Atlanta Soars to 27th on 2022 ParkScore® Index, Climbing 22 Spots on Improved Park Access and Investment; Washington, DC, Retains ParkScore Title

Trust for Public Land Reports Most Major Cities Using Parks to Meet Climate Crisis; Non-Profit Group Says Outdoor Space Is Key to Climate Resilience and Equity

Atlanta –Trust for Public Land announced today Atlanta placed 27th on the 2022 ParkScore index, boosted by significant improvements in park access and investment. Atlanta was the ParkScore's Index' biggest mover this year.

Atop the ratings, Washington, DC, retained the national ParkScore title, finishing narrowly ahead of 2nd place Saint Paul. The ParkScore index evaluates park systems in the 100 most populous U.S. cities.

Atlanta's big ParkScore rank increase was caused by improvements in park access and park investment resulting from two major new initiatives: Cook Park and Westside Quarry. The addition of these parks, coupled other access improvements, means that 77 percent of Atlanta residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, compared to last year's 72 percent. Atlanta now narrowly exceeds the national ParkScore average of 75 percent access. Park investment also expanded this year. Atlanta now spends $206 per person on parks, more than double the national ParkScore average of $98. However, Atlanta's ParkScore rank remains limited by its smaller average park size (2.9 acres, compared the national average of 5.4) and below average marks on ParkScore's park equity rating factors.

"Atlanta is a city in a forest, and as Mayor I'm committed to making sure that every resident has access to our beautiful greenspaces—regardless of zip code. While I'm proud of the work we've done to achieve this ranking, we're not done yet. I'm excited that we're continuing to add park space to our city, including building our first-ever park on the Chattahoochee River. Make room for Atlanta at the top, where we belong," stated Mayor Andre Dickens.

Trust for Public Land also reported that 85 percent of large U.S. park systems, including Atlanta, have taken at least one major action to leverage parks to meet the climate crisis, and more than half have taken three or more. Climate solutions most frequently embraced by cities nationwide include planting trees to increase shade and cool air temperatures; replacing asphalt, concrete and other paved surfaces to help control flooding; and installing solar panels on park buildings and taking other steps to increase energy efficiency. More information about how cities are using

parks to increase climate resilience is available in a special report released today, *The Power of Parks to Address Climate Change*.

"Investing in natural solutions like trails, shade, and green spaces can cool temperatures by up to six degrees and help prevent flooding. That's why Trust for Public Land is working with park advocates and municipal leaders across the United States to close the outdoor equity gap and ensure that quality parks are available to everyone," says Diane Regas, President and CEO of Trust for Public Land. "Parks inspire joy and happiness and help cities meet the climate crisis," Regas added.

PARKSCORE METHODOLOGY AND RANKINGS

The annual ParkScore index ranks park systems in the 100 most populous U.S. cities and is widely considered the "gold standard" for park evaluation. ParkScore rankings are based equally on five factors:

- **Park equity** compares per capita park space and 10-minute walk park access in communities of color vs. white communities and in low-income neighborhoods vs. high income neighborhoods. Park systems score higher if disparities are low or non-existent.
- **Park access** measures the percentage of residents living within a 10-minute walk of a park.
- **Park acreage** is based on a city's median park size and the percentage of city area dedicated to parks.
- **Park investment** measures park spending per resident.
- **Park amenities** assesses the availability of six popular park features: basketball hoops, off-leash dog parks, playgrounds, "splash pads" and other water play structures, recreation and senior centers, and restrooms.

According to Trust for Public Land, the 10 highest ranking park systems in the United States are:

Rank	City	ParkScore (Max: 100)
1.	Washington, DC	84.9
2.	St. Paul, MN	79.7
3.	Arlington, VA	79.1
4.	Cincinnati, OH	78.9
5.	Minneapolis, MN	78.6
6.	Chicago, IL	76.8
7.	San Francisco, CA	76.7
8.	Irvine, CA	76.6
9.	Seattle, WA	76.2
10.	New York, NY	75.5

The ParkScore index uses advanced GIS (Geographic Information Systems) and spatial analysis to evaluate park accessibility. Instead of measuring distance to a local park, the rating system's GIS technology considers the location of park entrances and physical obstacles to access. For

example, if residents are separated from a nearby park by a major highway, the ParkScore index does not count the park as accessible to those residents, unless there is a bridge, underpass, or easy access point across the highway.

Municipal leaders use ParkScore information to guide park improvement efforts, studying park access on a block-by-block basis and pinpointing the areas where new parks are needed most. The ParkScore website, [www.tpl.org/parkscore,](http://www.tpl.org/parkscore) is free and available to the public, empowering residents to hold their elected leaders accountable for achieving equitable access to quality parks for all.

About Trust for Public Land

Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national nonprofit that works to connect everyone to the benefits and joys of the outdoors. As a leader in equitable access to the outdoors, TPL works with communities to create parks and protect public land where they are needed most. Since 1972, TPL has protected more than 3 million acres of public land, created more than 5,000 parks, trails, schoolyards, and iconic outdoor places, raised $84 billion in public funding for parks and public lands, and connected more than 9 million people to the outdoors. To learn more, visit tpl.org.