

THE
TRUST
FOR
PUBLIC
LAND

THE POWER OF LAND FOR PEOPLE 2020–2025

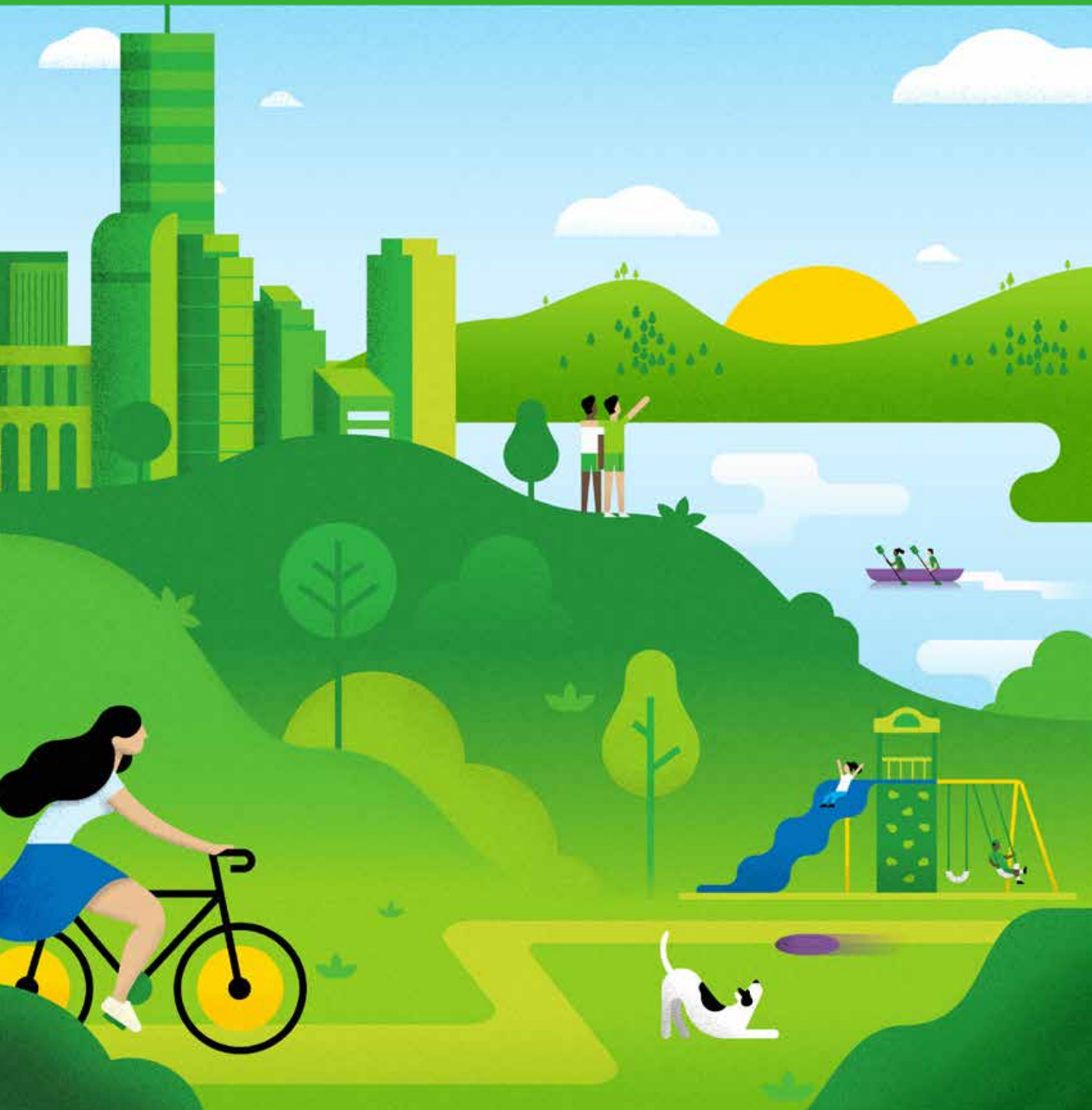


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The power of land for people

When you think of The Trust for Public Land, you might know us for the largest expansion of Yosemite National Park in 70 years.

You might know us for the childhood home of Dr. Martin Luther King in Atlanta, where we purchased more than a dozen properties over a 30-year span to help preserve the neighborhood as Dr. King would have remembered it – and which now welcomes more than a million visitors each year.

You might know us for the Stonewall Inn, where we helped the City of New York transfer the land that led to our first national monument dedicated to telling the story of the fight for LGBTQ rights.

But you should also think about commuters two miles north of Stonewall, who can board a train at Grand Central on a Saturday morning and hop off for a hike on the Appalachian Trail a couple of hours later.

You should think about an alley in South Central Los Angeles that we transformed into a community greenway, blooming with flowers and fig trees. That alley captures and filters two million gallons of polluted stormwater every year, preventing flooding. It also provides safer, greener space for a community that had none – on one visit, we saw kids riding bikes and families using the alley as a safe route to school.

And you should think about the students arriving at one of the hundreds of schoolyards that we have transformed into green and leafy neighborhood parks across the country.

That’s what’s so special about The Trust for Public Land – for nearly five decades, we’ve focused on *land for people*.

In the environmental movement, we hear a lot of talk about land *versus* people – about the prairies and oceans and species under threat from humans. And those threats are very real and critical. But understanding conservation in only this way is troublesome, because it frames human beings as fundamentally in conflict with our planet. With our home.

What if instead we think about this country and this earth as a place where the health of the people is inextricably linked with the health of the land? Where we can’t fix the prairies and oceans and protect species without addressing the health and prosperity of the human species and the landscapes, neighborhoods, and communities we inhabit. A place where stewarding the earth includes creating opportunities for *everyone* to experience and fall in love with nature – every child, every family. A place where prosperity means more than food to eat and a roof over our heads. It also means breathing clean air, drinking clear water. It means health. It means stronger communities. And prosperity means connecting with nature – great outdoor experiences for everyone – no matter where we live or how much money we have.

In 1973, The Trust for Public Land completed its first project – protecting what would become O’Melveny Park, the second-largest park in Los Angeles.

Today, almost half a century later, we proudly stand apart for our land-for-people mission, our deep commitment to communities, and our nationwide impact, including:

- Protecting and putting into public ownership nearly 5,000 places and more than 3.7 million acres, from neighborhood parks to national parks
- Creating nearly 500 parks, playgrounds, and gardens
- Developing more than 2,000 miles of trails
- Putting a quality park within a 10-minute walk of home for more than 9 million people
- Helping communities generate more than \$75 billion in new public funds for parks and conservation

But the true measure of our success is in the millions of people whose lives are affected by these places in countless ways. While we appreciate beautiful parks and public lands for their own sake, we are most moved by their transformative effect on people and communities – the leaders who design a park and emerge energized and ready to confront even greater challenges; the kids who come to see themselves as part of a larger, purposeful collective; and the elders who share their wisdom and leave behind a legacy of public land for future generations to cherish.

