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[Music playing].

>> TOM McCARRON: Before we begin, we want to recognize the special significance of this land - like that of our main campus for the Kumeyaay people. For millennia, the Kumeyaay people have been a part of this land. This land has nourished, healed, protected and embraced them for many generations in a relationship of balance and harmony. As members of the San Diego State community we acknowledge this legacy. We promote this balance and harmony. We find inspiration from this land, the land of the Kumeyaay. And now it is our profound pleasure and honor to welcome everyone to this mostly virtual groundbreaking of SDSU Mission Valley. This is truly a momentous day in the history of our university and the City of San Diego.

Today we celebrate the commencement of construction of SDSU Mission Valley and Aztec Stadium. Though this isn't quite the groundbreaking we had envisioned prior to the coronavirus pandemic. We truly look forward to celebrating future milestones in person and welcoming you at the grand opening of the River Park and at our first event in the new Stadium in the fall of 2022, just over two years from today.

There are so many groups and individuals we will thank today, and apologies to those we will possibly miss. First, I'd like to express my appreciation to the CSU Oversight & Advisory Committee members, and the Chancellor's office staff and leadership, who were instrumental in helping shepherd this purchase through the many Board of Trustees' approvals. I also want to thank the MV negotiating teams, both SDSU and the City who dedicated eighteen months on this incredibly complex agreement. Yes, it was not always easy but, in the end, it was obviously successful.

There have been hundreds of individuals directly involved in getting us to this day, not including the more than 250,000 voters who supported Measure G giving SDSU the opportunity to be the steward of the next generation of this public land. Our sincere thanks to each and every one of you.

Now it's my honor to introduce our SDSU president Adela de la Torre whose support and guidance was critical to making today possible. Dr. de la Torre.

>> ADELA DE LA TORRE: Good morning and welcome to a new and amazing part of our future. Today marks a milestone moment for San Diego State University and the City of San Diego. Thanks to you and many others across our region and supporters from around the world. This is SDSU Mission Valley. With today's groundbreaking we begin the work to expand SDSU's educational, research, and entrepreneurial missions. We will meet the needs of our region for the next 100 years. SDSU Mission Valley also addresses the realities of the past few months, and the need for new streams of revenue to support higher education opportunities for all. In just two years, San Diegans will be watching college football from the new Aztec Stadium. And while we all hope that this pandemic will be behind us by then, it will be the first multi-use stadium complex built to accommodate pandemic-related safety features from day one.

I can't wait to see the team run out onto Bashor Field and to join in the cheers of 35,000 fans. While Aztec Stadium is being built, crews will also begin developing a new San Diego River Park, which will become part of more than 80 acres of open space here. In the years ahead we'll see a world class Innovation District where future scientists alongside industry partners will conduct new research into cutting edge areas, and critical issues of our time such as climate change, sustainability, and biomedicine, and that will expand San Diego's community and public health clinics. 4,600 housing units for faculty, students, staff and the general public, with 10% set aside as affordable housing. Restaurants, shops and a hotel.

SDSU Mission Valley's many public-private partnerships will ease our reliance on state dollars for operating revenue, making us a far more resilient community and asset to all of San Diego. I thank the voters of San Diego for entrusting this property to us. It will become the signature project that defines the future not only for SDSU, but for higher education in California. Again, thank you for helping us to create a shared vision for our future.

>> KEVIN FAULCONER: Good morning. Good morning. Thank you, President de la Torre. I will tell you it's great to see some of you social distance but so many are watching virtually. Not just here in San Diego but across the country and indeed some of the e-mails we got across the world. Thank you for being part of such a very special day for this great University and our city.

President de la Torre, thank you. Thank you for your persistence. Thank you for your tenacity. Everyone at the University to make sure we got to this day. I can tell you that as a San Diegan, as your mayor, and a proud alumnus of

San Diego State, I am so very proud of our city today. I remember back when I was on campus and we were going through everything that we did at the time to get the arena, not only voted on, but constructed. Getting that done wasn't easy.

When it opened, it changed our university and our campus tremendously for the better. Standing here today, I get that same feeling. What happens on the ground right here beneath our feet will elevate San Diego State and elevate San Diego in ways that we can't possibly imagine. There is so much to love about this project. As we get ready to break ground here this morning, take a look around you. Soak it in. San Diego stadium as it was originally named will always be a part of San Diego story. Now, we are ready to write the next chapter.

