



INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING & FUTURE AMENITY OPPORTUNITIES

DS-26-022

March 24, 2026

Background – Town Hall Meeting

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- ❑ **Town Hall held January 12, 2026**, at the First National Bank Texas Senior Center, 6–8 p.m.
- ❑ 40+ residents and potential partners attended.
- ❑ **Purpose:** Gather community input, assess current services, identify accessibility and inclusion gaps, highlight existing therapeutic recreation offerings, and build support for future inclusive facility development.

Key Takeaways

- ❑ Discussions centered on essential services, barriers to participation, and how the City and community can collaborate more effectively.
- ❑ Feedback emphasized partnering with local nonprofits, civic groups, and businesses to expand engagement and help address staffing challenges.
- ❑ Suggested program needs included aquatic opportunities, summer camps, movie nights, community dances, and improved transportation options for the inclusive community.

Key Takeaways - cont.

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- ❑ Suggested **inclusive pilot programs** involving both parents and participants, plus **transition-age programs** for individuals 18+.
- ❑ Raised concerns about **ADA accessibility** across parks, trails, and fields.
- ❑ Highlighted the need for **more educational events** and learning opportunities for the inclusive community.

Key Takeaways - cont.

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- ❑ Establish **monthly resource meetings** to connect businesses, nonprofits, military programs, and private organizations.
- ❑ Use these meetings to **share information, coordinate services, and identify resources** that benefit the community.

Program Proposal – Aquatics

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❑ **Waves of Inclusion**

- Provides **adaptive aquatic activities** tailored to participants' unique needs.
- Includes **Adaptive Swim Lessons, Water Fitness, Aquatic Games, Therapeutic Water Play, and Water Safety Workshops.**

Program Proposal – Aquatics - cont.

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❑ **Program Schedule & Staffing:**

- Runs **before regular opening** during the aquatics season (June–August).
- Sessions held on the **first Friday** of each month of the 2026 aquatic season and subsequent years.
- Led by a team of **adaptive-trained lifeguards, water safety instructors, pool managers, and experienced volunteers.**

Program Proposal – Aquatics - cont.

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❑ Program Safety & Accessibility

- Maintains a **low participant-to-staff ratio** to ensure individualized attention and safety.
- **No individual assessments** required; participants must be accompanied by an appropriate adult guardian or caretaker.
- Hosted at the **Zenner Family Aquatic Center**, which offers accessible entry options such as ramps, lifts, and zero-depth entry for easy pool access.

Program Proposal – Aquatics - cont.

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❑ Facility & Environment Features

- Offers **accessible changing rooms** with spacious layouts and appropriate amenities.
- Provides **private changing areas** to ensure comfort and privacy for all participants.
- Maintains a **sensory-friendly environment**, with thoughtful lighting, reduced noise, and a calming atmosphere.
- Utilizes a range of **adaptive equipment**, including floatation devices, pool access chairs, and adaptive swim aids.

Program Proposal – Aquatics - cont.

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- ❑ **Budget considerations (Initial cost projections)**
 - **Venue:** \$ 4,500
 - Aligned with proposed fee schedule – FY'27
 - **Equipment:** \$ 6,500
 - Necessary to support the various ability needs for growth and development.
 - **Training:** \$1,000
 - Staff training and certifications to support quality, education, and safety.

Program Proposal – Aquatics - cont.

- ❑ In conclusion, the “Waves of Inclusion” Adaptive Aquatics Program will deliver a vital service to the community, offering a fun, safe, and enriching environment for individuals with disabilities to enjoy the benefits of aquatic activities. By fostering physical well-being, promoting independence, and building social connections, this program will significantly enhance the lives of participants and their families.

Proposal – Recreation

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Adaptive Recreation Coordinator – Key Benefits

- ❑ **Inclusive Programs:** Create activities accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- ❑ **Skill Building:** Support physical, social, and emotional development.
- ❑ **Community Engagement:** Partner with local organizations to expand outreach.
- ❑ **Staff Training:** Equip staff and volunteers with adaptive and inclusive practices.
- ❑ **Needs Assessment:** Tailor programs to participant needs and evaluate impact.
- ❑ **Resource Access:** Connect individuals and families to supportive services that enhance participation.

Proposal – Recreation - cont.

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- ❑ **Budget considerations will need to include:**
 - Personnel Costs – Pay Grade 24 (\$49,370.88 - \$74,056.94)
 - Currently submitting this position as a Decision Package for FY27

Proposal – Recreation - cont.

- ❑ By emphasizing inclusion, community engagement, health benefits, and ongoing evaluation, an Adaptive Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator enhances the recreation center's value, creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all community members.

Event Program Opportunities

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❑ **Inclusive Prom (Community Dance)**

- **Host two Inclusive Proms:** one for ages **13–18** and another for **19+**.
- **Foster belonging:** Create a safe, welcoming space that reflects diverse identities.
- **Build social skills:** Encourage empathy, confidence, and positive peer interaction.
- **Celebrate diversity:** Expose participants to different cultures and experiences.
- **Promote acceptance:** Reinforce respect and inclusion through shared, meaningful moments.

