

Houston Parks and Recreation Department FY 2008 Annual Report

Preserving Parks Today - Building for the Future

Greenspaces

Esplanades

Urban Forest

Trails

Urban Wilderness

Parks

Skateparks

Playgrounds

Dog Parks

Water Spraygrounds

Community Centers

Pools

Sports

Adaptive Recreation

Recreation



Lee & Joe Jamail Skatepark



Mason Park



Willowwaterhole Park



West 11th Street Park

A Message From the Director



We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.

- Native American Proverb

It is always a pleasure to bring you the Houston Parks and Recreation Department's Annual Report because it allows me the opportunity to highlight accomplishments that will have long term affects on the quality of our lives today and what we leave behind for future generations. As stewards of our city's parkland we are tasked with the management and protection of our city's greenspaces and with providing recreational opportunities for Houstonians of all ages and abilities.

This past year has been an important one for us as a department and for the citizens we serve. Our accomplishments have included an initiative that will help increase parkland for future generations (the Park and Open Space Ordinance passed by City Council in October of 2007) as well as the beginning of a project to preserve one of our department's most historic spaces (the Gragg Building Renovation Project begun in the spring of 2008). Taken together, these two initiatives underscore our commitment to our parks and recreational opportunities for today's park users while we build a park system that will serve future generations.

This past year we've been gratified by the support we've received from park users, green groups and volunteers. They have taken an active role in advocating for more parkland, planting trees and wildflowers, participating in our recreational programming for all abilities and expressing their support for our park system.

We recognize that the work we do on a daily basis is part and parcel of the legacy we together with our supporters leave to those who come after us.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Turner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joe Turner, Director

Houston Parks and Recreation Department

HPARD FY 2008 Project Highlights

- July** **Celebrated 135 Years of Freedom at Emancipation Park**
The department celebrated Emancipation Park's historic roots in conjunction with the Friends of Emancipation Park. The celebration highlighted the parks history and the foresight of the men women who originally created Emancipation Park in 1872. The park was purchased for \$1,000 in 1872 as a venue for some of the earliest Emancipation or Juneteenth celebrations held by freed slaves. Today, HPARD is dedicated to celebrate the parks historic legacy and the vision of the men and women who created the park.
- August** **Celebrated the acquisition of Hackberry Park**
The Houston Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the Houston Parks Board purchased 22.435 acres of land in southwest Houston to create a new park to be called Hackberry Park for approximately \$5 million dollars.
- September** **\$100,000 National Recreation Trails Grant for an Adaptive Trail Project**
The grant, funded by the US Department of Transportation and administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration, funded the creation of a trail at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center. While the trail is open to people of all abilities, unique features challenge people with mobility and vision disabilities to improve skills they need in every day life. In addition, they provide a place where rehabilitation specialists can teach wheelchair and hand bike mobility skills.
- October** **Parks and Open Space Ordinance passed by unanimous vote by City Council**
The Parks and Open Space Ordinance require residential developers to develop park space or pay an in-lieu fee in the areas in which they build. The purpose of the new ordinance is to provide sufficient and varied park and recreational areas, amenities and improvements for residents. The historic ordinance divides Houston into 17 sectors and utilizes a formula that provides developers with an option of contributing a dollar about or acreage to provide for park acquisition and improvements.
- November** **Grand Opening of Lake Houston Wilderness Park Nature Center**
The New Lake Houston Wilderness Park Nature Center enhances the park experience by providing a central location for visitors and students to learn about the parks natural world and its inhabitants. The center's 4 ecosystem rooms allow visitors to get up close and personal with forest and wetland invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles, including turtles, alligators, lizards, and snakes. The center was made possible by a \$100,000 donation from the George Mitchell Foundation.
- December** **Unveiling of MLK, Jr. Statue at Houston Garden Center**
The bronze statue of Martin Luther King, Junior was created by Denver artist Ed Dwight who has designed and installed over 35 major memorials across the nation including the MLK Memorial in Denver, the Underground Railroad Memorial in Detroit, the Harold Washington Memorial Sculpture in Chicago's blues district and other permanent works on display in the Smithsonian.
- January** **Celebrated Arbor Day by Planting 3,000 trees**
500 Houstonians have shown their commitment to the city's Urban Forest by volunteering to plant 3,000 trees in 4 hours. This annual event celebrates the city's Urban Forest canopy by encouraging volunteers to beautify their city and improve the environment by planting trees.
- February** **\$10 Million Memorial Park Capital Campaign Kick-Off**
In conjunction with Memorial Park Conservancy the campaign began the process of securing private funding to build a pedestrian bridge, running center and trails and a new tennis plaza at Memorial Park to address Memorial Park Master Plan objectives.
- March** **New Parks Master Plan passed by unanimous vote by City Council**
The new plan will guide the department in its future development of Houston's park system by creating a broader vision of park and recreation goals for the department.
- April** **Awarded over \$17,500 in scholarships through HPARD's ASK Program**
The ASK or Athlete's Seeking Knowledge Program provides educational support, resources and tools to equip middle school and high school students to excel in their academic studies. The program is offered free of charge by HPARD as a component of its After School, Teen and Summer Enrichment Programs. Since 2000, HPARD's ASK program has awarded \$65,000 in scholarships and education incentives to Houston youth. This program is sponsored by the Houston Astros and Minute Maid, The Rookie Foundation and the Center of Academic Preparation to Higher Education.
- May** **NCAA Division II National Championship Festival at Memorial Park**
For five days in May the eyes of the sports world were focused on Memorial ark and more than 800 Division II student athletes competed for NCAA titles in six spring sports: men's and women's golf, men's and women's tennis, women's lacrosse and softball. The event featured 70 teams and was structured similar to an Olympic-type event. This was the third national championships festival hosted by Division II. The national attention generated by this event increased the positive exposure for the city and the department.
- June** **Lee & Joe Jamail Skatepark Grand Opening**
The new state-of-the-art 30,000 square foot in-ground public skatepark vaulted the city into the forefront of American venues for one of the fastest-growing dynamic sports in the country. It contains the largest cradle in the world and provides the first world-class, in-ground skatepark in our region. The park provides areas for skaters of all levels, from pro to beginner.

