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Subject: Dallas ends contract with Fair Park First, plans new management model
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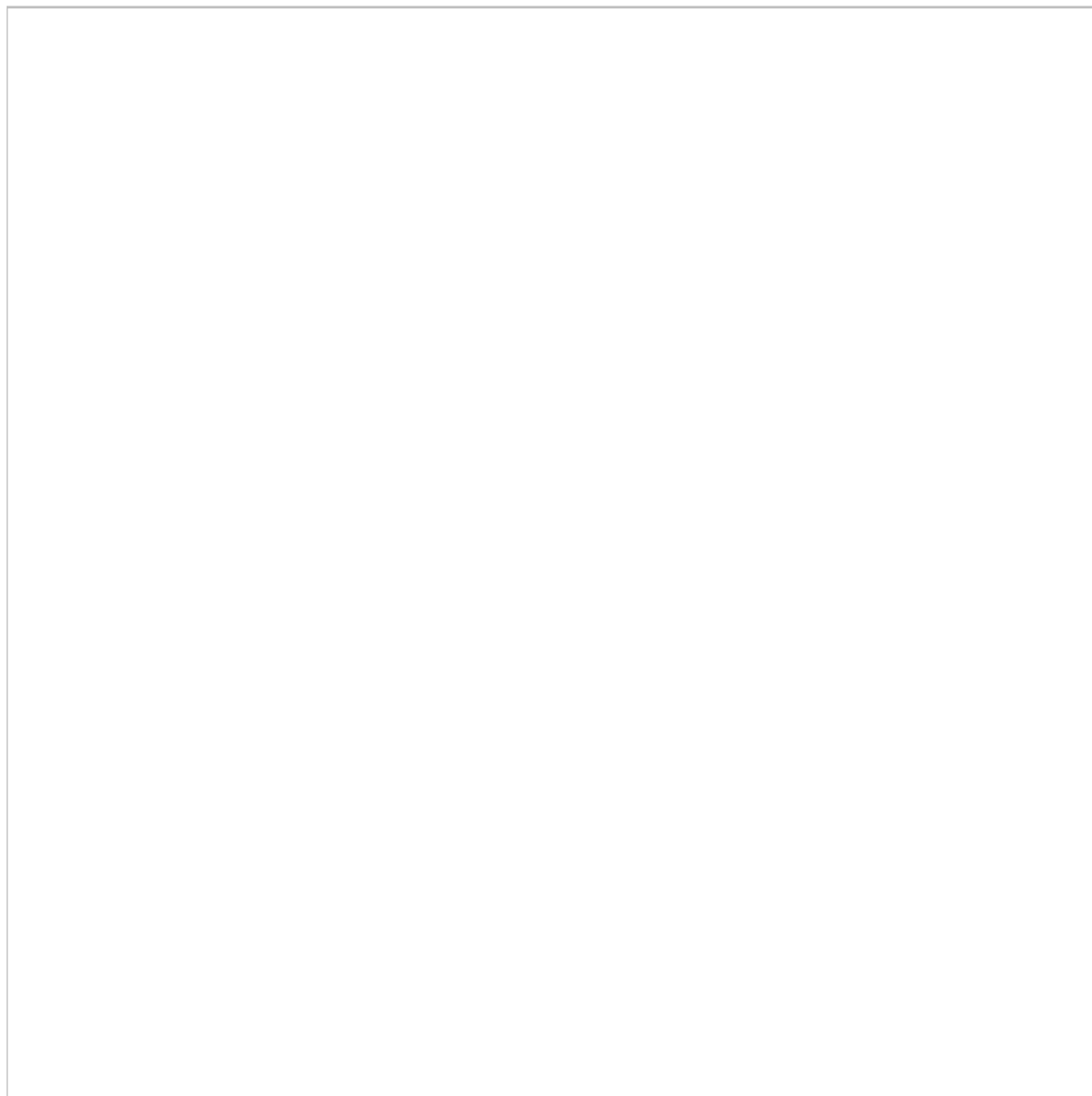
Dallas ends contract with Fair Park First, plans new management model

City to manage operations directly while partnering with a nonprofit for fundraising

NBCDFW

By [David Goins](#)

June 18, 2025



The Dallas Park and Recreation Department has terminated its contract with Fair Park First and Oak View Group as the first step in a new management model involving a nonprofit partner.

The city ended its agreement with Fair Park's current operator, citing the need to create a new contract that establishes a direct relationship between the park's management and the city.

The notice of termination to Fair Park First takes effect in 90 days and includes the subcontract established with Oak View Group, operating as OVG360, which has managed day-to-day operations at the 277-acre landmark since 2019.

John Jenkins, director of Dallas Park and Recreation, said city staff will work to ensure

continuity of operations at Fair Park for tenants and upcoming events.

"This step enables us to reset our approach to Fair Park management and is in the best interest of Fair Park, patrons, and the taxpayers of Dallas," Jenkins said.

Jenkins said a new plan will be developed in which Dallas Park and Recreation manages daily operations and maintenance, while partnering with a nonprofit for fundraising efforts.

He [told NBC 5 in September 2024](#) that the current contract with Fair Park First and OVG360 was flawed, primarily because the city had no direct oversight of OVG360.

Problems surfaced last year after the former executive director of Fair Park First was fired, then reinstated, and later [resigned in August 2024. Concerns had arisen that OVG360 was using donor funds meant for a planned community park for other purposes.](#)

An [audit later revealed \\$5.7 million in funds were misspent.](#) OVG360 disputed the findings, stating all expenditures had been approved by Fair Park First's former executive director.

Dallas City Manager Kim Tolbert said terminating the contract underscores the city's commitment to transparent management of "this beloved public asset."

"The city is prepared to move forward decisively to protect Fair Park's future," Tolbert said. "We will work with all our stakeholders to maintain this Crown Jewel of Dallas."

[Veletta Lill](#), board president for Fair Park First, told NBC 5 that the nonprofit will continue operating, but under a different model.

"This is not an end, this is a beginning," Lill said. "Fair Park First will evolve to a conservancy model, the community park will be built and we will continue doing community programming."

Lill added that about \$33.5 million has been raised for the community park, with approximately \$5.7 million still needed. Groundbreaking is scheduled for fall 2026, after the FIFA Fanfest, with an opening set for 2027.