

## Discovery Green - Downtown Houston, Texas



Photo by Katya Horner

# FACT SHEET

<b>WHAT</b>	Discovery Green
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>Discovery Green, Houston's premiere urban park, opened in April 2008. See, Touch, Hear, Taste and Explore 12 acres of urban green space featuring a one-acre lake; a children's playground; interactive water features; a multi-use amphitheater stage and sloping lawn; small and large dog runs; various public art works; Houston Public Library Express office; large lawn space; and great dining from The Grove and The Lake House restaurants operated by Schiller Del Grande Restaurant Group.</p> <p>The park has active <b>FREE Spring, Fall and Winter</b> programming seasons featuring cultural art performances, films, live music, exercise, flea market, hands-on children's activities, writing workshops and more.</p> <p><b>The ICE at Discovery Green</b> returns each Winter season. The model boat basin is transformed into the largest outdoor ice skating rink in the Southwest United States.</p>
<b>LOCATION</b>	<p>Downtown Houston, 1500 McKinney</p> <p>Discovery Green is located across Avenida de las Americas from the George R. Brown Convention Center and the Hilton Americas Hotel. Toyota Center, Houston Center and Minute Maid Park are only blocks away.</p>
<b>SIZE</b>	11.78 acres
<b>GREEN OPERATIONS</b>	<p>Discovery Green is committed to sustainable design and operation. Located in the middle of an urban center with access to public transportation, Discovery Green provides storage for cyclists and is served by REV Houston, the free electronic taxi for downtown and midtown. Discovery Green obtains 100% of its power from renewable sources, including solar and other efficient technologies.</p> <p>In October 2009, Discovery Green achieved LEED Gold Certification, making it the first completed LEED Gold project for new construction in downtown Houston.</p> <p>Get to Discovery Green via the Greenlink bus service and B-Cycle program.</p>
<b>MANAGEMENT</b>	<p>Discovery Green Conservancy. The Conservancy is the first private non-profit organization in Houston to be responsible for managing all aspects of a major park's ongoing operations.</p> <p>Barry Mandel, President Susanne Theis, Programming Director Clark Curry, Operations Director Melinda Parmer, Business Manager</p>
<b>CONTACT</b>	<p><a href="http://www.discoverygreen.com">www.discoverygreen.com</a> or (713) 400-7336</p>
<b>BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>	<p>Larry Faulkner, Chair Nancy Pittman, Vice Chair, The Brown Foundation F. Xavier Peña, Secretary/Treasurer, Houston Endowment, Inc. Barry H. Caldwell, Director, Waste Management, Inc. Thomas H. Castro, Director, El Dorado Capital Anne Duncan, Director Linda Evans, Director</p>

Saundria Chase Gray, Director  
Nick Massad, Director, The Sam Houston Hotel  
John L. Nau, Director, Silver Eagle Distributors  
Polly Whittle, Director, Kinder Foundation  
Nancy Kinder, Ex-Officio, Kinder Foundation  
Robert Eury, Ex-Officio, Central Houston  
Dawn Ullrich, Ex-Officio, Houston First Corporation

Dr. Maconda B. O'Connor, The Brown Foundation, Inc. (Founding board member; deceased)

## HISTORY

Discovery Green was the vision of Mayor Bill White, the Discovery Green Conservancy and the dedication of some of Houston's most generous citizens. The first step in the process of creating Houston's new park was to investigate a wide range of parks in other great cities, seeking to identify urban green spaces that were successful in cities such as New York, Boston, Atlanta, Chicago, and San Francisco. Input was also sought from Houston's own residents, in a series of public meetings and focus groups, seeking to identify what the city's diverse population valued in an outdoor destination.

With a beautiful setting and a vibrant and exciting entertainment program growing each day, Discovery Green has become a desirable urban gathering place for Houstonians and the millions of visitors to the city of Houston.

## PROJECT COST

\$125 million

## THE NAME

The Conservancy worked with the local media and community sponsors and sought the help of the public by creating a contest to name the park. More than 6,200 entries were submitted, and "Discovery Green" was selected as it fit the personality of the park, invited discovery and education, delight and surprise.

