



Agenda Item Report

Legislative Board: City Council
Date: June 16, 2026
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ITEM TITLE: Deliberation and possible action to approve the City Park Playground Replacement capital project plans and to authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a TIPS cooperative purchase agreement (#24010401) with AOT Recreation, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$825,900.00 (Parks Director Tony Host and Parks Superintendent Shane Heffernan) [PUBLIC TESTIMONY]

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to present three (3) proposed conceptual layouts and playground feature options for the City Park Playground replacement and to obtain the City Council's recommendation on the preferred playground components and associated site amenities.

The proposed playground improvements are intended to modernize the existing playground area, improve ADA accessibility, increase inclusive play opportunities, expand age-specific play zones, enhance safety and visibility, and create a destination-quality recreational amenity for residents and visitors.

With an FY2026 CIP budget of \$850,000, staff recommends the original design proposal, which falls within this budget at \$825,900. Additional options, including an integrated zipline and swing set or a stand-alone zipline have been included in the agenda report and will be presented to City Council for consideration. Staff has also included the quotes for the options presented should City Council prefer to move forward with and execute an agreement with AOT Recreation, LLC for one of the options presented. Should council desire to explore additional designs, staff will bring forward a future item for consideration.

2. BACKGROUND/HISTORY

During budget discussions in 2025 with City Council, staff presented the safety issues related to the dilapidated City Park playground equipment, which were outlined in the playground safety inspection report conducted by Seveska Contracting Services, LLC and based on ASTM and CPSC regulations. The existing playground infrastructure, which was installed in 2020, has experienced weather-related wear and represents a safety hazard. The more acutely hazardous pieces of equipment have been removed by Parks staff. As a result, the project was included in the FY 2026 CIP with a budget of \$850,000 for a full replacement.

On April 28, 2026, staff presented the proposed design and layout of new playground equipment and a pour-in-place surface to members of the City Park Ad Hoc Committee. The committee provided feedback regarding desired enhancements to the project. One of the member's comments was to include a playground zip line within the overall playground space to provide a unique destination-style play element and expand recreational opportunities for older children.

Additionally, at the May 20, 2026, meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission, staff presented the proposed playground layout, including the implementation of the zip line and swing set. During the meeting, commissioners discussed wanting to stay within budget and voted 5-1 to move forward with Option 3, which keeps the initial playground installation within budget from Option 1 as Phase 1

and adds the zip line as a Phase II project for a future budget year.

Construction would kick off as soon as the splash pad closes after Labor Day and take 8 weeks to complete.

The proposed project is intended to accomplish the following objectives:

- Replace dilapidated and unsafe playground infrastructure
- Provide durable, safe, and long-term recreational infrastructure
- Improve ADA accessibility and inclusivity
- Provide an all-abilities playground for children and parents/guardians
- Increase safety and visibility
- Expand play opportunities for multiple age groups
- Enhance parent seating and gathering areas

The project also complements City Park Phase II improvements ongoing this year, including:

- Amphitheater improvements
- Event infrastructure upgrades
- Lighting and security enhancements
- Parking and circulation improvements

3. ANALYSIS

The existing City Park playground equipment has reached a stage where modernization is necessary to meet current expectations for accessibility, safety, durability, and inclusive recreation. Industry standards for public playgrounds have evolved substantially over the past decade, particularly in the areas of ADA accessibility, inclusive play opportunities, shade coverage, safety surfacing, and multi-generational usability. The proposed improvements allow the City to align the park system with those evolving standards while also positioning City Park as a premier destination within the region.

Inclusive and ADA-accessible playground design has become an increasingly important expectation within municipal park systems. Incorporating accessible ramps, sensory play elements, inclusive swings, communication boards, and ground-level activities ensures that the playground serves a broader range of users.

Shade coverage and thermal comfort are also critical considerations given the regional climate conditions in Central Texas. Modern playground design increasingly prioritizes shade structures, tree canopy expansion, and heat-mitigating materials to improve usability during warmer months. Staff anticipates that playground usage rates and visitor duration will significantly improve with expanded shade coverage and improved seating opportunities.

Security, visibility, and park supervision are additional important elements within the proposed design framework. Open sightlines and clearly defined circulation paths support both public safety and operational oversight. These elements become increasingly important during high-attendance events and peak seasonal park usage.

