



Policy Report

PARK LAND ACQUISITION

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

- Growing Economic Base
- Commercially Thriving Downtown
- Well-Maintained City Infrastructure
- Enhanced Quality of Life through Amenities, Arts, and Events
- Safe Community
- Vibrant Neighborhoods and Commercial Centers
- Reliable, Cost Efficient Utility Services
- Customer-Focused City Services
- Sound Governance and Finances
- Future-Focused City Organization

ISSUE

The City of Garland desires to codify a park land acquisition policy that seeks to provide guidance and best practices to the City Council and City staff towards strategic and equitable investment of public park land.

In addition, pocket parks are being explored as an additional category or subcategory within the current park classifications found in the Strategic Master Plan. If desired to be incorporated as a clearly defined classification into to the Strategic Master Plan, an amendment may be brought forward for formal consideration by the City Council for adding Pocket Parks and including accompanying definitions and recommendations for typical improvements.

OPTIONS

This report is intended to provide a preliminary draft towards a Policy Report for consideration by the Garland City Council at a future date to be determined by the Community Services Committee.

BACKGROUND

The City of Garland completed the 2020 Strategic Plan for Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts, which provides recommendations for parks and recreation services in the City. The Plan includes guidance for park land acquisition strategies that seek to address deficiencies in levels of services as illustrated in the Strategic Priority Investment Areas map (Figure 5.19). Public input that was conducted throughout the development of the Plan indicates a strong desire for more park land and new parks, particularly in underserved areas. Park needs may be met in many of the underserved areas through existing parks, but where parks do not currently exist, park land acquisition will be

necessary. New parks will be needed in some growing areas in order to provide a level of service comparable to the rest of Garland in terms of access to facilities and proximity to accessible open space. Land for new parks should be set aside during and as part of the development process, and park land dedication should be prioritized during redevelopment efforts. Parks and open space must be considered vital infrastructure for redevelopment projects and initiatives to best accomplish this goal.

Developing and formalizing a park land acquisition policy will establish a basis towards improving equitable access to public parks for Garland residents. In order to meet national standards of providing 13.5 acres of park land per 1,000 population, the Plan recommends that the City increases its land holdings by approximately 900 acres. This goal can be accomplished through the approaches to park land acquisition as is further described below. The Community Services Committee has requested that City staff provide information to advance the discussion towards a comprehensive park land acquisition policy. The subject areas that will be discussed during this meeting include but are not limited to the following:

1. Develop a checklist to guide the park land acquisition policy
2. Establish a toolbox for resources to assist with park land acquisition
3. Identify the first five areas of greatest need of new park land within Garland
4. Define pocket parks and establish standards for size and provisions of amenities

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the following for consideration by the Community Services Committee:

Park land acquisition checklist:

- Real Property considerations:
 - Underserved areas (equity, access, priority investment zones)
 - Contiguous land to existing parks
 - Connectivity; vehicular and pedestrian (ease of access)
 - Floodplain
 - Proximity to residential properties
- Development costs:
 - Park amenities
 - Site utilities
 - Visibility; safety; CPTED
 - Parking
 - Access
- Legal constraints
 - Existing property entitlements or easements
 - Easement acquisition
 - ROW access
 - Railroad permitting

Park land Acquisition Toolbox (resources available to acquire park land):

- Economic Development

- Planning and Zoning
- Garland Tax Assessor and City Surveyor
- Office of Neighborhood Vitality
- Field research
- Tax liens
- Land donation
- Land dedication
- Long-term leases
- Fee simple
- Partnerships with public and private agencies

First five areas of greatest need (see attachment):

1. Area 1 (District 5 between NW Hwy and Kingsley & Centerville and Shiloh)
2. Area 2 (District 6 between Forest and Walnut & Plano and Jupiter)
3. Area 3 (District 8 between Miller and Forest & Saturn and Shiloh)
4. Area 4 (District 6 between Walnut and Buckingham & City limits and Jupiter)
5. Area 5 (District 5 between Kingsley and Miller & Saturn and Shiloh)

Pocket Parks

Staff recommends that Pocket Parks may be classified under the subcategory of “Specialized Space - Specialty Use” parks, which are specialized for single purpose recreational activities that meet the special needs of its intended use.

Pocket Parks are loosely defined as small, outdoor spaces between ¼ and 1 acre in size most often located in an urban area surrounded by commercial buildings or houses on small lots with few places for people to gather, relax, or to enjoy the outdoors. They are generally recognized as public park spaces that are built with the intention of providing benefits of a public park to the community within the park’s immediate vicinity. The intention of pocket parks is to fill in gaps of park space within a neighborhood and to provide communal gathering space to which people can bike and walk.

Due to the limited size of pocket parks, the provision of amenities should be based upon the needs and desires of the surrounding neighborhoods. Typical facilities may include paved areas with seating and shade, interpretive and wayfinding signage, public art, landscape enhancements, and other points of interest that facilitate expression of the community’s identity and provides temporary respite within a neighborhood where households have limited yard space and limited access to public open space.