Our board, staff, supporters, and partners are united by a shared understanding of the extraordinary power of land for people. And the latest scientific research reinforces what experience has taught us: quality parks and natural spaces are a fundamental requirement for sustaining healthy, equitable communities that are resilient and prepared for change.



Land-for-people solutions are more needed now than at any point in recent memory. In this moment of polarization and increasing social isolation, parks and public land reweave our country’s frayed social fabric, reconnecting us to the places and experiences that bind us together as a nation.

Maintaining community at the center of our mission, this strategic plan focuses The Trust for Public Land’s efforts on the work we are uniquely positioned to lead, so that we can:

- Collaborate with more communities to improve health, build climate resilience, and forge a more equitable society
- Advance innovations in conservation research and policy and generate new public and private funding for parks and public land
- Bring the power of land for people to hundreds of communities, improving quality of life for tens of millions of people across America

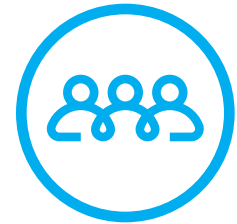
Grounded in our nearly five decades of accomplishment, we will partner with communities to envision a better future and build it with intention.

Toward solutions,

Thomas Reeve
Board Chair

Diane Regas
CEO and President

AT THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND



community is at the center of everything we do.

Healthy places are vital to human well-being. And as a growing body of scientific research demonstrates, access to nature is vital to health – both for people and for the communities where people live, work, and play.

At The Trust for Public Land, a target outcome of our mission is to catalyze communities that are healthier, more livable, and more connected. Stronger communities are better prepared to tackle systemic social, health, and environmental challenges. That’s why we work in and with communities to create, protect, and advance the nature-rich places we all love – and upon which we all depend.

In these uncertain times, when our system of public lands and our sense of collective civic responsibility are equally at threat, The Trust for Public Land is proudly, resolutely collaborating with communities – block by block, park by park, and city by city – to restore the public commons that bind us together as a nation. From California to Maine – and all the parks and trails and hills and vales in between – we help communities get the most public benefit from the places they hold dear. The impact of our mission is not only the creation of great parks, public lands, trails, and green schoolyards. It’s also the strengthening of the social, civic, and personal and emotional connections upon which our very democracy depends.

Many of our most pressing public challenges are place based: Lifespans vary significantly by zip code; a scarcity of neighborhood trees creates dangerous “hot spots” in cities; disparities in access to

parks and trails prevent entire neighborhoods from getting outside to play, taking a lifelong toll on generations of kids and families; and rural areas with less public land suffer economically.

At The Trust for Public Land, we use parks and public land to build community capacity and power to address historic and systemic inequities. Every one of the thousands of communities we have collaborated with has its own story to tell about how these places have transformed quality of life. We share a number of these stories in this plan, including:

In San Francisco, California, tens of thousands of families are reaping the health rewards of close-to-home parks and green spaces.

In Wenatchee, Washington, residents are discovering the power of parks to build civic participation and increase voter turnout.

In Atlanta, Georgia, residents are using parks and green infrastructure to redress the devastations of climate change.

In Trinidad, Colorado, decision makers are investing in public land to ensure economic vitality.

In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, neighbors are creating parks that reflect and reinforce their heritage and identity.

In New York City, hundreds of communities are transforming their schoolyards into inviting public playgrounds, sparking a nationwide movement and making life better for millions of people.

In Dallas, Texas, people are establishing innovative trail networks that connect them to nature and each other.

Our commitment to improving community health, equity, and climate outcomes drives every decision we make.

Over the next five years, we will maximize our impact in communities by evolving and implementing the highest standards of learning and engagement, including:

Learning

- Targeted siting of parks and public lands based on the latest data and technology
- Advancing cutting-edge academic health, equity, and climate research
- Measuring and tracking national progress against indicators of community-scale impacts such as heat, physical activity, public safety, economic activity, and education
- Collecting and sharing data to quantify the impact of the parks we create and the lands we protect in the communities we serve

Engagement

- Codesigning with communities to ensure that every park we create and place we protect reflects local culture, needs, and aspirations
- Broad, deep, and sustained outreach to people representing all perspectives
- Cultivating and developing local leadership
- Collaborating with partner organizations to address other community challenges



OUR MISSION

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.

WHAT we do

OUR INITIATIVES

By 2025, we will directly engage more than 300 communities and improve quality of life for more than 85 million people.



LANDS

We will generate more than \$10 billion in funding for land protection and establish 500 protected places for public benefit, deploying innovative tools to advance community conservation goals.



PARKS

We will put a quality park within a 10-minute walk of five million people who currently lack access by creating new parks or transforming underutilized parks in the communities of greatest need and by activating local and national partnerships.



SCHOOLYARDS

We will grow our schoolyards program to expand park access for nearly 6 million people across the country and open green schoolyards in 20 underserved school districts.



TRAILS

We will connect more than 3 million people to 1,000 miles of local and national trails and greenways.

WHY we do it

OUR COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITIES



HEALTH

Everyone deserves healthy communities. We create opportunities for all people to experience the physical and mental health benefits nature provides, from close-to-home parks to awe-inspiring outdoor experiences.

CLIMATE

Everyone deserves climate-smart communities. The parks we create and the lands we protect safeguard people from extreme heat, poor air and water quality, flooding, and sea level rise, making communities more resilient and prepared for change.

EQUITY

Everyone deserves access to the benefits of nature. Working hand in hand with communities, we support the efforts of historically marginalized groups to create access to the outdoors by delivering park and green space solutions that energize their efforts and address wide-ranging challenges.

HOW we do it

OUR TOOL KIT



PUBLIC LAND FOR PUBLIC GOOD

We help communities protect lands and waterways to benefit everyone.



PARK CREATION AND TRANSFORMATION

We help communities create and transform parks to reflect local interests, cultures, heritage, and aspirations.



DATA AND INSIGHT

We help communities prioritize investments in public land, using data-driven mapping technology and insights to pinpoint where nature is most needed.



ADVOCACY

We mobilize support for critical bills and policies to advance the use of public land for societal good.



FUNDING AND LEVERAGE

We help communities generate public funding for parks and open space, leveraging donations to achieve a return of \$2,000 in public funds for every \$1 donated.

Join us to reimagine and realize the power of land for people to create stronger communities that move society forward.

Health

Public health is too often determined by zip code. We aim to change that.



Olympic Park, Miami, FL
Photo: Allana Wesley White

Where we live plays a big role in how long, and how well, we live. In fact, where we live has an even more significant impact on our long-term health outcomes than the medical care we receive.¹ There is a growing understanding of the myriad ways that access to nature makes us healthier and happier.

Safe, high-quality parks and open spaces improve health.