Staff also recognizes that the final design selected by Council will directly influence procurement timelines, construction duration, and future phasing opportunities. Should Council desire a playground layout beyond currently available funding levels, a phased implementation approach may provide flexibility while still allowing the City to establish the core infrastructure needed for future expansion. The recommended contractor is AOT Recreation, LLC, which is on TIPS, a purchasing cooperative, under #24010401.

Staff will present the following 3 options for consideration:

- Option 1: \$825,9000

- PIP surfacing throughout the entire playground area (including the pyramid climber area).
 - An age 2-5 playground with integrated shade structure.
 - An age 5-12 playground.
 - An all-age geo slide.
 - An all-accessible, inclusive, all-age playground.
 - An all-age wee-go-round (accessible merry-go-round)
 - Block wall and drainage additions on the hillside of the splash-pad area to mitigate run-off onto the splashpad surface.
 - 3 shade structures (over the 5-12 playground, at the splash pad entrance, over the accessible playground).
- Option 2: \$860,500
 - This option removes the 5-12 age playground and replaces it with a zip line and swing set. Everything else from option 1 is still included. It includes the following:
 - PIP surfacing throughout the entire play area (including the pyramid climber area)
 - 2-5 playground.
 - 55-foot-long zipline.
 - 3-bay swing set.
 - Extended block retaining wall with drainage enhancements.
 - An all-age, accessible, inclusive playground.
 - An all-age we-go-round (merry-go-round).
 - 3 shade structures
 - Option 3: \$873,298 (Same as Option 1 + Stand-Alone Zip Line)
 - PIP surfacing throughout the entire playground area (including the pyramid climber area).
 - age 2-5 playground with integrated shade structure.
 - age 5-12 playground.
 - An all-age geo slide.
 - An all-accessible, inclusive, all age playground.
 - An all-age wee-go-round (accessible merry-go-round)
 - Block wall and drainage additions on the hill-side of the splash-pad area to mitigate run-off onto the splashpad surface.
 - 3 shade structures (over the 5-12 playground, at the splash pad entrance, over the accessible playground).
 - Stand-Alone Zip Line

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

FY 2026 CIP Budget for City Park Playground: \$850,000

Option 1: Original Proposal/Design cost \$825,900.00

Option 2: Original Proposal/Design w/swing set and integrated zipline in place of the 5-12 playscape: cost \$860,500.00

Option 3: Original Proposal/Design w/stand-alone zip line and no swingset. \$873,298.00

Cost of Zipline as a separate project: \$47,398.00

5. STRATEGIC PLAN/GOALS

FUN EXPERIENCES FOR ALL

6. STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

Have adequate resources to invest in the maintenance and replacement of parks, sport fields, and playgrounds

7. PROS AND CONS

Pros

- Modernizes aging infrastructure
- Enhances family recreation opportunities
- Improves accessibility and inclusivity
- Increases Park usage and visitation
- Creates destination-quality amenity
- Enhances community image
- Supports tourism and event activity

Cons

- Significant capital investment
- Increased maintenance obligations
- Possible phased funding requirements

8. ALTERNATIVES

1. Direct staff to construct proposed playground with an off-site, traditional zipline. This will require a phased approach to accommodate infrastructure planning and construction to facilitate traditional zipline equipment and ensure safety requirements are met.
2. Direct staff to construct proposed playground with an integrated zipline.
3. Direct staff to construct playground as proposed, to include swing set and no zipline.
4. Direct staff to construct playground as proposed to include swing set and integrated zipline.
5. Direct staff to re-evaluate layout and amenities and bring back a new proposal for consideration.

9. REQUESTED ACTION / SUGGESTED MOTION / RECOMMENDATION

At the May 20, 2026, meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission, staff presented the proposed playground layout, including the implementation of the zip line and swing set. During the meeting, commissioners discussed wanting to stay within budget and voted 5-1 to move forward with Option 3, which keeps the initial playground installation within budget from Option 1 as Phase 1 and adds the zip line as a Phase II project for a future budget year.Â Recommendation to approve the final playground design and associated amenities for the City Park Playground Replacement capital project and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute an agreement with AOT Recreation, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$825,900.00 for FY 2026.Â

Attachments:

[Presentation - 2026-0616 City Park Playground Replacement.pdf](#)
[2026-0616 Option 1 TIPS quote.pdf](#)
[2026-0616 Option 2 TIPS Quote.pdf](#)
[2026-0616 TIPS Quote for Standalone Zipline.pdf](#)