



# CHAPTER 03

---

## Snapshot of Today

---

### CONTENTS

- **Snapshot of Fort Worth**
- **Demographic Snapshot of Fort Worth**
- **Park & Recreation Department (PARD) Structure & Responsibilities**
- **The Park And Recreation System Today**
- **Citywide Park, Recreation and Public Realm System Assessment Summary**
- **Key Findings and Common Themes**
- **Next Steps: From Assessment to Action**











# Snapshot of Fort Worth

Fort Worth is a city in motion—one of the fastest-growing urban centers in the country, and evolving at an unprecedented pace. As the city expands, so does the need for a dynamic, accessible, and well-maintained parks and recreation system that serves all residents equitably. This chapter provides a comprehensive snapshot of Fort Worth’s current park system, examining its strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth. By understanding where Fort Worth stands today, it is possible to develop a strategic and sustainable plan for the future—one that ensures every community has access to quality parks, green spaces, and recreational opportunities.

This chapter is structured to provide a data-driven foundation for decision-making:

**Demographic Snapshot of Fort Worth** – Explores the city’s rapid population growth, shifting age demographics, increasing diversity, and evolving economic conditions. These trends directly influence park demand, service expectations, and funding priorities.

**Park & Recreation Department (PARD) Structure & Responsibilities** – Outlines how the city’s parks are managed, maintained, and programmed, highlighting PARD’s role in creating a high-functioning, community-driven park system.

**The Park and Recreation System Today** – Provides a quantitative and qualitative analysis of Fort Worth’s park inventory, including parkland acreage, facilities, and service levels compared to national benchmarks and peer cities.



Skyline View of Fort Worth and the Trinity River

**Citywide Park, Recreation, and Public Realm System Assessment Summary** – Evaluates how well the current system meets community needs through five key lenses:

- Standard-Based Assessment
- Demand-Based Assessment
- Resource-Based Assessment
- Equity-Based Assessment
- Access-Based Assessment

**Key Findings and Common Themes** – Summarizes the critical takeaways that will shape Fort Worth’s future parks strategy, including the need for expanded parkland, improved connectivity, enhanced maintenance, diversified programming, and greater equity in resource distribution.

For a detailed analysis, including data, maps, and level of service assessment, please refer to **Appendix C** of this report.



# Demographic Snapshot of Fort Worth

To understand the foundation of the GREENprint Fort Worth, it's important to examine the City's demographics and trends. Fort Worth as one of the fastest-growing cities in the United States, with a 25.7% population increase from 2010 to 2021, making it the 12th largest city in the country.

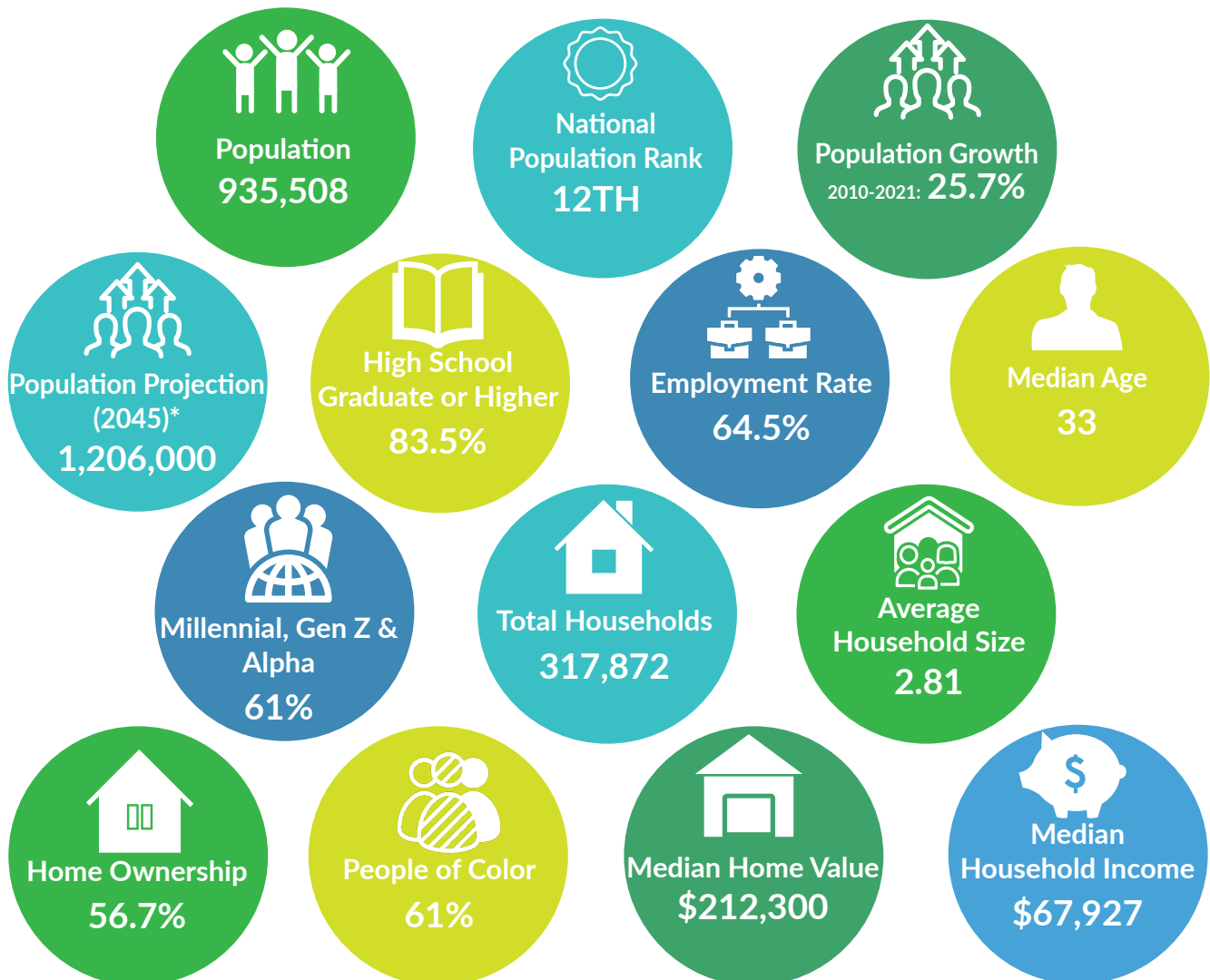
Key demographic highlights:

- **Rapid population growth:** Based on North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) data, Fort Worth's population grew 25.7% from 2010 to 2021 and is projected to reach 1.2

million by 2045 (a 28% increase).

- **Young population:** Median age is 33 years, with 61% in Millennial, Gen Z, and Alpha generations.
- **Economic growth:** Median household income is \$67,927, and median home values rose from \$147,900 (2010) to \$212,300 (2021).
- **Diverse community:** 61% of residents are people of color.

These factors shape the city's evolving park and recreation needs, guiding future investments. For more details, please refer to Appendix C.



Fort Worth at a Glance, Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021 5-Year Estimates; \*NCTCOG 2045 Population Projection



# Park & Recreation Department (PARD)

## Structure & Responsibilities

With approximately 455 full-time employees, the Fort Worth Park & Recreation Department (PARD) is the City's third-largest department. PARD's mission is to "enrich the lives of our citizens through the stewardship of our resources and the responsive provision of quality recreational opportunities and community services<sup>1</sup>." PARD manages an extensive system that includes acres of parkland, miles of trails, athletic fields, golf courses, special use facilities and community centers.

Additionally, it partners with the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) and the Fort Worth Zoological Association to manage the Fort Worth Botanic Garden and the Fort Worth Zoo. Beyond parks, PARD maintains landscaping at rights-of-way, medians, alleys, and city facilities like libraries and police stations. It also runs the Graffiti Abatement Program and the FW@6 Late Night initiative.

PARD is organized into five divisions, each with distinct responsibilities:

- **Park Operations:** Maintains parks, public spaces, and mows city-owned properties, including medians and rights-of-way. They also manages park reservations and the Graffiti Abatement Program.
- **Planning & Resource Management:** Leads planning, policies, land acquisition, project coordination and implementation, asset inventory, infrastructure maintenance, forestry services, and the protection of parkland to ensure public safety and sustainable growth of parks and green spaces.
- **Administration:** Manages finances, human resources, volunteers, equipment, and the Fort Worth Zoo contract.
- **Recreation:** Operates community centers, pools, the Log Cabin Village, the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge, and programs like FW@6 Late Night initiative, summer camps and after-school activities.



- **Golf & Athletics:** Oversees sports facilities, municipal golf courses, and youth/adult athletic programs.

Community engagement is integral to PARD's service delivery, with public input shaping master planning, capital improvement plans, and recreation programming. The Park and Recreation Advisory Board provides resident-informed recommendations to the City Manager and City Council on service improvements, budget priorities, and facility development.

Despite its critical role and broad responsibilities, PARD's current staffing levels are insufficient to effectively manage and maintain its existing assets at a high standard. As Fort Worth continues to grow and the city pursues an ambitious new vision for parks and recreation, additional resources and staffing will be essential to ensure PARD can meet current needs and future demands, delivering the high-quality services and experiences that residents expect.

1. City of Fort Worth Park and Recreation Department. (2024). Mission Statement.



# The Park & Recreation System Today

## Park Inventory

The City of Fort Worth boasts a diverse and expansive park and recreation system. As of 2023, Fort Worth’s green infrastructure encompasses 297 parks spanning 12,893 acres and 210 miles of trails, playing a crucial role in shaping the city’s identity and supporting its growth. The park system is categorized into three main types:

**Neighborhood-Based Parks:** Includes Urban Parks, Pocket Parks, and Neighborhood Parks, offering playgrounds, picnic areas, and green spaces for local recreation, relaxation, and small gatherings.

