

*Dallas Park and
Recreation Department*
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



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Dallas Park & Recreation Department

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Prepared for the Dallas Park and Recreation Department

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Introduction

The Dallas parks and recreation system has a proud legacy dating back to 1876, with the establishment of the city's first park, City Park. Through acquisition and generous donations, the parks and recreation system has grown as the city has grown—now encompassing close to 400 parks totaling more than 21,000 acres.

On a regular basis, the Dallas Park and Recreation Department reassesses the state of the organization, its facilities and services, and where it is headed. This comprehensive plan is the result of a two-year process to reassess the Department's mission and vision for the future and sets a course for achieving that vision. It takes into account citywide goals from forwardDallas!, changes in the park system over the past decade, recent trends, changes in demographics, and input from the community.

This plan establishes thirteen strategic directions for the Park and Recreation Department to focus on over the next decade and lays out a strategic plan for getting there, including a set of actions the Department can take to move each strategic direction forward as well as detailed steps that support each action.

Mission and Vision

An organization's mission should define its purpose and primary objectives. In 2002, *A Renaissance Plan for Dallas Parks and Recreation in the 21st Century* gave the Park and Recreation Department a strategy to recover from years of budget cuts, regain the confidence of the citizens of Dallas, and reposition the Department as a state and national leader. Over the last decade, the Department has taken great strides to “recover, regain, and reposition” and has moved beyond this mission. Thus, this comprehensive plan updates the Park and Recreation Department’s mission to articulate a more proactive engagement with the city of Dallas.

The Dallas Park and Recreation Department’s mission is to champion lifelong recreation and serve as responsible stewards of the city’s parks, trails, and open spaces.

With that mission in mind, the Department’s vision for the future is for a comprehensive system of parks, trails, open spaces, and recreation facilities that sustains, inspires, and invigorates.



Taking a short rest along the trail.
White Rock Lake

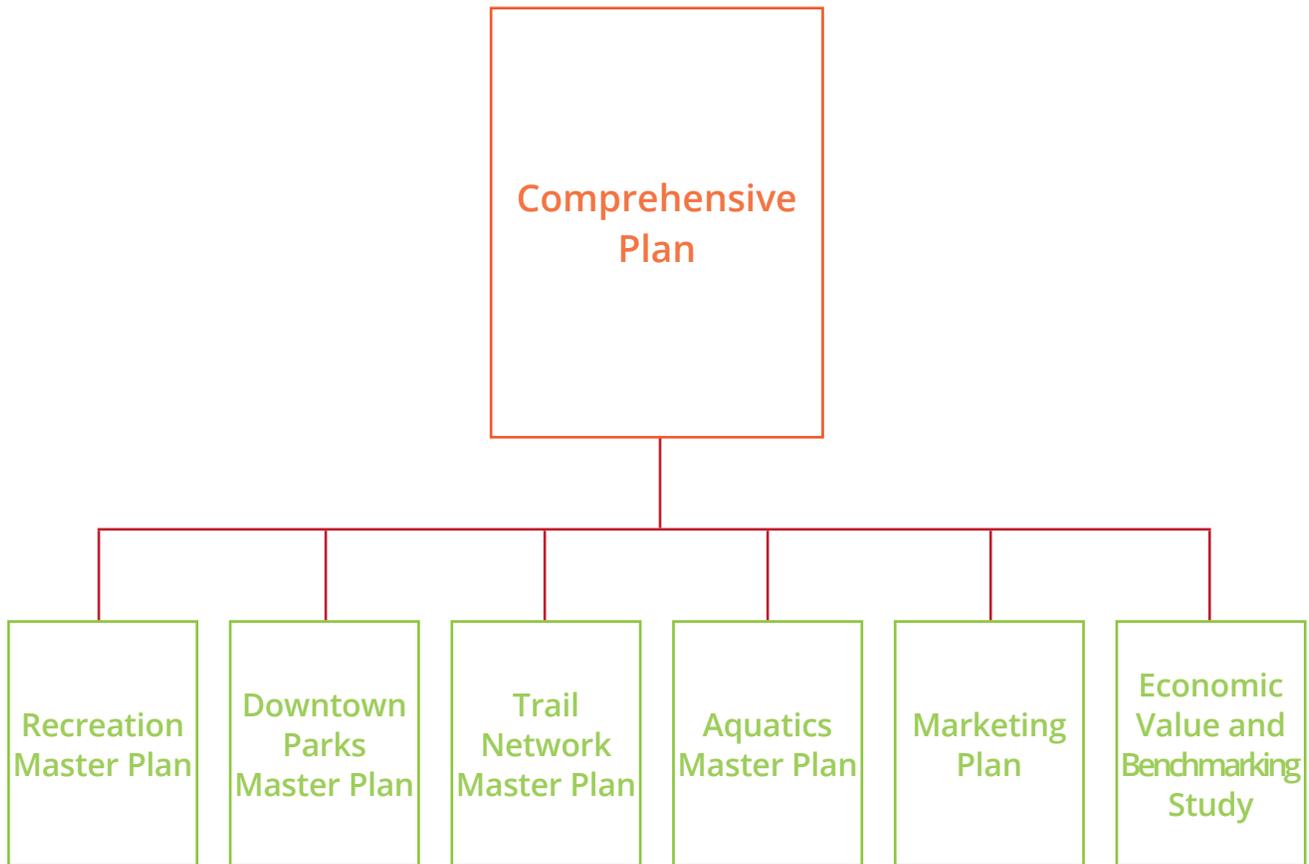


Planning Context

This comprehensive plan lays out broad goals for parks and recreation in Dallas over the next 10 years. These goals are consistent with and build on the guiding principles and policies of forwardDallas!

The plan is supported by an array of other plans that provide more focused direction on more specific aspects of parks and recreation (Figure 1). This comprehensive plan does not replace these plans. Rather, it incorporates larger goals from those plans and provides an organizing framework within which the Department should implement those plans.

Figure 1. The Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan Is Supported by an Array of Specific Plans
Current and In-Progress Plans



Recreation Master Plan

Developed concurrently with this comprehensive plan, the Recreation Master Plan provides more specific recommendations on recreation centers and recreation programming, including mini business plans for each recreation center.

Downtown Parks Master Plan

The Downtown Parks Master Plan, completed in 2004 and updated in 2013, sets direction for developing 87 acres of parks in downtown Dallas. The opening of Main Street Garden, Belo Garden, and Klyde Warren Park, recommended in the original plan, has created green spaces and public places for a growing downtown population. The Belo Foundation's recent funding pledge will provide half the estimated funds to complete the vision for downtown parks.

Trail Network Master Plan

The Trail Network Master Plan, completed in 2005 and updated in 2008, lays out a vision for an interconnected trail circuit that crisscrosses the city and connects major parks and other destinations. Currently, there are over 125 miles of trail, with an additional 28 miles that have been programmed and funded. A further 134 miles of trail have been proposed to complete the circuit.

Aquatics Master Plan

Dallas' Aquatics Master Plan was adopted in 2012 and updated in 2015. The plan called for developing fewer bigger, newer aquatic facilities to replace functionally obsolete community pools. Implementation of the plan is ongoing.

Marketing Plan

As of the completion of this comprehensive plan, the Park and Recreation Department is beginning work on a system-wide marketing plan that will seek to unify messaging and branding of the park and recreation system.

Economic Value and Benchmarking Study

The Park and Recreation Department undertook an economic value and benchmarking study of the Dallas park system at the same time the comprehensive planning process was underway. The study showed that Dallas parks provide a 15-to-1 return on public investment, or \$1.2 billion, each year that goes back to the local economy. About half of that value comes from tourism, while nearly a third comes from increases to real estate. Trails generate the highest return on investment, at a rate of 50 to 1.

Existing Conditions

Parks

Park Classifications

The Park and Recreation Department has categorized its 381 parks into eight park classifications based on National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines. Each park classification includes a general description, a typical size range (if appropriate), access provisions, and a list of typical amenities. The classification system was not changed during the comprehensive planning process. A list of parks by classification is included in Appendix A.

Figure 2.
asdfasdf

Park Classification	Number of Parks	Total Dept. Acreage	Acreage Range Each	Service Radius Each
Mini Park	27	15	0–1	0.25 mi.
Neighborhood Park	126	785	1–15	0.25–0.5 mi.
Community Park	91	2,506	16–99	1–2 mi.
Metropolitan Park	12	2,903	100–499	entire city
Regional Park	4	2,787	500+	1 hour
Special Use Area	75	3,681	N/A	N/A
Linear Park / Linkage	33	1,089	N/A	N/A
Conservancy	13	5,077	N/A	N/A
Total Park Acres	381	18,842		

Mini Park

The mini park is used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreation needs of concentrated populations. Mini parks typically serve a quarter-mile radius. The size of a mini-park ranges between 2,500 square feet and one acre in size. These parks may be either active or passive, but address a specific recreational need rather than a particular population density, although a high population density may create a specific recreation need. Recommended improvements for mini parks may include a small pavilion, picnic area, park benches, and a 6 foot-wide perimeter trail. Off-street parking is not recommended.

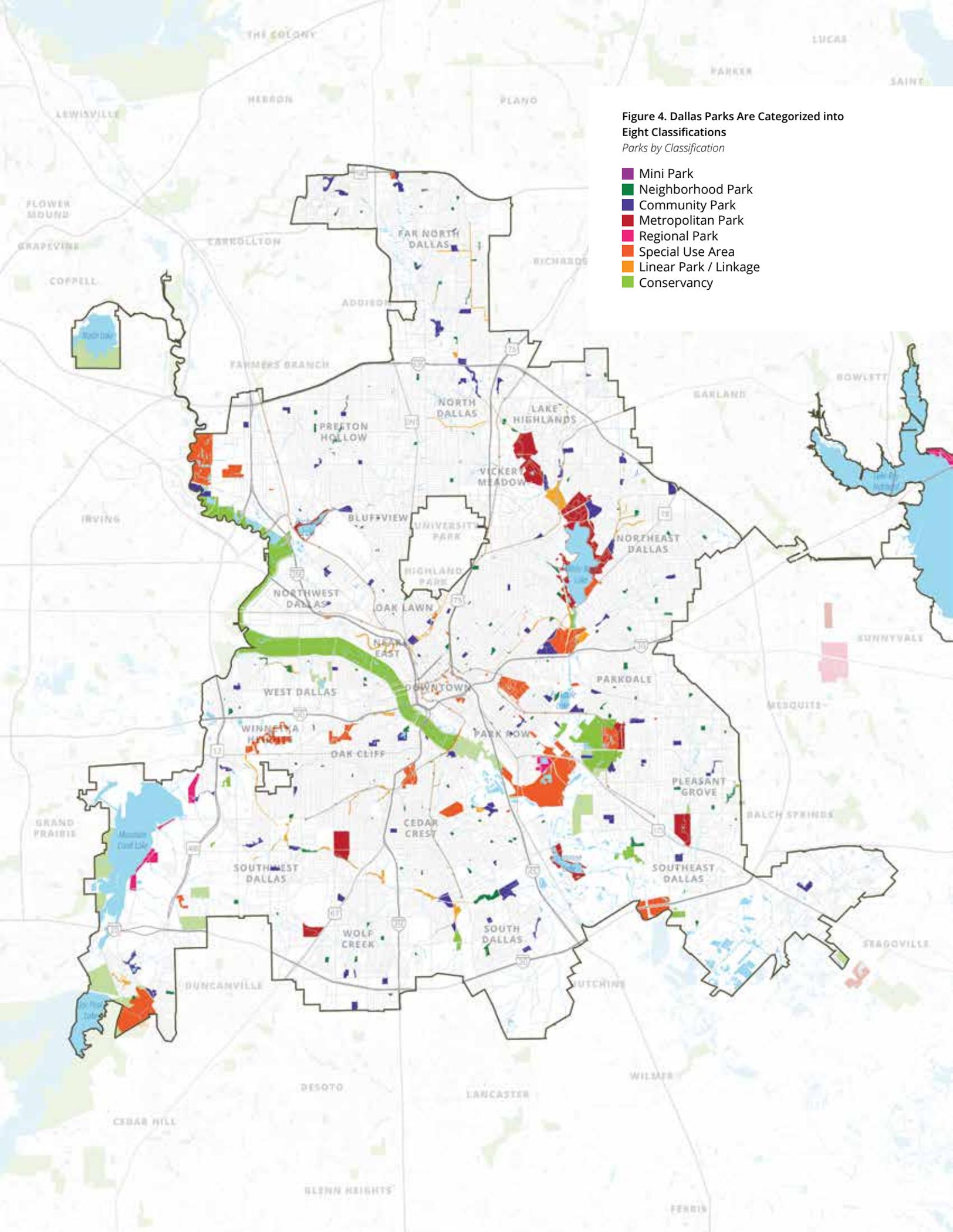


Figure 4. Dallas Parks Are Categorized into Eight Classifications
Parks by Classification

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Metropolitan Park
- Regional Park
- Special Use Area
- Linear Park / Linkage
- Conservancy

Neighborhood Park

Neighborhood parks serve a variety of age groups within a limited area or neighborhood. They range in size from 1 to 15 acres and generally serve residents within a quarter- to half-mile radius. The neighborhood park includes areas for active recreation activities such as field games, court games, playgrounds, etc. Passive recreation activities may include walking, viewing, sitting, and picnicking. Facilities are generally unlighted and off-street parking is not recommended.

Community Park

Community parks are larger than neighborhood parks and serve several neighborhoods. They range in size from 16 to 99 acres and generally serve a user area of one to two miles in radius. The community park may include areas for intense recreation activities such as competitive sports, swimming, tennis, playgrounds, volleyball, etc. There may also be passive recreation opportunities such as walking, viewing, sitting, and picnicking.

Metropolitan Park

Metropolitan parks are large park facilities that serve multiple communities. They range in size from 100 to 499 acres and serve the entire city. The metropolitan park includes natural areas or developed areas for a variety of outdoor recreation activities such as ball fields, playgrounds, boating, fishing, swimming, picnicking, and trail systems.

Regional Park

Regional parks are very large multi-use parks that serve several communities within a particular region. They are 500 acres or larger in size and serve those areas within a one-hour driving distance. The regional park provides both active and passive recreation opportunities, with a wide selection of facilities for all age groups. They may also include areas of nature preservation for activities such as sightseeing, nature study area, wildlife habitat, and conservation. National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards for regional parks vary due to the specific site characteristics and natural resources.

Special Use Area

Special use areas and parks are for specialized or single-purpose recreation activities. NRPA defines these parks as historical areas, nature centers, marinas, golf courses, zoos, conservatories, arboretums, arenas, amphitheaters, plazas, or community squares. There are no specific standards for size or acreage since each site will vary. Special use parks may carry a double classification.

Linear Park / Linkage

Linear parks and linkages are built connections or natural corridors that link parks together. Typically, the linear park is developed for one or more modes

of recreational travels such as walking, jogging, biking, in-line skating, hiking, horseback riding, and canoeing. Linear parks may include active play areas. The NRPA does not stipulate specific standards for linear parks other than they should be sufficient to protect the resource and provide maximum usage.

Conservancy

Conservancies include areas for protection and management of the natural / cultural environment with recreation use as a secondary objective. Recreation use might include passive recreation such as viewing and studying nature and wildlife habitat. The NRPA does not indicate specific acreage or size standards for the conservancy other than they should be sufficient to protect the resource and provide appropriate usage.

Other Providers

The large majority of existing parkland in Dallas is managed by the Park and Recreation Department. However, there are other providers that provide park amenities for use by residents. Other providers include Dallas County, Trinity Watershed Management, and independent school districts. Only facilities that are open to the public were counted in the inventory, and only in proportion to the time they are available for public use.

Figure 3. Dallas Has over 24,000 Acres of Park
Acres of Park by Classification and Provider

Park Classification	Department Inventory	Other Providers	Total Inventory
Mini Park	15	-	15 acres
Neighborhood Park	785	878	1,663 acres
Community Park	2,506	-	2,506 acres
Metropolitan Park	2,903	-	2,903 acres
Regional Park	2,787	-	2,787 acres
Special Use Area	3,681	-	3,681 acres
Linear Parks / Linkages	1,089	-	1,089 acres
Conservancy	5,077	4,719	9,796 acres
All Parks	18,842	5,579	24,439 acres



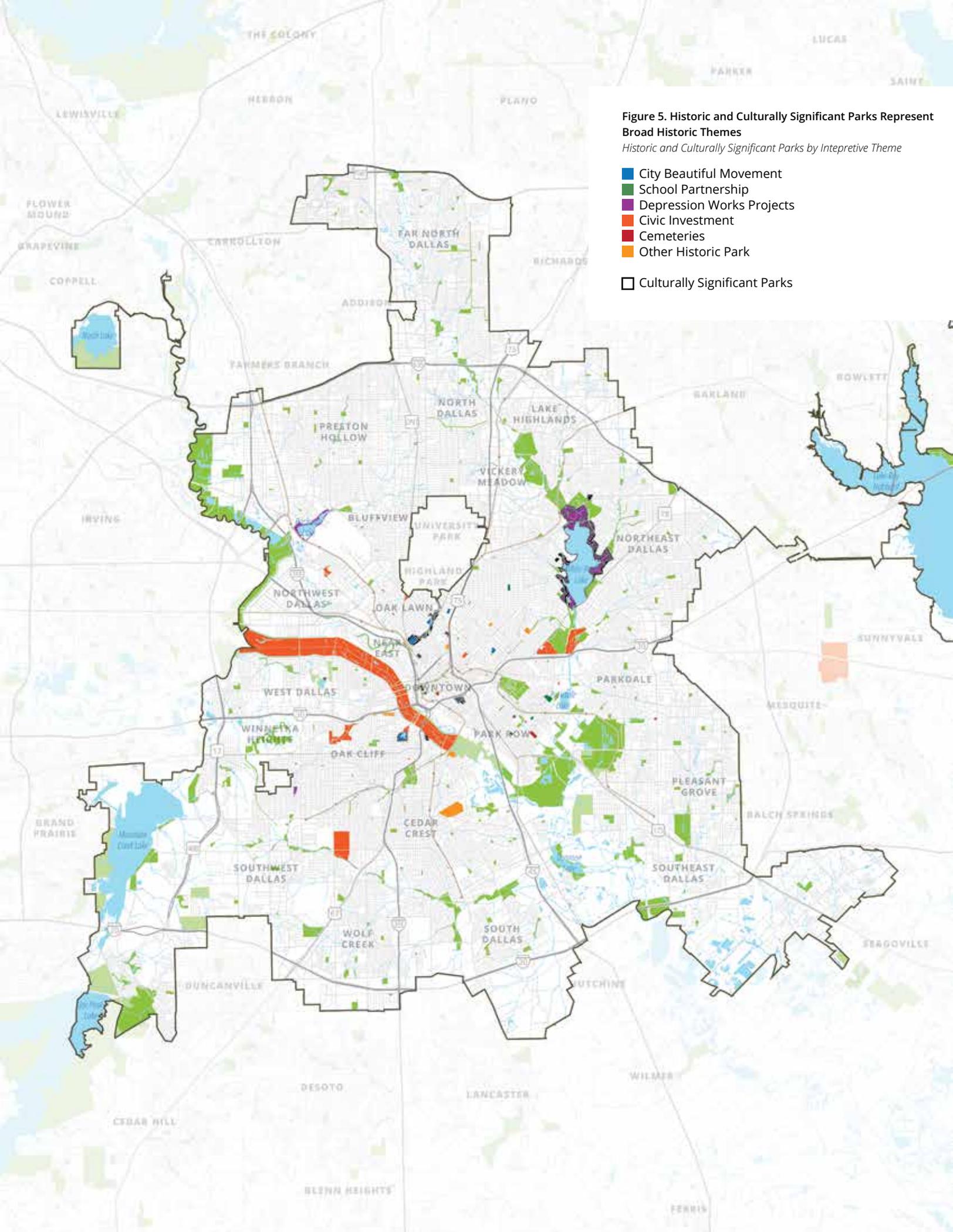
Finding shade on a hot summer day.
Hamilton Park



Figure 5. Historic and Culturally Significant Parks Represent Broad Historic Themes

Historic and Culturally Significant Parks by Interpretive Theme

- City Beautiful Movement
- School Partnership
- Depression Works Projects
- Civic Investment
- Cemeteries
- Other Historic Park
- Culturally Significant Parks



Historic and Culturally Significant Parks

The Dallas park system has a long and rich heritage shaped by the ideas of many prominent civic leaders, planners, national events, or programs. Each initiative left its mark on the Dallas landscape and created important cultural sites. Several broad historic themes are evident in Dallas parks (Figure 5).

Not every historic park can be classified with one of the movements. Some parks were established simply to meet a need. However, creating a park to fill a need should not diminish that park's contribution to the neighborhood or community the park served. See Appendix B for a list of historic parks and their interpretive themes.

Additional design and maintenance guidelines will be needed to preserve the city's historic and culturally significant parks (See 9.1.1.). Generally, these guidelines should strive to:

- maintain historic integrity
- rehabilitate existing resources before restoring lost resources
- integrate new structures and furnishings that are compatible with the historic character of their settings
- restore native habitats and landscapes

Historic Themes

The following is a list of proposed interpretive themes. A comprehensive interpretive plan should be developed for the park system.

City Beautiful Movement

A movement in the 1890s and early 1900s that promoted beauty for civic pride and the common welfare of the community. The architectural style of the movement utilized Beaux-Arts and neoclassical architecture that promoted order, dignity and harmony. These ideas were equally expressed in the landscapes of parks and focused on creating impressive public spaces and showcasing natural features.

School Partnership

In the 1911 park master plan, George Kessler proposed to introduce parks in established neighborhoods by partnering with the schools. The schools were generally located near children and the partnership benefited from eliminating duplicate costs and more efficient use of the facilities.

Depression Work Projects

Several Dallas parks were created from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The WPA was the largest agency created as part of the New Deal to provide work for unemployed people. The agency employed artists, crafts people, and mostly unskilled men to construct public works projects. The CCC was another public work relief program that employed unmarried young men for unskilled manual labor jobs related to the conservation

and development of natural resources. The National Youth Administration (NYA) was part of the WPA. Unlike the CCC, the NYA focused on providing work and education for young women and men. Parks created from these programs were designed to provide the public with recreation facilities, social gathering spaces, and enjoyment of nature. These programs led to a greater public awareness and appreciation of the outdoors and natural resources.

Civic Investment

Inspired by civic pride and a desire to improve their city, numerous citizens and civic leaders donated or bequeathed land from their estates to create parks. The donations were often to fill a city wide or local neighborhood need or in memory of family members.

Cemeteries

All cemeteries begin from the same basic need, a place to bury the dead. A group of people may choose to bury their dead together, united in a common cause, belief, or as members of a specific society or community. Often with humble beginnings some of these simple burial plots would grow into sites with impressive statues, tombstones, mausoleum and architectural features. Many of the most artistic cemeteries are populated with early settlers, civic leaders and the city's wealthy. What unites the humblest site with the most artistic is the need for a final resting place. All burial places are equally important to the understanding of a community's past and a place of dignity and respect.

Culturally Significant Parks

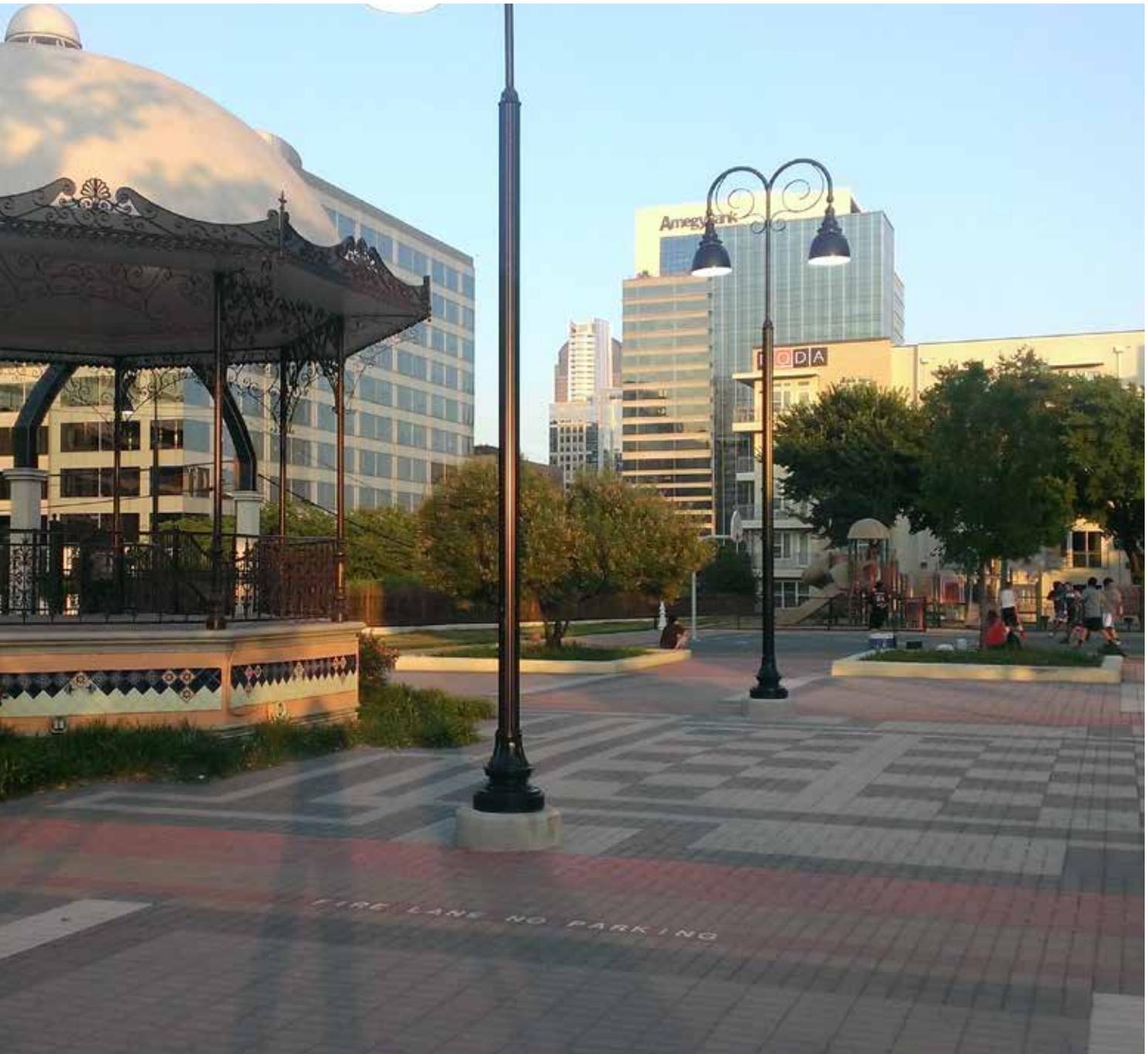
"Culture" is defined by the National Park Service as "traditions, beliefs, practices, lifeways, arts, crafts, and social institutions of any community." This definition is broad and could include most if not all of the historic parks and cemeteries developed before World War II as these parks were integral to the development and life of the neighborhoods they serve. But, some of the parks have significance related to a broader or larger community or to the city or region as a whole. These parks are identified as culturally significant (Figure 5).

