



**PARK  
PARTNERS**

# Equity Engagement Impact

**HELPING HOUSTON  
NEIGHBORHOODS THRIVE**





**To be a more resilient city and drive improvements to quality of life, Houston must have thriving parks to support thriving neighborhoods.**

Public and private investment in the development and improvement of Houston parks, Greenways, and public spaces has solidified Houston's national reputation as a green space leader. Signature parks such as Memorial Park, Hermann Park, Discovery Green, Emancipation Park, Levy Park, MacGregor Park, and the Bayou Greenways 2020 initiative have transformed the city.

The work to uplift neighborhood parks, however, is just beginning. Mayor Sylvester Turner's announcement for this new city initiative, 50/50 Park Partners, challenged 50 companies to join a citywide coalition driving improvements to neighborhood parks.

**“Green space is vitally important. You cannot have a complete city without having the green space and the parks that go right along with it.”**

**- Mayor Sylvester Turner**



# WHAT IS 50/50 PARK PARTNERS?

Led by the Office of the Mayor, Houston Parks & Recreation Department, Greater Houston Partnership, and Houston Parks Board, 50/50 Park Partners will improve Houston's neighborhoods, one park at a time. By becoming a Park Partner, you can help drive positive social, environmental, and economic change.

The 50/50 Park Partners initiative brings together 50 private businesses through monetary contributions, in-kind support, ideas, and volunteers, for improvements to 50 neighborhood parks. The heart of 50/50 Park Partners is the creation of long-term relationships for sustained impact between businesses, communities, and parks, improving the quality of life for Houstonians for decades to come.

To strengthen this innovative public-private partnership, the City of Houston has committed an estimated \$7-8 million to make improvements in neighborhood parks alongside 50/50 initiative partners.



Mayor Sylvester Turner



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**PARTNERSHIP**



**HOUSTON**  
PARKS BOARD

50/50 Park Partners is based on three founding principles:

1. **Park Equity:** Neighborhood parks are selected and improved based on need and citywide distribution.
2. **Community Engagement:** Improvements, projects, and volunteer support are responsive to the community and focus on existing parks.
3. **Long-term Sustainable Impact:** The 50/50 Park Partners initiative provides a multi-year investment, starting a long-term partnership between businesses, neighborhood parks and the community.

**Become a 50/50 Park Partner to join the coalition of businesses making an impact on Houston's neighborhoods and their parks.**



**“Civic engagement and investment within our neighborhoods greatly improves quality of life, strengthening the region as a whole.”**

**- Bob Harvey, President & CEO, Greater Houston Partnership**

# 50/50 PARK PARTNERS FRAMEWORK



50/50 Park Partners has been designed to create both business and social value in countless ways, maximizing the impact of becoming a Park Partner.

The 50/50 Park Partners framework provides an opportunity to play a leadership role in supporting neighborhood parks and their surrounding communities across Houston, catalyzing the process of reinvigorating an under-resourced park. The coalition of Park Partners, the City of Houston, Houston Parks & Recreation Department, and Houston Parks Board will determine a coordinated process for park improvement and design focusing on close collaboration with local communities.

Financial support from Park Partners will be held by Houston Parks Board in a centralized and coordinated fund to deliver maximum impact. Project funds will be invested based on priorities of need and distributed citywide across the identified neighborhood parks.

## PARK PARTNER OPPORTUNITIES

### Employee Engagement & Volunteering

Like parks, volunteers are at the heart of every community. Whether your company has already discovered the positive impact of a volunteer program, or if you are looking for a fresh new initiative to build employee engagement, Houston's parks renaissance is resonating with our citizens. Example efforts include:

- Constructing improvements
- Planting landscaped areas
- Identifying and building nature trails
- Refurbishing existing facilities

With many businesses now including volunteerism in their employee benefits program, 50/50 Park Partners provides meaningful opportunities for an organization and its employees to make a tangible, sustainable difference. This approach will enable Park Partners to directly tie their support of this initiative with their corporate strategies by increasing brand recognition, improving corporate culture and boosting employee morale.

Businesses can further support this initiative by providing in-kind value and expertise to projects that will uplift multiple neighborhood parks at a time (e.g., infrastructure lighting improvements, WiFi connectivity, community engagement).

### Developing Leaders and Stewardship Groups

In addition to park volunteer opportunities, there is an opportunity for Park Partners to share the knowledge and experience of their employees. In turn, these efforts will help develop neighborhood leaders, catalyzing community groups to become more efficient and effective in the care of their park. 50/50 Park Partners will empower communities to mobilize stewardship groups and communities to turn their park vision into reality, help sustain improvements, support community outreach, and continue to better their park and community.

### Event & Program Sponsorship

Beyond physical improvements to parks, Park Partners support events and the activation of parks, helping them to become more livable spaces and meet their full potential as vibrant centers of community life.