One that doesn't forget the old but builds upon it. And the path over the past 20 years till this day, well, it had more twist and turns than the San Diego river. Now, we are finally here. We know that this is the spot that it was meant to be. San Diegans should take great satisfaction in knowing that the future of this land is finally set as a place where education, athletics, and the community there thrive side by side for generations to come. This, indeed, is how significant this project is. We know, of course, that we are living through one of the toughest periods that our nation has ever seen.

In times like this, I can't think of a better cause for San Diego to rally around. The jobs, the housing, the community, and the hope that our city needs right now are all embodied in this endeavor. This is truly San Diego coming together. And, when we come out of the other side of the challenging time which we will, SDSU West, will be waiting for us with a stadium that brings us pride, a campus that brings us knowledge, a beautiful River Park that brings us closer, and a world class community that brings us together.

Before I pass the mic, I just want to say there are so many people that made this today to make today's moment in history happen. Under different circumstances, of course, we have all of them here today. Literally hundreds and probably over a thousand. I do want to acknowledge a few of the folks that made it happen starting with our President Adela de la Torre and her staff. All of the members of board of trustees who believed in this project. City council and special thanks to Chris Michelle for her tireless work and all of the negotiations. Chris gets a few honks. I like that.

Of course, I just want to thank all of the city staff from the planning department, real estate, smart and sustainable communities, and park and recreation. This has been a true partnership. Between the University, city of San Diego, greater San Diego community. I am so very, very proud of where we are today. Thank you, all, for your persistence. Thank you for believing in this project and thank you for making sure that it came and we delivered on the promises. I, for one, can't wait to see it come. Thank you. And go, Aztecs.

[Cars honking].

Now, it's my pleasure to introduce the gentleman that pushed very, very hard from the beginning. A lot of great work for the board of trustee. Please give a warm welcome for Jack McGrory.

>> JACK McGRORY: Thank you, Mayor Faulconer. I can't tell you how we were proud last week to sign the final documents. Actually, we were relieved today is a celebration of the higher education in community. 55 years we have enjoyed fabulous place, ocean of asphalt and visible for the outer space.

For me, this was a special place. When I was with the city for 13 years, I oversaw the stadium, Aztec football and three projects to be involved in. This place has a lot of history. Today, we take the first steps in transforming this place into a center of knowledge and engagement. Two particular groups I would like to mention. Without whom we would not have a chance to pull this off.

For the past year or so, the California State of University Board of Trustees and Finance Committee have been locked up with not only the beautiful of vision but to have a campus feasible. I'm thankful to Steve Relyea, our Chief Financial Officer and, they spent a lot of time on this. Another one of the champions on board of trustees was Adam Day. Few horns for Adam Day.

[Cars honking].

Now, as many of you know the reality of how we happen to be standing here today has been a long time coming. One particular group that built the concept, designed the plan, funded it, promoted the heck out of it, and followed through by implementing the vision with energy, passion, and grit. They are the friends of San Diego State University.

[Cars honking].

It's kind of a this memory. We had a rough and tumble campaign. We were outspent 9 to 1 and won by 22 percentage points. Shows the support that San Diego State University has in this community. Specific people I'd like to

mention from the friends of San Diego State. Steve Doyle, you were the master chef. Today, we feast on your fortitude without we would have no chance. Thank you, chance.

Kim Kilkenny, Kit Sickels, and Fred Pierce, and so many more. To all of the friends, please know that we have you to thank. Alumni of the San Diego University stepped in and the citizens of the San Diego. Today, we celebrate another milestone on that noble quest for bigger, better, stronger, and more accommodating and accessible San Diego State University. Today's true testimony to what people can do who come together and work with an extraordinary city for an extraordinary institution. Thank you.

Now, I'd like to -- I have the honor to introduce a short video. Two people who are very, very important from the City Council. One is Councilmember Barbara Bry from the first district.

[Cars honking].

Barbara was with us from the very beginning when we drafted the initiatives and started the campaign. We appreciate all the work you did for us. Second person is the City Council President Georgette Gomez. I didn't really know Georgette until we started the process.

