



Oak Forest Park is home to an architecturally recognized pool building and swimming pool, tennis courts with free childrens' summer tennis lessons, a play structure, and half-court basketball. Acquired by the city in 1951, Oak Forest Park will soon become an improved and more enjoyable space for all.

Our vision:
**A playground
for all abilities**



Better Parks Build Better Communities

Plans for the Oak Forest Park revitalization include a new accessible playground for all abilities with an engraved paver path, picnic tables, park benches, tennis and basketball court improvements, dual height water fountains with dog bowls, a painted art tile installation, more trees and a shaded area.

"Inclusion is a huge part of our lives. Driving to a park, or anywhere, with a mobility impaired child is an enormous task. We cannot jump in the car and go: it takes planning, transferring Mac multiple times, and a lot of patience. In the event of an emergency, things become even more complicated. A park in our neighborhood that can be used by both our children would improve the quality of life for our entire family and make life so much easier."

Gretchen Frauenberger
(with Maclaren and Emmerly)



Anna Grove Photography



More Than 1Way 2Play

This will be the first accessible, inclusive playground in Houston's central-northwest area, providing fun, challenging and sensory-rich features. One particular struggle in our community has been a lack of accessibility at playgrounds. Oak Forest Park, located at 2100 Judiway, presents challenges due to inaccessible playground equipment that predates current ADA guidelines. Unlike typical playgrounds which present obstacles to those with disabilities, the new design will allow everyone to access the play equipment. Those with disabilities can swing, slide and climb with family and friends, activities they may have never been able to do. Able-bodied children learn lessons that can last a lifetime by interacting with others of different levels of ability. Accessible playgrounds become an environment where everyone learns to respect and understand each other.

Together, with the management of Houston Parks & Recreation Department, and fundraising oversight of the Houston Parks Board, the City's non-profit park advocacy organization, we can make this new playground a reality.

Visit our project page:

houstonparksboard.org/projects/oak_forest_park/



HOUSTON
PARKS BOARD
PARKS BY YOU



A CAPRA Accredited Agency



Example of an Accessible Playground



**Better playgrounds.
Better world.®**
playlsi.com



Proudly presented by:
Tom Gall



HOUSTON PARKS & RECREATION, INC.

Why Here, Why Now

Kids, and parents, with special needs simply want a place to play where they aren't defined by their disability, where they can blend in and play with others instead of feeling isolated. At nearby Oak Forest Elementary, special needs staff member Tiffany Osborne often went down the slide with students so that they could experience what able-bodied students enjoy so effortlessly.

Maclaren, age 10 - Oak Forest

When Maclaren was 20 months, her family, perplexed by her previously misdiagnosed condition starting at 3 weeks old, learned she had actually suffered a stroke in-utero. She had sustained

severe brain damage, leaving her non-mobile and non-verbal. In spite of her condition, "Mac" loves people and especially being outside. Her family often walks her to Oak Forest Park, but she has to remain in her stroller as she has gotten too big to be straddled in the swings. As an added challenge, they must go through the tennis court in order to get to the playground as there is currently no path to cross through the park.



Will, age 7 - The Heights

At the age of 2, after a battery of confusing and complicated medical tests to determine why he wasn't walking, Will Martin was diagnosed with a mitochondrial disorder known as Leigh's Syndrome. There is no cure, and there are no treatments for Leigh's, which impacts many of his functions. In spite of lesions on his brain, mitochondrial disease hasn't affected Will's cognitive ability and desire to be just like every other kid. His parents, Lori and Neil, have often found it frustrating not to have an outdoor playground in the area that can accommodate Will's needs such as swings with back support, and ramps to roll a wheelchair or medical stroller. With a younger, typically-abled sister, the need is compounded trying to find places where the siblings can play together.



Garrett, age 10 - Oak Forest

Oak Forest Park Honorary Ambassador Garrett, who has spastic cerebral palsy causing limited mobility from the knees down, has championed a Walk With Me team each year to help other kids with disabilities go to Easter Seals' Camp Smiles. He had such a good time at camp that Garrett wanted as many kids as possible to experience the fun he had.



"It would be nice to have equipment for people with disabilities so they can play just like other kids their age. I have met many kids at school that are in wheelchairs or have walkers and it would be great to see them swing and slide. They deserve to laugh, scream, and play just like all kids."

Garrett Holcombe, Oak Forest Elementary 5th Grader

Noah, age 8 - Garden Oaks

Noah also has cerebral palsy, with his type immobilizing all four limbs, and requiring a wheelchair for anything more than short distances. Noah loves to swing and go down slides, but is unable to use them without assistance from his parents. They occasionally take him to one of the accessible playgrounds in other parts of Houston, but due to the distance and difficulty traveling, they hope to have an accessible park that is closer to home.



Olivia, age 7 - Oak Forest

Olivia is a determined girl who loves to play outdoors. Born with a rare chromosomal disorder called a 13q deletion, she has many special needs, including developmental delays, and multiple disabilities. Her mom Leslie struggles with Olivia having to "sit on the sidelines" in her wheelchair at parks where her 3-year old brother and other able-bodied kids can play effortlessly. As new residents of Oak Forest, the Stevens family is eager to have a safe, interactive playground nearby for Olivia and her brother to enjoy at the same time.



Ava, age 7 - The Heights

Diagnosed with Kabuki Syndrome, a rare pediatric congenital disorder, Ava needs assistance on play structures due to balance and coordination issues. Her family has expressed the need to find play structures in the area that can safely accommodate Ava and children like her.



