Memorial Park Amended and Restated Development Agreement
FAQs
April 2018

What's the purpose of this amendment to the existing Agreement?
The 2015 Development Agreement between the City of Houston, Memorial Park Conservancy (MPC), and Uptown Development Authority (UDA) is being amended to put in place the framework for a 10-year capital plan to implement a substantial portion of the Master Plan approved by City Council in 2015. A key component of the capital investments is to come from the largest single private donation in Houston parks’ history of $70M from the Kinder Foundation. Additionally, the Amendment outlines a network of funding streams to support the long-term care of capital improvements and the Park.

How did this specific proposal come about?
The Kinder Foundation and MPC had a number of conversations over a two-year period focused on potentially funding the Master Plan. Five months ago, the Kinder Foundation agreed to support an approach that emphasized connectivity within the Park and to the Park, and the accelerated delivery of the Plan’s destination projects (Eastern Glades, Memorial Groves and the Running Complex) as well advancing ecological restoration.

What resulted is the Major Donor’s catalyst gift of $70M, contingent on the following:

- MPC collaborating with the City to identify an additional $80M in public funding, including securing City of Houston support to seek $30M from a federal grants program for trails;
- A commitment from MPC to raise an additional $40M in grants and donations in addition to the $15M it has raised for Eastern Glades to-date, for a total of $55M;
- Secure funding for proper maintenance of the Park, ensuring that capital investments are protected, and further, that these programs close the gap that has resulted in Park-wide deferred maintenance for decades.

To Which Projects Is the Kinder Foundation Contributing?
- Connectivity and Resiliency projects, including:
  - **Central Connector:** The Central Connector, in the heart of Memorial Park, is a key component of this amendment. It includes a land bridge over Memorial Drive that connects the north and south sides of the Park. This Central Connector will distinguish Memorial Park and Houston nationally and internationally, serving as an icon for Houston. The Central Connector:
    - Provides safe crossing for humans and wildlife;
    - Heals the 75-year divide in Memorial Park created by Memorial Drive, which cuts the Park in half;
    - Creates acres of native prairie that will restore habitat to the Park and establish a more resilient ecology that will also aid with onsite detention during flooding;
    - Adds hike and bike trails to enhance recreational experience;
    - Reconstructs a section of Memorial Drive to significantly improve drainage and stormwater management;
  - **Southern Arc Trail:** a 1.5 mile, multi-use trail through the south side of Memorial Park’s 600-acre urban wilderness. This is one of the largest centrally-located urban forests in the U.S., and the most distinctive feature of Memorial Park, and is not accessible to most users.
• Provide advance payments for greenspace maintenance for the final seven years in the term that remain after the end date of the TIRZ.

**Why invest in Memorial Park?**

• Memorial Park is unique on a local and national scale.
  o Over four million people visit Memorial Park each year, and this plan makes the Park even more accessible through advancing connectivity. Though an urban park, it operates in many ways as a regional park, serving some 170 zip codes within Harris and surrounding counties.
  o It is one of the largest urban wilderness parks in an inner city in the US, and its ecological impact reaches beyond state boundaries.
  o The Park is also one of the only remaining WWI training camps that has not been developed. Houston’s important role in our nation’s military history is grounded in our care of Memorial Park and will be highlighted through the development of Memorial Groves, a signature project of the Master Plan.

• The capital projects that will be funded with this amendment:
  o Provide for connectivity to Memorial Park, allowing neighborhoods to connect with neighborhoods through the Park by connecting Memorial Park to the greater Houston hike and bike trail system; providing access to hundreds of acres currently inaccessible to most Houstonian; heal the divide created by Memorial Drive, and create safe crossings for humans and wildlife. The aforementioned Central Connector project, in the heart of the Park and the heart of Houston, will be functional and iconic for Houston.
  o Enhance Houston’s resiliency during flooding by improving and caring for Houston’s largest urban green asset, thereby assisting with onsite stormwater absorption and improving drainage along Memorial Drive to facilitate emergency transit.
  o Honor Houston’s military history and important contributions to WWI.
  o Deliver cultural and recreational amenities, including the Eastern Glades project described above, Old Archery Range improvements, sports fields and signage/wayfinding.
  o Support ecological restoration and habitat enhancement across the Park.
  o Provide basic infrastructure components such as restrooms and parking.

