



CITY OF HOUSTON

News Release

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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NEWS RELEASE

City of Houston Acquires State Park

On August 25 at 10:00 a.m., the City of Houston will acquire Lake Houston State Park from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. This transfer represents a unique effort designed to preserve the 4,786.6-acre park and ensure its continued operation. Mayor Bill White spearheaded this partnership among the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Montgomery County Precinct 4 and Harris County Precinct 4. The Ceremonial Transfer will take place at Lake Houston State Park, 22031 Baptist Encampment Road, New Caney, Texas.

"This transfer is a wonderful opportunity for both the City of Houston and surrounding counties to preserve greenspace and to increase tourism and economic development that will benefit the entire area." said Mayor White.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has managed the parkland since 1981. State budget constraints have forced the state agency to find alternate means of keeping parks open for citizens.

"We are grateful for and encouraged by the clear enthusiasm our city and county partners have expressed about assuming responsibility for what will soon be known as Lake Houston Park," said Robert L. Cook, TPWD executive director. "We have a clear understanding that they will continue the park's current recreational character and safeguard its natural resource and historical characteristics. It took careful consideration and lengthy discussion with our partners, but it finally became clear that in this case, transferring this site to local control was the right thing to do for the park and the people who will enjoy it in future years."

The City of Houston has partnered with both Montgomery County and Harris County to operate the park. "Montgomery County is on board with the project and looks forward to working with the City to make this park work better and get noticed," Montgomery County Commissioner Ed Rinehart said.

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The Houston Parks and Recreation Department will manage the park facility for the City. "This represents a first for our department," said Joe Turner, Director HPARD. "We're proud to receive this state park into our system. Twenty years from now, this area will be surrounded by residential development...and right in the middle will be almost 5,000 acres of parkland for all to enjoy."

Lake Houston State Park will be renamed Lake Houston Park. Its current reservation system will continue to be operated by the state. The park is located 30 miles north of Houston off FM1485. Activities include camping, nature study, bird watching, hiking, biking and horseback riding (the park does not furnish horses). To make reservations for Lake Houston Park, call the state park reservation center at 512-389-8900.

For additional information on Lake Houston Park or on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department call 713-845-1135 or visit our web site at www.houstonparks.org