THE TRUST for PUBLIC LAND

Greenprinting:
Travis County, Texas

Photo: Eric Swanson

"Travis County has used TPL's Greenprint research in the preparation of its Parks and Natural Areas Master Plan, and looks forward to its use to identifying priority parcels for open space acquisition."

Joe Gieselman
*Executive Manager,
Transportation and Natural
Resources, Travis County*

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TPL Services

Travis County, Texas, is experiencing unprecedented growth that threatens its natural beauty and rural landscape. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) assisted county and city agencies, regional and local conservation groups, and concerned citizens in identifying land conservation goals and important areas to protect.

Project Highlights

In the "Heart of Texas," Travis County is divided by the Colorado River running west to east. One of the fastest growing counties in the state, Travis County is surrounded by hills on the west and blackland prairie on the east. Many of the 850,000 residents work for the government, or in high tech industry, research, and education.

With local partners, TPL used an interactive, stakeholder-driven Geographic Information System (GIS) model to develop a Greenprint for the county. During TPL-facilitated sessions, stakeholders identified four goals: protect water quality and quantity; provide recreational opportunities; enhance cultural resources; and preserve sensitive environmental features.

A technical team, led by TPL, incorporated relevant data into the Greenprint model. For example, to identify the best locations for new parks, they included a park equity component. The analysis examined "gaps" in park availability (with variables such as travel distance, park amenities and carrying capacity) with assessment of need (based on demographic variables such as percentage of children under 18, population density, percentage of minorities, and percentage of low income families).

The resulting Greenprint provides a composite picture of the lands that, if protected, would best provide equitable investments across the county, and help to meet all four of the goals.

Results

The county and city will use a variety of funding sources to implement the Greenprint. In support, TPL is helping identify specific, high-priority properties to acquire.