• A park of this scale, combined with the robust city park system, strengthens the local economy as it boosts tourism and helps attract corporations and talent looking for a home base.

**Will this reduce the City’s spending in other City parks?**

No. In fact, it will lead to more investment in the other parks as the City’s current general fund contribution to Memorial Park greenspace maintenance and Cullen Running Trails Center operations is eliminated. This will allow the Houston Parks and Recreation Department to reallocate $600,000 towards its Neighborhood Playground Initiative and other community park improvements.

**Why is paid parking being added to Memorial Park? How are parking fees set?**

Houstonians asked for Memorial Park to remain an urban wilderness park with its current programming in place. In keeping with this desire, Memorial Park offers little opportunity for earned income to offset costs of maintaining such a large Park. Proceeds from parking will support greenspace and project maintenance. Consistent with other parking programs such as Allen Parkway meters along Buffalo Bayou Park and the Washington Avenue Parking Benefit District, the meter fees will remain within the City parking meter fee structure. There will continue to be free parking throughout the Park, and the extended trail system created through the ten-year plan will significantly expand multi-modal transportation opportunities to and within the Park, thereby reducing the need for car access. The fee
following the same procedures used for recent Eastern Glades construction. The plan will require construction of temporary travel lanes to accommodate the traffic on Memorial while certain sequences of work are completed, such as reconstruction of the drainage system in Memorial Drive, construction of the new pavement, and installation of the tunnels.
MEMORIAL PARK AMENDED AND RESTATED DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
APRIL 2018

Objective
The proposed amendment to the 2015 Memorial Park Development Agreement provides for delivery of projects approved by Houston City Council in the 2015 Memorial Park Master Plan and outlines funding for operations and maintenance of the projects and Park greenspace. If approved by City Council, this amendment would result in securing an additional $70M of the required $125M in private sector funding to be raised by Memorial Park Conservancy to construct a significant portion of the Master Plan over a 10-year period. This amendment also includes a $50M commitment from the Uptown Development Authority for capital improvements and will leverage an additional $30M in federal grant funds for connectivity.

The $70M donation will be the largest single private donation in Houston parks history. Over the past ten years the Kinder Foundation and the City of Houston have entered into several similar, successful public-private partnerships which are transforming parks and greenspace in Houston. These successful public-private partnerships play a significant role in Houston’s national recognition as a park and greenspace leader.

Current Situation
With the passage of the 2015 Agreement, the partnership between the Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD), Memorial Park Conservancy (MPC), and Uptown Development Authority (UDA) commenced. This partnership has led to MPC assuming greenspace maintenance and ecological restoration of Memorial Park. Implementation of the Master Plan began with construction of Phase 1 of the Eastern Glades by UDA and associated ecological restoration provided by MPC. HPARD has continued to operate the Cullen Running Trails Center, Tennis Center, Swimming Pool and Fitness Center, and all sports fields except volleyball.

Contract Form
- City of Houston, Memorial Park Conservancy, Uptown Development Authority
- Thirty-year agreement with renewal option, subject to approval of City Council.
- Some rights provided to the Major Donor recognizing the $70M donation.
- Houston Arboretum and Nature Center and Memorial Park Golf Course are excluded from the scope of the capital improvements and maintenance included in the agreement.

Amended Party Terms
City of Houston:
- Eliminates the $400,000 annual funding provided by COH to MPC for greenspace maintenance and $200,000 obligation for the Cullen Running Trails Center. This annual funding of $600,000 will be redirected to the HPARD Neighborhood Playground Initiative, thereby accelerating the rollout of this program.
- Supports a 2018 TIP grant application that seeks to extend connectivity to the north, south and west of the Park, in the amount of $30M
- Authorizes limited paid parking in high-traffic areas of the Park to support greenspace maintenance while maintaining free parking in other areas of the Park. Dedicates $200,000 annually from the golf fund to Park greenspace maintenance.