**Community-Based Parks:** Includes Community Parks and Metropolitan Parks, serving multiple neighborhoods with sports facilities, event spaces, and preserved natural areas for both active and passive recreation.

**Specialty Parks** include Special Use Parks (zoo, golf courses, botanic gardens), Greenbelts (natural corridors connecting parks), and Conservancy Areas (protected lands for wildlife and nature study).

In addition to these categories, Fort Worth benefits from non-PARD parks and green spaces, which complement the city’s park system. Two of the most significant contributors are Homeowners Association (HOA) parks and Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) parks. The City also partners with the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) to provide public access to school land for park and recreational use, further expanding community access to green space.

The city’s extensive trail system spans 210 miles of trail. Many of these trails follow the Trinity River and its tributaries, offering valuable opportunities for recreation, mobility, and environmental connection.

Despite the scale and variety of Fort Worth’s park system, many of these assets are not functioning at their full potential. Maintenance challenges, gaps in connectivity, and a lack of strategic investment and vision have left parks, trails, and green spaces underutilized and struggling to meet community needs.



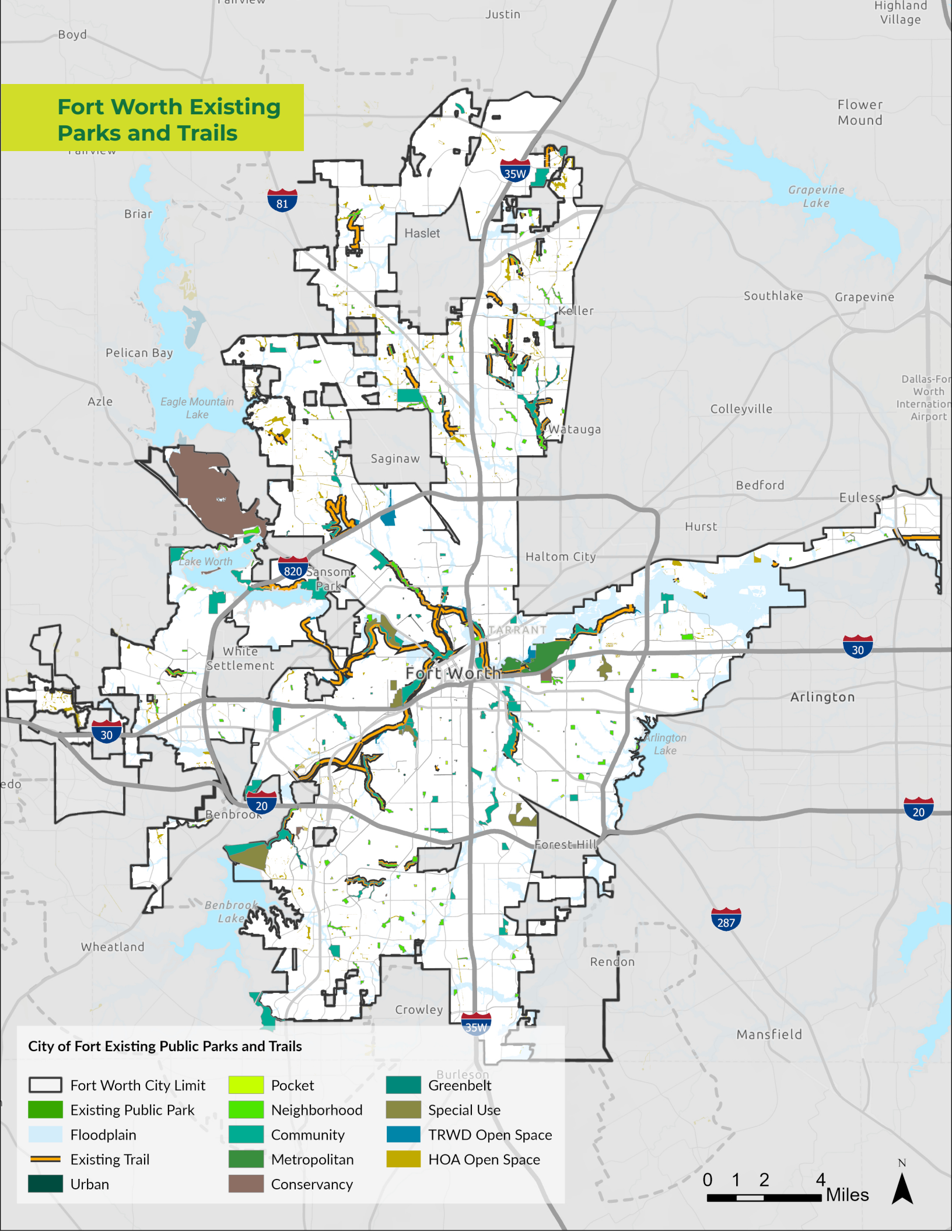
Rockwood Park



\* All numbers are based on PARD’s 2023 park inventory data



# Fort Worth Existing Parks and Trails





The trail network, while designed to connect neighborhoods and natural areas, remains fragmented and inconsistent, limiting its effectiveness as a true recreational and transportation resource. Similarly, many parks lack programming, upkeep, and accessibility needed to fully serve the city's growing population.

Without bold action and targeted improvements, these valuable assets will continue to fall short of their potential, hindering Fort Worth's ability to compete with other cities that are modernizing and expanding their public spaces. **Fort Worth must act now to elevate its park system.**

## Facilities

Fort Worth's park and recreation system are home to a wide variety of recreational amenities, including but not limited to baseball and softball fields, soccer fields, basketball and volleyball courts, tennis/pickleball courts, community centers, dog parks, and skate parks among others. These amenities provide residents with opportunities to engage in sports, fitness, and leisure activities, while the city's community centers serve as hubs for programs and services.

## Programs

In addition to its extensive park facilities, PARD offers a variety of recreational programming to residents, primarily through its community centers. These programs range from youth activities and fitness classes to arts and educational workshops. The city also provides mobile recreation programs and summer camps that offer outdoor recreational experiences, bringing activities directly to different neighborhoods and engaging a wider audience.

However, most programming still takes place indoors, with limited outdoor activities in parks. This creates an equity gap in accessibility and misses the opportunity to fully activate Fort Worth's parks as vibrant community spaces. Nationally, institutions like libraries, museums, and performing arts centers are expanding programs outdoors to reach broader audiences and foster deeper community connections. Fort Worth's parks have the same potential. Expanding outdoor programming can build on existing efforts, making parks more inclusive, engaging, and dynamic to serve the full diversity of nearby communities.



Victory Forest Community Center

### Fort Worth Recreation Facilities by the Numbers:



\* All numbers are based on PARD's 2023 park inventory data



Fire Station Skate Park

## Park Planning Districts

To effectively manage and enhance Fort Worth’s park system, PARD established five Park Planning Districts (PPDs). Unlike City Council Districts, which serve political functions, PPDs are designed solely for strategic park planning and equitable service delivery. These districts help prioritize funding, guide parkland acquisition, and ensure balanced investment across the city.

Each district is defined by physical characteristics—including major roadways, rivers, topography, and population density. This data-driven approach allows PARD to identify challenges, unlock opportunities, and develop targeted solutions that directly address community needs.

However, despite these districts, an analysis of park distribution reveals critical gaps in access and availability, highlighting the need for bold, strategic action:

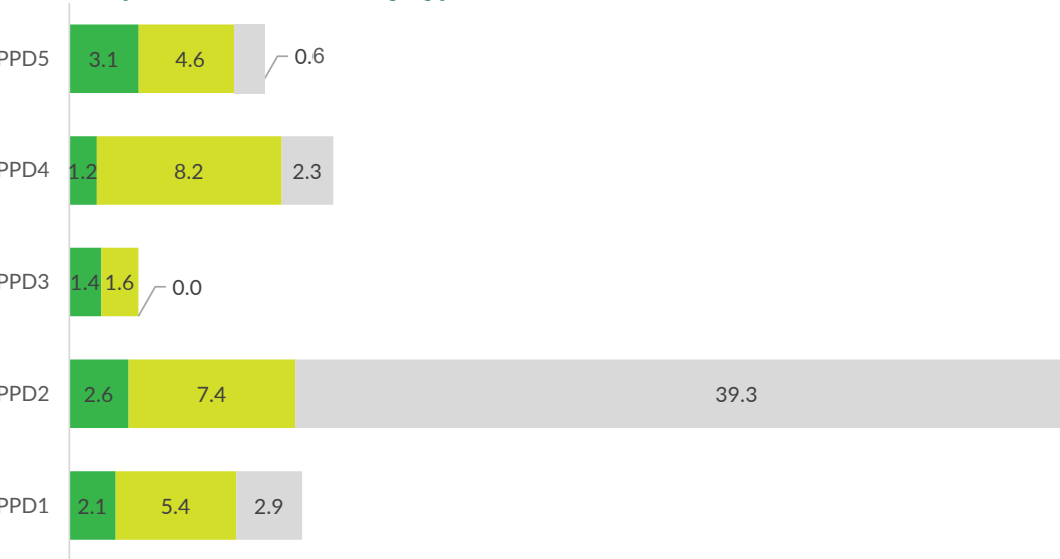
- PPD 3 is the most underserved and must be prioritized for new parkland acquisition and expanded neighborhood-based parks.
- PPD 2, while rich in parkland, is dominated by Special Use Parks, which do not fully meet daily recreational needs. A better balance of Neighborhood and Community-Based Parks will improve accessibility.
- PPD 5 and PPD 1 have low parkland per capita, requiring targeted investments to ensure growing communities have adequate park access.
- PPD 4 has the highest population, meaning that even with moderate parkland per capita, demand will continue to increase, necessitating expanded amenities and new park spaces.

