



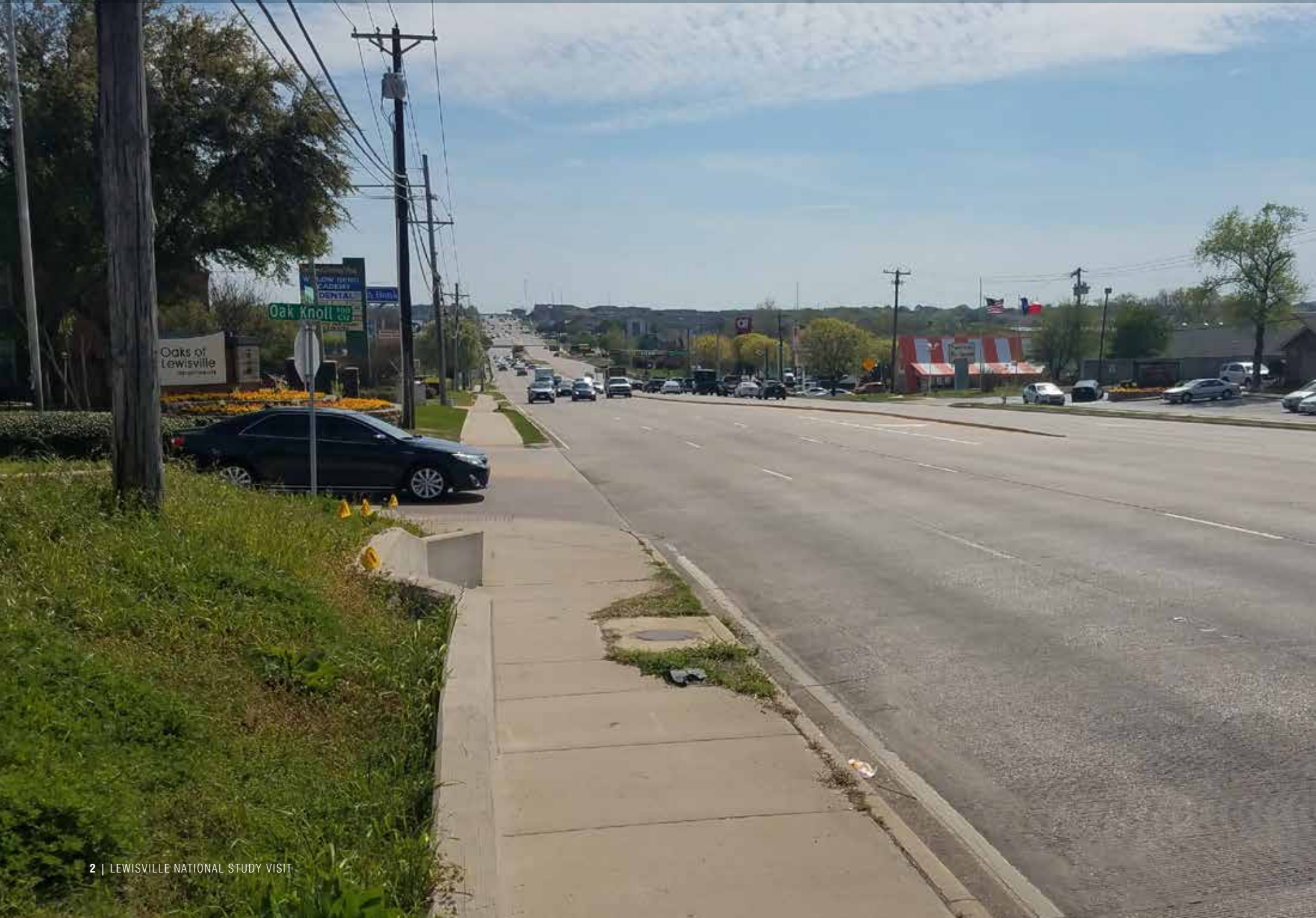
# LEWISVILLE, TEXAS

10 MINUTE WALK NATIONAL STUDY VISIT





Business Route 121, the eastern edge of the study area, is a barrier between the Triangle area and the communities to the east.