In recent years, mayors, community leaders, academics, and thought leaders have all come to the same conclusion: people need nature. We feel inspired by iconic lands and we feel calmed by a walk in our local park. This has a real impact on public health. In recent years, the public health community has found that parks and open spaces can address some of the nation's most pervasive, expensive, and intractable health crises, including obesity, mental health, crime, stress, and maternal and infant health.² When undertaken with smart investment, data-driven planning, and collaborative design, parks and open spaces improve community-level health outcomes.

We are scaling our land-for-people work to boost public health and reduce health disparities.

We use our proprietary databases and modeling techniques to pinpoint the optimal locations for new parks that maximize both health benefits and park access. These insights can ensure that communities move toward 100 percent park access in the most cost-effective and equitable ways.

We work with communities to design outdoor spaces that address health needs and reflect local culture and aspirations, which ensures the spaces are well used and well loved. As an example, in a rural Oregon community with the lowest physical health outcomes in the state, we are partnering with a broad community coalition to implement “Klamath Falls Blue Zones.” This cross-sector effort protects forests and expands park and trail access as a key component to improve the community's physical health, livability, and quality of life.

Our experience and insight inform broader park practice, including establishing national benchmarks for park use. This has been translated to a “nature diet” for the public in communities interested in improving health at the population scale.³

We work with communities to connect the dots – and funding – between public health goals and goals for improving access to quality parks and green space. For example, we have been leading the Pacoima Community Revitalization Strategy, a cross-sector, collaborative planning project that secured tens of millions in cap-and-trade funding to improve community health in California.



Frogtown Park and Farm, St. Paul, MN
Photo: Hunt + Capture Photography

Boosting health in San Francisco, California

Only steps from the tourist hot spot of the Powell Street cable car turnaround sits the Tenderloin, San Francisco's most densely populated neighborhood. Though it's bordered by some of the world's wealthiest zip codes, this less than half a square mile is home to the largest number of San Francisco families living below the poverty line. By density, the Tenderloin has the most children and the fewest parks in the Bay Area.

Here, schools sit side by side with single-room-occupancy hotels and apartment buildings share the block with soup kitchens and agencies providing mental health and addiction services. Tenderloin residents and families badly needed safe places to get outside—but their old neighborhood parks weren't it. More than 45,000 people live within a 10-minute walk of Boeddeker Park, but the site was so rundown and inhospitable, locals nicknamed it "Prison Park." And as the *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote, "City planners and politicians had long wrestled with how to 'fix' Civic Center Plaza and the blocks around it in front of San Francisco City Hall—a grand governmental hub, but also an often troublesome void."

These kinds of multifaceted, high-stakes urban planning challenges are exactly what The Trust for Public Land was built for. In 2009, we began convening groups of neighbors, school administrators, funders, health care partners, and others committed to improving health and well-being in the Tenderloin. And in 2014 we cut the ribbon on the new Boeddeker Park followed by the new Helen Diller Civic Center Playgrounds in 2018.

For the neighbors who've watched the transformation, these openings were milestone moments in the long fight for the parks and health opportunities they deserve—including an extensive community workshop process to identify the features they wanted most. Today both parks are vibrant hubs for community health and connection, from Zumba and tai chi classes to chess matches and after-school programming.

Now we're working with partners on the vision for the Tenderloin Wellness Trail, a safe passage to link parks, gardens, and community centers so residents can easily access health and recreation opportunities throughout the neighborhood.

"Parks are important because they bring the community together," says Jaeya Bayani, a 14-year-old student whose school uses the new Boeddeker Park for gym class and recess. "They help people get out and start moving and really appreciate what's outside, instead of being isolated all the time."



Helen Diller Civic Center Playground, San Francisco, CA
Photo: Lindsay Upson



Boeddeker Park, San Francisco, CA
Photo: Jeremy Beeton

Equity

Walk around any American city and it's easy to see: *Not all neighborhoods are created equal.*



Some have vibrant, inviting playgrounds, lush green parks and trails, bustling businesses, and plenty of welcoming public spaces to host a farmer's market, fair, or community gathering. Others don't.

What accounts for this disparity? The answers to this question reach back across generations of decisions and policies ranging from the unintentionally flawed to the outright biased. Although the causes of inequity are vast and systemic, the effects are measurable, mappable, and – in many cities – literally concrete.

Past decisions have led to disparities in community opportunities. The decisions we make today can create a just future for all.

Parks and public lands are where everyone can access the countless benefits that nature and the outdoors provide. But over the last several decades, low-income communities have seen a disproportionately low share of parks and open space investment, limiting their opportunities for social connection, accelerating poor health outcomes, and putting entire neighborhoods at greater risk of rising temperatures and severe weather.

In cities across America, too many neighborhoods struggle with undue concentrations of stagnation, disinvestment, and poverty.⁴ Rural communities face a unique set of hurdles: rapidly aging populations, isolation from infrastructure and services, and higher rates of chronic disease.⁵ That's why we work with each community to guarantee that investments in parks benefit everyone – especially the people and families who need it most.

In cities, we are bringing creativity to the table to help prevent the displacement that can come with development by advancing real-world solutions that help create new homes for working people, support community self-determination, and

drive widespread investment. For example, when we helped design and pass Proposition 68 in California, we advocated for – and successfully secured – \$750 million out of the \$4.1 billion in funding to be allotted to the neighborhoods with the greatest needs – the largest single public investment in state history for park-poor communities.

In rural areas we catalyze solutions that fit specific local needs. We are especially proud of approaches that bring both recreational opportunities and economic benefit, such as our work to create community forests that “pay for themselves” by generating timber income or our work to protect beloved recreation sites like community-owned ski hills or trail networks.

Community-led projects strengthen marginalized neighborhoods and communities. We are scaling our land-for-people work to address the urgent need for equity and access.

We are the national leader in the movement to ensure that everyone in the country has access to a high-quality park close to home.

Our parks – designed and built hand in hand with the community – increase the power of neighborhoods to address wide-ranging challenges.

We are experienced and adept at working *with* and not just *for* communities. We champion thoughtful community engagement practices, listening to all stakeholders to cocreate a shared vision and prioritize park investments. As people learn more about the benefits of parks and open space, we learn more about how parks can help them achieve their aspirations for stronger neighborhoods.

Increasing equity in Wenatchee, Washington

For farmworkers in South Wenatchee, a small city three hours east of Seattle, the start of fall means the end of the cherry season—and the conclusion of a long, hot summer harvest. Growing up, Teresa Bendito watched her father clock 16-hour days during June and July, and when she turned 18, she joined her family and friends working in the fruit-packing plants.

But despite the long hours, Bendito says her family always found time to ride bikes and play along the river after work, making the most of the midsummer sunlight. So when she learned that The Trust for Public Land was working to redesign the long-neglected park nearby, she was among the first in her tight-knit neighborhood to sign up as a volunteer.

Three years later, their group—the *Parque Padrinos*—is more than 120 volunteers strong. “In Latin American culture, *padrino* means godparent,” says Bendito. “We’re the *madrinas* and *padrinos* for this park.”

