



D O W N T O W N  
**SAN DIEGO**  
P A R T N E R S H I P

**Downtown San Diego Clean & Safe Board**

**Media Update**

**Tuesday, May 10, 2016**



## Cox San Diego Connection

April 13, 2016



Kris Michell, President and CEO of the Downtown San Diego Partnership, sits down with Cox San Diego Connection host Courtney Dwyer to discuss San Diego Startup Week and Downtown San Diego's innovative startup ecosystem.



## Competing visions for future of Downtown SD examined at public forum

April 14, 2016 by **CW6 News Team**

<http://www.cw6sandiego.com/competing-visions-for-future-of-downtown-sd-examined-at-public-forum/>



A free public forum on a proposed Chargers stadium and convention center in downtown was held Thursday morning.

It was organized by the **Downtown San Diego Partnership** and the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce at the US Grant hotel. Organizers say they're hosting the forum so the public can examine the competing visions for the future of downtown San Diego.

Among the speakers was Fred Maas, who is leading the Chargers stadium effort.

Corey Briggs, who's behind the Citizen's Plan initiative, was also a panelist.

# The San Diego Union-Tribune.

## Acee: Good to see downtown factions fostering discussion

Representatives from Chargers, Citizens Plan and East Village group speak at U.S. Grant

<http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/2016/apr/14/chargers-maas-briggs-malmuth-downtown-partnership/>



By Kevin Acee | 11:10 a.m. April 14, 2016



The MTS busyard at 16th Street and Imperial Avenue downtown is the focus of a possible Chargers stadium site. — Google Maps street view

At least people are talking.

Maybe there are too many seeds being planted, the potential for weeds to choke actual results from sprouting. But civil discourse is far better than the discouragement wrought by so much undermining name calling.

For about 90 minutes on Thursday inside the U.S. Grant Hotel, cats and dogs lived together and no fur flew.

If we are going to get anything done in San Diego, we'll need more meetings like the breakfast symposium Wednesday featuring Chargers stadium point man Fred Maas, Citizens plan champion Cory Briggs and East Village advocate David Malmuth.

They don't agree about much, particularly about how downtown San Diego's available acreage and San Diego taxes should be used. But they clearly have an affinity for San Diego. Suffice it to say, you've heard a lot of their individual talking points before. Briggs wants to prevent overdevelopment of Mission Valley and the immediate construction of a waterfront convention center expansion. The Chargers want public help in building a stadium and convention center downtown. The East Village group opposes a behemoth in its midst in favor of a sort of "idea district" with residential, retail, office and park space.

Prior to the forum, staged by the **Downtown San Diego Partnership**, Maas and Briggs met privately for the first time. The two men ostensibly steering their separate initiatives agree to disagree on certain points, for sure. But they are united on the need for public conversation and public action. It was interesting, for instance, to hear all three men talk about the fact that moving the MTS busyard will require public money no matter becomes of the site. Sometimes, differences are only resolved by shining a light on differences.

“A real public dialogue has started,” Briggs said during his comments to the crowd of more than 100 people.

If that’s the result of the madness I wrote about a couple days ago, then hallelujah. It still seems to me that the Citizens Plan and the Chargers stadium-convention center initiative being on the ballot together in November clutters the ballot and confuses the electorate. But both Briggs and Maas asserted their belief in the ability of voters to discern the merits of each.

Events like Thursday will help. It will be up to the citizens to engage and decide what is important.



April 14, 2016



Kris Michell speaks to a San Diego 6 reporter following the Downtown Sports, Entertainment, and Convention Center Complex Breakfast hosted by the Downtown San Diego Partnership and the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce.



## Two Downtown Initiatives go Head-To-Head in Public Forum

By: Steve Bosh | April 14, 2016

<http://www.kusi.com/story/31728928/two-downtown-initiatives-go-head-to-head-in-public-forum>



SAN DIEGO (KUSI) — The **Downtown Partnership** Thursday held the first public forum on the competing ballot initiatives for a new downtown Chargers stadium.

Fred Maas represented the Chargers Initiative and Attorney Cory Briggs defended his competing Citizens' Plan for San Diego.

The best chance, mayor the only chance of getting a stadium, is to have these competing initiatives somehow merge or have one withdraw.

From Thursday's discussion at the U.S. Grant Hotel, that is not going to happen.

The Citizens' Plan will turn in signatures to the city clerk in 13 days, April 27.

Cory Briggs said that deadline will be met.

"From a Citizens' Plan perspective we intend to run a very vigorous, very honest, very honorable campaign. We're not hostile toward the Chargers," Briggs said.

Each of these plans will have to be sold to the public and both sides dismiss the notion that competing plans will confuse the voters.

The Chargers will run an equally vigorous campaign, but admit a single initiative certainly would have a better chance of passing.

"I think the answer would be yes, neither of us are delusional about that, but that's not the cards that we were dealt," Maas said.

So, we're headed down two parallel tracks and they're not likely to merge.

Basically, the two plans rely on increasing the hotel tax.

The Citizens' Plan is a 5 percent increase, 4 percent for tourism marketing and a convention annex at Tailgate Park and 1 percent to the city treasury.

No money for a stadium.

"Chargers if you want to build in conjunction with a convention center, no problem there's just one condition you gotta bring a checkbook, you won't get the public's checkbook," Briggs said.