The chart highlights variations in parkland availability across park planning districts. GREENprint Fort Worth plays a critical role in closing the gaps by providing district-specific recommendations to ensure equitable access, improved connectivity, and strategic investments in parks and recreation.

PPDs at a Glance				
District	Population (2023)*	Total Park Acreage	Acreage Per 1,000 Residents	Key Challenges
PPD 1	169,511	1756.03	10.36	Neighborhood park shortages and limited connectivity to parks
PPD 2	93,963	4639.69	49.38	Uneven distribution of parks and lack of neighborhood-based parks
PPD 3	72,425	222.8	3.08	Significant park shortage and aging infrastructure
PPD 4	398,928	4689.85	11.76	Highest population density and limited land for new parks
PPD 5	181,095	1507.05	8.32	Low parkland per capita and rapid population growth

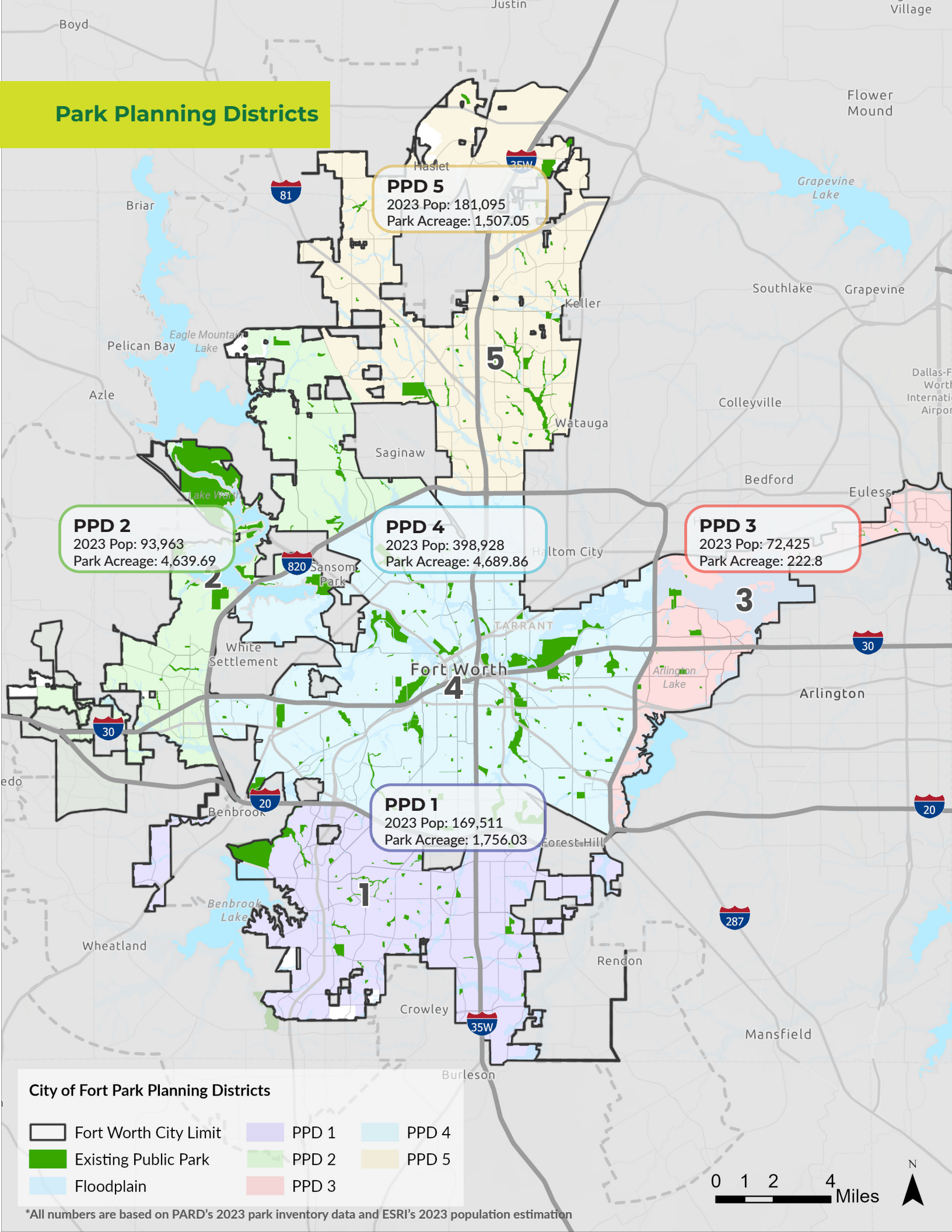
\*All numbers are based on PARD’s 2023 park inventory data and ESRI’s 2023 population estimation

Parkland per 1,000 Residents by Type and District: ■ Neighborhood-Based Parks ■ Community-Based Parks ■ Special Use Parks





# Park Planning Districts



## City of Fort Park Planning Districts

- Fort Worth City Limit
- Existing Public Park
- Floodplain
- PPD 1
- PPD 2
- PPD 3
- PPD 4
- PPD 5

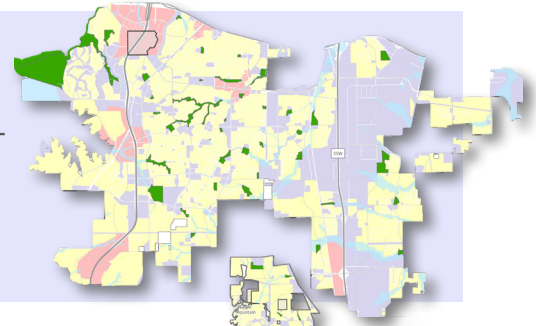


\*All numbers are based on PARD's 2023 park inventory data and ESRI's 2023 population estimation

## Park Planning Districts: Challenges and Opportunities

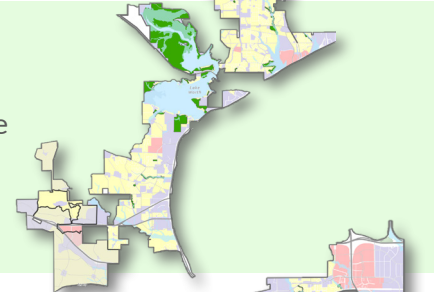
### PPD 1

Located south of I-20, PPD 1 is a diverse district with growing residential areas. While community parks are adequate, neighborhood-based parks are underrepresented, especially west of I-35. Improving park access, expanding trails, and addressing connectivity gaps will enhance recreational opportunities and equity.



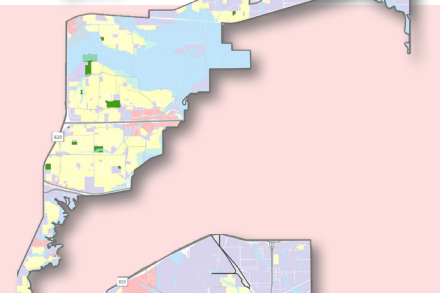
### PPD 2

PPD 2 is Fort Worth's fastest-growing district, located west of Loop 820, anchored by the 3,650-acre Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge. Despite its size, there are gaps in smaller neighborhood parks, limiting equitable access. Enhancing trails and ecological corridors such as Mary's Creek and Lake Worth will support connectivity, flood control, and recreation.



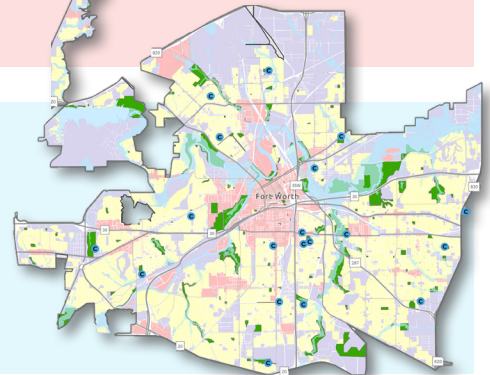
### PPD 3

PPD 3, east of Loop 820, has a marginalized and diverse population and faces significant gaps in neighborhood parks and aging infrastructure. The West Fork Trinity River corridor provides an opportunity for improving park connectivity, expanding green space, and enhancing conservation efforts.



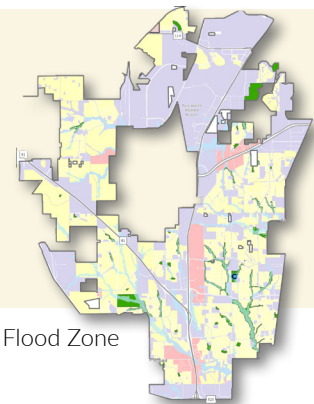
### PPD 4

As Fort Worth's urban core, PPD 4 has the highest population and park count, along with attractive destinations, but struggles with aging infrastructure and limited land for new parks. Innovative land-use strategies will be key to supporting future growth.



### PPD 5

PPD 5, located north of Loop 820, is a relatively new area experiencing rapid growth. The district faces significant gaps in neighborhood-based park acreage, and many recreational spaces are privately owned by HOAs, limiting public access. The district presents opportunities to expand public parks and recreational facilities to better serve the growing population.



