



Agenda

Monday, July 9, 2018

1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

H-GAC, Conference Room A

Welcome & Introductions

Glenn Laird, Roundtable Chair

Presentations

Gaining Momentum and Promoting Parks

Marlon Connley, Trust for Public Lands

Quick Win Projects and How to Work with a Consultant

Tim May, Halff Associates Inc.

PNA Awards Proposed New Timeline, Awards Application Review and Selection of Judges

Andrea Tantillo, Houston-Galveston Area Council

Glenn Laird, Roundtable Chair

Update on H-GAC PNA Projects

Amy Combs, Houston-Galveston Area Council

Round Robin Discussion

The Round Robin discussion is the time for subcommittee members and meeting participants to discuss their current projects, upcoming events, and other issues related to Parks and Natural Areas. Future meeting topics and site visits will be discussed as well.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Monday, September 10, 2018. Program and RSVP information will be sent out in August. If you have any program suggestions, please forward them to Andrea Tantillo. We will also discuss details of the PNA Awards Recognition event and other updates from members and H-GAC staff.

Adjourn

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, H-GAC provides for reasonable accommodation for persons attending H-GAC functions. Requests should be received by H-GAC 24 hours prior to the function.

2018 Parks and Natural Areas Awards Program

We seek projects that expand parks and natural areas for improved quality of life, habitat, and water quality. Winning projects, which exhibit efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation, serve as models to be replicated throughout the region.

DEADLINE Applications must be received by Friday, September 28, 2018, by 5 p.m.

Any public, private, or non-profit organization may apply. There is no entry fee. Submittals in any category must be for activities completed between September 1, 2015, and August 29, 2018. By submitting a project, the entrant agrees contest materials may be used in presentations and publications relating to the Parks and Natural Areas Program at H-GAC. Selected projects may be featured on the H-GAC website.

1. Title of Project
2. Project Owner
3. Category
4. Nominated by
5. Who should we notify if the project is selected for an award?
6. List of project partners
7. Provide the location of the project. (You may include a GIS shapefile, latitude/longitude, physical address, a map showing park location and major cross streets.)
8. You may attach a GIS shape file (you may attach more than one file) No more than 20MB
9. Briefly describe the key elements of the plan, project, or policy (up to 100 words)
10. Please attach at least one high-resolution photograph, suitable for print. You may include more than one. Files must be no larger than 20MB each
11. What are the project objectives? (up to 250 words)
12. How did the project meet these objectives? (up to 250 words)
13. Describe cost-benefit and funding solutions for the project. (up to 250 words)
14. Describe how the project preserves/will preserve, restores/will restore and/or improves/will improve the quality of life for the area and users. (up to 300 words)
15. Describe how the project created/will create, preserved/ will preserve, restored/ will restore and/or expanded/will expand natural areas and ecosystems. (up to 300 words)
16. Describe how the project preserves/will preserve, restores/will restore and/or improves/will improve quality of nearby water bodies. (up to 300 words)
17. Describe how the project created/will create, expanded/will expand and/or improved/will improve park areas. (up to 300 words)
18. Describe how the project can be a model for similar initiatives in the region? (up to 300 words)
19. Does the project include the reclamation, reuse or repurposing of land? If so, please explain. (up to 250 words)
20. Does the project include land acquisition, particularly in underserved areas or in areas with future needs? If so, please explain. (up to 250 words)

21. Describe how the project involves/will involve a collaborative effort between public, political jurisdictions and/or private businesses. (up to 250 words)
22. Does the project address specific public health benefits? If so, please explain. (up to 250 words)
23. Describe public involvement and/or input related to the project. (up to 250 words)
24. Describe how the project meets the needs of the community. (up to 250 words)
25. Supplemental information —photographs, graphics, websites, news articles, or related documents—may be included as a single PDF or Microsoft Word attachment no longer than 10 pages and no larger than 20MB.
26. If your project is selected for recognition, we will provide a press release to local media. Please provide a contact person (name, title, phone number and e-mail address) that we can provide to the media upon request.
27. If you have a list of local media you would like to receive the release, you may provide it here.