The Chargers initiative is a 6 percent increase, 2 percent to tourism related activities and 4 percent for the stadium and Convention Center space.

Their vision is a complex that will attract visitors and events throughout the year, saying the notion that somehow this is not "Petco Park 2," is just wrong.

"In order to accomplish I think what we all want for downtown is going to take something big of this magnitude, create the kind of resources and dollars to solve so many problems we care about," Briggs added.

Although there is much about these plans the public still doesn't know, it's a long way to November.

This forum was the beginning of the public discussion to inform the voters.

"I wasn't quite sure of this when I started down this road, it turns out that we we're right, we're having that public conversation now," Briggs said.

"Ultimately you have to make your case and it needs to be reasonable to get people to support it and so we've worked very hard with groups around the community and tried to come up with the best proposal that we could," Briggs added.

David Malmuth, in the center seat, pushed the East Village People's Plan for an innovation center without a stadium. Fred Maas called that an indictment against the Chargers. Maas said what Malmuth was really saying is this: "send the Chargers back in Los Angeles."

The wild card in this competition is Mayor Kevin Faulconer. His support will help one plan and likely kill the other. We're told he will take a position, but not before the June primary.



## Talent Retention Program to Show Students Local Job Opportunities

Downtown San Diego Partnership and San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation partner again to bring students to tour downtown startups.

By Caroline Howe | April 15, 2016

<http://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/local/San-diego-talent-retention-effort-375876721.html>



San Diego is taking steps to show recent graduates local job opportunities.

San Diego is hoping to keep its college graduates in town by offering opportunities to explore downtown startups.

**Downtown San Diego Partnership** (DSDP) and San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation (San Diego Regional EDC) each work to support and develop business in downtown San Diego.

On Friday, the collaboration brought over 100 undergraduate computer science students from San Diego State University (SDSU) and University of California San Diego (UCSD) to tour local startups and incubators such as EvoNexus, The Control Group, Mindtouch and Red Door Interactive.

In 2014, DSDP and San Diego Regional EDC partnered for a talent retention program to educate students on local job opportunities for recent graduates in fields including cyber security, sports and active lifestyle and bio tech.

The program expanded in late 2015 and began utilizing Link2Downtown to bring students to the companies themselves.

Sarah Lubeck, Communication Manager of San Diego Regional EDC, explained San Diego schools, like UCSD, have large numbers of computer science graduates but students frequently move to San Francisco for job opportunities. However, there are a lot of local jobs for recent graduates in technology, elaborated Lubeck.

“We just want students to know San Diego is an option for young graduates,” said Lubeck. “Businesses here have really cool jobs for young people but we don’t talk about them enough.”

The talent retention program hopes to continue showing students what opportunities lie locally and keep San Diego-educated graduates in town.



## ***Lyft, Uber Offering Discounted Ride Sharing***

*By Mike Wille | April 15, 2016*

<http://fox5sandiego.com/2016/04/15/lyft-uber-offering-discounted-ride-sharing/>



SAN DIEGO — Lyft and community leaders Friday unveiled the Lyft Line ridesharing platform in San Diego, which allows customers of the ride-hailing firm to share their rides with others, and get a discount in return.

According to Lyft, passengers can get up to 60 percent off the normal cost of their trip. Lyft says it will honor the lower rate even if it cannot find another passenger. Rival Uber says it already offers a rideshare option in San Diego.

According to Lyft, 80 percent of the seats of vehicles on the roadway at a given time are unoccupied. Around 40 percent of Lyft passengers are choosing Lyft Line in other cities where the service is available, company officials said.

“My feeling is, with options like Lyft Line, we can significantly reduce congestion and make rides more affordable,” San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer said.

The program will also help the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, he said.

The unveiling came at a time when ride-hailing companies are facing criticism for problems with security and impacts on the traditional taxi industry. In Los Angeles, the number of taxi trips has fallen by one-third since Lyft and Uber began business there in 2013, according to the Los Angeles Times.

The San Diego  
**Union-Tribune.**

## Chargers stadium won't be 'airy fairy'

<http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/2016/apr/15/charger-stadium/>



By Michael Smolens | 3:17 p.m. April 15, 2016



This is a 2014 rendering of the convention center stadium concept. At the far left is the stadium, next to it is the convention center annex ballroom building. The existing convention center is at the far right, in between is the new library, a proposed two-tower hotel and Ballpark Village, a residential-retail project under construction and Petco Park. Credit: Populous, JMI Realty. Populous, JMI Realty

Chargers stadium adviser Fred Maas is used to being in the hot seat since spearheading the team's campaign to put a financing plan on the November ballot. But he couldn't quite hide his irritation over pointed criticism from developer David Malmuth during a Thursday breakfast symposium at the US Grant hotel.

Malmuth, who's been pushing hard for a more than 30-block

innovation, education and arts district in East Village, says the 15-acre Chargers downtown stadium-convention center proposal would foil those plans. In contrast to Petco Park, which has spawned revitalization of the once sketchy area, a downtown stadium would drive a "spike" in all that good work, Malmuth said.

"I didn't think I'd be listening to an indictment from David," Maas responded during the panel discussion, which was sponsored by the **Downtown San Diego Partnership** and San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce. Also featured was attorney Cory Briggs, author of another initiative that proposes to raise the hotel tax for a possible satellite convention center while barring public money for a downtown stadium.