Legend: ■ Parks ■ Residential ■ Mixed-Use ■ Commercial/Industrial ■ Flood Zone

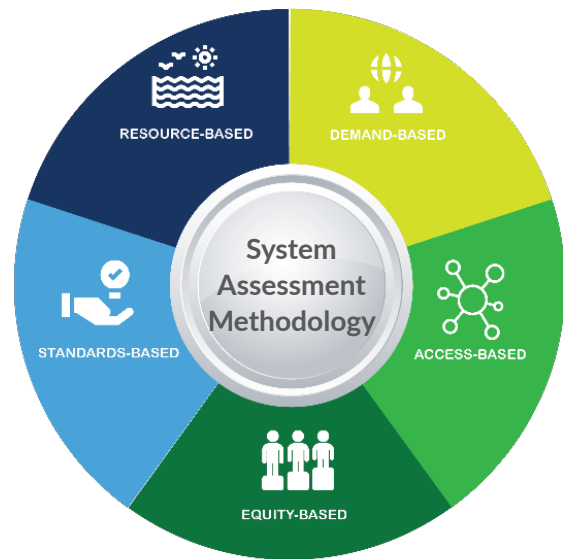


# Citywide Park, Recreation, and Public Realm System Assessment Summary

The System Assessment provides a comprehensive analysis of the current park and recreation system, offering insights into how well it meets the needs of the community. This assessment serves as a foundation for shaping the plan's vision, goals, and recommendations by identifying gaps, opportunities, and areas for improvement. In addition to evaluating traditional parks, this plan takes a broader approach by considering the entire public realm, incorporating main streets, plazas, and urban public spaces into the park system. The goal is to weave these spaces together into a cohesive, connected network that functions as a unified system of green and public spaces, enhancing the city's livability and accessibility. The assessment includes five key components:

- **Standard-Based Assessment:** Benchmarks the system against national standards set by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Trust for Public Land (TPL), and peer cities.
- **Demand-Based Assessment:** Captures input from residents through extensive community engagement, including in-person and online surveys, stakeholder sessions, technical and steering committees, and City Council workshops.
- **Resource-Based Assessment:** Identifies existing public and private resources that supplement the City's park and recreation offerings.
- **Equity-Based Assessment:** Evaluates the fair distribution of parks and resources, considering socioeconomic disparities, environmental conditions, and community health to ensure parks are accessible to all.
- **Access-Based Assessment:** Focuses on physical access to parks, emphasizing Close-to-Home Parks and the 10-minute walk standard to ensure residents have convenient access to green spaces.

This multi-faceted approach highlights where Fort Worth's park and recreation system stands today and defines where the greatest needs lie, setting the stage



for actionable strategies in the plan's next steps. For the full report and detailed findings, refer to Appendix C of this report.

## Standard-Based Assessment

As part of the standard-based assessment, Fort Worth's current standards were compared to national benchmarks established by NRPA, TPL, and peer cities such as Austin, Charlotte, Denver, and Seattle. As of the 2023 inventory, Fort Worth provides 13.7 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which falls below the NRPA benchmark of 17.4 acres per 1,000 residents and the peer city average of 18.5 acres. To meet the target Level of Service (LOS) and accommodate future growth, the GREENprint Fort Worth sets a goal of 18.5 acres per 1,000 residents, requiring significant parkland expansion—4,413 additional acres today, 6,385 acres by 2030, and 9,417 acres by 2045.

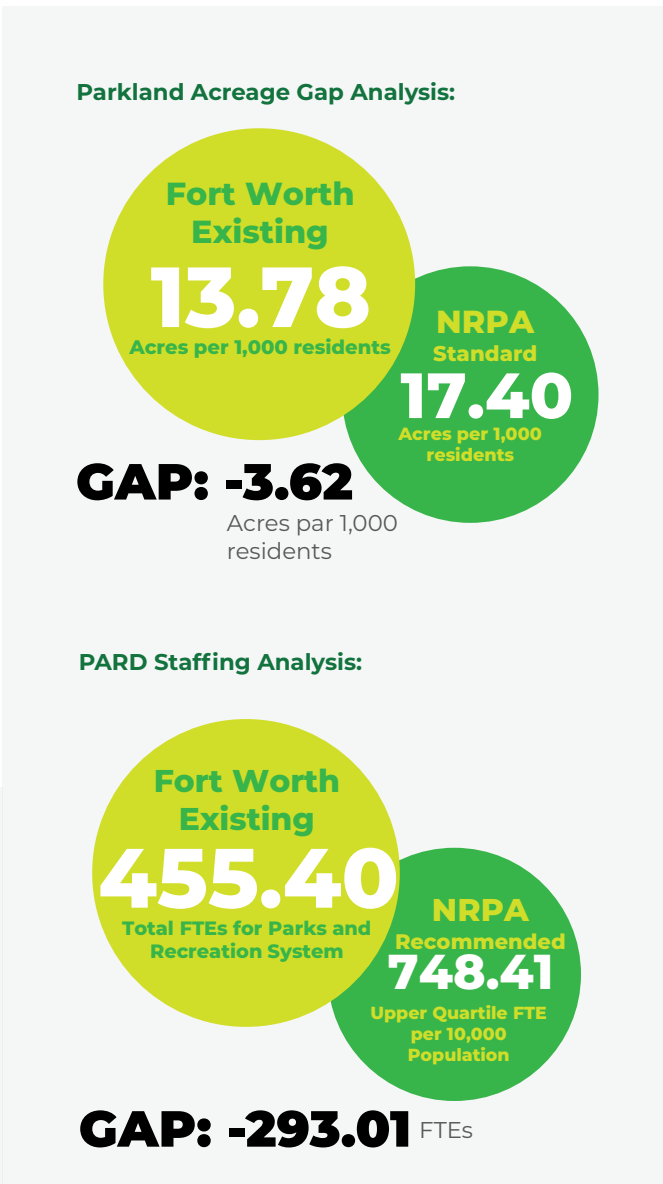
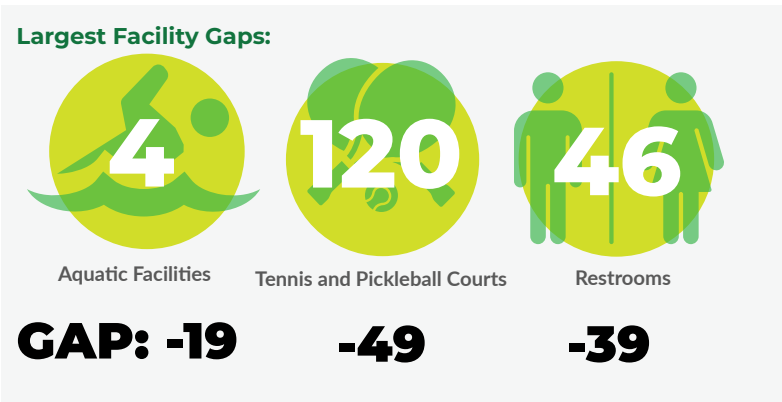
Fort Worth's 455 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) provide staffing levels well below the NRPA's upper quartile standard of 8.0 FTEs per 10,000 residents, with the city currently at 4.87 FTEs per 10,000 residents. This places Fort Worth at the lower end of staffing compared to peer cities like Denver and Austin. While the department's FY2023 budget of \$61.87 million appears to align with NRPA



standards, it does not fully account for the additional responsibility of maintaining right-of-way landscapes—an expense not typically covered by park agencies in other cities. When adjusted for this factor, Fort Worth’s funding falls below that of its peers, limiting the department’s capacity to meet service demands and support future growth.

As part of the Standard-Based Assessment, Fort Worth’s recreational facilities were also evaluated against benchmarks from the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review and peer cities. The city meets or exceeds NRPA standards in several categories, including playgrounds, basketball courts, skate parks, soccer fields, and community centers. However, significant gaps remain in aquatic facilities, with limited outdoor or indoor pools. Many parks lack permanent restrooms, shade structures and high-demand amenities like pickleball courts and splashpads to enhance recreational opportunities.

Resource-Based Assessment



Benchmark Analysis*								
City	Existing Parkland Acreage	Existing Number of Parks	Population**	Parkland Acreage Per 1,000 Residents	Residents Per Park	Miles of Trails	Operating Expenditures Budget - FY23-24	Number of FTEs
Nashville, TN	26,199	243	683,622	38.3	2,813.2	390.4	\$66,970,000	707.5
Charlotte, NC	22,656	383	897,720	25.2	2,343.9	270	\$59,163,552	436
Austin, TX	17,343	494	947,447	18.3	1,917.9	265	\$136,085,770	808
Columbus, OH	14,069	554	907,971	15.5	1,638.9	230	\$65,215,636	415
Denver, CO	7,028	366	713,252	9.8	1,948.7	120	\$178,464,669	600.2
Seattle, WA	6,441	382	749,256	8.6	1,961.4	80	\$226,031,235	1,117.9
Peer Cities Average	15,233.7	388.4	NA	18.5	2,253.4	223.6	113,400,196	648.6
Fort Worth, TX	12,893	297	935,508	13.7	3,149.8	210	\$61,870,514	455.4
NRPA Upper Quartile	NA	NA	Cities with pop 250,000+	17.4	5,791	176	\$53,898,865	533

\* This is based on the 2023 inventory for all cities, Source: Trust for Public Land, 2023 ParkScore Rankings (<https://www.tpl.org/parkscore>)  
\*\*Source: US Census, Quick Facts, Population Estimates, July 1, 2022 (V2022)



## Demand-Based Assessment

Robust community engagement is a cornerstone of the GREENprint Fort Worth Plan. Through a series of events, surveys, interviews, and activities, the community voiced both strengths and challenges within the current park system, while also presenting valuable opportunities for improvement and growth. From highlighting the department's responsiveness

to community desires to addressing critical concerns such as funding allocation and accessibility, the key findings present a holistic view of the community's vision for Fort Worth's parks and recreation. This summary encapsulates the essence of the community feedback, providing insights that will inform the strategic direction of the GREENprint Fort Worth.

