



# DALLAS INTERNATIONAL



# VISIONS

## 2016 ORIGINAL PLAN

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Park Vision and Booklet  
Designed by MIG

## 2023 REVISED PLAN

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Suzanne Smith (ex-officio; City Strategic Advisor)

*This park is made possible through the collaborative efforts of public and private entities, including business and property owners, community members, the North Dallas Chamber of Commerce and the City of Dallas. We encourage the community to help shape the future of this area into a new urban destination.*



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**Dallas International Commons will be an inclusive, iconic new urban oasis: a public social gathering space and destination for families from throughout North Texas, a place of endless discovery and quiet rejuvenation, with a range of events and activities, and great play and recreational opportunities—a catalyst for community revitalization. It will also celebrate, encourage and inspire the diverse people and businesses of North Texas.**

**part 1:**  
**Introduction**

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

# A new urban life experience

Dallas International Commons is a bold vision for a new, iconic regional urban park in North Dallas.

The park will be a catalyst for advancing Dallas' urban aspirations, while adding much-needed green space to the City's fabric. It is at the heart of revitalizing a currently underused and mostly vacant area into an exciting and dynamic urban neighborhood.

Many Texans—led by Millennials and followed by families and Baby Boomers—now aspire to live in revitalized urban neighborhoods. In this “urban century,” we are redefining the structure of our cities for those who prefer to live within walking or easy transit distance to their work, entertainment, shopping, social venues—and parks. Dallas International Commons is a defining moment: the quality of the entire community will be improved by creating a

magnetic community place that will become one of the great public spaces in Dallas.

Friends of the Commons present this park vision to set a direction, build excitement and attract the public and private financing that will secure the land, construct the park and establish the programming. The design will continue to evolve as more individuals and groups participate in the park's planning and development. The Friends invites you to take a glimpse into a future park experience and help bring Dallas International Commons to reality.

### CONTEXT

The Dallas International District (formerly named Valley View-Galleria) area and surroundings include a 450-acre district with restaurants, offices,

**1** Artist's rendering of Dallas International Commons. Photo credit: OMNIPLAN and MIG





stores, hotels, condos and apartments—anchored by the approximately 20-acre Dallas International Commons. In much the same way as Millennium Park in Chicago and Golden Gate Park in San Francisco are the foundations of their communities, this park-oriented development will redefine North Dallas. Dallas International District will become a major economic engine as a new regional downtown, which will attract major office users and development to this part of the City.

Dallas International District encompasses unique design concepts, including outdoor shopping, dining and entertainment along a European-style central esplanade. In addition to the park, the area is planned to include:

- Office space
- Retail space

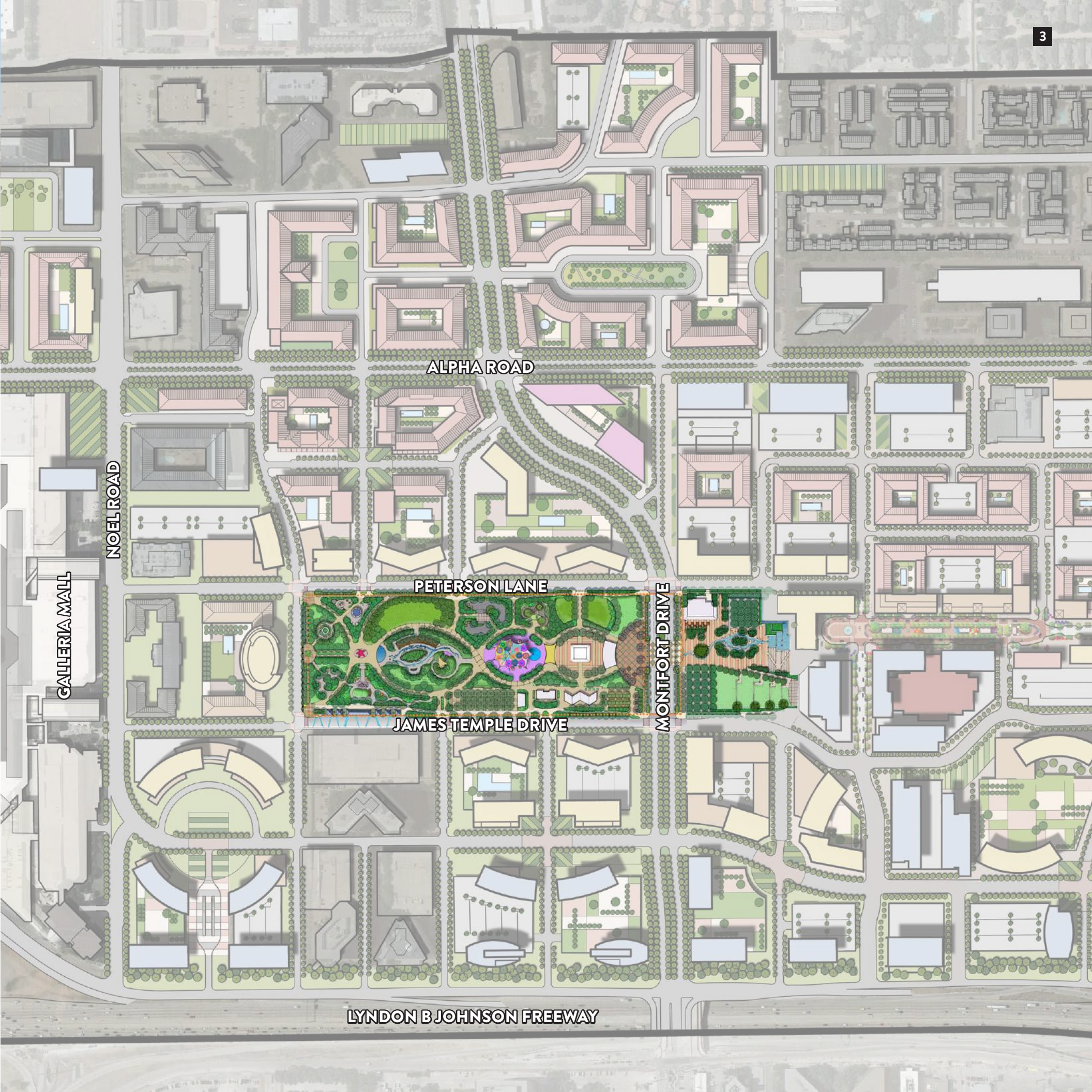
- Luxury and workforce condo units for sale
- Upscale multifamily and workforce rental units
- Luxury hotels
- Luxury movie theatre
- Restaurants and entertainment venues
- Boutique shopping
- Interactive water features
- Additional parks and open space
- Walking and biking paths
- Modern transit connections

Demolition of the existing Valley View Mall is complete, and the property is ready for new development. While full build-out will take many years to complete, the park is a top priority and will grow as space is acquired.

