

DOWNTOWN

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ENSURING A GREAT QUALITY OF LIFE

HOW IS QUALITY OF LIFE DEFINED IN AN urban environment? For some, it's about affordable, safe neighborhoods where they can raise a family and enjoy a sense of community. For others, it's amenities such as open space, a thriving nightlife and freedom from automobiles. Whatever the definition, downtown San Diego has it.

As the organization responsible for downtown's redevelopment, Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC) plans and executes cultural, educational, and public improvement projects. One of CCDC's first goals when redevelopment began 30 years ago was to create a residential community to look after downtown and ensure its continued success. San Diegans had fled the urban core for the suburbs in the 60s and created a 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. center city devoid of life. Residential neighborhoods downtown were critical to the success of retail, office and civic projects, all of which required users to ensure vitality. The first residents to move downtown in Park Row were true pioneers, having built a community foundation that has endured difficult economic times and nurtured the most recent housing boom.

Today, downtown has nearly 30,000 residents and that number is growing rapidly. Each new resident comes for his or her own particular reason, but common to all is the desire for a better quality of life. Downtown and Balboa Park feature the highest concentration of arts and cultural venues in the entire region. Recent surveys of new downtown residents indicate that people are moving here for the experience, excitement and simplicity of urban living. Notably, the East Village has come alive with young entrepreneurs tapping into the urban landscape and embracing the area's history to create a future of their own. This type of organic growth creates the opportunities and diversity that attract people to cities in the first place.

Downtown's success is contingent upon many different elements working harmoniously and it starts with good planning. In 2000, the San Diego City Council mandated that downtown absorb a majority of the city's projected growth over the next 30 years. Accommodating large amounts of people in a fixed amount of space requires careful planning and appropriate infrastructure. CCDC continues to embrace downtown's historic resources and demand the highest quality of design and materials from builders.

This issue of Downtown Today focuses on the people, projects and trends that make downtown so livable, and how CCDC will ensure it stays that way long into the future.

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PRESERVING the PAST

SAN DIEGO'S RICH HISTORY IS EMBODIED IN a number of buildings that have been a part of downtown's landscape throughout decades of constant change. Downtown currently has two historic districts, the 16.5-block Gaslamp Quarter and the Asian Thematic District, located in both the Gaslamp Quarter and the Marina neighborhood. Two additional thematic historic districts—the Warehouse District and the African-American District—are currently being studied for possible local historic district designations.

The goal of these studies is to identify potential historic structures to preserve and communicate downtown's architectural and cultural heritage, while allowing modern-day developers to make their own contributions to the skyline. CCDC offers incentives to encourage rehabilitation and reuse of historic properties, including loans, grants, off-site improvements, façade improvements and low- and moderate-income housing loans and grants.

African American History in Downtown

San Diego is an outpost city, marked by the convergence of cultures from all over the world. African Americans were one of the most influential groups in downtown's early development, holding leadership roles in business, civil service, sports and religion. In an effort to provide a comprehensive understanding of the history and contributions of African Americans to the development of downtown, CCDC hired Mooney & Associates in 2002 to conduct historical research for the possible creation of an African-American Thematic Historic District.



Creole Palace entertainers at the Douglas Hotel

CCDC Downtown San Diego African American Heritage Study



Edward Anderson in front of Anderson Mortuary, 1947

CCDC Downtown San Diego African American Heritage Study

Their research documented the buildings and areas of the city that had a significant association with African Americans. They focused on the Centre City Project Area south of Broadway, including the East Village, the Gaslamp Quarter and the Marina, which have been directly associated with African Americans from 1870 to 1960. Because this history of settlement had not been previously researched and documented, the results of the research have recognized people, events, sites and districts that had been forgotten in the march of progress. The complete Downtown San Diego African-American Heritage Study is available at www.ccdc.com.

Asian Pacific Thematic District

In 1987, the San Diego City Council adopted a resolution designating an eight-block area in the Gaslamp Quarter and the Marina neighborhood as the Asian Pacific Thematic Historic District. This area has particular significance in the history and struggle of Asian immigrants. The 1930 census shows that this area had the most ethnically diverse population in San Diego, with Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Black, White, Mexican and Native Americans living side by side.