### Community Engagement Common Themes:

#### Accessibility & Connectivity

-  Access to Quality Parks
-  Increase Connectivity
-  Trails, Greenbelts Creeks
-  Equal Public Access

#### Communication & Transparency

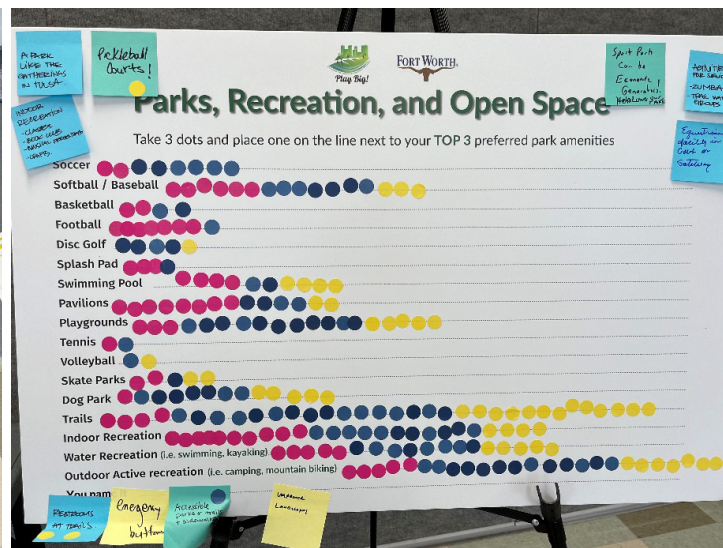
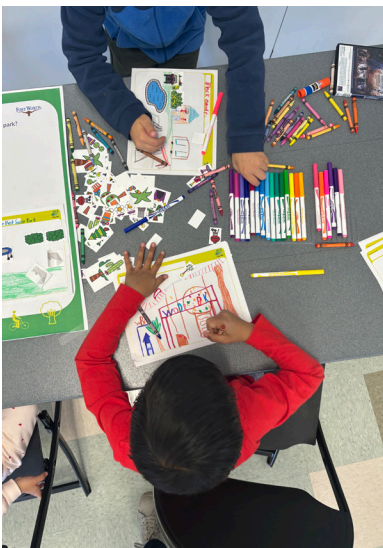
-  Marketing and Outreach
-  Foster Collaboration
-  Better Partnerships
-  Equal Distribution of Resources

#### Facilities & Amenities

-  Aquatic Amenities
-  Improve Facilities
-  Safety, restrooms shade, lighting
-  Better Maintenance

#### Programs & Activities

-  Multigenerational Programming
-  Outdoor Events
-  Community-Based Services
-  Educational Opportunities





Fort Worth is home to diverse and valuable natural and built resources that shape its identity and provide rich recreational opportunities. The Trinity River and Creek System, with over 210 miles of multi-modal trails, offers fishing, boating, kayaking, and equestrian routes. The Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge, spanning 3,667 acres, preserves the city's natural heritage, while the Fort Worth Botanic Garden, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, serves as a cultural and educational landmark.

Urban destinations further enrich Fort Worth's recreation landscape. Sundance Square Plaza, a 37-block walkable district, is a privately owned and managed public space that blends retail, dining, and entertainment, representing a successful example of a public-private partnership. Meanwhile, the Fort Worth Stockyards and Log Cabin Village celebrate the city's Western heritage, attracting visitors with cattle drives and cultural events. Marine Creek Reservoir, Lake Worth, Eagle Mountain Lake, Lake Arlington, and Benbrook Lake provide opportunities for fishing, kayaking, and waterfront activities.

However, despite these valuable assets, most remain untapped, disconnected, and underutilized. Highways, railroads, and geographic barriers restrict access, while the lack of strategic connections, coordinated investments, and targeted programming prevents these spaces from working together as a unified system that maximizes their potential. To truly elevate its park and recreation network, Fort Worth must move beyond isolated assets and build a fully integrated system that enhances quality of life, expands access, and strengthens the city's sustainability.

GREENprint Fort Worth provides the strategic direction needed to:

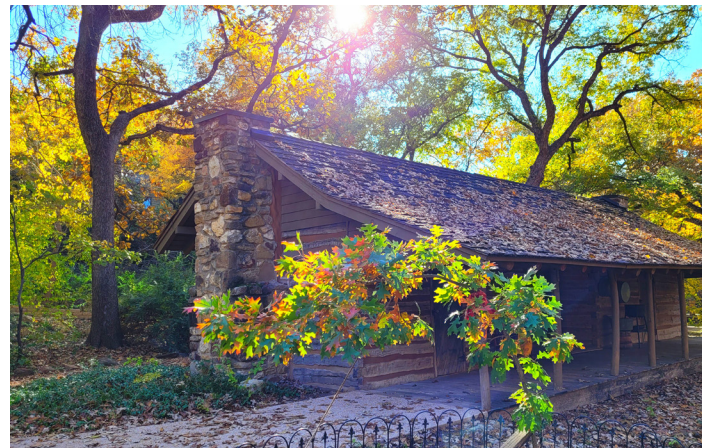
- Connect parks, trails, and recreation spaces into a seamless system.
- Break down barriers to access, ensuring all residents can enjoy Fort Worth's natural and urban resources.
- Leverage underutilized assets, activating them with programming, infrastructure, and investment.



Panther Island and Trinity River



Sundance Square Plaza



Log Cabin Village



Historic Fort Worth Stockyard



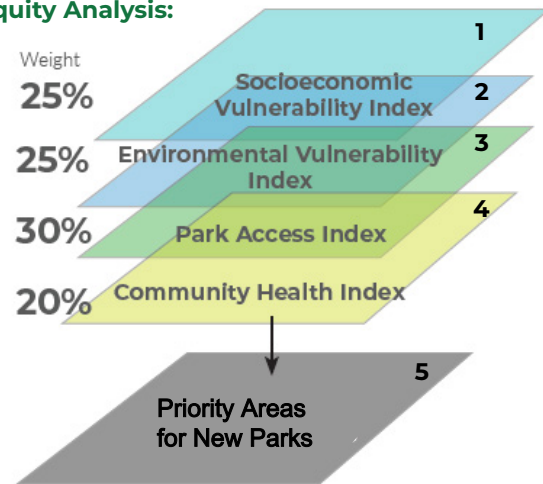
## Equity-Based Assessment

Equity-Based Assessment shows the disparities in park access across Fort Worth, highlighting the need for more equitable distribution of green spaces. According to data from the Trust for Public Land (2023), residents in neighborhoods of color have access to 13% less park space, while lower-income neighborhoods have 25% less park space than wealthier areas. To address these gaps, an equity-based tool was developed to evaluate socioeconomic vulnerability, environmental risks, community health disparities, and park access using 41 contributing factors. These factors were combined into four key indices—Socioeconomic Vulnerability, Environmental Vulnerability, Community Health, and Park Access—and mapped to identify Areas of Greater Need for Parks and Public Spaces.

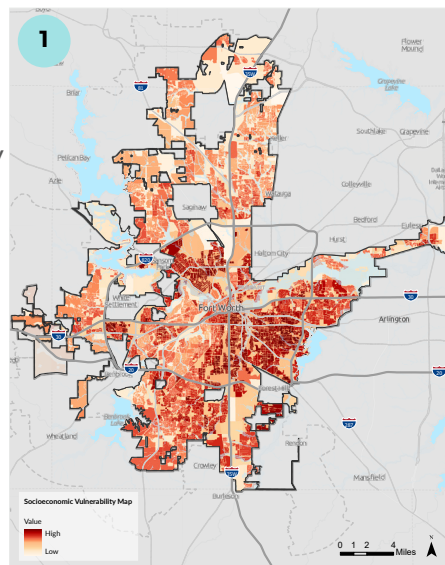
## Access-Based Assessment

Access-Based Assessment shows that only 62% of Fort Worth residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, ranking the city 88th among the 100 largest U.S. cities for park access, according to the Trust for Public Land's (TPL) ParkScore. This assessment uses the 10-minute walk metric—equivalent to a half-mile distance—to evaluate pedestrian and bicycle access to parks, emphasizing the importance of creating connected and accessible green spaces. The Park Access Index identifies gaps by analyzing proximity to parks, sidewalk and trail availability, road barriers, and demographic factors such as low-income households and youth populations. This data-driven analysis highlights key areas where new parks, trails, and infrastructure improvements are needed to promote equitable access and create healthier, more active communities.

