As Houston grows and changes, Hermann Park Conservancy's dedication to the stewardship and improvement of Hermann Park will guide new improvements over the next 20 years. A new master plan will ensure the Park adapts to changes in our community and continues to be a vital resource for recreation and relaxation in the heart of Houston.

In October of 2015, award-winning landscape architecture firm, Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA), was brought on board to study the Park's needs and develop a plan to guide future improvements. The focus is on underutilized areas of the Park, particularly on its edges, including Bayou Parkland and the western edge of the Park along Fannin. After observing the way visitors experience and interact with the Park on days with high visitorship, MVVA has designed plans to create beautiful landscapes on the Park's edges, improve mobility and parking and enhance wildlife habitat.

Houstonians have been an integral part of the planning process. On August 28th, the Conservancy held a community open house at the Park's Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion to share MVVA's ideas and to get input from Park users. After a presentation by the master plan team, those attending the meeting had an opportunity to ask questions and give feedback to the Conservancy, the MVVA team, mobility and transportation consultants from Nelson\Nygaard and the Houston Parks and Recreation Department. An additional community meeting was held on October 27th at Ripley House to present plans reflecting the MVVA team's observations at the Park as well as hundreds of comments from Park users. MVVA will present its full recommendations this spring at our final public meeting set for April 4 at the McGovern Centennial Gardens.

To follow the master plan process, go to hermannpark.org/masterplan. Send us your thoughts at ideas@hermannpark.org.
What do you love about Hermann Park? What is your favorite thing to do while visiting? These are questions we have been asking a lot as we update the Park’s master plan for the next 20 years. One of my favorite things to do in the Park is wave to the families riding by on the Hermann Park Railroad. From small children to grandparents, everyone is always happy as they wave back! That ability to connect with people who come from so many different backgrounds is something I truly love about Hermann Park.

On any given day as you walk through the Park, you can see Houston’s diversity reflected in the visitors you pass. A recent study by Rice University students shows that people visit from across the entire Houston region — and 11% of the visitors come from out of town. The diversity of the Park’s visitors is also a near perfect reflection of the diversity of our city. Survey participants were asked what they love about the Park and what they would like to see added. The Park truly is a universally shared experience we can celebrate together for generations to come.

The spring offers many community events and we hope you’ll join us and share your ideas for Hermann Park by stopping by our Conservancy tent (or emailing ideas@hermannpark.org). We invite you to experience the riot of kites in the air at the Kite Festival. Come celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Japanese garden with our friends, here and in Japan, who have made it possible. Celebrating at a big community event is joyous but any day you visit Hermann Park you have a chance to celebrate with our vibrant Houston community. Smile and wave at your fellow visitors — whether they are riding by on the train or not!

See you in the Park,

Doreen Stoller, President
On Saturday, October 29th, Conservancy members and
donors to the Grand Gateway restoration project
gathered to celebrate the revitalization of Hermann Park’s historic
entrance at Montrose and Main Streets.

Following a light breakfast reception at
Kinder Station, guests boarded the
Hermann Park Railroad for a train ride to
the Grand Gateway to see the colorful
landscaping featuring seasonal plantings
and to honor the project’s supporters.
Long-time Park advocate, Tommy Lott,
made the lead gift to restore the Grand
Gateway and worked with a group of
friends in the Warwick Towers to help
raise funds.

Another generous donation toward the
Grand Gateway restoration came from
the children of Genevieve Lykes Duncan,
a dedicated Park supporter. She and her
husband, James, moved to Houston in
1925, and fell in love with Hermann Park.
The garden at the top section of the
Grand Gateway, closest to the Mecom
Fountain, is dedicated in memory of
Genevieve Lykes Duncan by her children
Cameron, Genny and Bowie. Though
she later moved away from Houston, she
never lost her love for Hermann Park.

In addition to funds raised by the
Conservancy donors, the $5 million
project’s funding included nearly $3
million through the Texas Department
of Transportation, which managed the
project with the Conservancy and
the City of Houston.

