

HORTON PLAZA PARK

1. Reports grouped together within a cover, relating to the development of Horton Plaza or Park:

a. Report of Buildings Committee in re City Hall, adopted by Council, City of San Diego, June 18, 1900.

To the Honorable, the Common Council, San Diego, California
Gentlemen:

The undersigned herewith respectfully reports that we have apportioned and allotted the space in the New City Hall, and submit herewith the floor plans of the Building showing the manner of allotting the space, and also, an Ordinance authorizing the Board of Public Works to cause said Building to be fitted up in accordance with such allotment of space and recommends the same be adopted.

Respectfully,

J. P. M. Rainbow,
L. A. Blochman,
Carl J. Ferris,
Geo. B. Chapman,
E. H. Wright.

b. Park Committee Report

To the Board of Alderman:

From Committee on Parks to which was referred the annexed petition in relation to the improvement of the plaza or park in front of the Horton House, beg leave to report as follows:

I

That said plaza is in a dilapidated condition, to the extent that it is an "eye sore", and is a disgrace to our City. We therefore recommend that the same be improved, and in manner following=

II.

That a new street 25 feet in width be opened from 3rd to 4th Street, by appropriating therefor a strip off or through said plaza along the North line of the sidewalk now laid in front of the buildings fronting on the South is of said plaza. Said new Street to be known as "Short Street."

III.

That the balance of the area of said plaza be enclosed by a substantial cement curb, to run along the South side of D Street (already in) along West side of 4th Street, along East side of 3rd Street and along the North line of said New "Short Street", except openings to be left at each of the four corners of said plaza 8 feet in width, and openings to be left in center of each of the four sides of said plaza 6 feet in width.

IV.

That cement walks be laid in said plaza viz: a walk of 8 feet in width be laid from each of the corner openings to a circular cement walk 8 feet in width around a fountain or flower bed in center of said plaza; that a walk 6 feet in width be laid from each of the side openings to said circular walk.

V.

That all of said plaza between said cement walks, be leveled up in good shape, and with good soil, and the same planted to blue grass; that at least six trees of known beauty and of a species that will grow large, such as the "Gravillia Robusta" be planted in said plaza, said number of trees not to exceed eight.

VI.

That to better enclose said plaza, that there be set in the curb surrounding the same, iron posts of suitable design, at proper distances apart, with holes through the same at middle and top to receive chains to be stretched between the openings to said plaza.

VII.

That the City Engineer make a plat of the plaza in accordance with these recommendations, and rough sketch hereto annexed; that said Engineer's plat show the outside dimensions of the plaza; the area (approximate) of the spaces left between the current walks in said plaza; and submit to this Board at its next meeting an estimate of the cost of said curbing, cement walks, iron posts and chains.

VIII.

That whenever the Common Council decides to improve said plaza in accordance herewith, that an ordinance be passed dedicating said new 25 foot Street from 2nd to 4th Street, to be known as "Short Street" = That then the Council order the paving of 3rd Street from South line of D Street to the North line of E Street; and that said Short Street be paved, all with bituminous rock.

Respectfully submitte,
signed by
Wm A. Bezole
H. F. Norcross .

Committee on Streets and Alleys,
Highways and Parks.

{Rough sketch of plaza plan attached to side of this last page of Park Committee Report showing the shape of the plaza and the walkways and fountain. The plaza shown bordered by D Street, 3rd Street, 4th Street and Short Street is crossed with pencil and marked "Horton Place." Also depicts "seat" along every diagonal cement walkway and "Grass + C" or "Grass TC" (?) in the triangular sections of the sliced square}.

Back cover sheet bears only the words "Park Com" in handwritten pencil. No date.

c. Report of Street Committee of Board of Alderman on Bids for Improvement of Horton Plaza dated March 16th, 1891:

To Board of Alderman
City of San Diego

March 16th 1891

Gentlemen,

Your street Committee to whom was referred the bids for Horton Plaza, would most respectfully recommend that all bids be relected, and that the Board of Public Works be instructed to at once remove all obstructions, including trees, Hedges, Fountain + c from said Horton Plaza, and put the same in a clean smooth and wholesome condition.