ADRIAN ENGEL

## ABOUT THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

The Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 46,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of providing leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific regions, with members in 81 countries.

The extraordinary impact that ULI makes on land use decision-making is based on its members sharing expertise on a variety of factors affecting the built environment, including urbanization, demographic and population changes, new economic drivers, technology advancements, and environmental concerns.

Peer-to-peer learning is achieved through the knowledge shared by members at thousands of convenings each year that reinforce ULI's position as a global authority on land use and real estate. In 2019 alone, more than 2,400 events were held in about 330 cities around the world.

Drawing on the work of its members, the Institute recognizes and shares best practices in urban design and development for the benefit of communities around the globe.

More information is available at [uli.org](https://uli.org). Follow ULI on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

## ABOUT 10 MINUTE WALK

Parks are essential to the physical, environmental, and economic health of people and communities. Parks help expand the economy by attracting homebuyers, tourists, and highly talented workers. They protect the environment, provide space for the enjoyment of arts and nature, and make people healthier, happier, and more connected.

Despite these known benefits, research shows that one in three Americans—more than 100 million people—do not have a park within a 10-minute walk of their home. 10 Minute Walk is a movement dedicated to improving access to safe, high-quality parks and green spaces in cities—large and small—throughout the United States. Led by The Trust for Public Land (TPL), in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the Urban Land Institute and with support from The JPB Foundation, 10 Minute Walk is working to create a world

in which, by 2050, all people live within a 10-minute walk of a park or green space. This partnership drives commitments from city leaders working to achieve this vision and transform their communities.

The 10 Minute Walk campaign has been endorsed by nearly 300 U.S. mayors so far. ULI, TPL, and NRPA are working with partners in select cities on measurable policies and strategies to advance the 10 Minute Walk vision. Success in this work will require the expertise, creativity, and close collaboration of public- and private-sector leaders. ULI has a powerful role to play in catalyzing its members, networks, and partners around a vision of a green, sustainable, connected, and resilient future for all people.

Learn more and connect with 10 Minute Walk at [10minutewalk.org](https://10minutewalk.org).

Timber Creek Trail is a wide green space that cuts across the southern portion of the study area.



ADRIAN ENGEL

### PARTNERING FOR EQUITABLE PARK ACCESS IN LEWISVILLE

The city of Lewisville, Texas, is a suburb within the fast-growing Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex and home to about 100,000 residents. Because of its accessible location just minutes from the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and from other infrastructure, cultural events, and outdoor activity, Lewisville has been and remains an attractive city for both business and families. As in other cities in the metroplex, the amount of land available for future development is quickly diminishing. Lewisville has a number of unique natural features that other cities in the region do not, including Lewisville Lake and the adjacent 385-acre Lake Park as well as numerous creeks and greenbelts running through the city. In total, the city park system includes 1,468 acres of parkland and open space and 36 parks.

According to The Trust for Public Land's ParkServe analysis, 60.4 percent of Lewisville residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park.<sup>1</sup> The city has committed to increasing that figure to 85 percent by 2025 and to 100 percent by 2035. A city-wide team, which included leaders from parks and recreation, neighborhood services, and planning departments, identified these opportunities and strategies for bridging the gap:

- Improving the city's data analysis and mapping capacity;
- Partnering with the Lewisville Independent School District; and
- Modifying the park development ordinance to give the Lewisville Parks and Recreation Department the ability to require developers to dedicate parkland and create green connections.

City staff analyzed areas identified as not meeting the 10 Minute Walk goals within Lewisville and identified one specific region that presents unique challenges in devising solutions to address park and open-space deficits. City staff believed that a national study visit hosted by ULI and focused on this region could help address critical challenges the city faced with respect to advancing its park system.