CONSIDERATION

Staff requests the Community Services Committee to consider the recommendations outlined above for the potential creation of a park land acquisition policy. Any feedback and potential modifications made to this report during this meeting will be incorporated into an updated report to be presented to the City Council in a future meeting for formal consideration.

ATTACHMENT(S)

- GIS Map exhibit
- Figure 5.19 – Strategic Priority Investment Areas
- Pocket Park Example Photos

Submitted By:



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Approved By:



Andy Hesser (Oct 14, 2021 13:34 CDT)

Andy Hesser
Managing Director

Date: 10/14/2021

Date: 10/14/2021

References for Pocket Parks:

National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Issue Brief. Creating Mini-Parks for Increased Physical Activity.

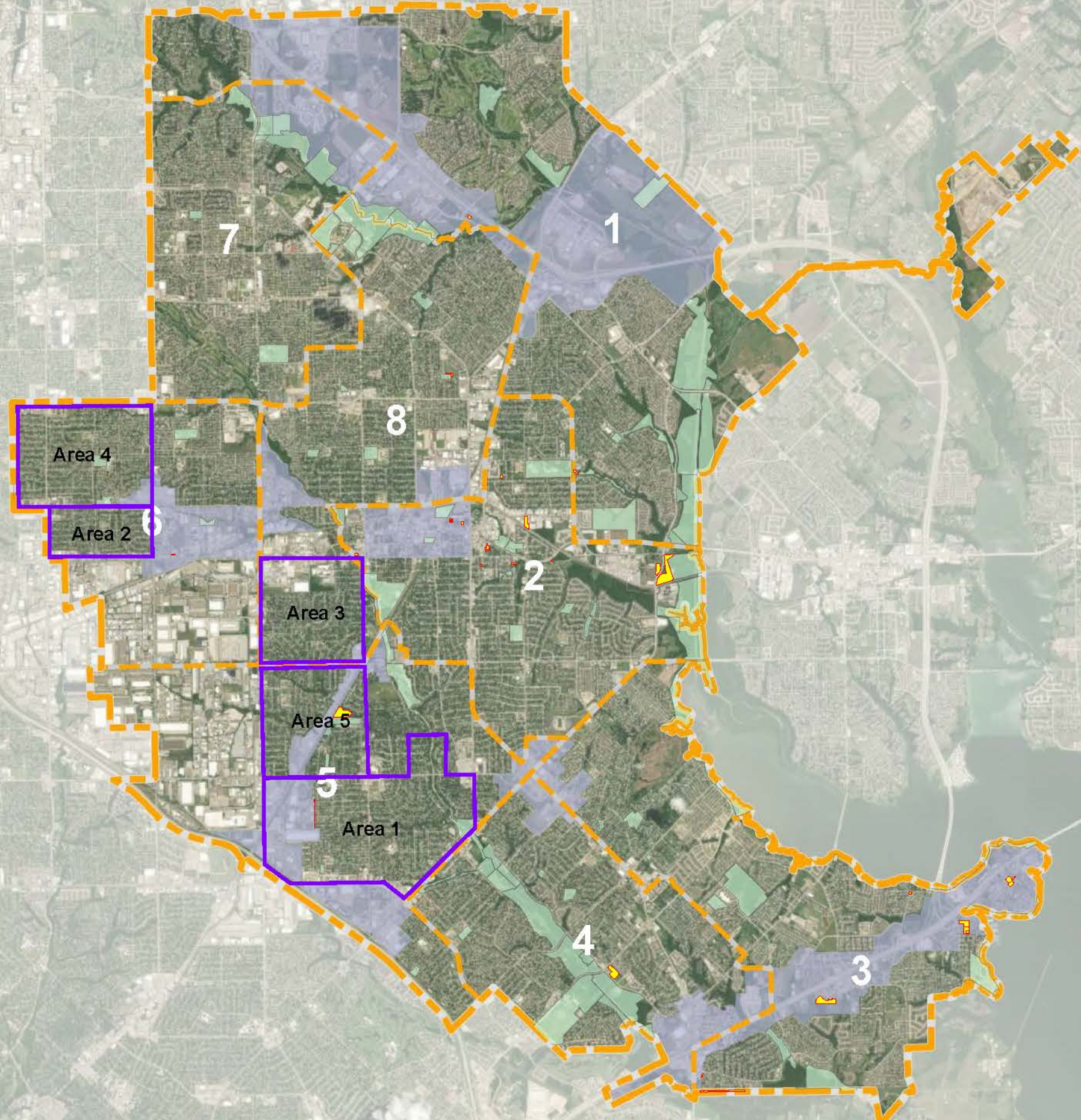
<https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/f768428a39aa4035ae55b2aaff372617/pocket-parks.pdf> (accessed June 1, 2021)

Trust for Public Land (TPL). Pocket Park Toolkit.

https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/Pocket%20Park%20Tool%20Kit_FINAL.pdf (accessed June 1, 2021)

Legend

- Struck Off Parcel List
- Parks
- Garland City Limits
- Garland City Council Districts
- Catalyst Areas



