



River Oaks FOUNDATION

Submitted by River Oaks resident, Susanne Pritchard

What is the River Oaks Foundation?

River Oaks Foundation is a non-profit corporation formed for the purpose of raising funds through voluntary contributions for the beautification and preservation of the green spaces and common areas of the River Oaks neighborhood.

When was it founded?

River Oaks Foundation was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) corporation in October 1999 by Bolivar Andrews, Gwyn Smith, Caroline Gregory and Paul Hobby. The board is now comprised of seven members of the River Oaks community, two of whom also serve on the ROPO board.

What is the main objective of the Foundation?

The goal of the Foundation is to assure that River Oaks continues to be a beauty spot within Houston, the fourth largest city in the nation. We take pride in the neighborhood's history, prominence and distinctive landscape. Hugh Potter was a visionary founding father of River Oaks. This letter, from 1920's, outlines his thoughts about the new subdivision he was planning. His 'modern ideas have served the River Oaks Community well for nearly one hundred years.

The Aim and Ideal

To produce for the Houston citizen of discriminating taste, a complete residential community in the most advantageous locality.

To focus upon the undertaking, from varied points of view, the minds of men of talent, experience and worthy accomplishment.

To intelligently locate shopping centers, schools, churches, parks and play-grounds, so as to protect the home owners from the accidents of neighborhood changes.

Then, having created a beauty spot, to keep it just that, by a most rigid and thoroughgoing maintenance.

All at a cost within the reach of the family of moderate income.

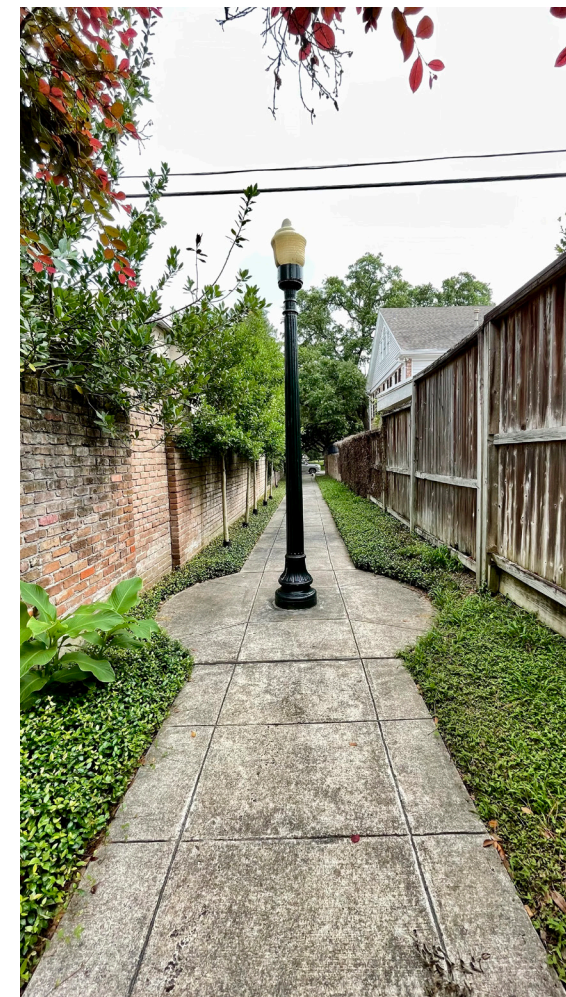
**Hugh Potter
President**

What are some of the projects River Oaks Foundation has completed in the past?

River Oaks Foundation held a campaign in the early 2000s and those proceeds have been used on a variety of projects around River Oaks ever since. The original Staub gates to the neighborhood were cracked and crumbling until the foundation repaired, replastered and repainted the iconic markers in their original pale pink. The foundation funded projects including planting trees and refreshing the landscapes of Homewood Park on Lazy Lane, Rebecca Myer Park on Reba Drive, Mary Elliott Park on Chevy Chase Drive, Sleepy Hollow Park on Sleepy Hollow Court, and the park at Kirby Drive and Shepherd. Troon Road, Olympia Drive, Briarwood Court, Ella Lee at Larchmont, and Pine Valley Island all have green spaces that were enhanced by foundation dollars. When River Oaks Boulevard was reinstalled after being demolished for storm sewer work, the foundation participated in landscaping the first esplanade and installed sprinkler systems and grass in the remaining esplanades.

What is the foundation currently working on?

Our current project is to raise funds to complete construction of the rose gardens on River Oaks Boulevard. The design was based on old photographs from the 1930s and 40s. So much thought and planning went into the original design concept by the founders Hugh Potter, the Hogg brothers and the landscape architects Hare



Secret sidewalk project which involved building a secret sidewalk to connect neighborhoods to a nearby park.



and Hare, that there was no reason to change anything. Construction began in the spring of 2020 and as of now, seven of the nine esplanades have been landscaped with brightly colored rose gardens. The gardens survived the big freeze and burst into bloom after those dreadful days in mid-February. We are hoping to celebrate completion of all of the esplanades this fall.

Do you have any events coming up that residents should know about?

Party on the Park is planned for Sunday, November 7 from 5:00 to 7:00. We are planning fabulous family-friendly food truck fare and libations for adults. We expect

an easy, casual setting for neighbors to connect and celebrate. Tickets will go on sale in the fall and we look forward to the community gathering in support of River Oaks Foundation. **If any neighbors would like to volunteer to help on this event, please contact Kelley Trammell at khtram@swbell.net.**

How can residents in the neighborhood get involved?

If you have an idea for a green space or park in River Oaks, please reach out and let us know! The foundation is here to help by providing a nonprofit vehicle for donated funds to be used toward projects. Many of our projects have been brought to us by residents who live near a green space that they would like to see improved. Seeing a project through from start to finish involves planning, permitting, fundraising and project management. As an example, eight Nuttall Oak trees were recently planted in Mary

Elliott Park as a project sponsored by a neighbor. The foundation assisted by accepting their donation and the work was completed with the assistance of another neighborhood volunteer who coordinated the permits, sprinkler work and the tree planting.

Please share anything else you feel is important for your neighbors to know about the Foundation:

River Oaks Foundation is here to help keep River Oaks Beautiful. Our unique and special neighborhood is nearing its 100th birthday and it's time to think about refreshing and maintaining its lovely appearance for the future. **Please check our website riveroaksfoundation.org and follow us on Instagram at [@riveroaksfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/riveroaksfoundation).**

