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JOHN GIBBINS U-T

State Senate leader Toni Atkins announced Friday that \$17.6 million in state funding has been appropriated for three arts and culture programs in San Diego, including \$8.2 million for restoration work on the Botanical Building in Balboa Park.

BALBOA PARK BENEFICIARY OF \$8.66M FROM STATE

Historic Botanical Building to be renovated; Liberty Station building upgrade gets \$9M

BY JENNIFER VAN GROVE

Thanks in part to a strong economy, the state of California will dole out financial gifts to some of San Diego's most recognizable landmarks. That means the city's oft-called crown jewel, Balboa Park, is receiving enough funds to jump-start stalled efforts to fix the storied Botanical Building in the heart of the park.

Friday, state Sen. Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) announced at a news conference that the park will receive millions in funding for two key projects; \$8.26 million has been designated for a long-planned Botanical Building renovation project and \$400,000 is set aside to help construct structures as part of the House of Pacific Relations International Cottages.

An additional \$9 million has been earmarked by the state to re-

store a historic structure, building 178, at Liberty Station in Point Loma, Atkins said.

The financial commitments follow the California Legislature's passing this week of the state's budget, which is in the hands of Gov. Gavin Newsom.

"These are monies that could have gone into reserves," Atkins said of the \$17.66 million designated for local cultural projects in a Friday morning interview. The state Senate's president pro tempore emphasized the importance of spending the money on the city's most pressing deferred maintenance and infrastructure needs.

"When you look at this," she said pointing to the Botanical Building, "this is something that helps us generate local dollars. People want to come to see this. So it is really incumbent upon us to

SEE FUNDING • A6

TRUMP NAMES HOMAN BORDER CZAR

Newly created post will coordinate immigration policy across agencies

BY MICHAEL D. SHEAR & ZOLAN KANNO-YOUNGS

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump on Friday again shook up his immigration team, appointing a hard-liner to coordinate border policy from the White House and sending a message that he is redoubling his efforts to prevent unauthorized migrants from entering the United States.



Thomas Homan

Thomas Homan, his choice for the job, served as the acting head of Immigration and Customs Enforcement early in the administration and retired last year when his nomination for the permanent position stalled in the Senate. Since then, he has been a fierce supporter of the administration's policies during frequent appearances on Fox News.

"He'll be a border czar," Trump said, announcing the appointment during a phone interview on "Fox & Friends." "He'll be very much involved in the border. He'll be reporting directly to me. He'll be probably working out of the White House but spending a lot of time at the border. And he's a good man. He's a good man."

The appointment to the newly created position comes at a time when Trump has expressed frustration and anger at his own off-

SEE CZAR • A11

SPORTS



LEONARD GETS A SHOT TO PICK HIS NEXT STOP

■ **D1** • After the Raptors' victory and a second NBA Finals MVP trophy, will SDSU alum Kawhi Leonard stay in Toronto or head home to Southern California?

BUSINESS

AIRPORT SEEKS IDEAS FROM STARTUPS

■ **C1** • The Airport Innovation Lab is looking to startup companies for out-of-the-box products and services to enhance the airport experience.

LOCAL

WINSLOW II WILL BE RETRIED ON 8 COUNTS

■ **B1** • Onetime NFL player Kellen Winslow II, convicted of forcibly raping a homeless woman, will face a new trial on eight felony and misdemeanor counts.



HAYNE PALMOUR IV U-T

Max Ng, 5, can move his arms, paralyzed by acute flaccid myelitis, with help from motorized orthotic braces made at UC San Diego. His dad, Ted Ng, lends a hand.

UC SAN DIEGO ENGINEERING STUDENTS RESTORE MOTION TO 5-YEAR-OLD'S ARMS

BY PAUL SISSON

His arms paralyzed by a rare virus three years ago, Max Ng has struggled to push, pull and poke his way through the world with the gleeful ease that most 5-year-olds enjoy.

But a device built by four clever UC San Diego engineering students delivers just the help he needs to reach out and touch the world in ways that have long been out of reach.

With cameras watching Friday morning at Rady Children's Hospital, Max was strapped into a pair of motor-assisted orthotic braces,

his fingers sliding into sensor-loaded gloves.

Once the contraction was in place, tilting his wrist up caused his arm to raise, bending at the elbow. Tilting down accomplished the opposite motion, and Max was quick to start roughhousing with his father, Dr. Ted Ng, landing a few light punches before reaching up and grabbing his dad's nose.

