

A STUDY OF PUBLIC PARKS, EQUITY, AND THE CREATION OF SINGLE MEMBER
COUNCIL DISTRICTS IN DALLAS, TEXAS

by

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I could not have done this alone.

Surround yourself with those who will build you up, not tear you down.

Abstract

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This research explores the civic governance and political structure of the city council election systems in Dallas, Texas after the Voting Rights Act in order to discover the change in minority representation and its impact on the equity and distribution of public parks within the City of Dallas. This thesis explores this particular political mechanism for equity creation in the City of Dallas during two time periods: at the drastic change to 14 single-member districts in 1991, and the changes made beyond the 1994 Dallas Plan. Within the Dallas planning history, there is little literature on equity and history of racially segregated spaces. There is also little record of the dynamics of the involvement of civic governance after the civic structure changed from an at-large city council to a single-member district council. This research is focused on designed parks within the city of Dallas, their distribution in the council districts, and whether minority and non-minority representation translates to park distribution.

This research uses qualitative and quantitative techniques (Sommer, 2002) in the forms of archival and secondary data obtained from Dallas Municipal Archives, online exhibits, and secondary studies that are used to inform a series of detailed map comparisons in order to analyze and determine the impact of single-member council districts on equity, distribution, and development of public parks in the city of Dallas. This analysis shows that single-member

districts did not have an immediate effect on equity creation in parks by showing evidence of less new park placement in consistently minority represented council districts versus consistent white represented council districts through comparative maps and counting of parks from 1991 to 2017. Instead it appears that later efforts after the release of Trust for Public Land's study on Smart Growth for Dallas had a greater impact than the single-member district verdict on the equity of public parks in Dallas.

It is important to continue conducting conversations on the relationship between equity and Landscape Architecture; as the profession follows the example of its professional organization, whose values are integrity and diversity, but does not fully reflect the shifting demographics of the nation.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis investigates the role of the creation of single-member city council districts in influencing the equitable distribution of parks within the City of Dallas. This is a study of how things have changed over time park-wise and the government and policies that were a key part in the changes made in the districts from the creation of the single member-districts in 1991 all the way to the current park master plan for Dallas. This research explores the ripple effect after the creation of single-member council districts by focusing on designed public parks within the city of Dallas, their distribution in the council districts, and whether or not minority or non-minority representation translates to park distribution. It also explores how the civic structure change effected equity change in Dallas and its parks after the 14-1 Ruling in 1991 and the redistricting of the city as a result. This thesis is covering one small measurement of equity in parks and its connection to a political system that was implemented for improved minority representation and racial equity in the City of Dallas. For the purposes of this thesis, it should be noted that the term “minority” will be used to refer to the ways that political representation is regulated by the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Future studies can be conducted on other ways to measure equity with this research as a starting point.

1.1 Methodology

To address the governance effects on park equity, archival maps and park comprehensive plans from the Park and Recreation department are used to see patterns in park distribution and if the tool of redistricting for better minority representation effectively helped in distribution equity. I also explore the history of equity in park distribution and access in Dallas and across the United States, as well as how race and landscape architecture played a role. This research recognizes that number of parks is not the sole measure of equity. However, it is a contributing

factor in a widely dispersed city like Dallas that acknowledges the need for more neighborhood parks to meet its “accessibility” goals.

1.2 Significance + Problem Statement

It is well documented that the creation of public parks systems across the United States in the twentieth century formed a racially segregated and unequal provision of parks (bcWorkshop, 2014; Connerly, 2005; Rothstein, 2017). The City of Dallas was no exception, and it is important to understand current conversations about equity, in attempts to redress the ill-effects of city and government policies, and how they have progressed over time.

Though it was not directly in the thick of the civil unrest of the deep south states, the City of Dallas was not immune to the civil injustices of segregation. In her study on implementation of George Kessler’s plans for Turtle Creek Parkway and Mill Creek, Molly Plummer discusses the injustices that plagued Dallas due to underlying power concerns and how those influenced the city spaces. She states specifically “In the era of Jim Crow in Dallas, the implementation of the first comprehensive plan gave physical space to the values of those who influenced the implementation” (Plummer, 2017, p. 5). This pushes the idea of “spatial distribution of privilege” and how it should be considered alongside social justice and their links to environmental or spatial justice. As Dianne Harris stresses, “If we want to design for diversity, we have to design for opportunity and for increased life chances for everyone” (Harris, 2007, p.2).

The Landscape Architecture Foundation (LAF) is an organization that provides “leadership and resources to empower landscape architects” and invests in other initiatives to further promote and support the landscape architecture profession (Landscape Architecture Foundation, 2019). Since they are a highly respected organization that the landscape architecture

profession looks to for moral guidance and support, it is crucial to take what they say seriously. In 2016, LAF created a new “call to action” to draw attention to the concerns that landscape architects could address. They declared: “As landscape architects, we vow to create places that serve the higher purpose of social and ecological justice for all peoples and all species. We vow to create places that nourish our deepest needs for communion with the natural world and with one another. We vow to serve the health and well-being of all communities” by bringing “different and often competing interests together so as to give artistic physical form and integrated function to the ideals of equity, sustainability, resiliency and democracy.” In order to fulfill these declarations, the LAF calls landscape architects to “work to strengthen and diversify our global capacity as a profession” (Landscape Architecture Foundation, 2016).

History thus becomes an important tool that landscape architects must engage to create a more equitable future. As Barton argues in *Sites of Memory: Perspectives on Architecture and Race*, understanding the mechanisms that segregated the landscape are important for every “...contemporary architect or urbanist seeking to explore the historic and contemporary effects of race upon the development of the built environment and to examine the realities and myths of America’s dual racial landscapes” (Barton, 2001, p. 1). Closer to home, Molly Plummer, a former student of the Landscape Architecture program at the University of Texas at Arlington, eloquently stated that landscape architects “cannot overlook the role of history in shaping the current physical environment of cities and cannot address the long-term problems created by these planning mechanisms without understanding the past,” (Plummer, 2017, p. 5). It is also important to understand what political tools have and have not been successful in creating equity, thus helping landscape architects navigate contemporary practice.

1.3 Research Questions

Did the 1991 change from the at-large system to single-member district system of city council elections effect the equity of park distribution in Dallas?

Was there change in representation on the city council of Dallas after the change from at-large election system to single-member district elections?

Was the new direct advocacy created by single-member districts the most effective way to achieve equity in parks?

Where did Dallas emphasize placement of public parks after the change in city council structure?

Which parts of the city are not receiving as equal of access to public parks as those in other parts of the city?

1.4 Definitions of Terms

At-Large Election System –

“All at-large members are elected to serve the same constituency, which is the population of the city as a whole.” At-large election supporters favor having council members elected by the larger population because they believe that “Council members in an at-large system can be more impartial, rise above the limited perspective of a single district and concern themselves with the problems of the whole community.” However, at-large elections have the potential to be less representative of specific groups, such as people of color, “especially if the group does not have a citywide base of operations or is an ethnic or racial group concentrated in a specific ward” (National League of Cities, 2016).

Black Spatial Imaginary –

In the United States, African Americans, out of necessity, have created a legacy out of struggling against the oppressions of race and fighting for space for centuries. This legacy formed what Lipsitz terms the black spatial imaginary, which is “a socially-shared understanding of the importance of public space and its power to shape opportunities and life chances” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 17). Lipsitz also defines this imaginary as a way to view space as “valuable and finite, as a public responsibility for which all must take stewardship. Privileging the public good over private interests,” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 69). With their struggle and fight over space, the black spatial imaginary “encourages us to see that how ‘things are’ is, at least in part, a consequence of how they came to be” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 245).

Civic Governance –

Governance is seen as “the process and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised.’ It conceives governance as including ‘how governments are selected, held accountable, monitored and replaced,’ with an emphasis on the capacity of governments to manage resources and respect the rule of law” (Boyte, 2005, p. 536).

Equity –

Equity is a term that can be defined in multiple different ways, depending on the context in which it is used. For this research, the best explanation for it is “In its broadest sense, equity is fairness. As a legal system, it is a body of law that addresses concerns that fall outside the jurisdiction of common law” (Equity, 2010, p. 217). Although, it is important to know where a term originates to understand its modern definition. In the Encyclopedia of Governance, they define equity in this manner:

“In its original formulation, equity was a rectification of, or supplement to, rigid law. In its modern form, it has lost this concrete relation to rigid law and is used to describe either the ‘essence’ of good law or an independent value that good law takes into consideration. Where equity was originally outside the law, it has come to describe a way in which the law itself ought to treat people. We say that the law is equitable, that it treats people fairly, or perhaps that it promotes equity. We no longer say that the law requires equity as a remedy. Furthermore, an original distinction between equity and equality in ancient Greece has given way to the modern interchangeable use of equity and equality. Tracing the evolution of the concept is instructive; the loss of its original meaning suggests we have lost sight of (a) a fundamental problem of governance by law and (b) an alternative to governance by law” (Equity, 2007, p. 281).

The definition of equity can also be seen as “spatial equity.” Lipsitz states that “the collective, cumulative, and continuing legacy of the racialization of space in the United States today makes itself felt most powerfully within black communities in the form of structured disadvantages revolving around environmental politics of place” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 18). This racialization of space also applies to “residential segregation, poverty, and political powerlessness” that have “left communities of color with disproportionate exposure to polluted air, water, and land” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 18).

Minority Districts –

After the enactment of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, state and city government systems have had to adapt to the new legislation requirements. The City of Dallas responded in 1975 by creating an 8-3 system, which saw eight district representatives and three at-large elected representatives. It was not until 1991 that Dallas government created districts specifically for improved minority representation, thus creating minority districts. This term of “minority districts” was a political term created predominantly from government legislation and policy. This is a way civic governance addresses the broad variety of ethnicities, but it also over-simplifies the complexities of the issue of minority representation. For the sake of this research and analysis, this term is defined as a district that the majority demographic is a legally recognized racial or language minority, whether or not its representative is a member of that minority population.

Public Parks –

bcWorkshop defines a public park as “a shared resource for all citizens to engage in the life of the city and a variety of planned and spontaneous recreational activities. This view, while technically accurate, does not reflect the far more nuanced reality of public parks.

The idea that all are automatically welcome in a public park ignores the ways in which the design, construction, programming, use, and alteration/renovation of the space can reinforce divisions, both physical and perceived, between populations” (bcWorkshop, 2015, p. 2).

Segregation –

“Segregation is the physical separation of peoples on the basis of ethnicity and social custom historically applied to separate African Americans and Mexican Americans from whites” (Calvert & De Leon, 2013).

‘It defines the boundaries between groups, locates the groups in the hierarchy, and regulates their interaction... An institutionalized form of social distance expressed in physical separation. It signifies a convergence of physical and social space and is to be distinguished from other social forms which also structure social distance” (Segregation, 1968, p. 144).

Single-Member District –

These elections select a single council member from a corresponding geographical section of the city, called a district or ward (National League of Cities, 2016). District election proponents favor having council members elected to represent individual wards because:

- District elections give all legitimate groups, especially those with a geographic base, a better chance of being represented on the city council, especially communities of color. Several court decisions have forced jurisdictions to switch from at-large elections to district elections, and in most cases the reason was to allow more representation by specific ethnic and racial groups, acknowledging that the prior

system was a denial of equal access to the city's political process (National League of Cities, 2016).

Voting Rights Act of 1965 –

After years of civil unrest in the United States, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Voting Rights Act in 1965. The legislation that was signed “applied a nationwide prohibition against the denial or abridgment of the right to vote on the literacy tests on a nationwide basis” (The United States Department of Justice, 2017). This was due to Congress determining the existing federal “anti-discrimination laws were not sufficient to overcome the resistance by state officials to enforcement of the 15th Amendment” (The United States Department of Justice, 2017). In addition to the legislation in 1965, the later amendments in 1970 and 1975 “added protections from voting discrimination for language minority citizens” (The United States Department of Justice, 2017).

White Spatial Imaginary –

This term, like black spatial imaginary, is coined by American Scholar George Lipsitz, who has written multiple books and articles discussing race and public spaces in America's history. He states that the white spatial imaginary “encourages people to think the world begins when they walk into the room” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 245) and “idealizes ‘pure’ and homogeneous spaces, controlled environments, and predictable patterns of design and behavior. It seeks to hide social problems rather than solve them” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 29). The white spatial imaginary also portrays the “properly gendered prosperous suburban home as the privileged moral geography of the nation. Widespread, costly, and often counterproductive practices of surveillance, regulation, and incarceration become justified as form of frontier defense against demonized people of

color” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 13). Lipsitz also states, “A white spatial imaginary based on exclusivity and augmented exchange value forms the foundational logic behind prevailing spatial and social policies in cities and suburbs today. This imaginary does not emerge simply or directly from the embodied identities of people who are white. It is inscribed in the physical contours of the places where we live, work, and play, and it is bolstered by financial benefits from the association of white place with privilege, from the neighborhood race effects that create unequal and unjust geographies of opportunity” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 28). Most importantly, this spatial imaginary “views space primarily as a locus for the generation of exchange value” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 30).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review focuses on three themes. One is the importance of the role single-member districts and their influence on the distribution of parks throughout the city of Dallas, Texas. Second, this chapter presents a review of relevant literature and studies of the history of planning and politics, as well as the broader literature on the relationship between landscape architecture and race and the impact of segregation on public park design. Finally, this chapter concludes with brief summaries of the Kessler Plan of 1911, the Bartholomew Plan of 1943, the Renaissance Plan, and the Dallas Park and Recreation Department Comprehensive Plan.

2.2 City and Park Planning in Dallas

2.2.1 Turn of the Century

At the turn of the 20th century, the City of Dallas prioritized “strong and effective governmental leadership” as well as improving adverse problems of the physical environment of the city. Identified by Charles Goff and George Dealey, who were urban activists of the time, these problems, such as poor public amenities and transportation services and lack of public parks, affected the prosperity and growth of the entire city. Dealey and Goff called attention to elected officials to address these problems, arguing that they would benefit the “city as a whole.” Historian Robert Fairbanks wrote that even though there were civic improvements being implemented, the different parts of the “city as a whole” system were not, however, seen as equal.

By 1900, the city had emerged as a commercial, financial, and transportation center with visions of rapid industrialization” The third-largest city in Texas at the time, Dallas had become the business, agricultural, and entertainment hub of a 250,000 square mile region

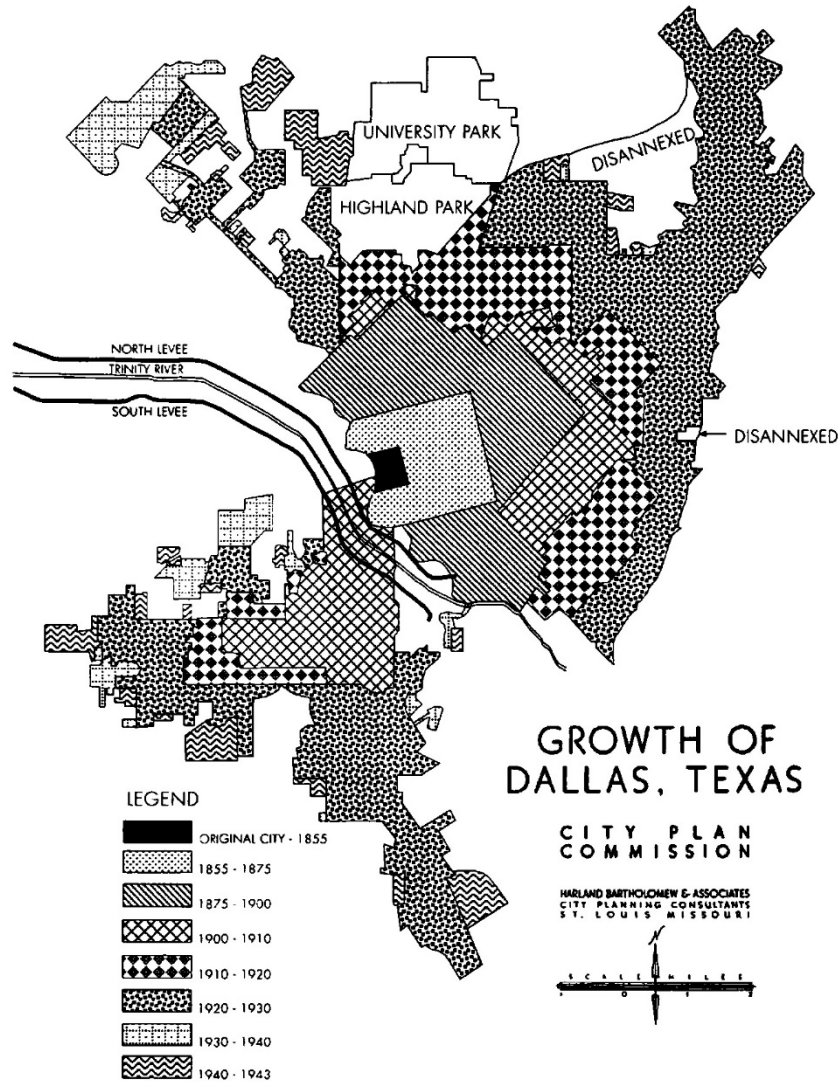
including North and West Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. That was not enough for Dallas boosters, who had visions of making their city the metropolis of the entire Southwest (Fairbanks, 1998, p. 11).

In 1905, the City of Dallas created a board of park commissioners “to oversee the operation of the city’s underdeveloped park system” (Fairbanks, 1998, p. 20) after concluding that managing it was too time-consuming. Although the city allocated funds for them in the annual budget, the new board developed its own budget and were able to have an independent agenda apart from the city council.

2.2.2 Impact of Early Urban Growth in Dallas

When it came to segregation within the city, although it did not follow the usual pattern of other large cities, minorities were in concentrated pockets of land throughout Dallas (Fairbanks, 1998). “Despite a rhetoric that constantly referred to the city as a whole, not all urban citizens received equal treatment: blacks, Mexicans, and the poor in Dallas did not benefit from local government to the same degree that downtown businessmen did” (Fairbanks, 1998, p. 4). In 1916, Dallas citizens voted and approved a racial zoning ordinance, which specified three classifications of “white, black, and open blocks” (Fairbanks, 1998, p. 29; Phillips, 2010, p. 64). This meant that if only white citizens lived on a block, African Americans would be barred from purchasing property and residing there. The same would go from African American blocks barring whites. Open blocks, however, could remain as joint occupancy. However, only a year after its passing, after a supreme court case overturned a similar ordinance in Kentucky, Dallas city commissioners “experimented with other forms of racial zoning” (Fairbanks, 1998, p. 29) passing seven other ordinances over an eight-year period.

Michael Phillips, in his book *White Metropolis*, also documents the ways that Dallas enforced Jim Crow segregation, including city council discussions on how to regulate “which streets African Americans could walk on” (Phillips, 2010, p. 120).



Map 2 Dallas Expands, 1841–1943. Redrawn from the Bartholomew Plan for Dallas.

Figure 1: Growth of Dallas – Dallas Expands 1841-1943

from *Your Dallas of Tomorrow* by Harland Bartholomew and Associates, 1943

In the 1920s, Dallas experienced massive urban growth that would not only double its population but double the physical size of the city as seen in Figure 1. Despite providing an economic boom

to the region, the city experienced a plethora of problems during this massive expansion. This demanded an immense response of city services that were not up to the standard of a growing metropolis. The infrastructure within the city failed to keep up with the demand and created real challenges resulting in inadequate sewage treatment, mass fire losses of buildings, and crime waves that police could not keep up with. During this time, however, the city focused on new comprehensive plans that addressed “systematic surveys of the economic, social, demographic, political, and public-works aspects of the city, as if the condition of every group and every part of the city affected not only the welfare of the whole but the condition of every other group or part” (Fairbanks, 1998, p. 42). Fairbanks points out that there was a growing want by government officials for better coordination for better treatment for the entire city, proving urban growth was not the sole factor in how civic leaders responded to Dallas’ needs (Fairbanks, 1998). Around this time the park system was minimal but expanding as rapidly as the city limits. The city purchased parkland beyond the city limits in anticipation of future growth, such as future Kiest and Gateway Parks, as well as annexing land around White Rock Lake.

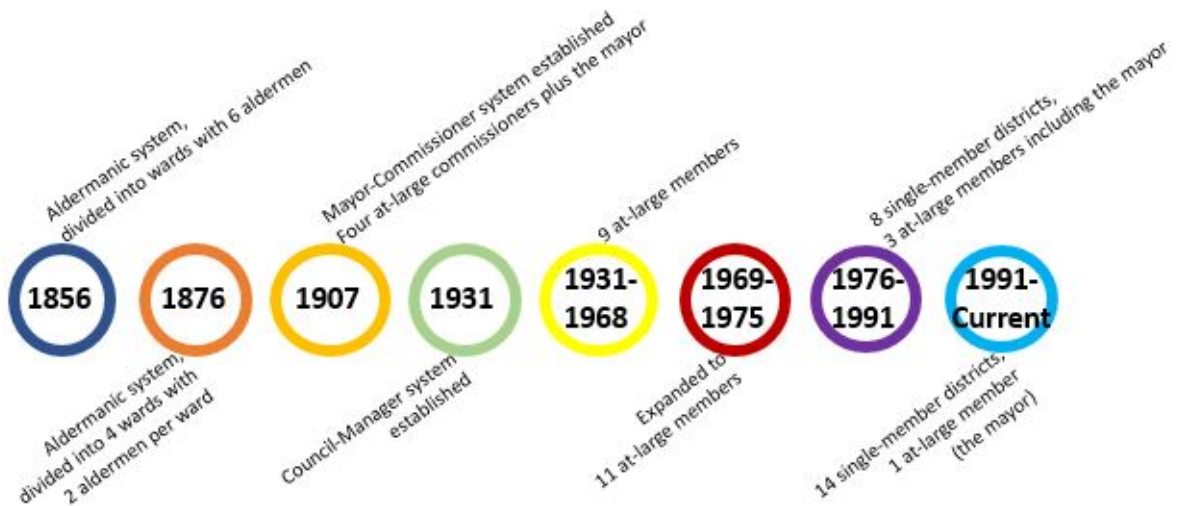


Figure 2: Timeline showing progression of governments in Dallas

Courtesy of City of Dallas online exhibit on 14-1 council districts.

2.2.3 Creation of Dallas Council Districts

Before the turn of the 20th century, the City of Dallas was governed by “a twenty-four-member, ward-elected city council (each ward being represented by two members), and a weak mayor, along with a popularly elected chief of police, assessor, tax collector, and city judge” (Fairbanks, 1998, p. 15). According to Dallas Archives, however, their records show Dallas government only having six aldermen, as shown in Figure 2 (City of Dallas Municipal Archives, n.d.-b). Between 1889 and 1900, the city charter was revised twice. By 1899, the city council consisted of only 12 members that included eight aldermen elected on a ward basis and four men from different districts selected at large. The new charter gave the council management and control over the city’s finances and appointive powers. Although his administrative powers were limited, the mayor was identified as chief executive as before, and along with the police and fire commissioners, was put in charge of public improvements. Despite all of these changes, there was still extensive frustration felt by the citizens of Dallas because they believed the new charter prohibited Dallas from “addressing important civic needs such as adequate water and sewage service,” and it “fostered local patronage and enhanced the special influence of land developers and utilities on city council” (Fairbanks, 1998, p. 17). By 1905, the City of Dallas government was a council-mayor system that relied on committees by dividing responsibilities amongst them, with finance, water, public improvements, streets and bridges, and sanitation being the top priorities (Fairbanks, 1998).

After being accused of avoiding responsibility and not accomplishing much, the City of Dallas called for a referendum to its charter in 1906. This led to a complete re-write of the charter that ultimately led to a Mayor-Commissioner government system (with four commissioners with specific responsibilities) in 1907 (Fairbanks, 1998). By 1931, after failing to

keep up with its rapid urban growth, the City of Dallas moved to a Council-manager form of government until 1968, when it switched from a nine-member council to an eleven-member council. From 1931 through 1975, all council members were considered at-large. Starting in 1975, however, the City of Dallas was divided into defined districts, each with its own council member represented in city council. There were also three at-large council members that included the mayor.

2.2.4 The 14-1 Ruling

Since its beginning, Dallas' citizens have not been equally represented in its city leaders. During Dallas' first hundred years of existence, African Americans were restricted from serving in city council. Up until the 1968 revision, the city charter contained a "Segregation of Races" section that "authorized the Council to divide Dallas into specific areas for whites and the colored races" (The 14-1 Ruling: Suing for Single-Member Voting Districts, 14-1 Home). In May 1988, however, a lawsuit was filed against the City of Dallas arguing the existing system of 8-3 member elections discriminated against Dallas' African American population; a group of Latinx residents later joined the suit. After multiple rejections of proposed plans over a 3-year span, U.S. District Judge Jerry Buchmeyer ordered elections in November of 1991 to proceed with a 14-1 plan. The new plan called for the redistricting of the City of Dallas into 14 new districts, each with an elected council member, with the mayor as the only at-large council member. After the November 1991 election, the council contained nine white, four African American, and two Latinx representatives, as well as four women included in its 14 members (The 14-1 Ruling). The effects that single-member districts have on development within the individual districts is discussed in Royce Hanson's "Civic Culture and Urban Change: Governing Dallas." In general, he states that, it doesn't always happen this way, a development project in a

councilmember's district will only gain support from the council as a whole if the project is supported by the member from that district (Hanson, 2003). Hanson, however, does not directly address the development of public parks.

