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**SUMMER AT THE OVAL+ TO RE-ENVISION USES FOR  
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PARKWAY  
Large-Scale Installations by PORT Urbanism Complement Ever-Popular  
Entertainment, Recreation, Food, & Beer Garden**

**May 31, 2017 – Philadelphia, PA – Fairmount Park Conservancy and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation will host the fifth summer of The Oval with expanded programming this year called The Oval+ (Plus) presented by PNC.** The Oval+ features an expanded footprint and unique installations in addition to the ever-popular movie and music nights, food trucks, beer garden, and family-friendly activities. The partners have engaged a cutting-edge design firm, PORT Urbanism of Philadelphia and Chicago, to develop an installation that will inspire people to envision future, potential uses for the Benjamin Franklin Parkway beyond Eakins Oval.

**Taking the theme of “What’s your Parkway, Philly?” this year’s Oval+ creates focal points on the Parkway from the Philadelphia Museum of Art to Logan Circle – for connecting with nature; enjoying art, culture, and play; or gathering for public dialogue about the future of the Parkway.** Three immersive open-air “rooms” explore these current and future aspects of the Parkway and its open spaces. One “room” invites visitors to explore the lost and hidden Fairmount Park. Another celebrates the familiar and not-so-familiar aspects of Philadelphia culture and recreation. And the third space, centered on a giant ground mural of the city, invites locals and visitors to literally draw onto the city what they imagine their Parkway to be. The new ground mural, designed by PORT Urbanism and painted by Mural Arts Philadelphia, will complement the installations at the Oval.



At night, the installations – some extending to 24 feet in height – will be illuminated from within, creating a glowing effect. Other elements include a dynamic maze which will wind through the trees and a stage to accommodate a changing schedule of public events large and small. Also, to continue the theme, **nearby Aviator Park and the newly renovated Shakespeare Park further down the Parkway will be the site of additional Oval+ installations and activities** from collaborating organizations like the Franklin Institute and Free Library of Philadelphia.

“The Oval will be both fun and thought-provoking this year,” said **Kathryn Ott Lovell, Commissioner of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation**. “As always, we expect people of all ages to come out to eat, drink and play, but we also want to hear from our citizens how they imagine taking advantage of the open space along the Parkway.”

**View renderings from PORT Urbanism here: <http://bit.ly/ConservancyPressKit>.**

The Oval+ runs from July 20-August 20, Wednesdays through Sundays. Highlights include:

- The Oval Beer Garden serving hot food, craft brews, wine, and cocktails
- Wellness Wednesdays with power yoga classes by Yoga Habit and kickboxing from CKO
- Arts & Culture Thursdays featuring hip-hop classes and DJ dance parties
- Food & Flicks Fridays showing free popular movies at dusk
- Game Day Saturdays presenting Quizzo and music jam sessions in the Beer garden
- Family Fun Sundays with Let’s Rock Recess, a kids’ DJ dance party in the Beer Garden
- Games like mini-golf, cornhole, ping-pong, and giant chess and checkers

“We are excited about furthering the dialogue this year at the Oval of what the Parkway can one day become,” said **Rick Magder, Executive Director of Fairmount Park Conservancy**. “This one-of-a-kind pop-up park will continue to set the tone for the neighborhood and the institutions of what a dynamic public space the Parkway can become. We thank all of our partners and sponsors for making this year’s effort possible again.”

Inspiration for this year’s design came from a 2013 study performed by PennPraxis recommending “more park, less way” along this important thoroughfare. Summer at The Oval is presented by PNC and supported by funding from ArtPlace America.

### **About the Designer**

**PORT Urbanism** is a Philadelphia and Chicago-based design consultancy comprising architects, landscape architects, urban designers and strategic thinkers. Led by Christopher Marcinkoski, Megan Born, and Andrew Moddrell, the firm’s expertise is in the analysis, visioning, design, and implementation of new formats of urban space and public realm, ranging in scale from streets, plazas, parks, and public waterfronts, to the regeneration of industrial districts, long-term framework plans, and regional development strategies. PORT is recognized for its capacity to leverage latent civic, environmental, and cultural potentials within a given context to imagine fresh, compelling, memorable, and culturally-relevant design solutions.

### **About The Oval**

Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, in partnership with the Fairmount Park Conservancy, revealed the City of Philadelphia’s new “Park on the Parkway” in July 2013. The eight acres of public space located on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway known as Philadelphia’s own “Avenue des Champs-Élysées,” Eakins Oval (2451 Benjamin Franklin Parkway) became The Oval, a park with community programming, events, and activities. Designed to promote the Parkway as a neighborhood park for all Philadelphians, The Oval offers a wide array of activities and amenities, and features park spaces that all ages can easily access and enjoy.

## **About the Partners**

**Fairmount Park Conservancy** exists to champion Philadelphia's parks. We lead capital projects and historic preservation efforts, foster neighborhood park stewardship, attract and leverage investments, and develop innovative programs throughout the 10,200 acres that include Fairmount Park and more than 100 neighborhood parks around the city. Philadelphia has one of the largest urban park systems in the world, providing residents with extensive health, environmental, social, economic and cultural benefits – including access to some of the region's most famous attractions. For more information, please visit [myphillypark.org](http://myphillypark.org), join us at [facebook.com/fairmountparkconservancy](https://www.facebook.com/fairmountparkconservancy), and follow us on Instagram and Twitter @myphillypark.

**Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR)** advances the prosperity of the city and the progress of her people through intentional and sustained stewardship of nearly 10,200 acres of public land and waterways as well as through hundreds of safe, stimulating recreation, environmental and cultural centers. PPR promotes the well-being and growth of the city's residents by connecting them to the natural world around them, to each other and to fun, physical and social opportunities. PPR is responsible for the upkeep of historically significant Philadelphia events and specialty venues, and works collaboratively with communities and organizations in leading capital projects and the introduction of inventive programming. To learn more about Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, visit us at [www.phila.gov/parksandrec](http://www.phila.gov/parksandrec), and follow @philaparkandrec on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Tumblr.

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**For a schedule of events as well as high-resolution images for media use, please visit the online press room at <http://bit.ly/ConservancyPressKit>.**