



Authentic
Connected
Inclusive
Resilient

A VISION FOR

BUFFALO BAYOU EAST

BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP

MICHAEL VAN VALKENBURGH ASSOCIATES
Landscape Architecture

HR&A ADVISORS
Economic Development

HUITT-ZOLLARS
Engineering and Transportation

LIMNOTECH
Hydrology

UTILE
Urban Design and Architecture



The Buffalo Bayou East Master Plan brings the community's vision for its waterfront to life.

Like other cities such as New York, Boston and St. Louis where Frederick Law Olmstead designed park systems, Houston hired Cambridge, Massachusetts landscape architect Arthur Coleman Comey in 1912 to provide a plan that would guide the city's growth. In his plan, *Houston: Tentative Plans for Its Development*, Comey asserted: "The backbone of a park system for Houston will naturally be its creek valleys, which readily lend themselves to 'parking' ... All the bayous should be 'parked' except where utilized for commerce."

Building upon Comey's vision, Buffalo Bayou Partnership's (BBP) 2002 *Buffalo Bayou and Beyond* Master Plan envisioned a network of green spaces along the Bayou stretching from Shepherd Drive to the Port of Houston Turning Basin. Today, countless Houstonians and visitors utilize the extensive parks and trails along the waterfront to the west, most notably Buffalo Bayou Park. In addition to being a central gathering place for all Houstonians to enjoy, the park has become a symbol of the city's rejuvenation and an important impetus for other park and bayou enhancement projects throughout the city.

While most of Buffalo Bayou Partnership's green space development has occurred west of Downtown, for more than a decade the organization has been acquiring property and building a nascent trail system along the waterway's East Sector. The Buffalo Bayou East Master Plan brings the community's vision for its waterfront to life. Informed by significant outreach and engagement, the plan envisions integrating new parks and trails, dynamic recreational and cultural destinations, and connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

This plan is an important step forward for the future of Houston's historic bayou—a project that will take decades and require creative partnerships to unfold. Step by step, piece by piece, Buffalo Bayou East will pay tribute to Houston's industrial roots, celebrate culturally rich neighborhoods, and serve as an important symbol for the city's continuing commitment to accessible park space for all.

This plan is an important step forward for the future of Houston's historic bayou.

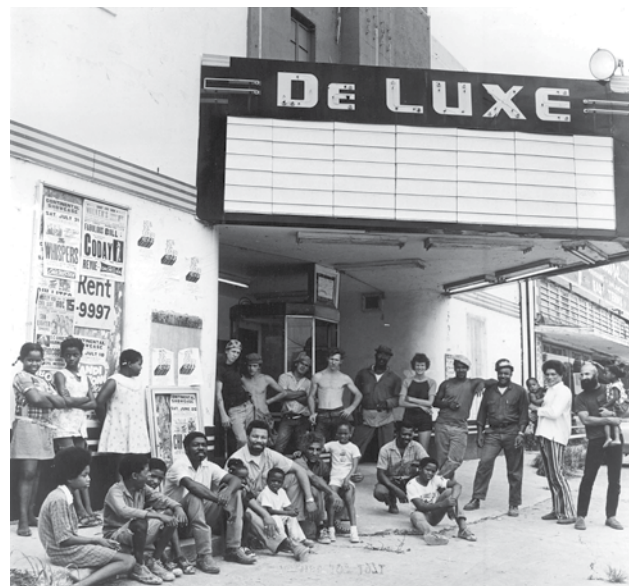


LOOKING BACK

Houston's rich history has been shaped by Buffalo Bayou and the waterway east of Downtown has played a particularly important role in the city's evolution. While Allen's Landing in Downtown Houston is the site most often associated with the city's founding in 1836, in fact it was the town of Harrisburg, located at the confluence of Brays and Buffalo bayous, where Houston's founders, Augustus and John Kirby Allen, preferred to locate. Situated just below the Turning Basin, Harrisburg served as a port of entry and became known as the commercial and shipping center of the southwest. For a brief period, the city served as the Republic of Texas capital.

Houston's early success was driven by Buffalo Bayou and its influence is strongly felt to this day. Continually competing with Galveston, Houston business leaders saw the need to straighten and widen the Bayou. After years of dredging and other improvements, an agreement was reached with the federal government and the Houston Ship Channel opened.

Galveston's 1900 hurricane and discovery of oil at Spindletop near Beaumont ensured Houston's future as a major trading and transportation center, and today, the Ship Channel is one of the world's great international ports.



A CULTURAL LEGACY

As Buffalo Bayou transitioned from a lazy stream to the transportation powerhouse it is today, so too have the neighborhoods that line its banks. Early years saw a large concentration of working class Germans, Italians and Irish, then an influx of African-Americans and Mexican-Americans.