Memorial Park Conservancy:
MEMORIAL PARK AMENDED AND RESTATED DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Context

- In late 1923 and early 1924, the Hogg family, with minority owner Henry Stude, bought two tracts of former Camp Logan land and sold the acreage to the city at cost. In May 1924, the City of Houston officially took title to the land and established Houston’s Memorial Park in memory of the soldiers who had trained there. It was deeded to be a park for park purposes for the citizens of Houston and today is Houston’s largest urban park with 4 million visitors per year from 170 zip codes across the greater Houston region.
- At 1,500 acres and nearly twice the size of New York’s Central Park, Memorial Park is unique nationally because of its size and composition: it is one of the nation’s largest wilderness parks located in the heart of a large city.
- Memorial Park also plays an important role in our nation’s military history. It contains the only extant archeological remains of the National Guard training camps in World War I, of which there were 16.
- As a result of Hurricane Ike in 2008 and the long-term drought of 2011-12, Memorial Park lost a drastic amount of canopy trees. This change in landscape scale ecology catalyzed the need for a new Memorial Park Master Plan to identify much-needed restoration and improvements.
- In 2013, Houston City Council authorized the expansion of UDA’s footprint to include Memorial Park with the intent to build on the City of Houston model whereby Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone dollars are committed to large park projects to encourage and secure private sector funding.
- In 2015, Houston City Council approved the 2015 Memorial Park Master Plan and charged MPC, UDA and the Houston Parks and Recreation Department with delivering the projects and ecological restoration identified therein. That same year, Houston City Council also charged MPC with operating and maintaining 1,100 acres of Memorial Park and created a framework to attract private donations to support Memorial Park in a public-private partnership.
  - The Memorial Park Master Plan included input from over 3,000 Houstonians in 8 large public meetings, 20 workshops and a 3-month online survey. The plan was also informed by 75 experts in ecological sciences, conservation, design and planning, recreation, history and other topics.
  - Nelson Byrd Woltz designed the Master Plan, and subsequently received the prestigious “Honor Award” from the American Society of Landscape Architects for this Plan. This award was granted to only 30 of 450 applications nationwide.
- In 2016, MPC launched a Master Plan capital campaign and has raised $20M through private philanthropy; the Eastern Glades project, is now under way. MPC also assumed Park operations and maintenance, expanding staff from 3 to 25.

About the $70M Gift and other Donations

- Over the past two years, the Kinder Foundation and MPC had a number of conversations focused on potentially funding the Memorial Park Master Plan. Five months ago, the Kinder Foundation agreed to an approach that emphasized connectivity within and to the Park, and the accelerated delivery of the Plan’s destination projects (Eastern Glades, Memorial Groves and the Running Complex) and ecological restoration.
- What resulted is the Kinder Foundation’s catalyst gift of $70M, which is contingent on the following:
  - MPC collaborating with COH to identify an additional $80M in public funds that includes City of Houston support for a $30M grant application for federal funding for trail extension within and outside of the Park.
  - A commitment from MPC to raise an additional $40M in grants and donations above the $15M it has already raised for Eastern Glades for a total of $55M in capital funding commitments.
- **Connecting to the Park.** A virtual island in the growing hike-and-bike connectivity within greater Houston, Memorial Park is not connected to the greater Houston hike-and-bike trail system. This proposal builds on a federal grant won in 2016 for the design of a trail system and bridge over Buffalo Bayou Park to connect south, ultimately to as far as Richmond Avenue. It provides formal City of Houston support for a grant application to expand this connection in order to:
  - Establish a trail and bridge system that connects north of the Park over I-10 to the White Oak Hike-and-Bike Trail; and
  - Create trail and bridge connections west of the Park into Uptown. This west connection will enable safe passage under I-610 along Buffalo Bayou.

