



# City of Denton

City Hall  
215 E. McKinney Street  
Denton, Texas  
www.cityofdenton.com

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## AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

**DEPARTMENT:** Parks and Recreation

**ACM:** Christine Taylor, Assistant City Manager

**DATE:** October 21, 2025

### **SUBJECT**

Consider adoption of an ordinance of the City of Denton making a finding, pursuant to the requirements of Chapter 26 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife code, that (1) there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the change in use of approximately 9.4 acres of City park land, located within South Lakes Park in the City of Denton, Denton County, Texas, from a park to a public school for the construction of Denton Independent School District recreation facilities and (2) finding that all reasonable planning has been done to minimize harm to the land as a park; and providing an effective date. (The Parks, Recreation and Beautification Board recommends approval with a vote of (5-0))

### **BACKGROUND**

Over the past few years, the City of Denton Parks and Recreation Department has been in ongoing discussions regarding the potential development of a neighborhood park on 3.433 acres of land at the former Calhoun Middle School site. This location has been identified as a high-priority area in the Parks and Recreation Land Plan due to its underserved status and growing community needs.

In a related initiative, the Denton Independent School District (DISD) proposed a land exchange involving 9.4 acres within South Lakes Park, which includes the existing track facility currently leased to DISD for school use. This proposal aligns with DISD's broader infrastructure goals, as reflected in the \$1.4 billion bond referendum approved on May 26, 2023. Among the projects funded by the bond is the renovation of the track adjacent to McMath Middle School, further supporting the district's commitment to enhancing educational and recreational facilities.

Since 1998, DISD has utilized this 9+ acres of South Lakes Park for student recreation space. DISD has built and maintained this area of the park since the construction of McMath Middle School.

State law as defined in Chapter 26, Protection of Public Parks and Recreational Lands, of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code requires that:

- (a) a municipality of this state may not approve any program or project that requires the use or taking of any public land designated and used prior to the arrangement of the program or project as a park unless the municipality, acting through its duly authorized governing body or officer, determines that:
  - (1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use or taking of such land; and
  - (2) The program or project includes all reasonable planning to minimize harm to the land, as a park, resulting from the use or taking.
- (b) A finding may be made only after notice and a hearing as required by this chapter."

Postcards were sent out to all residents within 500' of all properties under discussion, promotion on social media and a post on Nextdoor.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

After evaluating all available options, staff recommends proceeding with the proposed land exchange. This action is not expected to significantly affect current operations or programming at South Lakes Park. In contrast, acquiring the additional acreage near the former Calhoun Middle School site will enhance neighborhood access to park space and help meet the area's identified recreational needs.

### **ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROJECT**

Below is an outline of the total project calendar to date:

- Public Meeting #1: (Sept 25, 2025)
- Parks and Recreation Board: Consideration (Oct 6, 2025)
- Public Meeting #2: (Oct 9, 2025)
- City Council: Public Hearing (Oct 21, 2025)
- DISD: Public Hearing (Oct 21, 2025)
- Real Estate: Property Closing (Quarter 2 of 2025)

### **PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW**

On October 6, 2025, the Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board reviewed and recommended approval by a vote of (5-0).

### **FISCAL INFORMATION**

Following a comprehensive review of all alternatives, staff recommend moving forward with the proposed land exchange. This action will not result in any significant disruption to existing operations or programming at South Lakes Park. Moreover, the acquisition of land near the former Calhoun Middle School site will expand park access for nearby residents and help address a critical need identified in the Parks and Recreation Land Plan.

### **EXHIBITS**

Exhibit 1- Agenda Information Sheet  
Exhibit 2- Ordinance

Respectfully submitted:  
Gary Packan, Director of Parks and Recreation

Prepared by:  
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