



Brett Coomer / Staff photographer

Tony Marron Park's 19 city-owned acres will be doubled and reimagined in collaboration with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership as a signature central green space for East End and Second Ward residents. A \$10 million grant from the Houston Endowment is funding conceptual designs for this project and two others.

CIVIC IMPROVEMENTS

# What's coming next for Buffalo Bayou?

\$10 million grant to facilitate grand park, nature trail and event venue

**By Molly Glentzer**  
STAFF WRITER

On sunny days this time of year, the charms of Tony Marron Park are many: Plentiful green space and trees, a playground, a path along the bayou with a view toward downtown. With or without a pandemic, neighborhood havens like this are important to the health and well-being of those who live nearby, maybe within walking or biking distance.

But Tony Marron Park does not have nearly the bells and whistles of green spaces in more affluent parts of the city, such as Buffalo Bayou Park and Memorial Park's new Eastern Glades. Yet.



Michael van Valkenburgh Associates | Buffalo Bayou Partnership

**A rendering depicts a nature trail along Japhet Creek that will connect Fifth Ward residents to Buffalo Bayou, as envisioned in the Buffalo Bayou East master plan.**

Change is coming. Maybe even within two or three years. Houston Endowment announced this week that it has awarded a \$10 million grant to the Buffalo Bayou Partnership to accelerate three key projects of a master plan for the bayou's east sector that will spread the green-space wealth.

Though the master plan is only about a year old, the ideas behind it have been the stuff of dreams for at least a decade. The gift is a catalyst "to give people confidence that this is going to get done, and get done soon," says Houston Endowment president and CEO Ann Stern.

It's also a prelude to a capital campaign – likely launching next year – that will transform Tony Bayou continues on D6

## Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge offers feast for birds

**By Gary Clark**  
CORRESPONDENT

My wife, Kathy, and I ate our Thanksgiving feast on the hood of the car at Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge.

It was a glorious day on the refuge, where ducks hustled around Shoveler Pond like scampering children in the living room at Thanksgiving. Songbirds twittered in the trees at The Willows like gossiping grand-

mothers in the kitchen. Hawks and eagles soared over the marsh searching for prey like dads and granddads surveying food on the Thanksgiving table.

A hefty red-tailed hawk with powerful talons snatched an American coot from a marsh pond and landed on a grassy knoll. The hawk held the prey against the ground and sliced through the

raw flesh with its razor-sharp hooked beak – the way we might carve up a roasted turkey.

We parked by an oak motte to eat our Thanksgiving feast, mine a chicken-salad sandwich and Kathy's a bowl of couscous. Hermit thrushes scurried through the nearby understory stalking ever-abundant insects.

We continued our drive Nature continues on D2

NATURE



A young bald eagle lifts off from the marsh at the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge.

Kathy Adams Clark / Contributor

PASTIME

# Terrariums offer winter gardening indoors

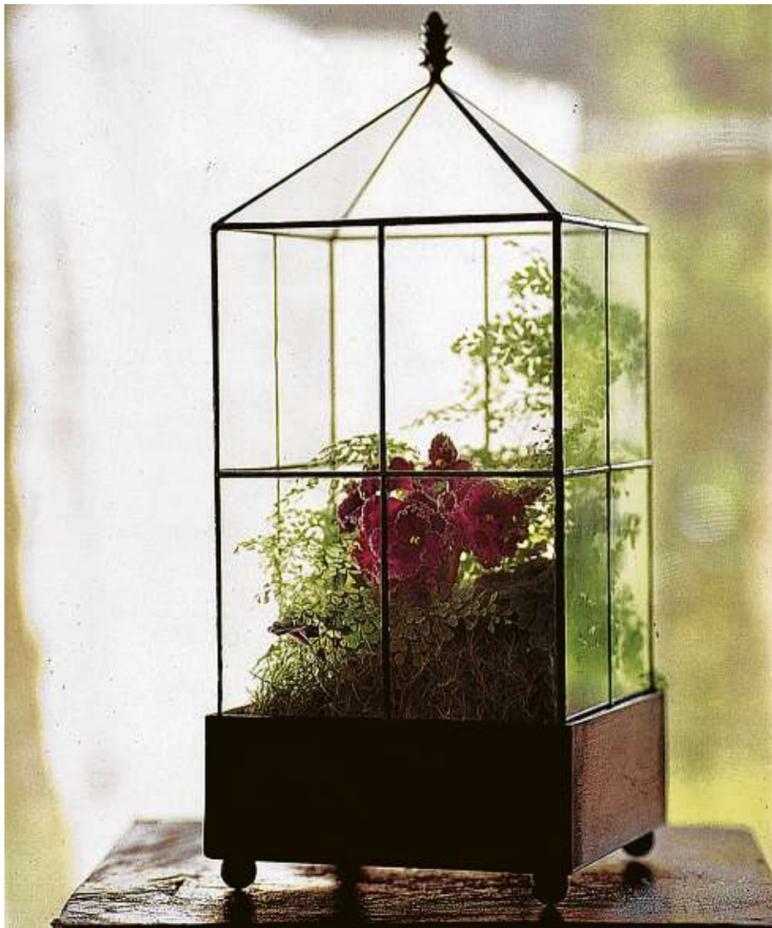
By Bob Hatton  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Many people have escaped the stresses surrounding the coronavirus by gardening, whether they are seasoned gardeners putting in more hours or newbies discovering what they can grow in our climate. But as the weather gets colder, how can they fill the void?