The study area, known locally as the Triangle, is bordered by three major roadways: Business 121, Interstate 35, and Corporate Drive. Commercial corridors surround a large part of the study area and prevent safe and walkable access to natural open spaces, schools, and homes, presenting challenges in achieving connectivity and cohesion. Families in the Triangle live primarily in multifamily residences and have a median income that is almost \$15,000 less than other households in Lewisville. Ownership of property in the area is dominated by commercial businesses and absentee property owners. Residents are perceived to be transient, making meaningful community engagement difficult.



CITY OF LEWISVILLE

The study area, defined by the red triangle.



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Families in the Triangle live primarily in multifamily residences and have a median income that is almost **\$15,000 lower than other households in Lewisville.**

### NATIONAL STUDY VISIT ASSIGNMENT

The objective of the Lewisville national study visit, held in March 2019, was to provide a set of recommendations to assist the city in achieving its goal of ensuring that all current and future residents within the study area have access to a high-quality park within a 10-minute walk. The city's park access goals for the study area included the following:

- To obtain clear strategies and tools, unique to the needs of the area, that the city can use to achieve publicly accessible open space within the study area.
- To ensure that equity is provided through park access and connectivity in all current and future development within the study area.
- To identify the next steps that would be the most effective in progressing toward the goal of ensuring that all residents within the study area have access to a high-quality park within a 10-minute walk of home.

To ensure that the national study visit was locally driven and inspired follow-through on the recommendations, the city convened a local planning group, which comprised local leaders with diverse professional backgrounds from across the private and public sectors. The group laid the foundation for the visit by building consensus on local priorities and developing study questions to guide the focus of the visit. The group also helped identify community stakeholders for the national study visit experts to interview, developed briefing materials, and built momentum and excitement about this effort among Lewisville residents. The experts were asked to advise on nine study questions, developed by the local planning group, which reflected local priorities.

### NATIONAL STUDY VISIT PROCESS

ULL's national study visits bring volunteer experts from across the country to a city or community to provide a set of recommendations to priority areas identified by local stakeholders. Experts are identified based on areas of expertise needed by the community.

For the 10 Minute Walk national study visits, the parks departments and local district councils are engaged in setting priorities and planning the visit. These fast-paced, three-day study visits include a briefing to the experts on the study area and the questions to be addressed; a tour of local parks and neighborhoods; interviews with stakeholders; and a public presentation of recommendations. The recommendations serve as a guide to help each city create implementable and actionable plans and priorities for the parks departments moving forward.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How can we identify creative opportunities to increase connectivity to existing parks, greenbelts, and/or open space in or near the Triangle? What strategies can be used to enhance equity at new or existing connections?
2. How can we identify opportunities to convert city drainage rights-of-way, easements, and/or open space in or near the Triangle to parks or trails?
3. What are creative strategies for developing micro-parks in areas where larger open spaces are not achievable? Can the amenities of public spaces be incorporated into the connectivity elements to create spaces that function as both?
4. What are successful community processes and creative strategies to engage a broader range of stakeholders in the study area?
5. We want to ensure that the community and cultural needs of residents are represented in the study area. What are creative ways to engage the population in this area, which is dominated by multifamily housing units and home to many Spanish-speaking residents? What placemaking strategies can be used to create community gathering and activity opportunities?
6. What investment and partnership strategies can the city use to encourage businesses and multifamily residential units to improve connectivity to existing parks, greenbelts, and open space in or near the Triangle?
7. What incentives or regulatory approaches can the city use to spark redevelopment of properties near the northern corner of the Triangle and encourage the inclusion of parks, open space, and trails?
8. The study area is within an Opportunity Zone, so how can the city leverage or market that factor to potential developers for redevelopment of multifamily housing to include public spaces?
9. What strategies can be applied to fund infill sidewalk and trail projects on undeveloped property, or property that was developed before the requirement for sidewalk construction? Is there a way to fund the infill with public funds and recover the cost from property owners?

