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Media Contact:

Abby Linney, Elmore
abby@elmorepr.com / 713-524-0661

Event Photos: [Download Here](#)

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PRESS RELEASE

Houston Parks Board Celebrates the Opening of the San Jacinto Bayou Greenway

The new 2.5-mile hike-and-bike trail expands recreational access for nearby communities

HOUSTON – April 17, 2023 – Houston Parks Board (HPB), the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D), the Harris County Flood Control District, and other key project partners celebrated the opening of the San Jacinto Bayou Greenway on Saturday, April 15. The 2.5-mile Bayou Greenway segment begins at Hamblen Road near Burning Tree Court and spans to Woodland Hills Drive, where it connects to the over 75-mile Kingwood Greenbelt trail system.

“This project is a testament of what is possible for our green spaces across every Houston community. With this new 2.5-mile segment, nearby residents can enjoy new off-street paths that improve connections across Houston’s vast trail system and further add to its ‘Livable Forest.’ I am proud of the collaboration to complete this effort and create sustainable outdoor spaces for Houstonians,” said Mayor Pro Tem Dave Martin.

Notable features of the San Jacinto Bayou Greenway include:

- Trail connection for Kingwood residents at Woodland Hills Drive to access the Bayou Greenway
- New off-street trails, as well as the use of existing residential streets for the trail system
- Planting of native trees, meadows, and wildflowers
- 14.5 acres of newly acquired land to be preserved as permanent parkland
- Benches, seating areas, and overlooks
- Interpretive and directional signage
- Trash cans and recycling containers

State Representative Charles Cunningham, Mayor Pro-Tem Dave Martin, At-Large Council Member Sallie Alcorn, and At-Large Council Member Letitia Plummer were all in attendance for the ribbon cutting celebration. Kingwood Park High School junior Taylor Mattingly opened the speaking ceremony with a performance of “Climb Every Mountain” and Matt Tielkemeijer provided the final remarks on behalf of the Forest Cove Property Owners Association. In addition, Community Involvement Representative Lawrence Bell presented a proclamation on behalf of Harris County Precinct Three Commissioner Tom Ramsey.



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A portion of the greenway goes through the former Riverview Townhomes at Forest Cove, which Harris County Flood Control District acquired and demolished utilizing a FEMA Hazard Mitigation grant in combination with its own funding. Hurricane Harvey severely damaged the townhomes, which made the buildings uninhabitable. Not only did this partnership bring recreational amenities to this area, but it also removed people out of harm's way from repetitive and devastating flooding.

"Land acquisition is a critical focus and cornerstone of Bayou Greenways," said Beth White, President and CEO of Houston Parks Board. "Houston Parks Board always seeks opportunities where the organization can complement Harris County Flood Control District's efforts along the Bayou Greenways. We are proud to have partnered with the Flood Control District to acquire land in this area and convert it to green space."

"The Buyout Program is one of the most effective flood mitigation tools used to move endangered Harris County residents to safety from flood-prone areas and reduce the impacts of flooding. The impact of buyouts is greater when land is transformed to provide recreational spaces for surrounding communities. We are glad Houston Parks Board shares a commitment to reduce flooding across the city and enhance its natural beauty," said Dr. Tina Petersen, Executive Director of Harris County Flood Control District.

The project cost including design, land acquisition, and construction was \$3,535,151. Of the Kinder Foundation's \$50 million investment in Bayou Greenways in 2013, approximately \$943,000 went towards land acquisition along this greenway.

"Today's opening of the San Jacinto Bayou Greenway segment adds a new link in the trail network in and around Kingwood," said Kenneth Allen, Director Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "We thank all the partners who have worked to make this project possible and for their dedication to improving the lives of all the citizens we serve."

Houston Parks Board will continue ongoing maintenance of San Jacinto Bayou Greenway through its Conservation and Maintenance Program. This includes weekly trash pickup, bi-weekly mowing of grass along the concrete trail, upkeep of the trail and amenities, and any necessary flood cleanup.

San Jacinto Bayou Greenway is one of nine bayous being transformed as part of [Bayou Greenways](#), a public-private partnership between the nonprofit Houston Parks Board, the City of Houston, and the Houston Parks and Recreation Department. The initiative is implemented in close collaboration with the Harris County Flood Control District, which manages the county's bayous and creeks for drainage and flood risk reduction. Bayou Greenways will transform 3,000 acres of underutilized land along nine major waterways and create a 150-mile network of connected parks and trails along Houston's major waterways.

Thanks to Kinder Foundation's visionary leadership and transformational gift, as well as the extraordinary generosity of the Hildebrand Foundation, Houston Endowment, The Brown Foundation Inc. and many other Houstonians, Houston Parks Board has surpassed its goal of assembling more than \$225 million to invest in Bayou Greenways. The fundraising journey began in 2012 when Houston voters resoundingly approved a bond to provide \$100 million in funds to the Bayou Greenways initiative.



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Houston Parks Board has since more than matched this number through a \$125 million capital campaign.

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Houston Parks Board creates, improves, protects, and advocates for parks for everyone. Since 1976, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization has utilized public-private partnerships and its extensive philanthropic, government, and community relationships to provide equitable access to quality parks and green space to the Greater Houston region. In addition to leading the transformational Bayou Greenways initiative, Houston Parks Board cares for more than 2,600 acres of green space and supports park projects large and small. For more information on Bayou Greenways and Beyond the Bayous, visit www.houstonparksboard.org.

The **Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.)** stewards and manages 381 parks and over 39,501 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.

The **Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD)** provides flood damage reduction projects that work with the appropriate regard for community and natural values. With more than 1,500 bayous and creeks totaling approximately 2,500 miles in length, the HCFCD accomplishes its mission by devising flood damage reduction plans, implementing the plans, and maintaining the infrastructure. For more information about HCFCD, visit HCFCD.org or follow us @HCFCD on Facebook and Twitter for all the latest #HCFCDnews.