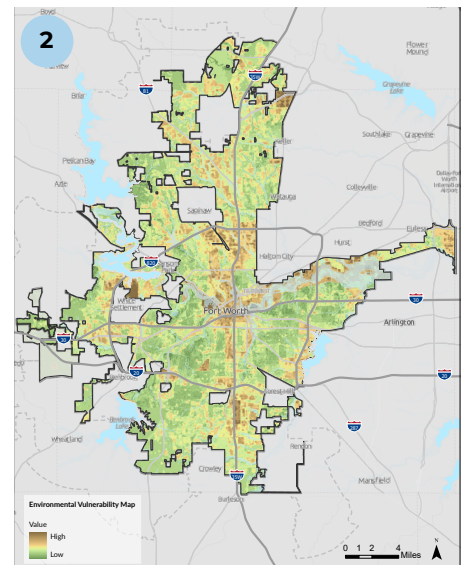
### A Composite Equity Analysis:



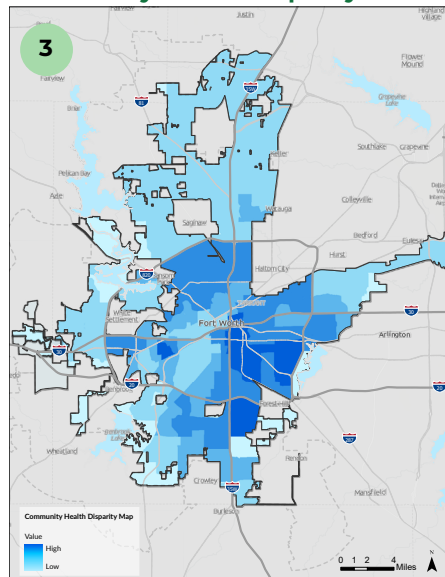
### Socioeconomic Vulnerability:



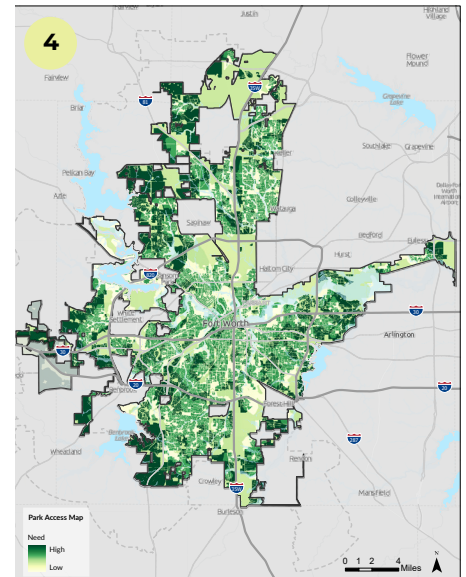
### Environmental Vulnerability:



### Community Health Disparity:



### Park Access:



Maps developed by Stantec team using data from CDC, U.S. Census ACS, EPA Environmental Justice Screening, City of Fort Worth GIS, Tarrant County GIS, TXDOT, USGS National Dataset, Esri Living Atlas, and local health data sources.



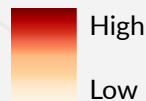
## Fort Worth Socioeconomic Vulnerability Map

### Socioeconomic Vulnerability Factors

- Low income households
- Less than high school education
- Linguistic isolation
- People of color
- Populations with disabilities
- Households without cars
- Population over age 64
- Population under age 5
- Homeownership
- Residential areas

### Socioeconomic Vulnerability Map

Value



0 1 2 4 Miles



## Fort Worth Environmental Vulnerability Map

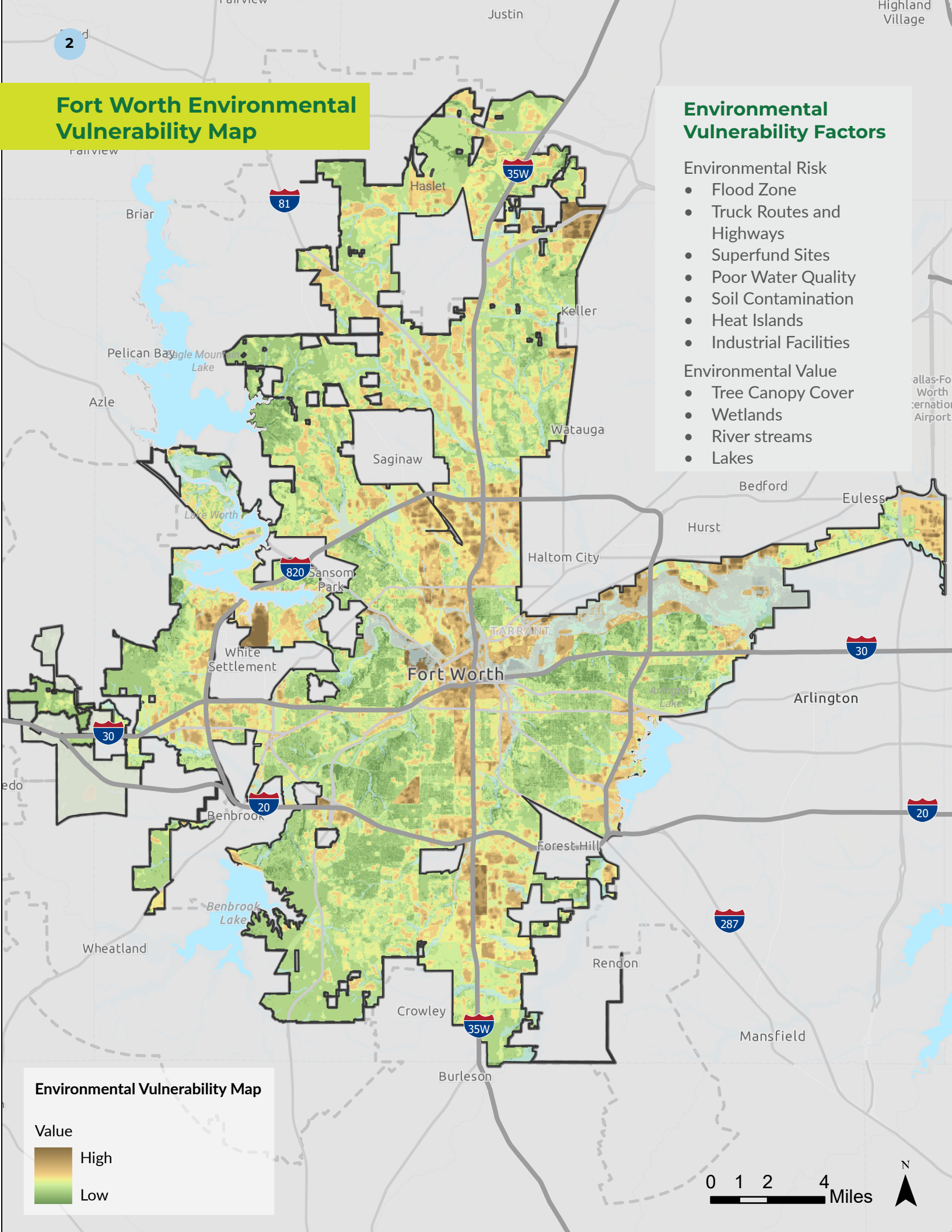
### Environmental Vulnerability Factors

#### Environmental Risk

- Flood Zone
- Truck Routes and Highways
- Superfund Sites
- Poor Water Quality
- Soil Contamination
- Heat Islands
- Industrial Facilities

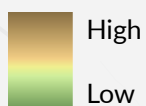
#### Environmental Value

- Tree Canopy Cover
- Wetlands
- River streams
- Lakes



### Environmental Vulnerability Map

#### Value



0 1 2 4 Miles

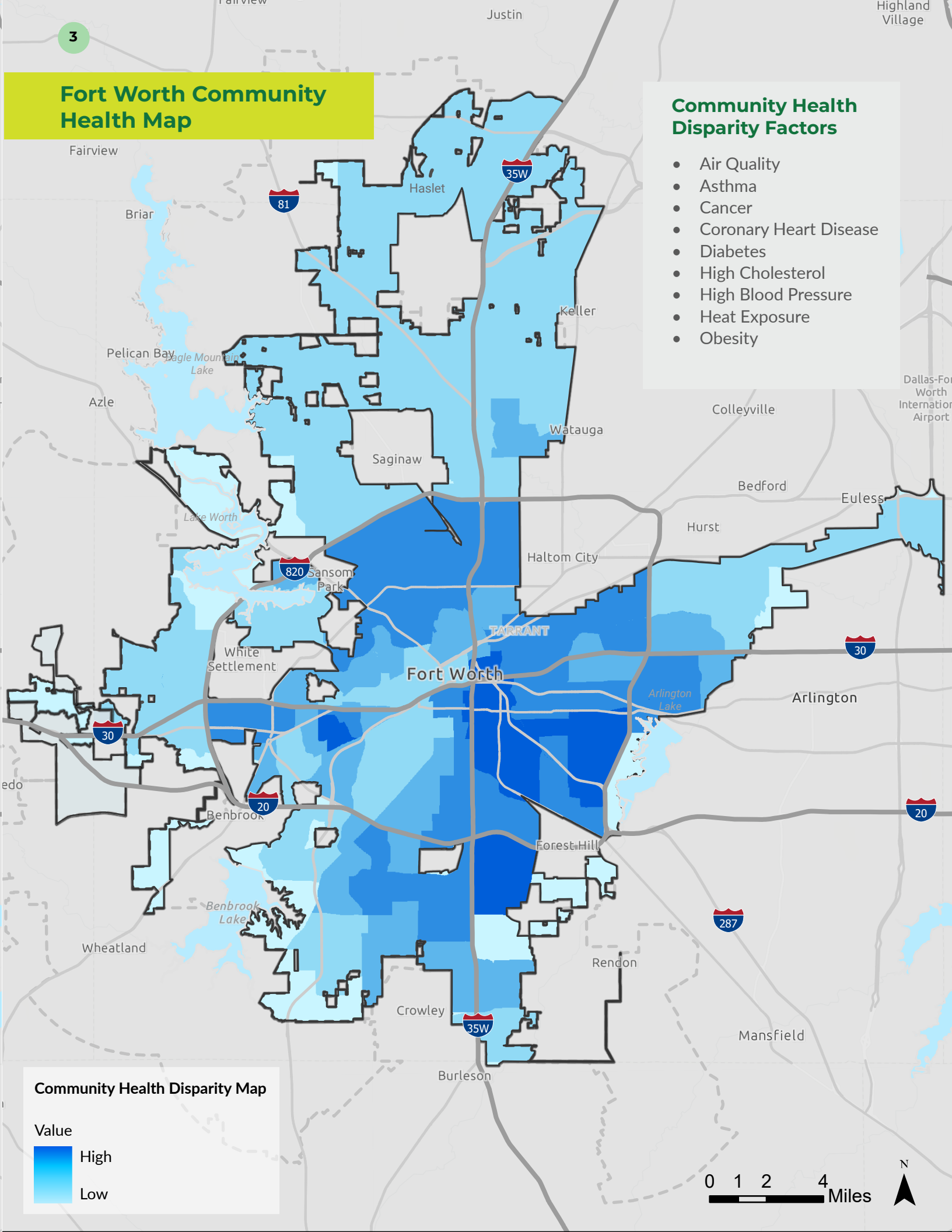




## Fort Worth Community Health Map

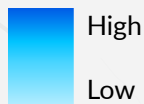
### Community Health Disparity Factors

- Air Quality
- Asthma
- Cancer
- Coronary Heart Disease
- Diabetes
- High Cholesterol
- High Blood Pressure
- Heat Exposure
- Obesity