The project brought back the grandeur
of the Park’s original landscaping while
improving connectivity to nearby
neighborhoods and adding irrigation
for Main Street’s live oaks.
On a hot December morning, McGovern Centennial Garden volunteers harvested Yuca, also known as the Cassava plant, or *Manihot esculenta*. They enjoyed learning how to harvest and propagate this edible starchy root. It’s featured in many cultures’ cuisines, including Brazil, Nigeria and Thailand. Native to South America and parts of the Caribbean, it is also used to make tapioca. It’s a drought-resistant crop and can be prepared in many ways. Try cooking it like a potato or as a sweet cassava cake or pudding. Be sure to check out all of the varieties of plants in the Family Garden. You can visit hermannpark.org/familygarden for a guide to the trees in the garden.

Special Therapy Benefits Volunteers and the Park

A small group of patients from Mentis Neuro Health volunteered in the Park as part of their physical therapy process. Mentis provides neuro-rehabilitation for people who have sustained a brain injury and strives to help patients get back to their homes and work. According to director of volunteer programs, Diane Kerr, patients participating in the program have been dedicated, monthly volunteers since 2011.

While volunteering in the Park helps in the therapy process, it also benefits the Park. The group raked pine needles in the Japanese Garden, filling more than a dozen bags to be used throughout the Park.
McGOVERN CENTENNIAL GARDENS

featured plant

Chinese Fringe Tree

Visitors to McGovern Centennial Gardens literally stop and stare when they see the Chinese Fringe Tree, *Chionanthus retusus*, in full bloom. There are two in the Woodland Garden, both on the Hermann Drive side of the pergola walk, near the Mount end of the lawn. One of these two young trees was planted in honor of Park patron Kathrine McGovern, and presented to her at the very first Hats in the Park luncheon held in the Gardens in March 2015.

The Chinese Fringe tree is native to eastern Asia, and is cultivated for its prolific and fragrant show of feathery white blossoms in springtime. It is a small deciduous tree with a rounded crown, growing between 15’-25’ in height. The oblong leaves have a glossy sheen. Chinese Fringe Trees prefer deep, well-drained, acidic soils and full sun, making them an excellent choice for a smaller patio area or set against the taller backdrop of a dark green hedge. It is relatively disease-resistant as long as it has adequate drainage and healthy soils. *Chionanthus retusus* translates as “snow flower”, a beautifully-evocative name for its most striking spring feature.
Urban Green Brings Gatsby to the Gardens

On Thursday, November 17th, Hermann Park’s McGovern Centennial Gardens filled with nearly 350 young professionals dressed in their best roaring twenties attire at Urban Green’s Gatsby in the Gardens.

Thanks to the dedication of chairs Bryce Bash, Kenedy Hughes, Patrick Sheehy, and Emily and Conner Tamlyn, the event raised more than $20,000, which will benefit Hermann Park Conservancy’s mission to improve and protect Hermann Park.

Guests dined on a fantastic spread of light bites and took their chance bidding on impressive silent auction items including a private cooking class at Four Seasons Houston, an autographed Brock Osweiler football, and a two night stay at a Caesars Entertainment property in Las Vegas. Guests danced the night away to the beats of Dj Mav and snapped pictures in a Gatsby-inspired photo booth courtesy of Ham & Cheese Photo Booth. Guests also sipped beverages provided by Saint Arnold Brewing Co., TX Whiskey, Deep Eddy Vodka, and Mighty Swell.

In addition to all the generous silent auction donors and other supporters, the Conservancy extends special thanks to Dj Mav, Butter & Company Catering, Ann Werme Group, Houston Young Lawyers Association, Antone’s Famous Po Boys, Capone’s Pizza Oven and Bar, Chipotle, FM Burger, and Roostar Vietnamese Grill.

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PARKSIDE / WINTER 2017
13th Annual Run in the Park

Run in the Park is a fun, healthy event that brings our community together. On Saturday, November 12th, more than 650 people took to the Park’s scenic trail to participate in the 5K run/walk, 3K walk, or the 1K fun run for kids. For some, the goal was winning the race, while others came to get some exercise with family and friends and to enjoy the outdoors. Afterwards, participants enjoyed a post-race party with food and music at Molly Ann Smith Plaza.

