



THE REAL ESTATE COUNCIL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TREC Foundation to Announce Recipient of Inaugural Dallas Catalyst Project Initiative During Nov. 30 'Speaker Series' Event

Community development project selected by The Real Estate Council members to receive more than \$1 million in grants and professional services over three-year period

(DALLAS – November 29, 2017) – The Real Estate Council Foundation on Nov. 30 will announce the recipient of The Dallas Catalyst Project, a new three-year philanthropic initiative to provide more than \$1 million in grants and pro bono professional services work for a community development project that TREC members voted for earlier this month.

The announcement will take place during TREC's quarterly Speaker Series event at Belo Mansion prior to a one-on-one conversation between TREC Vice President of Community Investments Robin Minick and Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas President and Chief Executive Officer Rob Kaplan.

On November 14, active TREC members chose from three proposed projects that address a significant economic challenge to a specific geographic location within the City of Dallas. The projects are as follows:

- **Forest Theater Project** – As residents have gradually moved out of the Fair Park neighborhood, the area has been largely neglected, resulting in a state of physical disrepair as well as a spike in poverty, crime, homelessness and blight. The current state of the commercial and residential structures in Fair Park do not reflect the community's values, culture or rich history, and residents deserve facilities and amenities that encourage a better quality of life for all. St. Philip's School and Community Center, CitySquare, and Cornerstone Baptist Church have proposed to revitalize the iconic Forest Theater and a 12,000 square-foot retail space on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, install more aesthetically-pleasing landscaping and improved lighting and create an innovative communal space using the canopy of the I-45 bridge. Each of the structures proposed in the project is located within a 1,050 radius and together create a

triangular landscape that will foster a new chapter of art, retail and communal space in Fair Park's history.

- **Golden SEEDS Project** – Comprised of 240 acres adjacent to the Trinity River with direct connections to downtown Dallas and The Cedars, the South Dallas neighborhood known as The Bottom offers one of the nation's best high schools, Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center School for the Talented and Gifted (Townview); an early childhood Learning Academy, N W Harlee; an active and thriving church group, Golden Gate Missionary Baptist Church; two other church groups; and the Eloise Lundy Park and Recreation Center. But roughly 70 percent of single-family houses in the community are vacant or poorly maintained due to dwindling population in recent years. The Golden SEEDS Foundation, through partnership with N W Harlee Early Childhood Academy, Yvonne Ewell Townview Magnet Center and Eloise Lundy Recreation Center, is looking to change that by renovating houses there and making the homeownership process easier for buyers. The applicants are also proposing to protect current homeowners in need of major repairs who wish to remain in the community by helping them stay in "host houses" while work is completed.
- **Mill City Renaissance Project** – Named for the twine and cotton mill owned and run by African-Americans in the early twentieth century, Mill City is a historically significant neighborhood near Fair Park. But like much of South Dallas in recent decades, Mill City has experienced a decline marked by deteriorating buildings, crumbling infrastructure, limited investment, unemployment, poverty and crime. Now, the Mill City Renaissance Project is looking to continue the neighborhood's revitalization efforts by partnering with the South Dallas Inncity Development Corporation (ICDC), the Texas Trees Foundation and North Texas Capacity Builders to employ a broad front of new housing developments, home rehabilitation, energy efficiency upgrades, job creation and training and the installation of environmentally important trees and plantings in public areas as well as a half-acre gateway garden.

TREC Foundation introduced the Dallas Catalyst Project in April to Ignite Positive Community Change. More than 70 nonprofits attended an information session in May and nearly 40 projects were submitted with the combined effort of more than 150 nonprofits.

About TREC Foundation: The Real Estate Council Foundation is the philanthropic arm of The Real Estate Council, working to strengthen the community in four key areas: education, housing, job creation and the environment. Its high-touch, project-based approach is led by TREC members who identify, review and select the community projects pursued each year. The selected organizations receive funding along with the pro bono professional services of our members. Since its inception in 1994, The Real Estate Council Foundation has contributed nearly \$10 million in grant funds to more than 100 nonprofit community organizations supported by professional services valued at more than \$750,000 annually.

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