During the visit, which occurred March 27 to 29, 2019, the experts toured the study area by bus and foot. They also acquired broad community input through interviews and workshops with more than 80 community stakeholders, including residents and neighborhood group representatives such as students and administrators from the Lewisville Independent School District.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the various activities during the national study visit, the experts formed positive first impressions of Lewisville and its local leaders. Among these impressions:

- City staff are very engaged and passionate.
- City leadership is committed to the 10 Minute Walk vision.
- Residents deeply value parks.
- A number of natural community assets exist.
- Community partners are ready and willing to help.


In general, it was clear to the experts that the city is ready for action. However, they also recognized a number of challenges facing the study area, such as the dominance of auto-oriented infrastructure over safe modes for active unmotorized movement, misperceptions about the transient nature of local residents, and the lack of the strong public/private partnerships needed for catalytic change.

To address these challenges and to help answer the study questions, the experts developed a set of recommendations, providing a path forward for the local planning group. The experts proposed that park quality and park access within the Triangle be greatly expanded by ensuring authentic community collaboration, employing strategies to improve park planning and recreation, improving pedestrian and transportation connections and access across major corridors, and creating partnerships that can enhance funding and investment for parks.

### 10 MINUTE WALK PLANNING GRANTS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

As part of the 10 Minute Walk campaign, the National Recreation and Park Association is leading year-long engagements with park and recreation departments from cities across the United States. NRPA is providing \$40,000 grants to support local efforts to incorporate 10-minute-walk park access as a sustained planning and funding priority. Grantees, which receive technical assistance from NRPA, the Trust for Public Land, and the Urban Land Institute, work to:

- Establish and analyze baseline metrics for 10-minute-walk park access and park quality, ensuring that data and analysis include under-represented populations.
- Identify priority areas and actions based on findings from assessments.
- Create equitable citywide policies that support achievement of 10-minute-walk park access.
- Incorporate 10-minute-walk park access into citywide planning documents.
- Identify funding to sustain continued investment in parks, operations, programming, and connections.



In general, it was clear  
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**ready for action.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### LEAD WITH EQUITY

All recommendations from the experts were devised with the intent to help the city achieve its vision of creating a park system that provides equitable access to all. The experts applauded this vision and set out to develop recommendations with a strong emphasis on equity, upholding the notion that all work done to meet goals for access to parks and open spaces in Lewisville must be done with a focus on three aspects: social, health, and economic equity.

Several states have established equity principles. According to the Office of Health Equity at the State of Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, a guiding principle of equity is “when everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from, has the opportunity to thrive.”<sup>2</sup> To ensure that proposed solutions were relevant and meaningful in the local context, the experts carefully listened to insights from community stakeholders and the local planning group and reviewed several planning documents, which contained socioeconomic data on the surrounding populations. The experts then presented the recommendations described in the following sections, which highlight equitable development strategies for sustained community collaboration, park planning and recreation services, thoughtfully designed access and connections, and funding and investment partnerships.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

The experts consistently heard from city staff that residents of the multifamily housing complexes in the study area often move around the city to find affordable housing, making it difficult to conduct meaningful community engagement. However, the experts found that that some misconceptions may exist about the perceived transience of the residents in the study area.

Interviews with property owners in the study area clarified that the majority of residents are actually long-term Triangle dwellers. In fact, the owners and operators of the multifamily apartment complexes reported a turnover rate of just 25 to 30 percent—much lower than the national average of 54 percent.<sup>3</sup> The interviews also underscored that although these residents may not own housing, they nonetheless have strong community networks and value a sense of belonging in their community. For residents of the study area, families are a priority and community networks are strong.

Providing equitable access for all residents requires a thorough knowledge and understanding of the study area’s residents and their hopes and needs for the community in which they live. Being inclusive in outreach and building sustained relationships with existing residents are critical to meeting equitable park access and quality goals.

The experts urged city staff to invest in community engagement and to approach engagement conversations with the goal of removing barriers and building trust, and to foster listening, learning, and collaboration. This community investment will help eliminate misperceptions about residents and their goals for the study area and will create social cohesion and stewardship. The city and the study area will be stronger when everyone is working together.<sup>4</sup>

## PRIORITIZING HEALTH AND SOCIAL EQUITY

As the city works to meet its park access goals, it is important for city staff and residents to think about equity and the positive health impacts that come from access to parks and open spaces. The study area's diverse population has high rates of unemployment and childhood poverty. These data reveal stress points that can affect public health. The city has an important role to play in serving the children in this population and improving their health outcomes. Steps should be taken to see what data the city has access to that can be used to measure potential health outcomes.