### Community Health Disparity Map

Value



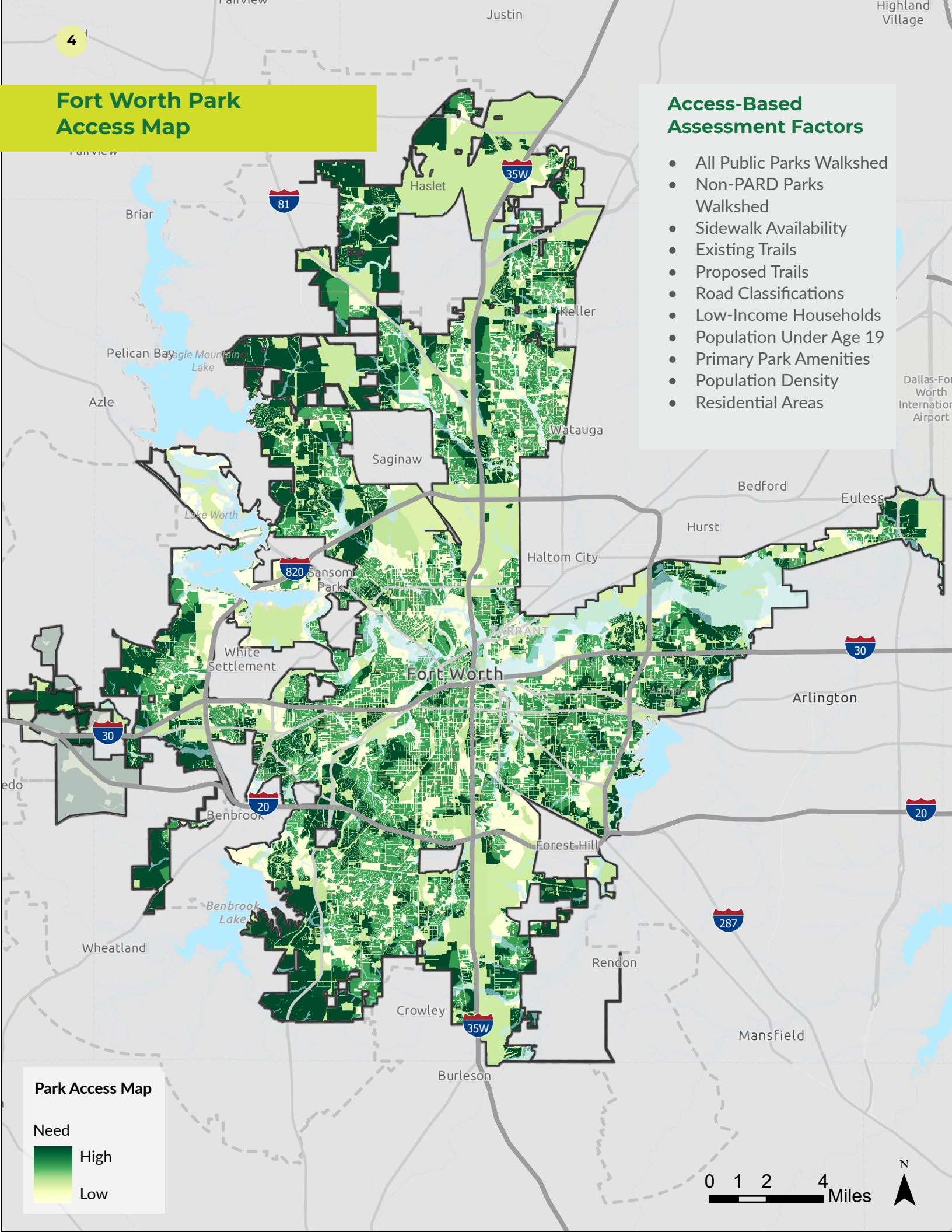
0 1 2 4 Miles



## Fort Worth Park Access Map

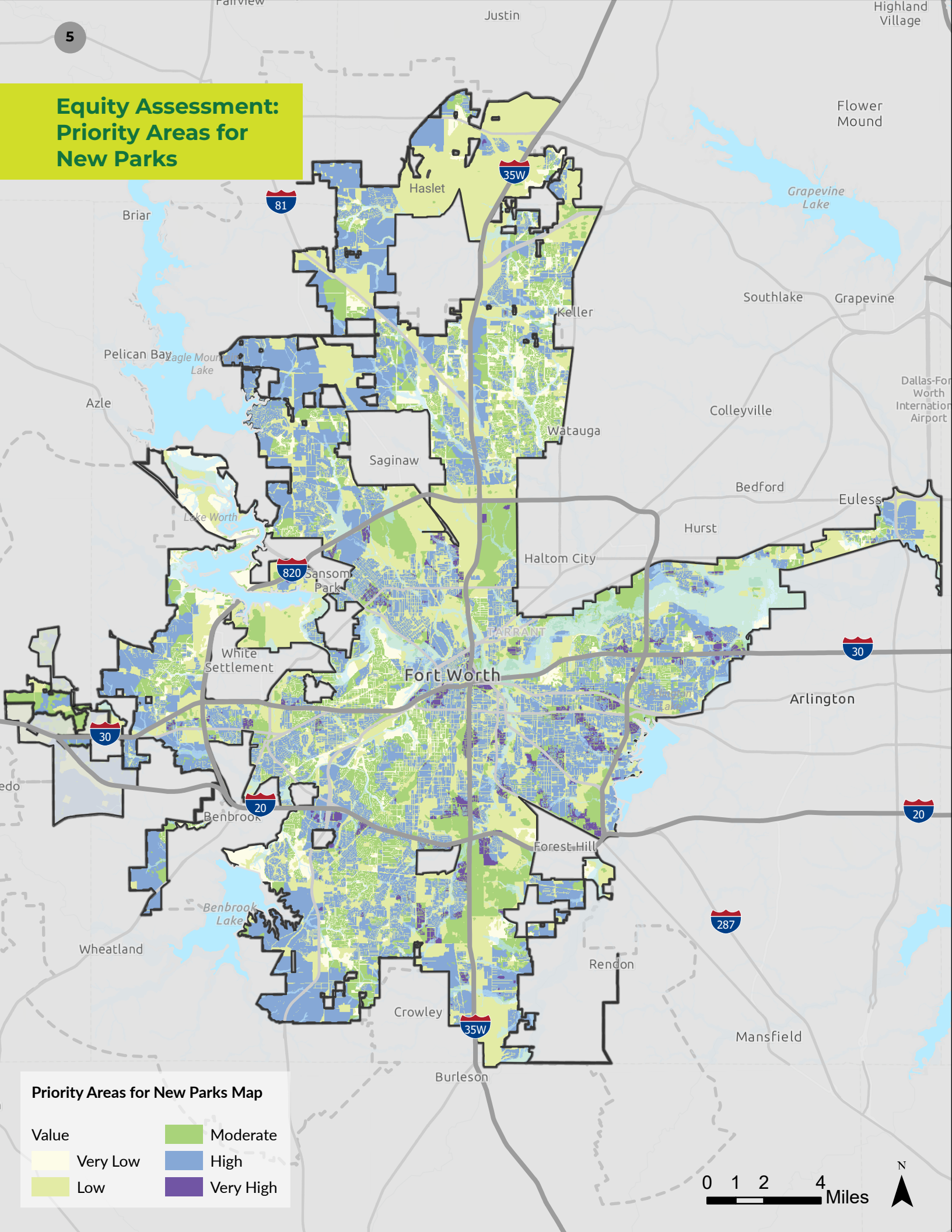
### Access-Based Assessment Factors

- All Public Parks Walkshed
- Non-PARD Parks Walkshed
- Sidewalk Availability
- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails
- Road Classifications
- Low-Income Households
- Population Under Age 19
- Primary Park Amenities
- Population Density
- Residential Areas





## Equity Assessment: Priority Areas for New Parks



## Beyond Park / Public Realm Assessment

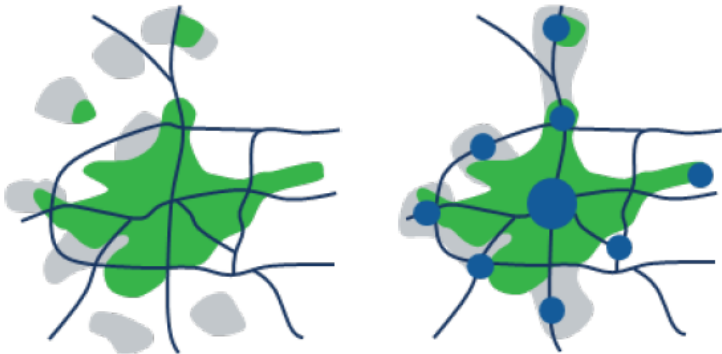
This plan expands beyond parks to embrace the entire public realm. As Fort Worth grows, the 2023 Comprehensive Plan marks a major shift from sprawling, auto-oriented development to compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods. This transformation responds to changing demographics, evolving housing demands, and economic trends that favor vibrant, pedestrian-friendly environments.

