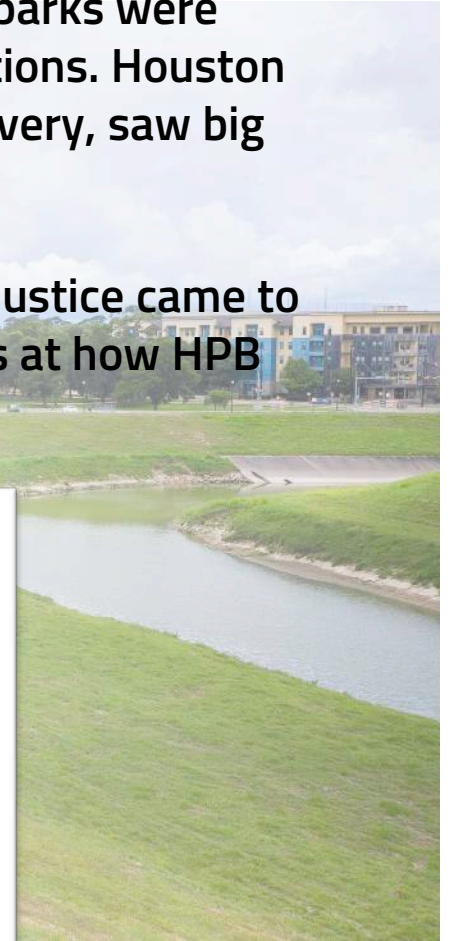


# Case study on Houston Parks Board: A focus on equity and inclusion



As the pandemic wreaked havoc globally, operators in parks were forced to adapt and deploy both new and existing solutions. Houston Parks Board (HPB), a valued partner of Agents of Discovery, saw big increases in their visitorship.

In parallel, a (long-overdue) global reckoning on social justice came to the forefront of the conversation. This case study looks at how HPB navigated these challenges.





Thanks to Anthony Rathbun for providing photos for this case study

## **The Problem:**

Even pre-pandemic, Houston Parks Board was working to reach diverse audiences. The Bayou Greenways system has an incredibly broad geographic reach, and it maintains a central focus on connecting Houstonians to nature and each other. However, sometimes it is difficult to engage visitors at the level HPB would like; for instance, there are cases where there is not a visitor center available to handle inquiries from the public.



## The Solution:

**Houston Parks Board used the *Agents of Discovery* platform for a range of equity and inclusion plans, as well as general programming and outreach efforts.**

- Incorporate Agents of Discovery into events. They found success when tied to other initiatives run in-house (e.g. as an activity at a ribbon-cutting event to showcase the adjacent trail).
- Use digital infrastructure for 150 miles of trails (HPB has moved Missions around seasonally).
- Plug in safety messaging (e.g. masks and other forms of COVID-19 preparedness).
- Use translation capabilities to reach Spanish speakers.
- Use it for community leadership building (e.g. working with community leaders to build culturally-significant Challenges).



*"During unprecedented times, Agents of Discovery enabled Houston Parks Board to offer free and safe programming when more people turned towards green spaces than ever before. Agents of Discovery has become an engagement tool that allows us to connect with Houstonians in an accessible and equitable way."*

**Beth White**  
President and CEO,  
Houston Parks Board

