

# Houston Parks Board

## Planning and Public Policy Associate



Houston Parks Board (HPB) expands, improves, and protects parks and greenspace in the Houston region. 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 greenspace to the Greater Houston region.

Houston Parks Board has reached a major milestone with substantial completion of the boldest and most exciting capital project in its history: Bayou Greenways. This ambitious \$225M project significantly expands and enhances Houston's parks system, creating a continuous system within the city limits of 150 miles of linear parks and trails along Houston's bayous. In addition to leading the transformational Bayou Greenways initiative, Houston Parks Board cares for more than 2,800 acres of greenspace and supports park projects large and small.

For more information about Houston Parks Board and its high-impact work in the community, please visit [houstonparksboard.org](http://houstonparksboard.org).

### Position Description

The Planning and Public Policy Associate plays a pivotal role in advancing the mission and vision of the Houston Parks Board. This dynamic position requires a creative thinker and go-getter, eager to learn and contribute to both parks and trail network planning and support our public policy objectives. The ideal candidate will have a background in urban planning, landscape architecture, architecture, engineering, or GIS, coupled with proficiency in PowerPoint and an aptitude for basic design principles. This multifaceted role offers an exciting opportunity to blend analytical expertise with creative problem-solving to shape the future of parks and greenspaces in the Houston region. Other duties and responsibilities include:

#### **Planning Support:**

- Assist in the development and implementation of comprehensive park and trail network plans, contributing ideas and solutions to enhance connectivity, accessibility, and equitable investment in our park system.
- Conduct site assessments and leverage creative thinking and problem-solving skills to assess challenges and maximize the potential of benefits of specific park or trail development projects.
- Evaluate and provide feedback on system-wide planning documents related to parks and trails, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and objectives for expanding and enhancing greenspaces within the Houston region. This may include assessing City of Houston, Harris County, and other park partners studies for project opportunities.

#### **Policy Support:**

- Conduct research and analysis on relevant public policies and legislation impacting parks, park funding and conservation efforts.
- Coordinate with colleagues who are primarily responsible for monitoring government activities regarding grants at local, state, and federal levels.
- Provide analysis and guidance on potential policy impacts and implications for the organization's programs and projects.
- Assist in the development and implementation of advocacy strategies to advance the organization's mission and objectives.
- Prepare written materials, such as policy briefs, reports, and presentations, to communicate key issues and recommendations to internal and external stakeholders.

#### **Spatial Analysis and Mapping:**

- Utilize ArcGIS software to develop maps, conduct spatial analyses, and visualize data related to parks, trails, land use, and environmental factors.
- Create and edit GIS data to support planning and decision-making processes.
- Ensure data accuracy, integrity, and compliance with industry standards.
- Aide in the expansion of a variety of datasets that support all departments including planning, development, communications, projects, conservation, and maintenance.

**Statistical Analysis:**

- Apply statistical methods and techniques to analyze spatial (geographic) data and non-spatial (tabular) data, identify trends, and support planning efforts.
- Leverage GIS and spatial analyses to strategically identify areas for park and greenspace expansion or improvements, contributing to an enhanced ParkScore for Houston by ensuring equitable access to recreational amenities across the region.
- Prepare reports, presentations, and visualizations to communicate findings to diverse audiences.

**Research and Innovation:**

- Stay abreast of emerging trends, best practices, and technological advancements in GIS, urban planning, and landscape architecture.
- Contribute to research initiatives, pilot projects, and innovation efforts aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and impact of parks and greenspace initiatives and achieving Houston Park's Boards strategic planning goals.

**Preferred Skills and Qualifications**

- Bachelor's degree in urban planning, landscape architecture, architecture, engineering, GIS, government, or a related field.
- 1-3 years of experience in a relevant field, with exposure to parks and greenspace planning, policy, GIS analysis, or related activities.
- Proficiency in ArcGIS software, including ArcMap and ArcPro, and GIS techniques. Experience with other GIS platforms is a plus, but ESRI software is preferred.
- Strong creative thinking and problem-solving skills, with a demonstrated ability to generate innovative ideas and solutions.
- Proficiency in PowerPoint and basic graphic design principles, with the ability to create visually engaging presentations and visualizations.
- Eagerness to learn and adapt to new technologies, methodologies, and challenges in a fast-paced environment.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders and community groups.
- Detail-oriented approach with a commitment to data accuracy, quality assurance, and documentation.
- Passion for parks, greenspace, environmental conservation, and community development.
- Commitment to the mission and values of the Houston Parks Board.

**Compensation and Benefits**

This is a salary exempt position with a range of \$55,000 - \$75,000 based on relevant skills and experience. HPB provides a competitive benefits package including medical, dental, vision and life insurance, a 403b retirement plan and generous paid time off. This role is based a hybrid position with some in office time required.

To apply for this position, email resume and cover letter to [bethtaylor@houstonparksboard.org](mailto:bethtaylor@houstonparksboard.org) with "Planner" in the subject line of your email.

Interviews are by appointment only. No telephone calls, please.