The experts tour a Lewisville neighborhood adjacent to the study area.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Strategies to Consider

Key recommendations for future engagement to create social cohesion and build stewardship include the following:

- **Include all stakeholders:** Make inclusion a priority, especially for those who speak another language.
- **Meet people where they are:** Engage the community where it is—physically, socially, and mentally—to develop a tool to promote inclusion, social cohesion, and a greater sense of belonging, and reenergize the power within a community.
- **Use engagement tactics:** Initiate storytelling and hands-on activities to start the community conversation and break down barriers. Creative placemaking and public art projects help community members of all ages share their voices and stories. Community members are the best resource for assistance with planning these activities.

### NRPA'S "COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESOURCE GUIDE"

Equitable and inclusive community engagement is critical to establishing high-quality parks that meet the needs of all people. Such engagement ensures that parks are created by the people they are intended to serve, making them more welcoming to everyone.

The "Community Engagement Resource Guide" from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provides a road map to assist local park and recreation professionals in employing engagement strategies throughout the planning, design, construction, maintenance, and activation of park projects and plans. It explores four categories of guidance:

- **Internal Assessment.** Assess staff capacity, secure funding, build leadership support, and create a plan with clear goals, including a community engagement framework and spectrum of engagement.
- **Building Trust with Communities.** Acknowledge past experiences, collaborate with local community leaders and partners, and be transparent and deliver on promises.
- **Community Engagement Strategies.** Identify strategies, consider a mixed-methods approach, and follow best practices.
- **Evaluation.** Collect data, develop an evaluation framework, and analyze data.

The guide highlights steps for neighborhood-level and park system-level projects. It is essential for local stakeholders to tailor these approaches to fit the unique characteristics and needs of their communities.



Because creating new park spaces takes time and thoughtful community input, the experts recommended focusing immediately on **building relationships with the community and activating existing spaces.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### PARK PLANNING AND RECREATION SERVICES

For the city to reach its goal of 85 percent of Lewisville residents living within a 10-minute walk of a park by 2025, the experts encouraged the city to enhance park planning and services by engaging the community and analyzing existing infrastructure. Specifically, the experts recommended the following:

- Engaging the community in park planning and design processes, using strategies described in the previous section;
- Studying connectivity to increase the number of parks and improve access; and
- Using innovative short-term and temporary park solutions to bridge the gap in current park access while providing recreational services to build momentum and trust with the community.

Because creating new park spaces takes time and thoughtful community input, the experts recommended focusing immediately on building relationships with the community and activating existing spaces. Building community relationships through fun, volunteer-driven programs and activities can also help achieve short-term objectives for park planning and recreation service efforts.

Conducting a community visioning process for the Triangle study area, for instance, could be used as a stepping-stone

to building a long-term collaborative relationship by using community feedback to shape programming, land acquisition, and partnership strategies. To make such events worth residents' time, organizers should consider providing incentives, such as food and beverages, as well as creating a fun and inviting atmosphere. Asking a central community organization, such as the Next Steps Center, to host such events in partnership with the city could help build community trust in the city.

Timber Creek, which runs through the study area, has a wide green space that the experts identified as particularly opportune for temporary community programming. Nevertheless, they reiterated that the city should hear about the area's potential and perspectives from residents, who can offer city planners a fresh eye and new perspectives. A local cleanup at Timber Creek combined with a pop-up popsicle party, for example, could help raise awareness of the space in the community, build ownership for future stewardship, and jump-start community engagement. Such an event could also encourage residents to think about this green space as part of their "backyard" and enable organizers to hear how residents think about using the space.

The following list presents additional strategies that the experts identified for improving park planning and services.

