

Fair Park Operations Model and Revitalization Strategy Update

**Parks, Trails, and the Environment
Committee
April 6, 2026**

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City of Dallas

Presentation Overview



- Purpose
- Background
- Accomplishments to Date
- Non-Traditional Revenue Opportunity at Fair Park
- Citywide Efforts to Revitalize Fair Park
- Next Steps



Purpose



- To provide City Council an update on Fair Park operations and accomplishments since assuming daily operations on September 16, 2025.
- Provide City Council an update on collaboration efforts with other City departments.



Background



- On November 7, 2024, the City provided Fair Park First (FPF) with written Notice of Default for failure to perform or comply with material terms, covenants, and conditions of the Agreement. These defaults were not cured.
- On June 18, 2025 the City of Dallas and the Park & Recreation Department (PKR) notified FPF the City has exercised our right to terminate the Agreement
- The termination also concludes FPF's sub-management agreement with the Oak View Group (OVG360), which has overseen daily operations at Fair Park since 2019.
- The termination was effective 90 days from issuance of notice
- PKR began management of daily operations on September 16, 2025.



Background



- On August 7, 2025, we provided a Transition Update to the Park Board, discussing
 - Operational impact: Development of new PKR division, staffing needs, and budget
 - Current conditions
 - Deferred maintenance
 - New management plan: 3-pronged approach
 - Update on the First 90 Days during transition



Background



- On October 27, 2025, we briefed the Park Board and on December 1, 2025, we briefed PTE Committee on Fair Park Operations Model and Revitalization Strategy, discussing
 - 5 Pillars for Fair Park
 1. Maximize the benefit of having successful campus partners
 2. Develop regularly-occurring community programs and events that include local and surrounding neighborhoods small business opportunities
 3. Aggressively pursue large scale campus activations
 4. Aggressively pursue development opportunities on the campus
 5. Develop and nurture non-profits to benefit and leverage resources for the campus and key facilities that may evolve into operating partners over time
- On December 1, 2025, the PTE Committee directed the Parks Department to return with an update on Fair Park operations and ongoing collaboration efforts with other City departments.



Background



Next Steps included:

Secure short-term key contracts	●
Initiate procurements for all long-term contracts	●
Sponsorship and Advertising revenue contract	●
Work with CAO for dedicated attorney for Fair Park	●
Review & modify, in necessary, all existing contracts at tenant facilities	●
Pursue & secure new tenants in vacant buildings	●
Finalize event surcharge implementation	●
Initiate development study led by Dallas Economic Development Corporation	●
Partner with City of Dallas Office of Economic Development to identify and secure park focused development deals for hotels, restaurants, and retail establishments to secure new funding streams for the park which may result in job opportunities for the surrounding neighborhoods	●

●	Completed
●	Initiated/In Progress
●	Not Started



FY26 Accomplishments – Facilities Maintenance



- Completed repairs to Esplanade Fountain, Twin Fountains, and Woofus
- Replaced chiller in African American Museum
- Replaced chiller in Automobile Building
- Replaced chiller in Visitors Center
- Completed major HVAC repairs at Hall of Religion
- Repaired and reclaimed previously unusable office space in Cattle Barn Offices to create sufficient operating space for facilities staff, including a workshop
- Extensive HVAC repairs in Centennial: retired aging gas fired inline heaters & decommissioned all faulty radiant heater loops; providing constant heat to the building for 20+ years
- Extensive HVAC repairs in Coliseum: rebuilt (2) 300-ton chillers that were filled with debris
- Reallocated one boiler from Automobile Building to Women's Museum to allow reheat for TBAAL operations
- Completed assessment of deferred maintenance list with contractor
- Established a preventative maintenance plan and schedule



FY26 Accomplishments – Facilities Maintenance



Before:



FY26 Accomplishments – Facilities Maintenance



After:



FY26 Accomplishments – Facilities Maintenance



Before: Temporary HVAC Units at Visitor's Center, Automobile Building, and non-operational HVAC unit at African American Museum; several other HVAC units with deferred maintenance issues & no signs of preventative maintenance work



FY26 Accomplishments – Facilities Maintenance



After: Automobile Building, Visitor's Center, AAM



FY26 Accomplishments – Grounds Maintenance



- Completed perimeter replanting at the Cotton Bowl Stadium following recent construction
- Installed a new specialized plant bed at the African American Museum (AAM) and replanted the high-visibility Entry Wagon Wheel
- Added a new plant bed at The Music Hall, removed dead trees, and raised the canopy of surrounding trees
- Finalized all fall plantings for Gates 3, 5, and 6, ensuring all main entries and display beds are visually optimized
- Coordinated with DWU to improve drainage along 1st Avenue, mitigating standing water and enhancing visitor safety
- Conducted a comprehensive clearing of all parking lots and remediated soil erosion at the Auto Building to maintain full ADA compliance
- Executed major irrigation system upgrade
- Updated all irrigation timers and centralized control for improved efficiency