With its turf field, upgraded playground, and brand-new *kiosko*—a performance pavilion, common in town squares in Mexico—the new Kiwanis Methow Park is nearly unrecognizable from its former incarnation. But just as much as the park has transformed, so have the *Padrinos*.

“Parque Padrinos is not just about the park. They’ve developed a space where your identity is respected and elevated so you can build community,” says Oskar Zambrano, director of Civic Engagement and Advocacy at the Latino Community Fund of Washington, an organization that encourages equal representation.

Historically, Wenatchee has had low Latino voter turnout, and Latinos are underrepresented in government office. So when it was time to get out the vote for the 2018 midterm elections, Zambrano called the Parque Padrinos to help.

In the days before voters headed to the polls, Padrinos knocked on 3,500 doors and made 4,200 phone calls. When ballots were tallied, Latino voter turnout was three times what it had been in the two most recent midterms.

“When I heard those numbers, I couldn’t believe it,” says Bendito’s mother, Teresa Zepeda-Sosa. “I realized we had the power to uplift candidates who care about our concerns and change how resources are distributed in our city.”

Bendito and Zepeda-Sosa shared the story of one Wenatchee 13-year-old who had started a group of “*padrinitos*” for younger volunteers. He organized a piñata-making workshop and raised \$50 in donations toward the park’s renovation. Later, he joined the Parque Padrinos on a visit to the capital to meet with state representatives.

“Kids need to see and experience the fruits of their labor and organizing,” says Bendito. “Now that I see the Padrinos leading, I’m confident we have begun a movement that will impact lives wherever our people take this experience.”



Kiwanis Methow Park, Wenatchee, WA
Photo: Mike Bonnicksen/The Wenatchee World



Kiwanis Methow Park, Wenatchee, WA
Photo: Jorge Rivas

Climate

Communities need real-world solutions to the climate crisis. *We can help.*



Runyon Canyon, Los Angeles, CA
Photo: Annie Bang

Each passing month brings increasingly dire headlines of record-breaking heat waves, storms, fires, and floods, with more lives and property lost and mounting damage to ecosystems and economies.⁶

While all of us are in harm's way, low-income communities and people of color are hit especially hard.^{7,8} There are countless stories of the local impacts of a global climate crisis, from families displaced by wildfire or floods to young children and the elderly hospitalized after extreme heat events.

It does not have to be this way. Public land is an effective tool to help communities protect themselves from the ravages of climate change. When armed with the right data and planning technology, informed guidelines for design and management, and new sources of funding, communities across the United States can harness the power of nature to build a more resilient and climate-just future.

Parks and public land are key to keeping cities cooler. For example, a shady green park on a hot day in Washington, DC, was 17 degrees cooler than surrounding neighborhoods⁹ and that cooling effect can extend a half-mile from the edge of the park.¹⁰ Nature-based green infrastructure – like that included in all Trust for Public Land schoolyards, parks, and protected lands – can buffer homes and neighborhoods from increasingly intense storms and absorb runoff, preventing flooding.

Public lands also reduce the very driver of climate change by storing carbon, removing it from the atmosphere. Research has shown that effective land protection and management could offset 21 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.¹¹

In our nearly five decades of helping communities, we've developed time-tested, cost-effective solutions for using parks and public land to counter climate challenges.

We've worked directly with 100 cities, home to 25 million people, applying our climate-smart planning insight to identify where parks and public land would have the greatest impact. We've implemented hundreds of on-the-ground projects to reduce urban heat, manage intense rainfall, and protect natural carbon stocks. We've protected 700,000 acres of floodplain and coasts and 3.6 million acres of land that store 141 million tons of carbon – equivalent to the emissions of 100 million vehicles for a year. And we've engaged voters and decision makers to deliver

nature-based climate action, driving policy innovation and billions of dollars in state and local conservation funding that more than double our direct impact.

Now we are scaling our land-for-people work to help communities assess and prepare for the magnitude of the challenges ahead. In the coming years we will identify the communities at greatest risk and apply science-based standards to help them maximize the climate benefits of their public land. And we will generate more than \$10 billion in new public funds so more communities can invest in parks and public land to create a green and resilient future for all.



Avalon Green Alley, Los Angeles, CA
Photo: Annie Bang

Improving climate resilience in Atlanta, Georgia

On the western edge of downtown Atlanta, the residential neighborhoods of Vine City and English Avenue have a long and luminous history. The area boasts four prominent historically black colleges and universities. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lived here, alongside fellow civil rights leaders Julian Bond and Maynard Jackson. But despite Vine City's proud legacy, more recent memories reflect decades of disinvestment and inequality, says Tony Torrence, an environmental activist who's lived on the Westside for decades.

The neighborhood has among the lowest incomes and highest crime rates in Atlanta. Abandoned buildings and vacant lots outnumber occupied homes. And many residents are still suffering the aftereffects of a devastating 2002 rainstorm that sent a flash flood tearing through Vine City and English Avenue, destroying dozens of homes and damaging hundreds more. "People were swimming out of their homes," Torrence recalls. "Trying to climb out of windows. We had to drag people out of their houses."

In the aftermath, the City of Atlanta razed properties across 16 acres, relocating hundreds of residents. And while many families have worked to

rebuild, they've found the chronic effects of badly managed stormwater to be no less hazardous: "The ground slumps. The foundations of your house crack. The roof leaks, and rain gets in. Then you have mold and mildew, and that stirs up your asthma," says Torrence. "If your health isn't good, it's harder to go to work. So you see how the stormwater situation in this neighborhood is contributing to some of the social challenges that we're facing."

Today, after years of activism by neighborhood residents like Torrence, The Trust for Public Land is helping transform those flood-ravaged 16 acres into a gleaming new park featuring state-of-the-art engineering for managing stormwater and preventing flooding. The plantings and retention pond at Rodney Cook Sr. Park can store up to 10 million gallons of stormwater, enough to keep the neighborhood safe during the next major flood.

With more extreme storms predicted as the climate changes, Cook Park cannot come soon enough. "The people who live in these low-lying areas have been the ones advocating for this park the longest," says Torrence. "It started with community groups saying, 'Hey, we have to do this. These floods are impacting our lives.'"



Historic Fourth Ward Park, Atlanta, GA
Photo: Christopher T. Martin



Cook Park, Atlanta, GA
Photo: Hannah Lozano

How we do it



PUBLIC LAND FOR PUBLIC GOOD

We work with landowners, partner groups, and public agencies to acquire, provide access, and put into public ownership the lands and waterways that enhance our nation's quality of life and make our communities great places to live, work, and play.



PARK CREATION AND TRANSFORMATION

We work with community and youth leaders, equitable development entities, schools, designers, and builders to create parks that reflect local interests, cultures, heritage, and aspirations and connect people to nature and to each other.



DATA AND INSIGHT

We work with cities and regions to pinpoint the greatest opportunities to bring nature to the communities that need it most, using GIS mapping, analysis, and insight.



