



Dallas breaks ground on Trinity River trail project

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With Mayor Tom Leppert piloting a backhoe, Dallas' Trinity River face-lift moved a ceremonial scoop of dirt closer to reality Friday.

About 100 city officials, neighborhood residents and others gathered at Moore Park in Oak Cliff to celebrate what will be the city's first designated entryway to the river corridor.

"It's our first groundbreaking," said a smiling Gail Thomas, president of the Trinity Trust, the nonprofit raising private dollars to support the \$2 billion publicly funded project.

Plans call for adding lakes, trails, greenbelts, a toll road and flood control measures along the river.

When completed, the Moore Park Gateway – on Eighth Street near the Corinth Street Dallas Area Rapid Transit station – will include a pavilion, an overlook, an amphitheater, picnic areas and a trailhead.

"We are starting to see what is going to be Dallas in another six or seven years," Mr. Leppert told those gathered for the symbolic launch of one of the first Trinity projects. "It's so exciting to see a day like this, when another piece is going to come into place."

Work on the Moore project is expected to begin in late June or early July. The \$924,000 first phase, paid for with city bond funds, will provide the pavilion, landscaping and a pedestrian bridge across Cedar Creek to the existing park.

A \$2 million grant from the Hoblitzelle Foundation will expand the pavilion plaza, add the amphitheater and trees and build the trailhead. That work should begin next year, said Mary Ayala, senior recreation manager for the Trinity project.

In time, the trail from Moore Park will cross the Trinity at the old Santa Fe railroad trestle bridge, provide access to the water and connect with other trails along the river and through the Great Trinity Forest.

Moore Park will be the first of at least six Trinity project gateways with openings planned for MLK Boulevard, Rochester Park, Loop 12, the Joppa neighborhood and Interstate 20.

For now, Moore Park is mostly aging athletic fields and playground equipment. Floodwaters can leave the creek trashed. The improvements will cover the former site of a rundown motel.

"I'm glad something's finally happening here," said Denean Thomas, a Moore Park neighbor for the last 37 years and one of the scattering of local residents at the midday event. "The neighborhood has started going down, and we needed something over here."

Hermene Gildo Diaz said he came to the groundbreaking with his three grandchildren after hearing rumors that the project would take his house on Rockefeller Boulevard.

"Two or three people told me the houses would be coming down," he said.

Ms. Ayala said the Moore Park improvements won't cost anyone their homes, but future flood-control projects could involve land now inhabited in the floodplain.