2.3 Race and Landscape Architecture

2.3.1 Segregation in Social Spaces

Beginning soon after the Constitutional Amendments 13, 14, and 15 went into place, many whites in the United States acted fast to construct a system of segregation. These “Jim Crow” laws “re-imposed political inequality by depriving blacks of the vote and by restricting important liberties such as freedom of association, freedom of movement, and free choice of occupation” (Nickel 1997, p. 260). Segregation was both excluding and separating African Americans from whites: “Exclusion of blacks occurred in areas such as voting, political participation, and service in public offices” (Nickel 1997, p. 261). Separation occurred in most public areas such as churches, schools, neighborhoods, the workplace, and other major public facilities. These public facilities included transportation, hospitals, stores, restaurants, and parks.

In examining these public spaces in more detail, four divisions of social spaces during times of segregation come into focus. Firstly, roads and sidewalks were shared and unsegregated. Then there were spaces that “the same (or an inferior version of the same) services or facilities were available to blacks as to whites, but there were segregated areas within them” (Nickel 1997, p. 261) which included areas such as trains, buses, and some parks. This division sector was the epitome of the ‘separate but equal’ doctrine adopted by many during Jim Crow supporters of that time. Then there were truly segregated areas such as schools and churches. These spaces “also limited blacks to what was available in their own community” (Nickel 1997, p. 262). Finally, there were exclusive sectors such as voting and other political participation (Nickel, 1997).

How segregation was “imposed” varied based on government facilitation or not. For example, in areas such as schools, parks, and public transportation, it was strictly implemented by law enforcement. Whereas in areas such as restaurants and theaters, they were partially enforced by the white population who owned and ran the establishments (with police backup if needed), while also being decreed by law. “Social segregation was often imposed through custom and social pressure...and with backup support from vigilantes and lynch mobs” (Nickel 1997, p. 262).

2.3.2 Spaces of Exclusion: Class and Race in the Park

“Park makers constructed the park’s image as natural, sanctifying, wholesome, and White, counter-posing it against a city construed as artificial, profane, insalubrious, and colored.” (Byrne & Wolch, 2009, p. 747)

During the public park movement in the mid-nineteenth century, park makers such as Frank Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux were creating parks that were designed to “impart civilizing sensibilities and enact elitist ideals of morality and refinement” (Byrne & Wolch, 2009, p. 747).

In a sense, they were wanting to build spaces that were an escape from the immorality of the city. Unfortunately, this idea was not available to everyone, and eventually led to the removal of populations from blighted and industrial areas in cities, which in-turn displaced “vulnerable residents, many of whom were poor and people of color” (Byrne & Wolch, 2009, p. 747).

2.3.3 Racialization of Space

“The racial demography of the places where people live, work, play, shop, and travel exposes them to a socially shared system of exclusion and inclusion,” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 12).

Lipsitz presents the idea that “Race serves as a key variable in...shaping differential exposure to polluted air, water, food, and land” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 12). Policing practices and civic boundaries

shape where different race populations in the United States live and congregate in separate locations, as well as determine the quality of these spaces. Lipsitz argues that separate “spatial imaginaries” such as the white spatial imaginary versus the black spatial imaginary, can be a root cause of the racialization of space. Not all who are within those categories embrace such mechanisms of separation, but all cannot escape either the benefits or subjections these categories place upon them. Within the white spatial imaginary, segregated housing provides the privileged and white homeowners with advantages such as access and use of better amenities and services and protection from environmental hazards (Lipsitz, 2007). This can be seen as systematic segregation, which prevents African Americans from “moving to desirable neighborhoods with better services and amenities” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 11).

During the 1950s and 1960s, federally assisted urban renewal projects demolished city housing that were occupied by African Americans. According to Lipsitz, over sixty percent of the population displaced from urban renewal were people of color. Urban renewal projects in New Orleans, for example, have caused a dispersal of people into different and distant neighborhoods that have weakened the “collective and individual equity in homes and businesses, reduced the political power of black voters, and disrupted the routines of neighborhood social and support groups” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 11). Those that are still in the inner-city are not in control of how the spaces around them are being used by the city. These urban renewal practices “emanate from shared cultural ideals and moral geographies based on a romance with pure spaces. This romance fuels allegiances to defensive localism and hostile privatism. It encourages well-off communities to hoard amenities and resources, exclude allegedly undesirable populations, and maximize property values in competition with other communities” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 12).

2.4 Equity of Public Parks

Once parks became more accessible to more diverse populations, many of the parks saw strict rules being imposed on its visitors, such as a dress code and other cultural norms of the time, in order to constrain the use by the unwanted populations. Many parks in the United States at this time were racially segregated. In many Southern states, for example, Jim Crow laws led to racially segregated park systems, sometimes with separate park administrators (Byrne & Wolch, 2009; Allen, 1995).

Despite the segregationist principles of ‘separate but equal’ for African Americans and ‘equity’ has become a way to describe fairness within the law, the parks that were created for them were “smaller, received less funding, and had fewer facilities than those for Whites” (Byrne & Wolch, 2009, p. 747). These parks were sited on land that would otherwise be unsuitable for development and were even sometimes located along outskirts of cities. Also, during this time, white suburbia led to many northern and midwestern cities to have “park-abundant suburban periphery” for Whites, while “people of color were confined to a park-deprived urban core” (Byrne & Wolch, 2009, p. 747).

2.4.1 Public Parks in Dallas

Although it painted a picture of a more peaceful transition in and out of segregated parks, the Park Department historians failed to mention the city of Dallas’ “ingrained racism” that made parks segregated to begin with (Slate & Winters, 2016). Contrary to that, it is seen in the park department’s archives that African Americans showed “genuine appreciation for new facilities” (Slate & Winters, 2016, p. 33). However, it is also seen that their consistent requests for maintenance and repairs reveals a mounting frustration over “inadequate or poorly constructed park elements” in the 1920’s through the 1950’s (Slate & Winters, 2016, p. 33). As Slate and

Winters state, “Inequality in recreational offerings can also be measured through population” (Slate & Winters, 2016, p. 33). For example, in 1920, there were only two parks in the whole city for African American residents of 24,000. In 1944, 5,000 park acres were available to the 320,000 white residents, with only 60 acres of parkland available to a growing African American population of 60,000. This shows that even with population growth and additional designated parkland, “separate was still unequal” (Slate & Winters, 2016, p. 33).

2.4.2 Measuring Access to Open Space

A quarter mile, or a 5-minute walk, is becoming the standard distance that many people are willing to walk to access a park or recreation area: “Many municipalities in the United States set goals to place parks and recreation areas within prescribed distances or walking times of residential areas” (Boone, Buckley, Grove, & Sister, 2009, p. 771). The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), the Trust for Public Land, and the Congress for New Urbanism all advocate for parks within a quarter mile (400m) of all urban residents. Although once it reaches more than a half mile walk, many people would rather drive to reach outdoor recreation than walk (Boone, Buckley, Grove, & Sister, 2009).

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is an advocate in leading the “10-Minute Walk” campaign, which is “dedicated to improving access to safe, quality parks and green spaces” (NRPA, 2020). During their study, TPL came up with a way to analyze “measures and current access to parks in cities, towns, and communities nationwide,” to make certain that “every person in America has access to a quality park within a 10-minute walk from home” (The Trust for Public Land, n.d.-b).

2.4.3 Park Distribution and Access: Measuring Equality

One measure of equity of access to parks is the distance to the park. According to a study conducted by Boone, Buckley, Grove, & Sister (2009), within the city of Baltimore, Maryland, they found that African American and lower-income populations have better access to parks than their counterparts, due to a higher residential and park density than in surrounding counties.

Another measure of equity of parks is access to acreage. As stated by Boone, Buckley, Grove, & Sister (2009), “those parks that are within a quarter mile of predominantly white neighborhoods tend to be larger than parks close to predominantly black neighborhoods” (Boone, Buckley, Grove, & Sister, 2009, p. 773). Similar to accessibility by distance, the ratio of acreage per person tends to decrease within the inner-city due to lack of open space, so most parks are smaller than those outside of the city center. In the end, Boone, Buckley, Grove, & Sister (2009) conclude that “poor, inner-city minority residents tend to have better access to parks, but white, wealthier suburban residents tend to have access to more park acreage per person” (Boone, Buckley, Grove, & Sister, 2009, p. 773-74).

2.4.4 Race and the Control of Public Parks

In 2015, a multi-disciplinary firm building community Workshop, also known as bcWorkshop, hosted an exhibit in Dallas on “Race and the Control of Public Parks.” Created to correspond with the Facing Race Conference, bcWorkshop describes this project as an “important critical conversation about racial inequity in cities” (bcWorkshop, 2014). One component of this project is an “annotated timeline of the evolution of Dallas parks and park typologies over the last 100 years” (bcWorkshop, 2014). bcWorkshop shows a snapshot of the major changes in park character classifications as it relates to city comprehensive plans moving through time. The importance of this walk-through time is that it can indicate contemporary

thinking about spaces for “urban recreation and needs of the city” (bcWorkshop, 2015, pp. 28-29). Along with the park typologies, this chart also includes highlights of key historical moments of the relationship between race and public parks in Dallas. In Figure 3, on page 24, is a pared-down version of the chart comparisons to feature the three city plans, as well as the key moments, that are important to this research: the Kessler Plan in 1911, Your Dallas of Tomorrow in 1943, and the Dallas Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan in 2016.

In its exhibit, bcWorkshop also focused on maps that “track segregation and racial geography, and expansion of the park system in Dallas by decade” (bcWorkshop, 2015, p. 3). This is the most detailed examination of park development and distribution in Dallas that has been conducted that incorporates the impact of race and equity. A 1972 history of the Dallas park system maintained throughout that “no legal barrier separated the races in Dallas” and neglected issues of equity of access, quality, and distribution of parks (Jebsen et al., 1976, p. 92).

This section of the literature review solely focuses on the decade maps that lead up to the change in council districts in the beginning of the 1990s, as well as the maps after 1990, as it is important to show the change demographically and how that impacted parks over time. To understand how these maps were created, bcWorkshop provided an explanation:

Several geographic units - the ward, the census tract, and the block - were used to allow for a neighborhood-level examination of segregation in Dallas. The 1910 map uses the ward as its geographic unit of measure, the smallest area in Dallas for which data was compiled that year. Compiled data is only available at the city scale in 1920 and 1930 for Dallas so additional historical sources were utilized to approximate the racial geography of those decades. Starting in 1940, use of the census tract was extended to Dallas, and is used here through the year 2000 (bcWorkshop, 2015, p. 3).

Comparison of Park Typologies 1911 - 2014

Comparación de tipologías de parques desde 1911 al 2014

1911

A City Plan for Dallas
George Kessler

PLAYGROUND

Serves children less than 14 years old in **congested areas**

LARGE PARKS

Serves residents of all ages. Includes parks and playgrounds. **Often inconveniently located for most of the population.**

PARKWAYS

Connectors, boulevards, parks, and playgrounds.

1915

The first officially segregated parks in Dallas are created at the Hall Street Negro Park and the Oak Cliff Negro Park.

1942

Your Dallas of Tomorrow
Harland Bartholomew with
Hare and Hare Landscape Architects

SQUARE

Provides **ornamental** value.

PLAYGROUND

Serves children, found **at schools** as well as **in the community**

PLAYFIELDS

Serves older children and adults.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Primarily creates **landscape beauty**.

BOULEVARDS

Connects the principal units of the park system

1945

The NAACP Report on the condition of parks and recreation for the black population of Dallas.

June 16th, 1963

Dallas Morning News article proclaims that **City Parks Integrated in Dallas**

1987

Dallas Parks and Recreation Department wins the Innovations in American Government Award for its, **Vision Through Diversity** program.

2002

A Renaissance Plan for the parks department is implemented to re-establish Dallas as one of the premier park systems in the nation.

2014

City of Dallas Parks and Recreation
National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines

MINI PARK

2500 square feet to 1 acre in size. Serves a concentrated population with a specific need.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

1-15 acres in size, serves all age groups within 1/4-1/2 mile radius. Serves a limited area or single neighborhood.

COMMUNITY PARK

16-99 acres in size, serves the community within a 1-2 mile radius. For use by several neighborhoods, meets many recreational needs.

METROPOLITAN PARK

100-499 acres, serves the entire city, including all communities. Meets many recreational needs and can contain natural areas.

REGIONAL PARK

Over 500 acres in size, serves an area within 1 hour driving distance. Has a wide selection of facilities for all ages. Can include nature preserves.

LINEAR PARK / LINKAGE

Built connections or natural corridors, can link parks together, protect a resource & be used on its own as an open space.

SPECIAL USE AREA

One of a kind place with a specialized purpose or activity.

CONSERVANCY

Management of a natural or cultural environment, should protect a resource as well as be useful.

Figure 3: Comparison of Park Typologies from 1911 – 2014

Courtesy of bcWorkshop's exhibit on Race and the Control of Public Parks

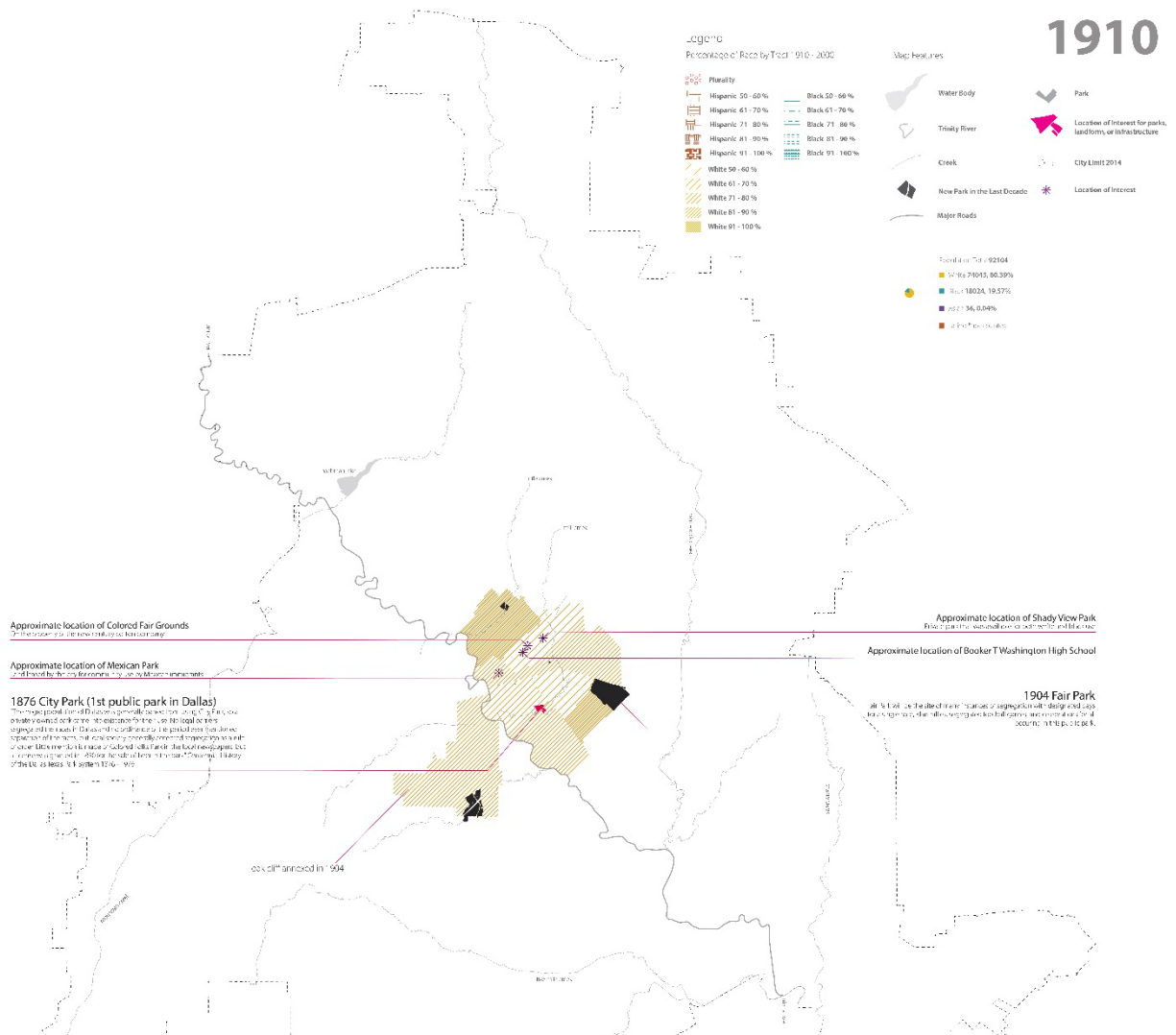


Figure 4: Race and the Control of Public Parks 1910 Map

Courtesy of bcWorkshop. Note: As this map is hard to read, it is available to be viewed on my website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcr.is/1v4fXe>

In 1910, Dallas was divided into ten wards with most of their makeup being white residents. African Americans only took up a meager 20% of the population and were distributed into small pocket neighborhoods within each ward in the city, with the 1st, 3rd, and 5th wards having higher concentrations. Until this point, Dallas has a limited park system, but included Fair Park,

City Park, as well as segregated and separate parks for residents of “Color” as described by the 1910 Census (bcWorkshop, 2015, p. 4).

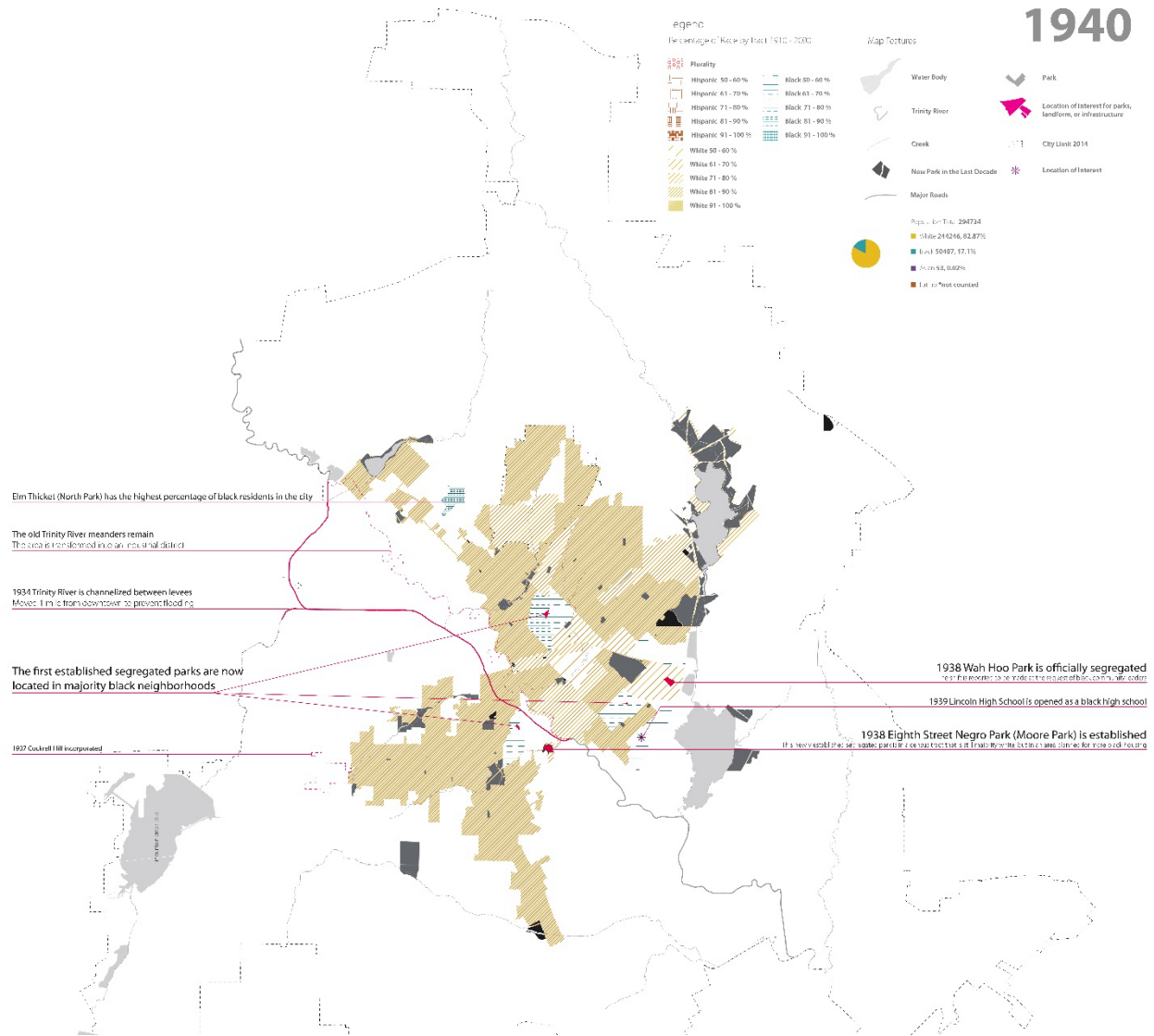


Figure 5: Race and the Control of Public Parks 1940 Map

Courtesy of bcWorkshop. Note: As this map is hard to read, it is available to be viewed on my

website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

By 1940, African American residents were still restricted into small pockets within the city, causing certain areas such as Elm Thicket (which is around present-day Love Field Airport) to grow denser in population, but not grow in physical size. However, there was expansion of

black population into south Dallas, which was met with much resistance and violence from the white populations occupying those areas. The park system was rapidly expanding but remained segregated. The city was acquiring land in majority black neighborhoods, establishing them as fully segregated parks like Wah-Hoo Park in East Dallas and Eighth Street Negro Park in Oak Cliff (bcWorkshop, 2015, p. 10).

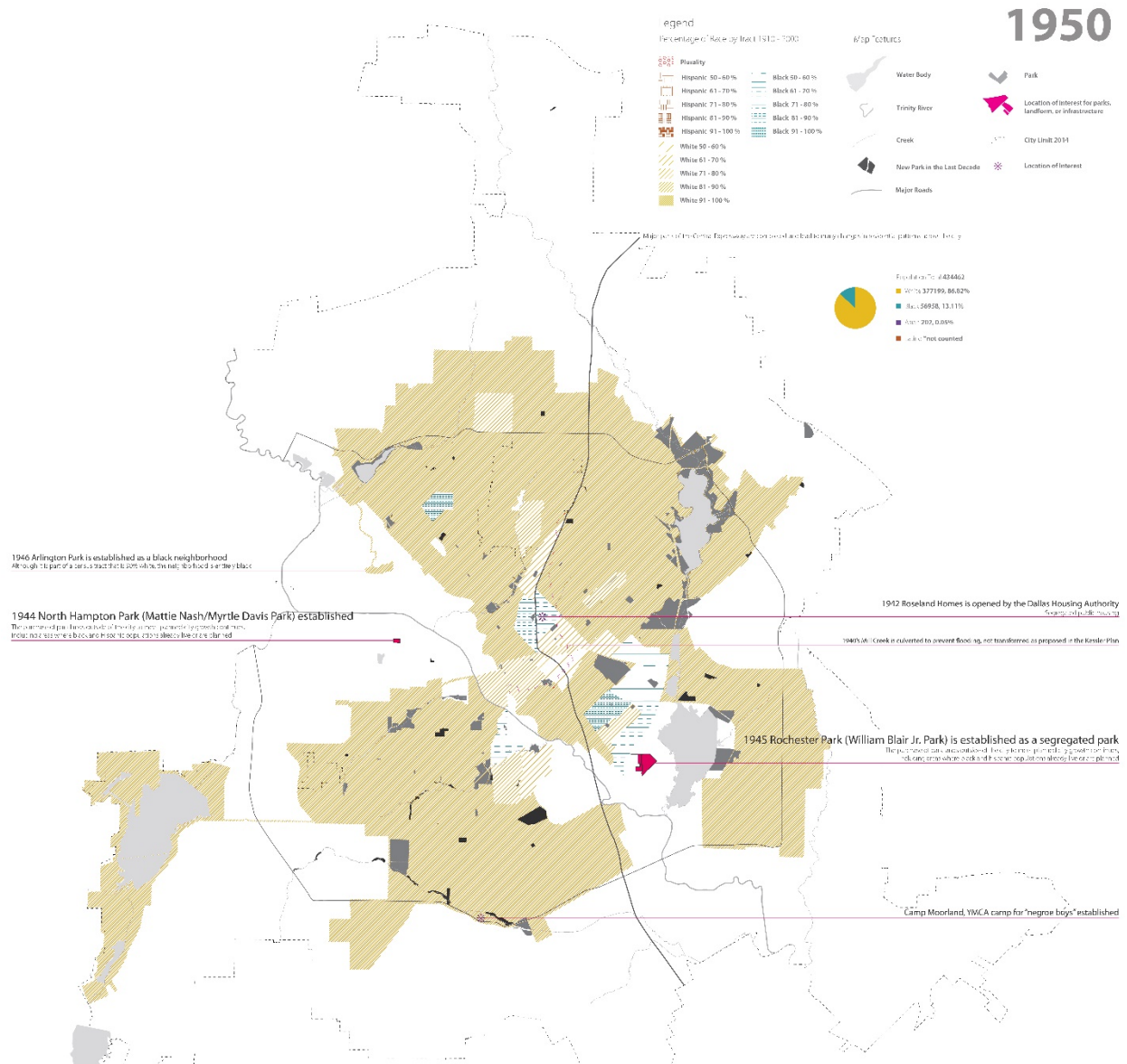


Figure 6: Race and the Control of Public Parks 1950 Map

Courtesy of bcWorkshop. Note: As this map is hard to read, it is available to be viewed on my

website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

We see the establishment of multiple neighborhoods and parks for the African American populations that were proposed by the city plan, “Your Dallas of Tomorrow” by Harland Bartholomew, in the years following its release (also see Figure 6). As predicted by Bartholomew, the city expanded exponentially, nearly tripling in size. Yet the African American population remained to make up only 13% of the population, with segregation continuing to increase. The park system nearly matched the growth spurt of the city, with nearly 25 new parks built during this time (bcWorkshop, 2015, p. 12).