## DESIGN

The Discovery Green design team included Hargreaves Associates, PageSoutherlandPage and Lauren Griffith Associates. Artists Margo Sawyer and Doug Hollis were integral members of the design team and produced three works of art for the park. A large team of local and international engineers and specialists supported the core design team. Learn more about the [History of Discovery Green](#).

## AWARDS

- Preservation Houston 2014 Future Landmark Award
- Business Week/Architectural Record "Good Design is Good Business"
- Austin Chapter AIA Design Award
- Houston Chapter AIA Design Award (The Grove)
- ULI-Houston Development of Distinction Award
- USGBC-Houston Outstanding Environmental Project
- IIDA Texas/Oklahoma Design Excellence for Hospitality (The Grove)
- Society of American Registered Architects Design Award of Excellence (The Grove)
- Brick in Architecture Gold Award
- Gulf Coast Chapter, ASID. Best in Show (The Grove)
- Central Houston Inc. 2008 Allen Award for Civic Engagement
- *Texas Construction's* Best of 2008 Award
- Texas Downtown Association 2009 President's Awards Program for the Best Public Improvement

- Public Relations Society of American Houston Bronze Quill – Integrated Marketing Award (2009)
- First World Architecture News (WAN) Effectiveness Awards (2011)
- American Marketing Association “Best of” Winner in the Venues & Arenas Category (2011)
- Finalist-Selected for 2011 Urban Land Institute Amanda Burden Urban Open Space Award (2011)
- American Marketing Association Marketer of the Year Award (2012)
- Public Relations Society of America Houston Award - Special Publications, Silver (2013)
- Public Relations Society of America Houston Award - Events and Observances, Silver (2013)



## This Season at Discovery Green – Spring 2015

*Most events are free and open to the public.*

Spring and Fall Programming Seasons feature 200+ events including a year-round flea market, weekly concerts and exercise classes, monthly films, cultural performances, children's and family activities, writing workshops and special events. Select programming listed below. Visit [www.discoverygreen.com](http://www.discoverygreen.com) for full event schedule.



- **Art Car Sneak Peek featuring Aaron Neville**  
**April 9, 6:30 – 10 pm**  
A sneak peek like no other! The one and only Aaron Neville “tells it like it is” performing a free concert for the public and the artists of the 28th Annual Art Car parade. See the Art Cars up close and meet the artists.
- **Families on the Green presented by Bracewell & Giuliani**  
**Sunday, April 19, 2 – 5 pm**  
Special fundraiser to support Discovery Green's free programming for adults and kids. Event features activities and entertainment for all ages. \$50 per person. 3 and under free.  
[www.discoverygreen.com/families-on-the-green](http://www.discoverygreen.com/families-on-the-green)
- **Maravilloso 2: The Water Festival**  
**Friday, June 5 – Saturday, June 6, check [discoverygreen.com](http://discoverygreen.com) for times**  
Floating, glowing “flowers” open to reveal graceful dancers on Kinder Lake. Original music and art works by Chanson d’Eau, an artistic company from Belgium and the Netherlands in their first US appearance. Featuring a new commissioned work by Karen Stokes Dance.  
<http://discoverygreen.com/maravilloso>
- **Bank of America Screen on the Green**  
Catch a free flick in the shadow of Houston's skyline. Arrive one hour early for contests and activities!
  - Saturday, March 28, 8:15 pm - *Guardians of the Galaxy*
  - Saturday, April 25, 8:30 pm - *The Lego Movie*
  - Saturday, May 16, 8:45 pm - *Parks and Recreation* Marathon
  - Saturday, June 20, 9 pm - *Jaws*