"If people can leave with one thing, I want you to understand what he just told you, which is sending the Chargers back to Los Angeles," Maas told the audience. As for those dreams of other cool uses for the East Village blocks where the Chargers would like to put a stadium? Get real, Maas said.

"You've heard a lot of talk about things that might happen on those blocks. I can tell you as someone who's spent 10 years on this project, we've been listening to that for 10 years. And the possibility of bringing some artistic, airy fairy, consultant-based, planner-based plan to those blocks is impossible."

It could be a long road to November.



## Street Festival Celebrates Jacaranda Blooms in Downtown San Diego

<http://timesofsandiego.com/life/2016/04/16/street-festival-celebrates-jacaranda-blooms-in-downtown-san-diego/>

By Cassia Pollock | April 16, 2016



A new festival in the Cortez Hill neighborhood will celebrate the annual spring bloom of violet flowers on downtown San Diego trees.

The inaugural Jacaranda Spring Thing street festival will begin at noon on Saturday at Tweet Street Park, on Date Street between Eighth and Ninth avenues. This event will delight in the annual bloom of Jacaranda trees while providing lively music and delicious food. Treat yourself to Marcel's real belgian waffles and the asian fusion sandwiches of Bite Mi Express.

Do-it-Yourself experts from The Home Depot will be on-hand for spring gardening advice. They will teach festival-goers everything they need to know about getting their patio garden ready for the spring.

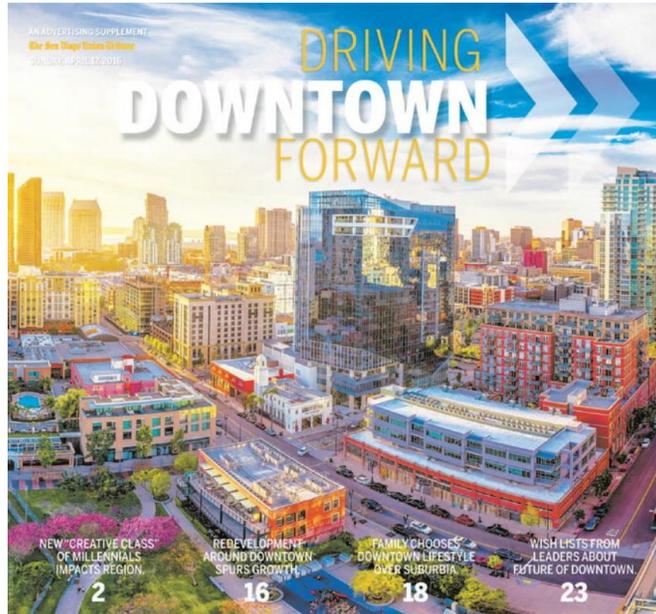
Families can snap selfies in the Pixter Photo Booth, so that they can always remember their experience at Jacaranda Spring 2016. There will also be a book truck handing out a healthy dose of literature. Families can read novels to their little ones while they sit on beach blankets surrounded by the violet blooms of Jacarandas in Tweet Street Park.

Local bands performing at the event include lighthearted acoustic jams from Sam Bybee, the jazzy sounds of Roman Palacios and GigTown.

Jacaranda trees are beginning to bloom throughout downtown, not only on Cortez Hill but also along Ash Street, the westbound roadway that runs through downtown to the waterfront.

The San Diego  
**Union-Tribune.**

Sunday, April 17, 2016



<http://sandiegouniontribune.ca.newsmemory.com/special.php?date=20160417&editionStart=Driving+Downtown+Forward>



## Tech Tuesday

April 19, 2016



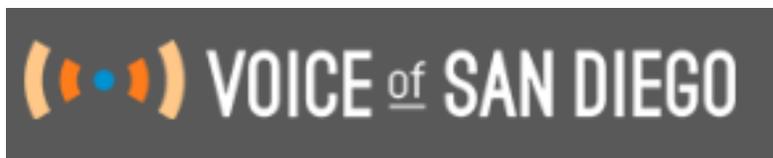
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pn9VidD20Do&feature=youtu.be>

KUSI's Brad Perry speaks to Kris Michell about the urban migration trends that continue to help build EMMES's 707 Broadway as the workplace of the future.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeAmIKwokF8&feature=youtu.be>

Kris Michell explains how amenities in the workplace, such as EMMES's Bark Park, help to attract and retain talented employees in Downtown San Diego.



## Morning Report

By Kinsee Morlan | April 25, 2016

### Choking on Smog in San Ysidro

San Ysidro is surrounded by freeways and abuts the busiest border crossing in the world.

Concerns about polluted air in the neighborhood are not new, but as the federal government pushes forward on its \$735 million expansion of the San Ysidro Port of Entry, community members have been spurred into action.

VOSD contributor H.G. Reza reports on a grassroots effort to conduct a new air-pollution study in San Ysidro, a neighborhood with higher regional rates of asthma and other respiratory illnesses in children.

Nonprofit advocacy group Casa Familiar got a \$229,935 grant from the California Environmental Protection Agency. The money will pay for a two-year program that includes 12 air pollution monitors that will be placed at sites throughout San Ysidro.

General Services Administration, the federal agency heading up the port's expansion, which is scheduled to be completed by 2019, says San Ysidro residents have nothing to worry about. The federal agency says the expanded port will cut down car idling times, which will decrease overall air pollution.