### Co-branding Opportunity

As Houston's reputation as a park-centric city continues to grow nationally and internationally, Park Partners will be recognized as integral to our city's success. 50/50 Park Partners will be acknowledged in marketing content designed to promote their investment as well as celebrate their success.

# 50/50 PARK PARTNERS LEVELS AND BENEFITS

	Founding Park Partner	Visionary Park Partner	Collaborative Park Partner
<b>Annual Donation (3 year commitment)</b>	<b>\$250,000/year</b>	<b>\$150,000/year</b>	<b>\$95,000/year</b>
Centrally Managed 50/50 Park Partner Company Employee Engagement Day(s)*	Up to 2 scaled volunteer events per year for employees	1 scaled volunteer event per year for employees	1 volunteer event (up to 50 people) per year
External Marketing - Use of 50/50 Park Partners branding and content in related marketing materials	X	X	X
Member of the 50/50 Park Partners Coalition	X	X	X
Recognition in print and online 50/50 Park Partners materials (e.g., press release, annual partner report, website)	X (Use of Company Logo)	X (Use of Company Name)	X (Use of Company Name)
Recognition in all 50/50 Park Partners neighborhood parks	X (Use of Company Logo)	X (Use of Company Name)	
Personalized 50/50 Park Partners recognition plaque for office lobby	X	X	
Greater Houston Partnership event recognition (e.g., printed materials, signage, 50/50 Park Partners exclusive opportunities)	X	X	
Priority selection of park engagement opportunities	X	X	
Membership on Greater Houston Partnership Quality of Place Committee	X	X	
Incorporate Houston personality (e.g. Houston athlete) as part of Employee Engagement Event	X		

\*This does not preclude ongoing, organic community and park engagement.

## More than 90% of funds will be invested into identified neighborhood parks and their communities throughout Houston.

The remaining will be designated towards administrative costs.



## PROGRAMMATIC PARTNERS

50/50 Park Partners aims to build long-term connections between Houston's companies and Houston's communities. While non-profit organizations might not be able to join through a financial contribution, these organizations can connect to 50/50 Park Partners in other capacities. Their strengths may lie in their ability to convene their neighbors, host park programs, or donate their services as part of a project. Adding the support of non-profit organizations further maximizes the impact of 50/50 Park Partners and draws further connection points within the neighborhoods themselves.

Programmatic Partners:

- Provide 3-year commitment
- Support community engagement and park activation efforts
- Are associated with the initiative citywide or be associated with a specific community and/or Park Partners

# WHY NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS?

**Support of 50/50 Park Partners sends a strong message about a company's commitment to improving quality of life for Houstonians and investing in the vitality of their city.**

Parks have extraordinary reach and bring many benefits to our communities. Neighborhood parks serve as hubs for recreation and civic engagement. Regular access to neighborhood parks is critical to quality of life in urban areas in many tangible ways, including:

- Improving mental and physical health
- Promoting civic pride and neighborhood cohesion
- Spurring economic development
- Mitigating flood risks and improving air quality

Parks, trails, and open spaces have become essential urban amenities in today's competitive economy and are now key considerations for employers and the talent they seek to recruit and retain.

Support of 50/50 Park Partners sends a strong message about a company's commitment to their quality of life and the vitality of their city.

**“Everyone in every neighborhood across the city deserves a great neighborhood park.”**

**- Steve Wright,  
Director of Houston  
Parks & Recreation  
Department**



# PARK SELECTION PROCESS

Houston is home to more than 180 neighborhood parks which are between 1 and 15 acres in size.

Those neighborhood parks most in need were identified through a detailed assessment process to ensure investments are equitably targeted. The criteria used evaluated the overarching condition of each neighborhood park alongside population and equity metrics for those Houstonians living within a 10-minute walk of each park.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Relationship Building

50/50 Park Partners are paired with a neighborhood park through a highly personalized process that considers both the community and the company priorities. These connections are drawn after careful analysis of existing relationships, company initiatives, and community needs.

## Community Engagement

Community members care deeply for their neighborhood and their parks. Community input is critical to the success and longevity of 50/50 Park Partner initiative projects. Neighbors will be engaged throughout the planning process to ensure that park improvements reflect the desires and needs of current and future residents.

50/50 Park Partners will also catalyze long-term care of the parks by inspiring and equipping the community to form stewardship groups.

**“50/50 Park Partners will connect businesses with neighborhoods, city agencies, and nonprofit organizations to enrich communities and strengthen our city.”**

**- Beth White,  
President & CEO,  
Houston Parks Board**



## 50/50 PARK PARTNERS IS AN INITIATIVE LED BY:



Mayor Sylvester Turner



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PARKS BOARD



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