Along with their strong work ethic and devotion to family, these early residents brought rich cultural traditions and customs that remain in the East Sector today. Whether it is the colorful murals and Tex-Mex cuisine of the Greater East End or the zydeco and blues music of the Fifth Ward, Buffalo Bayou East neighborhoods are among the most culturally vibrant in Houston.

AN INDUSTRIAL LEGACY

While industrial activity has migrated towards the Ship Channel, active nodes still serve as important East Sector employment hubs and link the area to Houston's history as a port city. At the same time, abandoned industrial relics contribute to a fascinating interaction of natural beauty and grit. Buffalo Bayou East celebrates the area's industrial legacy and finds opportunities for industry and open space to exist.



Four core principles guided the master planning process and serve as a roadmap for the Plan's implementation. Building upon the area's rich history and character, the principles inspired designs that reflect local residents' priorities, ensure established neighborhoods stay intact, and bring people to the water, so they can enjoy Buffalo Bayou East as it continues to flourish in the coming decades.

Authentic

Create unique open spaces that reflect the cultural and industrial legacy of Buffalo Bayou East.

Connected

Rethink how parks and neighborhoods interact, activating and connecting the waterfront with surrounding communities.

Inclusive

Catalyze investment and inclusive neighborhood growth that does not leave current residents behind.

Resilient

Promote investments that mitigate flooding, stabilize the Bayou's banks, and increase economic and social mobility.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

It was important for Buffalo Bayou Partnership to engage community members throughout the planning process. In addition to reaching out to over 50,000 community members through bilingual postcards and social media, BBP organized numerous opportunities for over 700 stakeholders to provide feedback through larger community-wide events as well as smaller group settings. Other activities, such as the self-guided public art tour *Encounter: Meeting Points on Buffalo Bayou*, allowed participants to share their ideas and opinions for future Bayou improvements.



A NEW DIRECTION

Buffalo Bayou East represents a new focus for Buffalo Bayou Partnership. Very different physical and geographic characteristics mean design solutions that activate the Bayou must consider the East Sector's unique conditions. Using the set of guiding principles, the Master Plan includes several key objectives and strategies.

- Preserve Buffalo Bayou East's culture and traditions.
- Repurpose the East Sector's industrial relics and showcase the area's ongoing industrial activity.
- Extend the neighborhood fabric to the Bayou and create a public waterfront edge open to all.
- Leverage Buffalo Bayou Partnership-owned and publicly-held properties for future open space development.
- Create a diverse network of parks and destinations with wide appeal.
- As early as possible, develop trails, greenways, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhood streets to connect the Bayou to the city's bike and pedestrian networks.
- Develop an economically integrated, Bayou-facing neighborhood.
- Create a safe and resilient waterfront to support an ecologically rich habitat connected to the wider open space system.

The Master Plan is organized into four key nodes: **Downtown Gateway**, **Central Hub**, **Industrial District**, and **Eastern Terminus**.

New multi-modal connections in the form of on- and off-street trails link to public transit. New streets in key locations, developed over time, create an enhanced network between neighborhoods separated from each other and the Bayou. Small-scaled parks and open spaces tie the larger destinations together to create a cohesive system of green spaces and attractions that will reinvigorate Buffalo Bayou East.



DOWNTOWN GATEWAY

A Bridge Between East and West

New open spaces and connections near the northeastern corner of Downtown link the East Sector to destinations farther west such as Buffalo Bayou Park. Bayou improvements associated with major infrastructure projects allow the area to become the primary entrance from Downtown to Buffalo Bayou and the city's entire bayou trail network.