This shift presents a unique opportunity to expand the park system by integrating public spaces into designated growth centers, urban villages, and revitalized corridors. Instead of treating parks as standalone spaces, Fort Worth can weave them into the fabric of daily life, ensuring that parks, trails, and civic spaces support the city’s evolving urban form.

To align with this vision, GREENprint Fort Worth leverages these emerging hubs to expand and enhance the park system, linking main streets, plazas, parklets, green streets, sidewalks, and trails into a seamless, connected network that improves mobility, access, and quality of life. GREENprint Fort Worth identifies opportunities to:

- Expand the park system within growth centers and revitalized corridors to ensure parks are within walking distance of where people live, work, and gather.
- Create a more connected, walkable public realm that supports Fort Worth’s future growth.
- Enhance economic opportunity and regional competitiveness by investing in high-quality public spaces.
- Provide common ground for diverse communities, making parks more inclusive and accessible.
- Activate urban spaces with innovative programming and flexible, multi-use design.
- Balance urban growth with nature and conservation, ensuring green infrastructure is a core part of the city’s future.

## Fort Worth Future Development Pattern, Shifting Towards Multiple Growth Centers:



Source: Fort Worth 2023 Comprehensive Plan

### List of Recommended Growth Centers:

INDUSTRIAL GROWTH CENTERS	
Alliance Airport	Meacham Airport
Alliance Gateway East	NAS-JRB/Lockheed Martin
Carter Industrial Park	Riverbend
Centreport	Veale Ranch
Loop 820 East/Lake Arlington	Walsh Ranch South

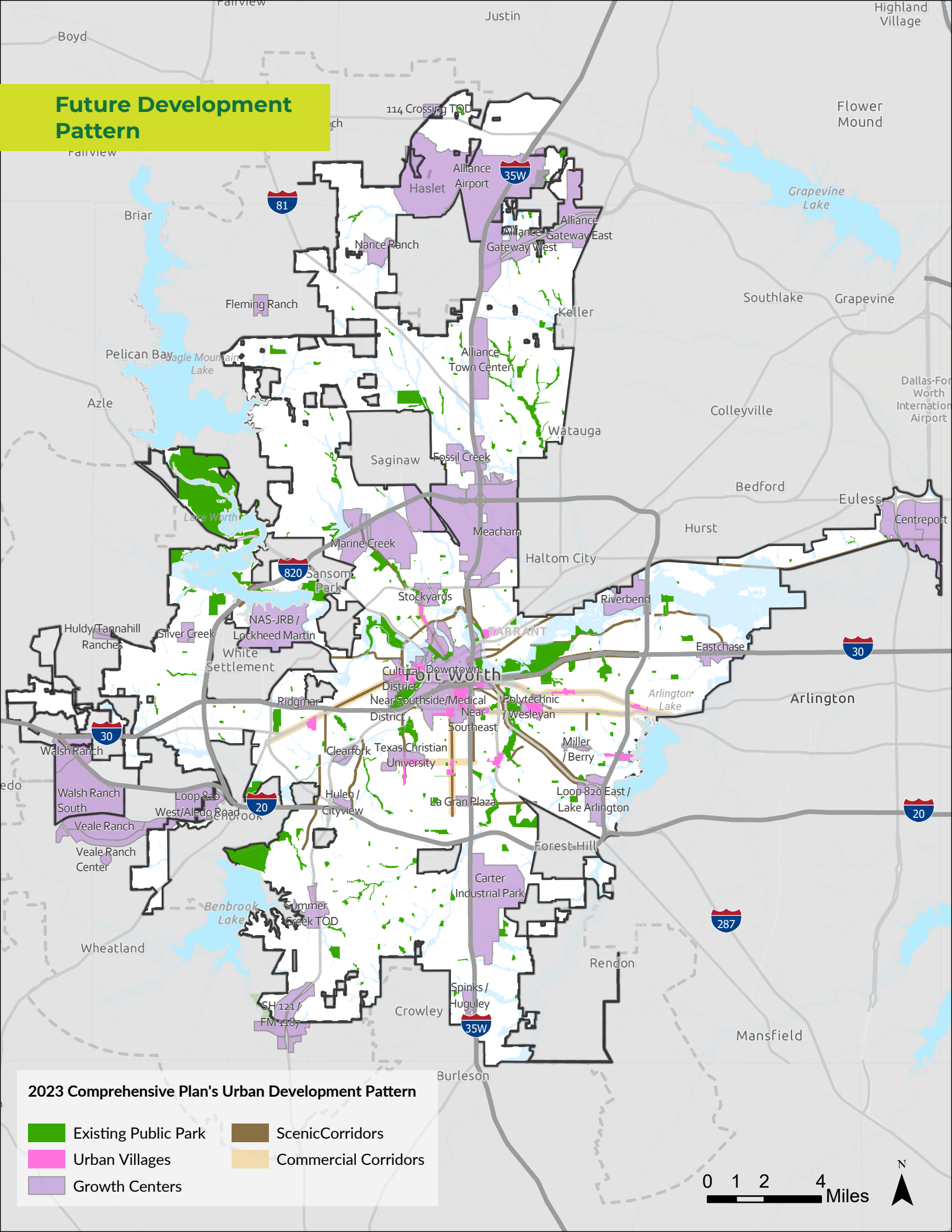
REGIONAL MIXED-USE GROWTH CENTERS	
Alliance Gateway East	Hulen/Cityview
Centreport	Nance Ranch*
Clearfork	Near Southside/Medical District
Cultural District	Ridgmar
Downtown	Veale Ranch*
Eastchase	Walsh Ranch*

COMMUNITY MIXED-USE GROWTH CENTERS	
114 Crossing TOD*	Near Southeast
Alliance Town Center*	Polytechnic/Texas Wesleyan
Alpha Ranch*	SH 121/FM 1187*
Fleming Ranch*	Silver Creek*
Fossil Creek	Spinks/Huguley
Huldry/Tannahill Ranches*	Stockyards
La Gran Plaza	Summer Creek TOD*
Lake Arlington*	Texas Christian University
Marine Creek*	Veale Ranch Center*
Miller/Berry*	Walsh Ranch*

\*Indicates growth centers that do not currently meet the criteria, but have the potential to do so.



# Future Development Pattern



2023 Comprehensive Plan's Urban Development Pattern

- Existing Public Park
- Urban Villages
- Growth Centers
- Scenic Corridors
- Commercial Corridors

0 1 2 4 Miles



# Key Findings and Common Themes

These key takeaways paint a comprehensive picture of Fort Worth's park system today—highlighting its strengths, identifying challenges, and uncovering opportunities for growth. The findings emphasize the importance of addressing gaps in equity, accessibility, and resources while embracing a broader vision for the public realm. This snapshot sets the stage for strategic actions and innovative solutions that will guide the GREENprint Fort Worth Plan towards a more inclusive, connected, and resilient future for the city's parks and public spaces.



Standard-Based Assessment:

**Fort Worth system faces growing needs and limited resources.**



Demand-Based Assessment:

**Fort Worth parks and recreation are not meeting community needs.**



Resource-Based Assessment:

**Fort Worth possesses untapped assets and resources.**



Equity-Based Assessment:

**Fort Worth parks and recreation amenities are not distributed equitably.**



Access-Based Assessment:

**Almost half of Fort Worth residents do not have walkable access to parks.**



Public Realm Assessment:

**A new era of growth calls for expanding the vision beyond just parks to embrace and elevate the entire public realm.**

These themes emerged from the numerous community engagement events and surveys completed as part of this planning process. Those themes, along with the priority needs and citywide analysis, form the basis of the recommendations to follow:

- **Connectivity & Access**
- **Maintenance & Upgrades**
- **Safety & User Comfort**
- **Programs & Activities**
- **Branding & Identity**
- **Facilities & Amenities**
- **Equitable Distribution of Resources**
- **Demographic Shifts & Evolving Needs**
- **Public Awareness, Communication, and Transparency**
- **Public / Private Partnerships**
- **Environmental Stewardship & Nature Preservation**



# Next Steps: From Assessment to Action

This needs assessment highlights critical gaps in park access, facility distribution, and connectivity, reinforcing the urgency to prioritize investment in a more equitable, connected, and sustainable park system. These findings will directly shape future policies, funding decisions, and implementation strategies, ensuring that Fort Worth's park system evolves to meet the needs of both current and future residents.

Moving forward, the City must focus on:

**Increase Funding & Investment :** Strengthen public-private partnerships to maximize funding opportunities and prioritize park maintenance, land acquisition, and new amenities to ensure long-term sustainability.

**Expand & Improve Programming:** Upgrade and modernize facilities, amenities, and programming to reflect evolving community needs and develop innovative, inclusive recreation programs.

**Activate Underutilized Spaces:** Transform underused parks and public spaces into vibrant destinations through strategic design improvements, programming, and community engagement.

**Ensure Equitable Park Distribution:** Expand parkland acquisition and direct investments to underserved neighborhoods to meet future demand and promote equitable access.

**Enhance Connectivity and Accessibility:** Expand and improve trails, sidewalks, and bike-friendly infrastructure to create stronger non-motorized mobility connections to parks and public spaces.

**Elevate Entire Public Realm:** Envision parks not as isolated spaces but as part of a broader ecosystem of green infrastructure, walkable streets, and dynamic public spaces.

These opportunities provide a roadmap for transforming challenges into strengths, laying the foundation for a more connected, inclusive, and resilient park system. In the following chapters, each opportunity will be directly tied to one or more overarching GREENprint Fort Worth goals, ensuring a strategic approach to enhancing parks, public spaces, and recreational experiences across the city.