See Appendix C for a list of these culturally significant parks. Further research will be needed to define a complete list of parks with cultural significance. This list should be considered a starting point that future research can build upon.



Preserving a part of Merican
American and Jewish culture and
history in Dallas.

Pike Park



Trails

Trail Classifications

The Trail Network Master Plan classifies trails into four categories that define a trail’s target audience, what assets it connects to, typical experiences along it, and minimum widths. The classification system was not changed during the comprehensive planning process. See Appendix D for a list of trails by classification.

Major trails are city-wide assets and should be marketed as regional attractions. A trail that is at least one mile in length is classified as a major trail. With the exception of nature trails, major trails are typically developed at a minimum width of 12 feet in accordance with American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines.

Figure 6. Dallas Has About Half of All Proposed Trails Implemented

Miles of Trail by Classification

Trail Classification	Existing Miles	Programmed Miles	Proposed Miles	Total Miles
Major Linear Trail	51.4	26.9	128.5	206.8
Major Loop Trail	20.7	-	5.7	26.4
Major Nature Trail	25.5	-	-	25.5
Neighborhood Trail	27.9	-	-	27.9
Street Connections	23.6	0.6	-	24.2
All Trails	149.1	27.5	134.2	310.8

Major Linear Trail

Major linear trails typically connect multiple parks, greenbelts, schools, neighborhoods, employment centers, entertainment districts and transit centers. In addition to the obvious recreational benefit, major linear trails are essential in promoting alternative modes of transportation and improving air quality.

Major Loop Trail

Major loop trails are typically located wholly within metropolitan, regional, and community parks. These trails provide multiple recreation and exercise opportunities while linking major amenities within the park.

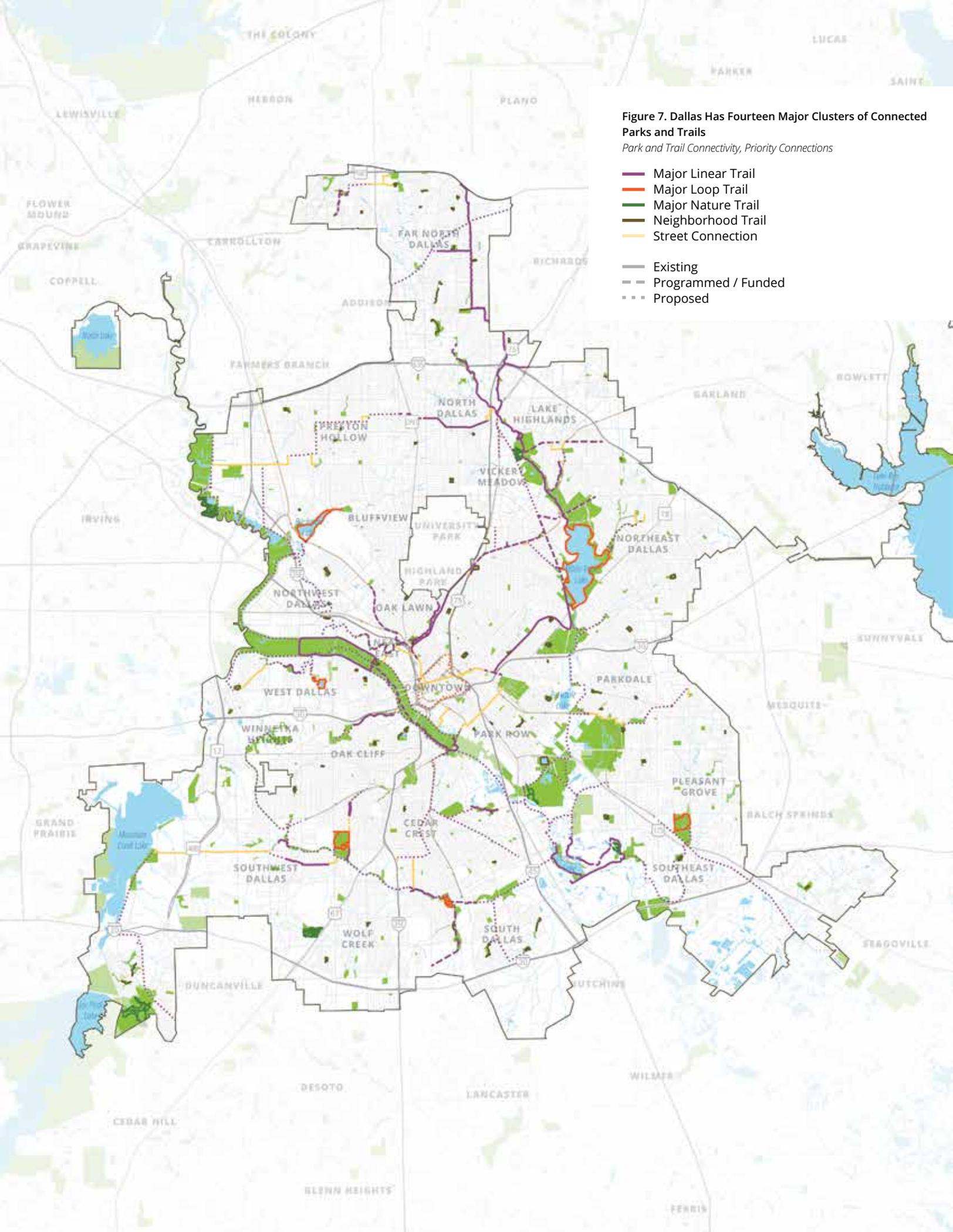


Figure 7. Dallas Has Fourteen Major Clusters of Connected Parks and Trails

Park and Trail Connectivity, Priority Connections

- Major Linear Trail
- Major Loop Trail
- Major Nature Trail
- Neighborhood Trail
- Street Connection
- Existing
- - - Programmed / Funded
- ... Proposed

Major Nature Trail

Major nature trails are natural-surfaced trails that are typically located in a major greenbelt park. These trails provide opportunities for environmental education and contemplative seclusion in a natural setting.

Neighborhood Trail

Neighborhood trails are considered more of a neighborhood amenity rather than a regional attraction. These trails are typically located wholly within community and neighborhood parks. A trail that is less than one mile in length is classified as a neighborhood trail and can be a linear, loop, or nature trail. Neighborhood linear and loop trails are typically no wider than 8 feet. Analysis and planning of each neighborhood trail occurs within the individual park development plan for the park in which the trail is located.

Utilizing utility rights of way for major linear trails.

Cottonwood Trail



Recreation

The Dallas Park and Recreation Department provides over 280 programs and special events offered within nine major program areas serving residents of all ages. Department staff are responsible for the management and operation of a diverse array of recreation programs, special community-wide events, and facilities. Employees are engaged year-round in planning, implementing, conducting, and evaluating programs and events. A more detailed inventory and assessment of the city's recreation offerings can be found in the *Recreation Master Plan*.

Core Program Areas

Core program areas are groups of programs that:

- have been provided for a long period of time (over 4 years) or are expected by the community
- consume a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the Department's budget
- are offered 3-4 seasons per year
- have wide demographic appeal
- have a tiered level of skill development available
- have dedicated full-time staff
- have specialized facilities
- represent a significant share (20% or more) of the local market

The following 9 program areas are considered core program areas for the Department.

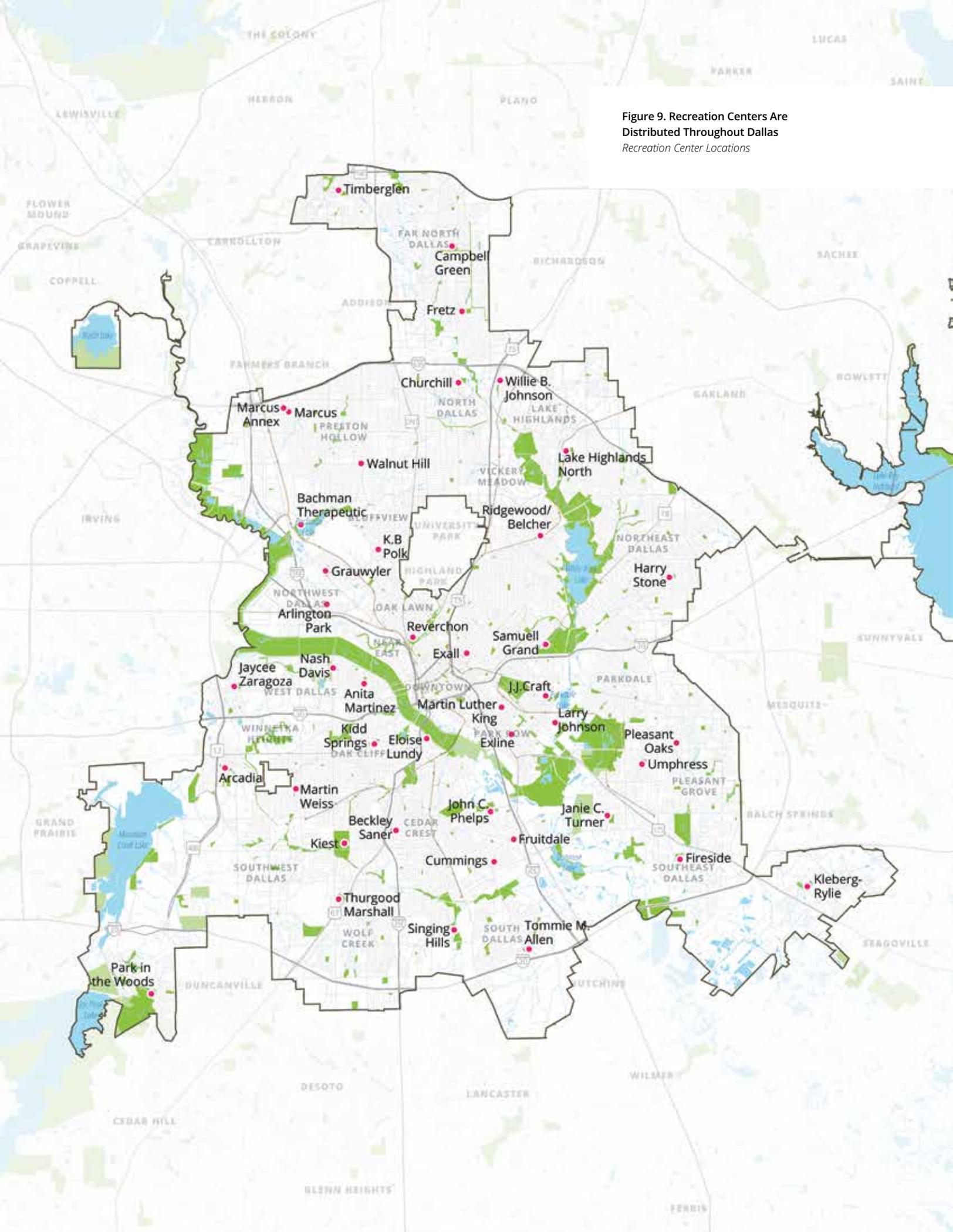
After School

Offers academic enrichment, physical fitness, nutritional and life skills for children ages 6-12 years after the school day ends

Sports

Includes youth and adult sport camps, lessons, teams, and leagues including competition levels from beginner to competitive

Figure 9. Recreation Centers Are Distributed Throughout Dallas
Recreation Center Locations



Camps

Summer & seasonal camps for youth and teens that provide a structured, safe environment for learning and having fun

Aquatics

Includes youth and adult lessons and teams for swimming, fitness, and water sports to promote water safety and swimming as a lifelong recreational pursuit

Health & Fitness

Includes adult group exercise, wellness, and Zumba classes to help achieve fitness and lifestyle goals

Fine Arts

Includes performing and visual arts classes and groups to provide personal and social benefit for all interests and abilities

Events

Community events coinciding with local or national holidays or community interests

Special Interest

Education, games, and hobbies of special interest to the community

Therapeutic Recreation

Adapted recreation and education programs

Facilities

Recreation Centers

The Department also provides a wide variety of recreation centers within Dallas that offer an array of programmable spaces and activities for users of all ages.

Amenities

The large majority of recreation amenities in Dallas is managed by the Park and Recreation Department. However, there are other providers that provide recreation amenities for use by residents. Other providers include Dallas County Community College for soccer and diamond fields and YMCA for recreation and aquatic centers.

Figure 8. Dallas Has a Wide Range of Recreation Amenities*Number of Amenities by Provider*

Amenity	Department Inventory	Other Providers	Total Inventory
Picnic Shelters/Tables	1,141	-	1,141 sites
Rectangular Fields (Lacrosse/Rugby/Football)	18	-	18 fields
Soccer Fields	107	16	123 fields
Diamond Fields	111	3	114 fields
Basketball Courts	151	-	151 courts
Tennis Courts	201	-	201 courts
Pickleball Courts	2	-	2 courts
Playgrounds	206	-	206 sites
Sand Volleyball	11	-	11 sites
Off Leash Dog Parks	5	-	5 sites
Skate Park	1	-	1 sites
Golf Courses	6	-	6 sites
Recreation / Aquatic Centers	782,085	185,985	968,070 sf

Similar Providers

The Park and Recreation Department's recreation and senior centers often compete with similar providers, most notably private fitness centers, in offering certain services.

Franchised Fitness Centers

Competitor	Location(s)
24 Hour Fitness	Carrollton, Cedar Hill, Dallas, Grand Prairie, Irving (2), Mesquite, Plano, Richardson
AnyTime Fitness	Carrollton, Dallas (2), Garland (2), Lancaster, Plano
Crunch	Addison
Curves	Desoto
Equinox	Dallas
Family YMCA	Grand Prairie, Irving, Richardson
Gold's Gym	Desoto, Irving, Plano
LA Fitness	Carrollton, Dallas (2), Duncanville, Garland, Irving, Plano, Richardson
Life Time Fitness	Dallas, Garland, Plano
Just Fitness 4 U	Carrollton, Mesquite, Plano (2), Richardson
Planet Fitness	Dallas, Farmers Branch, Garland, Grand Prairie
Snap Fitness	Dallas, Duncanville, Mesquite
Trophy Fitness Club	Addison, Dallas (3)

Local Fitness Centers

Competitor	Location(s)
Blast Fitness	Mesquite
Beyond Physical Fitness	Duncanville
CrossFit 3816	Desoto
CrossFit North	Mesquite
Crull Fitness	Richardson
Get Fit Fitness	Seagoville
Head 2 Toe Fitness	Irving
Sweat	Dallas
The Texas Club	Dallas

Recreation and Senior Centers

Competitor	Location(s)
Addison Athletic Club	Addison
Alan E. Sims Recreation Center	Cedar Hill
Audubon Recreation Center	Garland
Balch Springs City Recreation Center	Balch Springs
Bradfield Recreation Center	Garland
Carrollton Senior Center	Carrollton
Charley Taylor Recreation Center	Grand Prairie
Cimarron Park Recreation Center	Irving
Crosby Recreation Center	Carrollton
Dalworth Recreation Center	Grand Prairie
Desoto City Fitness Center	Desoto
Duncanville City Recreation Center	Duncanville
Duncanville Fieldhouse	Duncanville
Dunford Recreation Center	Mesquite
Evans Recreation Center	Mesquite
Farmers Branch Rec Center	Farmers Branch
Farmers Branch Senior Center	Farmers Branch
Fields Recreation Center	Garland
Florence Recreation Center	Mesquite
Georgia Farrow Recreation Center	Irving
Granger Recreation Center	Garland
Heights Recreation Center	Richardson
Holford Recreation Center	Garland
Hollabaugh Recreation Center	Garland
Huffhines Recreation Center	Richardson
Lancaster City Recreation Center	Lancaster
Lee Park Recreation Center	Irving
Lovely Pointe Youth Center	Irving
Mustang Park Recreation Center	Irving
Northwest Park Recreation Center	Irving
Rosemeade Recreation Center	Carrollton
Rutherford Recreation Center	Mesquite
Senter Park Recreation Center	Irving
The Summit: 50+ Center	Grand Prairie
Tom Muehlenbeck Recreation Center	Plano
Tony Shotwell Life Center	Grand Prairie
Willow Bend Fitness Club	Plano

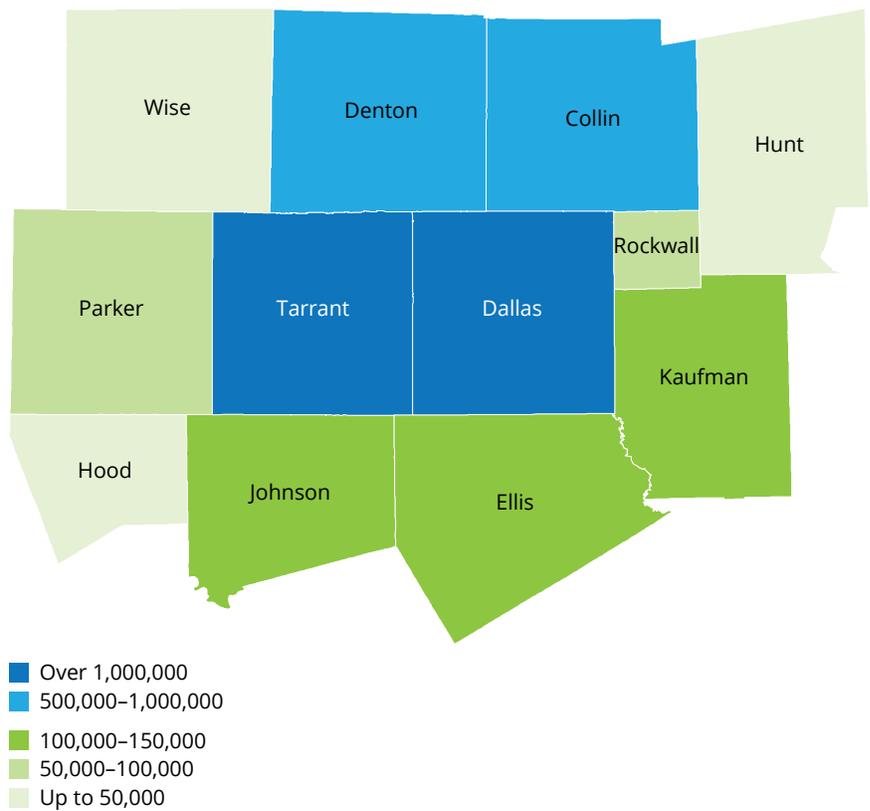
Trends

Demographic Trends

Metropolitan Area Trends

The Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex is growing. Some counties in the Metroplex are expected to more than double their population by 2050. While Dallas County is at the lower end of percent growth compared with other counties in the Metroplex, in absolute numbers, the County is projected to grow by about 1 million people by 2040 (Figure 10).

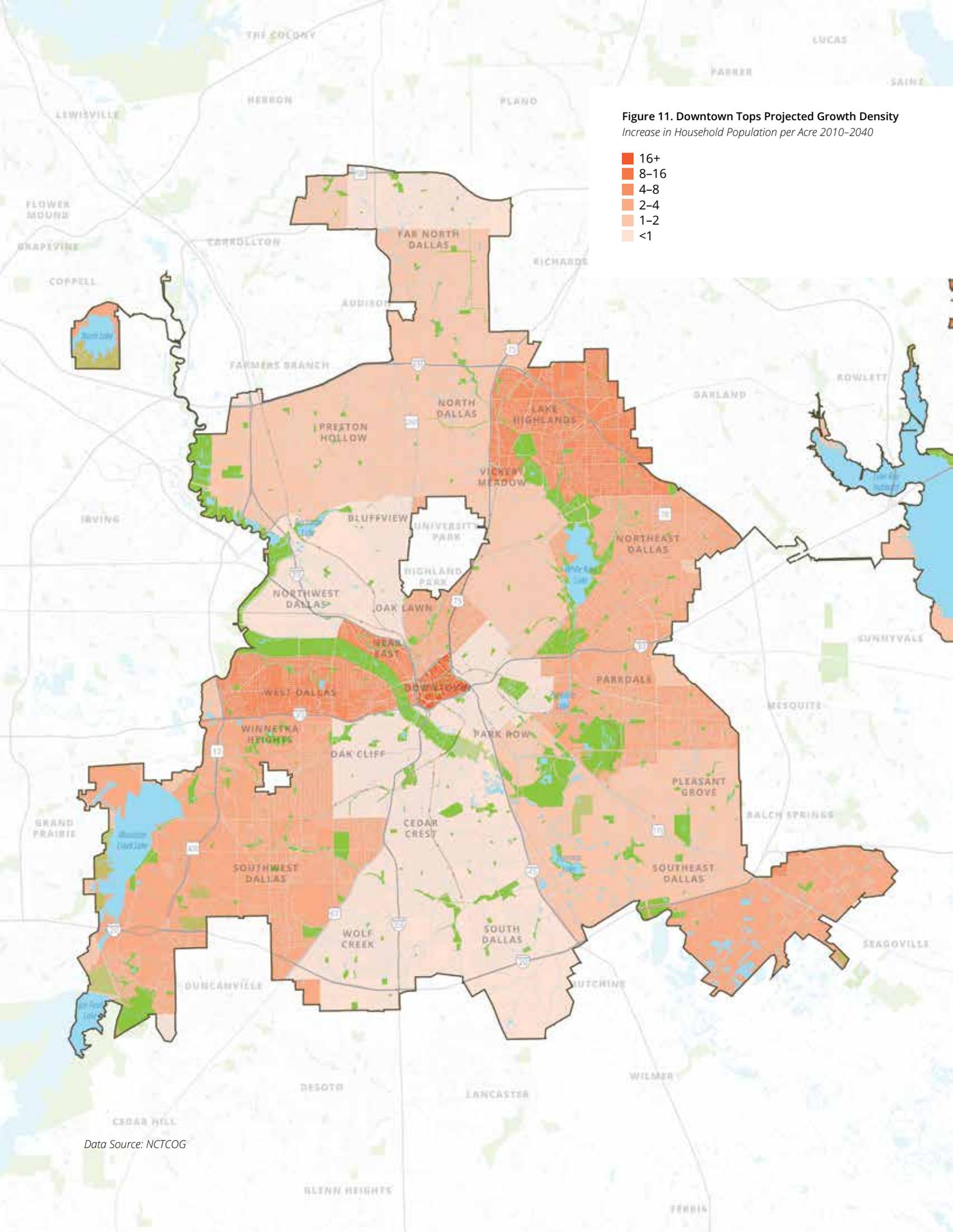
Figure 10. Dallas County Expected to Add
Percent Change in Population, 2000–2010



Source: Texas State Data Center

Figure 11. Downtown Tops Projected Growth Density
Increase in Household Population per Acre 2010-2040

- 16+
- 8-16
- 4-8
- 2-4
- 1-2
- <1



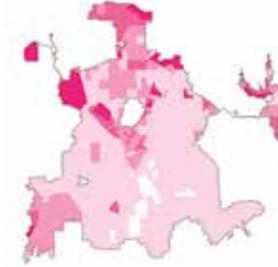
Data Source: NCTCOG

Figure 12. Dallas Has a Few Significant Demographic Spatial Patterns

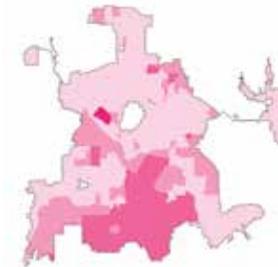
Share of 2014 Population Compared to the Citywide Share

- 4+ times citywide share
- 2-4 times citywide share
- 1-2 times citywide share
- less than or equal to citywide share

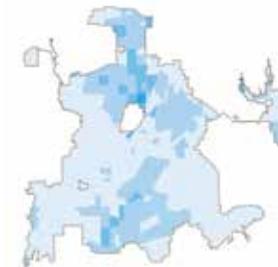
Asian Population



African American Population

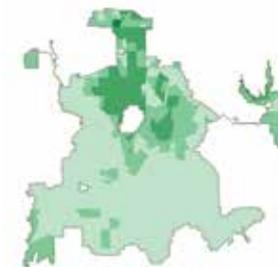


Senior Population



2014 Median Household Income Compared to Citywide Median Household Income

- 4+ times citywide median
- 2-4 times citywide median
- 1-1 times citywide median
- less than or equal to citywide median



Data Sources: NCTCOG, US Census, ESRI

City of Dallas Trends

Within the City of Dallas, the North Central Texas Council of Governments projects an increase of approximately 460,000 residents (Figure 11). Downtown Dallas is projected to have the greatest increase in density between 2010 and 2040, suggesting a need to complete the vision of the Downtown Parks Master Plan. Areas around White Rock Lake and the Katy Trail are also projected to grow more than other parts of the city. This suggests that the City of Dallas will have to prepare to accommodate additional users at already successful amenities and provide additional parks and recreation experiences to serve existing and new residents.

In order to better understand the access of particular segments of the population to existing parks, a demographic analysis was performed to identify areas of the city with higher than average concentrations of particular age, ethnicity, and income groups. For most cohorts, the population is relatively evenly distributed across the city. However, a few significant patterns were observed (Figure 12).

Asian Population

There are some locations with over 4 times the city average share of Asian residents, including around Koreatown, around Dallas Love Field, around Richland College, and at the northern edge of the city bordering Plano.

African American Population

The share of black residents in southern Dallas, roughly between US 67 and US 175 south of the Trinity River, is 2 to 4 times higher than the city's average.

Senior Population

There is a high concentration of seniors in Preston Hollow and North Dallas, with some additional pockets of high concentration around Preston Road and the Dallas North Tollway in North and Far North Dallas and around I-35E and US 67 in South Dallas.

Household Income

Median household incomes are over 4 times the city average in areas including Uptown Dallas, around White Rock Lake, North Dallas, and Far North Dallas.

Recreation and Leisure Trends

Recreation preferences are dynamic, changing with shifts in demographics, economics, and technological developments. To better anticipate the city's future park and recreation needs, it is important to understand current national trends.