By submitting an application, the applicant agrees all application materials, including images, may be used in presentations and publications developed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council without further acknowledgment. Selected projects may be featured on the H-GAC website.

| Question | Choice/Answer | Weight | Answer Type |
|--|---|--------|--|
| Title of Project* | | | Text Field |
| Project Owner* | | | Text Field |
| Category* | Planning Policy Tools On-the-Ground Project Over \$500K On-the-Ground Project Under \$500K | | Radio Buttons (single choice) |
| Nominated by* | Name* Title Address Phone Number* E-Mail Address* | | Text field Text field Text box Text field Text field |
| Who should we notify if the project is selected for an award? | Name* Title Address Phone Number* E-Mail Address* | | Text field Text field Text box Text field Text field |
| List of project partners | | | Text box |
| Provide the location of the project. (You may include a GIS shapefile, latitude/longitude, physical address, a map showing park location and major cross streets.) | | | Text box |
| You may attach a GIS shape file (you may attach more than one file) No more than 20MB | Select File Button | | Attach a file |
| Briefly describe the key elements of the plan, project, or policy (up to 100 words) | | | Text box |
| Please attach at least one high-resolution photograph, suitable for print. You may include more than one. Files must be no larger than 20MB each | Select File Button | | Attach a file(s) |
| What are the project objectives? (up to 250 words) | | 3 | Text box |
| How did the project meet these objectives? (up to 250 words) | | 6 | Text box |
| Describe cost-benefit and funding solutions for the project. (up to 250 words) | | 3 | Text box |

| Question | Choice/Answer | Weight | Answer Type |
|--|---------------|--------|-------------|
| Describe how the project preserves/will preserve, restores/will restore and/or improves/will improve the quality of life for the area and users. (up to 300 words) | | 15 | Text box |
| Describe how the project created/will create, preserved/ will preserve, restored/ will restore and/or expanded/will expand natural areas and ecosystems. (up to 300 words) | | 15 | Text box |
| Describe how the project preserves/will preserve, restores/will restore and/or improves/will improve quality of nearby water bodies. (up to 300 words) | | 15 | Text box |
| Describe how the project created/will create, expanded/will expand and/or improved/will improve park areas. (up to 300 words) | | 15 | Text box |
| Describe how the project can be a model for similar initiatives in the region? (up to 300 words) | | 10 | Text box |
| Does the project include the reclamation, reuse or repurposing of land? If so, please explain. (up to 250 words) | | 3 | Text box |
| Does the project include land acquisition, particularly in underserved areas or in areas with future needs? If so, please explain. (up to 250 words) | | 3 | Text box |
| Describe how the project involves/will involve a collaborative effort between public, political jurisdictions and/or private businesses. (up to 250 words) | | 3 | Text box |
| Does the project address specific public health benefits? If so, please explain. (up to 250 words) | | 3 | Text box |

| Question | Choice/Answer | Weight | Answer Type |
|--|---|--------|--|
| Describe public involvement and/or input related to the project. (up to 250 words) | | 3 | Text box |
| Describe how the project meets the needs of the community. (up to 250 words) | | 3 | Text box |
| Supplemental information — photographs, graphics, websites, news articles, or related documents—may be included as a single PDF or Microsoft Word attachment no longer than 10 pages and no larger than 20MB. | Select File Button | | Attach a file |
| If your project is selected for recognition, we will provide a press release to local media. Please provide a contact person (name, title, phone number and e-mail address) that we can provide to the media upon request. | Name* Title Address Phone Number* E-Mail Address* | | Text field Text field Text box Text field Text field |
| If you have a list of local media you would like to receive the release, you may provide it here. | | | Text box |

Draft Survey Questions for Park Directors in the Region

Your Name:*

Your Title:*

County/ City:*

Current Email:*

Current Phone Number:

1. **Does your jurisdiction have a Parks Director? If not, does your jurisdiction have a staff member in charge of maintaining parks within the city?**
 - Yes, a Parks Director, his/ her name is... Blank Box to fill in name
 - Yes, a staff member, his/ her name is... Blank Box to fill in name
 - No

2. **How many parks does your government currently maintain? ***
 - *Blank Box to fill in answer*

3. **What types of programing/activities do these parks currently offer? (Check all that apply)***
 - Sports leagues
 - Swimming
 - Picnic Areas
 - Running/ Hiking trails
 - Playgrounds
 - Community Gardens
 - Free Exercise Classes
 - Fairs/ Large Scale Community Events
 - Other. *Blank box to fill in answer*
 - Tennis courts
 - Basketball courts
 - Football/ Soccer/ Baseball Fields

