

November 8, 2011

*Malin Burnham is a San Diego native, successful entrepreneur, and dedicated civic leader.*

## “An Iconic Landmark for San Diego” By Malin Burnham

There are many aspects of San Diego in which we can deservedly take great pride. Ours is a community that welcomes newcomers from around the country and even the world, adding a rich diversity that strengthens the quality of life in San Diego.

It is a quality of life that is unparalleled. One that is replete with extraordinary weather and an outdoor lifestyle. One that is enhanced by the development of vibrant biotech, research, healthcare, education, and telecommunication industries.

Yet we remain proud of our heritage. In this year, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of naval aviation, we stand proud as the official birthplace of naval aviation. Our support of the men and women in uniform is as deep and heartfelt as it is permanent.

But where is the iconic symbol of all that San Diego represents? We lack that singular identity, a dramatic symbol in which we all can take great pride. That’s why for more than 20 years I’ve been working with community leaders to develop an iconic landmark for my hometown. Finally, the stars have aligned and the time is right.

The development of Veterans Park on Navy Pier as part of the revitalization of the North Embarcadero is an unmatched opportunity. It is an opportunity to create a park and public access to the waterfront, a community arts and events venue, and develop approximately 500 parking spaces. On a larger scale, it also is an opportunity to create iconic architectural element that will stand globally for decades as the unique symbol of a unique community. I am confident that we can create a public/private/philanthropic partnership to fund what promises to become the cornerstone of a downtown waterfront of international renown.

To be sure, we must protect the viability of the USS Midway Museum, a vital component of the North Embarcadero. The vision for conversion of the pier into a two-deck facility with a park on top and parking underneath provides an opportunity to make a dramatic statement to the world about what San Diego is, what we stand for, and what San Diego represents.

The opportunity to accomplish all this is at hand. I’m looking forward to working in the spirit of partnership between the Port, the USS Midway Museum, the San Diego Symphony, other San Diego visionaries, and downtown residents and stakeholders in realizing the great potential this opportunity represents.