Event Program Opportunities – cont.

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- ❑ **Budget considerations for both events:**
 - **Venue: \$300**
 - **Catering: \$3,000**
 - **Entertainment: \$200**
 - **Safety & Security: \$390 Photography/Videography: \$1,500**

Event Program Opportunities – cont.

- ❑ **Official City Support of a minimum of two community walks/runs (Examples below).**
 - **Killeen Autism Walk** promotes acceptance, connection, and access to resources for individuals with autism and other disabilities. It features community vendors, sensory-friendly activities, and a flexible walk format that supports participants of all abilities (April 18, 2026).
 - **Military-Focused Community Walk/Run** (example: Wounded Warrior Project Carry Forward 5K) - empowers communities to honor and support wounded veterans through fundraising and awareness-building events.

Event Program Opportunities – cont.

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- ❑ **The City of Killeen's Fallen Heroes 5K** is a community race held annually to honor service members who lost their lives in the line of duty. It blends remembrance, community pride, and accessible recreation, and is part of the broader Cen-Tex Race Series. (May 16, 2026)

Event Program Opportunities – cont.

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❑ **City Support Opportunities:**

- **Logistics & Operations:** Assist with permitting, route planning, traffic control, and accessible rest areas.
- **Accessibility Enhancements:** Provide sensory-friendly zones, quiet spaces, and ADA-compliant pathways.
- **Community Outreach:** Promote the event through City channels to increase participation and awareness.
- **Resource Integration:** Coordinate with local disability service providers to host booths and activities.
- **Volunteer Support:** Recruit and train volunteers to assist participants with diverse needs.

Event Program Opportunities – cont.

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❑ **Shared Benefits to the Community:**

- **Inclusion & Visibility:** Elevates awareness of disability inclusion and veteran support.
- **Community Unity:** Brings together families, service members, caregivers, and residents.
- **Health & Wellness:** Encourages physical activity in a supportive environment.
- **Local Partnerships:** Strengthens ties with nonprofits, schools, military units, and healthcare providers.
- **Positive City Branding:** Positions Killeen as a leader in inclusive, community-centered programming.

Facilities & Amenities

- ❑ **Integrate Inclusion into Every Renovation** Make adaptive and inclusive features a required element of all playground upgrades.
- ❑ **Apply Universal Design Principles** Use ramped structures, accessible surfacing, wide pathways, and multi-sensory play to support children of all abilities.
- ❑ **Phase Improvements to Build Momentum** Add adaptive swings, sensory panels, transfer stations, and quiet zones during routine renovations.

Facilities & Amenities - cont.

- ❑ Parks are currently under design and construction.
 - Purser Heritage (Design & Build)
 - Goodnight Ranch (Design & Build)
 - West Killeen Nature (Design)
 - Bunny Trail Community Park & Trail (Design)

Facilities & Amenities

- ❑ **Align Capital Planning with Long-Term Vision** Ensure each renovation contributes and includes Adaptive/Inclusive playground features and amenities.
- ❑ **Leverage Grants & Partnerships** Use incremental progress to strengthen funding applications and attract sponsors.
- ❑ **Expand Inclusive Programming** Pair infrastructure upgrades with adaptive recreation programs and staff training.
- ❑ **Develop a Long-term Flagship Inclusive Destination** Apply lessons from phased improvements to design a premier adaptive/inclusive playground and Miracle Field.

Regional Commitment to Adaptive & Inclusive Recreation

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❑ **Partner Municipalities & Organizations**

- City of Killeen
- City of Harker Heights
- City of Copperas Cove
- Armed Services (ASYMCA)
- Fort Hood Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR)

Regional Commitment to Adaptive & Inclusive Recreation – cont.

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- ❑ **Regional Collaboration Strategy** - Partners will share and promote each other's adaptive and inclusive recreation offerings through:
 - Co-Promotion of Inclusive Programs
 - Quarterly Regional Collaboration Meetings
 - Unified Regional Vision for Inclusion

Regional Commitment to Adaptive & Inclusive Recreation – cont.

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- ❑ **Long-Term Goal: A Regional Inclusive Park or Amenity –**
The partnership lays the groundwork for developing a regional inclusive park or major adaptive recreation amenity – a destination designed for individuals of all abilities, featuring:
 - Fully accessible play structures
 - Sensory-friendly spaces
 - Adaptive sports areas
 - Shaded rest zones and quiet areas
 - Universal design principles throughout

Regional Commitment to Adaptive & Inclusive Recreation – cont.

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❑ **Community Benefits:**

- **Expanded Access:** More adaptive programs across more locations
- **Stronger Military Support:** Inclusive recreation for service members, veterans, and families.
- **Shared Resources:** Reduced duplication and increased program quality.
- **Regional Identity:** A unified commitment to inclusion strengthens community pride.
- **Sustainable Growth:** Collaboration supports long-term planning and funding opportunities.

Direction Needed

- While this plan will address short-term opportunities, partnership models, training needs, cost estimates, and potential funding strategies. Staff seeks direction from the Council to have Parks and Recreation further develop and refine a phased plan for inclusive programming.