PARKLAND ACQUISITION ZONES

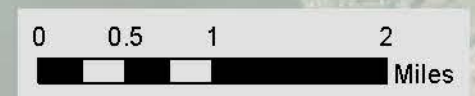
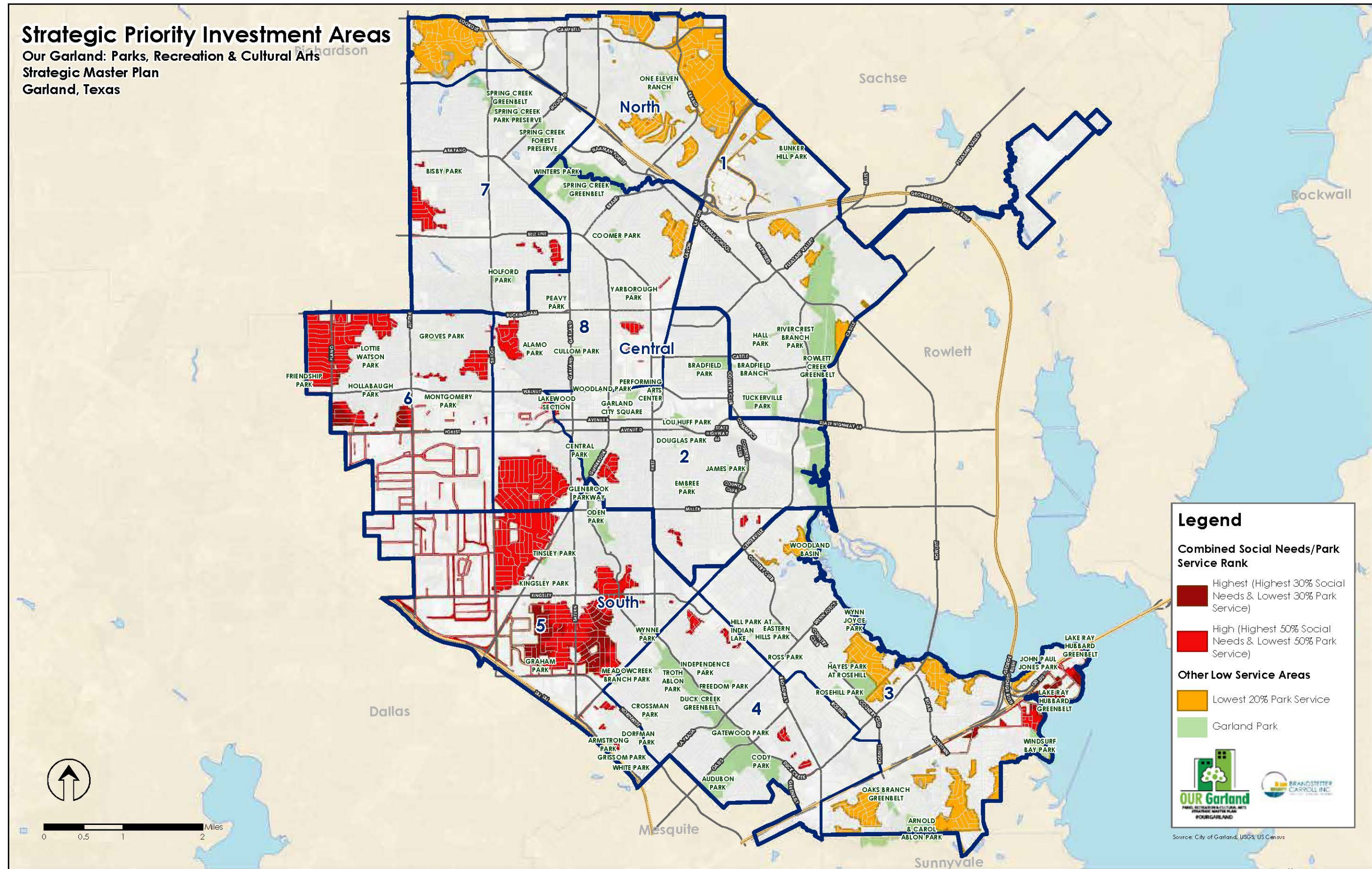


Figure 5.19: Strategic Priority Investment Areas



Gallery Garden Pocket Park in Marshalltown Business District



Gallery Garden Park

Photo Credit: Marshalltown Convention & Visitors Bureau



FONDY PARK



Solar-powered Fondy Park complements the Fondy Market by adding a performance stage, exercise/play space with seating and thousands of native plants to attract pollinators. Fondy Park was designed by Lindsay Heights residents, for residents.

DID YOU KNOW?
Fondy Park acts like a sponge with over 98% of the site collecting stormwater, fighting climate change & basement flooding to keep Lake Michigan clean.

SCAN THIS



ECO TOUR
Learn about solar, local food and climate change adaptation as you walk through the Lindsay Heights Neighborhood

SITE #11

- Stormwater Management
- Indigenous Culture
- Solar Power

Storage made possible through a grant from the City of Midwauakee Neighborhood Investment Reinvestment Initiative

ReFlo

FONDY food GZA

HOME GROWN
BY THE CITY OF MIDWAUAKEE

Storage designed by
MURENDEZING





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Photo by Charles Birnbaum::2009::The Cultural Landscape Foundation