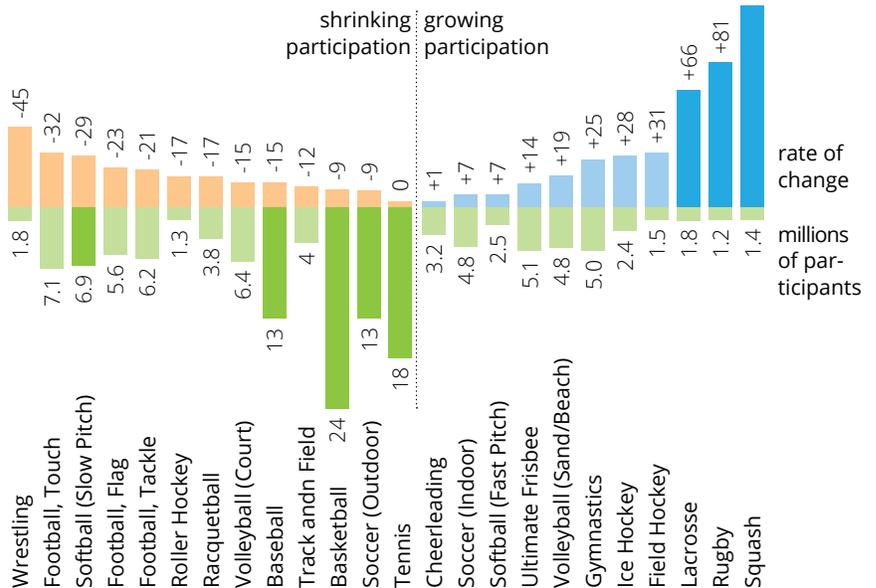
Sports

Basketball has the most participation of traditional “bat and ball” sports, with almost 24 million estimated participants. Its popularity can be attributed to limited requirements for the number of participants, equipment, and space.

Since 2008, squash and other niche sports like lacrosse and rugby have seen strong growth (Figure 13). Squash has emerged as the overall fastest growing sport, with participation levels rising by nearly 115% over the last five years. Based on survey findings from 2008 to 2013, rugby and lacrosse have also experienced significant growth, increasing by 81% and 66% respectively. Other sports with notable growth in participation over the last five years were field hockey (31%), ice hockey (28%), gymnastics (25%), and beach volleyball (19%).

Figure 13. Smaller niche sports are growing rapidly.

2013 Participation Numbers and Rates of Change, 2008–2013



Source: Sports & Fitness Industry Association

During the last five years, the sports that are most rapidly declining include wrestling (-45%), touch football (-32%), and slow pitch softball (-29%).

In terms of total participants, the most popular activities in the general sports category in 2013 include basketball (24 million), tennis (18 million), baseball (13 million), outdoor soccer (13 million), and slow pitch softball (6.9 million). Although three out of five of these sports have been declining in recent years, the sheer number of participants demands the continued support of these activities.

Aquatics

Swimming is unquestionably a lifetime sport. Swimming activities have remained very popular among Americans, and both competition and fitness swimming have witnessed a recent increase in participation. Fitness swimming is the absolute leader in multigenerational appeal with over 26 million reported participants in 2013, a 13.5% increase from the previous year. In 2011, recreational swimming was broken into competition and fitness categories in order to better identify key trends.

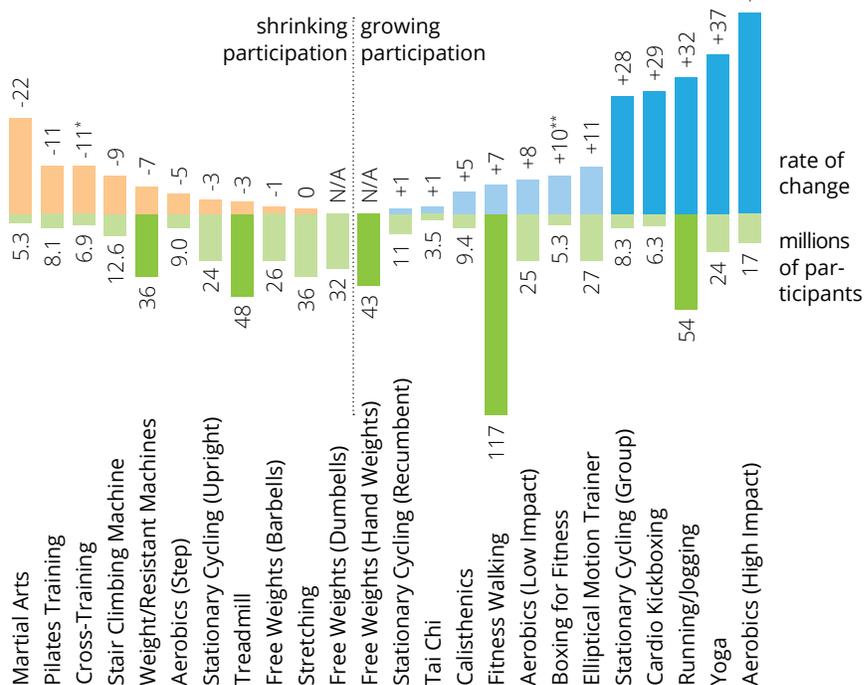
Aquatic exercise has paved the way for a less stressful form of physical activity, allowing similar gains and benefits to land-based exercise, including aerobic fitness, resistance training, flexibility, and better balance. Doctors have begun recommending aquatic exercise for injury rehabilitation, mature patients, and patients with bone or joint problems due to the significant reduction of stress placed on weight-bearing joints, bones, and muscles, and also the swelling-reducing effect of water pressure on injuries.

Fitness

National participation trends in general fitness have experienced strong growth in recent years. Many of these activities have become popular due to an increased interest among people to improve their health by engaging in an active lifestyle. These activities have very few barriers to entry, which provides a variety of activities that are relatively inexpensive to participate in and can be performed by nearly anyone with no time restrictions.

Over the last five years, the activities that are growing most rapidly are high impact aerobics (+47%), yoga (+37%), running/jogging (+32%), cardio kickboxing (+29%), and group stationary cycling (+28%). Most recently, from 2012 to 2013, the largest gains in participation were in boxing for fitness (+9% increase), Tai Chi (+8%), and high impact aerobics (+7%).

Figure 14. Fitness activities that encourage an active lifestyle are gaining in popularity.
 2013 Participation Numbers and Rates of Change, 2008–2013



*2012–2013 change used in place of unavailable 2008–2013 figures
 **2011–2013 change used in place of unavailable 2008–2013 figures

Source: Sports & Fitness Industry Association

The most popular fitness activity by far is fitness walking, which had over 117 million participants in 2013—a 3% increase from the previous year. Other leading fitness activities based on number of participants include running/jogging (54 million), treadmill (48 million), hand free weights (43 million), and weight/resistant machines (36 million).

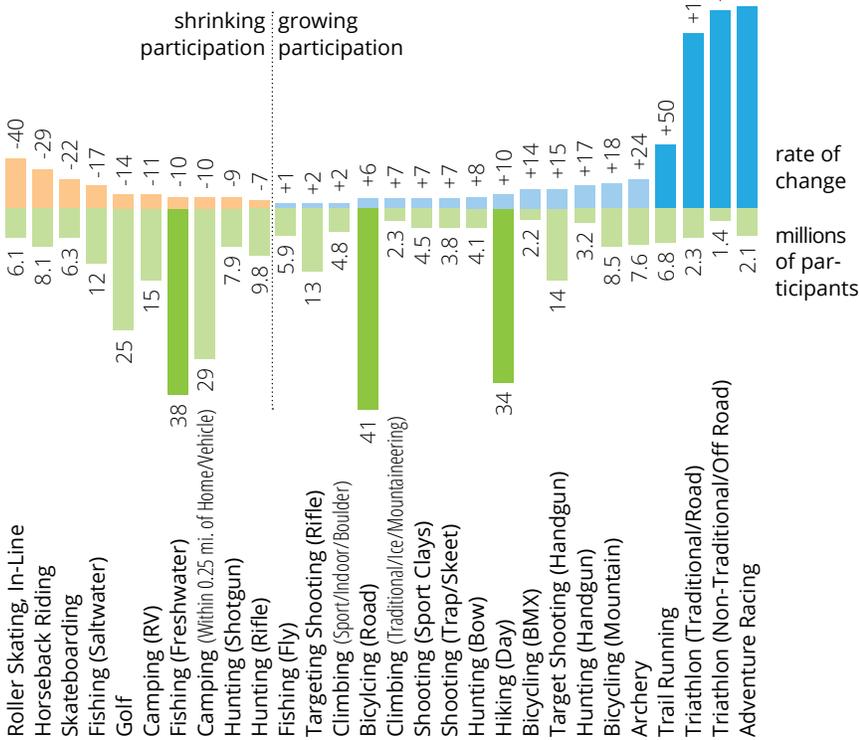
General Recreation

From 2008 to 2013, general recreation activities that have undergone very rapid growth are adventure racing (+159%), non-traditional/off-road triathlons (+156%), traditional/road triathlons (+140%), and trail running (+50%) (Figure 15). In-line roller skating, horseback riding, and skateboarding have all seen a substantial drop in participation, decreasing by 40%, 29%, and 22% respectively over the last five years.

Much like the general fitness activities, these activities encourage an active lifestyle, can be performed individually or with a group, and are not limited by time restraints. In 2013, the most popular activities in the general recreation category include road bicycling (41 million participants), freshwater fishing (38 million), and day hiking (34 million).

Figure 15. General recreation participation experiencing strong growth.

2013 Participation Numbers and Rates of Change, 2008–2013



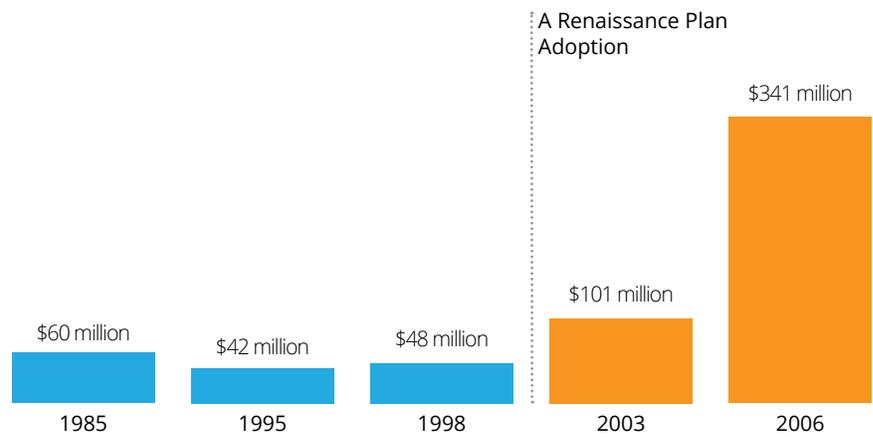
Source: Sports & Fitness Industry Association

Investment Trends

With the 2002 Renaissance Plan, the Park and Recreation Department was able to provide a concrete roadmap for improvements to parks and recreation, which led to a reversal of a downward trend in spending. The Department was able to secure \$341M worth of investment in the city's 2006 bond program, over three times as much as the previous bond program. Yet, the Department is still under-resourced.

Figure 16. City Bond Programs Included More Park and Recreation Funding after Adoption of a Comprehensive Plan

Bond Program Funding for Parks and Recreation



Engagement

Public Meetings

Public Meeting Series 1

In August 2014, a first series of public meetings included meetings held at Campbell Green, Janie C. Turner, Kiest, Grauwlyer, and Harry Stone recreation centers to get broad input on how residents envision the future of parks and recreation in Dallas. Each meeting started with a brief presentation about the planning process. Following the presentation, participants had the opportunity to provide input during an open house by voting with dots or writing comments on large format boards with prepared questions.

Public Meeting Series 2

In February 2015, a second series of public meetings included meetings held at MLK, Fretz, Pleasant Oaks, and Nash Davis recreation centers. Each meeting started with a brief presentation that summarized input from the first round of meetings, findings from the community survey, and results from the analysis phase of work. Following the presentation, participants had the opportunity to provide comments and ask questions.

Summary of Input

Input from the public meetings was used in aggregate with input from other forms of engagement. Because participation in the public meetings is self-selected, the input gathered does not represent a statistically valid cross-section of the city's population.

Participants

- Unsurprisingly, many of the participants at the public meetings live around the recreation centers where the meetings were held.

Most Used Parks

- Participants most often used the parks where the meetings were held. Other parks used often by participants included Timberglen, Fretz, Flag Pole Hill, White Rock Lake, Glencoe, St. Francis, the Dallas Arboretum, Tenison Park, Ferguson, Hillview, Cheyenne, Crawford Memorial, Main Street Garden, Klyde Warren, Reverchon, Pike, Bachman Lake, Elm Fork, and Luna Vista.

Figure 20. On Average, the Following Aspects of Accessibility, Facilities, and Programs Rated Between Fair and Poor
Rating by Category by Public Meeting Participants



Accessibility

- On average, accessibility at Dallas parks rated between fair and poor (Figure 20). Availability of parking rated fair to good at Campbell Green and Harry Stone and poor to very poor at Janie C. Turner and Keist. Accessibility via public transit rated fair to good at Janie C. Turner, while it rated poor to very poor at Campbell Green and Grauwylar.

Facilities

- On average, the facilities at Dallas parks rated between fair and poor (Figure 20). In general, ratings were higher at Harry Stone and lower at Keist. The availability of facilities for all ages was rated more highly at Grauwylar and Harry Stone and less highly at Campbell Green and Keist. Maintenance was rated more highly at Harry Stone and less favorably at Janie C. Turner and Keist. Grauwylar rated more highly for availability of amenities, and Keist rated less highly. Safety was rated better at Campbell Green and Harry Stone and worse at Grauwylar.

- The following facilities were identified as most important to participants.

Overall	Campbell Green	Janie C. Turner	Grauwylar	Keist	Harry Stone
1. Wellness	1. Wellness	1. Swim Lessons	1. Wellness	1. Swim Lessons	1. Home/ Garden
2. Home/ Garden	1. Special Events	2. Group Exercise	2. After School	2. Home/ Garden	2. Wellness
3. After School	3. Other Sports	2. Technology	3. Home/ Garden	2. Special Events	3. Performing Arts
4. Performing Arts	3. Games	2. Social Clubs	4. Performing Arts	4. Traditional Sports	4. Social Clubs
	3. Home/ Garden			4. Swim Team	4. After School

- The following special facilities were identified as most important to participants.

Overall	Campbell Green	Janie C. Turner	Grauwylar	Keist	Harry Stone
1. Fair Park	1. Arboretum/ BG	1. Zoo	1. Fair Park	1. Fair Park	1. Fair Park
2. Arboretum/ BG	2. Audubon Center	1. Arboretum/ BG	2. Arboretum/ BG	1. Zoo	2. Audubon Center
3. Audubon Center	3. Zoo	3. Fair Park	3. Zoo	3. Discovery Gardens	3. Arboretum/ BG
4. Zoo	4. Fair Park	4. Audubon Center	4. Cotton Bowl	3. Audubon Center	3. Cedar Ridge

Programs

- On average, the programs at Dallas parks rated between fair and poor (Figure 20). The fairness and affordability of fees and charges was rated more favorably at Keist and less favorably at Harry Stone.

Positive Feedback

- Multiple participants mentioned the following things Dallas Park & Recreation does well:
 - Klyde Warren and other downtown parks
 - staff that tries hard and cares
 - after school programs
 - maintenance
 - and parks that look nice
- Other strengths mentioned include: spray parks, reaching out to communities, adding trails, and the affordability of fields.



Providing input during Public Meeting Series 1.

Janie C. Turner Recreation Center



Needed Improvements

- Things Dallas Park & Recreation should improve upon that were mentioned by multiple participants:
 - communicating with the public and seeking citizen input
 - giving greater attention to neighborhood parks (not just downtown)
 - building new trails and increasing connectivity
 - using greener maintenance and management practices
 - providing sufficient recreation center space
 - seeking alternative funding sources
- Other areas for improvement mentioned include: training instructors, adding trees, offering more sections of recreation classes, increasing security, and improving restrooms.

Barriers to Use

- Reasons mentioned by multiple participants for why they and their families do not use Dallas parks or facilities included:
 - safety
 - lack of public restrooms
 - transportation issues or not having park space close enough
 - cost
 - lack of interest
- Other reasons include: lack of shade, not enough staff, parking, noisy crowds, and mosquitoes.

Most Attention Needed

- Parks, recreation facilities, and special use facilities identified by multiple participants as needing the most attention included:
 - trails
 - Pike Park
 - recreation centers (in general)
 - meeting locations Kiest and Janie C. Turner
- Other parks and facilities needing attention included: senior centers, neighborhood parks, Crawford Park, Cheyenne Park, Potters Creek Park, Bachman Lake Park, Grauwlyer Park, buildings around White Rock Lake, baseball fields, and soccer fields.

Online Forum

Purpose

From August 2014 to December 2014—a period before, during, and after the first round of public meetings—the online platform MindMixer was used to allow members of the community to contribute ideas and provide feedback remotely. The questions in the online forum mirrored the questions asked at the first round of public meetings to engage a broader audience of individuals who could not or did not participate in the public meetings or the public survey.

Summary of Input

Participants

- Public response to the survey was limited. In total, 45 individuals responded.
- The largest concentration of responses was collected from ZIP code 75218.
- The highest concentration of survey respondents identified the neighborhood they live in as Eastwood (5 respondents). Other neighborhoods with multiple respondents included Cedar Crest Country Club Estates (2), Kidd Springs (2), Lake Forest Hills (2), Lake Highlands (2), Old Lake Highland (2), and Pleasant Grove (2).
- Of the survey participants, 60% were male and 40% were female.
- All survey respondents were at least 25 years old, and over a third were over the age of 65.

Overall Impressions

- Respondents positively described Dallas Park & Recreation using words such as clean, fun, improving, convenient, good, high value, and great place to exercise.
- Words such as challenged, closed, underfunded, and inefficient suggest that there are areas where respondents feel Dallas Park & Recreation can improve.

Access

- Overall, 41% of respondents walk to the park or recreation center they use most often, while over a third drive (33%). The remaining bike (12%) or use some other form of transportation (14%).

- The majority of respondents (57%) typically travel a half mile or less to the park that they use most often. Although most travel less than a half mile, some respondents do travel up to 10 miles to reach the park they use most often.
- Sidewalk improvements, protected bike lanes and biking/walking programs for older citizens who want to stay active were mentioned as improvements that would encourage walking and biking more to parks.

Accessibility

- Overall, respondents identified the vehicular and pedestrian accessibility of Dallas park highly. Respondents ranked the availability of parking, ease of entry (clearly marked, multiple entrances, etc.), accessibility via public transit and accessibility to pedestrians as very good to good.
- Over half of respondents ranked accessibility to pedestrians (e.g., distance, safety, pedestrian facilities, etc.) and accessible facilities (e.g., handicap ramps) as fair, poor, or very poor.

Facilities

- The availability of programs, quality of programs, and fairness and affordability of fees and charges were largely rated as good. Although response was largely positive, 57% rated the diversity of programs as very poor to fair.
- Nearly half of respondents identified the availability of facilities for all ages as good to very good but ranked other facilities aspects as fair to poor. Responses suggest that respondents are not satisfied with the maintenance, availability of amenities, safety, and signage of facilities.
- While walking and biking trails received the most responses, passive uses such as open green space, natural/conservation areas and family use areas followed in importance of amenities.
- Amenities that were included in the survey but were not identified as important by any respondents included extreme sports areas, group fitness spaces, indoor active play space, media rooms, nature rooms, and running tracks.
- Most respondents identified Fair Park, Dallas Arboretum & Botanical Garden, Dallas Zoo, Trinity River Audubon Center, and Cedar Ridge Preserve as the most important special use facilities.

Programs

- The most popular programming included special events, performing arts, education, wellness and exercise and sport opportunities.
- Programs that were included in the survey but were not identified as important by any respondents included crafts, technology, games, seasonal camps, lifeguard training, and swim team.

Barriers to Use

- The following represent factors identified as obstacles to using Dallas parks or facilities.
 - Far travel distance
 - Limited hours of operation
 - Unaware of facilities, programming and special events

Positive Feedback

- Respondents indicated they like Dallas Park & Recreation walking trails and spraygrounds.

Needed Improvements

- Suggestions for future improvements included enhancing communications and marketing and increasing accessibility to parks.

Most Attention Needed

- Suggestions included Norbuck Park facility upgrades, better management at natural/conservation areas, and increased maintenance and marketing at Lake Highlands Park.

Soliciting online input.

Dallas Park and Recreation MindMixer Site

The screenshot displays the Dallas Park & Recreation MindMixer website. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, Topics, Activity, and About, along with a search icon, a notification bell, and buttons for Sign Up and Log In. The main banner features the text "Welcome to Dallas Park & Recreation." and "Provide input into the Dallas Park & Recreation Department's Comprehensive Plan Update and Recreation Master Plan." Below the banner are buttons for "Connect with Facebook" and "Sign Up with Email".

The "Topics" section is active, showing a topic titled "Most Often Used Park" posted on Nov 5 with 38 interactions. The topic is now closed. The survey question is "What neighborhood do you live in, and which park do you use most often?". A survey icon is visible next to the question, and a button labeled "See the Survey" is located at the bottom right of the topic card.

Stakeholder Input

Stakeholder Interviews

Public, nonprofit, and private sector stakeholders were interviewed during the comprehensive planning process. Stakeholders included elected officials, representatives from county and city government departments and agencies, natural resource advocates, recreation and program partners, Park and Recreation Board members, and Park and Recreation Department staff.

Park and Recreation Board Briefings

Throughout the process, the Park and Recreation Board was briefed 12 times by Department staff and their consultants to keep the Board apprised of plan progress.

Public Survey

Methodology

A public survey was conducted online and by phone from October to December 2014. The survey was available in English and Spanish and received over 1,163 responses. The results represent a statistically valid cross-section of the city's population, with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 3.2%.

Key Findings

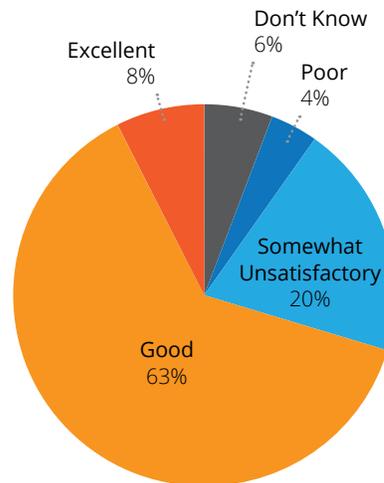
The following are key findings from the public survey. A copy of the survey sent to residents and the full survey results can be found in [Appendix X](#).

Satisfaction

- Almost three-fourths (71%) rated parks and recreational opportunities in the City of Dallas as excellent or good (Figure 21).

Figure 21. Nearly Three Quarters of Survey Respondents Rated Parks and Recreational Opportunities in the City of Dallas as Excellent or Good

Percentage of Respondents



- The park and recreation facilities with highest satisfaction ratings were Dallas Arboretum (81%), Klyde Warren Park (67%), Dallas Zoo (66%), parks (59%), Fair Park (53%), and trails (49%).
- Those said to need the most improvement were community pools (16%), Fair Park (12%), and recreation centers (11%).
- More than half of respondents have participated in a City of Dallas recreation program within the past 12 months across all age groups,

Access

- A majority of respondents drive to the park and recreation facilities that they use, while one-fourth walk (Figure 23).
- More than half (57%) of respondents reported there are adequate parks and green space with walking or biking distance of their home.

Facility and Program Needs

- The most important facilities for the Department to focus on in the future are senior centers, fitness centers, off-leash dog parks, computer labs, and open play spaces for practice or other uses.
- The most important programs for the Department to focus on in the future are senior programs, before and after school programs, and adult fitness and wellness programs, youth swim programs, and youth summer programs.

Funding

- Almost three-fourths of respondents are very or somewhat supportive of some increase in program or recreation fees or a tax increase to support the recreation facilities and programs that are most important to them and their households.
- The highest funding priorities identified were enhancing park maintenance, renovating existing parks and facilities, renovating existing recreation centers, building new hike, bike, walk, and jog trails, and building new senior centers.

Benefits

- Almost all respondents (95%) feel that quality parks, facilities, and programs are very or somewhat important to the overall pursuit of a healthy and active lifestyle for their family.
- Almost all respondents (97%) feel that quality parks, facilities, and programs are very or somewhat important to the overall quality of life in Dallas (Figure 22).

Figure 23. Over Three Times as Many People Drive to Parks as Walk
Percentage of Respondents Using Each Mode

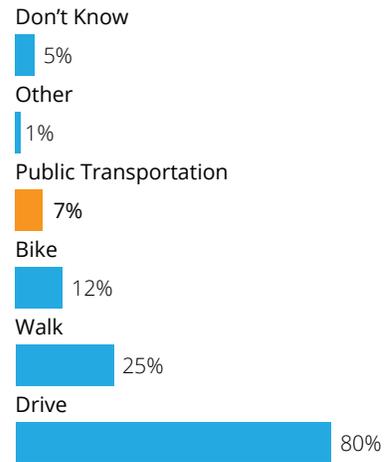
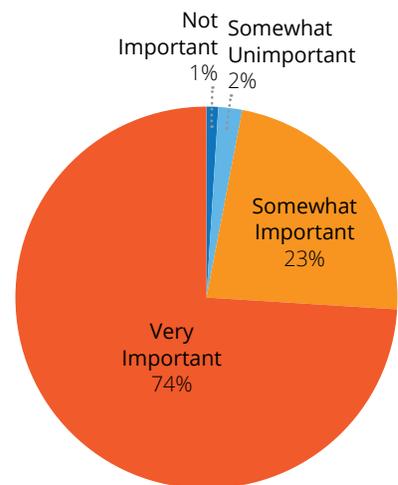


Figure 22. Almost All Respondents Think Parks, Facilities, and Programs are Important to Overall Quality of Life
Percentage of Respondents



Ensuring statistically valid input.
Public Survey Excerpt

Dear Resident,

The City of Dallas' mission is to provide you with high quality, reliable park and recreation services as efficiently as possible. This survey represents a proactive effort to help us responsibly and effectively plan for Dallas' future while also identifying and prioritizing our current needs.

For us to compile accurate information your participation is extremely important. **Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and return it within the next 10 days.** Your specific answers will be completely anonymous. Simply fold and tape the survey so the return address to National Service Research is visible and drop it in the mail **or** you may complete the survey online by visiting www.dallasparks.gov and clicking on the 2014 Park and Recreation Survey feature. Please complete only one survey per household. Thank you in advance for your invaluable participation!

Estimado residente,

La misión de la Ciudad de Dallas es proveer servicios de alta calidad y confianza a los parques y servicios de recreación de la manera más eficaz. Este estudio representa un esfuerzo proactivo para planificar eficazmente el futuro de Dallas' mientras también identificando y priorizando nuestras necesidades actuales.

Para poder recopilar información precisa su participación es muy importante. **Por favor tome unos minutos para completar esta encuesta y devuélvalo dentro de los próximos 10 días.** Sus respuestas específicas serán totalmente anónimas. Usted puede tomar la encuesta en Español en línea visitando www.dallasparks.gov y haciendo clic en la función de Parque y Recreación Encuesta de 2014.

Sincerely,

Willis Winters, FAIA, Director, Park and Recreation Department

City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department Citizen Survey

1. Overall, how would you rate the parks and recreational opportunities in the City of Dallas?

1 Excellent 2 Good/satisfactory 3 Somewhat unsatisfactory 4 Poor 5 No opinion

2. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the following facilities listed below.

