

OPINION

The reason Klyde Warren Park isn't in California

Park expansion is more evidence of the “Texas Miracle”



Artist rendering of a fountain to be added during an expansion of Klyde Warren Park. (Klyde Warren Park)



By Dallas Morning News Editorial
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Downtown Dallas got something to celebrate last week. Klyde Warren Park announced a major donation to jump-start a 1.65-acre expansion. Construction on this next phase is set to begin in 2021 and end in 2024. It will include a three-story enclosed pavilion for special events, an ice skating rink in winter, and a 36,000-square-foot green space that will host markets, festivals and other community events. That space will be named The Jacobs Lawn after the Jacobs technology and engineering company donated \$8 million to the project.

On the opposite end of the deck, park champions Jody and Sheila Grant are planning a fountain that will spray water 55 feet into the air, lit with pastel colors

and choreographed to music. Promoters say it's destined to become a "blimp shot" and one of Dallas' most iconic locations.

Klyde Warren Park is a model for public-private partnerships, a testament to what a city can do when its business and civic leaders work together. Since opening in 2012, the park has hosted more than 10 million visitors and had a \$2.5 billion impact on the city, according to a Woodall Rodgers Park Foundation estimate.

And we would point out that its newest donor is a testament to what a corporate neighbor can do when given the opportunity. Jacobs moved its headquarters to Dallas in 2016, in part to escape the crushing tax and regulatory atmosphere in California. Jacobs isn't alone. According to reporting by CNBC, 18,000 companies left California for more business-friendly states between 2008 and 2019.

Jacobs CEO Steve Demetriou told us the business climate in Texas was a key factor in the company's decision to move here.

"It's really been, I think, part of the reason why we've had a successful run in the company over the last four years. We've seen significant shareholder value creation and our employee culture has been transformed, and I think a lot of it stems from having our home office here in Dallas," Demetriou said.



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It's doubtful that the company would be in the position to contribute \$8 million to a public works project if it had stayed in California. And that, in a nutshell, is the strength of a state economy that has been dubbed "the Texas Miracle."

So, along with the rest of the city, we celebrate the success of Klyde Warren Park, we look forward to picnics on The Jacobs Lawn, and we're grateful for a place where public and private sectors can work together to make Dallas a more attractive, vibrant, livable place.

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