February 2, 2024; John G. Morley, “Balboa Park Notes,” *California Garden*, November 1923, 26. On file in the Richard Amero binder at the San Diego History Center; Botanical Gardens, Drawing AD 1058-020.1, San Diego History Center.





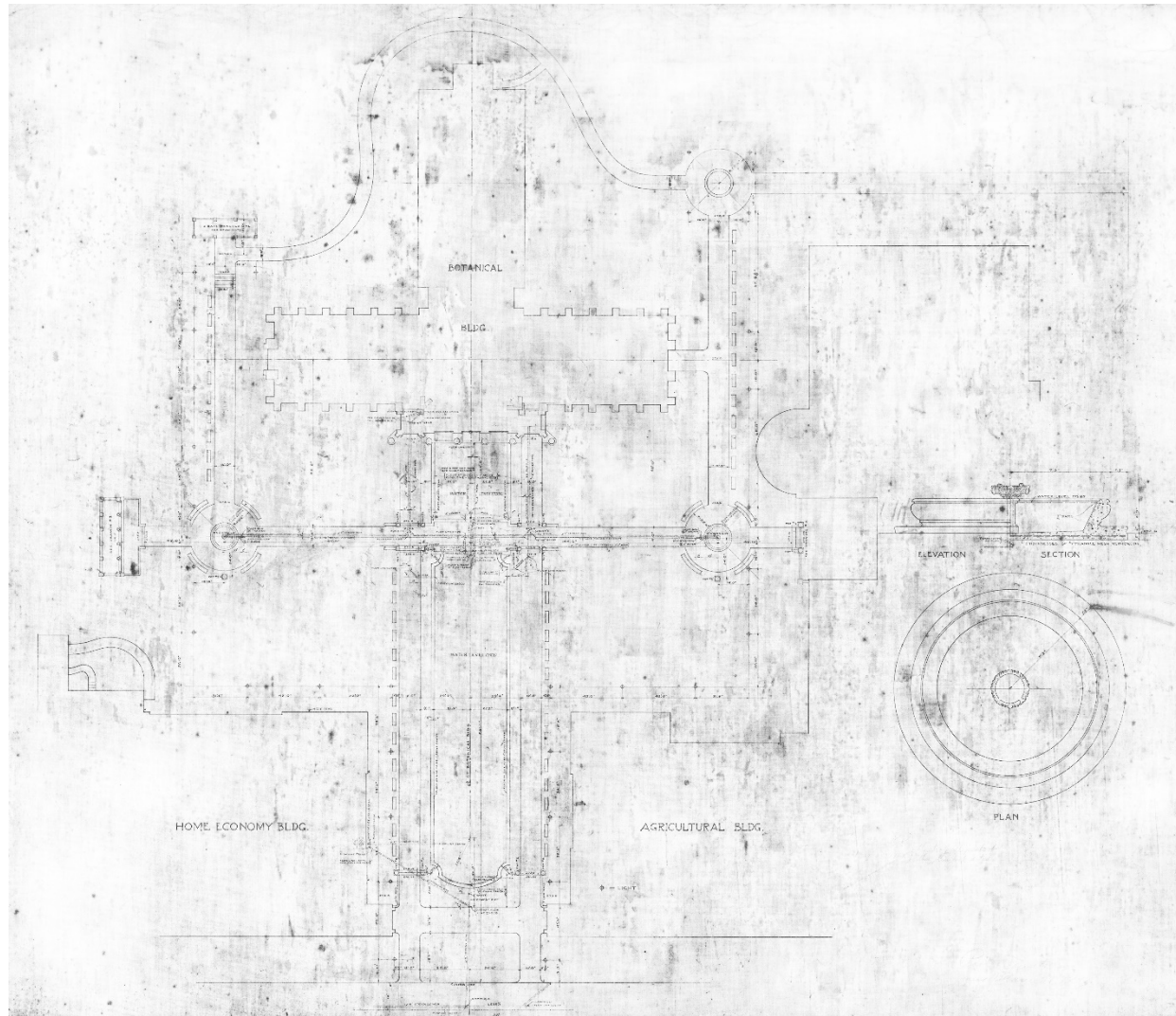


Figure 4. Drawing of the Botanical Gardens from 1914. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center.



Restorations of the Botanical Building occurred in 1924 and 1933.<sup>13</sup> In the post-World War II era, significant decay of the Botanical Building prompted its condemnation in 1941. Nielsen Construction Company reconstructed the Botanical Building in 1957-1959, which included the removal of the glass wing (1958).<sup>14</sup> Other improvements to the Botanical Building included restorations in 1973, a structural renovation of the steel frame in 1994, 2002, and the current Phase One project. Major restorations for the ponds were completed in 1949, 1964, and 1999.<sup>15</sup>

### Original and Reconstructed Condition: Balustrades and Urns

The 1914 balustrades and urns were constructed of redwood and fir and were painted white (Figures 5-10). By February 1964, the wood had deteriorated significantly, which prompted a local, but nationally recognized, construction company (M.H. Golden Construction Company) to gift the City of San Diego with new balustrades and urns. Robert M. Golden (executive of the company) funded and completed the reconstruction of the 50-year-old balustrades and urns. Golden's restoration plan included the "replacement of the existing wooden balustrade (a row of railings) and the urns with duplicates in concrete" because they had been in the park since 1914 and had significantly deteriorated during that 50-year period (Figures 11 and 12). Golden intended to create molds cast from the painted redwood and fir balustrades and urns to make sure the new concrete structures were the same size and retained the same details. Work started immediately with an expected completion date of July 1, 1964.<sup>16</sup> Golden also replaced the asphaltic concrete walkway at the balustrade with Portland cement concrete.<sup>17</sup> Work had progressed significantly by July 22, 1964, which included most of the balustrade, balusters, and pedestals. Urns were installed sometime thereafter. By October 1, 1965, the balustrades, urns, and associated concrete walkway had been replaced (Figure 13-15).<sup>18</sup>

Robert H. Golden was the son of Morley H. Golden, the well-known founder of M.H. Golden Construction Company. Across San Diego, the company made significant contributions as a construction company, including construction of the west wing of the Fine Arts Gallery in the mid-1960s.<sup>19</sup> In 1965, the local Grant Club named Morley "Mr. San Diego" for construction of the

<sup>13</sup> Richard Amero, "The Highs and Lows of the Botanical Building in Balboa Park," San Diego History Center. Available at <https://sandiegohistory.org/archives/amero/botanical/>. Accessed February 2, 2024.