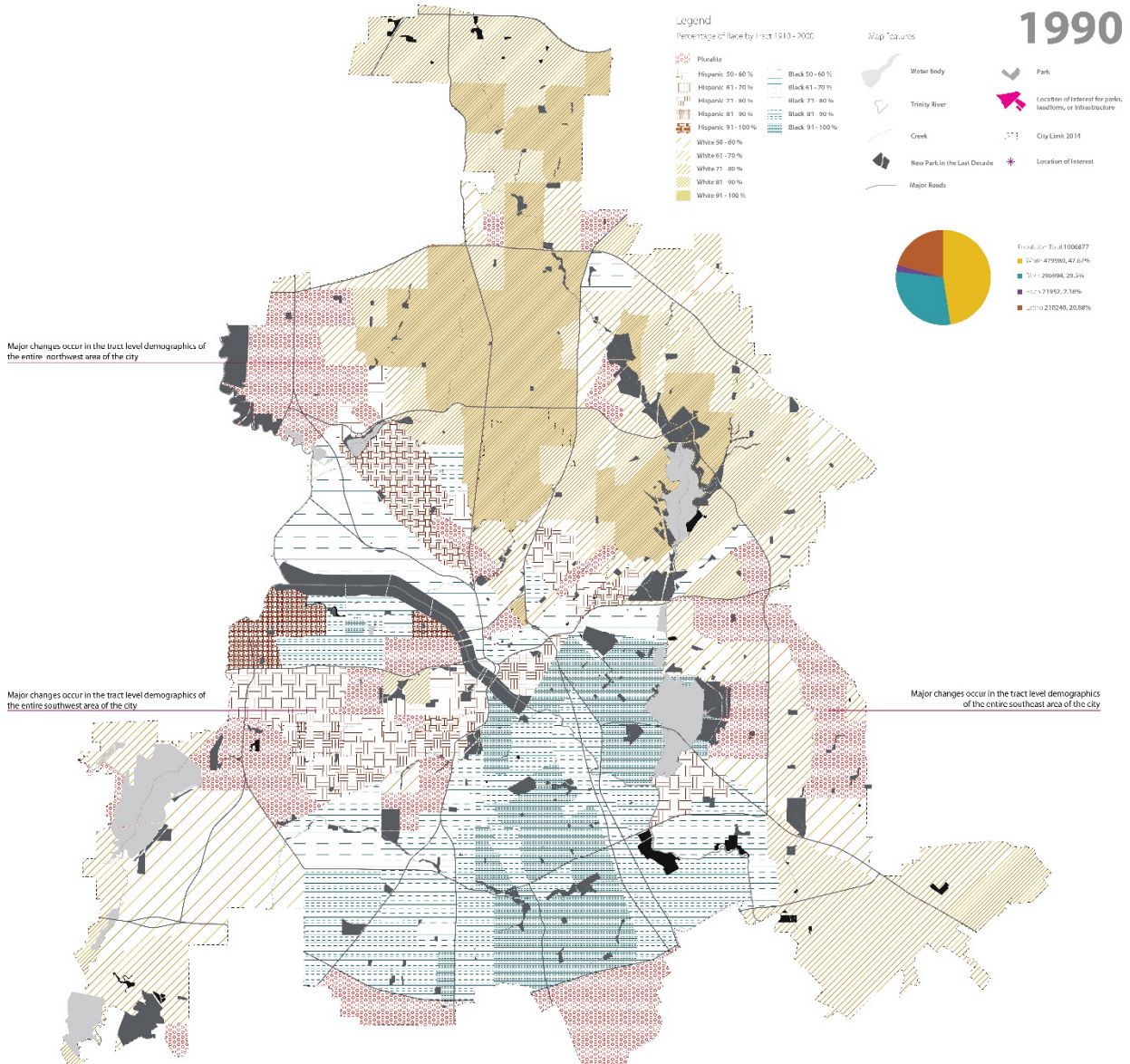


Figure 7: Race and the Control of Public Parks 1990 Map

Courtesy of bcWorkshop. Note: As this map is hard to read, it is available to be viewed on my website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

According to the 1990 census, there were more than one million people residing within the city of Dallas, with 50% of that population being African American or Hispanic. It was also discovered that the number of census tracts without one majority race grew exponentially and were also located in every part of the city. As shown in Figure 7, there were major demographic

changes is multiple parts of the city, particularly in the south west and south east areas. The majority of new parks in Dallas were neighborhood and community parks, and most notably, the Katy Trail, a privately funded linear park created along the path of a disused rail line that runs on the north side of downtown Dallas.

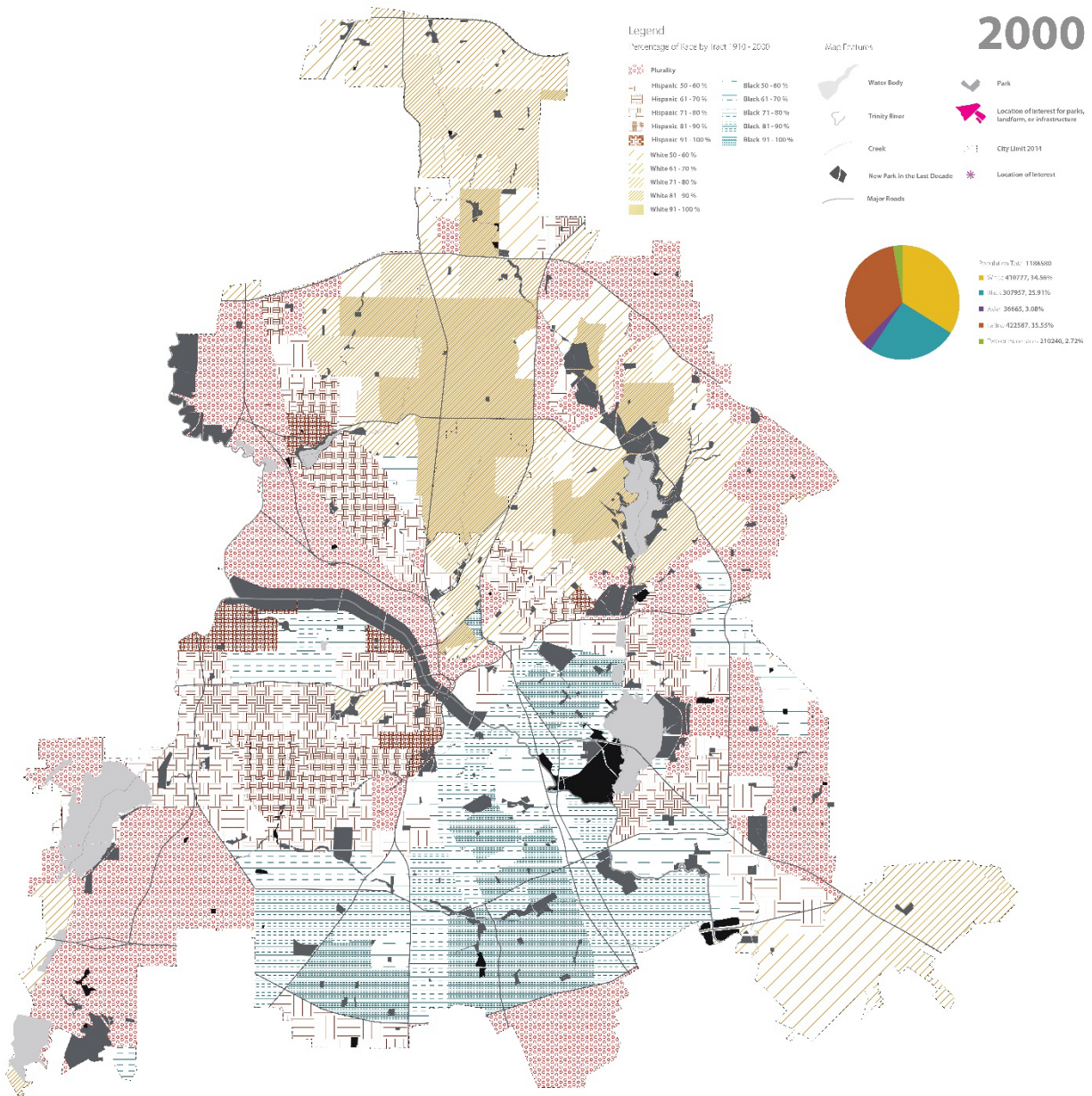


Figure 8: Race and the Control of Public Parks 2000 Map

Courtesy of bcWorkshop. Note: As this map is hard to read, it is available to be viewed on my website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

In 2000, we see a positive shift in demographic balance. We see Dallas with its most “balanced” race percentages, where we see Hispanics at 36%, whites at 35%, and African Americans at 26%. During the decade before, Dallas experienced a large influx of Hispanic residents, causing multiple census tracts’ populations to be composed of over 90% Hispanic. The 2000 Census shows neighborhoods in south Dallas, such as Oak Cliff, continuing to be predominantly African American and a growing population in southeast Dallas. The major greenspace additions during this decade were linear parks, which included extensions to the greenbelt along the Elm Fork of the Trinity River. See Figure 8.

When creating the map for 2010 (seen in Figure 9), bcWorkshop made the decision to view the city by blocks, rather than census tracts that were used in the previous maps, mainly to take a “much closer look at the racial composition of the city; where there are truly mixed areas and where stark segregation remains” (bcWorkshop, 2015, p. 24). During the decade between 2000 and 2010, they found that there were starkly apparent areas where there were 90% or more white residents and were “heavily insulated” from the more diverse areas of Dallas. Many historically African American neighborhoods remained the same, whereas areas around Love Field Airport and the north side of the Trinity River Corridor are changing at a more rapid pace.

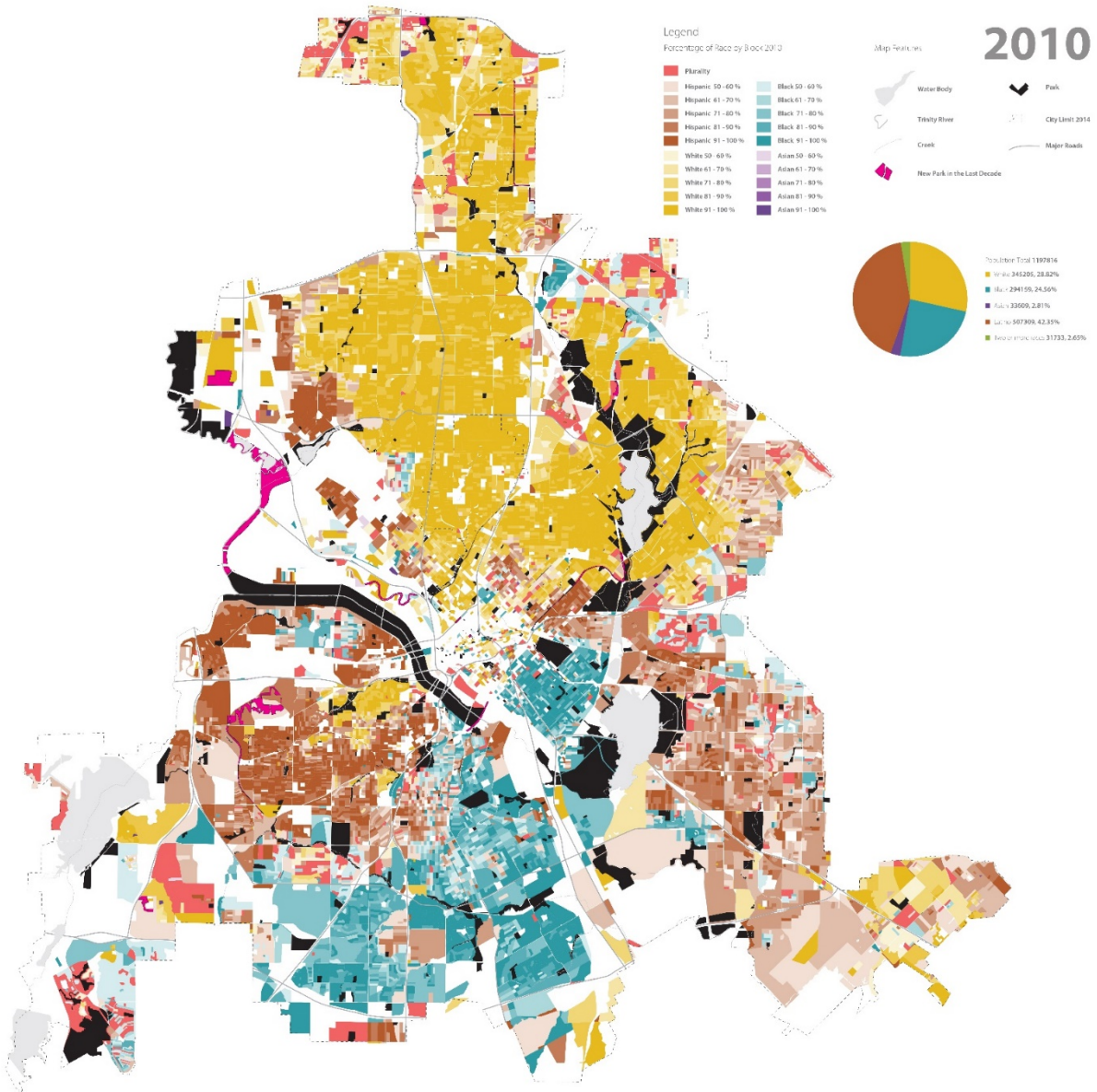


Figure 9: Race and the Control of Public Parks 2010 Map

Courtesy of bcWorkshop. Note: As this map is hard to read, it is available to be viewed on my website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

2.5 Dallas Comprehensive Plans

Over its history, the City of Dallas has had a plethora of planning strategies and comprehensive plans in hopes of influencing the physical structure of the city. However, this study only highlights the select few that are better at displaying broader changes to the park system over time.

2.5.1 The Kessler Plan

In 1911, the Park Board of Dallas published a book entitled “A City Plan for Dallas” that included text, proposed plans, and other illustrations from city planner and landscape architect, George Kessler. Within the plans, Kessler suggests changes such as levees, new buildings, extending roads, building parks and playgrounds, and parkways and boulevards throughout the city (A City Plan for Dallas). While this plan was never fully implemented, it has remained an important touchstone for future Dallas plans, especially its emphasis on greenbelts, green boulevards, and expanded park systems.

2.5.2 The Bartholomew Plan

In 1943, the City of Dallas recruited Harland Bartholomew and Associates to design a new master plan for Dallas that started with the Kessler Plan of 1911. The Bartholomew Plan was then published within a document entitled “Your Dallas of Tomorrow: A Master Plan for a Greater Dallas”. There are two parts within this document: the character of the city, which includes background, history, geography, economy, and zoning, and the scope of the city plan, which includes specific plan details to improve different aspects of Dallas (Your Dallas of Tomorrow: A Master Plan for a Greater Dallas).

A crucial section of this plan that details park’s long-range development is found in Report 7. This report describes proposed plans for an adequate park system, as well as schools,

that would be designed to serve the future population of the growing urban area of the city. This only included the location, size, and potential adaptability of the future park and school sites. However, the author's plans for parks and schools were different for whites and African Americans, as seen in the first section of this report on the populations to be served by the parks and schools: "before parks and schools can be planned, however, this future urban area must be divided into residential" and "non-residential...the future residential areas must then be apportioned between whites and negroes.* Neighborhood units can then be outlines for both races. When this has been done, locations for parks and schools can be made" (Your Dallas of Tomorrow, 1943, p. 5).

[*this language is quoted directly from the original document and does not reflect my personal views*]

2.5.3 The Dallas Plan

Released and adopted by the city council in 1994, The Dallas Plan encompassed multiple aspects of city improvement goals, predominantly focusing on a "growth and economic development master plan" as well as the start of the Trinity River Corridor Project (City of Dallas Municipal Archives). This plan was intended to be a vision for the 25 years following its release. The plan comprised of multiple strategic initiatives including Core Assets, Neighborhoods, Center City, and several others. As stated in the plan, "by focusing action on six strategic initiatives, we can use our investments most effectively. By following these principles in planning for our future, we can achieve our vision of Dallas the City of Choice for residents and businesses, today and in the future" (Dallas City Plan, Inc. p. 4-14). However, this plan emphasized the large spaces that are "shared", as it is further explored in the Analysis and Findings section of this research.

2.5.4 A Renaissance Plan

Released in August of 2002, the Renaissance Plan was a long-range development and strategic plan, based on community needs, that sought to address “park and open space planning, and recreation program development, along with operations and maintenance strategies, and funding/revenue/partnership opportunities” (Carter & Burgess, Inc., 2002, p. 2). The vision of this plan and the Park and Recreation Department was the desire for Dallas to be a premier system in the United States once again.

2.5.5 The Dallas Park and Recreation Department Comprehensive Plan

Starting in 2014, Dallas Park and Recreation Department began its reassessment to build a new comprehensive plan. This plan “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” (WRT, 2016, p. 1). This plan also establishes strategic directions and plans in which the department will focus on moving forward in the next decade that includes broad goals and specific plans. These plans consist of a Recreation Master Plan, Downtown Parks Master Plan, Trail Network Master Plan, Aquatics Master Plan, a Marketing Plan, and an Economic Value and Benchmarking Study.

2.6 Summary

This literature review focused on several themes: the impact of early government and the creation of single-member districts in the City of Dallas, a review of relevant literature and studies of the history of planning and politics, broader literature on the relationship between landscape architecture and race and the impact of segregation on public park design, and brief summaries of some of the Master Plans created for Dallas. All these themes were covered in

order to start the exploration of potential gaps in literature and records of equity, segregated spaces, and the involvement of Dallas government in equity creation.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study was conducted using qualitative, quantitative, multi-method approaches. The main methods utilized in this research to investigate the role of the single-member districts in influencing distribution of parks in the City of Dallas are exploring comparative maps and previous case studies, with archival data research. This research utilizes archival, municipal lists, and online exhibits from the city of Dallas, comparative maps of council districts over the years/maps of Dallas Park Plans from historic maps (before 1991) and current maps (after 1991) in a contextual analysis of public parks in Dallas. The main methods utilized for this research takes precedence from the countless urban historians who have studied the impact of physical geographies on equity and segregation.

3.2 Research Design and Data Collection Methods

The data collected for this study (seen in Figure 10) includes historic and current map data, city and planning archives, case studies and online exhibits. Maps are created to view the change in districts and park placement over time using city-provided data. Included in this mapping method is GIS mapping using the online Map Series Building software by ArcGIS. City data includes city limit, council district areas, park maintenance districts that were documented in 2002's Renaissance Plan for Dallas, and location and footprints of public parks and trails. This data is collected to create a series of overlays to visualize the location of parks within the 14 council districts during the different three redistricting periods from 1991 to 2017. The map series provides visualization of the placement of parks in the council districts and its relation to minority and non-minority district representation, which gives insight to the city's prioritization

of park placement. From the city archives, additional data was obtained that pertained to Dallas’ park history starting in 1991. This data included The Dallas Plan of 1994.

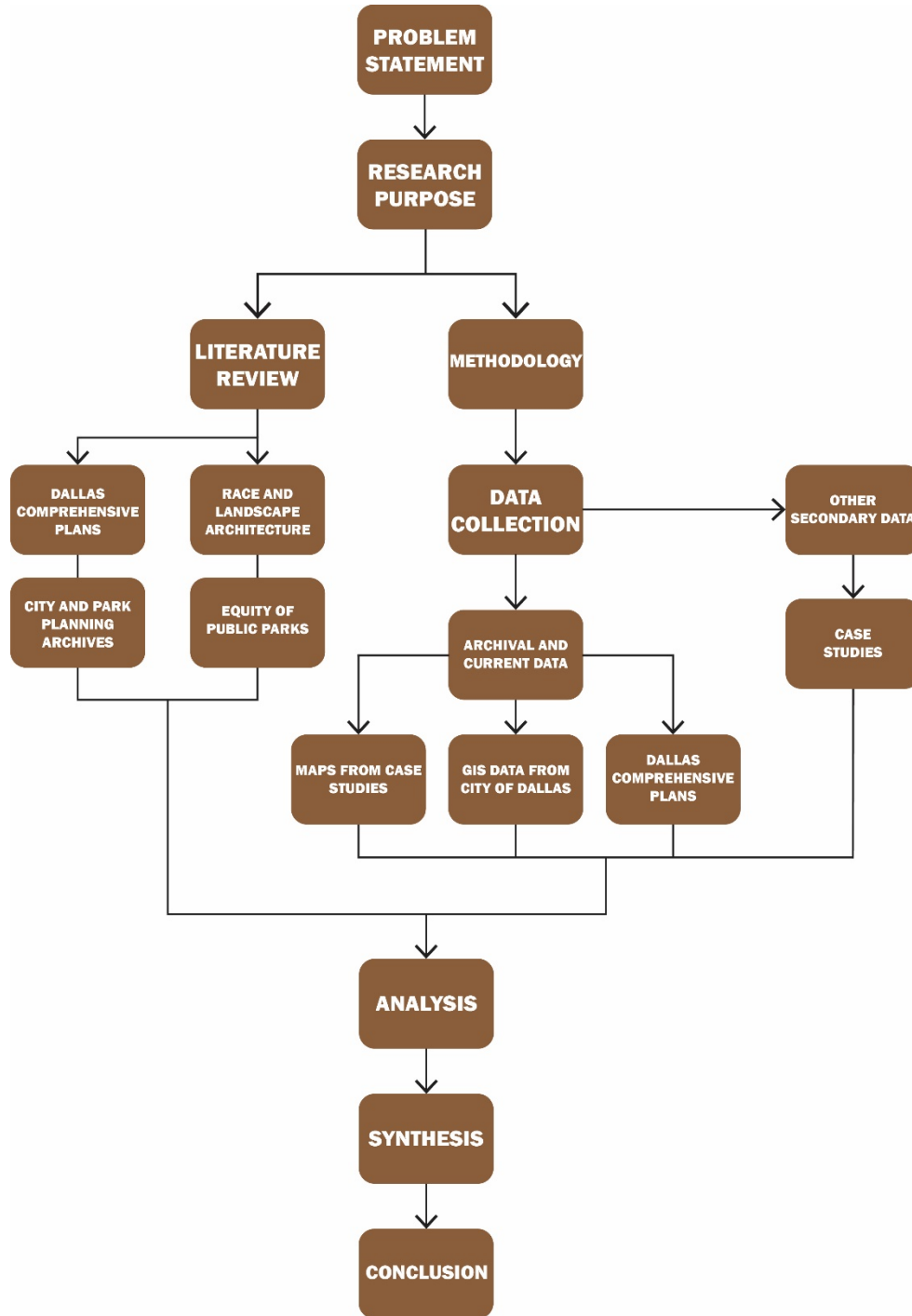


Figure 10: Visual Representation of Methodology

3.3 Data Analysis Methods

3.3.1 Comparative Mapping and Counting:

GIS is used to create a series of overlays that visualize the relationship between multiple facets. Those facets include –

- Park acquisition year and location within its council district at the time of acquisition
- Park districts that were created and documented in the Renaissance Plan of 2002 and council districts over multiple redistricting periods
- Consistent minority elect districts/non-minority elect districts and park placement within each.

These maps were created using GIS data from the City of Dallas only from the year 1991 onward. This comparison is to show the placement of parks after the redistricting of Dallas occurred after the 14-1 Ruling in 1991. These maps can be seen in Figures 19-39 and are discussed on pages 61-77.