>> GEORGETTE GOMEZ: Becoming the new owners of the project voters voted on a couple of years ago. I was successful bringing this project forward. Now, Mission Valley is going to get a transformation where we're investing in higher education and jobs. Also a restoration natural development that will come soon. Congratulations, San Diego State as an alumni. It makes me really proud that I had the honor to ensure it becomes a reality.

>> BARBARA BRY: This is a great day of San Diego. When I first learned of the plans, I thought San Diegans deserved more. I believe that investing in the education and future generations is the most impactful thing we can do. But coming up with plans for an alternative public use for this land in a short period of time seemed like it would take a miracle.

Then a miracle actually happened. Dedicated citizens wrote and qualified an initiative. The University moved add hyperspeed to formalized the plans. San Diegans raised millions of dollars to have the campaign for Measure G. After that, they supporting the officials to do the right thing. This event is a testament to the vision, dedication, and persistence of hundreds of people who dreamed of a better future for the Mission Valley and young people and region. Today, that dream becomes a reality.

[Applause].

>> ADAM DAY: Thank you, councilmembers, and good morning to everybody. What an exhilarating and humbling time to be with all of you. As you have heard and will hear from others, the success of this effort will not be possible. But for the dedicated and hard work of literally hundreds of people. It would be impossible to name them all as the process took many twists and turns. I would like to especially name a few. The Friends group and especially Jack McGrory who you just heard from. On the university side, I too, would like to compliment President de la Torre.

[Trolley passing by].

Don't forget. Mass transit.

On the university side, I would like to thank and congratulate President de la Torre. She has been an -- she leads a strong and passionate team of many. I would like to specifically call out for recognition and thanks Gina Jacobs for all her commitment for this project. Thank you, Gina.

City of San Diego led by the mayor and city attorney were critical partners in making this deal a success. And the broader community at large and especially our alumni kept the pressure on the entire time and never let up. Thank you to the alumni association. Last but not least, I, too, would like to thank my colleagues on the SDSU Board of Trustees. Over many, many months, they asked tough questions. Ultimately, they trusted this opportunity needed to be seized now for the future of our university. They did so anonymously. More than once. Starting with the unprecedented endorsement of the ballot measure and culminated of the sales agreement and all necessary financing. Without all of us pulling together, this dream, this vision would not be the reality it is about to become. We are breaking ground on the future. Future opportunity and future potential. Also, future success. Academic, athletic, and environmental.

SDSU Mission Valley, when fully built will be a beacon of education, hope, equity and success, prosperity for the entire region and smart growth. Thank you, all, for the hand you lent and making this project a success. Now, please direct your attention to a video from Dr. Hala Madanat. Thank you.

>> HALA MADANAT: Good morning. For faculty, this land represents a once in a lifetime opportunity for expanding research at SDSU and it also provides educational opportunities for thousands of new students, many of whom will be the first in their families to attend college. The 1.6 million square feet of campus research and innovation district will include up to 15 buildings containing interdisciplinary research and teaching space to support the mission of the university. Let me speak directly and clearly. These buildings will allow for incredible new research partnerships with private companies and with public agencies.

This space will provide opportunities for student internships, create an incubator for new and innovative business uses, and enhance regional economic development. The extent to which we can now engage in public-private partnerships at full scale. It would never have been possible without the blank slate and space to grow that Mission Valley provides. The need in San Diego is great. The capacity and ingenuity of our faculty is greater. Together we will demonstrate what a model public research university can be. And, now, I would like to turn the program over to JD Wicker, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics

[Cars honking].

[Applause].

>> JD WICKER: Hala, thank you for the introduction. On November 29, 2017, President Sally Roush introduced the SDSU Community. The next day, we held an event announcing the concept for the SDSU Community. Less than three years later, here we are again. Except this time we are building the realization of that dream. We are building the Aztec for football and international and concept. Any event you can think of. You name it, we will host it.

A world class 35,000 capacity stadium. Premium seating options, expansive concourses, local food, craft beer from the craft beer capital of America, 365 days a year use for campus and our community. The most important sports and entertainment event in San Diego since Petco Park opened. I appreciate those who have supported us from the beginning. It wasn't easy. There were serious headwinds and significant challenges. The world of a group of San Diegans kept marching through the goal line to get us here today. Unfortunately, I don't have time to name each of you. You know who you are. You should be tremendously proud of what you have accomplished. The hype is real.

