



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Estella Espinosa
Work: (832) 395-7022
Cell: (832) 465-4782
estella.espinosa@houstontx.gov

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO RELEAF BURNETT-BAYLAND PARK
PLANTING PART OF MAYOR'S COMPLETE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE**
*American Forests, Bank of America Charitable Foundation Partner with
Parks Department to Bring Change to Gulfton Area Park*

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department will hold a public tree planting event from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, November 4, at Burnett-Bayland Park, 6000 Chimney Rock Road, Houston, TX 77081.

The parks department is seeking volunteers to assist with planting 200 trees as part of ongoing efforts to sustain and grow Houston's urban forest. The Houston Community ReLeaf Tree Planting is a collaboration between the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, forestry nonprofit group American Forests, and the Bank of America Charitable Foundation.

"These new trees will increase the park's green canopy and help improve the quality of life for the Gulfton community," said Mayor Sylvester Turner. "We are happy to see this new amenity added to Burnett-Bayland Park."

"Thank you to our partners American Forests and the Bank of America Charitable Foundation," said Steve Wright, Director of Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "Their investment in Houston's Urban Forest is one that pays off today and tomorrow."

Burnett-Bayland Park is in the Gulfton neighborhood, part of the City's Complete Communities Initiative. The planting is an important element in tying together themes of neighborhood and urban forest renewal for Houston's citizens. The recent Houston Area Urban Forests project highlighted the need for increased focus on the area's urban forest. Community trees contribute an array of aesthetic and environmental benefits, including pollution reduction, flood mitigation, and increased property value.

"We are excited to be working with such great partners to restore and expand Houston's urban forest at such a critical time in the city's history," said Scott Steen, president and CEO of American Forests. "In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, this work is obviously more important now than ever."

"We have a strong commitment to environmental sustainability and believe that working with experienced groups like American Forests and the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department helps us increase our impact. Our partnership on the Community ReLeaf program not only brings more trees to urban areas, but also improves the environment and enhances livability in the communities we call home," said Hong Ogle, Houston Market President of Bank of America.

Registration will take place on site, and refreshments will be available. No experience is needed and all are welcome.

About the Houston Parks and Recreation Department

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 37,851 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.

About American Forests

American Forests inspires and advances the conservation of forests, which are essential to life. We do this by protecting and restoring threatened forest ecosystems, promoting and expanding urban forests, and increasing understanding of the importance of forests. Founded in 1875, American Forests is the oldest national nonprofit conservation organization in the country and has served as a catalyst for many key milestones in the conservation movement, including the founding of the U.S. Forest Service, the national forest system and thousands of forest ecosystem restoration projects and public education efforts. Since 1990, American Forests has planted more than 50 million trees in all 50 states and nearly 50 countries, resulting in cleaner air and drinking water, restored habitat for wildlife and fish, and the removal of millions of tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Learn more at www.americanforests.org.

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