3.3.2 Secondary Data:

Race and the Control of Public Parks Maps

BcWorkshop’s exhibit was composed of four main elements, which this research predominantly focuses on their visualization of race and parks across time. This visualization is seen through a “series of 10 historic maps and 1 contemporary map that trace the movement of different races across Dallas in relation to the development of the city’s park system” (buildingcommunity Workshop [bcWorkshop], 2015, p. 2). Since the data analysis and research is focused predominantly after the 14-1 Ruling in 1991, the maps that are analyzed from this series are from the decade of 1990 onward and can be seen on pages 25-32 located in Chapter 2, along with three maps from other decades. These three maps are also utilized to analyze how and

why the council districts were drawn, using their census tract data as an overlay to the minority and non-minority represented districts. To understand how to read the maps, as well as understanding the reason it is part of the research of this thesis, here is some description given in the exhibit:

The following ten maps track segregation and racial geography, and expansion of the park system in Dallas by decade for the past century. Demographic data was drawn from the decennial census and City of Dallas GIS data was the basis for the chronology of parks expansion. Parks are represented by their current size and shape, they do not reflect growth or removal of parks over time except when noted. To depict degrees of segregation, each of four racial or ethnic groups was assigned a color and pattern, the pattern is made increasingly dense relative to the intensity of segregation in an area. If a single race made up a majority of the population in a given geography, that geography received the respective color and pattern.

2010 depicts data at the census block level, which frequently correspond to city blocks, the smallest unit of census geography available. The U.S. Census Bureau's contemporary language is used for each race and ethnic group. Changes over time to the racial and ethnic categories and nomenclature are chronicled on the maps (bcWorkshop, 2015, p. 3).

Dallas Comprehensive Plans

Over the multiple plans created for Dallas, this research focuses on plans created and released after 1991. Those plans include The Dallas Plan of 1994, The Renaissance Plan of 2002, and the Comprehensive Plans of 2016. Within these documents, this study analyzes maps and other data that shows progress and creation over time of the prioritization and placement of parks within the city of Dallas.

Trust for Public Land Analysis of Dallas

In 2018, The Trust for Public Land created a ParkScore® index to “measure how well the 100 largest U.S. cities are meeting the need for parks” and given a score. They also “built a comprehensive database” of parks within at least 10,000 cities across the United States. The predominant data used in this research is the ParkScore® of Dallas, how that score breakdown

shows what is existing, where parks are needed moving forward, and the 10-minute walk concept within the city of Dallas.

3.4 Limitations

One of the major limitations to this study is data availability. GIS Data for Dallas parks, which is a primary data source for this research, only has shapefiles for parks up to 2016 and has yet to be updated. Along with park data, Districts, in the way that it is relevant to this research, were not formed until after the 14-1 Ruling in 1991. Therefore, the comparative maps, created with GIS Data and shown in Chapter 4, do not display overlays before the year 1991. The city's Park and Recreation Department provides ample access online to their current and past comprehensive plans.

However, some of the plans, like the Renaissance Plan, contain a few errors that make it difficult to see the full intentions. In the 2002 Plan, the appendices that contain the full lists, matrices, and other things that may be important to get a deeper understanding of what the plan wanted to do and the tools they used to get to those conclusions, are not available. While many archival documents and plans exist, they require physically searching and reading countless files to access these documents.

Considering the historic time in which the research is being conducted and the impact of COVID-19 on access to libraries, archives, and meetings, the researcher is limited to information physically obtained before crisis and information available online. In a non-crisis time, for future study, one could survey city council members, city staff, as well as park department staff and park board members. This research also narrowly focused on counting parks as predominant research method and could be expounded further in future research.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides analysis and findings from primarily secondary data, formed into two forms of analysis, such as comparative maps and overlays and discussion and exploration of Dallas' comprehensive plans, and how they address equity and access to public parks.

4.2 Dallas Comprehensive Plans

4.2.1 The Dallas Plan

The Dallas Plan in 1994 was the first plan after the creation of single-member districts. My analysis of the text looked for any indication that park planning was impacted by this decision. In reviewing the document, it is clear the 1994 plan emphasized the Center City, as seen in Figure 11, and associated large, monumental spaces that are “shared” amenities for the city. The plan did not cover analysis and inventory of the whole park system within Dallas, only containing goals and plans for major outdoor spaces such as Fair Park, Dallas Zoo, and the Trinity River Corridor. However, within the vision for the plan, they mention the want for a “greening of Dallas – a city whose choices for outdoor living are plentiful and accessible” (Dallas City Plan, Inc., 1994, p. 1-3). As seen in Figure 12, the plan did attempt to visualize an open space network with existing green and potential green spaces with ecological preserves. Yet the outcome seems to continue the “city as a whole” strategy that has long informed Dallas planning rather than emphasizing the need to invest more heavily in parts of the city that lacked public park access. This city as a whole strategy is also evident in their breakdown of investment, seen in Figure 13, needed to address solutions to citywide issues.

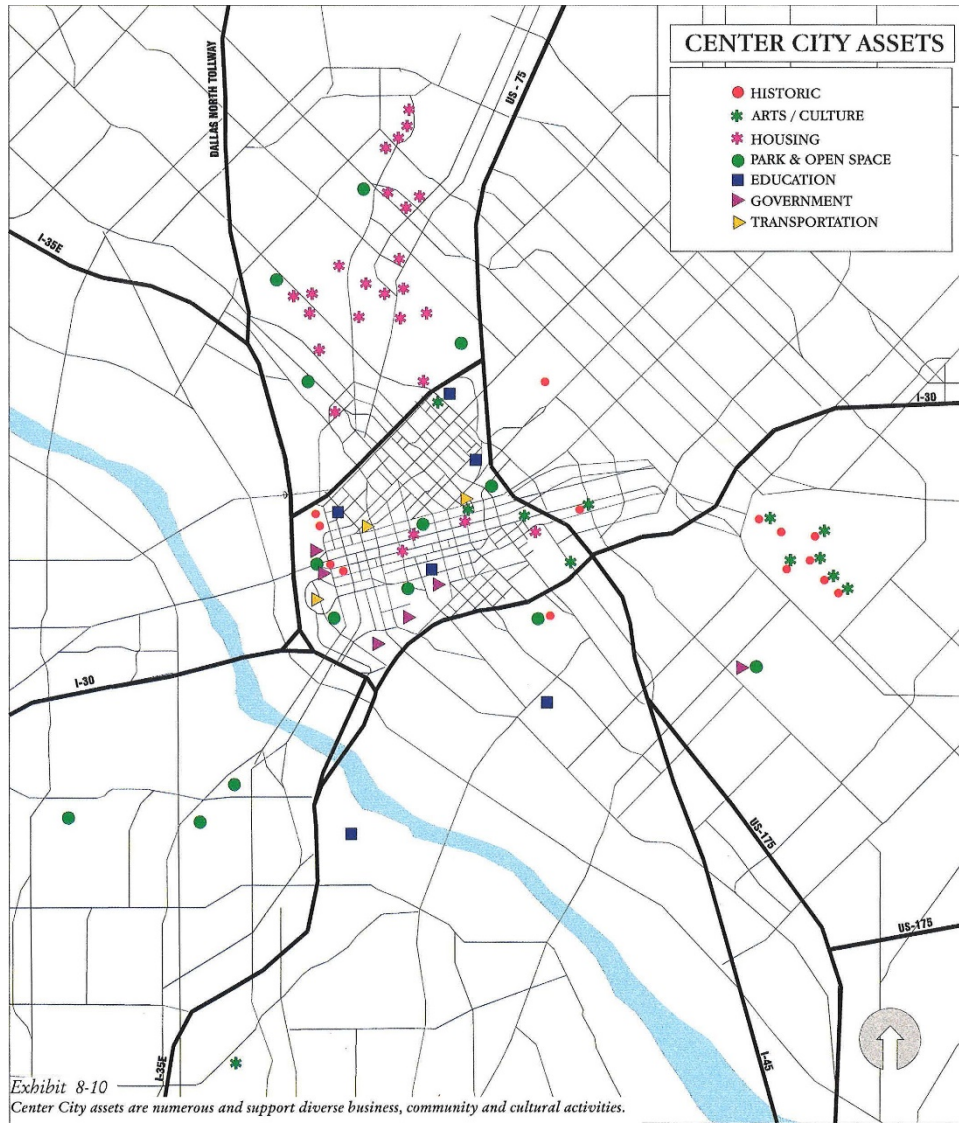


Figure 11: Center City Assets map highlighting Dallas' priorities

to support the city's activities and amenities; Courtesy of The Dallas Plan of 1994

POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE NETWORK



.3
and linking open space is important to the community's quality of life.

Figure 12: Open Space Network map showing an importance of linking open spaces in Dallas.

Courtesy of The Dallas Plan of 1994

Neighborhood Backlog Investments

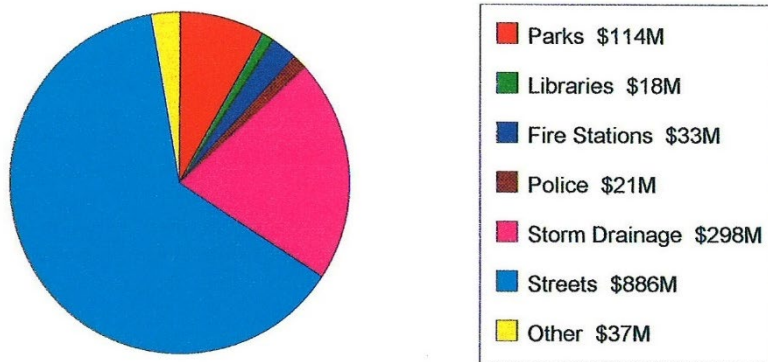


Exhibit 4-2

Significant investment will be needed during the next thirty years if community concerns are to be addressed.

Figure 13: Neighborhood Backlog Investment chart showing investment priorities of the city.

Courtesy of The Dallas Plan of 1994

4.2.2 A Renaissance Plan

When Dallas Park and Rec Department released their Renaissance Plan for Dallas in 2002, it had been 10 years since the implementation of single-member districts, and they had not created a new park comprehensive plan in over 20 years. The Park and Rec department recognized their faults and weaknesses in the park system, and since there had not been an extensive inventory on the park system and facilities in an extended amount of time, they decided to act. With Dallas being known for its large amounts of park acreage, they wanted to preserve their reputation and create a vision for the future needs of the park system and develop a long-range development plan that worked to “recover, regain, and reposition” (Carter and Burgess, Inc., 2002, p. 6).

An important aspect to the creation of this comprehensive plan of action was conducting a needs inventory as seen in Figure 14.

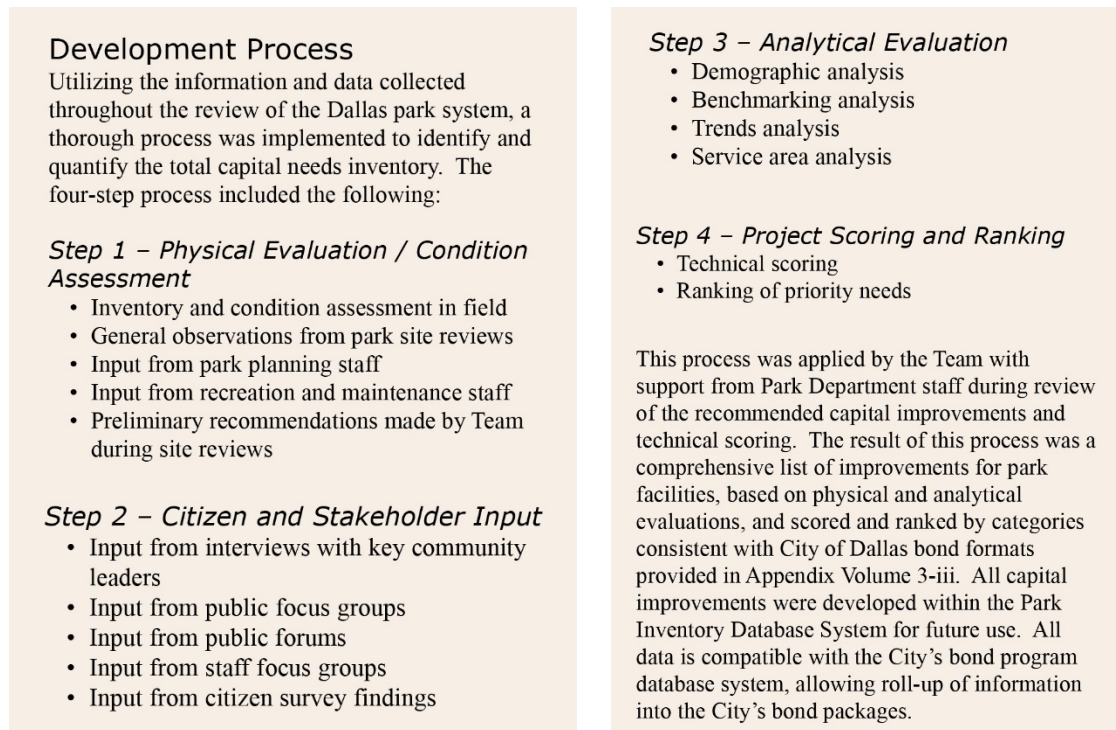


Figure 14: List of the Plan of Action process from the Renaissance Plan of 2002
Courtesy of the Dallas Park and Recreation Department.

In focus groups and public forums, Dallas residents, as well as key community leaders, were given the chance to voice their opinions and needs for parks and other programs, which led the Park Department to dictate a list of strengths and weaknesses of the department from the citizens’ point of view (Carter and Burgess, Inc., 2002, pp. 27-29). The public forums were held at-large for Dallas residents at different locations across the city. The focus groups with community leaders were 46 interviews that included:

- City Council members
- Park and Recreation Board members
- DART board members and staff
- Business leaders
- School district representatives
- Chamber of Commerce representatives
- Other city department representatives

Some of the views that are relevant to this research from the forums and interviews were:

Strengths

- signature destination facilities such as the Zoo, the Arboretum, and Fair Park
- amount of parkland
- parks and recreation programs that link the city

Weaknesses

- outdated neighborhood parks/poorly managed
- lack of equity of parks throughout city
- underfunded department with too much to manage
- Safety and security
- Lack of consistent standards
- Too bureaucratic

It is critical to note that the list of strengths include the amount of parks and amenities the city has to offer, in contrast with the outdated nature and lack of equity in neighborhoods and smaller areas of the city, in the weaknesses list. This is the first mention we see in a comprehensive plan of the citywide issue of inequity, with the possible causes being an underfunded department and lack of consistency.

Park Department staff were also interviewed in focus groups to gain insight into the everyday business. The staff members included those from maintenance supervisors to design leaders to district managers. In the report, their opinions on strengths and weaknesses were listed. However, when compared to the lists from Dallas residents and community leaders, there were few points that coincided with those listed from residents and other leaders. Some of the points from the staff list that matched points from the other two lists were:

Strengths

- enthusiastic staff in the Department
- professional staff

Weaknesses

- safety a major problem
- lack of staff
- lack of equity of parks throughout city
- lack of standards
- lack of program budget
- lack of service equity

The Park Department was able to create a list of opportunities from all the focus and forum group's discussion points. They also identified Key Barriers to implementing those opportunities. The opportunity points that aligned with each other and with this research were:

Community Leaders –

- widespread demographic appeal
- broader partnerships with the community
- beautification plan for entire city

Public Focus Groups –

- partnering with other groups and organizations
- pricing programs to customer's ability to pay
- more cultural sensitivity to changing demographics

Park Department staff –

- partnerships are key to the future

Key Barriers to the above opportunity points were found to be:

- lack of funding
- conflicts between city departments
- the development of signature parks at the expense of other parks
- lack of leadership citywide for parks

Overall, in 2002, the Park Department, other city departments, and city council did not communicate as thoroughly and clearly as they wanted to be. With this Renaissance Plan ratified by the city council at the time, it showed a want to move forward with improving the park system (Carter & Burgess, Inc., 2002).

Addressing Inequities

When evaluating the current system at the time, the department saw they “lack customization to meet changing demographics and recreational needs of the citizens” (Carter & Burgess, Inc., 2002, p. 9). They also stated in the report that Dallas residents were disgruntled due to the lack of equity in programming and facilities (Carter and Burgess, Inc., 2002).

An important section within this plan, Service and Equity Levels, was evaluated to establish how Dallas is meeting residents’ needs. A component of evaluation was a demographic evaluation to determine changes that were occurring in areas and adapt to the shifts. When conducting the demographic analysis, the Park Department mapped population densities based on census tracts and park districts, not council districts. Their reasoning for conducting it this way was so it “enables planning for future programming, parks, and facilities to be along non-political boundaries, and within geographic areas consistent with Park Department operations” (Carter and Burgess, Inc., 2002, p. 13)

Also within this plan are the department’s future goals for different objectives to fulfill their value statements. One of those goals mentions, “provide *equity* in the delivery of park facilities and programs that are dispersed throughout the city of Dallas” (Carter and Burgess, Inc., 2002, p. 32).

In order for the park system to move forward and fulfill its mission to ‘recover, regain, and reposition’ the Dallas park system, the plan called for “big moves” to be made. As seen in Figure 15, there are many moves that are proposed. However, for this research, there are a few moves that are crucial in showing equity creation. They are:

1. Provide new facilities and services – close equity gaps across the city by providing new parks and recreation facilities in underserved areas.
2. Upgrade current parks in the system – bring neighborhood parks and community parks up to a standard that elevates user satisfaction.

- Implement a regional trail networks throughout the city – establish a diverse network of trails to link communities together and to provide alternative transportation corridors.

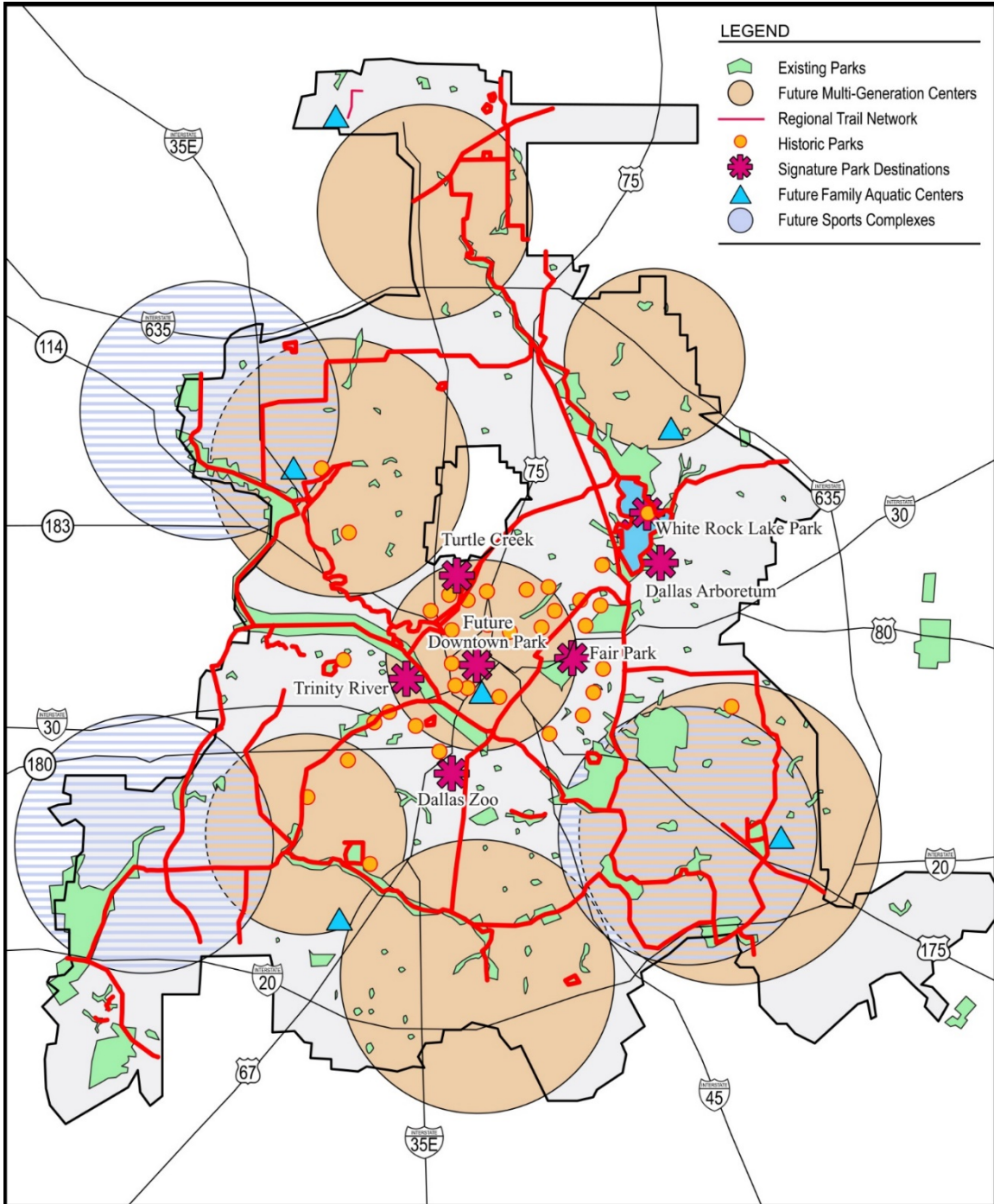


Figure 15: Big Moves in the Park System from the Renaissance Plan of 2002

Courtesy of the Dallas Park and Recreation Department.

4.2.3 Dallas Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan

At the beginning of the plan, when discussing the future mission of the department, the 2002 plan is acknowledged for its accomplishments and its desires to “recover, regain, and reposition” and bring Dallas park system out of a slump due to economic downfalls. As the plan states, though, they are ready to move forward with a new set of goals in mind and “articulate a more proactive engagement with the city of Dallas” in this Comprehensive Plan (WRT et. al., 2016, p. 2). It is important to note that equity, the way this research study defines it, is described differently within this plan. In this plan, equity is described more in terms of “accessibility” to all residents. Even though it does not fully encapsulate this research’s use of the term equity, accessibility of parks to all is still an important aspect of equity creation for Dallas’ parks.

The Park and Recreation Department has chosen to classify existing and future parks into categories based on the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines. As seen in Figure 16, the department has categorized the parks (as of 2016) and given the total acreage for each classification, each category’s size range, and general distance of access. However, there is a fairly significant amount of land acreage that is not managed by the park department but still provides amenities for Dallas residents to use (See Figure 17).

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		

Figure 16: Park Classification according to the Comprehensive Plan.

Found on page 9 of the Plan.

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

Figure 17: Acres of Park by Classification and Provider according to the Comprehensive Plan.

Found on page 12 of the Plan.

A major component of comprehensive plans is the public’s involvement in expressing their wants and needs for the city they live in. This comprehensive plan has dedicated a section to engagement, breaking it into sections such as public meetings and their outcomes, a public survey, and priority needs for facilities. The public meetings were held at various recreation centers across the city. They note that the data gathered from participants does not represent “a statistically valid cross-section of the city’s population” since participation was self-selected and only represented residents who lived around where the meetings were being held (WRT et. al., 2016, p. 45).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the average person would rather drive to a park or recreation center if it is more than a quarter mile from their home (Boone et. al., 2009). The Park Department found, through their public engagements, that statement to be true, as well as the fact that “participants travel, on average, nearly four miles to get to the park they use most often” (WRT et. al., 2016, p. 46). They also discovered participants would walk or bike to parks more if certain improvements, such as more neighborhood connections and bike lanes, shaded trails, and more safety measures, were implemented along routes. Another element the public engagements covered was accessibility to Dallas parks. As seen in Figure 18, a chart created by Dallas Park

and Recreation department shows “on average, accessibility at Dallas parks rated between fair and poor” (WRT et. al., 2016, p. 47). The improvements mentioned by residents were listed in the input summary, with the improvements being directed towards what Dallas Park and Recreation should be taking on. The important points to this research included “communicating with the public and seeking citizen input” and “giving greater attention to neighborhood parks (not just downtown)” (WRT et. al., 2016, p. 49).

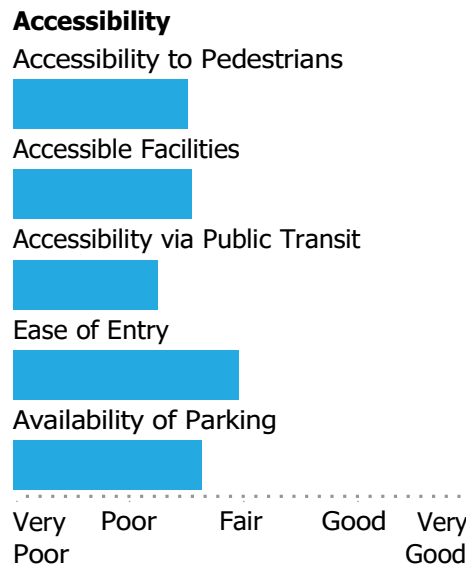


Figure 18: Accessibility Rating by Public Meeting Participants from the Comprehensive Plan.

Courtesy of Dallas Park and Recreation Department.

In its analysis, the plan discusses park access and how need for better access for certain areas of the city was determined. They used data to determine the areas of the city that had good and bad access to parks. To identify which areas met access standards and gaps in service, they measured walking and driving access along existing roadways and sidewalks. For walking access, a maximum distance radius was given to each park in the system, as well as a driving radius. They used access standards to define maximum distance for both walking and driving radii, which is a half mile and 2 miles, respectively. They also used resident survey data as a factor in determining good and bad access areas. According to their analysis, they concluded:

- Only 51% of the existing and projected population in Dallas has a park within walking distance
- Another 41% of existing and projected population has a park within driving distance, but not walking distance
- Leaves about 8% of the population with no park within walking or driving distance (WRT, 2016, p. 69)

In its synthesis, it lists the department’s strengths, deficiencies, opportunities, and constraints.

