

The Trust for Public Land

Conservation Finance Research Proposal

Dallas Park & Recreation Board Briefing
December 6, 2018

The logo for The Trust for Public Land, featuring a green-to-yellow gradient square background with the text "THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND" in white, stacked vertically.

THE
TRUST
FOR
PUBLIC
LAND



The Trust for Public Land – land for people

Where could you walk in ten minutes?



60%

*Percentage of Dallas residents that live within a
10-minute walk of a park*

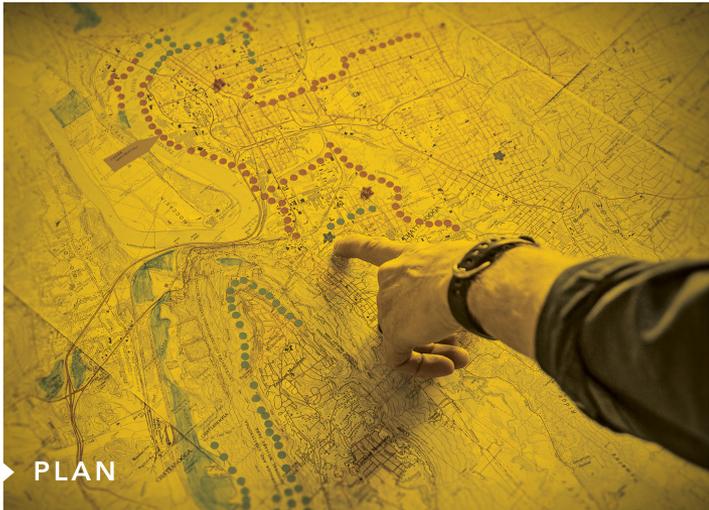
\$117

Per resident spending on parks

How does Dallas compare?

City	Spending per capita	Percent city within 10-minute walk of park
National Median	\$82	70%
Dallas	\$117	60%
Seattle	\$276.44	94%
Washington, D.C.	\$256.76	98%
Minneapolis	\$249.11	97%
New York City	\$198.26	97%
Plano	\$196.84	75%
Chicago	\$172	98%

Our mission services



Our mission services



Conservation Finance

- The Trust for Public Land is the national leader in creating public funds for land conservation, working with states, counties, and cities across the country to generate funding for parks and conservation since 1996.
- We have a proven record of success:
 - 500+ ballot measure wins
 - 81% approval rate
 - \$73 billion generated
 - 100 million “YES” votes
 - Including \$312 million in Dallas in 2017

November 6, 2018 Ballot Measures

- 17 of 18 measures we supported were approved by voters in states across the country
- \$1.84 billion in public funding for parks and conservation
 - Georgia: Constitutional amendment dedicating \$200 million for local parks and conservation throughout the state
 - Chaffee County, Colorado: Sales tax increase to fund farmland preservation and strengthen forest health
 - Denver, Colorado: Bond package with nearly \$1 billion for parks, trails, and open spaces

Feasibility Research

What goes into our research?

- *Finance options*
- *Conservation priorities*
- *Fiscal capacity*
- *Political profile*
- *Election history*
- *Election requirements*
- *Ballot language requirements*
- *Pathways to the ballot*
- *Best practices*

Our Proposal for City of Dallas

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of public funding models for Dallas parks, including:
 - Comparative analysis with peer and aspirational cities
 - Actionable recommendations for policy models Dallas could adopt
- This study will consider various options the City could pursue, including:
 - Amending the city charter
 - Dedicating certain City revenue streams (such as taxes from car rentals)
 - Leveraging philanthropic resources
 - Revenue potential and pathways for implementation for each proposed option
- **Outcome goal:** Increase the City’s fiscal capacity to develop, operate, and maintain a “tier 1” park system

Other Research Considerations

- Dallas park budget and current spending will be considered in context to historic spending as well as to comparison cities.
- The role of “Friends of” groups will be examined and placed in this context, including analysis of opportunities for alternative additional funding sources for Dallas parks.
- This analysis may require the assistance of Dallas city staff to provide financial data and documents, including budgets, capital spending plans, tax assessment rolls, and relevant legislative history on charter amendments.

Program Recommendations

- The feasibility research will provide:
 - Knowledge base to inform deliberations about the most appropriate finance mechanisms
 - Amount and duration of financing, expenditure priorities, and public accountability
 - Election timing and ballot language for mechanisms that would require a public vote
- If the Dallas City Council decides to move forward with a ballot measure, TPL will advise on the crafting of the ballot language, including state and local requirements, examples of successful ballot questions, and consultation with legal counsel as necessary.

Project Budget and Timeline

- **Project Budget**

Feasibility Research	\$20,500
Analysis, Presentations, Recommendations	\$17,300
Travel	\$2,800
TOTAL	\$40,600

- **Timeline:** The Trust for Public Land intends to commence work on this project in January 2019. Research generally requires two months. We will present findings to the Park Board, City Council and other partners on funding options in March 2019.

Next Steps

- Seek input and direction from the Park and Recreation Board
- Follow City procurement and contracting requirements



Thank you!
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