Activists in San Ysidro don't buy it.

### Chargers Signature-Gathering Efforts Begin

"Keep the Chargers in San Diego! Keep Comic-Con in San Diego!"

That's what a group of guys gathering signatures for the Chargers-backed stadium ballot measure yelled at me as I walked by their table set up outside the annual Chicano Park Day celebration in Barrio Logan over the weekend.

You, too, will likely hear a similar pitch as you exit and enter your local grocery store in coming months. The Chargers officially launched their signature-gathering Saturday at a big event at the Padres tailgate parking lot in the East Village.

A few surprise guests took to the stage at the event including Congressmen Juan Vargas, Scott Peters and Darrell Issa. Vargas urged Mayor Kevin Faulconer, who was not at the event, to get off his "duff" and help the team get what it needs. (NBC 7 San Diego)

The mayor's absence was highlighted via several "Where's Kevin?" signs held by folks at the event. The signs are part of mayoral candidate Ed Harris' new anti-Faulconer website, which slams the mayor for

not having a vision for keeping the Chargers. But Harris himself won't say if he supports the Chargers plan.

NFL commissioner Roger Goodell made an appearance at the Chargers event. He said San Diego would be a perfect place for another Super Bowl and he had a message for the mayor, too. He said if Faulconer was seriously considering supporting the plan, he shouldn't just be asking questions but working harder to get the answers he needs so he can help "structure the deal in a way that's really right for the community and be part of the solution..." (Mighty 1090 AM)

Tony Krvaric, the chairman of the Republican Party of San Diego County, doesn't think very highly of Goodell's comments and offered this interpretation.

The Chargers, by the way, need about 67,000 valid signatures to qualify an initiative for the November ballot. On Sunday, a check of the signature gathering hotline revealed professionals were getting \$12 per signature. They'll need to collect about 100,000 total.

## Downtown San Diego is the Next Innovation Hub

Mary Walshok, the associate vice chancellor for public programs and dean of Extension at UC San Diego, co-wrote an op-ed for the U-T that calls downtown San Diego and its surrounding neighborhoods a "millennial magnet needed to move our innovation economy forward."

Historically, Torrey Pines Mesa has been the city's innovation hub thanks to the research institutes clustered there. But Walshok and her coauthor, Kris Michell of the Downtown San Diego Partnership, think downtown could and should become the city's next innovation frontier because young, creative people like to live in walkable urban environments.

Walshok talked more about innovation in San Diego in a recent episode of our weekly VOSD podcast (she comes in at about the 27-minute mark).



## The Perfect Storm For Downtown SD Office

By Carrie Rossenfeld | April 27, 2016



<http://www.globest.com/sites/carrierossenfeld/2016/04/27/the-perfect-storm-for-downtown-sd-office/?channel=markets&section=san-diego&slreturn=20160327125543>

SAN DIEGO—**Millennials** and **Gen-Xers** are among Downtown San Diego's largest, best-educated and most-affluent demographic groups—and they're leaving the submarket to go to work, **Downtown San Diego Partnership's CEO Kris Michell** tells GlobeSt.com. The firm recently revealed the results of its demographic study, with **UCSD Extension** program, of the Downtown market. The study found, among other things, that **young professionals** want to both live and work in Downtown, but they are forced to commute out of the city for work because that's not where the jobs they seek are located. We spoke exclusively with Michell about the study findings and how the **commercial real estate** community can capture this growing Downtown demographic group.

***GlobeSt.com: What were the big takeaways from your recent demographic study with UCSD?***

***Michell:*** I'd like to start by talking about the reasons why we did this report. In 2013, the Downtown San Diego Partnership led an effort to engage thousands of San Diegans to prioritize the needs of Downtown San Diego. It was a 20-year vision plan—really a 20-year to-do list—with evolved goals and strategies to help the **economy**. It was groundbreaking at the time, but it also shed light on how much we really needed Downtown's current demographics and empirical data to help determine if we were moving in the right direction. We needed to know who was working and living Downtown and why the **urban core** was different. We suspected there was this quiet brilliance in Downtown, but could it be measured with quantitative and qualitative data? That led into the need for the study.

Through the study, we found that Downtown is full of young, bright, highly educated professionals. We now know that of the 35,000 residents Downtown, 28% are in the 30-to-39-year-old age group. We also found, interestingly enough, that 51% of Downtown residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, and 21% have a graduate or medical degree. Downtown is a much higher-educated workforce statistically than the rest of the county, and the average income Downtown is approximately \$73,000 a year (countywide average annual income level is

\$59,000). So, we have a lot of younger, highly educated and more-affluent folks living Downtown.

We also found that Downtown is in a regional **employment** center—it's an **innovation** hotspot and an **economic** driver for regional growth. There are more than 3,600 businesses Downtown and 137,000 employees, and 87% of them commute in and out of Downtown every day. This presents both an opportunity and a challenge. We are creating that ecosystem where innovation firms can thrive and grow. When you have a collection of innovative and **co-working spaces**, the by-product of that is an open environment. Also, we found out that Downtown is a highly amenitized, urban, walkable community.

