

Ferguson Road Initiative

P.O. Box 570417 Dallas, Texas 75357

Prepared by Vikki J. Martin, Executive Director



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To Our Stakeholders - Building Equity

The Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) believes that parks, trails, green spaces, and recreation centers are for everyone to enjoy. We are committed to providing safe and equal access to public spaces and natural places to inspire everyone. We believe that quality parks, trails, green spaces, aquatic and community recreation centers are fundamental for sustaining an equitable and resilient community. These "amenities" are more than just that—they are a matter of health, equity, and justice.



FRI Volunteers express "It's Our Turn!" to the Bond Task Force Committee

Continuing our commitment to these goals within our diverse Far East Dallas community, FRI launched a community-wide campaign in May to advocate in support of ensuring the long-sought \$18.1M White Rock Hills Recreation Center (CENTER) would be included on the 2024 City Bond Program. Our battle cry was "It's Our Turn!" After 28 years of waiting for the city to fulfill a promise to bring recreation opportunities to our community along the lower Ferguson Road corridor, we felt this slogan to be fitting. Our efforts included collecting more than 1,500 petitions from the community and demonstrating support through personal letters and emails to our City Councilmembers and Park Board Appointees.

Councilmember Jesse Moreno (District 2) appointed FRI Executive Director, Vikki Martin, to serve on the Bond Subcommittee for Parks/Trails to ensure our community would not be forgotten in this competitive process. We left no stone unturned. We attended and made presentations at District Townhall, Bond Task Force, Park Board, and City Council meetings to voice support for the CENTER.

In September more than 30 residents, ages 8 to 80, boarded a bus to City Hall to show their support for the CENTER to the Bond Task Force Committee. This is the kind of advocacy work FRI does best; identifying, and training community leadership to engage in respectful civic discourse that benefits their community. And most importantly, enjoying the engagement in fun and good fellowship with our friends and neighbors along the way! All these activities positively positioned the CENTER to be included on the Bond Program by the City Council in their final decision scheduled for early 2024 and to present to voters in a Bond Referendum Election in May 2024.

As part of the Far East Dallas vision to bring equitable recreation and connectivity opportunities to our area, FRI celebrated the ribbon-cutting and grand opening for the Trinity Forest Spine Trail and CreekSide Bike Park in October. Making this trail and bike park a reality involved working with the LOOP Dallas (the entity charged with building the 50-mile trail system around the City of Dallas), Dallas Off Road Biking Association (DORBA), the Park and Recreation Department, City Councilmembers, and Dallas County. Now our once isolated community can enjoy connectivity to the entire city and utilize safe routes to area parks, schools, and neighborhoods.

Strategic Highlights

Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit, grassroots, community-based, umbrella organization. Founded in 1998, the primary operations of FRI at that time were to address escalating crime and violence that was poisoning our community and forcing good families and businesses to flee to safer areas in the city.

From 2000–2011 we received (2) \$1MM federal grants from the Department of Justice to fight crime. At the end of this period, we achieved:

- Reduction of overall crime by 25% and violent crime by 61% in targeted areas
- Unification of neighborhoods, from 5 organizations to 37
- Increased social services to the community
- \$40,000+ in capital improvements to improve the quality of life
- Facilitated more than \$200MM in economic development in the form of affordable, middleand high-income housing and retail.

Since the expiration of federal funding, crime continues to decline and FRI's ability to build partnerships with local, state, and federal government, neighborhood and Crime Watch groups, local businesses, foundations, nonprofits, schools, and faith communities are strengthening our community. As more neighborhoods work together to watch out for one another, crime reduction has resulted in good businesses returning and building the economy of the area. However, challenges remain. Some areas of the community are in certified food deserts (USDA) and other issues remain regarding gaps in services in the areas of medical care (Health Resources and Services Administration), quality daycare centers (Dallas Foundation and Dallas College), and lack of neighborhood infrastructure (SMU). FRI is needed to address these gaps in service.

VISION:	Far East Dallas is strong and vital!
MISSION:	Engage and empower a community of advocates to advance a safe, beautiful, prosperous, and proud community in Far East Dallas.
VALUES:	INTEGRITY FRI integrates ethical values into the way we conduct ourselves. This demands absolute honesty and trust with one another. STEWARDSHIP We take good care of the resources entrusted to us and properly utilize and develop the talents of our staff and members. COMMUNITY We believe that one person can make a difference and that together we can improve the quality of life for people in our community. LEADERSHIP We act courageously and take responsibility for our choices and their consequences and persevere through challenges and barriers. RESPECT We honor individuality and demonstrate compassion and respect for ourselves, others, and those with whom we do business.

Since 1998, our advocacy work has been building neighborhood amenities, strengthening families, and improving health, welfare, economy, and overall quality of life in Far East Dallas.