Houston Parks and Recreation Department Divisions



Youth Sports & Recreation



Adult Sports & Recreation



Senior Programs & Recreation



Adaptive Recreation



Summer Food Service Program

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department Mission is

"To enhance the quality of urban life by providing safe, well maintained parks and offering affordable programs for the community."

Recreation & Wellness Division

The Recreation and Wellness Division provides recreational and educational programs and services aimed at enriching the lives of Houstonians of all ages and abilities. It staffs and operates 56 community centers, 39 pool sites, 4 of the 7 city golf courses (3 courses are managed by private contractors), 1 junior golf center, 3 staffed tennis centers, the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center which houses the Department's Adaptive Recreation Program for people with disabilities, the new Lee & Joe Jamail Skatepark in Eleanor Tinsley Park, and the Summer Food Service Program which offers lunch and afternoon snacks for youth ages 18 and younger.

Greenspace Management Division

The Greenspace Management Division works to preserve and maintain HPARD parkland, whether it is developed or natural wilderness. The division is composed of grounds maintenance, urban forestry, horticulture, adoption and volunteer services, community restitution services and fleet maintenance. The division maintains all 350 parks, 200 greenspaces and esplanades. In addition, the division maintains city library grounds and the Multi-Service Health Department Centers.

Facilities Management and Development Division

The Facilities Management and Development Division works to administer the Parks Master Plan by overseeing the planning, acquisition, design, construction, maintenance and repair of park facilities. The division manages the expenditures of the Capital Improvement Program budget, the Parks Special Fund Account and other sources of funds for improvements.



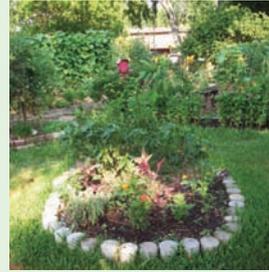
Urban Forestry



Volunteer With Parks



Hershey's Track & Field



Urban Garden Program



Wildflower Planting

Management and Finance Division

The Management and Finance Division oversees the accounting of expenses and revenues for the Department as well as forecasting financial needs, handling hiring and selectin, administering payroll and benefits, managing employee relations, overseeing safety and training and providing information services.

Hermann Park and Memorial Park Division

Hermann Park and Memorial Park have often been referred to as the Crown Jewels of the Department's park system. This much-deserved title stems from both their size and popularity with park visitors.

The Hermann and Memorial Park Division oversees the operation of these two (2) parks and works with the non-profit citizen conservancy groups, the Hermann Park Conservancy and the Memorial Park Conservancy to improve and develop the two parks in accordance with their Master Plans.

