

Mr. Bertram Goodhue,  
170 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Dear Goodhue:

I sent you a copy of my preliminary plan No. 3 for this exposition, but neglected to explain certain features of it. An estimate of cut and fill in grading has now been completed except the grading of some small plots between buildings shown on my plan and the adjoining walks or drives, and this estimate is so much less than that made for previous plans that I think it is safe to assume that the plan has now been cut down enough. The fill is some 10,000 cu. yds. in excess of the cut but this can be changed to an excess of cut, as it should be, by lowering the elevation figures for the Plaza de Musica and the Plaza Larga and El Camino Reale whenever the outlines of buildings are determined upon and still leave something for grading just outside the walls of buildings.

I am not without hope that we can so plan the buildings as to find money enough for a bridge on the line of Date St. or at a lower level a little north of that to serve as a more dignified and more convenient approach from the district west of the park than would be afforded by the 3% drive shown on my plans entering from Date and Eighth St. and running down to the circle on the Canyon, at north end of El Rhodep.

It seems to me that my general conception of the main group of buildings is a good one and I trust it fully commends itself to your artistic judgment. Intelligent people here seem well satisfied with it.

My idea is that of an idealized small Mexican town, consisting of a broad street leading gently up to a town plaza upon which would face the State building and a block of buildings for the social functions of Mexico and Central and South American Republics, and also the two buildings of smaller size for Southern California exhibits, one for Forestry and Fisheries, the other for Mines and Transportation or something of that sort.

In this plan I have narrowed the Plaza Larga between arcades, to 120 ft. and suggest reducing the arcades from 25 to 23 ft. in width. I suggest that you make the piers of the arcade  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ft. thick to simulate the customary thickness of plastered adobe and to avoid the thin appearance of ordinary stud and lath and plaster construction.

My suggestion as to planning the adjoining buildings

is to use the frontage along the two arcades of Plaza Larga for a row of booths as is usual in Oriental towns. These booths would be flowed independently from the rest of the buildings of which they would be otherwise a part, so as to be entered, in the main on a level or one step up from the arcade floor. I should like to see these booths used mostly for handicrafts in actual operation. There are plenty such that would be far more attractive to most visitors than "dead" exhibits. I have made no attempt to think up a list but can name a few at random. For instance, cigar making, wood carving, basket weaving, oriental rug looms, pottery making, book binding, lace making, glass blowing, wrought iron work for grills, balconies, stair rails, etc. type setting and card printing, statuette making, marble carving, linen paper making, ornamental glass grinding, and so on. Of course some of these are commonplace. I should try to select odd and unusual ones, especially Indian and foreign ones. I do not say these would pay or could be provided solely by concessionaires. I should advocate having an adequate appropriation made for the pay and expenses of these handicraftsmen and women by the exposition even if size of buildings and other appropriations, usually stretched to the utmost, have to be cut down.

At intervals between these booths would be the various entrances to the exhibit parts of the buildings, --- some necessarily with steps up from the arcade to the main floor level.

The three main exhibit buildings, that for Horticulture and Agriculture and Irrigation, that for Domestic Liberal Arts (so-called) and this perhaps with a gallery or second story if need be for Education (public schools and colleges to interest a large class of visitors) and that for Foreign Liberal Arts I have suggested should have each its patio, each treated architecturally in a different manner, so as to make the buildings more interesting in a simple unsophisticated way than the usual barn-like interior of exhibition buildings.

I have left one long place free of building on the west side of the west arcade as an outlook upon the terrace gardens which I conceive of as covered with great masses of flowers with little or no turf and not much if any elaborate garden architecture or sculpture which would it seems to me be somewhat out of place (I mean elaborately decorated vases, statues, fountains, etc.) where the Mission style is to predominate. We can have massive simple masonry, fountain rims, etc. While this opening to the terrace garden is desirable I think as connecting in an obvious "landscape" way the concession district, the Date St. entrance the canyon and the Jardín del Terrado with Plaza Larga, I have it in mind that if the pressure becomes irresistible for another, big (relatively) exposition building it could be put on this terrace west of the west arcade of Plaza Larga.

I have assumed a grade of 4% for the Plaza Larga in this plan. It may be decided to increase this to 4½% so as to lessen the fill especially on El Camino Real where the main entrance is. One reason why I made so much fill in Plaza Larga was to insure good depth without so much digging out of "hard pan" for the planting spaces. Another reason was to leave ample space under the

temporary exhibition buildings for the great amount of electric wiring needed in such buildings and for plumbing, etc. with the least amount of excavation which will be costly in that "hard pan". Another reason was to enable us to get that elevated outlook or terrace effect, with parapets, from the arcades, which are to be retained after the exhibit buildings are removed and which effect you suggested would be desirable.

The five temporary exhibit buildings shown on my plan are amply large in ground area to use up all the money that we have estimated should be allowed for them, at the average cost of \$2.00 per square foot.

I have indicated on the plan the interior passageways and the exterior arcades which in the former case, <sup>as called for</sup> and in the latter appeal to me as being desirable to give the buildings an interesting character and to afford views of the city, harbor, ocean, Point Loma, the mountains and the local scenery of the park and terrace gardens. I realize that this is not an economical way of providing exhibit space as of course each passage should have exhibit space on both sides of it instead of on one side only as will be the case with these arcades, both those surrounding the patios and those surrounding the exterior of the buildings, but I think the effect gained would be well worth the loss of exhibit space. I would concede however that the arcades on the north side of "Horticulture" and both north and south sides of "Foreign Liberal Arts" may not be worth while as they would have but restricted outlooks. The buildings not being shaded or colored these distinctions between arcades and passages and exhibit spaces and patios are not readily recognizable without some explanation.