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/balboa\\_park\\_city\\_council\\_minutes\\_1940-1960.pdf](https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/balboa_park_city_council_minutes_1940-1960.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Richard Amero, "The Highs and Lows of the Botanical Building in Balboa Park."

<sup>16</sup> *San Diego Union*, "R.M. Golden Tells Plan: City Oks \$15,000 Gift to Restore Park Urns," 26 February 1964: a-13.

<sup>17</sup> City of San Diego, City Clerk, Regular Meeting of the City Council of the San Diego Minutes, February 25, 1964; City of San Diego, City Clerk, Resolution 179099, February 19, 1964; City of San Diego, City Clerk, Document 667103: Letter from Robert M. Golden to Thomas W. Fletcher, February 4, 1964.

<sup>18</sup> San Diego History Center, Union Tribune Photograph Collection, # UT85:E8052, 1 October 1965.

<sup>19</sup> Barbara Hartung, "Gallery Spreads Its Wings," *The San Diego Union*, September 12, 1965.

Community Concourse.<sup>20</sup> In January 1966, the Southern California Portland Cement Association honored the M.H. Golden Construction Company with an “Outstanding Structures in Concrete” award for the Bureau of Fisheries Oceanography building in La Jolla that the company constructed with local master architects, Frank L. Hope and Associates. In total, there were seven buildings the Association recognized in San Diego and Imperial counties. The awards were based on “good architecture, unusual design ideas, structural innovations and outstanding construction techniques.”<sup>21</sup> M.H. Golden Construction Company had developed an innovation in the construction industry with designs that were “simple new-type forms for pouring concrete in the wings of the new building” that utilized plywood for the forms.<sup>22</sup> The nationally recognized construction company had been listed as number 259 out of 400 of the largest contractors in the United States with \$20 million contracted in 1966 alone.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> “Emanu-El Women Pick Men of Distinction,” *The San Diego Union*, December 26, 1965.

<sup>21</sup> Jack Knudson, “Outstanding Structures In Concrete Win Honors For Builders, Designers,” *The San Diego Union*, January 30, 1966, F:1.

<sup>22</sup> Clyde V. Smith, “San Diego’s Builders Try for Sky Room,” *The San Diego Union*, February 19, 1967, F:1.

<sup>23</sup> *San Diego Union*, “Around Town in Business,” May 29, 1967, C:7.



Figure 5. Photograph of the balustrades, urns, and two fountains, 1914. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, 3145-B.



Figure 6. Photograph of the Botanical Gardens, 1915. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Panama-California Exposition of 1915 Collection, OP 10559.





Figure 7. Photograph of the northern balustrade and urns, 1915. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Panama-California Exposition of 1915 Collection, OP 10575-27105.



Figure 8. Photograph of the southern balustrade and urns, 1915. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Panama-California Exposition of 1915 Collection, OP 10575-27106.



Figure 9. Photograph of the balustrade and urn with pedestal, 1915. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Photographic Collection, OP-6828.



Figure 10. Photograph of the urns with pedestals, 1915. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Photographic Collection, 8129.





Figure 11. Photograph of the Goldens assessing the redwood and fir painted balustrade prior to reconstruction. February 25, 1964. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Union Tribune Collection, UT85:D7211-1.



Figure 12. Photograph of the Goldens at an urn and its pedestal prior to reconstruction. February 25, 1964. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Union Tribune Collection, UT85:D7211-3.



Figure 13. Reconstruction of the balustrades, facing northeast. July 22, 1964. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Union Tribune Collection, UT85:5212-6.





Figure 14. Reconstruction of the balustrades, facing southwest. July 22, 1964. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Union Tribune Collection, UT85:5212-7.



Figure 15. Mrs. Clyde Cunningham, Mrs. Robert M. Golden, and Douglas Giddings at the balustrade and urn with its pedestal after reconstruction. The west fountain is in the background. February 25, 1964. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Union Tribune Collection, UT85:E8052.



### Original and Rehabilitated Condition: East and West Fountains

The east and west fountains of the Botanical Garden were originally constructed in 1914 with concrete reinforced with ¾-in. bars around the basins (see Figure 4, Figures 16-20).<sup>24</sup> After the 1935 Exposition, it was remembered that the fountains at the Botanical Garden were turned off.<sup>25</sup> By February 1964, the east and west fountains of the Botanical Garden were not operational and in disrepair. While Robert M. Golden also intended to gift the City of San Diego with restoration of the two fountains, he only completed the west fountain on behalf of The Thursday Club by October 1, 1965.<sup>26</sup> The M.H. Golden Company replaced the asphaltic pavement with Portland Cement concrete from the balustrade to the west fountain (see Figures 11 and 15). The cracked and peeling fountain basin was rehabilitated and covered with a “cream-colored plaster” and the interior had colored tile.<sup>27</sup> The tile may have been green color. The tile used for the east fountain was likely Italian glass mosaic tile (Vetrum #81-N supplied by Latco Company of Los Angeles) and it was likely the same tile used for the west fountain as the two were rehabilitated to match.<sup>28</sup> The 1914 fountain head had been replaced with new water pipes and recirculating fountain spray system that changed the spray pattern. After contacting the City of San Diego City Clerk and the City of San Diego’s Archives, it appears that specifications, contracts, and drawings were not filed with the City for the west fountain. The City of San Diego only has a general letter from Robert M. Golden that identifies limited information on the methods and materials used for rehabilitation (see Appendix A).

J.M. Haddad Construction Company (Joseph M. Haddad, owner) rehabilitated the east fountain, walkways, and drainage facilities between February 1966 and March 1966.<sup>29</sup> J.M. Haddad Construction Company installed floor drains from the Standard Pumping and Industrial Supply Company in San Diego and poured colored concrete sidewalks, which are still evident near the east fountain.<sup>30</sup> The manufacturing stamp remains embedded in the concrete near the east fountain.

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<sup>24</sup> Botanical Gardens, Drawing AD 1058-020.1, San Diego History Center.

<sup>25</sup> Beverly Beyette, “Old Fountain Spouts Again in Ceremony,” *San Diego Union*, 2 October 1965:16.