FY26 Accomplishments – Grounds Maintenance



Fy 26 Accomplishments - Security



- Finalized agreement with Andy Frain to provide campuswide security services
 - Coverage includes overnight security and substantial increases to daily coverage compared to previous operator
 - Established weekly meetings to ensure communication of all campus activities, address issues, and reinforce expectations
- Finalizing implementation of 24/7 Software, an incident management system and response platform that tracks all reported incidents, reported times and response times. It maintains a detailed history of all incident records and provides real-time automated alerts and notifications. It also provides live access to all security cameras in Fair Park which will be monitored in our central command center.



FY26 Accomplishments – Administration & Events



- Adoption of Org Chart and transition from 7-person Transition Team
 - Onboarded 28 staff members, with 5 more scheduled by end of March
 - Fair Park org includes operating units for events, business operations, grounds maintenance, facilities maintenance, security, community programming and outreach, and Cotton Bowl stadium operations
- Budget development and benchmarking
- Secured key contracts for security, parking, food & beverage, custodial services, Cotton Bowl A/V services, and Visit Dallas
- Created operating procedures for work units
- Initiated or completed the assumption process for 13 contracts
Initiated procurement for Event Services contract
- Updated all Fair Park website material
- Launched digital marketing with newsletters and event campaigns
- Continued commitment to community outreach
- Finalized 26 event agreements after previous operator informed them of cancelations; finalized an additional 14 event agreements for FY26
- Reintroduced High School football the Cotton Bowl
- Launched weekly Farmers Market
- Finalized Fair Park Business Plan
- Established reoccurring meetings with key departments to collaborate on plans outside the gates
 - Transportation
 - Economic Development
 - City Manager's Office



FY26 Accomplishments – Administration & Events



Remainder of FY26



- Complete remaining contracts pending assumption
- Submit remaining RFP/RFCSPs to Procurement for formal bid
- Continue onboarding efforts to finalize staff
- Complete remaining critical HVAC repairs and fire panel replacements
- Continue negotiations for large events and festivals
- Update and refine operating policies and procedures
- Continue research and pursuit of development opportunities at Fair Park



Brooklyn Bridge Park



One of the 5 pillars for Fair Park is seeking non-traditional revenue opportunities for the campus



Pier 1 – garden bar



Pier 1 – cafe



Presenter Notes: 1/11/11
2025-07-29 14:46:43
Aerial view: 2022

Year Opened: **2010-2015 opening of Pier 1-6**

Land Area: **85 acres**

Attendance: **5 million visitors per year**

How is it funded/operated: **Managed by Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy.**

Operations are supported through a mix of revenue streams: concessions, parking, permits, events, and development of parcels within park site.

Park aerial view



Brooklyn Bridge Park – cont.



