
Press Release

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

Celebrate Earth Month - "Meet Me at the Park" **Vote for Your Favorite Park Project April 1 to April 30** ***One Park Project Will Receive \$20,000 through Parks Build Community Campaign***

This Earth Month, the National Recreation and Park Association (N.R.P.A.) is collaborating with the Walt Disney Company, including Disney Citizenship, Disney|ABC Television Group and ESPN, to revitalize parks across the U.S. for a second year, including a park project right here in Houston. Through Parks Build Community, an N.R.P.A. initiative, one of three local park projects will receive a \$20,000 grant and Houstonians get to choose which one.

"The Houston Parks and Recreation Department is dedicated to improving the quality of life in our community, and the opportunity to receive this grant is greatly appreciated," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "That's why we are excited to be a part of the Parks Build Community Initiative to revitalize a park here in the Houston area. We encourage everyone in Houston to vote for their favorite project in this year's Parks Build Community Campaign."

From April 1 to April 30, Houstonians will have the opportunity to vote online for their favorite local project and give them a chance to receive \$20,000 in grant funding to make improvements. By visiting NRPA.org/BeInspired, park supporters can vote daily for their favorite park project. At the end of April, the park project with the most votes will receive the grant funding.

"Parks have immense power. They help families live healthier lives, connect kids to nature, increase kids' access to sports and so much more," said Barbara Tulipane, President and C.E.O. of N.R.P.A. "Parks Build Community is a great opportunity to share the power of parks during Earth Month while bringing essential funds to critical park projects."

The three local projects they can vote for are:

- **The Futsal Court at Ingrando Park** will repurpose an unused tennis court into a new soccer mini-pitch court for players of all ages. The soccer mini-pitch court is part of the Soccer for Success Program, an initiative of the U.S. Soccer Foundation in partnership with the Houston Parks and Recreation Department. This initiative targets and engages low income, at-risk children at city parks and schools in youth development opportunities through the game of soccer.
- **The Fruit Orchard and Community Garden at Herman Brown Park** is a partnership between the Houston Parks and Recreation Department and the Furr High School Green Ambassadors Program. The students and area residents have requested a community garden on the west side of this 717-acre park. The project will provide a half-acre, fenced garden with ten 6' x 4' raised vegetable garden beds, a fruit orchard, on-site access to water, and a storage area for hand tools.
- **The Houston Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership** coordinates community stewardship activities, the restoration of habitat, the creation of nature play areas, and improved quality of life. The Houston Parks and Recreation Department's after school and summer programs incorporate environmental education programs to engage hundreds of Houston children in conservation and outside recreation. **The programs at the Judson Robinson, Jr., Community Center adjacent to Hermann Park and the Carverdale Community Center in northwest Houston will benefit if this project wins the grant.**

This Earth Month, show how parks build your community and vote to improve local parks and the places you go to have fun, enjoy nature, and get active right here in Houston.

Last year, the public voted to build a wildlife trail in Herman Brown Park. Through the \$20,000 in funding, the community is now able to enjoy the Northshore Nature Walk, which connects neighborhoods on the east side of the park to existing facilities on the other side of the forested park. This year, resident votes will help improve another one of the parks in Houston.

For more information and to vote, visit NRPA.org/BeInspired.

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) *stewards and manages over 37,859 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.*

The National Recreation and Park Association *is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation, and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 50,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, N.R.P.A. encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.NRPA.org. For digital access to N.R.P.A.'s flagship publication, Parks & Recreation, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.*