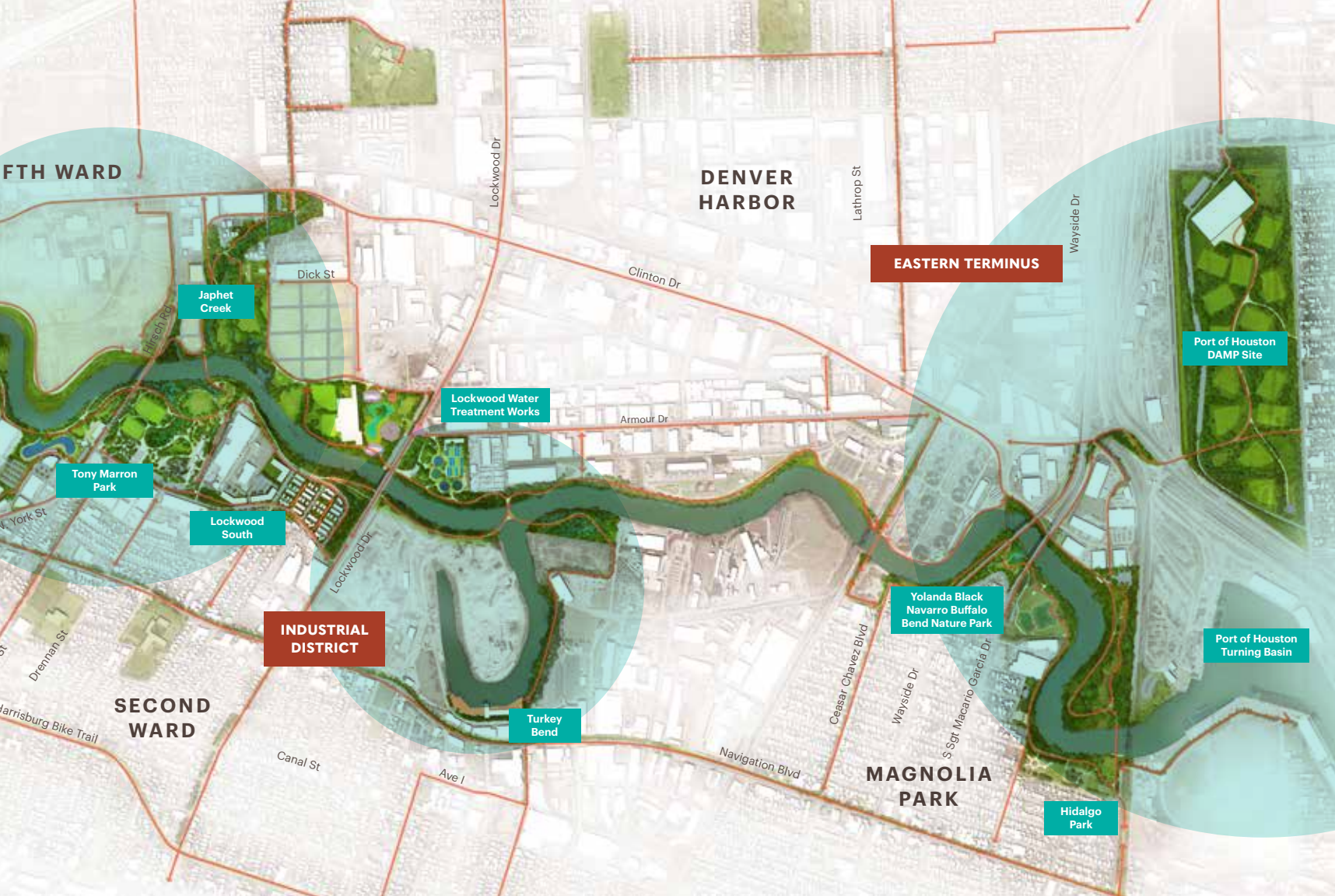


CENTRAL HUB

The Heart of Buffalo Bayou East

An expanded Tony Marron Park, enhanced with new and upgraded facilities, and Japhet Creek, with its natural splendor restored, become the engaging open space core of Buffalo Bayou East. New residential development along the Bayou brings surrounding communities closer to the water and to each other.





INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Repurposed Industrial Relics

Abandoned industrial structures, repurposed with exciting new uses, present residents with unparalleled experiences against an inspiring backdrop only Buffalo Bayou East can provide. The destinations' designs honor Houston's enduring legacy as a port city and simultaneously showcase how relics from the past can be thoughtfully adapted to give them new life.



EASTERN TERMINUS

A Gateway to the Port

New connections between existing parks and undeveloped green space create a cohesive and attractive destination for local residents and transform an underappreciated corner of Buffalo Bayou into a location where the Port of Houston can present its face to the public.



CONNECTIONS

Vital Links for Buffalo Bayou East

A carefully considered network of trails, multi-modal connections, on-street bikeways, and neighborhood-scaled open spaces creates a cohesive transportation backbone for experiencing Buffalo Bayou East. Trails and small open spaces provide continuous linkages between destinations and surrounding communities. New routes weave between active industrial sites that are currently difficult to access. Enhanced lighting, furniture, shade structures, and landscape upgrades make existing trails feel more attractive, secure, and comfortable. Linear green spaces extend the natural beauty of the Bayou deep into surrounding communities. And most importantly, new boat landings allow residents to travel from one place to another along Houston's most important and historic waterway.





10-YEAR PLAN

BUFFALO BAYOU EAST

CONNECTIONS

Vital Links for Buffalo Bayou East



Bayou Trail

Reunite Neighborhoods to the Bayou and Each Other

Communities of the Greater East End and Fifth Ward have long been separated from their Bayou, and one another. Large active and abandoned industrial sites create obstacles between the waterway and the upland neighborhoods, while street linkages and visual connections remain broken. The Bayou has been the East Sector's back door and a barrier. No longer.