***GlobeSt.com: Are there new demographic groups emerging that are interested in the Downtown San Diego market?***

**Michell:** It didn't surprise me because I'm one of them, but **Baby-Boomers** are boomeranging right back into the urban core. It's pretty exciting. Similar to Millennials and Gen-Xers, we want to walk out of our house and do things. Upkeep of the home is not how Baby Boomers want to spend their later years—they want to travel and do things. And they want to give back—Boomers are volunteers. We also have companies themselves Downtown, like **Underground Elephant**, that are giving back to charities. Downtown is an interesting community—everybody knows everyone. It's a wonderful, tight-knit community that's highly collaborative and connected.

***GlobeSt.com: What is the next phase of development for Downtown that this study indicates should occur?***

**Michell:** We have individual communities and neighborhoods, so the next part flowing is the East Village: **Makers Quarter** and **I.D.E.A. District** are just going to explode. Residential leads commercial, always, and now we're seeing commercial coming in. We will see just what that commute does. A lot of people who would love to work Downtown and live there now don't have the option. They will look for opportunities to actually find jobs Downtown. The biggest awakening is that the innovation economy space will have a ready workforce Downtown. This is a fun time to be doing this. You know that tipping point that occurs in communities and in real estate? Well, we just passed it, and momentum is now carrying us. It is going to be great. We are moving forward rapidly and in a great way. Those who are smart in the commercial space are building creative-office space. That momentum is there.

***GlobeSt.com: What else should our readers know about this study?***

**Michell:** We will update it annually. There are so many great nuggets and kernels of information in it; we're very excited.



## Office Is Missing The Boat On Downtown San Diego

By Carrie Rossenfeld | April 28, 2016



<http://www.globest.com/sites/carrierossenfeld/2016/04/28/office-is-missing-the-boat-on-downtown-san-diego/>

SAN DIEGO—More innovation start-ups are located Downtown than in any other part of the county, creating an untapped market for office developers looking to get a leg up on San Diego’s future, Mary Walshok, associate vice chancellor for public programs and dean of extension at the University of California San Diego, tells GlobeSt.com. **We recently spoke with Kris Michell, CEO of Downtown San Diego Partnership, about a demographic study her firm did with the help of Walshok’s team.** We also spoke exclusively with Walshok about the thought process behind the study and how the real estate industry can help meet the needs of the growing demographic groups in Downtown San Diego.

**GlobeSt.com:** What was your involvement with the demographic study recently completed by the Downtown San Diego Partnership?

**Walshok:** I was the study director. They contracted with my team at the UCSD Extension, a group that does a lot of work in economic trends in the region. My team put together the study, and I was its principal writer.

There were some surprising takeaways from the study. I live and work on the Torrey Pines Mesa, and the most surprising thing was the number, quality and excitement related to companies that are starting up Downtown. Most of them are in the IT software space—I think we found about 111, which we put in the report. Downtown San Diego has the highest innovation equation in the whole county. There are more innovation companies starting Downtown than anywhere else in the county. And the

organizations that are making it happen are grassroots organizations—this hasn't been organized by the City; it's happened on its own. And that's why understanding Millennials is important because the people making this happen are younger, like an urban lifestyle and are incubating companies there because that's where they like to live and work. Kris suspected that this was happening because she kept bumping into them, and she said, "I think something is going on, but I don't know how to find out." Well, we know how to find out—look at the business-license data. Also, look at how well educated the Downtown residents are. On a per-capita basis, they have much higher levels of education. Most people who live Downtown work outside of Downtown. There are highly educated people who want to live and work Downtown, and those who don't work Downtown say they would work there if there were jobs there.

**GlobeSt.com:** What can the real estate industry do to meet the needs of the growing demographic groups in this submarket?

**Walshok:** I think there's a real challenge here because the cost of a lot of the core Downtown space is very high. Nonetheless, you've got companies incubating there and a lot of people living there. A lot of people live in North Park, Golden Hill and other neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown's core, and we recommend that Kris, the mayor and others look at a somewhat wider geography than the core of East Village, Little Italy, and the baseball and library districts. If you look at the maps, Barrio Logan, the diamond district and Golden Hill are a 10-minute bike ride from the core of Downtown, but nobody is asking if there are opportunities for developing complementary housing stock. Are there opportunities to develop office parks or incubation space for very-early-stage entrepreneurs developing a concept? As they get more mature, they may need more high-end, sophisticated space. We feel having looked at the demographics and the cost of land, plus public and private foundation funds for developing in some of those neighborhoods, you would have a much more flexible landscape to grow the innovation economy if you include those contiguous neighborhoods.

Right now, there's not a lot of talk going on between Bosa and Irvine Co. and a lot of the core Downtown developers and the smaller, yet significant, families or organizations like the Jacobs family about the diamond district or Barrio Logan. If those conversations happened, there might be some synergies to get more young people, companies and jobs Downtown. And then it becomes an engine for growth. That was the second key finding: we realized since we'd been doing work in the diamond district and other parts of the city that you talk about the I.D.E.A. District being 10 blocks, but what if you created a community that crosses a lot of boundaries? The third thing we were struck by was, when we did a survey with tech-company executives on the Torrey Pines Mesa, it became very clear that the tech and financial leadership—and even the academic leadership—at UCSD and on the Mesa doesn't realize what's going on Downtown. They see it as hotels, museums and tourism, but not as an economic asset in their sector. That's what we have to start: computer science and IT are impacting all development, healthcare delivery is about iPhone apps, and it's all about software—and software is happening Downtown and on the Torrey Pines Mesa, where other science is developing.