<sup>26</sup> *San Diego Union*, “R.M. Golden Tells Plan: City Oks \$15,000 Gift to Restore Park Urns,” 26 February 1964: a-13; City of San Diego, City Clerk, Regular Meeting of the City Council of the San Diego Minutes, February 25, 1964; City of San Diego, City Clerk, Resolution 179099, February 19, 1964; City of San Diego, City Clerk, Document 667103: Letter from Robert M. Golden to Thomas W. Fletcher, 4 February 1964; Photograph, 1 October 1965, San Diego Union Tribune Collection, #UT85E8052, San Diego History Center.

<sup>27</sup> Beverly Beyette, “Old Fountain Spouts Again in Ceremony,” *San Diego Union*, 2 October 1965:16.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> City of San Diego, City Clerk, Regular Meeting of the City Council of the San Diego Minutes, Book 116, April 12, 1966, 17; City of San Diego, City Clerk, Resolution 186932, April 12, 1966; “Council Oks Balboa Contract with Haddad,” *The San Diego Union*, 3 February 1966, A:35.

<sup>30</sup> City of San Diego, City Clerk, Document 698291, Letter from Joseph M. Haddad to the City of San Diego Engineering Department, March 16, 1966; City of San Diego, City Clerk, Document 698291, Letter B. Urquidí to the City of San Diego Auditor-Comptroller, March 15, 1966.

For the east fountain, the City of San Diego solicited bids on March 21, 1967, and accepted the bid from J.M. Haddad Construction Company on May 16, 1967.<sup>31</sup> Restoration of the east fountain included replacing the asphaltic concrete walkway around the east fountain with 4-inch Portland Colored Cement (Class “B”) and renovation of the east fountain that included removal of the center pedestal and installation of a recirculating fountain spray system that changed the spray pattern. The new system required replacement of water lines and a connection to the existing water supply, installing a drain line, and electrical work to provide power for the pump and lights. The concrete required finishing with a “wood trowel with a light steel troweling and a transverse broom finish to obtain a rough surface texture.”<sup>32</sup> The color selected matched the pavement around the Timken Art Gallery and the West Wind of the Fine Arts Gallery, which was created with “Davis Color-Synthetic Iron Oxide Yellow, Dark #5569 (23 ½#/yard, five sack with passolith).”<sup>33</sup> The concrete was sandblasted on the interior and exterior for a clean surface. The interior was expected to be covered with Italian glass mosaic tile (Vetrum #81-N supplied by Latco Company of Los Angeles) set in sand and cement.<sup>34</sup> A ½-inch thick stucco was applied to the exterior with a color identified as #52, Expo stucco. Given that the east fountain was supposed to match the west fountain already rehabilitated in 1965, it is likely that a ½-inch thick stucco was applied to the exterior with a color identified as #52, Expo stucco and green Italian glass mosaic tiles were installed inside the basins of both fountains.<sup>35</sup> Specifications are available in Appendix A.

The Balboa Park Master Plan (1960)<sup>36</sup> provided general guidance for the Park as a collective without specific guidance on improvements needed for the Botanical Gardens largely because the Botanical Building had just been reconstructed (1957-1959). Guidance for improvements to the associated gardens was absent. However, the Balboa Park Master Plan (1989) prompted the preparation of the Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan (1992) in which design objectives were established to rehabilitate historic features and details of the Botanical Building and Gardens (Estrada Land Planning, Inc. et al. 1989; The City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department and The City of San Diego Planning Department 1992). More specifically, the recommendations included:

- Reconstruction of the 1915 pergola and
- Restoration of the east and west fountains and replace the extant fountain heads with replicated fountain heads with the 1915 Exposition design.

<sup>31</sup> City of San Diego, City Clerk, Regular Meeting of the City Council of the San Diego Minutes, Book 119, March 21, 1967; City of San Diego, City Clerk, Resolution 190382, May 16, 1967.

<sup>32</sup> City of San Diego, City Clerk, Document 709448, Specification No. 2028, April 18, 1967, C-4, D-1.

<sup>33</sup> City of San Diego, City Clerk, Document 709448, Specification No. 2028, April 18, 1967, D-1.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Harland Bartholomew Associates, *Master Plan for Balboa Park San Diego, California*. Prepared for the City of San Diego, June 1960.

In 2005, the Friends of Balboa Park (with funding from the City of San Diego, Robert M. Golden Foundation, The San Diego Foundation, and The Thursday Club) rehabilitated the fountain basins.<sup>37</sup> In 2009, the finials of the balustrade were repainted by Friends of Balboa Park. In 2010 or 2011, both fountain heads were reconstructed based on historic research and the basins were repaired and painted. By 2012, new pumps had been installed in both fountains and new electrical components were installed for the east fountain. Friends of Balboa Park also facilitated rehabilitation of pipes, a drain, and overflow pipes.<sup>38</sup>

### Original Benches

Rectangular and curved benches were originally installed for the 1915-1916 Exposition. The locations of those benches are shown in Figure 4 and their shape and form detailed in Figures 16-19 and Figures 21 and 22. Additional photographs and postcards are available in Appendix B.

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<sup>37</sup> Bronze plaque affixed to the western fountain of the Botanical Gardens.

<sup>38</sup> Email correspondence amongst Jacqueline Higgins, Ken Tranbarger, and James Hughes on February 6, 2024. On file with ASM Affiliates.



Figure 16. West fountain and original circular benches, facing northeast. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, 1912-46.



Figure 17. West fountain and original circular benches, facing northeast. Courtesy of the San Diego City Clerk Archives.





Figure 18. East fountain and original curved benches, facing north. Courtesy of San Diego History Center, Photographic Collection, 85:15343.



Figure 19. East fountain and original curved benches, facing north. Courtesy of San Diego History Center, Photographic Collection, 20999.



Figure 20. West fountain with historic pergola in the background, facing west. 1915. Courtesy of San Diego History Center, Photographic Collection, 20980.



Figure 21. Photograph depicting the original form and shape of benches in the Botanical Gardens as well as original arrangement, 1915. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Photographic collection, Panama-California Exposition Digital Archive.





Figure 22. Photograph depicting original form and shape of benches in the Botanical Gardens, 1915. Courtesy of the San Diego History Center, Photographic collection, UT 2786.



