

Memorandum



DATE December 1, 2025

CITY OF DALLAS

TO Honorable Chair and members of the Parks, Trails, and Environment Committee

SUBJECT **Agenda Item 25-3277A Comprehensive and Strategic Park and Recreation Plan Update**

The Park and Recreation Department (PKR) is excited to bring forward a service contract for the provision of a strategic and comprehensive plan for your consideration. This plan will provide a long-term planning and strategic documents that will guide the development, management, and maintenance of the Dallas Park system, ensuring it meets the needs of the community now and in the future. The central focus of the plan will be to see the department on a path towards financial sustainability.

Previous comprehensive plans included the 2002 Renaissance Plan which was instrumental in helping the department recover from years of disinvestment by developing a needs inventory and the establishment of many ongoing partnerships; and the 2016 Comprehensive Plan which ushered in a new era of development and resulted in the Parkland Dedication Ordinance, the adoption of a park access standard (increase from 58% to 81% of residents in a 10 minute walk to a park), and the increased focus on safety and security. With the strategies and initiatives identified in those largely completed, a new plan is essential to move PKR in the direction of achieving financial sustainability as well as providing services that meet the current and future needs of the community and contribute to retaining and attracting residents and visitors to the City of Dallas. The new plan will also position the city for future grant applications and maintain national accreditation.

Scope of Work Highlights:

- Exploration and recommendations around non-traditional park use on park land including mixed-use and/or other economic development that fosters a sense of community, long-term ground lease, and other uses that would return value to the department or off-set operational costs
- Exploration of the next generation of partnerships including public-private and shared operations
- Analysis of current programs and services to include recommendations and rationale for the establishment of new program offerings, outsourcing of programs, and delivery of programs via partnerships with other providers
- Space and utilization analysis of all facilities with recommendations to meet future programming needs including technology, virtual participation, and eGaming

- Financial management and strategy analysis including an analysis of all fees and charges, cost recovery goals and strategies by program, and recommendations for subsidy levels of all services offered
- Opportunities for monetization of department physical assets for the benefit of the park system outside of traditional sponsorships

We would also like to provide background information regarding the most advantageous proposer, Berry Dunn, McNeil & Parker, LLC., dba Berry Dunn. Berry Dunn is an established leader in comprehensive and strategic planning for park and recreation agencies across the country, including the City of Denver, CO, Maryland National Capital Park Planning Commission, City of Raleigh, NC, Mesa, AZ, and DeKalb County, GA, as well as over 50 relevant projects with agencies in Texas. Berry Dunn has deep industry expertise in parks and recreation, built on decades of experience in master planning, strategic planning, needs analysis, financial analysis, cost recovery, and quality assessments. They have proposed a comprehensive and inclusive strategy with a strong community engagement component and have assembled a team tailored to achieving the outcomes defined in the RFP.

Leading the team will be Jason Genck MBA, CPRP, senior manager and leader of Berry Dunn's Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Practice. He has nearly 30 years of experience in the parks and recreation industry and is a sought-after thought leader in this space. He has led large, municipal parks and recreation departments and special districts including a three-time recipient of the NRPA Gold Medal Award in Westminster CO. Berry Dunn will round out the team with over a dozen additional experienced staff and sub-contracting partners.

The anticipated schedule for the plan is twelve months and will include the following phases:

1. Discovery – to include identification of stakeholders, outlining of expectation, development of the project work plan, kickoff presentation, and data review
2. Engagement – creation of a detailed engagement strategy, development of a project brand, development of a project website and engagement portal, meetings with key stakeholders (including board members), public input sessions, and a statistically valid survey
3. Analysis – to include a facility inventory and conditions analysis and level of service analysis, transportation and mobile data analysis, facilities assessment demographic analysis and population projections, trends and benchmarking analysis, an analysis of the organization including financial and funding

- resources, program and services analysis, partnership assessment, and long-range capital improvement plan
4. Visioning – includes conducting a Park Board and City Council workshop as a midpoint review, visioning workshops, development of goals, objectives, and an action plan, and the development of a tracking tool
 5. Finalization – include the draft and final versions of both the strategic and comprehensive plans as well as a review session and final presentation

We look forward to working with them to achieve a goal-oriented, data-driven plan, that will move the department into the future. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ryan O'Connor, Deputy Director.

Sincerely,



John D. Jenkins
Director, Dallas Park and Recreation

c: Crystal Ross, Senior Deputy Director
Ryan O'Connor, Deputy Director
M. Renee Johnson, Deputy Director