We are grateful to our sponsors, including the City of Houston, CLIF Bar, Frontier Utilities, Luby’s Fuddruckers Restaurants, LLC, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Silver Eagle Distributors, Sovereign Wealth Advisors LLC, Texas Children’s Hospital, Gulf States Toyota, the Friedkin Group and the Williams Companies, and Dj Mav. Special thanks to Fleet Feet Sports for providing prizes for the race winners.

Stay tuned for more information on the next Run in the Park on Saturday, November 11, 2017.

Park to Port Bike Ride Rolls Down Bayou Greenway Trail

More than 850 cyclists joined in the fun at the 3rd annual Park to Port Bike Ride. Riders pedaled down the Bayou Greenway trail enjoying the view along Brays Bayou. Families, friends and individuals cycled from Hermann Park’s Bill Coats Bridge along the Brays Bayou Greenway Trail to the Port of Houston where they were treated to a mid-ride party sponsored by the Port of Houston Authority. Riders returned along the trail to Hermann Park for a post-ride party to celebrate the 20-mile ride.

Support for this event is generously provided by the Port of Houston Authority, Reliant an NRG Company, AECOM, Bayou City Cycles, Bike Houston, Brady’s Landing, CLIF Bars, Dj Mav/Cut the Fader, Golf Cars of Houston, the Mayor’s Office of Special Events, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Houston Parks Board, Luby’s Fuddruckers Restaurants LLC, Saint Arnold Brewing Company, Michelob Ultra/Silver Eagle Distributors, L.P., Texas Medical Center, the Williams Companies and Waste Management.

Stay tuned for information about the 2017 Park to Port Bike Ride scheduled for Saturday, October 7, 2017.
There’s a cool new way to beat the heat with the Conservancy’s shaved ice cart on Lake Plaza. Located between the Houston Zoo and Kinder Station, the custom-made cart sells shaved ice in a variety of flavors. Bottled water and snacks are also available. Ask about Conservancy membership while you pick up your shaved ice treat.
In collaboration with the Conservancy, Rice University's Center for Civic Leadership's Houston Action Research Team (HART) engaged in an analysis of Hermann Park users in the fall of 2016 to better understand who uses the Park and their patterns of Park usage to help inform the Conservancy's master planning process.

In total, 307 surveys and 44 observational forms were collected by the group. Questions in the survey pertained to time spent at the Park, transportation to the Park, comparison of Hermann Park to other parks, activities at the Park, and recommended changes or improvements to the Park. A key finding from the study is that Park users are truly a demographic representation of Houston’s diversity.

Below is a sample of their statistical findings. To see the full study’s findings, visit hermannpark.org/masterplan.

### New Play Equipment for Bayou Parkland

A new swing set has been constructed near the Bayou Parkland Pavilion, between Almeda and Brays Bayou. Bayou Parkland, situated across North and South MacGregor Way from the main body of Hermann Park, offers a wide variety of activities for hikers, joggers, and wildlife watchers. Until now, this area didn’t have play equipment for children. The materials, wood and swings were purchased by the Conservancy and constructed by the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department. The City also added mulch and a wheelchair ramp. Groups who reserve the pavilion and families looking for picnic fun now have a place to play!
Save the Dates!

Hermann Park Kite Festival
Miller Hill and Jones Reflection Pool
Sunday, March 26, 2017
10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Hats in the Park Luncheon
McGovern Centennial Gardens
Thursday, March 30, 2017
11:30 a.m.

Evening in the Park
Molly Ann Smith Plaza and
Jones Reflection Pool
Friday, April 28, 2017
6:00 p.m.

Student Performances
in the Park
Lake Plaza
Throughout the 2016–2017
school year

Dates and times are subject to change; where date and time not listed, exact time is TBD

Details at
hermannpark.org

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The names listed above and on the preceding pages include donors who made gifts or pledges of $100 or more between July 1 and December 31, 2016 and George Hermann Society members. Gifts to the Hats in the Park luncheon and Evening in the Park gala will be recognized in subsequent issues. In compliance with IRS standards, commitments paid over time in installments are recognized once in full at the time of the pledge. Please contact the Conservancy if we inadvertently have not included your name or if you would like to be listed differently in future publications.
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PARKSIDE / WINTER 2017

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