<u>Operational Highlights</u>

FRI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Daniel Ortman

President CitiGroup

FRI Resident

Melanie Flinn

Secretary

White Rock Medical Center, VP Operations

FRI Resident

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Sam Downey

Frost Bank, Assistant VP, Corp. Banking

Austin Endo

Amazon

FRI Resident

Gary Garcia

Dallas Foundation, VP Philanthropic Relations

FRI Resident

Jared Greco

Crowe Consulting

FRI Resident

Art Hall

Lakehill Preparatory, Head of School

Brian Harper

Lone Star Credit Union, CFO

Gary Hasty

Karrington & Co., President

Christopher Jackson

Vice-President

Wynn-Jackson, Principal

Becky Reed

Treasurer

Lone Star Credit Union, President

Shawn Lovelady

White Rock Medical Center, COO

Carmen Parra

CMIT Solutions, President

FRI Resident

Marcy Philips

Lone Star Credit Union

President

Christopher Rebuck

Bishop Lynch High School

President

Dr. Eddie Tealer

Dallas College Eastfield, President

Karl Zavitkovsky

Dallas Economic Development, Retired

Operational Highlights

FRI STAFF



Vikki J. Martin
Executive Director
Full-Time



Susan HopperCommunications & Marketing Director
Full-Time



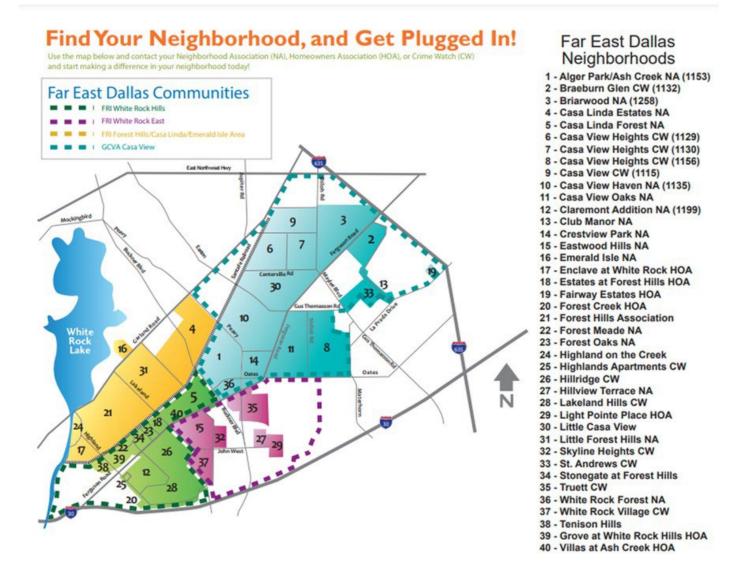
Maria ValenzuelaOffice Manager
Part-Time



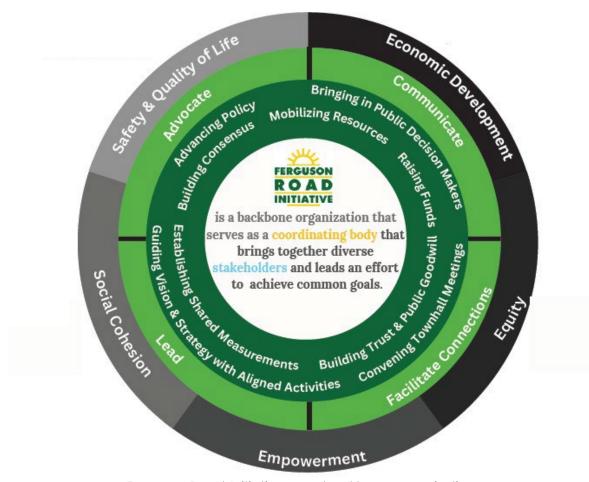
Zitziki SanluisenoMembership Administrator &
Special Events Coordinator
Full-Time

JBH Communications Web Manager Contract

FRI Service Area



FRI takes a holistic approach to neighborhood restoration, revitalization, and community development. As a backbone, participatory organization, one of FRI's roles is to align our common agenda comprised of our mission and vision statements. The diagram below helps to visualize the work of FRI. On the outside of the circle the seven key program activities describe the focus of our work. In the center of the circle, the roles of a backbone organization identify how FRI accomplishes the outcomes that generates collective impact. Our key program activities guide, support, and promote our partner organizations.



Ferguson Road Initiative as a backbone organization

Program Highlights:

- Advocacy
- Communication
- · Connection
- · Crime Prevention & Public Safety
- · Economic Development
- · Financial Literacy
- · Leadership

ADVOCACY

To develop partners to deliver programs, services, and Goal: research that improves the quality of life in Far East Dallas neighborhoods.

Outcomes

Education Outcomes

• Reading Partners: (www.readingpartners.org)
For the fifth consecutive year, FRI has helped recruit and mobilize volunteers for the educational nonprofit Reading Partners of Dallas program at Bayles Elementary School. The mission of Reading Partners is to help children become lifelong readers by empowering communities to provide individualized instruction with measurable results. This year FRI volunteers provided Bayles Elementary School with 96 tutoring sessions, serving 6 students with an economic impact of \$3,066.

FERGUSON ROAD INITIATIVE 2023-2024 IMPACT REPORT



Community volunteers are at the heart of our program. Thanks to the contributions of the **Ferguson Road Initiative**, our students have made tremendous gains in reading this year. Here's a look at the impact your tutors have made!