### 3. ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

ASM reviewed historical documents, photographs, postcards, and limited manuscript collections to identify the construction dates of and changes made to the balustrades, eight urns, and two fountains. ASM also collected information on the original plinths, benches, and lights. ASM's research did not focus on the two ponds (La Laguna de Las Flores and La Lagunita de Las Flores), but information collected included information on the ponds and concrete walkways that connected the balustrades and fountains. ASM did not collect historical information on the original flora planted in the outer gardens or the evolution of the species planted over time. ASM contacted and/or visited the following archives and repositories: San Diego History Center, City of San Diego City Clerk's Office (including Balboa Park Council Minutes, 1913-1939), City of San Diego Archives, San Diego Public Library Special Collections, and San Diego Union archives. Additional trade journals and floral association journals were also reviewed for information regarding the construction periods. Historical documentation collected for this project is available in Appendix A. Historical photographs and postcards collected for this project are available in Appendix B.



## 4. CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

When determining whether a property is historically significant, the NPS's NRHP states that a property must retain its essential physical features to be able to convey its historic identity and that:

*The essential physical features are those features that define both why a property is significant . . . and when it was significant . . . They are the features without which a property can no longer be identified.*<sup>39</sup>

The concept of character-defining features is further clarified in NPS Preservation Brief 17: *Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character*:

*Character refers to all those visual aspects and physical features that comprise the appearance of every historic building. Character-defining elements include the overall shape of the building, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, interior spaces and features, as well as the various aspects of its site and environment.*<sup>40</sup>

In identifying and addressing the character-defining features of the Botanical Gardens, a two-step approach was employed that involved:

1. Step One: Identification of Visual Features at a Distance: this involves analyzing the resource from a distance in order to determine the broad categories that contribute to an understanding of the overall character, rather than specific architectural features. Overall visual features include things such as shape, form, patterns, applied ornamentation, setting, etc.
2. Step Two: Identification of Visual Features Close-up: perhaps better described as an arms-length inspection of features that collectively give the resource its historic association, this step involved inspecting those individual features in terms of material characteristics and conditions.

As small-scale resources of the Botanic Garden the resources that are the subject of this Plan have a short list of character-defining features of:

- Concrete material
- For the balustrades: single, vase-shaped balusters with classical profile top and bottom rails (Figures 23-27, see also Figures 6-9)
- For the urns: large, symmetrical vessels with a fluted base, round bowl with intricate bas relief, wide fluted mouth, and rectangular, simple profile pedestals (Figure 28, see also Figures 7 and 8, 10, 11 and 12)

<sup>39</sup> Patrick Andrus, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Park Service. Washington, D.C., 2002.

<sup>40</sup> Lee H. Nelson, *Preservation Brief 17: Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving their Character*. National Park Service, 1988.

- For the fountains: wide, round basins with a rounded cap, set on a low round base (Figures 29-32, see also Figures 15-20)
- Views of these resources as a visitor moves through the gardens (Figures 33-36, see also Figures 5-10)
- Setting



Figure 23. Southern balustrade view from Laguna de Las Flores, facing northwest. Photo credit: Sarah Stringer-Bowsher.



Figure 24. Southern balustrade view of Laguna de Las Flores, facing south. Photo credit: Elizabeth Herlihy.





Figure 25. Southern balustrade to corner, facing southwest. Photo credit: Elizabeth Herlihy.





Figure 26. Southern balustrade corner, facing southwest. Photo credit: Elizabeth Herlihy.





Figure 27. Southern balustrade and urn with pedestal, facing southwest. Photo credit: Sarah Stringer-Bowsher.





Figure 28. Urn atop structurally damaged southwestern pedestal, facing southeast. Photo credit: Elizabeth Herlihy.





Figure 29. West fountain, facing northeast. Photo credit: Elizabeth Herlihy.



Figure 30. West fountain, facing west. Photo credit: Sarah Stringer-Bowsher.





Figure 31. East fountain, facing east. Photo credit: Elizabeth Herlihy.





Figure 32. East fountain with J.M. Haddad Construction Company stamped in concrete, facing west.  
Photo credit: Sarah Stringer-Bowsher.





Figure 33. Southern balustrade and urn with structurally deficient pedestal, view toward Laguna de Las Flores, facing southeast. Photo credit: Sarah Stringer-Bowsher.



Figure 34. Southern balustrade, facing east. Photo credit: Sarah Stringer-Bowsher.





Figure 35. Southern balustrade, facing southeast. Photo credit: Sarah Stringer-Bowsher.



Figure 36. East fountain, facing east. Photo credit: Sarah Stringer-Bowsher.



## 5. REHABILITATION TREATMENT APPROACH

### PRESERVATION OBJECTIVES AND TREATMENTS

The long-established, fundamental principles of historic preservation were established by the SOI. Through the NPS, the SOI provides standards and guidelines for projects effecting historic buildings and structures, specifically the *SOI Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and the NPS Preservation Briefs, Bulletins, and Technical Reports. Those standards and guidelines shall be applied to the proposed work that could affect the character-defining features (as defined in Section 4).

Within the *Standards*, the Secretary sets forth four treatment approaches (in order of importance):

- **Preservation**: emphasizes conserving, maintaining, and repairing the historic fabric of a building in order to reflect its continuum over time, through successive occupancies, and the respectful changes and alterations that are made.
- **Rehabilitation**: emphasizes retaining and repairing of historic materials but allows more latitude for replacement when the property is more deteriorated prior to work. It should be noted, however, that both Preservation and Rehabilitation standards focus attention on the preservation of those materials, features, finishes, spaces, and spatial relationships that, together, give a property its historic character.
- **Restoration**: emphasizes retaining the more important materials dating from a property's period(s) of significance, while permitting the removal of materials from other periods.
- **Reconstruction**: addresses the need to re-create a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object in all new materials.

A property's historic significance, physical condition, future uses, and current safety codes must be carefully considered prior to determining the most appropriate treatment approach. The following issues, presented in the Standards,<sup>41</sup> were considered by ASM, before making our recommendations for these resources of the Botanic Gardens:

- **Relative significance**: is the resource a nationally significant resource—a rare survivor or the work of a master architect or craftsman? Did an important event take place here? National Historic Landmarks, designated for their “exceptional significance in American history,” or many buildings individually listed in the NRHP often warrant the Preservation or Restoration. Buildings that contribute to the significance of a historic district but are not individually listed in the NRHP more frequently undergo Rehabilitation for a compatible new use.