**GlobeSt.com:** What else should our readers know about the demographic study and your role in it?

**Walshok:** As social scientists, we must be careful to grow I companies and incubate them. That's why I'm so high on Barrio Logan and Golden Hill—companies are going to need kids from all walks of life who can do coding and other technical jobs in science-based industries. We have to have a more inclusive Downtown strategy, to provide the chance to engage with innovators, entrepreneurs, working-class

residents and new immigrant families in a much better way. Equally important about Downtown San Diego is its proximity to Mexico; it could be a larger landscape, a hub of diverse tech and social interaction that really allows our population to share in the benefits of an innovative economy in a way that Torrey Pines Mesa and La Jolla have not been able to do as well. Those are my values, but the data suggests a real possibility for this in San Diego.

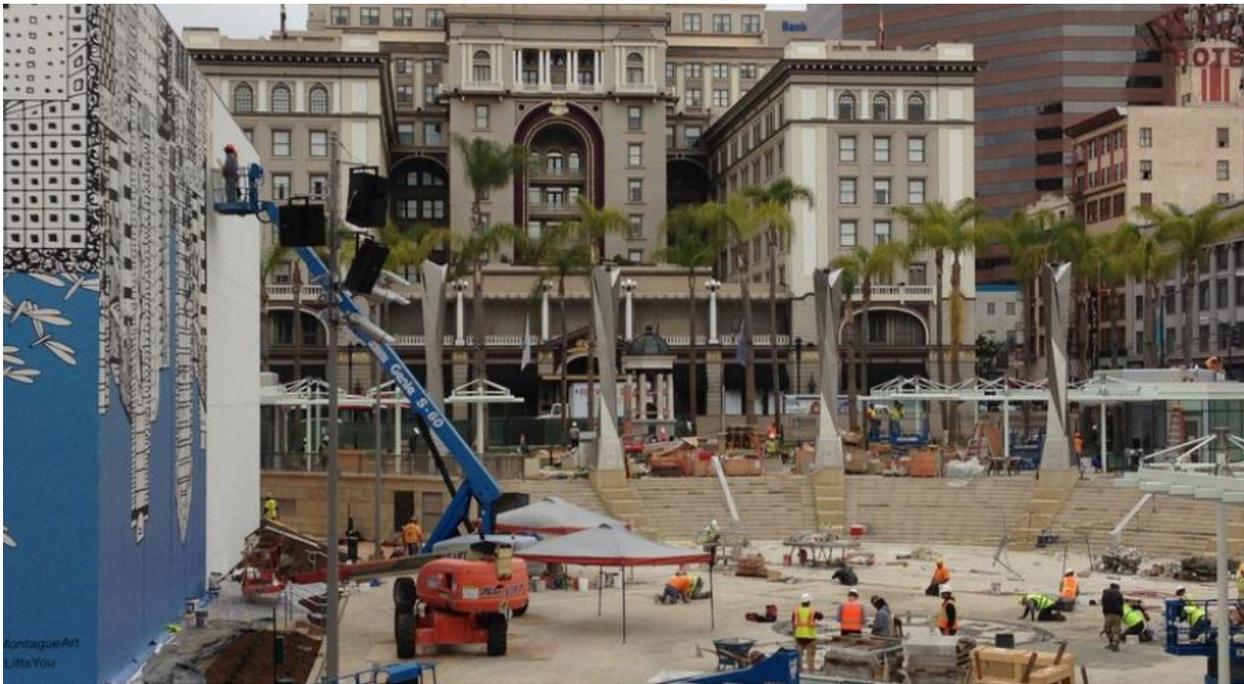
**GlobeSt.com:** You will be speaking at the Southwest Riverside County Regional Healthcare/Economic Development Summit in Murrieta, CA, next month. What do you feel are the most important factors for creating strong economic development around health and biotech and exploring options for healthy cities?

**Walshok:** One of the important factors is that innovations that are occurring in the diagnosis and treatment of health-related conditions are in part coming out of research and development in these entrepreneurial clusters. Start-up companies are developing health-related iPhone apps, new devices to monitor health and new drugs, and you have got to be close—ideally, physically or in some virtual way—to the centers of ideas. Also, you have to have institutions—hospitals and clinics—since many clinical-trial companies and proof-of-concept innovators are proving the value of healthcare technology. That’s easier than setting up a big pharmaceutical lab, so the applications and proof-of-concept work has to go on. And then, as you begin to see the emergence of certain kinds of products—there is a whole series of health-monitoring products—and you have to have a business infrastructure that helps turn a product or idea into a real company. There is a food chain there, and the places this is happening in are all in the same geography. The challenge in the Riverside County/Murrieta area is how to integrate all of these components even though they’re not in the same geographic area. Grand Rapids, MI, which has no university specializing in bio or medicine, has hospitals active in clinical trials, so MU started opening components of its medical schools in Grand Rapids. They didn’t relocate, but they established a presence. Maybe Murrieta needs something like that, where medical schools or major health-provider partners in the region set up a presence because that region has value. They just need to figure out what those assets are.

# The San Diego Union-Tribune.

## Horton Plaza: Historic park reopens in \$17M expansion

By Roger Showley | April 29, 2016



Horton Plaza park's historic fountain with its colored lights is on again. Three new pavilions will serve food and snacks. A new ArtsTix booth is opening. And public restrooms are returning.

