



NEWS RELEASE

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Forever Balboa Park is New Name of Merged Advocacy Groups at Balboa Park

SAN DIEGO (July 15, 2021) — Forever Balboa Park is the outcome of a merger between two of San Diego's most passionate park advocacy groups, Friends of Balboa Park and the Balboa Park Conservancy. The organization announces the strategic renaming after its acceptance by the board of trustees at their first combined meeting earlier this afternoon.

After a year of preparation, the two organizations officially merged on July 1, 2021, and will leverage their collective strength, combined resources and expertise for the greater good of Balboa Park. As one organization, Forever Balboa Park is better positioned to partner with the city and support the diverse needs of Balboa Park.

To ensure an equitable strategic renaming, the two organizations issued an RFP and selected Departure, a local branding agency, to develop a name that speaks to the mission of the merged organization.

"It has been exciting to work with Departure on a new corporate name and identity," said Kerri V. Kapich, COO of San Diego Tourism Authority and board member of the newly merged organization. "They were selected through a comprehensive RFP process, and their approach has included extensive research representing both local and national thought leaders."

The creative team worked with a task force consisting of board members, stakeholders, and global leaders to understand the competitive landscape of urban parks nationwide, as well as the local vision for nonprofit park leadership. These collective insights provided the foundation for branding a newly united organization.

"This merger resulted from our two organizations' shared mission to inspire and enable change for the greater good of Balboa Park," said Connie Matsui, Co-Chair of the Board of Trustees of Forever Balboa Park. "Adopting a new name demonstrates our own willingness to embrace change as well as our belief in becoming an even stronger partner to all who value Balboa Park and want to help sustain and support it. As the new name implies, we honor the comprehensive vision of the Park's founders while encouraging ongoing innovations and improvements that will enhance the Park's vitality and rich diversity for many more generations."

The name Forever Balboa Park conveys the pride of place and connection that Balboa Park inspires, and it embodies both the legacy and future of the park for all visitors. Now that a new name has been selected, the organization will work with Departure to develop a brand identity, and a comprehensive rollout will ensue.

Additionally, the combined board has hired a national search firm to secure a new executive leader. Until a new leader is hired, Forever Balboa Park will be led by continuing board leaders and senior managers: Sarah Evans and Connie Matsui as board co-chairs along with Sarah Beckman, John Bolthouse, Jackie Higgins, and Elizabeth Porter who are expected to remain in key staff leadership roles.

A special \$30,000 2:1 challenge grant from the Lodestar Foundation will help support the merger implementation, strengthening the organization's capacity to further Balboa Park's position as a world-class destination and regional resource.

The Lodestar Foundation

The Lodestar Foundation seeks to expand the overall capacity of the social sector by promoting philanthropy, volunteering, public service, nonprofit collaboration and other business practices. The Lodestar Foundation is focused on grantmaking and considers funding only organizations, projects and programs that further its mission.

Forever Balboa Park

Forever Balboa Park is the City of San Diego's partner in advocating for the greater good of Balboa Park. Its focus is to sustain the park's legacy, enhance its many assets, and collaborate with park stakeholders to envision and execute future plans to benefit both residents and visitors for decades to come. It brings valued resources to the park as a convener and organizer, raising funds and cultivating volunteers to realize and activate projects, programs, and services for the best interests of the park and the greater San Diego community.

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