(Check ONE answer for EACH Below)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Needs some improvement	Needs much improvement	Not aware / Don't Use
Parks	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Trails	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Athletic Facilities	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Recreation Centers	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Municipal Golf Courses	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Major Tennis Center Complexes	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Dallas Arboretum	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Trinity River Audubon Center	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Texas Discovery Gardens	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Bahama Beach Water Park	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Cedar Ridge Preserve	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Dallas Zoo	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Community Pools	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Fair Park	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

Priority Facility Needs

In the public survey, residents were asked to choose the most important facilities for the Park and Recreation Department to focus on in the future. The responses to each of these questions were synthesized into an Importance Rank. The top ten facilities by Importance Rank are split into outdoor and indoor facility priorities below.

Outdoor Facility Priorities

Importance Rank	Facility
3	Off-Leash Dog Park
5	Open Play Spaces
7	Outdoor Park Games
8	Youth Soccer Fields
9	Youth Baseball Fields
10	Horse Rental Stables

Indoor Facility Priorities

Importance Rank	Facility
1	Senior Centers
2	Fitness Centers
4	Computer Lab
6	Regional Recreation Center

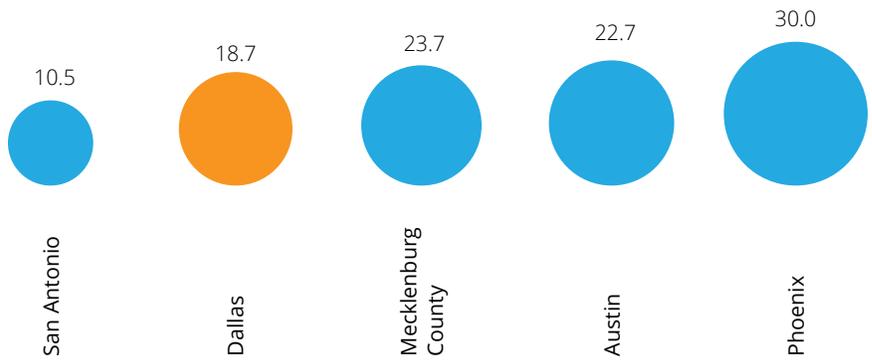
Analysis

Benchmarking

Parkland per Thousand Residents

Parkland per thousand residents is a metric that generally correlates with the density of a city due to development patterns and availability of land. Generally, the amount of parkland per thousand residents goes up as the density of a city goes down. Dallas is above the median for other medium-low density cities according to the Trust for Public Land’s 2015 City Park Facts. However, at 18.7 acres of parkland per thousand residents, Dallas is toward the lower end compared to its peers (Figure 24).

Figure 24. Dallas Falls in the Middle of Its Peers in Amount of Parkland
Total Acres per 1,000 Population



Trail Miles per Thousand Residents

Trail miles per hundred thousand residents speaks to the overall availability of trails within a city. With over 125 miles of existing trails, Dallas has about 0.12 trail miles per thousand residents. This puts Dallas just slightly below the median of the 52 largest cities in the country. Including 27.5 miles of programmed and funded but unbuilt trails would put Dallas at about 0.15 trail miles per thousand. If Dallas were to complete the trail circuit and build the programmed trails plus 134 miles of proposed trails, the city would have over 0.28 trail miles per thousand, ranking fifth among large cities.

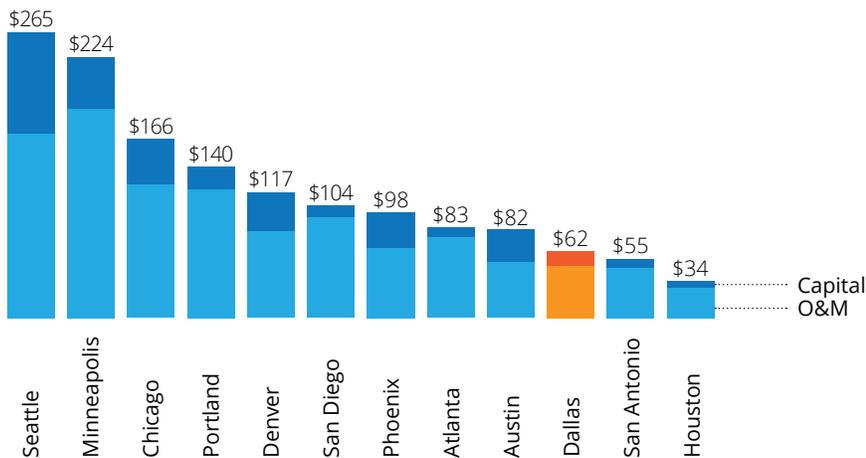
Figure 25. Dallas has Fewer Trail Miles per Person Compared to Peers
Trail Miles per 1,000 Population



Spending per Resident

Spending per resident on parks and recreation is significantly lower in Dallas than in the city's economic competitors such as Denver, Phoenix, and Atlanta and aspirational peers such as Seattle, Minneapolis, Chicago, and Portland (Figure 26). With the roadmap provided in this plan, the Department has a new guide to investment that can be put before voters in the city's next bond program.

Figure 26. Dallas Spends Less per Resident than Peers on Parks and Recreation
O&M and Capital Spending per Resident



Recreation Facilities

The City of Dallas ranks the highest in basketball courts, tennis courts, and playgrounds compared to its peers. It falls in the middle of the pack in rectangular fields, diamond fields, picnic tables, and volleyball pits. The City is below the median in dog parks and skate parks.

Figure 27. Dallas Surpasses Its Peers in Basketball Courts, Tennis Courts, and Playgrounds, but Lags in Other Facilities

Number of Facilities

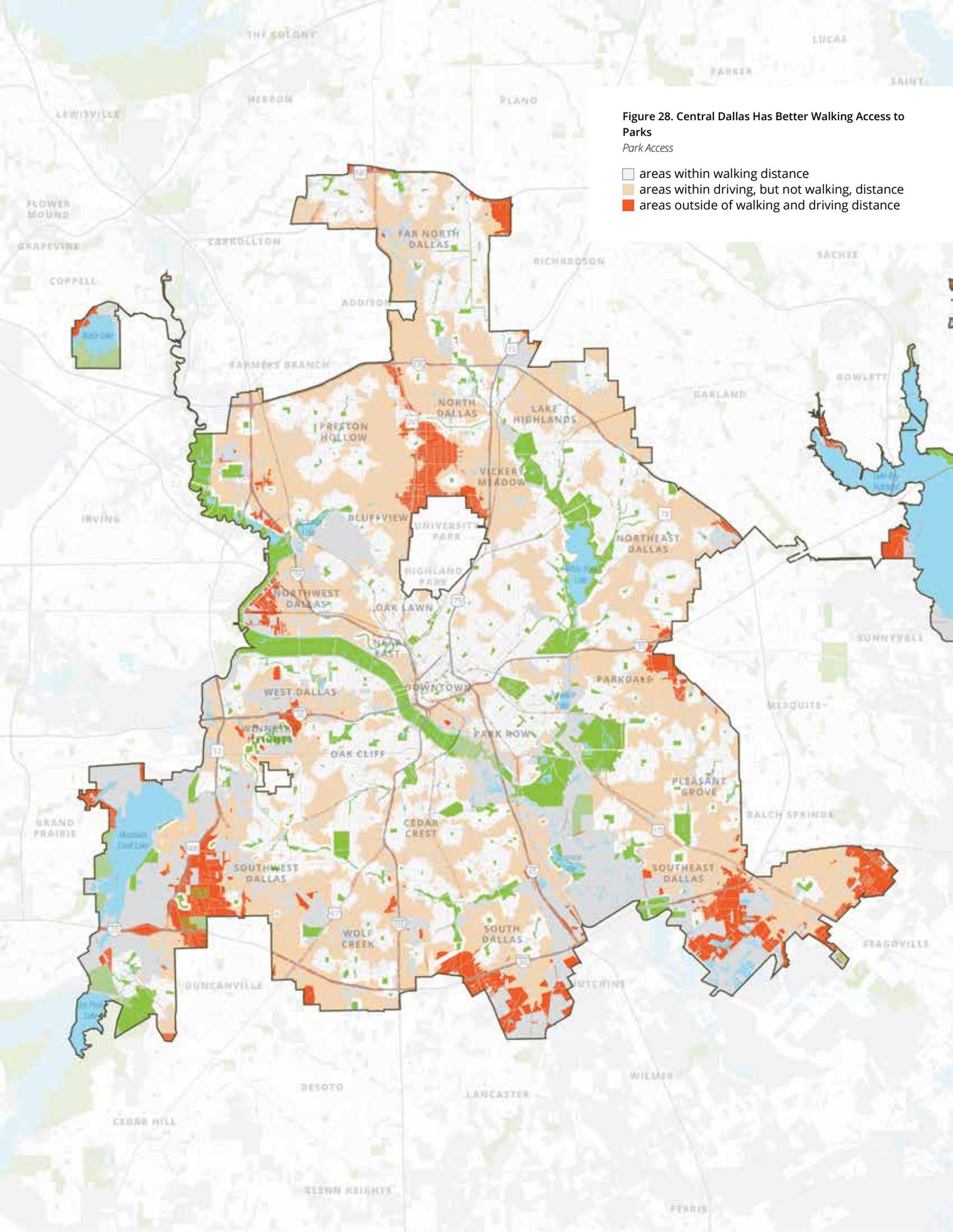
City	Rectangular Fields	Diamond Fields	Basketball Courts	Tennis Courts	Picnic Shelters/ Pavilions	Picnic Tables	Playgrounds	Dog Parks	Skate Parks	Volleyball Pits
Dallas	137	116	156	242	N/A	1,244	211	4	1	11
Phoenix	90	209	137	82	N/A	N/A	146	7	6	N/A
San Antonio	157	99	112	116	160	1,799	191	7	14	N/A
Mecklenburg Co.	131	11	111	149	160	N/A	186	6	1	45
Austin	101	70	77	124	76	802	145	12	3	N/A

■ Highest Number of Facilities
 ■ Median or Above
 ■ Below the Median

Figure 28. Central Dallas Has Better Walking Access to Parks

Park Access

- areas within walking distance
- areas within driving, but not walking, distance
- areas outside of walking and driving distance



Park Access

Walking and Driving Access

In addition to ensuring Dallas has a sufficient amount of parkland, the Park and Recreation Department must consider the location of its parkland and how accessible it is to residents. Based on available data, the Dallas parks system was analyzed to determine areas of the city with good and poor access to parks. Park access was measured in two respects: walking access and driving access. Distances along the existing road network to current parks and trails revealed areas of the city that meet access standards and identified gaps in service (Figure 28).

More than three quarters (78%) of survey respondents indicated they would walk at least a half mile (about a 10-minute walk) to get to a park. To determine walking access, parks were given a maximum walking radius, equal to the smaller of a half mile or the service radius specified in its park classification. In effect, this meant all parks were given a half-mile radius except for mini parks, which used a quarter-mile radius. Walking distance was calculated using distance along the existing sidewalk and trail network. Based on these factors, about 51% of the existing and projected population in Dallas has a park within walking distance.

Nearly all (92%) survey respondents indicated they would drive at least 2 miles to get to a park. To determine driving access, parks were given a maximum driving radius, equal to the smaller of 2 miles or the service radius specified in its park classification. Based on these factors, another 41% of the existing and projected population has a park with driving distance but not walking distance. About 8% of the population has no park within walking or driving distance.

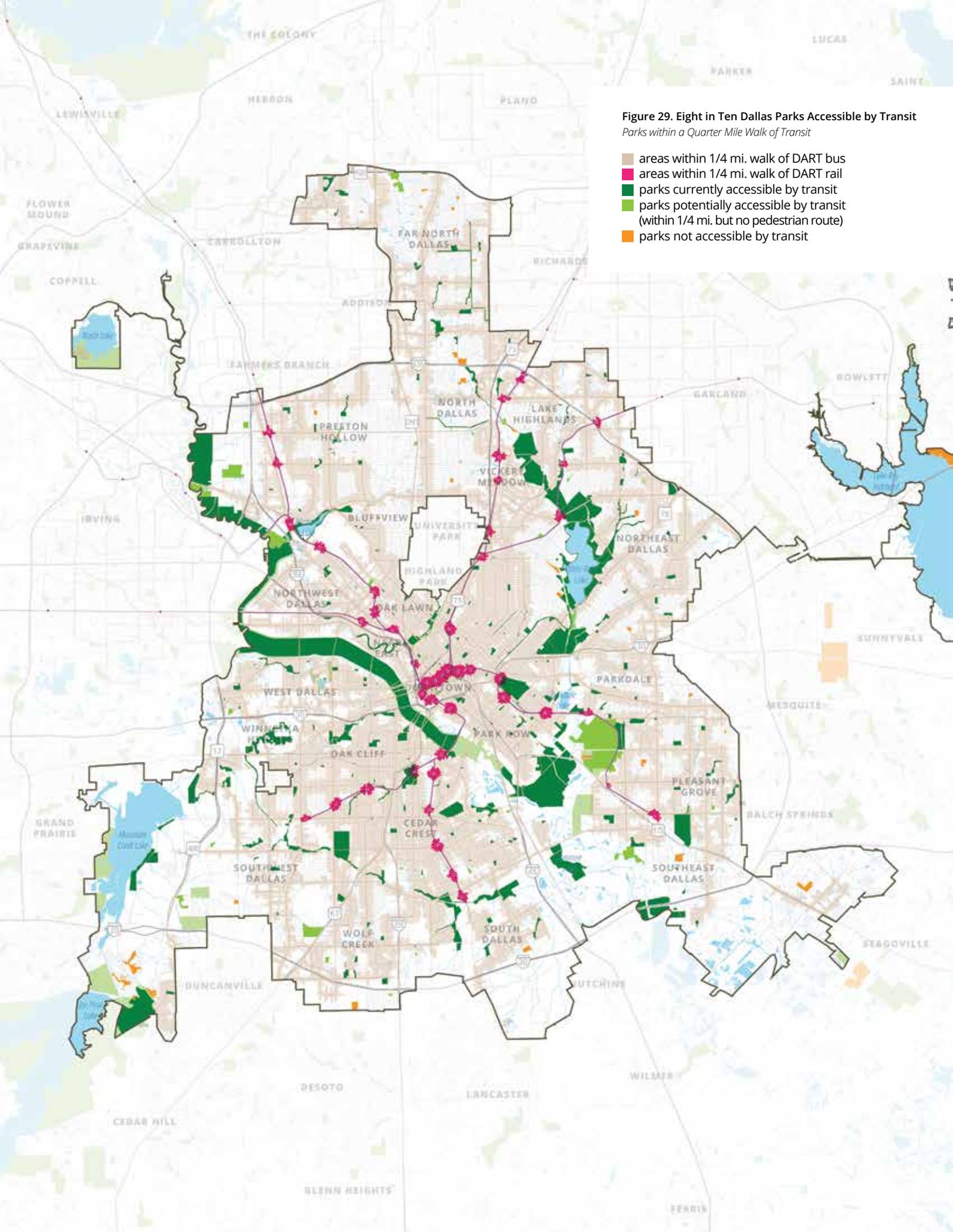


Figure 29. Eight in Ten Dallas Parks Accessible by Transit
Parks within a Quarter Mile Walk of Transit

- areas within 1/4 mi. walk of DART bus
- areas within 1/4 mi. walk of DART rail
- parks currently accessible by transit
- parks potentially accessible by transit (within 1/4 mi. but no pedestrian route)
- parks not accessible by transit

Transit Access

Considering transit access, the half mile walking distance is split in half, accounting for about a quarter mile walk to transit and a quarter mile walk from transit to a park. Only 39 of the city's 380 parks are within a quarter mile walk of DART rail along the existing sidewalk and trail network. An additional 10 parks are within a quarter mile of rail as the crow flies, but there are no adequate pedestrian connections between these parks and the rail stations. Over 80% (312) of the city's parks are within a quarter mile of DART bus along the existing sidewalk and trail network. An additional 13 parks are within a quarter mile of rail as the crow flies, but there are no adequate pedestrian connections between these parks and the rail stations.

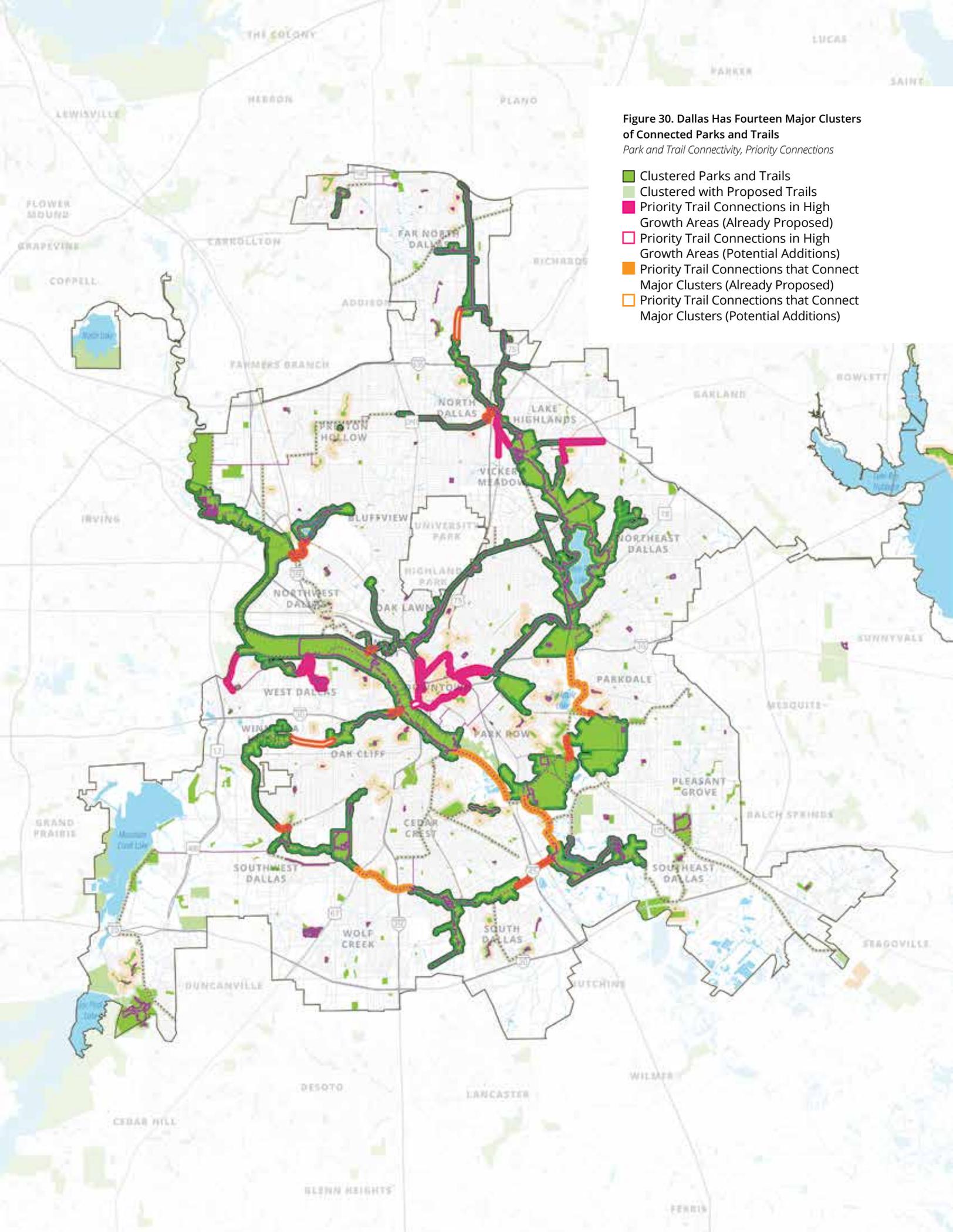


Figure 30. Dallas Has Fourteen Major Clusters of Connected Parks and Trails

Park and Trail Connectivity, Priority Connections

- Clustered Parks and Trails
- Clustered with Proposed Trails
- Priority Trail Connections in High Growth Areas (Already Proposed)
- Priority Trail Connections in High Growth Areas (Potential Additions)
- Priority Trail Connections that Connect Major Clusters (Already Proposed)
- Priority Trail Connections that Connect Major Clusters (Potential Additions)

Park and Trail Connectivity

Park and Trail Clusters

Park and trail clusters speak to the connectivity between parks and trails and the variety of experiences available geographically. Park connectivity is measured by examining the proximity of public parks and trails to each other. Adjacent parks, including ones that may be located across a street from one another, and trails that go through or are adjacent to parks were considered connected. All parks and trails connected to each other were grouped into clusters. There are currently 14 major clusters of connected parks and trails (Figure 30).

Synthesis

Strengths, Deficiencies, Opportunities, and Constraints

The following is a synthesis of findings from the public survey, public meetings, stakeholder interviews, staff survey, and facilities analysis.

Strengths

Strengths describe aspects of the Dallas Park and Recreation Department and the city's parks and recreation system that are working well—positive internal characteristics.

- Recreation plays an important role in the community.
- Nearly two thirds rated parks and recreational opportunities as excellent.
- Youth and senior programming is strong.
- Golf is strongly positioned since upgrading facilities.
- The Department strives for a high level of customer service.
- An enthusiastic group of athletic organizations is dedicated to using and improving parks.
- Signature parks, including downtown parks, are highly visible, recognized assets.
- There is emphasis on good design, particularly in the downtown parks and the pavilion program.
- Parks such as Klyde Warren that have been highly programmed are attracting many users.
- Parks have significant or unique natural and historic resources.
- Almost all think parks, facilities, and programs are very or somewhat important to a healthy and active lifestyle and overall quality of life.
- Managers are highly competent and perform well.
- Leadership and staff have a track record of achieving goals, as evidenced by Renaissance Plan accomplishments.
- Major spine trails (Katy, White Rock, Great Trinity Forest) are well used and connect several parks.
- The Park Ambassador program is well respected.
- Bond money has been successfully leveraged with partnership investment.

Deficiencies

Deficiencies describe aspects of the Department or the parks and recreation system that are lacking—negative internal characteristics.

- The five most needed facilities are senior centers, fitness centers, off-leash dog parks, computer labs, and open play spaces.
- The five most needed programs are senior programs, before and after school programs, adult fitness and wellness programs, youth swim programs, and youth summer programs.
- There is a lack of coordination and consistency between recreation centers.
- There is a lack of collaboration between divisions.
- There is no unified strategy or approach to golf and tennis, where pros manage individual sites.
- Many recreation facilities, tennis centers, and sports complexes do not have business plans.
- Recreation center managers do not sufficiently understand their budgets or cost recovery.
- Recreation centers are not open at prime times for certain users (e.g., for league use on weekends and for seniors in the morning).
- Recreation center programming is frequently not tailored to the demographics of the service area.
- Programming targeting teens, young adults, and active adults is insufficient.
- Facility reservation procedures are unclear, resulting in conflicts and inadequate maintenance of parks.
- Some athletic facilities are in poor physical condition.
- There is inadequate maintenance, particularly around restroom facilities.
- The Department lacks trained staff and funding to repair and restore historic resources.
- There is a lack of sufficient communication about what the Department has accomplished, what it is currently doing, why, and when it will be completed.
- There is no unified marketing and communication strategy.
- High use areas such as trails have limited amenities to enhance user comfort (e.g., shade structures, trees, lighting, water fountains, benches, bathrooms, parking).
- Some heavily used trails lack sufficient capacity (e.g., around White Rock Lake), resulting in user conflicts.
- The process of using trails for events is cumbersome.
- Environmental sustainability is not a priority.
- There are no horticulturalists or natural resources specialist on staff.

- Perceived lack of safety discourages park use.
- Only 57% feel there are adequate parks and green space within walking distance of their home.
- There is a lack of coordination between the Department and its contractors and a lack of recognition of the contributions of each.
- The potential of the Trinity River corridor has not been realized.
- There is a perceived inequity in the quality of facilities north and south of the Trinity River.

Opportunities

Opportunities describe forces or trends, but also internal and external assets, that the Department can take advantage of—positive, primarily outside influences.

- Existing data could better inform decision making.
- A partnership with DISD could enhance recreation facilities at schools and improve parkland accessibility.
- A stronger relationship with the Parks Foundation could establish targets for fund raising and leverage private donations.
- Existing and additional friends groups could support Department efforts and leverage resources.
- Many parks are within walking distance of public transportation, and others may be accessible for events with shuttle service.
- Fair Park has the potential to be better utilized.
- Projected growth around White Rock Lake, in Far North Dallas, in Koreatown, and downtown may add to the user base and revenues in those areas.
- North Dallas / Northwood Hills / Preston Hollow and Cedar Crest / Highland Hills / Wolf Creek could be good areas to target senior-oriented programming due to geographic clusters of seniors.
- With some relatively small linkages that are already proposed in the city's trail plan, the trail network and adjacent parks could be vastly more connected.
- Three quarters of residents would walk a half mile, bike a half mile, or drive 5 miles to get to a park or recreation facility that has the amenities or programs most important to them.
- Nearly three quarters of residents are very or somewhat supportive of some increase in fees or taxes to support the programs and facilities most important to them.
- The city manager and council recognize the importance of the park system to the city's future.
- Park funding bids that can pay for even half their cost are likely to be approved by council.

- Community-supplemented funding for improvements may be possible in the northern part of the city where median income is high.
- There may be a potentially unserved market in fitness with users who are novices or otherwise do not feel comfortable at commercial gyms.
- There may be a potentially unserved market in recreational league sports that are not ultra-competitive.
- The Trinity River corridor has large inherent potential for parks and recreation.
- Historic, cultural, and natural resources in parks are ripe for education and interpretation.
- Parks and trails have space to accommodate vendors, concessions, and rentals that could encourage people to spend more time using those resources and generate additional revenue.

Constraints

Opportunities describe forces or trends that hamper the Department—negative, primarily outside influences.

- Lack of appreciation results in theft and vandalism.
- Groups and leagues that make advance reservations are monopolizing facilities and locking out neighbors' casual use.
- Sports fields are being commandeered without permits.
- The Department competes with sports organizations in youth and adult leagues.
- The Department competes with schools, churches, non-profits in youth programs.
- The Department competes with private and non-profit fitness facilities.
- The Department and Trinity Watershed Management have overlapping priorities and staff responsibilities.
- Projected population loss in the Riverway Estates / Pleasant Grove / Balch Springs and Wynnewood / Elmwood / Winnetka Heights / Kessler Plaza areas could reduce the user base and revenues in those areas.
- Projected population growth near White Rock Lake (Vickery Meadows / Northeast Dallas) could add more users to already heavily used assets.
- Community-supplemented funding for improvements is likely to be difficult in the southern part of the city where median income is low.
- Some residents who would use parks and recreation facilities do not have access to transportation to get there.
- Parochialism and the Park Board structure make it difficult to plan for and implement regional facilities.

