

## Press Release

March 21, 2011

CONTACT: Estella Espinosa  
Work: (832) 395-7022  
Cell: (832) 465-4782

# Big Idea Becomes Reality Rosemont Bridge Grand Opening Scheduled

*780 Linear Feet of Concrete & Steel Span Buffalo Bayou & Provide New View of Downtown Houston*

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the Memorial Heights Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone #5 and the Buffalo Bayou Partnership will hold a Grand Opening Ceremony and Festival for the Rosemont Bridge on Saturday, March 26 at 11:00 am on the north side of the Memorial Drive trail system near Montrose Blvd. The bridge's ramps connect nearby neighborhoods and provide access to Buffalo Bayou while creating a new tree-top view of Houston's downtown skyscrapers.

"We're very excited about the completion of the Rosemont Bridge and the partnership that worked to build it," said Mayor Annise Parker. "I personally made use of it this weekend. It is a marvelous new addition that will provide increased accessibility for the thousands of Houstonians who use our network of hike and bike trails."

The Rosemont Bridge gives park users convenient access to Spotts Park, Cleveland Park and Memorial Drive by connecting recently completed hike and bike trails on the north side of Memorial Drive with existing Buffalo Bayou trails systems.

"The view from the center of the Rosemont Bridge is simply amazing," said Joe Turner, Director Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "It is sure to become a favorite scenic view for many and is a great example of how partnerships working together can address the public need."

Funding for the project was provided by the Memorial Heights Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone #5 and is part of a Capital Improvement Project that includes the Old Sixth Ward trail connector, the Spotts Park Hydrology Project, and the Shepherd Underpass to Memorial trail connector.

"The Rosemont Bridge connects Memorial Heights neighborhoods with the nearby bayou parks, as well as with a growing network of trails that connect a wide variety of neighborhoods," said Alejandro Colom, Vice-Chairman of the TIRZ. "These connections improve both the quality of life in the surrounding neighborhoods and the beauty of the downtown and near downtown area."

Buffalo Bayou Park is bounded on the north and south by Memorial Drive and Allen Parkway and on the east and west by the Sabine Street and Shepherd Drive. It is one of one of the cities more popular jogging areas and the site for the annual Freedom Festival in July.

"The Rosemont Bridge is an incredibly important amenity for the bayou as it provides accessibility for park users," said Anne Olson, President, Buffalo Bayou Partnership. "With the increasing development in neighborhoods north and south of the bayou, Buffalo Bayou Partnership is committed to developing additional pedestrian bridges and hike and bike trail connections."

The 780 foot long bridge is composed of seven structural sections with the heaviest being 35,000 pounds. The bridge sections were hoisted into place by 300 and 700 ton cranes and sit in concrete columns/bents supported by 40 feet deep drilled piers of 48" and 60" diameters. 105 cubic yards of concrete were poured in place to create the bridge deck. The bridge guardrails are galvanized steel and house 195 lights which light up the deck surface at night. The project also includes 10 foot wide concrete trails that connect adjacent neighborhoods to area parks and greenbelts along the bayou, earthwork and tree, shrub, vine, solid sod, and seed installation. The project took 12 months to complete and was designed by landscape architects from the SWA Group and built by Millis Development & Construction, Inc.

*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. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit [www.houstonparks.org](http://www.houstonparks.org).*