VOLUNTEERS



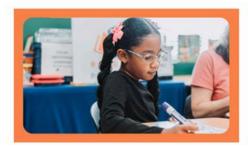
96 TUTORING SESSIONS



STUDENTS SERVED



\$3,066 ECONOMIC IMPACT





Ferguson Road Initiative's impact for Reading Partners at Bayles Elementary School

The Artist Outreach: (www.theartistoutreach.org)

For the fourth consecutive year, FRI continued our partnership with The Artist Outreach (TAO), an educational organization whose mission is to change the educational, emotional, and financial futures of individuals, schools and advocacy centers they serve through creative arts programs. In 2023 TAO served approximately 645 unduplicated students, with teachers and district staff involved at Bayles Elementary School and White Rock Hills Uplift Preparatory. The primary program provided was Rhythmic Vocabulary. This program uses unique, playful, arts-based techniques that support the students' language and math skills while providing teachers with unique ways to reach their students. Drumming techniques help support better speech patterns, build fluency and reading skills. Creative songs, poems, dances and storylines reinforce teachers' lesson plans. TAO delivers services in the classroom alongside the teacher, thus building continuity for students and teaching tools for the teacher. The overall value of this program is \$26,000.



Reinhardt Elementary School students enjoy selecting their books from the book fair and participating in an assembly featuring Cowboys' mascot, Rowdy, as well as the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders



The Artist Outreach provides math and reading enhancements by utilizing rhythm and drumming techniques

Book Drive for Kids:

(www.Bookdriveforkids.com)

In 2023 FRI celebrated the second year of our partnership with Book Drive for Kids, a nonprofit dedicated to creating a culture of literacy by providing books for disadvantaged children for independent reading. FRI's role identifies area funding to support free book fairs and recruits volunteer organizations to help distribute the books in Far East Dallas elementary schools. This year FRI increased the number of book fairs from last year by 50%, facilitating fairs at White Rock Hills Uplift Preparatory, Bayles, S.S. Conner, Truett, Gill, and Reinhardt Elementary Schools. More than 3,656 children were served at a value of \$14,656. By working in partnership with Book Drive for Kids, our goal is to serve all 9 of our elementary schools in Far East Dallas by the end of 2024.

Read Across America:

www.nea.org/professionalexcellence/studentengagement/read-acrossamerica)

FRI helped our business partner,
Monster Yogurt, communicate the
Read Across America book drive
program. Monster Yogurt collected
3,200 books that were provided to S.S.
Conner and Casa View Elementary
Schools and other local charities and
Free Little Libraries in Far East
neighborhoods.



Books collected by Monster Yogurt at Casa Linda Shopping Center for Far East Dallas schools. FRI communicated the Read Across America book drive through our media platforms resulting in the donation of 3,200 books

Owenwood Farm & Neighbor Space: (www.owenwood.org)

Owenwood Farm & Neighbor Space has been an FRI partner since its inception in 2017 where FRI worked with White Rock United Methodist Church and Dallas College to establish their mission and vision statements. Their mission is to create equitable opportunities for our neighbors to be known, empowered, and inspired.

Today Owenwood has fully transitioned from a faith community into a resource service center housing various nonprofit agencies who offer quality of life programs positively impacting the Far East Dallas community.

FRI's role is as a connector and convener between the surrounding community, area nonprofits, and faith communities who live in Far East Dallas with Owenwood. FRI regularly participates in community resource fairs and helps recruit volunteers for neighborhood workshops held at Owenwood. Our ability to engage and connect our community with Owenwood is accelerating Owenwood's impact in the Far East Dallas community.

In 2023 Ferguson Road Initiative Community Connection Townhall Meetings officially moved their meetings to the Owenwood location.



FRI's partnership with Owenwood helps provide quality of life services for community residents, such as food distribution

Dallas College/Eastfield Campus (www.dallascollege.edu)

The Ferguson Road Initiative participates as a partner in the Dallas College/Eastfield Campus Nonprofit Organizational quarterly luncheons. These luncheons are attended by key representatives from more than (50) nonprofit and faith-based organizations located in Far East Dallas, Mesquite, Balch Springs, Pleasant Grove, and Garland. These luncheons provide networking opportunities with other nonprofit agencies to understand area services, learn best practices, and form potential partnerships, thus expanding potential resources for the clients they serve.



Dallas College at Eastfield Campus President, Dr. Eddie Tealer, is presented with the Ferguson Road Initiative Founder's Circle plaque by Vikki Martin, FRI Executive Director

FRI also serves as a member of the Dallas College/Eastfield Campus President's Council comprised of key stakeholders from the communities listed above, representing school districts and local chamber of commerce organizations. Convening quarterly, the President's Council identifies key issues in our community and utilizes data driven strategies based on faculty research and expertise that is thereby applied to the communities we serve. Dallas College/Eastfield Campus is a Project Coalition Partner who is exploring strategies to improve early childhood education to address the childcare desert that exists in Far East Dallas. FRI's role in this partnership is to participate, track success, and provide feedback.



Dallas College hosts quarterly networking luncheons to collaborate with area non-profits

COMMUNICATION

Goal: Communicate vital information regarding strategic progress and access to quality programs and/or services.

Outcomes

The communication services provided by the Ferguson Road Initiative are critical to our community because FRI's robust communication platforms reach all segments of our diverse population. We provide pertinent information not only to Far East Dallas nonprofit partners, but also expanded partners serving adjacent communities in and around the Eastern section of Dallas.

FRI has continued the monthly direct communication we began in 2021 during the pandemic to our area apartments, schools, and faith communities. These communications provide an updated Resource Directory that can be shared with families needing emergency assistance such as food, financial/rental, ESL, health and workforce training.

