

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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COUNCILMEMBER WARD AND ADVOCATES CALL FOR \$9.5 M IN FUNDING FOR BALBOA PARK FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

SAN DIEGO, CA – With the goal of restoring Balboa Park to a state worthy of its current and historical role as a cultural hub of creativity, history and economic force behind our regional economy, Councilmember Chris Ward and the leadership of core park institutions have called for Mayor Faulconer to reinvest \$9.5 million in Capital Improvement Program funding back into general facility improvements across the park.

“Balboa Park has played an integral role in the story of San Diego for the last 150 years. To ensure that story continues we’ve asked Mayor Faulconer to invest funding back into general facility improvements across the park,” said Councilmember Chris Ward. **“Park conditions are embarrassing and must be addressed, so I will continue advocating for a new Balboa Park Master Plan Project Implementation Plan to prioritize park improvements requested by the community and stakeholders.”**

“We cannot risk losing out on \$9.5 million in funding when the needs of Balboa Park are so great,” said Peter Comiskey, Executive Director of the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership. **Over the last nine years, the cultural institutions of Balboa Park have invested over \$80 million into the park. We need the City to show it’s ready to do its part: secure this funding and commit to capital reinvestment for the existing facilities in our Park.”**

“There are clear, immediate infrastructure needs here in Balboa Park and they are best illustrated by the dismal conditions of public restrooms throughout the park.” said Joyce Gattas, Chair of the Balboa Park Conservancy. **The restoration of public restrooms, especially in the Palisades, is essential to improving the overall visitor experience that this park relies on.”**

“We have a golden opportunity to begin a real rebirth for Balboa Park,” says John Bolthouse, Executive Director of the nonprofit Friends of Balboa Park. **“This park is one of the most important cultural destinations in all of Southern California, but meaningful investment in its upkeep has been long overdue. What a better way for the Mayor and City Council to make a statement for future lovers of Balboa Park than to stand together and ensure next year’s budget reflects the pride we all have for the park.”**

For more information or to interview Councilmember Ward please contact Ansermio Jake Estrada at (619) 227-0421 or at EstradaAJ@SanDiego.Gov.

Councilmember Chris Ward represents San Diego's Third Council District including communities of Downtown, Little Italy, Bankers Hill, Mission Hills, Middletown, Hillcrest, University Heights, North Park, Normal Heights, Old Town, South Park, and Golden Hill.

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