

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEMORANDUM

FROM: The Office of the City Manager **DATE:** December 4, 2023
SUBJECT: Review the Park Amenity Request Policy and consider recommendations made by staff regarding the park amenity requests for the FY2024/25 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 2023.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Preparation of the FY2024/2025 Capital Improvement Program Budget will be underway by mid-December 2023. The *Park Amenity Request Policy* outlines the criteria and methodology for responding to requests for additional park amenities and improvements in existing parks. Five park amenity requests were received in calendar year 2023 for consideration in the preparation of the FY2024/2025 budget process.

1. ***JoAnn Johnson Trail Lighting***
2. ***Fossil Creek Park Portable Restroom***
3. ***Northfield Park Dedicated Pickleball Courts***
4. ***Faram Park Sidewalk Connection***
5. ***North Electric Trail Bridge Deck Replacement***

According to the *Park Amenity Request Policy*, applications received will be evaluated by Parks and Recreation Department Staff by 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.

Staff recommends not funding lighting the JoAnn Johnson Trail at Rufe Snow for the following reasons:

- In compliance with the 2007 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and 2016 Updated List of Priorities does not intend to provide lighting on hike and bike trails.
- Recent safety improvements with the TA-Set Aside Project provide safe crossing for cyclists and pedestrians through the rapid flashing beacons and has been well received by the public. The rapid flashing beacons alert drivers when a pedestrian or cyclist is waiting to cross. While it is both the responsibility of the driver as well as the trail user to follow all traffic rules, pedestrians must remain vigilant at any intersection.

Staff recommends continued funding of a portable restroom at Fossil Creek Park for the following reasons:

- In compliance with Criteria #2, the 2007 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and 2016 Updated List of Priorities intends to provide a public restroom at all Community Parks.
- Flood Plain restrictions prohibit the installation of a permanent restroom.
- Portable restrooms have existed in this park for many years, but were recently burnt down and temporarily did not return.

Staff recommends not converting the two tennis courts to eight pickleball courts at Northfield Park, but does recommend the conversion of the one tennis court at Richfield Park to add four additional pickleball courts if funding allows within upcoming proposed infrastructure maintenance needs for the following reasons:

- In alignment with Goal #1 of the 2007 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and 2016 Updated List of Priorities to provide recreational facilities and programs that meet the changing needs and desires of the City of North Richland Hills population.
- Northfield Park has steady, but not overwhelming use of both tennis and blended line pickleball play. A more recreational style of pickleball play is seen on the blended line courts with adults, families and youth, while the dedicated pickleball courts can be more competitive and intimidating for beginner level players because of the heavy usage (as seen at Richfield Park).
- Existing amenities at Northfield Park utilize the majority of parking spots during prime operational hours. Pickleball courts would most likely over extend the already limited parking lot availability at Northfield Park during peak usage days

and times. Richfield Park has sufficient parking to support the additional vehicles with the addition of four pickleball courts.

- The current four Richfield dedicated pickleball courts are completely full during peak hours with groups even waiting. The Richfield tennis court is underutilized and tennis players may not desire to play there because of large numbers of people playing pickleball.
- Additional dedicated pickleball courts at Richfield Park provide for potential programming and reservation opportunities helping offset the nominal cost of the conversion.

Staff recommends funding the Faram Park Sidewalk Connection for the following reasons:

- In alignment with Goal #4 of the 2007 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update strives to improve trail and sidewalk access to parks, trails, and recreational spaces.
- The location of the requested sidewalk exists within Faram Park and connects an adjacent subdivision that did not exist when the park was built. Additionally increased pedestrian traffic within the Smithfield TOD is anticipated as this area continues to develop.

Staff recommends funding the North Electric Trail Bridge Deck Replacement for the following reasons:

- The lumber decking on this bridge is significantly weathered creating more frequent safety issues that must be addressed. The condition is becoming a maintenance burden, taking valuable time and resources of maintenance and operations that could be directed elsewhere.
- In alignment with Goal #6 of the 2007 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update seeks to maintain parks and recreational facilities in a superior condition and in a sustainable manner.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Park 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 proposed FY2024/2025 CIP Budget.