Below in Table 1 are those lists condensed to highlight points relevant to this research.

Strengths	Deficiencies	Opportunities	Opportunities	Constraints
Nearly 2/3 rated park opportunities as excellent	Lack of collaboration between internal divisions	Existing data could better inform decision making	Park funding bids that can pay for even half their cost are likely to be approved by council.	The Department and Trinity Watershed Management have overlapping priorities and staff responsibilities.
Good track record in leadership and staff to achieve goals	Lack of sufficient communication of current and future Department projects	Many parks within walking distance from public transport.	3/4 of residents would walk a half mile/bike a half mile/drive 5 miles to get to a park that has the amenities or programs important to them.	Some residents who would use parks and recreation facilities do not have access to transportation to get there.
Recreation plays an important role in the community	Only 57% feel there are adequate parks and green space within walking distance of their home	Partnership with school district to improve parkland accessibility	Projected growth around White Rock Lake, Far North Dallas, Koreatown, and downtown may add to the user base and revenues in those areas.	Projected population growth near White Rock Lake (and others) could add more users to already heavily used assets.

	Perceived inequity in the quality of facilities north and south of the Trinity River	Stronger relationship with the Parks Foundation and other additional groups	The Trinity River corridor has large inherent potential for parks and recreation.	Projected population loss in the South and east areas of Dallas could reduce the user base and revenues in those areas.
		The city manager and council recognize the importance of the park system to the city's future.		Parochialism and the Park Board structure make it difficult to plan for and implement regional facilities.
				Community-supplemented funding for improvements is likely to be difficult in the southern part of the city where median income is low.
				There is no current source of funding for park acquisition or large capital improvements.

Table 1: Condensed list of findings synthesized from the Comprehensive Plan.

Courtesy of the Park and Recreation Department.

From the table above, it is seen that the Park Department recognizes its internal positive and negative characteristics. They mention the fact that there is a population of residents that don't have access to parks either because they are too far for them to walk to, or don't have means of other transportation to take them there. The Park Department acknowledges that a good

portion of their funding comes from community-supplemented funds. They also list in their constraints that areas like south Dallas could see a drop in community funding due to potential loss of population along with the low median income. Equity is only mentioned once in these lists, and it is stated as a “perceived inequity” around a specific area of Dallas. In the way that this comprehensive plan defines equity by “accessibility”, it is also listed as an internal issue with only 57% of residents feeling they have adequate parks within an accessible distance from their homes. Another crucial point in these lists is the acknowledgement from the city and city council that the park system is vital to the city’s future (WRT, 2016, p. 77-81).

To move their vision forward, the Park and Recreation Department’s comprehensive plan concludes with Strategic Directions, which is a breakdown of how the goals and potential opportunities would be implemented. Some of the strategic directions include: “ensure adequate parkland to accommodate future growth” and how they plan to do this (WRT, 2016, p, 89-90, 158), Economic Development to “promote synergy between parks and economic development to enhance the recreational experience” (WRT, 2016, p. 117-18), and “emphasize design excellence and sustainability in parks and facilities” (WRT, 2016, p 135-36). Within the design excellence strategy, it is important to note that they discuss ways to achieve quality design, but not of what areas would be receiving these new and improved designs. It is also important to point out the department took steps to ensure “capital planning is related to the needs and strategic directions identified in this Comprehensive Plan,” by creating a series of guidelines to evaluate future projects (WRT et. al., 2016, p. 153).

4.3 Other Secondary Data

4.3.1 Park and Recreation Department Annual Report for 2016-17

The Dallas Park and Recreation Department releases an annual report at the end of every year. While many contain valuable information and insight to the achievements and future goals of the department, there was one report that mentioned social equity and diversity in congruence with the series of Comprehensive Plans released in 2016. According to the report:

Dallas' Recreation Master Plan Aligns with planning guidelines encouraged by the National Parks and Recreation Association: conservation, health and wellness, and social equity. Incorporating these ideals into existing programs and park projects will ensure Dallas remains a diverse, healthy, livable, and desirable city that meets the ever-changing recreational and leisure interests of residents and visitors. Implementing the plan safeguards the future of Dallas' parks, recreational facilities, infrastructure, and quality of life (Dallas Park and Recreation Department, 2017).

The report also includes a Park Land Dedication Ordinance that states that if developers want to develop land, they must either dedicate new park land somewhere else or pay the City of Dallas a fee that can be used to purchase land or make improvements to park land elsewhere.

4.3.2 Funding for Parks Built After 1990

After the economic downturn in the 1980's, Dallas government was forced to make cuts to funds within the different departments, one of those being the Park Department's general fund. This forced the department to look elsewhere for funding in order to keep up with their services and to continue "delivering quality park facilities and services to the citizens of Dallas" (Carter & Burgess, Inc., 2002, p. 44). In 2002's Plan, it was recommended that the department develop ways to generate revenue, build partnerships, and gather other funding sources and grants.

List of Parks in Council Districts from 1991 onward

The tables on pages 59 and 60 are based on data pulled City of Dallas' GIS Dataset for Parks. In these tables are breakdowns of how many new parks per district, what year they were acquired, the general area of Dallas the council district is located, and which park districts coincide with each council district. It is important to note that due to the redistricting of the city twice within a period of 20 years, parks that started out being placed within one district might currently be in a neighboring district. It is also evident that some of the districts share park space, as some parks can span two or more districts. As seen in these tables, there are higher numbers of new parks in North Dallas and Southwest Dallas, with only one new park in District 13 and no new parks in District 1. Between 1991 and 2003, a total of 33 new parks were added, with 1995 being the highest amount of new at eight parks within the year. It is important to graphically see how the parks were distributed throughout the city, as it suggests a hierarchy of placement in certain districts. A more in-depth list that includes park names can be found in Appendix A.

LOCATION IN DALLAS	YEAR OF ACQUISITION	DISTRICT AT TIME OF AQUISATION	CURRENT DISTRICT	NEW PARKS	PARK DISTRICT
SW	n/a	1	1	0	4
WEST/	1991	2	2		
CENTRAL	1993	2,14	2,14		
	1994	6	2		
	2003	2	2		
	2007	2	2		
	2011	2,7	2,4,7		
	2011	2,7,14	2,9,14	7	1,3,5
SW?	1995	3	3		
SOUTH	1995	3	3		
	1995	8	3		
	1995	3	3		
	1996	6	3		
	1996	3	3		
	1997	3	3		
	1997	5,8	3,8		
	2007	3,6	3,6		
	2008	3	3		
	2010	1,3	3		
	2015	3	3	12	4
SOUTH	1995	2	4		
	2011	2,7	2,4,7		
	2012	4	4	3	3,4

LEGEND	
1991-2003	
2004-11	
2011-16	
parks that changed districts	
number of new parks	

Table 3: Matrix of new parks in Districts 1-4, created by Annabeth Webb

LOCATION IN DALLAS	YEAR OF ACQUISITION	DISTRICT AT TIME OF AQUISATION	CURRENT DISTRICT	NEW PARKS	PARK DISTRICT
SOUTH	1994	8	5		
	1997	4	5		
	2011	5,8	5,8	3	2
SW/NW	1998	2	6		
WEST	2004	2	6		
	2005	6	6	4	4,5,6
SOUTH	1992	7	7		
	1992	4	7		
	1992	7	7		
	1993	4	7	5	1,2,3
SOUTH	1995	8	8		
	1996	8	8		
	1997	5,8	3,8		
	2008	5	8		
	2011	5,8	5,8		
	2014	8	8	6	2,3,4
EAST	1991	7	9		
	2011	7	9		
CENT/EAST	2011	2,7,14	2,9,14		
NE	2016	9,10	9,10		
NE	2016	9,13	9,13		
CENT/EAST	2016	9,14	9,14	6	1,6

LEGEND	
1991-2003	
2004-11	
2011-16	
parks that changed districts	
number of new parks	

Table 2: Matrix of new parks in Districts 5-9, created by Annabeth Webb

LOCATION IN DALLAS	YEAR OF ACQUISITION	DISTRICT AT TIME OF AQUISATION	CURRENT DISTRICT	NEW PARKS	PARK DISTRICT
NORTH	1995	10	10		
	2008	10,11	10,11		
	2011	10	10		
	2011	10	10		
	2011	10	10		
	2013	10	10		
	2014	10	10		
	2016	9,10	9,10	8	6,1
NORTH	1995	12	11		
	1998	11	11		
	1998	11	11		
	2001	12	11,12		
	2012	11	11		
	2015	11	11	7	6
NORTH	1998	12	12		
	2000	12	12		
	2009	12	12		
	2009	12	12	5	6
NE	2016	9,13	9,13	1	6,5
CENTRAL	1991	14	14		
	1991	14	14		
	1992	2	14		
	1993	2,14	2,14		
	2009	14	14		
	2010	14	14		
	2011	2,7,14	2,9,14		
	2012	14	14		
	2016	9,14	9,14	9	1,3,5

LEGEND	
1991-2003	
2004-11	
2011-16	
parcs that changed districts	
number of new parks	

Table 4: Matrix of new parks in Districts 10-14, created by Annabeth Webb

4.4 Comparative Maps

4.4.1 GIS Overlays

The following research details park placement within the districts since 1991, show distribution of parks over the city, how the districts have shifted over time, when the park and maintenance districts were implemented and how they relate to the council districts and parks within them; in order to conclude whether or not the changing of district systems helped in park

equity and placement since 1991. Did the new districts allow for direct advocacy for parks and access to parks? Is this the most effective way for equity?

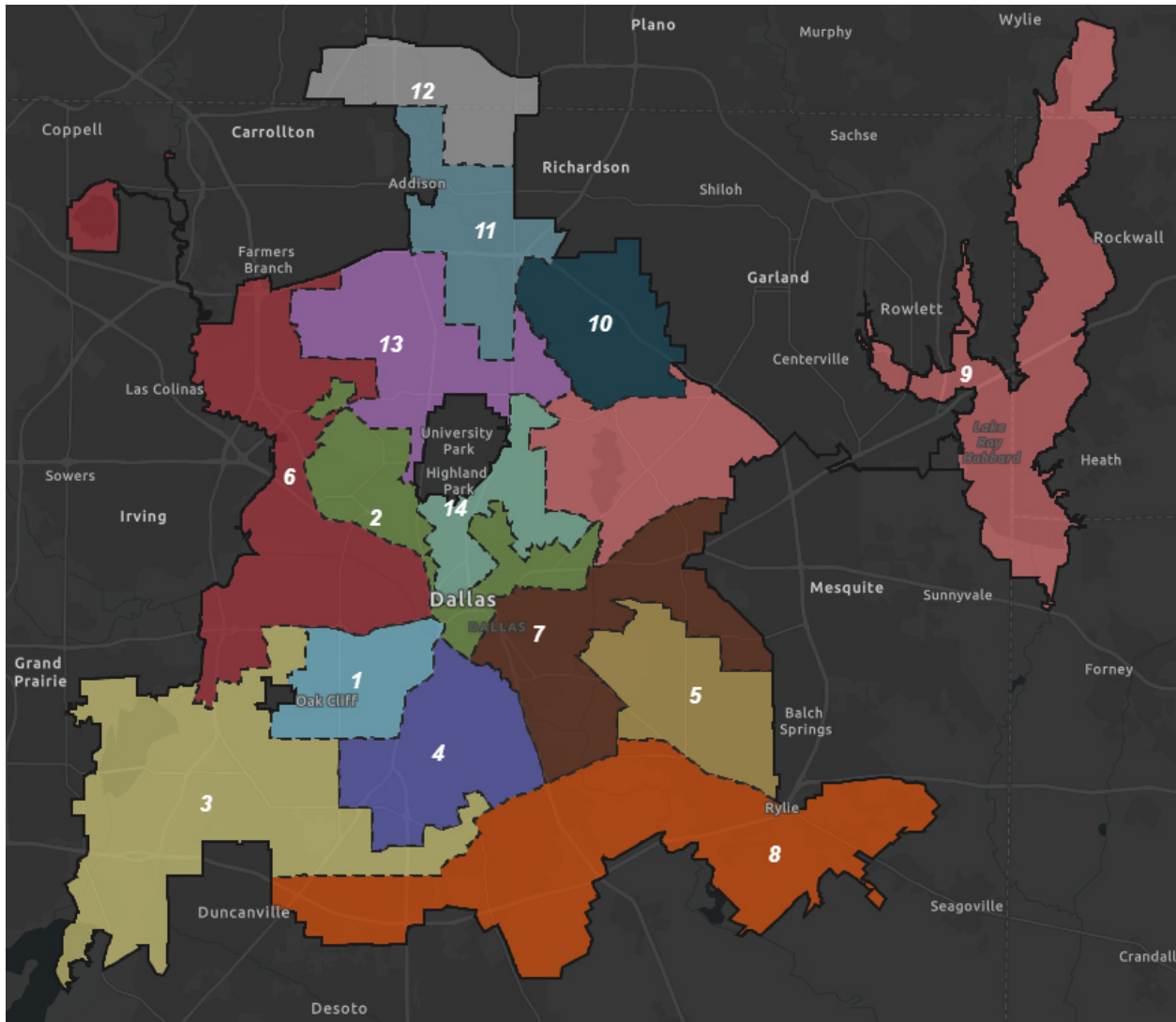


Figure 19: Current District Map showing Districts 1-14; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

The map in Figure 19 shows the current council district layout of all 14 districts. A similar map is highlighted later in this analysis in Figure 27 and will further detail its importance.

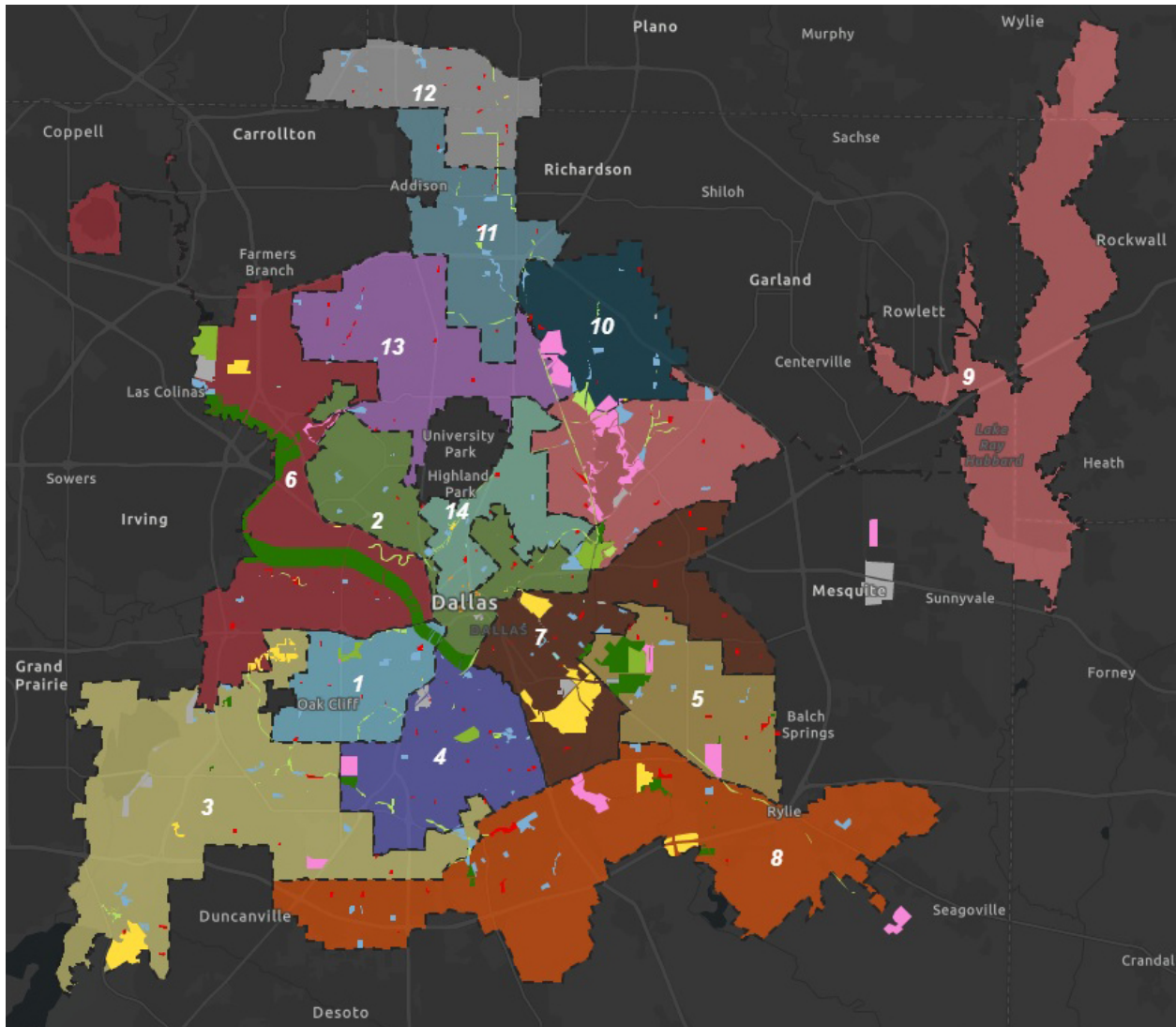


Figure 20: Current Districts with Parks; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be

found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

Within the city, as of 2017, there are about 380 parks. The map in Figure 20 shows all of the parks within the city of Dallas, including historic parks and all of those acquired before 1991. Starting in Figure 22, a series of maps highlights parks acquired in three time periods: 1991-2003, 2004-2011, and 2011-2017. These periods represent the City of Dallas undergoing redistricting three different times over the course of 26 years.

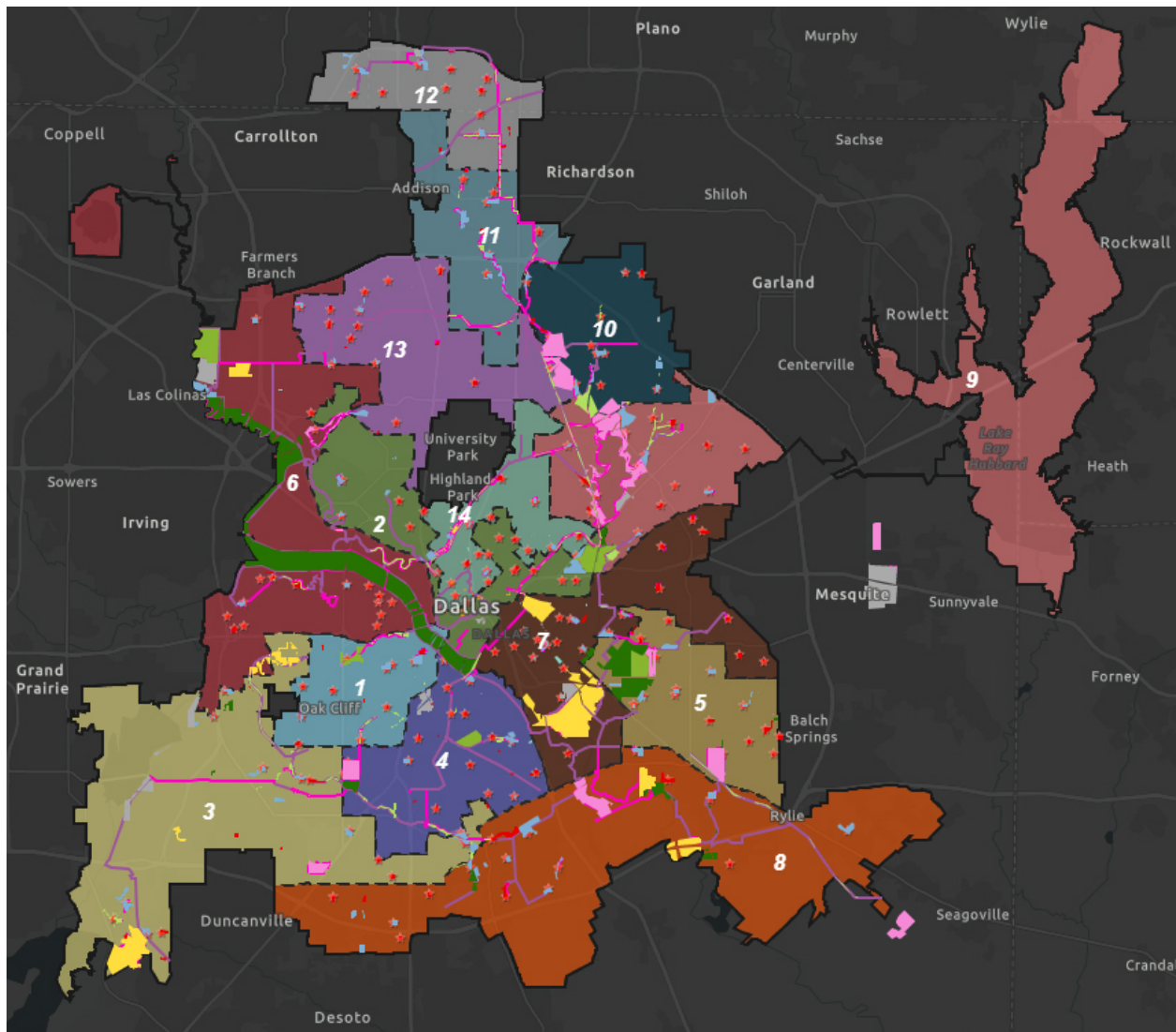


Figure 21: Current Parks, Playgrounds, and Trails; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be

found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

In Figure 21, playgrounds and trails are added to the park map to visualize which parks contain playgrounds and which parks are connected to trails. This analysis, however, does not include playgrounds in its research, as they are amenities within parks themselves.

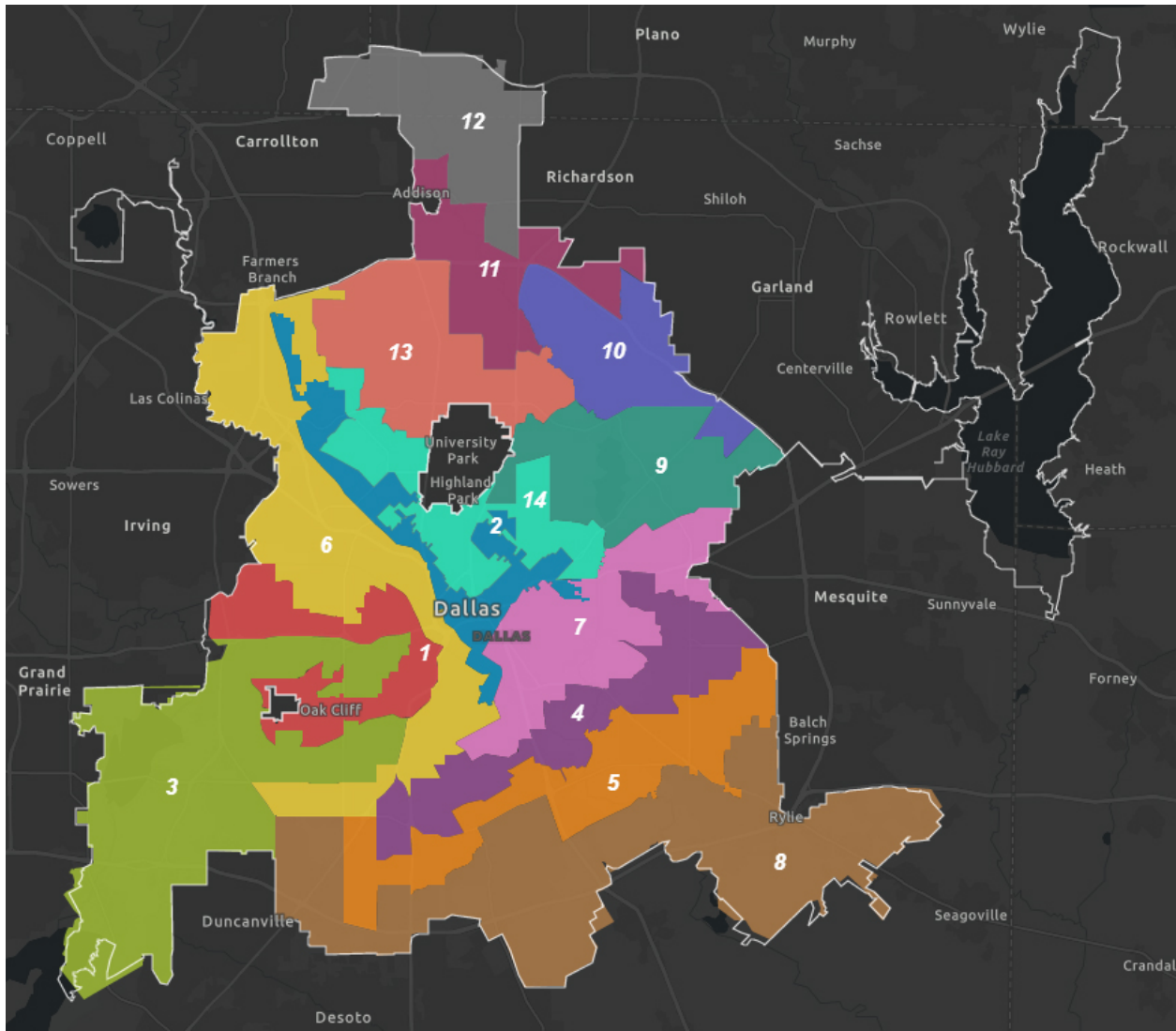


Figure 22: 1991 District Map; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be

found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

After the 14-1 Ruling in 1991, U.S. District Judge Jerry Buchmeyer called for a redistricting, as it was moving from 8 single districts to 14. The districts were created by the city’s appointed redistricting commission, the city’s demographer, and another designated demographer using the 1990 census information and “computer models that enabled the redistricting staff to split voting precincts and census tracts to achieve the racial composition desired in each district” (City of

Dallas Municipal Archives, n.d.-b). As seen in Figure 22, the city limits and districts did not yet encompass Lake Ray Hubbard to the east and a lake to the west.

