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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Houston Parks Board and Harris County Flood Control District  
acquire green space near White Oak Bayou in the Heights Neighborhood**

*Land to be preserved as green space for nearby communities and floodplain preservation*

HOUSTON, TX – November 20, 2019 – Houston Parks Board and Harris County Flood Control District have acquired a 1.3-acre property along White Oak Bayou at East 5<sup>th</sup> Street in the Houston Heights. As part of Bayou Greenways 2020, the land will be owned by Harris County Flood Control District and preserved as open space while making the White Oak Bayou watershed more resilient against flooding.

The property, valued at \$1.7 million, was purchased below market value thanks to a generous donation from the owner. Harris County Flood Control District contributed \$900,000 to the property purchase and Houston Parks Board contributed \$600,000 thanks to a generous donation from the Kinder Foundation. With the addition of this land, Houston Parks Board has acquired approximately 587 acres of green space along the bayous to date.

“We were delighted to reach an agreement with Harris County Flood Control to purchase this piece of land that sits so closely to the White Oak Bayou Greenway and the future location of our Bayou Greenway Park,” said Beth White, President and CEO of Houston Parks Board. “Preserving green space is a cornerstone of Bayou Greenways 2020 and we are pleased to have this land in our system.”

The purchase of the land ensures that the property shall be maintained in perpetuity for floodplain preservation and open space, and as needed for regional detention and channel modification and repair. The land may also be used for outdoor recreational activities; wetlands management; nature reserves; and community cultivation.

“Floodplain preservation is an important tool in Harris County for managing flooding risks,” explains Flood Control District Executive Director Russ Poppe. “The 2018 Bond Program includes funding for this important activity, which ensures that county floodplains can perform their natural function and are available for future flood risk reduction projects, if needed. HCFCD looks forward to our continued relationship with the Houston Parks Board on partnership projects along the bayous in Harris County.”

Bayou Greenways 2020 is a public-private partnership between the nonprofit Houston Parks Board, the City of Houston and the Houston Parks and Recreation Department and 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 2020 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.

In 2012, thanks in part to the “Parks By You!” campaign, Houston voters overwhelmingly approved a bond proposal that set aside \$100 million for Bayou Greenways 2020. Houston Parks Board is raising an

additional \$120 million and is managing acquisition, design and construction of the Bayou Greenways. More than \$114 million has been raised to date, including a historic \$50 million donation from the Kinder Foundation.

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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](http://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. Public investment was matched by significant private contributions including an extraordinary lead gift of \$50 million in 2013 from the Kinder Foundation.

The **Harris County Flood Control District** provides flood damage reduction projects that work, with appropriate regard for community and natural values. With more than 1,500 bayous and creeks totaling approximately 2,500 miles in length, the Flood Control District accomplishes its mission by devising flood damage reduction plans, implementing the plans and maintaining the infrastructure. To learn more about the Flood Control District, visit [www.hcfcd.org](http://www.hcfcd.org).