## MILESTONES

December 2004	Land Acquired/Donation by the City of Houston/ Formation of non-profit Houston Downtown Park Conservancy (now Discovery Green Conservancy)
July 2005	Design Began
October 2006	Park Construction Began/Groundbreaking Ceremony/ Name Announcement
December 2007	\$54 million in private donations achieved for Building Campaign
January 2008	The Grove Restaurant opens/Convention District Garage opens
March 1, 2008	“One for Doc” Preview Concert at the park
April 13, 2008	Discovery Green opens
November 2008	The Ice at Discovery Green, Holiday Skating on Kinder Lake opens
April 2009	One Year Anniversary Half a million visitors 400+ free high-quality public and private events 42,000 skaters at The Ice at Discovery Green 600+ news stories about the park
August 2009	1 million visitors
September 2009	Discovery Green Team membership giving program established
October 2009	Discovery Green achieves LEED Gold status
December 2009	Administaff Holiday Balloon, two-month holiday attraction, premieres
April 2010	Two Year Anniversary 1.7 million visitors 800+ free high-quality public and private events 40,000+ skaters at The Ice at Discovery Green

April 2011	1500+ news stories about the park Hosted NCAA Big Dance concerts generating thousands of park visitors
May 2011	Finalist – Selected for 2011 Urban Land Institute Amanda Burden Urban Open Spaces Award
September 2011	Inspirity Golf Experience, three-month mini golf attraction, premieres
March 2012	Received American Marketing Association Marketer of the Year Award
April 2013	Discovery Green celebrates its fifth anniversary
September 2013	Dedication of The House (Heart) in Maconda’s Grove
October 2013	Formation of Discovery Green Public Art Committee
March 2014	Unveiling of the Deck

## PARK FEATURES (AS OF MARCH 2015)

### ANDREA AND BILL WHITE PROMENADE

This walkway forms the heart of the park and offers a 360-degree view of Houston's skyline.

### KINDER LAKE

Kinder Lake, encompassing more than an acre of the park, features water gardens and a model boat area, a shallow pool specifically designed to accommodate remote-controlled watercraft operated by park goers of all ages.

### THE GROVE AND TREEHOUSE

Overlooking the park's live oaks, Schiller Del Grande's destination restaurant and rooftop bar offer patrons exceptional food, service and views of the park.

### THE LAKE HOUSE

The Lake House offers fast, casual, family-friendly food, with views of Kinder Lake and the Jones Lawn.

### ANHEUSER-BUSCH STAGE AND FONDREN FOUNDATION PERFORMANCE SPACE

This amphitheater hosts a variety of performances, including music, theater, film and dance, and is oriented toward a sloped lawn for audience seating. When the platform is not in use, it is open to all park goers, either as space to work, lounge or dine near The Lake House café.

### JONES LAWN

The Jones Lawn is the park's largest green space, providing ample area for major events or pick-up sports.

### BROWN FOUNDATION PROMENADE

The Brown Foundation Promenade is shaded by 100-year-old oak trees, the largest of which is the Nancy G. Kinder Oak near Avenida de las Americas, one of four large live oaks moved to the park.

### JOHN P. MCGOVERN CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

The playground is carved into an existing, tree-shaded hill, which shields youngsters from the surrounding streets and integrates the theme of the major migratory bird flyway over Houston. Individual species are represented in the play sets, and accompanying signage educates visitors.

### THE ALKEK BUILDING

Overlooking the Gateway Fountain and John P. McGovern Children's Playground, this building houses the park's staff, information center and public restrooms.

### GATEWAY FOUNTAIN

The fountain offers a visual gateway to the park for visitors approaching from McKinney Street and is an extension of the playground area. Two systems of jets create a myriad of water activity atop a gently sloping granite surface, with 14-foot high arcing jets serving as gateway landmarks and smaller jets cycling on and off to invite park visitors for a closer look or some fun in the spray.

### THE DECK

The first new addition to the park since its opening, 4,700-square-foot raised deck was installed in Spring 2014 adjacent to the Brown Promenade under the century-old live oak trees. The deck provides a shady place where visitors can relax, eat, read and enjoy the various sights and sounds of the park. In keeping with the park's mission, the deck is made from sustainable materials.