San Diego's 146-year-old gathering place, where presidents spoke, citizens celebrated and pro- and anti-war demonstrators assembled, will open for business Wednesday after a \$17 million restoration and expansion.

Mayor Kevin Faulconer will officially rededicate Horton Plaza park at noon and kick off a series of opening weekend festivities, followed by regularly scheduled events that could once again make the park the place to meet and mingle.

"It was the town center from 1870 to the present and we've been missing it," said local historian Iris Engstrand. "I know San Diegans will be glad that it is finished."

Construction crews last week were frantically grouting the granite pavers, installing the drought-tolerant plants and testing the lights and other equipment at the 1.3-acre park at Fourth Avenue and Broadway.

“There are few projects that were more anticipated than the park,” said Kris Michell, president and CEO of the Downtown San Diego Partnership business group. “It will offer hundreds of events each year and is definitely intended to enhance arts and culture downtown. It is a regional asset, not just for those who live and work in downtown but it is one of those sophisticated parks that will appeal to all San Diegans.”

Highlights include the restoration of the historic park that downtown founder Alonzo Horton set aside in 1870-'71 opposite his Horton House Hotel, replaced in 1910 by the U.S. Grant Hotel. The fountain, which featured electric colored lights that were a high-tech innovation of their day, was designed by famed San Diego architect Irving J. Gill, who also redesigned the park for the 1910 opening of the Grant.

That’s especially welcomed by Bruce Coons, executive director of the Save Our Heritage Organisation, which uses the fountain as its logo in recognition of the many battles to save the park and fountain over the last 60 years.

“It’s really exciting,” Coons said. “And I think it will be more of what it was intended to be, a public gathering space.”

In place of the Westfield’s Robinson’s-May department store that was demolished in 2012 is a 37,000-square-foot addition to the 20,000-square-foot history park that stretches south to the Balboa Theater. It includes an amphitheater and interactive fountain, stainless luminaire lighting fixtures and three pavilions that include the park’s first public restrooms since underground facilities were demolished in the early-1980s.

On the blank walls of the Bradley Building, a 1985 recreation of a historic office building on the west side of the park, is a temporary mural by Colorado artist Kelsey Montague — 45-foot-high, 131-foot-long depiction of several upside-down high-rises and a flutter of dragon flies that visitors are free to pose next to for selfies.

These additions to the historic park were made possible when Westfield decided to give the Robinson’s-May building back to the city in exchange for terminating a profit-sharing agreement for parking garage revenues. Westfield also agreed to schedule at least 200 events in the park per year, lease the pavilions to food services and handle maintenance and repairs.

“We’ve walked people through the site and they’re absolutely blown away with the scale and quality of the space,” said Westfield spokeswoman Kim Brewer.

Sarah Richardson, the company’s national special events director, said wedding planners, local companies and organizations and Comic-Con International are all thinking of ways they could hold events in the park. Revenues from private events are expected to cover park management and entertainment.

The northeast pavilion will include a Starbucks coffee shop and Sloan’s ice cream will occupy the northwest pavilion.

Ali Hajisattari, a mechanical engineer who owns the Florida-based Sloan’s franchise for San Diego, said he will stock fresh fudge, cookies, croissants, caramel candy apples and other goodies in addition to 20 flavors of all-natural ice cream.

"I thought it would be more fun," said Hajisattari, who immigrated from Iran five years ago. "Engineering is not that much fun."

Bruxie waffles backed out of a lease in the southeast pavilion and a replacement has not been selected.

However, the San Diego Performing Arts League will reopen its ArtsTix booth in that pavilion and 25 volunteers will double as information-please docents to help visitors find their way to the waterfront, Balboa Park and the Gaslamp Quarter.

"I'm fascinated to see, going forward, how this large, wonderful communal space will add to the benefits of living and working and visiting downtown San Diego," said board President D. Candis Paule.

Horton Plaza has a long history of serving as San Diego's version of London's Trafalgar Square in London and Madrid's Plaza Mayor. President Benjamin Harrison spoke there in 1892. The surrender of the Japanese at the end of World War II was cheered in 1945. Vietnam War protests took place there in the 1960s.

One of the first references to the plaza appeared in the May 7, 1871, San Diego Union, headlined "Base Ball": "Yesterday two full 'nines' assembled on the Plaza and played a game of seven innings."

But the plaza was never big enough to comfortably hold thousands of visitors. Redesign ideas ranged from replacing it with an underground auditorium and parking garage to paving it over to create an urban hardscape plaza.

When developer Ernest W. Hahn opened Horton Plaza shopping center in 1985, the historic park was restored to its 1910 look. But within six years, period benches, trash cans and grassy lawns were removed to discourage homeless campouts. The fountain, a mechanical marvel in its day, stopped working in 2008 and the park was boarded up four years later when the Robinson's-May building was demolished.

Downtown leaders hope the old issues of vagrancy and vandalism will be gone for good now that the park is bigger and better managed than ever. But Westfield is leaving it to the San Diego Police Department to patrol the park after hours.