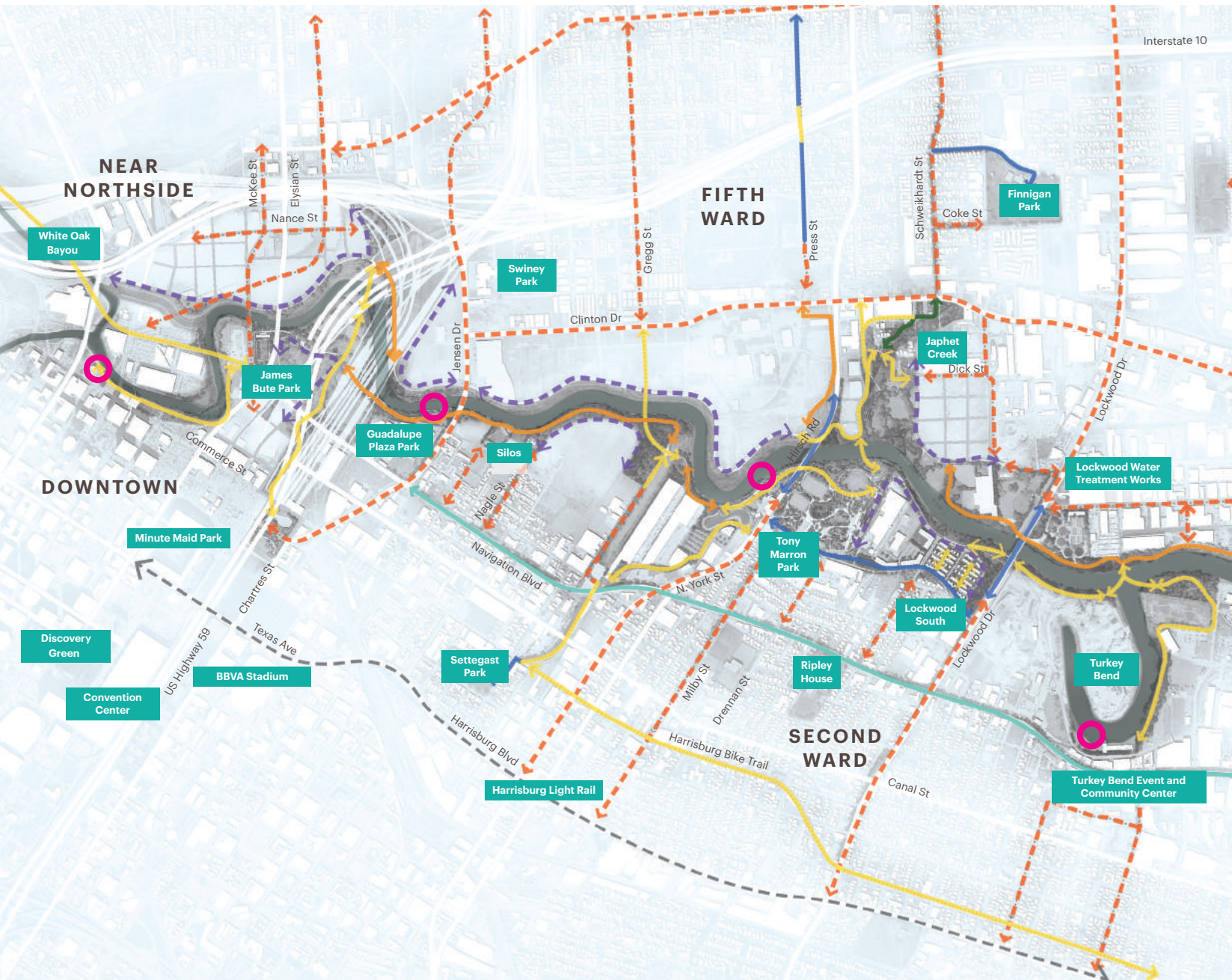
Buffalo Bayou East reunites neighborhoods and creates a common meeting ground to gather and experience a part of Houston like no other.

A comprehensive network of trails, on-street bikeways, green fingers, promenades and multi-modal connections provides vital linkages.

Historically, Buffalo Bayou has been used for transportation. Recently, BBP has made boating a central part of the waterway's revitalization. Buffalo Bayou East offers more boating activities and gives people an opportunity to see Houston from a unique perspective.



