

Summary of Information on ULI North Texas Grants for Technical Assistance Panels (“TAPs”) Related to Parks and Open Space

I. ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND:

- a. Established in 1936, the **Urban Land Institute (ULI)** is a nonprofit education and research institute with more than 40,000 members across the globe and over 1,300 in the DFW area. The mission of ULI is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI has long been recognized as one of America’s most respected sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development. **ULI North Texas (ULI NT)** is one of 53 District Councils, the local branches of the organization charged with implementing the ULI mission at the local level. Members of ULI NT include developers, lenders, architects, public officials, planners, landscape architects, and engineers.
- b. The **Trust for Public Land (TPL)** is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to create parks and protect land for people. It has a 30-year history of partnership with the communities of North Texas and has helped create nearly 2,000 acres of parks in the DFW region, including Eagle Mountain Lake Park (Tarrant County), the Southwest Nature Preserve (Arlington), the Joppa Preserve (Dallas) and Avondale Park (Denton). TPL has also implemented a number of key initiatives in the region, including Climate-Smart Cities: Smart Growth for Dallas, Conservation Finance: Dallas 2017 Bond Program, and an Economic Benefit Study for the City of Plano.
- c. Formed in 1965, the **National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)** is one of America’s leading non-profit organizations dedicated to the advancement of public parks, recreation and conservation. With a membership of more than 60,000, NRPA leverages its role in conservation, health and wellness, and social equity to represent public spaces in both urban communities and rural settings.

II. 10-MINUTE WALK CAMPAIGN

- a. In October 2017, TPL launched a bold national initiative with ULI and NRPA to ensure that all Americans living in cities have access to a high-quality park, trail or green space within a 10-minute walk of where they live. **The 10-Minute Walk has been endorsed by nearly 200 U.S. mayors, including the mayors of Dallas, Ft. Worth, Plano, Richardson, Lewisville and Grand Prairie.**
- b. Through the campaign and related activities, TPL, ULI and NRPA are promoting equitable access to parks, open space and nature, as well as civic investments in park-connecting infrastructure like trails and improved sidewalks.

III. ULI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL GRANTS

- a. ULI is seeking to partner with local municipalities, counties or non-profits (“**Sponsors**”) to find practical ways to improve the quality of and access to local parks, thus creating a positive neighborhood influence. A private organization may also participate in the TAP in coordination with a municipality, county or non-profit. The vehicle for ULI’s participation will be a **Technical Assistance Panel** or **TAP**, a two-day local workshop staffed by ULI member volunteers and focused on an infrastructure plan, design project, financing program or policy that supports access to quality parks and open space or park connections. ***For the first four qualifying TAPS related to parks and trails, ULI NT will waive its customary fee of \$20,000. This fee waiver constitutes the Grant.***
- b. The **purpose of this Grant Application** is to solicit grant requests from Sponsors interested in partnering with ULI on a TAP focused on the 10-minute walk to a park goal. Potential park and open space panel topics might include (but are not limited to):
- Short- and long-term opportunities for existing or proposed park parcels or trails
 - Parks or trails as catalysts for neighborhood improvement and economic development
 - Strategies that link parks and open spaces with other urban assets in a system
 - Recommendations for park funding (capital and operations), financing and partnerships, including public/private partnerships
 - Resilience and green infrastructure
 - Park programming

IV. STEPS IN THE TAP PROCESS

- a. **Scope of Services defined:** Once the applicants who will receive a TAP Grant are identified, ULI and each TAP Grant recipient will cooperate to define a scope of services tailored to the specific project. ULI’s advisory services may include support for the development or implementation of a plan or policy, including the elements below:
- Evaluating specific efforts undertaken by the Sponsor
 - Assessing overall strategy and planning
 - Identifying linkages between planning efforts and impacts
 - Engaging and getting input from community stakeholders if necessary to ensure that the project meets community-identified needs
 - Developing plans, policies, implementation steps and metrics to move the project forward
 - Identifying key economic & land use issues relating to parks and open spaces
- b. **Pre-Panel Information Gathering:** The Sponsor municipality or other organization is responsible for (1) preparing briefing materials (such as maps, population and economic data), (2) inviting appropriate stakeholders and community members to participate and (3) arranging for a tour of the study area. The Sponsor also cooperates with ULI to refine the TAP issue and identify key questions.

- c. **Panel Selection:** ULI assembles a team of 5-10 highly qualified professionals (public officials, land developers and owners, academics, architects, planners, designers, etc.) who volunteer their time. All panelists are screened to ensure their objectivity, and *all agree not to solicit work in the immediate study area for one year*. Once selected, the panel members begin to review the briefing materials and may participate in preliminary meetings or calls with staff to fully understand the issues.
- d. **Panel Program:** (1) ULI member volunteers spend two full days on site with local staff available as tour leaders and resource persons; (2) focus is on challenges posed by Sponsor briefing, confidential stakeholder interviews and feedback from any community reception or other meeting held by the Sponsor; (3) panelists deliver recommendations to Sponsor in a private presentation.
- e. **Post Panel:** (1) public presentation led by Sponsor highlighting outcomes of panel for the general public; (2) printed report prepared by ULI which summarizes the assignment and outlines practical recommendations for next steps (the Sponsor will have an opportunity to review and comment on the report prior to it becoming final, however, the report will reflect ULI's recommendations); (3) ULI monitors progress through correspondence with Sponsor staff or other agreed-on representative and remains available for implementation advice for up to 12 months after presentation of the report to the city council or other governing body.

V. **Role of the Sponsoring Municipality, County or Non-Profit Organization**

- a. Sponsors organizations should be in a position to benefit from ULI's expertise and to demonstrate their ability to implement its recommendations. ***ULI is particularly interested in situations in which a change in public policy, a new or improved park or trail or other TAP recommendation has the potential to be a catalyst for neighborhood stabilization and economic growth.***
- b. The TAP will be a joint effort, with ULI volunteers providing advice and support to the Sponsor municipality or organization. The Sponsor will take the lead in public outreach, including communicating within its governmental structure, facilitating information to ULI, communicating with stakeholders and implementing recommendations. If the TAP recommends policy changes, infrastructure financing or other public actions, the Sponsor will take the lead in presenting such recommendations to the applicable city council.
- c. **Cost to Sponsor:** Sponsors will perform and bear the costs of the following tasks:
 - identify and make available a dedicated point person, with knowledge and authority to participate in meaningful dialogue and engagement with ULI
 - prepare panel briefing materials
 - identify and schedule interviews with key stakeholders
 - arrange for and conduct any site tour

- provide venues for panel activities and provide food and beverages for panelists and for any meetings or receptions held in connection with the TAP
- host a presentation of the TAP recommendations to the Sponsor's city council within 60 days of the final TAP report

VI. Pre-Qualification Criteria. To be considered for a TAP under this Grant program, a Sponsor municipality, county or non-profit must:

- a. Have a strong connection with those area residents and other stakeholders who will be impacted by implementation of the TAP recommendations;
- b. Understand role of quality public space in neighborhood revitalization (community engagement, neighborhood pride, economic benefits, inclusive common spaces where diverse groups can meet, improved community health, etc.)
- c. Be willing to seek any necessary political support for the TAP program and implementing the recommendations resulting from this effort
- d. **Be willing to invest necessary staff time and absorb the costs associated with the TAP process, including the items listed in Section V c., above.**