

For Immediate Release

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## **Plano Receives National Excellence Award for Parks and Recreation for a Fifth Time**



The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) at its annual conference in Dallas today announced the City of Plano's [Parks and Recreation Department](#) as the 2023 National Gold Medal Award, marking a fifth national recognition for the Department.

The prestigious award recognizes agencies that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development, and community engagement.

"Winning the National Gold Medal for a fifth time is an amazing feeling," Director Ron Smith said. "Throughout the years, we have remained strategic, thoughtful and deliberate, re-affirming the Department's commitment to delivering outstanding services, facilities and programs to Plano residents every day. This award also reflects our efforts to help achieve and maintain City Council's vision for Plano, in which all residents experience an unparalleled quality of life."

The Department received its first Gold Medal Award in its population class in 1979, with three more awarded in 1987, 1997, and 2015. Agencies are judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of citizens, staff and elected officials.

Accredited since 1994 and ranked #1 in Texas by the Trust for Public Land, Plano Parks and Recreation provided more than 7,000 health, wellness and recreational programs in 2022, enrolling nearly 58,000 participants of all ages, backgrounds, income levels, and abilities. Its collaborations with schools, businesses and non-profits have also cultivated community-wide advocacy for quality parks and recreation in Plano. Integrated work order and asset management software has also enabled the Department to track work orders, inspections and community requests, resulting in faster response rates and cost savings.

For more information on the Gold Medal Awards, visit [www.nrpa.org/goldmedal](http://www.nrpa.org/goldmedal) or [www.aapra.org](http://www.aapra.org).

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## About Plano

Plano, Texas, is the largest city in Collin County with a population of 285,190 as of January 2020. Incorporated in 1873, the city is located 20 miles north of Dallas. Niche and AreaVibes recently named Plano as one of the Best Cities to Live in America. Forbes designated Plano one of America's safest cities. The City offers a high quality of life that includes nationally recognized schools, award-winning parks, and sustainability initiatives and a wide variety of multi-cultural neighborhoods appealing to families, young singles and retirees. Plano is home to the headquarters or regional operations of major corporations such as Toyota, Liberty Mutual, JPMorgan Chase Boeing Global Services, Fannie Mae, FedEx Office, JC Penney, Rent-A-Center, Cinemark Holdings, Denbury Resources and Alliance Data Systems. Our dynamic community features excellent restaurants, vibrant shopping and entertainment venues, a lively historic downtown district and active local arts scene. Easy access to DART light rail and major highways makes Plano a convenient place to live, work and visit. To learn more about Plano, go to our website at [plano.gov](http://plano.gov).