Downtown San Diego has been profoundly impacted by several different Asian Pacific immigrant groups, beginning with the Chinese who contributed to the fishing and shipbuilding industries of the late 1800s. In 1850, William Heath Mahi-Davis founded New Town San Diego. Davis, who was nicknamed "Kanaka Bill," arrived in San Diego from his native Honolulu, Hawaii, when he was 10 years old. By late 1851, the new



Gaslamp 1892

business and government agencies that were expected to develop in New Town as a result of California becoming a state in the Union and the gold rush in the north never materialized. In 1869, when Alonzo Horton began revitalizing New Town, many Chinese Americans settled in what is now known as the Marina neighborhood, working in the service industry and starting small businesses. They also contributed to the construction labor force, helping build such San Diego landmarks as the Hotel Del Coronado, the

California Southern Railroad and the San Diego Flume. In the late 1800s, Japanese immigrants came to San Diego and effectively took over the fishing industry. In 1903, the first recorded group of Filipino immigrants arrived in San Diego.

The urban decay following the mass exodus to the suburbs after World War II caused many of downtown's historic traditions to be lost or severely neglected. However, community members actively involved in the preservation of history have contributed to the continuing narrative regarding the contributions of Asian immigrants. Today, the Chinese Historical Museum at 404 Third Avenue is one of downtown's most celebrated assets and an anchor to the area.

Warehouse Thematic Historic District

The East Village, the Gaslamp Quarter and parts of the Marina were San Diego's first commercial industrial areas, manufacturing goods that were sold in local markets and shipped to foreign countries via San Diego Bay. The proposed Warehouse Thematic Historic District nomination was prepared by Heritage Architecture and Planning for



Chinese Historical Museum Building



17th & K mural

CCDC in response to a settlement agreement to address the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the Ballpark project, which failed to evaluate the potential of a warehouse district. A Preservation Advisory Group (PAG) was also established to provide input to the ballpark developer and project design teams.

Heritage Architecture and Planning conducted a field survey to determine the existence of a potential warehouse historic district. Forty properties have been identified as con-



East Village building

tributors for inclusion in the thematic district based on their type, age, historic integrity and adherence to at least one criterion under the local, California, or National Registers of Historic Places. The study resulted in a recommendation for local historic designation of a Warehouse Thematic Historic District for its reflection of downtown's industrial past, which was the economic engine for the city from the late nineteenth century through the 1950s.

Stay tuned to ccdc.com for updates on the creation of all historic districts.



East Village market façade

Q&A with outgoing CCDC President Peter Hall

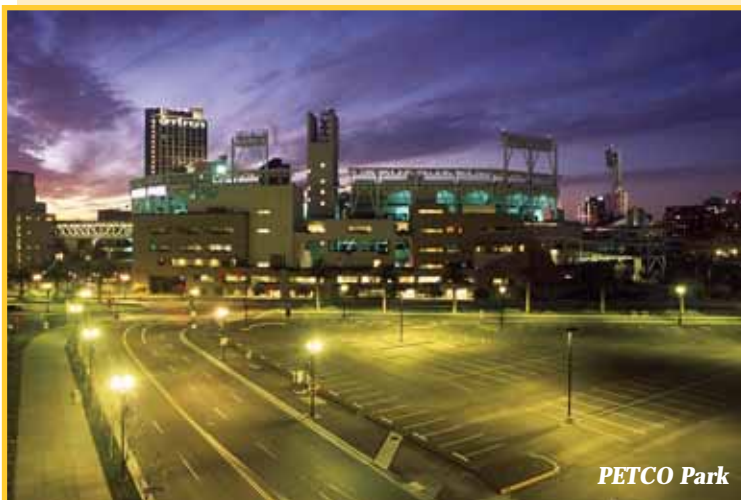
CCDC President Peter Hall recently retired after more than ten years with the corporation. Before coming to CCDC, Hall was senior vice president and manager of the Real Estate Finance Department at the former San Diego Federal Savings & Loan, and president of Great American Development Company, the real estate development subsidiary of Great American Bank. During Hall's tenure at CCDC, downtown saw an unprecedented amount of growth, including the addition of a new downtown ballpark. PETCO Park was one of the largest and most significant projects San Diego has ever undertaken and served as a fitting cap for a career that involved downtown real estate for more than 30 years.

What's in store for downtown in the next 25 years?

"We will focus our resources, both human and financial, more on the public realm. Ironically, this represents a trip back to the future. When CCDC first started redeveloping downtown, we already had a strong business sector. The focus was on improving the infrastructure to accommodate future growth and density, and to attract residents downtown. Now we've got a very healthy housing market, and we're doing more business attraction and retention to keep the jobs/housing balance healthy into the future. We'll become even more of a true 24/7 city, with the three-legged stool of live, work, play all in balance."

How is redevelopment different today than 30 years ago when CCDC started?

"We've moved from planning for things to happen and dreaming about the possibilities, to realizing those dreams. Our focus has shifted from quantity to quality—that is, we're demanding a more rigorous design process to help define our skyline and embrace our region's natural character."