**1,2** *The park will be surrounded by hotels, offices and residences.*

**3** *The redevelopment area is bound by LBJ Freeway on the south, Dallas North Tollway on the west, Preston Road on the east and Southern Boulevard on the north.*





ALPHA ROAD

NOEL ROAD

GALLERIA MALL

PETERSON LANE

JAMES TEMPLE DRIVE

MONTFORT DRIVE

LYNDON B JOHNSON FREEWAY



I have endorsed the vision that everyone should have a park or open space within a 10-minute walk of home. The Dallas International District is a wonderful opportunity to boost our city's presence on the global stage while also transforming an underutilized area into an amazing gathering place that all of our residents can enjoy.

ERIC JOHNSON  
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DALLAS

**part 2:**  
**Vision**

# 2

## VISION

# An outdoor celebration of North Texas' International Community

Based on the community vision, the park design is inclusive, open, playful, relaxing and recreational, supporting health and wellness, as well as highlighting our vibrant international community. It is bold and contemporary, yet fosters authenticity and sensitivity to the area's history and geography. Its distinct set of amenities and experiences will attract current and future District residents and employees, as well as all Dallas residents and visitors.

The park vision calls for:

- **Different types of play areas.** Areas and amenities will accommodate family play, quiet play, outdoor games, water play and “secret places.”
- **Promoting health and wellness.** Play fields and a walking and biking path will encourage residents and employees to play outdoors.
- **An iconic element.** A central area will feature an unexpected, unique structure.
- **Dog areas.** Separate areas for various sizes of dogs.
- **Incorporating the landscape of Dallas.** The park will include native plants of the area's Blackland Prairies.
- **Including ties to the international artist community.** Local artists will create elements of the park.
- **Reflecting the history and culture of the area.** Both park elements and programming will include elements of local and international history and culture.
- **Providing a regional park link.** Consistent with the Dallas Park Department's Comprehensive Park Plan, the park will be another link in the regional network of Dallas parks.

**1** *Interactive art and light installation by artist Jen Lewin in Austin.*





- **Incorporating food.** Both permanent kiosks and temporary food trucks will be available, along with picnic tables. A permanent Food Hall is under consideration.
- **Accommodating evening activities.** The park will be open after dark for concerts and other events, as well as for private rentals.
- **Ensuring flexibility and sustainability.** Seasonal activities and programming will keep the park active year round.

## ICONIC PARKS

Klyde Warren Park has had a wonderful impact on the city; Dallas International Commons would be almost 4 times as large. It will be almost as large as Millennium Park, built on former rail yards and parking lots and now one of the top attractions in Chicago. Of course, Central Park is significantly larger, planned when New York was still just developing and land was readily available.



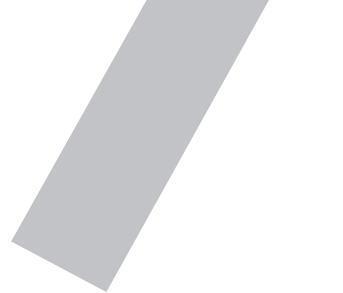
**Klyde Warren Park**  
Dallas, TX  
5.2 acres



**Millennium Park**  
Chicago, IL  
24.5 acres



**Dallas International Commons**  
Dallas, TX  
20 acres



**Central Park**  
New York City, NY  
778 acres

**1** Artist's rendering of grassy open space area.  
Photo credit: Studio Outside

**2** Compton Creek Natural Park, Compton, CA

I'm really excited about the signature park planned for the Dallas International District. For a long time we've needed more public green spaces in North Dallas, and this is a wonderful opportunity to develop a transformative park which can be a destination for both residents and visitors.

**JEFF KITNER,**  
DISTRICT 11 PARKS AND  
RECREATION BOARD MEMBER

A group of diverse children and an adult woman are gathered outdoors in a grassy field. The woman, wearing a black hijab and a black long-sleeved top, stands on the right, holding a stack of papers. She is looking down at a young boy in a light blue polo shirt who is kneeling and examining a plant. Other children, including a girl in a purple hoodie, a girl in a grey and green jacket, and a girl in a striped shirt, are also looking at the plant. The background shows trees and a fence.

**The Dallas International Commons was carefully named to reflect the regional community space it will become. The Commons will be a recreational, civic, and cultural destination for everyone from North Texas to enjoy.**

