



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of San Diego Seeking New Operator for Former Village Grill Restaurant in Balboa Park

CITY WORKS TO BRING NEW CULINARY OFFERINGS TO VISITORS IN SUPPORT OF EFFORT TO PROTECT PARK'S FUTURE

SAN DIEGO – As part of a larger undertaking to preserve Balboa Park as the City's crown jewel and make it an even more welcoming place, the City of San Diego is looking for an organization or individual to rehabilitate and reestablish the former Village Grill.

Today, the City issued a [Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) for the lease and renovation of the restaurant located near the Spanish Village Art Center. In their proposals, interested parties must show how they plan to renovate, operate and maintain the property. This includes offering high-quality food and beverage options for Balboa Park visitors.

"I would encourage local businesses to pursue the opportunity to respond to the City's search for a new food and beverage vendor at the corner of Village Place and Old Globe Way," said Councilmember Stephen Whitburn, who represents District 3. "Having a variety of dining options for every pocketbook will enhance the overall experience for visitors in Balboa Park."

The approximately 1,700-square-foot building was constructed in 1973 in a prime location in the park. It includes a walk-up kitchen service counter, roll-down window grills, a grill, an exhaust fan and a walk-in cooler/freezer. Adjacent to the building, there is an outdoor seating area with benches. The Village Grill last served customers from 2014 through 2017.

"Each year, Balboa Park welcomes about 14 million visitors to not only explore the San Diego Zoo, museums, gardens, arts and culture but to also enjoy delicious food," said Economic Development Director Christina Bibler. "We hope to receive proposals that will add to the unique culinary experiences offered in the park."

The [Balboa Park Central Mesa Precise Plan](#) serves as a guide for renovations and improvements within the park. Review of any proposed renovations will include the City's Parks and Recreation Department, the Balboa Park Committee and the Balboa Park Historic Resources staff.

When selecting a lessee, the City will consider the proposer’s experience and qualifications to operate a restaurant, financial capability, detailed operating plan and their proposed plans for renovations. The exact terms of the lease will be negotiated after a proposal is selected.

The RFP can be accessed through the [City’s website](#). Proposals must be submitted by 4 p.m. on Jan. 16, 2025.

This RFP comes as part of a larger effort to ensure Balboa Park remains a vibrant and sustainable cultural and recreational gem for future generations.

In August, the City put out a [RFP](#) to rehabilitate and operate the historic and famed Starlight Bowl near the Palisades Plaza area of the park. Proposals for this venue are due by 4 p.m. on Nov. 14.

The park’s Botanical Building is expected to open by the end of the year after a \$28 million ground-up reconstruction, and a \$1 million state grant will help restore the Marston House.

The City also entered into a 25-year nonprofit lease agreement with the Worldbeat Center in July to allow the Center to continue providing cultural programs and classes, art exhibits, a public garden and more. This agreement, along with a \$1 million state grant, will provide much-needed improvements to the building.

Visitors can also visit the more than 3,500 square feet and 16-foot-tall art installation “[Exchange Pavilion](#)” in Plaza de Panama as part of the [World Design Capital San Diego Tijuana 2024](#) until Nov. 15.



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