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## Press Release

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### **\$120,000 Timken Foundation Grant Will Fund New Fitness Center at Emancipation Park**

*Fitness Center Will Be Part of Coming Renovations To Historic Emancipation Park*

The Timken Foundation awarded a \$120,000 grant to the Houston Parks and Recreation Department and the Houston Parks Board during the October 22, 2012 OST/Almeda Corridors Redevelopment Authority (TIRZ #7) board meeting. The funds will be used to build the Timken Fitness/Weight Room at Emancipation Park.

"When sponsors like the Timken Foundation step up to fund worthy projects like the renovation of Emancipation Park the entire city wins," said Houston Mayor Annise Parker. "Their civic leadership helps strengthen our community and makes Houston a great place to live."

"The Timken Foundation is pleased to support and partner with the Houston Parks Board to help with the revitalization of Emancipation Park," said Greg Baylis, OA Manager Timken Boring Specialties, LLC.

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the OST/Almeda Corridors Redevelopment Authority (TIRZ #7) and the Houston Parks Board are currently working to fund the renovation of the historic Emancipation Park. The Timken Fitness/Weight Room will be part of the renovation of the park and will be housed in a new Recreation Center.

"We are thankful to the Timken Foundation for their generous support," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "Their commitment to Houston and to the renovation of Historic Emancipation Park will directly benefit the surrounding neighborhood and all who visit Emancipation Park."

The Timken Foundation of Canton grant funds will develop the interior amenities of the Fitness/Weight Room planned for the newly developed recreation center. When completed the new facility will include fitness equipment and will serve as a place for the community to exercise and attend nutritional classes and neighborhood meetings. Additional fitness and wellness activities for after-school and summer program participants, as well as adult and seniors will also take place in this area.

The fitness/weight room will be approximately 1,350 square feet and have daylight view to the new entry courtyard and interior lobby. It will be equipped with amenities including rubberized flooring, storage, signage, back wall mirrors and electrical wiring and outlets for various exercise/weight lifting equipment and speakers.

The Emancipation Park redevelopment project goal is to create a beautiful and functional park for the residents of Third Ward, to be a catalyst for local development, and to become a draw for national and international visitors. New elements to be included in the park design are a new indoor recreation building, a splash pad, a jogging trail, a porch-like covered area, and several picnic areas. The existing baseball field, tennis and basketball courts will be replaced and upgraded. The swimming pool will be removed and replaced with more a modern pool and the existing pool house will be renovated. The existing community center will be renovated and restored to more closely resemble the original design

and honor the historical importance of the building, and to create a more functional facility for the community. The gymnasium and other fitness amenities will be relocated to a new recreation center to be built next to the original building. In the later, a large Fitness/Weight room will be created with new equipment, sound system and storage areas.

**About the Timken Foundation**

*Founded in 1934, the Timken Foundation is a private family foundation based in Canton, Ohio. Since inception, the Foundation has given over \$300 million dollars in grants to public charities, primarily to capital projects that benefit Timken Company plant communities. The grants have been in the areas of Arts & Culture, Civic & Community, Education, Health & Hospitals, and Human Services.*

**About the Emancipation Park Capital Campaign Project**

*The Emancipation Park Capital Campaign Project seeks to preserve the history of the City's oldest park while serving as a catalyst for the revitalization of the Third Ward Super Neighborhood. The total project cost is \$33.6 million. This covers ALL project costs from Planning and Pre-Design through construction, including acquisition, architectural and engineering design fees, design contingency (potential construction phase design changes), construction management, surveys, testing, asbestos and lead abatement, and support costs including legal fees and program management. The project is one part of a public-private partnership between the Houston Parks Board (fiscal agent) and Houston Parks and Recreation Department (project manager) to create, improve, and protect parkland and recreation programs for the City of Houston. The redevelopment of Emancipation Park is one project created through this partnership.*

**About The Houston Parks Board**

*The Houston Parks Board, a non-profit organization founded in 1976, is funded primarily by the generous donations of private donors including individuals, families, neighborhood groups, foundations and corporations. During its 35-year history, the Houston Parks Board has acquired and improved over 75 percent of Houston's parkland, expanding the city's park space by over 13,000 acres and making over \$75 million in capital improvements. The Parks Board works closely with Houston's Mayor and the City's Parks and Recreation Department in fulfilling its mission to create, improve, protect and advocate for parkland in the Greater Houston Region.*

**About The Houston Parks and Recreation Department**

*The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 38,752 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit [www.houstonparks.org](http://www.houstonparks.org).*