- The responsibility for building and maintaining trails is split among the Park and Recreation Department, Trinity Watershed Management, and the Public Works Department.
- There is no sufficient or sustained funding stream for park maintenance.
- There is no current source of funding for park acquisition or large capital improvements.

Level of Service

Level of service is a method of comparing the current set of parks and amenities with certain targets based on existing and projected population to determine what additional parks and amenities may be needed in the city.

The current inventory of parks and amenities takes into account some facilities made available by providers other than the Park and Recreation Department, as described in the Existing Conditions section. Recommended level of service is based on a combination of 1996 NRPA standards, best practices, and 2014 PRORAGIS data, adjusted to take into account local conditions and ensure achievable targets.

Figure 31. Dallas Does Not Meet Recommended Level of Service Standards for Most Parks Now and Projected into the Future*Current and Recommended Level of Service Standards for Parks and Acres Needed by Classification*

Park Classification	Existing		Service Level (Units per Population)				Acres Needed		
	Total	Units	Current		Recommended		2014	2019	2024
Mini Park	15	acres	0.01 /	1,000	0.01 /	1,000	-	-	-
Neighborhood Park	1,663	acres	0.63 /	1,000	1.50 /	1,000	1,081	1,201	1,303
Community Park	2,506	acres	2.01 /	1,000	2.50 /	1,000	604	804	974
Metro Park	2,903	acres	2.33 /	1,000	2.33 /	1,000	-	183	340
Regional Park	2,787	acres	2.24 /	1,000	2.50 /	1,000	323	524	693
Special Use Park	3,681	acres	2.96 /	1,000	3.00 /	1,000	51	292	495
Linear Park / Linkage	1,089	acres	0.88 /	1,000	1.00 /	1,000	155	236	303
Conservancy	9,796	acres	4.08 /	1,000	7.87 /	1,000	4,713	5,344	5,877
Total Park Acres	24,439	acres	15.15 /	1,000	20.71 /	1,000	6,921	8,583	9,985

Figure 32. Dallas Does Not Meet Recommended Level of Service Standards for Most Amenities Now and Projected into the Future*Current and Recommended Level of Service Standards for Amenities and Units Needed by Type*

Amenity	Existing		Service Level (Units per Population)				Units Needed		
	Total	Units	Current		Recommended		2014	2019	2024
Picnic Shelters/Tables	1,141	sites	1 /	1,090	1 /	1,500	-	-	-
Rectangular Fields (Lacrosse/Rugby/Football)	18	fields	1 /	69,111	1 /	40,000	13	15	17
Soccer Fields	123	fields	1 /	11,626	1 /	7,000	71	82	92
Diamond Fields	114	fields	1 /	11,207	1 /	7,000	67	78	88
Basketball Courts	151	courts	1 /	8,238	1 /	4,500	125	143	158
Tennis Courts	201	courts	1 /	6,189	1 /	4,800	58	75	89
Pickleball Courts	2	courts	1 /	622,003	1 /	40,000	29	31	33
Playgrounds	206	sites	1 /	6,039	1 /	4,000	105	125	142
Sand Volleyball	11	sites	1 /	113,091	1 /	50,000	14	15	17
Off Leash Dog Parks	5	sites	1 /	248,801	1 /	100,000	7	8	9
Skate Park	1	site	1 /	1,244,005	1 /	75,000	16	17	18
Golf Courses	6	sites	1 /	207,334	1 /	150,000	2	3	3
Major Nature Trails (Miles)	23	miles	0.02 /	1,000	0.10 /	1,000	101	109	116
Trails (Miles)	141	miles	0.11 /	1,000	0.22 /	1,000	133	150	165
Recreation/Aquatic Centers (Square Feet)	968,070	sf	0.63 /	1	1 /	1	461,920	542,155	609,850

Strategic Directions





Parkland

ENSURE ADEQUATE PARKLAND TO ACCOMMODATE FUTURE GROWTH.

As Dallas at the Metroplex continues to grow, the Park and Recreation Department must ensure that it has enough parkland to serve existing and new residents. Many citizens and stakeholders noted the vast existing park and recreation resources in the city, but there was a general desire for more green and open space. Some suggested that additional use of existing resources could be achieved with the support of partners, if those resources were easier to access, and if there were additional amenities and programs that made them more inviting to use. Growth may also put development pressure on valuable natural resources, and the Department must be proactive about protecting these resources before they are lost.

Escaping to a green oasis.
Turtle Creek Park

Actions

- 1.1. Upgrade or provide new parks and facilities to meet level of service standards and changing user needs.

Areas around White Rock Lake and the Katy Trail in particular are projected to grow more than average. This suggests that the City of Dallas will have to prepare to accommodate additional users at already successful amenities and provide additional parks and recreation experiences to serve existing and new residents.

- 1.1.1. Continue to acquire land and build new parks to serve growing parts of the city.
- 1.1.2. Upgrade or provide new parks and facilities in areas that are currently deficient by level of service standards.
- 1.1.3. Continue to develop downtown parks identified in the Downtown Park Master Plan Update.
- 1.1.4. Monitor existing upgrade needs and new park and facility needs over time.
- 1.1.5. Monitor national trends in parks, and incorporate new and innovative experiences to sustain community engagement.

- 1.2. Identify new minimum design and maintenance standards to guide the enhancement and development of existing and new parks, recreation centers, and other facilities to meet program needs and further other strategic directions.

Design and maintenance standards ensure a degree of consistency in experience from one park or facility to the next. Whether the Department or one of its partners implements a project in the city, it should meet these minimum standards. Standards are typically flexible enough to allow some degree of tailoring to individual identity or environmental conditions.

- 1.2.1. Define design and maintenance standards for each park classification and type of facility.
- 1.2.2. Incorporate universal access, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), and safety principles into design and maintenance standards.
- 1.2.3. Build on existing signage program, and define branding standards with sub-brands for signature parks and facilities.



More than half (57%) of respondents reported there are adequate parks and green space within walking or biking distance of their home.



63% of respondents think parks, facilities, and programs are very important for a healthy and active lifestyle.

- 1.3. Identify funding sources and secure funding to develop new or upgrade existing parks and facilities.

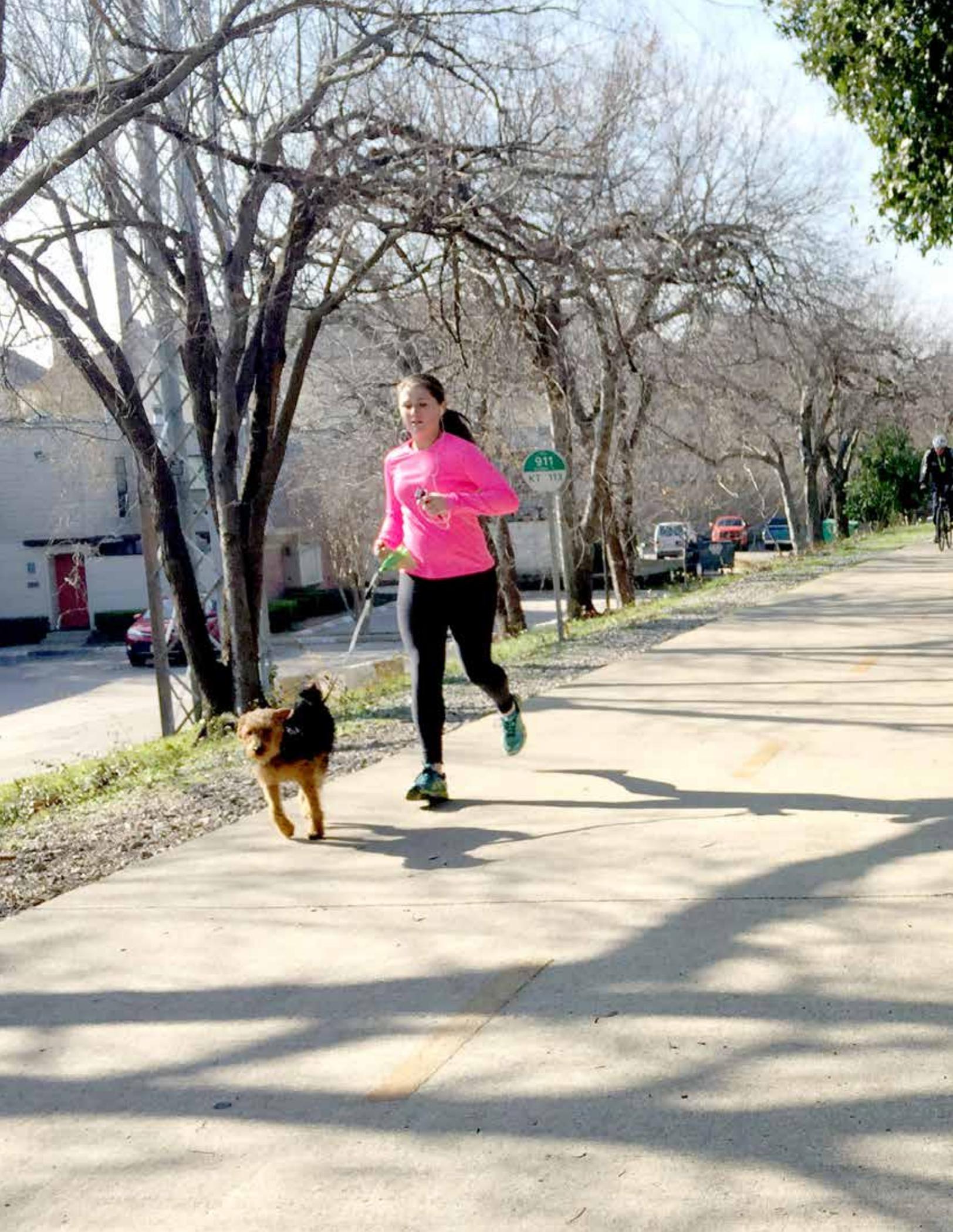
When asked where the Park and Recreation Department should focus its funding, the top three priorities indicated by survey respondents was enhancing park maintenance, renovating existing parks and facilities, and renovating existing recreation centers.

- 1.3.1. Advocate for sufficient funding in the capital improvements program to address identified needs.
- 1.3.2. Support and promote opportunities to leverage Park and Recreation Department funding with neighborhood-based, corporate, grant, and other funding (e.g., through public/public, public/private, and public/not for profit partnerships).
- 1.3.3. Explore the process required for implementation of a park development/park impact fee ordinance.

- 1.4. Develop an open space plan for greenways, wooded areas, and nature preserves.

A balanced ecosystem should have natural areas throughout the landscape, preferably connected together by greenways or linear parks. Intact natural systems perform multiple critical services beyond public enjoyment such as providing breathable air, drinkable water, a stable climate, and habitat; recycling waste; pollinating food crops; reducing negative stormwater, noise pollution, flooding, and greenhouse gas impacts; and lowering energy costs. Studies done by the National Recreation and Park Association (2010) and the Trust for Public Land (2009) have revealed that natural areas also provide economic benefits to communities that invest in them.

- 1.4.1. Inventory and categorize existing natural open space resources, and coordinate these efforts with other City departments.
- 1.4.2. Identify criteria and priorities for acquisition of new open space assets.
- 1.4.3. Develop management objectives and guidelines (e.g., level of improvement, conservation objectives, personnel/skill requirements) for natural open space resources.





Trails

CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT THE “TRAIL CIRCUIT” TO CREATE A MORE CONNECTED AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY.

The top three funding priorities identified by survey respondents related to maintenance and renovation of existing facilities. However, the top funding priority for new facilities was for new trails that can be used for hiking, biking, walking, and jogging. Citizens and stakeholders touted the success of the existing trail network and expressed a desire to see the system expanded to better link the city’s park and open space resources. This follows a national trend in trails being the most desired new amenities. While Dallas has made a lot of progress in implementing the “Trail Circuit” laid out in the Dallas Trail Network Master Plan, more work is needed to create a truly connected trail network.

Biking and jogging along a major linear trail.

Katy Trail

Actions

- 2.1. Improve coordination of inter-departmental trail planning and implementation.

Trails are a unique type of facility in form and function. They require rights-of-way or easements that cross properties with different owners, and they serve multiple purposes, including recreation and transportation. As such, the development and maintenance of trails is often split among many entities. In Dallas, planning, transportation, and public works partners have stakes in trails along with the Park and Recreation Department. For trail planning and implementation to be successful, all of these partners must work in tandem.

- 2.1.1. Work with City Departments, NCTCOG, foundations, and other partners to obtain primary responsibility for planning and implementation of all off-street trails.
- 2.1.2. Create a staff position to oversee the planning, implementation, and management of the trails system; coordinate with partners; and advise on associated economic development activities.
- 2.1.3. Identify, develop, and manage priority trail segments from the trail circuit that enhance system connectivity (e.g., link two or more parks or trails) or reach underserved areas.
- 2.1.4. Develop a management plan for key trails that addresses maintenance, safety, operation, and marketing.
- 2.1.5. Connect to adjacent trail systems beyond the city using NCTCOG's 2014 Regional Trails of North Texas as a guide.

- 2.2. Identify strategies and mechanisms for public and private funding of trail planning and implementation.

The appetite in Dallas for a high quality trail network trails can be seen not just in trail usage but in the supplemental funding that has been raised for trail planning and implementation. As an example, "the Friends of Katy Trail has privately raised over \$15 million in funding for developing and proving the trail."

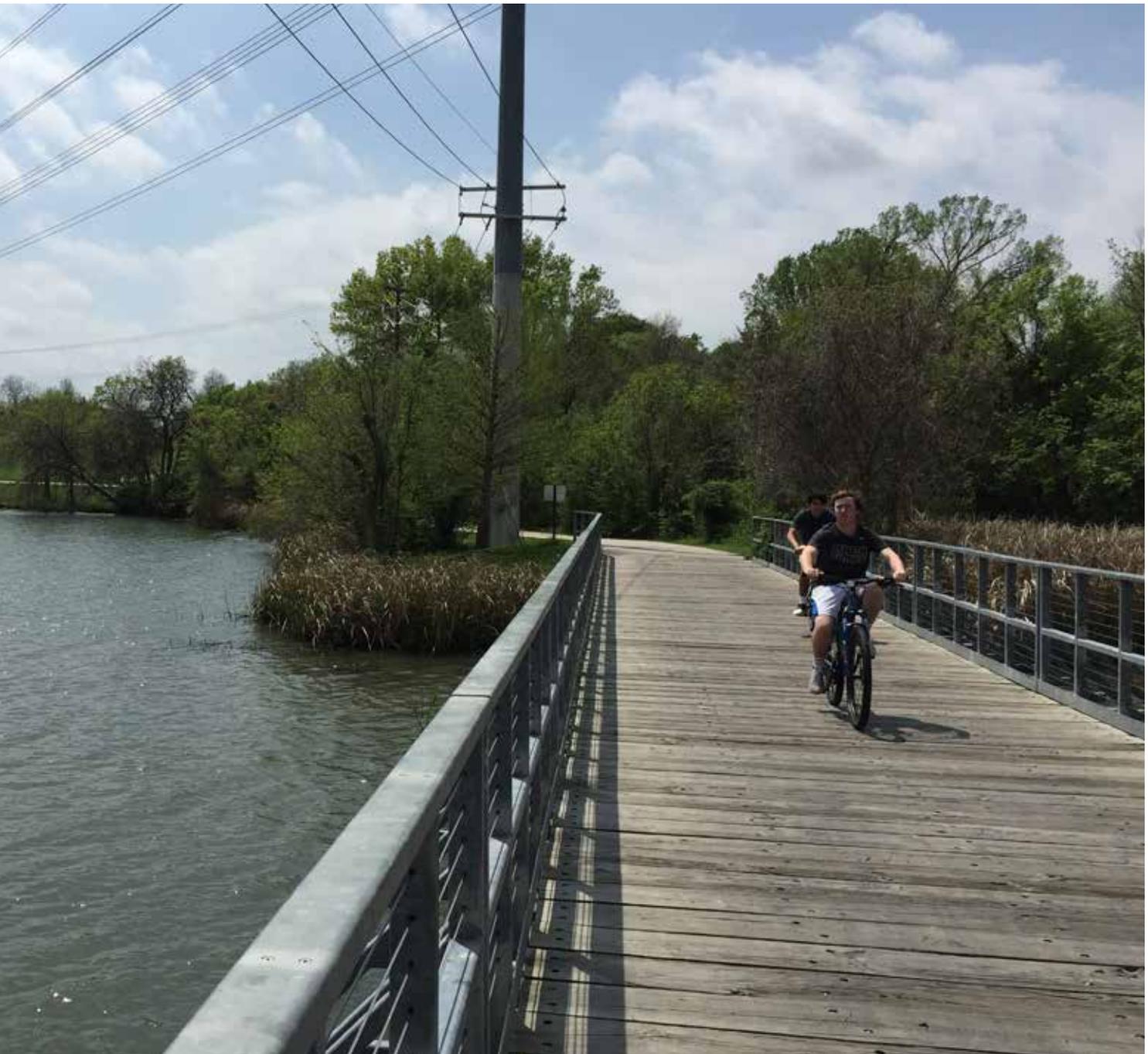
- 2.2.1. Support the establishment of a nonprofit organization to advocate for fundraising for trail construction and maintenance.
- 2.2.2. Involve trail friends groups and user groups in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of the city trail network.
- 2.2.3. Pursue trail grants from the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.



“ It is imperative that we complete our trail system in order to connect our neighborhoods.”

- Public Meeting Participant at Harry Stone Recreation Center

Offering a variety of trail experiences.
White Rock Lake Trail



2.3. Enhance user experience by providing more amenities along trails.

Basic amenities along trails, such as signage, benches, and water fountains, make regular and novice trail users more comfortable. In addition, the climate in Dallas makes for many hot days throughout the year that can negatively affect trail usage. Shade and water can mitigate these effects.

2.3.1. Work with neighbors, park friends groups, and trail user groups to determine which trail amenities would enhance the user experience.

2.3.2. Develop a comprehensive signage program for the trail system that alerts users to trail types, their hierarchy, trail connections, and destinations, and also contributes to the identity of the system.

2.3.3. Maintain and improve amenities along trails (e.g., restrooms, benches, shade, and parking).

2.4. Seek opportunities to generate revenue along trails.

Trails generate the highest return on investment of all park-related investments, generating over \$50 in development for every \$1 of capital invested." Trails are attractive amenities that can catalyze new development. New development provides economic benefits in terms of property-based tax revenue.

See also Action 6.3.

2.4.1. Work with Economic Development Department to develop criteria for identifying economic development opportunity sites.

2.4.2. Consider leasing of land adjacent to trails at trailheads for concessions (e.g., cafes, bike rentals, dog washing) to increase revenue opportunities.

2.4.3. Consider leasing of subsurface easements along rights of way to generate revenue.

2.5. Use trails to improve connections between parks and transit.

About a quarter of the parks in the Dallas system are within a half mile of a DART rail station and nearly all are within a half mile of a DART bus station. Yet, there is a lack of safe, easy multimodal connections between these parks and stations. This is of particular concern in areas with households that have no car available for shuttling people to and from parks.

2.5.1. Work with Trinity Watershed Management, the Public Works Department, DART, school districts, and nonprofit organizations to secure funding for better trail connections to and between neighborhoods, parks, transit stations, and citywide trails.



Trails generate the highest return on investment of all park-related investments, generating over \$50 in development for every \$1 of capital invested.

2.6. Establish a trail use monitoring methodology.

As the Dallas trail circuit is completed, it is critical to learn what is successful about segments that are built and what can be improved upon moving forward.

- 2.6.1. Use systems such as infrared trail counters to gather consistent long-term data on trail use.
- 2.6.2. Develop and implement a trail use observation procedure to be used by staff and volunteers (e.g., trail use form, schedule, safety measures, surveys).
- 2.6.3. Use gathered trail data to help guide the trail system planning process, maintenance and security, secure outside funding, and garner support for future trail development.

2.7. Develop and implement trail standards.

Trail standards ensure a degree of consistency in experience from one trail to the next. Whether the Department or one of its partners implements a trail, it should meet these minimum standards. Standards are typically flexible enough to allow some degree of tailoring to individual identity or environmental conditions.

- 2.7.1. Define design and maintenance standards for urban, multiuse, off-road city trails, and trailheads.
- 2.7.2. Incorporate universal access and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- 2.7.3. Build on existing signage program, and define branding standards with sub-brands for major spine trails.
- 2.7.4. Develop environmental construction standards for trails in sensitive areas.

2.8. Develop a marketing strategy for key trails to increase usage and for events.

While it is important for there to be consistent signage standards across the entire trail circuit, each trail may have a unique identity and cater to a different geographic or demographic user base. Developing a marketing strategy for key trails can help highlight those unique features and target messages to specific audiences.

- 2.8.1. Work with trail users and neighbors to develop trail-specific events that enhance community use and appreciation, and contribute to trail maintenance and security.



HOME PERIOD GUEST





Recreation Programming

USE A COMMUNITY SERVICE AREA APPROACH TO BETTER LEVERAGE RECREATION CENTER RESOURCES AND ENHANCE THE DELIVERY OF RECREATION PROGRAMMING.

Dallas residents have very strong allegiances to the recreation centers they use most often. Given the size of existing facilities and the wide range of recreation needs, the Park and Recreation Department is unable to provide all programs at all locations. By moving to a method of assessing and addressing needs that is based on larger communities rather than individual neighborhoods, the Department can make better use of available resources and tailor programming to meet local needs. However, similar programs across centers should be standardized to reduce inconsistency, and successes should be shared from center to center.

Engaging youth.
Samuell Grand Recreation Center

Actions

- 3.1. Define community service areas with similar demographic and recreational market characteristics.
- 3.2. Develop a recreation center business plan for each community service area, and adjust offerings to fit the business plan and changing user needs.

When recreation centers provide programs that align with the community's needs, they attract participation. The regular development of business plans for each community service area provides an opportunity to assess the success of current programs and make adjustments to meet unmet needs in a manner that coordinates strategies across individual recreation centers.

- 3.2.1. Ensure core programs continue to be offered at each recreation center.
 - 3.2.2. Expand or build new recreation centers to meet changing demographics and the needs identified in business plans.
 - 3.2.3. Allocate space for specialized programs to balance available recreation center space and user demand within the community service area.
 - 3.2.4. Develop new programs based on recreation trends to serve all age groups.
- 3.3. Expand recreation programs to target underserved demographic groups.

While people across all ages currently participate in recreation programs, anecdotally people indicated that currently the Department does the best job providing a range of options for youth activities Senior programs, before and after school programs, and adult fitness and wellness programs were the top three types of programs survey respondents indicated the Department should focus on in the future. Seniors in particular requested facilities or hours at facilities dedicated to their use.

- 3.3.1. Offer beginner and intermediate athletic leagues for youth and adults across skill levels.
- 3.3.2. Explore an athletic commission to work with the operators of private leagues to coordinate scheduling, sign-ups, marketing, and officials.
- 3.3.3. Increase and diversify senior programming to serve more active seniors, and ensure programs are available at hours that work for seniors.



Residents across all age groups indicated that they have participated in recreation programs.



Providing a diverse range of programs for seniors.

Highlands North Recreation Center

- 3.3.4. Expand league sports offerings for adults 30–55.
- 3.3.5. Provide more fitness programming at recreation centers.

- 3.4. Strengthen the Department's commitment to improving public health and wellness for all segments of the community.

Nearly all (95%) of survey respondents acknowledge that parks, facilities, and programs are important to the pursuit of a healthy and active lifestyle, with almost two thirds saying they are very important in that pursuit. However, the Department does not actively tout the health and wellness benefits of its recreation programs. By doing so, the Department can help residents meet their health and wellness goals.

- 3.4.1. Work with partners to identify community health and wellness needs and to assess the effectiveness of Park and Recreation Department programming on public health over time.
- 3.4.2. Evaluate existing programs for their contribution to health and wellness, and adjust programs or develop new programs to meet health and wellness needs.
- 3.4.3. Highlight the health and wellness benefits of individual Park and Recreation Department programs.

- 3.5. Develop an integrated, system-wide program plan that aligns provided programs with market demand and the needs of underserved populations.

The move to a community service area approach does not negate the need for system-wide analysis of needs and assessment of existing program offerings.

- 3.5.1. Conduct a demand and capacity analysis of existing programs.
- 3.5.2. Increase partnerships with other recreation providers to help meet demand.
- 3.5.3. Institute an outcome-based monitoring program to track the need to modify existing programs and implement new ones over time.
- 3.5.4. Monitor national recreation trends, and incorporate new and innovative recreational programs to sustain community engagement.

- 3.6. Enhance special events programming (e.g., tournaments, festivals) targeted at city, regional, and national audiences to improve quality of life, generate revenue, and contribute to the regional economy.

Special events are a good way to enliven parks. Not only do special events attract city residents who might not otherwise use parks or recreation facilities, they also bring visitors from outside the city. This raises the profile of the Dallas park and recreation system within and outside the city, improves quality of life, generates revenue, and contributes to the regional economy.

- 3.6.1. Work with event providers to determine special event facility needs and identify opportunities for new events.
- 3.6.2. Market Park and Recreation Department facilities for regional or national events.
- 3.6.3. Track the economic impacts of special events provided within the Park and Recreation Department system.



More than half of residents have participated in a City of Dallas recreation program within the past 12 months.

- 3.7. Implement best practices in program life cycle management to maintain a culture of quality program delivery.

Having an effective mix of programs in different life cycle stages allows the Park and Recreation Department to try new programs, build on successes of existing programs, and recognize when programs are no longer meeting needs. Therefore, a life cycle review should be conducted on an annual basis to ensure an effective distribution is maintained.

- 3.7.1. Ensure a beneficial mix of programs in the take-off, growth and mature stages.
 - 3.7.2. Annually review staff goals for program areas (e.g., policy, financial and registration performance, customer issues, future plans) with senior leadership.
 - 3.7.3. Document the program development process to reduce service variation and assist in training new staff.
 - 3.7.4. Update key customer requirements (i.e. service attributes that are most important to a customer) for each program area on an ongoing basis.
 - 3.7.5. Review programs provided by key competitors, similar providers and nationally renowned agencies to continuously improve programming.
 - 3.7.6. Annually report on each program's participation, finances, and outcomes.
 - 3.7.7. Conduct surveys in schools to understand what programs children and their parents want to attend for the following season.
- 3.8. Continue to implement the Dallas Aquatics Master Plan.
 - 3.9. Implement the Dallas Recreation Master Plan.





Fiscal Sustainability

CREATE A MORE FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE PARK SYSTEM.

Money for financing land purchases, construction of facilities, maintenance, and the operation of many varied programs comes primarily from bonds and the city's general fund. Other funds come from local governmental agencies, Dallas County, the Federal Government, donations from local businesses and civic organizations, and nonprofit organizations. The Park and Recreation Department strives to make the best use of taxpayer dollars and to leverage funding from other sources. The Park and Recreation Department has an operating budget of about \$80 million and an average capital budget of about \$17 million. Income generated by facilities, concessions, and programs is largely directed back into the general fund, which hinders the ability of the Department to generate revenue.