ADVOCACY

We work with elected officials, thought leaders, and communities to mobilize support for critical bills and policies to advance parks and public lands for people.



FUNDING AND LEVERAGE

We work with cities, states, counties, and communities to pass ballot measures and create and unlock public funding for parks and open space. To date, we've generated \$75 billion for park creation and land protection, leveraging donations to achieve a return of \$2,000 in public funds for every \$1 donated.

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND Boosting park access for Dallas

2016

54%
PARK ACCESS

FEBRUARY 2016

We partner with the **Dallas Park and Recreation Department** to lead development of a citywide planning tool to pinpoint the highest-need locations for parks, trails, and green space, prioritizing health, climate, and equity outcomes.

APRIL 2017

Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings becomes one of the first of hundreds to join our **10 Minute Walk Campaign**, challenging the city to rapidly increase park access.

MAY 2017

We partner with the park department and the **Texas Trees Foundation** to launch the city's first green schoolyards program. Applying our GIS data insights, we select 32 campuses for green schoolyards in areas with poor park access and urban heat islands.

NOVEMBER 2017

We lead a coalition of partners in support of a **\$311 million parks bond** to improve existing neighborhood parks, grow public-private partnerships, and expand the city's trail network.

FEBRUARY 2019

We publish the **Five Mile Creek Urban Greenbelt Master Plan**, casting a vision for equitable park access in one of Dallas's highest-need areas.

JUNE 2019

We begin implementation of the Five Mile Creek Master Plan, acquiring 40 acres of land for keystone parks within the greenbelt.

OCTOBER 2019

We help the city of Dallas explore expanding its green schoolyards program to include an additional 30+ campuses, putting a park within walking distance of an additional 67,000 people.

Since 2016, we've brought 366,000 Dallas residents within a 10-minute walk of a park.

But our work is not yet done. When complete, we will have raised park access by 24 percent—from 54 percent of residents served to 78 percent served.

TARGET
2022

78% PARK ACCESS



Our initiatives

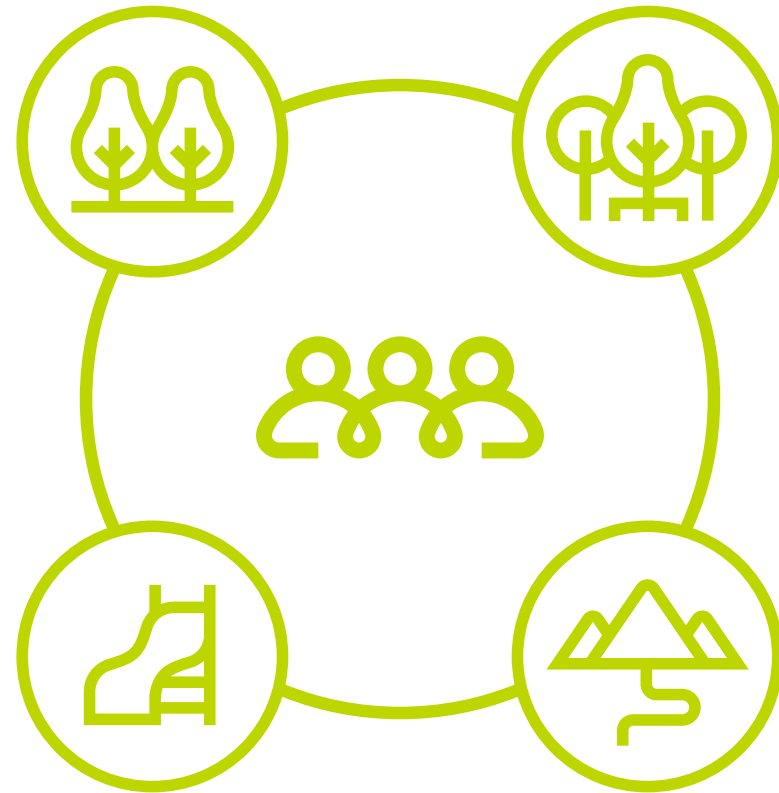
We envision a future where:

LANDS

Every community is connected to public lands, benefiting from their power to strengthen social bonds, provide healthy outdoor experiences, and safeguard clean air and water.

PARKS

Every community has safe, equitable access to a high-quality park within a 10-minute walk of home.



SCHOOLYARDS

Green schoolyards become a standard practice, serving as a hub for community empowerment, improved health and education, and climate resiliency.

TRAILS

Every community has equitable access to urban, suburban, and rural trails connecting people to nature, recreation, schools, workplaces, and their broader neighborhood.

Our goal

The Trust for Public Land is reimagining and realizing the power of land for people to create stronger communities that move society forward.

By 2025, our land-for-people initiatives will directly engage more than **300 communities** and improve quality of life for more than **85 million people**.

Lands

When a community rallies to protect a beloved river, forest, coastline, or any treasured landscape, we all gain.



Whether or not we grew up visiting these places, America’s iconic landscapes evoke a sense of national pride, splendor, and adventure. Our national and state parks, national forests, and other protected public lands embody and reflect our cultural identities and histories while providing a range of critical benefits, from clean air and water to recreation to jobs to improved quality of life.

Billions of times a year, millions of people all across America pack up picnic baskets or camping gear, hop on bikes or lace up boots, and head to public lands to paddle on a favorite lake or river, hike to a favorite vista, or ski or snowshoe in a wintery wonderland.

But as our country changes and grows, so too must our system of public lands.

The places we have protected in the past will not be enough to meet future demands. In 2016 and 2017, the national parks saw an unprecedented 330.9 million visitors – the highest ever recorded.¹² By 2050 our country could lose 23 million acres of precious forest¹³ – enough trees to cover the entire state of Indiana.

We know that public lands revitalize communities: over the past 50 years, rural counties in the western United States with the most federal lands – especially those with national parks and other publicly accessible lands – have twice the rates of population growth, employment, and income growth than their counterparts.¹⁴

The Trust for Public Land is poised to lead the nation in implementing community-driven land protection at scale.

Since 1972, we have protected nearly 5,000 special places across 3.7 million acres, and we’ve helped generate \$75 billion in public funding for parks and open space through ballot measures supported by nearly 116 million voters in 38 states. Since our founding, The Trust for Public Land has advanced innovative conservation models, such as community forests, which establish permanently protected open spaces that are planned, managed, owned, and used by the community and for the community.

By 2025 The Trust for Public Land will:

- Complete 500 regionally and nationally significant land protection projects, including community forests, national parks and forests, wildlife management areas, and working lands.
- Permanently protect 1,000,000 acres of land and 1,000 miles of rivers and streams.
- Empower and engage 200 communities to generate conservation plans and economic studies for land protection.
- Secure \$900 million annually through a permanent and fully funded Land and Water Conservation Fund to include significant increases in federal and state conservation funding through new and existing sources.
- Secure \$10 billion through bonds and other public measures to support land protection efforts of The Trust for Public Land and our partners across the country.