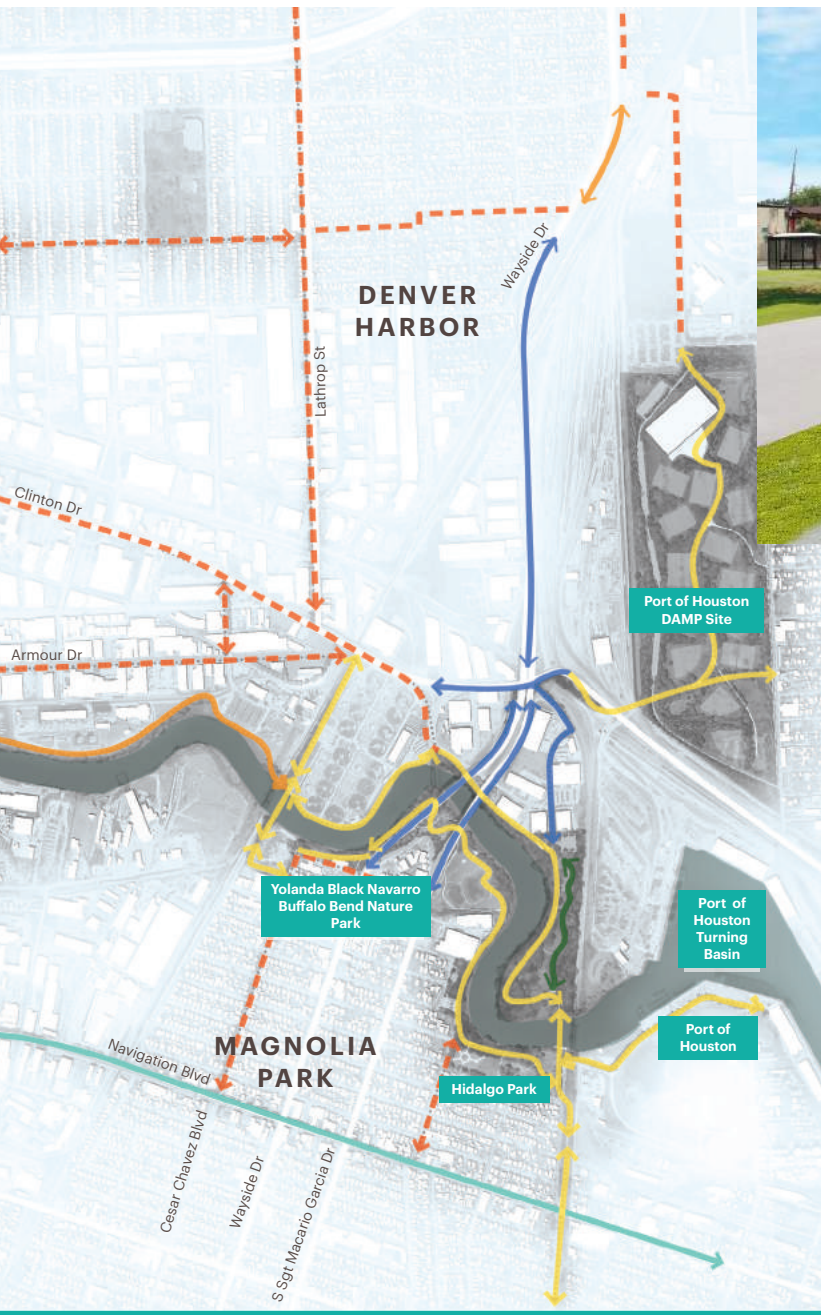
Trailhead and On-Street Bikeway



Trail Types

-  Bayou Promenade
-  On-Street Multi-Use Trail
-  On-Street Separated Trail
-  Off-Street Multi-Use Trail
-  Off-Street Separated Trail
-  Nature Trail
-  Navigation Greenway
-  Boat Landings





BAYOU TRAILS

A continuous, 15-foot wide multi-use trail follows the north and south banks of the Bayou where possible. Benches with nearby trash cans at regular intervals along the trail provide places to rest. Lighting for safety as well as wayfinding and interpretive signage mark key points.

LINKS TO DOWNTOWN

As part of the 10-Year Plan, BBP will build new trail links as well as upgrade and reconstruct existing segments to extend the system from just east of US 59 to Lockwood Drive on the south bank and from just east of US 59 on the north bank to Jensen Drive where the trail will connect to trails being developed as part of the East River project and ultimately to Japhet Creek.

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES

Two new pedestrian bridges will link the Fifth Ward to the trail system: one unifying Tony Marron Park and Japhet Creek, and a second connecting trails and Gregg Street on the north bank to the trails and Velasco Street on the south.



WATER CONNECTIONS

New landings and expanded canoe/kayak concessions provide community residents stronger connections to the water.



[Links to Downtown](#)

MARRON PARK WAY

A new street connecting North York Street to Lockwood Drive will provide park frontage and access at Tony Marron Park as well as community access via pedestrian and vehicular connections at Lockwood Park. It will also address traffic issues for residents by removing large trucks from their streets.

NAVIGATION REALIGNMENT

Along Navigation Boulevard, existing lanes become an on-street greenway wide enough to be a transportation path and a linear park, with remaining lanes being ample enough to handle traffic in both directions. With active industrial sites still lining Buffalo Bayou's eastern stretches, the Navigation Greenway provides an alternative route for accessing destinations towards the Port of Houston Turning Basin.