**JAYNIE SCHULTZ,  
DISTRICT 11 CITY COUNCIL MEMBER**

**Neighborhood Green.**  
A smaller green space for informal gathering.

**Bike and Walking Path.**  
Surrounds the entire park.

**The Meadows.** Open space meadow with lots of shade for simply relaxing.

**The Bow Wow Factor.** Dogs can enjoy being off leash while their owners sit in the shade.

**The Wow Factor.** The park's iconic, unique element, visible from outside the park.



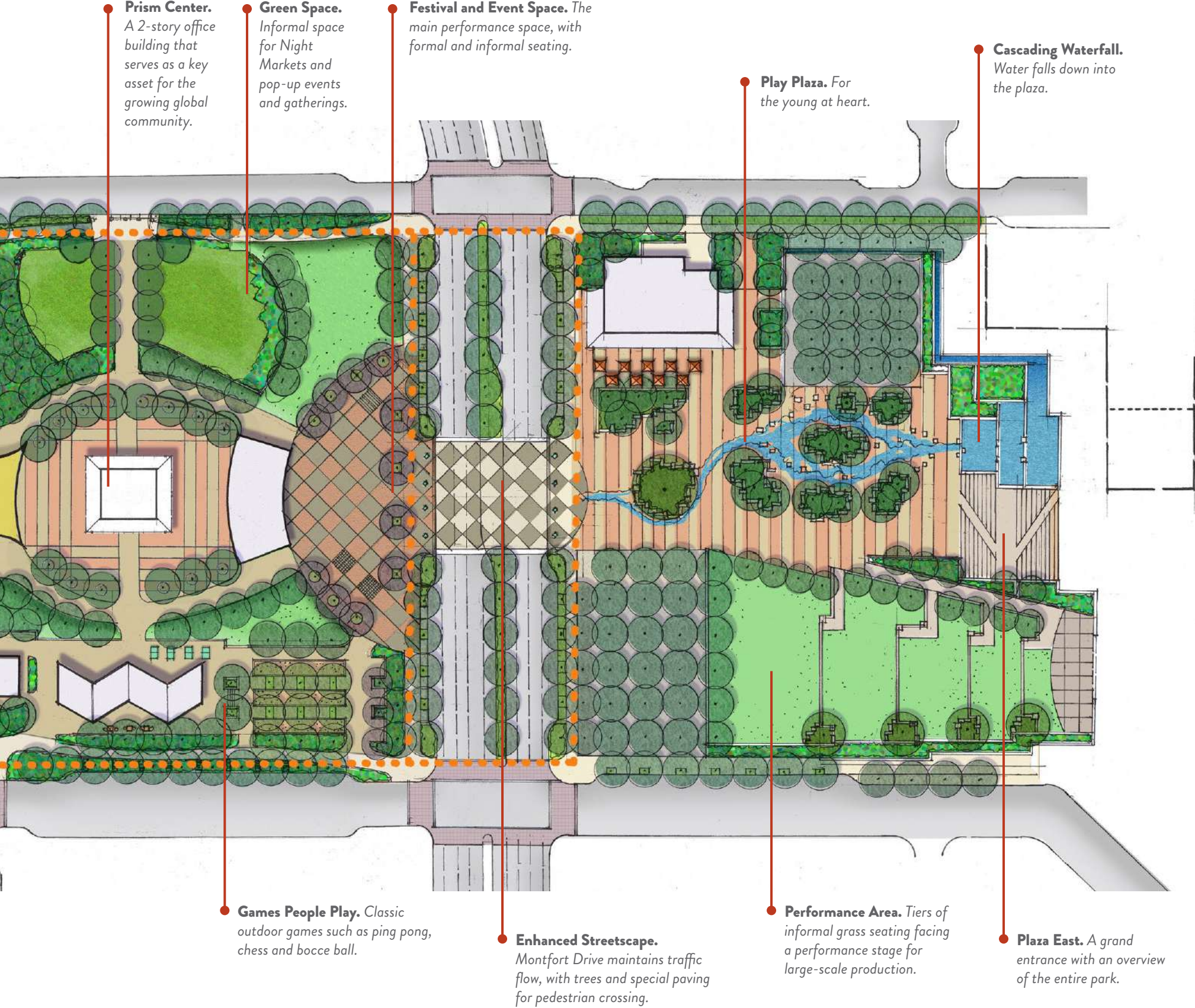
**The Office.** An outdoor area to accomplish actual work, individually or in small groups.

**Art Walk and Sculpture Garden.** The elegant strolling garden features installations by local artists.

**Water Works.** Play in the water; a welcome relief from the hot Dallas sun.

**Eat Drink Play.** An area for eating, with food trucks available.





**Prism Center.** A 2-story office building that serves as a key asset for the growing global community.

**Green Space.** Informal space for Night Markets and pop-up events and gatherings.

**Festival and Event Space.** The main performance space, with formal and informal seating.

**Play Plaza.** For the young at heart.

**Cascading Waterfall.** Water falls down into the plaza.

**Games People Play.** Classic outdoor games such as ping pong, chess and bocce ball.

**Enhanced Streetscape.** Montfort Drive maintains traffic flow, with trees and special paving for pedestrian crossing.

**Performance Area.** Tiers of informal grass seating facing a performance stage for large-scale production.

**Plaza East.** A grand entrance with an overview of the entire park.



**I am excited to see  
the original vision  
come to fruition  
through a dynamic  
destination park  
with entertainment  
spaces, a new DISD  
STEAM Academy  
and increased  
emphasis on  
international business  
and tourism—all  
of which will make  
for an exciting  
and vibrant Dallas  
International District.**

**LINDA KOOP  
FORMER TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
FORMER DISTRICT 11 DALLAS  
CITY COUNCIL MEMBER**

**part 3:**  
**Activity Settings**

## ACTIVITY SETTING

# PLAZA EAST

Size: About 4 acres

**The East Plaza, adjacent to new retail on the east, provides a vantage point overlooking the rest of the park.**

**A** Enter the park and find a sweeping overview of the entire park and its activities to the west. The “Wow Factor” in the distance provides a tempting destination. Then descend down a cascade of steps (fully accessible) alongside a cascading waterfall.

**B** A play plaza including a large, landmark tree and informal seating along a stream.

**C** The shaded contemplative grove will offer benches and tables under a canopy of trees. Water flows down a “water wall” on the east side, providing visual and audio “white noise.”

**D** A restaurant will provide food and drink for those attending events and visiting the park; there is also space for food carts.