Lake Houston Wilderness Park Division

The Lake Houston Wilderness Park Division oversees the operation of Lake Houston Wilderness Park. Lake Houston Wilderness Park is a wilderness park and is the largest park in the Houston Parks and Recreation Department's park inventory with 4,800 acres. The park was transferred to the City by the State on August 25, 2006. Since then the department has added a Nature Center and a Park Naturalist to the park to provide fun educational opportunities which allow park visitors to learn about the wildlife that inhabits the park. Lake Houston Wilderness Park is the only park in the department's inventory where overnight camping is permitted.



Hike, Bike & Jogging Trails



HPARD Internship Programs



Hermann Square Park



Swimming Pools



Tennis Courts

Urban Park Rangers and Safety Division

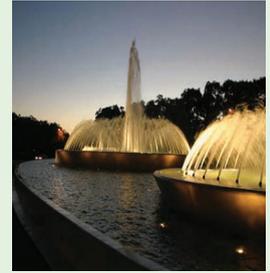
The Urban Park Rangers work in cooperation with the Houston Police Department to develop and implement patrol strategies to improve the security and safety of park visitors and Department facilities. The Urban Park Rangers operate a 24 Hour year-round dispatch office and monitor activities in all HPARD Parks.

Grants, Legislation and Development Division

The Grants, Legislation and Development Division is tasked with seeking and developing alternate forms of revenue sources for the department through grant initiatives, partnerships and legislative opportunities. They also review department-related legislation and coordinate with the Mayor's Office of Government Affairs on grants, federal appropriations and legislation and work with aligned support organizations and partnerships.

Communications Division

The Communications Division is responsible for collecting and distributing internal and external communications materials whatever the medium. Duties include media relations, public relations, marketing, web-site development, PowerPoint presentations, speech writing, press releases, citizen correspondence, the coordination of the parks department's 3-1-1 program, the citizens email system called AskParks, trade booth development and the preparation of collateral for park's events and programs.



FY 2008 Financial Statement

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department is composed of 2 funds, the General Fund and the Special Revenue Fund which taken together comprise the total FY 2008 budget of \$72,750,704.

FY 2008 GENERAL FUND

COST CENTER	CCG NAME	BUDGET	ALLOCATION
360001	Office of the Director	417,466	0.65%
360002	Management & Finance Division	5,450,272	8.46%
360002	Utilities	7,251,011	11.25%
360003	Park Administration Division	167,976	0.26%
360004	Communications Division	590,021	0.92%
360005	Grants, Legislation & Development Division	262,755	0.41%
360006	Urban Park Rangers Division	2,508,919	3.89%
360007	Facilities Development & Maintenance Division	7,877,232	12.22%
360008	Zoological Gardens (Houston Zoo)	7,901,704	12.26%
360009	Recreation & Wellness Division	13,141,769	20.39%
360013	Greenspace Management Division	18,445,554	28.62%
360014	Lake Houston Park	439,763	0.68%
General Fund Total		\$64,454,442	100%

FY 2008 SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

COST CENTER	CCG NAME	BUDGET	ALLOCATION
360002	Revenue Administration	1,413,242	17.03%
360010	Houston Garden Center	10,000	0.12%
360011	Golf & Tennis Center	3,969,244	47.84%
360012	Memorial Park Golf Course	2,803,776	33.80%
360013	Tree & Shrub Ordinance	100,000	1.21%
General Fund Total		\$ 8,296,262	100%



Mayor Bill White
City of Houston

Joe Turner, Director
Houston Parks and Recreation Department

Houston Parks and Recreation Department Division Heads

Doug Earle, Deputy Director
Recreation and Wellness Division

Paul Hendrix, Division Manager
Lake Houston Wilderness Park

Abel Gonzales, Deputy Director
Greenspace Management Division

Harold Norris, Division Manager
Urban Park Rangers and Safety

Cheryl Johnson, Deputy Director
Finance and Management Division

Estella Espinosa, Division Manager
Communications Division

Mark Ross, Deputy Director
Facilities Management and Development Division

Dan Pederson, Council Liaison
Director's Office

Karen Cullar, Assistant Director
Grants, Legislation and Development Division

Erika Sanchez, Administrative Specialist
Director's Office

Rick Dewees, Assistant Director
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