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Independence Visitor Center Corporation and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Open New Visitor Center in LOVE Park

The historic location will once again offer visitor information and civic engagement, with generous support from Bank of America and the William Penn Foundation. PHLvisitorcenter.com/LOVEpark

PHILADELPHIA, PA, May 6, 2021 – With generous support provided by **Bank of America** and the **William Penn Foundation**, the **Independence Visitor Center Corporation (IVCC)** and **Philadelphia Parks & Recreation** have partnered to develop an information services kiosk in LOVE Park, adjacent to the historic Welcome Center building. After a delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the **LOVE Park Visitor Center** opened to the public with a soft launch on May 1, and an official ribbon-cutting ceremony planned for **Tuesday, May 11, at 12:30 p.m.** *Media alert to follow.*

Since 1960, when the Fairmount Park Welcome Center first opened under its original name as the “Philadelphia Hospitality Center,” the LOVE Park site has provided community and visitor services. Its location makes it a natural hub: a point of entry from Suburban Station; a connector from Center City to the cultural institutions along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway; and a gateway to Fairmount Park.

In 2010, the brand equity of the location as a welcome center remained strong. In response to a continued high demand for onsite information services, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation partnered with the IVCC to operate an information desk inside the Welcome Center until the building and LOVE Park closed for renovations in 2016.

When renovations eliminated the information desk space inside the historic Welcome Center building, the IVCC and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation retained **SMP Architects** to explore alternate options for providing civic engagement and visitor services at LOVE Park. After conducting a feasibility study, SMP Architects determined a stand-alone kiosk with a minimal footprint could be installed to accommodate the IVCC’s operations and effectively restore public information services. SMP designed the new kiosk to invite visitors in and respond to the existing architecture in LOVE Park.

As the presenting partner of the LOVE Park Visitor Center, **Bank of America** has also supported the overall revitalization of LOVE Park. Bank of America’s support of the LOVE Park Visitor Center is in alignment with its long history of investing in communities across Philadelphia and the nation to help positively shape their diverse communities.

Goals of the new LOVE Park Visitor Center include:

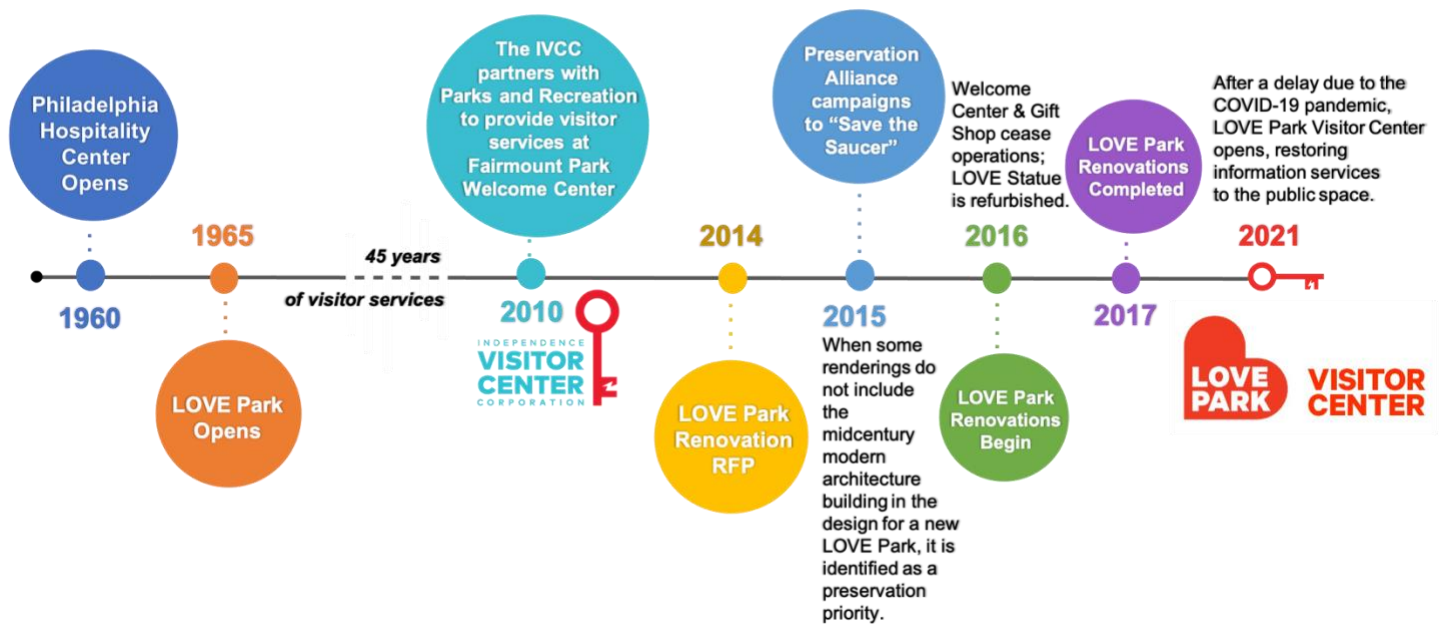
- Foster collaborative information-sharing through multi-lingual staffing and excellent customer service;
- Serve the public’s diverse needs through innovative and accessible design;
- Support local arts and culture and historic institutions with meaningful stakeholder involvement;
- Elevate information services offered in an engaging and welcoming environment;
- Enhance an important civic asset and community resource in a historic location;
- Act as a resource for school groups, educators, city employees, and the local community; and
- Strengthen communications with meaningful public initiatives for both residents and visitors.