**E** One of the main stages for performances, facing west.

**F** Five grassy tiers allow for informal venue seating.

**G** Additional shaded space with views of the performance stage.





1



2



3



4



**1** Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston, MA

**2, 3** Smale Riverfront Park, Cincinnati, OH

**4** Shake Shack, Madison Square Park, New York, NY

**5** Olympic Park, Seattle, WA

**6** Stern Grove, San Francisco, CA

**7** Samuel Paley Park, New York, NY



7



5



6

## ACTIVITY SETTING

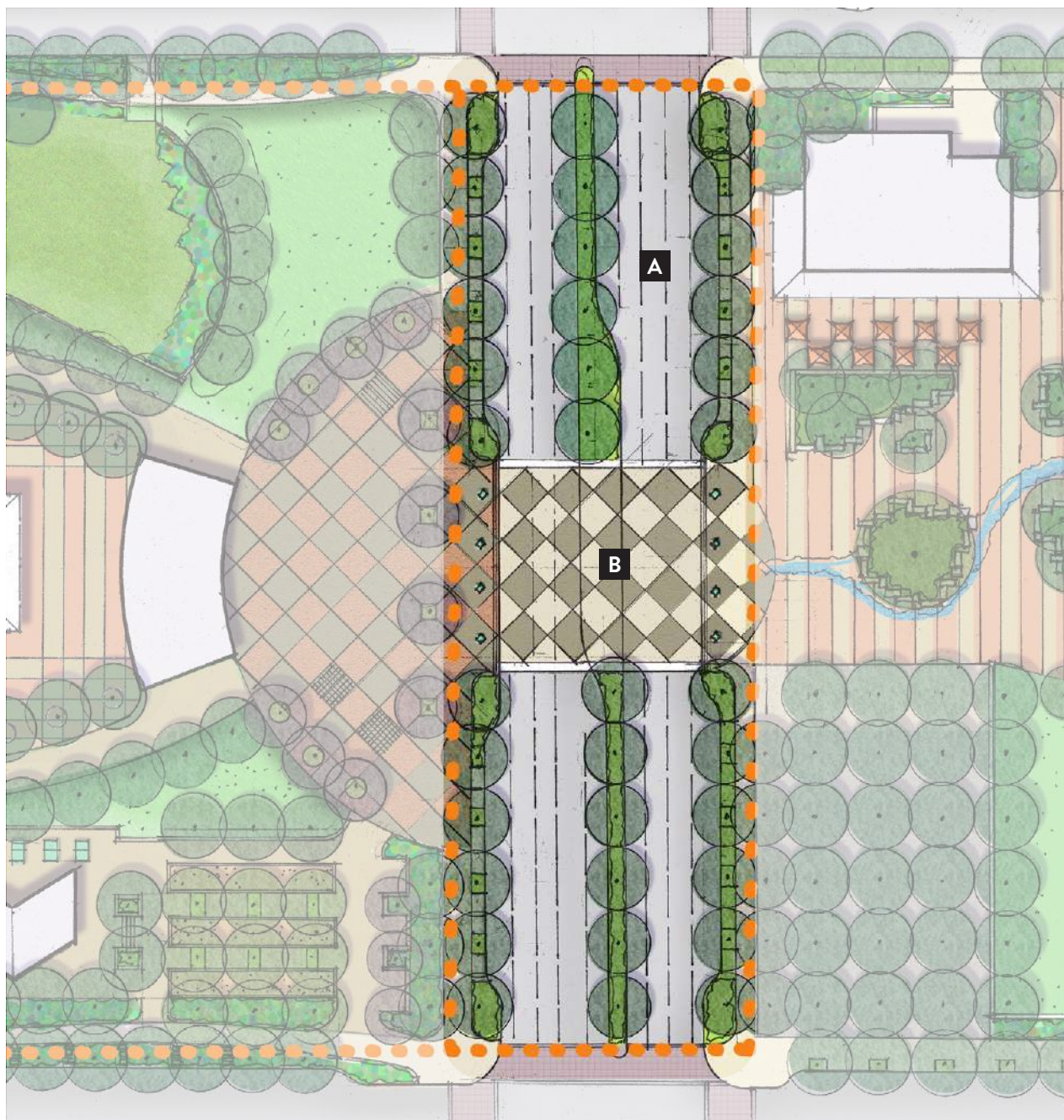
# ENHANCED STREETSCAPE

Size: 485 feet long

**The section of Montfort Drive bisects the park and will be fully integrated into the design.**

**A** The street maintains multiple travel lanes in each direction, along with bicycle lanes. It's enhanced with additional vegetation and its design will reflect the new Dallas International District streetscape design standards.

**B** The lines of trees open to provide visual access to both sides of the street. Special paving textures and colors signify pedestrian crossings and a median strip offers an oasis to ease pedestrian crossings.





The more successfully a city mingles everyday diversity of uses and users in its everyday streets, the more successfully, casually (and economically) its people thereby enliven and support well-located parks that can thus give back grace and delight to their neighborhoods.

JANE JACOBS, THE DEATH AND LIFE OF GREAT AMERICAN CITIES

1 West Capitol Avenue,  
West Sacramento, CA

2 Long Beach  
Transit Mall,  
Long Beach, CA



## ACTIVITY SETTING

# FESTIVAL AND EVENT SPACE

Size: About 3.6 acres

**This area is the main gathering point in the park for large festivals, pageants and other events.**

**A** The performing arts pavilion can face either east toward the festival plaza or west toward the festival lawn.

**B** The festival plaza contains “board games” such as large chess and checkerboards, and can also be used for formal seating for performances.