Land for people in Trinidad, Colorado

Juan De La Roca was ready to leave Colorado behind. For 25 years, he'd lived, worked, and played in the mountains around Denver. But the state's booming growth was driving up housing prices and snarling traffic, and the once-quiet trails where De La Roca rode his bike were getting crowded.

So he started looking around for a place that still had what he loved about Colorado, but with rents he could afford. And in a town called Trinidad, 200 miles south of Denver, he found it: the Rocky Mountains on the horizon, the Purgatoire River flowing through a charming downtown, where he could walk or ride his bike everywhere he needed to be. And tower-

ing over it all, the distinctive shape of Fisher's Peak, a 9,600-foot mesa that's a familiar landmark for everyone crossing into Colorado from New Mexico on Interstate 25.

Like a lot of his friends in the Denver metro, De La Roca had mostly known Trinidad by its hardscrabble reputation: a ranching and mining community, undeniably beautiful but with little in the way of public land. Even Fisher's Peak, visible from pretty much everywhere in town, was off-limits: all the land between town and the summit was part of a private ranch.

In 2017, Trinidad's city leaders approached The Trust for Public Land for help securing public access to the peak. And in 2019, we partnered to purchase the entire 19,200-acre ranch and protect it from private development.

Now we're working closely with Trinidad residents on a master plan to reimagine the property for the public. And in the fall of 2019, Colorado governor Jared Polis announced that Fisher's Peak Ranch will indeed become a new state park.

De La Roca says it's exactly what Trinidad needs, both culturally and economically. "This community has so much history and heritage and beauty. It's just been waiting for a chance to tell its story," he says. And with a huge, stunning, wild state park with a famous mountain at its heart, "People will come here, and they'll begin to appreciate all this place has to offer."



Trinidad, CO
Photo: Lauren Wachs, courtesy of The Nature Conservancy



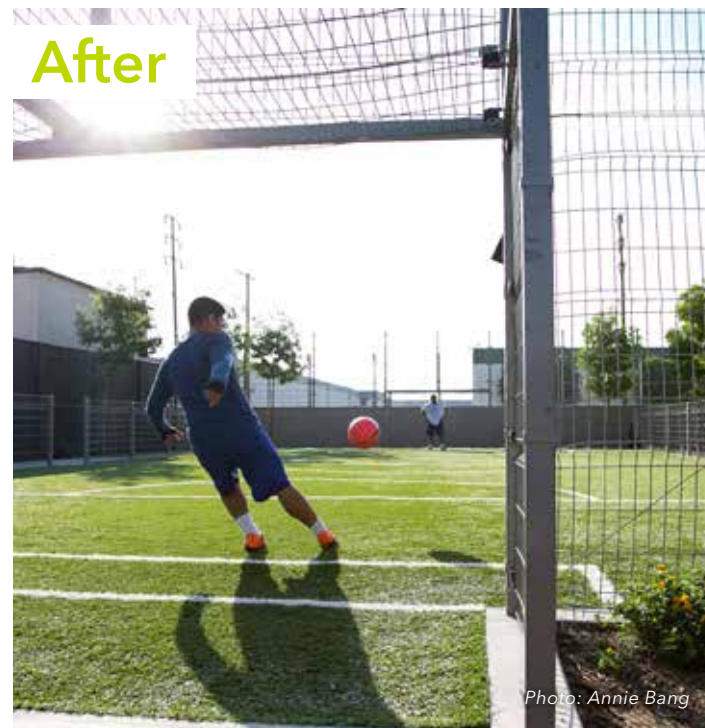
Story Mill Community Park, Bozeman, MT
Photo: Tom Robertson

Parks

More than 100 million people across America – a third of us – don't have a park within a 10-minute walk of home.



Benito Juarez Park, Los Angeles, CA



The Trust for Public Land is engaging civic leaders to bring parks – and their countless benefits – to all. Parks provide critical public benefits, from boosting health to strengthening social connections and helping communities adapt to climate change. To catalyze a movement to bring parks to every person in every city and town in the country, The Trust for Public Land is partnering with a powerful group who understands the value that parks can provide: mayors.

More than 250 mayors representing 57 million people in cities nationwide have signed on in support of our vision that everyone deserves a great park within a 10-minute walk of home. And over the coming years, we'll work with mayors and their communities to make this vision a reality.

No organization has worked more deeply with more communities to create more great parks than The Trust for Public Land. Since 1972, we've engaged hundreds of communities nationwide to

advance the creation of 517 parks, putting a park within a 10-minute walk of nearly 6.7 million people across the United States, and helping cities and towns finance long-term systematic improvements in their park systems.

Beyond our direct impact, we provide powerful research and tools, thought leadership, and park policy improvements to a growing number of local and national park champions. Policy-makers rely on our parks database – the largest and most comprehensive in the nation – to pinpoint where parks are most needed. Local nonprofits and community groups look to us to connect them to grants and critical public funding for park developments and improvements.

Over the next five years we will expand our best-in-class model for creating and transforming parks in partnership with communities to address local health, climate, and equity challenges.

By 2025 The Trust for Public Land will:

- Engage 50 mayors in 50 cities to make—and keep—the “100% Promise” to ensure a quality park for all within a 10-minute walk of home by 2050, advancing our 10 Minute Walk campaign nationwide.
- Pinpoint where parks are needed most by leveraging tools like The Trust for Public Land ParkScore® index and GIS mapping to evaluate how U.S. cities are meeting needs for park acreage, investment, amenities, and access.
- Support the passage of \$6 billion in government funding for parks and green space.
- Create 35 new high-quality parks, collaborating with communities through our signature participatory design process.
- Raise the public's awareness of the power of parks to strengthen communities through outreach including the 10 Minute Walk campaign, the ParkScore® index, and National Walk to a Park Day.
- Analyze the public benefits of parks and establish standardized metrics for evaluation. Establish new data sets, research, and insights to evaluate the public benefits of parks.

Parks for people in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

In a bare-bones gymnasium in Grays Ferry one summer evening, twenty people are planning a party. This South Philadelphia neighborhood's largest park is set to reopen with a big celebration in a few weeks, following a four-year renovation. But the folks gathered on folding chairs arranged around center court say Lanier Playground's reopening has actually been generations in the making.

"The sad thing is that when you Google 'Grays Ferry,' the majority of what you read is not so much the great things that have happened through the years, but the racism that's been here for longer than me," says lifelong resident Meeka Outlaw.

She talks about what it was like to grow up in a neighborhood that, perhaps more than anywhere else in Philadelphia, has been plagued by racial divisions and violence. And those tensions played out nowhere more fiercely than at Lanier Playground. "The park was ground zero for

racism in Grays Ferry," Outlaw says. "You have black people that live on one side and white people on the other side. If the black people were in the park, the white people wouldn't go in there. If the white people were in the park, the black people wouldn't go in there." After decades of violence between neighbors in and around the park, the city intervened, locking the park's gates in 2007. And that's how it stayed: four acres of green space in the heart of a dense residential neighborhood, off-limits and unused.