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<sup>41</sup> Anne E. Grimmer, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*. National Park Service. Washington, D.C., 2017.

- **Physical condition**: prior to commencing any project it is important to assess the existing condition of the resource. To what extent is its material integrity still intact? Has the original form survived largely intact or has it been altered over time? Are the alterations an important part of the building's history? Preservation may be appropriate if distinctive materials, features, and spaces are essentially intact and convey the resource's historical significance. If the resource requires more extensive repair and replacement, or if alterations or additions are necessary for a new use, then Rehabilitation is probably the most appropriate treatment. These key questions play major roles in determining what treatment is selected.
- **Proposed use**: an essential, practical question to ask is, will the resource be used as it was historically or will it be given a new use? Many historic resources can be adapted for new uses without seriously damaging their historic character.
- **Mandated code requirements**: regardless of the treatment, code requirements will need to be taken into consideration. But if hastily or poorly designed, a series of code-required actions may jeopardize a resource's materials as well as its historic character. For example, abatement of lead paint and asbestos requires particular care if important historic finishes are not to be adversely affected. Finally, alterations and new construction needed to meet accessibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and should be designed to minimize material loss and visual change to historic fabric.

## PROJECT GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project intends to repair surface and structural cracks and repaint or restucco the historic fountains, balustrades, and urns, and reconstruct missing benches surrounding the fountains and Laguna de Las Flores. A new pumping system and lighting will be added to the fountains as well. Additionally, because of the structural nature of a large crack on the pedestal of one of the urns (southwest), that pedestal will also be reconstructed. Because of the condition of the resources, their place in history, and proposed continued use, Rehabilitation is the appropriate treatment option to achieve the project goals. Rehabilitation calls for the retention and repair of historic materials but will allow for replacement in kind of deteriorated materials or features (such as the concrete pedestal of the urn). Character-defining features shall be preserved when possible.

When undertaking the rehabilitation project, each aspect of the work should fit within the parameters of the SOI *Standards* for Rehabilitation. If the project can be seen as following the guidelines, then it must further be asked if the nature of the project will be in strict accordance with actions "Recommended" in the guidelines. After analysis of the proposed plans and recommendations to approach the work, none of the aspects of the project fall within the category of "Not Recommended" actions.

## SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation is defined as “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.”<sup>42</sup>

### Standards

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

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<sup>42</sup> National Park Service, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. Washington, D.C., 1992.

The project as proposed follows the above *Standards* for Rehabilitation. The foundations, balustrades, and urns—contributing resources to the Botanic Gardens (within the Balboa Park historic district)—that are the focus of this portion of the Phase Two project will continue to be used as they were historically per **Standard 1**. Per **Standard 4**, these resources will be retained and preserved as changes to the property that have acquired historic significance in their own right. Per **Standards 2, 3, and 5**, the historic character and distinctive materials and features of these resources will be retained, and there will be no alteration of spaces and spatial relationships nor false sense of historical development. Per **Standard 7**, repairs to these resources will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Where removal is proposed for the pedestal because of the severity of deterioration, the new pedestal will match the old in design, color, texture, and materials following **Standard 6**. The replacement/new construction of the missing benches follows **Standards 6, 9 and 10**, as the design of the benches is substantiated by documentary evidence and their reconstruction will not destroy any historic materials or features but will restore the historic spatial relationships that previously characterized the property. As there is no new ground disturbance for this project, the project will not have the potential to effect archaeological resources and therefore follows **Standard 8**.

### Guidelines

Incorporated into the Standards for Rehabilitation are *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. Below is a summary of those guidelines<sup>43</sup> relevant to the proposed project:

- **Identify, Retain, and Preserve Materials and Features**  
Identify the form and detailing of materials and features that define the resource's historic character. The retention and preservation of those character-defining features are recommended over replacement.
- **Protect and Maintain Materials and Features**  
Protection generally involves the least degree of intervention and is preparatory to other work. For example, protection includes the maintenance of historic material through treatments such as cyclical cleaning of the concrete and re-application of protective coatings.
- **Repair Historic Materials and Features**  
Because of the physical condition of these resources and the concrete materials of which they are comprised, repair is recommended. Repair of historic materials begins with the least degree of intervention possible such as patching of cracks in the concrete. Destructive testing to determine the exact composition of the concrete shall be done to ensure the same composition of concrete is used.
- **Replace Deteriorated Historic Materials and Features**  
Limited replacement in kind of extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features is appropriate when the level of deterioration or damage of materials makes repair

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<sup>43</sup> Anne E. Grimmer, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*.

impractical. Such is the case with the pedestal of the urn with a structural crack. In instances in which sufficient form and detailing still exist to re-establish the feature as an integral part of the rehabilitation project, then its replacement is appropriate. Replacement of the entire feature in kind, that is, with the same material, is always the preferred option. It should be noted that, while the NPS guidelines recommend the replacement of an entire character-defining feature under certain well-defined circumstances, they never recommend removal and replacement with new material of a feature that—although damaged or deteriorated—could reasonably be repaired and thus preserved.

- **Design for the Replacement of Missing Historic Features**

The benches lining the Laguna de Las Flores and surrounding the two fountains have been removed and replaced with a fewer number of benches that do not match the original design. When an entire feature is missing such as this, it no longer plays a role in physically defining the historic character of the building unless it can be accurately recovered in form and detailing through the process of carefully documenting the historical appearance. Where an important architectural feature is missing, its recovery is always recommended in the guidelines as the first, or preferred, course of action. If adequate historical, pictorial, and physical documentation exists so that the feature may be accurately reproduced, and if it is desirable to re-establish the feature as part of the resource's historical appearance, then designing and constructing a new feature based on such information is appropriate. Extensive historical and pictorial evidence is available for the missing benches to provide guidance for the replacement of these missing features.

- **Accessibility Considerations**

The rehabilitation guidelines address work done to meet accessibility requirements. Although this work is quite often an important aspect of rehabilitation projects, it is usually not a part of the overall process of protecting or repairing character-defining features; rather, such work is assessed for its potential negative impact on the resources' historic character. For this reason, particular care must be taken not to radically change, obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining materials or features in the process of rehabilitation work to meet code and energy requirements.