Leveraging public and private financing.

Klyde Warren Park

Actions

- 4.1. Establish cost recovery goals for all recreation programs based on their classification as “core/essential,” “important,” or “value-added.”

Each recreation program serves a different segment of the population. Program pricing and cost recovery should be based on whether the program serves a public good and whether it is central to the Department’s mission.

- 4.1.1. Implement cost recovery standards, with consistent methods of calculating cost recovery, across the organization.

- 4.1.2. Set cost recovery targets for each core program area based on full direct and indirect costs and the degree to which it provides a public versus private good.

- 4.1.3. Create annual mini business plans (2-3 pages) for each core program service area to evaluate and set participation, service cost, cost recovery, market share, and marketing strategies for the following year.

- 4.1.4. Expand residency-based pricing to all program areas.

- 4.2. Identify non-city funding sources to support capital improvements and programs.

Traditionally, the Park and Recreation Department has relied almost exclusively on bond programs and the city’s general fund to fund capital improvements and programs. As with other park and recreation service providers across the county, the Department is trying to stretch and leverage public funding. Increasingly, providers are exploring outside funding sources to supplement their department budgets, for example through partnerships with corporations and foundations.

- 4.2.1. Identify partnerships with corporations and foundations.

- 4.2.2. Pursue and promote tax-exempt legacy gifts from individuals and families.

- 4.2.3. Support opportunities to leverage Park and Recreation Department funding with neighborhood-based funding.

- 4.2.4. Explore the process required for implementation of a park development/park impact fee ordinance.



Increasing cost recovery through partnerships.
Tenison Park



4.3. Pursue enhanced revenue opportunities.

The Department's vast land resources have untapped potential as a source of revenue. Leasing rights of way or land can generate revenue while at the same time providing amenities for users.

- 4.3.1. Review athletic field reservation methodology.
- 4.3.2. Consider leasing of land at trailheads or park facilities for concessions (e.g., cafes, bike rentals, dog washing).
- 4.3.3. Consider use agreements for subsurface easements along rights of way to generate revenue.

4.4. Track and report revenues, direct and indirect costs, and participation associated with the Department's services.

Collecting better data on services provided can allow the Department to make more informed decisions, compare itself to other providers, and make a more general case for continued investment.

- 4.4.1. Train facility managers in using a business and capacity management approach to maximize the value of these facilities to program users and visitors.
- 4.4.2. Benchmark Park and Recreation Department revenues, costs, and participation against similar providers.
- 4.4.3. Communicate the value Park and Recreation Department parks, facilities, and programs provide to the city.

4.5. Increase consideration of costs and benefits in operations, maintenance, and capital decisions.

The number of improvements necessary to address the needs at the city's park and recreation facilities far outweigh the funding available. The Department should target investments where they can have the greatest impact.

- 4.5.1. Set productivity standards for park and recreation facilities (e.g., attendance, revenue).
- 4.5.2. Provide training for site-level managers for evaluating costs and benefits of existing facilities and for using that information in decision-making.
- 4.5.3. Optimize operations and maintenance standards to ensure financial sustainability.



A majority (74%) of residents are very or somewhat supportive of a tax increase to fund the types of parks, trails, facilities and programs most important to them.

Spending per resident on parks and recreation is significantly lower in Dallas compared to its peer cities.



- 4.6. Explore new ways of doing business that create system-wide efficiencies.

Modeled after the best practices of other organizations, making better use of available information can allow for more effective decision-making. This, in turn, can make the Department's operations more efficient, ensuring the best use of taxpayer dollars.

4.6.1. Utilize training and study of best practices to refine and improve on Park and Recreation Department delivery models.

4.6.2. Explore ways to efficiently and effectively integrate training throughout the agency.





Partnerships

BUILD AND STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS TO CREATE A MORE SUSTAINABLE PARK SYSTEM.

In an era of limited resources, public, private, and nonprofit institutions, including park and recreation agencies, are increasingly looking to partnerships to deliver more efficient and effective services to customers. By strengthening existing partnerships and identifying common goals with new partners, the Park and Recreation Department can leverage its resources to make limited funding stretch further.

**Strengthening partnerships to
provide better experiences.**

Dallas Zoo

Actions

- 5.1. Establish partnerships with school districts to increase walkable access to parks, open space, athletic fields, and recreational opportunities.

In highly developed areas of the city, real estate can be expensive and there are few opportunities to increase the amount of park and recreation space available. Schools are natural partners for parks. Through agreements that allow for use of school fields and facilities when school is not in session, and potentially limited usage while school is in session, the Park and Recreation Department can ensure public access to park and recreation opportunities in areas it is currently unable to expand service. Conversely, schools may currently lack space for certain activities that could be remedied by partnerships that allow use of nearby Park and Recreation Department facilities.

- 5.1.1. Pursue intergovernmental agreements with school districts to ensure school district sites and facilities are open and accessible for recreation use outside of school hours.
- 5.1.2. Explore opportunities to leverage expertise and funding by dividing up responsibilities (e.g., the Department contributing to the enhancement of recreational facilities in exchange for public access outside of school hours and school district maintenance and operations).
- 5.1.3. Establish targets for Department/school district share of responsibility for providing access to neighborhood-serving open space, athletic fields, and outdoor recreation facilities.

- 5.2. Establish additional partnerships with school districts for recreation programming.

The second most important programs that survey respondents indicated the Park and Recreation Department should focus on were before and after school programs. This is a prime example of programming that would benefit from better coordination between the Park and Recreation Department and school districts.

- 5.2.1. Identify school district space that could be used outside of school hours to meet community recreation programming needs.
- 5.2.2. Explore opportunities for Park and Recreation Department assistance in coordinating and implementing after-school programs at school district facilities.

“The Dallas Independent School District may have 150 usable gyms and playgrounds that are not used during the summer. It would be very helpful if our community could use them.”

- Public Meeting Participant at Harry Stone Recreation Center

“ Implement an effective communication plan so outside organizations know who's in charge and who to contact.”

- Comprehensive Planning Process
Stakeholder

- 5.3. Create a Business Development Office to coordinate with foundations, conservancies, friends groups, and the business community and ensure the Department and its partners have fair and equitable relationships.

In conversations with existing partners and stakeholders, it was made clear that while many individuals and organizations have common goals with the Park and Recreation Department, coordination could be improved. A clear point of contact for partners and clear partnership agreements will help ensure that all parties focus on achieving goals rather than spending time managing expectations.

- 5.3.1. Support and expand the existing network of friends groups for parks and trails, and establish friends groups for recreation facilities.
- 5.3.2. Formalize and continually maintain partnership agreements that define equitable partner contributions, and monitor them on a quarterly or as-needed basis.
- 5.3.3. Streamline and develop a guide to the partnership agreement and onboarding processes.
- 5.3.4. Assign a liaison from the Park and Recreation Department to work with each partner, and ensure each partner has a liaison identified to work with the Department.
- 5.3.5. Track and regularly share costs and measurable outcomes of partnership agreements.
- 5.3.6. Establish a process to recognize partners for their contributions, including an annual partnership appreciation event.

Fostering stewardship and education through partnerships.

Trinity River Audubon Center



5.4. Support and strengthen the Department's volunteer program.

Volunteers contribute approximately 158,000 service hours to Dallas parks and recreation each year. They play a growing role in parks, taking on responsibilities that free up the Park and Recreation Department's resources for other purposes. As the volunteer program grows, clear policies and tracking should be employed to ensure beneficial experiences for volunteers, the Department, and park users.

- 5.4.1. Make the volunteer service program a core program under one division to recruit, train, and place volunteers.
- 5.4.2. Periodically identify, evaluate, or revise tactics of the volunteer services program to better support the Department's mission.
- 5.4.3. Develop a reward and recognition system for volunteers, and summarize volunteer recognition policies in the Park and Recreation Department Volunteer Policy document.
- 5.4.4. Regularly update volunteer position descriptions and durations.
- 5.4.5. Add steps to the Park and Recreation Department Volunteer Policy to track reasons for ending volunteer agreements (e.g., resignations and terminations).
- 5.4.6. Encourage the business community to organize corporate volunteer days.
- 5.4.7. Continue to hold "It's My Park Day" annually to encourage volunteerism.

5.5. Support and help establish other entities to focus on supplemental funding, and work collaboratively to set targets for contributions.

The Dallas Parks Foundation, trail friends groups, and other entities actively seek funding for park and recreation improvements. Through better coordination, the Park and Recreation Department and these entities can set goals for each entity's contributions to particular capital improvements and operating expenditures.

- 5.5.1. Strengthen the Department's partnership with the Dallas Parks Foundation by setting common goals for supporting land acquisition and capital improvements.
- 5.5.2. Develop or partner with a land conservancy to acquire land and support operations in regional or signature parks.
- 5.5.3. Develop a facilities conservancy to support facilities operations.

- 5.6. Identify areas in need of donor support, and reach out to donors to provide support.

The Park and Recreation Department is not alone in looking for outside funding support. In collaboration with foundations and other nonprofit organizations, the Department should develop a clear understanding of what existing and potential donors are available, what areas need donor support, what other entities will be contacting those donors, and how to best to leverage other partnerships to strengthen donor requests.

- 5.6.1. Identify and prioritize capital improvement projects that could benefit from donor support, based on costs and benefits, and update the list at least every five years.
- 5.6.2. Identify and prioritize programs and special events that could benefit from donor support, based on costs and benefits, and update the list annually.
- 5.6.3. Develop sponsorship proposals to help underwrite and offset operating cost for programs and services.
- 5.6.4. Develop a donor outreach strategy, including informational materials tailored to donors.
- 5.6.5. Track donor involvement.





Economic Development

PROMOTE THE SYNERGY BETWEEN PARKS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO ENHANCE THE RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCE.

Parks provide tremendous value to cities beyond being places for reflection, connection with nature, and physical activity. They are amenities that attract residents, businesses, and tourists to the city. Concurrently with this planning effort, the Park and Recreation Department completed an Economic Value and Benchmarking Study of the Dallas Park System. The study found that in terms of economic development, parks provide \$360 million in real estate value each year, including enhanced real estate value and increased development activity, and \$604 million in tourism value.

**Encouraging economic development
around parks and trails.**

Snyder's Union, Katy Trail and Lee Park

Actions

- 6.1. Encourage new park-oriented development or redevelopment to capitalize on the economic value of parks.

Nearly two thirds of the real estate impact of parks is due to real estate development surrounding parks. The premiums put on land near parks that lead to additional development translate into additional property tax revenue for the city and only help to increase the user base for the park system.

- 6.1.1. Work with Sustainable Development and Construction, Planning & Neighborhood Vitality, and Economic Development to identify underutilized land adjacent to parks and trails.

- 6.1.2. Work with Economic Development to include parks in efforts to attract development.

- 6.1.3. Work with Economic Development and others on key initiatives regarding downtown development and redevelopment.

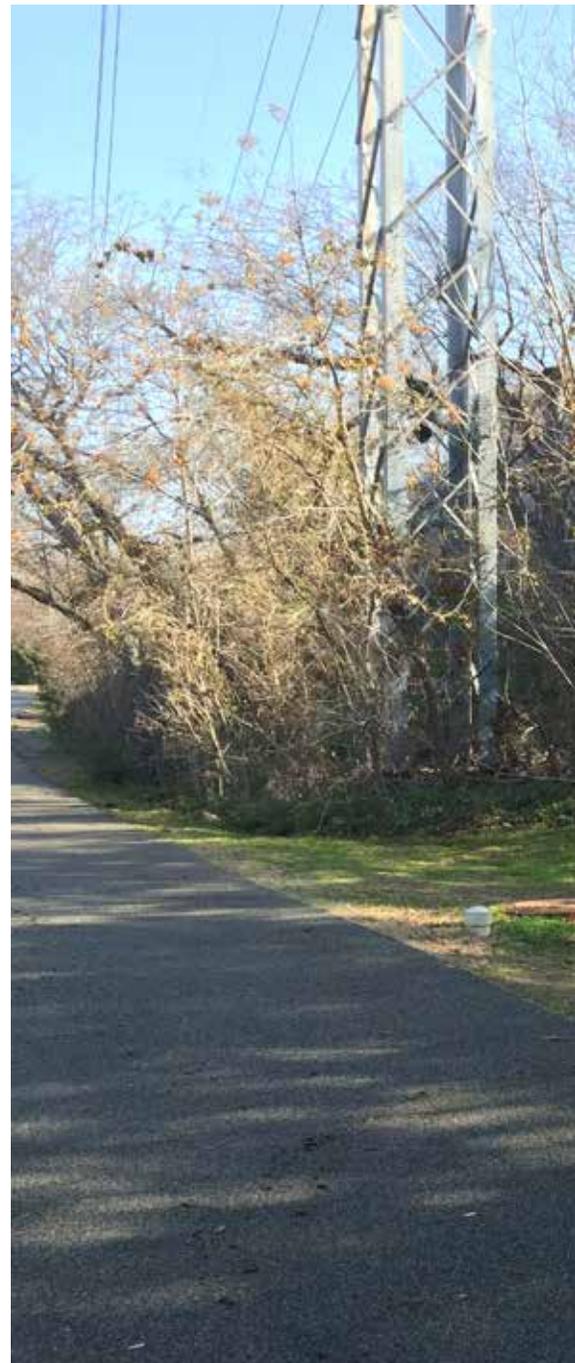
- 6.2. Explore establishing park improvement districts (PIDs) to ensure that businesses benefiting from parks contribute to their maintenance.

Developers who sell park access and park views and businesses that take advantage of park-side locations benefit monetarily from their relationship with nearby parks. Park improvement districts area areas surrounding parks that are subject to a special assessment to offset the maintenance costs of the parks that provide value to property owners or business owners within the district.

- 6.3. Explore allowing concession vendors with parks at specified locations to enhance the recreation experience.

In addition to basic amenities, such as signage, benches, and water fountains, along trails, stakeholders and public meeting participants mentioned a desire to purchase concessions. Allowing concession vendors at specified locations, namely trailheads, or in parks for certain events, can enhance the user experience and generate revenue for the Department in the form of licensing and concession fees.

- 6.4. Use findings from the Economic Value and Benchmarking Study of the Dallas Park System in communications with city leadership and the public to support additional investment in parks.



“ Good parks and amenities attract families. Young families that move in increase property values. ”

- Comprehensive Planning Process Stakeholder

Taking advantage of adjacent trail amenities.

Katy Trail



A stylized white silhouette of a bird in flight, positioned above the main title.

FOREST TRAIL

MILES: 0.65 miles (round trip)

TIME: approx. 30 minutes

RISKS: moderately easy
be watchful of wildlife

 Audubon

TRINITY RIVER VISTA →



Marketing and Communication

IMPROVE MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION TO ENHANCE PARK OPERATIONS AND USER SATISFACTION.

The Park and Recreation Department provides integral services that benefit all the residents of Dallas, and the Department should work to make those services known widely. However, marketing and communication materials should not just inform current and potential users about what the Department has to offer but inspire them to participate.

Using clear signage to mark trail routes.

Trinity River Audubon Center

Actions

7.1. Focus on increasing awareness of facilities, programs, and events.

In the public survey, 71% of respondents rated parks and recreational opportunities in Dallas as good or excellent. Yet, throughout the planning process, citizens and stakeholders frequently indicated they were unaware of the myriad of parks, facilities, and programs that the Park and Recreation Department offers. More than half of respondents were unaware of or do not use major facilities such as Texas Discovery Gardens, golf and tennis centers, or Samuell Farm. More than two thirds were unaware of or do not use Cedar Ridge Preserve or Bahama Beach Water Park.

- 7.1.1. Develop a comprehensive activity guide and other informational materials that highlight the benefits of Park and Recreation Department programs, facilities, and services and inspire users to participate more often.
- 7.1.2. Develop mobile applications for users to find system information (e.g., park locations, amenities, program information, upcoming events) or to report a problem.
- 7.1.3. Continue to review the most effective uses of electronic and social media for marketing and informational purposes.
- 7.1.4. Highlight health and wellness benefits of Park and Recreation Department programs in all informational materials.
- 7.1.5. Develop new information about all facilities and experiences available system-wide, with an emphasis on special use facilities.
- 7.1.6. Seek outside funding sources to support promotional materials and advertising costs.

7.2. Gather input from residents and employees on a recurring basis.

In public meetings, residents expressed opinions on plans for their local park or recreation center and indicated a desire to have more involvement in the planning of parks, facilities, and programs. In addition, employees that were engaged in the planning process provided valuable insight, and the Department should take advantage of their knowledge and expertise.

- 7.2.1. Ensure annual resident satisfaction surveys about city services include questions about parks and recreation facilities and programs.
- 7.2.2. Conduct annual staff surveys to assess job satisfaction, staff development, staffing levels, and work environment.

“Please work to ensure that all parts [of] and people in our community are considered in ... planning.”

*- Comprehensive Planning Process
Stakeholder*

Emails, websites and social media are the primary means by which residents prefer to find out about parks, recreation facilities and programs in Dallas.



Emails from the City of Dallas - 36%



City of Dallas Website - 34%



dallasparks.org - 32%

7.3. Establish a consistent, high quality brand for the park system.

Through the planning process, many people commented on the lack of consistency in the design and messaging of the Department's signage and communication materials. Signage varies from one park, trail, recreation center, or other facility to another. Flyers, brochures, and other materials for recreation programs are developed separately by each recreation center. There is little coordination even when similar programs are offered at multiple locations. A clear, consistent brand can help identify the many offerings as part of a larger system.

- 7.3.1. Develop a new logo for Dallas Park & Recreation.
- 7.3.2. Develop and implement a department-wide style guide for graphic design to ensure a cohesive department identity.
- 7.3.3. Ensure consistency of marketing materials.
- 7.3.4. Develop wayfinding and signage standards.
- 7.3.5. Ensure printed communication materials across recreation centers adhere to system standards.

7.4. Develop, annually update, and support the implementation and funding of a comprehensive marketing plan.

The Department's offerings, public interests, and communication tools are constantly evolving. Marketing strategies should be regularly updated to ensure the most current messages are being disseminated using the most effective tools available.

- 7.4.1. Develop a coordinated approach to identifying target markets.
- 7.4.2. Coordinate messages to cross-promote programs.
- 7.4.3. Institute a dedicated marketing budget.
- 7.4.4. Incorporate marketing research into annual marketing strategies, including sharing results with the staff and using the information to make informed decisions.
- 7.4.5. Reevaluate marketing methods to increase visitation where appropriate, reach a broader audience, and generate more income from key revenue-producing attractions.
- 7.4.6. Update marketing-related priorities, performance measures, and outcomes to be achieved within appropriate timelines given the staff resources available.
- 7.4.7. Continue to evaluate revenues and levels of use of attractions, programs, and facilities in relation to outlays for marketing, communications, and advertising.

- 7.5. Proactively engage communities adjacent to parks and facilities about the benefits of the Department's programs, facilities, and services and inspire users to participate more often.

Some marketing and communication strategies work citywide. However, some residents learn about the services offered by the Park and Recreation Department from friends and neighbors, from local businesses, through visiting other city facilities such as health centers, and from their religious communities, indicating a need for some tailored local communication strategies.

- 7.5.1. Identify existing and potential user groups and partners for each park, coordinate programs, and determine targets for focused engagement to increase use and awareness of facilities and services.
- 7.5.2. Adapt strategies developed in the system-wide marketing plan and new informational materials to reach identified communities around each park.
- 7.5.3. Coordinate with local municipal and community organizations and institutions to disseminate information to and gather feedback from target communities on Park and Recreation Department programs and facilities.

- 7.6. Work with regional tourism and economic development organizations to market Department parks and facilities as destinations for visitors from the region and beyond.

The Park and Recreation Department's parks and facilities offer affordable, high caliber experiences. An opportunity exists to capitalize on the value and quality to attract visitors to the city, recoup costs, and stimulate the local economy.

- 7.6.1. Work with the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau to strengthen the Park and Recreation Department's contribution to regional marketing efforts.
- 7.6.2. Develop new special events and recreation opportunities offered by the Department as part of a regional economic strategy.
- 7.6.3. Cross-market Park and Recreation Department destinations with other regional attractions to encourage visitors to spend time (and money) in the city of Dallas.



Encouraging dialogue.

*Public Meeting Series 2 at Harry Stone
Recreation Center*







Trinity River

COLLABORATE ON THE REALIZATION OF THE VISION FOR THE TRINITY RIVER CORRIDOR AS DALLAS' PREMIER OPEN SPACE.

The Trinity River was mentioned in nearly all conversations throughout the planning process—as a landmark, as a boundary, as a transportation and utility corridor, as a waterway, as an unrealized vision, and as the largest park and recreation opportunity in the city. Looking at a map of the Dallas park system, the Trinity River corridor jumps out as an enormous swath of green space that is counted as part of the park system but is not currently used to its full potential as a park amenity—a place to celebrate nature, recreate, experience beauty, and find respite in the city. The corridor has seen plenty of planning, but implementation has been elusive.

Actions

- 8.1. Participate in the design and development of the management and maintenance plans for the Trinity River's park amenities and recreation facilities to leverage expertise.

While the Park and Recreation Board, and by extension the Park and Recreation Department, is charged with controlling, managing, and maintaining parks and other public lands in the city that are used for recreational purposes, Trinity Watershed Management controls, manages, and maintains parks and other lands in within the Trinity River corridor that are used for recreational purposes. As additional park and recreation amenities are developed in the Trinity River corridor, it would be beneficial for there to be close coordination with and involvement by the Park and Recreation Department, who as stewards of the city's park system, have considerable expertise in park and recreation planning and management.

- 8.1.1. Determine the Park and Recreation Department's role in the management, operations, and maintenance of the Trinity River.
- 8.1.2. Participate in work sessions to advise on park and recreation spaces and maintenance standards.

- 8.2. Support the establishment of a space that can accommodate citywide gatherings.

Due to its size, the Trinity River corridor has the potential to include outdoor event and gathering spaces at a scale not attainable elsewhere in the city.

- 8.2.1. Work with event providers and citizens to determine special event facility needs and identify opportunities for new events.
- 8.2.2. Once event spaces are in place, develop a specialized marketing plan to market the Trinity River corridor for regional or national events.
- 8.2.3. Determine the Park and Recreation Department's role in providing the identified events, and ensure organizational and partner support.
- 8.2.4. Track the economic impacts of special events provided within the Trinity River corridor.
- 8.2.5. Work with local agencies and partners to share costs for special events that have strong tourism benefits.



“The Trinity has the potential to create spaces for a central park, to introduce people to the mystery/light/joy of nature, and to provide a getaway for silent reflection.”

- Comprehensive Planning Process Stakeholder

A Central Gathering Space.

Rendering of the potential for the Trinity River corridor to become a space for events and recreation.







Interpretation

PROMOTE INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION OF THE HISTORIC, CULTURAL, AND NATURAL RESOURCES IN PARKS.

Interpretation is a tool for fostering connections with valuable resources by explaining their significance. Through personal experiences, people are more likely to support and become involved in stewardship of these resources and less likely to engage in activities that threaten them.

Actions

- 9.1. Document, preserve, and restore important historic, cultural, and natural resource assets.

Knowing what assets have historic, cultural, and natural significance is a key first step to their preservation. Without this knowledge, many significant resources are at risk of damage or destruction. The Comprehensive Plan process updated the documentation of historic parks in Dallas to include those built through World War II.

- 9.1.1. Establish guidelines for the design and maintenance of the Department's historic, cultural, and natural resources.
- 9.1.2. Identify resources of potential historic significance that may need protection and have potential educational and interpretive value.
- 9.1.3. Pursue designation of appropriate facilities and historic resources as local landmarks or for inclusion in the national register.
- 9.1.4. Develop an official recognition program for important natural resources.

- 9.2. Action 9.2: Establish an interpretive and education program plan and guidelines.

Successful interpretive programs rely on effective communication. This may take the form of personal communication, with knowledgeable staff leading education programs, or signage and other self-guided communication materials.

- 9.2.1. Educate staff on fundamentals of historic, cultural, and natural resource interpretation.
- 9.2.2. Work with community partners (volunteers, community groups, conservation organizations, universities, youth programs, etc.) to develop and implement interpretive programs.
- 9.2.3. Implement interpretive signage in relevant parks.



Telling the State Fair Story.

A historical marker explains the historical significance of the event and the fair grounds.







Design

EMPHASIZE DESIGN EXCELLENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY IN PARKS AND FACILITIES.

The Park and Recreation Department has demonstrated how excellence in design enhances function, most notably with its signature park pavilions. With funding from the 2003 and 2006 bond programs, the Department was able to employ architects known for design excellence to replace 32 pavilions. This precedent allows for the opportunity to more broadly apply the lessons learned from this successful program, striving for design excellence and sustainability in all parks and facilities.

Striving for design excellence.

The Webb Chapel Park pavilion was the recipient of a Citation Award from the New York State chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

Actions

10.1. Strive for a more beautiful park system.

Making parks beautiful requires an attention to the quality of design in built structures, landscapes, the way they interact with each other, and how they interface with their surroundings. Considerations may include the sensitive and appropriate use of materials, plant palettes, and the inclusion of horticulture.

- 10.1.1. Seek funding levels comparable to aspirational peers.
- 10.1.2. Continue to engage local and nationally recognized designers in the development and reconstruction of facilities and parks.
- 10.1.3. Develop a new model for neighborhood playgrounds that incorporates current recreational trends among children.
- 10.1.4. Continue to pursue state and national awards on an annual basis from organizations such as TRAPS, NRPA, AIA, ASLA, and APA.
- 10.1.5. Review best practices in park planning, design, and operation from other park systems, and incorporate those best practices into the Park and Recreation Department's guidelines.

10.2. Develop an asset management plan with a life cycle replacement schedule to govern capital investment in existing parks and facilities.

Just as it is important to monitor where recreational programs are in their life cycle to ensure residents' needs are being met, it is equally as important to monitor where parks and facilities are in their life cycle. Costs and benefits should be weighed to prioritize capital investments. Investing in parks and facilities that are not working effectively may or may not create enough benefits to outweigh the costs. Employing a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) approach can help the Department better understand what locations are in need of improvements.

- 10.2.1. Inventory and assess all Park and Recreation Department parks and facilities using a standardized GIS management approach.
- 10.2.2. Develop and apply cost-benefit criteria for investing in deferred maintenance of major park facilities.
- 10.2.3. Evaluate underutilized assets for opportunities to either incorporate new uses that are consistent with the Department's mission or to remove from the inventory based on cost-benefit analysis.



Receiving accolades.

The pavilions at Brownwood Park won a Design Award from the Texas Society of Architects.



PICK UP
AFTER
YOUR PETS

DOG WASTE BAGS



PLEASE TAKE THE BAG
AT A TIME TRUNK





Sustainability

ELEVATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROFILE OF THE PARK SYSTEM.

