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Profit, Fame Promised for City in Great Bay Hacienda

$689,500 Federal Loan Is Sought Besides Grant of $295,000; Racetrack and Convention Hall Planned

By Melvin Mayne

A glorified hacienda typical of colonial Spain, its towers and tiled roofs catching the glint of the sun as they rise above surrounding tropical gardens at the northern border of Mission Bay state park -- that is the dream that directors of the Twenty-Second District Agricultural association plan soon to make a reality for the benefit of San Diego County

With all their beauty, the proposed group of buildings and their surrounding 140 acres will serve very practical needs of the community, providing the very best of facilities for fairs, race meets on a mile track, horse shows, polo meets, conventions large and small, expositions, exhibits and meetings of all kinds, boat racing, athletic events, and practical demonstration of the best and most modern practices and equipment in agriculture, horticulture and dairying.

Plans Completed

Plans for the project have been completed by association officials headed by James E. Franks, their president, and application has been made to the federal emergency relief administration at Washington for a loan of $689,500 and a grant of $295,000 to finance construction. The directors are seeking now to win cooperation of the state and the county in hastening allocation of funds to start immediate construction.

Indorsement of the chamber of commerce, city planning commission, building trades council and labor council has been obtained.

The annual fair and race meet, to last 39 days, is only one of the features scheduled by the association officials. They propose to make of the fair grounds and buildings a center for cultural development of the entire county.

There will be an annual merchants' and manufacturers' exposition, a six-day horse and pet show, a six-day automobile show, a six-day pageant or rodeo, a 25-day polo meet, boat races in the lagoon near the western border of the fair property, year-round concessions and exhibits, and permanent displays of high educational and entertainment value.

Would Seat 8000

Working on the plans for the enterprise were 21 experts, including five registered architects, two graduate mechanical engineers and two civil engineers. The work was financed by CWA, the government recognizing early the importance and value of the project.

These experts kept constantly in mind the development of buildings and grounds that would be both permanent and beautiful, that would rival the famous groups of the country and attract visitors to San Diego to join with the local populace in its fiestas. Most structures will be of steel and concrete.

Entrance to the fair grounds will be from Grand ave., new highway planned to connect Pacific Beach and Atlantic blvd. Through the colonades of the typically Spanish entrance, visitors will enter a plaza one and a half times as large as the Plaza de Panama at Balboa Park.

To the east weill be the great exhibition and convention building, to the south will be the grandstand and the racetrack beyond, to the west will be the two livestock exhibition buildings which may be used outside of the fair season for conventions smaller that those requiring the main auditorium.

At the northwest corner of the plaza, and visible from all the Mission bay area, will be a tall Spanish bell tower as distinctive as the far-famed tower on the California building in the park.

Between the lagoon at the westerly end of the grounds and the main group of buildings will be a model farm, which the district directors believe will be of inestimable assistance to agriculturalists of the county in meeting their problems. Here will be possible not only agricultural displays, but also year-round practical experimentation. There will also be available for the study of practical dairyment and farmers, model buildings and equipment of all sorts.

Beauty, Utility Stressed

Ample provision has been made for the racing season. Stables for horses and quarters for jockeys will be build near the Atlantic blvd. frontage of the fair grounds, and like all other buildings will reflect the architectural glory of colonial Spain.

Everywhere will be architecture of harmonious and related design, for the distrct association, starting "from scratch" and without the necessity of making over an old fair establishment, can do what officials of many older associations would like to do. They are avoiding patchwork and are utilizing the experiences of fair organizations throughout America, with whom they have been in close contact for manths, ro anticipate their every need and to provide for it in their original plans.

Construction of the buildings and preparation of the grounds will take approximately 10 months. The building program in itself will be a great boon to San Diego, for an average of 380 men will be employed each day to make ready an enterprise that Franks and his associates are certain will bring thousands of visitors to San Diego every year and give the city a form of advertising that can be gained by playing the role of hospitality.

And for those who come, the fair officials plan entertainment really worth while. They hope to make of their fair a fiesta that will demand the attention of the nation, just as the New Orleans Mardi Gras and the annual Toronto International exposition, both of which have not only attracted tens of thousands of visitors annually, and won fame for their cities, but which also have proven highly profitable.

President Franks said yesterday that careful analysis of the financial statements of these and other fair and exhibitions in all parts of this country, Canada and Mexico, have convinced the fair directors that the association, which is a part of the state government, amy expect annual net revenues in excess of $200,000. It is from these revenues that they plan to repay their federal loan and to create funds for the maintenance and future development of the beautiful 140-acre tract.