## 6. TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

The recommendations in this section of the report should be made available to firms bidding on the construction work and included in the construction documents. It should be noted that the future contractor will need to conduct limited destructive testing to determine the exact composition of the concrete and stucco that should be used for this rehabilitation project. The most appropriate location for that testing is the pedestal of the urn that has a structural crack and at the base of the exterior of one of the fountain's basin.

### CONCRETE

All resources that are addressed in this treatment plan are composed of concrete. As noted above, this concrete is not the original material for the balustrades and urns, but dates to the 1960s rehabilitation. The Portland Cement concrete of the balustrades and urns is likely 2,000 psi compressive strength with grade 40 steel rebar typical for the 1960s.<sup>44</sup> While conducting the site visit with the Phase Two team, the structural engineer confirmed that most of the cracks observed are surface cracks that can be patched. However, there is a structural crack on the pedestal of the southwestern urn of the south balustrade (see Figure 1). In contrast to the balustrades and urns, the fountains were not reconstructed in the 1960s but were patched and coated with a layer of stucco; the composition of the concrete under the stucco is unknown. No structural cracks were observed on the fountains.

#### Repairs

Repair measures should be selected that retain as much of the original material as possible, while providing for removal of an adequate amount of deteriorated concrete to provide a sound substrate for durable repair. Preparation for localized repairs should begin with the removal of the loose concrete to determine the general extent of the repair, followed by saw-cutting the perimeter of the repair area. To hide the repair edge, techniques such as lightly hand-chipping the edge of the patch may be used to conceal the joint between the original concrete and the new repair material.

The concrete and/or stucco used for repairs must visually match the existing concrete or stucco as closely as possible and should be similar to the original composition in aspects such as compressive strength, permeability, and color/tint if not painted. To match the characteristics of the original concrete and stucco, sample mixes should be prepared and tested in the least visible areas.

For sections of concrete without any spalling or cracking, the concrete will not need any patching. In those areas, the concrete should be cleaned using a low-pressure water wash (such as a garden

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<sup>44</sup> Email correspondence with Bryon Spicer, structural engineer, KPFF, February 27, 2024.

hose, no higher than 200 psi), supplemented by scrubbing with soft natural bristle brushes and non-ionic detergents if deemed necessary (examples include Tergitol or Triton made by Union Carbide/Dow Chemicals). Remove organic plant material, such as algae and mold, and metallic stains using poultices and appropriate solvents. The chosen cleaning method should be tested first before applying the detergent to the entire feature or resource.

For concrete that has been painted, use a biodegradable or environmentally safe cleaning or paint removal products and only remove the deteriorated paint to the next sound layer by hand scraping prior to repainting. Do not remove paint in areas where the paint is firmly adhered to the concrete. It is recommended to apply permeable, anti-graffiti coatings to masonry to resources that are considered subject to such vandalism. Curatorial experts currently recommend a sacrificial coating, as it will not alter the appearance of the concrete or stucco, allows quick removal of graffiti stains with the use of warm pressurized water (at least 180 degrees), product is reversible (can be removed with hot water at any time) and while it must be reapplied after removal of graffiti the reapplication can be done by trained individuals (not just professional masons).<sup>45</sup>

### Future Maintenance Recommendations:

The concrete of all these resources should be inspected quarterly, and locations of hairline cracks should be noted and monitored. Cracks that show no sign of increasing in size may often be left unrepaired. The preferred method to repair future cracks will follow the guidance above for the current cracks, and for the Parks Department to have a mix readily at hand for future repairs based on the composition of the concrete that is determined as part of the Phase Two repairs. When needed, epoxy injection repair can be effective.

### Additional References

National Park Service *Preservation Brief 1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellant Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings*. Robert C. Mack and Anne Grimmer. 2000. <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-01-cleaning-masonry.pdf>

National Park Service *Preservation Brief 15: Preservation of Historic Concrete*. Paul Gaudette and Deborah Slaton. 2007. <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-15-concrete.pdf>

## BALUSTRADES

The historical record confirms that the balustrades were originally redwood and fir painted white. These appear to have been the same shade of white as the urns and benches (although the exact shade of white is not identified). The balustrades were reconstructed in 1965 in Portland

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<sup>45</sup> *Graffiti Blog Part II: Are Anti-Graffiti Coatings Appropriate For Historic Masonry?* Architectural Resources Group, December 14, 2021. Accessed online at <https://www.argcreate.com/blog/graffiti-blog-part-ii/>.

cement concrete, the composition of which is unknown but were likely 2,000 psi compressive strength with grade 40 steel rebar typical for the 1960s. The reconstructed concrete balustrades have now acquired historic significance in their own right, for their association with the 1960s historic preservation movement and rehabilitation of Balboa Park.

The balusters and top and bottom rails of the balustrades should first be cleaned using a biodegradable or environmentally safe cleaning or paint removal products and only remove the deteriorated paint to the next sound layer by hand scraping prior to repainting. The next step is careful cleaning using a low-pressure water wash supplemented by scrubbing with soft natural bristle brushes and non-ionic detergents. If any organic plant material, such as algae and mold, is identified in the cleaning process, then a poultice can be used in combination with the appropriate solvents. Cleaning using this approach should be followed with a final water rinse.

The cracks should then be repaired following the guidance provided above under *Concrete*. The concrete used for repairs should be similar to the original composition in aspects such as compressive strength and permeability; color or tint of the concrete is not as important as it was historically painted, and the color of the concrete was not visible.

As the balustrades were historically painted (both the original wood balustrades and the concrete replacements), they should be repainted after cleaning and repair work is complete. The balustrades should be painted white using a product that follows the recommendations above under *Concrete*. As the exact shade of white is unknown, a general white color is acceptable.

## URNS

The historical record confirms that the urns (and pedestals on which they stand) were originally redwood and fir painted white. These appear to have been the same shade of white as the balustrades and benches (although the exact shade of white is not identified). The urns were reconstructed in 1965 in Portland cement concrete, the composition of which is unknown but were likely 2,000 psi compressive strength with grade 40 steel rebar typical for the 1960s. The reconstructed urns have now acquired historic significance in their own right, for their association with the 1960s historic preservation movement and rehabilitation of Balboa Park.

The pedestal of the southwestern urn on the south balustrade has a structural crack that will require reconstruction and is therefore the recommended location for deconstructive testing to determine the composition of the 1960s concrete mix for the urn and balustrade. The testing should also determine if the pedestals are solid or a hollow box. The reconstructed pedestal shall match the original in form, design, and materials, based on the evidence of the extant pedestals.