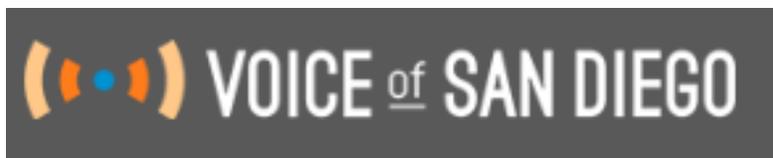
Daniel Kay, the Civic San Diego project manager for the park's expansion, said a security camera system will help identify any criminal activity.

One problem of immediate concern to SOHO's Coons is the limitation placed on operating the historic fountain only four hours a day. He said he will lobby the city to exempt the rules in this one case. The fountain's security is at stake, he said, and its operation is a key part of the historic aspect of the park.

"The tradeoff is having a dormant fountain that is possibly open to vandalism and losing a little water," he said. "There is much more benefit to keeping it running."

At a social event Saturday, Falconer said he did not realize the restrictive hours that might apply to the fountain and would look into the situation.

"It is our most historic fountain," he said.



## Four Takeaways From the New Homeless Numbers

By Lisa Halverstadt | May 2, 2016



Tamzyn Wagner lives with her puppy Baby on Harbor Drive in downtown San Diego.

<http://www.voiceofsandiego.org/all-narratives/homelessness/four-takeaways-from-the-new-homeless-numbers/>

As some other cities celebrate drops in homelessness, San Diego County's confronted with a spike in those living on the street.

The annual point-in-time count, conducted by hundreds of volunteers on a morning in January, relies on reports from shelter operators and the observations of volunteers who seek out the homeless on sidewalks, canyons and other outdoor encampments. The results of the count released Friday revealed a 19 percent increase in unsheltered homelessness countywide but a 0.6 percent decrease in the homeless population overall.

The survey tallied 834 fewer people staying in shelters than last January's count.

The new numbers represent a 13 percent drop in overall homelessness since 2012 but a continued challenge for the nonprofits and local officials looking to help get San Diegans off the streets.

Here are some key takeaways from the point-in-time count results.

### **San Diego County's system for serving the homeless is in flux – and it may be showing in the numbers.**

Cities and nonprofits across the county have been shifting their approaches to combating homelessness in the last year. That could be contributing to the seemingly contradictory results of the count – a slight drop overall, but a big spike in people on the street.

San Diego's long had a large stock of transitional housing, an approach that focuses on providing services to a person before connecting them with a permanent place to live. Last year, the federal Housing and Urban Development Department urged nonprofits to switch to new programs that prioritize housing first or risk losing funding.

The city of San Diego also moved to a year-round interim shelter at Father Joe's Villages with an eye toward more permanent housing placements. In the process, it lost dozens of beds at two winter tents that once housed up to 350 around the time of the point-in-time count.

Dolores Diaz, executive director of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, the group that carries out the count, was careful not to speculate about the reasons behind the results.

But she acknowledged the significant changes under way.

San Diego's refocusing its resources – particularly on homeless veterans and new housing-first programs – and that has real impacts on the rest of the homeless population and the system serving them, she said.

"Sometimes things appear worse before they look better," Diaz said.

### **San Diego's homeless are moving downtown.**

While the city of San Diego's overall homeless population is down 8 percent, downtown neighborhoods are living a different reality.

The downtown census tracts saw a 21 percent increase in street homelessness from 2015 to 2016.

More regular monthly counts by **the Downtown San Diego Partnership**, a prominent business group, have shown massive upticks in that population too.

The Downtown Partnership's April tabulation revealed a 21 percent spike in unsheltered homelessness since last spring and an 86 percent boom from April 2012 to April 2016.

East Village, a hub for nonprofits that serve the homeless, has seen the most significant growth.

"Our homeless are migrating, moving within the city, and they're moving downtown," Diaz said.

Another magnet could also be a factor: The San Diego Housing Commission hosted Project Homeless Connect, a one-day resource fair for the homeless, two days before the point-in-time count.

### **San Diego's focused on ending veteran homelessness, and it's gotten some results.**

Federal authorities have pushed cities nationwide to focus on ending veteran homelessness. San Diego's increased its response to that call in the last year and it's starting to show.

The point-in-time count revealed a 16 percent reduction in San Diego's homeless veteran population since last year's survey. This translates into a 34 percent drop since 2012.

San Diego's still behind, though. Several other cities announced last year that they'd effectively ended veteran homelessness.

A lack of leadership and coordination, steep housing costs and an inefficient deployment of resources previously kept San Diego from making significant progress.

Now local officials have rolled out a handful of initiatives focused on combating veteran homelessness and the San Diego Veterans Affairs has addressed staffing shortages that stymied efforts to house veterans.

San Diego Veteran Affairs program coordinator Cara Franke, who supervises the local office's work with homeless veterans, said she's excited about local progress now that more staffers are on the job.

"The VA has its resources mobilized," Franke said.

Diaz also said San Diego saw roughly 13 percent drops in unsheltered chronic and family homelessness, two other groups federal officials want cities to drastically reduce in coming years.

### **San Diego's seen a major spike in tent cities.**

Diaz said task force volunteers saw an unprecedented number of makeshift tents and shelters when they hit the streets in January.

They documented a 69 percent year-over-year spike countywide in so-called hand-built structures, the task force's term for tents, cardboard boxes or tarps draped over shopping carts.

Before the point-in-time count in January, multiple homeless people and advocates told me more passerby were donating tents to the homeless, particularly in East Village, in anticipation of El Niño rains.