



Media Contact: Carol Brejot
carol@carolbrejotpr.com or 713.503.3885

For Immediate Release

Trees For Houston announces plans for new, permanent campus, expanding capacity to serve constituents

Kinder Foundation provides \$3 million gift for project's capital campaign

HOUSTON, April 22, 2021 – Trees For Houston announces plans for a new, permanent campus on 1.5 acres in Houston's Garden Oaks area featuring an onsite tree nursery, office space and an education center. The move greatly expands the nonprofit's capacity to distribute more trees to constituents and to provide educational programming for both children and adults.

The Kinder Foundation, founded by Nancy and Rich Kinder, has provided the lead gift of \$3 million as part of Trees For Houston's *Taking Root* capital campaign, chaired by Sheila Condon and Larry Nettles. The new campus, located at 2001 W. 34th St., will break ground this winter and is named the Kinder Campus. Designed by Kirksey Architecture and Lauren Griffith Associates, the campus will have several notable "green" features including a cistern to catch rainwater for irrigation and permeable surface area replacing concrete.

The *Taking Root* capital campaign for Trees For Houston's facility now enters the public phase, after receiving the Kinder Foundation grant and three other major gifts, including \$1 million from Kyle and John Kirksey, Sr.; \$750,000 from Chevron; and \$500,000 from the Ruth and Ted Bauer Family Foundation and the C.T. Bauer Foundation.

The office building will bear the names of Kyle and John Kirksey, Sr., while the indoor/outdoor education center will be called the Bauer Education Center. The tree nursery will be named after Chevron, a longstanding supporter of Trees for Houston. Total project investment, including land and buildings, is estimated at \$8.8 million, with \$6.5 million already raised.

"Trees For Houston is indebted to our major donors in generously supporting our effort to positively impact Houston's green infrastructure," says Barry Ward, Executive Director of Trees For Houston. "The tree nursery on the Kinder Campus will be a game changer in increasing our growing capacity to meet the needs of those we serve, including local municipalities, parks, schools, nonprofits, community partners and individuals."

"The establishment of a new community campus will be transformational for Trees for Houston as it continues to increase tree distribution across the greater Houston area for years to come," says Nancy Kinder, President and CEO of the Kinder Foundation. "The Kinder Foundation is proud to support Trees for Houston as they continue their commitment to greening the region through the planting, protecting, and promoting of trees."

The move allows Trees For Houston to consolidate operations into two main tree farms, boosting annual tree distribution by 20 percent in one year. The Chevron tree nursery at the Kinder Campus, located near Loop 610 North, will provide efficient, convenient access to free and low-cost tree distribution for constituents and community partners during the week and on weekends, instead of past limited pick-up times and minimal access to private tree farms.

In the past year, Trees for Houston distributed and planted nearly 20,000 trees, with the goal of increasing to 100,000 trees within the next five years. The new facility is essential to achieving this goal. Notable plantings in 2020 include 5,524 trees with community partners, such as City of Houston, Memorial Park Conservancy, Spark Park, Houston Arboretum, and the Houston Zoo, in addition to 3,473 trees at 22 volunteer plantings in parks, schools, along streets, esplanades, bayous and trails and in tribute groves.

“As part of the founding group of Trees For Houston in 1983, it has been wonderful to watch the growth of the organization into the nation’s largest private sector urban tree planting organization,” says John Kirksey, Sr. “With our entire family now involved with the organization, we are so happy that we can support this important next step for Trees For Houston. We are proud to see the Kirksey name associated with the new campus.”

“Since 1997, Chevron has proudly partnered with Trees for Houston to enhance greenspaces and beautify neighborhoods in our community. We are excited to be part of the newly developed, centralized tree nursery that will continue to improve the quality of life for Houstonians,” says Margaret Cooper, General Manager, Chevron Corporate Affairs.

In addition to accommodating more trees, the Kinder Campus will provide Trees For Houston with the facilities it needs to better engage on-site volunteers and provide enriching educational opportunities for local school districts and community members through the Bauer Education Center. Volunteers are critical to the success of Trees For Houston, with 1000 volunteers contributing more than 2500 hours in tree plantings throughout the region.

“The Ruth and Ted Bauer Family Foundation and the CT Bauer Foundation are proud to be part of this transformational project for Trees For Houston and our great city,” says Doug Bauer. “The Bauer Education Center will be an indoor and outdoor learning space to educate and engage children and adults on the science and community impact of the urban forest and foster appreciation of our natural resources. I am thrilled to help make environmental education accessible to Houstonians of all ages.”

Trees For Houston is a national model for innovative and economically effective urban forestry organizations, with more than 600,000 trees planted since 1983. It is a major player in the City of Houston’s Resilient Houston strategy and Houston Climate Action Plan, which has a goal of planting 4.6 million trees over 10 years. The trees provided by Trees For Houston will help restore, protect and enhance our ability to capture and store carbon and help reduce flooding.

“The Arbor Day Foundation works hard to identify the best tree planting partners in each community, says Dan Lambe, Arbor Day Foundation President. “We work with people and communities who lead the charge in urban forestry and are committed to achieving a greener future for everyone. We're proud to be partnered with Trees For Houston for that reason.”

“Their knowledge and expertise in every aspect of tree planting, from establishing nurseries to engaging the community to come together to plant trees, is inspiring and a true asset for the Arbor Day Foundation and the people of Houston,” continues Lambe. “Trees For Houston also serves as a broader model for best practices in tree planting and disaster tree recovery due to their leading role in the replanting efforts following the damage caused by Hurricane Harvey in 2017.”

To learn more about Trees For Houston or to donate to the capital campaign, visit TreesForHouston.org.

###

Link to [visual assets here](#).

Photo credits: *Trees For Houston and Gabe Castillo; Ken Childress Photography for Phillips 66 planting photos #1648 and #1723.*

Video credit: *Gabe Castillo*

Renderings credits: *Kirksey Architecture and Lauren Griffith Associates*

About Trees For Houston

Trees For Houston is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to plant, protect and promote trees throughout the Greater Houston area. Since being founded in 1983, more than 600,000 trees have been planted throughout the southeast Texas region. For more information, visit TreesForHouston.org.

About the Kinder Foundation

The Kinder Foundation, a family foundation established in 1997 by Rich and Nancy Kinder of Houston, Texas, provides transformational grants that impact urban green space, education, and quality of life. More at www.kinderfoundation.org.