



PRESS RELEASE

January 31, 2014

Contact: Jennifer Davies, (619) 405-2741

Community Activates Gaslamp Square

"Chairs in Squares" event spurs new ideas

DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO –Community members celebrated the reopening of Gaslamp Square today by imagining future uses and programs to ensure it will be a vital part of Downtown.

The Downtown San Diego Partnership in conjunction with the Gaslamp Quarter Association, Metropolitan Transit System and CIVIC San Diego held the "Chairs in Squares" event using the tenets of "tactical urbanism" to create a sense of excitement about the future of this plaza, which serves as the entrance to the Gaslamp Quarter and Downtown.

Tactical urbanism is a forward-thinking trend that cities around the globe are using to experiment on how best to use public spaces. The goal is to hold temporary events to help develop lasting change for underused spaces such as Gaslamp Square, much of which had been fenced off due to an old, obsolete fountain.

Today's event had live piano music, chalk artists and, of course, plenty of chairs so that Gaslamp Square was a place you went to and not just walked through.

Participants also were asked to give their ideas for how best to use the space, which had been underused for years.

Suggestions for Gaslamp Square included:

- Cultural events such public art exhibits and farmers' market, featuring local produce and artisans.
- Seating areas to help transform it into an inviting enjoyable space for Downtown employees, residents and visitors.
- Live music and movie nights.

Kris Michell, president and CEO of the Downtown San Diego Partnership, said today's event would help ensure Gaslamp Square becomes a destination in Downtown.

"In urban environments, plazas like Gaslamp Square are critical to creating a sense of excitement and community," Michell said. "This event celebrated this important public space and engaged people in what Gaslamp Square could and should be for our Downtown."

"As the manager of this property, MTS has worked very hard to restore the square to beautify the area and make it an asset for all of Downtown," said Paul Jablonski, chief executive officer of MTS. "This property is at the gateway to the Gaslamp Quarter, and we look forward to activating it in new and exciting ways."

The "Chairs in Squares" event was an outgrowth of the priorities identified in the Downtown Partnership's 20-year vision plan called "Imagine Downtown." The 20-year vision plan was developed with the participation of more than 6,000 San Diegans over the course of a year. Among the top priorities in "Imagine Downtown" was the addition of more lively and attractive parks and open spaces in San Diego's urban core.

The Downtown San Diego Partnership is a non-profit, member-based organization that serves as the leading advocate for the revitalization and economic health of Downtown. To learn more about the Downtown Partnership, visit www.downtownsandiego.org

###