**C** The lawn areas can be used by families for picnics and relaxing.

**D** Additional lawn space for family fun or overflow concert seating.







1



2

1 Market Square Park,  
Houston, TX

2 Outdoor Concert,  
Philadelphia, PA

3 Día de los Muertos  
Festival, Austin, TX



3

## OFFICE SPACE

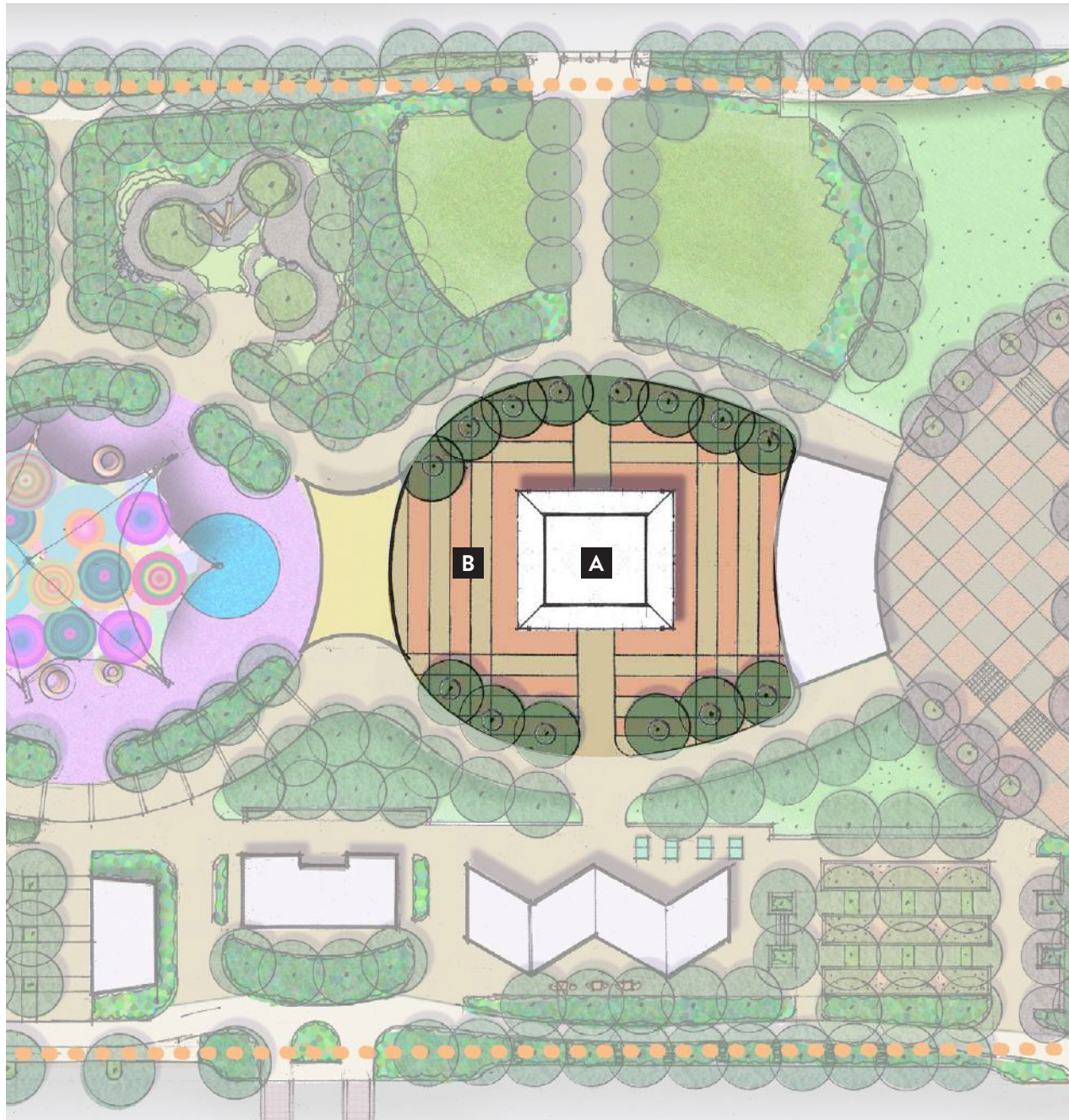
# PRISM CENTER

*Size: About .6 acre*

**The Prism Center, in the heart of the Dallas International District, serves as the home for international chambers, city offices, and global nonprofits and start-ups.**

**A** The building is shaped like a prism with an inviting atrium area to be filled with artwork from international artists and official gifts given to the City by international dignitaries.

**B** The building's grounds include a plaza area perfect for pop-up performances and events and a garden area that is a nice space for lunch or quiet reflection.





1

1 Prism Center

2 Borough Market,  
London, England

3 Dallas International  
Night Market



2



3

## ACTIVITY SETTING

# THE WOW FACTOR

Size: About 1 acre

**This area will become a park icon; a unique element that can be viewed from a distance.**

**A** The colorful, attractive woven climbing structure allows climbing up to 20 feet, with other built-in interactive features, art, technology and attractive lighting.

**B** A shaded pavilion area for gathering or small performances.

**C** Additional nature play area with seating.





**1** Play street concept,  
Charlotte, NC

**2** Roosevelt Row,  
Downtown Phoenix, AZ

**3** Takino Suzuran  
Hillside Park, Japan

**4** Discovery Cube,  
Santa Ana, CA

**5** Denver, CO



The measure of any great civilization is in its cities, and the measure of a city's greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and squares.

JOHN RUSKIN, ENGLISH ART CRITIC

## ACTIVITY SETTING

# GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Size: About .7 acre

**Those wanting to play games with a twist will find outdoor games galore.**

**A** A shade structure hosts ping pong, foosball and other game tables (with chess and checkers just to the north in the festival plaza).

**B** Play bocce ball under the trees.

**C** Large, main restroom facility for the park (small facilities located throughout).





1



2



4



3

1 Yanaguana Gardens,  
San Antonio, TX

2 Bocce Ball Court

3, 4 Yanaguana Gardens,  
San Antonio, TX

## ACTIVITY SETTING

# EAT DRINK PLAY

Size: About .8 acres

**A large space for families to eat homemade picnics or buy food, with playful lighting.**

**A** Shaded areas with plenty of tables and benches.

**B** A covered mini-stage is available for informal music and buskers.

**C** Food trucks will line up along the street.







1, 2 Bell Street Park,  
Seattle, WA

3 Pop-up Food Carts,  
Portland, OR



## ACTIVITY SETTING

# THE BOW WOW FACTOR

Size: About .65 acre

**A** great, modern off-leash dog park.

**A** Area for larger dogs.

**B** Area for smaller dogs.



1, 2, 3 Dogs provide a common denominator for meeting and socializing

4 Tompkins Square Dog Run, New York, NY.  
Photo credit:  
David Shankbone



## ACTIVITY SETTING

# THE MEADOWS

*Size: About 1 acre*

**This very peaceful, relaxing grassy area features the flora and fauna of the North Texas Blacklands Prairie, with abundant trees and shade.**



# Parks are the lungs of the city.

FREDERIC LAW OLMSTED,  
CO-DESIGNER OF NEW  
YORK'S CENTRAL PARK,  
PARAPHRASING BRITISH  
PRIME MINISTER WILLIAM  
PITT'S "LUNGS OF LONDON"  
REFERENCE TO HYDE PARK,  
LONDON



**1, 2** Indigenous landscape of the blackland prairie

**3** Hemisfair Park, San Antonio, TX

## ACTIVITY SETTING

# WATER WORKS

Size: About 1.3 acres

**This welcome relief from the hot Dallas sun will be a great place for families.**

- A** An interactive water feature with water spouts and “creek bed.”
- B** Elevated slides down to the water area.
- C** Sand play area with seating for adults.

