

COLLEGE TROLLEY STATION GRAND OPENING

Thank you. Good morning!

I am privileged to represent San Diego City College on this very auspicious occasion of the Grand Opening of the San Diego City College Trolley Station and to share with you some brief comments.

When I arrived at San Diego City College seven years ago, we had just opened our brand new Library and Learning Resource Center that occupies the block right across Park Boulevard from Smart Corner.

The views from our Library/LRC are spectacular, including the city skyline, the bay, and the Coronado Bridge. But at that time, one view was quite the contrary. For the block we are on today in this beautiful trolley station surrounded by these two amazing towers was then occupied by abandoned warehouses, shuttered businesses, and litter-filled parking lots.

And the existing trolley station was virtually a curve in the road where C Street meets Park Boulevard. The station was inadequately small for the hundreds of patrons that boarded here, and the station lacked seating and shelter during inclement weather. And its location was unsafe.

But it was the vision of developer Robert Lankford and the City Center Development Corporation to transform a blighted area of our city into a true asset for all of us.

And San Diego City College was pleased to partner with Mr. Lankford, CCDC, the City of San Diego, and the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System to help bring that vision into reality.

City College provided two very important ingredients. First, we lent our name to the San Diego City College Trolley Station. And second, we provided an easement to permit the construction on college property of the power station that drives this trolley station.

The City College Trolley Station is truly commuter-friendly. It is safe, attractive, inviting, and so much more accessible than its predecessor. It provides adequate seating and shelter from the sun and occasional rain.

San Diego City College is committed to promoting a sustainable lifestyle. Our students are very active in a number of environmental issues, including energy conservation, recycling, and public transportation.

I believe that this beautiful new station will significantly increase our ridership to serve many more than the hundreds of college and high school students and employees who commute by trolley each day.

And the Smart Corner as a whole has become an anchor for both the development of the Park-to-Bay Link along Park Boulevard (with its third phase scheduled for development along City College's front door), and the redevelopment of the C Street Corridor from the Bay to beyond City College to the east.

Smart Corner and the City College Trolley Station is the beginning of the revitalization of the College Neighborhood of East Village, and we who work and study at the college are excited about our future.

I congratulate all involved in the development of this wonderful project and thank you for this opportunity to share my comments with you.

And now, it is my great pleasure to introduce the President and Chief Operating Officer of the Centre City Development Corporation, Nancy Graham. Ms. Graham has led CCDC since 2005. She is nationally recognized as a leader in revitalizing of downtowns and has specialized in land use, comprehensive planning, and environmental law.

As an educator, I was also pleased to learn that Ms. Graham received high honors when she completed both her undergraduate and law degrees. She was number TWO in her class at the University of Florida Holland Law Center. I think San Diego will give her and CCDC high honors for the new City College Station as well! Nancy.....