While that kind of play drew laughs, Ted Ng said he has been looking forward to a slightly different maneuver that has been difficult for his boy to accomplish.

SEE BOY • A8

HOME + GARDEN



A HOUSEWORK WRINKLE

Most millennials may still own an iron, but the appliance is apt to be gathering dust on a shelf. **E1**

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FUNDING

FROM A1 figure out how to preserve it.” Originally constructed in 1914, the Botanical Building is just one of four remaining permanent structures built for the Panama California Exposition and was intended to be the park’s heart of horticulture. It is a popular attraction for both tourists and locals who want to check out its 2,100 different plant varieties. It’s visited by more than a half-million visitors every year, according to the nonprofit Balboa Park Conservancy, which has been leading the yearslong effort to fund raise for the structure’s renovation.

“It is in dire need of restoration due to termite damage, rust and years of deferred maintenance,” said Joyce Gattas, who chairs the conservancy’s board.

The \$8.26 million gift from the state will pay for the bulk of the roughly \$11 million restoration project, with the conservancy on the hook for the rest of the money.

The fix-it effort dates to 2015 when the conservancy, established in 2011 to solicit



The state has earmarked \$9 million to start the restoration of historic building 178 in the Arts District at Liberty Station, formerly the Naval Training Center.

donations for park upkeep, selected the building as its first major undertaking. In 2016, architectural and landscape plans were completed by RNT Architects, Spurlock Landscape Architects and horticultural designer Tres Fromme. Although progress

has been made at the city level, the project has lacked the necessary funds to move forward.

Now the conservancy is working to finalize the future visitor experience, which will emphasize education, said Tomás Herrera-Mishler,

who runs the nonprofit group. His group will need to work with the state and the city to figure out how the cash infusion is ultimately dispersed, but the hope is that a much improved Botanical Building and Gardens will debut to the public in around two years time.

“Right now (the Botanical Building is) a lovely experience but it doesn’t have any sort of educational content to it,” said Herrera-Mishler. “We have the opportunity to introduce the world to the amazing universe of plants that can grow in San Diego, and the value and importance of plants to our community.”

The state’s budget surplus will also allow for a \$400,000 payment to help complete Balboa Park’s International Cottages, Atkins said.

The existing cottages represent 32 different cultures, although a decade-long endeavor by the House of Pacific Relations organization has sought to construct five additional structures to house nine more cultural units. The nonprofit group, which secured building per-



At a news conference Friday in Balboa Park, state Sen. Toni Atkins announces \$17.66 million in state funding for Balboa Park and Liberty Station.

mits in 2016, ran into a financing snafu when construction bids came in over budget. The organization chose to move forward with building just four of the five planned structures.

The timely \$400,000 gift from the state means, however, that all of the cottages can likely be constructed at the same time, said Eugenie King, who is president of the House of Pacific Relations.

“This is an incredible day,” King said during the news conference. “I feel as though I’m flying away. ... It started with a dream. We wanted to increase the number of the cottages that we had so that we could show more of the diversity of San Diego.”

The state’s generous contributions to Balboa Park come as the city of San Diego struggles to keep pace with the maintenance needs of the park’s aging structures. A report prepared for the city a few years ago priced the cost to return all park facilities to good condition at \$79.2 million in 2017 dollars. A separate report prepared by a park advocate estimated, that by 2020, Balboa Park buildings would need at least \$285 million in repairs to reverse structural deterioration.

Beyond Balboa Park, Atkins has selected an asbestos-ridden Liberty Station building, which was built in

1941 and has sat empty for 20 years, to be the recipient of substantial state support. The just-passed budget includes \$9 million to restore the abandoned Navy structure, building 178, and make it a performing arts center.

“What this means for us, is that it allows us to begin renovating building 178,” said Alan Ziter, the executive who oversees the nonprofit NTC Foundation. The foundation, established in 2000, is working to restore and manage 26 historic Navy buildings as part of Liberty Station’s arts district. “We can now begin the planning, the design work and the renovation of a shell, although it will take considerable time and more funding to complete.”

The performing arts center project has been in the works for two years, Ziter said, and is estimated to cost \$17.2 million to complete.

Altogether, the state funds budgeted for San Diego arts and cultural projects, while substantial, represent just a fraction of the money Atkins plans to dole out in the region this upcoming fiscal year, which starts July 1. The Senate leader also Friday announced that millions in financing will go to major transportation projects in town.

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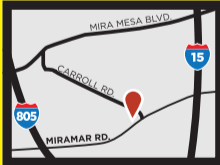
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