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Houston Parks Board Receives \$1 Million from Elkins Foundation

The Houston Parks Board today announced a major gift from the Elkins Foundation. The four-year pledge for \$1 million in support of Bayou Greenways 2020 is just the latest contribution by the Elkins family to Houston's parks.

The Elkins family has played a major role in the Houston Parks Board for generations. Mrs. James (Margaret) Elkins was a founding board member of the organization, starting in 1976. In 1979, she donated nearly 500 acres to establish Keith-Wiess Park in North Houston. Her son, Jim Elkins, served on the board of directors from 1995 until his death in 2010.

The eponymous foundation has also supported the work of the Houston Parks Board, including with donations for the development of Wiess Park, adjacent to Memorial Park.

"We so appreciate the continued confidence and commitment of the Elkins family," said Roksan Okan-Vick, Executive Director of the Houston Parks Board. "This latest gift will help us to realize our vision of Bayou Greenways."

Bayou Greenways 2020 will create a network of linear parks and trails along nine of the bayous that run through every neighborhood within city limits.

The seven-year project, launched in 2013, is funded through a public-private partnership at a total cost of \$220 million. In November 2012, voters approved a bond referendum allowing the City of Houston to fund \$100 million to complete the project. Thanks to the generosity of the Elkins Foundation and others, the Houston Parks Board has privately raised more than \$79 million of the remaining \$120 million.

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