Pier 6 – dog-friendly patio at restaurant



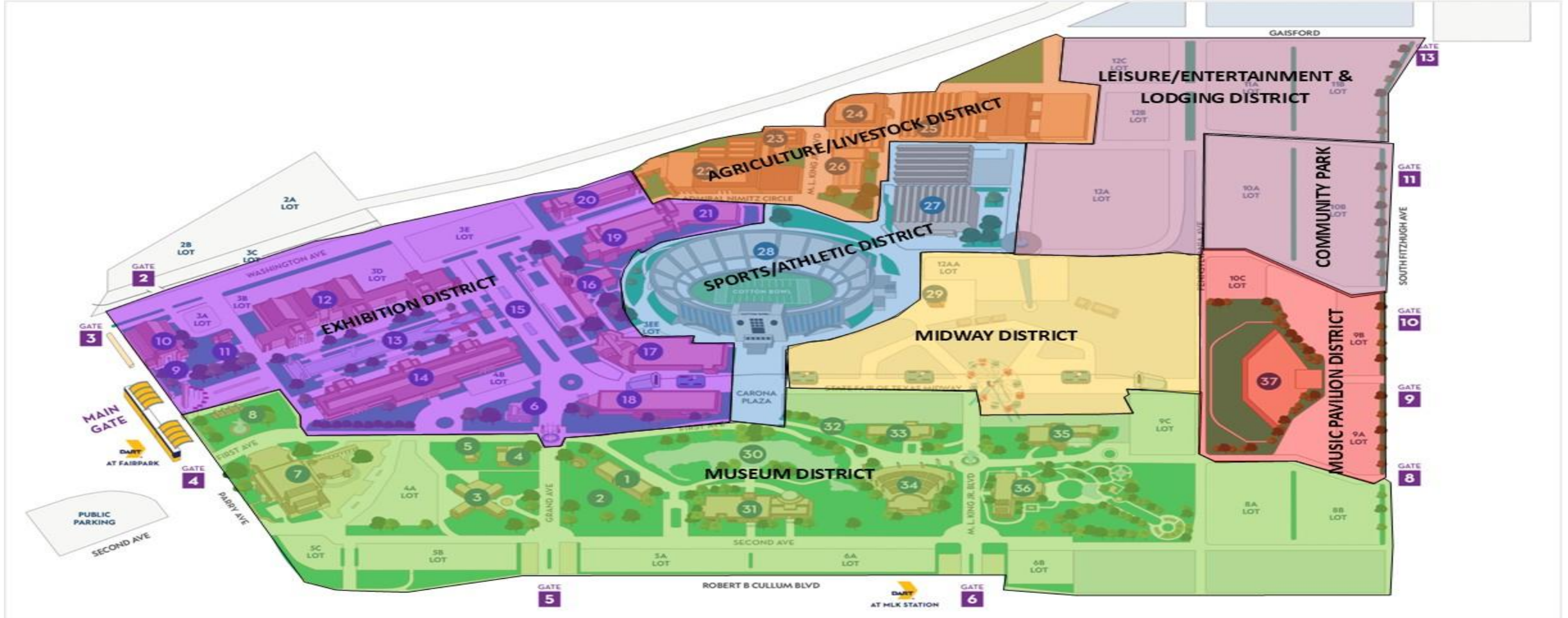
Pier 5 – ice cream store



Pier 1 - 1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge



Fair Park Districts



Non-Traditional Revenue Opportunity at Fair Park



- There is significant development interest at Fair Park
- Appropriate development could include hotel, structured parking, retail/restaurant, sports venues and multipurpose entertainment facilities
- Pursuing an entertainment, leisure and lodging development opportunity could yield significant revenue to the park through a lease payment or other similar mechanism and bring significant activation and attendance to a portion of the park that is largely unused most of the year
- Pursuing an appropriate development could also deliver an operator for the new community park



Non-Traditional Revenue Opportunity at Fair Park



- To fully explore the potential financial and activation benefits that a privately led development could deliver to the Fair Park campus, staff intends to partner with real estate experts and to seek proposals to maximize the “Leisure, Entertainment & Lodging District”
- Any proposal must include the following:
 - Revenue to the park that would mostly or fully fund all park and facility maintenance and operations
 - Be in alignment with existing uses at the park (compliment not contrast)
 - Comply with all existing Fair Park historic and preservation requirements
 - Report on benefits observed in local hiring, workforce development, and economic benefit in the community



Next Steps



- Conduct due diligence on entertainment/leisure/lodging district with preparation of fields notes and ESA
- Begin seeking proposals from interested developers



Collaboration Efforts – Public Safety



Encampment Abatement & Public Safety

- Cleared areas maintained & rapid response to new encampments
- Ongoing outreach and services offered but frequently refused
- Active monitoring of key locations (MLK DART, Jeffries, Al Lipscomb Way)

Cross-Department Coordination

- Strong alignment across EMCR, DPD, Code, partners
- Consistent communication and early issue intervention

Crime Deterrence & Enforcement

- Sustained patrol presence and targeted operations
- Deployment adjusted based on crime trends
- Continued proactive and undercover enforcement

Code Compliance & Nuisance Abatement

- Ongoing inspections and follow-up
- Focus on sustained compliance vs. reactive enforcement
- Coordination on repeat problem properties

Community Engagement

- Active communication with residents
- Participation in 3 community meetings (Q1 2026)



Collaboration Efforts – Transportation and Public Works (TPW)



TPW Fair Park Area Key Initiatives include:

- **Improve pedestrian safety and multimodal access** - NCTCOG CBD Fair Park Links Study recommends closure of Gate 3 and reconfiguration of adjacent intersections.
- **Traffic Signals** at MLK Blvd. and Robert B. Cullum Blvd. as part of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HISP).
 - TxDOT is lead on project procurement/construction.
- **Crosswalk improvements** at Fitzhugh Ave. and J.B. Jackson Blvd.



Collaboration Efforts – Office of Economic Development (OED)



- Coordinating with TPW and DWU to initiate an infrastructure needs assessment (i.e. water, wastewater, stormwater, paving, and transportation) to support transit-oriented development (TOD) in the MLK Station area (generally ½ radius from the MLK Station)
- Encouraging DART to identify and prioritize the DART-owned property at MLK Station for future private TOD and issue Request for Proposals (RFP)



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