



Press Release

October 22, 2015

CONTACT: Estella Espinosa
Work: (832) 395-7022
Cell: (832) 465-4782
estella.espinosa@houstontx.gov

Hermann Park Recognized As One of 15 Great Places In America by American Planning Association

The American Planning Association has released its annual list of Great Places in America, and Houston's Hermann Park has a prominent place on it. Hermann Park has been a favorite spot for Houstonians since its creation in 1914, and now this prestigious organization and the rest of the nation recognize its beauty and importance. At 2:30 p.m. on Friday, October 23, 2015, Mayor Annise Parker, Houston Parks and Recreation Department Director Joe Turner and Hermann Park Conservancy Executive Director Doreen Stoller will host representatives of the A.P.A. in a ceremony at the park's McGovern Centennial Gardens, 1500 Hermann Drive, 77004.

"Public spaces are essential as gathering places and recreational venues in our communities, and designing them to be innovative, multifunctional, and culturally beneficial requires thoughtful collaboration and planning," said Carol Rhea, F.A.I.C.P., president of A.P.A. "The Great Public Spaces of 2015 illustrate how to effectively create spaces that enhance the lives of residents and visitors alike, and we commend them on this tremendous achievement."

"We are honored that Hermann Park has received this designation," said Houston Mayor Annise Parker. "It is an iconic jewel that is a favorite of all Houstonians. We are thankful that the public private partnership that has worked to develop so many of these beautiful amenities has been recognized by the American Planning Association."

Hermann Park was originally gifted to the city by George H. Hermann in 1914. Its 445 acres of land are one of the most popular places visited by Houstonians year-round.

"This park is one of the places that make Houston such a unique and wonderful place to live," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "It is not only beautiful, but the amenities range from wild prairie to manicured gardens, with museums, entertainment venues, a world-class Zoo, and a mini train, to boot."

"The revitalization of Hermann Park is a miracle of community engagement," said Doreen Stoller, Executive Director, Hermann Park Conservancy. "The Park has become a place not just loved by the Houston community, but also supported by it, through institutions, corporations, and families."

As part of National Community Planning Month, A.P.A.'s Great Places in America program recognizes streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces in the United States that demonstrate exceptional character, quality, and planning that enrich their communities, facilitate economic growth, and inspire others around the country. Hermann Park's 101 years have involved a great deal of development, carried out according to master plans by such famous landscape architects as Arthur Comey, Hare and Hare, and Laurie Olin. The Houston Parks and Recreation Department is the steward for the park and the Hermann Park Conservancy has been its partner for the last thirty years of development. Today's park represents a diverse environment with a wide range of attractions, located in the heart of a busy, vibrant city. To be on the Great Places list, it must have a true sense of place, cultural and historical interest, a legacy of planning, and a vision for the future. Hermann Park fits all of these criteria, and more.

About the American Planning Association

The American Planning Association is an independent, not-for-profit educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities. A.P.A. and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, are dedicated to advancing the art, science and profession of good planning -- physical, economic and social -- so as to create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live. Members of A.P.A. help create communities of lasting value and encourage civic leaders, business interests and citizens to play a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people's lives. APA has offices in Washington, D.C., and Chicago. For more information, visit www.planning.org.

About the Hermann Park Conservancy

Founded in 1992, Hermann Park Conservancy is a nonprofit citizens' organization dedicated to the stewardship and improvement of Hermann Park, one of Houston's largest and most loved urban parks. Through a public-private partnership with the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, the Conservancy has secured nearly \$119 million toward a \$126 million goal for the Centennial Campaign for Hermann Park, which celebrated its 100th birthday in 2014. Beyond raising millions of dollars toward capital improvements in the Park, the Conservancy oversees programs focused on visitor services, conservation and stewardship, and tree care. For more information on the Conservancy, visit hermannpark.org. Follow the Conservancy at [facebook.com/HermannPark](https://www.facebook.com/HermannPark) and twitter.com/HermannPark.

About the Houston Parks and Recreation Department

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 37,859 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.