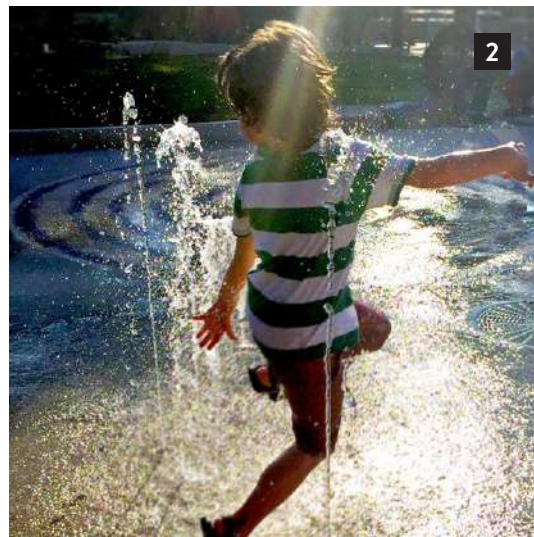




1

1, 2 *Yanaguana Gardens,  
San Antonio, TX*

3 *Clear Creek Plaza,  
Golden, CO*



2



3

We all need to play, especially in urban areas. Play is central to our health, well-being, creativity and intelligence and to our success as an innovative culture.

SUSAN GOLTSMAN, FASLA, PRINCIPAL, MIG, INC.

## ACTIVITY SETTING

# ART WALK AND SCULPTURE GARDEN

Size: About 1.25 acres

**This elegant garden will be available for weddings and other celebrations.**

**A** An iconic art sculpture introduces visitors to the art garden.

**B** Elegant, strolling garden features installations by international artists (art work will be featured throughout the park) and lovely spots for weddings.

**C** “Makers” booths along the park edge—and potentially on the ground in the adjacent parking structure—can be available to local and international artists to make and sell their wares.







A day spent without the sight or sound of beauty, the contemplation of mystery, or the search of truth or perfection is a poverty-stricken day.

LEWIS MUMFORD



**1** Bryant Park Youth Art Cart, New York, NY

**2** Makers Space for Metal Arts, San Francisco, CA

**3** Street art chalk festival

**4** Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston, MA

**5** Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle, WA



## ACTIVITY SETTING

# NEIGHBORHOOD GREEN

Size: About 1.25 acres

**Whether it's just a quick jaunt or part of an all day visit, this area will be a neighborhood favorite.**

- A** A small green space is suitable for outdoor movie screenings, casual talking and informal gathering.
- B** A small area for adult exercise structures.
- C** Tot lot with seating for adults.



**1** Hemisfair Park, San Antonio, TX

**2** Outdoor movies on the green



**Wonderful public spaces are not a frivolity. They are just as important as hospitals and schools. They create a sense of belonging ... and a society where people of all income levels meet and share the public space.**

**ENRIQUE PEÑALOSA LONDOÑO, MAYOR OF BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA**

## ACTIVITY SETTING

# THE OFFICE

*Size: About .5 acre*

**With a new hotel to the south, this area can become an outdoor space to do actual work in a casual and comfortable setting with Wi-Fi and secluded places for impromptu small group meetings.**



1 Shared workspace organization "The Hub," Melbourne, Australia

2 Office sunken into forest floor, Madrid, Spain

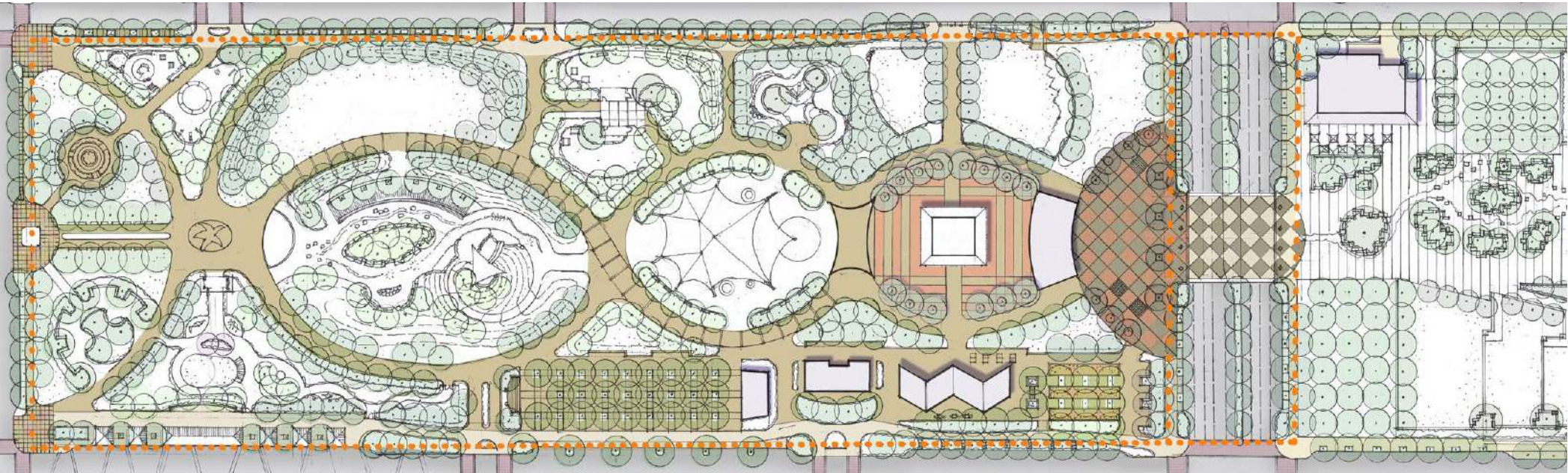
3 Working outdoors

4 Parallel Park, Vancouver, BC



## ACTIVITY SETTING

# WALK JOG RUN BIKE



**Dallas International District employees and residents can improve their health and wellness on the walk, jog, run and bike path that surrounds the entire park. And they can change it up by using the crisscrossing paths that connect activity settings throughout the park. The mostly tree-lined paths will be fully accessible, comprising decomposed granite, colored concrete, and colored and scored paving in the plazas.**

