



Office of Mayor Annise D. Parker



City of Houston Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RE-Plant Memorial Park Forestry Plan Announced Multi-Part Project To Be Covered By Private Donations

Mayor Annise Parker, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD), the Memorial Park Conservancy (MPC), the Apache Foundation, the Houston Area Road Runners Association (HARRA), the Houston Parks Board, and Trees For Houston will gather at the Memorial Park picnic loop to announce the beginning of the Memorial Park Forestry Plan on Friday, April 13 at 11:00 am.

"Memorial Park has always been one of Houston's crown jewels and with the help of our partners we intend to keep it green for many years to come," said Mayor Parker. "We are thankful to all our partners for their generous support and commitment to restoring Memorial Park's forest canopy. We are especially thankful to the Apache Foundation for its generous support of Arbor Day, the Tour de Houston & the Bayou City Classic, all of which helped support and reforest our Houston parks. We are also especially thankful to the Houston Area Road Runners for the focus they brought to reforestation through their Bayou City Classic Run for the Trees event this year. We encourage all Houstonians, corporations and businesses to follow their lead and help RE-Plant Houston & RE-Plant Memorial Park."

RE-Plant Memorial Park will be a multi-year multi-part campaign that will target the reforestation of the 1,500 acre park after the devastating drought that killed thousands of trees in this park alone. The first part of this campaign began in January of 2012 when 25,000 trees were planted by volunteers in 4 parks in the Houston area including Memorial Park.

"We appreciate our partners who have helped us make Houston such a green forested city for so many years," said Joe Turner, Director Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "Last year was devastating to our forest and to our department. Memorial Park, with its loblolly pine canopy felt the effect more than many of our parks and now with the help of MPC and our partners we will continue the process of RE-Planting Memorial Park that our volunteers began this past January on Arbor Day."

The next phase of RE-Plant Memorial Park will include 4 major projects:

- The MPC Forestry Plan-Funded by MPC. Scheduled start mid to late April 2012.
- The Memorial Park Triangle Plan-Funded by Trees for Houston. Scheduled completion May 2012.
- The Running Trails & Scenic Areas Plan-Contributions can be sent to the Memorial Park Conservancy.
- The Memorial Park Golf Course Plan-Contributions can be sent to the Houston Parks Board

The MPC Forestry Plan, developed before the 2011 drought, was expanded to include the reforestation of trees lost during the unprecedented event last year. The project is estimated to cost around \$1 million dollars and will begin in mid to late April. It will include the removal of the majority of remaining dead trees and mulching of the understorey to prepare the site for planting seedlings in the winter. The Memorial Park Conservancy has raised half of the funding for this project and donations are still needed for this project.

The Memorial Park Triangle Planting Project is being planned and coordinated by Trees for Houston thanks to a \$50,000 donation. This project will be designed by Lauren Griffiths and should be installed with irrigation by the end of May.

The Running Trails & Scenic Areas Plan is estimated to cost \$6.5 million dollars which will need to be raised through private donations. This plan will address tree planting and vegetation restoration for the Seymour Lieberman Trail, the Outer Loop Trail and other high visual areas in the park bounded by the Railroad tracks to the west, Memorial Drive to the south, I-10 to the North and Crestwood Drive to the East. This plan would include the addition of a major water line and irrigation for the trees and vegetation to be planted.

The replanting of the Memorial Park Golf Course is estimated to cost \$300,000. This project is being developed and when completed it will provide for the planting of replacement trees lost during the drought and the extension of irrigation to these trees.

Altogether these project and partners will focus on the reforestation of Memorial Park through private fund raising efforts for both the trees and their continued irrigation.

To be a part of the RE-Plant Houston and RE-Plant Memorial Park effort, visit the following websites:

- To RE-Plant Memorial Park visit the Memorial Park Conservancy www.memorialparkconservancy.org
- To RE-Plant the Memorial Park Golf Course visit Houston Parks Board www.houstonparksboard.org
- To RE-Plant MacGregor Park and Mason Park visit Trees for Houston www.treesforhouston.org
- To RE-Plant Hermann Park visit the Hermann Park Conservancy www.hermannparkconservancy.org

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 38,992 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities. RE-Plant Memorial Park is part of the RE-Plant Houston initiative kicked off by the 2012 Arbor Day celebration whose purpose is to replant Houston's urban forest that was devastated by the 2011 drought. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.