The intricate surface and design of the urns and their pedestals will first be cleaned using a biodegradable or environmentally safe cleaning or paint removal products and only remove the deteriorated paint to the next sound layer by hand scraping prior to repainting. The next step is careful cleaning using a low-pressure water wash supplemented by scrubbing with soft natural bristle brushes and non-ionic detergents. If any organic plant material, such as algae and mold,



is identified in the cleaning process, then a poultice can be used in combination with the appropriate solvents. Cleaning using this approach should be followed with a final water rinse.

Any cracks should then be repaired following the guidance provided above under *Concrete*. The concrete used for repairs should be similar to the original composition in aspects such as compressive strength and permeability; color or tint of the concrete is not as important as it was historically painted, and the color of the concrete was not visible.

As the urns were historically painted (both the original wood urns and the concrete replacements), they should be repainted after cleaning and repair work is complete. The urns should be painted white using a product that follows the recommendations above under *Concrete*. As the exact shade of white is unknown, a general white color is acceptable.

## FOUNTAINS

The historical record does not clarify the composition of the concrete of the fountains. The core of the fountains may contain original (1915 or 1935) concrete, however, cracks in the fountains are known to have been patched in the 1960s. Both fountains were coated with a layer of stucco. Rehabilitation of the fountains also included water pumps. The rehabilitated fountains have now acquired historic significance in their own right for their association with the 1960s historic preservation movement and rehabilitation of Balboa Park.

The fountains shall be drained and the exterior and interior of the basin shall be cleaned using a low-pressure water wash supplemented by scrubbing with soft natural bristle brushes and non-ionic detergents. If any organic plant material, such as algae and mold, is identified in the cleaning process, then a poultice can be used in combination with the appropriate solvents. Cleaning using this approach should be followed with a final water rinse.

Deconstructive testing should be conducted to determine the composition of the concrete mix and stucco coat. A good location for this testing is the base of the exterior of one of the fountain's basin. The cracking in the fountains should then be repaired following the guidance provided above under *Concrete*. The 1960s-era design of the fountain basin will be retained as the cracks are repaired. The concrete used for repairs should be similar in aspects such as compressive strength and permeability to either the original composition or 1960s composition, informed by the testing conducted. The color or tint of the concrete is not as important as it was obscured by the stucco coat. The cream color of the stucco coat was identified in the historical record as #52 Expo and the exact color should be replicated per the specifications in Appendix A.

In both fountains, extant, non-operation water sump pumps will be replaced, and new pumping systems will be added. The pumps will be replaced in the extant location at the base of the fountain basins and the covers to the pumps will be replaced. New lighting will be added in existing light fixtures and/or the existing vault cover. .

The fountain heads were reconstructed circa 2009 based on photographic evidence of the fountain heads that were present in 1915. They will be retained, cleaned, and repainted. ~~and.~~

## BENCHES

The historical record confirms that the Laguna de Las Flores was originally lined with many more rectangular benches than exist today and those extant today are not original benches. Originally the fountains were surrounded by curved benches, replaced at some point with rectangular benches (Figure 37). These were originally concrete and appear to have been the same shade of white as the balustrades (although the exact shade of white is not identified). The benches were removed at some unknown date and replaced by fewer concrete benches of a slightly different design.

The missing benches will be replaced/constructed following a design which can be substantiated by documentary evidence to restore the historic spatial relationships that previously characterized the property. Both the three-footed rectangular and five-footed curved benches will be reconstructed; four round benches surrounding each fountain (a total of eight) and 27 rectangular benches distributed on both sides of the Laguna de Las Flores. A special formwork will be designed to recreate the curved benches, whereas a form has already been created for the rectangular benches, recently reconstructed for Alcazar Garden (Figures 38-39), another area within the Balboa Park historic district. One alteration to the design of the original benches will be a small engraved, concrete band under the seat of the bench, used for donor recognition (Figures 38-39). The addition of these plaques will comply with the *Standards* as they shall be differentiated from the design of the reconstructed benches yet compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing.



Figure 37. Bench near west fountain, facing west.





Figure 38. Alcazar Garden bench.



Figure 39. Alcazar Garden bench.