Outlaw has worked alongside her neighbors to reopen the park since 2014. In the beginning, she remembers, park-planning meetings mirrored the dynamics throughout the neighborhood. "It was just really separated, with black people on one side of the table and white people on the other," she says.

But over time, through thoughtful conversations about what the park could be, and why it mattered to everyone, the hard feelings began to soften. "As it went on, then you started seeing the mixing of everybody. And everybody got to realize, okay, we all want the same thing," says Outlaw.

The renewed Lanier Playground opened to the public in August 2018, the culmination of years of work from a coalition of longtime residents who are deeply committed to their neighborhood growing beyond its divided past.

"It's disheartening to see the divisions that still exist in Grays Ferry," Outlaw says. "But what would be even more disheartening is if you allow that to scare you away. I know it's going to sound cliché—but we have more in common than not. Once you find that common ground, that's where you begin to work together."



Lanier Park, Philadelphia, PA
Photo: Elyse Leyenberger / TPL Staff



Lanier Park, Philadelphia, PA
Photo: Elyse Leyenberger / TPL Staff

Schoolyards

Transforming schools to make a life-changing difference.



Before

P.S. 366, NYC, Photos: TPL Staff

Everyone deserves access to a quality park and the vital benefits parks provide. But today, as little as ten percent of America's schoolyards are open to the public outside of school hours. By re-designing schoolyards – and making them accessible to the community after school and on weekends – we can put a great park within a 10-minute walk of more than 19 million people.¹⁵

For children and families, easy access to a safe and welcoming place to play can make a life-changing difference. A burgeoning compendium of research proves the vital benefits of outdoor play for kids – from boosting physical and mental health to building social skills to improving academic achievement.

America's more than 100,000 public schools are natural sites to spark full-scale community transformation.



After

There's a school in nearly every neighborhood, and by design, they are the place where the community gathers to play, socialize, exercise, and learn.

And yet, across the country, too few schoolyards are open to the public for use during non-school hours. And an even smaller number – as little as one percent – are designed with the kinds of green space and play features that the school and greater community need and deserve. Instead, the majority of schoolyards are an empty expanse of asphalt, more akin to a prison yard than a play area.

Since 1972, we've worked with communities nationwide, collaborating with thousands of students, parents, schools, and neighborhoods to create hundreds of nature-rich schoolyards designed to address climate, health, and educational inequities.

As of the fall of 2019, we're on our way to converting asphalt schoolyards in eleven cities – including New York City; Philadelphia; Newark; Camden; New Orleans; Oakland; Tacoma; Atlanta; Dallas; Los Angeles; and Bridgeport, Connecticut – and we've put more than four million people within a 10-minute walk of a quality schoolyard park.

We have refined our analytics and research capabilities to identify the nation's highest-impact opportunities, both for our own projects and for other leaders and organizations. For example, in Atlanta less than six percent of the city's land is parks, ranking it 43rd among the 100 largest cities; in 2017, our research concluded that Atlanta could increase 10-minute walk park access from 66 to 79 percent by opening its schoolyards to the public on weekends and after school.

Today, we are leveraging our experience to develop schoolyard policies and design guidelines that we offer to school districts across the country. Over the next five years, we will expand this effort to bring green schoolyards to six million more people in 20 school districts, and we will advocate for funding and policies that extend the reach of this work.



By 2025 The Trust for Public Land will:

- **Bring our green schoolyards initiative to 20 new school districts, connecting hundreds of thousands of people to nature and to each other and doubling the number of districts currently benefiting from schoolyard transformations.**
- **Identify 20 underserved school districts as candidates for schoolyard transformation. Cocreate green schoolyards in each district, designing each to achieve:**
 - 20 percent increase in moderate to vigorous activity levels
 - 75 percent increase in community engagement
 - 10 percent decrease in schoolyard ambient temperatures
 - Hundreds of millions of gallons of stormwater diverted
- **Advocate at the federal, state, and local levels to increase funding sources for green schoolyards, support policies like shared-use agreements, and build recognition of the importance of green schoolyards in improving educational outcomes, cooling neighborhoods, and managing floodwaters.**

Schoolyards for people in New York City

Even if your memories of grade school have faded, you can probably still picture the schoolyard. Large or small, asphalt or grass, it was your world and you knew every nook and cranny, from the quietest corner to whisper a secret to the straightest stretch to run a race. Nobody knows a playground like a child.

That's the idea behind our effort to tap students to help transform their recess areas into vibrant gathering spaces for the whole neighborhood. We began in New York City in the mid-'90s, a time when the

Big Apple had less green space per person than almost anywhere else in America. Looking to address the shortage, we spotted an underutilized resource: schoolyards. Back then—as now, in many communities—public school recess areas were barren asphalt lots, uninviting to students and closed to the rest of the community altogether. Taken as a whole, they represented an unprecedented opportunity to bring parks to the neighborhoods that needed them most.

The city embraced the idea. When Mayor Michael Bloomberg took office in 2002, he included schoolyards in his 30-year livability plan and named us as the city's nonprofit partner—in part because we involve the students as our cocreators. While installing “cookie-cutter” parks might be faster, the City of New York recognized that incorporating the design process into school curriculum would motivate students, parents, and school administrators—and produce better playgrounds.

Over the last two-plus decades, we've partnered on park design with more than 6,800 students to create more than 200 new schoolyard playgrounds across the five boroughs, putting a park within a 10-minute walk of more than four million New Yorkers. And we've expanded the effort, partnering with cities from Newark to Philadelphia to New Orleans to Oakland to achieve their sustainability and livability goals.

“This schoolyard demonstrates the value of student voices,” says Allison Cruz, a fifth grader at P.S. 213K in Brooklyn. “Watching our ideas take shape right outside the windows of our classroom has given us a huge sense of pride.”



P.S. 156 / L.S. 392, Brooklyn, NY
Photo: Joe Martinez



La Cima Charter School, Brooklyn, NY
Photo: Nomi Ellenson

Trails

Trails are the common ground for communities, connecting us to nature and each other.



