



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAYOR SYLVESTER TURNER TO CLOSE PARKING LOTS AT SOME CITY PARKS THIS WEEKEND

Plan Aims to Encourage Social Distancing and Prevent Park Overcrowding to Limit Spread of COVID-19

To help control overcrowding at City parks this weekend, Mayor Sylvester Turner will limit access to parking lots adjacent to parks. All City parks will remain open and those parks that have gated parking entrances will be locked Friday night and unlocked Monday morning. The goal is to encourage citizens to walk and/or bike to their neighborhood park. It will also minimize driving and parking at our facilities, while keeping the parks open.

"I want Houstonians to enjoy our parks because spending time outdoors allows us to breathe fresh air and stay healthy," Mayor Sylvester Turner said. "But we must also work together to save lives and blunt the progression of COVID-19. The HPARD measures to restrict access to parking lots will help everyone maintain social distancing and prevent overcrowding."

This will include Buffalo Bayou Park, Memorial Park, and Hermann Park -- where we will limit, but not close off all parking, nor close any sections of the park. In addition, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department will continue monitoring parks with the help of the Houston Police Department, Urban Park Rangers, and 150 re-assigned parks staffers.

"The Parks Department is working extremely hard to help slow the spread of COVID-19," said Steve Wright, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "This decision to limit parking at parks was made for the greater good -- to help stop park overcrowding which we hope will flatten the curve, and ultimately help the City win the battle against COVID-19."

Visitors are reminded to practice social distancing and follow CDC guidelines on personal hygiene prior to heading to our parks. This includes washing hands, carrying hand sanitizer, covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing, and staying at home if you are feeling ill. And remember, if you bring litter into City parks, please dispose of it by tossing it in trash bins, or taking it away for disposal elsewhere. For more information, visit www.houstonparks.org.

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.