



Press Release

March 30, 2017

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

Vote To Support Your Favorite Houston Park This Earth Month *One of Three HPARD Parks has the Chance to Receive \$20,000 through Meet Me At The Park Campaign*

This Earth Month, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is collaborating with The Walt Disney Company, including Disney Citizenship, Disney|ABC Television Group and ESPN, to revitalize parks across the U.S. for the third year, including a park right here in Houston. Through Meet Me At The Park, an initiative that gives back to these places that shape so much of our lives, one of three local parks will receive a \$20,000 grant and Houstonians get to choose which one.

Our local parks make Houston a better place to live. Parks are essential to our community's health and well-being as they provide safe places to get active, enjoy nature, preserve the environment and bring people together. That's why from April 1 to April 30, Houstonians will have the opportunity to help one of three park projects receive \$20,000 in grant funding to make improvements. The projects are:

- **Nature Center Outdoor Classroom at Lake Houston Wilderness Park**
This project will enhance the nature education programs at the park by installing a shaded, outdoor classroom to complement the Nature Center and enhance direct learning experiences for participants. **You can vote for this project starting April 1 by texting *lakehouston* to 35350.***
- **Mason Park Multi-Purpose Sports Field Improvement Project**
The largest multi-purpose sports field at Mason Park will be enhanced to better serve local leagues. Over 2,000 players use this field every month for practice and games. **You can vote for this project starting April 1 by texting *mason* to 35350.***
- **Oak Forest Park Revitalization**
This park is scheduled to receive a major makeover. Grant funds will be used to upgrade two tennis courts which offer free children's tennis lessons and open play throughout the year. **You can vote for this project starting April 1 by texting *oakforest* to 35350.***

By visiting NRPA.org/BeInspired, park supporters can vote daily for their favorite park project. At the end of April, the park project with the most votes will receive grant funding. New this year, everyone who votes will be entered into a drawing for a tablet outfitted for the outdoors.

"Houston's parks are a great asset to the city and its residents," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "Our department is dedicated to making each park

a centerpiece for its neighborhood, and we are grateful to the National Recreation and Park Association and The Walt Disney Company for joining with us to improve one of these local parks.”

“Supporting local parks is essential to the health and vitality of communities everywhere,” said Lori Robertson, N.R.P.A. Director of Conservation. “That’s why we are proud to collaborate with The Walt Disney Company to help fund critical park improvement projects in communities in need. We encourage everyone to join us in giving back to the places that shape so much of our lives by voting in this year’s Meet Me at the Park campaign.”

During April, a public service announcement (PSA) supporting the Meet Me At The Park campaign will be shared with audiences across Disney, including ABC Television Network, ABC-owned and affiliate stations, Freeform, Disney Channel, Disney XD, Disney Junior, the ABC app and other digital platforms. The PSA will also be available to view on the voting site at www.nrpa.org/beinspired. Additionally, Radio Disney will support the campaign with an on-air radio spot.

Last year, Houstonians voted for the Herman Brown Park Community Garden to win \$20,000. With that funding, students at Furr High School and neighbors of Herman Brown Park now have access to fresh produce grown in a half-acre, fenced community garden with raised beds, a fruit orchard, access to water, and a tool shed. This year, resident votes will help improve another one of Houston’s great parks. Nationally, more than \$600,000 has been awarded to help fund local park improvement projects as part of the Meet Me At The Park campaign.

This Earth Month, show how parks revitalize your community and vote to improve local parks right here in Houston. Encourage your friends to vote, too, by taking a selfie in your favorite park and using the hashtags #MeetMeAtThePark, #Parkies and #BeInspired.

For more information and to vote, visit NRPA.org/BeInspired.

***Message and data rates may apply.** Text **STOP** to 35350 to opt out and to discontinue further participation in the Promotion. Text **HELP** for information. If you enter via text messaging, you will receive four (4) text messages in response to your entry from an automated system. Consent is not required to buy goods and services. To view the Sponsor's Mobile Privacy Policy, visit <http://www.nrpa.org/About-National-Recreation-and-Park-Association/the-fine-print>. To view Mobile Terms and Conditions, visit <http://www.helloworld.com/terms>.

About The National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all Americans have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation and social equity. Through its network of nearly 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, Parks & Recreation, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.

About The Houston Parks and Recreation Department

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 37,851 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.houstontx.gov/parks.