### PUBLIC ART AT DISCOVERY GREEN

Discovery Green features works by artists Margo Sawyer and Doug Hollis. Great care was taken to ensure the art installations would be visually prominent, yet at home in the park's environs. In addition, Jean Dubuffet's *Monument Au Fantome*, an iconic sculpture by this world-renowned artist, has been relocated to the park.







DISCOVERY GREEN™

See. Touch. Hear. Taste. Explore.



- |    |  |    |   |
|----|--|----|---|
| 1  | McNair Foundation Jogging Trail<br>Clifford and Doris Faulkner Seating Area  | 19 | Jimi Derrick's Arbor<br>Wachovia Securities Seating Area<br>Nancy G. Kinder Oak   |
| 2  | Waste Management, Inc. Gardens<br>Compass Bank Waterside Lawn  | 20 | Jack C. Alexander Plaza<br>Lily Chen Foster Garden  |
| 3  | Merrill Lynch & Co. Pier<br>Cooper Industries Water Garden   | 21 | The Grove and the Treehouse   |
| 4  | Lindsey Waterside Landing & Garden<br>Monument au Fantome, a gift from the Duncan Family<br>Houston Astros Garden Grove                  | 22 | Grace Event Lawn<br>Allen Family Rose Garden<br>Lynda L. Transier Bandstand   |
| 5  | Kinder Lake<br>Carruth Lake Lights   | 23 | Wortham Foundation Gardens<br>Mary Lents Native Plant Garden<br>Fulbright & Jaworski LLP Garden<br>Tom Fricke Foundation Garden |
| 6  | Anheuser-Busch Stage<br>Fondren Foundation<br>Performance Space<br>David Mitzner Plaza   | 24 | Hagsette Putting Green<br>Michelle Rozzell Bulb Garden<br>Trini's Shuffleboard Court  |
| 7  | Gateway Fountain<br>Vinson & Elkins Garden<br>John P. McGovern Playground<br>BP Solar Panels   | 25 | Maconda's Grove<br>Carruth Foundation Bocce Courts  |
| 8  | Alkek Building<br>Flores Terrace<br>Stedman West Veranda<br>Simmons Family Stage<br>BP Solar Panels                                      | 26 | Riley Family Fountain<br>Listening Vessels, a gift from Maconda Brown O'Connor<br>Jackie Martin Family Scent Garden             |
| 9  | The Lake House<br>Cemex USA Terrace  | 27 | Ray C. Fish Foundation Bench Area<br>Long Plaza<br>Mithoff Family Foundation<br>Chapman and Clea's Garden                       |
| 10 | Cullen Veranda<br>Morgan Reading Room<br>Powell Foundation Reading Room<br>HPL Express<br>BP Solar Panels                                |    |   |
| 11 | Sarofim Picnic Lawn<br>Mist Tree, a gift from Fayeze Sarofim   |    |   |
| 12 | Bracewell Plaza<br>Devon Energy Global Garden<br>Robert R. and Kay M. Onstead<br>Foundation Walk   |    |   |
| 13 | Harriet and Joe Foster Dog Run<br>Burguieres Foundation Seating Area<br>Greg and Gretchen Tharp Fountain                                 |    |   |
| 14 | Kinder Large Dog Run<br>Friends of Lily, Kelly & Sadie Kinder<br>Seating Area<br>Wells Fargo Seating Area<br>The Bela Fountain           |    |   |
| 15 | Jones Lawn<br>Synchronicity of Color   |    |   |
| 16 | Andrea and Bill White Promenade<br>L.H. and C.W. Duncan Foundation<br>Seating Area<br>Marathon Oil Bike Racks                            |    |   |
| 17 | The Brown Foundation Promenade<br>CenterPoint Energy Seating Areas   |    |   |
| 18 | Bernice Hevrdejs Butterfly Garden<br>Sanders Hummingbird Garden<br>Beverly and Staman Ogilvie Seating Area<br>JP Morgan Chase Bench Area |    |   |

GEORGE R. BROWN CONVENTION CENTER

HILTON AMERICAS HOTEL