**A** 3,600-foot long perimeter path.

**B** About 4,000 feet of interior paths through the park.

1, 2, 3, 4 Getting outdoor exercise in urban areas is always a challenge



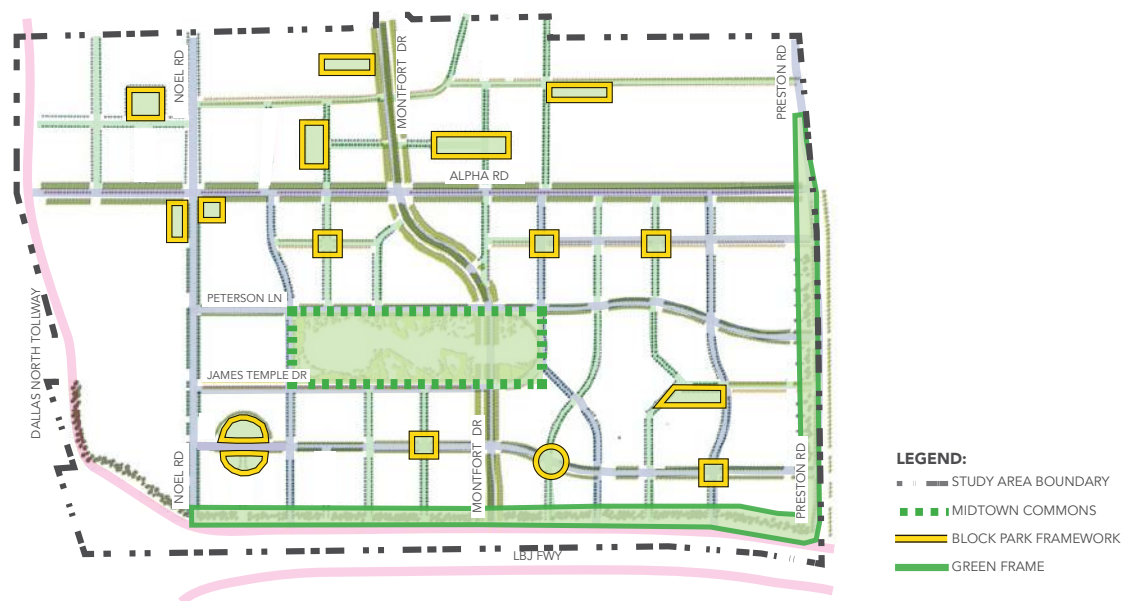
## ACTIVITY SETTING

# GETTING THERE

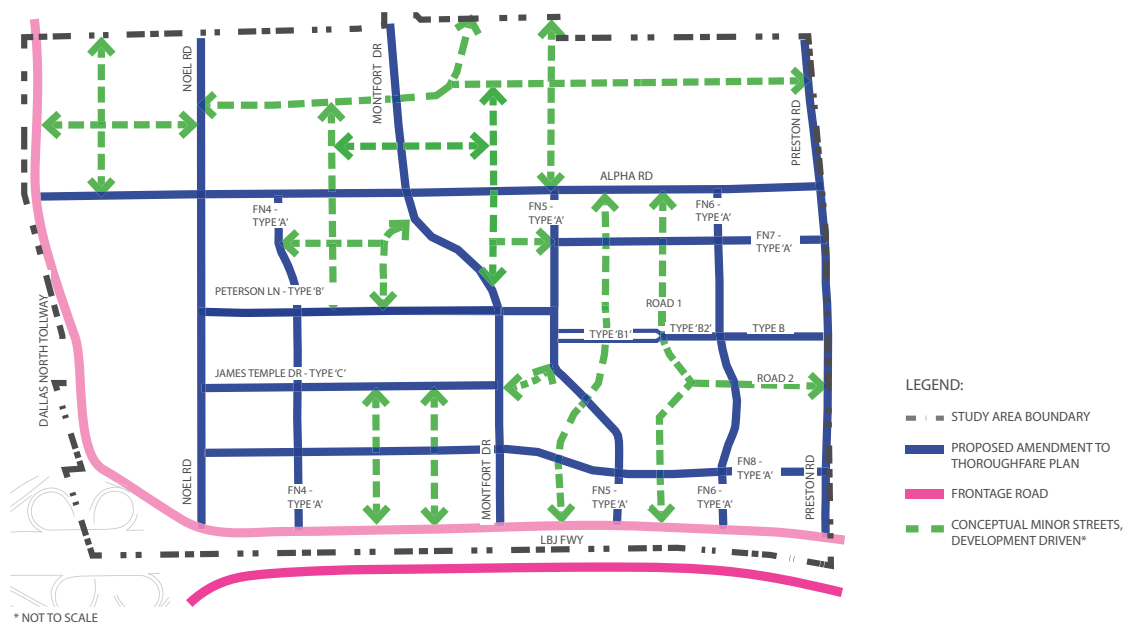
People from throughout North Texas will find it easy and convenient to come to the park, using many different types of transportation.

- An exploration is underway to determine the feasibility of developing a people mover system around the District and from the DART Silver Line, funded by a grant from the North Texas Council of Governments.
- There will be street parking, as well as use of the structured parking garage for visitors, residents and employees.
- A wheeled transit will transport people around the entire area.
- Bicyclists will find connections from the regional bikeway system to the park and plenty of bike parking.
- The City is planning enhanced last mile connections to DART buses and to light rail lines to the east and west.
- The proposed street network will provide enhanced vehicle access by creating new thoroughfares as the area redevelops into a vibrant, mixed-use community.