FRI Communication Platforms are listed below:

- FRIdays magazine, 18,000 households in Far East Dallas target area (Issued annually in September)
- NewsFlash, electronic newsletter 1,600 email addresses (Issued monthly)
- Facebook, Instagram, Website, NextDoor (Ongoing)
- Direct emailing to group constituencies: 40 neighborhoods,
 50 apartments, 17 schools, 30 faith communities
- · Health and Safety Fairs
- Semi-annual FRI Community Connection Town Hall Meetings



As a backbone organization, Ferguson Road Initiative communicates to the Far East Dallas community



Fall 2023 FRIdays magazine cover

These communications inform our FRI partners and members about FRI events, services, network resource providers, and project coalition news and updates. FRI communications have been an integral part of our message to the community about who we are and what we do for the Far East Dallas community.

CONNECTION

Goal: Engage community advocates in opportunities to connect and improve the community and neighborhoods in Far East Dallas.

Outcomes

The following is a report on the various ways FRI helped connect our community by providing support and service to improve Far East Dallas:

- (5,727) hours of community service were donated by 565 volunteers valued at \$182,134 in 2023!
- Operation Beautification Litter Cleanup Event celebrated our 11th consecutive year of service making our community a more beautiful place to live. This year garnered 140 volunteers representing 12 neighborhoods, 7 schools, 14 businesses/nonprofits, 4 service organizations, and 2 churches. This volunteer service was estimated to be valued at \$11,424. In addition to collecting 5,540 lbs of trash, the community also donated 215 lbs of food to benefit the White Rock Center of Hope food pantry, one of the many nonprofit partners FRI collaborates with.



FRI Board President, Dan Ortman, City Councilmember, Jesse Moreno (District 2), FRI Executive Director, Vikki Martin, and City Councilmembers Paula Blackmon (District 9,) and Adam Bazaldua (District7), participates in Operation Beautification Litter Cleanup Event

 In 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, FRI launched an annual blood drive to ensure North Texas blood supplies remain available for patients who need surgery, victims of car accidents, or other emergencies requiring life-saving blood. On July 22 FRI, in partnership with Carter BloodCare, collected 15 pints of blood from 21 donors, thus impacting 45 lives.



Lakehill Preparatory Head of School and FRI Board member, Art Hall, gives blood during the FRI/Carter BloodCare annual event



FRI member Mary Garcia donates blood with a smile on her face

CRIME PREVENTION & PUBLIC SAFETY

Goal: Educate and engage community leaders to increase public safety and decrease crime in Far East Dallas.

Outcomes

The Ferguson Road Initiative was established to address escalating crime and violence that was occurring in Far East Dallas and to find ways to promote public safety. From 2000–2011, the Ferguson Road Initiative received (2) \$1M Department of Justice (DOJ) grants, Operation Weed & Seed, that successfully addressed crime reduction and public safety in two target areas of Far East Dallas. By significantly reducing overall violent and nonviolent crime, this initiative helped set the stage for quality economic development to return to the community in the form of mixed income housing and retail. Crime prevention became a coalition project in 2011 after federal funds for Weed and Seed expired. FRI has successfully shifted to a donor–based funding model supported by the community. Today, FRI continues to support crime prevention and public safety initiatives and responds when crime hot spots arise. No community member should be afraid to live in their own neighborhood or home.

One of our strengths is our ability to identify, mobilize, and train community leadership in how to report crime, encourage neighborhood participation, and educate community members on how to work with local law enforcement, city departments, and navigate city hall in addressing crime and public safety issues.

We monitor and report on the status of crime and public safety in the community at our semiannual town hall, Crime Task Force, and Truett Area CrimeWatch Program meetings. We keep the community informed of the progress of our efforts via our various communication platforms. Furthermore, we track the progress of the City of Dallas' Traffic Calming Study conducted by Transportation to study how the Ferguson Road corridor from I-30 to I-635 can be made safer through traffic calming initiatives.

FRI posts progress through our communication platforms, Crime Task Force meetings, the Truett Area CrimeWatch program, and holding winter and fall FRI Community Connection Townhall meetings where the Dallas Police Department report on crime issues and provide informational programing that will help increase safety in our community.



Dallas Police Department attends FRI semi-annual Townhall meetings to update the community on crime issues

Crime Task Forces

The Ferguson Road Initiative dedicates time and funding to crime prevention and the enhancement of public safety. Crime in target areas of the Far East Dallas community has plummeted since the 2000's. One reason is due to FRI's vigilance in tracking, monitoring, and addressing crime in the community. We do this by creating temporary project coalition Crime Task Forces to address crime hot spots when they arise. These Task Forces are flexible and are formed on an as needed basis.

FRI currently administrates and manages two Crime Task Forces:

- Lower Ferguson Road Corridor Crime Task Force—assembled in April 2021
- Buckner/Peavy Crime Task Force—assembled in August 2023

Assembling Crime Task Forces involves holistically identifying area stakeholder leadership within the community: residents, schools, businesses, apartment owners, developers, and faith communities. These are not typical Crime meetings! Instead, we dedicate staffing to developing a database, maps, and communication system for the target area. Stakeholders are brought together to identify the underlying root causes of the crime and then draft an agenda together for a meeting that assembles city and county departments to begin systematically targeting the cause of these crime problems.