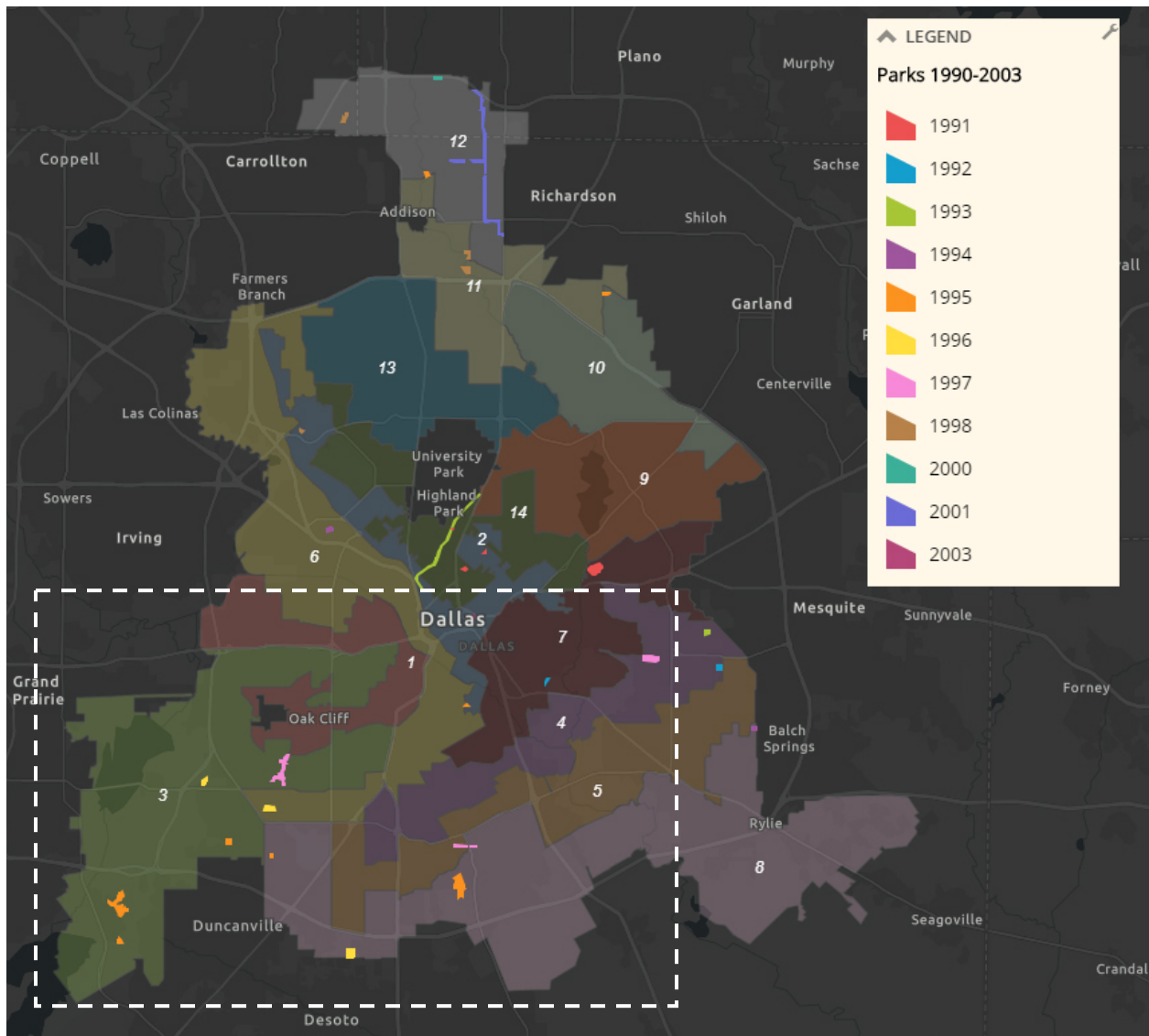


Figure 23: 1991-2003 Parks; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be

found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

In Figure 23, parks acquired from 1991 to 2003 are highlighted. This time period is the highest ratio of growth in new park projects in the city. The predominant park types seen during this time are community and neighborhood parks.

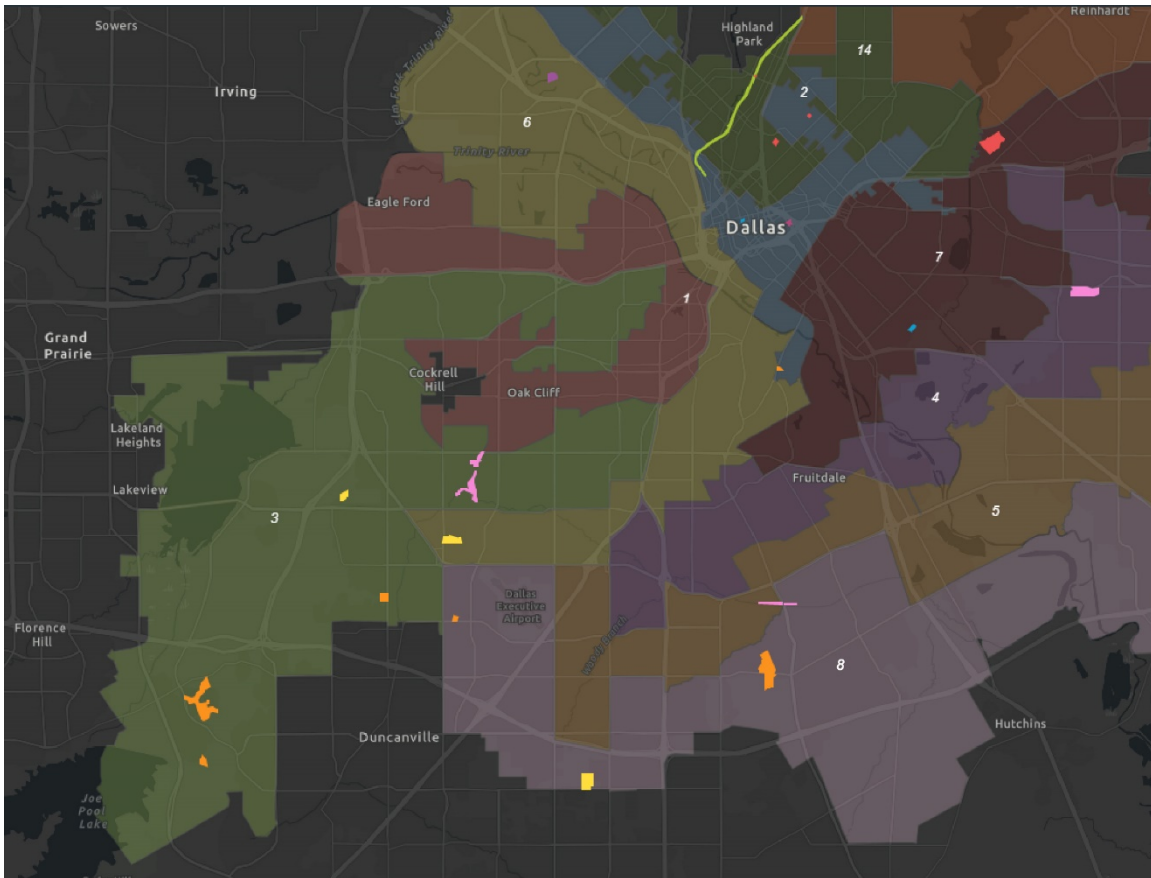


Figure 24: Districts 3 and 8; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be

found at <http://arcegis.com/1v4fXe>

The highest percentage of new parks during the 1990-2003 period were around Districts 3 and 8, highlighted in Figure 24, with a total of 10 new parks between 1995 and 1997. This might suggest the priority of the city and/or those specific council districts vied for new park projects to be placed in those southwestern districts. It also could suggest there were more opportunities to add park space due to more open space available in those areas.

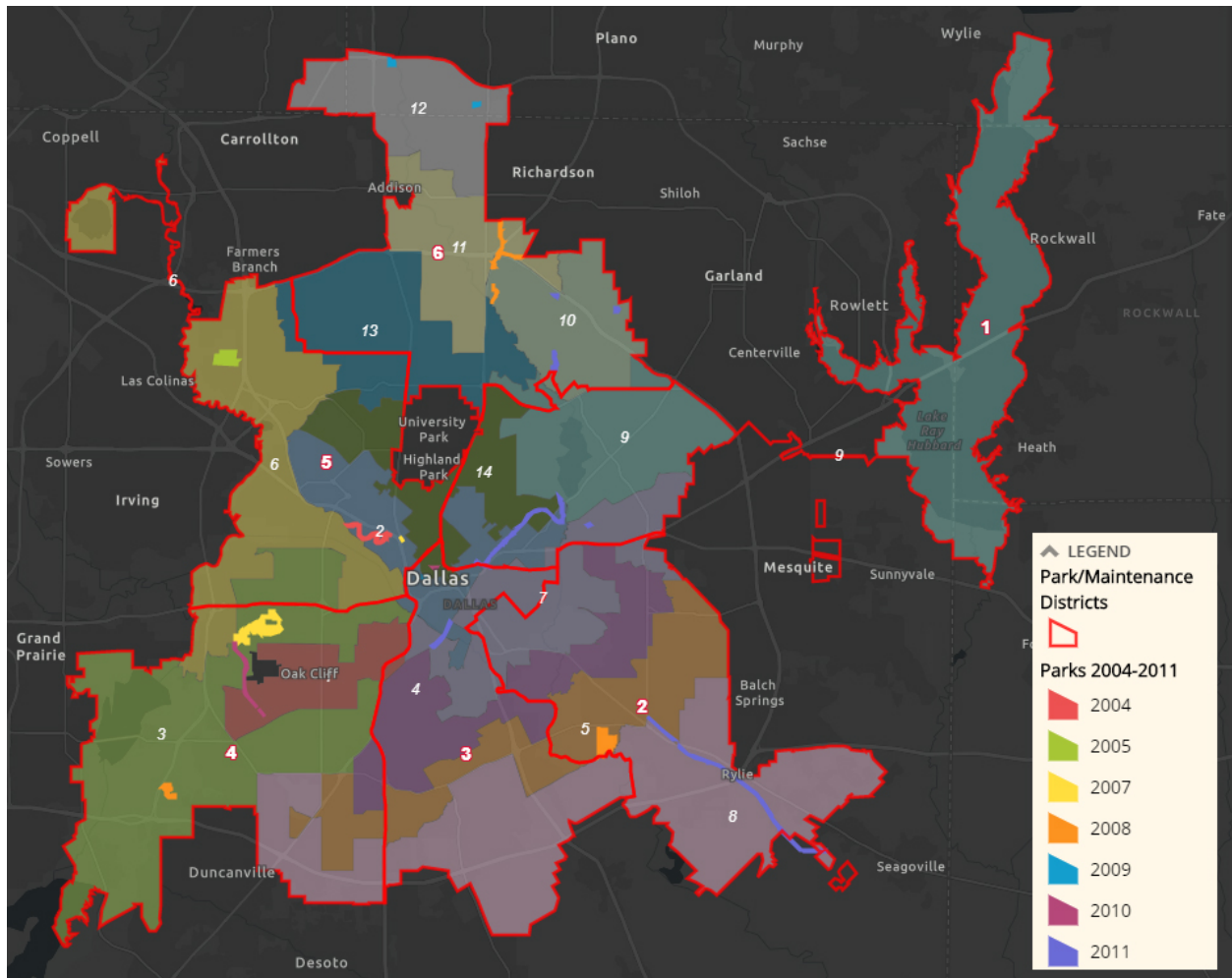


Figure 26: 2003-2011 Park Map; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

We see a significant drop in new park projects in this period, going from 33 new parks in the previous period to 19 in the 2003-2011 period. The predominant park type added during this time were linear parks, most notably the Santa Fe Trail that crosses three districts. Although park placement was pretty well distributed during this time, the highest percentage of new parks during this period were around Districts 2, 10, and 14.

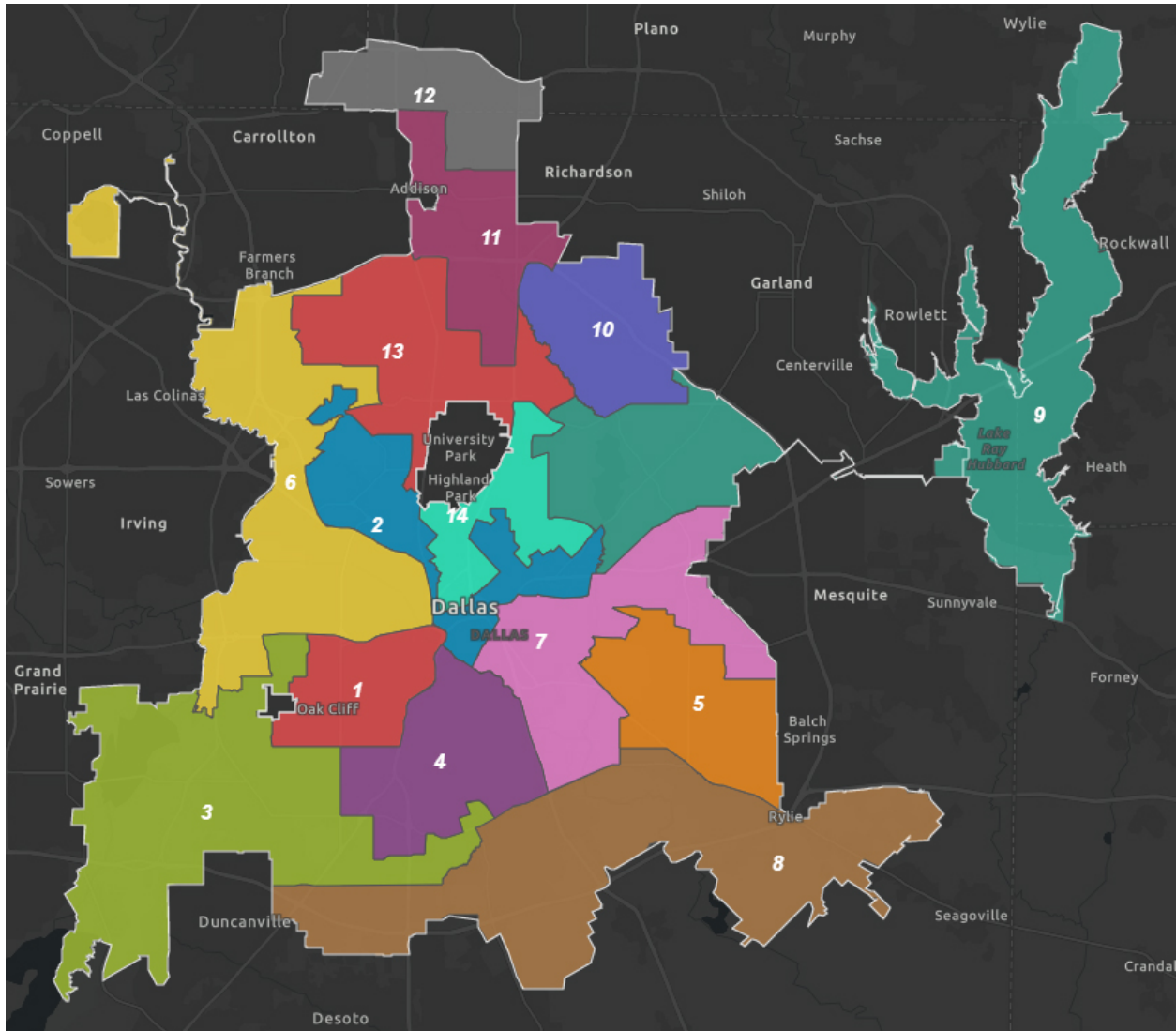


Figure 27: 2011 District Map; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

As seen in Figure 27, this is the current district map. According to the archive exhibit, the 14-1 Ruling, there are still questions regarding the success of the 14 single-member district's implementation. Some question the benefits of the city, assuming all councilmembers only vote for and consider their district's voters, some feel as though this division of the city is not aiding

in dissolving the existing monopolization certain areas have over city politics and finances, while others believe the plan is working well (City of Dallas Municipal Archives, n.d.-b).

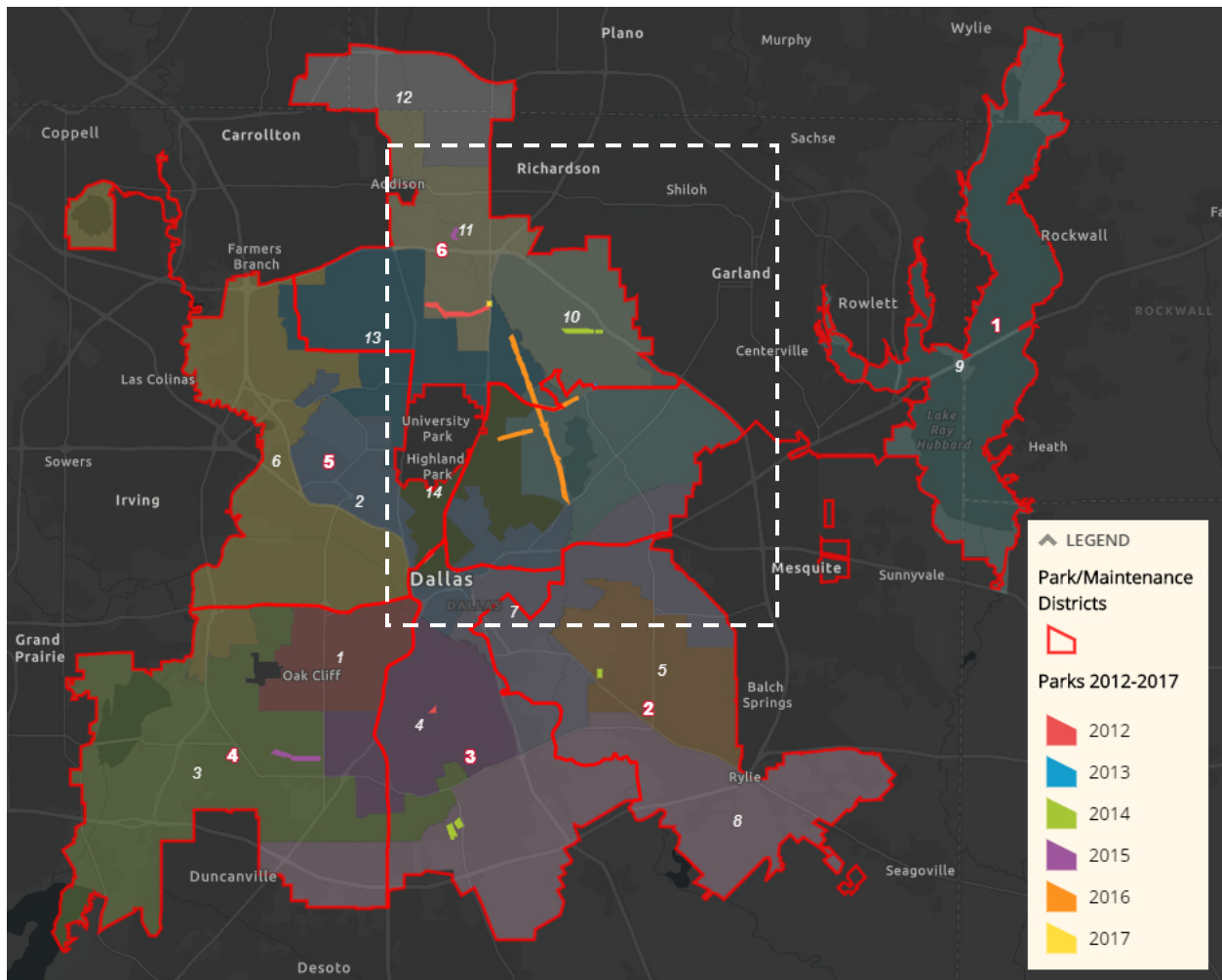


Figure 28: 2011-2017 Park and District Map; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be

found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

Once again, a drop in new park projects is seen in this period, going from 19 new parks in the previous period to 11 in the 2011-2017 period. However, it does not fully reflect the current status and number of parks as of 2020, for the data available to the public is not up to date. The park district boundaries have not changed along with the redrawing of council district lines.

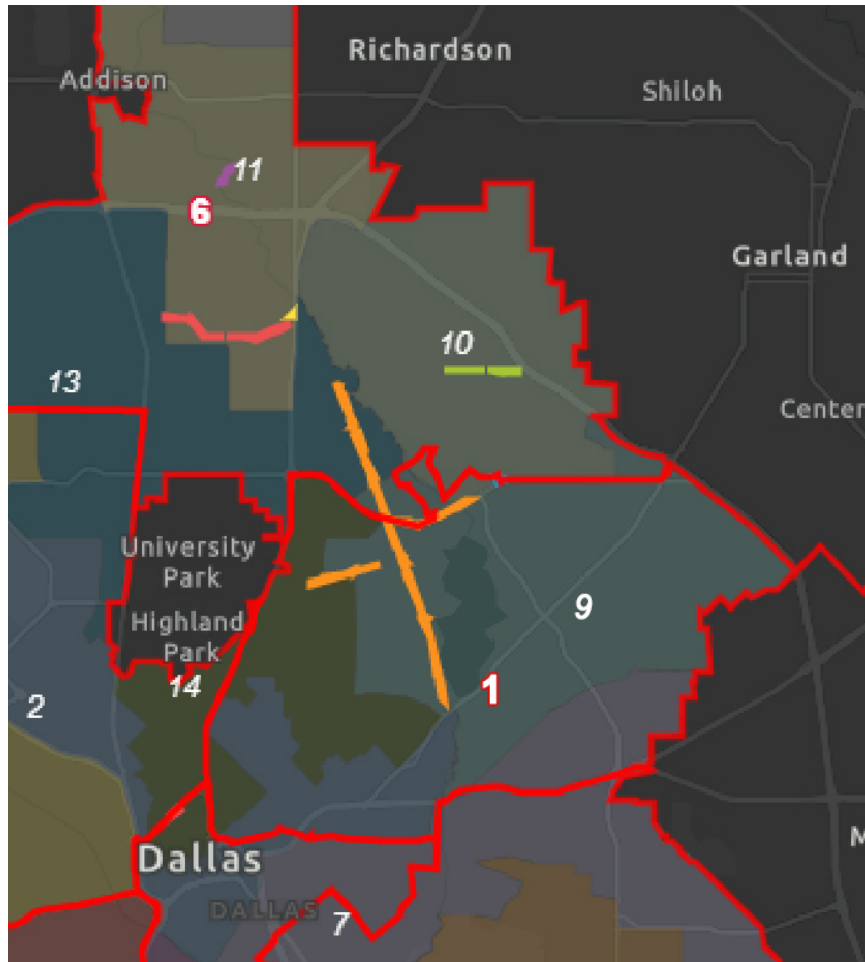


Figure 29: Districts 9 and 10; map created by Annabeth Webb

Note: This map is available to view more in depth on my website Parks + Equity, which can be found at <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

The highest percentage of new parks during this period were around Districts 9 and 10, as seen in Figure 29. The predominant park type added during this time was linear parks, like White Rock Lake Trail and Northaven Trail.

For a more thorough look and ability to zoom in and learn about certain areas and the parks within them, please visit the Map Series website created for this research on Parks and Equity: <http://arcg.is/1v4fXe>

4.4.2 Park Creation in Minority versus Non-Minority Districts

This section discusses and visualizes, through maps, which districts were created to represent minority populations in contrast with predominant white districts and, most importantly, track the creation of parks in minority represented districts versus park creation in non-minority districts. The minority districts were drawn so that the “population in the planned minority districts was about 65% of that particular racial or ethnic group” (City of Dallas Municipal Archives, n.d.-b). It is important to note that even though the district boundaries have shifted, there is still minority representation for those historically minority districts. At its origin, the 14 single-member district city council members consisted of six minority members and eight white members. Since then, demographics have shifted in some districts, causing some district representation to change to more minority members. For example, in District 7, where there has been an African American representing since 1991, a Latinx representative has recently been elected to council for that district. Currently, the council member representation contains seven minority members and seven non-minority, white members.