The experts take a walking tour around Timber Creek.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Strategies to Consider

- **Diversify park types:** Look at adding different park types that address the programming needs of residents. Where land is limited, the development of micro or pocket parks could help deliver important community benefits. Park size is not always important if the park offers activities that meet the community's needs.
- **Think short and long term:** When planning for long-term park creation, identify potential properties for acquisition without overlooking near-term interim park and open-space solutions.
- **Innovative partnerships:** Think innovatively about cross-sector partnership, ownership, and financing opportunities, such as the following: developing agreements and incentives to provide public access to private open spaces, developing strategies to diversify ownership of properties in the study area, and establishing a parks-focused foundation that could help explore nontraditional funding services and build long-term park champions.
- **Think about recreation opportunities in and out of parks:** Close streets temporarily for recreation opportunities and community events and festivals, create mobile recreation programs that bring park and recreation resources to the study area, and provide transportation to park and recreation opportunities outside of the study area.<sup>5</sup>
- **Enhance the trail network to create more open space:** Create a natural network and capitalize on existing natural areas by completing the trail plans for Fox Creek and Central Park, northwest of the study area.
- **Develop Timber Creek and get the community directly involved in this effort:** A new quarter-mile trail project would give 4,000 people access to a high-quality park, moving the city much closer to its 85 percent goal. A new trail will not be easy to implement in the floodplain, but it is feasible and could have a catalytic impact to transform this space.

### OPPORTUNITY ZONES

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 established the Opportunity Zones program, which allows investors to roll over capital gains to invest in low-income communities, in exchange for tax breaks. However, when using Opportunity Zones communities must take care to protect existing residents and businesses. Opportunity Zones can stimulate economic development opportunities, but according to the economic and social equity institute PolicyLink, resources must be used thoughtfully so not to cause displacement. PolicyLink has recommendations and action steps for how to use Opportunities Zones for equitable development.<sup>6</sup>

The experts were asked to look at whether Opportunity Zones could be a tool for encouraging revitalization of the Triangle study area in Lewisville. However, interviews with stakeholders revealed that the timing may not be right. Because Opportunity Zones are such a new tool, developers are trying to figure out how to use these funds—and the most likely users are developers with enough resources. If the city is interested in promoting the opportunity, staff need to ensure that they are ready to respond. Marketing to these deep-pocket developers and investors may be difficult, so the city should also look at other tools for equitable development in the short term.

## ACCESS AND CONNECTIONS

The experts noted that Lewisville has many great amenities. However, they also identified highways and freeways as key barriers that prevent access to community amenities. Despite being referred to as the “front door” for the residents of the Triangle community, Business Route 121 presents huge challenges to safe walking and biking connections in the study area. The experts observed school buses traveling minimal distances simply to bring students across an unsafe roadway. The sidewalks on the wide roadway have width requirements that are the bare minimum, greatly constraining pedestrian mobility. Bringing multimodal access to Business 121 will greatly improve the quality of life in the study area.

### Strategies to Consider

The Texas Department of Transportation is expected to make changes to the interchange at Interstate 35 East in the next three to five years. Given that timeline, the experts emphasized that the city must act now to improve pedestrian and bicycle amenities at this interchange by pursuing three efforts:

- **Undertake corridor plans and studies for Business Route 121:** The city should develop a corridor master plan and road safety audit for Business 121. A corridor master plan should examine how people cross the street today and specify actions to ensure that crosswalks are highly visible and that signals are set with enough time to cross safely. A study of Business 121 could examine the feasibility of a new signal at McCart Drive that uses a pedestrian hybrid beacon or a high-intensity-activated crosswalk signal. Another solution could be a grade-separated crossing over Business 121 near Lewisville Elementary School. Given the size of the child population within walking distance of school, this option may be worth exploring.

- **Develop a corridor master plan for Corporate Drive.**

The experts envision a retrofit of this roadway that would allow for shared access with bicycles. The roadway could also connect with a “green centerpiece,” which would serve as a nature hub that could connect with the rest of Lewisville’s beautiful nature parks and trail system.