Our city/community Crime Task Force meetings include:

- Law Enforcement (Neighborhood Policing Officers, Drug Enforcement, Marshall's Office, Community Prosecutor)
- Park Ranger Program
- Transportation
- Office of Homeless Solutions
- Code Compliance
- Councilmembers
- · Parking Enforcement
- Office of Integrated Public Safety Solutions

The purpose of these meetings is to begin a dialogue of understanding between city officials and the community. This involves training citizens in how to report crime and code violations and how to work with city government. We document the key comments and agreements in these meetings, then put together a Meeting Summary that includes an Action Plan of who does what and by when. This Meeting Summary is distributed after the conclusion of the meeting. We circle back with another meeting quarterly or semi–annually during the year, depending on the need. These meetings involve reviewing the Action Plan from the last meeting and reporting on the status of the initial problems. These task forces have been very effective in reducing crime.

Typically, once a Crime Task Force is assembled, crime in the area will increase. This is due to community members being trained to report crime when they see it. After a few community meetings, crime tends to decline in the area. In 2023 the Lower Ferguson Road Corridor Crime Task Force reported a reduction in crime by 20% since 2021, the year they formed. The Buckner/Peavy Crime Task Force was formed in August 2023 to address open air drug sales, homelessness, loitering, and aggravated assaults in a community that sits adjacent to a church and G.W. Truett Elementary School. Work in 2023 focused on assembling key stakeholders to begin working together to solve the issues at this challenging location.



Community Prosecutor and City Attorney
Thomas Perkins, attends
Buckner/Peavy Crime Task Force
Meetings and reports on the status of
crime and public safety at this location

Providing Support for the Truett Area CrimeWatch Program

We continue to provide support for the Truett Area CrimeWatch quarterly information programs. Although a portion of the meeting is set aside to identify and discuss neighborhood crime issues, these meetings generally provide a training component to them. This year programs were presented on topics such as how to access iWatchDALLAS and Dallas 311 apps in reporting crime and code violations, providing personal safety tips for women, and introducing the community to City of Dallas Municipal Court staff. FRI provides support to the program through communication and our participation.



Dallas Police Department, City Councilmembers, and members of the Truett Area CrimeWatch enjoy good fellowship during "Coffee with Cops" at the Starbucks at Casa View Shopping Center

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Advocate for compatible, quality economic development and amenities to revitalize Far East Dallas and facilitate opportunities with partners and investors.

OUTCOMES

With the rebranding of the Ash Creek Greenbelt to CreekSide: Ash Creek Urban Reserve, FRI is creating an outdoor recreation mecca for our residents. The grand opening of the White Rock Hills Park in 2021 (\$780,000), completion of sidewalks and bike paths on Highland Road in 2022 (\$3M), and in 2023, the completion of the Trintiy Forest Spine Trail (\$18.2M) and CreekSide Bike Park (\$500,000) are all part of a community-driven strategic plan to bring amenities that will encourage quality investment, as well as recreation, along the lower Ferguson Road corridor.

Some of these investments are already in place including the David Weekley and Karrington & Co. townhome developments completed in 2021–2022. A new housing development, Tenison Hills, a 23-patio home development is underway and expected to be completed in 2025. These developments, combined with existing affordable and workforce housing, are creating housing diversity that serves all in our community.



David Weekley's Grove at White Rock Hills offers high-income townhomes within a mixed-income housing neighborhood adjacent to the Trinity Forest Spine Trail, White Rock Hills Park, and future White Rock Hills Recreation CENTER

Trinity Forest Spine Trail

On October 21, the Ferguson Road Initiative, City of Dallas Park & Recreation, Park Board Members, City Councilmembers, County Commissioner, St. Representative, and the LOOP Dallas joyfully cut the ribbon on the first phase of the Trinity Forest Spine Trail (TFST). The trail connects with the Santa Fe Trail, Highland Road, and future phases of this trail will run southward to the Trinity Audubon Center. The TFST is important to the Far East Dallas community because it not only provides alternate transportation options, but also supports an active lifestyle that can prevent heart disease and other health issues. Trails also protect habitats for native plants and animals, reduce pollution, and raise environmental awareness.



Cyclists enjoy riding on the Trinity Forest Spine Trail



Celebrating the opening of the Trinity Forest Spine Trail with City Councilmember Jesse Moreno (District 2); County Commissioner Dr. Theresa Daniel (District 1); President of Friends of Warren Ferris Cemetery, Julie Fineman; Park Board President, Arun Agarwal; City Councilmember Paula Blackmon (District 9); FRI Executive Director, Vikki Martin; and City Councilmember Adam Bazaldua (District 9)

CreekSide Bike Park

Also opened in 2023 was the CreekSide Bike Park, a 5-mile soft surface mountain bike trail running through 50-miles of the Great Trinity Forest. It is adjacent to and accessed via the Trinity Forest Spine Trail. With the establishment of both the Trinity Forest Spine Trail and CreekSide Bike Park, kids and families living in Far East Dallas have an important connection to nature, and a pathway to better physical and mental wellbeing.