PETCO Park

TRANS

Downtown has fulfilled its promise as the heart and soul of the region. It's the geographical, physical, financial and social hub for the county. What was once an embarrassment for the region now defines San Diego in the most positive way."

How does downtown maintain its momentum?

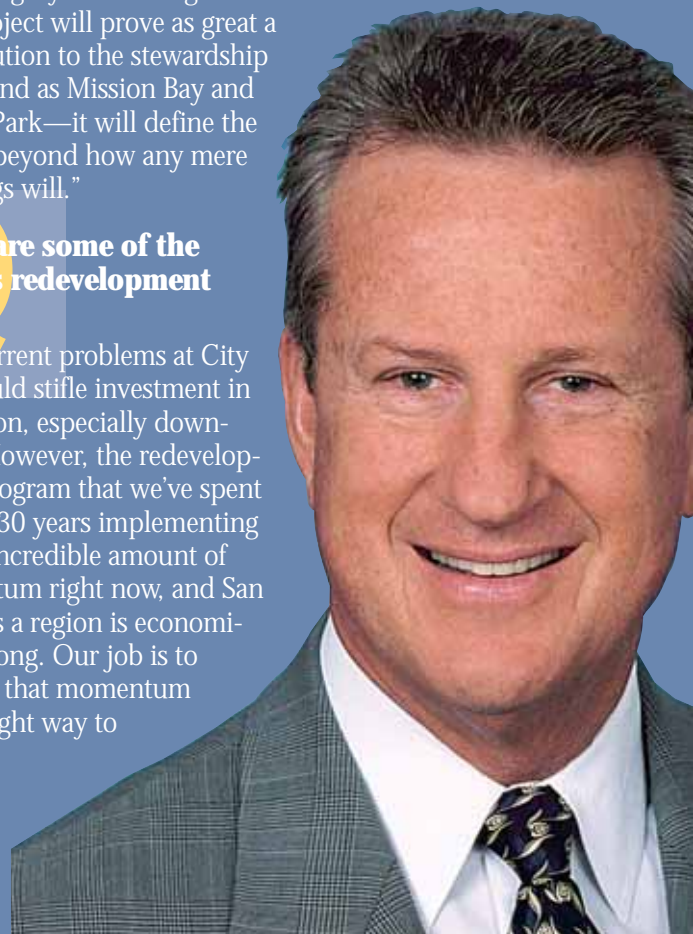
"Continued vigilance about protecting the lifestyle balance, the diversity and the historic heritage. We must make sure redevelopment benefits everyone by becoming the poster child for smart, transit-oriented, mixed-use, mixed-income growth. Downtown's success will help other communities embrace the challenges and benefits of higher density development. It's not just about the real estate, it's about 'place making' and taking pride in the ownership of your city."

What are the biggest opportunities we have left in downtown?

"The western waterfront. The North Embarcadero is the front porch to our city, and is one of the most singularly unique opportunities left perhaps in the country. The North Embarcadero Visionary Plan lays out the framework for creating a special legacy for future generations. This project will prove as great a contribution to the stewardship of the land as Mission Bay and Balboa Park—it will define the city far beyond how any mere buildings will."

What are some of the threats redevelopment faces?

"The current problems at City Hall could stifle investment in the region, especially downtown. However, the redevelopment program that we've spent the last 30 years implementing has an incredible amount of momentum right now, and San Diego as a region is economically strong. Our job is to channel that momentum in the right way to



ITIONS

Convention Center



Future Broadway Pier

What is CCDC's responsibility to provide for quality of life?

"This is perhaps the highest responsibility for a redevelopment agency. Everything we do goes toward that end. When redevelopment first began, CCDC was determined to make downtown a residential neighborhood. Now that the private sector has stepped up and the market has come around, we're now focusing on new and better ways to make those residents enjoy their new neighborhoods."