### CONCEPTUAL OPEN SPACE NETWORK



### CONCEPTUAL STREET NETWORK





1 DART

2 The DFW Skylink,  
Photo credit: Lars  
Plougmann

3 Enhanced bicycle  
lanes

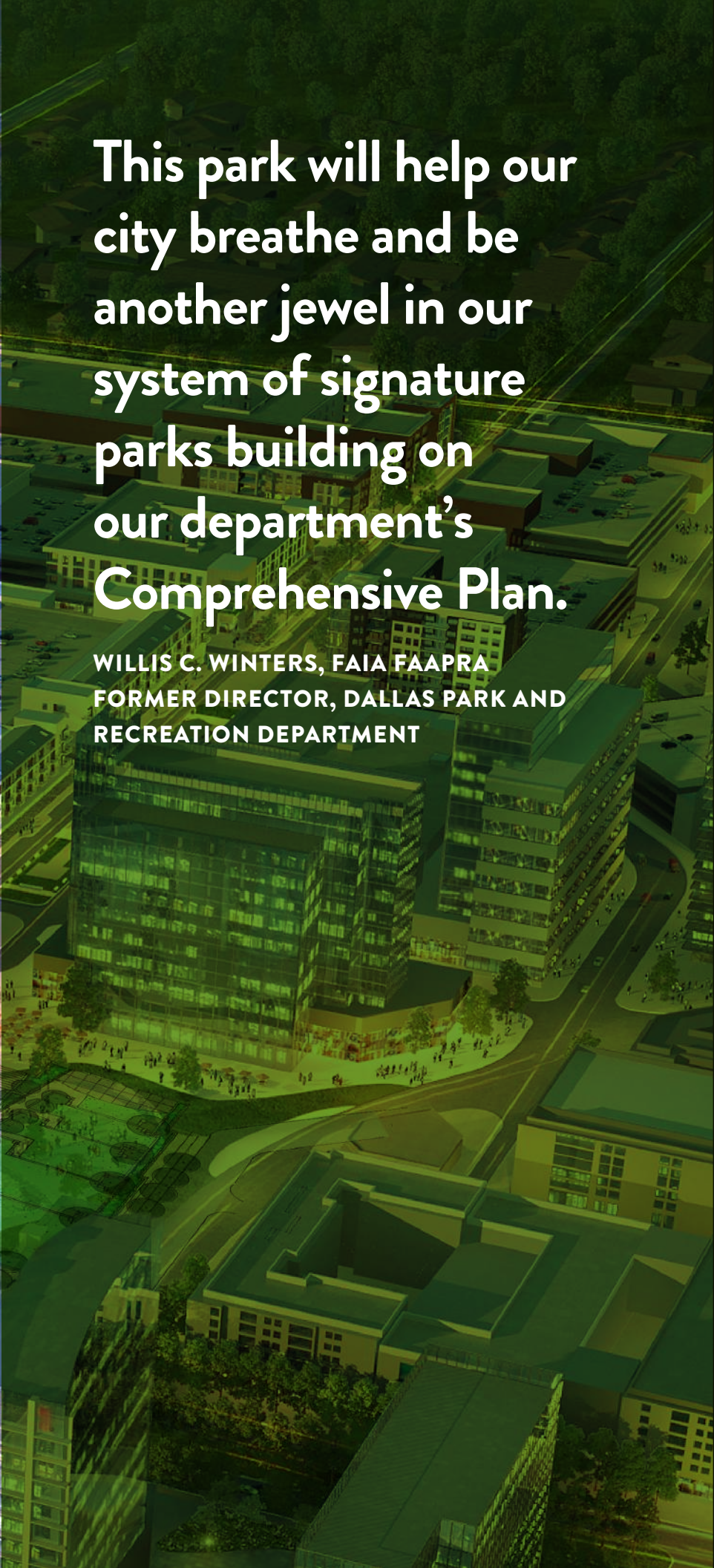


I am thankful to the Regional Transportation Council for providing a financial grant to identify mobility and transit options around Dallas International District.

LEE KLEINMAN

FORMER DISTRICT 11 PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD





This park will help our city breathe and be another jewel in our system of signature parks building on our department's **Comprehensive Plan.**

**WILLIS C. WINTERS, FAIA FAAPRA  
FORMER DIRECTOR, DALLAS PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

**part 4:**  
**Implementation**

# 4

## IMPLEMENTATION

# A destination park developed by the community

### FUNDING STRATEGIES

Dallas International Commons will be developed and maintained through public/private partnerships, providing opportunities for community organizations, businesses and foundations to become involved at all levels. Costs for acquiring land and developing the park with full programming are estimated at about \$160 million.

Working with the City of Dallas, Friends of The Commons has developed several financing methods:

**City Bonds.** Dallas voters approved a general obligation bond program in 2017, including \$6 million for the park (with a \$6 million match). Another bond program is currently being prepared for 2024.

**Tax Increment Financing.** The budget for the Mall Area Redevelopment TIF District has a significant dedication to parkland acquisition and served as a partial funding source for the City to acquire the Prism Center in 2021. The TIF district fund will continue to support the park as well as mixed-use and mixed-income redevelopment projects.

**Public Improvement District.** In 2022, the City engaged with the 400+ owners in the area to consider creation of a PID, which allows for property assessments generated to support and maintain the park once established.

**Open Space Assessment.** The special purpose zoning district, PD 887, features a fee-in-lieu-of provision. The PD 887 Open Space Fund served as a partial funding source for the City to acquire the Prism Center in 2021 and will continue to support the park as fee revenue accrues.

**Private Donations.** Corporations and foundations will contribute funding and in return may receive naming rights to specific areas of the park.

**Concessions.** Friends of The Commons will be the landlord for retail and restaurant concessions in the park and receive rental income and a percentage of sales of food and other concessions.

**Rentals and Fees.** The community will be able to rent park areas for events, concerts, weddings and other celebrations.

**Grants.** The City may receive grants from other government agencies and non-profits to support the park.




1 Galleria Dallas

## potential naming opportunities

- Plaza East
  - Entrance steps and waterfall
  - Contemplation Garden and water wall
  - Play plaza
  - Performance stage
  - Grassy seating area
- Enhanced Streetscape
  - Montfort Drive pedestrian crossing
  - Street trees
- Festival and Event Space
  - Main performance stage
  - Festival lawns
  - Festival plaza
- Prism Center
  - Enclosed structure
  - Plaza area
- Wow Factor
  - The Wow structure
  - Pavilion
- Nature Play Area
  - Bocce ball court
  - Game tables
  - Shade structure
- Eat Drink Play
  - Eating area
  - Mini-stage
- Bow Wow Factor
  - Large dog area
  - Small dog area
- Water Works
  - Water feature
  - Slides
  - Sand play area
- Art Walk and Sculpture Garden
  - Art sculptures and installations
  - The art walkway
  - Makers booths
- Neighborhood Green
  - The green
  - Movie screenings
  - Adult exercise area
  - Tot lot
- The Office
  - Benches and seating areas
  - Wi-Fi
  - Gardens
- Name the entire park!



An aerial night-time photograph of a modern city. The scene is dominated by several tall, glass-clad skyscrapers that are brightly lit from within, creating a glowing effect against the dark sky. The buildings are arranged in a dense urban grid. In the foreground, a multi-lane highway with light trails from cars is visible, curving through the city. The overall atmosphere is one of a vibrant, active urban environment.

**It is far easier, simpler to create spaces that work for people than those that do not—and a tremendous difference it can make to the life of a city. What attracts people most, it would appear, is other people. ... The best-used plazas are sociable places.**

**WILLIAM H. WHYTE, URBANIST, AUTHOR OF *THE SOCIAL LIFE OF SMALL URBAN SPACES***