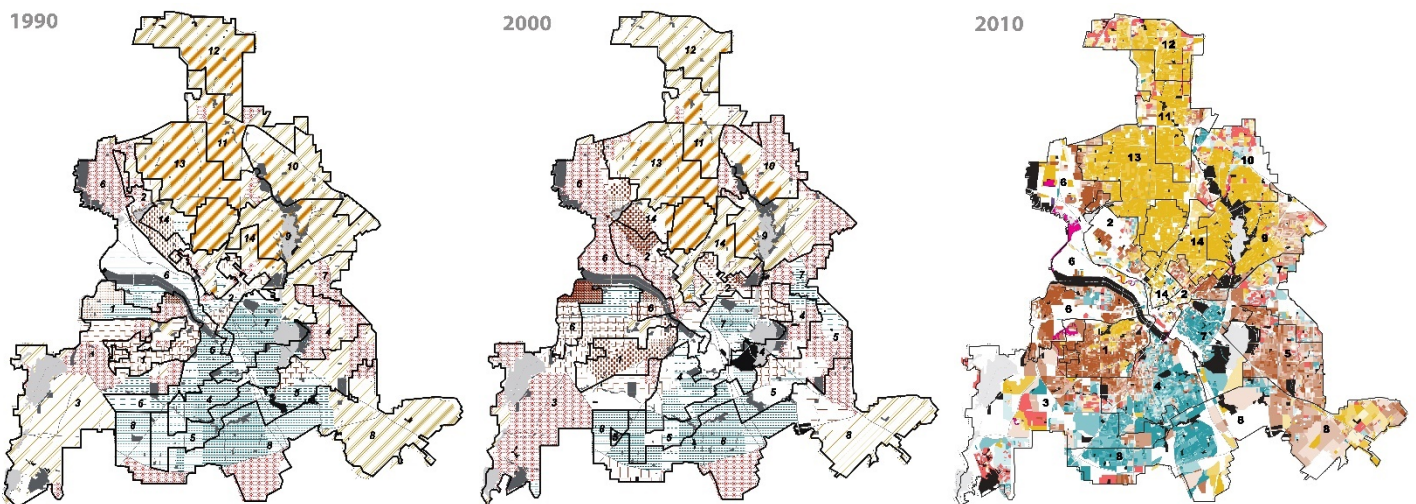


Figure 30: bcWorkshop Demographic Maps overlaid with Council District boundaries.

Courtesy of bcWorkshop and the City of Dallas.

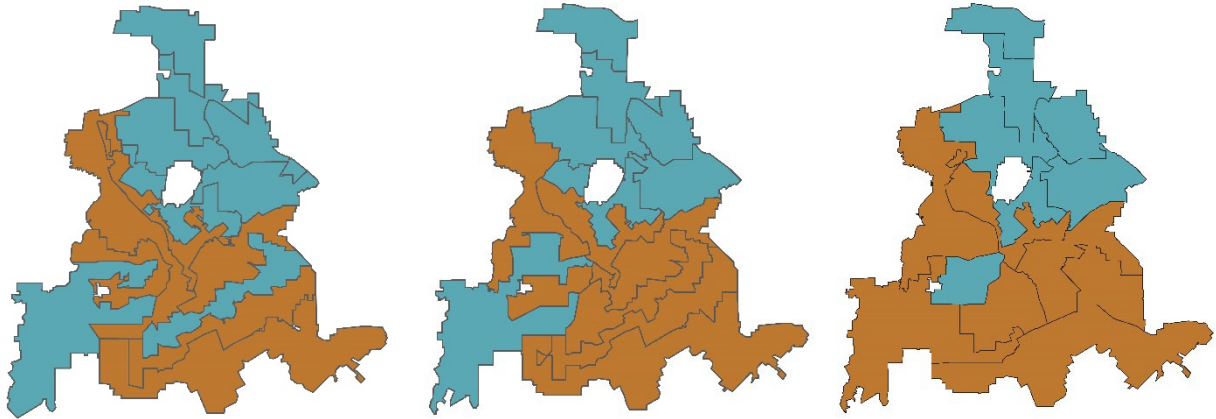


Figure 31: (left to right) 1991, 2003, and 2011 District Maps divided into Minority (orange) vs. Non-Minority (blue) Representation; created by Annabeth Webb

When looking at the demographic maps with district map overlays in Figures 30 and 31, a dividing line is made obvious of what parts of the city have minority versus non-minority city council representation. It is apparent that most of northern Dallas' districts have had white representation since 1991, while most of the southern districts have had minority representatives. Even with multiple district changes, there are areas that demographically have not drastically shifted. The districts with minority representation are Districts 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 are shown in Figure 31, signified with an orange color; with non-minority represented districts 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 signified with the blue.

In the following pages, the maps focus on the districts with the greatest and least number of new parks added between 1991 and 2017. District 1 is included in the map seen in Figure 39 solely because, even though it currently is being represented by a non-minority member, the predominant demographic that resides in that area is minority. I have also included the district maps seen in Figure 31 with the maps seen in Figures 32-39 as a reference that not only shows the focus area, but also emphasizes that area's minority or non-minority status.

Year 1991-2003

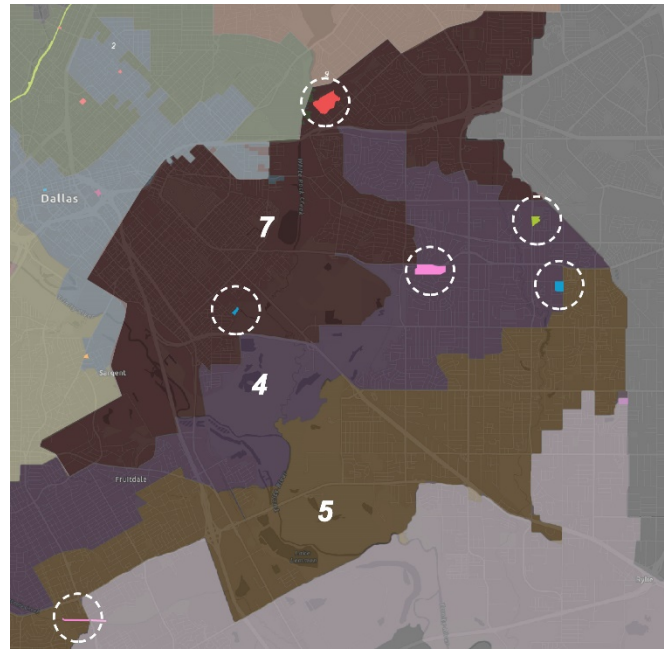
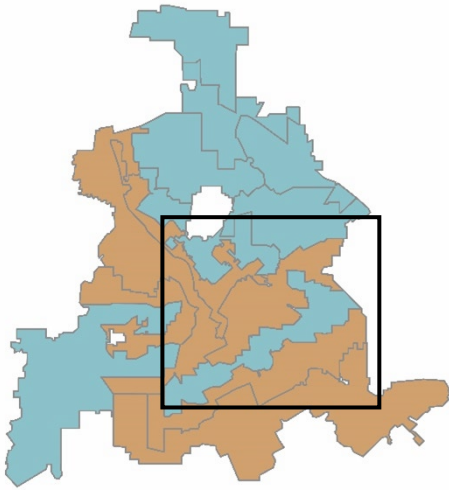


Figure 32: (left) 1991 Minority vs. Non-Minority Dallas council district map; (right) A focus on new parks for Districts 4, 5, and 7. Created by Annabeth Webb

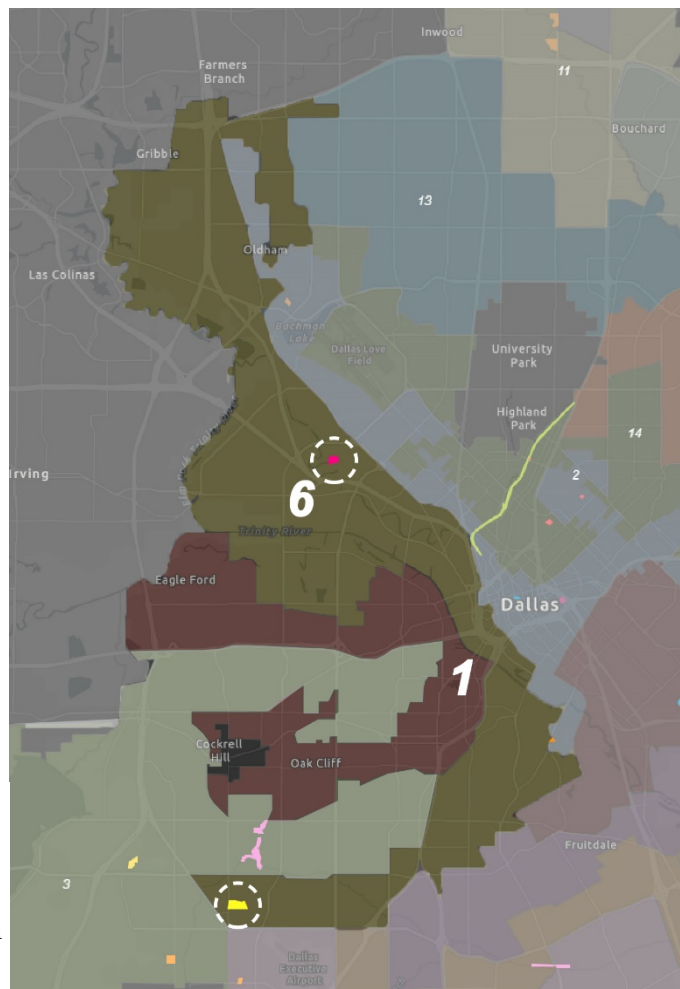
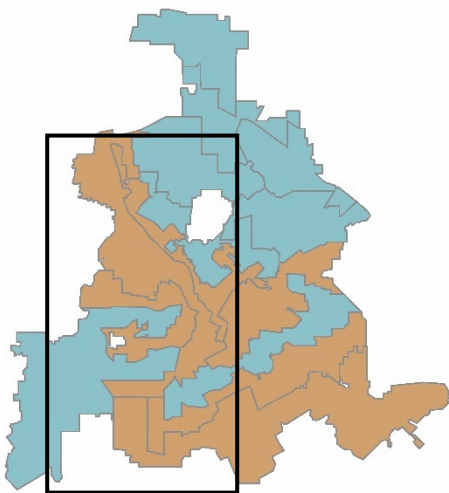


Figure 33: (left) 1991 Minority vs. Non-Minority Dallas council district map; (right) A focus on new parks for Districts 1 and 6. Created by Annabeth Webb

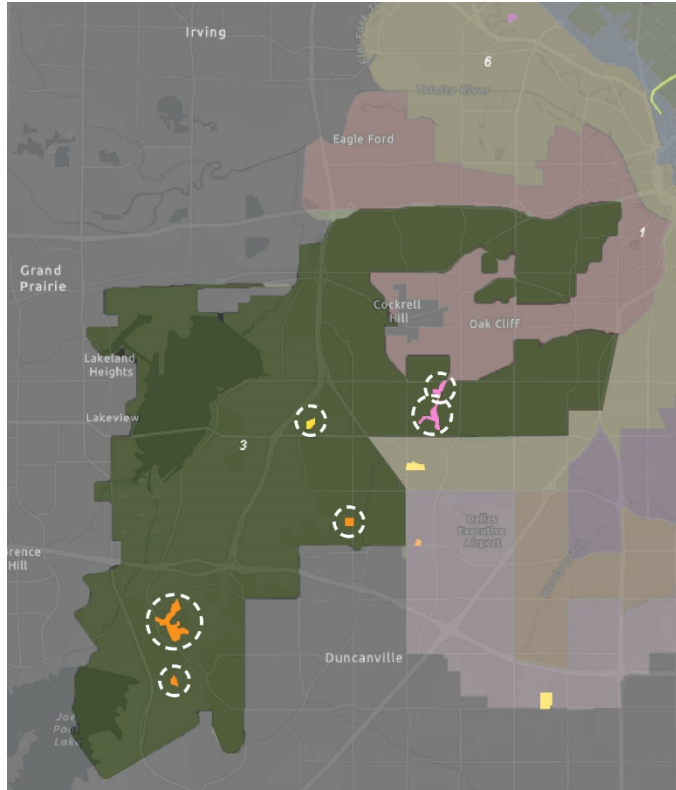
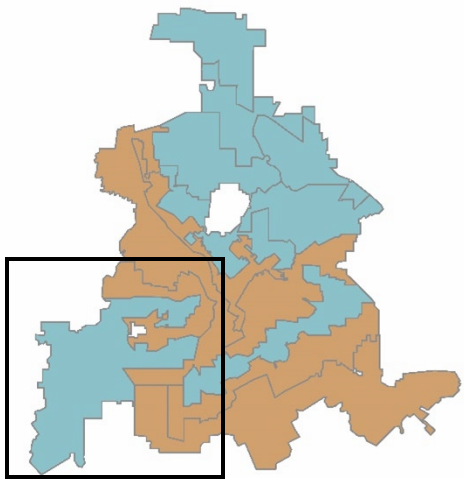


Figure 34: (left) 1991 Minority vs. Non-Minority Dallas council district map; (right) A focus on new parks for District 3. Created by Annabeth Webb

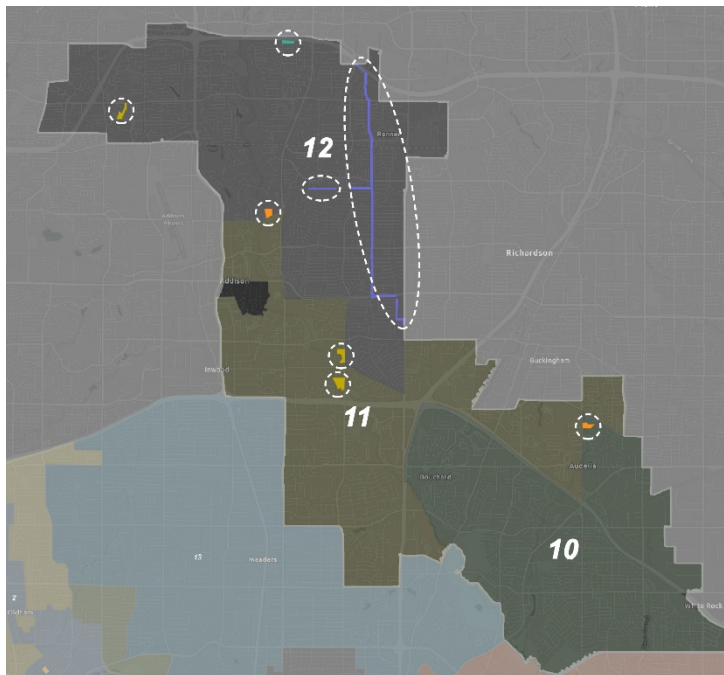
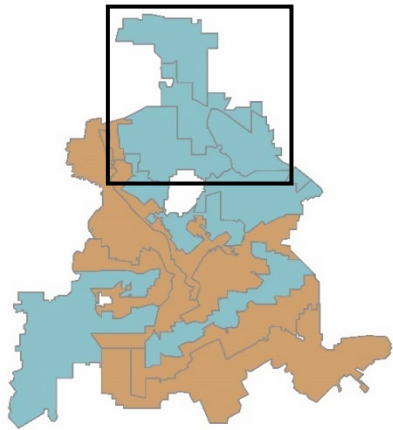


Figure 35: (left) 1991 Minority vs. Non-Minority Dallas council district map; (right) A focus on new parks for Districts 10, 11, and 12. Created by Annabeth Webb

Year 2003-2011

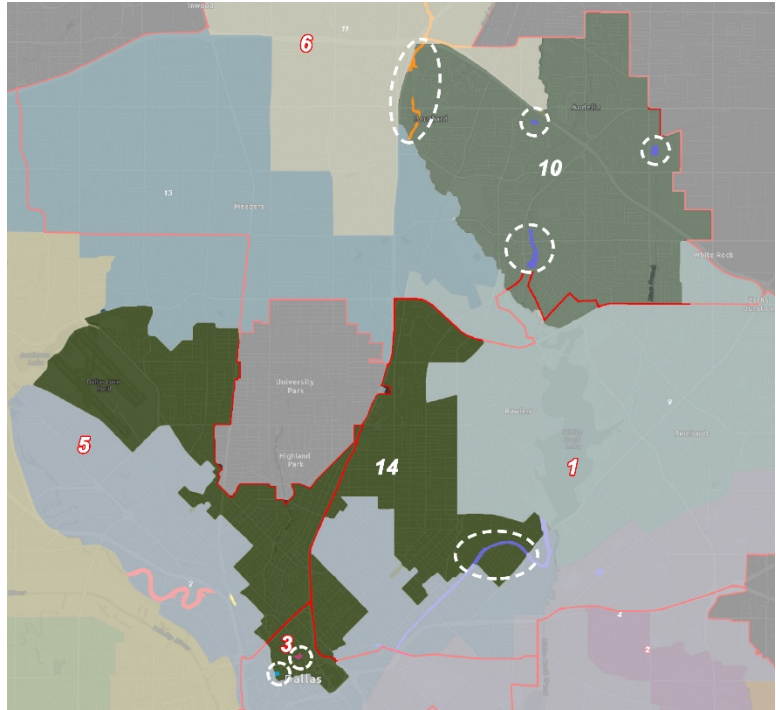
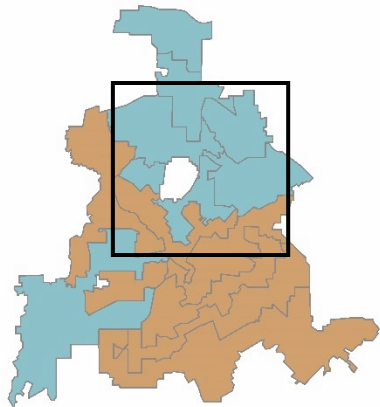


Figure 36: (left) 2003 Minority vs. Non-Minority Dallas council district map; (right) A focus on new parks for Districts 10 and 14. Created by Annabeth Webb

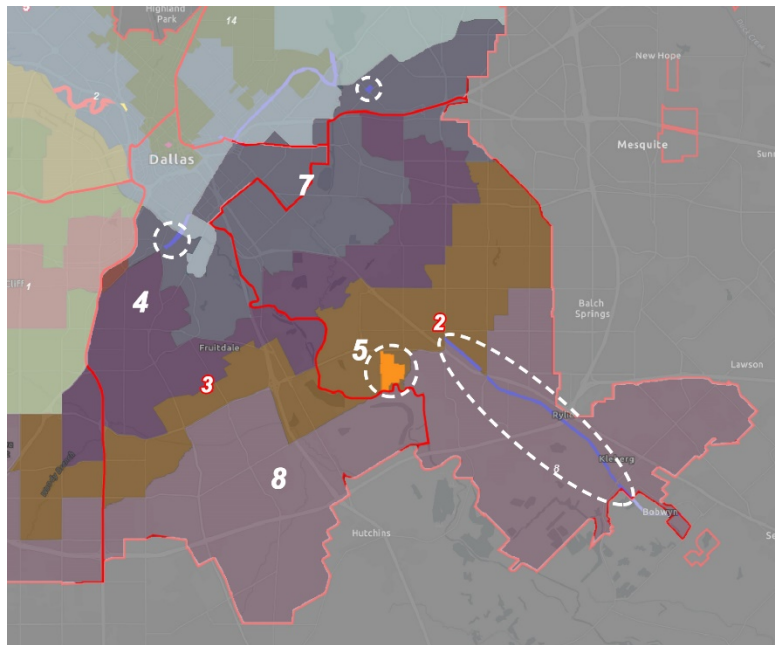
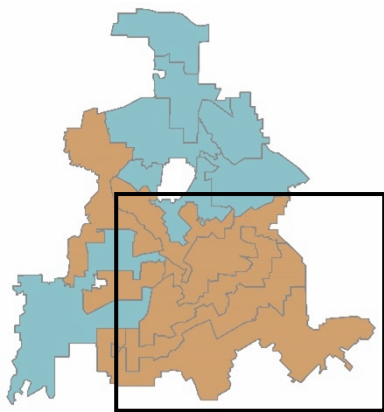


Figure 37: (left) 2003 Minority vs. Non-Minority Dallas council district map; (right) A focus on new parks for Districts 4,5, and 8. Created by Annabeth Webb

Year 2011-2017

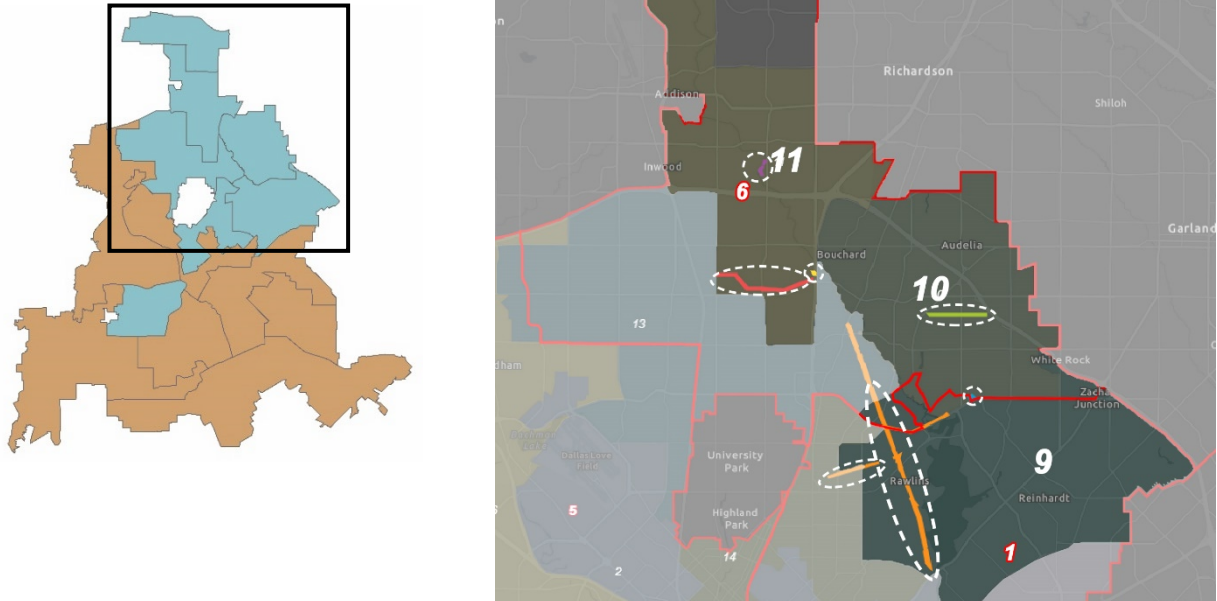


Figure 38: (left) 2011 Minority vs. Non-Minority Dallas council district map; (right) A focus on new parks for Districts 9-11. Created by Annabeth Webb

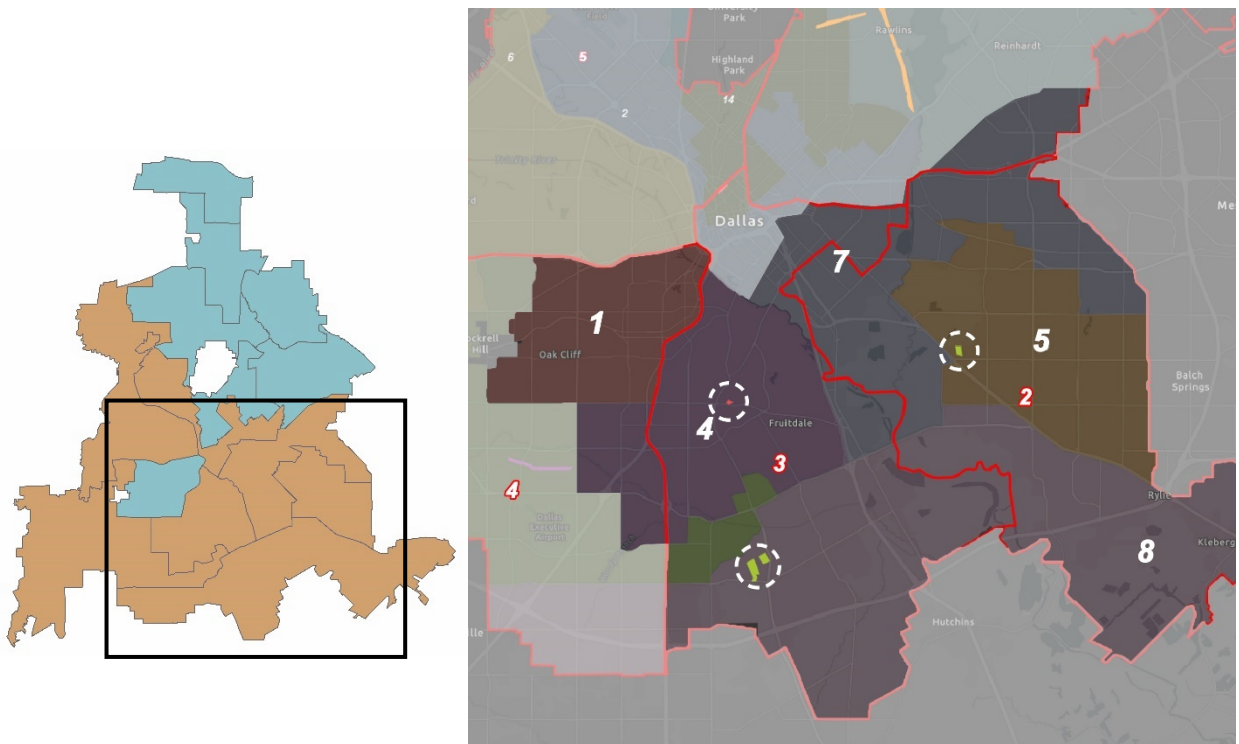


Figure 39: (left) 2011 Minority vs. Non-Minority Dallas council district map; (right) A focus on new parks for Districts 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8. Created by Annabeth Webb

From 1991 to 2017, the council districts with the least number of new parks were Districts 1,4,5,6,7,12, and 13. Of those seven districts, five of them had minority representation. The council districts with the greatest number of new parks were Districts 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 14, with only two of those with minority representation.