- **Embracing Houston’s Role in U.S. Military History.** Memorial Park was once Camp Logan, one of only sixteen National Guard training camps for WWI soldiers in the U.S., and is the only remaining undeveloped site that features archeological remnants. The Groves will serve as a living memorial in the form of a hardwood forest commemorating the Camp’s soldiers, an ideal space for field trips, family gatherings and community education. The Groves will be an educational asset for Houston schoolchildren and visitors that will highlight military history, African American military history, and urban forestry restoration. As we approach the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI and the retirement of the Camp, it is important to preserve the site and connect users to the Park’s history and the important role Houston played in preparing the country for War.

- **Cultural and Recreational Amenities.** Currently underway, the Eastern Glades is a 100-acre area on the east side of Memorial Park, almost none of which is accessible to users today. This project significantly expands picnicking in the Park, meeting a growing demand by families wishing to enjoy the Park; establishes a 5-acre lake and wetlands; and provides trails, boardwalks and opportunities to experience and learn about natural habitat systems. An expanded Running Complex will include a new quarter-mile timing track and concessions; a new multi-use field and 3 ballfields; improvements in the Old Archery Range; rebuilding the Seymour Lieberman Trail along Memorial Drive; and expanded signage and wayfinding will also be completed.

- **Other Improvements.** This amendment addresses basic needs of Park operations and user experience including the addition of restrooms and expanded parking.
About Memorial Park

Overview:
- Memorial Park is distinctive nationally for its size, location, and composition as an urban wilderness and active recreation park
- At 1,500 acres, Memorial Park is Houston's largest urban-center park and is almost double the size of New York's Central Park
- It is located in a prime location near the intersection of IH-10W and IH-610S, bounded on the south by Buffalo Bayou
- The Park encompasses approximately 30 miles of natural surface trails

Usage:
- Approximately 4 million Houstonians from 170+ zip codes visit Memorial Park each year for community and social interaction, wildlife watching, and recreating in nature
- Over 10,000 runners use the Seymour Lieberman Exer-Trail daily
- Over 65,000 rounds of golf are played each year on one of the country's best 18-hole public golf courses
- Over 42,000 tennis court reservations are made annually
- Facilities for jogging, tennis, hiking, biking, and picnicking are all available

Flora and Fauna:
- A 2016 biological assessment of all living things in Memorial Park identified 79 species of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and fish and 60 species of birds
- This same report identified 267 species of trees, shrubs, and woody vines

About Memorial Park Conservancy (MPC)

- MPC is a private, non-profit organization created to restore, preserve, and enhance Memorial Park for the enjoyment of all Houstonians, today and tomorrow
- The Conservancy seeks to implement the principles of world-class park management and stewardship in partnership with the Houston community
- A volunteer Board of Directors is led by Chairman Steve Jenkins, and a highly qualified staff works under the leadership of President & CEO Shellye Arnold. MPC works in partnership with the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD), the City of Houston (COH) and the Uptown Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ)
- In partnership with HPARD and the TIRZ, MPC delivered the 2015 Memorial Park Master Plan, which was approved by Houston City Council in 2015
- As of February 2016, Memorial Park Conservancy is responsible for operating and managing 1,100 of the Park’s 1,500 acres including the green spaces, open spaces and trails
MEMORIAL PARK MASTER PLAN FACT SHEET

OVERVIEW

- Through the Master Plan, Memorial Park will be restored, preserved and enhanced for the enjoyment of all Houstonians for generations to come. Developed through active management in partnership with the community, the plan was approved unanimously by Mayor Annise D. Parker and City Council in April, 2015.

- The Memorial Park Conservancy (MPC) and its planning partners, Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) and The Uptown Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) #16 (The Uptown TIRZ), work together to fund, develop and implement the Memorial Park Master Plan. The award-winning landscape architecture firm Nelson Byrd Woltz (NBW) led the development of the new Master Plan.

- The Memorial Park Master Plan is one of the largest historic urban park restorations underway.

- The Master Plan:
  - Included comprehensive research with 75 scientists, experts and other consultants and public input that engaged over 3,000 participants
  - Restores habitat and establishes a healthy, resilient ecosystem
  - Upgrades amenities
  - Addresses key infrastructure issues
  - Reveals and honors the history of the Park – cultural and ecological.