[Navigation Realignment](#)

BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP
1019 Commerce Street, Suite 200
Houston, TX 77002
713.752.0314
buffalobayou.org



10-YEAR PLAN

BUFFALO BAYOU EAST

CENTRAL HUB

The Heart of Buffalo Bayou East



Expanded Tony Marron Park

Expand and Improve Parks

The Central Hub becomes the park and neighborhood centerpiece of Buffalo Bayou East. Existing parks on the south side banks expand to provide a wider range of recreational and cultural activities. Investments in soccer fields, a play area, and venues for events and festivals transform currently underutilized areas. In addition to creating park space, a new residential development extends the existing neighborhood south of the Bayou to the water's edge. On the north side of the Bayou, restoration of a historic natural tributary provides an important connection from the waterway to the Fifth Ward.



Expanded Tony Marron Park



Expand Tony Marron Park into one of Houston's Best Neighborhood Parks

Tony Marron Park becomes a gathering place for Greater East End and Fifth Ward residents and serves as the primary green space destination for Buffalo Bayou East.

- Upgrades include new entry gardens connecting to North York Street (1), enhanced sports fields (2), improved habitat areas (3), and new nature play areas (4).
- A central maintenance facility will house park operations for the entire Buffalo Bayou East area along with BBP's waterway cleanup operation (5).
- A picnic lawn and boat launch make the North York site a more active and beautiful area (6).
- A new barbeque plaza will be popular for small and large gatherings (7).
- Existing buildings on the City-owned Drennan Street site, refurbished as picnic pavilions for a food truck court, support community events and activities in the Fiesta Plaza (8).



- A bayou-crossing pedestrian bridge connects the park to Japhet Creek (9).



Transform Japhet Creek into a Natural Connection

Before the development of this part of the city, Japhet Creek, a Bayou tributary, stretched north, deep into the Fifth Ward. Now only visible south of Clinton Drive, a restored Japhet Creek can serve as a key connection to Buffalo Bayou.

- New pedestrian and bike trails from the Fifth Ward and Finnigan Park (10) arrive at a Bayou trailhead with parking (11).
- Nature trails lead along the creek and cross at a new pedestrian bridge (12), linking interpretive elements (13) that extend to the Bayou.





Lockwood South: A New Economically Inclusive Neighborhood

Throughout the Buffalo Bayou East Master Plan's community engagement process, neighborhood residents voiced their need for affordable housing. Responding to this need, BBP is devoting 13 acres of property to a mixed-income housing project. Located on the south bank of the bayou along Lockwood Drive, the development is slated to include multi-family apartments, townhomes, and single-family residences adjacent to over six acres of new parks and trails.

Partnering with Brinshore, a Chicago-based affordable housing developer, BBP has been awarded 9% federal tax credits and Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant financing for Phase I of the project which consists of 80 multi-family units. BBP hopes to announce future phases of the affordable housing development soon.



BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP
1019 Commerce Street, Suite 200
Houston, TX 77002
713.752.0314
buffalobayou.org