Benjamin, age 8 - Oak Forest

Born with a genetic defect, which required open heart surgery as a newborn, Benjamin now attends The Arbor School which welcomes children with varying levels of ability and special needs. Prior to finding a school to meet his needs, his mom Julie felt a sense of isolation that she never imagined after having a child. A barrier-free playground in the neighborhood would provide her and other parents in the area a place where they could meet up and have play dates close to home.



Michelle Colvard, Oak Forest Park ADA Advisor - Timbergrove

Accessible playgrounds are often used as much by adults with disabilities as kids. Michelle was born with spina bifida, and has been a relentless advocate for others with disabilities. A former Ms. Wheelchair America and Texas, and past commissioner on the Houston Commission on Disabilities, Michelle is excited that once complete, she can use the new playground with her own daughter Anja. She received the prestigious Jefferson's Award in recognition of her volunteer service including her tireless work on the Vale-Asche Playground Without Limits at Memorial Park.



Aloha Island Weddings / Paul Agung

"District C and Houston are home to children with all levels of ability. Accessible playgrounds create an opportunity to bring these children together in an inclusive environment, which builds familiarity with and appreciation of diversity, removes transportation challenges facing parents of children with disabilities, and improves the quality of life of surrounding communities."

Ellen R. Cohen, Mayor Pro Tem
Council Member, District C





FROM THE FRIENDS OF OAK FOREST PARK

The namesake park for Oak Forest is home to an architecturally recognized pool building, tennis courts with free children's summer tennis lessons, picnic tables, a play structure, and half-court basketball. Each of these amenities has deteriorated considerably over the years, and it is up to us to revitalize the park, making it a destination for the entire area to enjoy.

Friends of Oak Forest Park Steering Committee

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Oak Forest Park ADA Advisor:
Michelle Colvard, former Ms.
Wheelchair Texas and America



A playground for all abilities. That's our shared vision. A community survey ranked top priorities for the park, including a playground that can be enjoyed by all levels of ability. Our goal is to build the **first accessible, inclusive playground** located in our community.

The first phase of improvements, which has already been fully funded, include tennis court improvements, basketball court re-striping, new benches, and two sets of dual height water fountains with dog bowls. Mayor Sylvester Turner and Mayor Pro-Tem Ellen Cohen have endorsed our project, and allocated District C funds towards tennis court repairs. We developed park plans with the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, with fundraising overseen by Houston Parks Board, the city's leading non-profit park advocacy agency. The efforts going forward will continue to support the **More Than 1Way 2Play** campaign for an inclusive, accessible playground. The playground area, once funded, will feature new picnic tables (including ADA) and park benches with donor recognition plaques, engraved pavers forming the Pathway to Play leading to the new playground with keystone recognition near the entry for major gifts, a shaded area, and a painted art tile installation.

How You Can Help

Because funding for the remaining park improvements must come through private donations, we need your help now. Please consider supporting this effort. **No contribution is too small.** All park improvements that can come to fruition will be based on funds raised through the generosity of our community, Houston area businesses and organizations.

We invite you to join The Friends of Oak Forest Park. Will you help by donating to the park project today? If you have any questions, contact any member of the steering committee. We're the founding members of the Friends of Oak Forest Park, and we're dedicated to seeing this revitalization project completed. Your **tax-deductible contribution** will allow Oak Forest Park to become a neighborhood landmark that will bring joy for generations.

Sincerely,

Elyssa, Kendall, Gretchen, Jen, and Roger

PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD!

Ask family and friends to participate ● Check with your company about a matching gift program that may double your donation ● Host your own fundraising activity to benefit the park
LIKE FriendsOfOakForestPark DONATE Houston Parks Board GET UPDATES Oak Forest Park News



Leave Your Mark on Oak Forest Park

With your contribution, we can make Oak Forest Park a great place to gather and play! Honor your company, loved ones, and service members. Your gift will leave a legacy that will last for generations. A dedication ceremony will be held in appreciation of those who make this project possible. **Donate online or return the completed form and tax deductible donation to: Houston Parks Board 300 N. Post Oak Ln Houston, TX 77024**



* Note Oak Forest Park on checks

DONOR FORM

The Pathway to Play

Distinctive keystone recognition at the entry to the playground for all abilities

- Underwriter \$75,000
- Playground Partner \$50,000
- Key Sponsor \$25,000
- Major Donor \$10,000

Engraved Pavers

- 12x12" Paver \$1,000
- 8x8" Paver \$500
- 6x9" Paver \$200

Painted Art Tile Project

- 6x6 tile \$100
- ___ Quantity

Like **FriendsofOakForestPark** on FaceBook for upcoming Paint Day information

Donor

- Specify any amount \$_____

Contact Information

Name _____
 Best Phone # _____
 Email _____
 Mailing Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Donor name to be listed in recognition materials:

Donation in honor/memory of (include honoree's name and address

Payment Information

Name on Card _____
 Billing Address _____
 (if different from above)
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Credit Card Type MC Visa Amex Discover
 Card # _____
 Exp. Date _____ Verification Code. _____
 Donation Amount: \$ _____
 Check # _____ **Designate Oak Forest Park**

Tina Clayton, Houston Parks Board
 713-942-8500 ext 43
 Houston Parks Board, is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and will mail a receipt for donations.

Paver Inscription Guidelines

12x12" Paver: Up to 4 lines, 20 characters per line
 8x8" Paver: Up to 2 lines, 18 characters per line
 6x9" Paver: Up to 2 lines, 18 characters per line

Line 1 _____

Line 2 _____

Line 3 _____

Line 4 _____

* To count characters, in Word, go to Tools - Word Count. Use Lines 3 and 4 for 12x12 pavers only.

Inscription: Type or print legibly. Spaces are counted as characters. Use additional paper if needed. Form may also be emailed to tina@houstonparksboard.org

DONATE HERE: http://houstonparksboard.org/projects/oak_forest_park/