White Rock Hills Recreation CENTER

In 2023 Ferguson Road Initiative put forth herculean efforts to develop a detailed strategy to ensure the \$18.1M White Rock Hills Recreation CENTER would be included on the 2024 Bond Program. We are proud of how we successfully mobilized our community to advocate for this CENTER that will be located at 2135–2165 Highland Road. The White Rock Hills Recreation CENTER will be the final component to the CreekSide Ash Creek Urban Reserve project.



Creekside Bike Park has mountain bike trails for cyclists to enjoy



Carmen Parra, FRI Board Member speaks before Dallas City Council in support of the White Rock Hills Recreation Center



FRI Volunteers take the bus to City Hall to express that "It's Our Turn" for a Recreation Center in Far East Dallas

New Business & Workforce Development

In 2021 El Rio Grande Latin Market grocery store committed to establishing a new store in the White Rock East community of Far East Dallas. Located in a community that has long been identified as a USDA certified food desert, the creation of a food store with fresh produce and protein is a positive sign of improved economic development.

In 2022 FRI connected El Rio Grande Latin Market grocery store with area nonprofit workforce training organizations like Dallas College at Eastfield Campus, Aspire to Learn, Wilkinson Center, White Rock Center of Hope, and Dallas Christian Women's Job Corp. The purpose was to support El Rio's employment model to hire and train from within the local community. Our area nonprofit partners provided El Rio with residents ready to work.

It was with great fanfare that the White Rock East community near the Buckner Blvd. and John West Road intersection joined with FRI to celebrate the grand opening of El Rio Grande Latin Market on August 18, 2023. The store continues to strengthen its community partnership with FRI by participating in crime prevention initiatives, providing in–kind services to FRI, nonprofits, and area schools, and has become a valued community business.



El Rio Grande Latin Market ribbon cutting

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Goal:

Provide Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) services and financial literacy education to low-income community residents.

Outcomes

FRI leadership was awarded the first IRS funded Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program in Dallas 19 years ago. Although underutilized, the VITA and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) programs are among the U.S. Government's largest, needs-tested, cash benefits anti-poverty programs. Access to VITA sites is critical in helping filers access EITC and reducing reliance on costly (and predatory) tax preparation services, maximizing the financial benefits of the refunds, which for many low-income families may serve as the largest infusion of cash into their household in the year. VITA serves families earning \$60,000 annually or less with free assistance in preparing their own tax returns.

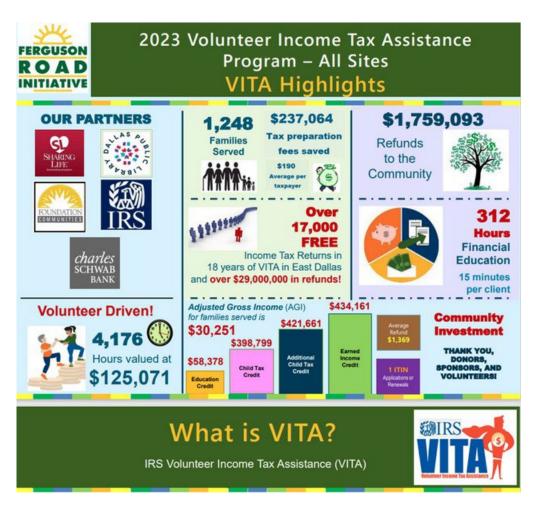
This year VITA locations were held at three local East Dallas libraries: Lochwood, Forest Green and Prairie Creek Libraries. We partnered with the IRS, Sharing Life, Foundation Communities, and Charles Schwab Bank to provide VITA services to 1,248 families saving each family an average of \$190 in tax preparation fees. Refunds to the community totaled \$1,759,093 and our volunteer tax preparers donated 4,176 hours of service valued at \$125,071. An average of 15 minutes of Financial Education training was provided to each family. Overall tax returns over 19 years of VITA services in East Dallas have resulted in more than \$30,000,000 in refunds to low-income families. (see more details on provided graphic on page 24).

FRI's extensive communication network was used to help recruit qualified volunteer tax preparers, greeters, and translators. FRI used these same networks to communicate VITA and EITC help to low-income families. Because FRI has earned the trust of our community and has deep roots in Far East Dallas, our loyal constituency groups return year after year to receive FRI VITA services.

I'm lucky because I benefited from the free income tax preparation services FRI provides. Tax preparers are very clear and precise to respond to each question. They are necessary because the cost to do your tax return elsewhere is very high. I am thankful for the support, and I would like to be able to continue with this service in the future. — Blanca Valle

I'd like to talk about how the VITA program has helped my family. VITA is a program that helps low-income families like us do our tax returns without cost and with the trust that people specialized in the matter will do them. The volunteers are very courteous all the time and they are willing to help and answer your questions with a smile. For me, VITA has also been a great help completing the ITIN application and renewals. I'm so thankful for the program that I'd love for the program to continue indefinitely so that many more families like mine benefit from it.

-- Diana Gonzalez



Detailed outcomes from the 2023 FRI driven Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program



VITA volunteers celebrate another successful tax season

LEADERSHIP

Goal:

Provide visionary leadership to the constituents of Far East Dallas and develop strong community leaders.

Outcomes

FRI remains committed to the idea that one person can make a difference. That's why our organization is always looking for leaders in our community. Whether it is leading a project coalition, committee, or attending a meeting, FRI's recruitment and training efforts in leadership are ongoing. FRI's 26 years of proven leadership has earned the trust of the Far East Dallas community.

