

## PRESS RELEASE

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### ***Downtown San Diego Partnership Appoints New President & CEO***

*After seven years, Betsy Brennan returns to San Diego to lead local nonprofit into a new era*



The Downtown San Diego Partnership is proud to announce Betsy Brennan as its new President and CEO. A New York native, Brennan returns to San Diego as a respected and innovative leader with vast experience in business and economic development, quality of life initiatives, public relations, marketing, fundraising, and political advocacy.

"The CEO selection process was robust," said Craig Benedetto, Chairman of the Downtown San Diego Partnership Board of Directors. "With more than 400 applicants, the committee worked hard to find the candidate who could best lead the Partnership into the future.

Betsy really stood out and had all the pieces we were looking for in our next President and CEO. We couldn't be more excited about her becoming our new leader and helping us take the organization to the next level."

A friend and colleague to many in San Diego, Brennan obtained her Juris Doctor, with a specialization in land use, at the University of San Diego. From 2002 to 2008, she worked for San Diego's first-ever City Council President, Scott Peters; first as a community outreach, policy advisor, and land-use aide, then as Chief of Staff. During this time, Brennan was integral in the transition to a strong-mayor form of government, as well as in the establishment of the roles and policies for the San Diego City Council President's office.

She also served as Chief of Staff to former San Diego State University President Stephen L. Weber. While at SDSU, Brennan served on the Board of Directors of Aztec Shops, the board that leads the university's commercial operations such as merchandise and licensing, food service, and real estate acquisitions.

Additionally, Brennan held executive leadership roles at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and the Tahoe Forest Health System in Incline Village, Lake Tahoe. Brennan is also a proud graduate of several statewide leadership programs, including Lead San Diego, Class of 2006, and has served on several local nonprofit boards of directors.

"I am honored and excited to lead the Downtown San Diego Partnership," said Brennan. "Downtown San Diego includes many vibrant and distinct neighborhoods, and I look forward to celebrating the best attributes of each area. I am confident that by working together with our Board of Directors, strong staff, residents, business owners, government officials, civic and business associations, and tourism industry representatives, we can further propel San Diego as a world-class destination. San Diego is the perfect place in which to start and grow a business, live in a clean and safe community, and continue to attract visitors to our beautiful Downtown, which is beneficial to our region as a whole."

Most recently, Brennan lived and worked in Charleston, S.C., as Vice President of Development and Stewardship for the Coastal Community Foundation of South Carolina. In this role, she directed initiatives related to civic engagement and economic development, and led asset development, donor services, and external relations for a nine-county coastal region in the Palmetto State.

Brennan will begin her position as leader of the Downtown Partnership in late February. She will be formally introduced as President and CEO during the Partnership's Installation Dinner at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Brennan succeeds Interim President and CEO Bill Geppert, formerly the head of Cox Communications San Diego. Past President and CEO Kris Michell successfully led the Downtown San Diego Partnership for nearly seven years until this past October, when she accepted a position in Mayor Kevin Faulconer's administration as Deputy Chief Operating Officer of Special Projects.

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*The Downtown San Diego Partnership is a member-based, nonprofit organization focused on representing Downtown San Diego as the leading economic, cultural, and government center of the region to our more than 11,000 property owners and 400 business members. For more information, visit [www.downtownsandiego.org](http://www.downtownsandiego.org).*