



HOUSTON
PARKS BOARD



HPARD
HOUSTON PARKS
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Media Contact:

Mireya Rivera, Elmore
mireya@elmorepr.com | 832-459-7761

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Let's Play Houston Drives Citywide Park Improvements Through Public-Private Partnership
Program combines community engagement and private investment to expand access to quality greenspaces

HOUSTON, March 31, 2026 — Let's Play Houston, a public-private partnership initiative, will revitalize 25 neighborhood parks across various Houston communities. The program is led by City of Houston Mayor John Whitmire, Houston Parks Board (HPB), and the Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD), in partnership with corporate and foundation support. Once improvements are complete, Let's Play Houston will represent the largest investment in neighborhood parks in the City of Houston's history, combining approximately \$60 million in public and private funding for park upgrades.

With more than 180 neighborhood parks across the city, many Houstonians visit their neighborhood parks almost daily, acting as key community gathering places. Quality neighborhood parks connect community members, promote physical and mental health, and enhance the quality of life for residents, making them a powerful public asset.

“Every neighborhood deserves to have a great park that its residents can enjoy,” said Mayor John Whitmire. “The City of Houston looks forward to partnering with Houston Parks Board and working with public and private organizations to benefit 25 neighborhood parks and the communities they serve.”

HPB serves as the project manager, leading community engagement and overseeing the design and construction of each park. The City of Houston — specifically HPARD and the General Services Department — will provide technical support for the initiative.

“Neighborhood parks offer a place where people can disconnect from daily stress, connect with nature, and strengthen belonging within their community,” said Justin Schultz, President and CEO, Houston Parks Board. “Houston Parks Board is proud to partner with Mayor Whitmire and the City of Houston to invest in public spaces that unite people of all backgrounds.”

The parks in the program were selected through an analysis that examined more than 180 neighborhood parks and identified parks with the greatest need for upgrades and investment. Community engagement is built into the early stage of the project — with more than 40 engagement events conducted to date, reaching more than 1,600 residents — to ensure park improvements reflect the needs and wants of the neighborhood. Residents will continue to have

opportunities to provide input on each park’s design through dedicated community meetings, park activations, and community surveys.

“While many residents enjoy our signature parks, bringing that same quality and care to local parks across the city will help more people experience the benefits of having a greenspace close to home,” said Kenneth Allen, Director, HPARD. “The Houston Parks and Recreation Department is excited to continue working alongside Mayor Whitmire and Houston Parks Board to strengthen our park system from the ground up.”

Parks in the program will be advanced in phases, with 11 parks currently in design and 14 conducting initial community engagement to help develop the scopes of work for the park renovations.

List of Let’s Play Houston Parks

District A	Haden Park and Schwartz Park
District B	Trinity Gardens Park and Lakewood Park
District C	Lawrence Park and American Legion Park
District D	Bricker Park, Zollie Scales Park, and George T. Nelson Park
District E	Greenwood Park, J.P. White Park, and Dylan Duncan Memorial Skate Park
District F	6640 Wilcrest Greenspace and Kirkwood Park
District G	Pumpkin Park and Francklow Park
District H	Montie Beach Park, Clark Park, and Warren Park
District I	Andover Park and Brookline Park
District J	E. L. Crain Park and Bonham Park
District K	Haviland Park and Beulah Maxie Park

While fundraising for Let’s Play Houston continues, the program is supported by an initial mix of public and private investment, including:

- \$8 million from the State of Texas through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for select parks
- \$11 million in public funding provided by the City of Houston
- Nearly \$18 million in combined funding from The Brown Foundation, Inc., Hildebrand Foundation, The Elkins Foundation, The Cullen Foundation, Houston Endowment, ExxonMobil, and others.

The City of Houston and HPB are working to identify additional sources of public funding for the program. HPB is raising private funding from additional companies and philanthropic donors.

Improvements at Pumpkin Park are fully supported by private funds raised by the Friends of Pumpkin Park community group, allowing public dollars to be prioritized for parks with the greatest need.

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Houston Parks Board expands, improves, and protects parks and greenspace throughout 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 nearly 15,000 acres of parks and greenspace. In addition to leading the transformational Bayou Greenways initiative, Houston Parks Board maintains more than 3,400 acres of the region's greenspace and has supported over 250 park projects large and small. For more information, visit houstonparksboard.org.

The City of **Houston Parks and Recreation Department** (HPARD) stewards and manages over 380 developed parks, 172 greenspaces, and more than 25,000 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston. HPARD develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all ages and abilities. The Department is nationally accredited through the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies. For more information on HPARD, visit www.houstontx.gov/parks/ or email at askparks@houstontx.gov.