

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEMORANDUM

FROM: The Office of the City Manager **DATE:** December 1, 2025
SUBJECT: Review the Park Amenity Request Policy and consider recommendations made by staff regarding the park amenity requests for the FY2026/27 Capital Improvement Program Budget.

PRESENTER: Tanner Arwine, Assistant Director

SUMMARY:

Mr. Tanner Arwine will provide a summary of the Park Amenity Request Policy and review the Park Amenity Requests that were received by the Parks and Recreation Department in calendar year 2025.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Preparation of the FY2026/2027 Capital Improvement Program Budget will be underway by mid-December 2025. The *Park Amenity Request Policy* outlines the criteria and methodology for responding to requests for additional park amenities and improvements in existing parks. Seven park amenity requests for the FY2025/2026 have been submitted:

1. Restrooms at Liberty Park
2. Swings at Richfield Park
3. Artificial Turf Infields at Richfield Park and Walker's Creek Park
4. Building Improvements at Walkers Creek Park
5. Open Field Enhancements at Walker's Creek Park
6. Restroom Access at Walker's Creek Park outside of field utilization
7. JoAnn Johnson Trail Playground Area

According to the *Park Amenity Request Policy*, applications received will be evaluated by Parks and Recreation Department Staff through a variety of criteria, including:

1. Compliance with the 2007 *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* and 2016 *Updated List of Priorities*.
2. Current principles and methods of park planning and design.

3. Capital costs for the requested improvements.
4. Long-term fiscal impacts related to maintenance and operations.
5. Impacts on other prioritized projects in the CIP Budget with regards to introduction of the funding and time schedules associated with the request.

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Development Capital Improvement Program is supported by a ½-cent sales tax revenue. Sales Tax projections are expected to continue to impact cash flow capabilities. Funding may not be available for introducing new requests in the CIP Budget until a future fiscal year.

Request #1 - Restrooms at Liberty Park

Staff does not recommend the installation of a restroom building or portable restrooms at Liberty Park for the following reasons:

- Neighborhood Parks are not currently identified in the *2007 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* and *2016 Updated List of Priorities* to have restrooms within the parks. Neighborhood parks and their usage are designed to primarily serve residents within walking distance from the park.
- Capital costs for a restroom building and the public utilities that would be required would be approximately \$400,000-\$500,000.
- Portable restrooms would be located in close proximity to adjacent homes and could regularly produce a nuisance odor.

Request #2 – Swings at Richfield Park

Staff recommends the design and installation of swings at Richfield Park for the following reasons:

- This request aligns with the *2007 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* and *2016 Updated List of Priorities* because it adds to the variety of recreational facilities to meet the needs and desires of the City of North Richland Hills' growing population.
- A proposed project for the upcoming fiscal year provides for the planning and design for a renovation at Richfield Park.
- Long term financial impacts would be negligible and provide an amenity that is popular and well utilized.

Because of the proposed planning and design of a renovation at Richfield Park, staff recommends that this amenity be incorporated into the design, planning and implementation of a renovation at Richfield Park.

Request #3 – Artificial Turf Infields at Richfield and Walkers Creek Parks

This request is for artificial turf infields on the Richfield park baseball fields and Walkers Creek park softball fields to avoid rainouts. Staff recommends further investigation on the feasibility of this amenity for the following reasons:

- This amenity could align with the 2007 *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* and 2016 *Updated List of Priorities* providing recreation facilities that meet the ultimate recreational needs and desires of the City of North Richland Hills' growing population.
- The proposed planning and design project for Richfield Park renovation will assess the feasibility.

Request #4 – Building Improvements at Walker's Creek Park.

This request is for a refresh of the concession and bathroom facilities at Walkers Creek Park. Staff recommends further planning and implementation of this request for the following reasons:

- This request aligns with the 2007 *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* and 2016 *Updated List of Priorities* by continuing to maintain the City of North Richland Hills Parks and Recreation facilities in superior and sustainable condition.
- Long term financial impacts would be negligible and actually could reduce some of the ongoing maintenance costs by preserving infrastructure and also replacing select electrical fixtures for efficiency.
- This item had also been identified on the Park Operations Healthy Infrastructure Maintenance Plan.

Request #5 – Open Field Enhancements at Walker's Creek Park

This request is for enhancements to the open field at Walker's Creek Park. Staff does not recommend that significant enhancements are performed at this open field within Walker's Creek Park, but does recommend that leveling is performed in this area through topdressing applications throughout the year, specifically during rainy seasons for the following reasons:

- This area has not been designated for athletic field use in the past other than the southeast portion where a recreational use backstop is located. Park users have utilized the open field for pickup soccer, but the area was not designed and has not been conducive to be a designated open-use athletic field because it lacks irrigation to keep an even surface with soil and turf conditions.
- This request would not align with current principles and methods of park planning and design when it relates to parking requirements. Parking would be inadequate to designate this area as open-use athletic fields because during times when groups are trying to use this open field for practices and pickup games while softball events are occurring within the complex. It is estimated that a minimum of 40 parking spots would need to be added to buffer the increase in parking.

- Estimated capital costs for improvements required to create designated multi-use athletic fields are \$150,000 for irrigation, grading, and hydro-seeding and \$200,000 for parking lot additions.
- Topdressing this area several times throughout the year with sand is recommended to level some of the uneven surfaces that develop from seasonal soil and turf conditions.

Request #6 – Restroom Availability Access outside of softball field use

This request is for the restrooms to be open during all hours of which the park is open rather than only when the park is being utilized for youth softball events. Staff recommends further investigation and implementation of open restrooms at this location for the following reasons:

- Open restrooms would provide facilities that would meet the recreational needs and desires of North Richland Hills. Currently some park restrooms are open as being requested. Walker's Creek Park restrooms have historically been closed during times when softball events are not occurring because of less frequent activity within the park. Additionally, the restrooms have been closed during non-softball use to curb nefarious activity.
- This request has also been identified on the Park Operations Healthy Infrastructure Maintenance Plan and through current park planning principles and design is to be addressed through a locking gate or door system that will automatically open during scheduled park hours and secure the restrooms after the park is closed.

Request #7 – JoAnn Johnson Trail Playground/Greenspace

This request is for a greenspace with a playground located directly adjacent to the JoAnn Johnson Trail. Staff recommends further investigation and planning for a greenspace and playground along the JoAnn Johnson Trail for the following reasons.

- This request aligns with the 2007 *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* and 2016 *Updated List of Priorities* by providing an open space system which links parks, schools, greenbelts, open spaces and cultural landscapes.
- Because an area such as this would fall into the Neighborhood or Pocket Park categories, minimal to no additional parking would need to be constructed, thus reducing the overall cost of the project significantly.
- This request aligns with current principles and methods of park planning and design because it links a greenspace and playground to the NRH trail system, thus providing greater access to these amenities.

RECOMMENDATION:



The Parks and Recreation Board is requested to review these Park Amenity requests and provide direction to staff on considering these projects as a part of the planning for the FY2026/2027 Park Sales Tax Capital Projects Budget.