4. **Does your community have a current Park Master Plan or city ordinances concerning parks?**
 - Neither
 - Yes, Park Master Plan
 - Yes, City Ordinances
 - Yes, Both
 - Unsure

*Required question

Draft Survey Questions for Park Directors in the Region

5. **Does your jurisdiction currently partner with any businesses, schools, or nonprofits to provide different programming throughout the year?***
- Yes. They are... Blank box to fill in answer
 - No
6. **What are your current top 3 funding priorities concerning parks?***
- Maintaining current parks
 - Improving existing parks
 - Designing and building new parks
 - Conserving land for open space
 - Do not have a current budget dedicated to parks
 - Maintaining or increasing programming for current parks
 - Other. *Allow for blank box to fill in answer*
7. **Is there local interest in developing more or improving current parks in your jurisdiction?***
- Yes
 - No
8. **What are the top three barriers to developing and/ or maintaining parks in your jurisdiction?***
- *Blank box to fill in answer*
9. **In your opinion, what is the level of expertise in your city/ county for successfully planning, designing and maintaining current and new parks throughout the city/ county?***
- **High-** Have a current staff in charge of planning/ designing new parks maintenance and programming parks, Have a budget for not only maintaining parks, but for significantly improving existing and building new parks
 - **Moderate-** Have budget and staff to maintain current parks and programming, do not have a budget or staff to create new parks or significantly improve existing parks
 - **Low-** Do not have a current budget for improving parks, do not have the staff to plan, design, or program new or existing parks, staff only do basic maintenance such as mowing or cleaning restrooms
10. **What practices have worked well for your jurisdiction in developing, maintaining, or programming parks?***
- *Blank box to fill in answer*

Any additional comments?

- *Blank box to fill in answer*

Native Plants and Parks in the Texas Gulf Coast

Planting native plants in a public or park space is a small, relatively inexpensive way to add value to these spaces while lowering costs over time.

Common Questions

What is a native plant?

While there is no one official definition for native plants, native plants are typically defined as living organisms including trees, shrubs, grasses, and flowers that developed over hundreds or thousands of years in a particular area.

This broad definition of native plants provides the opportunity for a variety of species of plants to be considered native

Why should a jurisdiction take time to consider natives?

Jurisdictions can choose from the variety of natives to create a pleasing and unique look, while encouraging visitors, lowering costs, and keeping water where it belongs.

Native plants especially edible trees or wildflowers can be a part of park programming and encourage more visitors at the park or in the community generally. Native plants are a small part of low impact development strategies that help absorb more rain-water compared to traditional turf

How can natives lower a jurisdiction's costs over time?

Through reduced purchase, installation and maintenance costs native plants have the potential to save jurisdictions money over time

Purchasing, installing and maintaining natives is less expensive than traditional plants. For instance, established native plants can be watered less than once a week and are often drought tolerant, leading to jurisdictions using less water, needing to replace dead plants, and mowing less often. Additionally, planting and maintaining native plants have become more of a volunteer and community event that may lead to less tasks for the maintenance crew.



Sea Oats



Wine Cups



Possumhaw Holly



Blue Curls

Myth Busters

Myth: Native plants are more expensive to purchase, and upkeep compared to traditional plants

FACT: Native plants are often less expensive to purchase, and upkeep compared to traditional plants

Traditional turf grass seeds may cost in the range of \$4,000 to \$8,000 per acre. This contrasts with \$2,000 to \$4,000 per acre for seeding native prairie grasses and forbs

Myth: All native plants look like weeds

FACT: Native plants come in a variety of sizes, colors, and textures that create a unique landscape and respond to the local environment

Within the region there are over 500 species of native plants. These varieties often bloom longer, have a variety of shades throughout the season, and mimic traditional landscapes such as traditional turf

Myth: Native plants attract unwanted creatures

FACT: Native plants attract beneficial wildlife (pollinators) that may help reduce pests

Natives are often deer and drought tolerant that attract local butterflies, birds, and dragon flies that help keep such pests as misquotes at bay

Myth: Native plants are an added responsibility for the maintenance crew.

