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## The Trinity Trust President and CEO Gail Thomas to Retire at Year End

*Leader is grateful for opportunity to work on the Trinity*



(Dallas, TX – December 13, 2016) After two decades of working on Dallas’ Trinity River Corridor Project, longtime leader and city builder Gail Thomas is retiring from The Trinity Trust Foundation at the end of 2016. During her tenure, The Trinity Trust raised \$105 million for projects in the Trinity River corridor, including the recent \$50 million donation for the Trinity River Park.

“My resignation as president of The Trinity Trust comes with gratitude for the opportunity to have served my city, Dallas, a city I love, with a fullness of heart,” said Thomas. “I feel especially fortunate to have worked in the center of our city on the Trinity - a river that has divided our communities for so many years and now has the opportunity to bridge that divide and bring us together as a city.”

Thomas began her work with the Trinity when then-Mayor Laura Miller asked her in 2002 to be on a team to develop what emerged as the Balanced Vision Plan, approved unanimously by the Dallas City council in 2003. Subsequently, Thomas formed The Trinity Trust to provide private funds and public outreach in support of projects in the Trinity River corridor. Thomas worked to raise funds for design fees for two Santiago Calatrava-designed bridges over the Trinity: the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge and Margaret McDermott Bridge. She initiated, with former Trinity Trust Board of Directors Chair Mary McDermott Cook, the transformation of the Ronald Kirk Bridge (formally the Continental

Avenue Bridge) from a vehicular bridge to a pedestrian and bicycle bridge. She was involved in the creation of the Dallas CityDesign Studio to inspire the best design and urban planning practices for the Trinity and surrounding areas through funding by Deedie Rose and the late Rusty Rose. Thomas has engaged the community with countless presentations, symposia and events about the potential the Trinity offers in creating unity, hospitality, and beauty within the heart of our city.

After announcing the historic \$50 million gift from Annette Simmons for the Trinity River Park, Mayor Mike Rawlings said, “We’ve made great progress on the Trinity River Corridor Project in recent years, including miles of trails, life-saving flood control projects, two signature Santiago Calatrava bridges and the opening and dedication of the Ronald Kirk Bridge and Felix H. Lozada, Sr. Gateway. Most recently, we announced a \$50 million gift toward design and development of a grand Trinity Park to be named for the late Harold Simmons. This project is and always has been a public-private collaboration and we never would have achieved these feats without Gail’s leadership at The Trinity Trust. Gail is the spirit and the poet for our Trinity. The citizens of Dallas owe her a great deal.”

Having realized a life-long vision – a central park for Dallas – Thomas is eager to focus on the next chapter of her life by completing and publishing her fifth book and spending long weekends at her East Texas home with her large family.

“When a park is finally realized within the Trinity River basin, it will be due in large measure because of the persistence and careful nurturing by Gail Thomas of a dream held by so many people for decades,” said Deedie Rose, Chair of The Trinity Trust Board of Directors. “Gail believes absolutely in the idea that people from all parts of the city can be connected through nature, through a park, with a river running through it.”



Garrett Boone, Vice Chair of The Trinity Trust Board of Directors, said, “Gail has been providing head, heart and soul leadership and inspiration for over 30 years to recognize and honor the beauty and potential of the Trinity River corridor. In doing so, she has inspired us all to continue making that vision a reality.”

After the October announcement of Annette Simmons' generous gift to name the future Harold Simmons Park in the Trinity River corridor, it is an excellent time for The Trinity Trust to move into its next stage, to be guided by a new director and to be renamed the Trinity Park Conservancy. The upcoming years will consist of working together with the City of Dallas and the City Council, engaging the community and moving forward with fundraising, design and construction of the park.

Thomas' passion for city building was always in her soul. With the late Dr. Louise Cowan, she originated and directed the Center for Civic Leadership at the University of Dallas. In 1980, she co-founded the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture and served as its director for 18 years. She will continue to serve as director of its Center for the City, where she teaches and conducts seminars and conferences. With her work on the creation of Pegasus Plaza, the restoration of the original flying Pegasus in Downtown Dallas, and the purchase and restoration of the Belo Mansion for the Dallas Bar Foundation, Thomas has received numerous awards including the Kessler Award, the award for excellence in Community Service by the Dallas Historical Society, as well as numerous awards given by Dallas AIA, Texas Society of Architects and the American Institute of Architects. She is a distinguished alumna from both Southern Methodist University and the University of Dallas and is a recipient of SMU's J. Erik Jonsson Ethics Award.