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Parking Plans: Lots nearby to share spots with **The Conrad performing-arts center in La Jolla**



La Jolla Music Society plans for the new performing arts center, The Conrad, coming to Fay Avenue. *Courtesy*

Construction for Conrad Prebys Performing Arts Center (aka The Conrad) will begin spring 2016 with grand opening January 2018 BY ASHLEY MACKIN

La Jolla's Traffic & Transportation (T&T) advisory board heard the long-awaited parking management plan for La Jolla Music Society's (LJMS) new performing arts center, The Conrad, during its July 23 meeting at the Rec Center.

Construction on the 500-seat concert hall and 150-seat cabaret room that make up the Conrad Prebys Performing Arts Center (aka The Conrad) at 7600 Fay Ave. will begin this spring for a grand opening in January 2018. LJMS plans to move concerts from its home at Sherwood Auditorium at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (MCASD) to The Conrad, as Sherwood Auditorium will be converted to gallery space during MCASD's upcoming renovation and expansion. (See related story here)

"One of the very most important aspects of our new performing arts center was our parking plan," said LJMS president and artistic director Christopher Beach. "We have spent thousands of hours and months of work developing a plan with the city. The plan we are presenting has cost us an additional \$2.3 million in fundraising, and I believe it's worth it. We are pleased to report the city has already reviewed the plan and embraced it."

Seeking approval from T&T, Beach and his team presented the details of the parking plan, which chiefly consist of "sharing" commitments from surrounding parking lots and the acquisition of a portion of the Bank of America parking structure one block away. The land on which the parking structure sits is privately owned and divided into three plots, Beach explained, and LJMS has executed a sale agreement to purchase one plot that contains 67 parking spaces for its use.

Further, Dave Sorenson, a traffic engineer with the firm Kimley-Horn and Associates, said LJMS has commitments to use a certain number of spaces in the parking structures of the following organizations: The Bishop's School, La Jolla Presbyterian Church and the Merrill Lynch and Charles Schwab buildings. The latter two house businesses that close at night, so the parking lots are mostly vacant then. Each of these facilities is within three blocks of The Conrad.

A stipulation with these parking facilities is that LJMS discuss concert dates in advance to avoid scheduling conflicts. "All told, we have commitments for 741 parking spaces and the most we would need is 192 — and that is if we have sold-out events in the cabaret room and the performance hall," Sorenson said.

He explained when an event is proposed, LJMS will reach out to the operators to make sure adequate parking is available, then schedule the event. When tickets are sold, these would indicate where attendees can park. There will also be a parking information page on the website established for the venue — theconrad.org

"We think it's a solid plan. It embraces a lot of smart parking principles. Shared parking is a great use of resources, it allows for under-utilized facilities to be used all the time," Sorenson said.

"When patrons park a little bit away from your venue, you allow them to walk down pleasant, lively streets past businesses and they tend to arrive a little earlier to eat. This is a win-win."

The Conrad will replace Shingle Lane, the former home to Tapenade Restaurant and other small shops, between Fay Avenue and Bishops Lane. Fronting the facility will be eight, two-hour parking spaces with two, three-minute loading zones in the middle.

"Many of our guests are elderly or do not move around well, so this will also offer a place for drop-offs," Sorenson said. LJMS is also requesting that for performances, four of the two-hour spaces be used for valet parking. "They would be two-hour during the day and during an event, we would convert that over," he said.

Sorenson added the city would be notified when performances are scheduled, so LJMS would be permitted to use sandwich boards to notice parking changes. Communications with the city also determined a traffic impact study would not be required because "We've taken a look at the traffic that will be generated by the facility and compared it to existing retail and restaurant uses ... the numbers work out that our facility will generate fewer daily trips and fewer peak hour trips," Sorenson said.

T&T voted unanimously to support the parking plan as presented. Beach said he would continue to announce details to community groups as they become available.