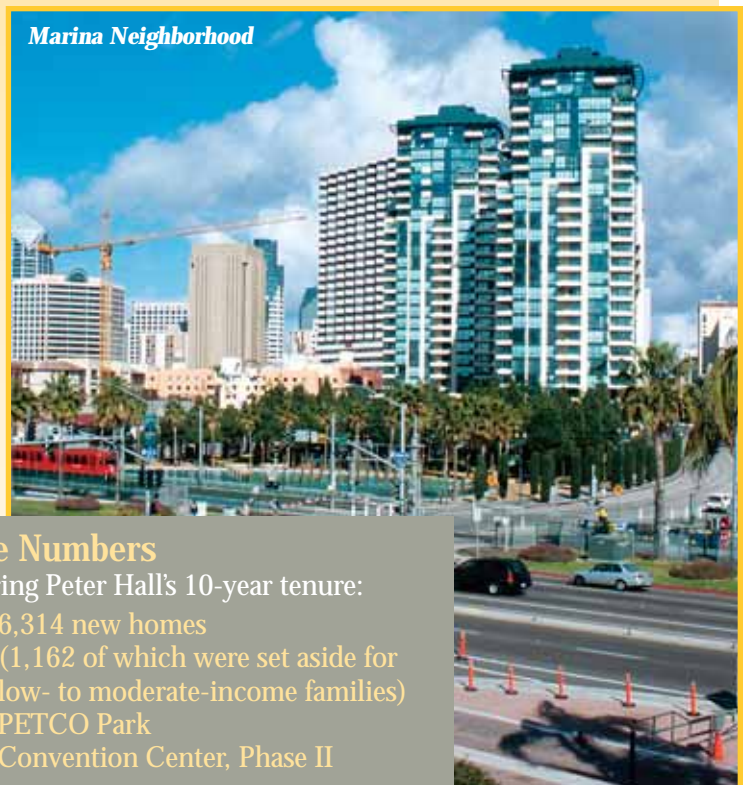
ensure that quality of life stays at the forefront of our planning efforts.

We also must keep our enthusiasm up as we move forward. Some people look around at all that's happened downtown and think redevelopment is done. It's not even close. We're only about one-third of the way there and the best is definitely yet to come."

How do we create livable environments with high density?

"Design is the key to overcoming popular misperceptions that density is a bad thing. Density in an urban environment can be wonderful. It puts eyes on the streets, making them safer. It encourages interaction and cooperation. Some of the most luxurious condo towers downtown are incredibly dense. It's all about how you design the space and how the building interacts with the rest of the built environment around it, to maintain a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood."

Marina Neighborhood



Peter Hall by the Numbers

The following occurred downtown during Peter Hall's 10-year tenure:

- * \$3.79 billion of private investment
- * \$637.4 million of public investment
- * 2,564 new hotel rooms
- * 700,000 square feet of new commercial space
- * 33,820 jobs
- * 6,314 new homes (1,162 of which were set aside for low- to moderate-income families)
- * PETCO Park
- * Convention Center, Phase II

Planning

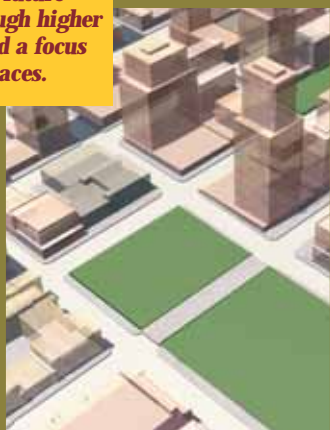
Nearly three years ago, CCDC initiated an update of the 1992 downtown Community Plan to reflect the rapid growth and changes occurring downtown. The plan provides a comprehensive look at the future build-out of the area, and the physical, cultural and human impacts and opportunities it will present. It lays out guidelines for the addition of parks, life-safety infrastructure, and the seamless integration of downtown's industrial history with its residential and high-tech future.

At the heart of the plan is a focus on improving the quality of life downtown in all its iterations. One of its unique features is adaptation of the San Diego City of Villages strategy, to create distinct, transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood centers. Each center will surround public space and provide neighborhood-serving retail such as dry cleaners and grocers, and put nearly every resident within a five-minute walk of a park.

Since the construction of the 41-acre Horton Plaza retail and entertainment complex in the heart of downtown 25 years ago, downtown retail space has been steadily growing to meet the needs of an expanding population. Currently, more than 1 million square feet of new space is planned or under construction, over half of which is in the East Village, downtown's fastest growing neighborhood. Much of this new development is occur-



Downtown will accommodate much of the area's future growth through higher densities and a focus on public spaces.



ring in the ground floor of the condominium towers. These mixed-use buildings enhance the public space with interesting street-level facades and places for people to congregate and interact.

India Street Revitalization

In an effort to remake the public right-of-way along India Street in the Little Italy Neighborhood, CCDC initiated a two-phase project that will include new sidewalks, curbs, gutters, irrigated street trees, tree grates, landscaped planters, and street lighting. Phase I of the project (from Beech to Grape streets) was completed in 2000. Phase II (from Grape to Laurel streets)



Phase II of the India Street revitalization project will remake the public right-of-way from Grape to Laurel streets.

began in August and is expected to be completed in summer 2006. This project is designed to encourage pedestrians, calm vehicular traffic and stimulate local retail activity.