Community Development Watchdog

FRI reviews all development projects that are proposed for City Council Districts 2, 7 and 9. We consult with and coach community leadership in how to understand zoning regulations, interact with developers, and navigate the City Plan Commission process. We are dedicated to finding development projects that help families build equity and wealth. That's why we are such big advocates for townhome projects. Townhomes provide affordable options for first–time home buyers and offer housing diversity in our community. However, when projects are not ideal, we attempt to work with developers and negotiate the best result on behalf of the community.

This is what we did with White Rock Church of Christ (9220 Ferguson Road). The developer, Generation Housing Partners intended to build a 4-story, 200+ unit multi-family apartment complex. FRI's position was that this site was not an appropriate location for this kind of development, and it would also have a negative impact on S. S. Connor Elementary School, causing it to immediately be overcrowded. FRI's work convinced the developer to reduce the height and density of the project and to make it a senior 55+ living community. This development broke ground this year and is expected to open in 2025.

Another example is the work FRI has done with Bethel Baptist Church (9314 Ferguson Road). In fall 2023, Bethel Church leadership decided to merge with another faith community and sell their property. Church pastors reached out to FRI because they were committed to seeing that their 3-acre property be used positively to serve the surrounding neighborhoods. FRI has identified and connected them was a qualified developer who has a contract on the property with plans to build 50 single-family townhomes beginning in 2025.

Intersection Task Force

This year the FRI Intersection Task Force continued to work with Public Works on finalizing intersection improvement plans at Lakeland Drive/Ferguson Road and Highland Road/Ferguson Road. Task Force leadership includes representatives from Little Forest Hills, Forest Meade, Lakeland Hills, Claremont, Villas @ Ash Creek and Eastwood Hills neighborhoods. The City of Dallas Public Works department has shared that sidewalks from Lakeland to Oates Drive will be underway in summer 2024 as well as intersection improvements at the above locations. Designed in 2005, our community is finally seeing this project begin.

FRI leadership was demonstrated financially in the following ways:

- · More than 20 area business invested \$24,800 in advertising to underwrite the FRIdays magazine.
- FRI continued our commitment to keep our community members informed regarding issues related to Far East Dallas during the Covid-19 pandemic. We pre-recorded our February semi-annual meeting so residents could access information from the safety of their home. Our September meeting was held in person and had more than 75 people in attendance.
- 203 FRI Community Connection members invested in FRI, thus sustaining operations and programs. \$50,201 was contributed by 146 investors during FRI's annual North Texas Giving Day (NTGD) annual fundraising campaign.
- 49 Founder's Circle Members made a 3-year pledge of support helping to establish an annual budget to support FRI operations.
- FRI received more than \$45,000 in in-kind support in 2023.

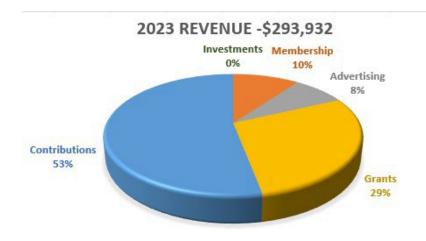
Award-Winning

FRI has been the recipient of dozens of federal, state, and local awards over the years. We have been recognized by the Department of Justice, IRS, The Real Estate Council, Bank of America, Dallas Historical Society, Greater East Dallas Chamber of Commerce, Center for Nonprofit Management and others.

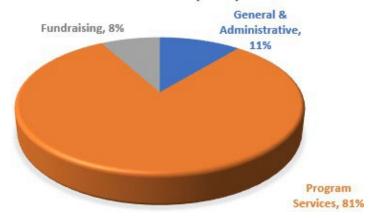


Ferguson Road Initiative was among 5 nonprofit organizations recognized in 2023 with a charitable gift contributed by the East Dallas Networking organization. FRI is proud to stand with other area nonprofits providing services and opportunities for our community

Financial Highlights



2023 EXPENSES - \$320,250



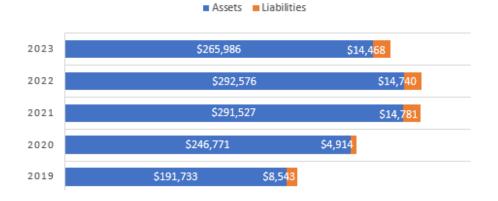
68% of FRI's support comes directly from membership fees and donations made during Year-End contributions and North Texas Giving Day.

Grant revenue more than doubled from 2022 (12%) to 2023 (29%) comprising nearly a quarter of FRI's revenue.

In 2023 FRI Board of Directors expanded the Executive Director position from part-time to full-time. They also added a new Communications/Marketing Director full-time position. The addition of two full-time employees was planned by the board with the understanding that the organization would have to tap into reserves to cover any deficit.

FRI's Financial Data is fully audited.