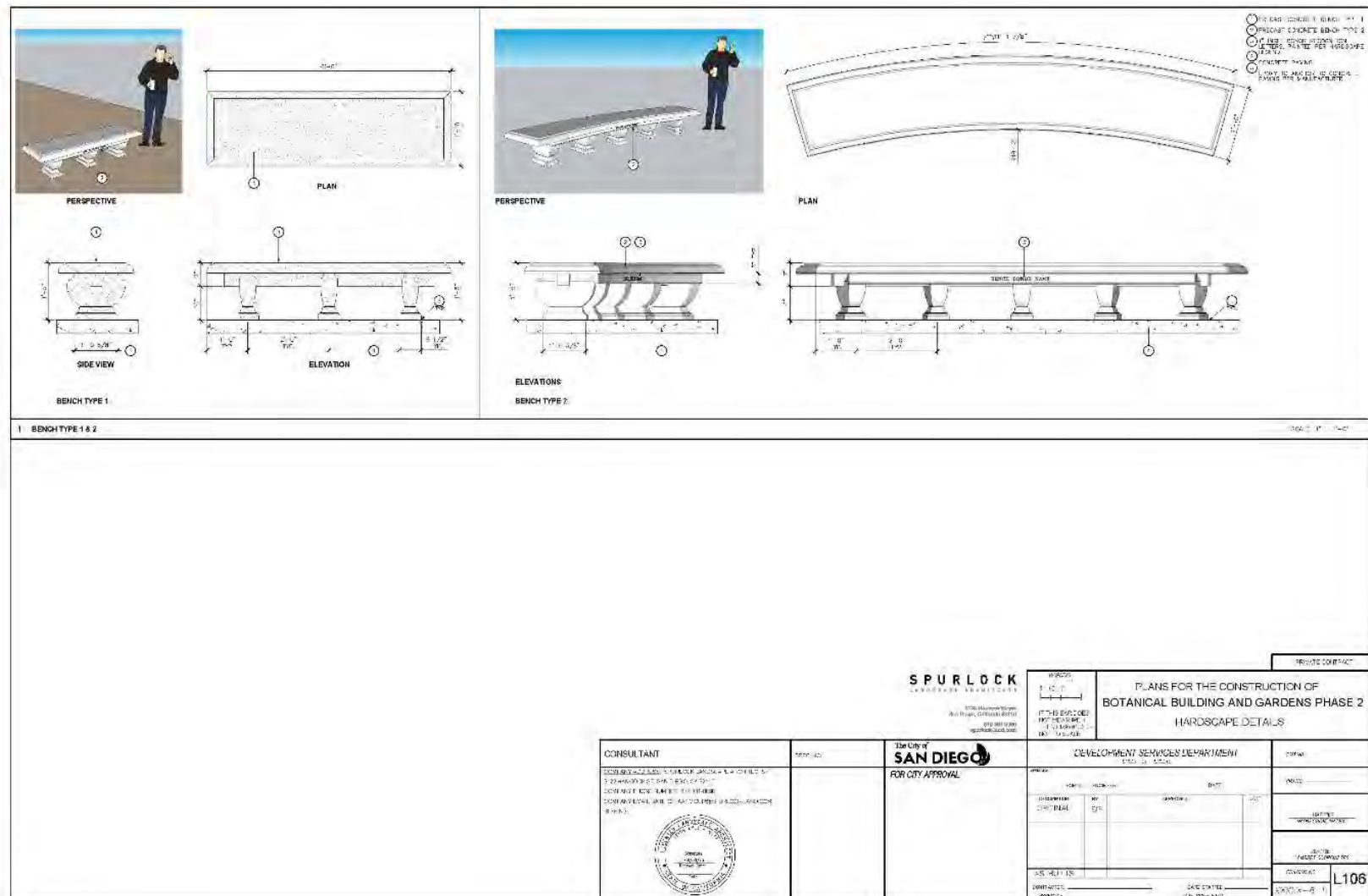


Figure 40. Proposed design for rectangular and curved benches. Courtesy of Spurlock Architects.



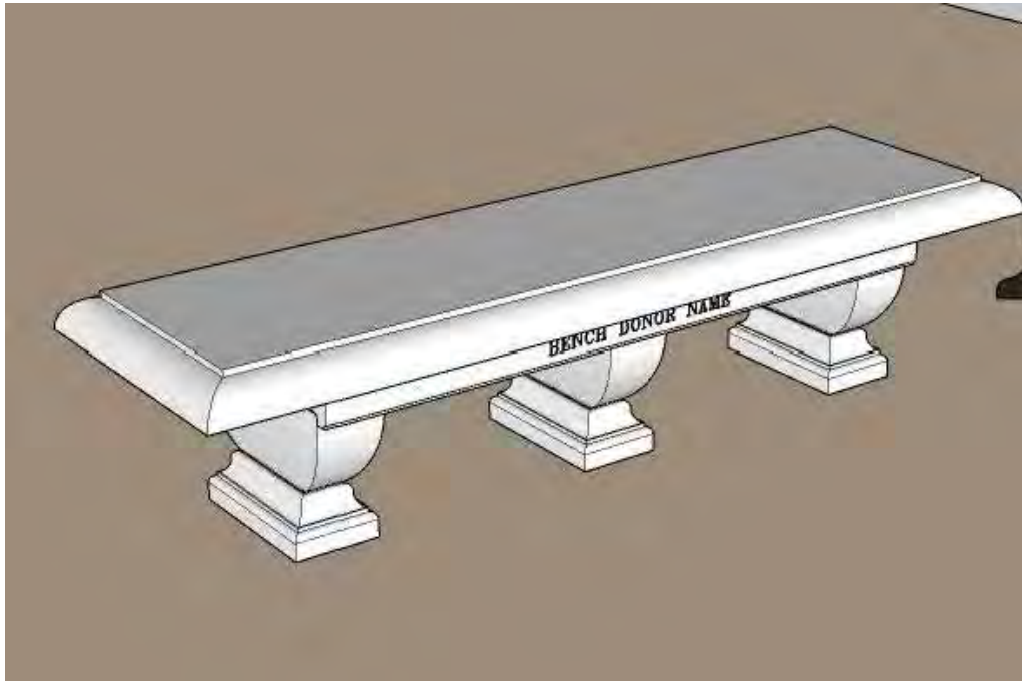


Figure 41. Rendering of donor name etched on concrete band under the seat of rectangular bench.  
Courtesy of Spurlock Architects.

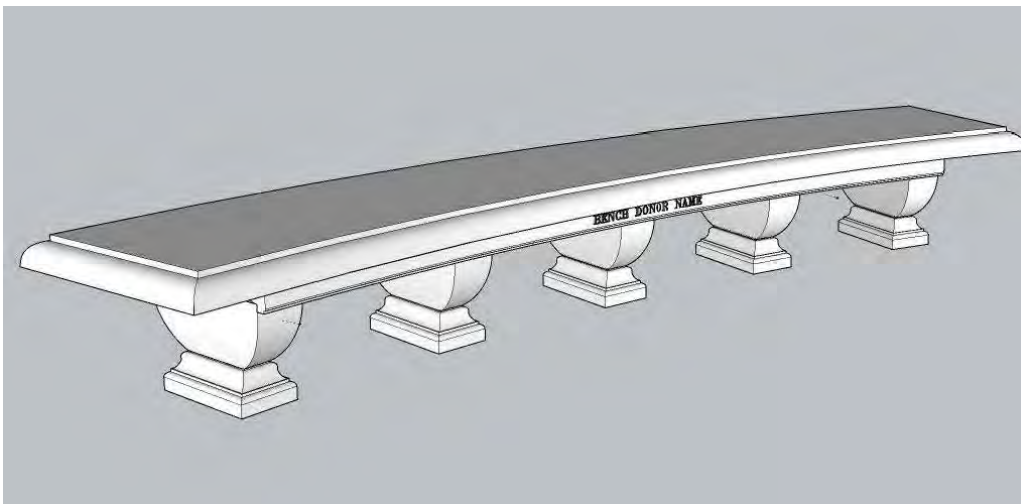


Figure 42. Rendering of donor name etched on concrete band under the seat of curved bench.  
Courtesy of Spurlock Architects.





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## APPENDICES



## APPENDIX A

Historical documentation

(Sent separately)





## APPENDIX B

Historical photographs and postcards  
(Sent separately)