

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of San Diego Launches First Comprehensive Update to Balboa Park Master Plan Since 1989

COMMUNITY INPUT WILL HELP SHAPE PARK IMPROVEMENTS, PRESERVATION AND LONG-TERM INVESTMENT

SAN DIEGO – San Diegans can help shape a new long-term vision for San Diego’s crown jewel as the City of San Diego launches the first comprehensive update to the Balboa Park Master Plan since 1989.

The update will help the City prioritize critical infrastructure improvements, preserve the park’s historic and cultural assets and explore sustainable funding strategies to support its long-term needs.

Starting today, the public is invited to visit the City’s [Balboa Park Master Plan Update webpage](#) to learn more about the planning process and share their thoughts by taking the [Balboa Park Master Plan Initial Survey](#).

“Balboa Park is San Diego’s crown jewel, and caring for it requires a clear plan for action,” said Mayor Todd Gloria. **“The last comprehensive Master Plan was adopted in 1989; this update will help us set priorities, address aging infrastructure and preserve the historic, cultural and natural assets that make the park special. I encourage every San Diegan to take the survey and help us build a practical roadmap for keeping Balboa Park welcoming and thriving for generations to come.”**

The initial survey takes just a few minutes and asks San Diegans to share how they use and enjoy Balboa Park and what they would like to see in its future. This includes physical improvements they would like the City to prioritize, cultural offerings, events and outdoor recreational opportunities, accessibility, underused spaces and other park amenities.

The survey is the first of many opportunities for San Diegans to get involved throughout the Master Plan update. To help make sure that all voices are heard, the City will also roll out a Public Engagement Plan in late November to support meaningful and inclusive public participation throughout the process. The City Planning Department will present and seek feedback on the Public Engagement Plan at the Balboa Park Committee (BPC) prior to finalizing the plan and beginning engagement work. As the official advisory

committee for Balboa Park, BPC will continue to be a regular venue for updates, feedback and presentations.

The City recognizes the significant infrastructure needs facing Balboa Park and the funding gap that exists to address them. The Master Plan Update will chart a path forward for addressing the park's long-term needs and opportunities, including aging infrastructure, access and connectivity and underused areas. It will consider new recreational opportunities, sustainability and climate resilience, and the preservation of the park's natural, historic and cultural assets.

Building on previous planning efforts, the update will also help establish clear investment priorities and explore long-term governance and sustainable funding strategies – including potential public and philanthropic partnerships – to support the park's preservation, maintenance and future improvements.

“Balboa Park is a park for everyone, and its future should be shaped by the people who use and enjoy it,” said City Planning Director Heidi Vonblum. **“We want to hear from people of all ages, including those who have loved the park for decades and those participating in its planning for the first time, about their hopes and ideas for its future.”**

Spanning 1,200 acres, Balboa Park is a beloved cultural and recreational destination that serves people from across San Diego and beyond. In the decades since the Master Plan was last comprehensively updated, San Diego has grown dramatically, creating a prime opportunity to build upon previous park studies and efforts while engaging a new generation of San Diegans.

With grant funding from Caltrans, SANDAG and the Prebys Foundation, the City has retained WRT Planning + Design to assist with the Master Plan Update, which is anticipated to be completed in 2028.

An equitable Master Plan requires input and feedback from all community members. The City is committed to inclusive engagement that reaches everyone who uses and enjoys the park, as well as those who face barriers to access. San Diegans can take the Initial Ideas Survey and learn more about the Master Plan Update, project timeline and sign up for ongoing updates by visiting PlanBalboaPark.org. Questions and comments can be directed to PlanBalboaPark@sandiego.gov.

What Others are Saying

City leaders and Balboa Park stakeholders shared their perspectives on the launch of the Master Plan Update and what it means for the future of the park.

"Few places give San Diego as much as Balboa Park does: millions of visitors, thousands of jobs, museums, theaters and public venues that families grow up with," said Peter Comiskey of Balboa Park Cultural Partnership. **"Real care and investment will help our cultural organizations continue**

to shine for years to come. We look forward to working with the City to update the master plan and lay the groundwork for a new generation of improvements and stewardship."

"Balboa Park deserves a thoughtful, collaborative Master Plan," said Katy McDonald, president and CEO of Forever Balboa Park. **"We are excited to work with the City and community in developing this important document."**

"Balboa Park is one of San Diego's most treasured public spaces, but years of deferred maintenance have taken a toll on this historic landmark," said Councilmember Stephen Whitburn, whose district includes Balboa Park. **"An updated Master Plan will give us a clear vision for protecting the park's historic character, while addressing critical infrastructure needs, and making the improvements necessary to serve future generations."**

"Balboa Park is one of San Diego's greatest shared treasures – a place that belongs to all of us and reflects so much of who we are as a region," said Grant Oliphant, CEO of the Prebys Foundation. **"This master plan is an exciting opportunity to think boldly about the park's future and ensure it remains welcoming, vibrant, and inspiring for generations to come."**



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