Respectfully submitted
signed by Committee
D C Reed
Wm A Bezole (Begole?)
H. F. Norcross.

Two pages, including cover sheet.

d. Report of Committee on Public Buildings in the matter of a City Hall. Filed by Council
February 14, 1898:

San Diego, Cal., Feb. 4th, 1898

To the Common Council;

The Joint Committee on Public Buildings, to whom was referred for investigation the matter of the erection of a City Hall, would respectfully, report as follows:

We have ascertained by inquiry from the owners of the property on the south side of the Plaza, that there would be strong objections to the erection of a City Hall upon the Plaza.

We also requested the owners of such property to submit an offer for their respective properties and have in response received the offer made by Mr. J. D. Wood, as agent, and would refer this offer to your Honorable Body without comment.

It is also suggested to this Committee that condemnation proceedings be commenced with a view of erecting a City Hall upon the Plaza. Not knowing the desire of the Common Council in the premises, we respectfully submit the within and ask for an expression of the Council.

Respectfully,

L. A. Blochman
A. E. Dodson
J. H. Cassidy
H. M. Landis
W. L. Frevert.

Two pages, including cover sheet.

2. "Report of St. Committee on bids of Lufkin & Kelly on work on Horton Plaza"; marked in pencil "Adopted by Delegates Mrh 2 - 91" on reverse:

To the Board of Delegates
City San Diego.

Your Street Committe (sic) to whom was referred the bids for work on the Horton Plaza would recommend that the bid of Lufkin & Kelly be accepted & the contract awarded to them, they being the lowest bidder.

signed
Chas. W. Pauly, Chair of St. Comm.
John H. Marshall
W Llewelyn (?)

Two pages, including cover on reverse.

3. Report Park Committee on Ordinance fixing salary of Park Superintendent. Adopted by Delegates August 31, 1891:

To the Board of Delegates:

Gentlemen -

We your Committee on Parks to whom was referred an Ordinance fixing the salary of Supt. of Parks at \$65 per month instead of \$35.00 respectively submit the following: -

That the said Ordinance do not pass from the fact that since the Plaza Park has been discontinued, the labor of Supt. Parks has been considerably decreased, and we think he should use this extra time in work on the Annex Tract. And we further find that the Annex Tract under the care of the Board of Public Works is receiving good attention and recommend that the charge of this Park remain where it now is.

signed by Committee on Parks members
Chas W Pauly
W W Wetzell
George H. Crippen

One page, including reverse.

4. Undated, handwritten note reading: "Resolved that it is the sense of this Board that the Board of Public Works be instructed to move the unsightly structure now standing on the East end of the Horton Plaza."

5. Letter dated May 16, 1955 and received May 18, 1955 from Mrs. Jo Lousie Williams to The Mayor, City Councilmen and Those Who Make the Decisions for the Betterment of San Diego:

P. O. Box 1648
Corpus Christi, Texas
May 16, 1955

An Open Letter to:

The Mayor, City Councilmen and Those Who Make the Decisions for the Betterment of San Diego

cc: San Diego Union Paper

Gentlemen:

Although I am not at present a resident of San Diego, some thirty-five years ago I was born in the 1900 block of Woodman Ave. now known as Imperial Ave. In view of this fact, I feel I have a native San Diegan's right to express my profound disgust and definite (sic) unhappiness at the slick way the people of San Diego are being taken, in regards to The Horton Plaza, Japanese Tearoom and the Botanical Gardens. These places are not yours to do away with. They belong to the people and it should be their decision as to whether they be torn down or be repaired and restored once again to their original beauty and attractiveness. Neglect has made them look as they do and surely it wouldn't take a great deal of money or brawn to put them in first class condition and bring to the minds of the oldsters, memories of the many wonderful and happy occasions (sic) they spent in these places. After all, each of you will, in time, be old and then you will be better able to understand just how much one learns to count on seeing familiar places of interest and beauty in the town you claim as your Home Town. You have no right to destroy what does not belong to you. No Mayor or City Council, past or present, has had or will have that right, without the full Consent of the people who own them.