FACT: Native plants allow for less maintenance over time compared to traditional plants

The combined costs of installation and maintenance for natural landscape over a ten-year period may be one fifth of the costs for conventional landscape maintenance

Ways to Incorporate Native Plants in Parks

Rain and Butterfly Gardens

These gardens provide a unique focal point for a park or public space, while helping encourage visitors and lowering costs and lessening rainwater runoff.

Rain gardens are a mix of native shrubs, grasses, trees and flowers which are designed to retain and soak in rainwater allowing for less runoff and increased water filtering. Butterfly gardens are a particular mix of natives such as Turks cap, passion vines, and the purple coneflower; the right mix of natives provides a complete habitat for butterflies. These gardens may be a good choice for an open area in a local downtown or a suburban park

Replacement for Traditional Turf Grass

There are several varieties of native grass mixes that act as replacements for traditional turf.

Native grass varieties grow best with minimal mowing and watering throughout the year. When mowing, native varieties thrive when cut to about 4 inches (similar to traditional turf). An example of a native grass mix suited to the region is Habiturf.

Edible Landscapes

Edible landscapes refer to a mix of native plants that individuals could potential eat.

Native edible plants include Mexican plum, pecan and persimmon trees, and the prickly pear cactus. For example, jurisdictions in our region have planted edible landscapes to have educational events and organized walks throughout their edible landscapes.

Native Plants in Action!

Missouri City, Texas | Native Plant Projects

Edible Arbor Trail: Missouri City established this project in 2010. The city, with the help of variety of partners, planted groves of edible trees including persimmon and Mexican plum trees along a 2 mile span of a local trail.

Go Native: Additionally, the city implemented the Go Native project which replaced traditional landscape around the library and tennis center with a variety of native plants. Residents and visitors have seen an increase in birds and bees, and other wildlife since the change.

Partnerships: A variety of private and public sponsors are a part of the Edible Arbor Trail including Missouri City Green, Kroger, Boy Scouts, H-GAC, and Union Pacific.

Funding: Each partner contributes to sponsoring the grove they have adopted. For instance, TXU Energy sponsors the Mexican plum grove



Close-up of a Mexican Plum Tree

Landscapes and Soils Within the Region

The main types of landscapes throughout the region are Gulf Coast Prairie and Saline Coastal Prairie

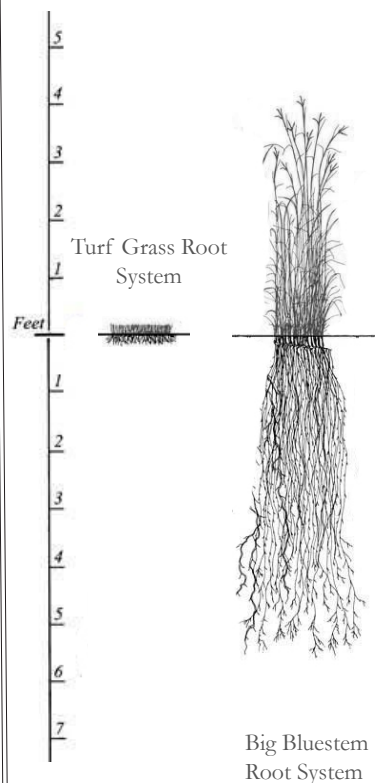
Gulf Coast Prairies and Saline Coast Prairies generally have well developed clayey, loamy, saline soils, that have a high shrink-swell potential. These types of soils influence the types of native plants that thrive in the region.

Roots!

The roots of established native plants are exponentially deeper* and more intricate than traditional plants. These deeper root systems create the opportunity for more rainwater absorption and water and soil quality improvement

*While established native plants do have deeper root systems than traditional plants, native plants often need a typical watering schedule at first in order for their roots to become established