Resource consumption has a direct impact on natural resources within Dallas and beyond. By elevating the environmental profile of the park system, the Park and Recreation Department has an opportunity to lead by example and preserve and conserve natural resources. Incorporating best sustainability practices into park maintenance can decrease the Department's environmental footprint, reduce costs, and serve as a model to other organizations and citizens for how to change their own practices.

Providing easy opportunities to recycle.
Cottonwood Trail

Actions

- 11.1. Move park maintenance towards sustainable and environmentally friendly standards.

There is a plethora of environmentally friendly maintenance products and practices available today. The parks and facilities that make up the park and recreation system in Dallas can be used as a laboratory to test the products and practices that are most effective and to implement the ones that are effective and to implement the ones that are effective at a large scale.

- 11.1.1. Continue to implement policies that target waste reduction, recycling, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced energy usage, reduced water consumption and light pollution.
- 11.1.2. Conduct pilot projects to determine effectiveness for system-wide application.
- 11.1.3. Utilize native plant species and water-wise plant materials where feasible.
- 11.1.4. Use environmentally friendly products—including cleaners and chemical treatments—where feasible.

- 11.2. Develop outreach and education programs on sustainable practices.

An interest in sustainability and the environment is often borne out of exposure to and understanding of natural resources. By providing nature- and sustainability-based education and recreation programming across ages and skill levels, the Department has the opportunity to develop the next generation of environmental stewards.

- 11.2.1. Develop and implement training programs for staff on sustainable practices.
- 11.2.2. Hire an urban biologist to educate the public, develop opportunities for people to reconnect with the natural systems, lead educational programs for adults and students on a variety of habitat/wildlife issues, and serve as a technical advisor on multi-agency conservation planning initiatives.
- 11.2.3. Communicate progress on environmental efforts to staff and to the public.

“*In the case that severe weather increases in our area, it would be helpful to have a plan that encourages the city to be prepared for global warming and limited water resources.*”

- Public Meeting Participant at Harry Stone Recreation Center

11.3. Pursue environmental certification of parks and facilities.

Environmental certification indicates that a park or facility has incorporated best practices in sustainable design and contributes to healthier ecosystems. Promoting parks and facilities that have been certified can help to raise awareness by the public of environmental and sustainability issues. The pursuit of environmental certification itself may also expose the Department to new best practices in design and management.

11.3.1. Pursue Audubon International or similar certification of golf courses.

11.3.2. Pursue Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) or similar certification of building facilities within the system.

11.3.3. Pursue Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) or similar certification of park landscapes.



Dallas parks provide about \$18 million in flood risk mitigation, heat reduction, water quality, and air quality benefits to residents each year.

11.4. Promote conservation stewardship volunteerism that provides opportunities for individuals and organizations to leave a positive legacy in the park system.

The Department is not alone in being stewards of Dallas' natural environment. Aligning the Department's efforts with those of partners can allow existing resources to generate a bigger impact.

11.4.1. Identify opportunities for conservation stewardship activities, such as recycling at large events, removing garbage from lakes or parks, planting trees, or removing invasive plants.

11.4.2. Expand efforts to develop collaborative relationships and partnerships with community groups, businesses, service clubs, and other groups that are not currently engaged in conservation stewardship activities.





Staff Resources

ENSURE THAT STAFF CAPABILITIES MATCH THE DEPARTMENT'S NEEDS.

The large number of parks and facilities and the wide variety of programs offered by the Park and Recreation Department require a large staff. Currently, the Department has over 1,000 employees in five divisions. As needs and offerings change, the Department must constantly reassess and adapt its staffing to maintain efficiency and meet the public's expectations.

Enhancing staff capabilities.
Staff Training

Actions

12.1. Ensure that staff capabilities match department needs.

Staffing needs vary by time of year and projects that are underway. For example, certain popular programs are only offered seasonally, requiring additional staff.

12.1.1. Evaluate staff levels season by season to ensure divisions are staffed properly for upcoming needs.

12.1.2. Actively recruit qualified staff to fill open positions.

12.2. Provide regular training to ensure that existing staff develop the skills to perform their duties.

Training was mentioned at a number of meetings during the planning process. Employees want to grow with the Department and seek opportunities for professional development to do so. The Department should build on its work to develop a Department-centric training program.

12.2.1. Conduct training that is job specific for each different discipline (e.g., trades, maintenance, arborists, horticulture).

12.2.2. Develop a division or department-wide training program.

12.2.3. Develop a leadership and development program to carry out the mission of the department.



“ I love this department and what I do. I think we need to be more flexible ... to allow maximum growth and success! ”

- Park and Recreation Department Employee Survey Feedback







Safety

CONTINUE TO ENHANCE SAFETY AND SECURITY IN ALL PARKS AND FACILITIES.

Concern about crime, whether real or perceived, keeps some residents from using parks and facilities. Twenty percent of survey respondents indicated that they do not use Dallas parks and recreation facilities due to a lack of adequate security—the third most cited reason for not using these amenities. While volunteer and park staff ambassadors regularly patrol the city’s parks and work closely with the Dallas Police Department, the Department continues to seek a reduction in the fear of and the incidence of crime.

Climbing on a jungle gym.
Klyde Warren Park

Actions

13.1. Ensure adequate “eyes on the street.”

The most effective way to improve the perception of safety and reduce the incidence of is to support a visible community presence in parks and facilities. The more parks and facilities are used by the community, the more “eyes on the street” there are and the less inviting they are to unwanted activities.

13.1.1. Expand the park ambassadors program to increase visible surveillance and rule enforcement in parks.

13.1.2. Expand the Volunteers in Parks (VIP) program to give neighboring residents a stake in the safety of parks, and have volunteers work with park ambassadors.

13.2. Update Department guidelines and policies on safety and security.

The Department should clarify the ways it intends to combat safety concerns, whether through people-based approaches or through design-based approaches.

13.2.1. Update safety manuals and emergency plans.

13.2.2. Continue to provide safety training for all parks, recreation, and maintenance staff who work in parks and public facilities.

13.2.3. Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into design standards.



In 2016, the Park and Recreation Department will add 6 new full-time park ambassadors.

“ Please don't forget maintenance and safety issues in new and existing parks. Those facilities need budget for security staff, lighting, safe public transportation to and from the parks, and daily junk removal.”

- Public Meeting Participant at Janie C. Turner Rec. Center



Encouraging a new generation of park advocates.
Junior park ambassadors at Singing Hills Park.

Capital Planning

Capital Planning Guidelines

In order to ensure that capital planning is related to the needs and strategic directions identified in this Comprehensive Plan, the following guidelines can be used to evaluate capital projects.

Demographics

- The project is in a part of the city that is projected to grow.

Parks

- The project is in an area that currently has poor walking access to parks.
- The project is in an area that currently has poor walking and driving access to parks.
- The project is in an area that currently has poor transit access to parks.
- The project addresses a need identified by level of service standards.
- The project is included in the Downtown Park Master Plan.
- The project protects greenways, wooded areas, or other natural features.
- The project incorporates new or innovative experiences that are not currently present in the park system.

Trails

- The project is in an area that currently has poor access to trails.
- The project implements priority trail segments from the trail circuit.
- The project connects two or more parks or trails.
- The project connects parks to neighborhood anchors, such as a school, library, train station, community center, or recreation center.
- The project addresses a need identified by level of service standards.
- The project is included in the Trail Network Master Plan.
- The project connects to adjacent trail systems.

Recreation

- The project expands or builds new recreation space to meet changing demographic needs.
- The project expands or builds new recreation space to meet business plan goals.
- The project promotes community health and wellness.
- The project is included in the Dallas Aquatics Master Plan.
- The project supports the goals of the Recreation Master Plan.

Fiscal Sustainability and Partnerships

- The project incorporates amenities that make existing facilities more accessible or user-friendly.
- The project connects to a neighborhood anchor, such as a school, library, train station, community center, park, or recreation center.
- The project coincides with other public investment projects such as street rehabilitation.
- The projects accounts for future operations and maintenance costs.
- The project leverages outside expertise or funding.

Economic Development

- The project makes use of underutilized land adjacent to existing parks or trails.
- The project is in a location targeted for economic development or redevelopment.

Marketing and Communication

- The project improves wayfinding or signage.
- The project creates or improves infrastructure for better communication (e.g., for mobile communication).
- The project creates destinations to attract visitors from the region and beyond.
- The project supports special events.

Trinity River

- The project helps realize the vision of the Trinity River corridor as Dallas' premier open space.
- The project creates or supports a citywide gathering space.

Interpretation

- The project helps realize the vision of the Trinity River corridor as Dallas' premier open space.
- The project creates or supports a citywide gathering space.

Design

- The project emphasizes design excellence.
- The project engages local or nationally recognized designers.

Sustainability

- The project incorporates sustainable design principles.
- The project meets criteria for environmental certification.

Safety

- The project supports visible surveillance.
- The project incorporates Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

Strategic Plan

Strategic Direction 1. Ensure adequate parkland to accommodate future growth.

Action 1.1. Upgrade or provide new parks and facilities to meet level of service standards and changing user needs.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
1.1.1.	Continue to acquire land and build new parks to serve growing parts of the city.				
	DPARD Planning & Acquisition; DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; TPL; TPWD	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Naming Rights; Private Donations		continuous
1.1.2.	Upgrade or provide new parks and facilities in areas that are currently deficient by level of service standards.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Private Donations		medium term (0–10 years)
1.1.3.	Continue to develop downtown parks identified in the Downtown Park Master Plan Update.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Corporations	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; General Fund; Naming Rights; Private Donations		medium term (0–10 years)
1.1.4.	Monitor existing upgrade needs and new park and facility needs over time.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services		Bonds; General Fund		continuous
1.1.5.	Monitor national trends in parks, and incorporate new and innovative experiences to sustain community engagement.				
	DPARD Administration	TPL			continuous

Action 1.2. Identify new minimum design and maintenance standards to guide the enhancement and development of existing and new parks, recreation centers, and other facilities to meet program needs and further other strategic directions.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
1.2.1.	Define design and maintenance standards for each park classification and type of facility.				
	DPARD Maintenance Division; DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Equipment & Building Services (EBS)			short term (0–5 years)
1.2.2.	Incorporate universal access, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), and safety principles into design and maintenance standards.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	EBS; Dallas Police Dept.			short term (0–5 years)
1.2.3.	Build on existing signage program, and define branding standards with sub-brands for signature parks and facilities.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services				short term (0–5 years)

Strategic Direction 1. Ensure adequate parkland to accommodate future growth.

Action 1.3. Identify funding sources and secure funding to develop new or upgrade existing parks and facilities.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
1.3.1.	Advocate for sufficient funding in the capital improvements program to address identified needs.				
	DPARD Administration	City Manager's Office	Bonds; General Funds		continuous
1.3.2.	Support and promote opportunities to leverage Park and Recreation Department funding with neighborhood-based, corporate, grant, and other funding (e.g., through public/public, public/private, and public/not for profit partnerships).				
	DPARD Administration	Corporations; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs; Pro Sports Teams; TPWD	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Interlocal Agreements; Naming Rights; Private Donations		continuous
1.3.3.	Explore the process required for implementation of a park development/park impact fee ordinance.				
	DPARD Planning & Acquisitions	Planning Dept.	N/A		short term (0-5 years)

Action 1.4. Develop an open space plan for greenways, wooded areas, and nature preserves.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
1.4.1.	Inventory and categorize existing natural open space resources, and coordinate these efforts with other City departments.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Office for Environmental Quality; Public Works Dept.; Sustainable Development & Construction; Trinity River Corridor Project; Water Utilities	N/A		short term (0-5 years)
1.4.2.	Identify criteria and priorities for acquisition of new open space assets.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Office for Environmental Quality	N/A		short term (0-5 years)
1.4.3.	Develop management objectives and guidelines (e.g., level of improvement, conservation objectives, personnel/skill requirements) for natural open space resources.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Office for Environmental Quality	N/A		short term (0-5 years)

Strategic Direction 2. Continue to implement the “trail circuit” to create a more connected and active community.

Action 2.1. Improve coordination of inter-departmental trail planning and implementation.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
2.1.1.	Work with City Departments, NCTCOG, foundations, and other partners to obtain primary responsibility for planning and implementation of all off-street trails.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Planning Dept.; Public Works Dept.; Street Services Dept.; Trinity River Corridor Project; Water Utilities Dept.; Dallas County; NCTCOG; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs; TPWD; TxDOT	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Private Donations		short term (0–5 years)
2.1.2.	Create a staff position to oversee the planning, implementation, and management of the trails system; coordinate with partners; and advise on associated economic development activities.				
	DPARD Administration	Office of Economic Development; Public Works Dept.; Dallas County; NCTCOG; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs; TxDOT	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
2.1.3.	Identify, develop, and manage priority trail segments from the trail circuit that enhance system connectivity (e.g., link two or more parks or trails) or reach underserved areas.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Public Works Dept.	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Private Donations		medium term (0–10 years)
2.1.4.	Develop a management plan for key trails that addresses maintenance, safety, operation, and marketing.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Public Works Dept.; Trinity River Corridor Project; Dallas County; Not for Profits;			short term (0–5 years)
2.1.5.	Connect to adjacent trail systems beyond the city using NCTCOG’s 2014 Regional Trails of North Texas as a guide.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Engineering Services	Dallas County; NCTCOG	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Interlocal Agreements; Private Donations		long term (0–20 years)

Strategic Direction 2. Continue to implement the “trail circuit” to create a more connected and active community.

Action 2.2. Identify strategies and mechanisms for public and private funding of trail planning and implementation.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
2.2.1.	Support the establishment of a nonprofit organization to advocate for fundraising for trail construction and maintenance.				
	DPARD Administration	Not for Profits			short term (0–5 years)
2.2.2.	Involve trail friends groups and user groups in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of the city trail network.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Neighborhood Groups; Organized Clubs	Bonds; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Private Donations		continuous
2.2.3.	Pursue trail grants from the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	TPWD	Bonds; General Fund; Grants		continuous

Action 2.3. Enhance user experience by providing more amenities along trails.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
2.3.1.	Work with neighbors, park friends groups, and trail user groups to determine which trail amenities would enhance the user experience.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Neighborhood Groups; Organized Clubs	Bonds; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Private Donations		continuous
2.3.2.	Develop a comprehensive signage program for the trail system that alerts users to trail types, their hierarchy, trail connections, and destinations, and also contributes to the identity of the system.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs	Bonds; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Private Donations		short term (0–5 years)
2.3.3.	Maintain and improve amenities along trails (e.g., restrooms, benches, shade, and parking).				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs	Bonds; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Private Donations		medium term (0–10 years)

Strategic Direction 2. Continue to implement the “trail circuit” to create a more connected and active community.

Action 2.4. Seek opportunities to generate revenue along trails.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
2.4.1.	Work with Economic Development Department to develop criteria for identifying economic development opportunity sites.				
	DPARD Administration	Office for Economic Development			short term (0–5 years)
2.4.2.	Consider leasing of land adjacent to trails at trailheads for concessions (e.g., cafes, bike rentals, dog washing) to increase revenue opportunities.				
	DPARD Planning & Acquisitions	Office for Economic Development; Corporations;	Corporate Sponsors; Fees; Naming Rights		short term (0–5 years)
2.4.3.	Consider leasing of subsurface easements along rights of way to generate revenue.				
	DPARD Planning & Acquisitions	Office for Economic Development; Corporations;	Corporate Sponsors; Fees; Naming Rights		short term (0–5 years)

Action 2.5. Use trails to improve connections between parks and transit.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
2.5.1.	Work with Trinity Watershed Management, the Public Works Department, DART, school districts, and nonprofit organizations to secure funding for better trail connections to and between neighborhoods, parks, transit stations, and citywide trails.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Public Works Dept.; Trinity River Corridor Project; DART; DISD; Dallas County; NCTCOG; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs; School Districts; TxDOT; Universities	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Interlocal Agreements; Private Donations		continuous

Action 2.6. Establish a trail use monitoring methodology.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
2.6.1.	Use systems such as infrared trail counters to gather consistent long-term data on trail use.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Public Works Dept	Bonds; General Fund		short term (0–5 years)
2.6.2.	Develop and implement a trail use observation procedure to be used by staff and volunteers (e.g., trail use form, schedule, safety measures, surveys).				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Not for Profits; Organized Clubs	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
2.6.3.	Use gathered trail data to help guide the trail system planning process, maintenance and security, secure outside funding, and garner support for future trail development.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Corporations; Dallas County; NCTCOG; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs; TPWD; TxDOT	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Private Donations		medium term (0–10 years)

Strategic Direction 2. Continue to implement the “trail circuit” to create a more connected and active community.

Action 2.7. Develop and implement trail standards.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
2.7.1.	Define design and maintenance standards for urban, multiuse, off-road city trails, and trailheads.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Public Works Dept.	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
2.7.2.	Incorporate universal access and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Police Dept.; Public Works Dept.	N/A		medium term (0–10 years)
2.7.3.	Build on existing signage program, and define branding standards with sub-brands for major spine trails.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
2.7.4.	Develop environmental construction standards for trails in sensitive areas.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Office for Environmental Quality; Public Works Dept.	N/A		short term (0–5 years)

Action 2.8. Develop a marketing strategy for key trails to increase usage and for events.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
2.8.1.	Work with trail users and neighbors to develop trail-specific events that enhance community use and appreciation, and contribute to trail maintenance and security.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Chambers of Commerce; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs	Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; Private Donations		continuous

Strategic Direction 3. Use a community service area approach to better leverage recreation center resources and enhance the delivery of recreation programming.

Action 3.1. Define community service areas with similar demographic and recreational market characteristics.

Action 3.2. Develop a recreation center business plan for each community service area, and adjust offerings to fit the business plan and changing user needs.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
3.2.1.	Ensure core programs continue to be offered at each recreation center.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Program plan developed and reviewed each year identifying which core programs are offered at each center	continuous
3.2.2.	Expand or build new recreation centers to meet changing demographics and the needs identified in business plans.				
	DPARD Planning, Facilities, and Environmental Services; DPARD Recreation Services	Schools; nonprofits; similar providers; other public agencies	Capital budget	Feasibility study conducted for each considered expansion or new facility	long term (0–20 years)
3.2.3.	Allocate space for specialized programs to balance available recreation center space and user demand within the community service area.				
	DPARD Planning, Facilities, and Environmental Services; DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Recreation center business plans or program plans specify space allocation based upon demand; space allocations reviewed annually	medium term (0–10 years)
3.2.4.	Develop new programs based on recreation trends to serve all age groups.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	Operational budget	Recreation program life cycle analysis kept within recommended parameters and updated annually	continuous

Strategic Direction 3. Use a community service area approach to better leverage recreation center resources and enhance the delivery of recreation programming.

Action 3.3. Expand recreation programs to target underserved demographic groups.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
3.3.1.	Offer beginner and intermediate athletic leagues for youth and adults across skill levels.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	Existing providers, as appropriate	Operational budget	New leagues achieve stated participation and cost recovery goals, assessed annually	short term (0–5 years)
3.3.2.	Explore an athletic commission to work with the operators of private leagues to coordinate scheduling, sign-ups, marketing, and officials.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	Existing providers, as appropriate	Operational budget	Develop concept for athletic commission and discuss with other existing providers	short term (0–5 years)
3.3.3.	Increase and diversify senior programming to serve more active seniors, and ensure programs are available at hours that work for seniors.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	Other community senior recreation providers	Operational budget	New senior programs achieve stated participation and cost recovery goals, assessed annually	short term (0–5 years)
3.3.4.	Expand league sports offerings for adults 30–55.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	Existing providers, as appropriate	Operational budget	New leagues achieve stated participation and cost recovery goals, assessed annually	short term (0–5 years)
3.3.5.	Provide more fitness programming at recreation centers.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	DPARD contractors; Other community fitness programming providers	Operational budget	New programs achieve stated participation and cost recovery goals, assessed annually	short term (0–5 years)

Strategic Direction 3. Use a community service area approach to better leverage recreation center resources and enhance the delivery of recreation programming.

Action 3.4. Strengthen the Department's commitment to improving public health and wellness for all segments of the community.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
3.4.1.	Work with partners to identify community health and wellness needs and to assess the effectiveness of Park and Recreation Department programming on public health over time.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	Community public health organizations; healthcare providers	Operational budget; sponsorships; donations	Public health assessment conducted; action plan developed	continuous
3.4.2.	Evaluate existing programs for their contribution to health and wellness, and adjust programs or develop new programs to meet health and wellness needs.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	Community public health organizations; healthcare providers	Operational budget; sponsorships; donations	Public health assessment conducted; action plan developed	short term (0–5 years)
3.4.3.	Highlight the health and wellness benefits of individual Park and Recreation Department programs.				
	DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	Community public health organizations; healthcare providers	Operational budget; sponsorships; donations	All program marketing material includes information on health and wellness benefits as applicable	continuous

Action 3.5. Develop an integrated, system-wide program plan that aligns provided programs with market demand and the needs of underserved populations.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
3.5.1.	Conduct a demand and capacity analysis of existing programs.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	Operational budget	Systemwide analysis conducted annually	short term (0–5 years)
3.5.2.	Increase partnerships with other recreation providers to help meet demand.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	Other regional service providers	N/A	When mission-related demand identified that DPARD cannot solely fulfill, new formal partnership established	continuous
3.5.3.	Institute an outcome-based monitoring program to track the need to modify existing programs and implement new ones over time.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Recreational program evaluation and assessment tool developed; launched for 20% of programs for five-year period; once launched, reviewed annually	short term (0–5 years)
3.5.4.	Monitor national recreation trends, and incorporate new and innovative recreational programs to sustain community engagement.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	TRAPS, NRPA, industry associations	N/A	Recreation trend report reviewed and updated annually	continuous

Strategic Direction 3. Use a community service area approach to better leverage recreation center resources and enhance the delivery of recreation programming.

Action 3.6. Enhance special events programming (e.g., tournaments, festivals) targeted at city, regional, and national audiences to improve quality of life, generate revenue, and contribute to the regional economy.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
3.6.1.	Work with event providers to determine special event facility needs and identify opportunities for new events.				
	DPARD Recreation Services; DPARD Marketing; DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	Regional event providers	Sponsorships; partnerships; operational budget	Annual meeting with regional providers	continuous
3.6.2.	Market Park and Recreation Department facilities for regional or national events.				
	DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	Operating budget	At least two DPARD facilities/events marketed annually	continuous
3.6.3.	Track the economic impacts of special events provided within the Park and Recreation Department system.				
	DPARD Administration; DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	CVB; Chambers of Commerce; Corporations; Not for Profits;	N/A	Development of Economic Impact Report	continuous

Strategic Direction 3. Use a community service area approach to better leverage recreation center resources and enhance the delivery of recreation programming.

Action 3.7. Implement best practices in program life cycle management to maintain a culture of quality program delivery.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
3.7.1.	Ensure a beneficial mix of programs in the take-off, growth and mature stages.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	DPARD Contractors, program partners	N/A	Review and update program lifecycle analysis annually	continuous
3.7.2.	Annually review staff goals for program areas (e.g., policy, financial and registration performance, customer issues, future plans) with senior leadership.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Core Program Area Business Plans and program plans updated annually	continuous
3.7.3.	Document the program development process to reduce service variation and assist in training new staff.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Program develop process is developed and approved; staff training provided on process annually	short term (0–5 years)
3.7.4.	Update key customer requirements (i.e. service attributes that are most important to a customer) for each program area on an ongoing basis.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Key customer service requirements identified and updated annually	continuous
3.7.5.	Review programs provided by key competitors, similar providers and nationally renowned agencies to continuously improve programming.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Update similar provider analysis annually	continuous
3.7.6.	Annually report on each program's participation, finances, and outcomes.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	DPARD Contractors, program partners	N/A	Participation, finances, and outcomes reported and tracked annually on program plan	continuous
3.7.7.	Conduct surveys in schools to understand what programs children and their parents want to attend for the following season.				
	DPARD Recreation Services; DPARD Marketing	DISD and other school districts	N/A	Annual surveys conducted	continuous

Action 3.8. Continue to implement the Dallas Aquatics Master Plan.

Action 3.9. Implement the Dallas Recreation Master Plan.

Strategic Direction 4. Create a more financially sustainable park system.

Action 4.1. Establish cost recovery goals for all recreation programs based on their classification as “core/essential,” “important,” or “value-added.”

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
4.1.1.	Implement cost recovery standards, with consistent methods of calculating cost recovery, across the organization.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Cost recovery policy updated/developed to specify standards; Cost recovery training and tools provided to employees	short term (0-5 years)
4.1.2.	Set cost recovery targets for each core program area based on full direct and indirect costs and the degree to which it provides a public versus private good.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Cost recovery targets specified for each Core Program Area; Cost of Service training and tools provided to employees	short term (0-5 years)
4.1.3.	Create annual mini business plans (2-3 pages) for each core program service area to evaluate and set participation, service cost, cost recovery, market share, and marketing strategies for the following year.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Each Core Program Area has mini business plan; reviewed and updated annually	continuous
4.1.4.	Expand residency-based pricing to all program areas.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Residency-based pricing implemented	short term (0-5 years)

Action 4.2. Identify non-city funding sources to support capital improvements and programs.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
4.2.1.	Identify partnerships with corporations and foundations.				
	DPARD Administration	Chambers of Commerce; Corporations; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Pro Sports Teams; School Districts; Universities	N/A		continuous
4.2.2.	Pursue and promote tax-exempt legacy gifts from individuals and families.				
	DPARD Administration	Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits;	N/A		continuous
4.2.3.	Support opportunities to leverage DPARD's funding with neighborhood-based funding.				
	DPARD Administration	Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits;	Bonds; Friends Associations; General Fund; Private Donations		continuous
4.2.4.	Explore the process required for implementation of a park development/park impact fee ordinance.				
	DPARD Administration	Office of Economic Development; Planning Dept.	N/A		short term (0-5 years)

Strategic Direction 4. Create a more financially sustainable park system.

Action 4.3. Pursue enhanced revenue opportunities.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
4.3.1.	Review athletic field reservation methodology.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Athletic field reservation task force established; reservation methodology updated	short term (0–5 years)
4.3.2.	Consider leasing of land at trailheads or park facilities for concessions (e.g., cafes, bike rentals, dog washing).				
	DPARD Administration	Local businesses; partners	N/A	Feasibility analysis conducted	short term (0–5 years)
4.3.3.	Consider use agreements for subsurface easements along rights of way to generate revenue.				
	DPARD Administration	Utility providers	N/A	Feasibility analysis conducted	short term (0–5 years)

Action 4.4. Track and report revenues, direct and indirect costs, and participation associated with the Department's services.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
4.4.1.	Train facility managers in using a business and capacity management approach to maximize the value of these facilities to program users and visitors.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	All facility managers receive initial training within one year	short term (0–5 years)
4.4.2.	Benchmark Park and Recreation Department revenues, costs, and participation against similar providers.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	Peer agencies	N/A	Benchmark report updated annually	continuous
4.4.3.	Communicate the value Park and Recreation Department parks, facilities, and programs provide to the city.				
	DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Marketing materials include messaging about value of programs, services, and facilities	continuous

Strategic Direction 4. Create a more financially sustainable park system.