- The Long-Range Master Plan initiative ensured a steady, methodical plan of action, and was developed and executed collaboratively by MPC, HPARD and Uptown Houston with input from stakeholder groups and the general public. The Plan seeks to create a healthy balance between conservation and recreation and evolved from a robust input process.

- Seeking to enhance, preserve and protect Memorial Park for years to come, the Master Plan projects identified for early attention were selected to meet the wide variety of user needs within the Park. Eastern Glades, the inaugural project, is currently underway. Phase I of the project is projected for completion in mid-2018.

- Funding for Memorial Park’s Master Plan comes largely from private philanthropy through fundraising efforts led by the Conservancy and is augmented by the Uptown TIRZ. Additionally, the Conservancy raises funds to operate and manage 1,100 of Memorial Park’s 1,500 acres today.

- Full implementation of the plan may take as long as 20 years to complete with costs determined as individual projects are designed. The 2015 Development Agreement between the City of Houston, Memorial Park Conservancy (MPC), and Uptown Development Authority (UDA) is being amended to put in place the framework for a 10-year capital plan to implement a substantial portion of the Master Plan approved by City Council in 2015.

- For more information on the Master Plan: www.memorialparkconservancy.org.
March 2015
April 2015 Design of Memorial Park Master Plan approved unanimously by Mayor Annise D. Parker and City Council
December 2015 Groundbreaking of the Memorial Park Master Plan
February 2016 Memorial Park Conservancy (MPC) assumed management of the Park, which had previously been managed by the Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD)
March 2017 Construction began on Phase I of Eastern Glades, projected for completion in mid-2018
August 2017 Hurricane Harvey elevated need for healthy green infrastructure, role of Memorial Park in a resilient Houston
2018 Significant new funding advances need to amend existing Development Agreement
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Houston's Green Renaissance

Over the past quarter century, cities across the United States have reinvested significantly in their parks and public spaces with landscape-scale impacts serving large urban populations and drawing constituencies in unprecedented numbers and with unprecedented levels of cultural and socio-economic diversity.

Consequently, investments in parks and public spaces have extraordinary reach and bring tangible benefits to urban communities, contributing to health improvements, reduced stress, heightened cultural awareness and exchange, greater appreciation for environmental health, increased exposure to the arts, opportunities for hands-on STEM education, and economic development that improves communities and urban livability.

Parks are common ground. They are places of respite, exercise, education, contemplation, meditation, the enjoyment of the arts and performance, environmental stewardship, and social connection. There is a unique form of social enjoyment that derives when people from disparate backgrounds and circumstances share public space. Parks are powerful equalizers and they offer an antidote to impacts of social conflict and the frenetic pace and stresses of urban life. They connect us to each other in ways that feel natural and unforced. They are worthy of investment, because they provide sizable social return on investment.

Houston is in the Vanguard

Houston is in the vanguard of this national movement and has earned a national reputation in recent years for its ongoing green renaissance. Extraordinary levels of public-private investment in parks, greenways, and public spaces have provided far-reaching benefits to one of the most dynamic urban populations and economies in the nation and world.

Public and private investment in the development and improvement of Houston parks, greenways, and public spaces is estimated to be well in excess of $500 million in the past decade with more investment slated for the next several years. The projects that these investments have generated have achieved national recognition for their responsiveness to community needs and desires, for quality of design and construction, for their new or restored natural areas and their built amenities, for their inspiring aesthetic and functional qualities, for innovative programming and collaborations, and for their popularity and fast-growing, active use.

Projects to build or improve Memorial Park, Discovery Green, Buffalo Bayou Park, Bayou Greenways, Hermann Park, Emancipation Park, Levy Park, Evelyn’s Park, projects advanced by Houston Parks and Recreation Department and Harris County Precincts, and many others have helped define this renaissance, with extensive community input and involvement, with tremendous cooperation and shared commitment across the philanthropic, government and nonprofit sectors, with tangible financial commitments to stewardship and maintenance, and
addressing and improving environmental health of our communities. TIRZ and management district support have been and will continue to be a source of investment in these efforts.