TURKEY BEND

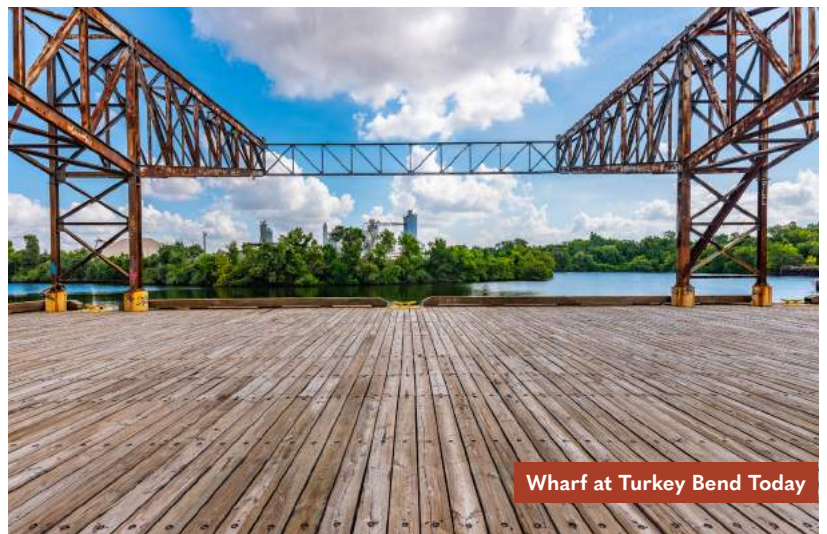
Repurposed Industrial Relics



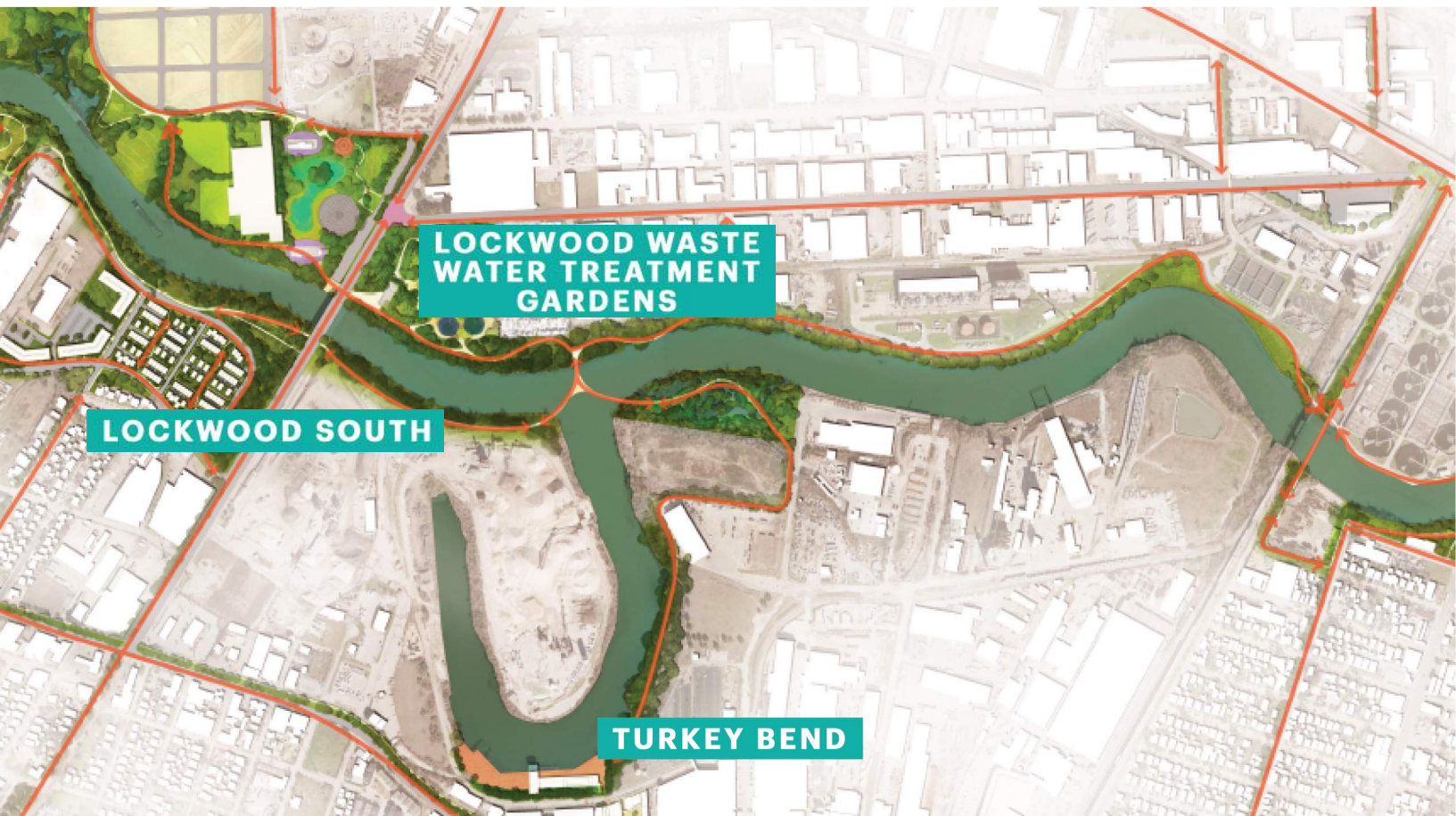
Wharf at Turkey Bend

Transform Abandoned Artifacts into Regional Attractions

While industrial activity has migrated toward the Ship Channel in recent decades, active nodes still serve as important East Sector employment hubs and link the area to Houston's history as a port city. Meanwhile, Buffalo Bayou East's intriguing industrial relics serve as a unique backdrop for creating new public spaces unlike anywhere in Houston. With the underground Cistern in Buffalo Bayou Park, Buffalo Bayou Partnership has already seen the benefits of repurposing these types of remnants. The abandoned former City water reservoir has been toured by tens of thousands and is one of the most popular sites for visitors to Houston. Gas Works Park in Seattle, Concrete Plant Park in the Bronx, and numerous sites in Germany's Ruhr Valley also demonstrate how industrial relics in Buffalo Bayou East can be renovated into popular parks and cultural attractions.



Wharf at Turkey Bend Today



A Neighborhood Arts and Event Center

A Buffalo Bayou Partnership-owned site along Navigation Boulevard at a stretch of the Bayou called Turkey Bend transforms abandoned structures into a center of activity for performances, public art and a variety of boating activities.

- A 50,000 sq. ft. warehouse on Navigation Boulevard will house the City's Hispanic History Research Center (HHRC) and Archives as well as community-based retail and a large central gathering space (1).
- Along the water, the wharf serves as event and gathering space (2) as well as a boating center and canoe/kayak launch (3). A protected oxbow off of Buffalo Bayou's main channel allows boaters to explore the water in a safe environment (4).
- Transformation of Navigation Boulevard into a linear greenway (5) improves pedestrian and bicycle connections and allows for outdoor events and activities in the plaza (6) in front of the warehouse building.