- **Access existing programs.** Programs exist that the city and the Lewisville Intermediate School District can leverage to improve walkability to Lewisville Elementary—a public resource that may also be able to offer accessible open space to the community. The Safe Routes to School Program can educate students and their families about walking to school and help encourage stakeholders to make walking to school a priority. For example, a community leader could organize a monthly “walking school bus” for families in the study area to practice walking to school safely.

The experts also emphasized that “complete streets” strategies should be employed consistently. Specifically, adding a shared-use path on the north side of Corporate Drive and adding continuous separated and wide sidewalks on both sides of Business 121 will enhance conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists. Plans and audits of these corridors should be completed with the needs of people of all ages and abilities in mind.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### FUNDING AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS

The experts encouraged the city to build and leverage partner relationships to foster development and create a strong sense of place for the study area. These partnerships will also be critical to improving the access to and the quality of parks and open spaces in the study area.

Overall, the experts found that the city needs to help create interest and excitement in the study area. It is critical to show potential investors and partners that the city is invested in and is an active partner in the study area. The experts made recommendations to help the city move in this direction, which may open up the opportunity to use tools, such as Opportunity Zones, in the study area. With any big move, the experts reminded the city to engage residents and listen to the community, and to continue to use and connect back to the Lewisville 2025 vision document. The experts also gave city staff a few tools and scenarios that could help fund recommendations. They developed short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations for developing and leveraging partnerships.

### Strategies to Consider

#### SHORT TERM

- **Build a partnership with strong buy-in by the Lewisville Independent School District:** Lewisville Elementary School has a large school yard adjacent to the study area, and safe access to a school yard will help the city make great progress in its park goals.
- **Form a park foundation:** The formation of a local park foundation could create community energy for parks and open spaces in Lewisville. This group could not only advocate for equitable parks but also help build new partnerships and assist in fundraising.
- **Build public/private partnerships:** The city needs to build and maintain relationships with local businesses and nonprofit organizations. The experts recommended casting a wide net to include stakeholders outside of the study area who are invested in the health and vibrancy of the city.

Given local concerns about safe pedestrian access to schools and parks for area children, Lewisville Independent School District was identified as a key community partner.



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## MEDIUM TERM

- **Expand work with private partners:** Lewisville is home to some national businesses whose interest could be leveraged. The experts urged local stakeholders to not overlook retail centers, residential projects, and lodging facilities. These private partners can help by sponsoring a community activity, such as the Timber Creek cleanup suggested earlier.
- **Develop innovative partnerships and land use agreements:** Public use of privately owned properties would be a large step forward to meeting 10 Minute Walk goals. There is already an informal trail network through the multifamily developments in the study area. Establishing a formal relationship between the city and these property owners with the aim of creating and maintaining a formal pedestrian network could connect and stitch together the study area. To help people move throughout the area, the city should start exploring access easements through these corridors, near property lines.

## LONG TERM

- **Prioritize “Big Moves” from the Lewisville 2025 vision plan:**<sup>7</sup> The experts recommended integrating strategies for multiple “big moves” that were identified in the Lewisville 2025 plan. In order of importance:
  - **BIG MOVE NUMBER 7:** Implement a central node at Business 121 and Interstate 35 East. This may require forming a new tax increment finance (TIF) district. A TIF district at this improved interchange could capture the annual return on investment from the incremental tax generated by urban redevelopment, which could then be directed to park access and development goals. Although TIF is a long-term recommendation, this tool would need to be applied sooner rather than later, before the interchange upgrades are completed.
  - **BIG MOVE NUMBER 2:** Allocate funding to park and trail improvements.

- **BIG MOVE NUMBER 5:** Look to include a variety of densities and housing types. A need exists for more housing options in the study area and within Lewisville. To encourage a healthy, vibrant, and equitable city, Lewisville should aim to incorporate housing that serves a mix of incomes into every neighborhood.
- **BIG MOVE NUMBER 4:** To ensure long-term mixed-income development, include an affordable housing program.
- **Develop a signature park to spur development.** The creation of a signature or marquee park can attract developers and spur economic development while creating a sense of place for the study area. A development partnership could contribute to a new signature park by including existing property owners and leveraging current assets such as Timber Creek. Property owners may not be willing to sell property to the city to create this vision, but easements or other approaches may be viable options for linking parks and community amenities.