True, Horton Plaza is not what it used to be and has definitely (sic) become an eyesore, but whose fault is that? Out of all the tax money poured into San Diego, surely a few dollars could be spent for such a worthy cause as beautifying the Plaza and restoring it to its original austerity. The Japanese Tearoom and the Botanical Gardens have long been a source of serenity and beauty, enjoyed by the masses, day in and day out. I personally, can recall many happy hours spent inside their walls, and on my frequent visits home have time and again revisited these loved places.

The decision to destroy them was accomplished (sic) through the efforts of a few who have no regard for old things and fail to see their beauty or value. Supposing someone should want to eliminate you just because you've become old and no longer look as youthful and upright as you once did. How would you feel? Give San Diego back to the people and listen to what they have to say. After all, their taxes pay your handsome salaries (including a generous increase just recently) and since they are putting up the money it seems to me they should have a right to say how it is used and what it is used for.

Becoming Mayor of San Diego does not give you the right to act as though you were God with His Disciples (sic) so come off it!

San Diego is the "Heart" to a multitude of people. Where is your heart?

Thank you for your kind attention,
signed Mrs. Jo Louise Williams -
Native San Diegan

On reverse, designated as Document 512515, filed May 19, 1955 by the Office of the City Clerk, San Diego, California; "Comm. from Mrs. Jo. Louise Williams relative to Horton Plaza, Japanese Tea Room, and Botanical Gardens, etc." Received stamp May 19, 1955; Also stamped May 24, 1955 with notation "S K Mgr to answer."

One page

6. Copy of letter in response dated May 27, 1955 to Mrs. Jo Louise Williams from Leo B. Calland, Park and Recreation Director, received May 31, 1955 by City Manager; received June 1, 1955 by City Clerk's Office, San Diego, California (Doc. 512515 attached):

May 27, 1955

Mrs. Jo Louise Williams
P. O. Box 1648
Corpus Christi,
Texas

Dear Mrs. Williams:

Your letter of May 16 addressed to the Mayor and City Council relative to Horton Plaza, the Japanese Tea Pavilion, and the Botanical Gardens has been referred to the Park and Recreation Department for reply. Inasmuch as you are no longer a resident of San Diego, you probably are not completely informed, and the following facts are being forwarded for your information.

1. The City Council appropriated \$4, 300.00, and the Park and Recreation Department is now in the process of rehabilitating Horton Plaza with these funds. Thirty-four new Palm trees are replacing the old hazardous ones. The fountain is receiving a face-lifting, and the lights will be repaired and placed in operation. The lawns will be renovated and flower plots will be provided in the Plaza.

2. The Japanese Tea Room was declared unsafe for public usage, and the structural engineer employed by the City to rehabilitate the buildings in Balboa Park reported that it was impossible to rehabilitate the Tea Pavilion. There were no foundations under the building, it was full of termites, and of very flimsy construction. Rather than go to the expense of rebuilding the Pavilion, the area where it stands was turned over to the San Diego Zoological Society to provide space for a Children's Zoo. This Children's Zoo will be built from funds provided by interested citizens of San Diego and will not be a burden to the taxpayers.

3. It is estimated that it would cost \$69, 823.00 to repair and restore the Botanical Building. The City Council has not been able to find the necessary funds to restore this familiar landmark to San Diego and to every one who has visited Balboa Park. The Mayor and City Council are elected by the voters of San Diego to represent them in making decisions, and there would be no need for a Mayor and City Council if every decision was referred back to voters. I believe that you will find that responsible men in the City administration always weigh all of the factors involved very carefully before making a decision, and they are responsive to the wishes of the voters.

I am recommending that your letter be filed with other correspondence dealing with the same problems.

Sincerely yours,
unsigned copy
Leo B. Calland,
Park and Recreation Director

LBC:ED

Two page letter.