“Bank of America’s support of the LOVE Park renovations demonstrates our ongoing commitment to helping local communities thrive,” said **Jim Dever, President, Bank of America Greater Philadelphia**. “We look forward to the reopening of the Visitor Center, which will help LOVE Park maintain its legacy as an iconic gathering place for Philadelphia residents, workers and visitors.”

“We are most grateful to our partners, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, the City of Philadelphia, the William Penn Foundation, and our presenting sponsor, Bank of America, for enabling us to return to LOVE Park,” said **James J. Cuorato, President and CEO, Independence Visitor Center Corporation**. “We look forward to bringing the same high-quality brand of visitor services to our kiosk that have earned us accolades at the Independence Visitor Center.”

“LOVE Park is our grand entrance to Fairmount Park, and one Philadelphia’s most iconic public spaces,” said **Kathryn Ott Lovell, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Commissioner**. “The new LOVE Park Visitor Center adds so much to the warm Philly welcome visitors receive when they arrive at the base of our beautiful Parkway. Thank you to our presenting sponsor, Bank of America, and our partners at the Independence Visitor Center Corporation and the William Penn Foundation for your commitment to high quality public spaces.”

A Timeline of Visitor and Information Services Offered at LOVE Park



About Independence Visitor Center Corporation: The Independence Visitor Center Corporation is a Pennsylvania nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization, which operates in cooperation with the National Park Service, Visit Philadelphia®, Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Philadelphia, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The IVCC manages the Independence Visitor Center, the official visitor center of greater Philadelphia and Independence National Historical Park; satellite visitor centers; and a visitor-friendly public transit service, the Philly PHLASH® Downtown Loop.

About Philadelphia Parks & Recreation: Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR) advances the prosperity of the city and the progress of her people through stewardship of nearly 10,200 acres of public land and waterways, and management of 500 recreation buildings, 166 miles of trail, and 250 playgrounds. PPR offers safe, enjoyable recreation, environmental and cultural programs and events throughout Philadelphia’s parks and recreation system. PPR promotes the well-being and growth of the city’s residents by connecting them to the natural world, to each other and to fun, physical and social opportunities. Visit us at phila.gov/parksandrec, and follow @philaparkandrec on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

About the William Penn Foundation: The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through efforts that increase educational opportunities for children from low- income families, ensure a sustainable environment, foster creativity that enhances civic life, and advance philanthropy in the Philadelphia region. In partnership with others, the Foundation works to advance opportunity, ensure sustainability, and enable effective solutions. Since inception, the Foundation has made nearly 1,000 grants totaling over \$1.6 billion.