Action 4.5. Increase consideration of costs and benefits in operations, maintenance, and capital decisions.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
4.5.1.	Set productivity standards for park and recreation facilities (e.g., attendance, revenue).				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Key productivity standards developed; Standards tracked annually	short term (0-5 years)
4.5.2.	Provide training for site-level managers for evaluating costs and benefits of existing facilities and for using that information in decision-making.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Managers receive annual training on analyzing costs, valuing benefits, and applying to decision-making	short term (0-5 years)
4.5.3.	Optimize operations and maintenance standards to ensure financial sustainability.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	N/A	N/A	Site-level annual performance reports are used to update operational protocols	short term (0-5 years)

Action 4.6. Explore new ways of doing business that create system-wide efficiencies.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
4.6.1.	Utilize training and study of best practices to refine and improve on Park and Recreation Department delivery models.				
	DPARD Recreation Services	TRAPS; NRPA; Peer agencies	N/A	Operational protocols, business plans, and action plan is updated annually to reflect best practices and new trends	medium term (0-10 years)
4.6.2.	Explore ways to efficiently and effectively integrate training throughout the agency.				
	DPARD Recreation Services; DPARD Human Resources	N/A	N/A	Training task force established to promote and schedule training; cross-training opportunities provided monthly	short term (0-5 years)

Strategic Direction 5. Build and strengthen partnerships to create a more sustainable park system.

Action 5.1. Establish partnerships with school districts to increase walkable access to parks, open space, athletic fields, and recreational opportunities.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
5.1.1.	Pursue intergovernmental agreements with school districts to ensure school district sites and facilities are open and accessible for recreation use outside of school hours.				
	DPARD Administration	DISD; Other school districts; Universities	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
5.1.2.	Explore opportunities to leverage expertise and funding by dividing up responsibilities (e.g., the Department contributing to the enhancement of recreational facilities in exchange for public access outside of school hours and school district maintenance and operations).				
	DPARD Administration	DISD; Other school districts	N/A	Development of MOU with DISD and other applicable districts	short term (0–5 years)
5.1.3.	Establish targets for Department/school district share of responsibility for providing access to neighborhood-serving open space, athletic fields, and outdoor recreation facilities.				
	DPARD Administration	DISD; Other school districts; Universities	N/A		short term (0–5 years)

Action 5.2. Establish additional partnerships with school districts for recreation programming.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
5.2.1.	Identify school district space that could be used outside of school hours to meet community recreation programming needs.				
	DPARD Administration	DISD; Other school districts; Universities	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
5.2.2.	Explore opportunities for Park and Recreation Department assistance in coordinating and implementing after-school programs at school district facilities.				
	DPARD Administration; DPARD Recreation Services	DISD; Other school districts; Universities	N/A	Operational concept developed and proposed to partner school district	short term (0–5 years)

Strategic Direction 5. Build and strengthen partnerships to create a more sustainable park system.

Action 5.3. Create a Business Development Office to coordinate with foundations, conservancies, friends groups, and the business community and ensure the Department and its partners have fair and equitable relationships.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
5.3.1.	Support and expand the existing network of friends groups for parks and trails, and establish friends groups for recreation facilities. DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	N/A	N/A		continuous
5.3.2.	Formalize and continually maintain partnership agreements that define equitable partner contributions, and monitor them on a quarterly or as-needed basis. DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	Applicable partners	N/A	All formal partnerships have written agreements reviewed annually	continuous
5.3.3.	Streamline and develop a guide to the partnership agreement and onboarding processes. DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	N/A	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
5.3.4.	Assign a liaison from the Park and Recreation Department to work with each partner, and ensure each partner has a liaison identified to work with the Department. DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	N/A	N/A	All formal partnerships have a staff liaison	short term (0–5 years)
5.3.5.	Track and regularly share costs and measurable outcomes of partnership agreements. DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	N/A	N/A	All formal partnerships produce an annual partnership report	continuous
5.3.6.	Establish a process to recognize partners for their contributions, including an annual partnership appreciation event. DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	N/A	N/A	Event held annually	short term (0–5 years)

Strategic Direction 5. Build and strengthen partnerships to create a more sustainable park system.

Action 5.4. Support and strengthen the Department's volunteer program.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
5.4.1.	Make the volunteer service program a core program under one division to recruit, train, and place volunteers.				
	DPARD Human Resources	N/A	N/A	Creation of consolidated volunteer service program; 15% of workforce hours supported by volunteers	short term (0–5 years)
5.4.2.	Periodically identify, evaluate, or revise tactics of the volunteer services program to better support the Department's mission.				
	DPARD Volunteer Services (when established)	N/A	N/A	Mini Strategic/Business Plan developed and annually updated for volunteer services	continuous
5.4.3.	Develop a reward and recognition system for volunteers, and summarize volunteer recognition policies in the Park and Recreation Department Volunteer Policy document.				
	DPARD Volunteer Services (when established)	N/A	N/A	Reward and recognition system developed, approved, and deployed; Volunteer Policy document updated	short term (0–5 years)
5.4.4.	Regularly update volunteer position descriptions and durations.				
	DPARD Volunteer Services (when established)	N/A	N/A	Volunteer position descriptions reviewed annually and updated as needed	continuous
5.4.5.	Add steps to the Park and Recreation Department Volunteer Policy to track reasons for ending volunteer agreements (e.g., resignations and terminations).				
	DPARD Volunteer Services (when established)	N/A	N/A	Process steps developed, approved, and deployed	short term (0–5 years)
5.4.6.	Encourage the business community to organize corporate volunteer days.				
	DPARD Volunteer Services (when established)	Local businesses; local volunteer organizations	N/A	At least one event for corporate volunteering held annually	continuous
5.4.7.	Continue to hold "It's My Park Day" annually to encourage volunteerism.				
	DPARD Volunteer Services (when established)	Local businesses; local volunteer organizations; community associations	N/A	Event held annually	continuous

Strategic Direction 5. Build and strengthen partnerships to create a more sustainable park system.

Action 5.5. Support and help establish other entities to focus on supplemental funding, and work collaboratively to set targets for contributions.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
5.5.1.	Strengthen the Department's partnership with the Dallas Parks Foundation by setting common goals for supporting land acquisition and capital improvements.				
	DPARD Administration	Dallas Parks Foundation	N/A		short term (0-5 years)
5.5.2.	Develop or partner with a land conservancy to acquire land and support operations in regional or signature parks.				
	DPARD Administration	Corporations; Not for Profits	Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations		short term (0-5 years)
5.5.3.	Develop a facilities conservancy to support facilities operations.				
	DPARD Administration	Corporations; Not for Profits	Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations		short term (0-5 years)

Action 5.6. Identify areas in need of donor support, and reach out to donors to provide support.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
5.6.1.	Identify and prioritize capital improvement projects that could benefit from donor support, based on costs and benefits, and update the list at least every five years.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Corporations; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs; Pro Sports Teams	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Naming Rights; Private Donations		continuous
5.6.2.	Identify and prioritize programs and special events that could benefit from donor support, based on costs and benefits, and update the list annually.				
	DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	Corporations; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs; Pro Sports Teams; other applicable partners	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Naming Rights; Private Donations	Prioritized partnership opportunity inventory updated annually	continuous
5.6.3.	Develop sponsorship proposals to help underwrite and offset operating cost for programs and services.				
	DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	Potential sponsors	N/A	Development of sponsorship proposal template; at least two sponsorship proposals developed annually for each Core Program Area	short term (0-5 years)
5.6.4.	Develop a donor outreach strategy, including informational materials tailored to donors.				
	DPARD Business Development Office (when established); DPARD Marketing	N/A	N/A	Donor Outreach Strategy developed and approved	short term (0-5 years)
5.6.5.	Track donor involvement.				
	DPARD Business Development Office (when established)	N/A	N/A	Donor database developed and actively maintained	continuous

Strategic Direction 6. Promote the synergy between parks and economic development to enhance the recreational experience.

Action 6.1. Encourage new park-oriented development or redevelopment to capitalize on the economic value of parks.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
6.1.1.	Work with Sustainable Development and Construction, Planning & Neighborhood Vitality, and Economic Development to identify underutilized land adjacent to parks and trails.				
	DPARD Administration	Office for Economic Development; Neighborhood Groups	N/A		short term (0-5 years)
6.1.2.	Work with Economic Development to include parks in efforts to attract development.				
	DPARD Administration	Office for Economic Development; Chambers of Commerce; Corporations;	N/A		short term (0-5 years)
6.1.3.	Work with Economic Development and others on key initiatives regarding downtown development and redevelopment.				
	DPARD Administration	Office for Economic Development; Chambers of Commerce; Corporations;	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; General Fund; Grants; Naming Rights; Private Donations		continuous

Action 6.2. Explore establishing park improvement districts (PIDs) to ensure that businesses benefiting from parks contribute to their maintenance.

Action 6.3. Explore allowing concession vendors with parks at specified locations to enhance the recreation experience.

Action 6.4. Use findings from the Economic Value and Benchmarking Study of the Dallas Park System in communications with city leadership and the public to support additional investment in parks.

Strategic Direction 7. Improve marketing and communication to enhance park operations and user satisfaction.

Action 7.1. Focus on increasing awareness of facilities, programs, and events.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
7.1.1.	Develop a comprehensive activity guide and other informational materials that highlight the benefits of Park and Recreation Department programs, facilities, and services and inspire users to participate more often.				
	DPARD Marketing	DPARD Contractors; Sponsors; Advertisers	Operational budget; Sponsorships; Advertising revenue	Development and deployment of activity guide	short term (0–5 years)
7.1.2.	Develop mobile applications for users to find system information (e.g., park locations, amenities, program information, upcoming events) or to report a problem.				
	DPARD Marketing; DPARD IT Services	Sponsors; Advertisers	Operational budget; Sponsorships; Advertising revenue	Development and deployment of mobile app	short term (0–5 years)
7.1.3.	Continue to review the most effective uses of electronic and social media for marketing and informational purposes.				
	DPARD Marketing	N/A	Operational budget	Electronic & Social Media Marketing Impact Report conducted quarterly	continuous
7.1.4.	Highlight health and wellness benefits of Park and Recreation Department programs in all informational materials.				
	DPARD Marketing	N/A	N/A	Health & wellness benefits mentioned in all materials as applicable	continuous
7.1.5.	Develop new information about all facilities and experiences available system-wide, with an emphasis on special use facilities.				
	DPARD Marketing	DPARD Contractors; Sponsors; Advertisers	Operational budget; Sponsorships; Advertising revenue	Information on 20% of all facilities/experiences updated annually	short term (0–5 years)
7.1.6.	Seek outside funding sources to support promotional materials and advertising costs.				
	DPARD Marketing	DPARD Contractors; Sponsors; Advertisers	N/A	Outside funding sources increase at least 10% annually	continuous

Action 7.2. Gather input from residents and employees on a recurring basis.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
7.2.1.	Ensure annual resident satisfaction surveys about city services include questions about parks and recreation facilities and programs.				
	DPARD Strategic Planning Services	N/A	N/A	Facility and program satisfaction measured and tracked annually	continuous
7.2.2.	Conduct annual staff surveys to assess job satisfaction, staff development, staffing levels, and work environment.				
	DPARD Administration	N/A	N/A	Employee satisfaction measured and tracked annually	continuous

Strategic Direction 7. Improve marketing and communication to enhance park operations and user satisfaction.

Action 7.3. Establish a consistent, high quality brand for the park system.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
7.3.1.	Develop a new logo for Dallas Park & Recreation. DPARD Marketing	N/A	Operational budget	Development, approval, and implementation of logo.	short term (0–5 years)
7.3.2.	Develop and implement a department-wide style guide for graphic design to ensure a cohesive department identity. DPARD Marketing	N/A	Operational budget	Development, approval, and implementation of style guide.	short term (0–5 years)
7.3.3.	Ensure consistency of marketing materials. DPARD Marketing	N/A	Operational budget		continuous
7.3.4.	Develop wayfinding and signage standards. DPARD Planning, Facilities, and Environmental Services	N/A	Operational budget	Development, approval, and implementation of standards.	short term (0–5 years)
7.3.5.	Ensure printed communication materials across recreation centers adhere to system standards. DPARD Marketing	N/A	Operational budget	Quarterly audits conducted and all printed materials comply with standards.	continuous

Strategic Direction 7. Improve marketing and communication to enhance park operations and user satisfaction.

Action 7.4. Develop, annually update, and support the implementation and funding of a comprehensive marketing plan.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
7.4.1.	Develop a coordinated approach to identifying target markets. DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	DPARD Contractors	Operational budget	Target markets identified and profiled in marketing plan	continuous
7.4.2.	Coordinate messages to cross-promote programs. DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	DPARD Contractors	Operational budget	Cross-promotional messages identified in marketing plan; at least one cross-promotional message delivered at every program	continuous
7.4.3.	Institute a dedicated marketing budget. DPARD Marketing; DPARD Administration	N/A	Operational budget; Sponsorships; Advertising revenue	Annual budget established; portion of sponsorship and advertising revenue dedicated to marketing budget	short term (0-5 years)
7.4.4.	Incorporate marketing research into annual marketing strategies, including sharing results with the staff and using the information to make informed decisions. DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	DPARD Contractors	Operational budget	Target market profiles updated annually; target market messages reviewed annually; marketing research briefing with staff conducted annually	continuous
7.4.5.	Reevaluate marketing methods to increase visitation where appropriate, reach a broader audience, and generate more income from key revenue-producing attractions. DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	DPARD Contractors	Operational budget	Marketing tactics evaluated annually; each revenue-producing attraction shows positive 3-year revenue average	continuous
7.4.6.	Update marketing-related priorities, performance measures, and outcomes to be achieved within appropriate timelines given the staff resources available. DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	DPARD Contractors	Operational budget	Marketing priorities, performance measures, and outcomes identified in marketing plan and updated annually.	short term (0-5 years)
7.4.7.	Continue to evaluate revenues and levels of use of attractions, programs, and facilities in relation to outlays for marketing, communications, and advertising. DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	DPARD Contractors	Operational budget	Marketing plan's performance measures tracked and evaluated annually; Marketing Impact Report produced annually	continuous

Strategic Direction 7. Improve marketing and communication to enhance park operations and user satisfaction.

Action 7.5. Proactively engage communities adjacent to parks and facilities about the benefits of the Department's programs, facilities, and services and inspire users to participate more often.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
7.5.1.	Identify existing and potential user groups and partners for each park, coordinate programs, and determine targets for focused engagement to increase use and awareness of facilities and services.				
	DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	Friends/affiliate groups; neighborhood associations; local businesses; schools; health centers; religious communities; etc.	Operating budget	Partners inventory developed for each park/ facility (include in Rec Center Business Plans); meeting to discuss opportunities with each partner occurs annually	short term (0–5 years)
7.5.2.	Adapt strategies developed in the system-wide marketing plan and new informational materials to reach identified communities around each park.				
	DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	Applicable partners	Operating budget	Marketing plan strategies developed and reviewed/ adjusted annually	short term (0–5 years)
7.5.3.	Coordinate with local municipal and community organizations and institutions to disseminate information to and gather feedback from target communities on Park and Recreation Department programs and facilities.				
	DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	Applicable partners	Operating budget; sponsorships; advertising revenue; grants; donations	Annual partner meetings held; information reviewed and adjusted annually	continuous

Action 7.6. Work with regional tourism and economic development organizations to market Department parks and facilities as destinations for visitors from the region and beyond.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
7.6.1.	Work with the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau to strengthen the Park and Recreation Department's contribution to regional marketing efforts.				
	DPARD Director; DPARD Marketing	Dallas CVB	Operating budget	Meet with CVB twice annually	continuous
7.6.2.	Develop new special events and recreation opportunities offered by the Department as part of a regional economic strategy.				
	DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	Partners TBD	Operating budget	At least one new special event or recreation opportunity developed and marketed regionally	medium term (0–10 years)
7.6.3.	Cross-market Park and Recreation Department destinations with other regional attractions to encourage visitors to spend time (and money) in the city of Dallas.				
	DPARD Marketing; DPARD Recreation Services	Other regional attractions	Operating budget	At least two DPARD destinations marketed in collaboration with other regional attractions	continuous

Strategic Direction 8. Collaborate on the realization of the vision for the Trinity River corridor as Dallas' premier open space.

Action 8.1. Participate in the design and development of the management and maintenance plans for the Trinity River's park amenities and recreation facilities to leverage expertise.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
8.1.1.	Determine the Park and Recreation Department's role in the management, operations, and maintenance of the Trinity River.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	City Manager; Trinity Watershed Management; NTTA; TxDOT	N/A		short term (0-5 years)
8.1.2.	Participate in work sessions to advise on park and recreation spaces and maintenance standards.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Trinity Watershed Management; NTTA; TxDOT	N/A		continuous

Action 8.2. Support the establishment of a space that can accommodate citywide gatherings.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
8.2.1.	Work with event providers and citizens to determine special event facility needs and identify opportunities for new events.				
	DPARD Administration	Trinity River Corridor Project; Chambers of Commerce; Corporations; Not for Profits;	N/A		short term (0-5 years)
8.2.2.	Once event spaces are in place, develop a specialized marketing plan to market the Trinity River corridor for regional or national events.				
	DPARD Marketing	Trinity River Corridor Project; Chambers of Commerce; Corporations; Not for Profits;	N/A	Development and approval of Trinity River Corridor Marketing Plan	medium term (0-10 years)
8.2.3.	Determine the Park and Recreation Department's role in providing the identified events, and ensure organizational and partner support.				
	DPARD Administration; DPARD Marketing	Partners TBD	N/A	Development and approval of partnership agreements for all involved partners	medium term (0-10 years)
8.2.4.	Track the economic impacts of special events provided within the Trinity River corridor.				
	DPARD Administration; DPARD Marketing	Trinity River Corridor Project; Chambers of Commerce; Corporations; Not for Profits;	N/A	Development of Trinity River Corridor Economic Impact Report	long term (0-20 years)
8.2.5.	Work with local agencies and partners to share costs for special events that have strong tourism benefits.				
	DPARD Administration; DPARD Marketing	Partners TBD	N/A	Development and approval of partnership agreements for all involved partners	long term (0-20 years)

Strategic Direction 9. Promote interpretation and education of the historic, cultural, and natural resources in parks.

Action 9.1. Document, preserve, and restore important historic, cultural, and natural resource assets.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
9.1.1.	Establish guidelines for the design and maintenance of DPARD's historic, cultural, and natural resources.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Equipment & Building Services; Office of Cultural Affairs; Preservation Dallas	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
9.1.2.	Identify resources of potential historic significance that may need protection and have potential educational and interpretive value.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Equipment & Building Services; Office of Cultural Affairs; Preservation Dallas	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
9.1.3.	Pursue designation of appropriate facilities and historic resources as local landmarks or for inclusion in the national register.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Preservation Dallas; Texas Historical Commission	N/A		medium term (0–10 years)
9.1.4.	Develop an official recognition program for important natural resources.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Office for Environmental Quality; Audubon Texas	N/A		short term (0–5 years)

Action 9.2. Action 9.2: Establish an interpretive and education program plan and guidelines.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
9.2.1.	Educate staff on fundamentals of historic, cultural, and natural resource interpretation.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Office for Cultural Affairs; Office for Environmental Quality	N/A		short term (0–5 years)
9.2.2.	Work with community partners (volunteers, community groups, conservation organizations, universities, youth programs, etc.) to develop and implement interpretive programs.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	DISD; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs; School Districts; Universities	N/A		continuous
9.2.3.	Implement interpretive signage in relevant parks.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	DISD; Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs; School Districts; Universities	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Grants; Interlocal Agreements; Private Donations		medium term (0–10 years)

Strategic Direction 10. Emphasize design excellence and sustainability in parks and facilities.

Action 10.1. Strive for a more beautiful park system.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
10.1.1.	Seek funding levels comparable to aspirational peers.				
	DPARD Administration	Corporations; Not for Profits; Organized Clubs;	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Naming Rights; Private Donations		medium term (0–10 years)
10.1.2.	Continue to engage local and nationally recognized designers in the development and reconstruction of facilities and parks.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Corporations	Bonds; Corporate Sponsors; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Naming Rights; Private Donations		continuous
10.1.3.	Develop a new model for neighborhood playgrounds that incorporates current recreational trends among children.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Neighborhood Groups; Not for Profits; School Districts	Bonds; Foundations; Friends Associations; General Fund; Interlocal Agreements; Private Donations		short term (0–5 years)
10.1.4.	Continue to pursue state and national awards on an annual basis from organizations such as TRAPS, NRPA, AIA, ASLA, and APA.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	TRAPS; NRPA; AIA; ASLA; APA	N/A		continuous
10.1.5.	Review best practices in park planning, design, and operation from other park systems, and incorporate those best practices into the Park and Recreation Department's guidelines.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Peer agencies; NRPA; AIA; ASLA; APA; TPL	N/A		short term (0–5 years)

Strategic Direction 10. Emphasize design excellence and sustainability in parks and facilities.

Action 10.2. Develop an asset management plan with a life cycle replacement schedule to govern capital investment in existing parks and facilities.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
10.2.1.	Inventory and assess all Park and Recreation Department parks and facilities using a standardized GIS management approach.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services	Equipment & Building Services	N/A		medium term (0–10 years)
10.2.2.	Develop and apply cost-benefit criteria for investing in deferred maintenance of major park facilities.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services; DPARD Admin & Business Services	Peer agencies	N/A	Development of criteria and necessary approval of cost-benefit model; Use of cost-benefit model integrated into capital and deferred maintenance planning processes	continuous
10.2.3.	Evaluate underutilized assets for opportunities to either incorporate new uses that are consistent with the Department's mission or to remove from the inventory based on cost-benefit analysis.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services; DPARD Admin & Business Services; DPARD Park Maintenance Services	Neighborhood associations	N/A	All assets annually evaluated for utility	continuous

Strategic Direction 11. Elevate the environmental profile of the park system.

Action 11.1. Move park maintenance towards sustainable and environmentally friendly standards.

Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
11.1.1.	Continue to implement policies that target waste reduction, recycling, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced energy usage, reduced water consumption and light pollution.			medium term (0–10 years)
11.1.2.	Conduct pilot projects to determine effectiveness for system-wide application.			short term (0–5 years)
11.1.3.	Utilize native plant species and water-wise plant materials where feasible.			short term (0–5 years)
11.1.4.	Use environmentally friendly products—including cleaners and chemical treatments—where feasible.			short term (0–5 years)

Action 11.2. Develop outreach and education programs on sustainable practices.

Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
11.2.1.	Develop and implement training programs for staff on sustainable practices.			short term (0–5 years)
11.2.2.	Hire an urban biologist to educate the public, develop opportunities for people to reconnect with the natural systems, lead educational programs for adults and students on a variety of habitat/wildlife issues, and serve as a technical advisor on multi-agency conservation planning initiatives.			short term (0–5 years)
11.2.3.	Communicate progress on environmental efforts to staff and to the public.			continuous

Action 11.3. Pursue environmental certification of parks and facilities.

Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
11.3.1.	Pursue Audubon International or similar certification of golf courses.			medium term (0–10 years)
11.3.2.	Pursue Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) or similar certification of building facilities within the system.			medium term (0–10 years)
11.3.3.	Pursue Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) or similar certification of park landscapes.			medium term (0–10 years)

Strategic Direction 11. Elevate the environmental profile of the park system.

Action 11.4. Promote conservation stewardship volunteerism that provides opportunities for individuals and organizations to leave a positive legacy in the park system.

Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
11.4.1. Identify opportunities for conservation stewardship activities, such as recycling at large events, removing garbage from lakes or parks, planting trees, or removing invasive plants.				short term (0–5 years)
11.4.2. Expand efforts to develop collaborative relationships and partnerships with community groups, businesses, service clubs, and other groups that are not currently engaged in conservation stewardship activities.				continuous

Strategic Direction 12. Ensure that staff capabilities match the department's needs.

Action 12.1. Ensure that staff capabilities match department needs.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
12.1.1.	Evaluate staff levels season by season to ensure divisions are staffed properly for upcoming needs.				
	DPARD Recreation Division; DPARD Park Maintenance Services; Fair Park Executive General Manager; DPARD Human Resources	n/a	n/a	Available staff hours within $\pm 5\%$ of required staff hours	continuous
12.1.2.	Actively recruit qualified staff to fill open positions.				
	DPARD Recreation Division; DPARD Park Maintenance Services; Fair Park Executive General Manager; DPARD Human Resources	Other City Departments; TRAPS; NRPA	Operational budget	Vacant funded positions are filled within 4 weeks; Less than 1% of employee performance evaluations cite lack of qualifications for position responsibilities	continuous

Action 12.2. Provide regular training to ensure that existing staff develop the skills to perform their duties.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
12.2.1.	Conduct training that is job specific for each different discipline (e.g., trades, maintenance, arborists, horticulture).				
	DPARD Recreation Division; DPARD Park Maintenance Services; Fair Park Executive General Manager; DPARD Human Resources	TRAPS, NRPA, other professional/industry associations	Operational budget (professional development budget)	All employees (including FT and Non-FT) receive at least 8 hours of external training annually	continuous
12.2.2.	Develop a division or department-wide training program.				
	DPARD Human Resources	n/a	n/a	Deployment of calendar accessible to all employees	short term (0-5 years)
12.2.3.	Develop a leadership and development program to carry out the mission of the department.				
	DPARD Human Resources	n/a	n/a		short term (0-5 years)

Strategic Direction 13. Continue to enhance safety and security in all parks and facilities.

Action 13.1. Ensure adequate “eyes on the street.”

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
13.1.1.	Expand the park ambassadors program to increase visible surveillance and rule enforcement in parks.				
	Park Ambassador Coordinator	Dallas Police Department			short term (0–5 years)
13.1.2.	Expand the Volunteers in Parks (VIP) program to give neighboring residents a stake in the safety of parks, and have volunteers work with park ambassadors.				
	Park Ambassador Coordinator; Volunteer Coordinator				short term (0–5 years)

Action 13.2. Update Department guidelines and policies on safety and security.

	Responsible Parties	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Performance Measures	Time Frame
13.2.1.	Update safety manuals and emergency plans.				
	Park Ambassador Coordinator	Dallas Police Department			short term (0–5 years)
13.2.2.	Continue to provide safety training for all parks, recreation, and maintenance staff who work in parks and public facilities.				
	Human Resources, Park Ambassador Coordinator	Dallas Police Department			continuous
13.2.3.	Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into design standards.				
	DPARD Planning, Design & Environmental Services				short term (0–5 years)

