



## **Citizens' Stadium Advisory Group Site Selection | Statement of Reasons**

March 12, 2015

After analyzing the Mission Valley site, which houses Qualcomm Stadium and covers 166 acres the City owns, and the Downtown site, which the City would have to piece together through several land purchases, the Citizens' Stadium Advisory Group (CSAG) has selected the Mission Valley location.

Each site has its pros and cons, but for several reasons (outlined below) the Mission Valley location is the best choice for the creation of a multi-use stadium and a fair and workable financing plan, which the committee expects to present to Mayor Kevin Faulconer by the end of May. The Mayor assembled the Advisory Group six weeks ago and asked the group to resolve two issues: Select either the Mission Valley site or the Downtown site, and develop a financing plan for public consideration.

Recent events in Los Angeles, including the Chargers plans to build a joint stadium with the Oakland Raiders in Carson, mean any plan to keep the Chargers in San Diego needs to be developed expeditiously.

The CSAG reviewed numerous plans associated with both sites with a fresh and independent perspective. It also met with numerous individuals and groups during its site-selection process, including representatives of the San Diego Chargers, San Diego State University, the County of San Diego, Convention Center, hotels, the San Diego River Park Foundation, college bowl games, developers, labor groups, architects, Chargers alumni, and fans.

The Mission Valley site was selected because it's the best location for a multi-use stadium for all of San Diego. The facility would anchor a new community and host the Chargers, the Aztecs, college bowl games, high school playoffs, concerts, monster truck jams, and other events.

It's also important to note that when the CSAG met with the Chargers in February, the Chargers said they did not prefer one site over the other. The team described its position as agnostic.



While the team has recently promoted a joint-use stadium and expanded Convention Center at the Downtown site, the Chargers campaigned for the Mission Valley site for several years.

“Redeveloping the Qualcomm site makes a lot of sense,” the Chargers wrote in 2003. “The site can be transformed from an empty parking lot into a unique and vibrant new community the rivals the best in the world.”

The team added: “One hundred acres of asphalt surrounds Qualcomm stadium. For 350 days a year, this parking lot remains largely unused. The Chargers’ concept turns it into a vibrant village with parks, condominiums and shops. Putting homes on transportation corridors is a top priority for this region. The Chargers’ concept embraces that notion and envisions affordable and market rate homes with an easy walk to the trolley station, which, by the way, is built specifically to handle the large crowds generated by a stadium.”

In 2006, the team shifted its focus to other sites due to a lack of support at City Hall, an obstacle that no longer exists.

CSAG’s decision to select the Mission Valley site was unanimous and based on the following 8 reasons:

**1. Saves roughly \$250 million**

- Building a joint-use stadium and expanded convention center on the Downtown site would require relocating the MTS bus yard, which would cost the City roughly \$150 million, according to MTS.
- Additionally, the City would have to buy multiple properties to acquire the land that would be needed. All told, the land purchases would cost the City roughly \$100 million, according to JMI Realty.
- The City of San Diego owns the Mission Valley site. The city’s water department does own some of the property but, if necessary, the city could acquire the land from the department.

**2. Creates development and tax revenue opportunities**

The Mission Valley site includes 166 acres of land, the equivalent of 66 city blocks. Developing the land would help pay for the stadium. Revitalizing the land with mixed-use residential, commercial and retail properties, with a new multi-use stadium as an anchor, would create jobs, property and sales tax revenue, and additional housing. If a hotel operator becomes part of this village concept,





Transient Occupancy Tax funds could be generated. The developable land also creates greater partnership opportunities with the County of San Diego.

**3. Restores and beautifies San Diego River**

Improvements could open the river to walking and biking paths, and transform Mission Valley into a master planned space for year-round use and enjoyment by all San Diegans.

**4. Site is transit friendly and offers better parking and tailgating opportunities**

The Mission Valley site is located near three freeways, major roadways, and a trolley station that can be expanded. In addition to being centrally located, the Mission Valley site also offers more parking and better tailgating opportunities than the Downtown site.

**5. Provides San Diego State University with an ideal location**

The university is located nearby and will of course be offered the opportunity to participate in the cost and utilization of this community asset, including the use of this multi-purpose entertainment facility for football games. SDSU also could work with the eventual development partner to utilize some of the surrounding land. The Mission Valley site will continue to be the best site to host the Poinsettia and Holiday Bowl games.

**6. Avoids years of uncertainty**

The City does not own the land proposed for the Downtown site, so it would have to enter into negotiations with more than one landowner to purchase multiple parcels. There is little to no certainty in this process, and it could open the City to eminent domain issues and years of uncertainty and costly litigation.

**7. Avoids costly delays associated with relocating MTS**

The downtown site includes the MTS bus yard, meaning the planned joint-use stadium and convention center would force the relocation of MTS, which would cost roughly \$150 million and take 5 to 7 years, according to MTS.

**8. Avoids scheduling conflicts with Chargers games and conventions**

If the joint-use stadium and Convention Center expansion planned for the Downtown site is built, convention center officials have said it would be difficult to book large events that generate significant revenue for the City in the shared space when the NFL is in season – between August and December. Large conventions are booked years in advance and the NFL releases its schedule every April. This scheduling conflict means it would be difficult to avoid gridlock



between conventions and Chargers games on Mondays, Thursdays, and Sundays, including weekend set-ups and tear-downs at the expanded convention center.

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