A signature park would benefit the surrounding community and also would draw users from a larger geographic area. Innovative partnerships can help alleviate concerns about needs for more parking. For example, multifamily housing developments may be willing to share unused parking during certain times of the day to support the park.

The experts recommended the catalytic big moves in order to provide opportunities for future development or redevelopment. They also considered how to promote development opportunities that look to the future, without displacing current residents. An approach that brings in multiple partners and stakeholders can leverage existing resources as Lewisville plans for more equitable parks and transportation infrastructure.

High-traffic commercial corridors in the study area with limited and poorly maintained sidewalks present safety concerns for children crossing the street to get to and from school.



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## **PRIORITY NEXT STEPS TO CREATE AN EQUITABLE PARKS SYSTEM**

With community partners' unyielding commitment, residents' deep valuing of parks, Lewisville's beautiful natural assets, and the city's fearless leadership and dedication, the experts agreed that the city is ready for action. They left the city with tangible action steps for each broad recommendation category so the city could start laying the foundation for achieving Lewisville's grand vision for 100 percent park access by 2035.

With respect to community engagement, the experts encouraged the city to engage in hands-on activities and pop-up events, to continue fostering partnerships with community partners, and to embrace more opportunities to engage with the Lewisville Elementary School. They suggested integrating these activities into park planning and service efforts in the next year, such as through community cleanups for Timber Creek.

Given the Texas Department of Transportation's plans to make adjustments to the interchange in the next few years, the experts underscored the need to coordinate with the department on multimodal connections. They also advised the city to work closely with the school district on a Safe Routes to School program.

The experts strongly advised the city to use equity as the lens, as it embarks on these initial steps and in all work moving forward. Doing so will help staff identify the right impact metrics to measure in order to ensure that parks are equitably distributed and will also help ensure all voices are included in the process to achieve these outcomes.

### QUICK WINS

Lewisville has not wasted any time in getting started since the ULI national study visit. After the experts shared their recommendations with the city manager and city councilmembers, local support has grown even stronger.<sup>8</sup> City staff shared the following signs of progress:

- SPRING 2019: Creative placemaking expert James Rojas visited Lewisville to train city staff on how to engage residents through story-telling and hands-on activities.
- SUMMER 2019: The Parks and Recreation Department ran a pilot mobile recreation program at one of the apartment complexes in the study area. Its success inspired the city council to approve the purchase of a van and provide part-time staff to continue the program.
- SUMMER 2019: The Community Development Block Grant committee and the City Council agreed to focus infrastructure-related grants worth over \$900,000 on the study area over the next two to three years to support the purchase and development of a park.
- FALL 2019: Funding for the development of the trail along Timber Creek was accelerated to be included in the current tranche of bonds for parks and recreation. The city worked to identify a design consultant.
- OCTOBER 2019: The city hosted a pop-up park event on Southwest Parkway to conduct further outreach with the community in the study area.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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## ON BEHALF OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE,

the experts would like to thank the city of Lewisville for inviting the team to the city to examine ways to improve park access in the city. This study visit would not have been possible without the support of Mayor Rudy Durham, a signatory to the 10 Minute Walk campaign, and Stacie Anaya, director of Lewisville Parks and Recreation and a champion of parks and social equity.

A special thank you goes to the Lewisville team, Jason Moore and Michele Berry, for their support and expertise before and during the study visit. The experts would also like to thank the more than 80 residents, students, school administrators, business and community leaders, and stakeholders from across Lewisville who shared their time, perspectives, experiences, and insights.

Finally, the Urban Land Institute is grateful to The JPB Foundation for its generous support of 10 Minute Walk.

FACING PAGE: The experts appreciated Lewisville's distinct vibrancy and community identity.

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