2019 - 2023 FIVE YEAR BALANCE SHEET



MEMBERS

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Barr, Kelly

Bassett, Heidi

Bennett, Jeff and Bridgette

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Cox, Joan

Crockhom, Mary and Brianda

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Diener, Maranda

Dinolov, Vladimir and Elvir, Monica

Dunklau, Brenda Endo, Austin

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Patterson, Kimberly

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Connie

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Christopher, Brent and Monica

Chuck, Brian

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Cook, Sharon

Daulton, Tom and Janet

Devereux, Julien

Eaton, Nathan and Linda

Farrell, David

Ferguson Gilman, Harriet Galliford, Grant and Jina

Gallo, Carmelita

Gardner, Tom and Carol

Gerry, William and Jones, Jean

Gillespie, Sam and Lori

Goodwin, Kerry and Rosemary

Greco, Jared Hamilton, Ruel Hanagan, Brian Hargrove, Amanda Harper, Brian Hatcher, Pat

Henderson, Scott and Karrie Henry, Matt and Alicia

^{*}please contact FRI at 214.324.5116 if your name is missing from the members or donors listing

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Webb, Catherine

Wildenthal, Kern and Marnie

Wuertz, Phil and Mary

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

Casa Linda Estates NA Claremont Addition NA – CANA Enclave at White Rock HOA Little Forest Hills NA Villas at Ash Creek N.A.

NONPROFITS AND CHURCHES

Book Drive for Kids Bring the Light Ministries Creative Arts Center Of Dallas Dallas Arboretum Dallas Christian Women's Job Corps First Community Church Friends of the Warren Ferris Cemeterv Good Samaritan Episcopal Church Greater Casa View Alliance IMPACT @ Bethel Church Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders Journey Community Church Roy Stanley Masonic Lodge No. 1367 Sam P. Cochran Masonic Lodge VIVA Church International White Rock Center of Hope, Inc. White Rock Hills Library Friends Wilkinson Center Worrall Foundation

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Mill Creek Residential
Oncor
Resource One Credit Union
Uplift Education
Peak Living, LLC
White Rock Medical Center
White Rock Montessori School

BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP - MEDIUM

CMIT Solutions
East Dallas Veterinary Clinic
Joe's Cleaners
Meyer's Pride Roofing
Oak Street Health
The Loop Dallas

BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP - SMALL

78 Backyard Concepts **Baldwin and Associates LLC** Zablosky, Don Arratia, Edna and Norma GHD Development Hello Dumpling Holden Green Apartments JFYP Audio Visual Services loe's Cleaners Karrington & Co. Mari Madison Design Strategies McBride Boothe Group Renfro. Mel and Liz MLC Insurance RaceWav Seeing Drala with Julie Einstein Sheshene, Tom

\$10,000 FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

Access Self Storage & Truck Rental AmeriSouth Realty Group

\$ 5,000 FOUNDER'S CIRCLE McDonald's/SLI Enterprises

\$ 3,500 FOUNDER'S CIRCLE Peak Living, LLC

\$ 2,500 FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

Endo, Austin Lone Star Credit Union Micciche, Dan Oncor

Resource One Credit Union Uplift Education

White Rock Medical Center

\$ 1.500 FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

Atmos Energy Corporation Bring the Light Ministries Farell Architects LLC Mountain View Church of Christ Owenwood Farm & Neighbor Space RaceWay

\$ 1,000 FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

Scheuerle, Angela M.D.

Aspire

Bishop Lynch High School Casa Pacifica Apartments Casa View Shopping Center

City Credit Union **CMIT Solutions**

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Griggs, John and Anne Henry, Matt and Alicia **Holden Green Apartments**

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Karrington & Co.

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Smoky Rose

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T. Robert & Bette J. Martin,

In Memoriam

Dr. Tealer, Eddie

Dr. Walker, Mike and Janice

White Rock Montessori School

Zavitkovsky, Karl

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Losinger, Sarah

Magdith, Doug and Cedotal,

Keith

Meyer's Pride Roofing Owens, Don and Carolyn

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Ferguson Donuts

McDonald's/SLI Enterprises

Peak Living, LLC

RaceWay

RAISE Texas

Signage Systems

Smoky Rose

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Ashmore, Shawn and Alison

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Bacsik, Rebecca

Bagley, Jim and Ann

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Barr, Kelly

Beispiel, Barry and Northcutt,

Connie

Benson, Ken and Stowe, Martha

Bernal, Antonio and Lisobel Biespiel, Ken and Pearce, Teri

Boatman, Ken and Rebecca

Brockhagen, Kristine

Brown, Robert and Martin, Vikki

Casa View Shopping Center -

Shop Cos.

Christopher, Brent and Monica

Chvojan, Susan

Clayton, Daniel Davis

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Coldwell, Scott and Deb

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Collins, Mary Jane

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Cook, Sharon

Crockhom, Mary and Brianda

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Devereux, Julien

Diener, Maranda

Dryden. Mel and Sara

Dunklau, Brenda

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Eddings, Bertha

Einstein, Julie

Evans, Michael

Farrell, David

Fink. Ann

Fontana, Larry and Hefley, Janis

Galliford, Grant and Jina

Gallo, Carmelita

Gardner. Tom and Carol

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Goodwin, Kerry and Rosemary

Greco, Jared

Green, Anthony and Sosa Green,

Dolores

Hamilton, Ruel

Hanagan, Brian

Hargrave, Eugenia

Harmon, Mark and Carrie

Harper, Brian

Henry, Matt and Alicia

Herring, Don and Stacy

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Hillin, Betty

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Lakehill Preparatory School LDG Development, LLC Lone Star Credit Union Mill Creek Residential

Oncor

Resource One Credit Union Scheuerle, Angela M.D.

Uplift Education

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