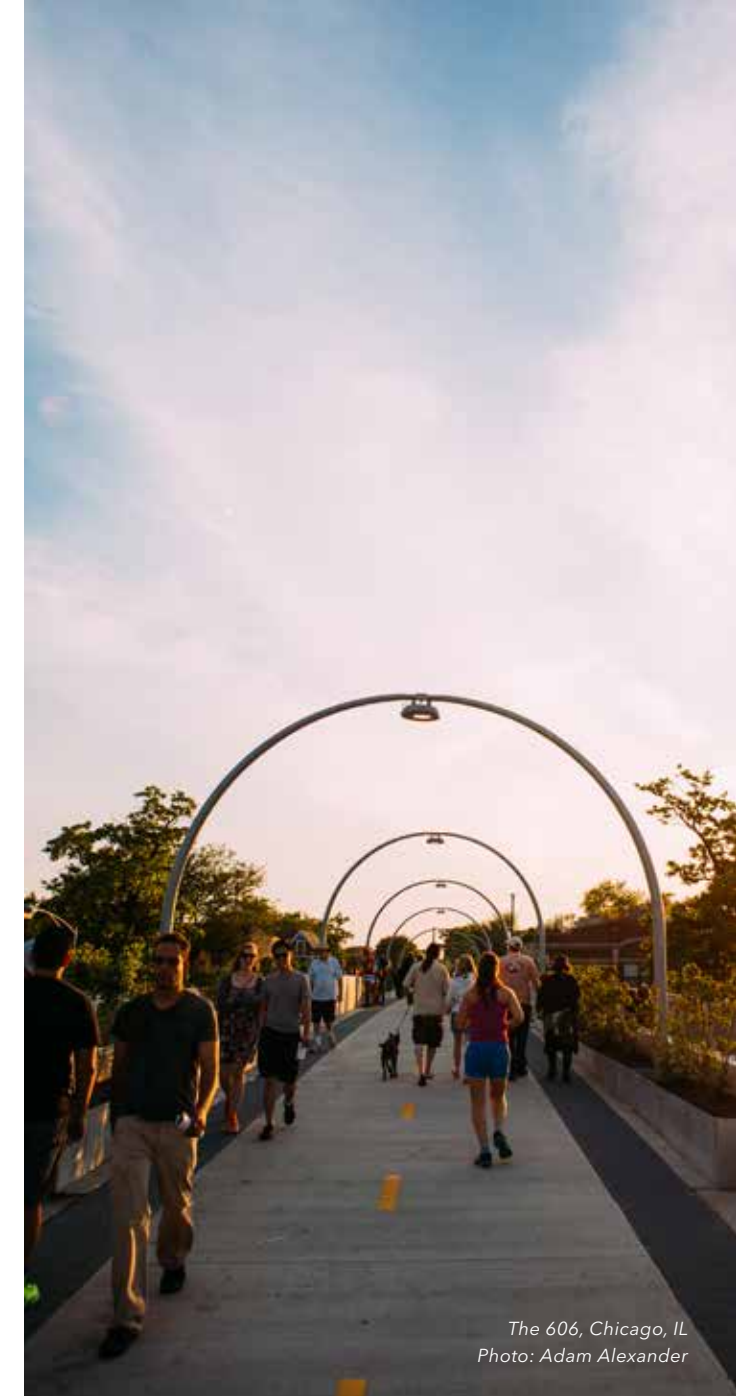
Zion Narrows Trail, UT
Photo: Mike Schirf

In an ever more sedentary and disconnected nation, trails serve as an important counterweight, encouraging people to get outside, get active, and see each other and the world. They cut across mapped boundaries and draw people into new places and experiences. Many cross not only neighborhoods, but entire cities and states.

Trails are where people mix and mingle – where joggers and cyclists share the route with dog walkers and kids on scooters and families with strollers. Plants and wildlife flourish along these corridors, and from neighborhood trails to national trails, local economies benefit from the value that trails bring. The Trust for Public Land works with communities and partners to create, connect, and enhance trails across the country.

Since 1972, we have led the creation of thousands of miles of rural and urban trails, from continent-spanning national trails to local greenways and paths, from The 606 in the heart of Chicago to segments of the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail.

Central to our work is an unwavering commitment to collaborating with and empowering other local and national organizations and partners. We are developing the first nationwide inventory of trails, which will include quantified models of trail use and detailed analysis of barriers to access. This will enable us to expand both our impact and the impact of our partners by understanding the scope of trail access obstacles and opportunities.



The 606, Chicago, IL
Photo: Adam Alexander

By 2025 The Trust for Public Land will:

- Establish new trails in 50 communities, creating or connecting 1,000 miles of urban, suburban, rural, or motorized trails and greenways.
- Demonstrate a 4:1 economic uplift for communities by prioritizing trail projects that will improve access and opportunity for underrepresented or low-income populations.
- Connect 20 new public transportation linkages.
- Increase funding for trails by leveraging local, state, and federal funds with philanthropic support.

Trails for people in Dallas, Texas

In 2015, students at Dallas's South Oak Cliff High walked out of class, protesting their 70-year-old building's crumbling condition. "The roof leaked, asbestos was everywhere, lead pipes for drinking water, the heating and air conditioning didn't work," says Derrick Battie, head of the South Oak Cliff Alumni Association. "Our students knew that their facilities didn't even come close to schools in the suburbs."

The walkout—the final stand in a yearlong battle to fix up the school—made national news and spurred leadership to invest \$55 million in a major renovation. Soon, South Oak Cliff students will report to class in a safe, modern, healthy facility. "Finally the type of learning environment our students deserve," says Battie.

"But there's still one big issue," he continues. "The creek." He's referring to the Alice Branch of Five Mile Creek, which cuts

through South Oak Cliff, running right behind the school. Battie says the overgrown and underused creek is "a dirty, nasty, smelly eyesore, right next to where our marching band and our championship football team practice."

Elsewhere in the Dallas metro, creeks serve as the backbones of well-planned, well-maintained trail networks, peaceful and welcoming amenities connecting neighborhoods. But not in South Oak Cliff, a predominantly African American neighborhood with far too little in the way of parks and open space.

Or at least—not yet. Battie says that shortly after the community won the fight for the school's renovation, it turned its focus to fixing the creek. "We said, 'We're not going to put up this brand-new school with the same dirty old creek behind it. That's like building a new house on an old foundation.'"

The Trust for Public Land worked with the school administration, Battie, and the rest of the powerhouse South Oak Cliff Alumni Association to develop the Five Mile Creek Greenbelt Master Plan—an ambitious vision to build 22 miles of trail along the creek and add four new parks to southern Dallas, including one where the creek flows behind the school. Trail segments are already under construction, and the new park is slated to open in 2021.

"South Oak Cliff has the highest crime rates in Dallas, highest rates of diabetes and those type of ailments," says school principal Dr. Willie Johnson. And owing to generations of inequitable investments in Dallas's parks, "we just don't have the green space that could help address that."

"That's why we're pushing for these trails. The students will use them, their families will use them. It'll just reinforce that our high school is a place of health and wellness for everyone in this community."



Dallas, TX
Photo: Mark Graham



Dallas, TX
Photo: Marie D. De Jesus



Thank you.

Thank you for all you do to create parks, protect land, and strengthen communities nationwide. And thank you for your ongoing support of The Trust for Public Land as we advance this strategic plan.

Together, in cities and towns in every corner of America, we're creating happier, healthier neighborhoods where all families can thrive. We are making communities more resilient and prepared for change. We are opening wellsprings of creativity and cultural connection. Block by block, we are transforming communities so that they welcome and work for all.

Together, we are renewing the power of public land to serve a greater public good. From idle to active. From closed to open. From alone to together. Because we know that a more vibrant, resilient, and equitable society is built on land for people.

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