

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of San Diego Begins Construction on AIDS Memorial and Community Park in Bankers Hill

MAYOR GLORIA, ASSEMBLYMEMBER WARD, COUNCILMEMBER WHITBURN CELEBRATE THE BEGINNING OF \$2.3 MILLION PROJECT

SAN DIEGO – Mayor Todd Gloria today was joined by State Assemblymember Chris Ward, San Diego City Councilmember Stephen Whitburn and the San Diego AIDS Memorial Task Force to break ground on Olive Street Park in Bankers Hill. The .6-acre park will feature a first-of-its-kind memorial in the City honoring and remembering San Diegans who have lost their lives to AIDS.

“What has long been nothing but an empty, unused lot will soon be Olive Street Park, a beautiful place for members of the Bankers Hill community to relax and enjoy the view, and its AIDS Memorial will finally give San Diegans a place to remember, honor and grieve for loved ones taken from us by AIDS,” said Mayor Todd Gloria. **“I’m deeply grateful to the AIDS Memorial Task Force and all who made today possible.”**

This \$2.3 million project will transform an empty lot into a community space that will include the AIDS memorial, a new playground for children of all ages, fitness equipment, an open lawn area, and ADA-compliant pathways to facilitate access for all users, along with an overlook deck to enjoy the open space of Maple Canyon below.

The park will feature a tribute to honor the nearly 8,000 San Diegans who have lost their lives to AIDS.

“This memorial will serve as a permanent testament to the resilience, courage, and compassion of those affected by AIDS in our community and to the tireless work of those who have dedicated their lives to ending this epidemic,” said Councilmember Stephen Whitburn, who represents District 3. **“Let us build this memorial not just as a tribute to the past but as a symbol of hope for the future.”**

City staff coordinated the AIDS memorial component of this project under the vision of the San Diego AIDS Memorial Task Force. Memorial boulders and interpretive panels will be placed throughout the

park, containing the history of the AIDS crisis in San Diego and honoring the many people and organizations who have served those living with AIDS.

The idea to build an AIDS memorial in San Diego has been around since at least 1994 and the creation of this memorial is the culmination of nearly 30 years of work and community activism.

“After a decades-long community campaign, San Diego will finally join many other major American cities in establishing a memorial that will honor local men, women and children who died of HIV-AIDS,” said Nicole Murray Ramirez and Katherine Stuart Faulconer, co-chairs of the San Diego AIDS Memorial Task Force. “At long last, we will give San Diegans a special place to grieve and celebrate the lives of those affected by this tragedy.”

Construction of Olive Street Park and the AIDS memorial is expected to be completed in the summer of 2024.

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