During the 1991-2003 district period, as seen in Figures 32 and 33, only three parks were created in Districts 5 and 7, with District 4 receiving three parks and District 6, two. Districts 4, 5, and 6, out of all the districts obtaining parks during this time, got the short end of the stick. For district 4, by the end of 2017, they only had 3 new parks that were added since 1991, with two of them falling into the district after redistricting was done. Districts 5 and 6 are in the same situation. They only received one park that was intended for them specifically, and the other two parks fell within the boundaries after redistricting. The predominant new park type in these districts were small neighborhood and linear parks. All four districts have consistently had minority representatives since the single-member system was implemented.

As seen in Figures 34 and 35, Districts 3, 10, 11, and 12, which are non-minority represented districts, obtained the greatest number of new parks from 1991-2003. During a two-year period, District 3 received six new parks, ranging from a 5-acre neighborhood park to a 62-acre community park. Within six years, Districts 10-12 had seven new parks all together, with the prevalent park type being linear and neighborhood type parks.

During the 2003-2011 period, the number of parks per district were fairly evenly distributed over most districts. Both minority and non-minority represented districts received a total of 13 new parks each during this time. However, there was still uneven park allocation amongst all fourteen districts. As seen in Figure 36, District 10 obtained four new park spaces and District 14 received three. In Figure 37, the minority districts 4, 5, and 8 received only two

new parks. Although it is not shown in the maps seen in Figures 33-34, District 1 only received one park in 2010. But, when Dallas went through a redistricting in 2011, that park fell within the boundaries of District 3 instead.

In the last time period of 2011-2017, similar patterns are seen when it comes to park distribution amongst districts. Districts 9-14, which have non-minority representatives, obtained thirteen new parks. Only Districts 9-12 are shown in Figure 38, highlighting the eight parks added within a 5-year period that are predominantly linear parks. In Districts 4, 5, and 8, which have minority representatives, only three classified parks were added, with only two being accessible to the public as seen in Figure 39.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Conclusions

From the GIS Map overlays, we see that in two time periods, new park placement was not evenly distributed throughout the city districts between 1991 and 2003 and 2011 and 2017. Even with slight shifts in district lines, there is still a hierarchy of number of parks in a select few districts. Based on the data collected, mapped, and analyzed, there appears to be an placement emphasis in Districts 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 14, suggesting a lack of equitable placement of parks in districts with greater need.

Although the number of parks is not the sole measure of equity, it is a contributing factor in a widely dispersed city like Dallas that acknowledges the need for more neighborhood parks to meet its “accessibility” goals. With the maps created and number of parks per district counted, there is evidence of less new park placement in consistent minority represented council districts versus consistent white represented council districts. After the change to single-member districts in 1991, there was more minority representation seen in city council; and it has also continued to increase, with the current council having even minority/non-minority representatives. However, since the single-member council districts were created to increase minority representation and that act was not enough advocacy to support equity in public park creation, I conclude that the single-member districts did not have an effect on equity creation in Dallas’ parks.

With the maintenance districts for the Park and Recreation Department not coinciding with the city council districts, and mentions of miscommunication in the 2002 and 2016 Comprehensive Plans, it is easy to conclude that there is a serious lack of communication and coordination between departments and city council. If the park department and the council are not working together to improve the park system overall, it is safe to conclude that the change in

council representation did not have a direct effect in equity and access to public parks. There might have been some secondary effects of morale boost and support from citizens and councilmembers alike, but it is hard to assume and prove. Interviews with Dallas city officials in future research could reveal the effect, if any, on equity of parks after single-member district creation.

The redistricting in the City of Dallas since 1991 has been caused by demographic shifts of its residents. When demographic shifts occur, the city takes action in redrawing the district lines in order to maintain equal representation within the government. It could be concluded that less parkland was added to certain districts and areas of the city due to a smaller number of residents living there. However, the studies from the comprehensive plans have shown the interest from residents all over Dallas of the want and need to experience green and open space within their neighborhoods. In future research, more data can be collected to show if less population within a district has any effect on the number of parks added.

This thesis has highlighted the number of parks created in different council districts as one means of understanding how the city did – or did not – address widely known issues concerning lack of available public parks. From this study, we can conclude that park placement could have been emphasized in certain districts over others.

There are other ways of measuring equity in public parks that need to be considered to develop a fuller picture of how public parks in Dallas have evolved. Those measurements include understanding amenities available in parks, the size of parks, and a more granular understanding of types of parks (neighborhood, community, pools, etc.).

5.1.1 Trust for Public Land and Smart Growth for Dallas

As of May 2019, over 940,000 Dallas residents are within a 10-minute walk, or a half mile, from home to a public park. However, as evidenced by The Trust for Public Land maps, there are still large pockets within Dallas that are in high need of parks. Although still ranked in the middle of the pack of 50-100 cities, from 2014-2017, the percentage of Dallas' population that had walkable access to a park increased by 4% (The Center for City Park Excellence & The Trust for Public Land, 2014 & 2017, pp. 12-15).

Since 2017, according to the annually updated ParkScore® website, Dallas has gone from 58% of residents to 69% of residents with 10-minute walk access to parks, even though only 9% of the total land in the city is used for parks and recreation (The Trust for Public Land, 2019). TPL collected data from 14,000 cities across the U.S. and created a map with multiple layers to evaluate what parks exist and the areas in most need of parks. The map for Dallas is seen in Figure 40. According to TPL and their ParkServe® system, the five points that are highlighted in blue are considered “optimized points”, meaning they are “suggested locations for a new park, ranked based on the estimated increase of residents,” (The Trust for Public Land, 2019).

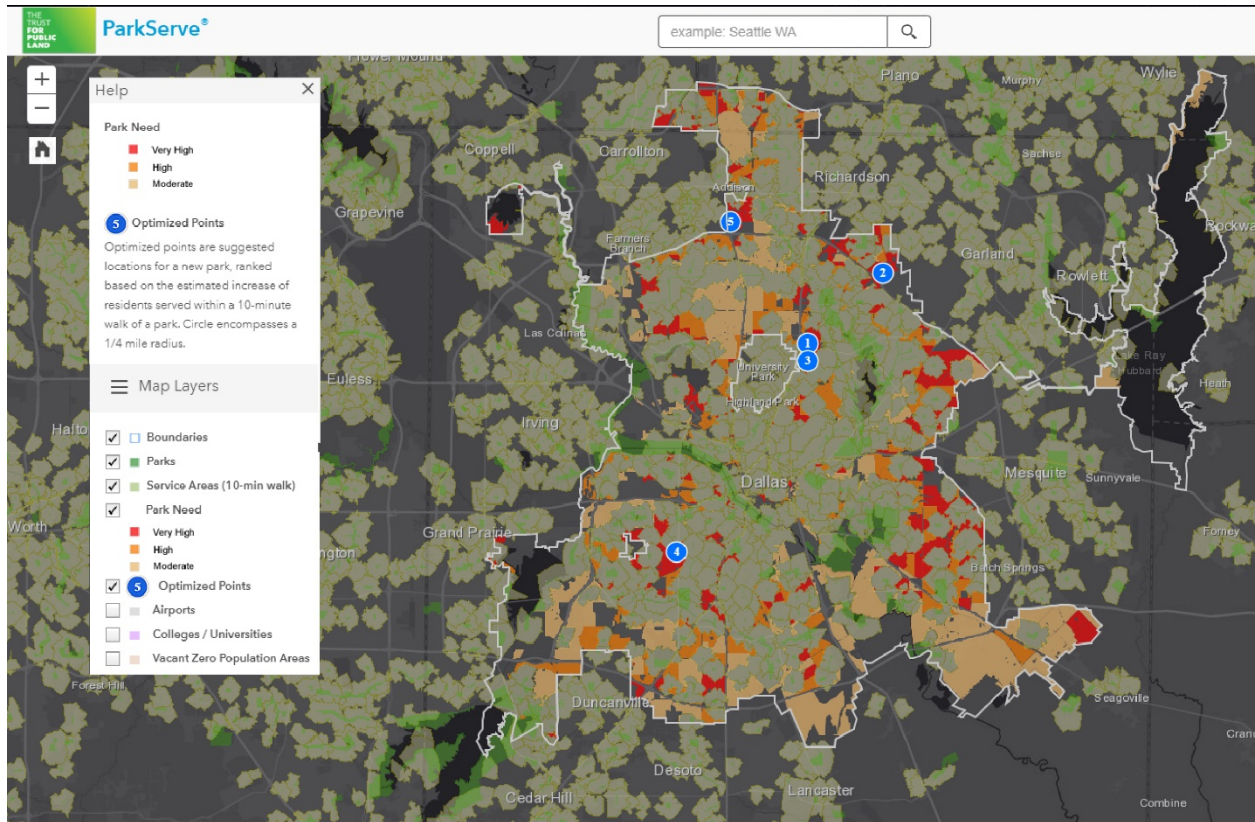
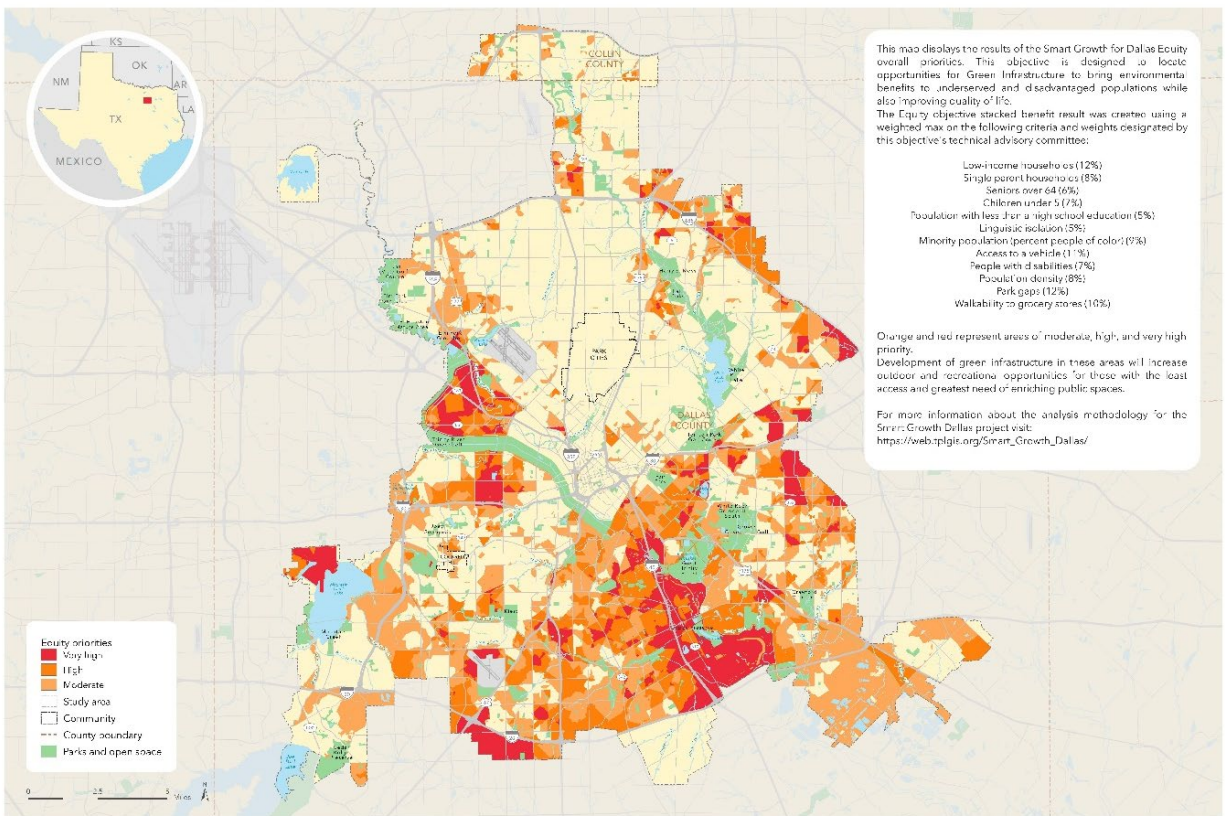


Figure 40: ParkServe® map for Dallas

highlighting park need, 10-minute walk areas, and optimized points.

Courtesy of the Trust for Public Land.

As a part of The Trust for Public Land (TPL), Smart Growth for Dallas is a partnership between TPL, the City of Dallas, Texas Trees Foundation, and bcWorkshop. Their goals are to “realize residents’ desires for their city’s park system, advocate for sustainable solutions to climate change, help us understand how we can green public spaces, and create a data platform that helps drive where investments happen.” They plan to accomplish this by focusing on specific strategies such as Connect, Health, and Equity. Smart Growth is a “data-driven initiative to improve the environment, social, and economic resilience of Dallas.” (The Trust for Public Land, bcWorkshop, Texas Trees Foundation, & Dallas Park & Recreation, 2018). They also provide tools and maps that are interactive to assist users in making smart, data-driven decisions.



Equity priorities
 SMART GROWTH FOR DALLAS

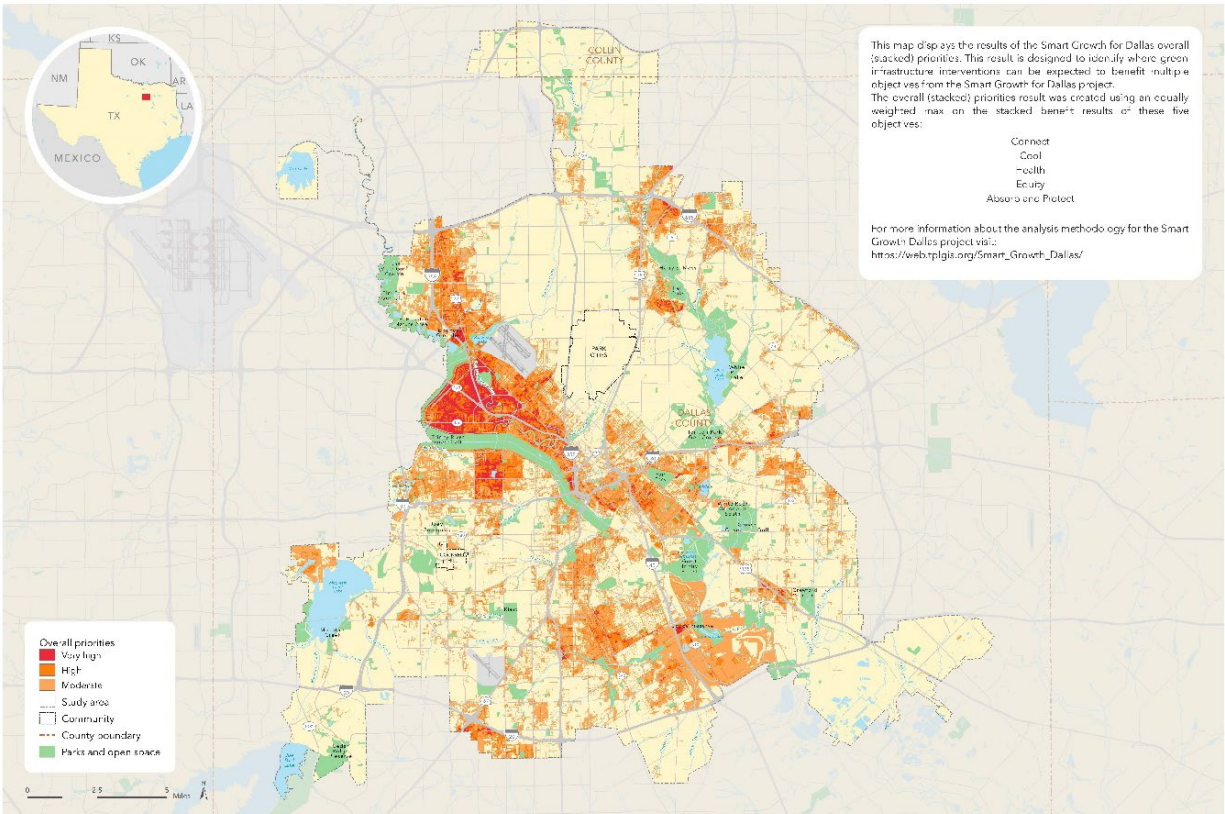


Figure 41: Map showing equity priorities that Dallas should consider.

Courtesy of Smart Growth for Dallas and the Trust for Public Land.

In Figures 41 and 42, Smart Growth has created maps, using their collected data, to visualize priorities that are designed to distinguish where green infrastructure should be prioritized “to bring environmental benefits to underserved and disadvantaged populations while also improving quality of life,” (The Trust for Public Land, bcWorkshop, Texas Trees Foundation, & Dallas Park & Recreation, 2018). Improvement of the green infrastructure in the areas highlighted in orange and red will boost opportunities for those in greatest need. The layered result of the map in Figure 41 were created using criteria such as:

- Low-income households (12%)
- Single parent households (8%)
- Seniors over 64 (6%)
- Children under 5 (7%)
- Population with less than a high school education (5%)
- Linguistic isolation (5%)
- Minority population (percent people of color) (9%)
- Access to a vehicle (11%)
- People with disabilities (7%)
- Population density (8%) Park gaps (12%)
- Walkability to grocery stores (10%)



Overall priorities

SMART GROWTH FOR DALLAS

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Figure 42: Overall priorities that Dallas should consider.

Courtesy of Smart Growth for Dallas and the Trust for Public Land.

5.2 Relevance to Landscape Architecture

According to Lipsitz, “Having a better understanding of differential space, of the roles played by exclusion, exchange value, and use value in determining the racial meanings of places, can help landscape architects and other professionals whose work shapes the built environment to ameliorate the racialization of space and the spatialization of race.” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 12).

As well as “Landscape architects and other land use professionals can help create spaces and spatial imaginaries by helping build communities characterized by racial and class heterogeneity, inclusion, and affordability.” (Lipsitz, 2007, p. 20).

The American Society of Landscape Architects is the distinguished professional association for Landscape Architects in the United States and is the driving force of the profession and its standards. Their mission states “Landscape architects lead the planning, design, and stewardship of healthy, *equitable*, safe, and resilient environments. The Society’s mission is to advance landscape architecture through advocacy, communication, education, and fellowship,” (American Society of Landscape Architects, 2019a). Their values of integrity and diversity, as well as culture of collaboration and inclusiveness, further emphasize how all landscape architecture practices and projects should be implemented. The United States’ population is predicted to become a majority-minority nation by 2043, per projections made by the Census Bureau. ASLA states that the “shifting demographics of our nation are not reflected in the field of landscape architecture” and “new perspectives are needed to ensure that landscape architecture reflects the communities it serves,” (American Society of Landscape Architects, 2019b). The organization held a diversity summit in 2019 “with the goal of developing a deeper understanding of why landscape architecture is failing to attract a more diverse profile,” with plans and goals in addressing diversity challenges for years to come (American Society of Landscape Architects, 2019c). Landscape architects should take heed and follow the example set by the professional organization that represents us all.

5.3 Future Research Opportunities

This study has been a broad look at the impact of single-member districts on all parks in the city of Dallas. Further study can be done by focusing on certain areas or individual parks and how those have been influenced by the change in districts. There is also the opportunity to collect voices from civic and neighborhood organizations that are directly involved with the residents they serve and show how greatly the councilmembers are involved in their community.

Discussion with city officials and council members could also help in future understanding of park equity since 1991. Since there has been improvement in the park system in the matter of more residents being within a 10-minute walk to a park, a series of microhistories could be done for parks. This is to understand what role the park department and other political processes played in creating those spaces.

If master plans for specific areas, information gathered on civic organizations within the districts, and GIS data for new parks acquired and built since 2017, are collected and made available, research can continue on how districts have and can directly impact equity and access to parks in Dallas. This study has also led to potential new research questions for future study:

1. Did the councilmembers have any influence on the amount of park projects within their districts?
2. Does the population density of an area or district impact the number of new parks placed within that district?
3. How has/will the City of Dallas continue to improve its equity of public parks with the new studies and data they receive?
4. What are the opinions of the current residents of the council districts on equity creation in Dallas' parks? Have they improved?

Appendix A

Table List of Classified Parks under purview
of Dallas Park and Recreation Department

YEAR	NAME	TYPE	CURRENT DISTRICT	DISTRICT AT TIME OF AQUISATION	PARK DISTRICT
1991	Monarch	Mini	2	2	1
1991	Ash Creek Greenbelt	Linear	9	7	1
1991	Katy Trail - Fitzhugh Gateway	Mini	14	14	5
1991	JW Ray	Neighborhood	14	14	1
1992	Peary	Neighborhood	7	7	2
1992	JP Hawn	Neighborhood	7	4	2
1992	Willie Mae Butler Park	Community	7	7	2
1992	Peegasus Plaza	Special (Downtown)	14	2	3
1993	Cedar Run	Neighborhood	7	4	2
1993	Katy Trail	Linear	2,14	2,14	5
1994	Arlington	Community	2	6	5
1994	Chestnut	Conservation	5	8	2
1995	Foxhaven	Neighborhood	3	3	4
1995	Emerald Lake	Community	3	3	4
1995	Blue Bird	Neighborhood	3	8	4
1995	Forest Cliff	Neighborhood	3	3	4
1995	Cadillac Heights	Mini	4	2	3
1995	Runyon Creek Greenbelt	Conservation	8	8	3
1995	Audelia	Community	10	10	6
1995	Wagging Tail	Neighborhood	11	12	6
1996	Doris Berry	Community	3	6	4
1996	Ledbetter Escarpment	Conservation	3	3	4
1996	Hulcy	Community	8	8	4
1997	Coombs Creek Greenbelt	Linear	3	3	4
1997	Scyene Trail	Community	5	4	2
1997	Five Mile Creek Greenbelt	Linear	3,8	5,8	3
1998	Overlake	Neighborhood	6	2	5
1998	Hillcrest	Neighborhood	11	11	6
1998	Valley View West	Linear	11	11	6
1998	Barry H Barker	Neighborhood	12	12	6
2000	Moss Glen	Neighborhood	12	12	6
2001	Preston Ridge Trail	Linear	11,12	12	6
2003	Taylor Fields	Special (Future?)	2	2	3
2004	Trinity Strand Trail	Linear	6	2	5
2005	Elm Fork Athletic Complex	Special	6	6	5
2007	Goat Hill Katy Trail Easement	Linear	2	2	5
2007	Joey Georgusis	Special	3,6	3,6	4
2008	Sharrock/Niblo	Special	3	3	4
2008	Trinity River Audubon Center	Special	8	5	2
2008	Cottonwood Trail	Linear	10,11	10,11	6
2009	Dickinson Facility	Special	12	12	6
2009	NorthBark	Special (Off-Leash)	12	12	6
2009	Belo Garden	Special (Downtown)	14	14	3

2010	Chalk Hill Trail	Linear	3	1,3	4
2010	Pacific Plaza	Special (Downtown)	14	14	3
2011	White Rock Hills	Community	9	7	1
2011	Bekay Service Center	Special (Maintenance)	10	10	6
2011	Timberleaf	Neighborhood	10	10	6
2011	Watercrest	Community	10	10	6
2011	Santa Fe Trestle Trail	Linear	2,4,7	2,7	3
2011	Santa Fe Trail	Linear	2,9,14	2,7,14	1
2011	Kleberg Trail	Linear	5,8	5,8	2
2012	Loris Lane Trailhead	Mini	4	4	3
2012	Northaven Trail	Linear	11	11	6
2012	Klyde Warren	Special (Downtown)	14	14	3
2013	Muchert Admin Facility	Special	10	10	6
2014	Singing Hills Annex	Community	8	8	3
2014	Lake Highlands Trail	Linear	10	10	6
2015	Kiestwood Trail	Linear	3	3	4
2015	White Rock Creek Trail	Linear	11	11	6
2016	Flag Pole Hill Trail	Linear	9,10	9,10	1
2016	SoPAC Trail	Linear	9,13	9,13	1,6
2016	Ridgewood Trail	Linear	9,14	9,14	1

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