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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **\$10 Million Campaign**

#### **To Add Amenities at Memorial Park for Hikers, Bikers and Runners**

Houston Mayor Bill White, in conjunction with the Houston Parks and Recreation Department and the Memorial Park Conservancy, will announce a \$10 Million Capital Campaign to improve connectivity and provide new amenities to the Memorial Park Trail System on Tuesday, February 19, 2008. The Press Conference will take place at 10:30 a.m., at the corner of South Picnic Lane and Memorial Drive near the railroad tracks.

"The running community in Houston has a special fondness for Memorial Park, and for good reason," said Mayor Bill White. "The running trail system is one of the best in our area, and the planned improvements will only add to its distinction as one of the favorite running spots in Houston."

The project is multi-faceted and will bring amenities to Memorial Park for all park users. The project will include a new outer loop running trail that will approximately parallel the current Seymour Lieberman Exercise Trail. This will provide runners with the ability to have a longer, more varied run. It will also include a pedestrian/bicycle bridge to allow park visitors to safely cross Memorial Drive and provide connectivity to the North and South sides of the park and its trails. A new Running Center will be built at the end of Picnic Lane, complete with showers and other amenities for runners. A new Tennis Plaza is also being planned, in front of the existing Tennis Center. The Plaza will provide a better focal point for tennis patrons to gather and improved amenities for park patrons in general. Improved lighting along the trails is also in the plan.

(more)

“Runners, walkers, and bicyclists have long seen the need for a way to cross from one side of the park to the other without the risk of crossing a busy street,” said Joe Turner, director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. “This ambitious plan will answer that need in a dramatic way. It will also add a new level of ease and comfort for users of the Tennis Center and folks out for a stroll in one of the nation’s premiere urban parks.”

The Memorial Park Conservancy will be heading this campaign.

“Connecting the trails on both sides of the park is a move that will make Memorial Park a better, safer place for exercise and the enjoyment of nature, for all time,” said Sally Tyler, Executive Director, Memorial Park Conservancy. “This ambitious capital campaign will improve life for all of us, and I look forward to the challenge of bringing it together!”

These improvements are part of the Memorial Park Master Plan. The bridge is being designed by Clark Condon and Associates, winners of the 2006 Rice Design Alliance Charette, which challenged design teams to connect the two sides of the park for safety and ease of use. The Running Center and Tennis Center will be designed pending the raising of funds.

For more information on the Memorial Park Conservancy or to contribute to the Memorial Park Capital Campaign, contact the Memorial Park Conservancy at (713) 863-8403 or visit [www.memorialparkconservancy.org](http://www.memorialparkconservancy.org). For information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (713) 845-1135 or visit [www.houstonparks.org](http://www.houstonparks.org).