Parking Management

Downtown has more than 60,000 parking spaces to serve residents, workers and visitors. However, some of downtown's on-street parking is underutilized. The Downtown Parking Management Group (DPMG), a group of downtown stakeholders appointed by Council District 2 to study parking, has determined more effective ways to manage the supply and demand of on-street parking for very-low-usage areas. Within four test areas (Cortez, East Village, Little Italy and the Marina), the DPMG completed a block-by-block analysis of the exist-



ing land uses and how they relate to adjacent parking patterns. The analysis also considered land uses surrounding the test areas for their parking needs, as well as the needs of employees, visitors, business owners and residents.

The DPMG created new on-street parking time limits and rates in the four test areas to increase meter utilization and best ensure parking space turnover where required. In most cases, time limits are lengthened and rates decreased. The test areas added 4-hour and 9-hour meter zones with rates ranging from \$0.50 to \$1.25 per hour. Depending on the test results, similar changes may be considered citywide.

Quiet Zone

As the areas along downtown's rail corridor have transitioned from industrial to residential and recreational uses, the noise associated with locomotives has become a major concern, especially for residents. Current federal law requires train engineers to sound their horns at all hours when passing downtown intersections to alert pedestrians and vehicles. CCDC is working on design improvements to downtown's 13 rail crossings that will increase the safety and reduce engineers' requirements to sound their horns.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) recently set out new safety guidelines for the designation of a Quiet Zone. Officials from the FRA, the railroads, trolleys, the City of San Diego, the California Public Utilities Commission and CCDC evaluated the physical factors at each of downtown's rail crossings, including the existing gates, number of lanes, traffic patterns, the location of existing driveways and adjacent roads, and pedestrian behavior. CCDC will implement a mixture of upgrading to four-quadrant gates, the proposed conversion of G Street to a one-way street between Pacific Highway and Front streets, pre-signals on the approach crossings, warning signage, safety striping, median islands, and the possible installation of queue cutters and miscellaneous improvements to comply with the new guidelines.

CCDC is currently in negotiations with various participating entities for Memoranda of Understanding to agree on the cost reimbursements (to be paid by CCDC) of the Quiet Zone-related work for the crossings and how the work will be constructed. The project is expected to be completed by summer 2006. Visit www.ccdc.com for project updates.



CCDC is working to create a downtown Quiet Zone which will help reduce train noise while still maintaining safety guidelines.



Harbor Drive Pedestrian Bridge

CCDC is paying close attention to mobility and connectivity issues in the rapidly developing East Village neighborhood. One aspect of this plan is to provide a safe crossing over a heavily traveled Harbor Drive and existing train and trolley tracks. Fulfilling a California Public Utilities Commission requirement, the pedestrian bridge will complete the vehicular intersection at Harbor Drive and Park Boulevard. The project will complete a 100-year old vision of a Park-to-Bay Link, connecting two important regional assets: Balboa Park and San Diego Bay. The bridge will enable the reopening of the at-grade crossing to vehicles, improving traffic circulation and access to and from the waterfront and Barrio Logan. It will also connect the new 2,000-space Port parking garage with Park Boulevard. The at-grade crossing will include pedestrian barriers and enhanced safety crossing technologies.

CCDC held several public forums to get the community's feedback on design and construction issues. Lead engineer T.Y. Lin International



The Harbor Drive Pedestrian Bridge will connect the East Village with the waterfront.



and architect Safdie Rabines presented three different design options. The final design includes a 500' curved span with a deck sitting 25' above harbor drive. The project will

feature stainless steel-wrapped cables and hard-scaped plazas on both the north and south sides, and public art throughout. The at-grade crossing improvements will include pedestrian barriers, enhanced safety crossing technology, elevators and approaches.

The \$19.7 million project is being financed through a variety of sources, including CCDC; the City of San Diego; Federal TEA Reauthorization; East Village Developer Funds; SANDAG Smart Growth Grant; and the Port of San Diego. Construction is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2006, with completion by the end of the year.



About CCDC

CCDC is the public, nonprofit corporation created in 1975 by the City of San Diego to staff and implement downtown's redevelopment, including the facilitation of retail, residential, office, hotel, cultural, educational and public improvement projects.

For more information on downtown redevelopment or any of the programs listed in this issue, visit www.ccdc.com. Visit www.sandiegodowntown.org for information on housing, business or lifestyle. For a free tour, call (619) 235-2222.

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30
YEARS
OF DEFINING
MOMENTS
1975 - 2005