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McAllen Makes Major Investments in Parks & Recreation Facilities

More than $1.2 million invested in upgrades across three City parks

Continued investments in the Parks and Recreation Department are expanding opportunities for residents to stay active and enjoy the outdoors. During a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Retama Park today, City officials celebrated the opening of an inclusive playground and highlighted additional improvements at Camp McAllen and Los Encinos Turf Field.

Together, the three projects represent a total City investment of $1,267,062. This investment supports improvements to recreational spaces and athletic facilities throughout McAllen.

The Retama Inclusive Playground, located at 2500 Laurel Ave., features play equipment for children ages 5–12, along with a new flooring system combining pour-in-place safety surfacing and synthetic turf. These improvements, funded through a Community Development Block Grant, create a welcoming space for children of all abilities to play alongside their peers. The project represents an investment of $372,062. Funding was provided through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

“Every child deserves the chance to experience the joy of playing outdoors and creating memories. Investing in inclusive playgrounds makes those opportunities possible for everyone. Every member of our community matters and every child deserves to feel welcome and enjoy all that our parks have to offer,” said Mayor Javier Villalobos.

That same commitment extends to Camp McAllen, where improvements introduce new amenities for families and outdoor fitness enthusiasts. Visitors will find seven new picnic shelters throughout the park, along with a family gathering area featuring two additional shelters, a barbecue pit and a decomposed granite walking path. Other additions include a new playground, parkour fitness course, equipment, water feature, butterfly garden and shaded fishing docks, as well as a new entrance gate and updated park signage. The Camp McAllen improvements represent a $500,000 investment.

Expanding recreational opportunities also means investing in athletic facilities. At Los Encinos Turf Field, improvements transformed the East Palomino baseball and softball fields into a dedicated soccer facility. The new 220-by-135-foot synthetic turf field spans approximately 29,700 square feet and includes new soccer goals and netting. The upgraded facility provides additional space for recreational and athletic play. The Los Encinos Field improvements represent an investment of $395,000.

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"McAllen offers a unique recreational experience that you simply cannot find in every city. True inclusion isn't just about making room for some; it's about making sure there is room for everyone. Through these investments, we are prioritizing safe, inclusive, high-quality, and sustainable parks and facilities that support community growth, promote wellness, and create opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities to enjoy the outdoors," said City Manager Isaac J. Tawil.

Together, these projects reflect the City's dedication to improving existing park spaces, responding to community needs and enhancing recreational facilities for residents of all ages. Guided by the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Capital Improvement Program, these investments support a healthier, more active and connected community.

"Our responsibility goes beyond building parks and recreational facilities. We have to make sure these spaces are ready for families to enjoy year after year. Just as importantly, we want our investments to reflect what our residents actually need and want. That's why community participation matters. When residents take the time to complete City surveys and share their feedback, it helps us identify priorities, make informed decisions and continue providing the services and amenities that best serve our community," said Parks and Recreation Director, Denny Meline.

For more information about City parks and recreational facilities, visit www.McAllenParks.Net or call 956-681-3320.

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About the City of McAllen
Founded in 1904 and incorporated in 1911, the City of McAllen has grown from a small agricultural community into one of the most vibrant and fastest-growing cities along the U.S.–Mexico border. Known as the "City of Palms," McAllen serves as a hub for international trade, retail, tourism, and culture in the Rio Grande Valley. Today, the city employs more than 2,600 dedicated public servants across 41 departments, delivering essential services to a community of more than 150,000 residents. McAllen city leaders remain committed to transparent governance, fiscal responsibility, and enhancing quality of life through innovation, infrastructure, and community engagement. For more information, visit www.mcallen.net and follow us on social media @cityofmcallen