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Media Contacts

Marta Fredricks, marta@dpwpr.com

Caroline Dawson, caroline@dpwpr.com

EASTBOUND MEMORIAL DRIVE TUNNELS NOW OPEN TO ONE-WAY VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

Eastbound traffic directed to new alignment of Memorial Drive; Westbound tunnels to open in April

Houston, TX – Today, Memorial Park Conservancy along with project partners the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Kinder Foundation, and Uptown Houston celebrated the opening of the eastbound Land Bridge tunnels to one-way vehicular traffic.

Eastbound vehicular traffic now traverses a new alignment of Memorial Drive via tunnels through the Land Bridge – one tunnel below each of the hills. The westbound traffic tunnels will open at a later date, with all tunnels to be open for traffic in May.

Each tunnel is 25-feet tall by 54-feet wide and is well-lit by both natural and overhead lighting. The tunnels are for one-way, continuous car traffic only (no stopping allowed). Pedestrian refuge areas are provided within the tunnels for safety purposes only—they are not sidewalks and pedestrians are not permitted to walk through the tunnels.

The opening of the tunnels marks a major milestone in Memorial Park’s Land Bridge and Prairie project, slated for completion in late 2022. Comprised of two separate 35-foot-tall hills, the Land Bridge will serve as a major connector for Memorial Park users and wildlife between the north and south sides of the Park, offering new gathering spaces with scenic views of Houston and the project’s expansive prairie system.

Together, the Land Bridge and Prairie comprise green infrastructure that will introduce a new 100-acre area for Houstonians to explore and enjoy, provide a safe crossing for Park users, reconnect wildlife corridors and help manage stormwater for the benefit of the city.

Memorial Drive Tunnel Safety Information

- The Tunnels are for car traffic only.
- The Tunnels will be well-lit by both natural and overhead lighting.
- Tunnels are one-way traffic only.
- The speed limit will remain 35mph through the tunnels, as they are still part of the larger project construction zone.
- No stopping is allowed in the Tunnels.
- The eastbound tunnels opened to one-way traffic on March 28, and the westbound tunnels open in May.
- During ongoing construction, traffic will continue to be limited to two lanes through the tunnels to maintain safety and access.

Memorial Drive Tunnel FAQs

- **Can people walk through the Tunnels?**
No. The Memorial Drive Tunnels are for cars only. There will be a multi-modal commuter trail implemented to the south of the Tunnels for all other traffic.

- **Are the Tunnels dark? Do the Tunnels have lighting?**
The Tunnels will be well lit. They are lit by both natural light during the day, as well as an overhead lighting strip that runs the length of each tunnel. These lights remain on 24 hours a day and respond to natural light conditions to maintain an optimal field of vision.
- **Can you stop in the Tunnels?**
No. No stopping or parking is allowed in the Tunnels as they are for continuous traffic flow only. Designated pull-over locations are at the Picnic Lane intersection to the west and the Picnic Loop entrance to the east, at either end of the tunnels.
- **Are the Tunnels for two-way traffic?**
No. Just as existing Memorial Drive separates east and west bound traffic lanes with a median, there are separate tunnels for eastbound and westbound traffic.
- **How tall are the Tunnels?**
Each tunnel is 25-feet tall by 54-feet wide.
- **Why is there a break between the Tunnels?**
The break in the Tunnels allows for light filtration to the culvert beneath the road, which assists wildlife crossing. This break also allows for more air flow through the Tunnels, which is also aided by the Tunnels' height.

To stay up to date on the latest Park news, visit Memorial Park Conservancy's [website](#), sign up for the [e-newsletter](#) or follow along on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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ABOUT MEMORIAL PARK CONSERVANCY

Memorial Park Conservancy is a non-profit organization created to restore, preserve, and enhance Memorial Park for the enjoyment of all Houstonians, today and tomorrow. Founded in 2000, the Conservancy's vision is to implement the principles of world-class park management and stewardship in partnership with the Houston community. Board Chair Carrie Pepi leads a volunteer Board of Directors, and a highly qualified staff works under the leadership of President and CEO Shellye Arnold. Memorial Park Conservancy is responsible for managing 1,100 of the Park's 1,500 acres.

ABOUT THE MEMORIAL PARK MASTER PLAN

The **Memorial Park Master Plan** is a visionary plan for the future of Houston's largest urban wilderness and recreation park. The Master Plan focuses on restoring the Park's ecological systems and creating greater resiliency; reconnecting the Park's land, waterways, trails, and people; consolidating compatible uses together in appropriate areas; tending to the land and the Park's cultural history, maintaining balance through responsible management; and enhancing the overall Park experience and amenities. It includes capital improvements, long-term conservation, and an operations and maintenance plan for the Park. It was unanimously approved by Houston City Council in 2015.

The **Ten-Year Plan** enables Memorial Park Conservancy to accelerate design and construction of significant components of the Memorial Park Master Plan and was made possible by a \$70M catalyst gift from the Kinder Foundation, which leveraged public funding through the Uptown Development Authority, and by the generosity of other donors. Execution of the Ten-Year Plan is overseen by the Memorial Park Standards Committee, a partnership comprised of Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Memorial Park Conservancy, the Kinder Foundation, and Uptown Development Authority.