Plaza de Musica I have reduced on this preliminary plan No. 3, from 350 ft. square inside the arcades, to 300 ft. square, both for economy of grading, paving, etc. and because you criticized the first plan as being unduly large for good architectural grouping. This reduction in dimensions has led me to omit the idea of drives crossing through the arcades east and west leaving the main drive, however, crossing it north and south. I have retained the bandstand in the middle on the assumption that it was needed during the exposition, but if you prefer, as I think you would, it can be moved away after the exposition and replaced by a simple fountain basin. I should prefer that myself, as after the exposition it would not be suitable to have a bandstand in a main drive. It is all right during the exposition as no driving is to be permitted during concerts or even at other hours except in the morning, perhaps, before the crowd collects.

I have shown the State building occupying the whole of the west side of the plaza with the City's Art Museum and Auditorium surrounding the other three sides of a court or patio west of the State Building. It has not seemed to me essential that these buildings should be entirely separate and disconnected since it

has not been suggested that they would be used after the exposition for entirely distinct and inharmonious purposes. I think the area of this building as shown on my plan with the wing at its north end would use up the appropriation of \$250,000, and the Auditorium, and Art Museum wings south of it, will use up the \$300,000 or so that the Park Commission would presumably be able to put into them, allowing an average cost of \$12.50 per sq. ft. I have thought that you would probably bring the second story of the State building out over the arcade in the middle, at least for the sake of getting an imposing front, but that each side of the middle the building might well be back of the arcade which could there have a flat roof with parapet so it could be used as a balcony.

On the east side of Plaza de Musica I have indicated a solid block of separate houses, like a block of city houses which might be assigned to various Central and South American Republics who would either pay for its building ready made, or rent it or get it free according to the special financial conditions of each case. These buildings I conceive could be two or even three (comparatively low) stories --- grouping them for architectural effect. There might be a large 3-story one in the middle, then two or three smaller ones 2 stories high only, each side of the middle one, and again a small 3-story one at each end for tower effect. The middle large one might cover the arcade and the others be kept back of the arcade to repeat somewhat the arrangement suggested for the State building and its arcade on the west of the Plaza Musica. I thought some of these Latin Republic buildings might be used entirely for social purposes, some for social purposes in 2nd story and bedrooms in third story if desired, and for exhibits on ground floor and possibly some for exhibits only. The arcade would be pretty good for setting out chairs and rattan lounges with awnings and tub plants. Unfortunately for my scheme the exposure to the west is a poor one so balconies might have to be provided on the east. This row of buildings with gay awnings, flags, tub plants, painted coats of arms and perhaps the distinctive foreign lettering designating each would form an attractive and unusual feature in this exposition since they would bring in the southern city style of thing instead of the usual suburban house in a large suburban lot. I assume that they would be of wood and plaster construction but with deep reveals at windows and doors to simulate masonry walls. Flat roofs, I think.

I meant to have said as to the temporary exhibit buildings that skylights in flat roofs behind parapets will afford ample light to the interior and will enable you to treat the outer walls above the arcades as if they were great massive adobe plastered walls with only a few small windows as is characteristic of the Mission style.

We won't have money for the Transportation Building I had on my first plan. I mark the site "U.S. Government Building". It is just possible that the notes of the California delegation to Congress may be needed so much that they can secure an exposition appropriation for California part of which might be assigned to San Diego's exposition though the larger part would doubtless go to San Francisco.

I realize that there will be much hesitation on the part of the Committee to the idea of removing the Auditorium from where I had it, near the street car line and streets of the city and near the High School whose students will use it for graduation exercises, etc. to the hill on the west side of the Plaza de Musica, but I agree with your desire to have it on the main plaza and on the more commanding site. I think we shall have to take the ground that it would not do in this case to sacrifice artistic considerations to utilitarian requirements. That isn't a very convincing argument but I see no other at present. From what I was told repeatedly at the beginning I know what they really meant to have was an immense convention hall which would tempt those numerous big societies to meet in San Diego, such as the American Education Society which brought 17,000 people together in Los Angeles last year, I think. If that is what they want I should say it would be better to buy a block of ground for it on D. St. somewhere down toward the Santa Fe railroad station or in connection with the proposed harbor front improvement, or near the Coronado ferry as many visitors would stay at the Coronado Hotel. It would not be as appropriate nor as convenient up in the park. Besides, I think such masses of temporary visitors ought to be most impressed by the harbor and its naval and commercial possibilities rather than by the hilliness of the park and the landscape gardening there, however worthy and beautiful. Let us then have in view the High School graduation exercises as the permanent justification of an auditorium in the park.

I trust you will not resent my architectural suggestions and deem it necessary for comfort of mind to discard them and do something different in each case. I do not propose to claim them as mine or to urge them upon the Committee if you have sound objections to them or have alternative and better ideas. My only idea is to help in securing the most unique small exposition that has been held. When money is so limited, I think it is unreasonable to try for bigness, or a metropolitan lavishness of cheap staff decoration which is what I anticipate they will try for at San Francisco. I hope you will give us your best thoughts and as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) John C. Olmsted.