Now, I'm proud to have the opportunity to introduce one of those San Diegans who recognized the importance of what we're doing in Mission Valley and committed to making it happen. Dianne Bashor provided the lead gift. A \$15 million gift to make sure that Aztec Stadium gets built and the Mission Valley project gets kicked off. She might not be an alumni of SDSU but created the opportunity. I'm proud to call her an Aztec for life. Mrs. Dianne Bashor.

>> DIANNE BASHOR: Thank you so much. I'm so pleased to be here today. I feel so honored. My husband and I moved here 52 years ago. We started our business in a garage in National City. This city has been so tremendously good to us. I felt that it was time to give back to this city. This stadium and all of the venues that will be around it will be here forever. All the students that will go all over the world will be part of San Diego. I am so honored and proud to be up here. I know the students are the future of our nation. They will go out with optimism, with joy, and tell what their experience was here in the city of San Diego. So thank you so very much for letting me participate in this wonderful, wonderful venue. Thank you.

[Applause].

[Cars honking].

>> JERRY SANDERS: Good morning. I am Jerry Sanders, President and CEO of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce. What an amazing day to see the work of so many come to fruition. This is a transformational opportunity for higher education and the entire San Diego region. As chair of the Campanile Foundation, I would like to thank board and staff as well of the thousands of donors for supporting SDSU and this new chapter in the university's history. We are counting on you and others from our community to provide the philanthropic support needed to help fund this incredible project. I would also like to thank the Friends of SDSU as well as the university leadership and supporters of SDSU. It is my pleasure to now introduce Nikki Clay, a fellow Campanile Foundation board member. Go Aztecs.

>> NIKKI CLAY: Hi. I'm Nikki Clay. I am an especially proud Aztec today. Thank you and congratulations to Adela and everyone who made today possible. SDSU once again defied expectations and is making Mission Valley a reality. My husband Ben and I are excited to see the River Park take shape. Ben serves as the chair of the San Diego River Conservancy so we have a personal interest. As the vision for Mission Valley came together in the early stages, the river and its hydrology was a major focus that resulted in the plans we have today for the River Park. There are 80

acres of green open space throughout the site, four miles of hike and bike trails that circumnavigate the site, and all these green spaces culminate at the San Diego River in a community River Park.

This is a park that has been talked about for decades and SDSU is making it happen with a significant investment. This once in a life time project will be a place for families to gather and learn more about the San Diego River and will have a long lasting impact on our region and for generations of students to come. There are so many opportunities for all of us and the rest of the community to become part of the Mission Valley Campus. We can support it through our philanthropy and by attending Aztec games and enjoying the River Park.

I encourage all of you to get involved and together we can continue to defy expectations. Ben and I look forward to the day and the not-too-distant future when can stroll along the San Diego River and see each one of you in person at the SDSU Mission Valley project. Now, as a former councilmember from the 1960s, it's my pleasure to introduce you to this year's associated student president, Christian Holt.

[Applause].

>> CHRISTIAN HOLT: Hello. It is an honor to be here today representing SDSU students. I have been one of the many students involved in the SDSU Mission Valley Project Planning. We are proud of the efforts to make this project environmentally sustainable. Goals such as saving energy and preventing waste in the long run, are important to our university and exemplify SDSU's leadership in sustainability.

As a student, I am excited that this project will provide more opportunities for students to attend SDSU, achieve their goals of higher education, have access to affordable and convenient housing opportunities, and contribute to a more environmentally sustainable community. This site provides hands-on educational opportunities for local students to enter the biotech, life sciences, technology, defense, and hospitality and tourism fields. SDSU has given me many opportunities to grow as a person, a leader, and a professional. I want that for future SDSU students as well. I know that this vision will be fulfilled with the completion of this project and this groundbreaking is the first step.

Before the program closes, we have one more thing to do. Could all of the groundbreaking participants please come forward.

[Fireworks].

[Cars honking].

[Fight Song video - band playing].

>> S-D-S-U. Aztec, fight.

[End].

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