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MASON PARK PEDESTRIAN/BIKE BRIDGE UNVEILING SET FOR SEPTEMBER 22

As part of Bayou Greenways 2020, this iconic 485-foot bridge will connect communities along Brays Bayou in the East End

HOUSTON, TX – Sept. 10, 2018 – Houston Parks Board and its partners are pleased to announce the Mason Park Bridge Grand Opening event slated for Saturday, Sept. 22. Community members along Brays Bayou and across the city are invited to celebrate the official unveiling of Mason Park Bridge with Houston Parks Board, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Harris County Flood Control District, Houston-Galveston Area Council, Kinder Foundation and Council Member Robert Gallegos. Event partners include Houston Area Road Runners Association, The Houston Wellness Project, Houston Marathon Foundation, Houston Dynamo, Bayou Preservation Association, Houston Public Library, East End Management District, Nature and Eclectic Outdoors (NEO), Telemundo Houston and various community organizations.

The Mason Park Bridge Grand Opening will begin with an 8:00 a.m. 5k Fun Run. Following the run, all participants and community members are encouraged to bring out their picnic gear and favorite picnic foods, listen to live music by Nick Gaitan and Tejas Got Soul Sound System and participate in fun family activities. One not-to-miss highlight of the day will be the ribbon cutting and a community procession across the new bridge symbolizing the new connection.

Mason Park Bridge Grand Opening

541 South 75th Street

Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018

8:00 a.m.: 5k Fun Run

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Picnic in the Park

11:15 a.m.: Ribbon Cutting and Procession

www.houstonparksboard.org

“The Mason Park Bridge is significant on many levels: it is an essential connector for the East End and surrounding communities, it provides an integral link from both sides of Mason Park to the Brays Bayou Greenway trail system, and, finally, it’s a stunning piece of architecture that we are all proud to bring to the neighborhood,” said Beth White, President & CEO of Houston Parks Board.

This summer, the central truss of a 485-foot-long, 16-foot-wide pedestrian/bike suspension bridge was successfully installed in Mason Park, a pivotal moment in providing a new, safe crossing for communities on Brays Bayou. The bridge, which came to fruition through a combination of funding from federal and local partners, is part of a series of improvements to Mason Park over the years including the new Brays Bayou Greenway trail connections.

Custom-designed by AIA Engineers and SWA Group, the pedestrian and bike bridge is anchored by 70-foot-tall towers on each bank with cables stretching from the top of the towers and connecting to the steel truss every 35 feet. It also features lighting and plazas with seating at each end. The steel truss, or structure of interconnected steel tubes, was hoisted using three cranes and a barge on Brays Bayou and anchored in place by NGB Constructors, Inc., overseen by TxDOT over a one-day installation period on Tuesday, June 12.

The bridge brings together the Magnolia Park, Lawndale, Wayside, Pecan Park, Harrisburg and Manchester communities. Architecturally, the bridge serves as a landmark and focal point for the community. It joins the ranks of the city's well-traversed signature bridges including the Bill Coates Bridge over Brays Bayou in Hermann Park and Jackson Hill Bridge in Buffalo Bayou Park.

"It takes time, teamwork and collaboration to make projects like Mason Park Bridge possible. In the early 2000s the parks department began the process of building this bridge by asking Harris County Flood Control to sculpt the north bank landing while they constructed the Tidal Marsh Basin through Project Brays," said Steve Wright, Director Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "HPARD secured additional funding to build the bridge through the federal Transportation Enhancement program administered by TxDOT. Today, as the bridge nears completion we acknowledge and thank all the partners who have helped fund Mason Park Bridge and have produced a win for the communities we serve."

According to Melody Galland, P.E., TxDOT Southeast Harris Area Engineer, "It is exciting to partner with the City of Houston, the Houston Parks Board, designers and the contractor to achieve the goal of creating connectivity with the Bayou Greenways 2020 project. The Mason Park pedestrian/bike suspension project will offer the community a beautiful, unique landmark while also maximizing the park accessibility. It has been a great opportunity to manage the installation of this cable stayed bridge."

Funding for the \$5.9 million bridge comes from the federal Transportation Enhancement program selected for funding by the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) and administered by TxDOT; a local match from the City of Houston; the Houston Parks and Recreation Department Park and Recreation Dedication Fund; council district service funds from Council Member Robert Gallegos, District I; and private contributions raised by Houston Parks Board including a grant from the Kinder Foundation.

Photos, a time-lapse of the installation, and b-roll may be found [here](#).

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A nonprofit 501(c)(3) dedicated to providing access to quality parks and greenspace in the Greater Houston region, **Houston Parks Board** creates, improves, protects and advocates for parks for everyone. Since 1976, the organization has utilized public-private partnerships and its extensive philanthropic, government and community relationships to improve parks large and small. Houston Parks Board is currently leading the transformational \$220 million Bayou Greenways 2020 project to complete a 150-mile network of connected parks and trails along Houston's major waterways. For more information, visit www.houstonparksboard.org.

Bayou Greenways 2020 is one of the most ambitious parks projects in the U.S. By transforming more than 3,000 acres of underutilized land along Houston's major waterways into linear parks, Bayou Greenways 2020 will complete a 150-mile network of connected parks and trails. The \$220 million project will connect people, places, and greenspace while enhancing air and water quality, preserving flood-prone areas and stimulating economic development in Houston.

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.houstonparks.org.