



PRESS RELEASE

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MAYOR SYLVESTER TURNER'S LOVE OUR PARKS INITIATIVE CELEBRATES IMPROVEMENTS TO INDEPENDENCE HEIGHTS PARK

Cheniere Energy Inc. Continues its Support of Neighborhood Park Improvement Initiative

Mayor Sylvester Turner, the Mayor's Office of Complete Communities, and the Houston Parks and Recreation Department will celebrate improvements to Independence Heights Park on Sunday, October 22, 2023. The park is located at 601 East 35th Street in Near North Houston. To celebrate the event the Parks and Recreation Department is hosting a Love Our Parks Fest at Independence Heights Park from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m., with a ceremony at 1:00 p.m. The fest will feature family-friendly activities and programming from Houston Parks and Recreation, Houston Public Library, HPD's Greater Houston Police Activities League (GHPAL), and other City departments.

"The Love Our Parks initiative is one of the many success stories of my tenure as Houston Mayor," said Mayor Sylvester Turner. "It has been transformative for the communities that visit these neighborhood parks every day. I thank all our city workers for another job well done, and a big thank you to Cheniere Energy for its continued support to upgrade and improve our neighborhood parks."

Independence Heights Park is in City Council District H, represented by Council Member Karla Cisneros. The Independence Heights Park improvements include: a new playground and exercise equipment, new basketball pavilion roof, new furnishings, repainting of the Independence Heights Community Center, tennis court upgrades, new mural painted by artist Israel McCloud, new barbecue pits, new water fountains, new fencing, sidewalk and lighting upgrades, landscaping, improved drainage, new pergola, and new wood seating on the bleachers. The total cost of the improvements is \$996,573. Cheniere Energy, Inc. is a strong supporter of the "Love Our Parks" initiative. The company has generously donated more than \$200,000 for Round Two of the Love Our Parks initiative.

"Cheniere is proud to support the revitalization of Independence Heights Park in Houston, our hometown," said Zach Davis, Executive Vice President and CFO, Cheniere Energy and Board Member, Cheniere Foundation. "We are a company committed to making a difference in the communities where we live and work, and we thank the Houston Parks and Recreation Department and Mayor Turner for the opportunity to contribute for a third straight year to the Love Our Parks Complete Communities initiative, which strives to provide safe places for the community to come together."

The Independence Heights Community Center is scheduled to receive additional Capital Improvement Project (CIP) improvements in 2024. That work will include remodeling restrooms, classroom enlargement, window additions, and other interior upgrades. These Phase II CIP improvements total \$1,005,000.

In 1915, the Independence Heights area, with a population of 600, incorporated to become one of the first African American municipalities in Texas. During its incorporation, from 1915 – 1929, four mayors served the city. In 1929, the area was annexed by the City of Houston. The City of Houston acquired the parkland in 1947, and the park is named after the neighborhood it resides in.

“Independence Heights is one of Houston’s most historic communities, and this park means so much to the proud citizens who live nearby,” said Kenneth Allen, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. “We are pleased to restore this neighborhood landmark and make it an enjoyable place to visit for families. A special shout out to Cheniere Energy for walking the walk with us, and to my Parks and Recreation Department team for making another neighborhood park sparkle and shine.”

The Mayor Sylvester Turner Love Our Parks Complete Communities initiative is a collaborative effort created by Mayor Turner to improve and upgrade neighborhood parks in under-resourced Houston communities. The first phase featured five neighborhood parks – Our Park and Malone Park in Third Ward, Woodruff Park in Magnolia-Manchester, Earl Henderson Park on the Near Northside, and Catherine Delce Park in Kashmere Gardens. Phase Two kicked off in August 2022 at Hobart Taylor Park and Irvington Park in December 2022. Other parks in this round include Lincoln Park and Evella Park.

For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, please visit www.HoustonParks.org.

About the Houston Parks and Recreation Department

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages 382 parks and over 39,501 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all ages and abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.