

Mayor Turner Celebrates Improvements to Forum Park as Part of City's 50/50 Park Partners Initiative

March 11, 2023 -- Mayor Sylvester Turner joined with local elected officials, the 50/50 Park Partners, Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.), Houston Parks Board (HPB), Greater Houston Partnership and other community partners today to hold a ribbon cutting ceremony at Forum Park.

Located in District J, within the Alief-Westwood Complete Community, Forum Park is the third neighborhood park to complete its transformation as part of 50/50 Park Partners, an initiative created by Mayor Sylvester Turner to improve neighborhood parks with the support of the corporate community.

“Complete Communities is about championing the voices of the residents, as is 50/50 Park Partners. I am proud that the upgrades to Forum Park reflect the needs and desires of this Alief-Westwood community. Every neighborhood should have access to quality parks, and I thank our partners for helping to make this shared vision for Houston a reality,” said Mayor Turner.

A total of \$1.4 million dollars was allocated for improvements made to Forum Park through 50/50 Park Partners including a new soccer mini-pitch court, a new half basketball court, upgraded park lighting, a new illuminated parking lot, a shade sail for the playground, new sidewalks, new picnic tables, benches, BBQ grills, water fountains, park signage and more. These exciting park features were funded by Memorial Hermann Community Benefit Corporation, Episcopal Health, Texas Children's Hospital and included the support of Houston Dynamo FC, Houston Dash and the U.S. Soccer Foundation.

The mini-pitch was donated by former Dynamo/Dash minority owner Ben Guill, former Dynamo/Dash minority owner Jake Silverstein through the W.J. Silverstein Family Trust, the Houston Dynamo FC and Houston Dash, and the U.S. Soccer Foundation. This mini-pitch is one of 15 that the partners are installing across the Greater Houston area by 2024.

The initiative, rooted in equitably investing in neighborhoods across Houston, includes listening sessions to determine park improvements in collaboration with local communities. All park improvements were selected based on input from each community addressing their desires for improvements to their local parks.

“It is important for neighborhood parks to serve the community’s needs, especially in a city as large and diverse as Houston. Our city is fortunate to have so many great park destinations and we hope all communities consider their neighborhood parks as great places to gather,” said Beth White, President and CEO of Houston Parks Board.

“Neighborhood parks like this one in the Alief-Westwood Complete Community are the backbone of the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, said Kenneth Allen, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department.

“The upgrades made to the playground and the additional improvements to the park are a testament to what is possible for neighborhood parks across our city. We want to send a special thanks to the General Services Department and to each of our Park Partners for their work on this project.”

The heart of 50/50 Park Partners is the creation of long-term relationships for sustained impact between businesses, communities, and parks, improving the quality of life for Houstonians for decades to come.

The project is supported by the City of Houston’s Resiliency Office and the Office of Complete Communities. The 50/50 Park Partners framework provides an opportunity for corporations to play a leadership role in supporting neighborhood parks and their surrounding communities, catalyzing the process of reinvigorating an under-resourced park.

“The collaboration between the City of Houston, Houston Parks Board, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, and Houston business leaders demonstrates the sustainable progress that can be made when our communities work together,” said Bob Harvey, President and CEO of the Greater Houston Partnership.

Since the program's inception, 22 neighborhood parks have been announced to receive transformative improvements as part of 50/50 Park Partners by the end of 2023. Construction is now underway on improvements to 10 of those parks, touching neighborhoods across the city.

Opportunities for additional corporate support are available, both at a program and individual park level. To learn more about 50/50 Park Partners and donor opportunities, please visit Houston5050parkpartners.com.

Houston Parks and Recreation Department

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 ages and abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.

Houston Parks Board

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 2,800 acres of green space and supports park projects large and small. For more information, visit houstonparksboard.org.

Greater Houston Partnership

The Greater Houston Partnership works to make Houston one of the best places to live, work and build a business. As the economic development organization for the region, the Partnership champions growth across 12 counties by bringing together business and civic-minded leaders who are dedicated to the area's long-term success. Representing more than 950 member organizations and approximately one-fifth of the region's workforce, the Partnership is the place companies come together to make an impact. Learn more at Houston.org.