



NEWS RELEASE

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\$100,000 Trail To Be Built At Metropolitan Multi-Service Center at West Gray

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department was recently awarded a \$100,000 National Recreation Trails Grant for an Adaptive Trail Project to be built at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center at West Gray. The grant is funded by the US Department of Transportation and is administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration.

"We're really excited about this grant," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "It will help us create a place where people with disabilities will be able to recreate and enjoy the outdoor environment while working on improving skills they use everyday."

The Adaptive Trail Project features 2 different trails, a 1,275-foot, 10-foot wide asphalt loop trail and a 260-foot, 6-foot wide Challenger Course. Both trails will be open for use by people of all abilities, but unique features will challenge people with mobility and vision disabilities to improve skills they need in every day life. The trail system will also provide a place where rehabilitation specialists can teach wheelchair and hand bike mobility skills like driving control, spatial awareness, road safety and back wheel balancing (a skill necessary for climbing curbs).

"The trail will be built with varying berm heights, lips and curbs," said Peggy Turner, Division Manager, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center. "This will help people with mobility disabilities make the most of their wheelchairs and hand bikes. Trail surface texture, wind chimes and sounding objects and Braille signs will also be a part of the trail system. This will give people with visual disabilities a place where they can sharpen their orientation skills by sharpening their senses of taste, smell, touch, and hearing."

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The Metropolitan Multi-Service Center is a 7.75-acre facility that provides recreational programming for people with disabilities. Center amenities include an indoor heated swimming pool, gymnasium, weight room, tennis courts, a beep baseball field, as well as meeting and activity rooms. The new trails will replace an existing asphalt trail. Additional development plans include the replacement of the existing playground with a Playground Without Limits structure pending additional funding.

The \$100,000 National Recreation Trails Grant is a matching grant and represents 80% of the cost of the project. The Houston Parks and Recreation Department will match the grant with construction and labor cost. The National Recreational Trails Fund is funded from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles.

For more information on the Adaptive Trail Project at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, or the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (713) 845-1135 or visit www.houstonparks.org.