Traditional vs. Native Root System



| Year | Category | Title | First | Last | Company |
|------|----------------------------------|-------|--------------|---------------|--|
| 2017 | Consultant | Ms. | Janis | Burall, AICP | Kendig Keast |
| 2017 | Wildcard | Ms. | Charlotte | Riser Harris | Keep Magnolia Beautiful |
| 2017 | Past Winner | Mr. | Alfred "Bud" | Gessel | Timber Lane Utility District |
| 2017 | Environmental Expert | Ms. | Lisa | Marshall | Galveston Bay Estuary Program |
| 2017 | Academic | Mr. | Dwight | Rhodes | Alvin Community College |
| 2016 | Wildcard | Mr. | Carl | Masterson | Retired |
| 2016 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Mr. | David | Parkhill | San Jacinto River Authority |
| 2016 | Past Winner | Mr. | Joe | Chesser | City of Sugar Land Parks and Recreation |
| 2016 | Consultant | Ms. | Beth | Clark | Clark Condon |
| 2016 | Academia | Dr. | Bruce | Race, PhD | University of Houston College of Architecture and Design |
| 2015 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Mr. | Steve | Hupp | Bayou Preservation Association |
| 2015 | Past Winner | Ms. | Tajana | Mesic | Green Grove Group |
| 2015 | Academia | Dr. | Hanadi | Rifai | University of Houston |
| 2015 | Consultant | Mr. | Michael | Robinson | SWA |
| 2015 | Past Winner | Ms. | Kim | Terrell | City of Jersey Village |
| 2014 | Wildcard | Ms. | Kristi | Alexander | Consultant |
| 2014 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Ms. | Danielle | Cioce | Harris County Watershed Protection Group |
| 2014 | Past Winner | Mr. | Wayne | Norton | Near Northwest District |
| 2014 | Consultant | Ms. | Cheryl | Quinn | White Oak Studio |
| 2013 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Ms. | Gabrielle | Novello | Department of State Health Services |
| 2013 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Dr. | Bakeyah | Nelson | Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services Office of Policy and Planning |
| 2013 | Consultant | Mr. | Kinder | Baumbardner | SWA-Houston |
| 2013 | Past Winner | Mr. | Jaime | Gonzalez | Katy Prairie Conservancy |
| 2013 | Past Winner | Mr. | Dustin | Schubert | Baytown Parks and Recreation Department |
| 2012 | Wildcard | Ms. | Denise | Armstrong | Prairie View Economic Development Corporation |
| 2012 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Ms. | Lisa | Johnson | City of Houston-General Services Department |
| 2012 | Consultant | Ms. | Roberta | Burroughs | Roberta F. Burroughs and Associates |
| 2012 | Past Winner | Ms. | Kim | Icenhour | Fort Bend Green |
| 2012 | Academia | Mr. | Ronnie | Self | University of Houston |
| 2011 | Past Winner | Mr. | Stephen | Barr | City of La Porte |
| 2011 | Academia | | Divya | Chandrasekhar | Texas Southern University |
| 2011 | Wildcard | Ms. | Dorris | Ellis | Friends of Emancipation Park |
| 2011 | Consultant | Ms. | Hayley | Pallister | Asakura Robinson Company |

| | | | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|-----|--------------|-----------|--|
| 2011 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Ms. | Charris | York | Texas Coastal Watershed Program |
| 2010 | Past Winner | Mr. | Bob | Rehak | Kingwood Service Association |
| 2010 | Consultant | Mr. | Jim | Patterson | White Oak Studio |
| 2010 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Mr. | Johnny | Cronin | Houston Wilderness |
| 2010 | Past Winner | Ms. | Kimberly | Terrell | City of Sugar Land Parks and Recreation |
| 2010 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Ms. | Marissa | Sipocz | Texas Coastal Watershed Program |
| 2009 | Consultant | Ms. | Merrie | Talley | Talley Landscape Architects, Inc. |
| 2009 | Past Winner | Mr. | Nathan | Deitrich | City of Shenandoah |
| 2009 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Mr. | John | Jacob | Texas Coastal Watershed Program |
| 2009 | Past Winner | Mr. | Alfred "Bud" | Gessel | Timber Lane Utility District |
| 2009 | Wildcard | Ms. | Kathryn | Nichols | National Park Service |
| 2008 | | Ms. | Vaness | Hamilton | |
| 2008 | | Mr. | Rafael | Longoria | |
| 2008 | Environment/Water Quality Expert | Mr. | Michael | Murr | Harris County Municipal Utility District |
| 2008 | | Mr. | Justin | Rhodes | |
| 2007 | | Mr. | Judson | Robinson | |
| 2007 | | Mr. | Kevin | Shanely | |
| 2007 | | Ms. | Margaret | Robinson | |
| 2007 | | Mr. | Rafael | Longoria | |
| 2007 | | Mr. | Robert | Rayburn | |