Utility corridors and other public easements also offer an extraordinary opportunity to help achieve this connectivity. As one example, CenterPoint has invested $1.5 million in a demonstration project, connecting Sims Bayou Greenway in Southwest Houston with a north-south power line easement. Ultimately, this effort could connect Sims, Brays, Buffalo, and White Oak Bayou Greenways and Memorial Park with many communities, providing public access and an extended public trail system.

And the Houston Bike Plan, adopted by the Houston City Council in 2017, lays out a 10-year vision to improve cycling safety and accessibility through investment in bike-friendly infrastructure and through efforts to educate cyclists and drivers and to increase ridership in Houston.

The role of parks in the context of flooding is also a critical consideration in their investment. The resilience of Houston communities has rarely been as top-of-mind as it is in the post-Harvey era. Parks’ contributions to quality of life make them a key component of any discussion on community resilience into the future, and the direct role that parks and greenspace play in flood resilience is an important part of the post-Harvey conversation. Improvements to our flood resilience is a direct outcome of the investment in parks.

**Joint Investment Realizes Bold Ambition**

Houston is not a community to rest on its laurels and accomplishments. We strive to build on what we have achieved. Houston’s park-making efforts and the philanthropic and public investments in them have combined to create an impressive network of options for Houstonians today, and they have fueled a pace of park development that will keep Houston in the national vanguard. We have developed a movement in Houston, and the next opportunities abound.

We must celebrate the impacts of public-private investment in our public good and we must continue to invest in the collaborative work that improves and cares for our commons. Investment in our parks, greenways and greenspaces is a pillar of the broader vision for Houston: a diverse, connected, welcoming, economically thriving, can-do, healthy city.
Major Gifts to Parks and Greenspace in Houston

In the last 10 years, the Kinder Foundation has provided catalyst funding for parks and greenspace projects in Houston that have inspired significant public and private funding to bring to fruition. Although not a comprehensive list of foundation greenspace giving, below are some notable highlights.

- **Emancipation Park**: a total of **$3 million** has been granted to Emancipation Park including a $2 million grant in 2012 to renovate the existing historic pool house and pool shade structure at the park. In 2017, another **$1 million** was provided to the park’s conservancy to further park programming and operations which included a $250,000 challenge grant met by H-E-B.

- **SPARK Parks**: a **$2.5 million** grant was provided to SPARK in 2016 to increase park equity in greater Houston. This gift was announced alongside a matching $2.5 million from the Houston Endowment and a City of Houston commitment of an additional $450,000 in federal Community Development Block Grant funding over three years for qualifying schools.
  - Includes **25 schools and 5 renovated SPARK sites**, primarily in communities outside of Loop 610 in the Aldine, Alief, Clear Creek, Fort Bend, Houston, Huffman, Katy, Pasadena, Sheldon, Spring and Spring Branch independent school districts. Nearly half of the parks have been completed or set to be completed in 2018.

- **Bayou Greenways 2020**: a **$50 million** grant to Houston Parks Board was announced in 2013. The overall $220 million project was supported through a 2012 voter-approved bond that set aside $100 million of public funds to be matched by $120 million in private fundraising to be raised by the Houston Parks Board.

- **Buffalo Bayou Park**: in 2010, the foundation provided a **$30 million** catalyst gift to Buffalo Bayou Partnership toward a total of $55 million of private funds to improve the existing 160-acre, 2.3 mile stretch of the bayou between Shepherd Drive and Sabine Street.

- **Hermann Park**: a **$2 million** grant was provided to Hermann Park Conservancy in 2008 for a new central rail station for the treasured Hermann Park Railroad, which reopened after renovations in 2009.

- **Discovery Green**: the foundation was one of the founders of Discovery Green committing **$10 million** in 2004 for the development of the $125 million downtown park and the creation of the nonprofit Discovery Green Conservancy. Nancy Kinder served as founding chair of the conservancy which operates the park. The foundation went on to grant **$3 million** in 2017 for future improvements.
# Summary of Capital Commitments

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