BUFFALO BAYOU EAST MASTER PLAN FUNDERS

Houston Endowment Inc.	Bank of America Charitable Foundation
The Garver Foundation	East End District
The Wortham Foundation, Inc.	The Cockrell Foundation
The Carruth Foundation, Inc.	Susan Vaughan Foundation
Fifth Ward Redevelopment Authority (TIRZ #18)	BBVA
Harrisburg Redevelopment Authority (TIRZ #23)	The Harry S. and Isabel C. Cameron Foundation
Midway	The Clayton Fund
The Winston Charitable Foundation	Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation
Anne Whitlock and Michael Skelly	Union Pacific
	Environmental Fund of Texas
	Seafarers International Union

BUFFALO BAYOU EAST MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Maria Bolanos City of Houston Department of Neighborhoods (Greater East End)	Estella Gonzalez BakerRipley
Alvin Byrd City of Houston Department of Neighborhoods (Fifth Ward)	Erica Hubbard Progressive Fifth Ward Community Association
Veronica Chapa-Gorczyński East End District	Jessica Castillo Hulsey Second Ward Super Neighborhood
Stephan Fairfield Covenant Community Capital	Erik Iberra Greater East End Resident
Rachel Figgs Fifth Ward Resident	Roland von Kurnatowski TXRX Labs
Kathy Flanagan-Payton Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation	Ernestine Lloyd Fifth Ward Civic Club
Sandra Flowers Fifth Ward Resident	Robert Meaney East Bayou Civic Club
Bolivar M. Fraga BakerRipley	Chad Shaw Rice Crew Team
Thomas and Daniel Garcia-Prats Finca Tres Robles Urban Farm	Judith Villareal East End Bike Group
	Anne Whitlock Greater East End Resident

BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP EAST SECTOR COMMITTEE

Gaynell Floyd Drexler Co-chair	Roberto Contreras
Bolivar M. Fraga Co-chair	Collin J. Cox
Anne Whitlock Co-chair	Carolyn W. Dorros
Ralph Abendshein	Erik Eriksson
Nory Angel	Guy Hagstette
Bonner S. Ball	Sis Johnson
Jonathan H. Brinsden	Christina Morales
Rev. Harvey Clemons, Jr.	David Ott, Jr.
	Geraldina Wise
	Gloria Zenteno

2019 BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeff Taylor Chair
Ralph Abendshein Vice Chair
Shawn W. Cloonan Treasurer
Kellie R. Jenks Secretary
Murad Ajani
Bonner S. Ball
C. Ronald Blankenship
Jonathan H. Brinsden
Rev. Harvey Clemons, Jr.
Roberto Contreras
Richard Dawson
Carolyn W. Dorros
Gaynell Floyd Drexler
Michael D. Fertitta
Cristina Garcia Gamboa
Stacey Gillman
Guy Hagstette
Samir Khushalani
Lisa Marshall
Erin Mincberg
Ginni Mithoff
Sara-Ashley Moreno
Judy Nyquist
David Ott, Jr.
Alison Porter
Winifred Riser
Shannon B. Sasser
Carson Trapnell Seeligson
Christof Spieler, PE, LEED AP
Karl S. Stern
Saul Valentin
Anne Whitlock
Geraldina Wise
Renee Wizig-Barrios
Gloria Zenteno

CHAIRS EMERITUS

Toni Beauchamp*
Chuck Carlberg
Brady F. Carruth
Collin J. Cox
Thomas O. Fish
Mike Garver
Dennis Greer
Artie Lee Hinds*
Sis Johnson
Susan Keeton
Dr. Manuel Pacheco
Bob Phillips
F. Max Schuette*
Raymond Snokhous
Georgia Wilson

EX-OFFICIO

Mayor Sylvester Turner City of Houston
Judge Lina Hidalgo Harris County
Brenda Bazan Houston First
Margaret Wallace Brown City of Houston Planning and Development Department
Commissioner Rodney Ellis Harris County Precinct One
Erik Eriksson Port Houston
Robert M. Eury Central Houston, Inc.
Commissioner Adrian Garcia Harris County Precinct Two
Dr. Juan Sanchez Munoz University of Houston Downtown
F. Xavier Peña Downtown Redevelopment Authority
Russell A. Poppe Harris County Flood Control District
Commissioner Steve Radack Harris County Precinct Three
Nancy Sauer Magnolia Cemetery Corporation

Steve Wright Houston Parks & Recreation Department
--

* deceased

BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP STAFF

Anne Olson President
Ian Rosenberg Project Manager, Real Estate
Jose Solis Project Manager, Planning



BUFFALO BAYOU
PARTNERSHIP

1019 Commerce Street
Suite 200
Houston, TX 77002
713.752.0314
buffalobayou.org

CORE Design Studio
Design