It's time for gardening inside. Planting a Wardian case or terrarium is a great way to move indoors. These two containers are really the same thing; Wardian cases were developed first, but the term terrarium is more commonly used today. It makes no difference what you call them, but I draw a distinction between the two according to size. Wardian cases are larger and can be completely closed. Terrariums are generally smaller and can be open or have a lid.

The Wardian case was developed by Dr. Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward (1791-1868) in London. He was a physician who enjoyed botany. As a gardener, he had a herbarium (a collection of plants and related information) of about 25,000 specimens.

In pursuit of his interests, he kept cocoons of moths in sealed glass jars. He noticed that a fern and a grass plant germinated in the jar while it was sealed. Interested in the oddity, he left the jar sealed and saw the grass produce a seed head. He had a carpenter build a large box, glazed and sealed by glass, and found



Grow your next garden in a glass house. Plant a Wardian case garden, such as this one from "Tabletop Gardens" by Rosemary McCreary.

Storey Books

that ferns grew very well in it. He published the results of this study and wrote a book in 1842, "On the Growth of Plants in Closely Glazed Cases."

For many years, plant explorers and others had tried, largely without success, to bring plants, cuttings and seeds from

foreign lands back to their countries. Most died from heat, saltwater, desiccation, mold or other calamities that can destroy plants if they are not cared for properly. The discovery that plants could be shipped safely sealed in these containers was a game changer.

It resulted in many social changes worldwide, such as breaking monopolies that some countries had for certain products that were only grown in their country. One result was that people could eat fruits all year long, once they expanded the areas



Russell Yip / Staff photographer

This Wardian case is filled with humidity-loving gynura (small fuzzy purple houseplant); sarracenia (carniverous pitcher plant); orchid "Amesiella monticola"; cryptanthus "Black Magic" (bromeliad); selaginella (low green fern-like groundcover) and Reindeer lichen.

where the fruits grow. A large social change resulted when the cinchona tree was smuggled out of South America. The bark of this tree contains quinine, an alkaloid that kills malaria parasites, and the production of quinine allowed Europeans to physically colonize tropical lands.

Wardian cases, or terrariums, allow you to create a miniature garden that will largely take care of itself. Depending upon the type of plants you want, the growing medium may be potting soil, moss, special mixes such as for succulents, or others. Depending upon the size, landscapes can be created for visual interest limited only by your imagination.



John Everett

A terrarium can be a conversation piece.

This article originally appeared in the Amarillo Globe-News.

## BAYOU

From page D1

Marron Park, Japhet Creek and a wharf at Turkey Bend into signature destinations. Three design teams are already on the job, creating more specific blueprints, so other potential donors can see more precisely what their millions will support.

"You need planning money on the front end, and sometimes those dollars are the hardest to get," Stern says. "We think we will see a lot of the other funding come rather quickly."

Chosen by a selection committee of partnership board members and stakeholders, most of the signature project designers already have an impressive track record of work at other Houston parks.

Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates is collaborating with Houston's Natalye Appel Architects on the redesign of the city-owned Tony Marron Park, aiming to create a more vibrant central green space and recreational anchor for the East End and Second Ward. With adjacent land acquired by the partnership, the park will grow from 19 to about 40 acres.



Brett Coomer / Staff photographer

An old industrial area in Turkey Bend is planned as one of the park destinations within the East Sector Master Plan.

Asakura Robinson is designing a nature trail along Japhet Creek, a nearly disappeared tributary just across the bayou from Tony Marron Park. That project will connect Fifth Ward residents to the waterfront. Reed Hilderbrand and Boston's NADAA (intentionally selected as a new player) are designing a concert and event venue at Turkey Bend that will re-purpose docks and a warehouse.

Buffalo Bayou Partnership president and CEO Anne Olson expects to see completed designs from each team by next summer.

The big gift also provides monies to stabilize bayou banks and repair existing trail links, acquire more land, begin phase 1 site improvements at Japhet Creek and add a community-engagement manager to the partnership's staff.



Michael van Valkenburgh Associates | Buffalo Bayou Partnership

A rendering shows how the Turkey Bend event area is envisioned. Reed Hilderbrand and NADAA are now designing actual plans so future potential bayou can see more precisely what their millions would support.

Those things are just as important as designing destinations, Olson says. "The great thing is that this part of the bayou doesn't flood, but the banks are

really steep, and there was a lot of erosion during Hurricane Harvey. And the price of land has escalated so much since we began. Once we identify a target, it

is usually a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity." The full east-sector master plan proposes 40 miles of new and improved waterfront trails and bike-

ways; 200 acres of parks and unique public spaces; seven new boat landings and seven new pedestrian bridges. Realizing all of it will likely be a 20-year,

\$300 million undertaking, Olson says. Counting the new grant, the partnership has raised \$17 million to date.

Houston Endowment has been a longtime supporter of parks in general, investing \$90 million across the city in the past 20 years. This gift was unusually large, however, and brings its years of support for the Buffalo Bayou Partnership to \$21 million total.

"We've been waiting for this," Stern says. "Even nine years ago we were talking about the East End, and celebrating part of the bayou that reflects Houston's history and diversity. These neighborhoods are important to us, and they are such a park desert where we can capitalize on the beauty of nature. We want to see this done."

molly.glentzer@chron.com